

Back Issue of Military Postal History Society 'Bulletin': (Bulletin Oct 2017)

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.

You are encouraged to join the MPHS to realize the additional benefits of membership. See: <http://militaryphs.org/membership>

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Central vignette of the German Air Field Post Stamp

Military Postal History Society Bulletin

Vol. 56, # 4

German Air Field Post - Eastern Front

by John Abrams

Editor's Note: Mr. Abrams is the editor of the Palo Duro Philatelic Society newsletter, of Albuquerque, New Mexico. He has a wide range of postal history interests and agreed to the reprint of this expanded presentation. It and other articles he has agreed to reproduce, represent extraordinary writing and research that can be found in small, club newsletters.

INTRODUCTION:

The German Field Post Service was a postage free mail service for mail between soldiers and their families and between military organizations during WW II. The rapid advances of the German Army after the June 1941 invasion of the Soviet Union created problems with the delivery of supplies, as well as mail delivery. In April 1942, the German armed forces introduced the air mail service on the Eastern front.

An excerpt from the Reichs Post Ministry, Field Post Office Announcement No. 46/1942 of April 15, 1942 entitled *Luftfeldpostdienst mit der Ostfront* (Air Field

Post Service with the Eastern Front) explains the service's mission (next page):



Figure 1: Map of the Eastern Front showing the German front line in November 1942. This was the furthest point of the German advance during the operations of the Air Field Post Service - East.

PLEASE NOTE: To encourage authors, promote lead articles and touch upon the wide ranging interests of our members, new lead articles will always appear on the cover page, while second parts of prior issue lead articles can be found several pages into an issue.

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Military Postal History Society



Vol. 56, No. 4

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The Military Postal History Society promotes the study of the postal aspects of all wars and military actions of all nations. A non-profit corporation, it was founded in 1937 as the War Cover Club, American Philatelic Society, Unit # 19. Home page: <http://www.militaryPHS.org>

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President's Message

by Ed Dubin

Later in the bulletin you will find a list of the MPHS officer and director nominees to serve for the next two years. There is some realignment of incumbent job functions. Dave Kent is taking on the Convention Coordinator job. Bob Zeigler who held the appointed position of General Counsel is taking on the job of Vice President and will continue as the Society's General Counsel. Two new Board members are Roger Santala of Billings, MT and Regis Hoffman of Pittsburgh, PA.

Roger was a frequent participant at past society auctions. With the passing of Thierry Delespesse, Roger felt it important that the auction continue and volunteered to take on the auction manager job and replace Thierry on the Board. Roger is now working to bring the auction back to life in the 2017 winter bulletin. So far he has received material from three members and a significant portion of Thierry's military postal history estate. If you have material to sell, contact Roger at rogrmt@gmail.com for instructions.

The second new Board member Regis Hoffman, you should recognize as the co-author of the Stars and Strife column that has appeared in past bulletins. Regis will handle the digital sales of our literature. Right now that is a CD. However, with time the delivery method or methods may change. As stated in the last bulletin our goal is to get out of the paper book sale business.

As you can see from the nominee list the Secretary position (as of this date) is still vacant. The job function of the Secretary has changed significantly. No longer is the Secretary responsible for maintaining the membership list. The Secretary is still the front porch of the Society and responsible for: handling website inquiries, correspondence to new members, dues notice letters (sent out by our bulletin printer), delinquent dues notification emails or letters and board minutes. If you are interested contact me.

Our 2018 convention is in conjunction with the APS Columbus, OH summer show (August 9-12, 2018). We would like to have a significant showing of exhibits from MPHS members. There will be one and possibly more military seminars. Between the exhibits and seminars we could have a large footprint at the show.

“For the soldiers on the Eastern Front and their relatives in the homeland, the opportunity will be given twice monthly to exchange news more quickly. Apart from the usual field post routes, an Air Field Post Service will be set up in which, in places, the Air Field Post mail will be transported by aircraft.

Each soldier who is deployed on the Eastern Front, and to whose unit the Air Field Post Service is permitted, shall receive 4 Air Field Post stamps each month.

Of these, the soldier himself shall use 2 stamps for Air Field Post letters to his relatives, while he shall send the remaining 2 stamps in a letter to his relatives. With these, 2 Air Field Post letters can be sent to him in the field.”

This new service for the Eastern front was the “Air Field Post Service - East” (*Luftfeldpostdienst - Ost*). Two smaller Air Field Post Services were later established. The “Air Field Post Service - Northern Scandinavia” (*Luftfeldpostdienst - Nordskandinavien*) operated from September 1943 to the end of the war. The “Air Field Post Service - Crete and Rhodes” (*Luftfeldpostdienst - Kreta und Rhodos*) operated from December 1942 to October 1944. All three services used the same Air Field Post Stamp (see **Figure 2**). This article focuses on the “Eastern Front” air field post service. Information on the other two services is scarce and very limited.

THE AIR FIELD POST STAMP:

The “Air Field Post Service - East” was used along with the normal field post service on the Eastern Front. The service was rationed by issuing “authorization stamps” (*Zulassungsmarken*) to be used on the air field post mail. The use of the authorization stamp indicated that the letter was allowed to use the air field post service. The mail was still postage free. The stamp bears the notations “*Luftfeldpost*” (Air Field Post) and “*Deutsches Reich*” (German Empire). It displays a Junkers Ju-52 transport plane (the type used by the service). It does not have a denomination. The stamp is listed in the *Scott Catalogue* as Germany, # MC 1 (Military (M) Air Post (C) 1).



Figure 2: The Air Field Post Stamp

The first deliveries of 20 million stamps to the Eastern Front units began on April 13, 1942. The total printing of the stamps (April 1942 to May 1945) was

probably more than 400 million.

Each air field post letter (weighing up to 10 grams) had to be franked with one stamp. As described in the Field Post Office announcement, each soldier in the areas served by the Air Field Post Service received 4 stamps each month. Two were used by the soldier to send two letters home. The soldier was required to send the remaining two stamps in one of the letters to his relatives so that they could send two letters to him.

By the beginning of 1943, conditions on the Eastern Front and in Germany had worsened. The Air Field Post Service had demonstrated its reliability. It was decided that, to improve morale, it would be better to have more frequent, shorter messages between the troops and their families. The Armed Forces High Command ordered the implementation of a new regulation for the use of the stamps, effective June 1, 1943. The Field Post Office Announcement No. 57/1943 of May 26, 1943 read as follows:

“From 1 June 1943 on, air field post letters are only permitted with two air field post stamps, however air field post cards are permitted with one air field post stamp. With this, the issue of air field post stamps to the soldiers on the Eastern Front will be doubled.”

The result of this order was that each soldier on the Eastern Front now received 8 stamps each month, beginning in June 1943. The soldier could use 4 stamps to send letters home and had to send the other 4 stamps to his family. Two stamps were now required on an air field post letter weighing between 5 and 10 grams. A postcard or a letter sheet weighing up to 5 grams could be sent with one stamp. Normal field post letters could weigh up to 20 grams (0.7 ounce).

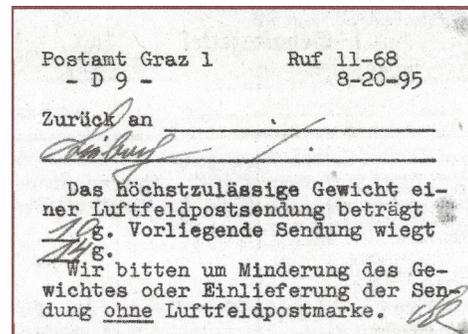


Figure 3: Label of Post Office Graz 1, Text reads “Return to Linburg. The maximum permissible weight of an air field post mailing is 10 g. The present mailing weighs 14 g.

We ask for the reduction of the weight or posting the mailing without air field post stamp.”

RETURN LABEL FOR THE AIR FIELD POST:

Illustrations of some of the labels used by the *Reichspost* (civilian post office) on mail returned to the sender are shown in Figures 3 (prior page) - 5 (below). These examples are for returns due to problems with the letter weight or with the number of air field post stamps affixed to the item.

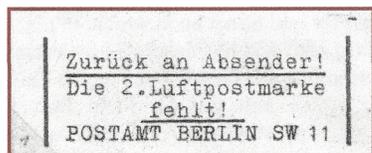


Figure 4: Label reads “Return to sender! The 2nd air post stamp is missing! Post Office Berlin SW 11”

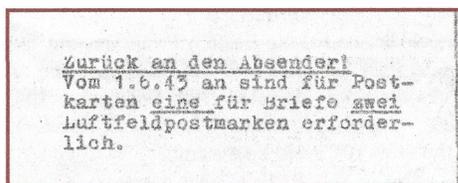


Figure 5: Label reads: “Return to the Sender! From 1 June 43 on, for post cards one, for letters two air field post stamps are required.

ORGANIZATION OF THE AIR FIELD POST SERVICE —East:

A special organization was set up to handle the operation of the Service. The organization was made up of some existing field post and civilian postal facilities to which were added new facilities.

A. The Command:

Overall commander of the Field Post Service was the Army Field Post Master (*Heeresfeldpostmeister*), *Generalleutnant* Karl Ziegler. Under him were several regional Army Field Post Masters (*Armeefeldpostmeister*). The Air Field Post Office - East was commanded by a Major, later a Lieutenant Colonel, assigned by the AFPM - East (*Armeefeldpostmeister - Ost*) in Warsaw. (Note: In German, “Army” (*Heer*) is a higher level than “Army” (*Armee*).

B. Air Field Post Collection Office (*Luftfeldpost-sammelstelle*), Berlin, Germany :

This facility was established in March or April 1942. It was operated by the *Reichspost* (the civilian postal service). It sorted all air field post mail addressed to soldiers on the Eastern Front (Home to Front mail). The mail was bundled by the field post number address on the letters. The office added the ID number of the field post office currently handling mail for that field post number.

This office apparently also handled the home-to-

front mail for the other field post services (*Nordskandinavien* and *Kreta und Rhodos*). It also sorted mail to units transferred to areas not served by the Air Field Post Service (see pg, 8) and to units that had been captured, destroyed or cut-off and unable to receive mail.

C. Post Office O17 (Postamt O17), Berlin, Germany:

This was one of the main *Reichspost* offices in Berlin. It sorted all of the air field post received from the Biala Podlaska air field post forwarding office (Front to Home mail). The mail was distributed to the *Reichspost* offices (in Germany and Austria) and *Dienstpost* offices (in occupied countries) for local delivery. It also handled the civilian mail that it had normally handled. It is probable that O17 processed the front to home mail of the other two air field post services.

D. Air Field Post Forwarding Office (*Luftfeldpostleitstelle*), Biala Podlaska, Poland:

In March 1942, the Army Letter Office 580 (*Armeebriefstelle 580*) was transferred from Bordeaux, France to the airbase at Biala Podlaska to operate the new mail forwarding office. It received mail from the Air Field Post Collection Office in Berlin and sorted it for delivery by the Field Post Squadron to transfer stations at airbases near the front (Home to Front mail). It also received mail picked up by the Field Post Squadron at airbases for delivery to Post Office O17 in Berlin (Front to Home) mail.

E. Field Post Special Train—Through Express Freight 5139 (*Feldpost Sonderzug—Durchgangseilgut 5139—FpSz De 5139*):

FpSz De 5139 was one of four “field post special trains” operating on separate routes on the Eastern Front. This train carried field post mail between Berlin, Germany and Smolensk, Russia. Its route was Berlin - Frankfurt/Oder - Posen - Warsaw - Biala Podlaska - Brest-Litovsk - Baranovitschi - Minsk - Borissov - Orscha - Smolensk. As the Russian counterattacks increased, the eastern terminus moved back westward.

The east-bound *FpSz* picked up home to front mail in Berlin and dropped it off at Biala Podlaska. The west-bound *FpSz* picked up the front to home mail at Biala Podlaska and delivered it to Berlin.

F. Field Post Squadron (*Feldpost Staffel*), Biala Podlaska, Poland:

In March 1942, a transport squadron the “Field Post Squadron” was formed by the Air Force (*Luftwaffe*) to carry the air field post mail. Six Junkers Ju-52 transports and pilots of the *Deutsche Lufthansa* air line formed the squadron and were transferred to the *Luftwaffe*. Most of the pilots had flown more than 1 million kilometers and were experienced in bad weather flying. The on-board

radio operators, on-board mechanics, and the senior ground mechanics were also taken from *Deutsche Lufthansa*. The remainder of the ground crews were regular *Luftwaffe* personnel.

G. Field Post Squadron Air Routes:

Figure 8 shows the routes flown by the *Feldpost Staffel* at the beginning of the Air Field Post Service - East in 1942. The original plan called for three routes – northern, central and southern. The availability of only six planes at the beginning scaled back the plan with the northern and central routes combined.



Figure 6: Army Field Post Master, *General-leutnant* Karl Ziegler (second from left), with the commander of the Field Post Squadron, *Staffelnkapitän* Joas (right), at Biala Podlaska in May 1942.

The northern/central route was first flown on April 18, 1942. It was about 3,470 kilometers (about 2,250 miles). Flown by one plane, the route involved overnight stops in Pskov and Orscha. The day one route was Biala Podlaska - Vitebsk - Pskov - Gatchina - Pskov; day 2: Pskov - Vitebsk - Smolensk - Orel - Orscha; day 3: Orscha - Smolensk - Vitebsk - Biala Podlaska.

The southern route was first flown on May 9, 1942. The route was about 2,000 kilometers (about 1,800 miles). It was flown by one plane with an overnight stop in Simferopol. Crimea. The day one route was Biala Podlaska - Zhitomir - Poltava - Dnepropetrovsk - Stalino - Mariupol - Simferopol; day 2: Simferopol - Mykolaiv - Zhitomir - Biala Podlaska.

With one plane leaving Biala Podlaska each day for each route, three planes were used on the northern/central route and two on the southern route. This left one plane in reserve or being overhauled.

The routes changed as needed due to shifts in the front lines. The number of planes in the *Feldpost Staffel* was increased from 6 to 11 by the end of 1942.



Figure 7: Loading mail at Biala Podlaska



Figure 8: Original air routing used by the *Feldpost Staffel*.

Air Field Post Bundle Label:

On the next page, **Figures 9** and **10** show examples of labels used on a bundle of mail all addressed to a single field post number. Labels similar to these were used for all mail going to units in combat areas.

Figure 9 is a black and white image of a bundle label for regular field post mail. The large (green) letters "Fp" stand for "*Feldpost*" and next to it (in red) is "*Feldpostbriefe*" (Field Post Letters). At the upper left is "*Abfertigungsbeamter*" (Processing Official). At the upper right is "*Absendeamt*" (Dispatch Office) and under it is the postmark reading, in this instance, "*Postsammelstelle Wien*" (Postal Collection Office, Vienna) dated October 7, 1941. In the lower part of **Figure 9** are blanks for:

- “*Kennnummer*,” (Identification Number of destination Field Post Office, in this case Field Post Office “165”),
- “*Abholamt oder Postleitpunkt*” (Claiming Office or Postal Forwarding Point, in this case “Brest-Litovsk B”),
- “*Feldpostnummer*” (Field post number – the 5 digit number of a military unit, in this case “38569” – the 3rd Company, Regional Defense Battalion 861).



Figure 10 (below) shows an air field post label in color. The differences between the two are as follows:

- next to the green Fp (in red) “*Luft-feldpostbriefe*” (Air Field Post Letters) instead of “*Feldpostbriefe*”;
- At the upper right (partially obscured by tape) is the printed Dispatch Office location “*Luftfeldpostsammelstelle Berlin*” (Air Field Post Collection Office, Berlin), and
- In the lower section under “*Postleitpunkt*,” is the printed Postal Forwarding Point “*Biala Podlaska (Distr. Lublin)*”.



Figure 10:
A bundle label
for air field
post mail.

However, the Figure 10 label was **not** used by the Air Field Post Service - East. It was apparently used by the Northern Scandinavian service. The label was addressed to Field Post Office “803” for Field Post Number “50829”, and “Biala Podlaska” was crossed out. Field Post No. 50829 was assigned to the *Luftwaffe* unit, “3rd Battery, Mixed Anti-Aircraft Battalion 527”, stationed in Finland from 1942 and transferred to northern Norway in February 1945.

Figures 11 to 14 show some of the mail operations in the field.

EXAMPLES OF AIR FIELD POST MAIL

Routing Examples:

One example is shown for the Front to Home direction and the other for the Home to Front direction. Note that on all Air Field Post mail, the envelope is inscribed by the sender “*Luftfeldpost*”. It is always underlined, usually in red.

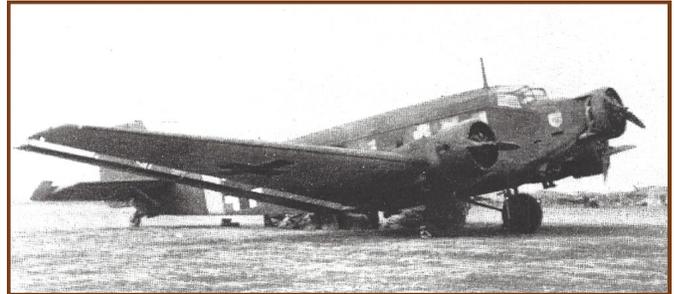


Figure 11 and 12: A Ju-52 transport of the *Feldpost Staffel* at Simferopol, Crimea airbase. The insignia of the *Feldpost Staffel* seen on the nose of the Ju 52 is shown on the right. The iron cross represents the *Luftwaffe* and the colors are those of the *Deutsche Lufthansa*.



Figure 13:
Mail being sorted
at the Biala
Podlaska Air
Field Post Forwarding Office.

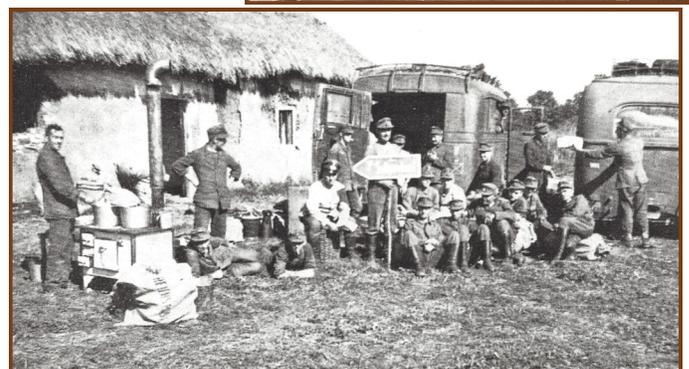


Figure 14: A mobile Field Post Office unit at Vinnitsa, Ukraine (40 miles south of Zhitomir). The soldier at center is holding a direction sign marked “*Feldpostamt*” (Field Post Office). The signs were posted in the area to direct soldiers from nearby units to the location of the post office.

