

Commercial Uses of the Australian Pound-denominated Stamps

Background and Aim: From 1913, when Australia issued its first postage stamp, to 1966, when it converted from the £sd (pounds, shillings, pence) to the decimal currency system, it issued 14 pound-denominated stamps. This exhibit shows how 10 of the stamps were commercially used on postal articles other than parcel tags. Uses of the other 4 stamps are not shown as no commercial article bearing any of these 4 stamps has been recorded thus far.

Treatment: The exhibit is arranged in the order given in the table below. For each stamp, at least one example of its use is shown, together with information on its issue date and print quantity. Brief explanations of the services employed, the corresponding rates, and the periods the rates were in use are given where appropriate to give greater context to the uses of the subject stamps.

Design	Stamp	Page
Kangaroos	£1 (1 st wmk)* & £2 (1 st wmk)*	-
	£1 (bi-colour 3 rd wmk)*	-
	£2 (3 rd wmk)*	-
	£1 (grey 3 rd wmk)	1 - 2
	£2 (small multiple wmk)	
	£1 (CofA wmk)	3 - 6
£2 (CofA wmk)		
Coronation	£1 (chalk-surfaced paper)	5 - 8
Robes	£1 (unsurfaced paper)	7 - 10
Coat-of-Arms	£1 Blue & £2 Green	11 - 14
Navigators	£1 Bass & £2 King	15 - 16

* No commercial usage known thus far

Significance: Commercial articles bearing pound-denominated stamps are very uncommon, with most being parcel tags. The articles in this exhibit are thus rare survivors. Many are one of only a few known bearing the subject stamps (in the case of the £2 King, the only known article bearing the stamp). Key articles are framed in red and their importance and rarity with respect to the subject stamp(s) explained in bold.

References:

¹ *The Australian Commonwealth Specialists' Catalogues*

² *The Australian Philatelist Vol 1 (#2, #4 & #5) & Vol 2*

(#1) – *Australian Commonwealth Postal Rates*

Kangaroo

£1 (grey, 3rd watermark) and £2 (small multiple watermark)



This article has been restored and affixed to non-acidic backing paper with soluble glue.

Usage: **Domestic airmail** (25 Mar 1933)

£1 Kangaroo (grey 3rd wmk) x11 and £2 Kangaroo (small multiple wmk) x3, used with 1/- Kangaroo and 4d KGV for an aggregate £17/1/4d on a parcel front, paying the 1,024d (£4/5/4d) domestic letter rate (2d every oz x512, 4 Aug 1930 to 9 Dec 1941) and 3,072d (£12/16/-d) domestic airmail fee (3d every ½oz x1,024, Dec 1921 to 30 Sep 1959). (Note endorsement at upper-left "Accepted / Weight / 32lbs / J Hart / Inquiry Office / G.P.O. / Sydney" with "£17/1/4" below. 32lbs = 512oz).

The £1 Kangaroo (grey 3rd wmk) was issued in May 1924 to replace the £1 Kangaroo (bi-colour 3rd wmk) and had a print quantity of 610,640. It was replaced 11 years later in Jun 1935 by the £1 Kangaroo (CofA wmk). The £2 Kangaroo (small multiple wmk) was issued in Nov 1930 to replace the £2 Kangaroo (3rd wmk) and had the smallest print quantity amongst all the pound-denominated stamps, with only 120,000 printed. It was replaced less than 4 years later in Jun 1934 by the £2 Kangaroo (CofA wmk).

- **Less than 10 articles bearing the £1 Kangaroo (grey 3rd wmk) are known.**
- **1 of only 3 known articles bearing the £2 Kangaroo (small multiple wmk), the other 2 being tags.**
- **Article with most number of the £1 Kangaroo (grey 3rd wmk) and the £2 Kangaroo (small multiple wmk).**
- **Known highest franking for a pre-WWII Australian article and known second-highest franking for a pre-decimal Australian article**



Usage: **Overseas airmail** (7 Nov 1940)

£1 Kangaroo (CofA wmk) used with 10/- and 5/- Coronation Robes and 9d Platypus for an aggregate £1/15/9d on a cover, overpaying by 5d the 35/4d (9th weight-step) California Clipper letter rate to the US (4/- for 1st ½oz + 3/11d every additional ½oz x9, 20 Jul 1940 to 23 Nov 1941).

