



Capital Philately



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Journal of the Philatelic Society of Canberra



The Philatelic Society of Canberra
(Founded 1932)

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Capital Philately

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Editorial

Ten years ago the Council of the Philatelic Society of Canberra discussed the methods of celebrating the 50th birthday of the Society. It was decided that the Society would organize a Convention and that a practice first attempt would be mounted in 1980. Now ten years later we have just completed the fifth biennial event.

And what a success it was. Not only crowds at the dealers and crowds around the displays but also crowds at the talks which has not always been the case. By far the most successful meeting was that of the National Association for Philatelic Exhibitors (NAPE) at which there was standing room only. It actually met twice such was the amount of discussion.

This is clearly one of the brightest ideas in a long time and we have to thank Gary Watson, with his collector's hat firmly on, for putting in the time and effort to get the association up and running. If you are a judge, an aspiring judge, an exhibitor, or a potential exhibitor then you should not hesitate to join (see the Journal Review on p.79).

The exhibits section of the Convention was once again very strong with many first time exhibitors trying their luck and doing very well. The Postal Stationery Class not only attracted a healthy number of entries but also some very classy material. Cinderellas disappointed in only having two entries but the material and presentation was excellent. With the introduction of Fiscals and Revenues as an experimental Class at World level we can expect this area of collecting to take off and those collectors who got in early amongst the scarce but unwanted material will never have the smiles erased from their faces!

By the time this is published the first Australian National Philatelic exhibition confined to one class, **Aeropex 88** will be all over. The amazing thing about **Aeropex** is that it attracted over 80 entries. A large number are collectors new to aerophilately and Canberra has several entries. Aerophilately will be all the better for **Aeropex**, new collectors, new ideas and new themes. If you don't have an interest in aerophilately then I suggest you think again.

While some are switched on by collecting items carried on pioneer flights (often carried to defray the cost of the experiment), others are not, feeling that they are manufactured items. To this latter group may I suggest that the introduction of the aeroplane in the last sixty years to provide scheduled mail services is an area of collecting that has hardly been touched. There is an awful lot of philately out there after the first flight covers have been forgotten. And it's inexpensive although the research is hard. How about at least ten aerophilately exhibits from the ACT at the national exhibition **Austamp 90** at Canberra. Give it a go!

Finally, to revert to the Convention; to have the exhibition dismantled and a sorting office resurrected in its place in 90 minutes must set some or record. The thanks are due to the many members of the Society, new and old, who approach the job so professionally. And there is no substitute for practice - a biennial Convention with an associated exhibition has really put us on the philatelic map. To all concerned, well done.

NSW POSTAL STATIONERY - SPECIMEN OVERPRINTS

D.I. Smith & E.C. Druce

(continued from vol.6, no.2)

In general, the use of capital letter or lower case overprints corresponds to the broad pattern given by Butler. These are:

1870-86	Capitals	1892-94	Capitals
1886-92	Lower Case	1894-1903	Lower Case

It should be noted that several of the new types are large in size and would not be suitable for use on postage stamps.

Pictorial Cards

During 1897 and 1898 a series of delightfully illustrated pictorial cards were issued. These were in three differing styles printed on the blank side of the one penny post cards designated by Higgins and Gage as post card 19. These are further classified as types 19a, 19b and 19c. These have headings on the reverse, respectively, 'Greetings from ...', 'With Christmas Greetings' and 'New Year Greetings'. Higgins and Gage list, for each style of greeting, eighteen differing views; the latter are numbered from 1 to 18. Many combinations of these 1897 pictorial postcards are known overprinted 'specimen' on the address side although no examples have been reported for 19a. All of the HG type 19b and c specimen cards have the same form of overprint and all are in a blue-grey shade. The cards so known are given in Table 3, the description of the view shown follows the notation in Higgins and Gage.

The 1898 pictorial penny halfpenny cards (HG 23) have similar views and format to HG 19 but only 'With Christmas Greetings' and 'With New Year Greetings' are known. These are Higgins and Gage 23a and 23b respectively. Table 3 lists all of these that are known with specimen overprints. The form of the overprint is identical to that used for HG types 19a, b and c, except that, in all cases, the overprint is red.

A further complication is that the various views are known in variety of colours; no attempt has been made to sub-divide these in Table 3. Much of this information was made available by Gary Watson. Material from the first Australia Post archival sale is illustrated in the 'Gary Watson' auction catalogue for 14 September 1987.

Table 2

Types of Specimen and dates of overprints
used on NSW posted stationery

Type			Dates- Stamps	Dates- Postal Stationery
3a	Caps, serif	13.5 x 1.75mm	1881	1870-80
4	Caps, serif	13.25 x 1.75mm	1892	1892
7	Caps, sans serif, diagonal	19.0 x 2mm	1865-70	1871
12a	Caps, sans serif	15.0 x 2.0mm	1890*	1888
14	Lower case, serif	10.5mm	1877	1876
15	Lower case, serif	11.5mm	1895-7	1884-88
16	Lower case, serif	13.0mm	1890-91	1880-88
16a	Lower case, serif	13.5mm	1890-91	1891
17	Lower case, serif	13.5mm	1887-96	1894
19	Lower case, serif	16.0mm	1897	1897- 1900's

* from Butler but only on postal stationery

New Types

20	Caps, serif (diagonal)	16.5 x 2.0mm	Not Known	1883
21	Caps, sans serif	12.5 x 1.75mm	Not Known	1888-89
22	Lower case, serif, (diagonal)	17.0mm	Not Known	1890-92
23	Caps, serif	64 x 4.5mm	Not Known	1897-98



