

Catalogue of ZAR (Zuid Afrikaansche Republiek) and Transvaal datestamps, 1868-1910

Bas Payne,
Moretonhampstead

RPSL SW Regional Meeting,
Friday 8 April 2022

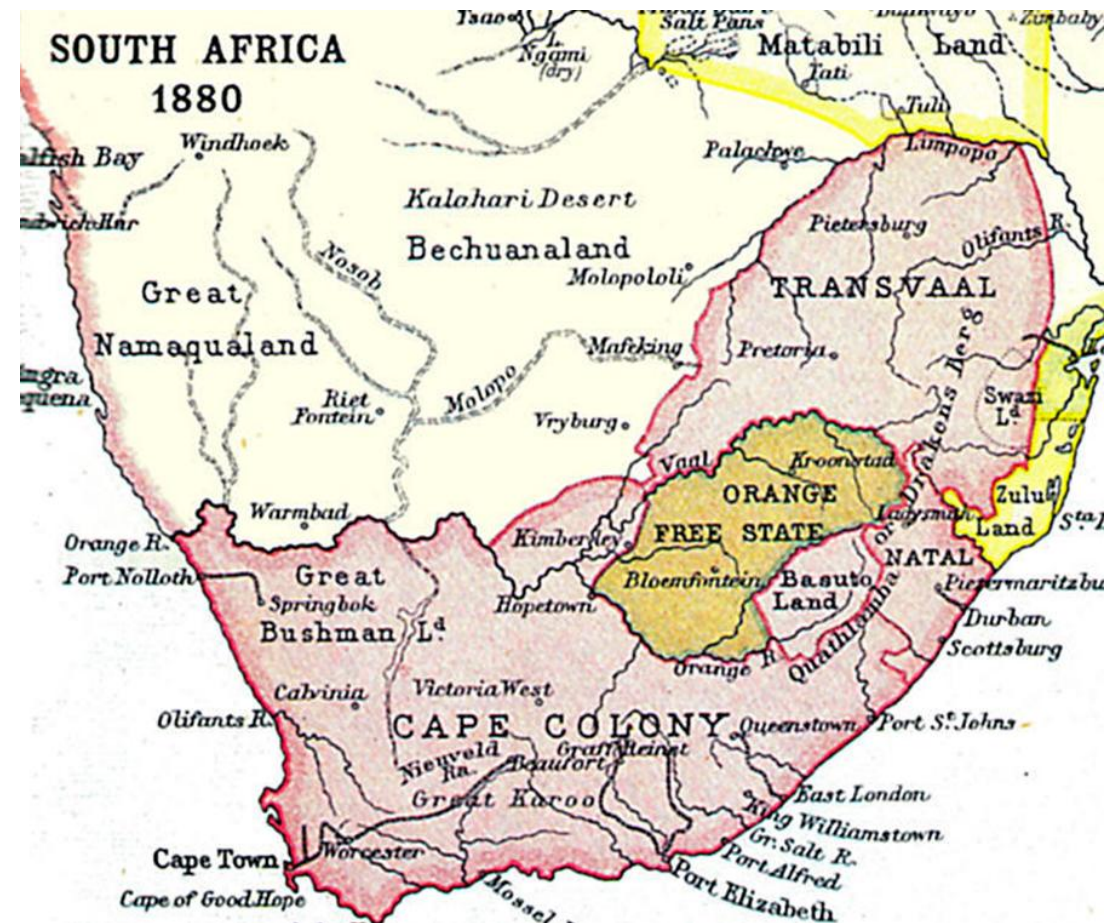
Why a catalogue of date-stamps?

- Interesting history but postal history under-researched
 - no/poor archives
 - Scarcity of postal material
 - Philatelic exploitation, reprints and fakery
- Catalogue provides research tool for better understanding of postal history
- Don't be surprised by how little we know!

