

WESTERN AUSTRALIA: MILITARY POSTAL MARKINGS WORLD WAR 2

World War 2 is the only period in which there has been a substantial military presence in WA requiring an extensive military postal system to augment the service provided by the Postmaster General's Department. 'Military' excludes Naval and Air Force mail.

This exhibit is organised to show the use of military postal markings as they became required to support the Middle East campaign, to meet the deployment of 3 Australian Corps and other military forces to counter a possible Japanese invasion of WA, and the redeployment of those forces when invasion was no longer considered a threat. This organisation differs from that in Haynes and Pope (1997) where postal markings are catalogued according to type. The postal markings are mainly military post marks, censor marks, and registration marks but others, such as POW mail and addressee's cachets, are also shown. Military use of the PMG's postal service is also included.

Plan

- 1930s : Inter-war
- 1939 – 41 : Middle East Campaign
- 1942 : 3 Australian Corps
- 1943 – 44 : Redeployment
- 1945 – 46 : Demobilization

MANUFACTURER'S ARCHIVAL STRIKES (H.C. Horton?)

Mil. P.O. Melville [Type ME 1]
28 OC 39



Mil. P.O. Naval Base [Type NE 1a]
28 OC 39



Mil. P.O. Northam [Type NM 1]
13 DE 38



Mil. P.O. Northam [Type NM 2]
11 DE 39



References

- Collas, P. (1986). *The Postal History of the Australian Army During World War II*, RPSV
- Haynes, B. and Pope, B. (1997). *Western Australia: The Forces, Prisoner of War and Censor Mail*, WASG

SECTION A : Inter-war

11TH AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY REGIMENT

One of the first outcomes of the move to federate the Australian colonies was the establishment in 1893 of the Princess Royal Battery to defend Albany. Fort Forrest became the Examination Battery for Fremantle in 1909. In 1914 the defence of WA was in the hands of 180 permanent members of the Commonwealth Military Force plus reservists, cadets, and rifle clubs. In response to secession, together with war preparations, saw WA military personnel rise to 257 in 1939. This included, in 1938, manning two 6" guns (ex HMAS Sydney) and 1939 two 9" guns on Rottnest. These, together with Swan Barracks HQ in Perth and CMF infantry battalions, used the PMG postal system as there was no military postal system in Australia between the wars.

Only recorded example of unit stationery in the inter-war period

Perth 13 January 1933



The Manager
Vacuum Oil Co., Pty., Ltd.
St. George's House.
PERTH.



Adjutant Downing
Officers' Headquarter:
26 Hampton St,
NORTHAM



Perth
20 September 1938
Northam
22 September

Northam Military Camp was established in 1916.

Inter-war

FIXED DEFENCES

Fort Arthur's Head and Fort Forrest were operational by 1909, each equipped with 6" guns
6th Heavy Battery R.A.A. Fremantle 20 October 1936

QSL from Experimental Short Wave Station VK 6KZ
 TO RADIO ^{G6CJ} CONFIRMING AND THANKING YOU FOR OUR
 QSO OF ^{20/10/36} AT ^{5.45} W.A. TIME (8 HOURS AHEAD G.M.T.)
 UR ^{cc} SIGS WERE T ⁹ R 6 QSA 5 CONDX ^{S/RM}

VK 6KZ

QRA 6TH HVY BTY R.A.A. FORTS, ^{FREMANTLE} ALBANY, WEST AUSTRALIA.
 XMITTER CC WITH ¹⁷ WATTS INPUT TO ^{P.A.}
 RECEIVER G-2-OD. O-V-1. DX WKD. 5 CONTS

PSE QSLOM. ^{VY 75 S FROM} ALBANY HAMS. C. H. VERNON (6KZ)
 F. W. SAW (6DA)

TIX 950 IN DX TEST.

ON HIS MAJESTY'S SERVICE

8 JUL 1932
12⁴⁵ AM
W. F.

TRAVEL BY TRAIN

2 POSTAGE TWO PENCE 2

Cranbrook Rifle Club,
 c/- Mr. J. Warnum,
 CRANBROOK. W.A.

