

# **AUSTRALIAN FORCES MAIL RESEARCH GROUP**

P.O. Box 201  
Gladesville, NSW 2111

CO-ORDINATING EDITOR  
DAVID J. COLLYER  
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AUSTRALIAN FORCES UNIT POSTAL STATION N.26

USED IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

ANDERS G.J. RHODIN

286) Australian Forces Unit Postal Station N.26 used in Papua New Guinea:  
Anders G.J. Rhodin

Previous information on the use and location of Australian Forces Unit Postal Station N.26 has been limited. Stobbs (1976) lists it as one of the Northern Command postmarks used during the Pacific Campaign, but gives no known dates of use nor a known location. Leek (1969) simply lists it as one of the Northern Command postmarks, and Rock (1967-71) does not mention it at all.

Recently, I had an opportunity to examine 8 covers from UPS N.26, one of which is illustrated in Fig. 1. The dates of use are from 6 MAR 1943 through 10 JUL 1943. All of the covers bear a 3 pence Air Mail stamp, indicating postage from one of the Pacific islands to Australia (Air Mail within Australia required 4 pence postage). All the covers are labeled "On Active Service", and all bear hand-drawn illustrations of Pacific scenes. All the covers also bear the handstamp of Australian Military Forces censor 1094, which serves as the key for identifying the location of UPS N.26. This same censor is also found on a few covers from other Field Post Offices from the same correspondence during the same period of time. One of these covers is illustrated in Fig. 2. I have recorded the use of the AMF 1094 censor at FPO 084 between 23-25 MAR 1943; at UPS N.26 between 6 MAR - 10 JUL 1943; and at FPO 12 between 3-6 AUG 1943. FPO 084 was allotted to the Australian 3rd Division in May, 1942, and was in use by the 3rd Division throughout the Pacific Campaign. The 3rd Division arrived in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea in January, 1943, and moved on to Bulolo in April, 1943 (see Leek; Rock). FPO 12 was allotted to the Australian 1st Corps from May, 1942 until May, 1944 when it became the 2nd Corps. The 1st Corps arrived in Port Moresby in August, 1942 and moved to Dobodura sometime during August, 1943, using FPO 12 during this time. It would appear from this information that whatever unit was using the AMF 1094 censor was stationed in the Port Moresby area of Papua New Guinea. In late March, 1943 some of its mail was postmarked by the 3rd Division at FPO 084 at Port Moresby, from early March to July most of the mail was postmarked at UPS N.26, and in early August it was postmarked by the 1st Corps at FPO 12 at Port Moresby. It appears, therefore, that both AMF censor 1094 and the postal facilities for UPS N.26 were also located in the Port Moresby area.

It is interesting to note that UPS N.26 is one of only 3 known Northern Command postal units believed to date to have been located in Papua New Guinea. UPS N.30 was apparently used somewhere in the region; Jennings (1978) records a cover dated 14 MAR 1943 used in Papua with AMF censor 300. Stobbs notes overall dates of 7 JUL 1942 through 1 APR 1943 for UPS N.30 but gives only "Pacific" as the location. UPS N.31 is listed by Stobbs as being used on 4 MAR 1943

at Losuia, Papua. This report now records the use of UPS N.26 in the Port Moresby area, Papua New Guinea from 6 MAR 1943 through 10 JUL 1943.

References:

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- Leek, J.E. 1969. Australian Military Forces in Australia and the Pacific (Seven Sections). Aust. Stamp Monthly 1969.
- Rock, P.M.C. 1967-71. Australian Military Forces postmarkers. Phil. Fr. Aust. 19:41-43,74-76,96-102;21:63-71,102-106; 22:20-25,53-55,78-87,105-110;23:21-24
- Stobbs, S. 1976. Postmarks of the Australian Forces from all fronts 1939 to 1953. West Yorkshire: Harry Hayes Philat. Study No. 21, pp. 64.

