

# Philately of Rhodesia and Nyasaland

## 1954 – 1964

### PURPOSE OF THE EXHIBIT

This exhibit shows the postage methods used by the Federal government from 1954 to 1964. It is not a traditional exhibit, nor a postal history exhibit, but a combination of the two, showing some production material as well as usages, especially to unusual destinations.

### SCOPE OF THE EXHIBIT

It includes printer's proofs, stamps of two definitives sets, commemorative stamps, meters, free franks and postage dues. Usages are presented. The exhibit also shows errors, perforation and plate varieties.

### HISTORY

Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland formed in 1953, from 3 countries, Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, that had issued stamps. Southern and Northern Rhodesia used joint stamps from 1892 to 1923 under the British South Africa Company. In 1909 Rhodesia was added to stamps by overprint. Southern Rhodesia became self-governing colony in 1923, issuing stamps. Northern Rhodesia was declared a British Protectorate printing first stamps in 1925. The first stamps of Nyasaland in 1901 used British Central Africa Protectorate. In 1908 the name was changed to Nyasaland Protectorate and these stamps in use at time of federation.

### Highlights of the exhibit are:

1. Plate Proofs from first and second definitives
2. **10/- 1954 definitive** on cover (Frame 2 page 12)
3. **1d color missing error**, 1959 definitives (Frame 2 page 15)
4. **3d printed on gummed side**, 1959 definitives (Frame 2 page 15)
5. **10/- 1959 definitive** on cover (Frame 3 page 8)
6. Plate proofs of vignette **Victoria Falls Centenary commemorative** (Frame 3 page 9)
7. **Postage Due hand-stamp overprint**, one of 240 (Frame 4 page 7)
8. Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland Postage Dues on cover.
9. Federation Postage Due on cover.

Important items are framed in light magenta.



The exhibit is organized as follows:

Printer's Plate Proofs: 1954 Definitives

1954 Definitive Issue and Usage

Printer's Plate Proofs: 1959 Definitives

1959 Definitive Issue and Usage

Commemoratives

Victoria Falls, 1955

Kariba Dam and Hydroelectric Scheme, 1960

Mining and Metallurgical Congress, 1961

Air Mail Service: London – Rhodesia, 1962

World Tobacco Congress, 1963

International Red Cross Centenary, 1963

World Council of Young Men's Service Clubs, 1963

Postage due

Free Franks

Meters

After the breakup

Synopsis: Philately of Rhodesia and Nyasaland 1954-1964  
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**Treatment:** This exhibit examines the ways postage was applied during the short-lived Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. The exhibit shows the stamps produced during this period and their postal usage, postage due, meters and free franks. Revenue stamps are not included. Nor are stamps issued by the Rhodesia Railways, a state-owned corporation. The political entity was established in 1953, with the first stamps issued in 1954. The Federation was dissolved on December 31, 1963, but I show federal era postal stationery used with 1964 Post-Federation Southern Rhodesia stamps, and demonetized R&N stamps used post break up, hence the dates 1954 to 1964 used in the title.

The exhibit is organized chronologically in each section, beginning with proofs where available. The stamps and varieties are shown, followed by usages. After the sections on stamps, postage due issues are shown. Free franks and meters are then presented. The conclusion shows items produced for the Federation used after the breakup.

Mixed frankings using stamps from one of the three territories that make up the Federation are found. Pre-federation stamps were withdrawn on 30 June 1954, but most were not demonetized until 1 January 1959. Two examples from Southern Rhodesia are shown, one a registered envelope with King George VI indicia, and the other a Queen Elizabeth definitive from 1953 on cover together with 1954 definitives. An example from Nyasaland on an aerogramme is shown.

**Importance:** These were the only postage stamps used during the Federal period.

**Study and Research:** It is relatively easy to find examples of usage to foreign destinations, especially in Europe and North America, but it is difficult to find examples of correctly franked covers using the higher denomination stamps, and also domestic second-class mail. The 10-shilling definitives on cover is the only ones I have seen in 30 years of searching. Postage Dues on cover are also elusive. The territorial postage due on cover shown may be philatelic, but do show correct usage. A range of unusual destinations is exhibited, including Honduras, Goa, Yugoslavia and Madagascar.

**Rarity:** Plate proofs of the definitives are available to collectors. Essays have been released to the public from the archives of Waterlow & Sons, but are in the hands of a few collectors overseas. Photographic proofs of commemoratives have come on the market, but the exhibitor was outbid. Plate proofs of the centennial of Dr. Livingstone's sighting of Victoria Falls are shown.

The Postage Due rubber stamp overprint is one highlight of the exhibit. There is only one sheet of 240 known with purple ink. Two of the stamps were donated to the British Royal collection. The remaining 235 stamps appeared on the market in the 1990s. It comes with a certificate of authentication from Johnson Philatelics.

The major errors of the 1959 definitive set are the 1d with the vignette missing and the 3d printed on the gummed side. The 1d stamps come from a single coil of 480 stamps. The 3d seems to have come from a sheet of 240. The exhibitor is conducting a census of both. An example of each is presented. For commemorative issues, plate flaws constitute the main varieties. Some examples are shown. Major color shifts have been identified in the tobacco and 30th anniversary of air service issues.

### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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