

CHAPTER 4

AIR LETTERS OF NORTHERN RHODESIA

At the outbreak of the War, the population of Northern Rhodesia was far smaller than that of Southern Rhodesia. Northern Rhodesia was administered by the Colonial Office in London and decisions regarding its postal services were made there. This caused delays in the introduction of air letter sheets into the country. In addition, during World War II there were far fewer service personnel stationed in Northern Rhodesia when compared to Southern Rhodesia. Northern Rhodesian military units participated as part of the British Forces, and were involved in Somaliland, the East African Campaign, the Battle of Madagascar and in Burma.¹ There was not such an immediate demand for an air letter service to and from Northern Rhodesia as there had been in Southern Rhodesia.

At first the demand for air letter sheets was met by the use of formula (unstamped) sheets imported from the United Kingdom. These will be dealt with later in Chapter 7. Three distinct air letter sheets were later issued, all printed in England with an impressed 6d stamp. None of these air letter sheets were printed on watermarked paper.

The first stamped air letter sheet was issued on 4 June 1949. The stamp, in purple-brown, depicted the grey 6d stamp of the 1938 definitive issue showing King George VI in profile.



*King George VI definitive stamp
depicted on air letter sheets (SG 38)*

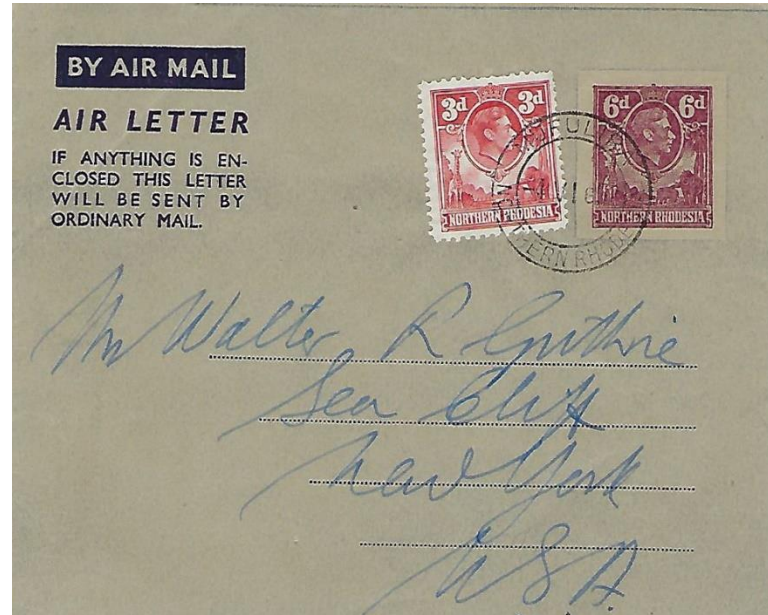
This issue is distinguished from the next by having only three lines of instructions below the etiquette, 'AIR MAIL', with a small blue line under those instructions.

¹ The 1st Battalion of the Northern Rhodesia Regiment served with distinction in the Malayan Emergency from 1953 to 1955.



First issue (NR 1) used from Kitwe to Canada 13 July 1952

The second issue was made on 29 June 1952 with the same 6d stamp depicting King George VI, although the King had died some four months earlier. This issue had four lines of instructions below the etiquette and no line underneath.



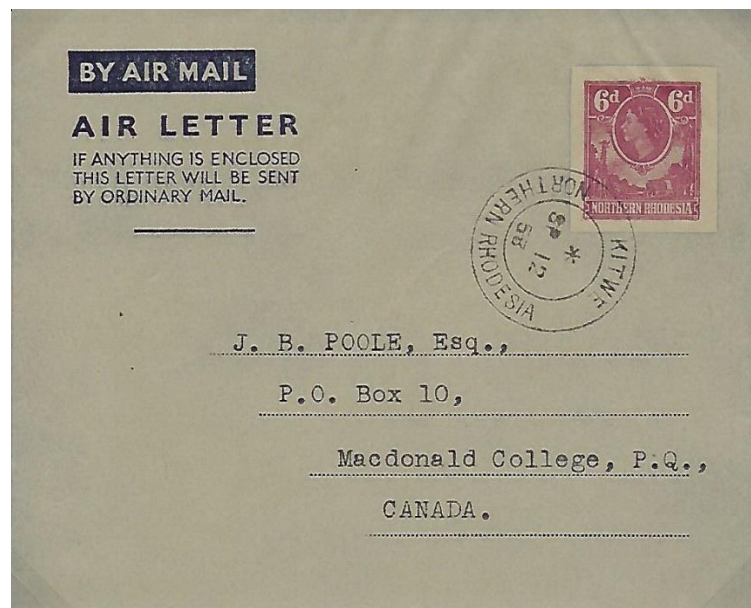
Second issue (NR 2) uprated from Mufalira to New York 4 June 1952

The second issue was replaced on 15 September 1953 by an aerogramme with an imprinted 6d stamp of Queen Elizabeth II again in purple-brown, and like the first issue having three lines of instruction.



