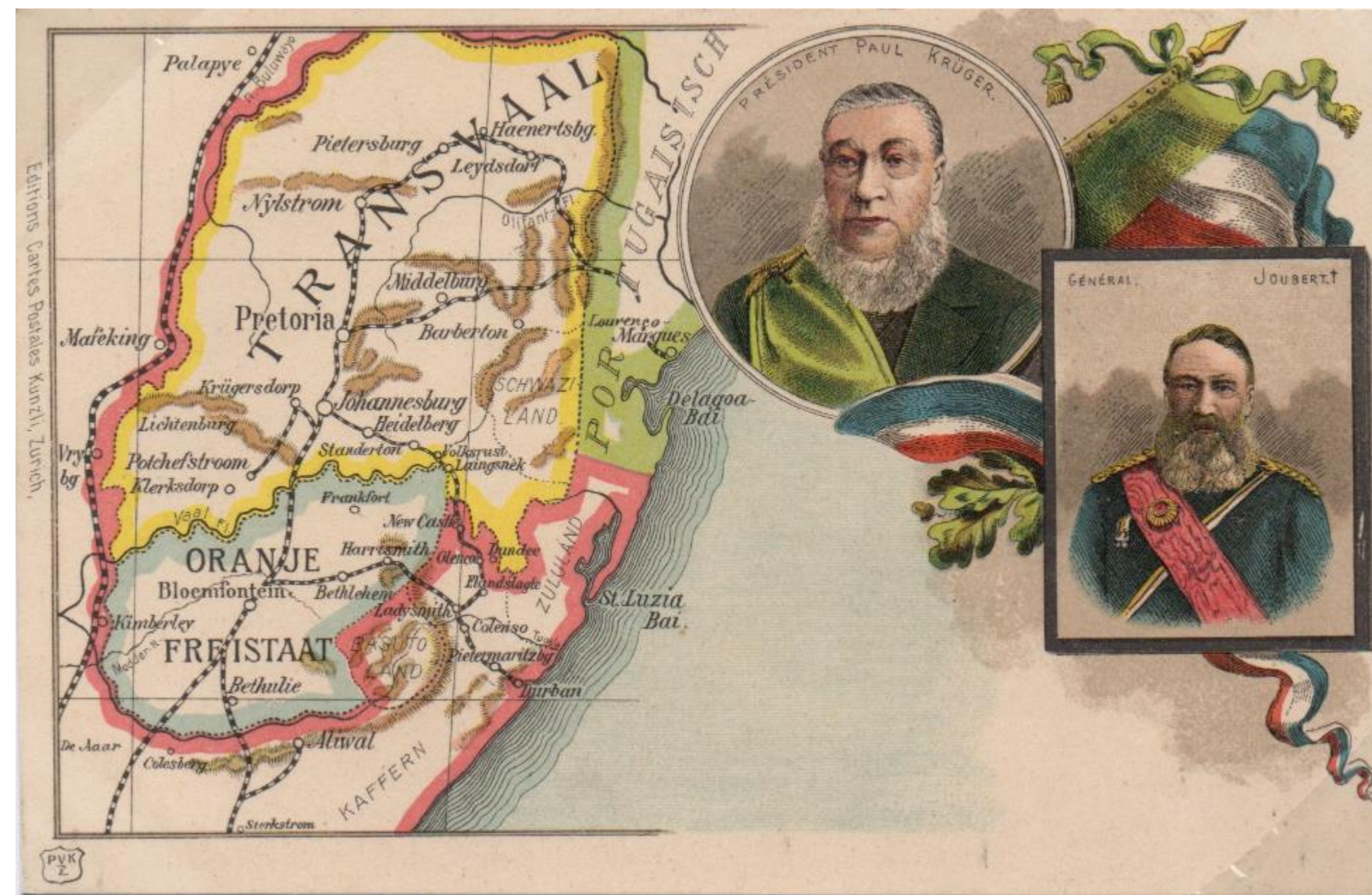


# Telegraphic Cancellations, Stamps and Stationery of Transvaal and South Africa 1879 - 1925



**President Stephanus Johannes Paulus  
“Paul” Kruger**  
(10 October 1825 – 14 July 1904)

**Petrus Jacobus Joubert**  
(20 January 1831 - 28 March 1900)

Map showing TRANSVAAL (ZUID AFRIKAANSCH REPUBLIK), ORANGE FREE STATE and NATAL

# First British Occupation 1877 -1881



It was recognised that communication was important. The first telegraph line was built linking Utrecht with Newcastle (Natal) and the line to Pietermaritzburg and Durban to the submarine cable with connection to the United Kingdom.

Completion of the line took place before 12 June 1879, and was then extended to Standerton and Heidelberg with offices opened 26 August and 10 September 1879, respectively. Eight days later, on 18 September 1879 the line reached Pretoria where an office was opened. The telegraph line followed the railway line.

# First British Occupation 1877 -1881

## Government Notice No. 131 of 1st September 1879.

The Tariff in the Transvaal will be the uniform tariff adopted in Natal and the Free State, and shortly to be introduced in Cape Colony, viz:

Ordinary messages:- One Shilling for the first ten word (inclusive of addressee), and sixpence for every additional five or portion of five words

Cypher messages:- double the ordinary rate. By a cypher message it is understood a message which on the face of it carries no connected meaning.

Press messages:- One Shilling for the first twenty words, and Three Pence for every additional ten orportion of ten words.

