

POSTAL HISTORY OF NAMIBIA

including the Exclave of Walvis Bay

**Part 2: South Africa's Invasion of German South West Africa
including 'Forerunner' stamps: 1915 - 1923**



Circa 1912. Postcard. Unknown Damara Woman. Mother Africa.

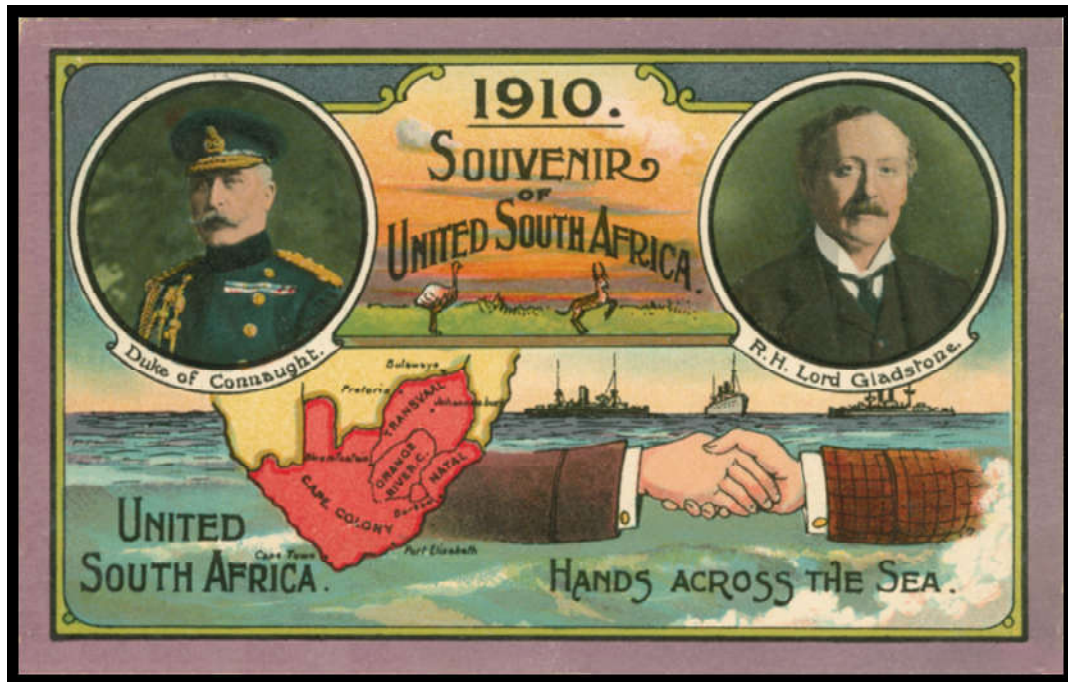
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PREFACE

Part 1: Pre-History of the SWA Territory and its Colonisation by Germany: 1888 - 1914

Part 2: South Africa's Invasion of GSWA: 1914 - 1923



1910. Propaganda 'Souvenir of United South Africa', the triumph of British Imperial policy. The Boer states and British colonies submit to Union, Britain's long-held Imperial goal for southern Africa.

This is the second of a four part 'display' that shows some of the Postal History of Namibia, the African nation that rose free of the shackles of colonialism and the prejudices of South Africans. This 'display' is my attempt to write history illustrated with philately, postal history and ephemera. I have not written it to meet formal exhibition requirements. My thanks to Robert Hill and Tony Howgrave-Graham for their assistance.

Part 2 of this Postal History of Namibia starts in South Africa with the end of the South African War. Britain's creation of the Union of South Africa in 1910 brought Boers and Brits together within one political system that excluded Black South Africans. Union gave birth to the concept of a new nation of 'White South Africans', a group who comprised just 22% of the country's population. It was this small racial elite who planned the future of SWA once it was 'liberated' from German control. For this reason, Part 2 of this display begins with political developments within the Union of South Africa before WW1. Botha's invasion of GSWA split the fractured White Union into two political camps, one pro-British Empire, the other pro-Republican. Despite their political differences White South Africans were largely united in their determination to maintain the racial status quo that benefitted them while marginalising the native people. Invasion introduced South African racial policies, attitudes and prejudices into SWA. This influenced the resistance that led to its People's War of Liberation in the second half of the 20th Century.

While this was a work in progress I placed General Louis Botha, the first Prime Minister of the new Union of South Africa and the conqueror of GSWA, on the frontpiece of this 'display'. When Botha died in 1919 he stood head and shoulders above his contemporaries, including Smuts, as lord and master of South Africa. His conquest of GSWA during WW1 replaced German colonial oppression with White South African 'baasskaap' (Afr. white master supremacism). Racist labour controls motivated SWA's long struggle for liberation from 1920 onwards. Namibia's emergence as a free, democratic and independent African nation is due to its people's rejection of colonialism, a repressive unrepresentative form of government that did not begin with Botha's victory in WW1 but which was perpetuated by it. In the absence of a better frontpiece, I had resigned myself to using the large silk cigarette collectable image of Botha on page 9 on the front of this display. However, when I saw the postcard of the dignified old Damara lady silently questioning "why?" some 120 years ago I knew she was my frontpiece. From the moment I first saw the face of Namibia's Mother Africa there was no way Botha was going to get his dusty jackboots through the front door of this 'display'.

The Republican Cause is Defeated: 1902



Circa 1901. Photograph. Kitchener of Khartoum. African Nemesis.

The British Army commander in S. Africa, Lord Kitchener, ordered the burning of farms and the imprisonment of Boer and Black civilians in 'Refugee Camps' (aka. concentration camps).

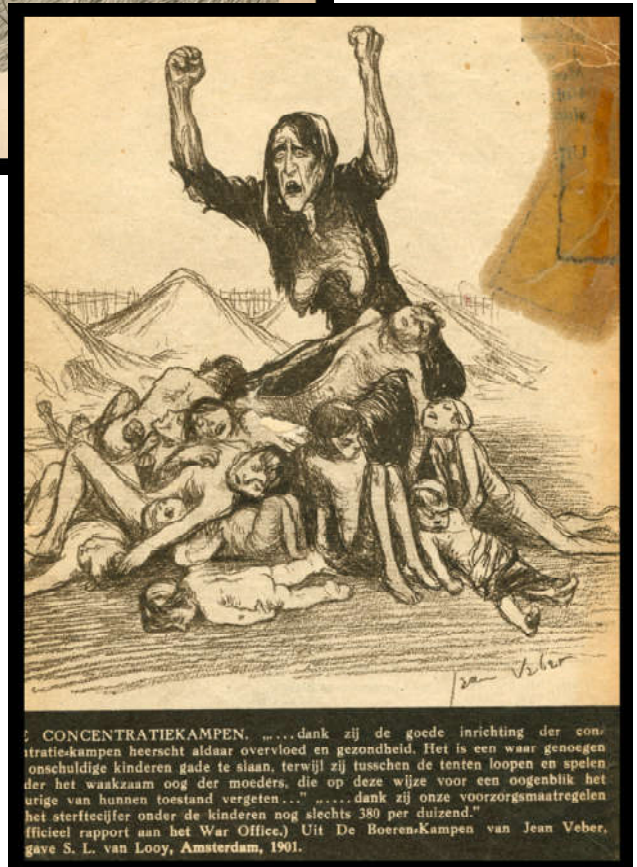


Circa 1901. Ccompilation of Pro-Boer European propaganda postcard and unused Commando Brief label issued to OFS forces on service.

By 1902 the Boers were outnumbered by British and Imperial forces, their mobility limited by 100s of blockhouses and 1000s of miles of barbed wire fences. With 27,927 Boer women, children and old men dying of neglect in enforced 'Refugee Camps', the Boers surrendered on 31st May 1902. Some 108,000 Blacks were interned of whom at least 14,154 died.

With the Act of Union in 1910, Britain made a fateful decision about the future of political power in SA. At the time it felt that Black South Africans were not yet ready to take power and run an industrial economy that Britain had fought at great expense to control. The British also knew that SA's 'European' population would reject power-sharing with Blacks. Indeed, a Boer negotiating demand was that Blacks remained politically powerless. To facilitate Union Britain allowed political power to be restricted to 'White South Africans' only. Its largest group were the defeated Boers, a people defined by the Great Trek and the recent war, especially 'the concentration camps'. Their rise to political ascendancy would be based on anti-English republican sentiment, segregation and support for White workers and farmers. SA's cast aside native people would form their own political parties that over time would emerge as full-blown armed resistance movements.

Circa 1902. Pro-Boer Propaganda Booklet. (Holland). It quotes the War Office death rate in the concentration camps among Boer children as 380 per thousand. It was subsequently determined that the number was even higher at 433 / 1000.



Pax Brittanica - The Imperial Garrison: 1902 - 1914

As part of the Treaty of Vereeniging that ended the South African War on 31st May 1902, all Republican forces still undefeated in the field were required to swear an oath of allegiance to Britain, its King and Empire. Those who did not went into exile. To keep the peace Britain retained an army in South Africa. Known as the Imperial Garrison, it occupied towns of strategic importance in the Cape, Natal, OFS and Transvaal. Its patrols were a visible sign of the defeat of the Republican cause.



Circa 1904. Postcard. 'The North Bridge - Potchefstroom'. (No. 600. Sallo Epstein, Durban). Inscribed 'S. A. C. - South African Constabulary, a paramilitary force founded 1900, disbanded 1908. As the SAC was not powerful enough to contain a rebellion, Britain retained a powerful army in SA.



1904 Cover. CANTONMENT POTCHEFSTROOM '12 DEC 1904' to GB.



1902. Registered Letter. ARMY POST OFFICE HARRISMITH 'FE 5 02' to KROONSTAD.
Sent by a 'Boer' Wagon Train Conductor attached to the 1st South Staffs Regiment.
Republican Afrikaner Nationalists would harbour great bitterness toward collaborators.

The purpose of the Imperial Garrison was to enforce the peace; to strong-arm the Boers into negotiations on Union, the long-held aim of the British in SA; and to secure the gold mines as a profit centre for long-term exploitation by British capital. To achieve Union, Britain agreed to a Boer demand that Black South Africans remain politically powerless. Union was achieved in 1910. When the 1913 Rand Strike threatened the mines', British troops helped crush it. (The Union Defence Force, created in 1912, did not yet have the ability or manpower to do this alone.) The Imperial Garrison also protected the naval base at Simonstown and the port of Durban, thus securing the sea route around the Cape to India. When the Imperial Garrison was withdrawn from SA in 1914 for service in Europe in WW1, a Republican rebellion broke out.



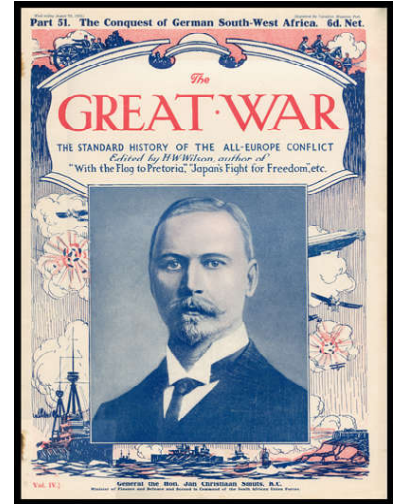
1907. Postcard. British 'Military Headquarters - Pretoria'. (G. B. & Co.).
Pretoria was the capital of the Transvaal Colony, previously the ZAR (South African Republic).

The Union of South Africa: 1910 - 1961



Label. Louis Botha, Boer General. SAW (1899 - 1902).

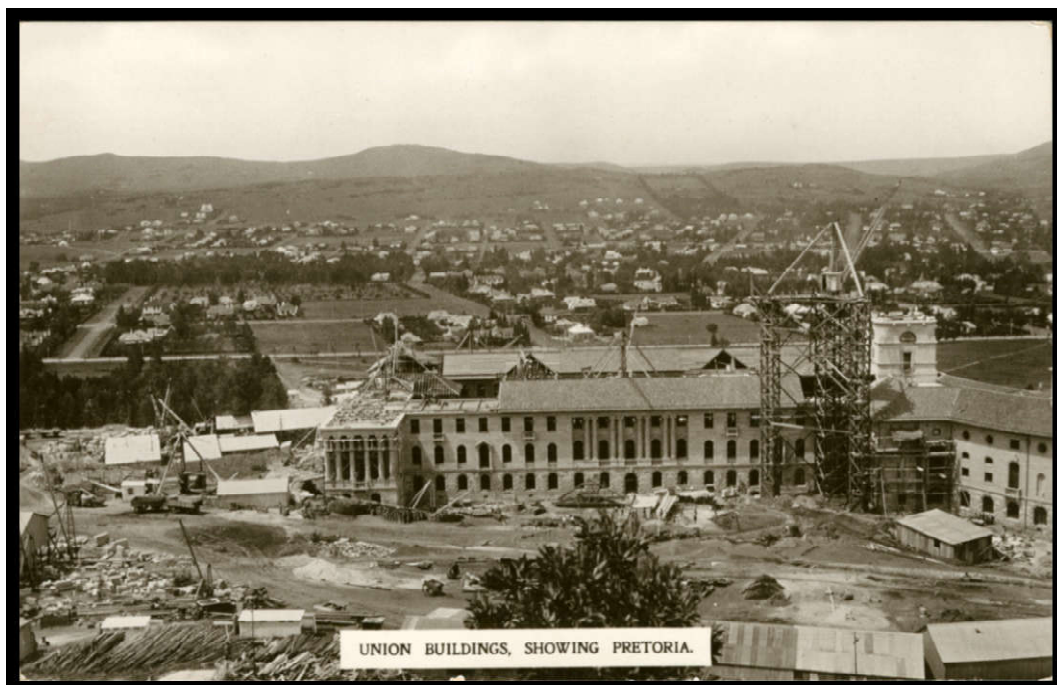
The aim of British colonial policy in southern Africa during the 19th Century was to unite its two British colonies of the Cape and Natal with the two Boer Republics of the ZAR (Zuid Afrikaansche Republiek or 'Transvaal') and the OFS (Orange Free State). This was achieved with the Union of South Africa in 1910 in which Britain created a 'White South Africa' ruled by just 22% of the country's population. It failed to give the Black majority a political voice, choosing instead the traditional inequitable White segregationist status quo. With political power concentrated in an all-White bicameral Parliament, the Black majority was effectively disenfranchised until the first democratic elections in 1994.



Magazine. Jan Smuts, Minister of Finance and Defence 1914.

The Union of South Africa was led by two ex-SAW Boer generals, Prime Minister Louis Botha and his able second-in-command, Jan Smuts, Minister of both Finance and Defence. They filled many of the senior posts in the UDF (Union Defence Force) with veteran SAW Boer commanders. As Empire loyalists Botha and Smuts believed that White South Africa's best chance of survival and expansion lay within the umbrella of the British Empire. In this they were supported by a small majority of the Union's new 'White South Africans'.

White South Africa Under Construction.



1912. Postcard. (Unposted.) White South Africa's Union Buildings near completion.

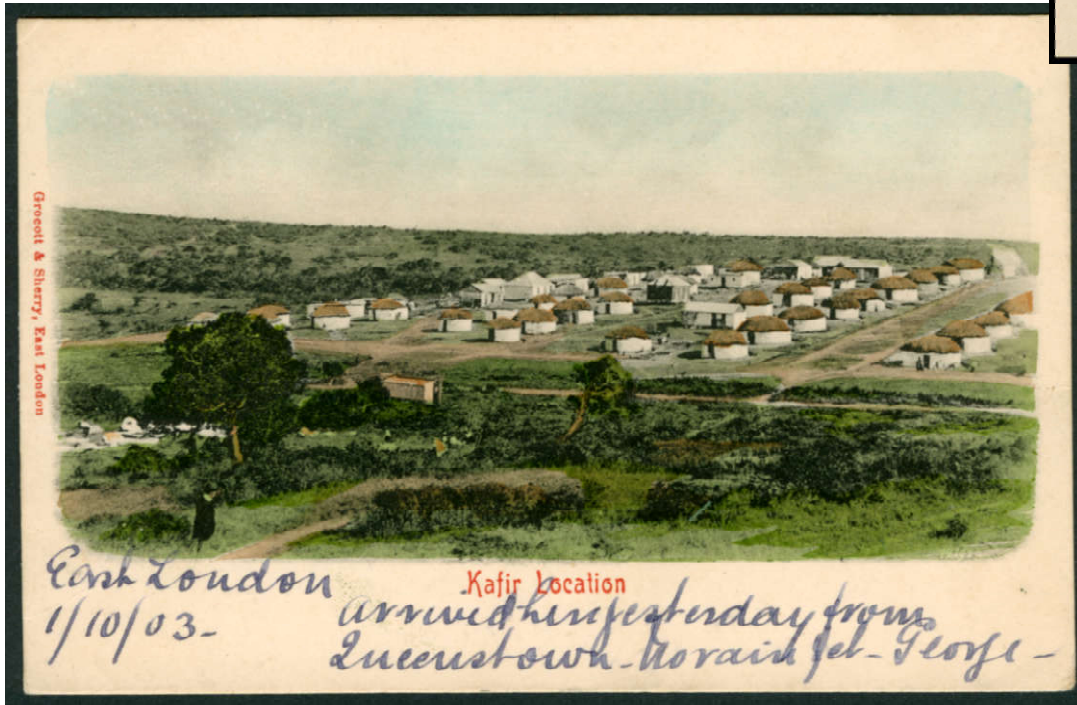
The Union of South Africa would conquer but never liberate GSWA. It simply replaced a European colonial master with a White South African one. Pretoria would rule SWA from 1915 to 1990, largely as though it was a fifth province of the Union. As segregation developed into the political ideology of Apartheid in South Africa, this was also implemented in SWA. Its Afrikaners and ethnic Germans would support Apartheid by returning all six Parliamentary seats allocated to SWA in favour of the segregationist National Party.

Segregation in 'White South Africa'.

Robert Hill

Segregation in South Africa did not start with the Union and Botha and Smuts. Both the Boer states and the British colonies practiced forms of segregation. The growth of Black literacy makes it possible to track the development of segregation in the Post Office. The Krugersdorp postmark (right) is an early example of a race-defining datestamp. The '(N)' is for 'NATIVE', suggesting a segregated counter or Post Office.

Right. 1905. KRUGERSDORP (N) TVL '10 FEB 1905' on 1904 KEVII ½d adhesive.



Robert Hill



1915.
New Brighton
Location, a Black
residential area
outside East
London in the
Eastern Cape.

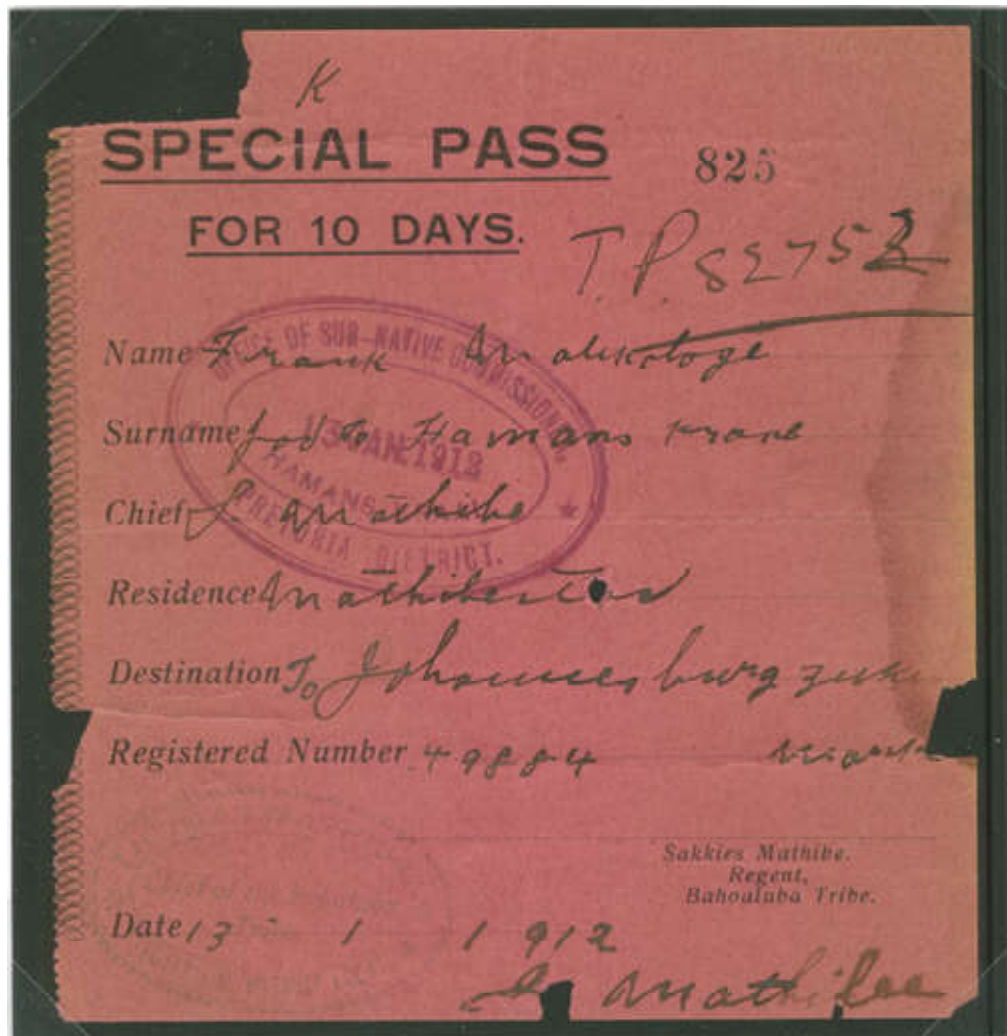
1903. Postcard. 'Kafir Location' EAST LONDON 'OC 3 03'. (Grocott & Sherry, East London).

The first Union government of Botha and Smuts implemented laws that disadvantaged Black people while benefitting 'White South Africa'. The 'Natives Land Act' of June 1913 became the cornerstone of 20th Century land rights in SA. It limited Black access to farm land and designated rural Native Reserves where they had to live. Blacks in urban 'White South Africa' were required to carry a Pass, live within the confines of a 'Native' Township or 'Location' (as above) on the outskirts of White towns and use segregated services.



Robert Hill

1909. Pre-Union Native Pass issued Elandskraal, endorsed Hamanskraal, Pretoria District, '20 DEC 1909'.



Robert Hill

1912. Post-Union Native Pass endorsed Hammanskraal, Pretoria District, '13 JAN 1912'.

The Pass system was intended to restrict Black movement within designated 'White' areas and to enforce contracts of employment. The GSWA colony used metal 'tokens' much like dogtags to perform the same function. The above and the preceding Pass were issued by a tribal headman and authorised by a White official. The preceding Pass was issued at Elandskraal in 1909, (before Union). It is a rare example of an ad hoc Pass with official cachet on lined foolscap paper. The above red printed and numbered Special Pass, No, 825, from 1912, (after Union) was issued and signed by Chief 'Sakkies' Mahtibe, Regent of the Bahoaluba tribe, (faint bottom cachet), and authorised by a White Sub-Native Commissioner. Similar methods of controlling the Black population by the use of Passes from Tribal areas and 'locations' would be introduced into SWA after the German colony was occupied by the Union on behalf of the Empire.

Racist Legislation Introduced in the Union before World War 1

Act of Union: 1910.

The franchise is for Whites only. Limited Black representation by Whites.

Mine & Works Act: 1911.

All industrial skilled and semi-skilled positions are reserved for Whites only.

The Defence Act: 1912.

Military Training and Active Service in the new UDF (Union Defence Force) is restricted to Whites only.

Native Lands Act: 1913.

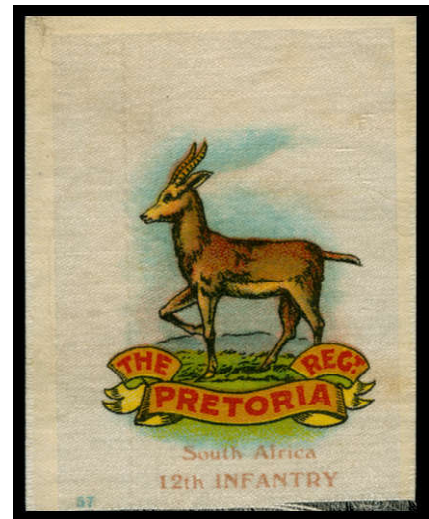
Black South Africans are limited to purchasing land in areas designated as 'Native Reserves'. Blacks are prohibited from purchasing or renting land in White South Africa and are required to live in segregated Locations if employed by Whites outside of the Native Reserves. The African majority are made to live on 8% of the land at time when White South Africa made up just 22% of the population.

The Union Defence Force: 1912



Circa 1916. Prime Minister General Louis Botha.
G. Phillips Ltd. BDV Large Silk Cigarette Collectable.

Botha was an Afrikaner intent on expanding White South African settlement in southern Africa under the Imperial shield. Fearing Blacks acquiring military skills, Botha forbade the arming of Black South Africans to fight the Germans in SWA.



Circa. 1916. The Pretoria Regiment.
No. 57. G. Phillips Ltd. BDV Silk Cigarette Collectable.

The 'Whites Only' UDF was created in 1912 with a small Permanent Force as its core. It combined two historically disparate South African military traditions, conventional British-style regiments and semi-irregular Commando units based on Boer mounted infantry. When Britain requested that SA invade GSWA, Botha raised an ACF (Active Citizen Force) army of over 100,000 men at short notice. The mobile Commandos (below) best suited his tactics in GSWA. Black South Africans would only serve in non-combatant roles. Formed in Pretoria in 1913 as the 12th Infantry (Pretoria) Regiment, the Pretoria Regiment, above, was an English-speaking unit of the ACF that served with Smuts' Southern Force in GSWA.



1938. Some British-style UDF Regiments.
Military Uniforms of the British Empire Overseas.
John Player & Sons Cigarette Card Collection.

On the eve of World War 2 soldiers of the Union Defence Force still wore much the same uniforms and used the same equipment as their fathers had done in GSWA and GEA in WW1. The style and cut of the uniforms shown above are similar to those worn by UDF regiments in GSWA.



Circa 1938. 'On Commando'.
Mounted 'Boer' Infantry.
United Tobacco Cigarette Card.
Hortors Ltd., Cape Town.

Potchefstroom Cantonment - Rand Strike: 1913



Left. Boer hostility to the Imperial Garrison spread to striking White miners when British Army units helped crush the 1913 Rand Strike in the absence of a Union army. This saw Afrikaner Nationalism merge with the segregationist needs of White workers. **Below:** Early use of a 1d 'King's Head' stamp three days after its issue.



COMMUNICATION ADDRESS
P'otstroom

Dear Jack.

This is a card which a few of us the E.Ds had taken while up at Joburg on strike duty. You must have just gone home in time what? I suppose we will meet again in Jan 1916. Bob R.H. Gass.

Lance Cpl J. Hughes,
E. Company R.E.
Training Battalion.
Brompton Bks
Chatham
Kent
England.

1913. Private Photo Postcard. 'Military Camp, Auckland Park. J'burg Strike'. CANTONMENT POTCHEFSTROOM '4 SEP [19]13' to GB (undated).



1913. Postcard. WILGE RIVER '20 OCT A 13' to RIVERSDALE (undated).

A Divided White South Africa on the Eve of World War 1: 1914



1910. King Geo V ‘Opening of Parliament’.
The Union of SA’s first stamp would see limited use in SWA where it was never on sale.

The Union of South Africa’s status as a Dominion within the British Empire meant it did not have the legal power to exercise an independent foreign policy ie. South Africa was tied automatically to all British foreign policy declarations. As a result, when the British Government declared war on Germany on 4th August 1914, South Africa’s divided White nation was expected to fight on the British side in the First World War.

Many Boers in the Union remained unreconciled to their defeat in the SAW and resented their imperial status as ‘Subjects of H. M. the King’. They wanted Republican rule restored. The Union’s first stamp of 1910 and the definitive set of 1913 known as the ‘King’s Heads’ were a painful reminder to Republicans that Britain was the triumphalist top dog in South Africa. These Union stamp issues would be used in GSWA where they would be known as ‘Forerunners’.

The unreconciled Boers saw in Britain’s declaration of war with Germany an opportunity to regain the country’s independence and Republican status. They were anti-English rather than pro-German. Many remembered the Kaiser’s failed promises of support during the SAW and had little or no reason to be grateful to him or Germany for anything at all. Unwilling to risk their lives fighting for Germany, the more cautious Republicans called for the Union to remain neutral. However, the militant among them agitated for armed rebellion when the opportunity arose. The postcard, right, shows a Loyalist Boer and Brit uniting together as ‘White South Africans’ to fight for Louis Botha, “our leader”, and for the British Empire, (not specifically for King and Country!).



1913. All values of the King Geo V Definitive are known used in SWA.
The 3d blue (issued in Oct 1922) is scarce.
The 1s 3d violet was barely used. Coil stamps are scarce. Interprovincial use was valid but genuine examples are rare.



1914. Patriotic Postcard ‘For the Empire’.
Union Jack, General Louis Botha, Union of SA Flag ,
Boer and Brit united as (White) ‘South Africans’.

World War 1 (WW1) starts in Europe: 1914

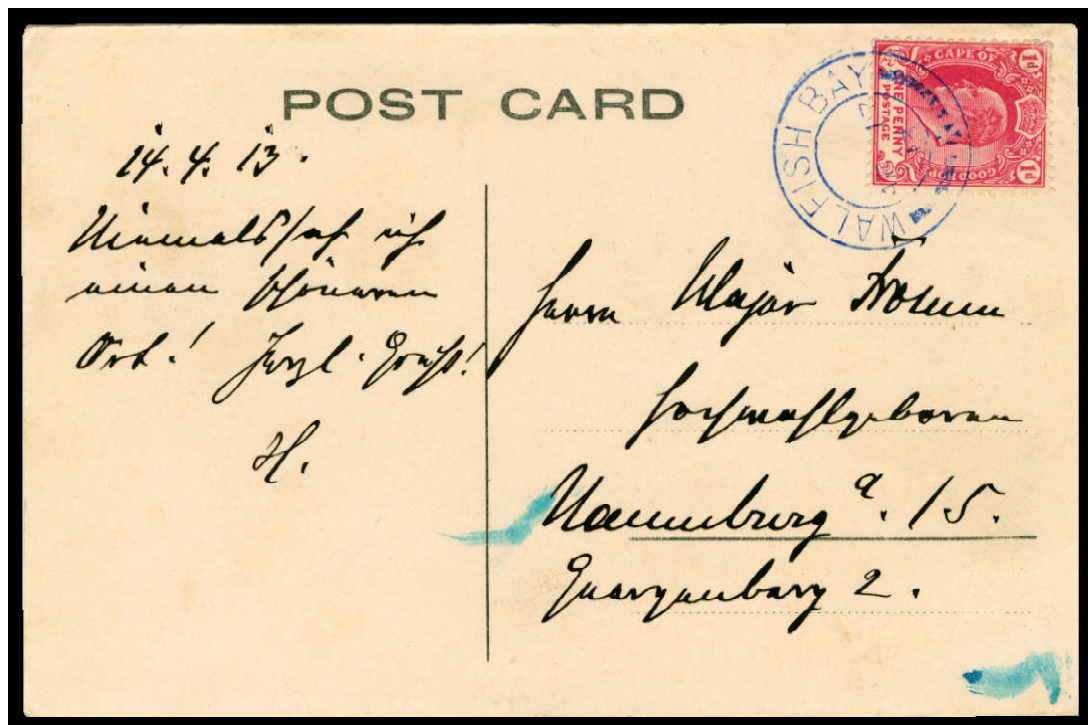
WW1 began on 28th June 1914 after the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria by a Serbian nationalist. His murder set off an escalating chain of events. The Austro-Hungarians blamed Serbia whom the Russians supported. Austria-Hungary waited for an assurance from the German Kaiser that Germany would support them if they attacked Serbia. Kaiser Wilhelm II encouraged Austria-Hungary to attack Serbia.

On 28th July Austria-Hungary attacked Serbia who appealed to Russia for military assistance. Within a week Russia, Belgium, France, Britain and Serbia had sided against Austria-Hungary and Germany. When Germany demanded the right to march through neutral Belgium in order to attack France, Britain demanded that Germany respect Belgium's neutrality. The Germans invaded Belgium and Britain declared war on Germany on 4th of August 1914. The British government, its people and Empire had gone to war in defence of 'gallant little Belgium'.

GSWA was not a British military priority. Its small military force stationed in a vast and unprofitable colony lacked the strength for more than regional mischief. However, Germany had built powerful radio transmitters that represented a naval and maritime threat. The British appealed to the Union of SA for support. Botha had long coveted SWA and responded positively to a chance to take it. While he mopped up GSWA within the first year of the war, the first successful Allied campaign of WW1, his actions divided the SA electorate.

The Tactical Abandonment of Walvisch / Walfish / Walvis Bay: 1914

Britain annexed Walvisch Bay in 1878 in order to forestall German colonial ambitions by preventing it from acquiring the only deep water harbour on the Namibian coast. Walfish Bay became an exclave* of the Cape of Good Hope in 1884 and a part of the Union of South Africa in 1910. A dispute with Germany over the exclave's boundaries was resolved in 1911. On 24th September, two days before the battle of Sandfontein, a German patrol entered undefended Walvis Bay. Not having the means to defend it, the Germans withdrew into the interior. Union forces re-occupied Walvis Bay on Christmas Day 1914.



1913. Postcard. WALFISH BAY 'AP 17 13' to Germany.

1902 Cape of Good Hope 1d carmine adhesive cancelled

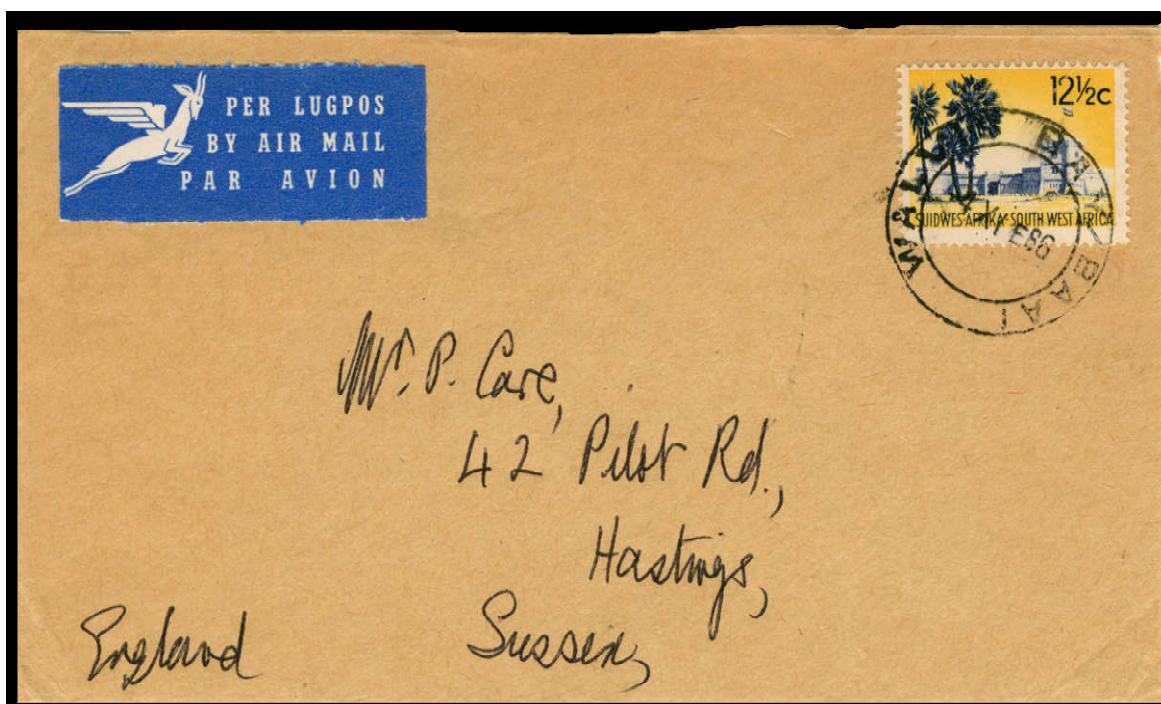
Extremely rare example of this datestamp which Putzel does not record in blue.

* An enclave is a territory that is completely surrounded by the territory of one other state. An exclave is a part of a state that is geographically separated from the main part by the territory of one or more states.

Vatican City, San Marino and Lesotho are enclaves. Alaska is an exclave.

Walvis Bay, South Africa: 1910 - 1994

On 1st March 1994, following three years of bilateral discussions between the South African and Namibian governments, the South African government ended 84 years of control over the Walvis Bay exclave by handing the port and 12 offshore islands over to the Namibian government. The amicable resolution to this territorial dispute, which stretched back to 1878, was commended by the United Nations and the international community as it fulfilled the provisions of UN Security Council 432 (1978), which declared Walvis Bay to be an integral part of Namibia.



1966. Airmail Letter. WALVIS BAY / BAAI '4 X1 86' to GB at 12½c rate.
Fort Namutoni was besieged, captured and burned by Namibian resistance fighters in 1904. Later rebuilt.
Both SWA (above) and SA stamps (below) were accepted in the Walvis Bay Post Office.