The £1 Coronation Robes (chalk-surfaced paper) was not used on this cover although it had been issued 2 years earlier in Nov 1938. Instead, the £1 Kangaroo (CofA wmk), issued in Jun 1935 to replace the £1 Kangaroo (grey 3rd wmk), was used, possibly to use up excess stock. About 600,000 £1 Kangaroo (CofA wmk) stamps were printed.

Less than 10 covers bearing the £1 Kangaroo (CofA wmk) are known.

Kangaroo

£1 (CofA watermark) and £2 (CofA watermark)



Usage: Overseas airmail (7 Oct 1940)

£2 Kangaroo (CofA wmk) and **£1 Kangaroo (CofA wmk)** used with 2/- Kangaroo (CofA wmk) x2 and 5d Merino for an aggregate £3/4/5d on a cover, paying the 64/2d (11th weight-step) trans-Pacific Clipper letter rate to the UK (5/10d every ½oz x11, 20 Jul 1940 to 27 Nov 1941) plus 3d registration fee (1 Mar 1901 to 30 Jun 1949).

The **£2 Kangaroo (CofA wmk)**, issued in Jun 1934 to replace the **£2 Kangaroo (small multiple wmk)**, had a small print quantity of 240,000. It was the de-facto **£2 stamp** for most of the KGV era (1936-52) although it was issued during the reign of KGV. It was only replaced more than 15 years later in Jan 1950 by the **£2 Coat-of-Arms**.

1 of only 2 known covers bearing the £2 Kangaroo (CofA wmk), with the added bonus of also having the **£1 Kangaroo (CofA wmk)**.

Kangaroo and Coronation Robes

£2 (CofA watermark) and £1 (chalk-surfaced paper)

Usage: Bulk postage (7 May 1940)

£2 Kangaroo (CofA wmk) and **£1 Coronation Robes (chalk-surfaced paper)** used with 10/- Coronation Robes (chalk-surfaced paper) and 1/- Lyrebird for an aggregate £3/11/0d (852d) on a bulk postage docket, paying bulk postage for 852 printed matter items at 1d per item.

(Postal regulations introduced in Oct 1905 required the punching of stamps with denominations 2/- and above when used for such purpose to 'absolutely destroy their saleable character', so as to prevent the theft and sale of such high-denomination stamps. Such articles were to be checked and then safe-kept, and the accumulated articles destroyed at certain intervals in the presence of at least two officers.)

The **£1 Coronation Robes** was issued in Nov 1938 to replace the **£1 Kangaroo (CofA wmk)**. It was issued on chalk-surfaced paper to provide a finer printing impression. 1,920,000 were printed in total. More than 10 years later, on 4 Apr 1949, it was reissued on unsurfaced paper.

Supposed to have been destroyed by the post office but somehow escaped destruction.

POSTMASTER-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT. N^o 35872

Sch. C.1692.—2/1937. **Bulk Postage Docket.** Form 620.—1.

Nature of Article... *Augustine Harrington*

Name of Newspaper or sender... *Augustine Harrington*

Number.	Weight.				Rate.	Postage.		
	cwt.	qrs.	lb.	oz.		@	£	s.
852					1	3	11	-

Postage stamps to be affixed within this space by the person posting the mail matter, who must write his name or initials across **each stamp** in the presence of the Officer to whom the mail matter is handed.

Stamps to full amount of postage purchased this day.

Date Stamp Stamp Sales Office.

RENMARK 28P-7MY40 S.A.

not be stamped

sixteen postage stamps.

Date Stamp Bulk Postage Office.

RENMARK 28P-7MY40 S.A.

The above particulars have been checked and found correct.

Receiving Officer. *Changdon*

Verifying Officer. *[Signature]*

NOTE.—This form must be forwarded at the close of each week to the Accountant, G.P.O., by registered mail.

Coronation Robes

£1 (chalk-surfaced paper)



Usage: **Overseas airmail** (4 Sep 1945)

£1 Coronation Robes (chalk-surfaced paper) x4 used with 5/- Coronation Robes (chalk-surfaced paper), 2/- Kangaroo and 1/- Lyrebird for an aggregate £4/8/- on a cover, paying the 88/- (22nd weight-step) airmail service to the US (4/- every ½oz x22, 18 Aug 1945 to 10 Sep 1946).

