

The West Africa Study Circle

St. Helena & Ascension Supplement No. 33



THE WEST AFRICA STUDY CIRCLE

ST HELENA & ASCENSION SUPPLEMENT NO 33

JANUARY 2000

CONTENTS

Editorial.....	2
Damaged "A" of Helena.....	3
1884-94 4d. With Additional Thin Bar.....	4
Another Dunlop Letter.....	5
The Halfpenny Broad Surcharge.....	7
1d. Imperf Surcharges, Additional Information.....	8
Deadwood Camp Internal Mail.....	10
The U.P.U.Postcards of Thomas Jackson.....	11
Flaws on the 1922 Ascension Overprints.....	23
Immigration Office Handstamp.....	27
Life on the Island of Ascension.....	28
Press Release, Curnow Shipping.....	35
Jason, Schedule for South Atlantic Charter.....	36

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THE WEST AFRICA STUDY CIRCLE
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EDITORIAL

Well here it is, after 12 happy, and I hope successful years as your Supplement Editor, my final Supplement Number 33. is with you: But don't despair this is not the end, my good friend and fellow St. Helena collector Barry Burns has agreed to take over the reins of editor from me.

Firstly I would like to thank all those contributing members (and non WASC members) who have kept me supplied with articles and information over the past 12 years. I feel sure that you will keep up the good work and keep your new editor well supplied. To those members who keep meaning to put pen to paper, but have not yet managed to do so, please try, as your new editor needs all your help and support to keep the Supplement going; remember, if you the members don't supply the articles and information, your editor cannot produce the Supplement.

This my final issue sees a variety of articles on Postal History, Postcards, Stamps and a fascinating account of life on the Island of Ascension in the 1840's.

Those of you who are St. Helena watchers will know of the problems that Curnow Shipping have been having of late. Firstly Andrew Bell, Managing Director was forced out of office by his fellow directors, then the RMS St. Helena broke her starboard crankshaft not long after leaving Cardiff with a large number of Saint's returning home for Christmas, plus supplies for the Island and the Christmas Mail. The RMS had to put into Brest, France. She will be out of action for some time while the engine is repaired, but is due to sail again from Cardiff on 3rd February 2000. A Curnow Shipping Press Release can be found on page 35, and a sailing schedule for the "Iason" which will be undertaking the passenger requirements is to be found on page 36.

Once again a big thank you to all WASC members both at home and abroad for all your help and support over the past 12 years, and I take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy 2000, and I hope that the "BUG" does not bite to hard.

Your new Editor's address is:-

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Stokesley,
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DAMAGED 'A' OF HELENA

by Barry Burns

I was interested to read in Supplement No. 32 (Page 30) of James' Podger's copy of the 10d. Key Plate issue of 1890-97 with the damaged 'A' of HELENA. A similar example has resided in my collection for a number of years, and previously I had assumed it was a non constant variety. My copy is the lower right stamp of a mint block of four; unfortunately not a positional block. It is illustrated below.



In view of the interest recently shown in key Plates generally, does anybody know of any studies of this St. Helena issue? I have a number of stamps, some in small blocks, but have not previously given them more than a cursory glance. Perhaps I should get the magnifier out!

DAMAGED A OF HELENA

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

by Ralph Stanton

There are a great many varieties on the ten penny, but most of them are minor. Of the several major varieties, the "split A" (as it is called by dealers) is one of the most prominent. It is a constant variety, and I have 11 copies of it in my own collection (mint, remainder cancelled, and even one postally used).

This variety has been known for a long time. This is one of the many St. Helena varieties that should be listed in Gibbons, but is not. Indeed, the Gibbons listing for St. Helena is, as you know, quite inadequate. They fail to list many varieties that are far more prominent than some other varieties that they list elsewhere in the catalogue.

1884-94 4d. WITH ADDITIONAL THIN BAR

In Supplement No.28, July 1997, p.21 I wrote about the above stamp, with additional information given by Ralph Stanton. The three copies that Ralph had at that time in his collection were plated as position 74 (not 76 as listed by Gibbons). In Supplement No.32 in July 1999 I mentioned a large block of 42 showing this variety also at position 74. This block is now in the collection of your NEW EDITOR, Barry Burns. Ralph Stanton has since written to me, informing me that he has purchased a block of 20 of this value, once again showing the variety at position 74. Another of our members, Colin Wenborn has written to say that he has a copy with BPA 1979 certificate stating it is position 76, they probably took this information from Melville which, in turn was copied by Gibbons. I will now have to look again at my own copy and re-check its plating.

It would appear from the number of copies (5) plated as position 74, then this variety is not as transient as first thought, and Gibbons should look again at their catalogue listing.

ANOTHER DUNLOP LETTER

by Barry Burns

The article on the Dunlop correspondence in Supplement No. 32 (Page 16) made very interesting reading, and I would like to add to the story by giving details of the only letter from George Dunlop in my collection. This was written at St. Helena on 3rd November 1818 to his father at Ayr, and I believe to be the letter referred to by the writer in the letter to his brother James on 1st February 1819 (Page 25).

POSTAL MARKINGS

The letter carries three manuscript charge markings. 6 and 1/11 appear to be in similar ink, but the 1/7 is written over the 6 in blacker ink. SHIP LETTER/DARTMOUTH handstamp, (London) F/30 DE 30/ 1818 date stamp, (GLASGOW)/ 2 JAN 1819 / 405 - G Mileage mark, and two strikes of the additional boxed $\frac{1}{2}$ mark of the type used 1817 - 1820. Recd. 2 Janry 1819 in manuscript on backflap.

3 Nov 1818 ST. HELENA - DARTMOUTH - LONDON -

GLASGOW - AYR

The above letter was written at St. Helena shortly before George Dunlop left for the Cape of Good Hope. A transcript of the letter is given below.

St. Helena
3rd. Novr. 1818

My Dear Father,

It was with much pleasure I received (only yesterday) your letter of the 6th July last. It arrived just in time to overtake me before leaving for the Cape of Good Hope, where I am ordered for the second time, to bring down the Vaccine lymph (?) on the living subject (?). This trip will prove very pleasant, as it is at the finest season of the year, and the vessel I go in is a large ship of 800 tons, with fine accommodation. You will be apt to say 'this is too much of a good thing' but considering the dull uniformity of this place, a trip to the Cape is considered as a great treat. We expect to sail in about (sic) two days. The voyage there and back will occupy between two and three months.

I am happy to inform you that I have received an assurance of going home the moment a surgeon joins the regiment, which I think cannot be later that March or April, in which case I shall reach England in June or July.

Old Hamilton, of whom you make mention, is a very good man, and highly respected in the regiment. What he told you is all correct. I hope the Gooseberry Pye was good - What you saw in the newspaper relating (?) to the insalubrity of the Island is to some measure correct, although by no means to the extent mentioned. We have all the diseases of the East Indies (Particularly in James' Town) in their greatest (sic) perfections. Provisions (?) are in great plenty. - You will receive before this reaches you a letter which went home by the Musquito (?) sloop of War, in which our Junior Assistant Surgeon went home. I am writing a long letter to Dr. Robertson which goes by the first packet. - Should I have an opportunity, I will write again from the Cape, giving a full account of the voyage etc. I have long looked for Annes or Besses letter, so long promised. - I hope it will soon reach this. Give my fondest regards to Mum (?) and James and believe me.

Yours very sincerely,

G. Dunlop.

THE HALFPENNY BROAD SURCHARGE

by Roger Morgan

Owing to a recent purchase of a complete sheet of this stamp (green as opposed to emerald) in four blocks of 60, I have been able to do a little more research into this interesting stamp. In particular, I was able to establish for certain that the bar lengths of the surcharge were not altered when changing from the broad to the narrow surcharge. (Some of these lengths were given by Roger West in Supp 4/12).

THE DOUBLE SURCHARGE

In Supplement 28/4 I wrote that I had plated a used copy of the Double Surcharge as stamp 1/7. The Halfpenny Double Surcharge differs from all the other values of St. Helena Queen Victoria so treated in that one surcharge is always too low and too far to the right, the other being correctly applied. The stamp of mine has a bar length of 14mm in the correct position, and a lower surcharge of 14½mm. The correct surcharge lengths in this area are as follows:-

	Stamp 6	7	8
ROW 1	14¼	14	14
ROW 2	14¼	14	14¼

It seems most unlikely that the first surcharge would have been displaced one stamp to the right or left, as well as being one row too high or low; and I think therefore it is a reasonable assumption that the original surcharge was made on the correct row, but one stamp to the right, thus leaving the left hand column unsurcharged.

Most people in the past have expressed the view that the surcharge was one row too high or, too low; but it is significant that Hibbert is an exception, and on page 40 of his book he states: "The first vertical row of stamps was missed and consequently the last vertical row of surcharges was printed in the right hand margin of the sheet".

I don't know where his information came from, but I now believe him to be correct.

THE SPACED NY

Several experts have written on this subject, notably Melville and Mounfield. The former has reported that the spaced NY is 1.25mm in the emerald printing and 1.5mm in the green printings of the broad surcharge; and both have indicated that the spaced NY is to be found in various positions in Column 12. Mounfield in 1973 further muddied the water by quoting an example of the NY spaced being found on stamps 3/12, 8/12 and 13/12 - but not on stamp 18/12, (presumably on the same sheet).

I have an emerald spaced NY on stamp 8/12; and in the four blocks of green stamps the variety appears on 3/12 and 8/12 - but not on 13/12 or 18/12 (all spacings being about 1.2mm). It is of course possible that these blocks do not come from the same sheet.