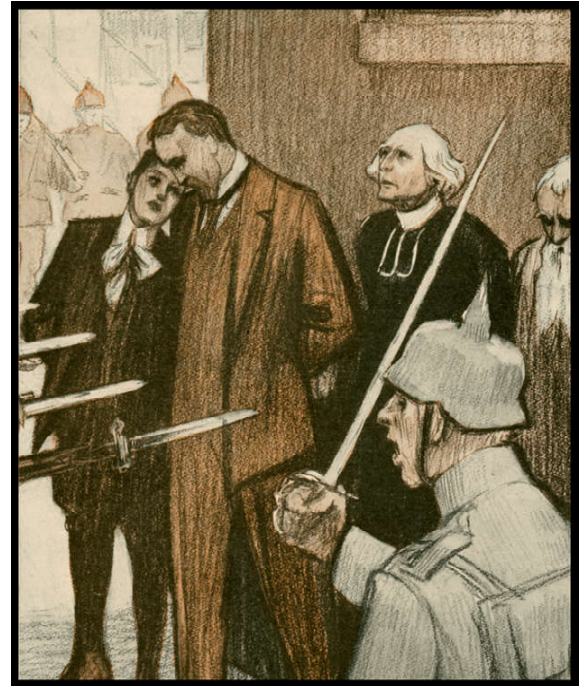
1978. Airmail Letter. WALVIS BAAI / BAY 5 '78 VI 29' to AUSTRIA at 12½c rate. (13c paid).
The cover bears the purple boxed cachet of the 2nd SA Infantry Battalion stationed in Walvis Bay.

The German “Rape of Belgium”

Because so many White South Africans lived on land once occupied by African people, the German genocide and land grab in SWA was never a cause for war despite widespread South African disapproval of Germany's barbarity towards SWA's people. Patronising White South Africans argued that “*we know how to treat our Blacks*”. South Africans who chose to enlist to fight in GSWA did so out of loyalty to the Union (Botha), the Empire (the King) and the horrifying press reports of the ‘Rape of Belgium’, a litany of German atrocities against Belgian civilians propagandised as a ‘Hun’ attack on European civilisation. Louis Raemaekers’ contemporary drawings of the ‘Rape of Belgium’ (below) are the visual equivalent of the outraged newspaper reports of German atrocities. These inflamed White South African opinion.

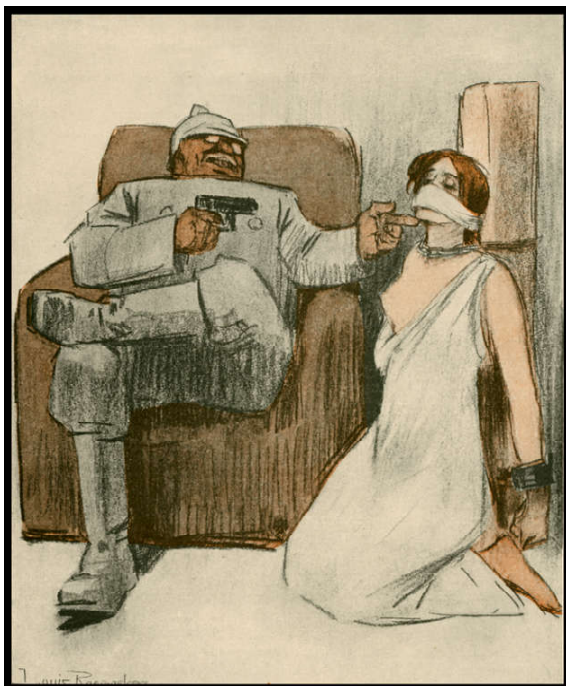


The Kaiser Violating the Neutrality of Belgium
“How I deal with the Small Fry!”



The Condemned Hostages
“Father, what have we done?”

All images ex-Louis Raemaekers, Cartoonist, 1915.



German Methods of Seduction
“Ain’t I a lovable fellow?”



Europe Broken and Tortured 1916
“Am I not yet sufficiently civilised?”



A South African Responds to the “Rape of Belgium”



Top left and above:
WW1. German Occupation of Belgium Stamps.
‘Germania’ overprinted ‘Belgien 40, 3 and 8 Cent’.



Circa 1914 - 1915. Sketchbook.
Drawings ex-George Jacobie,
West Cliff Drive, Park View, Johannesburg.
Above: ‘To Hell with the Kaiser’.
Below: ‘The Kaiser Crushed’.



‘The Rape of Belgium’ was a phrase used by the British and Belgian press to describe the abuse of civilians by German troops during the invasion of Belgium when its Armies summarily executed anyone thought to be ‘*francs-tireurs*’ (irregular militia). Some 27,000 civilians were killed in these atrocities and during the long occupation of Belgium in WW1. This brutality towards civilians saw the British resurrect the word ‘Hun’ to describe German ‘barbarity’.

The German advance through Belgium was accompanied by reports of sexual violence, perversions, mutilations, child abuse, even accounts of babies hoisted aloft on German bayonets. These crimes against civilians occurred because the German High Command feared imagined civilian resistance and because it failed to feed its advancing reserve troops, forcing them to live off the land.

Citing the earlier Herero genocide in GSWA, Allied propagandists damned the killings of Belgian and French civilians as ‘*German colonial practices*’.

In 1914, the Union of SA was tied to the Anglophone world and took its international news verbatim from Britain’s propagandists. SA was fed a diet of baby bayonetting by Huns intent on rape and pillage. General Smuts gave speeches and sent messages that reminded South Africa’s Boers that they shared the same blood as the Belgians and the French and that the cause at stake was the freedom of their European kin. The images, left, suggest how one South African perceived the German Kaiser, the ‘Rape of Belgium’, the anger of women and the need to fight.



Above: 1914. Bilingual Belgian Patriotic Label
ex-G. Jacobie’s South African Sketchbook.

Belgium was created at the end of the Napoleonic War. Its national motto, ‘*Eendracht Maakt Macht*’, (Dutch. ‘Unity is Strength’), was shared with the Union of South Africa where Dutch and English were the two official languages.

Nationalism vs Imperialism: 1914

Germany's colonisation of 'South-West' was generally unwelcomed by White South Africans. Many thought that SWA was and should be part of a 'greater South Africa'. Botha was strongly of this opinion and eagerly desired the opportunity to acquire it by conquest. He was driven by a need to secure SWA for the landless sons of South African farmers, as well as to ensure that its mineral riches accrued to South Africa.

However, Botha was faced with a problem. If the Union invaded GSWA unreconciled Republican Boers (proto-Nationalists) threatened to rise up in revolt. But, if the Union did not invade and Britain did so with the aid of Imperial troops, South Africa's opportunity to take control of SWA would be lost once troops other than its own were based there. Also, Botha feared what message the Union's Black 'Kaffir' majority might take from Indian troops, (mere 'Coolies' to most Whites), fighting Germans as equals in SWA and defeating them. Botha decided that he had to take the initiative and invade.



**Circa 1914. The Empire stands together.
The Union of SA is not represented.**

The prize was land, riches and prestige. Botha felt that a Republican revolt was unlikely but if one rose up he could suppress it with Boer troops loyal to him. After the invasion began a Republican revolt sputtered into life. This forced Botha to temporarily delay his invasion of GSWA, causing UDF forces in Luderitz to be stranded there at no great risk. The rebels quickly lost whatever initiative they had. By February 1915 the rebellion was over, crushed by a magnanimous Botha who now took command of the UDF Army in GSWA.

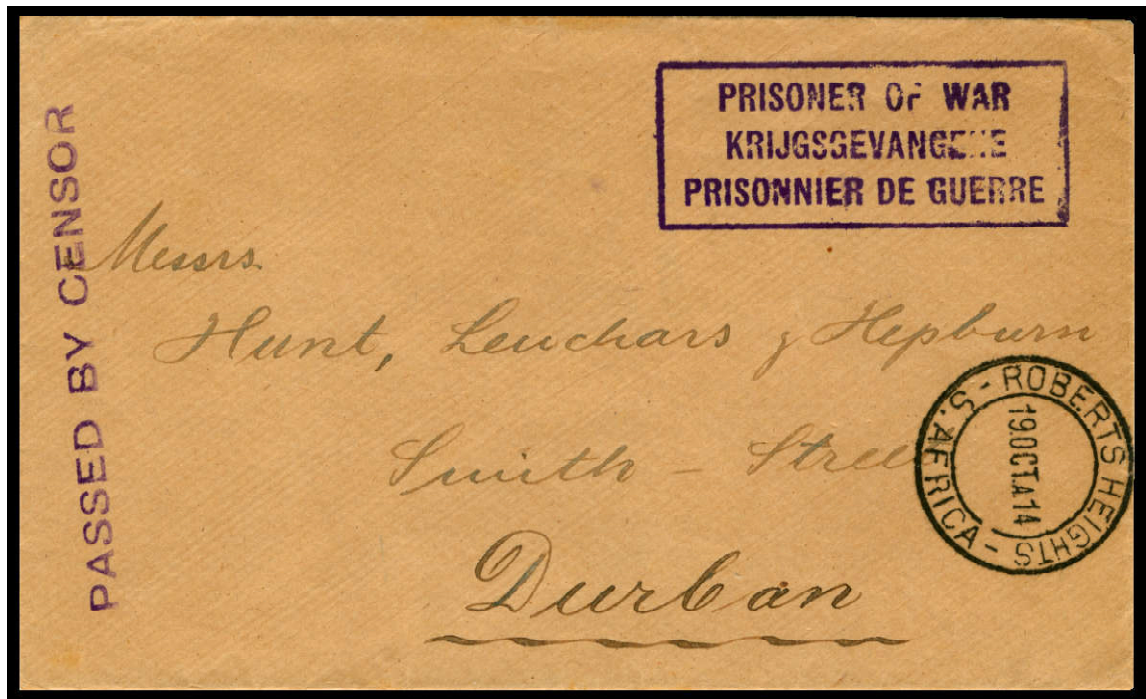
The German colony fell to the Union's warrior Prime Minister within six months. A grateful Empire heaped praise on their old Boer adversary for delivering the first successful Allied campaign of WW1. However, the addition of SWA into the Union was never approved by the League of Nations and its mandate to rule the territory became a huge problem for the Apartheid State at the United Nations. Botha's loyalty to the Empire divided White South Africa into two camps which led to long periods of political domination by Nationalists.



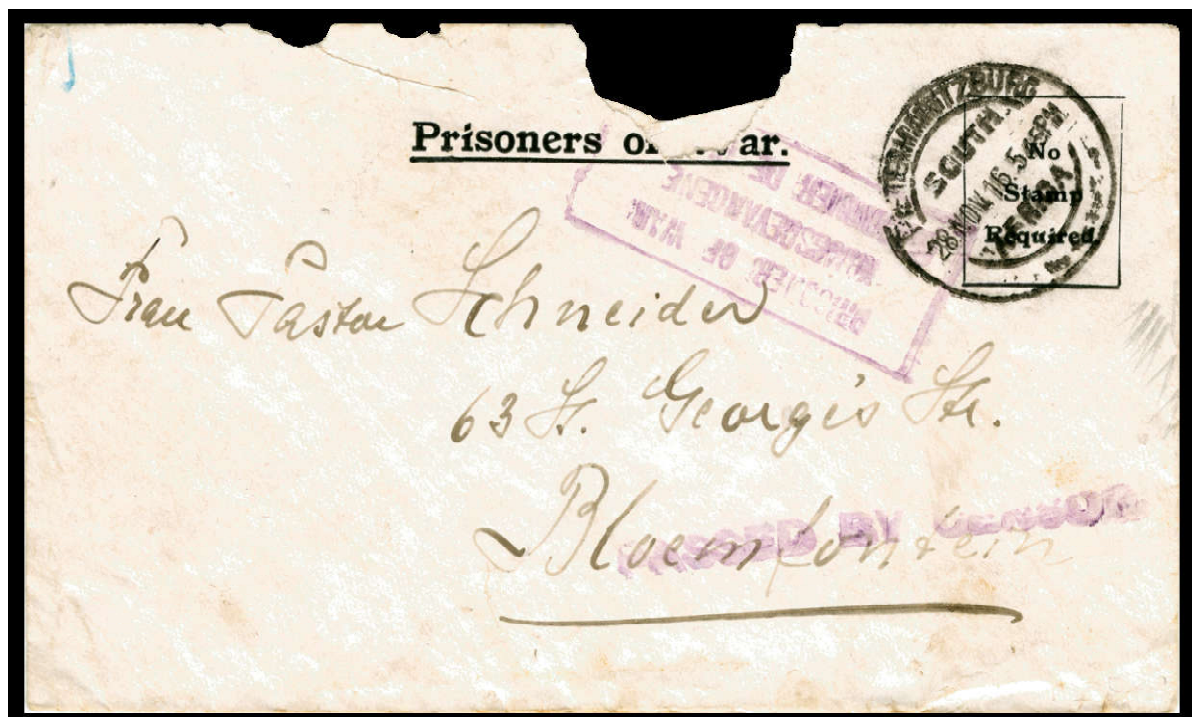
**1906. Postcard. LADYSMITH '11 MY 06' to GERMISTON.
This PC shows Afrikaner Nationalism developing in Natal in 1906.**

Internment of German and Austrian Nationals: 1914

The Union Census of 1911 registered 1,116,806 Whites and an African majority of 4,697,152, including other “Non-White” groups. Of the Whites 12,798 were born in Germany or Austria while 181,972 South African residents were born in Britain. Germans had been absorbed into South African society and Boer culture since the 17th century. In August 1914 Germanophobia gripped British SA as the media sensationalised German atrocities during the invasion and “*Rape of Belgium*”. On 6th August the government ordered all German and Austrian officers and reservists to be arrested. By 11th September some 1,500 detainees were interned in the military base of Roberts Heights, Pretoria. By 25th October some 2,000 prisoners had been transferred from Pretoria to Fort Napier in Pietermaritzburg, Natal. It was to be their home until the war’s end.



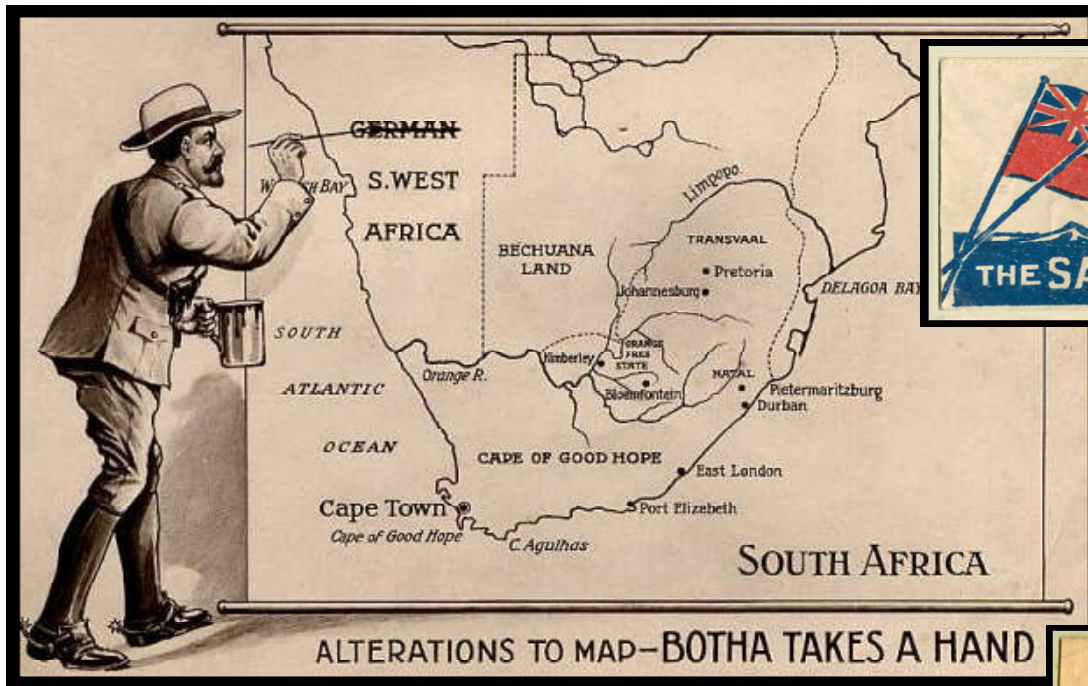
1914. Letter. ROBERTS HEIGHTS ‘19 OCT 14’ to Durban (undated).
One-line ‘PASSED BY CENSOR’ and boxed tri-lingual ‘PRISONER OF WAR’, both in purple ink.



1916. PoW Stationery. PIETERMARITZBURG (PoW Camp Fort Napier) ‘28 NOV 16’ to BLOEMFONTEIN.

Background to the First Invasion Plan: 21 August 1914

In 1914, with the memory of the SAW fresh and its scars still raw, many Boers saw Britain's war with Germany as an opportunity to escape the 'English yoke'. Despite some Republican Boers openly calling for armed rebellion, Botha and Smuts as Empire Loyalists agreed to proceed with Britain's request that the Union invade GSWA. They began planning and mustering Parliamentary and public support for the invasion of GSWA. They were motivated by their belief that war with Germany was in White South Africa's best strategic interests. Both were of the belief that GSWA was a part of a 'greater South Africa'.



1915. Navy Day Label. Britain contributed Royal Navy ships and a squadron of armoured cars to the campaign in GSWA.

1915. General Louis Botha sets about removing Germany from South West Africa. The purpose of his invasion was to acquire SWA for White South African settlement. His invasion was put on hold when anti-British Republicans rose up in revolt. Walvis Bay, the only deepwater port on the SWA coast, was an exclave of SA.



Circa 1916. Charity Label for Disabled SA Servicemen.

Some years before WW1 Botha had expressed to the British Prime Minister, Lord Asquith, his willingness to invade GSWA. In 1914 Botha assured Britain that the UDF would take sole responsibility for the GSWA campaign and the security of the Union. This released the occupying Imperial Garrison for service in Europe.

Botha was driven to conquer GSWA not by disgust of German genocide but to acquire it for White South African settlement. He realised he could only achieve his aims by using South African troops. If Britain garrisoned the conquered territory with troops from its Dominions, SWA might never be incorporated in the Union. Botha also wanted to keep it a 'White Man's War' between South Africans and Germans. He worried that the introduction of Indian troops would send the wrong message to SA's disenfranchised Blacks. He was against arming Blacks but encouraged their use in auxiliary roles as wagon drivers, cooks and servants to the fighting White men. This was in the tradition of the Black 'agter-ryer' (Afr. behind rider) who served Boer commandos by performing menial work for their masters. SA committed some 80,000 men to the GSWA campaign, over half of whom were armed Whites. Some 33,000 African, Coloured, and Indians, were unarmed volunteers.



Circa 1916. Charity Label for SA POWs captured in France. Some UDF troops were captured in GSWA, mostly at Sandfontein.

A popular claim is that the GSWA campaign was exclusively a South African show. It largely was but the UDF invasion would have struggled without the Royal Navy to protect its back and British transport ships to ferry troops and supplies to the landings at Luderitz and Walvis Bay. In addition, Royal Navy armoured cars proved especially useful at Trekkopjes. Overall, it was a South African campaign, the only one of any size in WW1 not planned and led by Staff officers of the British Army.

German South West Africa on the Outbreak of War: 1914

Britain's Royal Navy ruled the waves and thereby controlled the world's maritime markets. As an emerging European industrial and military power, Germany threatened to displace Britain. When Germany invaded Belgium, Britain declared war. As a British dominion, the Union was forced into a war against its neighbouring German colony. In terms of manpower, the Union outnumbered GSWA forces in SWA by 200 to 1. German troops comprised 1967 active Schutztruppen, some 2,500 reservists, a small Camel Corps, about 300 unreconciled Republican 'Vrij Korps' Boers and 1500 German policemen, a total of just over 6,000 men. They were well-supplied with four field artillery batteries, cannon, machine guns, ammunition and an airwing of two aircraft, a capability the Union did not have at the start of the campaign.



**1897 GSWA
First Issue,
Full Set.**



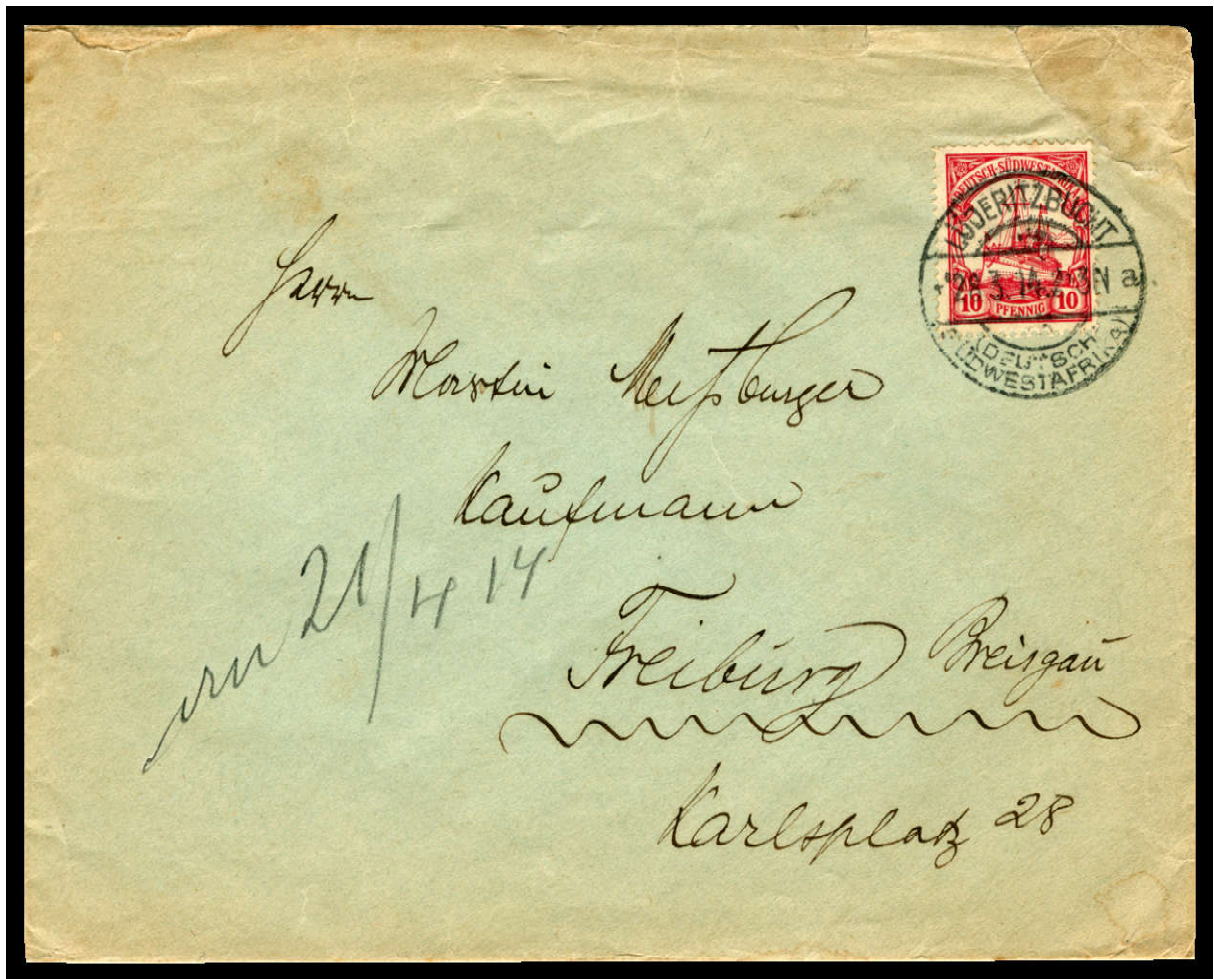
**Circa 1915. Unposted Postcard. 'The Fight to Victory'. Defenders of the German Reich: 1914'.
German Army Infantryman, Naval Marine and Colonial Schutztruppen (Security Forces).**



**1906 GSWA
Last Issue,
Low values.**

The German Schutztruppen had some defensive advantages. They were well-trained and better organised than SA's UDF. They benefitted from a unified command structure, a single language, local knowledge and internal lines of communication based on a railway system that ran from north to south. They had a good telegraph system which reported developments as they occurred. The railway could rapidly transport strong forces of men and material to meet UDF threats when and where they emerged. The Germans saw the Namib and Kalahari deserts as protecting the flanks of the central interior of SWA from seaborne and overland attack. They believed it was largely impossible for an army to cross the waterless Namib desert. They concluded that the UDF forces would have to attack from the south across the Orange River. SWA's hostile southern terrain and the lack of water would give the advantage to the German defenders who controlled the water wells.

Late German SWA Pre-War Mail



1914. Letter. LUDERITZBUCHT '28 3 14' to FREIBURG, GERMANY.
The overseas rate is correctly paid with a single GSWA 10 Pfg 'Yacht' adhesive.
Cancelled with the LUDERITZBUCHT Bridged Double Circle datestamp.
This cover is typical of GSWA overseas mail of the immediate pre-war period.

Britain entered World War I on 4th August 1914 when King George V declared war after the expiry of an ultimatum to Germany that it end its invasion of neutral Belgium. On 10th August 1914 South Africa formally agreed to invade GSWA. South African Parliamentary support for the invasion was divided but granted. On 14th September South Africa officially declared war on Germany and Austria-Hungary.

The start of the war cut GSWA off from the outside world. The German colony was unable to send and receive mail from overseas. As the German forces with drew into the interior the colony's ports from which mail was sent overseas, Luderitzbucht and Swakopmund, were abandoned and later occupied by SA forces. This limited the German colony to a domestic postal service based on its internal railway lines.

Ship traffic to and from the German colony ceased almost immediately the war started. Rather than risk sinking or capture on the high seas, most ships that were in GSWA waters at the start of the war sought protection in neutral Brazilian ports. The mail carried by the *Gertrud Woermann* travelled from Brazil via Genoa to Germany, arriving there in October 1914, presumably the last GSWA mail to reach the Fatherland.

Among the unexpected consequences of the sudden outbreak of war was that Berlin was unable to supply the Year slug '15' for GSWA insertion-type cancellers. As the South African invasion kicked-in the German colonial postal services largely withdrew with its retreating forces, leaving the incoming South Africans to fill the postal vacuum with a mix of converted German datestamps before new SA supplied ones arrived.

Late German SWA Pre-War Mail



1914. Postcard from WINDHUK '18 7 14' to OKAHANDJA.

The 5 Pfg domestic rate is correctly paid with a single GSWA 5 Pfg 'Yacht' adhesive
 Britain's entry into WW1 in response to Germany's invasion of Belgium is now just 17 days away.

German SWA Wartime Mail



1914. Postcard. WALDAU '19 8 14' to OKAHANDJA at 5 Pfg domestic rate.

The 5 Pfg domestic rate is correctly paid with a single GSWA 5 Pfg 'Yacht' adhesive
 Following Germany's invasion of Belgium, Britain and Germany have been at war for just 15 days.

A Technological War Comes to Africa - and the World

Before the First World War Germany built a network of long distance radiotelegraphy communications stations to connect its African colonies with Nauen in Germany and with each other. GSWA had radio transmission stations in Lüderitzbucht, Swakopmund and Windhuk. Similar ones were erected in GEA, Cameroon and Togo. As direct communication from GSWA to Germany was only possible subject to favourable weather conditions, messages were usually relayed through the Telefunken wireless station at Kamina in German Togo. This technology combined with a good telegraph system gave GSWA's remote border posts news of the outbreak of war days before their opposing SA counterparts got wind of it.



Circa 1913. Postcard. 'Lüderitzbucht', (Nr. 113. Deutsch-Südwest Afrika).

Radiotelegraphy mast in the foreground. It would later be dismantled and re-erected in Aus. The shallow harbour of Angra Pequena lies in the background. Ships in the port are served by lighters. The town boomed after 1908 when the railway was built and diamonds were discovered nearby.

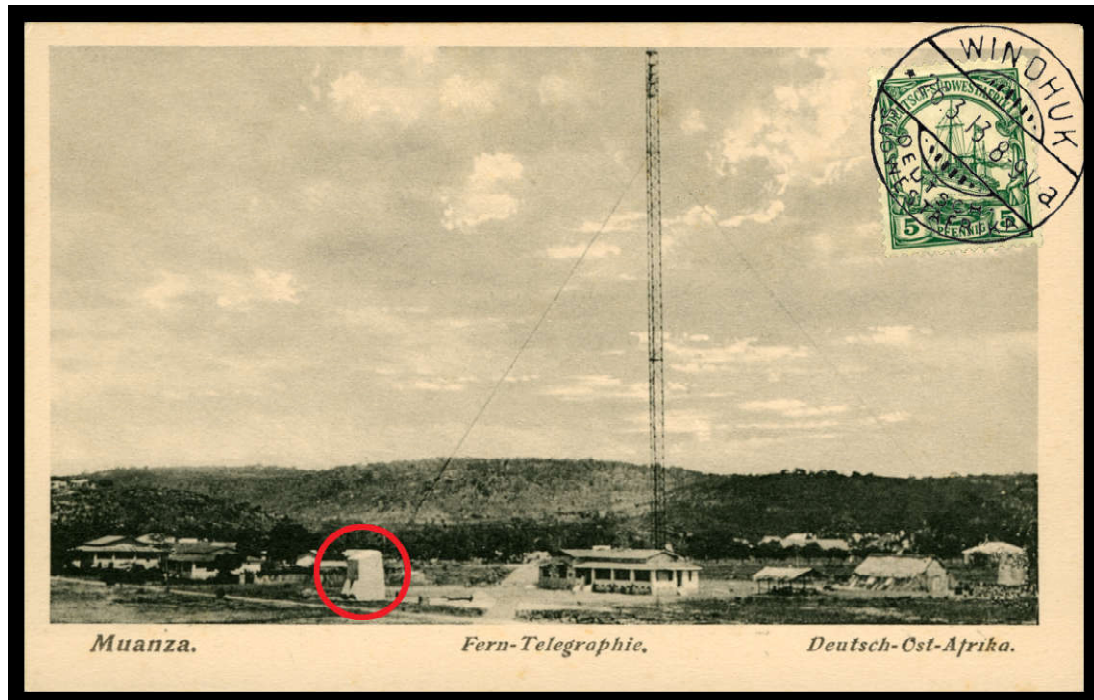
When Germany demanded the right to march unopposed through neutral Belgium to attack France, Britain supported Belgium and demanded that Germany respect its neutrality. When this was ignored, Britain declared war on Germany on 4th of August 1914. The ultimatum united the British government, its people and Empire in defence of '*gallant little Belgium*'. GSWA was not a British priority. Its small German military force stationed over the vastness of an unprofitable colony did not have the strength for more than regional mischief.

However, the powerful radio masts in GSWA were a great worry as these ports and Windhuk could send long range messages about British shipping to German warships. On 6th August the German light cruiser Königsberg based in GEA captured the City of Westminster in the Gulf of Aden. As a measure of the threat posed by German wireless stations, Britain fired its first shot of WW1 in Togo on 7th August in joint operations against the Kamina wireless station. The same day, Britain requested that the Union of SA perform an "*urgent imperial service*" to capture the harbours of GSWA and destroy their radio masts. Dar es Salaam's wireless station was bombarded the next day. Not a shot had yet been fired in Europe.

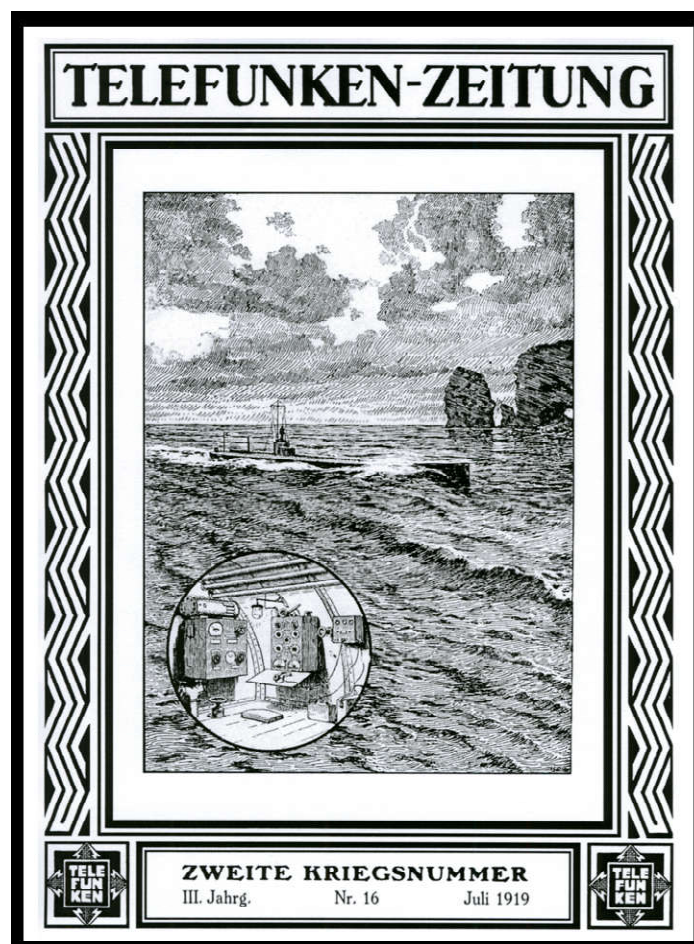
Participating Forces

Imperial Rhodesia raised and dispatched the 1st Battalion, Rhodesia Regiment (IRR), to South Africa on 14th November where it served in suppressing the Republican Rebellion. It later served in a minor capacity in GSWA, losing three men killed and five wounded. At the conclusion of the campaign IRR returned to Cape Town where it was disbanded. Its mail is scarce. In yet another example of the 'Anglo-Boer' divide Swaziland supplemented the GSWA Invasion Force with 31 Loyalist White men who were attached to the Imperial Light Horse, a Johannesburg Regiment previously known to the ZAR as the 'Uitlander Regiment'. Its mail is rare!

Telefunken Radiotelegraphy Technology



1912. Postcard. 'Muanza - Fern-Telegraphie - Deutsch Ost-Afrika' (German East Africa).
 5 Pfg Green GSWA adhesive cancelled with facsimile WINDHUK datestamp '26 3 13'.
 The object circled in red is one of the anchors used to brace the 120m high 'radio tower'.



1919. Reduced
 Telefunken Corporate
 Magazine. Inset -
 Radio Receiver aboard
 a U-Boat.

German communications and submarine technology posed a great threat to Britain at the start of WW1. British Intelligence was well-aware of the danger the GSWA wireless stations presented to maritime shipping. When the British government asked SA to destroy the radiomasts Botha had the pretext to invade GSWA and incorporate it into the Union. His unwavering support for Britain and the crushing of the rebellion would divide White South African political opinion for generations.

In Defence of the Kaiser's Realm

GSWA Governor Theodor Seitz (1910 - 1915) realised his military situation was hopeless despite the arrogant confidence of his commanders and the Schutztruppe's constant drinking toast to *'The Day'* when they got to fight England. Seitz cunningly proposed colonial neutrality in the event of war, a option that favoured Germany's long-term interests. However, the powerful radio masts that it had installed were a priority British target that made any chance of GSWA remaining neutral an impossibility. With Britain ruling the waves and with an army in South Africa, GSWA was *"easy pickings"*.

Without reinforcements to correct the imbalance between its forces and those of the UDF, the chances of GSWA repelling an invasion were slim. As a result of his military weakness, Seitz sought to exploit political divisions in the Union between Boer Republicans and the Empire Loyalists led by Botha and Smuts. Seitz hoped to create a Boer Republican ally that would allow Germany to maintain its authority over SWA. This failed when Botha and Smuts largely won the SA public's political support and took decisive action at the head of loyal Boer troops who crushed the rebels.

Seitz's military strategists believed that any invasion of GSWA would come across the Orange River. They thought it impossible for a large modern army to cross the vast, waterless Namib desert from the sea. The UDF troops who occupied Luderitz were seen as proof of this. Nevertheless, they underestimated Botha and his Boer ability to *'make a plan'*. The Germans saw the Namib and Kalahari deserts as protecting them in the central interior of GSWA from attack but failed to realise that the deserts also penned the defenders in on either side into a narrow corridor from south to north.

Given their limited options, Seitz ordered his military to 'weaponise' GSWA's semi-desert terrain by poisoning its water wells as they retreated, a tactic that had been successfully used in the Herero genocide. The only difference was that now they would post polite messages to their European adversaries that the water wells had been rendered *"useless"*. The absence of water would be the UDF's greatest logistical problem of the campaign.

Unlike its forces in GEA whose ranks were made up of redoubtable native askaris, GSWA's army was comprised almost entirely of European men. (Basters were used in non-combatant roles to protect valuable infrastructure, like the radiotelegraphy towers.) The UDF feared that if it did not surround and capture the German army it might resort to guerilla warfare, just as Botha and Smuts had done following the Republican defeat in the conventional stage of the SAW. However, the recent history of GSWA and Germany's genocide meant that it did not have the support of the indigenous population, a factor that restricted the ability of the Schutztruppen to conduct a guerilla war. As a result, the Germans decided to fight the war in a conventional way. Defeat was always the most likely outcome. By mid-1915, most German troops realised resistance was futile.

Theodor Seitz (1863 - 1949) studied law at Heidelberg University before taking up government service in the Foreign Office in 1894. Sent to Cameroon in 1895, he was appointed its Governor in 1907. Five years after the Genocide of 1904, he became Governor of GSWA, a post he held until forced to surrender the colony in 1915. He was held captive on parole until 1919 when he was repatriated to Germany. Despite Germany losing all its colonies in WW1, Seitz became President of the German Colonial Society in 1920. He wrote *'On the Rise and Fall of German Colonial Power'* (right) and supported the issue of 'Mourning Stamp' labels for lost colonies (GSWA bottom right).



