

## Back Issue of Military Postal History Society 'Bulletin': (Bulletin Win 2007)

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>

### **List of Index Items for This Publication**

*Mail from Foreign Senders to the AEF*

*World War I AEF Update*

*Fort Missoula Alien Detention Center - Revisited*

*US Army Censorship, 1941 - 42*

*US Swiss Mail of World War II*

*Port Chicago - Explosion*

*CPNY on Forwarded Mail*

*German Submariner POW in Canada*

*German Submariner POW in Canada*

*CPNY on Forwarded Mail*

*Norwegian POWs in WW I*

*Undercover Addresses of WWII*

*US Army Censorship, 1941 - 42*

*US Swiss Mail of World War II*



# Military Postal History Society

# BULLETIN

Volume 46, Number 1

WINTER 2007

## Mail from Foreign Senders to the AEF

by Alfred F. Kugel

Considering that the United States sent 2 million men overseas during World War I and its aftermath, it is not surprising that some 50 million pieces of mail (as estimated by Hennan Sanford in 1940) was received by the troops by the time the Armistice was signed. However, it has always seemed incongruous that so little of it came from anywhere but back home in the U.S.

Based on personal observation from examining literally tens of thousands of American Expeditionary Force covers over several decades, I would say that well over 99% of all inbound cards and letters came from the U.S.A. Moreover, I would estimate that a very high proportion (more than 90%) of those from other countries came from Britain, Canada and France, which obviously doesn't leave much for the rest of the world.

Once this realization sunk in, I began actively to seek out examples of mail to the AEF from foreign destinations. Yes,

one can find such items, but it requires a lot of searching for

rather modest results, with a total of perhaps a dozen and a half examples having been found during several decades. Perhaps the most exotic of those was sent from a member of the Polish Legion at Le Mans, France to a doughboy at nearby APO 762, which is shown as Figure 1. A second example of an unusual source is the cover from Tunisia to a Sergeant in the U.S. Air Service at Nantes – see Figure 2.

Why should such mail be so hard to find? There are probably several reasons, but the dominant one is that only a tiny percentage of all inbound covers to AEF members were ever saved. Clearly, the men in the field had no convenient

way to store them, and much of what might have been saved at one point likely deteriorated as a result of the low quality of paper available during the war. In addition, most of this

*Continued on Page 4.*

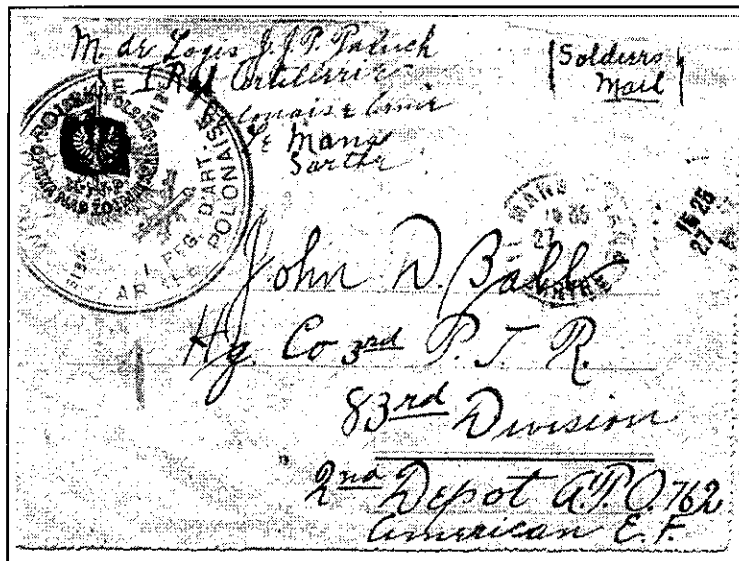


Figure 1. Unfranked "Soldier's Mail" cover sent by a member of the Polish Legion fighting for the French to an American at APO 762 in Le Mans.

### Read About It....

APO/FPO Openings/Closings.....	17
Fort Stevens, Oregon (Bob Kinsley).....	6
CPNY on Forwarded Mail (Charles Throver).....	8
German Submariner POW in Canada (Robert Henderson).....	9
Mail from Foreign Senders to the AEF (Alfred Kugel).....	1

Port Chicago.....	24
Stars & Strife: Fort Missoula Alien Detention Center - Revisted (Thomas Richards & Regis Hoffman).....	7
World War I AEF Update (by the late Theo Van Dam).....	11
World War II Red Cross Message Sheets (Alan Morva).....	10



The Military Postal History Society (a non-profit corporation) was founded in 1937 as the War Cover Club. American Philatelic Society Unit #19. It promotes the study of the postal aspects of all wars and military actions of all nations.

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Manuscripts and illustrations for publication are welcome. Send all material to the editor. While due care will be taken, no responsibility is accepted for material submitted. Enclose a stamped addressed return envelope with correspondence.

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## President's Message

by Al Kugel

Congratulations are in order to our esteemed editor, Dave Kent, for successfully dealing with health problems and, at the same time compiling in the Fall 2006 edition one of the most interesting and informative *Bulletins* that I can remember. This effort is, of course, a true labor of love, and we are all deeply grateful that we have Dave to keep everyone informed as to what is going on in the Society as well as to publish an unusually wide variety of exciting and useful articles on military postal history subjects.

As some of you know, one of the philatelic "hats" that I wear is as General Chairman of CHICAGOPEX, a national-level show held in Arlington Heights, Ill. each fall. I would note that many philatelic shows in 2006 had problems in recruiting exhibits, dealers and, in a few cases, jury members. My best guess is that many in our hobby may have been afflicted by "philatelic burn-out" from a lot of effort being expended in the run up to and aftermath of the wonderful WASHINGTON 2006 show. A good deal of concentrated attention was required to make that exhibition a great success, including the effort required to prepare exhibits and carry out a myriad of other activities, not to mention its effect on stamp budgets and available vacation time. I believe that this should be less of a problem in the coming year and think that most collectors are looking forward to an exciting 2007.

In this regard, I call your attention to the fact that the next annual meeting of our Society will be at the INDYPEX show in Indianapolis on July 5 to 7, which should provide sufficient advance notice to those of you who might be considering exhibiting. Additional information about INDYPEX can be obtained from our VP, Tony Brooks, whose e-mail address appears in the adjacent listing.

In earlier editions of this column, I had asked if there was anyone out there who would be willing to take on the task of editing a new edition of our famous AEF Handbook, which is now completely sold out. Having received no response, I have decided that it would make sense to shift to some sort of Plan B. That is, if we can't undertake to do a new book, perhaps a number of different members would find it feasible to take on the updating of the available information on some specific aspect of the mail of the American Expeditionary Forces by writing articles.

It is my belief that if one is going to lead, it would provide a better example if they get out in front. On this basis, I have recently gotten up to speed on the writing of articles on various subjects, including ones entitled "American Prisoners of War in World War I" and "Release Birds: Notes on the Pigeon Section of the U.S. Signal Corps in World War I" which appeared in the Fall 2006 edition of the *Bulletin*, and "Railway Post Office Cancels of the AEF," which will appear in an upcoming issue.

In addition, another piece covering "Registered Mail of the American Expeditionary Forces 1917-1923" was published in the October 2006 edition of the *Postal History Journal*, and "Third Army & AFG Postmarks used in Germany 1919-1923," appeared in the November 2006 edition of the *German Postal Specialist*. I hope to be able to do more of these articles and strongly encourage others to provide updates on subjects that are of particular interest to them. Dave will be pleased to hear from you!

## Editor's Notes

David A. Kent

A lull in the arrival of long, detailed articles provides the opportunity for us to present some of the legacy left to us by the late Theo Van Dam, one of the world's acknowledged experts on the postal history of the American Expeditionary Forces in the First World War. His cleverly titled *Updates of the AEF*, which we published (as the War Cover Club) more than a decade ago. It's amazing that new material continues to surface from this conflict after nearly a century!

Other articles in this issue present brief views of covers and related correspondence. We also offer news in the world of military philately, including a considerable number of book reviews and announcements of new books that you may want to add to your library.

### INDPYEX

Our annual convention is scheduled for next July 6-8 at the annual INDYPEX show in Indianapolis, Indiana. If you are thinking of exhibiting, you probably should submit your application now. Our convention coordinator Alan Warren has the prospectus, or if your computer is Internet-ready you can download a copy from the show's website: [www.indianas-tampclub.org/indy.html](http://www.indianas-tampclub.org/indy.html).

### No Auction

Our Auction Manager, Myron Fox, was unable to prepare an auction for this issue. Myron really needs help with auctions, and asks that no new material be submitted for now.

### Deadlines

The *Bulletin* is written by its readers. We welcome your contributions to future issues. Here are future deadlines for the coming issues:

Spring 2007	Apr. 13, 2007
Summer 2007	Jul. 15, 2007
Fall 2007	Oct. 13, 2007

If you want to have an article or notice published in a specific issue, it must reach me by the above dates.

### PayPal

One of the wonders of the modern world is the Internet-based payment system called PayPal, now owned by the Internet auction firm eBay. Although the system was designed to pay sellers for eBay purchases, it can be used to send payment for any reason to just about anyone who has an email address. Most conveniently, the system handles currency conversions from country to country, solving the problem of high international bank fees and conversion uncertainties.

PayPal's rather odd way of handling business seems to be causing problems, however. The MPHS has a PayPal account which can be used to submit payment for dues or publication purchases. However, for it to work you must use the correct account name, which under PayPal rules must be in the form of an email address. Our account code is

**dues@militaryphs.org**

Please do NOT try to send payment to the treasurer using any other name — it only complicates matters and may force him to refuse your payment. Use only this name, even if you are paying for publications rather than dues.

Finally, never send payment of any kind to any society officer other than the treasurer.

## Secretary's Report

Ed Dubin

Please welcome these new members:

3410 Jan van Nieuwkerk, Amsterdam, Netherlands  
3411 Alfred Schaub, Lititz, PA

### Membership Summary

Membership, Oct. 30, 2006	550
New Members	2
Resigned	5
Deceased	1
Membership, Jan. 1, 2007	546

The Society acknowledges with thanks the donations made last year by the following members. These funds are a great help to support the society research and publication program. If anyone would like a written receipt (we are a qualified 501(c)(3) organization) let the Treasurer know. If I missed anyone please let me know.

Joseph Banchak	Nola Earl Hite
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John Beirne	Harry J. Marshall
Gordon Bennett	Katherine Mountain
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Jesse Boehret	Louis Rief
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Paul M. Ford	Roy Teixeira
Dennis Havasi	Harvey Tilles

## Dues are Due!

Members are reminded that annual dues are now overdue, the membership year ended as the year 2006 expired. Members with a date of 12/31/2006 above their address on the mailing envelope still owe their 2007 dues. If dues are not paid, this is the last issue of the *Bulletin* you will receive.

To keep your membership active (and keep receiving this invaluable *Bulletin*), make certain that your dues are up to date. Send your payment to:

MPHS Treasurer  
P.O. Box 32  
Cypress, TX 77410-0032

Annual dues in the Military Postal History Society are \$20.00 to United States addresses; \$23.00 to Canada and Mexico by First class mail; \$25.00 to all other countries by airmail. Members can also use PayPal for dues payment by going to the application page of the society web site (<http://www.militaryPHS.org>) and follow the instructions.

## Mail from Foreign Senders to the AEF...

(Continued from Page 1...)

mail is not particularly distinctive since at first glance it appears to be ordinary mail from the specific country of origin.

A second aspect is that to the extent that many AEF members had family back in an "old country," many of these would have lived in places that were either part of the Central Powers (e.g. Germany and Austria-Hungary) or were occupied by them. This would include such areas as Belgium, the subsequent Czechoslovakia, the subsequent Yugoslavia, Poland, Ukraine, etc. Thus, no mail could be received from these areas during the war.

The only example that I have seen from Latin America is the cover shown as Figure 3 which was sent from the Dominican Republic to APO 705. Similarly, the only one that I have seen from Asia was sent from China to APO 777 in occupied Germany – see Figure 4. Two additional examples are a picture postcard from Denmark and a letter from Greece, also forwarded to the U.S. since the fighting had ended. (See Figures 5 and 6.)

As to the postage paid on such international mail, in theory, letters from foreign countries should have been paid at the UPU rate then in effect as if they had been mailed to the United States. However, this was probably not enforced by the postal clerks at some of the APOs as they were unlikely to be aware of what the foreign postage rate should have been. It is understandable that payment of postage was not imposed by some of the Allies, who apparently recognized the military franchise on letters to American servicemen.

The good news is that none of this material is particularly expensive but, as previously described, it is very scarce and doesn't draw attention to itself. What is needed is a lot of patience to look through vast "haystacks" of unexciting covers seeking a few "needles." I am satisfied that there are more of them out there somewhere; one just has to work to find them.

### Reference:

*The Postal History of the AEF, 1917-1923*, edited by Theo. Van Dam, published by the War Cover Club, 1990.

