

CAPTAIN COQK

NEWSLETTER OF THE
CHRISTCHURCH (NZ) PHILATELIC SOCIETY, INC

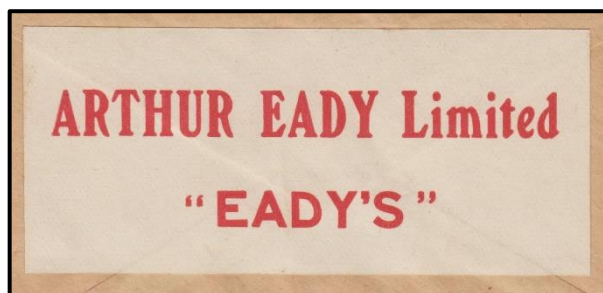
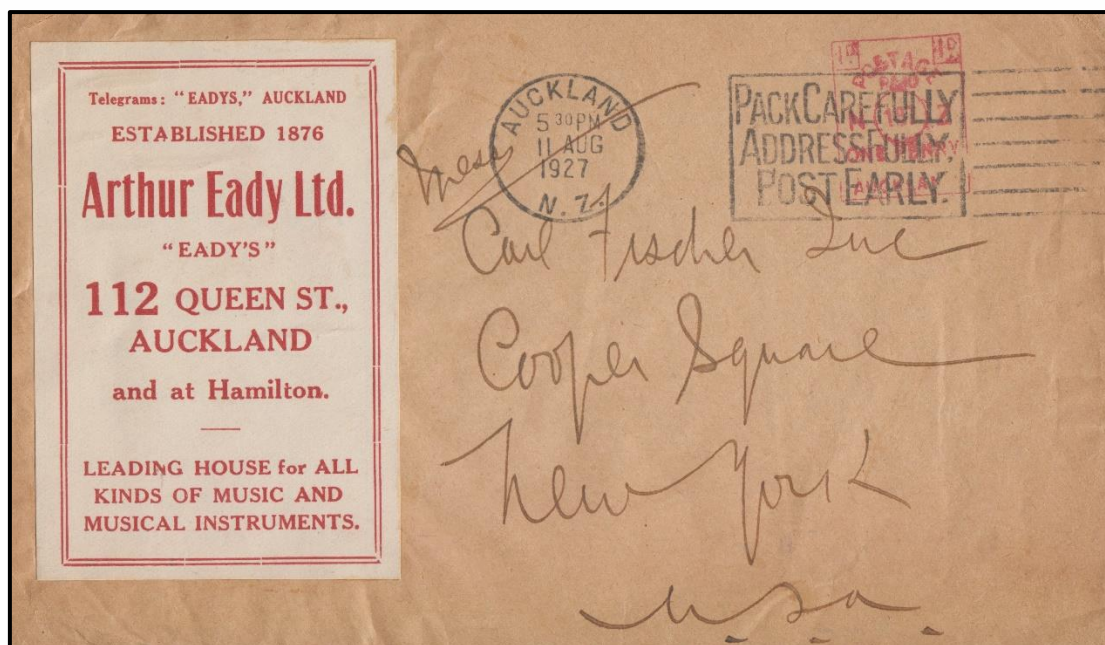
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March, 2022

Arthur Eady Music Retailer Cinderella

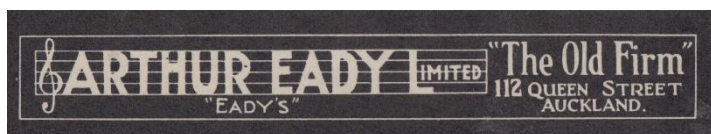
Although some of the fizz has gone out of the cinderella market, it is still a field that new finds by patient collectors can be made and I don't believe there is a collector that doesn't like the sound of "uncatalogued" when used to describe their new discovery. The label for Arthur Eady, a music retailer in Auckland, on the below cover is one such cinderella. Arthur established his business in 1876 and encouraged his brother, Lewis Eady, to open his own shop in 1884.



Label on reverse

The businesses were well known in Auckland and by the 1910's both companies had retail outlets in Queen Street, Auckland.

There may have been a little sibling rivalry between the two brothers as Arthur's advertising sometimes included the words "The Old Firm" to emphasise they were in business first.



Label used on sheet music

While not cinderellas, the advertising labels used on records and sheet music provides a huge variety of appealing material to collect.



Label used on a 78 record
Stephen Jones

SOCIETY NEWS

February Meeting

Luckily, with not too many changes for covid requirements it meant that members (up to 100) and visitors could again attend the regular CPS Tuesday meeting night, provided they have had their vaccine. The meeting began with a social hour, for members to enjoy some light refreshments and chitchat - often something that can get side-lined with guest speakers and displays to look at, it was lovely just being able to have a natter to fellow collectors with no time obstacles present - I was able to find out about members new collecting interests and things they have planned for 2022 from members present, whilst not concentrating on other jobs.