(Way heavier than the average article at 10½-11oz, the article apparently ruptured by the time it reached the US, for on the reverse is a handstamp of G.P.O. Boston Mailing Division explaining it was received in poor condition, tying a US "Officially Sealed" label. The repairs on the sides using brown adhesive paper were done by the US Postal Service).

£1 (unsurfaced paper)

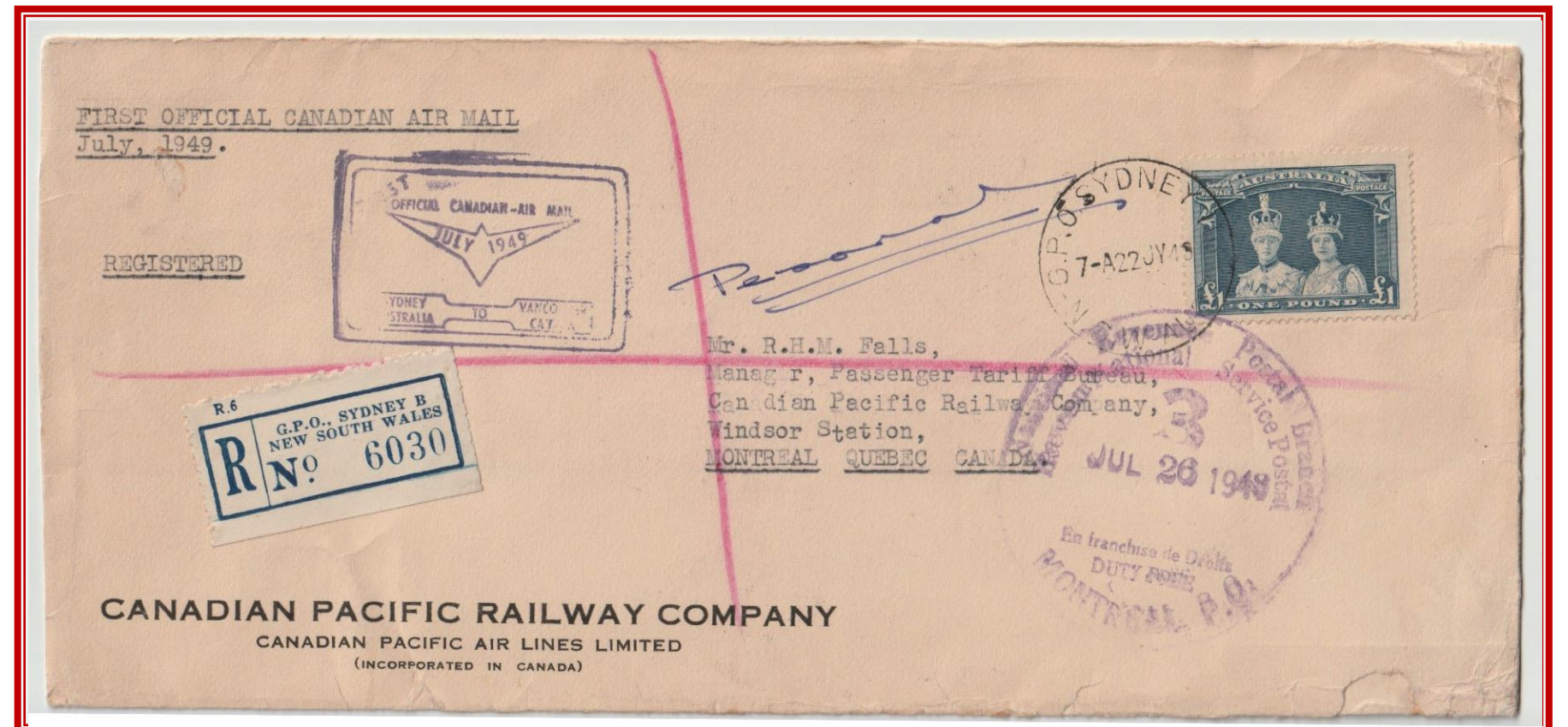
Usage: **Overseas airmail** (22 Jul 1949)

£1 Coronation Robes (unsurfaced paper) solo on a cover, paying the 19/6d (13th weight-step) airmail service to Canada (1/6d every ½oz x13, 1 Jun 1947 to 31 Jul 1952) plus 6d registration fee (1 Jul 1949 to 8 Jul 1951).

