

Back Issue of Military Postal History Society 'Bulletin': (Bulletin Mar 1946)

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British Fleet Mail Offices

ADDITIONAL APO LOCATIONS

Note: The following list contains a number of locations in Great Britain. Nearly all of these are taken from an official list published in May, 1944, and communicated to us by Mr. Norman Hill. The majority of the locations in Great Britain published earlier were taken from another official list published in September, 1945. Where the following list gives another location for these APO numbers, it will almost always indicate an earlier location.

The list published in the preceding (February) Bulletin contained a few misprints and errors which are corrected below. The abbreviation (cor.) indicates a correction.

APO 73, Batangas (Luzon); 115, Moreton-on-Lugg (Eng.); 118, Goxhill (Eng.); 120, High Wycombe (Eng.); 122, Torquay (Eng.); 124A, Nürnberg; 127, Memburg (Eng.); 128, Clunton (Eng.); 129, Warminster (Eng.); 130, Horsham St. Faith (Eng.); 131, Dogleap (Eng.); 132, Langford Lodge (Eng.); 133, Grantham (Eng.); 134, Barry (Eng.); 135, Honeybourne (Eng.); 136, Launceston (Eng.); 137, Blackmore Park (Eng.); 140, Marks Hall (Eng.); 141, Aldermaston (Eng.); 143, Ringwood (Eng.); 144, Totnes (Eng.); 145, Stone (Eng.); 146, Toome (Eng.); 147, Irvinestown (Eng.); 149, Sunninghill (Eng.); 150, Redruth (Eng.); 151, Lashenden (Eng.); 153, Bangor (Wales); 155, Dorchester (Eng.); 156, Stansted Matchitt (Eng.); 157, Wantage (Eng.); 158, Axminster (Eng.); 160, Dinton (Eng.); 161, Cotesmore (Eng.); 162, Stoneleigh (Eng.); 163, Kingswood Common (Eng.); 164, Llanover (Eng.); 165, Fairford (Eng.); 166, Cinderford (Eng.); 167, Bincombe (Eng.); 169, Plymouth (Eng.); 170, Brockenhurst (Eng.); 171, Ashford (Eng.); 172, St. Germans (Eng.); 173, Probus (Eng.); 174, Plympton (Eng.); 179, Manchester (Eng.); 198, Luzon Area Command; 201, 1st Cav. Div., Yokohama; 219, Shamshernagar (Assam); 224, Admiralty Islands; 230, Bristol (Eng.); 238, 29th Repl. Depot (merged with 21st, 12/21/45); 243, Korea; 252, Tidworth (Eng.); 253, Wincanton (Eng.); 254, Hardenhuish (Eng.); 255, Chiseldon (Eng.); 256, Batsford (Eng.); 264, Anguar; 270, Knock Camp (Eng.); 291, 6th Repl. Bn., Clark Field (Luzon); 295, Alabang (Luzon); 301, Osaka; 303, Hq. III Corps; 305, Taunton (Eng.); 307, Breamore (Eng.); 308, Marbury Hall (Eng.); 315, Ascomo (Luzon); 317, Manila; 318, 28th Repl. Depot (Leyte); 321, Mindoro; 322, Finchhaven (N. Guinea); 323, FEASC, Manila; 324, Manus (Admiralty Is.); 340, Marlborough (Eng.); 343, Japan; 347, Yokohama; 351, Nichols Field (Luzon); 352, Osaka; 354, Women's Repl. Depot, Manila; 359, HIBSEC (Luzon); 359, Nichols Field (Luzon); 380, Italy; 401, Yokohama; 403, Peover (Eng.); Nürnberg; 404, Kobe; 405, Manila; 409, Southampton (Eng.); 409A, Winchester (Eng.); 415, Osaka; 416, Glasgow; 417, 25th Repl. Depot, Manila; 418, Rochambeau Field, Cayenne (Fr. Guiana); 436, Lurgan (N. Ireland); 442, Hq. 6th Army; 445, Germany; 453, Hq. XIV Corps, Tokyo; 459, Makin Is., later Ft. Shafter, T. H. (delete Funafuti); 463, (cor.) Peine; 466, Jorhat (Assam); 467, Dona Doma (Assam); 468, 11th Airborne Div.; 471, Hq. XI Corps, Japan; 472, Newbury (Eng.); 490, Mohanbari (Assam); 503, Atsugi; 505, Tidworth (Eng.); 506, Glasgow; 506A, Edinborough; 510, Thatcham (Eng.); 513, Burton-on-Trent (Eng.); 515A, Valley (Anglesey, Eng.); 516, Newport (Mon., Eng.); 517, Watford (Eng.); 519B, Blandford (Eng.); 526, Atcham (Eng.); 529, Marignane Airport (cor.); 539, Partenkirchen (Ger.); 545, Glastonbury (Eng.); 546, Derbein (Eng.); 547, Italy; 548, Italy; 552, Plympton (Eng.); 553, Woolacombe (Eng.); 554, Stowmarket (Eng.); 555, Hilsea (Eng.); 558, Bungay (Eng.);