I have a very clear example of a green stamp 216 (18/12) with a spacing of 1.5mm and many photos of blocks at auction show the same spacing - I think all the varieties are claimed as occurring on stamp 216.

All this is very confusing. I am inclined to believe that on the earlier printings of the emerald and green broad surcharge a Spaced NY of about 1.2mm did sometimes occur (due to loose type) in several positions; but sometimes on the green sheets only a spacing of 1.5mm appeared, apparently only in position 18/12. The shorter spacing is not visible to the naked eye (not to mine, anyway!) whereas the wider spacing is. Perhaps, therefore, there is a case for amending the Gibbons catalogue to record only the wider variety, and to omit the shorter one on the grounds that it is not constant. (Note that the measurements given in the catalogue vary from mine - it depends where you measure the space between the 'N' and the 'Y').

1d. IMPERF SURCHARGES

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

by Ralph Stanton

There were definitely two formes used for the surcharge operation. I have two copies of Stamp 188, the second major re-entry (another important variety that is ignored by Gibbons), of which one has the short surcharge and the other has the long surcharge. Only the use of two formes is adequate to explain the fact that this position has both surcharges.

I believe that the short bar is far commoner than the long bar. In my collection I have 19 short surcharges and 5 long surcharges. Since I acquired the stamps from the point of plateability, this can be considered a random sampling of the two surcharges, and would indicate that the long bar is considerably less common.

My short bars are positions 20, 31, 84, 111, 116, 145, 146, 176, 188, 200, 200, 212, 216, 217, 227, 227, 236, 239, 240. My long bars are positions 15, 15, 91, 92, 188.

All sales that contain several of these stamps seem to verify this frequency count. The Jamestown-Ayre sale (Harmer's, 1989) had 41 copies of the short bar and only 17 of the long bar. This sale had 2 blocks showing the short and long bars se-tenant: unfortunately, I did not buy either block (I don't know who did), and it is not possible to plate the stamps with any certainty from photos.

I believe that the short bar was used for most of the surcharging, but that a few sheets were surcharged with the long bar (possibly only parts of some sheets). The scarcity of se-tenant pairs is probably due to the fact that not many sheets were surcharged using both formes.

I have a note (provenance uncertain) to the effect that the surcharging forme contained 60 stamps (five rows). I recall that there was a catalogue some time ago that had a se-tenant pair that definitely either confirmed or negated this opinion.

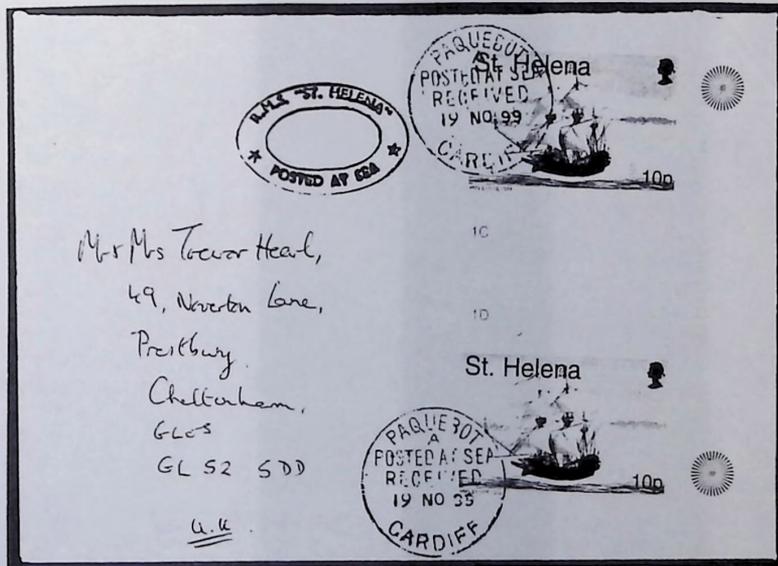
POST SCRIPT

by Trevor Hearl

Family and friends of passengers on the RMS St. Helena, voyage 44 to Cardiff, have been surprised to receive letters from them "posted at sea" three weeks after they reached journey's end. The covers bear, not only the ship's oval "posted at sea" cachet, but also a very clear Cardiff Paquebot c.d.s. dated 19th November 1999 though the RMS docked there on 30th October.

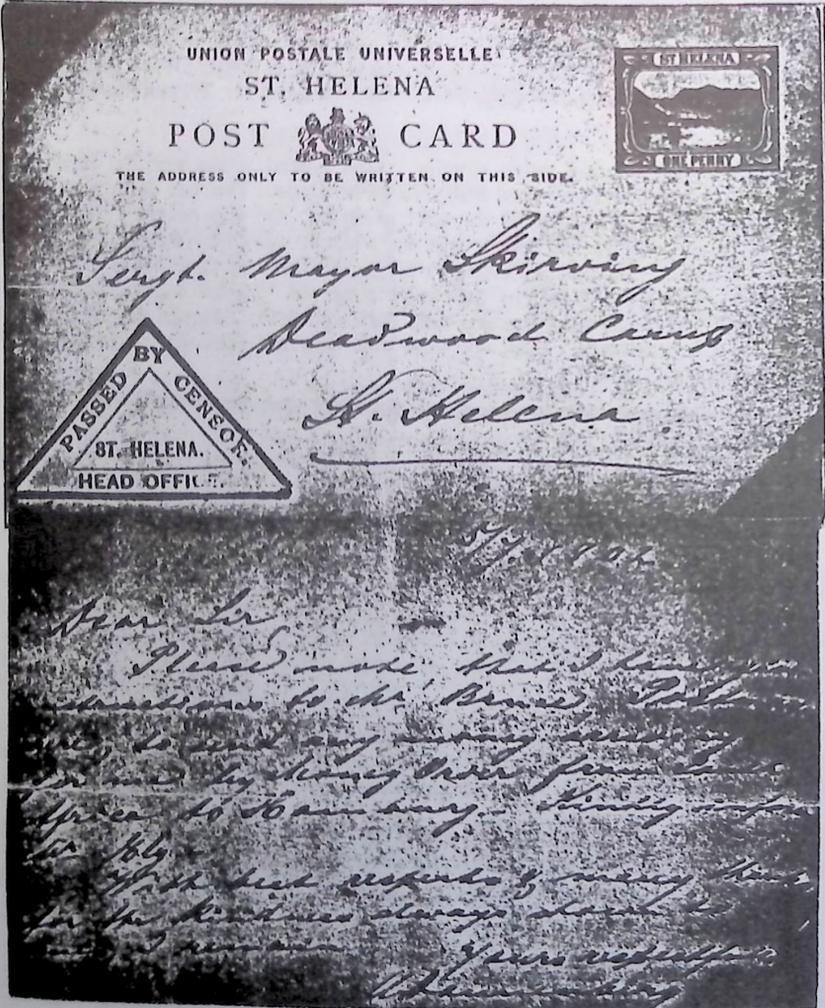
In a few years' time this will furrow some philatelic brows. One can imagine collectors, well into the third millenium, poring over the handstrike "PAQUEBOT/A/POSTED AT SEA/RECEIVED/19 NO 99/CARDIFF", while juggling with Curnow's timetable and the knowledge that, on 19th November, the ship was laid up at Brest. Were they taking the mail back to St. Helena? Perhaps the RMS never reached Cardiff? Permutations of possibilities are legion.

The explanation is fortunately much simpler. Mail posted at sea with St. Helena stamps is given the ship's cachet, and collected into a large envelope. This can only be accepted at one sorting office in the U.K. - that of the port of entry. On this occasion the envelope went with the Company's mail to Falmouth, and so, when it was discovered it had to go back to Cardiff. By this time Curnow had rather a bigger problem on their hands - 6767 tons of it lying off Brest. But the regulations had to be observed. In due course Cardiff Post Office officials received the much-travelled sea-mail back and made a careful job of the cancellation as if to placate the recipients. They will now wish they had kept that cover behind the clock on the mantelpiece!



DEADWOOD CAMP
INTERNAL MAIL.

I have been forwarded by a friend, Peter Cottis, a St. Helena Postal Stationery card that was used internally within Deadwood Camp. The card has no circular date stamp but shows a fine strike of the triangular, "PASSED/BY/CENSOR/HEAD OFFICE/ST. HELENA" censor handstamp. The card written and dated in manuscript "5/7/1902" is informing the recipient that, he the writer has given instructions to Mr. Bruce, Postmaster (St. Helena not camp Postmaster), to forward any mail for him to his home in Hamburg.



THE U.P.U. POSTCARDS OF
THOMAS JACKSON. A SECOND LOOK

by Robert Richardson

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The Skavaril-Lampart article published in the October issue of the Newsletter, Vol. X. 1986 was the first listing of these picture postcards. The address side was described in detail as to the colour of the ink used, the measurements of each line of the logo, and whether the picture was in colour or black and white. A series number was assigned to each card, but the final paragraph of the article stated two things, first, that they were not necessarily listed in the order that they were published, secondly, that there were always the possibility of other cards existing not described at that time. The picture postcard illustrated in Figs. 1. and 2. is such a card. The card has an undivided back, a type in general use up to 1904 but rarely thereafter. It was mailed from the Jeppestown branch of the Johannesburg Post Office and has a c.d.s. date of 8th May 1905. On the address side the measurements of three of the fur lines are the same as those on the two cards previously thought to be Jackson's first series, S/L.PPCs. 14 and 15. The lines referred to are "A", "C" and "D" in Table 1. of the original article. The type font is also the same in these, but in line "B" the type is from a different font and measures 23mm in length. All the lettering on the card, both front and back is in black, but the picture is grey-black.



