

Van Diemen's Land Pre-adhesive Postal Markings 1822-1853

Scope: This is an exhibit of postal markings found on mail to and from points in Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) during the period from the first postal decree October 1822 until the introduction of adhesives November 1853. Generally, handstamps were used in Hobart Town and Launceston. Most other (country) towns used manuscript markings. Exceptions were George Town (1822-24 only) and a few postmasters' private date-stamps introduced in 1850s. This is the most comprehensive exhibit of these markings available today.

Treatment: Although a postal markings study, close attention is given to verifying the complex and ever-changing postal rate structure in this early period and special routes giving rise to the postal markings. The exhibit is presented in chronological order within the structure of the postal markings used by the two main post offices of Hobart Town and Launceston to designate the type of postal service performed, followed by other (country) towns within each type of service. Chapter headings and running headers include:

- Outward and Inward Ship Letters (Hobart Town and Launceston)
- Local Posts and Carrier Mail
- Inland (between towns) Letters
- Official Mail
- Registered Mail

Within this treatment there are rare and special markings:

- Soldier's mail
- Redirected mail
- Forwarding Agents
- Private Carriers
- Taxed Markings

Personal Research: Census figures for the markings shown are based upon a thorough examination of auction catalogues 1922 to present as well as extensive correspondence with other advanced collectors of Tasmania. The author has identified and published research establishing new Earliest/Latest Uses for a number of markings.

Significance: The period presented here reflects the growth of commerce and personal correspondence during the formative years of the postal system of Great Britain's second oldest colony in Australia.

Difficulty of Acquisition and Condition: Great effort over the past 30 years has gone into acquiring the earliest/latest recorded dates of use (24 items), as well as special rates and auxiliary markings as a means of raising the difficulty level. Provenance for many of the special and rare items include gems from the pre-adhesive collections formed by Purves, Viney, de Righi, Odenweller, Tinsley, Groom, Druce, Karman, Askeland, Peace, and Cress, plus other examples from more than a score of anonymous sources.

I have endeavored to select the best condition available; however, the condition is how you find it when the examples available are severely limited. Some covers reflect the harsh conditions of pioneers living in the bush.

Rarity Factors: There are quite a few rare items included that have been recorded as only one, two or three examples known. Four items shown are known only by a single example, plus the set of four Hobart Town Carrier Mail covers are the discovery examples and the only recorded to date. **Highlights of the exhibit:**

- Earliest Hobart Town first handstamp F1/P2
- Earliest Hobart Town second handstamp F1/P3
- Concession Rate Soldier's Ship Letter F1/P13
- Earliest Launceston first handstamp F1/P14
- Earliest Inward Ship Letter handstamp F2/P5
- Only example of Launceston 1832 Local Post F3/P1
- Hobart Carrier Mail F3/P4-5
- Only example of 1837 Hobart Outward PAID datestamp F3/P8
- Inland Concession Rate Soldier's Mail F3/P11
- Last Day of Use: Redirected Unpaid Mail F4/P3
- Earliest (1824) Forwarding Agent Mail F4/P6
- Official Business to a Convict Station F5/P1
- Launceston first handstamp on Official Mail F5/P7
- Earliest George Town first handstamp F5/P9
- Earliest "Money Letter" marking F5/P12
- Taxed Money Letter F5/P13
- Earliest "Registered" marking F5/P14

Within the exhibit **Bold type** identifies and provides **highlight** information about special or rare items for the viewer. For in-depth study, detailed information about each marking and the applicable rates and route is provided in plain text below or beside each example.