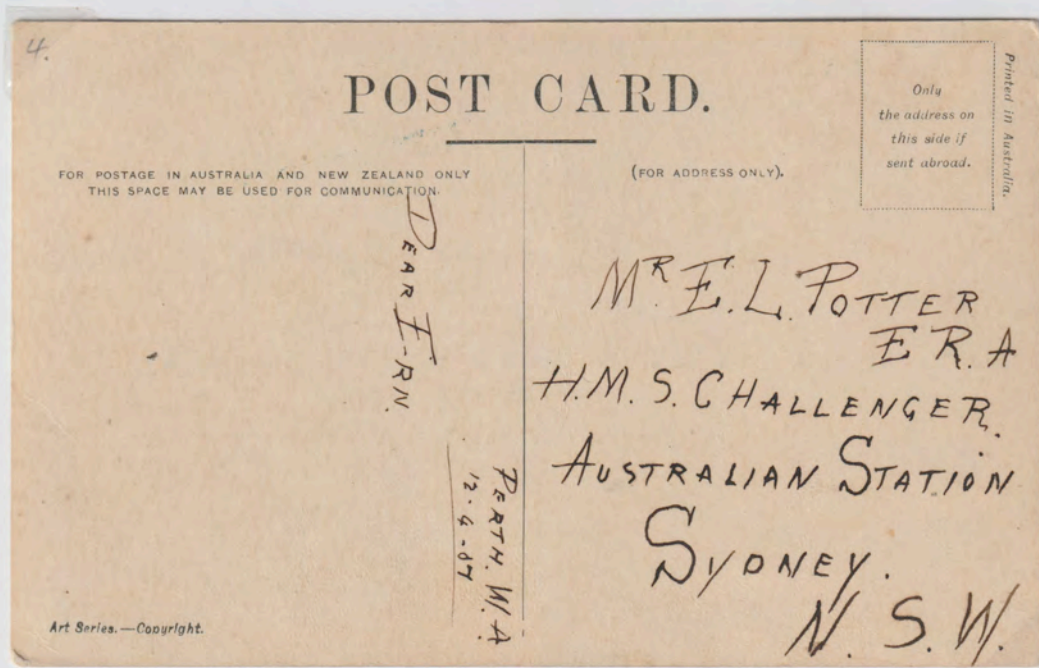


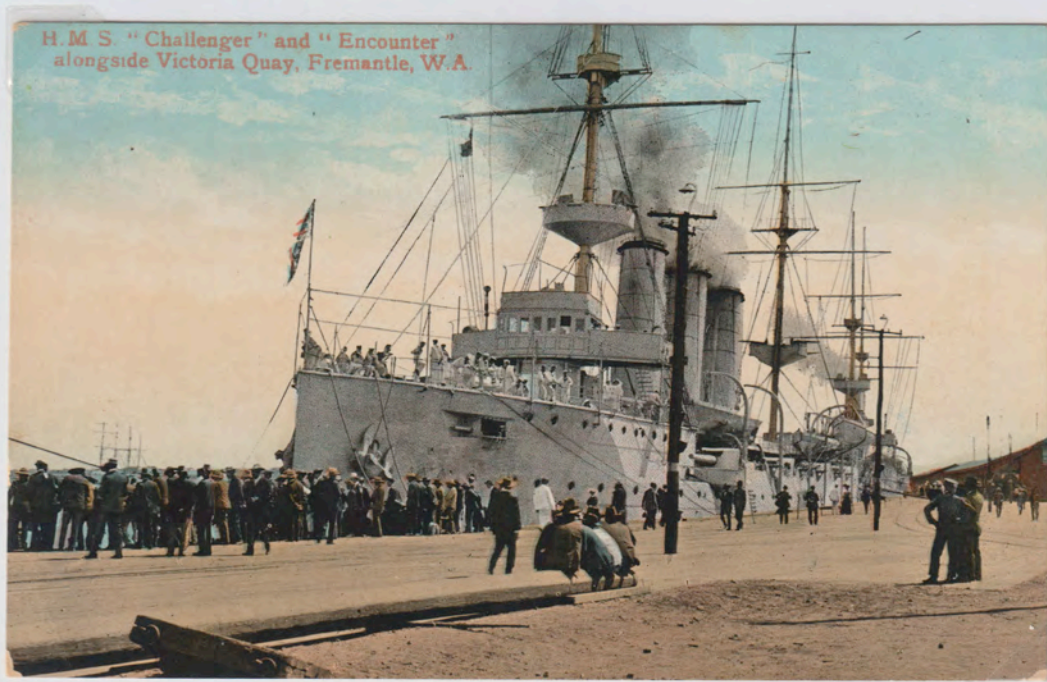
HMS CHALLENGER 1907

Card showing Royal Navy ships on the Australian Station, Sydney. Challenger had been in Fremantle at the beginning of January 1907 en route to Singapore to exchange crews. She returned via Fremantle at the end of January.