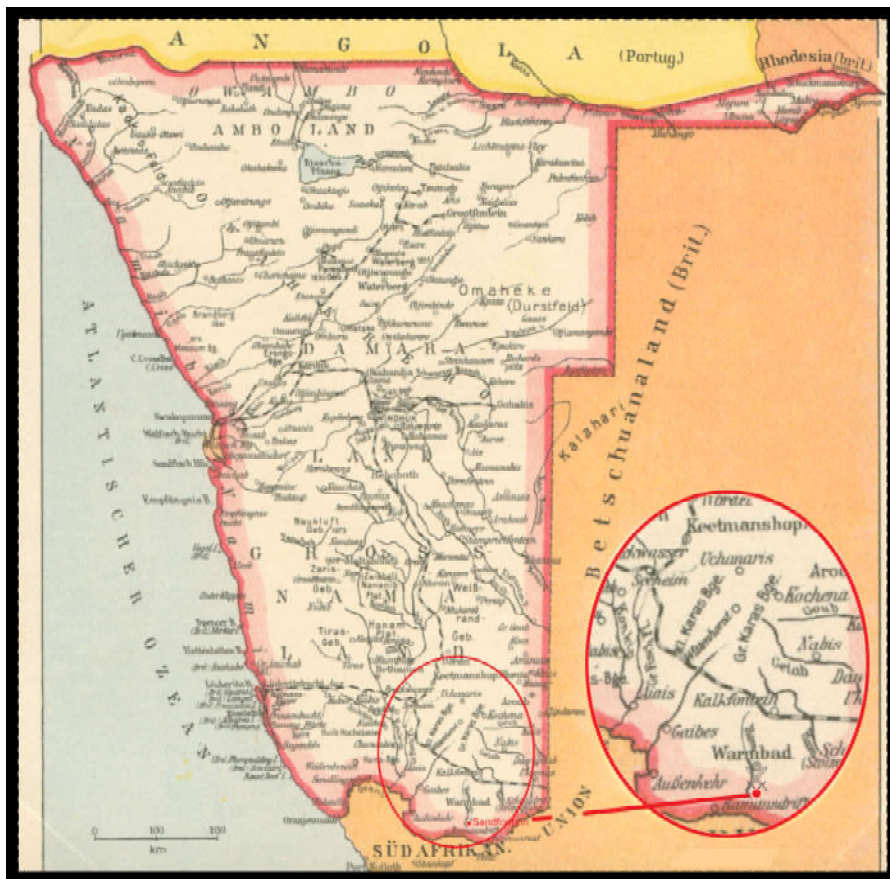
**Governor Dr. Theodor H. Seitz,
Governor of GSWA, 1910 - 1915.**



The German Military Commanders - Von Heydebreck and Franke

At the start of WW1, GSWA's military commander was Colonel Joachim von Heydebreck, an artillery officer who had gained valuable local campaign experience in

GSWA during the Herero / Nama War of Resistance. His artillery won the only notable victory in defence of GSWA at Sandfontein in September 1914, a battle that came about because of the invading UDF's desperate need to seize three water wells.



The Battle of Sandfontein: 26 September 1914

Victory by von Heydebreck at Sandfontein in the south would be followed 5 months later by Franke's surrender at Korab in the far north 1,100 km away.

At Sandfontein, von Heydebreck rallied in as many men as he could, plus more artillery and machine guns than the invaders had. He ambushed the UDF with overwhelming artillery fire which disabled the UDF guns. He kept up the pressure on the UDF with intolerable machine gun fire and determined infantry assaults. Unable to break out of the trap, 103 South Africans were forced to surrender. His victory was the result of planning, the use of internal railway lines to build up a superior force from limited resources, good use of terrain and decisive leadership. He wanted to follow up this success with a combined German / Rebel invasion of the Northern Cape but Maritz would not join in.

Despite this victory von Heydebreck was unpopular with his troops who favoured his second-in-command, Major Viktor Franke. Shortly after Sandfontein, von Heydebreck was killed when a bomb fell off an aircraft he was inspecting. This left Franke in command of GSWA's defences. Known as the 'Hero of Omaruru' to his men, Franke had defeated a numerically superior Herero force while defending the town. Despite this gutsy victory, Franke was an unimaginative commander. Versed in Prussian military doctrine he wanted a conventional war with the UDF. Botha refused to give him such an opportunity, constantly outflanking Franke with his mobile mounted infantry, always avoiding a fight if a set piece battle was not entirely necessary. An exasperated Franke derided Botha, saying of his opponent's tactics, "*it is not war; it is a Hippodrome!*" By staying true to Boer stratagems, Botha won the war with minimum casualties.



The field-grey slouch hat with blue edging as worn by the Schutztruppe in GSWA.



Col. Joachim von Heydebreck (1861-1914).

The Victor of Sandfontein, killed in an accident with a makeshift aircraft bomb.



Major Viktor Franke (1865 - 1936) assumed command of GSWA forces in late 1914 but surrendered them after a 5 month retreat.

Tinker, Tailor, Prospector Spy? August: 1914



1914. Fred Cornell, author of 'The Glamour of Prospecting'. Cornell had a great love of the arid and desolate Cape/GSWA border. He reported the 'invasion' of the Union by Schutztruppe at Nakob. Botha used this border violation to win Parliamentary support for war.

The intention of Botha's offer to Britain that the Imperial Garrison be released for service in France and that SA be left to invade GSWA was intended to preempt any possibility that Australian, New Zealand, Indian and or British troops be sent to SWA to fight the Germans. As a result of taking this initiative Botha had to move faster than he liked. He was aware of his Boer tribe's sensitivities, especially their anger at the deaths of so many women and children in Refugee / Concentration Camps during the SAW, coupled with the loss of their republican status and their hated new yoke as subjects of a British King.

This had created a 'broeder twis' (Afr. dispute between brothers) between those who supported Botha, Smuts and the Empire and those who wanted to restore their Republic. Botha knew that many of his people believed that the Union should not be fighting Germans in SWA. Despite the growing Republican rebel threat around him, Botha believed that he would win the argument and so made preparations with Smuts for war in GSWA while at the same time attempting to gain both public and Parliamentary support for the invasion. On 10th August 1914 his Union government formally agreed to invade GSWA.

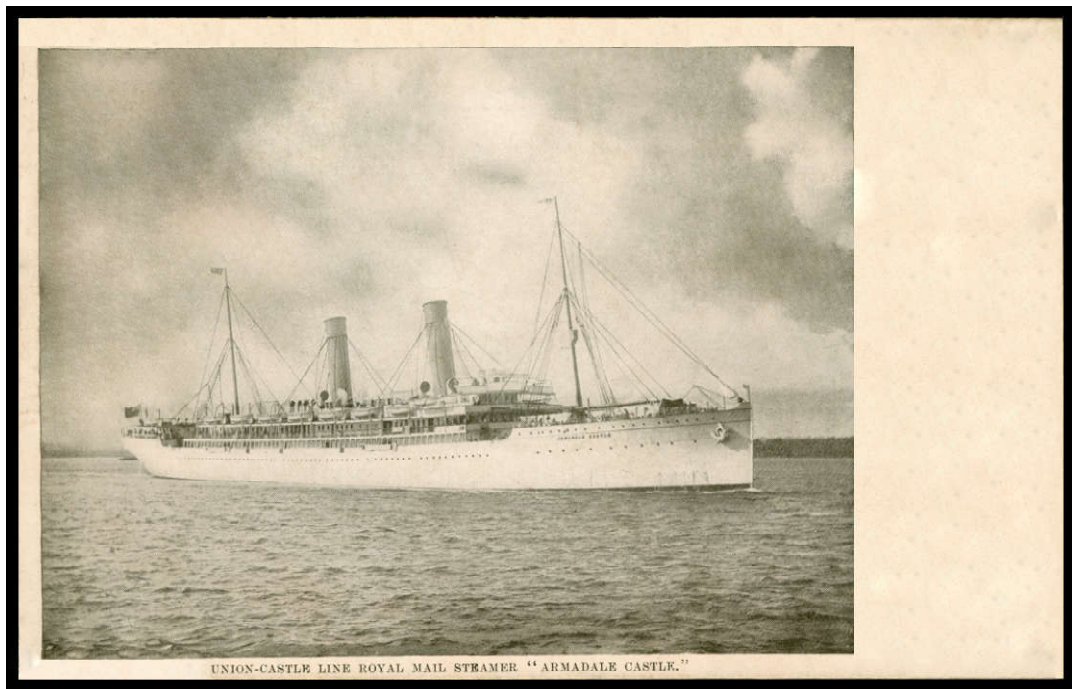
On 20th August Botha learned that German troops had crossed the South African border at Nakob and occupied a hill and created an observation point some 220 yards on the South African side. This had been reported to the SAMR in Upington by Fred Cornell, an English prospector with little liking for the Germans. He claimed to have witnessed German atrocities at Shark Island in Luderitz and wrote about finding the dessicated bodies of captured Nama who after their limbs were broken were thrown into ravines full of thorn trees to die a slow and agonising death. Cornell was also known to visit Major Buckle, an intelligence officer in the Castle on his trips to Cape Town.

Botha would use Cornell's 'intelligence' to win public and Parliamentary support for the GSWA invasion despite the risk of a rebellion. Botha and Smuts decided to call the rebels' bluff and put the invasion plan into action.

1973. Succulents. 2nd Definitive Issue.

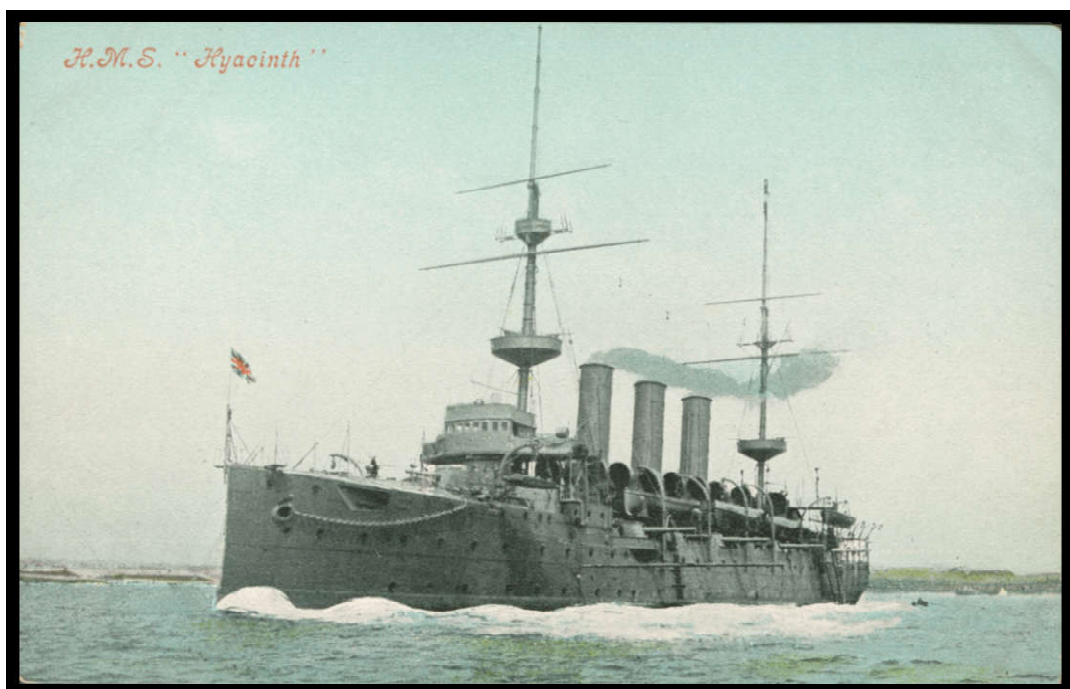


The Shelling of Swakopmund, GSWA: 14 September 1914



**Circa 1910. Postcard. 'Union Castle Line Royal Mail Steamer "Armadale Castle"'.
The Cape Station's HMS Armadale Castle provided troops and fire support for the invasion of GSWA.**

On 14th September 1914, the Union Parliament declared war on Germany. That day the Cape Station's recently arrived Armed Merchant Cruiser, HMS Armadale Castle, shelled the wireless tower in Swakopmund. Luderitz was captured on the 18th. Armadale Castle returned to Cape Town to take on troops, stores and horses. She returned Luderitz on 1st October. There was a fear that a German Squadron might appear at any moment. There was relief when the next day saw the flagship of the Cape Station, HMS Hyacinth, a 5,600 ton cruiser, arrive in Luderitz. The naval threat increased when the German East Asia Squadron destroyed the Royal Navy's 4th Cruiser Squadron at the Battle of Coronel in November 1914. The start of the Republican rebellion in the Union put the invasion on hold and stranded UDF troops in Luderitz until Christmas. Hyacinth's 6" guns protected Union troops from attack.



**Circa 1900. HMS Hyacinth when previously a part of the Channel Fleet.
Hyacinth was the flagship of the Cape Station's commander, Rear Admiral Herbert King-Hall.**

Nakob - The Invasion of the Union: 16 September 1914

The first German 'invasion' of the Union by German Schutztruppe was at Nakob, a remote border post in the north-western Cape some 100 miles (161 km) from Upington. The German presence was discovered on the 17th August 1914 by Fred Cornell, a prospector. According to him, the Germans fortified a hill 220 yards (200 m) on the South African side of the border. Cornell investigated and found signs of German occupation but saw no Germans present. He took photographs and immediately rode for two days to deliver the news to the SAMR base in Upington. Captain Fisher, the camp commander, took Cornell's statement and telegraphed it to Pretoria on 20th. Botha sat on this report for almost three weeks. During this time he mobilised UDF troops under Lieutenant Colonel Manie Maritz along the SWA border. He only acted after SWA Schutztruppe chased Boers across the border into the Union. On the 9th September, he called a special session of Parliament and used these two incidents to get a resolution "*fully recognizing the obligations of the Union as a portion of the British Empire*". On the day the Union Parliament declared war on Germany, HMS Armadale Castle shelled the radiotelegraphy tower in Swakopmund which supposedly 'fell' at 3.25pm with no civilian casualties.



1918. Cover. Cancelled NAKOB RAIL '2 FEB 18' to WINDHUK. PC B 100.
Addressed to the 'Officer Commanding Interned Schutztruppe'.

Perhaps in response, some 200 Boers of the pro-German Vrij (Dutch. free) Korps supported by two German machine-gun squads crossed the border and attacked the seven-man SAMR police border post at Nakob on 16th September. The surprised and outnumbered troopers surrendered after losing one dead and one wounded to bursts of raking machine-gun fire. The dead man was a Corporal Coulter, presumably the first UDF serviceman killed in WW1 by German gunfire. He died on South African soil defending the Union of South Africa in accordance with the charter of the UDF which restricted it to defending SA territory. It would take several days for the news of his death to reach Pretoria. Before it arrived Botha ordered the occupation of Luderitz by 1,800 UDF troops on 18th September. This invasion of GSWA sparked an armed Republican Rebellion in the Union, the size and seriousness of which forced further invasion plans for GSWA to be put on hold for some three months. The UDF troops in Luderitz now had to "*sit it out*" twiddling their thumbs.

Luckily, the Germans had withdrawn into the interior.

Death toasting: "To Your Health, Civilisation".
Louis Raemaekers, Cartoonist, 1915.



The Occupation of Luderitzbucht: 18th September 1914

Luderitz was occupied unopposed by 'C' Force (1). At the same time 'A' Force (2) crossed the Orange River at Ramans Drift. Maritz in Upington (3) made excuses not to support them. This saw 'A' Force defeated at Sandfontein (X) while attempting to capture its water wells.

After Maritz came out in rebellion in October 1914, Botha declared martial law in the Union and put the invasion on hold. 'C' Force would 'stew' in Luderitz for the next three months while the rebellion in the Union was crushed.



The First Invasion Plan: September 1914.
This was aborted by Maritz's treachery causing rebellion in SA.



Circa 1910. Unposted Postcard. Luderitzbucht (The Railway Station).
Capturing the railway line to Aus and Keetmanshoop was 'C' Force's objective.
Luderitz's occupying troops would spend three months relaying the destroyed railway line.

On 18th September, "C Force" under Colonel P. S. Beves landed unopposed at Lüderitz with the aid of the Royal Navy. They found that the German wireless transmitter had been removed and re-erected in Aus. The original plan called for "C" Force to advance into southern GSWA through Aus and Seeheim to Keetmanshoop where it would join up with General Tim Lukin's "A" Force advancing from Port Nolloth. This plan for the invasion of GSWA was put on hold when the 'Maritz Rebellion' began in SA.

Transvaal Scottish Regiment - Luderitz: 22nd September 1914



Tony Howgrave-Graham

1914. OAS (On Active Service) Postcard. FORCE C (Luderitz) '22 SEP 1914' to CAPE TOWN.

This is the first 'Force C' oval UDF canceller used in GSWA. It is scarce, especially on stamps.

The sender probably came ashore on the 18th. PC dated 'Terra Firma 20/9/14'. This is the earliest recorded purple oval 'Force C' datestamp. Purple 'PASSED CENSOR'. M/s 'TS' for 'Transvaal Scottish'.



1977. Shortened Transvaal Scottish Regiment Commemorative cover showing a ‘proper soldier’.

The 1st Battalion saw action in GSWA as part of General Louis Botha's Northern Force.

The 2nd Battalion saw action as part of General Jan Smuts' Southern Force.

Once White South Africa's proudest British-style regiment, the Transvaal Scottish is now the 'Solomon Mahlangu Regiment'.

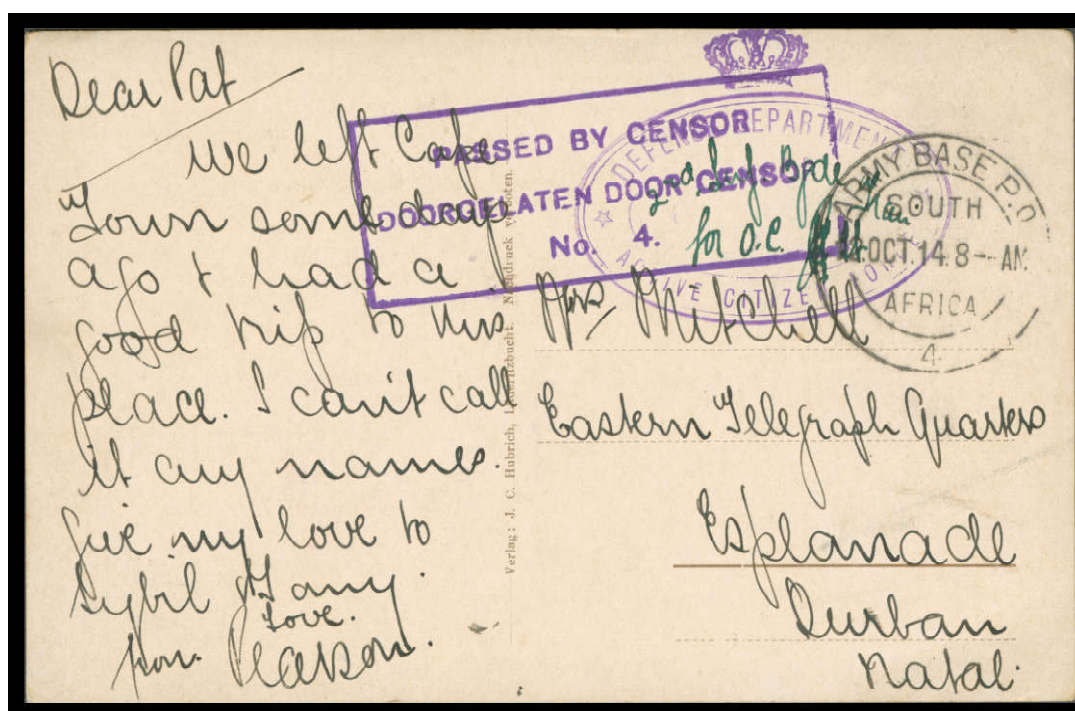
ARMY BASE PO 4 - Luderitz



1914. Photo. 'British Landing - South African Troops in Luderitzbucht. 18.9.14'.

Just before or after noon, cold UDF troops of Central Force march unopposed into Luderitzbucht.

The UDF troops would spend three long months kicking their heels in Luderitz while Botha crushed the rebellion in SA. Covers and postcards marked OAS ('On Active Service') were sent free of charge. The SA Army Postal Service received the SA Type 1 datestamp (below) for use in occupied GSWA. This sent a powerful message back home about the vigour of the new Union Defence Force. The Double Circle Army Base PO 4 used in Luderitzbucht is common, 4A less so and 4B scarce.



1914. Postcard from ARMY BASE PO 4 '12 OCT 14' to DURBAN.

Violet crowned oval 'DEFENCE DEPARTMENT ACTIVE CITIZEN FORCE' cachet.

'OFFICIAL FREE' appears omitted. Postcard NOT marked 'OAS' - but still sent free.

Violet bilingual 'PBC No. 4' long boxed cachet. M/s '2nd Inf Bgde for O.C.' in black-green.

The Republican Rebellion: October to January 1914

The Commandant-General of the UDF, Christiaan Beyers, was an ex-SAW Republican General who opposed the invasion of GSWA. He resigned his commission and wrote with reference to the 'Rape of Belgium' that *"it is sad that the war is being waged against the 'barbarism' of the Germans. We have forgiven but not forgotten all the barbarities committed in our own country during the War"*. He was referring to the deaths of 27,927 Boer women, children and old men in British Army Refugee / Concentration Camps during the SAW. (Some 16,000 Blacks suffered a similar forgotten fate.)



Circa 1902. French South African War Postcard. Unposted.
The chivalrous Boer General, Koos de la Rey.

General Koos de la Rey was the well-liked victor of Modder River and Magersfontein. A nominated senator in the Union Parliament after the SAW, he refused to support Botha over the invasion of GSWA and associated himself with the rebellious Beyers. On 15th September 1914, the two set off in a car to visit Major Jan Kemp in Potchefstroom. Kemp had a large armoury and a force of 2,000 men thought to be sympathetic to the rebels' Republican ideals. When the car failed to stop at a police road block set up to catch American gangsters, the police opened fire, killing General de la Rey. The ill-equipped rebel plan stalled, their moment passed and the initiative went to Botha who crushed them.



October 1914. Maritz's treason puts the GSWA invasion on hold.



1938. Marnie Maritz
'My Life and Struggles' (A SA 'Mein Kampf').

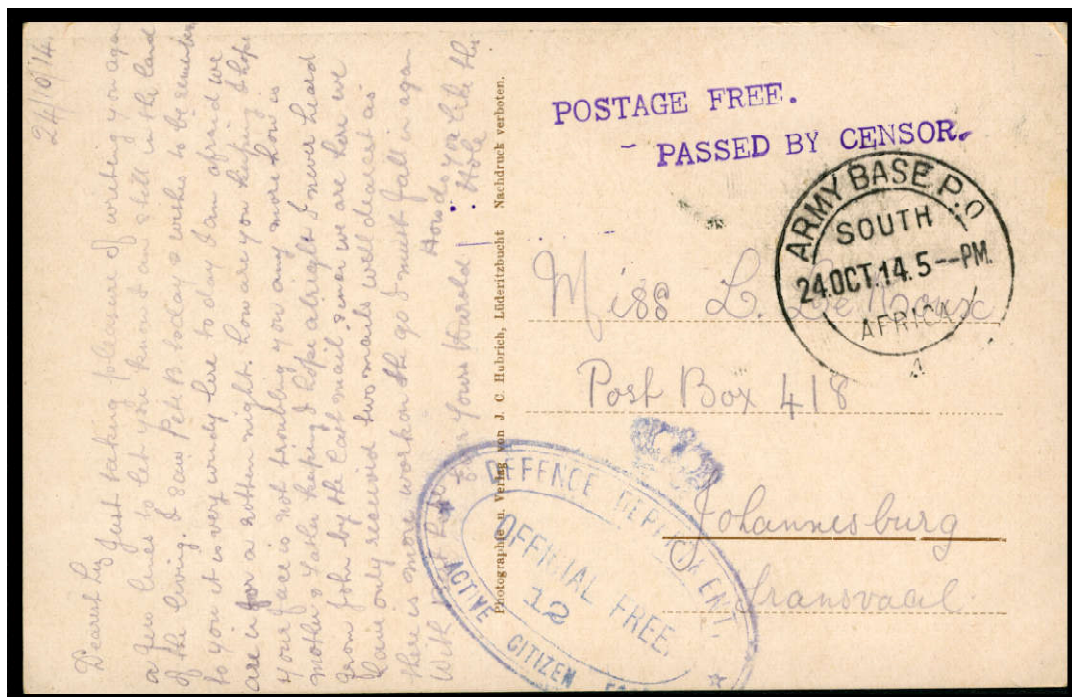
Believing De la Rey had been assassinated, SAW Generals Beyers, De Wet and Maritz agreed to rebel. Unlike Beyers and De Wet who had taken the Oath of Allegiance at the Republican surrender in 1902, Maritz had refused and gone into exile. In 1913, as commander District 12, the military area facing GSWA, he began secret meetings with German Governor Seitz. When war was declared Maritz was ordered to support of the UDF invasion of GSWA but found reasons not to do so. This led to the UDF defeat at Sandfontein. In October 1914, he declared a rebel provisional government which inspired rebellion in the Union. Forced to delay the GSWA invasion, Botha declared martial law across SA. Beyers joined forces with Kemp but drowned crossing the Vaal River. Decisive action by Botha in Mushroom Valley defeated De Wet who fled into Bechuanaland where he was captured. Unlike the Irish, South African rebels received light sentences. On his return to SA in 1923, Maritz received a 3 year prison term. When the National Party won the 1924 election, Maritz was released after serving just 3 months.

'C' Force 'stews' in Luderitz: September to December 1914



Circa 1910. Postcard. 'Bismarckstrasse - Luderitzbucht'. (No. 121 Deutsch-Südwest-Afrika).

The postcard above shows the German character of Luderitz. It also suggests the dry and sandy semi-desert environment of the town. Whether purchased or looted, this postcard of GSWA would have been received with pride in Johannesburg. (See below.) It suggest the sender is a warrior fighting in foreign fields, albeit an inhospitably sandy one. The building would probably have been occupied by SA troops who spent much of their first three months relaying the destroyed railway line to Aus and Keetmanshoop.



1914. Postcard from ARMY BASE PO 4 '24 OCT 14' to JOHANNESBURG.
Blue-violet crowned oval 'DEFENCE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL FREE 12 ACTIVE CITIZEN FORCE' cachet.
Unusual staggered violet bilingual 'POSTAGE FREE. PASSED BY CENSOR.' unboxed cachet.

Marking covers 'OAS' is not yet the order of the day The two cachets both state that postage is 'FREE'.

ARMY BASE PO 4 - Luderitz: 1914



Circa 1913. Real Photo Postcard showing Luderitzbucht street with corner shops and rail track. Desert sand has blown into the town whose building's roofs are designed for shedding snow. A railed track can be seen in this and the preceding colour postcard.

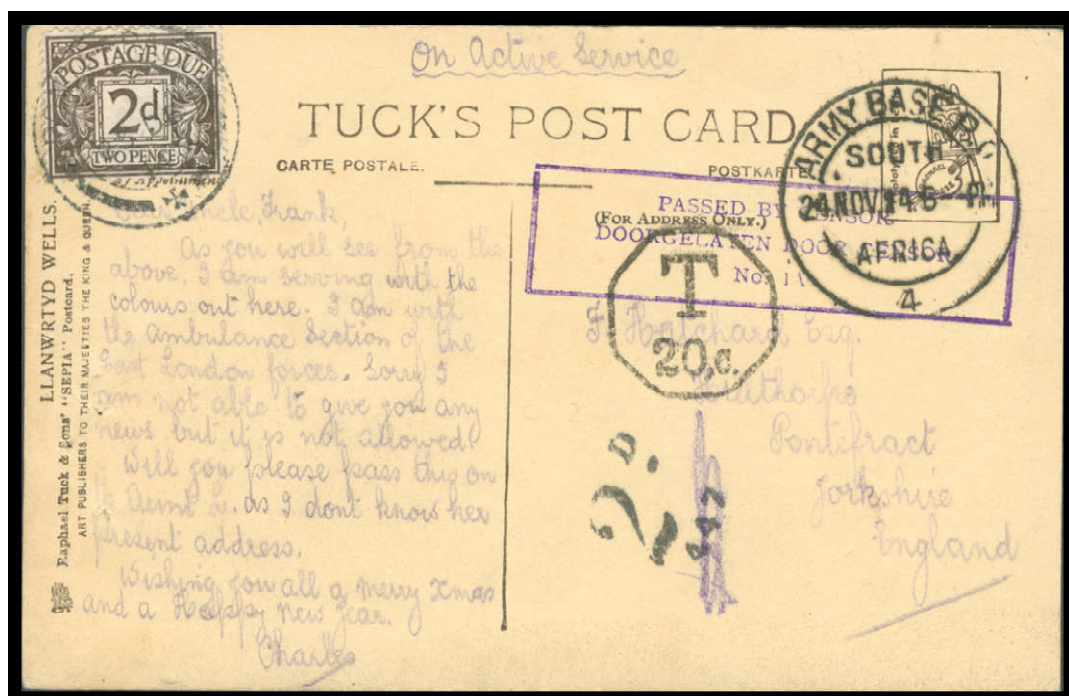


1914. Postcard. ARMY BASE PO 4 '13 NOV 14' to WITPOORTJE, TVL. Violet oval 'TRANSVAAL SCOTTISH REGIMENT ORDERLY ROOM' cachet. Marked OAS. 'POSTAGE FREE, BASE IC, PASSED BY CENSOR' rectangular boxed cachet. The Transvaal Scottish Regiment's PO Box is 1188, Johannesburg.

ARMY BASE PO 4 - Luderitz: 1914



1914. Postcard marked 'On Active Service' from ARMY BASE PO 4 '21 NOV 14' to Durban. Violet unilingual 'POSTAGE FREE BASE 1A PASSED BY CENSOR' small boxed cachet. The postcard has been signed-off bottom right from "C' Force".



1914. Postcard marked 'On Active Service' from ARMY BASE PO 4 '24 NOV 14' to GB. Violet bilingual 'PASSED BY CENSOR No. 1 A' long boxed rectangular cachet. The postcard has been charged 'T/20c' and '2d' tax on arrival in the UK.

Although marked 'On Active Service', this postcard was taxed for non-payment of postage on its arrival in GB. Ditto the next postcard which is also going to England and which is marked 'OFFICIAL FREE'. In not accepting South African military mail free of charge, it shows the early confusion that existed in the British Post Office about the acceptance of overseas 'OAS' free postage. This was not uncommon in the early months of WW1. It upset both the troops and the public alike. It was soon 'sorted'!

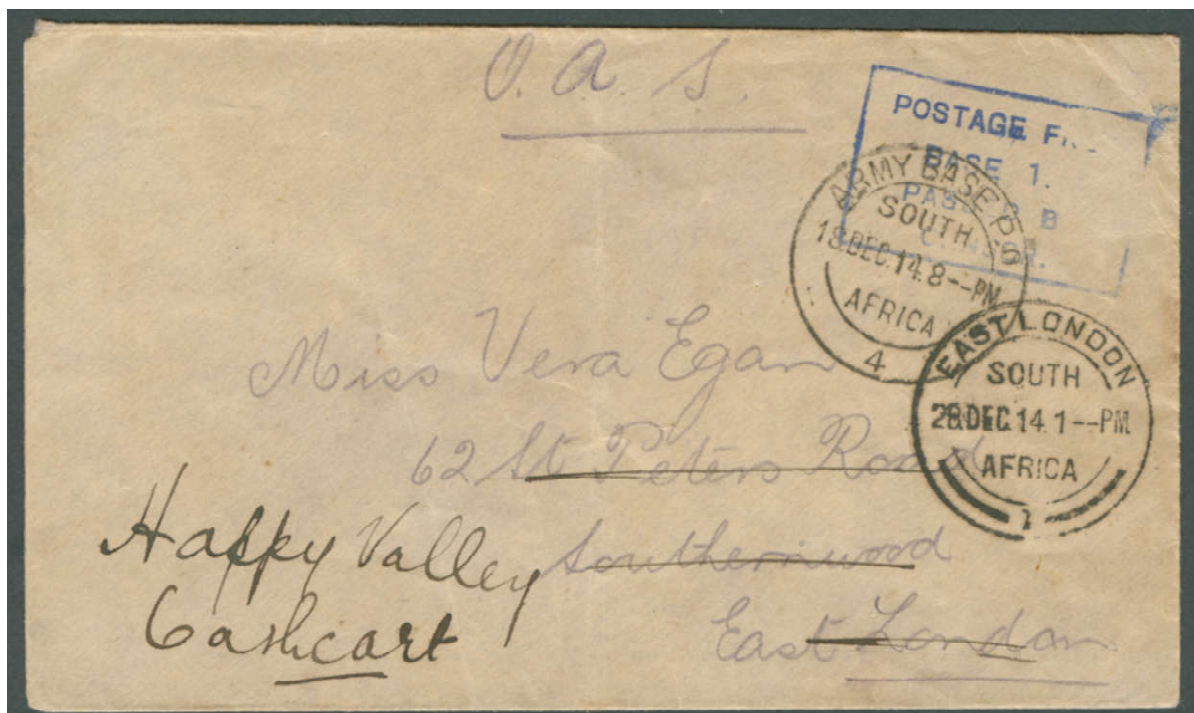
ARMY BASE PO 4 - Luderitz: 1914



1914. On Active Service Postcard from ARMY BASE PO 4 '28 NOV 14' to GB.
Blue crowned oval 'DEFENCE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL FREE 12 ACTIVE CITIZEN FORCE' cachet.
Violet bilingual 'PASSED BY CENSOR No. 1.' large, long boxed rectangular cachet.

The postcard has been taxed 'T/20c' and '1/2d' tax on its arrival in the UK.

While many GSWA datestamps were adapted for use alongside the Union's new SWA ones, the common SA Type 1 datestamp (below, East London) was not issued in SWA, (except as a South African ARMY BASE PO datestamp). This is because the ownership of the occupied German colony was sensitive and yet to be legally decided. Had the Union used SA Type 1 datestamps claiming SWA towns a part of 'South Africa', many more people would have seen the Union's invasion for what it was, a land grab.]



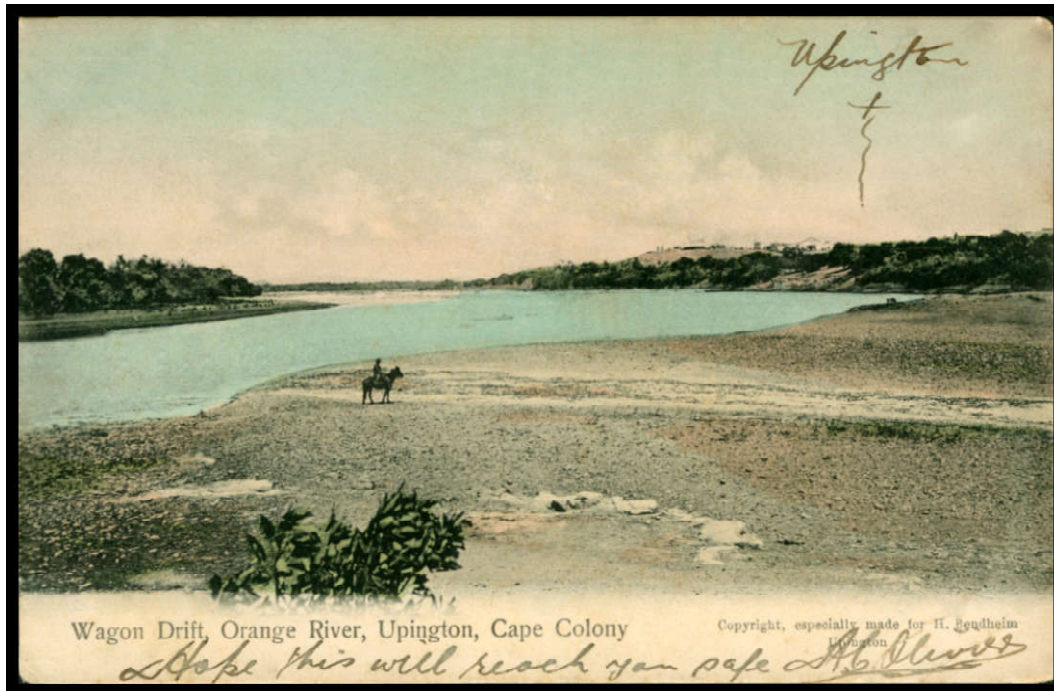
1914. 'OAS' Cover from ARMY BASE PO 4 '18 DEC 14' to EAST LONDON '28 DEC 14'.
Blue unilingual 'POSTAGE FREE. BASE 1. PASSED BY CENSOR' tall, small boxed cachet.

End of the Rebellion - War in the Union: January to February 1915

After a futile 1000 km fighting march across the southern Kalahari, Potchefstroom's Major Jan Kemp and his decimated and dehydrated men, more biltong than boerewors, finally linked up with Maritz in late November 1914. On 21st December part of their combined rebel force supported by Germans defeated a UDF column at Nous in the Union. This would be the only success they would have.



The SA Red Ensign Flag used until 1912. A version of this flag was raised over Windhoek in 1915.



Wagon Drift, Orange River, Upington, Cape Colony

Copyright, especially made for H. Roodhilm

Hope this will reach you safe H. Roodhilm

1910. Postcard. MARYDALE 'JAN 13 10' to BELGIUM 'FEVR 6-7 10'.

Wagon Drift (ford), Orange River, looking west at Upington on the north bank.

Sent by a philatelist from 'Rooi Sand (Dutch. red sand), PB Stoff Kraal (Dutch. Dust Kraal)'.

At dawn on 24th January 1915, Maritz and Kemp with 1,200 rebels made a frontal assault across open ground against Colonel Jaap van Deventer's 2,000 man UDF garrison in Upington, some 250 km from GSWA. Van Deventer's small force was part of the larger 'B Force' intended to form one of the UDF's four columns for the planned invasion of GSWA. The fighting was severe and losses were unexpectedly heavy and the rebel attack failed.

It did not help the rebel cause that Kemp was suffering from Blackwater Fever and was depressed by his and other rebel military defeats. He now realised that the 'game was up', the Maritz republican rebellion had failed. Kemp surrendered with his men at Upington on 30th January. As Van Deventer and Maritz had been comrades during the SAW in the northern Cape under General Smuts, Maritz helped arrange Kemp's surrender before slipping across the border into GSWA. Maritz would flee to Portuguese Angola at the end of Botha's successful GSWA campaign.