Figures 15 and 16 (next page) provide two examples of mail using the Air Field Post Service - East. They include details of the routing of the mail and the interaction of the parts of the organization.

Field Post Offices served units (that had been assigned to them) within a few miles of their location. Field post collection offices and forwarding offices maintained lists of units (identified by 5 digit field post numbers) that were currently assigned to each Field Post Office (identified by a 3 digit number).

In an active combat area, the location of a Field Post Office and the list of Field Post Numbers that it served could change frequently.



Figure 15: Front to Home Mail 1942 cover from Field Post no. 01702 to Heilbrunn bei Anger, Oststeiermark (Eastern Styria, Austria). It was inscribed by the sender "Luft-Feldpost" and franked with one stamp, required for letters at that time weighing up to 10 grams.

POSTMARK: FELDPOST, July 29, 1942

UNIT CACHET: Dienststelle Feldpostnummer 01702 (Service Office, Field Post Number 01702). Field post office 01702 was assigned to 4th Company, Railroad Construction Battalion 512 (4. Kompanie, Eisenbahn Bau-Bataillon 512), near Leningrad, Russia at that time.

ROUTING: From: Field Post Office (serving unit with Field Post No. 01702); *by truck to:* airbase at Gatchina, Russia; *by Feldpost Staffel to:* Air Field Post Forwarding Office, Biala Podlaska, Poland; *by FpSz De 5139 train to:* Post Office O17, Berlin, Germany; *by truck/train via Reichspost Forwarding Office to:* Post Office, Heilbrunn, Austria.



Figure 16: Home to Front Mail 1943 cover from Güls, Koblenz District, Germany to Field Post No. 05261. It was inscribed by the sender "Luftfeldpost" and

franked with two stamps, required at that time for letters weighing from 5 to 10 grams.

POSTMARK: GÜLS (Kr. KOBLENZ), Aug. 2, 1943

UNIT: Field post number 05261 was assigned to Headquarters, 197th Infantry Division (*Kommando, 197. Infanterie-Division*), near Nevel, Russia at that time.

ROUTING: From: Post Office, Güls, Germany; *by truck/train via Reichspost Forwarding Office to:* Air Field Post Collection Office, Berlin, Germany; *by FpSz De 5139 train to:* Air Field Post Forwarding Office, Biala Podlaska, Poland; *by Feldpost Staffel to:* airbase at (probably) Vitebsk, Russia; *by truck to:* Field Post Office (serving the unit with Field Post Number 05261) near Nevel, Russia.

TWO PERIODS OF THE AIR FIELD POST SERVICE - EAST:

Period 1 was April 18, 1942 to May 31, 1943. This was the period in which 4 air field post stamps were issued to each soldier, and each letter (up to 10 grams) required one stamp.

Period 2 was June 1, 1943 to July 24, 1944. This was the period in which 8 air field post stamps were issued to each soldier. Each post card or letter sheet weighing up to 5 grams required one stamp, and each letter weighing between 5 and 10 grams required two stamps.

Period 1:



Figure 17: Front to Home Mail 1942 cover from Field Post No. 19272 E to Württemberg, Germany (town name unclear). It was inscribed "Luftfeldpost" and franked with one stamp.

POSTMARK: FELDPOST, July 23, 1942

UNIT CACHET: Dienststelle Feldpostnummer 19272 E (Service Office, Field Post Number 19272 E). Field post number 19272 E was assigned to the 8th Company, SS Regiment "Northland", SS Division "Viking" (8. Kompanie, SS-Regiment "Nordland", SS-Division "Wiking") at this time located in the Caucasus region of the Soviet Union.

(continued on next page)

POSTMARK: FELDPOST, July 23, 1942
UNIT CACHET: Dienststelle Feldpostnummer 19272 E (Service Office, Field Post Number 19272 E). Field post number 19272 E was assigned to the 8th Company, SS Regiment "Northland", SS Division "Viking" (8. Kompanie, SS-Regiment "Nordland", SS-Division "Wiking") at this time located in the Caucasus region of the Soviet Union.



Figure 18: Home to Front Mail: 1943 cover from Minden, Westphalia, Germany to Field Post No. 13907. Inscribed "Luftfeldpost" and franked with one stamp. The letter was returned to the sender stamped "ZURÜCK! Unzustellbar" (Return! Undeliverable).

POSTMARK: MINDEN (WESTF.), January 29, 1943.
UNIT: Field post number 13907 was assigned to Supply Column, Armored Engineer Battalion 16, 16th Armored Division (Kolonne, Panzer-Pionier-Bataillon 16, 16. Panzer-Division). The unit was part of the 6th Army, at that time surrounded by the Red Army at Stalingrad. The last airfield in the pocket was overrun on January 25, 1943. Survivors of the 6th Army surrendered on February 2, 1943. Mailed on January 29, 1943, the letter was already too late to reach its intended recipient.

One of the rules for Air Field Post mail was that, on Home to Front mail, it must have "a red cross on the address side from the top left to bottom right and from top right to bottom left" as shown on this cover. This was often not done. This red cross was probably an aid to sorting the mail.

Period 2:



Figure 19: Front to Home Mail: 1943 field post letter sheet from Field Post No. 12965 to Kloster-Oesede, Germany. It was inscribed "Luft" beside the printed "Feldpost". The single page letter sheet was light enough (only 2.1 grams) to need only one air field post stamp.

POSTMARK: FELDPOST, November 20, 1943
UNIT CACHET: "Dienststelle Feldpost-nummer 12965 Briefstempel" (Service Office, Field Post Number 12965 Letter Stamp). The number is not clear on this stamp – it was taken from the return address. Field post No. 12965 was assigned to the "Commander of Sea Defense - Ukraine, Commanding Admiral, Black Sea" (Kommandant der Seeverteidigung Ukraine, Kommandierender Admiral, Schwarzes Meer) based at Mariupol, Ukraine.



Figure 20: Front to Home Mail: 1943 cover from Field Post No. L 00114 to Bitterfeld, Germany inscribed "Luftfeldpost". The letter, with enclosure, required two stamps.

POSTMARK: FELDPOST, August 10, 1943
UNIT CACHET: "Dienststelle Feldpostnummer L 00114" (Service Office, Field Post Number L 00114). The prefix "L" indicates an Air Force unit. The number was assigned to the "Chief of Supply Services, 4th Aviation Corps, Air Fleet 4" (Nachschub-Führer, IV. Flieger-Korps, Luftflotte 4) based at Salsk, Russia.



Figure 21: Home to Front Mail: 1944 letter sheet from Hannover-Münden, Germany to Field Post No. 39001 inscribed “Luftfeldpost” and franked with one stamp. This was a one page (8 x 11 in. unfolded) letter sheet that was light enough (4.1 grams) to need only one air field post stamp. The letter was returned to the sender marked (purple, top center) “Zurück”. (Return) and (violet, bottom) “Zurück, neue Anschrift abwarten”. (Return, wait for new address). The soldier had probably been transferred or wounded, and his family had to wait for his next letter to get his new field post number.

POSTMARK: HANN. MÜNDEN, March 29, 1944

UNIT: Field Post Number 39001 was assigned to “Field Hospital 198, Medical Services 198, 98th Infantry Division”. (*Feldlazarett 198, Sanitätsdienste 198, 98. Infanterie-Division*) located near Sevastopol, Crimea, Ukraine



Figure 22: Home to Front Mail: 1944 cover from Berlin, Germany to Field Post No. 05935C inscribed “Luft-Feldpost” and franked with two stamps. The letter was returned to the sender stamped (purple, top right, inverted) “Zurück”. (Return) and (purple, top right) “Neue Anschrift abwarten!”. (Wait for new address!). Field Post No. 05935 had been cancelled on March 21, 1944.

POSTMARK: BERLIN O 17, April 4, 1944

UNIT: Field Post No. 05935 C was assigned to

“2nd Company, Battalion on special assignment to Army High Command - 8th Army” (2. *Kompanie, Bataillon z.b.V. AOK 8 [zur besonderen Verwendung Armee-Oberkommando 8.]*), located in Bessarabia (eastern Romania) in March 1944. Field post no. 05935 was cancelled on March 21, 1944, probably due to a reorganization in April 1944 in which the German 8th Army was combined with the Romanian 4th Army to form Army Group Wohler.

INCORRECT USE OF THE AIR FIELD POST STAMPS:

In some cases, a soldier’s unit moved from an area served by the Air Field Post Service to an area not served by the service. His family had sent a letter using Air Field Post numbers and Air Field Post stamps that he had previously sent to them.

When such a letter was received at the Air Field Post Collection Office in Berlin, it was marked with a special hand stamp. The handstamp notified Field post personnel that the letter could not use the Air Field Post Service routing. The letter was then sent on to the field post number address using regular routing. For understandable reasons, these covers occur only in the Home to Front direction.



Figure 23: Home to Front Mail (Period 1): 1942 cover from Dresden, Germany to Field Post No. 44964 inscribed “Luftfeldpost” and franked with one Air Field Post stamp.

POSTMARK: DRESDEN A 39, June 13, 1942

UNIT: Field Post No. 44964 was assigned to the “2nd Platoon, Telephone Construction Company 649”. (2. *Zug, Fernsprecher Bau-Kompanie 649*). Its location could not be determined.

PROBLEM: The unit had moved to an area that was not served by the Air Field Post Service. To alert the

(continued on next page)

field post personnel, the letter was stamped with the auxiliary marking “Unit does not take part in the Air Field Post Service” (*Einheit nimmt am Luftfeldpostdienst nicht teil*). The purpose of this notice may not have been understood by some field post workers. It was later changed as shown in **Figure 24**.



Figure 24: Home to Front Mail (Period 1): 1943 cover from Aussig - Schreckenstein, Sudetenland (Czechoslovakia) to Field Post No. 09079E inscribed “Luftfeldpost” and franked with one stamp.

POSTMARK: “AUSSIG - SCHRECKENSTEIN”, January 26, 1943

UNIT: Field Post No. 07079E was assigned to the “14th Company, Mountain Infantry Regiment 137, 2nd Mountain Division”. (*14. Kompanie, Gebirgs-Jäger-Regiment 137, 2. Gebirgs-Division*) located in the Lapland region of Finland on this date. The unit had been in Russia until the end of 1942.

PROBLEM : The unit had moved to an area that was not served by the Air Field Post Service. The letter was stamped with the more explanatory “Unit of the addressee does not, at this time, take part in the Air Field Post Service @ Air Field Post Collection Office [ID of Examiner]” (*Einheit des Empfängers nimmt z. Zt. nicht am Luftfeldpostdienst teil @ Luftfeldpostsammelstelle .../...*).

THE RESULTS ACHIEVED BY THE GERMAN AIR FIELD POST SERVICE - EAST

The total results achieved (in round numbers) by the *Feldpost Staffel* during the period from April 18, 1942

to July 24, 1944 amounted to:

- 4,300,000 kilometers flown (about 2.6 million miles);
- 4,600,000 kilograms of Air Field Post mail carried (about 10.1 million pounds or 5,050 tons)
- 2,900,000 kilograms of regular Field Post mail and telegrams carried (about 6.4 million pounds or 3,200 tons)
- The planes of the *Feldpost Staffel* also transported 5,828 wounded soldiers and 9,058 other soldiers.

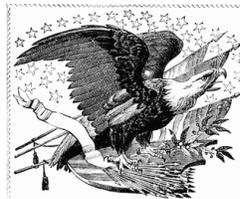
References:

Bruno Schmitt, Bodo Gericke, “Die deutsche Feldpost im Osten und der Luftfeldpostdienst Osten im Zweiten Weltkrieg”, *Archiv für deutsche Postgeschichte, 1969 - Heft 1* (Gesellschaft für deutsche Postgeschichte, Frankfurt am Main, 1969) [“The German Field Post in the East and the Air Field Post Service East in the Second World War” *Archive for German Postal History, 1969 - Issue 1*]

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MPHS Auction UPDATE Good News

We have a new Auction Manager. The MPHS Auction will return with the Winter Bulletin. Success depends on your consignments. Material from ALL periods are encouraged: 19th, 20th, 21st Century, the Big Ones of WW I and WW2; the “actions,” peacemaking, peacekeeping, times of peace and old fashioned acts of aggression. It is a Big Tent.

I am new as manager and request your inputs, ideas, and most of all your material. What has worked? What needs a tweak. Contact: Roger Santala, 2244 Fairview Pl., Billings, MT. 59102 email: rogrmt@gmail.com

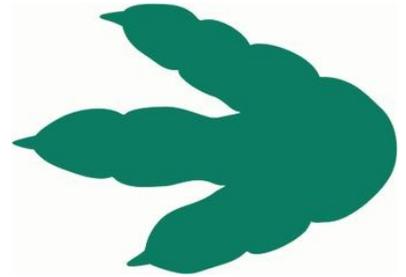
OUR NEW MEMBERS

by Ed Dubin

Bob Collins



**The MPHS Digital Footprint
is growing on the web
and YOU need to hurry on
board before YOU are
stomped on by progress.**



**The MPHS webpage now includes the following digital materials
(#’s 2 to 6 are member generated and submitted, and available to the public):**

1. **MPHS Bulletins** (*available only to digital members*)
2. **Videos** (1 at present; 3 by next mid year).
3. **Holiday Postcards of WW I.** *Being expanded to 450 postcards.*
4. **Small Bites:** Military postal history in small chunks of 2 to 4 minutes, geared towards single topic, condensed subjects.
5. **Presentations:** More or less the “large bites” of military postal history involving lengthier discussions of complex military subjects. Available as PDF files, online web pages of the presentations, and offline packages (downloadable) of the presentations. See IT Column below for recent and impending presentations.
6. **Research and Educational Materials including:**
 - Award Winning Postal History Exhibits, recent additions *include: Russian Interventions; and the Korean War.*
 - Individual Articles on Military Postal History;
 - Featured Postal History Items

**Go ahead—dip your toe in the water at:
<http://www.militaryphs.org/index.html>**

IT COLUMN

by Bob Swanson

In the future, I will be working closely with our new Auction Manager, Roger Santala, to post the auction listings online. Watch the website for news.

We now have Dr. Charles' War Savings Stamps Presentation online. See: <http://www.militaryphs.org/presentations/wss/web>

We are hoping to have a new group of Holiday Postcards posted to the website soon. These involve a large batch of military related silk postcards of WW I. The large number of scans associated with each postcard has forced us to modify our data collection and coding for the cards, delaying their uploading. If anyone would care to help with scanning of new incoming cards, please let me know. Watch the website for news.

Do you have some interesting military postal history to share? Large or small, one page or many, we

post them for educational and research purposes. You don't have to be a seasoned competitive exhibitor.

Just a cover or letter that you want to share will add greatly to our hobby in our “small bite” presentations.

Bob Collins, Sergio Lugo and Al Kugel have taken up the challenge and submitted large exhibits for our exhibit presentations. Sergio's: *Vichy French Overseas Empire* is now posted. Al Kugel's exhibit on *Russian Interventions* is being input as this is written, as well as Bob Collins' award winning exhibit of years past on *The Korean War*. Inputting and editing of the presentations takes time on both the part of Bob and Sergio as noted in the prior column—anyone interested in joining us in doing the scanning is more than welcome to contact me.

An update— with this issue's 2nd part of the Jim Downing story, we are ready to embark on a video dealing with this Pearl Harbor survivor. We are also editing a video on the Social Welfare Agencies of WW I. Look for links to both these videos to YouTube and the RMPL webpage in the near future.

Gray Leaders on Horseback Lt. Gen. Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson by Brian Green

This article is a considerably updated version of one first published in a defunct periodical in the mid 1970s.

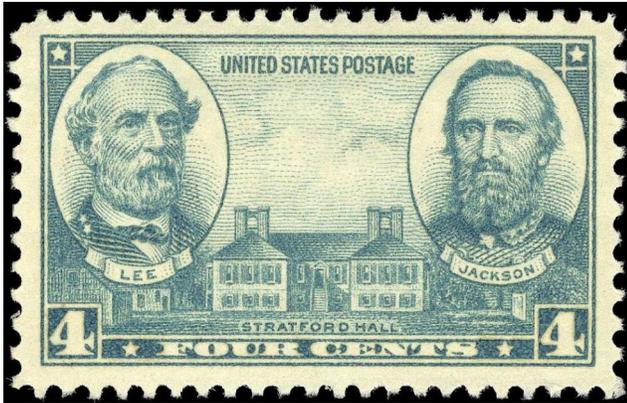


FIGURE 1: Scott # 788, showing the Confederacy's two most prominent generals.

All collectors of the relics of the War Between the States (aka as the American Civil War) have at least one thing in common. We dream of coming across that one-of-a-kind, chance-of-a-lifetime artifact. This dream became reality for me and my wife over forty (40) years ago after a chance encounter with a descendant of a Confederate officer. Successful negotiations with him resulted in the purchase of a letter and its cover, both of which had been in his family's hands since their receipt in 1862.

The letter was penned by none other than Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson.

