

Jamaica – Its Postal History, Postage Stamps and Postmarks
Section 7 Railway Postmarks by LCC Nicholson

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RAILWAY POSTMARKS.

The Jamaica Railway is the earliest Colonial railway, the first part of the line having been projected in 1843.

The first section was from Kingston through Spanish Town to Angels—14½ miles from Kingston.

The opening ceremony took place on the 21st November, 1845, and this section remained the length of the line, until 18 July, 1869, when it was extended eleven miles from Spanish Town to Old Harbour.

In April, 1879, the Jamaica Government purchased the Railway, opening an extension from Old Harbour to Porus, (244 miles) on 26 February, 1885, and another from Angels to Ewarton (14 miles) on 13 August, 1885.

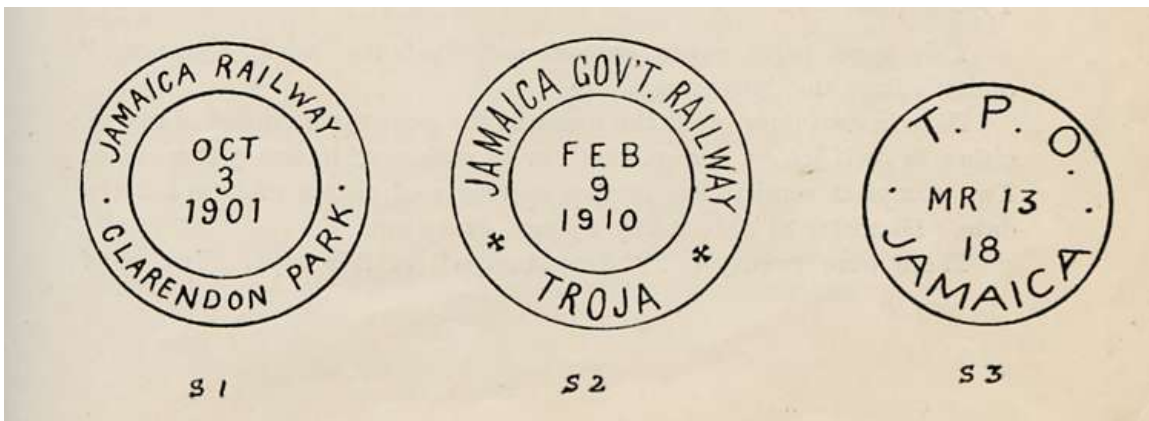
On 1 January, 1890, the Government sold the Railway to the West India Improvement Co., an American Syndicate, which extended the line from Porus to Montego Bay (66 miles) in 1895, and also from the Bog Walk Junction to Port Antonio (544 miles) in 1896.

The Americans did not make a success of the Railway financially, and in April 1900 the Government again resumed ownership, from which date it has been carried on as a Government Department.

Since 1900 two extensions have been put through by the Government, viz. from May Pen to Chapelton (13 miles), opened on to March, 1913, and from Chapelton to Frankfield (10 miles), opened on 16 March, 1925.

The Railway Postmarks of Jamaica can be divided into two classes, namely :

- (1) Those on letters posted at Stations (now obsolete)
- (2) Those on letters posted on the Trains.



Class 1 (vide S1 and S2). Station Names.

These came into use in 1901, and are in two types.

The first (S1) bears the words 'Jamaica Railway' at the top, and the name of the station at the bottom, curved in between two circles. The date is in the middle in three lines, the diameter of the outside circle being 31 mm.

The second (S2), which was a later type, had the inscription altered to "Jamaica Gov't. Railway" but was otherwise very similar to the first type.

These "date-stamps" are usually in blue ink, but early ones can be found in red, though they are not common in this latter colour.

The facilities for posting letters at stations ceased after 31 December, 1924, but were re-started on 28 March, 1927 from this date, however, all letters have been postmarked with the "T.P.O." date-stamp, and station names abolished.

There were forty-four of these station names, but only forty-three stations, as Chapelton Station was originally called "Danks" from its opening in 1913 until 1921. "Chapelton" postmark is very scarce, as also are several of the smaller station names.

The following is a list of the forty-four station names:

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Kingston	Ewarton	Montpelier
Albany	Four Paths	New Works
Anchovy	Grange Lane	Old Harbour
Annotto Bay	Green Vale	Orange Bay
Appleton	Gregory Park	Port Antonio
Balaclava	Hartlands	Pores
Bernard Lodge	Highgate	Richmond
Bog Walk	Hope Bay	Riversdale
Buff Bay	Inverness	St Margaret's Bay
Bushy Park	Ipswich	Spanish Town
Cambridge	Kendal	Suttons
Catadupa	Linstead	Troja
Danks	Maggotty	Williamsfield
Chapelton	May Pen.	Windsor Castle Siding
Clarendon Park	Montego Bay	

Several of these can be found in both types of date-stamp,

Class 2 (vide S3). Train Post Offices.

This system started on 1 September, 1913, and all letters bore the "T.P.O." date-stamp.

This consisted of a single-lined circle, 26 mm. in diameter, with "T.P.O." at the top and "Jamaica" at the bottom, the date being in the middle in two lines. It is always found in black ink.

This system was also stopped after 31 December, 1924, but re-started again on 28 March, 1927.