In order to disrupt the ongoing UDF invasion plan, GSWA forces launched another small pre-emptive invasion of the Union two days after Kemp's surrender. A German force under Major Hermann Ritter attacked Kakamas, some 100 km south-west of Upington and about the same distance from the GSWA border, on 4th February 1915. This was the furthest south that German invaders penetrated the Union during WW1. Ritter's plan was to capture two river fords on the then fast-flowing Orange River before taking the town. He launched his attack under cover of an artillery barrage but met stubborn resistance from the UDF garrison. Ritter was repulsed with the loss of 7 German dead, 6 wounded and 16 captured. With no means of crossing the river and fearing a counter-attack by the UDF who possessed the ferry, Ritter retreated back to GSWA.

In March 1915, the Rietfontein border post, some 200 km north of Nakob, was twice attacked by a German force from Aroab. Both attacks suffered heavy losses and were forced to withdraw. The rebellion and any potential that the Germans had for invading the Union was over.

Smuts Revises the UDF Plan of Campaign in GSWA



The UDF's invasion of GSWA was imaginative and daring. Germany's defence was predictable.

Aims

The British needed the Union to silence the powerful radio transmitters at Luderitz, Swakopmund and Windhoek which were capable of long-distance maritime / naval communications.

The Union wanted SWA as its fifth province in order to acquire its farm land and mineral wealth. The acquisition of land by Europeans is central to South African and Namibian colonial history.

A Revised Strategy

Smuts' original invasion plan involved four separate columns advancing into GSWA. This was intended to make it difficult for the Germans to use their internal railway network to muster all their forces against any one column in order to defeat it. Operations began with a naval bombardment against the wireless station at Swakopmund on 14th September 1914 and the occupation of Luderitz on 18th. However, Maritz's treachery allowed the Germans to muster an overwhelming force that led to the defeat of 'A' Force at Sandfontein, just as Smuts had feared. The start of the rebellion in the Union in October forced the first invasion plan to be put on hold. Once the rebellion had been put down, Smuts revised his invasion plan.

Walvis Bay was re-occupied on Christmas Day 1914 and Swakopmund shortly thereafter. Prime Minister General Botha took charge of the Northern Force in Walvis Bay / Swakopmund, the most powerful UDF army in the field. In February 1915 Smuts took charge of 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'E' forces, now united into the Southern Force'. The plan was for Botha to advance across the Namib Desert on Windhoek in the centre while Smuts kept the Germans occupied in the south. The aim was to trap the Germans around Windhoek in order to prevent them escaping into the far north where they could conduct guerilla war. While the Germans had the advantage of internal lines of supply, the UDF's were stretched. Their supplies came by ship from Cape Town to Port Nolloth, Luderitz, Walvis Bay and Swakopmund, then overland through the arid coastal desert to the UDF men in central GSWA. A huge railway building program was undertaken at great cost and in short time to connect the different gauge South African Railway system to the GSWA one. This would connect Walvis Bay to Swakopmund and the interior for the first time.

1. 'C' Force (Central Force).

As part of the original plan, Colonel Beves landed at Lüderitz which the Germans had abandoned on 18/19th September 1914. This precipitated rebellion in the Union and the invaders were made to sit it out in Lüderitz until the rebels were defeated. Over time C Force was strengthened to the point where Lüderitz could no longer hold all the men. A temporary tented camp was created at Tschaukaib on the railway line to Aus. In February 1915, Brigadier-General Sir Duncan McKenzie began to advance with C Force on Keetmanshoop via Aus and the strategic railway junction at Seeheim. Progress was slow due to a lack of water.

2. 'A' Force (Port Nolloth).

As part of the original plan, Brigadier-General Henry 'Tim' Lukin advanced from Port Nolloth on 7th September 1914 with orders to cross the Orange River at Raman's Drift, join up with 'C' and 'B' (Upington) Forces and march on Warmbad. Maritz's treachery and a desperate need for water lead to Lukin's defeat at Sandfontein on 26th September. This defeat put Lukin's plans on hold until February 1915.

3. 'B' Force (Upington).

Ordered to advance from Upington into southern GSWA in support of Lukin, Lt-Colonel 'Manie' Maritz disobeyed orders, turned traitor and precipitated a Republican rebellion in the Union. His action contributed to 'A' Force's defeat at Sandfontein. The defence of Walvis Bay and a landing at Swakopmund was put on hold. Troops were prioritised to defeat the rebellion in the Union, a task which was completed by mid-January 1915. Command of 'A' and 'B' Forces fell to Smut's trusted SAW comrade, Colonel Jacob van Deventer.

4. 'E' Force (Eastern Force)

Lieutenant-Colonel C A L Berrangé was to advance westward across the Kalahari Desert from Kimberley via Kuruman to threaten the eastern border of GSWA and to link up with 'A' and 'C' Forces.

5. Northern Force (Walvis Bay & Swakopmund)

On Christmas Day 1914, UDF forces re-occupied Walvis Bay, an exclave of South Africa. Nine days later UDF troops occupied nearby Swakopmund which became the base for the most powerful UDF invasion force.

On 11th February 1915, SA Prime Minister General Botha, took personal command of Northern Force. On 20th February, Botha with some 20,000 men advanced up the Swakop River Valley. His aim was to capture Windhoek and cut-off the retreat of German forces from the south.

6. Southern Force ('A', 'B' and 'C' Forces)

Forces 'A' (2), 'B' (3) and 'C' (1) united as 'Southern Force' under Minister of Defence, General Jan Smuts. 'Southern Force' advanced on Windhoek from the south up the line of the central railway.

7. Capture of Windhoek

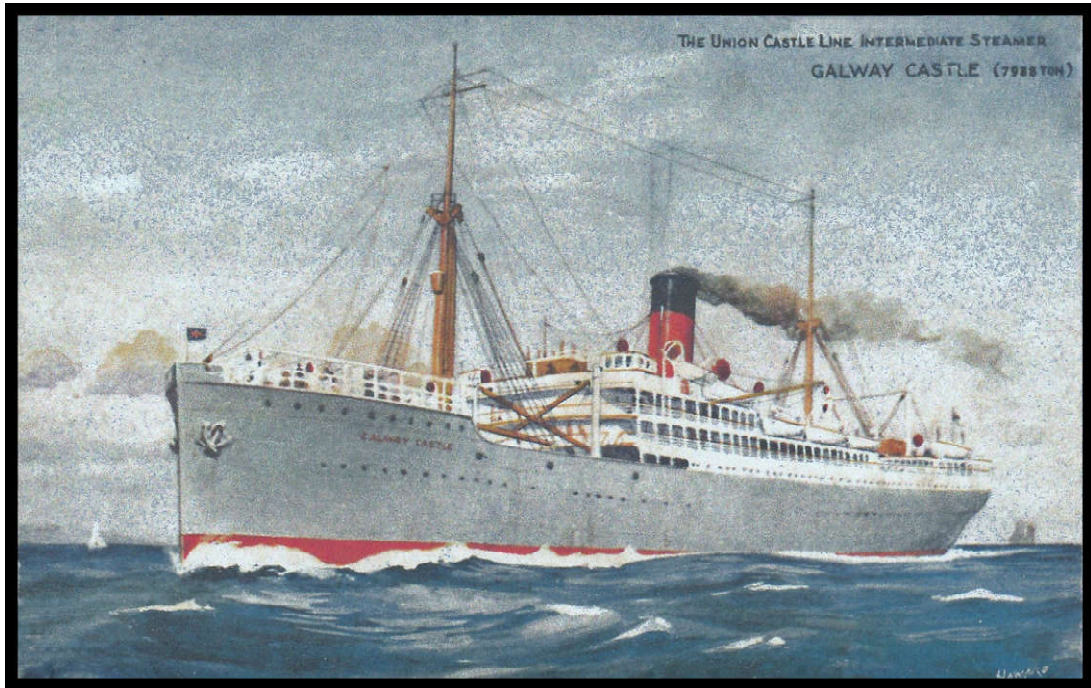
Botha crossed the Namib desert, fought several minor battles and captured Windhoek on 12th May. He failed to snare the retreating German forces who escaped into the north of SWA.



1914. UDF troops leave Cape Town for GSWA aboard the Union-Castle line's SS Gaika.

The Re-Occupation of Walvis Bay: 25 December 1914

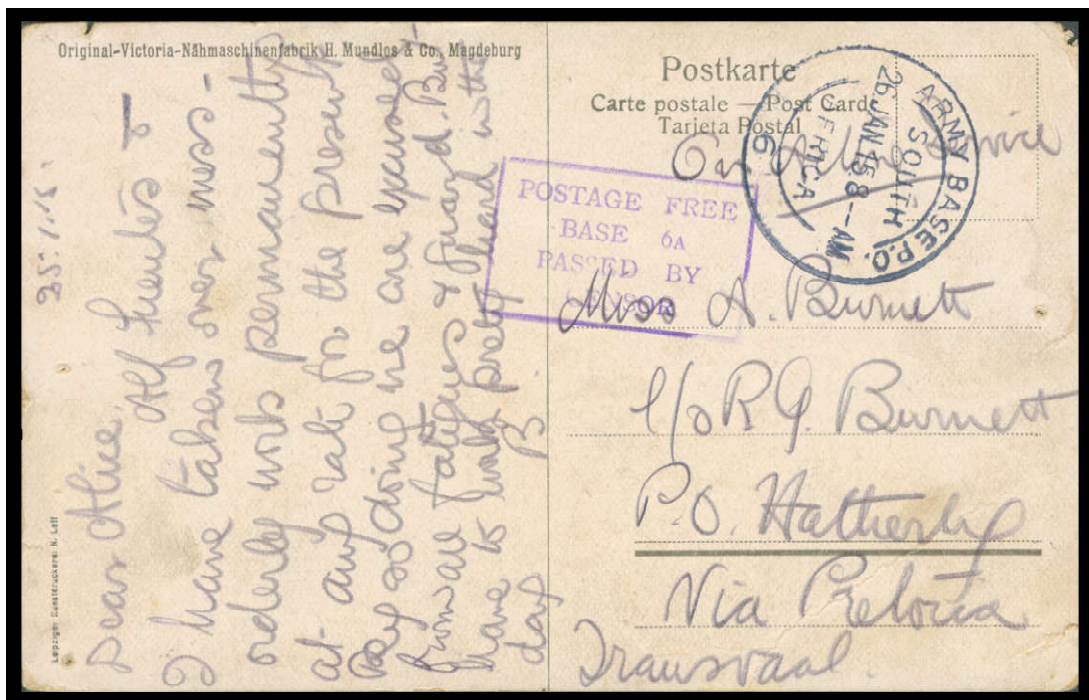
Having previously abandoned Walvis Bay, Union troops re-occupied it on Christmas Day 1914. Nine days later UDF troops occupied nearby Swakopmund which became the base for the most powerful invasion force.



Tony Howgrave-Graham

Circa 1910. Postcard Front. "The Union Castle Intermediate Steamer Galway Castle". Requisitioned by the Admiralty, she carried troops to GSWA (Luderitz & Walvis Bay). She reverted to commercial mail ship duties after the capture of GSWA in June 1915. She was torpedoed and sunk with the loss of 150 lives in September 1918.

ARMY BASE SOUTH AFRICA PO 6 - Walvis Bay



1915. Postcard marked 'On Active Service' from ARMY BASE PO 6 '26 JAN 15' to TRANSVAAL. Purple unilingual 'POSTAGE FREE. BASE 6A. PASSED BY CENSOR' small boxed cachet. Putzel states 'ARMY BASE PO 6' "first seen 31. 12. 14", last reported 3. 2. 15 whereafter PO 6A is used.

Occupation of Swakopmund: 3rd January 1915

On 25th December 1914, a powerful UDF force landed at Walvis Bay. Swakopmund was occupied, unopposed, nine days later on 3rd January 1915. General Louis Botha then assumed command of the Northern Force which was reinforced with more mounted brigades, infantry battalions and field and heavy artillery. Except for the 1st Imperial Light Horse, Botha's mounted troops were Boer commandos.

An Extract from the Diary of Andrew W. F. Proctor (No.6348, Signaller, 2nd Infantry, Duke of Edinburgh's Own Rifles.)

Wednesday 20th, January 1915.

After many false alarms, at last we have left Cape Town on the Galway Castle. Heaps of girls to see us off. Took some photos of the girls. Now is the time for Germans to attack. Many (men) are green. When leaving, Portuguese boat, with troops on, played our anthem and then theirs.

Thursday 21.

Passed Port Nolloth at 9 a.m. Ripping day. Sea smooth and hardly any suffering from mal-de-mer. Great fun at Physical Drill this morning. Tried to make us do a short-arm balance on one leg while the boat was rolling. Grub simply Al. (*This is Andrew's first and last favourable comment about the food.*)

Friday 22.

Armada is escorting us. Spoke to her in semaphore. Weather getting nasty and fellows turning green. Snapped Murrel having a bath under the firehose. Veils, hoods and bandages served out today. Also "Cold Meat Tickets" (*Possibly ID - Identification cards - or dogtags.*)

Saturday 23.

Arrived at Walfish Bay at 8 a.m. Orders to land cancelled so are still on board this evening. We found five transports in the Bay as well as the H.M.S. Astraea and Ebani (hospital). Rumour has it that there was a skirmish here yesterday. Casualties 3 killed and 1 wounded. Had a long chat with sailor on bridge while I was on guard. Told me Transvaal Scottish were the best regiment he had seen out here. I agreed with him.

Sunday 24 .

We were taken off in a tug Sir John (*Durban's Sir John Robinson*) and a large lighter. After two hours in a nasty swell we reached "S". (*Swakopmund.*) Was surprised at the beautiful town. Fine buildings and each in communication by telephone. Slept in the main square. Germans near.



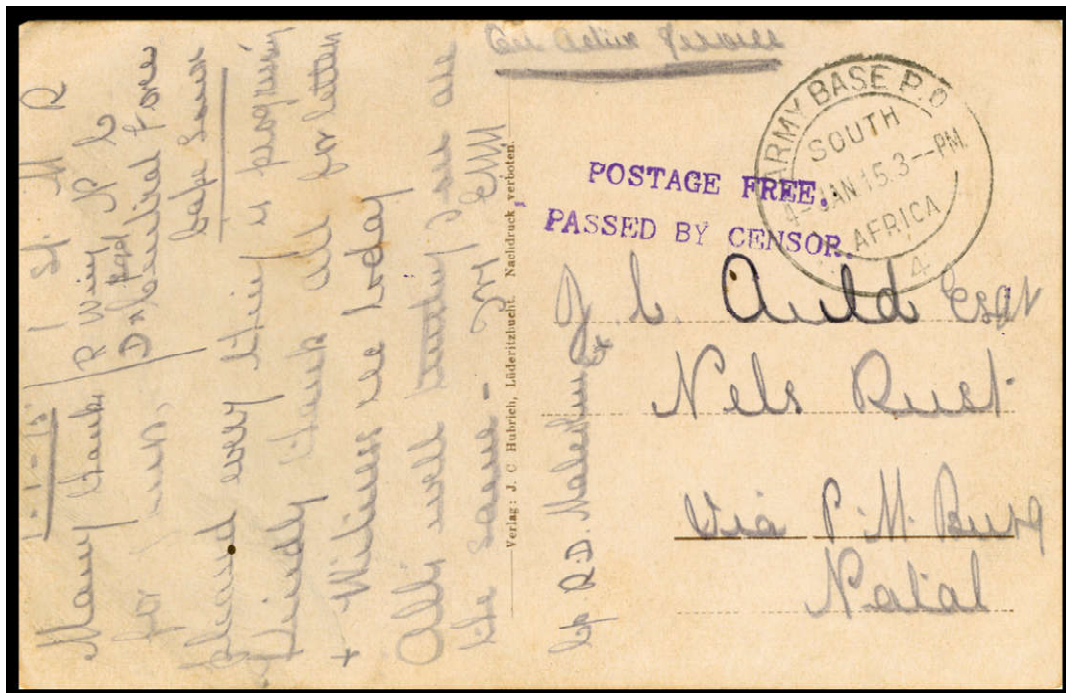
Circa 1910. Postcard. 'View of Moltkestrasse, Swakopmund'. (No. 5 Deutsch-Südwest-Afrika).
Could this be the "main square" where the Duke's spent there first night in enemy territory?

'C' FORCE Objective: Keetmanshoop via Aus



Circa 1913. Postcard. No. 896. 'Stamprieter-Weg', Keetmanshoop. (J. C. Hubrich, Luderitzbucht)

The previous owner of this postcard assumed from the ARMY BASE PO 4 date on the reverse, (see below), that 'C' Force had made a lightening advance to capture Keetmanshoop by '4 JAN 15'. This assumption was based on the argument that a postcard view of Keetmanshoop would only have been available in that town! This postcard, however, was most likely obtained in Luderitz. General Smuts, 'C' Force's commander, would only take Keetmanshoop on 20th May 1915 after four months of long, hard, hot and thirsty slog.



1915. Postcard marked 'On Active Service' from ARMY BASE PO 4 '4 JAN 15' to Natal. Unusual purple unilingual unboxed 'POSTAGE FREE PASSED BY CENSOR'.

The writer of the above postcard is a Corporal in the "1st MR" (Mounted Rifles), R Wing, PCD, Central Force. He says he is "pleased every thing is in progress", suggesting that at last they will begin to advance.

'C' Force Camp at Tschaukaib: February 1915



**1915. Postcard. ARMY BASE PO 4 '8 FEB 15' to London, GB. (Not marked 'OAS'.)
Purple 'DEFENCE DEPARTMENT, OFFICIAL FREE, ACTIVE CITIZEN FORCE' crowned oval.
Blue bilingual 'PASSED BY CENSOR No. 4 A' long boxed rectangular cachet.**

The above postcard is made out of a piece of thick card. It was drawn and presumably made by an 'E', 'H' or 'I' Mullins 1915'. It is addressed to 'E P Mullins, Bank of England, London EC' where it arrived on 'MAR 12 15'. The detail on the right of the card shows that on 7/2/15, the sender, Mullins was serving with the 'Rand Light Infantry, C. Coy, 'C' Force, Tschaukaib, German South West Africa.'

After 'C' Force was strengthened it comprised some 6,000 UDF troops, too many for Luderitz to hold. As a result, Tschaukaib in the interior became a large UDF 'overflow' camp on the future line of advance. As such it may also have been a forward base. Putzel's *'Comprehensive SWA Handbook'* states that Tschaukaib is a railway station between Luderitz and Aus, the line along which 'C' Force would advance into southern GSWA. However, it is also a mountain some 45 km from Luderitz. The postcard front shows a drawing of a 'C' Force camp with Bell tents and a ragged range of mountains in the distance. An aircraft flying overhead. At this time only the Germans were used aircraft. This is a drawing of a German plane flying over a South African Army camp. Drawings like this are not uncommon.

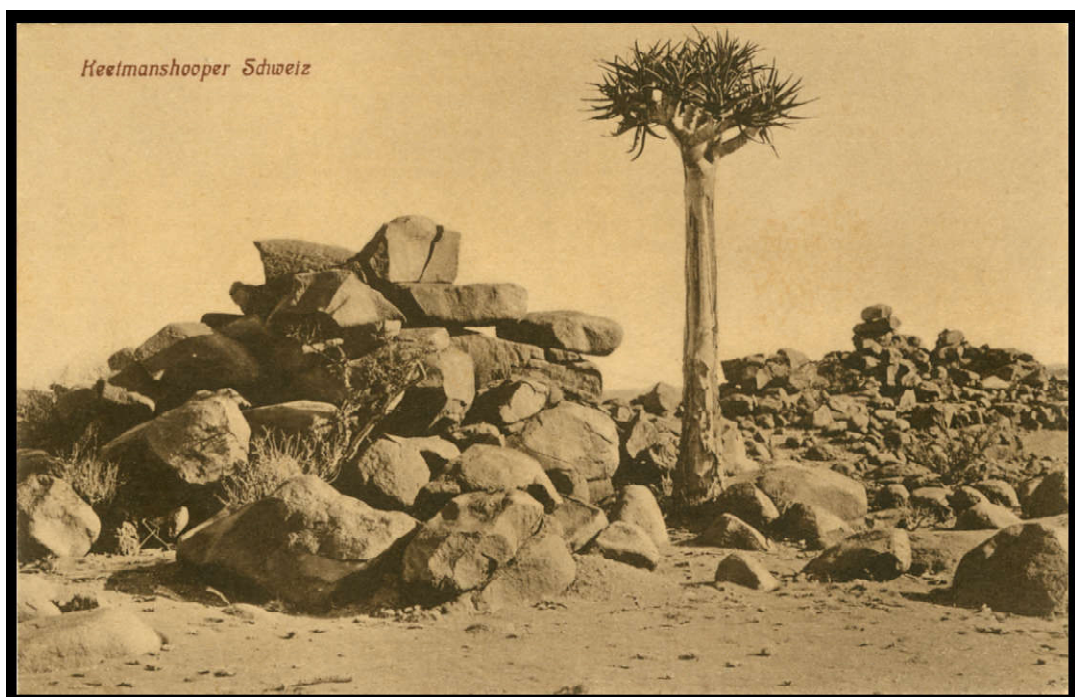
'Tschaukaib' is Nama for 'Sandfontein', (Afr. 'sand fountain'), 'a spring in the desert'. This is presumably not to be confused with the Sandfontein battlefield where Union Forces were defeated in September 1914, some 150 miles south-east of Tschaukaib. It is possible that the 'fountain' at Tschaukaib was one of the southern springs poisoned by the Germans as they attempted to weaponise the absence of water against the invading UDF forces. So serious a problem was the lack of water that 90% of the UDF's time in GSWA was spent transporting water and fodder for troops and horses rather than fighting the enemy.

‘C’ Force Advances on Keetmanshoop via Aus: February 1915



1915. Postcard marked ‘On Active Service’ from ARMY BASE PO 4 ‘17 FEB 15’ to Pretoria. Purple unilingual ‘POSTAGE FREE. BASE 4. PASSED BY CENSOR’ small boxed cachet. Purple SOUTH AFRICAN ENGINEER CORPS ‘16 FEB 1915’ large Double Circle datestamp.

Among other things, the South African Engineer Corps was responsible for restoring the railway line from Luderitz which the Germans had destroyed in order to slow the UDF advance into the interior.



Circa 1912. Postcard. ‘Keetmanshooper Schweiz’. (Ger. Switzerland), presumably a German joke! (Photogr. Lange. Windhuk. Verlag F. W. Krabbenhoft & Co., Keetmanshoop).

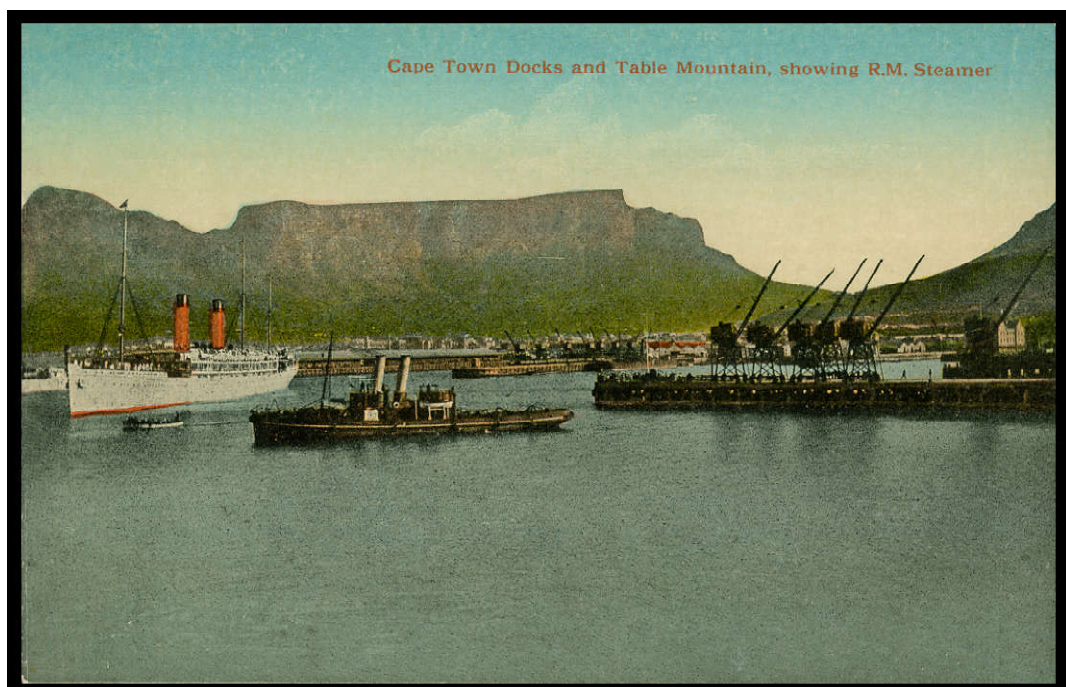
This rather unremarkable postcard is included here because it shows the dry, rocky terrain around Keetmanshoop through which the UDF’s ‘C’ Force had to advance. The lonely ‘kokerboom’ (Afr. quiver tree) is well adapted to living in this waterless environment. Ten trees like this make a ‘forest’! The land is inhospitable to men not born on it. It is no place for ‘softies’, German or South African.

‘GERMAN WAR’ Mutiny in Cape Town: 1915



1914. Postcard. OFFICIAL FREE from Drill Hall, CAPE TOWN '11 SEP 14' to PORT ELIZABETH. The purple OC Prince Alfred's Guard cachet suggests the opinion that Germany started the war. The sender writes "Take care of this post card because of the War Stamp on it".

The Prince Alfred's Guard was an Eastern Cape Regiment with a proud tradition of colonial service. In 1914 the eagerness of some of its troops to fight in GSWA led them to 'mutiny' against the boredom of garrison duty in Cape Town, a port vital to the UDF's campaign. The unit's punishment was to be disbanded and not allowed to serve in the GSWA campaign at all. Its 'GERMAN WAR' regimental cachet suggests the belief that Germany started the war and was guilty of atrocities in Belgium.



Circa 1910. Postcard. 'Cape Town Docks and Table Mountain showing R.M. Steamer'. (Valentine & Sons, CT).

Union Castle and other ships were requisitioned by the Admiralty as auxilliary cruisers and or troop transports. Invading UDF troops and supplies travelled there by ship from Cape Town to one of four landing and assembly points at Luderitz, Walvis Bay, Swakopmund and Port Nolloth (in the Cape).

Smuts takes Control of the Southern Force: February 1915



General The Hon. Jan Christiaan Smuts KC, Minister of Finance and Defence.

Smuts had UDF staff officers revise the invasion plan for GSWA. Previously four separate attacks in different places were expected to prevent the Germans from using their internal railway line to concentrate their troops and guns against any one attacker, as at the UDF defeat Sandfontein. Botha also wanted to destroy the Schutztruppen in the field to prevent any possibility of a guerrilla war. By February 1915 the rebellion in the Union was over and Botha was ready to continue the invasion. The new plan saw him take overall command of the invasion. He split his command in two, giving Smuts the Southern Force while he took command of the Northern Force. Smuts was instructed to merge the various Southern forces into one army which was to advance north with the purpose of distracting the Germans while Botha advanced east across the Namib with the aim of cutting the railway line to prevent the Germans from escaping north through Windhoek.

“BOTHAS ‘STONEWALL JACKSON’”

“While the chief glory of this astonishing success belongs to General Botha, the British race will not forget his great lieutenant, General Jan Christiaan Smuts, Minister of Finance before the war and Minister of Defence during it. What Stonewall Jackson was to Lee that was General Smuts to Botha. The two were a perfect combination and they worked with an energy, decision, courage and loyalty that placed the Empire in their permanent debt”.

The Victorious Campaign in German South-West Africa. (‘The Great War’. Part 51, Page 65.)

After WW1, Botha and Smuts would win only opprobrium from Nationalist Republicans for their victory in GSWA on behalf of the British Empire. Both would die as pariahs to their Boer race.

DUMB 6 - Swakopmund: Northern Force

Putzel states that "The DUMB postmark No. 6 was first reported on 26. 3. 15. Soon after 12. 5. 1915 (occupation of Windhoek) this postmark was used in Windhoek." The postcard below is dated '12 MAR 15'. Based on Putzel's observations, the postcard below must be a very early example of DUMB 6.



1915. Postcard marked 'On Active Service' from DUMB 6 '12 MAR 15' to NATAL.

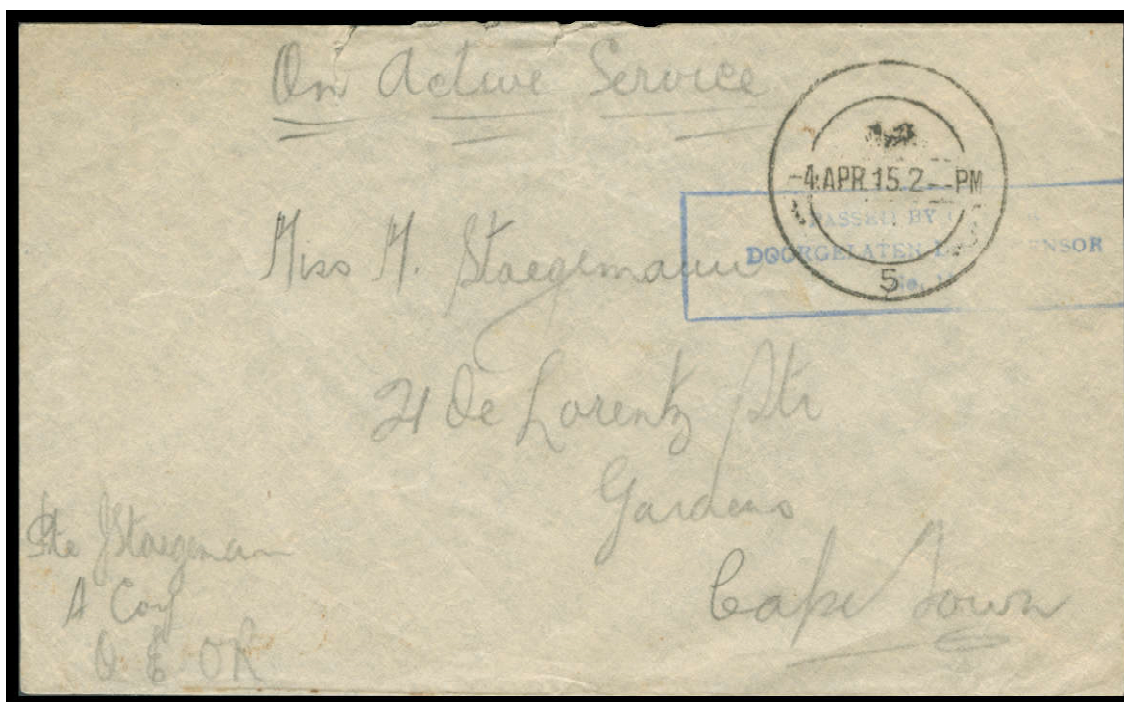
Blue bilingual 'PASSED BY CENSOR' very short, long boxed cachet.

Signed "Pte W W McLaren, 'B' Section, 2nd MBPA (Natal), Northern Force, Army PO, 8/3/15"



Circa 1980. Postcard. 'Moon Landscape. Swakop River'. (Photo Holler, [Schirmer], Swakopmund). It was through this terrain that Botha advanced eastwards following the line of the Swakop River, centre.

DUMB 5 - Swakopmund: Northern Force

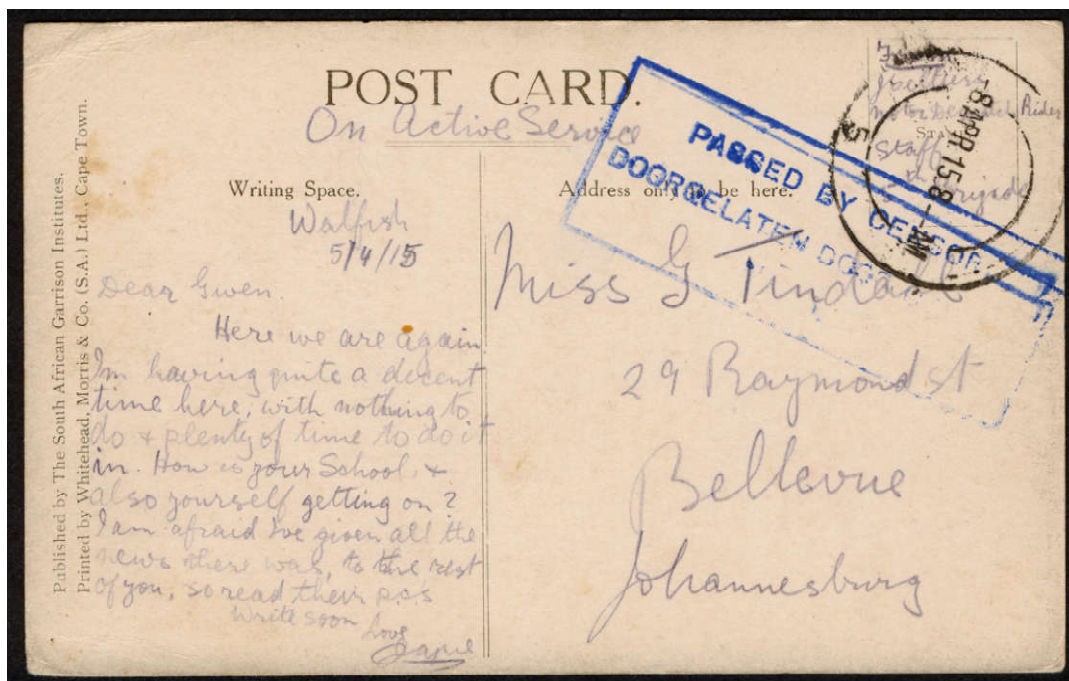


1915. Cover. marked 'On Active Service' from DUMB 5 '4 APR 15' to CAPE TOWN.

Blue bilingual 'PASSED BY CENSOR No. Obscure, short, long boxed cachet.

Signed by 'Pte J Staegmann. A Comp., DEOR' (Duke of Edinburgh's Own Rifles.)

The ARMY BASE SOUTH AFRICA PO Double Circle datestamps were rendered 'Dumb' in March 1915. Putzel states this dumb canceller was used at Swakopmund "from 15. 5. 1915". The card below was written a month before Putzel's '15. 5. 1915' and shows DUMB 5 in use at 'Walfish'. See the preceding DUMB 5 postcard supplied by Tony Howgrave-Graham that shows DUMB 5 use in Swakopmund on '5 APR 15'.



1915. Postcard marked 'On Active Service' from DUMB 5 '8 APR 15' to JOHANNESBURG.

Blue bilingual 'PASSED BY CENSOR No. ? short, long boxed cachet.

Signed by 'J 'Japie' Celliers. Motor Despatch Rider, Staff, 5th Brigade'.

'Walfish 5/4/15' has NOT been deleted by the censor, perhaps because it is no longer a secret.

Written a month before Putzel's '15. 5. 1915' and headed 'Walfish', this shows DUMB 5 in use at Walvis Bay. It supports Tony Howgrave-Graham's argument that DUMB 5 was used earlier than Putzel suggests.

ARMY BASE PO 6A - Swakopmund: Northern Force

Putzel states that the ‘ARMY BASE PO 6A’ datestamp was “used for the first time (in Swakopmund) on 16.2.15”. The postcard below is dated the 15th. It was last seen used 25.2.15.



1915. Postcard marked 'On Active Service' from ARMY BASE PO 6A '15 FEB 15' to TRANSVAAL. Purple unilingual 'POSTAGE FREE. BASE 6. PASSED BY CENSOR' small boxed cachet.



1915. Postcard from ARMY BASE PO 6A '4 MAR 15' to LUDERITZ. Blue bilingual 'PASSED BY CENSOR'. No. Obscure, short, long boxed cachet.

Inter-unit correspondence between Swakopmund and Luderitz. “.... *getting rather fed up*”.

Northern Force Advances East from Swakopmund



Circa 1912. 'Goanikontes, D. S. W. Afr.', on the Swakop River near Swakopmund.
This deceptively verdant oasis is not typical of Northern Force's line of march.



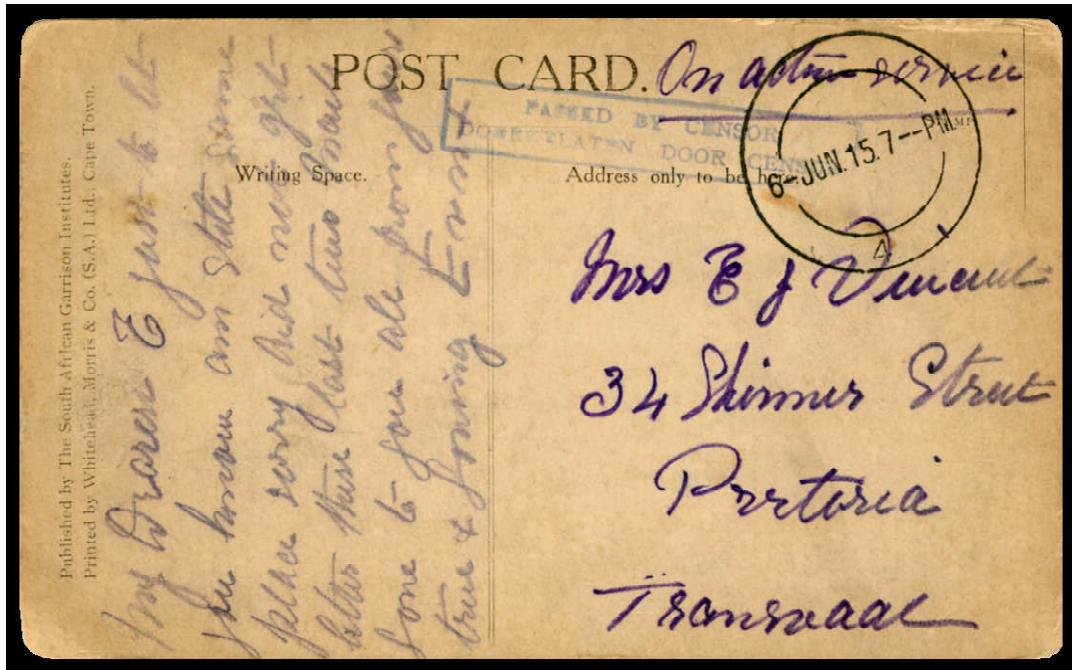
Circa 1976. The Namib Rand. (H W Theiss-Photo. Windhoek. Namibia).

