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The Journal of the West Africa Study Circle





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# Editorial

Welcome to the first *Cameo* of 2009 and to new volume 11. If I have compiled it by the time this issue is posted, the volume 10 index should be enclosed. There are a few small innovations with this issue, the most obvious of which is an increase to 72 pages to try to absorb the welcome increase in size, numbers and content of your contributions. The paper is now more matt than previously; the technical reason for this is that the gloss paper has to be thicker than matt because it is more "see-through" and the stapled binding requires us to use lighter-weight paper for the greater number of pages to stay within the maximum thickness that can be handled by the stapling machine. Two other innovations have been suggested by Dr Simon Heap and adopted; we are now providing on this page the next copy deadline, and at the bottom of every page we show the issue date.

This issue has a strong WWII theme as a result of a very active on-line community of members and non-members researching the air routes to from and via West Africa. There are more of this series of articles by John Wilson and Bob Wilcsek I have had to hold back, along with significant contributions from Marc Parren, Peter Wingent (on Elders Colonial Airways), Michael Wright and Jeremy Martin. I can only apologise to you all and thank you for your patience.

Rob May

**The next issue will be edited by me, datelined June 2009,  
and the copy deadline is 31 May 2009**



## Editorial Policy

The editors have the final say over content in *Cameo* in the interests of balance and relevance to the readership. Space in each *Cameo* may be limited as compared with the volume of material submitted by all the authors. The editors retain discretion over punctuation, spelling, grammar, use of colour for illustrations and whether to reduce the size of illustrations to fit the space available, but should not change wording, delete text or delete illustrations without full knowledge and permission of the author. If the editors consider amendment or deletion of text or removal of illustrations to be necessary they will discuss it with contributors. If contributors are then unhappy with proposed changes they can withdraw their items.

Rob May / Barry Burns

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**Scope :** The West Africa Study Circle studies the postage stamps and postal history of The Gambia, Gold Coast/ Ghana, the Nigerias, Sierra Leone, Camerouns & Togo together with the islands of St. Helena, Ascension, Tristan da Cunha & Gough and the British Postal Agencies in Madeira, Tenerife, St. Vincent and Fernando Po.

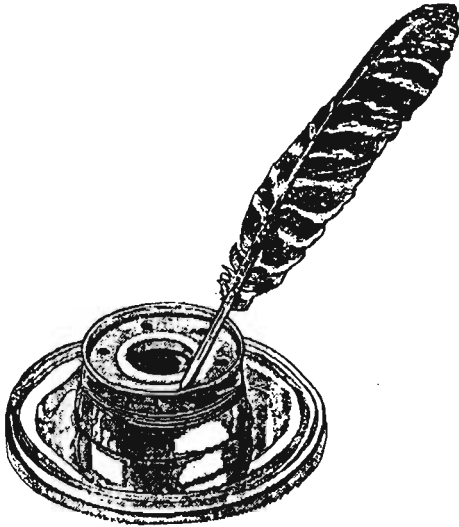
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### Front Cover

Postcard from Koforidua, Gold Coast to UK by airmail in January 1942, by the Pan Am Trans – Atlantic route, courtesy of Peter Wingent. See page 41  
Part of a collaborative study of WWII airmails to, from and via West Africa,  
which continues in this issue.

## Letters to the Editor



*Should anyone wish to reply to any of these letters, please do so through the Cameo editor in the first instance to enable a consolidated follow-up to be published in conjunction with the study editors as appropriate.*

*Correspondence on any subject is always most appreciated. Any form of contact is welcome, whether by letter, telephone or email.*

*The joint editors' addresses are listed on the front page of all Cameo issues.*

*Rob May & Barry Burns*

### Content of Cameo

Dear Rob & Barry,

The editorial comment in the October 2008 issue of Cameo regarding the shift of emphasis towards “more modern material” is surely nothing more than a reflection on the passage of time. When I began collecting West Africa stamps in the 1960s, I was studying material from the Victorian period that was 70 years old. We are now studying material, albeit more postal history than stamps, from the 1940s that is coming up for 70 years old – nothing has changed in the time elapsed.

However, what has significantly changed is the relative ease by which collectors and researchers can communicate with each other, and this has led to an increase in the rapidity of appearance of well-researched texts on any subject; indeed as you have commented, there has been a minor flood of articles being submitted to Cameo and other journals on the topic of wartime trans-Atlantic airmail between Africa and other countries in the western hemisphere. Gone are the days of letters from one collector to another, carried by post. These have been replaced by the electronic transmission of text and images to many recipients simultaneously, leading to an excellent situation whereby proper peer reviews can analyse and comment on work prior to publication.

I remember receiving the “Danson” sale catalogue and admiring the material being offered. That was in 1971: no doubt our younger collectors may one day look at the “John Wilson” sale of wartime airmails with the same interest as I had in the Danson sale – but not yet, I trust. One thing is certain, thanks to Cameo those collectors will be armed with accurate, well-researched and well-referenced texts to help them understand the subject and pursue the research for themselves, and that is

the real difference, not the 70 year collecting cycle. Keep up the good work, and congratulations on making each issue a well balanced and enjoyable read.

John Wilson  
Swimbridge, Devon

### Use of the Study Editors

Dear Barry & Rob,

As regards the query from Paul Redhead in the October 2008 Cameo page 306 re the New Calabar cancel pre-1900, please refer to page 331 (not 321 as indexed) in the book by John Sacher and me. See also the notes on page 181 of the book on the use of Oil Rivers/ Niger Coast cancellers. This canceller was available from 1893.

I have also noted Peter Crawshaw’s enquiry about the use of a cds on Niger Coast stamps with an inverted “A”. The subject of “inverts”, “reversed” and other aberrations is fully dealt with in the book in the notes to Oil Rivers/ Niger Coast cancels on page 181...“of no philatelic significance”. The aberrations were nearly always due to the carelessness of postal clerks.

I suspect that some queries arise from members who either do not have a copy of the book or do not have access to one. Books on the whole of West African philately would now make up quite an extensive library and members could save much time by referring in the first instance to the relevant Study Editor listed in each Cameo (page 4 of this issue) who should have all the leading references to hand for their territory.

Jack Ince  
Stirling, Canada

*(ed—see also the response on page 43 of this issue to a St Helena article in the last issue of Cameo)*

## Sierra Leone Registration

Dear Rob & Barry,

Frank Walton and I are starting to prepare a revised version of his 1994 WASC monograph "*Sierra Leone Registration*". I would be most grateful if members could send me details of any registered material that would update the originally published material, including the registered postmarks, boxed hand-stamps and blue printed labels. We would particularly welcome information about the post-independence period. I can be contacted by post, e-mail or telephone. All contributions will be gratefully acknowledged!

Philip Quirk  
Birmingham

## St Helena Picture Postcards

Dear Rob,

Barry Burns has suggested I write to you. I am trying to find out some information in regard to the picture postcards of St Helena. Specifically I would like to know:

- Whether there are any cards related to the period of incarceration of the South African prisoner, Dinizulu?
- Whether there is a single image St Helena card that features Boer General Kronje?
- How many cards there are in the "Polytechnic" series that look to have been issued in the 1940's or perhaps the 1950's?

Rod Kantor  
Perth, Australia



### WASC Study Editors are also available for queries and to help edit articles

- Airmails - Barbara Priddy
- Ascension - Bernard Hughes
- Biafra - Dudley Prestedge
- Cameroons - Marty Bratzel
- Gambia - Oliver Andrew
- Ghana - Ian Anderson
- Gold Coast - Peter Newroth
- Lagos - John Sacher
- Maritime - John Knight
- Nigerias to 1914 - John Sacher
- Nigeria post 1914 - Tony Plumbe
- St. Helena - Bernard Mabbett
- Sierra Leone - Philip Beale & Peter Rolfe
- Togo - Jeremy Martin

## Benin City Registered Postmark 1902

Dear Barry & Rob

I have an oval Benin City registered postmark dated 2 September 1902 and with an 'F' collection time on a penny stamp of the Niger Coast Protectorate (SG67), used in Southern Nigeria.

Ince and Sacher (1992: p350) designated such cancellations as R13C, with an earliest date of 16 July 1903. Proud (1995: p293) then pushed the earliest date of what he termed R1 Registered postmarks back to 5 May 1903 and the latest use as 5 June 1922. Proud's latest date is now 22 October 1922, by the way (personal communication, August 2008).

This one means at least another eight months of registered post at Benin City!

Simon Heap  
Oxford, UK

Access to the internet? Then please try visiting the  
West Africa Study Circle Web Site at : <http://www.wasc.org.uk>  
Webmaster is Ray Harris; contact [harris6@which.net](mailto:harris6@which.net)

CURRENT CONTENT—The draft Nigerian aerogramme listing remains available to interested members via a unique URL. Contact the webmaster for details. Additional information from members can still be added before further contact with Gerry Kaspar.

# Obituaries

## Nicholas Carter FRPSL (1936-2008)

A distinguished philatelist, Nicholas died whilst in office as President of the American Philatelic Society. I only met him once, at Washington 2006, where we discussed his study of the Gold Coast 1928 Christiansburg Castle set which was awarded a Gold Medal.

Dr. Nicholas Carter spent two years in Western Africa on an M.I.T. fellowship where he may have trod in some of the footsteps of his grandfather who was at one time Governor-General in the Gambia. Earlier, when her husband had been posted in Barbados, Nicolas' grandmother actually drew the design for a stamp (1906 Olive Blossom commemorative).

As an economist in the World Bank, one of Nicholas' early projects was facilitating the financing for the Akosomba Dam project on the Volta River in Ghana. Perhaps these African connections influenced his philatelic choice? However, his collecting interests also spread to butterflies, model trains, books and Uncle Scrooge comics.

Such is the nature of friendship between philatelists that with only one brief meeting and the exchange of a few letters that a collecting kinship can develop that makes one feel that you have known each other for ages. Our sympathies go to his wife, sons and grandchildren with whom we can share the memory of his enthusiasm in whatever task he undertook.

Ian Anderson

## Christopher Fyfe

Christopher was the historian of Sierra Leone. After graduating at Oxford he became the archivist in Sierra Leone, cataloguing and studying the records. On his return to this country he began writing his *History of Sierra Leone*. It is the standard work, a splendid publication that was composed without Chapters, though the publishers added numbers.

Following posts at Bristol and Belfast, Christopher became reader in African Studies at Edinburgh until his retirement in 1991. He continued to be editor of *The Journal of African Studies*. His students have continued to produce many works on Sierra Leone history. I was personally most grateful to him as he offered support and any help I needed when I was writing *The Postal Services of Sierra Leone*. We met on various occasions and it was a great pleasure to visit him in his home at Blackheath. He was most interested to know of our Study Circle and would always provide information when we needed it. A delightful and kindly person, he will be greatly missed by his many friends.

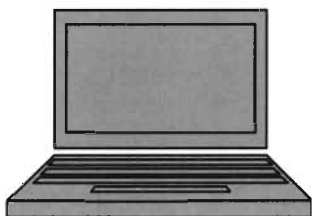
Philip Beale

## John Daynes

Several WASC members and other journals reported the death last summer of John Daynes. He was never a member of WASC but was instrumental in a long-standing Journal exchange between WASC and the Forces Postal History Society (which is how I first came into contact with him). This exchange enabled several productive collaborations. He was an acknowledged expert on WWII air mails and censorship matters, a consummate researcher, always willing to share his knowledge and original sources with others. I am personally very grateful to him for editing and publishing verbatim the Censorship and Air Mail Services sections of the Overseas Mail Branch Weekly Reports 1939 to 1944 and then assisting me with their interpretation for my study of the air mail routes to, from and via West Africa during that time.

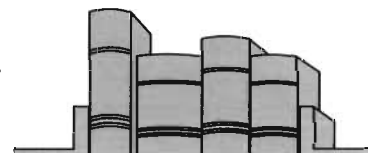
He was a regular contributor to the Journal of the Forces Postal History Society, the Civil Censorship Study Group and to Air Mail News ( the Journal of the BAeF, latterly the British Air Mail Society) and he would have been delighted to see the explosion of research on these air mails and censorship practices that are published in this issue of Cameo. His research and enthusiasms will long outlive him.

Rob May




## Sources

Views expressed by reviewers are their own,  
and are not endorsed by WASC or  
the editors of *Cameo*



*For all WASC book orders and payments please contact the Treasurer (address on contents page). Authors will distribute their own new publications to members, whilst distribution of purchases from older stocks is arranged via the Treasurer.*

 *Stanley Gibbons Commonwealth Stamp Catalogue: West Africa, 1st edition, 2008*, published by Staley Gibbons, ISBN-13:978-0-85259-651-7, ISBN-10 0-85259-651-0, 161p, A4 size, card covered, full colour. Price £19.95 plus P&P. Reviewed by Rob May.

It is eight years since Stanley Gibbons updated their catalogue listing for any Commonwealth West African stamps issued after 1970. Up to 1970 the listing follows the latest Commonwealth Part 1, so this review concentrates on the post-1970 stamps. Following the decision to include issues between 1953 and 1970 in the 2008 and 2009 Part 1 Commonwealth catalogues we can expect prices and discoveries for these to be updated annually. Who can guess when we might see the next SG update of issues since 1970?


This new catalogue is not a thick volume despite the continuing excessive “thematic” issues from Sierra Leone and Ghana, so why does it need to replicate the standard part 1 listing up to 1970? To me, it seems a missed opportunity that the early QE2 plate flaws, varieties and printing dates that were last shown in the Elizabethan catalogue in the mid-1970s are not now included here.

This new listing includes for the first time Republic of Cameroun issues since that nation joined the Commonwealth on 1 November 1995. Their refreshingly sparse number of new issues reflects their conservative new issues policy (or lack of funds). Marc Parren, who is currently working in Yaounde has e-mailed to say that the postal staff there have seen no new issue since the Japan Co-operation set of 2005. The lack of a new issues service to supply mint stamps to the European and American markets is reflected in a decision by SG to provide only used prices for the time being, with the comment “Unused stamps for this period are scarce to rare and, when offered, can command very high prices.”


The Ghana listing includes the latest redrawn definitives and the 2006 devaluation overprints. Similarly Sierra Leone includes the redrawn birds definitives of 2000 with imprint dates up to 2006, and also 61 different surcharges of March 2008.

In Nigeria the 1999 rain forest stamp is now listed with both perforations, the 2000-01 perforation changes appear, and the current animal definitives are shown with most of the known perforation varieties and the Cartor printings. See page 36 of this issue for a discussion of printings of the 2008 commemoratives which missed the copy deadline.

It is helpful to the small coterie of modern West Africa collectors to see SG bring their listings up to date, but I hope to see the second edition appear with more specialist detail. Through no fault of the catalogue editor, no-one expects this will be a best-seller, and this reviewer is grateful to SG for their commitment.

 *British Library Philatelic Collections Website*, <http://www.bl.uk/collections/philatelic>

The Spring 2008 issue (Issue 13) of the Philatelic Collections Newsletter announced the re-launch of the above website to include notes concerning research and access, and detailed descriptions of the collections, illustrated with an extensive range of supporting images. It lists details of the collections that are currently on public exhibition, so that people know what they may expect to see when they visit the Library. Orders for images can now be handled on line, and there is a link to the Imaging Services web page, which provides details of the range of imaging formats available and the cost structure (although for philatelic items it is recommended that the department should be contacted in the first instance)

 *The Philatelic Database*, <http://www.philatelicdatabase.com>

This on-line database is being constructed and managed by WASC member, William Cochrane. He is constantly looking for material and records on West African issues, some of which appear in *Cameo* from time to time.

# The United States involvement in West African Aviation and their contribution to the carriage of mails, 1941-1945

Richard Beith

*This mixture of aerophilately, aviation history and military history has been a source of fascination for over 20 years. This essay is designed to provide more of that aviation and historical background which, hopefully, will enable aerophilatelists and postal historians to make better sense of covers in their collections. The text suggests that aerophilatelists should find much of benefit in a study of aviation history and political/military history sources. It also comments briefly on the status and life of US Post Office route FAM 22 and the significance or otherwise of Leopoldville as its nominal terminus. The described rapid growth of American military aviation from 1942 onwards and the considerable use of American civil airlines under government contract must have had a serious bearing on just how a particular letter was carried through West Africa at that time. We will probably never know just how blurred the distinction became between the carriage of civil and forces air mails. Full source references are given in the endnotes and in the bibliography. References are given by paragraph or groups of paragraphs.*<sup>1</sup>

## Early transatlantic air mails via West Africa

Prior to the Second World War, the sole West African contribution to commercial transatlantic aviation was to provide the jumping-off point for French and German landplanes and flying boats making the crossing to the north-eastern tip of Brazil. Graue and Duggan recorded that the last *Deutsche Lufthansa* service to South America transited Bathurst on 25 August 1939. The Zeppelin service to Brazil also passed this way until its end in May 1937 following the *Hindenburg* disaster in North America, see Duggan and Graue. The French service, initially operated by *Compagnie Générale Aéropostale*, started as an air-sea-air operation in 1928 with the mail being carried by fast boat between Senegal and Brazil. In 1933 *CGA* was incorporated into *Air France*. Following eight return experimental flights in 1934 and 22 return flights in 1935, all-the-way-by-air carriage of mail was the rule from 1936 onwards. By 1938 flights were made with Farman landplanes and the service continued with minor interruptions until the fall of France in Summer 1940. The last northbound flight was on 2 July 1940, see Collot and Cornu. All these French and German flights carried nothing but mail and express freight across the ocean; only the Zeppelins carried passengers.<sup>2</sup>

From December 1939, the Italian *Linee Aeree Transcontinentali Italiane* (LATI) flew mail, freight and some official passengers from Rome to Rio de Janeiro via Seville, Villa Cisneros (Spanish Sahara), Sal (Cape Verde) and Natal (Brazil). Some Americans were unhappy at the close proximity of this airline. Charles Murphy, Editor of *Fortune*,

arrived in Recife, Brazil, by Pan American on 27 March 1941, faced with a ten day wait for his boat to South Africa. He noted 'No American can be long in any of the coastal cities on the strategic Brazilian bulge without appreciating the uncomfortable nearness to Europe.' After sighting a LATI plane, he continued:

*'If ever the Axis powers succeed in breaking the blockade to reach the markets and raw materials of this hemisphere, it will be via the stepping stones of West Africa ... and this streaming, sopping coast could be the first great battlefield of the war of the continents.'*

LATI extended their operations to Buenos Aires in July 1941 but were closed down in December of that year; not, in the end, because of Allied pressure, but 'as a routine consequence of Brazil's adherence to the United Nations'. Mail planes were always Savoia-Marchetti landplanes.<sup>3</sup>

## The United States helps out:

Pan American Airways opened two regular routes over the North Atlantic in the months before the outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939. The first, or 'Southern Route', ran from New York to Marseilles, France, via Bermuda, the Azores and Lisbon with a first mail departure on 20 May. The second, or 'Northern Route' operated from New York to Southampton, England, via Shediac, New Brunswick; Botwood, Newfoundland; and Foynes on the Shannon Estuary in the Irish Free State with a first mail flight over 30 June - 1 July. These services were operated with the Boeing 314 flying-boat. From

September 1939, American neutrality legislation resulted in the European termini being restricted to Lisbon and Foynes respectively. The Northern Route was discontinued between late 1939 and May 1942; as neutrality legislation also prohibited calls in Canada and Newfoundland whilst the USA was at peace. For the carriage of mails, both routes were designated Foreign Air Mail route number 18 (FAM 18) by the US Post Office. The poor weather and heavy swells in the Azores, particularly in the winter months, caused many delays, particularly westbound from Lisbon. As a result a longer but more reliable westbound route was introduced for the winter months from February 1941.

Operation of this route introduced Pan American Airways to West Africa as their Boeing 314 Clippers flew from Lisbon to New York via Bolama, Portuguese Guinea; Belém, Brazil; Port of Spain, Trinidad; San Juan and Puerto Rico. The use of Portuguese territory as the West African jumping-off point was still conditioned by American neutrality concerns. Bolama was located south of Bathurst. The 1941 diversion via West Africa closed at the end of April. Singley had already suggested in late 1940 that the use of a route through Bolama might be a prelude to extending Pan American's route structure, if possible, all the way to Cape Town. <sup>4</sup>

It was the war in North Africa between the United Kingdom and the Axis powers which precipitated a much greater American involvement in South Atlantic and West African aviation. One of the first catalysts was W Averell Harriman, President Roosevelt's *Special Envoy* to Prime Minister Winston Churchill. Churchill met with Harriman in May 1941 and asked him to visit the Middle East:

*'to make an independent appraisal of the situation, to see for himself what America might do to shore up the British position, and report back to him personally. ... Harriman wanted to see what arrangements the British had made to receive and assemble the airplanes, tanks and trucks being sent from America, to satisfy himself that the equipment was being used effectively...'*

Harriman set out from Poole, Dorset, on 9 June 1941 'on one of the original PBY flying-boats which the British had purchased before the start of lend-lease'; this was *Guba* on flight WAS 24. Harriman's flight travelled to Lagos via Lisbon, Bathurst, Freetown, Takoradi and Accra. He

reached Cairo on 19 June by Lockheed *Lodestar* from Lagos. He was not impressed with the efficiency of the air ferry service in Africa, one of his first recommendations was that it should be taken over by the United States. Harriman travelled far and wide, even to Eritrea where he 'suggested the development of an air base at Gura, near Asmara, which in time became a valuable link in the chain of airfields ... for ferry deliveries to Iran and India.' Harriman's report was delivered to Churchill on 16 July. At the end of that month Harriman flew to Washington to discuss the Middle East situation with the President. <sup>5</sup>

Harriman and his forthright report arrived in Washington at an opportune moment, as in June, Juan Trippe, President and Chief Executive Officer of Pan American Airways, and a noted *fixer*, had travelled to London to give the annual Wilbur Wright Memorial Lecture to the Royal Aeronautical Society, on the topic of *Ocean Air Transport*. Having given his lecture Trippe, much to his surprise, was invited to take dinner (again), this time with Winston Churchill. They continued their discussion of British communication problems in North Africa into the small hours. Daley reported that

*'Churchill said he would cable Roosevelt about this. The route to Cairo must be set up as soon as possible. Trippe should expect to hear from Roosevelt as soon as he landed in New York.'*

Trippe, back in Washington, immediately discussed the problems with the President. McCann has recounted how Pan American Airways had already been used as an instrument of the US government to build a chain of airfields from North America to north-eastern Brazil through their Airport Development Programme (ADP), to eliminate German influences in Latin-American aviation. To tackle the African problem on behalf of the President was just another such project, if a very large one. As recorded by Daley:

*'Carefully compartmentalizing his business as always, he (Trippe) incorporated Pan American Airways-Africa Ltd on 15 July and Pan American Air Ferries on 24 July (1941). (Soon) ... the first trickle of lend-lease planes began moving south through the chain of half-finished Latin American air bases to Natal, and then making the hop across the South Atlantic. To head Pan American-Africa Trippe named Franklin Gledhill. ... Gledhill ... would have to lay out a route to Cairo ... more than four thousand miles long. Gledhill flew an average of twenty-five hundred miles a day for*

*thirty consecutive days. ... He planned bases in Takoradi, Accra, ... Kano and Maiduguri in Northern Nigeria; Fort Lamy in Chad; in El Geneina, El Fasher and Khartoum in the Sudan.'*

It had been assumed that Bathurst, with its relatively long history of aerial transportation would be the first port of call in Africa, but Gledhill and Trippe considered it too close to hostile Vichy Dakar and not ideal for commercial development after the end of the war. Daley continued:

*'From British Gambia a surveying team was sent out to find a better, safer landfall on the African bulge. At the same time Trippe applied to the Civil Aeronautics Board for a certificate of convenience and necessity for a route to Leopoldville in the Belgian Congo; if he could get this far, then after the war the whole of the rich southern portion of Africa would lie open to him.'*

The search for an ideal base continued; 800 miles south of Dakar a lake was spotted behind the coast, actually a bay almost cut off from the sea, twelve miles long and five miles across at its widest point. This was Fisherman's Lake in Liberia, also known as Lake Piso. Two ships at sea, loaded with equipment and personnel to build the base at Bathurst were thus diverted to Fisherman's Lake.<sup>6</sup>

Culbert and Dawson recorded that five contracts were placed on 12 August 1941, the first of which between the US War Department and Pan American Airways was a 'Contract for Air Transport Service between United States and West Africa ...'. Bender and Altschul noted that on 18 August 1941, President Roosevelt made this major development a matter of public record. The full White House text is shown as Appendix 1. *The New York Times* commented:

*'Thus for the first time a United States civilian air transport service, accustomed to difficult operations in all parts of the world, will be employed as an instrument of the government in the same manner as Germany uses Lufthansa.'*<sup>7</sup>

At the same time as this route to West Africa was developed, American and British officials were trying to organize a 'LATI substitute' air mail service to be operated by Pan American Airways between Brazil and Portugal. The British Home Office, in its 1952 report on war-time censorship, noted that:

*'This route (LATI) became the enemy's last resort for the transport of valuable small freight, of agents, and of correspondence vital to his Western Hemisphere plans. It passed no British territory and interception by aircraft was impracticable. ... By August, 1941, it was possible to offer (to the Brazilian government) a substitute service by Pan American Airways from the US via Puerto Rico, Trinidad and Brazil to Lisbon, if the LATI service was suppressed. ... Such a substitution ... did not by itself solve the problem of mail ... Hence, ... H M Government strongly urged that a stop should be arranged at a British control point ....'*

Bathurst was considered the most suitable British base for such an Imperial Censorship Station for these transit air mails, but logistics were against such a large scale permanent establishment and in reality only ten Clipper mails were examined at Bathurst between March and August 1942. Thereafter transit censorship was transferred to San Juan, under the terms of the San Juan Agreement.

