

## Stamps that could not 'go all the way'.

### Unusual temporary 'runner' routes.

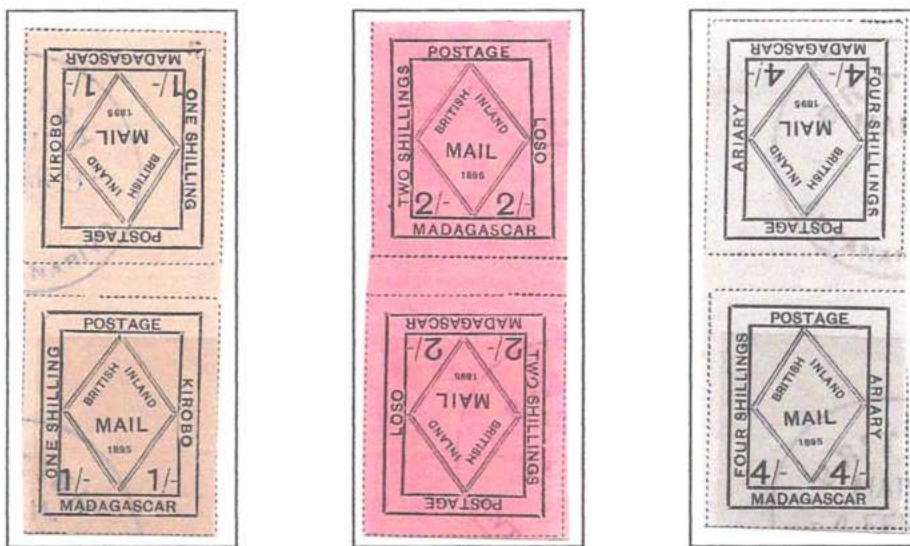
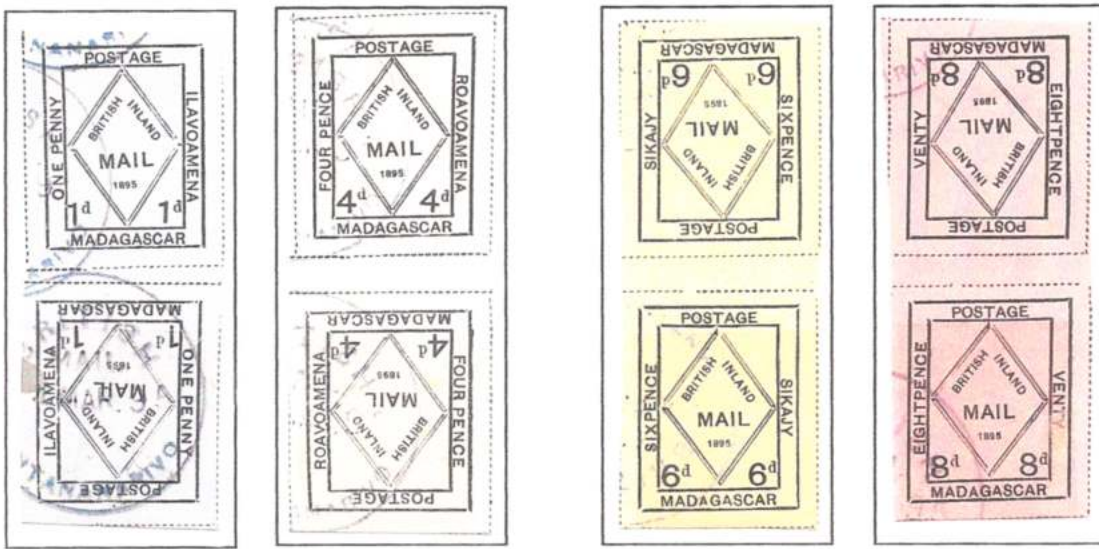
As new areas came under British Imperial influence the need for postal services for local and overseas mail became regularised, sometimes in unusual ways. The following outlines, with postage stamps, three of these routes in Southern Africa.

#### Madagascar.

The country was under the influence of France in the 1880's with a local Madagascar Royal family in power. The British merchants in the capital, Antananarivo, were allowed to establish their own consular mail in 1884 through the Vice-Consul W. C. Pickersgill. He produced a series of large stamps with gum usually in the top left corner which would be used to affix it to the letter. On receipt at the port of Tamatave, to be sent through the French packet system, the local stamp would be removed and postage paid with French colonial stamps according to the destination. The stamps were printed by the British Missionary Press. There were two issues printed in 1884 and 1886. Below is an example from 1886, SG 14 mint.



