

A paean to the golden era of Rhodesia KGV Admirals 1913 – 25: postmarks on ½d, 1d and 1½d

Introduction: From a philatelic perspective, the period 1913 – 25 in Rhodesia is most fascinating. Around three hundred postal agencies, often in out-of-the-way districts opened; convenient for settlers, many served mine prospectors' bases, or hunting camps that remained open, in some cases, for only a few months.

With the outbreak of the First World War, many settlers signed up for army duties. Rhodesians served on several fronts, including the Tanganyika, German East African sector. A war tax was introduced on mail from 1915, requiring the postal authorities in Livingstone to issue Halfpenny overprints which feature in this exhibit. Months later, the 1½d brown-ochre value was delivered and extensively used for internal correspondence.

This exhibit proposes over a hundred examples of postmarks from the period (SR = Southern Rhodesia, NR = Northern Rhodesia) including several late usages from north of the Zambezi.

Reference: Rhodesian Study Circle Memoir 27, R.M. Gibbs, Jenifer Barry, Stephen Reah-Johnson and Sean Burke

Abbreviations as used in Memoir 27: **SK** – skeleton single circle; **DC** – Double Circle; **DCA** – Double Circle Arc; **DCAJ** – Double Circle, Arc Joined; **TC** – Triple Circle; **SQC** – Square Circle

A – Abercorn: Northern Rhodesia

Antelope Mine, Arcturus: Southern Rhodesia



Abercorn NR
1 – JAN 25
(DCA, late usage)



Antelope Mine SR
8 OCT 1914
(DCA)



Antelope Mine SR
7 DEC 1923
(DCA)



Arcturus SR
6 - MAR 1918
(DC)

Colours and shades: using Stephen Reah-Johnson guidelines

Interpreting the numerous shades and colourings of the ½d and 1d Admirals is more often than not *'in the eye of the beholder.'* Numerous discussions within the RSC and thoroughly researched articles have been published through the years: here, I refer to Reah-Johnson for guidance, but retain the SG catalogue numbers for the illustrated key below:

Shades of the ½ d Admiral with Reah-Johnson input

		Shades	Remarks
SG 186	1913	Blue-Green	
SG 186a		Deep Blue Green	shaded ear
SG 187		Deep Blue Green	
SG 188		Yellow Green	unshaded ear
SG 188b		Dull Green	
SG 189		Bright Green	unshaded ear
SG 202		Blue Green	Perf 15
SG 203		Green	
SG 208a		Dull Blue Green	14 x 15
SG 208b		Dull Blue Green	15 x 14
SG 282	1922	Dull Green	On white paper
SG 283	1922	Deep Blue Green	
SG 288	1923	Dull Green	



Blue Green
SG 186



Deep Green
SG 187



Yellow Green
SG 188



Dull Green
SG 188b



Bright Green
SG 189



Blue Green
Perf 15
SG 202



Green
Perf15
SG203



Deep Green
(white paper)
SG 282



Deep Blue Green
(white paper)
SG283

Shades of the 1d Admiral with Reah-Johnson input

		Shades	Reah-Johnson
SG 190	1913	rose-carmine	and Gibbs
SG 191		carmine-red	
SG 192	issued in 1919	brownish-red	
SG 193		red	
SG 194		scarlet	
SG 195		rose-red (shades)	
SG 196		rosine?	'Cherry'
SG 204		rose-red	Perf 15
SG 208c	15 x 14	ochre-brown	14 x 14
SG 208d	issued in 1914		13.5
SG 281	Halfpenny overprints	rose-red	
SG 284	1922	bright-rose	
SG 289	1923	bright-rose-scarlet	'Crimson' shades



Rose-Carmine
SG 190



Carmine-Red
SG 191



Brownish-Red
SG 192



Red
SG 193



Scarlet
SG 194



Rose-Carmine
SG 195



Rose-Red
SG 195



'Gibbs Cherry'
SG 196



Rose-Red
Perf15
SG 204



Crimson
SG 284



Bright Rose
SG 284



Aniline
SG 285



Crimson
(shades)
SG 289



Bright Scarlet
SG 289



Bright Rose
Scarlet
SG 289

* The majority of the items above originate from Selukwe postal agency 1913 - 24

B – Battlefields: Southern Rhodesia

Broken Hill: Northern Rhodesia. British South Africa police revenue



Battlefields SR
15? FEB 16
(Triple Circle TC)



Battlefields SR
4- MAY 19
(TC)



Battlefields SR
17 JUL 1922
(Triple Circle TC blue-violet)

Battlefields was named after a group of mines in Mashonaland West (close to modern day Kwekwe) – the mining company used names of battles such as Trafalgar and Waterloo – for the sites. A postal agency was established in 1903 and the word ‘MINE’ was excised from the canceller from 1912 onwards.



Broken Hill NR
20 NOV 1914
(Double Circle DC)



Broken Hill NR
8 OCT 1917
Halfpenny overprint
with shift left



Broken Hill NR
19 AUG 24 (late usage)
(Double Circle Arc DCA)



British South Africa Co. police document, 1915

B – Bulawayo



Bulawayo 'skeleton'
NO 20 13



Block of four 1922?



