

In This Issue

In 1885, just as Stellaland became a part of British Bechuanaland and ten years later a part of the Cape of Good Hope, a variety handstamped Twee (for “two” in the local Boer language) appeared. **Alan Drysdall** and **Brian Hurst** offer an explanation of how and why these were issued, drawing upon new records, in **The “Twee” Overprint and the Reminders of Stellaland’s Postage Stamps**.

Details about the early airmail service from the United States to foreign destinations are not easy to find. **Murray Abramson** shows how early letters were carried in **New Findings Regarding United States Mail Dispatched to Europe for Onward Air Transmission**. Besides illustrating and describing the rates, he also shows how the cost was higher to the Post Office Department than the postage charged for the mail.

Harvey Mirsky discusses and illustrates the various rates for overseas mail during the four years of the 1847 issues in **U.S. Packet Mail Carried by the Cunard Line: 1847-1851**. Of particular interest is the so-called Retaliatory Rate where the UK engaged in tactics to preserve its shipping monopoly and was countered by a similar raise in U.S. rates before the two agreed on a postal treaty.

Opinions about the identification of various similar issues can differ, depending on the expert’s reference material (and if it is correct) and catalogue descriptions. Modern techniques that once were much too expensive are now relatively available for the examination of stamps. One such technique is covered in **A New Approach to Philatelic Examination: Non-destructive X-ray Fluorescence Analysis**. This study by **Andreas Burkhardt** and **Kurt Kimmel** centers on stamps printed in the 1850s by Bavaria and Switzerland, offering positive identification based on the inks used.

This issue’s ongoing feature **In the National Postal Museum: Original 1847 Correspondence** centers on a finding guide available at the NPM website and deals with **Harvey Mirsky’s** favorite topic, the 1847 issues. Of particular interest is the actual letter sent by Rawdon, Wright, Hatch & Edson that accompanied the hand-drawn essays showing the designs, which substituted Franklin for the earlier design that had the head of Jackson, and commented on starting work on the steel dies.

Cover Story shows a possibly unique example of a letter sent to South Africa from the United States, which was carried on an experimental flight and is the only one known to have survived this unintentional airmail service. Comments by **Murray Abramson** show how this came about.

At the Clubhouse features talks given from February to April by **Patrick Walters**, **Koichi Sato**, **Nancy Clark**, **Dale Forster** and **Barbara Harrison**.

On the Cover: A typical example of one of the few covers bearing a Twee overprinted stamp of Stellaland, from Barkly, where the Cape stamps were canceled on “OC 24/1885”; backstamps record a route via Kimberley “OC 29/85,” Burghersdorp (“28 OC/85”) and receipt in Venterstad (“OC 29/85”). This cover is ex Lichtenstein and was provided as a scan courtesy of Messrs. Argyll Etkin.