

## THE HALFPENNY IS THE KEY

Prior to 1908 mails from the Cayman Islands were small, irregular and infrequent. Often as few as 100 letters or so would make a mail every two to eight weeks. Approximately 550 sheets of the  $\frac{1}{2}^d$  and the  $1^d$  with 400 sheets of  $2\frac{1}{2}^d$  stamps were supplied in the five years 1902 to 1907. This resulted in shortages of these low values at various times.

The postal history of the islands is shown both local and overseas through the keyplate design halfpenny stamps of Edward VII and George V including the 1907 surcharge, various rates, town and village cancels, special postal services and mails are shown.

### Local Mail

#### Georgetown

Following the reduction in local postal rates from  $1^d$  to  $\frac{1}{2}^d$  in June 1908 a 1.00 p.m. daily local mail delivery service within Georgetown was introduced in January 1909. No local mail prior to 1908 has been recorded.

Local Georgetown cover with type V cancel to Miss G. A. Parsons, formerly postmistress, promoted in 1908 to Clerk of the Council addressed to Government House.

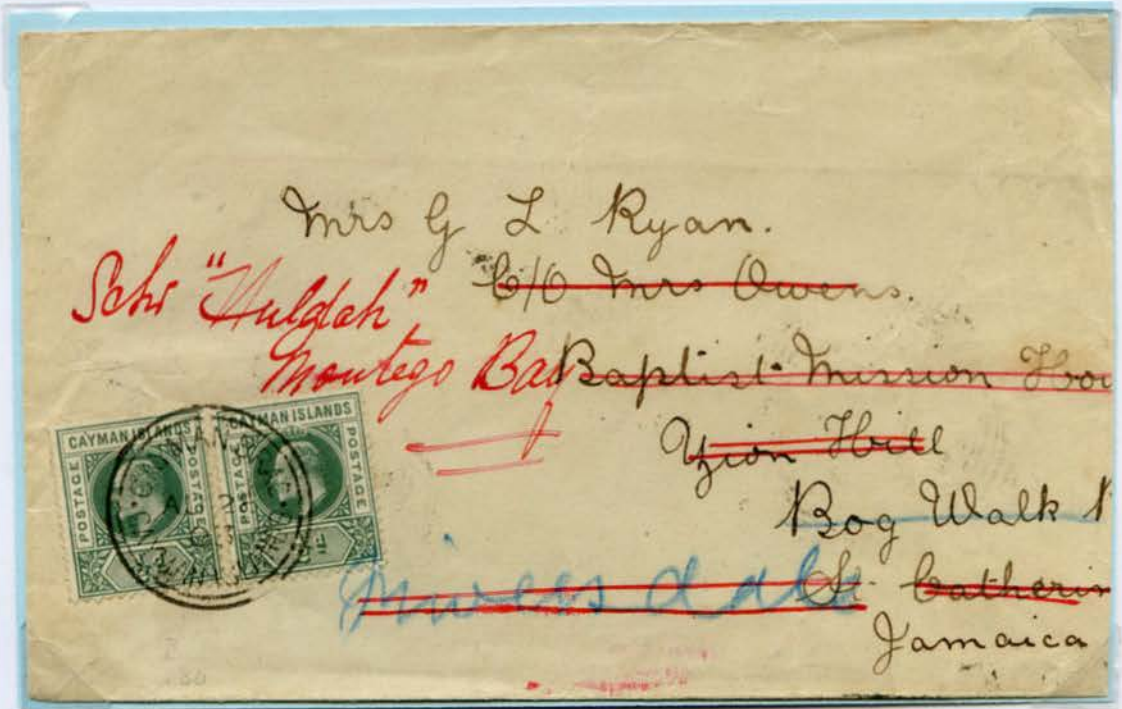


**Schooner Mail**

Mail sent to sailors on schooners at sea for prolonged periods would be sent to a poste restante address from which mail would be forwarded.

