

# The Bulletin



The British Society of Australian Philately  
*Founded 1933*



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**2292. CONTINUING RESEARCH ON THE GV 1D VARIETIES (Part 49)**  
**by Gordon Monk; Bert Wajer and Paull Kaigg (1727)**  
**Pane 6 # 9**

**1<sup>st</sup> State Proof – 7 July 1914 (1<sup>st</sup> half of 1<sup>st</sup> printing)**

1a Top Left Corner. Island flaw inconstant and variable in size.

**2<sup>nd</sup> State 28 July 1914 (2<sup>nd</sup> half of 1<sup>st</sup> printing) – Final**

1a as before.

2a Left Frame. Slightly thinned between 6½ and 11¼mm above BLC found on 50% of sample, variable.

2b Top Right Corner. A sharp angled corner found on 55% of sample, variable.

2c Shade Lines. The 6<sup>th</sup> clear line above the Emu's back broken 1½mm from RF found on 35% of sample, inconstant and variable.

2d Cross. The left half of the top of the cross dished on 30% of sample, variable.

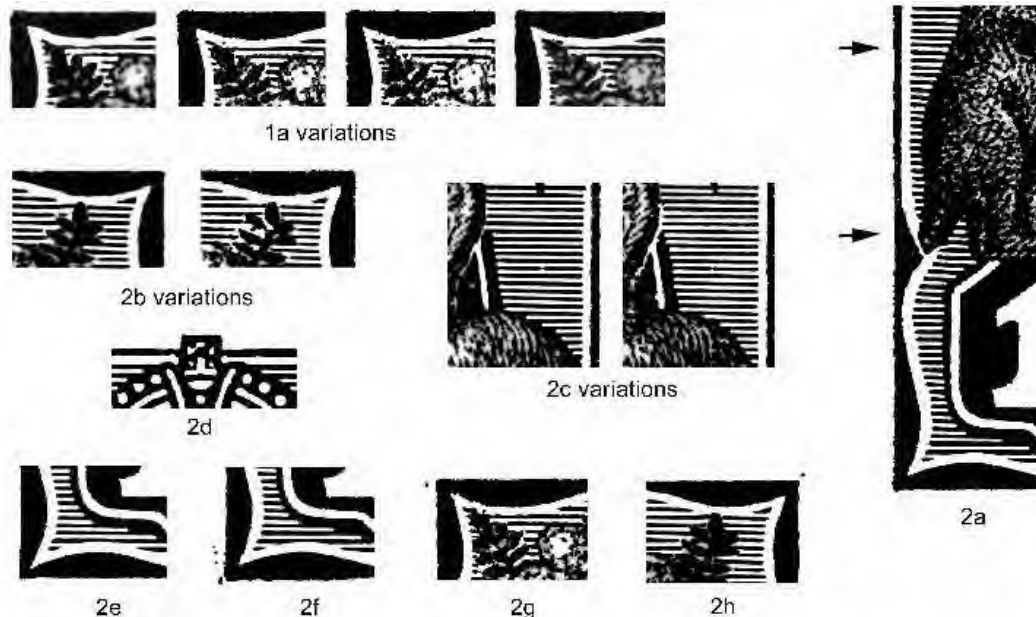
2e Bottom Frame. Shallow upward curve just right of corner found on 45% of sample, variable.

2f Bottom Left Corner. Late in the print run compartment marks appear on LF at the corner, variable.

2g Top Left Corner. At the end of the print run a compartment dot appears on LF in line with TF at the corner, inconstant.

2h Top Right Corner. At the end of the print run a compartment dot appears off the corner, inconstant.

Note



Issued Apr 2003 Revised Mar 2017

### 2617. AUSTRALIAN FORCES IN JAPAN 1945 – 1950 (Part 3)

by Malcolm Price (1766)

*A philatelic view, illustrated by items from the author's collection. Continuing the gentle ramble through a, perhaps, less well-known period of Australian Military operations. As previously, all illustrations are, to a lesser or greater extent, reduced in size.*

#### [Note from Ed. and author]

One illustration from Part 2 of the article decided to make a break for freedom and failed to appear in both the print and PDF versions. Figure 14 is repeated below:



## B.C.O.F. JAPAN 1946 on Stamps

*Kure 1/4/47. – All Australian stamps sold in B.C.O.F. areas from May 8, 1947 will be overprinted “B.C.O.F. JAPAN 1946”.*

*The stamps will be available in 5/-, 2/-, 1/-, 6d, 3d, 1d and ½d denominations. Heavy type will be printed on the 3d and 1d stamps and light type will be printed on the remainder. The new stamps will be available at all Australian bases and airfield post offices and unit postal stations in Japan.*

*The present issue of Australian stamps will be sold only for the purpose of affixing to postal notes to make up broken sums for which postal notes are not available.<sup>1</sup>*

This extract from BCON (the B.C.O.F. newspaper), summarises the details of the 8<sup>th</sup> May re-issue, the problems affecting the initial, failed, issue seemed to have been resolved. Also, rather than the original three values, there are now seven. Additionally, personnel were not allowed to purchase stamps having a face value in excess of 10 shillings in any one day. Adequate justification had to be given to military postal officials in order to make maximum purchases of the military stamps on a daily basis.

### 8<sup>th</sup> May 1947 – The Re-Issue

#### *½<sup>d</sup> Kangaroo Orange*

Original stamp was recess printed on watermarked Multiple Crown and C of A paper with a perforation of 14.75 x 14. With ‘By Authority’ imprint. The subject featured “Duke”, a favourite kangaroo at Melbourne Zoo. The overprint is in the Type 1 thin seriffed type. Illustrated is a lower left pane block of four (Fig 18). A number of the typesetting problems such as those illustrated in Part 2 Fig 11 were corrected, unfortunately a number were not. On the next page there are illustrated many of the problems which escaped into the issued stamps. Most of these can also be found on the other values printed with the Type 1 overprint.



Fig 18

Overprint Typesetting Varieties on the 1/2<sup>d</sup> value:



Fig 18a

Wrong Font "4"



Fig 18b

Wrong Font "6"



Fig 18c

Narrow "N"



Fig 18d

Misplaced "J"



Fig 18e

Broken "O"



Fig 18f

Raised "6"



Fig 18g

Block of six spanning the central gutter cancelled at UPS 453, situate at Eta Jima. The lower left stamp exhibits a dropped stop after the 'F'.

### *1<sup>d</sup> Queen Elizabeth Purple Brown*

Original stamp was recess printed on watermarked Multiple Crown and C of A paper with a perforation of 14.80 x 14.08. With 'By Authority' imprint. The subject featured the Dorothy Wilding portrait of Queen Elizabeth. The overprint is in the Type 2 thick san-serif type. Illustrated is a lower left pane block of four (Fig 19).



Fig 19

The Type 2 overprint did not, in general, suffer from the number, and form, of typesetting varieties found in Type 1. However, one catalogued variety of note is the "Blue-Black" overprint, attributed in Brunsden-White as not being a true change of ink formula, but the result of lighter overprint pressure in one printing. This variety does not lend itself to clear reproduction so the scan (Fig 19a) is the best that we can provide.



Fig 19a

### *3<sup>d</sup> King George VI Dark Brown*



Fig 20

Original stamp was recess printed on watermarked Multiple Crown and C of A paper with a perforation of 14.74 x 14. With 'By Authority' imprint. The subject featured the Peter North portrait of King George VI. The overprint is in the Type 2 thick san-serif type. Illustrated is a lower left pane block of four from the right-hand pane with selvedge (Fig 20). As with the 1<sup>d</sup>, this stamp did not suffer from many problems with the overprinting – except .....



**Fig 21**

Two examples of a dramatic error caused by stray foreign matter (a small piece of paper?)

Right hand stamp with 'B' 95% omitted

Below, Row 1, Position 8 with 75% of total overprint omitted.





*Kookaburra Dull Brown*

*1/- Lyrebird Dull Green*

Original stamp was recess printed on watermarked Multiple Crown and C of A paper with a perforation of 14.75 x 14. With 'John Ash' imprint. The subject is the Lyrebird in the Fauna series and is a reduced version of the 1932 1/- definitive. The overprint is in the Type 1 thin seriffed type. Illustrated is a lower left pane block of four (Fig 23).



Fig 23

For the 1/2<sup>d</sup>, 1<sup>d</sup>, 3<sup>d</sup>, 6<sup>d</sup> and 1/- the overprint forme was of 160 in two panes of 80, each being 10 rows of 8, covering a full post office sheet of stamps in one operation.

For the 2/- and 5/- values the thin, seriffed overprint was again used, however it was more generously spaced (wider and higher) and could be designated as "Type 3". The overprint forme for the 2/- was of 120 in two panes of 60, each 10 rows of 6, as previously, covering a full sheet of stamps in one operation. The forme for the 5/- was of 80 in upper and lower panes of 40, each 4 rows of 10 and again covering a full post office sheet in one operation.

