

Operation Deep Freeze III (1957-58)

United States Navy Branch P.O. No.17046 New York N.Y. reopened in Christchurch on 20 September 1957. Rear Admiral George Dufek, who had mostly worked out of Antarctica the previous season, moved his operational headquarters to Manchester Street, Christchurch and went south only when required during Deep Freeze III.

U.S. Fleet

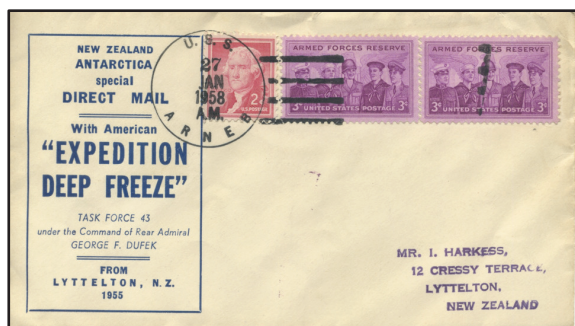
USS *Glacier*, USS *Atka*, USS *Arneb*, USS *Burton Island*, USCGC *Westwind*, USNS *Pvte John R Towle*, USNS *Nespelen*, USNS *Greenville Victory* and USNS *Wyandot*.



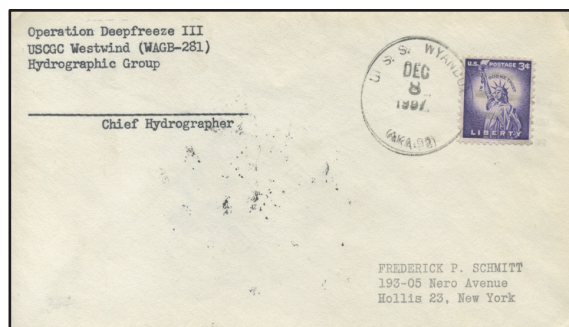
U.S.S. GLACIER NOV 18 1957



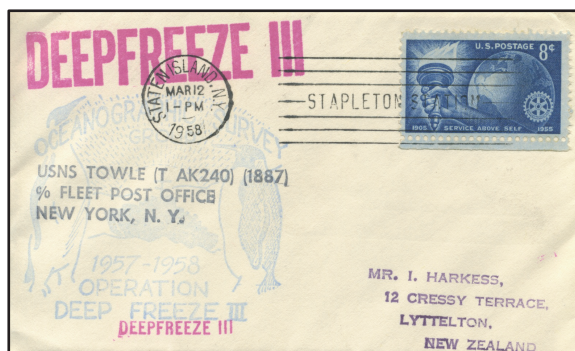
U.S.S. ATKA FEB 12 1958



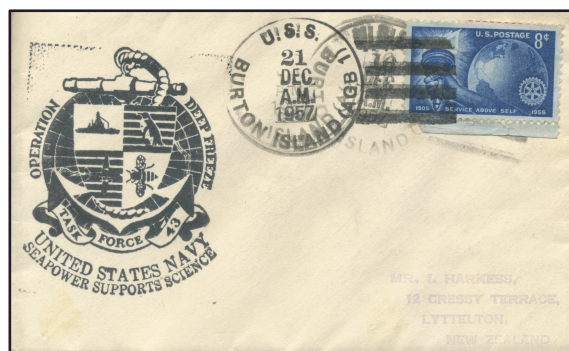
U.S.S. ARNEB 27 JAN 1958



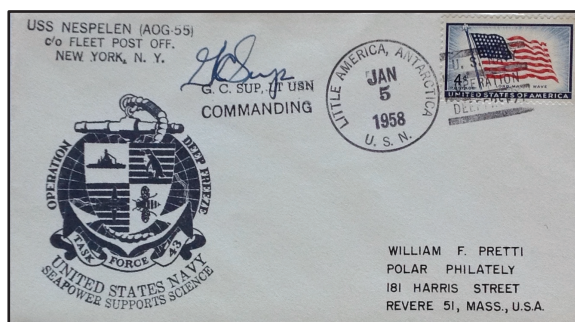
U.S.N.S. WYANDOT DEC 8 1957



cachet USNS Pvte John R Towle



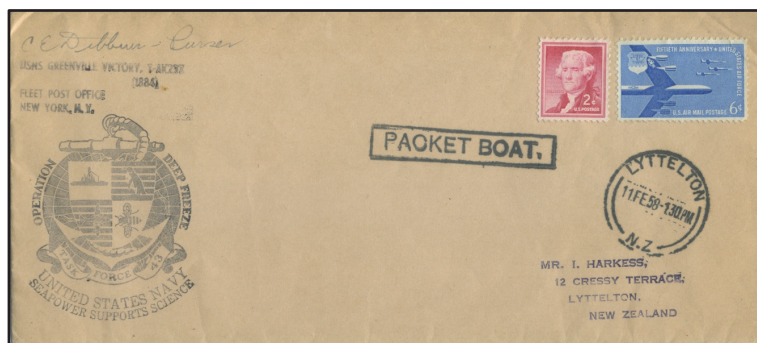
U.S.S. BURTON ISLAND 21 DEC 1957



cachet USNS Nespelen



cachet USCGC Westwind



cachet USNS Greenville Victory

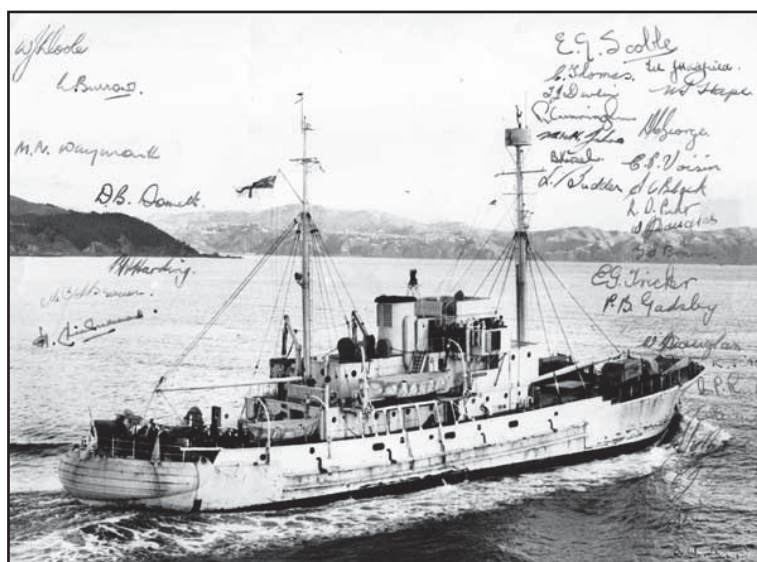
Picket Ship USS *Brough*

See Jurisich, M. *Operation Deep Freeze Picket Ships*; Classic Stamps Ltd., Blenheim, New Zealand, 2018. www.classicstamps.co.nz

N.Z. Fleet

HMNZS *Endeavour*

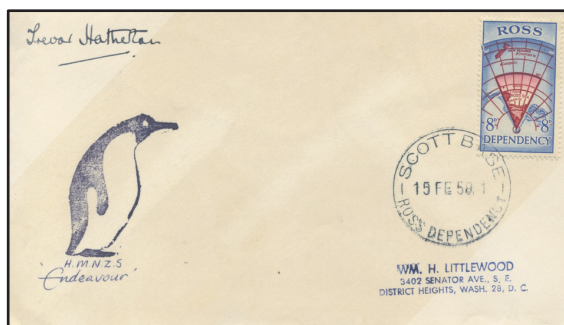
HMNZS *Endeavour* departed Wellington on 14 December 1957 and sailed via Dunedin, Campbell Island and arrived in McMurdo Sound on 30 December.



HMNZS Endeavour departs Wellington 14 December 1957



SCOTT BASE ROSS DEPENDENCY -9 JA 58.1