Bulawayo
9-AUG 17
(Double Circle DCAJ)

Bulawayo Rgt



Regt Bulawayo
9 - SEP 19 (DC)

B – Bulawayo Station



Bulawayo Station (DC)
28 OCT 1914





Bulawayo (DCA)
7 – JUN 17

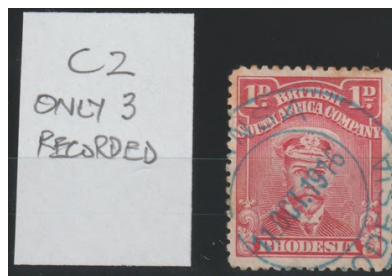


Bulawayo Station (DC)
11 SEP 1923

C – Chansa: Northern Rhodesia

Chansa, within the Northern Province of Zambia was established as a telegraph office in 1916, between Kasama and Abercorn. It is not quite certain when the postal agency closed, though almost certainly at the end of the First World War. There is an interesting snippet in the Northern Rhodesian Journal regarding the colourful telegraphist known as 'Chapman of Chansa' he had a *'temporary wartime post on the telegraph line that ran – tacked on to trees between Broken Hill and Abercorn....I swear (Chapman) used to receive messages with his right hand , whilst he was sending off others with his left hand. All at the same time. Yours H. A. Cripwell.'*

R.M. Gibbs notes on the three items below that that Chansa postmarks, not surprisingly, are Extremely Rare (acquired Spink Sale 2024)



Chansa NR
11 OCT 1916
DC blue canceller



Chansa NR
16 DE?
DC black

C – Chilanga: Northern Rhodesia

Twenty kilometres south of Lusaka, established around 1907 in the Mwomboshi District, E. A. Copeman wrote: *'When I went to Chilanga in 1909, the Boma was situated at the top of the hill about half a mile from the railway halt. It consisted of one brick building and some outhouses. One room was used as a post and telegraph office.'*

These days **Chilanga** is best known for its cement production works and industries.



Chilanga NR
14 DEC 1914 (DCA)



Chilanga NR
22- MAR 1923 (DCA)



Chilanga NR
10 SEP ? (DCA)

Chinsali: Northern Rhodesia



Chinsali NR
10 MAR 16
(DC)A



Chinsali NR
16 JUL 21
(DC, ex-Hallett
featuring 'red blush')

Concession Rail: Southern Rhodesia, 14 AUG-23



D – Daisyfield, De Kock, Dett, Duchess Hill: Southern Rhodesia



Daisyfield
7.JAN. 17 (DCA)



De Kock
7-OCT 1916 (DCA)



Dett
5-SEP 1921 (DCA)



Duchess Hill
27.SEP.1915 (DCA)

E – Essexvale, Enkeldoorn: Southern Rhodesia



Essexvale
12.SEP. ?
Blue canceller
(DC)



Enkeldoorn
23 APR.23
(DC)

F – Felixburg, Filabusi: Southern Rhodesia.

Feira: Northern Rhodesia



Felixburg
15. ? (DC)



Filabusi
6 JUN 20
(blue, DC)



Filabusi
10 MAY 1920
(DC)



Feira
6-APR.1921
(DC)

G – Gadzema, Great Zimbabwe: Southern Rhodesia



(R.A. Hall, 'The Ancient Ruins of Rhodesia')



Gadzema Station
-4DEC1919
(‘v.rare’ DC)



Great Zimbabwe
3 JUN 1921
(DCA)

I - Insiza Station: Southern Rhodesia



APR 1916 (DC)

**K – Kalene Hill, Kaleya, Kalomo, Kansanshi, Kasama, Kashitu
Kafue, Kawambwa: Northern Rhodesia**



Kalene Hill
7-OCT19?



Kaleya
25DEC24 (DCA)



Kalomo
10 SEP 1923
(DC blue canceller)



Kalomo handstamp. Only two known
(ex-R.M. Gibbs)



Kansanshi
25.NOV 1916 (DC)



Kasama square circle
1914



Kasempa
JAN 1915 (DC)



Kashitu
12OCT1915 (DC)



Kafue
24 SEP 1924



Kawambwa
27 JUL 1914

Livingstone – single circle ‘skeleton’ cancellers



Livingstone B
MR 18 20



Livingstone C
MY 23 21



Livingstone E
JY 8 20



Livingstone G
(ex-P. Peggie)

Livingstone - Halfpenny provisionals

The ‘Provisionals’ were made in August and September of 1917 in order to compensate a shortage of ½d stamps, probably needed for war tax until the 1½d could be supplied. In RSC journal 118 June 1982, Colin Hoffman wrote: ‘the explanation given for the need to surcharge stamps was that although Southern Rhodesia had made timely requisition for 1½d stamps from London, Northern Rhodesia had not, and therefore soon began to run low on ½d stamps.’