From top to bottom Types 16, 17, 19

Publications of The Royal Philatelic Society of Victoria

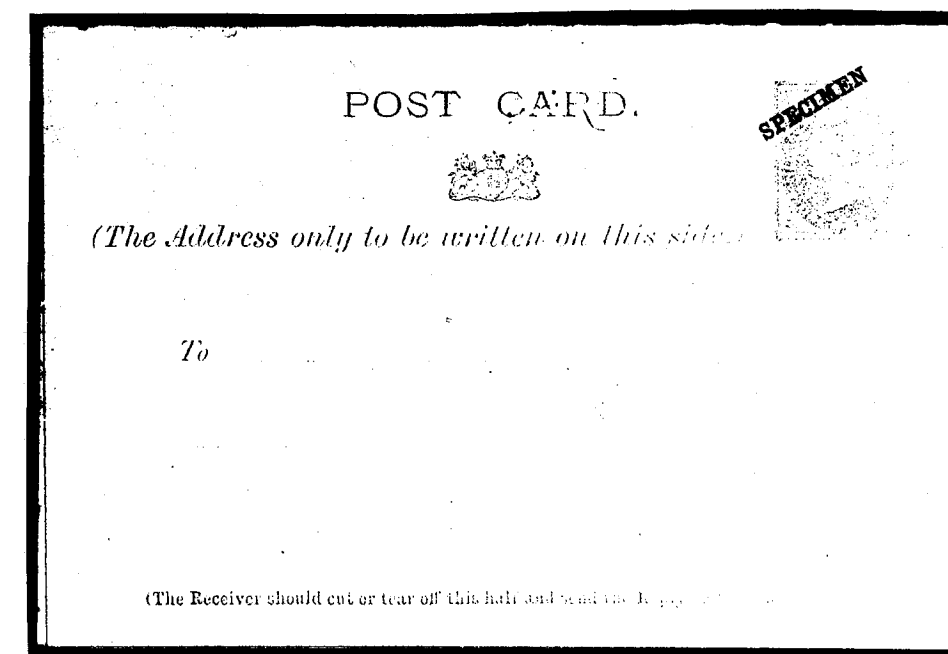
The Postal History of the Australian Army During World War 2 (P. Collas)	\$50.00
The Postal History of Internees and Prisoners of War in Australia During World War 2 (P. Collas)	\$15.00
Australian Numeral Cancellations. A Compendium (H.M. Campbell)	\$30.00
Queensland Cancellations & Other Postal Markings 1860-1913 (H.M. Campbell)	\$25.00
South Australia. The Long Stamps 1902-1912 (J.R.W. Purves)	\$25.00
The Pictorial Stamps of Tasmania 1899-1912 (K. Lancaster)	\$40.00
Tasmania: The Postal History & Postal Markings, Part 1 (Campbell, Purves & Viney). 1984 Reprint	\$30.00
The Postal History & Postal Markings, Part II (O. Ingles, Ed.)	\$30.00
Set of 2 ordered together	\$50.00
Victoria: The Postal History of the Port Phillip District (J.R.W. Purves)	\$15.00
The "Registered" and "Too Late" Stamps 1854-1858 (J.R.W. Purves)	\$20.00
The "Butterfly" and "Barred Oval" Cancellations 1850-1855 (J.R.W. Purves)	\$10.00
Western Australia: The 4d Lithograph 1854-1864 (B. Pope)	\$15.00
Commonwealth of Australia Cumulative Index to Source material (W.M. Holbeach)	\$7.50
J.R.W. Purves, R.D.P., F.R.P.S.L. A Philatelic Bibliography (G.N. Kellow)	\$7.50
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Type 20

Table 3

Specimen Pictorial Post Cards 1897 & 1898

1d	1897	HG 19a 'Greetings from ...'	No specimens known†
1d	1897	HG 19b 'With Christmas Greetings' on views no's 4,5,7,9,10 & 13,	all blue-grey
1d	1897	HG 19c 'With New Year Greetings' on views no's 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,11,12,14 & 18,	all blue-grey
1.5d	1898	HG 23a 'With Christmas Greetings', on views no's 1,2,3,4,6,7,8,9 & 10,	all red
1.5d	1898	HG 23b 'With New Year Greetings' on views no's 1,2,3,4*,6,7*,8,9 & 10*,	all red

*Known cancelled with triple-oval NSW, without specimen;
†HG19a is known with triple-oval NSW on 1,3,4,5,6 & 11

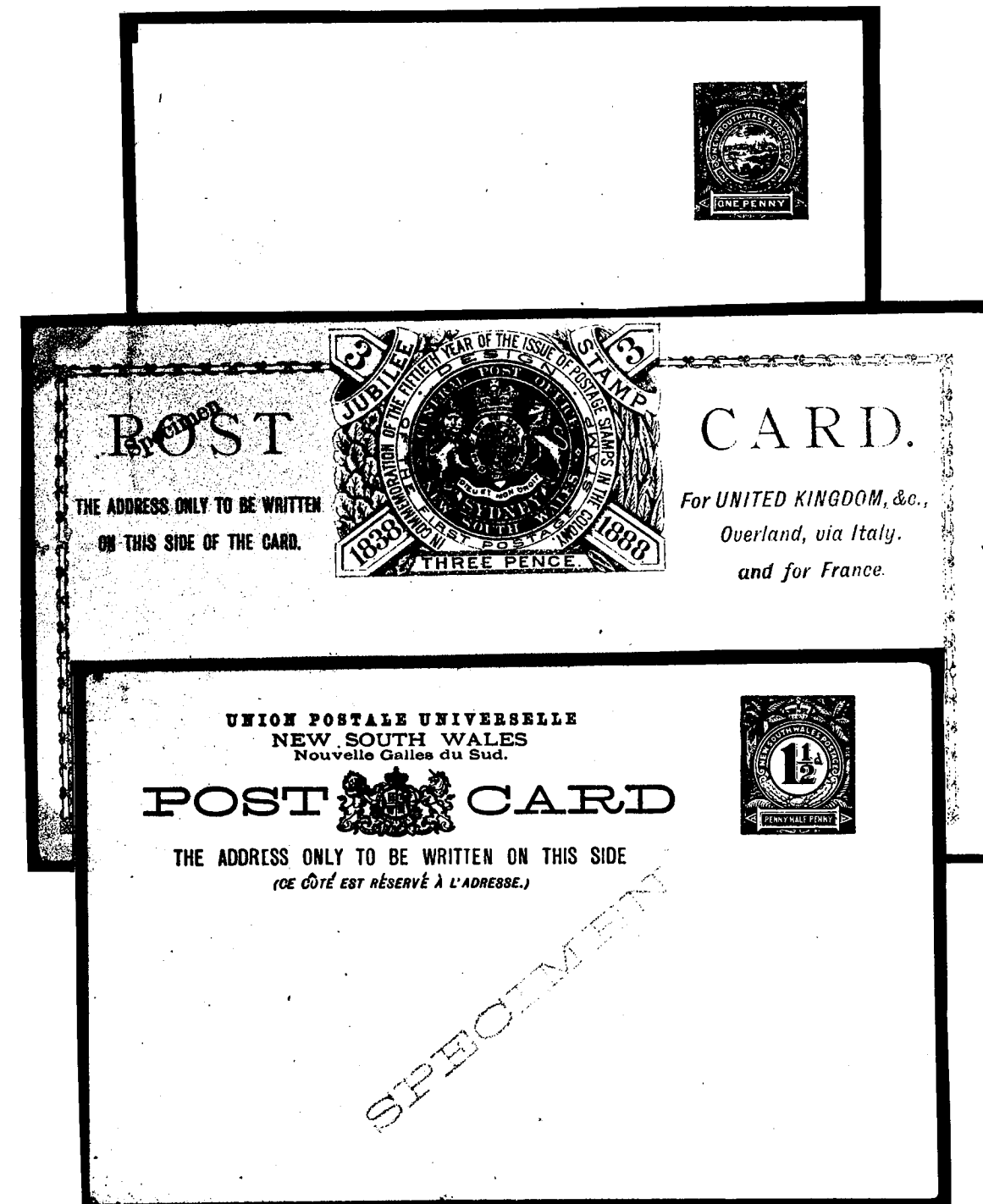
O.S. Specimens

The use, in New South Wales, of stamps and postal stationery marked OS for official correspondence ceased in January, 1895. However, the **Government Gazette** of July 22, 1895 announced the sale to the public of surplus OS stamps together with 1d postcards. The next steps in this public sale of obsolete issues are described in Bassett Hull, 1911 (p.323).

