Back Issue of Military Postal History Society 'Bulletin': (Bulletin May 1950)

Back issues of the Military Postal History Society 'Bulletin' are now available. The issues available span the period from 1937 to 2022. The MPHS is a non-profit organization for philatelists and stamp collectors interested in the collecting and studying of the postal aspects of all wars and military actions of all countries, including soldiers' campaign covers, naval mail, occupation and internment covers, patriotics, propaganda, V-mail, censorship and similar related material.

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Allied Field Postmarks in, 1941-6

THE BULLETIN OF THE WAR COVER CLUB An Occasional Publication

Edited by Jean G. Koor 1 West 47th Street, New York 19, N. Y.

7ol.	VI	MAY, 1950	Whole No. 6	
		RESULTS OF THE ELECTION		
	President - Vice-President - Secretary-Treasurer	H. K. Robinson, 315 Mulry Lane, Lawrence, N. C. D. Brenner, 5 Montrose Rd., Berkeley 7, 0 -A. J. Tripp, 16533 Mendota Ave., Detroit 21,	alif.	
	Directors -	A. E. Perry, Albany 6, N. Y. J. Paul Klinger, Havertown, Pa. M. R. Baggett, Charlotte 6, N. C. Miss Jean G. Koor, c/o Scott's, N.Y.C. 19 James Russell, Philadelphia 24, Pa. William Montgomery, N.Y.C. 5		
	Sales Manager - M. R. Baggett 1615 N. McDowell St. Charlotte 6, N. C.			
	Bulletin Editor -	Miss Jean G. Koor c/o Scott Publications, Inc. l West 47th Street New York 19, N. Y.		
	Resigned - Died -	Earl H. Strouse #264 Bernard L. Ahman, Jr. #167		
	Change of Address -	Charles J. Molnar #266 1246 Summit Drive Cleveland 24, Ohio		
	Change of Listing ~ Bartley, D.C. #57			
	Collects A. Patriotics	E.F., A.P.O., P.O.W., Illustrated V-Mail, Nav - All Wars.	al,	
	Now that the regult	s of the Election are known, we believe we ha	we an	

Now that the results of the Election are known, we believe we have an excellent group of officers and directors fully capable of carrying out their appointed duties. The best wishes of each and every member are extended to President Robinson, Vice President Brenner, and Secretary Tripp.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I wish to take this opportunity of thanking the members of the W.C.C. for the honor conferred upon me. As one of the organizers of the W.C.C. I have always been interested in its progress and will do all I can to advance its interests in the years of my administration.

I hope to appoint members in various parts of the country who will take the responsibility of getting the members in their respective areas together once or twice a year as we have been doing in the New York area. This I feel sure will stimulate the interest of the members, get us more publicity, and attract others to join with us.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (Cont'd.)

We need to make the W.C.C. grow for the protection of our own collections, which will have added value in the future only as we arouse the interest of more people in the collecting of war covers, and show them in exhibits how fascinating such a hobby can be.

Also, the members need to think more largely in terms of the contribution they can make rather than in what they can get out of the Club. Like anything else, the more we put in, the more we will get out of it. So get busy and write up some articles on your collection, and especially the most interesting items you have. Tell us of any new discoveries in the field of cancellations, types, etc. Cooperate with those who are writing on certain phases of our hobby by sending in to them your covers for them to check and study. Participate in every show possible, and talk up the club by exhibiting before various local groups. Thus with all working together, YOUR club will grow and be of added value to all the members.

With every good wish, Sincerely,

H. K. ROBINSON

ALLIED FIELD POSTMARKS IN IRAQ 1941-46 by Eugene Jagger

It was recently announced in the Press that British Forces had now evacuated Iraq, so perhaps the time is opportune to place on record details of the various Army and Field Post Office date-stamps that were used in Iraq during the years 1941 to 1946.

The reason for the presence of British and Indian forces in Iraq was the seizure of power by the pro-Axis Rashid Ali and his attack on the R.A.F. training station at Habbaniyah (which was only supplied with trainer planes). The R.A.F. station was attacked, and the airmen were in a somewhat precarious position until reinforcements were flown in from the Middle East, and convoys of troops and supplies were transported over the almost completed road across the desert, linking Palestine through Trans-Jordan to Baghdad.