cachet FIRST LIEUTENANT H.M.N.Z.S. ENDEAVOUR 30 DEC 1957



SCOTT BASE ROSS DEPENDENCY 15 FE 58.1
signed by Trevor Hatherton

On the evening of 5 March 1958, HMNZS *Endeavour* sailed from McMurdo and arrived in Wellington on 17 March where she was met by MV *Magga Dan* and they sailed into the harbour and berthed together at 9am. The ship later berthed at Auckland Naval Base.



WELLINGTON 24 MAR 1958
signed by Sir Edmund Hillary, Vivian Fuchs, Captain H. Kirkwood



AUCKLAND NAVAL BASE N.Z. - 2 MAY 58
signed by Captain H. Kirkwood

U.S. Flights

44 aircraft were used during Deep Freeze III, 13 Douglas R6D Liftmasters, two Douglas C-118s, six C-124 Globemasters, two Douglas R4D-8s, nine UC-1 Otters, four P2V-7LPs and eight C-124As of the 53rd TCS Squadron, based at Harewood (Christchurch airport). The 300 officers and enlisted men camped at Royal New Zealand Air Force Weedons Station.



WIGRAM AIR FORCE 30 SP 57 3

The season opened when a P2V-7LP Neptune under Commander J. Coley, an R5D-3 Skymaster under Lieutenant Commander H. Hanson and an R4D-8 Dakota under Commander E. Frankiewicz, flew from Christchurch to McMurdo on 1 October 1957. Mail was cancelled at Scott Base from 2 October.



SCOTT BASE ROSS DEPENDENCY - 2 OC 57.1

First commercial flight

The first commercial flight to Antarctica took place when Captain R. Savoy flew Pan American Airways Boeing Stratocruiser N1030V Clipper 'America' on 12 October from San Francisco to Christchurch Airport, arriving on 14 October. The following day it flew to Pole Station and McMurdo Station, returning to Christchurch on 16 October 1957.



