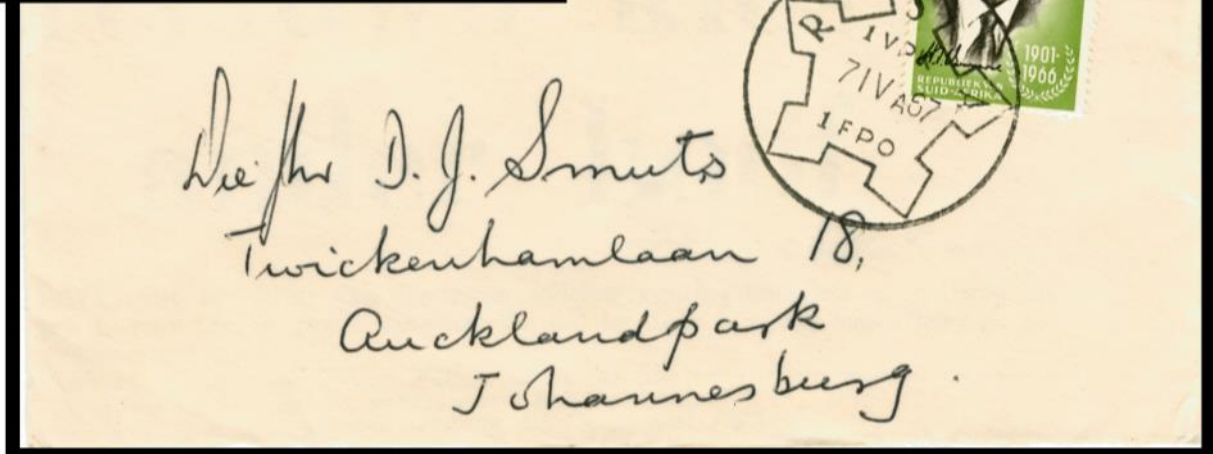


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# THE SPRINGBOK

SOUTH AFRICAN COLLECTORS'  
SOCIETY QUARTERLY  
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Composite image (courtesy of Steve Hannath) showing items relevant to Part 1 of his article on pages 14 - 18 of this issue, dealing with early Capetown post offices and postmarks.

It shows van Riebeeck's original fort, (not the Castle), a VOC monogram, (not the postmark), the first two known recorded British postmarks and an Apartheid era cover showing the Castle insignia of the SADF.

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## MEETINGS FOR 2022

*No physical meetings are planned as this goes to press. However, Simon is investigating a weekend conference for Spring/Summer 2022 so watch this space!  
We are planning to have a Zoom meeting on 12th March - see below.*

### ***Zoom meetings of the Society—Presentations needed***

We had a very enjoyable Zoom meeting of the Society on 11th December as reported on page 6.

We plan to have another meeting on 12th March, at the same time as before i.e. at 4pm (GMT). If you have a presentation you are able to offer I would be delighted to hear from you. If you would like to join the meeting, please email me on tonyjohnson26@btinternet.com. I will then send the link to all who express interest.

As the meetings held so far proved so successful, and in particular in enabling a number of members to join who aren't able to get to our normal meetings, I am hoping to hold Zoom meetings for the foreseeable future. So, I will need more offers of presentations. These could be of any topic associated with Southern Africa philately and could include social history as well as postal history or philately. If you have interesting material it doesn't have to be written up as a display (though those are very welcome). If you have access to a scanner it is possible to scan the material and prepare a presentation more quickly than preparing a display and digitising that. I am very happy to advise anyone on how they can best show their material via Zoom and offer any help I can.

Thank you.

Tony Johnson

## Editorial

*The Springbok* is published quarterly for the benefit of Members of the South African Collectors Society. It is not available to non-members. Contributions in the form of letters, notes, reports of SA related activities, articles, etc., are always welcome and should be sent to the Hon. Editor. All correspondence including a SAE will be acknowledged.

*The Springbok was awarded a large vermeil medal at Stampex 2017*

**Editor**  
 Tony Johnson  
**Editorial Panel**  
 T. Howgrave-Graham  
 C. Oliver  
 J.L. Shaw

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**Vol. 70 Issue.1 Whole No. 357**  
**Founded 1948**

Welcome to the first Springbok of 2022. Happy New Year to everybody. As you can see from the contents below we have a very varied issue with a wide range of subjects covered. We still lack any RSA period content so if anyone has an article on that era I would be delighted to hear from you. The article from Steve Hannath resulted from the postcard and postmarks shown on the cover of the last Springbok which he found to be misleading by suggesting that all the postmarks shown were used in that Post Office. I took the images from a presentation by Rob Lester that I am holding for future Springboks and that presentation did include the 'disclaimer' that the postmarks shown are not all directly relevant to the image of the Post Office shown but date back far earlier. So, any misleading impression given is entirely attributable to me! It is a case of unforeseen consequences that I need to be more careful of in future. Sorry for taking the images out of context, Rob but it has led to an excellent article from Steve of which there will be more in the next issue. I had also hoped to start serialising Rob's presentation in this issue but space precluded this. However, their article on Union Cinderella include a further 5 examples.

As well as Steve's article we have part 2 of Bob Hill's fascinating presentation of Cape of Good Hope Post Offices and their postmarks and shorter, but still very interesting, articles from Nicholas Arrow and Malcolm Judd on uncommon covers that led them to explore their relevant subjects further. Nick was stimulated by a cachet that he showed in the last issue and the help following that that allowed him to solve the mystery. Malcom acquired a cover some time ago that he had puzzled over for some time but has only recently found time to investigate. He has written it up for the interest of others. Maybe others have investigated interesting items that will enable them to produce a short (or long) article that would be interesting to other members? If so I would love to hear from you.

Tony Howgrave-Graham has produced an excellent piece on the 2d bantam that was of particular interest to me as the War Effort issues are my personal favourite. Tony has also provided another interesting article on an aspect of SWA postal history that he writes for us for most issues. I enjoy these insights into an area I know little about and hope many of you do too. Maybe some of you with an interest in SWA could provide a piece for this corner?

Finally we have some interesting letters but I would particularly like to point you to Jim Dounis's letter in which he is looking to clarify some of the information pertaining to the Union Pictorials. Please look at your material and see if you can help Jim.

Tony Johnson

Contents	Page	Contents	Page
<b>Society News:</b>		<b>Articles:</b>	
Letchworth Meeting report	4	The first Cape Post Offices and their early Postmarks - Part 1	14
Report on Zoom meeting held on 11th Dec	6	Little Bobby Shaftoe	19
<b>From The Editor's Desk:</b>		Union Cinderella—Part 2	22
Letters to the Editor from Steve Hannath, Wilbert Davids, Mike Smith and Jim Dounis	11-13	Was the RAF in Durban in WW2?	25
		Mystery of a cachet solved	26
		Postcards and Postmarks from the Cape of Good Hope (1880-1915) - Part 2	29
		SWA Corner	31
		Index to 2021 Springboks	35

## ***A REPORT ON THE MEETING OF THE S.A.C.S. HELD AT THE MRS HOWARD MEMORIAL HALL, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY ON SATURDAY, 30TH OCTOBER 2021.***



### **Ian Shapiro gives his display,**

13 persons attended, 9 of which were members. 2 visitors were from North Herts Stamp Club and there were 2 new visitors. One was Annemarie Verwoerd the granddaughter of the former Prime Minister and the other was Colin Archibald. We received nine apologies from members, including our President who is still confined to barracks, and one from Giovanni Palazzo who had, sadly, caught Covid-19 on his first trip to a local stamp club since lockdown. Our commiserations had been sent to them both.

Both Steve Hannath and Simon Peetoom took a table each for selling their stock.

Ian Shapiro gave the first display which was of the archival material "Premiers and Presidents: Archival Items from the Collection of Herman Steyn, Head of Philatelic Services, Pretoria". The material was, as usual, excellent, had not been seen probably for decades and Ian's description of the material was up to his very high standard and most informative. Among the items displayed were publicity photographs, first day covers including the rare "Gold Covers" as mentioned by Reisner, pencil etchings of the Presidents and varieties. A very rare item was a proof from the steel block of the 4c & 15c Diederichs issue. This display was as good as it gets.

Steve Hannath followed with a superb display of Simonstown from its beginning up to when the naval base ceased to be in British hands. He used stamps, covers and post cards to illustrate his display, with lots of humour, local knowledge, in his usual enthusiastic manner.

He displayed an unusual new collecting theme that of 'Simonstown Aerial Ropeway Mail'. This was mail sent from Simonstown to the Military Hospital above the town, by means of a rope cableway. A superb display of watercolour postcards of Simonstown which had previously been sold as views of Devon, but Steve recognised them as from Simonstown because he had spent his childhood there. A rare item was the use of the BONC 1047 used on a post card (unrecorded and possibly unique).

Steve then posted the question "Who was Clive Peter" He then showed the 2d sailor of the large war stamps and bantams informing us of his life, with examples of the stamps. He concluded his display with material (mostly various hand cachets) from the "Africa Station" which was the naval base there. including HMS Hyacinth mail.

The last display before the lunch break was a frame of Odds & Ends from Simon Peetoom. This included holiday mail from the mobile post office van at Tenby and from Dale near the end of the Milford Haven Waterway. Two postcards of hockey teams from 1914, Revenue Stamps, the Egypt "51" actual date canceller with a

newly discovered cover bearing "51", which Simon had not been seen before. A passenger list from the Union Castle Line and a post-war Czech repatriation card concluded his display.

Excellent refreshments/drinks were provided by Lyn & Rob Lester and Bob Hill to whom we gave thanks.

After the break, Chris Oliver, the Hon. Secretary of SACS, began the afternoon with a well-researched and detailed 36-page display on 'WW2 Airgraphs from South Africa'. Airgraphs cannot be said to be 'attractive' items but nevertheless they performed a vital function during the war and are an interesting collecting field. Airgraphs are letters that were photographed in South Africa (or anywhere) whose negatives were sent by air-mail overseas, typically to the UK where they were printed-out and posted. This reduced the weight of forces airmail that aeroplanes carried. Chris showed that even Italian POWs in South Africa, of which there were a great many, used the Airgraph mail system.

David Belton, who was visiting, then displayed some maritime connections between Plymouth and South Africa, mainly salvaged mail from the Kenilworth Castle. During war time, in 1918, the vessel was in convoy off Plymouth when it was on collision course with H.M.S. Kent. It avoided collision but hit a cruiser, H.M.S. Rival, dislodging two depth charges. The prow of the Kenilworth Castle was damaged, by them, some mail was harmed, and the ship was towed to Plymouth Dockyard for repairs.

Chris Board produced some of his research, obtained when trawling through the Post Office Archives in Pretoria and elsewhere, relating to the essays for the South African stamp designs of 1911.

He displayed an Immelman bromide print and other items concerned with the complex discovery of the designers and engravers in the competition for the first definitive stamps of South Africa whose lack of success has not been adequately recorded.

Our next display came from Bob Hill who, as usual, brought something out of the ordinary to show whilst munching on KitKat. Bob's display was of the correspondence of Titus Maleka, an ANC supporter during the apartheid years who was incarcerated on Robben Island. Maleka's family found it difficult to maintain contact with him whilst he was in prison. He took part in a hunger strike and eventually received help via the Red Cross. Post-Apartheid, Maleka became the ANC's mysterious head of security which was a position of some influence. We also saw documents of the African Auxiliary Pioneer Corps; a Bangwatto Christmas Card and a Kruger National Park permit of 1951.

Tony Johnson showed us, largely WW2, well designed advertising covers sent to Burmeister & Co., of East London.

Rob Lester then gave a Perfin display from some of this material which he and Lyn had assembled. Around 1890 British companies who had established colonial offices in South Africa started to introduce Perfins into their South African businesses to prevent fraud. Their use grew quickly throughout the decade and many South African commercial companies adopted the procedure first used in London.

