

Part 5: NEWSPAPER WRAPPERS
Queen Victoria

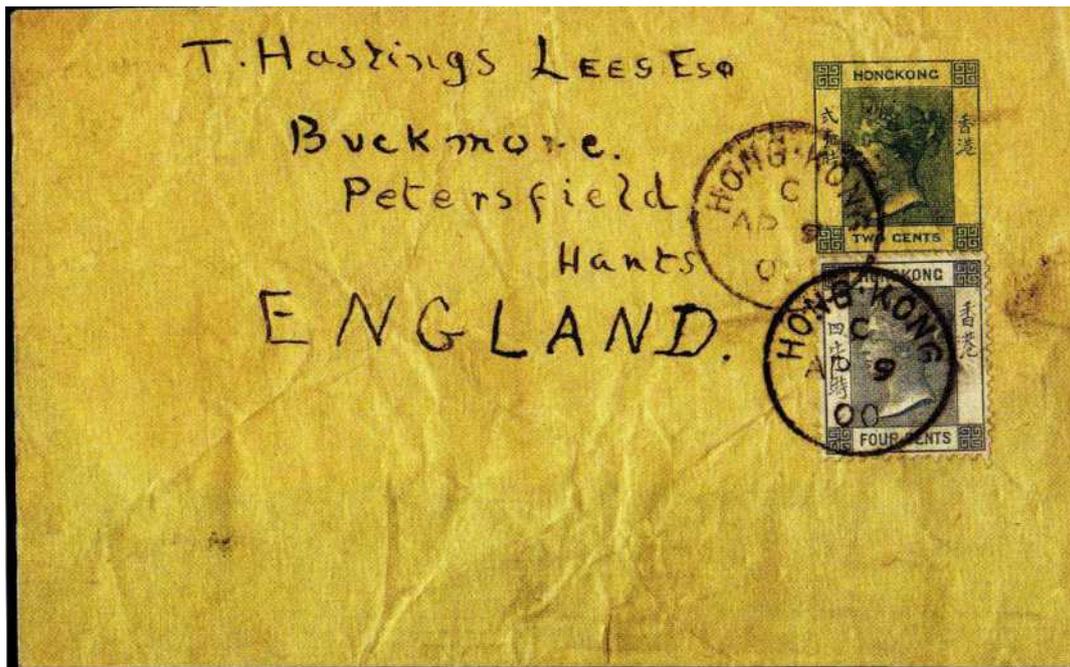


Figure NW-1a. 9.4.00: Earliest known use of Hong Kong newspaper wrapper

Col. Webb recorded 4.9.00 as the earliest date of usage of the QV NW (Webb and Sch. Type 1). Only two earlier examples: 9.4.00 and 16.7.00, have been seen after over 40 years, including in the HKSCJ 268 survey of postal stationery ERD / LRD's, and in Proud's record of PS usage at each of the Treaty Ports. The earliest known wrapper, which is exhibited in Figure NW-1a, is five months earlier than Webb's ERD (Spink, 1.2008, lot 1165). It is up-rated with a 4c QV adhesive stamp, which in conjunction with the 2c indicia, paid for three times the 2c per two ounces rate, effective from 1896 to 1926 for all types of printed matter, according to Mr. Proud's rate tables. Very few NWs have been seen that were sent at double or higher rates. This newspaper was carried by P&O steamers: the *Massilia* to Colombo, and then the *Victoria* to London with the "heavy mail", where she arrived on 20.5.1900.