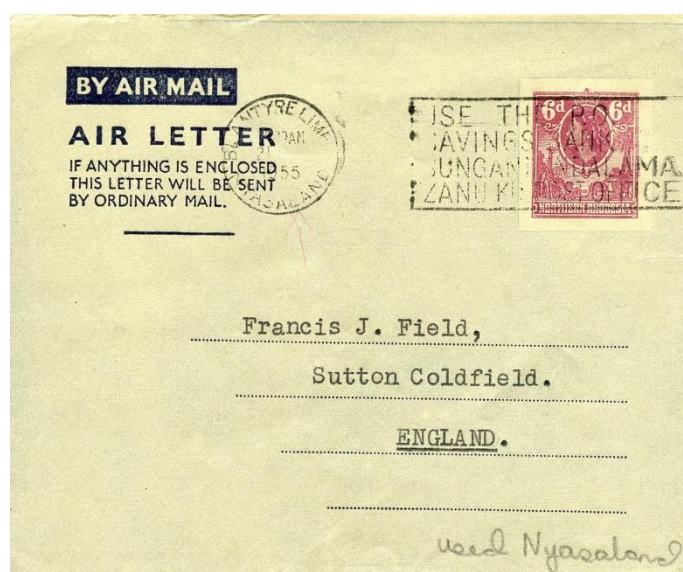
6d definitive stamp of 1953 used on aerogrammes (SG 68)

The print run of the third issue was for a small number of sheets, and as a result genuinely used copies of this aerogramme are more difficult to find.



Queen Elizabeth issue (NR 3) used at Kitwe to Canada 12 September 1953

This third aerogramme is also known used in Nyasaland after the formation of the Federation.



Queen Elizabeth issue (NR 3) used in Nyasaland at Blantyre in 1955

Shortly thereafter, in July 1954, the Federal Post Office took over postal services in Northern Rhodesia and issued its own unstamped and stamped aerogrammes. The aerogrammes of Northern Rhodesia remained valid for use throughout the Federal period and thereafter until Independence Day.

After the dissolution of the Federation the postal authority to Northern Rhodesia used outstanding stocks of Federal aerogrammes to meet demand, and used the opportunity to issue a series of aerogrammes to promote tourism. On Independence Day, 24 October 1964, the new Republic of Zambia issued its own aerogrammes which will be considered separately.

	RSC Wheatley RSCJ 153 page 159	Harrop RSCJ 130 page 76	Higgins & Gage World Postal Stationery Catalogue Vol 16	Kessler Catalogue of Aerograms
NR 1	1	2	F 1	1
NR 2	2	3	F 2	2
NR 3	3	4	F 3	3

Comparative table of catalogue listings of Northern Rhodesia stamped air mail letter sheets and aerogrammes

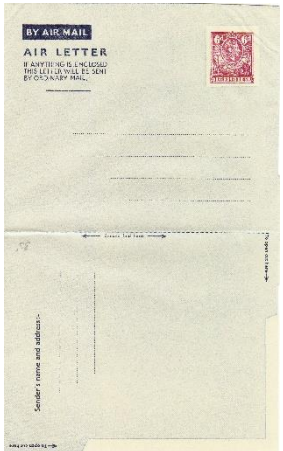
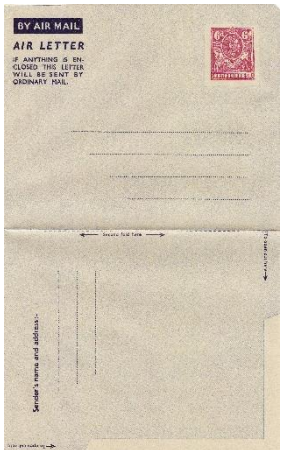
NORTHERN RHODESIA AIR LETTERS