# First British Occupation 1877 -1881

## Queen Victoria Head - Postage, and Revenue Stamps (Bourne Head)



Scan of only known QV Revenue stamps used at Marthinus Wesselstroom in October 1880

*(Illustration courtesy of Ian Paterson, South Africa)*

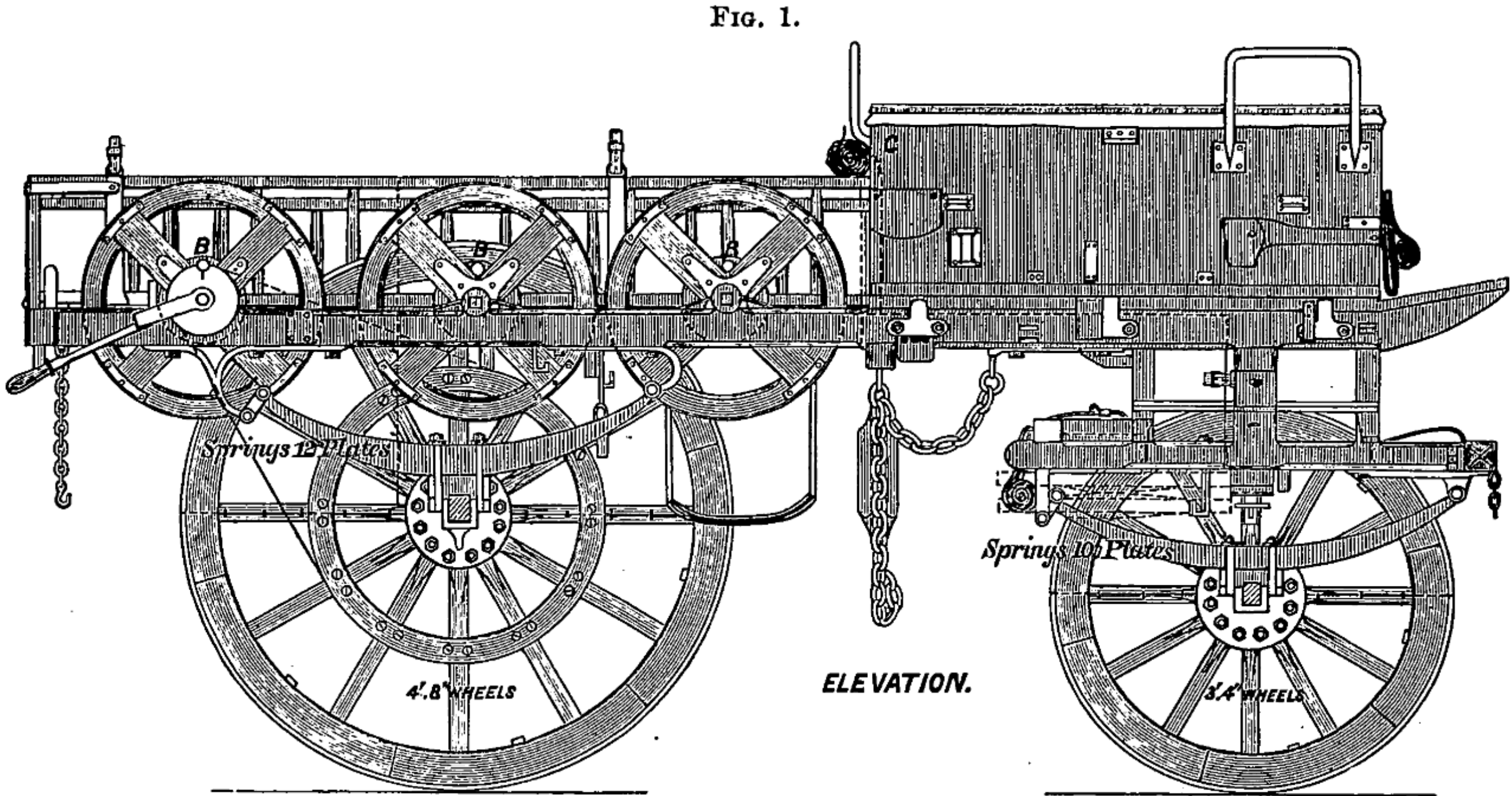
During the First British Occupation in 1879 a telegraph system was installed connecting Utrecht with Newcastle and the line to Pietermaritzburg and Durban, where the submarine cable terminated. The line was then extended from Utrecht to the towns of Standerton, Heidelberg and Pretoria. In 1880 the British Army extended the telegraph line to Marthinus Wesselstroom. The line ceased operating about 16th - 27th December 1880. It was recommissioned in 1881.

Prior to 1995, no postage or revenue stamps were known telegraphically used during the occupation period. Since then the above four Queen Victoria revenue stamps have come to light, cancelled M.W.STROOM on 12 August, 12 and 27 October 1880.

