

# UIT DIE POSSAK VAN JAMES PERKINS

(From the Postbag of James Perkins)

Translation of the Text

Gawie Hugo



Perkins se winkel op die h/v Hoog end Napierstrate vanaf 1869 tot 1963.  
Caption: Perkins' shop on the corner of Hoog and Napier Streets from 1869 to 1963.  
(James is believed to be on the right wearing the white shop-keepers dust jacket.)

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## **'From the Post Bag of James Perkins' - A Translation.**

This display was produced by Gawie Hugo of Worcester, Western Province, South Africa. The translation is by Steve Hannath, Cambridge, England, a poor student of Afrikaans in high school. Some changes have been made to the phrasing but hopefully not the meaning. The translation can be downloaded separately as a PDF file which you can print out and refer to as you read this. Alternatively, it has also been included as an addendum at the end of the display.

### **1.**

#### **From the Post Bag of James Perkins**

James Perkins was a General Dealer in Worcester from September 1869 to August 1963, a father to son undertaking for 93 years.

The post in this display takes us back to the years 1882 to 1887 and includes letters, notes, telegrams and accounts from suppliers, family and friends from all over. During this period the post and telegraph service was the only source of long-distance communication. All these postal items still contain their original contents. Our interest also lies in how he did business over such a vast area.

Caption: Perkin's shop on the corner of Hoog (High) and Napier Street from 1869 to 1963.

This display attempts to turn back to the postal history of the Cape of Good Hope with reference to different types of post and the development of stamps and postmarks from 1854 to 1887. We also look at the postal rates as it changed in the postal regulations of 1882 and other scarce stamps and items of interest which this post bag has delivered.

### **2**

#### **James Perkins**

James Perkins landed at the Cape on 9th December 1858 from England. In September 1869 he relocated to Worcester where he established himself as a General Dealer on the corner of Hoog (High) and Napier Streets.

In about 1890 his 20 year old son, James Junior, took over the business and ran it unchanged for 73 years until just a few days before he died on 3rd August 1963, after which the shop was closed.

James Junior received several English decorations and medals for his service in the ABO (South African War). He was also a leading figure in Worcester's affairs and social activities.

#### **Nickname for the shop?**

Napier Street was known as Canteen Street on account of all the bars (canteens).

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** The letter is addressed to 'Mrs James Perkins, Alias Tanta (Aunt) Kadoosie, Canteen Street, Worcester'. Mrs Perkins was known locally as 'Aunt Kadoosie'. A kadoosie is a small paper bag. As this was an age before off-the-shelf, pre-packaged goods, this is most likely a reference to her supplying goods in paper bags.

Small dealer's licence for the year 1885.

Photocopy of original, 50 percent larger.

### **3.**

#### **James Perkins the General Dealer**

Caption: Shop's stamp.

#### 4.

##### **Postal Rates of the day.**

Envelope used as a Postcard.

Caption: The Rate for Postcards was 1d, but this postal item was franked with 1/2d.

Standard Rate

Caption: The postal rate for standard postal items between post offices in the Colony, including Basutoland and the Transkei area, was 2d for each half ounce or part thereof.

Postal Tariffs of the day

#### 5.

##### **Postal Rates of the day.**

Double the standard tariff.

Caption: Cover and contents weighed more than a half ounce.

Registered letter.

Caption: The standard tariff for Registered letters was 4d each.  
A £10 Cape Commercial Bank note, no. 02555 was sent in this cover.

#### 6.

##### **Local Post**

Cancelling stamp No. 15: Thick bar (9 Bar) Oval Numeral Cancellor type of 1865 (BONC 18).

Datestamp: Worcester, 18 May 1886: Circular Datestamp of 1878 (CDS 10).

Postal rate: Local 1d. Extension of 1d Post of 30th August 1860. Extended to Worcester 1876.

Caption: Mr J. L. de Jongh, first owner of the Worcester Standard asks Mr Perkins for his support in electing him the new Secretary and Treasurer of the Land Development Company.

Caption: Worcester Post Office from 1885 to 1927 (photo from a postcard).

Local Post: OHMS

#### 7.

The letters O.H.M.S. (On Her Majesty's Service) was permitted, handwritten or printed from Government institutions, but following the reference book "Philatelic Research Library" the cover must have a stamp on or be signed for. There is nevertheless no postmark on it and the writer is of the opinion that it was delivered by hand. The O.H.M.S was therefore just to lend status to the sender. This was a common custom in the Cape.

#### 8.

##### **Telegraph Service**

Caption: Established in Worcester 1876.

## 9.

### **Other Types of Post**

#### Local Postcard

The first postcards in the Cape Colony were taken into service for local use on 1 March 1878. Our example is the second design is use from July 1882.

The text was the same as the first design, but the duty 'stamp' with Queen Victoria's head and English Coat of Arms was used. Postcard was printed by De La Rue & Co.

#### Mourning Letter

Mourning letters were especially popular after the death of Prince Albert of England but fell into disuse after the First World War.