*2/- Kangaroo and Map (1945-1948 Redrawn Die Issue) Maroon*



Fig 24

Multiple Crown and C of A watermarked paper with a comb perforation of 11.7 x 11.8 and 'By Authority' imprint. The overprint is in the 'Type

Original stamp was recess printed on watermarked Multiple Crown and C of A paper with a perforation of 14.75 x 14. With 'McCracken' imprint. The subject featured a Kookaburra on a stump based on a photograph. The overprint is in the Type 1 thin seriffed type. Illustrated is a lower left pane block of four from the right-hand pane with selvedge. (Fig 22). As with the 1/2<sup>d</sup> (and the 1/- to follow) this issue suffered the many varieties as previously illustrated

3'



Fig 22

thin

seriffed type.

Illustrated is a lower left pane block of four

(Fig 24).



Fig 26a



Fig 26b

Fig 24 is the first of two parcel labels, this with a very late usage of two 2/- overprints. Cancelled at AUST U.P.S. 497 (Brit. Com. Base Kure) in November 1949.

**5/- Coronation Robes Dull Lake**

This overprint was issued on two types of paper – Chalk Surfaced (Fig 24a) and Unsurfaced (Fig 24b). Both were watermarked Multiple Crown and C of A, featuring a photograph by Dorothy Wilding of Queen Elizabeth in Coronation Robes with perforation of 13.8 x 13.37.

And here is a selection of typographical anomalies on the 5/-:



Fig 26c  
Missing serif on “B”  
and break in top bar  
of “F”



Fig 26d  
Broken “B”



Fig 26e  
Double Stop after  
“F”



Fig 25



Fig 26f

The second of the parcel labels with a very late usage of the unsurfaced 5/- (plus a 6d.). Cancelled again at AUPS 497 in November 1949. But why so late? – did Major Bloomfield suddenly find them in his wallet and realise he had to use them before he returned to Australia? Who knows.

Fig 26f

### Withdrawal of the Overprints

On Saturday February 12<sup>th</sup> 1949 the sale of B.C.O.F. stamps was discontinued.

No official reason was advanced explaining why this action was taken as Australian troops still remained within Japan performing the duties of occupation. It may only be surmised that the stamps did not accomplish the purpose for which they had originally been intended, and that constituted authority had still to devise a way to stop petty violations of foreign exchange controls. Further, the issuance of the surcharged stamps made necessary the expenditure of a greater amount of time for supervision of stocks, printing, bookkeeping etc., than the venture warranted if judged in the light of accomplishment of purpose, together with the massive reduction in strength of Australian forces in Japan over 1948 and into 1949.

The Minister for the Army, the Hon. Cyril Chambers, stated during March 1949, that the following quantities of B.C.O.F. stamps had been sold by the military postal clerks in Japan:

Denomination	Quantity
½ <sup>d</sup> .	189,670
1 <sup>d</sup> .	378,750
3 <sup>d</sup> .	891,643
6 <sup>d</sup> .	136,133
1/-	131,055
2/-	62,651
5/-	32,508

Remainder stocks of the B.C.O.F. stamps on hand, representing a face value of several thousand pounds were destroyed during February 1949 by burning.

And, yes, First Day Covers had been prepared -



**Fig 27** Cancellation: AUST UNIT POSTAL STN 495 - Fukuyama

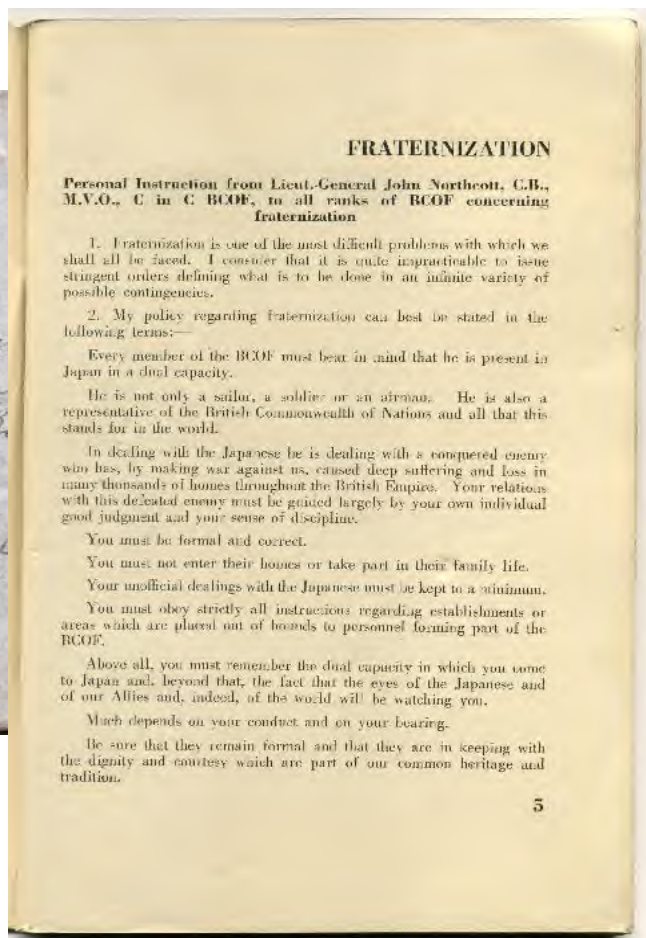
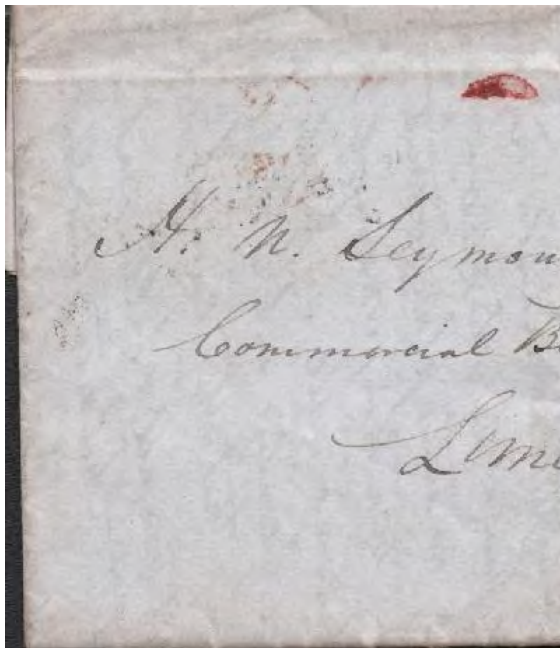
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### Next instalment, Other Aspects of Postal Services during the Occupation

<sup>1</sup> *The Postal History of Australian Forces in Japan and Korea, 1945-1957 - Collas P28*

If Members can advise any corrections or add any further information, please pass these through the Editor for inclusion in a future edition of The Bulletin.

2623. LETTER FROM ADELAIDE IN THE FIRST WEEK OF 1841 by Brian Peace FRPSL (395)



Dated 4 January 1841 this letter was put in the Post Office at Adelaide and received the undated first Adelaide hand-stamp. It is one of 82 examples of this hand-stamp so far recorded, however this is one of only three examples addressed other than to Great Britain or Australia. One of the other two letters is to the identical addressee in Limerick and dated December 1841. The third is addressed to Batavia.

The letter was placed aboard the 250-ton ship *Mercury*, Captain John Virtue Giles, sailing 10 January with a general cargo, and arriving off Gravesend on 19 May 1841. Processed in London the same day, the letter reached Dublin on the 20<sup>th</sup> and Limerick, Ireland on the 21<sup>st</sup>. That the *Mercury* was still afloat and made reasonable time to London must be attributed to her virtual rebuild, having been condemned by the Admiralty on 13 July 1813, over 27 years previously.

The letter is worth transcribing in full as it contains interesting facts about rates of pay and why emigration from Ireland was an attractive option for people suffering from poverty. Although the Irish Potato Famine was not to hit until three years later, widespread crop failures throughout Ireland occurred in 1836, 1837, 1839, and 1841.

H. N. Seymour Esq  
Commercial Buildings  
Limerick  
Ireland

Adelaide 4<sup>th</sup> January 1841

Dear Horatio

I received your letter of the 14<sup>th</sup> August by Dr. Davies I can assure you it gave us very great pleasure to get a letter from you & especially to learn from it that Mrs. S. had got over her confinement so well & that you, the other children & Richard were so well & also our other friends. It is indeed very pleasant to hear from our friends now so far separated from us- I have written you several letters & very long ones which I hope will arrive safely to you- if so, & also the newspapers which I frequently send, from them you will have a good idea of how matters are going on here & since my last to you (& also a long letter which I sent to Dr. Townley & which you will likely see if he has not left Limerick before it arrived) nothing particularly has occurred but I wish to take advantage of a Vessel going direct to London which will sail in a few days- We were greatly astonished and pleased when we knew that Dr. Davies had arrived here, he is now living with us- he has improved since he arrived & he thinks if any climate will suit & do him good this will- he intends remaining here & acting as a "Consulting Physician" which he is very fit for & which will not give him much fatiguing- I send you a newspaper in which some notice is taken of his arrival in a very delicate & agreeable manner which will soon make him known thro out the Colony- we are intimately acquainted with the Editor & proprietor of the newspaper- Dr. Davies was consulted soon after his arrival regarding Mrs Stow (our Ministers wife) & since then she has greatly improved. Today Dr. Davies called on regarding a Mr Rowlands a Merchant & I do believe he will soon get into as much practice as he will be able to attend to & I am sure he well deserves it.

