

POSTMARKS OF THE SHIPPING POSTMASTER & ASSISTANT POSTMASTER (ALFRED DOCKS, CAPE TOWN)

& SHIPPING POSTMASTER (POINT, DURBAN)

Robert Hill



1911. Letter to Berlin, Germany, mailed by a passenger on '16 AUG 1911' in Cape Town.

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Part 1
POSTMARKS OF THE
SHIPPING POSTMASTER
(ALFRED DOCKS, CAPE TOWN)

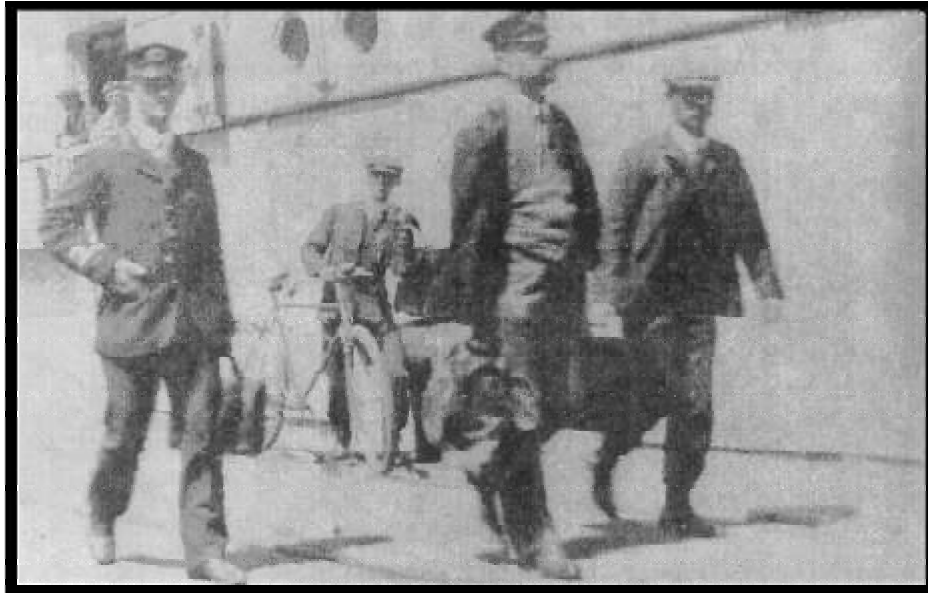
Part 2
POSTMARKS OF THE
ASSISTANT POSTMASTER
(ALFRED DOCKS, CAPE TOWN)

Part 3
POSTMARKS OF THE
SHIPPING POSTMASTER
(POINT, DURBAN)

NOTE: Durban had a Shipping Postmaster but NOT an Assistant Postmaster.

PART 1

POSTMARKS OF THE SHIPPING POSTMASTER CAPE TOWN



The Shipping Postmaster at Cape Town Docks

The “Shipping Postmaster and Assistant Postmaster” postmarks, which were applied on board ships in harbour are particular to South Africa and appear to have no counterparts elsewhere.

These distinctive postmarks were only applied to mail bearing South African stamps, as items franked with foreign stamps were sent to the head post office for “Paquebot” cancellations.

The Assistant Postmaster was only used on busy days when more than one ship had to be serviced. Their duties were to visit ships, mostly but not exclusively mail carriers, as they arrived or departed from Cape Town in order to:-

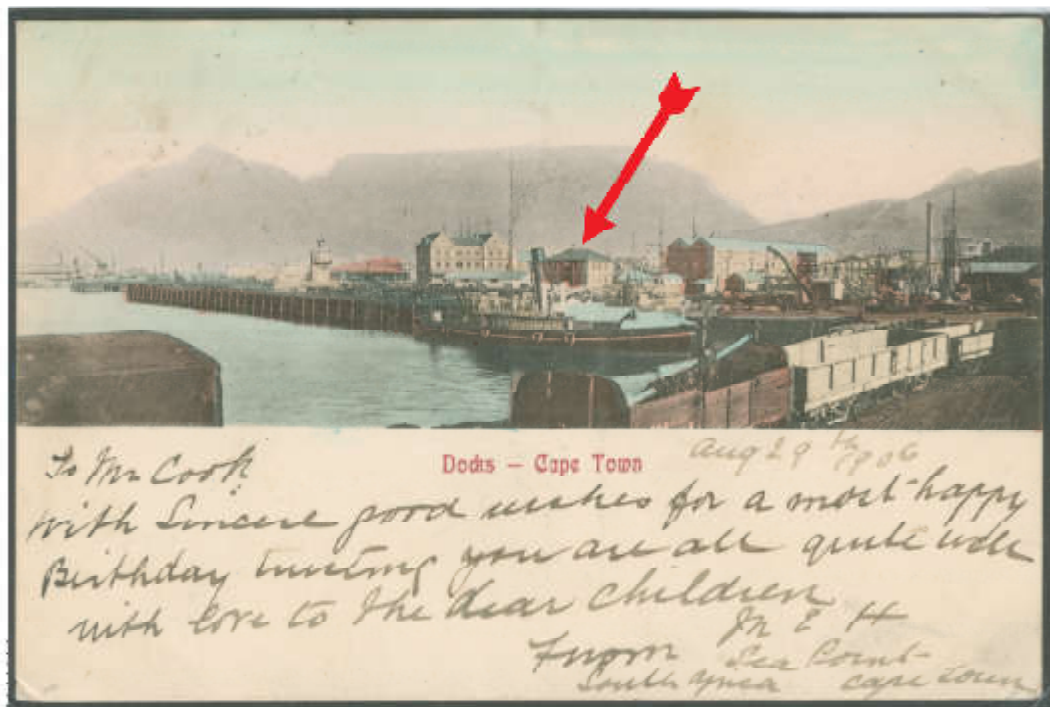
- (a) Accept for onward transmission registered letters, cables (sent by registered mail) and telegrams.**
- (b) To sell postage stamps and money orders but not to cash the latter.**
- (c) On occasion to hand over registered letters to the ship’s officers for delivery.**
- (d) To collect the incoming mail.**

Registration labels were not applied before World War 11, but instead an additional strike of their date stamp was made with the registration number written across or within it.

THE ALFRED DOCKS POST OFFICE

It is assumed that the "Shipping and Assistant Shipping Postmasters" at Cape Town operated from the Alfred Docks Post Office and did not have a separate building to themselves.

The postcard below which has a manuscript date of 1906 clearly shows in the centre of the card the Alfred Docks Post Office (highlighted by the arrow). The earliest recorded use of the "Shipping Postmaster" cancellations is in 1906.



To Mr Cook
with Sincere good wishes for a most happy
Birthday trusting you are all quite well
with love to the dear children
In L H
From Sea Point
South Africa Cape Town



Probably the earliest recorded date of a "Shipping Postmaster" cancellation.

SHIPPING POSTMASTER CAPE TOWN 1910



Piece displaying three 40mm double circle "Shipping Postmaster" cancellations from Cape Town. The date stamp has "Shipping Postmaster" at the top and "Cape Town" at the base. The centre shows the full date with day before month. There are two crosses at the side. Dovey Type 5.

The cancellations are in red ink, which are not listed by Dovey. The cancellation has also been seen in black. This canceller was in use from 1909-1910.

Note the usual practice of the "Shipping/Assistant Postmaster" in not using registration labels but instead stamping an additional cancellation and within it writing in pencil "R" and the "Registration Number", in this instance number 77 or a possible 97.

Also note the date of the cancellations "7th November 1910 which is 3 days after the issue of the Union of South Africa's first stamp (SG1).

THE SHIPPING POSTMASTER - CAPE TOWN



The above Registered cover bears on the front two examples of the blue 40mm rubber "Shipping Postmaster" postmark which was used from 1911 to 1913. It was a double circle date stamp with "Shipping Postmaster" at the top and "Cape Town" at the bottom and two star ornaments at the sides. The day was before the month and with a numeral "3" underneath the date. Note that unusually the postmaster has written a blue "R" in a circle (top left) in addition to the normal extra date stamp.



The reverse bears an additional "Shipping Postmaster" cancellation, a single circle Alfred Docks with "C.T." at the base date stamp, one Cape Town oval "Registered Letter Section" date stamp and a part legible oval "Registered" Cape Town date stamp.

**SHIPPING POSTMASTER CAPE TOWN – LATE POSTAGE
CHARGE**



Two superb strikes of the blue 40mm double circle rubber hand stamp of the Shipping Postmaster in Cape Town (Dovey type7) with day before month, numeral “3” in the inner circle and Cape Town at the base and “Star” ornaments at the sides.

This canceller was in use from 1911-13, note the “serif” type lettering.

The cover which is also “Interprovisional” shows in addition to the normal rate of postage to Germany (21/2d) two 6d Orange River Colony Stamps which covered the “Late Posting Charge” of one shilling.

SHIPPING POSTMASTER CAPE TOWN



40mm double circle violet rubber date hand stamp (Dovey type 7) with Serif lettering, day before month and the numeral "3" in the inner circle. Has two eight pointed stars at sides. Was in use 1911-1913.

SHIPPING & ASSISTANT SHIPPING POSTMASTER CANCELLATIONS – CAPE TOWN



36mm double circle blue "Shipping Postmaster" date stamp with serif lettering and figure "3" at base. Putzel type: 469



45mm double circle violet "Shipping Postmaster" date stamp, with month before and ornament above and below date. Putzel type: 471.



