

The Runner Post

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April 2004

DAVID CROCKER

PROFESSIONAL PHILATELISTS

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Membership News

New Members

Emil Bührmann RSA.
web@remgro.com

Emil is a member of the following Study Circles: East African, Natal Zululand, Transvaal, West Africa, Rhodesian and the Royal and OFS Philatelic Societies

Howard MacNay, 32 Beechwood Park, Leatherhead, Surrey, KT22 8NL UK.
Apologies to Howard for missing him off the last list.

Howard collects Bechuanalands, Central and Southern Africa pre QEII

Gordon Smith 11 Elliot St, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, B2Y 2X6, CANADA.
hoddersmith@ns.sympatico.ca

Gordon is interested in Botswana Meter Marks, Official Free Marks, Postmarks, Registered Labels/Marks as well as stamps and is a member of Botswana Phil. Soc., Royal Canadian Phil. Soc., British North American Phil. Soc., Nova Scotia Stamp Club etc.

DIARY OF EVENTS	
Date	Philatelic or Society Event
30th April	Closing date for 14th Postal Bid Sale material.
12th June	SWINPEX, St. Joseph's School, Queens Drive, Swindon. Joint Meeting of the Southern Africa Specialist Societies 1.30 p.m. to 4 p.m
late June	Runner Post #60 due
Wed. 15th September to Sun 19th September	Autumn Stampex, Business Design Centre, Islington, London (Angel tube)
Thu. 28th October to Sat. 30th October	Autumn Philatex, R.H.S. Hall, Greycoat Street, London (Victoria tube)
Sat 30th October	2004 AGM. 10.30am to 12.30pm in Room 22 in the Conference Centre at Autumn Philatex (see above). Biannual election of Society Officers.
Sat 6th November to Sun 7th November	Southern African Specialist Societies Conference 2004, Falstaff Hotel, Leamington Spa. Contact Brian Trotter for details.

Editor's Corner

Runner Post #60, in June, will have another chapter from Peter Lodoen and the first part of the new Postmark Study Report from Bruce Warrender.

News

Errata and updates to Runner Post #58

Tony Stanford's "Item of Interest" should have referred to the position row 5, column 2 of the **lower** right hand pane. The flaw is not present in the upper right hand pane.

The e-mail address for Steve Schumann, who is handling USA sales of John and Peter's Stationery Book, is sdsch@earthlink.net

Joint Meeting of the Southern Africa Specialist Societies 12th June 2004, 1.30 p.m. to 4 p.m.

The annual meeting will be held during SWINPEX 2004, at St. Joseph's School, Queens Drive, Swindon. All are welcome and invited to bring along items for discussion and display.

The Stamp Fair opens at 10 a.m. and closes at 4 p.m.

Botswana News *courtesy of Peter Thy*

Botswana Meter Stamps.

Gordon Smith (one of our new members) has launched a new website dedicated to Botswana meter stamps. Visit <http://www3.ns.sympatico.ca/hodderssmith/>. Highly recommended if you are interested in meters or simply enjoy a well-done site.

Botswana Post's Philatelic Bureau manager.

Mrs. Margaret Ruda retired at end of 2003 from her post as manager of Botswana Post's Philatelic Bureau. Mrs Ruda was for many years a constant source of information on new Botswana stamps. Stamp collectors will miss her at the steering wheel, but wish her a happy retirement. Mrs. Sebegu is the new manager.

Stamp Advisory Committee.

Sheila Case has been appointed to the committee, probably in replacement of Andy Andersson who died last year.

Items of Interest

Unlisted Error (notified to Stanley Gibbons)

My attention was drawn to Item 317 of the March 15th Philangles Auction "1972 Runner Post MS with unlisted buff colour error affecting every stamp - whole background colour omitted"

For Private Circulation only.

Prospectus

Heckler's Namaqualand and Bechuanaland Protectorate Prospecting Expedition.

Mr. H. Heckler, on his late expeditions, discovered rich diamondiferous ground, in the British Bechuanaland Protectorate, which Mr. Heckler states and other geologists agree contains the origin of the Marensky Belt in Namaqualand.

The draft Mining Law of the British Bechuanaland Protectorate was published in the Special Gazette by the High Commissioner, Sir Herbert Stanley, on the 16th October, 1931, and duly became Law by the issue of Special Gazette on the 12th August, 1932.

The draft Mining Law entitles the discoverer to a Crown Grant of 500 claims, each 450 feet by 150 feet, about 1 square mile in extent, to be legally pegged on the appointment of the Mining Commissioner for the Crown Lands. After such appointment is gazetted no further subscription can be accepted. This will be the asset belonging to the Subscribers to the Expedition.

This Expedition is being formed out of Certificated Diggers, Miners, private and business people for the purpose of further prospecting, and development of, Diamonds and other minerals and Gold, which latter has been found near the lake Nyama, in the Bechuanaland Protectorate, in which country the B.S.A. Co. held a sole concession for nearly 40 years, which has now been cancelled by Paramount Chief Tshekedi Khama.

The Discoverer's Rights, together with the Water Rights, will be for the sole benefit of Subscribers to this Expedition, as well as any other profits arising out of any Company to be formed later on, should the Subscribers agree to form such a Company.

It is anticipated that large profits will be realised from the assets for the Subscribers of the Expedition. The Subscribers will have no further liability.

H. HECKLER,

"Turk" 42 Cambridge Road, Kensington, Johannesburg
"Turk" 42272. Firmament road Sea Point

Received from Mr. *R. Muller Cape Town* the
sum of *Ten* pounds.....shillings
.....pence being for subscriptions to the HECKLER'S
NAMAQUALAND and BECHUANALAND PROSPECTING EXPEDITION, without further liability.

L 10. 0. 0



H. Heckler

Brian Fenemore sent in this image of a recently acquired Revenue document.

Heckler Document

Brian Fenemore sent in an image of a 1935 Revenue document entitled "Prospectus: Heckler's Namaqualand and Bechuanaland Protectorate Prospecting Expedition." (Illustrated overleaf p.1421)

Does anyone have any further information about Heckler or his Expedition? Did it even take place? Send any information to the Editor.

British Bechuanaland: The 1891 and 1893/5 Provisionals The Missing 's' in 'British' Variety

by John Inglefield-Watson

Some members may have noted the uncatalogued missing 's' in 'British' variety on the 1893 1d (SG38) illustrated and sold as Lot 1143 in the MacGregor & Deverell auction, in conjunction with Argyll Etkin Ltd., of the 'Country' collection on 24th September 2003. Three other examples have subsequently been recorded by me.

The sheet position of the variety is No.58 in the right-hand pane of 60, i.e. R10/10 in the setting of 120. Several other positional examples of No.58 have been seen that do not have the missing 's' but do show a defective 's', the central part being normal but the upper and lower loops being feint and in some cases partly incomplete. It is therefore evident that the missing 's' was not constant throughout the overprinting of SG38 but developed progressively. The defective 's' has also been seen in the equivalent position No.3 i.e. R1/3, in the left-hand pane of the 1891 2d (SG32 typeset).