I send you an Almanack which I hope will come to hand Safely- from it you will get a great deal minute Statistics & information that may be depended on- by this means you will get more correct Knowledge than I could convey in a great many letters- especially as to Climate- heat etc also flocks, herds, etc & have sent several newspapers to the "Chamber of Commerce" so as the public generally knows what is doing here & the truth known as far as possible- Capt Gapot of Ennis is greatly pleased with the Colony- he is an intimate friend of N Watsons of the "Chronicle Office" & intends writing him a long letter which I suppose will be published in the "Chronicle" if necessary you could show them the "Almanack"- these things are well got up here especially when it is considered that it was only 4 years on the 28<sup>th</sup> Ulto since the first settlers landed here-

I wrote you at such length before as to the kind of people that should Emigrate here & the various motives that urges some persons to undertake it which in them is right and proper- while in others it is not so-

I was very glad to learn by your letter that "N Jones" had returned to Limerick & entered into Partnership with you. This I trust will be mutually beneficial & that it will long remain so, you both cannot be better and more prosperous than I wish you to be- should any circumstances render either or both desirous to cross the waters & try this quarter- I would gladly give any further information that might be necessary & do any & every thing (as it is my duty to do) to further your views in any way I possibly could- I have been doing little in the way of business since my arrival, I hope soon to be well employed & profitably I have had only one consignment- I am gathering as much information as I can & getting acquainted with the people so as to be useful for me when I fully engage in business- latterly it has been very ticklish it is now improving- there is no danger of the permanent interest of the Colony, but many have suffered in various Speculations & failures some of which have been heavy- I

*expect you would receive in Oct the letters I sent you on our arrival here- it was sent via "India"- I am sorry you were so unfortunate with your "Tea" speculation- it became latterly quite a gambling trade, it was impossible to make any calculations as to what should be done or how to not- I am glad you have a prospect of being regularly supplied with "Sugar from Trinidad" I have no doubt of your being able to make "headway" against "Spaight & Harvey"-*

*I am sorry that "Durrand" did not secure apt the "Bank" his A Hq. did not do his Duty & ought to suffer for it*

*I home [sic] D. Dunit may succeed in "America" but I think he would have done much better here.*

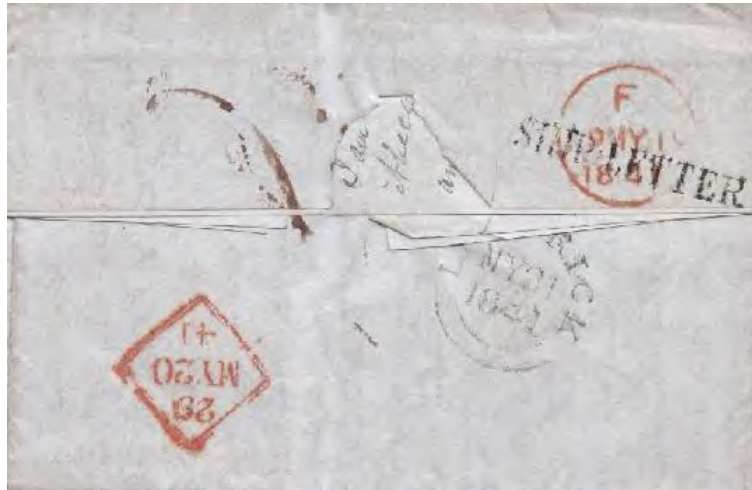
*I forgot if I mentioned in my former letter that I got word from my Brother Harry's family duly, he is in a very respectable situation of Book Keeper for which he has £200 a year of Salary & hopes in a short time to be still better- he has done better than what I had any expectation of especially so soon- please mention this to "John Sharp" & "John McNeill"- as they were interested for him- Has your brother "John" got settled yet or has he any thought of trying this quarter of the world- I see there has been a great deal of misery & destitution in Limerick during the Summer- thousands of them expect to Emigrate to some part of the world where they can get food & Clothing for work- no one here need idle for the want of work & in general very highly paid- "Morris" who was at the Asylum is at present at work as a Painter & will earn about £3 a week at this he expects to get permanent work- & the expense of living now is not much higher than towns in England- some articles are higher, but flour, rice, tea, sugar & butter meat is fully as moderate flour is now nearly the one third of the price when we arrived it was then £55 per ton it is now £20 for the very best- all the people that came out in the "Birman" from Cork are employed or nearly so- Labourers or farm Servants among them get from £35 to £45 a year & their rations- any of those when in the Co of Clare only got 8d a day- good women servants are scarce some of those that came in this ship who would only get at home £2 a year were fixed here at £14 to £20 a year-*

*The fact is there can be no better place for industrious, sober people, & many of them are making money fast- those that have small children do not do so well, as people in the Country do not wish to take large families out to their settlements; when the children are so young that they cannot do anything-*

*We are often thinking of you all & talking about you, seldom a day passes over without the children talking about "Shelburn"- at present we have fine cool weather but during part of last month we had very warm weather during a few days- we hope the summer will pass over without much more of it we are all thank God in our usual way- and the Year has gone some how now commenced another- what changes even in one short year takes place- may we be enabled to walk in the favour of the Lord while we are in this world- We desire to be most affectionately remembered to Mrs. S & the children, H Jones, your Brother & their families- also at "Richmond" & the "Asylum"- When you see the Revd Brown remember us to them, also W Thomas & family & any other friends-*

*C. desires me to say that she will likely write Mrs. S by next ship- Dr. Davies desires to be kindly remembered to you & yours- & also his Kind regards to Mr. & Mrs. Jackson & please say to them from him that he will write them by next ship, as at present he cannot get it done - he sends them a newspaper*

*May God bless you all  
Yours affectionately  
David Sutherland*



Reverse of letter to Limerick with London **SHIP LETTER**

**NOTES:**

- In para 1 there is a reference to Mrs Stow whose husband, The Reverend Thomas Quinton Stow, (1801-67) was the writer of many letters which were preserved by the Colonial Missionary Society and have found their way into collectors' hands.
- By 1841 there were three newspapers in Adelaide. The Almanack was an impressive statistical document containing every imaginable detail about the Colony.

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## **NEWS AND NOTES APRIL 2018.**

### **OPEN LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY**

Goodness, is it that that time again! Stampex over and Convention looming on the horizon. At one stage I was concerned that we would have insufficient numbers for Convention to be viable, but things have improved since then. I will raise at the next Council meeting as to whether we should continue with the current model or go for something less ambitious.

Since the last letter, we have seen the demise of Mossgreen, and the emergence of a new player on the Australian Auction Houses field, Abacus Auctions (you can count on us) that brings well-known members Torsten Weller and Gary Watson back into the front line. Thinking of the comments that have been made to me over the last three years or so, many will be pleased to see the re-emergence of the Prestige-style website with its ease of use.

Local to me (or relatively so), there seems to be competition to replace the large Postcard and Collectibles fair that was held in Farnborough. I guess it suffered because of the near-impossibility of parking anywhere near the venue. There is a two-day event being held in Bracknell, but it coincides with a judging workshop, and there is another two-day event shortly afterwards being held in Salisbury city centre. Just be careful where you eat! Whichever you may go to, I wish you good hunting.

This year, for the first time, I shall be attending the ABPS Congress, as part of a team who have developed a paper on "The Future of Philately as seen in 2018". It has been a fascinating exercise, and the full text should, in due course, be on the ABPS website. The team view it as a work in progress and would welcome constructive comment. The essence of the paper will be presented as the Kay Goodman Memorial Lecture.

I look forward to seeing those of you that attend Convention. It is always a good event, although this year it does clash with an important national event. We shall, I hope, enjoy ourselves, and learn something new over the weekend.

PGER

11/3/18

## **FORTHCOMING MEETINGS**

London meetings are held at the Royal Philatelic Society, 41 Devonshire Place, W1G 6JY,  
At 5.00 for 5.30

Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup>. April 2018

Speaker – Steve Paice FBSAP “King George V Heads and some other “Interesting” Items.

May 18<sup>th</sup>. -20<sup>th</sup>. Annual Convention

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup>. June 2018

Speaker – Dr. Andrew Mortlock with another look at “Aussie States”

### **South West Section**

Meetings at Greyfriars Centre, Ringwood at 2.30  
Meet at the Fish Inn Ringwood for lunch.

April 7<sup>th</sup>. 2018

A further look at “Aussie States”.

Dr Andrew Mortlock FBSAP from Cambridge.

## **BRITISH SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIAN PHILATELY**

Membership Secretary List of Changes to Membership Database.