WEST-AUSTRALIA - CRANBROOK

Tenberden

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA
 IF NOT DELIVERED WITHIN 7 DAYS, RETURN TO

RIFLE CLUBS

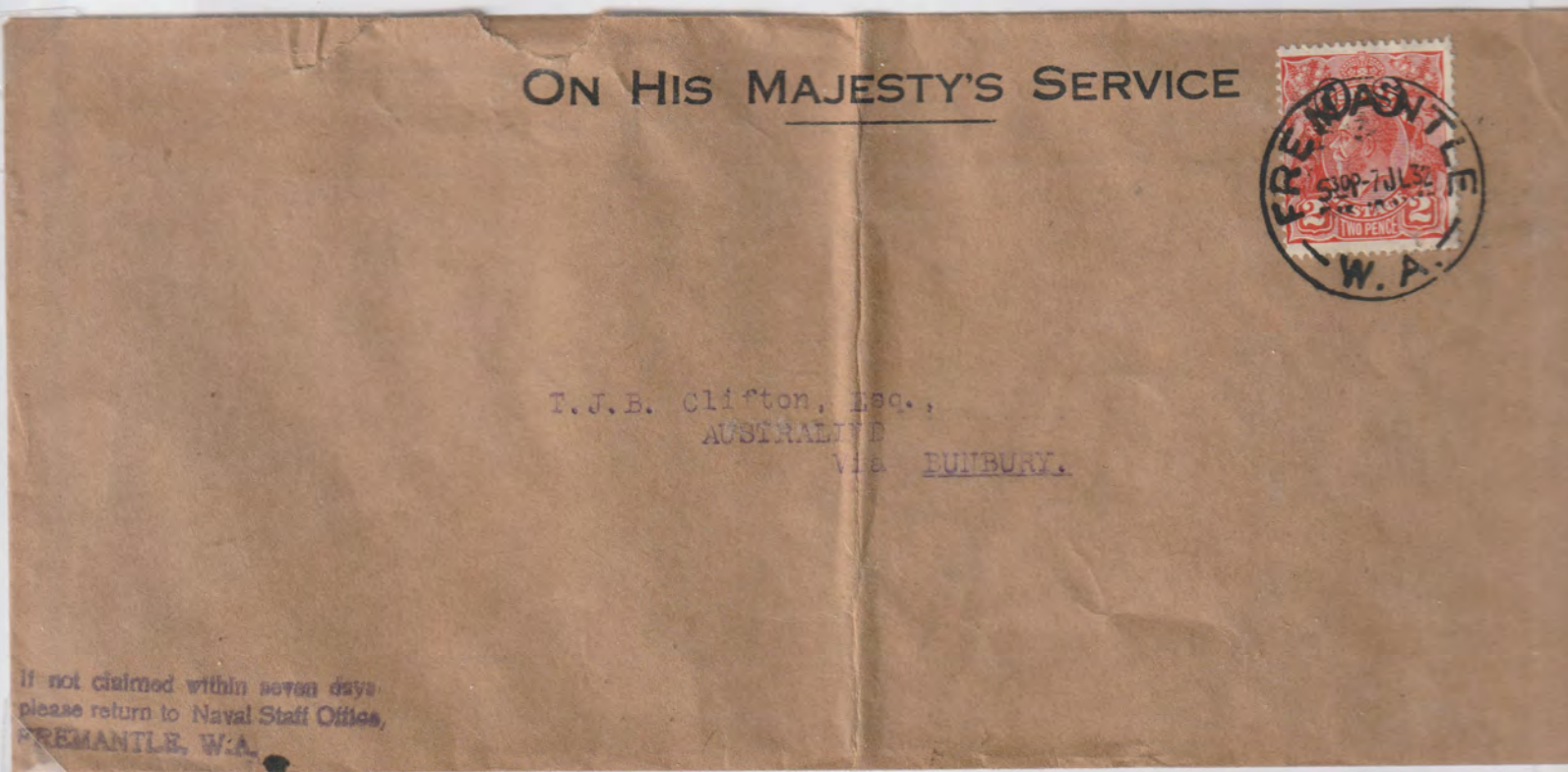
Rifle clubs helped maintain proficiency with military weapons and enabled inefficient to be removed from the military reserve. Clubs hired rifle ranges and bought ammunition and supplies from the military.