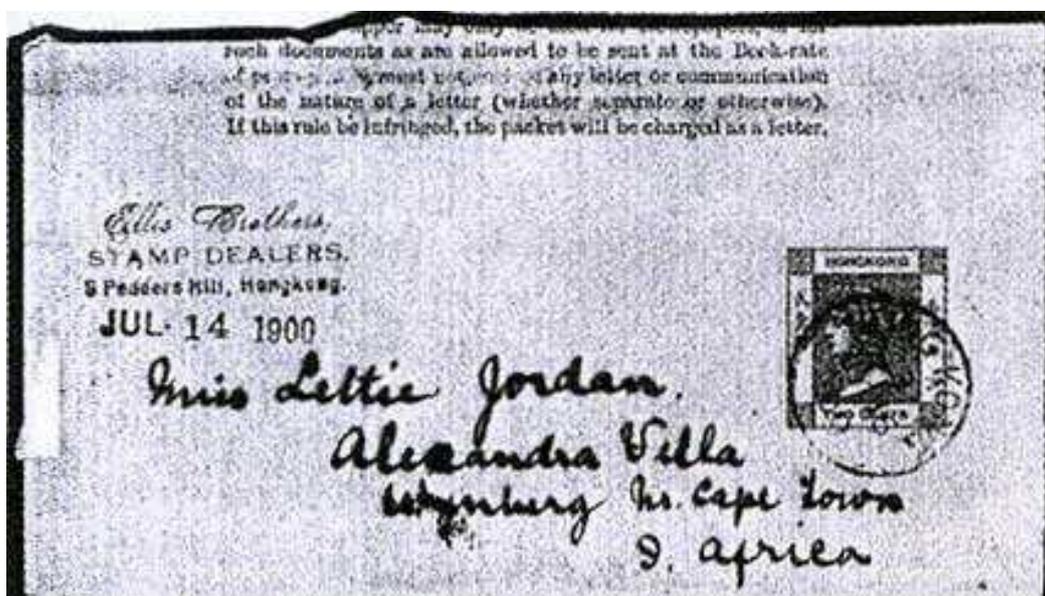


Figure NW-1b. 16.7.00: Earlier NW than Webb recorded; earliest printed matter to SA

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The Figure NW-1b wrapper was sent to South Africa (SA), quite a scarce destination from HK (2.2004 John Bull auction, lot 991). The Figure NW-1b NW is the earliest known printed matter sent from China to SA. Analysis indicates that, although the Union Castle Line provided various services for mail to SA in earlier years, the termination of this line was at Mauritius from 1889 to 1908. The British P&O line ceased operation to Mauritius in 1866, and the French Messageries Maritimes Line to Australia ceased operation via Mauritius in 1888. The German Deutsche Ost Afrikanische Hauptlinie began service between Aden and SA in 1890. Thus, Aden became a viable connection point with the German line to SA for the British, French, and German lines from the Far East. An approximate “tight connection” itinerary for the Figure NW-1 wrapper follows:

Mail Ship	Company	Hong Kong	Saigon	Aden	Durban
<i>Sydney</i>	French MM	c.16.7.1900	20.7 *	c.7.8	
?	German **			c.8.8	c.4.9

* The Saigon date for the MM *Sydney* is from Salles Tome V. The HK departures were typically 3 to 4 days before the Saigon dates, which is a good match with the 16.7 HK c.d.s.

** The 27 day estimate for the German ship line voyage from Aden to SA is based on recorded data in 1903: “German Mailboat Services to East Africa 1890–1914”; K. Pennycook; “The London Philatelist”, Vol. 85, No. 999-1000, page 56.

Figure NW-1c illustrates the 2.7.01 earliest known NW use from a Treaty Port; in this case, Canton. Proud did not record any NWs used from Canton. Proud’s record and my personal experience indicate that the use of NWs from Treaty Ports other than Ningpo, from where a single quite large accumulation of NWs surfaced a good many years ago (addressed to Stamm), is rare. This is the only NW that I have seen from Canton.