Period: 10th January 2018 to 9th March 2018

### **NOTIFICATION 157**

#### **Change of Address:**

None Advised.

#### **New members:**

None

#### **Resignations:**

652	Morrison W	974	Johnston A	1644	Scudder K
1661	Smith W.C.E.	1841	Kino M	1485	Beech C

#### **Reinstated:**

1745	Turner L.	Invernesshire
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## **AUSTRALIAN PHILATELY IN PRINT #2, 2018.**

A list of articles found in Journals & Bulletins held (or seen) by the Librarian (Periodicals).

### **THE AUSTRALIAN AEROPHILATELIST**, N0.113, July-September 2017.

Editorial – Ross Wood.

Adelaide to Gawler Airmail Centenary Events for Thursday 23 November 2017.

AAMC 202d – the DH66 flight from Perth to Darwin in 1931 – John Sims.

1945 Two Swedish Airmails to Australia – Ed Wolf.

England – Australia airmail routes during WW2 – Ed Wolf.+

### **AUSTRALIAN COMMONWEALTH COLLECTORS CLUB OF NEW SOUTH WALES**, Vol.56, No.4, December 2017.

Art.3698 – Polly’s Hoard: a remarkable find of Official Stamps – Gary Watson ACCCF.

Art.3699 – New flaws for the 3d Kangaroo – Richard Guy ACCCF.

Art.3700 – A tale of three modern postmarks – Richard Peck ACCCF.

Art.3701 – Australia Parcel Post Labels P.P.1 and P.P.2: usage and classification - Roger Eggleton & Eric Frazer.

Art.3702 – 4d Violet King George V – Plate 2, R6 with additional flaw – John Bozic.

Art.3703 – 6d Blue Kangaroo 3<sup>rd</sup> watermark (die IIb) with “white flaw over Arnhem Land” (BW20(U)e): confirmation of position and two further examples – Philip Adams & Rod Buchko.

Art.3704 – 9d Kangaroo 2<sup>nd</sup> watermark inverted – Richard Guy ACCCF.

Art.3705 – 1d Green George V, C of A watermark: position V1/32 – John Bozic.

Art.3706 – Australian Postage Meters: a summary of the last 18 years (1999-2017) – Richard Peck ACCCF. Art.3707 – Postal Regulations for PoWs in Australia, WW2 – John Collyer ACCCF.

Art.3343 (cont) – 1d KGV plate varieties and compartment markings – Gordon Monk, Bet Wajer & Paul Kaigg.

Meeting Minutes for 15 September & 16 October 2017.

Index to Volume 56 (2017).

### **APF NEWS**, February 2018.

President’s Column – John Moore.

The Library of the Royal Philatelic Society of Victoria – Abhishek Bhuwalka.

What is a Meter.

New APF Publication “The Arthur Gray Australian Booklets Collection”

Western Tasmania Post Offices – Mount Bischoff/Waratah m- Malcolm Groom.

Vale: Mike Rhodes – Glen Stafford.

SAPDAPEX 2017 (South Africa) – Philip Levine.

J is for Jabiru – a design error – Ian McMahon.

ROYALPEX 2017 – Linda Lee.

Australia – New Zealand Accord – John Moore.

Sharjah 2017 Exhibition – Anthony Presgrave.

Exhibition Timetable.

### **CINDERELLA PHILATELIST**, Vol.58, No.1, January 2018.

No Australian content.

**THE COURIER**, No.64, December 2017.

“Postage to Collect” for Australian Colonial Mail – Alan Grey.

Early “Registered” Mail – Peter Allan.

Somerset River Cam Handstamp – 7<sup>th</sup> example – Allen Shatten.

Tasmanian Archives N/S 1192/1/1 “Album of photos of Waratah by S Hooker”.

The Vickery Courier Sheet – Andy Coard.

**GIBBONS STAMP MONTHLY**, February 2018..

Christchurch Cathedral on New Zealand stamps – Christopher Moor.

Diary Dates.

**GIBBONS STAMP MONTHLY**, March 2018.

Obituary: Robert Briscoe Earée RDP 1846-1929 (author of “Album Weeds) – Michael Peach.

New Zealand’s 1855 Full-Face Queens – David Smitham.

The Five (Philatelic) Lives of (the Central Pacific Ocean) Christmas Island – Steve Pendleton.

**THE LONDON PHILATELIST**, Vol.127, No.1452, January-February 2018.

Meta-Analysis of Used Post Office Postal Stationery Wrappers – John Courtis FRPSL.

**THE LONDON PHILATELIST**, Vol.127, No.1453, March 2018.

Museum Update.

**THE QUEENSLAND STAMP COLLECTOR**, Vol.35, No.1, February – April 2018.

Editorial – John Crowsley

QPC News; APF News; Club Scene; Diary Dates; Where and When?; Exhibition Results.

Talk Queensland – Some aspects of the Early Postal History of Queensland Post Cards – John Stein.

Registered Post – Joan Orr.

50 Years Ago – Jeff Gunston.

Going but not Gone! – Sandra Bowtell-Harris.

**THE STAMP LOVER**, Vol.110, No.1, February 2018.

Pushing back the frontiers of Forensic Philately – Paul Leonards BSc (Hons), CSc, FRPSL.

**STAMP TALK**, Vol.43, No.3, November 2017.

Obituary - Paull Kaigg.

Adelaide STAMPEX 2017 Half National Results.

Results and Report on Sharjah 2017 Exhibition – Anthony Presgrave.

C of A Single Crown over A (Type 2) watermark paper for KGV Side-face issues.

King George V Research (Pane 5, #24 & 49, Pane 6, #1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7) – Bert Wajer, Paull Kaigg & Gordon Monk.

**AEC**

## BIOGRAPHIES

### 19. Alan Whittaker



I was born in North London in 1942, the youngest (and only boy) of four children, only 500 yards from the Stag Lane factory of De Havilland aircraft where my father worked. This led to an early interest in aircraft, visiting the annual air show at Hendon Airfield regularly with my father, my first flight being in a Tiger Moth doing circuits and bumps for 1/- a go at the age of 10.

My first school was Stag Lane junior, then on to Willesden Technical College of Engineering. With a passion to see the world, leaving education I gained an apprenticeship as a Cartographer with Hunting Surveys Ltd in Hertfordshire, spending the first year as a pole and tape boy with a surveyor on the base mapping of the new M1, between Crick and Doncaster before its construction. After completing five years in 1964, I went out to Jordan as the draughtsman attached to a UN geological survey for a year. On my return, my fiancée Win and I were married in 1965.

We bought our first home in the Cotswolds where I worked as Chief Draughtsman at Cartographical Services Ltd producing a whole range of new school atlases for the U.K. and overseas for William Collins Ltd. My daughter Jane (who is now Headmistress at a private school in Buckinghamshire) was born here in 1967. In 1969 I went to work, through the Crown Agents in London, to Malawi as Chief Cartographer in the Government Survey Department for three years.

By the time we returned mapping was on the decline as technology took over. I retrained as a lithographic planner and we moved to our present home in Romsey, Hants ending up as the reproduction manager. By the mid eighties this trade was also overtaken by technology and the company went into liquidation in 1993. I decided to retire and become a part time handyman as I had always enjoyed woodwork and decorating, I continued working until I was 71.

A keen stamp collector as a child, it was 3d packets from Woolworths! I have been a collector and investor all my life. When I was 65 I decided to join a stamp club, this led to a meeting with Colin Mount at Ringwood Philatelic Society, his passion for the hobby being a great influence on my starting to specialize and display. At that time I had a brother-in-law who owned a post office in Derby, Tasmania, and I started collecting Australia. This again gave Colin the opportunity to introduce me to the BSAP; the rest is history. Outside philately, I am a keen golfer, allotment holder and member of the U3A.

Besides the BSAP and Ringwood, I am a member of the British Air Mail Society, Southampton Philatelic Society and the Channel Islands Specialist Society.

## REPORT ON THE BSAP LONDON MEETING OF 14<sup>th</sup>. FEBRUARY 2018



Sandy came from Scotland in mid February to present his fairly comprehensive South Australia collection (which was just missing a couple of stamps where individual known quantities available are very low).

He explained the colony was something of a vast empty space actually stretching all the way to the north coast that had been sold to the South Australia company.

The first “no value” stamps do not have known die proofs, but do have menu card replicas, and a selection of these was presented. The actual stamps had been printed initially in London, which created the logistical challenge when new stocks were needed as lead in times for delivery were several months.

Sandy’s display, whilst primarily providing a strong run through of the stamps did include a few covers to illustrate usage, including one that had clearly travelled at least 30,000 miles as it was originally from Invercargill to Fife in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and Sandy had repatriated it to Scotland again from an Australian auction in more recent times.

His display also put forward an explanation of why perforation varieties arise in some issues and why some combinations are more/less frequently found; showing how this was associated with the set up of the machine. (Maybe the editor could persuade him to do a short article on this, as if right the idea should have application in other places where this phenomenon occurs).

