

Synopsis for Literature article titled:

Stamps and Postal History of German New Guinea/Territory of New Guinea, 1888-1952

Purpose

German New Guinea has had an interesting history, and the purpose of the article is to briefly explain how its history is reflected in the postal history of the colony/territory. 1888 to 1952 is a long timeframe including two world wars, and the intent is to give the reader a basis for understanding how and why stamp issues changed from Provisionals to Definitives, with both German and Australian occupations while still telling the story of the development of New Guinea.

Treatment

German New Guinea began using German stamps, then and then Provisionals before issuing a Definitive Issue. Australia did the same, using Australian stamps, Provisionals, then Definitives. One cover is shown to illustrate each of the New Guinea stamp issues. Care was taken to identify postal rates and show both ordinary covers, a variety of postal rates, a wide variety of destinations, and a couple extreme rarities to help tell the story.

A key aspect of New Guinea postal history is the early development of airmail services. Australian daredevil pilots were hired to fly from the New Guinea coast to the mountaintops where gold was found in 1925. The early development of airmail in such an undeveloped country is an extraordinary story and deserves its own article. Additionally, the payment of airmail services within Australia from Papua is addressed, air shipment of gold bullion to Australia, UK Horseshoe route to Europe, third party route through Greece, and Clipper mail across the Pacific. World War I was a complicated time regarding postal services, primarily in 1914-1915, with a few provisional issues being used (some very short term) because the Germans destroyed all the stamps from the major post offices. Three covers are used to illustrate three provisional issues used between Nov 1914 and June 1915.

The exhibit ends at the end of 1941, the beginning of WW2 (January 1942 invasion). This is the end of New Guinea stamps because Australian stamps were used during and after the war.

Author's research

It is documented that (small) OS punctured Australian stamps were issued in New Guinea by the military and known used as early as November 1914 (likely issued close to the same time as GRI stamps, and likely earlier), but there is no record of what OS values the military post office issued in New Guinea. I document ½d, 1d, 2d, 5d and 6d OS Kangaroos and ½d and 1d OS KGV heads. So, it is likely to assume that *at least* all OS Kangaroo values to 6d were issued. As these were provisional issues, possibly the 1/- OS Kangaroo was issued, but likely no values higher. I list this information in the article for other collectors.

In Australia, OS stamps were not issued to the public and covers are scarce to find. For example, the 6d is extremely scarce on cover in Australia. Thus, all OS usages are quite important. These Official Service stamps were likely brought to New Guinea because there was limited use for them in Australia.

References:

- Franklin's Guide to the Stamps of Papua and New Guinea, Mark Franklin, AH & AW Reed, 1970 ISBN 0589070843
- AIRMAIL: The Story of Australia's Overseas Airmail - Book 1, The Beginning Via India to 1934, Ronald M Lee, 2022, National Library of Australia ISBN 9780645501209
- AIRMAIL: The Story of Australia's Overseas Airmail - Book 2, The Rapid Advances between 1934-1939 of the England/Australia Airmail, Ronald M Lee, 2022, National Library of Australia ISBN 9780645501216
- AIRMAIL: The Story of Australia's Overseas Airmail - Book 3, World War II: 1939-December 1941, Ronald M Lee, 2023, National Library of Australia ISBN 9780645501230
- Commonwealth Stamp Catalogue Australia, Stanley Gibbons, 12th Edition, 2022
- G.R.I. The Postage Stamps of the German Colonies occupied by the British 1914-1918, Robert M Gibbs, 1988, Christie's Robson-Lowe ISBN 0853974284