39mm double circle violet "Assistant Shipping Postmaster" date stamp, with month before day. Has serif lettering and wavy lines above and below date. Putzel type: 467.

SHIPPING POSTMASTER – CAPE TOWN



39mm blue double circle date rubber stamp with numeral "3" at base. This canceller was in use from 1911-1913 (Putzel type 469). Note that both cancellations are on one shilling stamps which would have indicated a "late fee" surcharge, which at the time was one shilling.



The above part front bearing a 43mm double circle blue rubber date stamp was in use from 1927-1931, and is normally seen in black. The front also displays an unrecorded 25mm "Dock's" double circle date stamp there being an apostrophe between the "K" and the "S".

This front is the actual one described by R. D. Allen in his book "The Maritime Marks of South Africa".

SHIPPING POSTMASTER – CAPE TOWN



This 48mm double circle rubber date stamp was in use from 1913-20 and can be identified by its unusual bow like ornaments above and below the date. The cancellation is normally seen in blue this strike however is in red. Putzel type 471.



SHIPPING POSTMASTER CAPE TOWN



48mm double circle datestamp with “bow like” ornaments above and below the date and two five pointed stars at the sides. This datestamp was in use from 1913 to 1920 and is normally seen in blue although examples have been seen in red.

Clear strikes of this mark (Dovey type 8) are not often seen.



SHIPPING POSTMASTER – CAPE TOWN



Double circle 40mm date stamp with month before day. Has a narrow “3” below the date and unusual star ornaments at sides. Used between 1913 and 1925.



42mm?double circle date stamp in red ink with day before month. There are possible small Maltese crosses at sides. Date reads 11th November 1910. The example above is currently unlisted.



40mm circle date stamp in violet with day shown before month. There are lines above and below the date. No inner circle. Used between 1933 and 1939.

SHIPPING POSTMASTER – CAPE TOWN

The two examples below are the 37mm circular Shipping Postmaster date stamp with the numeral “3” that was used between the period 1924 and 1928. Examples have been seen in both violet and black ink.

It should be noted that the “3” is broad whereas on other Shipping/Assistant Postmaster date stamps it is much narrower.

The piece above is from an “Ocean Letter” which was the term used to describe a “telegraphic cable”.



Dovey Type 6 (1907-10)

Dovey Type 11 (1927-30)



Dovey Type 10 (1924-28?)



SHIPPING POSTMASTER – CAPE TOWN

The cover below displays two fine strikes of the large 54mm x 37mm double oval violet date stamp with the numeral "3" which was used by the Shipping Master from 1927-1927 a period of just one year. It should be noted that most of the recorded date stamps for this year were in black.

The cover also displays a crude cork or rubber "R" (registration) cachet. It was normal practice to include an extra date stamp instead.



SHIPPING POSTMASTER – CAPE TOWN DOCKS

The Postmaster at the Alfred Docks (later Dock's) Post Office acted as the Shipping Postmaster when he boarded ships in the harbour to transact certain types of postal business (e.g. registered letters, late mail).

This applied to ships, mostly mail carriers as they sailed or arrived, in the case of the former up to a short time before their departure.

The Shipping Postmaster did not normally use a registration handstamp or label, merely using for the purpose an extra impression of his datestamp and writing the receipt number in or underneath it.



The double oval violet datestamp shown above was in use from 1930-1938 and has a diameter of 48mm with "Shipping Postmaster" at the top and "Cape Town" at the bottom with two asterisks at the sides.

The above part cover was part of the "Hagger" collection and Putzel in Volume 2 Page 102 of his "Postmarks of South Africa" series writes "a cover with such clear strikes is very rare".

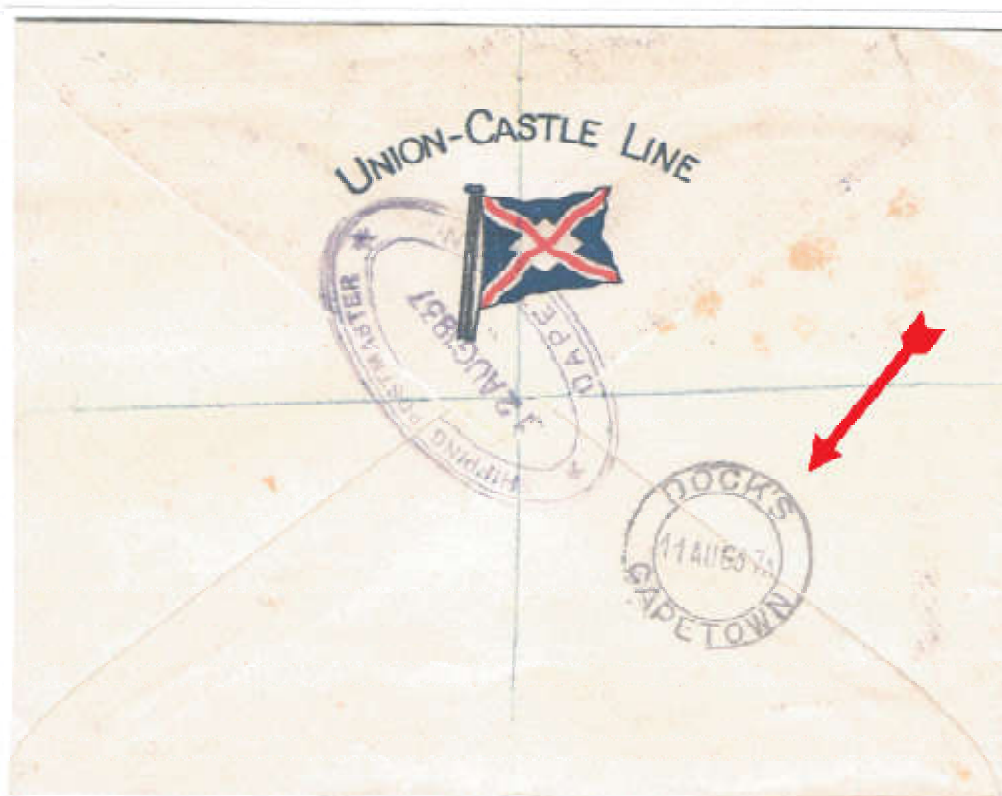
DOCK S – CAPE TOWN

The Docks Post Office in Cape Town was re-named from the “Alfred Docks, Cape Town, on 18th July 1921 and is still in use today although in different premises.

The Shipping Postmaster date stamp which was seen of the previous page also had on the rear of the cover in addition to another Shipping Postmaster cancellation a Dock’s date stamp of 11th August 1937.

The date stamp was a double circle date stamp 25mm in diameter with full date and time code letter. The month was in English.

Later date stamps were bi-lingual.



It should be noted that the “Dock’s” date stamp shows 11th August whilst the “Postmaster” date stamp is of the following day 12th August.

This may indicate that the Postmaster was based at the Docks Post Office and was not based elsewhere in the Docks area.

SHIPPING POSTMASTER – CAPE TOWN



A 48mm x 29mm double oval date stamp in violet with day before month. There is no numeral beneath date line. This date stamp was in use between 1930 and 1938. The example above shows 1935.



Another example of this particular date stamp but used in 1937. The asterisks in this particular date stamp appear to be smaller than those in the example at the top of the sheet.

SHIPPING POSTMASTER – CAPE TOWN



Cover cancelled by three strikes of the 48x28mm violet double circle date stamp with "Shipping Postmaster" at the top and "Cape Town" at the base and two asterisks at side (Putzel type 481).

The cover also bears a 29mm broken double circle Cape Town date stamp with "Cape Town 92" at top and "Kaapstad 92" at the bottom (Putzel type 339). Note the time code "0.15" indicating a quarter past midnight.



Records to date show that this "Shipping Postmaster" date stamp was in use from 1930-38. Note the above is dated 7th April 1939.

SHIPPING POSTMASTER – CAPE TOWN



The above cover displays three 40mm violet rubber circle hand stamps with the month in letters, lines above and below the date, two asterisks at the sides and no inner circle. Another strike is shown on the reverse.

It was presumed that registration slips were not used prior to World War 11, however they are shown on this cover (as well as the cover shown on the next sheet). Instead of the "Docks Cape Town" registration slip that was used later these show "Cape Town 84". Could it be that "84" was allocated to the Docks? (see copy of cover used in 1941 also with "84").



SHIPPING POSTMASTER – CAPE TOWN



The above cover displays two 40mm violet rubber circle hand stamps with the month in letters, lines above and below the date, two asterisks at the sides and no inner circle.

This date stamp was used from 1933-1939. The cover is dated 31st August 1939 and a few weeks later the month was permanently shown in Roman numerals not letters. Another strike is shown on the reverse of the cover.