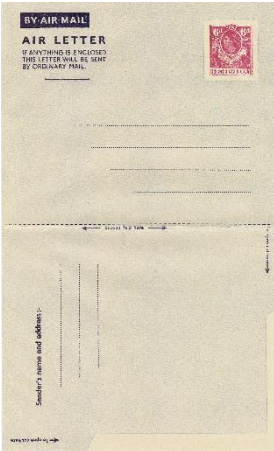


Air mail etiquette 2

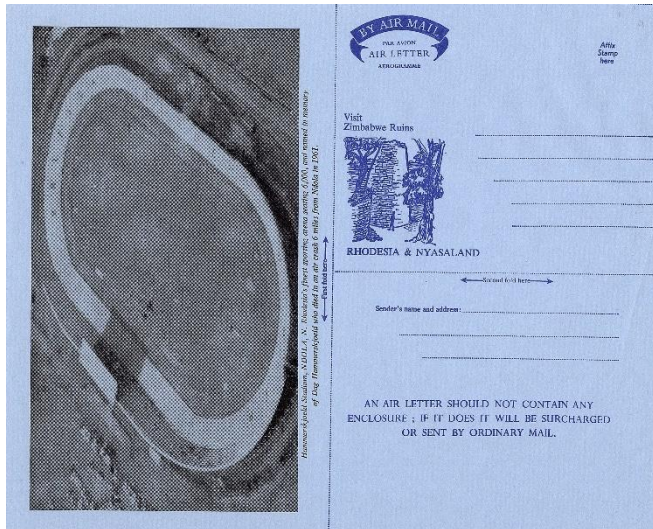


*Air mail etiquette 7
'N' of 'AVION'
over 'TT'*

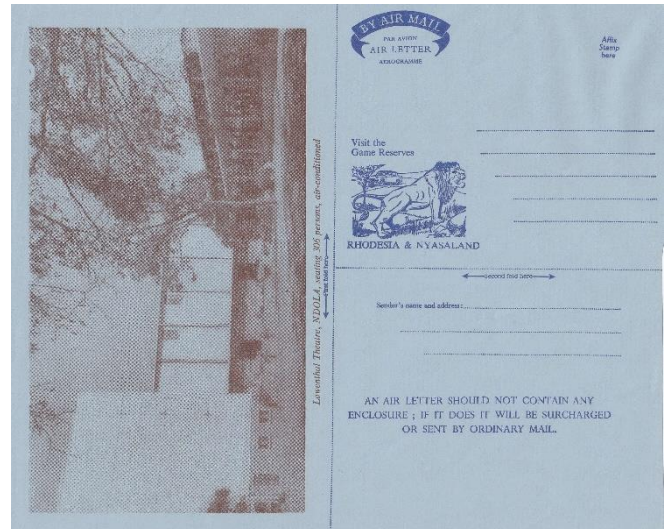
NR 1	Sheet size open: 248 x 200 mm Sheet size folded: 124 x 100 mm Colour: Bluish overlay on grey or cream paper Watermark: None Folding: Folds in half and then again in half from the bottom. Two gummed flaps. Frame: None Printer: McCorquodale & Co Ltd, Wolverton Issue date: 4 June 1949 Air mail etiquette: Etiquette 2. 'BY AIRMAIL' outlined in dark blue rectangular box. 'AIR LETTER' in dark blue. Design details: Imprinted purple-brown 6d King George VI definitive stamp on top right inside white box. There are three lines of instructions on the front panel under the etiquette with a 20mm line underneath. Sender's name and address is vertical with three lines.		
NR 2	Sheet size open: 248 x 200 mm Sheet size folded: 124 x 100 mm Colour: Bluish overlay on grey or cream paper Watermark: None Folding: Folds in half and then again in half from the bottom. Two gummed flaps. Frame: None Printer: McCorquodale & Co Ltd, Wolverton Issue date: ± 25 February 1952 Air mail etiquette: Etiquette 2. 'BY AIRMAIL' outlined in dark blue rectangular box. 'AIR LETTER' in dark blue. Design details: Imprinted in purple-brown 6d King George VI definitive stamp on top right inside white box. There are four lines of instructions on the front panel under the etiquette with no line underneath. Sender's name and address is vertical with three lines.		

