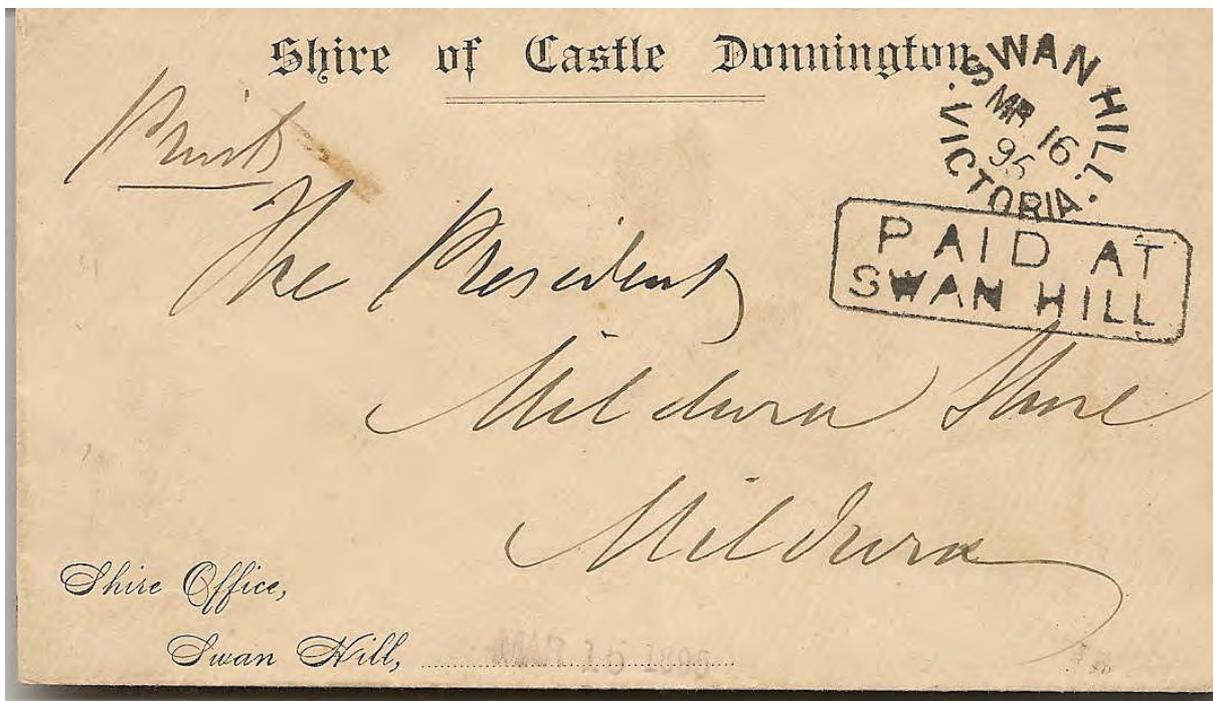


# Australian Journal of Philately

(Incorporating: The Date Stamp and Australian Journal of Postal History)

No. 117 September 2011



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#### **2011-2012 Programme**

17 October	Michael Barden	Belgium, International Trade Fairs 1913-1935
12 December	Harold Sheath & George Speirs	OZ WW1 PH & Christmas Island (Pac) PH
20 February	TBA	

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## Editorial

Thank you to all of the contributors this issue. I had a little extra time and cleaned out the inbox which resulted in my finding contributions from a number of sources. At times in order to get a balanced mix of interests, articles are held over until they fit in to an issue. The problem occurs if the inbox becomes over full and I consequently overlook items sent to me.

Hopefully this issue has taken up most of the backlog. I apologise if you contributed sometime ago and didn't see it published. I still have the odd item that someone is asking questions about. These will make the December issue.

Please keep the articles coming as the downside of emptying the inbox is I now have little for December which is the hardest issue to get articles.

Just a reminder for those who live in Melbourne that the society meets every second month February through to December where displays from various members are shown and knowledge shared. We have great fellowship, plenty of laughs and stuffiness is banned. If you are visiting Melbourne on a meeting night do feel free to drop in and join with us.

Judy Kennett with the help of Michael Barden has given us the second part of her interesting *Mail from Eastern Europe Pre World War 2—letters from Bucharesti to Irvin Tullin* which is most interesting. There is also follow up comments to part 1 *The Rabbis* after feedback from David Collyer.

Thank you again to George Vearing who faithfully compiles the Hand Held Datestamps segment. It is most appreciated George. Michael Barden as usual has been most helpful.

Finally, many of us know Max Harding who is one of those unsung heroes in philately, who keeps many a stamp show around the traps ticking over. Max was rushed to hospital after the Essendon Stamp Show. We trust he will have a speedy recovery.

Ciao till next time.

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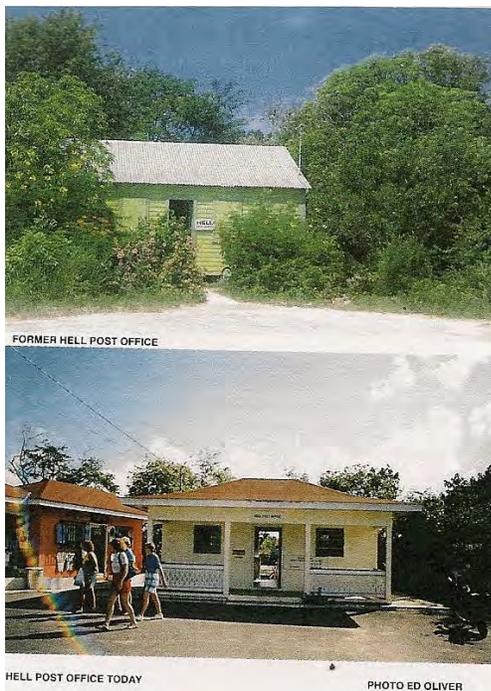
# From the President

This is a story about postcards from hell.

Norway and the Cayman Island each have Hell as a place name. The Norwegian 'Hell' comes from a Norse word describing a cave in a cliff or a similar landform. It is a small town in the north, near Trondheim. According to a postcard correspondent in 1953 the town was a tiny God-forsaken place, and it has not grown much since then.



The Cayman Islands Hell is a black limestone landscape, with more than a passing resemblance to that place. It is a calling place for Caribbean cruises, and with lots of sunshine it is apparently a bit more cheerful than Norway. The main industry is probably the post office and postcards.



Worldwide there are more places called Paradise, but so far I've not seen any postcards from them except the Paradise Hotel – a hotel, not a church – at Clematis in the Victorian Dandenong Ranges. In the world of postcards Hell may be a better seller than Paradise.

## Mail from Eastern Europe Pre World War 2 Pt 2 – Letters from Bucaresti to Irvin Tullin

### Judy Kennett and Michael Barden

Ismail Tulcinschi and his wife, Sofia, disembarked in Melbourne from the ship Norkur on 29 September 1939 as self-paid immigrants. Their Australian first port of call had been Darwin. Within one month, he had changed his name to Irvin and their surname became Tullin. There is no evidence her name changed. From the Imperial Russian Army leave pass, which we unearthed in the Melbourne National Archives of Australia depository (NAA), we found that Tulcinschi's name in the Russian was Izrail Uoynovich Tulchinskiy. We believe that Ismail is a mistranslation of his true name by Immigration personnel. The surname is possibly a Romanian version of the Russian.

Handwritten immigration form with the following details:

- Name: Tulcinschi, Ismail and wife Sofia
- Origin of Passport: Roumanian port No. 294650
- Date of Arrival: 29 9 39
- Part of Landing: Melbourne
- Date of Arrival: 29 9 39
- REMARKS: also form H2 to Melbourne 24/4/45

Red handwritten number: 4/26496

Handwritten note on a yellow card:

- Name: Ismail Tulcinschi
- Name Changed to IRVIN TULLIN
- Oct 1939
- Arr. Sep 1939 at Darwin

Red handwritten number: 4/26496

#### Information from NAA Melbourne file

It was a plea for help to Lionel Sharpe, the Jewish Welfare Genealogist and historian in Melbourne, which lead to Tulcinschi's file in the NAA. He thought that Tullin and Tulcinschi may have been one and the same person. The note (above right) was the proof we needed. All previous searches and enquiries in Melbourne had led to a dead end. Apart from where he lived, the address to which two covers were sent, and which still exists today as flats, nobody had any record of Tullin's sojourn.