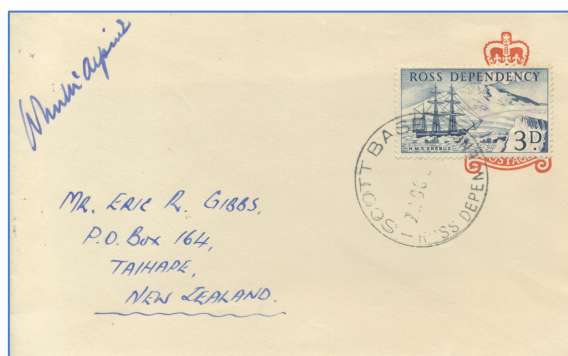
POLE STATION, ANTARCTICA U.S.N. OCT 15 1957



CHRISTCHURCH O.M.B. 16 OC 57

signed by Captain R. Savoy

Minister McAlpine, previously Minister for Marine, was invited by US Rear Admiral George Dufek to visit Antarctica and inspect developments in McMurdo Sound. He flew south on 15 October and spent a couple of days exploring McMurdo Station and Scott Base.



SCOTT BASE ROSS DEPENDENCY 22 OC 57.1

signed by Minister McAlpine

On 31 January 1958, two of the UC-1 Otters christened the new Marble Point airstrip, 93km westward across McMurdo Sound from McMurdo Station; one of the aircraft had Hillary and Dufek on board.

Scott Base

Construction and Summer Party

Eight men were selected to form the construction unit to erect the buildings at Scott Base.

Hallett Station

See Jurisich, M. *A Postal History of the Joint New Zealand - United States Hallett Station*, Classic Stamps Ltd., Blenheim, New Zealand 2018. www.classicstamps.co.nz

Scott Base Field Program

The New Zealand Geological and Survey Antarctic Expedition

This was the first official New Zealand scientific expedition sent to the Ross Dependency. Its aim was to explore and map the northern part of Victoria Land and to investigate its mineral resources. The New Zealand Geological Survey team consisted of eight men: geologists H.J. Harrington, B.L. Wood (University of Otago graduate), G.J. Lenson and I.C. McKellar (University of Otago graduate); and surveyors A.J. Heine, E.L. Fitzgerald, Wynn G. Croll (University of Canterbury graduate) and B. Hearfield, all experienced mountaineers.

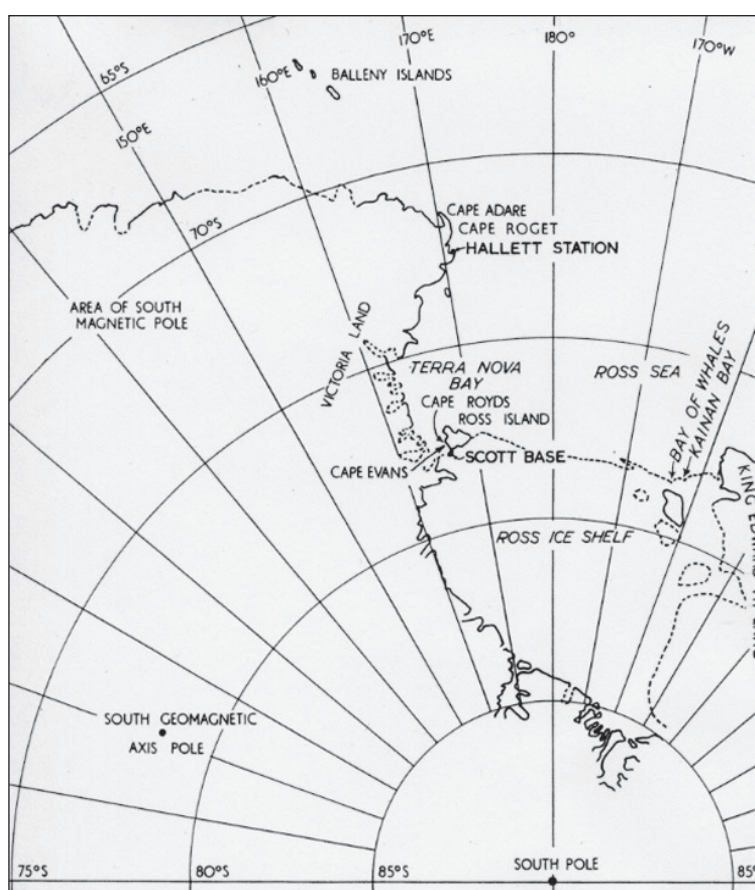
The team left Lyttelton aboard USS *Atka* on 21 November 1957; they were transferred to USS *Glacier* off Little America V Station, taken to McMurdo Station then flown to Cape Hallett on 15 and 16 December 1957. They were picked up by USS *Glacier* on 19 February and returned to Lyttelton on 24 February 1958.