In the second part Sandy illustrated material showing changes to marginal markings when the De la Rue family sold out, with their name being replaced by DLR, and Sandy showed one of 5 known

He then moved on to the “long stamps”, higher values 2/6-£2 as well as much higher values £10, 315 etc. used on title deeds, including both stamps inscribed Postage & Revenue as well as the later “postage” replacement.



On the 10th February 2018, sixteen members and one guest were invited to "The Last Hurrah or 65 years of Philatelic Displaying" when Ken Killeen, at 95 one of our oldest members came over from the Isle of Wight to present what we all believe will be Ken's last big display, but having seen the enthusiasm with which Ken guided us around his material, very few of us can believe this. Ken broke with South West's tradition of have only Australian material on show when he started by presenting his other love, the Postal History of Isle of Wight. And so the Ken started with a selection of ship letters from Cowes, Ryde, and Yarmouth from 1760 to 1850 which was followed by two Isle of Wight shipwrecks one from the "SS Eider of 1892 and a second from the PS Pertsdown of 1941. Prisoner of War Ship Mail followed from 1914/15. Next up was a number of the Official and Private Air Mail services both to and from the island during the 1930's. Then followed many stamps and covers relating to the Gerhardt Zuckers failed attempt send Rocket Mail to the Island. Royalty featured with mail from Osborne House signed by "The Queen" 1876 and "AE" 1862 being the Prince of Wales. Several covers were also shown associated with Royal Yachts. Ken then displayed an extensive array of Post Office services which included various licences ranging from "Man Servants", Armorial Bearings, Dogs, Guns, wireless, TV and motor vehicles. Ken finished his first half with some artistic Illustrated covers from the 19th and early 20th century.

Following a cup of tea everyone settled back to see Ken's second half entitled the Postal History and Stamps from Australia. and Ken opened up with some very early and unusual postal history items from Brisbane, followed by an extensive range of 1900/1910 Queensland covers from R.O.'s with Manuscript or Local handstamps. Next up was a small selection of the rarely seen documents outlining the closure of certain Post Offices or their transfer to new premises. Letter bills featured next, these were used in vast quantities but are rarely seen being used for the transfer of mail from Post Office to Post Office, interestingly this contained a small batch of 1898 receipts from a small Victoria Railway Station (beech Worth) issued when accepting mailbags, wallets, pouches or mail for a carriage which has never been seen before. Ken then said he was going to deviate a little by displaying a selection of 1d red "Roos" plus a small array of plate flaws on the Queensland 1897 1d and 2d "Void Head" including some interesting cracked plates. And to finish up Ken returned to his old favourite TPO markings and this featured rare NSW "Posted at Railway Sidings" and Railway Stations and also rare South Australia "Posted at Railway Stations". Ken ended his display with a number of postmarks in the category "Only One Known" or "Not Yet Recorded"

Chairman Colin Mount, on presenting Ken's certificate said how wonderful the display had been and with so much enthusiasm he felt it would be most unlikely that we would not see Ken displaying again. As many may know Ken flew in Lancasters during the war and one of our members Alan Whittaker was able to obtain a wonderful framed picture of the Lancaster bomber which was presented to Ken and this prompted several wonderful short stories about Ken's exploits.

A truly memorable occasion



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## 2620. SOME ASPECTS OF AUSTRALIAN MAIL CONTRACTS 1844-1860

### By Colin Tabcart (1806) (Part 3)

“It will be seen by the foregoing conditions that a semi-monthly mail packet service is contemplated by the Government between England, the Mediterranean, India, and China, instead of the monthly East India and China mail now maintained by way of Southampton and Alexandria, leaving there on the 20<sup>th</sup> of every month”.

“The mail service, hitherto performed by the vessels of the Royal Navy between Marseilles and Malta, is also to be performed by packet steamers, and is to be included in these arrangements. The Line from Aden to Bombay is, however, omitted from these conditions, and the vessels of the Hon. East India Company will continue to convey the mails on that station as at present.”

“With reference to the Australian mails, it will be observed that only an alternative monthly communication is to be provided by the contractors from Singapore to Sydney, and that the route via Batavia, Adelaide, and Port Phillip to Sydney is selected in preference to the previously recommended line via Torres Straits. In view of the existing state of our Australian possessions, and of their future prospects from the recent discoveries of abundant treasures of gold, and of the consequent necessity of providing a rapid, frequent, and regular communication with those distant parts of the world, it cannot be considered that a mail communication once every two months will be sufficient to meet the requirements of the case; it is therefore conjectured that their Lordships have it in contemplation also to establish a semi-monthly mail between England and Sydney via the Cape of Good Hope. Tenders for the latter service were

invited about three months since, and the particulars of the condition of this contract, tenders for which have to be sent in during the month of December, were given in the Times of 12<sup>th</sup> September last. Supposing this to be the intention of the Government, the joint service will establish a monthly communication with Australia, a mail being despatched every month alternately, via Suez and Singapore, and the Cape of Good Hope.”

“It will be seen that the advantages offered to Australia do not appear at first sight to justify the tone of triumph we have adopted. But an attentive perusal of the last paragraph of the Times article, coupled with the consideration that attention is now fully aroused to the vast importance of the subject, will convince every reader, we think, that it is no longer premature to announce that a regular monthly Steam communication between Great Britain and her golden provinces in the South is on the very eve of being established.”

The outcome of this particular call for tenders was never in serious doubt – only the P&O had the resources and the experience to operate such a complicated system, and indeed already were, with the exception of the branch line to Australia – the Fifth Line mentioned above. However, complications with existing contracts meant that the P&O contract for the service to Australia could not be concluded until 1 January 1853, and the first contract sailing did not leave the UK until 4 March 1853. However, four non-contract P&O steamers had left the UK for Australia between May and December 1852, carrying large mails.

As a matter of interest the branch line steamers between Singapore and Australia were required to carry eight 32-pounder cannon – the seas being traversed were infested with pirates, and the packets usually carried huge sums in specie, gold etc. – the cannon were not there as ornaments.

Initially the via Singapore route was used both out and home, but the last nine homebound contract mails went from King George’s Sound to Galle in Ceylon, a much more sensible routeing that eliminated one change of ships and several hundred miles of sea passage. To compensate for the late start to the P&O contract the Postmaster General made one-off contracts with three outbound steamers during 1852 – these three did not call at Adelaide.

### The Route via the Cape of Good Hope

The Australian Royal Mail Steam Navigation Company

Hedging their bets the Admiralty decided on alternate monthly voyages via Egypt etc (P&O – see above) and via the Cape of Good Hope. A number of offers were received for the Cape route,

but again an inexperienced, and as yet unformed, company was chosen, namely the Australian Royal Mail Steam Navigation Company (ARM). On 17 January 1852 in the House of Commons, Mr French “moved for copies of the contract entered into with Mr Walton for the carriage of the mails to Australia; and for the contract for the carriage of the mails to the West Indies and the Brazils, and of the tender made by the EICo for the performance of these services. He found upon enquiry that the contract had not been completed by the Admiralty, having been made conditional on Mr Walton getting a company together. No security had been taken by the Admiralty. The recommendations of the committee of last session had been disregarded, for the Admiralty intended to run only a mail once every 2 months from India to Australia, instead of from the Cape - the most suitable route for emigrants. Other offers had been made to the Admiralty, by companies possessed of funds and vessels, but that made by Mr Walton had been accepted, whose company was yet unformed., and who was very unlikely to complete his arrangements by the 3rd of April, when the mail service was to begin.”<sup>1</sup> Charles Walton was the ARM Company's Ship's Agent.

Nothing much happening, Mr French returned to his fact-finding mission: “House of Commons 22 March. Mr F French begged to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the Australian Royal Mail Company have entered into and executed the contract with the government for the carriage of the mails to Sydney? What security had been given for the due performance of the service contracted for? Have they been given a royal charter, and upon what terms as to the amount of capital to be subscribed? When is the first steamer to sail with the mails from England? Mr Stafford said that the company had not entered into the contract as they waited until they had obtained the completion of their charter, thinking it would be more satisfactory to make a contract as a chartered company. Their charter allowed the company to raise £500,000 at once, and a million hereafter, and there was already between £300,000 and £400,000 paid up. A charter had been granted to the company. The first steamer would sail on 3rd June and not 3rd May as had been originally intended.”<sup>2</sup>

In fact the contract was not signed until 2 June 1852<sup>3</sup>, the day before the first steamer left Plymouth on 3 June. It called for a two-monthly service from Plymouth to Sydney via St Vincent, the Cape, King George's Sound (Albany, Western Australia), Adelaide and Port Philip. The service speed was to be 8½ knots. To award a contract for a voyage of some 12,000 miles, that called for a highly unlikely speed, to a company that had never operated a shipping line before courted disaster – and got it. Four outbound contract voyages were performed at an average of 106 days each; two homebound contract voyages were completed, averaging 100 days, and the contract was peremptorily cancelled in April 1853 whilst the third homebound ship was en route, with the curious result that letters were treated as ship letters on arrival in UK.