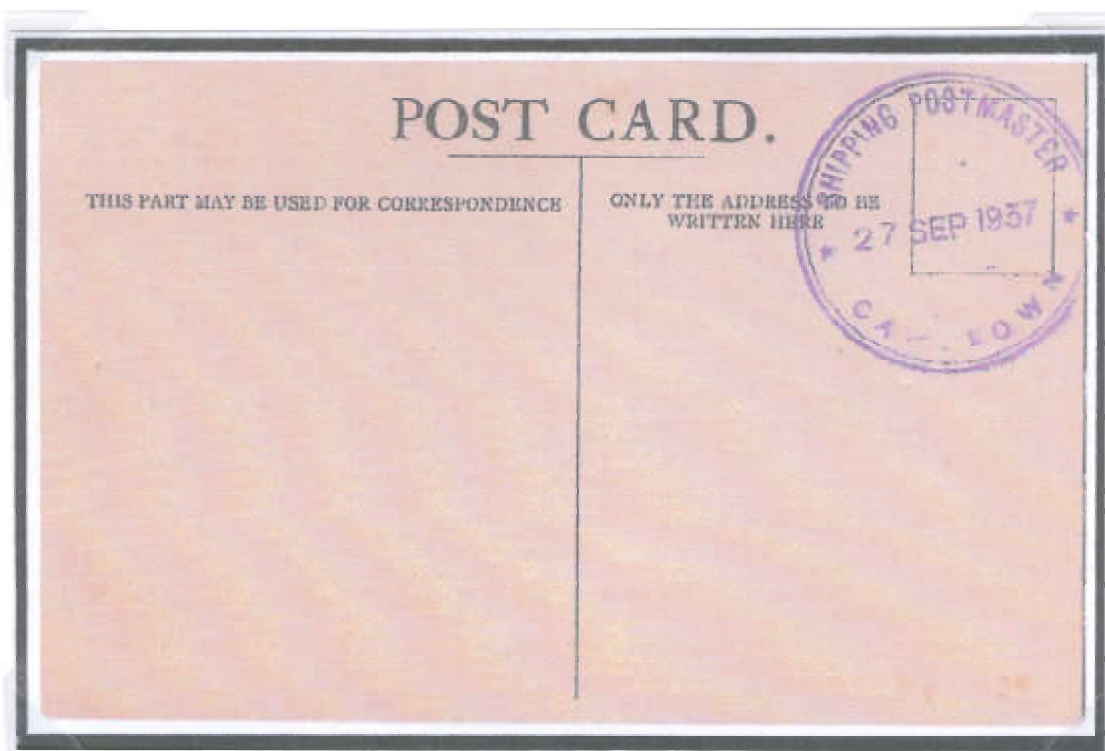


CAPE TOWN SHIPPING POSTMASTER DATE STAMP

The 40mm double circle violet rubber "Shipping Postmaster Cape Town" date stamp (Dover type 16) with the month in letters was in use from 1933 -39.

This example on the front of a Post Card (not addressed) of the Union-Castle mail ship "Carnarvon Castle" was probably stamped "Per Favour" by the Shipping Postmaster whilst the ship was in the docks at Cape Town.

The Shipping Postmaster used the Purser's office whilst on board ship, from where most Purser's sold postcards.



SHIPPING POSTMASTER – CAPE TOWN



A 40mm single violet rubber date stamp with "Shipping Postmaster" at the top and "Cape Town" at the bottom. There are two short lines above and below the date which has the month in figures.

This date stamp was believed to have been used during the period 1939-1948, when metal date stamps were introduced instead of the old rubber types. This example however is dated 22nd April 1949 and would indicate that they were still in use even although new metal ones had been introduced earlier.



SHIPPING POSTMASTER – CAPE TOWN



Registered air mail cover posted on the “Carnarvon Castle” bearing a violet 30mm metal double circle date stamp which was in use from 1949-59 and is normally seen used in black ink. The numeral “1” at the bottom indicates it belonged to the Shipping Postmaster. Putzel type 486.



SHIPPING POSTMASTER – CAPE TOWN



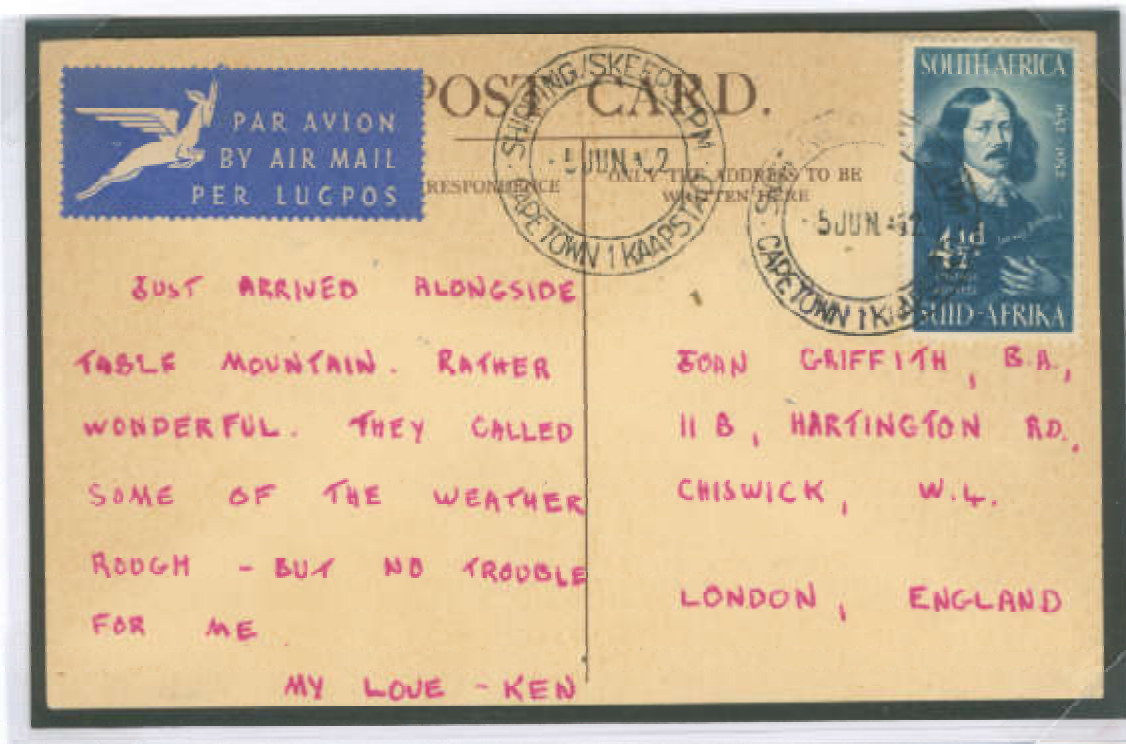
From 1949-1959 a new 30mm bilingual double circle date stamp was in use. The cancellation was normally in black ink. The numeral "1" at the bottom indicates it belonged to the Shipping Postmaster and the time code letter "A" was used in the morning. Putzel type 486.



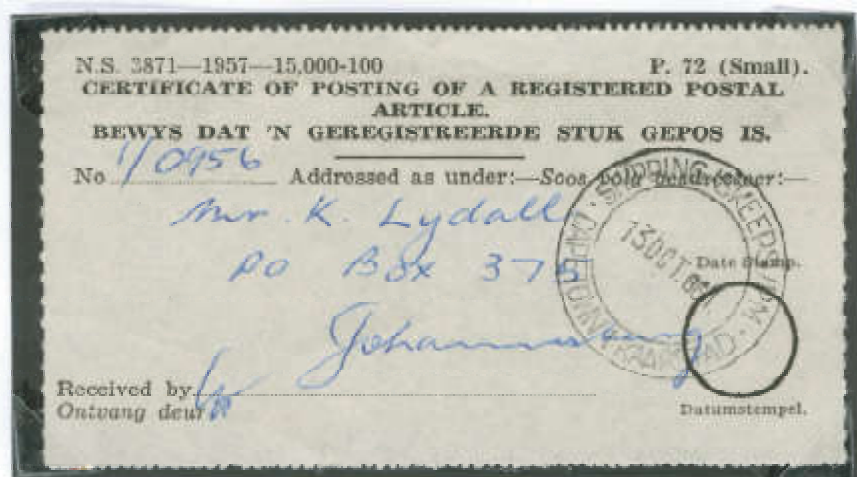
SHIPPING POSTMASTER – CAPE TOWN



Air Mail postcard posted on the "Pretoria Castle" bearing two strikes of the 30mm metal double circle bilingual date stamp which was in use from 1949-59. The numeral "1" at the bottom indicates it belonged to the Shipping Postmaster and the time code letter "A" was used in the morning. Putzel type 486.



Shipping Postmaster 30mm double circle date stamp with numeral "1" at base.
 Has time code "B" (afternoon delivery) in use from 1950-63 (Dovey type 18).
 Also has certificate of posting.



ROBERT HILL'S NOTES: 1

Bob has kept extensive notes on Shipping Postmaster Postal History. Among these are items he bid on at auction, often as the underbidder. These notes were attached to the reverse of his sheets because of their relevance to his display item. Some and other items are included here.

REVERSE PAGE 5



- 832 **RARE LARGE DOVEY TYPE 7 CANCELLATION ON REGISTERED COVER - A PREMIER EXHIBITION ITEM OF PHILATELIC BEAUTY;** 8 Dec. 1911 White Star Line env. (light fold & opened out) registered to Manchester bearing Transvaal 2½d blue tied by a v. fine strike of the large almost matching blue double ring "SHIPPING POSTMASTER/3/CAPE TOWN" c.d.s. with another equally fine strike alongside. On reverse a further strike plus "ALFRED DOCKS" c.d.s. and oval "REGISTERED LETTER SECTION/CAPE TOWN" d.s. both of 8 Dec. 1911, plus oval "REGISTERED/MANCHESTER" arrival d.s. of 30 Dec. 1911. *Illustrated on the outside back cover of Rogers 2000 book.* PHOTO - see page 12.