Although by Nairn Coach it is approximately a 24-hour journey from Baghdad to Damascus, with short stops at Ramadi and Putbah for refreshments, the drivers, three in number taking 2-hour spells at the wheel, in comparison, motor trucks which traveled in convoy, took four days over the journey, avoiding the heat of the day by starting at daybreak and going until noon, except for a short break every two hours or so.

At the same time Indians were ordered to proceed by sea to Basrah where Base Post Office "C" was set up. This was actually at Maqil or Margil, which is that part of Basrah where the docks and modern portion of the city are situated. The main base was some 15 to 20 miles outside Basrah at a spot on the desert named Es Shu'aiba or Shaibah, where still exist the ruins of some old Turkish forts, the scene of fighting during the 1914-18 campaign in Mesopotamia, as it was then called. Incidentally, I met an old campaigner who had been there before. When World War 2 came along he left his tea plantation and volunteered again for service, little dreaming that he would later revisit old battlefields.

An advanced base Post Office was set up at Shaibah where a cancellation "Indian Section Base Post Office No. 8" was in use, there were also other date-stamps similar to this with letters SOR (Sorters) REG (Registered) PAR (Parcels) above central base. This was one of the three A.P.O's in Iraq which had a machine for cancelling letters; the others were Base P.O. "C" and Advanced Base P.O. No. 7 which was at Baghdad. The foregoing remarks can also be applied to B.A.P.O. No. 7.

During 1944 a new date-stamp was brought into use reading "Advanced Base Post Office No. 7" and "No. 8."

There were several Field Post Offices in the Baghdad area including a British Field P.O. which functioned for sometime, using F.P.O. 513 date-stamp which may be Continued on next page

ALLIED FIELD POSTMARKS (Cont'd.)

found cancelling both British and Indian stamps. Other British F.P.O's operated both in Iraq and Iran, and were attached to the British Division which had seen service in Madagascar and India, and which was resting prior to proceeding to the Middle East and Sicily.

During the German drive to the Caucusus many divisions were concentrated in the North of Iraq ready to repulse any advance and to protect the Mosul Oilfields. This threat was removed by German defeat at Stalingrad, so these formations proceeded to other theaters of war, and they would be accompanied by their Field Post Offices. It is necessary to pay attention to the <u>dates</u> of postmarks, as some of these numbers were later used elsewhere.

It was interesting to see the arrival of mail at some of the smaller Indian F.P.O's. The contents of the bags were emptied on the floor and one member of the staff would squat there and proceed to date-stamp the letters. Occasionally he would only stamp the last letter in the bundle, if the letters were tied in a bundle. It was the practice to back-stamp all inward mail. After stamping, the mail was sorted by other members of the F.P.O. and made up into unit bundles, then handed out to the waiting mail orderlies from the various units, as the Field Post Offices do not make delivery.

It is exceptional to find an Indian F.P.O. date-stamp on the address side of a "Free" letter as it is customary to postmark on the back.

Just prior to Christmas 1941, a special free air mail letter card was issued, or rather a concession was made to the troops, and they were issued with an extra letter card which had to be endorsed in manuscript "Special Christmas Air Mail Free" which did not require the three-anna air mail fee, but had to be handed in bulk to the F.P.O. with a certificate that the requisite number had not been exceeded by the Unit.

Indian troops were allowed a similar concession according to their religion to send a free air mail letter card to India on the occasion of one of their festivals.

Letters addressed to civilian addressees, banks, and shops in Iraq and Iran from 1944 had to be franked with Iraqi or Iranian stamps so that it was possible to purchase these at the Indian Field Post Office. A small quantity of the lower values likely to be used were kept in stock but these were very rarely asked for. I have come across these stamps which had been addressed to one of the oil companies or to one of the banks in Teheran.

Iraqi stamps are also found with the Polish Army "Poczta Polowa" postmark. These were used under similar circumstances as the Iraqi stamps used by Indian Field Post Offices.

During 1942-3 many of the Polish Army who had been prisoners of war in Russia, and who had been released after Germany attacked Russia in 1941, were conveyed to Teheran or handed over to the British authorities who placed camps at their disposal, clothed and equipped them. The women and children were also cared for by M.E.R.R.A., which stands for Middle East Refugee and Rehabilitation Administration, which in those days was wholly supported by the British; this organization was afterwards renamed U.N.R.R.A.