There are only 198 known on South African stamps. Of these, 28 are Fiscal dies and 11 Official dies. Of the remaining 159 dies, 26 companies are known to have more than one die, leaving only a total of 133 different commercial companies that used Perfin stamps in South Africa. The task of perforating stamps was often given to the junior clerk or post boy in the firm, and he would often fold a sheet of stamps so that he could perfin more stamps at a time and speed up the work. This in turn led to some Perfins being back to front or upside down. There is no significant value in these Perfins, and they do not constitute a variety nor error, as most Perfin collectors prefer an impression the right way round and the correct way up! When machines became worn or were badly maintained, they would not perforate four sheets at a time and occasionally pins would break, resulting in partial impressions. The introduction of franking machines in large companies eventually resulted in the demise of the Perfins.

The display consisted of twenty "proving" covers where stamps with Perfins of the company were applied to advertising covers giving details of the company. Of note, were both dies of B Lawrence & Co, (BL&Co), and William Dawson & Sons, (WD&S and DS). Single dies of Cleghorn & Harris, (C&H), John Dickinson & Co, (JD&Co) J. W. Jagger & Co, (JWJ&Co) Thomas Cook & Son, (TC&S), and Union Castle Co., (U- - C Co) all had attractive advertising covers or post cards and matching Perfins. The Standard Bank of South Africa, (SBSA) Perfin displayed used the same die as its British counterpart as illustrated overleaf on cover along with the South African examples.

Our thanks must be given to Bob Hill for arranging and chairing the meeting and also, with Lyn and Rob Lester for providing the food which we all enjoyed. Simon Peetoom is also to be thanked for transporting frames to the meeting.

My thanks to Bob for making notes on the pre-lunch displays and to Rob for providing a write-up of the Perfin display.

For a more full report by Steve Hannath, visit the South African Philatelic Club website. I must thank him as I have pinched one of his pictures and used his report on my display as I find it difficult to praise my own work.

Chris Oliver



## A REPORT OF THE ZOOM MEETING OF THE S.A.C.S. HELD ON SATURDAY, 11TH DECEMBER 2021.

Tony Johnson opened the meeting to 14 participants at 16.00.

Our first presenter was Wilbert Davids who showed us an interesting mix of Union covers selected from a display he showed at Stockholm 2019.

The first cover was described as a letter on a detour and was a war-time cover sent from France to Port-Said in Egypt that must have gone right around Africa as it also bore a South African censor label.

The second cover was described as a Wartime Goldmine as it had been sent to the Head of Administration at a goldmine (see front and reverse below – heavily reduced). As can be seen from the various postmarks it went on quite a journey around South Africa in trying to trace him.



The third cover was described as Operation Barbarosa - A Jewish story and was a cover dated 26th Feb. 1941 containing a letter from a Rabbi Stein in Worcester S.A., to his father in Eastern Poland. It was received in Bransk on 22nd June 1941. Wilbert showed us where Bransk was and provided us with a translation of the letter in Hebrew.

The fourth cover was described as running around on an Island. It was a censored cover (see front and reverse below – heavily reduced) sent from Durban to a radiographer on board a ship that was censored before being sent to the shipping company’s head office where it was forwarded to the Dutch Indies. It was received in Batavia where it was read by another censor before being sent on a few days later. It then went around the island from Batavia to Soerabaya where it was taxed. It couldn’t be delivered there so was sent back to Batavia where it was taxed again. After 9 days it was sent back to Soerabaya where it was taxed for a third time! The last mark shows it was sent on 2 weeks later, presumably to the addressee on the S.S. Ombilin.

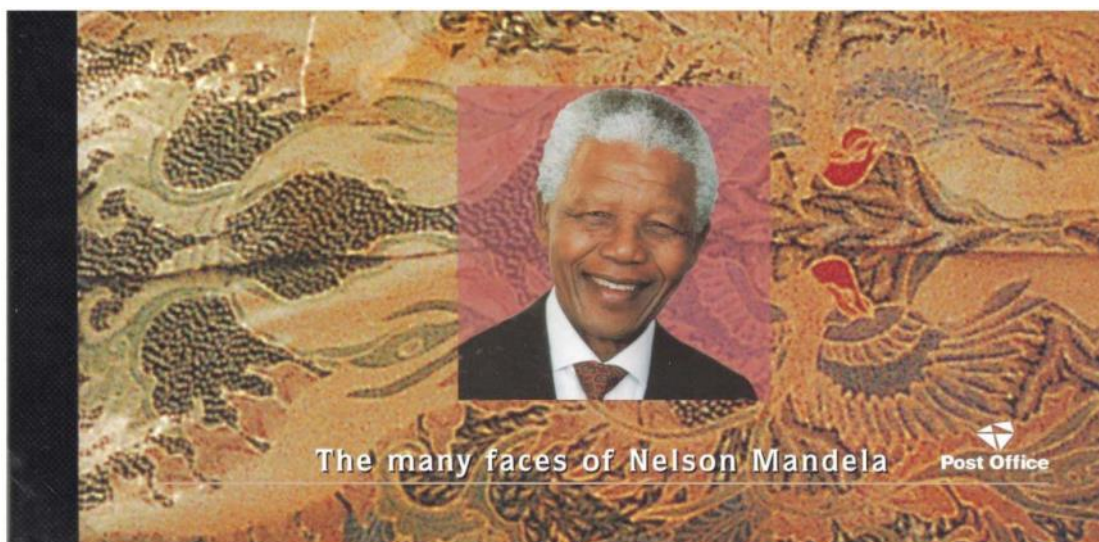


The fifth cover was entitled ‘How many times can one censor a letter’. It showed a cover that went from Costermanville to Elizabethville (Belgian Congo) where it was read by a censor. It was then sent to Johannesburg where it was censored again. From there it went to Capetown where it was censored yet again and 3d postage was added before going on to Lisbon. From there it was sent back to Elizabethville where it was censored for a fourth time before being sent on to Aketi, the last mark shown.

The final cover was yet another letter on a detour. It was an airmail letter sent from Marseille to Guadelope. It went from Marseille to Capetown where it was censored before being forwarded to Guadelope where it was received over a year later!

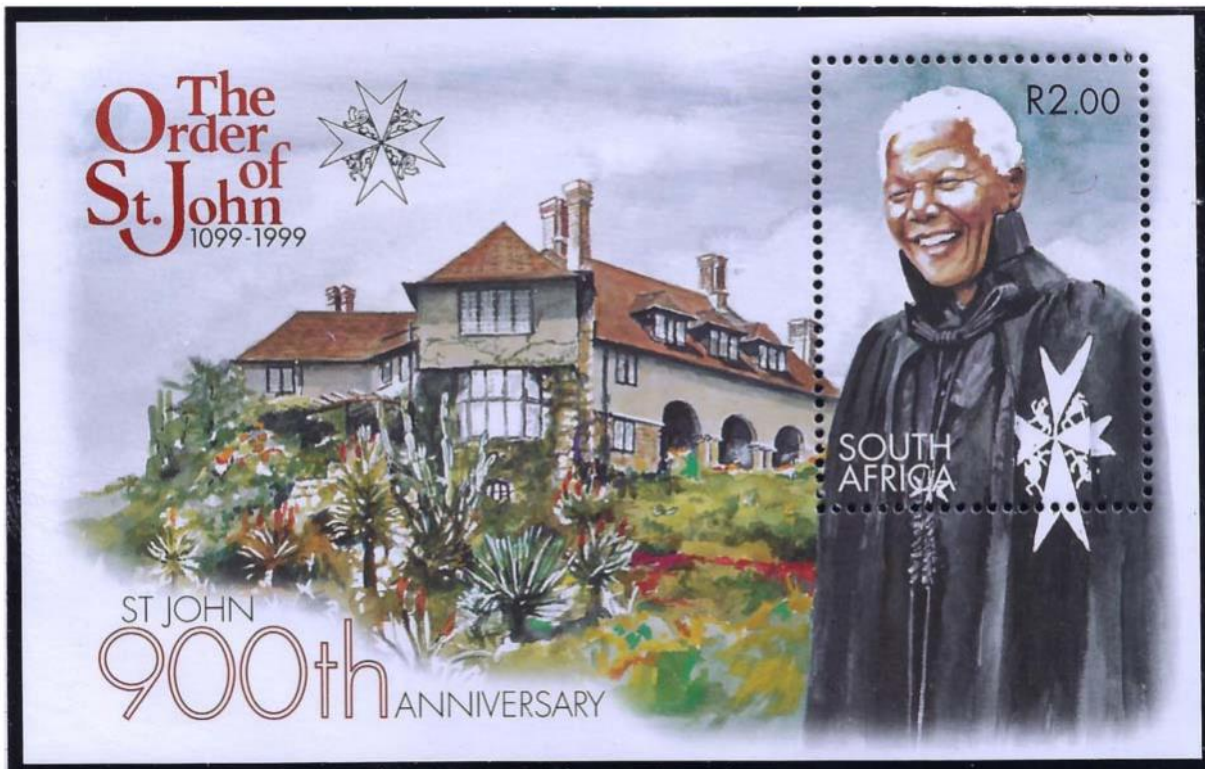
Our second presenter was Chris Oliver who showed us various stamps and covers commemorating Nelson Mandela. The first was a special cover issued on the day he was inaugurated as President which bore stamps selected to mark the occasion, including one issued on the day showing his picture as President. It also included an insert summarising the relevance of the 4 stamps used on the cover.

He then focussed on a 24 page stamp booklet issued on 21st November 2001 (shown reduced below) containing 10 commemorative stamps and 2 postcards. Two of the stamps are shown also.



Chris took us through each page of the booklet as each described a different phase of Mandela's life, and showed him in various roles on the world stage as president.

He then showed us a variety of postcards and miniature sheets issued to commemorate his Nobel prize, his 80th and 90th birthdays and the 900th anniversary of the Order of St John of which he was a Knight of Grace.



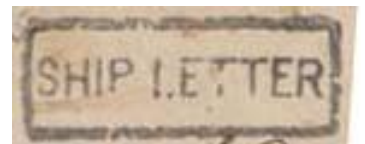
The third presenter was Keith Klugman who discussed the Durban Boxed Ship Letter mark. He told us there are only 34 known examples of this mark, used between 1888 and 1893. He listed the countries each of these covers were sent from, and the numbers from each. The countries were Rhodesia (14), Mozambique (7), Madagascar (1), Mauritius (2), British Central Africa (1), Zanzibar but using Indian stamps (3), German East Africa (2), India (2), Tasmania (1) and Victoria (1). Keith showed us three of these covers from his collection. These are shown below and on the facing page.





The first of the covers shown came from Madagascar via Mauritius, the remaining 2 are from Mauritius and Rhodesia via Mozambique, and it can be seen that each of them bear very clear copies of the Ship Letter mark.

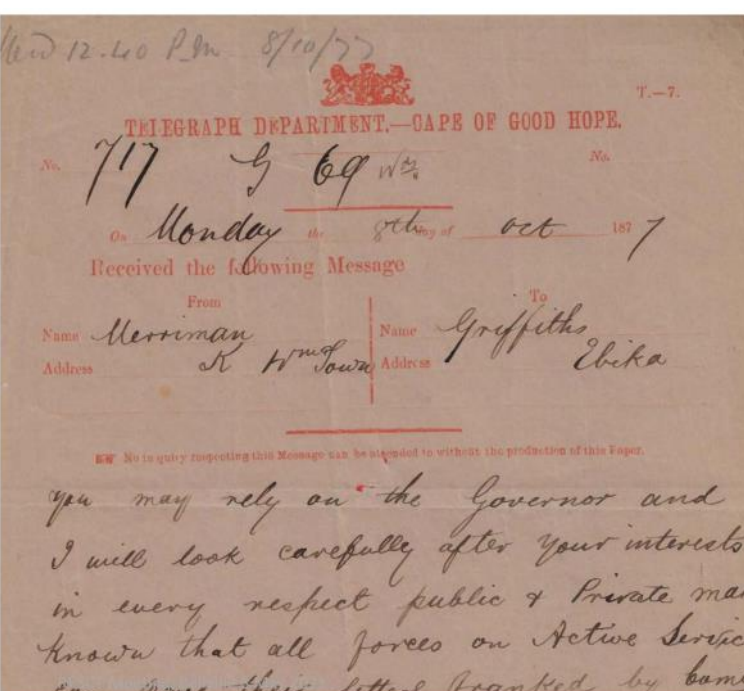
Keith concluded his presentation by showing the destination for each of the 34 recorded examples. 8 of these were destined for the Cape Colony, 3 for the Orange Free State, 8 for the Transvaal and 3 for Natal. The remainder went to Europe including 6 for England, 1 for Wales, 1 for Belgium, 2 for Germany and 2 for Holland.