Proud referred to such a Brazil-Lisbon service in his recent text and described a variety of 'anti-clockwise' routes, but without giving any source references. Crotty also noted this additional Pan American route following searches in the Pan American archives at the University of Miami Richter Library. The *confidential* timetables that he researched included a Natal-Lisbon-Natal route via Fisherman's Lake and Bolama. Crotty postulated that the known boxed cachets applied at Sao Paulo and elsewhere in Brazil lettered: VIA AFRICA-LISBOA-LONDRES, might have related to this route. See also the recent study by Wilson, which included references to censorship in Bathurst and the San Juan Agreement.<sup>8</sup>

#### **Air Mails to Africa from Miami:**

The civil air mail aspect of Pan American's development was mentioned in a brief note in the September 1941 *Airpost Journal*:

*'PAA seeks new FAM route to the Belgian Congo: The Pan American Airways has asked the Civil Aeronautics Board for permission to establish commercial air service between New York and Leopoldville, Belgian Congo. Stops would be made at Baltimore, Puerto Rico, Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, Belem and Natal, Brazil, Monrovia and Lagos, Nigeria.'*

The United States was still a neutral country, so

the lawyers were kept busy. Deborah W Ray commented on the problems facing the President:

*'In view of the unique ability of the Takoradi route, it is hard to condemn Roosevelt for using every possible means to put that airway into efficient operating condition and thereby rescue the threatened Middle East ... given ... the personal enjoyment he found in successfully manipulating a challenging situation, Roosevelt probably was able to quell any doubts about the constitutional and ethical propriety of his conduct. The President simply wanted to deliver the goods to the desert forces. He left it to his lawyers to wrestle with the annoying technicalities.'*

Don Thomas recorded that the first survey flight left New York on 27 September 1941 in a Boeing 314 'with 52 people on board, the nucleus of PAA-Africa's staff, pilots and mechanics', half went to Bathurst, half to Lagos. Accra, Gold Coast, was picked as their headquarters. Berry recorded this as Special Mission 04, which used the *Capetown Clipper*. However, M D Klaás claimed the first survey flight departed from New York as early as 4 July, 1941. Berry recorded this as Special Mission 1 to Bathurst and Bolama, when the *Atlantic Clipper* was piloted by Captain Gray. On 6 October a PAA-Africa survey flew across the existing BOAC trans-Africa route.

As American commercial vessels were excluded from war zones, Pan American had, on 12 August 1941, to sell their newest Boeing A314, NC-18612, *Capetown Clipper*, to the US War Department and lease it back. A later survey flight carried Eve Curie, daughter of scientist Marie Curie, and an accredited war correspondent. She recalled leaving La Guardia Field, New York, on the *Capetown Clipper* on 10 November 1941. She was the only female passenger and the first to board the plane so that reporters would not spot her. She had been told 'We will carry you to Nigeria, if that is where you want to go, but just try to forget how you got there.' She noticed a framed letter from Washington on a bulkhead, stating that the plane was the property of the Government and that Pan-American Airways was allowed to operate it. The letter, addressed to PAA, ended: 'Yours truly, The United States of America'. The *Clipper* called at Bermuda, Puerto Rico, Port of Spain, Belém, Natal, Bathurst and Lagos. Harold E Gray, Captain of the *Capetown Clipper* on that flight noted his thoughts at La Guardia Field, before departure. He commented that valuable

metereological information had been acquired through Pan American's westbound Lisbon-Bolama-Belém-New York route (FAM 18). Klaás noted that Captain Gray made a survey call at Fisherman's Lake on the return trip.<sup>9</sup>

The first official mail flight to West Africa left New York, not Miami, early on the morning of 6 December 1941 with the US Post Office designation Foreign Air Mail route No 22 (FAM 22). The shipping page of the *New York Times* showed:

*'Dec 6 - CAPETOWN CLIPPER from la Guardia Field - Bermuda Dec 6, San Juan 6, Trinidad 6, Belem 8, Natal 8, Bathurst 9, Lagos 10 and Leopoldville 11. Letter mail for Africa (except Northern) and Southeastern Asia, for onwards dispatch from foregoing points. Mails closed noon, registered 11AM and Morgan Annex 11.30AM Dec 5. Take-off 3AM.'*

The stop at Bermuda was to drop Europe-bound mails so that they could be censored before being collected by the next Lisbon bound *Clipper* operating FAM 18. The United States still being neutral on 6 December, a full range of first flight covers had been prepared. This was not to the taste of William M Masland, the Captain of the *Capetown Clipper*, who feared censorship delays at every stop, but as he philosophised, 'If you have a philatelist for President, you must take the good with the bad'. All the first flight covers were prepared on the basis that the regular route commenced at Miami, so these had to be brought from Miami to San Juan by the *Clipper Comet*, a Boeing 307 *Stratoliner*, and possibly a Sikorsky S 42, to meet the *Capetown Clipper*. The crew and passengers spent the night of 6 December in Port of Spain, Trinidad. The news of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour reached them on the afternoon of Sunday 7 December. Masland was particularly concerned about their planned call at Bathurst as the colony of Gambia was surrounded by Vichy French territory, but they continued and Leopoldville was reached one day late but without incident on 12 December. After a 24 hour turnaround, they returned to Brazil, calling at Fisherman's Lake, Liberia, rather than Bathurst. On landing at Natal Captain Masland commented:

*'We were back in the Western Hemisphere without incident, a complete anticlimax. It was a blow to the ego to realize that Hitler had so completely ignored our vital mission to the Congo with a load of first flight covers.'*

Masland and his flying-boat returned to New York via Miami within the scheduled 12 days for the round trip. Now that the USA was at war, it should be noted that they possessed exactly 19 civil aeroplanes with an intercontinental capacity, see Appendix 2.<sup>10</sup>

### **Leopoldville as eastern terminus:**

The choice of Leopoldville as the official terminus of Pan American's passenger and mail route has occasioned some comment. Daley and others have noted that Leopoldville, across the Congo River from Brazzaville, the notional capital of Free French Africa, was a handy connecting point for routes to South Africa and offered future post-war developments. Masland claimed that NC-16812 was called the *Capetown Clipper* 'so as to advise the British of where we wanted to go'. Bender and Altschull recorded that Pan American:

*'concluded an operating agreement with SABENA ... as a prelude to securing a concession in Leopoldville, also with exclusivity features. The Congo port was seen as the pivot of a strategic alternative route to the Middle East and beyond, but this was not to be flaunted in open hearing before the CAB (Civil Aeronautics Board). American and Eastern Air Lines intervened ... until the War Department asked for a temporary adjournment of the hearings and gave evidence in secret session that persuaded the board to grant the application at once.'*

Don Thomas commented:

*'I doubt if Leopoldville was used much after the opening ceremonies ... It was south of the beaten path from Brazil to Accra where all the air supply activity was. Mail from all points east of Cairo would probably go west over PAA-Africa routes in 1942, and the Cannonball route to Accra or Lagos or Fish (erman's) Lake in 1943 and 1944.'*

Perhaps there was another, very secret, reason for an official link between the USA and the Belgian Congo, one that might relate to the above-noted secret session of the CAB. The southern area of the Congo was the main source of uranium ore available to the Allies for the *Manhattan Project*, the plan to develop the atomic bomb. William R Stanley, University of South Carolina, commented that

*'... the Brazil-West Africa air link was expanded to include a route through Central Africa, primarily to tap a supply of uranium from what*

*was then the Belgian Congo.'*

Professor Stanley continued by recording that:

*'In late 1941 or early 1942 a Clipper is purported to have arrived at Robertsport (Fisherman's Lake) from Leopoldville, carrying a load of sandbags filled with a radioactive substance. As the story was related to this writer (Stanley) it was from this shipment that Enrico Fermi ... carried out the first successful chain reaction ... at the University of Chicago.'*

The present author has highlighted the words *primarily* and *purported*. Groves recorded that the first chain reaction took place on 2 December 1942. However, he also reported that over 1250 tons of high grade uranium ore had been shipped from the Congo to the USA by sea from Lobito (Angola) as early as the autumn of 1940.

Jackson noted that in 1943, the only surviving Martin M 130, NC 14716, the *China Clipper*:

*'was returned to Pan American and put on a regular passenger run across the Atlantic from Miami through the Caribbean to Leopoldville in the Belgian Congo.'*

In late 1944, the *China Clipper* was authorised to conduct a survey of refueling stops between Fisherman's Lake and Leopoldville with calls at Porto-Novo, Dahomey; Douala, Cameroons; Libreville, Gabon and Point Noire, French Congo. Pan American Captain Marius Lodeesen, recalled that he had been transferred to Miami in 1944 to fly the *China Clipper*, for their Latin American Division. Later he was told to take the *China Clipper* to Leopoldville on a top secret flight; 'No questions, no answers'. Lodeesen wrote: 'Three decades later I learned that the unmarked crates put in the Clipper's hold at Leo(poldville) contained the uranium ore for the first atomic bomb ... .' Robert S Miller also commented: 'Minerals in the Belgian Congo could have been one reason for the selection of Leopoldville'.<sup>11</sup>

### **What became of FAM 22 and the call at Leopoldville?**

Aerophilatelists and postal historians have, in the past, agreed to disagree, as to whether the FAM 22 route survived to the end of the war and as to the importance of calls at Leopoldville. Some, such as the Dutch aerophilatelist Frans van Beveren considered FAM 22 in limbo for the first months

of 1942, due to excessive demand on the available Boeing 314s; as later noted by Berry and Crotty. Aitink and Hovenkamp managed to list five flights from the USA to Leopoldville between 6 December 1941 and 31 January 1942, an additional flight as far as Lagos on 14 February 1942, and then admitted that data was hard to find. Bob Wilcsek tended to agree with van Beveren on the gap in FAM 22 operations up to May 1942 and suggested that the FAM 22 route terminated at Lagos from that time onwards. A number of collectors are currently looking at the significance (or otherwise) of Leopoldville as a meeting point for air mails involving the Belgian airline SABENA, BOAC and South African Airways as well as PAA. In addition, the Free French line FAFL, called at Brazzaville, across the Congo River from Leopoldville. Pan American Airways had initially promised a fortnightly service on this route; there have been hints in current investigations by Wilson and others, that this might well have been attempted, but was subject to disruption due to priority calls on the Boeing 314s for the previously mentioned Special Missions. Wilson has also investigated the delays associated with mail carried on the January 1942 Free French first flight from Beyrouth and Damascus to Brazzaville for onward transmission by FAM 22 to New York.<sup>12</sup>

Today, the legend FAM 22 is still used by collectors to describe commercial air mail carried via the Natal-Fisherman's Lake link and return, well into 1945. The most effective use of the available A314s was to operate a trans-oceanic shuttle from Natal, Brazil, to Fisherman's Lake and back, with landplanes delivering cargoes to Natal and collecting from Liberia. Navigator George Hester recalled that:

*'We flew B314As from Natal to Fisherman's Lake, Liberia, non-stop from early February 1942. About a mile from the lake we built a dirt landing strip ... we flew C-47s (DC 3) back and forth to Accra, all cargo going east was warehoused there. ... Our B 314A shuttle, Natal - Fish Lake, peaked in March 1943 at 25 trips a month. We were using the Dixie, Atlantic, Cape Town and American Clippers. ... We had double crews and sometime took 16 hours to cross. Major overhaul (was) at Miami but we had two or three boats on shuttle at all times up to middle 1943, when the landing strip on Ascension was completed. I never saw a BOAC 314A at Fishermans Lake.'*

Whatever the truth of the matter, whatever it was

called and whosoever operated it, the air route from West Africa to Miami via Brazil continued to carry large quantities of commercial mails until the end of the war. The evidence is there in the form of mail bearing Miami transit markings and/or Miami censorship seals. Westbound mail was not restricted to that from Africa. Mail can be found, for example, from Afghanistan, Ceylon, China (unoccupied), Dutch East Indies (until occupied), India, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine, Portuguese India and Saudi Arabia. Most of this mail would be carried via the Cairo - Lagos and vice versa service, initially with PAA-Africa, later with BOAC. On-going research by Wilcsek and Wilson, now suggests that transatlantic routes were more complex, depending on the seasons and the need to provide that 'LATI substitute' service, and that FAM 22, as originally conceived, came to an end in October 1942. The Miami-Leopoldville run, however regular or irregular and with or without mail bags, probably came to a final end on 8 January 1945 when the *China Clipper* crashed at Port of Spain, Trinidad. It should be noted that from September 1944, the revived *China Clipper* service was officially listed as a branch of FAM 18, not as FAM 22.<sup>13</sup>

#### **Mail to or from the United Kingdom via the USA**

Between the fall of France in summer 1940 and the entry of the USA into the war, BOAC's acute lack of equipment resulted in an almost complete absence of any regular *civilian* air mail service between the United Kingdom and West Africa and vice versa. The limited capacity available was strictly controlled for military and diplomatic use, see Beith. Up till now it had been thought that civil mails were precluded from carriage on the three uprated Boeing A314s acquired by BOAC from Pan American Airways between May and July 1941. Wilson has studied the purchase contract and was unable to find any such restrictive clauses. If civil mails were carried, the clockwise route used and the need to visit Baltimore for regular servicing might have precluded the carriage of much mail to the UK. It was only to be expected then, that the arrival of a nominally commercial American air service linking West Africa with Miami was regarded as a route, not only to the Western Hemisphere, but to the United Kingdom via the North Atlantic. A number of British colonies, including Gambia, Gold Coast, Nigeria and Southern Rhodesia, soon published lists of official air mail rates, both to the Western Hemisphere via FAM 22 and to the United

Kingdom via the FAM 22/FAM 18 two-ocean route. Of course, the payment of these expensive rates was no guarantee of speedy delivery, nor that air transport would be used for the entire journey<sup>14</sup>

This same opportunity was discussed in London, with regard to southbound mails to Africa and beyond. A Post Office official wrote to the Air Ministry at Bristol on 23 December 1941:

*'We, ourselves, have already been requested to introduce an air mail service to West Africa via the USA, and if we do so and the service proves satisfactory we shall doubtless be pressed to extend the service to include destinations on the Trans-Africa and Horseshoe routes.'*

No such FAM 18/FAM 22 acceptance was ever officially authorised from the United Kingdom, but May illustrated a July 1942 Manchester - Nigeria cover franked at 4/6d which had been censored in Miami and a few similar examples have been recorded. Air Mail rates from the United Kingdom to the West African colonies (whether at 1/3d or 4/6d per half ounce) were conspicuous by their absence from the British Post Office Guides from August 1940 to October 1943. In August 1944 there was still *No Service* for letters and postcards, but *Air letters* were accepted at a 6d rate. By July 1945 air mail letters were accepted at 1/3d per half ounce, 7d for postcards, with the *caveat*: 'By air throughout to the extent that aircraft capacity is available after military priority requirements have been met'. The only known southbound two-ocean mail to feature in postal regulations anywhere was that from Switzerland. Kohl recorded the official Swiss Post Office routing to most of Africa in 1942 as: Barcelona-Lisbon-New York-Bathurst-Lagos-Leopoldville. Similar routings were given until 1944 with continued reference to passage via Leopoldville, probably based on an assumption that the December 1941 route was still being followed.<sup>15</sup>

#### **PAA-Africa:**

Pan American Airways-Africa had a relatively short life, as the line was fully militarised by the end of 1942. Their first scheduled flight to Khartoum and back departed from Accra on 22 October 1941 and by December that year their route had been extended to Basra. Culbert and Dawson recorded that on 19 June 1942 the original PAA-Africa contract was extended to 15 August,

with an option for the War Department to extend it to 15 December. PAA-Africa were later informed that the contract would indeed be terminated on 15 December 1942. Already on 31 August the large Accra operation was officially designated as a US Army Air Base. The Air Transport Command did take over in December, but not without a degree of friction. The last scheduled PAA-Africa flight arrived at Accra on 12 December from Teheran. Culbert and Dawson noted that PAA-Africa did carry mail on their westbound flights; even some semi-official, apparently airline sponsored, 'first flight covers' from Cairo to the USA are known, posted in May 1942. These covers were censored in Miami, see Sears and Wilcsek. By December 1942, the Pan American Airways-Africa network stretched from Bathurst to Khartoum where the line divided. One branch, went to Cairo, Habbaniya, Basra and Karachi with a Basra-Teheran link; the other branch via Asmara, Aden and Salalah, also to Karachi. From Karachi it ran on to New Delhi, Calcutta, Dinjan and Chungking. Some published itineraries are reproduced in Appendix 3 to illustrate a typical ferry flight and travel by PAA-Africa. Additional actual routings can be found in Dunning.<sup>16</sup>

#### **Military Aviation and the contract airlines:**

Although Pan American Airways-Africa was militarised by the end of 1942, American civil airlines, including Pan American Airways, operated on an ever-increasing scale using additional equipment under government contract. In writing of the American contribution to air transport after the attack on Pearl Harbour, Smith recorded that:

*'By the end of 1942 the Army, Navy and Marine Corps were operating their own transport services with a nucleus of former air-line administrative and flying personnel. The Naval Air Transport Service (NATS) was authorised by the Secretary of the Navy on 12 December 1941. NATS service was inaugurated in February 1942. The Army's Air Transport Command (ATC) was an outgrowth of the old ferry service, but was made a separate unit in July 1942. ... ATC alone delivered more than 40,000 aircraft abroad by January 1945. It was flying 28 million miles a month in transport service and another 32 million as a ferry agency.'*

Smith also noted that:

*'Although the operations of the old commercial carriers were thus dwarfed by military air transport before the end of 1943, the air lines*

*continued to play an important part in the war effort.'*

Williams reported that by V-J Day, 2 September 1945, Air Transport Command consisted of:

*'more than 300,000 military and civilian personnel and over 3,700 aircraft, including nearly 1,200 C-47s (Douglas DC-3), 770 C-46s (Curtiss CW 20), 700 C-54s (DC 4) and 200 C-87s (the transport version of the Consolidated Liberator).'*

He added that NATS was slow to grow in size, but that their Atlantic Wing was formed in March 1943. At the end of the war their fleet included over 100 R5D Skymasters (DC 4), 32 Convair PB2Y-34 Coronado flying-boats and four of the Pan American Boeing A314s.

Something of the scale of ATC's operations can be gauged from photographer Ivan Dmitri's detailed and very well illustrated account of a round-the-world trip made with ATC from Miami back to Miami via Brazil, Ascension Island, Accra, Kano, Khartoum, Cairo, Casablanca, Prestwick, Reykjavik and New York, with side trips to India and China.

Serling compiled a useful discussion of the military contributions of the major American airlines. He noted that Pan American's growing fleet of C-47s, C-54s and C-46s began joining the ATC/NATS airlifts. He recorded that:

*'PAA's planes flying under a NATS contract crossed the North Atlantic 3800 times during the war, and its NATS aircraft made more than 3000 transpacific flights. When these are added to the airline's ATC operations across the South Atlantic between Natal and Africa, Pan Am's wartime crossings totalled some 15,000 ... Pan Am also established the Cannonball route for ATC from Miami direct to Karachi, India – an 11,500 mile flight using C54s exclusively ...'*

TWA (still standing for 'Transcontinental & Western Air' at that time) owned five Boeing 307s (see Appendix 2). TWA found themselves operating these planes under ATC contract, two of them on a regular Washington-Cairo service. Early in 1943 the first flight departed from Washington to Cairo in the Stratoliner *Navajo* via West Palm Beach, Puerto Rico, Belém, Natal, Roberts Field (Liberia), Accra, Kano and Khartoum. TWA's five 307s logged 21,000 transatlantic flying hours.

Eastern Air Lines established a Military Transport Division (MTD) on 1 September 1942, with headquarters in Miami. Their prime responsibility was an ATC landplane route operated from April 1943 using the Curtiss C-46, initially between Miami and Natal, but later extended to Accra via San Juan, Trinidad, Georgetown (British Guiana), Belém, Natal and Ascension Island. Serling noted that pilots had to avoid flying over French Guiana, still loyal to Vichy. He also recorded that landing a C-46 at Ascension was like *'trying to park a Greyhound bus in a suburban driveway.'*

Entwistle surveyed the air services in British Africa during this period and recorded an additional ATC route: Washington or New York to Prestwick (Scotland) via Port of Spain, Natal, Bathurst and Marrakech (Morocco) using C-54s and C-87s. This commenced in 1943 and was operated for ATC by American Airlines and TWA.<sup>17</sup>

American Export Airlines (AEA) was a small company with a great ambition, backed by its parent, the American Export Shipping Line. Their ambition was to break the monopoly on commercial transatlantic air services held by Juan Trippe's Pan American Airways. Following very lengthy and expensive legal wrangles, the CAB granted the requested permission to AEA in July 1940. AEA immediately ordered three transatlantic flying-boats from the Vought-Sikorsky company. Known as the VS-44A 'Flying Aces', the boats were named *Excalibur*, *Excambian* and *Exeter*, NC41880-82. Completed in the weeks and months after Pearl Harbour, all three went into service between New York and Foynes with a refuelling stop at Botwood. On 22 June 1942, *Excalibur* flew non-stop from Foynes to New York, the first non-stop flight across the Atlantic to the USA, see the account by Captain Charles F Blair, AEA's chief pilot. On 3 October the same plane crashed on take-off at Botwood. In January 1943 the two remaining VS-44As were requisitioned by NATS, but continued to be operated by AEA crews. Boyle claimed that VS-44As typically carried four and half tons of mail on a transatlantic flight. Pember included a photograph showing a buggy train of mailbag carriers with the caption: 'A photo which illustrates the volume of mail carried overseas (from the USA) to the troops by the VS-44As'. As with Pan American, AEA introduced a more southerly westbound route to counter winter

weather. From November 1942 until May 1943, they flew Foynes-Bathurst-Belém-Port of Spain-San Juan-New York. Fort Lyautey (Morocco) was later added as a southbound stop. AEA went on to add PB2Y-3R Coronado flying-boats to its fleet under NATS contract. Pember emphasised that the VS-44As were 'the longest-range commercial aircraft in the service of any airline' at that time. They were the first to fly non-stop Bermuda-North Africa, Bathurst-Port of Spain and Bathurst-San Juan.<sup>18</sup>

Most aerophilatelists had previously assumed that AEA only carried forces mail, apart from small amounts of in-house company correspondence. However, Daynes has revealed that AEA featured in the weekly reports of the GPO's Overseas Mail Branch in London from summer 1942 onwards. Report No 151, for the week ended 1 August 1942 recorded:

*'Notification has been received from the United States Post Office that the American Export Airlines flying-boats which have recently commenced to operate on the direct route between New York and Foynes are now available for the conveyance of a limited quantity of mails. The service is scheduled to operate twice weekly and, for the time being, aircraft capacity for mails in the westbound direction is limited to 400 lb (180 kg) per flight. The first despatch ... (for uplift at Foynes) was made from London on Saturday 1 August.'*

Report No 161 noted that by 10 October 1942, capacity on both PAA and AEA was so small that an accumulation of mails, including US forces mail, was dispatched by sea. It also mentioned that the mails carried in the previously mentioned *Excalibur* crash at Botwood, were salvaged. Further references to the mail carrying activities of AEA were found until late 1944. Report No 164 for 31 October 1942 noted that:

*'Both the Pan-American Airways and American Export Airlines aircraft have ceased to operate on the route via Newfoundland, and in the westbound direction now operate via West Africa and Trinidad.'*

Report No 192 for 15 May 1943 revealed that:

*'the American Air Companies concerned will again operate their services over the northern route (Foynes-Botwood-Shediac-New York) during the summer season.'*

Reports Nos 194 and 197 for 29 May and 19 June, recorded that AEA had resumed flights over the northern route in the east bound direction only and that air mails for French North Africa containing *civilian correspondence only* were now forwarded to French Morocco by AEA on their westbound service. Report No 216 for 30 October 1943, indicated that AEA were operating via West Africa and Brazil. Report No 217 for 6 November 1943 confirmed that:

*'The winter schedules of American Export Airlines do not include a call in Brazil ... The company's service is now operating in one direction only, over the following southern air route: New York-Bermuda-Foynes-Port Lyautey (Morocco)-Bathurst-Trinidad-Bermuda-New York.'*

AEA was again mentioned in the 1944 reports, very much as a commercial undertaking, even though operating under NATS contracts. Pember noted that AEA's contract with NATS was terminated on 31 December 1944, and that the two surviving VS-44As were soon back in AEA civilian colours. According to Sikorsky, these 1945 operations were under contract to USAATC. None of the above extracts indicated if AEA picked up or delivered mail at, say, Bathurst, but *Excambian*, *Exeter* and the Coronados appeared to have carried civil as well as forces air mails.<sup>19</sup>

#### Summary:

The considerable scale of United States involvement in flights through West Africa from 1941 to 1945 has been demonstrated. It remains very difficult to attribute a mail carrying capability for civil correspondence to any particular service, except, perhaps, the operations of Pan American Airways in the pre-Pearl Harbour period and PAA-Africa to late 1942. At least, the range of options has been clarified.

