

KONONGO GOLD MINES

William Hall

I recently acquired a proving cover sent in 1942 bearing one of the two perfins used in the Gold Coast, "KGM" which was in use in the 1940s. On the rear the sender has written his name S. A. Baker, c/o Konongo Gold Mine. The town of Konongo is located just east of Kumasi in the Ashanti region.



The Gold Coast was the British Colonial name for Ghana in use before it gained independence in 1957. European settlers first appeared in the region in 1471 when Portuguese traders built the castle of Elmina and sadly used it for slave trading to the Americas. Many other European traders arrived in the following years including the British, Dutch, Prussians, Danes & Swedes. A Royal Trading Company was established in 1752 by the British Crown, which was formally taken over by the British government in 1821 who then established the British Gold Coast colony. In the following 50 years the British gradually incorporated other countries' trading colonies

into the Gold Coast. The British had four wars with the Ashanti people who controlled the hinterland between 1822 and 1896. By 1902 the Ashanti were incorporated into the Gold Coast protectorate.

The British built a network of railways and exported a variety of natural resources including gold, metal ores, diamonds, ivory, pepper, timber, grain and cocoa. The Konongo Gold Mines began in 1903 and were in continuous production until closing in 1997. They were re-opened in 2009 by Signature Metals in partnership with the Government of Ghana, now nearing the end of a multi-billion-dollar re-commissioning spend. Production should resume shortly.