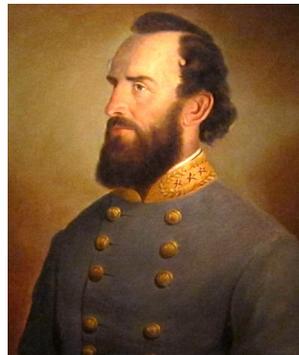


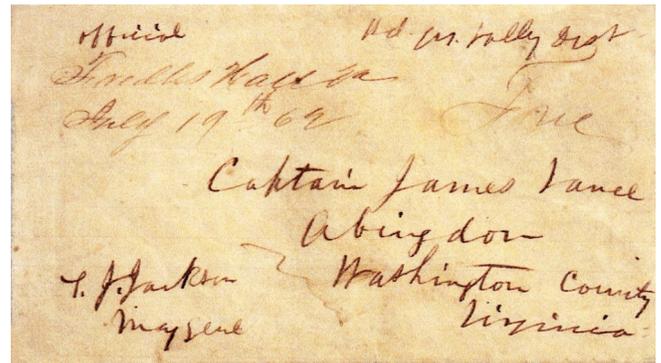
FIGURE 2: Portrait of Thomas Jackson in the National Gallery of Art

Dated July 17, 1862 and forwarded from "Hdqtrs Valley Dist," the letter was written to Captain James Vance of Co. K., 37th Virginia Infantry. It read:

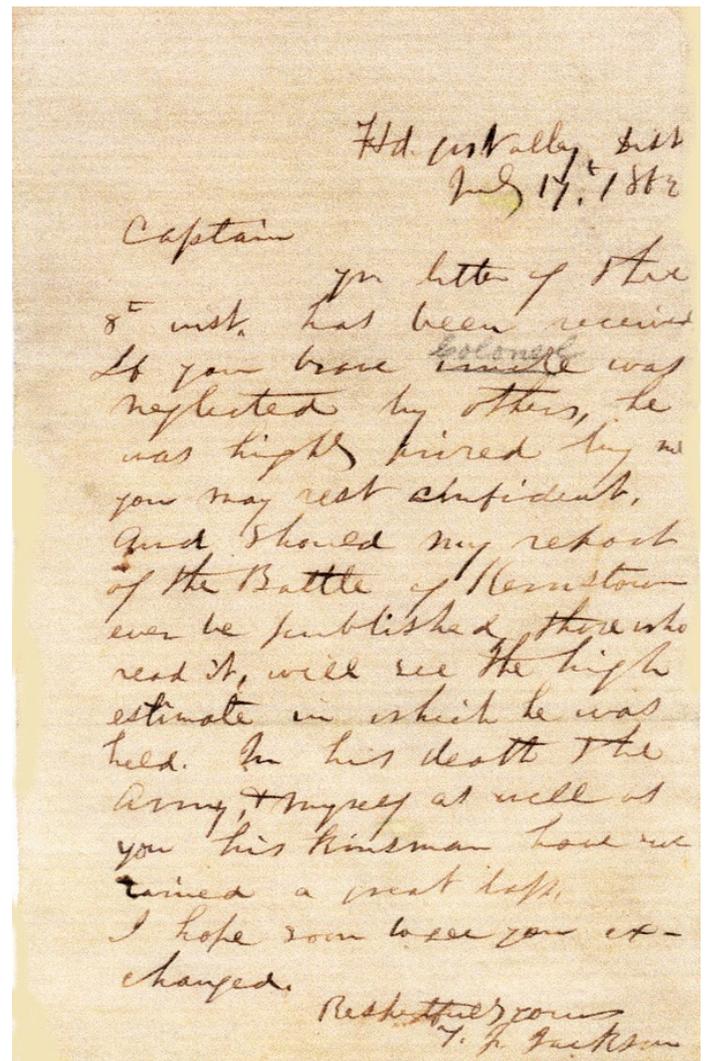
"Captain

Your letter of the 8th inst. Has been received. If your brave uncle was neglected by others, he was highly a[d]mired by me you may rest confident, and should my report of the Battle of Kernstown ever be published, those who read it will see the high estimate in which he was held. In his death the Army, &

*myself as well as you his kinsman have sustained a great loss. I hope soon to see you exchanged. Respectfully yours
T.J. Jackson*



FIGURES 3 & 4: July 17, 1862, letter from General Stonewall Jackson to Captain James Vance, 37th Virginia Infantry, commiserating on the death of Vance's kinsman, Colonel Samuel Vance Fulkerson.



The cover and its contents will receive more airing in a moment as we review the career of the General.

Thomas Jonathan Jackson was born in 1824. He graduated from West Point in 1846, serving in the Mexican American War as a Lt. in most of the major battles of that war. There followed numerous active and instructional assignments, culminating with his command of a Virginia regiment during the Brown raid on Harpers Ferry.



FIGURES 5 & 6: West point officer & VMI instructor

He enlisted in the Confederate Army as Colonel of the Virginia Militia and was ordered to Harpers Ferry. Promoted Brigadier General on June 17, 1861, he fought at First Manassas (aka the First Battle of Bull Run) where General Lee gave him the name “Stonewall.”

He was promoted to Lt. General on October 10, 1862 and fought under and along side General Lee in all of the Army of Northern Virginia’s major battles. His most famous manoeuvre was his “Flank March” around the Union Army at Chancellorsville. While on reconnaissance on May 2, 1863, he was shot by his own troops. He died 8 days later on May 10, 1862.

Returning to our postal history prize, Fulkerson, once a lawyer and circuit court judge, was killed in action at the Battle of Gaines’ Mill on June 27, 1862, while commanding the Third Brigade of Jackson’s Division. That Jackson held him in high regard is evident - doubly so, when one appreciates that Jackson rarely praised his subordinates in his letters. Jackson was not alone in his opinion of Fulkerson: Major R.L. Dabney wrote, “Had he lived, the highest distinction must have crowned his merits, for his judgement, diligence and talent for command were equal to his heroic courage.”

Fulkerson was buried in Abdingdon, Virginia, the letter’s destination. At the time, Captain Vance, Fulkerson’s kinsman and fellow officer in the 37th Virginia Infantry, waited at home in Abdingdon for his formal exchange as a prisoner of war.

The cover was addressed by Jackson, who added his frank (a note allowing mail to be sent free of charge) in the lower left hand corner. This is not the usual soldier’s endorsement, but may have been added to aid in the delivery of the letter. Jackson also penned “official” at the top left and “Hdqrs, Valley Dist” at the top right. The cover bears the manuscript postal markings of Frederick Hall, Virginia, with a date of July 19, 1862—one of the only two days Jackson was at that town.

Instead of a rate marking (of 10 cents, in this case), the postmaster, Horatio Hancock, penned the word “Free,” which was an improper use of the postmaster’s franking privilege. The Confederate Post Office Department had abolished the franking privilege except for the Post Office Department officials writing on official business.

At the time we unearthed this dream find, the cover was one of four; having since raised itself to one of five (5) known covers addressed by General Jackson. This cover differs from the others in that it has the postmaster’s free franking (“Free”). The postmaster’s franking - the word “Free” on it - constituted an illegal use of the privilege. Of the remaining four, two have updated pen cancelled stamps (neither tied to their respective covers, one of which is dubious), the third bears a hand stamped “PAID” in the upper left hand corner, and the fourth has the 5 cents Davis 1861 adhesive stamp postmarked Richmond, VA. 11/24/61 on a legal sized cover from the C.S.A. War Department pertaining to non commissioned officer (Alfred Jackson). Jackson docketed this cover so noting the officer (Alfred Jackson) and incorporating his last name Jackson. Cover ex-Green and sold.

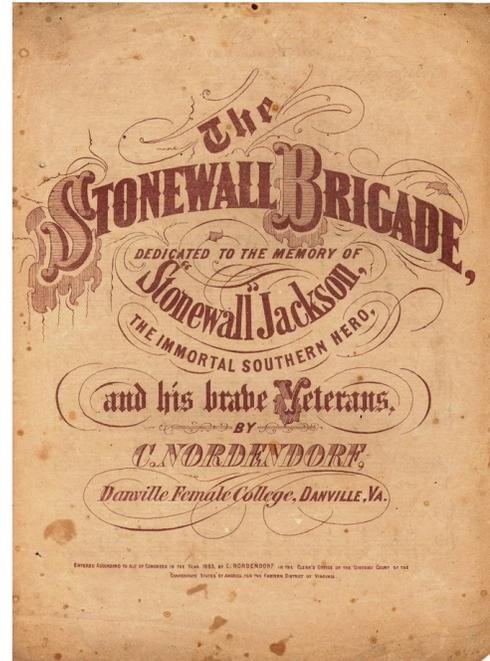


FIGURE 7: Sheet music dedicated to the Stonewall Brigade.

References: Figures 5, 6 & 7 are from Wikipedia.

Editor’s Note: North Carolinians Brian and Maria Green specialize in Confederate military postal history. A former U.S. Army officer working in diplomatic capacities, Brian has promised future articles on the postal history of Confederate Generals. Brian’s ancestry traces back to Revolutionary War generals. Their lecturing/exhibiting schedule has taken them far afield of North Carolina. He deals in Confederate and Union autographs, letters, diaries, documents, currency, photos and postal history. He can be reached at shop.bmgcivilwar.net or 336-993-5100.

Part II: GUNNER'S MATE & NAVAL POSTAL CLERK

by Sergio Lugo and Jim Downing

(Editor's Note: In Part I which appeared in issue # 3, 2017, you were introduced to Jim Downing and his duties as a chief naval postal clerk on the U.S.S. West Virginia. Those duties continued through December 7, 1941 and beyond as the "WeeVee" was salvaged. After 1943, his naval career took a variety of interesting turns.

5. December 7, 1941:

At the onset of the attack at 7:57 am, Downing was at home on shore with his wife of several months, Morena. As soon as it was realized what was happening, he and other *Navigator* friends found vehicles heading for the harbor. By about 8:20 am Downing was trying to catch barge boats to his ship. The *USS West Virginia* was ablaze after having taken a number of torpedo hits (9 in all were counted, plus two 1600 pound bombs in the two waves of the attack). The "WeeVee" was the battleship pouring out all of the prominent smoke (beside the *USS Arizona*) frequently seen in photos of the burning harbor.

That smoke was of immense concern at 0830 hours. First it consisted of the several inches thick burning fuel oil on the water surface leaked from the immense

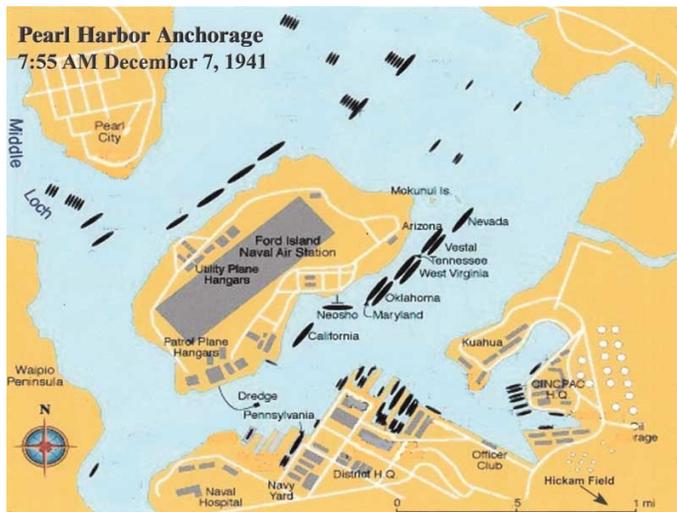


Figure 13: The Pearl Harbor anchorage on December 7, 1941 with Battleship Row ships identified.

oil tanks of the ruptured battleships. Fires on the harbor's surface delayed many boats from gaining access to their ships. Secondly, the flaming fuel oil engulfed many a seamen as they struggled to survive being thrown overboard and surfacing - only to be covered in flaming fuel oil. Thirdly, once aboard ship, firefighters had to be concerned about exploding ammunition bunkers. Never mind the gunner's mate duties (the 16 inch guns couldn't be used) or naval clerk duties—the mail had to wait in the face of other priorities. Soon, the officers of the "WeeVee" had

deliberately counterflooded the ship to allow her to settle into the mud of Pearl Harbor bay. That saved what was left of the ship, but the fires kept raging all around and on board the *USS West Virginia*.



Figure 14: The *U.S.S. West Virginia* engulfed in smoke and flames. *USS Tennessee* on starboard side. Courtesy Navsource Online: Battleship Photo Archive, US Navy photo C 5904 of the U.S. National Archives.



Figure 15: The *USS Tennessee* (center left) and *USS West Virginia* (center right). Courtesy Navsource Online: Battleship Photo Archive, U.S. Navy photo G 3241 from National Museum of the Navy, via flicker.



Figure 16: View of the *USS West Virginia* (left) and the *Tennessee* on December 10, 1941. Sunken "WeeVee" deck is awash at waterline. Courtesy of U.S. Navy photo compliments of Peter Bakels and Navsource Online: Battleship Photo Archive,,

Berthed alongside the “Wee Vee” was the *USS Tennessee*. To get aboard his ship, Downing had to slide down the barrel of a *USS Tennessee* 5 inch gun that had been lowered. Once aboard ship by around 8:40 am, his immediate task was battling the flames to reduce the risk of exploding ammunition bunkers. Water lines from the *USS Tennessee* were run out to the deck of the “WeeVee.”

These circumstances point to the likelihood that **Figure 17** (obtained separately from Jim Downing) was produced following the “day of infamy.” It purports to be produced postmarked on the *Tennessee* at 0900 hours on December 7th, implying that her chief postal clerk was performing “house keeping” functions at the moment that the *Tennessee* was engulfed in the thick black smoke and fires of the bomb blasted harbor. The fires aboard the *USS West Virginia* and *Tennessee* were not extinguished until late morning of December 8th, as recorded in the separate after action reports of their respective Executive Officers (XO) (in the case of the “WeeVee” Captain Bennion had been mortally wounded).⁽⁹⁾ According to the *Tennessee’s* XO⁽⁹⁾, the fires of the two sister battleships and the burning oil on the harbor’s surface threatened to destroy the *Tennessee* which had been wedged against the shore by the sunken *West Virginia*. In the author’s view, postal duties at 0900 (the first attack wave ended at 0830; the second attack wave ended at 0930) were impossible and the cover must be treated as a forgery. Further, the censor marking was not introduced until early 1942. Absence of a return address suggests that the fabricator of this “attack cover” was toying with the *Tennessee’s* machine cancellation device sometime later.



Figure 17: Despite the official looking naval censor marking, the legitimacy of this Pearl Harbor cover “survivor” needs to be questioned. Courtesy Rocky Mountain Philatelic Library (RMPL).

By the time Downing could board his ship at around 0830, he had become one of those seamen fire-fighters battling the flames and keeping them from the ammunition bunkers on the “Wee Vee.” As more progress in battling the flames was achieved, Downing had assumed a new task more in keeping with his chief naval postal clerk duties. Specifically, Downing began memorizing the names of the casualties on the *USS West Virginia’s* deck.

That was a remarkable display of internal fortitude, particularly as he found one of his best friends dead on the deck. This was NOT a duty called for of navy postal clerks. As he explained in our interview, it was an innate sense of duty that impelled him to seek such information for notifications of the next of kin for the dead, dying or wounded. The dangers from the fire had subsided to such an extent that he could shift his attention to other duties as ordered or as deemed appropriate. It was at this time that Downing attempted to secure the postal safe and the postal holdings of the ship, but all had been destroyed by the hits sustained from torpedoes and aerial bombs. It is not clear whether Downing also went to his turret to assess damage of his turret.

Earlier, Dorie Miller had attempted during the first attack wave to man his assigned machine gun post and to get the mortally wounded Captain Bennion to safety. Downing knew Doris “Dorie” Miller, but for the benefit of our readers he was the African-American mess cook who distinguished himself for bravery in the attack. He was the first African American to be awarded the Navy Cross, the third highest honor at the time awarded by the U.S. Navy. Miller's acts were widely publicized, making him an iconic emblem of the fighting spirit of Americans at Pearl Harbor, and African-Americans in particular. Nearly two years after Pearl Harbor, he was killed in action when the *USS Liscome Bay* was sunk by a Japanese submarine during the Battle of Makin.



Figure 18: Dorie Miller being presented with the Navy Cross by Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz.

During the attack, the Pearl Harbor hospital set up a burn ward for many of the men whose oil soaked bodies had become fiery torches in the harbor. On Sunday afternoon of the 7th, Downing visited a friend whom he had learned had been placed in the burn unit (Charles Knuckles) Knuckles had been knocked totally silly and unaware of his whereabouts by an aerial bomb that had exploded just beneath him on the deck of the *USS California*.

Most of the burn unit victims were in suspension harnesses and could not use their hands. Here again Downing began memorizing names of men who were dead or dying from their horrific burns. Further, he memorized dictated letters for these men for their parents, so that they might get a personal word from them in addition to their death notices. In Downing's book, he wrote that despite their severe burns, almost all the patients were quiet, with the certain knowledge that they had been maimed for life or were on the verge of dying.

Downing wrote that with the names of many sailors memorized, that once official letters had been sent by the Navy Department he sent letters to the next of kin indicating what had happened to their beloved ones. In the days and months following, he received responses from one or more families thanking him for his extraordinary service. Additionally, for some time thereafter, he recorded dictated letters from sailors that he personally sent to friends and next of kin (see Figure 19).

As chief navy postal clerk, Downing was still responsible for the "WeeVee's" shambles of a postal service operation. He managed to convince a shipboard carpenter to secure plywood from the Submarine Base Carpenters shop to build a make shift sorting case for the mail. This became the outdoor post office on the Navy Landing for the *USS West Virginia*. To make it fully functional, Downing sought to obtain a bicycle from the Navy Yard Supply Officer to haul mail from his temporary dockside post office to the remaining crew of the *USS West Virginia*, who were beginning the grisly work of salvage operations. Downing was refused the bicycle on the rationale that the *USS West Virginia* had been sunk, and therefore there was no ship to which to assign the account. One of the "WeeVee's" officers apparently prevailed upon the Supply Officer to recognize the error of his ways. So much mail had accumulated for the crew that it took Downing two days to sort and deliver the mail from their make shift, land lubbers post office.

USS West Virginia survivors were being transferred, except for a skeleton group of salvage crew members. Thus began the operations of a naval post office returned to "normalcy" by attempting to keep track of the hundreds of reassignments of WeeVee personnel. Downing was also provided with the death certificates of the 105 men who had been killed in action. Sorting, forwarding and returning the mail occupied much of his time for the next several weeks. In addition, tons of Christmas packages had to be dealt with—as mailers had mailed early.

Among the most difficult of the tasks in processing the mail was that of handling mail from family and friends of those killed in action. Censorship had begun soon after the attack - with letters limited to one page. Free mailing privileges were extended to all active duty military personnel. Censorship requirements, however, prevented Downing from explaining why the mail for the dead was being returned to the sender. Postal staff were instructed to simply stamp the mail - UNKNOWN.

One of those KIA (tended to by Dorie Miller among others) was the *USS West Virginia's* skipper, Captain Melvin Bennion. After returning several Christmas packages in the manner described above, Mrs. Bennion wrote sardonically to Downing explaining that she knew who Captain Bennion was and that she knew he had been killed in action.

