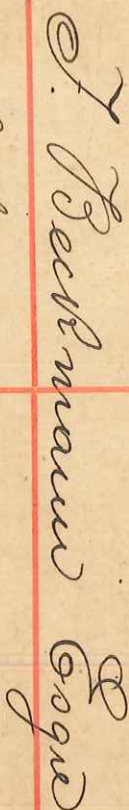


In the 1850s there were many Germans living in Tonga especially on Vavau where a German coaling station had been established. This RLE (H & G C8) is postmarked Vavau on 17th June, 1898. The RLE entered the German postal system in the Pacific at Apia, Samoa and reached Hamburg on 13th July. If it really travelled on the SS Taviuni via San Francisco, it is most unusual for there not to be US transit cancels present. 7½d pays for 1½ ounces in weight.



AN OFFICER OF THE POST OFFICE RECEIPT OBTAINED FOR IT.



St. J. Davini via Laura San Francisco

12

No. 497

Willebrord
Hamm - Hamburg
Venice



Lester Earl King
Litch Ben Jolands

Opie Laura



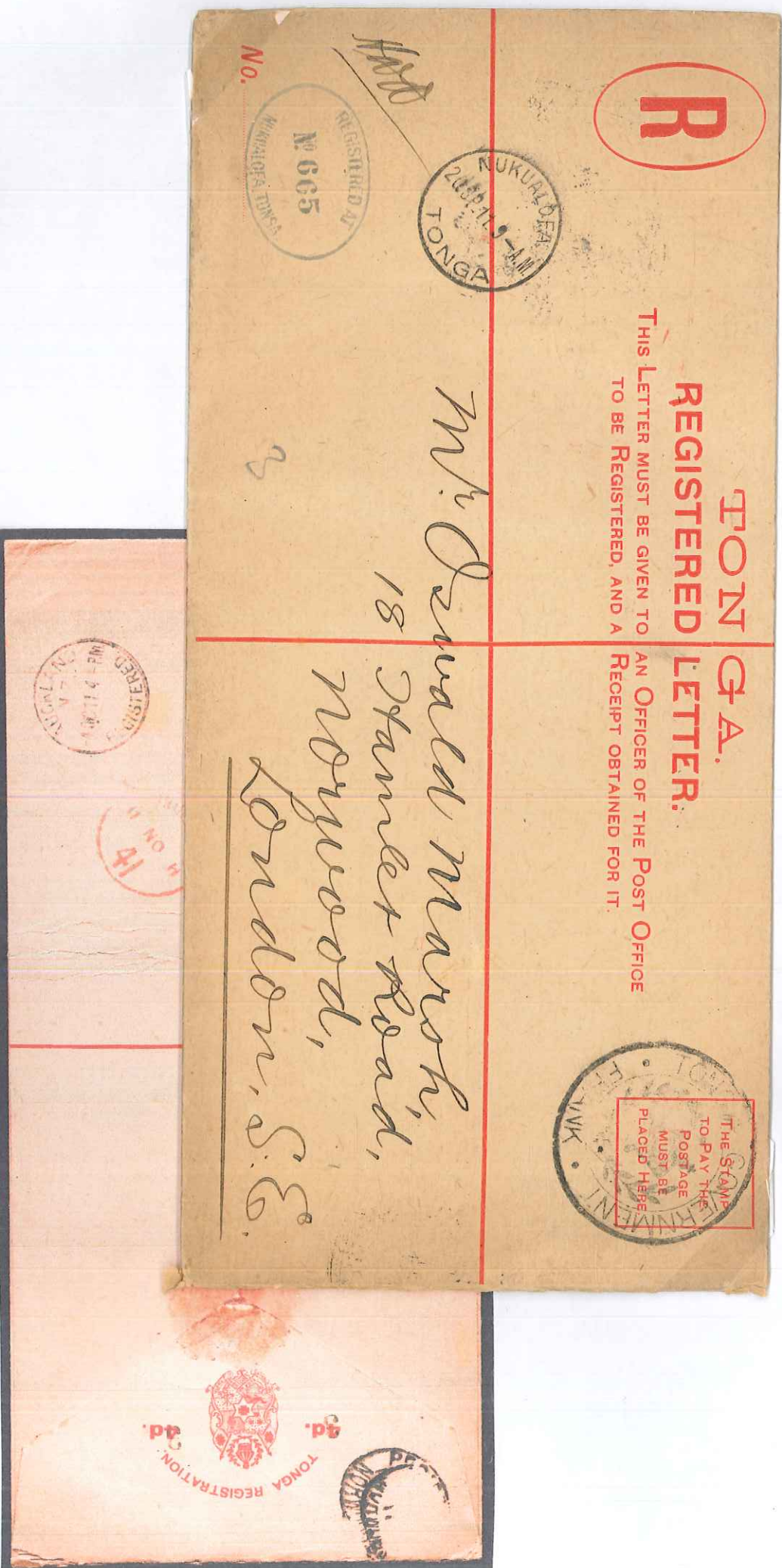
4D.

4-D.

