The Royal Philatelic Society London

The London Philatelist

The Journal of
The Royal Philatelic Society London

Volume 132 December 2023 Number 1511

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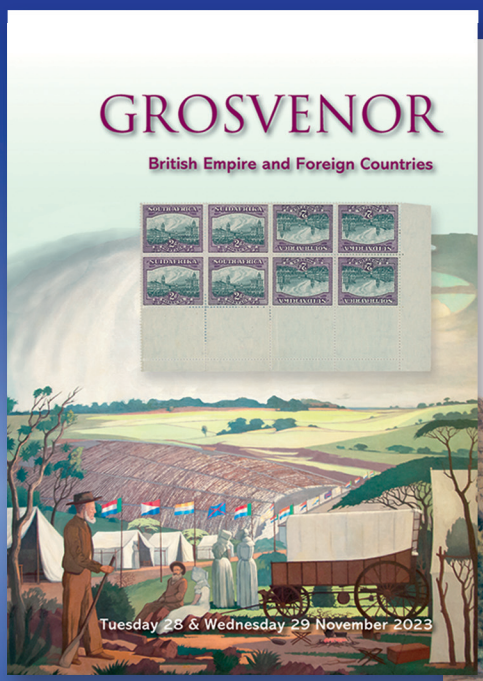
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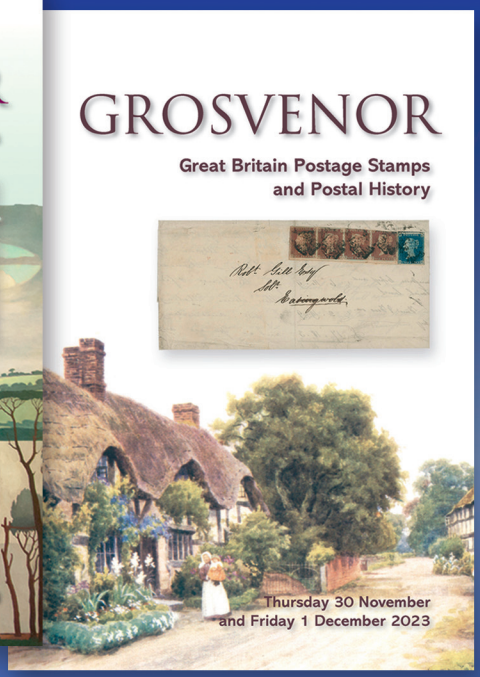
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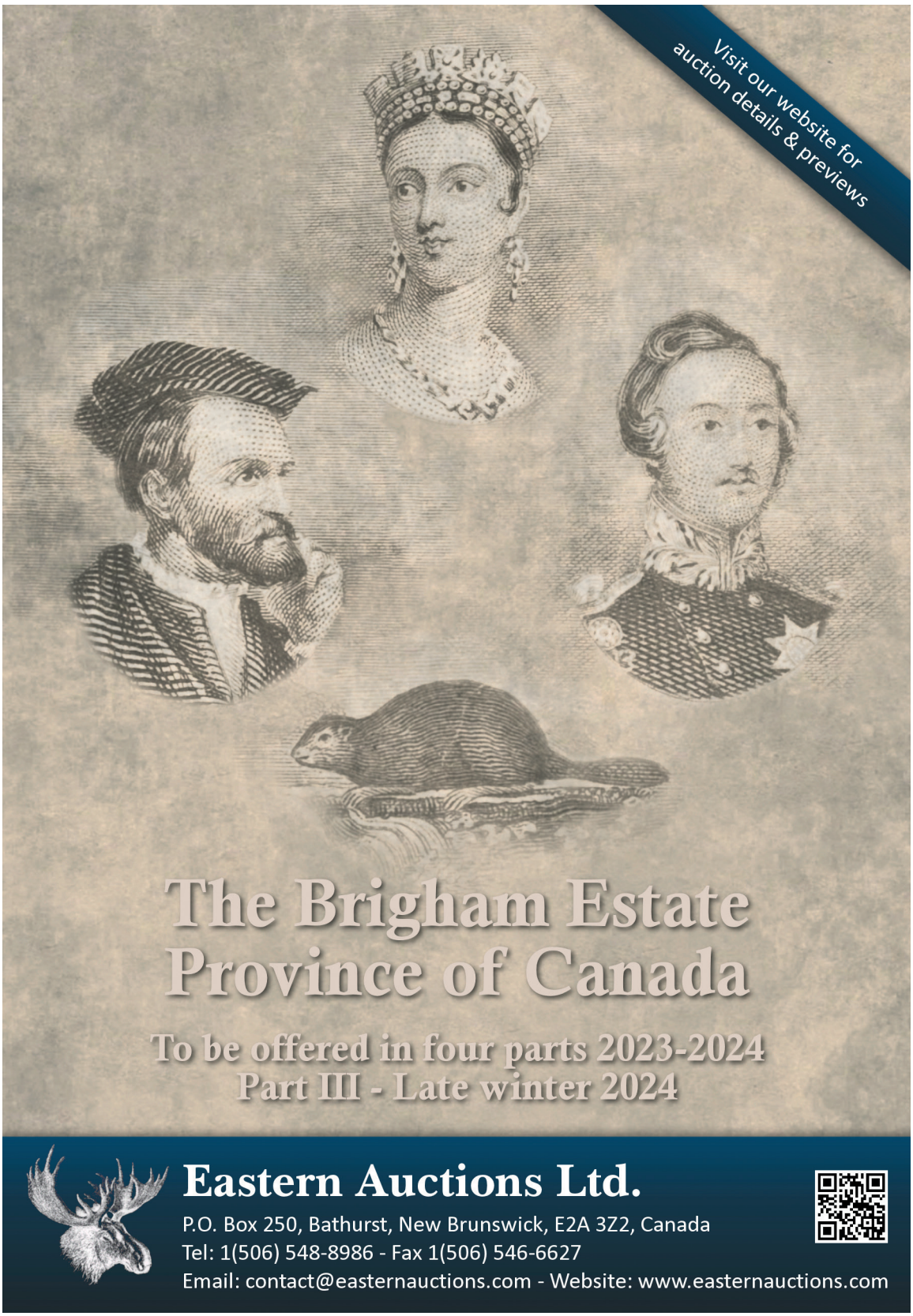
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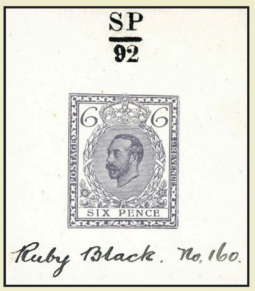
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The Journal of

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From the Editor

All I Want For Christmas

Is world peace and a bit of turkey – the festive fowl, that is, not the country! I fear, however, that there will precious little of the former, and far too much of the latter. In my long-lost youth, my only Christmas wish was for stamps, but I usually ended up getting the same old, same old – socks, chocolate and a board game.

So now, given my philatellically-challenged immediate family potential present givers, I simply reply "I'll leave it up to you" when asked what I might like. Frankly, in my experience, it is a better strategy than getting what a non-collector thinks an obsessive specialist philatelist would want. "Well, the man in the shop said this was perfect for stamp collectors", is a statement that immediately anticipates disappointment, but which must be masked by an expression of feigned delight accompanied by "How wonderful of you to take such trouble" as the inevitable copy of *Stamp Collecting for Idiots* or a tie with a design vaguely approaching something stamp-y emerges from its wrapping paper. I guess it is the thought that counts. I sometimes wish someone would just get me socks or chocolates, but I do not miss the board games.

Looking forward to 2024, with my philatelic hat on, I have set myself a challenge. I plan to see whether I can climb back into the exhibiting saddle in the five-frame category. My last venture in this 'league' was in 2000, at Alexandra Palace in London. To my mind, that was probably the best venue for any international exhibition that I have attended. True, its location was not the most central, but the setting and the architecture and, more importantly, the light, were superb, as I recall. I entered the competitive side of things on a bit of a high: I had won golds at the last three attempts in far flung corners of the world. As it turned out, on this occasion my attention to detail (or lack of it) proved to be my downfall. Somebody (obviously an overworked judge) had come up with the idea of making an introductory page mandatory. That little detail was news to me, and the subsequent Large Vermeil put me off competitive exhibiting for nearly two decades.

I dipped my exhibiting toes gingerly back into competing, but in the One Frame class. A real challenge! It did not help that the Stampex judges thought that my subject was North Vietnam instead of North Korea. After politely pointing out the obvious mistake I was told not to write too much on each page ("We are of an age, and do not have time to read everything") and, because of my obscure subject, I should get something published. Which I duly did, and since then have stuck to the single frame format. Next August sees the once-in-a-decade return of PhilaKorea in Seoul. Not being a betting man, I am proceeding on the basis that this will be my last opportunity to exhibit Korea (albeit the 'wrong' one) in Seoul, so i am going for the full five frames. I will not be expecting any major gong, as a lot may depend on the state of intra-Korean political relationships a the time of the show, but I am definitely looking forward to revisiting that buzzy, busy, young capital city.

Rounding off this 132nd volume of the *LP*, we have a selection of contributions which will hopefully keep you entertained during the festive season. Andrew Briscoe presents a detailed retelling of the famous Siege of Mafeking, while the first part of Peter Fernbank's article on De La Rue's recess printing history provides an in-depth look at the development of what for many collectors is the finest form of stamp printing. We have a belated visual tribute to the Second Crawford Festival, accompanied by David Beech's espousal of Context Philately, republished from the Crawford programme. To round off the contributions in this issue, Peter Hornung's 'Story behind the Cover', blends British monarchy with art world royalty. Please also look at the programme for the UPU 150th anniversary historical colloquium. It provides exposure for the view that philately has a justifiable place in the world of academia.

I wish everyone a very happy, healthy and peaceful 2024.

Mafeking: Before, During and After the Siege

Andrew Briscoe

The Siege of Mafeking lasted 217 days and generated more public interest than any other episode in the Anglo-Boer War of 1899 to 1902. The plucky defence of the town by Colonel R.S.S. Baden-Powell and his hastily assembled garrison against what was believed to be an overwhelming Boer force aroused acute interest in the British press and public.

Before the Siege, barely anyone other than its residents had even heard of this small dusty town located in the vast dry wastes between the grasslands of the veldt and the fine sand and bare scrub of the Kalahari desert. The town occupied little more than a square mile and lay close to the western internal border of the Transvaal. Its singular claim to distinction was that it housed the largest railway depot between Kimberley on the Orange Free State border, and Bulawayo in Rhodesia.

In military terms, Mafeking was at best of marginal importance, and of little more than passing interest to the Boer advance into the Cape Colony. The larger part of the besieging forces, led by General Cronje, abandoned the town after a month to concentrate on more pressing and important engagements further south. The ill-fated General Snyman was thereafter left to command a body of less than 2,000 increasingly demoralised men.

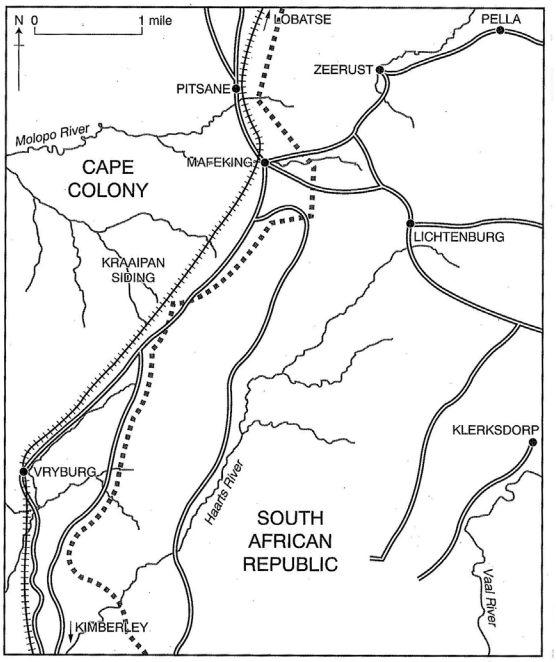


Figure 1. Mafeking and the principal towns referred to in this article.

The Town and its History

Mafeking was an isolated British outpost less than five miles from the western edge of the Boer state of the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek, also known as the Transvaal Republic. For several years previously, Boer freebooters had drifted across the border into the lands traditionally occupied by the Barolong tribe, and then established the short-lived 'republics' of Goshen and Stellaland. Britain responded by despatching a military force (the Bechuanaland Expeditionary Force) under the command of Sir Charles Warren to secure the strategically important 'wedge' of land bordered by Transvaal to the east and by the recently established colonial territory of German South-West Africa to the west.

Warren's instructions were to 'remove the filibusters from Bechuanaland, to restore order in the territory, to reinstate the natives on their lands, to take such measures as may be necessary to prevent further depredation, and, finally, to hold the country until its further destination is known.' Warren's mission was accomplished without a shot being fired.

The town of Mafeking was marked out by Warren in 1885, approximately half a mile from the Barolong stadt of Mafikeng. The name 'Mafeking' was simply an anglicisation of the Tswana name. The Barolong stadt had been founded in 1857, a time of conflict with the Boers over land and cattle that resulted in constant fighting. The Barolong Chief Montshiwa decamped to Mafikeng and established the stadt as the tribal capital.

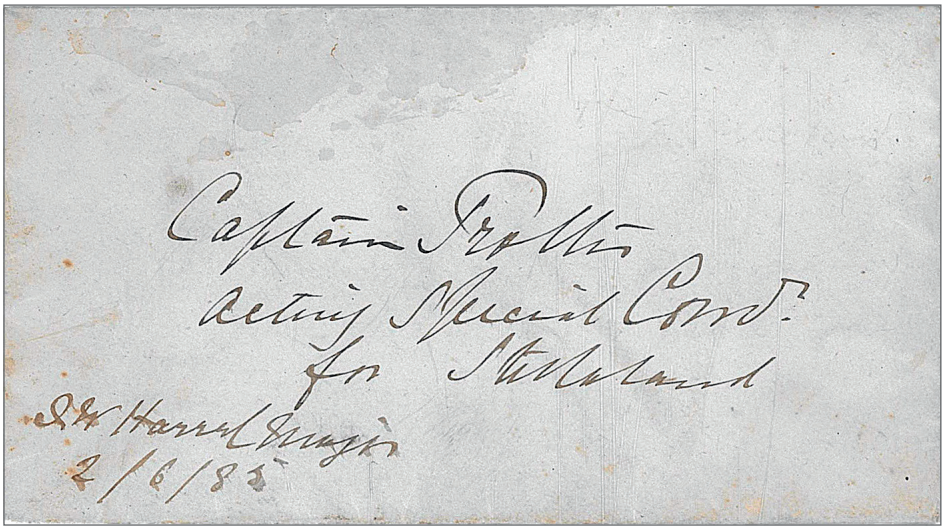


Figure 2. A cover from Major J.W. Harrel dated 2 June 1885 and addressed to Captain Trotter, Acting Special Commissioner for Stellaland, based at Mafeking.

Figure 2 illustrates the earliest known cover to have been received at Mafeking. The enclosed letter was written at Motito on 2 June 1885 by Major J. W. Harrel, Commandant Western Province Bechuanaland. The envelope is addressed to Captain Trotter, Acting Special Commissioner for Stellaland, at that date based at Mafeking. In the letter, Harrel refers to the recently introduced wagon toll, and suggests that

> *'By this way as a great many natives proceeding from the South to the North go through Stellaland not knowing of the existence of the wagon toll or tax, I think it would be advisable that you should tell Field Cornet van Norgen that he ought to exercise a little discrimination in cases where ignorance of the law is pleaded and allow those who wish to leave Stellaland via Takoon without enforcing payment.'*

Harrel's letter concludes 'In haste for post.' It was presumably carried to Mafeking by mounted police, the envelope being endorsed on reverse as received on 4 June 1885.

The expeditionary force had no field post office, and virtually all of the surviving mail from members of the force was transported to the nearest civilian post office at Barkly in the former colony of Griqualand West. Figure 3 illustrates the earliest known cover from Mafeking. It was written by Lord Methuen to his wife when Methuen was serving with the Warren Expedition at Mafeking. The cover entered the postal system of the Cape Colony at Barkly on 10 August 1855. It is franked with a Cape 2d adhesive, addressed to Wynberg, but redirected to Farmer Peck's inn, situated on the coast at Muizenberg near Cape Town. A further 2d was applied for redirection. Farmer Peck's inn was famous for its ham and eggs, and offered 'excellent beds without any fleas'.



Figure 3. An envelope franked at the 2d per half ounce internal Cape rate, cancelled at BARKLY / G.W. on 10 August 1885, redirected at Muizenberg on 12 August 1885. On the reverse is a T.P.O./UP cds.

By 1899, the town of Mafeking had a population of around 1,500 that was surprisingly diverse. Of the 661 men who fulfilled the property qualifications required for inclusion on the town's electoral role of 1889 for both the town and the surrounding rural area, 513 were registered as resident in Mafeking. The names of these residents suggest that 425 were British, 32 were Boers, 39 were Blacks and 17 were Indians. The two major employers in the town were the railways and the police.

Also by 1899, the town had a number of public buildings and facilities. In addition to the post office, there was a town hall, a courthouse and a gaol, a handful of schools, several churches of various denominations, a Masonic hall, around five hotels, the Victoria Hospital, a library, a bank, and numerous shops. The only two-storey building was the convent of the Irish order of the Sisters of Mercy. The houses were fairly spaced out and built of soft brick with roofs of corrugated iron. The centre of the town was the market square, from where radiated a grid pattern of dusty streets.

The flatness of the surrounding dust-ridden veld was monotonous and uninspiring to survey; in the words of a war correspondent, 'it was as if one lived in the middle of a plate with a bright blue cover over it.' Another simile for describing the town was that it lay in the veld like a sitting duck, with no natural defences other than a low thorn-covered hillock, christened 'Canon Kopje'. The town's buildings offered little or no protection against the Boer's heavy artillery, which included the huge 94-pounder Creusot siege gun (known as the 'Long Tom' by the besieged).

The Early Days of the Post Office

The Bechuanaland Expeditionary Force opened a military telegraph office at Mafeking in February 1885. Seven months later, in November, a civil post office was opened in the same premises, and the Resident Magistrate was appointed as postmaster but without any extra remuneration. All letters posted at Mafeking had to be prepaid, and the Postmaster-General of the Cape instructed that until such time as a datestamp was available, stamps were to be cancelled in manuscript. So far as I am aware, there is no recorded example of this manuscript cancel, and it is likely that none has survived the passage of time.

In May 1885, when the fledgling Mafeking post office was barely three months old, the Resident Magistrate was replaced as postmaster by H. H. Flowers. Flowers was a professional postal officer and was no doubt disappointed to see that the town's post office was located in the small, dilapidated tin-roofed structure that had previously housed the military's telegraphic equipment.

It was not only the structure that was amiss. In 1887, the Postmaster-General sought authority to spend £100 on office furniture: "Need exists for a counter, sorting table and other fittings to replace the old soap boxes which the Postmaster is obliged to use at present." Four years rolled by before the dilapidated state of the post office premises was officially recognised to be a serious concern. In his Annual Report for 1891, the Postmaster-General commented: "The condition of [the Mafeking post office] imperatively demands that some special effort be made to facilitate the acquirement of more suitable premises or the adaption of existing buildings to the requirements of the time." But the situation got worse before it got better. Whereas in 1891 only two officers (the postmaster H.H. Flowers and his assistant J. V. Howat) were working in the dilapidated building, by 1894 a further two assistants (M .F. Biebuyck and F. Lock) had been appointed to work there. Notwithstanding this state of affairs, three more years were to elapse before the office was enlarged in 1897.

In mid-1885, following the suppression of Goshen and Stellaland and the creation of British Bechuanaland, a postal division centred upon Mafeking was established. The division was small, initially comprising only two post offices – at Sherwood and Setlagoli – in addition to the 'head office' of Mafeking.

The Postal Cancellers

In August 1884, Mafeking was allocated the barred oval numeral canceller '638', illustrated as Figure 4, the earliest known usage of which is 1 December 1885, and the latest is 13 November 1896. The Mafeking post office was also subsequently issued with the numeral cancellers '890' (the only known copy of which is dated 13 May 1894) and '1045' (only known copy dated 27 June 1900). These two latter numerals were presumably issued as 'standby' cancellers for use in the event that '638' was either damaged or lost.

