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Correspondence: All to the Secretary except as noted. Journal articles to be with the Editor by 15 February, May, August and November respectively.

<u>Secretary:</u>	<u>Australian Journal of Philately</u>	<u>HHDS Notes</u>
Irene Kerry	Tony Lyon	George Vearing
PO Box 7014	2/2 Edith Avenue	Box 426
Hawthorn	Croydon, Victoria 3136	Mooroopna, Victoria 3629
Vic 3122	Australia	Australia
Australia	Phone: 0412 997 675	Ph: 03 5825 3194
	E-mail: lyonaj@optushome.com.au	georgedwv@optusnet.com.au

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15 April 2013	John Young	WW2 Horseshoe Route Mail
	Tony Lyon	WW2 NZ POW Mail
17 June 2013	Michael Barden	1935-38 QANTAS mail from Verviers to Oz & HB Smith
19 August 2013	AGM—Members:	Works in Progress

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Editorial

Tony Lyon

Well here are in 2013 with the first journal off the press for the year and Australia 2013 very much closer; in fact this is the last issue prior to that exhibition. I trust you are on top of your exhibit and it is all coming together as you would wish.

There is a wonderful array of articles to read this issue and thanks again to all who contributed.

Simon Alsop and John Fitzgerald were out and about on Friday doing the rounds of the post offices for postmarks. I had the good fortune to see them and it was great to see Simon looking so well. He told me he was still on his honeymoon having married a couple of years ago. He now lives at Mt Martha; too far to attend the meetings. However he is still fervently involved with his postmark collection. We wish him all the best.

For those members who are interested in mail sent during World War 11, there was an excellent article in two parts in the Journal of the American Philatelic Society, by Lawrence Sherman entitled United States Mail to France in World War II (Part I, American Philatelist, January 2013, 42-51; Part II, February 2013, 126-136). Well worth a read.

Whilst talking about items from other Philatelic Journals, Stephen Prest a member of the New Zealand Philatelic Society, Inc, is conducting research into the George VI period and is looking for scans of covers that you may have in your collection. One area is New Zealand Short-paid mail into Australia between December 1936 and February 1954. You may contact Stephen by email at: Stephen.prest@gmail.com or by mail at: P.O. Box 18354, Glen Innes Auckland, New Zealand 1743. For further information visit the King George New Zealand website at www.kgvi.co.nz. Any help would I am sure be much appreciated.

Finally, if you have a cover that you would like to submit for the front page please send a scan along with an explanation. We are always looking for good back cover articles also. You get to have your cover in colour.

Ciao for now.

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The Postmark Collector Comes to Town

Ian Cutter

A short play inspired by an article in AJP for March 2008.

The scene, a small post office with one person behind the counter: He is the Official. The door opens and a man enters. He is the Collector.

Collector: Good morning.

Official: Good morning, nice day to be about.

Collector: Just as well, it's a fair hike from the camping ground.

Official: What can I do for you?

Collector: I collect postmarks. I don't have my wallet with me, but I wonder if you would be so kind as to give me a sample impression from your datestamp. Any piece of paper would do.

Official: I'm afraid not sir. The datestamp can only be used for the cancellation of mail.

Collector: That's a pity.....Hold on! I've got some coins. If I bought a stamp, no, better still, a pre-stamped envelope, there would be no objection to cancelling that would there?

Official: None at all..... Here is your envelope.

Collector: Thank you...but there's no datestamp.

Official: That is because you haven't addressed the envelope. It can't go through the mail system until it is addressed.

Collector: But I won't be home for three weeks; I don't want it sitting in my letter box all that me.

Official: I'm sorry sir, but that is my understanding of the rules.

Collector: That is very disappointing.....I know! I could address it Poste Restante to this post office, couldn't I?

Official: Yes, we do offer that service.

Collector: There we are then, addressed care of this Post Office.

Official: Thank you. [Cancels envelope.]

Collector: Can I have my envelope back now?

Official: Of course. Do you have any identification to confirm that you are the addressee?

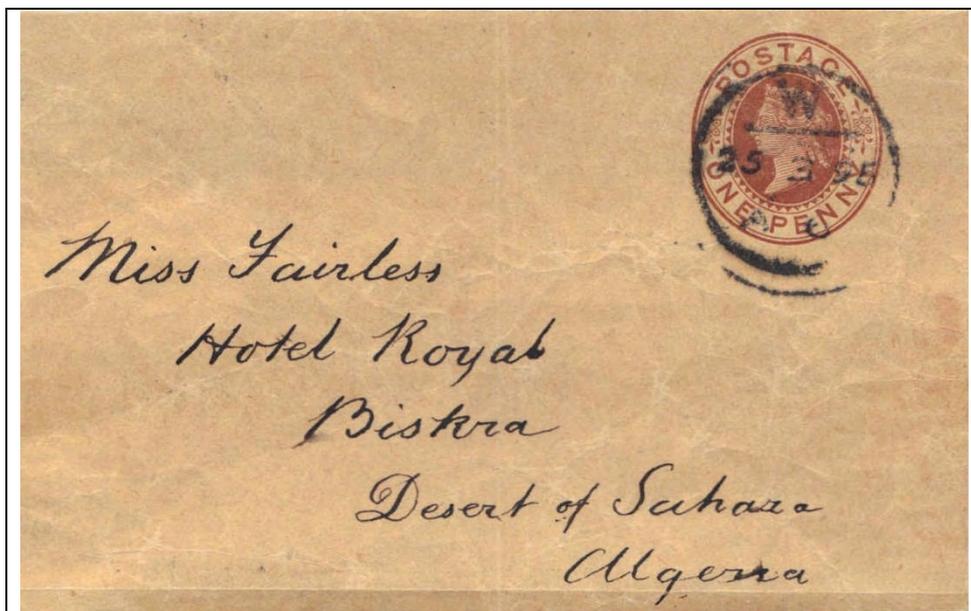
Collector: !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!....

Hotel Royal, Biskra – A Scarce GB Wrapper Destination

Dr John K. Courtis, acapjaic@friends.cityu.edu.hk

A recent analysis of GB postal stationery wrapper destinations published in *The London Philatelist* revealed that out of a study of 3,497 different wrappers only two were addressed to the French colony Algeria (Courtis, 2012). One was a type E9 4-line wrapper while the other was a stamped-to-order W. H. Smith, both with the city of Algiers as the destination. Wrappers from Great Britain addressed to Algeria are scarce. It was with some excitement therefore to find a wrapper for sale on the Internet with the exotic destination Biskra, Desert of Sahara, Algeria and this wrapper is shown in Illustration 1. It is postmarked W// 25 3 95// A 6; in other words it was posted from the Western district of London on 25 March 1895 and addressed to Miss Fairless at the Hotel Royal, Biskra, Desert of Sarah. The purpose of this paper is to tease out the scenarios of romance underlying this exotic destination at the end of the 19th Century.

Illustration 1: GB Type E6 PO Newspaper Wrapper Addressed to Biskra



Biskra, Algeria

Biskra is the capital city of the Biskra province, Algeria. Its location relative to other northern cities is shown in Illustration 2. As of 1935, Biskra was an inland town and the principal settlement of a Saharan oasis watered by the intermittent Oued Biskra. It is the capital of the Zab Mountains, the queen of Zibans, and the door of the desert. It is in the southern part of the Algerian rail system, and a favorite winter resort. Large quantities of fruit, especially dates and olives are grown in the vicinity. The town was a military post, and was the scene of severe fighting in the native insurrections of 1849 and 1871. Located in northeastern Algeria on the northern edge of the Sahara Desert, the area surrounding it is arid and most of the population lives in the area of Biskra or Souf oases. The oases stretch southward along the right bank of the Wadi Biskra. In 1901, six years after the postmark date on the wrapper, the population was 7,500 (Wikipedia, Britannica).

Illustration 2: Biskra's location within Algeria



An extract from a book by Arnold Bennet *The Loot of the Cities* adds additional information and colour about Biskra, although his description refers to a decade after the time of Miss Fairless's vacation. He writes: "Besides the hundred and sixty thousand palm trees, it possesses half a dozen large hotels, five native villages, a fort, a huge barracks, a very ornamental town hall, shops for photographic materials, a whole street of dancing-girls, the finest winter climate in all Africa, and a gambling Casino. It is a unique thing in oases. ... (which) is genuine enough, and the limitless desert is, in fact, all around. You may walk out into the desert... the sand remains the sand, and the desert remains the desert, and the Sahara, more majestic than the sea itself (<http://gaslight.mtroyal.a/lootX5.htm>).

Hotel Royal

Why would Miss Fairless travel from London to the Hotel Royal in Biskra? That the wrapper was addressed to her at this address and that it was not forwarded from a previous stopover implies that the stay there by Miss Fairless was sufficiently long to have made it worthwhile to have had friends send an English newspaper from London. Presumably she was already in Biskra when the newspaper was mailed and that the mails to such a location would have taken at least a week. We can assume her stay coincided with at least some of the English winter. During March and April the average daily temperature in Biskra was a sunny and dry 73-79°F compared with London's overcast and wet 52-56°F.

