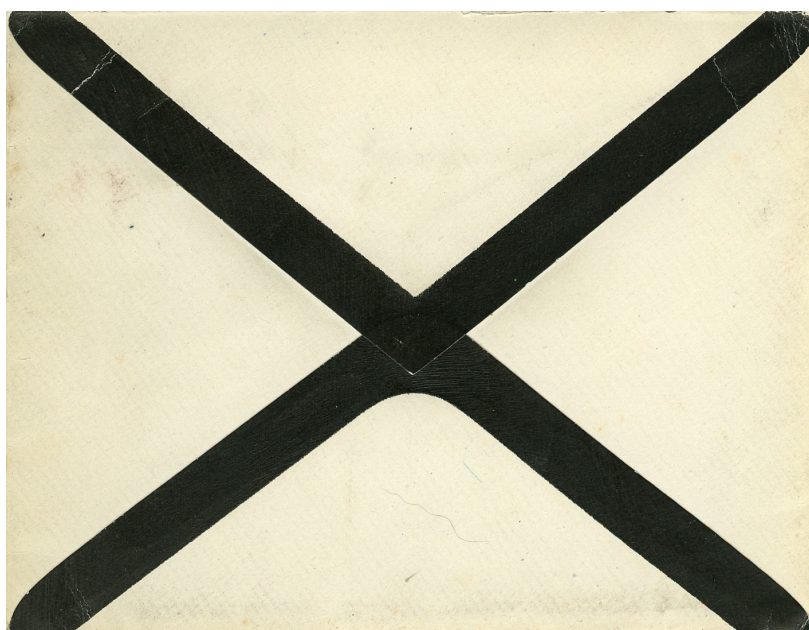


1905 Victoria Falls Mourning Cover

Rare Mourning cover addressed to Captain Howard Fitzgerald Hay R.N. of Southsea with 2½d 1905 Victoria Falls duty affixed and cancelled with **SELUKWE (SC) (MD)** dated **NO 20 05**. The envelope is annotated with the date of receipt in red crayon **14/12/05** There are no back stamps or other markings Captain Hay had served on three ships as Captain between 1884 and 1896. He had previously been sent another mourning cover in 1885 from another of the ships he had commanded, HMS Pilot



Mourning stationary was a very Victorian way of announcing a death, or, of sending condolence to surviving spouse or family. Ships crews are "family" and Captain Hay had commanded three. I cannot find any reference to the practice of sending death notification to previous Commanders of vessels, but this seems likely in view of these two instances