TONGA REGISTRATION

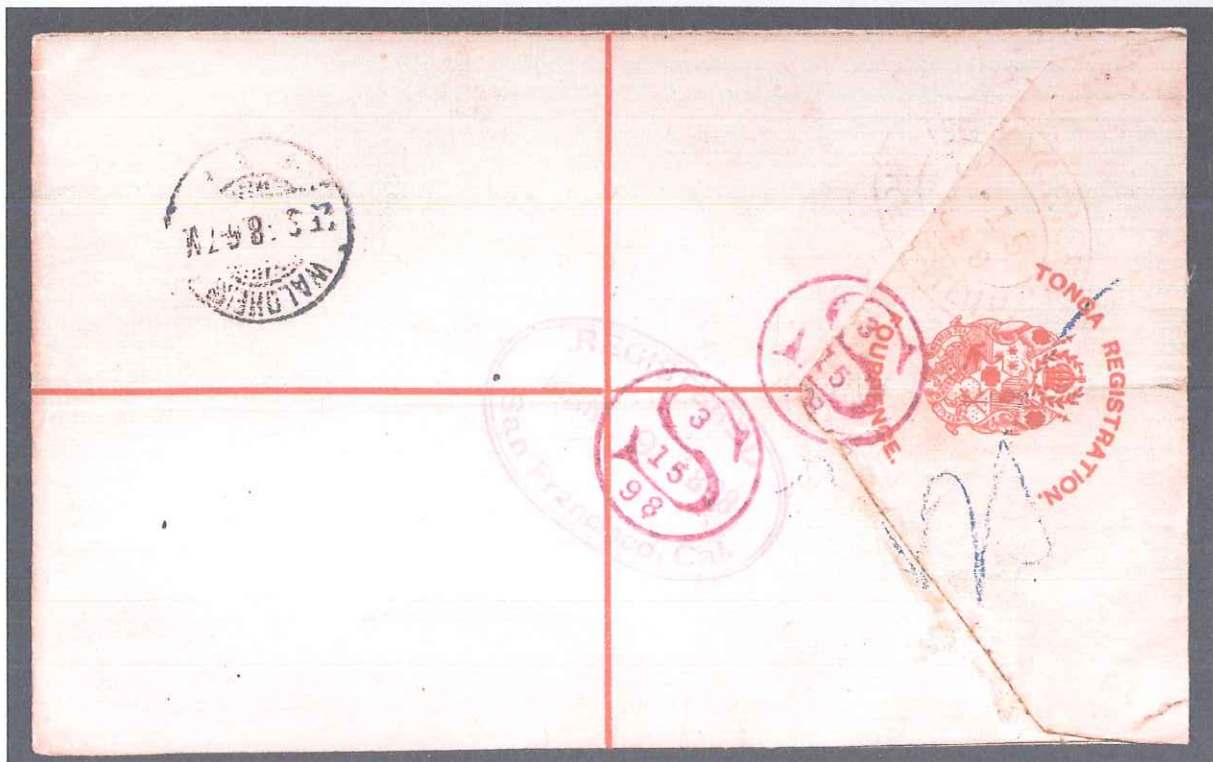
Postal Stationery of Tonga

This is an extremely uncommon Registered Letter Envelope, H & G 13, size H2, dated 1 MARCH 01 under the flap, but not issued in this state until 1908. Some say that only 10 were prepared, although this may be a misreading of the H & G catalogue entry. This RLE has the "4d" overstruck by "3d" on the flap. There are no stamps – none were needed since this is an official communication. Instead, there is a "Tonga Government Frank" where a stamp would be. Postmarked at Nuku'alofa by the regular s/c (Proud type D4) on 20th September, 1911 with a registration oval, Proud type R4 at bottom left front. On the back are transit cancels for Auckland (4th October) and London (11th November – 11.11.11) and a pert strike of a Norwood Registered s/c as receiver. Initials at left front are those of the Postmaster, H W Watkin, and the addressee was a stamp dealer.



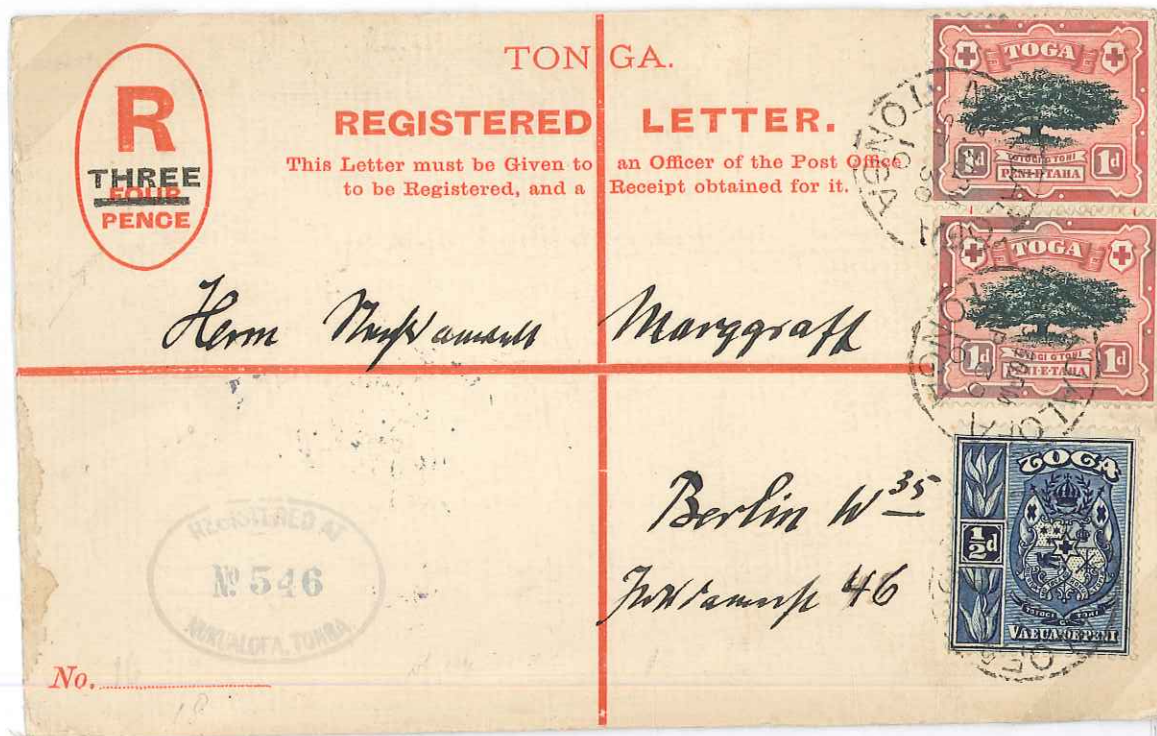
Postal Stationery of Tonga

Yet another RLE to Germany, this time H & G C4, is seen here. Postmarked at Nuku'alofa – the date is unclear – the RLE travelled via San Francisco and New York, arriving at its destination on 25th February, 1898. The RLE was first issued in 1892 on the reduction in the registration fee from 6d to 4d.



