

The Rural Post

The Rural Post service began on 31 March 1908, but the special handstamp (Type 1) was not available until late 1909. It was used on all mail in conjunction with the Georgetown c.d.s. for a short period. Thereafter, Rural Post mail addressed overseas was cancelled by the c.d.s. only. The few exceptions occurred by favour or oversight.



Commercial cover to U.S.A. (redirected to Cuba) dated DE 14 09. The earliest recorded Rural Post cover, and one of two known addressed overseas and correctly cancelled by both the c.d.s. and the handstamp.

EARLY RURAL POST OVERSEAS USE

The earliest recorded use of the large rural Post handstamp is December 1909. Prior to this date no markings have survived to indicate mail was carried by the Rural Post Service.

Three of the four earliest recorded covers are overseas to U.S.A. The practice of using the handstamp on overseas mail then stopped.



February 1910 cover to U.S.A. The last of the three covers overseas with this large Rural Post handstamp All are to the same commercial addressee. At correct 2.5d foreign letter rate.

E.K.D. 14.12.1909

L.K.D. 9.1.1914

Foreign Letter Rate

An early example of the AA Coe correspondence used in May 1906 prior to the earliest Rural Post covers in December 1909 and February 1910.



March 1910 cover to AA Coe. Rural Post handstamp no longer used.

RURAL POST SERVICE

In early February 1908 Commissioner G.S.S. Hirst put forward a scheme to rejuvenate the failing local mail service.

He proposed to run a weekly mail service from Georgetown to Boddentown by waggon and from Boddentown to East End by horseback messenger.

He reduced postal rates. The waggoner and messenger would collect and deliver mail en route and sell stamps. The waggoner would carry freight.

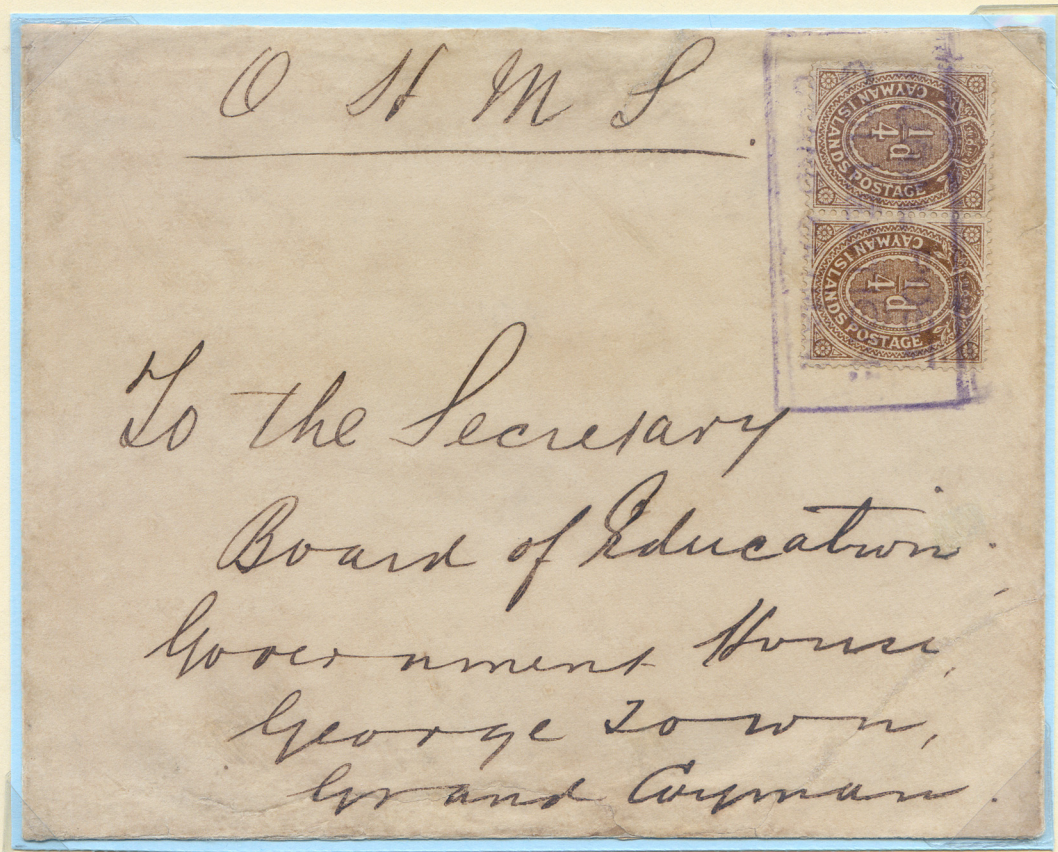
In 1994 following our research and correspondance John Byl wrote the definitive article on Rural Posts in GSM. This was based on the 90+ recorded covers at that time. This together with my further research and articles is the basis of this study. Approx. 100 covers are now known less than 25% non philatelic.