Historical background 1: 1652-1881

1652 Dutch colonization of Cape
1806 Capitulation to British
1830's Great Trek across Vaal
1852 Recognition of independence of ZAR
1877-81 Annexation, rebellion,
First Anglo-Boer War
1882 ZAR re-recognised

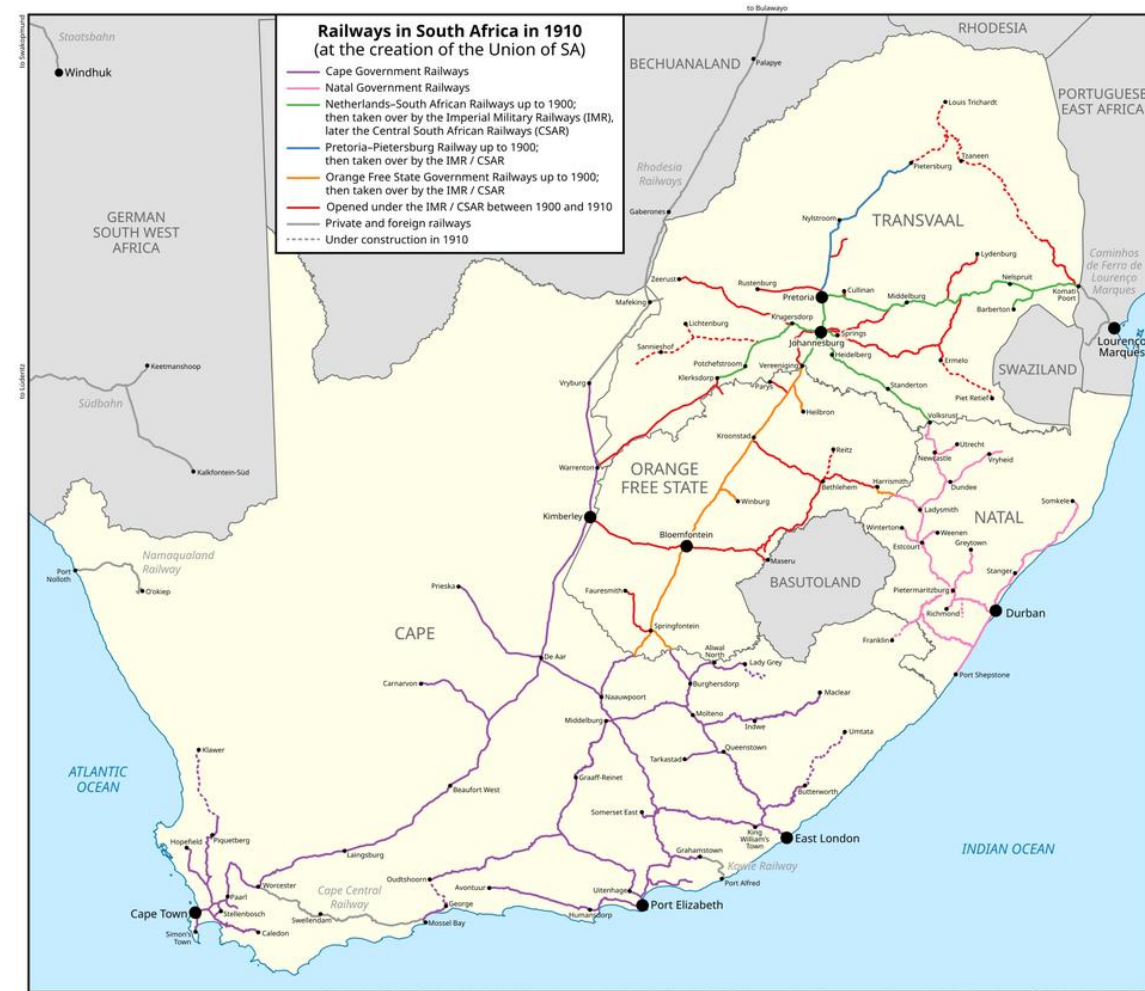
In 1880, ZAR basically poor, Dutch,
agricultural.
Postal services developed slowly:
first stamps issued ca. May 1870,
mostly for collectors.
By 1880 still only a handful of post offices;
only a few hundred covers known from
before 1880.



