

**Under the Magnifying Glass: No.25 New Island Postmark Dates and Naval Mail
by Malcolm Barton and Kim Stuckey**



We go back to Principality Auctions Summer 2017 sale, which had a pair of KEVII ½d with a New Island cancel. Pairs of stamps bearing the whole New Island cancel are not common, our listing of New Island canceller dates (which can be found in the Online Resources section of the www.fipsg.org.uk website) lists only one other KEVII ½d pair cancelled 18th October 1909. Retroveal helps us see the cancel JY 7 12, as shown to the left.

On the right was a New Island cancel found in the Study Group packet; yet another new date MR 12 12. Amazingly new dates continue to emerge! If you have any other new dates for either the New Island or West Falkland canceller listing, please get in touch.

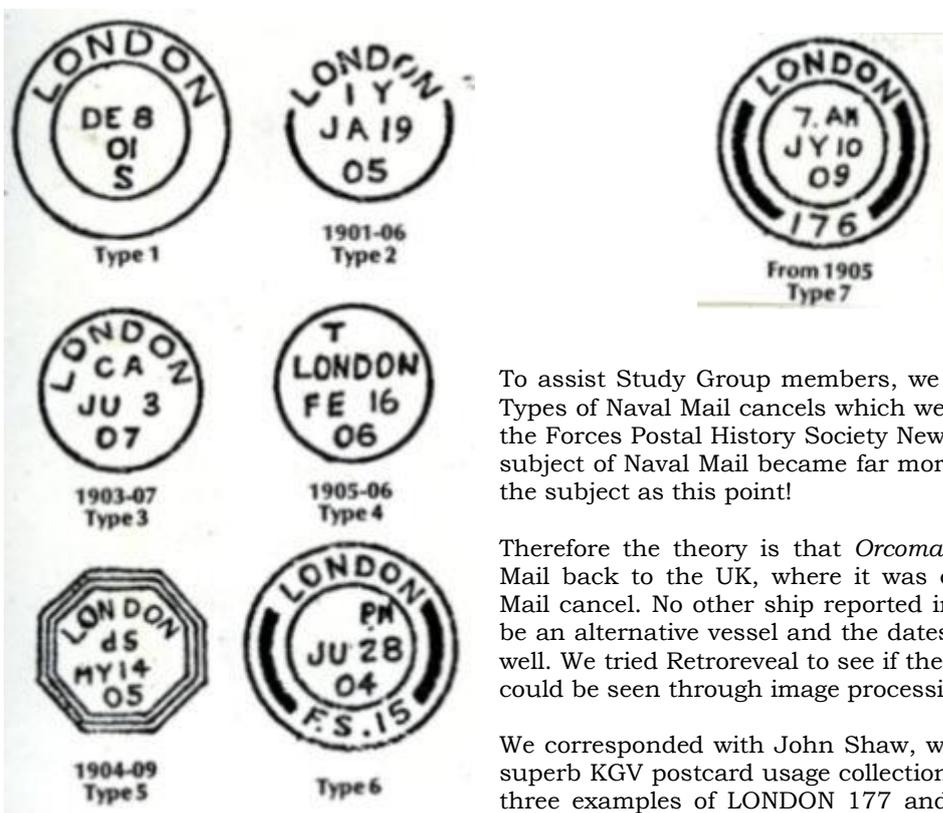


Here is an unusual postmark on a postcard sent from a crew member of HMS *Glasgow* while she was visiting the Falkland Islands in 1912, two years before the Battle of the Falkland Islands. The postcard was then forwarded from East Dulwich to Hastings,

Glasgow arrived in Port Stanley on February 19th 1912 from Punta Arenas and only left Falkland waters on March 7th, too late to carry this postcard.

However RMS *Orcoma* sailed for Liverpool on 21st February 1912, so the first prosaic theory was that the card was simply handed over to a crew member on the *Orcoma* and posted in UK. However, a West Country based postal historian, Crawford Alexander, looked at the postcard and concluded that the postmark (even incomplete) was a London Naval postmark of March 18th 1912.

Between 1901 and the early part of WWI, about 1915, a series of London cancellations were used on Naval Mail. From 1905 Type 7 was used probably exclusively for the purpose of cancelling Naval Mail, particularly numbers 172 to 177. Other numbers found between 1905 and 1915 are the more scarce 160, 163, 166, 203, 204 and 207.



To assist Study Group members, we are also illustrating the earlier Types of Naval Mail cancels which were published by Mr. C. Coles in the Forces Postal History Society Newsletter. As WWI progressed, the subject of Naval Mail became far more complex, so it is best to leave the subject as this point!

Therefore the theory is that *Orcoma* carried a sealed bag of Naval Mail back to the UK, where it was cancelled by the London Naval Mail cancel. No other ship reported in the FI shipping records could be an alternative vessel and the dates of sailing and cancelling tie in well. We tried Retroreveal to see if the number of the Type 7 canceller could be seen through image processing, but alas there was none.

We corresponded with John Shaw, who as many of you know has a superb KGV postcard usage collection. John commented that he had three examples of LONDON 177 and a single example of LONDON 172 from HMS *Glasgow*.

John also reported a LONDON 205 cancel on a Falklands postcard sent by a HMS *Glasgow* crew member, a GV KGV 1d stamp cancelled in London on 15th March 1914. This is a number not mentioned in the original vintage articles referenced here. Many thanks to John; it would be interesting to hear if any other members have Falklands mail from the pre WWI period cancelled with a Naval Mail postmark.

Thanks to: Philip Malcolm of Principality Auctions, Crawford Alexander and John Shaw.

References: The Retroreveal website for image processing at retroreveal.org.

Stamp Collecting Magazine - Heads & Tails – 28th June 1979

Forces Postal History Society Newsletter 144 (Vol XV No.4) 1977