# THE ORGANISATION AND OPERATIONS OF THE FIELD TELEGRAPH CORPS IN THE TRANSVAAL, 1881.

Commanding Officer - Lt. Arthur H. Bagnold, R.E.

| Ranks.          | Establishment |            |
|-----------------|---------------|------------|
|                 | Mounted       | Dismounted |
| Officers        | 2             |            |
| Sargents        | 1             | 1          |
| Corporals       | 1             | 1          |
| 2nd Corporals   | 1             | 1          |
| Lance Corporals | -             | 2          |
| Trumpeters      | 1             |            |
| Shoeing Smiths. | 1             |            |
| Wheelers        |               | 1          |
| Collar-makers   |               | 1          |
| Sappers         |               | 20         |
| Drivers         | <u>20</u>     | <u>0</u>   |
|                 | <u>27.</u>    | <u>27.</u> |



## Qualifications of Non-commissioned Officers and Men.

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Manipulators. | 12 (including 2 signallers)                    |
| Linemen.      | 21 (including 8 signallers and 5 manipulators) |
| Artificers    | 6  |
| Drivers       | 13 (including 5 signallers)                    |

## Camp equipment and baggage

60 miles of field cable,  
3 waggons fitted to carry 12 miles of cable each, 1 general service waggon.  
Instruments and batteries for 3 offices  
Signal equipment for 2 stations  
A large supply of stationery and forms  
100 miles of semi-permanent overhead equipment with instruments and batteries for 7 offices  
and construction tools for 4 work parties.  
The total equipment was in the region of 120 cubic tones with the list being 650 different items.

# Second Zuid-Afrikaanse Republic 1881 - 1899

## Pretoria

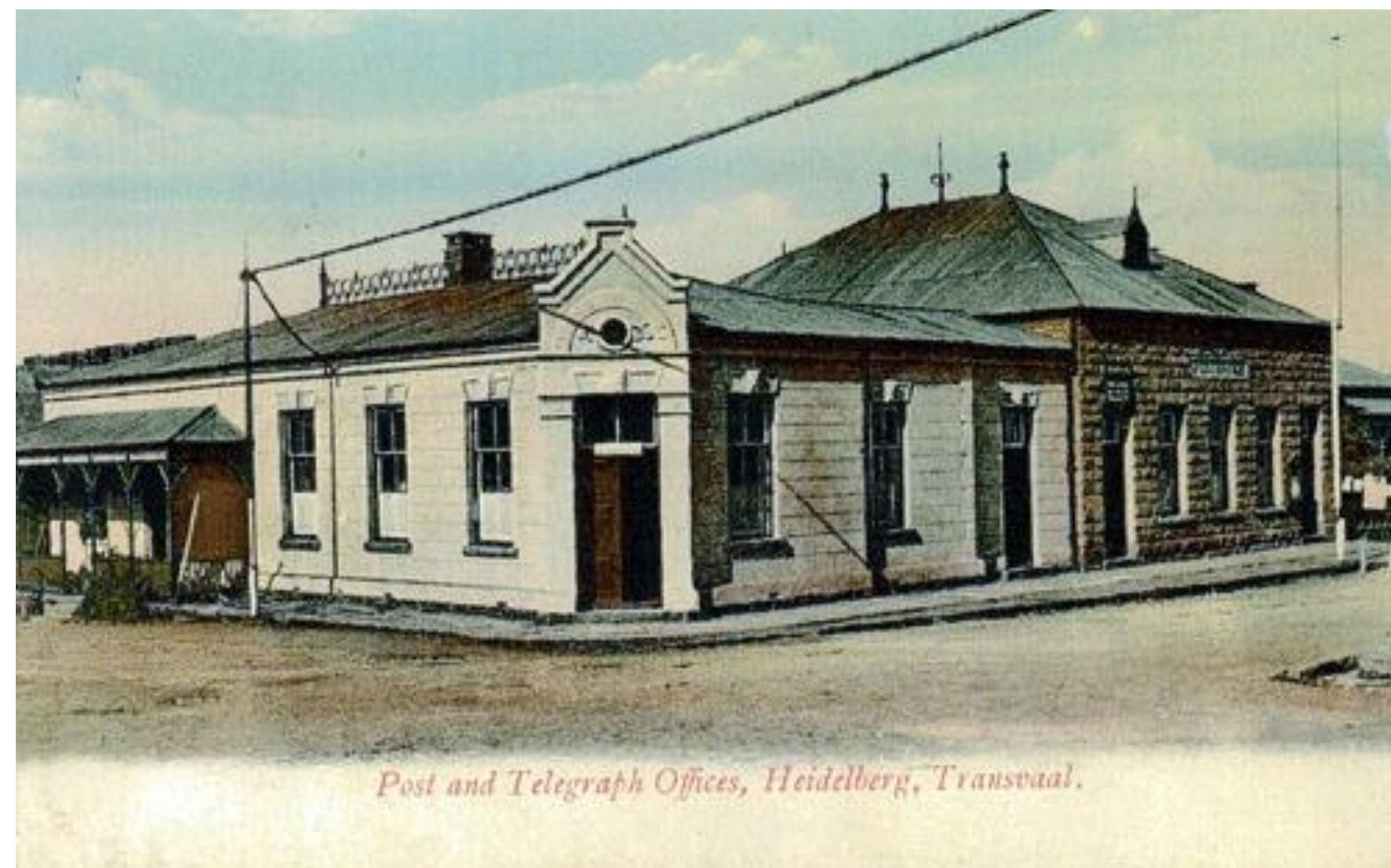


The Z.A.R. Article 209 of Law No. 3, 1884 made it compulsory to use postage stamps to indicate pre-payment of telegram chargers, however, revenue stamps were also used regularly until the Second Republic ended in 1900.

Official Records indicate that 3,537 postage stamps of the Queen Victoria Head 2/- value, issued 1878 were found in 1886 and handed to the Postmaster General 7 October; the stamps were then sent by him to the Telegraph Office for use on telegrams.