'However, this supply did not contain sufficient varieties to meet the demands of collectors, who clamoured for the obsolete types, and especially with red overprints. With a desire to meet this demand, the Department determined to reprint such varieties as were not then in stock and furnish them to collectors. The face value of the complete set was nearly 6 pounds, and as this price would be beyond the reach of most collectors, and as the audit regulations forbade the sale of uncanceled stamps, at less than face value, it was decided to obliterate the dates with an undated cancelling mark, consisting of the letters NSW in three concentric ovals, and to sell the sets at 2 pounds each. One thousand sets were printed, and all were cancelled. Nine hundred sets bore the above-mentioned obliteration, and 100 were cancelled with GPO in three concentric circles for gratis distribution to other postal administrations'.

The availability of the 2 pound sets, with oval overprints, was announced in the **Gazette** of 15 August 1985. This form of cancellation caused a 'storm of indignation ... from the philatelic journals'. Only 158 of the 900 NSW overprints were sold and 50 of the official GPO sets distributed. The Gazette announced, on 18 March 1986, that the sale of these sets would be discontinued. The remaining NSW oval sets were destroyed and the GPO sets additionally cancelled 'specimen'. The list of OS NSW postal stationery that were included in these sets is given in Appendix S of Bassett-Hull. This information is incorporated in Table 4. Table 4 also gives the Higgins and Gage reference number and year of issue. The latter often differs from that given in Bassett-Hull, although it is almost certain the Bassett-Hull dates are correct.

Following the description in Bassett-Hull, there should be three different styles for these sets of OS postal stationery. They can be cancelled with a triple oval NSW, a triple oval GPO or an oval GPO with a specimen



From top to bottom Types 21, 22, 23

Table 4

OS Postal Stationery
For presentation and sale to collectors

H&G No	and Date	Date of Issue	NSW (Bassett-Hull, Ovals 1911)	GPO Ovals	GPO Ovals & Specimen	NSW Oval & Specimen
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Post Cards

1d	1877	D1	1 Jan 1880			
1d	1887	D2	31 Mar 1887		Type 16	
1d	1888	D3/3a	31 Jan 1889		Type 16	Type 16
1d	1890	D4/4a	31 Jan 1890			Type 16*

*with NSW ovals and GPO ovals on reverse

Envelopes

1d	1883	DB1/1a	31 Aug 1880
2d	1883	DB2	7 May 1882
1d	1888	DB4/4a	30 Sept 1888
2d	1888	DB5	30 Sept 1888
1d	1883	DB6	7 May 1885
1d	1888	DB 8 or 8a, b,c,d	28 Sept 1888
2d	1888	DB9	31 May 1889
4d	1891	DB13	8 Aug 1892

Registered Envelopes

3d	1888/92	DC 1 or 1a, b,c	26 Sept 1892	Type 16 (on 1b)
6d	1888/92	DC 2 or 2a	24 Oct 1888	Yes
6d	1888/92	DC 3 or a,b	23 May 1889	

overprint. The latter two cases would be relatively uncommon with a maximum of only fifty of each. To complicate this picture, some of these postal stationery items are also known with a triple oval NSW and a specimen overprint. Butler (1967, p. 141) also comments on this situation. The authors have one example which combines a triple oval NSW and specimen and, on the reverse of the card, a triple oval GPO.

Table 4 shows the examples that should exist, those that have been seen are marked. To date, all these specially issued OS postal stationery specimen items are cancelled with type 16. The authors would particularly welcome information on OS postal stationery items that would enable the blanks in Table 2 to be completed. It should be noted however, that these items are also known with specimen overprints that correspond to their initial issue. The type of overprint is shown in Table 1.

Conclusion

The listing of specimen overprints for NSW postal stationery represents a considerable extension to that published by Butler (1967). It is hoped that similar check lists may be forthcoming for the stationery of other Australian States. The only State with readily available information is Western Australia (see the West Australian Study Group publication of 1982). While comparable information for Queensland, South Australia, Victoria and Tasmania would be of considerable interest the numbers of overprint posted stationery items is thought to be less than for New South Wales. The authors would be pleased to receive additional information of specimen postal stationery items care the editor of 'Capital Philately'.

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JOURNAL REVIEW

THE AUSTRALIAN EXHIBITOR, Journal of the National Association for Philatelic Exhibitors, volume 1, number 1 edited by Ross Duberal

The first issue of this journal-with-a-difference was released in February by the National Association for Philatelic Exhibitors. **The Australian Exhibitor** is aimed at collectors, dealers and judges in fact at anybody interested in the competitive aspects of organised philately. This is reflected in the content of the magazine. The five feature articles range from instructive pieces to an analysis of exhibiting at State level. Several of the articles contain useful hints for exhibitors at all levels.

"Presenting Your Collection for Exhibitions" is a practical analysis of the basics concerning album pages, mounting techniques and various implements used in the process. The first of a series dealing specifically with displaying Postal Stationery looks at problems associated with showing Aerogrammes. An interesting perspective is given by Ron Lee in an article entitled "Exhibiting & Judging: A Personal View", which compares trends in Australia and the USA.

The major article looks at the question "What Is A Philatelic Cover?" This is a controversial subject and the article is recommended reading for every collector, and especially for judges at all levels. The magazine also contains reviews of a recent exhibitions, with lists of awards, and previews of several 1988 shows. A calendar of events up to 1991 is a useful tool for planning your own exhibiting programme.

In summary, "The Australian Exhibitor" contains a deal of information for those collectors who wish to show their material competitively. Much of this detail is not available elsewhere in the philatelic press. Issues will be published each January, May and September. If you get just one good idea a year from the journal, that will be worth more to you than the cost of membership. Copies of the journal are available only to members of NAPE. Subscription rates are \$A20 in Australia (\$A12, juniors) and \$A30 (overseas). Payment should be sent to The Treasurer, NAPE, 1st floor/397 Little Collins Street, Melbourne 3000.

Gary Watson

THE POSTAL STATIONERY COLUMN - QUALITY! OH QUALITY
B.P. Beston

Quality! oh, Quality. No, I'm not talking about mercy, or Romeo, but about the need for top quality material when collecting and ultimately exhibiting Postal Stationery. A collection never loses marks for spotty cards or dirty postmarks or torn corners, it just doesn't gain any points. This is especially so if the item is of modern vintage.

It is known that some stationery is very rare. You may have the only known copy, albeit that it has a corner missing or is perhaps cut down in size or an additional stamp has been removed. Either way, condition is a relative thing. A few rust spots here and there may not matter in these cases but a completely foxed card or badly stained item just has no place in your collection. Any poor quality stationery should be replaced by better pieces as and when they become available (Figure 1).