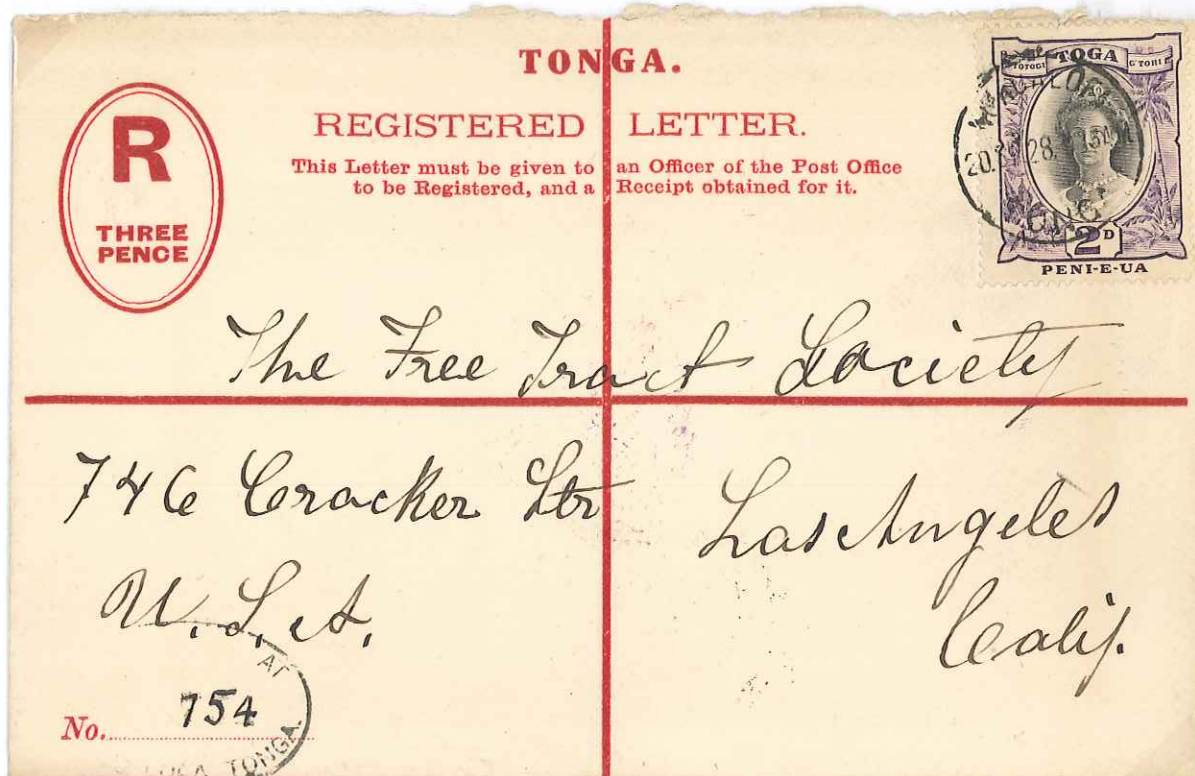
Postal Stationery of Tonga

In 1908, the Tongan authorities issued 4 revalued RLEs in quick succession in response to a change in the registration rate. None of the 4 was issued for more than a few weeks and it has been suggested that only up to about 10 or 12 of each were produced. This is the last of the four to be issued, H & G C15 where the "FOUR" in the oval has been surcharged "THREE" in ^{blue}red. This example was posted at Nuku'alofa on 30th April, 1910. There is the usual (for the time) registration oval, Proud type R4, on the front; correct postage of 2½d has been paid with SG 38 and 2x SG39. There is an Auckland transit cancel for 5th October and a Berlin receiver for 12th November on the back.



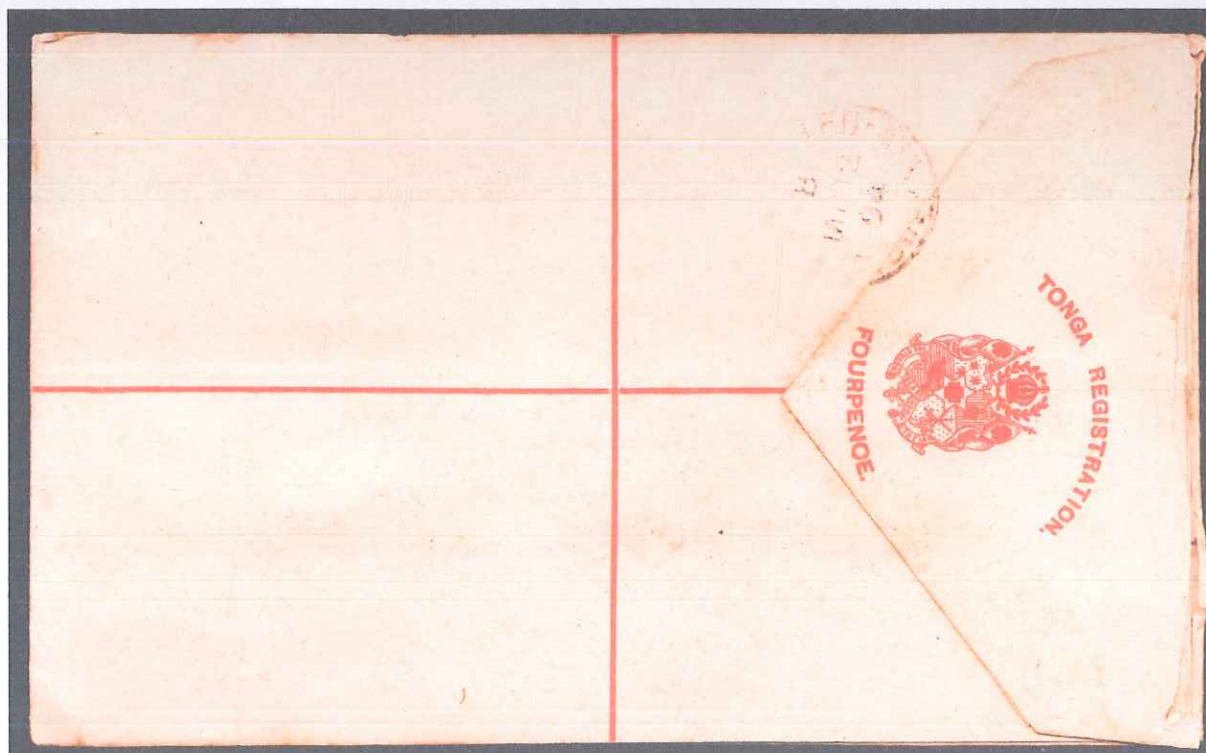
Postal Stationery of Tonga

H & G C20 was first released in the mid – late 1920s, but no-one is sure when. By now, the flap has migrated to the top but still has the Tongan crest present. The 2d stamp which pays for ½ oz of mail to California is SG 57b with a small “2”. The postmark is from Nuku’alofa on 20th September, 1928. Despite its relative modernity, this RLE is surprisingly elusive to obtain in used condition. This RLE was printed by Waterlows in London.