Written Perth 12 April 1907



Falk & Co. card showing HMS Challenger and HMS Encounter, Victoria Quay, Fremantle.



SECTION B

GREAT WHITE FLEET AT ALBANY 1908

The United States of America took part in the Dreadnought-inspired "Great Naval Race" with Britain and Germany to build up their navies between 1904 and 1908. The Great White Fleet was an effort to impress the world (particularly Japan) with American seapower. Churchill opposed the visit to Australia. Roosevelt said the Fleet visit was "to show England ... that (New Zealand and Australia) are white man's country". Reckner, 1988, p.78) The ships were painted white (instead of "Battleship Grey") to dramatically emphasize the diplomatic rather than the naval mission. The voyage also gave the US Navy deep sea experience to modify their ship design and logistic capability (the visit to Albany was extended due to lack of coal). It also gave 14,000 sailors a world tour. The 16 battleships and 6 auxiliary ships is the largest fleet to circumnavigate the world and is the largest fleet to visit a WA port. The visit created considerable official and public interest and helped to stimulate the formation of the Australian Navy.

The Fleet left Virginia on 16 December 1907 for San Francisco via the Magellan Straits. It departed on 7 July 1908 for Honolulu 16 July, Auckland 9 August, Sydney 20 August, Melbourne 29 August, **Albany 11 September**, Manila 2 October, Yokohama 18 October, Amoy 29 October, Manila 7 November, Colombo 13 December, Suez 3 January 1909, Gibraltar 31 January, Virginia 22 February.

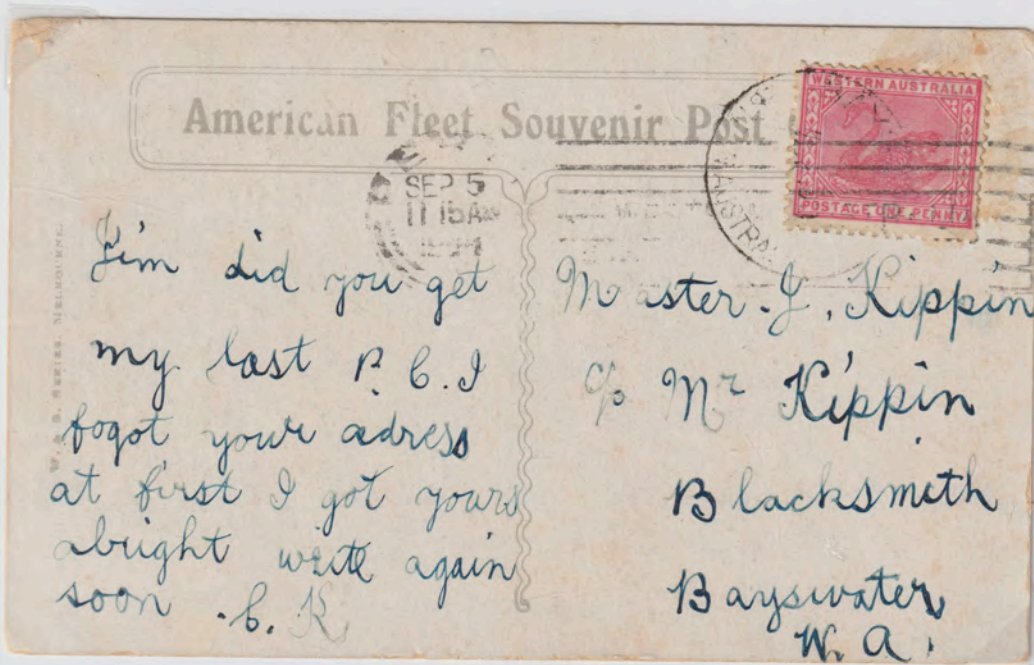
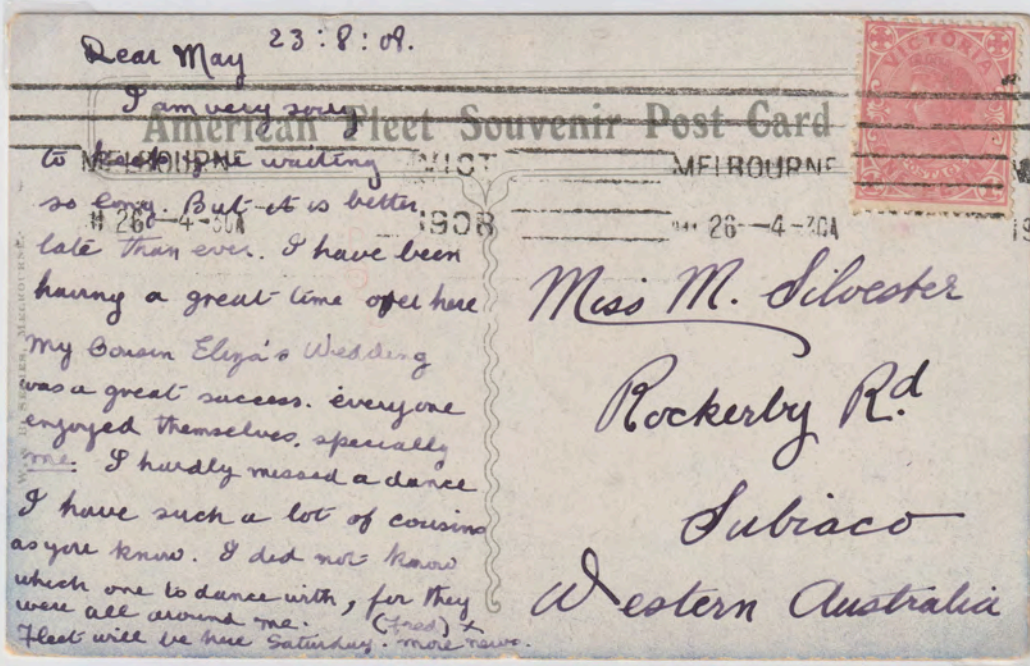
Parade American Bluejackets, Albany, W.A.
Unused
Manufacturer unknown