# Second Zuid-Afrikaanse Republic 1881 - 1899

## Heidelberg



Post and Telegraph Office, Heidelberg





## Second Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek

The Celliers 'EEN SHILLING' postage stamp of 1883 and the Vurtheim postage stamps, 1885-1893, were cancelled in the same manner as the Queen's Head issues. The stamps were in use 1883 - 1887 an indication that remainders of the Celliers stamps were being used up. They were used at Pretoria, Heidelberg and Standerton, and possibly other telegraphic offices.

### Canceller - Drysdall TYPE II.1

#### HEIDELBERG



Tête bêche pair normally only found telegraphically used.  
*(Currently only known Tête bêche pair used at Heidelberg)*

#### PRETORIA



#### STANDERTON



Script date 24.6.85



Script date 17.6.85



The script dates are currently the only two known on stamps.

## Second Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek

A special oval cancel, 32mm by 23mm, was used between 1887 and 1889, nearly always purple or violet ink, with the sending office name at the top, single-line date in the centre, and an ornament at the bottom. The main offices which used the cancels were Johannesburg, Pretoria, Heidelberg, Ottoshoop, Rustenburg, Vryheid and Germiston, and many more.

### Canceller - Drysdall TYPE II.5

Celliers re-issue stamps.



Vurtheim stamps.



# Nieuwe Republiek 1884 - 1888

**Nieuwe Republiek stamps with cancelled at Vryheid from 14 Feb. 1888.**



Unrest followed the death of Cetshwayo the Zulu king in 1884 and a group of Boers from Transvaal offered support to his son Dinizulu, the price of which was the cessation of a large portion of Zulu territory to establish an independent Boer republic. The New Republic was centred on Vryheid. Mail from Vryheid in 1884-1885 was franked with Transvaal stamps for despatch via Utrecht.

Stamps were issued on 7 January 1886 but were never accepted as internationally valid so external mail still had to be franked with Transvaal stamps.

The stamps were valid to receipt payment of telegram fees in 1888.

# Second Zuid-Afrikaanse Republic 1881 - 1899

**Canceller - Drysdall TYPE II.2a and II.2b.**  
Cancels struck in blue or black. (1890's)



**Drysdall TYPE II.3**

Used only at Pretoria, in blue.

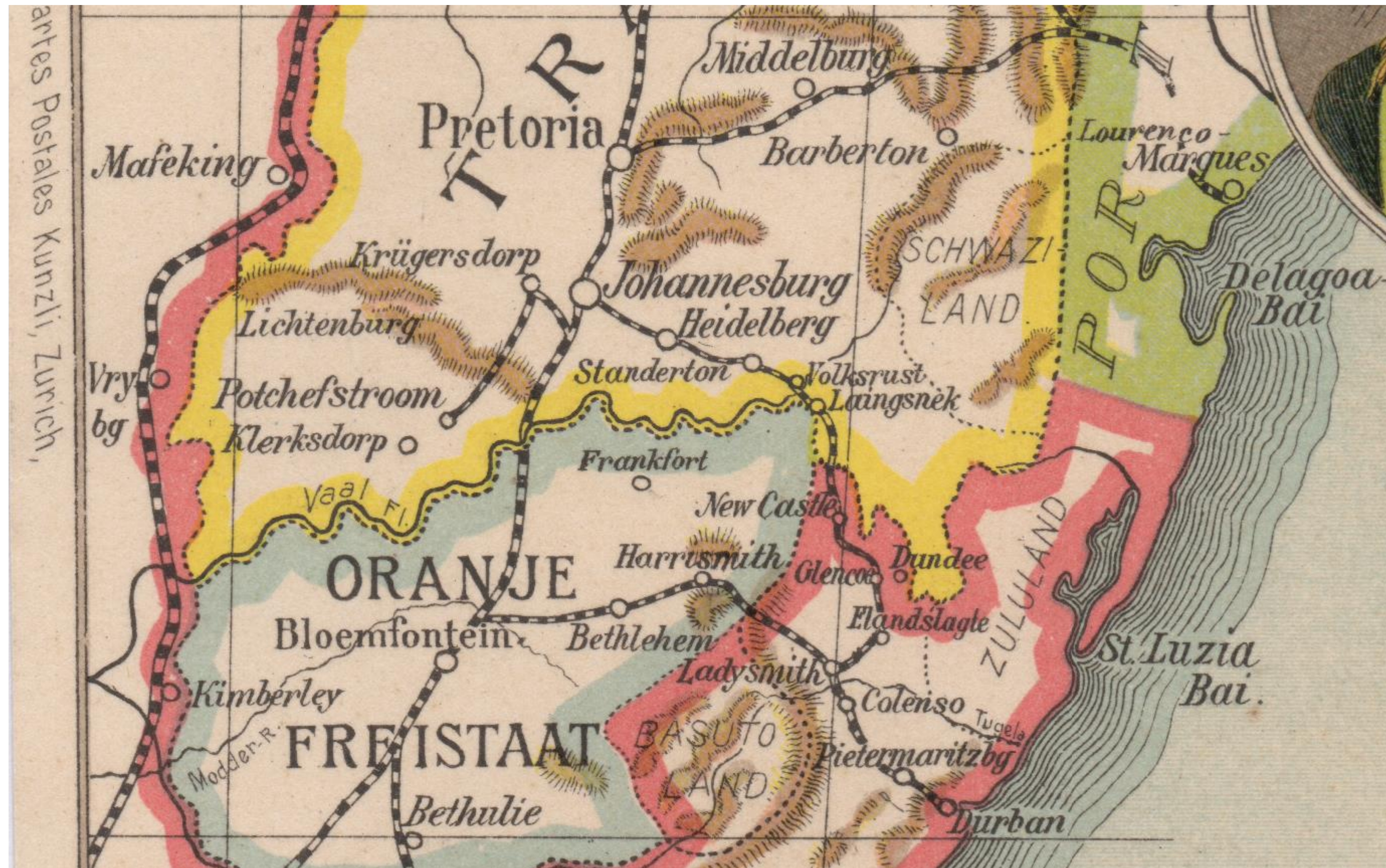


**Drysdall TYPE II.4**

Used only at Piet Retief.