Many of you may collect Australian pre-stamped envelopes and good luck to you; it's an interesting and challenging field. Collect the private overprints and special postmarks by all means, but do not neglect copies showing their real postal usage. These are rarely available in quantity or quality. You'll find them occasionally in a dealers box and sometimes at an auction. Just as important are postal stationery items bearing additional stamps covering a rate for which no stationery items existed at the time of use; for example when a one cent stamp is added to make up the 37 cent rate from 1 July 1987 until 37 cent rate items were issued on 26 August 1987. However, they are often roughly opened, and I wonder just how many fine used copies will survive. Judges look forward to seeing modern issues as we know just what a great display can be put together with these issues (Figure 2 & 3).

A walk around Stampex '86 and Cup-pex '87 demonstrated that even pre-war Commonwealth registration envelopes are plentiful and they show a myriad of uses and rates. So pick the good ones. If you must show a card or envelope that is damaged, try to mask the poor part by cutting the page, or hiding it behind another similar card or item (Figure 4 covering a heavy crease). Unfortunately you will need to fold, in most cases, aerogrammes. They may lose a dollar or two in value in that process, but overall it will make a far more

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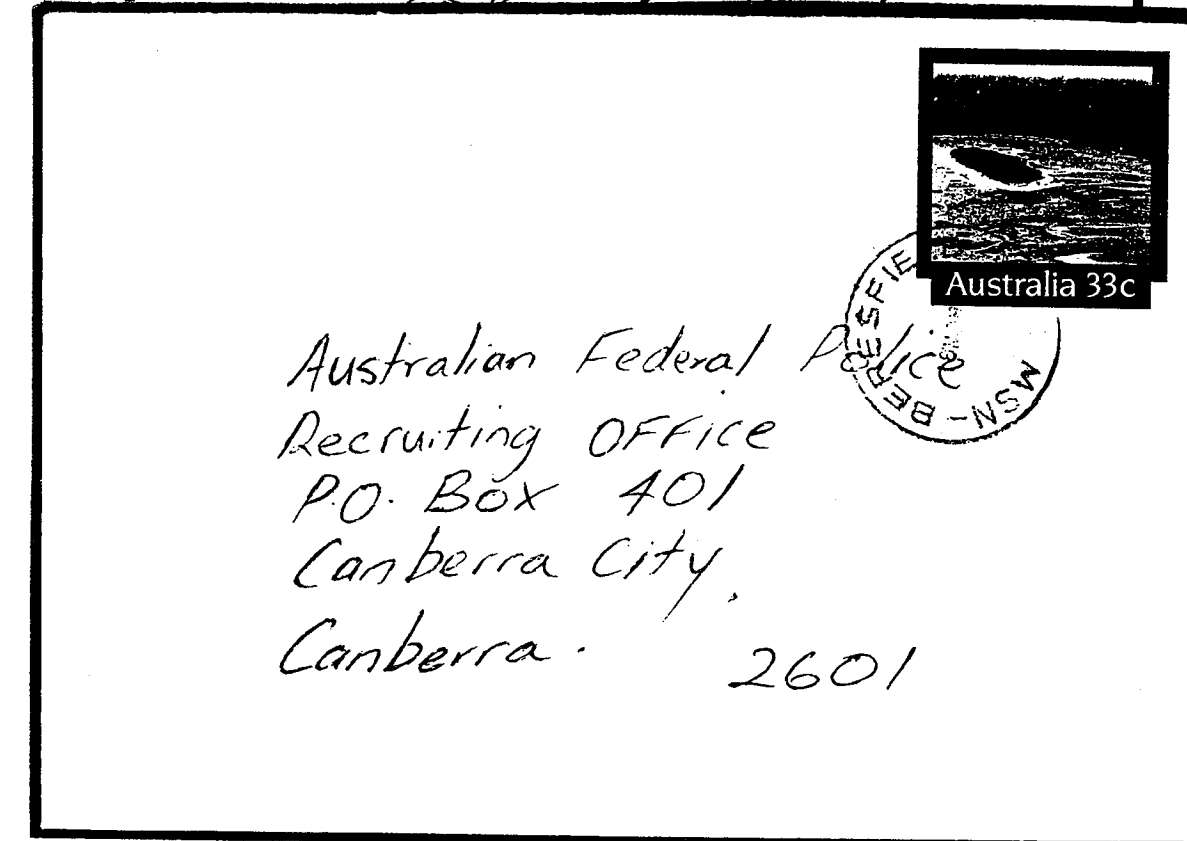
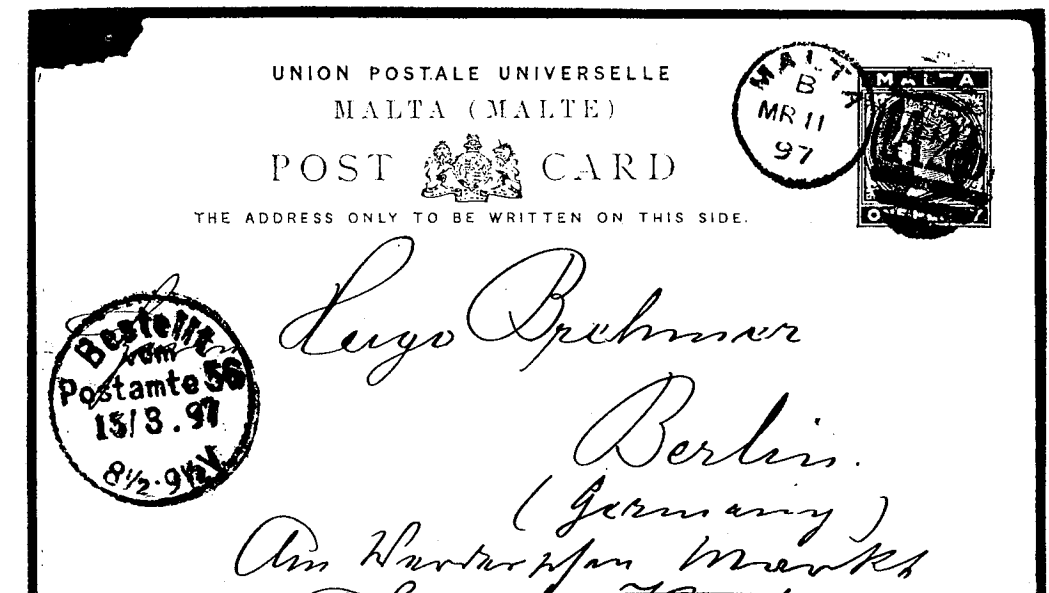
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VALUATIONS

