

POSTAL HISTORY – AN INTRODUCTION

PREAMBLE

Postal History is not a Postage Stamp on a Cover (Envelope). It is a COVER with or without a Postage Stamp that will illustrate the use of the Postage Stamp or similar markings indicating payment.

A Postal History attitude towards Postage Stamps will be: –

- **Why was it issued**
- **What was it used for?**

The material that a Postal Historian collects will be chosen because it supports and illustrates the answers to those two questions.

As far as the issues of New Zealand are concerned, the *Handbooks on the Postage Stamps of NZ*, issued by The Royal Philatelic Society of New Zealand, and in particular Volumes III and VII is the Postal History collectors “bible”

Also overseas publications, that include Robson Lowe’s Encyclopedia of British Empire Postage Stamps, Raymond Sales, numerous Tomes “*La Poste Maritime Françoise History Catalogue*” etc.

There are of course the very valuable publications issued by the Postal History Society of New Zealand, and their counterparts in Great Britain, Australia and the USA.

More recent publications include those printed by The Royal Philatelic Society, London and the Stuart Rossiter Trust, not forgetting the publications privately published by Colin Tabcart.

Whilst Stamp Collectors have many Stamp Catalogues showing all the stamps

issued including the Dealers selling price, however no such catalogues on Postal History exist. Some guides are available, but probably the best guide to value can be gleaned from Auction realizations, although this can be misleading, especially if there is only one person bidding.

The true Postal Historian, must have access to a good and varied Reference Library, and have the time to carry out the necessary research to maximize the information that can be discovered about the item being investigated.

The Postal Historian must also have the time in order to make a full examination of all the facts that are present. An analogy would be the similarity of a Detective visiting a "Crime Scene" and the amount of work required gathering every piece of evidence, as well as finding out answers to all the missing links.

Postal History Embraces all the following sections: -

- PRE-STAMP
- FUMIGATED MAIL
- GB USED ABROAD
- RATES & ROUTES
- LOCALS
- CANCELLATIONS
- REGISTRATION
- PARCEL POST
- MARKINGS
- MARITIME
- AIRMAIL

- RAILWAYS
- PIGEON POST
- EXHIBITIONS
- HEALTH CAMPS
- WAR CAMPAIGNS
- MAORI WARS (NZ)
- MILITARY
- NAVAL
- HOSPITAL SHIPS
- PRISONER OF WAR MAIL
- DELAYED MAIL
- POSTAGE DUE

- OFFICIAL
- FRANKS
- WRECKS
- DISASTERS
- POSTAL STATIONERY
- ILLUSTRATED COVERS
- VALENTINES
- MOURNING
- FIRST DAY COVERS

There is no doubt that even the above list can be increased

- **CANCELLATIONS**

Manuscript, Relief, Handstamps, Datestamps, Obliterators, Machine Cancels

- **MARKINGS**

Missent, Too Late, Late Fee, Redirected

- **MARITIME**

Marine Post Offices, Ship Letters, Loose Letters, Catapult Mail

- **RAIL**

Travelling Post Offices, Flag Stations.

- **AIRMAIL**

Routes, Special Flights, Zeppelin

- **DELAYED MAIL**

Dead Letter Office, Forwarded Markings, Returned Mail.

- **DISASTERS**

Damaged Mail, Air and Rail crashes, Earthquakes, Floods