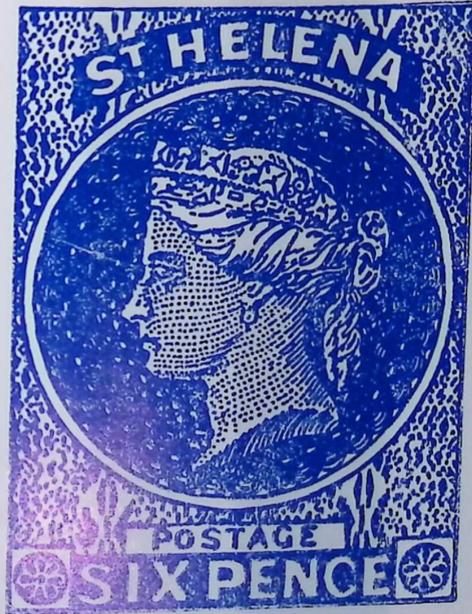


The West Africa Study Circle

St. Helena & Ascension Supplement No. 31



THE WEST AFRICA STUDY CIRCLE
ST. HELENA & ASCENSION SUPPLEMENT NO 31

JANUARY 1999

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THE WEST AFRICA STUDY CIRCLE

ST HELENA & ASCENSION SUPPLEMENT NO 31

EDITORIAL

This issue starts with a report of our trip to St. Helena June/July 1998 and covers the period from leaving the U.K. on June 11th through to Sunday 21st. I have added a few photographs which I hope will reproduce reasonably well, although I have my doubts. I will finish my report in the July 99 issue of the Supplement.

The rest of the Supplement has a variety of articles from an Ascension re-touch, a book review on the St. Helena KGV1 definitives (a must for all St. Helena collectors) very reasonably priced at £2. a copy. My grateful thanks must go to Philip Beale for sending me information from a contact of his on the Royal Marines at St. Helena and Ascension. The Ascension section will be reproduced in the July 1999 Supplement. Another contact of Philips' has provided a photocopy of an early Ceylon St. Helena item of mail.

The rest of this issue is taken up with with excellent articles from Trevor Hearl. Although Trevor is not a member of our society, nor is he a philatelist, but his interest and knowledge of the Island, its people, and its history is amazing and he manages as usual to come up with information on people, places and events old or new that we philatelists are unaware of.

Wilf Vevers illustrates a rare cover while Barry Burns and myself illustrate some new handstamps found during our visit to St. Helena. The final few pages are taken up with the Trafalgar Day Stamp Promotion on the RMS and New Issues from Ascension and St. Helena which was kindly forwarded to me by Nigel Fordham and Allen Price of the Crown Agents Stamp Bureau.

Although we are now well into 1999 I take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

Best Wishes, Bernard Mabbett

BERNARD MABBETT

34 VERONICA GREEN

GORLESTON

NORFOLK. NR31 8LE.

TEL (01493) 656147

A TRIP TO ST. HELENA

by Bernard Mabbett

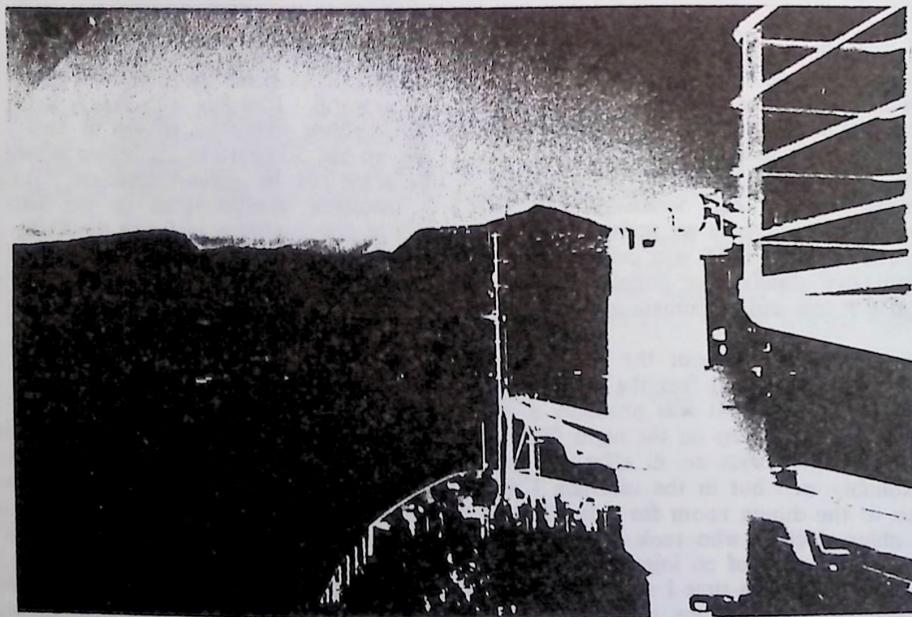
Although I have collected the stamps, and been interested in the island and its history for over 20 years, little did I realise that my dream of visiting the island would eventually become a reality. My story really begins in January 1997 when a brochure from Curnow Shipping concerning the RMS sailing dates dropped on my doormat. For days I could not stop reading it or talking about it. My wife and I talked it over and she said that if I wanted to go she would back me all the way even though it meant being apart for 23 days. In 24 years of marriage we had never been apart for more than a few days. She suggested I get in touch with other St. Helena collectors to see if they would make the trip with me. After several phone calls Barry Burns and Brian Foord with his wife Penny agreed to accompany me on the trip. We decided on a June 1998 some 17 months away as a good time to go, and those 17 months seemed to fly past and in no time at all our departure date was upon us.

Never having been further than Austria before in my life it was with some trepidation that I said goodbye to my wife at Norwich station on June 11th 1998 for the 8,300 mile journey to one of the most remote and isolated islands in the world. I met up with Barry, Brian and Penny at Heathrow for the overnight flight to Capetown where we arrived at 6am. We transferred to the superb Town House Hotel. As we had 30 hours to kill before joining the RMS we decided to sample the delights of this great city in glorious sunshine. Andrew Duncan, one of our South African W.A.S.C. members entertained us on the Saturday morning making sure we arrived back at our hotel in time for the transfer to the RMS. The departure of the RMS was delayed from 1600 to 1830, due to the late arrival of part of the cargo (the islands beer supply), but we finally sailed with Capetown a blaze of lights and Elgar's Pomp and Circumstance blaring out from the ships loudspeakers.

Once out of the harbour the RMS began to roll quite considerably in the Cape swells, and yours truly began to feel the effects quite badly and I had to forego the evening meal and take to my bunk. It was probably a combination of excitement and lack of sleep, as I had not managed to sleep on the night flight from the U.K. Having been across the North Sea in a force 8 gale with no ill effects I considered myself to be a reasonable sailor. I slept reasonably well but in the morning I made my offering to King Neptune while Barry went away to the dining room for a full English breakfast. Just outside our cabin I bumped into the ships doctor, who took one look at me and sent me straight to his surgery where he inflicted the pain of an injection on me and then, had the audacity to charge me £10 for the privilege. By lunch time I was much better and was starting to eat again, the injection having worked wonders. Once away from the Cape Swells the ships motion settled down and I started to enjoy the cruise. Over the five days of the voyage the Purser and his staff kept us busy with film shows during the day and entertainment during the evening. Monday evening saw Barry myself and six other fellow passengers team up for a quiz, which we had the good fortune to win, although Barry probably wishes we hadn't; our prize was two bottles of South African Champagne, one of which was promptly despatched by our team, the second bottle being reserved for the return voyage. Tuesday morning saw Barry very ill and it was my turn to look smug as I departed for breakfast while the very mention of food saw Barry heading for the bathroom. Barry tried to blame it on the Champagne, but the rest of us had drunk it also with no ill effects. Barry remained in his bunk for the rest of the day just

racing on deck to take a quick look at a school of whales passing the ship, a sight which caused great excitement amongst our fellow travellers. All through the voyage we had glorious sunshine and as we neared St. Helena the excitement of seeing St. Helena rose with the temperature.