FIG 1

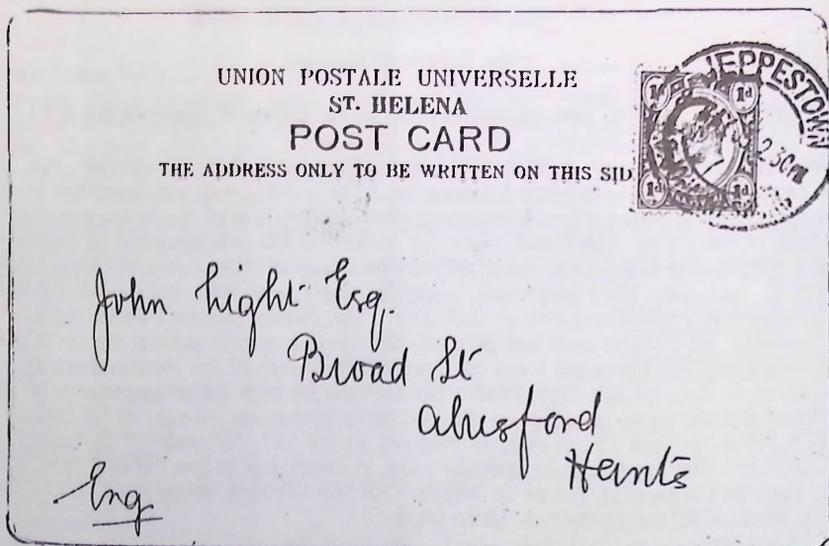


FIG 2

On all Jackson's cards after this one his logo is printed on the address side, but on this card it is printed along the bottom of the lower left edge of the picture side horizontally. The area on this side reserved for the sender to add a short message or name has the picture title below the "GREETINGS FROM" line, on all his later cards it is to be found somewhere in the picture area.

The chart in Fig. 3 was made using the backs of the PPCs used in the original article primarily to avoid any confusion as to which card is being referred to; with the introduction of this new card changes had to be made in the original numerical order. A double set of digits is shown on the left side of the chart being the new designated number of a PPC, the lower the original preceded by "S/L" (Skavari/Lampart). From this point on all PPC numbers referred to in this article will be the upper of the two. On the right side of the chart is an additional reason for the change in the numerical order, that being the use of "COPYRIGHT" in his logo. This appears on his first six cards and the change in the order of PPCs. 19, 20 and 21 was made because of this; it would not make any sense to eliminate it on 20 and 21, re-use it on 19, then eliminate it once more on PPC. 22. The dates given in this column are taken from dated material in my own collection, if any member can present an earlier one the Editor or I would be pleased to hear from you so any corrections can be made.

PPC.#14.
(S/L.N/A)

UNION POSTALE UNIVERSELLE
ST. HELENA
POST CARD



COPYRIGHT. 1907/4.
Copyright on picture
side.
Black & white.

THE ADDRESS ONLY TO BE WRITTEN ON THIS SIDE

PPC.#15/16.
(S/L. 14-15)

UNION POSTALE UNIVERSELLE
ST. HELENA
POST CARD

COPYRIGHT. 1904/5.
#15. B & W.
#15. Color.

THE ADDRESS ONLY TO BE WRITTEN ON THIS SIDE

PPC.#17.
(S/L.22)

UNION POSTALE UNIVERSELLE
ST. HELENA
POST CARD



COPYRIGHT. 1906.
Black & white.

PPC.#18.
(S/L.23)

UNION POSTALE UNIVERSELLE
ST. HELENA
POST CARD



COPYRIGHT. 1906-7.
Black & white.

PPC.#19.
(S/L.18)

UNION POSTALE UNIVERSELLE
ST HELENA
POST CARD



COPYRIGHT. 1907-8.
Color.

to be used for correspondence. | For Address only.

PPC.#20.
(S/L.16)

UNION POSTALE UNIVERSELLE
ST HELENA
POST CARD



COPYRIGHT Eliminated
1907-8.
Black & white.

to be used for correspondence. | For Address only.

PPC.#21.
(S/L.17)

UNION POSTALE UNIVERSELLE
ST HELENA
POST CARD



COPYRIGHT Eliminate
1908.
Color.

to be used for correspondence. | For Address only.

PPC.#22.
(S/L.20)

UNION POSTALE UNIVERSELLE
ST. HELENA
POST CARD



COPYRIGHT Eliminate:
1908-1909. + or -.
Black & white.

PPC.#23.
(S/L.19)

UNION POSTALE UNIVERSELLE
ST HELENA
POST CARD



COPYRIGHT Eliminate:
1910-1912. + or -.
Color.

to be used for correspondence | For Address only.

PPC.#24.
(S/L.21)

UNION POSTALE UNIVERSELLE
ST. HELENA
POST CARD



COPYRIGHT Eliminate:
Dates as above.
Black & white.

to be used for correspondence | For Address only.

PPC.17 was listed next to last in the original article but was in fact the first of Jackson's cards with the divided back to be published. Dated by the sender March 31st. 1907 it has a c.d.s. of April 3rd. 1907 and is shown in Fig. 4. In Fig. 5. a similar view of the Ladder from the PPC. 20 series. The difference between them is the sun illuminating the right side of the Church Steeple on "4" and on the front of it in "5". The face of the cliff is defined with more contrast, the whole presenting a far better picture in general than any of the same view in later series. Whatever the reason for it not being used again is unknown, possible damage at the printers.

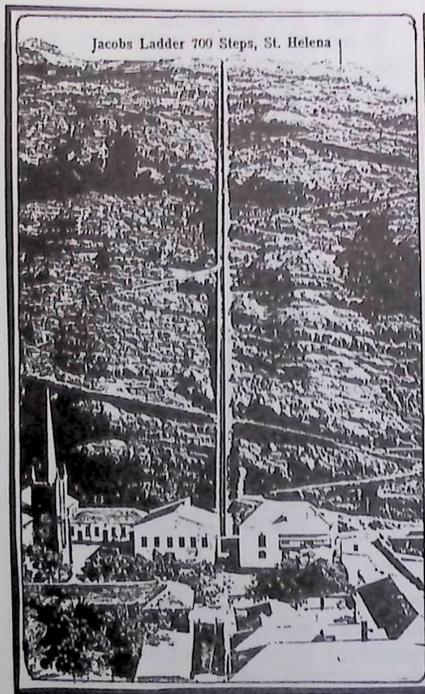


FIG 4

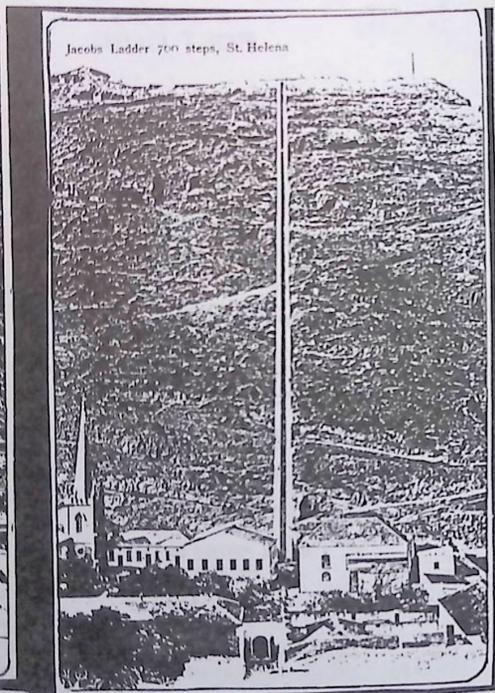


FIG 5

Illustrations slightly reduced.

One of the questions posed by Jackson's cards is 'Who was the printer?', at least it had been for me since becoming interested in this area of the Island's postal history. The answer to this came quite unexpectedly during my search for photographs to illustrate the visit of the

three German Warships in 1914. (St. Helena & Ascension Supplement No. 30). One of my contacts was Helmfried Luers, publisher of his own postcard magazine, "THE PHOTO ALBUM" this being his hobby. With some friends he is researching the picture postcards published by the C.G. RÖDER, CO, one of the largest producers of these at the turn of the century. He was able to locate a source for the material I needed and with it included a recent copy of his magazine: by chance it contained an article complete with illustrations of the numbering system used by Röder on some of the PPCs it produced. One of them was identical to that on PPC. 19., and after forwarding him photocopies of PPCs. 19, 20 and 21 he wrote to say that all three were produced by the Röder Company. With this information I made a comparison check of the logos on the address side of Jackson's cards which indicated that most if not all were printed by Röder. These checkpoints were as follows:-

1. On PPCs. 14, 15, 16 and 17, line 'A' "UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION" is printed in the same type font on all and their measurements are the same, 61mm x 3mm. On line 'C', "POSTCARD" is 38mm x 4mm, same type font.
2. On PPCs. 14, 15 and 16 line 'D' "THE ADDRESS ONLY... etc" measures 84mm x 2mm, all letters are from the same type font.
3. On PPCs. 15, 16, 17, 19, 20 and 21 line "B", "ST HELENA" is from the same type font measuring 29mm x 3mm.