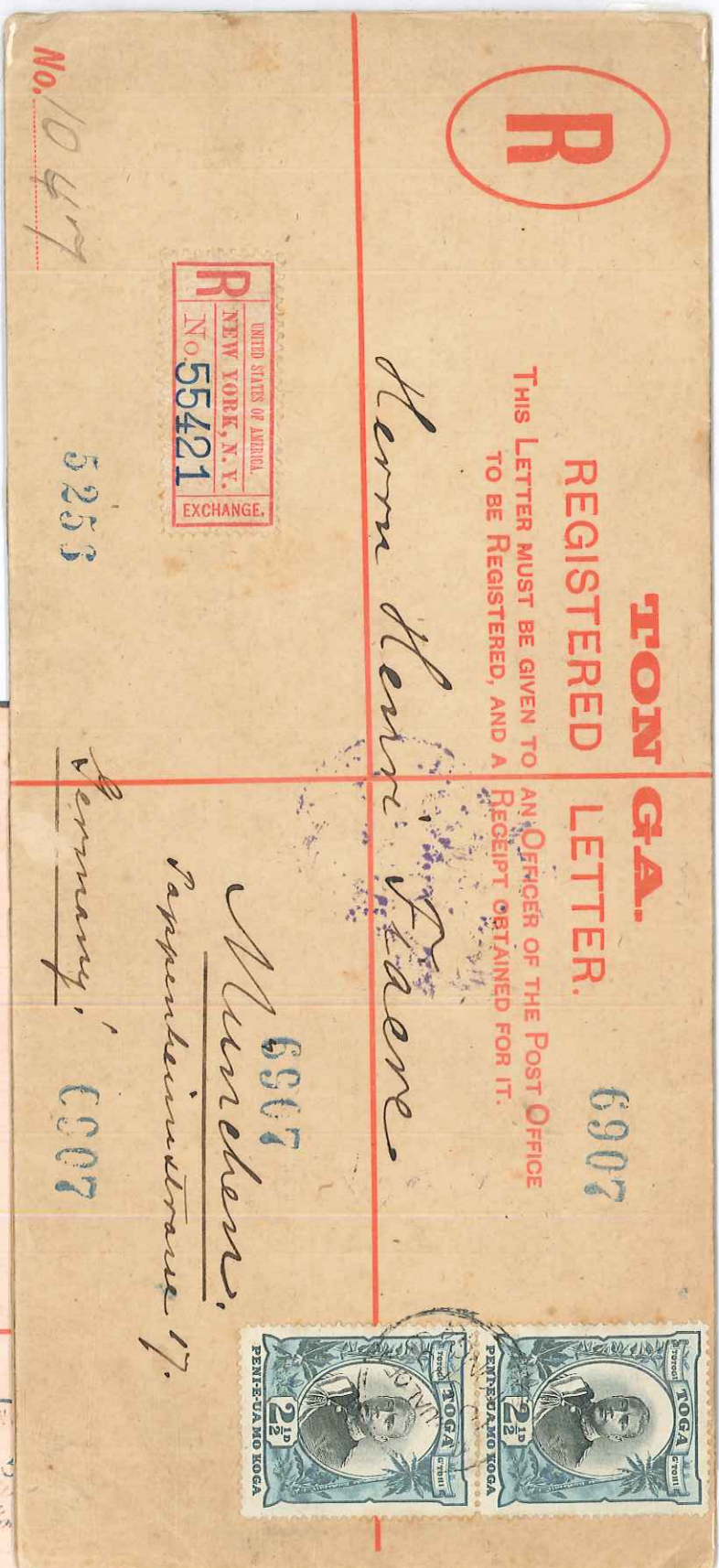
Postal Stationery of Tonga

Although the Tongan stamps have not been cancelled, there is an arrival mark for Sydney on the back, dated 12th May, 1894. The RLE has the date "1-4-93" under the flap, so this is H & G C7. Also printed is "JOHN SANDS, PRINTER AND STATIONER, SYDNEY". This is quite a difficult RLE to obtain in used condition.



Postal Stationery of Tonga

The two 2½d stamps pay for up to 1 ounce of mail to Europe. It is most unusual to have a vertical pair of stamps on Tongan mail, here SG 43. The RLE is another copy of H & G C8, a very uncommon RLE to find used. This one is postmarked at Nuku'alofa on 9th September, 1900 and arrived in Munich, via San Francisco and New York, on 5th November.



Postal Stationery of Tonga

H & G C6 was issued on or after 1st January, 1893. These are 2 examples used in 1898 and 1900. There is a date of 1-1-93 beneath the flap, together with John Sands imprint. The New York registration label is quite common on RLEs of this age. Postage of 2½d pays for the first ½ oz in weight.