On Thursday June 18th Barry and I were woken by our cabin steward with our morning tea and coffee to be told that St. Helena was in sight; within minutes we were on deck to see the outline of St. Helena's forbidding 600 ft cliffs looming out of the darkness. By the time it was daylight we could make out landmarks such as "The Barn", "Flagstaff" and the "Turks Cap". The whole ship was a buzz of excited passengers, many of us being first time visitors getting our first look at the island. An island which had dominated my life for so many years through my stamps etc and stepping ashore was soon to be a reality, not just a dream.



The RMS about to drop anchor in James Bay.

We anchored at 8am, and after the usual immigration formalities we transferred to a launch for the short trip to the harbour steps, passing on the way the steering gear of the S.S. Papanui, which sunk here on fire so many years ago. The sea, or I should say Atlantic Ocean was quite lively, but we managed the Wharf steps with no problems. Words cannot express my feelings at that precise moment, a dream had come true and, although I had never been there before I felt like I was coming home. Of course I can't vouch for Barry and Brian's feelings at that time, but I think they also had similar feelings.

As our luggage was going to be some time arriving from the RMS we transferred the short distance from the Customs shed to the Consulate hotel by bus, where after booking in Barry and I decided to explore Jamestown. The three main streets of Jamestown are shaped like a letter Y, Main Street running up from the Wharf, just past the Consulate Hotel Napoleon Street forks to the left and Market Street to the right. Barry and I started up Napoleon Street where we met an old St. Helena gentleman and struck up a conversation which, turned to cricket; now I know nothing about cricket, and Barry knows even less, in fact he probably knows more about the Jamaican Bob Sleigh Team than he does about cricket, a terrible admission for a Yorkshireman. We returned via Market Street for lunch of chicken and chips in the Consulate snack bar. After lunch we walked down to the Wharf and then back up Main Street where we had the good fortune to bump into Edith Timm. Barry had been asked by a friend in the U.K. to look up Edith while on St. Helena but hardly expected to meet her on the first day ashore. Although Edith knew that we were due on the island she had never met us before and did not know us from Adam, but such is the friendly and unassuming nature of St. Helenians that we were immediately invited to Sunday service at St. Pauls Cathedral and then to Sunday lunch at Edith's. The rest of the afternoon was spent browsing round the shops and getting a feel of the place.

Barry kept eyeing Jacobs Ladder longingly, finally deciding that he must climb the 699 steps to the top of Ladder Hill. As the steps are almost vertical it is not for the faint hearted. I decided to accompany Barry on this feat of stamina. Unfortunately my legs gave out at 350 but Barry and experienced Fell walker eventually made it to the top descending via Ladder Hill Road.

Friday 19th June dawned very hot and sunny and a group of us decided to take the footpath from the rear of the Consulate Hotel up the hillside and round to Mundens Battery (The old fortifications). Although there were signs warning that the footpath was dangerous we found no difficulty at all. After exploring the old fortifications we carried on round towards Ruperts bay where St. Helena's oil comes ashore and is stored, we returned to Jamestown via Field Road and Side Path from which one gets excellent views of Upper Jamestown.

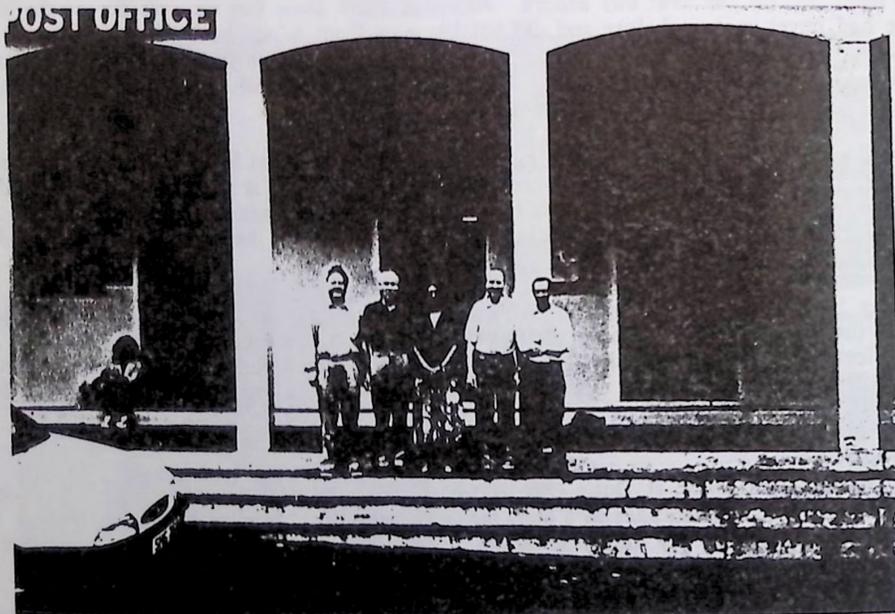
Barry and I had lunch at Dot's Cafe above the Fish Market, it consisted of a St. Helena speciality non-spicy fishcakes in a bun, that still had more than enough spice in them for my taste, I would hate to try the spicy variety. Dot is one of those larger than life characters of whom you will here more later.

Friday afternoon saw a group of us on a charabanc trip in a 1929 Cheve. The trip took in Napoleon's Tomb, a beautiful, quiet place, then on to Longwood House and Deadwood plain. After visiting Longwood we continued through the High Peaks with stunning views of the interior of the island at every twist and turn in the road. We returned via Plantation House where it is obligatory to see Jonathan the Seychelles Tortoise, then St. Pauls, Half Tree Hollow and Ladder Hill Fort.

After a meal in the Consulate snack bar we spent the evening drinking some of the beer that delayed our departure from Capetown and swapped stories with our fellow travellers over the days events.

Saturday dawned hot and sunny once again, we could not believe our luck with the weather. In fact it was so hot I had to buy a pair of shorts (not a pretty sight). The morning was taken up with a visit to the Philatelic Bureau at the Post Office with was directly across the street from our hotel. We visited the Post Office almost everyday we were on the island with demands for stamps postcards and the like, no doubt they heaved a sigh of relief when the RMS sailed taking us home. But I must say that they were every friendly and helpful with our questions and demands and nothing was to much trouble for them.

The rest of the morning was taken up with souvenir shopping and visiting the heritage Museum, a fascinating place full of island history then a very pleasant picnic lunch in the Public Gardens.



On the steps of the Post Office.

Brian Foord Alan Scrine Iva Henry (Postmistress) Myself Barry Burns

While walking up Market Street after lunch a pickup truck (Robert Peters taxi) came past us with four of our fellow travellers aboard. On seeing us they screeched to a halt and informed us that they were going to Knollcombes, the site of the Boer P.O.W. cemetery and would we like to come along. Having written a handbook on the Boer prisoners of War on St. Helena for the Anglo Boer War Society this was on our agenda for the trip so we gratefully accepted the lift.

It was just a short ride via Ladder Hill Road, Half Tree Hollow and St. Pauls to Knollscobes. The cemetery at Knollscobes is a very peaceful and quiet place. The graves themselves are unmarked apart from a number but, at the front of the cemetery are two plinths with the grave number, name and age of each Boer prisoner who died in captivity. Sitting on the grass and reading the names of those who died was a very poignant moment for me, and I have to admit that a tear came to my eye. It was a very personal moment for me, and one that will remain in my memory for many years to come.