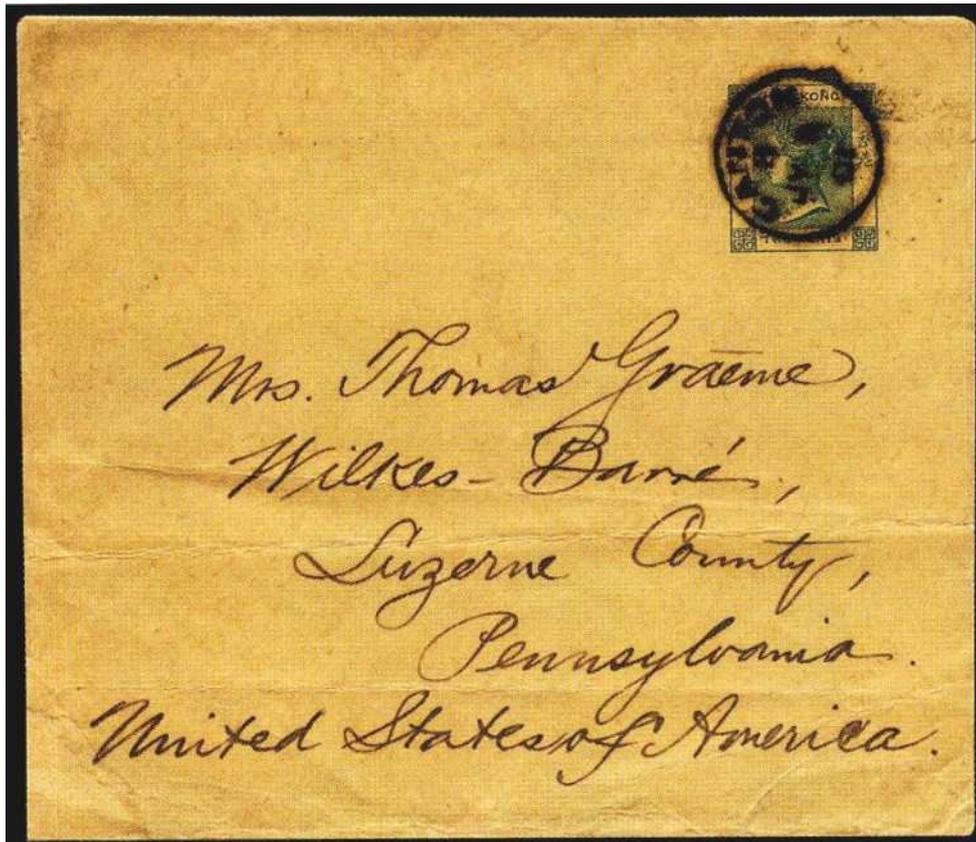


Figure NW-1c. 2.7.01: Earliest known newspaper wrapper from a Treaty Port

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Chris Norton reported a 24.5.05 example from Shanghai, and a 13.9.01 example from Hankow is also known (Spink, 11.2003, lot 1317). Another QV 2c NW, was sent by the British Consul (“H. B. M. Consulate / G.M.H. Playfair” chop) from Hankow on 19.10.03 to New Zealand (John Bull, 3.2007, lot 1048). It is franked with additional 2c and 10c HK adhesive stamps, apparently to pay for a very heavy newspaper. Proud recorded no NWs from Shanghai or Hankow.

I also have a QV NW sent from HK to Canton. Interport use of NWs is very seldom seen, and this 17.3.06 example is also quite a late use of the QV NW. A 10.1.05 NW to Calcutta bears a Jardine Matheson FAC (Bull 6.2011, lot 1255), indicating that it originated from somewhere outside of HK. Although the HK c.d.s. is not readable on another QV NW from this correspondence, also bearing a Jardine Matheson FAC, it arrived in India on 11.11.06 (EB 5623283830). Given the typical steamer voyage time from HK to ports along the east coast of India at that period, it would have been sent from HK in late October.

Another 1906 example was sent on 23.7 from HK to Bangkok (Bull, 3.2007, lot 1050), the scarcest destination for a NW that I recall having seen, other than the Figure NW-1b example sent to South Africa. I have an even later QV NW usage, with 11.4.08 c.d.s. struck on the indicia, but it is, unfortunately, a small piece cut out of a complete NW. Chris Norton reported a 23.3.03 QV NW with a Kowloon c.d.s., the earliest I recall seeing from a Branch PO. The latest known QV NW use, 16.9.08, which is illustrated in Figure NW-1d, originated from the HK Western Branch PO (Bull, 12.2002, lot 979). It is the only known NW bearing a date stamp of that PO.