Correct reduced 1/2d inland postage rate large Rural Post

RURAL POST OHMS LOCAL MAIL

In all we have so far recorded over thirty covers with this 51 x 24 mm handstamp. The minority of these as shown are correctly rated.

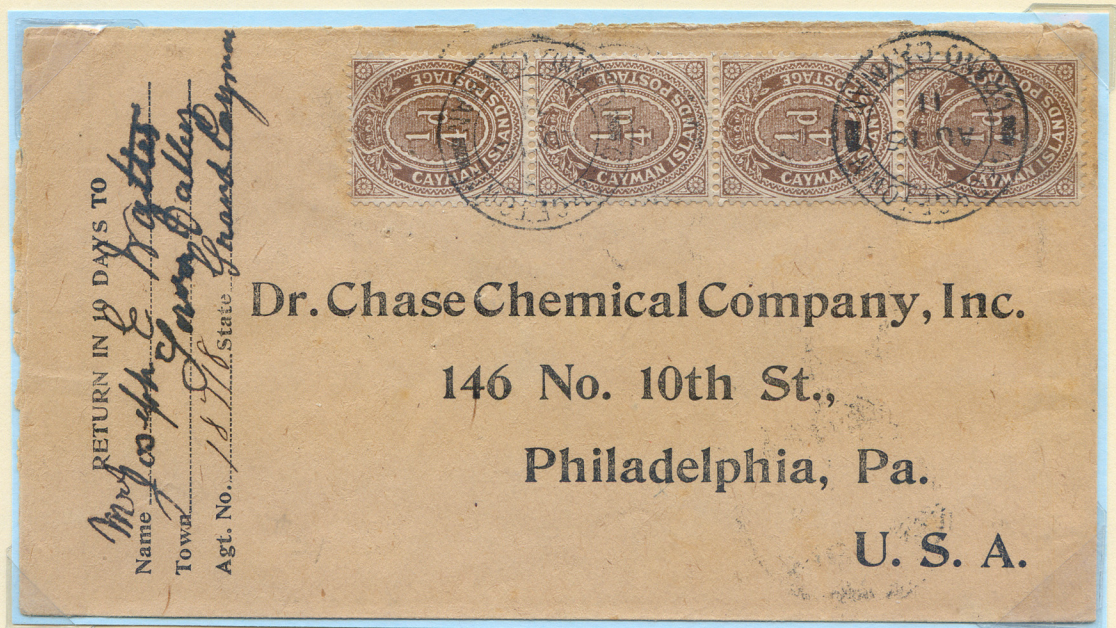


Local O.H.M.S. cover to Board of Education in August 1911 at the correct halfpenny inland letter rate.

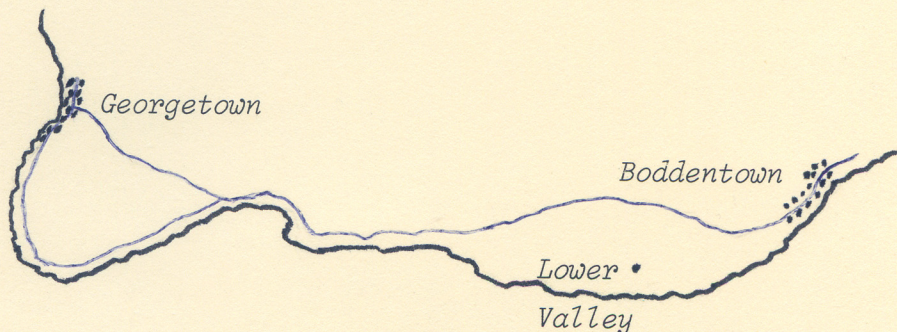
The Commissioner ordered farthing and halfpenny stamps to be supplied to the waggoner and messenger to sell en route.

RURAL POST EN ROUTE MAIL

On March 1st 1908 the Commissioner closed the Post Offices at Boddentown and East End. The waggoner was to sell stamps and collect letters en route.



1911 Commercial cover to U.S.A. No Rural Post Cachet as destined overseas at this time. Cancelled on arrival at Georgetown. Cover had ten farthing stamps, four on front six on reverse poorly applied when the envelope was given to the waggoner at Lower Valley, some two miles en route from Boddentown to Georgetown.