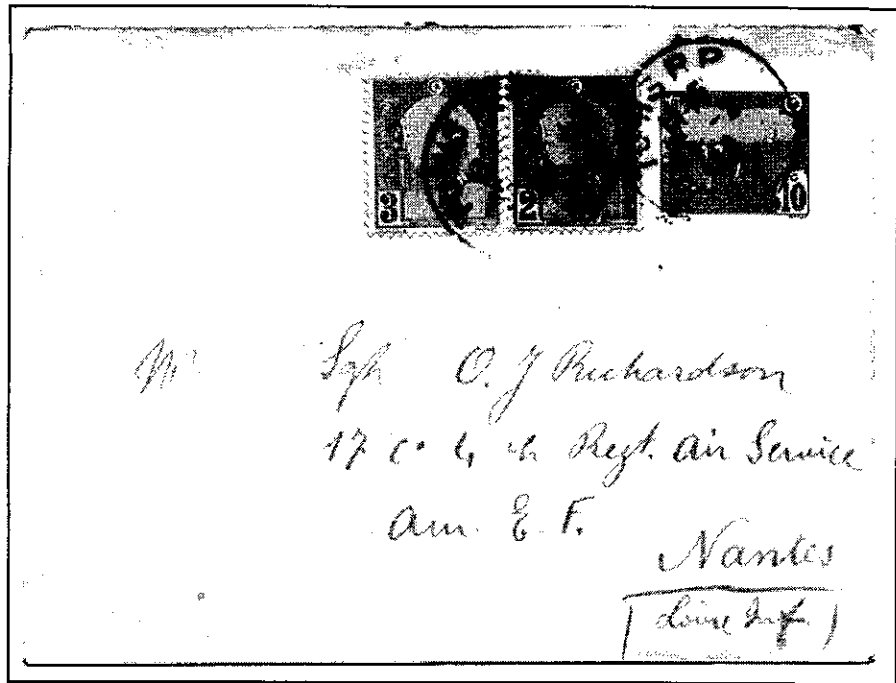


Figure 2. Stationery envelopes uprated with adhesives for a letter from Tunis to a member of the American Air Service at Nantes.

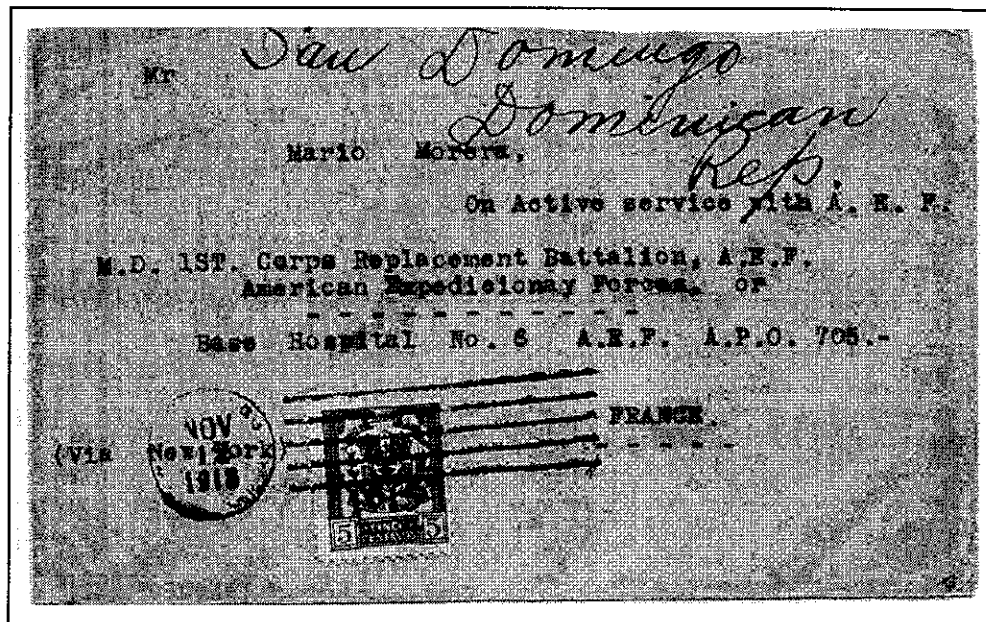


Figure 3. Cover sent from Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic to a soldier with a Hispanic surname at Base Hospital No. 6 at APO 705.

# Mail from Foreign Senders to the AEF...

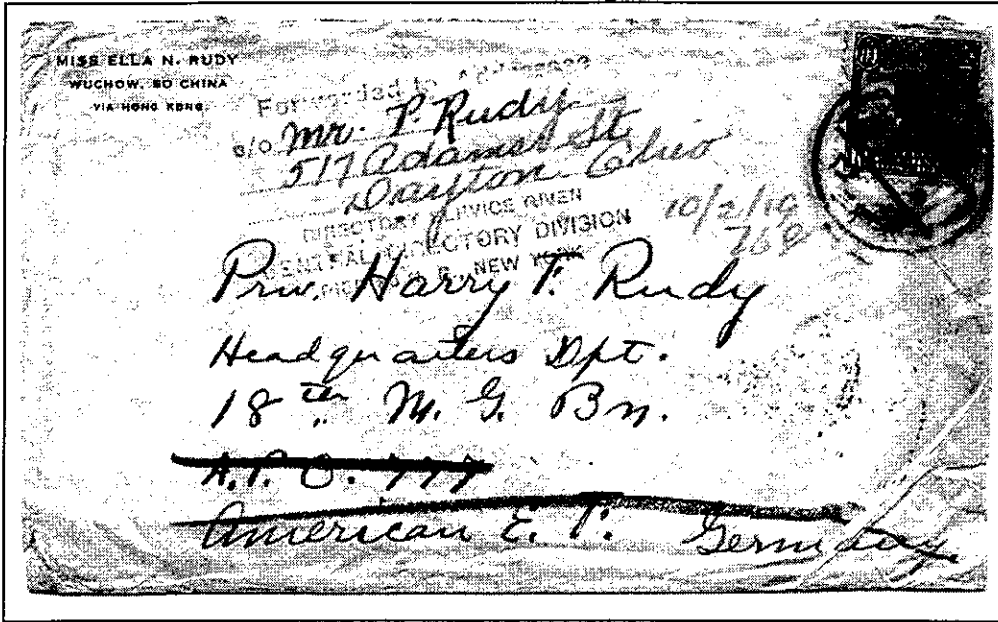


Figure 4. Cover from Hankow, China to a soldier at APO 777 serving in the American occupation forces in Germany. He was no longer there, so the letter was forwarded to Ohio.



Figure 5. Picture postcard from Denmark to a soldier with a Scandinavian surname serving with an American ambulance unit in France.

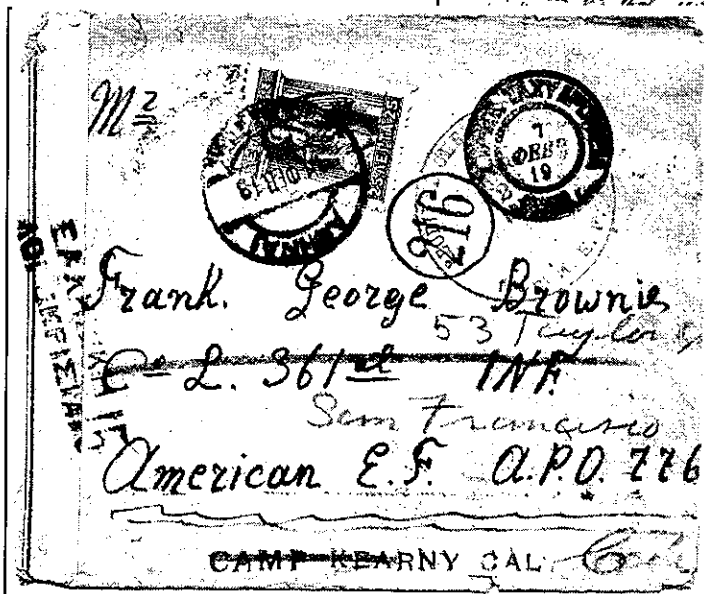


Figure 6. Cover from a Greek soldier at FPO 912 to an American at APO 776. In Athens, it was franked with a 25 lepta adhesive to pay the UPU rate. The addressee had already been sent home, so the letter was forwarded to California.

# FORT STEVENS, OREGON

by Bob Kinsley

During the U.S. Civil War the Government was concerned that ships of either, or both, the Confederacy or the British navy would enter the Columbia River to attack the settlements of the new state of Oregon to the south and of the territory of Washington to the north. Since the range of cannon of that era could not reach across the mouth of the river, forts were authorized to be built on both sides. The fort on the Oregon side of the river was Fort Stevens, named for Isaac Stevens, the first governor of Washington Territory. This fort has an unusual claim to fame noted at the end of this article.

By the time the Civil War ended on April 19, 1865 no cannon had yet been installed. By the time of the Spanish-American War in 1898 Fort Stevens was a control center for a submerged mine field designed to protect the river entrance, but by the time of the armistice on August 12, 1898 no mines had been laid. A post office at the fort was opened in 1899.

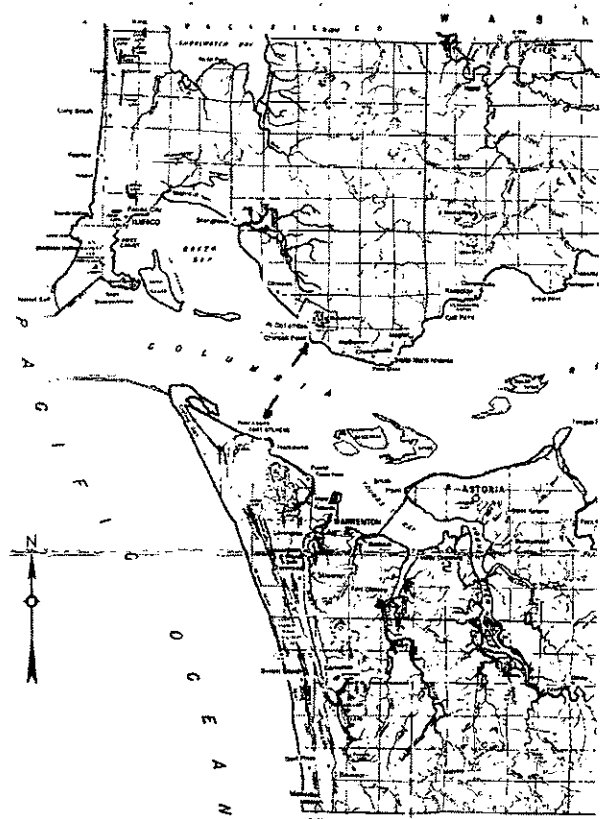
During World War I Fort Stevens was used for training and its cannon were removed and sent to Europe. It was reported that not only did the men and officers have to live in tents, including through the winter, but most only had one uniform and one pair of shoes and "when these got wet they had to sit in their underwear until they dried."<sup>(1)</sup>

Following World War I coastal battery fire control was improved, submarine mines established, huge searchlights sixty inches in diameter were mounted, and surrounding swamps were drained. Fort Stevens was one of two posts where hip boots were authorized to be issued. Security typically had low priority and residents recall Japanese merchant ship crews touring the fort with their cameras.

As World War II got underway the US was divided into four strategic areas and Fort Stevens came under the Western Defense Command headquartered in San Francisco, Calif.

Radar was installed at the fort with new 6-inch guns with a range of 15 miles. By Christmas 1941, after the U.S. officially entered World War II, the two forts protecting the entrance to the Columbia River still did not have a mine laying ship so a local ferry boat, the *Tourist No. 2*, was leased and began work planting mines from Fort Stevens.

This fort has the distinction of being the only military installation in the continental United States to be fired upon by a foreign power (since the War of 1812) when the Japanese submarine I-25 surfaced and fired a number of shells at about 11:30 p.m. on June 21, 1945.<sup>(2)</sup> The official log of the submarine indicates that 17 shells were fired. And how many



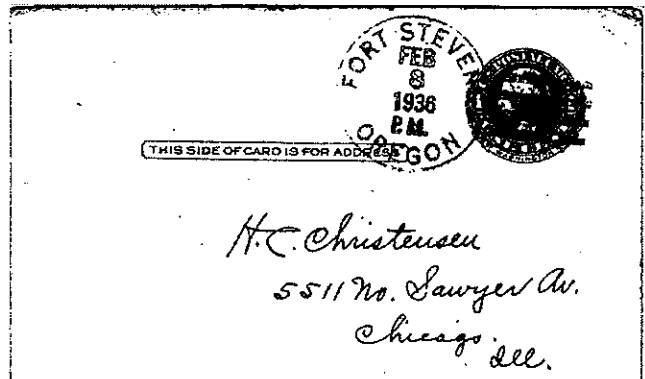
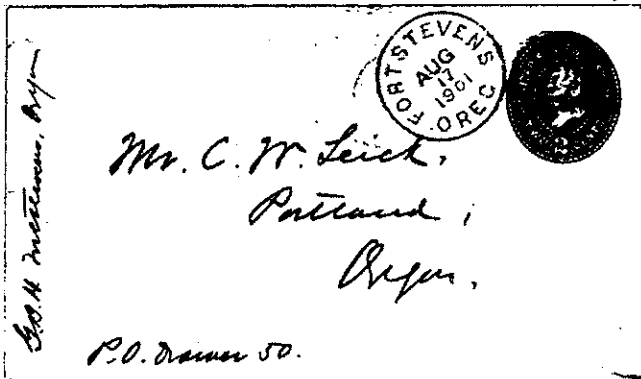
shells were fired from Fort Stevens at the submarine? None! One explanation was that they didn't want the gun flash to give away the location of the fort; another explanation stated they thought (erroneously) that the submarine was too far away.