The NZ Geological Survey Antarctic Expedition 1957-58, with Sir Hubert Wilkins, at Hallett Station

Back row: W. Croll, Sir Hubert Wilkins, B. Fitzgerald, I.C. McKellar, H.J. Harrington, J.J. Tur (USA), G. Turnbull (UK).
Front row: G.J. Lenson, B.L. Wood, B. Hearfield

Mail from this expedition is much scarcer than that from the 1955-58 Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Expedition. The team used as their base of operations Hallett Station, the joint New Zealand-United States research facility that had been set up in Moubray Bay the previous summer.



Map showing Kainan Bay (Little America Station), Hallett Station and Cape Adare in relation to Scott Base

Survey team departure

USS *Glacier* preceded USS *Atka*; she left Lyttelton on 18 November 1957 to clear a pathway through the Ross Sea sea-ice for the other ships of DF III to follow. The New Zealand Geological Survey team sailed from Lyttelton aboard USS *Atka* on 21 November. During the expedition, a single line rubber cachet and a circular cachet was used on mail, impressed usually in violet and more rarely in black.



USS GLACIER (AGB-4) NOV 18 1957



U.S.S. ATKA NOV 20 1957

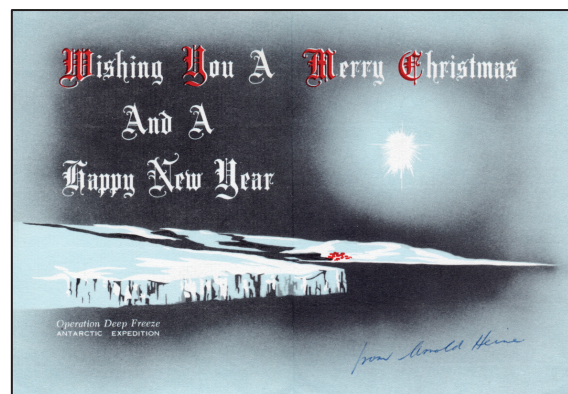


CHRISTCHURCH -4 DEC 57; backstamped TAIHAPE -6 DE.57.1
POSTED AT SEA 26-11-57 ON THE "ATKA"

On 27 November, Arnold Heine bought an Operation Deep Freeze Christmas card aboard USS *Atka* and sent it to New Zealand philatelist Eric Gibbs.

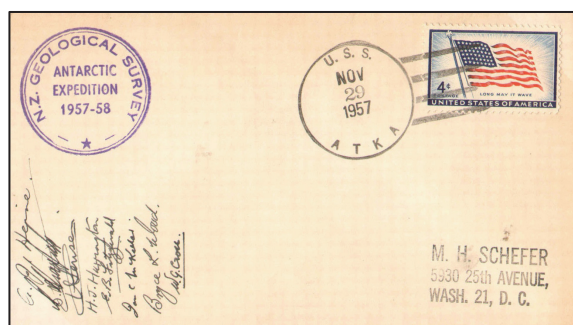


U.S.S. ATKA NOV 27 1957; backstamped TAIHAPE 9 DE.57.1

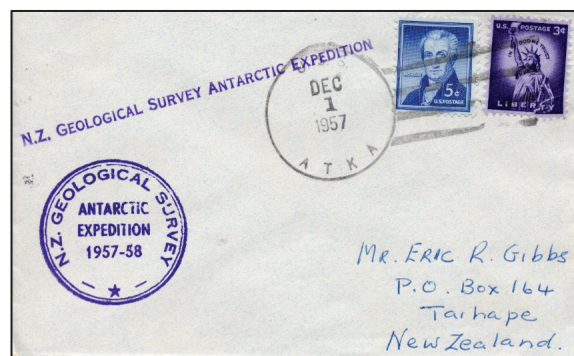


Arrival at Kainan Bay - transfer to USS Glacier

On 29 November, USS *Glacier* arrived in Kainan Bay where the US Navy was setting up Little America V Station. The team was transferred from USS *Atka* to USS *Glacier* on 1 December.



U.S.S. ATKA NOV 29 1957



U.S.S. ATKA DEC 1 1957

In Kainan Bay - First mail dispatch from Little America V Station

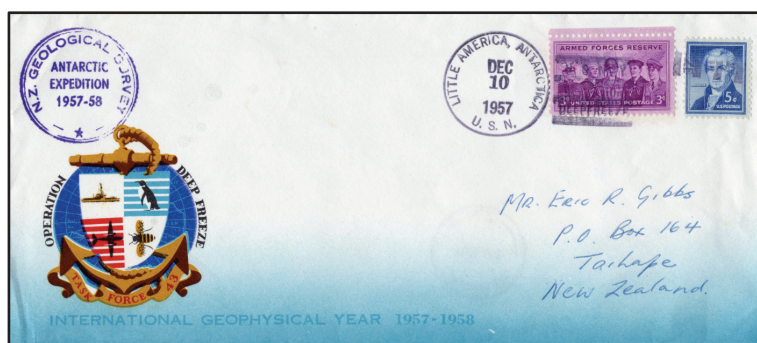
Mail was also sent by helicopter to Little America V Station for cancellation aboard USS *Atka*.



