

Back Issue of Military Postal History Society 'Bulletin': (Bulletin Nov 1952)

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Navy in World War I

WAR COVER CLUB BULLETIN

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WHOLE NO. 3

NOVEMBER, 1952

VOLUME VII

On Saturday, October 18th the fall meeting of the W.C.C. was held at the offices of Scott Publications, Inc., at 1 West 47th Street, N.Y.C. Before we go further we want to thank the "Boss" for the use of these offices. We really appreciate it. Members came early and stayed late. In fact Miss Koor had a hard time to terminate the many "small" meetings at 5 P. M. Many of the familiar faces were again present plus many new ones that came after reading about our Club in the recent issue of Linn's. William Cippoli, Tillson, New York was appointed Sales Circuit Manager to replace Mike Baggett who recently resigned the position after many years. Thanks a lot Mike and Good luck Bill! Send in some good material for the Sales Circuit. Drop Bill a line and let him know your wants. Sol Whitman came through with a swell talk and exhibition on his Australian War covers. He presented all present with a nice civilian V.J. cover from the Phillipine Islands that also had an APO cancel of Sept. 3, 1945!! Winfred Grandy of New Haven, Conn. exhibited and spoke on his WW I Naval Collection that won the 2nd Grand Award at the 6th National Convention and Exhibition of the Universal Ship Cancellation Society held in Newark, New Jersey last June. The covers made the members' mouths water..A very valuable collection. James C. Wheat of Bay City, Michigan won the long distance contest very easily at this meeting. Hope you make it to all the meetings. What is this about the Global Cover Club?? Mr. Wheat is interested in having someone to work with him in indexing and classifying civilian censor marks. He has 3 feet of files containing tracings of censor markings or labels with cover origin and destination data. I hope someone capable of doing this job would step forward and drop Mr. Wheat a line. Joseph Lohr took a picture of one phase of our meeting. Hope it turns out. Who knows we might put it in a future bulletin...which goes to show you how much we need material to keep the Bulletin going!

*** EARLY KOREAN NAVALS ***

Look through your naval covers and see if you come up with some of these items. Before October 1950, Heavy Cruisers TOLEDO AND HELENA and Light Cruiser WORCHESTER were in action. On October 12th, 1950 Minsweepers PIRATE and PLEDGE struck mines off Wonsan. PLEDGE sunk in 5 minutes and PIRATE in 1 hour. Before November the HENRIECO was in Korean waters. SEMINOLE and WASHBURN were in the Inchon invasion. Before December 1950 the aircraft carrier PHILLIPINE SEA, Destroyers PARKS, CRAIG, SUTHERLAND, HOLLISTER and KNOX were in the thick of things. Minesweeper PARTRIDGE hit a mine on Feb. 2, 1952 and sank.

*** "YOUR BULLETIN" ***

Pick up a few post cards and have available. Then when you see something of interest jot it down on the card and send to your editor. Tracings of new cancellations, new directory markings, new APO's located about the world. All these things are of interest to all the members. Let us know of your "finds" from other wars, etc. Please sit down tonight and tell us about your "Favorite Cover."

A - AF - PO - CHATTER

During June '52, the Headquarters of Gen. Mark Clark's Far East Command moved from the Dai Ichi Bldg. to Pershing Heights, and on Aug. 17th the P X closed its doors and moved into Finance Building. The Dai Ichi and Finance Br. cancels have been discontinued, and as a recent post card from Pershing Heights bears the double ring cancel of APO 500 Unit 1, we can assume the following known branches will be assigned various such numbers. Branches are established at Grant Heights, Washington Heights, Meiji Park Hotel, Prince Shimazu House, Army Security Agency and US Army Stockade. As APO 500 handles nearly 50 per cent of all mail arriving and departing Japan, the regular staff of 46 Army workers will be aided by additional personnel from the Air Force, Navy and Army units for the MO and parcel post rush during the holidays.

Our WCC member A. L. Nicholson, Postmaster at Macon N. C. states he can't resist bragging about his cover from Lt. Col. Brad Smith who commanded "Task Force Smith," 1st Bn, 21st Regt. 24th Inf. Div. It's dated July 21st; sixteen days after the first contact with the enemy in Korea, It is something to brag about.