Perth 8 July 1932, Cranbrook 9 July

NAVY

In 1939 the RAN had two heavy cruisers, three light cruisers, a 1912 design light cruiser, five WW1 destroyers and two sloops with one sloop based in WA. The RAN's role was to defend Imperial trade routes, not defend Australia. Foreign warships visited occasionally.
U.S.S Augusta 18 November 1934 Fremantle

Two covers recorded



AIR FORCE RESERVE

On 1 August 1933 the Air Force wireless reserve was formed with amateur radio operators.

R.W. Muir, Wagin, 1 March 1936

TO RADIO *R. Balmer* CONF OUR *Ref 1/3/36 ON 40m* PST *pm*
 SIGS QSA *5* R. 7 TONE *A1*

VKORW

MI. XMITTER *MOPA 38 ex pro Ebd r/c PA* PWR *10 watts 220V DC mains*
 ANT *1/2 no doubt* RECEIVER *EC 666-276*
 REMARKS *Many hrs on for FB Ref. appreciable. Am on every Sun 730*
 PSE. QSL. R. W. MUIR, Wagin. OWN. OP. *R. W. Muir*
 M. WIA.



PEARCE AIR FORCE BASE

Initial flying training was at 1 FTS Point Cook, Victoria.

As part of the post-secession settlement, the Royal Australian Air Force opened Pearce on 28 May 1938. On 14 February 1939 No. 14 Squadron was formed flying Avro Anson maritime reconnaissance aircraft and No. 25 Squadron Hawker Demon biplane fighters.

Perth 19 November 1935, Melbourne 21 November

SECTION B : Middle East : Censorship

LABEL TYPE 1 : CACHET TYPE 1/3

On 1 September 1939 censorship was imposed in WA on overseas mail, war was declared on 5 September, and the formation of the Second AIF was announced on 15 September. The Perth District Censor operated under the control of the Defence Department and was located initially in the Commonwealth Bank building and subsequently in the GPO. In the period 1939-1941 a number of different cachets and sealing labels were used (identified here using the Haynes and Pope numbering). Because the label was too small, this cover sealed with two labels. Perth 29 September 1939

ROGER N. DARD
232 JAMES STREET
Perth, Western Australia
AUSTRALIA

PASSED BY
CENSOR 3

Mr. Walter Grapen,
7527 S. Broadway,
ST. LOUIS, Mo.,
U.S.A.



5CSL 2.1
11/9/39 - 1/10/39
4 recorded
5CC 2.1/3 in blue

OPENED BY

**LABEL TYPE 2
CACHET TYPE 1/3**
Decorated line 72mm
wide compared to
Type 1 50mm
5CSL 2.2
7/9/39 - 11/11/39
4 recorded
5CC 2.1/3 in purple
Antwerp 9 October 1939
Brussels 9 October

par avion



Mr. Paul Weinmann

PASSED BY
CENSOR 3

*St. Finkelstein
48 Walcott Street*

PAR AVION
PER VLEIGHT

abt Lawby Perth W. Aust

CACHET TYPE 2/2

This ARCS Message Service cover may have been sent by the Singapore/Manila route to the USA and forwarded via Lisbon. Rate 6/- + 3 x 5/11d = 1/3/9d
Perth 13 November 1941, 5CC 2/2 cachet, Lisbon 9 December



A.R.C.S.
MESSAGE
SERVICE

AUSTRALIA
- U.S.A. -
SWITZERLAND

BY AIR MAIL

PAR AVION

AUSTRALIAN RED CROSS SOCIETY



PASSED BY
CENSOR 2
The Secretary

Agence Centrale

COMITE INTERNATIONALE de la CROIX ROUGE
Palais du Conseil General
GENEVA
SWITZERLAND

HIGH-CLASS SILK MERCHANTS: CURIO DEALERS: GENERAL DRAPERS, HOSIERS, TAILORS AND OUTFITTERS

P. CHANDIRAM & SON

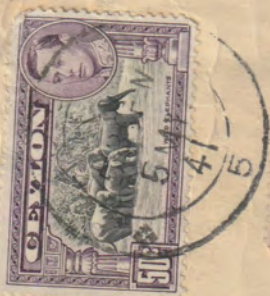
BRISTOL BUILDING
COLOMBO
TELEPHONE: 1839

G. P. O. BOX 287
ESTABLISHED 1890

Miss Patricia Green
to Mr C. E. Green
No 11 John Str.

