

INCOMING MAIL to AUSTRALIA WWII 1939-1945.

All will be aware that the years 1939 -1945 were a time of great change.

Not only was a world war effecting lives, flight had not long entered the scene and was subject to great disruption as a result of areas cut off by conflict.

Mail was often disrupted and a letter sent to a loved one by airmail to arrive as quickly as possible was sometimes lost in a disaster or transferred to a transit by ship taking considerably longer than expected.



Temporary Post Offices or FIELD POST OFFICES were set up in remote locations throughout the world in areas of hostility.

CENSORSHIP became a common event as sensitive information had to be avoided at all cost.

The need for civilian families to "keep in touch" with their member in the services was paramount and the only way this could occur was by mail. The Postal services all around the world were never more active in their attempts to "deliver the mail".

In the fields of battle the need for "contact from home" was vital and the requirement to send a letter home was a real need.

This was well understood by the various Governments, Services and Postal Authorities and they made great attempts to keep mail flowing throughout this difficult time.

Examples that follow of Commercial & Private correspondence give a brief glimpse into mail that had set out from various theatres of war and reached their intended recipient during this dark period in our history.

Each cover (1940 through 1945) has some surface indication of its movements, but there is no indication of the story that was hidden within each envelope.

INCOMING MAIL to AUSTRALIA WWII

CYPRUS to MELBOURNE VIC.

JANUARY 1940



Posted 18 January 1940 NICOSIA to KEW Victoria. (No arrival date by sea indicated.)

Face:

Stamp

1½ Piastres CARMINE SG 155 Issued 12 May 1938.

Two c.d.s applied: R.P.O. CYPRUS 18JA40 (Railway Post Office)

CYPRUS ORANGE & MAP undated.

"WRITTEN IN ENGLISH" & Double circle Passed by censor I Cyprus applied

Double circle CENSORSHIP M applied (conformation mark)

Rear:

NICOSIA CYPRUS 10-AM 18 JA 40 cds

On arrival in Australia it was opened and a rectangular PASSED BY CENSOR V66.... applied on face.

A very early example of sealing tape was applied Opened by Censor and 3 ... (3 dots hand written)

Indicating a Victorian location.

The period between October 1931 and October 1940 proved to be a very difficult one for the Cypriots. The Governor at the time, Sir Richmond Palmer, took a number of suppressive measures including limitations on the administration and functioning of Greek schools, and prohibition of trade unions and associations of any kind and form. This regime became known as "Palmerokratia", named after the Governor. Its aim was to prevent local public interest in politics. There were strong protests against the regime but the suppressive measures were not lifted until the beginning of the Second World War, during which more than thirty thousand Cypriots joined the British armed forces.

INCOMING MAIL to AUSTRALIA WWII

GERMANY to MELBOURNE VIC.

MAY 1940



Airmail 25 MAY 1940 FRANKFURT to Dhurringile TATURA Victoria (No arrival date indicated)

Face:

Stamps issued 1933: 55 Pfennig.

2 x 1 Pfennig Black Deutsches Reich Pres Von Hindenberg

1 x 3 Pfennig Brown Deutsches Reich Pres Von Hindenberg

1 x 50 Pfennig Black & Green Deutsches Reich Pres Von Hindenberg

4 x c.d.s FRANKFURT AM MAIN STADT DAS DEUTSCHEN HANOVER WERKS 25 5 40

Rear:

Printed censor tape in German stating "opened by"

Senior Command / Swastika in a circle

Also a hand stamped Checked c.d.s/swastika applied

On arrival in Melbourne it was again opened and a rectangular "PASSED BY CENSOR" V131 handstamp applied on face.

A Victorian sealing tape was applied **Opened by Censor** applied.

This envelope was sent from Frankfurt during WWII to the Internment camp at Dhurringile near Tatura Vic. At the time there were 2376 German & Italian Internees at the camp.

