

'The railway revolutionized land transport and it became possible to organize the human and natural resources of far larger geographical bases'

It is generally accepted that the development of Railway systems over the world facilitated the **transport** of mail and led to the introduction of a uniform **postage** system. In South Africa, the development of postal systems was greatly **influenced** by the arrival and development of the different railway systems.

Railways in South Africa rather begin as undertakings by **several** small companies to service local needs. The first working railway line in started in **1860** between Durban and the Harbour. At first it was operated by animal power until the Natal Railway Company purchased a **steam** locomotive.

The Cape Town Railway and Dock Company, which had obtained its locomotive a year earlier, had not completed any railway line. These early railways were mainly used to carry **freight** and eventually **Cape Town** supported three small railway companies operating lines from Cape Town to Wellington, Wynberg and Sea Point, issuing parcel **stamps** as early as **1877**.

Over the years it so developed that the Railway Department started to **issue** its own packet labels, stamps, stationary, stamps and cancellers. The basic difference between **railway stamps** and normal postage stamps is that, although both prepay the conveyance of mail, in the former they are normally **affixed** to a waybill and not directly to the item of mail to be delivered.

AIM

This exhibit aims to show how the Railways deal with **conveyance** of material/postal matters by way of railway stamps, covers and waybills.

SCOPE

The development and **expansion** of the different railway companies of South Africa and constant innovation that led to the introduction of a **service** to assist and compliment the Postal Service are observed. These **efforts**, such as Postal Agencies/Offices at Railway stations, Travelling Post Offices and Special Mail Trains resulted in the **efficiency** of rail-post services. The storyline is **outlined** with historic pictures and postcards portraying early activities and philatelic material of Railways in South Africa. It concludes with the amalgamation of these Railway Systems to form the SA Railways in 1910.

MANIFESTATION

Frame 1

- pp 1: Introduction
Natal
pp 2 - 5: Natal Government Railways (NGR)
pp 6: NGR - Official Stationery
pp 7: NGR - Traveling Post Offices
Cape of Good Hope
pp 8: Cape Town Railway and Dock Company

Frame 2

- pp 9: Cape Town Railway
pp 10 - 13: Cape Government Railway (CGR)
pp 14 - 15: CGR - Expansion
pp 16: CGR

Frame 3

- pp 17: New Cape Central Railway Ltd
pp 18 - 22: CGR - Travelling Post Offices (TPO's)
pp 23 - 24: CGR - Railway Station Postmarks

Frame 4

- Zuid Afrikaansche Republiek**
pp 25 - 26: Nederlandsche-Zuid-Afrikaansche Spoorwegmaatschappij (NZASM)
pp 27 - 29: NZASM - Official Stationery
pp 30 - 31: NZASM - Railway lines
pp 32: NZASM - Braamfontein Disaster

Frame 5

- pp 33 - 34: NZASM - Traveling Post Offices (TPO's)
pp 35: NZASM - Pretoria Pietersburg Spoorweg Maatschappij
Orange Free State (OFS)
pp 36: Oranjevrijstaatsche Spoorwegen (OVSS)
pp 37: OVSS - Stationary
pp 38: OVSS - Travelling Post Offices
pp 39: OVSS -Associated Station Marks
Anglo Boer War (ABW)
pp 40: ABW – Railway Related Mail

Frame 6

- pp 41: ABW - Railway Related Mail
pp 42: ABW - Hospital Trains
Imperial Military Railways (IMR)
pp 43 - 44: IMR - Usage of NZASM/OVSS stationary
pp 45 - 47: IMR - Official Stationery
pp 48: IMR - Travelling Post Offices (TPO's)

Frame 7

- pp 49 - 50: IMR - Railway Pioneer Regiment
pp 51: IMR Related transport
Central South African Railways (CSAR)
(1902 - 1910)
pp 52 - 54: CSAR
pp 55: CSAR – Perfins
pp 56: CSAR

Frame 8

- pp 57 - 58: CSAR
pp 59 - 60: CSAR Traveling Post Offices *Transvaal*
pp 61: CSAR Traveling Post Offices *ORC*
pp 62: CSAR Traveling Post Offices Tax marks
pp 63: CSAR/ORC Railway Cancellations
pp 64: **South African Railways 1910** →

MATERIAL

The exhibit is planned chronologically but, in some instances, material is grouped together to keep to the story line without detracting.