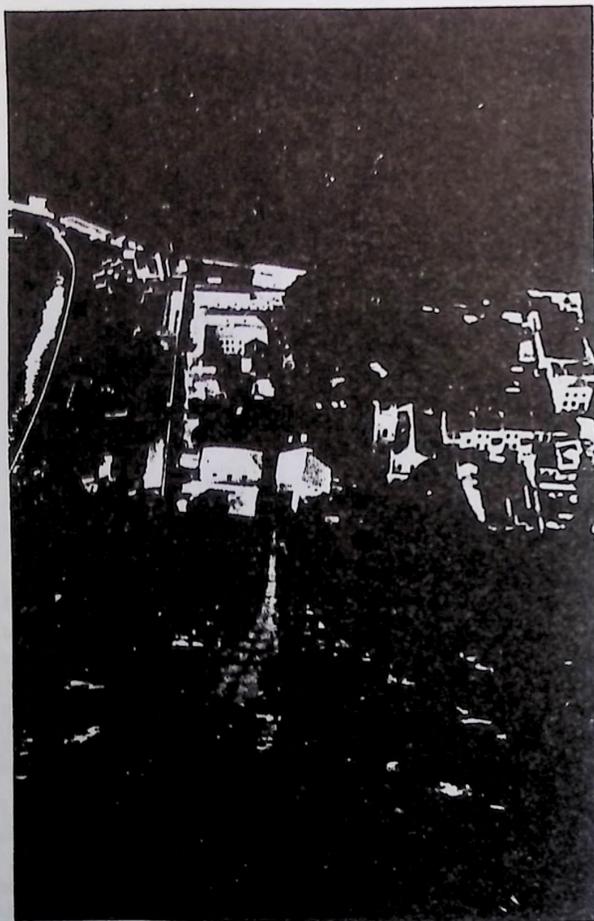
On the return trip our driver took us up to High Knoll Fort where, from the ramparts magnificent views are afforded of virtually the whole of the island. Although I took a number of photographs none of them can do justice to the stunning views which are spread out before us with evocative names such as Sugar Loaf Hill, Flagstaff, The Barn, Deadwood Plain, Longwood, Diana's Peak, High Peak, Horse Pasture Point and Donkey Plain etc.

It was late afternoon when we returned to Jamestown where we called on Nick Thorpe who had arranged for us to meet the stepson of F. Oswell Jones. Oswell Jones was an artist who married the widow of Jim Ward in the early 1960s and, having quite a bit of his correspondence in my collection I was interested in seeing any of his paintings. We were immediately invited into the family home and were shown several paintings and in true St. Helena style we were made most welcome. Nick Thorpe also took us to his warehouse, the old Paramount cinema. Nick informed us that Oswell Jones used to be a scenery artist in the U.S.A. for the cowboy films. The walls of Nick's warehouse are covered in murals of western scenes. Nick has tried to keep them as intact as possible, but I wonder just how many St. Helenians actually know that they exist at all.

Our evening was a most enjoyable one, with six of us dining at Dot's cafe above the Fishmarket. We had ordered our meal of fresh Tuna Steaks the previous day and turned up promptly at 7.30pm for the meal. Now eating out on St. Helena is an experience in itself! When we arrived we found Dot a woman of somewhere between 60 and 70 years of age sitting down chopping up the vegetables that she still had to cook for the meal we had ordered for 7.30. She immediately stops what she is doing and welcomes us with open arms and informs us that if we want a beer we will have to go the White Horse Pub across the road and bring some back ourselves. Somehow Dot manages to cook our meal as well as chatting to us and having her photo taken with us. The Tuna steaks were superb but, just as we started eating the Salvation Army started to serenaded us in the Market Square right outside Dot's cafe. For sweet we had St. Helena bananas and custard, an excellent meal for just £3.50 per head.

Sunday 21st saw us taking a taxi to St. Pauls for morning service with Edith Timm. The Cathedral at St. Pauls although not large by our standards is quite beautiful and well looked after. We had a nice service attended by the Church Lads Brigade, Girl Guides and Brownies. After the service Edith took Barry and myself to her lovely home at Crack Plain, where we were treated to the most enormous Sunday Lunch I have ever seen. It was 3pm by the time Edith had finished plying us with good food and wine so a good walk was called for to aid our digestion. From Edith's you look out across Lemon Valley to Friar's Ridge and the Friar Rock. Our walk took us to the church of St. Martins in the Hills the inside of which was no larger than than a small lounge. On our return to Edith's we talked of England where she had worked for a number of years and stamps of which we all had a great interest.

She then gave us a tea of Roast Beef, Ham salad and cakes etc till in the end Barry and I had to forcibly stop her from bringing more food from the kitchen as we were fit to burst. Edith drove us back to Jamestown in the early evening with an invitation to return to hers on Wednesday evening for a party.



Looking down into Jamestown from the top of Jacobs Ladder. The footpath to Munden's can be seen on the opposite hill.

To be continued.

ASCENSION RETOUCH

by Trevor Buckell

Upon checking my examples of Ascension 1963 (Bird set) S.G. 70 to 83 I have found what I believe to be a retouch to the tail of the 7d. (Frigate Bird) S.G. 76.

This appears in the form of an extension to the bottom fork of the forked tail. Illustrated below are the normal stamp and the retouch. If any member has any additional information regarding this stamp could they please let me know.



NORMAL TAIL



RETOUCHED TAIL

BOOK REVIEW

THE KGV1 DEFINITIVES OF ST. HELENA 1938-1952

by David Studd

I have recently received from the author a copy of his excellent Monograph on the St. Helena KGV1 Definitives. David's study covers every aspect of this issue from The Design, The Printers, The Plate Numbers and then through each stamp in turn covering each requisition, numbers sent to dealers and numbers despatched to the Colony etc. to my knowledge no one has made a detailed study of this issue before, and David is to be congratulated on a splendid piece of work. Copies of this Monograph are available direct from:-

David Studd,
6 Rose Mount,
Bradford. BD2 4JJ
West Yorkshire

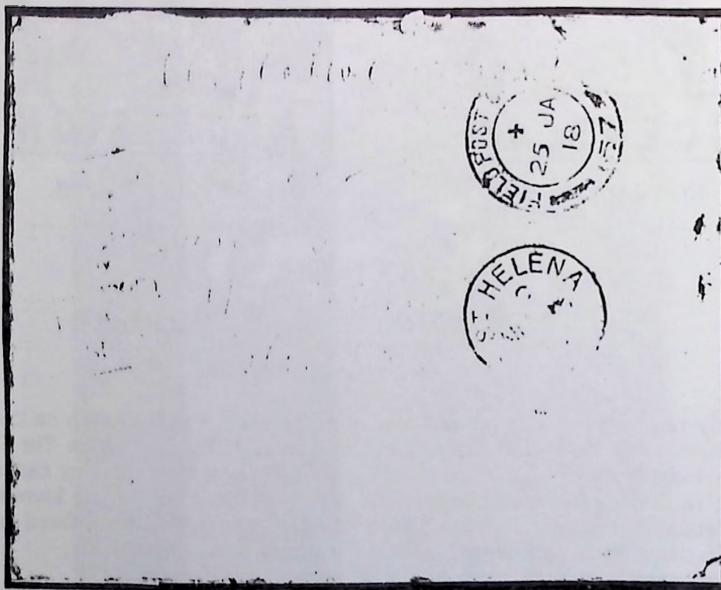
The cost is £2 per copy including postage (10 x 2nd Class Stamps will suffice). I would suggest that overseas members who would like to purchase a copy add an additional £1 to cover the additional mailing cost.

BERNARD MABBETT

THE ROYAL MARINES
ON ST HELENA 1918

The following four items have been forwarded to me by Philip Beale. They come from a collection of Royal Marines material belonging to a friend of Philip's, Bob Swarbrick. Bob has kindly given permission for them to be reproduced in the Supplement. Bob has also provided through Philip a number of ephemera items connected with the Royal Marines at Ascension and I will be re-producing that in Supplement No 32 in July of this year.

If any member has information or material connected with the Royal Marines at Ascension or St. Helena would they please let me know and I will forward the information to Bob Swarbrick.

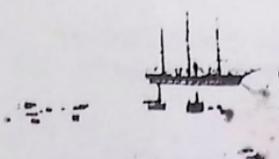


ST. HELENA SOUTH ATLANTIC

A detachment of the Royal Marine Artillery garrisoned the Island, and manned the Radio Station. Initially this force numbered only about a dozen men, but due to the threat of Surface Raiders, this was increased to about 50.