£50

REVERSE PAGE 8



- 836 **A RARE SHIPPING POSTMASTER C.D.S. (DOVEY TYPE 9) ON REGISTERED OCEAN LETTER WITH CONTENTS;** 19 Nov. 1923 Radio Communications Co. Ocean Letter with contents registered to Pretoria with Transvaal 1½d block of four tied by a complete strike of the violet "SHIPPING POSTMASTER/3/CAPE TOWN" c.d.s. (Dovey type 9) with further strike nearby. On reverse a further strike plus "DOCKS/CAPE TOWN" c.d.s. of the same date. Also the original contents, an ocean letter posted via. "SS ARMADALE CASTLE" to "SS BRITON". PHOTO - see page 67.

£300

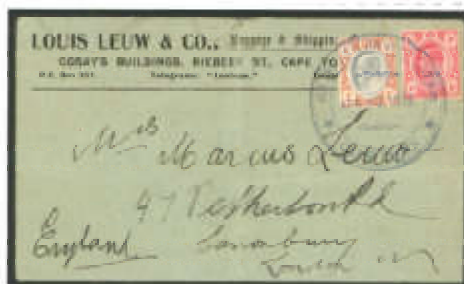
ROBERT HILL'S NOTES: 2

REVERSE PAGE 8



- 835 THE SCARCE SHIPPING POSTMASTER C.D.S. (DOVEY TYPE 9) ON NEAT ENVELOPE TO FRANCE: 8 Dec. 1919 env. registered to France bearing Transvaal ½d & 6d tied by an almost complete strike of the scarce large blue "SHIPPING POSTMASTER/3/CAPE TOWN" c.d.s. (Dovey type 9) with a further complete strike alongside. A further strike on reverse together with 31 Dec. 1913 French arrival c.d.s. PHOTO - see page 67. £300

REVERSE PAGE 9



- 833 A RARE LATE FEE COVER WITH DOVEY TYPE 8 CANCELLATION; 30 April 1913 printed env. (vertical fold) of "LOUIS LEUW & CO., Cape Town to London franked with Transvaal 1d & 1/- (paying late fee) tied by a complete strike of the scarce blue "SHIPPING POST MASTER/CAPE TOWN" double ring c.d.s. (Dovey type 8). A rare late fee item. Note; The "Kildonan Castle" left Cape Town for Southampton on 30th April 1911 arriving at Southampton on 17th May. PHOTO - see page 66.

£300

ROBERT HILL'S NOTES: 3

REVERSE PAGE 15



- 840 RARE EXAMPLES OF DOVEY TYPES 11 & 16 ON ITEMS REGISTERED TO GERMANY; 4 Sept. 1927 S. Africa 1½d postcard to Germany uprated with 4d pair tied by a v.fine oval "SHIPPING POSTMASTER/3/CAPETOWN" d.s. (Dovey type 11) with "R" and Maisack 28 Sept. 1927 arrival c.d.s. 5 Feb. 1935 env. registered to Berlin with S. Africa 4d & 1/- tied by a fine "SHIPPING POSTMASTER/CAPETOWN" c.d.s. (Dovey type 16). PHOTO - see page 67.

£120



This "Shipping Postmaster Capetown" cachet was added to a postcard on route for Germany. It was posted from the Hapag Linie vessel "D.Toledo" in Capetown harbour. The Shipping Postmaster handstamps are unique to South Africa and were used only in Cape Town and Durban. The Shipping Postmaster boarded ships in the harbour to sell postage stamps and accept registered letters, and telegrams for onward transmission.

ROBERT HILL'S NOTES: 4

REVERSE PAGE 16

This cover, addressed to a Cape Town P.O. Number has on the flap "Union-Castle Line" over a large print of the Company Ensign on flag-staff in blue and red. Intended to be registered, it seems to have been posted "out of course" as there is a DR HS "Docks II Aug 37A Capetown" in black on the back, whilst on both front and back there are four oval three ring HS in purple "Shipping Postmaster 12 Aug 1937 Capetown," a day later. What might well be the registration number in blue crayon MS "9967" is overprinted with one of the oval HS. It would seem likely that the stamps were also affixed in the Shipping Postmasters' office, as they appear to be over the blue registration line (3d. stamp), and were not postmarked with the Docks HS.

9966
Same plate
shown in
Putzel

REVERSE PAGE



ROBERT HILL'S NOTES: 5

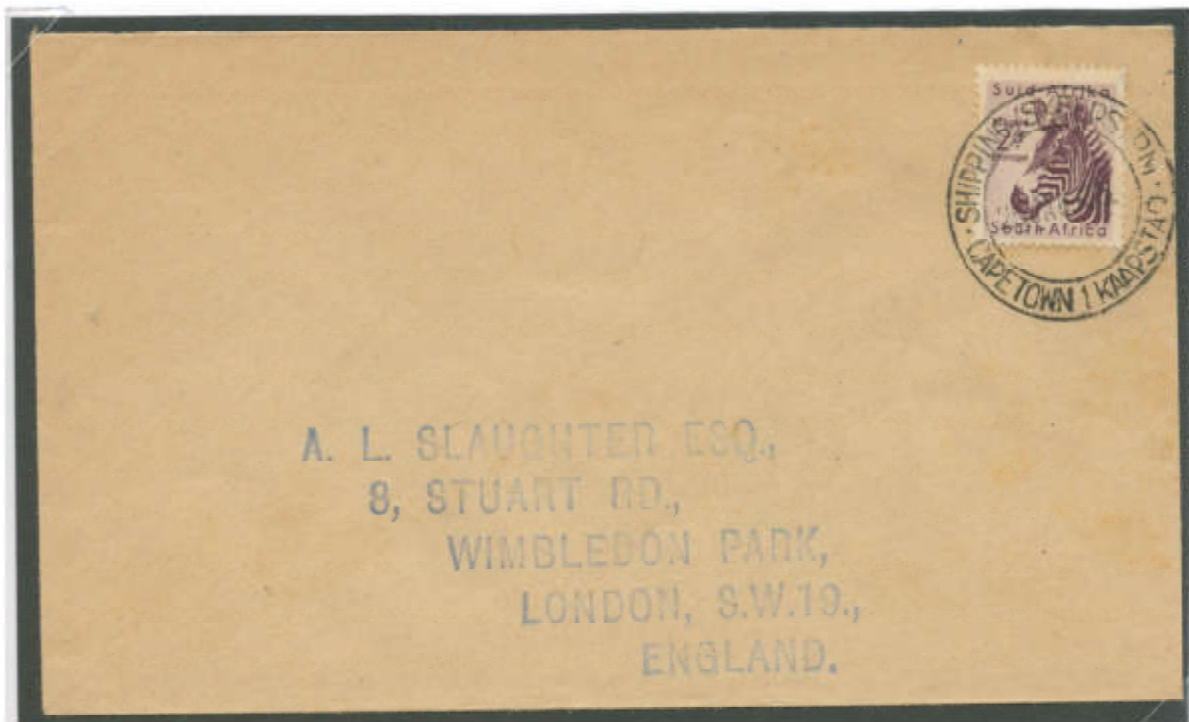
REVERSE PAGE 24



- 842 RARE USE ON AIRMAIL COVER TO LAGOS OF DOVEY TYPE 14; 29 May 1937 Air Mail cover registered from Khartoum to Lagos with S. Africa 1d, 3d & 1/- tied by fine strikes of the oval "SHIPPING POSTMASTER/ CAPETOWN" d.s. (Dovey type 14) with another example nearby and on reverse. Lagos arrival c.d.s. of 3 June 1937. Also a front to Germany with a similar cancellation for the assistant postmaster. (2 items). PHOTO - see page 67.

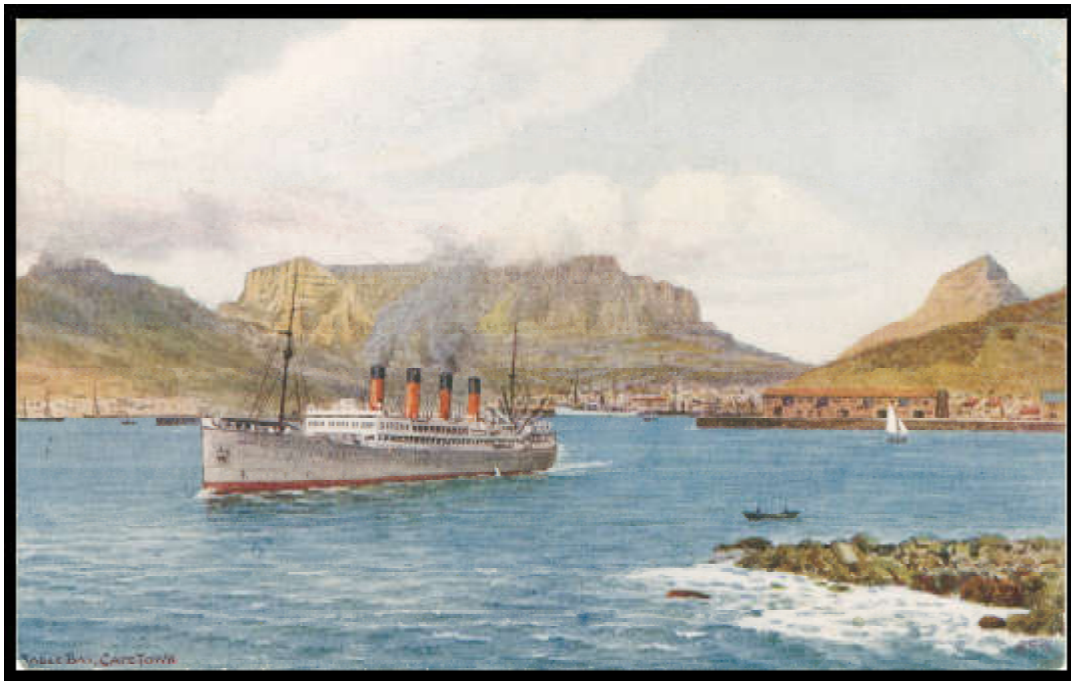
£200

REVERSE PAGE 26



PART 2

POSTMARKS OF THE ASSISTANT SHIPPING POSTMASTER CAPE TOWN



1924. 'Table Bay, Cape Town'. (Perry & Co, Cape Town). Original Watercolour by A. R. Quinton.
A Union-Castle mailship from the era of Shipping Postmasters departs the Docks.