In March 1886 Mafeking was issued with a single circle datestamp, illustrated as Type 1 cds in Figure 5, the earliest known usage of which is 7 August 1887. Another single circle date stamp, but with a dot at the base – illustrated as Type 2 cds in Figure 6 – was issued in 1893 (earliest known date 28 January 1894). Two squared circle datestamps were subsequently allocated to Mafeking; the first is more difficult to find and has the initials 'B.B.' at the base (Type 3, Figure 7) and the second bears 'C.G.H.' at the base (Type 4, Figure 8). These single circle datestamps were allocated in 1893 and 1894 respectively. A third cds (Type 5, Figure 9) was only utilised during the siege.



Figure 4. '638' barred oval numeral cancel.



Figure 5. Type 1 datestamp.



Figure 6. Type 2 datestamp.



Figure 7. Type 3 Squared circle datestamp.



Figure 8. Type 4 Squared circle datestamp.



Figure 9. Type 5 datestamp.



Figure 10. 20 March 1887 envelope from Mafeking registered to Graaf Reinet, franked with a purple Cape 6d overprinted 'BRITISH BECHUANALAND' in black (SG 7) tied by the '638' barred oval numeral cancel. Backstamped Nelspoort 22.3.87 and T.P.O. 22.3.87, arriving Graaf Reinet on 23 March 1887. The earliest known registered cover from Mafeking, and one of only three covers bearing SG 7. The franking of 6d comprises the 2d inland Cape rate plus 4d registration fee.

The Early Postal Services

In June 1885, a mail service was introduced by the Bechuanaland Expeditionary Force between Vryburg and Molepolole, via Mafeking which functioned as a sorting station. The service was operated by despatch riders between Mafeking and Molepolole, leaving Mafeking at 1.30 pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and arriving at Molepolole at 7 pm on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. The 'down' service left Molepolole at 6.00 am on Mondays, Wednesday and Fridays and reached Mafeking at 11 am on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

Following the disbanding of the Expeditionary Force in August 1885, a quasi-military force was established to patrol the borders of the new territory so as to prevent incursions by freebooters and other intruders. The initial recruits of the Bechuanaland Border Police came mainly from the disbanded mounted units of the Expeditionary Force. The Police's headquarters were established at Mafeking, and shortly thereafter Mafeking was declared as the administrative capital of the Bechuanaland Protectorate in spite of the town not being located in the Protectorate. Mafeking also became the head office of the Protectorate's postal service.

In 1887, John Smith Moffat was appointed as an emissary to Chief Lobengula in Gubulawayo and in this capacity he communicated regularly with Sir Sidney Shippard, the British Administrator in Vryburg. Moffat initially utilised the missionaries' informal postal system: his letters and reports were carried, mainly by runners, some 500 miles to Mafeking, where they were passed to the post office for onward transmission to Vryburg. In early 1888, Moffat recommended to Shippard that a regular official runner mail system be introduced between Mafeking and Gubulawayo. The proposal was approved, and the Postmaster General at Vryburg was instructed to investigate whether certain residents in the Protectorate would be able to assist in the establishment of the project. Mr Tillard, Postmaster at Mafeking, was asked to say whether he could secure the services of trustworthy runners between Mafeking and Kanye to convey a post once a fortnight each way, and if so, what would be the cost. Kebalepele, the son and heir of the Barolong chief Montshioa, agreed to arrange transportation of the mails between Mafeking and Kanye at the cost of £1 per trip.

By this means, the first official runner postal service from Mafeking northwards to Gubulawayo was introduced on 9 August 1888. The inhabitants of Mafeking were now advantaged by a weekly service as far as Shoshong in the Protectorate. Although the runner post system worked satisfactorily for only nine months, it helped to establish the future role of Mafeking as both the postal and administrative headquarters for British Bechuanaland and the Bechuanaland Protectorate.

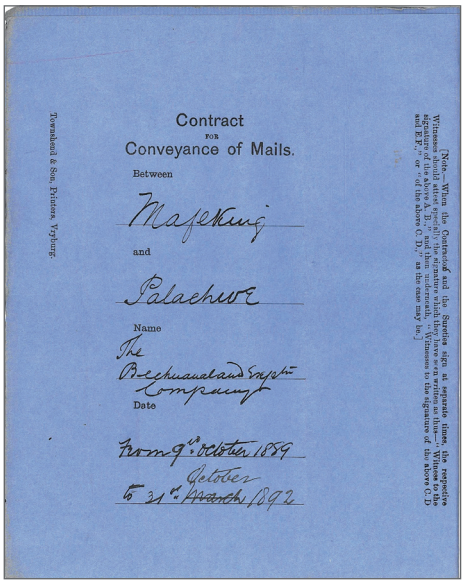

Contract
for
Conveyance of Mails.
Between
Mafeking
and
Palachwe
Name
The
Bechuanaland Exploration Company
Date
From 9th October 1889
to 31st March 1892
Townshend & Son, Printers, Vryburg.

Figure 11. The Mail Contract of 1889 awarded to the Bechuanaland Exploration Company for Conveyance of the Mails between Mafeking and Palachwe.

In 1890, Cecil Rhodes began preparations for the invasion of Mashonaland in the territory that was to become known as Rhodesia. A 'Pioneer Column' was assembled at Macloutsie in the far north east of the Bechuanaland Protectorate, which created an immediate demand for an efficient mail service between Macloutsie and the Cape Colony. Mafeking was appointed as the 'sorting centre' for this mail service, the significance of which to British interests in the region was explained in the following terms by the Postmaster General in a telegram dated 3 January 1891 to the Colonial Secretary:

'The postal service between Mafeking and Macloutsie is now one of the most important in South Africa and the weight of mails to be conveyed is very considerable. It is therefore of the first importance that the service should be a thoroughly good one and under no circumstances should it be allowed to break down. Any stoppage of the service would result in a heavy loss of revenue to this Department, and would cause the greatest inconvenience to the public throughout South Africa generally.'



Figure 12. Cover from England to Mafeteng in Basutoland, bearing GB 6d. tied by the Stockport '733' duplex (9 March 1887), showing manuscript 'Missent to Mafeking'. The front shows the Mafeking datestamp (Type 1, dated 7 April 1887) and the Mafeteng arrival cds for 18 April 1887.

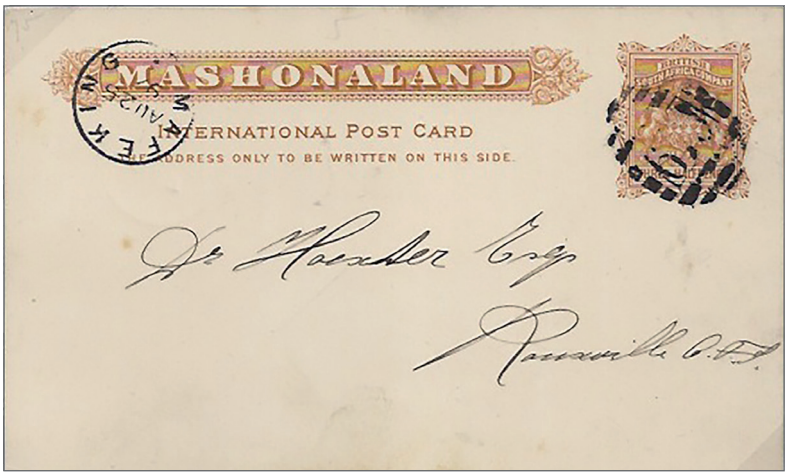


Figure 13. Mashonaland 1½d postal stationary card from Mafeking cancelled with the '638' barred oval numeral cancel and showing the Type 2 cds for 21 August 1897, addressed to the Orange Free State and backstamped Rouxville 29 August 1897. An unusual acceptance of a Mashonaland postal stationery card as valid in the Cape, the postcard rate to the Orange Free State being ½d.

The Telegraph Line

The first Bechuanaland telegraph line was erected from Barkly West through Mafeking to Kanye in 1885 by the Bechuanaland Expeditionary Force, which included a mounted troop of telegraph engineers. Upon the withdrawal of the Expeditionary Force, the section from Mafeking to Kanye was dismantled but the section from Barkly West to Mafeking – a distance of 220 miles - was taken over by the Bechuanaland Government and rebuilt with iron poles in 1886. The construction of a telegraph line northwards from Mafeking, in order to support his 'Pioneer Column', was one of Cecil Rhodes's greatest priorities. He paid for construction of the line from his personal funds, and on 12 May 1890, the project was commenced. In early 1892, the line reached Salisbury in Rhodesia. However, as the line became busier, the staff at Mafeking proved unable to cope satisfactorily with the increasing load, and in 1896, responsibility for the working of the line was transferred to Kimberley where a larger staff and greater facilities were available.

The charge for transmission of a telegram on the line of the British South Africa Company was 6d per word with a minimum charge of 5/. There was however an agreement between the Company and the Cape Government that certain official telegrams would be transmitted free of charge. The 14-word telegram contained in the envelope illustrated in Figure 14 was addressed to a Major in the Bechuanaland Border Police, and therefore qualified for free transmission. However, the telegram was addressed to the small village of Palla near Mafeking where there was no telegraph office. The telegram was therefore carried to Palla by a Company despatch rider from Mafeking, the charge being 3d per word for redirection of a 14 word telegram and amounting to 3s 6d for collection at Palla.

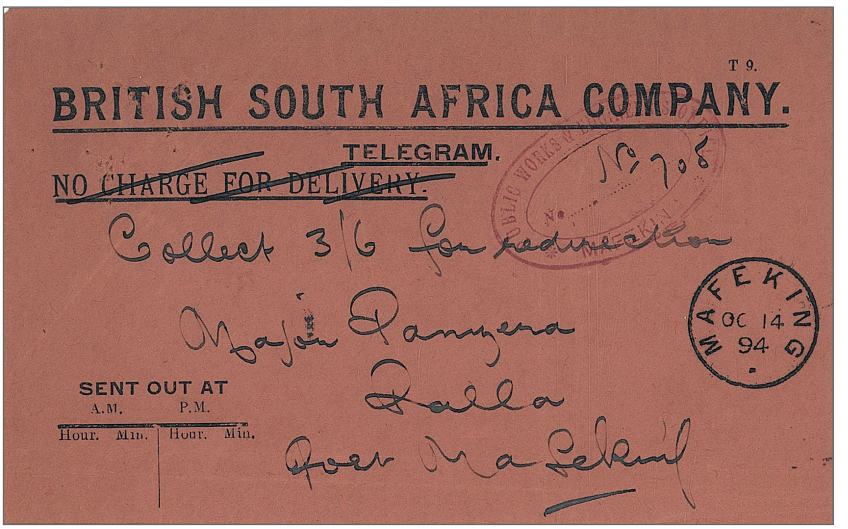


Figure 14. A British South Africa Company envelope containing a telegram transmitted from Kimberley to Mafeking, for redirection to the village of Palla. A charge of 3s 6d for redirection was levied on the recipient.

The Railway Arrives

In comparison with other offices in British Bechuanaland, the post office at Mafeking became a comparatively busy one. The Annual Report of the Postmaster-General for British Bechuanaland indicates, for example, that in the year ending 31 August 1888, some 2,187 'overseas' letters to the United Kingdom and foreign countries were despatched from Mafeking, as compared with 1,156 from Vryburg and 788 from Taung. Many of the envelopes posted at this time were overpaid, presumably either because there was a shortage of the relevant stamps, especially the half-pence, or because one (or more) of the Post Office staff was not properly informed of the applicable rates. By this date, the post office at Mafeking was also a money order office.



Figure 15. An envelope to Germany franked with the 1888 unappropriated die 1d. pair and 2d. strip of three cancelled by the Type 1 cds of 10 April 1890, and showing on reverse an arrival datestamp for 6 May 1890. The franking of 8d is excessive since the rate to Germany was only 6d per half ounce.



Figure 16. A cover to Germany franked 5½d and cancelled by the Type 3 datestamp for 22 October 1894. By this date, the rate to all foreign countries (for mail sent via Britain) had been reduced to 2½d per half ounce. Presumably a double weight cover overpaid by ½d. Arrival cancel of 18 November on reverse.

In December 1891, J.E. Symons – who had previously served as an assistant postmaster in Mafeking – passed through the town on his way to Macloutsie in the Protectorate, where he had been appointed postmaster. He subsequently recorded his impressions of the town:

> *I paid a visit to the Post Office, where the officials were working in their shirt sleeves, sorting the Mashonaland mail - a heavy one. I clambered over a mountain of newspapers to shake hands with my colleagues, nearly maimed myself by tumbling over the parcels, and was thankful to escape by a back door. Mafeking is about the same size as Vryburg, its great ambition is to have a railway and a bonded warehouse. If you want opinions on railways and bonded warehouses, go to Mafeking; if you do not want these opinions don't get within sight of the place; they have railways and bonded warehouses for breakfast, luncheon and dinner, and it is the subject of conversation during the day. When anyone*

there has a nightmare, he, or she, dreams that the Government has decided not to extend the railway and not grant Mafeking a bonded warehouse, and then the dreamer wakens in a terrible fright.

The residents' 'great ambition' was finally achieved on 3 October 1894, when the railway line from Vryburg to Mafeking was completed and opened to traffic. Rail services from Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and East London now converged on Mafeking, the journey from Cape Town taking only 54 hours. The opening of the railway meant that the days of carrying the mail from the south by mail cart were now over, replaced by the faster and more efficient travelling post office. Transportation to the north was still by coach, which now offered a daily service. The coach departed Mafeking two hours after the arrival of the train from the south carrying the European mail. Mafeking remained the railhead for a further 21 months until July 1896 when Gaberones in the Protectorate was reached by rail.

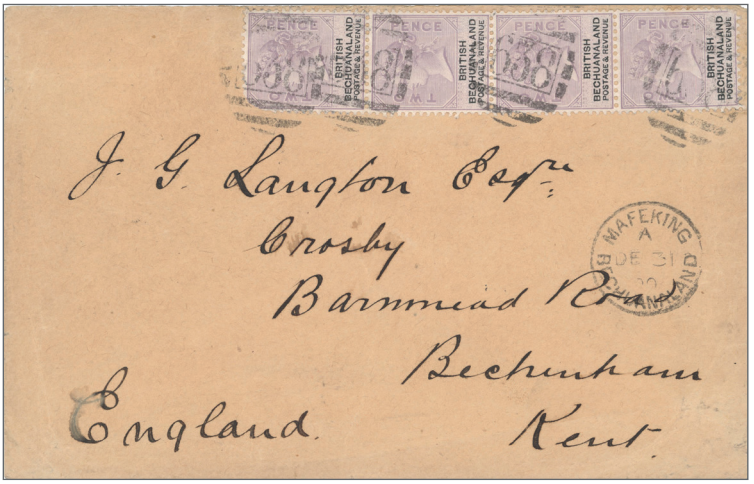


Figure 17. A cover posted on 31 December 1890 to Britain franked 8d. The rate at this time was 6d per half ounce, and reduced the following day, on 1 January 1891, to 3d per half ounce.

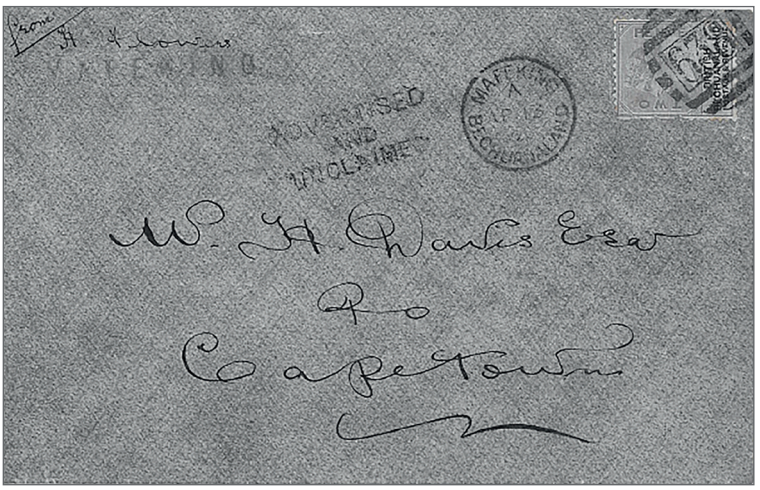


Figure 18. An envelope franked at the internal 2d rate to Cape Town showing the 638 barred oval numeral canceller, and the Mafeking Type 1 cds dated 13 April 1891. The envelope at upper left bears the signature of the postmaster H.H. Flowers with a mauve MAFEKING handstamp and shows the scarce Cape Town mark 'ADVERTISED / AND / UNCLAIMED'.



Figure 19. An example of abuse of the franking privilege. An O.H.M.S. envelope franked by Lieutenant General Charles Rickets of the Bechuanaland Border Police at Macloutsie (posted 26 June 1892), addressed to a Mr Joyce, Transport Agent, care of the Mafeking Post Office, where Mr Joyce was 'unknown'. Upon investigation, it was clear that the communication was not of an official nature, and the letter was taxed 8d at the Postmaster General's Office, being twice the deficit of 4d. The stamps are cancelled by the rare purple oval Postmaster General's Office datestamp for 13 July 1892, and the cover also shows the only known example of the 'RETURNED LETTER OFFICE / MAFEKING' datestamp, applied on 4 July 1892.

Before the Siege

When the siege began on 13 October 1899, Baden-Powell estimated that the Boer besiegers outnumbered his own men by as many as ten to one. Baden-Powell's own forces included two so-called military units, the Protectorate Regiment and the Rhodesia Regiment. Both had been hastily assembled and each comprised a motley collection of untrained men, many of whom had no experience of shooting, military drill or managing horses. Each regiment had around 450 men, but both were poorly equipped with weaponry; the Protectorate Regiment having only one 7-pounder fit for field-work.

The town was divided into 'Interior' and 'Exterior' areas. The town and railway works formed the interior area, which was again divided into five wards, each under a separate commander, and each having its own unit of defence formed from the Town Guard including the Railway Division consisting of 123 men. An unusual feature of the town's defence was Baden-Powell's decision to arm almost as many blacks as whites, a decision which provoked fierce indignation among the Boers. The adjoining Barolong stadt was also incorporated within the defences of the colonial town.

J. Angus Hamilton, war correspondent of the *Times*, described the town's defences a few days prior to the siege:

> *The perimeter of the defences is between five and six miles. The armoured train protects the north-west front. Between the railway on the north-west and the Convent, there are some trenches, built with an eye to their future use. Upon the western and eastern bases of the town there are further trenches, manned by the Protectorate Regiment, the Town Guard, and other local volunteer corps. The town was garrisoned by the Cape Police under Inspector Marsh and Inspector Brown. Colonel Walford held Cannon Kopje with the British South Africa Police. Colonel Hore commanded the Protectorate Regiment, which was scattered about the defences of the town under its squadron officers. The western outposts were entrusted to Major Godley, while in this direction there were*

also the Women's Laager and the Refugee Laager in Hidden Hollow. To the south-west was Major Godley's headquarters. Below this, and further to the west, was Captain Marsh's post, upon the other side of which, along the eastern front of the town, there are many forts in process of construction. There are De Koch's, Musson's, Ellitson's Kraal, Early's Corner. These forts will be garrisoned by the Town Guard, and it is hoped that they will be provided with adequate protection from the enemy's artillery. The Railway Volunteers garrisoned the cemetery and controlled an advanced trench about eight hundred yards to the front. In the meantime, every effort is being made to press forward the work of constructing the defences, and every one appears to be willing to assist.

The exterior area of the town was encircled by a defensive perimeter comprising earthworks, trenches and hastily constructed forts and outposts, all of which would subsequently be served by the town's internal postal service. Figure 20 illustrates an O.H.M.S. envelope posted by Major Alexander Godley to Surrey on 17 September 1899, two days before commencement of these works. Godley was adjutant to Colonel Baden-Powell who subsequently in a despatch referred to Godley as his 'right hand man'. During the siege, Godley also acted as Baden-Powell's advisor on postal matters.

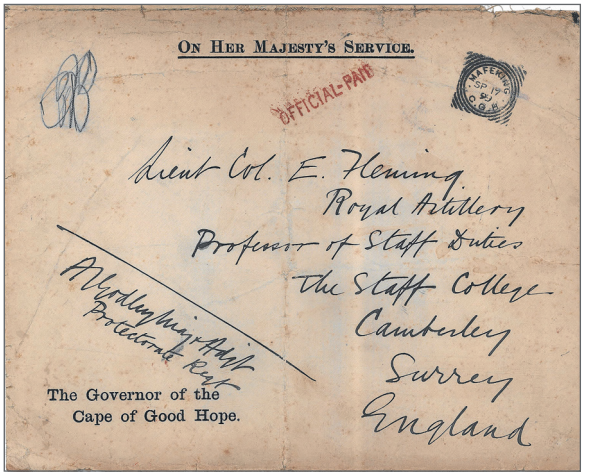


Figure 20. Godley's O.H.M.S. envelope, bearing the Mafeking Type 4 single circle datestamp for 17 September 1899, and a red 'OFFICIAL-PAID 'handstamp, which is a mystery because the Cape Regulations only extended the franking privilege to mail addressed within the Cape. Backstamped Camberley 17 October 1899, six days after the siege commenced.