The Polish troops were in training in camps near Baghdad and Khaniqin in Iraq. They also had their own Field Post Office, which was provided with a double-ringed type of date-stamp inscribed "POCZTA POLOWA" with number of office at base of postmark. The following numbers were in use in Iraq during the year 1943:

> No. 111, 111A, 113, 114; No. 116 Khaniqin, 117, 118, 124. British Field Post Offices: No. 226. 513 Baghdad, 299 Indian Field Post Offices: 85C Base P.O. - 104 Nov. 1942 ZUBAIR 14 May 1943 Baghdad Area R31 June 1945 SHAIBA

R33	Jan. 1943	ZUBAIR				
R30 R19	Oct. 1946	KANIQIN SHAIBA				
107	April 1946		2 Types date-stamp exist, one without No. in			
TO	ADIIT 1940	OHATDA	front of 107			
102		MOSUL	2 Types date-stamp exist, one without No. in			
106		MODOT	front of 102			
108		MUSSAYIB				
22	May 1942	MAQIL				
21						
18						
26	Aug. 1941					
41	ц	BAGHDAD				
42	Dec. 1942	BAGHDAD				
48	May 1941	BAGHDAD				
27	" 1943	17				
	Sept 1945	BAGHDAD				
56	Sept.1942					
57 Sept.1943						
Indian Section Base Post Office No. 8 SHAIBA						
17	21 12	ti	" No. 7 BAGHDAD			
	Advance Bas					
No. 7	12 13		" BAGHDAD			
C	Base Post (Office	MAQIL			

On December 11, 1942, United States Forces arrived in Iraq. These formed part of the United States Persian Gulf Command whose main interest was American Lend-Lease Supplies to Russia. U.S. A.P.O. 816 operated at BASRAH for a time, and afterwards was in use on the island of BAHRAIN. Incidentally, British Forces stationed at BAHRAIN, utilized, when necessary, the ordinary Bahrain stamps which were cancelled on arrival at Indian F.P.O. 101 or C. Base Post Office.

ILLUSTRATIONS:













One of My Favorite Covers

A. K. Hurlburt

A dirty brown V-Mail envelope containing a letter and carrying various markings on the outside.

November 3, 1943 a V-Mail letter was written to a soldier c/o Postmaster, New York, New York. The letter contained the request that it and its cover be returned to the sender.

The letter was addressed to A.P.O. #15018, but the cover shows that "Directory Service" was given it on November 27 and the letter sent to Co. A, 8th Replacement Battalion. From there it went to the 3rd Infantry Division and eventually to the soldier who was then a member of Co. C. 30th Infantry.

On April 6, 1944, on a letter headed "Anzio Beach," the soldier wrote: "I received your letter the first part of January and have been quite busy since... Enclosed find your letter, and please excuse the dirt it has accumulated...It like myself has done a lot of rough traveling."

Fortunately, the soldier was able to survive all of his rough traveling and returned to the States. When he related his experiences on Anzio Beach, I was forced to conclude that his comment of having been "quite busy" was a gross understatement.

However, I assured my friend that this cover with all of its dirt was of greater sentimental value to me than all of the clean ones in my collection.

AERIAL PROPAGANDA LEAFLETS (conclusion) by P. H. Robbs

BATTLE FOR FRANCE (1939-40)

In the period of the "Phoney War" Germany engaged in an intense propaganda campaign against France, with great success. About fifty different types of leaflets were dropped, mostly full of Anti-British and Anti-Jewish "hate." Included was a series of "naughty" postcards, which show a French soldier going into battle. When these are held up to the light, a British soldier is revealed enjoying himself in a French "cafe." These were dropped on the French troops in the Maginot Line, and certainly helped to prevent allied solidarity. A few items exist in English dropped upon British troops prior to Dunkirk, and the French air forces dropped nearly fifty different varieties over Germany, as well as a few over Czechoslovakia.

BATTLE OF BRITAIN (1939-1944)

Under twenty different leaflets were dropped by the Luftwaffe over the British Isles, and most of them are very rare - two or three copies of some only are known to exist. Mention may be made of "A last Appeal to Reason," being Hitler's speech of July, 1940; "Dieppe" photographs of September 1942, and to several V.L. weapon leaflets of 1944 (The rare "P.O.W. V. I. Mail" and "Signal Magazine," etc.)