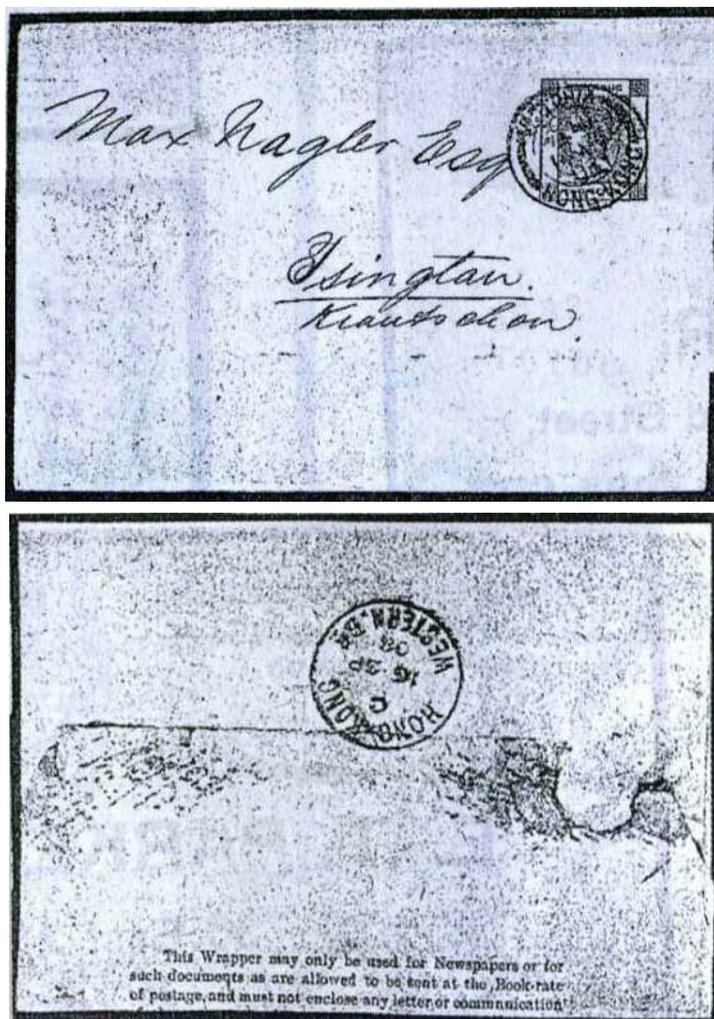


Figure NW-1c. 16.9.08: QV HK NW LRD; only known NW from Western Branch

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Col. Webb listed 12.5.03 as the ERD for KE NWs, but a 4c carmine NW cancelled 15.6.03 is the earliest example since seen (D&O, 12.1993, lot 1665). Unfortunately, I have not been able to locate an image of this NW. Proud did not record KE NW use from any of the Treaty Ports until 19.1.04, a 2c (Sch. 2), and 7.7.03, a 4c (Sch. 3), both from Ningpo. A KE NW, purported to be dated 7.2.03, was offered by PhilaChina as lot 977 in their 4.2004 auction, but the dates are unclear in the illustration. The 7.2.03 date seems unlikely, since it would represent earlier usage than any other KE PS of any type, even preceding the 12.2.03 date for the HK KE 8c adhesive stamp, the earliest KE issue that is recorded in Gibbons, Part 17.

The 2c KE NW illustrated in Figure NW-2a is, not only the latest known usage of KE NWs, but also the latest known use of all Hong Kong NWs. The Chinese date in the “FROM STEAMER BOX / SWATOW” cancel is 18.10.25. The “25” equates to 1936 in the conversion from Chinese cancel dates, based on the founding of the Republic of China. Webb recorded the usage of this bilingual ship marking in the “early thirties,” and Hosking recorded its use only in 1934 (Type 3408, scarcity “D”: rare), so this example represents the latest known usage.

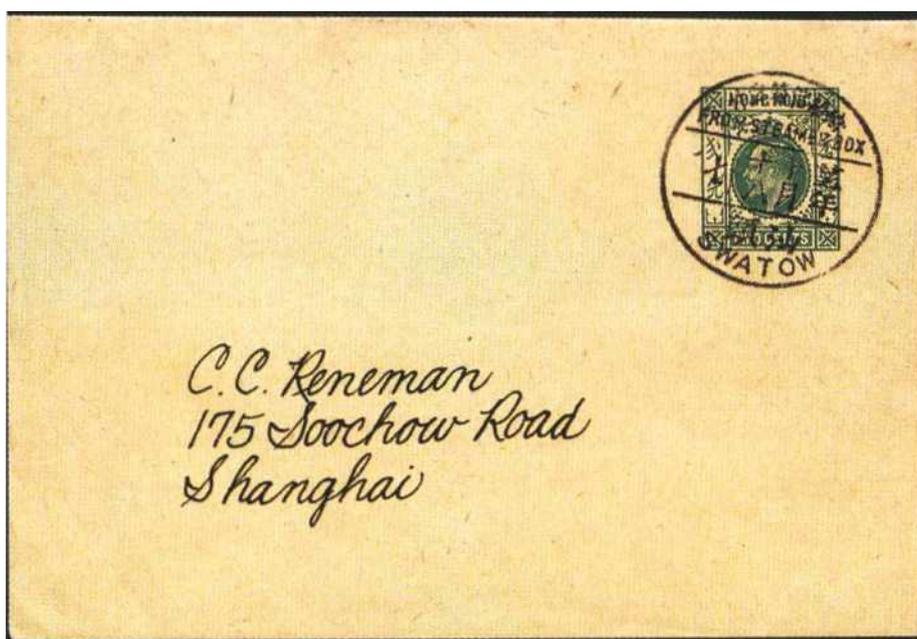


Figure NW-2a. 18.10.36: Latest use of HK news wrappers & Swatow “Steamer Box”