Irvin Tullin was born on 6 March 1876 (Julian calendar), probably near Khotin (Romanian Hotin) in the north of then Bessarabia, at that time part of Ukraine, and later part of Romania (see maps on next page). Thus, he was born a citizen of Tsarist Russia. That made him 63 years of age when he and Sofia arrived in Melbourne. It possibly explains why we could not find any descendants in Australia. If they had surviving children in Romania in 1939, the Third Reich probably liquidated them as part of the Final Solution. Bessarabia for many years had one of the highest populations of Jews in the world, living principally in the towns.

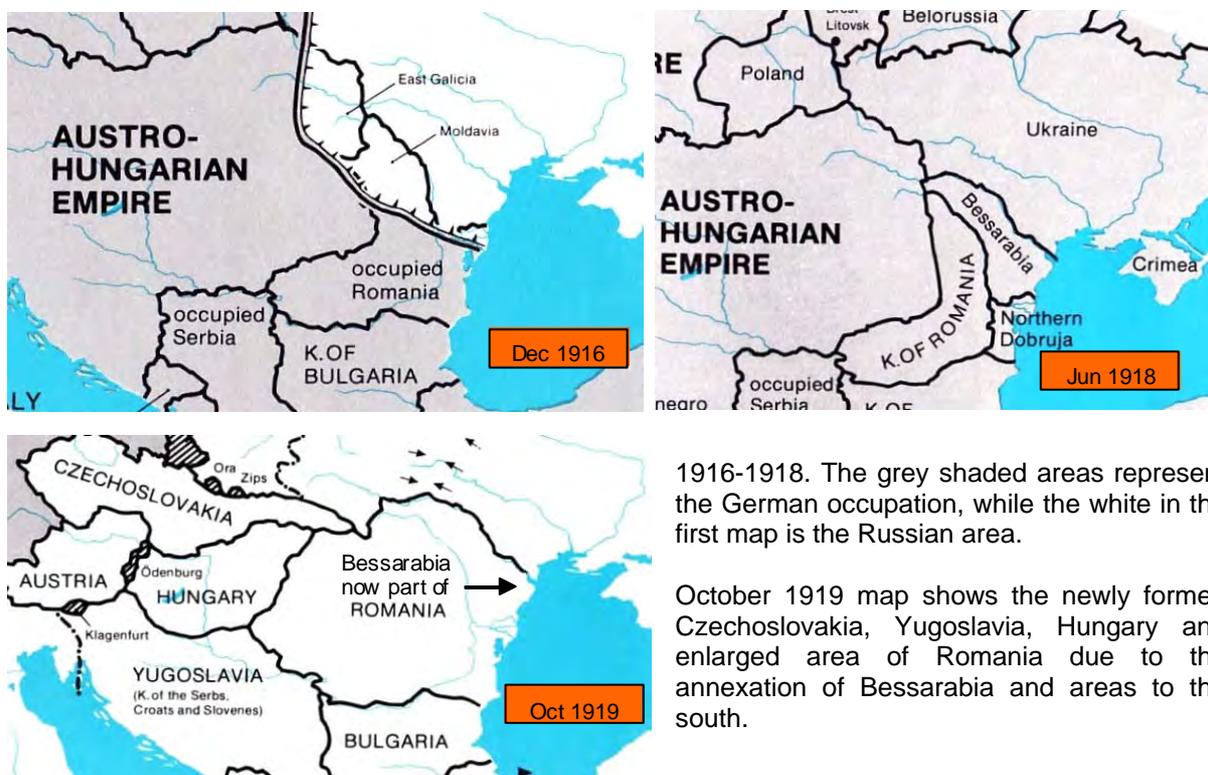
Romania had remained neutral during WW1, until 28 August 1916, when she declared war on the Germans in an attempt at self-preservation. Germany wanted access to the Ploesti oil wells. Armies from Bulgaria, Germany and Austria-Hungary invaded Romania. By December, the war was over for Romania and the country was partitioned, with the Romanian government existing only in a 'rump' in the northern province of Moldavia.

On the eastern front, the German advance continued into Russia. When the first revolution broke out in March 1917, wholesale desertions from the Tsarist army followed. Following the second revolution in November 1917, the war effort collapsed, and Russia took no further part in the war. At this point, it is useful to look at the position of Bessarabia (Basarabia in Romanian) in east central Europe. Like the provinces that made up Romania, it was formerly part of the Ottoman Empire in Europe. Following

the Russo-Turkish War (1806-12), it was ceded to Russia by the Treaty of Bucharest (28 May 1812), where it remained until 1917. Following the collapse of the central government after the revolutions, nationalist movements in a number of provinces proclaimed their independence, including Ukraine, Armenia and the Moldovan Republic of Bessarabia. Its population was mixed, having Ukrainians, Russians and a Romanian component, as well as Jews. On 6 February 1918, the territory proclaimed its independence, and on 9 April joined in union with Romania. Romania annexed the territory, as was confirmed by the Treaty of Versailles (1919).

With this event, Irvin Tullin and his wife Sofia became citizens of Romania. There is no way of knowing what they did in the intervening years, but we know from a landing record found in his file in NAA that he was issued with a Romanian passport on 8 March 1939. Presumably the decision had been taken to leave Romania, but why did they choose Australia when so many of their fellow Jews were immigrating to North America?

It is worth studying the parts of the maps reproduced below. We can better understand from them why Tulcinchi's Russian army leave pass had a German regimental stamp on it, and we can see very briefly some of his background before he came to Australia.



1916-1918. The grey shaded areas represent the German occupation, while the white in the first map is the Russian area.

October 1919 map shows the newly formed Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Hungary and enlarged area of Romania due to the annexation of Bessarabia and areas to the south.

From the document on the following page, we know that Tulcinschi was 40 years of age when he was balloted into the Russian army on 17 June 1916 in Kiev Province. (This was before the German advance passed through Bessarabia, going on to the Ukraine) His leave pass said he was a Junker of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Company in the 1<sup>st</sup> Peterhof Ensign School (equates to a Warrant Officer). He took part in campaigns but was not injured, so remained on duty. While on leave, with a pass dated 29 November 1917, he became ill and was given indefinite leave on 11 February 1918. (This document is available to view at [www.naa.gov.au](http://www.naa.gov.au). Go into Recordsearch as a guest and type in Tulcinschi. The translation into English by Alla Barden should also be available in time).

As Bessarabia became part of Romania in 1919, we may suppose that with all the chaos of the Russian Revolution, the leave pass became academic. However, he kept it until his arrival in Melbourne, when he surrendered it to Immigration. Now it forms a unique record in the NAA; more so now that it has been translated into English. However, he must have retained his Romanian passport. He disappeared from the records in Melbourne, so one may conjecture that he and Sofia went to live interstate.



**Front & back cover of Tulcinschi Imperial Russian Army leave pass (due to sickness).**

Note: Kaiserliche.korps.Schützenregiment Nr. 19 Technische Kompagnie cachet and m/s date 18/II/ (1)918 (both covers) Circular official stamp of Head of 1<sup>st</sup> District of Kameno-Pod (Kamenets-Podolskiy - shortened to Kamenets-Pod is next to Khotin in Bessarabia, Tulcinschi's home town).

The basis for this article was two envelopes addressed to Irvin Tullin while he was living in Melbourne. Included also is a postcard showing two Moldavian peasant children, such as might have been found in Bessarabia in the time when Irvin was living there. This card and a set of six stamps issued by the Romanian Post Office in December 1941, showing historical monuments in Basarabia (Romanian spelling), give some 'flavour' of the province.

Bessarabia was re-absorbed into the Soviet Union after World War 2. Following the break up of the Eastern bloc, it has once again been able to assert its independence. It is now the Moldovan Republic, one of the poorest countries in Europe.

**Acknowledgements:** Our sincere thanks go to:-

- Alla Barden for translating into English the text of Tulcinschi's Imperial Russian Army leave pass and the printed text on the postcard.
- Anna Koh of NAA, Melbourne for arranging firstly, the retrieval of the Tulcinishi file from the depository, and secondly, the production of the scans from the leave pass. These are now available on the NAA database for all to view.
- Lionel Sharpe of the Jewish Welfare Society of Victoria, for a flash of inspiration re Tullin / Tulcinschi.

The source for much of the historical information in this article is **Historical Atlas of East Central Europe** by Paul Robert Magocsi, University of Washington Press, 1998.