In July 1945 orders were issued to retrieve the mines planted in the river; in 1947 the fort was declared surplus and in 1949 its postmark was retired. About 1955 the area became a state park which is still open at this time.

Footnotes:

(1) "Anecdotal Time Line for Fort Stevens," D. Lindstrom 1991, excerpted from *Fort Stevens — Oregon's Defender at the River of the West*, Marshall Hanft, Oregon State Parks 1980.

(2) "Panic at Fort Stevens," Bert Webber, Webber Research Publications, Medford, Ore., 1995



*Stars and Strife***Fort Missoula Alien Detention Center - Revisted**by *Thomas Richards and Regis Hoffman*

In the Fall 2003 (Vol. 42, Number 4) issue of the *MPHS Bulletin* we showed two covers from the Fort Missoula Alien Detention Center to Movie Stars (Peggy Ryan and Deanna Durbin). Both were from Italian detainees. Another similar item has surfaced (shown here). This was to Alice Faye from Guiseppe Gambrara — most likely another Italian seaman as there were about 1,300 interned at Missoula.

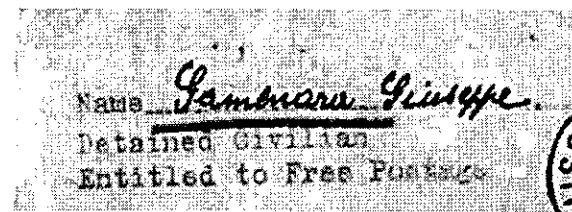
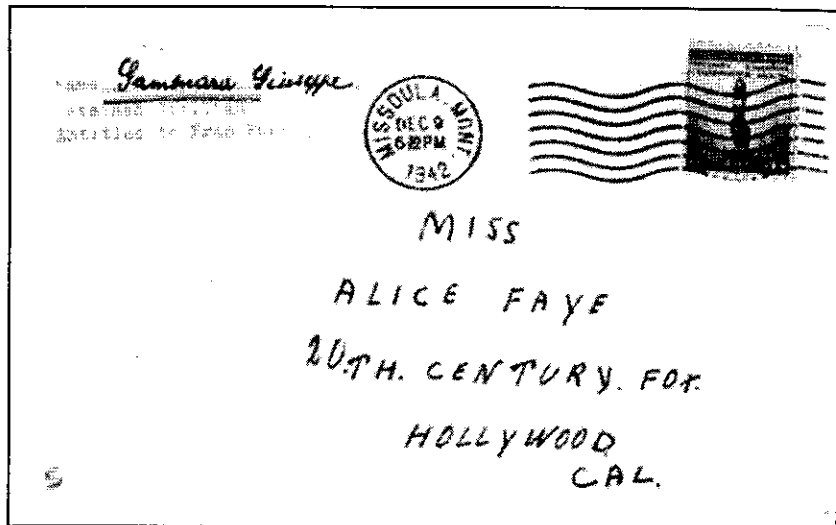
Alice Faye initially toured with Rudy Vallee as a singer at the age of 19. She was the star in the 1934 Fox movie "George White's Scandals." She was first cast as a Harlow-type bleached blonde and became a leading star in the musical film world. By 1945 she had retired but is still active in fan clubs around the world.

In the previous article the cover to Deanna Durbin (Feb 10, 1943) had postage. The cover to Peggy Ryan (Mar 25, 1943) was sent postage free. The stamp appeared to have been removed and a red "FREE Prisoner-of-War Mail" marking was in its place.

The Alice Faye cover has postage and is dated Dec. 9, 1942 but has a red marking in the top left corner under the name (enlarged at right:)

**Detained Civilian  
Entitled to Free Postage**

So when was free postage instituted? Based on our first article one could draw the conclusion that some time between Feb 10<sup>th</sup> and Mar 23<sup>rd</sup> 1943, but this Dec 1942 cover with postage but with a statement about free postage adds to the confusion. Can anyone provide and answer?



**The Military Postal History Society Presents**

***Greetings: Postal History of the Selective Service  
and the Draft, 1917 to 1976***

By *Russ W Carter*

When every young man reaches various ages, his thoughts turn to certain topics: riding a bike, cub scouts, girls, cars, and the Selective Service. The draft has been with us since biblical times but, at least in the U.S., it was only in 1917 that the mail was used in the registration and processing for the draft.

This book covers the various items of postal stationery, particularly penalty post cards, used by the selective service processes. Starting in WW I, there are 48 penalty items covered and illustrated including mail bag tags, package labels, and cards. In WW II there are 39 penalty items covered and illustrated. In the post-WW II era there are 77 items covered and illustrated.

Many of the topics covered by the cards are rather surprising. While registration, notice of classification, and requests to report for physical examination are what one would expect, there are such topics as deserter reports, meal ticket requests, authorization to entrain, reemployment references, college qualification tests, and occupational inquiry. Plus there are cards that were used between the local boards and state headquarters plus the Provost Marshal General Office. The final chapter is devoted to a preliminary listing of Selective Service penalty envelopes.

Almost every item has both sides illustrated and all single cards are at full scale. The penalty cards range from 5 by 3 inches to a huge 17 by 16 inch message and reply monster. A handy four-page check list gives collectors a guide to all the forms and cards.

The book (ISBN 0-9770649-7-2) has 180 numbered pages with over 160 illustrations plus a check list. It is 8.5 by 11 inches with spiral binding. Available from: Publications, MPHS, Box 32, Cypress, TX, 77410-0032, for \$20. for US members; overseas members \$25. Nonmembers \$25. US; \$30. overseas. All orders are to be paid in US funds, checks drawn on U.S. Banks, U.S. Postal Money Orders, International Money Orders or PAYPAL, assigning payment to dues@militaryphs.org.



# CPNY on Forwarded Mail

by Charles Thrower

After Reading Mike Ruggiero's article on U.S. Navy Armed Guard Mail in the Winter 2006 *Bulletin*, I remembered that I have a postal card with the wavy lines and CPNY printed in red.

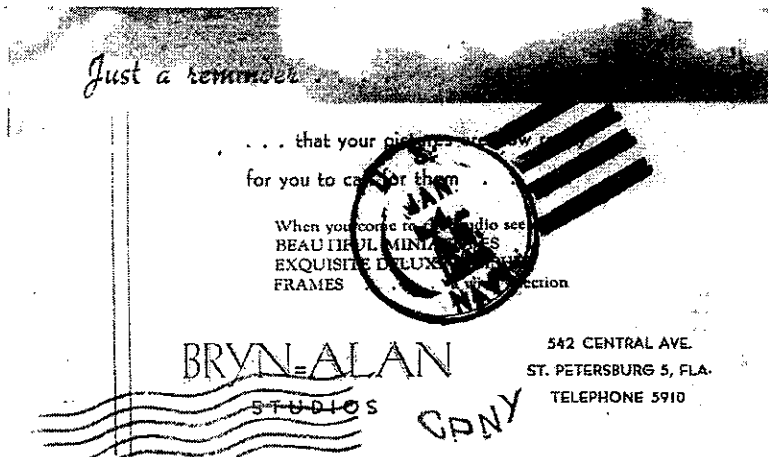
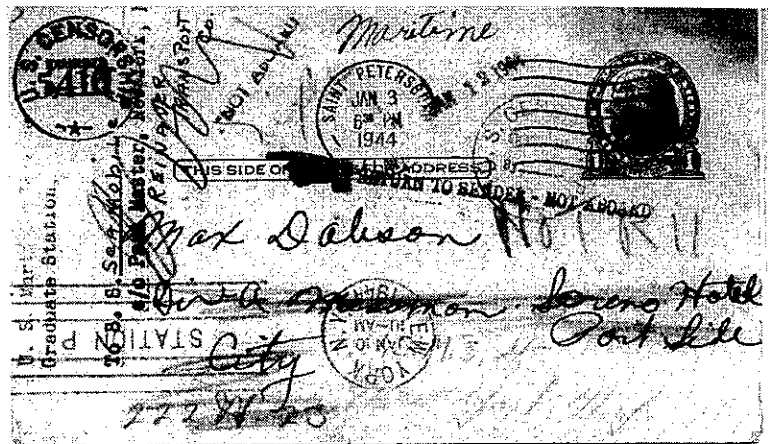
The postal card was mailed Jan. 3, 1944 in St. Petersburg, Fla. from the Bryn-Alan Studios to merchant seaman named Max Dahson, also supposedly in St. Petersburg at the Serano Hotel, then under U.S. Navy wartime control. The U.S. Navy backstamp of Jan. 4, 1944, a receiving cancel, was made at the same time as one of the two censor marks on the front of the card.

Max was no longer at the hotel and the hotel put on the forwarding address of U.S.M.S. G.S. NEW YORK, N.Y. (very light and difficult to read). It was received in New York on Jan. 10 and the New York city post office nixie service added "222 W. 25," where the U.S. Maritime Graduate Station was located. The second censor mark was added at this time.

Max had moved again, however, and the Graduate Station sent it to *SS Sea Mobile* care of the Postmaster, Newark, N.J. on Jan. 12, 1944. *SS Sea Mobile* was owned by or under contract to the Reinaver Transport Co. Max was "not on board" here, either, and the card was sent back to St. Petersburg, Fla. Very likely Max never saw those photos. The CPNY marking was added when the card went from the New York City Maritime Graduate Station to Newark as Armed Guard mail.

I collect postal cards of this type (Scott UX-27) with unusual messages, and have probably had this one for 30 years without knowing the meaning of the marking until Mike Ruggiero's fine article on Armed Guard mail.

*Editor's note:* Fred Schmitt writes that he has also seen the CPNY marking on mail addressed to Free French warships out of the Fleet Post Office in New York during world War II.



## The British North American Philatelic society has recently published two new books of interest to military postal historians.

*The BNAPS Catalogue of Canadian Military Mail Markings, Volume 3 — From Victory in 1945 to Afghanistan*; by C. Douglas Sayles (Editor). 2006. Spiral bound, 314 pp. 8.5 x 11. ISBN 0-919854-91-6 Stock #B4h025.3. \$C47.95

The result of several years of hard work by Doug Sayles, Volume 3 of the new *BNAPS Catalogue of Canadian Military Mail Markings* is a complete reworking and updating of the previous catalogues published by the late W.J. Bailey and E.R. Toop (B&T). The reworking consists of a completely new numbering system built around keeping cancellations from individual military locations (by era or type) in a single group, and ordering them by marking shape and size. Each new catalogue number is cross referenced to a B&T number if one existed, and in the Appendices there is a reverse cross reference from B&T numbers to the new "BNAPS" numbers.

The spiral binding and heavy paper used in the Sayles' catalogue are intended to allow collectors to use it to record and annotate their holdings and, with luck, find new and previously unreported items. Because the military postal markings of the post-World War II era formed the smallest part of the B&T catalogues, Doug decided to start with them and to name this Volume 3. All cancellations, both those previously recorded and the more than 650 new cancellations unknown to B&T, have been reproduced in excellent illustrations. Volumes 1 and 2, covering military activity in Canada from the 1800s through 1945, will be published in due course and will follow the style and format of Volume 3.

*Canadians in Russia: the Last Contingent of World War I*, by Hendrik (Henk) Burgers. 2006. Spiral bound, 98pp. 8.5 x 11, BNAPS Exhibit Series No. 41. ISBN 0-919854-93-1 (B&W), 0-919854-92-3 (Color); Stock # B4h923.41 (B&W) \$C30.95, B4h923.411 (Color) \$C74.00

## German Submariner POW in Canada

by Robert Henderson

The ability to research for additional information is improving with each passing year, and with the release of more recently confidential files to the public. Often, such efforts pay off handsomely, as was the case in attempting to learn more about the writer and recipient of the envelope shown here.

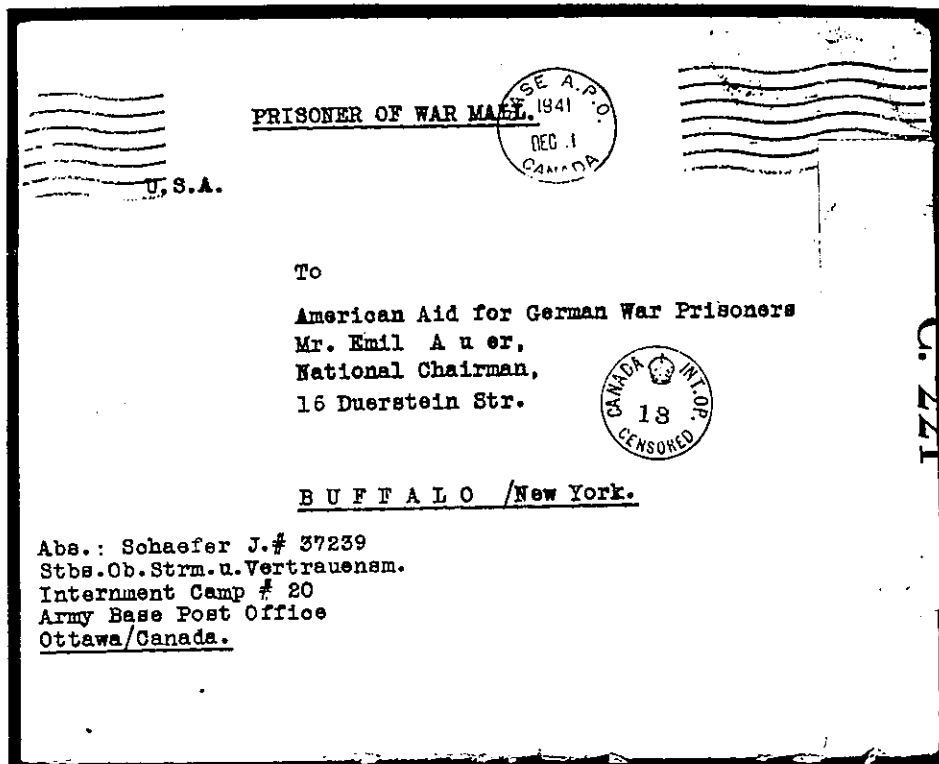
The sender was a POW in Canada #37239, Josef Schaefer, captured off the *U-27* on Sept. 20, 1939 by the British ships *HMS Fortune* and *HMS Forester*. All 138 crewmen survived and were sent to Canada as POWs. His rank translates to "Chief Warrant Quartermaster Shop Steward."