The view side of the PPCs also attests to the fact that only one printer was involved in their production regardless of the logo on the address side. Identical views of "HUTTS GATE" are shown in Figs. 6 and 7, the first is a Röder card, PPC. 20 in black and white

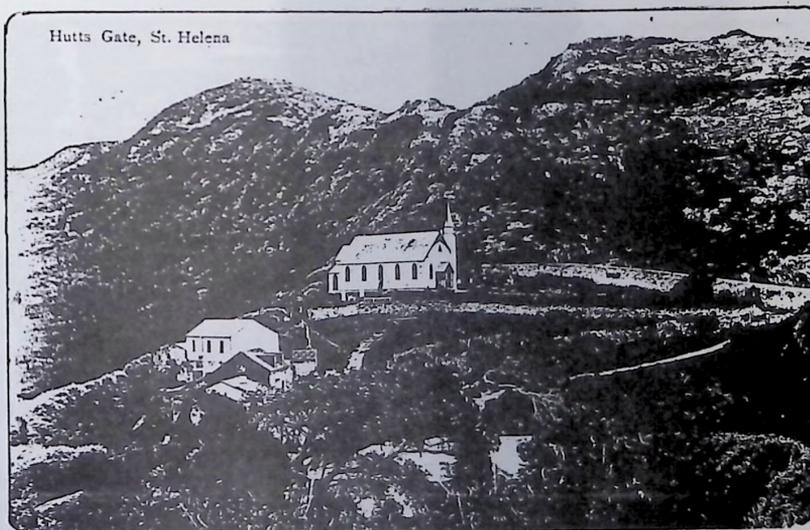


FIG 6.

the second PPC. 23 in colour. The registration of both views is exactly the same, yet Fig. 6 is postmarked December 5th 1908 and Fig. 7 May 25th 1913, a difference in time of four and one half years.

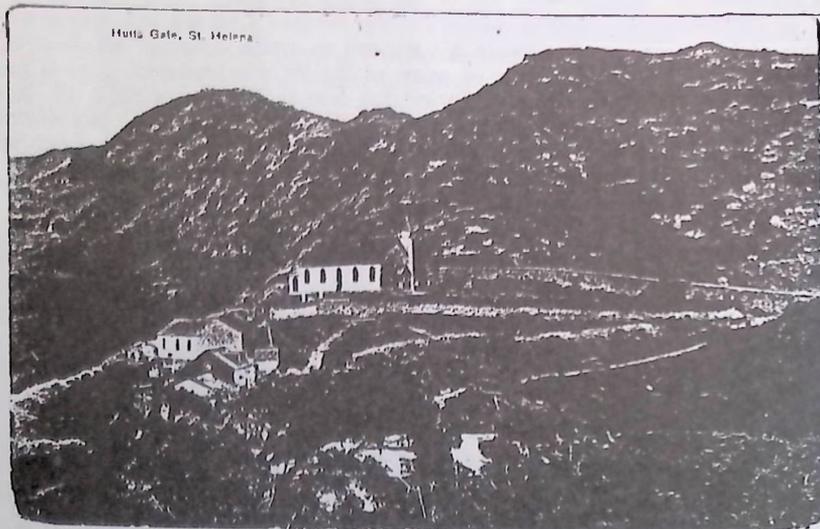


FIG 7.

Fig. 8 is a Röder view of Jacob's Ladder, Fig. 9 the same view but PPC. 22. I also have a maximum card of The Wharf, PPC. 20 and the same scene appears on a PPC. 22. We have here then three views all of which are tied to Röder cards but in different time periods. I feel sure that some members with larger collections will be able to find other examples.

The only difference on the address sides of PPCs. 23 and 24 is the stop after "St." on 24. They were probably printed at the same time but in different areas of the printing works since one is in colour, the other in black and white. A work order must have been issued as to which type should be used for the logo, but one of the typesetters chose to include the stop, the other did not. In a situation like this it is difficult to accurately place one card's appearance ahead of the other, but in my own collection PPC. 23 has a c.d.s. date of May 25th 1913 and not having a PPC. 24 I used the date which is visible on the one shown in the original article, even though it is a U.K. c.d.s. of February 23rd 1915. One should always keep in mind when evaluating Jackson's PPCs that some were probably on sale concurrently, he would not have waited for his stock of any one to run out before re-ordering.

An unexpected bonus came with the discovery of the source of Jackson's PPCs and the numbering system of the Röder Company. This was the clarification of those listed in the 1986 article for PPCs. 19, 20 and 21, then thought of as belonging exclusively to Jackson

FIG 8

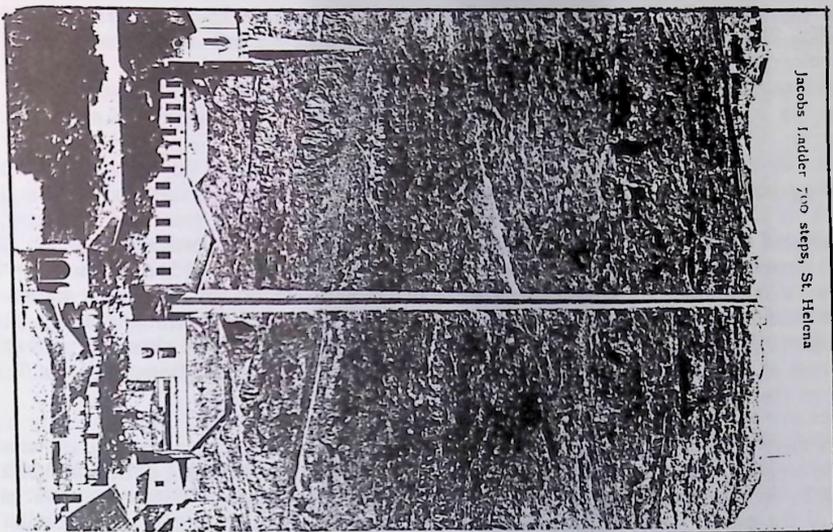
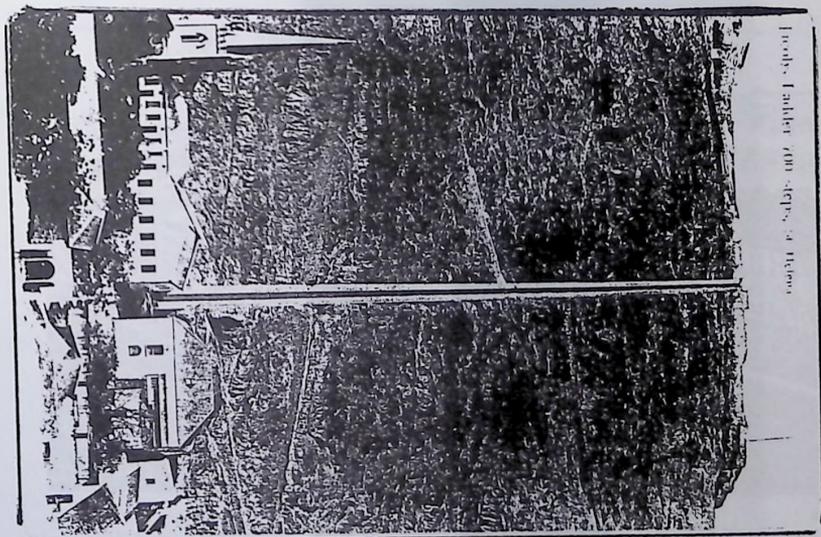


FIG 9



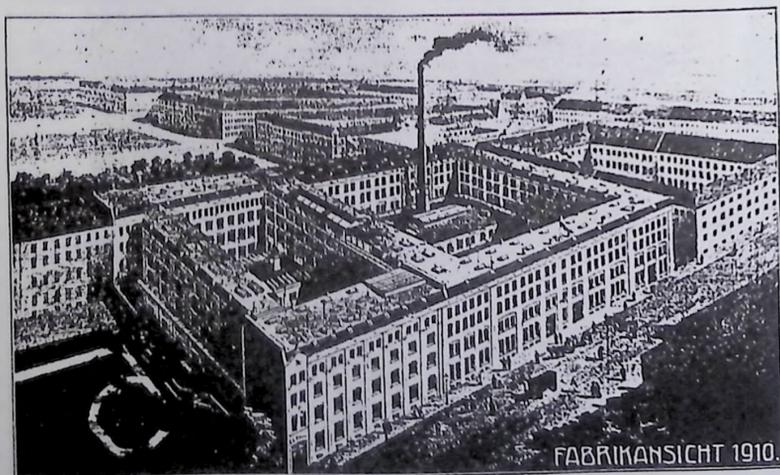
from the lowest to the highest within those quoted. This is not the case as I found out during my correspondence with another Röder researcher, only those listed below were allotted to him:-

PPC. 19	Prefix number 155/1014** and 155/2042**
PPC. 20	Prefix number 155/1493** and 155/2042**
PPC. 21	No prefix number. 1465**, 1780** and 1781**.

The stars represent the last two digits of a specific card.

Two photocopies of other PPCs each with the 155/ prefix number were sent to me, one, 155/112751 depicted a native house in Manila, Phillipines, the other, 155/109185 showed a beach party on St. Kilda. These two cards were printed by Röder for the W.T. Pater, Co printers and stationers of Melbourne, Australia, who by the end of 1904 advertised a stock of three quarters of a million PPCs on 80,000 different subjects in 10,000 sets, very possible including some of St. Helena. Only one thing so far has eluded identification, and that is the monogram on the left side of the stampbox of PPC. 19.

The C.G. Röder, Company printed millions of picture postcards over a period of several decades, the scope of its business was worldwide. It was founded by Carl Gottlieb Röder in 1874 primarily for the printing of sheet music, books and magazines. With the upsurge in popularity of the picture postcard as a collectors item, a craze which began much earlier in Europe than in Britain, these too were added to its line of products. As the years passed the Company expanded, opening branches in Berlin, Vienna, Budapest, Paris and in 1900, London. A print of the parent factory taken from one of its letterheads is shown in Fig. 10.