A week before the siege began, strict instructions were given to the newspaper correspondents by Lieutenant Hanbury-Tracy, the press censor, requiring them to have a pass and to submit their messages, via himself, to the telegraphic office.

The Siege Begins

The (Second) Anglo-Boer War began on 11 October 1899. Two days later, on the evening of 13 October, the Siege of Mafeking commenced. The military significance of the Siege in the war as a whole lay in terms of the number of Boers who were engaged in besieging the town for the first seven months of the war and who were thus diverted from other fronts.

From the start, transmitting information from Mafeking to Britain was difficult. On 12 October 1899, the telegraph line, which followed the railway line, was cut at Maribogo, some forty miles south of Mafeking. For a while, telegrams still came from Cape Town via the south route as far as Kuruman and Hopetown, but by the end of October this route was becoming too dangerous for the runners, and therefore telegrams had now to be sent northwards via a runner to Mochudi or Mahalapye in the Protectorate, from where they were telegraphed to Beira, and then on by boat and train to Lourenço Marques.

From November 1899 the entire onward 'journey' of a telegram from Mafeking to London, which before the war had taken around a day or two, took at least a fortnight, sometimes longer. This was partly because messages might have to wait some time before it was considered safe to send them out, and partly because of the longer distance to a post office.

In late March 1900, the Boers adopted a policy of shooting runners captured carrying mail and depositing their bodies near the defence lines. The intercepted mail was attached to the body and found the next morning. Figure 21 illustrates a rare example of such mail, having been franked one shilling and posted on 30 March 1900, before being returned to the town where Postmaster Howat readdressed the letter to the sender. The envelope was then franked one shilling a second time and reposted on 26 May, the day before the siege was lifted.



Figure 21. An example of an envelope franked at the 1 shilling rate for the northern route but intercepted by the Boer forces and returned to Mafeking.

Communications inside the town relied greatly upon a web of telephone lines installed by Howat, and which connected all the outlying forts and look-out posts with Baden-Powell's HQ next to Dixon's Hotel on the southern edge of the town. This enabled Baden-Powell and his staff to send and receive up-to-the minute reports to and from every part of the defence lines. There were in additional other traditional aids to communication – heliographs, lamps and flags – and acetylene searchlights to protect the forts and the armoured train, and the look-out seats on which an observer could be hoisted over five yards up on telescopic posts.

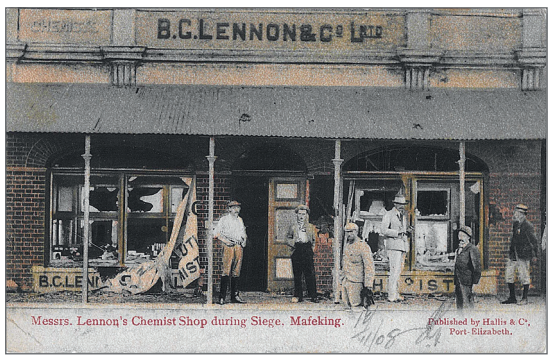


Figure 22. Lennon's Chemist Shop during the Siege.

The siege was notable for the extent of communication between the garrison and the Boer forces investing the town. The frequent letters between Baden-Powell and first General Cronje, and later Generals Snyman and Eloff, were widely reported at the time, and soon became the stuff of legend. Temporary truces were regularly negotiated under the white flag, following engagements in which there were dead to be collected and buried, and wounded to be rescued and cared for. An early understanding was reached that Sundays were to be observed as days free of bombardment and hostilities.

The Journalists and the Censors

During war, there is an inevitable conflict of interest between the journalists and the censors appointed to muzzle their work. The Boer War commentator Lady Elizabeth Briggs described this conflict in the following terms:

> *The correspondents have their papers to serve, and they wish to pass messages through that the press censor, for military reasons, cannot sanction. I am convinced there is no position so difficult to fill on active service as that of press censor. In censoring the war correspondents' telegrams which they submit to him for transmission, he has to consider how far the information would be useful to the enemy when telegraphed back to Boer sympathisers in the course of a few days, and to what detrimental effect it could be employed against the British forces …. Having arrived at a decision as to what should be eliminated, he has to run with no unsparing hand the well-known and thoroughly hated blue lines through the objectionable paragraphs, which not infrequently includes the whole message.*

When the war broke out, Mafeking was well provided with newspaper correspondents. We know of nine by name, the most prominent being Angus Hamilton who represented both *The Times* and *Black & White*. Hamilton was in his twenties and had no previous experience as a war correspondent. At the end of August 1899, he approached the Moberley Bell, business manager of *The Times*, claiming that he was about to join Baden-Powell's fighting force and volunteering his services. He was offered employment as a temporary correspondent, to be paid at the rate of £5 per column for anything that the paper published. Bell was initially unimpressed by Hamilton's journalism. He complained that Hamilton's diary was packed with 'trivialities', that (partly because of their length) reached London in about 19 days. On 3 May 1900, Bell told the Eastern Telegraph Company to accept no more telegrams from Hamilton. In his defence against the charge of trivialism, Hamilton argued that the press censors would allow nothing of substance to pass through their hands. The military censor in Mafeking, Major Algernon Hanbury-Tracy, knew that most of the correspondents were inexperienced, and even those that were not, could not be trusted to abide by the censorship rules. After the siege had been lifted, the correspondents visited the Boer laager, and found that well over a hundred letters had been intercepted by the Boers. Censorship of both war reports and 'private' letters had therefore been an unpleasant necessity which everyone should have accepted.



Figure 23. The Post Office Bunker

The Post Office and its Staff

In order to protect the Post Office and its important work, the Office operated from a specially constructed bunker for the duration of the siege, as illustrated in Figure 23.

Post Master J.V. Howat together with his staff – Messrs Campbell, Simpson, and McLeod – were mentioned in despatches for their 'invaluable work in connecting up and in keeping in communication with headquarters and the whole of the defence works by telephone.'

The telephone played a critical role in repelling a Boer attacks such as on 12 May 1900, when Major Godley - in command of the Western Section – was able to telephone for assistance from the reserve squadron.

The staff of the Post Office were also paid a special allowance in recognition of their invaluable work. In the issue of the *Mafeking Mail* dated 7 March 1900, Baden-Powell announced that:

The following members of the Postal and Telegraph Staff will draw the special allowance mentioned below, from the commencement of the Siege, namely the 13th October, 1899, inclusive :-
Mr. Howat, Post Master, Trench Allowance at rate of 2/6 per diem, and in consideration of the very valuable work he has done under fire and under considerable strain, a special allowance of 10/- per diem.
Messrs. Campbell, Kearney, Simpson, Stewart and McLeod - Trench Allowance at rate of 2/6 per diem.
The following Postal Officials are also granted a special allowance, under the same circumstances as Mr. Howat, at the rate of 2/- per diem - Mr. Campbell, Mr. Simpson, Mr. McLeod.



Figure 24. Colonel Baden-Powell on the Look-out.

During the siege, Baden-Powell appointed Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Cecil to supervise the work of the Post Office. In March 1900, Cecil became concerned to ensure that the existing stock of stamps would last for the duration of the siege, and literally took the matter into his own hands. He went to the Post Office and purchased the entire stock of stamps at their face value from the Postmaster. He then took the stock to the printing works of Messrs Townshend and Son, publishers of the *Mafeking Mail,* where he ordered that the stamps be overprinted 'Mafeking Besieged' and surcharged 1d, 3d, 6d or 1/-.

The primitive circumstances in which the surcharging was conducted resulted in variations such as 'inverted', 'double' and 'treble'. These variations are highly prized by philatelists. The surcharged stamps were put on sale on 23 March when new postal rates were introduced.

The cost for carriage of a letter via Kimberley on the southern route was 6d per ½ ounce, and 1/- per ½ ounce for those carried on the northern route via Bulawayo (Figure 21 illustrates a 'northern route' cover). Since the town was governed by Martial Law, all postal rates were determined by the military authorities.



Figure 25. A cover to Manchester written by F. Rosenfield, a soldier in the Bechuanaland Rifles, bearing a Mafeking 6d on 3d with the variety 'No Comma after Mafeking' tied by two strikes of the Type 5 datestamp for 29 March 1900. A Kimberley 22 May 1900 transit cancel is on the front of the cover; on the reverse is a 15 June 1900 arrival datestamp. Franked at the 6d rate for the southern route, this cover was carried by a native runner to Kimberley where it entered the Cape postal system.

The 'Blues'

In March 1900, Edward Ross - a local auctioneer and photographer - was commissioned to produce a £1 siege banknote to supplement the town's supply of gold sovereigns that had mysteriously run short (the £1 note supplemented the three shilling and ten shilling notes that had already been printed in January and February). Ross copied the siege note designed and drawn by Baden-Powell to celebrates the siege and portray it as the garrison would have liked to remember it.

Also in March, Baden-Powell commissioned Ross to produce by photography a special siege issue of threepenny postage stamps, because of the dire shortage of stamps in the town. The photographs were taken by Mr D. Taylor, a local photographer [see Figure 34], and the gumming and perforation executed by Messrs Townshend and Company. Three such stamps were printed: two bearing Baden-Powell's portrait (one bearing a small portrait, the other a larger portrait), and the 'bicycle' stamp. One of Baden-Powell's motives in commissioning the stamps was to make money for the garrison to offset the cost of the siege; he did this in the belief that this would be popular with the penny-pinching bureaucrats at the War Office. The blue stamp which bore Baden-Powell's portrait was withdrawn in a hurry soon after it was issued, when it occurred to Baden-Powell that Queen Victoria might not be amused to learn that he had put his head on the stamp rather than hers. The second stamp issue, known as the cyclist stamp, depicted cadet Sergeant Major Warner Goodyear on his bicycle. The cyclist stamp on cover is much scarcer than that of the Baden-Powell portrait.

On 7 April 1900, Howat published the following Notice in the *Mafeking Mail*:

> *The new issue of stamp bearing the Colonel's photograph, will be available on Monday, the 9th instant. These stamps can only be issued on production of a letter addressed locally (Mafeking or forts). No person can for the present be allowed to hand to the officer in charge of the Siege Post Office more than one letter per diem.*

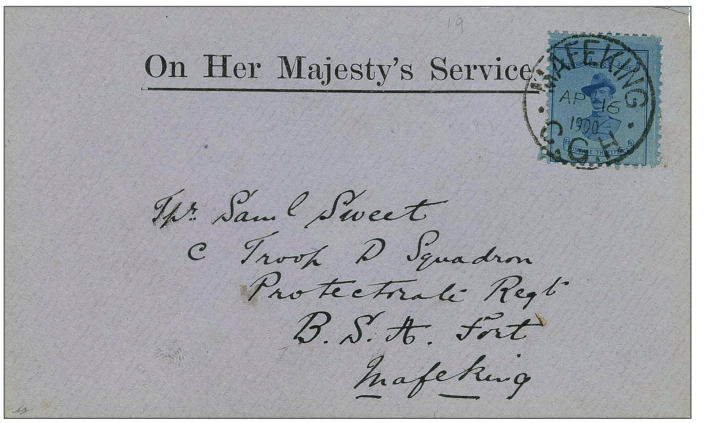


Figure 26. An example of mail to an outlying fort. The envelope is franked with a Baden-Powell 3d pale blue stamp tied by a Type 5 cancel dated 16 April 1890, and addressed to a Trooper of the Protectorate Regiment stationed at the British South Africa Fort.

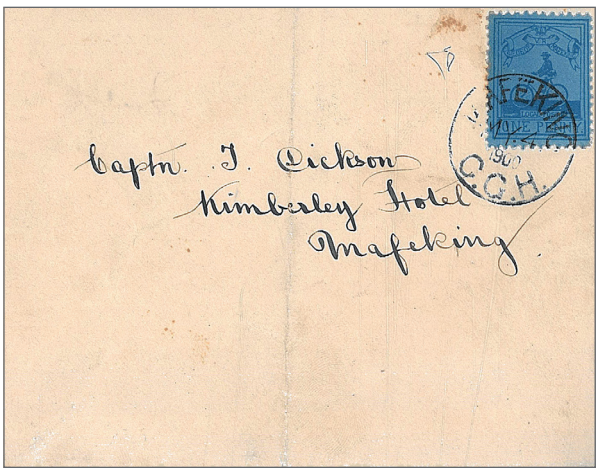


Figure 27. A faked 'cyclist' stamp on a faked cover which surprisingly has a Diena certificate that certifies the cover as genuine. From a postmark perspective, suspicion is immediately aroused because the datestamp is a careless imitation of the Type 5 cds, but showing no 'side dots' above 'C.G.H.'

The portrait and the cyclist stamps became known as the 'Blues', although the shade of blue varies significantly from light blue to dark blue, depending on weather conditions at the time of printing, and on how much light reached onto the development plate; a bright day produced a dark blue, and a dark day produced a lighter shade. Although both stamps were intended for use only within Mafeking, this was not always the case. Both of the stamps were used until the relief of the town on 17 May 1900. For a while after the relief it became common practice to obtain the signature of the magistrate, Charles Bell, to certify these stamps as genuine



Figure 28. An envelope addressed to the Mafeking Hotel, bearing a 1d cyclist stamp in a dark shade of blue cancelled by a Type 5 datestamp for 2 May 1900.



Figure 29. An example of the 1d stamp in a light shade of blue.

The Status of the Mafeking Stamps

These stamps were not overprinted or issued with the authority or permission of the Cape Post Office. At page 25 in the 1900 *Annual Report of the Postmaster-General of the Cape of Good Hope*, the PMG reported that:

> *Owing to the interruption of communications, I was not consulted in the matter, either as regards the sale of the stamps to the Military Authorities or their being overprinted, and from the time the stamps originally passed out of the hands of the Civil Postmaster, the Colonial Post Office Department ceased to have any control whatsoever over their treatment. In view of these circumstances, and of the fact that the whole of the additional revenue derived from the sale of the stamps at their surcharged values was retained by the Military Authorities, it was decided by the Government of the Colony, and also by the Bechuanaland Protectorate Administration, to regard the stamps in question as purely Military issues; and in the month of November official notices were published in the Government Gazette proclaiming the non-availability of the stamps in question for the pre-payment of mail matter posted either in the Cape Colony or in the Bechuanaland Protectorate.*

Incoming Mail

The besieged residents received practically no mail from outside the town; the few incoming letters took the form of despatches addressed to Baden-Powell. One of the greatest hardships endured by the inhabitants was the absence of reliable news from the world beyond the town. A remarkable feature of the Siege was the sustained publication the *Mafeking Mail* newspaper – 'issued daily, shells permitting' by its dedicated and resourceful editor, George Whales. In November, Whales also began a series of 'Siege Slips' to reassure and entertain his readers. The *Mafeking Mail* was subject to censorship, but much of the paper was devoted to official news submitted and often drafted by Baden-Powell's staff. It is thanks to the *Mafeking Mail* that we know much of what we do now know regarding the operations - and tribulations - of the Post Office during the Siege.

Communications with the south were more effectively cut off for most of the Siege than were those to the north, so it was to the north that, via Colonel Plumer on the Bechuanaland-Transvaal border, and through him to Colonel Nicholson in Bulawayo, and then on – via Beira and Lourenço Marques – that contact with the outside world was essentially maintained. Baden-Powell was in regular contact with Plumer from late January 1900, and it was also via the northern route that occasional messages from the Queen reached Mafeking, along with the news of the long-delayed relief column from the north.

By February 1900, as Plumer's column inched its cautious path southwards along the railway line, communications with the world beyond the town became easier. Baden-Powell sent runners out to Plumer every two or three days, some with duplicate messages in code, others in ordinary language with deliberately inflated accounts of their food supply – in case the runners were captured. Later, carrier pigeons were tried, with limited success; the birds preferred to be in Mafeking. But it was always easier to get news out than in. Even by March, messages from Lord Roberts were still taking about a fortnight to reach Baden-Powell, which meant they were always liable to have been overtaken by events.

Outgoing Mail

The evidence gleaned from recorded covers suggests it was practically impossible to smuggle letters through the Boer lines between November 1899 and the third week of March 1900. In the fourth week of March, when many of the Boer forces moved south, conditions changed and runners carrying letters were able to creep through the Boer lines at night. Runners were initially paid £15 per 'run', but this was increased to £30 as the siege progressed.

From the last week of March, the average number of letters per week forwarded *via* the northern route was approximately 60, a runner leaving Mafeking twice per week; and *via* the southern route approximately 30, once per week. Many of the runners were captured by the Boer forces, and the letters being conveyed by them never reached a British post office. Letters captured by the Boers were often divested of their postage stamps.

The Northern Route took 13 days to Bulawayo. Although mail sent to Britain by this route had to cross three international borders before reaching the port of Beira, it was safer from Boer sabotage than the southern route once it got past Gaberones in the Protectorate.

The front of the cover illustrated as Figure 30 bears an initialled endorsement written in blue crayon. The significance of such endorsements was explained by J.H. Powell, the Postmaster at Bulawayo, in a letter subsequently written to Stanley Gibbons describing how mail from Mafeking was handled at Bulawayo:

> *With the first batch of letters received from Mafeking (in March), several were found to be minus stamps. The 'Base Train (Military) P.O.' to which all letters were sent from Mafeking was manned by chaps from my office and I immediately instructed them to examine closely every Mafeking letter, verify the postage and initial each letter. On arrival here the letters were again examined, verified and initialled. Most, if not all, of the Mafeking letters should therefore bear the initials 'T.G.' (Thomas Glanville), 'H.R.E.' (H.R. Evered) or 'J.H.N.' (John Nevett) (these were all base train clerks) and 'G.H.W.' or 'J.H.P.' (my Supts. initials or my own). In addition to these initials the letters should have figures which represent the No. (of letters passed at Mafeking) or the value of the postage attached. I suppose at least 80 per cent of the letters sent out of besieged Mafeking passed through my hands …*

Military despatches were written in code. Some were sent using pigeons, others were hidden in empty cartridge cases. If the runner was intercepted, he dropped the cartridge case and covered it with sand. Longer messages were written on tissue paper and hidden in caps and the soles of boots. Duplicates and triplicates of messages were also sent to ensure at least one got through.



Figure 30. An envelope to Bulawayo bearing a one shilling on 4d pair tied by a Type 5 datestamp of 18 April 1900. The envelope shows the Bulawayo handstamp 'PASSED / PRESS CENSOR', and is endorsed at right '2/- J.H.P.' On the reverse is an arrival cds of 28 April 1900.

The unsung heroes of these lengthy and often dangerous journeys were of course the Barolong dispatch runners. There was more to being a runner than having a swift pair of feet. Runners had to understand the politics of the villages they passed, whether it was safe to stay there and trust the chief. When things went wrong, they had to be able to talk themselves out of difficulties. They also had to have a nose for trouble, to anticipate being captured by the Boers, and to find a safe hiding place for the bundle of mail, which could be retrieved later when danger had passed. Some returned empty-handed, having been relieved of their mail by the Boers, others never returned.

The New Arrangements Applicable from 24 March 1900

The most detailed set of regulations governing postal and telegraphic matters (shown here abridged) were issued as a notice in the edition of the *Mafeking Mail* published on 24 March 1900:

New Arrangements for the Transmission of Telegrams and Dealing with Letters.

The Bombproof Post Office at the end of Minchin's Yard, at Headquarters, will be open daily to receive Letters and Telegrams for North and South, between the hours of 9 a.m. and 10 a.m. (Sundays excepted).

The following are the rates for Telegrams: Via the North, 1½ d. per word, plus a fee of 1/- for a receipt; duly stamped ; Telegrams for Cape Colony and Natal will be accepted by this route.

Telegrams via the South for Cape Colony and Natal will also be accepted, the rate being 1/- for 12 words, plus a fee of 1/- for a duly stamped receipt.

...

The sale of stamps for letters for local delivery will be restricted.

Letters for Northern and Southern routes must be handed to the Postal Official on duty, and stamps cannot on any account be sold.

Rates of Postage — Letters.

Local delivery (within town limits), Id. per ½ oz.
Delivery at Outposts and Forts, 3d. per ½ oz.
Letters for United Kingdom, Cape Colony and Natal via the South, 6d.per ½ oz.
Letters for United Kingdom, Cape Colony, Natal and Rhodesia, via the North 1/- per 4 oz.
Newspapers for local delivery: 1d. per paper. Book Post 1d. per ounce.