The contract should have paid the company £26,000 a year. In practice they were paid £8,772 in the year according to reference 7, an indication of the fines incurred for poor performance such as late sailings, overlong passages, etc.

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<sup>1</sup> *London Daily News* 18 Jan 1852

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid* 23 Mar 1852

<sup>3</sup> POST 51/22

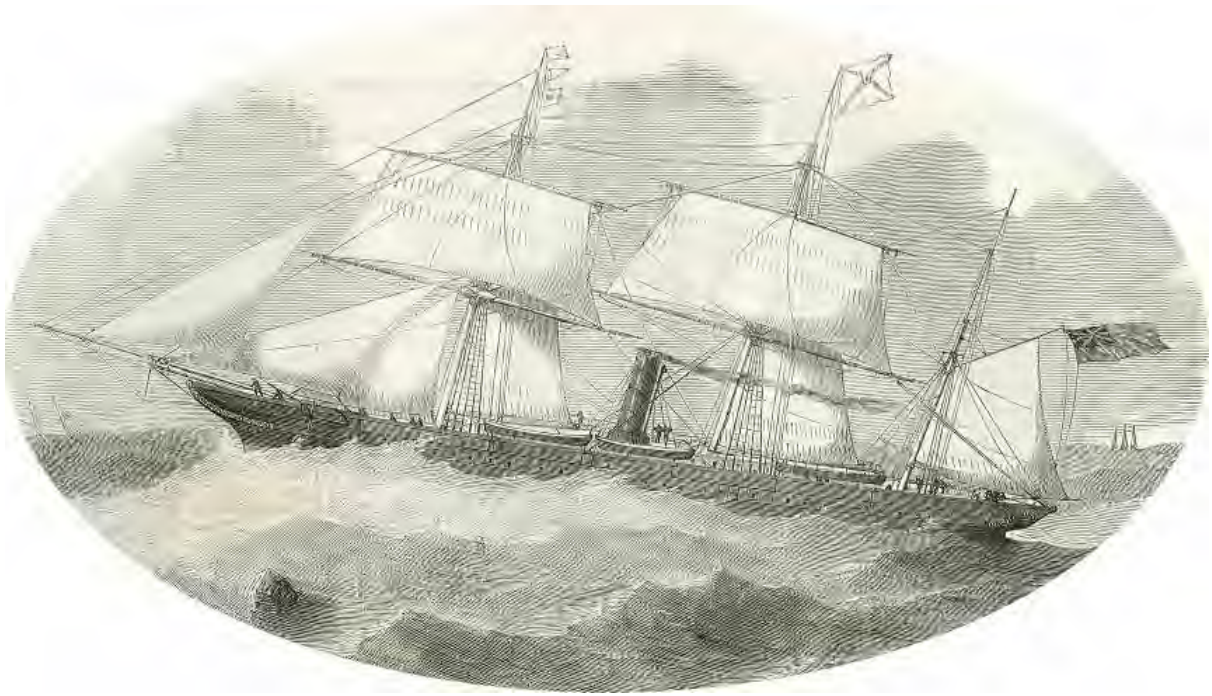


Fig 8. Ss *Sydney* of the Australian Royal Mail Steam Packet Company. Like all long-distance steamers of the period she was fully rigged for sail, the steam engines being used intermittently when the wind was either adverse or too light to make good progress.



Fig 9. The first ever steam contract packet mail from Australia. Per ARM ss *Australian* 105 days Melbourne-Plymouth.



Fig 10. The third homebound ARM voyage. Due to leave Sydney on 15 Jan 1853, *Melbourne* had to fit a new propeller, and did not sail until 6 March. She spent 6 days at Cape Town mending the screw again, and broke down completely at St Vincent's, returning to UK under sail. The mail contract was cancelled on her voyage, letters being rated the 8d ship letter rate on arrival rather than the 1/- packet rate.

#### Alternative arrangements following the cancellation of the ARM contract

"GPO Notice 20, dated April 1853, told the public of the end of the ARM contract. It seems that the Admiralty was not particularly interested in plugging the gap, so the initiative rested with the Post Office. POST 29/70 contains a memo from Captain Walker of the Board of Trade to Lord Canning, the then Postmaster-General, the relevant parts of which read as follows: "My Lord, I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your note with a Draft to be submitted to the Treasury respecting the conveyance of the Mails to Australia and wishing me to give my opinion on the scheme it suggests. Having carefully examined the Draft I beg leave to observe that I think the plan you propose a most excellent one and I have little doubt that the arrangements contemplated by your Lordship will effect the object required and be the means of having the mails conveyed to the Australian Colonies in a more regular and efficient manner than they have hitherto been. I think that HM Postmaster-General should have the power to remit or reduce the fine of £20 to be levied for every day the voyage shall exceed the specified period. The General Screw Company are getting a fleet of very fine steamers & the Directors of the Company represent to the proprietors that there is an opening & sufficient inducement to run a line of steamers without any grant from the Government and they are already doing so; such being the case the offer of £1,000 per trip will in my opinion make them, or others, desirous of taking the contract....."

It would seem from this that the Postmaster-General was asking the Treasury to increase the limit for contracts that he could initiate from the £500 quoted earlier to £1000, presumably in order to be able to offer bigger incentives. The Treasury presumably agreed, for in May 1853 the *Daily Packet List* contained a Notice as follows: "The Postmaster-General hereby gives notice that it is his intention to receive tenders for the conveyance of mails to Australia, by steamers or sailing vessels. The dates of dispatch to be as follows, viz: the 4th June, 4th August, 4th October, and 3rd December, of 1853, and the port of departure to be that of London, Liverpool, Southampton or Plymouth." Tenders were required by 19 May for the 4 June sailing, £1,000 to be paid, subject to penalties for delay in either sailing or arrival. Other things being equal, the tender for the fastest passage was to be accepted. *The Times* dated 11 July 1853 carried a very similar announcement.



Eventually what was hoped would be a more permanent arrangement was reached with the General Screw Steam Ship Company.

The *Daily Packet List* for 2 April 1853 stated: “No packet can be despatched from Plymouth to Australia on the 3rd of this month. The screw steamer *Osmanli* under contract with Her Majesty’s Postmaster-General, will be despatched from Liverpool on the 7th inst with mails for the Cape de Verdes, the Cape of Good Hope, South Australia, Western Australia, Victoria (Port Phillip), New South Wales and Van Diemen’s Land, and all letters for those places reaching Liverpool previous to her departure, *and not addressed to be sent by any other Vessel*, will be forwarded by the *Osmanli*. These letters will be liable to the packet rate of postage.”

A number of one-off contract voyages ensued until, on 31 March 1854 a contract was agreed between the Postmaster-General and the General Screw Steam Ship Company. This company had been operating a successful line of steamers to the Cape of Good Hope since 1851, recently extending to Calcutta, so had good experience and good ships.

The contract may be found in POST 51/20 and was unusual in many ways, but particularly as it was made between the Postmaster General and the Company, not by the Admiralty. Dated 31 March 1854 it called for the first ship to leave on 4 April from Southampton, direct for Melbourne, the Company to arrange despatch of the mails for Sydney and Adelaide by whatever means from Melbourne. Thereafter a ship was to leave every 2<sup>nd</sup> month. There were penalties for late departures and slow passages. The dates of return voyages were to be agreed with Sydney, albeit to start from Melbourne, and the homeward route could be via Cape Horn or Cape of Good Hope. The Company was to receive half the postage paid on letters and a halfpenny per newspaper, an entirely different way of remuneration for contract mails that was to continue into the following clipper era. *Queen of the South* duly left Southampton on 4 April 1854, being followed precisely on due dates by four more steamers. General Screw were starting to perform well until the Crimean War brought a temporary end to the steamer service, discussed further below.

The period between the end of the ARM contract and the beginning of the General Screw contract was covered by a series of single voyage contracts awarded by the Postmaster General. They were not all steam ships – there just were not enough steamers available capable of making the huge distances, so several sailing ships had to be used. One particularly interesting voyage was started by the sailing vessel *Mathilda Wattenbach*, leaving Liverpool on 3 December 1853 with 35,000 letters for Australia. She was almost totally dismasted in a Bay of Biscay storm, struggling into Lisbon with great difficulty. The post office, having heard of her problem, arranged for the General Screw steamer *Croesus*, about to leave Southampton with a ship letter mail, to call at Lisbon and pick up the mails.

A typical outbound single voyage contract by sailing ship is shown at Fig 13. Endorsed “p *Stratford POP*” – the POP standing for Post Office Packet. Prepaid the packet rate of 1/-, and charged 3d collect on arrival with the distinctive flat-topped “3” of Sydney.