ASSISTANT SHIPPING POSTMASTER – CAPE TOWN



The above block of four displays the 39mm violet rubber double circle date stamp that was in use from 1907 to 1909 and shows “Assistant Shipping Postmaster” at the top, two Maltese type crosses at the sides and “Cape Town” at the bottom.

The shipping postmaster (who had his own rubber date stamps) and his assistant operated from the Albert Docks in Cape Town. It is believed that the assistant postmaster only operated when pressure of work justified it.

They boarded ships in the harbour (mostly mail ships) as they sailed or arrived to transact certain types of postal business. In the case of ships sailing it was just before their departure.

Other mail items were taken to the Post Office at the Docks to be dealt with, whilst incoming mail was handled by the main Post Office in Cape Town where the “Paquebot” mark was applied.

Putzel regards all Postmaster and Assistant Postmaster cancellations are rare.

ASSISTANT SHIPPING POSTMASTER – CAPE TOWN



43mm violet rubber double circle date stamp with inner circle within, it has the day before the month and has two stars at the sides.

Records indicate that this cancellation was in use from 1926-29, although this cover is dated 17th August 1925. This is the canceller that later became distorted due to the handle becoming loose. Also shown on the reverse is the unlisted "Dock's" double circle date stamp.



ASSISTANT SHIPPING POSTMASTER – CAPE TOWN



The postcard below displays two fine strikes of the “deformed” Assistant Shipping Postmaster date stamp. This was originally a 43mm double circle date stamp which was used between 1927-1931 but due to believed repair work when the handle became detached and local office repairs made, instead of it being sent away for repair, it ended up a stunted oval date stamp.



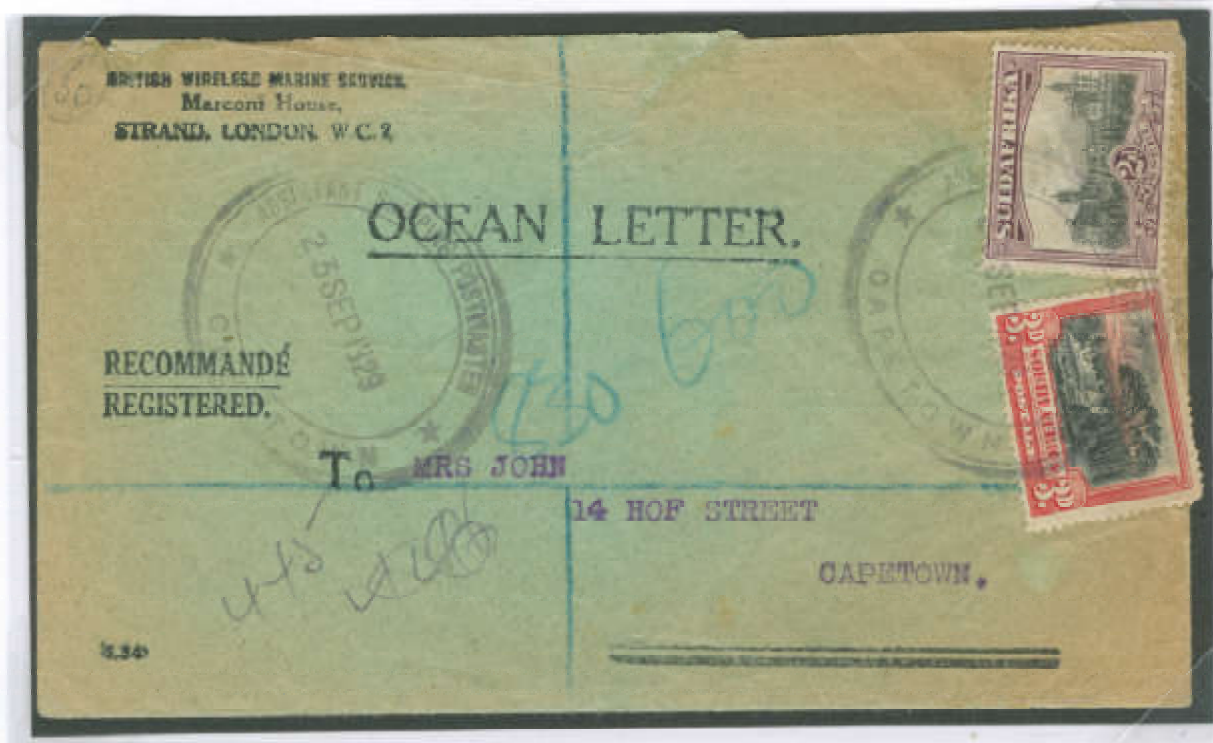
The post card also displays a crude cork or rubber "R" (registration) mark and the "Docks" 26mm double circle date stamp. It was the normal practice of both the Shipping Postmaster and his Assistant not to use registration marks or labels but to place an additional date stamp on the stamps denoting the extra charge and write the registration number therein. In this instance the registration number is written on the "R".

ASSISTANT SHIPPING POSTMASTER – CAPE TOWN



The above 43mm violet rubber double circle date stamp was in use from 1926-29, the month is in letters and the cancellation has also been seen in black.

Due to damage to the canceller (the handle being loose and finally becoming detached) cancellations became increasingly distorted and it had to be repaired locally. The above example was used on the "Windsor Castle" and shows the distortion clearly. Putzel type 478.

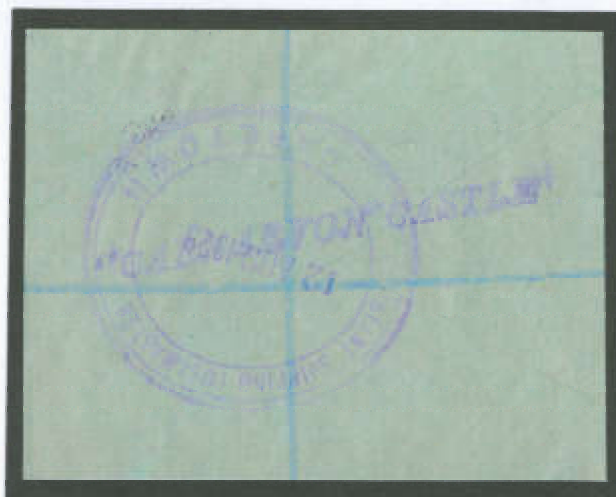


ASSISTANT SHIPPING POSTMASTER – CAPE TOWN



The above 43mm violet rubber double circle date stamp was in use from 1926-29 (Although I have a example from 1925). The cancellations have been seen in black.

Due to the canceller (the handle being loose and finally becoming detached) cancellations became increasingly distorted and had to be replaced locally. The example below was used on the "Carnarvon Castle" and shows early stages of distortion. Putzel type 478.



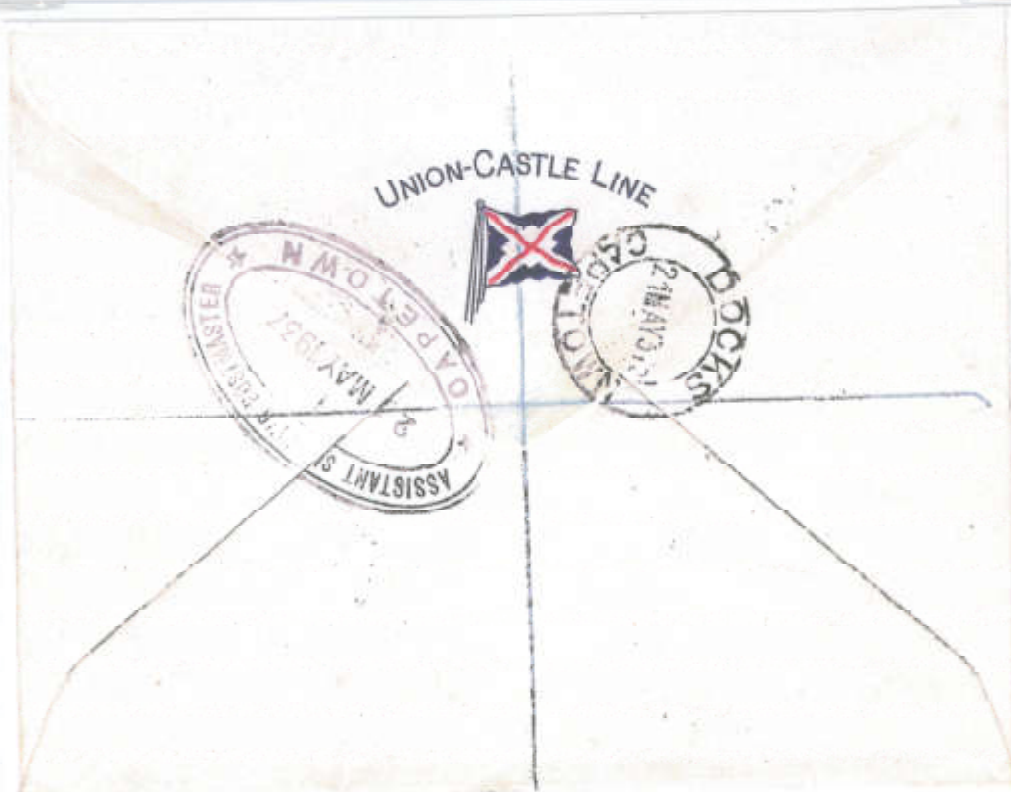
Reverse bearing "Carnarvon Castle" rubber hand cachet.

