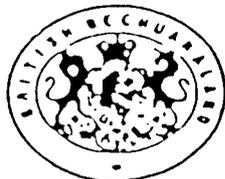


The Runner Post



NEWSLETTER No. 5

RUNNER POST No. 2
WINTER ISSUE 1985/86

CONTENTS

Page

Editor's Comments

1

"Overprint Forgeries of 1885-7
Issue of British Bechuanaland"
by Jim Catterall

2

Philatelists Psalm

5

Ngamiland - Military Correspondence

6

Magalapye BBP

8

Next Meeting

8

Francetown S. Africa Cover

9

Chairman:	Brian Trotter Im Ruehrets 3, 8803 Rueschlikon, Switzerland
Secretary:	Roy Setterfield 18 Goldsmid Rd, Hove (East Sussex) BN3 1QA, UK
Treasurer:	Philip Kaye 9 Avondale Rd, Hove (East Sussex) BN3 6ER, UK

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

A correction and apology! We were very pleased to meet Mike George for the first time at our inaugural meeting - but unfortunately his name went missing from the list of those attending the meeting. Sorry Mike!

Volunteers. We are delighted at the way in which our members are rallying around. This issue contains our first Article, by Jim Catterall. Those of you who receive The Runner Post in Africa, will do so with the goodwill of Hamish Campbell, who will photocopy a master-copy, and then despatch to members in the sub-continent, a considerable saving on postage. Philip Kaye as Hon. Treasurer will get our financial affairs in order this year, but only until October, as it is difficult for him to attend the A.G.M. and give a Report ... but don't worry, we have a volunteer ready to take over! And Alan Macgregor is now your co-editor, so the Runner Post should keep running at a steady pace.

Life President. To our great pleasure, Mr. H.R. Holmes has consented to be the Life President of our Bechuanalands and Botswana Society. Needless to say, we are both flattered and delighted to have him with us. This is a case where it is certainly no exaggeration to say "he wrote the book" on our favourite topic - since that is exactly what he did. His book being not only the key reference on The Bechuanalands, but also the inspiration for many of us to start collecting these territories.

Newsletter. The last Newsletter was the first Runner Post. Our numbering it as Newsletter No. 4 caused some confusion. The next issue shall be simply "Runner Post No. 3".

Background Reading. 'KALAHARI SAND' Frank Debenham (G. Bell & Sons, London 1953). Description with illustrations of 2,000 miles tour in Northern Bechuanaland on a water/cattle grazing survey. Gives an excellent picture of bush travelling at that time; and to those of us who have had to work in the Kalahari area even to the present time - very reminiscent and enjoyable; those who have not had the pleasure and privilege (?) will be able to get the 'feel' of such travel. (Surrey County Council Library).

OVERPRINT FORGERIES OF 1885-7 ISSUE OF BRITISH BECHUANALAND

by JIM CATTERALL

This issue must be worthy of an entry in the "Guinness Book of Records" for the widest variety of forgeries of any overprint. Many of the forgeries were made in the 1880's and '90's on used Cape stamps by a pair of rogues called Benjamin and Sarpy at their shop in Cullum Street in the City of London. They were prosecuted in the early nineties along with Jeffreyes, who forged the N.S.W. Sydney Views and Ceylon Pence issues.

In those days, it actually paid to forge overprints on common stamps which could then be sold for 6d. or so - and the common used Cape stamps were a ready source of raw material. Knowledge of cancellations at that time was almost negligible, and the same applied to geography.

A well-known story (probably apocryphal) tells how Ferrary used to call at Benjamin and Sarpy's shop when visiting London and, on one occasion, they sold him a forged double overprint. Benjamin, who was serving him, asked if he had the same stamp with inverted overprint? On Ferrary replying 'No', Benjamin called out to Sarpy to let him have the inverted overprint, which was then quickly produced (literally) with the ink still wet.

Another prolific forger of overprints on the first issue was Emil Tamsen, who generally forged the overprints on unused 1/2d, 1d and 2d Cape stamps, and added the cancel later -- see Type 2 below.

Forgeries comprise a significant percentage of the stamps of this issue on offer from non-specialist dealers and auctions. So far, I have found eight different types of forgery and there are almost certainly more. Most are fairly obvious and can be disposed of by the use of a ruler, but some require very careful examination. The genuine overprints consist of the words "British Bechuanaland" in two lines 4 mm apart, the word "British" being 8 mm long and "Bechuanaland" 16 mm long.

Type 1: Overprint lengths 7 mm and 15 mm. Lines 4.5 mm apart. This is probably the most common type and was forged on used Cape stamps of all the possible values. Many of the cancellations can be identified and are sometimes dated before the date of issue of the Bechuanaland stamps.