At the same time, researchers should not forget that in this period much mail franked and labelled for carriage by air did not receive the service that had been paid for. The British *Horseshoe* route from the UK to India and Australasia and back, was based on the unavailability of air service between the UK and Africa and travelled that part of the journey by boat to and from Durban. Again, how much *paid airmail* was carried by sea from West African ports to the UK?

The author would be delighted to receive additions, comments, corrections and theories via the editor. Thank you all in advance.

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All the quoted extracts from Post Office Archives, London, are reproduced courtesy The British Postal Museum and Archive. ©

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Beith, Richard, 'From Miami to the Congo', *Stamps* (GB), August 1987, pp37-41; Beith, 'Twice across the Atlantic to the United Kingdom', *British Philatelic Bulletin*, Vol 33, No 6, February 1996, pp172-175; Beith, 'FAM 22 and beyond', *Airpost Journal*, October 1997, pp407-416; November, pp449-458 and December, pp489-502. *The Airpost Journal* was and is the monthly magazine of the American Air Mail Society.

<sup>2</sup> Graue, James W, and Duggan, John, *Deutsche Lufthansa, South Atlantic Air Mail Service 1934-1939*, (Ickenham, Zeppelin Study Group, 2000) p185. The last DLH flight going North, avoided Bathurst in favour of Portuguese Bolama. Duggan, John, and Graue, Jim, *Commercial Zeppelin Flights to South America*, (Valleyford WA, JL Diversified, 1995); Collot Gérard and Cornu, Alain, *Ligne Mermoz, Histoire aérophilatélique Latécoère, Aéropostale, Air France, 1918-1940*, (Paris, Editions Bertrand Sinais, 1990); Labrousse, Pierre, *Répertoire des traversés aérienne de l'Atlantique sud, par l'Aéropostale et Air France*, (Libourne, the author, 1974).

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A full bibliography has been provided by the author and is available as pdf upon e-mail request to richard@mbeith.demon.co.uk

## Appendix 1 The White House Statement of 18 August 1941

The President announced today an important step to speed delivery of planes direct to the British forces in the Middle East. Agreements have been concluded under which the Pan American Airways System will ferry aircraft from the United States to West Africa and then will ferry those planes on to the Middle East. In connection with the ferry system, Pan American Airways is establishing an air transport service from West Africa to the Middle East and plans are under way for a transport service from the United States to West Africa. Planes owned by the United States Government will be used by Pan American and they will be operated by American personnel. The route of delivery is so arranged that it will nowhere pass through the zone of actual warfare. The transport service will supplement the ferry service by returning ferry personnel and carrying spare plane parts and items essential to effective delivery of aircraft to the Middle East. The route will also be available for general commercial use, providing direct air service from New York or Baltimore to Africa. The ferry system and the transport service provide direct and speedy delivery of aircraft from "the arsenal of Democracy" to a critical point in the front against aggression. The importance of this direct line of communication between our country and strategic out posts in Africa cannot be over-estimated.

.....

Source:

Culbert, Tom, and Dawson, Andy, *Pan Africa, Across the Sahara in 1941 with Pan Am*, (McLean VA, Paladwr Press, 1998), p15.

## Appendix 2

### United States civil aeroplanes in December 1941 with transcontinental capability

	Wartime Activity
<b>Pan American Martin M 130 flying-boats</b>	
NC-14715 <i>Philippine Clipper</i>	To US Navy (a).
NC-14716 <i>China Clipper</i>	To US Navy (b)
<b>Pan American Boeing 314/A314 flying-boats</b>	
NC-18601 <i>Honolulu Clipper</i>	To US Navy (c)
NC-18602 <i>California Clipper</i>	To USAAF (e)
NC-18603 <i>Yankee Clipper</i>	To US Navy (c), (d)
NC-18604 <i>Atlantic Clipper</i>	To US Navy (c)
NC-18605 <i>Dixie Clipper</i>	To US Navy (c)
NC-18606 <i>American Clipper</i>	To USAAF (e), (f)
NC-18609 <i>Pacific Clipper</i>	To US Navy (c)
NC-18611 <i>Anzac Clipper</i>	To USAAF (e), (g)
NC-18612 <i>Capetown Clipper</i>	To USAAF (e)
<b>Pan American Boeing 307 Stratoliner</b>	
NC-19902 <i>Clipper Rainbow</i>	(h)
NC-19903 <i>Clipper Flying Cloud</i>	(h)
NC-19910 <i>Clipper Comet</i>	(h)
<b>TWA Boeing 307 Stratoliner</b>	
NC-19905 to NC-19909 (5)	(j)

- Notes:**
- (a) Crashed California 21 January 1943
  - (b) Crashed Trinidad 7 January 1945
  - (c) US Navy Boeing 314s were operated by PAA crews under contract and retained their civilian registrations, even though issued naval serials
  - (d) Crashed Lisbon, 22 February 1943
  - (e) To Air Transport Command as a C98
  - (f) To US Navy 17 August 1943
  - (g) To Pan Am 30 November 1942, to US Navy
  - (h) Served with US military, but retained civil registrations
  - (j) Operated by Army Air Transport Command (ATC) as C-75s with military serial numbers but using TWA crews. Three were allocated to the North Atlantic including the provision of a military VIP service to Britain from 18 April 1942. Two were allocated to the Washington-Cairo route. During June 1942 one operated a Natal, Brazil, to Accra, Gold Coast, shuttle.

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### Appendix 3

#### Examples of recorded American flights passing through West Africa

a) May 1942: Delivery flight of a B-25 Mitchell bomber from Miami to Basra for collection by the Soviet Airforce and return to Miami by PAA–Africa DC 3 and PAA Boeing 314 flying-boat for the next delivery flight

1 May	Miami to Trinidad
2 May	Trinidad to Belem
9 May	Belem to Natal
9 May	Natal to Roberts Field, Liberia, arr 10 May
10 May	Roberts Field to Accra
13 May	Accra to Khartoum via Kano
14 May	Khartoum to Cairo
15 May	Cairo to Shaibah (Basra) via Habbaniyeh
.....	
15 May	Basra to Cairo
16 May	Cairo to Lagos
19 May	Lagos to Fisherman's Lake
20 May	Fisherman's Lake to Belem, via Natal, arr 21 May
22 May	Belem to Miami via Trinidad and San Juan

b) PAA–Africa consolidated timetable effective 25 June 1942.

Leave	Freetown, Sierra Leone (M, Th, Sat)		
Arrive	Fisherman's Lake/ Benson Field	10.40	
Arrive	Roberts Field	11.10	Leave Roberts Field 11.50
Leave	Takoradi	15.50	
Arrive	Accra	16.40	Overnight in Accra
Leave	Accra (daily)	06.30	
Arrive	Lagos	08.05	Leave Lagos 09.05
	Oshogba	flag stop	
	Kaduna	flag stop	
Arrive	Kano	11.50	Leave Kano 12.50
Arrive	Maiduguri	14.50	Overnight in Maiduguri
Leave	Maiduguri (daily, ex Wed & Sat)	05.00	Arrive Fort Lamy 05.55
Leave	Fort Lamy	06.10	
Arrive	Geneina (Sudan)	09.20	Leave Geneina 09.35
Arrive	El Fasher	10.50	Leave El Fasher 11.50
	El Obeid	flag stop	
Arrive	Khartoum	15.00	Overnight in Khartoum
Leave	Khartoum (Daily, + Mon, Th, Sat)	06.00	
Arrive	Cairo	12.10	Overnight in Cairo
Leave	Cairo (Sun, Tues, Fri)	04.00	
Arrive	Habbaniyeh	08.40	Leave Habbaniyeh 09.10
Arrive	Basra	11.05	Overnight in Basra
Leave	Basra	03.00	
Arrive	Teheran	05.45	
.....			
Leave	Khartoum (Sun, Tu, Wed, Fri)	03.00	
Arrive	Asmara/ Gura (Eritrea)	05.45	Leave Asmara/ Gura 06.15
Arrive	Aden	09.00	Leave Aden 09.30
Arrive	Salala (Oman)	13.35	Overnight in Salala
Leave	Salala	04.00	
Arrive	Karachi	10.30	

Sources:

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# Scandinavian Missionary Flights, 1945-1946

Peter Hellberg

*This article first appeared in the September 2007 issue of Scandinavian Contact, the magazine of the Scandinavia Philatelic Society. It has been sent to Cameo by Jeremy Martin and is reproduced here by kind permission of Peter Hellberg, who is also the magazine editor. Jeremy's interest stems from a cover he owns which is illustrated at figure 1, below*

Long distance air communications in the immediate post-war period were difficult, and in some parts of the world, non-existent. This was a great problem for the many missionary stations in Africa and Asia. An interesting initiative to improve these communications was taken in 1945. The initiator was the Swedish flier and "soul of fire", (Duke) Carl-Gustaf von Rosén. With funds supplied by different churches in Scandinavia, "Scandinavian Missionary Flights" (Nordiskt Missionsflyg) was founded. A DC-3 was purchased, and it got the name ANSGAR (registration SE-APG). Ansgar was the first missionary to Denmark in AD826, and to Sweden in AD829.

The first flight of the plane *Ansgar*, with von Rosén as pilot, started from Bromma, Stockholm on 11 November 1945, destination Dar-es-Salaam in British East Africa.

What justifies the mention of these flights in postal history is the fact that mail was carried on them and indeed it was the first direct mail contact with these parts of the world from Scandinavia. For this first flight, a special rectangular cachet was used (red, black and green for the different destinations and flights). The text of the cachet reads: NORD. MISSIONSFLYG/ PREMIER VOL. FIRST TRIP./ SVERIGE—AFRIKA"

On the flight of 11 November 1945, half a kilo of mail was carried to Athens, half a kilo to Addis Ababa, and 1.25 kilos to Dar-es-Salaam. The special cachet on this flight was red. On 12th December 1945 *Ansgar* made a really long flight from Scandinavia to Madagascar. Mail was carried to Tananarivo and back; mail carried on the return is scarcer. *Ansgar* left Tananarivo on 17 December and arrived in Stockholm on 22nd, where the mail was franked and postmarked. Covers have the violet cachet of the Swedish Consulate of Tananarivo. On 3 March 1946 *Ansgar* left Stockholm for Leopoldville, in Belgian Congo, and landed on the return flight in Lagos, Nigeria [on 14 March 1946], where mail was also taken aboard (figure 1)

Figure 1



The longest flight undertaken by *Ansgar* was on 24 April 1946 when it left for Johannesburg, South Africa. The mail was back-stamped Johannesburg 33 / 1.V.46 10.00.

The last flight of *Ansgar* on which mail was carried was a trip to Congo, leaving Stockholm on 23 May 1946. Regular airlines had now come into service, and the Scandinavian Post offices no longer used Scandinavian Missionary Flights.

**Postscript:** Carl-Gustaf von Rosén, the Swedish flier, spent a great part of his life in charity-flying in Africa. He took part in the Swedish Red Cross Ambulance in the Italo-Ethiopian War in 1935. He was killed in a guerrilla ambush in Ethiopia in July 1977, whilst organising food transports to hunger-stricken areas.

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This original article arose from a cover owned by Nick Arrow flown on the return Johannesburg flight, queried to the author, but which is not illustrated in this reproduction of the original article, here preferring to illustrate the more relevant (to us) Nigeria cover.



## Un-recorded Nigeria “Tombstone” Censor mark

Rob May & Peter Wingent

During the extensive correspondence that has spawned the several articles on World War 2 airmails in the last issue of *Cameo* and this one, Peter Wingent circulated a scan of the cover illustrated at figures 1 & 2. It was sent from Douala Cameroun to Manchester, UK by registered airmail on 16 June 1942, rated 23fr. This rate is made up as 2.50fr first 20grm ordinary postage + 18.00fr per 5grm air fee + 2.50fr registration.

Figure 1: front of cover Douala to Manchester of 16 June 1942 (reduced to 80%)

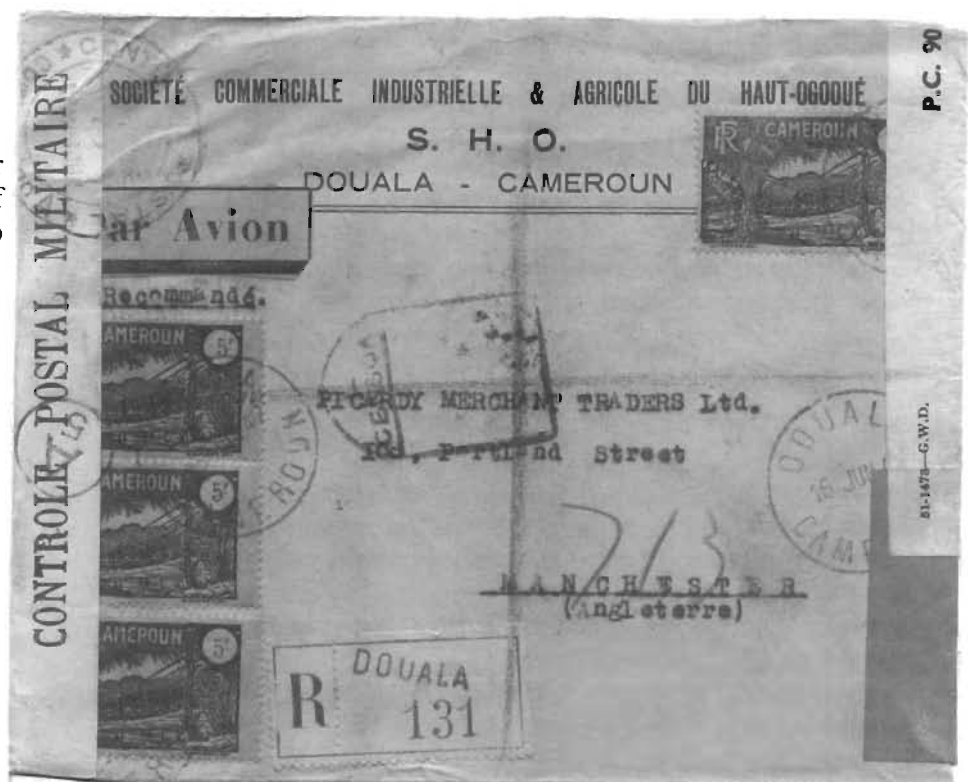


Figure 2: reverse of the cover showing back-stamps for the double-Atlantic crossing by Pan Am FAM22 and FAM18



Peter Wingent has been able to reference the PC90 label with an imprint “51-1473 G.W.D.” in Torrence & Morenweiser (Ref 1), which shows that it is a UK tape. Rob May remembered having seen the tombstone censor mark on the centre front of this cover before, but it is not recorded by Martin & Walton (Ref 2). After Rob showed a scan of this cover at the November 2008 WASC meeting, Ray Harris sent a scan of the cover shown at figure 3 which he had shown at a WASC meeting a few years ago. This cover is by registered surface mail direct from Nigeria to the UK, sent 4 March 1942, and therefore it is very probable that the mark was applied to both covers at Lagos (abbreviated to “L” at the top of the mark?). Its dimensions are 37.5mm tall by 25mm wide.

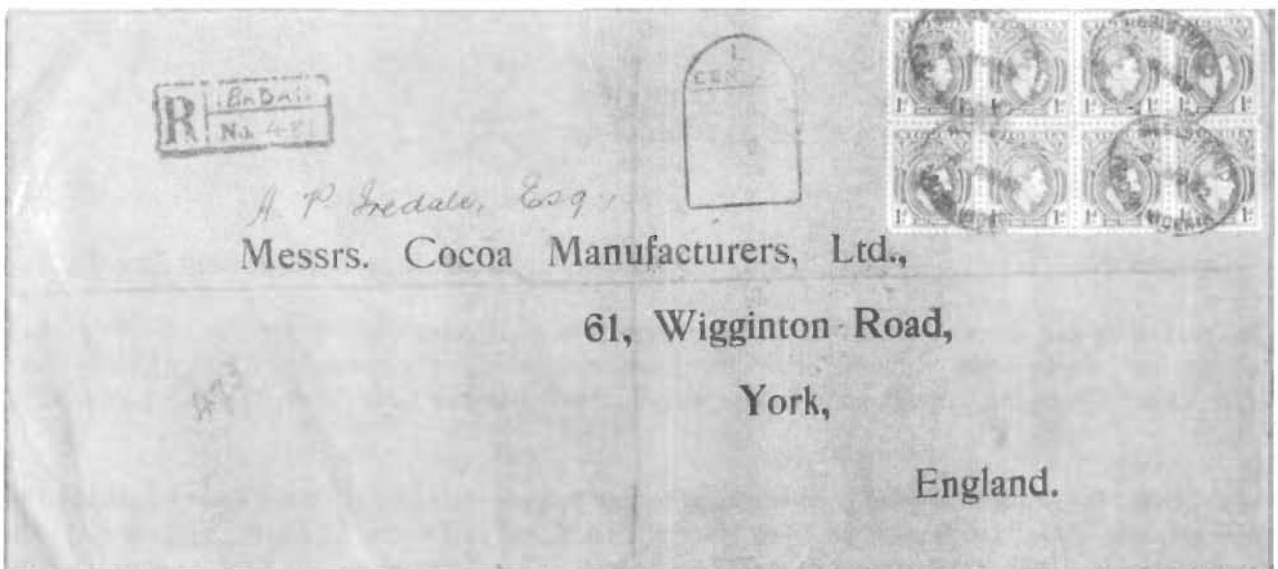


Figure 3: “L / CENSOR” tombstone mark on surface mail Badagry to York, UK., 4 March 1942 (at 60%)

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# Cameroun – Plating the Sterling Issue of 1961: The ½ d on 1 Franc, 1d on 2 Franc, and 2d on 10 Franc Stamps

**Marty Bratzel, Brian Lythgoe, Nick Carter, Michael Wright, Rob May, Peter Hørlyck, and  
Claude Chassagne**

## INTRODUCTION

On October 1, 1961, Cameroun introduced 12 then-current postage stamps revalued with sterling currency, for use in West Cameroon. These overprinted stamps remained in use until May 1962, when the currency conversion was completed and stamps in CFA francs were introduced. This article, the third in a series, examines in detail the overprint characteristics on the ½ d on 1-franc Type 1, the 1d on 2-franc, and the 2d on 10-franc stamps. Previous articles have examined the 1½d on 5-franc and the 3d on 15-franc F.I.D.E.S. stamps (Ref. 1) and the 1/- on 25-franc Ahidjo stamp (Ref. 2).

## THE STAMPS

The un-overprinted 1-franc, 2-franc, and 10-franc stamps were originally issued in 1946 as part of a series of 19 definitive postage stamps. The series underwent several printings, and many of the stamps exist with different perforations and with various shades of ink. The stamps selected for overprinting were drawn from existing stocks at the Cameroun PTT and are depicted in Figure 1. A full sheet of each denomination consists of 50 stamps, arranged in 5 rows of 10 stamps. Table 1 on page 30 summarizes the characteristics of these sterling-revalued stamps.



**Figure 1. The ½ d, 1 d and 2 d Overprint Settings on the Issued Stamps.**

The perf. 12½ and the perf. 12½ x 12 varieties were previously reported by May (Ref. 3). The stamp colours are based on the authors' observations and are deliberately general. Attempts for greater specificity, for example, through comparisons with the Michel Colour Guide (Ref. 4) yielded ambivalent results.

As discussed below, the overprint plate was used to first prepare the ½ d on 1-franc Type 1 stamps. The plate was then adjusted to prepare the 2d on 10-franc stamps and then further adjusted to prepare the 1d on 2-franc stamps. These three denominations were overprinted in September 1961 (Ref. 5) and officially placed on sale in West Cameroon on October 1, 1961.

As noted in Table 1, the ½ d on 1-franc stamp is found with two different overprints. Additional 1 franc stamps were overprinted about March 1962 (Ref. 5) using a new plate that differed significantly from the first printing. The first printing is classified as Type 1 and the later printing as Type 2. This article focuses on the three stamps released on October 1. The key differences between the ½ d Type 1 and Type 2 stamps are discussed and illustrated anon.

## PROOF IMPRESSION

At least one proof impression was prepared for the ½d Type 1 overprint. The proof is in vermilion ink on greenish paper. On the reverse is the manuscript notation, 1000 planche / 50000 / 1 fr / Porteurs Bananes / 1/2 d. The proof was cut into at least four pieces. Three pieces are to hand:

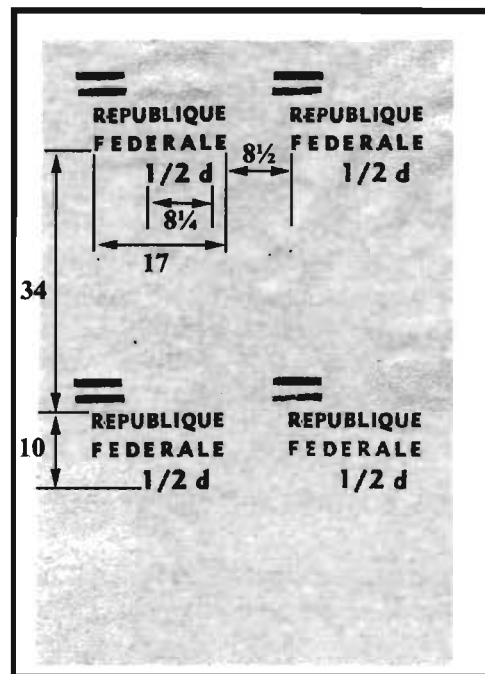
Positions 1-8, 11-18, 21-28, 35-38 and 45-48 (BL).

Positions 31-32, 41-42 (PH).

Positions 33-34, 43-44 (MW).

Together, these three pieces cover the first eight columns in a full sheet of 50 stamps, specifically, positions 1-8, 11-18, 21-28, 31-38, and 41-48.

Overall, the overprint plate was well composed, with no significant differences in the positioning of the lines of text and in the measured distances and dimensions, and with no defective letters or numbers, which would have facilitated plating. Positions 1-2 and 11-12 are depicted in Figure 2, along with key measurements. As for other denominations in the series, the key characteristics that aid in plating are the shape and relative position of the two bars overprinted onto each stamp.



**Figure 2. ½ d Type 1 Proof,  
Positions 1-2 & 11-12.**

Measurements in millimetres.

