

THE LIFE AND CAREER OF
WILLIAM RIDDELL BIRDWOOD,
FIELD MARSHAL,
LORD BIRDWOOD OF ANZAC AND TOTNES,
GCB, GCSI, GCMG, GCVO, CIE, DSO, LLD, DCL, DLitt, MA



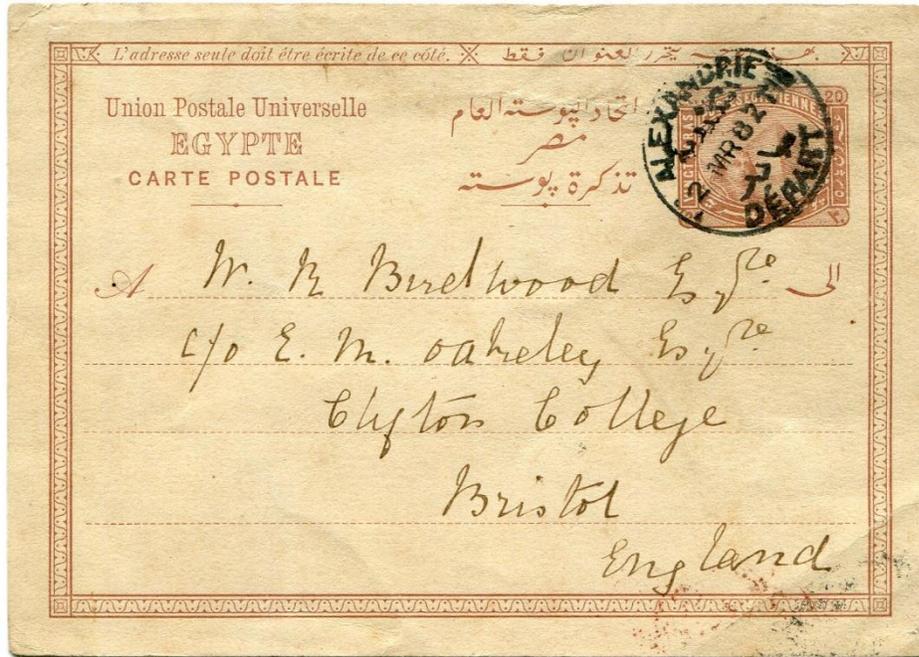
*Birdwood
F.M.*

Major Reference: KHAKI AND GOWN, AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY by Field Marshal Lord Birdwood, published Ward, Lock & Co Ltd, London and Melbourne, 1941.

Other information has been sourced from contemporary newspapers, accessed through trove.nla.gov.au.

William Birdwood - school boy in England

William Riddell Birdwood was born on 13 September 1865, son of Herbert Birdwood, Under-Secretary to the Government of Bombay, at Kirkee, near Poona, India. He was the second of five sons, and had one elder sister. He came from a family with a strong military tradition: his grandfather, General Christopher Birdwood, was in the Bombay Army, and his mother Edith, was daughter of Surgeon-Major Impey of the Bombay Horse Artillery, and was for a time the Postmaster-General of Bombay.



Birdwood attended Clifton College (Oakeley's House) from 1877 to 1882, and gained a commission in the 4th battalion Royal Scots Fusiliers. He then went to the Military College at Sandhurst. He received his commission in May 1885 (early, because of fears of a Russian invasion of Afghanistan), and was gazetted as a lieutenant in the XII (Prince of Wales's) Royal Lancers, and immediately embarked for India.

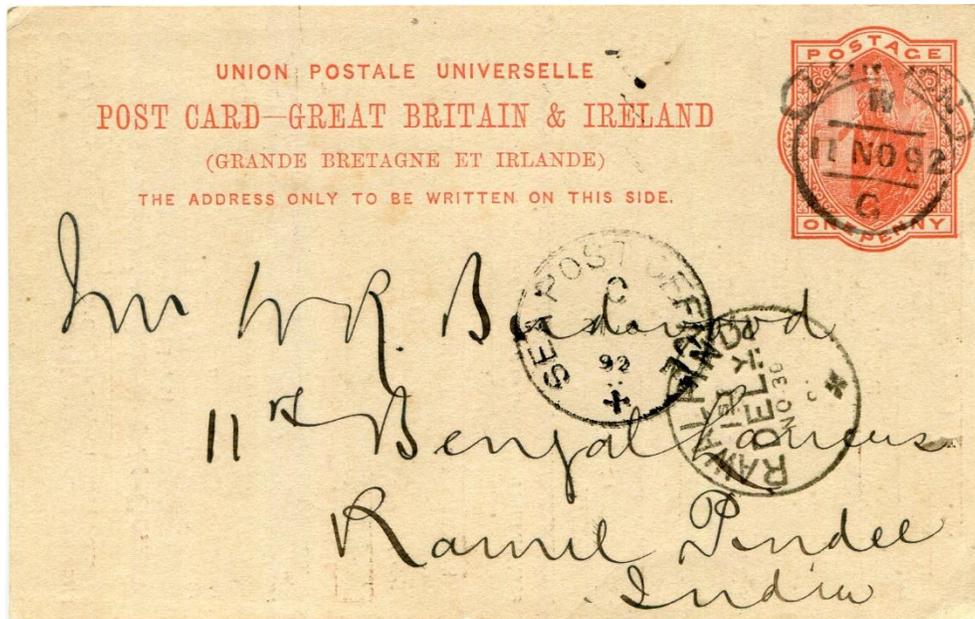
Above:
2 March 1882 - postcard from his mother to William Birdwood, school boy at Clifton College

Right:
Scan of back of card, bottom third of the card is blank, text reads: 'Alexandria, 2 March, Just reached this after a dreadful voyage, have written to Chris, send this as you may like the stamp'. Yours, initialled EMB (Edith Marion Birdwood)

Alexandria
2. March.
Just reached this
aft. a dreadful
voyage. have written
to Chris. send this
as you may like
the stamp. yrs. EMB

Lieutenant Birdwood - Officer in Bengal Lancers

William Birdwood sailed for India in 1885 as a newly commissioned officer, and transferred to the 11th Bengal Lancers in 1887. In 1892 he became engaged to Jeanette Bromhead, and they married in 1893. Note that the card is addressed to Mr W R Birdwood, and that his military rank is not used.



British postal card (with a printed reverse) from the London shipping agent Davies, Turner & Co, postmarked with a hooded London date stamp of 11 November 1892, the date of posting. There is also a SEA POST OFFICE cancel dated 21 November 1892, and the RAWLAPINDI DELIVERY date stamp of 30 November 1892.

The card advises the despatch of a parcel, such as a shipping trunk, to Bombay.

The parcel would have contained British made items for Lieutenant Birdwood, such as clothes for his wedding, or household items needed to set up a house after he was married. The families of the bride and groom were both permanently based in India.

In 1893 Birdwood was appointed adjutant of the Viceroy's bodyguard, with the rank of Captain.

BOMBAY.
Goods forwarded and insured to and from all parts of the world by Mail or other Steamers, Clipper Ships, Railways, &c.

DAVIES, TURNER & Co.
(Established 1870.)

CHIEF OFFICE—LONDON 52, LIME ST., E.C. | BRANCH OFFICE—LIVERPOOL, OLDHALL ST.
WEST END " " 113A, REGENT ST., W. | DO. NEW YORK, 40 & 42, BROADWAY.

52, Lime St., London, 107 11 1892

Mr W R Birdwood
Bombay

Telegraph Address: SPEDITION, LONDON.
Refer to 5629 in your reply.

ADVICE OF GOODS
Carried at a Through Freight INCLUDING AGENT'S LANDING AND CLEARING CHARGES.

Dear Sir,—We have the pleasure to inform you that we have forwarded per s/s. *Arched prepared* received from *M^r J. Weir London* in case of delay please apply to *M^r Sunday Brown to Bombay.*

Soliciting your further favors,
We are, yours faithfully,
DAVIES, TURNER & Co.

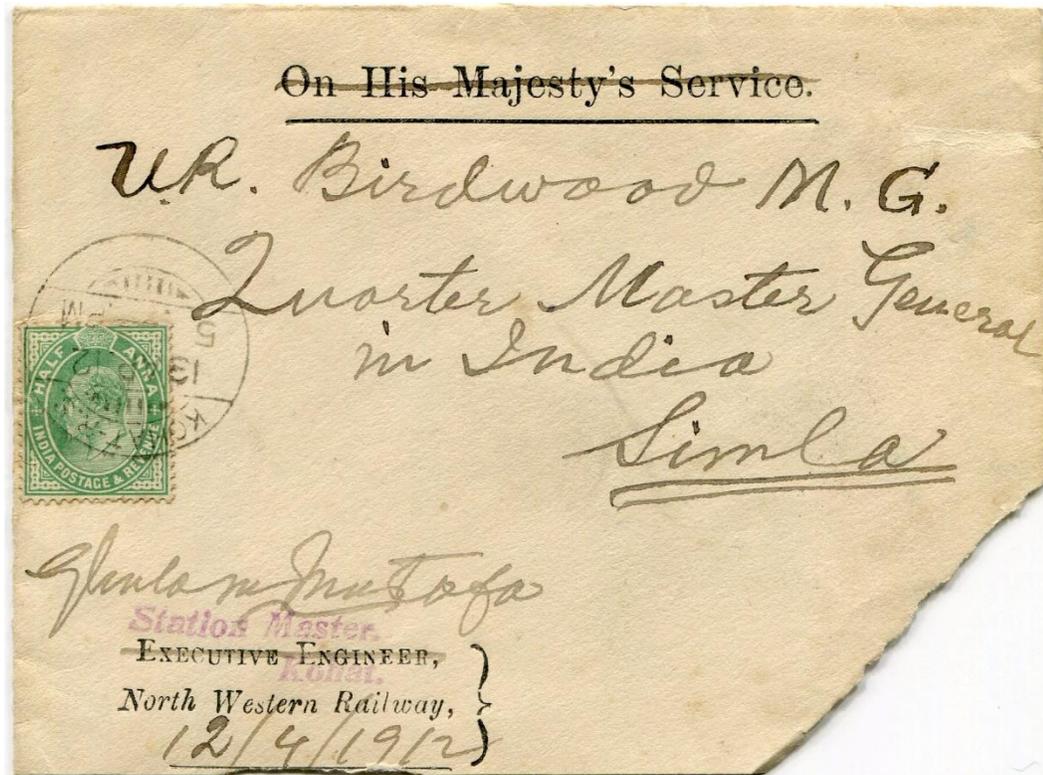
Through Freight including delivery..... £
Insurance f.p.a.
Postages and Advice.....
Amount of Sender's Invoice.....

Total £ *paid*

Pay no further charge beyond Government stamps, and duty, (if any) and difference in exchange.

Major General Birdwood - QuarterMaster General for the British Army in India, 1912

In 1912 Major-General W R Birdwood was promoted to QuarterMaster General of the British Army in India. (The Quartermaster General is the staff officer in charge of the supplies for the whole army). Birdwood was also a member of the Viceroy's Legislative Council, and in 1913 became the Secretary of the Indian Army Department of Government.



Cover from Glenla M Mustafa, Station Master Kohat, to W R Birdwood in his role as QuarterMaster General in Simla, India.