The recipient, Mr. Emil Auer, was a Nazi sympathizer, well known to both Canadian and American counterespionage agencies, and he was listed among a number of other such individuals and organizations for their nefarious activities on "Restricted Lists."

The "Free" mail was sent from Canadian Internment Camp #20 (previously Camp "C"), located at Bowmanville, Ontario, lasting from 1940 to 1946. It held both German officers and other ranks within the wire boundary.

A Canadian red censor stamp (#18) is readily visible, with just the edge of the U.S. Censor label # C.221 is visible in the copy. Mailed on Dec.

1, 1941, one wonders what might have been said in the letter.



When people think of the end of World War I they usually recall that the war ended on the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918. But it didn't! Although the Armistice in Western Europe took effect on that day and at that time, it did not end the fighting in the east, in Russia, where the Bolshevik forces of Vladimir Lenin were still trying to take over the vast country. Canada was asked to send forces to assist the British Army units still active in Russia.

A few Canadians went to Russia early in 1918 but the majority were not sent until later that year. The main tasks of the Canadian Expeditionary Force (Siberia) [CEF(S)] were to protect the Czechoslovak Legion from the Bolsheviks and to guard the 700,000 tons of allied military supplies which had been stockpiled in Vladivostok. The first units of the CEF(S) reached Vladivostok in October 1918 and eventually grew to 3,800 officers and men (and one Nursing Sister). The last members of the Canadian units were repatriated from Siberia by June 5, 1919, and from Northern Russia (Murmansk) by October 12, 1919.

Henk Burgers' career with the Royal Canadian Engineers (RCE) and the post-1967 Canadian Military Engineers (CME) took him on assignments as far apart as Alert, NWT, Germany with NATO forces, and Egypt with the United Nations Emergency Force. Upon retirement from the military in 1984 he was able to resume his childhood philatelic hobby, with an added interest in military postal history, and was Editor of the Newsletter of the BNAPS Military Mail Study Group. While looking for material for his collection Henk was fortunate to come across the Keene and Fennell military correspondences, which were previously unknown. Covers and postcards from these finds are being published here for the first time and form the major part of the volume. "Canadians in Russia: the Last Contingent of World War I" is an important addition to the field of Canadian Military Postal History.

All BNAPS books are available from: Ian Kimmerly Stamps, 112 Sparks Street, Ottawa, ON K1P 5B6, Canada. Phone: (613) 235-9119. Internet orders can be placed at [www.iankimmerly.com/books/](http://www.iankimmerly.com/books/) (click on the price at the end of the book description and you will be taken to the check out page.)

The price given above is the retail price in Canadian Dollars. BNAPS members receive a 40% discount from retail prices. Shipping is extra. Credit card orders (Visa, MasterCard) will be billed for exact amount of shipping plus \$2 per order. For payment by cheque or money order, add 10% in Canada, 15% to the U.S., 20% overseas (overpayments exceeding 25 cents will be refunded in mint postage stamps). GST is payable for Canadian orders. No Ontario Retail Sales Tax applies.

# World War II Red Cross Message Sheets

by Alan Morvay

During World War II mail from home was not always delivered to the soldiers on the front lines. Some of the mail that was delivered was quite late. With soldiers being wounded or killed around the world, family members at home were always worried when they didn't hear from their soldier husband or son. Thus, the Red Cross undertook to make connections under certain circumstances.

Each message the Red Cross would accept for delivery was limited to 25 words and must only discuss personal or family matters. The Red Cross message sheet pictured here was from a wife in Paris, France to her husband in Mobeka, Belgian Congo and was routed through Lisbon, Portugal.

A translation of the message reads,

"All in good health, hope you are the same. Jean received your package. He sends you hugs. This is long for us. Prayers. I work. Affectionate kisses to you. Renée."

I would like to thank Robert Kinsley and Laurence Lambert for their help in the preparation of this article.

61

**COMITÉ INTERNATIONALE DE LA CROIX-ROUGE**  
Palais du Conseil Général  
GENÈVE (Suisse)

**DEMANDEUR — ANFRAGESTELLER — ENQUIRER**

Nom - Name - M<sup>me</sup> POUGEUX  
Prénom - Christian name - Vorname Renée  
Rue - Street - Strasse Desrenaudes No 4  
Localité - Locality - Ortschaft Paris 17<sup>e</sup>  
Département - County - Provinz Seine  
Pays - Country - Land France

Message à transmettre — Mitteilung — Message  
(25 mots ou maximum, nouvelles de caractère strictement personnel et familial) — (nicht über 25 Worte, nur persönliche Familiennachrichten) — (not over 25 words, family news of strictly personal character)

*Tous bonne santé, espère de même  
Jean reçoit mes colis il vous embrasse  
C'est long pour nous. Surtout de  
travail. Affectionnés bisers vous.  
Renée*

Date - Datum 24 Avril 1941

**DESTINATAIRE — EMPFÄNGER — ADRESSEE**

Nom - Name M<sup>l</sup> J M<sup>me</sup> POUGEUX  
Prénom - Christian name - Vorname Jean  
Rue - Street - Strasse Luikwa No  
Localité - Locality - Ortschaft Mobeka  
Province - County - Provinz Congo - Belge  
Pays - Country - Land

ANTWORT UMSEITIG      RÉPONSE AU VERSO      REPLY OVERLEAF  
Bitte sehr deutlich schreiben      Prière d'écrire très lisiblement      Please write very clearly

Message transmis par les soins de la  
**CROIX-ROUGE FRANÇAISE, 12, Rue Newton, PARIS (16<sup>e</sup>)**

## MPHS Literature For Sale

**"WE BUILD, WE FIGHT" Locations and Assignments of United States Naval Construction Units 1941-2005** by Norm Gruenzner. Covers the development and assignments of Seabee unit from pre-December 1941 into 2005. The book is spiral bound with a clear plastic cover, 421 numbered pages and 76 illustrations. Cost: \$36.00 for US members, \$42.00 members in Canada, members in Europe \$45.00 and Australian members \$48.00; non-members \$60.00.

**War Ballots: Military Voting by Mail from the Civil War to WW II** by Russ Carter. Begins with Pennsylvania, which allowed military voting in 1813. and continues to the Civil War, Spanish-American War, World War One and World War Two. The book is spiral bound with a clear plastic cover, 262 pages, 315 illustrations, 9 charts plus 2 identification guides. Cost: \$27.50 for North American members, \$35.00 members overseas and \$55.00 for non-members.

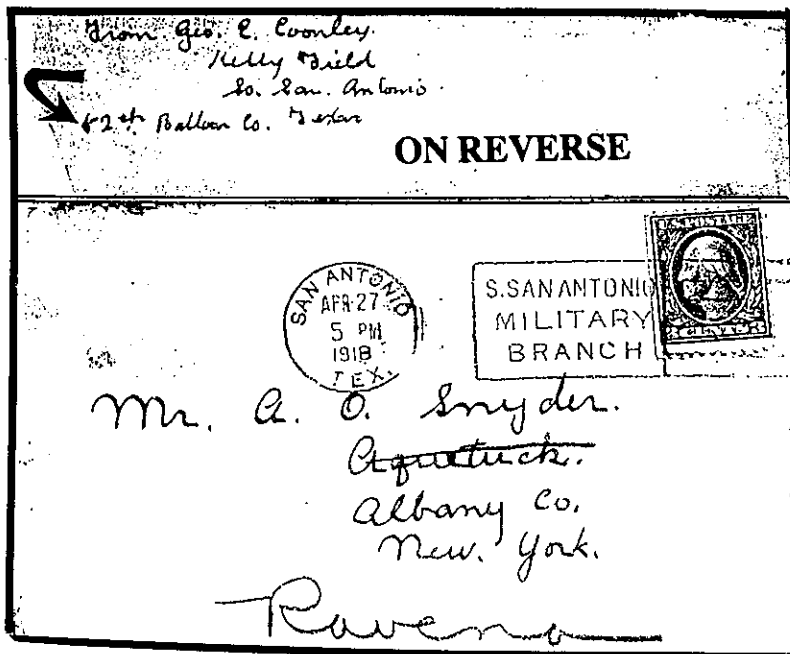
All prices are postpaid. Order from MPHS, Box 32, Cypress, TX 77410-0032. Payment must be in US funds, checks drawn on US Banks, US Postal Money Orders or International Money Orders.

# World War I AEF UPdate

by the late Theo Van Dam

## Chapter 1, Page 13 - US Army Air Service — Balloons

Envelope postmarked San Antonio/Military Branch April 27, 1918, from 52nd Balloon Company Kelly Field. Here also is documentation from the Headquarters, Commander Army Balloons, First Army. [Irving Baron.]



Headquarters Commander Army Balloons  
First Army

### III. The Balloon Section.

#### No Balloon Service Before the War.

The United States Army had almost no Balloon Service previous to our declaration of war. On December 28, 1917, four companies, comprising the 2d Balloon Squadron, arrived overseas, and were assigned to Artillery training centers in the Services of Supply.

#### Size of the Balloon Section.

The general organization project, as amended and completed by the service of the rear project, for the American Expeditionary Forces, called for 69 balloon companies, and the revised project, approved by general headquarters, American Expeditionary Forces, on August 17, 1918, provided for a total of 133 companies by June 30, 1919. According to the latter schedule, 70 balloon companies should have arrived in France by October 31, 1918. There were actually, at the cessation of hostilities, a total of 35 companies operating in France, of which two had been organized from balloon casualties in the American Expeditionary Forces. Of these, 12 were stationed at Artillery firing centers and balloon schools in the rear, 6 assigned to armies were en route to the Zone of Advance, and 17 were serving with the 1st and 2d

Armies at the front. On November 11, 1918, the personnel of the Balloon Section consisted of 446 officers and 6,365 soldiers. Of the officers, 230 were commissioned in the Air Service, and the remainder attached from other arms for duty as instructors or observers. Only 14 officers of the Balloon Section were on a nonflying status.

#### First Arrival at the Front.

The 2d Balloon Company arrived in the Toul sector on February 23, 1918. Although many American aviators were serving with both British and French squadrons before that date, this was the first completely equipped American Air Service unit assigned to the 1st Army Corps, to which were assigned the first American units to take their places at the front.

#### Training.

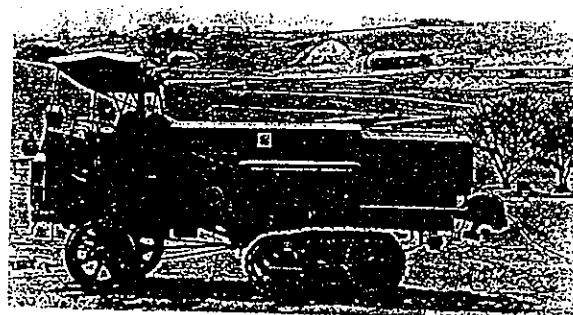
Valuable training in the regulation of Artillery fire was obtained in France by sending all Balloon Companies, as they arrived over seas, to Artillery firing centers in the Services of Supply. They remained at these stations until relieved by newly arrived companies from the United States, and were then assigned to a quiet sector

on the front for battle training. Although it was intended to give observers and maneuvering officers a full course of instruction in the United States, it was not at first possible to do so without seriously delaying the arrival overseas of balloon troops. This condition made it imperative to establish a balloon school in the American Expeditionary Forces. The school was first located at Cuperly (Marne), close to the French balloon school of Vadenay, from which valuable technical assistance was secured. The enemy advance in the latter part of March, 1918, made necessary a hasty move, and Camp Souge was chosen for the new location. The first classes at Souge began on May 5, and from that time a new class for observers and maneuvering officers was started on the 6th of each month, including December 1918, the month in which the activities of the school ended. The classes graduated a total of 199 officers and trained 623 soldier specialists, who were taught the operation of balloon winches, telephone line work, look-out work, machine

