



THE COLLECTORS CLUB

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LIBERIA

History of 1947 Harbor Issues

Commercial development commemorated by two sets of stamps designed and printed by E. A. Wright Bank Note Co., Philadelphia.

By FRANKLIN R. BRUNS, JR.

THE Liberian Roosevelt set (C. C. P., Vol. 24, No. 4, Pages 143-145) was the end of one era, or almost the end of one, and the springboard for another. It was the last regular set to make its appearance under the aegis of Postmaster General Phillips.

Preceding, and following the Roosevelt issue, were the various "emergency" surcharges of which the full story is yet to be written. Gordon Harmer, editor of Scott's Standard Postage Stamp Catalogue, has a partial listing of both the postage and air mail stamps in his book, but it is far from complete.

Data are known to have been made available to Scott Publications, Inc. from various sources, but apparently even that will have to await the 1949 edition despite the quantities of postage and air mail surcharges used on legitimate commercial mail.

This phase of Liberian postal history is, truthfully, somewhat clouded. The full details were promised to the Liberian Philatelic Agency in 1945 and 1946, but, for some reasons which can only be surmised, none were forthcoming.

Sanabria's Airpost Catalogue, in treating the surcharged air mails, is more comprehensive, but is still far from being accurate.

These surcharges, representing an interesting field of study, are dropped from their rightful place in the study of Liberian philately, pending clarification of several details.

It is hoped the official decrees desired by Gordon Harmer, editor of the Scott cata-

logues, will be available early in 1948, to prove their actual postal authority and use.

1947 Harbor Issue

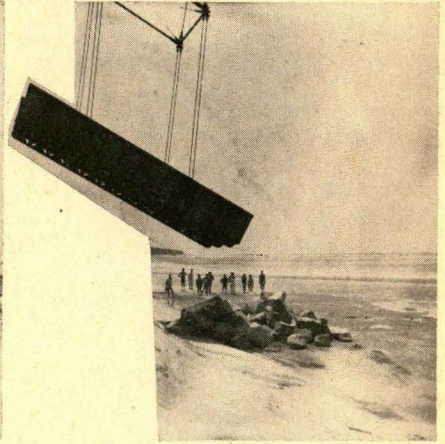
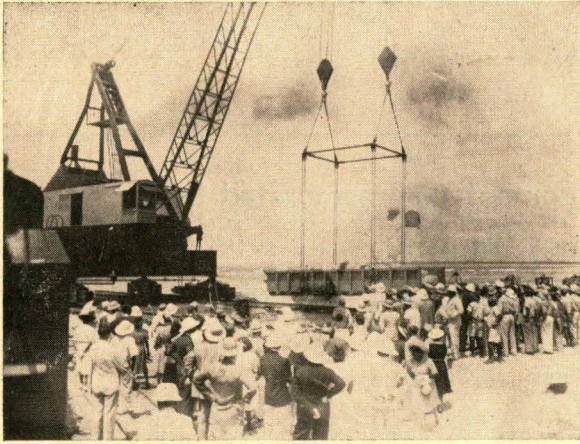
One of the great needs for Liberia's development has always been a good harbor. At Monrovia, the capital, ships were forced to discharge their cargoes via tender. It was natural, therefore, that stamp-minded Walter F. Walker, Secretary of Public Works and Utilities, should foster a set of two stamps to mark the inauguration of this very important project.

Postmaster General James T. Phillips, in the early summer of 1946, authorized the preparation of special 5-cent and 24-cent stamps, the latter an air mail, to mark the inauguration of the harbor project by President William V. S. Tubman.