Past President, Murray Willocks & Treasurer, Karen Jeffrey

The President provided two silent displays related to the GRAPE theme - wine to the vine (topical) and a thematic wine exhibit from a past member The Noble Grape, which covered the origins of winemaking, viticulture, steps in winemaking, wine types and wine publicity'. Of course, Murray Taege our webmaster gave yet another innovative and inspired power point presentation on the 'Grapes of Wrath'. David Reynold spoke and displayed the beginnings of a new collecting area - not his usual Canada - but Costa Rica. (cont pg 29)



Exchange Branch super Tony Stockley, Bruce Grimwood & Marray Taege Webmaster

SOCIETY PAGE

PROGRAMME

MARCH 1 POSTAL HISTORY GROUP Open for all members

MARCH 8 SOCIETY MEETING **Graham Muir**
Deregulation of NZ Postal Services

Alternative Posts, a visit to the dark side
Graham Muir will be displaying and speaking about his 5 frame exhibit on stamp issues of the private mail service providers
Members are encouraged to bring along their examples of the other mail providers and see if you can help Graham make some new converts

MARCH 15 LIBRARY NIGHT Open for all members

MARCH 22 POSTCARD GROUP Open for all members
Trams & Trains

APRIL 4 POSTAL HISTORY GROUP Open for all members

APRIL 12 SOCIETY MEETING **AGM**
President's Night

APRIL 19 LIBRARY NIGHT Open for all members

All meetings are held at the Philatelic Centre, 67 Mandeville Street, Riccarton, and commence at 7.30 pm. (Library night closes at 10 pm)

SOCIETY ADDRESS: PO Box 9246, Tower Junction, Christchurch 8149
(website) www.cps.gen.nz
(emails) captaincoqk@gmail.com

SOCIETY OFFICERS:

Patron	Jeff Long	President	Sue Claridge
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Christchurch (NZ) Philatelic Society (Inc) Subscription Rates

The annual subscription is \$60.00 which includes a digital copy of Captain Coqk. A \$10 discount may be deducted if paid by 31st March. Where husband and wife are members but require only one CAPTAIN COQK newsletter to be sent a combined subscription of \$90.00 is charged with a \$15.00 discount allowed. From 2021 there is an additional charge (for NZ members) of \$20.00 for receiving printed copies of Captain Coqk or \$30.00 if you want a printed copy with our personalised stamps. For overseas members, the additional charges are Australia \$35.00 and Rest of the World \$40.00 plus another \$10.00 if you want the personalised stamp used for postage.

The view expressed in this issue of CAPTAIN COQK are not necessarily those of the Christchurch (NZ) Philatelic Society (Inc) but are simply those of the respective authors.

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Where On Earth Is: Pleskau (Pskov)

Pskov is in western Russia, near the borders of Latvia and Estonia. It was founded near the confluence of the Velikaya and Pskov Rivers beside Lake Pskov. The name Pskov, (Pleskow in Old Russian), means purling water. It reflects its position near the confluence, which was chosen as a strategic point to defend the Rus' from attacks from the Baltic tribes.

Pskov was first mentioned in 903, when Igor of Kiev married a local, lady Olga, who became St. Olga to the Ukrainians. With the decline of Kievan Rus' in the 12th century, Pskov fell into the orbit of the Republic of Novgorod.



In August 1240, the Teutonic Knights captured Pskov. The Prince of Novgorod, Alexander Yaroslavich (Nevsky), liberated Pskov in March 1242. After the Teutonic Knight's defeat in the Battle of Peipus, April 5, 1242, they returned the rest of the Novgorod territory they had captured including Luga.



Ukraine - St Olga



Alexander Nevsky

In 1299, the Livonian Order (of Knights) besieged Pskov but were defeated by the Prince of Pskov, Daumantas. Pskov's importance grew as a frontier fortress defending Novgorod.

In the Treaty of Bolotovo, 1348, Pskov became independent of Novgorod, as the Republic of Pskov. Like Novgorod, Pskov was one of the major trading hubs with Western Europe. Trade was dominated by the Hanseatic League.

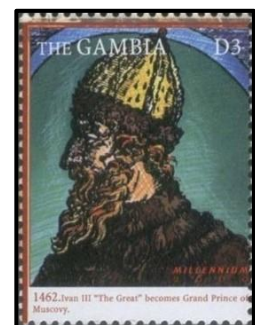
Initially, Pskov sided with the Grand duchy of Lithuania. On October 12, 1398, Grand Duke Vytautas signed the Treaty of Salynas with the Livonian Order. Vytautas promised to help the Order conquer Pskov. Pskov turned to Grand Duke Vasili I of Moscow for support.

In 1510 Vasili III Ivanovich annexed Pskov into the Grand Duchy of Moscow. Three hundred of Pskov's richest families were deported to central Russia. They were replaced by merchants and military families from Moscow. It was the third largest city in Muscovy. Pskov withstood a siege, August 18, 1581 - February 4, 1582, during the Livonian War (1558-1583) with Poland. Again, from August 9 - October 27, 1615, during the Ingrian War with Sweden, 1610-1617.



Peter 1 (the Great)

In 1710, Peter I (the Great) conquered the Baltic states from Sweden. Pskov's raison d'être as a frontier town and defender of Moscow had ceased. Its importance and size declined. On March 15, 1917, Tsar Nicholas II signed his abdication on the imperial train at Pskov. After the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, March 3, 1918, the Imperial German Army occupied Pskov until November 1918. Pskov was also occupied by Estonia, May 25 - August 28, 1919, during the Estonian War of Independence.



Ivan III Prince of Moscow



1941 "Motherland Calls" proclamation

On Sunday, June 22, 1941, Germany launched Operation Barbarossa, the German invasion of the Soviet Union. It was, and still is, the largest invasion in recorded history. 2021 marks its 80th anniversary.

The "Eastern Front" stretched 2,900km from the Arctic Ocean to the Black Sea. 3.8 million troops, including troops from Finland and Romania, took part. There were 600,000 motor vehicles, including 3,800 tanks and 6,900 armoured vehicles.