Type 2: Overprint lengths 9 mm and 18 mm, in lines 4 mm apart. Forged on unused Cape stamps of 1/2d, 1d, and 2d values, and the cancels added later. The cancels seen have all been of Vryburg and Mafeking and include the Holmes Types 1 and 2 CDS and 638 numeral of Mafeking, and the Holmes types 1 and 2 CDS and 555 numeral of Vryburg. In the case of the Type 2 CDS, the dates shown are usually June or July 1887, which was about four years before the introduction of that date-stamp.

The forger in this case was Tamsen, who was quite enterprising, producing blocks of four and larger multiples, inverted overprints, and the missing "B" variety. An example of the latter was offered as genuine at a European auction recently, but was condemned by the accompanying photograph.

Five pages of this forgery were presented to the R.P.S. by the late Ernest Hunt of Bryanston, Transvaal.



Normal



Type 1



Type 2

Type 3: Overprint lengths 8 mm and 16.5 mm, in lines 4 mm apart, with stop after "Bechuanaland". Forged on unused Cape stamps of various values, but obviously bogus because of the stop. Examples have been noted on 1d and 2d values, but there may be others.

Type 4: Overprint lengths 8 mm and 16 mm, in lines 4 mm apart. Forged on used Cape stamps of various value with Cape postmarks which include examples dated before the issue of Bechuanaland stamps. This can be a dangerous forgery if the postmarks are indistinct as the measurements are correct. However, there are slight differences in the print which is thinner than the genuine. This is most noticeable in the loop of the letter "n" which begins very thin on the left and thickens slightly to the right. The genuine is thicker and more even throughout.

Type 5: Overprint lengths 8 mm and 16.5 mm in lines about 1 mm apart. Again, forged on used Cape stamps but the close spacing of the lines makes the forgery obvious.



Type 3



Type 4



Type 5

Type 6: Overprint lengths 7 mm and 15 mm in lines 2 mm apart. Forgery on used Cape stamps but, as in Type 5, the close spacing of the lines makes the forgery obvious.

Type 7: Overprint lengths 8 mm and 16 mm in lines 4 mm apart. Forged in red on used Cape stamps. Very crude and would deceive no-one.

Type 8: Overprint lengths 8 mm and 16 mm in lines 4 mm apart. Potentially dangerous. This group comprises forged overprints on used Cape stamps, but with the wrong Watermark. Apart from that, there is a slight lack of crispness in the printing. The forger also seems in the first two examples to have had difficulty in getting the lines of print horizontal. Three examples have been noted:

(a) Black overprint on 1/2d stamp with Crown CA watermark instead of cabled anchor. This stamp was at one time considered genuine and listed. The numeral cancel on this example is the BONC 232 of Barkly West, which would have been possible on a genuine stamp.

(b) Overprint on 1d stamp with Crown CC watermark instead of cabled anchor. The cancel on this example is a Cape squared circle.

(c) Black overprint on 1/2d stamp with Crown CC watermark instead of cabled anchor. Although placed in the same group as (a) and (b) above, it is probable that this stamp has a different origin. The overprint is partially double, and it came from a collection where it was described as a used example of S.G. 1a (overprint double, lake plus back). There is no apparent trace of lake colour, but the possibility exists that it could have originated in printers' waste. However, this cannot be proved, so we must regard it as a fake.

The overprint in Type 8 examples above are so like the genuine, that if the forger had used stamps with the correct watermark, they could have passed undetected. That raises the interesting question -- Did he? And have they?



Type 6



Type 7



Type 8

Conclusions

1. In all cases, measurements and watermarks must be checked.
2. Almost all stamps with Cape cancellations are forgeries, the only possible exceptions being those of Barkly West and, perhaps, Kimberley.
3. Used stamps are far more likely to be forged than mint.
4. All overprints seen by me, showing a significant deviation from the horizontal, have been forged.

JIM CATTERALL

Editor's Note: I suspect that, on reading Jim's most informative article, some of us will be in haste to get back to our albums/stock books armed with millimetre gauge and magnifying glass -- I did so, then had to telephone Jim as my copies appeared to fall into his forgery groups... Jim very patiently explained that the measurements between lines are taken from the bottom of the letters in the upper row, to the top of the small letters in the lower row - i.e. u, a, n, and a, and the length along the line of lettering is the overall length. Unfortunately the reproduced illustrations are not as clear as we had hoped.

PHILATELIST'S PSALM

We make no apologies for reprinting the following 'Philatelist's Psalm', although you may have seen it before, as every line, with possible exception of the last, applies to us so perfectly. Our thanks to STAMPS AND FOREIGN STAMPS for permission to copy.