An enlargement of the mark, taken from the cover above left, is shown above.

The next presenter was Hugh Amore who told us about the Greetings Telegrams issued by the Union and RSA between 1926 and 1991.

He told us that the telegraph system was first operated in South Africa by the Cape of Good Hope Telegraph Company, but with subsidies from the Government, until 1873 when they were bought out by the government.



He then showed us one of the early telegrams (dated 1877) sent during the last war of dispossession (shown here heavily reduced). It authorised members of the forces to frank mail.

The Greetings Telegram was introduced in 1926, the charge "being one penny for each word in the address and name form, plus 3d for the selected [standard] greeting, with a minimum of 9d." These could be sent at Christmas, New Year and the Jewish New Year but the Postmaster General reported in 1935 that "it was possible that some extension of the arrangements may be adopted in the future."

In a Gazette of 1937 new charges for greetings telegrams were set. The rates were: (a) Ordinary telegrams: 1d per word with a minimum of 1/-; (b) Greetings telegrams: standardized (Post Office) text at 3d plus 1d per word exclusive of the standard text and a minimum of 9d per telegram; and using the sender's text at 9d for 12 words plus 1d for each word after 12. Greetings telegrams were

“delivered on special ornamental forms enclosed in golden envelopes. They are treated on receipt at the telegraph office as letters, and as such become subject to the Postal Regulations so far as delivery is concerned.”

Hugh then showed us examples of the various greetings telegrams and envelopes issued over the years. Just two of these covers are shown below (heavily reduced), the first of which Hugh speculated may be the earliest greetings telegram envelope issued and the other a telegram from the middle years.



Our last presenter was David Osborne who showed us many covers connected to the Royal visit of the Royal Family in 1947. Some of the covers were hand drawn and while most were South African he also included other countries visited during that tour; namely Rhodesia, Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland. Some of the covers shown were First Day Covers and others had been carried on the Royal Train.

Some of the covers shown were official but had various significant printing errors such as significant colour shifts.

Three of the covers are shown below (heavily reduced). Note the missing red on the first envelope and the colour shifts for both red and orange on the second. Also note the differences in the strength of the blue on each. Both are First day covers of 2 of the designs issued. The third cover is one carried on the Royal Train (confirmed by the special mark at the bottom of the cover).



# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## From Steve Hannath

Further to Tony H-G's question, "Who are the two figures in front of van Riebeeck?", ('The 1952 Van Riebeeck Tercentenary', The Springbok, October 2021), I submit the following:

The first is presumably Diaz or da Gama, red and green being the colours of Portugal. The other, more soberly dressed chap is most likely the great English pirate, Sir Francis Drake, who circumnavigated the globe (1577 - 1580) during which he described the Cape as "the fairest in all the worlde". This was probably due to the fact that he was expecting a rough time at the Cape of Storms but instead found fair weather and a good wind. Drake was a contemporary of Sir Walter Raleigh. Tony's postcard shows him performing a Raleighesque bow (as if Hope was QE1 stepping over a puddle). Drake's description of the Cape as "the fairest in all the worlde" has been a godsend to South African tourist propagandists ever since. No doubt the 1910 Pageant promoters were mindful of his contribution. Given that the Pageant of South Africa was a celebration of the Union of Boer and Brit, it would have shocked and disappointed many Unionists back then if no Brit was included to stand among the pantheon of South African firsts. Drake fits the bill admirably!

All of the front three men - da Gama/Diaz, Drake and van Riebeeck - performed 'firsts' at the Cape. Diaz was the first to round the Cape (1488) and open the way for Da Gama to be the first to sail to India (1498). Drake was the first English sailor to round the Cape (1580). Jan van Riebeeck was the first Dutch settler at the Cape (1652). So, in chronological order left to right, it is Diaz, most likely not Da Gama, Drake and van Riebeeck.

## From Wilbert Davids

With regard to Nick Arrow's question in Springbok #356, page 113 I suggest Nick is close to the answer, but this cover, or more accurately, these kind of markings indicates (US) pouch or diplomatic mail. Usually, this kind mail was stamped in the country of origin. In this case South Africa. Only on arrival in the USA, it was postmarked. In most cases this was Washington, but I also hold a cover that had arrived in New Jersey in 1952. Diplomatic mail is usually not censored, including war time mail. Also, it's usually not registered, but I also hold a registered cover from 1945 in my collection. Regarding the FC marking: this indicates Foreign Country, but I'm not sure what 'MA' stands for.

Wilbert sent me scans of a number of diplomatic covers 3 of which are shown below (heavily reduced). The first also shows a detailed enlargement of the mark showing it came from the Netherlands Legation in Pretoria, the second doesn't include this but it shows the FC and MA marks Wilbert refers to above and the third shows the front and reverse showing Miami transit numbers.

*(Please read Nick's update on this MA-FC cachet on page 26—Editor)*



Vlucht AN 446 Telegram verzonden, JOHANNESBURG 11.V.37 naar LONDON 20.MAI.37 Engeland.



<u>ROUTE</u>			<u>Airplane name</u>	<u>Type</u>
Johannesburg - Zuid-Afrika	vertrek	12 mei.	Andromea	Armstrong-Withworth
Juba - Soedan(nu Zuid-Soedan)	vertrek	15 mei.	Hadrian	Handley Page E42
Southampton - Engeland	aankomst	19 mei.	Centaurus	Short S23 Empire Flying Boat
Aankomst Londen op 20 mei 1937.			Telegrambrief met duidelijke aanduidingen bij aflevering!	

*Luchtpost tarief 6--d. enkel geldig voor Engeland en Noord Ierland. Geldig van 27/11/1934 t/m 30/06/1937.*

I.A.1-37.

A friend of mine in the USA, Jeff Switt, has sent me a request regarding the attached image of a S.A. telegram envelope that he recently purchased. He has several questions about this cover, see below, and has asked if I might have some contacts who could help him.

He asks:

1. Is there a collector following for these?
2. How common are these surviving envelopes?
4. Why was a telegram mailed to the UK instead of by cable, as I believe the cable was in existence at this time?
5. The street address - I cannot find such a CHIYWELL ST. I did find CHISWELL ST, and the structure there seems occupied. Do you think that is correct?
6. I speculate this envelope was meant for incoming "foreign" telegrams for local delivery, and this example was used for some unknown (to me) reason on an outbound telegram. Do you think that is correct?
7. Is there anything else you can add to this story?

If you are able to help or know someone who can, please let me know.

Regards, Mike (mikesmith.philatelist@gmail.com)

*Editor's note: Tony Howgrave-Graham and I agree that the address should have been Chiswell Street but can't help otherwise. Please copy me on any replies for inclusion in the next issue.*

## ***Final auction?***

**Nick Arrow will need to clear the material he is currently holding prior to giving up his auctioneer's role. This will need to be postponed until we can meet up again for a live auction, with Zoom participation, when the material can be inspected before the sale.**

**However, this means he can't take any new material for sale and after that sale the auction will cease unless we can find a new auctioneer. Any chance you can help?**

## From Jim Dounis

For some time I have been frustrated with the vagueness of the issue dates given in various publications [for the Union Pictorials], so I have thought that maybe through the Springbok we can clarify them.

I am sending you a table for each of the Union pictorial values and some photos of the earliest dates I have seen.

What I am asking the readers is if they can supply a photo of their earliest dates so we can keep these tables updated.

Regards Jim Dounis (ddounis@hotmail.gr)

*Editors note: I have included one of the tables and some of the scans Jim sent as an example (for the 2d value) below. If you can help Jim with examples on or before the dates shown please let him know directly. When appropriate I am hoping Jim can update us on this project.*

2d.		UHB dates†	Earliest date Wmk up.	Earliest date Wmk inv.
LONDON 1	P14	Mar-27	4 MAR. 27	
LONDON 2	P14	Jan-28		
LONDON 3	P14	Apr-28		
LONDON 4	P14	Sep-29		
LONDON 4	P14X131/2 UP	Feb-30		
LONDON 4	P14X131/2 DOWN	Sep-30	23 SEPT. 30	
LONDON 4	P14X131/2 DOWN (Cleaned plate)	Jan-31		
UNHYPH.	ISS 1	Apr-31	16 APR. 31	9 MAY 31
UNHYPH.	ISS 1A	Mar-32		
UNHYPH.	ISS 2	Feb-32	22 OCT. 31	24 SEPT. 31
UNHYPH.	ISS 2A	Oct-33		
UNHYPH.	ISS 3	1934	12 JAN. 34	12 SEPT. 33
UNHYPH.	ISS 3 Blue+violet	Mar-38	26 JAN. 38 JAN 38 (M.T.)*	25
HYPH.	ISS 4	Nov-38		
HYPH.	ISS 4a	May-41	23 APR. 41	
HYPH.	ISS 5	Mar-45		
HYPH.	ISS 6	Oct-46		
HYPH.	ISS 7	Dec-46		
HYPH.	ISS 7A	Feb-47		
HYPH.	ISS 8	Dec-46		
HYPH.	ISS 9	Jan-47		
HYPH.	ISS 10	Feb-47		
HYPH.	ISS 11	Oct-47		
HYPH.	ISS 12	May-48	19 MAR. 48	
HYPH.	ISS 13	Mar-50	30 MAR 50 (M.T.)*	
MEDIUM PTG	ISS 14	Apr-50	20 APR. 50	
ISS 15		Nov-52		
ISS 16		Dec-52		
ISS 17		Dec-52		



Roto issue 2. Watermark inverted.  
24 SEPTEMBER 1931

(Showing issue 2 proving varieties. R8-9/6)



Roto issue 3. Watermark inverted.

12 SEPTEMBER 1933  
(Showing issue 3 proving varieties. R2/6)

† Union Hand Book

\* Picture in Mike Tonking's book: The 2d Rotogravure pictorial issues 1931-1952 (SACS)



Roto Issue 1.  
Watermark upright.  
16 APRIL 1931



Roto issue 2. Watermark upright.  
23 SEPTEMBER 1931

(Showing issue 2 proving varieties. R10/5-6)

# 'CAPE TOWN CASTLE & THE OLD SLAVE LODGE - THE FIRST CAPE POST OFFICES & THEIR EARLY POSTMARKS' - Part 1.

Steve Hannath

*The article below started as a letter concerning last month's front cover but it has now grown into a full article! - editor.*

The front cover of the 'The Springbok' (October 2021) seems to suggest that all the postmarks shown were used at the Cape and that all are associated with the GPO (General Post Office), Cape Town, as illustrated by a postcard. This prompted me to clear up any misconception.

None of the postmarks shown (Fig 1) were in postal use when the GPO building opened on the 30th August 1897. All except one of the postmarks, the much debated VOC (Vereenigde Oost Indische Compagnie) handstamp, are recorded used in the Castle, the first post office in the Cape and thus South Africa, and or in the Old Slave Lodge post office, arguably the more important post office to lovers of Cape postal history.



Fig 1. Springbok Cover October 2021 postmark strip suggesting use of VOC handstamp at the Cape. The first post offices of the VOC, its successor the Batavian Republic and the British were all based in the Castle but not always in the same room. The post offices of these three administrations spanned a period of approximately 17 years. We know very little about them.



(Fig 2). The Castle, Cape Town: Built 1666 - 1679. Postcard. Circa 1910. Entrance to the Castle. (North facing). The Main Gateway is the pointed arch and look-out tower. The Outer Gate (with lions) seen from the eastern Grand Parade.



Fig 3. Interior of the Castle. The De Kat transect: Added 1695. Postcard. Circa 1905. Interior of Castle. (North-facing). The De Kat divides that the Castle into two courtyards. The road from the Main Gateway leads to the office of the Governor. The start of a post office was proclaimed on this porch on 2nd March 1792.

### The Castle, Cape Town, as a Post Office.

#### VOC (aka Dutch East India Company): 1792 - 1795

By including the VOC handstamp with other hand and datestamps recorded used at the Cape, the Springbok has created the impression that it was used at the Cape during the final years of the VOC. (Fig 4) This is unfortunate because this remains a subject of debate. At present there is no conclusive proof that the VOC handstamp was used at the Cape despite many wanting to believe it was.