The 1st Air Postal Sqdn. celebrated its third birthday anniversary Oct. 18th. The First, pioneered Air Force mail activities and is divided into a headquarters and 32 detachments which operate 55 air post offices, eight aerial mail terminals, five security courier stations, two mail directories, and a material courier system. The squadron is scattered from the isolated mountains of central Luzon in the Philippines through Okinawa, Guam, Iwo Jima, Japan and Korea. It also handles all types of mail for all United Nations, with top priority given to Communist-held prisoners of war. In 1951, squadron personnel handled over 54 million pounds of mail and had stamp and MO sales in excess of 43 million dollars. The present monthly volume of mail would fill 100 boxcars. The squadron also originated the "Shipside PO" for personnel fresh off incoming boats, and "Bodside APO" for hospital patients. The squadron received a Meritorious Unit Commendation in 1951 for its "exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding service."

Major Ian Morgan reports, as of Sept. 6th Canadian Registration Service to and from Canadian Armed Forces in Korea and Germany became effective. Registered matter from the troops must be mailed from a CAPO and prepaid with Canadian postage stamps.

I mid-summer, the first jet mail was flown over the Pacific by pilots of the 31st Fighter Escort Wing, the flight of the F84G Thunderjets, with each pilot carrying several covers which were cacheted with a sketch of the Thunderjet and canceled at each of the eleven stops on the flight to Japan. It had been decided before they left Turner Air Force Base at Albany, Ga., in the event of a fatal accident, the covers would be sold for the benefit of the pilot's widow. Nearing the end of the ten-thousand mile flight, Lt. Col. Elmer G. DaRosa was killed when his Thunderjet crashed and exploded on Iwo Jima July 15th. 57 covers were to be auctioned at the Air Force Convention held in Detroit Aug. 30th the proceeds to be sent to Mrs. Sarah DaRosa, the widow. There was no local advance notice of this event, and it is hoped a cover can be located in order to make a complete record of this historic flight.

WCC members who have a copy of the WW-II APO Location List, will perhaps want the two page, four column appendix showing many new items, early dates latest known dates, plus other information which will be mailed to you on receipt of 12¢ in stamps, by your Secy.

THE U. S. NAVY IN WORLD WAR I

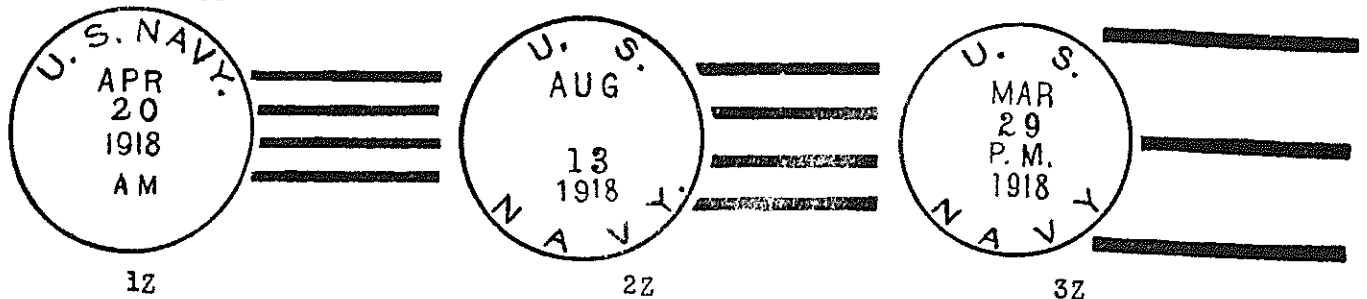
Winfred M. Grandy

There seems to have been considerable research and effort in classifying and identifying the various army postmarks of World War I but very little research in the way of naval cancellations of this interesting period in our history. The Universal Ship Cancellation Society, whose chief interest and research is the classification of all naval postmarks, has classified all known ship cancellations.