Enlargements of 'British' (300% normal)
(L to R): Normal, Defective (block of 3), Defective (block of 6) and Missing (pair)



REQUEST TO MEMBERS:

Have you seen

- Any other example of the missing 's' on SG38?
- Any example of the missing 's' on SG31, SG32 (typeset) or SG39?
- Any example of the defective 's' on SG31 or SG39?

Please report sightings of any of these, especially positional examples, with photocopies, direct to:

**John Inglefield-Watson,
The Ross, Hamilton,
Lanarkshire. ML3 7UF, UK.**

My thanks to Brian Hurst for the illustration of the defective 's'.



Illustrations

top-left, bottom-left: Defective 's'
Margin Block of 3, Corner Block of 6
top right, lower-right: Missing 's'
Block of 4, Pair

The same break at top centre of the 'B' of 'British' occurs on all examples seen.

An Unknown Kanye Postmark

by Dennis W Firth



Examples of Bechuanaland SG88 and SG89 2/6 and 5/- Bradbury Wilkinson printings have recently appeared in British Provincial Auctions which have an unrecorded postmark of Kanye. The single ring postmark is 25mm in diameter (compared to 22.5mm for the normal single ring postmark). It has Kanye at the top, Bechuanaland at the bottom and the date 7 DE 33 in the centre. All the letters are sans serif and the style of lettering is unlike that of any other Bechuanaland Postmark of the period between WW1 and WW2. The "Bechuanaland"

inscription is not known on postmarks of this period.

In the same sale similar style postmarks on stamps of British Somaliland appeared, these inscribed Obbia, Somaliland and Base Office. Two of the stamps are dated 1922. At this period Obbia was in Italian Somaliland and there were no base camps in the country.

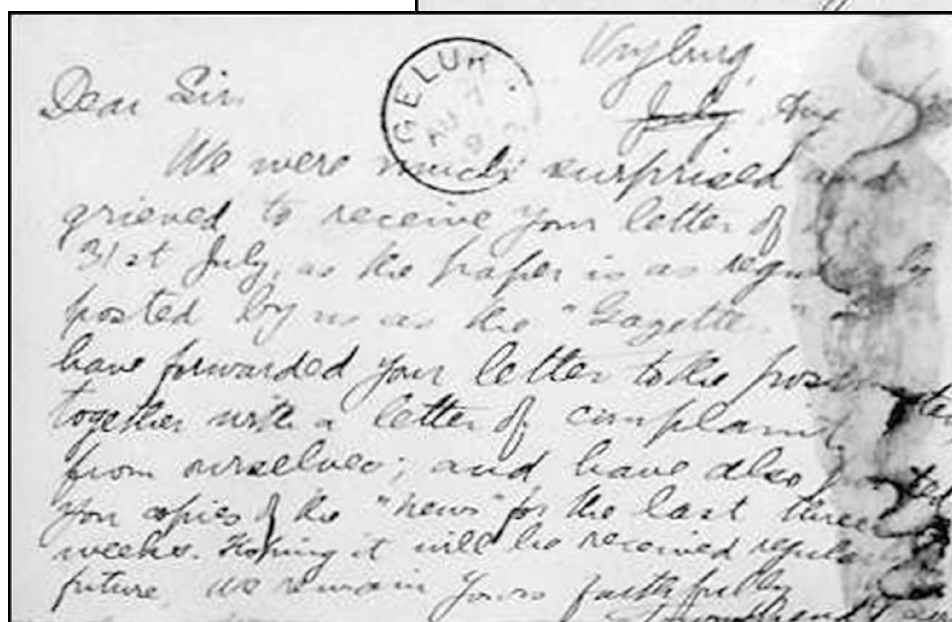
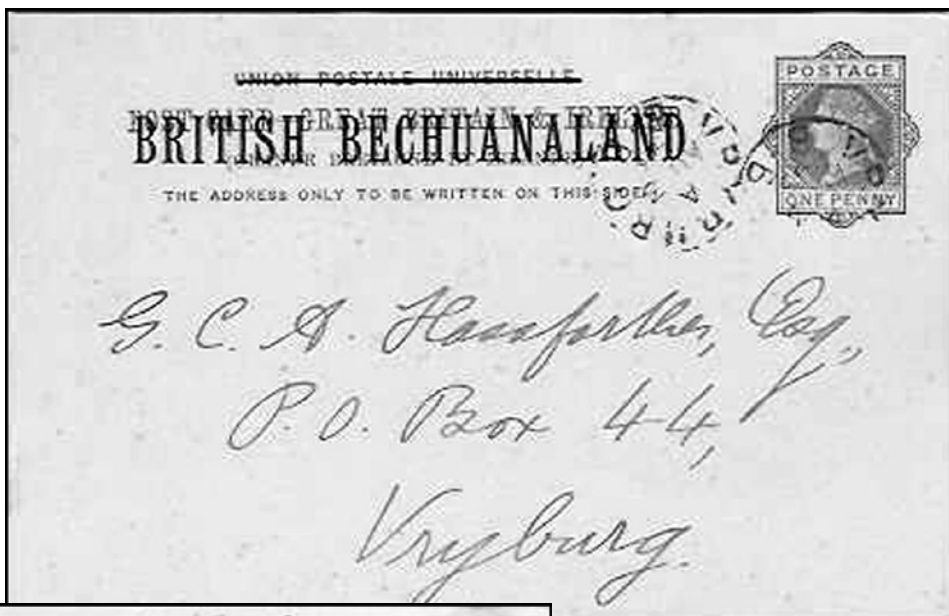
The postmarks are on stamps which are worth more used than mint.

Does anyone have other examples or information regarding this Kanye Postmark or other similar style of postmarks? Is it genuine or bogus?

I am indebted to John Inglefield-Watson for much of the above information.

St Stephen's Church Subscriber

Members will remember the 1891 Financial Report and Appeal for St Stephen's Church, Vryburg (Runner Post #57, June 2003, p1390-3) which contained a list of subscribers to the church fund. Brian Fenemore sent in the following postcard sent to one of these subscribers, G.C.A. Hassforth. The card was from Townshend and sons, with regards to non-delivery of the "Gazette".



Front and Back Cover of a postcard sent to G.C.A. Hassforth
[courtesy Brian Fenemore]

Rarer Stamps in the County Auction

by Steve Wallace

The Alan MacGregor and Michael Deverell "County Collection" Auction, in association with Argyll Etkin Ltd, took place on 24th Sept 2003. It contained no less than 22 of the stamps covered by the Society's Rarer Stamps Study

The Stellaland and Bechuanaland part of the collection comprised of many varieties, including military telegraph stamps, essays, proofs, colour trials, specimens, revenues and postal history items. The gentleman obviously had a penchant for blocks of 4 "with two singles to balance a page" (to quote Argyll Etkin). Larger blocks were also evident.

Of the 22 'Rarer' items, 13 are updated sightings, with 9 new sightings including one fresh category to report.