Leipziger Fabrikgebäude der Firma C. G. Röder, G. u. b. H.

FIG 10

Photography was Jackson's hobby at which he was able to turn a profit, yet not depend on it for a living. By today's standards he would be considered a 'freelancer' many of his photographs appearing in the Eastern Telegraph Company's house magazine "THE ZODIAC". His work hangs in the local museum, and he is known to have done photographic work around the various flax operations in their heyday, and the local sports events and social happenings were not neglected by him.

Thomas Jackson died on April 9th 1918, after a short but unspecified illness. His obituary was printed in the Church Diocesan Magazine of April of that year and the legal notices for the disposal of his estate published in the St. Helena Guardian on April 16th 1918. Figs. 11 and 12. Little is known about Jackson, most of it is in his obituary as far as his life on St. Helena. He was born in Durham, England about 1840 and before emigrating to St. Helena took a course in pharmacy arriving on the Island sometime in the 1860s where he went into business, combining his profession with that of a general store proprietor. He was twice married, his first wife, Mary Ann died in January, 18887 and two children from the union both died at the age of three months, M.R. in 1869 and E.E. in 1870.

His second wife Emily Louise Warren well known for her work in teaching the women of the Island the art of lacemaking. As E.L. Jackson she was the author of "ST. HELENA. THE HISTORIC ISLAND" published in 1903 which contained many photographs of the Island and the Boer Prisoners confined there. Thomas Jackson probably contributed a good number of them.



Mr. T. Jackson.

WE regret to have to announce the death of Mr. Thomas Jackson on April 9 in Jamestown, at the good old age of 78.

He had occupied in business in town for over half a century, extended a new Pharmacy about fifteen years ago, and added to his other work the useful profession of a dentist. He was one of the most pleasant of conversationalists, and had a well stored mind. Probably few were aware of his comparatively great age.

The funeral was at St. Paul's Cathedral, and taken by Canon Porter, assisted by Rev. O. F. S. Wood.

Our sympathy is extended to Mrs. Jackson, and his relatives at home and abroad.

FIG 11.

Notice.

The undersigned has this day given full power of Attorney to Edwin James Warren respecting all business transactions whatsoever, including purchases, sales and collection of outstanding debts.

E. L. JACKSON.

16th April, 1918,

Notice.

In the Estate of the late THOMAS JACKSON.

All Creditors and Debtors in the above Estate are hereby required respectively to lodge their claims with and pay their debts to the undersigned.

E. J. WARREN,

Holding power of Attorney for

E. L. Jackson, Executrix.

BARGAINS.

FOR SALE
BY PUBLIC AUCTION

Outside the Store of the late

Mr. T. Jackson

From 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. to-day.

A variety of Articles :

Hats, Collars, Shirts, Bottled
Fruits, Tinware, Glassware,

and a

little Furniture.

Terms—CASH.

FIG 12

The following is a list of known numbers on Jackson's cards and the picture on them:-

Prefix number 155/...101461. NAPOLEON'S TOMB. 101462. NAPOLEON'S HOUSE,
LONGWOOD. 101466. JACOB'S LADDER. 101469, JAMESTOWN
ST. HELENA.

155/...149365. NAPOLEON'S TOMB. 149371. JAMESTOWN. 149375.
SANDY BAY. 149425. LACE WORKERS. 149426. LACE WORKERS
204293. JACOB'S LADDER, UPPER JAMESTOWN. 204294
JAMESTOWN LOOKING NORTH, NAPOLEON'S HOUSE, LONGWOOD
104295. JACOB'S LADDER. 104296. JAMESTOWN LOOKING
NORTH. 146538. THE WHARF.

No Prefix. 146536. JAMESTOWN LOOKING NORTH. 146538. FISH MARKET.
146540. DIANA'S PEAK.

No prefix. 178040. LONGWOOD PLAIN. 178043. JACOB'S LADDER 700 STEPS, ST. HELENA. 178045. REMOVAL OF NAPOLEON'S BODY FROM ST. HELENA, OCTOBER, 15. 1840. 178146. NAPOLEON'S TOMB.

The titles given for 204294 are unusual, Jackson's cards are normally single views. It may be a typographical error in the original article, but if any member has this card in his/her collection I would appreciate a photocopy for the record. Views on cards without numbers are:-

PPC. 14. NAPOLEON'S TOMB. ST. HELENA.
PPC. 15. JAMESTOWN. ST. HELENA...GOVERNMENT HOUSE. ST. HELENA. REMOVAL OF NAPOLEON'S BODY. ST. HELENA. OCTOBER, 1829.
PPC. 22. JACOB'S LADDER. 700 STEPS. ST. HELENA..DIANA'S PEAK.2701 ft ABOVE SEA LEVEL...THE WHARF.ST. HELENA. (RETOUCHED SKY).

NOTE: The date given for the removal of Napoleon's body is erroneous

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Death notice of Thomas Jackson also reported in the Causerie column of the St. Helena Observer of April. 5th. 1918.
8. Disposal of Jackson estate. St. Helena Observer. May. 4th. 1918.
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Special thanks to Trevor Hearl who supplied the biographical information on Thomas Jackson, he is Comstock lode of the Island's history and to Ms. Maureen Stevens for researching the clippings on Thomas Jackson.

"THE POSTCARD ALBUM" is published by Helfried Luers, Rastede, Germany at irregular intervals during the year.

List of Jackson PPCs 14-23 with measurements.

Table 1. Descriptions of St. Helena U. P. U.
Postal Cards and Post Cards.

 A = Length of "UNION POSTALE UNIVERSELLE"
 B = Length of "ST. HELENA"
 C = Length of "POST CARD"
 D = Length of "THE ADDRESS ONLY TO BE WRITTEN ON THIS SIDE"

Type	A (mm.)	B (mm.)	C (mm.)	D (mm.)
S/L PPC14	60.5	27.5	37.0	83.0
" PPC15 (b)	60.5	27.5	37.0	83.0
" PPC16 (d)	67.0	29.0	56.0	(c)
" PPC17 (e)	67.0	29.0	56.0	(c)
" PPC18 (f)	67.0	29.0	56.0	(c)
" PPC19 (g)	56.0	23.0	41.0	(c)
" PPC20 (h)	50.0	25.0	34.5	(c)
" PPC21 (i)	56.0	23.0	41.0	(c)
" PPC22 (j)	61.0	28.0	38.0	(c)
" PPC23 (k)	58.0	25.0	41.0	(c)

 (a) With stop. (b) Picture in color. (c) Phrase absent. (d) Stamp area reads "Made in Germany / Stamp / here " and "155/" followed by a six-digit number, see Figure 22. (e) Stamp area reads "Made in Germany / Stamp / here " with a number below that phrase, see Figure 23. (f) Stamp area reads "Stamp / here " with a monogram and small "155 /" followed by a number in larger type below, see Figure 24. (g) Stamp area reads "Made in Germany / Stamp here " see Figure 25. (h) Stamp area reads "Stamp / here / Made in Germany" see Figure 26. (i) Stamp area reads "Made in Germany / Stamp here " (j) Stamp area reads "Stamp / here " see Figure 28. (k) Stamp area reads "Stamp here. / Printed / in / Germany." see Figure 29.

FLAWS ON THE 1922 ASCENSION OVERPRINTS

by Bernard Hughes

I've been asked: Are any flaws common to the St. Helena 1912-16/1922 definitives and the 1922 Ascension overprints. As far as I know there aren't, but perhaps someone else knows better.

Ascension's 1922 overprints were a special printing, no existing stock of St. Helena stamps was used. All the Ascension stamps except the 1/- were on Script CA watermarked paper, which St. Helena used only for the single colour 1922 trio. So the basic stamp, unoverprinted, exists with the correct watermark for the 1d, 1½d, 3d and 1/- values, but not the ½d, 2d, 3d, 8d, 2/- and 3/- values (no 2½d value was issued by Ascension). It is said that some St. Helena stamps were forged with the overprint, though I have never heard of an example, and the watermark would easily show they were forgeries.

The Wharf and Government House vignettes were first used on the 1903 Edward V11 set for St. Helena, and were getting old by 1922. Even the George V head frames had been in use since 1912. I have never seen any suggestion that the plates were rechromed, as seems to have happened with the Badge vignette in 1927. So it is not surprising that most flaws found on the Ascension set fall into two categories, both associated with worn plates and often semi-constant rather than constant. The first were caused by bits of dirt adhering to the plate, causing coloured flaws. The second were caused by wear on the plate, leaving a white area on the stamp where ink has not picked up properly. Since so few sheets of the higher values were sold, these flaws are recorded mostly on the lower values. I have never seen any suggestion that any can be found on the unoverprinted stamps! The best, and most likely to be constant, is the 2d "White Line through POS of POSTAGE" which is listed in *Gibbons Part One* nowadays. By the time the ascension set was printed, some St. Helena Badge stamps were already current, others appeared in February 1923. I do not think there can have been any St. Helena reprints of the 1912-16/1922 stamps later than the Ascension overprints, which were printed around August 1922.

