

RHODESIA SURCHARGED MAIL

An employee of Mr Wilson's household visited Stanley Gibbons who bought the letters offered putting them up for sale at about £5 each. The seller stated there were many more letters at no 10. Stanley Gibbons were not offered any from no 10.

Hundreds of letters bearing the independence stamps were sent to PM Harold Wilson forcing him to pay a surcharge on each letter. From Umtali some 300 letters were sent. The ploy misfired as the UK Post Office stated that the surcharge will in fact be paid by the taxpayer, the standard practice when understamped letters are received by Government Departments.

RHODESIA
POST OFFICE
FIRST-DAY COVER



INVALID STAMPS USED
POSTAGE DUE.....6^d A

RHODESIA INDEPENDENCE
11th NOVEMBER, 1965

Prime Minister Harold Wilson
No. 10, Downing Street.
London.
United Kingdom

The half ounce airmail rate to the UK was 1/3. The 2/6 independence stamp was deemed 'illegal' and a surcharge of double deficiency 2/6 should have been charged.

M & T cachet 21 was applied indicating 6d was payable.

How that figure was arrived at is unknown. The postage due was not collected.

Posted on the day of issue, the sender, as with fellow Rhodesians thought, wrongly as it turned out, that PM Harold Wilson would have to pay the surcharge charge on receipt. The Sunday Express wrote about the letters on 9th January 1966 (see overleaf).

The registered airmail letter was sent by stamp forger ALEXANDRE BINDA (who was later caught and sentenced for forgery and fraud), from his home address of 126 Baker Avenue, Salisbury. Postmarked 28th January 1966 Salisbury to Mr Constantino Binda c/o Savoy Hotel, London. On reverse it has a Salisbury despatch 28th January mark, a Dover Office of Exchange receiving mark 30th January and Salisbury purple boxed 8th March return mark. 'Invalid' Independence stamps (10) face value of 3/3. Airmail rate 1/3 (per half ounce) & registration 1/- = 2/3. Surcharge should have been 1/3 plus 1/- = 2/3 so why 4/3 ?.

If unregistered surcharged would have been 1/3 doubled to 2/6.

Postage dues 4/4 applied 'Registered London' postmark, date unclear.

"STAMP NOT VALID WHERE POSTED TO PAY" (inappropriate) M & T cachet 34a, "STAMPS MISSING IN TRANSIT" cachet 144a & a manuscript 'refused to pay 391' applied.

Payment was refused either by addressee, or if he had moved on, by the hotel. Postman wrote on letter 'refused to pay 391'. Postman would then have returned letter to the Post Office where it was endorsed "RETOUR" cachet type Ca and "REFUSED REFUSE" type Cc. Letter was sent to the Returned Letter Office for processing (tracking no FI.4494). Letter returned to sender (RLO's tracking no (on reverse) 1382984). Letter received Salisbury 8th March 1966, evidenced by rectangular postmark "REGISTERED" and returned to sender.

Propaganda airletter used "We have confidence in an independent Rhodesia" and a "Good Luck Rhodesia" CATF label.