GERMAN OCCUPATION OF EUROPE (1940-1945)

As will have been seen, the Allies spared no pains to disseminate leaflets over Occupied France and the Low Countries, and so effective was the propaganda that the Germans tried to participate. They dropped in France, especially around Paris, upwards of twenty anti-Allied and anti-jewish leaflets, including a "fake" of an American One Dollar note, and "fake" newspapers such as "Le Courrier de l'Air" and "L'Amerique en Guerre." A small number of leaflets were also dropped on Allied military forces after D-Day, including issue number 4 of "The Other Side sent by V.I. to British troops in Antwerp.

NORTH AFRICAN AND ITALIAN CAMPAIGNS

Several hundred varieties exist from these theaters, including many in Italian and German which incoporate surrender passes. An especially interesting item is a false English One Pound note, with Arabic inscription on the reverse, dropped by the Germans on Cairo shortly before the Battle of El Alamein. The battles in Italy resulted in a wide range of propaganda material, including many in English sent by the Germans to American and British troops telling them to desert, with detailed instructions on how to "go sick" to avoid battle.

EASTERN-EUROPEAN THEATERS

During the long course of the War, leaflets were employed by the Germans, Finns, and Russians on substantial scales. Few details are available, though "Surrender Passes" dropped by the Red Air Force in the Battle for Berlin are known, as well as Allied items dropped on Bulgaria and Yugoslavia.

SOUTH-EAST ASIA

Lack of space prevents a detailed summary of the many interesting types of leaflet existing emanating from Burma, Malaya, Siam, etc. The Japanese invasion of these areas was accompanied by the dropping of various crude and gaudy leaflets, and in the last year of the War especially, dozens of different types of leaflets were disseminated by the American and British air forces. After the surrender of Japan, leaflets were widely scattered on all prisoner of war camps, giving the captives the news of the surrender, and their orders. Leaflets were also distributed by American and Australian aircraft over New Guinea, Dutch East Indies, Philippine Islands, China, etc.

PACIFIC THEATER

The great American air forces dropped millions of leaflets upon Japan, many being exceptionally interesting and very well produced. The writer has not yet seen the official record, however, of such leaflets, and until this is published, it would seem preferable to defer summarizing the leaflet campaign.

MISCELLANEOUS

In this great global struggle, conflicts took place in all parts of the world, which even now, are but slightly recollected. Leaflets played an important part, however, in the British Abyssinian campaign, the Anglo-Free French Syrian campaign, and the capture of Madagascar. Furthermore, leaflet propaganda was called in to help many War efforts and War Loan campaigns, and such items exist from America, Canada, Great Britain, India, New Zealand, South Africa, etc.

It will be seen that there is a tremendous field available for study, but this should not deter the collector. Completion is neither possible nor desirable. The collector should choose his leaflets to relate to important World and War events, and to notable feats of War-time aviators. Few indeed are the covers available of many historic military flights and sorties, but leaflets are souvenirs of many amazing flights in all parts of the world and of man's struggles in the direst extremities. They constitute, in fact, a wonderful AIR POST of the history of our time and of the Dawn of the Atomic Age.

TID BITS

An unreported provisional camp postmark of the Spanish-American War period has recently been seen. It reads: "Mil. Sta., Anniston, Ala." and is of the same provisional type as used at Lexington, Ky., Middletown, Pa., and at several stations in Puerto Rico. The fact that it has just come to light would indicate that it was used a very short time and is very scarce.

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Mail from the U.S. troops engaged with the Canadian Army this winter in the manuevers in Yukon Territory known as Exercise Sweetbriar, bears the postmark of APO 949 at Fort Morrow, Alaska. Mail was probably flown to and from this post office as being the nearest office to the field of manuevers.

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The Philippine Army and Navy are now using their own postmarks. The following have so far been reported: NAVAL, LEYTE: CAMP MURPHY, QUEZON CITY: P. I. ARMY HEADQUARTERS, QUEZON CITY.