The cancel on the Figure NW-2a NW is identical to the one illustrated in Col. Webb’s article on the steamer box markings, right down to the small mark that appears like an apostrophe touching the left edge of the stamp at the upper left of the first character in the center section of the cancel. This led to the possibility that the cancel was photocopied / forged onto the NW, but the APS Expertising Committee gave it a “clean bill of health.” Thus, it seems possible that this was the example of the Swatow Steamer Box marking from which Webb’s illustration was reproduced. Chris Norton rightly made the following “tongue in cheek” observation with respect to this NW:

“With all due respect to the APS Expertising Committee I find that Steamer Box example somewhat contrived. My latest date for normal use is 7 MR 08.”

I had a slightly later KE 2c NW, which is illustrated in Figure NW-2b, and listed in Table NW-1 as the LRD for what Chris defined as the “normal” period of use. It is dated 14.4.08 at HK, and was received at Rangoon, Burma, on 28.4.08. Newspapers were included at the 2c per 2 ounces rate applicable to other printed matter sent to British Empire and Union countries beginning 1.1.99.

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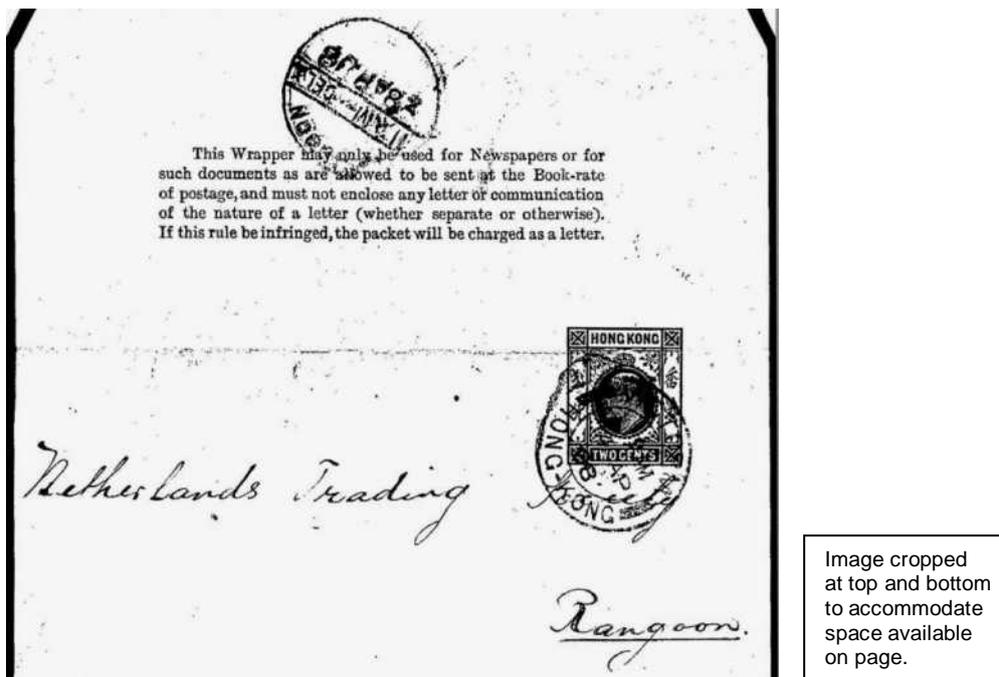


Figure NW-2b. 14.4.08: Latest HK NW use during “normal” period; scarce to Burma

A KE 4c NW, bearing a “Money Order Office / Hong Kong” c.d.s. (John Bull, 6.2011, lot 4278), is illustrated in Figure NW-2c. This “Money Order Office” c.d.s. is the same type as the 24.12.14 example on the KGV 2c NW LRD shown in Figure NW-3b, and the cover has the same address in the same handwriting. The date on the KE example is not legible, but given the virtually identical nature of the usage of these two philatelic NWs, it seems likely that the KE example was sent at the same time as the 24.12.14 KGV NW. Assuming so, the KE NW shown in Figure NW-2b would become the latest known KE 4c NW. The 24.12.14 “Money Order Office” c.d.s. is an early usage, superseding the previous 1923 ERD (HKSCJ 365) shown at the right of Figure NW-2b (see the description of Figure NW-3b concerning the earliest known use of this scarce date stamp).