The Namib Rand (Afr. ridge) is the eastern edge of the Namib Desert's drift sands. Having marched up the Swakop River to cross the waterless Namib, 'Northern Force' troops next had to cross the vast arid regions of the interior where the Germans lay in wait. The view above is typical of the one that greeted the UDF as it debouched from the Namib into the central interior. The view above is taken from the rand looking into the interior towards Rehoboth halfway between Luderitz and Swakopmund. While not the view that 'Northern Force' had of the interior, it shows the aridity of the terrain that awaited them.

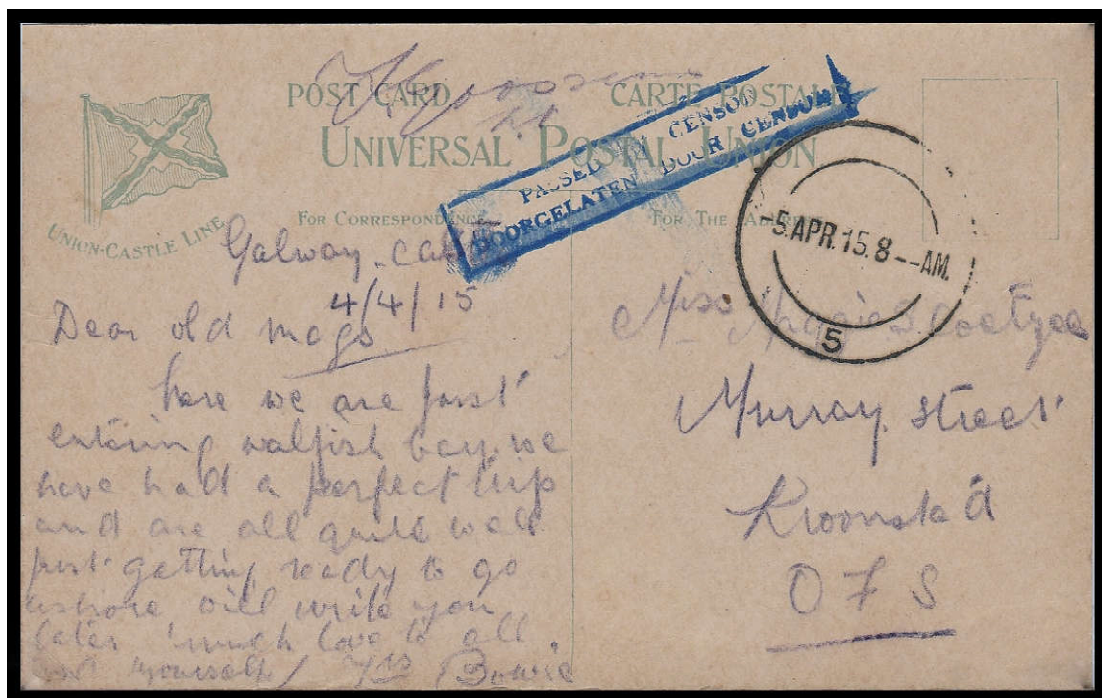
DUMB 4 & 5

The datestamps of Northern Force in Walvis Bay and Swakopmund were rendered dumb in March 1915.

There are two Dumb 4 dayestamps, one with '4' is centred at base and the other, below, left of centre. Dumb 6 was later used in Windhuk, Dumb 8 in Keetmanshoop. No example of it in its original state has yet been recorded. An Eastern Force Army Base PO 7 datestamp that originated in Kuruman in the Union in the build-up to the GSWA invasion was also rendered dumb.



1915. Postcard. DUMB 4 (LUDERITZ) '6 JUN 15' to PRETORIA.



1915. Postcard. Galway Castle 4/4/15' with DUMB 5 (WALVIS BAY) '5 APR 15' to KROONSTAD.

Blue bilingual 'PASSED BY CENSOR' short, long boxed cachet.

The ARMY BASE PO Double Circle datestamps were rendered 'Dumb' in March 1915.

Tony Howgrave-Graham says that his postcard's statement "Here we are just entering Walfish Bay. We have had a perfect trip and are all quite well. Just getting ready to go ashore" proves that DUMB 5 was used in Walvis Bay on 5th April some five weeks earlier than Putzel's suggested '15. 5. 1915'.

Numbered Triple Box Field Post Office Handstamps

Warmbad fell on 3rd April 1915 after 'A' 'B' and 'C' Forces joined up as Southern Force under Smuts. ARMY BASE PO datestamps were replaced by triple box types which were used in the Union during the Rebellion. Seen used in GSWA from March until September 1915, they are divided into three horizontal sections with the date in the centre with a Field PO number below. Found in black, blue, purple and red ink, they are associated with the advance into GSWA from the UDF's base camps. The rarest, FPO 13, has not been seen used.

The UDF launched a number of attacks along the four different axes of advance and captured some key German towns between March and June 1915. These were: Aus (31 March); Warmbad (3 April); Kalkfontein (5 April); Kabus (20 April); Gibeon (27 April); Karibib (5 May); Windhuk (12 May); and Namutoni (6 July). The principal battles of the campaign were fought at Riet-Pforte and Jakkalswater (20 March); Kabus (20 April); Trekkoppies (26 April); Gibeon (26-27 April); and Otavifontein (1 July).



1915. Postcard marked 'On Active Service' with rare FPO 37 in blue '16 May 1915' to NATAL. PC is uncensored. Message headed "Gibeon 5. 5. 15." (Putzel refers to this PC on page 516.) This PC entered the postal system 11 days later at PO 37 located at KUIBIS. (Opened 14th May.)



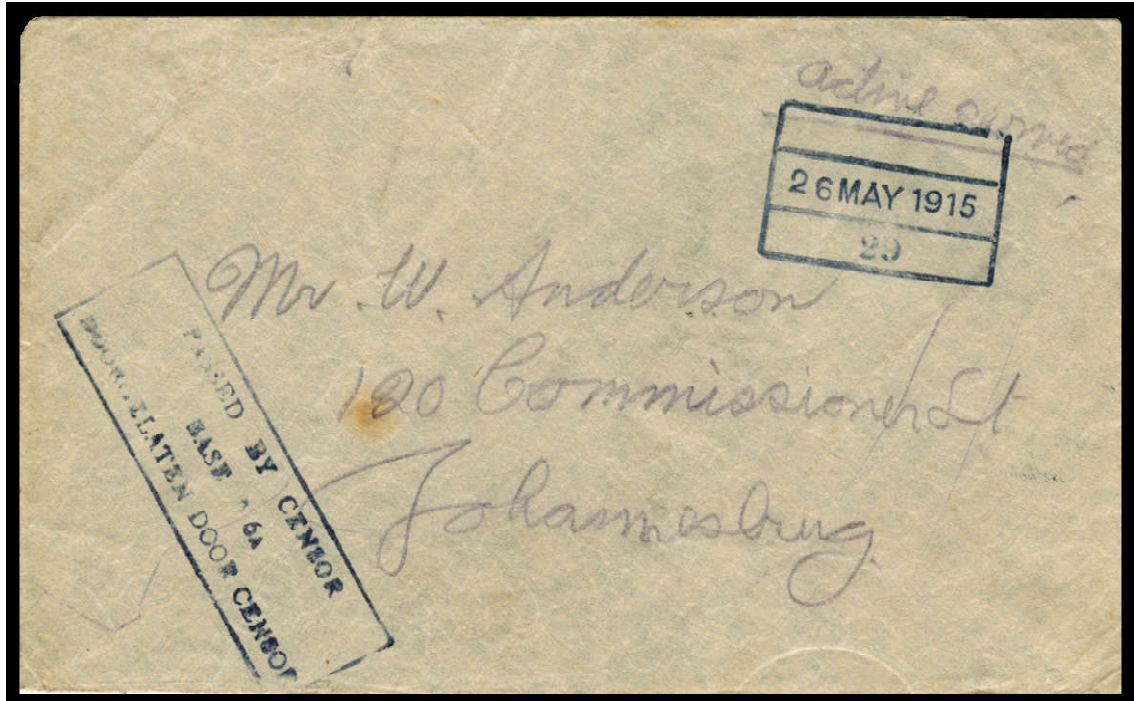
No. 31. Southern Force. Used at AUS when the FPO opened there on 10 April 1915. Putzel states: "Telegraph Office opened there on 3.4.1915. FPO 31 closed after 17.4.1915 the exact date of closure is unknown." As can be seen it was still in use 8th May 1915. It has now been recorded that FPO 31 was in use as the first military date stamp at BETHANIE 24.4.1915."



No. 37. Southern Force. Used at KUIBIS when the FPO opened on 14 May 1915. Putzel states: "Telegraph Office opened 10.4.15. Simenoff reports FPO 37 in the advance from Gibeon to Fish River but a correspondent reports he has a postcard from FPO 37, headed "Gibeon 5.5.15", (see above) "which is 11 days earlier than postmark, which speaks against FPO 37 being at this town". Note this postmark's unusual dropped 2nd date digit.

Numbered Triple Box Field Post Office Handstamp 29

The censored envelope to Johannesburg below bears a fine strike of the very scarce boxed FPO (Field Post Office) 29. It is not known where this FPO was based.



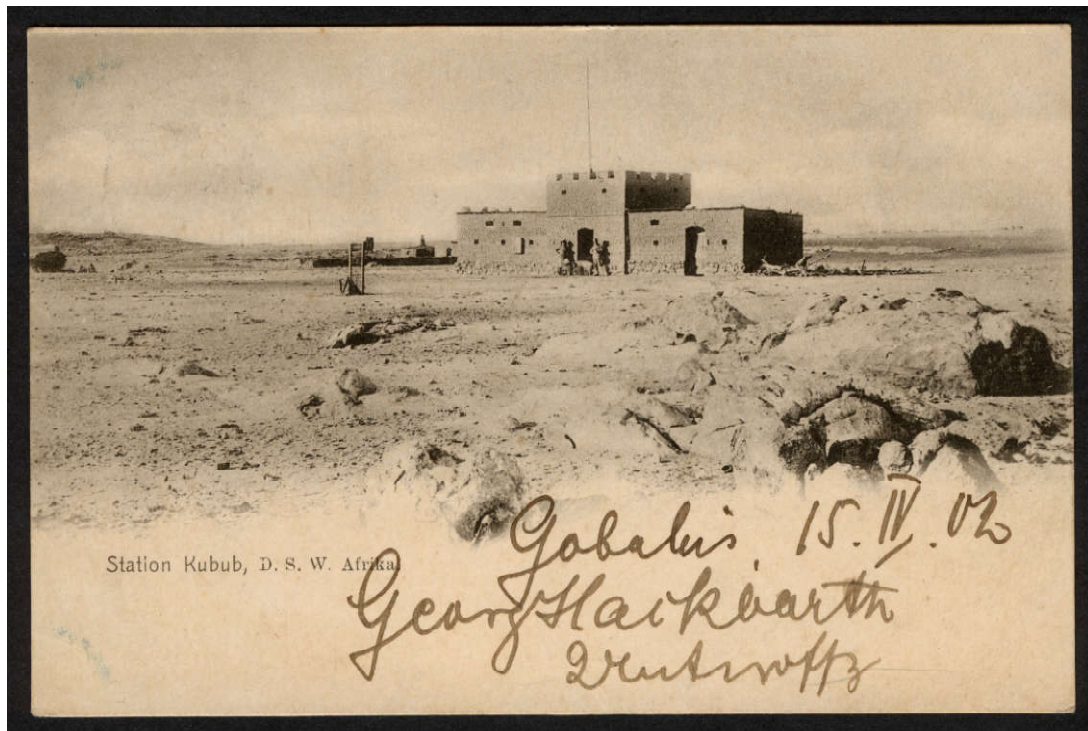
1915. Letter marked 'Active Service' with scarce FPO 29 in blue-black '26 May 1915' to JOHANNESBURG. A bilingual Base 6a Passed By Censor cachet is at the lower left of the cover.

Putzel shows an example of FPO 29 dated '20 May 1915'. He ascribes it to the '4th Infantry Brigade, later 2nd Infantry Brigade'. Generally, the Military section in his 10 volume *'The Postmarks of South Africa and Former States & Colonies'* is not very helpful.

Putzel's *'The Comprehensive Handbook of GSWA, SWA and Namibia'* is better but still not informative enough. He says FPO 29 "was first the FPO of the 4th Infantry Brigade and became the FPO of the 2nd Infantry Brigade approximately at the end of May 1915." At this time the 2nd Infantry Brigade is recorded as using FPO 26. This, says Putzel, does not mean that 2nd Infantry Brigade used two FPOs simultaneously. Apparently, it just means that the 2nd Infantry Brigade moved "about quite considerably", ending up in an unknown location where FPO 29 was being used. Such is the fog of war.

A bilingual Base 6a censor cachet is at the lower left of the cover. When '6a' is used in the Double Circle 'ARMY BASE PO SOUTH AFRICA' datestamp it refers to Swakopmund. It is therefore possible that after this cover was accepted by FPO 29 it was censored in Swakopmund before posting to the Union.

“Fighting Men is a Joke Compared to Fighting Nature!”



Circa 1900. Postcard from GOBABIS '15 4 02' to WALDSHUT, GERMANY '1 6 02'.

The postcard to Gobabis above shows 'Station Kubub' in southern GSWA. This is a Schutztruppe outpost on a farm, not a railway station. It lies some 20 miles south of Aus. Kubub had a post office for 6½ years until the railway line reached Aus in 1906 when it relocated there. The remote aridity of Kubub can be seen in the postcard above. It was captured by 'C' Force in 1915 despite the Germans doing all they could to make the hostile terrain work in their defence as a waterless weapon against Smuts' invading Southern Force. As a dessicated UDF soldier in SWA said, *"fighting men is a joke compared to fighting Nature"*.

Water as a Weapon



As the South African forces advanced, the Germans destroyed infrastructure and biblically blocked wells with sand (2 King's iii. 19). This was acceptable to Botha but the poisoning of wells was not. While many UDF servicemen denied it, the Germans claimed to have left warning notices that the wells had been poisoned, a courtesy they had not given the Herero and Nama.

The six month GSWA campaign saw only 26 days devoted to fighting, the rest of the time was spent transporting water and fodder to where it was needed.



**Lithops Meyerii and Stapelia Schinzii,
Succulents found in arid Namaland.**

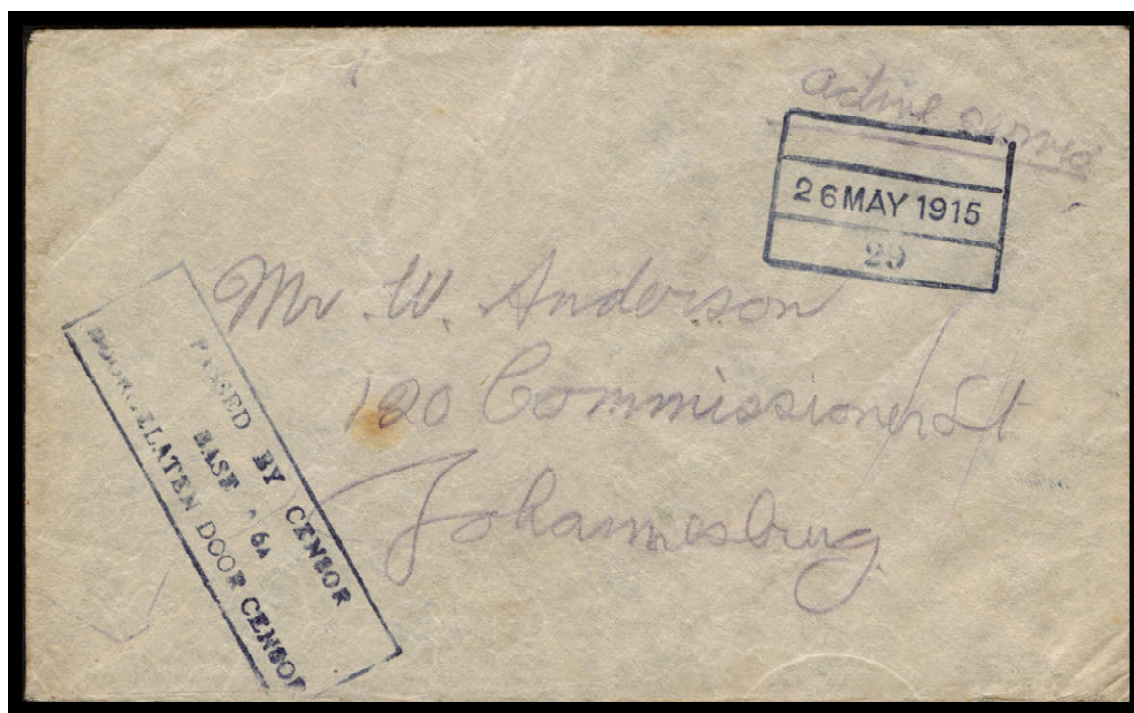
Issued by the Westminster Tobacco Co. (C. T. & L.) Ltd.

Captured Guns at Gibeon: April, 1915



1915. Photograph. 'Captured Guns at Gibeon, GSWA'. (National Army Museum.)

Battle-worn UDF troops pose with two captured German 7.7 cm (3") M96 field guns following the battle for Gibeon on the 26th - 27th April 1915. This photo shows in some uncertain detail the multi-racial make-up of the motley uniformed Southern Force. On the left stand three Black auxiliaries. The first wearing a hat, boots and an apron may be a cook. Standing third left beneath a hat with arms folded in a workmanlike way at a job well-done is another wanting in on the action. His bearing and attire is as military as the rest. At the back a fourth, perhaps a driver, is looking sideways. All have come a long and thirsty way on to this colonial German town in the middle-of-nowhere. All want to be remembered as a part of this moment.



1915. Letter marked 'Active Service' from FPO29 '26 May 1915' to JOHANNESBURG.

Blue-BLACK bilingual 'PASSED BY CENSOR 6A short, long boxed cachet.

It is not known where FPO 29 was based. The letter is dated two weeks after the fall of Windhoek.

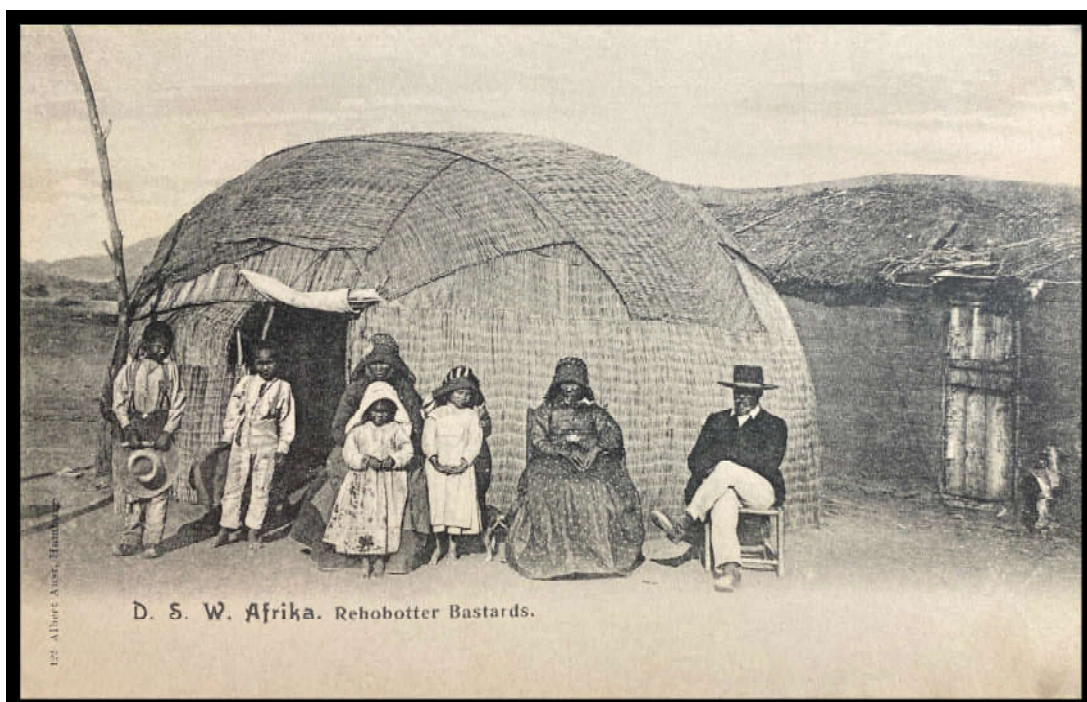
This boxed FPO 29 is scarce. It is associated with both the 2nd and the 4th Infantry Brigades.

The Rehoboth Baster Uprising: April, 1915



Circa 1910. Postcard. 'Rehoboth. GSWA'. An Oasis of Mixed-Race Civilisation.

The Basters (Afr. bastards) of Rehoboth were descended from Europeans, Khoi and slaves who migrated to SWA from the Cape in the 18th Century to escape Dutch colonial rule. With clothes, horses, wagons, guns, literacy, and elected council and God they practised a 'civilised' Boer way of life, producing written laws for their land south of Windhoek that pre-dated the German colony. Threatened by attacks from both Namas and Hereros, the Basters signed a Treaty of Protection and Friendship with the incoming German colonial authorities in 1885. Subject to military service, they served in the German army during the genocide. At the start of WW1 relations between the Basters and the Germans deteriorated due to their conscription in the German Army. The Basters viewed South Africans as kin and asked to remain neutral. Short on manpower the Germans refused. This led to confrontation, misunderstanding, death and reprisal.



Circa 1910. Postcard. 'D. S. W. Afrika. Rehobotter Bastards'. The Black Boere of SWA.

The Battle of Sam Khubis: May, 1915



Circa 1915. British Postcard parodying a popular American song of 1895.
“I Want Yer, Ma Honey! (An Ethiopian Oddity)” Fay Templeton, Composer.
Song Copyright, 1896, T. B. Harms & Co., New York.

It should not need pointing out that the postcard above does not illustrate a Rehoboth Baster. What it shows is the British hope that Africans would rise up against their German colonial masters. In this they were to be doubly disappointed, Black Africans seeing little difference between a British or a German ruler, nor White South Africans who refused to arm Blacks or support those who did rise up, like the Basters of Rehoboth.

The Germans issued Basters with Army uniforms and made them guard UDF prisoners. Botha worried that the Germans might use native troops in SWA, as they did in the Cameroons and German East Africa. Botha tried to find agreement with his German counterpart, Lieut. Colonel Victor Franke, to keep it a “White Man’s War”. He received assurances that the native troops in the German Army were only used in non-combatant roles. When the Germans demanded that the Basters retreat north with their prisoners, many defected with their arms. Avoidable misunderstandings occurred that lead to the deaths of Basters, German soldiers and civilians.

Botha denied the Basters his support. He likely feared the political consequences in ‘White South Africa’ if he was seen to support a Black uprising against their White masters. This gave the Germans a chance to punish the fleeing Basters who had taken refuge in the mountains at Sam Khubis. Outnumbered, out of ammunition and facing annihilation, the Basters prayed for deliverance, promising to honour God and the day if they were saved. Next morning the Germans withdrew after hearing that General Smuts’ Southern Force was approaching. The Basters were saved from certain defeat. It was the Baster’s ‘Day of the Covenant’, much like the Boers’ at Blood River. They now took their revenge on local German farmers.



1917. REHOBOTH S.W. AFRICA
‘17 FEB 17’

Windhuk Falls: 12th May 1915



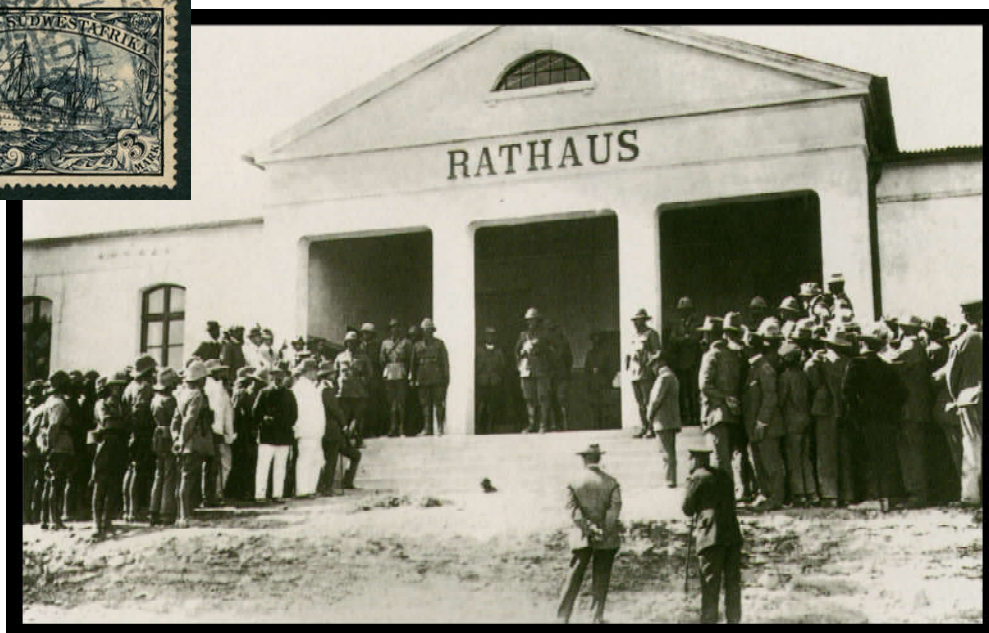
1915. Botha arranges terms for Windhoek's surrender with its Burgomaster. ('The Conquest of GSWA').

The German military leadership attempted to halt the UDF with conventional tactics. Botha was never going to 'play the game' by Prussian or British rules of warfare. Instead, he captured GSWA by keeping true to his Boer military traditions, relying on his mobile units of mounted infantry to outflank, frustrate and defeat the Germans at every turn whenever and wherever they attempted to stand and fight.

After the capture of Windhoek on 12th May, Botha saw the campaign as largely over, despite his failure to capture those German forces who escaped to the north. He ordered Smuts' Southern Force disbanded. A difficult six week lull in the fighting followed during which supply problems saw the UDF Northern Force placed on half rations and forbidden from raiding local farms. Grootfontein became the capital of GSWA.

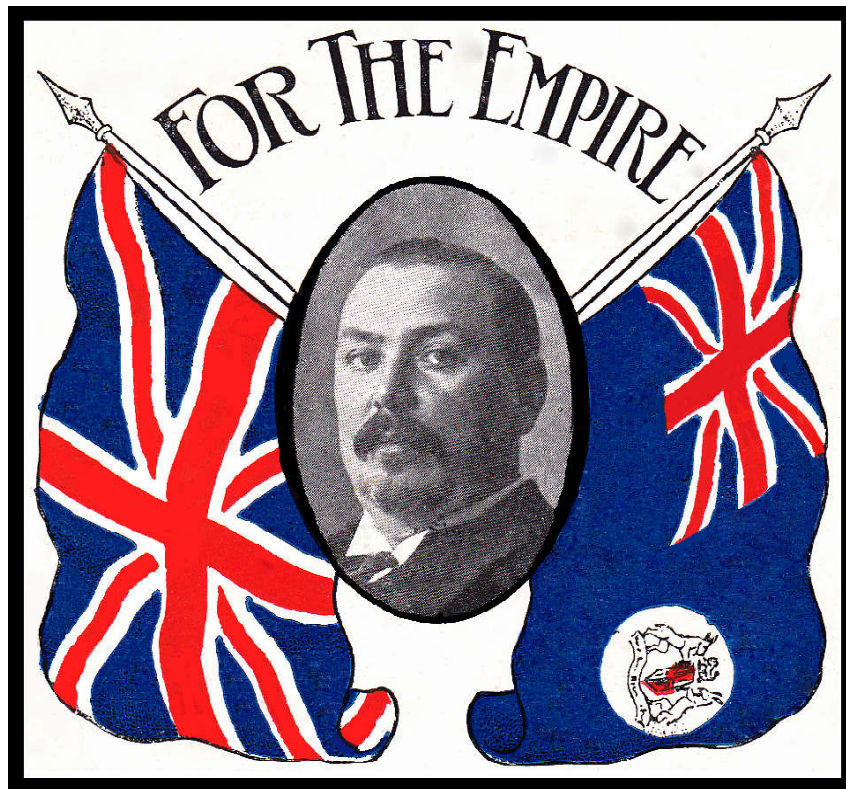


Very late
double-
cancelled
postal use
of 3 Mark
in
WINDHOEK
'5 1 15.



1915. Botha makes a speech from the steps of Windhoek's Rat House. (Imperial War Museum).

Which South African Flag flew over Windhuk?



1914. Postcard. 'For the Empire'.

The official national flag of the Union of South Africa was the British Union Jack.

A South African Red Ensign similar to the Blue shown above was raised in Windhoek in March 1915.

Before Union in 1910 the official flag of the British colonies was the Union Jack. After Union the country needed its own flag. The Cape Colony had used a version of the British Blue Ensign bearing the colony's coat of arms. A British Red Ensign with the Cape Government Railways coat of arms, the "Railway Ensign", was flown at Cape Government Railway stations. Following Admiralty approval, Blue and Red Ensign flags bearing the Union of South Africa coat of arms were used as the South African flag between 1910 - 1928. A Red Ensign bearing the Union's coat of arms in a shield was discontinued in 1912 in favour of the one below which has the shield superimposed on a white disc, as per Admiralty Flag Book requirements. However, there is a suggestion that the flag that General Louis Botha hoisted in Windhuk on 12th May 1915 was an unauthorised Red Ensign showing the full arms on a white disc.



Image by Blas Delgado Ortiz, 14 May 2002

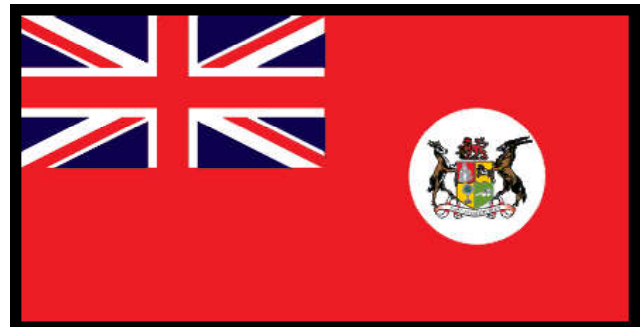


Image by Martin Grieve, 23 May 2015

There is debate about how an unauthorised Red Ensign showing the full arms on a white disc came to be created and used in GSWA. It is suggested that a Woman's Support group in Worcester created the flag and presented it to Botha. It is not known how many such flags they made but several such designs are recorded. The Red Ensign flag, right above, "was hoisted in Windhoek on 31 May 1915 by General Botha's second son, J. C. S. Botha". (Flags of the World). The only examples of the Union Jack on a SA stamp are on those that show the old Union National Flag, like the 1977 5c '50 Years SA Flag'.

The First Victorious Allied Campaign of the War: 1915

With the loss of Windhoek, the Germans' options were limited: fight to the death, resort to guerilla war or surrender. Franke recognised that if he kept fighting his men would be destroyed for no gain other than their honour. Waging a guerilla war was out of the question while the Namibian people were set against them. However, the Governor of GSWA, Theodor Seitz, was reluctant to lose face and surrender while powerful German armies remained undefeated in Europe. Somewhat ingenuously Seitz proposed an armistice that allowed the German forces to keep the northern territory it occupied, as well as their weapons. This was not the Victory that Botha or Britain wanted.

Botha dismissed Seitz's conditional proposal and resumed his advance against the German forces in the north. The speed of his advance and his enveloping tactics gave the Germans no option but to surrender.

After dumping their heavy weapons Lake Otjikoto, Seitz and Franke surrendered with their remaining German forces at 10 am on 9th July 1915 at Khorab near Otavifontein.

Franke's 2,200 men were far less than the 15,000 the UDF believed he had. Asked where these missing men were, Franke told Botha *"If I had had 15,000 men I would not be here now talking to you"*.



1915. Photograph. "Victor and vanquished face to face".
General Botha, right, sitting opposite Lieut. Colonel Franke left, at the signing of the surrender. (Illustrated First World War.)



Circa 1910. Postcard. J. C. Hubrich, Luderitzbucht. (No. 62 Lake Otjikoto).
The Germans dumped their heavy weapons into this lake before surrendering.

The Germans heavy weapons - artillery, cannon and machine-guns - lay undisturbed in Lake Otjikoto outside Tsumeb for some 90 years. Today, some of these weapons have been recovered by divers and can be seen on display in the Tsumeb Museum. Among them is a rare example of a 'flaming onion' cannon.

South Africa's Moment of Imperial Triumph: 1915



Circa 1915. Postcard. Personalised with “The Flag of Freedom Shall Fly for Ever”!

An arrogant but misplaced sense of certainty about the British Empire and its place in the world can be seen in the postcard above. Within 50 years the African sun had begun to set on the ‘flag of freedom’.



1915. Punch. “A Clean Sweep”.

The victorious General Botha sweeps the Kaiser out of GSWA but....
.... in reality the territory simply exchanged one oppressor for another.

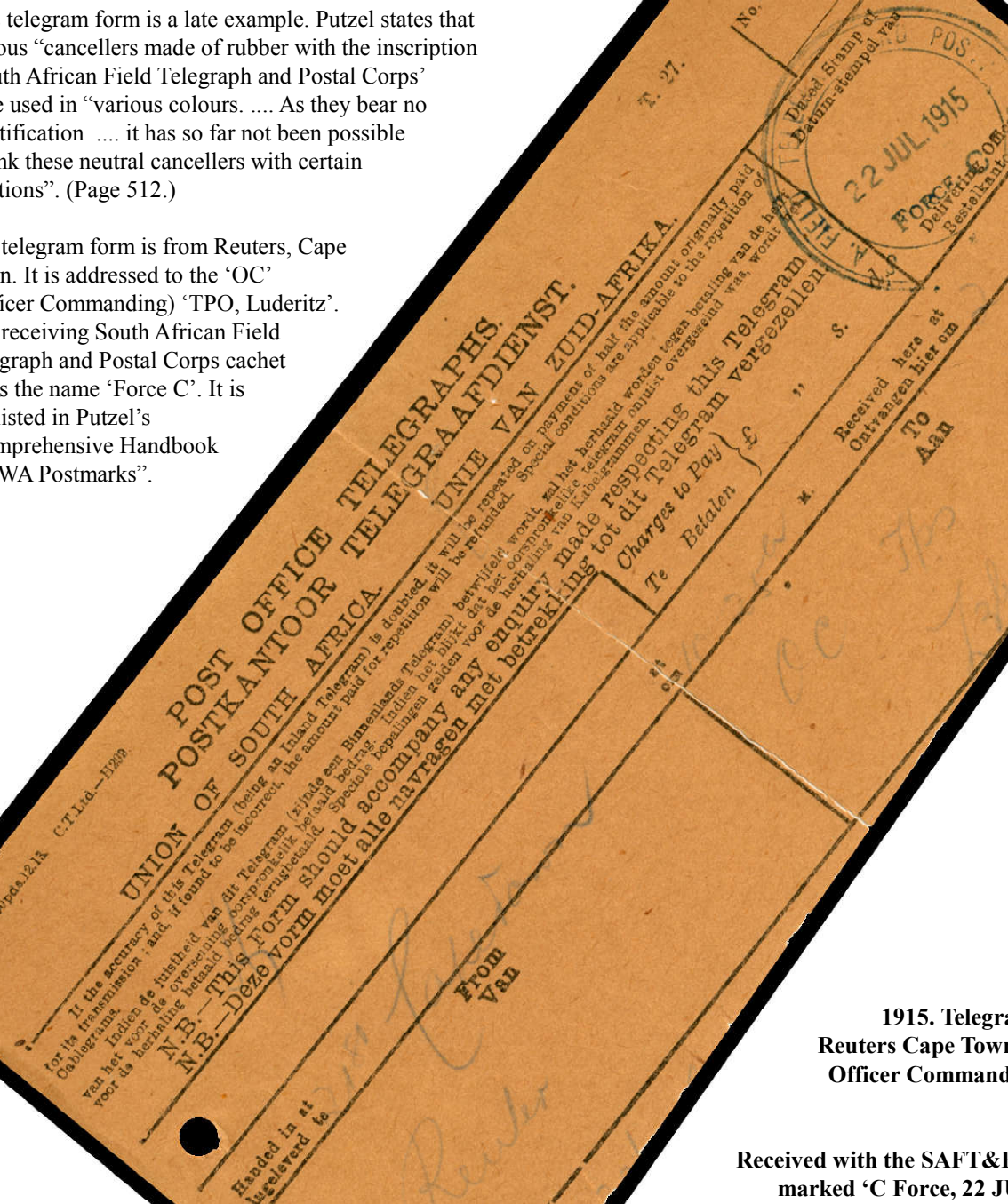
This telegram form is a late example. Putzel states that various “cancellers made of rubber with the inscription ‘South African Field Telegraph and Postal Corps’ were used in “various colours. As they bear no identification it has so far not been possible to link these neutral cancellers with certain locations”. (Page 512.)

The telegram form is from Reuters, Cape Town. It is addressed to the ‘OC’ (Officer Commanding) ‘TPO, Luderitz’. The receiving South African Field Telegraph and Postal Corps cachet bears the name ‘Force C’. It is not listed in Putzel’s ‘Comprehensive Handbook of SWA Postmarks’.