CHECKING APO CANCELS - WW-II

(Your Job)

by A. J. Tripp

In answer to many inquiries regarding the scarce and unknown APO numbers, the following notes are offered after comparing data found in various publications and other reliable sources, with the Army APO records. Perhaps we should first quote the following remarks found in the ADJ-GEN'S FIELD MANUAL, ARMY POSTAL SERVICE, Section VI page 30:

"Postal Officers responsible for the handling of mail in theaters of operation will be confronted with many unfamiliar and complex postal problems, for the solution of which they must rely very largely on their own resourcefulness, ingenuity and good judgment. The conditions under which the Army Postal Service must be rendered will vary so greatly in different theaters as to make it impossible to prescribe hard and fast operating procedures. The instructions in this chapter are expected to serve as a general guide only."

We start with APU 11 which was the organic APO of the 22d. PRS and is recorded as active in France and Belgium.

APO 15 cancel is not known to have been used until early '48, in Hawaii, and as 15 BPO is known to have operated at this point during the war, we may assume the APO was established after the BPO ceased operating.

APO 50 helped APO 340 which was assigned to the XX Army Corps. The P.O. Dept. listed this number as being active at Starnberg, Ger. in '46 but no reports on this number found in the cancel have been received.

APO 120 assisted 312 which was assigned to the XII Army Corps, and perhaps at times, had the assistance of other APUs. The following gives a good idea of the reasons for the need of such extra help. The official BATTLE ORDER of May 7, 1945, places the HQs XII Army Corps at Viechtach, Germany, where 312 was also located. The higher command, Gen. Patton's 3d Army HQs, was located at Erlangen, Ger. where APO 403 was also active. The 3d. Army was a unit of the 12th Army Group which along with its assigned APO 655, were at this date at Weisbaden, Ger.

Units of the XII Corps which were assigned APO numbers, and locations as of this date, are:

May, 1950

APO 254 arriving in Czech., May 11th. 4th Armored Div. in Czech. 11 11 " 261 " " Austria, May 8th. llth in Austria ١r. 5 at Freyung, Germany, May 8th. 5th Inf.Div. in Germany tı. 26th " 11 26 arrived at Ried, Aus., Aug. 15th. in Austria 90th " †† in Czech. " 90 reached Weiden, Ger. (which is about 50 miles w. of the Czech. border) on May 22d, and moved to Marseilles, Fr. Nov. '45, which is also the month this unit ceased operations.

Various other units assigned to the XII Corps HQs and its combat units would be assigned one of the above numbers, and at the same time make use of any of such APOs for mailing purposes. As an example, we take the records of the 5th Div. which consisted of three Inf. Regt's; four Artillery Bn's; plus fourteen other combat and noncombat units, as well as seven other combat units of various types assigned for short periods. No doubt APO 5 had some assistance from other APUs.

APO 296 helped five other APOs in France, listed in the P.O. Dept. Bulletin as active Feb. '46, no cancels reported.

APO 313 - Reported as helping other APOs in France. The Army lists it at Chartres, Fr. from Nov. '44 to June '45. No cancels known.

APO 325, Belgium; 326 France; 327 Holland, all being listed as active less than three months, early '45. Cancels reported of the first two, none of the latter number. Also the first two are known to have assisted other APOs.

APO 348 was the organic APO of 23 PRS in France and had branches "A" and "B" with locations unknown. No cancel reports received.

APO 504 known to assist 65-17-875 and perhaps others. This much-looked-for cancel has never been found.

APO 890 is known to have helped 640 - 1 BPO at Sutton Coldfield, Eng., early '45. One report of this number in the cancel dated May 6 '44, with "7th. Bomb. Grp., APO 886" found in the return address, would indicate this number was used in India. Also units of the 7th Bomb. Grp. are known to be in India as early as '42. We hope to have the loan of this cover for verification and to find this number in either the ret. address or cancel sometime in the future.

APO 895 - Known to help 887 at Paris and 416 at Villacoublay, Fr. in '45. A report states this was used at Camp Herbert Tarryton and perhaps is verified by the Army records placing it at Le Havre Nov. '45 through May '46, as all the "cigarette" camps were located in the Le Havre area. No cancels have been reported with this number.

Although APO 888 is one of the few numbers not found in the Army records, two covers have been found with this number in the cancel, dated Dec. '45. Then later on an official cover was found bearing a 885 cancel (New Delhi, India) and a rubber stamped ret. address "HQ US FORCES IN BURMA APO 888," the cancel dated July '45 at New Delhi which was HQ INDIA - BURMA THEATER. The U.S. force with the allied army in Burma was small, and it is to be expected few such cancels exist.