The £1 Coronation Robes (unsurfaced paper), issued on 4 Apr 1949, was replaced less than 8 months later on 29 Nov 1949 by the £1 Coat-of-Arms. Only 160,000 were printed compared to 1,920,000 for the £1 (chalk-surfaced paper). Of all the pound-denominated stamps, this stamp had the second smallest print quality. Only the £2 Kangaroo (small multiple wmk) had a smaller print quality with only 120,000 printed.

1 of only 3 known articles bearing the £1 Coronation Robes (unsurfaced paper).

[Historical note: This cover was carried on the inaugural flight of Canadian Pacific Airlines' new service between Sydney and Vancouver on 22 Jul 1949 (note blue cachet "FIRST OFFICIAL CANADIAN AIR MAIL / JULY 1949 / SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA TO VANCOUVER, CANADA). This was also Canada's first trans-Pacific plane service. According to newspaper archives, 481 covers bound for Canada was carried on this inaugural flight.]



£1 (unsurfaced paper)



Usage: **Domestic airmail** (1949)

(Date unclear but year almost certainly 1949 as the stamp was issued in Apr 1949 and replaced by the £1 Coat-of-Arms in Nov 1949).

£1 Coronation Robes (unsurfaced paper) used with 5/- Coronation Robes, 2/- Aboriginal art x2, 3d Brown KGVII and 1/2d Kangaroo for an aggregate 29/3 1/2d on a cover/parcel front, of which payment can be either 1 of 2 possibilities:

- (1): Before 1 Jul 1949, weighs 43-43 1/2ozs:
- Letter rate 2d every 1oz x44 = 7/4d
 - Domestic airmail fee 3d every 1/2oz x87 = 21/9d
 - Registration fee = 3d
 - War tax = 1/2d
 - Total of 29/4 1/2d, overpaid by 1d
- (2): On or after 1 Jul 1949, weighs 42 1/2-43ozs:
- Letter rate 2 1/2d first 1oz, 2d every additional oz x42 = 7/2 1/2d
 - Domestic airmail fee 3d every 1/2oz x86 = 21/6d
 - Registration fee = 6d
 - Total of 29/2 1/2d, underpaid by 1d

(From the establishment of the first domestic airmail service in Dec 1921, a fee of 3d per 1/2oz in addition to surface postage was applied to airmail letters. This fee remained unchanged until its abolishment in 1959. The 1/2oz war tax was introduced on 10 Dec 1941 to help meet wartime expenditure. It applied only once to postal articles regardless of weight, though some categories of mail were exempted, such as foreign airmail letters and mail to/from the Defence Forces. It was abolished on 1 Jul 1949.)

Second of only 3 known articles bearing the £1 Coronation Robes (unsurfaced paper). The first, in the previous page, was for foreign airmail while this was for domestic airmail.