The system broke down and from 1887 to 1895 the mail from British residents was carried by runner as usual, but without stamps. In 1894 the French proclaimed a Protectorate over the island which was resisted by Queen Ranavalona III, leading to a French blockade of Tamatave, disrupting and suspending the French packet arrangement. In January 1895 a syndicate of British merchants, including the Vice Consul, issued a series of stamps to pay in sterling for mail to the port of Vatomandry to avoid the blockade. The letters would then go to Natal for onward transmission where Natal stamps would be attached. These were printed by the London Missionary Society Press in Antananarivo in blocks of six (2x3) separated by gutters, four times on each sheet, the upper and lower blocks being tete-beche. Below the set of seven values tete-beche used, SG 50-56.



In March 1895 the previous issue was superseded by a set of 6 printed in typography by John Haddon and Co., London with values for the runner in rice.

- Voamena - 1.12 grammes of rice
- Roavoamena- 1.68 grammes of rice
- Sikajy - 3.3 grammes of rice
- Kirobo - 6.75 grammes of rice
- Loso - 13.5 grammes of rice
- Ariary - 27 grammes of rice

Below the set of six mint, SG 57-62.



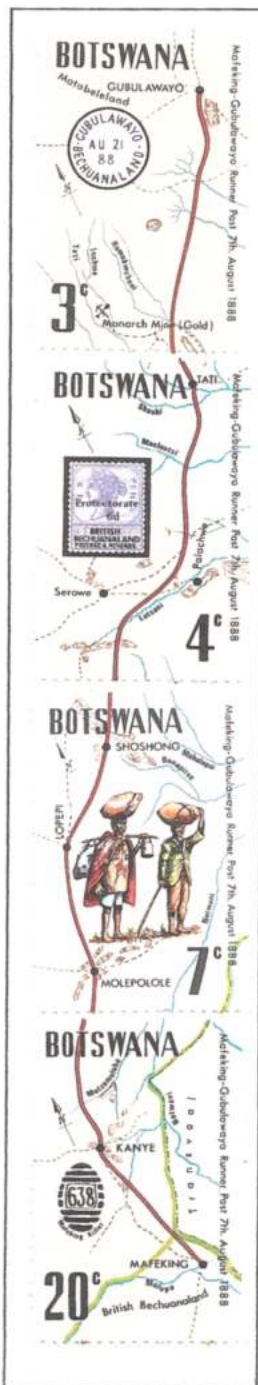
These stamps were discontinued on 30<sup>th</sup> September 1895 when the French entered the capital Antananarivo, after which French colonial stamps were used.

## Bechuanaland Protectorate.

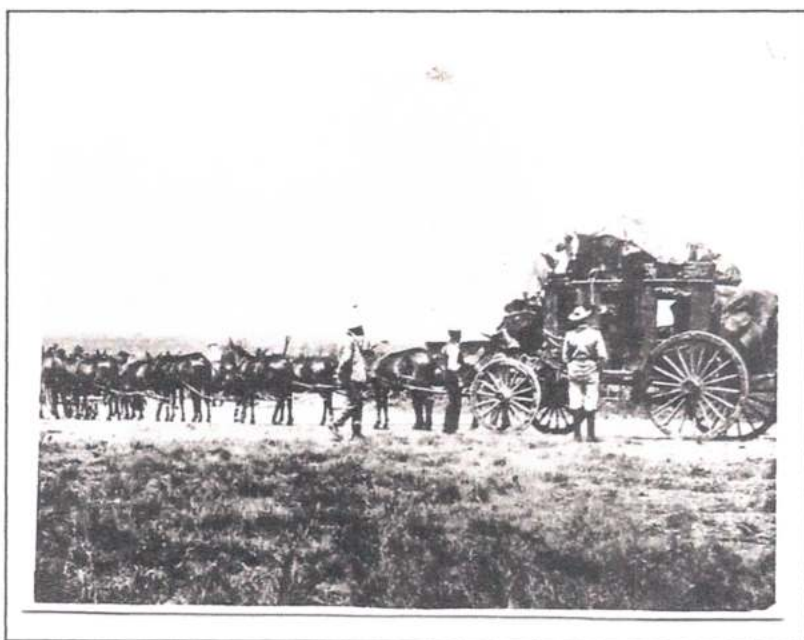
Postal services from Cape of Good Hope to Gubuluwayo, later Buluwayo were sporadic and dependent largely on the missionaries and hunters operating in the area, including Robert Moffat and David Livingstone. An area around Vryburg and Mafeking was established as British Bechuanaland and used stamps that were Cape of Good Hope issues overprinted, Great Britain overprinted or unappropriated dies with British Bechuanaland in the blank tablet. Below is a range of examples, including some unappropriated dies used for fiscal purposes in Great Britain.