Following in the rear was 625,000–700,000 horses. Over 4,300 aircraft (of all types) were also involved. The Soviet forces were larger than the Axis and better equipped in armour, but they were inferior in training and tactics. Operation Barbarossa followed military history in that superior training and tactics invariably defeat superior numbers and weapons.



Army Group North, under Field Marshal Wilhelm Ritter von Leeb, was tasked to take Leningrad via the Baltic States and northern Belarus, as well as to cover Army Group Centre's northern flank. Von Leeb estimated he would need 35 divisions to complete his task but had only 26 available. On July 9, 1941, the 4th Panzer Army captured Pskov (Pleskau in German).



German occ of Estonia



USSR 1944 - Defense of Leningrad

Not waiting for the 18th (Infantry) Army to catch up, it wanted to smash the Soviet defenses on the line of the Luga River. The Battle of Luga, July 10 - August 24, 1941, cost 4th Panzer Army and Army Group North both precious time and troops.

The delay enabled Soviets to prepare an in-depth defense of Leningrad and evacuate some civilians. Hitler then decided to starve Leningrad to surrender rather attack it directly. There were many such battles as Luga during Operation Barbarossa. The cost of these battles to Germany in terms of time, men and materiel turned very long odds into near impossibility, to achieve a decisive victory over the Soviet Union.



On July 17, 1941, the Reichskommissariat Ostland (Ostland) was established. It was the civilian and party occupation regime for the Baltic states and the western Belarus. The main objectives for Ostland were the implementation of National Socialist policies for the occupied territories. It included the genocide of the Jewish population, as well as Lebensraum (the settlement of ethnic Germans into occupied territories and the expulsion of the locals).

The administration was hampered by several overlapping authorities. Army Group North controlled the military, SS the security, Berlin controlled labour and economic resources, and the Reich Postal Service (RPS) administered the occupied territories' postal services. Eastern Belarus and occupied northern Russia were under the control of Army Group North and the SS. On November 4, 1941, the RPS issued a set of stamps of 1941 Hitler overprinted



Belarus - victims of the Holocaust

"Ostland" for use in Ostland and the military territory controlled by Army Group North.

After its capture, Pleskau became an important supply depot with its major road and rail junctions, servicing the Leningrad front and Novgorod. It was also a major air force base. To service the postal needs the local Field Commander authorized the re-opening of Pleskau's post office on August 6, 1941.



1933 Hindenburg
"Pleskau"



1929 & 1939 Soviet stamps "Pleskau"



According to an article in the 1959 issue of the Journal of the Rossica Society of Russian Philately, there were Soviet stamps hand stamped "Pleskau" with a rubber stamp, but no evidence exists of these.

The first recorded issue was on the 1933 Hindenburg, hand stamped "Pleskau" on August 9.

On September 16, the RPS forbade the overprinting of German stamps for Russian use. Soviet stamps from 1929 and 1939 were hand stamped "Pleskau". These were locals issued to serve the postal needs until the "Ostland" issues were available.

In 1928 Stalin called for an "atheist five-year plan", 1932-1937. All religions were to be eliminated. During the Great Terror, 1937-1938, the clergy in north-western Russia, as elsewhere in the USSR, were almost completely liquidated. Churches and church land were confiscated. To legitimatise their occupation and gain local backing, in mid-August 1941 Army Group North authorised the formation of an "Orthodox mission in the liberated regions of Russia", otherwise known as the "Pskov Orthodox Mission".



Drawing of a gulag-forced labour camp where many priests were sent to & died

The official aim was the restoration of the Russian Orthodox church. This ran counter to Hitler's plan to annihilate Eastern Slavic culture. On August 18, 1941, the first Orthodox missionaries arrived in Pskov. The missionaries did not see themselves as pro-German, rather as pro-Russian anti-Bolshevik patriots. The missionaries cared for Russian POWs, established schools and orphanages.



Orthodox Cathedral Pskov



Arms of Pskov



Pskov Cathedral



Madonna & Child

On February 18, 1944, Army Group North closed the Pskov Orthodox Mission with the first Soviet attack on Pskov. On July 23, 1944, Pskov was liberated by the Soviet troops under the 3rd Baltic Front. Most of the missionaries fled with the German army. Of those that chose to stay, some were arrested, killed, or sent to labour camps. Others were allowed to continue their work. Some churches were allowed to continue.

In early October 1941, the Commandant of Pskov ordered the printing of semi-postal (charity) stamps which reflected the aims of the Pskov Orthodox Mission. The new stamps were issued on October 17, 1941.

On October 18, Army Group North closed all post offices out of fear that the active partisans would use the mail system or get military secrets from it.

The order was rescinded on December 1, 1941. On the same date the sheetlet of the Madonna was issued. The German authorities tolerated these issues as the German Red Cross benefited from the sales. On June 1, 1942, the Reich Postal Service was established in Pleskau and the "Pleskau" locals were withdrawn.



Partisans blowing up Riga Rail Bridge, Pskov



Miniature sheet



Luga

Army Group North occupied Luga (Pskov-Leningrad railway), on August 24, 1941. The Commandant of Luga, without authorisation had Soviet stamps found at Luga overprinted with new values. The Luga overprints were forbidden to be sold and were withdrawn. In December 1941, the Commandant of Lyady (Ljady in German, not far from Leningrad), authorised the overprint of Ostland stamps with "Ljady 60", due to the disruption of the postal activities by the Soviet partisans.