# Second Zuid-Afrikaanse Republic 1881 - 1899

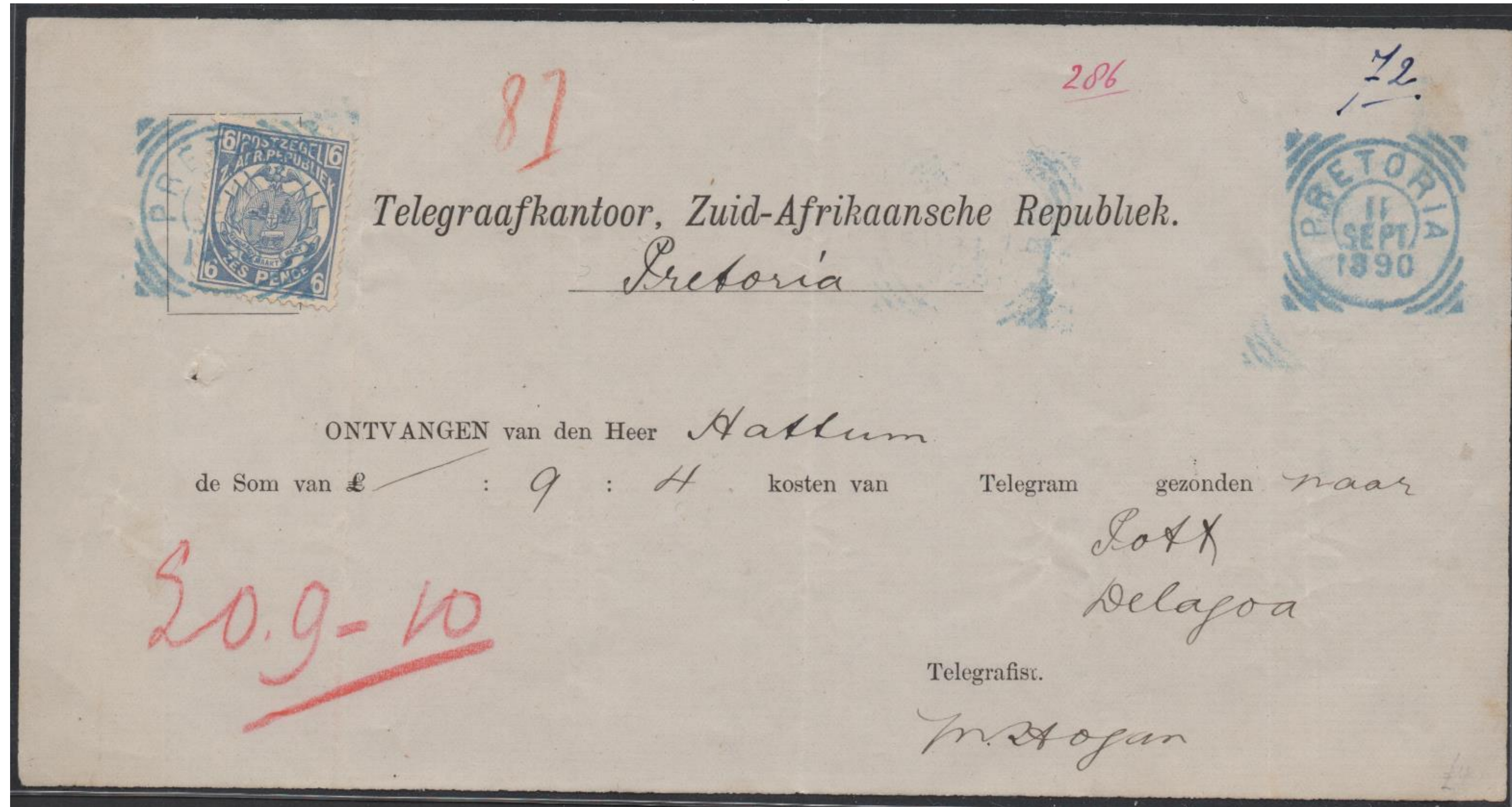


Contractors working for NZASM (Nederlandsche Zuid-Afrikaansche Spoorwegmaatschappij) built the railway down to Delagoa Bay (Lourenço Marques - now Maputo) in Mozambique, the shortest route from Pretoria to a deep sea port. It opened on 6 November 1894 and was of political significance because it meant that the ZAR could bypass having to use the railway lines through either the Cape of Good Hope down to Cape Town, or Natal down to Durban.