Immediately after the attack, the Navy set up a temporary outdoor Command Post (CP) at the Receiving Station to handle routine and emergency situations. Many of the men whose ships had been sunk had swum ashore. After concluding that the island was not under seaborne assault by Japanese forces, they wandered in from the mosquito infested *Aeia* sugar cane fields, reporting to the CP as directed by shore personnel. Downing recounts in his book a black humor incident involving such returning sailors and their mistaken belief that they were going to go before a firing squad for desertion during the attack. Other duties of the CP became that of providing a firing squad and bugler for the mass burial of those who had died at the Hospital.

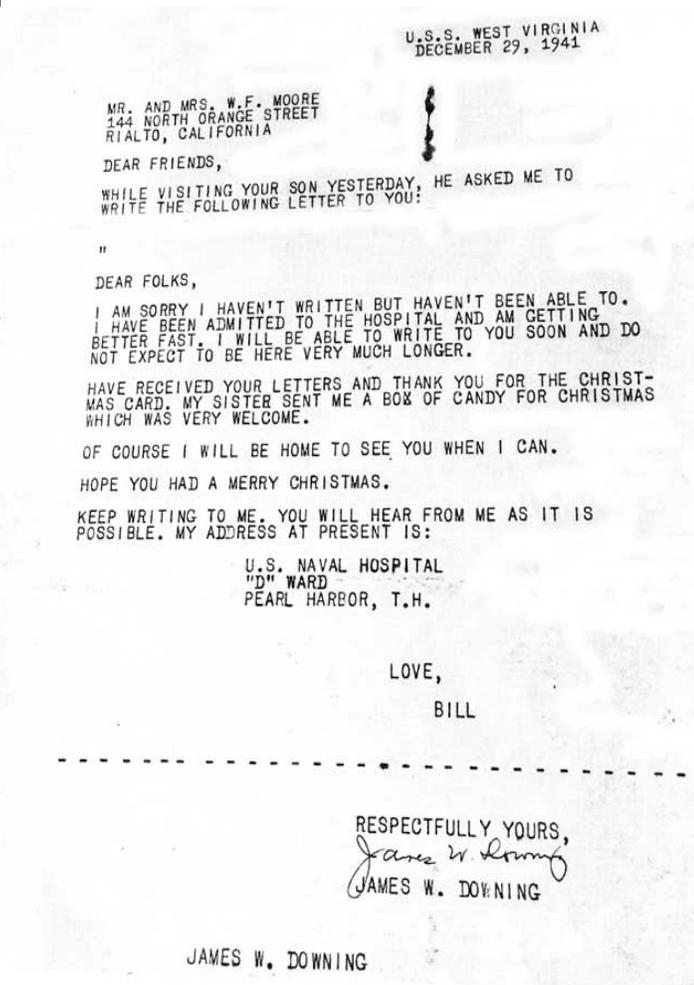


Figure 19: Letter to friends of the Moore family from Jim Downing, dated December 29, 1941.

On December 8th, 1941 Downing and Morena were able to catch up with each other in a joyous reunion—despite his bedraggled appearance in an oil soaked

With an efficient, mechanized personnel records system, within 48 hours most families had been notified of those reported killed or wounded in action. One such report hit close to home. A friend, radioman Johnson was aboard the *USS Arizona*. He had sent for his wife and children, who arrived on December 6. He, in the meantime, had been ordered aboard the *USS Indianapolis*, departing for Johnson Island on December 5th. Her Christian faith was sorely tested, when on December 9th she received word from her home that her husband was missing in action and presumed dead. As *Navigators*, Morena and Jim tried to console her that he was still aboard the *USS Arizona*. The *USS Indianapolis*, meanwhile, had been ordered back to Pearl Harbor. Johnson was very much alive, a fact she learned shortly after the *USS Indianapolis* was berthed and he went ashore in search of his wife. He was transferred to a Pearl Harbor communication facility, where he remained for another year while she began defense work and the two remaining together for years.



Figure 20: Undated photograph of Jim and Morena Downing.

Another incident of similar nature involved Downing directly. On December 8th or 9th, Downing was ashore when he encountered a *USS West Virginia* officer. The officer became ashen when he saw Downing, having been led to believe by the ship's chaplain that Downing had been killed aboard the *USS West Virginia*. That was a case of mistaken identity, in that another seaman by the name of Downing had been the casualty.⁽¹⁰⁾

During the remainder of 1942 and through May 1943, Downing continued as the *USS West Virginia*'s gunner's mate and chief navy postal clerk. Postal responsibilities were reduced considerably, other than that of forwarding of mail to since reassigned crew members.

Those tasks were reduced as well by the wartime innovation of "V" mail. To reduce the weight factor in transporting mail to the mainland, all servicemen overseas were required to write letters on special forms. The letters were microfilmed, placed on reels of film, and flown to the U.S. where the microfilm was developed. The reconstituted letter was then sent forward to the addressee.

Downing's reduced workload translated to more time committed to salvage work and honing of his skills as a gunner's mate. In his interview, Downing made one ob-

servance of considerable interest on the salvage work. To seal the huge holes blown in the side of the "WeeVee" by the torpedoes, wooden frameworks were constructed in to which were poured concrete. Those concrete walls became the temporary patches as she was raised out of the water and moved to a dry dock for permanent repairs. To effectuate the repairs, the concrete patches had to be removed by explosives! In May 1943, the "WeeVee" was sufficiently repaired to successfully complete her sea trials and sail for Bremerton, Washington for full repairs.

6. Reassignment and Reminiscences—Post 1943

Downing was able to encode a message to Morena to meet him at Bremerton. Their little code, among many developed by couples, involved a simple message that she should take a trip to Bremerton. Morena departed Little Rock, Arkansas for Los Angeles, where she took on another *USS West Virginia* crewman's wife (a *Navigator*) and drove to Bremerton. Recall that the roads were not the superhighways of today, but rather two lane roads for thousands of miles. When the "WeeVee" docked at Bremerton, she and Pat Kelso were there. It was another grand reunion.

Within a month, Downing's career on the *USS West Virginia* had come to a close. The Navy saw fit to reassign Downing to the new construction Gunnery School located at the Naval Gun Factory in Washington, D.C. for eventual assignment to the new Battleship X (eventually the *USS South Dakota*). Downing quickly wound up his financial and reporting duties as chief naval clerk, and departed by car for Washington, DC.

At the gunnery school, a fateful turn of events awaited him. Downing was so proficient in naval gunnery after years on the modern weaponry of the "WeeVee" that he was selected to be a naval gunnery instructor. Within short order, Downing was elevated to the chief instructorship of naval gunnery for the Bofors 40 antiaircraft gun.

Oophs—the Navy found itself in the awkward position of having an ordinary seaman as a chief instructor. We'll have none of that the hide-bound hierarchy concluded; that's to be resolved by promoting Jim Downing to an officer and a gentleman, as an ensign in the U.S. Navy. Problem resolved!

By war's end, the *USS West Virginia* had resurrected herself as a proud naval fighting ship. Downing was never aboard her again in any official capacity. Her reconstituted crew managed to engage Japanese warships and airplanes in the Philippines during the Leyte Gulf campaign, in kamikaze attacks that required shipyard repairs, and at Iwo Jima and Okinawa before the anticipated invasion of mainland Japan in late 1945. The atomic bombings of Japan changed those plans, with the Japanese surrender in Tokyo Bay on September 2, 1945. Beside the *USS Missouri* was anchored the *USS West Virginia*—the only battleship from Pearl Harbor at the scene, providing part of her naval band for the ceremonies involving the surrender. The irony of the scene was not lost upon many



Figure 21: Quad 40 Bofor anti-aircraft guns of *USS Hornet*.

Figure 22 (below): *USS West Virginia* in late August 1945 in Tokyo Bay, with Mt. Fuji in the background; note her funnel reconfiguration.



Figure 23: Signing of the Japanese surrender on the *USS Missouri* on September 2, 1945. In the background can be seen the silhouette of an American battleship. Only three U.S. battleships had the same funnel configuration (one of which was the *USS West Virginia* after its near total refit). Since a place of honor was given to the *U.S.S. West Virginia* in close proximity to the *USS Missouri*, it is believed that the silhouette is that of the “WeeVee”.

students of the war - the sunken battleship of the down-trodden U.S. of December 7, 1941 was an instrumental presence on the day of surrender by her erstwhile adversary of 4 years earlier.

During those four years, the powerful new Navy completed to achieve the conquest of Japan was on display in Tokyo Bay as evidenced by the philatelic memorabilia created for future generations—including that of the *USS*

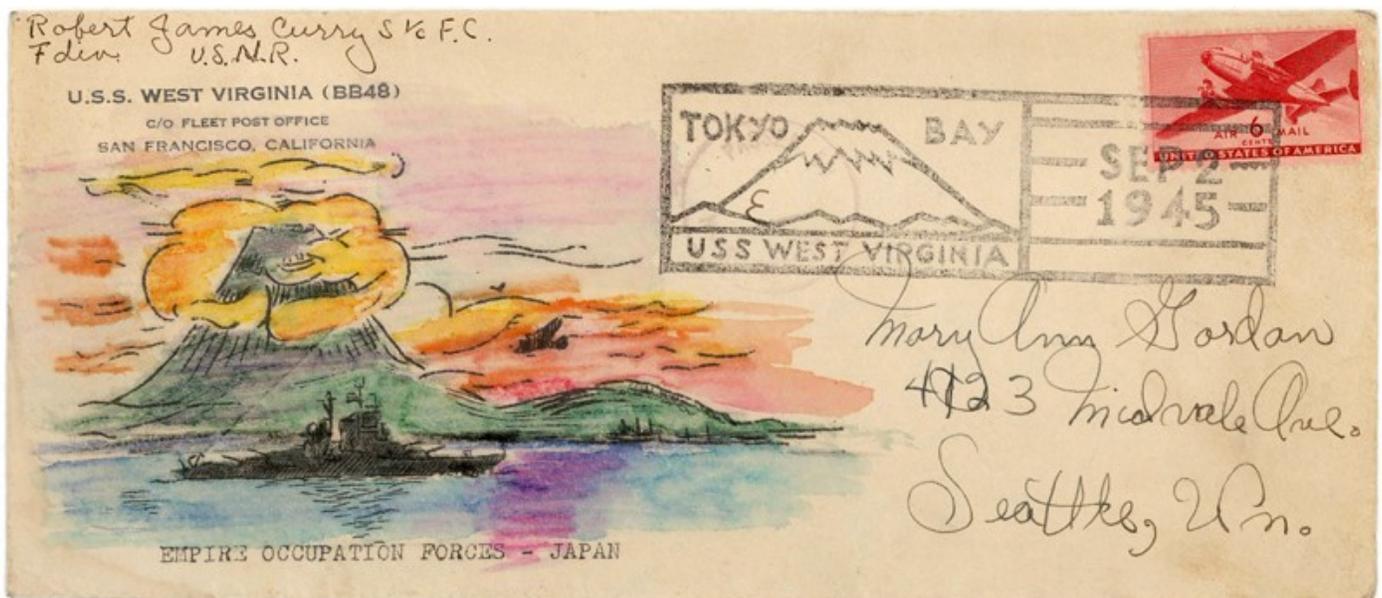
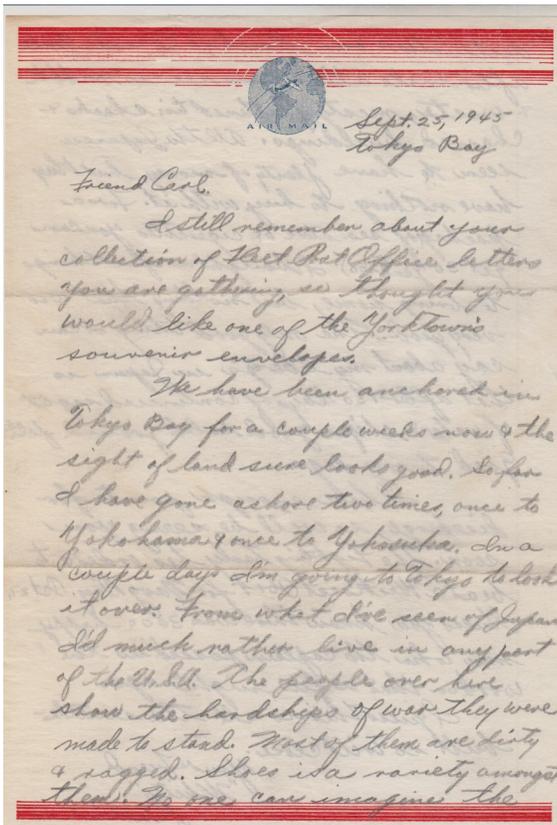


Figure 24: *USS West Virginia* hand-drawn cacheted event cover of the Japanese surrender. Cancel produced on-board. Courtesy of David Kent.



Figures 25 & 26: The U.S. S. Yorktown was in Japanese waters in September 1945, serving with the occupation forces as evidenced by Donald Lawrence's Sept. 25th cover, containing the two page enclosure of **Figure 26**, (first page is shown). *Courtesy of Jim Kilbane.*

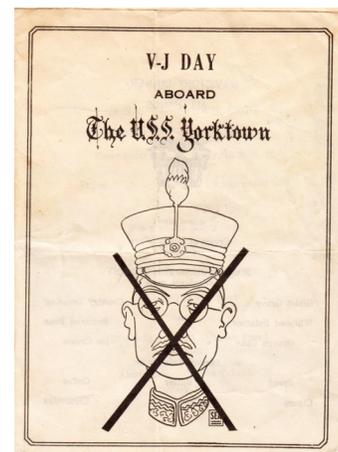


On the other hand, the *USS Yorktown* (see **Figures 25, 26, 27 & 28**) was at sea off the waters of Tokyo Bay as a precaution. Seaman Donald Stephenson's letter of September 25th, is notable for two reasons. First, the enclosure provides insight into the state of Japanese society as observed by a foreign interloper shortly after the surrender. He wrote:

“Have been anchored in Tokyo Bay for several weeks.

The people over here show the hardships of war they were made to stand. Most of them are dirty and ragged. Shoes is [sic] a rarity amongst them. No one can imagine the destruction our bombers caused. Mile after mile all one can see is rubble and waste, and flattened tin shacks and charred buildings.”

The second reason for the special character of his letter is its other enclosure - providing proof positive of the *Yorktown's* presence at sea. As a baker on board the ship, Stephenson would have retained the menu (**Figure 27**) to show participation in the surrender, albeit at sea. It portrays the crossed out image of Emperor Hirohito. The full menu is shown as **Figure 28** (next page).



Figures 27: *USS Yorktown* menu of Sept. 2nd. Despite cease-fire orders from Tokyo, Kamikazes continued to attack U.S. ships after the Aug. 14 surrender announcement. No carriers were allowed in Tokyo Bay until all had been secured and no further attacks could take place. The ship's history states that she entered Tokyo Bay on Sept. 16.

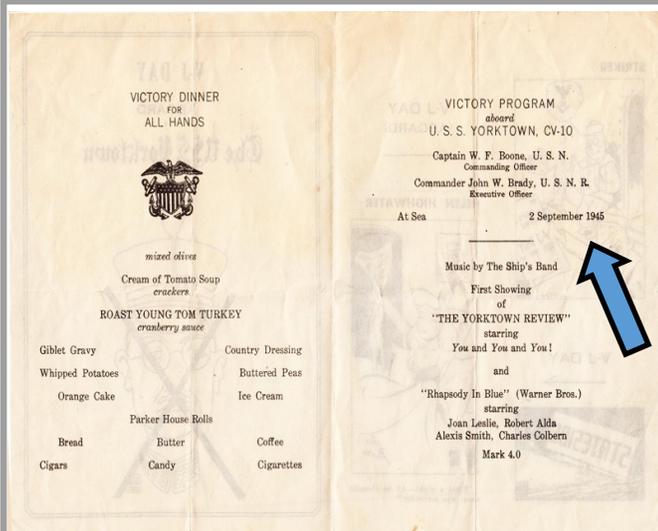


Figure 28: U.S.S. Yorktown menu of September 2, 1945. The Captain was prepared to go to special lengths to celebrate the U.S. victory. The USS *West Virginia* continued as part of the occupation forces.

In those later stages of the war, Jim Downing's fortunes had taken a fateful turn for the better. After fulfilling his duties in gunnery instruction, Downing returned to the sea at the end of the war, being assigned to the *USS Nespelen*, a tanker, sailing primarily in the Western Hemisphere. Following service on board her for several years, he was placed in command of the *USS Patapasco*, model namesake of a class of fuel tankers built between 1942 and 1945. Downing consequently became the youngest commanding officer of any ship in the Pacific fleet.

In February 1954, the *Patapasco* was ordered to deliver fuel to concrete storage tanks at Bikini atoll. At Bikini, he was informed that the storage tanks were leaking and that he was to deliver his cargo to Eniwetok. Upon sailing into Eniwetok, he knew something was afoot that he had not been alerted about, since the ship passed a steel structure that was familiar to him. During the war, he had been required to attend an atomic weapons instructions class. He was not allowed to take notes, but had to memorize everything, including the use of towers.

He sought out the senior officer present, a destroyer flotilla commander. After inquiries about the *USS Patapasco*'s nuclear clothing protective gear, Downing was ordered to take the *USS Patapasco* out immediately, all engines ahead full. When he objected that he had not delivered his cargo and that only his operations officer in Honolulu could order such a departure, the flotilla commander ordered him to take the ship out on the commander's recognizance, and that Downing would receive the orders by radio to sail immediately. He also told Downing that he would be in the blast zone of the Castle Bravo H bomb test. The *Patapasco* sailed immediately eastwards towards Honolulu. When the blast went off, the *Patapasco* was 180 miles distant. The blast scoured the ocean bottom to a depth of 250 feet, had a blast radius of four miles,

and a towering blast cloud reaching 25 miles into the atmosphere (see Figures 29 & 30).^(10 & 11)



Figures 29 and 30 (above and below) are scarce testaments to the Castle Bravo test. Marvin Johnson was a sailor on the *USS Sioux Falls* (Figure 29), a tugboat assigned to Task Force 75. The cover is postmarked February 11, 1954, slightly less than three weeks before the test blast. Airman Gilbert of Figure 30, on the other hand, was still involved in post test assessments in an air quality detachment unit. *Courtesy of David Wells.*



That blast cloud rained radioactive fallout upon the *USS Patapasco* and much of the world. Arriving at Pearl Harbor, she was boarded by a nuclear radiation team, which almost immediately left the ship. Within short order, the crew was assessed as having been radiated with the equivalent of 450 x-rays a day in their six day voyage to Pearl Harbor. The Operation Bravo test, for the first time, had been placed under the control of the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission. President Eisenhower had ordered that no publicity was to be released by any armed services organization. The *Patapasco* had literally stumbled into the blast area, never having received word of the intended blast, until his inquiry at Eniwetok. He also commented that the *USS Patapasco* underwent complete decontamination for three weeks.