Army Group North began the siege of Leningrad on September 8, 1941. After the German defeat at the Battle of Moscow, October 2, 1941-January 7, 1942, Army Group North's only real objective was the capture of Leningrad. It was to be a joint operation with Finland. However, Finland only wanted to recover its territories lost to the Soviet Union during the 1940-1941 Winter War. Thus, Leningrad was not completely sealed off.



This enabled the Soviets to establish the "Road of Life" to bring in supplies throughout the siege. This enabled Leningrad to holdout, just. After over 2 years of heavy bombardment, bombing, hypothermia and starvation, the siege was finally lifted on January 27, 1944. An estimated 800,000 civilians died during the siege. Over 1.5 million Soviet soldiers were killed. Pskov was badly damaged during World War 2. Although it was rebuilt after the war, it has struggled to regain its traditional position as a major industrial and cultural center of western Russia.



Images of Pskov

Murray Taege

Stephenson's 1928 Trans-Tasman Flight Cover

It is well known that *Southern Cross*, piloted by Charles Kingsford Smith, with CTP Ulm (as co-pilot), HA Litchfield (navigator) and TH McWilliams (radio operator), made the first successful trans-Tasman flight from Sydney to Christchurch on September 10-11, 1928. The return crossing was made a few weeks later, but from Blenheim to Sydney.

A cover from this flight, previously unknown to the catalogue compilers has recently come to light, some 93 years after the event. It is quite different from the flight covers described in the current editions of the Australian Air Mail Catalogue and the New Zealand Airmail catalogue.

It is reported that an estimated 15 covers were flown on the eastbound trans-Tasman crossing. Most, but not all, of the covers carried bore a special inscription to that effect whilst a few are reported to have carried *Australian* stamps.¹ Some were signed by crew members and after arriving in Christchurch, Charles Ulm personally delivered the covers to the Chief Postmaster at the Chief Post Office, where he was sworn in, in accordance with New Zealand postal regulations, as a postal official. The few extant covers seen by the writer all bear New Zealand stamps added on arrival in Christchurch. These were cancelled on September 11, 1928 at 5.15 pm. An Atlantic Union Oil Co. Ltd. cover (see Figure 1) carried by Kingsford Smith is also known with a New Zealand 1d meter frank - this was cancelled on September 12 and is featured in the New Zealand Airmail Catalogue.²

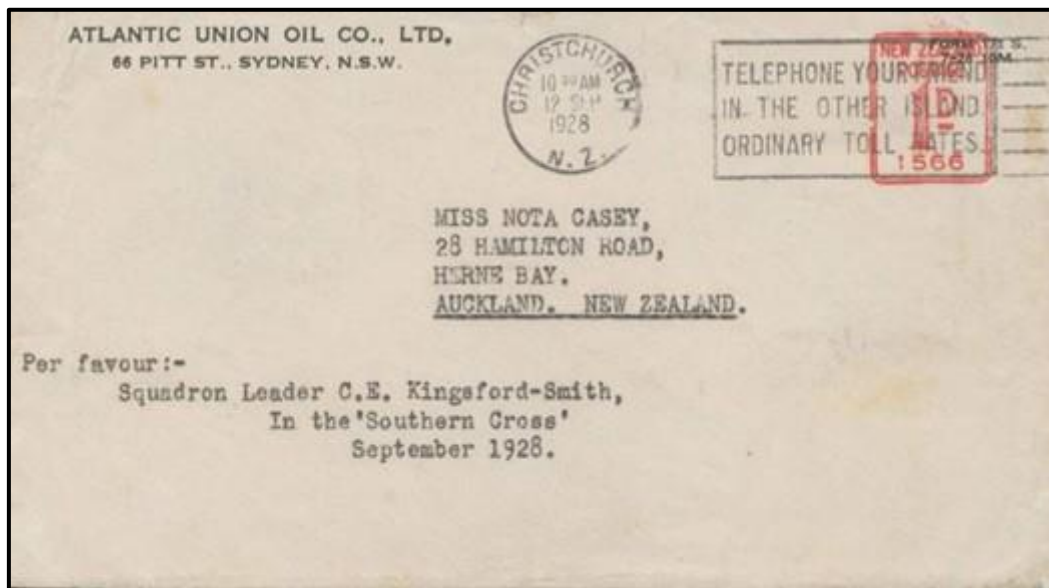


Figure 1 Credit T Frommer/C Leski

Before moving on to a description of this significant new discovery, why were such low numbers of covers carried on this flight? The Australian Post Office seriously considered a proposal for the carriage of mail on this historic flight. It was originally thought that a special mail could be as many as 20,000 letters, but subsequently it was felt that a mail of this size would be something of a problem for the Post Office to handle, besides perhaps overloading an already heavily laden aircraft operating at the very limit of its capability. It was then felt that if any mail was carried it would have to be limited to possibly no more than 130 articles, confined to messages from Government officials and VIP's. Eventually, the Australian Post Office decided that unless a substantial mail could be carried and a special stamp made available to the public, no official mail would be carried at all.

In view of the announcement that no official mail would be carried on the flight, it subsequently came as a complete surprise to learn that the airmen had in fact brought a small bundle of covers as a courtesy gesture and on their own initiative. These consisted, in the main, of letters

exchanging greetings between Government officials and prominent people on both sides of the Tasman.