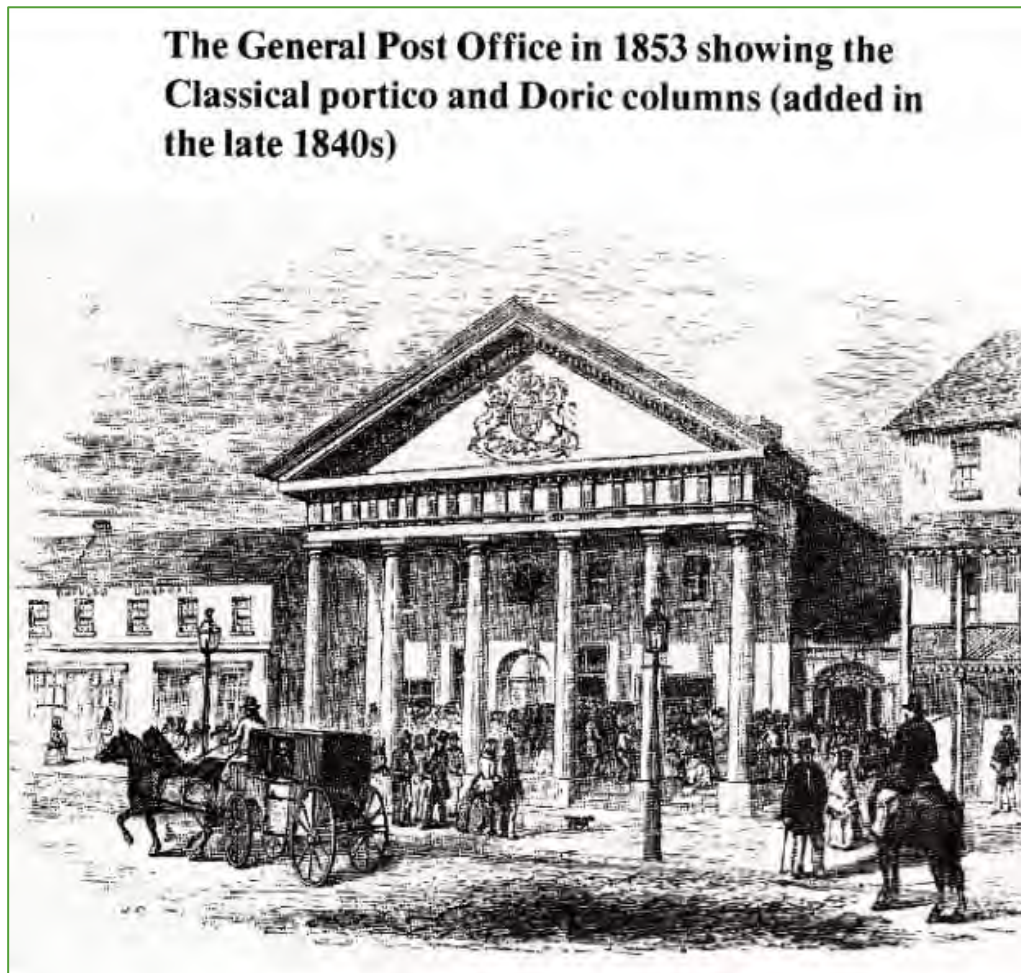
It would seem that these single voyage contracts were for outbound mail only; at least the cover at fig 11 carried on the return voyage of the *Sarah Sands* was treated as a ship letter, she having gone out as a contract mail packet.

**2624. THE WORKINGS OF THE SYDNEY GPO IN 1855 AS OBSERVED BY MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL DURING A GUIDED INSPECTION**  
by Brian Peace FRPSL (395)

**Events Leading to the provision of the 1866 GPO Building**

Despite several alterations to the 1830s Post Office on George Street, by 1851, a special Board of Enquiry established by the colonial government had concluded that *the building is very ill-adapted for the business required to be carried out in it...*

Further alterations were added in an attempt to relieve some pressure on the mail service, but nevertheless, the lack of amenities was a source of complaint by workers and one staff member in 1853 described how: *the stench in this room is at times so unbearable as to hinder us materially in the performance of our duties.* Continued rapid growth and population rise, particularly in New South Wales, had placed significant strain on the postal services and the post office building itself, which had now become a public and government concern due to its gross overcrowding and that the system of handling mail was rapidly descending into the danger of collapsing entirely.



Despite these growing problems, the building remained in use but, by 1863, the situation had worsened such that the Doric building had been entirely abandoned and a larger temporary wooden structure to serve as a temporary post office in Wynyard Square (now Wynyard Park) was erected at a government cost of £4,000. It was at this time that James Barnet, having recently been appointed the first Colonial Architect of New South Wales, was instructed to prepare plans for a new Post Office on the George Street segment of the present site.

Although his intention had always been to create a much grander civic structure, it has also been documented that Barnet entertained suggestions that the existing Doric portico be retained and a

new, larger structure be erected behind it. This idea was unique for its time as it was "almost certainly" the first time in Australian architectural history that contemplation for 'retaining' and 'recycling' an existing historic building had been documented. Eventually however the former GPO was demolished.

The following appeared on page 2 of the *Sydney Morning Herald* on Monday 26 November 1855. It offers interesting details of, and insights into, the operation of the Sydney GPO over 160 years ago.

## **SYDNEY GENERAL POST OFFICE**

Numerous additions and alterations have lately been made in the General Post Office, for the twofold object of facilitating the despatch of business, and the accommodation of the public. These arrangements are now nearly completed, and on Thursday last were inspected by several of the representative members of the Legislative Council, accompanied by the honourable and gallant Postmaster General Major Christie.

A few observations in reference to this public office, in which almost everyone has an interest, will no doubt be acceptable to our readers. The arrangements are very minute, and to the uninitiated their utility does not at first appear; but by a little attention it is soon perceived how nicely one department works with another, and how useful are many of the checks and counterchecks which are imposed on the sale of postage stamps, the receipt and delivery of letters and newspapers, and upon every transaction in short, occurring in connection with the establishment.

The amount of labour involved in efficiently discharging the postal duties of the colony is almost inconceivable to those who have not had the opportunity of assuring themselves by ocular demonstration, and it is impossible to visit the Post Office without observing and regretting that so very little care has been taken to ensure the comfort of those who are cooped up all the day within its walls, where it might have been enhanced at a very small cost. Several of the rooms are but little suited for the purpose to which they are now set apart, some are badly ventilated, and others are not ventilated at all. Even the skylights are fixtures. The heat is oppressive. There is another striking feature in this establishment - its compactness. Every available inch of space practicable is turned to account; but with all the ingenuity which has been brought to bear upon the various arrangements, many little matters call for improvement which it is impossible to bring about in the present building; for it is evident, that, however easy it might have been to turn it from a Police Office into a Custom House, it has not at present been converted into a suitable building for a Post Office. The necessity for the erection of a new Post Office, where the increasing postal business of the colony may be carried on with comfort as well as efficiency, becomes greater and greater diurnally.

It would be tedious and uninteresting to enter into details with respect to the labours and arrangement of the corresponding cash and account branches of the Post Office. The efficiency with which the duties of these various departments are discharged is too well known to need comment. The other departments of the Office are various, and in each is involved a very large amount of clerical labour.

There is the letter branch, in connection with which is the inland office, the delivery office, the foreign office, the newspaper office, the dead letter office, the registry and stamp sale room, &c. In this latter-named room there is but little of interest to observe. The business transacted therein is confined to the sale of postage stamps; and as many as £122 worth were recently sold on one day through that narrow aperture, where small groups may be seen at certain hours almost every day, and to arrive at which on "mail days" is frequently trying alike to the patience and the temper.

In the Dead Letter Office there is much judicious arrangement. Here unclaimed English letters are kept for twelve months, and then, the owner not appearing, they are returned to the London Dead Letter Office unopened; here, too, the colonial letters, if not claimed within one month after they have been advertised in the Government Gazette, are opened and returned to the writers. Irregularly posted letters also meet the same fate in this room, and are returned to the impatient scribes who penned them, with the ominous words "insufficiently stamped" printed in red characters. In each of the apartments there are patent scales where suspected letters may be tested.

The inland receiving-room of the letter branch is a very interesting portion of the general arrangement. Letters are here received from all parts of the colony, some of them pass through the office to be forwarded to other parts of the colony, in consequence of there being no cross mail - these are termed "forward letters" - others are called "town letters" and are of course for delivery in the city.

The "ship letters" are placed together for transmission to all parts of the world, in a place assigned to them. Compartments are provided for each of these three classes of letters, to which they are consigned, having been duly stamped so as to show the time of their arrival. The town letters are then sorted into small compartments, alphabetically, and the letter-carriers who attend to the 10 beats then re-sort their own letters, each putting them in a nest of pigeon-holes placed at his disposal. There are twelve letter-carriers in all, but two of them are reserved in case of accident or ill-health of any of those actively engaged, being employed in the meantime as sorters of newspapers, &c; each of the letter-carriers keeps an account of the letters he delivers, upon which a check is kept by the clerk in charge, who also preserves an account of all the letters passing through the department.