(continued on page 2)

BRITISH FLEET MAIL OFFICES

The following information on British Fleet Mail Offices and the extended list of those offices are reprinted from THE SEAPOSTER, with the permission of the editor.

During the War, the British Admiralty established Fleet Mail Offices in many foreign countries in order to expedite the transit of both ordinary and air mail correspondence sent not only by the Admiralty but also by personnel of the naval services of Great Britain. These offices were located in many instances at cities strategically situated on the air mail routes established during the war emergency. As all mail for the British overseas naval personnel was transported by air wherever possible, a great deal of air mail was handled by the Fleet Mail Offices. All of these offices were in charge of a British Fleet Mail Officer who had a corps of assistants, the number depending upon the amount of mail handled.

Each office was provided with a hand stamp postmark showing the office number. There were 40 offices (many of which are now closed), whose locations and assigned numbers are shown in the list below. These hand stamps have been used to cancel stamps on official correspondence, although they were originally intended to be used only as transit marks. We are indebted to member Norman Hill for the list of locations and for the following information obtained from the British Admiralty: "British Fleet Mail hand stamps are used merely to indicate that during transit letters have passed through a Fleet Mail Office. Thus all redirected mail should bear the stamp impression. The hand stamps are not, or should not have been, applied to letters posted at a Fleet Mail Office. Some letters posted by Naval personnel are for Army and RAF addresses and these are given the British Fleet Mail stamp to indicate Naval origin. It would appear that with relaxation of censorship and security regulations, certain offices are using the British Fleet Mail stamp in error, but this was not the original intention."

- | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| 1. Colombo | 14. New York | 27. Batavia |
| 2. Cochin | 15. Gibraltar | 28. Calcutta |
| 3. Penang | 16. Darwin | 29. Durban |
| 4. Port Said | 17. Madras | 30. Cuxhaven |
| 5. Fremantle | 18. Port Tewfik | 31. Bombay |
| 6. San Francisco | 19. Kilindine | 32. Minden |
| 7. Akyab | 20. Rangoon | 33. Port Swettenham |
| 8. Cosenza | 21. Vizagapatam | 34. Brisbane |
| 9. Adelaide | 22. Sourabaya | 35. Karachi |
| 10. Malta | 23. Aden | 36. Alexandria |
| 11. Wilhelmshaven | 24. Antwerp | 37. Trincomalee |
| 12. Sydney | 25. Manus | 38. Hamburg |
| 13. Chittagong | 26. Singapore | 39. Cairo |
| | | 40. Kiel |

EDITOR'S NOTE. The above list was published November 12, 1945. Comparison with the list published in the November, 1945, Bulletin will show that the latter contains the names of several places that do not figure in the new list. Those offices may be presumed to have been closed. There is evidence from covers that BFMO No. 2 was located in Trinidad at one time. Most of these offices use a double circle postmark which is not unlike the common British Field Post Office stamp. A few have individual oval or circle postmarks.

ADDITIONAL APO LOCATIONS (cont'd)