August 1903 cover from Cayman Brac type II cancel to Bog Walk Jamaica with two Postage ½<sup>d</sup> for 1<sup>d</sup> empire rate. Forwarded to Montego Bay when news arrived that the schooner was in port.

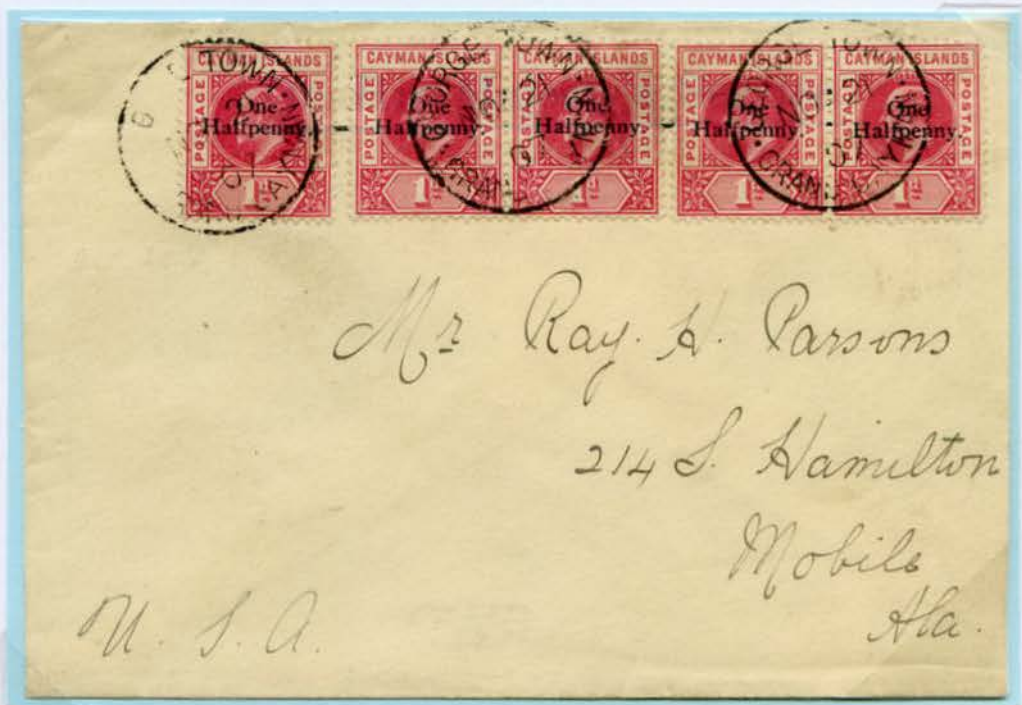
September 1908 cover from Georgetown Grand Cayman type IV cancel to Mobile Alabama with five Postage and Revenue ½<sup>d</sup> for 2½<sup>d</sup> foreign letter rate.