Historical background 2: 1882-1910

- 1886 Discovery of gold in Witwatersrand
- 1887 Johannesburg – explosive growth
- 1899-1902 Second Anglo-Boer War; devastation
- 1902 Transvaal becomes British colony;
rapid reconstruction from gold wealth
- 1910 Union of South Africa

Postal services developed rapidly after 1885, in tandem with growth of railways. By 1899, over 600 post offices and agencies; Johannesburg handling over 20 million letters a year. After ABW very rapid reconstruction, largely using ZAR staff and methods: over 1000 offices and agencies by 1910.



Drawn by Adrian Frith (<https://frith.de>). Released under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 license (CC-BY-SA-3.0). Contains map data © OpenStreetMap contributors, made available under the terms of the Open Database License (ODBL).

Scope

- Date-stamps – not cancellers, not manuscript
 - Civilian PO cancellers – not military or railways administrations
 - From earliest ZAR date-stamp (1868) to Union (31 May 1910)
-
- Co-author Alex Visser
 - TP editor Tim Harrison



date as in ~~top~~

*2 JAN 04 BP - 28 JUN 04
~~ab~~



BP

Put 2 = Add 2*

25 mm DC
 AMERSFOORT / x-cut rectangle, date as dd mmm
~~XA~~

15 SEP 04 BP - *2 MAY 15
 BP



PC



Add

AMSTERDAM
 approx. 70 km E of Ermelo
 PAK opened before 1881, last listed 1888
 PWK opened 1.4.1892, (closed during Boer War),
 PO re-opened 1.11.1902, open → Union (~~ERX~~)

Add 1x

25 mm SQ.C.B
 AMSTERDAM, date as dd mmm ~~XX~~

** JU** 1894 PC - *6 AUG 1895 BP, 11 JUNI 1900 BP - 4 JULI 1900 BP



BP



~~ab~~

Add 1v

SQ OCT
 AMSTERDAM / Z.A.R., date as t / dd mmm / ~~XX~~
 A / ** JAN / 95
 t: A seen



~~ab~~

Add 1w

24 mm DC.ZAR
 AMSTERDAM / Z.A.R., 5-pointed stars at sides, date as dd mmm ~~XX~~

26 AUG 95 ~~ab~~ - 27 APR 00
 BP



BP




PC

Put 1

24 mm DC.TVL
 AMSTERDAM / TVL, date as dd mmm ~~XX~~
 23 APR 98 Put


Use of TVL in this way has no known parallel in pre-Boer War ZAR cancellers; drawing seems likely to be a misreading. Included for completeness.



[Put-drawing](#)

Add 1z


25 mm DC
 AMSTERDAM / x, date as dd mmm ~~XX~~
 31 JUL 03 Add - 8 OCT 08
~~ab~~



Add

Put 2

24 mm SC.R
 AMSTER / DAM, date as dd mm / ~~XX~~
 30 AU 04 Put



Put drawing

Add 1y

24 mm DC.TRA
 AMSTERDAM / TRANSVAAL, date as dd mmm ~~XX~~
 30 AUG 06 ~~ab~~ - 23 JUN 09
 ATV



~~ab~~

Sample page and sample entry

Put 11

25 mm DC

BARBERTON / blank, x-cut stops at sides, date as dd mmm yy

18 AUG 02 PC – 6 APR 14
ATV

Put 21 (later) is similar but has larger letters.