Kingsford Smith and Ulm had met Harry A Litchfield, the navigator, on their way to the USA in 1927 in the Union Steamship Company's SS Tahiti. The three had much in common and navigation was discussed in detail. Litchfield was then secured for the Tasman flight as navigator. Tom H McWilliams had also worked for the USSCo. as a radio operator. At the time, he was working in Wellington at the NZ Government Radio School and was "borrowed" for the trans-Tasman flight.¹

It is apparent that Tom McWilliams knew HP Stephenson (the addressee on the cover in figure 2), who worked as a printer in Wellington. Stephenson is known to have served in the Signals Corps of the Royal Engineers during the First World War. In that role, he would have become familiar with the new technology of radio. So, this may have been an interest that both men shared. It is also suggested that his company may have been involved with printing shipping notices, and as a radio operator Tom would likely have been in contact with ships' masters to learn of their progress sailing into Wellington. However, until very recently, it was unknown that Tom had actually carried a cover on the trans-Tasman flight for his friend in Wellington. On arrival in Christchurch, this cover was treated quite differently from the other recorded covers from the flight. For example, it was not taken by Ulm to the Christchurch CPO to be cancelled there. Ulm may not even have been aware of the cover carried by McWilliams, who, in turn, may not have thought of having the cover cancelled with a Christchurch postal datestamp or indeed of signing it himself.

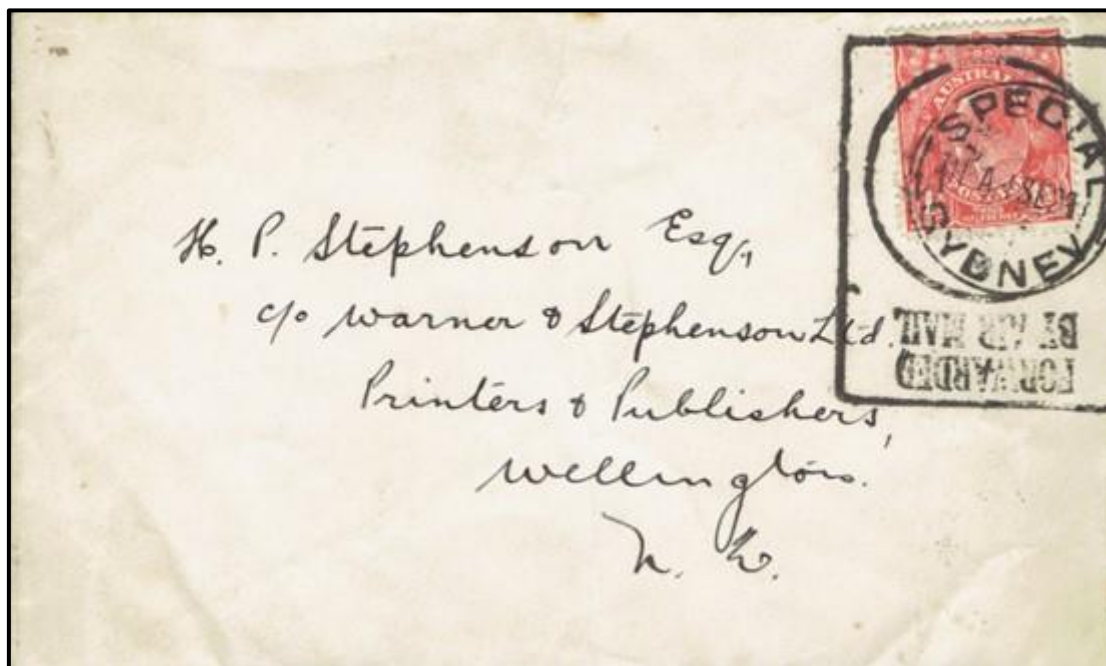


Figure 2

The cover carried by McWilliams (see figure 2) is folded vertically and is clearly addressed to HP Stephenson in Wellington. It bears an Australian 1d King George V stamp, which was cancelled "SPECIAL / 11 A -1SE 28 / SYDNEY". The rear of the cover is plain, and it is suggested that it was folded by Tom McWilliams who carried it in his jacket pocket.

Interestingly, the cover is dated some 9 days prior to the flight's departure. Clearly, McWilliams arranged the cancellation of this cover himself well before the actual flight. Kingsford Smith's flight had originally been planned for take-off from Richmond, near Sydney, on Sunday, September 2, 1928, with a scheduled landing around 9:00 am on September 3 at Wigram Aerodrome, near Christchurch. This plan drew a storm of protest from New Zealand churchmen about the "sanctity of the Sabbath being set at naught". The mayor of Christchurch

supported the churchmen and cabled a protest to Kingsford Smith. As it happened, unfavourable weather developed over the Tasman and the flight was deferred, so it is not known whether or how Kingsford Smith would have heeded the cable.³

As may be seen in figure 2, not only did the stamp receive a "special" cancel, but the cover also received an inverted boxed FORWARDED BY AIR MAIL cachet into which the SPECIAL / SYDNEY datestamp was applied.