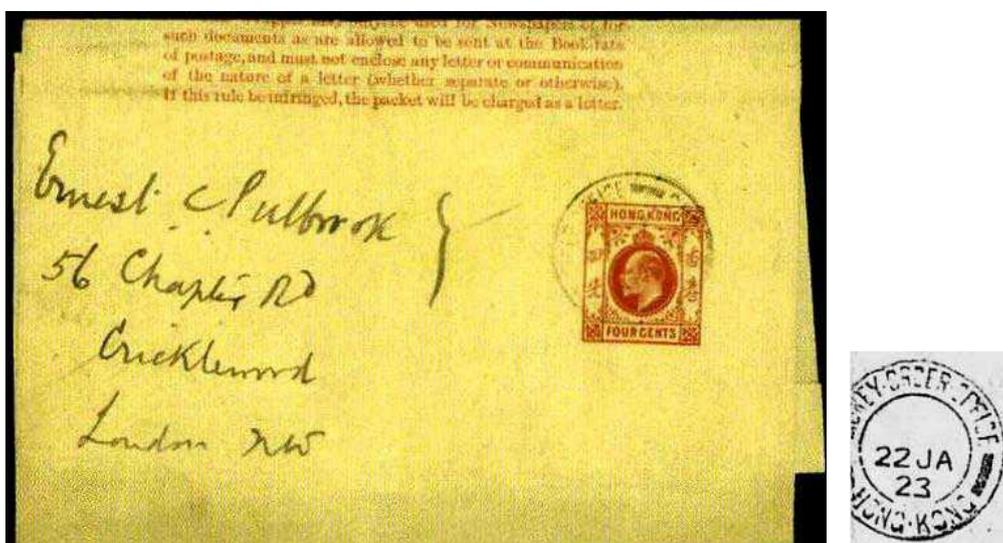


Figure NW-2c. KE 4c NW: probable LRD + early “Money Order Office” c.d.s.

Since the date of the Figure NW-2c NW is uncertain, a verified 13. - .09 (month illegible) KE 4c NW submitted by Chris Norton has been shown as the LRD in Table NW-1. A possibly later (but not illustrated) 26.3.09 CTO example is included in lot 1061 of the John Bull auction in 9.2004.

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Webb recorded only one used example of the KG V NW (Webb and Sch. Type 4). Only four other used examples have since come to light, all since I noted: “No other used example seen” in the original version of this part of the PS monograph. I questioned whether or not the KG V NW had actually been placed on sale for commercial use, and Chris Norton rightly responded:

“With regard to your comment (p. 95) about whether or not KGV NWs were ever actually sold for commercial use, you will be interested to know that the Hong Kong G.P.O. Report for 1915 gives the number of Newspaper Wrappers sold as 14,497 (in 1914) and 14,875 (in 1915). I doubt if all of those were for **non-commercial** use.”



Figure NW-3a. 28.5.13 - Earliest of only 5 known used KGV newspaper wrappers

Col. Webb's 28.5.13 ERD for the 2c KG V wrapper was offered as lot 2203 in the 2.2008 John Bull auction (illustrated in the original version of this monograph). The indicia was cancelled with the second type of Kowloon Branch PO date stamp. Chris Norton reports another example from the Kowloon Branch, which is shown in Figure NW-3a, with the same earliest date and addressee as the example noted above, and also an additional KG V NW with illegible cancel. This NW was up-rated with a one cent adhesive stamp (John Bull auction, 7.2007, lot 2677), possibly with a philatelic intent, since the next NW rate increment above two cents was four cents. It was marked postage due (Proud Type UP9: 1909 – 33), although this “T” was subsequently struck out.