**Penguin Atlas of Recent History (Europe since 1815)** by Colin McEvedy, 1982 provided the three maps of Romania.

## Romanian stamps issued December 1941



**Hotin, Cochim (P)  
Khotyn (U)**  
(red-brown)



**Chapel, Hotin**  
(Magenta)



**Soroca**  
(green)



**Tighina, Bendery (R),  
Bender (T, Y)**  
(orange-brown)



**Cetatea Alba,  
Belgorod (R), Akkeman  
(T), Bilhorod (U)**  
(Magenta)



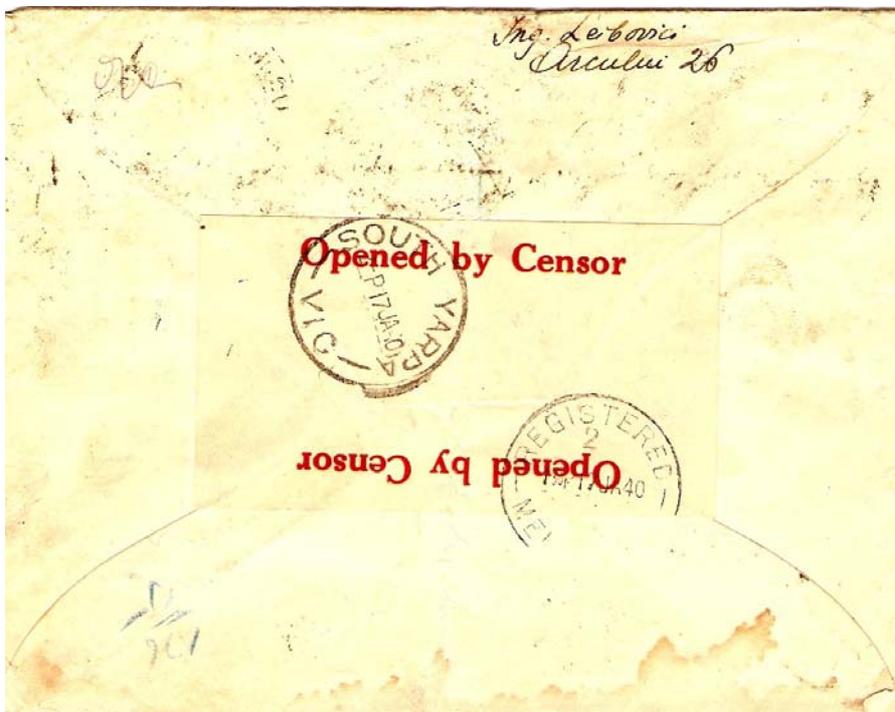
**Rughii Monastery,  
Soroca**  
(blue-green)

Note - The town names are listed in the Romanian form. Where applicable, forms of the names as they appear in other languages are given also. Abbreviations used are P= Polish, R = Russian, T = Turkish, U = Ukrainian, Y = Yiddish.



**Postcard from Tighina (Bender) to Mt Lawley, WA. Posted Tighina 18 Sep 1921, also cancelled Bucuresti 29 Sep 1921. Both partial cancels.**

Comments: Message in Esperanto is about sending and receiving postcards. Handwritten note in Esperanto on front. Text on back: at left ' Issue of the Benderskiy District Council's Workshop manuals; at bottom 'In Bessarabiya'- Moldovan children – Series III N 113; at right. 'Photo engraving M. Pikovskogo, Odessa'.



**Registered letter from Bucuresti to Melbourne.**

Posted at **Bucuresti 13** on **29 XI 1939**

registration  
**handstamped with manuscript number**  
 (interestingly – original number is 4675 and miscopied in Australia as 7675)

backstamps – **censored on arrival** (old type of censor label without dots unfolded)

**Blue cross on front added in Australia**

**Registered 2 Melbourne 17 JA 40, and South Yarra 17 JA 40 cds**

Comments: Endorsed on front '**Roumanian language**'  
**Passed by Censor V 25** on front (violet)



**Registered letter from Bucuresti to Melbourne.**

Posted Bucuresti 5 MAR 40, and registration etiquette.

Backstamps oval [RE]GISTER[ED] / LIVER[POOL] 11 M[AR] partly obscured by UK PC 66 censor tape, Registered 5 Melbourne 5 MY 40 (twice), South Yarra 6 MY 40.

Censored in UK by Censor 1881, thus sent first to UK from Alexandria.

Comments: 'Written in Russian language and in Roumanian language'

Blue crosses on front and back added either in UK or in Melbourne.

## Another Possible Trans Pacific Airmail Cover 1942-44

### John Young

It's surprising how things turn up, and on both occasions at weekend stamp fairs. In the last APS journal I described a 'per favour' military air-carried cover across the Pacific from Peru to Australia in 1943. More exotic still, here is a cover from French West Africa to Melbourne in 1944-45. In both cases it has registration backstamps that reveal the airmail movements.

The cover has mixed Senegal and Mauritania stamps (quite usual) amounting to 56 francs, a little over twice the rate for French West Africa to USA in that period. It has two revealing aspects.

From about January 1944 the air route out of French West Africa was by military aircraft to Leopoldville and then the *south* Atlantic PAA clipper flying boat to South America and Miami. This cover is backstamped Lisbon, the *north* Atlantic route's starting point. By the end of 1944 the war in north Africa was well past, and it was safe to go north to Europe. This cover was carried by the BOAC West Africa service from Dakar to Lisbon and then travelled to New York, San Francisco and Honolulu on its way to Australia. The dates were:

Dakar 25 Nov 1944

Lisbon 7 Dec 1944

New York 20 Dec 1944

San Francisco 22 Dec 1944

Honolulu 23 Dec 1944

What happened after then? The backstamps are scrappy, but at the lower left there are 'Registered – Melbourne – ? JA 45' and '...SBAN...' The number before JA appears to be a single digit, and the other postmark appears to be (bri) SBAN (e). There were probably 17 days or less between Honolulu and Melbourne, a bit short for an ocean voyage; and carriage via Brisbane suggests military aircraft, not shipping. As the letter was registered and between government bodies it perhaps got 'per favour' military air carriage across the Pacific to Brisbane, like the one from Peru discussed in the last journal.

The trouble with this kind for research is that there is so little evidence. USA correspondents rarely registered their mail, and registered airmail from other places to Australia in 1942-45 is hard to find. But it does seem that military aircraft took over from PAA's Pacific clipper service more often than we might have thought.



## Backstamps

***Ian Cutter***

The larger Australian pre-paid mail items often have a stamp on the back. By “stamp” I don’t mean a postage stamp, because it is not adhesive and it carries no value, nor do I mean a datestamp, because it carries no date. What I mean is the ink impression left by what is commonly called a rubber stamp. I apologize for this woolly preamble, but I can’t think of any unambiguous term to describe the subject of this note.

Sometimes there is no stamp at all, sometimes there is one, and sometimes there are two.

If there is no stamp, then there is nothing more to be said. If there is one stamp we can note that it exists, but may not be able to tell where it was used. If there are two stamps we can generally tell where they were used and, if we are lucky, also when they were used.

What is the purpose of these stamps, anyway? It seems from looking at the samples available that the first stamp is applied at the post office when the item is placed on the self-service display for selection by the potential user. This practice is not universal – random observations in April 2011 showed that some, such as Collins St West, did stamp the envelopes, Croydon did not, and Collingwood displayed only laminated samples with the instruction to ask at the counter.

The second stamp is then applied at the counter when payment is made.

A number of such stamps are illustrated. The first two are single examples, probably the “first” impression, where there is no indication of the location. In fact, you wonder whether somebody has picked up the wrong stamp: “Under \$100” serves some other financial purpose, and it is hard to imagine a requisition for “One smiley face stamp (medium) for backstamping envelopes.”

The next few are first impressions which do show the location. Some include an instruction, or even, in the case of the QV post shop, a threat.

Then there are a variety of “second” impressions which do show the locations. Many conform to a general corporate style, but there is also a wide variety of alternative formats. When applied together with an anonymous first impression they serve to identify that impression’s location. Examples of these are given.

There are also second impressions which consist merely of the word “PAID” – these are not illustrated, although in an inversion of the previous process, a named first impression can identify the location that used a particular “PAID”.

Finally, the most informative combination of all is where a datestamp has been utilized when the item has been purchased. This confirms both the location and date of the first stamp. A number of these are shown, including one which tracks down the origin of at least one smiley face.

Not so easy to collect unless you have access to business mail, but of some interest nonetheless.