NR 3	Sheet size open: Sheet size folded: Colour: Watermark: Folding: Frame: Printer: Issue date: Air mail etiquette: Design details:	248 x 200 mm 124 x 100 mm Bluish overlay on grey paper None Folds in half and then again in half from the bottom. Two gummed flaps. None McCorquodale & Co Ltd, Wolverton 15 September 1953 Etiquette 2. 'BY AIRMAIL' outlined in dark blue rectangular box. 'AIR LETTER' in dark blue. Imprinted purple-brown 6d Queen Elizabeth II definitive stamp on top right inside white box. There are three lines of instructions on the front panel under the etiquette with a 20mm line underneath. Sender's name and address is vertical with three lines.	
NR 4	Sheet size open: Sheet size folded: Colour: Watermark: Folding: Frame: Printer: Issue date: Air mail etiquette: Design details:	240 x 196 mm 120 x 98 mm Light blue ink on greenish-blue paper. None Folds in half then again in half from bottom. Two gummed flaps. None McCorquodale & Co Ltd, Wolverton 1964 Air mail etiquette 7a. 'BY AIR MAIL' outlined in a blue banner, and below on three lines 'PAR AVION/AIR LETTER/AEROGRAMME'. Third Federal tourism aerogrammes (FED 6) printed with a black and white photograph and a description on the left front panel. The known photographs are. 'Hammerskjoeld Stadium, NDOLA, N. Rhodesia's finest sporting arena seating 6,000 and named in memory of Dag Hammerskjoeld who died in an air crash 6 miles from Ndola in 1961.' 'Lowenthal Theatre, NDOLA, seating 306 persons, air-conditioned' 'High Court, NDOLA, serving Western and Northern Provinces, N.R.' 'Elephant on the banks of the Zambesi River' and 'Launch trip on the Zambesi' It is possible that each picture can be found on each of the eight types of the third Federal tourism issue (FED 6). Issue date not known.	Form FED 6 See next page