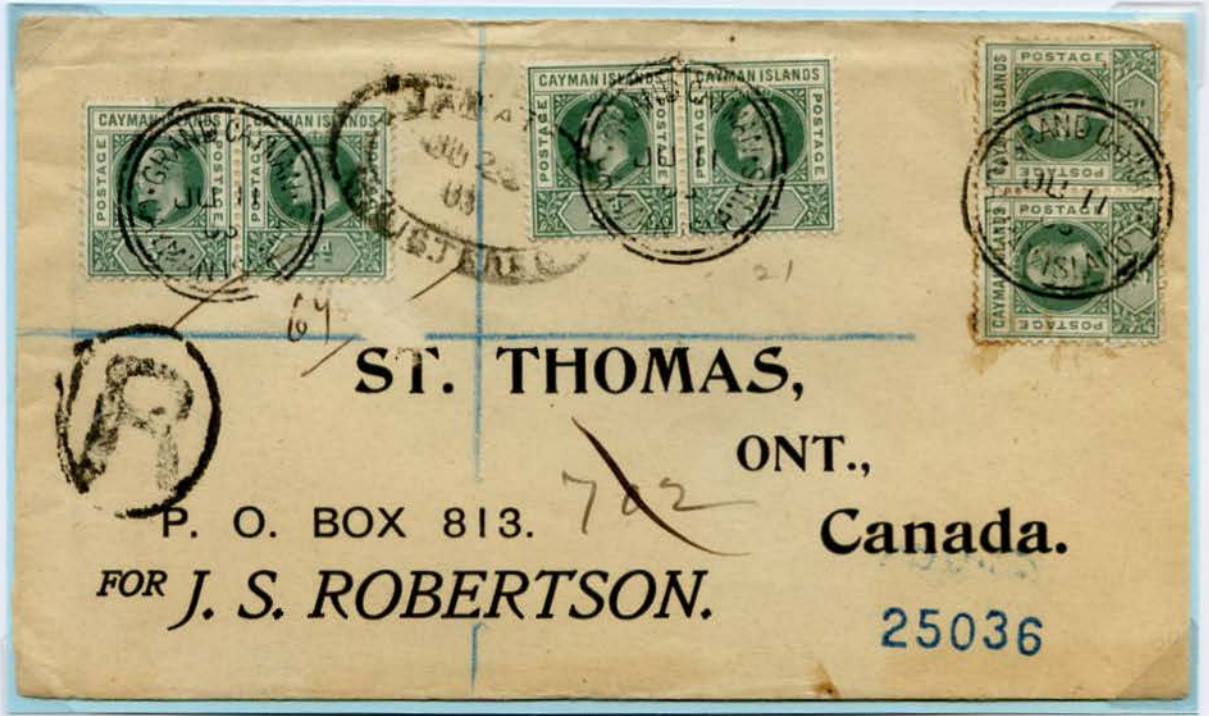
### Foreign Letter Rate

Covers with five adhesives 1905 Postage Postage  $\frac{1}{2}^d$  with Georgetown IIIa cancel used December 1905 and 1907 "One Halfpenny" on  $1^d$  surcharge used during the shortage of  $\frac{1}{2}^d$  stamps in November 1907, George Town IV cancel both paying  $2\frac{1}{2}^d$  foreign letter rate to USA via Jamaica.



### Registered Mail

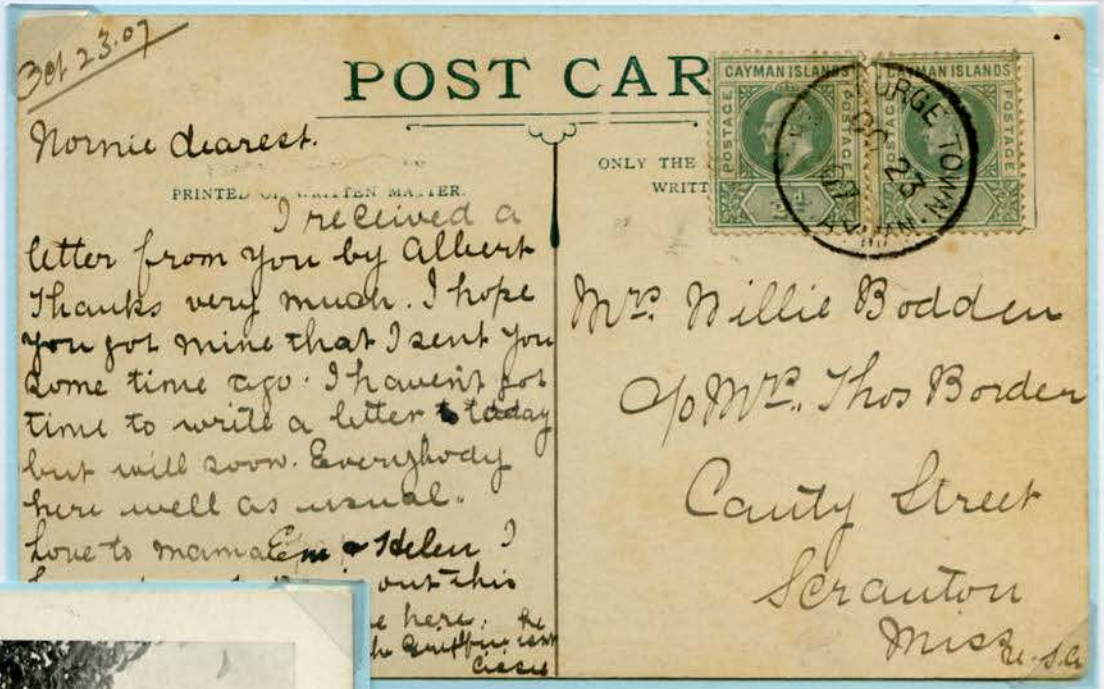
Six ½<sup>d</sup> adhesives: 1902 Postage Postage cancel Georgetown IIIa used June 1903 to Canada: 1907 "One Halfpenny" on 1<sup>d</sup> surcharge used with George Town IV cancel in November 1907 during shortage of ½<sup>d</sup> and 1<sup>d</sup> stamps both bear R for registration for 2<sup>d</sup> registration and 1<sup>d</sup> Empire rates.