NOT
OPENED BY
CENSOR

*From
Vare with
love*

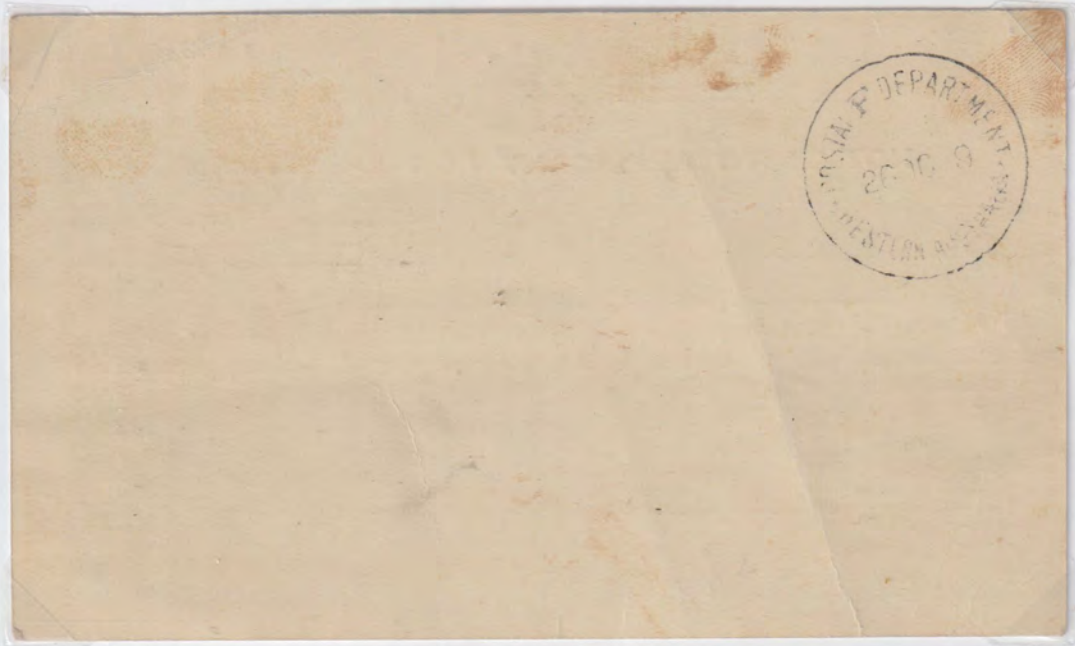


Miss Sawley


POSTAL F DEPARTMENT

Army recruitment was stepped up after the declaration of war. This PMG Department relief stamp was used at an unknown military location. It was subsequently used at unknown locations in 1942.

Postal F Department , 26 October 1939



A.A. FORM A.201.

AUSTRALIAN  MILITARY FORCES.

NOTICE TO APPLICANT FOR ENLISTMENT.

To Cyril J. Anderson Wagin Recruiting Office.
Dumbleyung 26/10/39 date.

With reference to your application for enlistment in the Australian Military Forces, for service in Australia or abroad, you are required to attend at Road Board Office
Wagin

at 11 a.m. on 30.10.39 (date), for purposes of interview, medical examination, &c.

Chris W. Shenton Lieut
Recruiting Officer.

D.3543/9.39.—C.13232.—60M.

EXEMPT

Correspondence headed Drill Hall, Vincent Street Leederville was posted from the adjacent Leederville Post Office. Drill Hall Leederville cachet Leederville 22 April 1941

ON HIS MAJESTY'S SERVICE

R.6

R LEEDERVILLE WEST AUSTRALIA No. 2499



Reg.

Trainee H.M.S.Park. 183 Oxford St. Leederville

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY IF NOT DELIVERED WITHIN 7 DAYS RETURN TO

DRILL HALL

LEEDERVILLE

A.A. Form Mob. 4

No. 1086

AUSTRALIAN



MILITARY FORCES

U.S.P.

Certificate of Exemption

This is to Certify that Henry Meredin Semples Park of (address) 183 Oxford St. Leederville is exempt from service in the Citizen Forces under the Defence Act 1903-1939 for the following reason: Hardship

(Own Business) (expires 31.12.41)

Description of holder:—

Age 29 4/12 years Height 5ft 9 1/2 ins Colour of Eyes Brown Colour of Hair Dk Brown Complexion Fair Distinctive Marks NIL

Signature of holder H.M. Park

Date 20-4-1941

(Signature of Area Officer or Clerk of Exemption Court)

If the reason (as stated above) for which this exemption has been granted ceases to exist, the holder (if of an age group which is called up for service) must report within seven days to the Area Officer of the Area in which he resides—otherwise he will be deemed to be a deserter under the Defence Act 1903-1939.