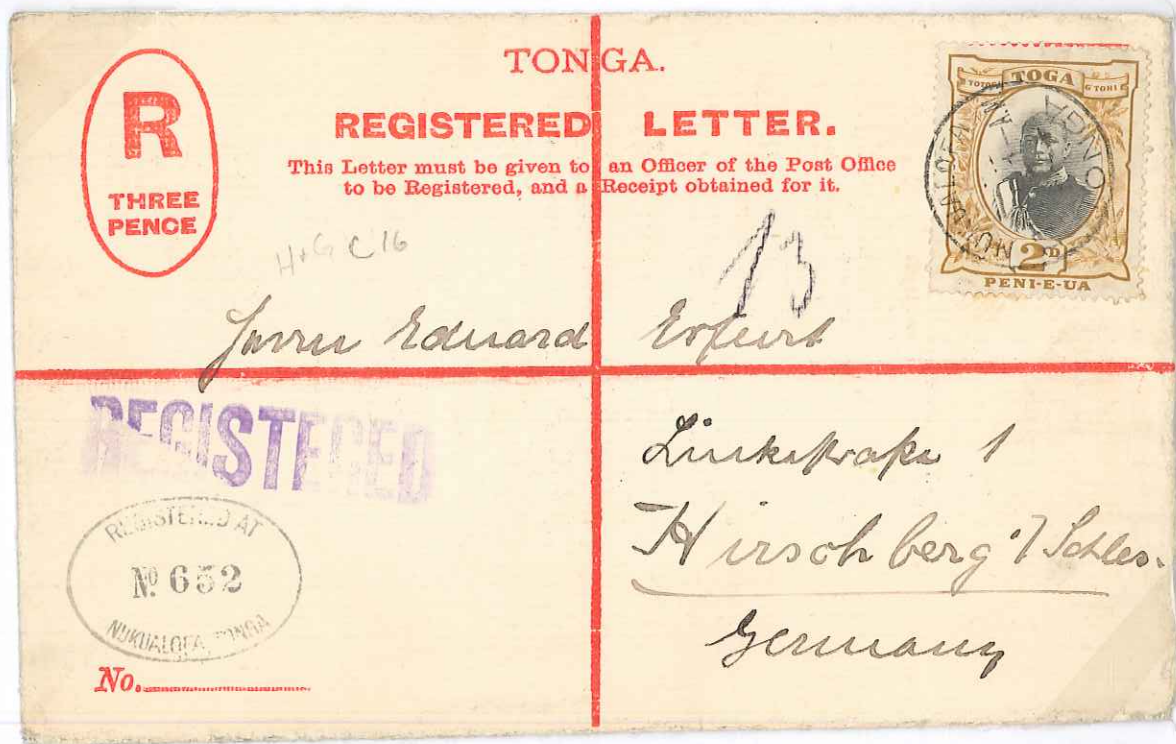
Postal Stationery of Tonga

Here is an example of H & G C3 used as late as 1900 from Nuku'alofa to Germany. Postmarked on 16th May, it appears to have reached its final destination, via Auckland, on 10th July. The postage of 7d pays no postage rate for the time (2½d per ½ oz weight). The cancels are all incomplete in some way, suggesting the RLE was distended in some way and so heavier than the first weight step.



Postal Stationery of Tonga

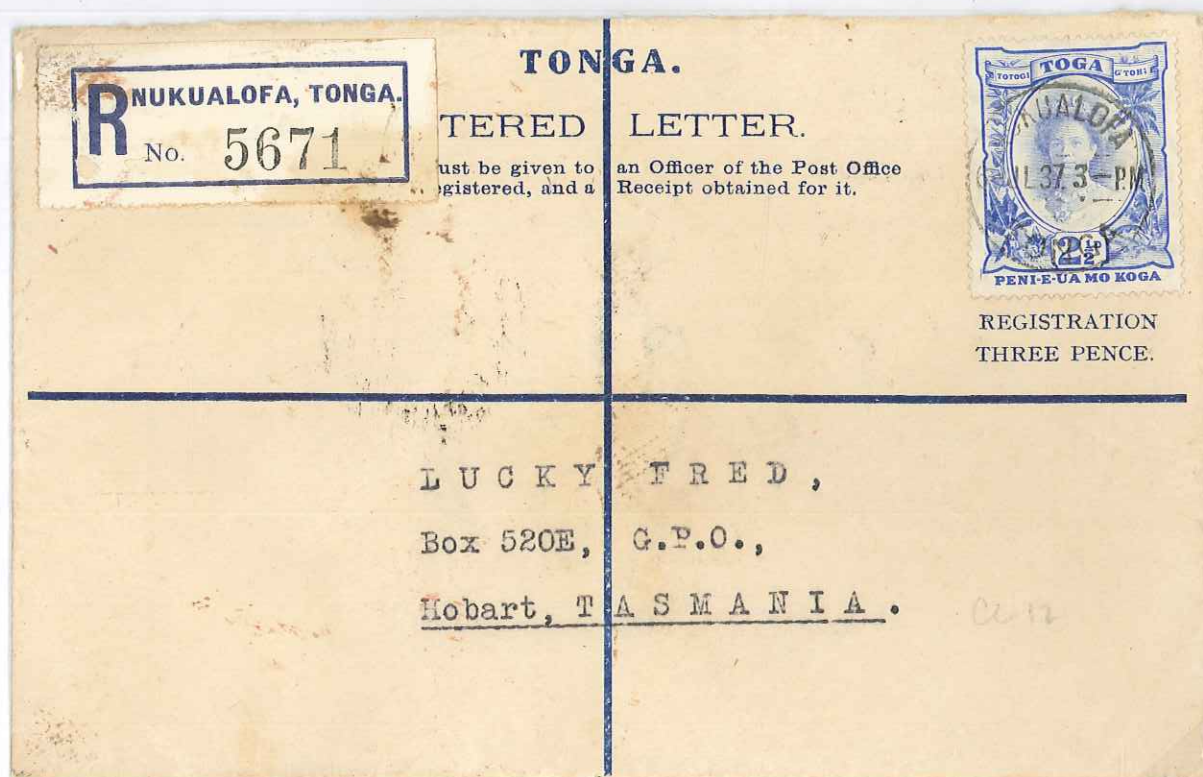
This is an example of H & G 16 issued in 1909, but here used to Germany in 1911. This is the first RLE to have no printer's imprint under the flap. The 2d stamp is SG 40, with a visible sword hilt, which is cancelled by the Nuku'alofa s/c, Proud type D6, although the date is unclear. Unusually, the RLE was taken to Seattle, and thence by train across the USA to New York, arriving on 23rd October. A German receiver is present on the back for 1st November.