560, Braintree (Eng.); 562, Lilford Hall (Eng.); 568, Devizes (Eng.); 571, Plaster Downs (Eng.); 574, Cardiff (Wales); 577, Ballymena (N. Ireland); 578, Sherborne (Eng.); 579, Eastleigh (Eng.); 580, Chipping Ongar (Eng.); 582, Warminster (Eng.); 584, Swansea (Eng.); 594, Bovington (Eng.); 595, Middle Wallop (Eng.); 597, Bradford Downs (Eng.); 602, Zandery Field, Zandery (Dutch Guiana); 618, Windsor Field, Nassau (Bahamas); 632, Batista Field, San Antonio de Los Banos (Cuba); 633, Camp Griffiss (Eng.); 633 A, England; 634, Wellingborough (Eng.); 637, Watford (Eng.); 639, Cheddington, later Chipping Ongar (Eng.); 645, Shrivenham (Eng.); 646, Winchester (Eng.); 647, Oxford (Eng.); 648B, Stornoway (Eng.); 651, Kidderminster (Eng.); 655, London; 681, Italy; 695, Waller Field, Trinidad, B. W. I.; 695-1, Seawell Field, Barbadoes, B. W. I.; 696, Sunninghill (Eng.); 697, Japan; 700, Oran; 703, 9th Repl. Bn., Tokyo; 704, Manila; 707, Hq. AFWESPAC; 709, Manila; 710, 5th Air Force; 711, 5th Repl. Bn., Manila; 712, 385th Air Service Gp.; 713-1, Nadzab (N. Guinea); 713-2, Gussap (N. Guinea); 714, 22nd Repl. Bn., Nielson Field (Luzon); 715, Panay; 716, Yokohama; 717, Zamboanga (Mindinao); 719, 13th Air Force; 720, Leyte; 721, Leyte; 743, France; 757, Kingston-on-Thames (Eng.); 786, N. Africa; 812, Hato Field, Curacao, D. W. I.; 813, Belfast (N. Ireland); 849, Benedict Field, St. Croix (Br. Virgin Is.); 855, Coolidge Field, Antigua, B. W. I.; 857, Atkinson Field, Br. Guiana; 861, Vernam Field, Jamaica, B. W. I.; 867, Beane Field, St. Lucia, B. W. I.; 871, Cheltenham (Eng.); 872, Woolacombe, later Cheltenham (Eng.); 873, Teovil (Eng.); 875, Kettering (Eng.); 903, 7th Air Force; 916, Laoag (Luzon); 919, Laoag (Luzon); 920, Biak; 924, Melbourne; 925, Ft. McKinley (Luzon); 926, Morotai; 928, Staging Area, San Fernando (Luzon); 929, Japan; 932, Samar; 943, Yakutat, Alaska; 948, Umnak, Alaska; 950, Ft. Armstrong, T. H.; 952, Ft. Hase, T. H. (delete Camp Upulah); 954, Oahu; 955, Oahu; 960, (cor.) Is. of Hawaii; 961, (cor.) Maui; 964, Kahuku Air Base, Oahu; 966, (cor.) Kauai; 1000, 116 Sta. Hosp., Leyte; 1001, 117 Sta. Hosp., Leyte; 1002, 11 Sta. Hosp., Tacloban (Leyte); 1003, 44 Gen. Hosp., Leyte; 1004, 126 Gen. Hosp., Leyte; 1006, 49 Gen. Hosp., Manila; 1007, 251 Gen. Hosp., Yokohama; 1008, 360 Gen. Hosp., Lingayen; 1009, 60 Gen. Hosp., Manila; 1010, 80 Gen. Hosp., Manila; 1054, 118 Sta. Hosp., Okinawa; 1055, 122 Sta. Hosp., Okinawa; 1057, 373 Sta. Hosp., Okinawa; 1058, 374 Sta. Hosp., Okinawa; 2494, Bowen Field, Port au Prince, Haiti.

U. S. ARMY COURIER MAIL MARKINGS. The illustrations in this issue are devoted almost exclusively to U. S. Army Courier Mail Markings. These are found only on important official mail and occasionally on personal communications from very high-ranking officers. Covers bearing such markings are therefore very scarce. Only one example is known of some of the markings illustrated. There must be a good many of these markings of which no example has been seen. In addition to the markings illustrated there are a number of straight-line hand stamps reading: VIA OFFICER COURIER, VIA AIR SAFEHAND COURIER, VIA ARMY COURIER SERVICE, SAFEHAND COURIER, etc.

The term SAFEHAND (also spelled as two words) which occurs in some of these markings is a contribution of this war to U. S. Army parlance. An inquiry regarding it addressed to the Chief of the Army Courier Service brought the following reply: "Information has been received from the British Embassy that 'Safe Hand' (written as two words) is a traditional British term that corresponds to our 'officer courier.' It appears that in the Pacific Area 'Safehand' (written as one word) has been used occasionally by our forces in place of 'officer courier.'"