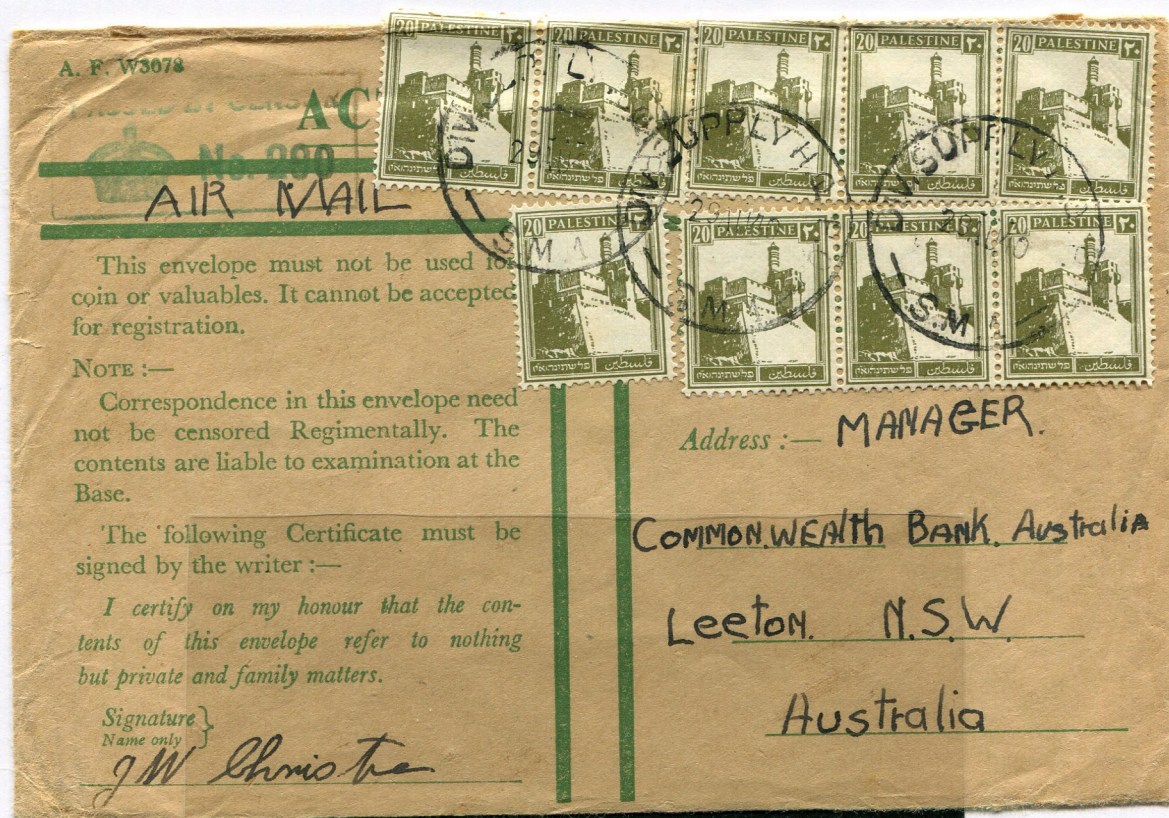
This complete cover is rare in as much that the Government policy at the time was to remove the stamps from incoming mail in case they contained hidden messages on the rear.

An unusual cover from a difficult time in our history



INCOMING MAIL to AUSTRALIA WWII

PALESTINE to LEETON N.S.W. AUGUST 1940



ACTIVE SERVICE cover AIRMAIL JERUSALEM to LEETON N.S.W. 28AUG 1940 (Arrival date not recorded)

Face:

Stamps: Paying 18 piastre (180 millimes")
20m GREEN x 9 SG 99 (MP 33)
c.d.s. x 3 DIV SUPPLY H.Q. P.O. SM1
Rectangular **PASSED BY CENSOR No 290 (British Crown)** handstamp applied.



Rear: Plain

Australian Camp near JULIS 1940

*The c.d.s. DIV SUPPLY H.Q. P.O. SM1 was used at camp Julis - set up in February 1940 in Southern Palestine.
(collas)*

INCOMING MAIL to AUSTRALIA WWII

INDONESIA to MELBOURNE VIC.

AUGUST 1940



Registered post from KISARAN Sumatra to Coburg Victoria. 8 Aug 1940 arriving 9 Sept 1940

Face:

Stamps – Netherland Indies (Sumatra) – renamed Indonesia 1948.

Paying 35cents (or sen.)