Reference: Reckner, J.R. (1988). *Teddy Roosevelt's Great White Fleet*, Annapolis, MD, Naval Institute Press

GREAT WHITE FLEET

The American visit created great excitement where ever it visited. The W & B Series cards, Melbourne were produced before the visit and distributed to Western Australia. "Fleet will be here Saturday" Postmarked Melbourne 26 August 1908



Postmarked Bayswater 5 September 1908, Perth 5 September

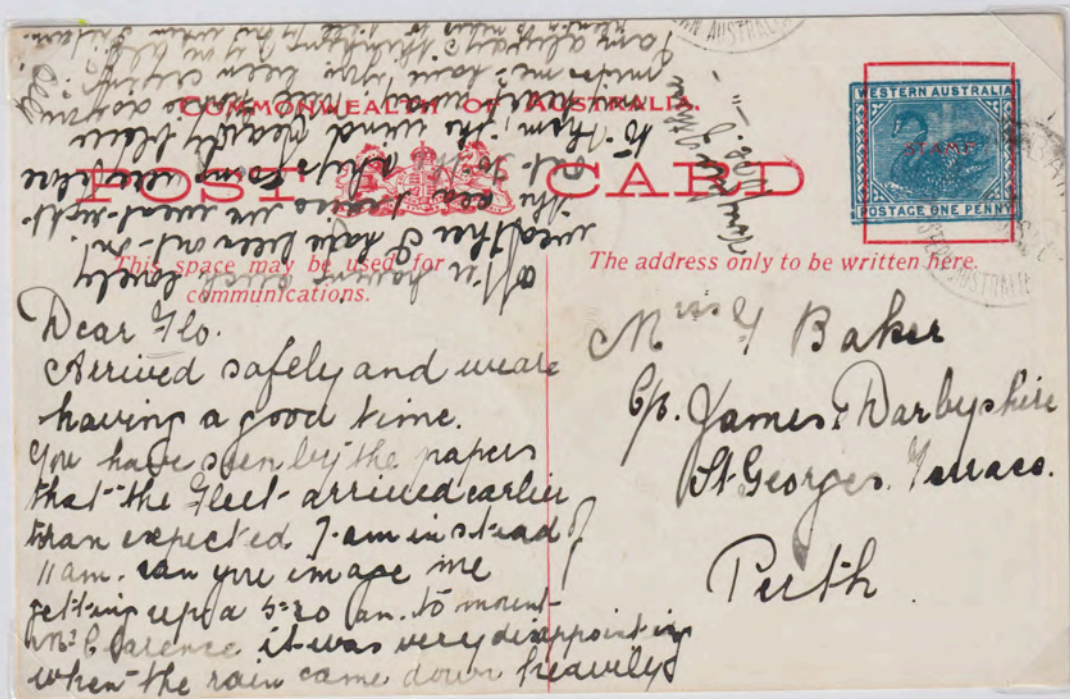
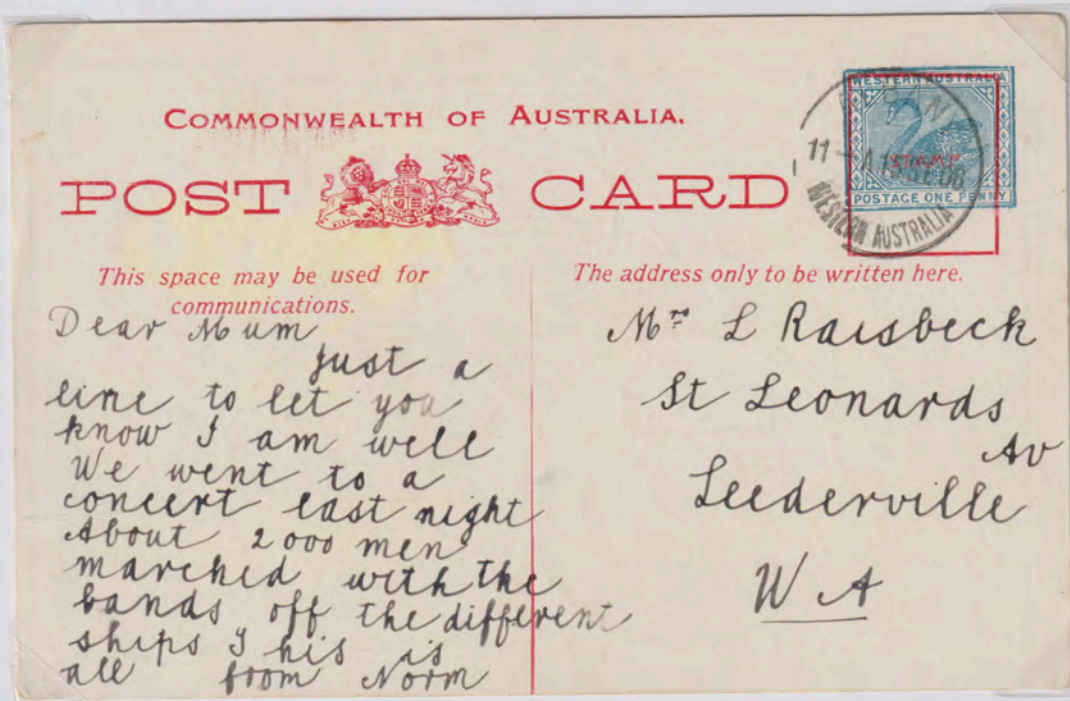
GREAT WHITE FLEET 1908