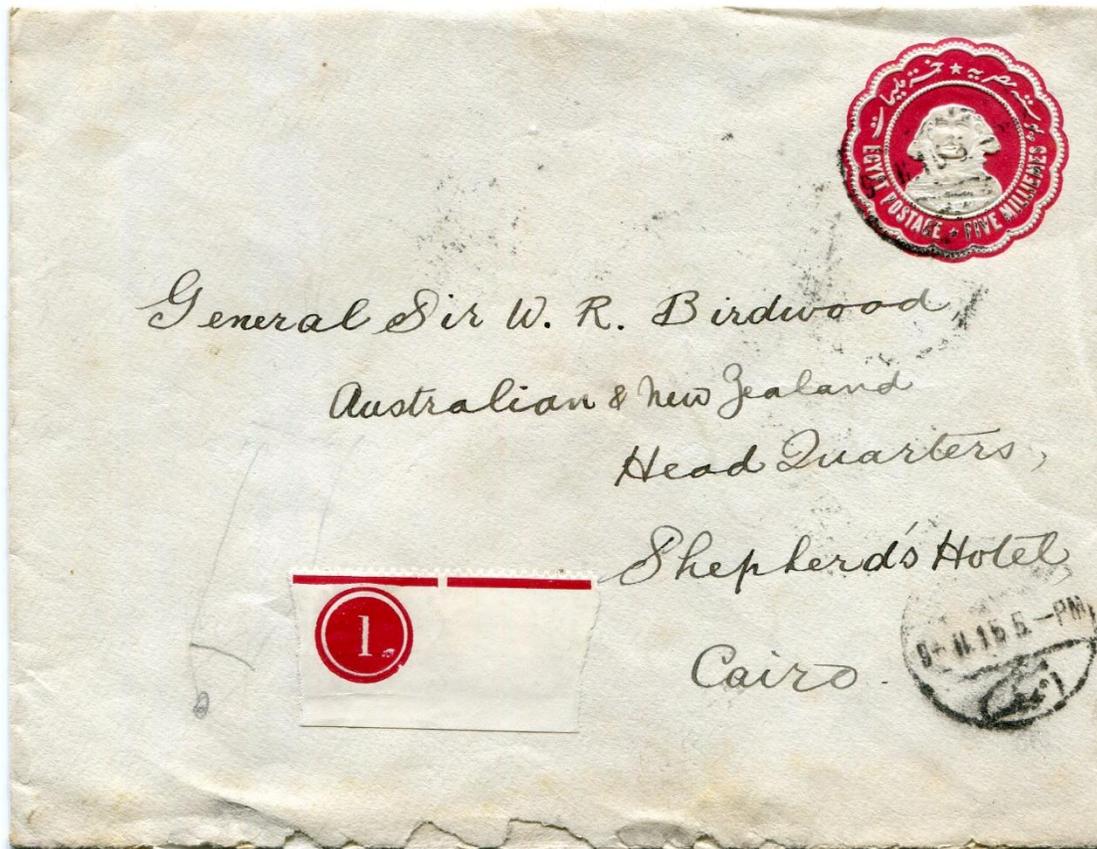
Photograph of Colonel W R Birdwood, in his role as Military Secretary, pictured standing on the step in the white cap, with the Commander in Chief (India), General Lord Kitchener (far right), and other members of Kitchener's personal staff. Photograph taken in 1908, at Simla, north west India.

Reference: Khaki and Gown – an Autobiography by Field-Marshal Lord Birdwood, pub Ward, Lock & Co, London, December 1941, photograph facing p192.



General Sir William Birdwood - commander of the ANZAC forces in World War 1, 1915

General Birdwood of the British Indian Army was appointed to command the army corps from Australia and New Zealand, who were assembling in Egypt for training. The administrative headquarters of the new force, later named ANZAC at the suggestion of Major A P White, was Shepherd's Hotel in Cairo. It was announced in July 1915 that General Birdwood was to be knighted later in the year.



This Egyptian postal envelope was posted at SHEPHERD'S HOTEL, CAIRO, on 9 November 1915. At this time, General Birdwood was with his staff and troops overseeing plans for the evacuation of Gallipoli. He was ashore during the day and aboard the cruiser HMS Chatham at night. This letter, and others addressed to the general, would have been carried by military courier to HMS Chatham.



On the face of the envelope is a piece of selvedge. It has the plate number 1 in a red circle. Its purpose is not known.

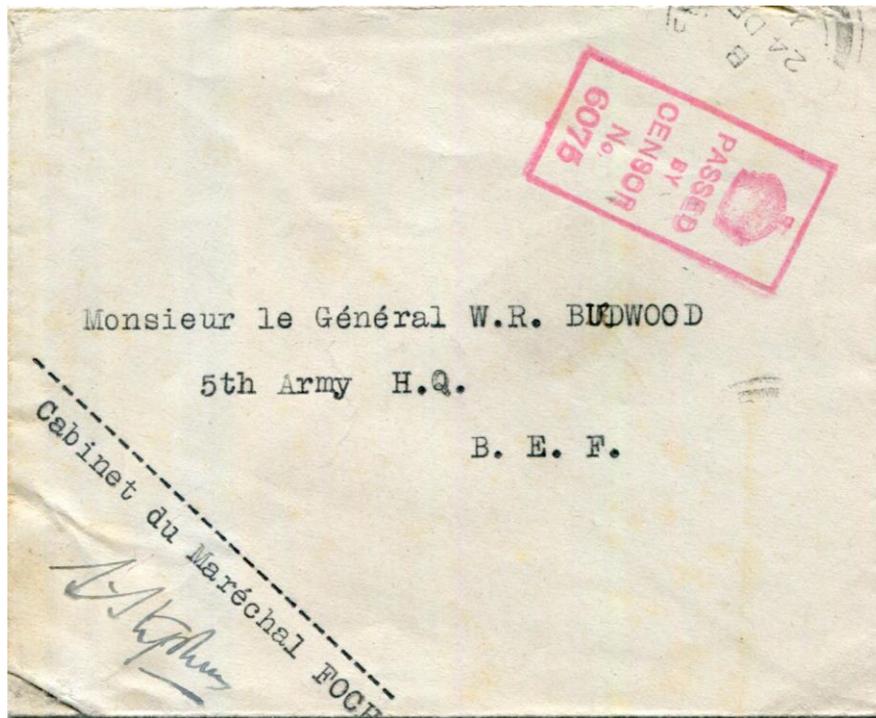
Shepherd's Hotel was established in 1841, and was destroyed by fire in 1952. It was rebuilt and named Shepherd's Hotel, later Hotel Shepherd. (Note the different spelling). The photograph shows Shepherd's Hotel in the 1920s.

General Sir William Birdwood - duties after the war, November to December 1918

General Sir William Birdwood was commander of the British Fifth Army. While the Second and Fourth Armies moved into Germany, the Fifth Army remained in northern France and southern Belgium.

The war ended at 11 o'clock on the eleventh of November. Birdwood spent time with the French Premier Clemenceau, the French soldier and Supreme Allied Commander Marshal Foch, the King and Queen of the Belgians, the civic leaders (Burgomasters (mayors), bishop and city fathers) of Lille, Tournai and Roubaix, as well as touring his troops located across many towns and villages.

Cover below, poorly postmarked with the British army field postmark dated 24 December, almost certainly 1918, with the pink British censor mark. This shows that the envelope was posted into the British military mail system.



Newspaper article, shown in several Australian newspapers and presumably around the world. Dated 19 November 1918.

FOCH AND BIRDWOOD.

(REUTERS).
LONDON, Saturday.—Reuter's correspondent at the British headquarters in France reports that Marshal Foch visited General Birdwood yesterday at the Fifth Army headquarters. The meeting was of the most cordial nature.

General Sir William Birdwood - duties after the war, 1919

In March 1919 the British Fifth Army was demobilised, and General Birdwood no longer had any command. His time was spent in the office of the Australian Imperial Forces in London. He attended the triumphal march through Paris on 14 July, and London on 19 July. He made frequent trips to Portsmouth to farewell Australian troops returning home. In addition, he was granted the freedom of the Borough of Totnes, presented a captured German gun to the people of Exeter in recognition of their kindness and hospitality shown to Australian forces travelling from Portsmouth to their encampment on Salisbury Plain, and escorted the Shah of Iran from Dover to London.



Covers dated August 1919, addressed to General Sir William Birdwood at the headquarters of the Australian Imperial Forces in London.

Top cover – Gibraltar, dated 11 August 1919.

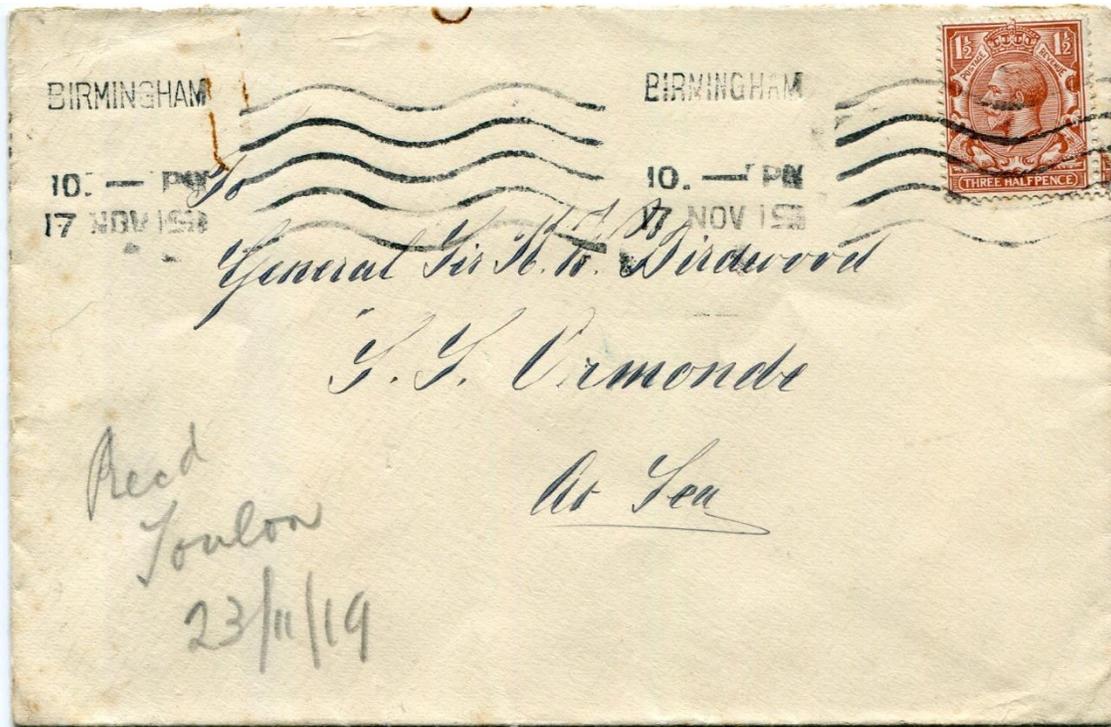
Bottom cover – Poona, India, dated 16 August 1919.

General Sir William Birdwood - trip to Australia, 1919-1920

General Sir William Birdwood set sail on the R M S Ormonde (Orient Steam Navigation Co Ltd of London, 170 m long, 14,982 tons) on 14 November 1919, stopping at Gibraltar, Toulon, Naples, Port Said, Suez, Colombo, and arriving in Fremantle on 19 December. From there the Ormonde sailed to Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane.

This was the maiden voyage for the RMS Ormonde as an ocean liner. The ship had previously sailed to Australia, leaving Plymouth on 8 June 1919, as a troop ship carrying 1,583 Australian troops and their wives. Upon its return to England it was taken in hand by the builders and converted to a three class ocean liner.