10c Red Queen Wilhelmina x2 SG403

15c Blue Queen Wilhelmina SG 404

KIRSARAN c.d.s. x 4 8.8.40

Registration label Kis.133

Netherland Indies censor mark DEVIEZEN CENSUUR MEDAN II

Rear:

Netherland Indies censor mark DEVIEZEN CENSUUR MEDAN II

REGISTERED MELBOURNE c.d.s. 12.00pm 3 MELBOURNE 7SE40

Double Oval handstamp COBURG POST OFFICE 9 SEP 1940

On arrival in Melbourne it was again opened and a rectangular "PASSED BY CENSOR" V24 handstamp applied on face.

A Victorian sealing tape was applied **Opened by Censor** applied



The COBURG – double oval violet listed in Watson Webster & Wood No 1020 – Rated RR (7-12 copies)

INCOMING MAIL to AUSTRALIA WWII

INDIA to MELBOURNE VIC.

OCTOBER 1940



Registered post from BOMBAY (now MUMBI) to Coburg Victoria. 21 OCT 1940 arriving 22 NOV 1940

Face:

Stamps - (2 *KINGS*) Paying 5½ Annas
 1 Anna CARMINE KGV SG25
 ½ Anna GREEN KGV SG232
 1 Anna CARMINE KGV SG160 (x2)
 2 Anna VIOLET KGV SG168
 c.d.s. CENTRAL BUILDINGS BOMBAY 21 OCT 40 5pm x 3
 REGISTRATION label *Central Buildings (BOMBAY) R 984*
 Triangular **PASSED BY CENSOR C 19** handstamp

Rear:

Triangular **PASSED BY CENSOR C 19** handstamp
PASSED BY CENSOR (British Coat of Arms) sealing paper applied in India.
 REGISTERED PERTH West AUSTRALIA c.d.s. 13NOV40
 REGISTERED 2 MELBOURNE c.d.s. 22NOV40
 COBURG 22NOV40 c.d.s. (type100)(c) handstamp.



Travelled India to Perth- Perth to Melbourne then arriving Coburg -a one month journey.

Double triangle postmark BOMBAY **PASSED BY CENSOR C** indicated it passed a censor once and was not required to go to other stations.

This mark with crown insert and "c" indicated Bombay and was used 1940 - 1942.

(A scarce example of this use with crown.)

INCOMING MAIL to AUSTRALIA WWII

INDIA to LEETON N.S.W.

NOVEMBER 1940



REGISTERED LETTER posted 11 November 1940 BOMBAY (now MUMBI) to LEETON N.S.W. (Arrived 10 December 1940)

INDIAN REGISTERED LETTER with Embossed KGVI sideface paying 3 Annas Registration & 1 Anna Postage.

Tied with 2 x 9p stamps Paying a total of 5 Annas 6 pies.

Face:

Indian Stamps x 2:

9 pies King George VI SG 249 (MP 22)

c.d.s. BOMBAY G.P.O. F REG 11 NOV 40

c.d.s. G.P.O. SYDNEY RS 9DE40

c.d.s. LEETON N.S.W. 10DE40

REGISTRATION label BOMBAY G.P.O. R Y 467

CARD ISSUED..... 10 DEC 1940 (Leeton add on)

REAR:

No additional marks in addition to preprinted detail.

Private Gerald Davey NX 22835 appears on the Roll of Honour in Willimbong Shire (Leeton N.S.W.) This being a letter to home.

INCOMING MAIL to AUSTRALIA WWII

EGYPT to VICTOR HARBOUR S.A. FEBRUARY 1941



AIRMAIL cover MERSA MATRUH to VICTOR HARBOUR S.A. 15 FEB 1941 (arrival not recorded)

Face:

Stamps: Paying 40 millimes' Airmail rate

10m x 4 CARMINE SGA12 (MP 2)

c.d.s ARMY P.O. A.M. 1 15FEB 1941

British Triangular Violet censor mark **PASSED BY CENSOR No3294** applied

Rear: Plain

The 10 millimes' ARMY POST Stamp with King Farouk's portrait was issued 16 December 1939 and was withdrawn 1 May 1941 when Postal Concessions allowed troops free postage for surface mail.

Other mail to Australia could use Australian stamps from 5 February 1941.

The c.d.s ARMY P.O. AM 1 was used at (1 Base PU) sub-B.P.O. and later at B.P.O. CAIRO.