The visit to Australia of the American Great White Fleet on a world tour was the most significant naval event in pre-war Western Australia. The Postmaster General's Department even produced post cards for use by officers and crew but no example has been seen used from Albany. Each state had a revised card with impressed stamp but the 9,600 with Western Australian horizontal stamp format did not fit the template made for the New South Wales stamp.



GREAT WHITE FLEET CARDS

The Fleet arrived at Albany on 11 September 1908 and departed on the 18th. Few postal stationery Fleet Cards are recorded used from Albany during this time. The Fleet sailed past Rottnest Island but did not stop at Fremantle. Albany 11 September 1908



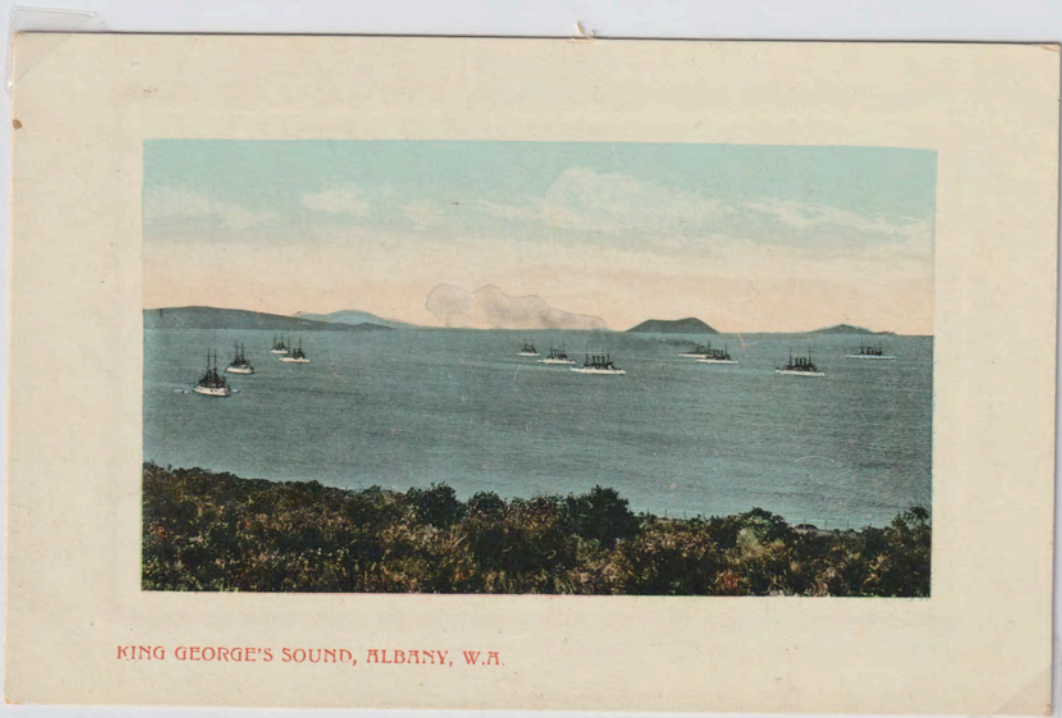
Albany 1? September 1908

FLEET CARDS

Various individuals and firms produced post cards of the Great White Fleet visit. "This is a small view of our harbour with part of the American Fleet anchored. Also HMS Gibraltar." Addressed to England.

The presence of HMS Gibraltar en route from Portsmouth to Sydney did not lessen the propaganda impact of the visit from a rising naval power.