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Figures 1 & 2

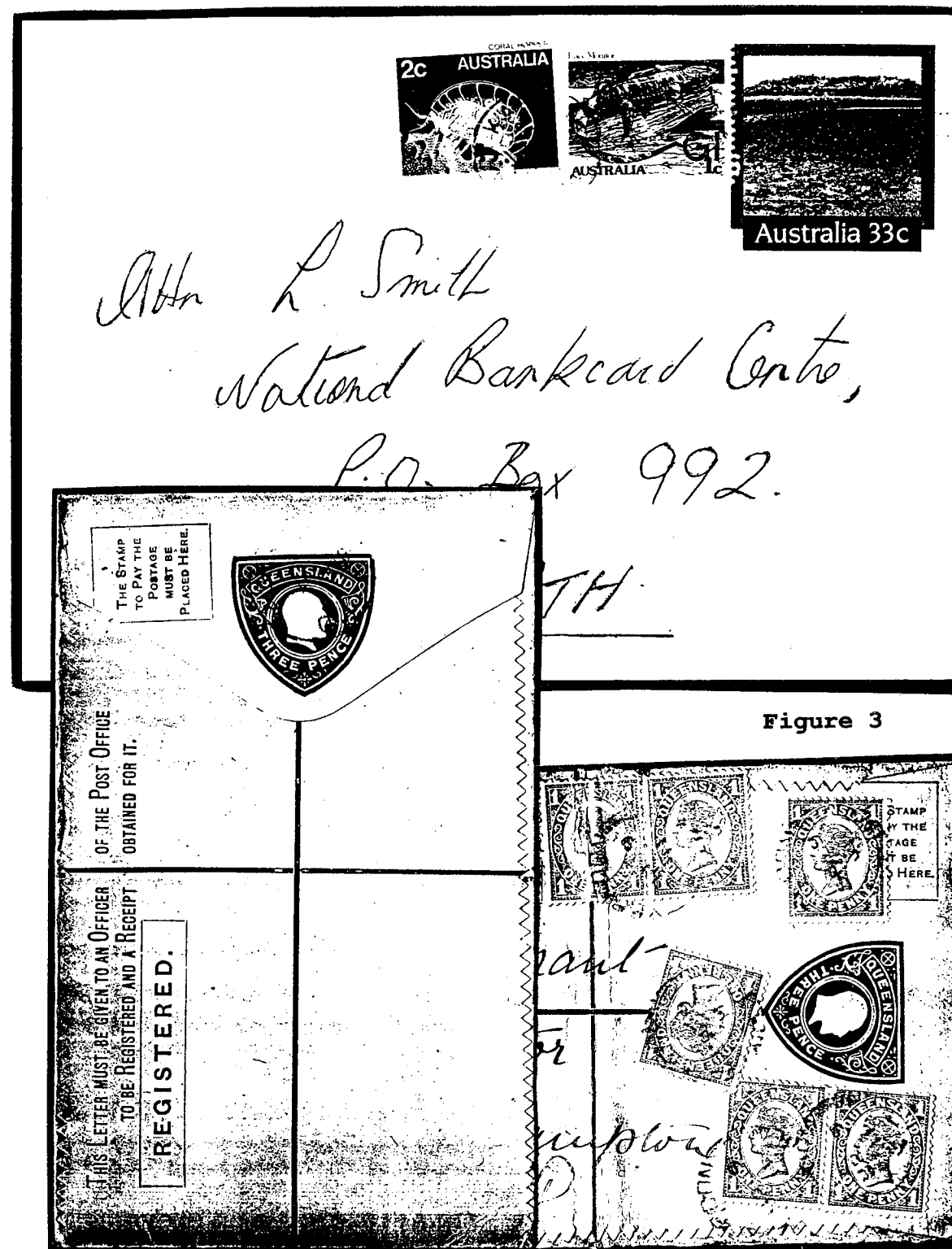
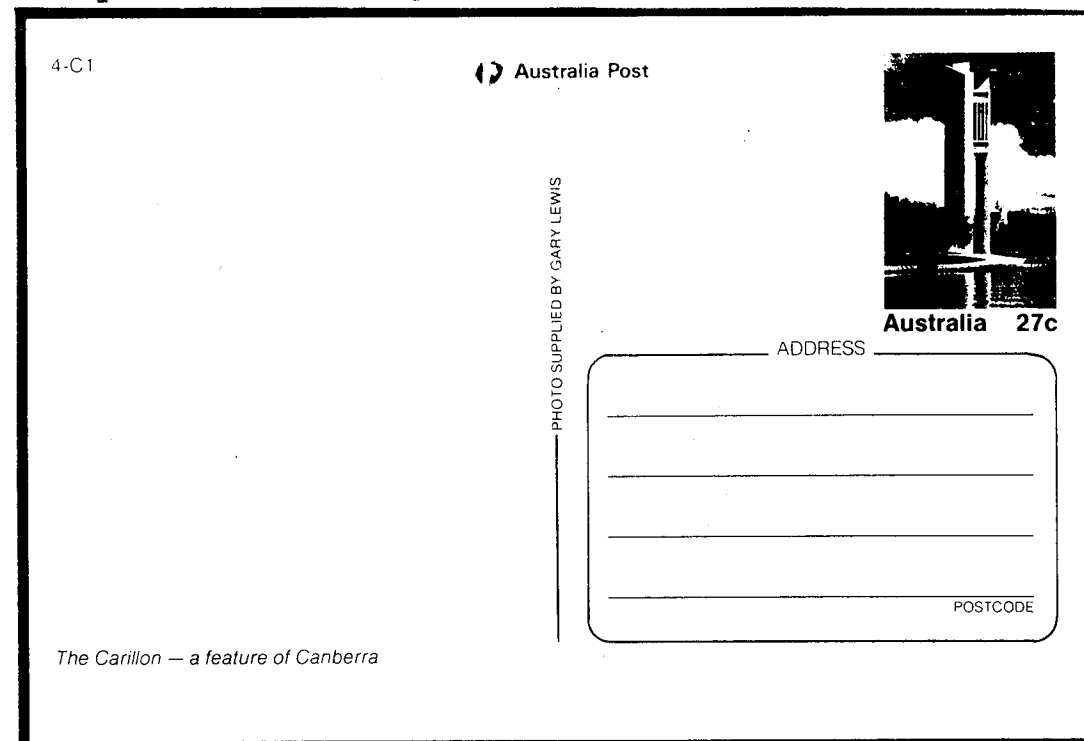


Figure 3

interesting exhibit. Used aerogrammes, especially those that are clean and not ragged and have genuine overseas postal useage are rare. One solution is to post them to philatelic friends overseas. It also saves on postage too. I write such a messy letter, I don't use them, but aerogrammes with typed addresses look nice on a display page.

If some of you have difficulty in understanding the English in my articles, it's because it's not. Not English, that is. It's Queenslish. I'm told on good authority, by a very charming philatelic lady from the southern states that we speak differently up here and the Editor frequently tells me that we lack culture.