Letter from his nephew Gustav Geyer.  
Deceased as a result of the Gastric Fever epidemic.

## 10.

### **Small Triangular Cancelling Handstamp of 1853**

The handstamp was taken into use in 1853, along with the introduction of adhesive stamps. There are approximately 7 varieties of this (handstamp).

Caption: Letter: J.L. Geyer of the farm Rietrivier, Montagu.  
Supplier of potatos and lentils to Perkins.

### **Double Arc Type of 1857**

Greenpoint Datestamp: Double Arc type of 1857.  
A limited number of the cancellers were issued from 5 May 1857.  
Cape Town datestamp: First circular datestamp type of 1864, without hyphens or full stops. (CDS 1 Type 4). Was chiefly used for back-stamping by the G.P.O.

Caption: Letter from J.H.R. Bate, a Horse pedlar.

## 11.

### **Double Arc Datestamp of 1857**

Caption: Letter from his nephew Mr R. Carstens

Caption: Photocopy of front. (RIGHT).

Caption: (LEFT)  
Cancelling handstamp No. 67: Thick Bar (9)  
Datestamp: Port Nolloth. Double Arc Type of 1857

The design of the handstamp was taken from a handstamp in use in from 1842 in rural England and Walesa hands. Was made for datestamping, but was also used as a canceller. Cancelling was in red or black ink.  
Posted: Port Nolloth 4 October 1883. Received Worcester 12 Oktober 1883.  
Post Route: By boat, the "Namaqua" to Cape Cape Town and then by train to Worcester.

## 12.

### **Circular Datestamp of 1864.**

Rondebosch Datestamp@ Circular datestamp of 1864 (CDS 2) with hyphen.  
The first circular datestamp to replace the round datestamp of 1853.

Caption: Letter from Mr Skead.

Ceres cancelling stamp No. 6: Thick bar (9) Oval Numeral type of 1865 (BONC).  
Ceres datestamp: circular datestamp of 1878. (CDS 10).

Caption: Ceres Road (Wolseley) Circle  
Datestamp of 1864 (CDS 2),  
the type without full stop or hyphen.  
Photocopy of original.

Elizabeth Rose advises she will leave the residence for a month, she wants to visit the warm water spring at Brandvlei.

## 13.

### **Circular Datestamp of 1871.**

Victoria-West datestamp: Circular datestamp of 1871 (CDS 6),  
Time control letter missing.

Caption: Beaufort-West: Circular datestamp (CDS 17) with large dot at base. According to Goldblatt the handstamp was  
in use from 1885, but here it is already used in 1883.

Caption: Letter from representative Mr J. Allan Yallop.

Piquetberg Road Datestamp: Circular datestamp of 1871 (CDS 6) without time control.

Caption: Today it (Piquetberg Road) is known as 'Gouda'.

## 14.

### **Circular Datestamps of 1878**

Paarl Datestamp: Circular datestamps of 1878 (CDS 10).

Caption: Letter from Miss A. Hendrickse.  
7 October 1883 was a Sunday.

Salt River Datestamp: Circular datestamps of 1878 (CDS 10).

Caption: Letter from his niece Polly van Roode Bloem.

## 15.

### **Circular Datestamps of 1879**

Datestamp Alfred Dock: Circular datestamps (CDS 13) of 1884.  
Cancelling stamp No. 420: Thick bar (9) Oval Numeral type handstamp (BONC).

Caption: Letter from his daughter Jessie.

Hex River East Datestamp: Circular Datestamps of 1879 (CDS 12).

Caption: Hex River East Post Office (closed 1897).

Letter from Mr S. C. Black regarding quinces sent for the Chamber of Commerce's display.

## 16.

### **Circular Datestamps**

Mossel Bay Datestamp: Circular datestamp (CDS 173) of 1885 with full stop and time control.  
Cancelling stamp No. 222: Thick bar Oval Numeral type handstamp (BONC).

Caption: Letter from Standard Bank, Mossel Bay.

Eerste River Station Datestamp 16 April 1887.  
Circular Datestamps of 1864 (CDS 2) without hyphen.  
Arrived Worcester 18 April 1887.

Caption: Post route No. 2 from 1859: Mossel Bay via Blanco, Riversdale, Swellendam via Heidelberg and Rietkuil.  
Caledon via Riviersonderend, Somerset-West via Houw Hoek, Grabouw and Sir Lowry's Pass, Eersterivier.

## 17.

### **Head Post Office (GPO), Cape Town**

Headquarters of the Cape Colony Post Office from 1872 to 1897. St. George's Street, Cape Town.

Circular Datestamp of 1864.  
Introduced in 1864 in Cape Town and Port Elizabeth head post offices. Different variations of these cancellers are known.

Right: Variation with both the full stop and hyphen missing.

Left: The handstamp variety with the full stop (raised) between 'Cape' and 'Colony'.

## 18.

### **Head Post Office Postmarks**

G.P.O. datestamps in use from 1881. Time control letter missing.

Combined datestamp (Duplex) of 1870.