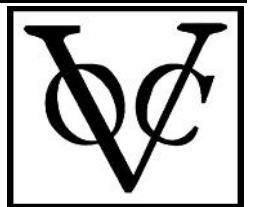


Fig 4. The VOC Monogram - recorded used at the Cape

If the handstamp was used at the Cape, it would have been used in the Castle where the VOC started a "post comptoir", (Fr. 'post counter'), on 2nd March 1792, in a small room vacated by the departing Swiss mercenary garrison. Quoting the renowned architect Gawie Fagan, Franco Frescura locates this post office "initially .... in the Leerdam Bastion of Cape Town Castle, adjoining the original Commander's quarters". (See Fig 5, 6 and 7).

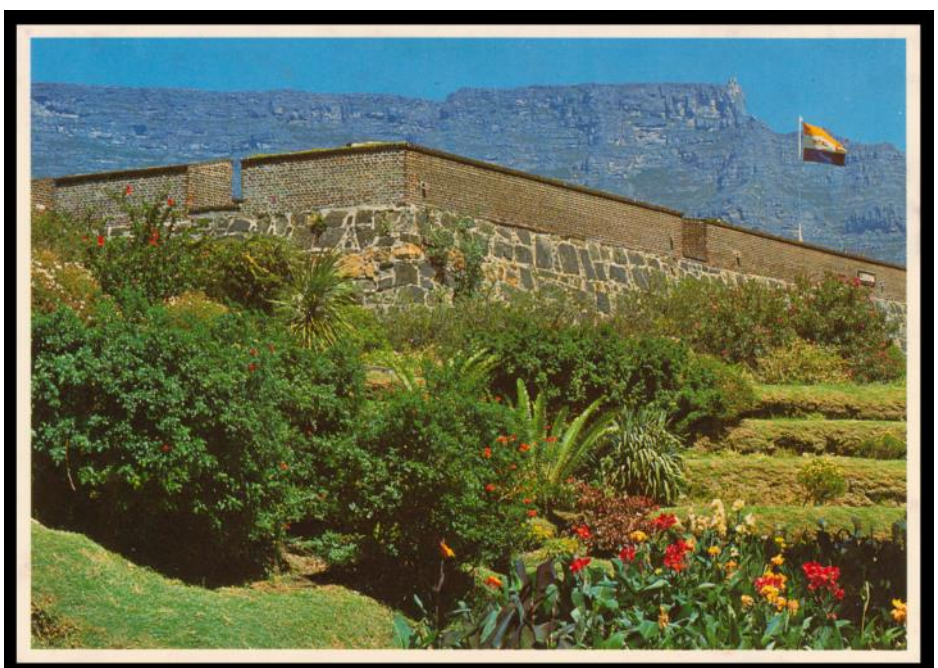


Fig 5 (reduced). The Leerdam bastion of the Castle. Postcard. Circa 1962. Cape of Good Hope Castle. The old South African flag above the site of the first Post Office. The view is from the road at the Main Gateway entrance to the Castle.



Fig 6. The Main Gateway entrance to the Castle,. The railway line has passed within feet of the Castle walls since 1859. The postmark is the 'Inauguration of the Blue Train', 4th September 1972.

Fig 7. The Main Gateway from the inside of the Castle. (South-facing). Postcard. Circa 1900. The Castle (in the Courtyard). The gabled entrance is the Main Gateway seen from the inside the Castle. The buildings about the inside of the surrounding Castle walls. The first post office in the Leerdam Bastion is just out of sight on the left.



The VOC post office was restricted to sending post to and from Holland and Batavia only. Despite it not providing a domestic service in the Cape to the local people, some postal historians now refer to it as 'South Africa's first post office'. Cape-born Adrian Vincent Bergh, was appointed the VOC's first postmaster in 2nd March 1792.

According to G. J. Allis, *The Cape of Good Hope Post Office, History of Its Birth and Development, Part II*, (The South African Philatelist, Jan 1932, Page 158), when the post office became operational "the Postmaster received three-quarters of the total amount .... collected by way of salary, whilst one quarter accrued to the Postman." It seems the Cape Post Office had to fund itself because of the hole in the insolvent VOC's finances. The reference to a postman suggests that overseas mail was delivered by hand once received in the Castle.

### First British Military Occupation (1795): 1797 - 1803

After occupying the Cape for 143 years, the VOC was ejected by Britain in 1795. Almost three years passed before the British re-established a post office in the Castle. According to Robert Goldblatt, this was located in the room of C. G. Höhne, sworn translator to the government, for want of more proper vacant space in the Castle. (Postmarks of the COGH.) Once Bergh had sworn an oath of allegiance to the British crown, Earl Macartney, the new British Governor, re-appointed Bergh as the Cape's new postmaster in May 1797.

Bergh received a salary of 2000 rix dollars, about £400 pa, a position he held only briefly until 1798. He has the distinction of being the only Cape postmaster to serve three colonial administrations - the VOC and two British ones. After the Second British Occupation in 1806, Bergh was appointed the first postmaster of Clanwilliam (1820 - 1826). He was there to greet the unfortunate Irish settlers who arrived in May 1820.

The British found they needed an ocean mail service between the Cape and England, much the same as the VOC's to Holland. However, unlike the VOC, the British also started a basic domestic mail service, the so-called 'Field Cornet's Post', in which colonial militiamen carried 'per favour' private mail which used no hand-stamps. On 5th March 1801, Bergh was either replaced by or more likely subordinated to John Holland, the first judge of the newly created Vice-Admiralty Court of the Cape of Good Hope. Goldblatt states that as the new Postmaster General, Holland was to superintend postal duties. This suggests he was someone's superior, most probably Bergh's. Presumably the post office remained in the Höhne's room in the Castle, then the main administrative centre.

### The Batavian Republic - 1803: 1806

In 1803, the British returned the Cape to the Batavian Republic. Bergh's oath of allegiance to the British prob-

ably gave the Batavians cause to view him as a disloyal colonial. In addition, the incoming Batavian administration probably assumed that Höhne had learned more than most about the Cape's postal system under the British while it was run from his room. Whatever the reasons, the Batavians appointed Höhne their Cape postmaster rather than Bergh.

A range of new postal service initiatives took place under Höhne's watch. During the Batavian Republic's brief time in control of the Cape the domestic mail service was improved and expanded through the use of Dragoons (ie. the False Bay Dragoon Post to Simons Bay), Khoi runners and blue-coated mounted post boden (Dutch. 'postmen'). Mail was also distributed through a network of drostdys (Dutch. 'Magistracies'). (See Fig. 8.)

The VOC had been liquidated in 1800, its assets and liabilities

Fig 8. The Batavians start the Cape's first domestic postal service. 1993 RSA Commemorative Issue - Early Cape Mail.



accruing to the Batavian Republic. The Batavians introduced no new handstamps and their use of the VOC handstamp goes unrecorded.

### Second British Military Occupation: 1806 - 1809

On 10th January 1806, the British re-occupied the Cape and again based themselves in the Castle. The post office was quickly re-opened roundabout 23rd May 1806. It is not known where it was located in the Castle.

The first handstamp introduced at the Cape by the British was the 'Oval Medallion Post Office Letter Stamp' (OML). Adapted from the official seal given to the invading British force, it was "bought into use at the end of January" (Goldblatt) and used to record the pre-payment of domestic postage. If there were not lingering suggestions that the VOC handstamp was used at the Cape, the OML would undoubtedly be South Africa's first postmark. (See Fig. 9, 10 and 11.)

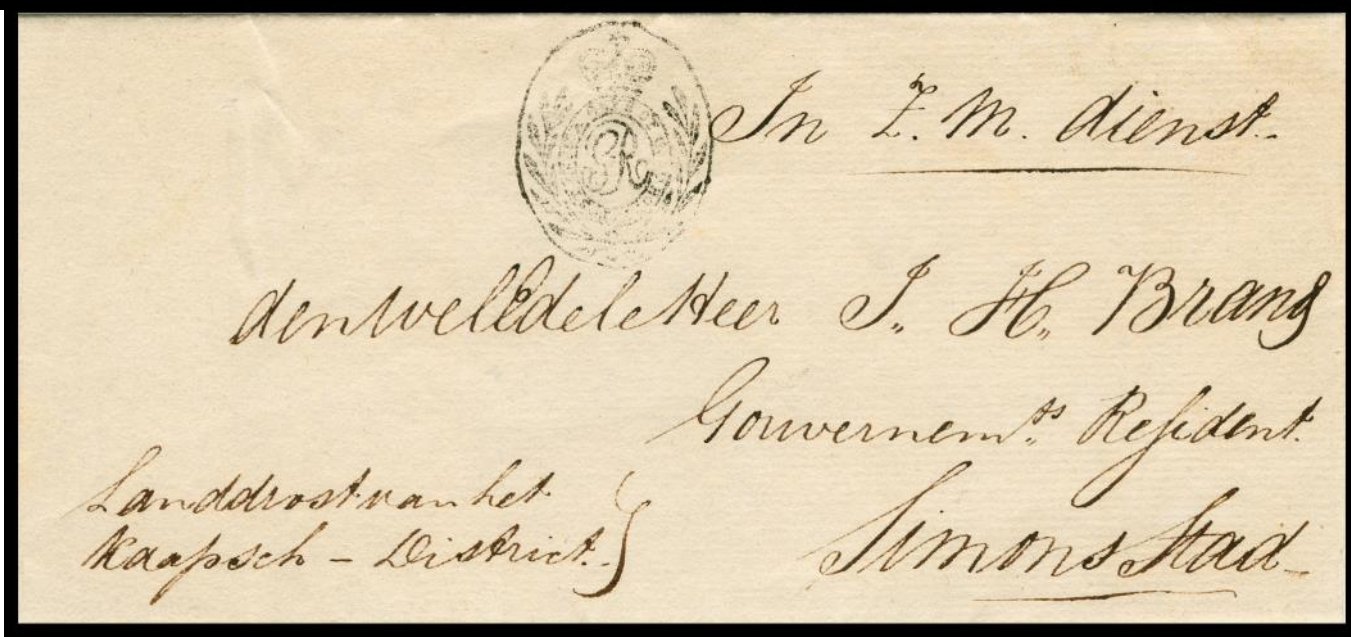


Fig 9. Circa 1806. The Official Seal of the British Occupying Forces.

Fig 10. The Oval Medallion Post Office Letter Stamp.



(Fig 11). Circa 1808. OML cover posted in the Castle to Simonstown. Stamped with the OML on dispatch; sent In Z. M. Dienst (Dutch. OHMS). The use of Dutch shows British use of Cape Dutch civil servants.



From 1806 to 1807, William Caldwell, "a Cape businessman" was the postmaster in the Castle. He was able and enthusiastic and implemented efficiencies and innovations. He revised postal charges and reorganised the local postal system, in particular the conveyance of mail to outlying settlements. Caldwell expressed his concern at the use of Hottentot postmen in a colony that was racist and unlikely to treat them with the respect due to them and their work. He also raised the difficult issue of Army and Navy officers marking personal letters On His Majesty's Service in order to avoid paying postage under what at that time was still a military administration.

(Caldwells wife, Catharina, became postmistress of Stellenbosch in 1808. She is arguably the first woman to be employed in the Cape post office.)



In 1807, Caldwell received a Ship Letter handstamp for use in the Castle. (See Fig. 12.) Its purpose was to distinguish overseas mail from domestic Cape mail which continued to be struck with the Oval Medallion handstamp. As a result, Oval Medallion and Ship Letter handstamps are not found used together on mail. They are the only two postmarks known and recorded used in the Castle about which there is absolutely no dispute.

Fig 12. The Ship Letter Cape of Good Hope Handstamp.