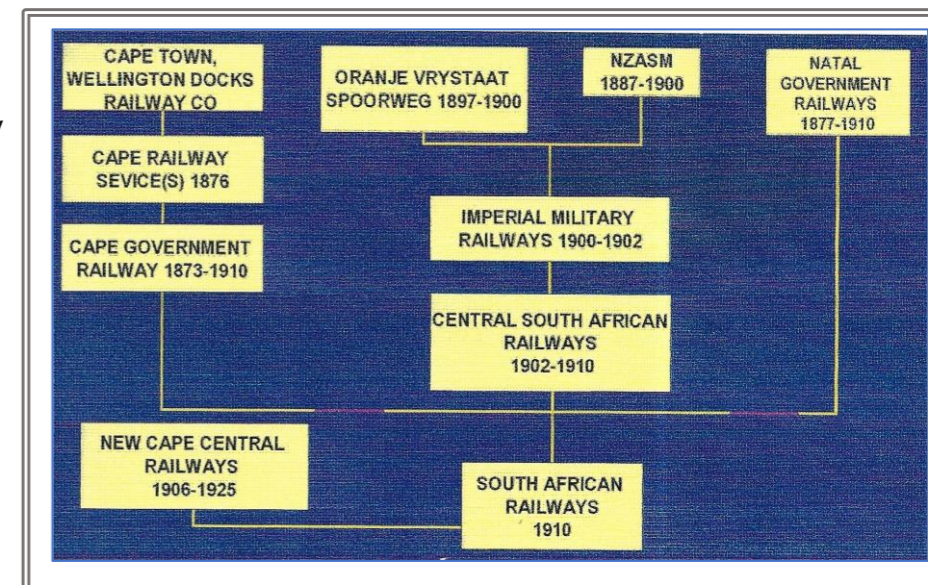
Philatelic as well as non-philatelic material has been chosen to best fit the story, to enhance the exhibit and to appeal to the eye.

In general terms, it can be mentioned that at least **70%** of the material shown, is of notable historical importance and as such unique and hard to find.

Specialist items are outlined with Green borders

BIBLIOGRAPHY

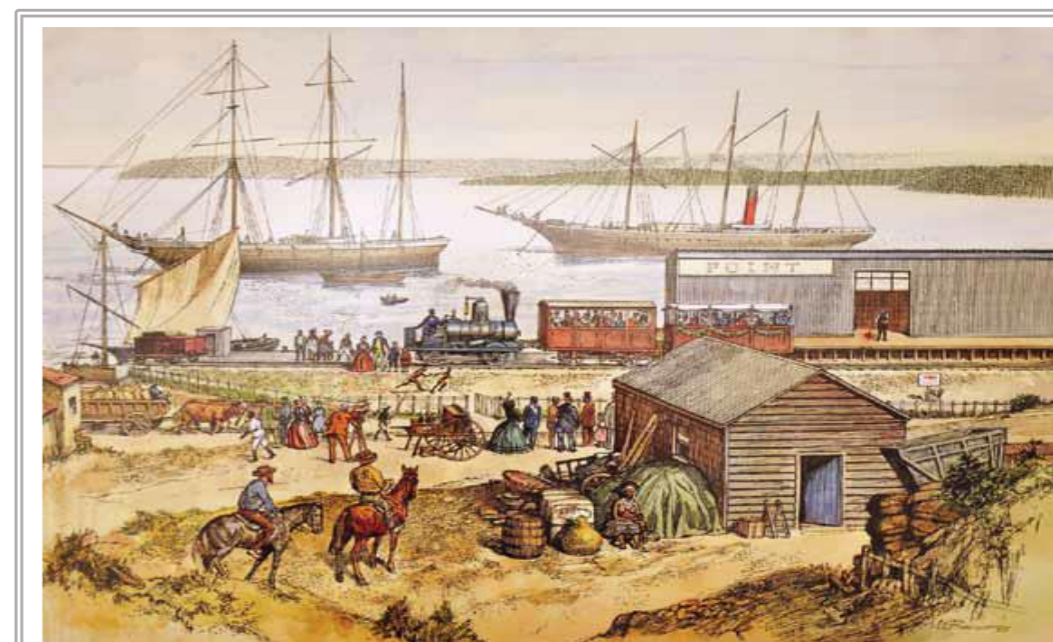
Transvaal Railway Stamps and Travelling Post Offices: AR Drysdal RDP, RDPSA, FRPSL, 1997: Various pages
Railway Stamps of South Africa: HS Hagen and SP Naylor, 1985: Various pages
Railway Postal History of South Africa: HS Hagen and SP Naylor, 1998: Various pages
Personal research – Various Internet websites accessed: <https://commons.wikimedia.org> : <https://www.sahistory.org.za> :



Selected Highlights

- NGR perforated stamp on cover - pp 6
Hottentots Holland cover - pp 12
Set of 10 specimens stamps - pp 16
Delagoa Bay Railway cover - pp 25
Unboxed Olifantsfontein station handstamp - pp 29
OVSS free pass ticket - pp 37
NZASM Boer Forces cover - pp 41
Imperial Government Railways cover - pp 43
CSAR perforated stamp on cover - pp 55
CSAR stamp specimens - pp 58
SAR perforated stamps - pp 64
- De La Rue essays - pp 10
Kimberley & Bechuanaland Railway - pp 15
Midland TPO handstamp in red - pp 20
Johannesburg Station boxed handstamp - pp 27
Pretoria Pietersburg Spoorweg Maatschappij cover - pp 35
Looted Mail cover - pp 40
IMR Karree boxed station cachet - pp 42
CSAR Stencil cut stamps - pp 53
CSAR parcel label - pp 57
TPO 6d Tax mark - pp 62

The first railway company in South Africa - **Natal Railway Company** - was formed in January **1859**. It starts operations on 26 June 1860 with construction of the **first** railway line in SA - a 3-kilometre track connecting Durban with the Point station at Durban harbour.



Reproduction of 1889 painting by A.H. Barrett showing the Point Station on the official opening of the first railway line in South Africa - from the Point to Durban

Source: Railway Society of Southern Africa.