Real photo card postmarked Albany 16 October 1908



FLEET ALBANY PICTURE POSTCARDS

Falk and Co.
Albany? 1 September 1909



ENTRANCE TO PRINCESS ROYAL HARBOUR, ALBANY, W.A.



Entrance to Princess Royal Harbour, Albany, W.A.

Inscribed N.Z. Expeditionary Force 1917
Posted under cover

FLEET ALBANY PICTURE POSTCARDS

Picture postcards of Albany posted to the USA by sailors from the Great White Fleet are the only items of WA naval mail that are relatively easy to acquire. 14,000 sailors in town would have resulted in substantial sales of these cards. With moderate effort one or two cards a year may be identified. By contrast, only two items for Section A have been acquired in the past 10 years.

F.E. Morgan card Stirling Terrace Albany
Albany 14 September 1908

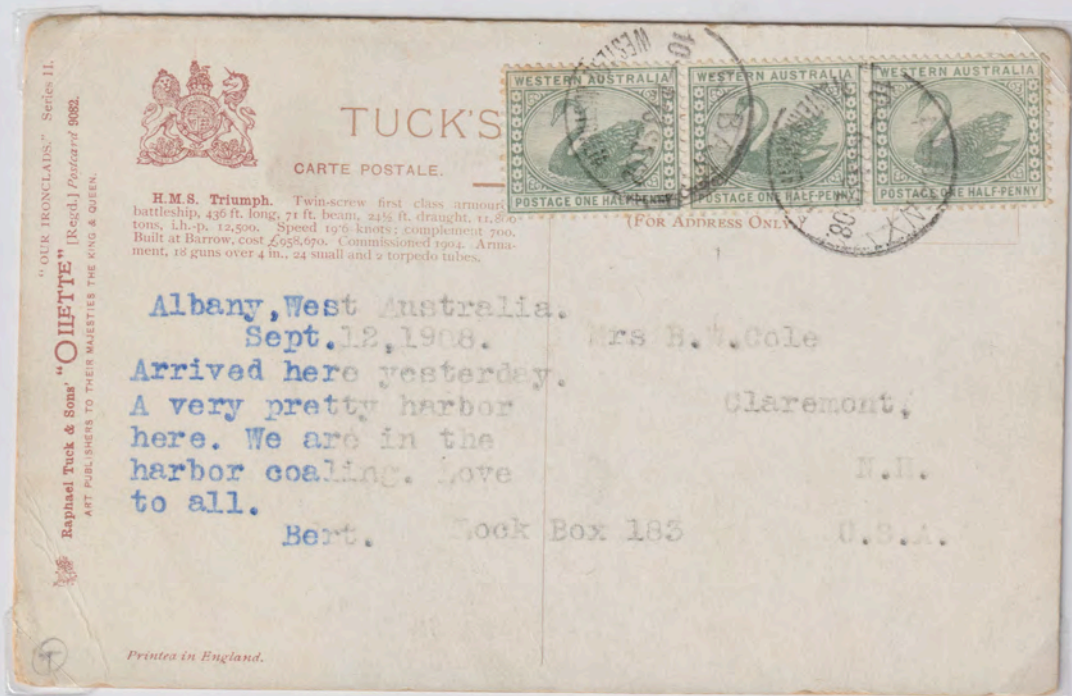


Dog Rock Albany
Albany 12 September 1908, Baltimore 22 October

FLEET CORRESPONDENCE

Some fleet correspondence may be identified by the sender's address (top card) or by the address (Claremont, New Hampshire, bottom card) and date.