Pillar and Wall Letter Boxes. —

Pillar or Wall Letter receivers are erected at the following places in Mafeking and are cleared at the times mentioned:

Pillar & Wall Boxes.	Morning.	Afternoon.
Dixon's Hotel	9-55 a.m.	3-55 p.m.
De Kock's Corner 9-40 "		3-40 "
Victoria Hospital	9-30 "	3-30 "
Post Office	9-35 "	3-35 "
Railway Division	9-30 "	3-30 "
Whiteley, Walker & Co	9-45 "	3-45 "

J. V. HOWAT, Postmaster.

On 9 April 1900, to maintain morale, Baden-Powell set up a local Bicycle Post to enable the troops to communicate with each other. A corps of cadets mounted on bicycles delivered the mail inside the town, and between the forts and outposts.

The Relief of Mafeking

On 23 April 1900, Colonel Plumer sent a message by pigeon post announcing that relief columns were about to advance from both north and south. A runner brought a letter to the storekeeper Ben Weil from his brother Sam – then serving under Lord Methuen at Fourteen Streams – promising that relief was imminent.

The morning of 16 May dawned bright and clear but without hint of any of the good things to come. Soon after lunch, the residents heard the sound of heavy guns by the Molopo River. Baden-Powell ordered all men with rifles to go down and 'demonstrate' in the Boers' rear. During that evening and night, the relieving troops entered the town, some 217 days after the siege had commenced.

Baden-Powell immediately ordered a victory procession by the relief force. Mahon's small relief column of 1,149 men had been carefully chosen to symbolise the unity of the Empire; there were units from England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, Australia and Canada. But the dominant force was South African, from the Cape Colony. The Town-Guard and the non-combatants lined the battered, shouting themselves hoarse.

On the following morning, the garrison mustered for a solemn thanksgiving service in the town's cemetery. After 'God Save the Queen', six buglers blew the Last Post over the graves of those who had lost their lives in the siege. The official casualty list of those killed, died of wounds, wounded and missing totalled 813, including half of the officers and a fifth of the men of the garrison. 478 of the town's inhabitants had died. The figures for Black civilians killed by shell-fire or rifle-fire were given as 329, but this total did not include the thousands believed to have died of disease or starvation, or to have been killed by the Boers trying to escape this episode in the 'white man's war'.

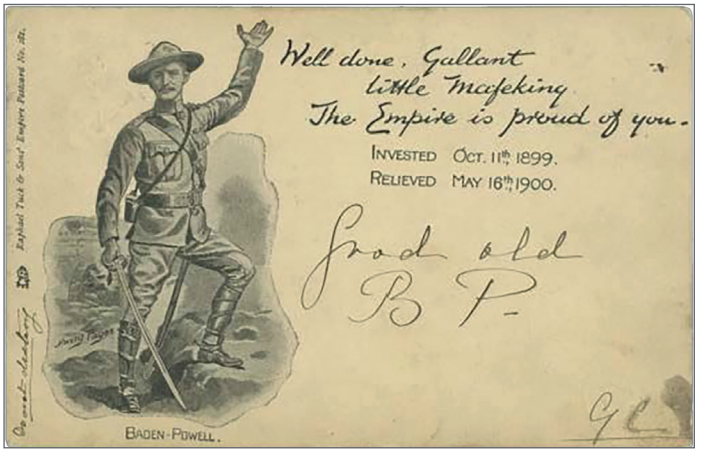


Figure 31.
A celebratory card

After the Siege

The siege ended on 17 May 1900, having lasted 217 days. It made Colonel Baden-Powell a British national hero, 'The Defender of Mafeking', the man who had defied all odds with a small garrison of amateur soldiers. The siege had already generated huge attention in the press, partly because Lord Edward Cecil - the son of the British prime minister - had had been trapped in the town for the duration of the siege.

In Britain, the relief of Mafeking was celebrated in an orgy of nationalistic fervour (Figure 31). Crowds erupted onto the streets: cheering, dancing, waving flags and singing patriotic songs. A new verb was added to the English language - to 'maffick' - which, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, means 'to exult riotously'.

But Mafeking itself was now a place of utter desolation, with all its trees felled and the fences cut up for firewood. There was not a single house or store in the town that had not been severely punished by shelling, many of them having been demolished as dangerous. All the galvanised iron roofs of those still standing were riddled with shrapnel. Practically every resident had a hungry, gaunt-looking face.



Figure 32. An envelope endorsed 'On Active Service' by Captain Ramsey, the officer in charge of the detachment stationed at Lobatsi just across the border in the Protectorate, posted at Mafeking on 9 June 1900, to Scotland (Stow, 18 July 1900 arrival cds on reverse]. The envelope is unusual because it is one of very few posted after the siege which bears the Mafeking Type 5 cds, intended for use only during the siege. The enclosed letter expresses elation that the town has been relieved and postulates that that 'the Boers are giving up their arms' and that 'the last shot in the Boer War has been fired'.

But the residents were also happy, and extremely relieved that the ordeal was over. *The Times* war correspondent - Angus Hamilton - reported that:

> *The town is bright again, and people throng the streets as though a load had been lifted from off the backs of everyone. The shops are open, the post office has resumed work, and now once more accepts telegrams and letters. During the siege there has been but little opportunity to send to the outer world any message of a private character that contained more than a few words. Letters were almost out of the question, and were expensive luxuries even to war correspondents who were compelled to employ special runners at high prices to carry their despatches to the nearest office. Lately, and when the investment of the enemy was not so close, the intelligence department did manage to pass through the lines small parcels of mail matter. The occasions have been infrequent, and there were so many people who were anxious to write that it became necessary to restrict the general public to a certain limit of space. It does not seem that many letters got through, since now that we have had time to overhaul the laagers of the enemy we have found much correspondence in their waggons. ...*

Mail services resumed five days after the siege was lifted (Figure 32). A *Mafeking Mail Special Siege Slip* was published on Tuesday May 22, which - under the heading 'Posts and Telegraphs' – informed:

> *The office will be opened daily, except Sunday, from 9 am to l pm, and 2 pm to 5 pm, for the transaction of ordinary postal and telegraphic business. Letters may be posted in the Letter Box at the Post Office.*

Shattered by the siege, the town took time to recover. Rationing continued until the end of August. The war correspondents, who had done so much to give the town its prominence on the world stage, left as soon after the relief as they were able, and wrote about their Mafeking experiences elsewhere. J. V. Howat departed as postmaster almost immediately after the siege and, after a short interlude, H. H. Flowers returned to resume the office on 1 January 1901 (see Figure 33).



Figure 33 An unusual envelope from Macloutsie in the Protectorate 'Received under cover' at Mafeking by the postmaster H. H. Flowers, who registered it to England at the 5d rate, being the Imperial Penny Post plus 4d registration fee, on 26 August 1901. In Macloutsie, the envelope had been franked with 2d and 6d, being the correct Protectorate rate to the U.K., but the stamps were for some mysterious reason defaced crudely, which may explain why the envelope was sent under cover to Mafeking, being the head office of the Protectorate's postal service. For the avoidance of doubt, Flowers indicated with a blue crayon around the defaced stamps to indicate that they had been disallowed.

After the siege had ended, Baden-Powell was immediately promoted to the rank of Major-General, and given command of a column. He left the town on around 5 June 1900. Although the siege had given him the status of a 'global celebrity', there was a dark side to Baden-Powell's character. Faced with the challenge of feeding the Europeans within the town, he elected to starve the Black Africans who were also trapped in nearby Mafikeng. Baden-Powell hoped that the black population would simply decamp rather than starve; but he also knew very well that the Boers were unlikely simply to let them leave.

Faced with the choice between eventual starvation and the prospect of immediate death at the hands of the Boers, the bulk of the black population simply sat down and waited for death. But when manpower was short, they were recruited into local defence organisations, and proved to be especially useful for intelligence gathering; and, of course, for the running of dispatches through enemy lines.

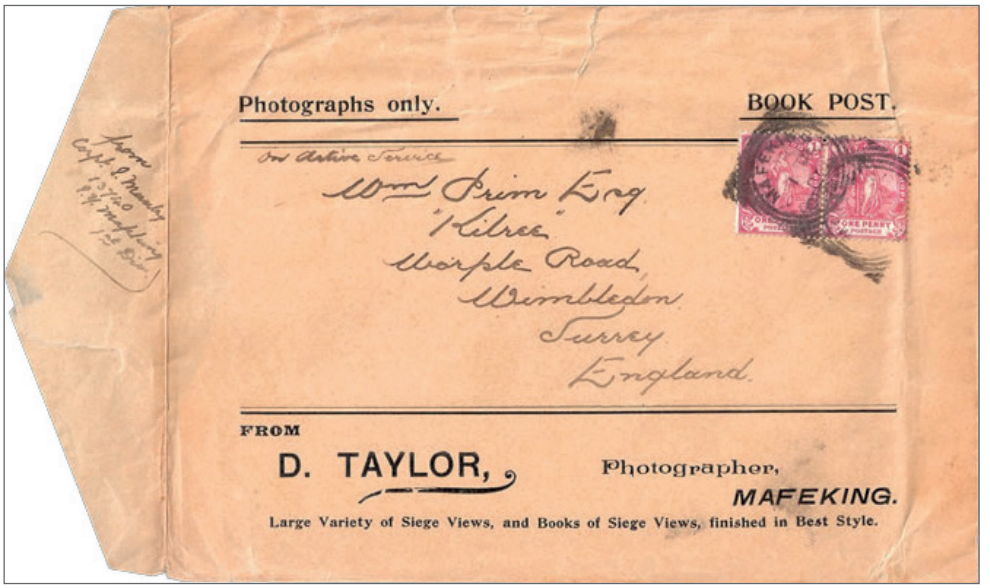


Figure 34. An advertising envelope for D. Taylor, the photographer responsible for production of the 'Mafeking Blue' stamps. The envelope is endorsed 'On Active Service', although this is irrelevant because the envelope is not countersigned, and is franked 2d, being the double rate for envelopes posted to Britain under the Imperial Penny Post scheme. Cancelled with the Type 4 squared circle datestamp for 1 June 1907.

Conclusion

By the time the siege came to an end, the name of Mafeking had become famous in many parts of the world. It was a name soon given to other places in far-flung corners of the British Empire. For decades, many would associate the Anglo-Boer War with the epic siege of Mafeking above all else. A considerable literature and – more recently – television films have kept the history of the siege alive to the present day.

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The Research Hub

Research topic: The Skeleton Postmarks of England and Wales

Researcher: Patrick G. Awcock, patrick.awcock@mypostoffice.co.uk

I am the current collator of 'Skeleton Postmarks of England & Wales' on behalf of the British Postmark Society, aiming to produce a 4th edition of this publication. In particular, I am trying to improve the listing of the early 'traveller' postmarks (1838-54), aiming to establish whether codes (if any) are within the datestamp or around the rim, but also to try to eliminate existing false entries. Can I ask members to please check their collections and to let me have scans of ANY relevant examples that they may possess. I am, of course, also interested in any date extensions or unlisted uses of later skeletons. Please send scans to patrick.awcock@mypostoffice.co.uk

Context Philately: An Introduction

David R Beech MBE FRPSL, Past President

Context Philately is a new philatelic term, coined just recently (January 2023), for a trend or activity which has been developing within the subject in the last few years.

Philately is a subject that is just what you want it to be. It can be relatively simple in collecting stamps or more complex in the study of stamps and aspects of postal (not to mention revenue/taxation) history. It can be seen as a hobby or, an academic study and interest, and all stages between. Context Philately aims to extend the understanding of the aspect of philately that you have decided upon, to collect or study, by setting it in a wider context. This wider context may be broad or as focused as you please; examples might be to see your subject as an aspect of historical development in political, economic, social, geographical, human, or cultural terms, etc and thereby gain a better understanding of its significance and ability to describe it fully. You might examine or collect historical documents, books, newspapers, maps, legislation, photographs, posters and even three-dimensional objects or artefacts: post boxes, medals, badges, handstamps, flags, etc. Key is the educational benefit to be derived from a broader understanding.

The trend within philately to this expansion of interest has been growing for some years. Some feel that Context Philately needs to be promoted to those who may wish to engage with philately, as collectors or students, but who want to see it within a wider historical context. The challenge to the philatelic establishment is to embrace this opportunity to develop the subject, especially in the form of public exhibitions and the many facets of the media.

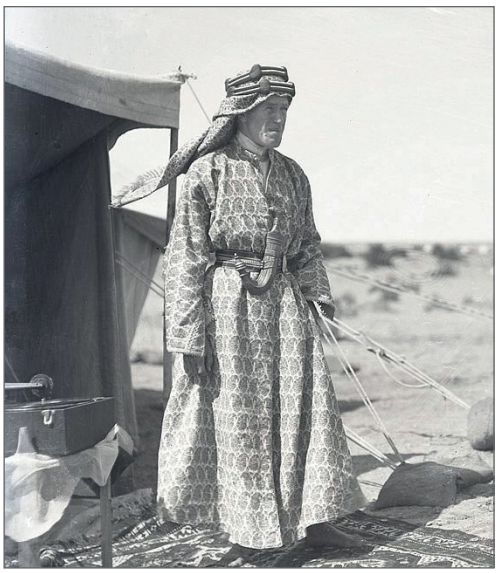
The concept of Context Philately might be applied in any aspect of philately, including postal history, be it to a particular subject, a competitive exhibition class, a collection, an exhibit, an article, a book (printed or digital), or website, etc. I give five examples to illustrate what Context Philately can be.



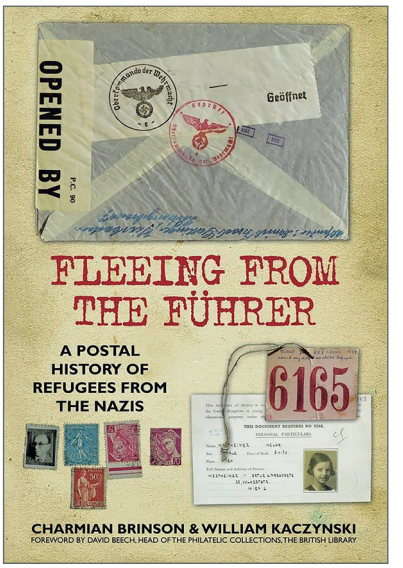
King George VI 1½ annas definitive with the central design illustrating the iconic 'Adenese dhow'.

Example 1. A philatelic society meeting that I attended a few years ago, sometime after the year 2000, was a presentation about the postmarks of Aden. It was excellent in illustrating the postal markings and a little of the associated postal history, but lacked the essential background information giving the subject depth and meaning, that is the context. The presentation would have been so much more interesting and of educational value if additional data had been included. For example: the location of Aden, how, why, and when it became a separate (Indian administrated) territory, and then a British Colony and when it ceased to be. What were the political, economic, population, currency, geographical, and other historical factors, etc? These would have set a background and need not have been extensive.

Example 2. In 2001, The Imperial War Museum in London put its Stamp Collection on long-term loan to the British Library Philatelic Collections. As part of the publicity for the transfer and to make it more easily available, a press release was issued by the British Library. In order to make the most of this release, the realisation that Thomas Edward Lawrence, Lawrence of Arabia (1888-1935) was involved in the design and manufacture of the first postage stamps of Hejaz in 1916 was featured. This resulted in much publicity and the question in my mind about what I knew about Lawrence and the breakup of the Ottoman Empire. This led me to a lot of reading over many years to understand the context.



T. E. Lawrence – 'Lawrence of Arabia - in traditional costume.



Front cover of Fleeing From the Führer *originally published in 2011.*

Example 3. As a Trustee of the Stuart Rossiter Trust, I came to meet William Robert Eleazar Israel Kaczynski (1936–2019) who had fled Berlin for Britain with his parents Martin (1896–1966) and Edith (1896–1975) and brother Edward in 1939 to escape Nazi Jewish repression. William's father Martin had previously spent time in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. William had collected the papers, letters, covers, post cards, propaganda etc associated with his family's departure and wanted to present these and their background in a book marking the events in context. The Stuart Rossiter Trust helped fund the work and with fellow author, Charmian Brinson, Professor of German Studies at Imperial College, London, The History Press published *Fleeing From the Führer A Postal History of Refugees from the Nazis* in 2011, a paperback edition was to follow in 2015, a Danish language edition in 2016 and an expanded edition in the German language in 2017.

The two authors' work is based on the historical facts illustrated by the various documents, including those of a philatelic nature, to tell a wider story of the departure of Jews from Germany, together with the persecution of homosexuals, gypsies and of political opponents of the Nazi party. The William Kaczynski Collection is now housed at the Wiener Holocaust Library, London, where it is on permanent loan, to mark the context of these events beyond, but including, philately.



Perkins D Cylinder printing press.

Example 4. Alan Druce FRPSL had been studying Great Britain line-engraved postage stamps for many years and had researched the Perkins, Bacon Archive (held at The Royal Philatelic Society London) to reassess printing and production procedures and printing numbers of the postage stamps. His work included aspects of the management by the Office of Stamps and Taxes and of Perkins, Bacon the printers. The product of Alan's research work was to be published as a printed book. I was asked to read the manuscript and soon realised that by extending its scope it could become of greater value by giving more context information. Further archival records were examined at The National Archives (London), the National Art Library at the Victoria and Albert Museum, The British Library, and the Postal Museum (London) and these greatly added to the scholarship of the work. Alan's book *Perkins Bacon Great Britain Line-Engraved Postage Stamp Printing 1840–1846* was published in 2018 to much critical acclaim.



Visitors inspect the display cabinets featuring artefacts and postal history, at the Clash of Empires exhibition, photographed on 31 July 2023 at 15 Abchurch Lane.

Example 5. The exhibition *Clash of Empires the 1879 Anglo-Zulu War* was held during July 2023 at The Royal Philatelic Society London. As an example of Context Philately, it may be described as an extreme example, but no less relevant, where the philatelic objects are in a minority to other exhibits. It is an excellent example of philately and of philatelic objects being seen as a part of history; they have been used to illustrate the historical story as written records which are often important key evidence.

These five examples of presentations, books and exhibitions show that by adding the essential background information and context the subjects are more informative and rounded, as a result they are more interesting and educational, helping to engage with other groups and wider interests.

Some may say that added context information is nothing new and they would be right. Others may point out that forms such as social philately and open philately already exist; while Context Philately may be applied to all philatelic endeavours and not just to competitive philately or to one exhibiting class.

The emerging open philately class of competitive philately opens up possibilities for telling a story using a wide variety of material. One must guard against open philately, in its competitive form, becoming one where merit is gained by items that are impressive by monetary value or provenience, used to gain marks but which may be tenuous with little or no link to the subject. Such material may be described as 'beyond context' or irrelevant which may increase the possibility of losing exhibition marks.

Many realise that stamp collecting and philately has a poor reputation in the non-philatelic world where it is often seen as being a small-minded hobby undertaken by eccentrics. Those who know stamp collecting and philately do understand that this is sometimes true, but these same people also understand its serious and worthwhile nature. Thus, philately has an image problem. By seeing a philatelic subject in a wider context, as part of history, it is hoped that this image problem may be improved over time. This may lead to the encouragement of people to become philatelists.

Apart from those who may become interested, as individuals, philately in a wider context has a further prime audience - the academic world. Here the contribution philately and postal history can make to research in a variety of non-postal areas could, and has been in a few instances so far, been of much value. Philatelic research in non-postal areas is growing and as an example Patents of inventions have much to offer the understanding of paper manufacture, printing methods and production factors, postal mechanisation, etc. Research in general in many areas has been much enhanced in recent years by the realisation that a cross discipline approach has distinct advantages. Philately may have much to gain by such a collaboration. This will undoubtedly take time and depend on the quality of written work to high standards. This article may be taken as a preliminary view with much discussion to follow.

End Notes

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www.clashofempires.org

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Acknowledgements

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The Second Annual Crawford Festival 2023
Festival Speakers





Speakers at the Festival (left to right): Top: Chris King RDP Hon. FRPSL; Centre: Alex Haimann FRPSL, David Beech MBE FRPSL, Daniel Piazza FRPSL. Bottom: Susan Taylor FRPSL, Nicola Davies, Head of Collections, Wendy Buckle FRPSL
Photo credit: John Ray FRPSL

The Second Annual Crawford Festival 2023
Festival Speakers and Crawford Medal Finalists



Festival Speakers and Crawford Medal finalists (left to right): Top: Matt Hill, Mike J. Y. Roberts FRPSL, Claudio Manzati.
Centre: Crawford Medal winner Lars Engelbrecht RDP FRPSL with Simon Richards FRPSL.
Bottom: Crawford Medal finalists Colin Hoffman, Luis Moreira Barreiros FRPSL and Eduardo Moreira Barreiros FRPSL
Photo credits: John Ray FRPSL, Jack /huadong Zhang FRPSL

De La Rue's Early Techniques in Recess Printing – Part One

Peter Fernbank FRPSL

The problem of how to manufacture steel recess (or intaglio) printing plates containing multiple images of the stamp design had been resolved by Perkins Bacon in the 1850s. This involved the hardening and softening of steel at various stages in the process, which subsequently became the essential technique in replicating an image, taken from the master die, on to a steel printing plate multiple times via a hardened transfer roller. The basic steps involved with this process are:

1. Engraving the die in reverse on soft steel.
2. Hardening the die.
3. Rocking a soft steel roller over the die under pressure (in a forward and backwards motion), thereby creating a positive impression on the roller with the lines in relief.
4. Hardening the roller.
5. Rocking the roller over a soft steel printing plate in the required positions to make the desired number of stamps for the sheet.
6. Hardening the Printing Plate.