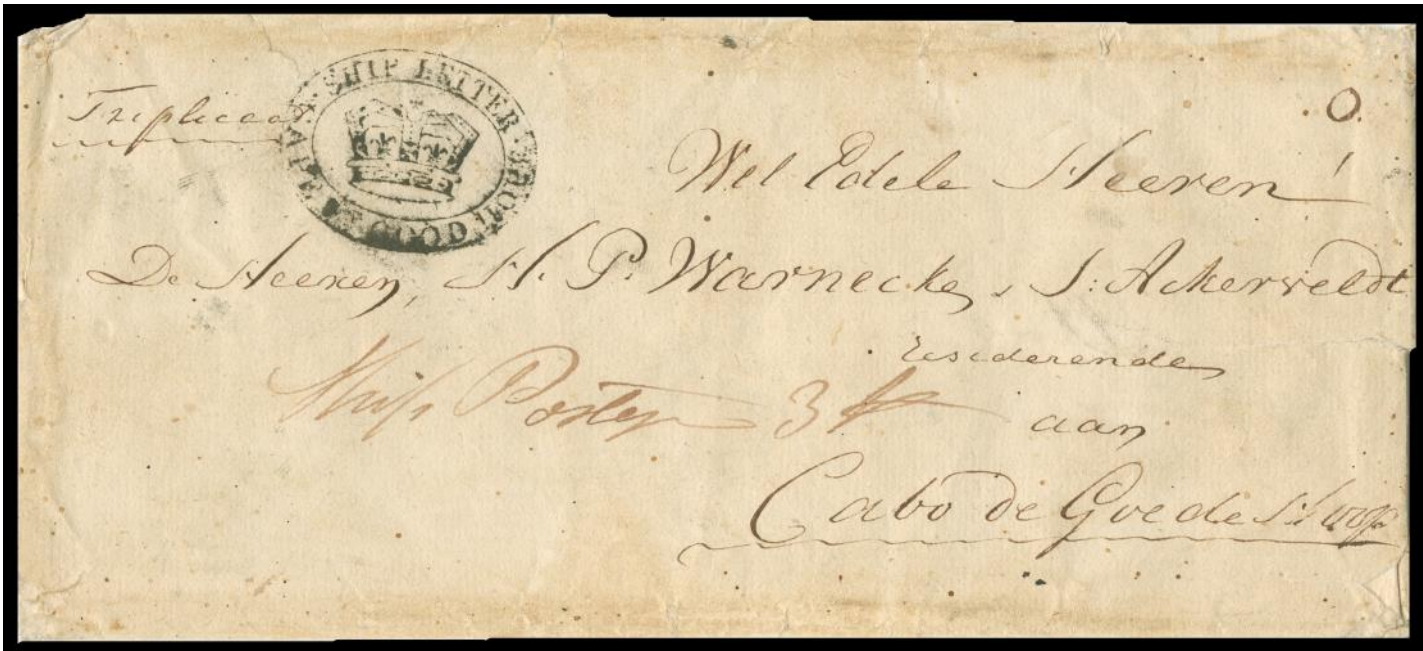


Fig 13. 1807. Cover from 'Holland' via London to the Cape. (ex. Robert Hill Collection). It has been received with a very early Ship Letter Handstamp.

In December 1807, Matthew Gall, the long-awaited postmaster from England, arrived and was immediately appointed Postmaster General of the Cape. Caldwell returned to his many businesses. However, Gall proved inept and disorganised and nothing short of a disaster. During his time in charge the nascent Cape postal system suffered long delays and lost mail. On 20th May 1809, Robert Crozier replaced Gall who returned to England, possibly on paid leave. Crozier would operate under Galls long shadow. Letters were often addressed to him as Postmaster General Acting for Mr Gall.

Some suggest that Gall's failure put Crozier on some sort of probation. In fact, Crozier was a talented young Ulsterman who diligently performed his Cape postal duties while also working as the highly respected "Cashier, Lombard Bank". The six year delay in Croziers appointment to Postmaster General is probably because he was also running the bank, sometimes referred to as the 'Government Discount Bank'. Crozier was finally appointed Postmaster General on 18th November 1815.

## ***Society Auctioneer Wanted***

**In order to keep the Society Auction going in the future the Society urgently needs a new Auctioneer to take over from Nick Arrow.**

**If you can help please contact Nick via the details for him given on page 2.**

# LITTLE BOBBIE SHAFTOE

Tony Howgrave-Graham

The bantam war efforts have always been a favourite of mine, so much more interesting than their larger precedents. They were introduced as a war-time paper saving exercise from 1942. Stamps the size of the former 2d, 4d & 6d were rotated 90° and divided in two by roulettes to create double the number of stamps per sheet, 240. Stamps the size of the 3d & 1/- were divided into three creating 360 stamp sheets. Ink, presumably, was in less short supply as the Government decided to advertise their Union Loan Certificates on all the margins. This required cylinders to be made for this purpose with four different ones for the dual units (1½d, 2d, 6d & 1/-) and five for the triplets (½d, 1d, 3d & 4d, and for two of the three 1/3 issues).

The little 2d is based on an actual sailor, Cecil Peter, so I hope his kin will forgive my Bobby Shaftoe heading. By itself it's a very uninspiring little stamp either as a single or as a unit. Its violet shades vary a lot but it's when one comes to the controls and varieties that things become interesting. So fascinating, in fact, that they are arguably the best in the set. They were produced from two stamps cylinders and four slogan cylinders to produce five issues.

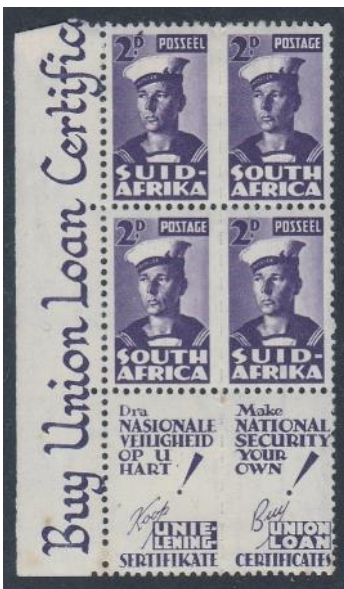


Figure 1

The first issue was in February 1943 using the fine screened Cylinder 6931 with the slogan Cylinder 1. (Fig. 1). This had the advertising labels in the top and bottom margins in the "bilingual" setting. That is the labels were in the opposite language setting to the attached stamp. The script in the side margins is placed close to the stamps. The bottom left corner control also shows the Gibbons listed variety, the "2/6" flaw, on row 19/1. The second issue (Fig. 2) was in January 1944 using the same stamp cylinder but with a new slogan cylinder 2. This had a "unilingual" setting so that the labels were of the same language as their attached stamps and the script in the side margins was placed further from the stamps and a full stop was added after *Certificates*.

A new coarse screen Cylinder 39 was used for the third issue in October 1944 (Fig. 3). The second slogan cylinder was used again so the corner control is similar to issue 2 but the "2/6" flaw is absent. The side script is placed further from the stamps and the coarser screen is quite noticeable.



Figure 3

The fourth and fifth issues (Fig. 4) both used the same stamp cylinder but used different slogan cylinders though both had the sheet size "= 240 =" repeated in the side margins and one has to look elsewhere to differentiate them. With the fourth issue of January 1945 (Fig. 5 overleaf) the margins either side of the side arrows is clear whereas with the fifth of April 1945 (Fig. 6 overleaf) the "= 240 =" is continuous. The fourth issue controls are, according to the handbook, scarce and certainly one doesn't often see them offered. Also shown in Figures 5 and 6 is the other Gibbons listed cylinder variety "the tassel on cap" on row 11/9.

There are other cylinder varieties from both stamp cylinders but what makes the issues interesting are the general varieties. Before going on to these I'll just correct the handbook which states all the serial numbers are in red. Issue 1 has them all, or at least some, in black (Fig. 7 overleaf).

The handbook lists the joined paper as its first general variety. These are scarce but there is more than one sheet so affected. They are difficult to show for obvious reasons but the example I've chosen will, I hope, at least show the top of the join (Fig. 8 overleaf). The bottom is level with the bottom of the stamps in row 1. I'll leave the "partly printed" until later. The "Certificates / Sertifikate" printed on the stamp (Fig. 9 overleaf) is scarcer than one might suspect whereas the tails of



Figure 2



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7

"y", "g" or "f" encroaching on to the stamps in Issue 1 isn't uncommon. The "blurred slogans" is a good variety if you can find extreme examples (Fig.10) and is under-rated as such in the handbook. The misplaced perforations (Fig.11 on facing page) is another excellent variety undervalued by the handbook which seems to only allow for examples where the perforations run through the middle of the stamps. It would be more reasonable for the lesser, though still marked, examples. I quote from a contemporaneous article "A South African correspondent sends us a photograph and description of a curious piece of printing on the 2d bantam war effort stamp. This concerns 24 sheets purchased in October 1945 in which the

perforation is progressively misplaced until in the centre rows it cuts directly through the sailor's mouth. But that is not all. On one sheet the top half of the stamps is entirely missing, only the bottom half having been printed. The only likely explanation is that a piece of paper intruded during the printing process. (I'm not too sure I agree!) A similar fault occurs on another sheet



Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10

perforation is progressively misplaced until in the centre rows it cuts directly through the sailor's mouth. But that is not all. On one sheet the top half of the stamps is entirely missing, only the bottom half having been printed. The only likely explanation is that a piece of paper intruded during the printing process. (I'm not too sure I agree!) A similar fault occurs on another sheet

## Other magazines

I receive copies of three other publications dealing with South African Philately.

**Forerunners**, the journal of the Philatelic Society for Greater Southern Africa, is a Society based in North America. The latest issue has articles covering Hong Kong trial stamps, Blue Cape triangles, T110 Rail Labels, Supply of Post Office Stationery Wrappers (2011-2020), Varieties of Union Airmail Stamps.

We have not had a new issue of the **RSA Study Group Newsletter** since the last Springbok. The **last issue** we received dealt with the second definitives printed on the De La Rue Giori press.

I don't have permission to forward either of these newsletters to members but if anyone is interested in either I am happy to put them in touch with the respective Editors. Early Forerunners are now available online to all collectors. Follow the link <http://www.psgsa.org/>

Don't forget we also receive copies of **Bartholomeu Dias**, a Dutch language magazine, which I do have permission to circulate to members for anyone who can read that language. We have had 2 issues since the previous Springbok.



Figure 11

except that only the top half of the stamp exists ; and no less than three other sheets were entirely blank (a very big paper intrusion!!) except for the serial number at the top of each sheet. It would seem, therefore, that these 24 sheets were thoroughly defective and probably had been put aside by the checker for rejection ; for some reason they got into circulation and were purchased in the normal way in the Transvaal. Thus they have fallen into collectors' hands, and, while not meriting our correspondent's extravagant claims ("counted among the great rarities" etc) they are not without interest for a "Union" specialist."

Of interest they certainly are even if the article is a bit "po faced" it does give some idea as to the number of sheets involved and the relative scarcity of items from them. Figure 12 shows a blank block of 10 with serial numbers. Figures 10&11 both show the multipositive "star" variety (V.1) which appears on row 1/1 of all sheets. And that just leaves the handbook variety V.13, the highly catalogued missing roulettes. (Fig.13)

I hope you've seen something of interest in what, at first, seems a boring little stamp. I thoroughly recommend collecting the bantam war efforts. They all have their own interesting features and make a good display.



