

Cinderella Corner

Ackland to Trouchet: Stamp Dealers and Australian Cinderellas

Welcome to the June issue of Cinderella Corner. The reader may remember nearly 12 months ago, to last year's July piece. With the expert assistance of Rod Perry, it harboured its focus on cinderella advertising material produced by some of Australia's early stamp dealers and traders.

This issue, the first for Australia's winter, briefly continues this narrative, focusing of one stamp dealer and his use of war labels on correspondences.

William Ackland was a pioneer and a highly revered and respected Victorian philatelist. He operated across two different Melbourne locations, commencing his practice in 1892, and dealing for over 50 years. On the other side of the continent,



Figure 1

Western Australian local (and Mauritius born) Alex Trouchet, primarily a chemist by trade, operated as a philatelic dealer from his Wellington Street pharmacy in Perth. While lesser known in philatelic circles than Ackland, his contributions to philately were equally significant.

It is clear that both dealers corresponded with each other during their years of operation. Of note,

and with intrigue to the cinderella collector and enthusiast, three envelopes have surfaced addressed to Trouchet, each with a clear example of Ackland's handstamp as the return address. On all three items, the same example of a Liberty Loan cinderella label is affixed. Details of these three pieces, as per provided illustrations, are as follows:

- In Figure 1, the handwritten address to Trouchet is: *Mr. A Trouchet – Barrack*



Figure 2

Vito Milana



Figure 3

& Wellington Sts. Perth West Aust. This is accompanied by the written addition: *per 1st Overland Mail Oct 20th 1917 Melbourne to Perth*. Two Tasmanian colonial stamps adorn the front of the cover, with postmarked details: *20th October 1917, Elizabeth St., Melbourne*. In the top left corner of the envelope is an affixed cinderella label with the written text: **For all they mean to you – Subscribe to the LIBERTY LOAN**. The label is also postmarked. The reverse of the cover displays a clear example of Ackland's purple and boxed handstamp: *WM. ACKLAND – FOREIGN STAMP IMPORTER, 267 Collins Street Melbourne*.

- Figure 2 illustrates a cover that is near identical to Figure 1, sharing the same address, return handstamp, postmarks, and cancelled cinderella label. One key difference in the single postage stamp used on the front. It is therefore possible that Ackland posted similar covers on that day to Trouchet and/or others.
- The item highlighted across Figures 3 and 4 (front and reverse, respectively) also shares similarities with the previously two explored covers, mainly because it is addressed to

Trouchet, and was also sent as part of the 1st Overland Mail service from Melbourne to Perth. The piece itself, however, is larger in size than the items illustrated in Figures 1 and 2 and carries several Colonial stamps cancelled on the front. Ackland's handstamp also features on the front (top left corner), rather than the reverse. And, conversely, the cinderella label that features on the front of the envelopes presented in Figures 1 and 2 is affixed to the reverse of this third one (Figure 4), with faint remains of a part cancel strike towards the base of it.

The cinderella labels presented across all three items are part of 13 differently designed ones that have been elsewhere documented in philatelic catalogues and articles, most notably in Jackson's 1987 text *FIRST WORLD WAR PATRIOTIC LABELS OF AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND*. Many of this cinderellas shared a patriotic UK motif, and they were all issued by the Australian Commonwealth Government. They were available, free of charge, from different branches of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia. The labels were issued from the latter part of 1917 and production stopped some time before 1918 when T. S. Harrison was appointed as the Commonwealth Note and Stamp Printer.

One of the earliest points of reference regarding details about the released labels dates to October 26, 1917 where a newspaper article titled *Poster-Stamps and the Liberty Loan* discusses the cinderellas. The century-old vignette attributes the release to the then Federal Treasurer Sir John Forrest as a means of popularising the War Loan, raising needed funds and equipping the public with patriotism. Guidelines were also issued at the time to only affix the labels on letters or on the reverse of correspon-

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dence envelopes.

In Jackson's well-regarded catalogue, the label featured on the three covers is referenced as A7b, distinguishable from its counterpart A7a by the black outlining around the letters LIBERTY LOAN. A7b is significantly scarcer (and more valuable) than A7a; the latter is one of the more common of the 13 basic design styles that exist across the Liberty Loan labels, whereas A7b is one of the rarest of the varieties that can be found amongst them. An example of label A7a is illustrated in Figure 5. Furthermore, when cancelled on cover, the scarcity of any of these Liberty Loan cinderella labels increases several fold. The three covers therefore present as an interesting and valuable set with rare WWI-era Australian cinderellas,



Figure 4



Figure 5

especially given that two of them, illustrated in Figures 1 and 2, effectively violate the guidelines that Ackland would have likely have been familiar with, as he affixed them to the front of the envelopes rather than to the reverse. This arguably adds an overall attraction to the covers and helps isolate their patriotic message more clearly.

A question remains regarding Ackland's relationship with cinderella labels. Perhaps he shared an affinity with the, along with a firm allegiance to Australia's war efforts, and, in attaching them when corresponding to fellow trader Trouchet on at least three separate occasions on the same day, helped highlight their questionable validity in philately during this time. This is heightened by the fact that they were attached to the face of significant pieces celebrating the first Overland Mail service from Melbourne to Perth. Regardless of the motivation behind Ackland's items, the envelopes are desirable pieces and broaden both the scope of information relating to Australian cinderella philately and the information already gathered on the philatelic patterns that define some of our early Australian traders and dealers. Any further information about Australian dealers and their use of cinderella labels is most welcomed.

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