#### Locations of Balloons in First Army September 14, 1918

7th Co.	Corps	1 kilo. N. Sommedieue
12th Co.	Army	1½ kilos E. of Rattentout
8th Co.	Divisional	3 Kilos N. of Mouilly
93rd Co.	Divisional	St. Remy
6th Co.	Divisional	Dommartin
20th Co.	Corps	Vigneulles
52nd Co.	Divisional	N.E. of Bois-de-Creue
41st Co.	Army	Nonsard
53rd Co.	Divisional	Vignoit (Reserve)
9th Co.	Divisional	Richecourt
5th Co.	Divisional	Maizerais
69th Co.	Corps	Bois-au-Jury
43rd Co.	Divisional	3 Kilos N. of Flirey
10th Co.	Army	Bois-de-la-Hazelle
38th Co.	Army	Lironville
1st Co.	Divisional	Bois-de-la-Haut
2nd Co.	Corps	Bois-de-la-Lampe
11th Co.	Army	Mamey
5th Co.	Divisional	1 Kilo N.E. Jezainville
42nd Co.	Divisional	Ville-au-Val

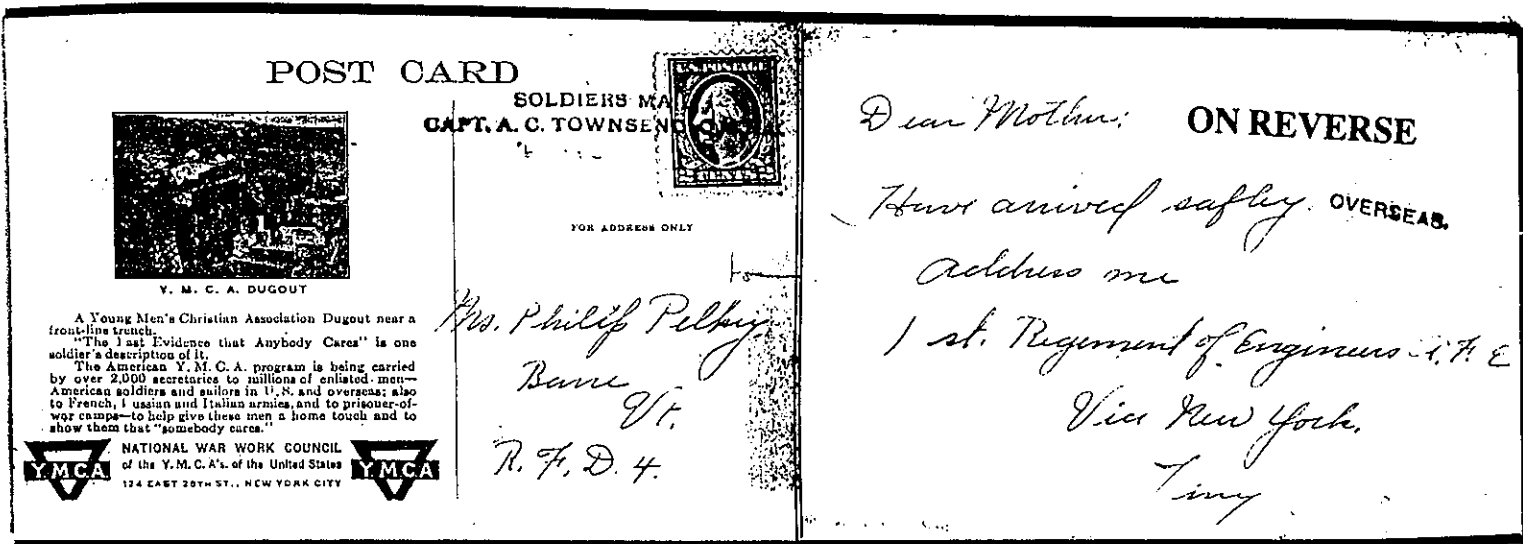
Paegelow



A balloon windlass mounted on a truck with a caterpillar adapter.

# World War I AEF Update... Chapter 1, Page 20 - "Safe Arrival Overseas" cards.

National War Work YMCA card, on reverse  
"arrived safely" with OVERSEAS handstamp,  
from 1st Regiment Engineers (1st Infantry Div.),  
APO 719. Censor handstamp 2.3b [Stephen Cohn]



## Chapter 1, Page 20 "Going Home" cards.

A new "Going Home" card

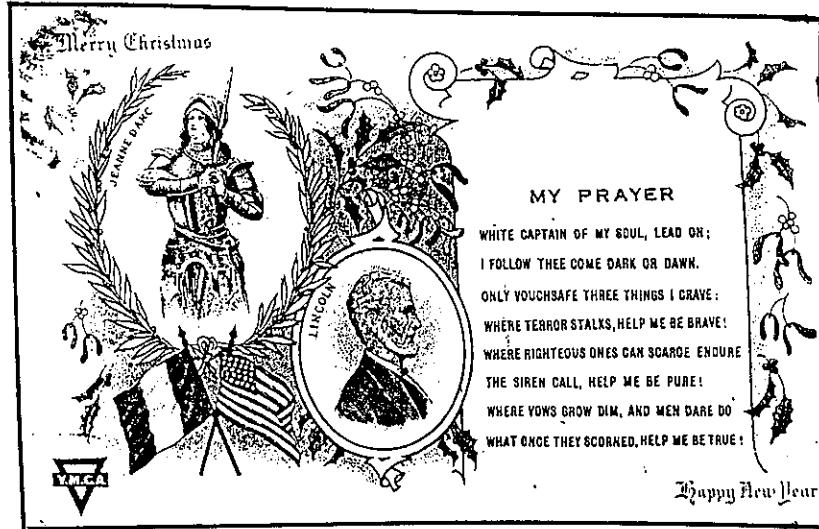
YMCA card from St. Nazaire  
postmarked A2001.911 July 9 —19  
(instead of 1919, so a sub-variety).  
[Chuck McFarlane]



### World War I AEF Update...

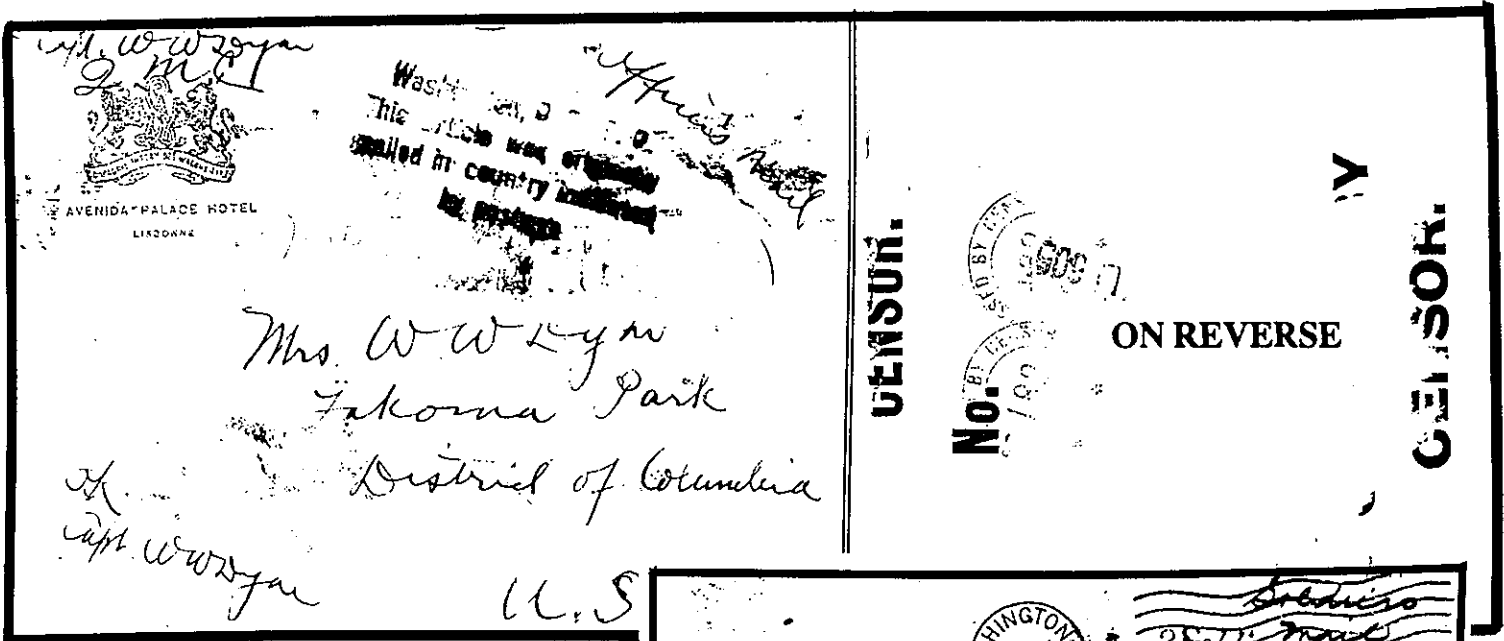
#### Page 24, Picture cards

Unusual YMCA card. [William Sandrik]



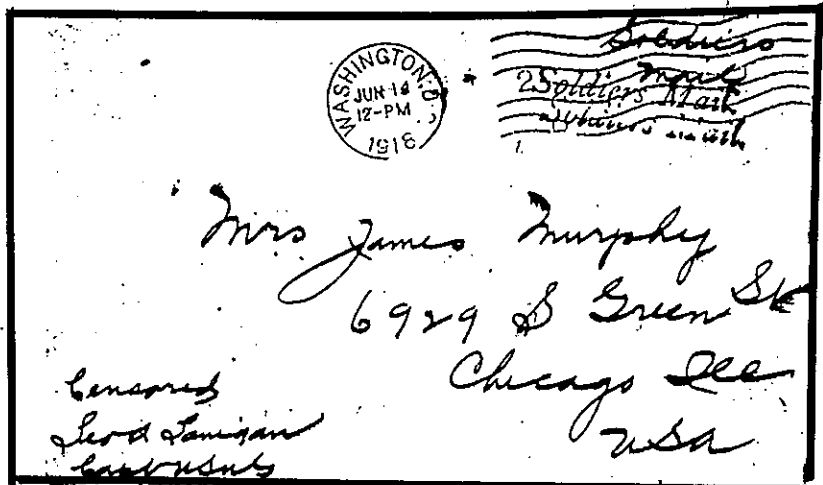
#### Page 30 - Diplomatic Mail

Hotel envelope from Lisbon, Portugal, not franked, manuscript "Officer's Mail" to District of Columbia dated inside December 3, 1918. Blurred handstamp "Article mailed in country....., no postage." Censor label C1 and handstamp 182 (New York), eight page letter inside regarding diplomatic connections and actions. [Karl Haas]



#### Page 67, Group F - Franchise Markings

"Soldiers Mail/Sailors Mail" handstamp, cursive Tupe F201 variety with machine Washington, D.C. postmark to Chicago Jun 14, 1918. Manuscript censor. [Stan Jersey]

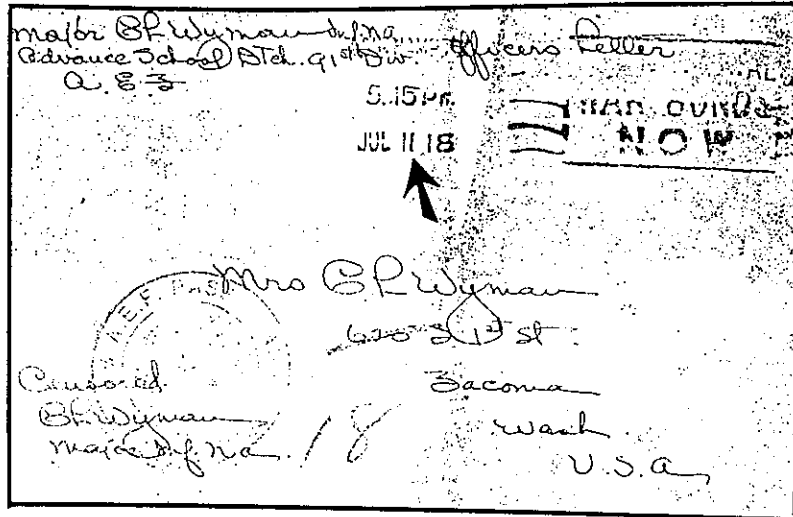


# World War I AEF Update...

## Locations of AEF post offices in Western Europe, 1917-1923

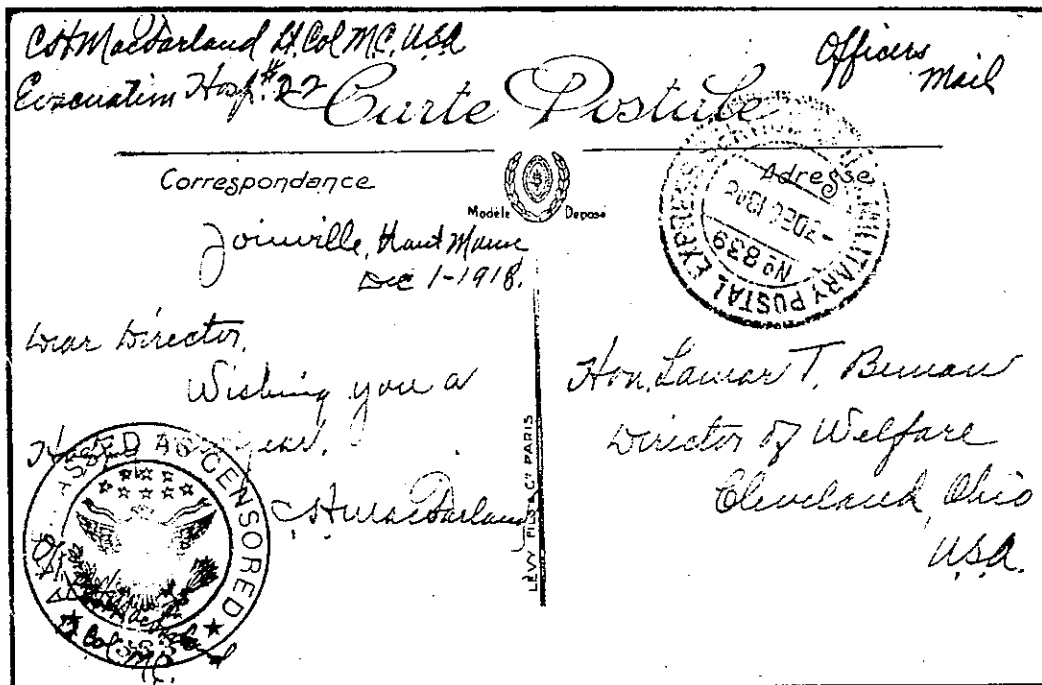
### APO 776

Stampless envelope with British machine postmark Southampton to the USA, July 11, 1918. Sender cornercard Major C. L. Wyman, Advance School Det. 91st Div./A.E.F.. According to the official history of the 91st Division, they landed at Southampton on July 17th! (Major Wyman, later Lt. Col., was Division Signal Officer.) The Division Headquarters arrived in France on July 23, 1918 and APO 776 opened on July 30 (War Dep't. listing; the Post Office listing is Sept. 3). {Irving Baron}