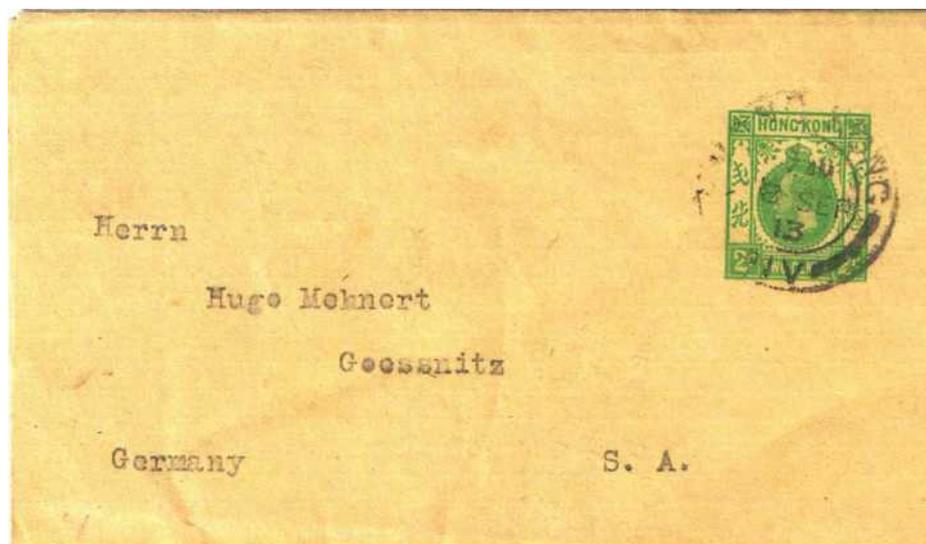


Figure NW-3b. 1 of only 5 known used examples of KGV newspaper wrapper

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Ms. Susan Crewe has an 8, 18 or 28.9.13 KGV 2c NW, one of the five currently known used examples of this wrapper, which is illustrated in Figure NW-3b. The c.d.s. is Proud Type D103, recorded in use from 1911 to 1917. Only an “8” is discernable for the day, but the day / month placement in this datestamp indicates a two digit day to me. If it is dated 8.9, as indicated by Ms. Crewe, it was picked up at HK by the French steamer, *Australien*, based on the 13.9.13 Saigon date recorded by Salles for that vessel, and a typical three to four day transit time between those two ports. Neither the British, French, nor Italian ship departure dates from HK fit, if this NW is dated 18.9 or 28.9.13, which leaves either the German or Austrian shipping line as the next most likely carrier.