However, while the letters in the proof impression are all clear, many of the bars are not. This could be due to under-inking, poor transfer of the ink to the paper, and / or other factors. Whatever the reason, this lack of clarity limits the usefulness of the proof impression to plate the overprinted stamps. Most of the bar characteristics seen on the proof impression are artefacts.

All three stamps under consideration here are vertical format, but the designs are different: 1 franc – porters carrying bananas; 2 franc – bowman; and 10 franc – Lamido horsemen. On the 1-franc stamp, the denomination is at the top left, on the 2-franc and the 10-franc stamps at the top right. May (Ref. 6) speculated that the ½ d on 1-franc Type 1 stamps were printed first, then the obliterator bars were shifted from the top left to the top right, and the denomination altered by removing the 1/, leaving only the 2d and, after the 2d on 10-franc stamps were printed, the 2 replaced with a 1 and the 1d on 2-franc stamps were printed. Based on examination below, this hypothesis is, in all likelihood, correct. Most likely, after the adjustments were made, proofs were not made for the 1d and the 2d overprints.

## EXAMINATION OF THE OVERPRINTED STAMPS

As for the 3d on 15 franc stamp, two different overprint inks are found on all three denominations: a relatively flat orange red or vermilion and a more viscous carmine red. Because the design on the basic 1, 2, and 10 franc stamps is engraved, the overprint ink did not necessarily adhere uniformly, although the carmine red yielded much better adherence. As a result, the bars in the overprint often appear variable and incomplete – more artefacts and anomalies. Therefore, the characteristics of the bars may not be evident, adding to the challenge of plating a particular position in a full sheet. The ½d on 1-franc stamp is particularly vexatious.

The overprint is usually well positioned on the ½d on 1-franc stamp but, for the 2d on 10-franc and the 1d on 2-franc stamps, the overprint is often shifted to the right or up, the result being that the obliterator bars intersect the perforations or are shifted to the adjacent stamp. See for example Figure 3. This results in the further loss of information about the characteristics of the bars, further complicating the plating of the

stamps.

As a result of the above considerations, plating was challenging, although multiples and marginal copies facilitated the process. A 30X magnifier was essential to discern more subtle differences among the 50 positions in a sheet.

Several hundred stamps were examined, especially for the 1d on 2-franc and the 2d on 10-franc denominations. Table 2 summarizes the overprint positions seen and unequivocally plated for the proof and for the three stamps. Single stamps for virtually all of the other positions for the 1d on 2-franc and the 2d on 10-franc stamps are to hand but, given the similar characteristics of the overprint at several positions, the limited quality of the overprint, and because the stamps are singles, we cannot be absolutely positive that a given stamp slots into a given position. Significantly, however, there are no stamps that could not be plated to the one of the 50 positions. We therefore conclude that only one overprint plate was used to prepare each denomination.

### **THE ½d ON 1-FRANC TYPE 1 STAMP**

The Carter accumulation (Ref. 7) contains no used multiples of the ½ d on 1-franc Type 1 stamp and only a handful of used singles, indicating that the stamp was not used as extensively as other denominations in the series. However, a number of mint multiples with marginal selvedge are available. These stamps were compared with the proof impression and plated. For those positions for which both the proof impression and overprinted stamps were available, the overprint on the stamps match the proof impression, artefacts notwithstanding. This includes the positions of the bars relative to each other. The ½d stamps were also compared with 1d and 2d stamps from corresponding positions in the sheet, confirming the position assignments.

### **THE 2d ON 10-FRANC STAMP**

The Carter accumulation contains used multiples of up to 9 stamps. In addition, a number of mint multiples with marginal selvedge, as well as other used multiples from the authors' collections, are to hand. A sufficient number of stamps are available to unequivocally reconstruct most of the overprint setting for the 2d on 10-franc stamp. Comparison of the stamps at various positions with the proof impression and with ½d stamps from the same position (and subsequently with the 1d stamps) confirm that the same plate was used. The obliterator bars have been shifted from left to right but, in each case, the alignment of the bars relative to each other is unchanged, that is, if one bar extended a bit to the left or right for the ½d overprint, the same holds true for the 2d (and the 1d) overprint.

It is likely that, when the plate was adjusted after printing the ½d stamps, a whole row of double bars (i.e. across 10 stamps) was shifted *en bloc* by removing a spacer from one end of the row, moving the type, and then re-inserting the spacer at the other end. The process would then have been repeated for the other four rows. The other distances and dimensions, depicted in Figure 2, are unchanged except, of course, the length of the denomination line, which was adjusted for the 2d and then the 1d overprints, 5 mm and 4¼ mm respectively. Also, the d in the denomination was not adjusted.

### **THE 1d ON 2-FRANC STAMP**

The Carter accumulation contains used multiples of up to 6 stamps. In addition, a number of mint multiples, some with marginal selvedge, are to hand along with a number of other used multiples. A sufficient number of stamps are available to unequivocally reconstruct much of the overprint setting for the 1d on 2-franc stamp. Comparison of the stamps at various positions with the proof impression and with ½d and 2d stamps from the same position again confirm that the same plate was used. Comparison also confirms that the alignment of the bars relative to each other remains unchanged and the d was not adjusted.



**Figure 3. Shifted Overprint on the 1 d on 2-franc Stamp.**

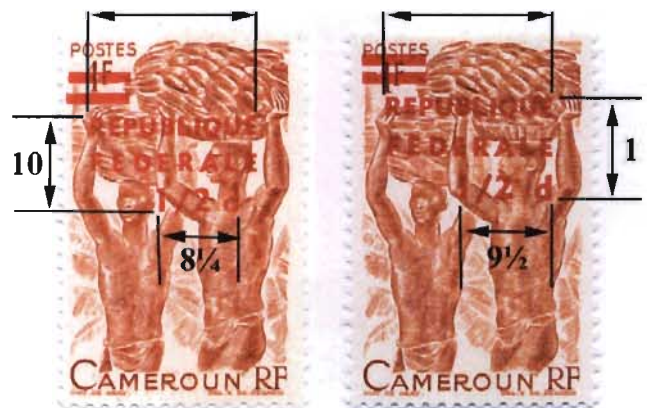
The shift of the bars onto the perforations or to the adjacent stamp adds to the plating challenge.

#### INVERTED OVERPRINT ½d on 1-FRANC STAMP

We illustrate in Figure 4 a ½d on 1-franc Type 1 stamp with inverted overprint which plates to overprint position 49. The stamp is perf. 12½ x 12 and the overprint ink carmine red.



**Figure 4. ½d on 1 franc Type 1  
Inverted Overprint.  
Overprint position 49.**



**Type 1**

**Type 2**

**Figure 5. The ½d on 1-franc Type 1  
and Type 2 Overprint Settings.**

#### THE ½d ON 1-FRANC TYPE 2 STAMP

The key differences between the ½d on 1-franc Type 1 and Type 2 overprints are depicted in Figure 5. May (Ref. 8) showed a strip of ten Type 2 stamps comprising the right two columns of a sheet of 50. He noted that there are distinct characteristics for the bars at several positions that will facilitate plating. The plating of a full sheet of the Type 2 stamp will be the subject of a future article in this series.



Figure 6. Position 1.  
Proof, 1/2 d and 2 d.



Figure 7. Position 13. Proof, 1/2d, 1d, and 2d.



Figure 8.  
Position 22.  
Proof, 1 d  
and 2 d.



Figure 9. Position 24.  
Proof, 1 d and 2 d.

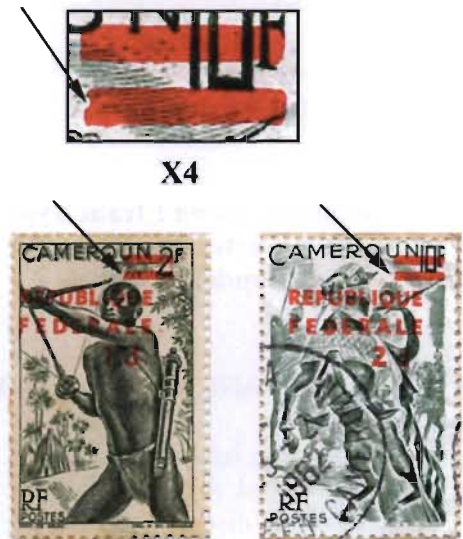


Figure 10. Position 50.  
1d and 2 d.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF SPECIFIC POSITIONS

A few positions exhibit easily (a relative term!) discernible characteristics that are present on the proof impression and on the overprinted stamps, providing further support to the case for the use of a single printing plate, suitably adjusted, to prepare all three denominations.

Position 1. Indentation at bottom right corner of lower bar. The indentation on the proof and on the ½d and the 2d stamps is shown in Figure 6. Position 23 has a similar, but smaller indentation at the same location, too minute to clearly illustrate here. The relative bar alignments for positions 1 and 23 differ, facilitating differentiation between the two positions.

Position 13. Indentation at left end of top bar. The indentation on the proof and on the ½d, the 1d, and the 2d stamps is shown in Figure 7. Position 49 also has a slight, but differently shaped indentation. Other bar characteristics can be used to help distinguish between the two positions.

Position 22. Indentation on bottom side of lower bar. The indentation on the proof and on the 1d and the 2d stamps is shown in Figure 8.

Position 24. Indentation on top edge of lower bar. The indentation on the proof and on the 1d and the 2d stamps is shown in Figure 9.

Position 50. Notch at left end of bottom bar. The notch on the 1d and the 2d stamps is shown in Figure 10.

Confirmation of these characteristics and their position was obtained through the plating of larger multiples. Even with these more easily discernible characteristics, and even when viewed through a magnifier, one can begin to appreciate the challenges posed to plate these stamps. Unique characteristics for other positions also appear on the proof impression and on the plated stamps. With care and with a 30X magnifier, single copies of stamps from many positions can be plated. Because of the magnification required, the characteristics of many positions do not lend themselves to reproduction here.

## FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF ALIGNMENT

In the quest for additional characteristics that would assist in plating these stamps, specific consideration was given to the alignment of the numerals and the d in the denomination with REPUBLIQUE and FEDERALE. All available stamps – several hundred in total – were checked. For the proof impression and all three stamps, there is no clearly discernible variation or unique alignment that would contribute to establishing a position in a sheet of 50 stamps. The only exception is Position 22 (which already has a unique characteristic; see Figure 8), but then only on the 2d on 10-franc stamp – the d is a fraction of a millimetre further to the right, so that extension of the arm of the d passes to the right of the U in REPUBLIQUE. For the other positions, the extension intersects the U. This difference is not present on the proof, the ½d stamp, or the 1d stamp, the latter which was prepared after the 2d stamp. We conclude that some very slight shifting occurred when the overprint plate was adjusted.

## CONCLUSIONS

Proof impressions are available for 40 of the 50 positions of the ½d Type 1 overprint. Through careful comparison of the bars on multiples, marginal stamps with selvage, and even single ½d, 1d, and 2d stamps, it is possible to find, collectively across all three denominations, stamps for each of the 50 positions in a full sheet. For a given position in a sheet, stamps of one, two, or all three denominations are available for comparison with each other and / or with the proof impression. In each case where comparison for a given position is possible, the characteristics of the bars are the same, even though the bars have been shifted from left to right for the 1d and the 2d stamps.

The poor imprint of the bars on the proof impression, the uneven adherence of the overprint ink on the engraved stamps, and the frequent positioning of the bars onto the perforations make the plating of all three denominations a challenge.

Based on examination of the proof impression and the stamps for all three values, we conclude that there was only one overprint setting and that the same plate was used to prepare all three denominations, with suitable adjustments of the value and the location of the bars. There is no evidence to not support the order of printing of, first the ½d on 1 franc stamp, for which a proof impression was made, second the 2d on 10-franc stamp and, third the 1d on 2-franc stamp. We can further conclude that there was only a single printing for each denomination with this overprint plate. The ½d Type 2 stamp, as discussed in Refs. 5 and 8, constitutes a separate, later printing.



**Figure 11. Forged Overprint.**  
The 1d overprint is genuine, the ½ d overprint is forged.

Collaboration continues to examine and plate the other stamps in this fascinating series. Future articles will be published in due course.

To conclude and for the record we illustrate in Figure 11 an atrocious double overprint on a 2d stamp, offered for sale on ebay. The 1d overprint is genuine, the ½d overprint is forged. Caveat emptor.

**TABLE 1. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ½ d ON 1 FRANC, 1d ON 2 FRANC, AND 2d ON 10 FRANC STAMPS**

Denomination	Perforation	Perforation	Stamp Colour	Overprint Colour
½ d on 1 franc	Type 1	12½, 12½ x 12	brownish orange	vermilion, carmine red
	Type 2	12½ x 12		carmine red
1 d on 2 franc	12½	12½	shades of dark grey green	vermilion, carmine red
2 d on 10 franc	12½	12½	shades of green	vermilion, carmine red

## REFERENCES

1. Bratzel, Marty, Brian Lythgoe, Rob May, and Nick Carter. Cameroun – Plating the Sterling Issue of 1961: the 1½ d on 5 Franc and the 3d on 15 Franc Stamps. *Cameo*, Vol. 8, No. 3, June 2004, pages 144-150.
2. Bratzel, Marty, Brian Lythgoe, Nick Carter, and Bob Maddocks. Cameroun – Plating the Sterling Issue of 1961: the 1/- on 25 Franc Stamp. *Cameo*, Vol. 9, No. 3, January 2006, pages 129-133.
3. May, Rob, Michael Wright, John Smith, and Brian Lythgoe. Cameroun 1961 Sterling Surcharges. *Cameo*, Vol. 6, No. 5, January 2000, pages 248-252.
4. *Michel Schwaneberger Farbenführer*. 17. Auflage, Munich, Schwaneberger Verlag GmbH.
5. Bratzel, Marty. Cameroun – the Sterling Issue of 1961: Printings, Dates of Issue and Availability. *Cameo*, Vol. 9, No. 4, June 2006, pages 190-197.
6. May, Rob. Cameroun 1961 Sterling Surcharges Reprinted. *Cameo*, Vol. 6, No. 7, July 2000, pages 330-331.
7. The Carter accumulation is a large quantity of used Cameroon stamps that Nick Carter acquired “on the streets” in Lagos in 1961-62. Nick passed away on September 11, 2008. His stamps have been, and will continue to be available for study. Additional articles based on his accumulation will be published periodically in the philatelic literature.
8. May, Rob. Cameroun 1961 Sterling Surcharges – ½d Value. *Cameo*, Vol. 9, No. 2, October 2005, pages 111-112.

**TABLE 2. OVERPRINT POSITIONS SEEN AND PLATED**

**½ d Type 1 Proof**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18		
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28		
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38		
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48		

**½ d on 1-franc Type 1 Stamp**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7			
11	12	13	14	15	16	17			
				25	26				
			34						
								<49>	

**1 d on 2-franc Stamp**

	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17		19	20
21	22	23	24			27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34		36		38		40
41	42	43		45	46	47		49	50

**2 d on 10-franc Stamp**

1	2		4	5	6	7		9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	22	23	24	25	26		28	29	30
	32	33	34	35	36		38	39	40
			44	45	46			49	50

# Nigeria: A 1959 puzzle

Jeremy Martin FRPSL

John Powell and I have been steadily working our way through the Crown Agents Philatelic and Security Printing Archive held by the British Library. In the *Proofs from 1913* Nigeria album we came across this bromide (Figure 1) for a circular design with the head of the monarch in the centre and for a 1/3d value. The design was "Approved 3/6/59". The words Postage & Revenue have been omitted and there was no note of the reason for this bromide. Suggestions will be welcomed.



My thanks to Paul Skinner, Curator of philatelic Collections at the British Library for his help.



## Gold Coast: the 1876-1881 issue

Jeremy Martin FRPSL

In *The Postal Services of the Gold Coast to 1901* (Ref 1) shades of the five values are noted as follows:

½d	olive-yellow, dark olive-yellow
1d	blue, light blue, deep dull blue
2d	pale green, dark green
4d	magenta, pale magenta
6d	pale orange, dull orange, pale orange-yellow

I have often wondered if these shades exist on both line and comb perforated stamps. Recently I checked my own collection and that of a friend. It does seem that all shades can be found both line and comb, but there is one query. For the 6d value, comb perforated, we found the pale orange and pale orange-yellow shades, but not the dull orange. Would members like to check if they have this shade comb perforated?

### Reference

1. Sacher J.(ed), Beale P., Ensor M., Martin J., and Newroth P., *The Postal Services of the Gold Coast to 1901*, pp154-156, RPSL, London, 2003

# Nigeria Stamp Duty Adhesive

Ray Harris

In 2006 Nipost issued a N50 stamp inscribed "Stamp Duty" (*ed—the new SG catalogue lists this as a fiscal stamp issued 2007*) but which has also been seen used to prepay postage. The following two notes demonstrate the real purpose of this stamp, which is interestingly in both articles described as a "postage" stamp.

From the Nipost web-site

3.10 Stamp Duty: The Stamp Duty Act is principally a financial regulation but its implementation is exercised through the use of Postage stamps. Bulk users like Hotels, NEPA, Water Boards, Landowners Banks, The Stock Exchange Market and other big businesses can hire agents, Tax Meter Machines for the purpose of putting on impression demoting the amount of stamp duty with dates. Users of these machines must obtain licenses from the Local Head Postmaster and Payment in advance in respect of stamps used must be made from time to time.

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From "This Day" (Lagos)

17 December 2007

Posted to the web 17 December 2007

Nigeria: Nipost Warns On Evasion of Stamp Duties

James Sowole  
Akure

The Nigeria Postal Services has warned that the law enforcement agents would start arresting any person who issued receipts for any transaction which value is above N1,000 without affixing a postage stamp of N50 on such a receipt.

The Area Postal Manager for Ondo Territory which comprises Ondo and Ekiti states, Mr Lawrence Tunwase gave that warning on the occasion of 2007 Customers' Forum on Stamp Duties Act Implementation and Implication Workshop held in Akure, Ondo State capital.

Tunwase lamented that though the Federal Government circular on the implementation of the Stamp Duty Act had been in operation since August, 2006, the Ondo Postal Territory comprising of both Ondo and Ekiti states have not commenced the implementation.

He said non implementation of the Act had been denying the government of the deserved revenue over the years saying a stop must be put to this.

According to Tunwase, the Stamp Duties Act which had been an integral part of the nation's jurisprudence, was kept in the cooler for too long until former President, Olusegun Obasanjo gave it the needed impetus through the National Assembly while the office of the Accountant-General issued a White Paper on its implementation.

The Area Manager said while Section 14(2) of the Act made denotation of the receipts mandatory, Section 92 makes it a criminal Offence punishable on conviction for any person to give a receipt liable to duty and which is not duly stamped where a receipt would be liable to duty.

Apart from the revenue that would accrue to the government stamp duty, Tunwase said the use of postage stamps on receipts made such receipts authentic to the transactions documents. Tunwase, who highlighted categories of transaction to attract stamp duties, implored participants at the workshop to pass the information to friends, relatives and neighbours so that they would not run foul of the law.

# Cameroun Sterling Overprint Stamps Appeal

**Martin Bratzel**

Since 2001, a group of dedicated Cameroun stamp collectors has worked to plate a series of Cameroun stamps (Scott 343-351, C38-40) released October 1, 1961. Each stamp is overprinted REPUBLIQUE FEDERALE, two bars obliterating the old value, and a new value in sterling currency. The stamps were intended for use in the former Southern Cameroons until the conversion from British currency to the CFA franc was complete.

In total, 19 face-different stamps were released, ½d through £1. Since each overprint plate was prepared from loose type, the characteristics of the type, primarily the obliterating bars, allows the position of each stamp in each sheet to be plated. To date, nine of the stamps have been fully plated and the findings published as a series of articles in *Cameo*, journal of the West Africa Study Circle. The goal is to complete the reconstruction of sheets for the remaining ten stamps, and to characterize each position in each sheet, by the end of 2010.



To complete this landmark study, we are appealing to collectors for the loan or sale of multiples – blocks of four or larger and preferably with marginal selvage – of the following stamps:

½ d on 1 franc – the variety with the d aligned with the end of FEDERALE.

4 d on 15 franc – two overprint plates of 50 positions each were prepared.

All three varieties of the 5/- and the 10/- stamps and both varieties of the £1 stamp. The 5/- and 10/- varieties differ in the size of the numerals and the placement of the numerals in relation to the obliterating bars. The £1 varieties differ in the length of REPUBLIQUE and FEDERALE.

Photocopies and even electronic scans are not sufficient to conduct the study. The stamps must be examined firsthand under 30X magnification.

Our priority is for larger multiples of the 4d stamps. Two overprint plates of 50 positions each were prepared, necessitating more than the anticipated number of stamps in order to complete the characterization of both plates.

All expenses, including postage, will be reimbursed. If desired, contributors will be acknowledged in articles arising from this study.

For further details, please contact Dr. Martin Bratzel at [marty\\_bratzel@yahoo.ca](mailto:marty_bratzel@yahoo.ca) or at 1233 Virginia Avenue, Windsor, Ontario N8S 2Z1 Canada.

Member: American Philatelic Society, West Africa Study Circle, France & Colonies Philatelic Society, Germany Philatelic Society



## Nigeria National Saving Stamps Postally Used

**Jeremy Martin FRPSL**

In *Cameo* number 66 (Vol. 9, No.2, October 2005, p97) I gave details of the 3d and 1/- National Savings stamps issued in 1962. Bob Maddocks in *Cameo* 61 (Vol. 8, No.2, January 2004, p111) recorded the 1/- value on a piece date-stamped 27 DE 62. Then in *Cameo* 73 (Vol. 10, No.4, January 2008, p231) Ray Harris reported a 1/- value on a commercial cover, date-stamp unclear but accepted as a 1/- airmail rate to the USA.

I have now discovered a 3d National Savings stamp used on a commercial cover to the UK. The cover, date-stamped 4 DE 62, also has a strip of three 1961 3d definitives to make up a 1/- airmail rate.

# Gold Coast to Sudan, Censored in Egypt, 1948

Jeremy Martin FRPSL

This cover, figures 1 and 2, was cancelled at Akuse on 5 November 1948 and franked 1/- for airmail. This was the correct Empire rate per half ounce (Ref 1) but in Sudan it was taxed 4 milliemes as though Sudan was a foreign destination. What is interesting is that *en route* it was censored in Egypt, during the first Arab-Israeli War.



Figure 1; front



Figure 2; reverse

My thanks to Richard Stock for sending photocopies of this cover.

## Reference

1. Ensor M. (Ed), *The Postal Services of the Gold Coast 1901-1957*, p168, WASC, Dronfield 1998

# Nigeria 2008 stamp printings

Rob May & Ray Harris

The first edition of the Stanley Gibbons Commonwealth West Africa has just been published, but does not include some strange printings of commemorative stamps that have emerged during 2008 and were reported to the SG editor by Ray Harris just too late to be included. There is just a footnote after the 10 April 2008 Anti-corruption campaign issue which reads “....known without imprints in the margins”.

The World Wildlife Fund set of four values depicting the Cross River Gorilla (an endangered species) was offered to some WASC members in two styles, apparently different printings. Figure 1 shows the bottom left corner of a “normal” sheet of the N20 value, with traffic lights, plate numbers and guide marks. The bottom selvedge also includes a “Nigerian Security Printing & Minting plc” imprint below columns 7-9. Note the variation of printing colour within the sheet, where stamp 1 of the bottom row shows browner fur than the rest of the sheet. Figure 2 shows the top left corner of a sheet of the same design with a totally different, low quality, appearance. This sheet has no marginal markings except the sheet number as shown. Note that all the stamps in columns 4 and 9 show the N of Nigeria damaged to look more like XIGERIA. Both versions are accurately perforated 13, quite possibly on the same machine. Similar pairs of sheets exist for all three other values in this set

Figure 1; normal



Figure 2: sheet offered as 'proof'



Later in 2008 (too late to be included in the new SG catalogue) a single N50 value has been issued showing a couple wearing Yoruba ceremonial costumes, commemorating the UPU Congress. Figure 3 shows that this has appeared in at least two different versions as well, both having imprints on each stamp for NSPMPLC and NIPOST copyright 2007. The darker version, with a lower sheet number, again has no marginal markings or printer's imprint, except the sheet number, whilst the paler version has the full set of traffic lights, plate numbers, imprint and guide marks. To add to the mystery this sheet of the darker shade has only 43 stamp images, with blanks instead of stamps 44-50, as illustrated at figure 3. Michael Wright has shown me several used copies on recent mail, all but one of which are closest in colour to the darker stamps illustrated here: - in effect, the "proof" version is the one so far seen more frequently used on commercial mail!