A part time collector I met in my office last month was recently bemoaning the demise of the pictorial postcards (Figure 5) and I know a lot of postcard and thematic collectors would like to see them back. I am told that they were not big sellers and when they did sell, for example, at the Gold Coast, Alice Springs and Green Island, the local tourist souvenir suppliers were not too happy. But you just try to find them genuinely used, especially with a commercial or genuine holiday message. So if you haven't got them all, and they are on your wants list, get them now before its too late.



BOOK REVIEW

Mail for the Back of Beyond. John Maddock, Kangaroo Press, Sydney

Book reviews have not been common in **Capital Philately** but this is no ordinary book. It is an important record of the postal services of parts of three states, South Australia, New South Wales and Queensland, but because it has been published as a 'ordinary' paperback it faces the prospect of being unknown to all those postal historians who need it as a reference. It has been successful in penetrating a general audience, it is now into its second edition.

The basic story is one of the development of mail services along such Australian legendary routes as the Birdsville and Strzlecki Tracks. Beginning with the horse mails through the desolate Corner and Channel Country it portrays vividly the change to vehicular mail. The people, the trials and tribulations, the unforgiving country are all dramatically trapped in its 160 pages and innumerable photographs.

The handling of the mails from receipt to delivery, the routes and timings are all there for the postal historian, though not in the form that we are used to seeing. Anyone who is interested in the Maree-Birdsville, Lyndhurst-Innaminka and Broken Hill-Cordillo Downs mail routes should own a copy. Equally anyone who is just interested in the development of Australia's dead heart and the ordinary people who became living legends should make sure a copy is on their bookshelf.

Try and order a copy from you local bookshop and if they cannot oblige then you can obtain a copy from Stanley Gibbons, 343 Little Collins Street, Melbourne for \$12.95. And mention of Stanley Gibbons reminds me that they have a tremendous range of philatelic literature covering all countries, periods and subjects. My bicentennial birthday tip to you is go out and spend \$200 on philatelic literature during 1988 and you will have given yourself the biggest and best bicentennial gift you could wish for. If you do let me know what you bought, and why, and **Capital Philately** will let other readers know all about it.

NATIONAL PHILATELIC CONVENTION 1988

Judy Kennett

The 5th National (Bicentennial) Philatelic Convention was held at the GPO Canberra on 19-21 March 1988, the long weekend of the 1988 Canberra Festival. The Convention was an accredited Bicentennial event.

Once again the venue was the GPO, and sincere thanks are due to Australia Post Canberra/Monaro for making available the Post Office and its facilities for the long weekend. Special thanks are due to Ray Rodda and his staff.

The main feature of the Convention was the State-level philatelic exhibition, that attracted 75 local and interstate entries, including six from Juniors. To these were added thirteen non-competitive entries submitted by the judges and the apprentice judges. The judging panel consisted of:-

Accredited	A.G. Salisbury (Chairman)	D.I. Smith
judges:	E.A. Bodley	A.R. Tippet
	A.J. Campe (Sydney)	M.B. Watson
	E.C. Druce	(Melb.)
	T. Frommer	S.J. Wilson
	W. Roemer (Melb.)	P.A. Wood

Apprentices: P. Barsdell H. Karman
B. Jarrett

This year the Convention Committee offered two additional competitive classes - Postal Stationery and Modern Philately. Both were well patronized. Once again there was a wide diversity of subjects represented in the competitive classes. The following awards were made by the judges :- Vermeil, 12; Silver, 28; Silver-bronze, 20; Bronze, 7; Commended, 5.

The official opening took place at 10.00 am on the Saturday. Mr Lyall Gillespie, a former Canberra City Manager, opened the Convention and spoke about the early days of the post in the Canberra district. The guests afterwards adjourned to the opening reception given by Australia Post.

Some Convention Events

Three meetings of specialist societies were held during the Convention: the Cinderella Stamp Club of Australasia, the Thematic Society of Australia and the Sarawak Specialists' Society/Malaya Study Group. The recently-founded National Association of Philatelic Exhibitors (NAPE) held its inaugural meeting. Talks were given by R Morrison (Conservation and preservation of paper), Ken Sparks (Framas), Ed Druce (Modern Philately), Alan Wells (Philately for young collectors), and Michael Sanig, the Editor of *Stamp News*. The Judges Critique was chaired by Alan Salisbury; afterwards, individual exhibitors had the opportunity to discuss their particular exhibits with a judge.

Edlins of Canberra held a major auction in the GPO on the Saturday evening. Due to late delivery of his catalogues, Wilson Ilbery was not able to hold his planned auction of Cinderella material, but it was displayed, and aroused considerable interest. Alan Wells conducted a junior auction with an upper limit on bidding, well attended by keen young collectors. Three junior exhibitors from local clubs had exhibits mounted in a special display.

The special event for the 1988 Convention was 'Balloon mail'. The Society produced special souvenir covers, and about 600 of these were carried by 32 hot air balloons in Canberra for a 'Balloon Spectacular'. The covers, in marked bags, were dropped from the balloons into a target area which had an Australia Post mail van at its centre. They were then taken to the GPO and postmarked with the Convention postmarker. The postmarker, which featured the Canberra coat of arms, was designed to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the of Canberra by Lady Denman, the wife of the Governor-General, on 12 March 1913.

Other Features

The Convention benefited from the great interest created by the 'Balloon Spectacular' - balloon flights had been taking place early each morning of the preceding week. It gained some visitors from the ranks of those who had cause to view the Australia Post Philatelic Exhibition which had special displays of Bicentennial issues. Once again Australia Post mailed

out invitations for the Philatelic Exhibition and the Convention to all people on their mailing list in Canberra and the surrounding regions, and this brought in extra visitors, who wanted to 'post' their invitations in the special box and take part in the daily draws for prizes donated by Australia Post.

Conclusion

It was estimated that 2500 people passed through the doors on the three days of the Convention, of which about 1000 were children. The dealers were happy with the level of business and the society sold all of its souvenir covers. There was a general atmosphere of people enjoying themselves. Many thanks to all the members of the Society who helped in one way or another. Special thanks to the hard-working members of the Convention Committee for planning and running this Convention.

LIST OF AWARDS AT THE NATIONAL PHILATELIC CONVENTION, 1988

Congratulations to members of the Philatelic Society of Canberra who gained the following awards at the Fifth National Philatelic Convention :-

VERMEIL

J & J. Grant (2), R.N. Gurevitch, I.M. Hay

SILVER

T.G. Cowley, A.S. Davis, I.M. Hay (3),
A.A. Wilson

SILVER-BRONZE

C.M. Bogdan, K.P. Breitkopf, B.S. Parker,
J.E. Parker (junior), J.I. Smith (junior)

BRONZE

R.M. Berriman, I. McMahon

MERIT

B.S. Parker, P.M. Oldham

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The magazine circulates in more than sixty countries worldwide and has earned a reputation for serving the best interests of collectors and the stamp trade. Each month, the magazine carries the most up-to-date report of world-wide new stamp issues, maintained by computer and a worldwide network of correspondents.