LITTLE AMERICA ANTARCTICA U.S.N. DEC 3 1957

On board USS *Glacier* in Kainan Bay

Arnold Heine wrote to Eric Gibbs from USS *Glacier* off Kainan Bay on 8 December, advising they were delayed at Kainan Bay because the ice was too soft to effect unloading with tractors.



LITTLE AMERICA, ANTARCTICA U.S.N. DEC 10 1957

Sunday 8th December '57

Dear Eric,

I am writing this on board the "Glacier", at present breaking ice in Kainan Bay. We transferred from the "Atka" several days ago. Bought these envelopes here, so am sending you one. So far, our expedition hasn't got very far. The trip down was O.K. except that until the pack, we struck very bad seas. Of course, being on an icebreaker doesn't help. We went through about 700 miles of pack, which is a pretty long distance, but never really had any trouble. The hold up here is that there is about 4 miles of bay ice in Kainan Bay and is evidently not strong enough to stand the heavy tractors. The idea is to try & break in to a safe distance & then unload. We hope to go around to McMurdo at the end of the week & then up to Hallet about Xmas Day. Sincerely,
Arnold Heine.

Ashore at Little America Station

The team went ashore at Little America V on 9 December, sooner than Arnold Heine had expected. Some members sent mail the following day.



LITTLE AMERICA ANTARCTICA U.S.N. DEC 10 1957;

USS *Glacier* then proceeded to McMurdo with the party on board. She arrived alongside on 11 December 1957.

In transit at McMurdo Station and Scott Base

The team visited Scott Base the following day, 12 December. The signed cover below was returned to USS *Glacier* that same day for cancellation and dispatch through the US mail system, via Christchurch Airport, to the US Navy post office in Manchester St Christchurch, for forwarding to Washington D.C.



SCOTT BASE ROSS DEPENDENCY 11 DE 57.1,
U.S.S. GLACIER (AGB-4) DEC 12 1957

Earliest usage of “TRANS-ANTARCTIC CROSSING” envelopes

The team took some official Trans-Antarctic Crossing commemorative envelopes with them on the journey south. These were cancelled at Scott Base on 11 December 1957, well before the planned official cancellation date for the Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Crossing. The vast bulk of the 100,000 commemorative envelopes were taken south aboard HMNZS *Endeavour* that only sailed from Wellington on 14 December.



SCOTT BASE ROSS DEPENDENCY 11 DE 57.1

The above cover was kept with the party and later dispatched; it bears on its reverse the New Zealand and United States IGY cachets for Adare Station and Hallett Station, which they could not have accessed until after their arrival at Hallett Station. The Trans-Antarctic Crossing envelopes were later cancelled with the agreed date 20 January 1958, the date when Sir Vivian Fuchs reached the South Pole. The New Zealand Geological Survey team autographed the cover below after that date.



ANTARCTIC MEETING SCOTT BASE ROSS DEP 20 JA 58.1

Flight to Cape Hallett

The team was flown in two groups by aircraft 560km from Williams Field to Cape Hallett on 15 & 16 December 1957. A hand-assembled date cachet was used to note their arrival.



SCOTT BASE ROSS DEPENDENCY 22 DE 57.1;

Initially, IGY ADARE cachets were used at Hallett by both the New Zealand and United States teams, a smaller version for New Zealand and a larger version for the United States. In November 1957 new IGY HALLETT cachets were supplied. There must have been two US cachets of the original type. There are some locally fashioned versions of interim variations to one of the original cachets. Both US versions were destroyed in mid-January 1958; the New Zealand cachet continued to appear on mail from Scott Base for quite some time after.

Setting up camp

As there was limited permanent accommodation at Hallett Station, soon after landing the team set up their own camp next to the airfield, adjacent to the Station.