After the lapse of the patent this technique appears to have been adopted by the London security printers involved with the recess printing of stamps. However, although the firm of Thomas De La Rue and Co. had experience of recess printing for commercial work they had never printed stamps by this process. Their baptism in recess printing stamps occurred when Perkins Bacon lost the stamp printing contract for a number of colonial territories in 1862 and their steel printing plates were awarded to De La Rue. The first opportunity the firm had to manufacture the printing plates required for recess printing stamps was in 1878 for Labuan, the stamp design being "… *pantographed ten times on to an unfaced grown-copper plate*" (Walton, Vol. 4, p1781), although this probably just refers to the denomination rather than the main body of the stamp. For their next venture into recess printing in 1895 they adopted a process that was peculiarly their own. Initially De La Rue referred to the recess printing of stamps as 'the copper-plate process' but by the 1920s tended to use the term 'the direct plate method' instead. The precise details of how the firm went about manufacturing their recess plates for the actual printing remained vague.

Part of the problem is that the various philatelic bibles on stamp printing such as Fred Melville's verbose but very informative *Postage Stamps in the Making* (written in 1912, but not published as a book until 1916), John Easton's somewhat inferior but updated book by the same name (1949) and L. N. & M. Williams' scholarly tome *Fundamentals of Philately*, mention little relating specifically to De La Rue's recess plate manufacturing and printing processes. Some authors dealing with a specific territory whose stamps were recess printed by De La Rue have made much progress in investigating the firm's plate making techniques. Morris Ludington, in his study of the Bermuda 1910 'Ship' issue, established that a master plate in steel was first made from which moulds were taken and subsequently electrotyped to form a copper shell. After a backing was added and the duties engraved in, these became the printing plates. Rob Holley, in his masterly and comprehensive book on Kedah and Perlis, provided considerable detail on the recess printing techniques employed (albeit restricted to Kedah issues only) and will be much quoted from in this work. He arrived at the same conclusion, deducing that the moulds were taken from the complete master plate rather than from individual 'leads' derived from the master die. However, neither author suggested exactly how these moulds from the master plate were taken.



1901 Bahamas 1d,'Queen's Staircase, Nassau', SG 58.

Whilst researching the fascinating Queen's Staircase issue of Bahamas, recess printed by De La Rue, I endeavoured to investigate the finer points of the firm's techniques in recess printing and the associated plate manufacturing in order to understand some of the characteristics on the printed sheet that seemed different to those of other recess printers. In 2017 I published the results of my investigation within my book *Bahamas: Stamps and Postal Stationery to 1970* as an appendix to the main work. I have since provided a copy of this appendix to a few interested parties but it has been pointed out to me that this is a rather obscure location to anyone wishing to study De La Rue's methods and procedures for recess printing. My interpretation of some of the relevant supporting passages in John Easton's *The De La Rue History of British and Foreign Stamps 1855-1901* has also been questioned and it has been felt that the topic should be offered to a wider audience in the hope that it will aid the dissemination of information and perhaps provide an opportunity to hone and refine certain of the theories presented here by the introduction of fresh information.

1. De La Rue's Introduction to the Recess Printing of Stamps

In his introduction to *The De La Rue History, etc.* (Easton, pxiv) the author, John Easton, comments that '*almost all the problems of surface printing that have beset philatelists in the past have been dealt with in writing by De La Rue at one time or another, and with unmistakable clarity*'. Although the firm's recess printing was not included in this statement the same is also true, where their correspondence contains much valuable information pertaining to the firm's introduction to recess printing and in broad brush-strokes outlines both their recess plate making techniques and their printing procedures. Much of the following review of De La Rue's early involvement in recess printing is taken directly from Easton, with this author's comments added at appropriate places.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century a number of stamp printing firms had introduced pictorial designs as a contrast to the rather dull and unimaginative formats that comprised a central head portrait (of the monarch, president or head of state) together with a simple border design incorporating the denomination. This was the format adopted by De La Rue for British and colonial stamps which, coupled with their single and double fugitive inks to defeat the forger, had formed the bedrock of stamp printing for Britain and its empire. These were all printed by letterpress (surface printed) and the firm's procedures at this juncture for the manufacture of the printing plates and the printing of stamps by this process were highly efficient and very profitable; De La Rue were not willingly prepared to disturb this comfortable state of affairs by adopting recess printing.



1879 Labuan 2c, SG 1.

In October 1878, in response to an enquiry for the first Labuan stamps, the firm felt compelled to submit a design to be printed by copper-plate due to the complexity of the design required for the stamps (Easton, p327) and this led to the manufacture of their first recess engraved plates for postage stamp printing, each plate comprising ten subjects. John Easton added a note that the design was pantographed ten times on to an electrotyped copper plate, probably based on such a report by the De La Rue archivist, G. Leslie Newman, in his write-up of the De La Rue Collection.

In retrospect it is felt probable that it was only the denomination (in three languages) that was pantographed, the main design being formed from an electrotype produced from lead impressions taken from the master die, De La Rue's traditional technique for making plates for letterpress. This appears to be the only time that De La Rue used this plate making technique for the recess printing of stamps.

An increasing number of colonies began to suggest that pictorial designs would be more attractive than the somewhat lacklustre key and duty designs employed but De La Rue's routine answer to such suggestions was that recess printed stamps did not afford the same level of protection to the Revenue as did their current printing method employing fugitive inks, which were only available for printings by letterpress. However, as more and more customers requested pictorial designs the firm eventually felt obliged to give way.



1896 British East Africa 4 Rupees, SG 78.

Their next venture into recess printing was a complete series for the new British Protectorate in East Africa, for which 15 denominations were required. On 17 July 1895 they quoted (Easton, p563) for:

Engraving an original Stamp Plate, with the duty left blank	£20
Making therefrom printing plates 60 set (English Postage size)	£10 for each duty required.

This was accompanied by a table of prices per thousand stamps depending on quantities printed, which was more expensive than printing by letterpress. Easton summarised the subsequent invoice of 8 April 1896 as follows:

> "*One original Stamp plate with duty left blank, and fifteen 'Working Duty' plates, with approximately 5,000 of each duty …*"

He added an explanatory note following this quotation concerning De La Rue's method of making their recess plates, the more important points being

> "*… They engraved the die, or plate, and from it they struck the required number of leads, and grew an electro plate over them, exactly as they made the printing plates for the surface-printed stamps. The duties were engraved on the printing plates; there is no evidence to show whether this engraving was carried out by hand, punch, or pantograph*" (Easton, p564).

Easton rather carelessly summarised this information extracted from a later report by De La Rue (Easton, 586), but the section underlined above is somewhat ambiguously phrased and will be addressed in more detail a little later.



1897 Tati Concessions Limited £5 'Elephant' SG 32.

In late 1895, the company Tati Concessions Ltd required a series of six Revenue stamps, 1s to £5, for use in their territories on the Bechuanaland-Rhodesian border. The company approached De La Rue for a quotation, the design to include an elephant (the company was subsequently given the right by the British Government to issue its own Revenue Stamps in 1896 for use on legal documents). On 15 October 1895 the firm tendered their estimates based on printing by the copper-plate process. They stated that:

> *it would be necessary to engrave an original plate … with the duty left blank. From this original plate it would be further necessary to prepare an electrotype single plate and engrave therein the duty … for each duty required.*

When submitting a colour scheme for approval on 18 March 1896 De La Rue mentioned that

> *… in consequence of the fineness of detail in the engraving of your stamps, we found it necessary to make the printing plates on an improved system, which will increase the cost of future plates to £20 each* (£18 had been quoted) … (Easton, pp749–750).

It was not revealed what the improved system was and whether these improvements were implemented on plates made after this date.



1899 Malta 4½d 'Gozo fishing boat' SG 32.

On 9 September 1896 the Chief Secretary of the Government of Malta sent four sketches to the Crown Agents, who forwarded them to De La Rue with a request for an estimate and designs. The firm replied on the 30th with the desired estimate and designs, stating that '… *We propose to produce these stamps by the copper plate process* …' There were considerable delays in having the designs approved, which was eventually given for four of the five designs by the Chief Secretary in a letter of 15 February 1898. De La Rue replied, acknowledging these instructions, but also stated

> *We much regret that the designs we sent on 30 September 1896 have been so long under consideration* (17 months)*, for just at present we have so much work in hand that it is impossible for us to give a definite date for delivery. We will, however, push on with the engraving as possible and write you more definitely a little later on.* (Easton, p579).

As John Easton remarked, this letter reveals the great development that had taken place in the printing of stamps by the copper-plate process. Within less than two years De La Rue found themselves inundated with orders; it could no longer be said that 'security to the Revenue must be the first consideration'.



1897 Tonga 7½d 'King George II', SG 48.

Two-colour printing

On 30 March 1896 the Postmaster General of Tonga requested an issue of stamps whose designs were to conform to a series of photographs submitted with the order. It was specifically requested that '*… no efforts will be spared to make the issue equal to those of North Borneo*' (Easton, p706). The North Borneo issue referred to had been recess printed by Waterlow and Sons in 1894 in two colours. The pictorial designs requested meant printing by the copper-plate process but this was the first occasion that De La Rue was required to recess print in two colours for each denomination. This required two copper working plates for most values, one for each different central vignette and one for each of the various frames containing the denomination. Fifteen values for the series were required and the experience gained with this order, invoiced on 8 March 1897, helped the firm considerably in dealing with subsequent requirements of the Crown Agents for designs in two colours.

The Tonga Chief Postmaster requested that they would like to have a watermark and would '*prefer a turtle … if it can be managed*.' This necessitated having a special batch of paper made with the new watermark but it would appear from later correspondence that De La Rue had specified that it should be 25% thicker than normal due to the paper having to be dampened twice for two colour printing.



1898 British Guiana 10c 'Kaieteur Falls', SG 220.

On 1 October 1897 a letter from the Government Secretary, British Guiana, containing their requirements for a special issue commemorating Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, was sent by the Crown Agents to De La Rue. Photographs were supplied for the suggested designs of which two, Mount Roraima and the Kaieteur Falls**,** were chosen. They were to be printed in two colours by the copper-plate process and the firm wrote the following note to the Crown Agents on 5 January 1898 regarding the quality of paper required:

We beg to inform you that when printing copperplate stamps in two colours, which necessitates dampening the paper twice, we are in the habit of employing paper 25 per cent thicker than the ordinary postage paper, and we shall be glad if you would authorize your Inspector to specially order your watermarked paper required for the execution of this order 25 per cent thicker than your ordinary watermarked paper. We feel sure that unless you do so, we shall not be able to obtain a thoroughly satisfactory result, as the dampening of the paper twice is liable to seriously affect it, if too thin. (Easton, p597).

A later letter to the Crown Agents on the same subject mentioned that

Mssrs. Turner (the paper manufacturer) *have agreed to supply the thicker paper at the same price as the ordinary thickness*" (Easton, p607).

On 15 January 1898, De La Rue sent a further note concerning this order to the Crown Agents

We regret we shall be unable to execute the order for these Stamps to time, unless you allow us to print the vignette plate on a machine which is in a room by itself in our 'Mint' Works, which your Inspector can lock up at night and open in the morning. This would leave the whole of the six machines in the room under your control free for printing the borders which contain the duties. (Easton, p597).

This note provides some insight into the firm's recess printing capacity at this early date. There were several similar later requests for copper-plate printings due to limited printing capacity, a particular one on 27 April 1898 noting that "… *the whole of our copper-plate printing presses at the Anchor Works will be occupied on your work for some time to come* …" (Easton, p612).



1899 Mauritius 15c 'Birth Centenary of Mahé de la Bourdonnais', SG 136.

In April 1899, during discussions between The Crown Agents and De La Rue concerning the design and colours for the Mauritius Mahé de la Bourdonnais commemorative stamp, it had been decided that it should be printed by copper-plate. However, on the 5th the Crown Agents asked "*What would be the cost of printing in three colours*?" The firm's reply on the 7th contained informative comments on register and three colour printing:

"*We regret that it is impossible to print by the Copper-plate process the word 'Mauritius' and the duty in a different colour to the body of the Stamp, for the paper has to be thoroughly wetted at each printing. When wetted it expands and contracts as it dries. At the second wetting it does not expand to exactly the same extent as at the first wetting, and so it would not be feasible to get such minute register as would be involved in printing 'Mauritius' and the duty in a different colour to the body of the stamp. All we can do in a two colour Stamp is illustrated in design A* (head in one colour, frame in another). *In this design a sufficiently good register is possible, for, if the vignette is slightly out of register, it runs behind the border and consequently the want of register is not apparent. The British Guiana Stamps illustrate what we mean.*

We also regret that we could not undertake to print Stamps in three colours by copper plate (leaving aside the difficulties of register), for the paper would not stand a third wetting. With two wettings so much size is taken out of the paper as to make it exceedingly difficult to gum." (Easton, p622)

2. Manufacturing methods for Copper-plate printing plates

Engraving the Die

The manufacture of stamp printing plates started with the production of a master die, initially engraved in soft steel and hardened once the engraved design had been approved. Engraving was a highly skilled profession and in 1890 David Turner, a De La Rue employee coached and trained by Daniel John Pound (Givans, 2023), became their chief engraver. He in turn trained Leonard V. Phillips who had been apprenticed to De La Rue in 1894. Phillips' earliest stamp work was the engraving of the vignettes for the Tasmanian pictorial issue of 1899. He also engraved the St. Lucia 'The Pitons' (1902), the Barbados 'Olive Blossom' (1906) and the Bermuda 'Ship' issue (1910) to mention just a few within a career covering a period of 51 years (Pemberton, 1958). The firm's engravers were capable of engraving in both relief and recess.

Plate making

An important nugget of information was contained in a report by the firm to the Cape of Good Hope authorities in 1893 explaining the difference between surface and recess printing. It was disclosed that the firm had installed the transfer roll (a machine used for rolling in multiple impressions on to a steel printing plate) in April 1893, but so far it had only been used in connection with the printing of bank notes; it had not been used for the purpose of making steel plates for printing stamps by the line-engraved, or recess, process (Easton, p727). From this point forward the firm had the capability to manufacture steel printing plates by the Perkins Bacon process.

A valuable insight into the technicalities of De La Rue's recess printing plate making procedures was revealed by the firm in their response of 4 December 1896 to a request from B. Bartlett, the Inspector to the Crown Agents, for the position regarding control in making plates for copper-plate printed stamps to be clarified (Easton, p586). Because of the different methods used in making recess plates compared to those employed for the firm's traditional surface printing plates the Crown Agents were concerned that there may be security implications involving some of the plate making artefacts and procedures used in the new process.

The firm replied:

With reference to our interview today, we beg to confirm what we then told you, viz., that in making plates for copper-plate printing we adopt two systems, the first being to make a working roller for each duty of Stamp and roll in the required steel printing plates; the second being to roll in an original plate of 60 set (more or less as the case may be) with the duty left blank. In this case lead impressions are taken from the original plate, under hydraulic pressure, and electrotype copper plates are grown from the leads.

Of course, original rollers, working rollers and original plates would always be kept in your custody but we venture to suggest that when the plates are rolled in, your assistant should, each morning, take a roller to our engraver, in the rolling-in room, and fetch it again at night, to be locked up in your safe. When original plates with the blank duties are employed, the plate could be sent down in the custody of your assistant, for us to take the required number of lead impressions for producing the working plates. Taking the lead impressions is only a question of a few minutes each. Your assistant would see the lead impressions put into the battery for the working plates to be grown, and he would see them taken out of the battery and the leads destroyed. The working plates should then be handed to us to engrave the duties in, without control, it being understood that all proofs – whether from plates rolled in or electrotyped – should be taken under your control.

Our reason for making this suggestion is that if your assistant were to be present during the process of rolling-in the plates or engraving in the duties upon the electrotype copper plates, it would take him fully four to five days for each duty, and it would appear to be hardly necessary for him to be in attendance during either of these operations.

The text above was originally all in one paragraph but has been separated into three paragraphs to aid digestion of this somewhat complex technical tract. The above letter to the Crown Agents' Inspector, B. Bartlett, provides a generalised description of their procedures but there are a number of potential ambiguities within it that require careful analysis in evaluating their true meaning. A brief explanation of some of the content and the technical terms used in the passage above may assist the reader:

Plate making systems

The first system described, making a working roller for each duty of Stamp and rolling in the required steel printing plates, is puzzling. This involved providing a die and a transfer roller for each duty and then rolling in multiple images on to a series of steel printing plates. It is believed that this method was more costly than the second system described. It certainly wasn't used for the British East Africa issue of April 1896, where just one 'original' steel plate was made.

For the order for Tati Concessions, despatched in May 1896, it was originally proposed to have just a single 'original' steel plate, but, as detailed earlier, it was found necessary to make the printing plates on '*an improved system*'. It is possible that this might have been by the first system described above but if so it was a special case and appears to have been a 'one off' since later orders for other territories featured 'original' steel plates from which electrotyped 'working' plates were made.

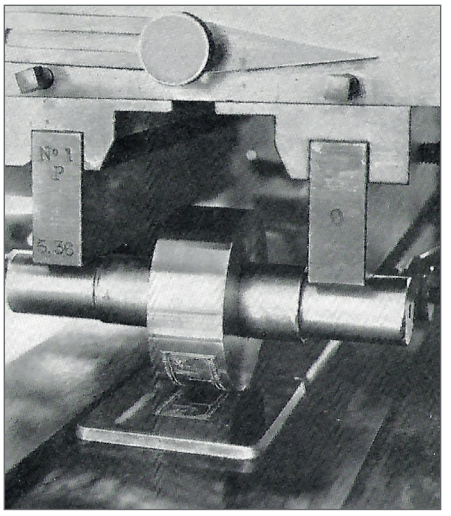


Figure 1. Transfer roller receiving an impression from the die

Roller: This was a hardened steel transfer roller, sometimes also known as a roller punch, which contained a mirror image in relief taken from the master die (Figure 1). It was used to impress the stamp image on to a soft steel printing plate as many times as was necessary for the size of plate required.

Battery: The above casual use of the phrase 'the battery' should not be taken literally here. It appears to have been a colloquialism used within the De La Rue works for the electrotyping bath but retained when communicating with the outside world (if 'electrotyping bath' is substituted for 'battery' in De La Rue's report above then the relevant sentence makes perfect literal sense). In this context the 'battery' is an electrotyping bath in to which the lead sheet containing the impression from the steel master plate was placed in order to grow a thin copper shell on it, this being deposited by electrolytic action.

Pantograph: A pantograph is a mechanical linkage connected in a manner based on parallelograms so that the movement of a tracing point, in tracing an image, produces identical movements in a remotely separated second pen. If a line drawing is traced by the first point, an identical enlarged or miniaturized copy will be drawn by a pen fixed to the other. In the case of engraving the figures and/or letters of the denomination, a large scale template comprising the letters or figures of the denomination, would be produced. The tracing point would be traced around each letter or figure (Figure 2). In this case the pen would be replaced by a diamond pointed cutting needle which would correspondingly engrave the plate (Williams, 1971, pp91–92).