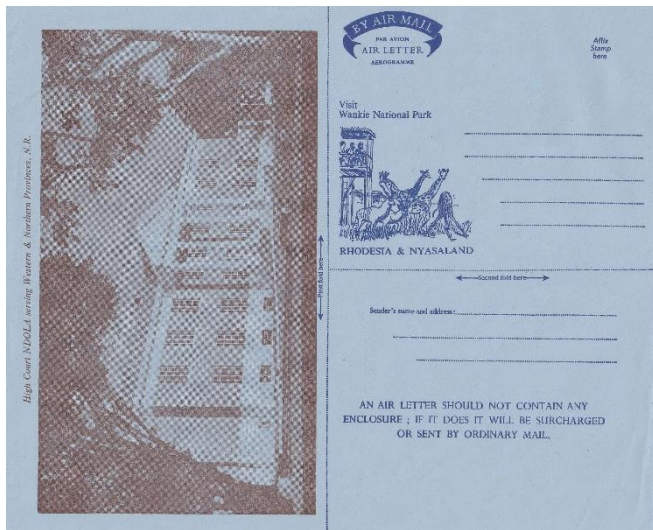
NR 4a



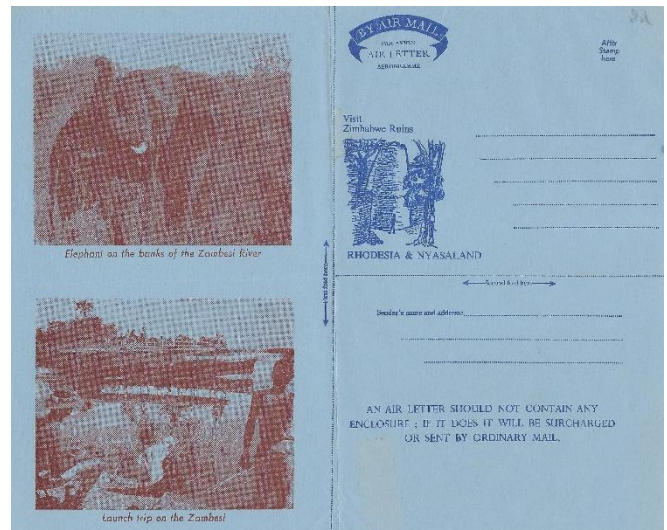
NR 4b

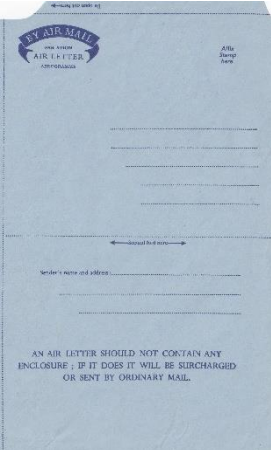


NR 4c

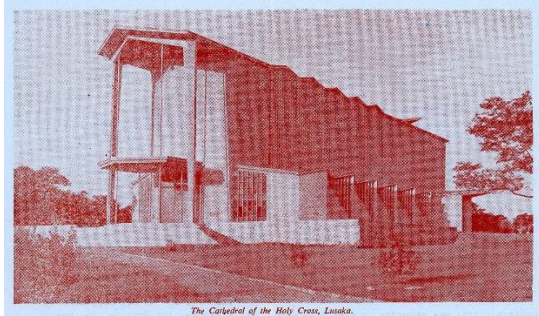


NR 4d

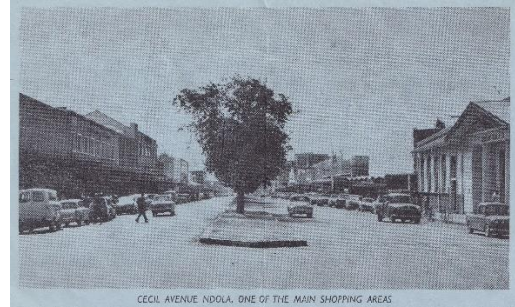


NR 5	Sheet size open: Sheet size folded: Colour: Watermark: Folding: Frame: Printer: Issue date: Air mail etiquette: Design details:	240 x 196 mm 120 x 98 mm Light blue ink on greenish-blue paper. None Folds in half then again in half from bottom. Two gummed flaps. None McCorquodale & Co Ltd, Wolverton 1964 Air mail etiquette 8. 'BY AIR MAIL' outlined in a blue banner, and below on three lines 'PAR AVION/AIR LETTER/AEROGRAMME'. The N of 'AVION' is between the T and E of 'LETTER'. Printed on form FED 7 with a full stop after 'MAIL' in instructions and three lines for sender's name and address on lower front panel. A series of local scenes printed in black or sepia on the left panel of the aerogramme. The known scenes are: 'The Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Lusaka.' 'CECIL AVENUE NDOLA, ONE OF THE MAIN SHOPPING AREAS' 'The Secretariat with the Cenotaph in the foreground, Lusaka.' 'PICTURESQUE ENTRANCE TO LUANSHYA, 'THE GARDEN WORKSHOP' 'Offices of the Lusaka Publicity Association in the Public Library Buildings' - Top picture: 'The Secretariat with the Cenotaph in the foreground, Lusaka.' Lower picture: 'Swimming pool at "Munda Wanga" Botanical Gardens, Lusaka.' 'AN ARIEL (sic) VIEW OF LUANSHYA, 'THE GARDEN WORKSHOP OF THE COPPERBELT' 'Cairo Road, Lusaka.'	Form FED 7  See following pages
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NR 5a



NR 5b



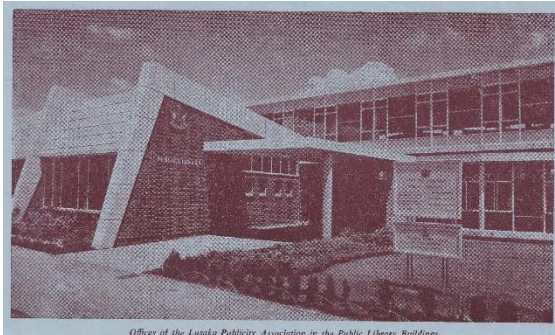
NR 5c



NR 5d



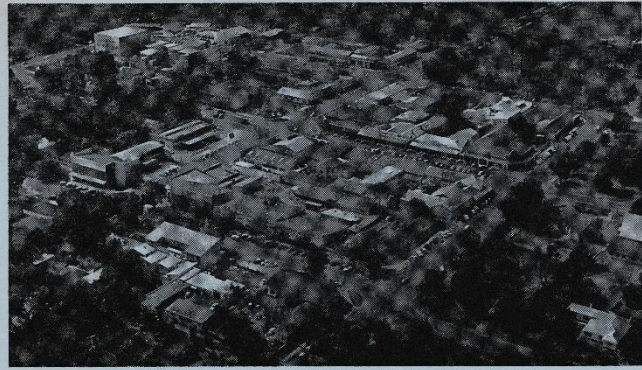
NR 5e



NR 5f



NR 5g



NR 5h