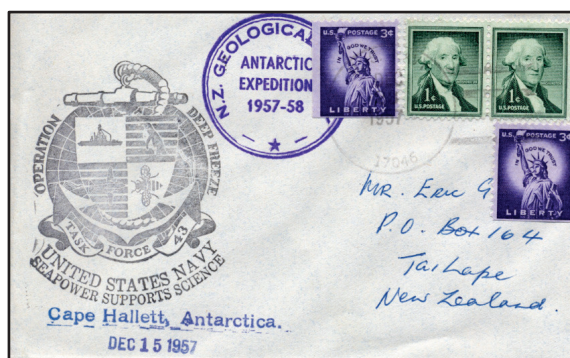
At Cape Hallett near the airfield
ski-equipped DC-3 in the background



Among the northern Victoria Land Mountains

In the field

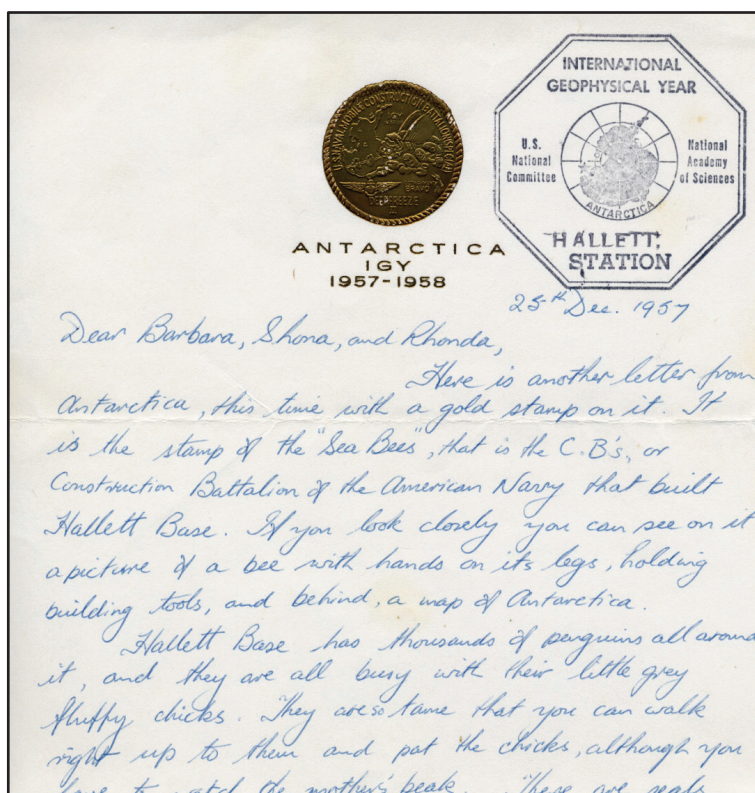
The team split into groups to explore the northern Victoria Land Mountains, returning frequently to Hallett Station to obtain fresh supplies. The cover below, carrying US stamps, was flown via McMurdo to the US Navy Field Post Office at Harewood Airport for cancellation then passed to Christchurch Chief Post Office. for delivery within New Zealand



U.S. NAVY 17046 DEC 23 1957

Christmas mail

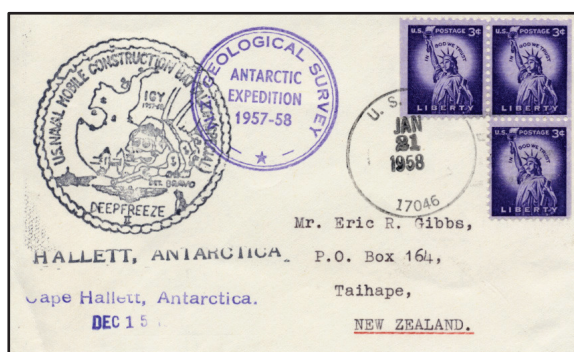
The team explored and mapped a large part of the northern part of Victoria Land from late December 1957 until mid-February 1958. They made short trips into the field, returning to Hallett Station to obtain fresh supplies. B. Wood wrote home on Christmas Day:



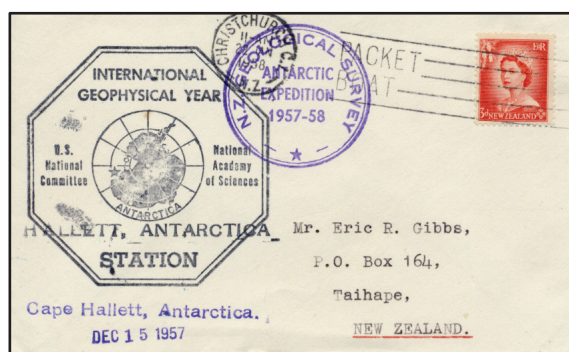
letter Bryce Wood to his daughters 25 December 1957

Mid-Expedition outbound mail

US ships that visited Hallett Station in January 1958 delivered some mail to New Zealand. Covers rated with United States issues were dispatched to the US Navy Field Post Office in Christchurch for cancellation on 21 January 1958, then forwarded to the United States for international destinations or to Christchurch Central Post Office for domestic destinations. Covers rated with New Zealand issues were cancelled on arrival at Christchurch Central Post Office with the Christchurch Packet Boat canceller and then delivered.