Among our regular columnists is Alan Salisbury who writes each month on specialised aspects of Australian Commonwealth philately. We have a monthly feature on Australia Post's archival collection and for the postal stationery collector "Selected Stationery" by Gary Watson.

For the thematic collector, there is our popular feature "The World of Thematics" and for the investment-oriented, two special features every month: "Make Collecting Pay" and "Market Matters" to canvass the widest possible range of investment possibilities.

There are regular news features on happenings in New Zealand, the South Pacific and the rest of the world, monthly reports on auctions and a pictorial feature called "Talkabout" edited by the Crown Agents. There is a monthly feature on "Philatelic Forgers" as well as frequent reports about stamp trade activities.

For the beginner, our monthly "Beginners Start Here" column is essential reading and our long-running "Cinderella Corner" with Bill Hornadge has broken new ground in Cinderella collecting.

The latest philatelic books are reviewed each month and there is a special column for reports of Australian and New Zealand philatelic societies.

Newly-added features include a Postcard Corner and a Coin News section. All these features are supplemented by regular special editorial features on diverse philatelic subjects and the advertisements of leading dealers, auctioneers and postal administrations throughout the world.

If you want to get the utmost out of your hobby, you cannot afford to miss a single edition of "Stamp News" — Australia's brightest philatelic magazine!

For a free, sample copy of "Stamp News", write to the Circulation Manager,

STAMP NEWS

P.O. Box 1410, Dubbo, N.S.W., 2830, Australia.

POSTAL HISTORY COLUMN — FORWARDING AGENTS

E.C. Druce

For most of us the postal service is as near as the nearest letter box or post office and with modern transport that is merely a 'stones throw' away. Not entirely so of course, particularly for some Australians who live beyond the black stump. I remember in 1969 camping in the northern part of the Simpson Desert in the Northern Territory some 200 kilometres from the nearest post office which was at Urandangie in Queensland (since closed).

In order to ensure adequate communication for a team of twelve who were absent from home for about four months we arranged with a fruit and vegetable supplier in Mount Isa to be our forwarding agent. Each week the storeholder would make up our requirements of fresh fruit and vegetables and consign it via a Bush Pilots Airways (now no longer in existence) flight in a light plane to a nearby desert strip. People who wished to write to us did so care of the fruit and vegetable man and he on-forwarded our mail. Similarly we sent our outgoing mail on the same flight, to enter the Australia Post system in Mt Isa. Most of the letters I stamped with a notation that they were carried on this Bush Pilots flight. Strangely I kept none for myself and none were philatelic. However just to show what a small world it is I was offered, and gratefully obtained, an example in the USA!

In this case the firm did not charge for this 'postal' service but did it as a favour in return for a steady (and large!) weekly order. Of course the demand for such forwarding services was considerably greater a century or two ago, particularly in developing countries where the postal infrastructure was poorly developed. Even in cases where the postal service was developed, rapid changes in population location produced a demand for such services. The Victorian gold rush is an example.

The greatest student of forwarding agents is Kenneth Rowe, a Canadian, who wrote a book on the subject. **The Forwarding Agents** is now in its second edition and contains a wealth of information including a world-wide catalogue of types of handstamps. Kenneth Rowe defines a Forwarding Agent as:

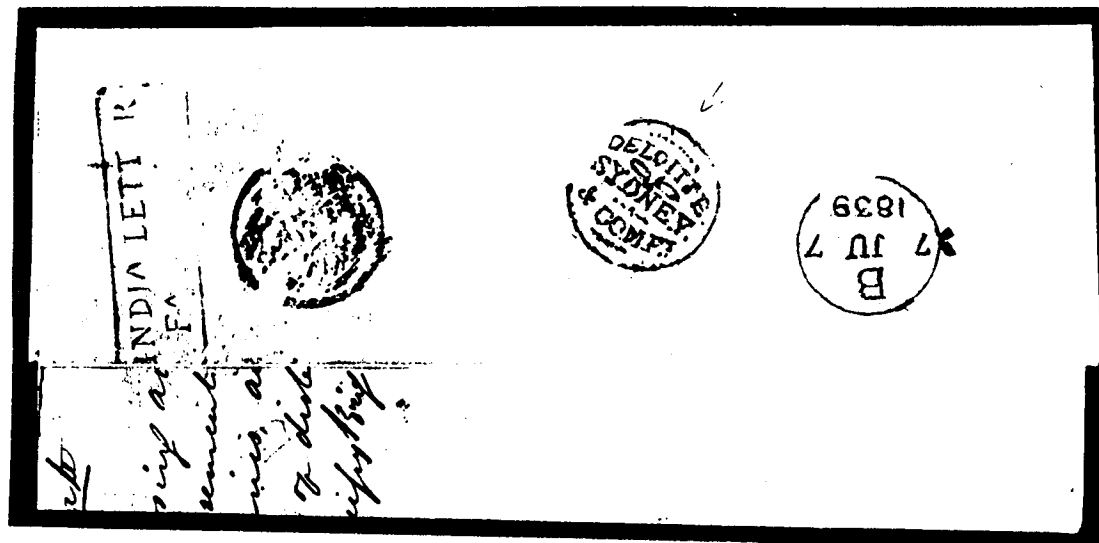


Figure 1

'A person, or firm, who undertakes to see that the goods or correspondence of another are transported without himself acting as the carrier.'

Some of the earliest forwarding agents markings are from continental Europe in the early 1600's. The development of commercial relations between Europe and North America in the 1700's and 1800's saw a plethora of Forwarding Agents opening for business, often in the coffee houses which played such an important role in the birth of many postal services.

While the conditions in Australia, particularly prior to the States joining the UPU in 1891, were extremely favourable to the functioning of forwarding agents, very few are known. Although many may have existed only a small number apparently used handstamps or marked covers