Figure 3

Turning now to the meaning of the footnote in the SG catalogue regarding the Anti-corruption issue. This discovery was reported to the catalogue editor by Ray Harris and the imprints referred to are the ones on the STAMPS. Figure 4 shows the N50 value in its two versions, and the same versions are known for the N20 and N100 values as well. The version without the imprint has appeared only on first day covers as far as we know. Ray has put both stamps under high magnification to find that the print is the same number of dpi and there seem to be no plate differences apart from the marginal inscriptions. The colours are similar but more intense on all the three "no imprint" stamps.

Finally Ray also reports that the 2008 Olympics set has been printed without plate numbers etc.



Figure 4: N50 value of the Anti-fraud issue

We can only speculate on what is going on. The poor quality of the gorilla stamps might indicate photocopies, but if anyone photocopied full sheets they would surely copy the marginal markings as well. It would also be hard for an amateur copyist to reproduce the accurate perforations. Whatever is happening seems to be a deliberate policy for all 2008 issues so far, and is probably being done within NSPM.

We gratefully acknowledge contributions from Jeremy Martin, Roger West and Moses Zacchaeus which brought these stamps to our notice.

# Sierra Leone Edward VII Plates 2a and 2b

Frank Walton FRPSL & Peter Fernbank FRPSL

The following article first appeared in the *London Philatelist*, July-August 2008, volume 117, page 212, and updates an earlier LP article (Ref 2) which was also reproduced in *Cameo*, June 2008, pages 249-254. This article appears with the kind permission of the authors and the editor of the *London Philatelist*, who is one of them.

Further to the article in the December 2007 *London Philatelist* (Ref 1), additional information has come to light concerning the use of Plates 2a and 2b for the Sierra Leone 1d on Crown CA watermarked paper. Now all three plates, i.e. 1, 2a and 2b have been recorded for this stamp (Figures 1 to 3).



Figure 1. Plate 1: plate number plug present in all four corners of the sheet



Figure 2. Plate 2a: plate number plug present in the top margin only



Figure 3. Plate 2b: lower margin only

The *Colonial Stamps* book shows that initially 606 sheets of 1d stamps were printed, with a further 5,427 sheets following a little while later. It seems probably that the first printing was made at the same time as the other values, therefore most likely from Plate 1.

The larger printing was a substantial volume; only 1,425 sheets were printed for the other values combined. To manage such a high print run it is likely that De La Rue used multiple presses, hence the use of Plates 2a and 2b, perhaps in addition to Plate 1.

The two examples illustrated in Figures 2 and 3 are different shades. This would support a conclusion that they were from different print runs, which in turn would discount a theory that Plates 2a and 2b were bolted together and used 240-set.

The next printing of the 1d value was on 7 April 1904 (ref 2). Whilst this has been allocated to the Multiple Crown CA paper, neither author has seen a postmarked example dated before the third printing on 8 June 1905. It is conceivable that some or all of the 1904 printing could have been done on the earlier paper and have been from Plate 2a or 2b. The earliest use seen by us for the use of the MCA paper is for Virgin Islands for a printing on 22 April 1904.

Any further evidence that might shed light on this matter would be most welcome.

## References

1. Fernbank P., "King Edward VII Imperium Style Postage & Revenue Key Plate 2", *London Philatelist*, Volume 116 pp391-396, RPSL, December 2007
2. Beale P.O., *The Postal Service of Sierra Leone...*, pp160-161, RPSL, London 1988

# SALPOST's New Website

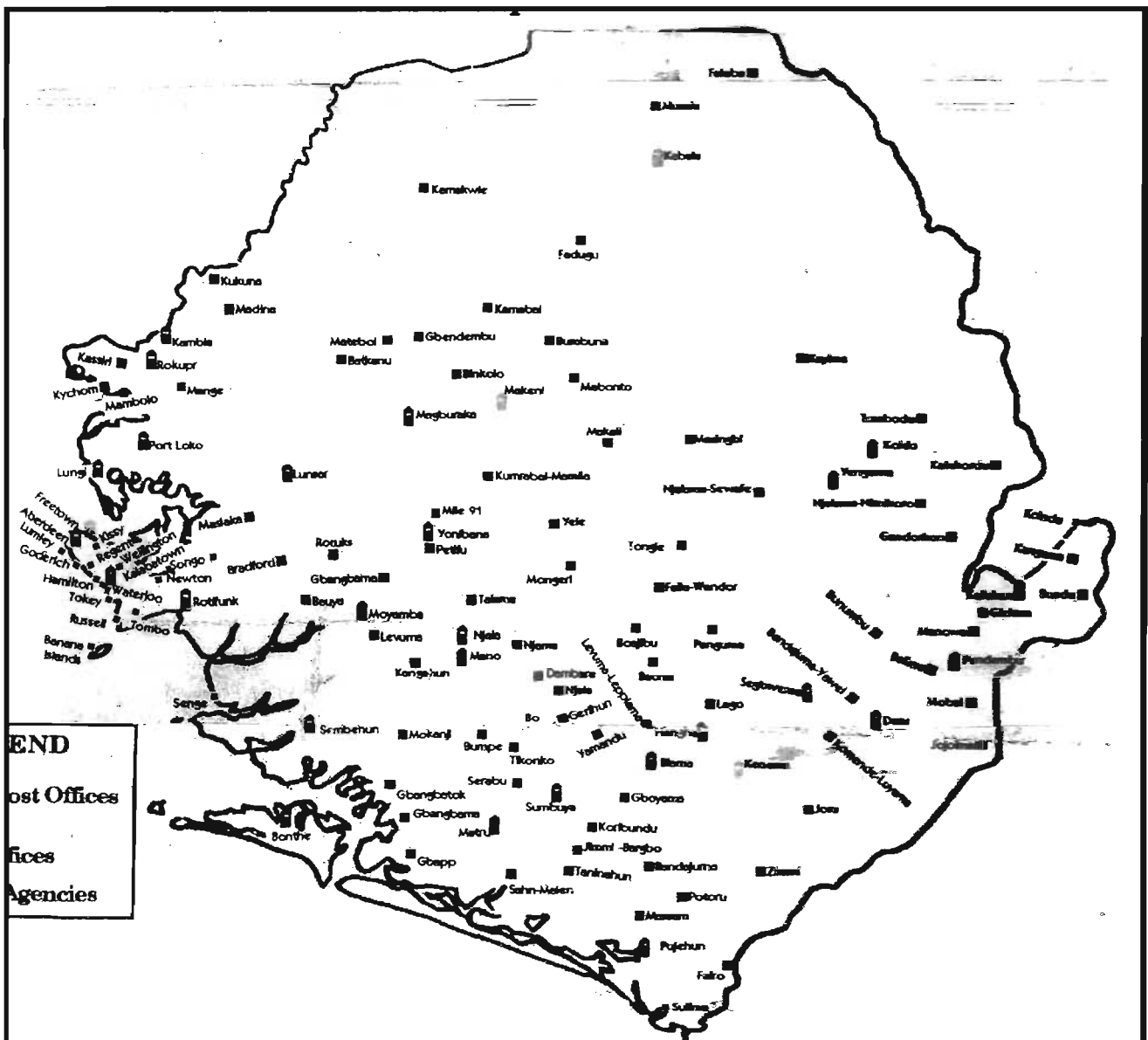
Philip Quirk

I recently (26 November 2008) chanced upon SalPost's website at <http://www.salpost.sl/> . In addition to an extensive list of postal rates and services offered by the organisation, I was interested to find a list of 24 currently operating post offices, as shown below.

## OPERATIONAL OFFICES

The following shows a list of Operational Post Offices in Sierra Leone and their address.

1. General Post Office, Siaka Stevens Street, Freetown
2. Cline Town Post Office, Jenner Wright Road, Cline Town, Western Region
3. Kissy Post Office, Low cost Housing, Kissy, Western Region
4. New England Post Office Jomo Kenyatta Road, New England, Western Region
5. Aberdeen Post Office, Cape Road, Aberdeen, Westren Region
6. Youyi Building Post Office, Main Motor Road, Youyi Building, Freetown, Western Region
7. Hill Station Post Office, Regent Road, Hill Station, Freetown, Western Region
8. Q.E. II Quay Post Office, Queen Elizabeth II Quay, Freetown, Western Region
9. Waterloo Post Office, Waterloo, Western Region



10. Bo Post Office No. 2 Matru Road, Bo, Southern Region
11. Moyamba Post Office, Siaka Stevens Street, Moyamba, Southern Region
12. Pujehun Post Office, Gbondappie Road, Pujehun, Southern Region
13. Bonthe Post Office, Heddle Road, Bonthe, Southern Region
14. Kenema Post Office, 2 Hangha Road, Kenema, Eastern Region
15. Blama Post Office, Kori Bondo Road, Blama, Eastern Region
16. Kailahun Post Office, Pendembu Road, Kailahun, Eastern Region
17. Koidu Town Post Office, Post Office Road, Koidu Town, Eastern Region
18. Makeni Post Office, Station Road, Makeni, Northern Region
19. Kabala Post Office, Hospital Road, Kabala, Northern Region
20. Magburaka Post Office, Post Office Road, Magburaka, Northern Region
21. Kambia Post Office, Komrabai Dura Road, Kambia, Northern Region
22. Port Loko Post Office, Wharf Road, Port Loko, Northern Region
23. Lunsar Post Office, Siaka Stevens Street, Lunsar, Northern Region
24. Lungi Post Office, International Airport, Lungi, Northern Region.

Of even greater interest to me was a poster displayed on the home page of the website, showing a map of 125 post office locations, illustrated on the previous page. The map includes a number of offices that opened after Independence in 1961, but presumably must date from before the civil war. Postmarks from some of these offices have been reported in "Cameo", particularly by the indefatigable Messrs. Rolfe and Walton, but others may still await discovery.

**Table 1: Alphabetical listing of the 125 post offices shown on the SalPost poster map**

Aberdeen	Fairo	Kainkordu	Lumley	Moyamba	Sembahun
Baiima	Falaba	Kalabatown	Lungi	Musala	Senge
Banana Islands	Falla-Wandor	Kamabai	Lunsar	Newton	Serabu
Bandajuma	Freetown	Kambia	Mabonto	Njaiama-Nimikoro	Songo
Bandajuma-Yawei	Gandorhun	Kamekwie	Madina	Njaiama-Sewafe	Sulima
Baoma	Gbangbama	Kangahun	Magburaka	Njala (1)	Sumbuya
Batkanu	Gbangbema	Kangama	Makali	Njala (2)	Taiama
Bauya	Gbangbetok	Kassiri	Makeni	Njama	Taninahun
Binkolo	Gbapp	Kayima	Mambolo	Panguma	Tikonko
Blama	Gbendembu	Kenema	Mange	Pendembu	Tokey
Bo	Gboyama	Kissy	Mano	Petifu	Tombo
Boajibu	Gerihun	Koidu	Manowa	Port Loko	Tongie
Bonthe	Giehun	Koindu	Masingbi	Potoru	Tumbodu
Bradford	Goderich	Komende-Luyama	Maslaka	Pujehun	Waterloo
Buedu	Hamilton	Koribundu	Massam	Regent	Wellington
Bumbuna	Hangha	Kukuna	Matru	Rokupr	Yamandu
Bumpe	Jimmi-Bagbo	Kumrabai-Mamila	Metebol	Roruks	Yele
Bunumbu	Jojoima	Kychom	Mile 91	Rotifunk	Yengema
Dambara	Joru	Lago	Mobai	Russell	Yonibana
Daru	Kabala	Levuma	Mokanji	Sahn-Malen	Zimmi
Fadugu	Kailahun	Levuma-Leppiama	Mongeri	Segbwema	

# Postcard Gold Coast to UK by PanAm trans-Atlantic

Peter Wingent

The front cover of this issue of *Cameo* shows a postcard sent from Koforidua, Gold Coast on 16 January 1942 to the UK by way of the Pan Am Atlantic air service. It is a commercial item and was part of a large correspondence. The sender was perhaps too optimistic when he included in his message:

*"This is a new service which has just been inaugurated here and I do hope it will be a success. Its frequency is approximately once every 14 days but one does not know when it leaves or how often. Anyway please write to let me know how long this takes to reach you. A letter costs 5/6. It should be a great deal speedier than by any boat even if a long wait is entailed and the 5/6 is a good deal of money. See how much more one can say than in a cable!"*

2/9d. for a post card was also a good deal of money. I think it ironic that the writer of the card was as much in the dark about the FAM22 service as we are today!!



## French Equatorial Africa— The “Petit Bureau of Campo: suite et fin

Bill Mitchell



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

A note from Dudley Cobb has drawn attention, I'm afraid, to some inadequacies in my article in *Cameo* 71 (ref 1) on the late use of a cancel of the petit bureau of Campo in Gabon some years after its closure. He drew attention to the lettering, the numerals and the inner circle of dashes, which certainly are not typical (the lettering particularly so) and concluded that the cancel is a fake. If I had included rather more detail in my article he would not, I hope, have formed this opinion.

Figure 1 is a re-run of the illustration of my stamp with its cancel of 12 AOUT 06 (inverted), some six years after Spain's claim to Campo and the rest of the territory of Rio Muni was recognized by France. Figures 2 & 3 show two somewhat earlier cancels of another Gabon petit bureau, Cap Lopez, the second example having the same style of lettering as mine of Campo (Gabon, incidentally, was absorbed into French Congo between 1891 and 1904, hence the differing inscriptions in the lower segments of the cancels). These illustrations are taken from Bob Stone's book on French Equatorial Africa cancels (Ref 2). His note on figure 3 is reproduced in part in my previous article. It reads in full:

*"Rare type, used 1888-1891, 5 P.O.s recorded although it was prepared for 15 P.O.s (reported: Cap Lopez, Lambaréné, Iguéla, Loango and Bata). Late use Lambaréné 1929-41. M'Pando and Campo marks "used" at Libreville in 1893, long after these P.O.s were closed!"*

As mentioned in my previous article, since this book was published it has been found that the Campo post office was open again for some five years until its final closure, probably in 1900 (but see below).

A re-reading of the important article on the Gabon petits bureaux by P.-L. Pannetier (Ref 3) shows that this was the source of much of Stone's report and of his illustration of this unusual type of cancel; the two are identical. M. Pannetier records that until 1887 the only post office in Gabon was at Libreville; in that year the creation of the 15 petits bureaux, including Campo, was authorized. He also records that manufacture of their circular date-stamps was entrusted to a firm in Paris, Maison Dubettier. Although he does not specifically say so, I infer from this that the company did not normally undertake this kind of work, and no doubt this explains the unusual lettering and other characteristics of these rare cancels.

So, I do not think that the cancel on my stamp is a fake. There seem to be three possible explanations of the late use;

that it was held in reserve for occasional use at Libreville,

it was issued temporarily to some newly-opened office awaiting delivery of a date-stamp of its own

or it was an example of clandestine use, probably at Libreville

Bob Maddocks has seen this note in draft and has kindly sent me further details of the Rio Muni area in general and the Gabon Campo in particular. The Spanish claim to the area was recognized as early as 1778, but this was challenged by the French during the second half of the 19th century. The Spanish claim was re-affirmed (to a much reduced area) by the Conference of Berlin in 1884, but this was ignored by the French and the Germans who agreed on the River Campo as the boundary between Gabon and Kamerun, and despite Spanish protests the French established both military posts and warehouses in the area. Franco-Spanish negotiations in Paris between February and June 1900 resulted in the recognition by France of the Spanish claim, but only to 26,000 square kilometers between the Campo and Utamboni Rivers (800,000 sq km had been recognized in 1778!). The borders of Rio Muni were established in 1901, when the French military detachments at Campo, Bata and Rio Benito were withdrawn (Ref 4). So it now seems that postal facilities at the Gabon Campo may have finally been withdrawn in 1901, not 1900 as I previously suggested.

And there the story of this particular cancel comes to an end; unless and until an example of post-1900 (or 1901) use is found on an envelope bearing details of the sender's address.

#### References

1. Mitchell W., "French Equatorial Africa—late use of the date-stamp of the "Petit Bureau" of Campo, Gabon", *Cameo*, Volume 10 p85, WASC, June 2007
2. Stone R.G., "*The Diverse World of Postal markings of Gabon/Congo/AEF*", pp8-9, F&CPS, New York, 1987
3. Pannetier, P-L. "Gabon et Congo Francais—les Petits Bureaux (1887-1893)", *Les Feuilles Marcophiles* 217 and 218 (1979). This was a reprint of an article originally serialised in *l'Echo de la Timbrologie* in 1960.
4. Liniger-Goumaz, M. "*Historical Dictionary of Equatorial Guinea*", No 21 of African Historical Dictionaries, Scarecrow press, Metuchen, New Jersey, 1979, pages 27, 65, 131 and 132.



## More useful references

**Dudley Cobb**

May I draw readers' attention to three articles that will interest some WASC members:

*Das deutsche Muni-Dreieck — Ekododo/Ukoko* by Wolfgang Herterich ARGE Berichte No.125, November 2007. A masterly solution to the Ekododo/Ukoko question that has troubled Kamerun collectors for so long. There is an historical section that casts some light on French and Spanish claims to Muni, Gabon and even Congo.

*Kamerun: die nachverwendeten deutschen stempel während der alliierten Besetzung 1914-1918* by Gernot Reiners, ARGE Rundschrieben No.95, October 2007

*La série de Timbres gravés de 1901 Congo* by Wolfgang Strobel, COL.FRA Bulletin No.122, 2007. This provides useful analysis of the three watermarks, with comments on the perforations and papers used for this issue, which was also later overprinted for use by the French Occupation of Cameroun.

# An Unrecorded Tax Mark for St Helena? - No!

Stefan Heijtz

I have read the article *An Unrecorded Tax Mark for St Helena?* in *Cameo* 75 (Ref. 1) and have to say that Barry should have contacted me first, as some of it is nonsense! The Tax mark is most definitely Mabbett Type 5, although I admit that the illustration in the book is not very good as it appears the original has been 'improved' by the addition of serifs. The Type 5 does not have serifs on either the 'T' or 'C'.

Although the book says that there are three recorded examples, I now have no less than ten, dated between 16 April 1911 and 6 October 1922, and it perfectly fills the gap between Type 4 (my LRD 23 April 1910) and Type 6 (introduced in 1926 or earlier although my earliest example is from 1927).

My first example (Figure 1, 80%) is on a postcard bearing the 1902 ½d cancelled 16 April 1911. The correct postcard rate was 1d, so the Type 5 mark indicates 5 gold centimes (½d) underpayment, or 1d postage due.



Figure 1 Postcard of 16 April 1911

Figure 2 (also at 80%) illustrates my last recorded date of the Type 5 Tax handstamp. It is on a cover of 6 October 1922 to the USA, franked with ½d and 2d values of the 1913 set. The foreign letter rate had been increased from 2½d to 3d per ounce from 25 January 1922, so this cover was underpaid by ½d. The Type 5 mark for 5 centimes was therefore correct, resulting in the 2 cents US mark and postage due stamp.

If I may return to the original article and the cover. We know that 1d = 10 centimes = 2 US cents. So 20 centimes = 4 cents which is what has been charged to John's cover. However, this seems to be incorrect since the stamp in question is a 2d stamp and not a 1d stamp, and the rate was 2½d at the time. But you mention that there is a ½d stamp on the reverse so the following seems to be the logical explanation:

The St Helena Post Office did not see the stamp on the back and taxed it ½d = 5 centimes. In London (or elsewhere) the clerk noticed the stamp on the back but believed that the stamp on the front was only valued at 1d, so the cover would have been franked with 1½d, thus 1d short. This equals 10 centimes which, times 2 for postage due, is 20 centimes, which is what the number in the Tax-marking has been altered to. In the US the 20 centimes has correctly been altered to 4 cents.

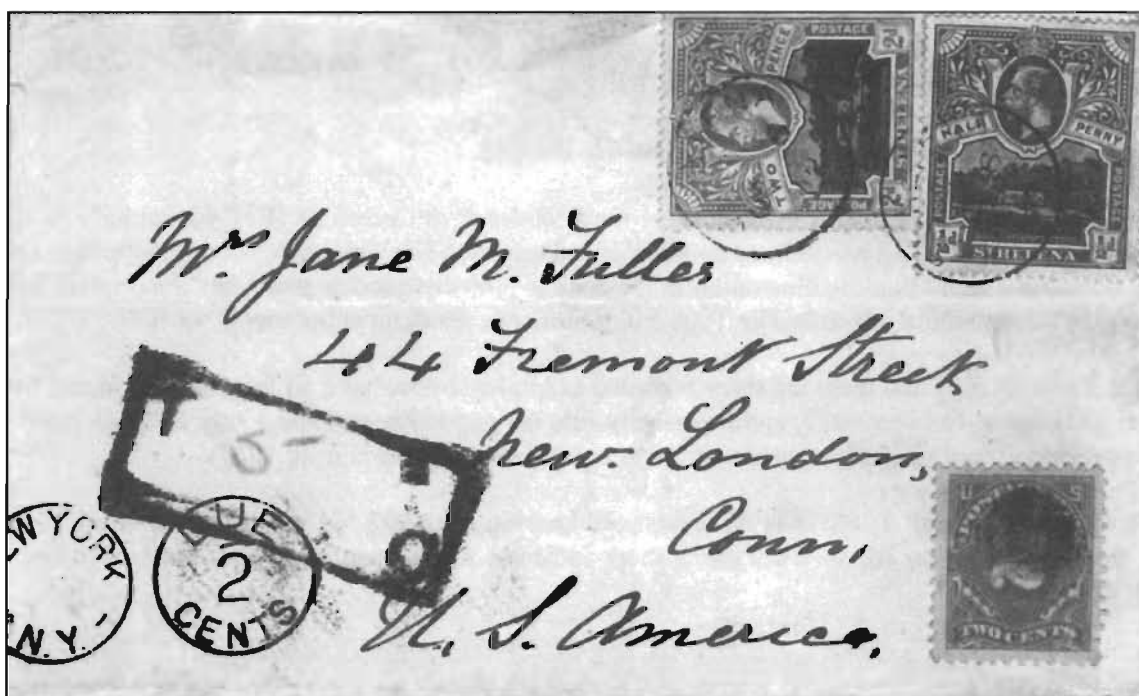


Figure 2 Cover of 6 October 1922 to USA

Reference

1 Davis J. & Burns B., "An Unrecorded Tax Mark for St Helena?", *Cameo*, Volume 10 pp348-349, WASC, October 2008



## Contemporary Advert for Togo 'Provisionals'

**William Cochrane**

Illustrated is an advert from the Sydney based dealers J.H. Smyth Ltd. It is printed in black on pink paper, and apparently dates from the 1915-1916 period.

**TOGO WAR PROVISIONALS**  
Anglo-French Franco-Anglaise Occupation

Having acquired a small stock of some kinds we are prepared to send selections on approval to collectors in Australia and New Zealand

AT REASONABLE PRICES

We can at present supply most of the pfennig denominations of

**German New Guinea G.R.I.  
Marshall Islands G.R.I.  
Samoa G.R.I.**

And a few of the mark values, also, of the first two named.

---

**Marshall Islands (Ship Type) Stamps**  
Overprinted in Native Characters in Red by the Japanese.  
A set, unused, which consists of 3, 5, 10, 20, 25, 30, 50 and 80 pfennigs.  
8 Varieties. PRICE £4, POST FREE.

---

**Samoa G.R.I. First Provisionals**

1/4d. on 3 pf. used	...	4 0	1/4d. on 20 pf. used	...	2 6
1/4d. on 5 pf. used	...	5 0	6d. on 50 pf. used	...	5 0
1d. on 10 pf. used	...	9 0			

POST FREE

---

STOCK RECEIVED  
**STANLEY GIBBONS' CATALOGUE, Part II. Foreign Countries**  
New Edition for 1915-16.  
PRICE 3/6. Postage 4d. Extra.

---

**J. H. SMYTH LTD.,** 50 Castlereagh St.  
SYDNEY

# 1925 Egypt—Nigeria and return RAF Experimental Flights

Jeremy Martin FRPSL

I acquired these *BY AIR* labels at the York Stamp Fair in July 2008. I queried their provenance and was advised that originally they came from the stock of the well-known airmail dealer Francis J. Field.