The hotel itself must have been well-known as a vacation destination for well-heeled and adventurous English, French and Germans. There was a culture of travel to exotic places at this time. Travel was motivated for adventure, although the winter weather may have been a contributing factor. The flag-flying Royal Hotel, Biskra is depicted on a vintage postcard and shown in Illustration 3. A similar scene of the hotel (not illustrated) shows camels and their handlers awaiting hotel guests – like the modern day taxis waiting outside the better hotels.

Old postcards such as these bring to life a location, era and the heat of the day with a precision that words cannot always adequately capture. Other Biskra hotels featured on postcards include Hotel de Ville, Hotel Transatlantique, Biskra Hotel and the Palace Hotel.

Illustration 3: Hotel Royal, Biskra



What kind of a lifestyle did the Hotel Royal afford? Illustration 4 shows a postcard with the inscription “Luncheon of the Royal Hotel served at the famous Garden of Allah, Biskra. The Luncheons take place once a week during winter Season.” Close inspection of the setting and the couples reveals a number of insights about the apparent privileged lifestyle. The narrow garden (of Allah) reveals an aesthetic setting of lawn, hedges and trees, obviously comfortable for formal wear by the patrons and eating without annoying insects. The tables are set with white linen, white napkins, glassware and china for what seems a European clientele (only one Arab can be seen). Note the table at the left with stacks of plates. There are at least four waiters (again Europeans) standing and dressed formally in dinner jackets. There is also one local “busboy”. The patrons are dressed formally also, the ladies are wearing hats, the men jackets, and we can imagine that it is Miss Fairless sitting on her own at the front center table, her newspaper laid by her side as she is being served by a waiter. These appear to be people with old money who are used to the Victorian lifestyle of the times.

Illustration 4: Luncheon at the Royal Hotel served in Garden of Allah, Biskra

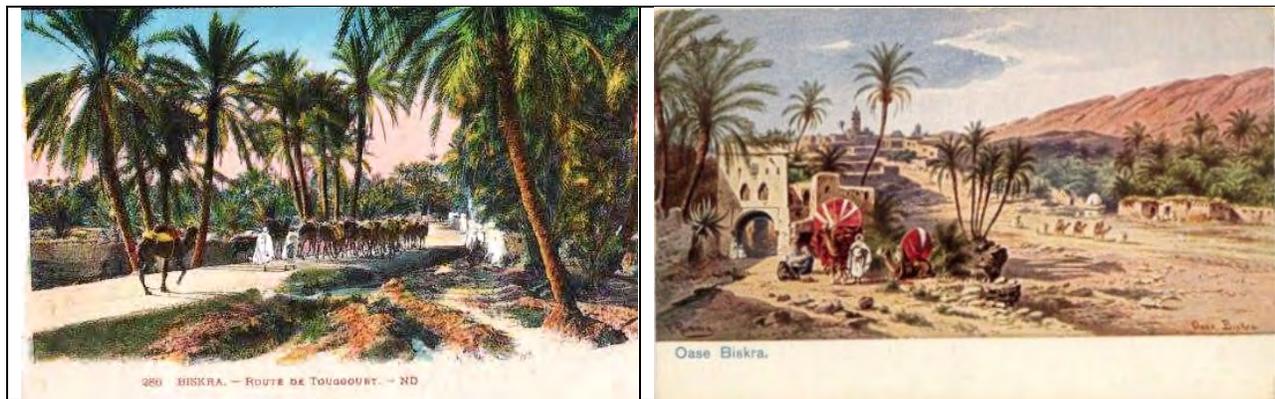


The Route

The exact route taken by Miss Fairless is unknown without recourse to her diary, if she maintained one. However, we can advance a couple of educated guesses. Being winter and a reason why Miss Fairless left London for warmer climes, the presumption is that she would not have wanted to wait around any longer than necessary. Therefore, a three-four day steamer journey from London or Southampton to Algeria is a possibility. A more likely route is that Miss Fairless took the London to Dover train that connected with the ferry to Calais, staying perhaps for a night in Paris before continuing by train to Marseilles where she probably would have rested overnight again, and then taken a French steamer across the Mediterranean to Algeria. While we cannot prove that this was the route taken by Miss Fairless (as there are no transit marks to give us clues on the wrapper) there is corroborating evidence in Gösta Mitting-Leffler's book (2010) *A Man of Conviction* where he describes the route by rail to Marseilles and by steamer to Algiers (p.570) in the year 1905.

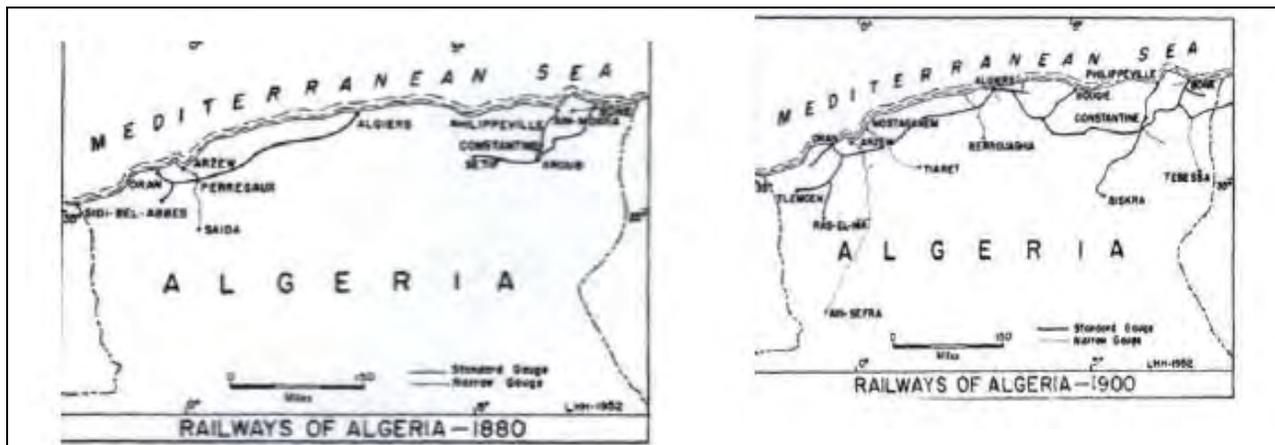
One scenario would allow Miss Fairless an overnight rest in Algiers before undertaking the 300 kilometer trip by donkey and/or camel and/or horse-drawn coach to Biskra. This trip was not exactly the same as would have been experienced by an early missionary. It almost certainly would have been a journey well catered for with fine provisions by an established touring company that took groups of British, French and German tourists in a caravan. There would have been overnight stops at oases such as shown in Illustration 5, which also shows a caravan of camels on the road to Biskra.

Illustration 5: Life on the Road to Biskra circa 1890



Another and more likely scenario is that Miss Fairless caught the train in Algiers to Constantine where she would have changed to the Biskra line. There is no readily available information about the specific date when this Biskra line came into operation. It is hard to believe that the type of people appearing in the Allah Garden of the Hotel Royal would be the sort of people prepared to ride on a donkey or camel for 300 kilometers. The Biskra line came into being sometime between 1880 and 1900. An important motivation for building the line was to service the large oases with exports of dates (Thomas 1953). The rail system in place in Algeria in 1880 and 1900 are shown in Illustration 6.

Illustration 6: Rail System in Algeria and Line to Biskra



Miss Fairless

What can we infer about Miss Fairless? The proud use of the title 'Miss' conjures up the image that she was likely to be a middle aged spinster of the Victorian era with enough experience to have had her mail sent to the Hotel Royal, suggesting this was not her first trip abroad. Did she travel alone or was she accompanied by another female friend? That the wrapper was mailed from West London (by someone else of course) suggests Miss Fairless may have lived in West London, which would be consistent with the areas of Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon and Hounslow. She was obviously wealthy enough to afford both the journey and a stay at the Royal Hotel for some time. One would hope that her name did not describe her features. Examples of stereo-typical Victorian women in circa 1890 are shown in Illustration 7.

Illustration 7: Examples of Victorian Women 1891



Conclusion

The possible circumstances that surround the movement of this wrapper from the suburbs of London to the edge of the Sahara illustrate the efficiency and effectiveness of the steadily expanding global postal service in the 19th Century. Evidence of effective co-ordination by the postal service of sea and rail delivery, from English to a French jurisdiction, shows how social and community life spanned the globe long before the invention of the term "globalization".

References

- Courtis, John K. (2012), A Guide to Great Britain Postal Stationery Wrapper Destinations, *The London Philatelist*, Vol. 121, No. 1398, September, pp. 268-275.
- Mitting-Leffler, Gösta (2010), *A Man of Conviction*, Aschehoug, Oslo, original Norwegian edition translated by Tina Nunnally.
- Thomas, Benjamin E. (1953), The Railways of French North Africa, *Economic Geography*, Vol. 29, No. 2. April, pp. 95-106.
- <http://gaslight.mtroyal.a/lootX5.htm>

Acknowledgements

Sincere thanks to Professor Kevin O'Connor and Allan Gory for their comments on an earlier draft.