1,000 sheets of each value were ordered, which seems very odd, since it can never have been likely that each value would sell equally. Dealers particularly wanted ½d stamps, perhaps collectors of the day liked to have a single cheap stamp from a new territory. Most commercial mail, such as there was, used 2d stamps. Demand for high values was mainly from collectors for complete sets, but parcels needed shilling values, and passport fees of 5/- were usually paid by stamps. In late 1923, a survey of stocks of these stamps on hand on St. Helena and Ascension (see Philip Beale's WASC Study Paper *Ascension Island's Post Office 1922-24 - Control Transferred to St. Helena*) suggested only 139 sheets (60 stamps per sheet - 5 rows of 12 stamps) of the ½d remained, but under 100 sheets of the 2/6 and 3/- had been sold.

John Attwood's book *Ascension - The Stamps & Postal History* lists the main flaws on page 25. Apart from the first of these mentioned below, all are specific to a single value. I have not done any research at the Crown Agents records to see if vignettes for several values in the same colour (black) might have been printed together: my impression is that generally this did not happen for security reasons. In theory, the ½d, 2d and 1/6 vignettes, and the

8d, 2/- and 3/- vignettes **COULD** have been printed as single exercises, but this does not mean they were! Incidentally, this issue has jubilee lines only in the colour of the frames: on the Badge issue, jubilee lines in the vignette colour are most useful in positioning marginal stamps, but they don't appear on these stamps!

One flaw is listed by Attwood as appearing on the ½d, 2d, 3d and 1/- - *Frame break of vignette below "T" of "GOVERNMENT"*. He positions this as No 51 (R5/3) on the 2d, but other values are not positioned. So he must have seen a positional block of the 2d with the flaw at R5/3: - I have a block of the ½d with the flaw in this position as well. Evidence of constancy? Well, perhaps. But I have also seen a sheet of the ½d with no flaw at R5/3, but an identical flaw at R5/1 (Stamp 59)! This makes it hard to be sure about the position of the flaw on the 3d or 1/-. I have a bottom marginal 1/-, this could be R5/3 or R5/11, though I am inclined to think it is R5/3. The flaw on the 3d that I have is much less pronounced, either because the blue ink spread better than the black, or because it is an early state - or it could be another coincidence and not R5/3 at all. It is the only example of the flaw on the 3d I recall ever having seen, and is ex-Fryer.

On the ½d Attwood also lists *Malformed "E" of "HOUSE" and Full Stop after "HOUSE"*. This is a state of the flaw found on R1/12 (No 12), which varies considerably in extent, sometimes being as Attwood describes, sometimes a large white splodge obscures the E altogether. On other sheets R1/12 appears quite normal, so this is only a semi-constant flaw, albeit a large one.



1/2d with St. Helena local
SPECIMEN handstamp and
Malformed E of HOUSE
R1/12 (Stamp 12)



2d Long T in GOVERNMENT
R5/3 (Stamp 51) - probably!

Attwood's other ½d flaws, *White Line joining Bottom of "T" and Full Stop of "ST"*. and *"Deeper "V" in "GOVERNMENT"* I have never seen, and they did not appear to be present on a sheet of the ½d which I examined.

On the 1d, Attwood lists the *Cannon Flaw*, a green projection from the cliff face. I have a complete sheet of the 1d which shows two such flaws, a small one at R5/5 and a longer one lower down the cliff at R4/10 with a "cannonball" fired from it. Not in the sheet I have, I have seen other "cannons" in slightly different positions. The sheet includes a similar projection at the top of the cliff generally called a "hut" (R3/10). Then there are numerous specks in the sky of various sizes, generally called "cannonball" flaws: similar flaws on Government House vignettes are less often seen but are generally called "Bird" Flaws. Coloured lines and dots seem to be particularly prevalent on the 1d, but I doubt they are constant.



1d Cannon flaw
R5/5 (Stamp 53)



1d Cannon and
Cannonball flaw
R4/10 (Stamp 46)



1d Hut Flaw R3/10
(Stamp 34)

On the 1½d, Attwood lists *Missing Bar to E in right "POSTAGE"*, a better flaw than the 1d ones, but one which varies somewhat, sometimes there is no trace of the bar, sometimes a trace remains. It is found on R3/11 (No 35) and I have never heard of a positional block without it - though only a minority of the 997 sheets printed will have been sold, as 732 still remained in stock in late 1923.



1 1/2d Missing Bar to E
of POSTAGE R3/11
(Stamp 35) with Crown
Agents SPECIMEN ovpt.

On the 2d, which sold better than the 1½d, there are two well known flaws which may be constant. The best flaw in the set is line through "POS" of "POSTAGE" on R3/6 (No30) and nearby at R3/10 (No 34) is the *Blot on Scroll*, another clear flaw.



2d Line Through POSTAGE
Gibbons SG 4a R3/6
(Stamp 30)



2d Scroll Flaw -
Spot behind King's
Head R3/10
Stamp 34)

These flaws on the 1½d and 2d are frame flaws. The only other flaw is the *Extra Boat* flaw on the 8d, still unpositioned - a black rectangular mark on the left of the vignette just above the railing. Several examples exist, but I do not have one myself, and I do not have an illustration available.

The issue is poorly printed and abounds with other marks or smudged bits of the design, but which are constant or semi-constant is hard to detect!

The ½d value can be found with reversed watermark, probably from a single sheet. One catalogue used to list the 2d with reversed watermark, but I think this was a mistake for the ½d.

Ascension's 1922 issue provides a number of other possible areas for study. Although the catalogue shows the issue date as 2nd November 1922, no stamp or cover that early is known, loose stamps can be found postmarked 1st December 1922, but no covers with even that date are known to me. G.B. stamps postmarked 1st December 1922 are also found, but again no covers, only pieces from envelopes which show Ascension addresses, even though there was no internal post (or any need for an internal post). Was this set really available as early as 2nd November 1922? Another puzzle is that Philip Beale (op cit) records that St. Helena handled large numbers of orders for the Ascension stamps both mint and used. How were the latter supplied - dealers would hardly want ascension stamps postmarked St. Helena, and though the stamps were valid on St. Helena, they are hard to find with St. Helena postmarks other than 14th December 1922? Is this part of the reason there are several different Ascension postmarks found in use 1922-24?

One link between this set and St. Helena is that it is the only Ascension issue found with the local St. Helena **SPECIMEN** handstamp, apparently applied to a small number of complete sets (I've never heard of any odd values of the Ascension set) given out locally on a complimentary basis. Being a handstamp, errors (double overprints) are known as well. One of my illustrations shows the local **SPECIMEN** handstamp, another the smaller, more regular Crown Agents **SPECIMEN** overprint.

IMMIGRATION OFFICE HANDSTAMP

by Robert Richardson

Illustrated below is a St. Helena KGV1 5/- definitive stamp with a large double oval handstamp dated 1946 for what appears to be the "IMMIGRATION OFFICE". The Immigration Fee at that time was 5/-, today it is £11, that's inflation for you. Has any member got similar stamps with this handstamp in their collections?



LIFE ON THE ISLAND OF ASCENSION

(Extracts from the diary of General Simon Fraser, Royal Marines, written about 1843.)

We had been eagerly watching for the first glimpse of our new home. In the moonlight it looked so beautiful that we thought all the stories we had heard of its discomforts must have been untrue, or all events much exaggerated; but we soon found that the first glance had been deceptive, and in the morning, and on closer inspection it did not appear quite such an enchanted island as when etheralized by the moon's soft tender light.

In 1501, it was a desert cinder, without a single inhabitant, either man or beast. It was called Ascension on account of its having been discovered on Ascension Day, the discoverer being Joao de Nova Galezo, a Portuguese navigator. It lies between Africa and Brazil in South Atlantic Ocean; and is seven and a half miles long and six miles wide. The Island is of volcanic origin, and presents a surface of conical hills 200 feet high and upwards.

Of these, no fewer than 24 have craters, but they emit neither fire no smoke. Desolation is stamped upon these hills, with one exception. Between the hills are valleys strewn with various volcanic substances. In the eastern part rises a double-peaked mountain, and this, from its verdant appearance is rightly named the "Green Mountain".

Such then was to be, for some time, the home of our party of Royal Marines, now arrived from the Transport. We were landed early in the morning, by means of small boats. The entrance to the harbour is protected by a fort, in which are a few guns, and also a supply of small arms. Georgetown was the next object to meet our view on shore, it is built in the form of a square, and here are the quarters of the married soldiers, the single men occupying the barracks, a large building encircled with a wide verandah. There are small cottages for the Officers quarters, and two hospitals, one of the latter being exclusively for fever patients; and these are all the buildings that constitute the small garrison. The commandant's cottage was on the slope of a hill, from whence orders could be signalled to the Green Mountain. The black men's quarters were all built near the shore, and were called Krootown.

Every house was surrounded by a wide verandah, which was an absolute necessity in that climate, being the only means of making any dwelling habitable. The houses themselves were built of stone from the shore; the sand consists of finely pulverized shells, or coral, which becomes firm by the action of the waves, and becomes in time susceptible of a clear polish like marble. Our cottage had neither fireplace nor window-glass in any of the rooms, but the latter was scarcely required - there was no change of season at Ascension, the heat was intense all the year round; so that the window places were always open during the day, and closed at night by venetian shutters, kept as open as possible to admit the air. Our walls were whitewashed, instead of being papered, or painted, so that such venomous insects such as centipedes and scorpions might be easily seen on them; and for the same reason carpets were also avoided, and very light matting used in their stead.

Our baggage having arrived we soon had the furniture and our other possessions arranged, and the rooms looked more home-like.

The kitchen was built separately, and at some little distance from the house, and there our black cook reigned triumphantly.