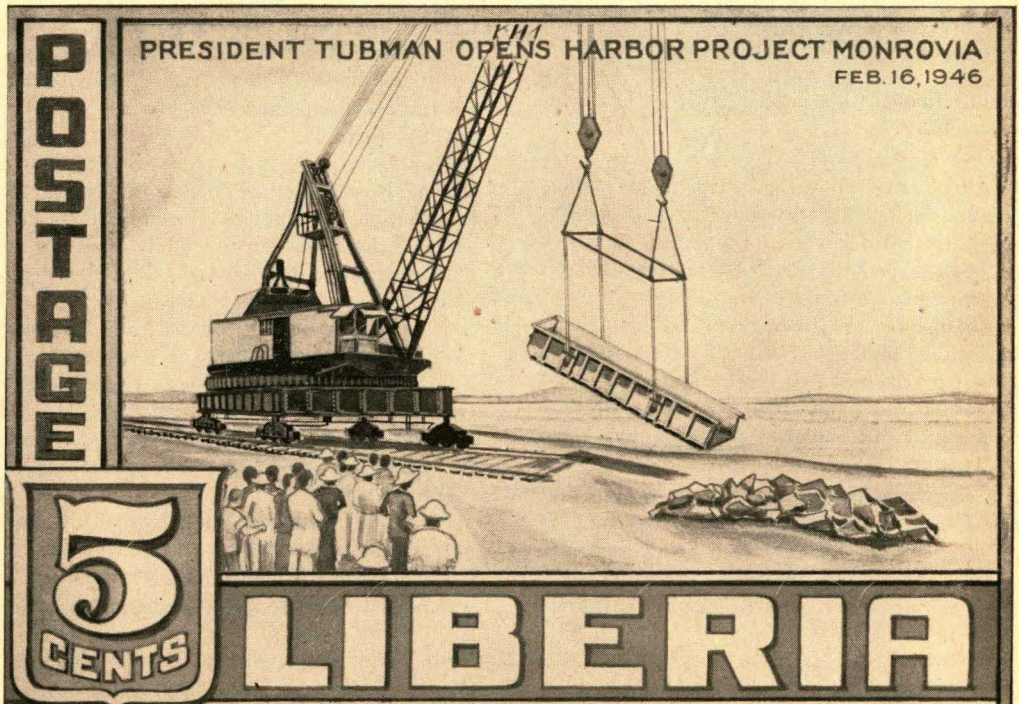
Two designs were proposed: one showed a close-up of the President at the controls of a large derrick; the other was a composite of two photographs showing the large derrick dumping the first load of rocks on the beach at Monrovia. The latter was selected as the more desirable.

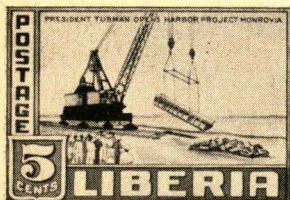
Since the American Bank Note Co. would not accept orders calling for delivery of the finished stamps in less than a year, the order was placed with the E. A. Wright Bank Note Co. of Philadelphia.

On May 20, 1946, the printer submitted the original wash drawing of the design showing a small cluster of Liberians watch-

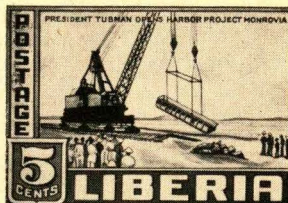


When the Liberian government decided to issue a set of stamps to mark the inauguration of the important harbor project, a group of photographs of the opening ceremonies were considered, and two selected, from which a composite was made. In one photograph, the crane operated by President Tubman held a load of fill rock low off the beach. In another, the truck was tilted and the first load dumped. By super-imposing the second on the first, the crane, truck and load were depicted, and some of the spectators were omitted for clarity, as shown in the enlargement (below) — the actual artists' wash drawing from which the engraver worked.





The first design submitted by the printing firm showed no commemorative date at upper right, and had a small load of rock and several spectators at lower right. The second sketch submitted showed more rock, no spectators and, as yet, no date.



ing the operation at the right of the center vignette; the inscription across the top lacked the date, "Feb. 16, 1946." This design was altered to eliminate the spectators at the extreme right. A modified design was forwarded by the E. A. Wright Bank Note Co. on June 18, and was accepted only with the stipulation that the date be inserted at the top in a second line.

Authority to proceed with the production of the stamps was sent to Philadelphia on July 1, 1946, the order calling for 150,000 of the 5-cent postage value, printed in blue, and 20,000 of the 24-cent air mail, printed in turquoise. Printing was in sheets of 25 with some selvage on each side.

By August 13 engraving had progressed to

such an extent that proofs were submitted in the ordered colors. These proofs, unlike specimens submitted by some companies, were fully perforated and on gummed stamp paper. Two sets were forwarded in all, mounted in a sheet of folder glassine with office staples at each side to make pockets.

