Indian Post Office in Zanzibar 1878-1895

This is an exhibit of the unique cancellations used by the Indian post office in Zanzibar from June 1, 1878 through November 10, 1895.

India operated a post office in Zanzibar from November 1868 until April 1, 1869 when it was closed for political reasons. Cancels of India were used during this period.

India again opened a post office in Zanzibar on October 1, 1875 that continued in operation until November 10, 1895 when it was turned over to the Sultanate. Cancellers of India were used until the first unique canceller was introduced on June 1, 1878. There were seven (7) different unique Zanzibar cancellers used for outgoing mail from 1878 through 1895. There were four (4) additional date stamps used only for receiving and transit marks; the registered cds was used for both outgoing and incoming mail. Usages of the cancellers are shown in the sequence in which they were issued followed by the date stamps.

Zanzibar was the major trading port and organizing area for trading and exploration caravans on the mainland during the late 1800’s. The population in 1890 was estimated to be about 200,000 including about 10,000 each Arabs and Indians and less than 300 Europeans.

France opened a post office at Zanzibar in 1889 and Germany followed in 1890. The German post office closed in 1891, after an agreement with Great Britain that set boundaries on the mainland, while the French office continued to operate until 1904.

Zanzibar was composed of the islands of Zanzibar, Pemba and several small islands off the east coast of Africa of what is now Tanzania, just south of the border with Kenya. The post office was located in the city of Zanzibar, located on the western shore of the island of the same name. It was the largest city in East Africa during the period of interest. Zanzibar is now part of Tanzania.
First Canceller
Used from 1878 to 1879

1878 covers to India carried on the P&O ship Pekin that left Suez on November 22 and arrived Bombay December 4. The single letter rate of 4 annas was paid with a four annas stamp, Die I, from the 1866 issue of India.

Two of 24 recorded covers with the first canceller.

Zanzibar  Nov 14
Sea Post Office (E)  Nov 22
Aden  Nov 23

Zanzibar  Nov 14
Sea Post Office (E)  Nov 22
Aden  Nov 23
Mundra  Dec 9
Second Canceller
Used from 1879 to 1882

1880 J. Meyer cover to Hamburg Germany; Carried on the P&O ship *Sumatra* from Aden to Suez. Franked with stamps from the 1865 issue of India.

Zanzibar OCT: 18; cds on reverse: Aden OCT: 28, Sea Post Office F 23 OCT, Hamburg 12/11 80

1880 cover to England from Walter Thompson of The Eastern and South African Telegraph Company, Limited to his wife. Routing requested via Aden and Brindisi to expedite delivery. Correctly franked at 4½ annas, the single letter rate introduced at the beginning of 1880, with a 4 annas, Die I, and a half-anna from the 1866 and 1873 issues respectively, of India.

Zanzibar JUL: 29; cds on reverse red London AUG 23 80
Second Canceller
Used from 1879 to 1882

1882 over to Cutch Mandvi carried on the P&O ship Thibet that left Suez on June 9 and arrived Bombay June 19. Franked with a vertical pair of half-anna stamps from the 1873 issue of India and a single 2 annas stamp of the 1865 Indian issue.

Zanzibar 1 June
Sea Post Office (F) 9 June
Aden 11 June
Bombay (TPO Enquiry Office) 21 June
Mandvi 24 June

Postage due ship letter to Bombay
Franked with two half-anna stamps from the 1873 issue. Ship letters cost 2 annas with one anna going to the vessels captain.

INW BOMBAY 27 MAR
R BOMBAY/ 5. DEly 27 MAR
FIFTH DEly/BOMBAY. E.C. 27 MAR
BOMBAY./SHIP LETTER/POSTAGE DUE 1AN

Cover is from 1881 or 1882 based upon broken H in British in the duplex canceller that occurred in August 1880.
Third Cancellor
Used from 1882 to 1884

1882 covers to Cutch Mandvi, India. Carried on the P&O liner Venetia that left Aden 7 September 1882 and arrived Bombay 13 September.

Earliest recorded usage of the third canceller.