A Tale of Two Submarines in Sydney Harbour 1960 [U.S.A.]

Maurice Mishkel

As luck would have it, these 2 covers turned up on the same day from two different sources, and surprisingly, the two submarines noted were related in time and place, even to the point that the two had been berthed together in Sydney Harbour, at one point in time.

The first large cover was On Her Majesty's Service, with a purple stamping and blue vignette showing it was sent by Air Mail. It was addressed to The Navy Secretary, Navy Office, Wellington, New Zealand, with a total of 8d postage made up of three QE II definitives, the blue-green 3d, the carmine-lake 4d and the deep slate-purple 1d, all issued in 1959. The stamps were cancelled with a single faint NAVAL P.O. BALMORAL/ 23 FE 60/ N.S.W- AUST postmark. There were 3 additional markings, a printed 'Code No. 26-72', a red boxed COMMANDING/ OFFICER/ 23 FEB 1960/ H.M.S. ANCHORITE and a purple double circle NAVY OFFICE/ 27 FEB 1960/ WELLINGTON, N.Z. receiving mark (Figure 1).



Figure 1

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Figure 2

The shield on the cover was a copy of the patch worn on the uniforms of the sailors, and came with and without the firing of the rocket. A cynic might question the reason for the 2 designs, perhaps concerns about demonstrations in different ports (Figure 3).



Figure 3

Whereas the covers were totally different in intent (the first cover official mail, and the second philatelically inspired) and there was exactly 10 weeks difference in the dates on the two covers, there is proof that they were berthed together in 1960 in Sydney Harbour, before the HMS Anchorite set off to New Zealand where it met an ignominious fate.

There are many points of interest and speculation concerning these two covers.

The Royal Navy HMS Anchorite was one of ten submarines stationed in Sydney during the years 1949 to 1969. They were offered to the Royal Australian Navy for training purposes, the flotilla usually comprising 3 or 4 ships. The Anchorite was one of the "A" class (others were Aurochs and Andrew) in service during the period 1957-1960, and they were replaced by the "T" class submarines in 1960. The Balmoral Naval PO was 9k from the Central Business District of Sydney and it was opened in July 1945 and was not closed until September 1992, Balmoral being at the entrance to Middle Harbour.

Two submarines of the United States Navy have borne the name USS Halibut, and both have had an association with Australia. The first USS Halibut (SS-232) attempted unsuccessfully to intercept the Japanese submarine I-6 when it laid magnetic mines near the approaches to the Brisbane River on 13 March 1942. The US Navy at that time had a large submarine base at Capricorn Wharf at New Farm in Brisbane.

The second USS Halibut (SSGN 587) was the first American submarine to be designed to launch the guided 'Regulas' missiles. She was launched in Vallejo, CA in January 1959, and she departed on her shakedown cruise March 11, 1960. On March 25 she became the first American nuclear submarine to successfully launch a guided missile. On her voyage to Sydney she was under the command of Lt. Commander Walter Dedrick. The reason for the visit to Sydney in the first week in May was for the remembrance celebration of Coral Sea Week during WW II.

The proof that the two submarines were in Sydney Harbour at the same time is found in a picture of the two below, with the following caption: "Halibut (SSGN-587), and Regulas missile in Sydney Harbor with the British Submarine HMS ANCHORITE outboard, circa early 60's"



Figure 4

The fate of both submarines is known, the Halibut was disposed of by submarine recycling in 1986. The Anchorite was damaged on 3 October 1960, striking an uncharted rock in Hauraki Gulf off New Zealand, and was broken up in Troon, Scotland in 1970. Could the O.H.M.S. letter from the Commander of the Anchorite sent to the Navy Secretary, Navy Office Wellington New Zealand have been in relation to this impending trip, for it certainly ties in nicely.

New Zealand Musings

The Royal New Zealand Navy at War 1939-45

Tony Lyon

This article will continue with the naval covers. The first cover shown is from the Dutch hospital ship *Oranje*.

In 1941 the Netherlands Government offered to the Governments of Australia and New Zealand the MV *Oranje*, a ship of 22,000 tons, for use as a hospital ship to convey Australian and New Zealand sick and wounded from the Middle East. This offer was gladly accepted by the two governments. (Stout 1958: 302-303)¹

Initially the Netherlands Mercantile Marine were responsible for staff and crew of the vessel with the bulk of the medical complement being provided by the Netherlands medical service with only a small supplementary Australian and New Zealand medical personnel: After its first voyage the staff comprised mainly Australian and New Zealand medical personnel with only a few Dutch remaining.

When in 1943 the Australians returned from the Middle East because of the Japanese threat, the medical staff also withdrew. They were replaced by British medical personnel. By early 1945 the medical staff from both New Zealand and Britain came under the authority of the New Zealand Liaison Officer.

No. 1 Netherlands Military Hospital Ship—Oranje

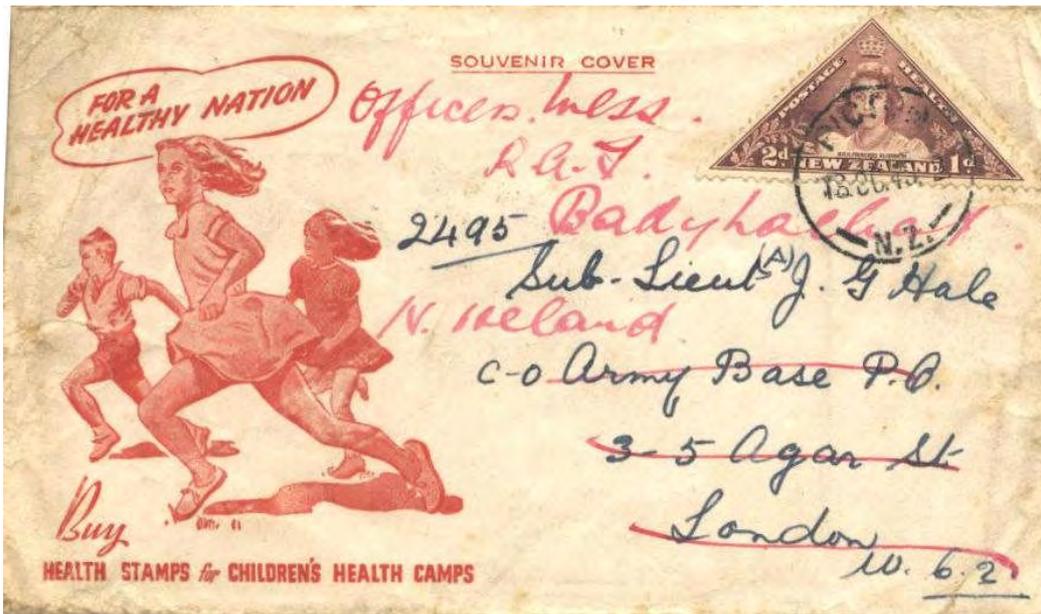


Air Letter censored with the **Passed by Censor 47** (a scarce censor) used aboard No 1 Netherlands Military Hospital Ship '*Oranje*' dated 21 1 45. Posted through **MPO KW 9** which was used at the **No 2 NZ General Hospital, Caserta, Italy**. The return address is given as C/- NZCPO 2NZEF MEF. **Airletter rate 3d.**

Private Frederick George Edgecombe left New Zealand in the second half of 1942 as part of the New Zealand Medical Corp (NZMC). He says in his letter that they have loaded 500 German and 100 Italian POW's.

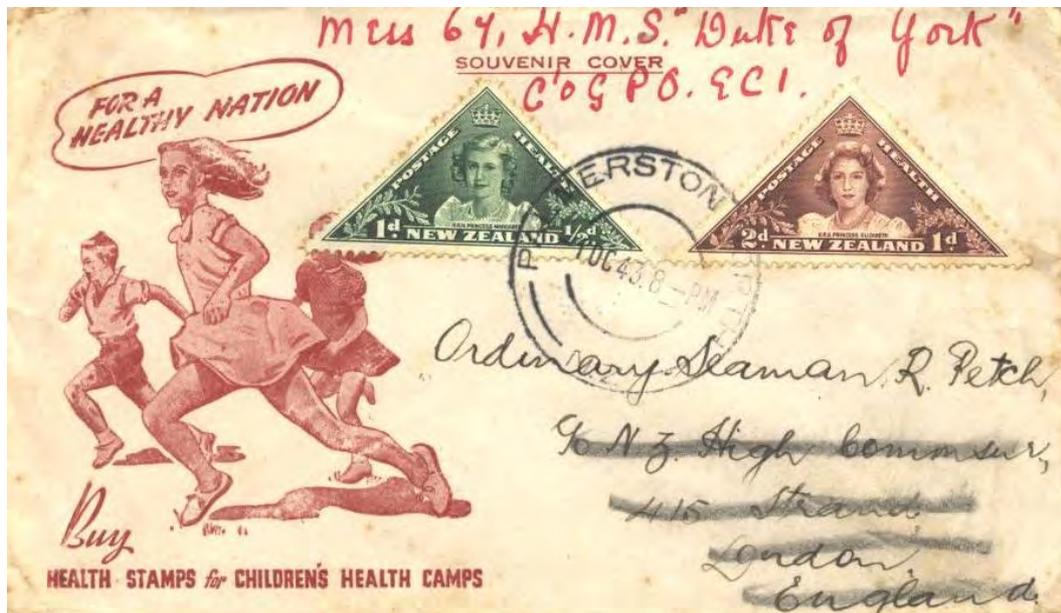
¹ Stout, T Duncan M. 1958. *Medical Services in New Zealand and the Pacific. Official History of New Zealand in the Second World War 1939-45: In Royal New Zealand Navy, Royal New Zealand , Air Force and with Prisoners of War.* Wellington: War History Branch, Department of Internal Affairs.