LOT	SG No	State	Value - description	Rarer Status
1044	1a	MINT	½d - optd in lake only	
1053	5a	MINT	1d - error 'ritish'	New Sighting
1054	5b	USED	1d - ovpt double	New Sighting
1057	6a	MINT	2d - error 'ritish'	
1058	6b	USED	2d - ovpt double	New Sighting
1062	8a	MINT	1s - error 'ritish'	
1114	29a	MINT	3d - horizontal pair - left stamp showing broken 'f' in 'Half'	
1120	30e	MINT	½d - vertical pair - upper stamp showing 'British' omitted	
1124	31c	MINT	1d - horizontal pair - right stamp showing 'Bechuanaland' omitted	
1139	38c	MINT	1d - ovpt reading 'Bechuanaland British'	New Sighting
1144	38e	MINT	1d - ovpt reading upwards no dots to 'i' of 'British'	New Sighting
1146	39a	MINT	2d - ovpt double from Gaberones sheet	
1147	39a	USED	2d - ovpt double - Gaberones	
1157	39	USED	2d - 1896 (14th June) Registered cover to Switzerland bearing an irregular block of six 2d pale bistre, each showing shifted overprints - three with unlisted 'British' only - three optd 'Bechuanaland British' (SG39c). All tied by light strokes of BONC 758 with light PALLA cds alongside	Unlisted New Sighting
1176	44a	USED	4d - small figure '4'	
1182	46a	MINT	1s - first 'o' in 'Protectorate' omitted	
1186	47a	MINT	2s - first 'o' in 'Protectorate' omitted	
1210	53a	USED	4d on ½d - surcharge inverted	
1220	54d	MINT	½d - 'Portectorate' inverted	
1344	131a	MINT	3d - upper marginal strip of four showing ovpt omitted on vertical pair with normal	New Sighting
1359	159b	MINT	2½c on 2d type II - vertical strip of ten - upper pair showing vertical pair one without surcharge - downward shift of ovpt results in surcharge on stamps 2 through 10 and lower margin	New Sighting
1365	163a	MINT	10c on 1s - horizontal strip of 6 with outer margin showing horizontal pair one without surcharge. Considered to be ROW2 - misplacement of the surcharge to the left creates the variety	New Sighting

[Editor: Here is the second half of the article started in Runner Post #58. This article also appeared in *The Transvaal Philatelist* v.38 no.4 (148) November 2003]

The Potchefstroom to Tati Postal Service

by John Dickson and Alan Drysdall

The missionary post in 1860

Baker (1983, p.25-7) reproduces a letter from Fred. Jeppe, Postmaster-General of the South African Republic to the Cape Postmaster-General, in which he claimed to have established a postal service as far north as the Zambezi. The letter is headed Post Office Potchefstroom, South African Republic, and dated the 10th April, 1860.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your two letters, in regard to the post to the Zambesi. My reason for not answering your letters earlier was, 1st, that I had to get information from the Rev. Mr. Schroeder, our Postmaster at Litheyana [the Hanoverian Mission at Sechele's], 2nd that some very important changes in the head departments of our Government prevented me to receive definite instructions about your letter.

Although I am not able to answer your letter in full this post, I have to remark that the mail for the Zambesi, which you send via Hope Town and Kuruman, reaches our Post Office at Litheyana after a delay of sometimes 3 or 4 months, and is, by the absence of Mr. Moffat perhaps, at present entirely at a stop. From Cape Town to Litheyana however you will have a regular monthly post, and it will take twenty-three days from Cape Town to Litheyana, and in case a better and director postal communication between Bloemfontein and here is established, only from 18 to 20 days. From Litheyana the post is forwarded with Post Caffres once a week from Sekhomi and Selekatze [Msilikasi], and from Sekhomi goes a direct communication to the great Lake [Ngami], and from a Caffre chief there (whose name I shall communicate to your later, to the Zambesi, say in about a month's time or less. At Sekhomi one of our missionaries [Rev. Schulenberg of the Hanoverian Mission] is the Postmaster; at Selikatzé's are some of Mr. Moffat's sons or friends, all of whom will take a great interest in the conveyance of the mails. I observe that the English mails from June reached Mr. Moffat's party only in the month of December, at which time they could have had the mails of September and October, it being only about 30 days from Cape Town to Selekatze via Potchefstroom.

In regard to your second question about our postal arrangement with the Free State, I beg to state that we have to pay for each of your single letters one and sixpence, as well as those from your Government of Natal, which money I always have to send by return post. In case your Government could get the free transmission of your packets to us, and ours back to Colesberg as far as Kroonstadt, by the Free State, the Republic would be willing to undertake the weekly conveyance of your mails from Kroonstadt to here, and further to Kuruman, Moselekatze, Sekhomi, Zambesi, etc., at her own expense.

I have, etc.,
(Sgd) H. JEPPE

There is no doubt from contemporary accounts by the missionaries themselves that the postal services to the 'interior' described by Jeppe did not exist. Moreover he was grossly underestimating the time it would take for mail to reach the Zambezi. Robert Moffat, who must have been asked for his comments by the Cape authorities, did not hesitate to put the record straight.

DEAR SIR

KURUMAN, 20th July, 1861.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 15th December/'60, enclosing copies of two letters from the Post Master General of the S. A. Republic on the subject of postal communications with the Zambezi via Potchefstroom which was received during my absence in the interior.

In reply I would take the liberty of noticing errors into which Mr. Jeppe has fallen from want of better information. That the mail for the Zambezi by Hope Town and Kuruman reaches the post office at Litheyana after a delay of sometimes 3 or 4 months and is, by the absence of Mr. Moffat, perhaps at present entirely at a stop, is entirely a mistake. Nothing of the kind took place.

Again that Post Kafirs are forwarded once a week to Sekhomi and Selekatse has not the shadow of truth in it. And as to direct communication from Sekhomi to the great Lake and from the Kafir chief there

(Lechulatebe) to the Zambezi is also a dream. Not a single letter was ever sent to Sekhomi by that direction.

Again, as to the Republic undertaking the weekly conveyance of mails from Kroonstad to Kuruman, Moselekatse, Sekhomi Zambezi, etc., at her own expense, I cannot understand; for what object could be gained by sending letters from the Kuruman to have to return thus far in the direction of Cape Town?

Again as to the mail packets sent from the Kuruman in the first instance to the care of the Revd. Mr. Schroeder, Letheyana, and forwarded by him to the Revd. Schulenberg at the Bamangwato, who (with much pleading and many promises) induced Sekhomi to convey them to the Matabele, were not taken away by Macheng, as Mr. Jeppe seems to have been informed.

I need only add that we receive the post regularly every month at this place, and the letters and papers for the missionaries at Moselekatse are either forwarded direct by parties going in that direction or sent to the care of Sechele or the Revd. Mr. Schroeder, who again, instead of sending Post Kafirs, as Mr. Jeppe supposes, embraces opportunities of persons going to Sekhomi and Moselekatse. Hitherto this has been the course pursued. It is now more than five months since the date of last letters from Moselekatse's brought by people of this station. How comes it to pass that the Post Kafirs, said to be sent thither every week, bring no tidings, much less letters, for, during that period, there have been frequent opportunities from the Bamangwato and Letheyana to this place?