The flight started from Cairo on 27 October 1925 reaching Kano on 3 November 1925, then returning from Kano on 12th November to Cairo, arriving 20 November. The azure labels, figure 2, were for the outward flight; the pink labels, figure 1, for the return. However, I cannot recall having seen any covers with labels attached.

I have checked two sources, Jones (Ref. 1) and Sears (Ref. 2) but neither records these etiquettes.



Figure 1

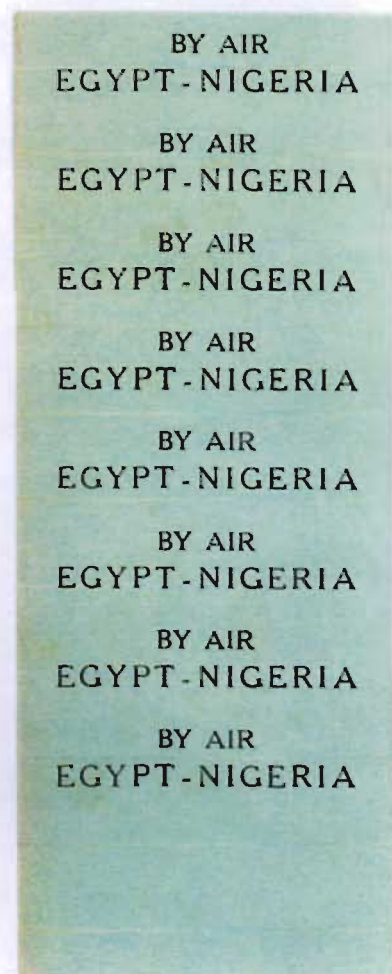


Figure 2

## References

1. Jones Frank G., *Etiquettes: Par Avion – By Air Mail*, British Aerophilatelic Federation 1992
2. Sears, John, *The Airmails of Egypt*, 2nd edition, published by the author 1991



When the illustrated cover appeared recently on eBay, my interest was aroused by the boxed “Décédé. / Deceased.” marking on the front. Although Beale, Walton and Proud (refs. 1-3) have catalogued three similar boxed markings, as shown in the table below, this one has not been recorded. All four markings have the French words in italic font above the non-italicised English version. A full stop follows each phrase, with the possible exception of the English “Not called for”. The “Non réclamé.” mark was described in “Cameo” articles by Lutwyche in 1995 (ref. 4) and Martin in 2005 (ref. 5). As we cannot know the precise day when any of these undated markings were applied, I have given the periods of use to the nearest month.

Inscription	Beale type	Walton type	Proud type	Period of use
Parti./Gone away.	M9	709.01	I4	April 1892 –September 1897
Inconnu./Not known.	M13	713.01	----	April 1894 –July 1899
Non réclamé./Not called for	M29	729.01	I5	February 1938 –May 1960
Décédé./Deceased.	----	717.02	----	August 1899

The Décédé box measures 25mm x 16mm, and was presumably applied at around the same time as the Freetown cds of 25 August 1899 and the manuscript “Deceased”. The cover was returned to Hamburg, where it was officially opened (“Amtlich eröffnet”) to determine the sender (“Zur Ermittlung des Absenders”) and resealed. The sender’s address was written in red on the back of the envelope, Zurück and Unbestellbar markings were applied, and the item reached the Hamm-Horn office on 7 October.

Two other Deceased markings have been attributed to Sierra Leone. Beale and Walton record a boxed “Deceased” (English only) used on Edward VII stamps (types M17 / 717.01, refs. 1,2), while Proud reports an unframed, one-line “Décédé (Dead)” from 1923 as type I12 (ref. 3). Frank Walton has kindly allocated 717.02 to the new marking.

This discovery brings the number of boxed, bilingual markings of this type from Sierra Leone to four. Unfortunately, neither these nor any similar markings appear in the surviving impression books (ref. 6), so how many more members of this family await discovery?

References:

1. Beale, P.O., *The Postal Service of Sierra Leone*, RPSL, London, 1988.
2. Walton F.L., *The Postmarks of Sierra Leone 1854 to 1961*, WASC, 1990.
3. Proud E.B., *The Postal History of Sierra Leone*, Proud Bailey, Heathfield, 1994.
4. Lutwyche N., *Sierra Leone Instructional Marks, Cameo*, Vol.5, No.1, p.41 (originally p.337 in Vol. 4 sequence), January 1995.
5. Martin J., *Sierra Leone “Not called for”*, Cameo, Vol.8, No.5, p.281, January 2005.
6. Beale P., Martin J. and Walton F., *West African Post Office Impresion Books*, WASC, Dronfield, 2001.



## Campost - Cameroun

### Bob Maddocks

From this postal date stamp struck at Mbouda on 29 January 2008 it is apparent that the Cameroun postal service has been privatised under the name of Campost. I have no information as yet as to when this change took place.

Unusual not to have the town name also in capital letters!



# William Thomas (1797 - 1829) of Coity and St Helena - Part 2

Neil Walklate

*Part 1 of this correspondence from a Welshman at St Helena was published in Cameo 75, October 2008, pp325-332. Here we conclude this interesting insight into his life far from home and family.*

Figure 6  
Document 6

Written St Helena  
24 November 1822

INDIA LETTER / PLYMOUTH

m/s 1/4 in black

8d ship letter rate plus



The following year another letter (Document 6, Figure 6), to Lettice dated 24 November and overwritten in red ink, intriguingly bears part of William's seal and on an inside fold where he accidentally spilled a drop of the red wax he encircled it in tiny writing with the touching motto *I have dropped a Kiss for you*. He is in good health but is perturbed that his brother has not acknowledged receipt of money paid by his agent, in fact Thomas *appears to have dropt all correspondence with me* and for that he is *much disappointed*. Further he sent with a friend, Mr Jacob of Lantrissant silver waistcoat buttons and wants to know if they have been received as well. William wants to know whether Lettice had difficulty exchanging two pound notes he sent her for silver because he has heard that *Bank of England notes are not current in England at present*. Fascinatingly and surreptitiously he writes *under the seal of this letter I have contrived to insinuate a gold Sovereign merely as an experiment to try if it would reach you in safety or not – you will be pleased to accept it yourself, or if you think Thomas is at all distressed or in want of money pray send it to him*. The letter folds down to a compact 5 by 3 inches and one can only speculate as to whether his enterprise was successful or not. This would account for the spillage of wax mentioned earlier as William took pains to apply extra in order to cover the coin. Oddly he has no news to impart although he is daily expecting a new Governor from England. He also finds himself thinking frequently about the climate differences between St Helena and England, observing that it is intensely hot with a burning sun when he supposes there to be frost, snow, ice and severe cold weather at home. Despite *all its inconveniences I must & ever shall give it the decided preference to St Helena, for I shall have & ever shall have a strong attachment for my native land*. He signs off giving his compliments to Mrs Blackwell noting that although *Our Races* are taking place for three days he will not be attending preferring to write to his sister instead. As a postscript he asks to be informed *of the dates of our Birth days – for my own part I recollect that mine is on the 9 June but neither of yours do I recollect*.

After a gap of four years the next letter dated 28 October 1826 (Document 7, not illustrated) is a response to one from Lettice of the previous April, explaining that as he had written to their sister Cate *you would learn every particular regarding my Welfare*. Regretting the death of *that good Creature Uncle Thomas of Seamouth* and a cousin Catherine, William notes that *Such Lettice will be the fate of us all, so that we must bear these losses with fortitude and resignation*. He is much taken with the intended project to erect a Pier-head at Newton as it will prove to be of great importance to *that little town* and Bridgend as well. In 1825

an Act of Parliament had approved the building of a tram road and dock or jetty at Pwll Cawl. He is also uneasy about brother Thomas, hoping for a change for the better – quite what Lettice has told him is not clear but *if these Vices, & the dissipated line of conduct which he now pursues is followed up, god only knows the result*. Whatever the problem, William has had a similar report from a friend who met Thomas in Bristol and gave *a short sketch of concurring circumstances*. Ever compassionate, William hopes that the *poor fellow does not feel distress, for if I thought he did, I should be truly miserable indeed*. Also *I shall send you what money you may require at all times, & you may relieve him at your own discretion*.

This letter has no recipient's address but it is likely that Lettice had moved to Bristol; subsequent letters confirm this, and William refers to a visit that she has made to Bridgend. Apparently she received a kind reception proving that the family was still respected there. William wishes that he could *see the old spot once more trusting in god that the day is not yet very distant*.

He is obviously very proud of his burgeoning career and personal situation, where his employer Mr Solomon behaves towards him like a father. He is bold to say that he has *pursued that straight forward line of Conduct which every prudent, upright & honorable character ought to do, & which must ultimately ensure him success*. After all he has always made it his *study to persevere in exerting* himself for the interests of Mr Solomon. The latter would seem to be appreciative of these efforts but, modestly, he does not wish to extol his own praise. Suffice to say *that the proof of the Pudding is in the eating of it* and as a reward for his faithful services he has entered into a Bond with Mr Solomon to admit him as a partner in his *extensive concern* from the first of January 1828 *under a Penalty of One Thousand Pounds*. However the share that William will possess has not yet been decided. The business is principally confined to shipping on a very extensive scale, presumably the provisioning of the same, because as a well established company they are well known by *all the East India Shipping*. So in the course of twelve years William has attained a position of substance and significance on this tiny island.

Back now to family matters and his role as substitute father to Lettice. Sister Catherine has hinted to him that Lettice might have changed her name through marriage and although of course he does not wish to interfere he can not resist offering advice. William cautions her *to Act with Prudence & judgement in ascertaining whether, those young men who have been disposed to show you their intentions etc are respectable, & of good connections for you are ... deserving of the best....* He further promises to tell Lettice of his matrimonial plans, although given his present (financial) limits this is not currently possible but he must *candidly* tell her *that the Charming little creature upon which I have fixed my mind is now here*. Making no promises or *rash Vows* he anticipates that in two years hence she may hear the good tidings. That his intended is now in St Helena possibly implies that she has recently arrived there. Obviously being the father of two illegitimate sons was not an impediment to future marriage. Or is William planning on marrying Martha, their mother?

Responding again to a remark that Lettice must have made in her letter he is *indeed anxious to know what could have possessed you to imagine that I was about to become united with a Black lady*. Given the multi-racial nature of this island community Lettice's imaginings were not totally fanciful, indeed there is no way of knowing Martha Chippingdale's origins. These thoughts now lead him to eulogise the opposite sex in rather patriotic terms. He remarks, *you cannot but be aware that we have as fine young Girls here, as in any part of the World (excepting of course the Welsh which are not to be excelled) bless their little black eyes & rosy Cheeks, which we can but rarely boast of here*. Sensing his sister's disapproval of his future actions or of his supposed relationship, it is not clear which, he adds, *Well indeed ... might you observe that you would not approve of such a Step on my part*.

Excusably lapsing into sentimentality, William remembers small evening parties at Old Castle – *those Lettice were our truly happy days – never to return again, since the loss of our ever dear Mother, who we sincerely hope & pray is now rewarded for her tenderness, & maternal care of us*.

Although he wrote this letter in the October of 1826 he did not post it immediately, waiting until the following January, when he wrapped it inside another sheet of paper with a brief note. Addressing it to Lettice Thomas (to be left at Mrs Backwells) 9 Kings Parade, Clifton, Bristol and postmarked 11 JA 1827 Deal – Ship Letter (Document 8, Figure 7).

Lettice had lived with Mrs Blackwell in Bridgend, suggesting that she may have been in service. The Bristol connection is further reinforced with the knowledge that sister Catherine lived care of J Milford Esq, at Hill Cottage in Long Ashton.

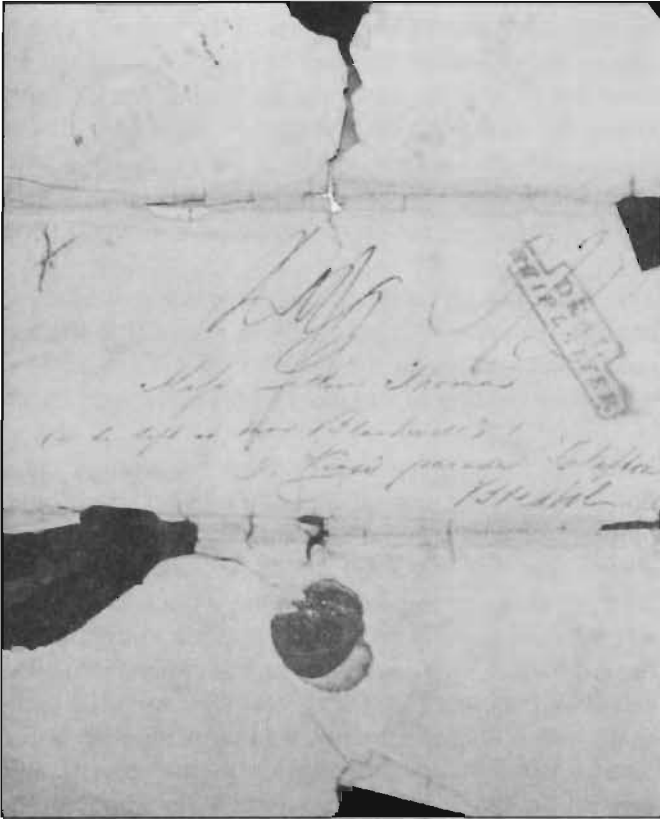


Figure 7  
Document 8

Written St Helena  
December (?) 1826

DEAL  
SHIP LETTER  
Postmark 11 January 1827

m/s 3/2 in black

1/4d double Ship Letter rate plus

William wrote again soon, the seventh day of February to be exact, with the postmark 26 MR 1827 Weymouth Ship Letter (Document 9, Figure 8). It is short but fascinating, concerned as it is with amounts of money and marriage. Having waited some time to get his hands on Bank of England notes, he takes this opportunity to enclose the not inconsiderable sum of £20 for Lettice's use, an amount he considers a *trifling token*, with the promise of more to come. He then offers his free consent for Lettice to marry the man she loves *with whom I earnestly hope you will have many happy years*. He has been very busy with business and apologises for being so laconic. Lettice's intended was John David, who was variously a merchant, draper and grocer from the Newcastle Hill area of Bridgend.



Figure 8  
Document 9

Written St Helena  
7 February 1827

WEYMOUTH  
SHIP LETTER  
Postmark 26 March 1827

m/s 3/- (deleted)  
and 3/4 in black

1/4d double Ship Letter rate plus

Of equal interest is that this letter still has a perfect impression of William's seal in red wax as it was cut open rather than torn. About a centimetre in diameter it does not bear his initials but is in fact a pictogram bearing the motto 'I hope you are well'. It is perfectly legible and was deciphered by Lettice's grandson John David and his brother-in-law George Scott Lahr on 17 January 1923, this information being written in pencil alongside the sealing wax. It reads as follows:

- I - image of a human eye
- hope - female classical figure with anchor
- you - image of a yew tree
- are - as written
- well - image of a well head

Figure 9  
Document 10

Written from ship *Berwickshire*  
St Helena 19 January 1829

PORTSMOUTH  
SHIP LETTER

m/s 1/5 (deleted)  
and 2/10 in black

1/4d double Ship Letter rate plus



The last letter Lettice received from William is dated 19 January 1829 and seems to have been written on board one of the ships that he was provisioning, the *Berwickshire* (Document 10, Figure 9). There has been a lull in their correspondence, but William is pleased that all is well, encloses £5, and mentions that he is now in co-partnership with Mr Solomon. This short letter ends poignantly with the remark, *do not yet despair having once more a sight of Your Affectionate brother.*

But despair she did. In a letter from the executors of William's estate in St Helena dated 2 April 1829, she learnt the dreadful news (Document 11, Figure 10). *The unpleasant duty devolves upon us of apprising you of the unfortunate termination of your dear Brother's Life the 3<sup>rd</sup> of last month. He was drowned when about returning from the Ship Medina after dark during a heavy Surf. It will be a melancholy satisfaction to acquaint you his Body was found the following day and had a most respectable Burial, such a one as we are convinced would have satisfied your utmost Wishes : it will also be a consolation to you to add he died universally and justly regretted.* These sad facts are reiterated in a newspaper obituary probably from The Times (on the back of the cutting are market prices for beans, oats and livestock at Smithfield Market on 8 June 1829) :

*ST HELENA, MARCH 28.- MELANCHOLY ACCIDENT*

*A more distressing occurrence than the following, it has seldom been our lot to relate. On Tuesday, the 3<sup>rd</sup> inst. between the hours of seven and eight o'clock at night, the boat belonging to the ship Medina, Capt. Mordaunt, in pulling towards the shore, upset, owing to the darkness of the night and the very heavy surf which was running at the time, when, we are sorry to state, Mr. W. Thomas, of this Island, was unfortunately drowned. This young gentleman had formerly been in the Navy, and on Admiral Plampin quitting this Island, had been induced to enter into the mercantile house of Mr. S. Solomons, of this place; where his talents and unvaried attention to business, had rendered his services particularly valuable; and he was just about gaining the reward due to ten years' indefatigable exertions, that of forming a partnership with Mr. Solomons, when he was thus untimely and precipitately snatched away.- His obliging disposition and engaging manners had endeared him to many of the inhabitants.*



Figure 10  
 Document 11

Written St Helena  
 2 April 1829

SOUTHAMPTON (?)  
 SHIP LETTER

m/s 2/10 in black

1/4d double Ship Letter rate plus

The burial register in Jamestown confirms that William was interred on 5 March 1829, aged 29. Cause of death – Accidentally drowned. In actual fact he was 31. The ship *Medina* is confirmed as being at St Helena on 6 March in *Letters to England 1826-29* and Captain Morduant submitted an affidavit presumably concerning William’s death. Part of St Helena’s attraction as a place of exile was it’s inaccessibility and the difficulties involved in embarking and disembarking, a fact confirmed to this day by those who have been there. This was William’s undoing.

The executors’ letter continues with details of William’s will dated 3 April 1828 and *made about the time he had an idea of going to England*. He left his two sisters £500 each and £400 to his brother, with his property being shared equally. Proof indeed of William’s financial standing. It is strongly recommended that the legacy to brother Thomas is placed in the savings bank at Swansea or Bridgend so that the interest, along with his earnings, might support him. Lettice is further encouraged to urge him to *enter into such Arrangements that he may not be able to tamper with the principal and frustrate the kind and Brotherly intentions of the Testator*. It was expected that the rest of the estate would generate another £450. In order to facilitate the release and transfer of the money from St Helena to Wales the Testators recommend that Lettice should employ a man of business, possibly her cousin Mr W.L. Thomas of 17 Took’s Court, Chancery Lane, London.

The will makes fascinating reading alluding as it does to a visit home. The balance of probability is that William did not undertake this journey. It states that he is *about to return to my Native Country for the purpose of visiting my Relations and Friends and with the full intention to repair to St Helena from hence as quickly as possible*. With uncanny foresight a will is a necessity *in case any accident happening during my Voyage from hence...considering the Dangers of the Seas, and uncertainties of this transitory life*. Details of the money he left to his sisters and brother are dealt with first, noting in passing that the living in Wales is so cheap.

Next William bequeaths to his *two Natural Children at the Island of St Helena named Evan and Owen begotten from a woman named Martha - (but better known by the name of Patty) the sum of Fifty Pounds each – Viz Ten pounds each immediately after my decease – and the remaining Forty pounds each to be placed in the savings bank at St Helena*. In keeping with his caring nature he then instructs that the interest arising from these savings be paid to Martha until the children are sixteen (they were seven and four years old at the time of his death). He also hopes that at the age of twelve or fourteen they *should be bound Apprentices to a good trade – such as the Shoemaking and Tailoring, by which and aided by their own Industry and perseverance, they will in the course of a little time be enabled to earn an honest livelihood, and throw in their Mite to the assistance of their poor Mother*. At this point it should be noted that both boys grew up and got married on the island. On 13 March 1843 Evan married Ann Maria Phillips, and on 8 August 1846 Owen married Sarah Gentry, both boys having taken their father’s surname.

He also leaves twenty five pounds each to Sarah and Jane Tracey, daughters of Mr William Tracey *both of whom I have known and respected for many years past*. Finally he asks his executors and friends – Dr James Price, Mr Isaac Moss and Mr William Fowler – to sell at public auction his *Drawers, Books, Plate, Furniture, Pictures and Wearing Apparel*.

There then follows a statement of William's affairs and funds at the making of the will and an inventory of his effects numbering nearly five hundred items, or groups and batches of items, and the amounts that some of them fetched at auction. After the inventory come the final accounts of his estate. In 1828 William had assets totaling nearly £2000 including his salary of £600 (it is not clear if this is his annual amount), a bond worth £666 and cash of more than £460. This compares to an amount of £1891 5s 8d that was paid to his sisters and brother after funeral expenses and bequests had been met. This brings to an end the life and tragic death of William Thomas in St Helena.

William had a short life by 21st century standards but it was a rich and rewarding one. In these letters his character and personality shine through showing that he was decent, hard working and loving, never forgetting his family back in Wales. He was also ambitious, successful yet self effacing. In personal matters he did not always reveal the full truth. It is pointless to speculate as to what he might have achieved over a long life span. Whatever, his influence is still at work today.

### **Bibliography and Acknowledgements :**

Dava Sobel *Longitude*  
Giles Milton *Nathaniel's Nutmeg*  
Shirley English *The Times* 2001  
*St Helena Family History* Website – Saul Solomon  
Mauricette Silbert – Member of *Souvenir Napoleonien*  
Cynthia and Dick Young – former residents of St Helena



## **Kano Field Force, 1917**

**Michael St J. Wright**

I have recently bought the cover addressed to England shown at figure 2. It has the postmark of KATSENA MY 15/ 17 and transit marks of KANO NORTHERN NIGERIA 21 MY / 1917 and of LAGOS / NIGERIA MY 24 / 17. It has the senders name and address as shown at the foot of figure 2. Some of the five lines of text are hard to decipher. I can make out the usual "On active service no stamps available" then a name "F.H.Bush" then in the third line "o/c" (officer commanding) then "GH Coy" (Company) but not the rest of that line. (*ed—maybe "1st W.I.R.?"*) The last two lines read "Kano Field Force / Tessaoua French Sudan"

I had never previously heard of the Kano Field Force, but the History of the RWAFF (Ref 1) has the following paragraph on page 252:

*"Tuareg Rising, December 1916-March 1917*

*This Tuareg Rising was led by a Senussi, called Kaossen, and was said to have been fomented under German and Turkish auspices. The oasis of Agadez, 300 miles north of the Nigerian Frontier in the Sahara, was a French outpost and had been invested in December 1916 by the Senussi leader. The French Government asked for our co-operation. Two columns of WAFF, one from Sokoto and the other from Katsena, numbering in all 425 rifles, with 37 Europeans, were accordingly held in readiness to reinforce the French if required. At the same time three companies [of the?] West African Regiment were sent to Zaria from Sierra Leone. In March 1917 Agadez was relieved and the Tuaregs were dispersed."*

Although it seems clear that no West African troops were ever deployed in the French Sudan (now the Republic of Niger), is it possible that the writer was still acting as liaison officer (for instance in case some Tuaregs were giving trouble in this area—and might even cross the frontier?). Tessaoua is shown in the map at figure 1 half way between Maradi and Zinder, which are about 75 miles apart.



Figure 1: map for the border area of Nigeria and French Sudan



Figure 2

Katsena, now Katsina, is about 30 miles south-west of Tessaoua and about the same distance south-east of Maradi. The national border is somewhat nearer Katsena than these Niger towns. Kano is about 50 miles south-east of Katsena, and Agadez is almost due north of Tessaoua (all distances are as the crow flies).