ASSISTANT SHIPPING POSTMASTER – CAPE TOWN

The cover below displays four 48mm x 30mm double oval date stamps in black of the Assistant Shipping Postmaster that was in use from 1933-1937.

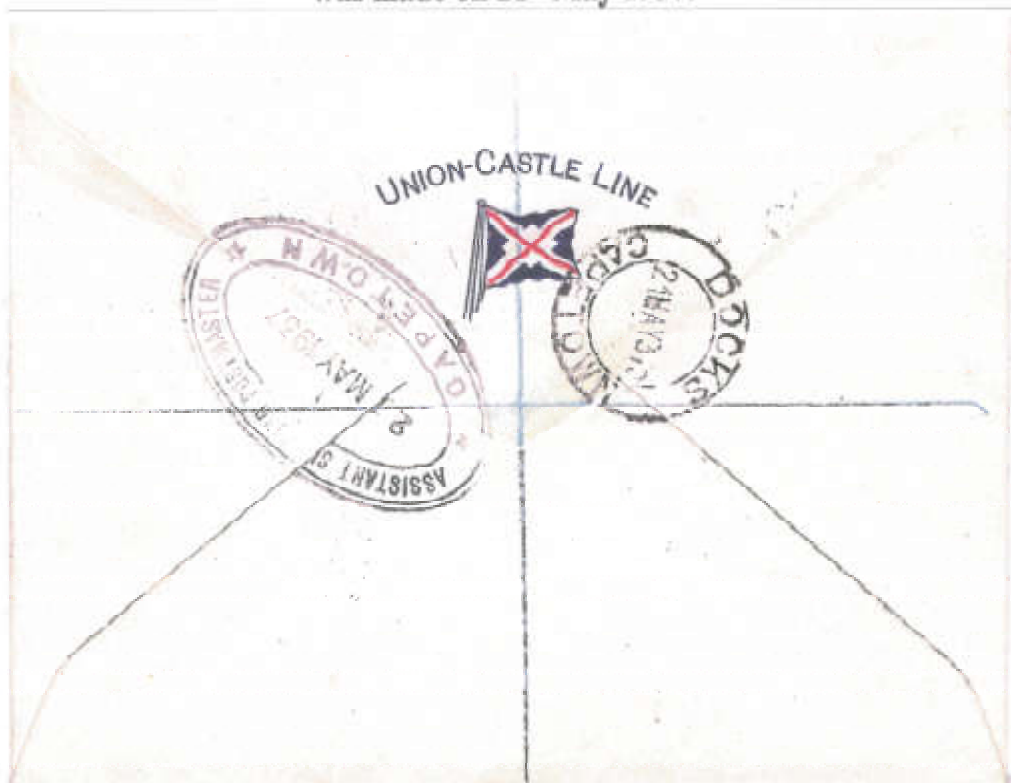
Note that no “R” or registration label is used but an extra date stamp with the registration number in blue is inserted manually.

The reverse displays an additional Assistant’s date stamp and a 26mm double circle date stamp of the “Docks” Cape Town.

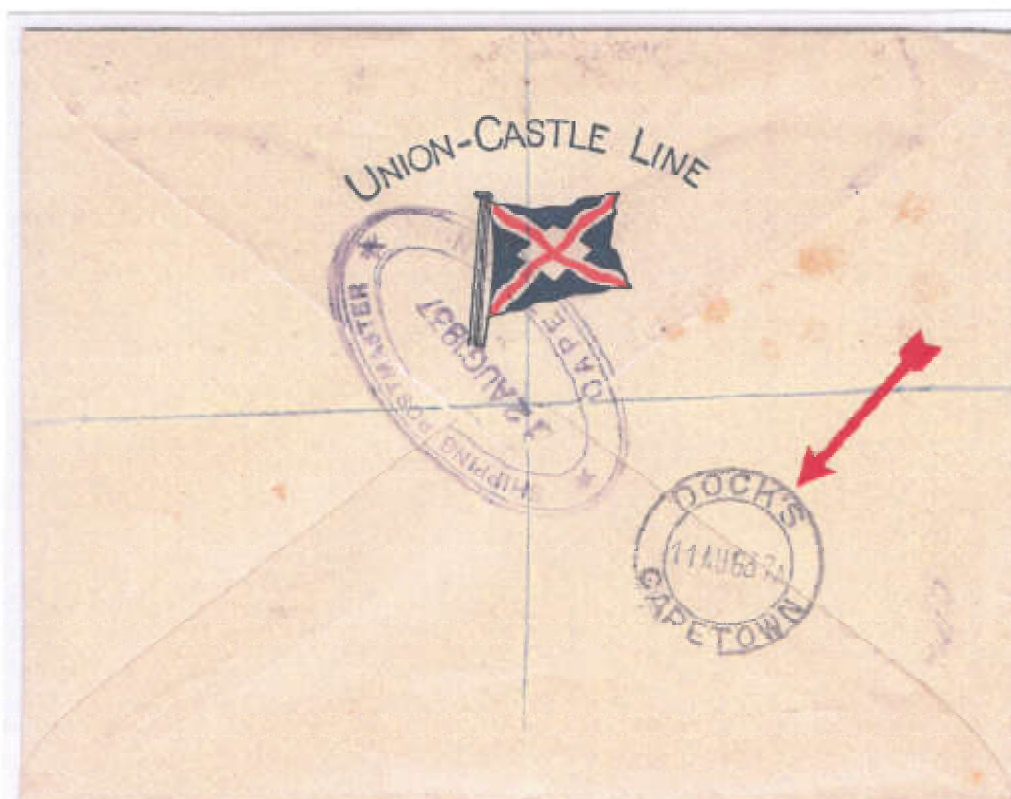


UNLISTED DOCKS DATE STAMP

The "DOCKS" double circle date stamp shown below is the one listed in Putzel and does not have an apostrophe between the letters "K & S". This cancellation was made on 21st May 1937.



The "DOCKS" double circle date stamp shown below has a clear apostrophe between the letters "K & S" and is not listed by Putzel. This cancellation was made on 11th August 1937. This is only 3 months after the cancellation shown on the above cover. Were there two separate date stamps in use at the same time or was the latter one a replacement for the one shown at the top of the page?



ASSISTANT SHIPPING POSTMASTER – CAPE TOWN



The cover below displays five 48 x 30mm double oval date stamps in black of the Assistant Shipping Postmaster that was in use from 1933-37, Putzel type 485.

Note that no registration label is used but an extra date stamp with the registration number in blue is inserted manually.

The reverse displays an additional Assistant's date stamp with a 26mm double circle "Docks" Cape Town date stamp, Putzel type 1X.



Certificate of Posting.

ASSISTANT SHIPPING POSTMASTER – CAPE TOWN



This 28mm metal bilingual double circle date stamp was in use from 1949-59 and is normally seen in black. The month is in letters and the numeral "2" indicates that it is the Assistant Postmaster's date stamp. The time code letter "A" denotes use in the morning. Putzel type 487.



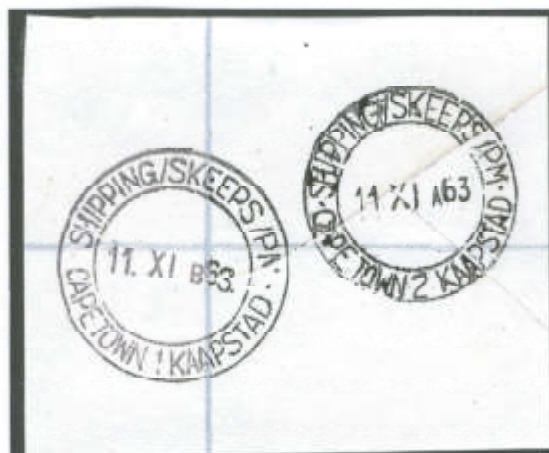
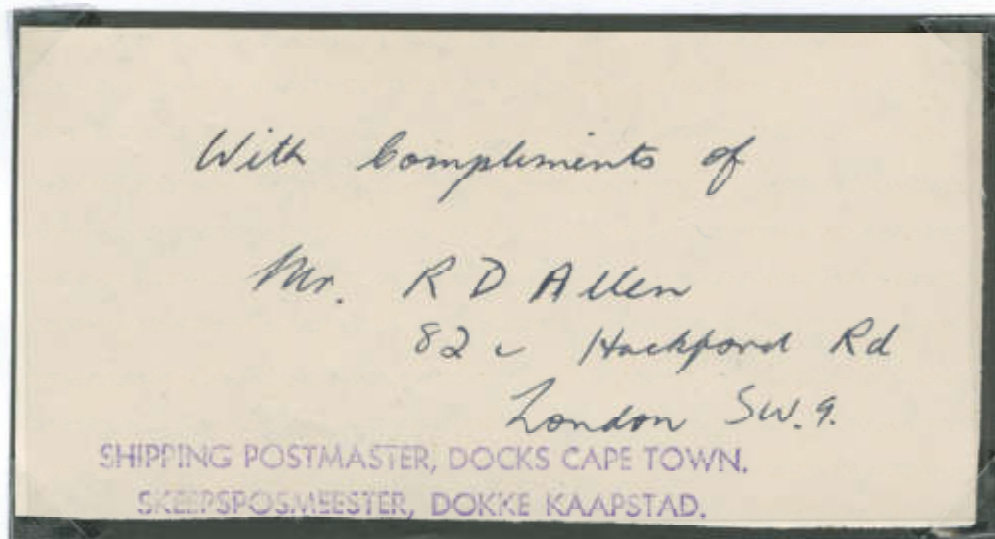
ASSISTANT SHIPPING POSTMASTER – CAPE TOWN



This 28mm metal bilingual double circle date stamp was in use from 1949-59 and is normally seen in black. The month is in letters and the numeral "2" indicates that it is the Assistant Postmaster's date stamp. The time code letter "A" denotes use in the morning. Putzel type 487.