From the above it will be seen that Mr. Jeppe, who deserves praise for his anxiety to serve all parties, has been quite misinformed on the subject on which he writes.

In a reply dated the 21st September, 1861, the Under Secretary in the Colonial Office, Cape Town, stated that, "it is not his Excellency's intention to disturb the present arrangements".

The ZAR postal service to Tati

The first mention in the Natal press of a ZAR postal service to the Tati goldfields is in a report from "our occasional correspondent in Potchef-stroom" dated the 23rd March, 1868, in *The Natal Mercury* of the 7th April.

On Thursday evening last [19th March] I attended the public meeting called by A. Forssman and F. W. Reid, Esqrs., for the purpose of considering the possibility of at once establishing a postal communication with the goldfields, and the best way of doing it. I must say that a greater unanimity and promptitude of action, could have been shown nowhere, not even in go-ahead Natal. Copies of letters written by the former gentlemen to the missionaries on the route, and already despatched, were read to the meeting. It was decided that an outward mail should be made up on the day next following. The Postmaster-General, who was present, signified his readiness to despatch such a mail (for this first time by an express kafir) to Marico on Friday, at 2 p.m., with instructions for the Postmaster there to forward it to the Rev. Mr. Price, at Secheli's [Molepolole], who will send it on to the Rev. Mr. Mackenzie, at Sechomo's [Shoshong]; the latter transmitting it to the diggers, and receiving their down mail. In future the regular fortnightly post to Marico will take letters and papers addressed to "the Goldfields Ramakoban" [Ramaquabane]. Thus our P.P.P. [Potchefstroom Prospecting Party] will receive their first post very shortly after their arrival at the South African Eldorado; and we in turn may look for the first news from them in about seven weeks time, and thereafter for a regular fortnightly budget. The expenses of this postal service are not expected to be heavy; in fact, it is proposed to make it self-supporting by charging a proportionately high postage, as soon as, from the missionaries' replies, the amount of expenditure has been ascertained.

A unofficial postal service - utilizing traders, travellers, mission employees, etc. - linking Kuruman with Inyati in Matabeleland via the mission stations in what was to become Bechuanaland Protectorate had been established by the missionaries by 1861 (Baker, 1983, p.19). The postal route from Potchefstroom via Marico (Zeerust) and Molepolole to link with the northern section of route operated by the missionaries, was used by the explorer and naturalist Frank Oates, who wrote letters to his family when he was en route to the Victoria Falls in 1873-75 (Wright and Drysdall, 1988), and by Dr. Emil Holub, another explorer and naturalist, in 1875 (Knight, 1996). The route from Zeerust was then via mission stations at Linokana and Kanye to Molepolole, which was probably the route used in 1879 for mail addressed to the Rev. John Smith Moffat when he was at Molepolole (Drysdall, 2002; 2003). Twenty years after the Potchefstroom prospectors set out the missionary 'road' became the route of the official Mafeking-Gubulwayo runner post.

On the 19th May, 1868, *The Natal Mercury* published the following report:

Last Saturday afternoon we received the first mail from our P.P.P. [Potchefstroom Prospecting Party]. Capt. Black's letter is dated Shoshong (alias Matjen's Stadt, alias Sechomo's, alias Bamanguato), 31st March, on which day they arrived at Matjen's... [Shoshong, where the Rev. McKenzie was based]. This mail left several days before Hartley's express, but arrived later, because it came round by Secheli and Marico...

By the above mentioned mail A. Forseman Esq. received a very hearty communication from the Rev. Mr. Price, at Pecheli's [Sechili's, i.e. Molepolole], in answer to his letter in re postal communication, assuring him that Mr. P. will do all in his power to assist in the matter, and that the mails will be forwarded with the greatest possible regularity and dispatch, as far as his station is concerned.

Molepolole was then the closest mission station in what later became Bechuanaland Protectorate to Zeerust. The Rev. Price was very much involved a few years later in organising the missionary post which handled Frank Oates' letters (see above).

The Natal Mercury of the 30th June, 1868, quoted the following notice, first published in "the Argus of the 10th instant".

Post to the Gold Fields

The postmaster general, F. Jeppe, Esq., has received a letter from the Rev. John McKenzie, stationed at Shoshong, in which the Rev. gentleman treats of the postal communication with the Gold-fields and Potchefstroom via Secheli and Marico, and adds, that no difficulty will be experienced by him in despatching the post from Machin to the gold-fields, and the return post to Secheli. Measures, however, have been taken here some months since to keep open the communication with Secheli

The Natal Mercury of the 1st December, 1868, quoting the Transvaal Argus, reported the arrangements then in force regarding the post to the "Victoria Gold Fields":

Letters from Natal to the gold fields (Natal postage being prepaid) are charged three pence per half ounce Transvaal postage, which the receiver can pay to the Rev. J. McKenzie at Shooshong (Matshing's town), Mr. McKenzie will also receive letters on payment of three pence per half ounce letter, and will forward them to the Potchefstroom post office by the fortnightly post, whence they are despatched to Natal via Wakkerstroom; the sender only pays three pence to the Rev. J. McKenzie, and his letter is delivered free in Natal.

The same issue of the paper included a further report "Apropos of the Post to the Gold Fields".

Mr. Broderick of Pretoria, who is at present in England, has addressed a letter to the Daily News of the 27th August in which he states: - "A kafir post was established by Hartley, to run between his farm, near Pretoria, and the chief's (Matshing's) station, so that constant news may be expected" etc. This is an error, Mr. Hartley established no post; Mr. Hartley's farm is not near Pretoria (unless a distance of 60 miles can be called near) and is situated some 25 miles west of the road connecting Potchefstroom with Pretoria; the only post to the gold fields that exists, is between Potchefstroom and Matshing's town via Marico and Secheli, and was started so far back as the month of March last, mainly through the exertions of our spirited fellow towns-men Messrs. A. Forssman and F. W. Reid, ably seconded by our very efficient Postmaster General, F. Jeppe, Esq.

Marico/Zeerust

Zeerust was evidently an important staging post on the route to Tati and the interior, mainly because it was the most westerly and therefore the closest ZAR post office to the 'missionary road'. It is stated in the Standard Encyclopaedia of Southern Africa (SESA v. 11, p.579) that the original settlement - on the Klein Maricorivier - was founded on the farm Sebatlani, which belonged to one whose name is recorded only as Riekers. In 1858 he sold the farm to Casper Coetzee, who renamed it Hazenjacht ('hare hunt'). Bulpin (1989, p.71-2) describes subsequent events as follows:

In 1864 a wandering builder named Walter Seymore was engaged to erect a church surrounded by a fortification on the farm Hazenjacht, owned by Casper Hendrik Coetzee. Coetzee died in May 1865, before the building was completed; but his brother-in-law, Diedrik Coetzee, who took over the estate, laid out a town around the fort and named the place Zeerust (Coetzee's Rest) in memory of old Casper who was buried there. Still later, in October 1871, when Marico became a separate district, its first magistrate, J.