Cover posted from Birmingham, dated 17 November 1919, is addressed to General Birdwood 'at sea'. From London GPO it was sent by rail through France to meet the ship at Toulon on 23 November 1919.



News item from "The Daily News", Perth, Thursday 18 December 1919, page 8, detailing the arrival on the RMS Ormonde and carrying Murray, Birdwood, and Monash. Accessed www.trove.nla.gov.au.

NOTABLE ARRIVALS

**MURRAY, BIRDWOOD AND
MONASH**

TRAVEL TOGETHER ON OR-
MONDE.

PUBLIC RECEPTIONS ARRANGED.

There will arrive at Fremantle by the Ormonde to-morrow three of the big men of the A.I.F.—

Lieut.-Colonel Henry William Murray, V.C., C.M.G., D.S.O. (with Bar), D.C.M., Croix de Guerra.

General Sir William Birdwood, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., K.C.S.I., C.I.E., D.S.O., A.D.C. (F.).

Lieut.-General Sir John Monash, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., V.D. (F.).

No more notable triumvirate have ever come to Fremantle in one boat. Lieut.-Colonel Murray is the marvel soldier of whom West Australia is especially proud—the man who left in 1914 as a private and returns a colonel with the greatest number of distinctions won by any soldier in the whole of the British Army. General Birdwood is the beloved chief of the A.I.F., who has never seen Australia but who knows its men and is known by them better than most Australians, and General Monash is the organising genius of whom the "Times" recently stated: "He is one of the most striking examples that the war produced of latent military ability in modern civilian life."

The people of W.A. will be happy to do honor to these three men, whose reputations are world wide, and who are the outstanding personalities of the A.I.F. Public receptions and soldier festivities appropriate to the occasion have been arranged, and the day will be devoted to giving them a cordial welcome.

General Birdwood during his tour of New Zealand, 1920

Cover addressed to General Sir W R Birdwood, during his tour of New Zealand. The cover was posted in Melbourne, then the seat of government for Australia.

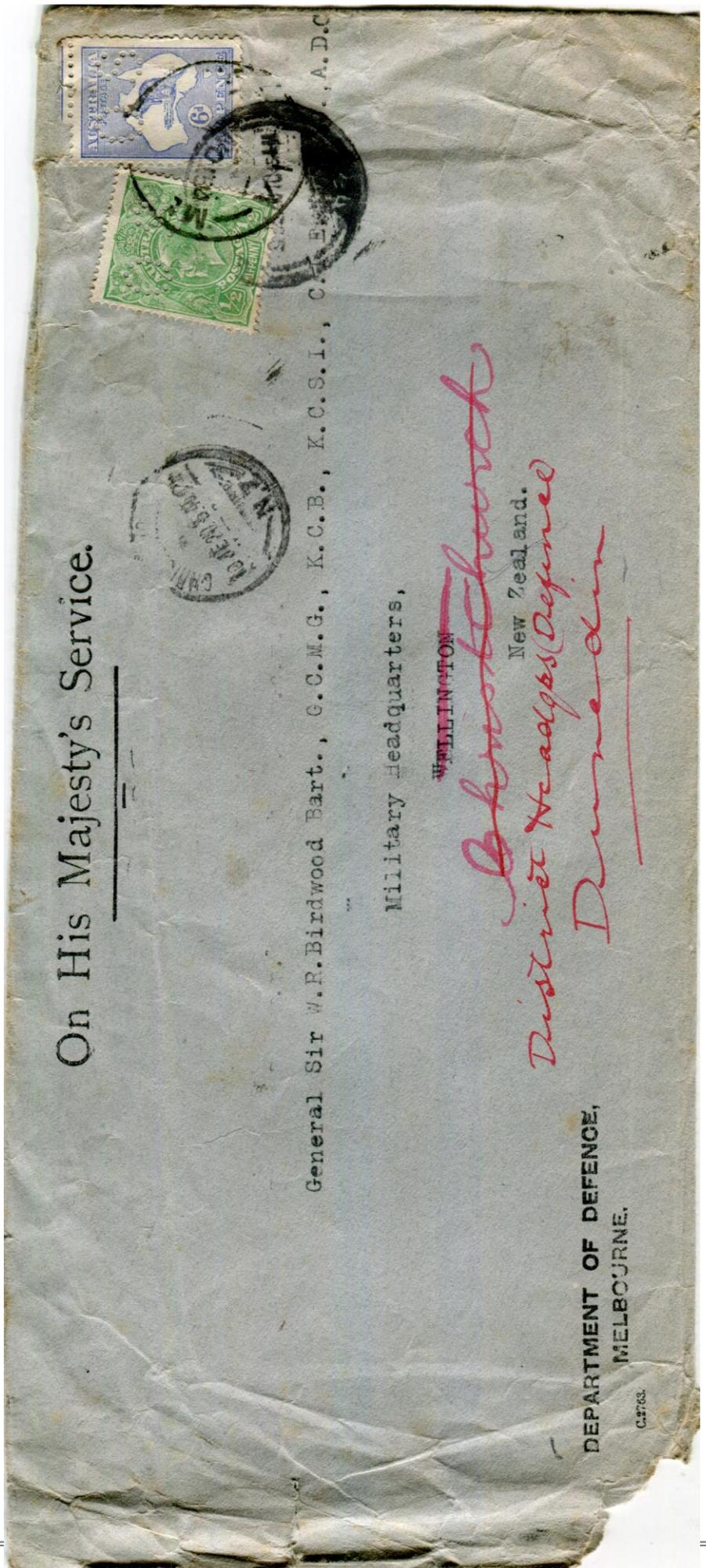
The cover has followed General Birdwood around New Zealand, being re-directed from Wellington to Christchurch and then Dunedin.

Postmarks are Melbourne (date unclear), Wellington (10 June), and Christchurch dated 10 June 1920.

Postage has paid the triple weight postal rate of two pence, and half penny war tax. Both stamps are perforated OS for government use.

General Birdwood arrived at Wellington, New Zealand, on 2 June 1920. He also visited Christchurch, Oamaru, Dunedin, Invercargil, finishing in Auckland. He left New Zealand 'at the end of July'.

General Birdwood's mail was opened by his secretary, Captain L A P Ward. He had been with General Birdwood since he took over the AIF in 1914. He left General Birdwood's service when the general left New Zealand in July 1920.



Letter written by General Birdwood during his tour of Australia, 1920, page 1 of 2

The letter is General Birdwood's response to the letter from General Sir Skipton Climo, who commanded the forces during the Waziristan Expedition, one of the battles on the North West Frontier, 1919 to January 1920. Birdwood and Climo would have known each other since serving together in the Boer War.

Cin C
Waziristan



AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

C/o Defence Department,
Melbourne.

5th March, 1920.

My dear Climo,

Only a line in a hurry to thank you for your letter of 19th December - just received. The news we get here of what is happening on the frontier is so very meagre that it is quite impossible to follow your doings at all, but I gather that the Mahsuds have finally and completely climbed down, so I trust that you have been able to hit them really hard - as I was quite sure you and Andrew Skeen would succeed in doing.

I am having a terribly strenuous time of it - far more so than I had thought possible, for the Commonwealth Government have made out an extremely ambitious tour for me, meaning about a month in every State, and during that month visiting every town and centre of returned soldiers, addressing them and seeing them settled down, etc. etc. At times I feel it is almost hopeless to get through it, when all are so more than kind in their welcome. When one finds men riding/

- 2 -

riding anything up to fifty miles to see one for a few minutes, I cannot help feeling that the most one can do for them is all too little.

I am hoping I shall be out in India by the autumn - if I am allowed to stay here until then, but New Zealand insist on my going to them after I finish this country, so I am not likely to get much rest.

Every good wish to you, my dear Climo, for the future, and all that may be before you, and please remember me to Andrew Skeen and other friends with you.

Yours ever,

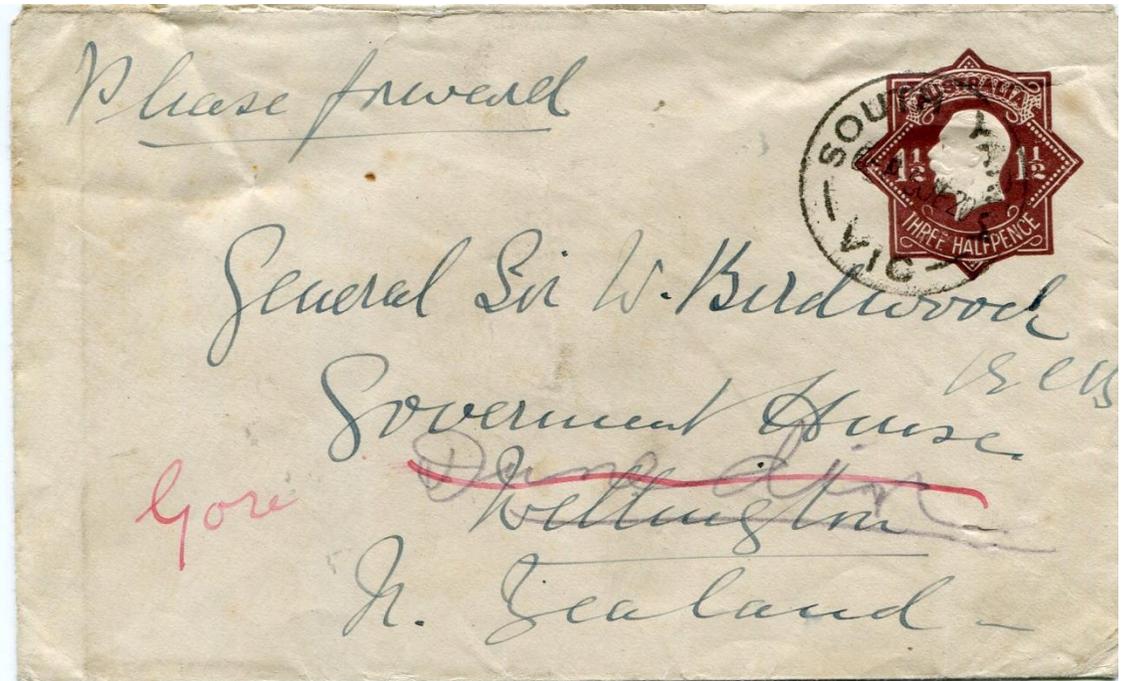
W. B. Birdwood.

My boy in 11th - tells me he has just joined your force - attached to 2/76th.