# Second Zuid-Afrikaanse Republic 1881 - 1899

## Telegraphic Stationery - Counter Receipt

*Drysdall Type 2*



A telegraphic receipt, provided by the telegraph counter at Pretoria, in respect of a telegram sent by the contractor. "Received from the Mister Hattum the sum of 9/4d cost of one telegram sent to Pott, Delagoa (Bay)" on 11 September 1890. While the telegram consisting of seven words, cost nine shillings and four pence to send, the cost of obtaining a receipt for that expenditure was six pence. The contractor receipts are addressed to either Versteeg or Hattum and often signed by the head of Engineering etc. Obviously like good bureaucrats they had to account for their expenditure and this is why they existed, the red pencil marks probably being for NZASM accounting purposes.

Receipt for Hattum of Van Hattum and Co. appointed by NZASM to build 4 sections of the railway line from the Mozambique border to Delagoa Bay - 100 kilometres.

*Vurtheim 6d cancelled with Drysdall Type II.2a squared circle in blue.*

***Receipt - One of only ten recorded.***

# Second Zuid-Afrikaanse Republic 1881 - 1899

## Telegraphic Stationery - Counter Receipt

*Drysdall Type 4*



Receipt for Hattum of Van Hattum and Co. The ink number '1' in the top right corner is the first telegram to be sent from Pretoria in the month of March 1891; the 2nd March was a Monday.

*Vurtheim 6d cancelled with Drysdall Type II.2a used on a Telegraphic Counter Receipt.*

# Second Zuid-Afrikaanse Republic 1881 - 1899

## Telegram Delivery Envelope - Type 3



'**TELEGRAM**' - 5mm thick sans serif capital lettering and square full-stop.

Cancel - Drysdall Type II.2b - 28 JUN 1897

Bestteller No. 33 - (Distributor Number)

The number 673 possibly refers to the number of the telegram inside the envelope.

Second Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek

Telegraphic Stationery - Telegraphic Form

Drysdall & Jonkers Type 3. - Ca Telegraafdienst, Z. A. Republiek.

Ca

Telegraafdienst, Z. A. Republiek.

Nr. 407

Bij vermoeden van verminkingen, kan men van het twijfelachtige herhaling vragen. De kosten daarvan worden alleen dan in rekening gebracht, wanneer het blijkt dat de verminking niet heeft plaats gehad door de schuld van den telegraafdienst.

Het Departement is niet aansprakelijk voor verliezen ontstaan door verminking, vertraging of niet aflevering van telegrammen.

Dit blad vergezelle elke navraag omtrent dit telegram.

Te betalen £.....

Pretoria's tijd geldt voor alle binnenlandsche kantoren.

Aangenomen te ..... ten ..... Hier m. ontvangen ten ..... m.

Van

Aan

Schlyer

Paul Scheutter  
First Raad  
Pretoria.

Just returned cant manage this  
week will be at your  
farm next week & settle  
with your brother



A delivered Telegram, sent by 'Schlyer' in Johannesburg to Paul Scheutter, First Raad, Pretoria on 23 February 1899.

The telegram delivered is No. 407.

The cancel is telegraphic and in black. The telegram form written out at the sending office would have been charged two shillings for the 18 words and stamps for receipt of payment would have been attached.

# Second Zuid-Afrikaanse Republic 1881 - 1899

Throughout the 1890's the number of telegraph offices expanded rapidly along with the volume of telegrams sent.

A new type of canceller was introduced at Marthinus Wesselstroom probably about October 1890 and to other offices at later dates. It is believed that instructions issued referred to cancelling with blue ink, but many offices ran out or were never provided with blue ink. With the rapid rise in telegraph activity the use of special cancellers was overlooked and many telegram offices used postal cancellers.

**Canceller - Drysdall TYPE II.6 and Postal Cancels**  
(Type II.6 - 22mm single circle)



The Barberton cancel in blue, dated **AU 17 87** is the earliest recorded for that office.

The Potchefstroom cancel is currently the only known example.



## Second British Occupation British Lines of Communication

### (Army Telegraphs date stamps)

The British occupied Pretoria on 5 June 1900 and a civilian postal service began operating on 18 June 1900. The telegraph service initially fell under the administration of the British Army.



Two 'ARMY TELEGRAPHS' stamps possibly used at Standerton



V.R.I one shilling used at Heidelberg

The instructions in the Army Telegraphy Manuel, issued in 1897 records that steel date stamps were 34mm in diameter and inscribed 'Army/Telegraphs' and part of the narrative stated:-

- '1 to cancel the adhesive stamps on forms to which such have been affixed,*
- 2 to clearly indicate on forms the offices in which such forms have been dealt with and the date of so dealing'.*

## Second British Occupation

### British Lines of Communication

#### Issue 2

Transvaal 1d, 6d and 2/6d postage stamps of the 1896-97 issue were overprinted 'Transvaal/Telegraphs.' in Albion type during October 1901. The 1s duty, was by way of a surcharge overprint on the 2s 6d postage stamp.



J. -  
Johannesburg Military

**Second British Occupation**  
**British Lines of Communication**

**Fournier forgery.**



In 1902 a 5s duty was provided by surcharging the ‘V.R.I.’ overprinted £2 Enschedé revenue stamp “Transvaal/Telegraphs. / FIVE/Shillings’.

In June 1902 the 6d Wagon issue stamp overprinted ‘E.R.I.’ had a hand stamp applied ‘Transvaal/ Telegraphs.’ The lettering being slightly rounded. The same hand stamp was used to overprint the 10/-, £1 and £5 King Edward VII revenue stamps of Transvaal. The £5 stamp exists with a forged overprint by Fournier which was printed on cleaned fiscally used stamps.