RAF Ballyhalbert / HMS Corncake



Cover sent from Picton, NZ, addressed to Sub Lieutenant (A)² J G Hale C/- Army Base PO 3-5 Agar Street London which has been redirected to the Officers Mess, RAF Ballyhalbert (HMS Corncake) Northern Ireland. This was used by the Fleet Air Arm (FAA) as a lodger facility from the RAF. On the reverse a English type double ring New Zealand Army Base P.O.U.K. dated 16 DE 43. The 2d stamp cancelled at Picton 18 OC 43 paid the surface rate and letter took 2 months to arrive.

HMS Duke of York



Cover posted at Palmerston North, NZ to Ordinary Seaman R Petch C/- NZ High Commissioner 415 Strand, London where it has been on forwarded to Mess 67, HMS *Duke of York*, C'oG PO E C 1. **Backstamped with New Zealand Army Base P.O.U.K. 30 Nov 43.** The Duke of York was the flag ship of Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser which took part in the battle in December 1943 which sunk the *Scharnhorst*. The Duke of York was part of the Home Fleet (1940-45) and served the Murmansk Convoys. **FDI of 1943 Health stamps overpaid surface rate by 1d.**

² (A) Air Branch, showed that the person was a pilot in this case a RNZAF pilot with the RAF.

RNAS Duke / HMS Goldcrest



Cover sent from member of the RNZN to PO Moncur RNZNVR (A)³ addressed to NZABPO 35 The Strand London where it has been redirected to PO Mess Royal Navy Air Station Dale, Near Haverford, West Wales. The machine cancel in red is London and there is a navy tombstone censor cachet dated 3 December 1944. On the reverse there is a partly struck NZ Base PO-UK cancel. RNAS Duke opened in 1942. Postage free.

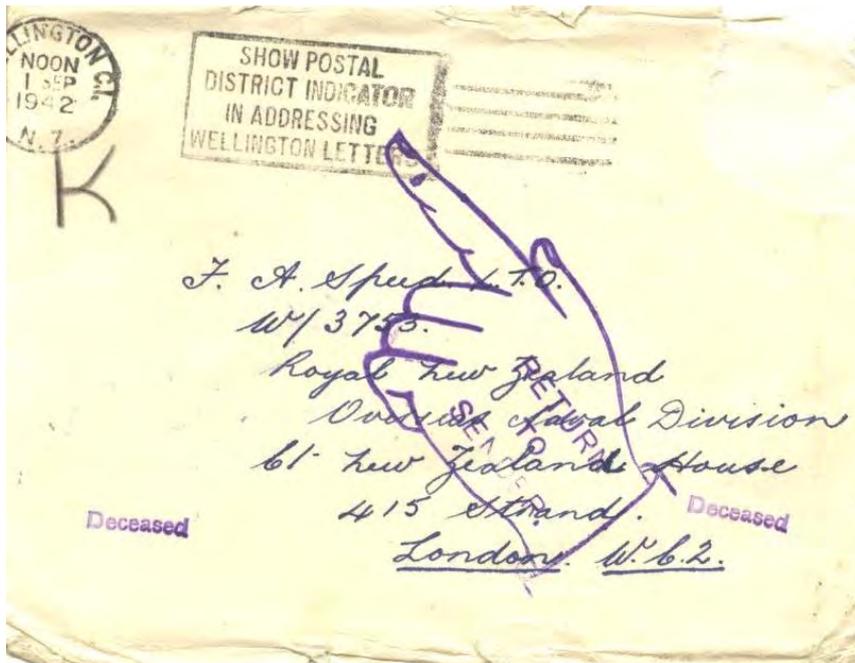
HM Schooner Kheya-El-Dine



Letter giving address as H M Schooner Kheya-El-Dine C/- HMS Nile (Shore Base, Dockyards at Alexandria, Egypt). Written 14 Mar 42 from Colombo and censored by Naval Tombstone cachet dated 15 Mar 42. The 3d Airmail Letter Card rate has been paid by 2 x 1½d GB Geo VI Brown stamps. These have been cancelled by Egypt Postage Paid 77 which was held by OE2 M.E British Base APO Cairo.

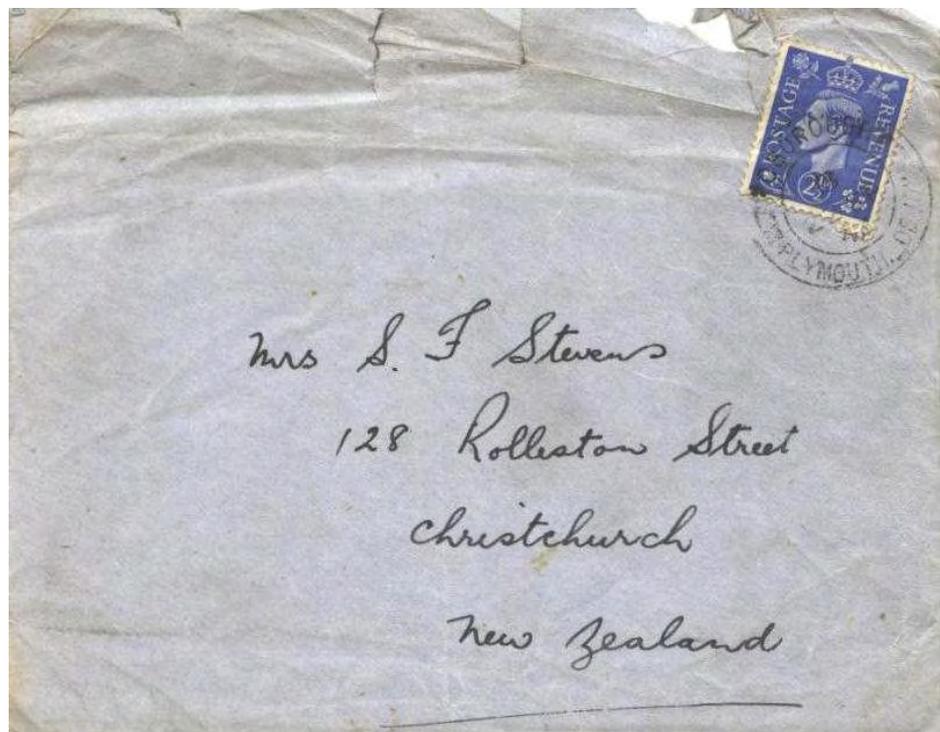
³ RNZNVR – Royal New Zealand Navy Volunteer Reserve. VR stands for (a) Pre-War Reservists or for (b) Wartime officers enrolled for the war only and commissioned in the RNZNVR. [http://www.google.com.au/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=rnznvr%20\(a\)&source=web&cd=149&ved=0CGYQFjAIOIwB&url=http%3A%2F%2Frnzncomms.files.wordpress.com%2F2012%2F03%2Frzn-casualty-title_1.pdf&ei=v4I9Ue7zK6L4mAWQsIGIBg&usg=AFQjCNER7ir4Bhxm7PvdVMeGVvXjvMYuKw](http://www.google.com.au/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=rnznvr%20(a)&source=web&cd=149&ved=0CGYQFjAIOIwB&url=http%3A%2F%2Frnzncomms.files.wordpress.com%2F2012%2F03%2Frzn-casualty-title_1.pdf&ei=v4I9Ue7zK6L4mAWQsIGIBg&usg=AFQjCNER7ir4Bhxm7PvdVMeGVvXjvMYuKw)

HMS Parthian



Cover sent to Able Seaman an electrical fitter serving on HMS Parthian in the Mediterranean. Stamp has been removed. Sent from Wellington 1 Sep 1942 by surface mail (rate 2d). Returned to sender and Deceased cachets. There is also a manuscript letter 'K' under the date slug. (Killed?) Addressed to Royal New Zealand Naval Division. 415 Strand London. Speed was accidentally killed 13 October 1942. His memorial is in the NZ Naval Memorial, Devonport, Auckland (panel 11).