General Sir William Birdwood - visit to Australia and New Zealand, 1919-1920

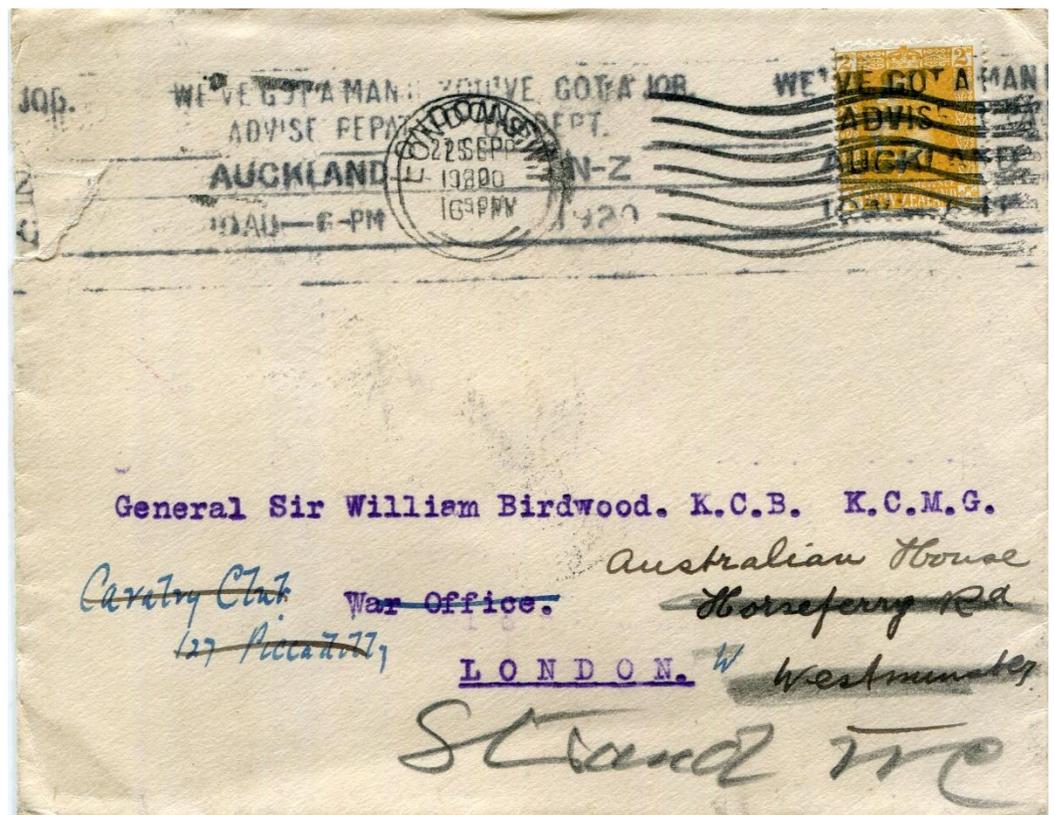
General Sir William Birdwood and Lady Birdwood visited Australia from 19 December 1919 to late May, about 5½ months. They visited every state. After Australia, the General visited New Zealand for 2 months. They returned to England via the Panama Canal and America, arriving in London on 10 September 1920.

This cover has been postmarked SOUTH YARRA - VIC - , dated 5 June 1920. (General Birdwood arrived in NZ on 2 June 1920). The cover has been addressed to Government House, but the Governor General Lord Liverpool was packed to leave the position. General Birdwood and his wife stayed at the Midland Hotel while in Wellington. This cover has been re-directed to Dunedin, with the text 'Gone'.



This cover has the crest on the flap of the North Auckland Mounted Rifles. It has been posted in Auckland on 10 August 1920, with the slogan cancel WE'VE GOT A MAN YOU'VE GOT A JOB / ADVISE REPATRIATION DEPT.

The cover was addressed to the War Office, then re-directed to the Cavalry Club (21 Sept), then to Australia House in Horseferry Road (22 Sept), then to Australia House in The Strand.



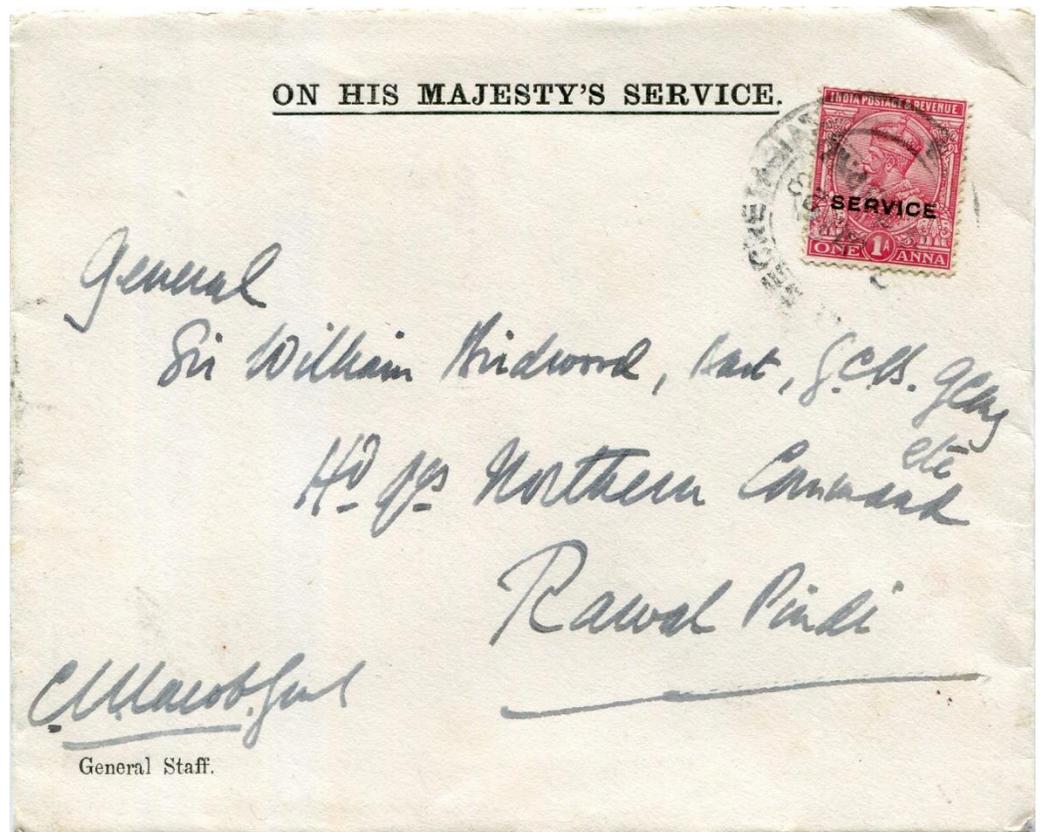
General Sir William Birdwood - Officer Commanding Northern Army, India, 1920-1925

General Sir William Birdwood and Lady Birdwood arrived in London on 10 September 1920. Upon his return to England, General Birdwood was appointed as the Commander of the Northern Army in India. General Sir William Birdwood arrived in India on 30 October 1920 to take up his command, with the headquarters being at Rawalpindi. The covers below are both embossed with the arms and text GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

This cover, dated 8 February 1922, was written by Lieutenant General George Barrow, commander of the Peshawar District. Note his signature at the bottom of the envelope: GB LG / Pesh Dist .



This cover, postmarked ??? SECRETARIAT, dated 2 January 1923, was written by Lieutenant General Claud Jacob, Chief of the General Staff in India from January 1920 to 1924. His signature is at the bottom left: "C. W. Jacob. Genl"



General Sir William Birdwood - Officer Commanding Northern Army, India, 1920-1925

General Sir William Birdwood was involved in social affairs as well as military matters.

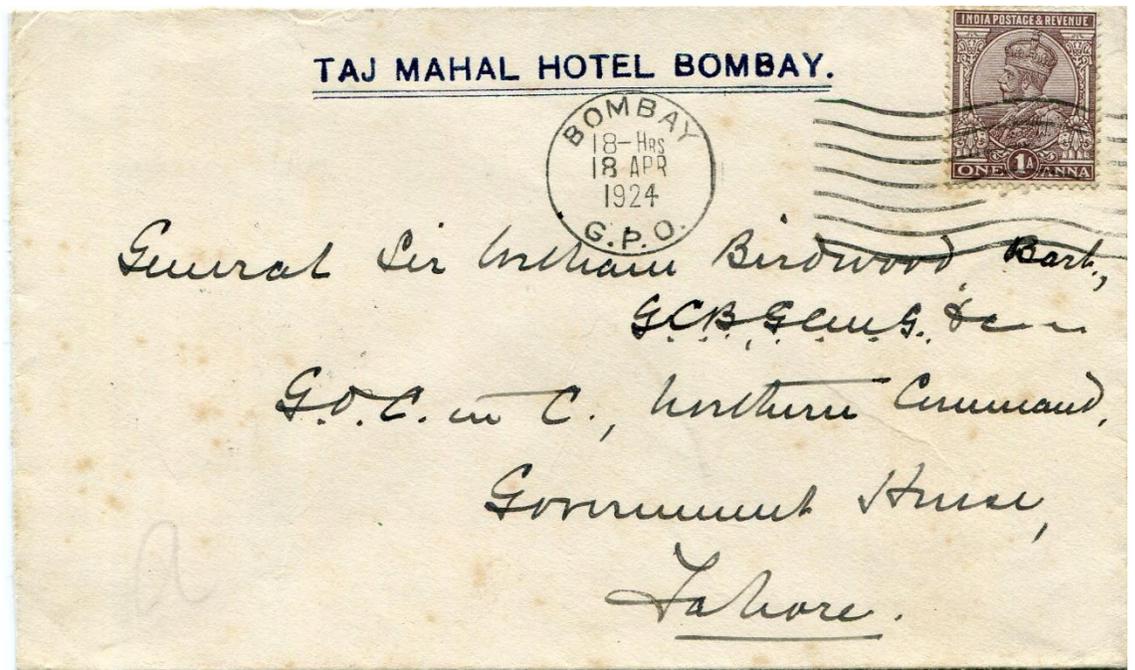
General Sir William Birdwood maintained his interest and connections to Australia during his time in India. He read Australian newspapers, and answered correspondence from Australia.

This envelope, post-marked Melbourne (then the location of the Australian Government), dated 2 March 1922, probably contained a letter or invitation addressed to Birdwood care of the Prime Minister, and has been forwarded in a separate envelope.

Backstamp ANUSHKOR, 19 April 1922.



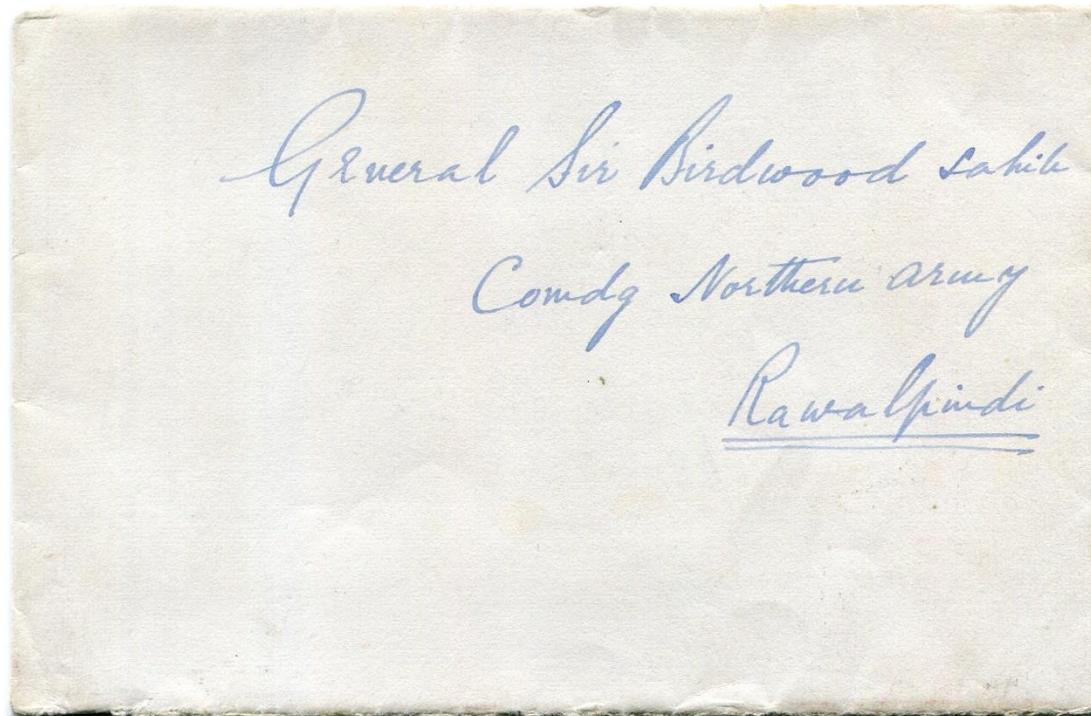
This cover, dated 18 April 1924, was posted when General Birdwood was in Lahore for discussions with the Sikhs, aimed at improving relations (and reducing the risk of armed conflict) between some members in the Sikh community and the government.



