

Cinderella Corner

Welcome to the first issue of Cinderella Corner for 2016 and my first as a regular writer for Stamp News Australasia. I begin by extending my thanks and appreciation to Tony Presgrave for his hard work and commitment towards providing incredible Cinderella Corner pieces over the years. His dedication has helped develop and cement the important place that cinderellas have in philately and, through their exposure, to also help safeguard their longevity in the years ahead.

As an avid collector and researcher of Australian cinderellas and labels, I hope to offer much to Stamp News and welcome the opportunity to regularly present information with other collectors. If you have an item (or perhaps several) that you wish to share and discuss, or have any general comments about Australian cinderellas, please email me at: vitomilana@hotmail.com

I anticipate that Cinderella Corner will continue to run as a regular inquiry into many of the countless cinderellas from around our Nation and, in doing so, build upon the body of knowledge that exists on them. It never ceases to amaze me how many *new* labels are regularly unearthed and help to redefine our understanding of them and how they were utilised across the decades. Com-



ments on the scarcity of some of the discussed labels will also be offered alongside some suggested prices. I also welcome suggestions and robust feedback on how best to approach future Cinderella Corner articles in the future.

While this January issue serves as a commentary on a few cinderellas from my own collection, future Cinderella Corner pieces will most likely also feature items from other collectors. I look forward to a healthy partnership with Stamp News Australasia and its readers throughout 2016 and beyond.

Essex Motor Cars

The following four illustrated advertising labels share a common *Essex* theme. Their association with cars and car products serves as an early example of motor and vehicle-themed cinderellas from Australia that are, currently, a popular collecting interest. If not for only one of the four Essex labels that presents the slogan 'Australia's Rising Sun', it would be questionable if they were truly Australian. Thankfully, the *rising sun* label, with its iconic image of the enlarged sun and horizon, helps lend support that they are most likely of Australian origin. Arguably, however, having the name *Aus-*

Vito Milana

tralia as the only text on the label would have been less affirming, as several early cinderellas produced abroad, especially in the United Kingdom, have the word *Australia* embedded somewhere in the label's frame for the purpose of inciting international patriotism and allegiance.

The labels are tall and atypically rectangular shaped at a healthy 55mm by 32mm and are all rouletted 7; thus they would have served as prominently-sized seals affixed to the reverse of letter and envelope correspondences.

Each of the four labels are richly coloured with white margins and texts. They also draw upon different states of nature and the environment, including a brightly sun-lit road, and a dark evening in the open air. The text found on each label is as following:

Label 1: ESSEX COACH for Sunny days and Wet days

Label 2: ESSEX MECHANICAL MASTERPIECE

Label 3: ESSEX MOTOR CARS The SIGN OF EFFICIENCY

Label 4: AUSTRALIA'S RISING SUN - ESSEX

Without at least one of these labels tied to a



cover with a clear complete (or partial) postmarked date, it is difficult to ascertain a year of origin, given that Essex was foremost a beloved American car (founded in Michigan) with little international export and productivity. Thankfully the written texts that adorn the vignettes serve as opportunities to help establish the time period in which these colourful labels likely entered in the Australian cinderella arena.

Some initial research on Essex vehicles uncovered that the brand of car had a relatively small lifespan. It was introduced at the end of World War I in 1918 and retired from productivity just over two decades later in 1933. This leaves a coverage of some 16 years. Closer inspection of each label's text then helped to refine this scope.

Label 1 presents the image (and text) of an Essex Coach model, which began production in 1922 and peaked in 1926. The closed door model of the Essex appears in both Label 1 and Label 4 (heading away from the rising sun). The starting point of the timeline of production thereby narrows 4 years or so from 1918 to 1922.

Label 2, unfortunately, yields no further help towards locating the year of these labels. The expres-



Cinderella Corner

sion 'mechanical masterpiece' appears to serve as an advertised testimony of satisfaction and praise towards the vehicles moreso than a slogan that offers some historical information about the cars.

Label 3 continues to build the profile. The image towards the base is a hexagon, which encases the words ESSEX MOTOR CARS: while Essex vehicles ran in production until 1933, it was in late 1922, after only around 5 years of production, that they were manufactured by Hudson Motor Company (until 1933). As such, the slogan suggests that the labels were produced under the auspice of Essex Motor Cars rather than Hudson, and the window of possible production of these cinderellas dramatically shrinks to the year 1922 or thereabouts.