The despatching-room of the letter branch is also worthy of notice. Considering the construction of the room the arrangements are admirable. Down the centre of this apartment there are two tables, divided into numerous compartments, labelled with the names of the various post towns of the colony, and the small hamlets which are included in their vicinity. Along the wall are arranged no less than 268 little compartments, into which the letters are sorted; but by habit and attention those in charge of the department are as familiar with them as a compositor is with his "cases." These 268 pigeon-holes are divided into seven parts. The letters are ported into the first nest alphabetically; then they are arranged in other compartments according to the different post towns, and the small places around them, and as the time comes round for the despatch of the different mails, the letters to be forwarded are taken from their respective nests and placed in the compartments on the table in the centre of the room bearing labels corresponding with those over the pigeon-holes from which they were taken. They are then again inspected and deposited in the mail-bag (into which the newspapers have previously been stowed), which is tied and sealed forthwith. It will be seen, therefore, that there are three checks upon each letter before it is consigned to the letter-bag and sent on its mission. This, no doubt, causes delay, but it ensures accuracy. Whether accuracy could be equally secured with less labour is another question.

The registry-room is not the least worthy of note. No less than 49,000 registered letters have passed through this office during the last nine months. The gold which passed through it in the quarter commencing on the 1st July last, and ending on the 30th of September, was 4143 ounces. During the last month 697 ship letters and 400 inland letters have been registered. It is a delusion to suppose that letters dropped into the box with the word "registered" on them are treated as registered letters, or that they undergo the operation of being registered; we should hardly have thought it needful to notice this fact, but the large number of letters posted in the manner alluded to justifies the remark. A registered letter is duly numbered and stamped as such, and the person posting it receives a receipt. Each letter so registered involves the labour of four entries, and the number of each letter is written five times. The arrangements in this respect are more minute even than those of the London General Post Office. Registered country letters are also treated in the same manner; they are signed for by the letter carrier, who receives a small book in which each is entered. In this book he obtains, on delivery, the signatures of the persons to whom they are addressed. The registered letters are kept in a strong iron chest, and the general letters and newspapers are protected during the night by a slide, which falls over the pigeon-holes, and is safely locked; and, when forwarded from one part of the office to the other, the letters are sent under the protection of lock and key. Besides the ordinary clerical labour, the duties of this department are greatly increased by the making-up of the postage of paid and unpaid letters by mail and by private ships.

In the Foreign Letter Office, the operation of sorting the letters is much the same as in the other departments. The paid and unpaid letters for the United Kingdom are here duly stamped, but those for foreign countries are marked with a pen. This is rendered necessary on account of the difference of the rates of postage. The arrangement causes much delay. If it was obviated by each country keeping its own postage, the mail might be made up in about half the time at present required. The request which has been made by the Post Office at home to the Postmaster-General in this colony to separate the London, Liverpool, and Edinburgh letters will also impose additional labour on the department, for which the separation of our Sydney from the country letters will scarcely be an equivalent. A letter bill and an abstract are sent with each mail. Those sent by

private ships are but small, generally speaking, although sometimes when the departure of a regular mail is not expected they are rather bulky; one of the largest was made up for the Granite City; it consisted of nearly 8,000 letters. The return of the number of letters and newspapers which have passed through the Foreign Letter Office during the Quarter ending the 30th September 1855, will speak for itself. The mails received were 592, consisting of 66,500 letters and 81,112 newspapers; 1,009 mails were despatched during the quarter, containing 88,660 letters and 125,815 newspapers; making a total of 1,601 mails, consisting of 155,160 letters and 206,927 newspapers. [Altered from 1,581 mails and 936,427 newspapers – BRP]

It will be seen that the mails, letters, and newspapers, sent from this colony outnumber those which are received. This last mail, however, the newspapers fell from 26,000, the number of the previous mail, to 7,000. Such is the effect of the penny stamp arrangement. Here is a falling off of 18,000 newspapers in one month! It is true the imposition of the penny stamp has secured to the colony an addition to the revenue of some £400 or £500 per annum; but it is very questionable whether the arrangement will ultimately benefit the colony to that extent. The 18,000 papers which have been short sent would keep our colonies more before the eyes of the British public, and probably influence the minds of many in our favour. Of course the stamps of all letters put into the box are defaced, and the envelopes stamped with the date of the postage; but there is a peculiarity in this latter stamp, by means of which the time when any letter was posted may be ascertained. The stamp used from 7 until 9 has on it the letter A; the one used from 9 till 12 a capital B; that used from 12 till 2 has a capital C; and the one used from 2 till 6 bears in the centre the letter D. An officer is appointed to exchange the stamp at the periods fixed. In this department, too, is kept an account of the gratuities to captains bringing the mails by private ships. For all letters brought from foreign ports they receive one penny, and  $\frac{1}{2}$ d for those brought coastwise; the newspapers they bring gratis, and before they can enter their vessels captains must produce a certificate from the Post Office that they have delivered their letters.

In the Delivery Branch, some of the greatest improvements have been effected, and the superiority of arrangement over that which previously existed is evident at a glance, although the room altogether is too small and confined. At one end, looking on to the Post Office yard, the private boxes are arranged. They are 348 in number, 272 of which are occupied. It is rather to be wondered at, considering the advantages derived from this system, that the whole of these boxes are not taken up. Some of the box-holders wish the postman to bring their letters, except on the arrival of a mail, when they prefer receiving them a short time after arrival, to waiting until they come round in the usual course. These boxes are distinguished by a yellow label. The arrangement, however, has led to much confusion, and it is thought will be done away with next year. The endless inquiries of holders of private boxes is remedied, for the number of their box appearing on the window outside, they have only to look through that part which is left unpainted to see for themselves if there are any letters. There are four windows to this room, each containing two openings for the delivery of letters. These four windows divide the alphabet between them, as is well known; the internal arrangement, however, is not so generally understood. Facing each window, and extending across the room, are three sides of a hollow square, containing some hundreds of small compartments, a number of which are devoted to each letter specified on the window where the letters are to be delivered. To the letter S, for instance, 74 compartments are set apart, containing the first two or three letters of all names commencing with S, and so with all the other letters. This arrangement is carried all the way through the alphabet. Then there are boxes for official letters; for her Majesty's navy, for the mercantile marine, and for letters containing initials only. The arrangement is so precise, that instead of having to wait as formerly while a large bundle of letters was being overhauled, the epistles required are taken from their compartments immediately.

In this office was kept an account of the changes of residence of the wanderer; for instance, you order your letters to be sent to Bathurst; on your removal you write to require the alteration of your address accordingly; the request is attended to, and the letters, on their arrival, are forwarded, subject only to a twopenny rate for re-direction. It is rather amusing to look at this book and observe the changes of locality of many who wished their correspondence to be sent after them. The labour of keeping this book of names and re-directing the letters is not light, for four or five hundred by every English mail undergo the operation of being re-directed. First, a gentleman requires his letters to be directed to No. 95 box, then to Jamberoo, afterwards to Ipswich, and finally to Auckland. At each window is kept a registered letter book, which is signed by the receiver. Those letters, however, are not kept in the small compartments with the ordinary letters; they are locked up in an envelope containing the direction being kept in the compartment instead of the letter itself.

The newspaper rooms being partly underground, are rather cooler than those more elevated, but decidedly dismal. The newspapers are all put into a large bin, and are sorted much in the same way as the letters; in making up the mails they are placed first in the bags.

The Stamp-printing Department, although in a dismal cellar underneath the Post Office, is a distinct establishment; but the business will, it is supposed, in a short time be carried on in separate premises. Three rooms are occupied - one by the Inspector, one by the printer, and the other for gumming and drying, and they are equally uncomfortable and unsuited to the purposes for which they are now set apart. When we visited the printing-room, the workman was engaged in striking off a number of stamps of a new description (fivepenny stamps), intended for letters from the colonial districts to the other Australian colonies - one stamp paying the whole of the postage. The paper used is water-marked, in the usual manner. The plate is of steel, and beautifully engraved - one hundred heads being struck off at once. The average sale of stamps is about £3,300 worth per month - about 246,000 stamps of every description.

The whole arrangements, from the packing of the old vouchers next the roof, to the stamp department in the dreary cellar, are very good; but the necessity for providing a new building becomes daily more apparent, and ought not to be delayed.

### **Postscript**



The 1866-91 GPO in George Street

Although the desperate need for a new Post Office building was evident in 1855, and had been raised in the Legislative Council five years previously, it would be eleven years before construction began. During those eleven years conditions became so intolerable that the existing building had to be abandoned in 1863 and the entire Post Office establishment moved into a temporary wooden building.

### **Acknowledgements:**

With thanks to Patrick Reid for proof-reading and Christine Earle for an image.

### **FROM THE EDITOR**

Following the good response to pleas for articles in the February edition, I have to be brutally frank and say that the response since has been abysmal. It has been non-existent. This edition consists entirely of articles held in reserve from the last edition, plus the welcome next installment of the George V Pages and the next parts of the excellent articles by Malcolm Price and Colin Tabart.

Obviously if this trend continues there will soon be no bulletin and no bulletin editor. This would be very unfortunate, but not a personal tragedy for me because it would enable me to switch most of the limited time I have available for philately from editing to dealing with my own collection. The remedy, dear reader, is in your hands.

GJK

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