The few Navy and Marine Corps courier covers that have been seen have borne no special courier markings, merely an endorsement indicating the mode of despatch to be used. It is not known whether any such markings have been used by these branches of the service.

(Contributions from P. E. Baker, E. B. Peter, and M. Hertzberg.)

U. S. Army Courier Mail Markings, W. W. II

ARMY COURIER SERVICE

FL

VIA COURIER

REG. NO.....

17. (Florence)

18. (Kumming)

ARMY COURIER SERVICE

COURIER
AIR SAFE HAND

KU

19. (Kumming)

20. A.G. D/C USASOS

U. S. Army Courier Mail Markings, W. W. II

COURIER
AIR SAFE HAND

COURIER

ITEM _____
BAG _____

27.

ITEM _____
BAG _____

HOME SERVICE DIVISION
CONTINENTAL HEADQUARTERS
AMERICAN RED CROSS

26.

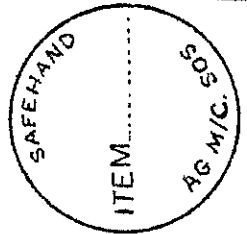
COURIER STOP 6500

28.

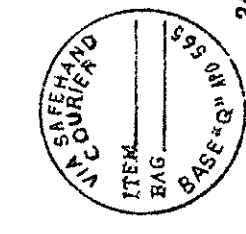
No. C.O.

British Officer Courier
Marking. Hq. SEAC
Ceylon

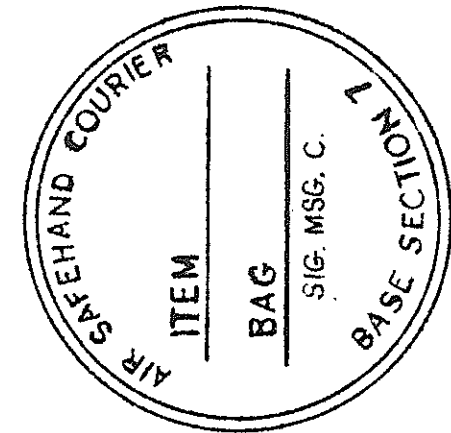
H419



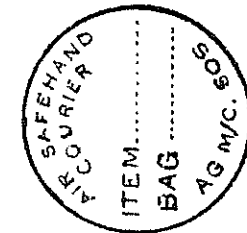
22.



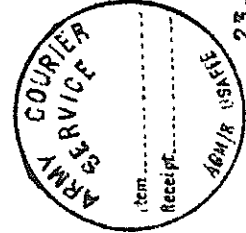
24.



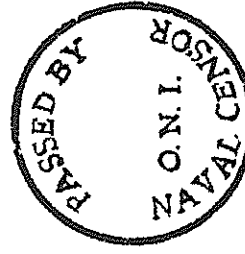
25.



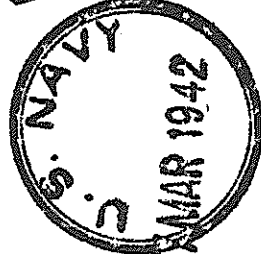
21.



23.



H420



E61

U. S. Army Courier Mail Markings, W. W. II

ARMY COURIER SECTION
NO. —

1. (Brisbane)

ARMY COURIER SERVICE
AU.

3. (Auckland)

ARMY COURIER SECTION
NO. BR—

2. (Brisbane)

Army Courier Service
Se:

4. (Seattle)

Like Fig. 3 are hand stamps with letters NO (Noumea), ES (Espiritu Santo), and GU (Guam)

ARMY COURIER SERVICE
E S

NO. HO.

5. (Honolulu)

ARMY COURIER SERVICE HONOLULU
#

6. (Espiritu Santo)

ARMY COURIER SERVICE WASHINGTON, D. C.

7.

8.

U. S. Army Courier Mail Markings, W. W. II

ARMY COURIER SERVICE CAL.

9. (Calcutta)

SHAFF AG M & D
No.....

10. (Eq. SHAFF)

ARMY COURIER SERVICE
PAR

12. (Paris)

ARMY COURIER SERVICE
PR

11.

ARMY COURIER SERVICE
LO

14. (London)

13. (Paris)

ARMY COURIER SERVICE
NP-

VIA COURIER
REG. NO.....

16. (Noumea)

15. (Naples)