F.E. Morgan card Church of England, Albany
Albany 13 September 1908



Tuck 'Oilette' of battleship HMS Triumph
Albany 13 September 1908

FLEET CORRESPONDENCE

T. Todd card of lower Stirling Terrace
Postmarked 15 September 1908



Postmarked 16 September 1908, New Brunswick 24 October

VERY SMALL INSIGNIFICANT TOWN

"but it's so clean it gives one a headache to look at it."

T, Todd card

Albany 14 September 1908



EASTERN STATES CARDS

Commercial cards produced in the Eastern States were available in Albany and brought with them by some American sailors.

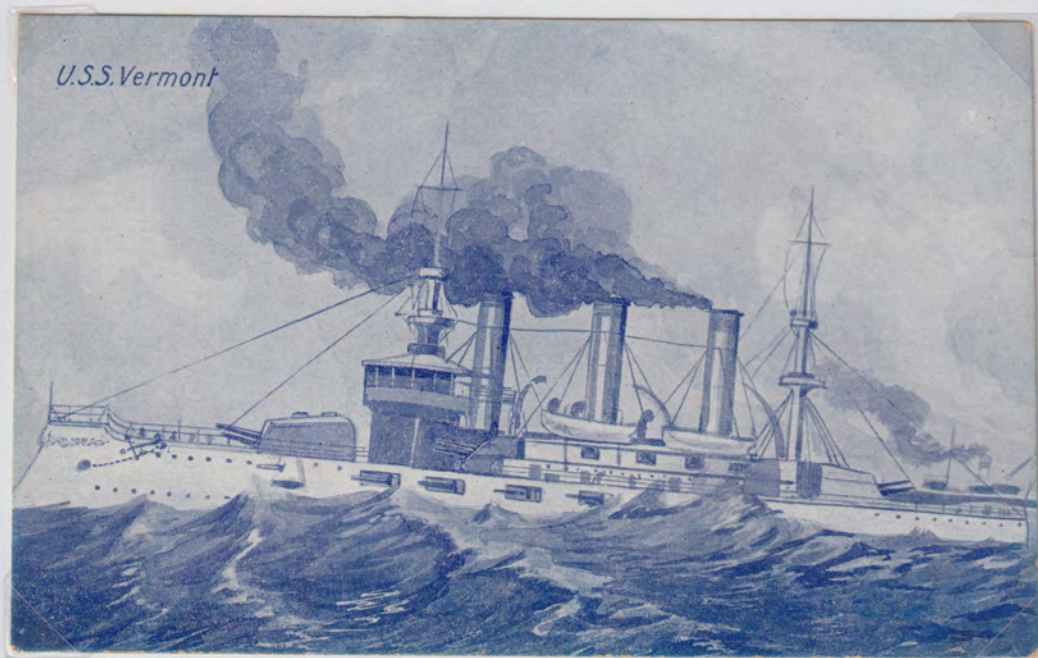
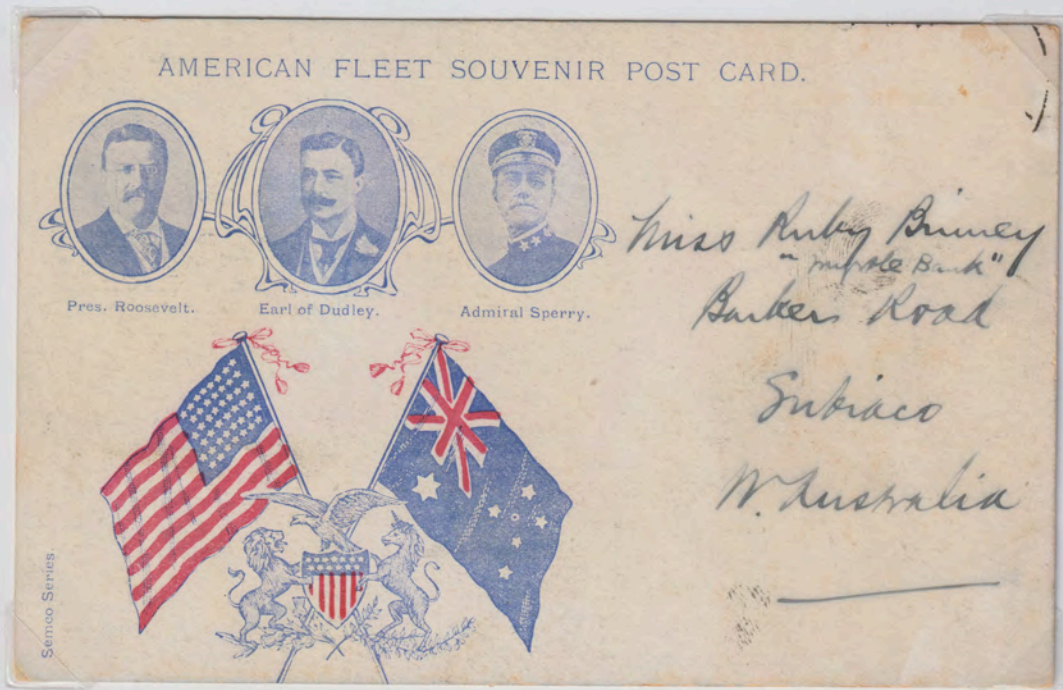
GB & Co Sydney card 'Australia Welcomes the American Fleet', globe, flags, and ships. Albany 28 August 1908, stamp removed



