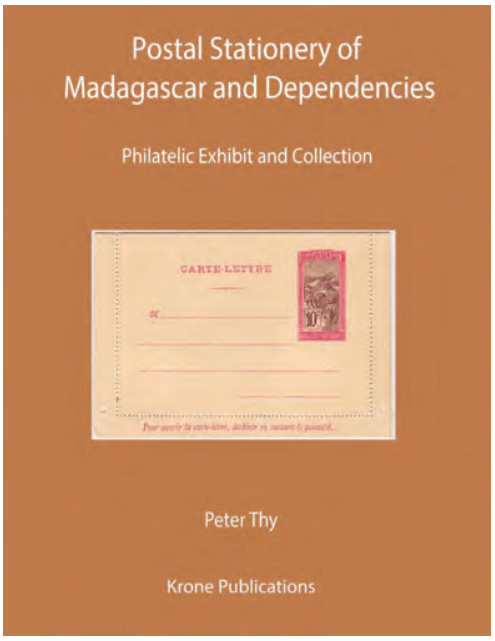
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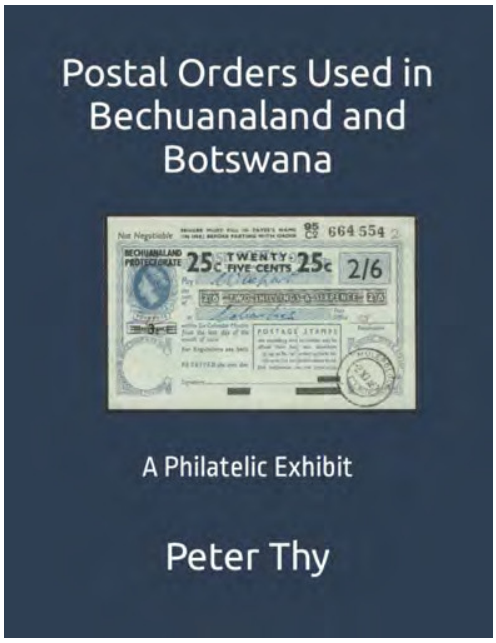


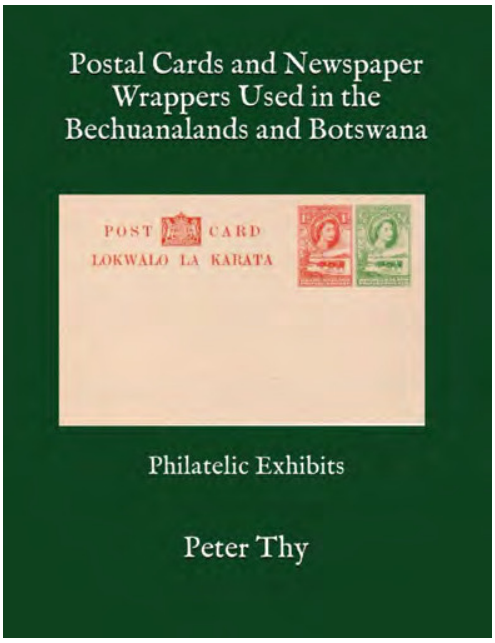
"Postal Stationery of Madagascar and Dependencies. Exhibit and Collection" by Peter Thy. Krone Publications, 2026, 372 p, 8.5 x 11 inches, full color. $46, plus shipping and appropriate taxes (or equivalent from regional sites).