**UNDER \$100**  
**UNDER ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS**



**PLEASE PAY AT COUNTER**  
**BANKSTOWN POST SHOP**

PLEASE PAY AT COUNTER  
Doncaster Heights LPO

**SPOILAGE DUE TO YOUR MISTAKE**  
**IS CHARGEABLE**  
**QV POST SHOP, LEVEL 1,**  
**SHOP 49, 210 LONSDALE**



**SYDNEY G.P.O**

**RYDE POST SHOP**  
**NSW 2112**



**PAID**  
**PORT HEDLAND**

PAID AT  
LAKEMBA  
POST SHOP

PAID AT  
KURRI KURRI  
POST SHOP



PAID AT  
WORLD SQUARE  
POST SHOP



PAID AT  
CARDIFF  
POST SHOP

PAID AT  
MERRYLANDS  
POST SHOP

**2-3926-5**  
**MERRYLANDS**

**217488**

**MERRYLANDS RETAIL**

PAID AT  
MERRYLANDS  
POST SHOP



PAID AT  
LAVINGTON  
POST SHOP



26 SEP 2008  
\*  
GLEN RETAIL 3150



LAW COURTS MELB  
POST 24 JAN 2008  
POSTAL MANAGER

POST OFFICER  
24 NOV 2008  
MELB NSW 1715



## And Another Thing!

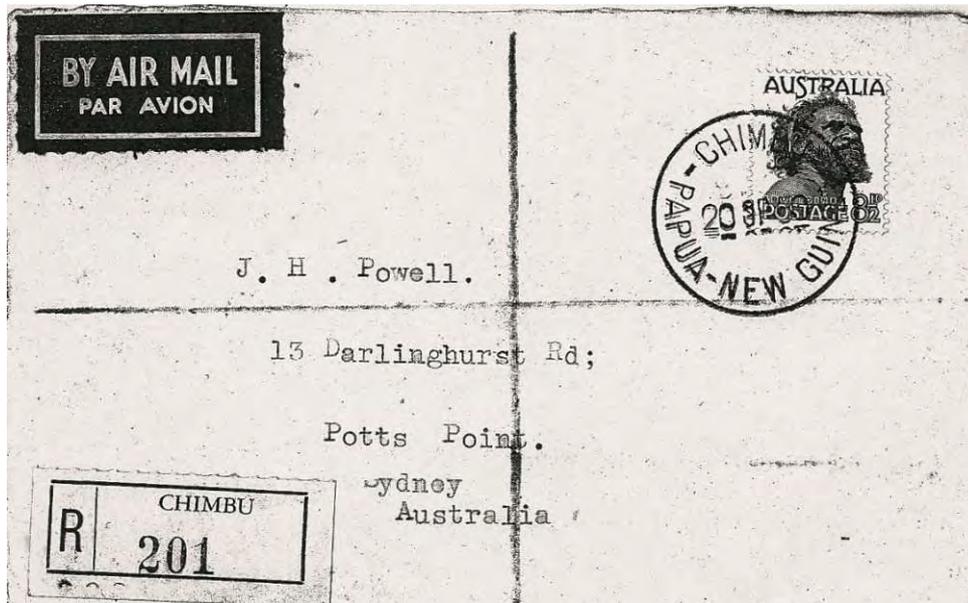
### **George Speirs**

As a follow up to John Young's postal rates of Australia its worth mentioning that with the ending of the Second World War Papua and New Guinea became one nation. As such on October 30, 1945 Australian stamps were authorized to be used, and this arrangement lasted exactly 7 years.

Finding the correct rate of an Australian stamp with a PNG cancelation, other than used at the main centres is worth holding onto. High value robe stamps can be found used mainly with LAE cancellations, for believe it or not, soiled bank notes were returned by registered post to the Note Printing Branch in Fitzroy.

The illustrated cover with the 8½d aboriginal stamp covered the combined registered and letter rate to Australia, and indeed further afield to Commonwealth countries at the time of posting.

Chimbu post office operated from July 4, 1949 until April 30, 1959. On May 1, 1959 the name changed to Kundiawa, the town where the District Headquarters was located. Chimbu remained the name of the district. It's a small town on the Lae - Mount Hagen Road. The 8½d stamp had a fairly short life span of just short of 3 years, first issued on August 14, 1950. The said cover had backstamps of Chimbu (20/SP/50), Lae (23/SP/50) together with Sydney & William St. (26/SP/50).



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### Really Different Points of View

To the stamp collector, the glass is half-empty.

To the postmark collector, the glass is half-full.

To the postal historian, the glass is twice as big as it needs to be.

## THE SPEED OF THE POSTAL SERVICE 2000 YEARS AGO

### *Ian Cutter*

Two thousand years is a very long time, and it is almost unbelievable that we can have any measure of the “postal” system so long ago. However, thanks to two people who corresponded regularly, and one of whom arranged for the correspondence to be copied and preserved, this can be done.

The writer of the letters was Marcus Tullius Cicero, the orator [106 – 43 BC]; the recipient was Titus Pomponius [110 – 32 BC], known by his cognomen “Atticus”. The text of over 400 letters is preserved, of which about twenty contain a reference to the receipt of a letter despatched on a particular date. Cicero was a prompt respondent, often writing more than once a day, and began his letters with the place and date of writing, so we can establish the time of transit and the destination.

We have to make an assumption about the place of origin. Although Atticus spent much of his life in Athens, he returned to Roma in 65 BC, living on Quirinal Hill. It is assumed that the relevant letters from him were from that place. (Although Atticus did have an estate at Epirus, and Cicero mentions other letters that had been despatched from Equus Tuticus and Brundisium, the assumption here of Roma as the origin does not lead to any anomalies). So, we can sort the letters by destination and take it that they originated in Roma.

But first of all, a brief overview of the process:

Letters were written on various media, but communication between wealthy Romans would be written on papyrus. It was not cheap, and even Cicero himself would sometimes squeeze the writing up to save paper. A Roman might write a letter in his own hand, or dictate it to a servant, possibly even when walking in the garden. (Or in Caesar’s case, while on horseback and to several scribes at once.)

Letters were folded and sealed to protect the contents from prying eyes. Because of the uncertainties of the times, duplicates of important letters would be sent by more than one carrier.

We know that there was some formal system of couriers, because Cicero complained that they did not keep their appointed regular hours. However, couriers were often freedmen or slaves of the writer, or acquaintances who happened to be travelling in the required direction. One does wonders at the thoughts of a servant setting off, knowing that the only reason for his journey was that his master could not bear to let a day pass without writing something: on the other hand, a trip to Roma may have brought enjoyments beyond those to be found in a rural villa. Just as there was variation in the skill of those taking the dictation there was variation in the capability of the carrier – one who served Cicero was nicknamed “Fleet-foot”, presumably by contrast to some others.

Now, listing by destination the transit times of letters, assuming them to have originated in Roma, we have:

**ARPINUM**, the birthplace of Cicero, 100 km east-south-east of Roma.

*Elapsed times 4, 1, 2 & 1 days, average speed 50 km/day*

**ASTURA**, one of Cicero’s villas, 70km south-east of Roma.

*Elapsed times 0 & 1 days, average speed 70 km/day*

**CYBISTRA**, a city in south-east Cappadocia (Turkey) about 2050 km from Roma

*Elapsed time 60 days, average speed 35 km/day*

**DYRRACHIUM**, on the coast of Macedonia, opposite Brundisium, about 850 km from Roma.

*Elapsed times 31 & 14 days, average speed 40 km/day*

**FORMIAE**, one of Cicero’s villas, 120km down the coast from Roma.

*Elapsed times 3, 5, 3, 3, & 2 days, averaging 40 km/day*

**LAODICIA**, a town in western Turkey, about 1650 km from Rome.

*Elapsed time less than 41 days, speed greater than 40 km/day.*

*[Also Cybistra>Roma>Laodicea 150 days, speed 25 km/day]*

**POMPEII**, 25 km south-east of Neapolis, the site of one of Cicero’s villas. (Neapolis is 190 km south-east of Roma.)

*Elapsed times 4, 6, 4 & 2 days, average speed 50 km/day*

**PUTEOLI**, a villa 5 km south-west of Neapolis.

*Elapsed times 7, 4 & 5 days, average speed 35 km/day*

Near **TREBULA**, 25 km north of Pompeii

*Elapsed times 3 & 3 days, average speed 65 km/day*

**TUSCULUM**, 20 km from Roma

*Elapsed time perhaps ½ day, speed 40 km/day*

In summary, if we acknowledge the imprecision from having measured time in units of days, and consider that the second observation from Laodicea may relate to a letter which temporarily went astray, we get average transit speeds ranging from 35 to 65 km a day.