LARGE RURAL POST HANDSTAMP

Mr Henry Bodden plyed the cart which carried mail and freight between Georgetown and Boddentown in 1909. He would have been supplied with the Large Rural Post handstamp and would have applied this to the mail he received.



Local cover at correct halfpenny rate bearing the large Rural Post handstamp applied by the mailcart driver, the waggoner.

The Rural Post

Beginning sometime in 1908, the mail was carried once a week in a horse-drawn cart to the home of the "wagoner" (the driver) at Frank Sound (midway between Boddentown and East End on Grand Cayman) who delivered it to GPO in Georgetown. While initially the "rural post collection" hand stamp may have been used on all mail collected by the wagoner, after mid-1913, all foreign bound mail was processed at Georgetown.

The actual post-mark hand stamp is believed to have been lost during the hurricane of 1917



Rural Grand Cayman – Georgetown – Kingston – New York - Pittsburgh
Mar 1 to Mar 14, 1912

Postmark: Rural Post Collection Type RP1
Registration: Georgetown Type R3, Type R1

A rare use of the wagoner's hand stamp on registered mail. Only four registered Rural Post covers are known.

The postage is correct at 4-1/2d

The farthing stamps are from the second printing.

Rural Post

e Rural Post

Large Rural Post handstamp in rectangle 51 x 24 mm.



The handstamp was probably carried by the driver of the mailcart the waggoner and applied by him to mail he received uncancelled.

Cover with handstamp Georgetown receiving mark only on front no transit marks.

RURAL POST STAMPLESS OHMS MAIL

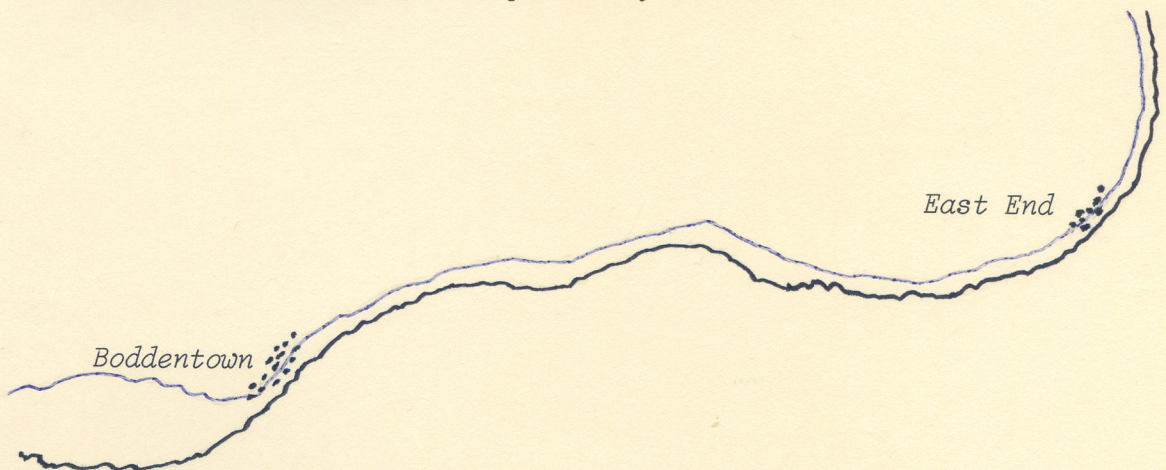
O.H.M.S. mail could be sent stampless on official business. There are five recorded examples of such mail. Two are with large and three with East End Rural Post handstamp 25.5 x 16.5 mm. In all over forty East End covers are known.