To those not familiar with this fascinating branch of collecting it might be of interest to note that postoffices from U.S. naval vessels were first authorized and established under an Act of Congress approved May 27, 1908, and have been in continuous use ever since. Any vessel with a complement of 35 men or more is granted the necessary equipment to carry out the cancelling of mail, etc.

While all naval postmarks are classified into roughly a dozen major types, practically all naval postmarks during a war do not show the name of the vessel in the cancellation but the wording, "U. S. Navy" instead.

I do not believe it would be of interest to the general reader to go into all the ramifications of these war-time cancels. We will endeavor, however, to show just three types and when the wording, "U. S. NAVY" replaces the ship's name it is known as a "Z" type.



You will note that in Type 1Z the wording is at the top.

2,

Type 2Z, the wording is at the bottom and type 3Z has three killer bars instead of four and there is space for wording between the bars. All these various types were in use during World War 1 while some ships still used cancels bearing the ship's name.

On account of the unrestriced German submarine warfare, War was declared by an Act of Congress on April 6, 1917.

Rear Admiral W. S. Sims was dispatched to London and he became the Commander of the American Naval Forces operating in European Waters during the war. The German submarine manace to merchant shipping had reached an alarming stage, a fact of which the general public was ignorant.

Six destroyers crossed the Atlantic and arrived at Queenstown in southern Ireland on May 4, 1917. Here they reported to Vice-Admiral Lewis Bayly, who was commanding the naval forces there. These ships consisted of the U. S. S. Wadsworth, Conyngham, Porter, McDougal, Davis and Wainwright, which received a great welcome from the local inhabitants. Later in May, a second destroyer flotilla arrived at Queenstown and subsequently these two flotillas were supplemented by others.

It was early perceived that Germany's purpose was the simple one of starving England into submission and there was no question of the very grave situation she was in. The only real answer that had been found for the submarine was the destroyer. At this point the convoy system had not been developed. The chief mission of the destroyers was to patrol commerce lanes and keep down or destroy enemy submarines. All the areas off Ireland and France were laid out into sections or zones, each thirty miles square. Each destroyer was given her special area to patrol. Wireless stations were co-ordinated so as to supply prompt radio bearings of vessels that were being attacked by subs or of subs that were sending messages home. Truly the happy hunting-days of the German U-boats were numbered.

At this point it might be of interest to mention a few exploits of our destroyers during the early part of our entry into the War. In October,

1917 the U. S. destroyer Conyngham, Commander Johnson, was escorting, with her destroyers, a large convoy off the east coast when a wireless message came from the J. L. Luckenbach, a merchant ship that she was being shelled by a submarine. The U. S. destroyer Nicholson was at once dispatched to the Luckenbach's assistance, and came on the scene between two and three hours later. The Nicholson attacked the submarine which at once submerged and disappeared. The Nicholson rejoined the convoy and resumed her station. Scarcely had she done so when one of the escorting ships, the British armed merchant cruiser, H. M. S. Orama, was torpedoed. The U. S. S. Conyngham dashed to the spot, a depth charge was dropped; wreckage rose to the surface but no more was seen and it was presumed the U-boat was sunk. The Orama subsequently sank, her survivors being rescued by the destroyers, and Commander Johnson was awarded the C. M. G. from the British government for this action.

The first enemy submarine caught by our forces was the U-58 which was discovered off Queenstown on November 17, 1917 by the destroyers Fanning and Nicholson. Depth charges were a constant menace; the Manley had her whole deck blown off by an explosion, with a grevous loss of life.

American genius for organization deserves the credit, not for the invention but the success of the convoy system. From July 26, 1917 to October 28, 1918 about ninety thousand vessels were convoyed with a total loss of only 436. Some two million American troops were carried by the United States Navy on their passage to France and not a single soldier's life lost. The transports zig-zagged. Beyond them a destroyer screen swept back and forth. One or two heavy men-of-war lumbered along nearby in case a German raider turned up. A simple and effective system this was, and one that spelled defeat for the enemy the day it was adopted.