In addition, there is a smaller number of examples where no assumptions are needed because Cicero himself gives all three necessary pieces of information – the origin, the destination, and the elapsed time. His actual words are given below in each case, under the name of the place from which he was writing. Comments are added in italics.

**ARPINUM**, 100 km east-south-east of Roma

2 July 45. I have received a letter of consolation from Caesar dispatched on 30 April from Hispalis.  
*Hispalis is modern Sevilla in Spain. It is 2300 km from Rome by road, somewhat shorter by sea; the average speed would have been 40 km/day*

12 November 44. That courier of Sestius' is a rascal. He said he would reach Rome from Puteoli the next day.

*The distance is about 190 km, so his apparent failure is not surprising. On the other hand, Cicero appears not to have considered the proposal to be impossible. (Perhaps it was a joke?)*

**ASTURA**, 70 km south-east of Roma

3 May 45.... the letter arrived on the third day from Cumae.

*Cumae is 15 km west of Neapolis; the total distance is 105 km, giving a speed of 35 km/day.*

5 May 45. Hirtius....despatched the letter from Narbo on 18 April

*Narbo is the modern Narbonne in France. The distance overland 1300km, giving a speed of 80 km a day (Perhaps the message travelled by sea, but there is a record of a voyage from Narbo to Roma which took only three days, so this can not be the full explanation.)*

**BRUNDISIUM**, modern Brindisi

25 August 47.....a freedman of C Trebonius arrived from Seleucia Pieria, having started 27 days previously

*Seleucia Pieria the port for Antioch. The distance is about 1750 km; with an average speed of 65 km a day the journey could well have been by sea...*

**CYBISTRA**, south-east Turkey, 2050 km from Roma.

21 September 51. Apella's courier arrived with a letter from you...46 days after setting out from Roma; a rapid journey and oh! What a long one.

*A speed of 45 km a day, and note that the same person made the whole journey.*

**FORMIAE**, on the coast 120 km from Rome

27 February 49. I have received your letter of 20 February from Canusium

*Canusium is on the Ofanto River in SE Italy; the journey would have been around 220 km, giving a speed of 30 km a day*

**ROMA**

24 October / 2 November 54. The last letter I had from you was dispatched from Ephesus, 9 August  
*Ephesus is on the west coast of Turkey, near the island of Samos. The distance is 1500 km, giving 20 km/day, but neither the route nor time is certain.*

On 24 October I received letters from my brother Quintus and from Caesar despatched "Shores of nearer Britain, 25 September."

*This is 1700 km in 30 days, a speed of 55 km a day. One would naturally expect a person carrying messages from Caesar to proceed with all haste, but it may not have been the same messenger all the way.*

This second set of figures provides a reasonable confirmation of those in the first set that had required an assumption about their starting point.

Apart from the average times, two individual performances stand out: the courier who travelled for 46 days, covering over 2000 km, and the courier who was believed when he claimed he would travel nearly 200 km in two days.

### Footnotes

The information in this note comes from *Cicero's letters to Atticus*, Penguin Classics (1978).

The original letters are numbered. They were omitted to simplify the text, but anybody wanting a link to these numbers should contact the writer via the editor.

The translator has expressed the dates in the Christian Calendar. For calculation I have used 30-day months.

Sailing vessels of the time could make 5 knots (about 220 km in 24 hours) in favourable conditions: for details see *Transactions of the American Philological Association* Vol. 82 (1951), pp136-148.

## Front Cover

### **John Young**

Castle Donnington was once the name for Swan Hill in northern Victoria.

When the surveyor and explorer, Sir Thomas Mitchell, travelled through south east Australia in 1836 he came upon a hill or rise among reeds and lagoons near the Murray River. He wrote that 'swans and other wildfowl so abounded' that he named the remarkable feature 'Swan-hill'.

Some decades later when colonial land surveyors reached this district they named the survey Parish Castle Donnington. The origin of the name is unrecorded, but surveyors could reach back into English antiquity and bestow some whimsical names. In England Castle Donnington is a fourteenth century ruin in Berkshire. (Some local historians have made a connection with Matthew Flinders' birthplace, but that was Donington, with one n, in Lincolnshire.)

In any event the name caught on. In 1865 a colonial gazetteer stated that Swan Hill was better known as Castle Donnington, although postal authorities stuck with Swan Hill.

Local government in north-west Victoria began with the Swan Hill Road District in 1862, stretching from the South Australia border to Kerang, an area of 11 078 square miles. It was named Swan Hill Shire in 1871. In 1893 the shire was divided in two. There trouble was that the old shire's headquarters were in Kerang, and Kerang kept the old name. What to call the new shire around the town of Swan Hill? The councillors fell back on 'Castle Donnington' shire. Local government had the old situation of Swan Hill shire being unconnected with Swan Hill town, and Castle Donnington being up in the remote Mallee. The confusion was ended in 1904 when the Kerang councillors named their shire Kerang and Castle Donnington councillors reclaimed their rightful name. Among Victorian private-printed postal stationary, a Castle Donnington envelope is a rarity. The shire seldom had more than a few thousand people and the name lasted for only eleven years. Numbers of the envelopes may have been kept, but to be used as scribble papers or to be munched through by mouse plagues. The illustration here is kindly made available by John Steward.



Backstamp Mildura Mr 18 95

## Infrequently Seen Cachets

*Tim Cowley - England*

### Infrequently Seen – 1

Most Return to Sender items seen these days either has the removable label with the pointing finger (currently 8838522 (FEB/09)) or some form of manuscript marking. Therefore, it was interesting to see the following label – unfortunately no indication of the location where it was applied, nor does it have any form of item or printing number on it. The date on the envelope was 15 October 2009. The label is printed on a shiny white background with the printing in red. The box measures 57 mm by 27mm – label measures 63 mm by 32 mm.



### Infrequently Seen – 2

Damaged Mail is not common so it was pleasant surprise to find the following marking. Unfortunately no indication of when or where it was applied. The ink is red. The M to G measures 49 mm while the top to bottom is 15 mm.

**DAMAGED BY  
MAIL SORTING  
EQUIPMENT**

### Infrequently Seen – 3

Rewrapped items are also not common. Usually the rewrapped item is a standard letter and there is a clear-faced envelope used for this. The following is the printing of a large clear plastic bag used for larger items by the Canberra Mail Centre. The plastic bag has a usable size of 40 mm by 30 mm. There is a white background area printed on the bag (158 mm by 126 mm), which is shown below. The printing on the white background is in black and the T to o of the first line measures 111 mm. The item number at the bottom right is 666 – it appears as 663 due to doubling of the plastic and the tape used to seal the bag. There is an Express Post peel off number stuck on the flap so I am assuming that was what had to be rewrapped.

Dear Customer



The postal article accompanying this letter has been referred to you as a result of:

- Received wet.
- Being found open, or unaccompanied by packaging.
- Being damaged by mail sorting machinery.
- Having unsuitable wrapping or packaging for transmission through the mail network.

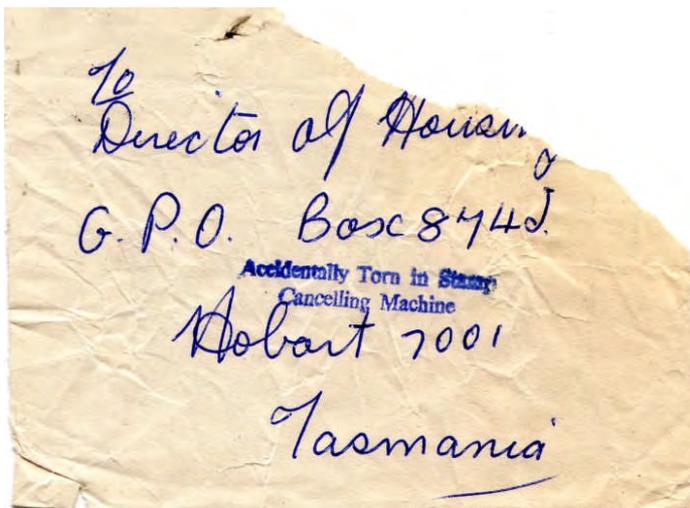
Australia Post endeavours to deliver all mail articles in a sound and intact condition. Unfortunately, this is not always possible.

If you have any questions or would like advice on how to package your postal articles, please retain the damaged article and/or packaging and contact this office.

Please accept our apologies for any inconvenience this may have caused.