The Officer commanding, Major W. Dixon was also the Governor, combining both Civil and Military duties.

St. Helena



PASSED BY
CENSOR *ms*



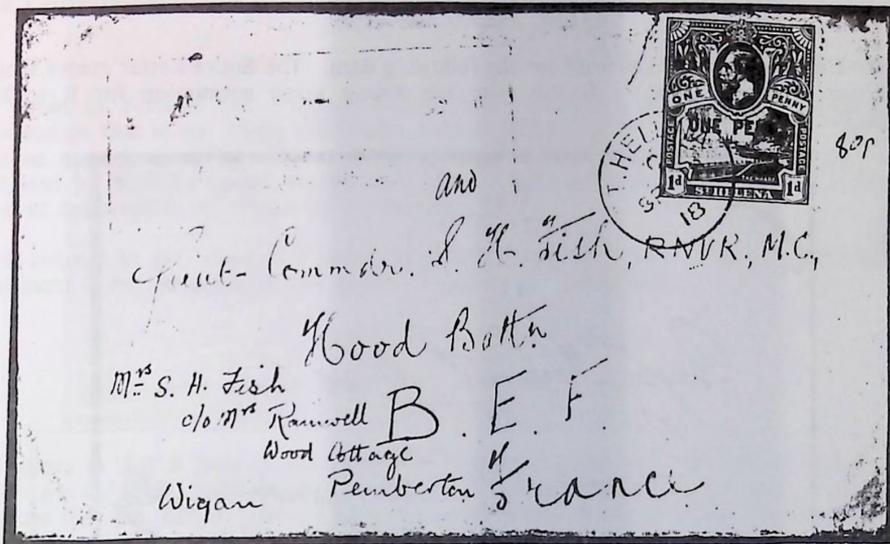
*Mr & Mrs James Fish
13 Ashland Avenue,
Wigan,
England Lancs.*

9-50

ST HELENA SOUTH ATLANTIC

19th. 1918, at the concessionary rate of 1d. per 1/2oz. From Gunner J. [unclear] the boxed "Passed by Censor" in blue of the detachment.

This cover and the one illustrated on page 13 extends the known date of 1. censor mark from June 1918 to September 1918.



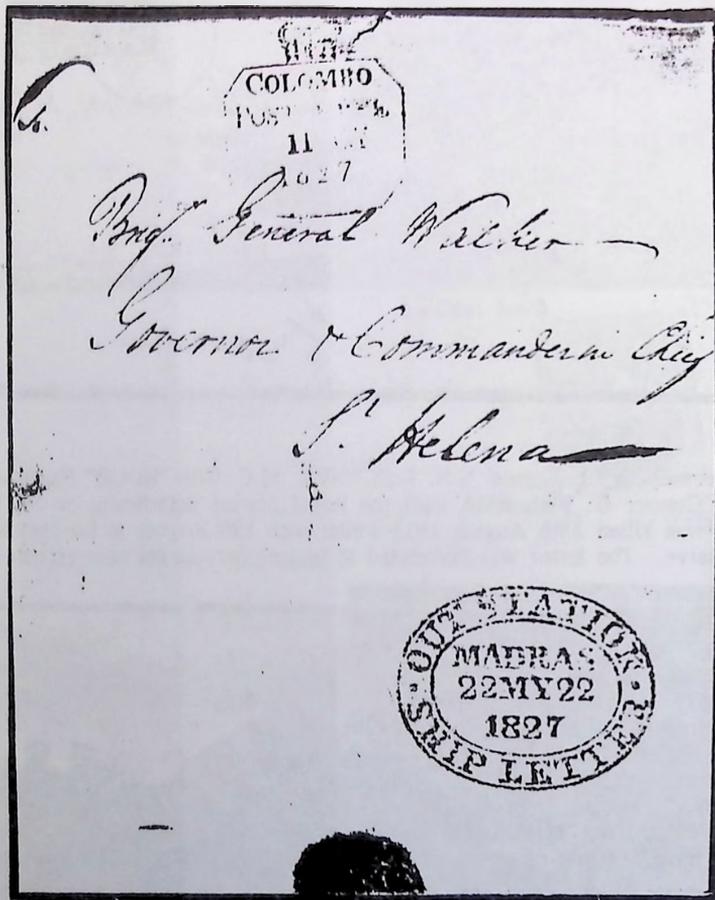
A letter addressed to Lt. Comm. S.H. Fish RNVR, M.C. with "HOOD" Battalion RND from his brother, Gunner G. Fish RMA with the Royal Marine detachment on St. Helena. Lt. Comm. Fish was killed 25th August 1918 whilst with 189 Brigade at Loupart Wood, in the Somme offensive. The letter was redirected to his mother, as his next of kin.



Two photographs showing the Radio shack and High Knoll Fort.

CEYLON TO ST. HELENA

Once again I have to thank Philip Beale for the following item. The Entire Letter comes from the collection of one of Philip's friends who has kindly given permission for it to be illustrated in the Supplement.



The Entire letter shows Crowned "Colombo/Post Free/11 May/1827" and double oval "OUT STATION/SHIP LETTER" with "MADRAS/22 MAY/1827" across the centre. The letter is addressed to Brig. General Walker. Governor and Commander in Chief, St. Helena, but shows no arrival marking as St. Helena had no official Post Office at that time.

The Letter reads:-

Ceylon
11th. May 1827

Sir,

While in London the enclosed letters were forwarded to me in Edinburgh in the expectation that in our voyage to Ceylon we should touch at St. Helena and that I would have had an opportunity of delivering the same in person. In conformity to the route usually followed by outward bound vessels this has not been accomplished and I now embrace the earliest opportunity of redeeming the delay which

such request in the Island at present that I am afraid the chance of being forwarded to the Continent is not so great as was anticipated when I left England.

I have the Honour to remain
Sir
Your obed. & Humble Servant
David Lister

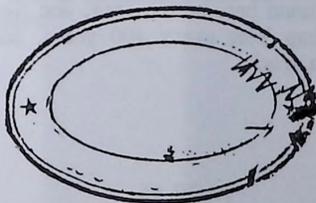
My guess is that 3 lines of the original are missing which with his writing probably some 25/30 words. This could well be the end of the second sentence and the start of the third. I surmise that Mr. Lister, whom I have not come across in any previous correspondence, had been attempting to work a little closer to home.

David Norris.

Although not authorised in the accepted manner, this entire was written by a Government official enclosing letters which he had intended to deliver personally to the Governor on an outbound trip from England to Ceylon, but unfortunately the ship could not call at St. Helena.

A NEW ST. HELENA BOER WAR CENSOR MARK OR CAMP CACHET

While on St. Helena June/July 1998 Barry and I visited the St. Helena Heritage museum. While looking through the material on display we came across a photograph of the reverse of a cover (original in Cape Town museum). Unfortunately we had no access at that time to photocopying facilities so had to make a rough sketch. The censor mark or cachet in violet has the wording "BECKER EN GREYVENSTEIN" round the top between the two ovals and "ST. HELENA" round the bottom. Across the centre in three lines was "AFNEMEBC/BROADBOTTOM/KAMP". Spelling may be slightly out as the handstamp was quite faint. I have reproduced the handstamp below as accurately as possible.



A MATTER OF STYLE

by Trevor Hearl

St. Helena's 500th anniversary is already being celebrated by the Post Office; a second series of "Discovery" stamps was released on 2nd July 1998. Its official First Day Cover, decorated with the 1596 Linschoten view of the Island in sepia, contains a welcome insert telling the story behind each of the four stamps in the set. About the 25p stamp, which depicts a dramatic scene of settlers raining rocks down upon men trying to land on the beach below, it explains:

"1672 - Dutch Invasion.

The Dutch fleet arrived off St. Helena on 20 December 1672. Soldiers landed at Lemon Valley on New Year's Eve..."