### APO 839

Card written at "Joinville, Haut Marne Dec 1, 1918" by an officer in the Medical Corps at "Evacuation Hosp(ital) #22." Another card from the same correspondence has the THIRD ARMY APO 927 cancellation type A5001 dated APR 22 19, written from "Coblentz 4/21/19", also with the address "Evac(uation) Hosp(ital) #22." [Alec Swain]



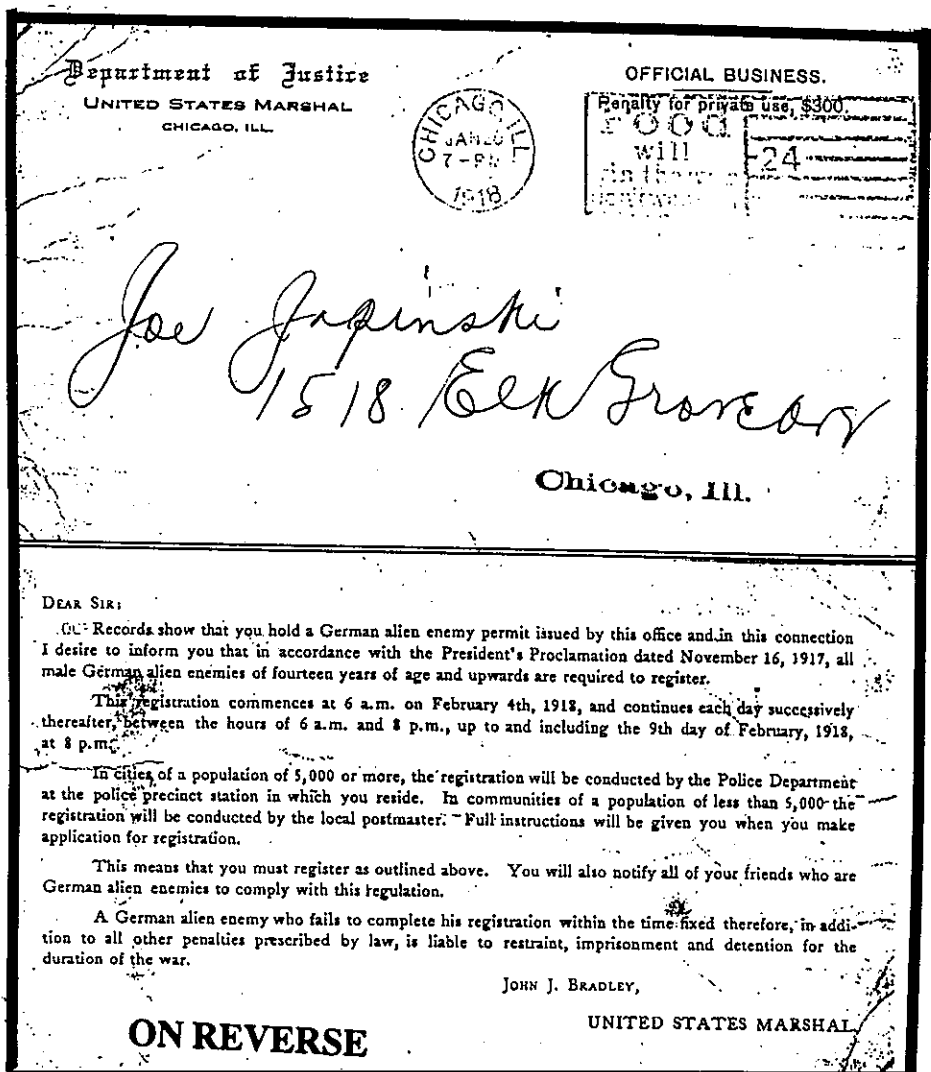
# World War I AEF Update...

## Miscellaneous, not classified

Czech YMCA picture card showing presidents Masaryk and Wilson. [Karl Haas]



Official card from the Department of Justice, U.S. Marshall, in Chicago post-marked Jan. 26, 1918 to Chicago. On reverse text regarding alien registration. [A. W. Ebright]



DEAR SIR:

Records show that you hold a German alien enemy permit issued by this office and in this connection I desire to inform you that in accordance with the President's Proclamation dated November 16, 1917, all male German alien enemies of fourteen years of age and upwards are required to register.

This registration commences at 6 a.m. on February 4th, 1918, and continues each day successively thereafter, between the hours of 6 a.m. and 8 p.m., up to and including the 9th day of February, 1918, at 8 p.m.

In cities of a population of 5,000 or more, the registration will be conducted by the Police Department at the police precinct station in which you reside. In communities of a population of less than 5,000 the registration will be conducted by the local postmaster. Full instructions will be given you when you make application for registration.

This means that you must register as outlined above. You will also notify all of your friends who are German alien enemies to comply with this regulation.

A German alien enemy who fails to complete his registration within the time fixed therefore, in addition to all other penalties prescribed by law, is liable to restraint, imprisonment and detention for the duration of the war.

JOHN J. BRADLEY,

UNITED STATES MARSHAL

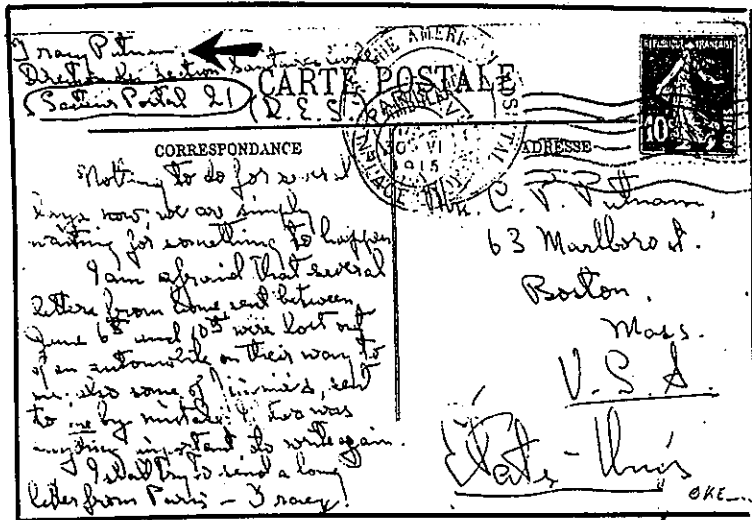
**ON REVERSE**



# World War I AEF Update... American Field Service

Postcard, sender Tracy Putnam, Directeur du Section Sanitaire Civil, Secteur Postal 21 with 10c French Sower stamp tied Paris, France, June 30, 1915 with faint cachet.

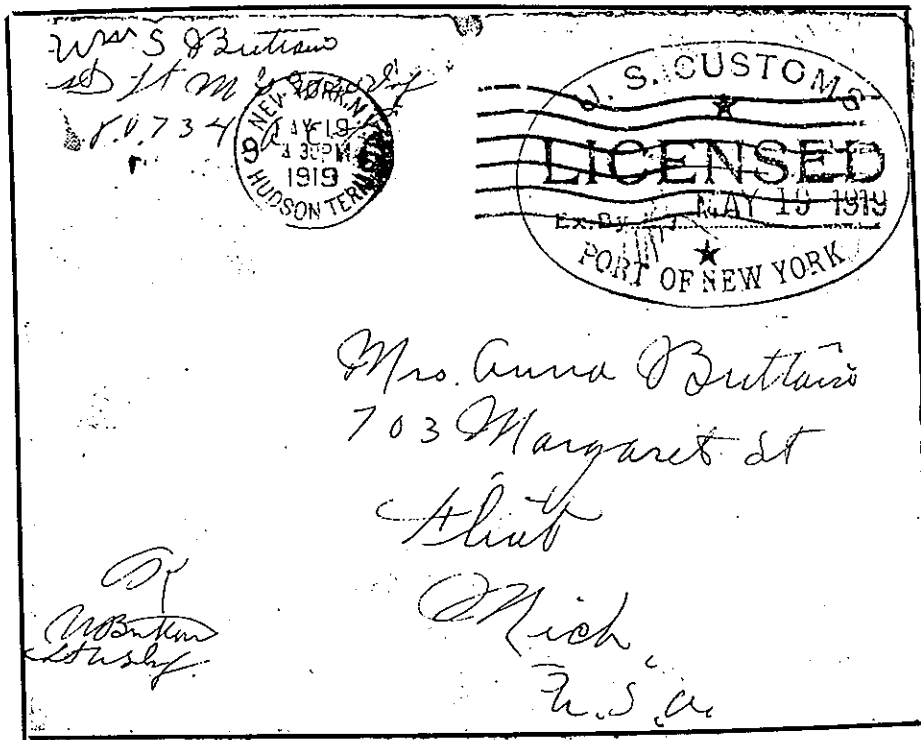
Biography of Tracy Putnam, who received the French Croix de Guerre. [Irving Baron]



Putnam, Tracy Jackson, A.B. '15(16); M.D. '20. Ambulance driver, American Field Service, Section 1, May to August 1915, with French Army at Dunkerque and in Belgium; ambulance driver, American Field Service, Section 3, September 1915 to January 1916, with French Army in Vosges sector. Enlisted private Medical Enlisted Reserve Corps December 14, 1917; not called to active duty; discharged December 1918. Awarded Croix de Guerre with the following citation:  
 "A, pendant quinze jours, assuré nuit et jour, sur une route de montagne difficile et constamment battue par les projectiles ennemis, l'évacuation de nombreux blessés avec un zèle et un dévouement dignes de tous les éloges."

## U.S. Customs Censorship (page 167)

Interesting example of this scarce handstamp. Envelope sender Lt. William S. Brittain, 125th Machine Gun Battery, 32nd Infantry Div. (APO 734), postmarked New York/Hudson Terminal (Port of Embarkation), May 19, 1919 with "Licensed" U.S. Custom handstamp Type 1.11. Lt. Brittain received the Distinguished Service Cross on August 31, 1918. Did he send it home in this package? [Irving Baron]



### APO/FPO Openings and Closings

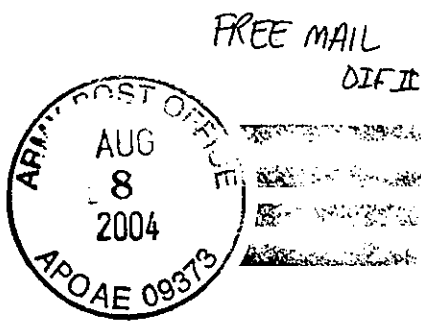
These APO and FPO actions were announced in the *Postal Bulletin* from November, 2006 and January, 2007. Announcements advise Postal Service staff that they may now accept mail addressed to APO/FPO numbers listed as "Active," and may no longer accept mail addressed to numbers listed as "Closed." Actual dates of operation of APO/FPO post offices may differ from the dates given. Some numbers may be Mailing Addresses Only rather than representing an operating post office.

APO/FPO #	ACTION	DATE
APO 09319	Close	12/21/06*
FPO 09370	Active	01/04/07*
APO 09372	Close	11/09/06*
APO 09628	Close	11/09/06*
APO 09702	Active	11/09/06*

In many cases the *Postal Bulletin* does not publish actual effective dates, saying only "immediately" for the action. The dates of these announcements are marked with an asterisk to show that this was the date of the *Postal Bulletin* notice.

Very little activity this quarter, as political discussions continued over American military activity in Iraq. APO 09372 was reportedly assigned to the 48th Bde. in Baghdad, while APO 09319 served the 172nd BCT at Mosul, Iraq. Outside the Middle East, APO 09628 was assigned to the headquarters of the Southern European Task Force at Camp Ederle, Vicenza, Italy. Reports are vague as to whether the base has actually been closed, and this may be merely an adjustment in APO number assignments.

Although proposals in this country to provide free postage for packages mailed to members of the Armed Forces overseas were not approved by Congress, Canada Post offered such a service during the holiday season, with free outbound parcel postage in effect from Oct. 26 to Jan. 15. The free service was limited to parcels addressed to service members stationed in Afghanistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Sinai, Jerusalem, and aboard Canadian navy ships. These parcels were routed through Canadian Forces postal stations at bases in Halifax, Trenton or Victoria.