**CANBERRA MAIL CENTRE**  
**(02) 6209 8121**

663



Attached is a scan of a damaged cover addressed to Hobart. Both the stamp and the cancel are missing. The only clue as to where the cover was posted is the cachet apologising for the damage. I have never ever seen this cachet before and suspect it was put on in Tasmania, but don't know for sure.

Nobody in BSAP responded to my query when I put it in the Bulletin. I wonder if you would be kind enough to include the scan in the next AJP to see if any members from Down Under have seen a cachet like it and could confirm in which State it was actually applied.

Dee Pullan

## Main Trunk T.P.O South

### ***Nina Dowden***

Nina asks for an explanation regarding this Hawaiian cover. Why has it been sent on the NZ main trunk T.P.O.

She says, as far as she recalls, Devonport is just across the harbour from Auckland city (she visited in 1994) and therefore asks, why the need for it to travel by train from Auckland to Devonport, unless there were no road connection at the time. Perhaps someone else can provide an explanation?



Devonport does seem to be out of the way for the main trunk line. The main trunk line from Auckland to Wellington was officially opened by Prime Minister Sir Joseph Ward on 6 November 1908 and regular services operated from mid February 1909. It seems that The Main Trunk R.T.P.O – Auckland – Ohakune (south) commenced operation 15 February 1909 (Startup R. 1993. *New Zealand Post Offices*. Whenuapai: PHSNZ. P. 128). The actual Machine cancel on this cover is a Burns type and in Startup's *New Zealand Postal Slogans*, page XXIX it is shown as the Auckland-Thames TPO Nov 1908 – Oct 1909. In 1898 the Auckland-Hamilton-Thames loop was completed which gave rise to the Auckland-Thames TPO

Firstly, there was no harbour bridge to the North Shore. That didn't happen until 1959. Daily ferry services supplied the needs of Devonport up until the Bridge opening. The first ferries commenced service to Auckland in the 1840's.

The mail to Devonport could have gone via Thames, then by a vessel of some kind. This would account for the RTPO use. Are there any other theories or facts out there? (Editor.)

## New Zealand Musings: New Zealand at War 1939-45

**Tony Lyon**

Part Three of the series on World War II. This is a continuation of previous articles which appeared in AJP 106, December 2008 (Part 1) and AJP 111, March 2010 (Part 2). Part three will focus upon the Third Echelon, 2 NZEF of the NZ Division.

### The Third Echelon

The *Orcades* sailed from Lyttleton 27 August, 1940 for Wellington where she joined the *Mauretania* and the *Empress of Japan*, which were carrying the rest of the Third Echelon. Escorted by *HMS Achilles*, the three ships steamed across the Tasman. Off the Australian coast the *HMAS Perth* replaced the *HMS Achilles* as escort. The ships sailed through Bass Strait and entered the Australian Bight, where four transports escorted by *HMAS Canberra* joined the convoy and the *HMS Perth* departed. The convoy arrived in Fremantle 4 September, 1940 where shore leave was granted. The stay in port was just twenty-four hours and the convoy sailed for Bombay, India reaching there on 15 September, 1940. The convoy left Bombay on the 19<sup>th</sup> but the *Ormonde* was delayed due to a dispute over the conditions on the vessel. The *Ormonde* caught up with the convoy which was now being escorted by the *HMS Colombo* and the *HMAS Kanimbla* and arrived at Port Tewfik on the 29<sup>th</sup> September, 1940.

### The 6<sup>th</sup> NZ Infantry Brigade

- I. 24 Battalion (Formed from the original Northern District School of Instruction at Narrow Neck which assembled 1 February, 1940, On the 3<sup>rd</sup> April the battalion marched into Papakura Camp for further training).

The Battalion was organised on a district basis: A Coy men from Auckland City, B Coy from Hauraki, C Coy from North Auckland and D Coy from Waikato. There was also a HQ Coy who were mainly specialist from all provincial districts.

The battalion sailed on the *Empress of Japan*.

- II. 25 Battalion (25 Wellington Battalion was formed at Trentham Camp).

The battalion comprised men from Wellington, Hawke's Bay and Taranaki provinces. Again broadly district lines were used to organise the various companies. A Coy from Wellington City, B Coy comprising Wellington-West Coast, C Coy from Hawke's Bay and D Coy from Taranaki.

The battalion sailed on the HM Transport No. 11, the *Mauretania*. At Bombay re-embarked to the *Ormonde* for the voyage to Egypt.

- III. 26 Battalion (assembled at Burnham Camp).

The battalion comprised men from the South Island. A Coy comprised men from Canterbury, B Coy from Southland, C Coy from Nelson, Marlborough and West Coast and D Coy from Otago. HQ Coy was the largest and comprised the specialist units, Signals, Anti-Aircraft, Mortars, Bren carriers, Pioneers, and Transport.

The battalion sailed on the *Orcades*. At Bombay re-embarked to the *Orion* for the voyage to Egypt.

- IV. Other units that sailed as part of the Third echelon

With the 24 Battalion on the *Empress of Japan*:

1. 13 Railway Construction Coy, 16, 17 Railway Operating Coy, HQ Railway Operating Group.

- 19 Army Troops Coy. (A troops company carries out engineering projects along the lines of communications)

With the 25 Battalion on the *Mauretania*.

- 6 Field Regiment
- 33 Battery 7 Anti Tank Regiment
- 2 NZ General Hospital
- Mobile Dental Section

With the 26 Battalion on the *Orcades*:

- 6 Field Ambulance embarked on the *Orcades*, Then re-embarked on the *Felix Rousset* for Port Tewfik. The 6 Field Ambulance had to wait an extra ten days before continuing on to Egypt. Whilst in India they were billeted at a camp at Deolali 100 miles north-east of Bombay. They remained in India until the 6 October, 1940 when they finally sailed. En-route to Egypt they put in for water at Port Sudan and bypassing Port Tewfik disembarked at Port Said.
- C Sec Divisional Ammunition Coy with 26 battalion on the *Orcades*, then re-embarked on the *Orion*.
- 2 NZ General Hospital embarked on the *Mauretania* and at Bombay the *Ormonde*.

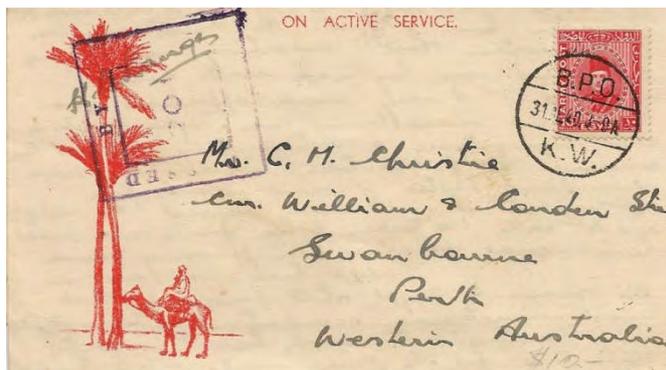
#### Examples of mail to and from Third Echelon



Cover sent to Captain F O Dawson CF at HQ 18<sup>th</sup> (Auckland) Battalion. Cover sent to Captain F O Dawson CF at HQ 18<sup>th</sup> (Auckland) Battalion.

Chaplain (Capt) Frederick Oberlin Dawson was assigned to HQ 6 Field Ambulance (Roll 3 New Zealand Army WWII Nominal Rolls, 1939-1948), however on the 13 April 1941 he was appointed Padre of the 18<sup>th</sup> Battalion. He remained with the battalion until September 1942.

Postage 9d (airmail) and cancelled by Woodville Airforce C34 22 DE 41.



Cover from Capt H B Lange to Perth Australia. Captain Harold Braithwaite Lange sailed with the 2 NZ General Hospital (Roll 3 New Zealand Army WWII Nominal Rolls, 1939-1948). When he sent this cover it as MO of 24<sup>th</sup> battalion.

Surface postage 10 mills is cancelled by BPO KW 31 DE 40. This was located at Amyria 9.12.40 – 1.3.41.

Also with the third echelon were the following as conveyed by the Chief of the General Staff (Wellington) to HQ 2 NZEF (Cairo). 'With the Third Echelon: third reinforcements to First Echelon units and second reinforcements to Second Echelon—total 1300.

It is also proposed to provide an additional reinforcement of 1600 all ranks to accompany the Third Echelon. (<http://www.nzetc.org/tm/scholarly/tei-WH2-2Doc-c3-6.html>).