WT card view of ships off Williamstown, Victoria
Albany 13 September 1908

FLEET CARDS

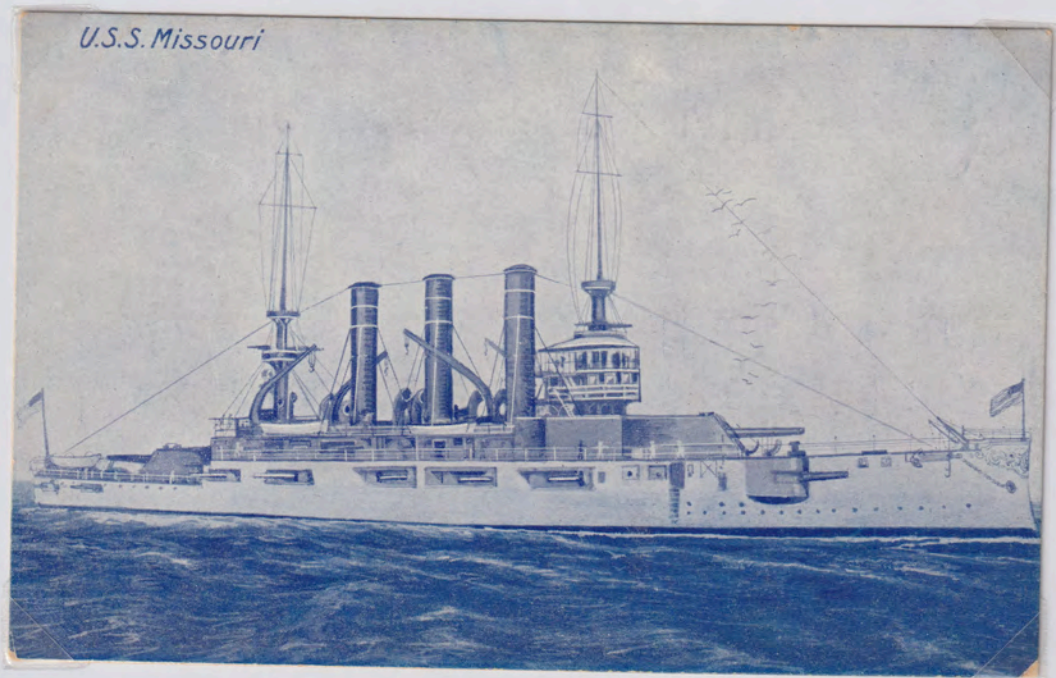
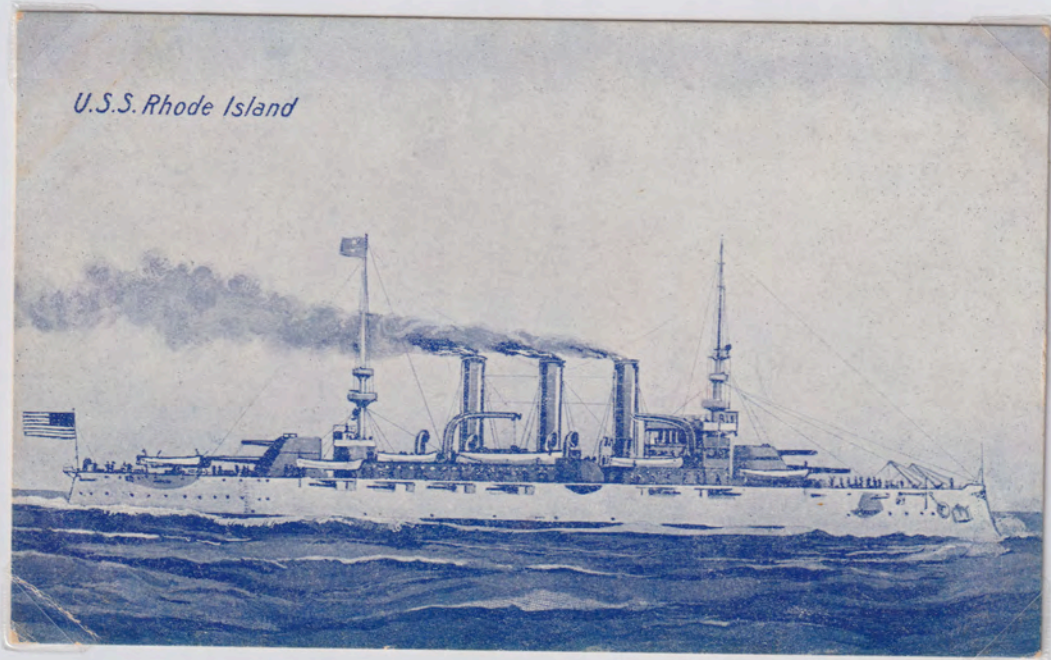
Semco Series card showing Great White Fleet at sea line astern.
Message dated 24 July 1908, stamp removed.



