

Eras Journal - Fitzpatrick, G. Abstract

Abstract of Fitzpatrick, G. Inky Stephensen's internment experience in Australia: Letters to his wife (1942-45).

P.R. or 'Inky' Stephensen (1901-1965), author of *The Foundations of Culture in Australia : An Essay Towards National Self Respect* (1936) was once well known as an advocate for Australian culture.

Midwife to Xavier Herbert's *Capricornia* , publisher of finely-printed books in his and Jack Lindsay's *Fanfrolico Press*, adviser to the indigenous committee for the 1938 Day of Mourning, he came to the attention of the Security Service as the business manager, contributor to and later editor (1936-1942) of *The Publicist: The Paper Loyal to Australia First*.

This article focuses on the period when his placing Australia first, ahead of Britain and America , led to his internment in camps at Liverpool (NSW), Loveday (SA) and Tatura (Vic.) from 11 March 1942 until 17 August 1945 , two days after the Pacific war ended. His case was the most publicised at the time but was one of some 50 cases of 'British-born' Australians interned for their dissident opinions or behaviour and placed in the same camps as internees of enemy alien ethnicity.

Based on the extensive correspondence between Stephensen and his wife, Winifred, over the three and a half years of his internment under Regulation 26 and supplemented by the official security files on him held in the National Archives, I suggest markers for a social history of internment in Second World War Australia.