E.K.D. 8.3.1911

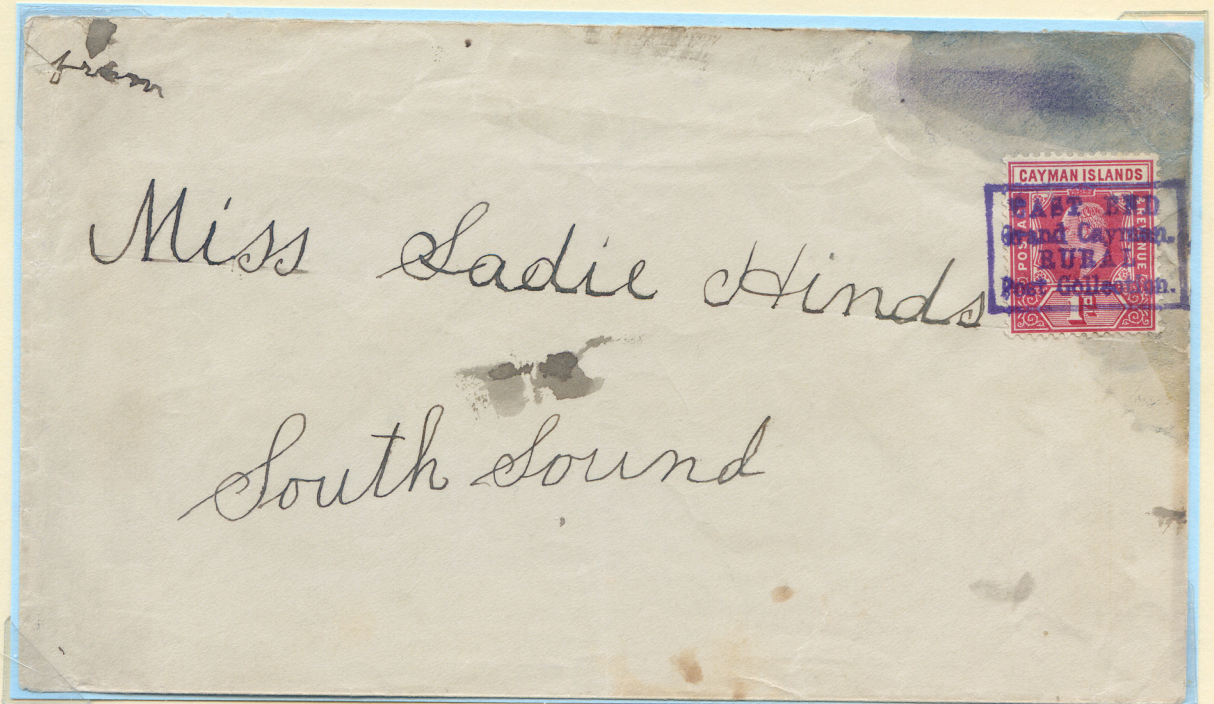
L.K.D. 16.8.1916

Cover to Arthur Bodden at various times Collector of Taxes, Postmaster and Inspector of Wrecks.



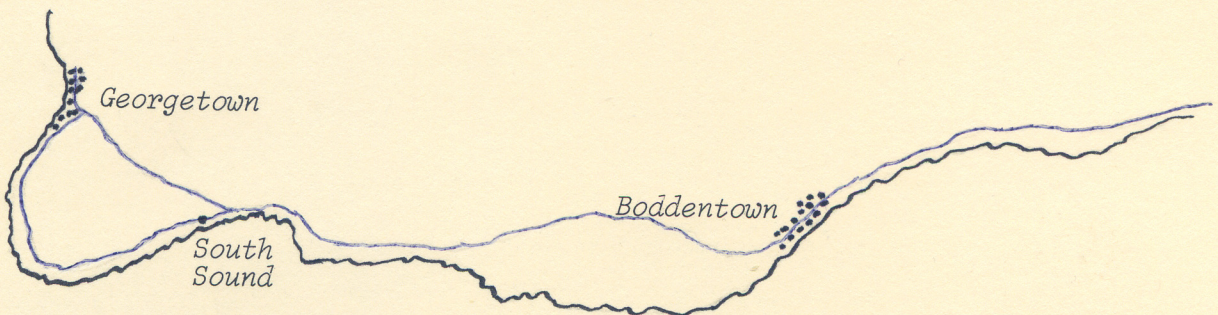
EAST END RURAL POST MAIL DELIVERED EN ROUTE

One of Commissioner Hirst's suggestions was to have no Post Offices and for the waggoner and messenger to deliver and collect letters en route.



One of two undated covers. Delivered by waggoner en route (only recorded example on the old coastal road at the hamlet of South Sound off the normal route, after the bifurcation at Crewe Road.

The cover was sent from one young lady to another. She probably did not realise the inland postal rate had been reduced from one penny.



EAST END RURAL POST JAMAICA

Only a few covers are known to Jamaica with the East End Rural Post handstamp. The handstamp was probably applied by the police constable who was the rural postman.



East End Rural post cover 1^d rate to Jamaica transit cancels October 25th at Boddentown and Georgetown , Kingston arrival November 6th . ADVERTISED and UNCLAIMED returned transits Kingston January 1912 , Boddentown February 1912. The messenger having received the cover back endorsed the senders name and returned it to her at East End.

EAST END WITHOUT RURAL POST HANDSTAMP

Covers addressed overseas given to the rural post messenger would not normally receive the Rural Post handstamp. They would be cancelled at the next post office the mail arrived.