Cover from Private Kenneth Scot Aitkin. Aitkin was part of the reinforcements. Wellington C Class (Blackball type) 23 JA 42 cancels 3/- pictorial.

Until November 1940, airmail from New Zealand to NZ forces in the Middle East was charged at the full rate of 1s 6d. However, on 22 November 1940, an airmail concession rate to overseas forces of 9d was introduced. The concession rate was for a maximum of a ½ oz. If the letter weighed more than that then the normal rate of 1s 6d per ½ oz applied and so would cost at least 3/-.

(<http://www.nzstamps.org.uk/air/teal/egypt.html>)

Air mail Letter Card from Sgt Peter Guy Fulton, HQ Coy 25<sup>th</sup> battalion.

Three pence pictorial is cancelled by MPO KW 3. Used at Baggush, Egypt 11.9.41 – (5.11.41).

Ref. (Roll 3 New Zealand Army WWII Nominal Rolls, 1939-1948).

Air Mail Letter Cards were introduced in early 1941 for mail between forces in the Middle East and the UK. They were much lighter than ordinary air mail letters. From 5 July 1941, they became available for mail between the Middle East and New Zealand. The postage rate was 3d and was payable in New Zealand stamps.

(<http://www.nzstamps.org.uk/air/teal/egypt.html>)



Cover to third echelon soldier. Lieut. Samuel Walter Ellingham was with 6 Anti Tank Coy. He was obviously bored because he joined the Long Range Desert Group (LRDG).

Until November 1940, airmail from New Zealand to NZ forces in the Middle East was charged at the full rate of 1s 6d.

(<http://www.nzstamps.org.uk/air/teal/egypt.html>)

Another cover from Lieut. Ellingham. By this time he was serving with LRDG. Posted in Sudan while on patrol with T Patrol which was at Kufra, Libya. British double circle FPO 214 dated 1 MY 41 cancel 3 x 15 milliemes = 45 milliemes airmail rate.

The army censor mark triangular No 1818 (Daynes A200) known used in Sudan 1940-42. It was during this time that LRDG acquired two aircraft which were at Kufra. Possibly used to move the mail.

Ref. (Kennedy Shaw, W.B. 1945. *Long Range Desert group*. 57-64. London: Landsborough Publications Limited)



Cover again from Lieut. Ellingham posted through the Australian 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade HQ PO P 2. Dated 15 MY 41. This PO was located at Tobruk April-October 41. Airmail rate 9d platypus.

LRDG covers are very scarce.

Cover sent through FPO KW1 11 DE 40 to Abbotsford Victoria Australia. Squared censor signed by Lieut. C H Bishop of 16<sup>th</sup> Railway Construction Coy.

FPO KW 1 2 NZ Divisional HQ El Daaba Egypt 6.9.40 - 14.12.40

Until 1 May 1941 the airmail rate was 40 mils up to 10 grammes and 70 grammes for up to 20 grammes.

This is a double weight example.



## Mail from Eastern Europe Pre World War 2 Comments on Part 1: The Rabbis

### Judy Kennett

David Collyer sent me some comments on this part. He remarked, first, that immigration was part of life for families in Eastern Europe during the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**Airlines involved.** Second, he noted that the airline which carried the Polish covers illustrated on pages 6 and 8 was Imperial Airways. British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC) did not commence operations until 1 April 1940. Further, he noted that the envelope on page 6 (posted in Warsaw on 30 July 1937) would have travelled by flying boat only as far as Alexandria (Egypt), and that until June 1938 the only airline which flew into and out of Australia was Qantas Empire Airways (QEA). Before that time, any international mail would have been collected by QEA either from Singapore or from Batavia.

**Currency control in Poland.** David remarked that it would be interesting to ascertain when currency inspection was introduced in Poland. He sent a photocopy of an envelope posted in March 1933 where it was not applicable. Three envelopes sent from Warsaw were also inspected. It may be worth noting that these three envelopes were all private correspondence, from August and November 1937, and November 1938. The middle one is illustrated below. The currency control notice is a straight line cachet, partly obscured by the Greek currency control cachet at the top.

Courtesy of Ronald Lee I have photocopies of a large batch of commercial envelopes from Poland pre World War 2 all addressed to wool brokers F B Smith of Spencer St in Melbourne. None of these covers shows signs of having been inspected. They range in dates from 1937 to 1939. Was currency inspection applicable only to private mail?

I have requested Alex Kaczmarek of the Polish Community Council of Australia to try to find when currency control in Poland was introduced, and perhaps, ceased. We hope for a reply from him shortly.



**Letter to Rabbi Gurewicz in Carlton from Warsaw** (scan of photocopy - letter from David Collyer)

Posted in Warsaw 18 November 1937, backstamped in Athens on the same day, Darwin 28 November, Melbourne 1 December & Carlton the same day. Currency control mark added in Athens. Letter was flown from Warsaw to Athens by Polish airline Lot.

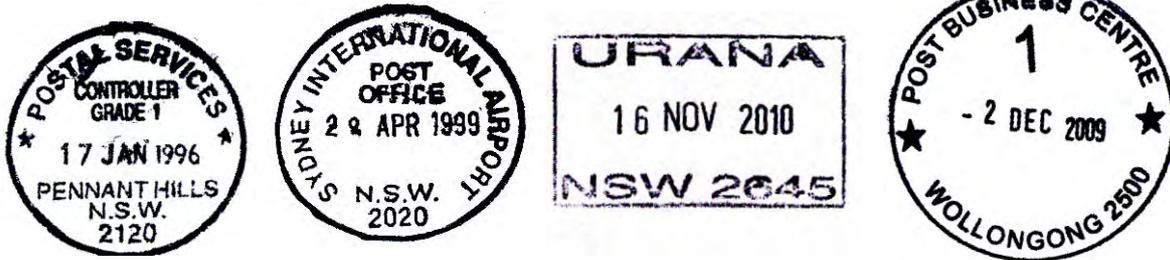
## Hand-Held Date Stamps

**Co-ordinated by George Vearing**

There does not seem to be anything significant to report in this issue other than it seems to be very top heavy with postmarks from Victoria. It would be appreciated if some readers could supply some from other states

Many thanks to Richard Peck, John Treacy, Ian Cutter, Simon Alsop and Ron Lee that have sent in postmark material to keep this column going