Discussed in Chapter's 16 & 17 of his story for the *USS West Virginia* webpage, the story was repeated in his

book. Two sources of confirmation of this incident can be found on the internet— a Defense Department news release of mid 2015, discussing the radiation effects upon U.S. military personnel by the Castle Bravo first test explosion. Within its three page summary, data on the radiation effects upon the *USS Patapsco* crew was provided! (9 & 11). In an Atomic Energy Commission report issued in the late 1970s, its over 300 pages of presentations explored the *Patapsco*'s presence at the site and the radiation effects on the crew. Unlike Downing's recounting, however, in order to save face the AEC noted that the *Patapsco*'s presence was on a routine fuel delivery mission - an incredible assertion in light of the limited radiation effects on the other Task Force 75 ships and Cpt. Downing's recounting!

Apparently due to health reasons Dawson Troutman was nearing the end of his 20+ year leadership of the *Navigators*. As discussed by Downing in his book *The Other Side of Infamy*, Troutman asked Jim Downing at about the time of the Castle Bravo incident to consider retiring from the Navy and taking the helm of the *Navigators* organization. After retirement a year or so later, Downing settled in Colorado Springs, Colorado for among other reasons its proximity to the national headquarters of the *Navigators* in Glen Eyrie, Colorado.

As a founder (member # 6) of the *Navigators* aboard the "WeeVee", his faith in the organization's mission had grown throughout the years. On board the "WeeVee", Downing was known to many as the "Deacon". Certainly, there were chaplains on board ship - but the *Navigators* had in mind their mission of bringing faith in Jesus Christ to the many seamen that had lost their footings in Christianity or who had never acquired those footings. The ministry did NOT proselytize among the crew members. They were simply known to be there among the crew, and available to discuss matters of faith and belief whenever crewmembers sought them out.

That has continued to be the mission, and modus operandi, of the *Navigators* to this day— a mission that Downing has been proud to be associated with in many capacities over the past seven decades - two decades of which were devoted to the leadership of the *Navigators*. in the 60s and 70s. Today, the *Navigators* have staff throughout the world in numerous countries working with college age students. Their mission to navy and armed forces personnel has not been overlooked - as they continue to work with all branches of the U.S. military.

An inadvertent laudatory salutation was provided to Sergio Lugo while he was working with another author for an unrelated article. He asked US Navy Commander David Thompson, retired Chaplain, if he knew anything of the *Navigators* from his service in the 1970's through the 2000's. Commander Thompson's reply is provided below verbatim from his e-mail response

"Yes, I know the *Navigators* well.

The *Navigators* are a interdenominational Evangelical Christian organization that had its start in 1933 in the U.S. Navy in San Diego, CA, home-port for the U.S. Pacific Fleet.

The Navs were founded by a man by the name of Dawson Trotman (see: <https://www.amazon.com/Daws-Dawson-Trotman-Founder-Navigators/dp/0310328012>) who had a vision to minister to sailors and to equip them to live out their lives as "serious Christians," on ships of the U.S. Navy, disciplining other sailors into the Christian faith aboard the ship in which they served (see: <http://www.navigators.org/About-Us/History>).

This whole movement grew to become a large ministry during WW II and beyond, spreading to the other branches of the service and eventually onto college campuses as well.

When I served as the Chaplain to DESRON 21 out of San Diego in the late 70's and early 80's, they were to be found on all eight of my Navy destroyers. They were very supportive of Chaplains ministries and often ran lay-led Bible studies regularly on each one of these ships. Later on, as the Base Chaplain for the U.S. Marines at Camp Foster Chapel at MCB Camp S.D. Butler in Okinawa, Japan for three years (1984-87) they were very supportive of the Navy/Marine Corps chapel ministries and had a great outreach to Marines and Navy personnel on Okinawa, largely through intensive Bible study groups. Then again, in the late 1980's, while Chaplain on the *USS Sacramento* (AOE-1) home-ported out of Bremerton, WA, I had great support and encouragement from *Navigators* aboard that ship. Many Naval Academy graduates, who were part of the *Navigators* ministry at Annapolis, were very active with the *Navigators* aboard Navy ships and shore commands when I served in the Navy. I hold *Navigators* in high regard to this day. Here is a link to Dawson Trautman's bio, Founder of the *Navigators*: <http://kamglobal.org/BiographicalSketches/dawsontroutman.html>."

Which brings us around the allegorical full circle insofar as Pearl Harbor is concerned. Just as the *USS West Virginia* was at the beginning and end of the war, two unknown antagonists of that day were to meet as a result of Downing's ministry. On the morning of December 7, 1941 at 0700 (seven hundred hours) the morning rays of the sun broke through the cloud cover over Hawaii. The Japanese air fleet commander took this as a magnificent omen for the Japanese attack as the morning sunshine replicated the symbolism of the Japanese national flag.

At war's end, Lt. Commander Mitsuo Fuchida (of *Tora, Tora, Tora* movie fame) was an embittered man. He had witnessed and commanded one of the stunning successes of arms in all of military history. He had trained and commanded well over 300 airmen and their crews in the launch of one of history's great surprise attacks, earning the epitaph of "A Day of Infamy." But in September, 1945 those visions of glory and courage had given way to the agony of defeat at the hands of the very enemy he had



Figure 31: Lt. Commander Mitsuo Fuchida, commander of the Japanese air fleet at Pearl Harbor.

vanquished 4 years earlier. Compounding that agony, was the belief that Japanese men had suffered mightily at the hands of Americans in battle and as prisoners - as was to be expected in the Japanese system of imprisonment for defeated and vanquished warriors. Such were his beliefs until one day in 1947.

On that day, the embittered Fuchida encountered a repatriated Japanese war prisoner whom he had presumed killed in action at Midway. Fuchida had contracted an illness and was unable to participate in the air battle that marked the resounding defeat of the Imperial Japanese Navy, and the beginning of the end of Japan's ambitions in the Pacific.

The repatriated POW was his radioman aboard one of the aircraft he had commanded in the course of the war. Over the course of the next several days, Fuchida learned the shocking truth that he was badly mistaken about the treatment his radioman had received as a POW. Yes, he had been imprisoned and abused for being Japanese, but his treatment was in total contrast to the codes of the Japanese warrior tradition. And his radioman indicated that it had something to do with the religion of the Americans, and their beliefs on the spirit and soul of human beings.

This revelation stunned Fuchida, launching a life long quest to understand Christianity and its meaning for believers. That quest eventually led Fuchida to conversion to Christianity and coincidentally seeking out proponents of the faith throughout the globe who had experienced warfare. His travels eventually led him to Jim Downing, who indicated that in their first meeting he (Downing) was unwilling to bend in his inflexibility towards the Japanese aggressor, but eventually shook hands with Fuchida.. There followed several visits to Colorado and the *Navigators* organization. Downing had the distinct pleasure of becoming Fuchida's life-long acquaintance, if not amicable friend, as both reconciled enemies shared their thoughts in closing the circle of events of that day through a mutual bond of faith—solidified by wartime experiences.

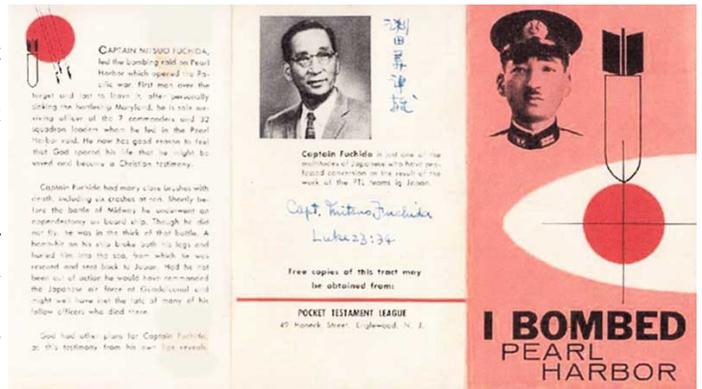
Endnotes:

1. *James Downing: The Other Side of Infamy, Glen Eyrie, CO, NAVPRESS, 2016.* Navpress is the publishing arm of *THE NAVIGATORS*, an international Christian evangelical organization dedicated to spiritual de-

velopment. For more information, see www.NavPress.com or see the Navigators homepage at <http://www.navigators.org/Home>

2. *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*
 3. *Linn's Stamp News*, Monday, September 10, 1979
 4. *Ibid.*, pg. 28
 5. *All Hands Magazine: The Navy Carries The Mail*; May 1949, pp. 2-4
 6. *USS West Virginia* website, under the caption Stories, and specifically "My Story by Jim Downing, Chpt. 5.
 7. *Linn's Stamp News*
 8. *Ibid.*,
 9. <https://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USN/ships/logs/BB/bb48-Pearl.html> *Action of December 7, 1941 -- Report of The USS West Virginia.*
<https://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USN/ships/logs/BB/bb43-Pearl.html> *Report of the USS Tennessee Pearl.html*
Report of the USS Tennessee
 10. *My Story: Chapters 16 and 17.*
 11. Department of Defense, website : *Castle Series 1954, U.S. Atomic Nuclear Weapons Test, Nuclear Test Personnel Review*, Defense Nuclear Agency, 6035F
 12. http://www.dod.mil/pubs/foi/Reading_Room/NCB/DNA6035F_Castle_Series_1954.pdf
- Or
<http://www.osti.gov/opennet/servlets/purl/16380885f-givuWF/16380885.pdf>

Figure 32: Christian missionary tract of Mitsuo Fuchida kept by Jim Downing.



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2018 StampShow – Columbus, August, 2018
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What's Coming To You In Future Bulletins

In addition to MPHS Society news and regular features, the following are in the next issues of the *Bulletin* (subject to change). **Bold titles indicate completed:**
Winter (# 1, release 2/10/18)

- **1937-39 Civilian Mail China** (Weirather)
- **U.S. Consular Service China, USS Brooklyn**
- Why Is This Postcard Censored? (Nelson)
- **NY Copperhead Writes** (Jennings & Lugo)
- Naval Wife Scrapbook & USS Ommaney Bay
- **Espionage Act of WW I** (Berlin)

Spring (#2, release 5/10/18)

- Mexican National WW II US Army –Bilingual
- **Texas Politician in Post War Japan+Korea**
- **Newfoundland Special Delivery** (Crown)
- Halifax Censors in WW I (Lowther)
- APS Article on Espionage (Berlin)

Summer (# 3, release 8/10/18)

- Y Worker in Brutalized French Village (Lowther)
- 1795 Am. POW Letter to James Madison (Vora)
- Anglo Boer War POW Mail (Abrams)

Fall (# 4, release 11/11/18) -

Special Edition: 100th Anniversary of the Armistice

- **Summary of U.S. PMG Reports 1917 - 1919**
- **Postal History of the 1st Infantry Division**
- **5th Year of the War** (Kugel)

Editor's Notes

Manuscripts/illustrations for publication are welcome. A **writer's guide** to article content, format and preferred layout is available by contacting me directly. Thanks for your consideration and please take up the challenge. You are the lifeblood of the MPHS *Bulletin*, as readers and authors. Won't you consider writing an article on subjects of interest to you in the postal history arena. You'll be encouraged at the reception you will receive. Please submit your article by the dates shown below.. No responsibility is accepted for material submitted. Enclose stamped, self addressed return envelope with correspondence for any return mail

Request reprint permission from the Editor.

DEADLINES

Issue	Article Deadline to Editor and Revisions	<i>Bulletin</i> in Member Hands Date=Digital; 2nd=Hard Copy	
Winter	January 20 to 25	Early February	Mid February
Spring	April 20 to 25	Early May	Mid May
Summer	July 20 to 25	Early August	Mid August
Fall	October 20 to 25	Early November	Mid November

BOOK REVIEW

by Magnus Heder

The Stockholm Run: Air Transport between Britain and Sweden during WWII. Author: Nils Mathisrud - ISBN 9788365281159. Published 2016, 344 pages, large format.

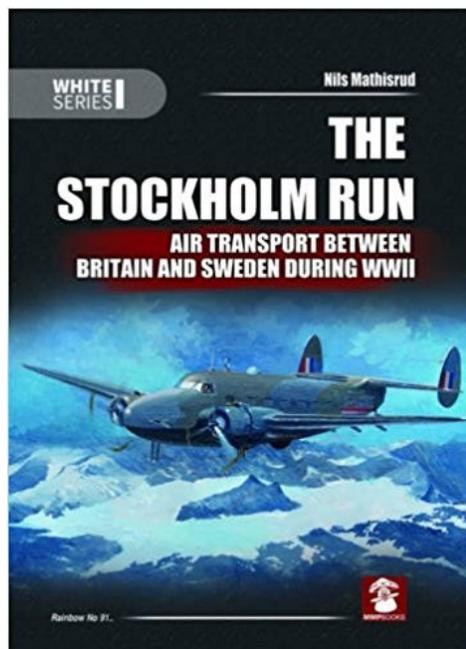
The book is written by Norwegian Nils Mathisrud, who came to be a flying historian due to his initial interest of air modelling and construction.

There have been some books on the subject such as Nilsson / Sandberg's book "Blockade Runners" from 1996 and other books in Swedish that deal with the subject. The faults with these books are the strictly Swedish perspective on the history. It has been difficult to grasp the flights made by the Allied side.

This new book (2016) therefore fills a difficult gap. The book describes in detail the game behind the scenes about how air traffic towards Sweden worked during WW2. In detail, British (BOAC) and Norwegian but also American and Swedish, efforts and operations are described. The book is also richly illustrated with World War II photos. Of particular interest is the chapter about "Accidents, losses and incidents".

The subject of crash mail is not dealt with specifically in this book (2 objects are shown), but I recommend it to all interested in Sweden during WW2. A basic knowledge about the wartime situation in Scandinavia is, however, recommended.

A virtual review can be found at; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cqGrfI5ReHY>. The book is available from a number of sources, including Amazon – USA and ABE Books.



The Doolittle Raid—Remembered

by Kurt A. Stauffer

Editor's Note: With his article submission, Kurt reminds us that 2017 is the 75th Anniversary of the Doolittle Raid. Space was, of course, found for this postal history reminder of that inestimable morale booster for the American public and its armed services at the outset of WW II.

On April 18, 1942, Lt. Col. James (Jimmy) Doolittle led 16 B-25 aircraft on the first mission to attack mainland Japan since WWII began. The aircraft took off from the carrier *USS Hornet* on April 18, 1942 on what many believed was going to be a suicide mission. The original plan was to launch the planes close enough to Japan to allow the planes to land at pre-designated airfields in China. A sighting by a Japanese ship caused them to launch much earlier due to the risk that they had been detected/reported.

Following the mission, 15 of the crews did reach mainland China and crashed or bailed out near the coast. One aircraft reached Russia and the crew was interned.

as a crack in the perceived shield of Japanese invincibility. In the next 2 months the Battle of the Coral Sea and the Battle of Midway would be seen as the turning points in the war. The Japanese reaction to the bombing raid was to downplay its effect and to make propaganda statements about how little damage the raid actually caused. As a true indication of the psychological damage, the Japanese officer in charge of Tokyo's defenses committed ritual suicide because of his shame and dishonor in allowing the attack to occur. It was a terrible loss of face. Further, the raid led the Japanese to seek to strengthen their outer defense ring in reaction, contributing to the decision to seize Midway Island and the disastrous destruction that followed of the Japanese carrier force in that naval battle.

The cover shown as **Figure 1** represents one man's journey during what became known as "The Doolittle Raid".

Lt. Col Doolittle and his crew parachuted from their B-25 over China with their aircraft impacting into a mountainside. He thought the mission failed miserably. Doolittle said in an interview with the LA Times in 1986: "I was very low in my mind," he said. "I had a Sgt. Paul J. Leonard in my crew and I said, 'You know what's going

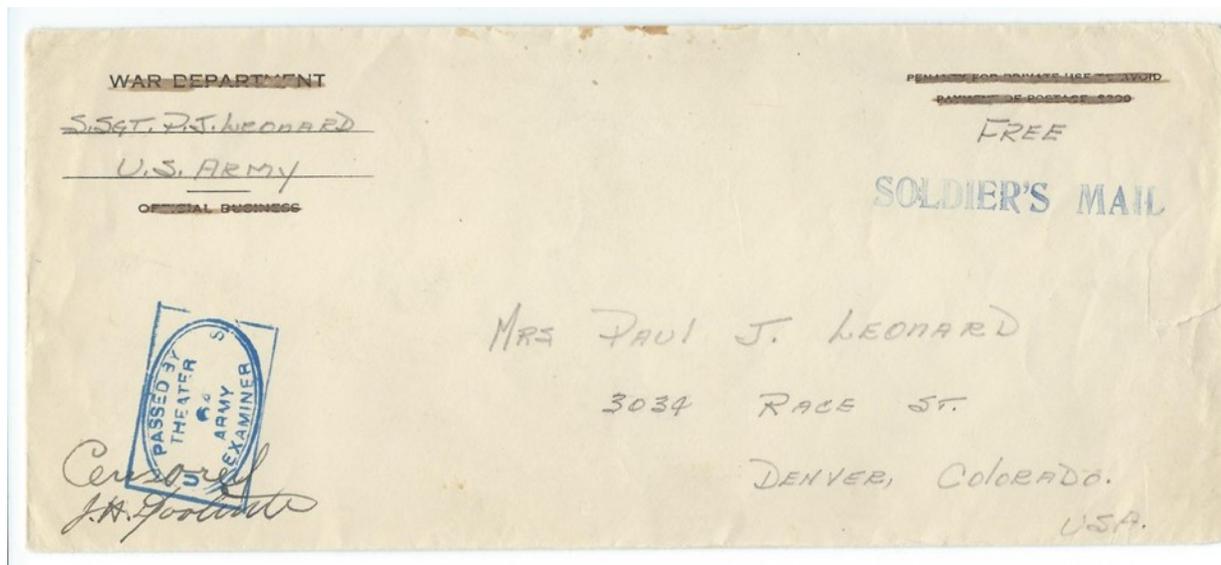


Figure 1 is a cover to his parents from S/Sgt Paul J. Leonard, the Flight Engineer/Gunner in Doolittle's own crew. The cover was mailed from Chungking, China on May 5, 1942, two and a half weeks after the raid. APO 879 had been established for Chungking, China by May 1942,

While most of the men made it to safety in China, two of the crews were captured by the Japanese with two of the officers killed when their B-25 crashed into the sea. Of the 8 remaining POW's, 3 were executed, 1 died as a POW, and 4 survived the war. 69 out of the 80 men eventually made it back to safety. Some of these 69 men subsequently were KIA or taken POW in their future assignments during the course of the war.