PHILATELIST'S PSALM

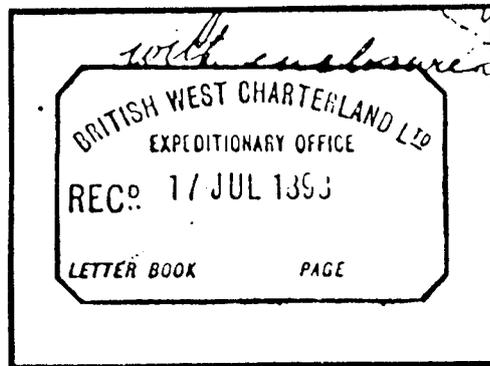
Stamp collecting is my Hobby, I shall not be bored.
It maketh me to do research on far places.
It causeth me to correspond with odd people.
It keepeth me alert.
Yea, though I live through a Winter of inclement weather
I will fear no boredom, for my stamps are with me.
Their beauty and their history they intrigue me.
They provideth me a means of escaping from the
tensions of my responsibilities.
They filleth my house with books.
My cash runneth lower.
Surely interest and knowledge shall follow me all the
days of my life.
And I will be listed in the ranks of Philatelists
forever.



NGAMILAND - MILITARY CORRESPONDENCE

The following 2 items are reproduced with kind permission of the Editor and Publisher of THE PHILATELIST. The first appeared in March 1975, and the second in September 1975.

Ngamiland 1898



Norman Lurch recently sent us a Cape of Good Hope 1/2d green postcard bearing the Cape 1d stamp cancelled MAFEKING JU 14 98 and addressed to Capt. E.J. Lugard, British W. Ch. Land, Ngamiland.

Mafeking had been in British Bechuanaland but was the administrative headquarters and business centre of Bechuanaland Protectorate. British Bechuanaland was declared a British possession on 30th September 1885. On 16th November 1895 British Bechuanaland was annexed by Cape Colony, so the use of this postcard was normal. Ngamiland was the north western corner of Bechuanaland Protectorate (now Botswana), north of the Kalahari Desert.

The postcard was an acknowledgement from the manager of the Mafeking branch of the Standard Bank of South Africa of a communication dated 7th May with enclosures which had been sent by Capt. Lugard. The postcard took over a month to reach Ngamiland for, on arrival, it received the illustrated datestamp.

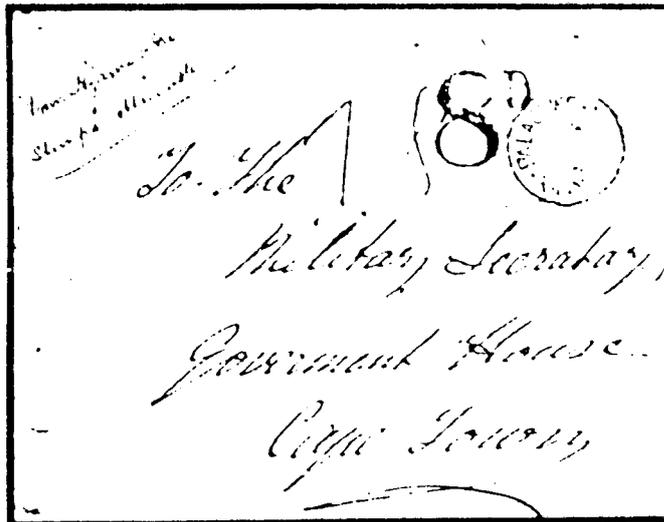
Ten years earlier, the Revd. J.S. Moffat had started a runner service from Mafeking to Bulawayo and in 1895 he organised an extension of the service from Bulawayo westwards to Lake N'Gami which operated monthly. There can be little doubt that this postcard travelled by this route which went via Plumtree, Gnakow, Magodi, Maketos to Sambos (the spelling and names of these villages appear to be different on every map).

In 1896 Sir Frederick (later Lord) Lugard took charge of an expedition to Lake N'Gami on behalf of the British West Charterland Co. who were exploring the mineral rights in the area. Obviously some military force was maintained as from December 1896 to August 1897 there were

sporadic engagements in the Protectorate although these troubles were generally further south around Langeberg. Sir Frederick was recalled by the British Government in 1897 in order to raise the West African Frontier Force.

Possibly the Capt. E.J. Lugard was a brother of the great administrator. In any case, this is the first communication to Ngamiland that we have seen.

Ngamiland 1897

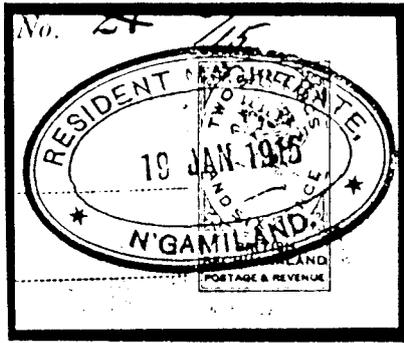


The note in the March 1975 Philatelist (page 174) has prompted Douglas Roth to send details of a cover in his collection.