Figure 13

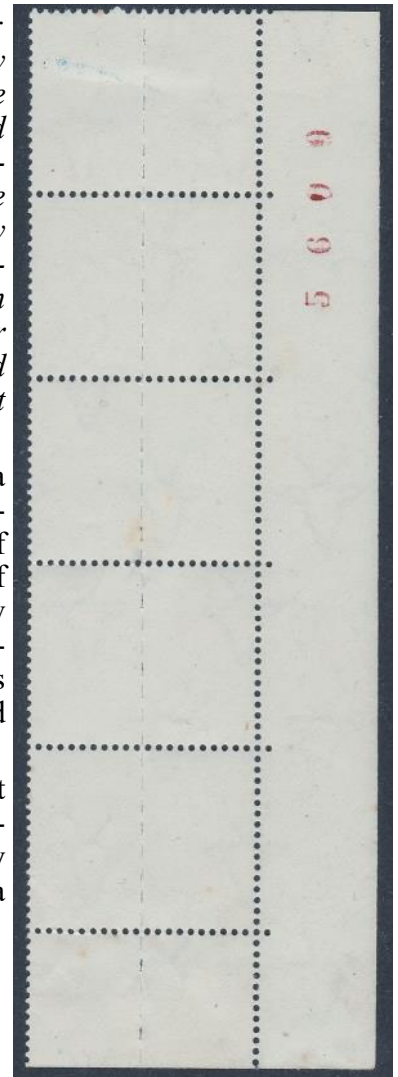


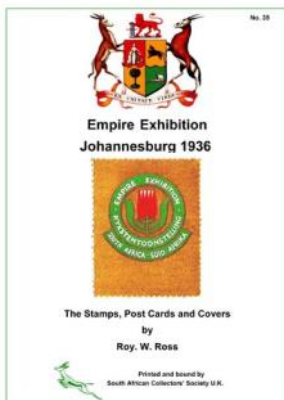
Figure 12

### New SACS Study Booklets

There are two new study booklets available to members to purchase to help with those specialist collections. Anyone interested in purchasing one or both of the booklets should e-mail [Lyn28lester@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:Lyn28lester@hotmail.co.uk) to request a copy. No electronic copies of the booklets are available.

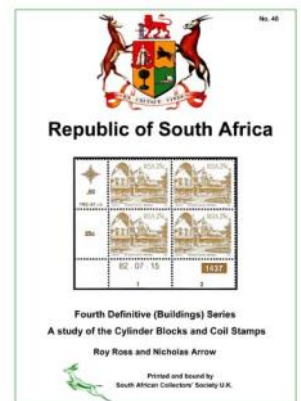
#### Booklet No 39 - Roy Ross; 1936 Empire Exhibition Johannesburg.

Roy has kindly donated to the Society the booklet he produced privately which covers stamps, post cards and covers from the 1936 Empire Exhibition held in Johannesburg. The booklet also includes a very detailed pictorial reference for all the JIPEX miniature sheets including reconstructed sheet images of their printing. A must for anyone interested in the JIPEX miniatures. Images of the covers produced, their faults and errors also provide a detailed insight into the variations available to collectors. The booklet is priced at £10.00 plus postage costs for this 54 page A4 study booklet.



#### Booklet No 40 - Roy Ross & Nick Arrow; Fourth Definitive (Buildings) Series, A study of the Cylinder Blocks and Coil Stamps.

Roy and Nick have been working together for over a year to produce this highly detailed analysis of all of the printings of the building series definitive issue. The booklet identifies each individual pane and is full of images of printing faults all shown in great detail. It also identifies the differences in the coil stamps and includes images of the coil stamp faults. A truly remarkable study which will assist any member interested in the fourth definitive series in their specialist collection. The booklet is priced at £15.00 plus postage costs for this 76 page A4 study booklet.



# UNION CINDERELLA—PART 2

*Lyn & Rob Lester*

Continuing on from the last edition of the Springbok we feature a further 5 labels in this edition from different decades of the Union. The initial one is an unusual label that would appear at first glance not to be of South African origin, but it is used on a South African registered cover posted locally in the Orange Free State and tied with a South African date stamp.

## 1912 Bela Szekula Budapest.

The image below shows the reverse of the registered cover (reduced) with a Bela Szekula, Budapest label. Paper envelope seals and labels started being introduced in the 1850's replacing the more formal wax seals used by public authorities on legal and important correspondence. In the first two decades of the twentieth century it became common place for private businessmen to use their own designed paper seals or labels fixed to the rear of the envelopes, particularly on registered mail. Often the seals or labels were embossed, incorporating a coat of arms or a crest identifying the sender. The Bela Szekula label is such an embossed label. Measuring 35mm by 51mm it is imperforate with no value tablet and is light purple on a white, presumed adhesive, backing. It shows a person leaning on what appears to be a table with the image of a postage stamp to the side.



The cover, on which the label is applied, is a “Woolwash Roller Mills” advertising cover from Goetzkesrust, posted from Reddersburg, Orange Free State to Smithfield, Orange Free State.



Research confirms that Bela Szekula was born in Budapest, Hungary on 9 February 1881. He moved to Geneva, Switzerland in 1901 and started selling stamps with false cancels along with forgeries, especially from South American countries. He operated under the name 'Internationale Philatelisten'. By 1913 he had been black listed by most European Countries as a forger of philatelic material. This example is the only label of this type we have seen which is clearly used and tied by South African date stamp 'Reddesburg 19 JUL - 12', with a receiving stamp of 'Smithfield 22 JUL - 12.' Earliest date known to us 19 July 1912.

### 1926 Support South African Industry

With the start of the great depression in 1929, signs that markets were failing were apparent as early as 1925. For example wool lost 75% of its value in the middle of the decade and agriculture in South Africa was one of the first industries to feel the effect of the down turn. 1926 also saw the introduction in South Africa of the bilingual postal slogan, 'Support South African Industry/Ondersteun SuidAfrikaanse Nywerhede' which was used in Cape Town, Pretoria and Port Elizabeth in different forms until 1932.



Along with the postal slogan a 34mm circular blue label on white gummed paper was issued, (shown here on cover reduced) presumably by the Government, to encourage the buying of South African goods and to support South African Industries. The label features South Africa's coat of arms in the centre and includes the English and Afrikaans slogan to the upper and lower aspect respectively.

The registered cover, addressed to France, has an array of stamps and includes a label tied with a date stamp 'Yeoville Johannesburg B. O. 7 - JUL 1926' and a 'Yeoville Johannesburg' registered cachet in black ink. Earliest date known to us 7 July 1926.

### 1935 Queenstown the Ideal Home Town

Queenstown is a town in the Eastern Cape founded in 1853 by Sir George Cathcart, Governor of the Cape of Good Hope from 1852 to 1853, who named the settlement and its fort after Queen Victoria. In 1853 Queenstown was laid out and designed as a military outpost to protect British subjects against attacks by the Xhosa tribe during the latter stages of the eighth Frontier War. The town was planned around a central hexagon, with the centre being the place where citizens could gather for safety should they be attacked. Although a distinguishing feature of the Town today it was never used for its original purpose.



In 1935 the town issued a multi-coloured publicity label, printed in English only, on gummed paper measuring 52mm by 38mm and perforated 12 (shown on the previous page). There is no value shown. The label has an image of a Cape Dutch style building set in the foreground within a tree lined country landscape and the fort in the background. As a publicity label it claims that 'Queenstown is The Ideal Home Town' listing Shopping, Schools and Sport to tempt would be residents. The cover shown on the previous page) is a slightly damaged advertising cover from the Royal Hotel Queenstown to Johannesburg with label and 1d Silver Jubilee King George V stamp date stamped 'Queenstown 17 JUN 35'. Earliest date known to us 17 June 1935, but not tied.

### 1948 Tenth Anniversary of the Ossewa-Brandwag



Part sheet (reduced) of poorly printed political labels in red with shades of grey, on white gummed paper, measuring 30mm by 39mm and perforated 11. The label celebrates the tenth Anniversary of the Ossewa-Brandweg (1938 – 1948) a movement set up to promote unity amongst Afrikaans speaking people in 1938, the year of the Great Trek. Its establishment was assisted by the political feuds of the thirties following the coalition between the National Party and the South African Party. The O.B., as the organisation became known, was formally founded on 4 February 1939 in Bloemfontein and was modelled on the commando system of the Boer Republics. A commandant-general was appointed leader by a 'Groot Raad' (High Council) which consisted of representatives of provincial boards.



As well as labels the O.B. printed its own letter head and covers all of which use the image of a cart wheel from the Great Trek as its logo with the Nazi emblem of an eagle above. The words 'My God / My Volk' appear to either side of the emblem, with 'My Land Suid-Afrika' to the base. 'Die Ossewabrandwag' is incorporated in the logo and within the label at the base. We have not seen this label used on cover.

### 1953 Stamp it Out Vote United Party

A political, multi-coloured label on white gummed paper measuring 33mm by 52mm and rouletted. The label is printed in English and Afrikaans in sheet format showing the image of a lower right leg and foot with a studded shoe, poised above a raging fire, with the words, 'Racial Politics' within the flames under the shoe. 'Stamp It Out! / Trap Hom Dood!' occurs across the top of the label with 'Vote United Party / Stem Verenigde Party' across the base. In the margin at the base are the words, 'Issued by the United Party Pretoria, Rostra Printers Ltd. Jhb.,' and the Afrikaans equivalent.

The election took place on 15 April 1953 which consolidated the position of the National Party under their existing leader D. F. Malan. He won the majority of the 156 seats in the House of Assembly. The United Party under J. G. N. Strauss lost several seats and suffered splits after the election. One of the main policies of the

United Party in 1953 election was to criticise the idea of Apartheid. This view was not shared by the electorate. The labels were issued for political propaganda purposes and used in the run up to the election prior to April 1953, although we have not seen a used label on cover.



Should anyone have any comments or anything else to add about these labels we would really appreciate hearing from you. Our e-mail address is given at the front of the Springbok or contact can be made through the editor.

## **WAS THE RAF IN DURBAN IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR?** *Malcom Judd*



The envelope and reverse on the previous page was postmarked on the 20 July 1942 and then opened by a Censor (whose number was 14) who applied a Censor's Code C (Durban) on a Coat of Arms on the re-sealing label, printed in two languages. On the reverse is the name of the sender Capt. H Kanter RAF. The grass airstrip at Durban called Stamford Hill Aerodrome was opened on the 5 December 1936 and requisitioned on the 1 September 1940 for the South African Air Force (site active until 1946) as 'Afrikander IV'. A Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm 'Fleet Requirements Unit' was established there in April 1942 allowing aircraft carriers to embark and disembark aircraft from a land-based facility. Notably in April 1942 a Squadron from H.M.S Illustrious, equipped with Fairey Swordfish T.S.R. I and T.S.R II flown by Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm pilots was using the base (Royal Navy Research Archive). Umhlali Rock Hotel still operates some 35 miles north of Durban.

The South African Air Force had a squadron stationed at Stamford Hill Aerodrome equipped with aircraft supplied by the USA and that could well have been the link as Captain H Kanter RAF wrote to Dr Janet Green in Lower Manhattan, New York City. However, 'Captain' is not a rank in the RAF and checking in Forces War Record for RAF personnel at the time there was no such person listed, but it is a rank in the USAF and it is most likely therefore that he had been seconded to the RAF. Captain is the third Commissioned Officer rank in the United States Air Force ranking above First Lieutenant and below a Major (Military-Ranks.org).

Although 2½d was enough for a 1-ounce letter to Great Britain it was insufficient for a letter to the USA as the rate to the USA was the UPU rate of 3d for the 1st ounce and 1½d per each extra ounce. This was set on the 1 Jan 1922 and remained the rate until 1950 (with some changes made to the 'extra ounce' charge). Thus, this cover is underpaid ½d, doubled to 1d, converted to 10 centimes. A 'T10c' postage due handstamp was applied in South Africa, converted to 2 USA cents as shown in the opera glasses handstamp from 'New York. N.Y. G P O (General Post Office). The photograph below shows the Control Tower, the only remaining building from the Stamford Hill Aerodrome.



Stamford Hill Aerodrome Control Tower, Durban. Reproduced by permission of the SA National Society

## ***MYSTERY OF THE CACHET 'MA/FROM FC' SOLVED***

*Nicholas Arrow*

I posed a question about a wartime cover to Washington DC in the last Springbok. I have now discovered the answer, thanks to some very timely intervention by Bob Hill, but mostly thanks to the considerable knowledge of Peter Wingent and John Wilson of the Imperial Airways Study Group.

Bob telephoned me a day or so after he received his Springbok, telling me that he had three covers, all from the same sender, E M Groth, from the same address, and all sent to a Miss Lillian Schoedler, who lived in New York, not Madame Gelsener as my cover. Two of these covers (dated February 1943 and January 1944) had the same small boxed cachet "MA / from FC". The third cover (dated May 1944) had a slightly different boxed cachet, being "AM-M / from / FC", and this cover also had the two line cachet "This article originally mailed in country indicated by postage". On each cover, Mr Groth's address (c/o American Legation, Pretoria) was the same, in one case embossed as my cover with "Pretoria" added, and on the other two with the address typed in.