Under the heading "Nigeria" the History also states:

*"The Northern Emirs from the very start of the War renewed their profession of loyalty to the Crown, and gave every assistance possible by collecting supplies of grain and cattle for rationing the troops, as well as encouraging recruiting. Even when the Tuareg Rising in 1916 might have been calculated to make them waver they retained their staunchness."*

Reference

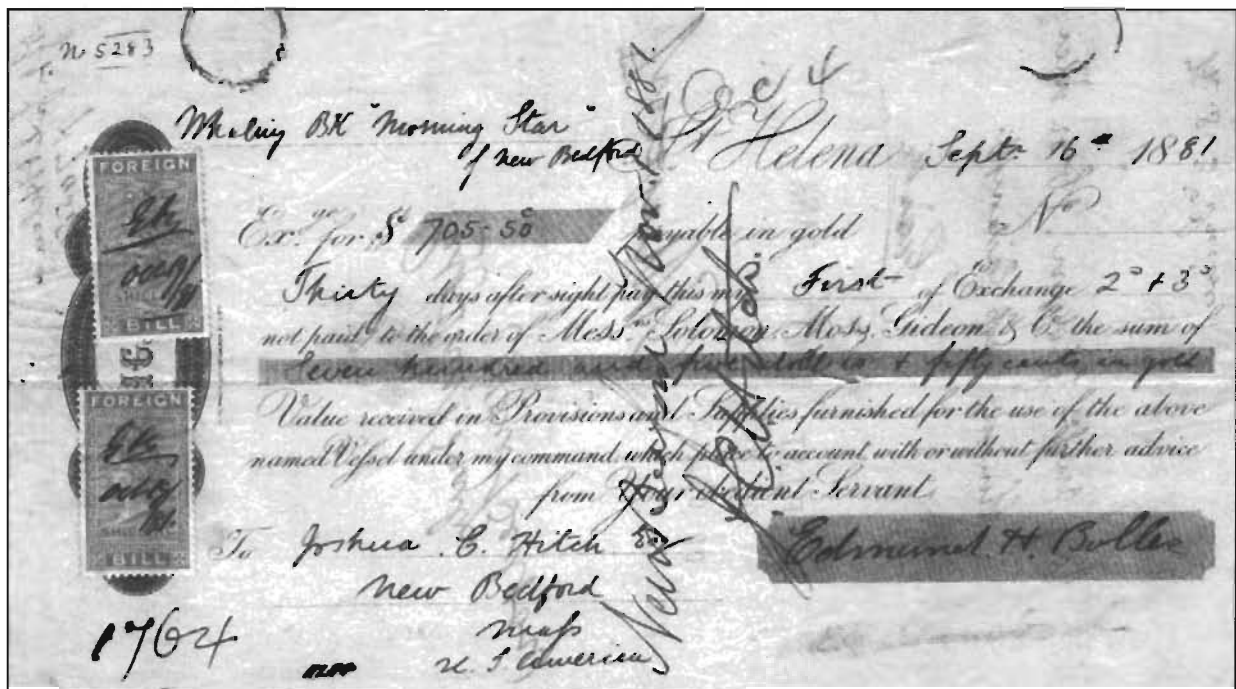
- 1 The *History of the Royal West African Frontier Force* by Colonel A. Haywood CMG, CBE, DSO and Brigadier F.A.S. Clarke DSC, psc Aldershot UK, Gale & Polden Ltd, 1964.



## St Helena Bill of Exchange

Stefan Heijtz

I noticed the article by Barry Burns in *Cameo* 72, pp 148-9, illustrating two One Shilling revenue stamps on a St Helena document. I illustrate below (at ca. 75%) another document also bearing two Foreign Bill stamps.



This is a bill of exchange of 1881 for \$705.50 in provisions and supplies for the New Bedford whaling bark *Morning Star*. It is the only example I have seen, and it is interesting that these revenue stamps were available at St Helena. Why were normal St Helena postage (& revenue?) stamps not used?

The bill was issued by Solomon, Moss, Gideon & Co., a well known Merchants and Shipping company on the Island who also acted as Forwarding Agents during the nineteenth century. It was signed by Edmund H. Bullie who also apparently initialled the Foreign Bill stamps.

# The Short-lived Imperial Censor Station at Bathurst

John Wilson

When the uncensored Italian LATI airmail service from Rome to South America was forced to close on December 16<sup>th</sup> 1941, Pan American Airways, as part of the arrangements, instituted a "LATI substitute" service to provide an airmail route from South America to Europe. This enabled the British and American censors access to suspect mail that had been travelling from Europe to and from South America prior to America entering the war.

Before December 1941, mail to and from South America had a choice of routes; the uncensored direct LATI service to Rome and the alternative service via the United States and across the Atlantic using the PanAm FAM-18 service. However, this route was subject to censorship in New York and/or Bermuda, and the LATI service avoided this censorship.

The chosen route for the PanAm "LATI substitute" was from the United States via Natal (Brazil) to Lisbon, and this meant that attention was focused on Bathurst as the most likely location for an Imperial Censor facility (Ref. 1). However the existing staff at Bathurst were but six in number working part-time, and were only empowered to censor terminal mail, i.e. mail originating in or addressed to Bathurst. Censorship of mail in transit could only be carried out by properly trained Imperial Censors. Reference 1 contains the following paragraph:

***"250. Transit Mail Examination at Bathurst.***

*Finally an advance party consisting of a staff of six was sent out from this country and arrived at Bathurst on the 12th February, 1942, for the specific purpose of dealing with transit mail carried on the Pan American Airways Clipper Service between Brazil and Lisbon. They were instructed to forward enemy mails to London and to examine others selectively as best they could."*

The paragraph continues:

*"The first Clipper mail was dated 8th March, 1942, and in all ten mails were examined before the Clipper ceased to call after 21st August, 1942. It may be pointed out that owing to changes in the schedule of the air services between Brazil and Lisbon and also in some measure owing to the dislike of Pan American Airways for the arrangement and their seizure of any pretext to omit the Bathurst call the unit was by no means so*

*regularly or fully employed as had been hoped."*

This tells us that the first Clipper call at Bathurst was on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March 1942, so Imperial Censorship of transit mail was only carried out at Bathurst between 8<sup>th</sup> March and 21<sup>st</sup> August 1942, a period of less than six months. After the 21<sup>st</sup> of August 1942 the censorship function was transferred to San Juan, Puerto Rico, and that remained the situation until the end of the war. As a result, mail from South America was diverted to San Juan for censorship before being sent on its journey across the Atlantic to Europe (see page 59 of this issue), and Bathurst reverted to part-time terminal censorship duties only.

From the collector's point of view, this means that any covers in transit through Bathurst between March and August 1942, and deemed as suspect by the Imperial Censors, would have been opened and so marked by a Bathurst censor cachet but I have to say that I had never seen one before this, and their rarity is highlighted by Martin & Walton (Ref. 2) which lists the unframed type 3B "Crown over INN/xx" with four censor numbers; 5524, 5960, 6185 and 7219 and the framed "Crown over INN/xx" with numbers 5453, 6185 and 7219. All these occurrences are listed in the short period when Imperial Censorship was in place at Bathurst. Take care to distinguish between the normal Gambia "NN" censor marks and the Imperial "INN" marks.

One other intriguing possibility remains; if Pan American began their "LATI substitute" service in the interval between the end of the Italian service on 16<sup>th</sup> December 1941 and the first recorded Bathurst call of the Clipper on 8<sup>th</sup> March, it is possible that mail traveled from South America via the PanAm service without censorship, so one could keep a wider eye out for clearly dated airmails from South America, and indeed from Europe to South America that have not been censored.

A fuller account of the "LATI substitute" airmail service is covered by an article published in "Air Mail News", journal of the British Airmail Society (Ref 4). The same article provides validation of the "Via Africa Lisboa" and "Via Lisboa Londres" cachets on South American mail which had previously been considered an aberration.

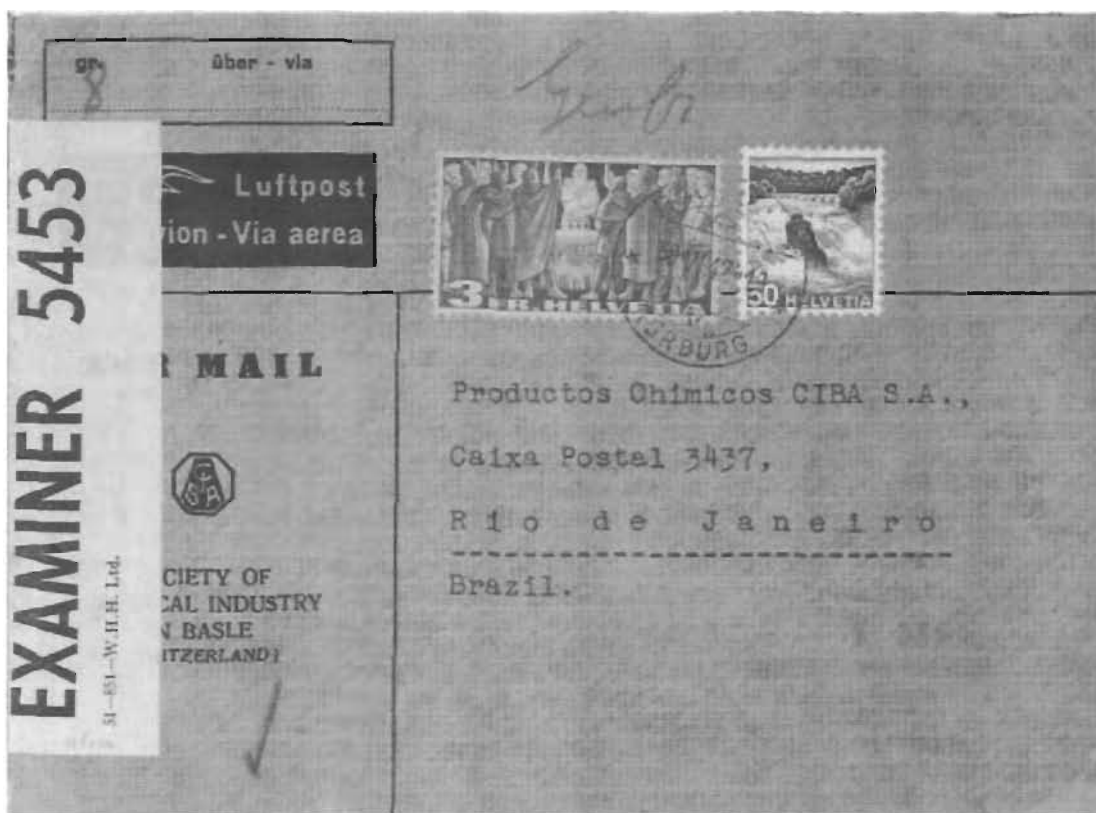


Figure 1: the purpose of the Bathurst Imperial censorship office was to censor mail in transit via Pan Am but this is the only example found to illustrate this article, with thanks to BAMS member Michael Crux. Cover from Basle, Switzerland 30 June 1942 to Rio de Janeiro, back-stamped there 18 October 1942, opened and resealed by Examiner 5453 at Bathurst. Little (Ref 3) rates scarcity 10 on a scale 1-10.



Figure 2: the six Imperial censors at Bathurst were under-occupied with the transit mails and filled in by undertaking terminal censorship during 1942. Unframed INN/7219 is here applied to an outbound airmail letter, posted 18 July 1942 and back-stamped Gerrards Cross 23 July 42.

Illustrated courtesy of John Russell.

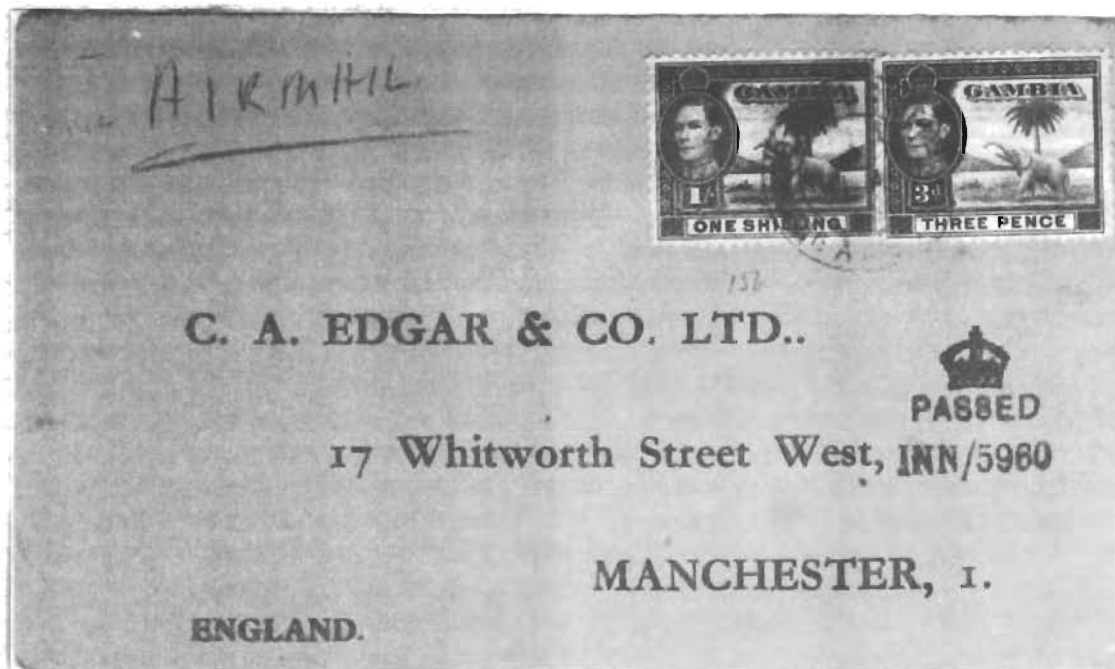


Figure 3: unframed INN/5960 applied to a northbound civilian air mail letter to the UK from Bathurst 8 August 42



Figure 4: unframed INN/5453 (the same examiner as for figure 1) applied to a northbound registered civilian air mail letter to the UK from Bathurst 26 May 1942.

Figures 2-4 are examples of air mails permitted northbound on the BOAC flying boats from Gambia, when capacity was available from this last port of call in Africa.

Figures 3 and 4 are illustrated courtesy of Philip Beale

#### References.

- 1 H.B.M's Home Office. "History of the Postal and Telegraph Censorship Department 1938-1946 Vol.1 and Vol. 2". Public Records Office Reference DEFE 1/333. Authorised reprint 1996.
- 2 "West African Censorship". Martin J.J. and Walton F. West Africa Study Circle 1999.
- 3 "British Empire Civil Censorship Devices, World War II: Colonies and Occupied Territories in Africa", by Little J, Civil Censorship Study Group, 2000
- 4 "The LATI Substitute service of Pan American Airways and the influence of Wartime Censorship", by John Wilson, Air Mail News, Vol. 51, No. 203, November 2008, pp196-209

# WW2 Censorship—the San Juan Agreement

John Wilson

I hope that the attached text will be useful to WASC members. This is original source material - I have transcribed the text exactly as it is given in the San Juan file at the National Archive at Kew, UK, and I think it provides a stepping stone to understanding the routing of Trans-Atlantic mail as it was affected by censorship.

MOST SECRET

17th June, 1942.

## MEMORANDUM

Arrangements made with the State Department and the U.S. Censorship with regard to the Censorship of mail between South America, Africa and Europe and vice versa.

This Memorandum is divided into two parts, A. and B.

A. deals with the arrangement in principle come to with the State Department. B. deals with the administrative arrangements made with the United States Censorship for the purpose of giving effect to the arrangement come to with the State Department.

A. The arrangement come to between Mr. Berle and myself is as follows :-

1. Pan-American will not be permitted to carry mail directly between South America and Europe or Africa or vice versa.
2. The mail that has hitherto been picked up or dropped in South America will be carried to San Juan in Puerto Rico, and will there be examined, subsequently being placed upon the most convenient airplane for onward transmission.
3. Subject to any question of landing rights at Lisbon Pan-American will not carry mail between Bolama and Lisbon or vice versa.

This arrangement has been submitted by the State Dept. to the Brazilian Government and approved.

It is part of this arrangement that British staff should assist the Americans in the examination of the mails at San Juan, but that the San Juan Censorship should be an American Censorship.

This arrangement presents certain disadvantages in that there are various financial and other operations which we could carry out at Trinidad, which can not be as well carried out at San Juan. The important thing, however, is to prevent the carriage of the mail direct, and the question of whether its examination should take place at Trinidad or San Juan is a relatively small point, provided that adequate steps are taken to see that the examination at San Juan is efficient.

B. The administrative arrangements with the U.S. Censorship are as follows:-

1. Instructions in common form are being issued to Bermuda, Trinidad and San Juan, indicating with precision the mails which are or are not to be examined at each of those stations. These instructions make it clear that the only mail to be diverted to San Juan is the mail formerly picked up and sent down at Port Natal and that the mail at present examined at Trinidad and at Bermuda, is not to be diverted for examination at any other Censorship Station.

2. The mail will be examined at San Juan primarily by U.S. Censors. The mail, however, will be segregated from the general mail dealt with at San Juan, and will be dealt with by a special body of sorters and examiners who will devote their special attention to it. Approximately thirty will be required for this work, and in addition, we have arranged to move seven experienced persons from Bermuda to assist in the training and development of the United States staff. The persons moved from Bermuda will be as follows:-

Three experienced sorters.

An experienced chemist.

An experienced finance D.A.C.

An experienced trade D.A.C.

An experienced D.A.C. who is used to the form and substance of enemy espionage communication.

This staff should be adequate to insure that the work is properly carried out as the experience gained at Bermuda is fully placed at the disposal of our American Colleagues.

3. It is understood that the transfer of staff from Bermuda will be temporary, but that staff is likely to be at San Juan for some considerable period.

4-. The results of examination at San Juan will be made available to the authorities of both countries through the medium of the Division of Reports, which already has strong British representation in Washington.

5. The financial and trade aspects of the mail are being kept fully in view, and certain experienced persons from the U.S. Censorship Headquarters are being sent down to supervise the development of this side of the work.

E.S.H.

Director of Postal and Telegraph Censorship.

[*Note by JW: E.S.H. was Mr. Edwin S. Herbert, Director British Imperial Censorship, Knighted on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1943, becoming Sir Edwin Herbert, Director General, until 31<sup>st</sup> July 1945.*]

MOST SECRET

#### INSTRUCTIONS

Complete censorship of all South Atlantic Clipper mails will be inaugurated immediately. A 100% censorship with the least possible delay will be effected.

In order to insure this 100% effectiveness, all mails carried to and from Europe and Africa over the South Atlantic Clipper Service will be diverted to United States and British Censorship Stations as follows:

#### SAN JUAN

##### Eastbound

All air mails originating in Brazil and the Argentine; all air mail originating south of Trinidad including air mails routed to Belem and Natal over the local Brazilian air lines and that routed over the air lines from Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires will be allotted to San Juan.

These Eastbound South Atlantic Clipper Mails will be diverted at Natal and Belem to northbound planes and removed at San Juan. They will not be removed at Trinidad. After censorship of these mails is completed they will be dispatched onward by either the northbound or the southbound plane, whichever calls first or whichever affords the most expeditious routing to destination.

##### Westbound

All mails received at Natal and Belem from Europe and Africa destined to Brazil, the Argentine and points south of Trinidad including air mails for dispatch over local Brazilian air lines and the air lines from Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires will be allotted to San Juan.

Westbound mails will be forwarded from Belem and Natal to San Juan and not removed from planes at Trinidad. Upon completion of the examination they will be dispatched from San Juan.

#### BALBOA

##### Eastbound

All air mails originating in Central America and Mexico for dispatch to Africa and Europe via South Atlantic Service will be examined at Balboa and released for forwarding to destination by the first available plane.

##### Westbound

All air mails originating in Africa and Europe, to Central American countries and Mexico via South Atlantic Service and transiting Balboa, will be examined there and dispatched to destination by the next available plane.

## TRINIDAD

### Eastbound

All air mail originating in northern and western South America routed to that station over the air line transiting Barranquilla; all air mails originating in Cuba, dispatched via Baranquilla; and all air mails originating in Martinique, Guadeloupe, Antigua and Trinidad will be allotted to Trinidad.

These eastbound mails will be taken from planes transiting Trinidad censored and returned to planes, either north or south bound, whichever affords the most expeditious routing to destination.

### Westbound

All air mail from Africa and Europe destined to Trinidad, Martinique, Guadeloupe, Antigua, northern and western South America; and Cuban mail routed via Barranquilla and all air mails due for dispatch to western South American destinations, will be allotted to Trinidad.

These westbound South Atlantic Clipper mails will be taken from the plane at Trinidad and after censorship, they will be placed on planes affording the most expeditious routing to destination.

## BERMUDA

### Eastbound

All air mails from New York via Bermuda over the South Atlantic Clipper Service will be allotted to Bermuda.

Eastbound air mail due for censorship at Bermuda will be taken from the planes, censored and returned to the plane affording most expeditious routing to destination, regardless of direction.

### Westbound

All mails destined to New York routed via Bermuda over these lines will be allotted to Bermuda.

Westbound mails due for censorship at Bermuda will be taken from planes, examined and returned to the first available plane, destined for New York, These mails will not be removed by San Juan or Trinidad.

Mails handled by this Clipper Service are of most importance from every standpoint and personnel qualified in trade, finance and special activities - including codes, ciphers, secret inks, etc. - will be required.

As there will be a high percentage of German and Italian correspondence, personnel qualified in these languages will be necessary, It is estimated that there will be approximately 10,000 letters weekly involved and the examination thereof will take precedent over all other mails.

At San Juan a special section will be established and personnel from New York and from the British Station at Bermuda will be dispatched to that Station to assist in the inauguration of this censorship and the special training of the examiners. After the training period is over, the temporarily loaned personnel will be returned to their respective stations and the San Juan station will continue the censorship of this mail with its own personnel.



# The effects of censorship on transit mail routes to and from West Africa

John Wilson

I have said before that in my opinion, the wartime need for censorship has had an enormous effect on the apparent variability of air mail transit times, and in reading the Home Office History (my ref. 1 on p58), I came across a section which I think supports that view and provides a possible answer to the question of why mail from Belgian and French Congo was apparently loaded on board the Pan American Clippers at Lagos (or further north) rather than at Leopoldville. The relevant section is transcribed as follows:

“NIGERIA

## 1411. Establishment and Organisation

*Postal and Telegraph Censorship was introduced in Nigeria and the Cameroons on 1st September, 1939. The Postmaster-General was appointed as Chief Censor. This appointment lasted too long as experience showed that the interests and objects of censorship were handicapped by the over-riding interests and control of the Postal and Telegraph Department. For instance, no terminal and very little transit mail to or from neutral countries was examined until July, 1940. Furthermore, mail to enemy-occupied territory was returned to the sender marked " No service ", but was not examined. In September, 1940, the Military took control of censorship, although the P.M.G. remained nominally as Chief Censor. In June, 1941, however, the Local Government decided to create an independent Censorship Department under the control of an Officer unconnected with Postal and Telegraph Department. (This Officer later became Superintending Censor for the West African area and Censorship Adviser to the Resident Minister in West Africa: see paragraph 1416 below). It is interesting to observe that the Military Intelligence Section ceased to function over night and left the new Chief Censor with no Headquarters staff whatever. A Censorship Advisory Committee had been appointed, but only met once in 1941. Special local difficulties arose from the absence of any European residential community; the unreliability of the African staff; and finally the enormous length of the land frontier coupled with the proximity of the neutral islands of Fernando Po and Sao Tome and Principe. Finally the evasion of censorship by high officials and their friends by the improper use of official bags was on a considerable scale until the end of 1941, when the matter was reported to the Colonial Office and the evasion consequently stopped.*

## 1412. Transit Mails at Lagos

*It was reported in October, 1942, that after the cutting of communications in the Pacific and with the great increase in Military activity in Egypt, the Middle East and U.S.S.R. new varieties of transit communications had passed through Lagos. A number of additional air routes had been opened and those previously operating had enlarged their services considerably. The result was a very large increase in the transit mails which had to be dealt with. The situation created by the exclusion of Africa from the San Juan Agreement (see paragraphs 206 and 251) imposed a very heavy burden on the Lagos unit, because the station found itself compelled to examine 100 per cent of mail from South America to French Africa, Belgian Congo, Angola and Fernando Po. Mail in the reverse direction was over-labelled to Trinidad because it was beyond the scope of Lagos to handle it. Neither Lagos nor Trinidad was in a position to intercept mails between South America and Liberia and Portuguese Guinea. The closest co-operation was established by Lagos Censorship with the American Army Headquarters at Accra to prevent the evasion of San Juan by Pan American services to and from Lisbon. Moreover the U.S. army and security personnel in Liberia seized suspect mails and forwarded them either to Lagos or direct to San Juan through Military channels.*

*On the closure of the Bathurst Imperial Censorship station (see paragraph 252) four members of the staff were transferred to strengthen the staff at Lagos. On their arrival in December, 1942, immediate steps were taken to examine fully at Lagos various categories of transit mails which previously it had been impossible*

to deal with locally. These included communications to and from the Belgian Congo and Free French territories received from and addressed to South America, Vichy Africa and Liberia. These reinforcements also enabled Lagos to examine the whole of the Belgian and Fighting French mails which had previously been consigned by Leopoldville, Stanleyville, Brazzaville and Douala to Cotonou via Accra, and which the Gold Coast Censorship had had to forward unexamined owing to lack of qualified staff.