The bombing mission, while tactically a failure, was a huge boost to the morale of the United States and was seen

to happen? I'll be put in Leavenworth prison for having missed the mission.' "

Doolittle says Leonard tried to cheer him up by telling him that no matter what happened with the planes, the mission was a success and Doolittle would get the Medal of Honor, the nation's highest military award. Leonard also asked Doolittle if he could continue to be his mechanic.

"Well, the tears came to my eyes," Doolittle said. "I said, 'Son, if you want to be my mechanic, you can be-forever.' "

With assistance from local Chinese soldiers and civilians, to include John Birch who was in China as a missionary, Doolittle and his crew made it to Chungking, China and later back to the USA. Doolittle censored Leonard's letter himself, indicated by his manuscript censor mark. However, a cancellation was not applied. It was also censored by a US Army Theater Censor (most likely in India)

and was carried by a Chinese National Aviation Corporation aircraft to India. The CNAC docketing is hand written on the reverse of the cover. The British subsequently censored the cover in Calcutta, India as indicated by the DHA/16 censor mark on the reverse (see Figure 2 below) and under the backflap of the envelope. The envelope was probably sent unsealed from China to India for the purposes of censorship.

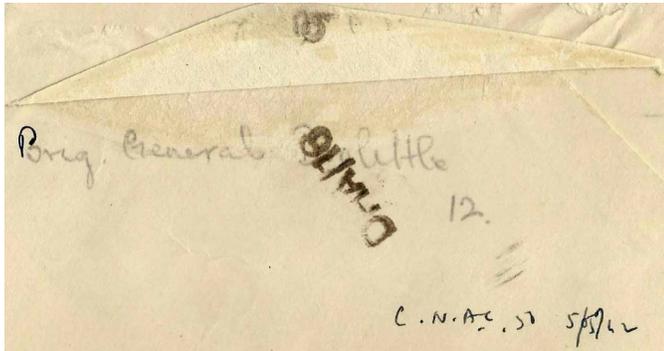


Figure 3: Photo of Doolittle's crew on the USS Hornet prior to the mission. (USAAF photo)



Figure 4: Pictured in China following the Doolittle led air raid: Left to Right: SSgt. F.A. Braemer (Bombardier); SSGT. P.J. Leonard (Engineer-Gunner); Chinese; 1st Lt. R.E. Cole (Co-Pilot); Col. Jimmy Doolittle (Pilot); Chinese; 1st Lt. H.A. Potter (Navigator); Chinese. (U.S.A.A.F. photo)

S/Sgt Leonard remained in China until June 1942 and later served as Doolittle's personal crew chief in

the USA, England and North Africa. He was promoted to M/Sgt and was killed in action by a bomb blast January 5, 1943 in Algeria. Doolittle later recalled Leonard's death:

"He had taxied my plane over to the other side of the field, to a better place," Doolittle said. "I saw it there and walked over, and alongside the plane was a bomb crater. I looked all around for my mechanic, and finally saw a hand. The bomb had gone off and his hand with his wristwatch still on was all that was left of that nice boy."

Of all the 80 men who participated in the raid, only Richard E. Cole (Doolittle's co-pilot) is still alive, as the last remaining Doolittle Raider. I met him in Louisville Kentucky earlier this year at the "Show of Shows" sponsored by the Ohio Valley Military Society. He is scheduled to appear again in 2018. In April 2017 he took part in a 75th anniversary ceremony at the National Museum of the Air Force in Dayton Ohio. He told a reporter from CNN "It's kind of lonely because I'm the last one,".

Far from failing miserably, Doolittle received the Congressional Medal of Honor from President Roosevelt in the White House on May 19, 1942. His citation read:

"For conspicuous leadership above the call of duty, involving personal valor and intrepidity at an extreme hazard to life. With the apparent certainty of being forced to land in enemy territory or to perish at sea, Gen. Doolittle personally led a squadron of Army bombers, manned by volunteer crews, in a highly destructive raid on the Japanese mainland." Each of the other men on the mission received the Distinguished Flying Cross.

General Doolittle went on to a successful career in the Air Force commanding the 12th, 15th, and 8th Air Forces in WWII. He received his 4th and final General's star from President Reagan in 1985. America lost a true hero when Jimmy Doolittle passed away in 1993 at the age of 96.

Captain Ted W. Lawson - a Doolittle pilot - wrote a book *Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo* (1943) that became a popular movie focusing on his experiences in the raid.

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AB AEROTRANSPORT DOUGLAS DC-3 "GLADAN" SHOT DOWN OVER NORWAY – AUGUST 1943, CORRECTION

by Ken Sanford

In the Spring 2008 issue, we published an article about this aircraft which was shot down by a German fighter on the night of August 27-28, 1943 over Norway. British collector Peter A. Forrestier Smith thought the cover, and a Swedish ambulance cover, were from this incident. The cover is postmarked 6 August 1943. Our member John Thiesen believes this cover is not from the "Gladan", but from the crash of a BOAC De Havilland Mosquito (G-AGGF) at Glen Esk, Scotland on 17 August 1943. It was operating the route from Leuchars/RAF Base, Scotland to Stockholm/Bromma Airport.

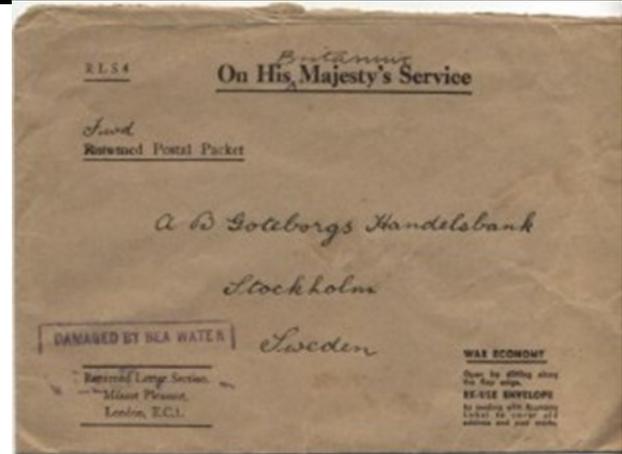
The following are the details, from John's website at: <http://crashmail.dk/air-crashes/1943-08-17/>

The Crash

The plane took off from the airbase at Leuchars at 20:16. The crew soon experienced difficulties with the orientation, and requested bearing and distance information several times. As they had no response, they decided to return to Leuchars. At 21:30 the plane crashed, hitting a mountain near Glen Esk more than 60 km north of the airbase. The wreck was located three weeks later on 8 September by a local gamekeeper. The crash investigators suspected that the airplane suffered a major instrument or compass systems failure, hence the requests for directions. The plane was on the wrong course right from the start. The report criticized Air Traffic Control at several airfields for not recognizing an emergency situation and not answering the air crew's pleas for directional information.

The Mail

The plane carried 608 kg of mail, which according to the records, was lost in the crash. I have recorded two covers, which I think very well may have come from this crash (see illustrations). Both covers were processed by



the Returned Letter Section, Mount Pleasant, London which usually handled British crash mail. This office used different handstamps, labels and service covers as shown on the covers.

A third cover has been identified, which is from the Hallvard Slettebo collection, as shown. A badly damaged cover from the Ackroyd Brothers, London postmarked BRADFORD 10 AU 1943 and addressed to Sweden is shown below. The handstamp DAMAGED BY SEA WATER was used by the Returned Letter Section in London. As the cover was postmarked on 10 August and the crash occurred on the 17th of August, John believes it more likely that this cover was in the BOAC crash rather than the ABA "Gladan" flight shot down on the night of August 27-28, 1943 over Norway. This is because there were flights to Sweden after the postmark date, and before 27 August.



**The Sky Is NOT Falling,
The Sky is NOT Falling
But a Volunteer FOR the Secretary
Position would go a long way (see
pg. 25), to helping the organization.**

Contact President Ed Dubin
Email address = dubine@comcast.net

Military Postal History Collateral Material RCA Marconigram – WWII Germany Surrender

by Thomas Richards

While the search for primary material for a Military Postal History collection/exhibit goes on continually, sometimes the finding of collateral material happens when we least expect it. **Figures 1 and 2** are examples.

SHIP O SHIP					SHORE TO SHIP				
MARCONIGRAM									
Prefix	Handed in at <i>Admiralty</i>				Date Received	Time Received			
Number	No. of Words	Date handed in	Time handed in	Service instructions	Received from	By			
	<i>PA</i>	<i>8-5-45</i>	<i>1100z</i>	<i>Immediate</i>	<i>GBR</i>	<i>KGB</i>			
To <i>BAMS 1A.1B.3A.3B.3C.5A.7A.7B.7C.9A.9B.</i>									
<p><i>The German High Command has been directed to give the following surrender orders to U-boats.</i></p> <p><i>(A) To remain on the surface flying a large black or blue flag by day and burning navigation lights by night. (B) To make for specified ports under Allied control. (C) To report their position in plain language on 500 kcs every eight hours. U-boats apparently complying with these instructions are not to be attacked but should be given a wide berth. W/T reports or such sightings are to be made in plain language in the following form:—</i></p> <p><i>(A) Number of U-boats. (B) Position. (C) Estimated course. (D) Estimated speed. If however U-boats commit a hostile act</i></p>									
BRITISH WIRELESS MARINE SERVICE <small>Joint Service Department of The Marconi International Marine Communications Co. Ltd., Radio Communication Co. Ltd., and Marconi Sounding Device Co. Ltd. MARCONI HOUSE, CHELMSFORD. General Office, Marconi Office, Essex House, Victoria Embankment, London, W.C.2.</small>									

SHIP O SHIP					SHORE TO SHIP				
MARCONIGRAM									
Prefix	Handed in at <i>Admiralty</i>				Date Received	Time Received			
Number	No. of Words	Date handed in	Time handed in	Service instructions	Received from	By			
	<i>PA</i>	<i>8-5-45</i>	<i>1100z</i>	<i>Immediate</i>	<i>GBR</i>	<i>KGB</i>			
To <i>BAMS 1A.1B.3A.3B.3C.5A.7A.7B.7C.9A.9B.</i>									
<p><i>or otherwise disregard these orders, reports are to be made by normal distress procedure and all appropriate defence measures taken.</i></p> <p><i>/081100z</i></p>									
BRITISH WIRELESS MARINE SERVICE <small>Joint Service Department of The Marconi International Marine Communications Co. Ltd., Radio Communication Co. Ltd., and Marconi Sounding Device Co. Ltd. MARCONI HOUSE, CHELMSFORD. General Office, Marconi Office, Essex House, Victoria Embankment, London, W.C.2.</small>									

A RCA Marconigram is a message sent by radio. Marconi was an Italian inventor and electrical engineer known for his pioneering work on long-distance radio transmission. He formed the Marconi company and he shared the 1909 Nobel Prize in Physics with Karl Ferdinand Braun "in recognition of their contributions to the development of wireless telegraphy".

The role played by the Marconi Co. wireless in maritime rescues raised public awareness of the value of radio and brought fame to Marconi, particularly following the sinkings of the *RMS Titanic* on 15 April 1912 and the *RMS Lusitania* on 7 May 1915.

RMS Titanic radio operators Jack Phillips and Harold Bride were not employed by the White Star Line but by the Marconi International Marine Communication Company.

Also employed by the Marconi Company was David Sarnoff, who later headed RCA. Wireless communications were reportedly maintained for 72 hours between *Carpathia* and Sarnoff, but Sarnoff's involvement has been questioned by some modern historians. When *Carpathia* docked in New York, Marconi went aboard with a reporter from *The New York Times* to talk with Bride, the surviving operator. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guglielmo_Marconi

The Marconigram of **Figures 1 and 2** was sent to all ships at sea on May 8, 1945 by the British Admiralty just hours after Germany surrendered. It announces the German surrender and that the war was over and gives instructions regarding German U-boats. Sent from the Admiralty at 1220, its contents read:

The German High Command has been directed to give the following surrender orders to U-boats.

(A) To remain on the surface flying a large black or blue flag by day and burning navigation lights by night. (B) To make for specified ports under Allied control. (C) To report their position in plain language on 500 kcs every eight hours. U-boats appropriately complying with these instructions are not to be attacked but should be given a wide berth. W/T reports on such sightings are to be made in plain language in the following form. (A) Number of U-boats (B) Position (C) Estimated course (D) Estimated speed. If, however, U-boats commit a hostile act or otherwise disregard these orders, reports are to be made by normal distress procedure and all appropriate measures taken.

/081100z

While the authenticity of this item could be questioned – no doubt there were, and still are, blank Marconigram forms around. The blank forms could be filled out by anyone. It does have a COA from "Piece of the Past" Inc. They are one of the largest sellers of paper collectibles in the U.S. If genuine, it is an interesting piece of WWII collateral material.

Your generous donations to the MPHS allows the Board to explore other services to offer the membership - such as our publications program and its products. Please consider a contribution. *Ed Dubin, President*



U.S. Korean War Memorial located in Busan, South Korea. GPS Coordinates N35 07.710

Do Not Bring My Body Back Home

by Paul Albright

The young airman was trying to keep warm in his tent on a frigid November day in war-battered Korea as he composed a poignant letter to his father in Michigan.

"I don't want you to worry for what I am going to say," wrote Cpl. Paul W. Garvelink, "If I should get killed over here, do not bring my body back home... [Y]ou must promise me that, dad, because if I was good enough to fight with my buddie(s) and die with them, I will be buried with them. [D]on't let anyone talk you into it, please."

Then assigned to the 4th Air Police Squadron of the 4th Airborne Group, Garvelink continued to explain his desire to be buried in Korea if he was KIA:

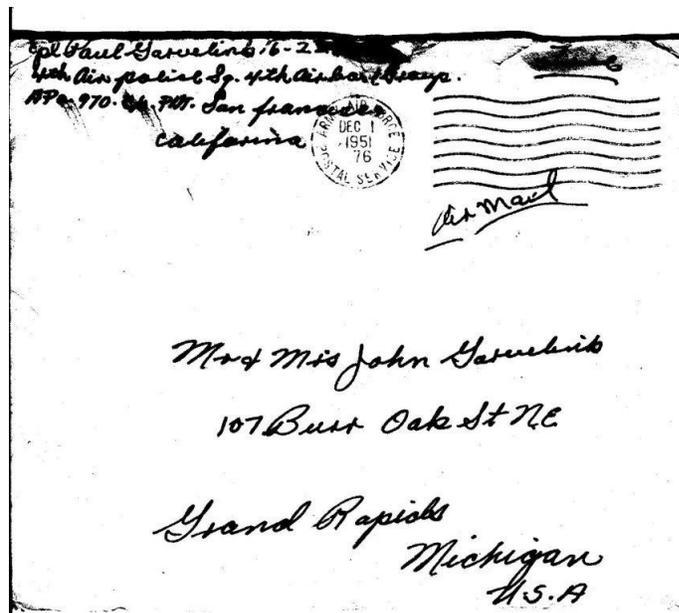
"As much as I love you and mother and would want to be buried at home... you must promise me you will leave me where I die, dad. I don't look for it, but God knows when I will die and when my time comes he will take care of me, dad. You have told me that many times, dad.

"So, I wish to be left here. I don't look for it. But it might come. If I must die for my country to make it safe for you and mother and my son, I will gladly give my life for that.

"Dad I miss you very much," he wrote. "I miss hearing you talk, the way you walk and just to look at you. I am ready to leave Korea and to leave when my time is up."

Garvelink, who was writing from Kimpo Air Base in Korea on November 25, 1951, then shifted from the unknown to the immediate: "It is now 8 above zero here and

the wind is blowing up to 30 miles an hour and that is cold. I have warm clothing except for warm socks. I could use some heavy wool socks if I don't have some on the way."



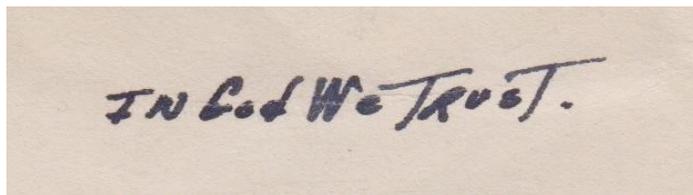
Free-franked cover with an Army Air Force Postal Service cancel on Dec. 1, 1951 sent from Kimpo Air Force Base in Korea (APO 970).

He ended his letter by conveying best wishes to two male friends — one of whom he described as "the life of a party" and the other as "quite a guy" — plus "anyone else in the church that you might think would care to have me say hello."

"Good bye. God bless you and keep you. Your loving son in Korea. Paul."

The letter was enclosed with a “Season’s Greetings” card that he signed: “From your loving son, Paul. I wish all the happiness in the world.”

The free-franked letter addressed to John and Josephine Garvelink in Grand Rapids, Michigan, was canceled Dec. 1, 1951, with an Army Air Force Postal Service cancel. On the back of the cover, Garvelink printed: “In God We Trust.”



Gravelink’s inscribed: “In God We Trust” on the back of the letter to his parents in Michigan.

In context, Garvelink’s letter was written one week after peace talks had resumed at Panmunjom, Korea, between the United Nations and Communist forces. Despite this lull in military action, Garvelink began his handwritten, two-page letter by answering a previous question from his father: “In answer to your letter about killing, I am afraid men will be killing each other.”