The black men employed on the island as cooks and servants, were, for the most part, liberated Africans. Only the Marine Officers had a white man for personal attendance in addition to the cook. The black people on the island had been rescued from slavers, and landed at Sierra Leone. It was of their own free will they engaged to stay at Ascension for three years, and were then replaced by others for a like period. Their great ambition was to save money enough to buy wives on their return, but they were only allowed one wife on the island. Sometimes they would send for a wife to Sierra Leone, marrying women they had never seen before.

Our first cook had sent for a wife in this way, just after he came to us. On his wedding day he came up to the house dressed in gorgeous fashion, pure white trousers, bright blue coat with brass buttons, two very gay coloured waistcoats, both being displayed to the best advantage, a brilliant silk neck-tie, in which yellow predominated, and out of each coat pocket appeared the corner of a gorgeous coloured silk pocket handkerchief. His bride was attired in a white dress, which contrasted strangely with her dusky skin, and was relieved only by the brilliant colouring of her head-gear. As there was neither church nor clergyman on the island, the marriage ceremony was performed by the Commandant of the Marines who was legally empowered to marry and to christen.

At this time Ascension was the headquarters of the West African squadron, which was engaged in the prevention of the slave trade; and the hospitals contained a good many invalids from the various ships.

On Sundays we all assembled in the verandah of the barracks, that being the largest, and the Commandant or adjutant read prayers and a sermon. Just before we left, however, the foundation of a church was laid.

There being no shops we were dependent upon passing ships for most of our household necessaries such as tea, sugar, butter and flour. Champagne could sometimes be procured from the French ships, and also brandy; but neither wine nor spirits could be landed, without especial permission from the Commandant.

Water was very scarce, it was kept locked up in tanks, and a small quantity doled out to each family, according to its numbers. Officers and men shared alike, the commandant receiving no more than the private, and this same rule was strictly followed in the distribution of the fish and turtle. At a certain hour the water tanks were again locked up for twenty-four hours. These tanks were filled by the heavy rainfall which occurred two or three times a year, pipes being laid to receive it, and the verandahs around the different buildings being literally surrounded by every available tub, basin and jug, and these were filled from the roof with the precious fluid.

How often we used to wish for Scotland's bonnie burnies. One season the rain failed, and we had to procure water from St. Helena. Clothes had to be washed in sea water, and there was at that date nothing known of the condensing apparatus, or any such means in supplying us in our need, and great joy when, after two months, our kind commodore arrived, bringing

with him a barrel of water for every family on the island, and it may be imagined how thankfully this gift was received by all.

The happiest time for us was when the Commodore's frigate was anchored in the Bay. During his stay he used to look after the comfort of all in our little garrison, and do all he could for us. He came about four times in the year, and as other ships from the squadron came at the same time to receive orders, we used to have a gay time. The commodore used to organise parties to the Green Mountain, and the ladies used to accompany us upon these pleasant excursions, which we all enjoyed. The Commodore was our best and kindest friend.

All the mason, wright, carpenter and smith work was done by the Marines, who had learned these trades previous to their enlistment; and very clever workmen they proved themselves.

Both men and officers wore suits of white duck, and broad Panama hats, as a protection against the sun. Ascension being so near the Equator the sun always rose at 6a.m. and set at 6p.m., there being no twilight.

It was intensely hot throughout the day, but the moonlight nights were refreshingly cool, and the light was so clear and brilliant that we could sit in the verandah and read, as easily as by daylight. The insects in Ascension were both troublesome and dangerous, scorpions and centipedes being numerous. My sister-in-law had a very narrow escape from one of the latter, whose bite is often fatal. The creature had crawled up her back, and got into the plait of her hair. On entering the room I fortunately chanced to see it in time, for, at that moment it was erecting itself preparatory to its venomous bite, but quickly snatching up a pair of scissors, I went behind her, grasped the centipede with them, and drew it out of the plait. Had the creature bitten my sister-in-law on the head she would have had but little chance of recovery.

There were large cockroaches which, though harmless, proved very disagreeable, for they imparted a strong odour to everything they touched. Streams of ants too, used to pay us regular and repeated visits, entering by the front door, marching through the dining room, and finally wending their way to one or other of the bed-rooms, and at last making their exit through the window place. These insect marches were conducted with a regularity that was surprising. At first we attempted to get rid of them, but found it quite impossible, so we were obliged to let them have their way. Mosquitos were furious, and unwearied in their attacks, and their peculiar hum was very irritating. Sleep was impossible unless when quite surrounded by mosquito curtains. But one of the greatest and most trying pests of all was the common house-fly; they were round us at all times in myriads. Neither breakfast nor dinner service could be set down until the very moment of use, and every glass or tumbler had a cover which was only removed for a moment and then replaced; reading or writing was a most difficult task, as the flt-switcher was in constant use. When the lamp was lighted was our only time of peace, our tormentors then beat a hasty retreat and clustering together like bees they retired to rest until morning.

One of our female servants was a young African woman, who had been brought up on the island; she had been rescued from a slaver when she was three years old. Being too young to be set on shore at Sierra Leone, she had been brought to Ascension; and successive officer's ladies had taken kindly care of her, and had given her a good, plain education. She had the instinctive love of her race for gay colours, but otherwise her ideas were entirely European. We were sorry to lose our first black cook; he was a round faced, pleasant looking man, and we all liked him; but his time being out he returned to his native land. His successor was frightful to see; from brow to chin his face was gathered in knots like the back-bone of a fish, and in addition to this he had fearful gashes across his cheeks. These, we were informed, were the marks of his tribe. His wife came to me with a formal complaint that: "Seurs beat her plenty too much, " and she "want to go in big ship to Sierra Leone."

It was with great difficulty that I at last made her understand she could not be sent from the island without her husbands consent. But at last I summoned Seurs, by ringing the large bell in the verandah. He denied the charge of "beating her plenty too much," and, enumerated all the articles of dress he had bought for her, she said indignantly that she "gib dem all back, no want dem." To which he replied most emphatically, "Him no want dem neider, dey no use, him want de money." On hearing this the wife hurried to Krootown, sold her belongings and brought back the money; her affectionate husband then gave her permission to depart whither she would, of which she speedily availed herself on the first opportunity. Seurs afterwards became very attached to us, and was even anxious to accompany us home to England; but as that could not be, he took service with our successors, and whenever any letters arrived from our friends at Ascension they contained the message that Seurs sent "his best memory" to us all. The society belonging to the Island was very limited, but we had pleasant visitors sometimes, independent of our Island garrison; convalescent officers from the hospitals, and friends from the ships in the Bay. Often in the evenings they would come in, those who were musical bringing their instruments with them; and so enlivening us with music and singing.

Hours were very early. Those who belonged to the ships had to leave at 9p.m., no boats being allowed to leave the pier-head later. Their departure was followed by that of our other guests belonging to the Island, and by ten o'clock everyone had retired to rest.

All were astir once more in the early morning at 5a.m., to enjoy a cool hour before sunrise. At one time we used to keep a number of birds, but we found they would not live in that climate for any length of time. We tried English and Cape Canaries, love birds, whydah-birds and doves of various kinds, but the most tender care could not prolong their lives. Two parrots only survived, and were brought home to England.

We had some kind friends on St. Helena whom we never saw; they used to send quantities of fruit from time to time, and wrote pressing invitations for us to visit them, but being Adjutant I could not leave the island even for a short time, so we could not avail ourselves of their kindness. One day, however, we made an excursion to Comfort Cove, by sea it was rather more than three miles distant from Ascension; we lunched previously on board the Commodore's ship. Comfort Cove is the place of quarantine for ships having had fever, or other infectious disease, on board. Near the sea is the graveyard, where those are buried who die on board the ships undergoing quarantine.

It is a peculiar spot round, and quite flat, surrounded by steep hillocks, and having only one entrance. A plant of the Madagascar rose was the only green thing visible; the flower is of a deep purple hue, and the plant grows low on the ground; it has no thorns; the want of verdure, and the bare hillocks, makes the spot look very desolate.

In spite of every precaution, fever will sometimes find its way into the garrison, and always proves fatal. Some years before we were there nearly half the officers and men fell victims to it, the Commandant being one of the first. The water on the island, in spite of careful filtering, was very unwholesome, the great heat caused incessant thirst, and brought on a feeling of lassitude and weariness. The thunderstorms on the coast were awful, but neither thunder or lightning were ever known on Ascension.

There were two fairs on the island, which were held entirely by birds, eggs being the only commodity to be obtained. These strange fairs were called "Wideawake Fair" and "Gannet Fair". The former is so named from the peculiar cry of the birds as they fly through the air., constantly repeating what sounds to the hearers like "Wideawake", "Wideawake". The fair is a level piece of ground surrounded on all sides by hills, with a few sickly looking plants of the castor-oil and Madagascar rose. Thousands of birds congregate on this spot, three times in two years. They always come here, and to no other part of the island. When they depart no one knows where they go, as they have never been seen in any other place. On approaching the fair the noise is quite deafening from the screaming of its feathered occupants. All the residents on the island, and the sailors of ships of any nation lying at anchor, are allowed to go out to the fair and bring back as many eggs as they please. Of this permission all on the island eagerly avail themselves; and, though vast numbers of eggs are carried away, up to the last there seems but little diminution of the stock. No one is allowed to fire a gun in, or near the fair, for fear of frightening away the birds. "Gannet Fair" was occupied entirely by sea birds, about the size of a goose; but their eggs were not sin so much request.

The Erebus and Terror discovery ships called at Ascension on their way home from the South Pole. Alas! as we stood on the shore and watched their departure, little did we foresee the sad fate awaiting them in the Arctic regions.