At this time the first convey of troops arrived in Palestine on 14 February 1940 and a base P.O. was established in Jerusalem later that month, by September 1940 the date stamp was moved to MERSA MATRUH EGYPT. It then moved to KANTRA where it was used until September 1942

*This is a very early use of the date stamp that had been bought with the No1 AIF Base PU from Australia.
(collas) (Egypt Study Circle)*

INCOMING MAIL to AUSTRALIA WWII

SOUTH AFRICA to MELBOURNE VIC. JULY 1941



AIRMAIL cover posted from KINGWILLIAMSTOWN South Africa to MELBOURNE Vic 3 July 1941

Face:

Stamps -

Paying 1/3d

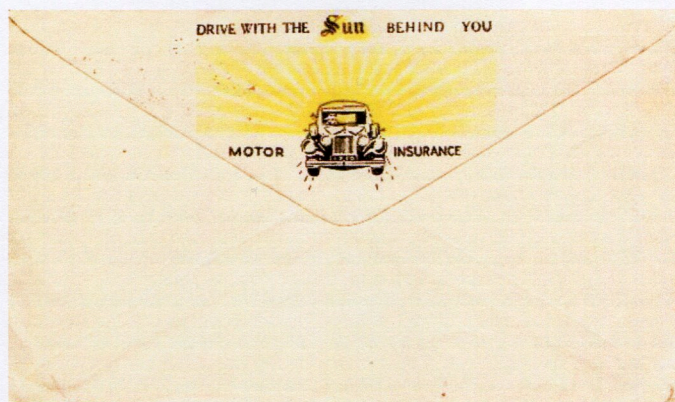
3d ULTRAMARINE Groot Schuur (South Africa issue) Feb 1940 SG 22a (MP X7)

2d Union Building Pretoria issued Nov 1938 (both issues) SG 58 (MP X5)

4d Brown Type 2 Native Kraal issued 1936 (both issues) SG 46c (MP X8c)

KINGWILLIAMSTOWN c.d.s. x 3 3V1141 12.30

Rear:



Company advertising only.

This cover was flown from Durban South Africa - Cairo then B.O.A.C. route to Australia.

Note: This mail was not the subject of censorship.

INCOMING MAIL to AUSTRALIA WWII

MALAYA to MELBOURNE VIC.

JULY 1941



AIRMAIL cover posted 16 July 1941 SEREMBAN to PRESTON Victoria. (No arrival date indicated)

- Face:** Paying 25cents
International Meter mark **MALAYA 25c U52 Straits Settlements**
c.d.s. applied: A.I.F. FIELD P.O. No 17 16JY41
Rectangular **AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCES PASSED BY CENSOR 644** & signed
- Rear:** Senders address only.
Plain censors tape sealing the back

This cover was flown from SINGAPORE -DARWIN - SYDNEY then onforwarded to MELBOURNE.

The A.I.F. c.d.s. was used in SEREMBAN 6 Feb 1941 - 13 Jan 1942.

The letter was sent from 16th Battery, 4th Tank Regiment - stationed in Malaya (now Malaysia)

Note:

During World War II, the Japanese invaded Malaya and the Straits Settlements by landing on Kelantan on 8 December 1941. This regiment was captured and spent their time as prisoners of war.

INCOMING MAIL to AUSTRALIA WWII

CANADA to LEETON N.S.W.

JANUARY 1942



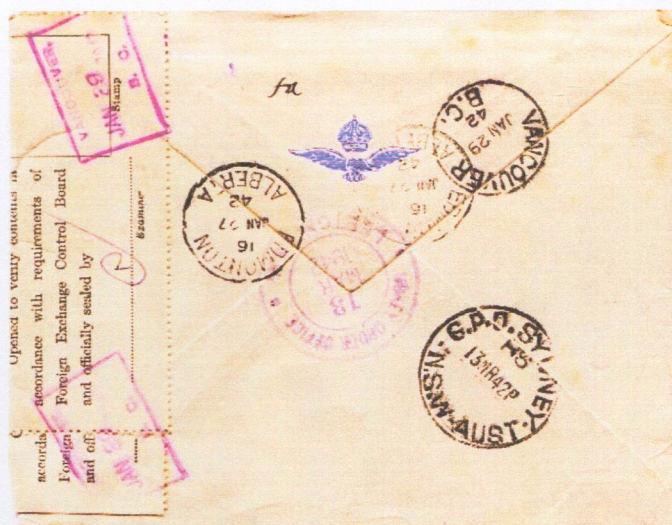
REGISTERED cover Posted 27 January 1942 ALBERTA Canada to LEETON N.S.W. (Arriving 13 March 1942)

