



CAPE-OF-GOOD-HOPE STAMPS AND POSTAL HISTORY

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Cover image: The cover image shows Jo Bodeon, a back-roper in the mule room at Chace Cotton Mill. Burlington, Vermont. This and other similar images in this book were taken by Lewis W. Hine, in the period between 1908-1912. These images as well as social campaigns by many including Hine, helped to formulate America's anti-child labour laws.

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VOC_HANDSTAMP

Contents

Cape of Good Hope - Postal History

The Dutch Period in the Cape of Good Hope

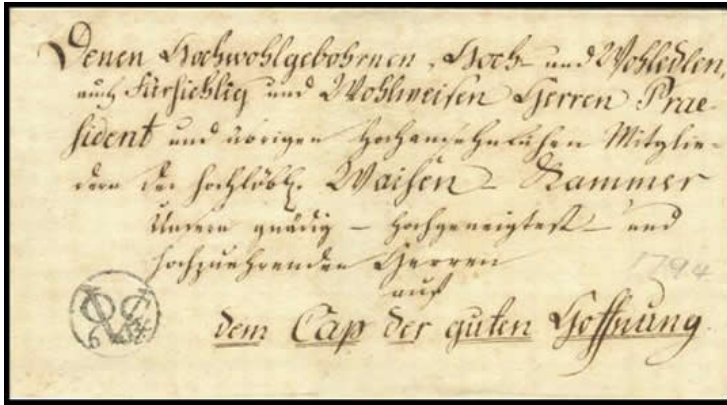


Figure 1: C 1794 Wrapper addressed to the Cape of Good Hope in German showing a single strike of the VOC 6 stuiver handstamp (Goldblatt VOC 3) (photo-cert.: PFSA)

The VOC Handstamp

A proclamation signed by the Acting Governor, [Johannes-Izaak-Rhenius](#) on 2nd March 1792 formed the basis of the establishment of a postal service at the Cape of Good Hope Colony. The post office dealt exclusively with mail to and from overseas. (see establishment of [First Cape of Good Hope post office](#)).

A lot of this correspondence was official and addressed to Cape of Good Government [Governors](#) and officials.



Figure 2:

The first postal marking associated with the Cape is the VOC handstamp. It consists of a circle containing the monogram Vereenigde (Nederlandsche Geoctroyeerde) Oos-Indische Companie; the United Netherlands Chartered East India Company. Covers addressed to the Cape of Good Hope and stamped with the VOC handstamp are scarce. The collector should be careful as forgeries are known. These covers are best bought with a certificate.

*Postal History Covers with Two Strikes of the VOC handstamp
(12 stuiver rate)*



Figure 3: C 1795 Wrapper addressed to de Heer Hendrik Justus de Wet Deutchse Consul de Caap de Goede Hoop. Marked by the ship Beshout Capt Chr. Martens. At the right hand corner there is a talismanic inscription D.g.g.(die god geleide entrusted to God). Cover bears two fine strikes of the VOC six stuiver handstamp. (Goldblatt VOC-3)

Provenance: Photo-certified PFSA (ex-Goldblatt Collection)

These covers are more scarce than those stamped with only one VOC handstamp.

Three Strikes (18 stuiver rate)

Covers with three strikes (18 stuiver rate) are even scarcer and must be considered of the utmost rarity. One such cover is shown on this page by kind permission.

Only one cover with a VOC 2 guilder handstamp addressed to the Cape of Good Hope has been reported in the literature.(See image below). This was received in the Cape on 16 January 1793.



Figure 4: Cover to the Cape of Good Hope struck with three strikes of the VOC handstamp. Talismanic inscription at lower left hand corner.

Was the VOC handstamp a Cape of Good Hope handstamp

To my knowledge all known covers are addressed to the Cape of Good Hope and at best the VOC was an arrival stamp. However, I

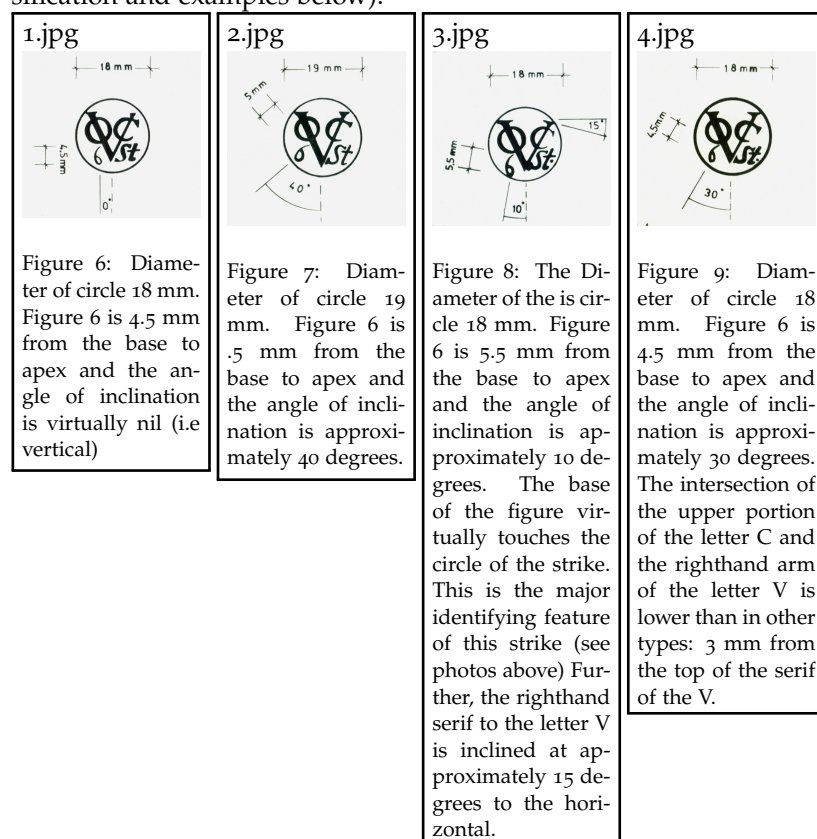
share Goldblatt's view that it is highly unlikely that so many different arrivals stamps would have been issued to the Cape, especially given the fact that these early mails were limited in number.



Figure 5: VOC two guilder handstamp Cover from the Netherlands with the Dutch two guilder VOC handstamp. The VOC strike was probably applied on Departure. The letter was received at the Cape of Good Hope on 16 January 1793. At bottom left there is a talismanic inscription 'Met Heer en Vrind Die god geleijde in Salvo', i.e. Per gentleman and friend entrusted to God in Heaven).

VOC Handstamp Classification

VOC handstamps are normally classified based on the angle from the vertical of the Number 6 (as per Goldblatt). This is still an area where further research can lit some light. (See VOC handstamp classification and examples below).



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Researching these Covers

Two archive websites provide valuable information on the voyages and passages to the Cape of Good Hope:

<http://vocopvarenden.nationaalarchief.nl/detail.aspx?ID=1055256>

<http://www.historici.nl/Onderzoek/Projecten/DAS/detailVoyage/99080>

They have excellent search facilities and although not possible to trace passengers at least some of the VOC settlers and officials can be traced. Based on the dates of the covers one can trace these early ships.