### Postcard Rates

October 1907 Cayman PPC **earliest recorded** with two ½<sup>d</sup> stamps paying the 1<sup>d</sup> postcard rate. November 1907 PPC single "One Halfpenny" on 1<sup>d</sup> surcharge paying the **printed matter rate**.





### Multiple Rate

Large 1907 commercial cover with George Town Type IV; and  $\frac{1}{2}^d \times 14$  stamps paying  $2\frac{1}{2}^d \times 2$  double foreign letter rate for the extra  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz and  $2^d$  registration.



## Local Mail

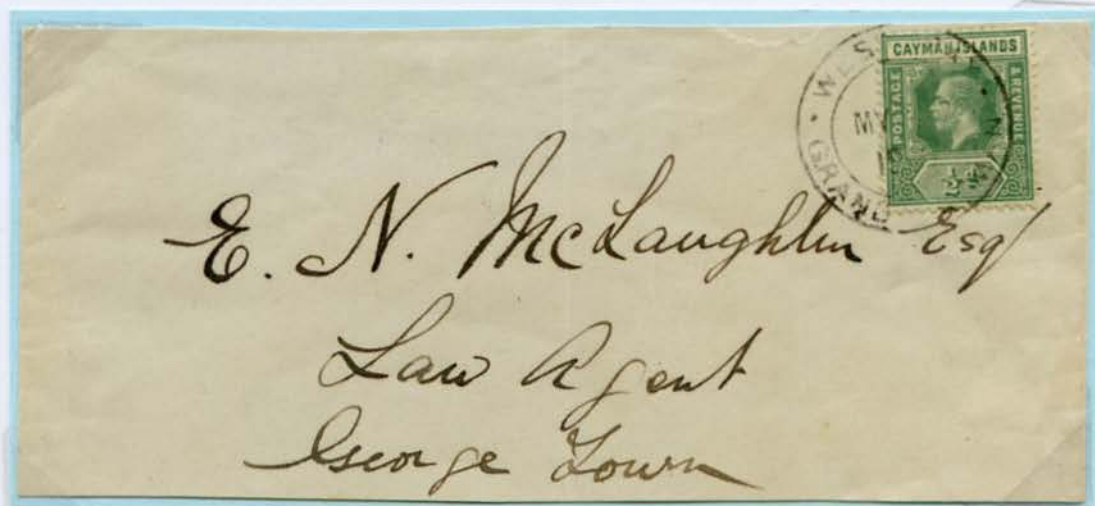
### East End Post Office

This office reopened in February 1913 at William Conwell Watlers Store at Gun Bay. Cover January 1914 with George V ½<sup>d</sup> cancelled by East End Type II handstamp paying local letter rate within the island.