Authority to proceed with printing was sent to the E. A. Wright Bank Note Co. on August 14, and shipment followed September 12, 1946. Only one copy of the 5-cent postage value is known to exist overprinted "SPECIMEN" in red diagonally across the stamp.

Issuance, originally planned for September, was delayed by the reshuffling of the Postmaster General's office, and other governmental posts. Finally, on January 2, 1947,



The actual stamps as issued (above) show the addition of the date "Feb. 16, 1946"; (right) a reproduction of the decree.

REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA
POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT
(POSTS & TELEGRAPHS)
MONROVIA.

POSTAL NOTICE No. 7, 1946 "HARBOUR PROJECT STAMPS"

The Public is hereby notified that a special series of two Liberian Postage and Airmail Stamps will be placed on sale at the Monrovia Post Office and the Liberian Philatelic Agency, 25, Beaver Street, New York, U. S. A., January 2, 1947.

The series will include a 5-cent Postage and 24-cent Airmail denominations.

The stamps are in a single design, picturing His Excellency President Tubman dumping the first load of rocks for the Harbour project in Monrovia, February 16, 1946.

Issued this 20th day of
December A. D 1946.

Nete Sie Brownell,
Acting Postmaster General of Liberia

the stamps were placed on sale simultaneously in Liberia and at the Liberian Philatelic Agency in New York. Special first day covers were provided.

1947 Harbor Re-Engraved Issue

On February 1, 1947, even before the two Harbor stamps made their appearances, Nete Sie Brownell, as Acting Postmaster General replacing Postmaster General James T. Phillips, authorized the reduction of air mail postage (foreign) from 70 cents per half-ounce to 25 cents per half-ounce, such a change to go into effect March 1.

This change was made in Order No. 1, 1947, and reads:

REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA
POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT
POST & TELEGRAPHS
MONROVIA
POST OFFICE ORDER
No. 1, 1947

Reductions in Air Mail Rates



Revised stamps, as issued, show the elimination of the commemorative inscription across the top of each stamp, and the change of the Air Mail stamp from 24 cents to 25 cents. Decree which authorized these stamps is shown (reduced) at right.

“Effective March 1, 1947, the rate of postage on foreign air mail will be reduced from 70 cents to 25 cents per half-ounce.”

To meet this condition, since air mail is widely used by those in and out of that country, it was decided to revise the 24-cent by changing the value, eliminating the commemorative inscription and date, changing the 24-cent air mail to 25-cent air mail.

Since the designs were almost identical with the original Harbor stamps, it was only necessary to show trial color proofs of the accepted design. In the case of the 25-cent value, two sets of proofs were submitted. It was also decided to re-issue the 5-cent postage value without the commemorative date.

The imperforate proofs of the 5-cent value were printed in a reddish shade, and a purple.

In the case of the air mails, imperforate proofs were submitted in green and orange. Only two sets of each color trial are known to exist.

Special first-day covers finally arrived here during June. Each had a special post office imprint in the upper left.

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POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT
(POSTS & TELEGRAPHS)
Monrovia.

POSTAL NOTICE No. 2.

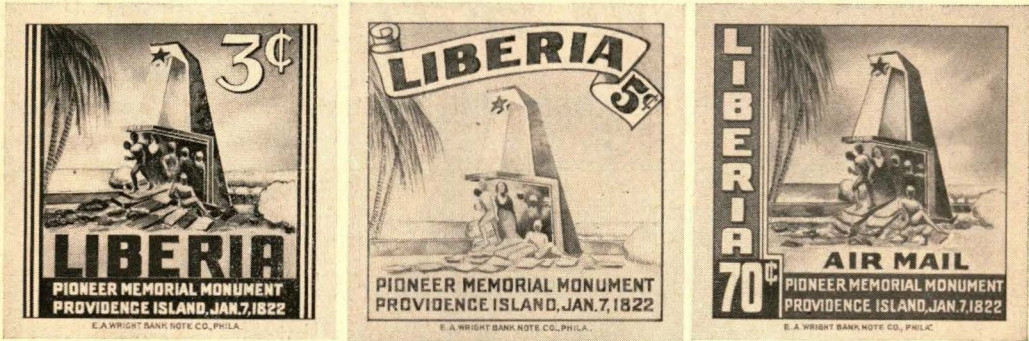
"RE-ENGRAVED" HARBOUR STAMPS.