One of the navy's greatest tasks of versatility during the War was

the participation in the North Sea mine fields; "The Northern Barrage," as the British called it. Practically without warning a colossal manufacture of mines began in 1917 and actual laying of them began in June 1918. By November 11, 1918 American ships had laid a total of 56,760 mines, to the westward of the North Coast of Scotland. This gigantic barrier constituted one of the strongest factors in the allied victory. Our squadrons of mine-layers were in reality as new and experimental as the mines themselves. Up to 1917 the mine force of the Navy included only two mine-layers, the U. S. S. San Francisco and the Baltimore.

A mine laying force was selected which consisted of the U. S. S. Housatonic, Roanoke, Quinnebaug, Shawmut, Aroostook, Canandaigua, Canonicus, and Saranac. Inverness and Invergordon were selected as the bases of this force in Great Britain and about five thousand mines were laid each time the ships went out, which they did on thirteen occasions, but without serious mishap.

In August 1917, American naval vessels began to assemble at Gibraltar in order to aid in convoying the immense and valuable trade passing thru the Mediterranean Sea. The U. S. S. Decatur, and four other small destroyers from Manila were joined there by the Nashville, the Paducah, and other gunboats, yachts, coast-guard cutters- any craft, in fact, that could be spared from duties elsewhere.

The force was commanded by Rear-Admiral H. B. Wilson, U. S. N. who took command at Brest in November 1917, being succeeded by Rear-Admiral A. P. Niblack, U. S. N. at Gibraltar.

U-boat activity on the Western side of the Atlantic was not marked but ships were occasionally torpedoed and mines were laid; one of these sank the U. S. Cruiser San Diego off Fire Island near Long Island.

American troops first crossed to Europe in June 1917, and, when they

began to go across in large numbers, the Germans took some of their U-boats off the shipping lanes, in the hopes of sinking the troop-ships; but they met with no success, as those ships were strongly escorted by the U. S. Navy.

After the Battle of Jutland in 1916 the defeated High Seas Fleet returns to its bases; it never emerged again, until it surrendered in the Firth of Forth in November 1918. The German bases where the High Seas Fleet was sheltering had to be watched and the greatest caution exercised. During this period a squadron of six American battleships under Rear-Admiral Hugh Rodman, U. S. N. joined the Grand Fleet and became known as the 6th Battle Squadron. They consisted of the U. S. S. New York, Admiral Rodman's flagship, U. S. S. Texas, U. S. S. Arkansas and Wyoming, Florida, and Delaware.

There was a possibility that the German High Seas Fleet might try to interfere with the convoys which were carrying troops to Europe and to guard against this possibility a small squadron of battleships under Rear-Admiral F. S. Rodgers, U. S. N. was based at Berehaven. They consisted of the U. S. S. Nevada, Oklahoma and Utah.

One of the most active destroyers on the French Coast was the U. S. S. Stewart. On March 16, 1918 this vessel rescued a torpedoed British steamer. A month later a powder transport exploded in harbor, spreading fire and destruction in all directions. The Stewart, Truxton, and Whipple steamed thru the blazing wreckage to open up a passage for small boats and to rescue men floundering in the water. Five days later the Stewart participated in an air and water attack on a noted submarine known as the "Penmarch Pete", which was believed to have been successful.

At first one of the great problems in the Transport Force was the

lack of ships. Fortunately, the difficulty was in part solved by the enemy themselves. At the outbreak of the War the United States promptly seized the German ships that had been interned in 1914. About twenty of these when repaired made excellent troop ships and over a half million troops were transported in them. The Leviathan alone was responsible for the transporting of nearly 100,000 men. The George Washington 48,373, the President Grant 39,974, America 39,768, Agamemnon 36,097 and the Mount Vernon 33,692.

One of the great mysteries of the War was the loss of the collier, U. S. S. Cyclops which left Barbados, West Indies in March 1918 and has never been heard of since. She had a crew of 309 on board.

A great majority of the vessels mentioned in this article had postoffices aboard and cancellations from any of these ships or any ships of World War I are all very desirable items for the collector of naval postmarks. When a "Z" type postmark is used the only way one can tell the ship it is from is from the return address on the cover or card or on the official business envelopes which usually have the ship's name printed or stamped thereon.