An Australian Postmaster General's January 16, 1926 memorandum advised that rubber stamps were being manufactured for use as cachets on air mail correspondence. Twenty seven (later increased to 28) identical cachets were distributed and (generally) brought into use from March 1926 at post offices which were stopping places on air mail routes. The cachets were impressed on air mail posted at these post offices and on air mail posted elsewhere that joined the air mail system at these points.⁴

According to the AAMC, the earliest known use for such a cachet is February 9, 1926 from Fitzroy Crossing in Western Australia. That for Sydney is March 22, 1926. A number of post offices apparently ceased using the cachet at various times during 1926-28, and although a post office memorandum dated October 25, 1928 ordered that the usage of the cachet should be discontinued, some later usage is known.⁴

A listing (in the Australian Air Mail Catalogue) of earliest known and latest known dates for the various towns with these cachets shows that Normanton continued the use of this cachet until April 14, 1936. However, there is no recorded last known date of use of the Sydney cachet!⁵ There is now - Tom McWilliams' September 1, 1928 cacheted cover, only a few weeks before the use of these cachets was officially authorised to be terminated.

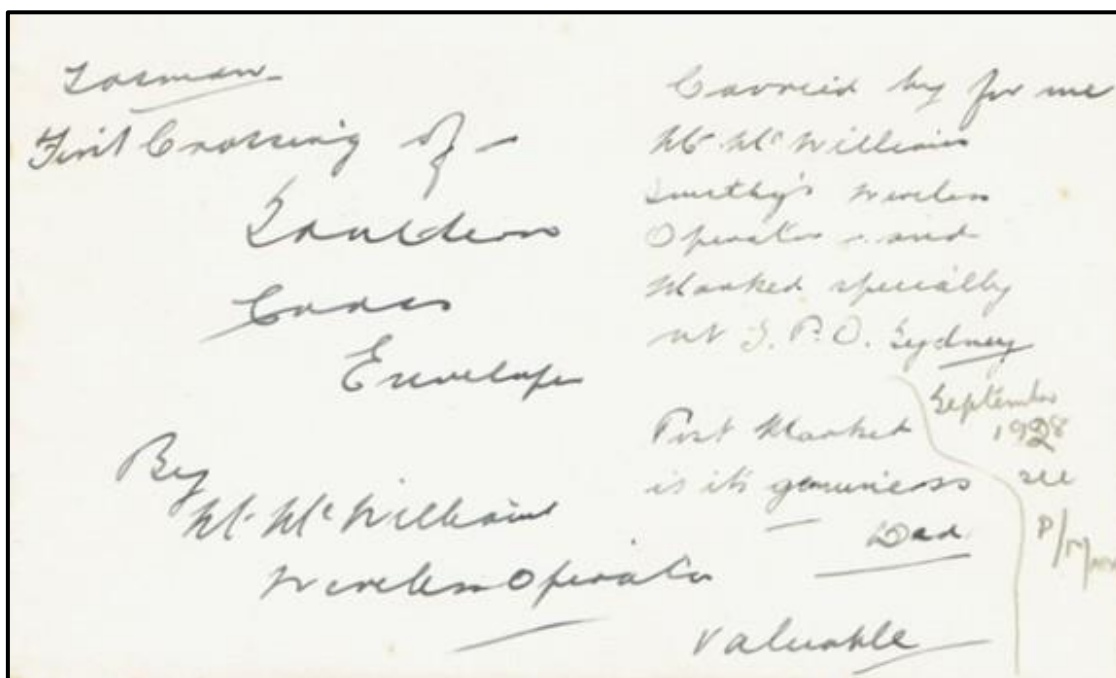


Figure 3

Evidence that this cover was carried on the first trans-Tasman flight is shown in figure 3. This envelope [with explanatory manuscript endorsements provided later by the addressee HP Stephenson] contained the cover depicted in figure 2. On the front, at left side is the following manuscript text: *Tasman / First Crossing of / Southern / Cross / Envelope / By / [??] / McWilliams / Wireless Operator.*

The text at the right side of the envelope reads: *Carried by for me [sic] / [??] McWilliams / Smithy's wireless / operator and / marked specially / at G.P.O. Sydney. / Post Marked / is its genuineness / Dad / Valuable.*

Appended in pencil to the extreme right of this text is: *September / 1928 / see / p/mark.*

AAMC entry 124 for 1928 (10 SEPTEMBER) states: "**Kingsford Smith** and **CTP Ulm** left Australia for New Zealand in the Fokker FV11B-3M 'Southern Cross' G-AUSU. As Ulm was sworn in under New Zealand postal regulations, the mail was official. The covers were delivered to the Chief Postmaster at Christchurch, and in most cases a 1d NZ stamp was postmarked 'CHRISTCHURCH 10A 11SE 28' [this time does not agree with Walker, see earlier - ed.]. Most covers were signed by both pilots. Other crew members were HA Litchfield and T McWilliams".⁶

Whilst the AAMC has seen a number of editors since initially published in 1937 under the expert knowledge of Nelson Eustis, nowhere is there any mention in it of any Australian stamped/cancelled covers carried on this flight. It is this writer's opinion that had Eustis been aware of such a cover he would have made some reference to it.

Walker¹ fleetingly mentions "a few of them carried Australian stamps" and "all the envelopes including those with Australian stamps affixed, were franked with the requisite New Zealand stamps" [excluding the Stephenson cover - ed.], but had any been *cancelled* in Australia? It is unclear, but it seems they had not been cancelled. Walker clearly was unaware of the Stephenson cover, or he would have made a point of recording it here to refute the objection that all the covers carried during the flight "*did not even carry any postage nor had they been postmarked at any stage*".

It is apparent that the Stephenson 1928 trans-Tasman flight cover is extremely rare, if not unique. It has features that the other 15 known 1928 trans-Tasman flight covers lack. However, even with an unlikely 0% attrition rate over the past 8 decades, those 15 1928 trans-Tasman flight covers are in themselves all rare as well.