#### 1415. Staff

It was not possible, with very few exceptions, to entrust any confidential information to local Africans. Consequently the whole of Censorship sorting and scrutiny, as well as examination, had to be undertaken by the European staff. The recognised establishment of the Department was about 40, but no fewer than 195 Europeans were employed on Censorship duties at different times during the War. Fourteen men were recruited from England through the Crown Agents, but most of these did not give very satisfactory service.

#### 1416. General Note on West Africa

From June, 1941, onwards there was constant and useful co-operation and exchange of Censorship information between the four West African British Colonies. viz., Nigeria, Gold Coast, Sierra Leone and Gambia (Bathurst). In August, 1942, the Chief Censor of Nigeria was appointed as Imperial Censorship Representative for West Africa. This appointment was due to the great importance of West Africa as a transit area for war supplies and communication to the Middle and Far East in 1942, partly caused by the cutting of Pacific communications. The appointment of the Imperial Censorship Representative was confirmed on the 20th August, 1942. His duties consisted of the co-ordination and supervision of British Censorship control in West Africa. He also inspected the Censorship stations in the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone and Bathurst (Gambia). Lastly he acted as Censorship Adviser to the Resident Minister in West Africa."

I have quoted at length for completeness but the important parts are in paragraph 1412 where it explains that because of the exclusion of Africa from the San Juan Agreement (see page 59), the censorship load at Lagos was very heavy. The station was examining 100% of all eastbound mail from South America to French Africa, Belgian Congo, Angola and Fernando Po. In order to ease the load, westbound mail was "over-labelled to Trinidad".

The situation eased in December 1942 when additional Imperial Censorship staff from the Bathurst station were transferred to Lagos, whereupon Lagos began to examine "communications to and from the Belgian Congo and Free French territories received from and addressed to South America, Vichy Africa and Liberia." More importantly for our studies of Pan American services, Lagos also began to examine "the whole of the Belgian and Fighting French mails which had previously been consigned by Leopoldville, Stanleyville, Brazzaville and Duala to Cotonou via Accra, and which the Gold Coast Censorship had had to forward unexamined owing to lack of qualified staff."

Since the mail which we had assumed (but questioned) was assembled at Leopoldville for transit by Pan American had to be censored at Lagos, and since there were regular BOAC services from Leopoldville to and from Lagos on their Cairo-West Africa via the Congo route (and by SABENA from October 1942), it seems highly likely that this Congo mail travelled to Lagos for censorship before onward transmission. Mail for England could probably have been transported by the northbound BOAC West Africa flying boat, and mail for the United States (including so-called Double Atlantic mail) taken to Fisherman's Lake (Liberia) by the American ATC service via Accra, there to be put aboard the PanAmerican FAM-18 clockwise service from Lisbon to San Juan and Miami.

Recent research into the history of the FAM-22 service has revealed that this actually ended in October 1942 and the mail was thereafter transported on either the southern FAM-18 route during the winter (October to May) months, and by the "LATI substitute" service flying the FAM-18 southern route when the "regular" FAM-18 aircraft were re-routed New York-Canada-UK during the summer (May to October). Consequently there was simply no postal reason why Pan American should fly the very long trip from Lagos to Leopoldville and return to Lagos, and this supports the belief that at least for airmail services, the Pan American routes to Africa terminated at Lagos or Liberia, not Leopoldville.

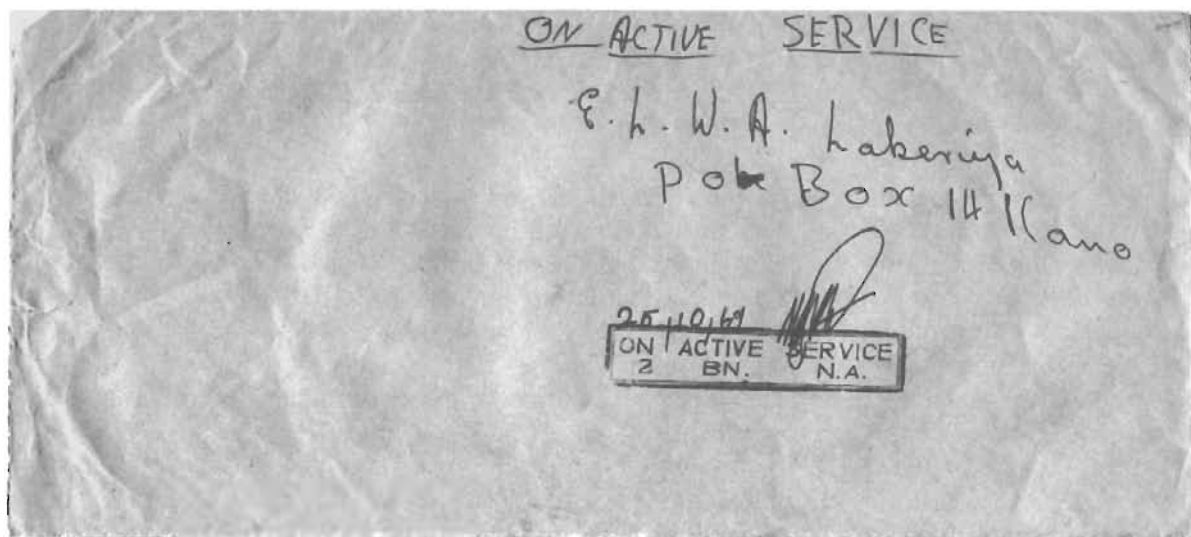
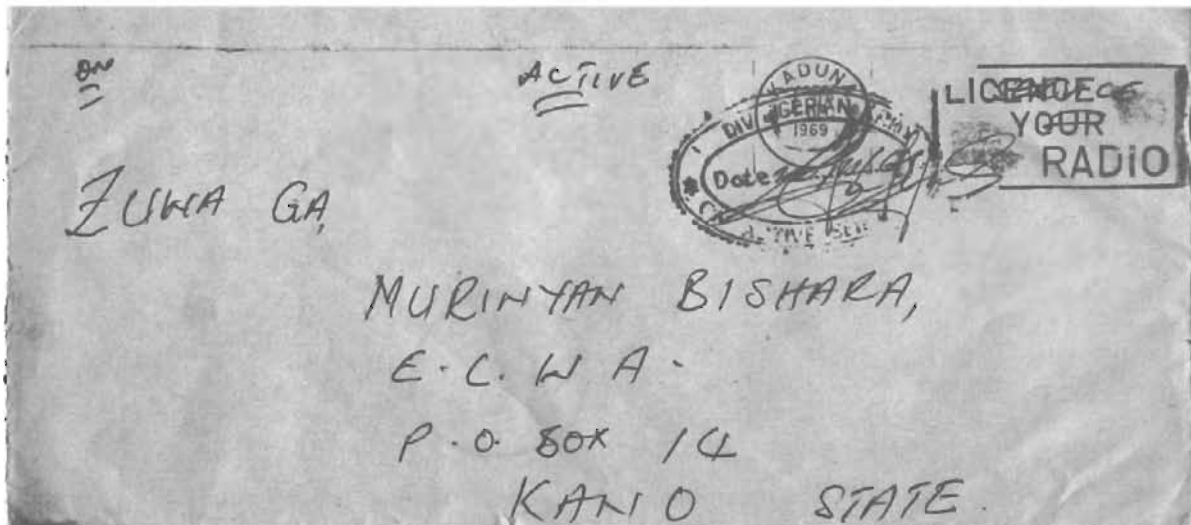
# Nigerian Army Mail during Biafra Conflict

Dudley Prestedge

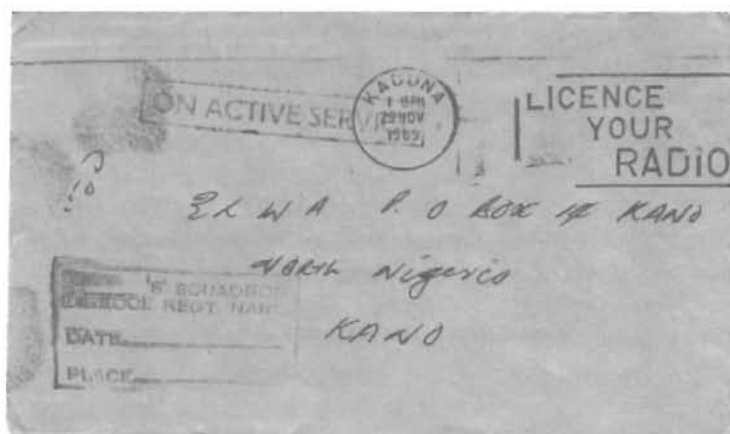
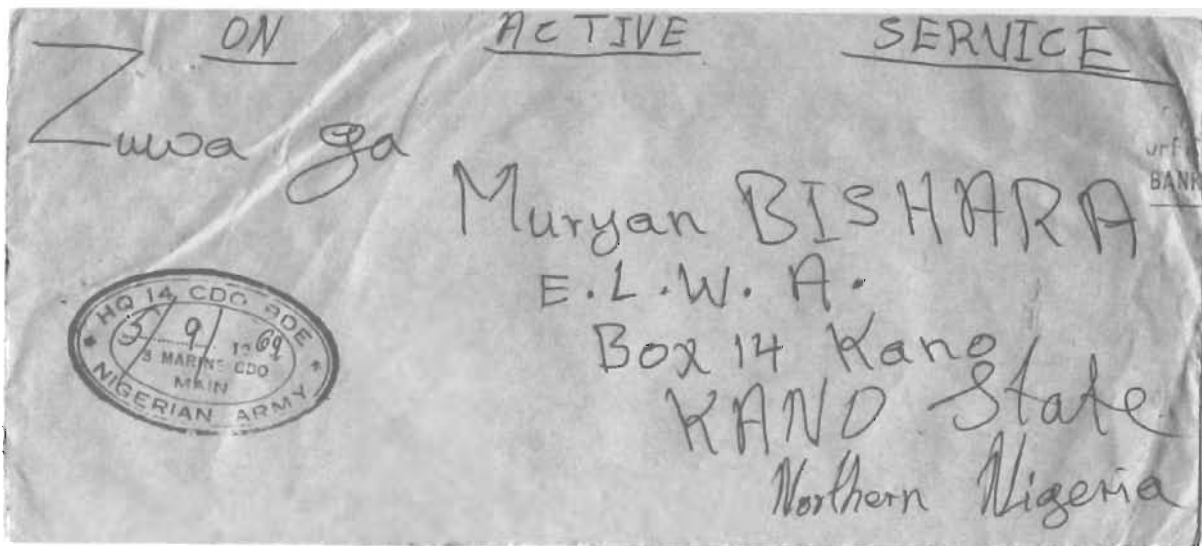
There has been little information on this subject and my own material is quite small in quantity. All my covers are addressed to ELWA which I mistakenly assumed was just a clearing house for Nigerian Forces mail. Recently I decided to look at it more closely and I discovered that ELWA was a radio station operating from Monrovia, Liberia and the mail was for requests for either music to be played, messages to families or religious connections.

A short while on the internet turned up the fact that the ELWA radio station had a history going back to 1952 when it was set up by Sudan Interior Mission International to propagate the tenets of the Christian faith by broadcasting. The Government of Liberia assigned the station a radio frequency with the call letters "ELWA" (Eternal Love Winning Africa).

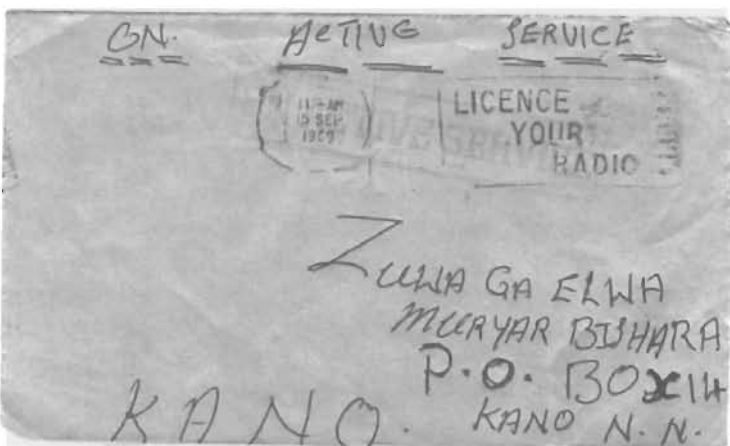
The station broadcasted in Liberian dialects but more importantly devoted several hours each day to English. During the Biafran war there was an associated radio/TV station at Kano operating under the name Muryar Bishara, hence the address on the covers below.



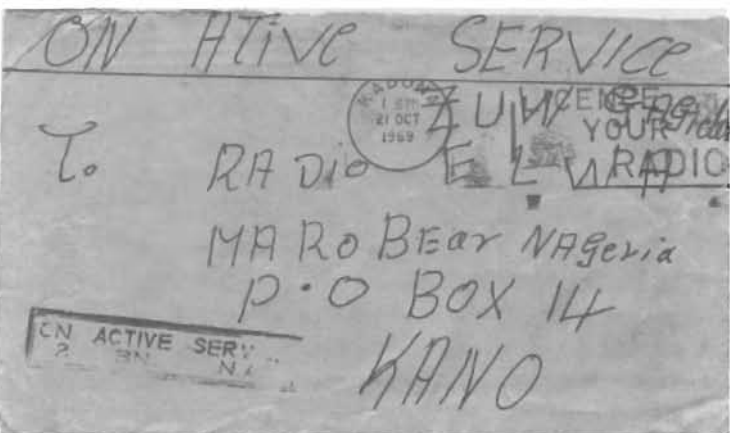
It would appear that ELWA was a preferred listening choice of the Nigerian Armed Forces and so it is reasonable to assume that there must be many similar covers around and the information I have amassed covering the later period of the war (1969) could be greatly expanded.



These covers have a variety of addressing features with the majority being sent to P.O.Box 14, Kano although one was addressed to Jos.



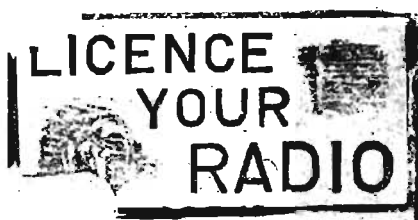
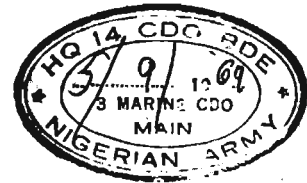
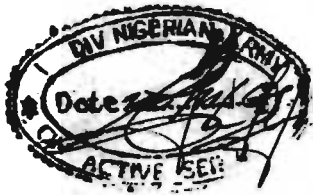
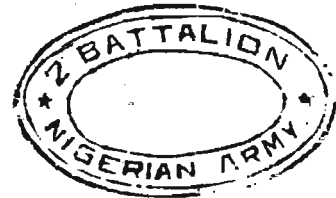
Presumably all information regarding the radio service was obtained from the broadcasts giving rise to different interpretations of the phonetic pronunciation of the address. One correspondent thought the station was ELWA Laberiya (Liberia) and there were many spellings for Muryar Bishara.



All are stampless covers bearing a script or rubber stamped "On Active Service" or similar and a cachet showing the sender's unit.

With the Nigerians in control of the mail service, the situation seems to have returned to normal quickly with cancellations having the 1969 date slug.

Biafra Conflict 1969  
Nigerian Army Cachets and Post Marks



# Elder Dempster Hospital Ship "Aba"

Jeremy Martin FRPSL

This ship was built in 1918 and purchased by Elder Dempster in 1920. During World War 2 she was converted for use as a hospital ship, and is shown in that guise in the postcard view at figure 1.



Figure 1

An air mail letter card just acquired (figure 2), written by the Rev. Clay on HMH Ship "ABA", includes the following information:

*"I am writing this at sea, with the hope that when we arrive at Freetown, Sierra Leone, we will be able to post there..... After Freetown we go to the Equator, and then to B. Congo, 90 miles up the river to Matadi, where we pick up our patients."*

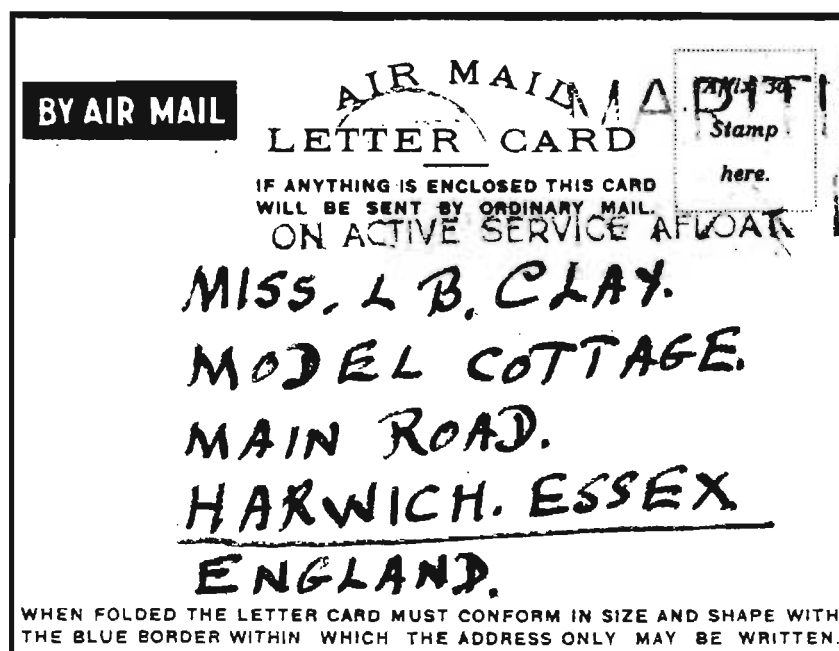


Figure 2

The Airmail letter card was written on 30 August 1945, had a purple cachet ON ACTIVE SERVICE AFLOAT, and was sent to England where it received a red POST OFFICE / MARITIME MAIL mark. The *Aba* was not refitted and was sold in 1947 to Bawtry SS Company of Liverpool, renamed *Matrona*.

## Articles of Interest Published in Other Journals

Members are invited to contact either editor by e-mail, post or telephone when the notice any article they may feel might be of interest to other members. Articles which we hope to reproduce in full in *Cameo* at a future date are not listed here

### **London Philatelist** Volume 117

September 2008, number 1358, pp241-258 "*Slavery on the Congo Coast: Postal History*" by Patrick Masalis

December 2008, number 1361, pp396-398 "*Northern Rhodesia 1963: apparent Double Printing*" by Alan Drysdall and Paul Skinner (an explanation of the apparent doubling of black imprints on photogravure stamps of this period; which may also be seen on contemporaneous stamps of West Africa).

### **Sixth Sense**, Murray Payne

December 2008, "*Insight into Gambia*" with particular reference to the shades of the KGVI 1½d

### **Journal of the France & Colonies PS**, volume 58, number 3, September 2008

pp103-105, *Togo 1914-1922—Postal Stationery*, by John Mayne

### **Journal of the France & Colonies PS**, volume 58, number 4, December 2008

pp145-151, *Airmail Routes and Rates from Cameroun to the UK during World War II*, by Martin Bratzel and Bob Picirilli, in which they appeal for more examples from readers to help them to reconstruct the rates to the UK. Well done to them for grasping this nettle and giving a good tug at its roots!

### **Air Mail News**, volume 51, number 203, November 2008

pp196-209, *The LATI Substitute service of Pan American Airways and the influence of Wartime Censorship*, by John Wilson. An abbreviated version of that article appears in this issue of *Cameo* at p56

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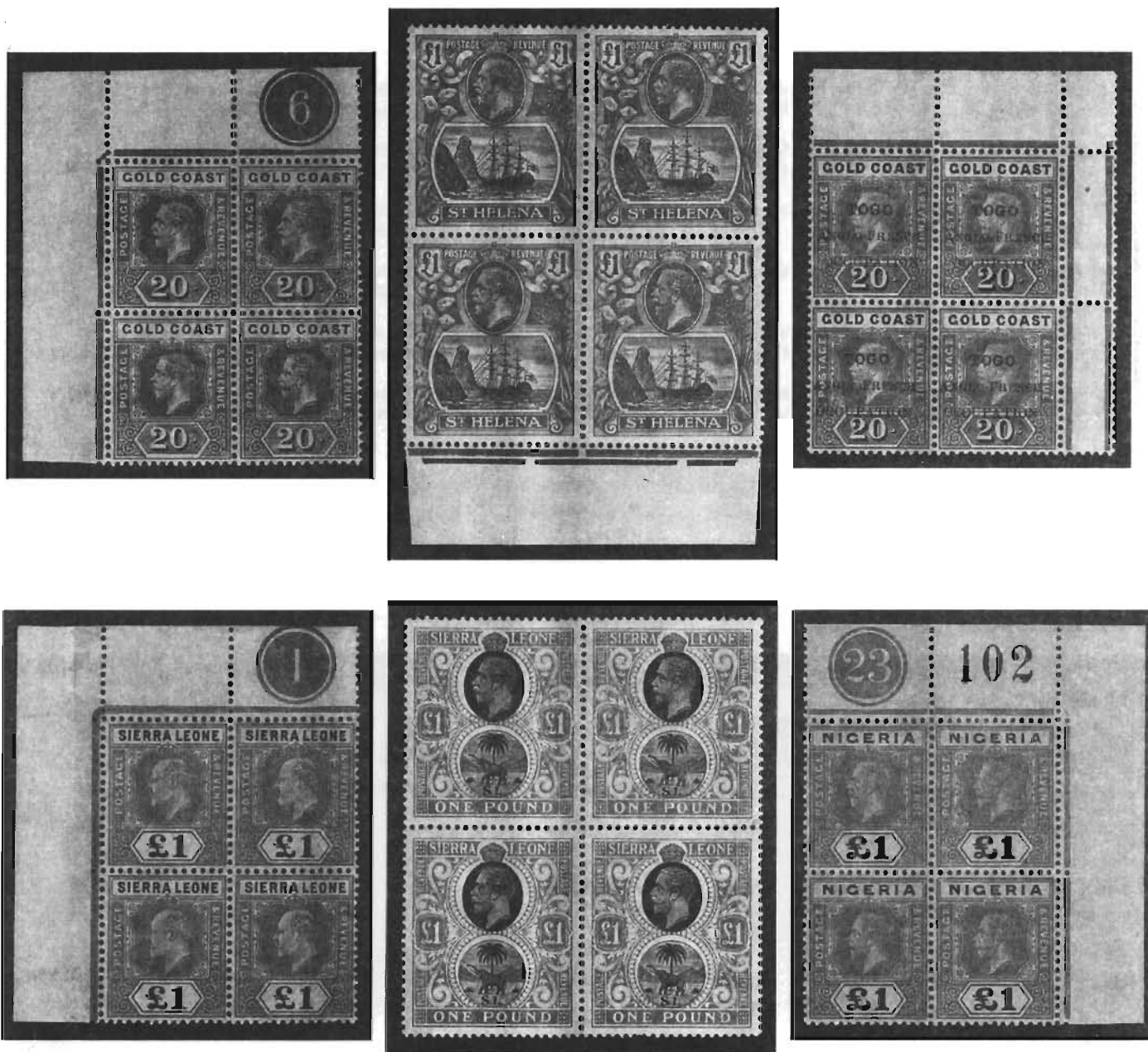
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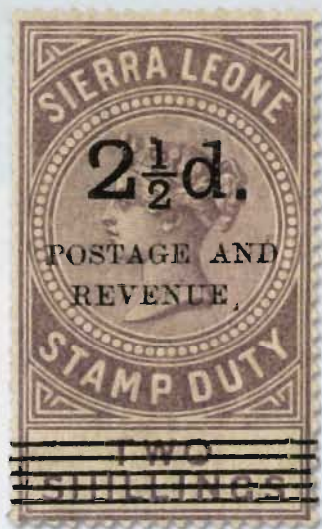
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