### On the Show Circuit

by Alan Warren

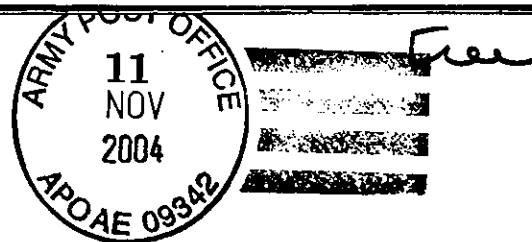
Larry Sherman's book *United States Patriotic Envelopes World War II* won a gold in the literature section of the APS Stamp show 2006 in Chicago. At the Milcopex show in Milwaukee in September, Al Kugel won a gold and the Postal History Society award with his "Postal History of the American Forces in China 1900-1941." Valentins T. Dabols received a vermeil at the SESCAL show in Los Angeles in October for "Western Army Overprints, Latvia Occupation World War I Period."

Several military area exhibits were on hand at Filatelic Fiesta in October in San Jose, Ca. A gold and the APS 1900-1940 medal of excellence went to Akthem Al-Manaseer for his "The 'In British Occupation' Provisionals of Baghdad and Mosul." Another gold and the Postal History Society award were taken by Jonathan W. Becker for "The Conquest and British Administration of Palestine 1914-1920."

At the same show William J. Oliver received a vermeil and an AAPE award of honor for "Philippine and Japanese War." In the single frame category Andrew Urushima won a vermeil and an AAPE award for "The 1944 POW Olympics Gross Born and Woldenberg."

Charles LaBlonde received a large vermeil at Kiwipex in Christchurch, New Zealand in November for his "World War II Airmail from Switzerland to Great Britain, Canada, and the USA." Phil Rhoads won a gold and the APS 1940-1980 medal of excellence for "The Murder of Lidice" at Chicaogpex in Arlington Heights, Ill. in November. Another gold and the APS research award went to Philip Parker for "WWI German East Africa: the Portuguese Connection." A gold and the Reserve Grand award went to Eliot Landau for his exhibit containing a number of military related pieces, "Classic France: Postal History of the Ceres and Napoleon Issues 1849-1875."

At the same show Jerry Miller took a gold for "German Post Offices in China." Still another gold went to Harold E. Peter along with the Herman L. Halle award for German exhibit research for his "Fieldpost Schleswig-Holstein in the Denmark Wars 1948-1851, Occupation 1852, 1864, and 1965-66." Vermeil awards at the Chicago show went to Earl L. Bailey for "Hitler's Third Reich and the World War II Ignited," and to Myron Fox for "German Postal Censorship World War II."



### Future MPHS Conventions and Meetings

July 5-7, 2007

INDYPEX, Indianapolis, Ind.

May, 2008

Rocky Mountain Stamp Show, Denver, Colo.

May, 2009

NOJEX, Secaucus, N.J.

March, 2010

St. Louis Stamp Expo. St. Louis, Mo.

## 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 at APS headquarters in Bellefonte, Pa.]

John Norris writes about World War I German naval mail, i.e. "Marine Schiffspost" in the October issue of the *German Postal Specialist*. He uses a number of covers to illustrate the three major cancellation types. In the October issue of *Stamp Lover*, Alan Bartlett describes the chaotic situation in Indonesia after WW II hostilities had supposedly ended. As British and Indian troops arrived in Java in 1945 to liberate POWs, they faced an uprising by Indonesia nationalists who wanted to be separated from the Dutch.

Postal facilities had to be administered by the Recovery of Allied Prisoners of war and Internees (RAPWI). Examples of mail during the period are shown. Jorge Vega-Rivera writes about the United States military provisional usages of Spanish cancellations in Puerto Rico 1898-1899 as a result of the Spanish American War, in the November *La Posta*. His descriptions are based on a survey of over 60 covers franked with U.S. issues but bearing Spanish cancels.

Kim Dodwell writes about the use of FPO 89 vs FPO 432 cancelers in 1945 on Canadian Infantry Brigade mail in the November issue of the Canadian Military Mail Study Group's *Newsletter*. The 89 appears to have been used as a replacement for worn 432 marks. In the November *German Postal Specialist*, Alfred Kugel describes the Third Army and the American Forces in Germany postmarks following WW I from 1919 to 1923. During this period the number of troops was gradually reduced. Mail with various APOs is shown.

Several military related articles will be found in the Fall 2006 issue of *Rossica*, the journal of the Rossica Society of Russian Philately. Anatoly Osatinski describes the Red Army field post during the Soviet-Finnish (Winter) War of 1939-1940. Topics include postmarks, military sorting points, organizational structure of field communications, and a 9-page table of Red Army units, locations, postal stations, and unit designations.

In the same issue, George Werbizky illustrates some soldier's mail of WW I originating at field hospitals. Meer Kossoy describes how ingenuity was used by letter writers facing shortages of materials in the USSR during WW II. Some people folded their letters into triangles, thus saving the cost of an envelope. Other examples include use of cardboard for post cards, paper or cardboard from food containers for telegram forms, and even German fieldpost letters and forms recovered as the Germans retreated, were used by Russian soldiers.

One more article in this Fall issue of *Rossica*, by Miron Lam and Vladimir Vinokur, is mostly a table of over 300 POW camps in Russia during WW I, with name, location, and number of POWs as of 1 January 1916. Alfred Kugel discusses registered mail of the American Expeditionary Forces in WW I in the October issue of *Postal History Journal*. In addition to describing postal rates and markings, he illustrates some of the registry marks.

The Czech Legion post in Siberia is the subject of an article by William A. Jones in the January issue of *Scott Stamp Monthly*. With the collapse of the Russian Army, the Czech legion took control of the Trans-Siberian Railway in order to permit them to make their way to Vladivostok from where they could sail. The legion organized a postal service using overprinted Russian stamps initially. Although the legionnaires had franking privilege, the authorities felt that producing their own stamps would help publicize their efforts. The article illustrates these issues.

Joe Cartafalsa writes about collecting Vietnam military postal history in the October/November *Global Stamp News*. He describes the different service branches of South Vietnam and illustrates some of the various units' covers. In the January-February issue of the *Collectors Club Philatelist*, Kees Adema describes French fieldpost mail sent from the Netherlands when it was invaded 1747-1748.

In the same issue, Reuben Ramkissoon illustrates some items of Trinidad military letters from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. One example is a soldier's concessionary 1-penny rate from the Bahamas to Trinidad in 1863. A second shows another 1-penny rate, in 1874, for a letter sent from Trinidad to the United States. An unusual third item is a letter sent from Trinidad in 1873 to an officer aboard the HMS *Repulse* in Panama "or elsewhere." The cover went across Panama by rail and thence by ship to Valparaiso.

MPHS member Mike Ruggiero calls attention to two articles that appeared in the June 2006 issue of the *PHSC Journal*, published by the Postal History Society of Canada. In that issue N. F. Lee Dowsley writes about the civil censorship of mail in Canada during WW II, and Gray Scrimgeour discusses trans-Pacific and Asian mail censored in Canada. Øivind Rojahn Karlsen provides the second part of a series on Norway's fieldpost marks and locations since 1950 in the December issue of the *Norwegian War and Field Post Journal*.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

### *U.S. Army Censorship 1941-42*

reviewed by Alan Warren

*Passed By Army Censor: A Catalogue of U.S. Army Censor Markings Used on Mail from American Soldiers and Civilian Contractors Overseas 1941-1942* by Richard W. Helbock. 8 3/4 by 11 1/4 inches, case bound, dust jacket, 254 pages, James E. Lee Publishing, Cary IL 2006. ISBN 0-9790294-0-6, \$50 postpaid in the USA, \$60 elsewhere, from James E. Lee, PO Box 36, Cary IL 60013-0036.

Although the subtitle of this book indicates it is a catalog, there is a lot of text material to provide background and data about the censor markings. This study is limited to mail from American soldiers and War Department civilians in the early part of WW II.

The number of overseas Army and Army Air Corps personnel jumped from 150,000 in October 1941 to over one million by the end of 1942. During this period a wide variety of censorship markings are found on their mail. Throughout the book there are lists of the earliest and latest known uses of the markings from each of the overseas command areas. Rather than using dollar values, a scarcity index of 1 to 5 is used to indicate more common (1) markings up to scarce (5).

The listings are geographical, and the first three cover Lend-Lease bases in Newfoundland, the Caribbean, and Greenland/Iceland. Provisional handstamped censor mark-

ings are assigned type numbers using the Army Post Office (APO) number as a prefix.

A separate chapter is devoted to Alaska — an area familiar to author Helbock who published a monograph on Alaska military postmarks nearly 30 years ago. Subsequent chapters deal with censorship in Hawaii, Panama Canal Zone, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, then Canada, the United Kingdom, the South Atlantic, sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East, China-Burma-India theater, and ends with Operation Torch in North Africa.

Appendix A is the actual catalog listing with the censor markings assigned to three major groups: text, numbers and letters, and geometric shapes. These important tables list the format of each group, a reduced-size image of the mark, its size in millimeters, the nature of the lettering (serif or sans-serif, upper or lower case), the type based on APO number, the geographic region, earliest and latest dates, and the scarcity index.

A second appendix lists the 3-digit censor numbers that appear in the boxed oval censor handstamps. Although a master bibliography might have been useful, the author chose to list selected references at the end of most of the chapters. A detailed index is provided.

Printing is on glossy paper resulting in excellent black and white illustrations. In addition to examples of covers in each chapter, other graphics include maps and photographs that add substantially to the reader's understanding of the subject.

There is a wealth of censorship information here for specialized collectors and the author acknowledges the help and support of such collectors in the preparation of this book.

### ***Norwegian POWs in WW I***

*reviewed by Alan Warren*

*Prisoners of War and Internees in Norway in World War I 1914-1919*

by John Thiesen. 8 by 11 1/2 inches, card covers, 120 pages, perfect bound, War and Philabooks Ltd, Oslo, Norway 2006. ISBN-10: 82-92826-00-9, \$55 postpaid by air from War and Philabooks Ltd., Gydas v. 52, 1413 Tårnåsen, Norway.

Although the Scandinavian countries were neutral in World War I, Norway lost half its fleet and over 2,000 seamen due to German submarine activity. The author examines the mail to and from POWs and internees that resided in camps in Norway. These people ended up in Norway due to several specific incidents.

The German auxiliary cruiser *SMH Berlin* entered the Trondheim fjord in November 1914 and the ship and its crew were interned. In August 1915 the British auxiliary cruiser *HMS India* was torpedoed off the coast of Norway and the survivors were interned.

The German naval airship *L 20* crash-landed in Norway in May 1916 and the crew was interned. In 1917-1918 semi-invalid (sick and wounded) POWs from Russia, Germany, and Austro-Hungary were transferred to Norway. In 1917 twelve crew members of the British trawler *Lord Alverstone* were interned, and lastly there was a little known camp in Harstad where Finnish soldiers were interned.

After providing some statistics on the vessels mentioned above and some details about the semi-invalid POWs transferred to Norway, the author launches into a study of the postal history of camp mail. He first examines the types of mail (letters, post cards, parcels, insured, registered, stationery including cards and envelopes) and then the markings or handstamps found on much of this mail.

The censorship devices are illustrated and described, and they include adhesive labels, sealing tapes, handstamps and one manuscript marking. There were 23 camps in Norway and they are listed along with some details about how mail was handled at each location.

Many pieces of mail are shown that reveal specific marks used at the camps. There are quite a few picture post cards of the cruiser *Berlin* and photo cards of interned crew members. For each camp there is also an indication of the number of censored pieces of mail from and to the camp, any special markings, and various types of stationery or picture post cards known. There is also some discussion for each location that includes any unusual events that took place and their dates.

There is a chapter that describes the role of relief organizations such as the Red Cross, the Central Bank of Norway for conveying funds to internees, and private organizations with examples of their forms. Several appendices list the crew members of the vessels cited above. There are also lists of sick and wounded internees with an indication of those for whom there is known mail. A bibliography concludes the book.

With so much literature available on the Second World War it is nice to have this study of WW I censored mail.

### ***U.S.-Swiss Mail of WW II***

*reviewed by Alan Warren*

*The Suspension of United States Mail to Switzerland 1942 to*

*1944/1945* by Charles J. LaBlonde. 8 1/2 by 11 inches, card covers, 88 pages, spiral bound, American Helvetia Philatelic Society, Ashville NC, 2006. US\$20 postpaid to U.S. and Canada, £15 in the U.K. (cash or check), or US\$25 (cash) to the rest of the world, from Charles LaBlonde, 15091 Ridgefield Lane, Colorado Springs CO 80921-3554.

New discoveries by the author and information from colleagues gleaned during the Washington 2006 international exhibition completed many of the missing pieces to the puzzle surrounding the handling of mail from the United States and Canada to Switzerland during the period 1942 to 1945.

LaBlonde begins by using covers to illustrate the handling of mail between North America and Switzerland in mid-1942. In December 1941 the Post Office Department issued Order No. 16559 suspending mail service to Germany and Italy and European countries under their control. Mail to and from Switzerland passed via unoccupied France. Therefore Germany occupied Vichy, effectively closing off this route. In December 1942 the USPOD announced the suspension of mail to continental France and therefore, by implication, mail to Switzerland as well.