The Stephenson 1928 trans-Tasman flight cover and the later explanatory outer cover will be offered for sale in a public stamp auction by Mowbray Collectables in 2022.

Acknowledgement:

The writer wishes to thank Alan Jackson for his help with this article and for recognising the significance of the cover.

References:

- 1 *Airmails of New Zealand, Volume Two - The Overseas Flights*, by Douglas A. Walker, 1986, pp 3-5.
- 2 *The New Zealand Airmail Catalogue*, 4th edition, edited by David Smitham, 2021, p 5.
- 3 *Charles Kingsford Smith - 1928 Trans-Pacific Flight*, Wikipedia.
- 4 *The Australian Air Mail Catalogue*, 8th edition, edited by Nelson Eustis & Tom Frommer, 2008, p 35.
- 5 *ibid*, p 36.
- 6 *ibid*, p 40.

David Smitham



More Changes

NZ Post continues with changes in Christchurch.

City East Box Lobby on St Asaph Street will close mid February. Those who haven't closed or gone elsewhere will go into the Christchurch box lobby on the corner Montreal and Cashel Streets. City East was an amalgamation of pre-quake Victoria Street, and Armagh Street lobbies along with Eastgate Shopping Centre lobby. Interestingly enough, there are now also 2 types of box lobby, a standard one and a priority one. The priority one is \$15 per annum more expensive, and the mail is guaranteed to be sorted by 7am. City East box holders are going from a standard lobby to a priority one, so face not only changing postcode on their business papers, but also an increase in cost.

Also closing is the Kiwi Bookshop in Edgware Village, St Albans. This has had the Post Shop agency for a number of years and is closing at the end of March.

They are blaming the closure on to their customers on reducing margins from NZ Post to the extent it is no longer economic to run.



Not the flashiest exterior for a Post Shop, the street view is basically the back side with the entrance being off a small mall

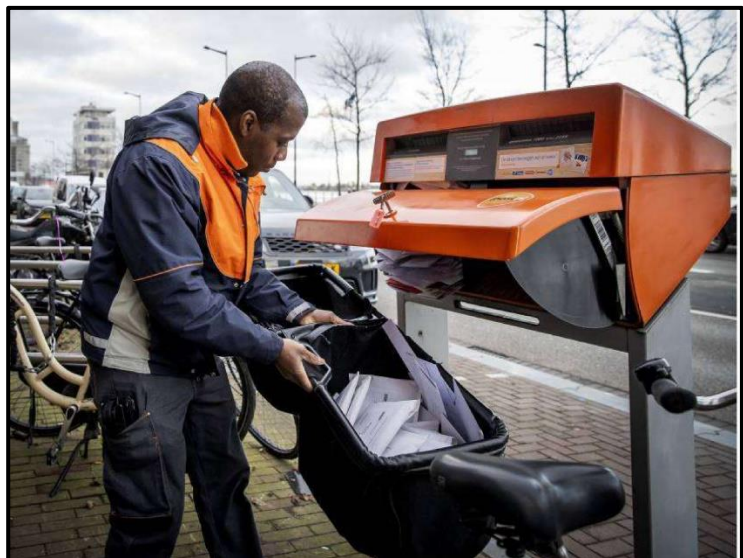
Once Edgware had a purpose built modern Post Office which became a medical centre and was demolished after the earthquakes. Its replacement Post Shop agency is now also disappearing.

Slow Deliveries

A recent news article out of the Netherlands advised that Post NL had been fined two million Euros for not meeting delivery targets in 2019.

The offending target was that 95% of all mail collected from street receivers is delivered by the next day.

NL Post managed to get to figure of only 94.34%. Post NL stated part of the issue revolved around the merger that year with rival post delivery firm SANDD causing some hiccups.



A Dutch postal worker emptying a street receiver courtesy www.nos.nl, the Dutch news service

Post NL is contracted to provide the Universal Postal Service in the Netherlands and there is a government authority that monitors that service to ensure it is achieved. They are required from Tuesday to Saturday to have 95% of mail posted in street receivers delivered the next day. Medical and bereavement mail is also to be delivered on Mondays. Another target is that 95% of people are to live within 5 km of a full service postal outlet which in 2019 was measured at 99.7%. For smaller places of more than 5000 inhabitants 85% are to have postal facilities within 5 km and 97.9% was achieved.

While the Netherlands is physically a much smaller country than we are, with a greater population (15 million in an area of Canterbury) making next day delivery perhaps easier, it would be interesting to know what sort of conditions NZ Post operates under and who monitors that?

What drives NZ Post is published annually as a "Statement of Corporate Intent" which is viewable on their website. The 2021 version is 16 pages in length, and it is very much a corporate document from public relations perspective. There is one page with their targets in figures and it is interesting in what it covers and what it starts with at the top. It starts with a 9.3% shareholder return, a 0.0% dividend yield, a 2% return on equity, a 1.3% return on capital employed, followed by things like gearing ratio, interest cover, and solvency.

Then there is a customer section with a "Net Promoter Score (Consumer)" of +17 and a "Net Promoter Score (Business)" of +22. What these mean is not explained. Then a people section which includes a Engagement factor which they are still in process of determining and a total recordable injuries figure of 20%. An environment section giving a total emissions figure of 115.1 tCOe(k) and a directly influenceable emissions figure of 61.9 tCOe(k). Finally the last section is called Network and that has a "Standard letter service performance" of 90%.