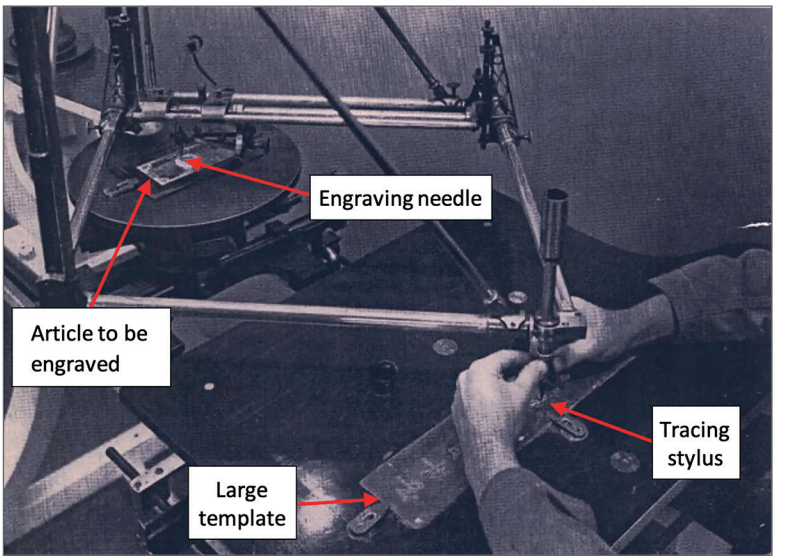


Figure 2. Engraving by Pantograph. (Source: De La Rue Journal*, 22 November 1954.)*

Engraving a plate of 60 subjects via a pantograph where the value appears twice in separate tablets was a lengthy procedure. The position of the diamond pointed cutting needle would have to be precisely set in position within one of the blank tablets and the figure(s) traced and hence engraved. The needle would then need to be repositioned to the second blank tablet and the procedure repeated. To engrave a complete series of (say) 13 values via a pantograph would entail a huge amount of repetitive engraving which must be done professionally, without error. Bradbury Wilkinson had used a ten-head pantograph that engraved ten images in one pass for the Argentina 1882 issue (Williams, p408) but, whilst this would seem an obvious improvement in speeding-up this time-consuming operation, no evidence has been seen by the author that De La Rue used such a machine.

Taking Lead Impressions

John Easton provided a further explanatory note to De La Rue's description of their plate making procedure as described above, where he explained that the electro was grown over a single lead impression from a roll-in plate of 60 multiples, not from sixty separate leads conjoined for insertion into the electrotype bath (which was the practice for making surface printing plates). This has been questioned by some, probably due to the reference to 'leads' (plural).

Were 60 leads struck (from the master die) or were multiple lead sheet impressions taken from the original steel plate (if there were ten duties then ten lead sheet impressions would be required)? However, it does specifically say that the lead impressions were taken from the plate, not the die, but also "…*Taking the lead impressions is only a question of a few minutes each.*" Striking 60 individual leads from the die was a lengthy task whereas inserting the steel master plate (containing the rolled-in stamp design impressions), with a sheet of lead on top, into a hydraulic press and taking an impression on to the lead sheet would take only a few minutes.

Engraving in Duties

Easton also queried whether the duty entered on every stamp subject on the electrotyped copper plates had been by achieved by pantograph, engraved by hand or by punch. To engrave the duties on to a typical plate of 60 subjects by hand would require an exceptionally skilled hand and it would be most unlikely that an exact likeness could be achieved in all 60 positions. The time involved in such an exercise would be huge and this method can be safely discounted. In the firm's letter to the Crown Agents' Inspector they specifically refer to "*engraving in the duties upon the electrotype copper plates*" and hence a punch was evidently not used. Finally, the earlier mention by De La Rue that they had used a pantograph for engraving the 1879 Labuan issue tends to support its use for their later recess plates.

This method had the advantage that it did not require a skilled engraver, it simply required a competent machine operator capable of setting up the machine to engrave in the required positions (usually 60 or 120 times). Once the set-up position had been achieved for each subject it was a relatively simple, if tedious, task to trace over the large figures and/or the letters of the template and hence to engrave each duty blank with the cutting needle of the pantograph.

Plates for Two-Colour printing

Two colour printing required a vignette plate (usually containing a pictorial design) and a frame or border plate on which the value (duty) tablets were blank. In both cases steel master plates were first made by the Perkins Bacon method - De La Rue referred to them as 'original' plates. From the steel master plates electrotyped copper working plates were manufactured and, after the denomination had been engraved on all subjects of each frame plate, it was these that performed the actual printing (the steel plates were normally not used for printing).

Problems with plates

As with any business there were unplanned incidents that interrupted production. When producing the plates for the British Guiana Diamond Issue in March 1898 the firm had to report:

> *We regret to say that the engraving of the plates has occupied somewhat more time than we anticipate; in addition to which the steel roller unfortunately cracked in the hardening and the work had to be done all over again*. (Easton, p598).

Whilst working on the same order the firm had to further report in October 1898 that '*We had an unfortunate accident with the view plate of the 1 Cent stamp, as some grit got on it and scratched it. This has necessitated our preparing a new plate.'* (Easton, p599).

Further woes struck the firm in June 1898 whilst preparing the plates for the Virgin Islands 1899 series when they reported to the Crown Agents: '*We regret to inform you that just as we were going to start making the plate the original broke in half, and so now we have to commence the engraving all over again.'* (Easton, p609).

An even worse disaster struck in April the following year whilst attempting to complete an order for Zanzibar. The firm had to disclose:

> *We very much regret to have to inform you that when your plates were completed, we had a most unfortunate accident with them, and that they were spoilt. This necessitated entirely new plates and has consequently caused some considerable delay, which we much regret, as we are quite aware that it will cause you serious inconvenience*. (Easton, p741).

Since there were 15 plates in the 1899 series one can only speculate on the calamity that had occurred to spoil all these plates.

During the printing of the Mauritius Mahé de la Bourdonnais commemorative stamp there was an unfortunate hiatus after about half had been printed and on 10 July 1899 the Crown Agents asked the firm for an explanation. Replying on the 12th De La Rue explained

> *Unfortunately the plate was spoiled by our printers after printing 2,800 sheets* (of 5,044 ordered)*, but we are pushing on as quickly as possible with a new plate and hope to be able to commence printing the stamps again in about a fortnight's time.* (Easton, p623).

The order was completed with the new plate.

Despite their legendary efficiency De La Rue were not immune to the occasional engineering catastrophes that sometimes beset business life.

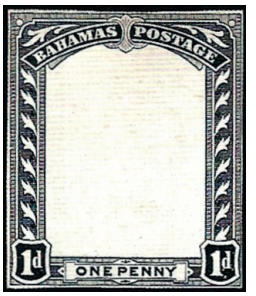


Figure 3. Die proof with value tablet (1d value).



Figure 4. Die proof with blank value tablet (5d, 2s and 3s values).

Duty Die Proofs

When Bahamas required a pictorial 1d stamp in 1900 (of the Queen's Staircase design) De La Rue engraved a frame die that incorporated both the frame design and the denomination (Figure 3). From the die a transfer roller was made. In this case (and for others where just a single value was issued) multiple impressions from the frame design, complete with value, were rolled in to the steel master plate – no separate engraving of the duty was necessary.

However, in 1902 Bahamas decided that three additional values, 5d, 2s and 3s, were required in the same design as the 1d. A new die with blank value tablet was created, probably by taking an impression from the original die on to a transfer roller (on which the design appeared in relief) and removing the '1d ONE PENNY 1d' from the roller. The transfer roller was then hardened and used to impress a new die on which the value tablet was blank (Figure 4). The master steel plate subsequently made was used to create copper working plates with blank duties for the three new values. The duties were then added by engraving with the aid of a pantograph.

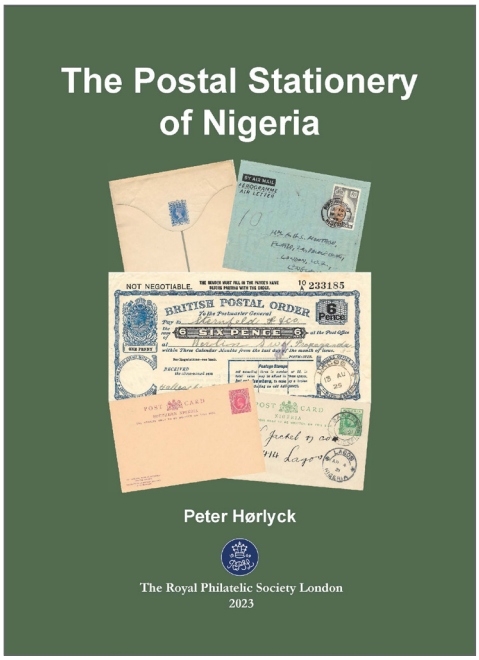
Hence die proofs featuring the denomination are normally only found on issues where either just a single value of a specific design was provided, thus permitting the value to be entered on to the frame plate die, or from dies for single working plates. Amongst examples of the former are the 1902 St Lucia Pitons, both the 1898 Grenada and Trinidad 400th Anniversary stamps and the Mauritius Bicentenary of Mahé de la Bourdonnais in 1899.

Master plate defects / constant varieties

It should be appreciated that any defects on the master plate would subsequently appear on all working plates created from it, as happened on a number of the subsequent issues. Classic examples are the two variations of the tree-trunk variety that appear in positions 12 and 56 respectively on every one of the first five vignette plates made of the Queen's Staircase series for Bahamas and hence they occur on every printing of all values from these plates. In his study of the Bermuda 'Ship' series Morris Ludington identified a number of minor varieties on the master plate that appear on each value. Brunei, Kedah ('padi-sheaf'), Tasmania and Tonga also feature master plate varieties and no doubt there are others. These varieties prove beyond doubt that the copper working plates were electrotyped from the steel master plate.

Part Two of this article will appear in the January–February 2024 edition of *The London Philatelist*

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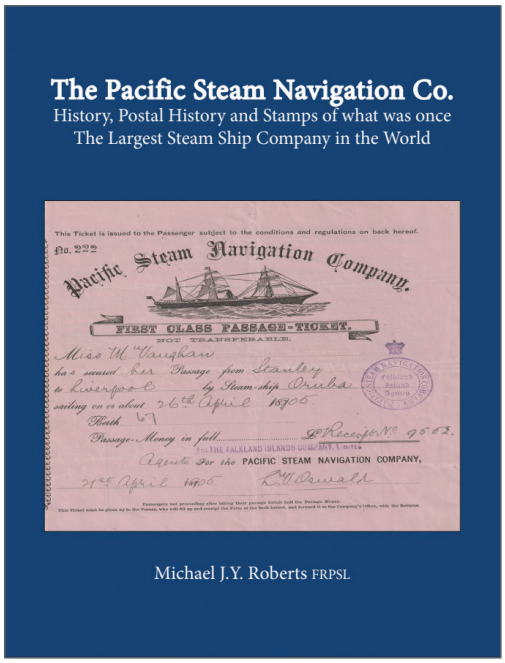


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To be published December 2023.
This profusely illustrated book, of nearly 450 pages, by the late Peter Hørlyck was completed by his long-time collaborator, Ray Harris. It provides an in-depth study of the postal stationery of Nigeria up to 2000.
The book starts with chapters on Lagos, Niger Coast, Northern Nigeria, Southern Nigeria, Nigeria 1914–1960 and Nigeria 1960 – 2000. It then considers Postal Orders, Reply Coupons, UPU Specimens and Cut-outs, before returning to geography with chapters on the Cameroons under WW1 British administration, and another on Biafra. There are Appendices relating to De La Rue, Crown Agents and British Post Office archives, Government gazettes, and essays and proofs in private hands plus a list of known scarce items (with an attempt at rarity assessment). The book ends with a bibliography and a brief index.

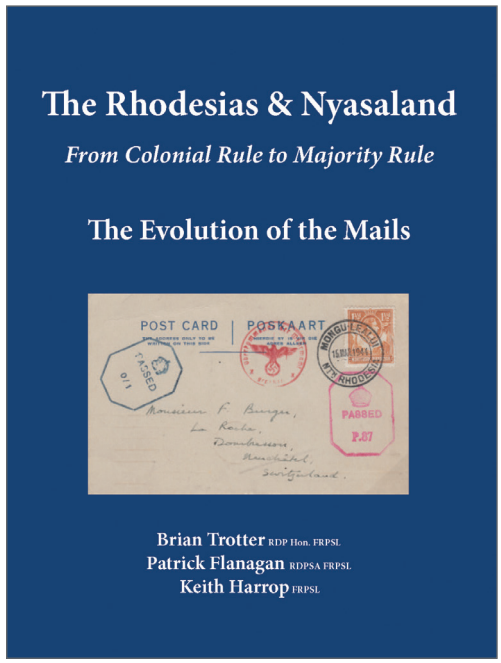
Plus, a reminder of our two most recent other new titles.

Details of these and all other available RPSL Publications are available on the Society website.



The Pacific Steam Navigation Co.
History, Postal History and Stamps of what was once
The Largest Steam Ship Company in the World.

by Michael J. Y. Roberts FRPSL
Retail price £60, Members' Price £54.



The Rhodesias & Nyasaland
From Colonial Rule to Majority Rule
The Evolution of the Mails.

by Brian Trotter RDP Hon. FRPSL,
Patrick Flanagan RDPSA FRPSL and Keith Harrop FRPSL
Retail price £60, Members' Price £54.

UPU 150th Anniversary Historical Colloquium, Bern, Switzerland. 1–2 February 2024

The UPU will launch its 150th anniversary celebrations by delving into the rich history of postal services and the UPU through a historical colloquium. The Colloquium will welcome 40 historians, academics and philatelists from over 16 countries under the theme "Achieving 'a single postal territory': A global promise – Past and present'.

It will serve as an important platform for discussion and an opportunity to build stronger connections between academic historians – a valuable group of stakeholders within the postal sector.

The Colloquium is composed of eight sub-themes and will be held under six different sessions and two parallel workshops. The themes here will explore how the UPU has supported and accompanied postal services to become key components of international communication, business and development over the last century and a half.

During the Colloquium, the UPU will host a unique, once-in-a-lifetime philatelic experience featuring various exhibitions, displaying all stamps issued by postal operators in commemoration of the UPU's 75th,100th and 125th anniversaries, as well as the UPU's collection of about 8,000 inaugural stamp issues since 1840. There will also be a collection of art and philatelic pieces, including audio and videos dating back to 1947 on display.

The following list of presentations, workshops and session start times highlights presenters and those chairing the portions of the Colloquium who have recognised philatelic or postal administration connections or work for the UPU. In all other cases the presenters listed are affiliated to academic institutions.

Day 1. Thursday, 1 February 2024. 9.00 Opening ceremony

9:30. Session 1: *Pre-1874: global traffic and postal reforms.* Chair: Pascal Griset.

Rocío Moreno-Cabanillas: *Governance and power in the transatlantic postal system: the organization of the postal service in the Spanish Empire in the 18th century;* Charli Muller: *The capitalist and colonial logics of Rowland Hill's postal reforms: terra nullius, uniform pricing, and 'conveyance at the lowest rate'.* Pérola Goldfeder: *The throne and the world: from bilateral postal treaties to Brazil's entry into the UPU (1840–1877);* Diego Avaria (UPU, Switzerland): *The UPU: a pioneer and template for multilateralism*

11:15. Session 2. *The foundation of the UPU as a global organization. Strengthening or fighting back (informal) imperialism in the nineteenth century*? Chair: Sandrine Kott.

Bruno Crevato-Selvaggi RDP FRPSL: *European post offices abroad: the UPU between Ottoman complaints and power politics;* Mehmet Şükrü Yaman, (Turkish Post Corporation): *The hidden parts of historic relations: the founding of the UPU and Türkiye's membership;* Ririko Honda: *Struggles with globalisation: the integration of Japan into the UPU in the late nineteenth century*

13:45. Session 2 (continued)

Lane Harris: *'The comity of nations': the Chinese Post Office, the UPU, and the abolition of 'alien' post offices 1843–1923;* Camille Avrillas: *Between a desire for cooperation and imperial rivalry: the German, Indo-British and French post offices in Zanzibar (1875–1904)*

Parallel workshops (14.30–15.30)

Workshop 1: *The UPU's past: what comes next? Sources and methodologies.* Chair: Muriel Le Roux.

Anna Batzeli and Luke Davis: *The traces left behind: an appraisal of the archival heritage of the UPU in the European archives;* Bob Reinalda: *The Directors(-General) of the UPU 1874-2024*

Workshop 2: *Philately in historical perspective*. Chair: Benjamin Combes (UPU).

Yves Drolet: (Académie québécoise d'études philatéliques, Canada): *Philatelists: witnesses and agents of the first globalization (1860–1914):* Maria Libera: *Safeguarding the added value of the postage stamp within UPU's 'single postal territory';* Yorim Spoelder: *Beyond philately: stamps and the iconography of globalization*

15.45. Session 3: *The transnational making of national postal services*. Chair: Éric Godelier.

Richard R. John: *How the Universal Postal Union shaped postal policy in the United States, 1874–1913;* Stephen A. Kochersperger, (United States Postal Service): *Transnational influence on the Development of United States Parcel Post:* Mónica Farkas: *Postal universalisation: transformation of the space and time imaginaries in the second half of the nineteenth century in Argentina*

16:45. Session 4: *Postal politics*. Chair: Matthieu Gillabert

Gary Baines: *Decolonization and postal politics: the UPU and sanctions against secessionist states and illegal regimes in sub-Saharan Africa, c.1961–1980;* Hideki Sato: *Macro-, micro- and long-term perspectives to the UPU: the three dimensions for international harmonisation;* Etienne Morales: *Airmail in revolutionary Cuba: between embargo and bypass routes (1960s and 1970s);* Rajeev Venugopal, (Canada Post Corporation): *Delivering Diplomacy: The UPU's Role in a Post-Westphalian Global Order*

Day 2. Friday, 2 February 2024

9:00. Session 5: *Regionalizing postal cooperation – why and how?* Chair: Christiane Berth.

Gabriel Godeffroy: *The Central European postal union: debates around world postal unification following the collapse of Austria-Hungary (1918–1929);* Sabrina Proschmann: *A replacement for the UPU? The European Postal and Telecommunications Union of 1942 and its relations to the UPU;* Valentina Vardabasso: *Origins of the European Postal Union: the 1946 Franco-Italian postal agreement;* Mohieddine Hadhri: *The Arab Postal Union, three quarters of a century on from its foundation in 1952. Overview of a specialized Arab organization and its cooperative relationship with the UPU.*

10.45. Session 6: *The UPU material world: on stamps, envelopes and electronic mail*. Chairs: Kristian Sund and José Anson (UPU).

Daniel A. Piazza FRPSL (Smithsonian Institution, National Postal Museum, Washington, D.C.): *UPU specimen stamps and the world's postal museums: an accidental history;* Sébastien Richez: (Comité pour l'histoire de La Poste (CHP), Groupe La Poste, France): *The UPU and the standardization of the envelope in the 1960s: towards a universal language of mail;* Christian Henrich-Franke: *'Nothing can replace the Post' – electronic mail and the UPU in the 1980s*

12:15. Scientific conclusions.

There will be full coverage of the panel discussions and the presentations at the Colloquium on UPU TV (https://tv.upu.int/).

Complete details of the event are available at https://www.upu.int/en/Events/Historians-Colloquium---Celebrating-UPU-s-150th-anniversary

The Story behind the Cover – 41

A Real Rodin

Peter Hornung

If there is no traffic jam, nowadays it takes about half an hour from downtown Paris to the suburb of Meudon, to the street that has long been called avenue Auguste Rodin. The Villa des Brillants, the former studio of the sculptor Auguste Rodin (1840–1917), is located at number 19. It must have taken a little longer to get there on 6 March 1908, a Friday. Although there probably were no traffic jams then, automobile technology was still in its infancy; the vehicles back then were slower, and the roads were bumpier. But that did not stop the distinguished visitor from taking the strain of a car ride to the suburb.

Edward VII, King of Great Britain, had it in his head to visit the famous artist in his workshop, the sculptor of whom, according to contemporary sources, the monarch was the biggest fan. Before lunch with French Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau and a visit to President Armand Fallières in the Elysée Palace, Edward had himself driven to Meudon, almost ten kilometres away, where Rodin was waiting for him.

THE KING IN PARIS.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

PARIS, MARCH 6.

Sir Francis Bertie, M. Clemenceau, M. Pichon, and the Hon. Reginald Lister took luncheon to-day with the King, who had previously driven out to Meudon in a motor-car to see the eminent sculptor M. Rodin. At 3 o'clock his Majesty paid a visit to the President of the Republic at

Figure 1.

The correspondent of *The Times* telegraphed the story to London, and it appeared on page 8 of its 7 March 1908 edition (Figure 1). Rodin had specially cleaned up on the occasion of the royal visit. He only left a few marble statues and plaster models standing but put everything else aside. What exactly was said during this visit, which works of art the king was able to see and whether he was even able to buy anything from the Frenchman, is not known.