Montgomery, made his seat at the village (which the Africans know as Sefatlhani, the dusty place).

Zeerust is actually an abbreviation of the original name, Coetzee-Rust.

It is further recorded in SESA that Zeerust was proclaimed a township on the 19th October, 1880 "in the Marico district established eight years earlier". However, it was still commonly referred to as Marico, and the original datestamp used by the post office, which was inscribed 'MARICO' (see below), had continued in use.

Zeerust was a typical frontier town, with a steady flow of adventurers of various sorts heading for or returning from the 'interior'. Such characters were all too likely to indulge in wild behaviour that at times verged on outright lawlessness, and Zeerust certainly had a reputation for that.

The Staats Courant of the 19th August, 1859, mentions a weekly post to Marico, and Marico is mentioned in Herman Jeppe's first annual report as Postmaster-General submitted to the President and Executive Council on the 15th August, 1860. Putzel records a post office at Marico from 1860,



Figure 5 Two covers addressed to K. Noble Acutt, Secretary of the London and Limpopo Gold Mining Co., c/o F.W. Reid in Potchefstroom. Both covers were posted in Durban - on the 9th August and the 17th October, 1870 - and were received in Potchefstroom on the 17th August and the 25th October respectively
(The later cover is illustrated courtesy of John Taylor)

attributing this information to Dick(?), and at Groot Marico from 1868.

The Staats Courant of the 7th March, 1865, included the following postal notice appointing Fieldcornet D.J. Coetzee as Postmaster of Marico.

Gouvernements Kennisgeven No. 156.

Zy het by deze kennelyk aan allen, die deze zullen zien of hooren lezen, dat benoemd en aangesteld is tot Postmeester van Marico, de Veldcornet D. J. Coetzee.

M. W. Pretorius, President.

Op last, H. v. d. Linden, Gouv. Secr.

Gouvernements-kantoor, Pretoria, 7 Maart, 1865.

The ZAR estimates for the year starting the 1st August, 1869, as published in the Staats Courant of the 13th July, 1869, show an charge of £75 for the carriage of mail between Potchefstroom and Marico.

The cover evidence

Four covers posted in Durban in 1870 and addressed to R.N. Acutt, Secretary of the London and Limpopo Mining Co., c/o F.W. Reid, Potchefstroom - consistently misspelt by the writers as Potschefstroom - have been illustrated in The Transvaal Philatelist (Dickson, 1997, p.80-1; anon, 2001, p.86-7). At least three other covers addressed to Acutt are known. One of the covers illustrated



Figure 6 A ZAR postal stationery envelope of the type manufactured in 1869 by Postmaster-General Fred. Jeppe using the 30 mm. Potchefstroom datestamp, which is addressed to him and bears the imprint of the London and Limpopo Mining Co. on the flap

as **Figure 5** has the words "Tati Gold Fields" included in the address, but there is no evidence on it that it was forwarded to Tati. It is tempting to assume that Acutt, as Company Secretary, was based in Potchefstroom, but why were the letters addressed to him c/o F.W. Reid? It may have been simply because Reid was an established resident of Potchefstroom who would have been known to the post office - and was evidently an acquaintance of Jeppe's - and would have known Acutt's whereabouts at the time he received mail for him, i.e. whether he was in Potchefstroom or Tati. However it is also evident from the above quotation from *The Natal Mercury* that Reid was very much involved in organising the postal service between Potchefstroom and Tati, and it is therefore certainly possible that the letters to Acutt were addressed c/o him as he was forwarding the mail to Tati. The obvious next question is, if such letters were forwarded to Tati via Zeerust, why do they not bear a Zeerust transit datestamp? The answer is, because Zeerust did not have a datestamp until 1874. The earliest recorded date of the Marico datestamp, which was inscribed with the name of the district rather than the office, is the 4th December, 1874 (van den Hurk and Drysdall, 1992, p. 90), and it was almost certainly one of eight datestamps that Tamsen (1893, p.104) records were sent from Germany in March 1874.

Illustrated as **Figure 6** is a cover addressed to Postmaster-General Jeppe that may well have originated in Tati. The item is a postal stationery envelope of the type produced by Jeppe in 1869 using the 30 mm. Potchefstroom datestamp with only the year of the date and with "6d" entered in manuscript in the space where the day and month would normally be struck. The flap of the envelope

bears the oval imprint of the London and Limpopo Mining Co. Proud (1997) suggests that the Company had sent a supply of their envelopes to Jeppe, and had paid - presumably - for them to be made into postal stationery envelopes. (The ZAR inland half-ounce letter rate was increased from 3d to 6d in 1869.) This would certainly have made it easier to send mail from Tati to Potchefstroom and vice versa as there were no ZAR (Transvaal) postage stamps on sale to the public until the 1st May, 1870.

A Potchefstroom datestamp struck on the reverse of the cover records that it was received there on 'NO10 / 69'. There is also a manuscript annotation recording that the letter was from Capt.. Echalez, who was almost certainly at Tati (see below), and was only answered on the 7th February, 1870.

Robert Noble Acutt

Miller (1977? p.142-5), in her history of the Acutt family, records that Robert Noble Acutt (1849-1935), known to his family and friends as Bob, was the middle of three sons born to Henry and Penelope Ann (nee Drew) Acutt in Lambeth on the 20th March, 1849. He emigrated to Natal in November 1864 to join his brother Frank and his uncle William, and a year later was joined by his mother, then a widow, his younger brother (Lestock) and his sister (Eliza, or Lily).

The rest of the family were tall, Bob was only 5ft. 4in. but never seemed insignificant. The socialite of the family, sprightly, full of fun, he also had an adventurous disposition. He was not the reckless swashbuckling type, but the cool-headed practical adventurer, ready with an ingenious solution for every problem.

At the end of 1869 ... he was appointed secretary to the London and Limpopo Gold Mining Co. Expedition which opened up the Tati gold field... The expedition consisted of Sir John Swinburne, Capt.. Levert, Capt.. Echalez. Mr. Sutton, Mr. Pullen, Mr. Arkle and Mr. Kisch, the secretary. Mr. Kisch had had a disagreement with the Company, his connection with them was terminated and Capt.. Levert came down to Natal to engage another secretary and to negotiate other company affairs...

He [Robert Noble Acutt] and Frank went up to Pietermaritzburg by Jessup's coach on November 29th to meet Capt.. A. Levert. On November 30th it was pouring with rain but Levert was determined to start. He set out at 4 a.m. in a Cape cart with two other men. Bob was to follow on horseback. When he tried to cross the Umgeni River at Howick he found the river was in flood and was nearly swept over the Falls. After delivering the horse to its owner in Harrismith he went on to Kroonstad and Potchefstroom by postcart. There he met Levert who was getting a wagon ready for the journey to Tati. He planned to do the 500-mile journey in three weeks. Everyone said it was impossible, but he did do it, though it was a difficult and uncomfortable journey. On Christmas Day 1869, they were without food or water. Uncle Bob "lay for hours in the small bit of shade made by the wagon, thinking of the whole Christian world celebrating the festival



Figure 7 Robert Noble Acutt, his wife (and cousin) Florence and their daughter Hilda

in a more agreeable manner". They arrived at Tati on December 31st. 1869.