Postal Stationery of Tonga

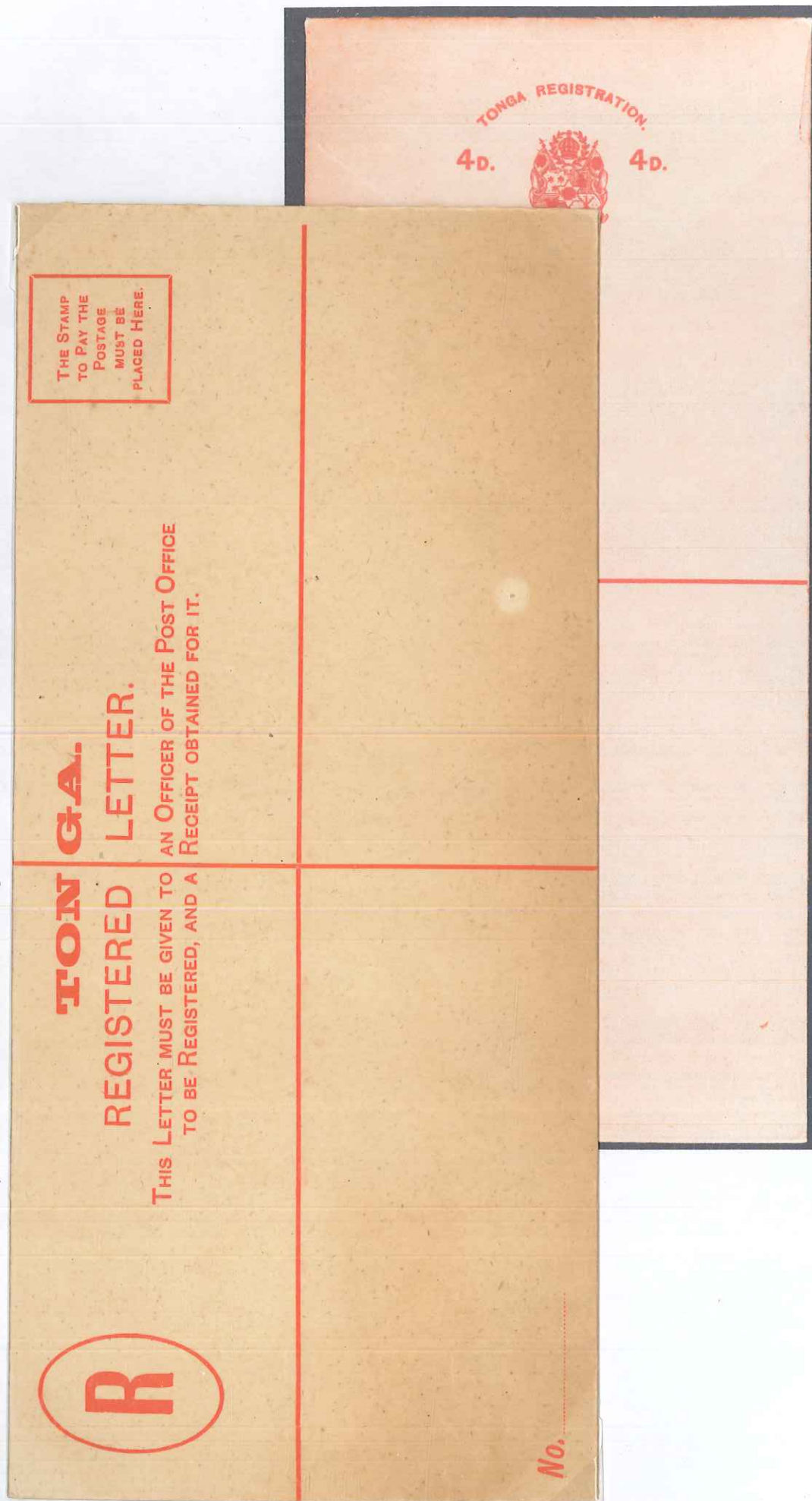
216

This is the last Tongan RLE to be produced, H & G C20b, although its release date is unknown. The value is now where the stamp is and a registered label has been affixed. The Tongan crest is now in blue. The stamp is SG 59 paying the correct single rate to Australia.



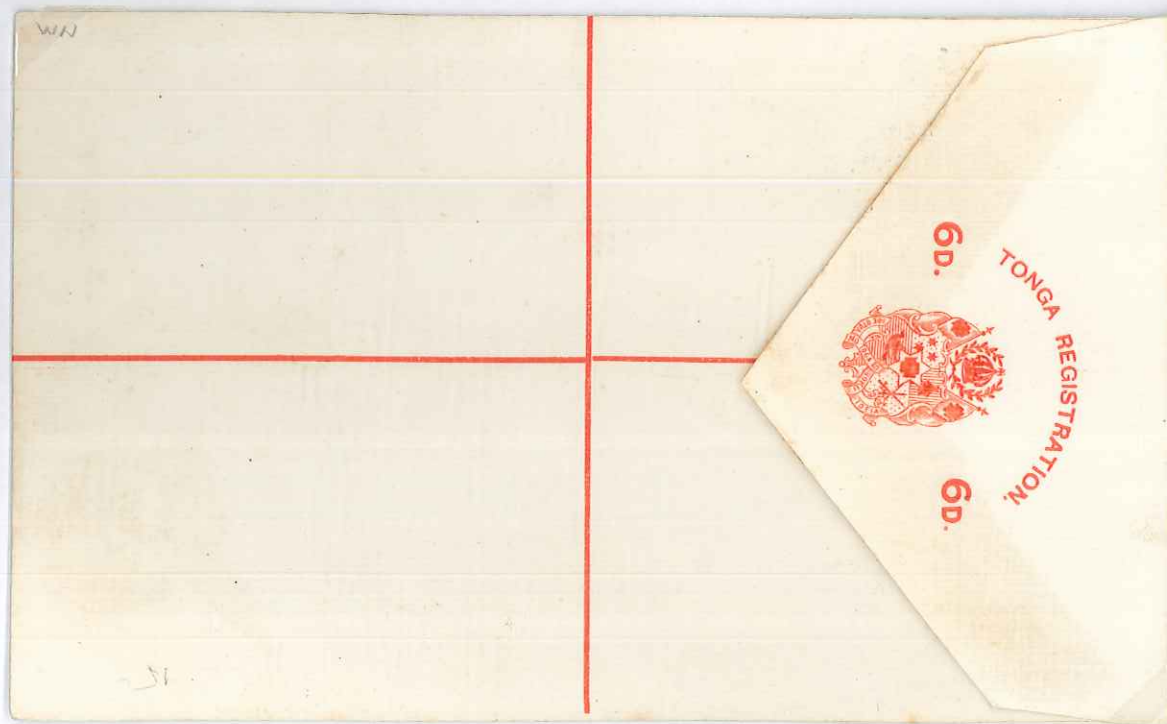
Postal Stationery of Tonga

This is an example of H & G C8, size H2, issued on or after 1st April, 1893. There is printing under the pointed flap reading "1 APRIL '93/JOHN SANDS, PRINTER AND STATIONER, SYDNEY." The value is now in figures and letters and the header on the flap is wider but shallower.