## Second British Occupation

### Transvaal

#### Johannesburg Post Office



## Second British Occupation

### Transvaal

Johannesburg Post Office

#### “Number in Circle” - Drysdall Type IV.1

King Edward VII definitive issue 1905-09 - Typo by De La Rue. Wmk. Multiple Crown CA



There is no known date for the introduction of the Numeral Cancel. What appears to be the case is that these cancels are all on paper with watermark Multiple Crown CA. This determines the earliest possible year of use of Numeral Cancel would have been 1905. Of the higher King Edward VII values, mainly used for telegrams, only the 1/- and 5/- stamps were issued in 1905, followed by 2/- 1906, 2/6d 1909, 10/- 1907, £1 1908. The 5/-, 10/- and £1 are the most common values with a numeral cancel.

Second British Occupation

Transvaal  
Johannesburg Post Office

“Number in Circle” - Drysdall Type IV.1  
King Edward VII definitive issue 1905-09 - Typo by De La Rue. Wmk. Multiple Crown CA

The numbers 3 and 7 are not known used on Transvaal stamps.



Counter 1



Counter 2



Counter 4



Counter 5



Counter 6

Five Shilling Value



Counter 1



Counter 2



Counter 4



Counter 5



Counter 6

Ten Shilling Value



Counter 1



Counter 2



Counter 4



Counter 5

Counter 6

One Pound Value

## South Africa

The Union of Cape, Natal, Orange River Colony, and Transvaal was formed on 21 May 1910. Other than a commemorative stamp issued 4 November 1910 South Africa did not issue its own stamps until 1 September 1913. The period 1 June 1910 to 31 August 1913 is known as the Interprovincial Period in which the stamps of the four provinces could be used in any province.

### Johannesburg Post Office

#### **'Number in Circle' - Drysdall Type IV.1**

A 25mm single circle with number in centre - 1 to 7.



It is not possible to ascertain a date of use.

These Transvaal stamps may have been used the Interprovincial Period.



Counter 2

Interprovincial usage - Cape of Good Hope used in Transvaal

South Africa

Johannesburg Post Office

Combination or Clandestine Cancellations?

Drysdall indicates the Johannesburg Type IV.1 numeral cancels are found in combination with a double circle cancel inscribed 'JOHANNESBURG' at the top, with the date in a single line across the centre.

Mathews concluded that the date-stamp was looted, during the Boer War, and subsequently used to create an impression of postal usage. In support of his conclusion Mathews noted the looted canceller had breaks in the outer circle above the first 'N' and the 'U' of JOHANNESBURG - usually obscured by the thick ring of the numeral cancel.

Transvaal, Natal (2/6d only), EdVII - Wmk. Mult. Cr. CA, Cape EdVII (5/- only) - Wmk. Anchor.



Counter 1  
18 August 1910



Counter 1  
1910



Counter 1  
1 June 1910



Counter 1  
16 December 1910  
*(break in outer circle above  
'U' of JOHANNESBURG)*



Counter 2  
October 1910



Counter 2  
7 July 1910



Cape of Good Hope - Counter 1  
15 December 1910



Natal - Counter 1  
16 November 1910

Known cancellations all have the year 1910, prior to and after Union on 31 May 1910.



Counter 1  
18 August 1910



Counter 1  
1910



Counter 1  
1 June 1910



Counter 1  
16 December 1910  
*(break in outer circle above  
'U' of JOHANNESBURG)*



Counter 2  
October 1910



Counter 2  
7 July 1910



Cape of Good Hope - Counter 1  
15 December 1910



Natal - Counter 1  
16 November 1910



Enlargement showing that the Johannesburg cancel is not aligned with the circumference of the number cancel and thus illustrates a break in the outer circle of the Johannesburg. canceller.

# South Africa

## Johannesburg Post Office

### 'Number in Circle' - Drysdall Type IV.1

Combination - Drysdall Type IV.1 and Type IV.3 cancels.

Type IV.3 cancels have C.T.O. at the top and JOHANNESBURG at the bottom.

Type 3b, 26mm double circle, with C.T.O. widely spaced and 3mm high letters.

Type 3c, 26mm double circle, with C.T.O. not so wide as 3b and 3.5mm high letters.

Type 3d, 29mm double circle, with letters C.T.O. closely spaced, date has hyphen between month and year.



Counter 1  
Type 3d



Counter 4  
Type 3b



Counter 1



Counter n/k  
Type 3c



Counter 1  
Type 3d.



Counter 4  
Type 3d



Counter 1  
Type 3d



Counter 2  
Type 3b

Cape of Good Hope 5/-

The above stamps have two cancels; a single circle with a numeral and a C.T.O. JOHANNESBURG.

It is likely that the above stamps were used in 1910/14.

## South Africa

Johannesburg Post Office - Central Telegraph Office

### Canceller - Drysdall Type IV.2a

A 24mm single circle inscribed 'CONTROLLER / JOHANNESBURG',  
with flanking Maltese cross ornaments, date in centre over letters 'c.t.o.'



9 January 1912





Interprovincial usage of Cape of Good Hope 5/-.



Interprovincial usage of Natal 2/6d.

# South Africa

Johannesburg Post Office

## ‘Number in Circle’ - Drysdall Type IV.1

King George V issue 1 September 1913 - Typo by De La Rue, Wmk. Springbok’s Head



Thick Number 1



Counter 4



Counter 1

Numbers on low values, under 1/-, are not common.