N.S.W.:-



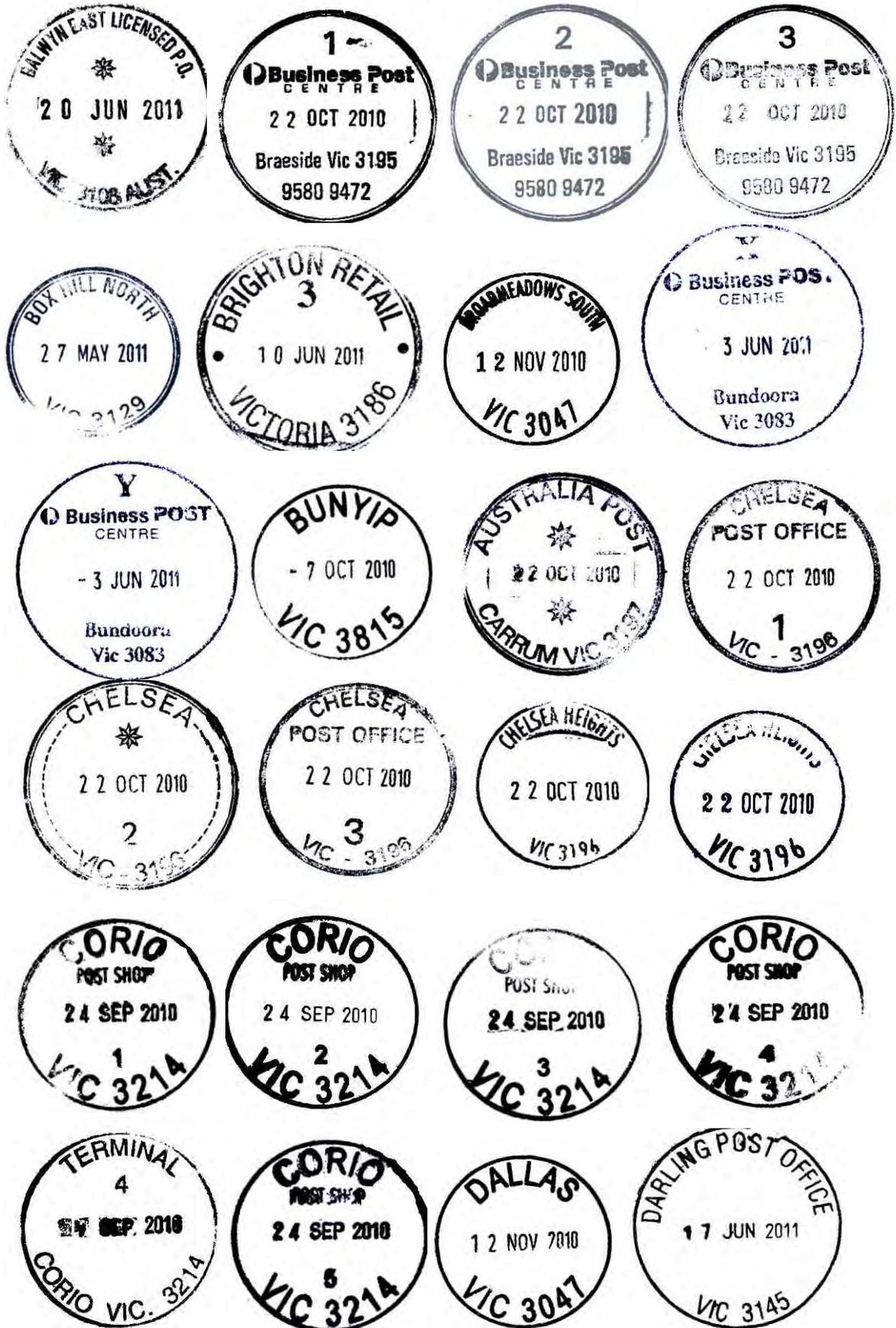
S.A.:-



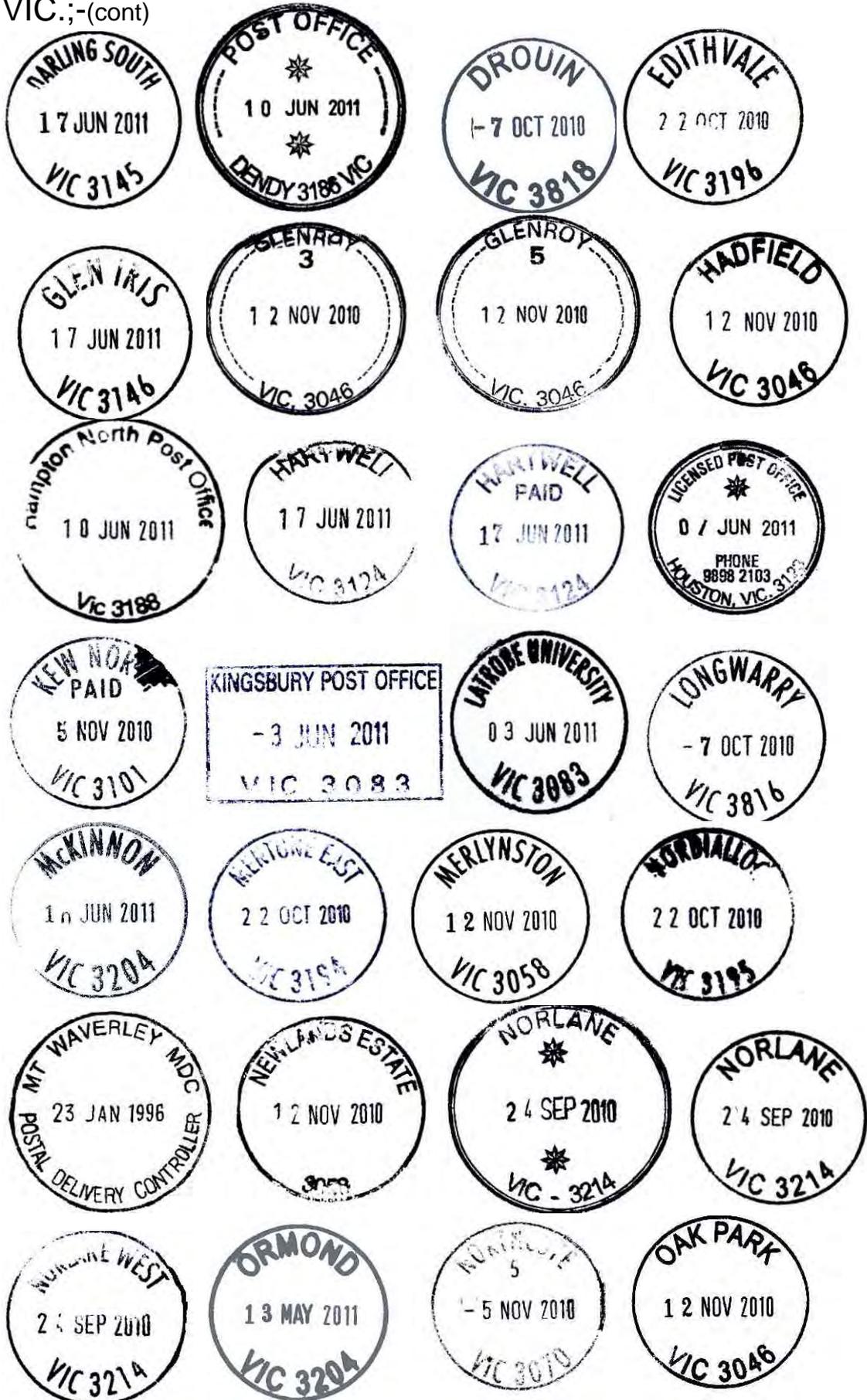
VIC:- Earlier datestamps:-BUNYIP (87/33), DROUIN (103/32) , ORMOND (102/39), OUYEN (105/27), PRESTON WEST(103/32), PRESTON LOWER (98/26), SNAKE VALLEY (90/36).



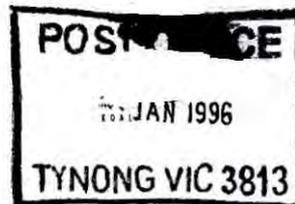
VIC.:-(cont)



VIC.:-(cont)



VIC:(cont)



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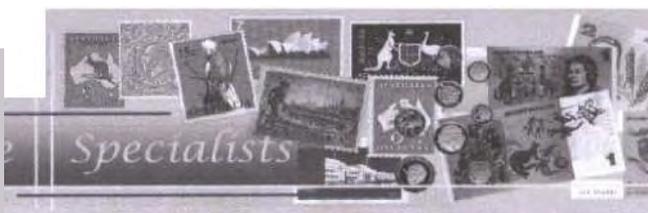
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- ◆ Write an article for the Journal (Better still, write two!)
- ◆ Send the Editor any interesting philatelic news
- ◆ Come to the bi-monthly meeting if in Melbourne
- ◆ Help George Vearing with his Datestamp Notes
- ◆ Get involved in one of the Study Groups
- ◆ Enter the Society Competitions
- ◆ Volunteer to display your collection at the monthly meeting
- ◆ Ensure the Council receives your feedback and suggestions for the Society

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## Back Cover

### **John Young**

The airmail cover shown here was sent by the Swiss consulate to a Legation in Portugal in 1941. It is franked 9 pounds 6 shillings and 11 pence, including 3 pence registration, and was mailed from the Rialto post office in Melbourne. It measures 325mm x 228mm and is probably the highest franked Australian airmail cover in existence. The franking was about triple the Australian weekly basic wage.

The cover has been shown in black and white in journals a couple of times, but here it is larger and in colour. It was last sold by postal auctioneer George Knight (once a member of this society) in about 1998 for around \$400. Since then prices have moved a bit. In 2010 Prestige Philately sold for \$6250 an airmail cover/parcel front franked 6P 14sh 11p to Scotland, and a year before an ordinary looking cover carrying 4P 8sh to USA sold for \$1800. Both of those covers were flown on the route/s for which the postage was paid.

The big one here, however, was not flown on its intended route. It was mailed on 10 Dec 1941 for the trans Pacific-USA-Atlantic air route to Lisbon. Three days before, the Japanese airforce bombed Pearl Harbour and the PAA trans Pacific clipper air service was immediately suspended, a fact not announced until 18 Dec. The cover was carried by sea to USA and then put on aircraft, arriving in Lisbon on 5 Feb 1942.

The envelope carried 16 ounces. It is ragged at the edges and no doubt was knocked about during transmission. The airmail rate was 5sh 10p per half ounce. That figure, multiplied by 32, amounts to 9P 6sh 8p.