We were also honoured by a visit of the Belle Poule, which was commanded by the Prince de Joinville, son of Louis Phillippe, on which occasion the French language was in great requisition. The Prince, with some of his officers, landed at my quarters, and proved charming guests.

The first vessel that steamed from England to India, the Hindustan, remained two days at the island, on her way out, for the purpose of coaling; coals having been previously sent there for her use. The Captain was a Naval officer, an old friend of mine. We spent a most delightful day on board, the Captain's wife, who was with him on the voyage, treating us with the greatest hospitality. One great trouble to us was the irregularity with which we received letters from home, months would often pass, and then a Transport would bring several at a time. We had more chances of sending letters home, as we kept them ready, and Captains of ships calling on their homeward voyages were most kind in carrying our various despatches to England, and there posting them.

We were allowed during our stay on the Island to spend a month on Green Mountain, during which time we occupied the Mountain House, taking the whole establishment with us. The distance was seven miles, so we started very early in the morning to escape the heat.

The base of the Green Mountain is four miles from the garrison, it rises almost perpendicularly, the summit being reached by a rugged road along its side, very zig-zag and about three miles long, it is named "the ramps". It is a dangerous road in some parts, and one morning the mountain cart fell over the edge, and the two poor mules were killed.

The gate at the top is always guarded by a Marine sentry; and a we--poor dwellers in the perpetual heat, dust and desolation below--were rejoiced at the sight of what seemed to us like a paradise; the sweet cool air was so refreshing, and round the mountain cottage were clustered the only trees to be found on the whole Island.

The scenery at the mountain is very beautiful, especially to those who admire the bold grandeur of rocks and rugged hills. In the distance is seen the crater, known as "The Devil's Punch Bowl", also the famous locality called "Bottle Point", which is most difficult to reach, many who attempted it being obliged to return disappointed and un-successful. The spot is so called from some adventurous person, in the year 1824, having placed a bottle there for the reception of visiting cards.

Our party daily enjoyed some delightful rambles. There was a beautiful glen which could only be reached by going through a long dark tunnel, high in surrounding it on all sides. The glen was bright with flowers of the Indian cress climbing up the sides of the ravine; and how sweet the gorse and simple daisies seemed to us, reminding us of home and the old Country.

There was a stove in the mess-room, but we never cared to have it lighted, the coolness being a perfect luxury to us. Some natural caves were said to have been the storing places where pirate had, in the days of old, before the Island was inhabited, hidden their plunder. If such was the case, the labour and danger of dragging it up the mountain-side must have been great.

The most pleasant times of life seem to end soonest. Our month of leave passed away all too quickly, and the day came round when we had to set out on our return to the garrison, and the heat and discomforts of the plain. We left the Green Mountain with keen regret, but with gratitude for the renewed health and strength we had derived from our delightful sojourn there.

Our friends in the garrison were pleased to have us back again, and said that the Island had appeared quite deserted during our absence. At this time there arrived the medals for those who had distinguished themselves in the war of the Levant. They were sent to me as the only officer on the Island entitled to one.

I may here mention that the whole of the buildings were built solely by the small detachment of Royal Marines, comprising the garrison; two large hospitals, a large barracks and fort, Officers Quarters and Married Men's Quarters, and they were the admiration of all strangers who visited the Island.

The scarcity of water in the garrison was greatly felt at times; during one season no water came from Green Mountain, and our tank was getting very empty, so that we had to kill of all our extra live stock. No rain had fallen for a great length of time, and whenever a dark cloud was seen, every piece of crockery about the house was brought out and ranged along in front of the verandah, so that we might catch any rain that fell, but none came. When we had reached our worst strait, however, our kind Commodore Foote, arrived with a supply of water on board, and a large water tank followed, to our great relief and delight.

Generally the sea came in in moderate rolls, but at other times with very little notice it came in in huge rollers. On one occasion the Purser of one of our ships came to me to request leave to land a large quantity of coal and other stores on the wharf for a day or two. I told him it would be very dangerous to do so, as the rollers came in often very rapidly and with great force, quite without notice. At this remark he only laughed and said, "Oh I will run the risk". Accordingly for two days, stores of all kinds were landed and piled up along the wharf; but on the third day, about midnight, the garrison was roused by the ringing of the great bell and roll of the drum. The waves came suddenly rolling in with even more than their usual force, without the least warning, and by ten o'clock the next day (Sunday) everything was swept entirely away, the rollers were rising mountain high and the wharf washed clean and clear. No one could land, and the poor Purser could only stand on the deck of his ship and from a distance view his loss.

Not a breath of air was blowing, and a short distance out to sea the water was quite smooth. The cause of this strange phenomenon, like the coming and going of the turtle, remains hidden from our knowledge; from no quarter comes the slightest breeze, all is calm and still outside the rollers.

On another occasion, a very fine Merchant ship with a valuable cargo, coming in for a supply of water, and commanded by Captain Hamlin, of, and bound for Greenock, Scotland, was totally lost close to the landing place. The captain had been there before this occasion, therefore nothing but fool-hardiness or gross carelessness could have made him take his ship inside the danger buoy, and right up upon the coral rocks, where she stuck fast.

The Sergant-Major of Marines (who was the smartest non-commissioned officer I have ever known) with our men did all they could to save the ship, but she soon rolled her masts overboard and began to leak.

The Captain seeing her lost state formally handed the ship and cargo over to the Commandant of the Island. To save the valuable cargo, every spare man on the island was at once set to work; from daylight until darkness set in they worked hard, and fortunately the whole of the immense and valuable cargo was safely landed and housed in the Fort, only one bag of coffee getting a dip in the sea.

The Captain and his crew struck work, and were housed in a tent on the beach. Not long afterwards three ships arrived to take home the cargo, all of which our men re-shipped; they expected to have reaped a considerable sum as salvage money, and for their good and faithful service, but not a farthing did either officers or men receive, nor even a thanks for their trouble. In due time my term of service having expired I was relieved, and we bad adieu for ever to the Island of Ascension.

PRESS RELEASE

CURNOW SHIPPING LTD
ST HELENA LINE LIMITED

ENGINE FAILURE 5 NOVEMBER 1999

Following the breakdown of the RMS St Helena at the start of her southbound voyage from Cardiff, the results of the extensive technical appraisal of the situation were considered by the interested parties at a meeting held on 16 November 1999 in order to consider the options available to address the engine failure. Those in attendance were representatives from this company as owners, HM Government's Department for International Development, the St Helena Government United Kingdom Representative, the Managers of the service, Curnow Shipping Ltd, our technical consultants and the engine manufacturers. It was noted that the manufacture of the replacement crankshaft was a major engineering project and delivery could not be guaranteed before 8 January 2000 which would indicate a firm date for return to operations for the vessel of 10 February 2000. A temporary repair was not considered appropriate as it could not be effected in sufficient time to enable the vessel to meet the needs of the Island.

It has, therefore, been necessary to make urgent alternative arrangements for the transport of goods and passengers to St Helena and we are able to confirm the following arrangements.

A cargo inducement has been offered to the owners of the "THORSRIVER" to deliver up to 70 containers of cargo to St Helena from Cape Town, Departing on 28 November and arriving at St Helena on 3 December 1999.

The "ELIZABETH BOYE" has been chartered to carry cargo from Europe and will depart from Brest on 25 November arriving in St Helena on 13 December 1999 having called at Tenerife and Ascension Island en route. She will then sail on to Cape Town to deliver cargo for Tristan da Cunha.

A passenger vessel the "LASON" has been chartered to carry passengers to St Helena and will depart from Malaga on 7 December to arrive at St Helena on 19 December 1999 after which the vessel is timetabled to undertake an inter-island shuttle to Ascension Island, returning to St Helena before Christmas. The Managers will be in contact with passengers to make arrangements for them to join the vessel at Malaga.

A revised sailing schedule for the entire period until the RMS St Helena is able to return to her published schedule will be released in the early part of next week.

As always, the provision of a safe service to the Island has been a major consideration in reaching the decisions above and will remain the objective of this company in reaching compromise arrangements during the period the vessel is out of operation.

Background

The RMS St Helena provides the only liner shipping service to the South Atlantic Island of St Helena. It is owned on behalf of the Government of St Helena by St Helena Line Limited, which has appointed Curnow Shipping Limited as vessel managers and passenger agents. The service is funded in part by subsidy from HM Government's Department For International Development.

For further information contact:

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HAK 19.11.99

(Circulated by St Helena Catalogue - information obtained from Web site)

IASON

Schedule for South Atlantic Charter

Pircaus	d	Thu. 02 Dec.	17:00
Gibraltar	c	Tue. 07 Dec	TBA
Las Palmas	c	Thu. 09 Dec	TBA
Ascension	c	Thu. 16 Dec	12:30-22:00
St Helena	c	Sun. 19 Dec	06:00-12:00
Ascension	c	Tue. 21 Dec	13:30-22:00
St Helena	c	Fri. 24 Dec	06:00-15:00
Cape Town	c	Thu. 30 Dec	07:00-20:00
St Helena	c	Wed 05 Jan	06:00-12:00
Ascension	c	Fri. 07 Jan	13:30-22:00
St Helena	c	Mon 10 Jan	06:00-12:00
Ascension	c	Wed 12 Jan	13:30-22:00
St Helena	c	Sat. 15 Jan	06:00-12:00
Ascension	c	Mon. 17 Jan	13:30-22:00
Las Palmas	c	Mon 24 Jan	TBA
Gibraltar	a	Thu 27 Jan	TBA