The Public is hereby notified that a special series of the Harbour Project Stamp - "Re-engraved," will be on sale at the Monrovia Post Office and the Liberian Philatelic Agency, 25 Beaver Street, New York, U. S. A., on and after the 16th day of May, 1947.

The Series consist of 5-cent ordinary Postage and 25-cent Airmail.

Issued this 12th day
of May A. D. 1947.

Nete Sie Brownell,
POSTMASTER GENERAL OF LIBERIA



Artists' wash drawings were submitted for the Pioneer Monument issue. The three projected values are shown above, while the eight original sketches are shown below, marked in order of their popularity with high Liberian officials. Nos. 1, 2 and 3 (b) were accepted. The project was abandoned.



Apart from the imperforate stamps, which may well be from sheets sent in mistake before perforating, color proofs on card are known of the values in colors as follows: 1m. gray, 2m. brownish red, 5m. green, 10m. vermilion, 25m. blue, 50m. violet.

Ten examples only of the artists' proofs of all six values exist, printed from the die on small sheets of paper 170 x 120 mm., and each consecutively numbered from 1 to 10.

Undoubtedly these stamps call for more study of printings and transfer varieties.

It should be possible to find all the local stamps on cover in combination with stamps of other of the extra-territorial posts (on letters for overseas). The stamps of the Cherifien posts are largely found with French stamps on letters from French troops, the French stamp, of course, paying the overseas postage. Much more rarely one finds them used with stamps of Gibraltar, used at one of the British consular agencies, or at Tangier and, of course, with stamps of the British "Morocco Agencies." I have a number of such covers of various periods, addressed to France, England and Germany, the three countries which had probably the largest trading interests in Morocco.

LIBERIA

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Accepted values in the set, which is supposed to feature "Commerce & Industry," include the 5-cent postage and the new 25-cent air mail.

The postage value was produced in purple, with an order of 200,000 copies, and the 25-cent air mail in red, with an order of 50,000. Both values were extensively used for commercial mail from Liberia.

1947 Pioneer Monument Issue

The earliest settlement of the pioneers was on Providence Island on January 7, 1822. From there they went to what is now the site of Monrovia. To mark this small island's place in Liberian history, a monument was to have been erected on Providence Island on the 125th anniversary and, appropriately enough, it was decided that a set of three stamps should be issued.

Based on a large but rough sketch of the

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DANIEL F. KELLEHER

7 Water Street

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Boston, Mass.

LIBERIA

(continued from page 61)

proposed monument, an artist of the E. A. Wright Bank Note Co. prepared a group of eight sketches, or roughs, showing various frame treatments. These were shown to a number of individuals connected with, or interested in, Liberia, and curiously enough all selected the same three designs (1, 2 and 3A—*See illustration*), with a few also favoring 3B.

On the strength of this feeling, the E. A. Wright Bank Note Co. proceeded to prepare three designs, for the 3-cent and 5-cent postage values, and 70-cent air mail (which would have had to be changed to 25 cents). These wash drawings were very striking, and were on the verge of being authorized when a sudden change in government plans called the whole thing off.

Postmaster General Nete Sie Brownell, on February 10, 1947, wrote that the statue was not to be erected. There was some consideration of a set of stamps showing Providence Island itself, but available sketches were so poor the whole idea was dropped.

U. S. NEW ISSUES

(continued from page 47)

tions of this new stamp may send not in excess of 10 addressed envelopes, accompanied with remittance for the stamps to be affixed, to the Postmaster at Tuskegee Institute, Ala., in time for servicing before January 5. The envelope addressed to the Postmaster should be indorsed "First Day Covers, Carver Stamp." The stamp will be on sale at the Philatelic Agency, Washington 25, D. C., the next day and at other post offices throughout the country as soon as distribution will permit.

October 30, 1947.

It was announced last night that the designer of the new 3-cent Dr. George Washington Carver stamp is William A. Roach, with the engravers being Edward R. Grove, portrait; James T. Vail, frame; lettering and numeral by James T. Vail and Axel W. Christensen.

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