Label 4 is where a credible link to Australia is achieved. It illustrates the glorious expression AUSTRALIA'A RISING SUN and the familiar namesake image which first featured on Army Corp badges in 1902 to mark Australia's involvement in the Boer War. The word ESSEX appears inside the rising sun, with the vehicle driving away on an open plain. The message appears unmistakable and clear: The American-made Essex vehicles had developed their own iconic place in Australia, entrenched in a patriotic culture forged a few decades earlier. While the written information certainly points to this conclusion, further research established that Essex vehicles were very popular in Australia in the early and mid-1920s and were even sold out at one point. They were, in fact, imported for sale as early as 1919. So alongside a tentative yet plausible production year of around 1922, it appears that these labels are genuinely Australian.

When considered collectively, the four Essex labels advertise a rustic and scenic Australia and illustrate an American car that was hugely popular abroad. They are an attractive set of four cinderellas that showcase two models of the Essex vehicle range and were most likely produced sometime in the early 1920s when the post-war vehicle was a prime seller in Australia. Furthermore, they were adverts that were likely issued for free.

I have personally cited only two sets of these labels with the same four types in each. It is uncertain if other designs exist. They are scarce and valued at around \$100 - \$150 for the set. If anyone has other examples of these attractive cinderellas or knows anything more about them, please let me know.

Examples Of Colonial-Era Australian Cinderellas

I am hoping that another occasional feature of Cinderella Corner will be discussions on labels that pre-date World War I, including some early Colonial ones. To begin, I offer four different cinderella items.

Walter Akhurst & Co

This pair of red and white cinderellas are certainly interesting. They are each rather small (measuring 21mm by 19mm) with perforation 14 on all four sides. An image of a corner street building adorns the centre of the frame and is encircled by the text: WALTER AKHURST & CO. KENT ST. SYDNEY. In addition to this, as seen with the help of a magnifying glass, the façade of the building also sports the words AKHURST & CO.

These labels advertise the printing business of Walter Akhurst & Co. Walter Akhurst was born in North Adelaide on January 2nd 1854 and died in Sydney on the 6th April 1904. He established his Sydney firm after another printing and lithographic business run by Charles Troedel relocated from N.S.W. to Melbourne. It was opened in April of 1881 and remained active on 307 - 309 Kent Street in Sydney for close to 20 years.

Of further note, Walter appears to have won a stamp design competition run in N.S.W. in 1887. Through his business, he contributed regularly to printing processes, including some of those responsible for the design and production of Australia Colonial stamps and stationery items.

The labels are scarce and likely dates to the final years of the 1800s.



Vito Milana

A.J. Nettlefold

Several copies of this pre-WWI label exist in collections. This example bears a striking postmark from Hobart dating July 28th 1904. The cinderella illustrates the text: A. J. NETTLEFOLD – TAILOR – OUTFITTER in a centre image with HOBART printed above and QUEENSTOWN printed below.



In striking pink and white, the cinderella is perforated 11 on all sides and measures 31mm by 25mm.

In Hobart, Alfred John (A.J.) operated as a tailor and outfitter on Liv-

erpool Street, Hobart, and opened another store in Queenstown (also in Tasmania). One well-centred example of the label recently sold for \$100 and they should be regarded as scarce.

Intercolonial Exhibition

This small, circular, brown and white cinderella label has a diameter of 28mm and is wonderfully embossed. The example provided is gummed on the reverse. At the base, printed in white, is INTERCOLONIAL EXHIBITION VICTORIA. 1866. It is one of, if not the earliest example of an Australian exhibition label.



The Intercolonial Exhibition was an important event as it was the first time Australian colonies came together, in Melbourne, to exhibit and showcase a range of items and achievements guided by specific categories. There were representations from all over Australia and other parts of the world, including New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania, Queensland, Western Australia and New Zealand. The cinderella itself is an exact replica of the medal awarded to winners at the exhibition. Like all items relating to this prominent event, this label is scarce and few examples have survived.

International Exhibition Labels (1879/1880)

Like the Intercolonial cinderella, this label also exists as one of the earliest exhibition labels from Australia (research has confirmed that while there is no English text present, they were in fact produced here). Intricately embossed, these seals present the German text: AUSTRALISCHE WELTAUSSTELLUNGEN 1879/80 – REICHS – KOMMISSAR and the English translation is AUSTRALIAN WORLD EXHIBITIONS 1879/80 – EMPIRE – COMMISSIONER.

The label is 36mm in diameter and exists in two distinct shades of red. It celebrates the German's efforts to exhibit a range of products, especially pianos, at the International Exhibition in Sydney (1879) and Melbourne (1880). Several examples have been cited and prices range from \$70 to as high as \$200.