Despite the difficult journey there were a surprising number of Europeans at the Tati; other gold mining companies, hunters, traders and explorers. It was also "a resort of all the outlaws of South Africa, they were on the best of terms with everybody though their history was well known. They may have made only one mistake, for I never heard of them doing anything wrong while in that country". The artist Thomas Baines was also there, Uncle Bob got to know him well and gives an amusing picture of him. Not as the cult hero of today but as the cheerful, impractical artist, singing comic songs and getting lost in the bush.

... Eric Rosenthal's book "Other Men's Millions" contains a reproduction of a very interesting sketch done at the time. It shows a large and well-organised encampment. In the foreground is a stone wall, obviously Zimbabwe work for it has the typical herring-bone pattern at the top. There are also signs of old workings; primitive tools and other indications showed gold had been mined there in the past...

Hopes were high at first, but gradually illness, lack of capital and transport difficulties put an end to them. Many of the miners left for the diamond fields at Kimberley. Bob himself lost confidence in the venture, the year for which he had been engaged was nearly up so he decided to make a fresh start somewhere else. At this point Levert fell seriously ill with dysentery; both he and Bob thought that his end had come. Then he took a turn for the better but was so weak that everyone

felt he must be got back to civilisation as soon as possible. But he refused to go unless Bob promised to stay for another year...

Bob remained at the Tati until early in 1872. At the age of 21 he was all on his own in Matabeleland. As sole representative of the Company he had to act as Magistrate and was known to the Africans as an Induna of Lobengula with whom he was on friendly terms. Readers who are interested in his adventures should read his booklet "The Reminiscences of Robert Noble Acutt, Sidelights on South African Life (from his own pen)"...

In April of 1872 Bob had a serious attack of malaria (his third). There were only two other White men left at the Tati, the business of the Company was at a standstill with no prospect of reconstruction. Bob could not throw off his attack of malaria ... so packing his wagon he set out for Potchefstroom, arriving there so ill that he had to be carried into the hotel, where he was nursed back to health by his room mate Ted Robinson, brother of Sir John Robinson...

Bob became a successful businessman. He went into partnership with his friend George Reid of Potchefstroom [the brother of F.W. Reid], later they came to Durban where they became the wool-broking firm of Reid and Acutt... Somewhere about 1900 he retired from business and went back to England. There he settled at Torquay (Devon) ... where he lived the rest of his life...

[He] died on December 20th, 1935.

Further information concerning the role played by Robert Noble Acutt in the affairs of the London and Limpopo Gold Mining Co. is provided by Tabler (1966, p.97-9).

The expedition, which left England late in 1868 under the command of the chairman of the company, Sir J. Swinburne, was equipped at great expense and took out a steam engine and a steam traction engine to

replace ox wagons, but the traction engine was sold in Natal. Levert was second in command, Kisch was storekeeper, A. Griete was practical miner and mineralogist, and Edwards was labour boss and transport manager. Arkle was stationery engineer, and a stockholder named Echalez supervised the commissariat and did transport work. A man named Sutton was also a member, and Swinburne had a servant named Murphy.

The party travelled from Natal via Pretoria and reached Tati on 27 April 1869... A bar and a well-stocked store were opened at Tati, and the steam engine, the first in the interior, was set up. Mining operations were not immediately begun there because the primary objective was the Northern Goldfields [in Mashonaland].

Although the Company obtained permission to cross Matabeleland into Mashonaland and started shaft-sinking on a prospect south of the Hartley Hills, they were ordered to leave in October 1869 while a successor to Mzikazi was chosen.

Kisch quit his job towards the end of 1869, though he kept on until his successor, Acutt, arrived from Natal on 28 December with Levert...

Griete was working the Blue Jacket Mine near Tati by January 1870, when Swinburne left to go to England...

Levert was in charge after Swinburne's departure... Echalez arrived from the Transvaal with mail and supplies on 28 March... Levert and Elton went to the King's [Lobengula at Gubulawayo] in April, and on 29 April they obtained from Loben a written concession to the area between the Shashi and the Ramaquabane Rivers. That grant and its superior resources enabled the London and Limpopo Company to outlast all competitors... Echalez was at the Mhalapshwe River, en route to Tati with supplies, on 21 August.

Levert went to Natal before 1 December 1870, and Acutt was acting manager at Tati for several months. The settlement was comparatively deserted by December 1870 when the company men in residence were Acutt, Griete, Arkle and Franklin...

By 1871 the company, which obtained all other claims by purchase or default, was sole proprietor of the Tati Fields...

Nelson [hired as "general field manager" in London by Swinburne] had at Tati in July 1871 Acutt as head storekeeper, Franklin as storekeeper, Griete as miner and H. Gren as assistant miner...

The company had abandoned Tati by July 1875, when it was in liquidation...

Conclusion

There can be no doubt that Robert Noble Acutt was in Tati at the time the letters addressed to him were posted in Durban - probably by members of his family - and that they were forwarded from Potchefstroom by the postal service instigated and managed by F.W. Reid, A. Forssman and Fred. Jeppe, with the assistance of the Rev. J. Mckenzie at Shoshong, as described in *The Natal Witness*. There can also be little doubt that the postal stationery envelope addressed to Jeppe sent by Echalez originated from Tati

The Potchefstroom to Tati via Zeerust route was certainly the first postal link operated on a regular basis between the South African Republic and what was to become Bechuanaland Protectorate.

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New Book on Southern African Tokens



Afribilia has announced the publication of Brian Hern's "Handbook on South African Tokens."

This is the first comprehensive catalogue of southern African tokens and trade pieces for nearly twenty-five years. The soft-cover handbook will cover more than 400 different issuing authorities across southern Africa, and includes full-size black-and-white scans of over 1500 individual pieces. Only 200 copies are being printed.