Aftermath

Cpl. Garvelink, who was about to turn 24 years old when he wrote the letter, did not die in Korea. According to files of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs available through Ancestry.com, Garvelink was born December 21, 1927, and died February 15, 1990, in Los Angeles, California, at the age of 62.

VA files list Garvelink as serving in the Navy, the Army, and the Air Force, but there is a discrepancy in his service dates. VA records available through Ancestry.com list his service in the Navy during 1945 and 1946, in the Army from 1947 through 1949, and in the Air Force from 1953 into 1955. There is no indication that he was in military service in 1951 when he wrote the letter in Korea. Efforts to find obituary information or to locate members of his family in 2016 were unsuccessful.

Even if Garvelink had died in Korea, it would have been unusual for his body to have remained there. A Korea War Monument was erected at Busan (formerly Pusan), Korea, in 1951. This is the only United Nations memorial cemetery in Korea. It contains 2,300 graves of service members from 11 countries, but only 36 are from the United States.

MPHS President Ed Dubin and his wife visited the UN cemetery in 2014 and participated in a memorial ceremony. “The ceremony was well done,” recalled Dubin. “As I remember we were the only westerner spectators. My wife was interviewed by a student reporter from a local college radio station. She got to explain that her stepfather was a

Marine tank commander and was involved in the Chosin Reservoir retreat.”

According to the American Battle Monuments Commission: “The United States contributed the greatest number of persons to the conflict, 1.7 million, of which 33,739 were battle deaths. Most were reinterred in the United States.” (www.abmc.gov).

Sources:

Garvelink’s letter was found in philatelic material donated to the Rocky Mountain Philatelic Library in 2016.

Records available from the state of California, the U.S. Veterans Affairs, and from U.S. school yearbooks available through Ancestry.com.

American Battle Monuments Commission (www.abmc.gov).

Various Wikipedia entries concerning the war in Korea.

Acknowledgements:

Thanks to genealogist Duane Kniebes for research assistance, and to Ed Dubin and Dave Kent of the MPHS for information concerning the UN cemetery in Korea.

Disney Animators, the 1943 Christmas Seal and the WWII Nisei Internees

by Thomas Richards & Regis Hoffman

(Editor’s Note: A version of this article was previously run in The Seal News – the Journal of the Christmas Seal and Charity Stamp Society (CS&CSS)).

The juxtaposition of the controversial internment of Japanese-Americans during WWII, the 1943 Christmas Seals and Disney animators seems strange but this is an unusual piece of WWII collateral material being covered.

Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt authorized the forced relocation of Japanese Americans living on the West Coast with Executive Order 9066. There were ten “relocation centers.” Granada, Colorado was one of them and the sole one built on private land. It was one of the smallest of the War Relocation Centers. It was run by the War Relocation Authority (WRA)¹

Granada’s unofficial name became Camp Amache, named after a Cheyenne chief’s daughter who was the wife of John Powers. Camp Amache was located in Powers county. The name change was a result of a mail mix-up between the town of Granada and the camp.

Lil’ Neebo (little Nisei boy – which means second generation boy) was created by Chris Ishii (died 2001), who

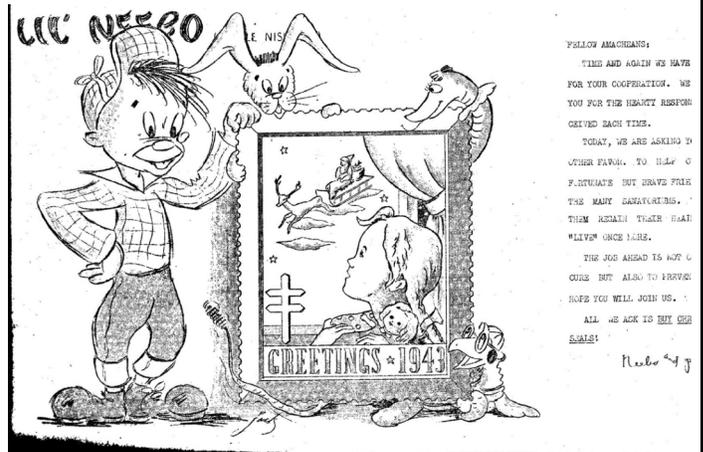
began as a Disney artist in 1940. He was among the tens of thousands of Japanese Americans who were forcibly removed from their homes and sent to internment camps. (Scooby-Doo designer Iwao Takamoto, who recently passed away, was also among those interned).

He created the character Aca, (an interned Japanese-American boy) for the Granada camp's newspaper - *Granada Pioneer*. After nearly a year in Camp Amache, Ishii was accepted into the US Army in December 1942. After Chris entered the Army, the character continued to be drawn for the paper by other interned Disney artists, as well as used in puppet shows at the camps.

Figure 1 (cropped) shows page 7 of the Dec. 11 1943 *Granada Pioneer*, the camp's newspaper. The page covered camp happenings; movies, births, arrivals, etc.

The reverse side (un-numbered), **Figure 2**, (cropped slightly) shows a cartoon like person, Lil' Neebo, along with animal characters and a sketch of the 1934 Christmas Seal. The statement to the right of the sketch reads:

once more.
The job ahead is not only to cure but also to prevent.
We hope you will join us.
All we ask is BUY CHRISTMAS SEALS.
Neebo and pals.



Over the spring of 1942, some 120,000 west coast Japanese Americans were "evacuated" and placed into temporary "assembly centers" before being transferred to more permanent and isolated "relocation centers" like Granada. They were run by the War Relocation Authority, the government body responsible for administration of the incarceration program. Each person was only allowed to bring one bag, therefore, many people were forced to sell what they could or give away their possessions, including pets, before being forced out.



Figure 3 is a view of the Amache Camp

In Feb. 1999, the Justice Department closed the books on a \$1.6 billion reparations program for ethnic Japanese interned in American camps during World War II. The redress program made \$20,000 payments to 82,210 Japanese Americans or their heirs. The Granada Relocation Center (Camp Amache), a National Historic Landmark, is located on CO-Rd 23 5/10, two miles west of Granada, CO, and is open to the public. It is located on the high

FELLOW AMACHEANS:

Time and time again we have asked for your cooperation. We thank you for the hearty response received each time.

Today, we are asking you another favor. To help our unfortunate but brave friends in the many sanitoriums. To see them regain their health and "Live"

plains near the south eastern corner of Colorado.

The legacy of the internees has outlasted the temporary buildings that housed them during the days of WW II. The Nisei always considered themselves Americans. Lil' Neebo became one of their icons. Yet another icon was the fame gained by American born Nisei soldiers serving in the armed forces of their homeland. Thirty-one Amache men gave their lives in the war, including one Medal of Honor recipient. The 442nd/100th was the most highly decorated unit for its size and length of service in the history of the U.S. Armed Forces, fighting in Italy, France and Germany, receiving eight Presidential Unit Citations, 21 Medals of Honor, 52 Distinguished Service Crosses, 559 Silver Stars, 4,000 Bronze Stars, and 9,486 Purple Hearts.² For more information on the center go to: <http://www.amache.org/amache-museum/>

Special thanks to:

1. John Hopper, Amache Preservation Society, Preserve America Stewards of Amache ¹https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Granada_War_Relocation_Center
2. <http://www.amache.org/military/>

Figure 4 Chris Ishii's enthusiastic Neebo.



APO/DPO/FPO Openings and Closings

By David Kent

These APO, FPO and DPO actions were announced in the *Postal Bulletin* between March and July, 2017. Announcements advise Postal Service staff that they may now accept mail addressed to numbers listed as "Active," and may no longer accept mail addressed to numbers listed as "Closed." Actual dates of operation of offices may differ from the dates given. Usually the effective date of an action is the publication date of that issue of the *Postal Bulletin*. Exceptions would be marked with an asterisk*.

TYPE	#	ACTION	DATE
APO	09055	Close	7/20/17
APO	09143	Close	4/27/17
APO	09161	Close	3/30/17
APO	09314	Open	4/13/17
APO	09317	Open	4/13/17
APO	09497	Open	3/30/17
FPO	09543	Close	5/11/17
DPO	09601	Close	3/30/17
DPO	09614	Open	6/22/17
FPO	09747	Close	3/16/17
APO	09800	Open	4/27/17
DPO	09807	Close	3/30/17
APO	34044	Open	3/30/17
APO	96273	Open	4/13/17
APO	96297	Open	4/13/17

APO 09143 was assigned to the Army-Air Force Exchange Service warehouse in Giessen, Germany. The facility has been replaced by a more modern Europe distribution center at the Army Depot in Gemersheim, a project ten years in the making to relocate its stocks about 100 miles down the road from Giessen.

FPO 09543 was assigned to *USS Enterprise* (CVN-65), the world's first nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, commissioned in 1961 and decommissioned last February. Construction of a new carrier with this historic name has already been authorized.

FPO 09747 was noted on the latest absentee ballot deadline list as being in Gibraltar, and DPO 09807 in Kyrgyzstan. APO 09161 and DPO 09601 were not on that list. Codes 09143 and 09800 were listed twice during this period; the earliest date is reported here, and APO 09055 was listed for Germany.

LOOKING FOR

This space is RESERVED for YOU, at no cost, for a one issue announcement

LOOKING FOR: Collector seeking stamps/covers postmarked "Jedwabne" during the 1938 - 45 time period." Carl Barna, cbarna@hotmail.com

LOOKING FOR: Covers, etc., etc., related to the Thomas Cook wartime undercover mail schemes, WWI & WWII. Ed Fraser - EdFraser@gmail.com

LOOKING FOR A Dealer & Appraisals: U.S. Postal History only. Don Tocher www.postalnet.com/dontocher
Appraisals for any philatelic items—Don Tocher: <http://www.postalnet.com/dontocher/Articles/appraisal.termsgeneric.htm>
U.S. Classics;ASDA, APS, CSA, MPHS, USPCS
[617-686-0288](tel:617-686-0288) www.postalnet.com/dontocher

On the Show Circuit

by Alan Warren

[Note: The purpose of this column is to bring to the attention of MPHS members the awards obtained in recent shows for exhibits that are basically about military postal history. This may include exhibits by non-members. While there are many non-military related exhibits by members, these are not recorded here.]

Wayne Youngblood won a large vermeil at the National Topical Stamp Show in Milwaukee in June for his "Lost Almost: The Los Alamos, N.M. Post Office and WWII."

At the Minnesota Stamp Expo in Crystal, Minn., in July, **Phil Rhoad** received a large gold, the APS 1940-1980 medal of excellence, the ATA first award, and the Collectors Club of Chicago award for "The Murder of Lidice." **Philipp Mueller** won large vermeils for "Foreign Volunteers with the German Military during World War II" and "The German Afrika Korps during World War II." A vermeil and the ATA one-frame award went to **Phil Rhoad** for "Japan Commemorates Pearl Harbor."

Michael Dixon received a prix d'honneur at APS StampShow in Richmond in August when his "British WWII Prisoner-of-War Air Mail Stationery" was shown in the Champion of Champions. In the open competition **Greg Galletti** won a gold and a United Nations Philately International silver award for "The League of Nations – The War Years." **Wayne Youngblood** took a gold also for "Lost Almost: The Los Alamos, N.M. Post Office and WW II." **George Kramer** received a vermeil for "Telegraphy in the Civil War."

Robert Toombs won a vermeil and the Toop Military award at the Postal History Society of Canada's Symposium in July held in Hamilton, Ontario, for his "RAF Ferry Command Dorval Military Mail to and from Global War Fronts." At the same show **Christopher Anstead** received a large silver for "The Royal Flying Corps in Deseronto 1917-18 Per Ardua Ad Astra," and **Don Hedger** took a silver for "A Soldier's Postcards – Mailed from the Somme-Flanders in WW I."

Jon Johnson won a gold, the best military exhibit award, and the Philatelic Specialists Society of Canada medal at the BNAPS/CALTAPEX show in Calgary, Alberta, Canada in September for "WWI Canadian Army Nursing Sisters Serving Overseas." **N. O. Good** took a large vermeil at the Balpex show in Maryland in September for "A Message to the Enemy."

Phil Miller won a vermeil and the Omaha Philatelic Society President's award in September at the Omaha Stamp Show for "Foreign Volunteers with the German Military during WW II." He also received a silver for "German Afrika Korps." At the same show **Steve Henderson** garnered a large vermeil and the MPHS award with his

"Hawaiian Sea Frontier."

At the NOJEX show in Newark, N.J., in September, **Daniel Ryterband** won a large gold, and the MPHS award for "A Country Divided: Effects of the American Civil War on the Mails." **Henry Laessig** received a gold for "The 16 Feldpost Expositur Cancels of the 1879-1908 Austrian Occupation of Novi Pazar," and **Don Chafetz** won a bronze with his "Morristown, N.J., Military Capital of American Revolutionary War."

Eric Knapp took a gold, the MPHS award, and the United States Possessions Philatelic Society award at Seapex in Seattle, Wash., in September with his "Alaska at War: World War II in Alaska and Western Canada." A large gold and the Collectors Club of Chicago award went to **Louis Fiset** for "1871 Commune of Paris Prisoners' Mail." Fiset also took another large gold for "Japanese Americans in World war II, 1942-1946." **Sheryll Ruecker** received a vermeil and the AAPE creativity award for "The 1893 French Military Franchise Essays of the New Hebrides—A Closer Look."

Michael Dixon received a large vermeil at Milcopen in Milwaukee in September with his "Boer War POW Camps in Ceylon 1900-1902." A gold and the BNAPS award at the Greater Houston Stamp Show in Texas in September went to **Larry Ballantyne** for "Postal History of the Canadian 'War Issues' of 1942-1949." **Labron Harris** received a vermeil and an AAPE award of honor with his "Two Cent First Bureau on Mail to and from the Philippines during the Spanish American War."

Philatelic Militaria

by Alan Warren

[The following articles appeared in recent issues of a variety of journals and may be of interest to military postal history collectors. Copies of the complete articles can usually be obtained through the American Philatelic Research Library, 100 Match Factory Place, Bellefonte PA 16823.]

Robert Rose discusses the Hoboken, N.J., postmarks during WW I in the July-August *Collectors Club Philatelist*. The town was the embarkation point for troops heading abroad. He shows their use on Red Cross "safe arrival" post cards.

Ian Robertson profiles the battleship USS *North Carolina* in the July 1 issue of *Canadian Stamp News*. She was decommissioned in 1947 and then in 1961 moved to Wilmington, N.C., where it has undergone renovation to the point where parts of it are available for self-guided tours. She had an operating post office until a few years ago.

Canada's Merchant Navy during WW II is the subject of **Jon Johnson's** article in the July newsletter of the Canadian Military Mail Study Group. He discusses the Merchant Seamen's Manning Pool, freighters and passenger ships, and the volunteer citizens who served

on them in the war effort. In the same issue the late **Colin Pomfret** shows some of the correspondence of Wireless Operator Charles E. Walkey who served on several Merchant Marine vessels.

David Piercey focuses on the Canadian Forces in Alaska during WW II in the July/August issue of *The Canadian Philatelist*. The RCAF established a unit on Annette Island that used U.S. postal facilities for its mail. Canada also supported the United States in its war with the Japanese in the Aleutian Islands.

Gavin Fayer reviews the effect of the WW 2 bombing of Britain on the handling of mail in two articles in the July-August *London Philatelist*. He shows the handstamp marking "Delayed Through Enemy Action" and also lists cancellers that were reserved for use as mobile post offices for emergency purposes during the raids. Other handstamps were "Damaged by Enemy Action" and marks indicating damage due to fire/water.

In the July-September *BNA Topics*, the late **Colin Pomfret** describes mail associated with the Canadian air squadrons during their missions in England in WW I. **Kevin Lowther** continues his examination of World War I in the July-August *The American Stamp Dealer & Collector*. This time he looks at advertising and its effect on consumers. Some of the advertisements he shows that used WW I associations promote photographic film, U.S. savings stamps and bonds, patriotic dolls, life insurance, and American flags.

In the September *USCS Log*, **Larry Nelson** discusses the WW II German merchant raiders *Komet* and *Orion*. These converted and armed merchant vessels wreaked havoc with Allied ships. He shows mail associated with both vessels.

Russian censorship in Tornio during WW I is the subject of **Søren Chr. Jensen's** article in the September *London Philatelist*. The town was situated across the river from Haparanda, Sweden, and mail going out of Russia to other countries was routed this way. The author's focus is primarily on mail from Finland to Sweden, Norway, and Denmark. He shows a number of examples with a variety of censorship marks and labels.

In the July issue of *Trencito 2*, published by the Peru Philatelic Study Circle, editor **David Paddock and Ed Fraser** describe a cover sent from Peru to Norway. It was mailed in November 1941 and went via the United States, where it was censored and held by the Office of Censorship until after the war. It arrived in Norway in 1945. **Ed Fraser** also has an article in the same issue about undercover mail, especially the scheme operated by Thomas Cook and Son.

Paul Albright and Sergio Lugo brought to my attention a useful resource for those studying turn-of-the-century postal history of India. In 1921, Geoffrey

Clarke authored a book, *The Post Office of India and its Story*. It is around 300 pages and is available at nominal cost either as an e-book or on-demand hardbound edition. Of particular interest is Appendix H titled "The Work of the Field Post Office between 1867 and 1912." This 22-page appendix provides a brief summary of 38 foreign military expeditions conducted by the Indian Army during that time period. The recent versions of the book can be found with an online search, or by using a provider/locator like Abe Books (<https://www.abebooks.com/>).

William DiPaolo clarifies the Coama provisional used in Puerto Rico in 1898 in the third quarter issue of *Possessions*, journal of the United States Possessions Philatelic Society. Several covers are known where the provisional is tied with a Military Station No. 1 postmark. However, they are not considered as sanctioned by the U.S. post office for valid franking. The sender in these cases was a known collector, Capt. R.D. Potts. The provisional was used as a local post as documented by other existing covers.

The August issue of *War Times*, journal of the BNAPS World War II Study Group, carries an analysis by **Charles LaBlonde** of a censored 1944 cover from Millville Boularderie, Nova Scotia to the International Red Cross Committee in Geneva. It bears both Canadian and German resealing tapes. In another article in the same issue, several covers are shown from the Custodian's Office of Canada's Secretary of State during WW II. This office served as the Custodian of enemy property like dividends, interest, insurance, and bequests.