Stampless cover either by oversight or possibly starting as a ship letter was given to the Rural Post messenger. He did not apply the rural post handstamp as it was destined for overseas. It bears the same date transits of October 25th at Boddentown and Georgetown as the previous East End cover. They travelled together to Kingston, Jamaica date November 6th where they parted. It went on to England where it received 2d FB mark for postage due a tax T in circle mark has also been applied.

CAYMAN ISLANDS

East End Rural Post

One of three recorded commercial overseas covers cancelled by any Rural Post handstamp. It is thought that these cancellations were intended for internal mail only.



Backstamped "Boddentown FE 19 13" & "Georgetown FE 19 13"
Montgomery Ward cachet "FE 26"

EAST END RURAL POST IN BLACK

Covers are occasionally found with stamps placed on the reverse sealing the envelope as presumed extra security.



McLaughlin in addition to being a vestryman was also one of the law agents. This may explain why these covers survived containing legal or matters relevant to East End.

EAST END RURAL POST IN BLACK

Over some four weeks in July and August 1916, some eighteen months after the previous last use in violet, a very worn E.E.R.P. cachet is seen in black.



Only four covers appear to have survived at this time with black cachet. They are all addressed to E.N. McLaughlin, a school teacher and vestryman (local councillor) representing East End at the Georgetown Assembly.

RURAL POST WEST BAY

The West Bay Rural Post service had the shorter duration of existence compared with the service through Boddentown to East End. Consequently few examples are found.

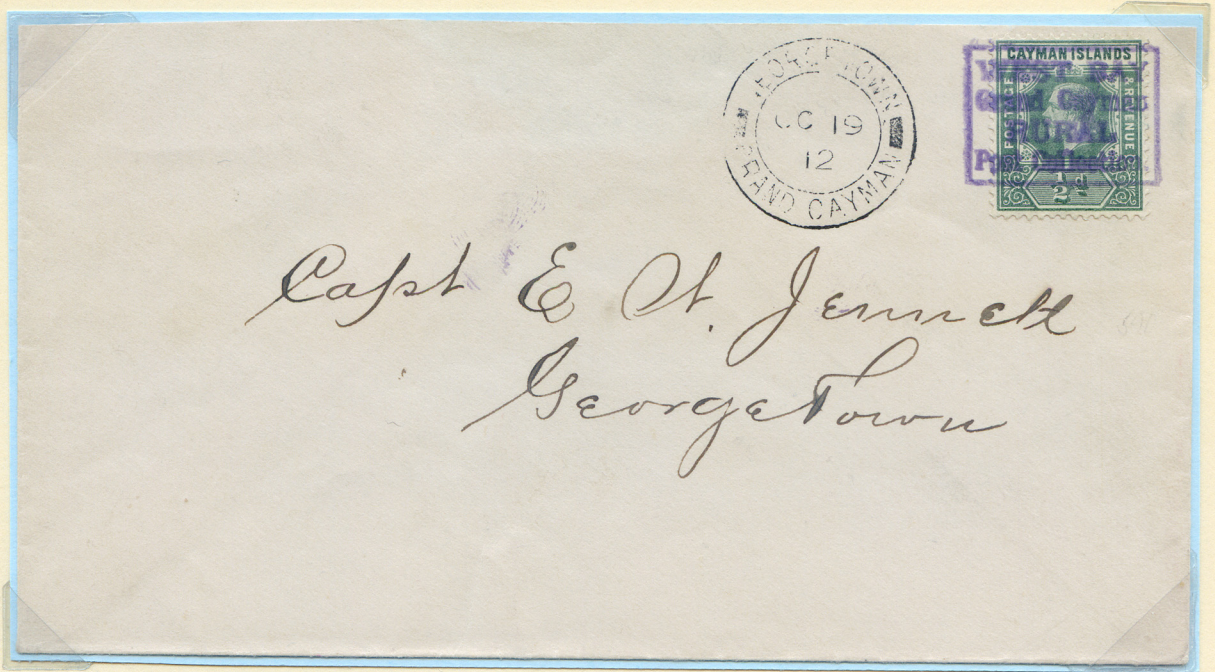


January 18th 1913 cover from West Bay to George Town with the West Bay cancel.

The sender has mistakenly franked the cover at the 2½d rate.

RURAL POST WEST BAY

In 1911 the Rural post Service was extended in the other direction north along the coast to West Bay.



October 1912 cover with halfpenny stamp bearing small rectangular 25 x 18 mm. West Bay Rural Post handstamp.

E.K.D. 9.12.1911

L.K.D. 18.1.1913

Approximately twenty West Bay rural Post covers have been recorded.