Bloemfontein, after the Imperial Garrison was withdrawn from SA for service in France. With no HQ section the corps was trained up and attached to units in the field for the purpose of communications between the southern Forces in the GSWA campaign. The Corps was disbanded after the GSWA campaign.

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1915. Telegram Form.
Reuters Cape Town '21st' to
Officer Commanding TPO,
Luderitz.

Received with the SAFT&PC cachet
marked 'C Force, 22 JUL 1915'.

This torn-in-four telegram provides
information on developments in the
war in Europe, starting with the
resolution of the Welsh Coal
Miner's Strike.

**1915. Telegram Form.
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Officer Commanding TPO,
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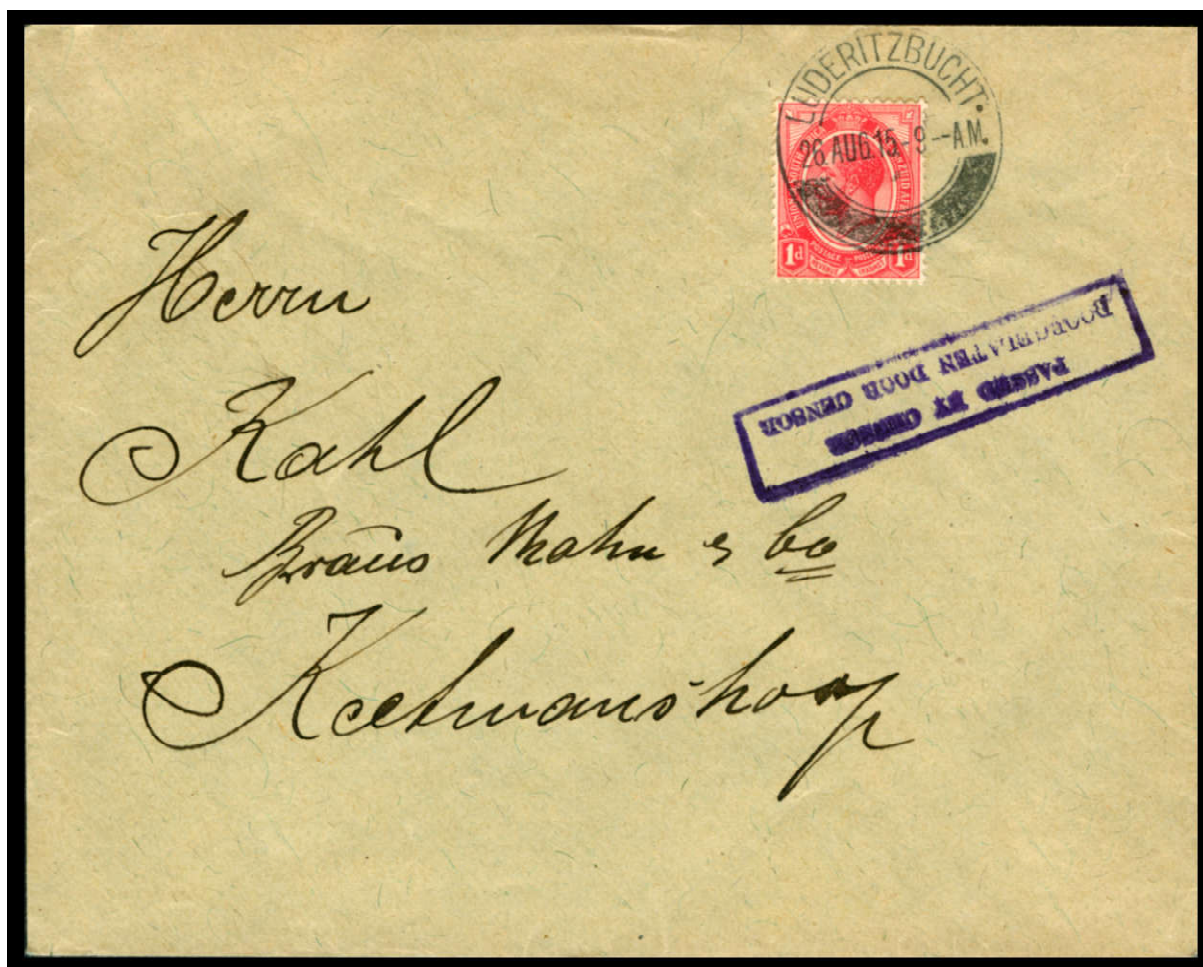
**Received with the SAFT&PC cachet
marked 'C Force, 22 JUL 1915'.**

This torn-in-four telegram provides information on developments in the war in Europe, starting with the resolution of the Welsh Coal Miner's Strike.

Postal Services Returned to Civilian Control: July 1915

Following the surrender of the German forces on 9th July 1915, South Africa organised a civilian postal service using South African stamps until 1923. After the surrender German postal officials “were permitted to return to the towns chosen by them”. (Putzel. Comprehensive Handbook of the Postmarks of SWA.)

‘Forerunners’ is the term given to the postage stamps of the Union of South Africa and Transvaal as used in SWA from 1915 to the first issue of the over-printed King Geo. V SWA set of 12 stamps on 31st January 1923. The first part of the ‘Forerunner’ period is the invasion and occupation of SWA by the UDF up to end-July 1915 when the military returned control of postal services in SWA to civilian authority.



1915. Forerunner Cover cancelled LUDERITZBUCHT '26 AUG 15' to KEETMANSHOOP.

The SWA domestic rate paid is the same as for SA.

The European-size cover has a long, thin violet rectangular bilingual ‘PASSED BY CENSOR’ cachet. Censorship of civilian mail would remain in force in SWA for the duration of the war.

According to Putzel, the Luderitzbucht datestamp shown above is “*considered by Busch....*” (see later cover) “*.... to be the first definitive canceller. It is first seen end July 1915*”. Presumably, he means that this was the first definitive canceller provided by the Union to the new SWA civilian postal service.

Why No Special Overprint Issue of GSWA Stamps?

In May 1915, some six weeks before the German surrender, the main stock of stamps in Grootfontein, then the capital of GSWA, was burned, a loss of some 300,000 DM. “*The same occurred with several smaller stocks which had been kept back and it was only in a few Postal Agencies that SA forces could capture small quantities of stamps.*” With only a small number of stamps captured a special overprint issue was impractical. Germany had saved itself from postal humiliation as suffered by the OFS and ZAR.

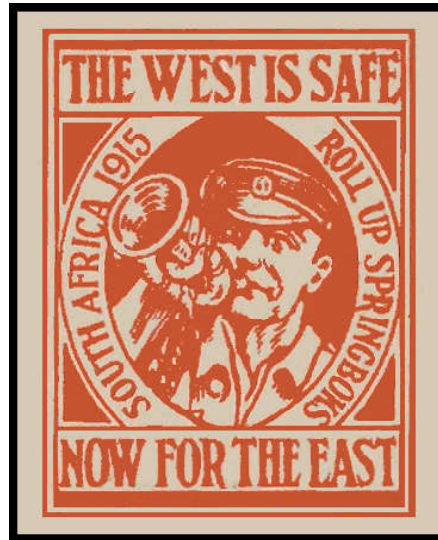
Botha & Britain Look to German East Africa: 1915

Having taken GSWA for the Empire and the Union but creating a political storm and a rebellion in the process, the victorious Botha was wary of campaigning in GEA. The UDF was free to serve there only if the

Union Parliament allowed it. To prevent further political unrest, Botha did not ask Parliament for its permission. Instead, with Britain's approval, South African troops were encouraged to serve in Europe and GEA as Imperial Service Troops under British command, paid for by the British government.

1915. Enlarged British cinderella label used in SA to encourage Empire Loyalist '*Springboks*' to join up for service in GEA and or France.

South African sportsmen were first called '*Springboks*' by the British media during the 1906 - 1907 overseas tour by a pre-Union all-White 'national' rugby team. Afrikaner members of the team referred to themselves as '*die Springbokken*'.



The East (GEA, later Tanganyika, today's Tanzania) would prove far more deadly to South Africans than GSWA. It is recorded that 2,361 Whites, 211 Coloureds and a similar number of African labourers died serving in GEA. The loss of young men from the Natal Midlands was particularly severe.

Circa 1916. Postcard. 'Askari aus Deutsche Ostafrika'. ('Kolonialkriegerdank'. F. Bruckmann. A;G. Munchen.) Unused.

This postcard was most likely produced during or after the war. If after the war it is possibly a part of the national mourning for the 'Lost Colonies' initiated by ex-GSWA colonial governor Theodor Seitz.



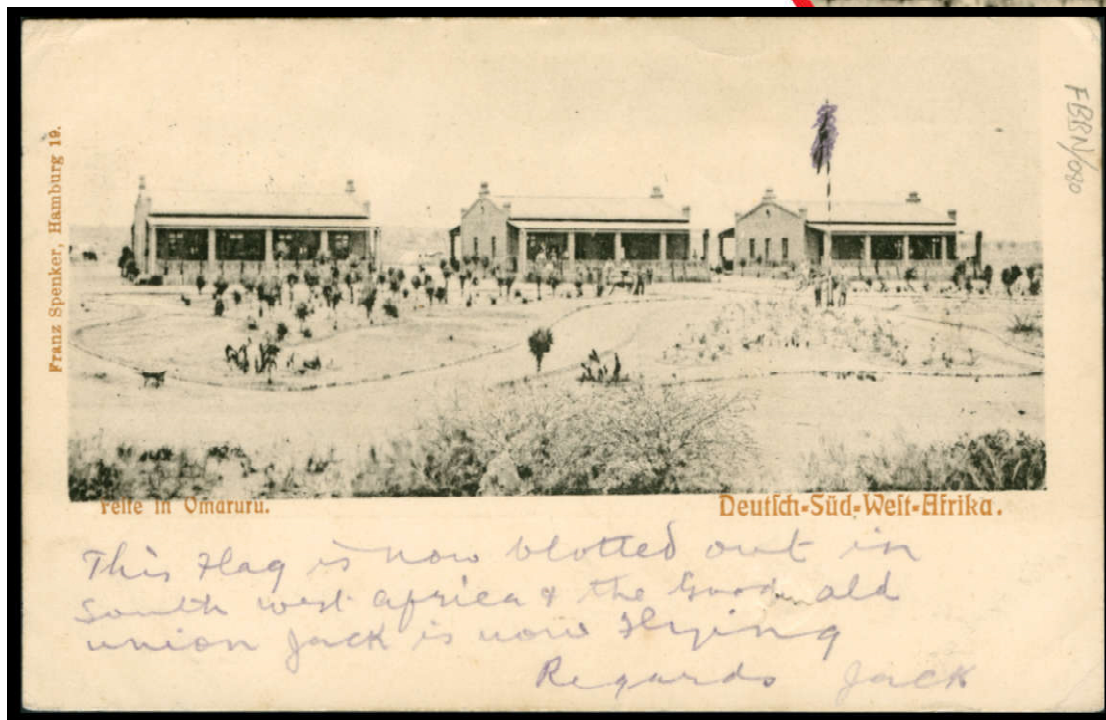
The German-led Askaris proved tough opponents for the South African forces but worse was the terrain and the tropical diseases which decimated them. Unlike the UDF troops returning from GSWA, those returning from GEA were not met by huge welcoming crowds. This was done deliberately to prevent an outcry at the high number who were emaciated and chronically ill. The GEA campaign was neither glorious nor victorious.

The ragged Germans resorted to guerilla warfare and remained undefeated until the war's end. Smuts wriggled out of blame for the failure.

He went to London in January 1917 where he was welcomed as a loyal conquering hero and appointed a member of the War Cabinet with responsibility for creating the RAF out of three different air forces.

The Spoils of War: 1915

Following the German surrender, most Union troops quickly returned to South Africa. This GSWA postcard was posted in Potchefstroom Cantonment (Army camp) in August 1915, either by a South African or a British soldier, who had obtained the postcard during or after service in the GSWA campaign. The German flag on the front of the postcard has been obliterated. The writer states that “*This flag is now blotted out in SWA & the good old Union Jack is now flying*”.



Circa 1910. Postcard. ‘Feste in Omaruru. Deutsch-Sudwest-Afrika’. (Franz Spenker, Hamburg 19.)

The British Cantonment, Potchefstroom Camp, once a hotbed of Republican rebel support, is now being used to train South Africans for overseas service as part of the British Army.



1915. Postcard marked ‘On Active Service’ from CANTONMENT PSTROOM ‘AU 31 1915’ to GB. The postcard’s abbreviated Potchefstroom Cantonment skeleton relief datestamp is scarce.

A War Hero Plans for His Future: 1915

Many South African troops acquired through purchase, capture or theft items of German postal stationery, letterheaded letters, printed covers and or German postcards. These sent a strong message back home or overseas to colleagues, friends, wives and girlfriends that the sender was a member of the Union Defence Force who had participated in the defeat of the Germans in SWA and the occupation of that territory in the first successful Allied military campaign of WW1. The cover below created quite an impression in London on its arrival. Note the word 'Keep' in blue in the top left of the cover.



1915. Cover ex- German Royal Bacteriological Institute from USAKOS '27 DEC 15' .

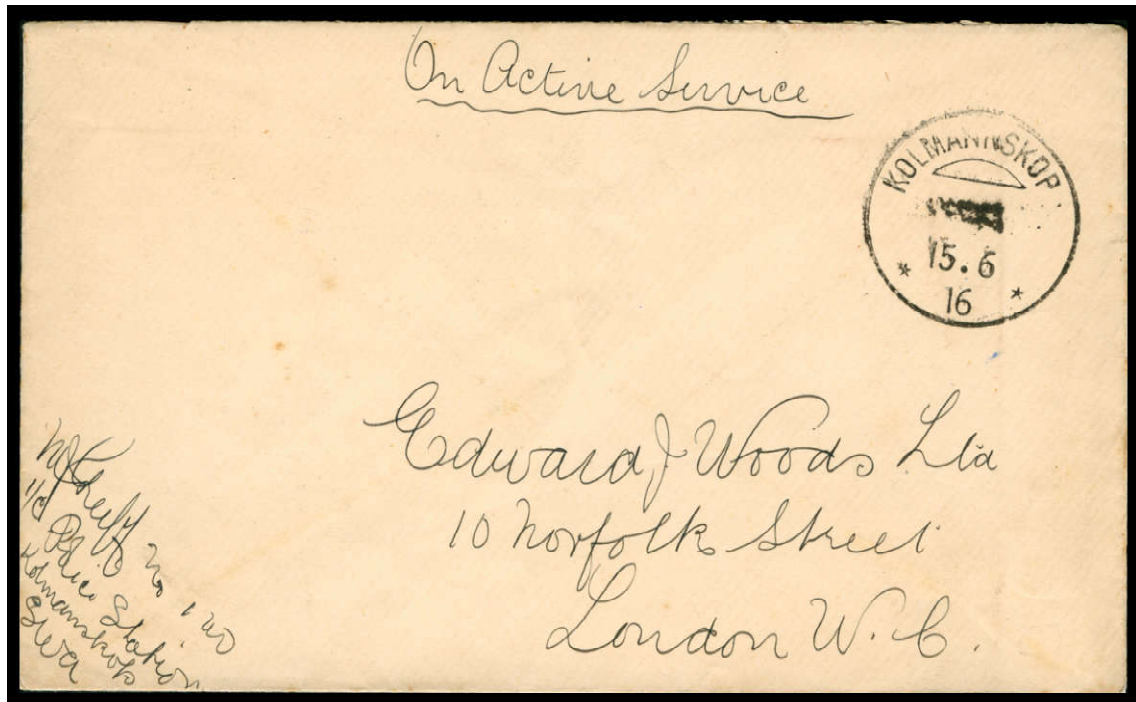
Sent via WINDHOEK '28 DEC 15' to LONDON.

**Postcard marked 'On Active Service' with bilingual ' PASSED BY CENSOR' long, thin boxed cachet.
Signed 'Sergt. Snelgrove, Military Hospital, Usakos, SWA Protectorate'.**

While South African troops 'On Active Service' could send mail free of charge, the civilian population could not. As a consequence there was a need for postage stamps for the local population. South African stamps were issued in SWA prior to the German surrender. The stamps used were mostly the then current Union issue of 1913 King's Head stamps. When used in GSWA, they are often called 'forerunners'. The first overprinted King's Head stamps showing 'South West Africa. Zuid West Afrika.' were issued in 1923.

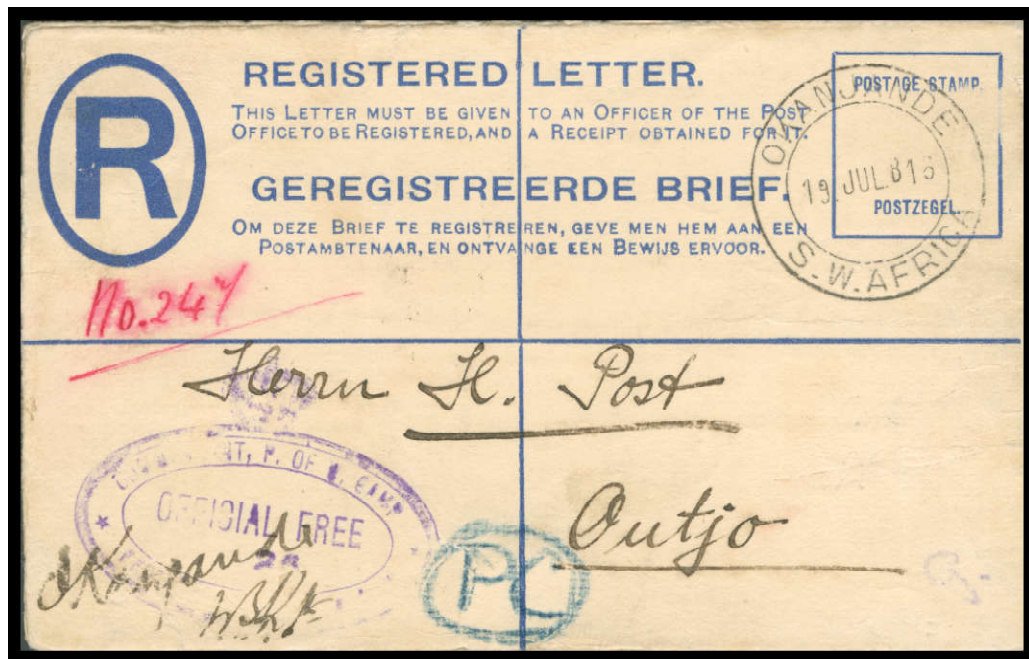
Police & Prisoner of War (POW) Camps

German policemen were rounded up and replaced by South Africans, mostly taken the military in the first instance. The German policemen became POWs along with the German Schutztruppe.



1916. Cover marked 'On Active Service' from KOLMANNSKOP '15 6 16' to GB.
Endorsed by 'N J Greiff, I/C Police Station Kolmannskop, SWA'.

The datestamp is a converted German canceller with 'DEUTSCH SUDWESTAFRIKA' removed. It is notable for retaining the two 'N's of the German 'KOLMANNSKUPPE'. Early and scarce.



1916. 4d Registered Letter No. 247 (red) from OKANJANDE '19 JUL 16' to OUTJO. Scarce.
Posted with signed violet crowned oval 'COMMANDANT, P. OF W. CAMP OFFICIAL FREE'.
M/s 'OKANJANDE'. Transit via OTJIWARONGO '19 JUL 15'. 'PC' - Passed Censor ringed in blue.

Okanjande was a POW Camp for German officers who had refused parole ie. they had not given their word of honour that upon release they would not attempt to escape. The camp was open from August 1915 to 1917 when its POWs were transferred to Swakopmund. This Postal Agency only operated during the POW camp's existence.

POW Camp: AUS



Aus was a small settlement in south-western GSWA on the railway line about 125 km east of the port of Luderitz and about 230 km west of Keetmanshoop. Set in arid country, it was remote but easily supplied by ship and rail. As a result, Aus was selected as the site for the main German POW camp. Its old GSWA datestamp, (above), was one of the few to have its town name in a seriffed font. Unlike Okanjande which was a temporary camp for unreconciled officers who had refused parole, Aus was an POW camp for non-commissioned officers and men of the Colonial Troops (*Schutztruppe*) and Territorial Police.



Circa 1916. Real Photo Postcard. AUS Prisoner of War Camp.

Most of the POWs held here were “active” low-ranking soldiers and policemen.

The men guarding the German POWs are from the ‘Protectorate Garrison Regiment’.

About two weeks after the surrender of the German forces at Khorab on 9 July 1915, 797 German POWs were brought by train from Otavi to Aus. The camp was supplied with food and other provisions, as well as any equipment it needed, by ship from Cape Town. This was unloaded in Lüderitz, then railed to Aus. As the overall standard of accommodation in the camp was poor, over time the German POWs rebuilt the camp themselves using sun-dried mud bricks. This work which was performed voluntarily by the POWs represents the final chapter of the German colonial building heritage in SWA / Namibia.

Prior to the surrender, “about 1000 soldiers and civilians were taken via Swakopmund and Cape Town to the Internment Camp at Kimberley” where they are put up in tin shacks usually used by miners. In August 1915 these prisoners were sent back to Cape Town and shipped to Luderitz from where they were sent to Aus where the active soldiers were interned while the reservists were discharged.

Prisoner of War, AUS: 1915 - 1916

Prisoner of War,
Free of Charge.
AUS.



1915. Cover from POW AUS '12 NOV 15' to WINDHUK '15 NOV 15'.
Purple 'Prisoner of War, Free of Charge AUS' & 'PASSED BY CENSOR' cachets.



1916. Cover from POW AUS '11 OCT 16' to LUDERITZBUCHT '12 OCT 16'.
Purple 'Prisoner of War, Free of Charge AUS' & 'PASSED BY CENSOR' cachets.

Prisoner of War, AUS: 1916 - 1917



1916. Cover from POW AUS '4 OCT 16' to LUDERITZBUCHT '5 OCT 16'. Purple 'Prisoner of War, Free of Charge AUS' & 'PASSED BY CENSOR' cachets. The 1d Kings Head stamp is unnecessary as the cachet states 'Free of Charge'.



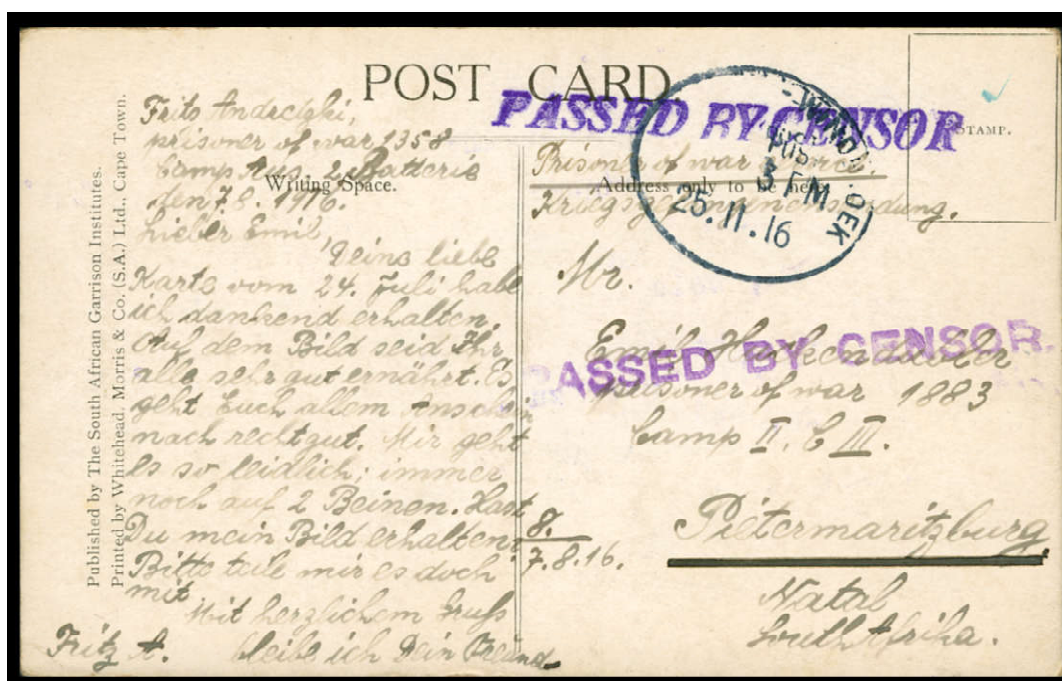
1917.
Cover from AUS '24 APR 1917' to GERMANY endorsed with large purple 'COMMANDANT, POW CAMP.'

Censored with magenta C.12 PASSED CENSOR dated '28.7.17' in manuscript.

Three-line purple 'Prisoner of War, Free of Charge AUS' cachet.

As no German receiving datestamp is applied, was it ever received?.

Inter-POW Camp Mail.: Aus to Pietrmaritzburg: 1916



1918. Postcard. 'Diamond Fields, Luderitzbucht, G.S.W. Africa'. (Published by SAGI.)
 AUS POW Camp (undated) via WINDHOEK '25.11.16' to PIETERMARITZBURG POW Camp.
 PCs marked 'Prisoner of War Service' were accepted for posting if 'PASSED BY CENSOR'.
 PC received Windhoek with converted GSWA railway canceller. No stamp as POW mail was free.

Fort Napier, the Imperial Garrison camp in Pietermaritzburg, Natal, became an Internment camp for German nationals during WW1. SAGI, (SA Garrison Institutes), was an initiative started by Field Marshal Lord Roberts, British Commander-in-Chief during the SAW, to provide his huge army with canteen facilities that offered goods and services at reasonable prices. SAGI suffered a huge commercial blow when the Imperial Garrison was withdrawn from camps like Fort Napier in 1914 to serve in Europe. However, it soon gained new customers in the form of the UDF. SAGI was contracted to supply staff to run field canteens to service the UDF columns invading GSWA. Did it offer services to POWs in Aus?



The POW Camp at Aus, close to Luderitz, was situated in arid terrain similar to the Diamond Fields, shown. The mineral wealth of SWA was one reason why the Union wanted to acquire it.

Service Letter of Schutztruppe: 1917

Dienstbrief der Schutztruppe.



1917. Cover from WINDHOEK '13. 12. 17' to SWAKOPMUND '17 12 17'

Sent at the SA 1d inland letter rate. The four days taken is typical of this period.

Purple 'PASSED BY CENSOR 100' cachet. 'Opened By Censor 100' label on reverse.

Pair ½d stamps cancelled with the most common converted German oval Train datestamp.

This oval canceller was taken out of service on '31 08 04' when WINDHOEK became 'WINDHUK'.

The above letter bears a curious 'Service Letter of the Schutztruppe' cachet. It is likely that no postage would have been due on an 'Official Letter' sent by the GSWA Colonial Administration. In 1917, however, SWA was under SA control with the Union's postal rates and regulations displacing German ones. To all intents and purposes, SWA was being run as though it was a part of the South African postal system.

As we have seen, German POWs in Aus could send mail 'POW, Free of Charge', just as South African forces 'On Active Service' did. But the sender of this letter could not. Why?

The purple 'Service Letter of the Schutztruppe' cachet suggests that it is an 'official' letter on behalf of the interned Schutztruppe. Assuming it is, it clearly carries no weight with the SWA postal authorities who have not allowed it to be sent free of charge. Postage of 1d has been applied in the form of two ½ d King's Head 'Forerunner' stamps, (see next). Despite the use of the 'Service Letter of the Schutztruppe' cachet, the sender does not enjoy the same 'Free of Charge' right as per normal POW mail.

The letter originated in Windhoek. See the next two letters addressed to the "Officer Commanding Interned Schutztruppe, Windhoek". This suggests that in Windhoek a German officer was responsible for administering the affairs of the defeated Schutztruppe. This letter may have been sent by him or his organisation. He is possibly by a German officer on parole in Windhoek who does not have the privilege of free post like the rank and file in the AUS POW camp. Any advice on this will be greatly appreciated.

Four AUS PoW Postmarks on One Cover: 1918



1918. Cover from AUS '16 AUG 18' to "WINDHUK" '19 8 18'.

Endorsed on the front with a large faint red 'COMMANDANT, POW CAMP.'

Plus purple B 100 'PASSED CENSOR' handstamp and three-line purple 'PoW, Free of Charge AUS' cachet.



1918. Reduced size facsimile - Reverse of front above.

The small bilingual Censor Label 100 has been applied by the AUS PoW Camp Censor.

On arrival in WINDHOEK '19 8 18' it has been received with a converted German train canceller.

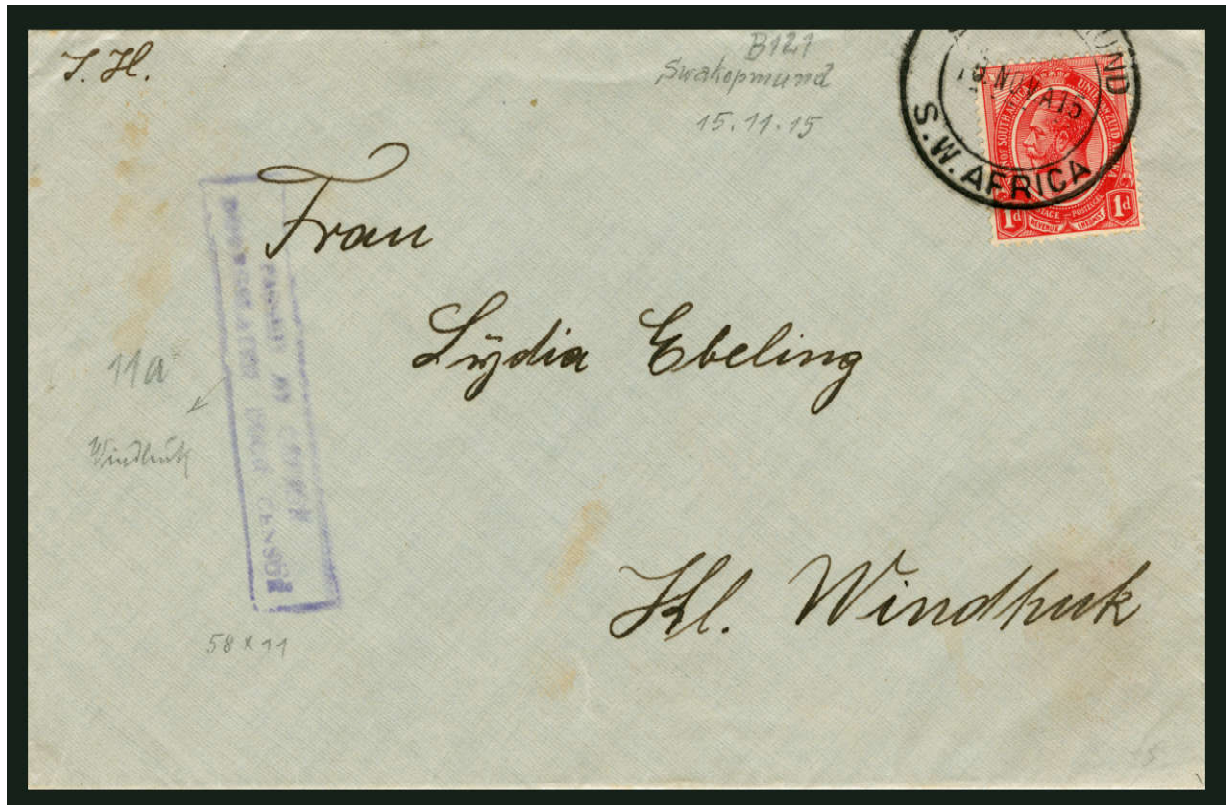
The SWAKOPMUND - WINDHOEK train canceller is the most common converted GSWA datestamp. It was taken out of service on '31 8 04' when Germany changed the name 'WINDHOEK' to 'WINDHUK'.

After the Union occupation 'SWAKOPMUND' was removed to create a 'WINDHOEK' datestamp.

Forerunners: July 1915 - 1923

Following the capitulation of German forces and the occupation of GSWA by the Union on 19th July 1915, South African stamps replaced German ones. Union stamps used in SWA are known as 'Forerunners' because they preceded the first SWA stamps, the over-printed King's Heads of 1923.

The Forerunners include both the blue 1910 2½d King Geo V 'Opening of the Union Parliament' and all the 1913 King's Head issue, the use of some of the latter being much scarcer than others. Union and Transvaal Postage Due stamps were also used. The postage rate in SWA was the same as in the Union of SA. Standard Union issue King's Head stamps over-printed 'South West Africa' and 'Zuid-West Afrika' replaced the Forerunners on 31st January 1923.



1915. Cover cancelled SWAKOPMUND S.W.AFRICA '15 NOV 15' to WINDHUK (undated).
The rate paid for this letter from SWA is 1d, the same as the standard SA domestic rate for a letter under ½ oz.
The cover has a thin rectangular purple 'PASSED BY CENSOR' cachet (58 x 11 mm).
The pencilled annotation suggests this 'PASSED BY CENSOR' cachet is No. 11a applied in Windhuk.

This letter was posted three months after the surrender and the start of an SA-style postal system.

Union Stamps Cancelled with Original German Datestamps

A feature of the earliest Union stamps used in SWA are those cancelled by original GSWA datestamps ie. before they were altered by Union Postal Services. These are few in number and we are unable to show any here. Putzel states that "*The German (Swiss type) Luderitzbucht canceller has been reported twice on SA Geo V. Stamps*". Readers wanting to see examples are referred to Tony Howgrave-Graham's 'South West Corner' in the South African Collectors' Society's journal, 'The Springbok'. See Tony's article: "*Use of Unaltered German Cancellers by Union Postal Services*", (October 2020).

Postal Services Under Civilian Control: October 1915

The South West African Postal Services ceased to be run by the Military in October 1915 when it reverted back to civilian control. Those German postmasters who were not interned as reserve soldiers and who wanted to return to their previous town and employment were encouraged to do so.

The following pieces are from Christmas mail, the first '*Weihnachten*' spent under South African occupation.



GIBBEON S. W. AFRICA
'4 DEC 15'



WINDHUK S. W. AFRICA
'10 DEC 15'



OKAHANDJA S. W. AFRICA
'13 DEC 15'

The above are all early examples of SA occupation 'S. W. AFRICA' datestamps of the Civilian PO era (after 1st October 1915) applied to Forerunner stamps. All these datestamps were supplied by the Union. Notable is the 'Windhuk' datestamp which still retains the Germanised town name. This will change.

The rate paid is for this Registered letter (piece, right), from SWA to the USA is 9d. The 9d paid is the same rate as a letter from SA to the USA. As this letter has been charged at 5d, it weighed over a ½ oz and less than one ounce.

The addressee is Montgomery Ward & Co., a world-pioneer in the mail-order business. It first supplied America and later the world with a huge range of products chosen from a catalog. The fact that someone in SWA in 1916 thought it easier and practical to select a wide range of goods from Montgomery Ward's US catalog shows the appeal and success of the American company's business model as well as the utter isolation many settlers experienced living in the wide expanses of SWA.



1916. Registered Piece
Cancelled LUDERITZBUCHT S. W. AFRICA
'27 JAN 16' to CHICAGO, USA.

The early German settlers in SWA also had their Forerunners, stamps of the German Empire that were in circulation in the colonies without any special identification mark (i.e. they were not yet overprinted "Sudwest Afrika"). German Empire Forerunners were officially delivered to post offices and were sold from postal counters, just like Union ones from July 1915. Stamps that were not used or not officially issued cannot be listed as Forerunners. The Forerunners exist only because of their cancellations. There is no such thing as an unused Forerunner.

Forerunners: Okahandja to Switzerland: 1916

As is always the case in war, some men went missing and were never accounted for. Others suffered mistreatment, sickness and invariably incarceration. Some parents, children, wives, lovers and friends had reason to write to the Red Cross in Geneva hoping for news of the missing or of finding help for the imprisoned. It is difficult to know what the Red Cross could have done to help such people alone in the emptiness of SWA while millions of men were being brutalised and butchered on a daily basis in the civilised charnel house that was Europe.



1916. Cover cancelled OKAHANDJA S.W.AFRICA '7 APR 16' to SWITZERLAND '14 V 16'.
The rate paid for this letter from SWA is 2½d, the same as the standard SA rate for a letter under ½ oz to Europe.
The cover has a dark blue 'PASSED BY CENSOR CN' cachet with MS '21.4.16'.
The light blue 'PASSED CENSOR' cachet shows that it was censored in Cape Town on '22 APR 1916'.
OBC 99 Censor label on reverse shows it was routed via Cape Town to Red Cross, Geneva, Switzerland.

Two Interesting Postmarks: 1916



1916. Cover. KEETMANSHOOP '3 APR 16' to WINDHUK '9 APR 16'.

Two ½d, stamps pay the standard Union rate for an internal domestic letter under ½ oz within SA.

The cover has a small unilingual purple boxed rectangular 'PASSED BY CENSOR' cachet.

This rather ordinary cover has two interesting but unsatisfactorily struck postmarks that go some way to redeeming it. Initially I chose not to include it in this display but after looking at it more carefully I was pleasantly surprised at the potentially interesting story it has to tell.

At the start of the war, many German colonists with businesses and farms were called up into the Army reserve. Defeated, captured and temporarily made POWs, many of them had fallen into debt and or failed to pay off loans. With their colonial lifeline to Germany cut, those farmers not in POW camps had to pay for imported goods from Britain in pounds at a time when the German mark was weak. Their financial situation worsened as the pound strengthened in value, first in 1916, then again after Germany's defeat in 1918. This letter to the 'German Farm Society' is possibly from a hard-up colonist seeking financial support.



Reproduction of above.
Rated 'scarce' in original
and good condition.
(Example ex-Putzel.)

The faint KEETMANSHOOP postmark (on cover above) has been copied from Putzel and adapted (left). He says that "the left foot of the letter 'K' was already short in 1916".

This can just be seen in the datestamp on cover above.

The Union occupiers preferred 'Windhoek' to 'Windhuk'.