In 1885 a large area north of the Molopo River was proclaimed a British Protectorate at the request of the native chiefs. A postal service was needed from Mafeking to Gubulawayo. A postal service using runners was inaugurated on 9<sup>th</sup> August 1888 and the unappropriated die stamps were overprinted with additional values to pay for the service as a temporary measure to assess the cost. The stamps were overprinted 'Protectorate' Below right are a range of stamps from this time, all used and probably originally on a cover carried in a forked stick by a relay of runners. To the left series of stamps issues by Botswana in 1972 commemorating the 'Runner Post'.



This was assessed as successful and a cart service was established in July 1890. In 1893 the telegraph was established to Matabeleland followed by a coach service established by C. H. Zeederburg Ltd., a regular mail service between Mafeking and Buluwayo. By 1897 the railway had been completed between Mafeking and Buluwayo and the days of 'native runners' was over. Below a Rhodesia stamp issued in 1966 showing the Zeederburg coach, a photograph of the coach and a photograph of a train in the 1890's going through the latest extension of the line to Buluwayo, location unknown.



## Uganda.

The country now delineated as Uganda was an uncharted area in the 1890's and was the subject of rivalry between the various Imperial Powers. These rivalries were often fought through the various missionary groups. The mail sent from this area to the outside world went by various routes, mostly as entires, North via Khartoum and East via Zanzibar, Mombasa and Bagamoyo, which were coming under French, British and German influence respectively. Below are examples of stamps used from these depots during that period.



French Post Offices in Zanzibar



German East Africa



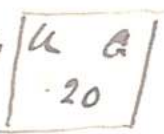
British East Africa



The struggle for Uganda between the Islamic, Roman Catholic and Protestant factions was finally resolved when the Anglo-German Agreement of 1890 declared the area as under British control and the British East Africa Company was given permission to extend into the area. This was initially slow, but the Church Missionary Society established themselves in Mungeo with the Kabaka (King). In 1895 the Reverend Ernest Millar decided, with the local British representative, that the situation needed some formal way of paying the runners who took mail from Mungeo to the port of Mombasa for onward transmission elsewhere.

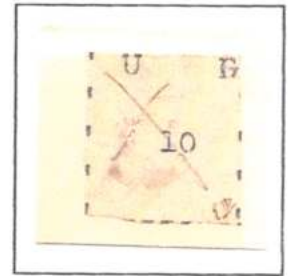
He took his typewriter and sat under a mopani tree and typed a series of stamps. The values were in cowrie shells, the local currency, and the various values were for the sending of letters within the area of Uganda and to the coast or the advancing railhead from Mombasa, whichever was the closer. Letters outward were paid for in a combination of 'cowries' and money and further franked in Mombasa with British East Africa stamps. The stamps come in two different sizes, reflecting the time when the Reverend was sent a new typewriter, and two colours, reflecting when he changed the ribbon from black to violet. Below are two examples from this time.

### Uganda Stamps

The stamp  is the oldest type

of stamps used in Uganda. It was struck off on a typewriter belonging to a missionary and the figures represent the value of the stamp in cowrie shells. The pencil marks show that the stamp has been used and therefore cancelled. The next step is the purple stamp V.R. This issue was printed for the Govt. on the C.M.S. printing machine. The other stamps tell their own story

F.R.B.





In November 1896 the typewriter 'cowrie' stamps were replaced by a more recognisable issue typeset by Reverend F. Rowling on the Church Missionary Society's Press at Luba's village in Usoga. They were valued in Annas and Rupees. Post was still sent by runner, but the distance to the coast was getting shorter as the Mombasa to Nairobi railway was being built. Below are two examples, one cancelled Kampala, the other a piece cancelled 1/12/1898 at Luba's with an example of the 1 anna issued in November 1898 from London and printed by De La Rue. The date stamp on this one is within a month of the arrival of these stamps.