Just a moment. If this is supposed to mean 31st December, or "Old Year's Night" in St. Helena parlance today, then what were the Dutch doing for eleven days? And are we to believe that St. Helena observed New Year's Day on 1st January when in England it was 25th March? Though Gosse [p.62] and most others describing the event support the philatelists, it still seems unlikely. The question of which calendar was in use by St. Helena's settlers is rarely raised, but events show it is not a trivial issue.

At the time of the Dutch attack after the outbreak of the third Dutch War (1672-74), England (but not Scotland) observed the 'Old Style' calendar, and as St. Helena usually followed English custom we should first remind ourselves what that was. When in 1582 Pope Gregory X111 introduced the 'New Style' calendar it was adopted by all Roman Catholic states and soon afterwards by most others, including Scotland - but not England. When Holland, then the United Provinces, adopted it is not so easily found; Hayden's Dictionary of Dates gives 1584, others 1700, and the Encyclopaedia Britannica ignores the Dutch altogether, but from St. Helena evidence 1584 seems more likely.

The reason for the change was that the old calendar, founded by the illustrious Julius Caesar in 46 BC, had 'lost' ten days so that the Spring Equinox, which determines the date of Easter, fell on 11th March instead of the 21st! To put it right at one fell swoop Gregory ordained that 5th October 1582 should become the 15th, and New year begin on 1st January. Another detail allowed a extra Leap Year every 400 years, so that AD 2000 will have an extra day to keep the Calendar on track.

So when did the Dutch invade St. Helena? The answer would seem to depend on which calendar was being used. For example, as we have seen, according to the English version the Dutch fleet arrived on 20th December 1672, and in his article on 'The Loss and Recapture of St. Helena' in The Mariner's Mirror (1950), Geoffrey Kitching, the former Government Secretary (1932-40), suggests that they said this to convince the Directors in London of their prolonged resistance to the invaders, whereas the Dutch dated their arrival on the 29th and, helped by a disaffected settler and a desultory defence, were in occupation in a couple of days. The disparity in dates, I suggest was not due to any trickery by the settlers, but to the different calendars in use by the Dutch and the English. This also affects the date of recapture by Captain Munden a few months later. C.R. Boxer, the authority on Dutch trade with the East, significantly gives Munden's arrival off the Island as "May 4th/14th 1673", allowing for the use of both the Old and New Style calendars in protagonists' records. Though this does not say which St. Helena was using, their reference to 20th December shows that it is the 'Old Style'. This cannot be checked in Janisch's Extracts from the St. Helena Records, unfortunately, as they do not start until 19th December 1673; nor does he refer later to any change in Island usage from 'Old' to 'New Style' to keep in line with the English practise.

England remained stubbornly attached to the Julian Calendar until 1752. It was then eleven days behind solar time making business with neighbouring states more and more difficult. To put matters right the Government decided to call 3rd September 1752, the 14th. It is alleged that uproar erupted in towns and cities across the country with marching mobs chanting "Give us back our eleven days" under the impression that a ruthless régime had shortened their lives! More than that, 1752 was clipped to nine months so that AD 1753 started on 1st January instead of 25th March. *

But returning to St. Helena in 1672/73, only fellow St. Helenian-historian Dr. Percy Teale has noticed the calendar problem, prefacing his account of The Seizure by the Dutch (2nd ed. May 1979) with "A note about dates". Unfortunately he does not solve the discrepancy, believing both countries to be using the Old Style in 1672. The New Style, he said, "was not observed by the Dutch and British until 1700 and 1752 respectively... Eleven days must be added to the dates contained herein". So if any reader can produce irrefutable evidence to show when Holland and St. Helena switched to 'New Style' it would solve a mystery. The New Encyclopaedia Britannica suggests that not only England, but "her colonies", adopted the New Style in 1752, but if so no one has mentioned this momentous event during Governor Hutchinson's time (1747-64). Clearly no mobs marched down Main Street demanding their eleven days back. Probably no one noticed.

***EDITORS NOTE:**

Trevor has since informed me that the British financial institutions refused to change the end of their financial year, and that is the reason that our financial year ends on 5th April each year; 25th March plus 11 days.

SAMUEL HOPEWELL & CO.
ST. HELENA MERCHANTS

by Trevor Hearl.

Two names on an 1885 registered cover from St. Helena, illustrated in St. Helena & Ascension Supplement No. 30 of the West Africa Study Circle, caught my eye for their interest and philatelic potential which readers may like to share. One was that of SS Roslin Castle [II], then the newest and soon the fastest mailship of its day on the Cape run, though known as the 'Rolling Castle' by its queasy passengers. The second, the addressee Samuel Hopewell, holds more significance for St. Helena-watchers, though few may recognise it as that of one of the most successful businessmen in the Island's commercial heyday, with all that implies for overseas mail. Fortunately a descendant, a retired London surgeon John Hopewell, published a brief biography from his family researches in 1994 and this, allied to evidence from St. Helena sources, offers a glimpse of the lucrative career of this merchant and his shipping agent and enlightening vistas of the Island's somewhat obscure commercial affairs.

Young Samuel went out in the late 1820's while still in his 'teens, to work for his uncle, Richard Prince, who grew so prosperous in business on the Island that one is tempted to call him St. Helena's 'merchant prince'. His only serious competitor was Saul Solomon, with whom relations can hardly have been cordial as prince had gone there, not to set up business, but recover debts overdue from Solomon to his London firm, W. & J. Prince. He sailed on the Roxburgh Castle to Cape Town, and thence to St. Helena on the Mornington on 11th December 1813. He soon recognised the Island's commercial potential as the East Indiamen's only port of call homeward bound, even before the prodigal expenditure of the Napoleonic exiles and their guards had made fortunes for them all, and so decided to stay. But the St. Helena Government, ever wary of 'inward investors', ordered him off in August 1815, though if legend is to be believed he merely sailed round the coast and landed at a convenient cove! So he was there to greet Napoleon and develop trade with the Longwood exiles, before being deported again! This time it was for telling Napoleon's valet, Louis Marchand, that the Austrian botanist Philippe Welle had brought a letter from his mother containing a lock of hair for Napoleon from his son, the 5-year-old King of Rome. "Prince was banished from the island by order of the Governor and for that cause alone", exclaims Aubry in an indignant note to his study of Napoleonic St. Helena. In fact the incident is used by writes in both camps to show, on the one hand "the underhand intrigue the governor had to unravel", and on the other, proof of Hudson Lowe's "tortured brain". But for Prince there was no nipping round the Island this time, and on 17th August 1816 he found himself stepping ashore from the ship David at Simon's Bay.

What happened to his business interests on the Island, one wonders. He must have had competent employees to manage his affairs, which perhaps explains why, when he returned after the Napoleonic interlude, he employed several expatriates. By 1829, in addition to his nephew Samuel, they included Henry Harris, John O'Connor, T. Cassin a hairdresser, and Charles Fuller as bar-keeper "at Mrs. Loudon's Tavern". From the St. Helena Bazaar "at the Bridge" facing the Market, he proudly informed....

"Owners, Captains, & Passengers of Ships, that he has for sale Marine Stores, Provisions, Wines, Beer, &c.&c.&c., an exclusive Stock of Europe, India & China Goods, consisting of Gold & Silver Trinkets &c. of the best quality & latest Importation, also attached to the Establishment are fashionable Dress Makers, Tailors & a Hair Dresser from the most eminent Houses in London."

By specialising in goods and services at the top end of the market, and employing expatriate staff to foster customer confidence, he was following Saul Solomon's successful example. Though unmarried, he lived in style at Knoll Cottage, just north of Plantation House grounds, enlarging it as 'Princes Lodge' to make a gentleman's estate of 28 acres - it is now 'Bishopsholme', official residence of the Bishops of St. Helena - and invested in other property, including the prestigious 60-acre Farm Lodge estate. He did not live long to enjoy his wealth, however, for he died in 1838, leaving his 26-year-old nephew a fine, flourishing business.