As luck would have it, on the day immediately following Bob’s call, I was able to attend a Zoom meeting of the Imperial Airways Study Group, and at the end I was able to ask if anyone knew of such covers, and what was it all about. Before I had even finished speaking, Peter Wingent produced a cover, of which he later sent me a copy, set out below (Fig 1) -



Figure 1  
[Acknowledgement Peter Wingent]

He also explained that “According to UPU rules, consular mail had to be franked with stamps of the country in which it was posted, but it was then transmitted in a diplomatic pouch rather than via the Post Office” and that the initials in the square boxed cachet stood for “Mailed Abroad / from Foreign Consulate”.

John Wilson, who has probably forgotten more about Transatlantic Mail than I shall ever know, also produced within a matter of minutes a similar, long, cover, from Egypt, which I set out below (Fig 2) -

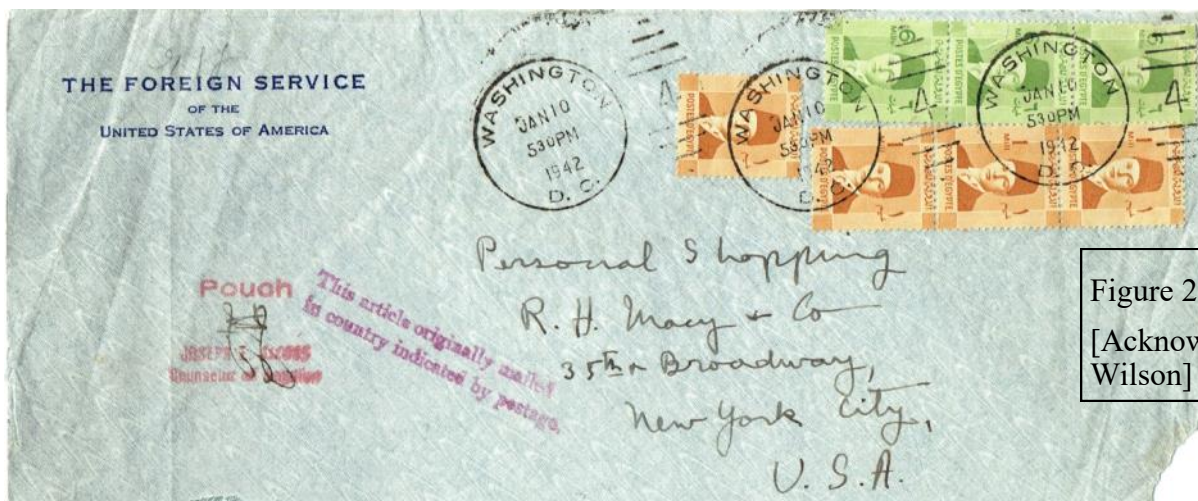


Figure 2 - reduced  
[Acknowledgement John Wilson]

This cover has the same 2-line cachet, and, although it does not have the Boxed “MA...” cachet, it does have a notation “Pouch....”, referring to the diplomatic pouch. He advises that “At the start of American involvement in the war, and leading up to the assistance offered to British efforts in the Middle East, the US opened a Legation in Cairo and a diplomatic airmail service was opened that was a **separate and distinct** operation [from] “FAM-22” or “Cannonball” flights. The contract was awarded to TWA who flew between Washington and Cairo using the all-new Boeing Stratoliner aircraft and not the Boeing 314 flying boats. The route was to carry only diplomatic mail which is why it is a bit obscure.”

The cover was correctly franked at 22 millièmes surface rate and was carried by air on the diplomatic mail service from Cairo to Washington, this use for what was clearly a non-diplomatic cover being a misuse of the diplomatic concession. The stamps were cancelled on arrival in Washington and the cachet “This article originally mailed in country indicated by postage” added.

All these covers establish that mail from a consular representative serving abroad should be stamped with the stamps of the country in which the legation / embassy is situated. Although the postage required is for **surface** mail between the country of origin and the country of destination only, by concession it is carried in the diplomatic pouch by **air** to the country of the addressee, where it is processed by the stamps being cancelled, whereupon the item is delivered by surface mail in the country of destination.

[As far as the precise wording of the boxed “MA ....” etc cachet, John’s cover from Egypt was sent in 1942, Peter’s cover and 2 of Bob’s covers, as well as my own, are dated between 1943 and January 1944, whereas Bob’s cover with the boxed “AM-M / ...” cachet is dated May 1944, which maybe explains the slight change in the letters used in the cachets - ie that things evolved, as of course they will do. Peter suggests that perhaps the "AM - M / from / FC" cachet stands for "Ambassador's Mail - Mailed / from / Foreign Consulate" and used to identify mail from the head of a consulate.]

In the case of all these covers, the mail would have been carried across the southern Atlantic by the US diplomatic service via Natal (Brazil) and Miami to Washington.

I am extremely grateful to Bob, who stimulated the search for getting accurate information about these covers, so that no-one need follow the wild guesses in my original query, in particular to Peter Wingent and John Wilson, not only for their clear advice as to what really happened but also for proof-reading this final offering, and perhaps finally to the Gods of Chance in that the Imperial Airways group should have such a timely Zoom meeting, to prevent my sieve-like memory from forgetting to raise the questions in time!

There is furthermore a happy postscript to this article, in that I attended the Cornex Exhibition near Launceston, where I obtained the cover shown below (Fig 3) -



Figure 3

Peter confirmed that this is yet a further example of consular mail, franked as for surface mail and carried by air in the diplomatic pouch by concession.

However, the best was still yet to come, being a glorious nugget of information which I had not expected! As is common knowledge, on Italy entering the War, siding with the Axis, the route between Cairo and England came immediately to a halt, and mail between South Africa and England was taken by sea to (or from) Durban (and then onward by air as appropriate). The Swedish cover was posted at 5pm on 1 June 1940. It thus missed flight DN275 which had left Durban on the flight north earlier that morning, so it would have been carried by flight DN276 which departed at 6.10am on 5 June and arrived Poole 13.30 on 11 June. It was carried by the BOAC Short S-23 flying boats “Castor” to Alexandria and thence by “Cathay” to Poole.

From England, the cover would almost certainly have been taken from Poole to Leuchars in Scotland and flown to Stockholm, again by BOAC.

The icing on the cake for me, however, was that Flight DN 276, on which my cover was flown, was the last through service flown from South Africa to England before the service was suspended.

# POSTCARDS AND POSTMARKS OF TOWNS & VILLAGES IN THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE DURING THE PERIOD 1880-1915. Part 2

## Bob Hill



### EAST LONDON (1853-Current).

Double circle date stamp of 1900-02 with 25mm circle and figures 1, 2, 3 or 4 enclosed by curved bars at base.

Time code as hour of day and month before day.

Type:- 53 (fig. 1), 60 (fig. 2), 65 (fig. 3) and 76 (fig. 4)

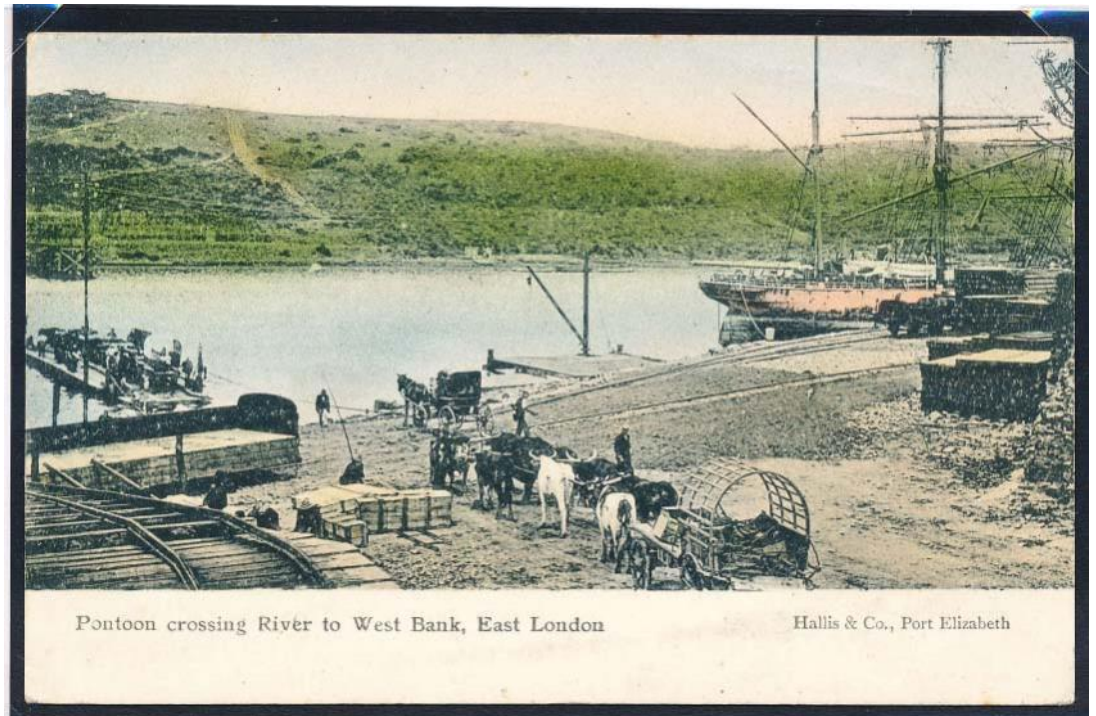
Putzel:- All types 25



Postcard circa 1913 showing H.E. Governor General at East London. Shipping in Buffalo River.

**EAST LONDON (West Bank) 1877—1926.** A post office was opened on 1st June 1877 and remained opened until 1926 when the name was changed.

The circular date stamp of 1869-82. 23mm single circle with name at top and bottom. Time code letter and month before day.  
Type: 2 Putzel: 20



The postcard shows the location of the ferry from East to West banks of the Buffalo River in East London.



**EAST LONDON JETTY.**

A Post Office was located here from 1880-82 and from 1902-14. Cancels from here are R (scarce).

The Jetty date stamp is the 25mm double circle at the top of 1900-02 with time at the top, month before day with two thin bars at sides and a cross at the base. The East London transit date stamp is the same type.



The postcard shows passengers landing at the East London Jetty.

**EUREKA (1887-1914) (1914-1974)**

24mm circle. Three asterisks at bottom and sides. Date without time code letter. Type:- 3X Office:- RR Putzel:- 30



The Postcard shows Eureka City, Da Kaap Goldfields





**FORT BEAUFORT  
(1842-Current)**

Circular date stamp of 1869, 22mm circle, time code letter and month before day.

Type:- 3 Putzel:- 40



Postcard circa 1905 showing Fort Beaufort.

**43 STRAND STREET  
(1882-1903)**

The post office opened in 1882 and remained open until 1903 when it was renamed Bree Street. Putzel lists all cancellations from this office as scarce. It is most unusual for the street number to be shown on the date stamp.

Type: 1 Putzel: 20

Office: R



Post card of Strand Street circa 1904.



**GREAT BRAK RIVER  
(1877-1951)**

Single circle date stamp of 1869. 24mm wide, month before day, no time code letter.

Type:- 2 Putzel:- 50



Postcard circa 1905 showing "Great Brak River".





**GRAAFF REINET (1866-Current)**

Reverse of postcard shows the "Squared Circle date stamp of 1882" with CGH at base. Has one inner ring and three segments.

Putzel type 14A.



Postcard circa 1904 showing "Graaff Reinet" Note comment by sender that "X" is a mountain called "Spantau's Kop".

