

S.S. FERNSTREAM SHIPWRECK COVER

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The S.S. Fernstream was a Norwegian cargo ship launched in 1949. The ship had sailed from Boston, Massachusetts - through the Panama canal - to San Francisco, California. On December 11, 1952 the ship sailed early in the morning with a cargo of soybeans, general cargo and mail. Destination was Manila, Philippines.

The ship had reached a point about .8 mile from the Line Point Lighthouse, just off Anita rock when it collided with the inbound S.S. Hawaiian Rancher. The side of the Fernstream was ripped open and the ship rapidly sank. The Fernstream carried a crew of 25 and 10 passengers. All were rescued by the crew of the Hawaiian Rancher safely. If you have never read a form Marine Accident Investigation report - go to [//www.uscg.mil/hq/cg5/docs/boards/hawaiianrancher.pdf](http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg5/docs/boards/hawaiianrancher.pdf) for the complete report. One small note in the report was the mention that lawyers were already aboard the Hawaiian Rancher when it docked!

The cover illustrated was from the sunken ship - being retrieved, dried and forwarded in this case to Taiwan.

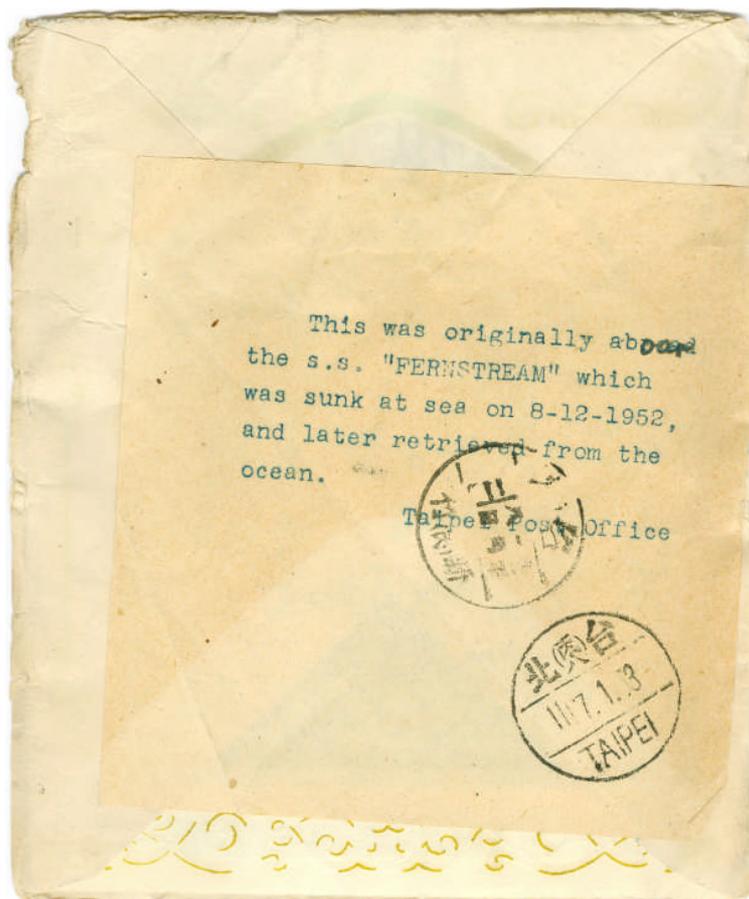


Figure 1

The slip that explains the condition of the cover was applied by the Taipei Post Office is 29 x 58.5 mm. It has the receiving cancel of January 7, 1953 (Figure 2), with the cancellation of the final destination of Hsinchu on January 8 (Figure 3). Considering the mail had to be recovered, dried then forwarded - it made good time!



Fig. 2
Taipei January 7, 1953



Fig. 3
Hsinchu January 8, 1953

The front of the cover (Figure 4), indicates that the name and address was barely readable.



Figure 4

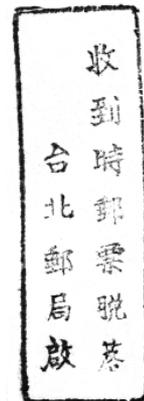


Figure 5



Figure 6

The item was a Christmas card, mailed on December 8, 1952 from Napa, California. The 12 character Chinese chop (Figure 5), reads - Item received without postage stamp, Taipei Post Office. The small

red chop (figure 6) is the number of the postman that handled the letter. In this case assigned to the Taipei main Post Office.

I was told by a collector in Taiwan that the notice was only applied to those letters that were addressed in English. Those addressed with Chinese characters had a hand stamp applied with gave essentially the same information. However, I have never been able to find an example of this chop.

Since the mail was destined for Manila first. One would think that letters were also destined for other Asian countries. However, I have not found examples from any other country.