Single rate cover franked with a one anna and a two annas stamps from the 1865 issue of India.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zanzibar</td>
<td>29 August</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sea Post Office (B)</td>
<td>31 August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aden</td>
<td>7 September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bombay (TPO Enquiry Office)</td>
<td>13 September</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mandvi</td>
<td>17 September</td>
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Double rate cover franked with two each one anna and two annas stamps from the 1865 issue of India.

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1884 cover from Scharrer, Tiede & Co., Zanzibar to Henley on Thames, England; re-addressed to Eastbourne. Double rate cover franked with a 2 anna stamp from the 1865 issue of India and a 6 annas stamp from the 1876 issue. Carried on the P&O ship *Peshawur* from Aden to Suez.

Postage due, indicated by the circled T handstamp, of 2½ pence (in manuscript) for forwarding.

Zanzibar 2 September
Sea Post Office D 10 September 1884
Aden 14 September
Eastbourne 30 September 1884
Third Canceller
Used from 1882 to 1884

1882 cover to England. Carried on the P&O ship *Cathay* from Aden to Suez. Single rate cover franked with a half-anna stamp, 1873 issue of India, and a 4 annas stamp from the 1866 issue. Backstamped Aden NOV. 27.

Fourth Canceller
Used from 1884 to 1887

1884 cover to England routed through Brindisi. Carried on the P&O ship *Parramatta* from Aden to Suez. Single rate cover with the same franking as the cover above.

Zanzibar 25 November 1884
Sea Post Office D
5 December 1884
Aden 9 December 1884
Cardiff 24 December 1884
Fourth Canceller
Used from 1884 to 1887

1885 cover to England routed through Aden and probably Brindisi even though endorsed "via Cape" (of Good Hope). Carried on the P&O ship Verona from Aden to Suez. The year is missing from the Zanzibar cancel.

Zanzibar  8 May (no year)
Sea Post Office D
22 May 1885
Aden  24 May 1885
Brighton 9 June 1885

Fifth Canceller
Used from 1887 to 1894

1887, 12 August; card addressed to Mozambique. Message from Max Shultz confirms receipt of money for equipment and states he is going to Bombay in 14 days.

"per Oriental" notation in the upper left corner is directing that the card be sent by French paquebot that carried mail between Zanzibar, Mozambique, Madagascar and Reunion.
Fifth Canceller
Used from 1887 to 1894

1889 cover addressed to Schweidnitz, Germany carried by the French mailboat Ava that left Reunion on 25 November and arrived Marseille 12 December 1889.

1889 card written in Pangani on November 29, 1889 by Lieutenant Johannes, message as follows: "Heartiest wishes and good luck for the New Year. Ehler sends greetings also. I am in a hurry. Pangani 29/11."

Carried on the Ava as per the above cover.
Fifth Canceller
Used from 1887 to 1894

1892; Quarter Anna internal use postal card, uprated for international use with addition of a one anna stamp (thus overpaying the 1 anna rate), addressed to Hamburg, Germany.

Zanzibar 16 December 1892, Aden 30 December 1892, Hamburg 14 January 1893

1893 cover addressed to Cutch Mandvi carried by the P & O ship Victoria that left Aden 13 February and arrived Bombay 18 February 1893.

Zanzibar 4 February 1893, Sea Post Office C 13 February 1893
Cutch Mandvi 21 February 1893
Fifth Canceller
Used from 1887 to 1894

1892 Postal Stationery envelope, 2½ annas surcharged on 4½ annas, addressed to Switzerland.

Zanzibar 5 June 1892, Aden, 23 June 1892, ChauxLeFonds, 26 June 1892

1893 Postal Stationery envelope, 2½ annas surcharged on 4½ annas, addressed to Bombay. Carried by the British India mailboat S.S. Kola to Aden where it was transferred to the P&O ship Carthage that arrived Bombay 9 July.

Zanzibar 17 June 1893, Sea Post Office B 4 July 1893, Bombay 9 July 1893
Sixth Canceler (for registered mail)
Used from 1887 to 1894

1892 registered letter to Germany from Karl Perrot & Co. Zanzibar to the home office in Wiesbaden.