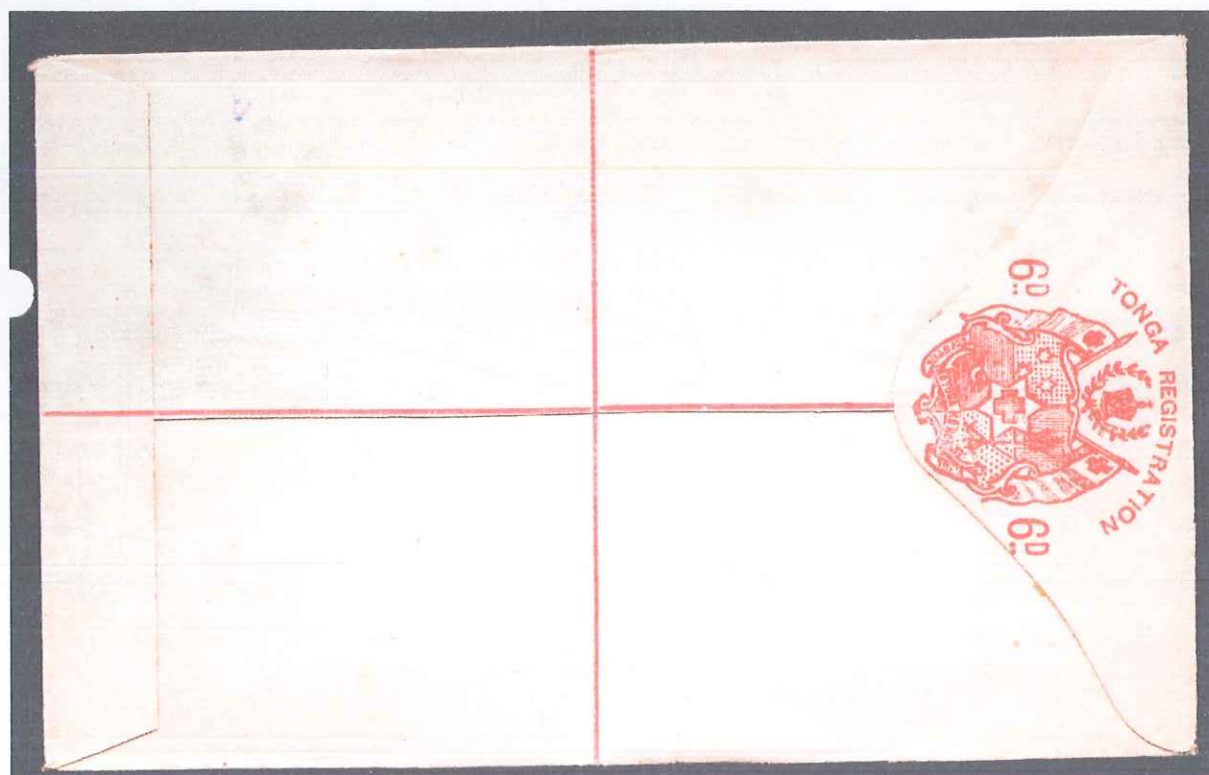
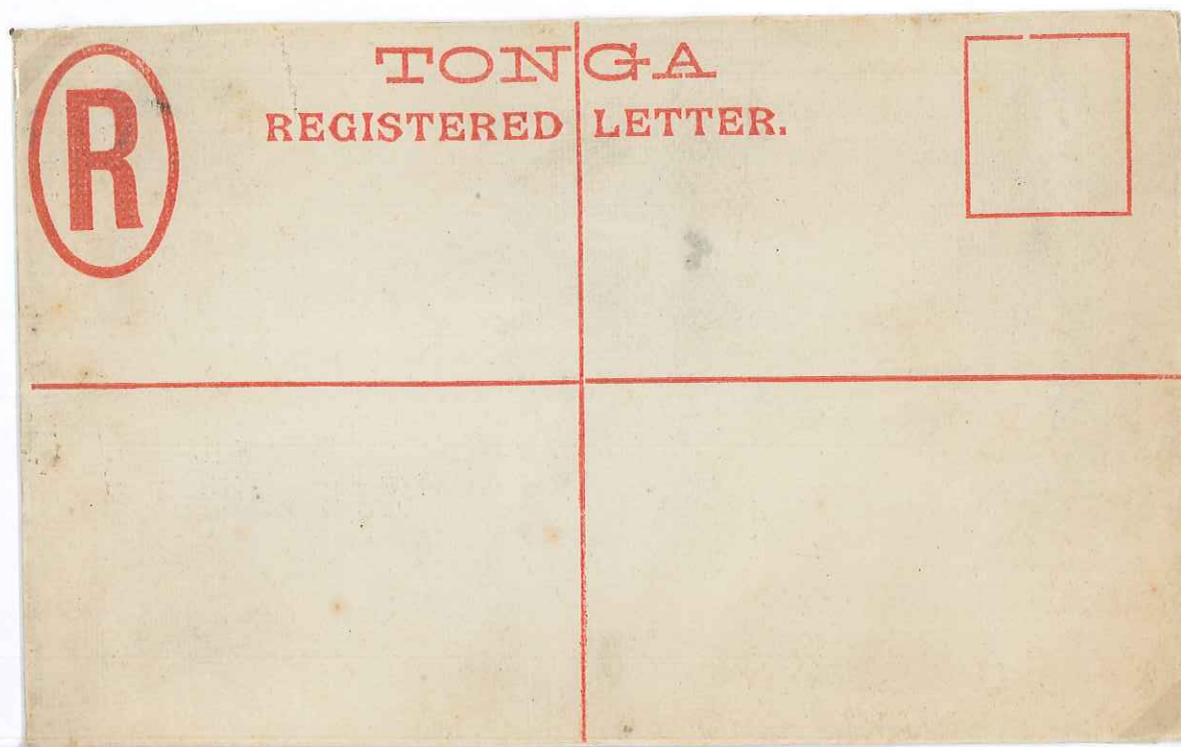
Postal Stationery of Tonga

In July, 1897, a new design of RLE was issued in both sizes (G & H2). There is a new design of the coat of arms and value, and there is printing under a pointed flap: "JOHN SANDS, PRINTER AND STATIONER, SYDNEY". This is one of the more frequently found mint RLEs, but it is not common. This is H & G C3.