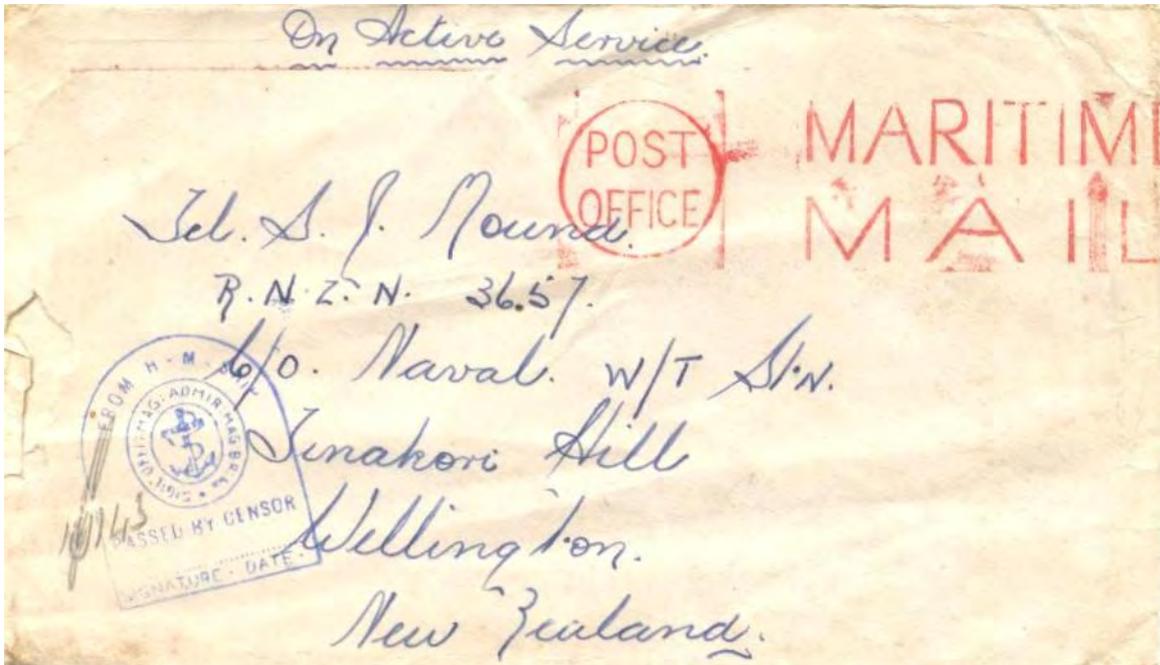
Signals School, Glenholt Camp



Tipping was sent to the Signals School, Glenholt Camp, Plymouth, UK. The 2½d Blue Geo VI paying surface rate has been cancelled by a Double Circle from the Roborough, Plymouth, Devon dated 22 Sep 43 addressed to New Zealand. During this period mail from service personnel serving in England was sent through a Civil Post Office but could not be posted in a pillar box.

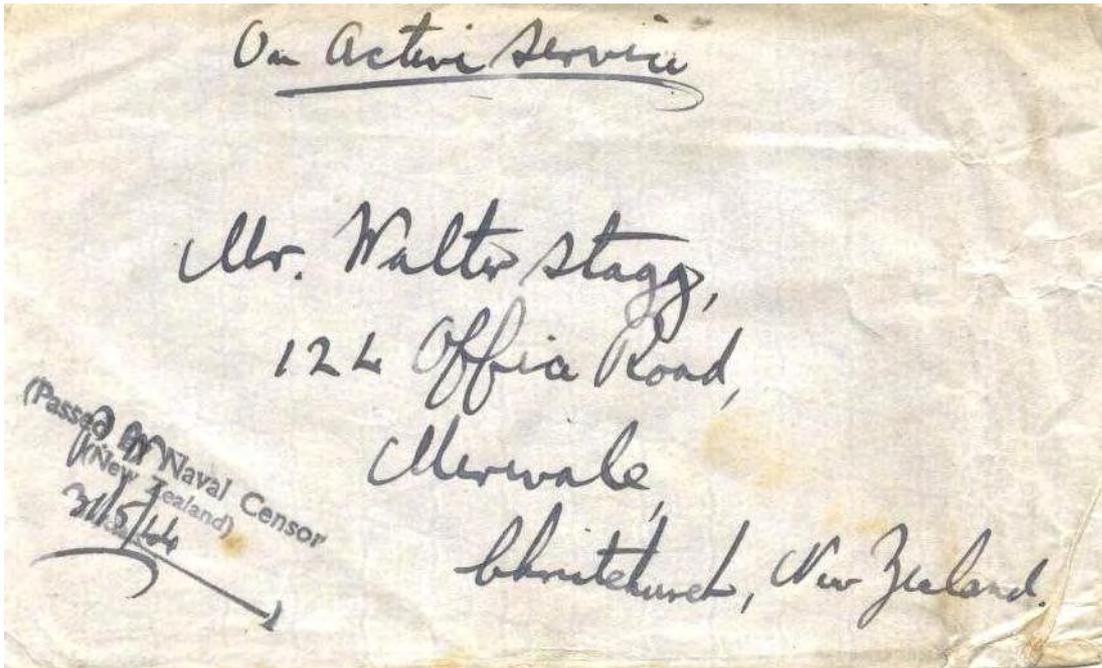
Fleet Mail Office—London

Two different treatments of Fleet Mail on free the other subject to postage. Censored naval cover sent from an unknown vessel through London where it received the Maritime Mail cancel. It was addressed to the Naval Wireless & Telegraphic Station, Tinakori Hill Wellington where it was received 13 Oct 43. On Active Service posted Free.



Cover from Sub Lieutenant Dave Scott RNZNVR censored it with a Naval Tombstone cachet signed 6 Mar 43 and signed by the writer. It has been through London evidenced by the red Maritime Mail cancel. The 2½d postage was the inland rate up to 2oz and which applied from the 1st May 1940. This rate applied to surface mail to the British Empire. No indication of 'On Active Service'.

ML 405



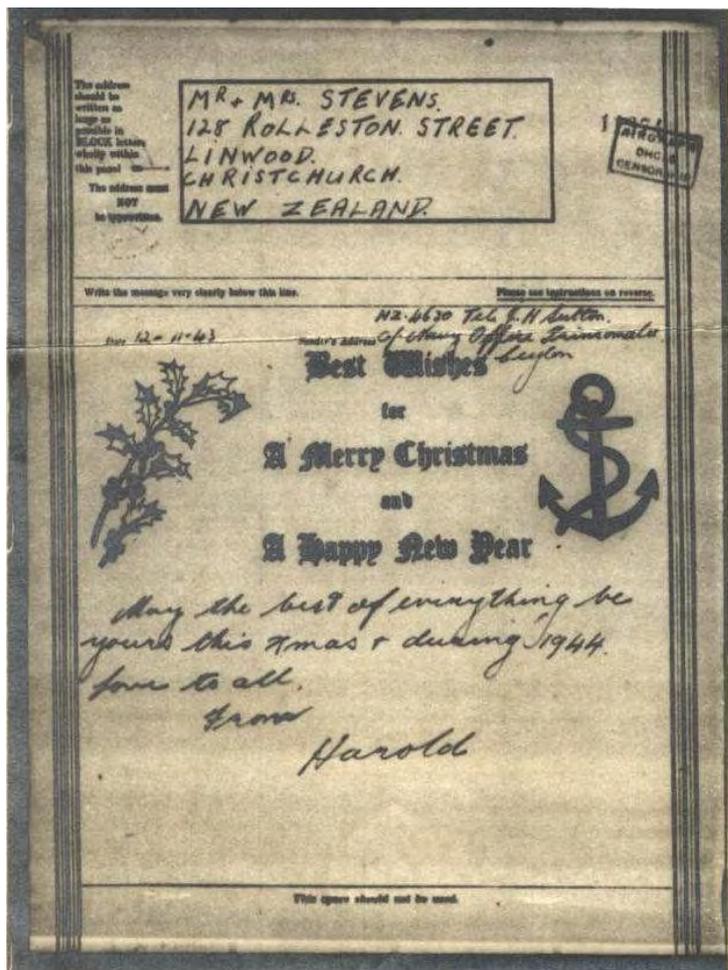
Cover from Lieutenant R E Pugh Williams RNZNVR who was the commander of Motor Launch 405 (ML 405), also known as Fairmiles. ML 405 was part the 80th Motor Launch Flotilla. The 80th Flotillas arrived at Guadalcanal on the 5th March 1944. Pay and mail etc was handled by the forward base at Espiritu Santo. There task was anti-submarine and escort duties. Pugh Williams relinquished command in July 1944. It received a Passed by Naval Censor (New Zealand) dated 31 May 44, possibly at Espiritu Santo.