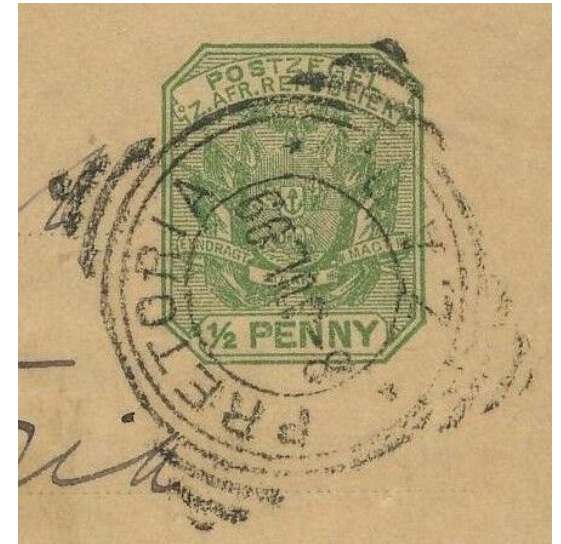
BP



BP



Few surviving cancellers;
slug-change and wheel-change



Where to find it?

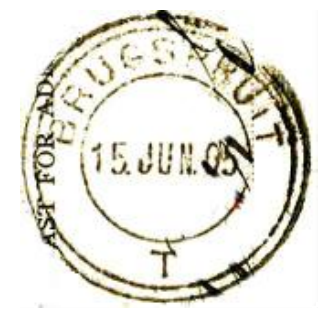
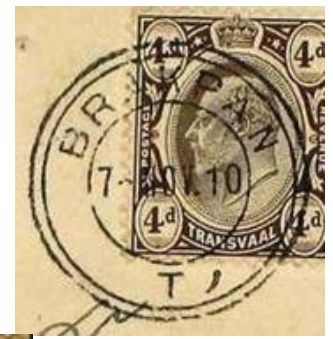
- Published in parts in The Transvaal Philatelist (2020 -):
6 parts published so far, covering A – Jap.
- Also available (free) on Philatelic Federation of South Africa website: <https://stampssa.africa/postmarks-2/>
be prepared to scroll down

Variety of Transvaal date-stamps



Triple circle date-stamps:

31 offices/agencies so far known



Triple circle date-stamps

Dates of issue and use?

- ***Earliest recorded dates of use?***

- 1902 – 1905 15
- 1906 – 1909 10
- 1910 – 1924 6

[Latest recorded dates of use]

- 1902 – 1909 5
- 1910 – 1929 17
- 1930 – 1949 6
- 1950 – 1979 3

- ***First opening of office/agency after ABW?***

- 1900 – 1905 24
- 1906 – 1909 7 [Hatfield opened in 1909]

**Provisional conclusions: probably all issued between 1902 and 1909;
some very long-lived**

Triple circle date-stamps

Past suggestions for use/purpose?

- Telegraphic?



“T” only at 2/30 TC offices;
16/31 TC offices/agencies without telegraph facilities.

- Railway use?



“R.O” only at 4-5 TC offices;
21/31 TC offices/agencies not on railways;
Used on railway parcels only at the R.O offices, and only seen after Union



Triple circle date-stamps

Evidence of use, 1902 - May 1910 (Union)

Status in 1910

17 agencies

Usages

PCs, Letters,

Reg letters, Due

Stamps

½d, 1d, 2½d

6 offices

PCs, Letters,

Reg letters,

also higher values

(5/6)

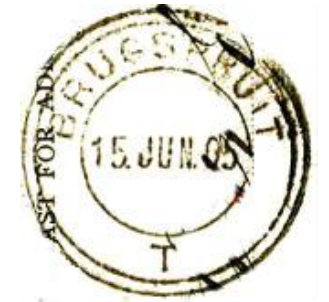
Johannesburg

PCs (arr), Dues,

CTO

full range

Similarity of style:
single engraver??



Please help!

- Almost any ZAR or Transvaal cancellation with
 - Identifiable office name
 - Clear date (at least the year)

may be useful

(main exception is Johannesburg and Pretoria cancellations - these need to be reasonably complete because they used a large number of different cancellers)

- Please send scans (400 dpi preferred) of covers, pieces or stamps to bas.payne@gmail.com
- Any help will be acknowledged.

Many thanks ...

- To Ian for letting me talk
- To you for listening – and, hopefully, commenting
- To Alex Visser and other South African postmark enthusiasts
- To Tim Harrison and the TSC Committee
- To André du Plessis and the PFSA