‘Most Provisionals fit neatly into Plate I for SG 280 and Plate II for SG 281, the colours do not differ hugely and it is not surprising that SG called the colours of the two by the same name, ‘Rose-Carmine’; both hover around the key ‘Rose Red’ neither one is near the SG Catalogue assertion ‘Rose-Carmine.’

(Reah-Johnson RSCJ 262/229)

It appears that when the British South Africa Company in London heard of the Livingstone Provisionals, a cable was sent with instructions to cease issue as soon as the supply 1½d stamps arrived at the beginning of December 1917. The balance in the different post offices was then called in and forwarded to London.

(Colin Hoffman RSCJ 118/82-90)



August 1917 setting
(no hyphen or full stop)



September 1917 setting
(hyphen and full stop)

Magoye: Northern Rhodesia



Magoye
(DCA 1917)

Marandellas, Marshbrook, Mashaba, Matetsi, Matopos, Miami: Southern Rhodesia



Marandellas
(DC 1918)



Marandellas
(Single Circle DEC 20)



Marshbrook
2-SEP1917
(DC – 'rare',
later Charter)



Mashaba
6-APR1920
(DC)



Matetsi
4-DEC1922
(DC)



Matopos
26-FEB23
(TC Triple
Circle)



Miami
8-DEC.1921
(DC)

Miami: is the Rhodesian version of the place referred to as Mwami. The postal agency opened in 1920, situated between Karoi and Mhanghura. In the sector Bushmen left their pictorial legacy on the walls of a rocky cave dwellings. Arab traders, Portuguese missionaries passed through at various times. In 1901, mica was discovered (Last Hope Mine) but its commercial exploitation did not begin until 1919: settlers had to cope with tsetse flies and lions.

M – Mazabuka, Mongu Lealui, Mulungushi: Northern Rhodesia



Mazabuka
12-JUN1918
(DC)



Mazabuka
FEB1925
(DC – late
usage)



Mongu Lealui
24-FEB1921
(DC)



Mulungushi
(ex-P.Peggie
rated 'v.rare')

N - Ndanga PO: Southern Rhodesia



Ndanga, Native Commissioner's Office (rare)

O – Odzi, Old Umtali, Penhalonga, Penkridge Plumtree: Southern Rhodesia



Odzi
4- JAN15
(DC)



Old Umtali
4-JUL1918
(DC)



Penhalonga
7-NOV18
(Triple Circle)



Penkridge
1918
(ex-Hallett)



Plumtree
4-JAN.14
(DC)

Que Que, Queen's Mine, Rusape, Rurgwe : Southern Rhodesia



Que Que
9-AUG1923
(DC)



Queen's Mine
11.JUN1921
(DCA)



Rusape
16MAR1918
(DC)



Rurgwe
14OCT1917
(DCA –'v.rare')

Salisbury



Salisbury
Diamond A



Salisbury
29.NOV.14
(DCAJ)

Salisbury: Southern Rhodesia



Salisbury
1914?



Salisbury
-3SEP.14
(DCAJ)



Salisbury
26SEP16
(DCAJ)



Salisbury
5-JAN23
(DCAJ)

S – Selukwe, Shagari, Shamrock Mine, Shamva: Southern Rhodesia



Selukwe
SP 7 14
(skeleton)



Shagari
2-OCT1918
(DC)



Shamrock Mine
(skeleton)



Shamva
12APR21
(DC)

Sibali, Sipolilo, Susannah Mine: Southern Rhodesia



Sibali
SEP1918



Sipolilo
29JAN1922
(DC)



Sipolilo
6-APR192?
(DC)



Susannah Mine
(Tuli River, DC
violet)

South Helvetia, Southern Rhodesia

South Helvetia postal agency opened in 1910 and closed in 1922. South Helvetia farm is south of Umtali towards the Mozambique border and was operated by a Swiss and served by mail runner weekly to Melsetter.



South Helvetia
1920 (DCA)



South Helvetia
OCT1915 (DCA)



South Helvetia
(DCA)

**T – Tafuna, Tarn Estate, Tuli: Southern Rhodesia
Tanga: Northern Rhodesia**



Tafuna
16OCT.1913
(DCA)



Tanga
(SK ?)



Tarn Estate
23MAR1915
(DC)



Tuli
MY2616
(SK skeleton single)

TPO Up, TPO Down: travelling post office between Plumtree and Salisbury



TPO UP
24 JUN.1914 (DCA)



TPO DOWN
24 JUN.1914 (DCA)



TPO UP
14AUG1921

Umvuma : Southern Rhodesia



Umvuma
21AUG1922
(DC)

U – Umtali: Southern Rhodesia



Umtali 1920
blue canceller (DCAJ)



Umtali
21 FEB 23
(Double Circle Arc)

V - Victoria Falls



Victoria Falls
28 JUN 1920
(DC)



W – Wankie, Victoria: Southern Rhodesia



Wankies (earlier spelling with 's')
3-FEB 1914
(DC)

Victoria
16 AUG 1919 (DCA)



Wankie
16 MAY 1923
(DC)