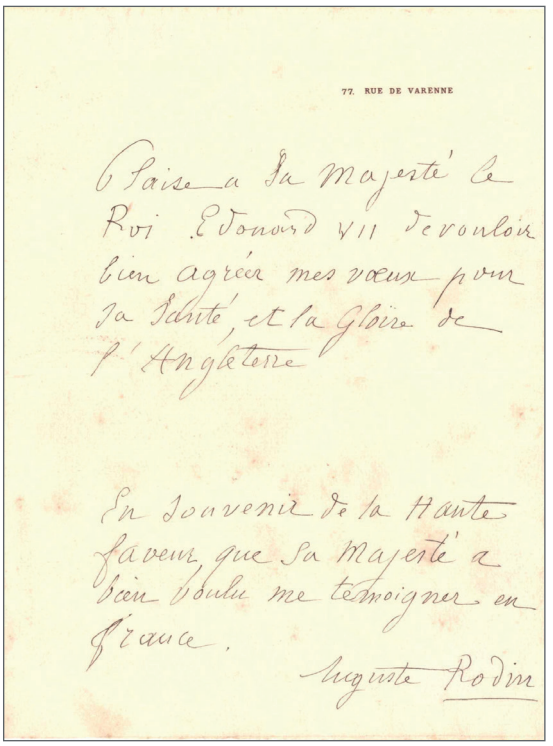


Figure 2.

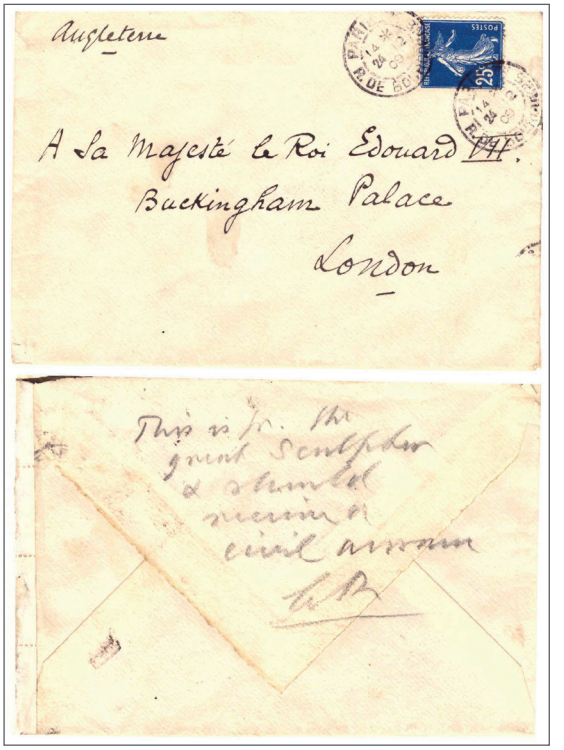


Figure 3.

This letter (Figure 2), documents the King's visit. On the letterhead is the address '77 rue de Varenne', then the Hôtel Biron and now the Musée Rodin, near the Invalides, where Rodin had moved after the King's visit the previous year. The letter itself is undated, but the accompanying envelope was stamped on 24 December 1909 at the post office on Rue de Bourgogne in the 7th arrondissement of Paris. In his distinctive handwriting, Rodin wrote to the King:

> *Plaisera Sa Majesté le Roi Edouard VII de vouloir bien agréer mes voeux pour sa saluté, et la Gloire de l'Angleterre.*
> *En souvenir de la Haute faveur que Sa Majesté a bien voulu me témoigner en France.*
> *Auguste Rodin*
>
> (Will it please His Majesty King Edward VII to accept my wishes for his salvation, and the Glory of England. In memory of the high favour that His Majesty was kind enough to show me in France).

The envelope (Figure 3) is addressed 'Á Sa Majesté le Roi Edouard VII., Buckingham Palace, London, Angleterre', and it is also worth a closer look. The handwriting is not Rodin's, but a different one, possibly that of his secretary. What iss really remarkable is the reverse (Fig. 4). There the recipient, King Edward VII, wrote in his no less characteristic handwriting:

This is fr[om] *the great Sculptor & should remain a civil answer*

The note, written in pencil, is signed 'E R', i.e. 'Eduardus Rex', the initials used by Edward **as King.** As far as I can tell, this letter was in the estate of Frederick Ponsonby, Edward VII's deputy private secretary. A few years ago, a private scrapbook came onto the market that contained this letter among numerous other letters and documents.

The King's enthusiasm for the French sculptor had probably begun several years earlier. Rodin gained fame in Great Britain through the 'Paris in London' exhibition that opened at Earl's Court in the spring of 1902. The aim of this event was to give an impression of what the French Pavilion had achieved at the 1900 Paris Exhibition. The main attraction was said to be the exhibition of fine arts. Rodin and Monet, who were made official artists, were part of the organising committee. King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra were honorary presidents of the charity bazaar for this exhibition.

The King was to set the criteria for evaluating Rodin's art by having a picture of himself circulated in the mainstream press. This picture showed Edward VII being deep in thought while examining Rodin's bust of George Wyndham, Secretary of State for War and then Chief Secretary for Ireland. The bust that fascinated the King, is today part of the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

References:

Miller, Joan Vita and Marotta, Gary (1986). Rodin: The B. Gerald Cantor Collection, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Mitchell, Claudine (Ed.) (2004). Rodin: The Zola of Sculpture, Routledge.

The Gazette

news, meetings, events and reports

Forthcoming Meetings and Events at 15 Abchurch Lane or by Zoom – Season 2023–24

5 Dec. at 3 pm [by Zoom]: John Stimson and Brian Hart – *The Chalon Portrait.*
7 Dec. at 1 pm: Richard Berry – *Classic Afghanistan, including the First and Second Afghan Wars. From the Camellia PLC Collections.*

2024

9 Jan. at 3 pm [by Zoom]: Eric Scherer – *Struggle for Dominance.*
11 Jan at 5 pm: Luc Selis – *The Ocean Letter.*
25 Jan. at 5 pm: Julian Tweed – *GB Express Mail.*
6 Feb. at 1 pm [by Zoom]: Paul Watkins – *Occupied France in WWII.*
8 Feb. at 1 pm: West Midlands Region.
*22 Feb. at 5 pm: Gordon Eubanks – *The 1847 Issue of the USA.*
5 Mar. at 3 pm [by Zoom]: Terje Heskestad – *Southern Norway.*
7 Mar. at 1 pm: Joseph Hackmey RDP – *Barbados and Grenada.*
21 Mar. at 1 pm: The British Thematic Association. Showcasing the World of Pictorial Collecting.
2 April at 3 pm [by Zoom]: Susan Taylor and Graham Stockdale – *The Anguilla Story.*
4 Apr. at 5 pm: Lars Engelbrecht RDP – *Newspaper Wrappers: The Ugly Ducklings of Postal Stationery*?
**18 Apr. at 5 pm: The President's Display – *The Postal History of the Isles of Scilly.*
2 May at 5 pm: Graham Winters – *Golf: A Good Walk Spoiled.*
7 May at 3 pm [by Zoom]: Jon Aitchison – *Europhilex—One Year to Go.*
16 May at 5 pm: Pat Grimwood-Taylor – *Iceland.*
30 May at 1 pm: Lars Boettger – *A Selection from the Current Most Prominent Collections of Luxembourg.*
4 Jun. at 3 pm [by Zoom]: Simon Richards – *Numeral Cancels.*
13 Jun. at 5 pm: Daniel Ryterband – *The US Civil War.*

* Change of presentation and presenter.
** Change of time and title.

To participate in Zoom Displays, there will be an invitation to participate posted on the Society's website – and it costs nothing. Before the talk takes place a reminder will be emailed by Eventbrite with the required link for the Zoom presentation, meaning a simple 'click' will ensure the talk and display can be viewed. All talks begin at 3 pm (UK time).

Forthcoming Philatelic Events

27 Nov.–2 Dec.	Thailand	THAILAND 2023, Grand Postal Building, Bangkok
18–21 Apr. 2024	Australia	FIAP Regional International, Melbourne, Victoria
28–30 Mar.	UK	Qualifying Exhibition, RPSL, 15 Abchurch Lane, EC4
31 May–2 Jun.	Norway	NORDIA 2024, Skjærgårdshallen, Langesund
26–28 Jul.	Estonia	MARE BALTICUM, Tartu
15–18 Aug.	USA	Great American Stamp Show, Hartford, Connecticut
15–20 Aug.	South Korea	PHILAKOREA, Dongdaemun Design Plaza, Seoul
17–20 Oct.	Denmark	HAFNIA 2024, Øksnehallen Halmtorvet 11, Copenhagen
23–26 Oct.	UK	STAMPEX, Business Design Centre, London N1
26–28 Oct.	Germany	Internationale Briefmarken-Börse Ulm, Messe–Ulm, 89073
7–11 May 2025	UK	EuroPhilEx, National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham
23–30 May 2026	USA	Boston 2026 World Stamp Expo, Boston

Forthcoming Regional Meetings of the RPSL – UK and abroad

10 Mar. 2024: North West with SPH at Bowdon – Martin Davies, 07710 573659, kuitman@btinternet.com
10 April: Wessex at Ringwood – Julian Jones, 01794 514902, jones2@f2s.com
18 July: North at York – Steve Ellis. 07749813342, steve@homestead75.co.uk

Membership News

Announcement of New Members as Approved by Council

The following new members, whose membership applications have been duly approved in accordance with the articles of association of the Society, have now been elected by Council. We wish them a long and enjoyable membership.

Name	Location
Jazad Ali	Trinidad and Tobago
Amer Alzarouni	United Arab Emirates
Anthony Benjamin	London
Paul Bondin	New South Wales, Australia
Ian Button	Lincolnshire
Simon Cooper	Thailand
Stephen Dee	East Sussex
Tom Dellar	Surrey
Luke Devlin	Essex
Christian Genovese	Italy
Sanjay Morzaria	London
Ilya Umanskiy	Hertfordshire
Julian Waldron	France

We Announce With Regret the Death of the Following Members:

Robert D'Elia FRPSL of California, USA died October 2023 (joined 07 February 1985)
Deborah Friedman FRPSL of New York, USA died 22 October 2023 (joined 23 October 1980)
Paul Larsen FRPSL of Illinois, USA died October 2023 (joined 20 January 1972)
Ashley Lawrence FRPSL of Bournemouth, Dorset died 17 October 2023 (joined 16 March 1995)
Friedrich Schad of Cottbus, Germany died 20 October 2023 (joined 10 March 2012)

Society News

Can you meet? Can you greet?

Members will recall that when the Society was at 41 Devonshire Place, on meeting days we had 'meeters and greeters' in the hallway to welcome all attending the meeting.

We would like to reintroduce 'meeters and greeters' at Abchurch Lane. To be able to do this we need volunteers who are willing to be in reception between 1 pm and 4 pm on meeting days. Would you be willing to volunteer for this? Any time you could spare, from half an hour to two hours would be very helpful. It does not have to be at every meeting; it is whatever you choose to volunteer for. This also provides an ideal opportunity for the volunteers to get to know many members who attend the meetings – and also to get their own face known!

If you would like to volunteer, please contact Lillian Swift FRPSL by email at swiftl@rpsl.org.uk, in person at a meeting or by post to Abchurch Lane.

Steven Harrison FRPSL, Hon. Secretary

British National Exhibition at the RPSL – 28-30 March 2024

The next United Kingdom National Exhibition will be held at the Royal Philatelic Society London from Thursday 28 to Saturday 30 March 2024. Held over four floors there will be about 150 frames covering all UK and international classes. It will be open from 10am until 5pm daily and the American Tea Room, the Members' lounge, will be open throughout serving refreshments. There will also be three dealers present, Bill Barrell. Stanley Gibbons and David Griffiths, who between them will offer a wide rage of stock from most counties. A special souvenir sheet is being issued that will be available free to everyone attending.

A new innovation at this exhibition is that for the first time there will be a sub-class for three dimensional philatelic objects. This could include things like postbox-shaped money boxes, stamp cases, vintage albums, philatelic medals, writing implements and all manner of philatelic paraphernalia. It will be judged as part of the Ephemera Class. The frames that were acquired for the *Clash of Empires* exhibition are being used for this. Each entry will be allocated one frame with four shelves and is priced as a single-frame entry. Why not be one of the first to enter this interesting new category?

The exhibition is open for entries now through the ABPS website at www.abps.org.uk/forthcoming-exhibitions. The cost of exhibiting is the standard charge of £25 per frame.

Forthcoming exhibitions

The Following forthcoming events will be available to RPSL exhibitors and attended by Members and Fellows. The Society will have stands at many of them.

British National Exhibition. 28–30 March 2024 at the Royal Philatelic Society London.See top of page.

Efiro 2024 Specialised World Stamp Exhibition. 16–19April 2024 at the National Library, Bucharest, Romania. FIP Patronage and FEPA Recognition. Entries closed. Website www.efiro.ro. 2,000 frames and dealers' booths.

British Northern National Exhibition. 19 and 20 July 2024 at York Racecourse. Bookings open at www.abps.org.uk/forthcoming-exhibitions. 300+ frames and dealers.

Mare Balticum 2024. 26–28 July 2024 at the National Museum, Tartu, Estonia. FEPA Recognition. Entry deadline 29 February 2024. Website www.marebalticum.ee. Contact the UK Commissioner Jon Aitchison at jonaitchison.uk@outlook.com. 500 frames and dealers' booths.

PhilaKorea 2024. 15–19 August 2024 in Seoul, Korea. Not open for entries yet and entry deadline not announced. FIP Patronage, under the auspices of FIAP. Contact the UK Commissioner Simon Richards at simon@sidebell.co.uk.

Hafnia 2024 European Stamp Exhibition. 17–20 October 2024 at Oksnehhallen (the old Ox Hall) in central Copenhagen, Denmark. FEPA Patronage. Website www.hafnia24.com. Contact UK Commissioner, Steve Harrison at sharrison500@btinternet.com. 1,300+ frames and dealers' booths.

EuroPhilEx BIRMINGHAM 2025 International Exhibition. 7–11 May 2025 See previous page for details. Commissioner Daphne McMillan at daphne@europhilex2025.co.uk.

Member's Successes at Recent International Exhibitions

At the recent Postgeschichte Live exhibition in Ulm, Golden Posthorns were awarded to:

Martin Camerer: *The Postal Relationship between the Old Italian and the Old German States 1850–1870.*

Jean Herr: *Luxembourg Préphilatélique - Histoire Postale 1459–1852.*

Arnim Knapp frpsl: *Schneller als Express - Die elektromagnetische Telegraphie.*

Henrik Mouritsen rdp frpsl: *Danish Postal History 1875–1907*, and in the Literature Class for his book of the same title.

Klaus Weis frpsl: *Die Verwendung farbiger Nummernstempel im späteren Großherzogtum Baden 1734–1871.*

Congratulations to all those named.

Previews of Forthcoming Meetings at 15 Abchurch Lane, Season 2023–2024

7 December 2023 at 1 pm: Richard Berry FRPSL
Classic Afghanistan, including the First and Second Afghan Wars. From the Camellia Plc Collections



The 1289 issue (1872-1873) was printed in sheets of four on soft thin paper, with a pair of the one rupee stamps above a pair of the six shahis value. This is one of only two sheet reconstructions from unused pairs – the other is in the Tapling collection in the British Library. The rejoined pairs shown here have been in the Ferrary, Burns, Hopkins and the Dietrich Collections.

As philatelic curator at Camellia Plc for the last six years, it has been my great pleasure to work with and add to some exquisite philatelic material.

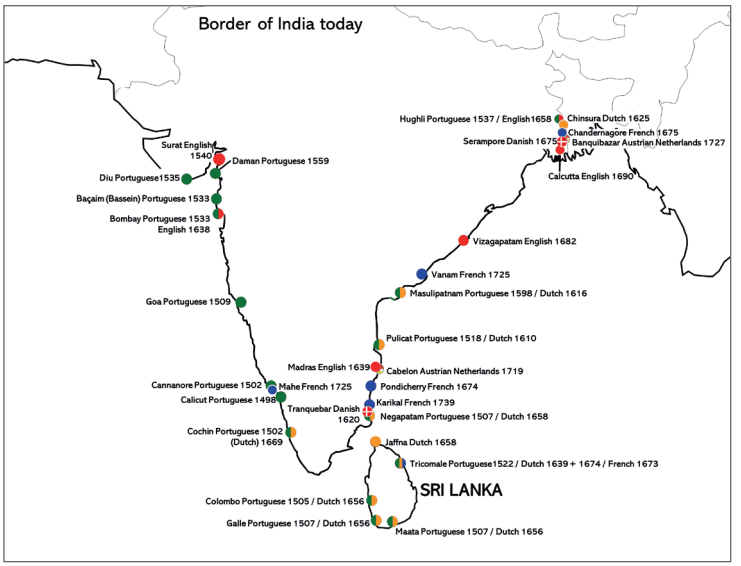
Following the showing of our Newfoundland collection at the Royal in 2022, I am delighted to be able to now showcase our Afghanistan philatelic collection of classic nineteenth century Afghanistan stamps and their usage, The First Afghan War (1839-1842) and The Second Afghan War (1878-1880).

The collection has been put together over nearly fifty years. Our Afghanistan collection has never previously been displayed other than the Afghan Wars material as a 'taster' to the Forces Postal History Society in 2020.

9 January 2024 at 3 pm [by Zoom]: Eric Scherer RDP FRPSL
Struggle for Dominance on the Indian Subcontinent 1498–1819

The philately and postal history of the Indian subcontinent is rich and spans a long period of time. This makes India's philately one of the largest collecting areas worldwide, encompassing numerous nations as well as feudal and contract states. However, a period that still lacks attention is the time between the first Portuguese settlements and the establishment of British dominance at the end of the Napoleonic Wars. Besides well-known nations such as Portugal and Great Britain, European powers struggling to colonise India also included the Netherlands and – as the great opponent of Great Britain for many years – France – as well as lesser known nations such as Denmark or even the Austrian Netherlands (today's Belgium).

While the initial focus was the establishment of trading factories along the coastal lines, posts and communication networks centred on the connection between India and the European home countries. Later, the development and control of domestic postal services became a crucial issue.



India was colonised by several European nations. This map shows the European settlements on the Indian Subcontinent between 1498 and 1739. (Map by Eric Scherer based on Luis/Wikipedia and other sources).

The talk will take you on a journey along India's history of colonisation and look at the build up of the postal services by the different nations.

Eric Scherer FRPSL is an avid philatelist. He started collecting in the early 1970s and first exhibited in 1978. He has been collecting, exhibiting and publishing on various topics in philately ever since. Eric always had an affection for exotic topics in philately, making the postal history of French India one of his key interests. He is a member of numerous philatelic societies and study circles around the world and became an elected member of the board of the German Philatelic Association BDPh in 2021, a Fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society London in 2023 and was recently elected a member of the European Academy of Philately (AEP).



During the 1st half of the 18th century, the French were the predominant power on the Indian Subcontinent. No formal mail service existed, so letters were carried by private and official travellers.

The entire illustrated is dated 25 October 1731 from the Bernaffa garrison in Poland, located close to Berestia in today's Ukraine. The letter is addressed to Jean Denis, servant of the French India Company in Pondichery or Bengalle.

The then French king, Louis XV, was married to Maria Leszczyńska, a daughter of the King of Poland. This was the reason for the presence of French military in Poland. The letter does not bear any markings concerning rates. It shows the mark 'Dieu garde le porteur' (God protect the carrier) and was carried by messenger from then Poland to India.

11 January 2024 at 5 pm: Luc Selis
The Ocean Letter

The 'Ocean Letter', not to be confused with a ship letter or maritime letter, exists thanks to the invention of the wireless telegraph by Guglielmo Marconi in 1896. On 11 September 1911, the German company DEBEG (Deutsche Betriebsgesellschaft fur Drahtlose Telegrafie) introduced a new cheaper telegraph service on German ships: the 'Ozeanbrief'.

The system worked as follows: a passenger on board a cruise ship handed the message to be transmitted to the radio officer of the ship. As the ship was usually too far from any coastline, the message was transmitted wirelessly to a ship within range, sailing in the opposite direction. The radio officer of the receiving ship wrote or typed the message on a specially-designed form and placed it in an envelope. At first port of call, the letter was handed over to the harbour post office for registered forwarding to the addressee. In 1925, the registration became no longer mandatory, and Ocean Letters could be posted in any harbour, not necessarily the first port of call.