In an article like this it is impossible to cover adequately the great exploits of our navy and it must not be overlooked that the army and the airforce all together made the victory possible. There was a dismal failure along the line somewhere in holding the Peace, and America must be always well prepared and ever ready to cope with those within and without who would dare to take away the heritage of which we can be justly proud.

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--*-NEW MEMBERS*-*-*-*

- 330 PROUD, Edward B. c/o Perak Hydro. Malim Nawar, Perak, Fed. of Malaya. Br. Empire-all wars-FPO-Naval-RAF;Spec.Boer War.
- 331 LASKY, Lt.Charles S. 312th.Base P.O./APO 82, c/o P.M. New York General, all wars and war affected postal history
- 332 HAYWARD, Benjamin M. 38 Liberty St. Montpelier, Vermont V-Mail, Spec. POW; Religious, Music, Boy Scouts.
- 333 LOHR, Joseph J. 1447 Minford Place, New York 60, N.Y. All wars. Spec. those printed in G.B. for U.S.Forces
- 334 STEWART, Lester F,Mrs. 710 S. Main Ste., Normal, Ill. World War II

--- OMITTED --- from Sept. Bulletin.

- 318 BENNETTS,L.C. Spec. Civilian and Mil.covers of New Guinea and near by islands.
- 275 BOGG, Wm. G. 49 Dundee Rd. Squantum 71, Mass. General, Spec. British Colonies.

--- CHANGE OF ADDRESS ---

- 65 HURLBURT, A.K. to 4837 Cadieux Road, Apt.6, Detroit 24, Mich.
- 171 TUTTLE, Col.Lowell H. 1178 Virginia Way, LaJolla, Calif.
- 203 SHELLHAMER, Robert H. 5938 Walnut St. Pittsburgh 32, Penna. Spec. Spanish-Amer. war material.

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BOOKS IN WAR COVER LIBRARY
(books, articles, pamphlets, etc)

1. AUSTRALIAN HOME DEFENCE POST IN W W II. All service Post Offices. When listed-stricken-security number, etc.
2. CHECKLIST OF 645 CAMPS OF SWISS REFUGEE AND INTERMENT MAIL WWII. Camps Canton. Cancel type. Category of Internees and Units, etc. Pictures of Cancels and Censor Marks.
3. HUGO MICHEL'S KRIEGSMARKEN KATALOG 1920 (War Stamps of W.W. I)
4. 1914-1917 CATALOGUE SPECIAL DES TIMBRES DE LA GUERRE (War Stamps of W.W.I)
5. WAR STAMPS OF THE ALLIES 1914-1920 (Historical record)
6. LIST OF CONCERNS HOLDING APPROVED PERMITS TO REPRODUCE AND DISTRIBUTE V-MAIL LETTER SHEETS
7. STEPHEN'S AIRCRAFT AND V-MAIL CATALOGUE 1948
8. U. S. POSTAL SLOGAN CANCELS
9. PHILATELIC LITERATURE REVIEW Where to find your favorite articles (Various Copies)
10. BRITISH ARMY FIELD POST OFFICES 1939-1950 Locations and Assignments by Col. G. R. Crouch and Norman Hill.
11. TYPE CHART OF U. S. ARMY POSTAL SERVICE IN SECOND WORLD WAR 1941-1946
12. WAR COVER PHILATELIST (nearly complete) 1938-1942
13. BRITISH NAVAL MAILS 1939-1949 John Goldup
14. 1951 YEARBOOK OF ASSOCIATION FILATELICA DO FILIPINES (APO cancels in Pjilippine Guerilla stamps, etc.)
15. DICTIONARY OF U. S. ARMY TERMS (Loaned by Rogan)
16. GLOSSARY OF U. S. NAVAL ABBREVIATIONS NAVEXOS P-475 July 1945 May be secured from office of Naval History Executive of the Secretary, Navy Dept, Washington D. C. (Loaned by Rogan)

ALL Members: Please look around your old books about Histories of the Wars. If you are finished with them please give or loan them for our Library.