Face:

Stamps Paying 13c -10c Postage + 3c Registration
 3c CARMINE KGV SG359 (MP 3)
 10c CARMINE Parliament Building Ottawa SG363 (MP 7a)
 Two c.d.s. applied: EDMONTON ALBERTA 16 27JAN 42
 "PASSED FOR EXPORT" handstamp
 REGISTRATION handstamp EDMONTON, ALBERTA No 14005

Rear:

Two c.d.s. applied: EDMONTON ALBERTA 16 27JAN 42
 VANCOUVER B.C. c.d.s. 29JAN42 applied
 Examined by Foreign Exchange Control Board and seal tape
 applied with two rectangular VANCOUVER B.C. JAN 29 42
 handstamps



On arrival in SYDNEY Australia c.d.s. applied on rear G.P.O. SYDNEY RS 13MR42P

Reaching LEETON N.S.W. a Violet double circle MONEY ORDER OFFICE LEETON 13 MAR 1942 applied

Note: The Control Board seal was too short for the cover and a part second segment applied.

INCOMING MAIL to AUSTRALIA WWII

USA to CAULFIELD Vic.

JULY 1942



AIRMAIL cover Posted 25 July 1942 NEW ORLEANS to CAULFIELD Vic. (Arrival date not recorded)

Face:

Stamps Paying 70c (20c Postage + 50 Airmail)
20c GREEN AIRMAIL SGA905
50c TRANS PACIFIC MAIL SGA777

Two x Duplex c.d.s. with Barred numeral (4) X 3 applied:
NEW ORLEANS LA. 25JUL 1942 11.30AM
Senders Address obliterated.

Rear:

Censor tape applied USA 4726

On arrival in MELBOURNE Australia it was again opened and resealed with Victorian censor tape **3 Opened by Censor** (printed front and reverse)
On the face a diamond shaped Australian **3 PASSED BY CENSOR 192** in violet across the seal.



South Pacific Routes to Australia 20 June 42 - June 43
San Francisco - Hickam - Christmas - Canton - Nandi - Tontouta - Sydney or Brisbane,
Air Transport Corp, Consair B-24, C-54

INCOMING MAIL to AUSTRALIA WWII

BRITISH WEST AFRICA to COBURG VIC.

JANUARY 1943



AIRMAIL cover posted 26 January 1943 BRITISH WEST AFRICA to COBURG Victoria. (No arrival date by air indicated)

Face:

Stamps: Paying 15 pence. (1/3d was Airmail rate.)

UK 6d King George VI PALE PURPLE (31/1/39) SG470 (MP 9)

UK 9d King George VI DEEP OLIVE (1/5/39) SG473 (MP 12)

Two c.d.s. applied: Double ring thick bars FIELD POST OFFICE 106 26JA43

"ON ACTIVE SERVICE" handwritten note.

Square R.A.F. CENSOR in Blue handstamp with blue pen signature.

Rear:

Senders address with location obliterated

Notes:

From Sgt Goddard stationed at R.A.F. base Takoradi -British West Africa
(GOLD COAST - now GHANA)

As the starting point of the Allied trans-African supply line to Egypt that became officially known as the West African Reinforcement Route, Takoradi became one of the most important bases for Britain's Royal Air Force (RAF). Between August 1940 and June 1943, over 4,500 British Blenheims, Hurricanes, and Spitfires were assembled at Takoradi and ferried to the Middle East.

Flight journey to Australia was through Belgian airline SABENA to LAGOS - KHARTOUM - CAIRO
Then B.O.A.C. Empire Route.

INCOMING MAIL to AUSTRALIA WWII

INDIA to LEETON N.S.W.

FEBRUARY 1943



AIRMAIL cover posted 25 February 1943 INDIA to LEETON N.S.W.. (No arrival date by air indicated.)

Face:

Stamps: Paying 8 annas.

KGV 8As BLUE SG275 (MP 31)

c.d.s. applied: Double ring F.P.O. 35 25 FEB 43

"ON ACTIVE SERVICE" "BY AIR MAIL" handwritten note.