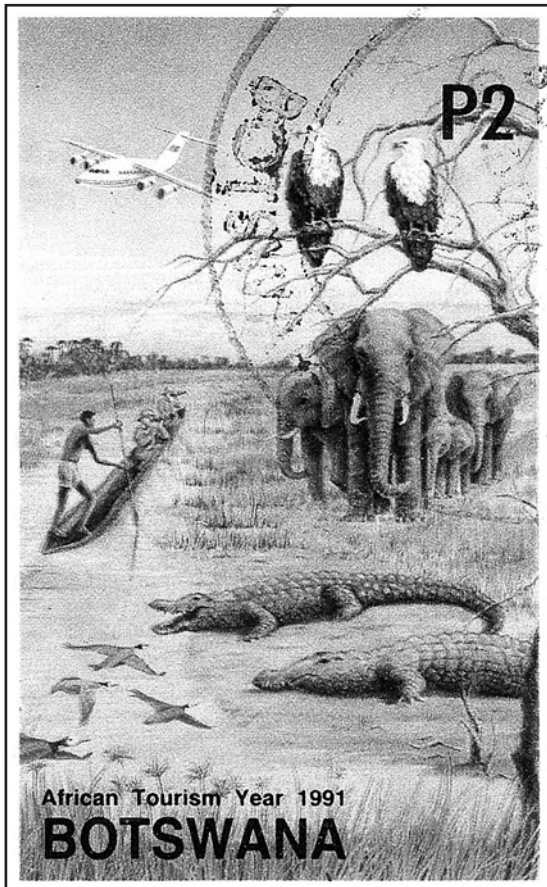


To order and pay for your copy now, you can either go to <http://www.afribilia.com> or write to Afribilia Ltd, 16 Bury Place, London, WC1A 2JL, UK, Tel: 020 7404 7137, Fax: 020 7404 7138.

(Illustrated are the Bechuanaland tokens from the Afribilia website. [PT])

The Life of a Botswana Postage Stamp Designer - Chapter 3

Miniature Sheet in Miniature: Tourism Year 1991 by Peter Lodoen



Enlargement of the issued "jumbo-size" P2 value

The preliminary design for a Tourism Year issue came into my possession about mid-1990. It was a sketchy but well conceived pen-and-ink drawing of ducks, elephants and eagles in their Okavango habitat. Its designer, Alec Campbell, proposed a painting of an Okavango Delta ecosystem, with a double pair of se-tenant stamps carefully worked into its interior.

Such a miniature sheet would be a first among Botswana issues, in that the design from the selvage blended in with the stamps themselves.

At that time I had not yet become a wildlife artist, but, I thought, painting elephants' wrinkles and eagles' feathers could not be more difficult than painting steam engines' pistons and drive gear. So I put brush to canvas and easily established a comprehensive design: sky at the top, reeds left, trees right and water below. The placement of the four stamps, without perforations running through elephants' trunks and birds' beaks, was the difficult part. The upper stamp pictured two fish eagles perched and one in flight. The lower stamp portrayed a kudu bull, looking the observer in the eye, in front of a flock of white-faced ducks. At centre right a vertical stamp showed elephants nearing the water's edge. At centre left a dugout canoe with its polesman held nattily attired tourists pointing their long-lens cameras at the elephants.

With wee scissors I cut out tiny ducks and miniature elephants to fit them into the 30 X 35 and 80 X 24 millimetre strictures of the stamps. At last the small canvas was covered and I submitted the work to the Philatelic Advisory Committee.

The committee approved in essence, but requested several improvements, Chief among them were crocodile in place of the kudu and a Botswana Airways aircraft in place of the airborne fish eagle.

Imperforated preliminary proofs of the miniature sheet were produced and smartly lettered according to Alec Campbell's original instructions: 'Tourism in Botswana' above and 'Conserving the Wilderness' below. Even I will admit that the miniature sheet looked very good.

It looked a little too good, apparently, for the printers' quotes were higher than Poso House, Botswana's postal headquarters, was willing to pay. Time passed and as the issue date of 30 September 1991 approached, the miniature sheet idea had regrettably to be scrapped.

At the last minute Andy Andersson, chairman of the Botswana Philatelic Society, stepped to the front and saved the day. By telephone conversation with Pretoria, Andy described dimensions for three 36 X 20 mm horizontal stamps and a jumbo-size 26 X 43 mm design that encompassed the designs of the first three. It became, in its state of issue, a miniature sheet in miniature that was subsequently chosen by Stamp and Coin Mart International, a leading British philatelic journal, as the stamp of the month.



The four issued values 8t, 15t, 35t and P2 SG717-720 [images courtesy Brian Hurst]

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON SATURDAY 1st NOVEMBER 2003 AT THE ROYAL HORTICULTURAL HALL, GREYCOAT STREET LONDON, FROM 1 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Brian Trotter (chairman), Dennis Firth, Malcolm Hodgson, John Inglefield-Watson, Neville Midwood and Tony Stanford.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Mike Hall, Brian Hurst, Alan MacGregor and Dickon Pollard.

(P/S=Proposed and Seconded)

1) MINUTES OF THE LAST AGM: It was agreed that these be signed as a correct record (P/S). As only four or five members had attended MIDPEX held on 28th June and no new members had been recruited, the Society should consider whether we would wish to participate next time. Thanks were expressed to those members who provided displays.

2) CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: Brian Trotter stated that the next meeting would be held on Saturday 28th February 2004 during [Philatex]. He spoke about the joint meeting of the Southern African Societies being held at Leamington Spa on 22nd and 23rd November. (Brian Hurst, Brian Trotter, Neville Midwood and Dennis Firth attended from our Society). If the meeting is a success it may be decided to hold similar meetings in future years.

3) TREASURER'S REPORT: Brian Hurst submitted a written report, along with the accounts. [Summarised] The accounts for the year show a healthy increase in the Society's financial position. This is largely due to the transfer of funds when the South African branch of the Society closed, and also to a useful profit from the Society's Postal Bid Sale earlier this year. However, even disregarding these two items, subscription income alone covered the Society's normal operating costs.

Now that the Inglefield-Watson/Thy Postal Stationery book is about to go to press, with the Society's commitment of £1000 towards the publication, the balance at the end of next year's accounts will not look so good. However the Society has sufficient cash in hand to maintain subscriptions for the year 1st July 2004 to 30th June 2005 at the current levels. Overseas postal levels are a burden, but the £2 differential advantage for members living in Africa will be maintained for this one further year. This will effectively spend the funds received from South Africa in the current accounts. It is proposed to fix the SA Rand and US\$ rates in May or June next year when the demands are issued for the next round of subscriptions [at a subsequent Committee Meeting, due to continuing exchange rate changes, current subscription rates were set at 110 Rand and 17 US\$]

There continue to be more new members than resignations, with more than 90% having renewed at the time of the meeting.

Finally, Brian wishes to thank the Society's Auditor for his enormous help he has given in the preparation of the Society's accounts.

The accounts show a surplus for the year of £890.93. The accounts were accepted (P/S) subject to audit.

4) MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT: Neville reported that the Society membership numbers have increased, with membership currently standing at 105. There have been three resignations, a few possible non-renewals and regular new members. He also suggested that the easiest way to increase membership was the get knowledge of the Society's existence better known by e.g. submitting details of meetings to Gibbons Stamp Monthly.

5) EDITOR'S REPORT: The first part of the new Botswana Postmark Study has been received from Bruce Warrender. A regular supply of articles is been received, but from a small number of members - currently sufficient for two Runner Post's a year. The next Runner Post being delayed until January 2004 - due to work commitments. Neville has prepared a proposal suggesting the Society purchase a colour laser printer. This would improve the quality of the Society's journals [this was agreed, within certain cost restrictions at a subsequent Committee Meeting]

6) NEXT AUCTION: Brian plans to run another Postal Bid Sale despite the stress involved. Its success however is entirely dependent on the submissions of a good quantity of good quality material. Members are asked to go through their collections and send in lots of unwanted material before the end of [April] 2004.