Assistant Shipping Postmaster 30mm double circle bilingual date stamp with numeral "2" at base and time code "A" (morning delivery) in use from 1963-72 (Dovey Type 21). Note Shipping Postmaster's bilingual hand cachet (Dovey type 22). Cover was sent to Dr. Harvey Pirie by Mr. R.D. Allen via the Shipping Postmaster Mr. C. Hibbard.



ASSISTANT SHIPPING POSTMASTER – CAPE TOWN



This 28mm metal bilingual double circle date stamp was in use from 1949-59 and is normally seen in black, this example however is in violet. The month is in letters and the numeral "2" indicates that it is the Assistant Postmaster's date stamp. The time code letter "A" denotes use in the morning. Putzel type 487.



ASSISTANT SHIPPING POSTMASTER – CAPE TOWN



This 28mm metal bilingual double circle date stamp was in use from 1949-59 and is normally seen in black, this example however is in violet. The month is in letters and the numeral "2" indicates that it is the Assistant Postmaster's date stamp. The time code letter "A" denotes use in the morning. Putzel type 487.



Reduced & Rotated
See Previous

ROBERT HILL'S NOTES: 2/1

REVERSE PAGE 35



SHIPPING POSTMASTER, CAPE TOWN.

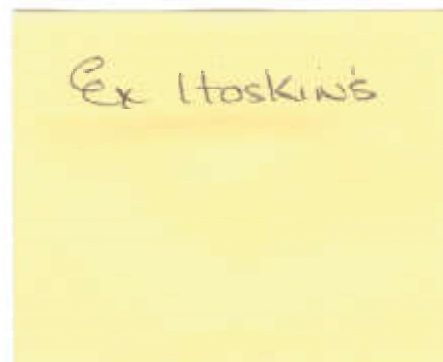
In our issue of Nov. 1951 (Vol. 27, p. 199) there was recorded what was then the earliest known date (20 SEP 1910) for a Cape Town Shipping Postmaster cancellation. This was in the collection of Mr. E. Lauder of Glasgow.

I have been fortunate enough recently to find similar marks of a still earlier date, 18 AUG 1909. They are of the same type as Mr. Lauder's, viz., a double circle of 40 mm. diam., outer circle double lined. "Shipping Postmaster" at the top, "Cape Town" at the bottom, and the date in one line in the centre. Maltese Crosses between upper and lower lettering. The marks are on blocks of 12 of Cape Edwardian 3d. and 1d. stamps, the colour being a faded violet or purple.

J. H. HARVEY PIRIE

S.A. Philatelist Sept 1954

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- 834 AN INTERESTING COLLECTION INCLUDING DOVEY TYPES 5, 8, 13 17 & 19 AND A FEW LATER; 1920-58 covers/cards & pieces (3) inc. 1920 env. (poor) registered to Durban with S Africa 2d & 3d tied by "SHIPPING POSTMASTER/CAPE TOWN" c.d.s. (Dovey type 8). 17 Aug. 1925 registered Ocean Letter from London to Natal with fine "ASSISTANT SHIPPING POSTMASTER/CAPE TOWN" c.d.s. (Dovey type 13) and another on env. (stains) dated 23 Sept. 1929.. 22 April 1929 env. registered from Cape Town to Johannesburg with fine "SHIPPING POSTMASTER/CAPETOWN" (Dovey type 13) c.d.s. A good lot. (14 items) PHOTO - see page 67.

£300

ROBERT HILL'S NOTES: 2/2 (SEPARATE INSERT)


Form No. 51.

RADIO COMMUNICATION COMPANY, LIMITED.

34-35, NORFOLK STREET, STRAND, W.C.2.

[W. & S. Ltd.]

OCEAN LETTER.

R.M.S. "EDINBURGH CASTLE" Station.  Date **28 MAY 1926**

Prefix.	Number.	No. of Words.	RECEIVED.		
SSD	11	29	From	Time	By
	69		CLWT	0110	<i>[Signature]</i>

POSTED.			CHARGES.		
Port	Date	By	Due to ship		
Cape Town	31/5/26	J.K.S.			
			Paid out		

Handed in on Board the S.S. *Llanstephan Castle* on **27 MAY 1926** for transmission and posting via S.S. **R.M.S. "EDINBURGH CASTLE"**

To *Master Reggie Brown 27 Beach Rd Durban*

We are now fifteen hundred miles

Form 20a.

OCEAN LETTER.

Master Reggie Brown,
27 Beach Road,
Durban.

4689

RECOMMENDED
REGISTERED

RADIO COMMUNICATION CO., LTD.,
34-35, NORFOLK STREET,
LONDON, W.C.2.

I was the underbidder on this one, went for £900+

- 863 ☒ **RARE "SHIPPING POSTMASTER" CAPE TOWN CANCELS (TYPE 10) ON COMPLETE "OCEAN LETTER" WITH CONTENTS:** Fine 31 May 1926 "OCEAN LETTER" env. (flap lost) registered to Durban with KGV 2d Pair + Ship 1d tied by a mainly very fine rare purple 2-ring "SHIPPING POSTMASTER/[3]/CAPE TOWN" cds (Dovey type 10) with a second strike on the front and a further large part strike on the reverse; most unusually with the original very fine "OCEAN LETTER" contents with a superb purple "R.M.S. EDINBURGH CASTLE" mark and message from "S.S. [Llanstephan Castle]" that was "1500 miles from Cape Town...". [The similar 1923 Type 9 cover with contents in Cavendish's Dec. 2014 auction, lot 836, realised £1,080.] Exhibition item from a recent (Aug. 2016) family 'find' in Scotland. PHOTO - see page 65.

ROBERT HILL'S NOTES: 2/3

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- 841 THE DISTORTED DOVEY TYPE 13 C.D.S.; 6 May 1927 "OCEAN LETTER" env. registered to Zanzibar bearing S. Africa 1d, 2d & 3d tied by the distorted slightly oval "SHIPPING POSTMASTER/CAPE TOWN" (Dovey type 13) c.d.s. The env. is roughly opened and a little discoloured. A scarce item. PHOTO - see page 67.

£120

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LONDON PRINTING

A pre-printed Ocean Letter from the Assistant Shipping Postmaster in Cape Town addressed to East London, dated 12 AUG 1929 with a 2d & 3d London printing issue attached. It has a cachet on the reverse indicating that this letter was sent on the 'Carnarvon Castle'.

PART 3

POSTMARKS OF THE SHIPPING POSTMASTER POINT, DURBAN



Circa 1910. The mailship, RMS Briton, a 'Cape Flyer' entering Durban harbour, When she entered service in 1898, she was the largest ship operating between Great Britain and any of her colonies. Only the Transatlantic liner were larger.

SHIPPING POSTMASTER – DURBAN



The appointment of a Shipping Postmaster in Durban can be seen as inter-colonial rivalry between Cape Town and Durban. The duties performed were the same as in Cape Town but there was no Assistant Shipping Postmaster.

R.D. Allen in his 1975 book "The Maritime Marks of South Africa" on page 50 writes "A very late find, double lined circle, 5 pointed stars, on Ocean Letter dated 28. Nov. 1927. Only known recorded piece".



Above piece is the cancellation referred to by Allen in his book

Allen writes "the early marks are very rarely seen in a collection and to be the subject of an auction list would be a complete surprise".

Mike Dovey in his 2013 book "The Shipping Postmaster Cancellations of South Africa" writes under rarity "Any reader will have noticed that in this area of collecting even the smallest fragment of a piece or even a stamp only can have a major historical value as it could be that it is the only known copy of a cancellation."