At the time, mail en route to Switzerland was everywhere in mailboxes, post offices, on trains, ships, planes, and at censor offices. These items were immediately held, with the exception of POW and Red Cross mail, until a decision was made to return them to the senders. Much of this mail in transit was then returned in April and July 1943. The covers shown tell the story along with the author's analysis of rates and where each piece was held or censored, and when it was returned. Examples of POW and Red Cross mail that did go through are also seen.

Some of the sacks of suspended mail contained letters from countries such as Venezuela, Chile, and New Zealand that were in transit via the United States. Very few of these are known during this period and whether they were sent on to destination or returned to the sender is not consistent. Author LaBlonde seeks further examples to learn more about their treatment. Mail from Canada was returned to the sender.

Following the Allied invasion of France, the suspension of mail to Switzerland was lifted in stages (surface and air mail) in 1944 and 1945. The suspension and restart of mail from Switzerland to the west is briefly addressed. Although the author has found many of the formerly missing pieces of the mid-war handling of mail between the USA and Switzerland, he leaves the reader with a list of questions, the answers to which would truly complete the puzzle.

The appendices in this book include pertinent documents from the American and Swiss postal administrations, and even correspondence from/to J. Edgar Hoover regarding censorship. An extensive bibliography on censorship and handling of mail during WW II concludes the book. A list of abbreviations and acronyms is presented at the beginning.

The black and white illustrations throughout the book are quite good and mostly in actual size. Collectors of WW II mail between North America and Switzerland will be indebted to the author for this new information.

### ***Undercover Addresses of WW II***

*reviewed by Ken Sanford*

*Undercover Addresses of World War II*, Third Edition, by Charles Entwistle. Published by Chavril Press, Abernethy, Perth, Scotland, 2006, 46 pages. Available from the author for £13.50 postage paid in the UK and £2.00 postage overseas. It is also available in the U.S. for US\$27.00 plus \$3.75 surface postage, from Aerophil, 613 Championship Drive, Oxford, CT 06478-1298.

An Undercover address is one which fails to show the true destination of the correspondence. It is possible to divide such addresses into two distinct categories:

• Those that permit communication between the Axis powers (together with the territories they occupied) and the Allies

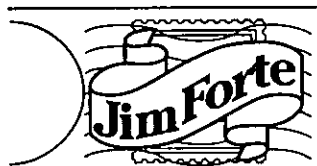
– which for the purpose of this book, the author has termed “External Addresses.” Those addresses which were designed to conceal the identity and/or location of particular establishments, projects, military units or operations - which the author has termed “Internal Addresses.”

The first edition of “Undercover Addresses,” published in 1990, was a slim volume listing 80 undercover addresses. The second edition, published in 1992, listed in excess of 170 addresses in 25 countries and territories. This third edition lists over 340 such addresses relative to 39 countries and territories, together with additional background information.

The book starts with background history on undercover addresses. For example, to send a letter from German occupied Netherlands to the Dutch Press Service in London, the letter would be addressed to Mrs. L. Haakmar, Hotel Miramar, Estoril, Portugal, and would then be forwarded to London. The author states that “postal and censor markings on such covers are often mundane and unlikely to cause the collector much excitement. The ingoing address, however, can turn the mundane cover into a gem.”

There is background on various organizations that used undercover addresses, such as Thomas Cook & Son, Ltd., The Red Cross, Jewish organizations, and prisoners of war, as well as private individuals and forces in exile. All known undercover addresses are listed by country. A few covers are shown as examples, but it would have enhanced the book if more examples had been shown.

The book is very useful for World War II collectors, and those who like to go through dealers stocks of ordinary commercial covers to find the gems.



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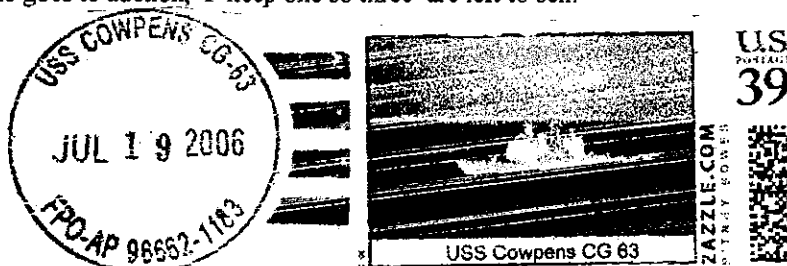
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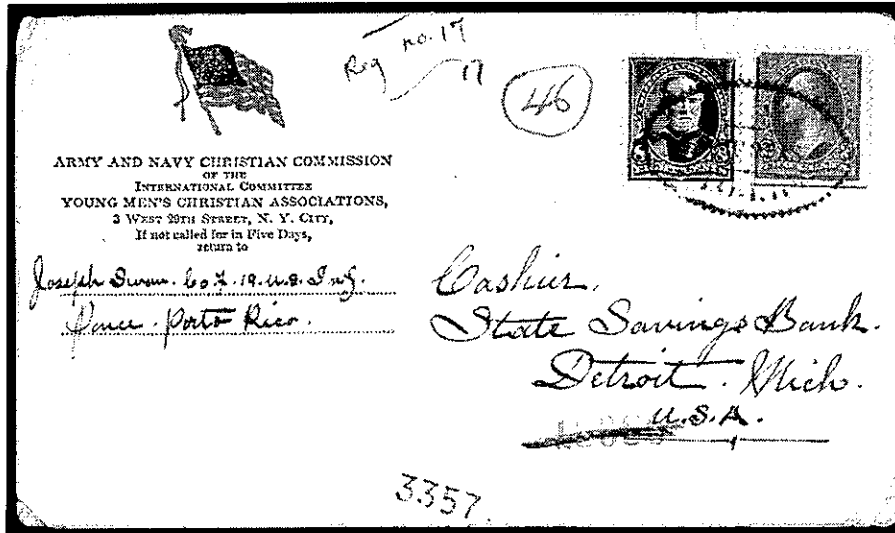
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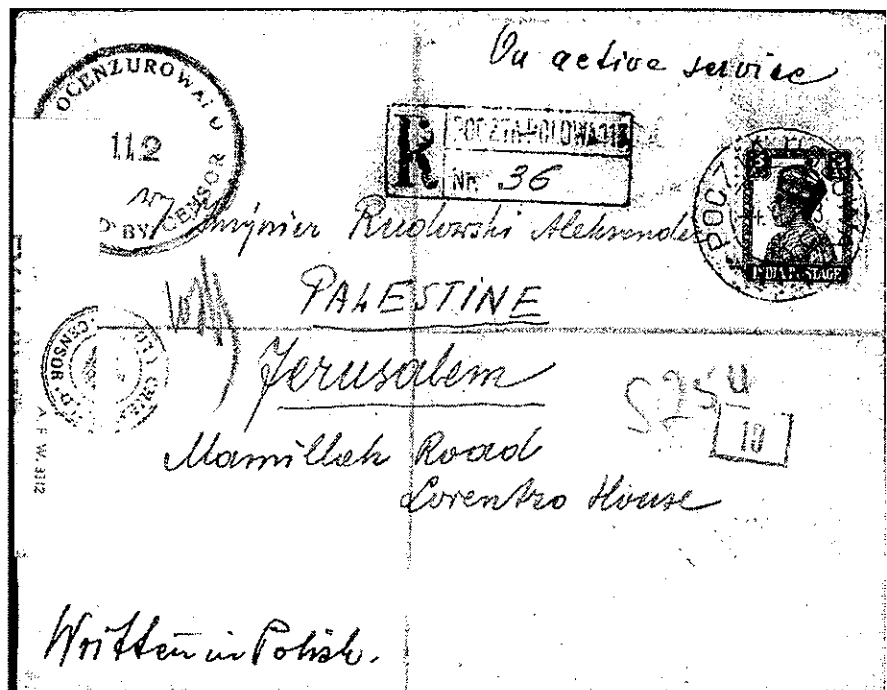
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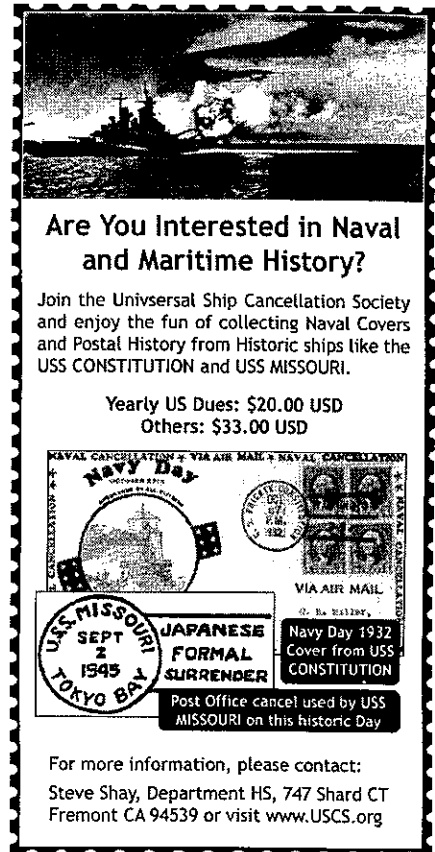
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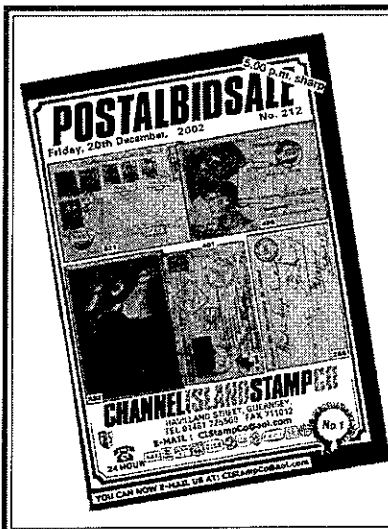
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## Port Chicago

War is a dangerous business, and not only for those on the front lines. The history of war is filled with examples of sudden massive explosions of munitions that caused great destruction and loss of life. The most famous disaster during World War I devastated the city of Halifax, Nova Scotia. In the following war ships seemed to suffer most. Combat actions set off ammunition magazines in *HMS Hood* and *USS Arizona*, while purely accidental casualties were *USS Mount Hood* and *USS Serpens*.

When the Navy was propelled into World War II in December of 1941, it quickly found its facilities on the West Coast inadequate and built a number of new bases to support the fleet. Among these was an ammunition depot at Port Chicago, at the northern end of San Francisco Bay. While other Naval bases on the Bay continued to provide ammunition to combat ships, Port Chicago's primary purpose was to load munitions as cargo on ships, many of them operated by the Merchant Marine, for transport to distant overseas locations. By 1944 the pier out into the Bay had been improved so that two ships could be loaded simultaneously.

Most of the workers at Port Chicago were African-Americans, reflecting the racial segregation of the era. Officers and managers, however, were all white. Although the Navy certainly had long experience in handling munitions, most of the training for the men was in basic cargo handling rather than paying serious attention to the safe handling of the dangerous materials they worked with. A sense of competition developed (and was encouraged) for the most tonnage loaded in an eight-hour shift.

On the evening of July 17, 1944 some 320 cargo handlers, along with ships' crews and Armed Guard members, worked on the wooden pier. *SS Quinault Victory* was tied up along one side, ready to be loaded for her maiden voyage. Across the pier was *SS E. A. Bryan*, another merchant ship just back from her own first voyage. Loading her had progressed for four days, and she had 4,600 tons of ammunition and explosives on board. Some 16 rail cars sat on the pier with another 429 tons of explosives ready to be loaded.

Shortly after ten that night the sound of splintering wood

was heard, followed by a giant explosion that lit up the night sky. Within seconds an even larger detonation followed as *E. A. Bryan* erupted in an explosion whose seismic shock wave was felt as far as Boulder City, Nevada, 500 miles away. Huge chunks of metal flew in all directions — witnesses reported seeing the bow section of *Quinault Victory* flying into the air on a 200-foot column of water, its mast still attached. The remains crashed into the Bay 500 feet away. A plane flying overhead at 9,000 feet reported seeing chunks of white-hot metal "as big as a house" flying by. A 16-inch naval shell, which fortunately did not explode, hit the engine room of a small tanker, *SS Redline*, which was passing by.

Not surprisingly, all 320 men on duty that night were killed. Another 390 on the base and in the nearby city of Port Chicago were injured. Every building in Port Chicago was damaged. The blast even caused damage in San Francisco 48 miles away.

While Port Chicago was being repaired, the Navy transferred the surviving African-American cargo handlers to Mare Island, further south on the Bay. In August, however, the men rebelled and refused to load any more munitions until new safety procedures were developed. In a move that still resonates in the annals of race relations, the Navy instituted court martial proceedings against the men, and 50 of them were found guilty of mutiny. The Navy also changed its procedures and limited the number of African-Americans at ammunition depots to no more than 30% of the staff.

After the war ended calmer thoughts prevailed, and the men were gradually released from prison. However, they had to remain in the Navy, and were sent to the South Pacific in small groups for a "probationary period." All were eventually given an opportunity for an honorable discharge, although the last of them was not granted a full pardon until 1999. The Navy eventually tried to erase memories of the incident by buying out the city of Port Chicago and merging it and its Naval Magazine into the Concord Naval Weapons Station.

Resentment, however, has lingered. "Port Chicago" eventually became a symbol of the struggle for racial equality in America.