Curiously this datestamp, right, supplied by SA states 'WINDHUK'. Putzel says that this WINDHUK receiving datestamp as seen on the reverse of this cover is the "first permanent canceller", (presumably, the 'first' supplied by the Union Post Office with 'S. W. AFRICA' at base.) Putzel says it was "Introduced at the end of August 1915" BUT this is dated '9 APR 15'. Its use as a dispatch datestamp is "far less common in Windhoek than in most other towns". After March 1916, it was "used as a Registered Letter canceller and as an arrival datestamp, (apparently usually with a block instead of code". The postmark right meets this description of early use as a receiver with block before Year.



Original on reverse.
"For lack of a good copy"
Putzel used a tracing to
illustrate this postmark.

So, these disappointing postmarks add extra interest to what I originally thought was a rather poor cover.

Censor Label 104, Keetmanshoop: 1916



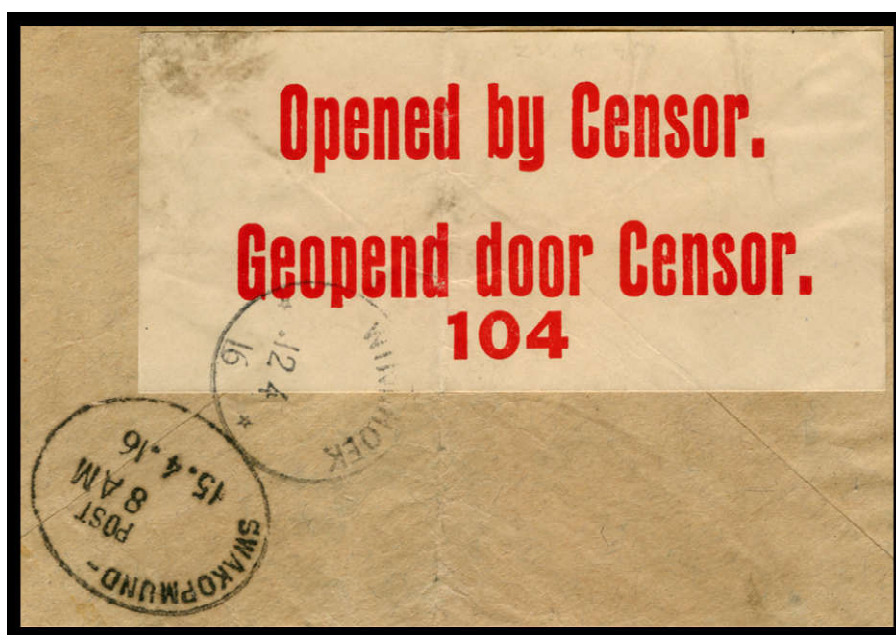
1916. Registered Letter. KEETMANSHOOP '2 APR 16' to SWAKOPMUND '15 4 16'.

The rate paid for the Registered Letter is 6d, the standard Union rate for a letter under ½ oz within SA.

The blue boxed rectangular 'KEETMANSHOOP' Registered town cachet is common.

This new datestamp Putzel No. 3a. describes the territory as 'S.W. AFRICA'. It is not yet a part of SA.

The datestamp on the 'Opened by Censor 104' label on the reverse shows it routed via Windhoek on '12 4 16' and reached Swakopmund three days later. The 13 day delivery time is unusually long.



The reverse has a 'PASSED BY CENSOR 104' label.

WINDHOEK '12 4 16' transit and SWAKOPMUND '15 4 16' receiving mark.

The single circle 'WINDHOEK' datestamp is the pre-Windhuk GSWA one (Putzel A2) with 'DEUTSCH SUDWEST AFRIKA' removed. (No stop between dates). Like its second 'WINDHOEK' half, this converted 'SWAKOPMUND' oval Train canceller is

Censor Label 99, Cape Town on Overseas Mail: 1916



1916. Cover cancelled OKAHANDJA S.W.AFRICA '7 APR 16' to SWITZERLAND.

The rate paid for the letter is 2½d, the standard SA rate for a letter under ½ oz to Europe.

The new civil administration's postage rate is the same in SWA as in the Union.

In the dark blue 'PASSED BY CENSOR CN' cachet, 'N' appears as an inverted 'U'. MS '21.4.16'.

This datestamp has 'S.W.AFRICA'. It recognises that SWA is not a part of the Union. The despatch date above is unclear and appears to show '7 APR 15'. However, the light blue 'PASSED CENSOR CAPE TOWN' datestamp (below) clearly shows that it was censored in Cape Town on '22 APR 1916'. It was received in GENEVA, SWITZERLAND '14 V 16' with an OBC 99 label on the reverse.



1916. Cover to Red Cross received in GENEVA '14 V 16'.

The oval blue CENSOR CAPE TOWN '22 APR 1916' has possibly lost 'PASSED BY' (CENSOR).

Censor Label 100, Guchab to Windhuck: 1916



1916. Cover cancelled TSUMEB S.W. AFRICA '7 OCT 16' to WINDHUCK.

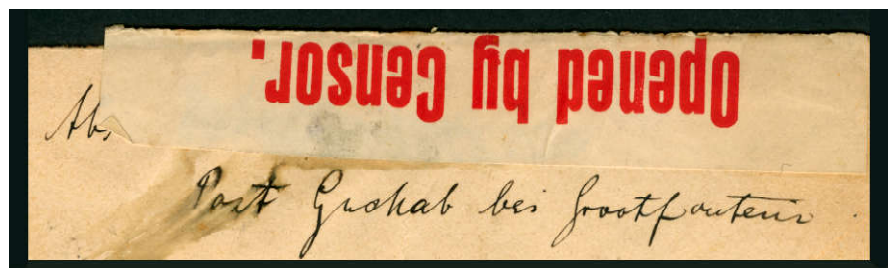
The rate paid for the letter is 1d, the standard SA rate for a domestic letter under ½ oz.

The cover has a 'PASSED BY CENSOR 100' label only ie. no PBC cachet.

This cover is simply addressed to "Mr. Intendanturrat v. Lagiewsky, Most Worshipful (possibly 'Well Born') in Windhuck". It was too insufficiently addressed for it to be delivered or the addressee had moved. The pencilled note of, '12/10.16' advises that it should be forwarded to him or given to someone else.



The GUCHAB datestamp
as used on forgeries
dated 29. 6 15



1916. Reverse showing GUCHAB PO address.

This cover has a back-story. It originated in Guchab, one of the smaller German colonial post offices. The sender's address is 'Post Guchab bei Grootfontein' ie. 'Post Guchab near Grootfontein'. There is an explanation for why the letter was cancelled in Tsumeb, not Guchab. The GSWA GUCHAB datestamp was looted on or just after 29 June 1915 during the invasion, probably by a South African. As Guchab was only a very minor GSWA post office it had never received a reserve datestamp. At the time this letter was posted it had not yet received a replacement datestamp from the new SWA postal authority. It would go 17 months without one. The lost GSWA GUCHAB datestamp is recorded on forged cancellations dated '29. 6. 15'. South Africa converted the GSWA GOCHAS datestamp for use in Guchab in January 1917.

Scarce KLEIN WINDHUK and Rare WALDAU Datestamps: 1917



1917. Cover cancelled KLEIN WINDHUK '11 JAN 17' to SWITZERLAND. PC C9.
The rate paid for the letter is 2½d, the standard SA rate for a letter to Europe. Passed Censor C9.
This is an early and scarce example of this rubber, skeleton-type datestamp.

Top. The town remains 'Klein Windhuk' in the rubber datestamp supplied in the Union era but it is 'Windhoek' in the converted oval Train canceller, right.



1917. Cover cancelled WALDAU '2 FEB 1917' to WINDHOEK '5 2 17'. Local Mail. PC B / 100.
The rate paid for the letter is ½d, the printed matter or book post rate for items up to 2 oz.

Putzel says of the WALDAU canceller, "This postmark is so rare that it is difficult to study it". This postmark is Putzel's recut No. B2 with a seriffed font. It is a rare example of an unusual datestamp earlier than and at least as good as the partial examples in Putzel's "The Postmarks of GSWA".

The UDF Suppress Owambo Anti-Colonial Resistance: 1917



1917. Post Card cancelled SEEIS '8 FEB 1917' to KEETMANSHOOP. PC B 100.

The rate paid for the letter is ½d, the standard SA rate for a domestic postcard. Passed Censor B 100.

This distorted Seeis rubber canceller is its second Union issue datestamp, first seen '2 11 16'.

The example above is shown by Putzel in his book. The addressee collaborated with Putzel.

During 1917, the UDF garrison in SWA suppressed threats to its control of the territory. These included the deposing of the last king of the Oukwanyama, an Owambo clan whose land straddled both Angola and SWA. After resisting the Portuguese, Chief Mandume Ya Ndemufayo (1894-1917) died resisting South African forces. *"It is better to die fighting than to become a slave of the colonial forces"*, African oral history has him saying. Today, he is a national hero of both Angola and Namibia.

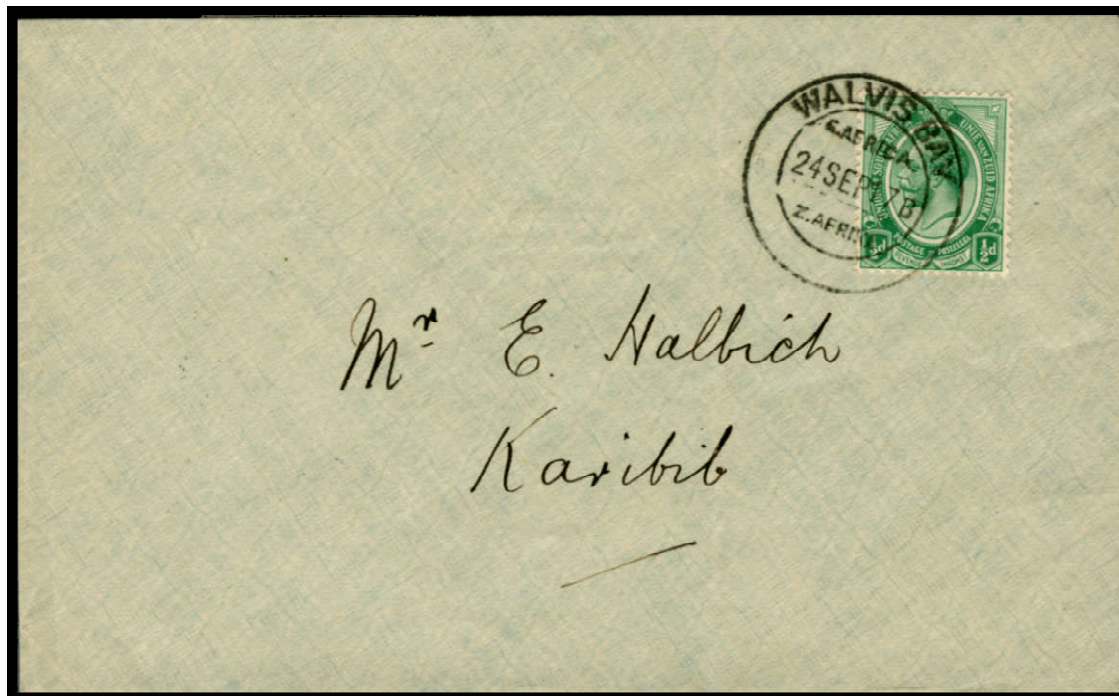


1917. ½d Postal Stationery Postcard. OTJIWARONGO '30 SEP 17' to SWAKOPMUND '11 10 17'.

Routed via KARIBIB '1 OCT 17'. Blue Single Circle Passed by Censor 105.

Walvis Bay, South Africa: 1917

The postmark on the cover below is the first one to refer to 'WALVIS BAY', the name by which it is known today. All previous postmarks referred to it as 'WALVISCH BAY' or 'WALFISH BAY'.



Robert Hill

1917. Cover. Single 1/2d green cancelled WALVIS BAY '24 SEP 17' to KARIBIB.

Posted WALVIS BAY (an exclave of the Union of SA) at the 1/2d Open Commercial Letter rate.

Cancelled with Type 3 Double Circle bilingual S.AFRICA Z.AFRICA (Small Letters) Datestamp (Clear at Base).

This is a variety with the Time code letter placed after the Year slug.

As an exclave of the Cape Colony, later the Union of South Africa, Walvis Bay was legally a part of SA. It and some surrounding desert territory was annexed by Britain to prevent its use by Germany in the 19th c. In the early days of WW1, a German patrol briefly entered the unprotected port before returning to GSWA. It was too isolated to warrant occupation and the Germans lacked the means to defend it. While there was uncertainty about the legal status of SWA when the fighting ended, Walvis Bay's position as a legal part of SA was not disputed. It is the only SWA/Namibian town to have used a datestamp marked 'SOUTH AFRICA', the Type 3 Double Circle S.AFRICA Z.AFRICA datestamp, above and right below, *"introduced not later than 1915 but possibly already in 1914". (Putzel). "Used until 1926".*



**1916. Piece.
WALVIS BAY' Double
Circle Datestamp '22 JAN**

The postmark right is the second bilingual datestamp Type 3 issued in South Africa, the third to promote the concept of 'a united 'White South Africa' of which the exclave of Walvis Bay was a part. This type of 'S. AFRICA' datestamp was not issued elsewhere in SWA. It was the first to use the new name of 'WALVIS BAY'. Later Walvis Bay datestamps would use 'SWA'.

16'.

According to Putzel, these bilingual datestamps were introduced simultaneously with the one shown left on this page. It was predominantly used on Registered mail. Putzel records three varieties with Time code letter as above, after Year and as a Block after Year.



**1916. Piece.
WALVIS BAY Type 3
Bilingual
'S. AFRICA - Z. AFRICA'
Datestamp '24 JUL 16'.**

Rule by South African Military Magistrates: 1917

Military magistrates were appointed to secure South African rule over GSWA. They reported to a central Administrator in Windhoek. It was a system generally hostile to ethnic Germans and the native people.

D U P L I C A T E O R I G I N A L .



I, the undersigned, Paul Schor, an employee of the Otavi Mine, Tsumeb, do hereby authorise and empower Mr. A. Steckel of Swakopmund, to receive the sum of One hundred and fifty marks (150 Marks) in German Paper money from my salary due by the Otavi Minen und Eisenbahn Gesellschaft each month from the 30th November, 1917 until such time as the sum of Six hundred and ten mark and Seventy pfennig (610.70 Mark) has been paid off, together with all such interest as may be legally due on the original debt of 2470.70 Mark, as stated in Mr. Steckel's letter to the Mine Authorities, dated the 8th March, 1916.

Signed before me at Tsumeb, S.W.A.P. this 12th day of November, 1917.

Acting Military Magistrate.

The War in Europe: 1918

On 26th July 1915, two weeks after the GSWA campaign had concluded, the triumphant General Botha, revealed his long-held ambition for the territory, saying that “*In German South West Africa, homesteads are waiting for many a South African son.*” In calling the territory “German South West Africa”, Botha recognised that the Union of South Africa’s claim to the territory was not yet a done deal.

As the occupying authority the Union quickly stopped referring to SWA as being ‘German’ and began calling it simply ‘South West Africa’. In adapting GSWA postal handstamps for use under SA rule, the post office removed ‘Deutsche’ but refrained from introducing postmarks that referred to the territory as ‘South Africa’. The status of the territory was put on hold awaiting a favourable outcome of the war in Europe.

The war had begun with the Russia Empire of Tsar Nicholas II a part of the Triple Entente which included the British Empire and the French Third Republic, also an empire. They were the three major Allied combatants until the entry of America into the war in Europe in April 1917. The war took a surprising turn in February 1917 when Tsar Nicholas II of Russia was overthrown. A Russian Provisional Government was formed who continued to wage the Tsar’s unpopular war against the Axis forces.

Matters worsened considerably for Great Britain and France in October 1917 when the Bolshevik Party seized power in Russia, inaugurating the Soviet regime. The new Russian government quickly negotiated a truce with the Germans who immediately began to transfer the bulk of their Eastern Armies to the Western Front. This resulted in a significant and innovative German offensive in March 1918, the so-called ‘Kaiserschlacht’ (Ger. Kaiser’s Battle). For a time it looked like the Germans would win the war.

The German storm stalled and the British and French fought back and recovered lost ground. When American forces entered the fighting was on the wall for the Germans. It was now only a matter of time before they were defeated.

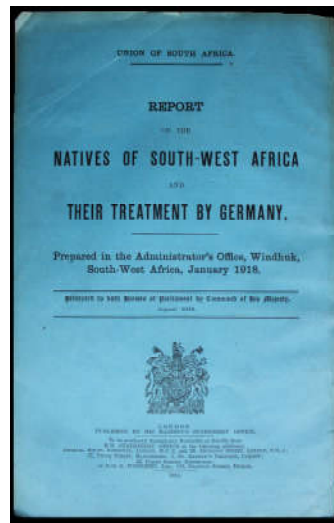
President Wilson Seeks Peace: 1918

In January 1918, when it looked like the war in Europe would not end soon or well for the Western Allies, US President Woodrow Wilson published ‘*Fourteen Points for Peace*’, his principles for future peace negotiations. This required the Allies to withdraw from occupied enemy territories and colonies. This offered no encouragement to Botha who was determined to absorb SWA into the Union of South Africa.

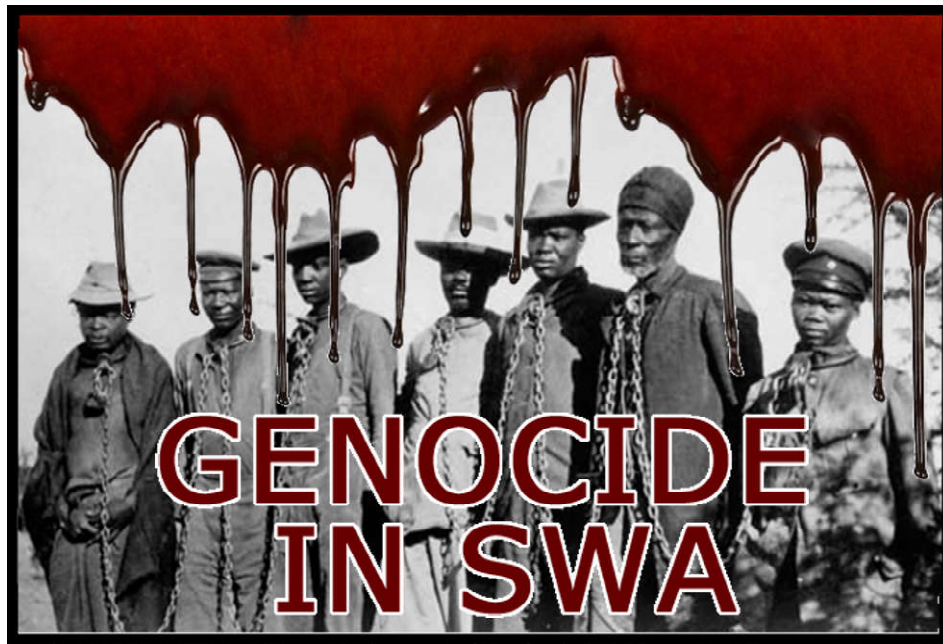
To strengthen the Union’s case for keeping SWA, South African officials took statements from native people about their experiences under German colonial rule. These were combined with captured colonial documents and photos and produced as an official Blue Book, a 220 page “*Report on the Natives of SWA and Their Treatment by Germany*”, published by H.M. Stationery Office in August 1918.

Whatever the motives of Botha’s government for producing the Blue Book, it provided and continues to provide a powerful insight into the cruelty at the heart of the German colony and uncompromisingly documented German atrocities against the Herero, Nama, Damara and Rehoboth Basters and others. I saw a private copy of this book as a teenager and it made a profound impact on me.

The Blue Book: 1918



January 1918. The Blue Book



**Circa 1904. Photo. The Faces of the Victims of German Colonial Barbarity.
Captured and chained Namibian Resistance Fighters await summary execution.
Extrajudicial killing is a terror tactic used to enforce racial and religious authoritarian rule.
In civilised societies *"summary execution is illegal as an arbitrary deprivation of the right to life"*.**

The Blue Book raised the hopes of the dispossessed people of SWA that the Union would deliver justice and return their lost lands to them. However, this was not the Blue Book's purpose. Its first aim was simply to provide post-war proof of Germany's brutality toward SWA's native people and to show that it was criminally incapable of administering an African colony, thereby denying Germany any hope of regaining its lost colony, a territory which Botha planned to make a part of the Union of South Africa.

The Blue Book also had a second purpose. On the basis of German genocide against the indigenous people, it attempted to justify the deportation of German colonists so that White South Africans could acquire their land and property. With a long history in southern Africa, most White South Africans claimed they understood Africans better than Germans. *"We know how to look after our Blacks,"* they said. The reality was that there was little difference between the Germans and the worst of the land-hungry White South Africans in their treatment of dispossessed indigenous people.

Railways and Diamonds: 1918



1917. Registered Letter cancelled WINDHUK '8 OCT 17' to SWAKOPMUND. PC B 100. The rate paid is 5d. This is 4d for a Registered Letter and a 1d for local postage. Passed Censor B 100. Letter addressed to 'Railway Operations Director of the Otavi Mines and Railway Company'.

Note the continued use of German place names for 'WINDHUK' and 'LUDERITZBUCHT' in these early SA-supplied 'S. W. AFRICA' datestamps. As a sign of the Union's ascendancy WINDHUK would be renamed to its original Orlam / Afrikaner 'WINDHOEK' in 1922.

LUDERITZBUCHT would lose 'BUCHT' (German. Bay.) in 1921 and be known in simply as 'LUDERITZ'.

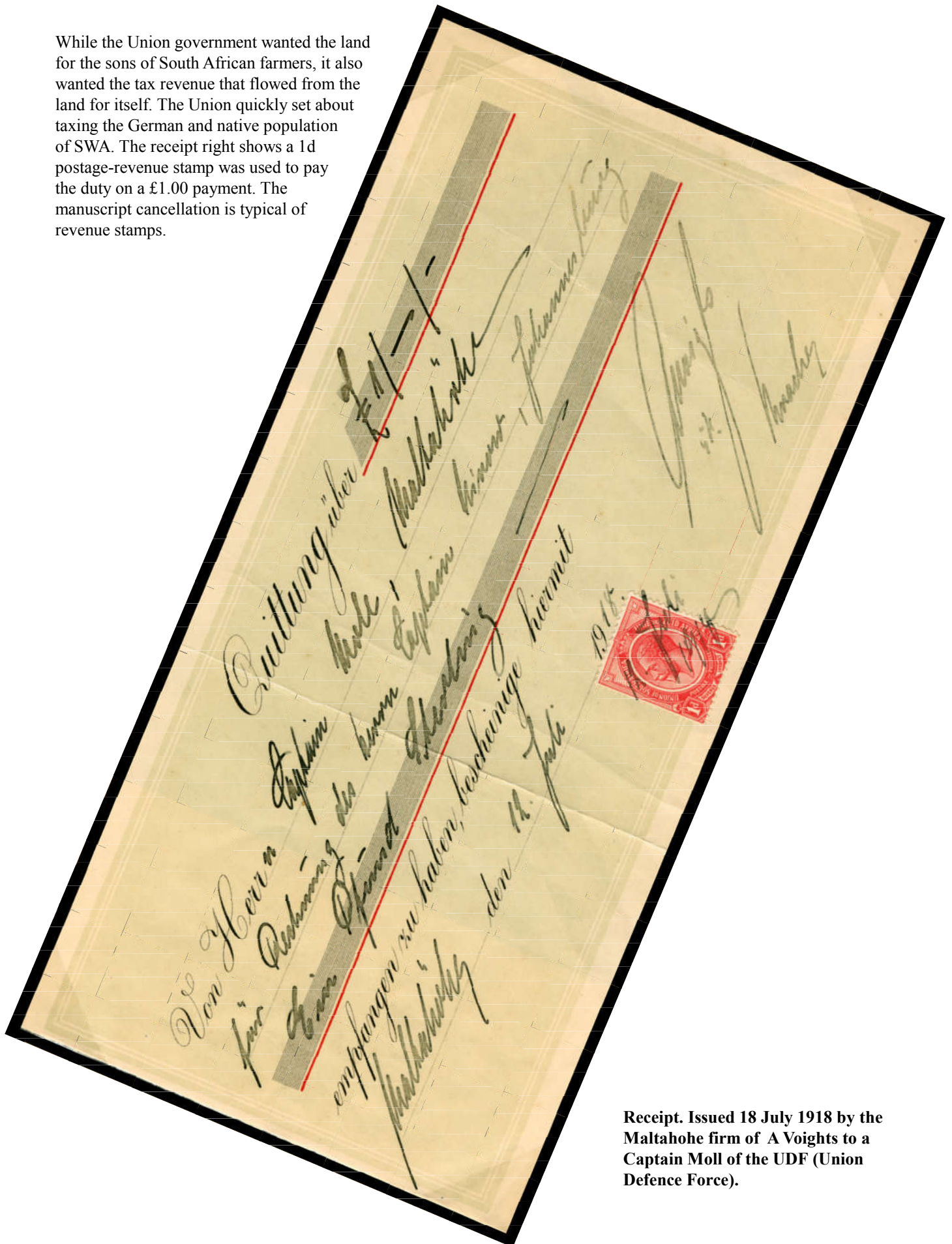


Tony Howgrave-Graham

1918. Piece Registered Letter with high value Forerunners cancelled LUDERITZBUCHT '25 JAN 1918. Because of the high postage rate, this piece is thought to have come from a Diamond Packet. The £2 2s 5d rate comprises 4d for a Registered Letter and overseas postage at 2½d for each ½ oz. This suggests that the letter was very heavy, over 6lbs in weight.

1d Duty on a £1 Payment: 1918

While the Union government wanted the land for the sons of South African farmers, it also wanted the tax revenue that flowed from the land for itself. The Union quickly set about taxing the German and native population of SWA. The receipt right shows a 1d postage-revenue stamp was used to pay the duty on a £1.00 payment. The manuscript cancellation is typical of revenue stamps.



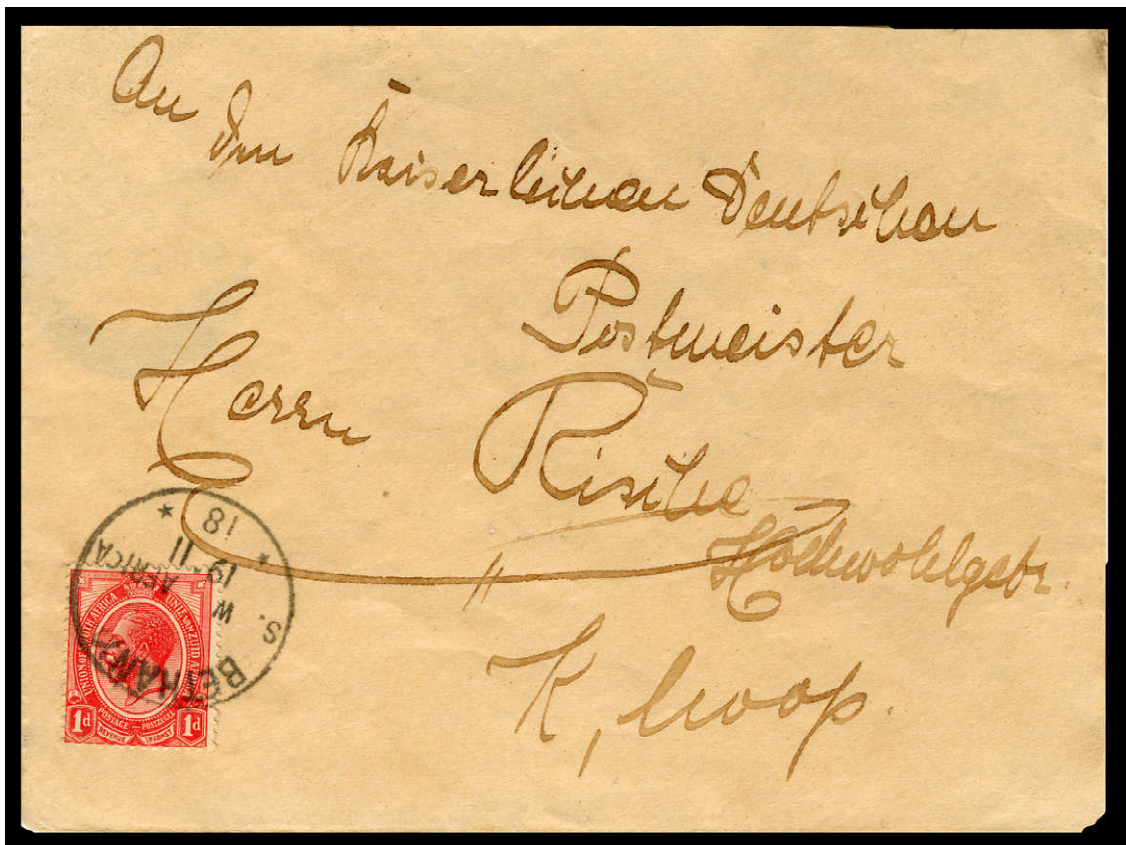
Receipt. Issued 18 July 1918 by the Maltahöhe firm of A Voights to a Captain Moll of the UDF (Union Defence Force).

Deportation and Repatriation: 1918 - 1919

To Botha's relief, Wilson's plan was rejected at Versailles in June 1919. Instead, Germany was made to accept the punishing terms of a Treaty that held it responsible for causing the war. This played into Botha's hands. Martial law, a bad economic situation and deportation and repatriation gave South African officials and their cronies an unfair advantage in buying up German farms and assets.

The enforced suddenness and speed of the deportations created desperate circumstances in which the deportees had little choice but to sell their livelihoods to South Africans at knock-down prices. With over a third of the colony's German population forcibly deported in just over a year, South Africa strengthened its presence in the territory by bringing in the relatively poor sons of rural Afrikaners. They bought with them ancient racial antagonisms that rudely denied the native people any hopes of land redistribution.

Among the deported 'undesirables' would likely have been the defiant sender of the letter below. Eight days after Armistice the sender reveals a stubborn and no doubt 'undesirable' loyalty to defeated Germany by addressing the letter '*To the Kaiserliche Deutsche Postmeister, K'hoop*', (To the Imperial German Postmaster). If the sender had property, a farm or a business that was worth anything which was desirable to an incoming South African, the sender would have received a one-way ticket back to the Fatherland.



**1918. Cover from BETHANY '19 11 18' to KEETMANSHOOP '20 NOV 18'.
1d red King's Head cancelled original German datestamp altered by removal of 'DEUTSCH'.
The 1d stamp is cancelled with a converted German BETHANIEN canceller, hence imbalance.**

The last ship carrying deportees departed SWA in February 1920. Altogether 4,941 Germans were forcibly repatriated while another 1,433 left of their own accord.

Upheaval, Loss, Debt & Continued Censorship: 1919



1919. Cover from KALKFELD '3 2 19' to WINDHUK '9 2 19'.

Vertical pair ½d stamps pay the standard Union rate for an internal domestic letter under ½ oz within SA.

The Kalkfeld 'DEUTSCH-SUDWESTAFRIKA' datestamp was adapted to 'S. W. AFRICA.'

Despite WW1 being over, the cover bears a circular 'PASSED CENSOR 100A' cachet.

(See next, for comparison of adapted GSWA Kalkfeld datestamp and PC 100A).



Original German Cancellor (ex Putzel).

The above is possibly a letter from a German farmer requiring financial assistance. By the end of 1919, 6374 Germans had been deported and or repatriated from SWA. For those Germans who remained in SWA it was a time of financial and emotional stress as they came to terms with the loss of friends, family and farms in a land many now regarded as home.

Two of many Train Cancellor varieties



'Swakopmund' Removed Cancellor (ex Putzel).



Left: This adapted Train Cancellor is shown on the reverse of the letter above. It has one stop after the Month. Stops vary greatly.

Right: This adapted Train Cancellor is from a Union postal stationery postcard. It has no stops and '1919' is unusually shown as '9'.



To integrate SWA into the Union, the SA government re-settled vacated German farms with the second sons of poor rural Afrikaners, thereby strengthening the 'Boer' presence in the territory. This did little to foster better race relations. The Union's failure to provide justice and compensation to the Nama, Herero and others who had lost everything to German reprisals added to a sense of grievance. The incoming 'Boers' simply perpetuated the rural White Master / Black Serf status quo that prevailed in the Union.

The shared racial prejudices of both Germans and South Africans allowed the administration of SWA to be one of effective cooperation between these former adversaries. The Union occupation slowly introduced benefits to the economy and the infrastructure of the territory. The indigenous people of SWA, however, were left with little to cheer about. Both Blacks and Whites awaited the ruling of the League of Nation's on SWA's status in the new post-WW1 world order with trepidation.

Converted German Datestamps used in SWA: 1919

Like many 'DEUTSCH SUDWESTAFRIKA' datestamps, KALKFELD's was converted to 'S. W. AFRICA'. While other SWA Post Offices received SA-supplied 'S. W. AFRICA' datestamps from 1916 or earlier, Kalkfeld did not. It used its ex-GSWA datestamp until about 1929 with varying Year slugs.



1919. Unstamped cover from KALKFELD '10 3 19' to WINDHUK '17 MAR 19'.
Taxed 2d, (twice the rate of missing postage). Postage Due paid the next day. Scarce!
The Kalkfeld 'DEUTSCH SUDWESTAFRIKA' datestamp has been adapted to 'S. W. AFRICA.'
Cover routed via OMARURU '10 MAR 19' arriving WINDHOEK '16 3 19'.



1919. Post Card. ½d lime-green KALKFELD S. W. AFRICA '25 5 20' to SWAKOPMUND '11 5 20'.
OMARURU '3 MAY 20' and KARIBIB '7 MAY 20' are SA-supplied 'S.W. AFRICA' datestamps.
Received in Swakopmund with a converted German oval Train canceller. Variety B6d - one low, one high stop.

The Führer - Interned Schutztruppe, Windhoek: 1919.



1918. Cover. Cancelled KEETMANSHOOP '17 APR 19' to WINDHUK '19 4 19'.

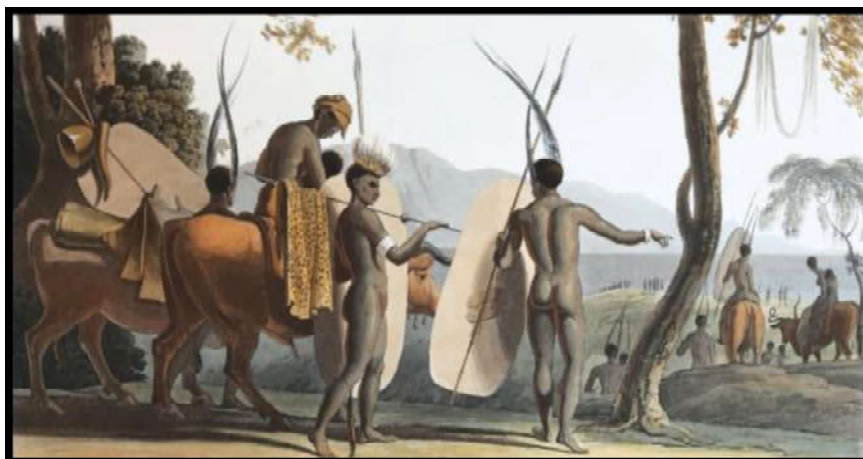
The rate paid is 1d, the standard SA letter rate.

Passed Censor B 100.

Like the 1918 Nakob letter, this is addressed to 'The Officer Commanding Interned Schutztruppe, Windhuk'. The addressee is presumably a German officer, mostly likely one attached to the Schutztruppe, who has been given his parole and who has taken it upon himself or been appointed to take care of the affairs and interests of the Schutztruppe imprisoned in Aus and elsewhere.

What is of interest about this letter is the date of 17th April 1919. Botha's priority was to ship 'undesirables' Germans back to their Fatherland ASAP once it was safe to do so. Armistice came into effect on 11th Day of the Eleventh Month 1918. When this letter was written some five months had elapsed since the shooting war stopped. The Schutztruppe were the least desirable of all the German colonists and the first to be deported. By June 1919 most of the Schutztruppe and many of the part-time reservist colonists were back in Germany. Their colonial experience was over. This letter was written at time when the Schutztruppe were packing their knapsacks and getting ready to leave SWA.

Native Travelling Passes: 1919



Robert Hill

1919, Otavifontein.

Khoi Freedom of Movement - No Passes issued...
... none required.

M83/102240.200bks.5.17. C.T.Ltd.-N5333.

P.N.A. No. 8.

SOUTH WEST AFRICA PROTECTORATE.

ORDINARY TRAVELLING PASS.

Serial No. *2433*

1. Name (Native)..... *Shapange (9212)*
2. Name known by..... *do*
3. Location or place of residence..... *Ovamboland*
4. Tribe or Nationality..... *Ovamba*
5. Accompanied by.....
6. Travelling to..... *Luderitz*
7. By way of (route)..... *Rail*
8. For purpose of..... *Work on mines*
9. Time allowed..... *8 days*
10. Stock or property in his possession.....

Issued at..... *Damutla*

[Signature]
Signature of Pass Officer.

Date..... *12-6-19.*

Robert Hill

1919. South West African Administration. Native Travelling Pass '12 6 19' from Ovamboland to Luderitz.
This is typical of a South African Pass. Ovamboland would become SWA's native labour pool.

Death of Louis Botha: 1919

After contracting Spanish influenza, the South African Prime Minister, Louis Botha, died in office of a heart attack in August 1919. His successor, Jan Smuts, extended a government scheme that provided loans to the landless sons of South African farmers to include SWA. Botha had set a trend for SWA. For the next 71 years White South Africa would control its affairs, suppress the people's political voice and combat their armed resistance with the full might of the SA Defence Force.



1919. Piece.

GROOTFONTEIN Double Circle

Datestamp '15 FEB 19'.