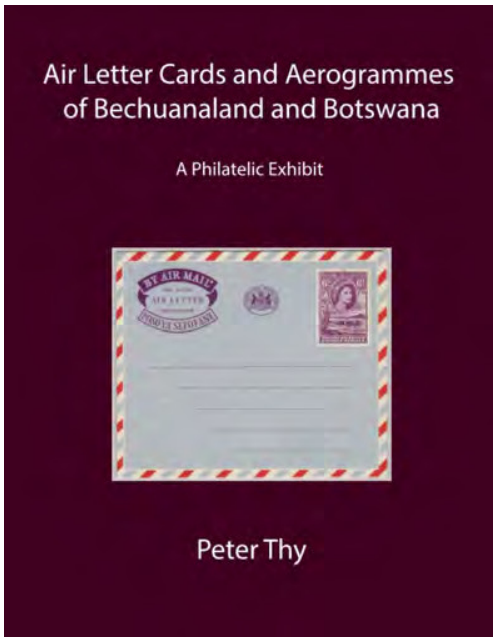
By the early 18th century, France had become a dominant European participant in the lucrative spice trade in the Indian Ocean, with possessions in East India and the Mascarene Islands (Rodrigues, Réunion, and Mauritius). The Napoleonic Wars (1803–1815) altered the balance of power in the Indian Ocean. France lost Mauritius and Rodrigues to the British and, as compensation, focused her attention on Madagascar, the crown jewel of the western Indian Ocean. The Napoleonic Wars (1803–1815) altered the balance of power in the Indian Ocean. France lost Mauritius and Rodrigues to the British and, as compensation, focused her attention on Madagascar, the crown jewel of the western Indian Ocean. In 1892, when the first postal stationery of the Group type was issued in the area, France controlled two small islands and a peninsula around the main island of Madagascar (Nossi-Bé, Sainte-Marie, and Diégo-Suarez) and was in at least partial control of the Comoro Islands (Anjouan, Grande Comore, Mayotte, and Mohéli). The island of Madagascar had, however, long evaded attempts by France to establish direct control. This changed in 1895, when a large expeditionary force invaded the island and eventually, in 1897, deposed the ruling queen and her government. Nossi-Bé, Sainte-Marie, and Diégo-Suarez were incorporated into the new, larger Madagascan colony in 1897. It took a few more years, until 1908, before all four of the Comoro Islands were also consolidated into Madagascar. Madagascar and Dependencies was thus established as an amalgamation of seven previously autonomous colonies, with the larger island now fully under French control. The first postal stationery used in the area was the French general colonial type, used prior to 1892, although it is uncertain how widely it was used. French-type formula cards were only introduced at Sainte-Marie in 1888. Both Diégo-Suarez and Madagascar received overprinted stationery in early 1895, respectively on the general colonial and on French types. Between 1892 and 1897, postal stationery (and adhesive stamps) was issued in the Allegorical Group type key-plate design (Navigation and Commerce). The name of the colony was separately printed in a rectangular box at the base of the design. Each territory was eventually issued identical sets of stationery types and denominations (postal cards, letter cards, and envelopes). Only Mohéli never issued postal stationery. All stationery originally issued in the former autonomous colonies remained valid in Madagascar after incorporation and was used until stocks were exhausted or the Group type stamps and stationery were demonetized in 1927. This resulted in a complex postal history of the area, affected by political and social changes continuing even to the present day, that can be difficult to unravel. Following the Group type stationery, it was not until 1911 that new stationery was again issued sporadically, with the last issues appearing in 1927, all showing designs based on current adhesive stamps. An upsurge in envelope stationery occurred during 1931–1938. These envelopes were widely used during World War II and were often up rated as a result of inflationary increases in postal rates. The République Malagasy became independent in 1958 and ceased to issue stationery until 1992, when various types started to appear. The Comoro Islands obtained independence in 1975 and have since issued stationery only sporadically. Mayotte remained a French Overseas Territory and issued stationery envelopes between 1999 and 2011 until becomming an Overseas Department.

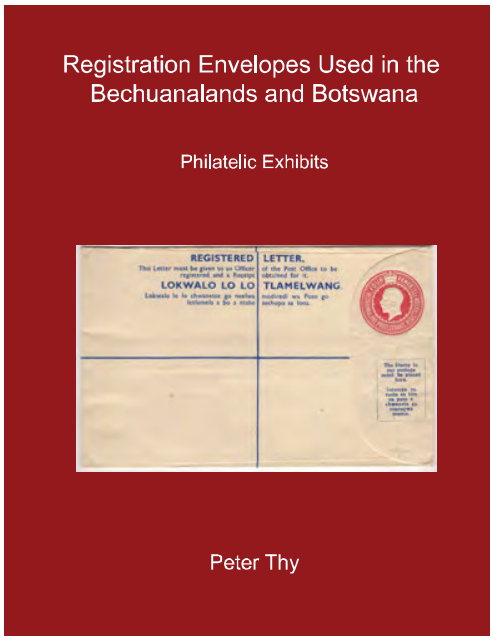
Press Release, November, 2026.

The Postal Stationery of the Bechuanalands and Botswana Are Offered in Four Volumes









The author's books on the Bechuanaland stationery can also be found on Amazon.com.