General Sir William Birdwood - Officer Commanding Northern Army, India, 1920-1925

Cover addressed to General Sir William Birdwood at Rawalpindi. The cover is reverse franked. It has probably been sent by an Indian officer in the 112th Infantry, with the regimental logo on the flap of the envelope and the Indian term of endearment 'sahib' used to describe General Birdwood.

The cover has been postmarked at Dhaunkal, a town in the Punjab, in the district of Gujranwala, dated 20 or 26 December 1922. It cancels the green half anna stamp. The arrival datestamp is Rawalpindi, 30 December 1922.



The 112th Infantry Regiment was raised in 1796 by the East India Company's Bombay Army, later the British Indian Army. During World War 1 they served in Mesopotamia as part of the 17th Indian Division, and fought in the Waziristan Campaign in 1919-20. In 1922 (date of this cover) the 112th Infantry became the 3rd Battalion 4th Bombay Grenadiers. After independence in 1947, the regiment was allocated to the Indian Army.

General Sir William Birdwood - reply to letter of congratulations

In March 1925, General Sir William Birdwood received a telegram advising him that King George V had approved his promotion to Field Marshall, and as Commander in Chief in India. This was a break in tradition, as normally the rank of Field Marshall was bestowed after retirement.

7. 6. 25.

TELEGRAMS, BASSINGHAM.
STATION, LINCOLN.

THURLBY HALL
NEWARK-ON-TRENT.

My dear old Colonel,
I have only today received
your kind congratulations. via India!
So many thanks to them & I can assure
you I appreciate them very much
indeed, coming as they do from
my old Sandhurst instructor
& those one of my very oldest-
service friends. Of course I know

TELEGRAMS BARRINGTON
STATION, LINCOLN.

7. 6. 25.

THURLBY HALL
NEWARK-ON-TRENT.

My dear old Colonel,
I have only today received
your kind congratulations, via India!
So many thanks for them. I can assure
you I appreciate them very much
indeed, coming as they do from
my old Sandhurst instructor,
I suppose one of my very oldest
service friends. Of course I know

I am much over-rewarded, and hope I
am never likely to forget that. I owe greatly
to the real good comrades in the team,
and good fortune to serve with – rather be
served by – during these last 40 years.
I do hope all goes well with you. I'd
hoped to have seen Toby, who I believe
will be at home this year, but unfortunately
I have to return to India next month.
Every good wish to you and yours.
Yours very sincerely,
W R Birdwood.

Sir William Birdwood
and Australian Expeditionary Force
GALLIPOLI 1914-15

Transcript of letter, dated 6 June 1925, reads:

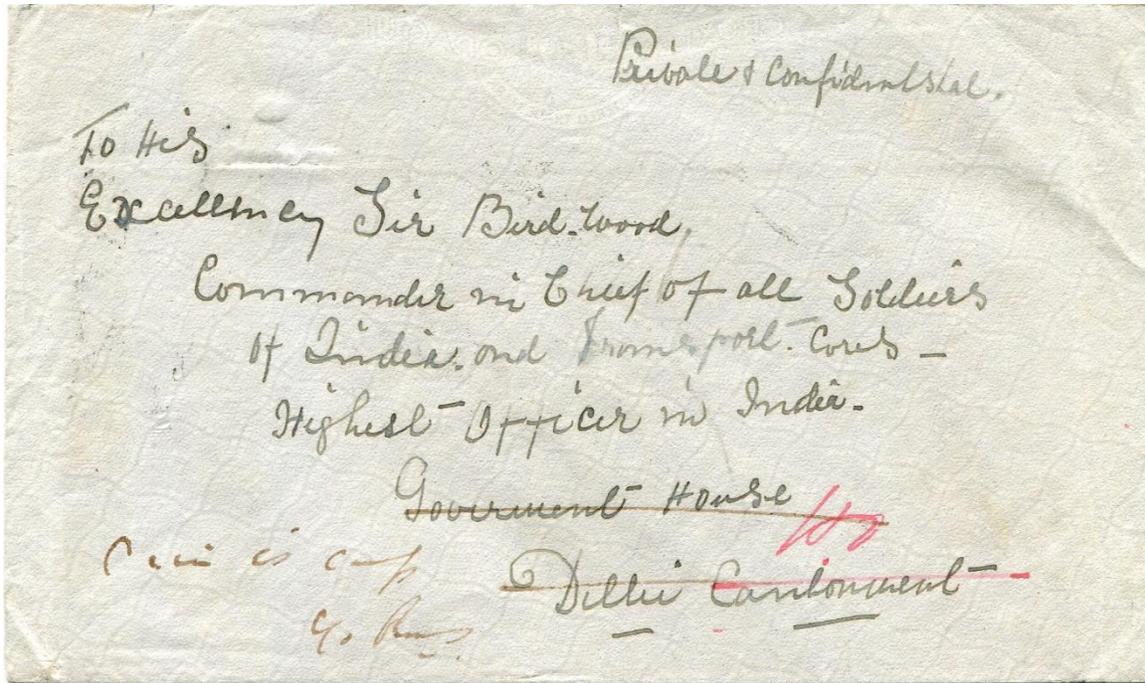
My dear old Colonel, I have only today received your kind congratulations, via India! So many thanks for them. I can assure you I appreciate them very much indeed, coming as they do from my old Sandhurst instructor, I am sure one of the very oldest service friends. Of course I know I am much over rewarded, and hope I am never likely to forget that. I owe greatly to the real good comrades in the team and good fortune – to serve with – rather be served by – during these last 40 years. I do hope all goes well with you. I'd hoped to have seen Toby who I believe will be at home this year, but unfortunately I have to return to India next month. Every good wish to you and yours. Yours very sincerely, W R Birdwood.

Note: General Birdwood never refers to the 'dear old colonel' by name.

Field Marshal Sir William Birdwood - 1925-1930

In March 1925, General Sir William Birdwood received a telegram advising him that King George V had approved his promotion to Field Marshal, and had appointed him to succeed General Rawlinson as Commander in Chief in India. This was a break in tradition, as normally the rank of Field Marshal was bestowed after retirement.

The cover below, reverse franked, postmarked SIALKOT 13 NOV 25, describes him as: To His Excellency Sir Birdwood, Commander in Chief of all Soldiers of India and Transport Corps, Highest Officer in India, Government House, Delhi Cantonment. The cover has been re-directed to 'C in C's Camp / C/o RMS'. (RMS = Railway Mail Service, who delivered mail to mobile military units, bases and camps). Scan at bottom shows the reverse of the cover.



Field Marshal Sir William Birdwood - annual notification of the flying of the Union Jack,
over the French city of Lille

Each year General Birdwood received a letter from the Mayor of Lille (this letter is from 1925) advising that the Union Jack had been flown in the French city of Lille on 17 October that year, the anniversary of the liberation of the city in 1918 from the Germans near the end of World War 1.

Cover postmarked Lille, 21 October 1925, with the corner text MAIRIE DE LILLE / CABINET DU MAIRE, which translates as LILLE TOWN HALL, OFFICE OF THE MAYOR. India arrival backstamp dated 6 November 1925

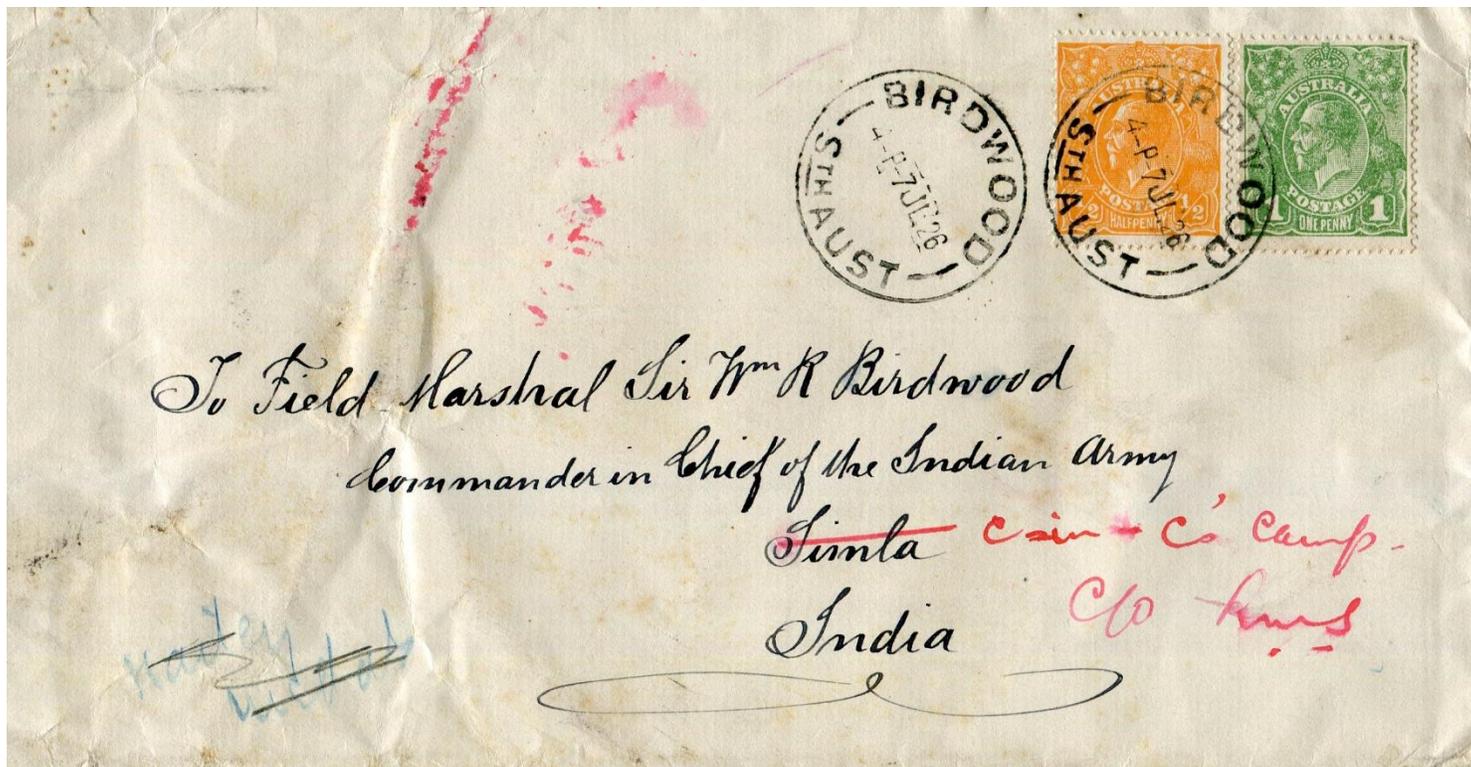


Plain cover postmarked Lille, 30 November 1925. India arrival backstamp dated December 1925. The sender is not known. The envelope is made of thick patterned paper, lined with purple coloured paper. This type of envelope was used to post cards, such as greeting cards, sympathy cards or Christmas cards.