It was briefly the capital of GSWA after Windhuk was abandoned.

Circa 1919. Prime Minister General Louis Botha. Soldier and Statesman.

(James Guthrie: 1859–1930.)

**A Study for Portrait in Statesmen of the Great War. (Unfinished.)
Scottish National Gallery.**



.... while Life Goes On for Those Who Remain....

A German father writes to his son at school in 'Windhuk' now Windhoek'.

"Card and telegrams received.

Everything is fine at home. I'm coming there myself by train, which arrives early on Saturday with lots of groceries for home.

Greetings from the heart."



**1919. ½d green Post Card. MARIENTHAL '18 11 19' to WINDHOEK '20 11 19'.
Received in Windhoek with a converted German oval Train canceller. Variety B10d - no stops.**

Deportation / Repatriation Ends: February 1920

These covers from late 1919 and early 1920 date from the last deportations / repatriations. As both are to banks, they possibly relate to the sale of assets by departing German colonists. Again, we see a degree of defiance in the address to the Land Bank in 'D. S. W. A.' (German SWA!) in Windhuk.



1919. Registered Letter. OMARURU '30 10 19' to WINDHUK cancelled with converted German datestamp. Unboxed large letter Registration Cachet. The rate paid is 5d. (1d postage plus 4d Registration under ½ oz.) Purple 'PASSED CENSOR B 100' cachet. OBC small 100 on reverse.

A 'Desirable' German Who Got to Stay



1930. Real Photo Postcard. WINDHOEK '26 FEB 30' to HAMBURG, GERMANY (undated!).

South West African Protectorate: 1920

Putzel says that this SWAP (South West Africa Protectorate) datestamp was “first observed 9.6.1920”. This may have been an attempt to manipulate political events. As SWA was not a formal ‘Protectorate’ there were objections to the use of the term. It was altered on 6th January 1921, a few weeks after the Union received a limited mandate to administer SWA. The ‘P’ at its base was removed. This gave the datestamp a lop-sided appearance. Its life was also limited by the German ‘Windhuk’ reverting back to its Afrikaans original of ‘Windhoek’. These factors combine to make this datestamp uncommon.



1920. Cover. Strip x 3 ½d green WINDHUK S.W.A.P. ‘11 JUN 20’ to PRETORIA.
In 1920 in South Africa the local letter rate was still 1d. So why has 1½d been paid here?

The recipient of the letter is the renowned South African intellectual Eugene Marais. Putzel says of this postmark “First observed ‘9 6 20’ it is scarce”. This is example of ‘11 6 20’ is very early.



Robert Hill

1923. Piece. WINDHOEK SWA ‘3 FEB 23’ to JOHANNESBURG. Taxed 3d.
Same canceller as above but with town renamed ‘Windhoek’ and the ‘P’ of ‘SWAP’ removed. There appears to be a remnant of the ‘P’ remaining (or is this an issue with the perforations?)
This postmark does not appear to be listed by Putzel.
The original cover or parcel was ‘INSUFFICIENTLY PREPAD’.
On arrival in Johannesburg, it was taxed double the outstanding postage of 1½d ie. 3d.

South Africa Receives a 'C-Class' Mandate to Rule SWA: 1920.

As member of the British War Cabinet and Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa, General Smuts proposed the idea of a League of Nations Mandate system for Germany's conquered colonial possessions. He did not intend this to apply to GSWA which he hoped to see incorporated into South Africa. He was unable to persuade the Peace Conference and League of Nations to approve his recommendation.



1920. Cover. SWAKOPMUND '15 1 20' to OMARURU (undated).

The rate paid is 5d, suggesting the letter was Registered (1d postage + 4d Registration).

5 x 1d stamps cancelled with converted German oval Train canceller. Variety - stops at top.

Rather than hand SWA over to Smuts for incorporation into the Union, the new League of Nations gave South Africa a limited 'C-Class' Mandate on 17th December 1920. This limited the Union's responsibility to the administration of SWA only. The League of Nations stipulated that this was "*subject to the mandate obligation to promote to the utmost the material and moral well-being and the social progress of the inhabitants of the territory*". The League of Nations retained responsibility for SWA while SA administered it.

The 'C-Class' Mandate meant there could be no change in citizenship for SWA's people and that the population had a right to lodge complaints with international bodies.

There was to be no South African justice for the SWA people whose lands Germany had confiscated. The seized lands of the Herero and Nama had passed in part into settler ownership through apparently legal purchases. In the South African elections of 1924, Smuts was defeated by a coalition of the pro-Afrikaner National Party, many of whom had supported the rebellion in 1914, and the South African Labour Party, socialists who represented the interests of white workers. This was a significant step along the long road to Apartheid, a policy that the economist Thomas Hazlett describes as "*socialism with a racist face*".

When SWA received its own Legislative Assembly in 1925, one of its first acts was to have the Blue Book destroyed on the grounds that it was "*a serious obstacle to mutual trust and co-operation*" between the now ex-German colonists and SWA's new South African arrivals. The new Union government pardoned the traitor Manie Maritz who was now feted as an Afrikaner Nationalist hero. Smuts remained out of office until 1939 when he became the Union's WW2 Prime Minister. The Union retained its Mandate until the League of Nations ceased to exist in 1946. It was called upon to transfer the Mandate to the UN (United Nations) so that SWA could become a UN Trust Territory leading to its independence. Smuts objected to SWA coming under UN control. He refused SWA's transition to independence, proposing instead to make SWA South Africa's fifth province. He was ejected from office in 1948, replaced by die-hard Afrikaner Nationalists whose new policy of 'Apartheid' promised to secure the White man's place in Africa for a 1000 years. This policy would be exported to and implemented in SWA.

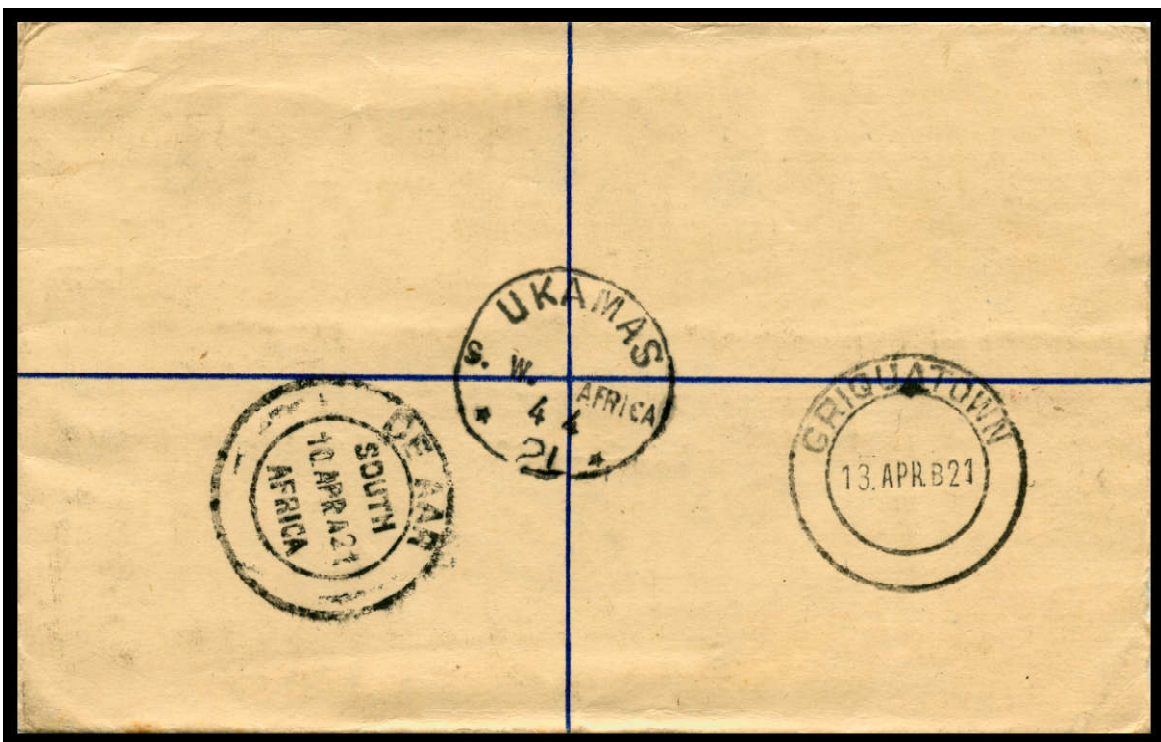
The Misshapen Adapted UKAMAS Datestamp: 1921



1921. Registered Letter Envelope. UKAMAS '4 4 21' to GRIQUATOWN '7 APR 21'
Transit via KALKFONTEIN '7 APR 21' and DE AAR '10 APR 21'.
Sent at Registered Letter rate of 5d



The Ukamas' datestamp is an adapted, now misshapen ex-GSWA datestamp. There is some confusion as to which Ukamas datestamp this is. Putzel lists five varieties. This has a distinctive break between 6 and 7 o'clock and no oblique between Day and Month. Its Year slug appears large. Clearly, it has lived a full postal life!



Converted Swakopmund GSWA Oval Train Cancellor: 1916 - 1921

First seen from March 1916, this datestamp was previously the Swakopmund - Windhoek Bahnpost datestamp. These are unique to Swakopmund and Windhoek. Eash has had the other town removed, in the case of Swakopmund Windhoek has been removed. In addition, it has had 'ZUG and its Time Code Number' removed, leaving it looking quite unbalanced. Time as 8 AM or 9 PM has been inserted where the ZUG Time Code Number previously was. Six varieties exist.



March 1901.
Original GSWA
Railway Cancellor
(ex-Putzel).



Robert Hill

1916.
1d red cancelled
SWAKOPMUND '19 6 16'.
Two Stops at Bottom.



Robert Hill

1919.
Pair 2½d blue cancelled
SWAKOPMUND 19 8 19'.
Stops raised to top.

Unlike the standard canceller top, this one on the left is a variety with 'stops raised'.



1921. Cover. Pair 1d red cancelled SWAKOPMUND '9 6 21' to KARIIBIB.
Cancelled with converted German oval Train canceller. Variety - stops at bottom.

Postage Rate Change: 1921



1921. Cover. Pair 1d red cancelled OKAHANDJA S. W. AFRICA '18 OCT 21' to KARIBIB.
The rate has changed. Note address as 'S. W. P.' (Protectorate).



1922. Cover. Pair 1d red cancelled OMARURU S. W. AFRICA '5-MAY A 22' to WINDHUK '6 MAY 22'.
Putzel shows the same "with unusual date figures '5/hyphen/month' instead of 'hyphen/5/stop/month'".
Putzel's variety is dated '5-DEC A 22' eight months after this. Is this an earliest recorded date?

A Letter to the Deutsche Bank, Berlin: 1922



1922. Cover. 3 x 1d red King's Heads cancelled KEETMANSHOOP '11 DEC 22' to GERMANY. This cover makes no sense unless the 2½d European rate has changed to 3d with the rate change. or, in the absence of a ½d stamp, the sender chose to use a 1d red, thereby paying ½d too much.

Given the date that this cover was sent, 11th December 22', it contents may relate to a financial matter conducted on behalf of one of the deported or repatriated. Or perhaps there is a simpler explanation, that it contained a Christmas card? However, as the letter is not addressed to a named individual but simply to the Deutsche Bank, the suggestions that it contained a Christmas card is unlikely. The large blue German cachet is the Deutsche Bank's own administrative receiving and filing mark, rather like those seen used by Montgomery Ward. 'Eingang' is German for 'Entrance', hence this refers to "In-coming" or "Received".

The KEETMANSHOOP postmark is the one with the broken 'K, as seen previously in the display sheet headed 'Two Interesting Postmarks: 1916'.

In 1919, the League of Nations gave South Africa a mandate to rule the territory of South West Africa. In January 1923, a set of twelve King's Heads overprinted 'South West Africa Zuid-West Africa' were issued.

There were at least three further similar issues with slight changes to the spelling of the overprint.

Witvley via Uhabis and Outjo: 1922

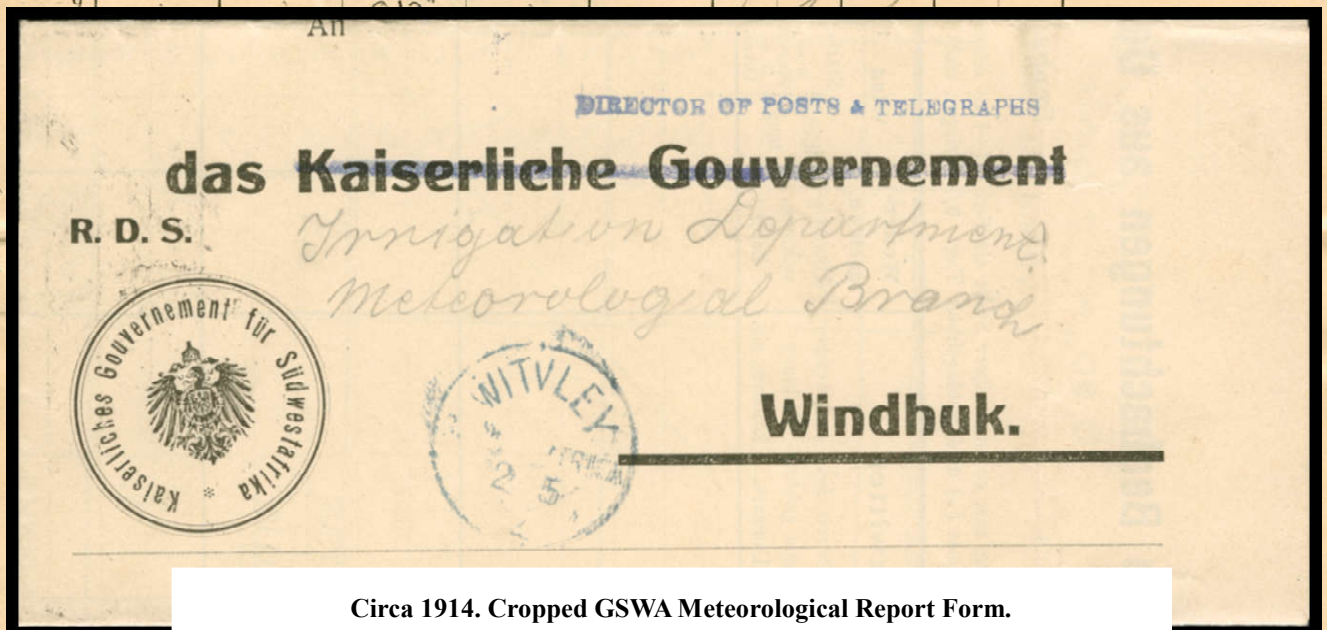
Meteorologische Beobachtungen aus Deutsch-Südwestafrika.

Ort: Witvley

Beobachter: Bücherl

Notiz: Fällt eine Beobachtung aus, so ist an ihrer Stelle ein Strich (—) zu setzen. Bezüglich der Messung der Regenhöhen bedeutet: Punkt (.) niederschlagsfreier Tag. 0,0 geringer, nicht meßbarer Niederschlag.

Monat Jahr 1922	Regenhöhe in mm u. Bruchteilen von solchen 8 Uhr Morgens.	Gewitter			Wetter- leuchten. (Himmels- richtung, Zeit.)	Wind		Bewölkung in Zehnteln d. Himmels	Extrem- ther- mometer Auf Zehntel- Grade ablesen		Bemerkungen für allgemein. Witterungsnotizen und besondere Erscheinungen: Schnee-, Hagel-, Meteorfall, Abkommen größerer Riviere, Erdbeben etc. (Bei Beobachtg. v. Erdbeben ist der Fragebogen auszufüllen.) Raum für weitere Bemerkungen siehe Rückseite.
		Zahl derselben an einem Tage.	Uhrzeit des ersten gehört. Donners.	Aus welcher Richtung kommen sie.		Rich- tung	Stärke 0 = Windstill 12 = Orkan.		0 = wolkenlos 10 = bedeckt.	Maxi- mum Mini- mum	
1						E	5	0			
2						SE	4	2			
3						S	2	0			
4						E	3	4			
5						SE	1	3			
6						S	2	1			
7						SW	3	0			
8						W	3	2			
9						S	1	1			



Circa 1914. Cropped GSWA Meteorological Report Form.
1922. Same folded GSWA Met' Report from WITVLEY '2 5 22'. Official Free Post.
GSWA 'KAISERLICHE GOVERNMENT' obliterated.
Overprinted 'DIRECTOR OF POSTS & TELEGRAPHS' allowing FREE postage.
Received Irrigation Department, Meteorological Branch WINDHOEK '6 MAY 22'.

The astute observer will note that the WITVLEY datestamp is based on an ex-GSWA datestamp. The astute GSWA collector will also know that there was never a GSWA WITVLEY datestamp. So is it from? It is the UHABIS datestamp that was converted to a neutral Wanderstempel, then converted to OUTJO and finally to WITVLEY.

Arguably, we have here the history four datestamps for the price of one.

Summe: 12.7

Anzahl der Regentage: 5

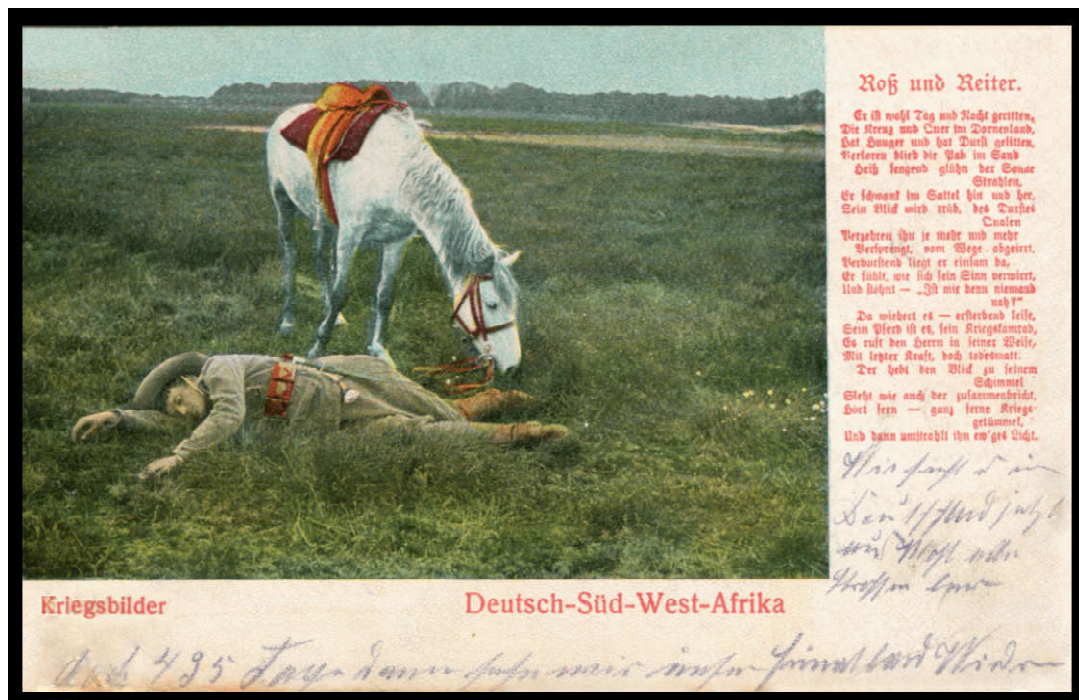
The Legacy of the Schutztruppe: 1888 - 1945



National Flag of Germany (1894).



Imperial German War Ensign (1903 - 1919).



Circa 1906. Postcard. 'War Images'. (6039 Franz Spenker, Hamburg 19.)

Believed to have originated in AUS POW Camp. Undated, probably used circa 1915 - 16 .
Endorsed 'Feldpost' with large violet POST FREE. PRISONER OF WAR. PC handstamp.

The "Kriegsbilder" (Ger. War Image) above is probably staged in the flat landscape of the north German plain. The brim of the 'dead' man's hat appears rimmed in white, suggesting a confusion with German East African uniforms. The romanticised drama of heroic death as bloodless sleep in foreign fields would come to haunt many German families as World War 1 cruelly ripped apart some 2m of its men in mud.

Germany was a nation of 60m people, many of whom believed they were the most worthy and civilised in Europe. They demanded and got the 'right' to a colony in SWA despite Chancellor von Bismarck's misgivings. The native people were less than 250,000. Those who resisted were eliminated with brutality.

"About 75 percent of the entire Herero population and some 50 percent of the Nama population died during the campaign. This would make it one of the most effective genocides in history." (Casper Erichsen. Historian, Humanist, Namibian.)



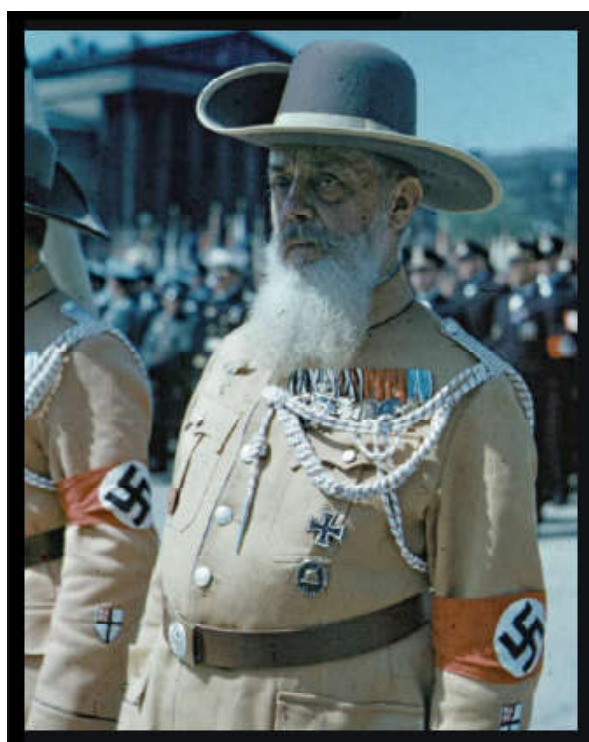
Flag of Nazi Germany (1935 - 1945).

The colonial history of SWA is a tragedy based on the Herrenvolk's (Ger. Master race) conceit that they and Germany answered to no-one but themselves.

From Africa to Auschwitz



Two ex-Schutztruppen left wear GSWA slouch hats.
The bearded man right wears a GEA slouch hat.
GSWA slouch hats had blue bands, GEA white ones.



Circa 1938. Munich. Nazi rally, Koenigsplatz. The Propyläen is in the background. Images courtesy: Robin Lumsden, Gentlemen's Military Interest Club.

With the Nazis determined to restore German pride in the aftermath of WW1 and the punitive Treaty of Versailles, many ex-colonial Schutztruppen supported Adolf Hitler's aggressive plans for rearmament, the acquisition of 'lebensraum' (Ger. living space) and the restoration of their lost colonies.

There is little evidence to show that the Schutztruppen's genocide in GSWA directly influenced the Nazi's decision to murder 6m Jews and others in Europe during WW2. There were no ex-Schutztruppen with links to the GSWA holocaust within the hierarchy of the Nazi Party. Those who participated in the GSWA genocide and who survived WW1 were few in number. So, is there any truth in the suggestion that the Schutztruppen's Herero and Nama genocide lead directly to the Nazi Einsatzgruppen and Death Camps?

The modern seed of mass extermination as German state policy was sown by the Kaiser in 1900 when he instructed his troops departing for China to kill without mercy. He ordered that "*No quarter will be given! Prisoners will not be taken!*" It should be no surprise then that when the Schutztruppe came out to GSWA in 1904 - 1905 during the Herero / Nama War of Resistance they took racist mass murder to a new level, one that shocked even the disapproving Boer General Manie Maritz. He wrote that the Schutztruppe "*believed that all Black people were enemies and must be killed. That's why they had come out.*" Maritz served Germany during the colonial war and wrote from experience. The Schutztruppe's SWA genocide was nothing less than what the Kaiser had demanded his troops do to the Chinese Boxers. Details of the GSWA holocaust would have been common knowledge in the German army. The majority of its men would have thought it a just punishment for 'sub-humans' who rose up against German authority.

The Schutztruppen justified the murder of Africans in GSWA because they believed that they were an inferior race of people who with great temerity risen up against a lawfully constituted German colonial authority. They believed that Germans were superior to all the races in Africa, including the other European colonisers. The Nazis simply perpetuated mass murder on the back of this constant belief in German racial superiority. They did not do so because the Kaiser and his Schutztruppen had established a precedent for genocide but because racial murder was easily justifiable within most German's worldview. The chilling fact is that there was a maleable thread of murderous self-righteousness, one kneaded by both the Kaiser and the Nazis, that ran in degrees through a proud German people which when unleashed manifested itself as utter violent contempt for all threatening non-Germans deemed to be inferior.

POSTSCRIPT

Fred Cornell, author of *'The Glamour of Prospecting'*, saw in a ravine on the Cape / GSWA border *"where a thick bush known as haak doorn (Afr. hook thorn) abounded... gruesome relics in the shape of skeletons, firmly entangled in the thickest part of the bush, where they had apparently been thrown as living men. The 'Hottentots' claim that the Germans, exasperated by the protracted resistance of the natives, used to treat all wounded men who fell into their hands with horrible severity, breaking their bones, and throwing them bodily into these thorn-bushes, from which a sound man could scarcely escape. I have seen the skeletons in several places where fighting took place. The Germans claim that German wounded were thus treated by the 'Hottentots' but the rags of clothing clinging to the bones I saw were not part of a German uniform."*

In 1914 Cornell, visited Ukamas in GSWA. He found the village's neat buildings *"a credit to the Germans"* but described the behaviour of the Schutztruppe stationed there as *"uncouth", "brutal" and "intolerable"*, particularly drunken German officers baiting the British Jewish storekeeper. As Cornell tells it, this stemmed from the storekeeper having served in the British Army rather than being a Jew. *"As I sat quite quietly there pretending to read, (they) talked about what a poor lot all 'Englanders' were ... and how only the worst of them ever came to Africa, and how they, the Germans, were the salt of the earth, were bound, sooner or later to take over the whole of it, from the Cape to the Zambesi I again heard the toast of "The Day" being drunk, though I did not imagine how soon that "Day" would come."*

The Kaiser's flawed character bore much of the responsibility for the start of World War 1. He saw himself as a military leader and cautiously awaited the day when war would come. *"The Day"* was a German Army anthem, a toast to the start of war with its perceived enemies, most especially England. *"The Day"* arrived on 4th August 1914 when Britain declared war on Germany. Four years and millions of dead later, Germany surrendered and the Kaiser abdicated. Forced to submit to a humiliating Peace Treaty, Germany lost all its colonies in the process. As Germans looked for reasons why they, the Master Race, had been defeated, they found scapegoats in Jews, communists, homosexuals, decadence and international capitalism. Colonists and Schutztruppe deported from SWA in 1919 who had lost everything found a home in the Nazi Party who swore to restore their lost lands and pride.

The Nazis promised to restore Germany's lost colonies, chief among them being GSWA, its only colony settled by a small number of its people, about half of whom remained in the territory after the deportations of 1918 - 1920. The Germans who remained in SWA developed a proud *'Sudwester'* identity, one that was based on notions of racial superiority over both the indigenous people and the incoming South Africans.

Because most SWA Germans remained racially pure and loyal to Germany they were regarded by the Nazis as *"the ideal type"* of German. Many of the *'Sudwesters'* felt the same about the Nazis.

Both German colonialism and Nazism promoted racist pseudo-science that devalued human life. Imperial Germany used Social Darwinism and eugenics to justify colonial genocide of *"inferior"* races as a positive good. The colonial authority preceded the Nazis with racist medical experiments on *'untermenschen'* (Ger. subhumans), native people the colonists called *"baboons"*. To make way for German settlement, two tribes with land and water who led the anti-colonial resistance were largely destroyed. The Nazis also promised *'lebensraum'* (Ger. living space) for German settlement in eastern Europe. The ethnic cleansing of the Herero and Nama was not a violent racist colonial abberation run amok but the first outbreak of an epidemic of irrational German national superiority, a complex of racial arrogance that lead to the atrocities of WW1 and the Death Camps and the Holocaust of WW2. In these crimes Germany's colonial Schutztruppe and WW2 Einstazgruppen were Blood Brothers in Arms implementing the Imperial and National Socialist will.

What the Union's Victory in GSWA meant for the Indigenous People

The UDF garrison in SWA effectively suppressed a number of internal threats to the Union's rule. One of the first came during WW1 when the Portuguese attacked the Oukwanyama whose royal capital was at Ondjiva in Angola. The Oukwanyama kingdom had been split in two by the 1884 Berlin Conference that determined African colonial borders regardless of the people living there. As a result, King Mbandjiru ruled over the Ambo people of southern Angola and the Ovambo of northern Namibia.

While the king was fighting the Portuguese in Angola, the UDF simultaneously moved in to 'peacefully' capture Ovamboland in SWA. Due to heavy losses fighting against the Portuguese, King Mbandjiru was forced to relocate the Oukwanyama capital to SWA where he refused to submit to the South Africans.

"It is better to die fighting than to become a slave of the colonial forces," he is believed to have said before being killed in battle against the UDF in February 1917. He was the last king of the Oukwanyama and is today one of Namibia's nine national heroes identified at the inauguration of the country's Heroes' Acre near Windhoek in 2002.

In 1922 a southern Khoikhoi tribe, the Bondelswarts rebelled against South African rule. The action meted out against them has been described as *"the Sharpeville of the 1920s"*. It brought the nature of South African rule under the terms of its Mandate to the attention of the new League of Nations. Unsurprisingly the chief cause of the Bondelswart Rebellion was a loss of land. In the late 19th Century the Bondelswarts' land had extended from the Orange River northwards to beyond the Great Karas Mountains and westwards to the Fish River, an area of 40,000 square kilometres (4 million hectares). Most of this land was confiscated by the Germans in 1906. After the Armistice in Europe in 1918 White South Africans were encouraged to move to SWA to take advantage of its land and opportunities. Many were allocated huge farms and given generous financial terms and support. Labour laws, discriminatory practices and heavy-handed policing pressured the indigenous people into working for the new South African and the remaining German farmers.

By 1922, over 95% of the Bondelswart's land had been lost. With their ancestral land and way of life threatened, the Bondelswarts' patience grew thin, ending variously with the imposition of a dog tax and the introduction of punitive laws to force them into labouring serfdom on white farms. The Bondelswarts rebelled, taking to guerilla warfare as they had done against the Germans. Fearing a long war in hostile terrain, worse one that might encourage further 'native' rebellions elsewhere in White South Africa, the Bondelswarts were savagely dealt with by Prime Minister Jan Smuts who ruthlessly used the new South African Air Force to bomb and machine-gun them far from the public eye.

The People of SWA began to realise that they had to look to themselves and international support if they were to throw off the yoke of colonialism. Organised resistance took root among the Ovambo, the tribal group that represented the majority of SWA's population. The Ovamboland People's Congress (OPC) was formed on 1 August 1957 under the leadership of Andimba Toivo ya Toivo. It aimed to end the exploitative contract labour system and the policies of SWANLA (South West Africa Native Labour Association). In 1958, Ya Toivo documented human rights violations in SWA which made headlines in the New York Times and problems for the South African government with the United Nations, the post-WW2 successor to the interbellum League of Nations. Ya Toivo was deported from South Africa and returned to Ovamboland from where his message spread. The SWA people had begun their resistance.

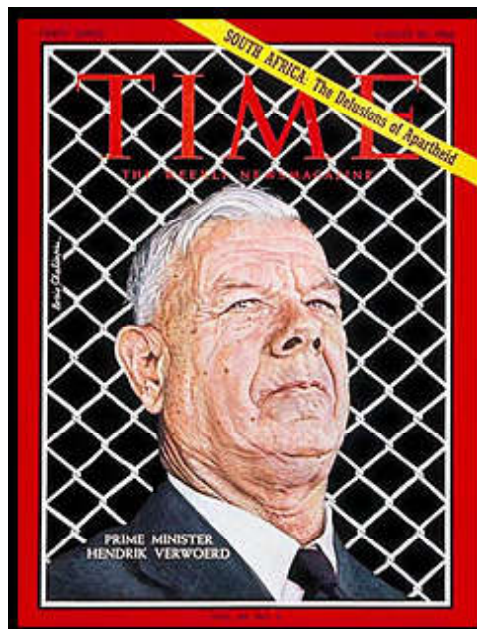
The Rise of Nationalism in South Africa: 1924

The long road leading to formalised segregation in the form of the political policy of Apartheid began with Union in 1910 and the discriminatory laws enacted by Botha and Smuts' pro-Empire South African Party. However what cost Smuts the most with the White South African electorate was his pro-Empire support for Britain and the crushing of the Republican Rebellion in the Union. In the 1920 South African general election the pro-Empire parties lost seats but not power. Smuts' South African Party continued to govern with the reduced support of the Unionist Party. The National Party of J. B. M. Hertzog had won the most seats but not a majority. The Labour Party also gained more seats. The 1924 election saw Smuts ejected from office Hertzog elected to power in a coalition of the victorious National and Labour Parties.



**Union Day, 31st May 1960. The triumph of White Nationalism.
The six White Prime Ministers of the Union of South Africa 1910 - 1960:
L to R. Botha, Smuts, Hertzog, Malan, Strijdom and Verwoerd.
The last pre-decimal Union stamp, above, defines an era.**

Once a pin-up boy for the Boer 'volk', Prime Minister General Louis Botha had a long fall from favour. Nationalist hatred of his Empire loyalty and his crushing of the 1914 rebellion made the stamp above the only South African one of the Union and pre-democratic Republican era to show Louis Botha's face. His conquest of GSWA, the first successful Allied campaign of WW1, would be deliberately ignored and or forgotten.



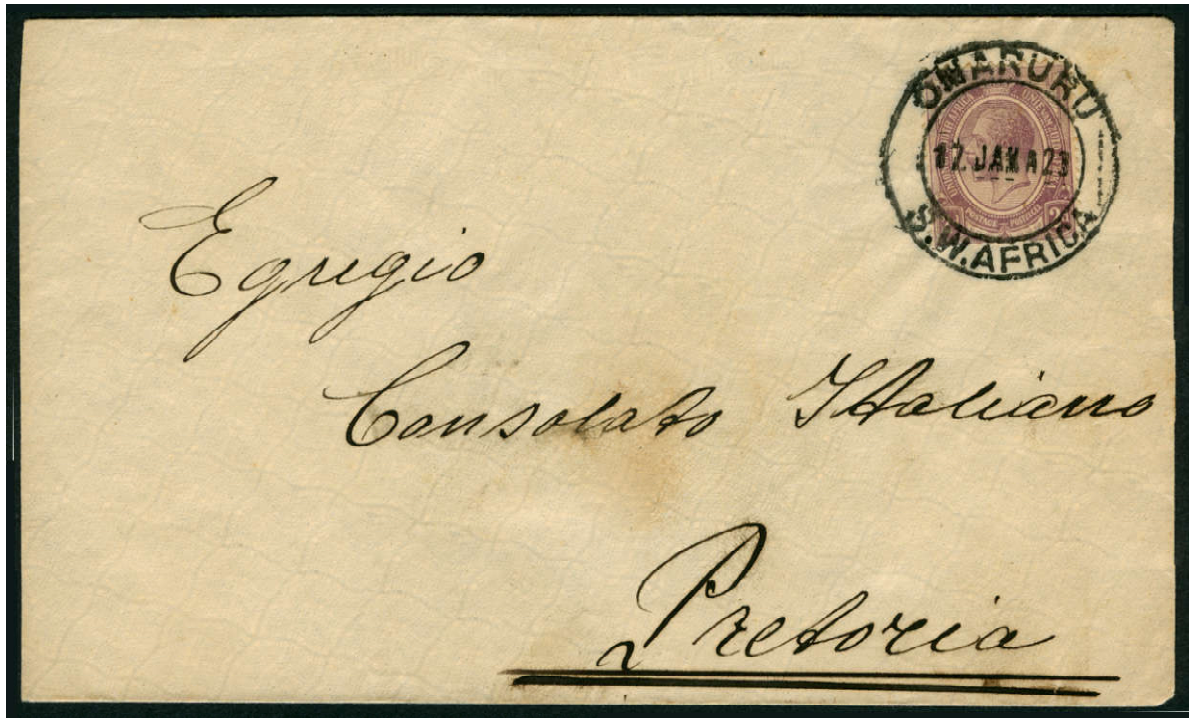
The Liberal West saw Dr Verwoerd, the 'Architect of Apartheid', as a grim and ruthless ideologue.

Exactly a year after the issue of the stamp above South Africa became a republic on 31st May 1961, the culmination of the long-held ambition of Afrikaner Nationalists. Life would be good for many White South Africans in the Republic's booming 1960s but sanctions, boycotts, isolation and a 'pariah' status would be forced on them by the country's Apartheid policies, (which it implemented in SWA), as well as its reluctance to surrender SWA to democracy.

PART 3: COMING 2024

South West Africa 1923 - 1990

At the time the stamp on the cover below was cancelled in the Omaruru Post Office on 12th January 1923, overprinted King's Heads from the Union of South Africa were being introduced into SWA post offices. The overprinted King's Heads will be included in Part 3. 'SWA to Independence (21st March 1990)'.



**1923. Cover. 2d purple cancelled OMARURU S. W. AFRICA '12 JAN 23' to PRETORIA.
This is Putzel's variety shown previously overleaf. The date is now 'normal'.**

In January 1923, a set of twelve King's Heads overprinted 'South West Africa Zuid-West Africa' were issued. There were at least three further similar issues with slight changes to the spelling of the overprint.

The concluding Part 4 of this display will cover the postage stamps of democratic Namibia.

To comment on this display, please [CLICK HERE](#).



The End

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30/10/2023

If you have questions and want to contact the Club, please contact:

"Postmaster" <postmaster@southafricanphilatelyclub.com>

www.southafricanphilatelyclub.com