7) ASSOCIATION WITH OTHER SOUTHERN AFRICA SOCIETIES: Conversations have taken

place but with nothing positive, other than the joint meeting at Leamington Spa (22nd and 23rd November 2003). No mergers, joint magazines or officials sharing seem any nearer, but discussions will continue to take place informally in the future.

8) ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Stationery Book: John stated that the final proof had been handed over, and he was hopeful of progress.

Revenue Book: Neville reported that he and Brian Trotter had a book in advanced preparation listing Revenue Stamps of Basutoland, a start made on Revenue Stamps of Swaziland and a planned revision of Revenue Stamps of The Bechuanalands into the same format as the Basutoland edition.

Congratulations: John congratulated Brian Trotter on being awarded a Large Gold Medal at Stampex for his entry on Rhodesian Revenue Stamps. He also received the Harmers Diamond Jubilee award and the Revenue Society of Great Britain award.

PHILATELY: The chosen topic was Official Free mail (but not including Post Office items which had been listed in Runner Post) John Inglefield-Watson and Dennis Firth provided displays.

John's contribution included BECHUANALAND Resident Commissioner marking on a cover with a relief postmark of Mafeking, Treasury 1959, Treasurer 1965, Commissioner for Revenue 1965, Director of Medical Services, Game Control 1967, District Commissioner, Kasane 1965, Forest Officer, Kasane 1964. BOTSWANA District Agricultural Officer, Francistown 1980, National Museum and Art Gallery 1984, State Prison, Selebi-Pikwe 1982 and Botswana Polytechnic Academic Register 1995.

Dennis produced some items duplication John's material but other items included BECHUANALAND Public Works Department 1959, District Commissioner, Serowe 1946, Controller of Stores 1957 BOTSWANA Ministry of Education 1980 and 1995, United Teaching Services 1982, Labour Office, Francistown 1982, Botswana State Prisons, Lobatse 1983 and Botswana State Prison, Gaborone Central 1984.

Some of the Botswana covers had office cachets on them, with Official Free as a separate marking, others with the handstamp showing the department and Official Free together.

To finish off Neville produced a large hand drawn Bechuanaland Protectorate licence with duty paid by 4 x £5 Stellaland Revenue stamps, relating to William Henry Mayhew being admitted as an advocate to the Court of the Resident Magistrate, Vryburg. He also showed a draft copy of the Revenues of Basutoland book.

REPORT OF THE ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON SATURDAY 28th FEBRUARY 2004 AT THE ROYAL HORTICULTURAL HALL, GREYCOAT STREET LONDON, FROM 10.30 am

MEMBERS PRESENT: Brian Trotter (chairman), Dennis Firth, Malcolm Hodgson, Brian Hurst, John Inglefield-Watson, Howard MacNay, and Neville Midwood.

This was an informal meeting and members had been asked to bring displays.

Brian Hurst's was the only display (it included one or two items loaned by John Inglefield-Watson). One of the interesting features was a series of high quality prints of reconstructed panes of some of the early issues. Actual stamps from Brian's collection had then been placed on the prints in their correct positions. These reconstructed panes of the ½d slate are the panes from which the SG30b double one inverted, SG30c double one vertical, SG30ca se-tenant and SG30e "British" omitted come.

Also of interest was a forged SG30 ½d value made up of two half stamps carefully stuck together, showing British at the top and no overprint on the lower half.

Other items included a block of 12 of the 1961 5c on 6d without the printers' imprint, SG 48a with the first 'o' missing from Protectorate and SG 32 Stereo printing with nail head flaw.

Brian reported, in his capacity as Treasurer, that the Society had approx. £1100 in the Bank and approx. £2075 at the Building Society.

Mankoroane, Chief of the Batapins



"The Bechuanaland Expedition"
from
"The Illustrated London News"
May 30, 1885 - p.563

--- sketches by our special artist, Mr
Julius Price of "Methuen's Horse"---

Two of Mankoroane's Suite



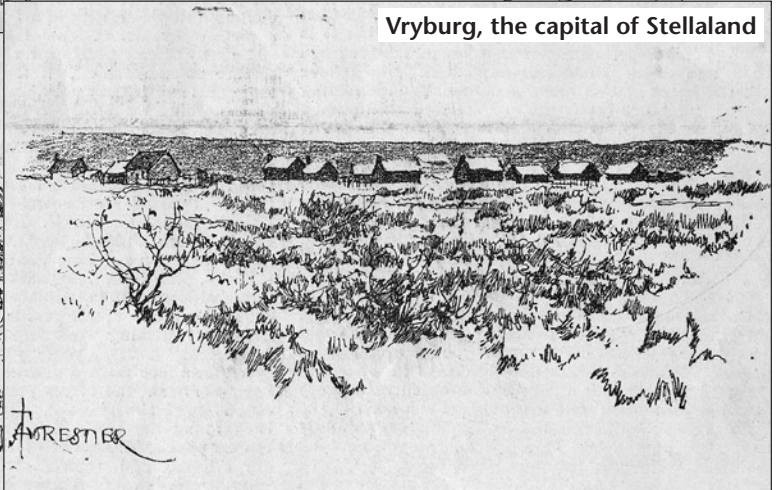
Great meeting of Mankoroane's tribe at Taungs, Feb 9



Taungs, the capital of Mankoroane's tribe



Vryburg, the capital of Stellaland



BECHUANALAND



BECHUANALAND / RHODESIA 1888 (Sep) cover from F.R. 'Matabele' Thompson to his wife in Cape Town, posted at Tati while en-route with C.D. Rudd to see Lobengula in Gubulawayo. One stamp removed and bearing two Protectorate 2d. on 2d lilac and black (SG 42) cancelled with manuscript 'Tati 15/9/(88)'. This matches the cancellation of 15/8/88 illustrated in Dann's *The Romance of the Posts of Rhodesia*. It was applied by postal agent Samuel Edwards as he had not yet received the Tati datestamp. Each stamp additionally cancelled and tied by MAFEKING (OC ?) single circle datestamps with an additional strike alongside, applied in transit. Rosebank (OC 10) and Cape Town (OC 10) transit / arrival datestamps on reverse. Some staining though the only recorded example of this manuscript cancellation on cover. Illustrated page 2 of *The Postmarks, Postal Routes and Principal Postage Rates of Southern Rhodesia to 1924* by Knight and Mitchell. The postage rate was 6d per half ounce (4d Protectorate rate plus 2d for letters from the Trans-Protectorate); the missing stamp was therefore probably a third 2d. Unique, and a major item of both Bechuanaland and Rhodesian philately. £2650

The Bechuanaland section of <http://www.rhodesia.co.za> has recently been updated and now lists over 450 items, the majority of which are illustrated.

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