

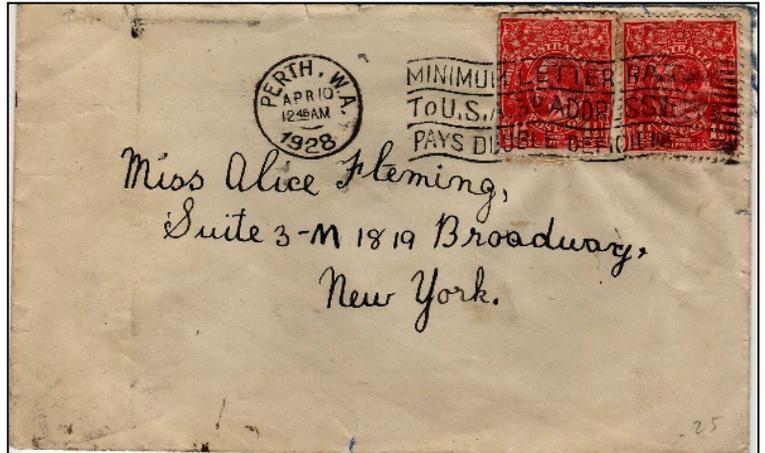
Oh, the Things You Can Learn Stamp Collecting!

by Mike Schumacher

A recent look through a box of inexpensive covers at the Northern Philatelic Library in Minneapolis, MN this summer resulted in some interesting finds (at a cost of .25 per cover). And they were not even Icelandic covers (for those of you who think I only look at Icelandic material). Both are covers from Australia – the first one contains two 1½ pence King George V, red rose stamps (Scot # 68) issued in 1927. The cancel is a very nice “1928 Perth, W.A.” cancel and sent to the USA. The cover is a bit weathered, but what turned out to be most interesting about it was that the recipient of the letter was “Miss Alice Fleming Suite 3-M 1819 Broadway, New York”.

What you may ask is so interesting about that? Well, one of the things I find interesting about collecting is researching the recipient.

In this case it turns out that **Alice Fleming** was a movie actress! Miss Fleming (1882 – 1952) starred in some silent movies (most notable “**His Greatest Sacrifice**” by 20th Century Fox – 1921) and then starred as the “**Duchess, Wild Bill Elliot’s Aunt**” in the acclaimed “**Red Ryder**” western series by Republic Pictures until 1946.



The second one is addressed to: “**Col. & Mrs. Leslie Skinner, Asheville, No. Carolina**”. Who was Col. Leslie Skinner?

Col. Leslie Skinner – retired military, spent most of his service in the Army Ordnance Corps & later 2 years on active duty with the Air Force. He was born in San Francisco, the son of an Army surgeon. Graduated from West Point (1924).

During the 1930s, he was stationed at the Aberdeen Proving Grounds, where he spent his time & money working on rocket experiments. In the 1940s he was assigned to the National Powder Factory at Indian

Head and worked with Dr. Clarence N. Hickman of the National Defense Research Committee. According to Army Magazine, Col. Skinner received little formal recognition for his pioneering work (which included the development of American Military rockets & the Bazooka). Ordnance Magazine stated he almost became the “forgotten Army Rocket Man”. In 1948, the Army awarded him the Legion of Merit medal & later he received the Hickman Award from the American Rocket Society. As a civilian he worked for Aerojet Engineering Co. California.

Col. Skinner spent the last several years of his life living in Florida; died at the Hospital in Clearwater at the age of 78 in 1978.

Who knew, one could find so much history for fifty cents!

Member Spot Light

Jason Wells



I am Jason Wells and I have been collecting stamps since I was a kid. I inherited my Dad's collection (which he hadn't touched in years) and it went from there on and off since then. I collect all countries, and I have albums from almost every country, colony, principality etc. etc. in the world. If I had a specialty, it would be British Commonwealth. Originally, the reason I enjoyed collecting was the historical overview stamps provided, but over time I discovered that philately offered a unique combination of sense of accomplishment and serenity. I am forever cataloging, sorting and classifying my collection --- and it will never be completed. I wouldn't have it any other way. I have already learned some very useful information and look forward to future exchanges of information and stamps.

Phil's Corner by Phil Fettig

Ever seen printed initials in the margin of stamps printed in the 19th or early 20th Century? They are part of a collecting sub-specialty called Marginal Markings. The United States Stamp Society defines Marginal Markings as:

“any intentional marking found on a printing plate except for the stamp itself. Such markings will also appear on the printed sheet. Examples of marginal markings include Plate Finisher’s initials, Siderographer’s initials, plate numbers, BEP or Printer’s Logo Imprint, copyright notices and Mr. Zip logos. Other plate marginal marking may not appear on the perforated and trimmed sheet, such as guide lines, arrows, printer’s initials, electric-eye dashes or slugs and ink color markers.”

Figure to the right is an imperf block of Scott 373, the issue for the Hudson-Fulton Celebration issue. The initials "CAH" are for Charles A. Hall, a Siderographer who created engraved printing plates from a transfer roll for the Bureau of Engraving and Printing.

Thanks to the web site for the United States Stamp Society for the background information used in this article.

[Editor’s note: collecting siderographer’s markings is an interesting side line. They tell an incredible history of who was involved in the production of the stamps.]