HMFS Viti



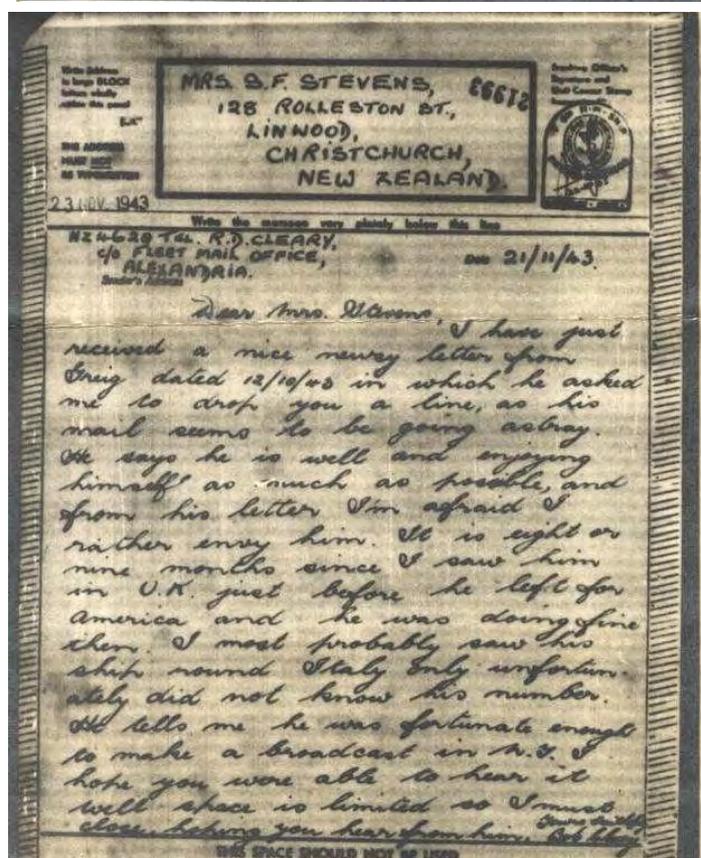
Cover from Lieutenant J Cummings FRNVR (Fiji Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve). Cancelled by NZEF Field Post Office cancel and censored by Naval Censor New Zealand. Manuscript On Active Service. In November 1941 the Viti was placed under the control of the NZ Naval Board and used to patrol the waters around Fiji. Postage free.

Airgraphs



A Christmas & New Year 1943/44 Airgraph from Telegraphist Harold Sutton NZ 4630 giving his address as C/- Navy Office Trincomalee, Ceylon.

Censored by a rectangular cachet ,
'AIRGRAPH DHC 10 CENSORSHIP'



MTB 315

An Airgraph sent 23 Nov 1943 by Telegraphist Bob Cleary NZ 4620. It has been censored by a **Naval Tombstone cachet**. Address given as **C/- Fleet Mail Office, Alexandria**.

Cleary was stationed on MTB 315 and was mentioned in dispatches for good service in the Aegean.

Reference: Waters S. D. (1956). *Official history of New Zealand in the Second World War 1939-45. The Royal New Zealand Navy*. Wellington: p497. War History Branch Department of Internal Affairs).

An Uncommon Queensland Postmark on an Unclaimed F.D. Cover

Maurice Mishkel

Yes, I admit to buying First Day Covers (F.D.C.) in the years of my collecting Australian covers, but not in the last 30 years, yet this one was an exception due to a low fixed cost price sale in 1999, plus an interesting display of postmarking. The cover was registered with a blue R6 registration label of CORINDA, S.W.4 Queensland label and the red crayon lines front and reversed. The complete Peace set of red 2½d, blue 3½d and green 5½d were each carefully cancelled CORINDA/ 18 FE 46/ QUEENSLAND, and the sender had typed at lower left 'Official First Day Cover, Australian Peace Stamps. 18.2.46. It was addressed to a Mr. K.C. Robinson, 18 Boulder Crescent, Colorado Springs, Colorado, United States of America. The prominent Pointing Finger Returned to Sender, with the purple handstamp instruction UNCLAIMED/ From Colorado Springs, had been applied with care, twice as well as another purple handstamp MAR 20 1946/ Second Notice, No Reply/ To First Notice Mailed... There was a pencilled ms, the meaning of which was uncertain.



Figure 1

The reverse has a neatly typed address of Miss J.T. Lawson, Hassall Street, Corinda, S.W.4, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, as well as 7 circular postmarks and 2 copies of the purple Pointing Finger, as seen on the front. There is a symmetry of the postmarks as if the various postal office workers were respecting the fact that it was a First Day cover! There was a CORINDA/ 18 FE 46/ QUEENSLAND [1] as on the front, a next day transit mark of REGISTERED BRISBANE/ 10³⁰A/ 19 FE 46/ QLD. AUST [2], and there was a purple transit double circle SAN FRANCISCO/ CALIF./MAR/ 13/ 1946/ REGISTERED [3].

The cover arrived at its destination as shown by the faint purple double circle COLORADO SPRINGS/ COLO./ MAR/16/ 1946/ REG. STN [4]. With the failure to deliver the cover twice, it was sent back to Australia with a transit cancel again in SAN FRANCISCO/ APR/26/1946/CALIF. [5], which is a different cancellation than that on the inward journey. There is another faint black REGISTERED postmark which probably is that of Brisbane, on the cover's return to Australia, dated ()MY46 [6], and finally the black reverse has a neatly typed address of Miss J.T. Lawson, Hassall Street, Corinda, S.W.4, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, as well as 7 circular postmarks and 2 copies of the purple Pointing Finger, as seen on the front. There is a symmetry of the postmarks as if the various postal office workers were respecting the fact that it was a First Day cover! There was a CORINDA/ 18 FE 46/ QUEENSLAND [1] as on the front, a next day transit mark of REGISTERED BRISBANE/ 10³⁰A/ 19 FE 46/ QLD. AUST [2], and there was a purple transit double circle SAN FRANCISCO/ CALIF./MAR/ 13/ 1946/ REGISTERED [3]. The cover arrived at its destination as shown by the faint

purple double circle COLORADO SPRINGS/ COLO./ MAR/16/ 1946/ REG. STN [4]. With the failure to deliver the cover twice , it was sent back to Australia with a transit cancel again in SAN FRANCISCO/ APR/26/1946/CALIF. [5], which is a different cancellation than that on the inward journey. There is another faint black REGISTERED postmark which probably is that of Brisbane, on the cover's return to Australia, dated ()MY46 [6], and finally the black postmark of special interest, when it was returned to the sender, which is shown as CORINDA POST DEPOT S.W.4/ 27 MY 46/ QLD-AUST [7]. Once again, there were 2 examples of the purple pointed finger with 'RETURN TO SENDER/ UNCLAIMED/ From Colorado Springs.



Figure 2



The CORINDA POST DEPOT S.W.4/ 27 MY46/ QLD-AUST is shown separately, and it is magnified as fig 3

I cannot recall seeing the use of 'Post Depot' in relation to Queensland postmarks, and on consulting my copy of Allan Cowan & Terry Dell's *Queensland Datestamps 1860-2000* published in May 2003, I found that there was an entry for Corinda, a suburb of Brisbane as well as for Corinda Post Depot,

and the latter's details were as follows: Type 1 postmark with no time marking, 30.5 mm diameter, CORINDA POST DEPOT SW4/QLD AUST, rarity rating 'R', earliest recorded date: 10 MR 56; latest recorded date: none given. The present cancel is now the earliest recorded date of 27 May 1946, with the latest recorded date now being 10 March 1956.

I found that the following post offices had similar 'Post Depot' cancellations (in alphabetical order): post office; date(s), rarity.

ALDERLEY	1936-58	'S'	ANMERLEY	1953-56	'S'
ASHGROVE	1938-57	'---'	BULIMBA	-----	
CAMP HILL	1954-71	'C'	CHERMSIDE	-----	'R'
COORPAROO	1950-51	'R'	CORINDA	1956	'R'
GAYTHORNE	1957	'R'	LUTWYCHE	1941	'2R'
MOOROOKA	1941	'R'	MOOROOKA	1950	'R' Second type
MORNINGSIDE	1948	'R'	NEW MARKET	1950-56	'---'
ORIEL PARK	1936-56	'S'	SUNNY BANK	1951	'S'
SUNNY BANK	1973	'S' Second type	VINCENT	1970	'R'

It became obvious very soon that all the Postal Depots were in the suburbs of Brisbane, except for Vincent, which was a suburb of Townsville. Presumably these depots were opened to speed delivery of mail in Brisbane, in the time period shown. Only one of these postmarks was considered common 'C', the others being scarce ('S'), or rare 'R' & 'RR'.

Front Cover

Airmail cover posted at Libreville Akebe, Republique Gabonaise 17.2.69 addressed to Germany. Postage 50 Francs.

The Ultimate Challenge in Cover Collecting

Ian Cutter

In the AJP there has been at least one contribution about the collecting of covers from post offices that have ceased to exist because the location itself has vanished.

It is actually possible to take this process one step further.

The example illustrated here cost \$5 in November 2011. I do have other examples from the same series of pictorial postmarks: Some are registered, some are not. There is a good reason why this particular one was not registered.