### West Bay

This post office opened in Hubert Lee Ebanks store around February 1913. He was the first sub postmaster. The type 1 postmark is recorded from July 1913. The cover with postmark in black bears George V ½<sup>d</sup> used May 1919 sent to Mr. McLoughlin, Law Agent, Vestryman and local school teacher.





## Rural Post

Henry Bodden, the waggoner, pulled the cart that carried mail and freight between Georgetown and Boddentown from 1909. He sold stamps picked up and delivered mail en route. He would apply the large Rural Post handstamp to local mail which was sent at the new reduced  $\frac{1}{2}^d$  rate from June 1908 as shown in the May 1913 cover.



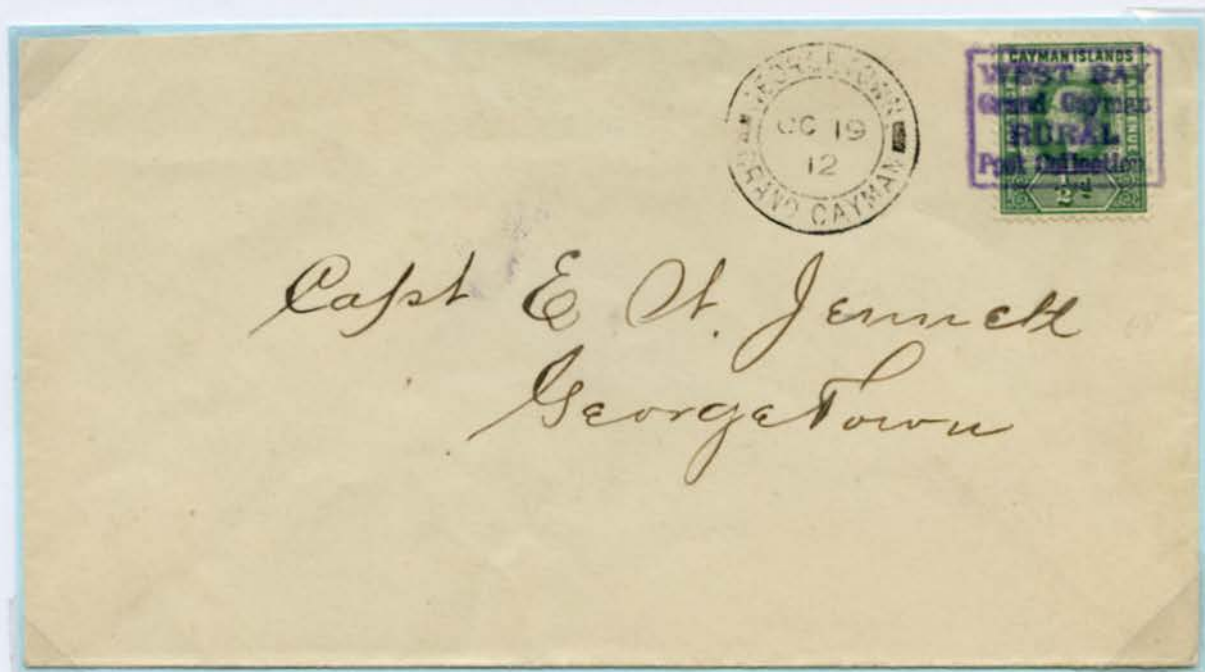
The service was extended from Boddentown to East End by messenger a local policeman on horseback. He would apply the small East End Rural Post handstamp. Most examples are in violet but four late uses of the very worn handstamp are known in July and August 1916 after use of the East End Post Office type II handstamp.





## Rural Post

In 1911 the Rural Post Service was extended from Georgetown North-West to West Bay by messenger (horseback rider). October 1912 cover with small West Bay Rural Post handstamp to Georgetown using George V  $\frac{1}{2}$ <sup>d</sup> adhesive.



## Unsealed Letters

Occasionally letters, both local and overseas, are seen with postage paying the postcard rate as with this example two  $\frac{1}{2}$ <sup>d</sup> stamps paying 1<sup>d</sup> postcard (unsealed letter) rate to Philadelphia via Cuba in September 1915.