So looking at that last figure over time and we see:

2013	2015	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
92.4%	95.1%	89.1%	85.9%	91.1%	86.1%	90%

Does that look like consistent performance in the prime business of letter delivery ?

What perhaps this comparison does show is that a privatised postal service contracted to a government can be held to account and penalised, but when the service is a government owned entity (ie NZ State Owned Enterprise) there is enough conflict of interest not to have such penalties for service performance.

Paul van Herpt

Cont from page 18



I would like to advise CPS members of the forthcoming Annual General Meeting to be held on:

April 12, 2022.

There are several committee vacancies, so why not think about stepping up to help keep your society running for another 100+ years. Further information can be obtained from the President, see below, or the CPS Secretary:- Paul Ledington - paulledington@yahoo.com.au

A top of the south member is interested in acquiring items related to 'N.Z parrots (kakapo and Kaka etc) for a new exhibit, all items considered, please contact CPS President for details. sueclaridge@xtra.co.nz or phone (03) 338 9439

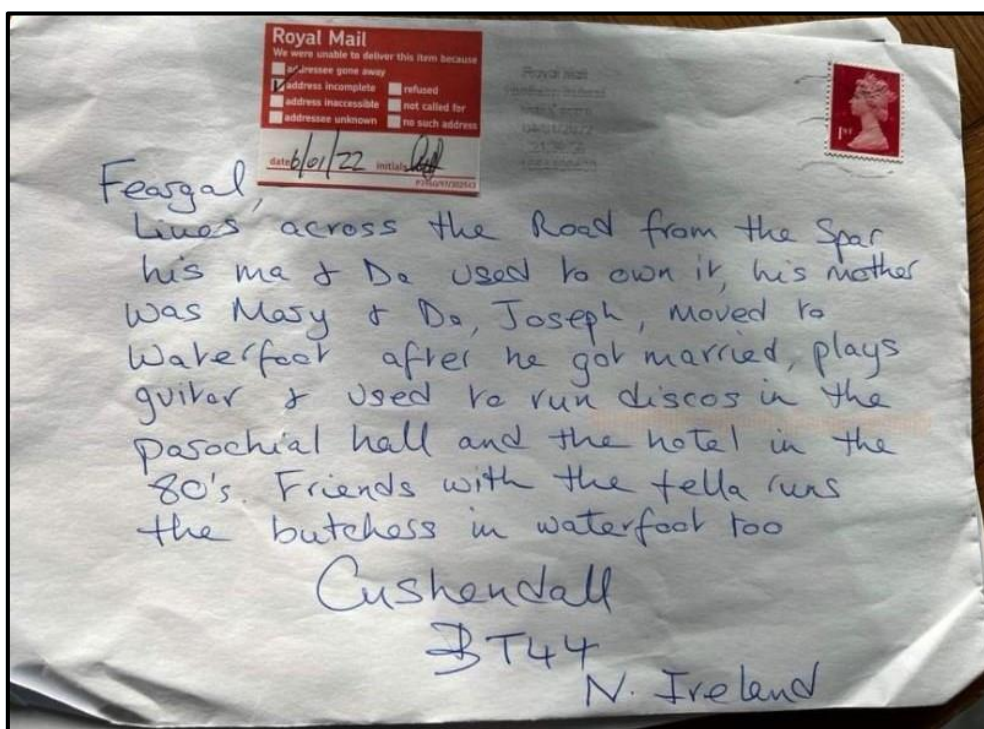
Sue Claridge



Royal Mail Operatives Deliver The Goods...

Just when you thought you had lost faith in the ability of the postal services to deliver mail, the following reported at www.theguardian.com and cribbed from StampBoards should restore some hope:

"Sherlock Holmes might have balked, but the Royal Mail detectives came up trumps when they correctly delivered a letter with an address that was more like an episode of This Is Your Life than a conventional street name and postcode. Writing on Twitter, the County Antrim musician Feargal Lynn said the postal system deserved "hearty applause" for successfully delivering the letter addressed by following a brief history of his family in the area. Describing his parents and the "Spar his ma and da used to own", the description of Lynn also included his later move to the nearby Waterfoot and the fact he is "friends with the fella [who] runs the butchers" in the neighbouring village.



Lynn said he laughed for about 10 minutes when he first saw the letter and that the description on the front brought back "so many memories from my youth". The full description on the envelope reads: "Lives across the road from the Spar, his ma and da used to own it, his mother was Mary and da Joseph, moved to Waterfoot after he got married, plays guitar and used to run discos in the parochial hall and the hotel in the 80s. Friends with the fella who runs the butchers in Waterfoot too."

It is not the first time the Royal Mail has defied expectations in deciphering addresses that could, at best, be described as vague. Last year, Catrina Davies, who lives in a shed in Cornwall, was handed a letter in an envelope omitting a town, street name or postcode. The sender had simply addressed it to Katrina Davis [sic], noting that she lived in a shed "near a village 21 miles from Land's End, as featured on BBC2 Simon Reeve Cornwall programme".

In 2010, a postie rose to the challenge when they were asked to find a couple with an address given as "somewhere near the golf course in Thetford, Norfolk". But perhaps the most impressive feat was the delivering of a Christmas card to Paul Biggs in Longlevens, Gloucestershire, in 2015 - sent from Germany in an envelope simply marked "England". At the time, Royal Mail said that although its "address detectives" were renowned for their investigative skills, this effort was "pretty impressive" even by their standards."

Stephen Jones

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