Ligne N cancel is unusual on a Zanzibar cover; the French mail boat service Ligne N carried mail between China and France with a stop in Aden.

Perot Handstamp on reverse

Zanzibar 22 Dec 92
Aden 30 Dec 92
Ligne N Paq FR No.6 1 Jan 93
Wiesbaden 13 Jan 93
Seventh Canceller
Used from 1894 onwards

1895 One Anna surcharged One and Half Anna postal reply card of India addressed to Dar es Salaam, German East Africa in 1895. Message written on 27 February 1895.

Zanzibar 1 March 1895, Dar-es-Salaam 3 March 1895

1895 One Anna Indian postal wrapper addressed to Mozambique in 1895. Most likely for an edition of the Zanzibar Gazette.

Zanzibar 5 July 1895, De Mocambique 28 July 1895
Date stamps used for Receiver and Transit Marks

First Date Stamp 1878-82

Probably introduced concurrently with the first canceller.

1878-1882 cover from Karachi, India via Aden to Zanzibar.

Second Date Stamp 1882-84

Probably introduced concurrently with the third canceller.

1882-1884 cover from India via Aden to Zanzibar.
The Aden canceller was used from 1880 until 1886.
The message in Gujarathi reads:
"Zanzibar Port, Jairam Sewjee ran away from Bhuj Port with someone."

Third Date Stamp 1884-94

Probably introduced concurrently with the fourth canceller when the year was added.

1889 Half Anna Indian envelope uprated to 3 annas mailed from New Bazar, Poona, India. Cancelled FE 14 89. Received in Zanzibar MA 1 89.
Fourth Date Stamp 1894 onwards

1895 cover from Aden cancelled MY 19 95; received 31 MY 95

1895 postal card from Seychelles cancelled 21 OC 95; received 26 OC 95

Registered Canceller used as receiving mark 1888 onwards

1892 British East Africa RLE to the German Consulate cancelled Lamu OC 22 92: received OC 26 92

This RLE variety, Minns RE2, is only recorded as used between 15 July 1892 and October 1893.
Indian Post Office in Zanzibar
1878-1895

This is an exhibit of the unique cancellations, on covers, used by the Indian post office in Zanzibar from June 1, 1878 through November 10, 1895. There were seven (7) different unique Zanzibar cancellers used for outgoing mail during this period. There were 4 additional date stamps used only for receiving and transit marks. The registered cds was used for both outgoing and incoming mail. Once a new canceller or datestamp was introduced use of the previous canceller was ended.

The first three unique cancellers used in Zanzibar did not include the year, as common throughout the Indian Postal Administration. Determining the year a cover was mailed is done either through year dated receiving or transit marks applied by most European postal administrations or in the case of mail that stayed within the Indian Postal Administrated countries often through the Sea Post Office date stamps and the records of the sailings of the P&O ships that carried the mail.

There are only 24 recorded examples of the use of the first canceller on covers. Two of these covers are included in this exhibit. There are 54 covers known with the second canceller, 4 are shown in the exhibit, and 28 with the third canceller, 4 of which are shown. Two of the latter are the earliest usage of the third canceller recorded by John Minns (29 August 1882) and almost 4 months earlier than recorded by Proud.

It is not until the introduction of the fourth canceller that covers bearing Zanzibar cancellations become relatively common.

A registered cover from the Karl Perrot & Co. office, just opened in Zanzibar, to the headquarters in Germany is shown missing one stamp. The 7 stamps remaining total 1 rupee 12½ annas (28½ annas); this is most likely an 11x rate registered letter and the missing stamp is a 1 anna: 11x rate postage= 27½ annas, registration= 2 annas.

Two of the covers showing receiving marks require special mention. The first date stamp used as a receiving mark is on a cover from India on which the stamps were not cancelled until the cover reached Aden. Both the receiving mark and Aden cancellation are scarce. The second cover is a British East Africa J size RLE (the first of this size issued by the Imperial British East Africa Company) that was only used for 15 months from July 1892 until October 1893. It was mailed from Denhardt & Co. in Lamu to the German Consulate in Zanzibar and received the Zanzibar registered cds.