The Hopewell era began at a challenging point in St. Helena's economic evolution as the Island had just been transferred to the Crown. Though the Company's civil and military servants were ruined by their peremptory dismissal, Jamestown's already prosperous tradesmen were on the threshold of a 30-year boom. New business was generated by the Royal Navy's anti-slavery squadron, the Liberated African Depot, the vice-Admiralty Court, a new St. Helena Regiment, and above all, a steep rise in shipping, from under 500 vessels a year in the 1830's to over a thousand in the 1850's. To take advantage of this, Samuel bought a second shop in a more prominent position, next to the Canister at the top on Main Street, behind the traditional auction site "under the trees". He lived at Prince's Lodge and in 1840 married Emma Matilda Arnall to whom three children were born on the island including a son, suitable named Richard Prince Hopewell. A keen churchman and a member of the Vestry Committee, Samuel Hopewell epitomised the honest, thrusting Victorian businessman who astutely kept a finger on the pulse of the commercial world by judicious visits to London. When he felt the time was ripe, he left St. Helena with his family and a 'fortune' to enjoy a long retirement at Wigmore House, Hackney - the address on the illustrated cover.

Young Hopewell - Richard Prince Hopewell - stayed to carry on the family business. The date of his father's departure is not certain, but as there were no Hopewell signatures on the memorial to the departing Governor, Col. Sir Thomas Gore Browne, on 14th December 1854, and Samuel had already sold the Bazaar to Thomas Edmund Fowler, a rising star in the Island's commercial firmament, a major re-structuring of the business must then have taken place involving his absence from the Island. Fowler's advertisement - "late Samuel Hopewell" - in the St. Helena Almanac for 1856 reveals a down-market trend in the shipping trade since the East India Company had lost its commercial role and the shops opposite the Market and in "Front Street" now stocked

"...Haberdashery, Millinery, Jewellery, Ironmongery and Tinware, Cutlery, Glass and Crockery-ware, Toys, China Fancy Articles, &c. Also...every kind of groceries, Pickles, Sauces, Jams, Jellies &c."

St. Helena was nevertheless thriving as never before and Samuel Hopewell clearly expected his son to build on the foundations he had laid, remitting his share of the profits to Hackney. But without the Bazaar it is not clear where his business was now located, though he must have had a base in Jamestown, as he is said to have lived, not at Prince's Lodge, but at Thompson's Wood, as far from town as it is possible to get.

Young Hopewell seems to have done his best, however. A stalwart supporter of the 'New Market' opened in May 1865, by 1873 he had been elected President of the Market Committee, responsible to the members for allotting stall-space, and to the Governor for its "proper conduct" - a pretty thankless task! A keen churchman and friend of Bishop Welby, he served as churchwarden and a member of the choir, so it is no surprise to find him in the role of Chaplain to the 'Hope of St. Helena' Lodge of the Independent Order of Good Templars, a society for promoting total abstinence, surprisingly popular according to Grant's St. Helena Guide (1883), having "effected much good in reclaiming the inebriate". Richard married in 1863 and during the next ten years raised a family of two girls and a boy, before tragedy struck. On 29th October 1873 his wife Sarah, only 33, died probably in childbirth. Their home at Thompson's Wood House, above Botley's lay and the historic 'Wild Cattle Pound' - which the Hopewells must have bought from the Island's oldest settler family, the Bagleys - was described in the guidebook as

"an estate of 100 acres enclosed by a wall, where we observe stone pine, pincasters, evergreens and oaks; also fruit trees, among which are three chestnuts (old tres), and in front of the house flower beds and flowers. The grounds of this estate yeild crops of potatoes, corn and vegetables, ad has a good stream of water running through it."

If Richard Hopewell indulged too much time in this 'Garden of Eden', or in good works "reclaiming the inebriate", it was not for these reasons, or the loss of his helpmate, that the business began to fail. Times had changed. Samuel Hopewell had been a leader among thirty shopkeepers and a dozen "merchants and shipping agents", when there was business for all. But the bubble burst during the 1860's, with the ending of the anti-slavery patrols, the disbandment of the St. Helena Regiment, and above all the sharp decline in shipping, as steamers, the overland route to India and, after 1869, the Suez Canal, cast St. Helena further and further adrift from the world's shipping lanes. As trade slipped away, with the thousand sail of 1860 fading to a mere 211 by 1890, and Government retrenchment triggered a catastrophic slump in the local economy, so competition between Jamestown's tradesmen became fiercer. Richard did not have the ruthless drive, or indeed the business resources, needed to outplay Solomon's moves to monopolize the trade of the port. Meanwhile by each mail Samuel Hopewell still hale and hearty in Hackney, lambasted his unhappy son for financial failings. The old man must have been particularly galled that a Solomon now reigned at Prince's Lodge, with its veranda, tennis court and glorious garden. Moreover Richard's son, Samuel Prince Hopewell, played no part in the business, but manfully struggled to qualify for the London Medical College and dully graduated in 1893. Yet when Samuel senior died in 1902 he left the business only in Richard's care for his son in England, now Dr. Hopewell, so he was still not master of its resources. The blow undermined his already failing health and he died the following year. His daughters, after the example of other 'European' families, emigrated to the Cape and married. Thompsons Wood house decayed, its stone soon spirited away to shelter other heads.

But to return to Samuel Hopewell's registered envelope of 1885 which, when auctioned at Harmer's on 28th January 1998, realised twice its estimate at £1,062. From what we now know it may well have contained a 'dividend' from the business. As there must have been scores of others over the years, old Samuel may well have thrown away a fortune in St. Helena covers, yet where one survives there are likely to be others. They may not all be worth £1,000, but the names 'Hopewell' and 'Prince' should be worth looking out for among St. Helena postal history items.

And if there is family information in any of them, I am sure John Hopewell would like to hear - a note to the Editor will put readers in touch.

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- MELLISS, G.W: Survey of Landholdings (1836), trans. by Dr. P. Teale & L.W. Shepherd.
- PHILIP, Peter: British Residents at the Cape 1795-1819 (Cape Town 1981) 332.
- ST. HELENA GOVT: The St. Helena Calendar & Directory for 1829,1833,1834,1843, and 1844.
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WATERMARK VARIETIES ON THE
PERKINS BACON 6D. PLATE

Included in Supplement No. 30 was a checklist of the watermark varieties so far recorded. Vic Dyball and myself had hope for some feedback by members from stamps in their own collections; unfortunately this proved not to be the case. Only one member returned the list with any additions. The additions are as follows:-

S.G. 9 2d. WATERMARK REVERSED

S.G. 40 2½d. WATERMARK REVERSED (WITH REMAINDER CANCELLATION)

S.G 44 6d. WATERMARK INVERTED AND REVERSED

P.O. 1. HANDSTAMP ON COVER

by Wilf Vevers

The cover illustrated below shows a fine strike of the double oval P.O. 1. handstamp struck in blue dated Jun/9/67. Less than half a dozen copies of this handstamp are known to exist as it was in use for only a very limited period. The cover is one that has not been recorded before.



The cover is franked at the 4d. Ship Letter rate and shows manuscript "2" indicating that the postage is to be split equally between the St. Helena and United Kingdom Post Offices. The cover received London 'PAID' c.d.s. for 8th July 1867. The cover is endorsed at the top left "per H.M.S. Anglian" and is addressed to "Mrs. Harkness, The Toy House, Hastings, England". There is also a manuscript notation at the bottom left 'A.H.H. May 30th'. Wilf asks if any member can give him any information regarding the "H.M.S. Anglian" or of the 'Harkness' family.