Drill Hall, Leederville W.A. (Address)

Report to Area 11A on 31.12.41

Compulsory training for home defence commenced on 1 January 1940 but with a long list of exemptions.

ROTTNEST

This initial strength report of 5 Fortress Company indicated 25 men marched into No 2 Camp Kingstown, Rottnest on 5 September 1939; 7 men into Oliver's Hill, Rottnest; 16 men into Arthur's Head No 3 Light, Fremantle; 8 men into Fort Swanbourne.

5 FRT Coy Rottnest WA cachet
Fremantle 30 October 1939

ON HIS MAJESTY'S SERVICE.



L/Sgt J. Reany R. A. E.

13th. Field Company

Guildford

W. A.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE.
IF NOT DELIVERED WITHIN 7 DAYS, RETURN TO

For Official Use Only A.M.R. & O. 1587

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.

Routine Orders Part II.

By

Capt. J.E.M. Calder, Staff Corps, Commanding 5th Fortress Company.

14th September, 1939

No. 20

Rottnest Island, W.A.

W RATIONS AND QUARTERS

3801 Cpl. Peat H.M.

) To be in R & Q on and from 2.9.39.

ROTTNEST

In September 1939 a small number of selected German aliens were arrested and interned in the Fremantle civilian gaol. In January 1940 they were transferred to a temporary internment camp on Rottnest Island. No mail is recorded to or from these internees. After war was declared on Italy on 10 June 1940 the number of internees on Rottnest grew to over 500 where they were guarded by 5th Garrison Battalion.

Only recorded cover from the Rottnest Internment Camp

Geraldton 22 July 1940

Perth 24 July

Fremantle 25 July

Refused by addressee

Fremantle 5 August



HARVEY

Internees transferred from Rottnest to Internment Camp No. 11 on 12 August 1940, guarded by M Garrison Company and. Service of Prisoners of War cachet, Reply To cachet, 5CC 2.1/3 cachet, Perth 31 August 1940, [no camp cachet]

Only English language Reply To cachet in red recorded

HARVEY

Mail was usually left open but this cover was delivered to camp authorities already sealed and may have been part of a bulk posting by the Post Office. Internee surface mail was free but airmail (5/8d rate) was paid by the prisoner. Censor cancelled the stamps. Services Prisoners of war. Camp No 11 cachet, Respondete A cachet in purple, 5CC 2.1/3 cachet



Camp Guard

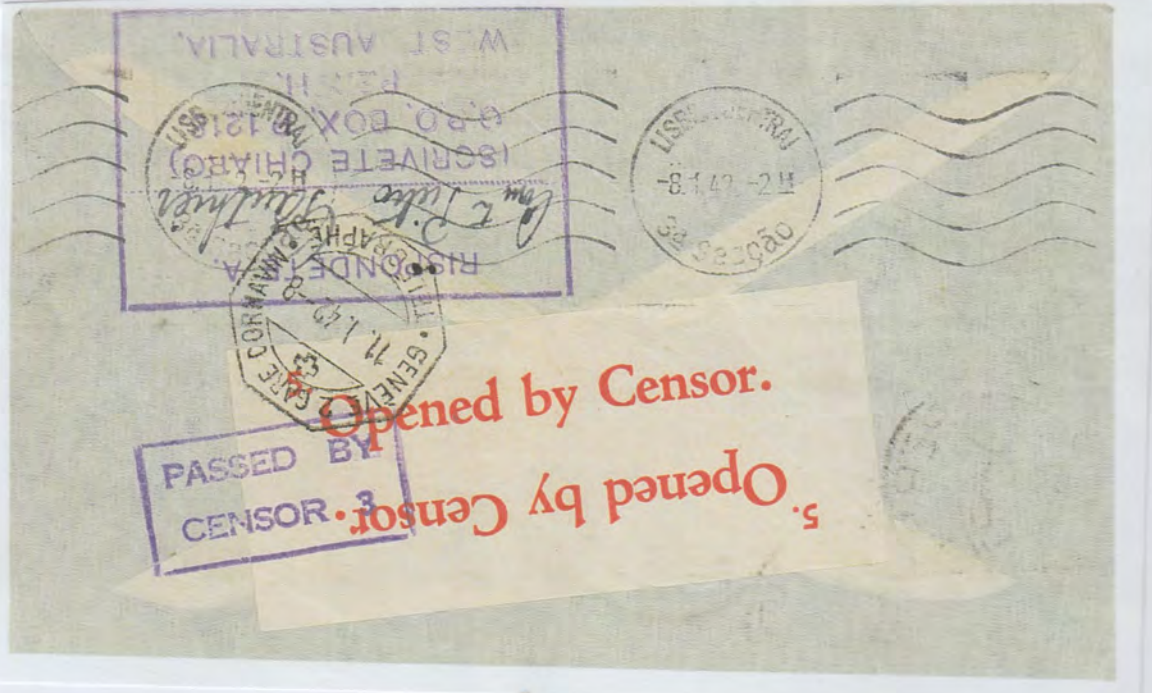
As there were no other significant military establishments near Harvey in 1941, it is probable that this cover is from a guard at the Internment Camp No 11. Harvey 27 October 1941, Army concession cachet, Perth 28 October, Hobart 1 November