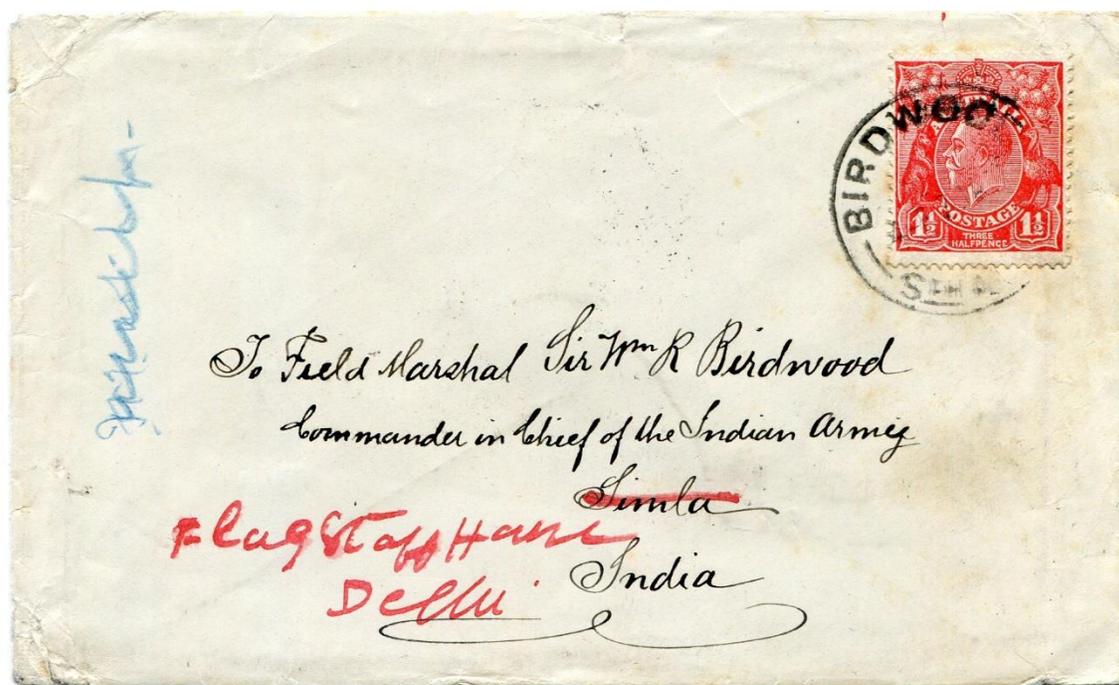


General Sir William Birdwood - connection to the town of Birdwood, South Australia

These covers have been posted by the mayor (Mr F Pflaum) of the town of Birdwood, South Australia. The town was renamed in honour of General Birdwood in 1918, from the German name of Blumberg. In 1924 General Birdwood wrote to the mayor, suggesting that he donate an annual prize at the local school, for "the best boy in the local school who would be likely to grow up a good citizen for the State and Empire, and develop a straight, honest and brave character". Lady Birdwood instituted a similar prize for a girl. The value of each prize was £5.

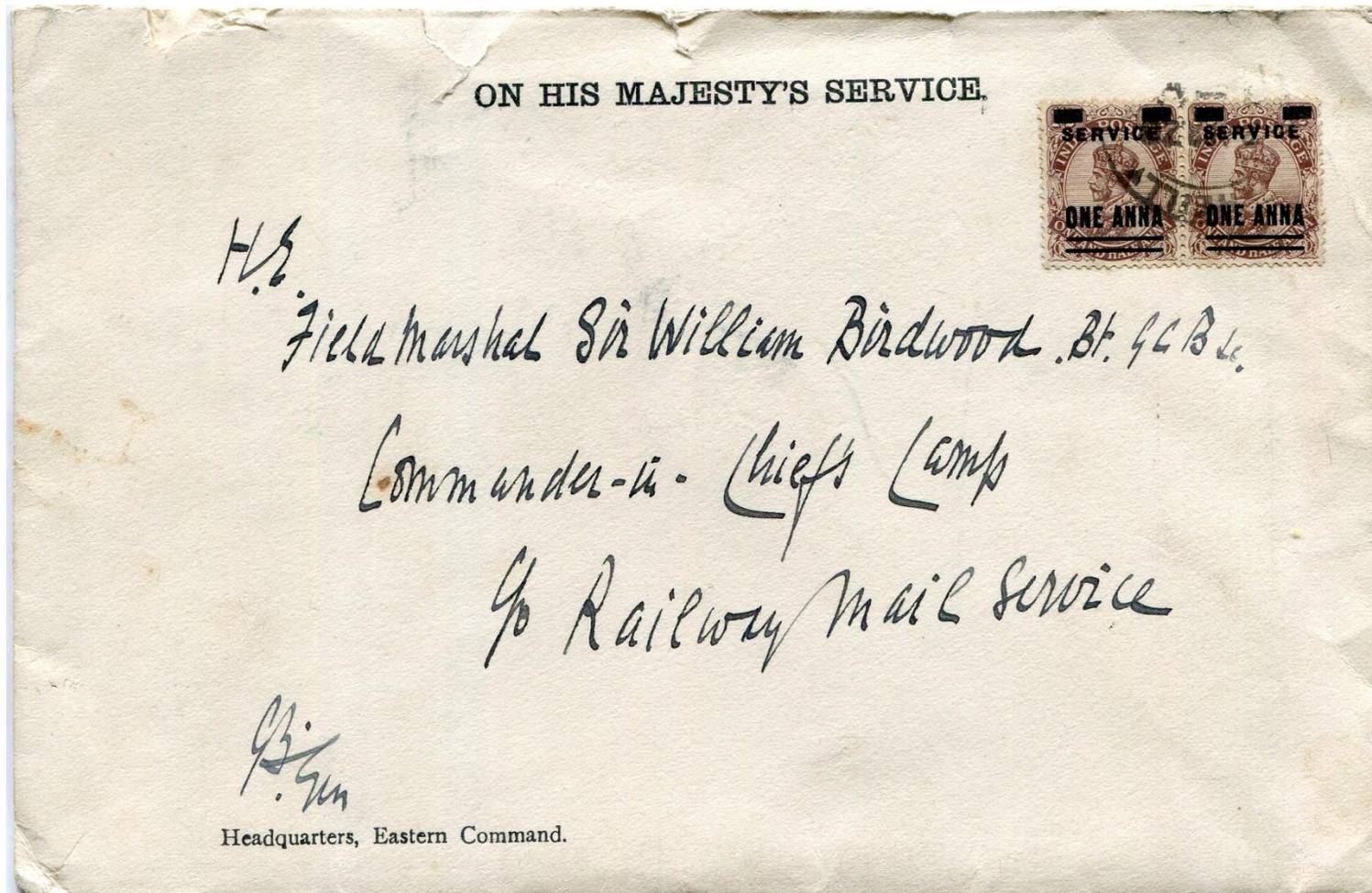


The top cover is dated 7 July 1926, and has been re-directed from the city of Simla, in the North West Frontier province, to the Commander-in-Chief's Camp, care of the Railway Mail Service. The bottom cover is dated 2 June 1930, and has been re-directed to the army headquarters at Flag Staff House in the Indian capital of Delhi.



Field Marshal Sir William Birdwood - official correspondence from British officers

These covers are made from heavy weight paper and have the embossed coat of arms of the Government of India on the flap. The top cover has been posted by Colonel Radford, commandant of the 10th Battalion Field Force Rifles, postmarked at ABBOTTABAD, 27 November 1927. The bottom cover has been posted by General George Barrow, town name indistinct, dated 2 April 1928.

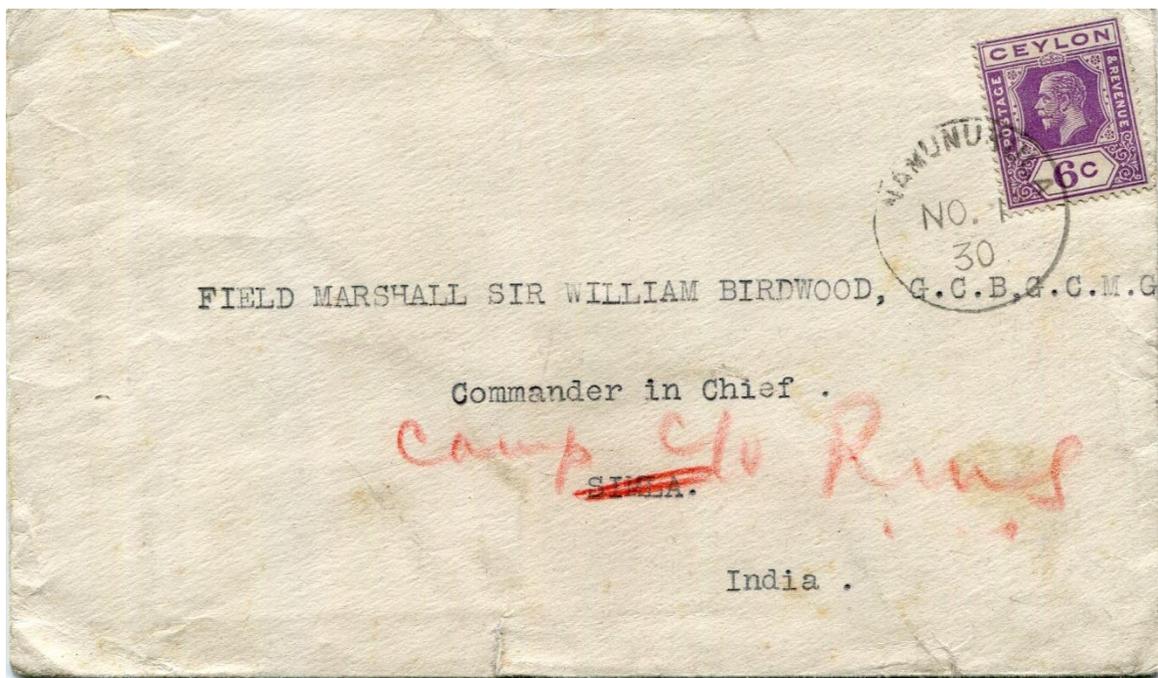


Field Marshal Sir William Birdwood - other correspondence to military encampments

The Railway Mail Service carried the mail, as well as food and military equipment, to military units in the field and in their barracks. This was important for military units and their leaders who moved around the country.