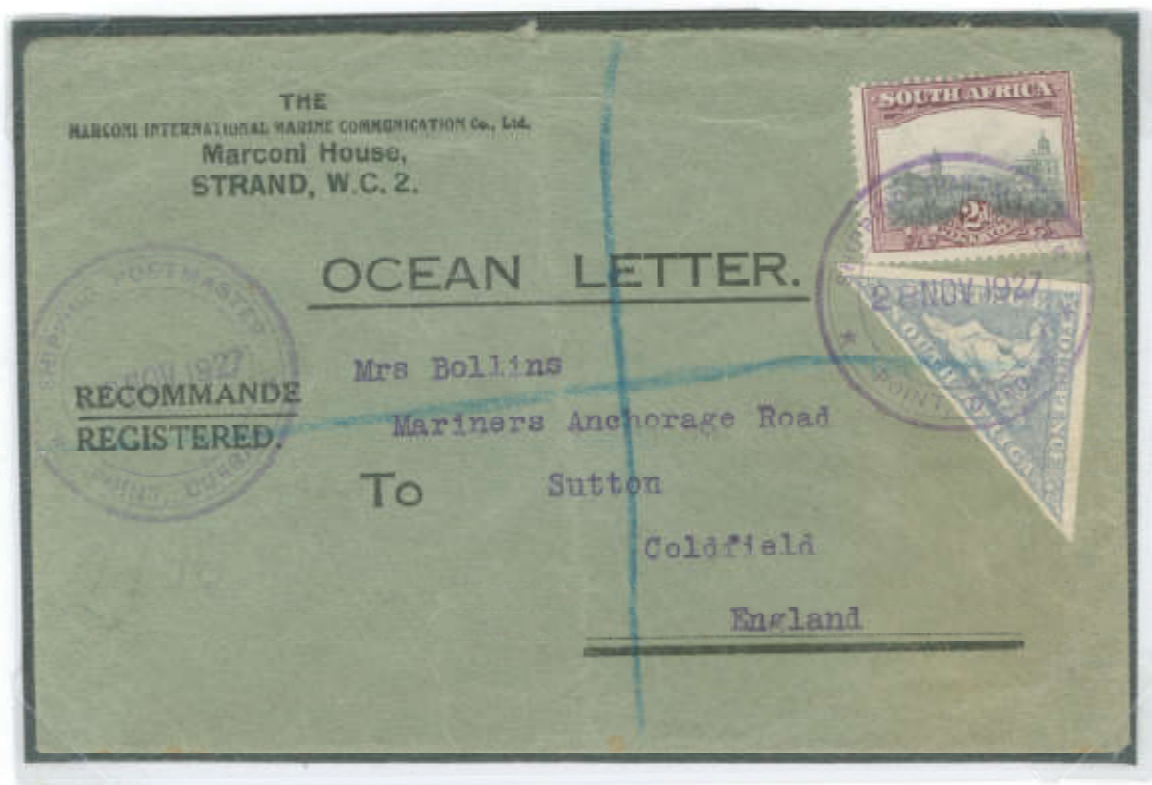
SHIPPING POSTMASTER – DURBAN



The appointment of a shipping postmaster in Durban can be seen as inter-colonial rivalry between Cape Town and Durban. The duties performed by the shipping postmaster were the same as those in Cape Town, but there was no assistant postmaster.

The cancellation was 36mm double circle violet rubber date stamp with "Shipping Postmaster" at the top and "Point, Natal" at the base. Day was before month. This date stamp is believed to have been in use between 1927-36.

R.D. Allen in "The Maritime Marks of South Africa" writes of the "28th Nov 1927" cancellation "only recently found and the only recorded known piece".

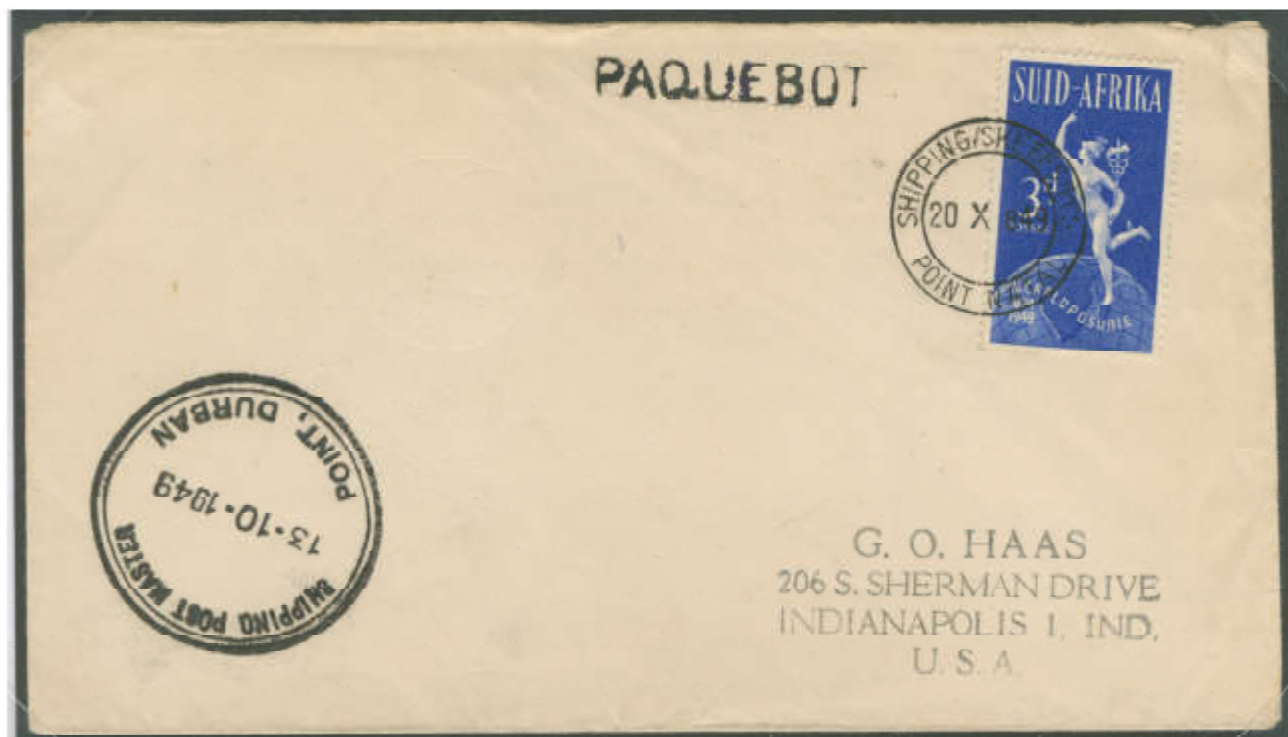


Putzel in his "Encyclopaedia of South African Post Offices, Volume 3 states regarding the cancellations of the Durban Shipping Postmaster, "Such is their rarity that anyone could collect South African maritime material for decades without ever seeing, let alone have the opportunity to acquire a single cover, bearing one of these marks, which had passed through the post".

SHIPPING POSTMASTER – DURBAN



PAQUEBOT



The large 36mm double circle date stamp with the date in numerals was in use from 1939-1948 and was replaced in 1948 by a metal 26mm double circle bilingual date stamp which continued in use until 1963?.

The "Paquebot" mark was the subject of an article in the South African Philatelist (Feb 1949) which stated that no such mark had been seen on cover and that according to Mr. W. Ovens at the Shipping Postmaster's office in Durban the die had been lying there for years but had not been used. The above cover seems to have been used 8 months later.

Although philatelic, this cover is the only example showing any of the 3 cancellations that I have seen and are listed by Putzel as extremely rare.

ROBERT HILL'S NOTES: 3/1

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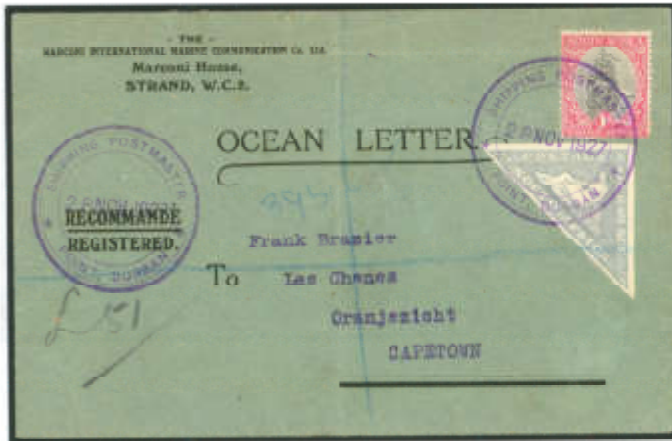


"New example"
discovered by
Rob/Lyns Lester
last year

Above is an example of the 2d and 4d Triangle cancelled with a "SHIPPING MASTER - POINT DURBAN" cachet in purple. Ocean post offices were first introduced in South Africa on 1 October 1893. According to Ralph Putzel, the Ocean Post Offices were discontinued with the outbreak of the First World War! I cannot find any reference to this particular cachet.

ROBERT HILL'S NOTES: 3/2

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according to
Dr Franks

This item was
part of the
"Ralph Phillips"
Collection

- 824 POINT DURBAN - THE UNIQUE (?) SHIPPING POSTMASTER C.D.S.; 28 Nov. 1927 Marconi Ocean Letter env (creased) registered to Cape Town franked with S. Africa 1d & 4d tied by a fine strike of the large violet "SHIPPING POSTMASTER/POINT, DURBAN" (H4032) double ring c.d.s. with further strikes at left and on reverse. Allen type 2 and stated by him to be unique. Also a Marconi Ocean Letter of the same date and 13 Oct 1949 env. to USA with S. Africa 3d tied by "SHIPPING/SKEEPSPOS/POINT NATAL" c.d.s. alongside "PAQUEBOT" of point and a v. fine SHIPPING POST MASTER/POINT, DURBAN" c.d.s. (Dovey types 25 & 26). Illustrated in *The "Shipping Postmaster" Cancellations of South Africa* by Mike Dovey. PHOTO - see page 12. £400

REVERSE PAGE 54



PAQUEBOT



Ex Hoskin's.
(The one Dr Franks
gave me for not
going for the other
"unique" letter)



The End

This display is the copyright of Robert Hill. This material cannot be copied in full or in part without the express written agreement of both Robert Hill and the South African Philately Club.

A grateful South African Philately Club thanks

Robert Hill

for sharing his collection with us.

10/10/2020

If you have questions and want to contact Robert Hill, please contact:

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www.southafricanphilatelyclub.com