An Army mail clerk states 16 BPO was established at APO 709 Dec. 13 '42, which is the same date that the Army records established 709 at Guadalcanal. They moved to 249 at Saipan, Marianas Is. July 1 '45, then to nearby Guam Feb. 8 '46. The information checks with the Army records of APO 249. There has been no report on this APO number being found in the cancel.

We note that the Army records show that APO 12 was active in France from Nov. '44 to Feb. 18 '45. In March '45, this number moved to Luzon in the same area that 12 PRS - APO 70 served, where Gen. MacArthur landed on the Lingayen Gulf Jan. 9 '45. Though the records show that APO 12 was active in five French cities or villages, we have not seen this cancel used through N.Y. The earliest known APO 12 cancel through S.F. is dated March 15 '45.

This data supplements the request for the list of little and unknown APO numbers published in the March Bulletin. Information on or the loan of covers bearing such numbers in the cancel or ret. address will be appreciated.

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Editor's Note - Here is your chance to do a little research and assist us in completing the records!

May, 1950

Well, the April 29th meeting, held at the offices of Scott Publications, Inc. 1 West 47th Street, New York City, is now but a fond memory. It was the first meeting conducted by our new president, Rev. Robinson, who received the good wishes of everyone present. There was a steady stream of visitors all day long and the attendance was most heartening. Again, Mr. Cipolli made that long trip so as to attend, winning the long-distance record hands down. What happened, Mr. Rogan?

We were most fortunate to have Mr. Louis Kravitz address the meeting and show four volumes of covers from his Philippines collection; censored, patriotic, Jap-occupied, and post-war. Many of us were drooling at the sight of so many at-thescene-treasures. As well as being factual, Mr. Kravitz' talk was highly entertaining.

As usual, your editor was fortunate enough to secure many new items for her collection...Mr. Cipolli was very helpful, having a wealth of duplicate material, (why not contact him sometime) and from Mr. Kiefer securing two covers handstamped "Released by Prize Court" which I had not previously seen. Think he has others.

We have also received from Mr. Tripp, our brand-new Secretary-Treasurer, the completed manuscript on Locations and Assignments of U.S. Army Post Offices in World War II. This was certainly a labor of love and everyone present felt an expression of thanks and sincere appreciation be extended to Mr. Tripp for his fine piece of work. So here it is, Mr. Tripp, and more power to you! This will go into the works immediately.

RECEIVED IN THE MAIL

From A.L.L. Lapoints, 8595 St. Denis St., Montreal, Canada: "Kindly advise if you are interested or any members of your Club in exchanging air mail stamps of the World - used or unused - for a number of covers bearing Military PostMarks from this last War, (Canadian Military Post Office) which I have."

Perhaps this will afford someone an opportunity to acquire wanted items for his collection.

From Norman Hill, WCC No.222, Netherleigh, Old Wortley Rd., Rotherham, England comes the following request for help:

"I wonder whether you would please be so good as to ask the members present (or, if I'm too late, to put a note in the WCC Bulletin) if anyone can help me trace a card, cover, or piece bearing the cancel of the British Army T.P.O. of the North

Russian Exped. Force, 1919. I am anxious to examine this cancel (see illustration) to complete my British Army T.P.O. data. The late Mr. Milton B. Hunt of Southport, Conn., had a copy which was sold." How about it? Is anyone able to help member Norman Hill?



Received from Abram LeGallez, Slingerlands, N.Y., (photographic cachets) three Patriotic covers postmarked on memorable dates. Many thanks!

The Oregon Stamp Society is having an exhibition and convention, May 28,29,30, 1950, in Portland, Oregon, at the American Legion Building. Trust some of our members in the Northwest are exhibiting their prize items and perhaps Member D. C. Bartley will favor us with a report.

DUES for the year 1950-51 are now due. If you want to help the Secretary-Treasurer, send in your dues without waiting for a bill. Please send to the NEW Secretary-Treasurer, A. J. Tripp, 16533 Mendota Ave., Detroit 21, Mich.

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THAT'S ALL FOR NOW - MORE NEXT ISSUE