NEW DEPARTMENTAL CACHETS

by Barry Burns

While Bernard and I were on St. Helena in June/July 1998 we were in the Government Printing works having some photocopying done for us when we spotted two large covers lying on the desk with handstamps that we had not seen before. We requested copies of the covers and to our delight we were also given the two covers as well. The first cover shows a boxed Legal & Lands handstamp dated 9 June 1988 while the second has a four line handstamp reading "AUDIT DEPARTMENT/CASTLE GARDENS/10 JUN 1998/ST HELENA GOVERNMENT". Both the handstamps are illustrated below.



CHANGE OF GOVERNOR AT ST HELENA

by Trevor Hearl

David Hollamby has been appointed Governor and Commander-in-Chief of St. Helena in succession to David Smallman LVO, who will be retiring from the Diplomatic Service.

Mr. Hollamby will take up his new appointment in May 1999.

David James Hollamby Born: 19 May 1945.

Mr. Hollamby was appointed the first Deputy Head of the Overseas Territories Department in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office when it was formed in July, 1998, having been the Deputy Head of West Indian and Atlantic Department for two years.

Mr. Hollamby is a career diplomat who is strongly pragmatic and who sees staff as the most important resource of the Diplomatic Service. He has extensive experience of working with the Dependent Territories in the Caribbean and worked closely with Monserrat during her recent volcanic crisis. He had experience of the Commonwealth in the 1970's as a desk officer in Commonwealth Co-ordination Department and was a desk officer for Gibraltar in the mid-1980's.

His previous postings include Beirut, Asuncion, New York, Dallas and Rome. He speaks Italian and Spanish. Mr. Hollamby is married to Helena and has two stepsons. His hobbies include travel, reading, the cinema, he shares his wife's enjoyment for live opera and is fond of country and western music, as well as skiing.

CAREER

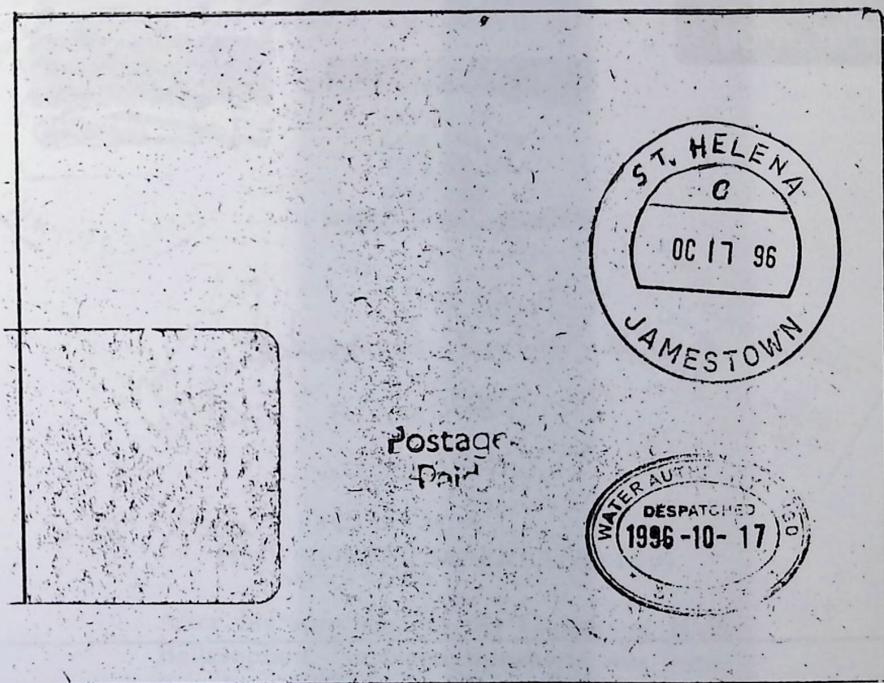
1964	Entered FCO
1964-67	FCO (Archivist, Archives Department)
1967-70	Beirut (Registry/Communications later Visa Officer)
1970-72	Floater duties
1972-75	Asuncion (Third Secretary Vice Consul)
1975-78	FCO (Commonwealth Co-ordination Department)
1978-82	New York (Consulate General) (Vice Consul Commercial)
1982-86	Dallas (Consul Commercial)
1986-87	FCO (Southern European Department)
1988-90	FCO (Energy, Science and Space Department)
1990-94	Rome (Western European Department)
1994-96	FCO (Western European Department)
1996-98	FCO (Overseas Territories Department)

THE WIDMORE CANCELLATION

by B. Mabbett.

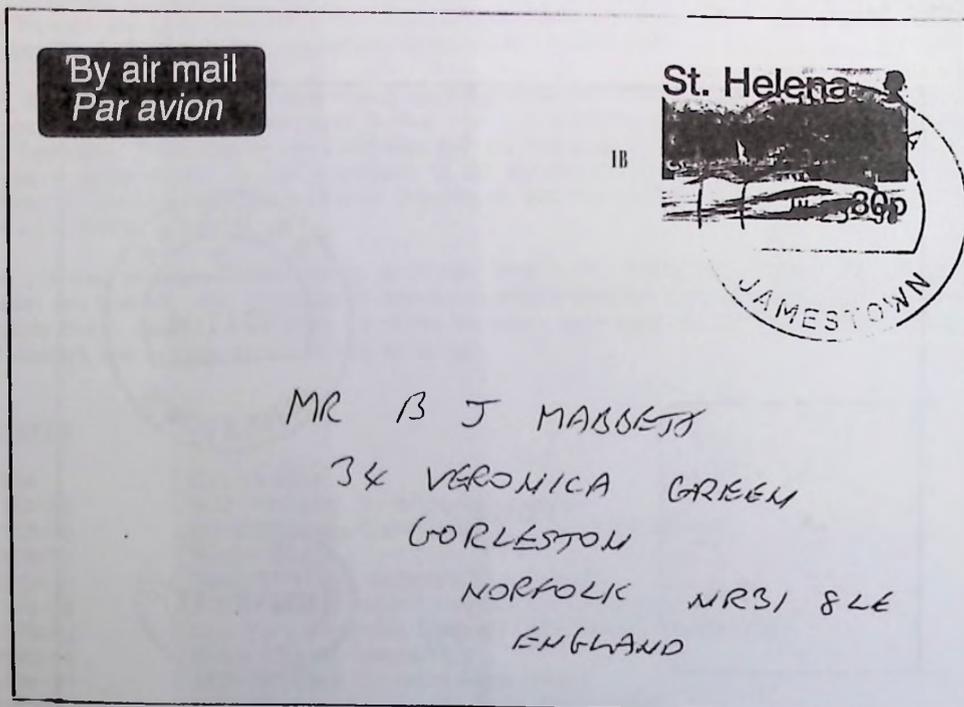
In Supplement No. 25, January 1996 I illustrated on page 3. an unusual St. Helena cancellation that I had not come across before. All three copies I had seen were used on internal mail dated between May 25th and September 5th 1995.

In February 1998 I received a letter from Robert Richardson of the St. Helena & Dependencies Philatelic Society enclosing photocopies of two more covers bearing this same cancellation from the Water Authority PWSD, and appear to have been used internally on the Island. The two covers are dated April 30th 1996 and October 17th 1996 and I illustrate one of them below.



Large 43mm Widmore cancellation on cover dated October 17th 1996.
Cancellation inked in as it was quite faint.

As Barry Burns, Brian Foord and myself were on St. Helena in June of 1998 we decided to make enquiries at the Post Office concerning this cancellation. We met Iva Henry the Postmistress and she informed us that the Electronic Widmore machine had initially been brought into use at the opening of the First Local Post Offices back in 1965. Apparently the machine was unreliable, and she could offer no explanation as to why it should have been used between May and September 1995, nor again between April and October 1996. Iva then went to a store room and returned with the machine, set it up and kindly cancelled half a dozen covers for us all dated June 23rd 1998. One of the covers is illustrated below. So part of the mystery of this cancellation has been solved: - A It was brought into use in January 1965 for the First Local Postal system, but not apparently used. B Why it was used during 1995/96 on internal commercial mail remains unanswered C Future philatelists will, in years to come be able to read from the pages of this journal why it was used again in 1998.