HARVEY : M.V. REMO

During June 1940 M.V. Remo was delayed on various pretexts by authorities until 11 June when the vessel was boarded and Captain Pietro Gauthier and 23 men were interned at Fremantle Detention Barracks. The remainder of the crew and passengers were interned on Rottnest until all were transferred to Harvey.

This cover probably contained an urgent request to the ship's agents for crew's wages. As late as 24 February 1942 Red Cross noted no remittance for crew had been received (Australian Archives Item 241/3/82)

Services Prisoner of war. Camp No 11 cachet, Respondete A Comr Pietro Gauthier cachet in purple, 5CSL 2.9, 5CC 2.1/3, Perth 27 November 1941, Lisbon 8 January 1942, Geneva 11 January, Express label attached at unknown location although the cover is paid at POW airmail rate of 5/8d.



Middle East : Camps

MIL. P.O. MELVILLE [7/11/39 – 30/6/46]

The first step in establishing a military postal system in WA was the opening of post offices operated by the PMG Department on behalf of the Army at fixed military camps.

Melville became the largest Army camp in WA but the post office was only made an Allowance Office on 1 January 1940 and Official on 20 January 1942.

Only one datestamp recorded used 7/11/39 to 30/8/44.

Registration label with office cachet, Mil P.O. Melville 12 February 1940, Fremantle 12 February, Sydney 17 February, Strathfield 19 February



Registration label, Mil. P.O. Melville 29 July 1940, Fremantle 30 July, Sydney 3 August, Strathfield 5 August

Middle East : Camps

MIL. P.O. NORTHAM [8/11/39 - 30/6/44]

Northam opened as a camp in November 1939. It became an official post office some time in December and was supplied with 3 different datestamps.

Datestamp

P to N = 9.5mm

Registration label
with office cachet

Mil P.O. Northam

8 November 1939 (ERD)

Northam

8 November

Melbourne

13 November

Williamstown

13 January 1939 (sic)



Datestamp
P to N = 7.5mm
Mil. P.O. Northam
15 December 1940
West Australian Newspapers
17 December

Middle East : Camps

MIL. P.O. NORTHAM

Datestamp
P to N = 7.5mm

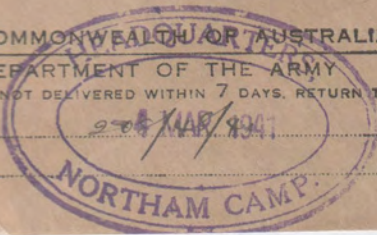
ON HIS MAJESTY'S SERVICE

*Commercial Agents' Office
Central Station Bldg
Perth.*



Headquarters
Northam Camp cachet
Mil. P.O. Northam
4 March 1941

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
IF NOT DELIVERED WITHIN 7 DAYS, RETURN TO



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
CONCESSION POSTAL RATE

*To Controller of Accounts and Audit,
Railways Branch.
Perth
WA.*



Datestamp
P to N = 10.5mm

Church of England Hut
Northam Camp
stationery
Concession cachet
Mil. P.O. Northam
30 December 1941