This is from Ngamiland to Capetown in November/December 1897 endorsed (in a different hand from the addressee) "No stamps available" and surcharged "8d" postage due. At the top right of the cover the barely legible rubber stamp reads "Remit (Submit?) to.... Dec 97 Control and Audit Office". One wonders whether this referred to the post office accounting for the surcharge due or the military accounting for the payment thereof. A backstamp has been applied at Capetown "Charge Office/A/Nov 8.97..."

Presumably the sender was a military person who was in the area in connection with a punitive or exploratory expedition.

The date of this cover lies between Lord Lugard's expedition on behalf of the British West Charterland Co. and the cover from Mafeking to Ngamiland previously mentioned.



Ngamiland cachet
from Alan MacGregor

MAGALAPYE BBP

First a correction. Brian Fenemore's example is on a 1d KGV (S.G.72), and not on a KE 1/- as reported. Jim Catterall has a part strike on a 2d (S.G.32). My copy, on the proverbial "Seahorse" is illustrated below. When visiting Brian Fenemore recently we noticed that, although the cancellers are very similar, mine has a "0" code above the JY₁₈²³, while Brian's has none! What do others have?

B.T.



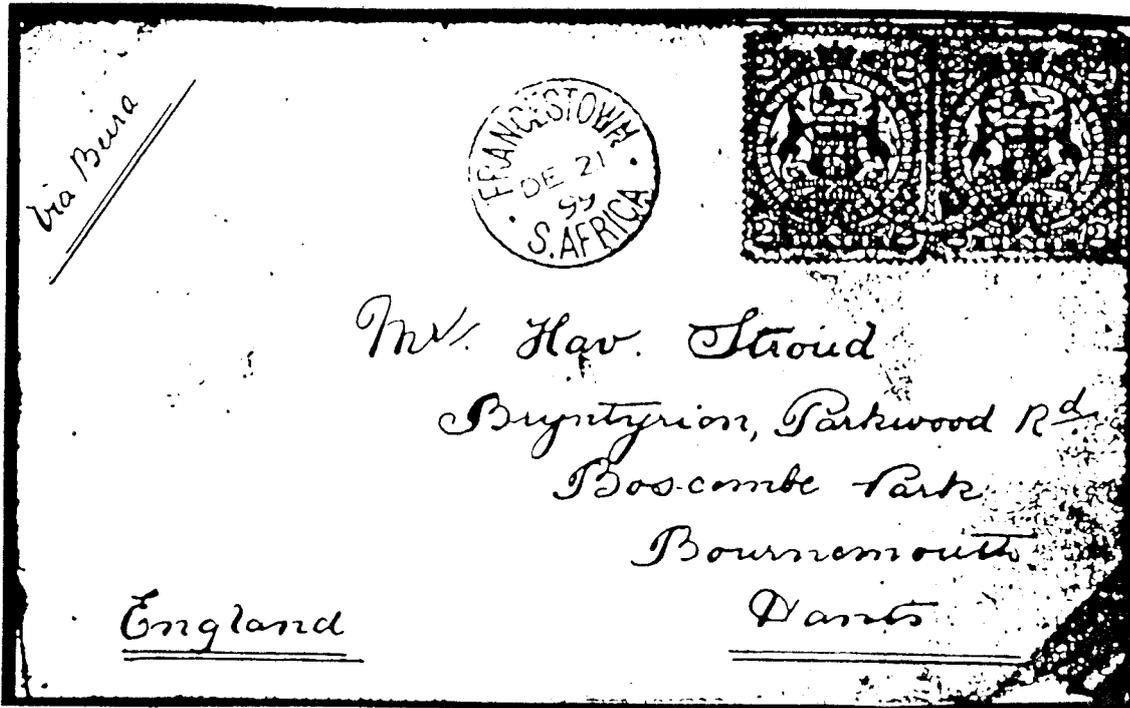
NEXT MEETING!

Wednesday March 5th at Stampex, London. Meeting at 2 p.m. in the Floral A room, but it would be pleasant to foregather in the Bar at 12 noon, as we have done previously. Please bring along a treasure or two (or photocopies of them) for others to view. Bechuanaland postmark classification (typology) shall be the main topic for the meeting. We look forward to meeting as many of you as possible.

SUBSCRIPTIONS PLEASE!

The next issue of the Runner Post shall only be distributed to members of the Society. That is, those that have paid the 5 Pounds Sterling subscription. If you haven't already done so, please join!

FRANCESTOWN S.AFRICA COVER



Francetown, S.Africa Dec 21 datestamp on Rhodesian stamps (4d was Rhodesian Field Force officer's rate as well as civilian rate) endorsed 'via Beira'. Mafeking was under siege and the normal southern route was cut. The railway to Bulawayo ran through Bechuanaland a few miles to the west of the Transvaal border. Transit mark of Bulawayo Dec 22. arrived at Plymouth Feb 3, 1900 having been 44 days in transit.