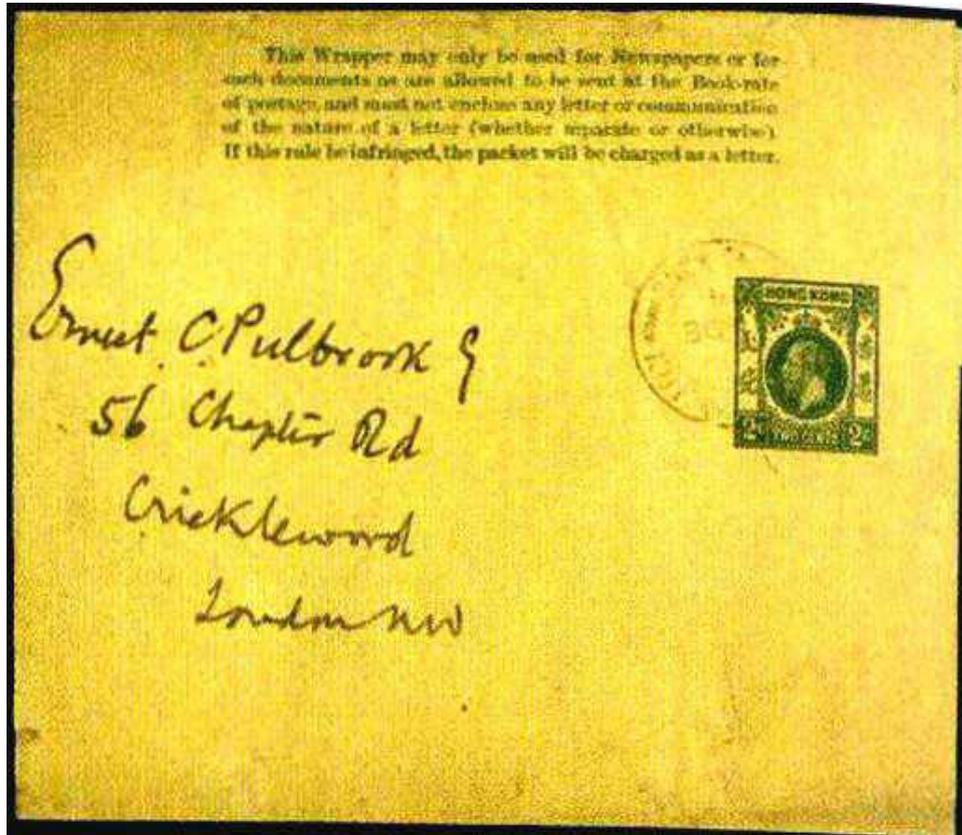


Figure NW-3c. 24.12.14 - latest known KGV NW; early “Money Order Office” c.d.s.

The indicia of the latest known KGV NW (John Bull, 6.2011, lot 4284), which is philatelically cancelled with a 24.12.14 “Money Order Office / Hong Kong” c.d.s., is displayed in Figure NW-3c. This “Money Order Office” c.d.s. (similar to Webb Type EE, but with side bars) predates the example shown on cover in HKSCJ 365 by nine years. Chris Norton reported a 2.12.13 LRD for Schoenfeld subtype 11d KGV 4c PSE, based on the “Money Order Office” cancel applied on it, which has become the earliest known use of the “Money Order Office” date stamp.

Part 5: NEWSPAPER WRAPPERS KGV CHINA Overprint

So far no used example of the “CHINA” overprint on the KGV NW (Webb and Sch. Type 5) has been recorded by any of the catalogs, including Ian Gibson-Smith’s exhaustive online study of the “CHINA” overprints, and very few unused examples have been seen. An unused “CHINA” NW is illustrated in Figure NW-4 (Zurich Asia, 4.2010, lot 270) for reference purposes. The lack of even a single known used example of the “CHINA” overprint NW is somewhat surprising, since it was calculated in HKSCJ 266/8-4 that, albeit a small quantity, 455 were sold between 1917 and 1922. Perrin reported that 2085 “CHINA” NWs were issued, but the HK PMGs report for 1918 listed an estimated requirement per year of only 100. So who will find the elusive first example of a used KGV “CHINA” overprint NW?

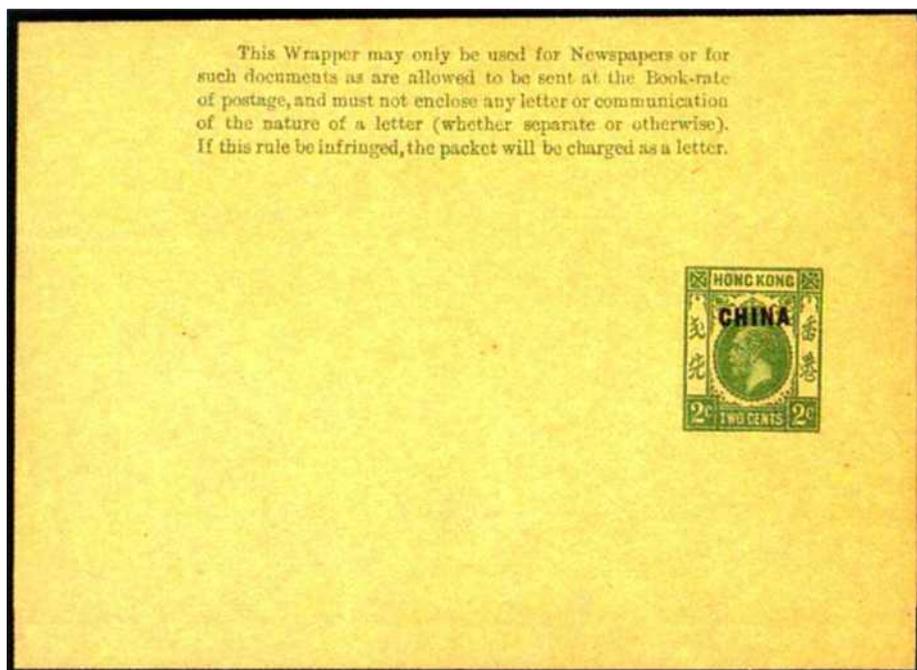


Figure NW-4. Unused KGV NW with “CHINA” overprint; not yet known used

The next section is 6. Aerograms. To access this section or other parts of the monograph, return to the HKSC website/Papers. <http://www.hongkongstudycircle.com/papers.html>