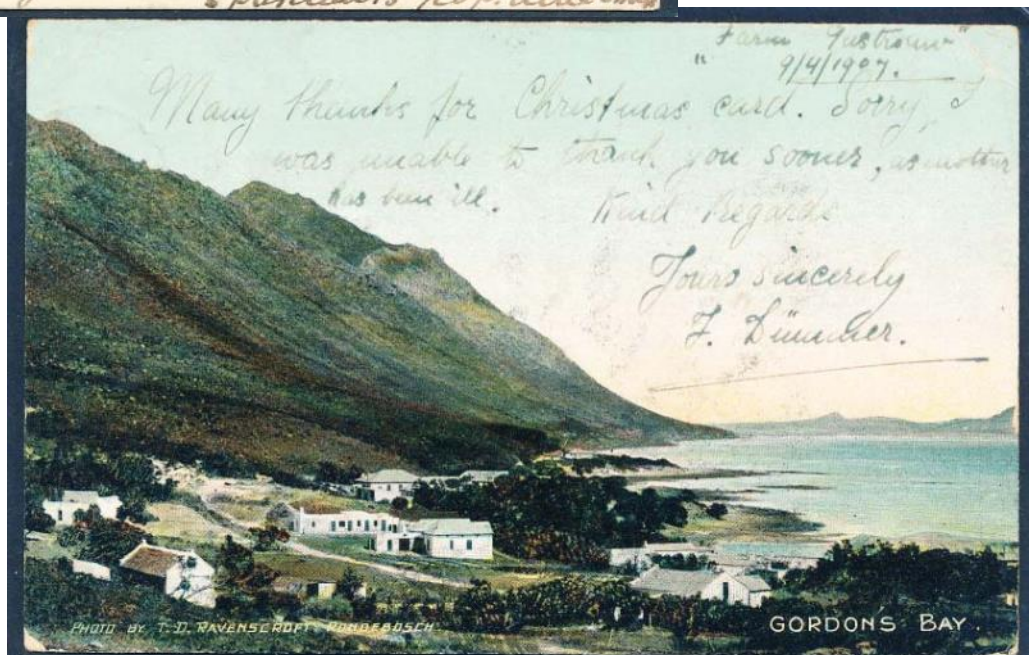
**GORDONS BAY (1891-Current)**

Circular CGH date stamp of 1891 22mm single circle with CGH at base and two dots above. Time code letter and day before month (note late usage).

Type: 16 Putzel: 20



Postcard circa 1907 showing Gordons Bay.



# SOUTH WEST CORNER

Tony Howgrave-Graham

## CENTRAL FORCE AT THE START OF WW1

Central Force arrived at Luderitzbucht on the night of 18 September 1914. They were in the *Galway Castle* and the sea was rough. There were stated to be about 1600 on board. A landing party was lowered into a dinghy and made for the shore. The dinghy capsized when meeting the breakers on the beach but they managed to get ashore some miles from the town. They made their way along the railway line towards the town not knowing what to expect. In fact the Germans had ordered a hurried retreat, so much so that they found doors open, fires on and, reputedly, even a hot mug of coffee! There was some exchange of gunfire but no casualties. The retreat was probably ordered because of the threat from some large naval guns aimed at them and the fact that various civilians remained. The remainder of the Union troops had a more comfortable landing as a tug was sent to bring them ashore the following day. A period of consolidation followed involving the removing of the civilians to an internment camp as they had been passing information on to the Germans and the shifting of a German military unit that had only retreated to Kolmanskop (the nearby open cast diamond mine). On October 3, Col Duncan McKenzie arrived with reinforcements which brought the Union force total to about 6,000.

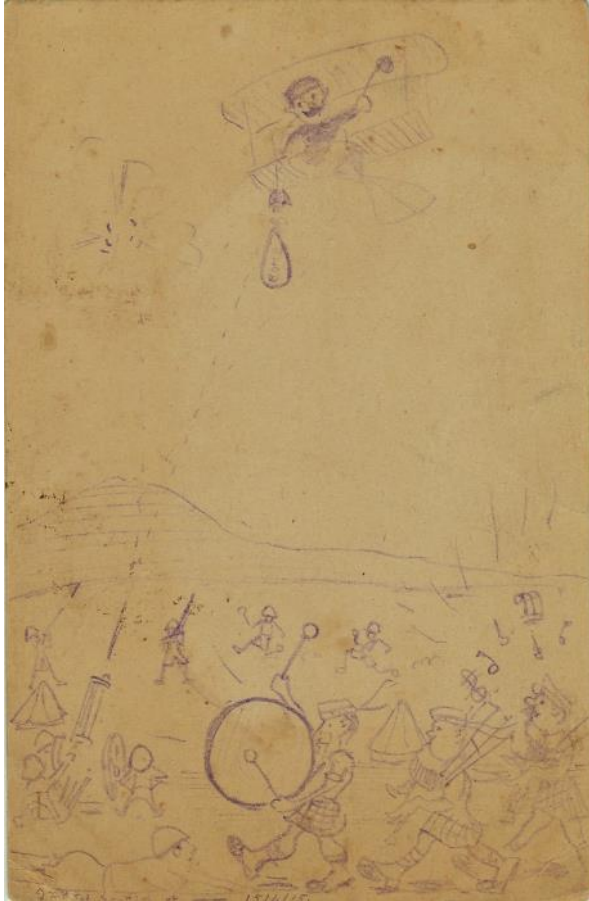


Figure 1 (reduced)

Their war was hugely delayed, however. Eight days after their original landing, on 26 September, the German trap at Sandfontein took place inflicting a major defeat on the Union forces. This was followed by a rebellion amongst various Union forces who were extremely unhappy about siding with Britain and fighting Germans. Quashing the rebellion then became the main object of Union forces for the next three months leaving "C" Force largely twiddling their thumbs for a considerable length of time. 6,000 is a large number of troops. Too many for Luderitzbucht and a largish camp was set up at Tschaukaib further inland. The more artistic soldiers took to illustrating postcards. These are often elaborate representations of their unit crests but as hostilities increased at the end of the year and early in 1915 the Germans, who had the only available aeroplanes, started a bombing campaign. This became the subject for a few illustrators. *Figure 1* (reduced) shows a crude picture, presumably by a Transvaal Scottish soldier judging by the band!, with the note



"Here is the sketch I promised you. It's by Cattermole, one of our unit. One soldier was killed by shrapnel but the bombing was largely ineffective". *Figure 2* is a bit more proficient if possibly less fun, headed "GSWA 23/1/15" with "the above is a sketch of the aeroplane which has recently visited our camp. The bombs the boulder drops are not very welcome but still they very seldom do any serious damage". The plane was flown by Fielder and von Scheele.

Figure 2



Figure 3 (reduced)



Figure 4 (reduced)

They were based some 70 miles away at Aus. To call them bombs is a bit of an exaggeration as they were, in fact, artillery shells. The story goes that so many didn't detonate as they landed incorrectly that Fielder took to putting a small parachute on them to keep their descent vertical, though this gave anyone beneath plenty of time to see them and get out of the way! It wasn't all one way, however. Fielder, who very much became a hero of the war, once counted 70 bullet holes in the canvas of his aeroplane after one of his missions. The SA Aviation Corps didn't form until May of that year and was only active once before the campaign ended. Although the German "bombing" wasn't effective the reconnaissance was, as shown by the high quality photograph taken by them (*Fig.3 reduced*).

Another camp was set up at Radford Bay (*Fig.4 reduced*). Identified by its desalination plant it's some miles south of Luderitzbucht and the card shows a visit by Botha to "inspect" the troops and raise their morale. It's a rare card and I've not seen another.

After the campaign the garrison troops at the Aus POW camp also had time on their hands & created postcards from bits of cardboard such as the example below (Figs. 5 & 6 reduced). Drawn by a G Murray and presumably swapped for a cigarette or bit of chocolate as used by a W. Jamieson".

As you may have gathered (!), I love South West African postal history and though we have a small regular following for S.W.Corner, I have trouble understanding why it isn't more popular and bringing in masses of new collectors! If you're looking for something really interesting & fun, then I can't recommend it highly enough.



Figure 5 (reduced)

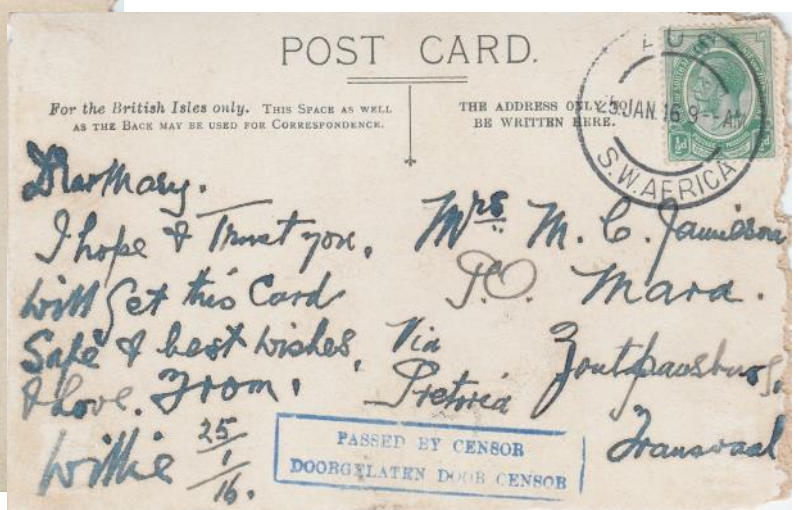


Figure 6 (reduced)

## The Springbok Index 2021 Volume 69/1 - 69/4 Whole Numbers 353-356

Philatelic News	Volume	Page	Articles	Volume	Page
<b>Society News</b>			<b>Articles:</b>		
Auctioneers Report	69/1	4	New Durban postmark? Nick Arrow	69/1	7
Report on November Zoom meeting	69/1	5	RSA First definitive 2½c Roy Ross	69/1	14
Library Update	69/1	15	Book Review (SG Part 1) Simon Peetoom	69/1	16
Index to Springbok Vol 68 (2020)	69/1	27	Report on two recent auctions of Southern African material Tony Howgrave-Graham	69/1	19
Report on February Zoom meeting	69/2	32	SWA Corner Tony Howgrave-Graham	69/1	26
Auctioneer's Report	69/2	44	Disaster at Rome Nick Arrow	69/2	41
Report on May Zoom meeting	69/3	72	RSA Fourth definitive series Roy Ross	69/2	47
Auctioneer's Report	69/3	81	Basutoland - The country surrounded by South Africa David Macdonald	69/2	54
Report on September AGM held on Zoom, as well as a report on the Zoom meeting that followed and the Wicks Medal award	69/4	104	SWA Corner Simon Peetoom	69/2	66
			Different print runs of the Rotogravure Union issues – part 3 Nicholas Lindstrom	69/3	82
			Nice to put it right! Nick Arrow	69/3	91
			Skulduggery? Tony Howgrave-Graham	69/3	94
			SWA Corner Tony Howgrave-Graham	69/3	96
<b>The Editor's Desk</b>			Different print runs of the Rotogravure Union issues – part 4 Nicholas Lindstrom	69/4	108
Jipex Panes wanted by Siegfried Mayr	69/1	2	The hunt for Jipex panes Siegfried Mayr	69/4	114
Letters to the Editor from Hugh Amooore, Siegfried Mayr and Mike Tonking	69/1	8-12	The van Riebeeck Tercentenary - A major design error Tony Howgrave-Graham	69/4	117
The Philatelists Psalm	69/1	13	Postcards and Postmarks from the Cape of Good Hope (1880-1915) - Part 1 Bob Hill	69/4	122
Queries from Nicholas Lindstrom and Nick Arrow	69/1	17-18	Union Cinderella Rob & Lyn Lester	69/4	127
Obituary - Eric Hammond	69/2	40	SWA Corner Tony Howgrave-Graham	69/4	131
Letters to the Editor from Roald Sand and Nicholas Lindstrom	69/2	44-45			
Fundraising Postcards	69/2	46			
Letter to the Editor from Siegfried Mayr	69/3	81			
Letter to the Editor from Mike Tonking	69/3	93			
Query from Nick Arrow	69/3	81			
Query from Jim Dounis	69/3	92			
Query from Nick Arrow	69/4	113			

### *South African Philately Club reminder*

The lockdowns we have endured recently have forced many of us to make a much greater use of digital resources as well as attending Zoom meetings. I suspect that even as things return to normal many of us will continue to use these resources as well. The South African Philately Club website, created by one of our members, Steve Hannath, is a useful online resource, and a means of staying in touch with, and meeting new, fellow collectors. To join the Club, create a new Topic and or answer one that is already in the Forum go to the link below.

*(I looked a day or two ago and a lot of new and varied material has been added since the last Springbok - Ed.).*

To join simply click on this link to enter the Club website: <https://southafricanphilatelyclub.com>

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