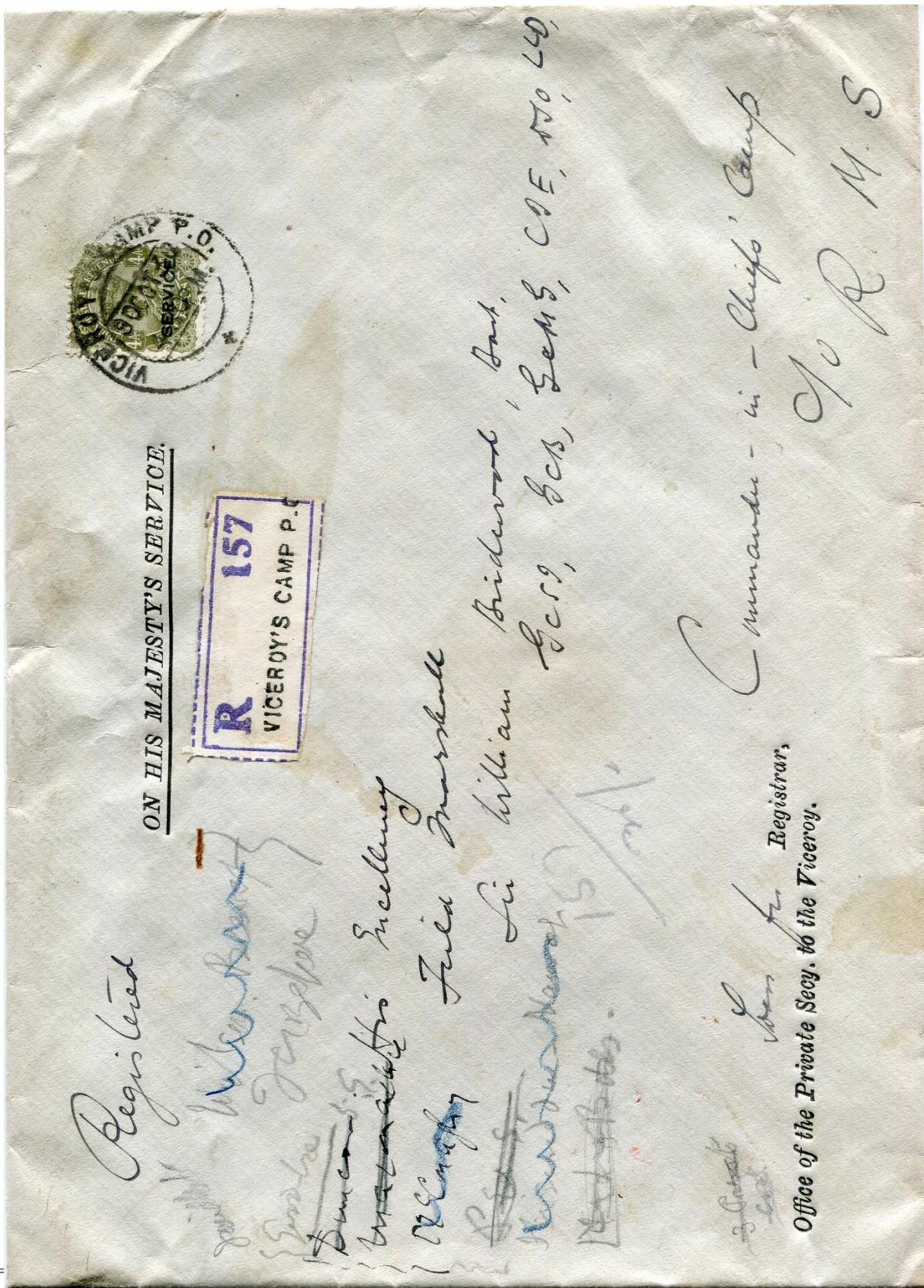


Top cover postmarked October 1928, with the scarce black oval handstamp LATE FEE / NOT PAID with DETAINED in the centre. Bottom cover postmarked Namunukula, Ceylon, dated 9 November 1930, where it was re-directed to the Railway Mail Service.



Field Marshal Sir William Birdwood - from the camp of the Viceroy of India, 1930

When the Viceroy was travelling throughout India, his staff included postal officials. This large registered cover has been postmarked from the VICEROY'S CAMP POST OFFICE on 9 October 1930. The signatures at the left side of the envelope are the military officers and non-military officials who read the contents of the envelope. It may have contained a revised list of duties following the planned departure of Field Marshal Birdwood to England. (He left Delhi by rail on 25 November, and sailed from India on 29 November 1930. RMS = Railway Mail Service).



Field Marshal Sir William Birdwood - arriving in England from his service in India, 1930

Field Marshall and Lady Birdwood arrived in Plymouth, England on 24 December 1930, and travelled to his wife's family home Thurlby Hall in Lincolnshire, to spend Christmas and the new year.

This cover, postmarked Abbottabad 1 January 1931, was the headquarters for some parts of the Northern Army.

On the flap of the envelope is the logo of the 6 Gurkha Rifles. Birdwood was the Regimental Colonel of this regiment from 1926 until his death in 1951.



The cover was flown air mail from Karachi to London, arrival backstamp 15 January 1931.



This cover, postmark town unclear, dated 11 December 1930.

On the flap of the envelope is the logo of the 16 Punjab Regiment.



The cover was flown air mail from Karachi to London, with the re-direction cancel London 27 December 1930.



Sir William and Lady Birdwood - visiting Western Australia for a private visit, 1932

The elder daughter of William and Jeanette Birdwood was Constance, known as Nancy. She married Colin Craig, a grazier from the property named Boraming, near Williams, in Western Australia. Although Sir William and Lady Birdwood visited their daughter in a private capacity, they were welcomed by the Governor and Premier of Western Australia. Sir William attended functions and hospitals related to soldiers who served with him in World War 1, and Lady Birdwood attended functions organised by the Country Women's Association. The town of Williams is 160km south east of Perth, in sheep and wheat country.

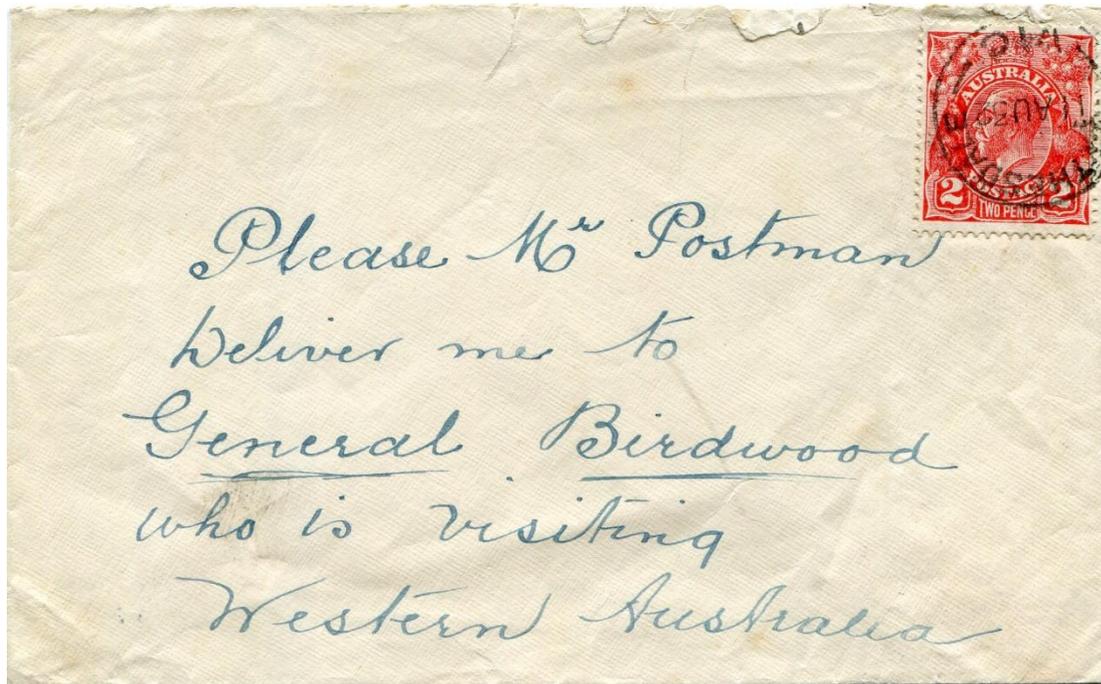
Sir William and Lady Birdwood visited their daughter in Western Australia on three occasions:

1932 – from the night of Saturday 6 August, until Monday 5 September. At the time of this visit, General Birdwood arrived suffering from bronchitis, and a swollen right foot (maybe due to a constricted vein).

1934 – arrived Tuesday 31 July

1937 – arrived Tuesday 27 July

Their first visit was widely reported in the newspapers and radio, but the later visits were more private. (Lady Birdwood had visited privately in October 1929, but this visit was not publicised).



Cover above has been posted from SMYTHESDALE, VICTORIA, dated 11 August 1932. There are no 'return to sender' markings or backstamps, so it is assumed that the letter was delivered.

The newspaper article has been printed from "The West Australian" (Perth), Wed 10 August 1932, page 14.

Sir William and Lady Birdwood had three children, daughters Constance and Judith, and a son Christopher. Their son had a career in the army in India, similar to his father and grandfather.

Their son-in-law, Colin Craig, had served with the Royal Flying Corps in World War I, and had been captured by the Germans after his plane crashed in enemy territory. He married Constance Birdwood in March 1919.

SIR WILLIAM BIRDWOOD.

Departure for Boraming.

Sir William and Lady Birdwood, with their daughter, Miss Judith Birdwood, left Perth for Boraming, near Williams at 11 a.m. yesterday. They will stay with their son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Colin Craig.

Sir William and his family were motored to Boraming in the Premier's official car. A special foot rest had been installed for Sir William's comfort on the journey. Yesterday Sir William's condition showed little change, and his medical adviser urged care in the use of his right foot, in which a clot of blood has formed.

Among visitors to Sir William yesterday were Lieutenant-General Sir Talbot Hobbs and the president of the West Australian branch of the Returned Soldiers' League (Colonel H. B. Collett).

Field Marshal Sir William Birdwood - returning to England after a visit to WA, 1932

Sir William and Jeanette Birdwood left Western Australia on Monday 5 September, 1932. He arrived at the ship, the P&O liner S S Chitral, at 3.30pm, spoke to members of the guard of honour, before boarding the ship. The ship left Fremantle Harbour at 5.25pm. SS Chitral stopped at Colombo on Wednesday 14 Sept, Bombay Saturday 17 Sept, Aden Wednesday 21 Sept, and arrived Port Said on Sunday 25 September.

The cover has been addressed to Field Marshal Sir William Birdwood, Sahib Bahadur. Sahib is a polite title or form of address for a man, originally meaning 'companion' in Arabic. Bahadur is a title of respect, commonly affixed to the name of European officers in Indian documents or ceremonies.



Backstamps:

- » Karachi- date not clear
- » Lincoln 9 Sept
- » Rafa-Qantara TPO 14 Sept
- » Qantara 14 Sept
- » Port Said 15 Sept

The letter arrived at Port Said on Thursday 15 September, and the liner 'Chitral' arrived on Sunday 25 September.