Coat-of-Arms

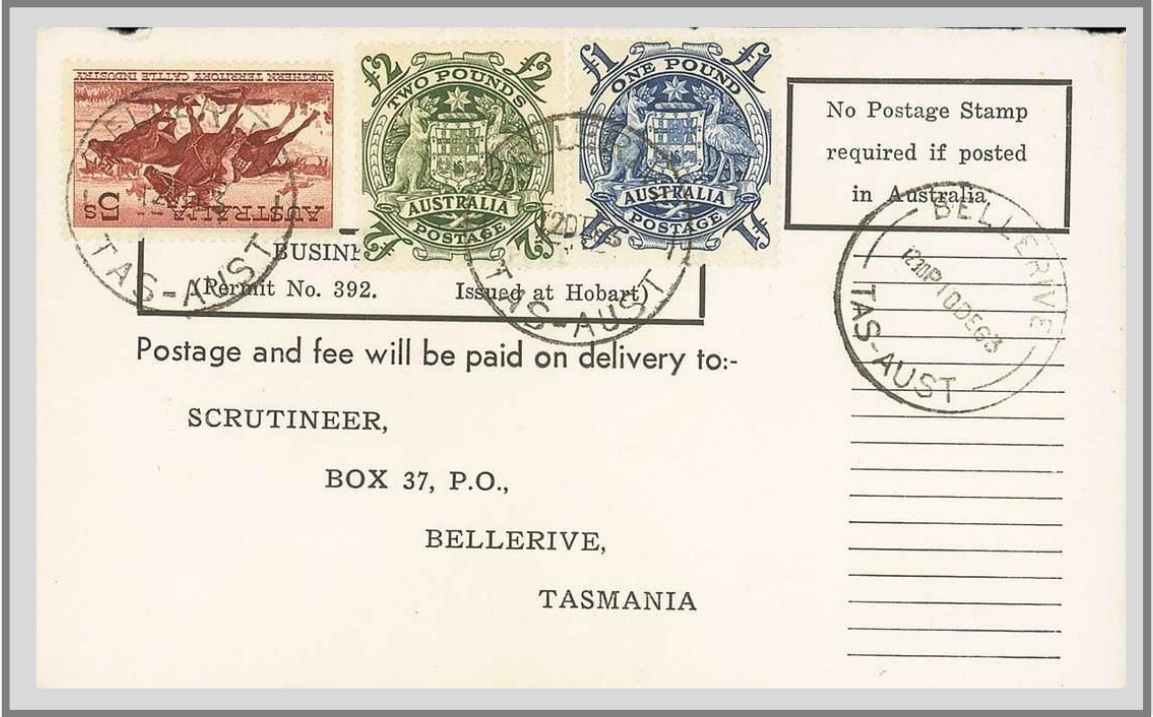
£1 Blue and £2 Green



Usage: Overseas airmail (8 Feb 1952)

£1 Coat-of-Arms x5 used with 5/- Coat-of-Arms, 1/6d Hermes x2 and 9d Platypus for an aggregate £5/8/9d on a parcel wrapping, paying the 108/- (72th weight-step) airmail service to the US (1/6d every ½oz x72, 1 Jun 1947 to 31 Jul 1952) plus 9d registration fee (9 Jul 1951 to 30 Sep 1956)

Amongst all the pound-denominated stamps, the £1 Coat-of-Arms, issued in Nov 1949, had the highest number printed and issued, with 7,650,000 printed of which 7,417,160 were distributed to the various post offices.