LA POSTA: Journal of American Postal History

The postal history journal "La Posta" was created and published for over 40 years by the late Richard W. Helbock. Currently, this invaluable postal history publication remains active and is expanding. It is now produced quarterly by La Posta Publications. The editor is Peter Martin. It is considered one of the foremost postal history publications in the world. Each issue is full of excellent articles on U.S. postal history, covering all eras, and all parts of the country. Contact Information: Peter Martin, Editor, POB 6074, Fredericksburg VA 22403

e-mail: pmartin2525@yahoo.com

COURIER MAIL

Revolutionary War Cover

By Ravi Vora

(Editor's Note: Another new columnist to our pages is Ravi Vora of Arvada, Colorado. Ravi is a specialist in Indian mails and a strong researcher into the diplomatic/courier mail of the United States. He has had a couple of small articles in these pages in the past two years).

The year is 1778. American rebel forces have been fighting the British for slightly more than 2 years in the colonies of New England, New York and the mid-Atlantic. That fighting has settled down into a stalemate, as the American revolutionary army licks its wounds from defeats in 1776 and 1777, and the British Army attempts to formulate a plan to outflank and divide the rebel forces.

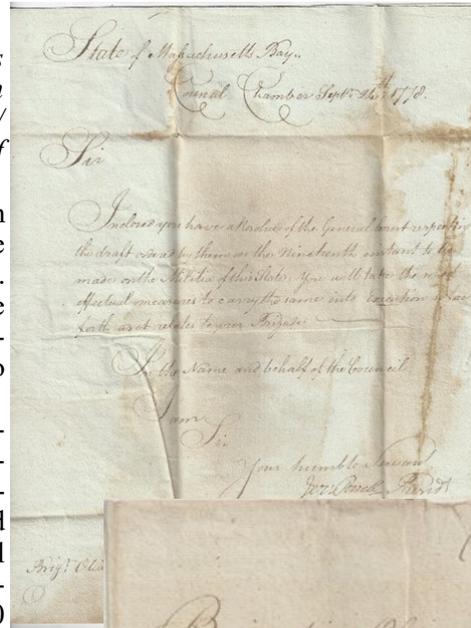
Those colonial rebel forces consist of two parts. Namely, the weak and outclassed national army under the command of General George Washington, then trying to recover and strengthen its military bearing in the area around Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. The other arm of the rebel forces are the various colonial militia. These are the remnants of the militias established by the British from 1630 on for defense of the colonial territory. The colonial militia evolved into the armed forces maintained by each rebel colony for the protection of the lands of the colony, not yet quite states in the evolving American political landscape.

Such militias defended the colonies lands from invasion, fought against the Indians within their respective lands and were comprised of the colonies citizenry. Militias were generally comprised of frontiersmen, farmers, and townspeople who volunteered to defend the territory. Those volunteers were called to duty as the situation dictated, and could be expected to do so willingly. Where insufficient forces could be mustered to defend the territory, a local "draft" could be relied upon to fill in the ranks. While those volunteers could be expected to be paid, service was generally of short duration, with the understanding that service generally did not extend beyond the colonies boundaries, and the volunteer would be released upon completion of his service - whether voluntarily or involuntarily. Volunteer militia units could be expected to vary in size over given periods, as farmers and craftsmen had to return home to maintain their livelihoods.

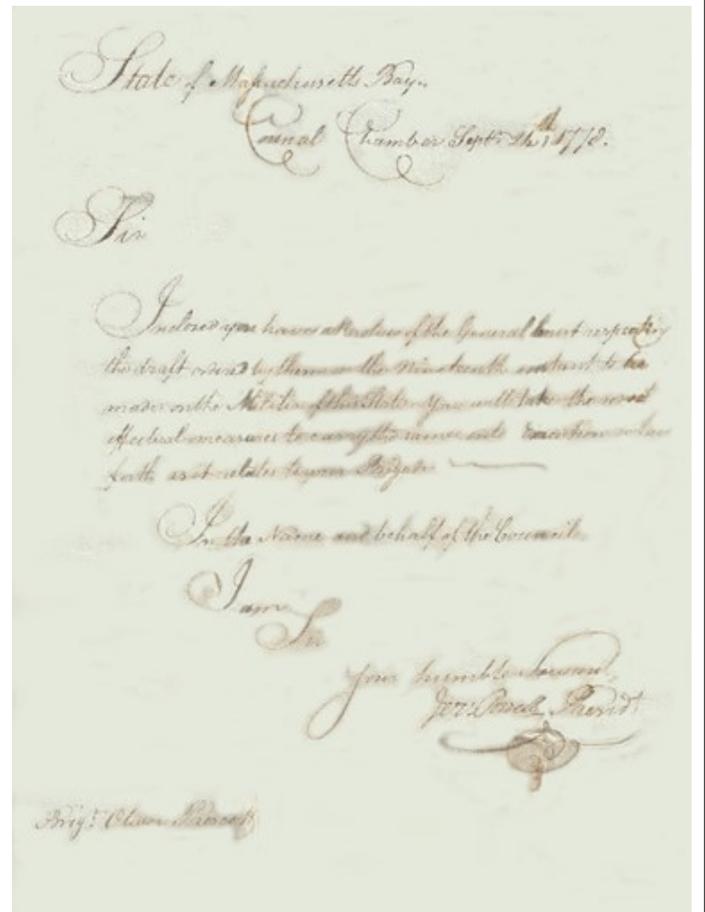
Such was the case with the President of the Massachusetts General Council in 1779, when its President (Jeremiah Prescott), the Governor, in effect, of the rebel colony of Massachusetts wrote his letter to Brigadier Oliver Prescott, then in command of the 4th Middlesex Brigade. His letter was "On Public Service" the manuscript free frank accorded the Massachusetts General Court by itself. In the absence of a postal service, the Massachusetts rebel colony had to devise its own postal system to carry on communications within its borders, and with other colonies of the rebel alliance. Example of that correspondence sent to Brigadier Prescott, is shown below.

Figure 1 shows the letter in its natural state, with creases, folds, discoloration throughout. In order to make it legi-

ble, all such folds, creases, smudges, toning and discoloration have been digitally removed in **Figure 3—below**..



The letter basically authorizes General Prescott to defend the area he is in and, if necessary, to raise the complement of his militia by a draft.



SOLICITATIONS for 2017

(Moan and Groan as you deem appropriate)

- Bob Swanson (IT) has gotten several MPHS website presentations **on portable devices**. Check them out and let us know how they are working.
- In time for the 2017 Holiday Season **the Holiday Cards of WW I webpage and its 450 postcards** We continue to accept new submissions, and work on this unique resource. Show them at your club meetings using your Wi-Fi connectivity and projectors.

Happy Holidays & A Merry Christmas

FORCES POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Established in 1952, the Forces Postal History Society was formed to bring together the many collectors interested in the postal history of the Armed Forces of all countries, (and United Nations), at all times. For info, contact: Hon. Secretary: Michael Dobbs, 52 Leamington Avenue, BROMLEY Kent BR1 5BL, UNITED KINGDOM, www.forcespostalhistorysociety.org.uk



MPHS Board Nominations 2018 –2020

Notice of the nominees for the MPHS Board is hereby given for the period 2018 through 2020

MPHS By-Laws (para. 5) provide that a call for nominations be made —this was done in Issue # 3, 2017. A nominating committee met in September and October, and published the list of nominees in this issue (# 4, 2017). If there is only one nominee for office voting is waived. Terms begin on January 1.

Nominees for the Board are as follows:

President: Ed Dubin
 Vice President: Bob Zeigler (General Counsel)
 Secretary: *Vacant*
 Treasurer: Ed Fisher

Directors:

Awards Coordinator: Jeff Curtis
 Auction Manager: Roger Santala
 Bulletin Editor: *Vacant*
 Convention Coordinator: David Kent
 Literature Manager: Regis Hoffman
 Past President: Tony Brooks

General Counsel: Bob Zeigler

A COPPERHEAD'S Letter of 1863 in the American Civil War by Sergio Lugo and Van Jennings



A chance discovery at a paper ephemera dealer's box of miscellaneous materials provides the background to this "contrarian" view of the American Civil War.

Its "contrarian" view stems from the fact that the letter (illustrated on the next page) was written by a "copperhead," an infrequently heard term in today's jargon. But in its day—namely 1863 to post Civil War days—the term was clearly understood to indicate a southern sympathizer in the civilian or military ranks of the northern states. In today's parlance, the word is akin to the term "fifth column" of World War II fame.

The letter formed the enclosure to the illustrated cover shown. The Branderths Building at Canal St. and Broadway in Manhattan, New York City was the subject of the illustration. Mailed on July 22, 1863, it was received on July 25th (and recorded on the reversed), and answered on August 1st. As can be seen, it was franked with the George Washington regular issue of 1862.

The dreadful condition of the cover is illustrated on the next page. It was basically in four parts, which the author temporarily fixed with archival tape. That fragmentation of the letter undoubtedly explains why the cover had not been snatched up earlier by collectors of any kind - as the fragments could not be intelligibly read and definitely attributed to an individual with southern sympathies—a likely scarce example of potentially treasonous views in the midst of the American civil war.

The writer admonished Will Nutt, a lawyer in Zanesville, Ohio, to destroy the letter because of its contents and potential consequences for the author. Obviously, that did not happen and the author's "copperhead" sentiments managed to be conveyed to our readers nearly 150 years after the end of the Civil War.

How are you "Hooker"? hi-tigh. - New York July 21st 1863

My Dear Friend Hutt,

My time being unoccupied, (nothing new) while laying off in the arm chair musing on the past, my thoughts reverted to you, and I seized the opportunity in the "Empire City" (and indeed all over the state) lately - the people of this village, for once took upon themselves to consider the legality of the Administrations acts (impudence) and their consideration suggested that they act according to the laws of the Constitution, rather than the tyrannic mandate of a "Rail Splitter", so we had a little "muss" here in the way of burning a few blocks of Public Buildings & the destruction of the enrolment lists, an attempt to sack the Tribune Office (I wish they had succeeded) hanging of a few negroes whom Greeley had taught their superiority to we poor whites; & a big row generally. - Expect another soon

All the folks in J. City are well as far as I know, Eugene boards to Grove St. where you was, - is sweet on the Meekers girl, - fool! - Better burn this letter in case of a French Revolution it might cost me my precious neck. Write soon -

Your friend J.L. Robinson

References in J.L. Robinson's letter are explained at the end of the letter's recapitulation provided below.

"How are you "John Hooker" New York July 21, 1863

My Dear Friend Hutt:

My time being unoccupied (nothing new) while laying off in the arm chair musing on the past, my thoughts reverted to you and commenced this letter to you. Strange scenes have occurred in the "Empire City" (and indeed the entire state) lately - the people of this village, for once took upon themselves to consider the legality of the Administrations acts (impudence) and their consideration suggested that they act according to the laws of the Constitution, rather than the tyrannic mandate of a "rail splitter", so we had a little "muss" here in the way of burning a few blocks of public buildings and the destruction of the enrollment lists, an attempt to sack the Tribune Office (I wish they had succeeded), hanging of a few negroes whom Greeley had taught their superiority to we poor whites; and a big row generally. Expect another soon.

All the folks in Jersey City are well as far as I know; Eugene boards to Grove St. where you was - is sweet on the Meekers girl - fool! Better burn this letter, in case of a French Revolution it might cost me my precious neck.

Write soon.

Your friend J.L. Robinson, 294 Canal St,

COMMENTARY: Robinson is speaking of the draft riots in New York City in July 1863 that resulted in the mobile-

zation of thousands of Federal troops to suppress the rioting, restore order, and prevent any rebellion against the Lincoln administration's conduct of the war,

- Empire City = New York City
- "this village" = New York City
- "they act according to the Constitution" = against the conduct of the war, as the war was unconstitutional in the author's view.
- "rail splitter" = Abraham Lincoln, the winner of the 3 way race for the Presidency in 1860.
- "muss" = rioting
- "burning a few blocks of buildings" = most prominently along 5th Avenue and Park Avenue.
- "destruction of the enrollment lists" = enrollment lists used for the draft.
- "Tribune Office" = New York Tribune newspaper located at Nassau Street and Broadway along Press Row.
- "Greeley" = Horace Greeley, owner of the N.Y. Tribune and prominent advocate of "Go West young man"
- "hanging of a few negroes" = the most prominent victims of the Irish immigrant anger that led to the draft riots resulting from the large number of Irish enlisted into the ranks of the Union army, many just off the boat.

CLASSIFIED ADS

For details and to submit all copy with payment (payable on a U.S. bank) contact editor, Sergio Lugo, lugopspe@q.com.

MPHS MEMBER ONLY ADS: for military postal history offered for sale or specialty items being sought.

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- Situated on this page.

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- 10% discount applies for multiple, consecutive insertions of the same display advertisement.
- Ads situated together on single pages of the *BULLETIN*.



FOR SALE: a nice selection of books on World War 2 airmails. See my website at: www.aerophilately.net. Ken Sanford, 613 Championship Dr., Oxford, CT 6478. kaerophil@gmail.com 18/3

WANTED: Postal history of (1) U.S. 2nd Inf. Regt. (1791-now), (2) 1st Inf. Div. (1917-now), or (3) Social Welfare Organizations of WWI. S. Lugo: 303-691-0393; lugopspe@q.com 18/2

FOR SALE: *YOUR UNIFORM IS YOUR PASS: Soldier and Sailor Welfare Relief in WWI.* 5 of 12 completed vols.: American Library Association; Jewish Welfare Board; Salvation Army; National Lutheran Commission; National League for Woman's Service; Softbound, saddle stitched, 60 - 85 ppg. ea.; \$25 per vol., \$125 for set; postage paid: Sergio Lugo, 1190 S. Grape, Denver, CO. 80246; 303-691-0393; lugopspe@q.com 18/2

TYKES may make a mess of it. We don't!! Place your classified ads with the MPHS Bulletin .

Military Postal History Society



Check the premiere military postal historian's offerings of *Mike White* at mikewhiteuk.com



TRANSVAAL-GB: 1900 BOER War CONSULAR SERVICE USA envelope TAXED & TAX Deferred

Cover illustrations are from my website, where you will find more items/prices.

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Mike White
P.O. Box 19
Sattahip Post Office
Chonburi 20180
Thailand
Email:
mikewhiteuk@aol.com



GB... 1917 WRECK MAIL from SS NORWEGIAN or Armed Merchant Cruiser KARMALA.

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OUR MEMBERS ELSEWHERE:

David Thompson's comprehensive article: *RPO's Across America: A Century of "Running the Mail" on America's Rail*, comprises the entire 30 page issue of the National Railway Historical Society Bulletin, Vol. 30, # 2. Pages 27 to 30 are devoted to the railway mail service in the A.E.F.

Rear Guard Cover of the Month - Wines and Cigarettes by David Kent

April 25 (1918)

USS Antigone

% Postmaster New York

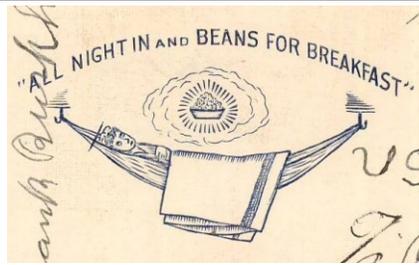
Dear Brother:

I got your letter the day I left the states so I could not ans it right away. I have been to France. We are out at sea now. I don't know when we will hit port. Well, France look pretty good but not as good as the states. I had one liberty in France and it was about enough. I tried to get a meal and all I could get was spuds and egg. No bread. One could buy beer and wine but it did not start good. I only drink one bottle.

It took us 14 day to go over. I don't know how long it will take us to go back. I haven't been seasick yet. I am working in the engin room now I am oiling now. I got rated to a second (2) class fireman. I get forty one (41) dollars a month now. I had (52) fifty two dollars coming to me last pay day.

Well what are you doing for health. Still at the same old job. I hope they keep me in the engin room. You don't have to work hard and you have a good chance to learn something. Oh yes going over to France all I done was to wash paint. Got to sleep ever night. What do you think of that.

Have you heard from Harley or Earl. The last time I heard they was all well. They haven't heard from me since March.



Well Glen I hope this find you well, and having a good time. I am doing fine and dandy. Now dont wait to long to write. I will write ever time I get a chance. We are not in one place very long at a time. Be sure and ans

soon. With luck and best wishes, your loving brother.

PS (added at top) Landed OK. Had a fine trip. Hope will fine you well be sure and ans soon with love Frank.

Commentary: Wartime correspondence between brothers, the sender a sailor on a troop transport shuttling between the U.S. and Europe, while his brother was a musician in a Marine band at the Mare Island naval base in California. Postage paid at the three-cent wartime rate, WW I free mail having been limited to servicemen stationed in Europe.

The writer's ship was the *USS Antigone*, one of a number of German-built ships that ironically carried American troops and supplies to Europe to fight, and win, the war against Germany. She was built in 1900 as *SS Neckar* for the North German Lloyd shipping line, a combination passenger and cargo ship. For more than a decade she carried thousands of emigrants to a new life in America, but when war broke out in 1914 her crew realized that they were a target for British Royal Navy warships. She sought refuge in Baltimore, a neutral country port where she was interned under international rules of war.

When the U.S. entered the war in April of 1917, that neutrality vanished. She was seized and turned over to the Navy, which refitted her as a troop transport and renamed the *USS Antigone*. She carried 16,526 troops to Europe, along with a variety of supplies. She brought more than 22,000 vets back home. In September, 1919 she was turned over to the Army Transportation Service, and sold in 1921 to the U.S. Lines, which operated her as *SS Potomac*. The postwar years were difficult with labor strife, devastated European industries no longer producing goods demanded in the U.S., and restrictive immigration laws. Oil was replacing coal as the fuel of choice, making old obsolete. The shipbreakers got her in 1927.

Editor's Note: Antigone is the heroine of tragedies by Sophocles and Euripedes. The postcard was distributed by the Jewish Welfare Board for Soldier and Sailor Relief to returning vets.



Say, Glen the next time you get your pictures taken send me one. You might send one of your girl pictures too. If you get a extry one tell her hello for me any way.

We have moving pictures show ever night now. Have some good show to. Going to France the old boat rock so we had to eat on the deck, the table slid all over the deck. I think I will have to wash my bag and hammack tomorrow. I wash some of my clothes to day.

Well this is Monday and still at sea. I wash my hammack and bag Sunday and done a good jobe.