In passing, I saw that the back of the envelope carried an un-cancelled ½d kangaroo. [Why? I wonder.] This brought the value of the franking up to an even 4/-, which in 1956 would have been sufficient for twelve ordinary letters. The \$5 that I paid for it would nowadays be sufficient to post eight such letters; not a great return over a period of more than 50 years.

The Australian Stamp Catalogue – I don't know which one – has a page of Olympic Games postmarks. A note at the bottom of the page reads:

The above postmarks include one for Station Pier, Port Melbourne, where a temporary post office was to have been opened. Due to circumstances beyond the control of the apartment (sic) this office was not opened, but to keep faith with philatelists who had supplied covers for cancellation, the postmarker was allocated to the Philatelic Bureau and was applied to philatelic covers. The postmark is sought by collectors as a "ghost" cancel as being from an office that never existed.

Postmarks from non-existent post offices must be pretty close to the ultimate collecting challenge.



Frimerkjasafnarar!

Ian Cutter

This is a pretty bland postcard, which at first sight appears to have little to offer. However, there is something of interest on each side, and it well illustrates the power of web-based search engines to flesh out even the barest skeleton of information.

Apart from the address, the front has three different Andorran stamps and two datestamps.



The stamps show the name of the country as Andorre. The datestamps are unusual in giving the name of the country as being different from the name on the stamps. It is not “Andorre”, or even the Spanish “Andorra”, but “Vallees d’Andorre”.

When Andorra first issued stamps in its own name in 1932, the datestamps issued at this time used the country name Andorre, but this was for only a few months before being replaced by the official French name Vallees d'Andorre (After 1979 it became the "Principat d'Andorra".)

The stamps were cancelled at Encamp, a town of about 10,000 people located near the centre of the country.

This particular hexagonal type of datestamp was used at Encamp from around March 1932 to the end of 1966, although early examples in this period used a two-digit year.

Further information can be obtained by looking up the [Andorran Philatelic Study Circle](#).

On the other side of the postcard we have the cachet of the "TRIAGE" INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE CLUB'. Thinking that this might have been a postmark exchange group, I looked it up on the web.

Having been accustomed to Google searches producing squillions of matches, I was taken aback to find only one in this case. [Admittedly it did take only 0.14 seconds to find this pretty obscure reference.]

The entry started off promisingly enough, with "Triage international exchange club" but then continued...

Frimerkjasafnarar! – Tryggið ykkur sambönd um viðá veröld með því að gerast meðlimir í Triage-klúbbum.

Sendið mér nafn og heimilisfang, stöðu og uingetningu um áhugamál, og eg mun senda yður endurgjalslaust og án skulbindingar af yðar hálfu, sams konar upplýsingar um 195 Trimerkjasafnara í 25 löndum. Skriðið greinilega, á ensku, frönsku, eða Þýzku.

Not at all helpful!

What I was reading was a classified advertisement in the issue of *Dagur* for 3 July 1951. (*Dagur* was a rural agrarian newspaper of Iceland, which is no longer published.)

However, printing and enlarging enabled a fair copy to be typed up, with the insertion of the appropriate Icelandic letters not present on the normal keyboard.

The resulting text was then processed with several on-line translators and dictionaries to yield the following....

Stamp collectors! - Ensure you relationships around the world by becoming a member for triage-club.

Send me your name and address, status and uingetningu [=list?] of interests, and I will send you endurgjalslaust [= free response?] and without any obligation on your part, identical information about 195 stamp-collectors in 25 countries. Write clearly, in English, French, or German.

I make no claim of accuracy, but it does seem to relate to some philatelic exchange group – whether commercial or as a hobby I can't tell. Whichever, it seems a worthy activity.

At the very end of the process it occurred to me that I should have Googled the name of the writer himself, but when I did so the search revealed nothing further.

I suppose that it would not be necessary for the members of this group to use a special cachet – this example does come from head office, so to speak –but they may have chosen to do so.

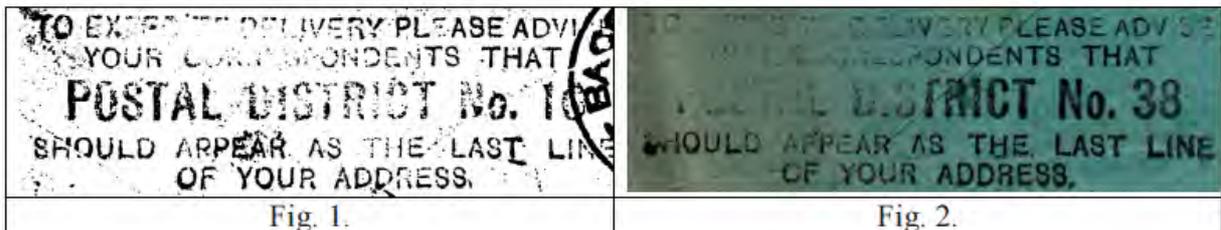
Has anybody else come across TRIAGE?

Melbourne Postal Districts

Colin Salt

An alpha/numeric numbering system for postal districts was in operation in Melbourne from 1 January 1928 - brief details can be found in the British Society of Australian Philately Bulletin, article 1879, Volume 51, Number 2, April 1996. This continued until the introduction of the postcode system. Shortly after this was published I acquired a cover with a backstamp dated 1922 giving referring to an earlier numbering system - see fig. 1. This was the subject of Query 498 in the Bulletin for August 1996 - Volume 51, Number 4.

I subsequently received a note via the Editor who had been advised by David Collyer that research was ongoing into the probability of an earlier numbering system. There the matter rested until a couple of months ago when I came across another example of this style of marking - see fig. 2.



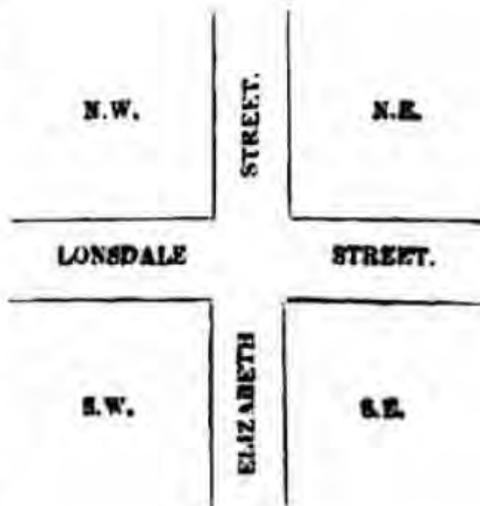
A search of the newspaper files, particularly The Argus (Melbourne) at <http://trove.nla.gov.au> revealed details of this scheme. But also to my surprise information about an earlier attempt to introduce subdivision into the Melbourne central area in 1908/9, the precise date is not known.

"MELBOURNE, S.W."

NEW POSTAL SUBDIVISION.

Following upon a suggestion lately made in the House of Representatives by Dr. Maloney (V.), the deputy Postmaster-General for Victoria (Mr. C. E. Bright) has submitted to the Postmaster-General (Mr. Thomas) a report in favour of dividing Melbourne into four postal districts. The districts will be north-east, north-west, south-west, and south-east, and will be divided from each other by Lonsdale and Elizabeth streets. The boundaries of the districts will thus be:—North-east, Elizabeth, Victoria, Spring, and Lonsdale streets; north-west, Elizabeth, Victoria, Spencer, and Lonsdale streets; south-west, Elizabeth, Lonsdale, Spencer, and Flinders streets; south-east, Elizabeth, Lonsdale, Spring, and Flinders streets. The public are requested to add to addresses of letters for the city the initial letters, "S.W.," "N.E.," "N.W.," or "S.E.," denoting the district. By this means it is expected that the sorting and delivery of mails will be expedited, but of course the scheme entails the full co-operation of the public to ensure its success.

This extract from The Argus of Monday 14 December 1908 outlines the scheme and the map below is taken from The Argus of Saturday 27 February 1909.



From the article which appeared on 27th February 1909 it is clear that the scheme was in operation by that time.

The sub-heading reads "PUBLIC UNRESPONSIVE" it goes on to say "The public are not co-operating with the postal authorities in the endeavour to introduce postal districts in Melbourne. Apparently business people are of opinion that the innovation is simply a departmental arrangement designed to facilitate the work of the sorting-room. Yet postal officials state that the general adoption of the system would be a very real advantage to the public as it would serve to obviate certain delays which, under the old method are unavoidable."