Circular **PASSED BY CENSOR** No294 handstamp and signed

Octagonal Crown PASSED DHA/22 hand stamped over previous mark

Rear: Plain

The F.P.O. 35 datestamp was allocated to 6th Indian Division, departing Bombay September 1941 for Iraq, it remained in use until 1946.

The DHA/22 censor stamp was used from 1942.

INCOMING MAIL to AUSTRALIA WWII

USA to FOOTSCRAY Vic.

DECEMBER 1944



Cover Posted 20 December 1944 NEW YORK USA to FOOTSCRAY Vic. (Arrival date not recorded)

Face:

Stamps x2

Paying 6c

3c Thomas Jefferson

SG803

c.d.s. with Bars: U.S. ARMY POSTAL SERVICE A.P.O. 220 20 DEC 1944 (New York N.Y.)

Rectangular PASSED BY U.S. ARMY EXAMINER 31195 handstamp

Overstamped c.d.s. U.S. PASSED BY ARMY BASE EXAMINER 1822

Clear sealing tape

Rear:

Clear sealing tape - "OPENED BY"

The 770th Bombardment Squadron was first activated in 1943, and became one of the earliest Boeing B-29 Superfortress units. It moved to the China Burma India Theatre's in April 1944.

The B29 Bomber known as "Vixen" had as its Right Gunner Sgt G Peacock.

Returning from a mission Dec 7 1944 at 4.22am over Sianfu CHINA it failed to return.

Peacock earned the Air Medal and Purple Heart posthumously, he was from Kalamazoo Michigan USA.

South Pacific Routes to Australia 1 Nov 44 - 1 Sep 45 Hamilton - Hickam - Christmas - Canton - Nandi - Tontouta - Amberley
Consair LB-30 2 - ATC C-54.

This letter was on forwarded to Australia after his death.

INCOMING MAIL to AUSTRALIA WWII

INDIA to MELBOURNE VIC.

JANUARY 1945

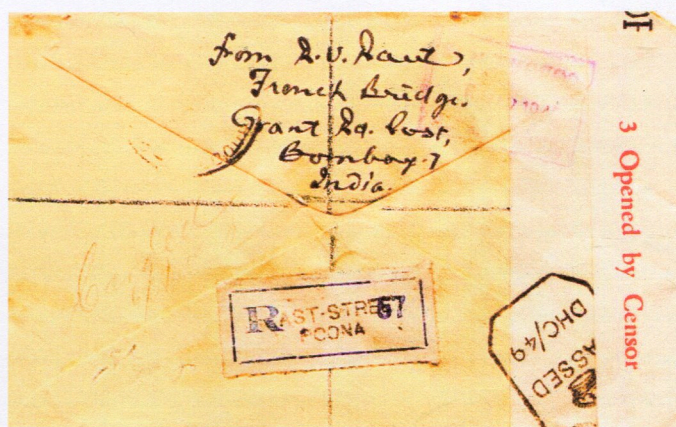


REGISTERED cover posted 22 January 1945 POONA to COBURG Vic.. (Carded 6 March 1945)

Face:

Indian Stamps: Paying 6½ annas.

¼ anna	King George V	SG226
1 anna	King George V	SG 160
2 anna	King George VI	SG 270
1 anna	King George V	SG242
3 pies	King George VI	SG 265
1 anna	King George V	SG 234
¼ anna	King George VI x 2	SG 266
c.d.s. x 5 applied: POONA. 22 JAN 45		



REAR:

Octagonal Crown PASSED DHC/49 hand stamped over Indian sealing tape.
REGISTRATION label EAST STREET POONA R 57
A faint REGISTERED MELBOURNE c.d.s. (date unclear)

On arrival in Australia it was again opened by censor - resealed with a Victorian **3 OPENED BY CENSOR** tape and over stamped with Diamond shape mark in violet **PASSED BY CENSOR 373** and checked by **IC338** also in violet on face.

After arrival at COBURG 6 March 1945 a violet rectangular hand date stamp was applied **POST OFFICE COBURG N13**

The COBURG date stamp is listed as TYPE 1040 in Watson Webster & Wood - Rated RRRR.
(The upside down date is unrecorded)