W & B Series Melbourne unused

FLEET CARDS

W & B Series Melbourne unused



The welcome for the Fleet at Albany, while warm, paled in comparison with the 500,000 people (most of Sydney's population) who took advantage of two days of public holidays declared by the NSW Government to welcome the Fleet to Sydney Harbour.

GREAT WHITE FLEET 1908

Programme

Monday 14th September

The Admiral will land at 11.30am and be received by His Excellency the Governor, the Premier, and other officials, and will be conducted to the Rotunda, where he will be presented by His Excellency with an Address of welcome enclosed in a casket. Subsequently an Address will be presented by the Mayor and Councillors of Albany. When this ceremony is concluded, the Admiral and his officers will proceed to the Town Hall, where lunch will be served to about 250 guests.

The men who land from the Fleet will be entertained between 11.30 and 4 o'clock in a Marquee on the Victoria Square. Sports will be held in the afternoon on the Recreation Ground.

In the evening the ships will be illuminated.

The Perth City and other bands will play in the evening in different parts of the town.

Tuesday 15th September

The Admiral and his officers will land in the afternoon and be entertained at a Garden Party in Lawley Park.

Wednesday 16th September

.... In the evening there will be a Ball given by the Mayor and Councillors in the Town Hall.

Thursday 17th September

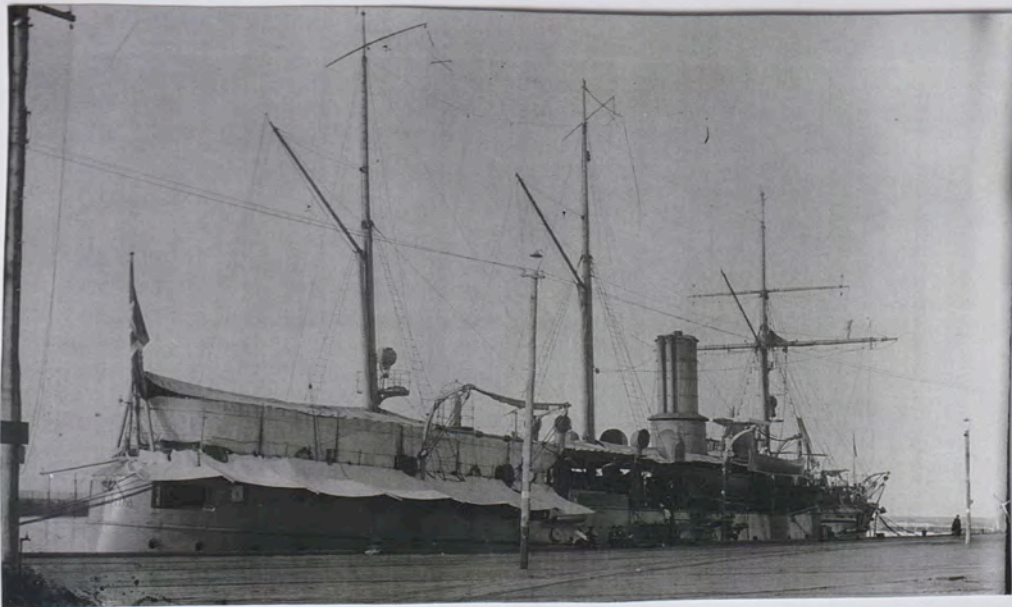
The Fleet leaves Albany in the morning, and will be followed out of the anchorage by various steamers....



IRM CALABRIA 1905

IRM Calabria was a small protected cruiser that conducted a world tour with Midshipman Prince Fernando (Prince of Udine) aboard to show the Italian flag. In late 1905 it visited Australia but Haynes and Pope (1997) do not record the Fremantle visit. After Wellington (NZ), IRM Calabria visited Hobart, Melbourne, Adelaide, Fremantle, Sydney and was in Brisbane on 24 January 1906.

Fremantle 31 January 1906, Singapore 26 February, Manila 6 March, Manila 9 March



IRM Calabria alongside Victoria Quay, Fremantle Harbour (photo courtesy of Battye library)