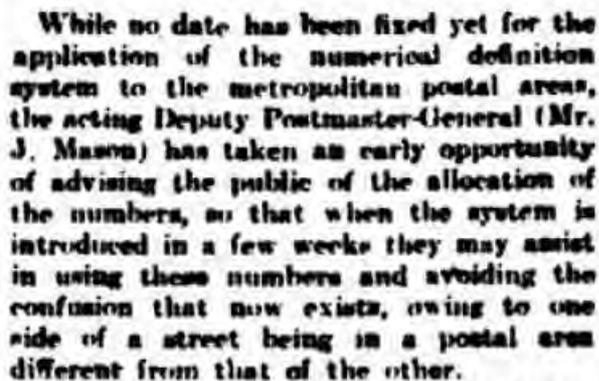
"Many delays for instance are traceable to insufficiently addressed envelopes. A number of people, who are unacquainted with the initials of citizens with whom they desire to correspond, address their letters somewhat as follows: -

*"—Brown, Esq.,
Collins Street,
City"*

"When such a missive reaches the sorting-room, the despatching officers are confronted with the question, "Which Brown? One sorter knows a Mr. Brown, of Collins Street East; another is acquainted with a gentleman of the same name whose office is at the Spencer Street end of the thoroughfare. Hence the letter has to take its chance of being delivered on the first round or of being delayed. Here is a case in which, it is pointed out, the addition by the addressee of the initials "S.E." or "S.W." would ensure the early and accurate delivery of the letter"

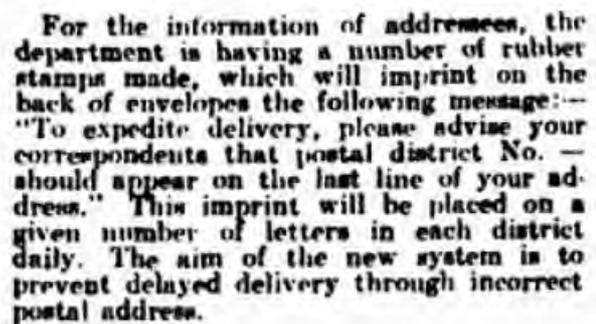
I have not found any later reference to this scheme, but a search of my Melbourne covers for 1909, 1910 and 1911 did not reveal use of the district initials Can anyone show an example?

The Argus of Friday 3rd November 1922 reports the imminent introduction of a new system of numbered postal districts. (Figs 3 and 4) Included in the report are details of handstamps of the type shown in figs. 1 and 2.



While no date has been fixed yet for the application of the numerical definition system to the metropolitan postal areas, the acting Deputy Postmaster-General (Mr. J. Mason) has taken an early opportunity of advising the public of the allocation of the numbers, so that when the system is introduced in a few weeks they may assist in using these numbers and avoiding the confusion that now exists, owing to one side of a street being in a postal area different from that of the other.

Fig. 3.



For the information of addressees, the department is having a number of rubber stamps made, which will imprint on the back of envelopes the following message:— "To expedite delivery, please advise your correspondents that postal district No. — should appear on the last line of your address." This imprint will be placed on a given number of letters in each district daily. The aim of the new system is to prevent delayed delivery through incorrect postal address.

Fig. 4.

The extract shown in fig.4 goes on to give details of the individual district numbers which have been extracted. See Appendix 1. Details are also given of the principal streets where confusion might arise.

The scheme was introduced on Thursday 9th November 1922 and a further lengthy article appeared in The Argus drawing attention to the benefits the new system.

I cannot trace any further reference to the scheme, but clearly the lack of surviving covers bearing the "To expedite delivery...." handstamp suggests that it was not in operation for any length of time.

Reports of other covers with this marking would be welcome, along with any details of how long the scheme continued.

APPENDIX 1

Abbotsford	34	Caulfield East	16	Glen Iris	16	Parkville	41
Albert Park	6	Cheltenham	54	Half Moon Bay	12	Pascoe Vale	43
Alphington	19	City Road	6	Hampton	12	Pt. Melbourne	5
Armadale	15	Clifton Hill	33	Hawksbury	13	Prahran	8
Ascot Vale	45	Collingwood	35	Heidelberg	17	Preston	48
Auburn	20	Coburg	43	Hotham Hill	40	Regent	48
Balaclava	7	Cremorne	25	Ivanhoe	20	Reservoir	48
Balwyn	28	Darling	16	Kensington	44	Richmond	25
Bentleigh	52	Deepline	28	Kew	26	Ripponlea	7
Black Rock	12	Elsternwick	9	Kooyong	16	Sandringham	12
Box Hill	30	Elwood	9	Malvern	16	Sth Melbourne	6
Braybrook	21	Essendon	47	Maribyrnong	45	South Yarra	13
Brighton	11	Fairfield	18	Middle Park	6	Spotswood	51
Brunswick	42	Fitzroy	36	Mont Albert	29	St. Kilda	7
Burnley	25	Fitzroy North	37	Moonee Ponds	46	Surrey Hills	29
Camberwell	27	Flemington	44	Moonee Vale	42	Thornbury	32
Canterbury	28	Footscray	27	Murrumbeena	50	Toorak	14
Carlton	38	Gardenvale	9	Newport	28	Wattletree Road	16
Carlton North	39	Gardenvale West	9	Northcote	32	Williamstown	31
Carnegie	10	Gardiner	16	Nth Melbourne	40	Windsor	8
Caulfield	10	Glenhuntly	10	Oakleigh	49	Yarraville	22

Notes.

1. Just before the table appears in the article, the text says "Mr Mason (Deputy Postmaster- General) states that the following numbers have been allotted to the principal postal areas" The implication of this comment is that there are other postal areas with numbers which are not listed.

2. The numbers in sequence run to 54 but no details are given for 1, 2, 3 and 4 which may be for the central Melbourne area. Several adjoining areas have the same number; e.g. Northcote and Thornbury are both 32.

In Response to Mangapuaka – My Brief Period as the Expert

Neville Solly writes:

RE AJP 122 Dec 12 Pg19 " Mangapuaka"

Postcard divided backs (post office front) were not permitted through the post before 1905

If the JA 14 date is correct the only years possible for this card is 1906 or 1907.

Tony Lyon writes:

Circular 1 July 1903

The "divided front" postcard became allowed for inland transmission: "Post-cards addressed to places with the colony may now be passed bearing the address and the communication on the front of the card". (Jackson 1984: 11).¹ 1905 was when the divided front was permitted for transmission to Australia (Circular 1 Feb. 1905 & Supplement No. 25 Jan. 1905. Jackson 1984: 12).

¹ Jackson, Alan. 1984. *New Zealand Postcards: Rates & Regulations to 1939*. Auckland: Postal History Society of New Zealand Inc.

Hand-Held Date Stamps

Co-ordinated by George Vearing

Every so often a mail marking appears cancelling a postage stamp. This one was sent to me by John Young and I have also seen a copy of it some time ago and now as when I first saw one I wondered at what post office it was used at as that one had no return address on the envelope.

The return address on the envelope was from East Kew but I do not think that it was posted there. Does anyone have any idea where it may have been posted and where would it fit into a postmark collection?

This edition features mostly postmarks from Victoria and it would be very beneficial if more postmarks from other states were included. Best way to send them is by email and I can produce them from there.



Email address is on the inside cover of this magazine.

Many thanks to Richard Peck, Ian Cutter, Frank, Simon Alsop and John Young for their contributions to this column.

N.S.W.

S.A.

W.A.



VIC:—Earlier Datestamps—BENALLA (different dateline)(119/27), GREENVALE (96/34), ELMORE (102/28), GLADSTONE PARK (116/28), KYABRAM (119/28), LANCEFIELD PAID (93/36), MT. EVELYN (104/31). MURCHISON (120/28), POINT LONSDALE (104/31) SHEPPARTON EAST (96/36).



BARNAWARTHA



VIC. (CONT)



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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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FDC from Belgium's -10% issue of 20 May 1946



The Belgian government, on the 16 May 1946 in Service Note 20, stated that the three values of stamp shown on the above envelope should be surcharged -10% rather than, as the UPU laid down, show the new value. This was as there were five days between the announcement of the surcharging and its commencement. As all local postmasters were to effect the surcharging, -10% hand stamps would be obtainable locally, whereas to arrange new values would have been high impossible. In practice, many domestic type movable font type sets were used to carry out the Government's wishes.

Before Belgium's 1944 liberation from German occupation, two types of definitive stamps were circulating, Poortman (on the letter), which were issued in 1936 and ceased printing in 1943, and 'open shoulder' effigy stamps of King Leopold III.

With Liberation, J. Malvaux & Co, who printed the latter stamps, added a V + crown to the stamps, and Waterlow and Sons in London printed stamps showing the Belgian Lion in large format with a V (for victory).

By May 1946, Waterlow printings were obsolescent as were Poortman stamps and the Leopold effigy without the V + crown. Thus, 99% of stamps being printed and available to surcharge -10% were the current series of Leopold with V + crown.

Official records give the following quantities of Poortman stamps existing at Brussels GPO on 20 May: 1⁵⁰ Fr = 6, 2Fr = 35 & 5 Fr = 3. Hence the cover shown, while philatelic, cannot be more than one of three, is rare indeed. Postage was 1³⁵ Fr and registration 3¹⁵ Fr (Stamps could not be surcharged 'per favour')



Postage was 1³⁵ Fr and registration 3¹⁵ Fr (Stamps could not be surcharged 'per favour')

Obsolescent issues discussed above (reduced).

This cover will be part of my display at **Melbourne2013**

Michael Barden