U.S. NAVY 17046 JAN 21 1958



CHRISTCHURCH PACKET BOAT 11-AM 22 JAN 1958

Last inbound mail

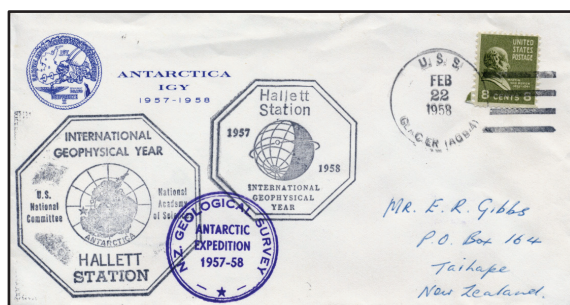
USS *Glacier* arrived at Hallett Station on 18 February to pick up the New Zealand and United States summer teams. Bryce Wood marked his incoming mail "Received 18/2/58 BL Wood, Geologist".



DUNEDIN C.I. N.Z. 12.15AM 10 JAN 1958

Last outbound mail

USS *Glacier* departed 19 February for Lyttelton. Arnold Heine noted on the back of the cover below: "From A.J. Heine 19/2/58. Probably last day on the Continent."



U.S.S. GLACIER FEB 22 1958

US Naval Mobile Construction Battalion ODFII stationery envelope

The last mailbag

The last mail of the season was posted at Hallett Station in a special New Zealand Post Office mailbag that was sealed and delivered to the USS *Glacier* when she called to collect the party on 19 February.

"Some envelopes carry the cachets of our expedition along with those of Little America and Scott Base, at both of which stations we called on our way to Cape Hallett. They also carry the cachet Adare Station." (H.J. Harrington to Mark Smith Jr.)



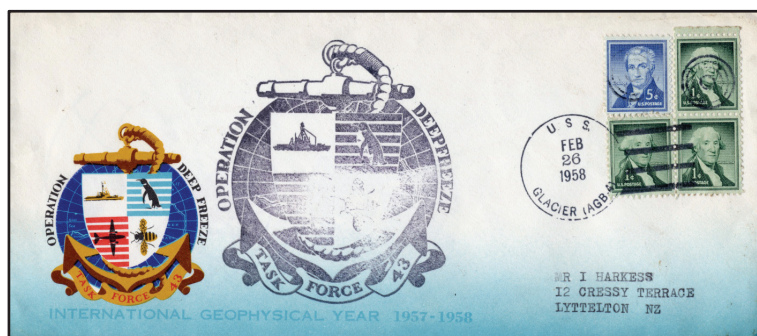
CHRISTCHURCH C.I. 24 FEB 1958

Return to Lyttelton

USS *Glacier* arrived at Lyttelton on 24 February 1958. There the team arranged their final mail dispatches. Some earlier autographed envelopes were later cancelled on arrival as well. The cover below, with signatures of Sir Hubert Wilkins and J.J. Tur (USA), O.I.C. Hallett Station, as well as the New Zealand Geological Survey team, is an example.



CHRISTCHURCH C.I. 4 30P 24 FEB 1958



U.S.S. GLACIER (AGB-4) FEB 26 1958

Mail arrangements

The typescript of a letter, in the collection of notes of Ian Harkess, from H.J. Harrington to US philatelist Mark Smith Jr., explained the mail arrangements for the expedition.

"Mail from our party and from those New Zealanders who over-winter at the joint US-NZ station at Cape Hallett could be posted in two ways. There was the opportunity of sending it out on planes that landed five times on the sea near Hallett Station in November and December 1957 and then returned to the Williams Air Facility at McMurdo Sound. This mail (except for one bag) if it carried Ross Dependency stamps was handed over to Scott Base, postmarked there and then forwarded to NZ and other destinations. If it carried US stamps, it was handled by McMurdo in the usual way. There was also the opportunity of posting NZ mail (i.e. letters carrying Ross Dependency or other NZ stamps) by special arrangements with the NZPO in NZ mailbags supplied to Hallett. These bags were sent out:

(1) On a plane returning to McMurdo, and thence carried direct to Christchurch without passing through Scott Base (one bag was treated that way, the others that went to McMurdo passed through Scott Base).

(2) On a group of five US ships that called at Hallett early in January. This bag also went straight to Christchurch and was treated there as "packet mail", with probably a special postmark. Naturally I have not seen this mail yet, but there was the arrangement concerning treatment before we left NZ.

(3) The last mail of the season was posted at Hallett in a special NZPO mail bag that was sealed and delivered to the USS Glacier when she called to collect our party on her way to NZ on 19 February 1958.

Some envelopes carry the cachets of our expedition along with those of Little America and Scott Base, at both of which stations we called on our way to Cape Hallett. They also carry the cachet "Adare Station". This is because it was originally intended that Hallett Station should be built at Cape Adare some 80 miles further north, and the cachets that were supplied to the station from both the US and NZ carried the name Adare Station. However, the base was eventually built at Cape Hallett, and about November 1957 the stamps were changed over to read Hallett Station.