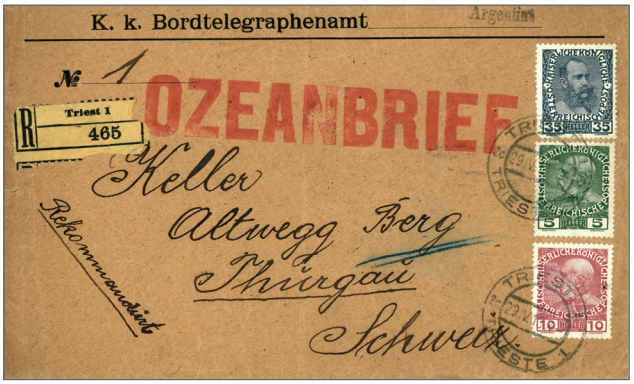
Every telegraph or shipping company that wanted to operate an Ocean Letter service was required to get authorisation from their postal authorities to handle letters, which normally was the privilege of the national postal authorities. Much to the consternation of Marconi, it was not until early 1913 before his company received authorisation in the UK to start the Ocean Letter service. As a result, DEBEG, and the Belgian wireless telegraph company, had a major advantage in introducing the service on board many ships in the period before the First World War.

Several telegraph and shipping companies rolled out the new service on board their ships and developed special telegram forms and matching envelopes. Depending on the operating language of the country under which flag the ships sailed, different names were used on the telegram forms and envelopes: 'Ocean Letter', 'Ozean-Brief', 'Radio-Ozean Brief', 'Lettre-Océan', 'Radio Letter', 'Radiobrief', 'Radiobrev', 'Lettera Oceanica', 'Wireless Letter', 'Ocean Poste', 'Carta de Alta Mar', etc.

Only 11 countries issued permits to shipping and telegraph companies: Austria-Hungary, Germany, United Kingdom, Belgium, France, The Netherlands, Italy, Denmark, Norway, United States of America, and New Zealand. With the on-board telegraph equipment improving fast in the next decades after the introduction of the service in 1911, its success dwindled sharply by 1940. Only a few Ocean Letters can be found up to the mid 1950s.



*Ozeanbrief (telegram form and envelope) from the K.k. Telegraphenamt, sent registered on 29 April 1913 from the harbour of Trieste to Berg in Thurgau, Switzerland. Postage rate of 25 Heller for an international letter and 25 Heller registration fee. Telegram above was sent wirelessly from the steamer S.S.*Pennsylvania *(Deutsche Lloyd, Hamburg Amerika Line) to the steamer* Argentina*, which received the message on April 14th 1913 when it sailed about 1000 miles east of New York on its route to Trieste.*



This is the only known Ozeanbrief from Austria-Hungary. The service was introduced in January 1912 and halted at the outbreak of the First World War. After the war, Austria-Hungary no longer had access to any harbour (as Trieste had been annexed by Italy) and the service from this country disappeared.

25 January at 5 pm: Julian Tweed
GB Express Mail

The British Post Office somewhat reluctantly introduced an inland express service for letters in March 1891 and extended from August 1892 after reciprocal arrangements were agreed with the first batch of a soon to grow number of foreign countries.

Most inland express mail was delivered by one of two methods; all the way by express messenger or, with the appropriate postage paid in addition to any express fee, first by post to the nearest delivery to the addressee and only then onwards by messenger. The basis for express fees in both cases (at least until 1938) was a charge for each mile or part mile carried by the messenger. Extra charges could be raised, for example, if the messenger had to wait for a reply or had to pay for transport.

Charges for the service were accounted for either in stamps on the letter itself or on a document, known as an "E-Form", which recorded the charges raised and the outward and inward progress of the express messenger. Any charges not paid by the sender were collected without further penalty on delivery. Express letters were usually identified by the application of a handstamp or an adhesive label.

The rather complicated arrangements combining express delivery with the letter service offered by the railways discouraged use and were eventually simplified through the introduction of the flat rate 'Railex' service in 1934 though it too remained under used.

Outward overseas express mail had to pay appropriate British postage and then current basic express fee; any delivery charges in the destination country beyond the local express fee were collected there. Incoming overseas express mail was delivered without extra charge provided the address was within one mile of the delivery office and the basic express fee in the country of origin had been paid.

From the start, express delivery could be combined with other services such as registration and the payment of a late fee. Later, special arrangements were made to deliver in London on Sundays (from February 1899) and to link with international airmail (from November 1919).

The display aims to illustrate as many as possible of the ways in which British express services developed and were accounted for in the ninety years up to 1980, when a major restructuring in what was offered took place.



1909 Cover to Strathtay, redirected to Perth as Railway Express.



1899 first day use of London Sunday Express service, Thorncliffe to Chelsea.



1898 Express newspaper wrapper sent from Glasgow to Berlin.

22 February at 5 pm: Gordon Eubanks FRPSL
The United States Issue of 1847



August 1847 folded address sheet from New York to Liverpool via Boston. The 10¢ stamp paid double rate postage to Boston and double rate 2s postage was due on delivery. Carried on the Hibernia *departing Boston 16 August, arriving in Liverpool on 27 August.*

By 1847 the United States was behind in issuing stamps. Postmaster General Cave Johnson contracted the printers and engravers Rawdon, Wright, Hatch & Edson (RWH&E) of New York to produce and print a 5¢ and 10¢ stamp. The stamps were line engraved on steel plates. Two hundred images were rolled into the plate, creating two panes of 100 stamps each pane with ten rows and ten columns. The steel plate was then hardened. Two plates were created; one for the 5¢ stamp and one for the 10¢ stamp.

The United State stamps were put on sale 1 July 1847, first in New York. The 2 July 1847 edition of the *Commercial Advertizer* ran a note from Robert Morris, Postmaster announcing that stamps were available for sale at the post office. In the following days, major East Coast cities received stamps. However, unlike the UK, the US did not distribute stamps widely. The printers made five different printings of the 1847 stamps. Unlike the 5¢ value, the 10¢ showed significant wear and colour variations. This display shows the evolution of this wear and these colour variations. Multiples of this issue are not common. The display shows the largest know blocks of both stamps on cover as well as the largest unused block of the 10¢ stamp.



April 1848 double rate over 300 miles cover from Fredonia NY to Albany NY. One of three 5¢ blocks known on cover.

Postal rates remained unchanged for the entire period of the 1847 issue's validity for postage. These were: for distances under 300 miles the fee was 5¢ for ½ ounce; for over 300 miles, it increased to 10¢ per half ounce and over 3,000 miles to 40¢ for a half ounce. Mail delivery was significantly enhanced by the use of steamships and railroads. The display shows examples of multiple rates as well as the 40¢ rate from San Francisco.

International mail was increasingly important to the United States's growing economy. The largest amount of foreign mail went to Europe, and most of that was routed through the British Open Mail system. This display shows examples to England, Egypt, France Italy, Switzerland, Hungary, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Canada and Cuba.

The stamps were demonetised on 1 July 1851 when new rates became effective. The display shows examples of demonetised uses both accepted, (more common), and not accepted.



The largest recorded franking of the 10¢ cent stamps on cover. July 1850 cover from Lima, Peru to Tepic, Mexico. Stamps pay the triple 30 cent rate from the west coast of Panama.



June 1851 folded letter, mailed from Montreal, Canada to New York. The only recorded cover with first issue of Canada and the United States.

Reports of Meetings: Season 2023–2024

10 October 2023: RPSL Wessex Regional Meeting

Report by David Winnie FRPSL



Sixteen Fellows and Members attended this Wessex regional meeting held at the Milford Hall Hotel in the centre of Salisbury. Apologies were received from 16 other members of the region who missed out not only on superb pastries and cookies available at the tea and coffee breaks, but also on some very high-quality displays.

The meeting was chaired by David Winnie throughout the day and, in a small change to our usual format, the morning began with a main display by Geoffrey Eibl–Kaye FRPSL in celebration of *100 years since the end of German Hyperinflation*. This consisted of a PowerPoint presentation followed by eight frames of superb material. It was somewhat surprising to learn that a loaf of bread which cost 250 marks in January 1923 had risen to 200,000 million marks some ten months later and that it cost more to print a note than the note was worth.

Following this display, we had the first round of displays to lead up to lunch:

Richard Hobbs FRPSL	*Propaganda Envelopes*
Gavin Fryer RDP FRPSL	*The 1937 Coronation*
Jeremy Martin FRPSL	*West Africa – Nigeria*

After pausing for a very pleasant two–course lunch, three further rounds of displays were presented:

Claire Scott FRPSL	*Brunei*
Robin Pizer FRPSL	*U.S. Occupation of the Rhineland 1918–1923*
Paul Latham Warde FRPSL	*Andrew Restall DA, a retrospective*
Michael Tombs FRPSL	*Cognac – Town and Spirit*
John Scott FRPSL	*Commercial Paper*
Nick Martin FRPSL	*Mail entering Belgium up to 1815*
Peter Richards	*G.B. to West Africa Airmails 1926–1939*
Tony Howgrave–Graham FRPSL	*S. W. Africa WWI including the use of military cancels after the campaign*
Robert Robson	*The Chinese New Year of the Golden Monkey*
David Winnie FRPSL	*The early postmarks of St. Aubin, Jersey*

Other members attending were John Wills FRPSL and Patrick Austin.

The next meeting of the Wessex Region will be held on Wednesday, 10 April 2024 at Greyfriars Community Centre in Ringwood, Hampshire.

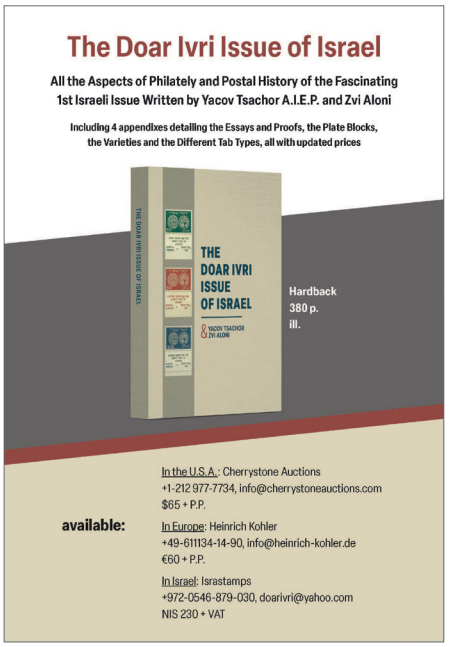
Book Review. Compiled by Gwynne Harries FRPSL

The Doar Ivri Issue of Israel

Yacov Tsachor AIEP & Zvi Aloni, published by Yacov Tsachor, 2023.

Hardbound, col. ill., 380 pages, ISBN:978-965-598-485-9
ID No. 30741

Reviewer: Ed Kroft FRPSSC



On 16 May 1948, the State of Israel issued its first stamps - a set of nine with different denominations. In late May 1948, five values of the stamps were overprinted and issued as postage due stamps ('Dmei Doar'). These 14 stamps are known as the 'Doar Ivri' Issue of Israel. The process to design and print these stamps during the British Mandate over Palestine was done in secrecy and in various stages. It is a fascinating subject to study regardless of whether a person is interested in stamp collecting or not.

Stamp collectors uniformly recognise the Doar Ivri issue as iconic and most representative of early Israel philately. However, collecting this stamp issue can be a complicated endeavour because of each stamp's different printings, perforations, papers, and colours. The assembly of early Israel postal history featuring these stamps – particularly the high denominations – can be very challenging, given the need to find the usage of various domestic and foreign postal rates applicable between May 1948–April 1950.

So, to what one authoritative and comprehensive source about the Doar Ivri Issue can a collector turn to obtain detailed and accurate information, including beautiful colour photographs? We now have our answer. We have the book we have needed for many years! This new book was written by Yacov Tsachor and Zvi Aloni, the experts in this field. Sadly, Mr. Aloni passed away before the book's publication.

The book has ten chapters and four very detailed appendices. The detailed chapters deal with all topics relevant to the Doar Ivri issue: the history of the issue and its printing, the individual stamps, the postage due stamps and postal usages, the postal usage of the stamps (domestic and foreign), courier covers to Israel franked with Doar Ivri stamps, philatelic and para-philatelic material, stamp booklets, rarities, stamps used as revenues and fakes and forgeries. The appendices deal with control/plate blocks, perforation varieties, essays, proofs and rejected designs and all known tab types and their estimated value.

This new book far surpasses the work done by Mr. Tsachor and the late Dr. Stephen Rothman in 1985. The content is superior in description and content and is very comprehensive. The photographs and layout are outstanding. The story of the pre-production history and related examples are easy to follow. The detailed description of the displayed material throughout the book gives the reader fundamentals with which to analyse philatelic materials – whether they are related to the pre-production process, the production of the stamps and applicable first days covers or the postal history reflecting domestic and foreign destinations and rates. I was spellbound flipping page after page.

The complex information about tabs, paper, printing and colours was easy to follow with the benefit of charts and illustrations. With these visual aids and analysis, collectors will want to search through their collections to look at the stamps and their attributes on or off covers. I kept thinking that I had to do a better job looking at my own stamps and covers with the benefit of all this information.

A detailed study of each page of over 120 pages of postal history sent me back to my collection to analyse rates, markings, and routes. I was intrigued by all the nuances I saw in the many covers displayed in the book. What I took away from pouring over this book for hours on different days was how collectors could happily collect aspects of all areas of the Doar Ivri Issue for many years. However, collectors should consider obtaining a certificate from an expert like Mr. Tsachor before purchasing an expensive item, whether stamps or postal history/revenue materials.

One minor drawback is the bibliography. It has comprehensive listings only up to the early 1980s. Excellent articles and books have been written since that time by various authors on the Doar Ivri issue, relating to topics such as essays, stamps, and postal history. They have been published by various philatelic societies around the world, including the Society of Israel Philatelists, CFPI and the Society of the Postal History of Eretz Israel. It might be useful to publish a brief bibliographic addendum to be included with the book or to be published in one or more philatelic publications. To be clear, the book is so comprehensive and detailed that it contains information listed in these other books and articles. Nevertheless, the additional listings may appeal to collectors who wish to also consult or own copies of these other sources.

Overall, the book is a must have for Israel stamp collectors. It is also an essential purchase or source book for those exhibiting or judging. My heartiest congratulations to the authors for a job well-done. May we all continue to use this new publication to find new discoveries and more gems in our collections!!

Recent Library Acquisitions
Compiled by Nicola Davies, Head of Collections

Acheminement et distribution du courrier, transport des voyageurs, des passagers et des marchandises sur lacs, fleuves, rivières et canaux by Jean-Jacques Curgy, published 2023 by Société des Amis du Musée de la Poste, No ISBN, softback, 144p, ill., 30cm. ID No 30980.

Anguilla's quest for identity: the philatelic story by Susan Taylor, Julian Waldron, Graham Stockdale published 2023 by The West Indies Philatelic Study Group, ISBN 9781907481529, hardback, 233p, ill., 29cm. ID No 30979.

Austria 1938-1946: stamps and forgeries by P Clark Souers, published [2023] by P Clark Souers, No ISBN, softback, 38p, ill., 28cm. ID No 30915.

Ballons Montés related to Spain and its territories by Eduardo Consejo Prieto, published 2023 by International Postal History Fellowship, No ISBN, softback, 34p, ill., 28cm. ID No 30778.

Bessbrook to Ballinadee: a postal tour of Ireland by Stephen Ferguson, published 2023 by An Post, ISBN 9781872228808, softback, 144p, ill., 26cm. ID No 30567.

Caribbean Islands: the British sailing packet service, presentation given to the International Postal History Fellowship by Simon Richards, published 2023. No ISBN, softback, 31p, ill., 30cm. ID No 30744.

Die IBRA 2023 Essen: ein Rückblick by Wolfgang Maassen, published 2023 by Phil*Creativ GmbH, No ISBN, softback, 127p, ill., 28cm. ID No 30992.

Disinfected mail in the Mediterranean: a graphical approach from the Vandervelde Collection by Esteve Domènech, published 2023, No ISBN, softback, [91]p, ill., 30cm. ID No 30749.

El correo Inglés en Santo Domingo: adenda = British mail in Santo Domingo: addendum by Danilo A Mueses, published 2019 by The authors, No ISBN, softback, 38p, ill., 28cm. ID No 30920.

El correo Inglés en Santo Domingo= British mail in Santo Domingo by Danilo A Mueses, published 2018 by The authors, ISBN 9781642554243, softback, 236p, ill., 28cm. ID No 30916. Reviewed

El correo Yankee en Santo Domingo= Yankee post offices in Santo Domingo by Danilo A Mueses, published 2015 by The authors, ISBN 9780692356548, softback, 248p, ill., 28cm. ID No 30921.

French Mediterranean packets and Malta 1837-1851 by Robert Abensur published 2023, No ISBN, softback, 50p, ill., 30cm. ID No 30745.

Germania: Marke & Mythos: entwürfe und probedrucke aus dem Archiv für philatelie der Museumsstiftung Post und Telekommunikation by Andreas Hahn, published 2023 by Global Philatelic Network, ISBN 9783000755453, hardback, 208p, ill., 29cm. ID No 30530.

Germany: the year after Hitler, stamps & forgeries, by P Clark Souers, published [2023] by P Clark Souers, No ISBN, softback, 72p, ill., 28cm. ID No 30913.

The Winton M Blount Postal History Symposia: select papers from the seventh, eighth, and ninth symposia by Susan N Smith, published 2020 by Smithsonian Scholarly Press, No ISBN, softback, viii, 142p, ill., 28cm. ID No 30905.

Tété-Béche: rarities from the Oval Issue of Finland by Tomas Bjäringer, published 2023 by The Royal Philatelic Society London, ISBN 9781913015220, hardback, xx, 496p, ill., 29cm. ID No 30986.

Transit maritime mail via Galle (Ceylon) 1843–1863 by Kurt E. Kimmel, published 2023 by Kurt E. Kimmel, No ISBN, softback, 17p, ill., 31cm. ID No 30847.

The tenth Winton M. Blount Postal History Symposium: World War I and its immediate aftermath, select papers by Susan N Smith, published 2022 by Smithsonian Institution Scholarly Press, No ISBN, softback, viii, 104p,ill, 29cm. ID No 30903.

The stamp cancelling machine slogan postmarks of Trinidad and Tobago 1923–2023 by Jazad N. Ali, published 2023 by The Philatelic Society of Trinidad and Tobago, ISBN 9789768291394, hardback, 332p, ill., 29cm. ID No 30555.

The Rhodesias and Nyasaland from Colonial rule to majority rule: the evolution of the mails by Brian Trotter, published 2023 by The Royal Philatelic Society London, ISBN 9781913015268, hardback, viii, 500p, ill., 28cm. ID No 30977.

The postal relationship between Austria and the Ionian Islands: direct mail and transit mail 1819 to 1851 by Gerald Heschl, published 2023, No ISBN, softback, [27]p, ill., 30cm. ID No 30746.

The Malayan postal administration in the Dutch East Indies during the Japanese occupation 1942–1945 by J R van Nieuwkerk, published 2023 by Dai Nippon, ISBN 9789083200538, hardback, 276p, ill., 30cm. ID No 30981.

The Lady Spencer covers flown in the Melbourne Centenary Air Race between England and Australia in 1934 by John Sims, published 2023 by John Sims, No ISBN, Softback, 54p, ill., 30cm. ID No 30906.

The evolution of the mail carriage by sea in the XIX century in Italy (1850–1879) by Mario Mentaschi, published 2023 by International Postal History Fellowship, No ISBN, softback, 17p, ill., 30cm. ID No 30783.

The Horizon Label by Alan Bush, published 2021, ISBN 9798548647481, softback, 75p, ill., 23cm. ID No 30742.

The Italian occupation of Somaliland Protectorate August 1940 until March 1941 by Germain Mentgen, published 2019 by Aden & Somaliland Study Group, No ISBN, softback, 17p, ill., 30cm. ID No 30973

The British free franking system by R B Galland, published 2023 by The Stuart Rossiter Trust, ISBN 9781908710130, hardback, x,399p, ill., 30cm. ID No 30549.

Tasmanian postal history: post office and datestamp compendium by John Hardinge, published 2019 by The Tasmanian Philatelist Society Inc., ISBN 9780646810126, softback, v,229, ill., 30cm. ID No 30922.

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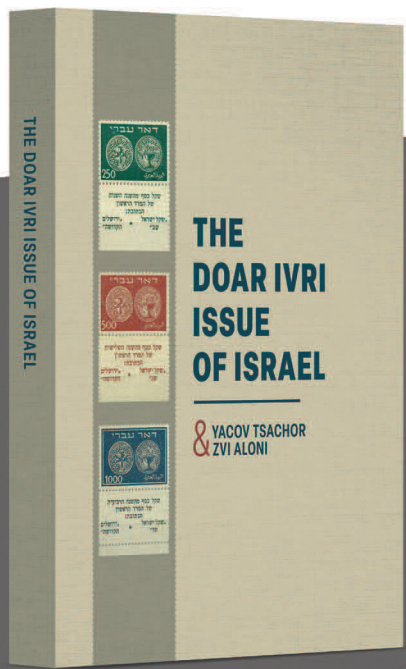
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