Caption: The datestamp and canceller is a combined hand stamp. It is the thin bar (18) Oval Numeral handstamp of 1870, and the Circular Datestamp of 1864 issued to Cape Town No. 1 and Port Elizabeth No. 2 in 1870.

## 19.

### **"Squared Circle" Postmarks**

Experimental handstamps from 1882 to 1891.

Post handstamp type SC 3 "Squared Circle" of 1882.  
Ring with 4 segments. Cape Town and Cape Colony with full stop.

Letter was presumably in the wrong post bag.

Caption: Letter from Wilman Spilhaus & Co.

20.

**Transporter of Post**

Photo of Worcester Station roundabout 1876. (MISSING!)

21.

**The Printer Saul Solomon & Co.**

Posted: Caper Town 29 June 1883

Postage Stamps: Cape of Good Hope. 2 x 1d Horizontal Pair.

Shade of Colour: Deep Rose Red

Postmark: Squared Circle of 1882 type SC3

Caption: Saul Solomon's signature.

Caption: Business card from Mr Silvester.

22.

**Advertisements on Cover**

Caption: Very pretty example of advertising print work on both sides of a cover.

23.

**Advertisements on Cover**

Caption: J. Garlick supplier of clothes

Memo sent on 20 October 188

24.

**Purveyor's Invoice**

Caption: 1d Revenue Stamp

**Perkins' Bankers**

Caption: Payment for purchases.

Perkins' signature.

25.

**Advertising Leaflet**

James Perkins is approached to sign up as an agent for the company.

Note the use of 'Western Province' as a part of the address.

Postage stamp was removed.

## 26.

### **Posted Late**

Postmark: "Posted Late" was used on post when it was handed in too late but no penalty was made here. Post was sent with the next delivery.

Caption: Receipts: Hines. Heywood & Co.  
Posted: Cape Town 4 January 1883 to Worcester

### **Bulk Postage Postmark**

This postmark was very scarce, only used on circulars and address bindings (wrappers).  
Was posted after the postmark was applied on 6 August but no year record, also no postmark on reverse applied by Worcester Post Office. Was also a later postal tariff,

1d in place of the normal 2d.

Caption: Letter: "Printed Matter".  
Purveyor: Pocock & Co. Distributors of Dutch medicines.

## 27.

### **TPO Up / TPO Down**

Caption: Photocopy of postmarks on reverse.

Du Toitspan (now Beaconsfield) was part of Griqualand-West. Cape of Good Hope stamps were used in Griqualand West from 1871. The cancelling postmark was specific to Griqualand West. This postmark was a striped oval with the number 9 in a diamond.

The TPO (Travelling Post Office) service was started in 1883 and was originally to Victoria-West Road (now Hutchinson) and after 1885 was used to De Aar. A specially manned trained wagon was used. The "Up" was from the interior to Cape Town and "Down" from Cape Town (to interior).

## 28.

### **Special Tarrif Post**

1d postage and only No. 1 barred (13 bars) oval numeral cancelling postmark (BONC 26). No other date or back-stamped postmarks through Worcester.

Caption: Circular letter from J. S. Prins dated 19 October 1882.

### **Postmark of unknown origin.**

Caption: Telegram-style memo from brokers, Bidewell Edwards on 25 June 1883.  
No further postmarks nor indication of postage paid.

## 29.

### **Working on Christmas Day**

Montagu datestamp: 25 December 1886.

Caption: Received Worcester 25 December 1886.



Letter postmarked Diep River 24 December 1886, postmarked Worcester 25 December 1886.

Caption: GPO Datestamp: Type GPO 1 of 1881

Caption: Diep River datestamp: Circular Type of 1885 without Time Control Letter.

### **30.**

#### **Working on New Year's Day**

Postmarked Cape Town 31 December 1886 and Worcester 1 January 1887.

Caption: The post office was therefore open for business on these days.

#### **Post from England**

Caption: The combined date and cancelling postmark (Duplex) is the same type as used in the Colony.  
Letter from his brother Frank.

Sources:

- 1]. 'The Handstruck Letter Stamps of the Cape of Good Hope and the Postmarks from 1792 to 1910'. By A. A. Jurgens.
- 2]. 'Postmarks of the Cape of Good Hope'. By Robert Goldblatt.
- 3]. Archive, Worcester Museum.
- 4]. The Cape of Good Hope Blue Book, 1882.
- 5]. The Postal Stationery of South Africa.

### **31.**

#### **Further information from Mr Perkins about his father and grandfather**

### **32.**

**South African Who's Who, Page 361.**

### **33.**

#### **Colour Illustration of J Perkins Jnr in his shop.**

Seventy years ago in South Africa Lever products were already on sale. Here sits old master Perkins in his little shop at Worcester in the Cape - a little shop that proudly shows off some of the original advertising placards which were issued in the 90s of the previous century. (Editor's Note: Today (2023) that would be two centuries ago!)

### **34.**

#### **The Finest American Lamp Oil White Rose.**

**END**



# The End

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