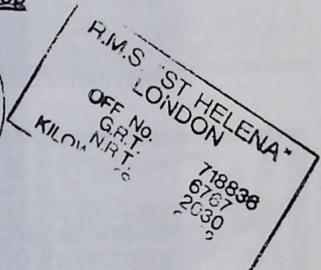


Cover addressed to myself with the Widmore cancellation dated June 23rd 1998.

RMS ST HELENA
21 OCTOBER 1998
TRAFALGAR DAY

In September 1998 I received from Mrs. Cathy Hopkins an invitation to a Stamp Promotion on board the RMS St. Helena in Cardiff on 21st October 1998, Trafalgar Day. The object was to promote the new Ship Definitives issued on 28th August 1998.

As I had recently returned from St. Helena on the RMS it felt like coming home to be stepping back on her decks again and renewing old friendships with some of the Officers. The evening went very well and as usual the hospitality of the RMS was of the highest standard. I had the good fortune to have a long talk with John Batchelor, who designed the definitives, and also Nigel Fordham and staff of the Crown Agents and many other people connected with St. Helena and philately. All those who attended were presented with an Official Post Office Presentation Pack, signed by Iva Henry, the St. Helena Postmistress plus the card illustrated below signed by Capt Roberts and with a special RMS St. Helena cancellation for Trafalgar Day.



HMS NORTHUMBERLAND 1815

After his surrender to the Captain of HMS Bellerophon, Napoleon Bonaparte was transferred to HMS Northumberland (a ship of 74 guns). The Northumberland brought Napoleon to his exile in St Helena on 15 October 1815. This ship already had a distinguished record under the command of Admiral Lord Nelson.

ASCENSION & ST. HELENA
NEW ISSUES 1998/99

The following information has been forwarded to me by Mr. Allen price of the Crown Agents Stamp Bureau following discussions between Nigel Fordham any myself on board the RMS on Trafalgar Day.

I have illustrated as many of the stamps as possible over the next few pages.

ASCENSION ISLAND

1998	INSECTS	15p.35p.40p.50p	10/2/98
	DIANA, PRINCESS OF WALES 4 X	35p (20p)	31/3/98
	80th ANNIVERSARY RAF	15p.35p40p.50p	1/4/98
		4 X 50p S/S	
	MIGRANT BIRDS	15p.25p.35p.40p.50p.	15/6/98
	SPORTS	15p.35p.40p.50p.	17/8/98
	XMAS	15p.35p.40p.50p.	1/10/98
1999	AIRCRAFT/TRANSPORT	15p.35p.40p.50p.	20/1/99
	WINSTON CHURCHILL S/S	£1,50	20/1/99
	UNION CASTLE		
	AUSTRALIA'99 S/S		
	WWF/FAIRY TERN		
	MOON LANDING		
	CHRISTMAS/MILLENIUM		
	EASTERN TELEGRAPH CO		

ST. HELENA

1998	MAIL SHIPS 11	20p.25p.30p.80p.	2/1/98
	DIANA TRIBUTE	4 X 30p. (20p)	4/4/98
	DISCOVERY OF STH 2	20p.25p.30p.80p.	2/7/98
	NAVAL SHIPS DEFINITIVE	10p.15p.20p.25p.30p.	
		35p.40p.50p.75p.80p.	
		£2.£5.	28/8/98
	CHRISTMAS 1998	15p.20p.30p.85p.	28/9/98
1999	AUSTRALIA' 99		MARCH





125th Anniversary of the Birth of Sir Winston Churchill



Winston Churchill acknowledging the salute of the 1st American Squadron Home Guard, 2nd Aug 1941. Clementine Churchill is to his right and Brigadier Sir Basil Serguson-Brook to his left.



DIANA, PRINCESS OF WALES
1 July 1961 - 31 August 1997



In respect of international sale, 20p from the total selling price shown on the souvenir sheet will be donated to The Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund.

Diana
Princess of Wales 1981-1997

In respect of all national sales, 20p from the total selling price will be donated to a designated local charity.

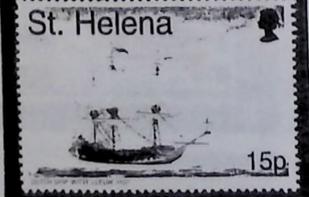


10p HMS Desire



This 50 gun ship under the command of Admiral Thomas Cavendish (the first Englishman to visit St Helena) was sent to the East Indies to add strength in the face of a Dutch and French build up of power. Even as early as 1586 Europeans were realising the value of colonies so far away and sent powerful ships to protect trade routes.

15p Witte Leeuw



To aid the Dutch who were building influence and colonies in the Far East, the Witte Leeuw was sent to protect Dutch interests in the East Indies. Although built as a navy ship she was run by the Dutch East India Company. The loss of the Witte Leeuw was considered a mighty blow for the Company when she was sunk in James Bay in 1613, during a battle with two Portuguese carracks. Witte Leeuw translates as White Lion.



20p HMS Swallow and HMS Dolphin

Although only a ship rigged sloop and a 6th rate, these small ships added valuable aid to the small number of ships stationed in the East Indies. Lightly armed but fast, they were useful for protecting East Indiamen against Malay and Chinese pirates.

25p HMS Endeavour

Originally named the Earl of Pembroke, this Whitby collier was converted by the Admiralty for extended voyages of exploration. Commanded by the greatest of all navigators, Captain James Cook, she called at St Helena for stores towards the end of the first voyage of discovery. The Endeavour was one of the most famous ships ever to sail the seven seas.

30p HMS Providence

A ship rigged sloop of shallow draught, this ship was helpful for inshore work, landing soldiers and dispatch carrying while serving in the Indian Ocean against French and Dutch interests in the East Indies. She called at St Helena for stores after a long storm bound voyage (three weeks in the Doldrums) from England.

35p HMS St Helena

This topsail schooner was typical of the type of craft used to carry dispatches for the Government and Royal Navy. Fast and light, they could outsail most other craft as they were able to sail closer to the wind than square rigged ships. Built especially for the island by the Honourable East India Company, it was intended that she ply between the island and the Cape of Good Hope carrying, cattle, grain and stores.



40p HMS Northumberland

After his surrender to the Captain of HMS Bellerophon, Napoleon Bonaparte was transferred to HMS Northumberland (a ship of 74 guns). The Northumberland bought Napoleon to his exile in St Helena on 15 October 1815. This ship already had a distinguished record under the command of Admiral Lord Nelson.





50p Rurik

This Russian brig, accompanied by a schooner and under the command of a Russian nobleman, Otto von Kotzebue, called at St Helena not only to take on water and wood but to show the Russian flag in as many places as possible on its journey to the Far East.

75p HMS Erebus

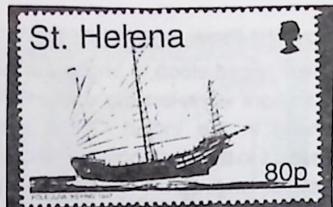
She called in at St Helena for water and wood on her last voyage before being fitted with a propeller powered by a locomotive engine. She was lost, along with HMS Terror, whilst trying to find a route through the Northwest Passage under the command of Captain Sir John Franklin.

80p Keying

Built of ironwood, 148 feet long with a mast 93 feet high, this pole junk made the long voyage from China arriving at St Helena 17 April 1847 (over four and a half months after setting out). Not normally associated with 'blue water sailing' these ships were very dry and seaworthy. Due to the size of the rudder it sometimes took twenty men to steer.

£2 La Belle Poule

Under the command of Prince de Joinville this French frigate carried the body of Napoleon Bonaparte from St Helena in 1840 and returned it to Paris. This poignant event was captured on a set of stamps issued in 1990 (the 150th Anniversary).



£5 HMS Rattlesnake

This steam and sail powered corvette cruised the South Atlantic soon after being commissioned, visiting Ascension Island and St Helena. Iron built and fitted with rifled muzzel loaders, she was powerful for her size.