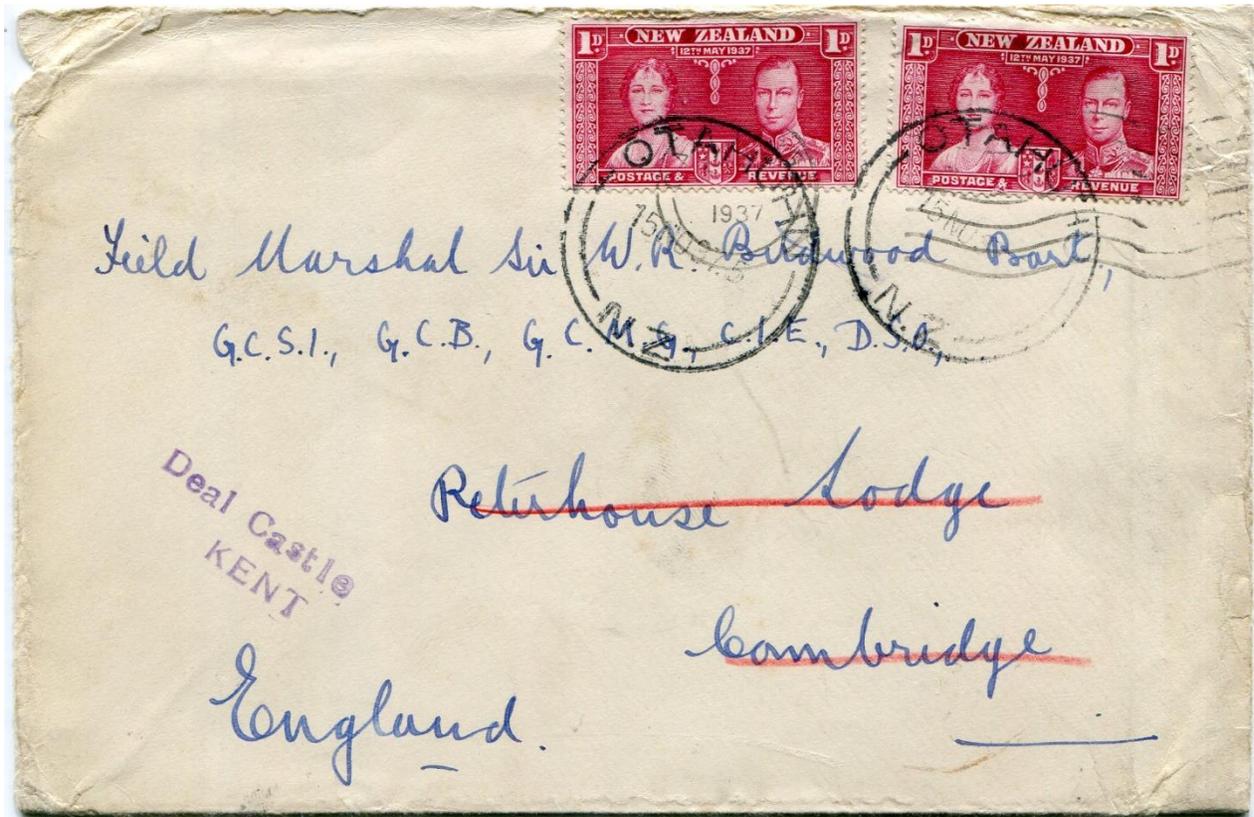
References: Newspapers of Western Australia, for Tuesday 6 September 1932.

Daily Commercial News and Shipping List, Friday 30 September 1932, p 7, accessed through www.trove.nla.gov.au.

Lord Birdwood - retirement in England

1937, 1938

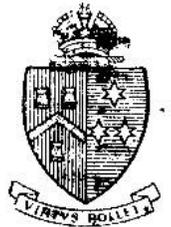
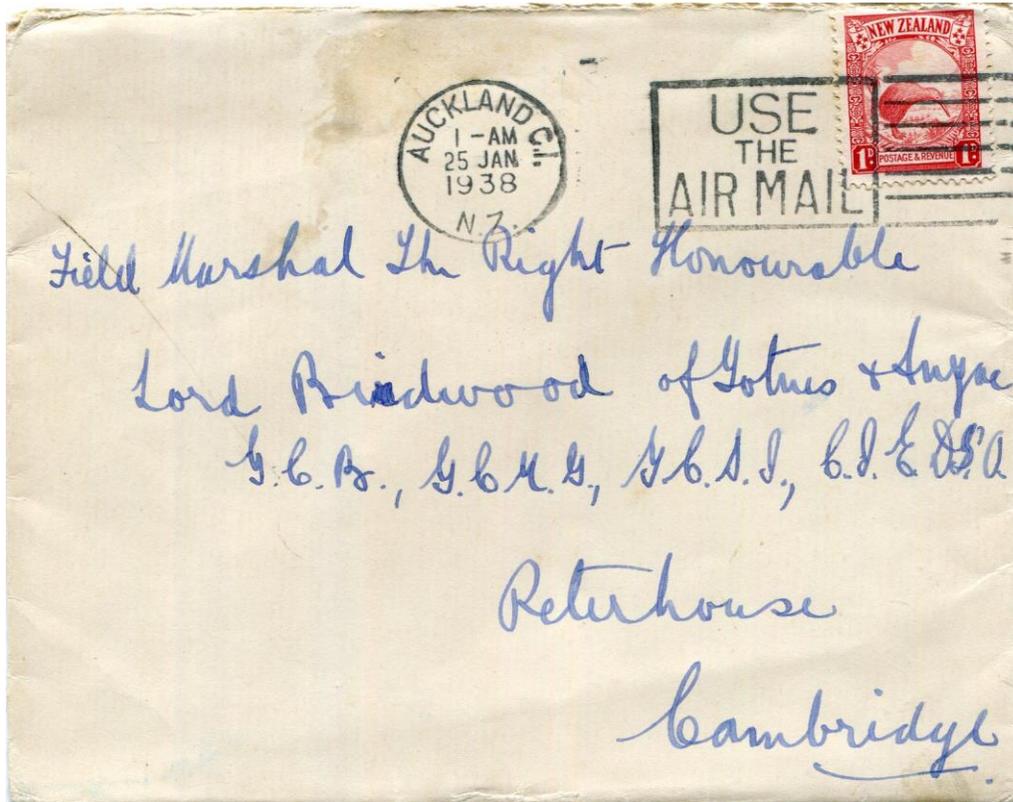
Field Marshal Birdwood left India in 1930, and lived in England. He became Master of Peterhouse, Cambridge, until 1938. In the same year he was raised to the peerage as the First Baron of Anzac and Totnes, with the title Lord Birdwood of Anzac and Totnes.



Above: cover from New Zealand postmarked 15 November 1937, addressed to Field Marshal Birdwood at Peterhouse, and re-directed to Deal Castle. Below: cover addressed to Lord Birdwood at Peterhouse Hall, postmarked 13 January 1938 at Santpur / Gujrat, now known as Santalpur in Gujarat state, western India.

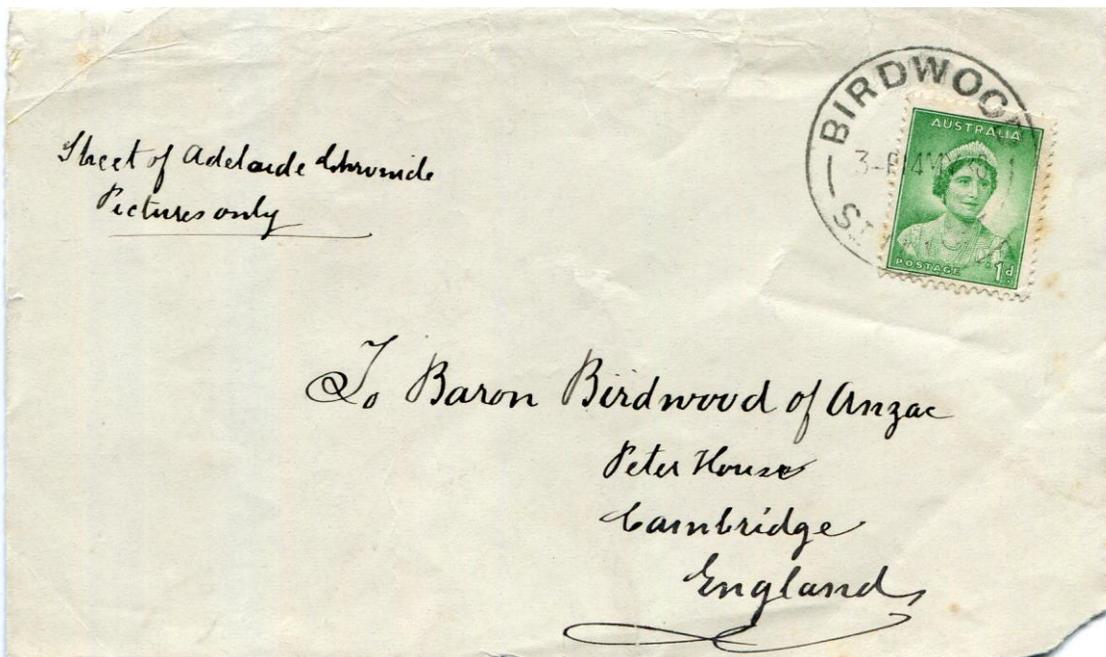


In 1938 Birdwood was raised to the peerage as the First Baron of Anzac and Totnes, with the title Lord Birdwood of Anzac and Totnes.



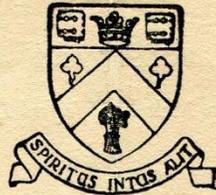
Top cover has the crest of the King's School Auckland on the flap (shown opposite), and has paid the Empire Mail Scheme printed matter rate of one penny. Lord Birdwood visited the school in June 1920 as General Birdwood, the commander of the Anzac Forces in WW1, and presented prizes (p357). It is highly probable that he was a patron of the school.

The bottom cover (a front) has paid the printed matter rate of one penny, with the datestamp of Birdwood SA, dated 14 May 1938. The cover has been addressed by Mr Pflaum, the former mayor of the town of Birdwood.



Field Marshal Lord Birdwood - Memorial Service held at Clifton College Chapel

As a boy, William Birdwood attended a private primary school, and from 1877 to 1882 he attended Clifton College, first as a day boarder and later as a full time boarder in Oakeley House. Upon his return from India in 1930, Birdwood was nominated to be a member of the college council (the governing body) at Clifton. He was elected President of the Clifton College Council in May 1935, a position he held until his death in 1951.



Memorial Service

FIELD MARSHAL LORD BIRDWOOD
OF ANZAC AND TOTNES

(S.T., O.H., 1877-82)

President of Clifton College Council, 1935-51

Clifton College Chapel

TUESDAY, 29th MAY, 1951

at 12.15 p.m.



Memorial Service

FIELD MARSHAL LORD BIRDWOOD
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President of Clifton College Council, 1935-51

Clifton College Chapel

TUESDAY, 29th MAY, 1951

at 12.15 p.m.

VOLUNTARY

Solemn Melody (*Walford Davies*)

ADDRESS

By THE VERY REVEREND THE DEAN OF BRISTOL

HYMN

O Worship the King, All glorious above:	Frail children of dust, And feeble as frail,
O gratefully sing His power and His love;	In Thee do we trust, Nor find Thee to fail;
Our Shield and Defender, The Ancient of days, Pavilion'd in splendour, And girded with praise.	Thy mercies how tender, How firm to the end! Our Maker, Defender, Redeemer, and friend!

O tell of His might O sing of His grace, Whose robe is the light, Whose canopy space: His chariots of wrath Deep thunder-clouds form, And dark is His path On the wings of the storm.	O measureless Might! Ineffable Love! While angels delight To hymn Thee above, Thy ransom'd creation, Though feeble their lays, With true adoration Shall sing to Thy praise.
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SENTENCES

PSALM 23

Sung by the Choir only

LESSON

Revelation 21, Verses 1-7

ANTHEM

Sung by the School only

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,
But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;
For though from out our bourne of time and place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have cross'd the bar.

PRAYERS

HYMN

O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home!

Beneath the shadow of Thy Throne
Thy Saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is Thine arm to save,
And our defence is sure.

Before the hills in order stood,
Or earth received its frame,
From everlasting Thou art God,
To endless years the same.

A thousand ages in Thy sight
Are as an evening gone;
Short as the watch that ends the night
Before the rising sun.

Time like an ever-rolling stream
Bears all its sons away;
They fly forgotten, as a dream
Dies at the opening day.

O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our guide while life shall last,
And our eternal home!

THE LAST POST

THE BLESSING

VOLUNTARY

Funeral March (*Moulessohn*)

*After the Clergy have left the Chapel,
the School will remain seated while visitors leave.*