# South Africa

Johannesburg Post Office

## ‘Number in Circle’ - Drysdall Type IV.1

King George V issue 1 September 1913 - Typo by De La Rue, Wmk. Springbok’s Head



Counter 3



Counter 5



Counter 6

The 1/3d stamp issued 1 September 1920 was mainly used on telegrams.



Counter 1



Counter 2



Counter 4

# South Africa

Johannesburg Post Office

## ‘Number in Circle’ - Drysdall Type IV.1

King George V issue 1 September 1913 - Typo by De La Rue, Wmk. Springbok’s Head



Counter 4



Counter 6



Counter 1



Counter 4



Counter 6

## South Africa

Johannesburg Post Office - Central Telegraph Office

Canceller - Drysdall Type IV.2a



6 January 1914

Star Punch



11 December 1913.



5 January 1914

## Transvaal and South Africa

### Five Point Star Punch

#### Small Star

A five point star punch was used to deface stamps on cables. A cable, as distinguished from a telegram, has a foreign destination which requires an undersea cable for onward transition. This explains why the star punch is mainly found on higher value stamps.



A small five point star punch has been found on Transvaal 6 pence and 5 shilling Enschede stamps, and on a 5 pound Vurtheim stamp (1885 - 1893).



The small star punch appeared in Pretoria during 1919 where it was used mainly on 1 shilling stamps, almost certainly indicating use on telegrams.

## Transvaal and South Africa Five Point Star Punch



Main Street, Johannesburg



East London



Counter 4

Combination cancel and Star Punch



# SOUTH AFRICA

## Small Hole Perforations

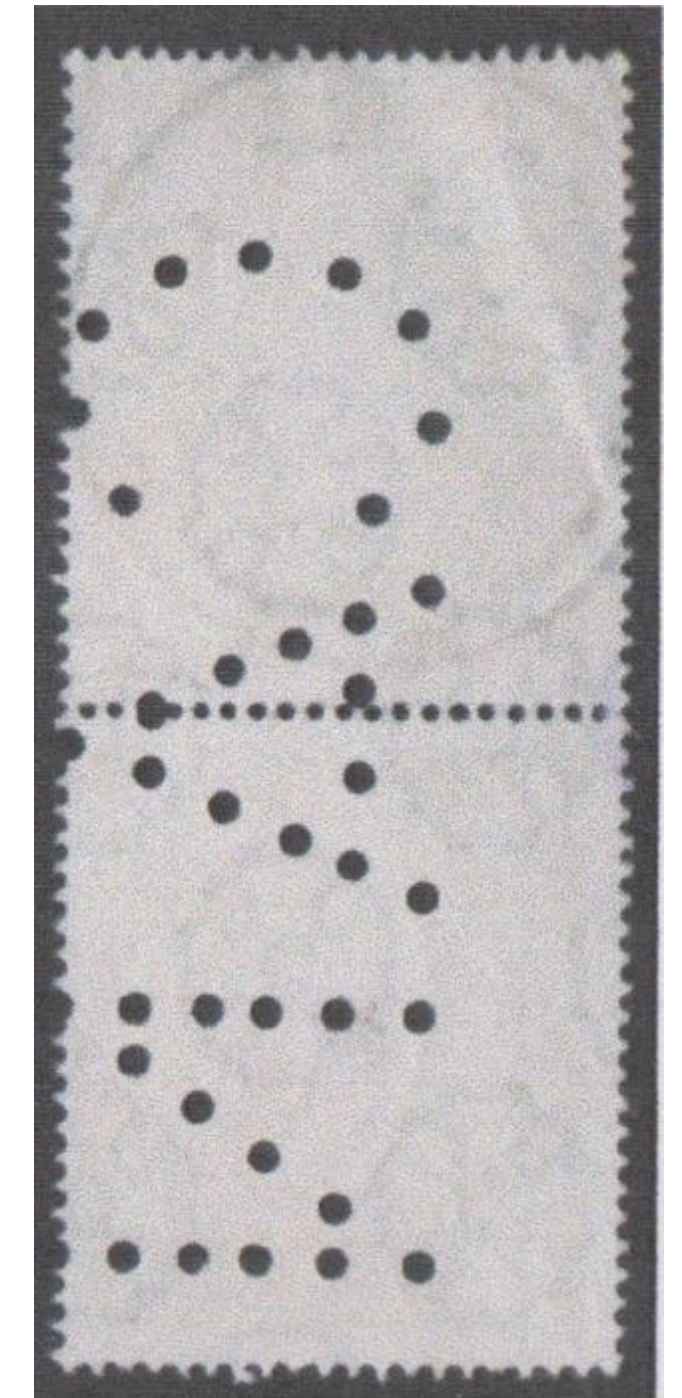


CAN  
KIMBERLEY  
NOV 13

The stamps have been defaced by having a network of small holes 1m.m. dia. punched in at the time the cable was sent to storage. The perforation reads ‘CANCELLED’ though the size of one letter just fits onto a stamp. It is believed it came into use between November 1913 and February 1914 at Johannesburg where it would appear that all telegram receipts were defaced, in bundles, by the perforator. In 1923, G. W. Reynolds, a collector who wrote an article in The South African Philatelist Vol. 1 No.7, made the following comment:-

*‘No doubt certain dealers who hold stocks of stamps with these cancellations may resent this publicity, but it troubles me little. If however I have succeeded in putting collectors on their guard and have helped to kill the market for these objectionable stamps, then I am well repaid.’*

That is not the case today!



N



LL



N



CE



E



LL