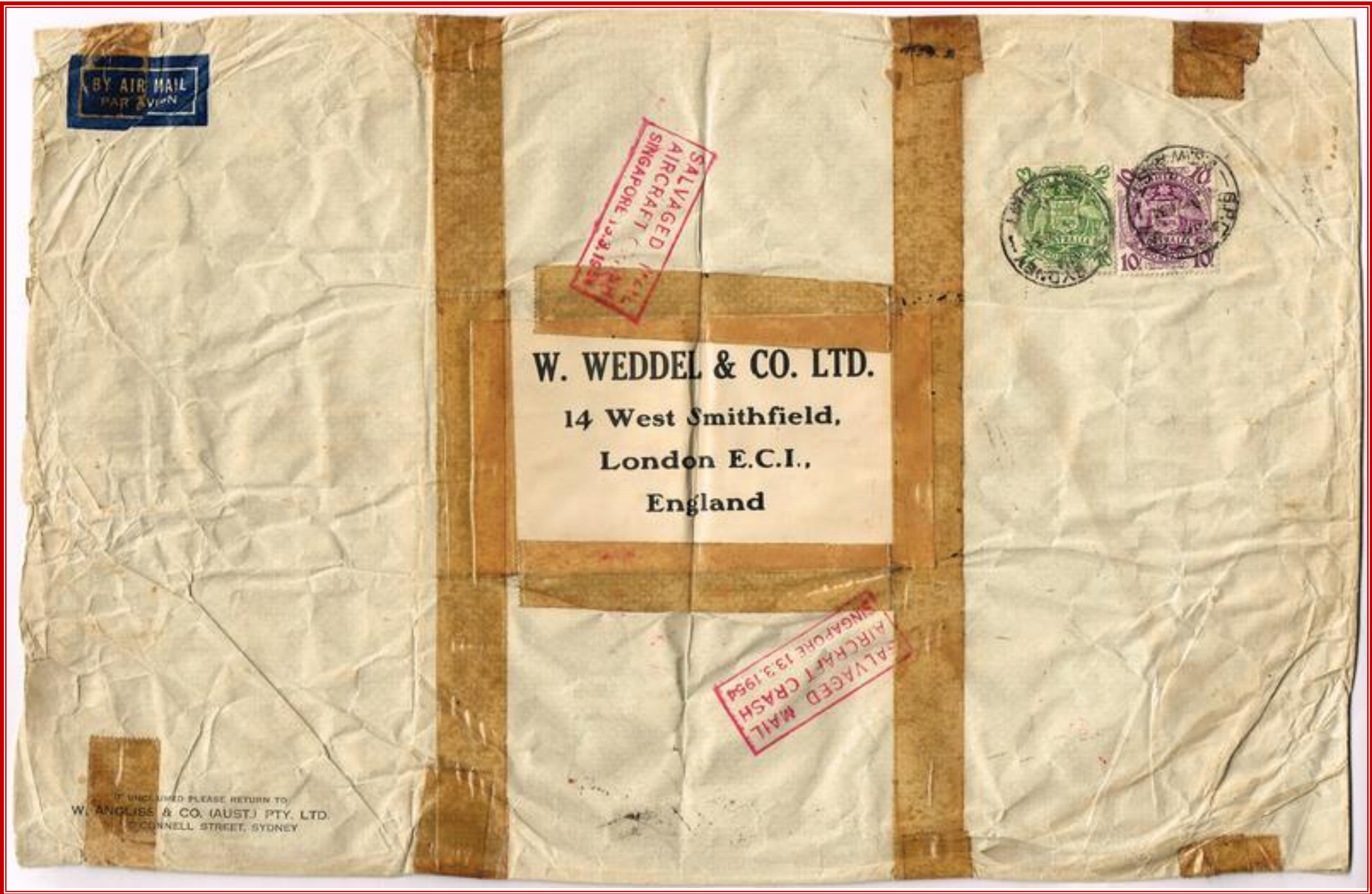


Usage: Receipt for Business Reply Post (10 Dec 1953)

£2 Coat-of-Arms and £1 Coat-of-Arms used with 5/- Cattle for an aggregate 65/- for the payment of receipt for Business Reply Post – 130 items at 6d each (5d domestic letter rate plus 1d fee) = 65/- (£3.5.0d).

(Introduced on 1 Jul 1929, the Business Reply Post service allowed businesses to pay the postage on replies received through printed, addressed envelopes and cards sent to potential customers. The rate comprised the prevailing letter rate postage plus a ½d fee (before 1 Oct 1959) or 1d fee (from 1 Oct 1959 to 13 Feb 1966) for each reply received.

The £2 Coat-of-Arms was issued in Jan 1950 to replace the £2 Kangaroo (CofA wmk). It saw 4,230,000 printed, with 3,925,410 distributed to the post offices.