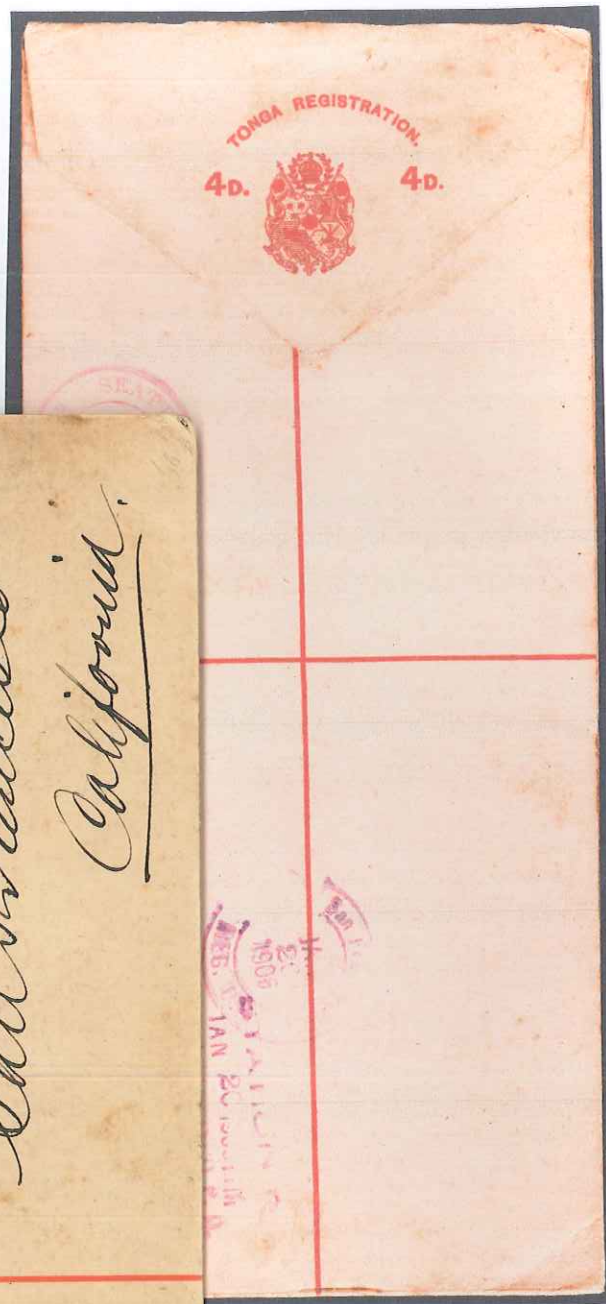
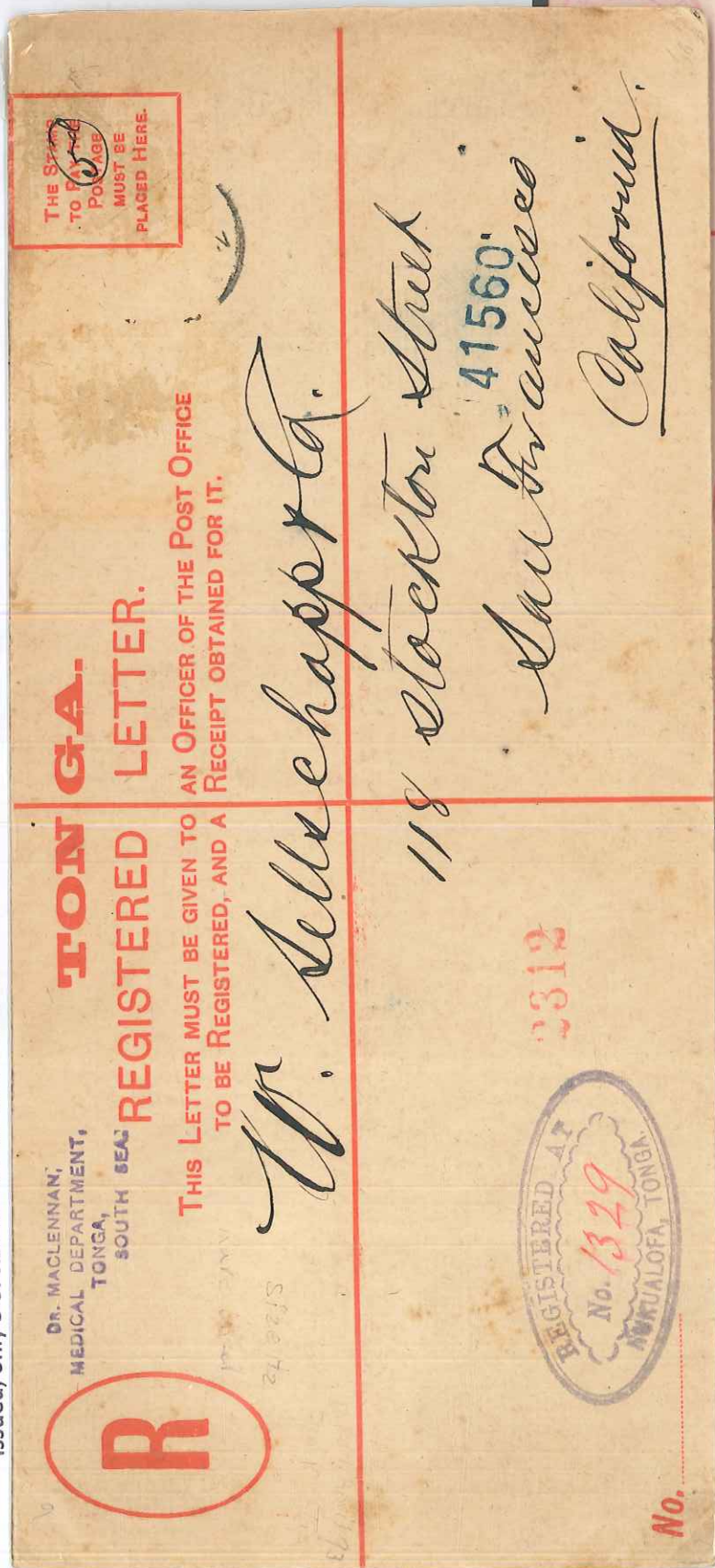
Postal Stationery of Tonga

The first Tongan Registered Letter Envelope was issued on 1st October, 1891. It was only issued in the small size, known as "G". Here is an unused envelope, with a slightly blue tinge in the paper, showing the indicium on the flap, which is broad and used only for this and a much whiter replacement, issued on 1st January, 1892. Because of its short time of availability it is very rare in used condition.



Postal Stationery of Tonga

This RLE was sent by Dr Donald MacLennan, Tonga's only physician, to a stamp dealer in San Francisco, arriving in 1905. It is a copy of H & G C8, with the usual imprint "JOHN SANDS, PRINTER AND STATIONER, SYDNEY", but with the date written as "1 April, '93" under the flap. Although 19 RLEs of size G were issued, only 5 of size H2 are known. This is the fourth and is very rare in used condition.



Postal Stationery of Tonga

H & G C12 is the first of 4 different RLEs to be issued in 1908. It is thought that the surcharging was done in Tonga and that they remained in use for a very short space of time. These mint examples show the surcharge of "THREE PENCE" in black replaces the original "FOURPENCE" in red of H & G C9.