The old "Adare Station" stamps were destroyed in January 1958. The smaller version of each stamp was supplied by NZ (it is the same size as the Scott Base cachet), and the larger version by the US."

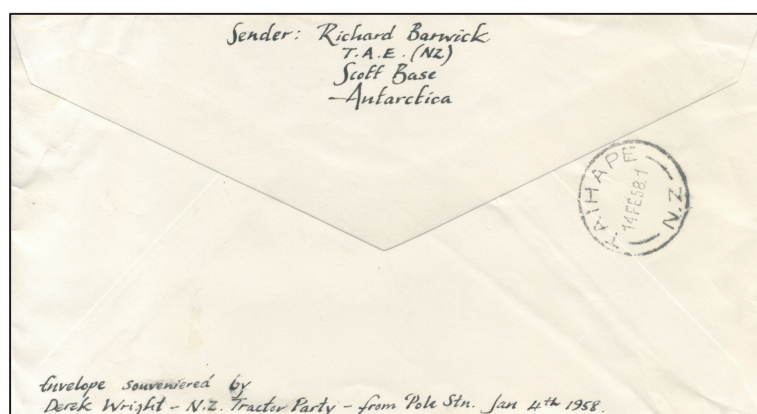
(Polar Post, No.46, pages 5-7, July 1961)

Victoria University of Wellington Antarctic Expedition No.1

Two Victoria University geology students B.C. McKelvey and P.N. Webb travelled south aboard HMNZS *Endeavour*. Early in January 1958, Webb joined R. Balham and R. Barwick of the Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Expedition Summer Party to fly by US helicopter on 4 January to a dry valley which was later named the Victoria Valley.



SCOTT BASE ROSS DEPENDENCY 11 FE 58.1



sent by Richard Barwick

“envelope souvenired by Derek Wright – N.Z. Tractor Party - from Pole Station Jan 4th 1958”

There they set up camp at Lake Vida. On 7 January, Webb climbed nearby peaks to be first man to see from ground level the general layout of the Dry Valley system. On 18 January, Webb and McKelvey were to return on the USNS *Greenville Victory* to New Zealand however they were invited to join a US party to examine the Beacon sandstone in the Taylor and Ferrar Glacier region. They spent late January and early February camped in the Taylor Valley, returning to New Zealand on 17 February 1958 on a US vessel.

Lin Martin takes over as O.I.C. Scott Base

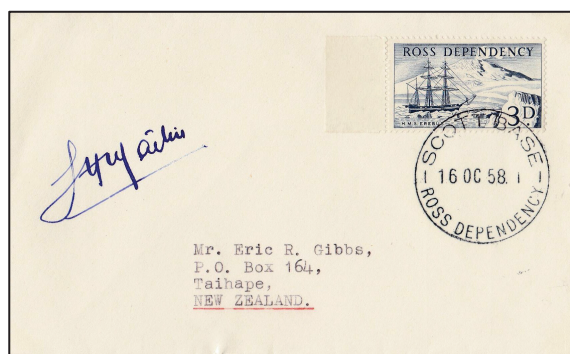
On 21 January, Hillary recommended that Lin Martin take over as Scott Base Officer-In-Charge for the winter-over, as he was returning to New Zealand. The following day, Hillary gave Lieutenant Commander Kirkwood the names of 22 men to be transported out on USS *Greenville Victory* and 19 (including 12 from Fuchs' Trans-Polar Party) on HMNZS *Endeavour*. On 6 February, Hillary passed over the duties of Postmaster to Lin Martin, as Hillary was flying the following day to Depot 700.

New Zealand Government approves Scott Base to continue

On 26 February, the New Zealand Cabinet approved 'in principle' the continued operation of Scott Base and Hallett Station after the conclusion of the IGY. Nearly a month later, on 24 March, Cabinet decided that the New Zealand Department of Scientific and Industrial Research would have ultimate responsibility for activity in the Ross Dependency. Cabinet also established the Ross Dependency Research Committee to advise and assist them; this committee comprised representatives from the DSIR, Departments of External Affairs, Chiefs of Staff Committee, Lands & Survey, Meteorological Service, the Dominion Museum, Royal Society and the New Zealand University. Its first chairman was Dr. R.G. Simmers, Assistant Director of the Meteorological Service and a member of Mawson's 1929-31 expedition.

Scott Base Wintering Over Party

L.H. Martin (O.I.C.), D.C. Thompson, A.L. Burrows, L.O. Duff, Lt. F. Faggioni (Italy), I.M. Gibson,
R.H. Henderson, M.G. Midwinter, R.M. Robb, M.J. Speary, P.A. Yeates.



SCOTT BASE ROSS DEPENDENCY 16 OC 58.1
signed by L.H. Martin