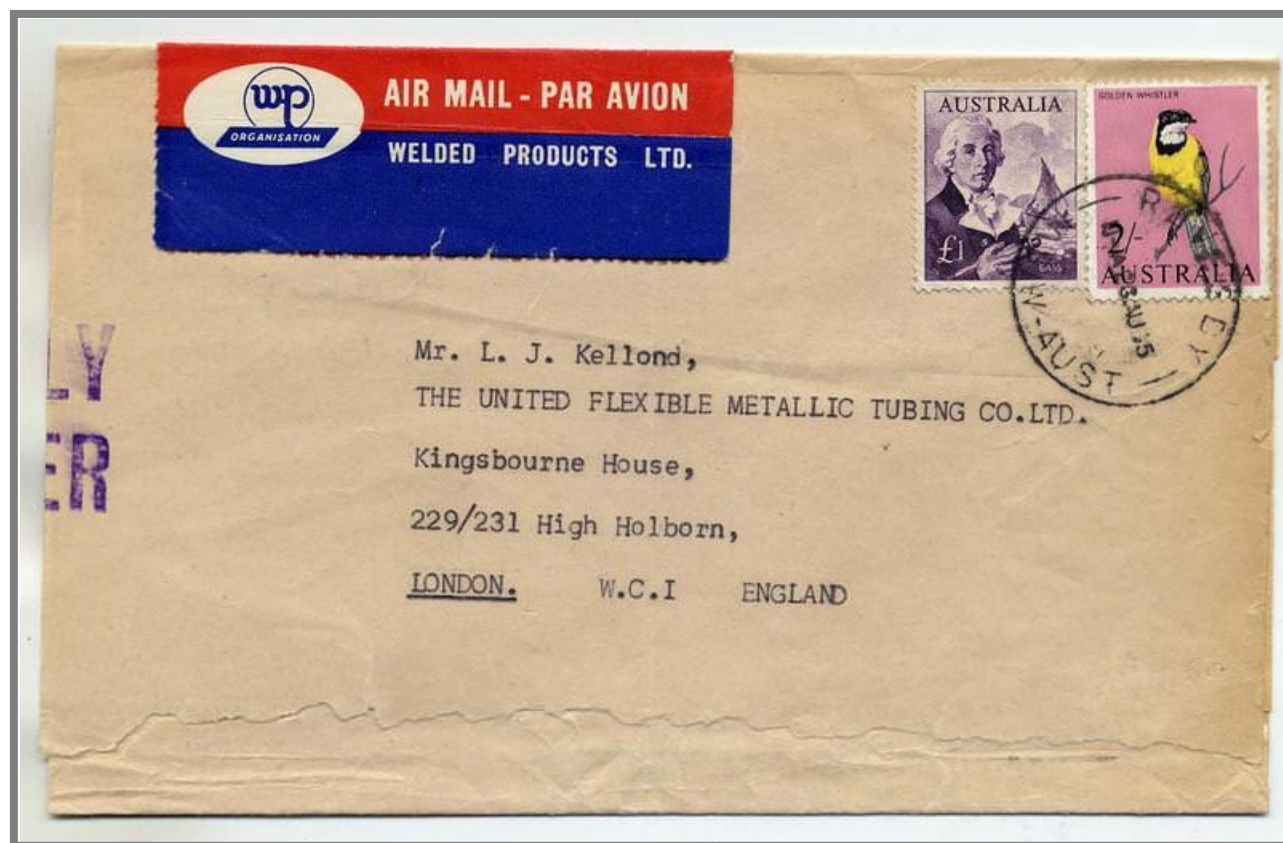


Usage: **Overseas airmail**
(12 Mar 1954)

£2 Coat-of-Arms used with 10/- Coat-of-Arms for an aggregate 50/- on a cover, paying the 50/- (25th weight-step) airmail service to the UK (2/- every ½oz x25, 1 Aug 1952 to 13 Jul 1958).

Less than 5 covers bearing the **£2 Coat-of-Arms** are known

[Historical note: Note the red cachet "SALVAGED MAIL / AIRCRAFT CRASH / SINGAPORE 13.3.1954". A British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC) aircraft (christened 'Belfast') on a passenger flight from Sydney, Australia, to London, England crashed and caught fire as it attempted to land at Singapore's Kallang Airport on 13 March 1954. All 31 passengers and 2 of the 7 crew members were killed.]



Usage: **Overseas Parcel** (26 Aug 1965)

£1 George Bass used with 2/- Golden Whistler for an aggregate 22/- on a reduced cover, most probably paying the 20/- overseas parcel rate to the UK (more than 7lb but less than 11lb)(1 Oct 1960 to 13 Feb 1966) + 2/- registration fee (1 Oct 1959 to 13 Feb 1966).

The £1 George Bass, part of the Navigator series, replaced the £1 Coat-of-Arms. It was issued on 26 Feb 1964 and was in use for less than 2 years, having been discontinued on 14 Feb 1966 with the introduction of the decimal currency system. 1,680,000 were printed, of which 1,488,960 were delivered to the post offices. Upon withdrawal, 100,767 were destroyed, which meant 1,388,193 were actually issued.

Usage: **Receipt for Business Reply Post** (13 May 1965)

£2 Philip Parker King x8 and **£1 George Bass** used with 10/- Matthew Flinders for an aggregate 350/-, most probably for the payment of receipt for Business Reply Post – 700 items at 6d each = 4,200d = 350/- (5d domestic letter rate plus 1d fee, 1 Oct 1959 to 13 Feb 1966)

The £2 Philip Parker King, part of the Navigator series, replaced the £2 Coat-of-Arms. It was issued on 26 Aug 1964 and was in use for less than 1½ years, having been discontinued on 14 Feb 1966 with the introduction of the decimal currency system. While 1,080,000 were printed, only 348,960 were actually delivered to the post offices. Upon withdrawal, 58,835 were destroyed, which meant only 290,125 were actually issued.

- Only known article bearing the £2 Navigator.
- Known record franking for a pre-decimal Australian article at £17.10.0.