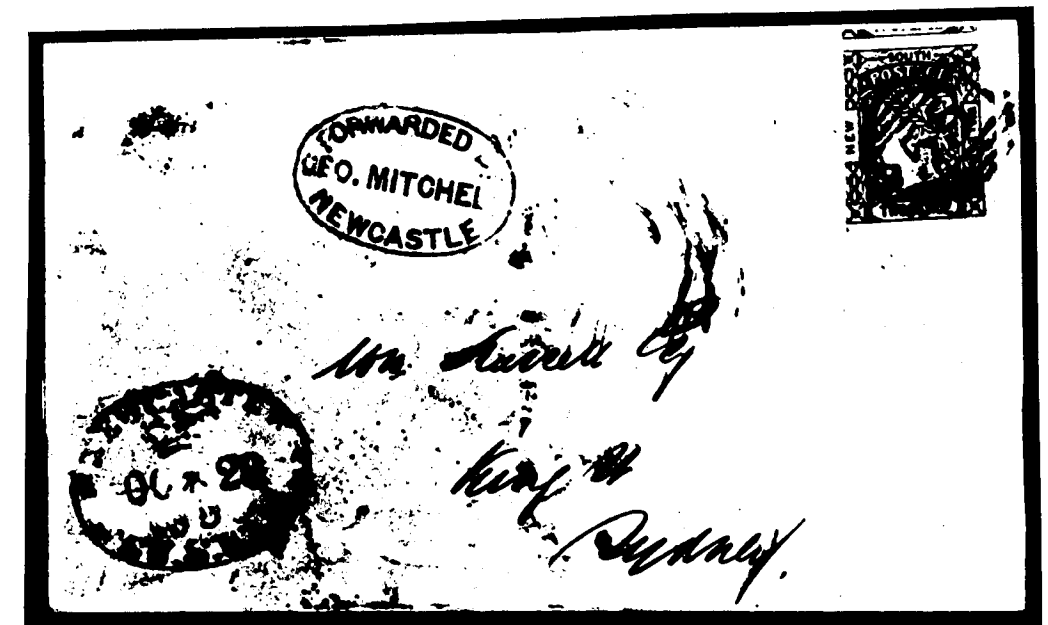


Figure 2

in manuscript which is the usual manner in which the activity of a forwarding agent can be deduced. In Rowe's first edition he only records two Australian forwarding agents, both in Melbourne. Although the list is expanded in the latest edition no agents are recorded in Sydney. This is indeed surprising because Sydney was not only the prime city but also the commercial centre of Australia and the South Pacific, especially in the first half of the nineteenth century.

The first record of a Sydney based Forwarding Agent was published by H. L. Chisholm in **Philately from Australia** volume 17, numbers 2,3 and 4, (1965). This article is devoted to one John Thomas Wilson who acted as New Zealand's first Forwarding Agent in Sydney. Chisholm illustrates a cover of 1 July 1833 forwarded by Wilson and endorsed as such in manuscript to London. Wilson operated an ironmongery business at 68, George Street during the period 1833 - 1836.

I have been fortunate in obtaining two New South Wales covers which bear Forwarding Agents cachets and which extend the known Forwarding Agents in New South

Wales to three. Neither of the markings have previously been recorded.

The first item (Figure 1) is a letter forwarded by Deloitte & Company to London in 1839. According to **Brabazons New South Wales Town Directory** of 1843 (p. 23) William S Deloitte and Co were Merchants with an office on the Wharf at the intersection with Argyle Street West. The letter itself was written by Campbell of Campbells Wharf and concerns early missionary activities. The letter was carried outside the mails, bearing no New South Wales markings. On arrival in Falmouth, England it was treated as an India Letter and charged at the double rate, 3/4, made up of 1/4 shipletter rate and 2/- inland rate.

The second example of a Forwarding Agent mark is from Newcastle, New South Wales (Figure 2). Another example is known in public records. The oval design is of George Mitchell and the letter was posted in Newcastle and delivered to Sydney. According to **Walter Samson & Co's New South Wales National Directory** for 1867-68 George Mitchell was in Hunter Street (p.481) and carried on business as a shipping agent (p.294).

This suggests that the letter may have been carried by private ship, possibly from the north coast to Newcastle. The sender could have had an arrangement with Mitchell for the on-forwarding of mail and possibly the provision of postage. The existence of a handstamp suggests that such a procedure was normal practice and it is therefore surprising that only two examples are known. Perhaps even more surprising was the fact that my copy surfaced in a German dealers stock in Sweden!

While the Column generally aims to introduce and educate the reader in some facet of postal history it was fortunate that in this case the column could also contain some basic research. Two Forwarding Agents handstamps where none were recorded before and a doubling of the number of manuscript annotations is not bad going. This illustrates the charm and excitement of postal history collecting - the unearthing of unknown treasure, a pleasure long forgone by our stamp collecting sisters and brothers. Further examples of manuscript annotations identifying forwarding agents have come to light in the latest **Gary Watson Auction Catalogue No. 42**. Several examples of missionary mail are endorsed for forwarding through Sydney.

**SPECIALIST PHILATELIC SOCIETIES - INDIAN OCEAN
STUDY CIRCLE
Paul Barsdell**

Collectors of Mauritius, Seychelles or other islands in the western Indian Ocean should think about joining the Indian Ocean Study Circle.

The Indian Ocean Study Circle was founded in 1970 to promote and encourage the study of all aspects of the stamps and postal history of the Islands of the western Indian Ocean. Broadly speaking, the area is bounded by Africa, Arabia, India and the 80 E line of longitude. East Africa and Ceylon are included in so far as they are inseparable from the area in some aspect of postal history; eg. World War II Army post offices in East Africa, and 19th century mail routes to Ceylon; but, Cocos, Christmas Island and Antarctica are excluded.

The Circle publishes the bulletin "IO" three times a year. The bulletin keeps members in touch with the Circle's activities and informed about new finds and the results of research. It cannot be stressed too much that for any serious collector, the journal or bulletin of the relevant specialist society is essential reading. It is the only way to keep abreast of developments in your collecting area. Although handbooks are useful, some information in them can date very quickly.

Three handbooks have been published by the Society - 'Seychelles: Cancellations and Instructional Markings 1860-1980' (1980), 'Mauritius: Accountancy and To Pay Marks 1860-1876' (1985) and 'Seychelles: Airmail History 1938-1971' (1986). These are available from the Circle.

Another benefit of membership of a specialist society is access to experts in the field. Advice can be sought on those difficult problems often confronting collectors. If you have done research yourself, you might wish to contribute the results of your research to the general pool of knowledge to help other members. Within the Circle, studies of the major islands or groups, and a number of postal history and cancellation subjects are carried out under group leaders, to whom members can write, via the Secretary to give or request information'.

Three meetings are held in the United Kingdom and two auctions are conducted annually.

Annual subscriptions are five pounds (air mail ten pounds) and auction catalogues sent by airmail are an extra pound. Enquiries should be directed to the Secretary/Editor, Mrs S Hopson, The Vineyard, Garden Close Lane, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 6PR, United Kingdom.

General Note: Paul Barsdell will be glad to provide information on specialist societies on request.

AEROPEX-88 RESULTS

The Philatelic Society of Canberra was well represented at Aeropex in Adelaide from 8-10 April 1988. This one class National Exhibition was a raving success - 'the best stamp exhibition I've ever been to' was the verdict of one of Australian's international judges. Society member Ray Chapman was the Chairman of the Jury but the fact that a local member won a Large Gold, a Gold and a Large Silver plus the Grand Prix National was due solely to the material displayed. Congratulations 'Stamptom'. Two other Canberra members dipped their toes in the aerophilately class for the first time and both 'Dingle' Smith and Ed Druce came away with silver bronze medals. Not bad going, as one of the international judging panel remarked, "I began with a certificate of merit". Watch out 'Stamptom', there are pretenders to your throne!

GRAND PRIX NATIONAL & LARGE GOLD

'Stamptom'

GOLD

'Stamptom'

LARGE SILVER

'Stamptom'

SILVER-BRONZE

D.I. Smith

E.C. Druce