

Back Issue of Military Postal History Society 'Bulletin': (War Cover Philatelist Jan 1939)

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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US Hospitals Under British Command

Spanish Civil War Censor Marks (1936-9)

AEF North Russia, Postmarks & Censor Marks of

Spanish Civil War Censor Marks

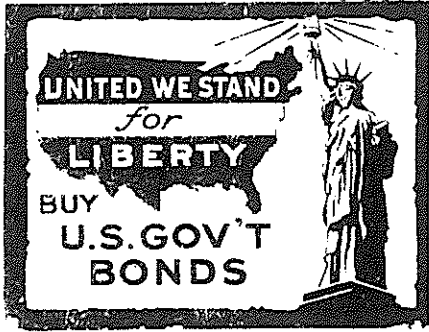
THE WAR COVER PHILATELIST

An Occasional Publication

Edited and Published
by

DEL F NORONA
MOUNDSVILLE, W. VA.

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Vol.2 January, 1939

Whole No. 8

THE A.E.F. NORTH RUSSIA *****

By Milton B. Hunt - Southport, Conn.

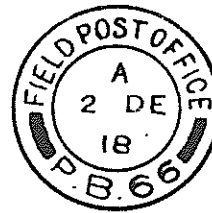
No definite system of marking mail was set up by the AEF. Mail was dispatched from headquarters or from the consulate by the most expeditious way available. Consequently, we find mail with: (a) British Army and Field post offices; (b) the British Navy; (c) the American Navy; and, (d) Russian post offices.

A - British Army and Field post offices: This shows the double ring ARMY POST OFFICE or FIELD POST OFFICE types used in the British system. These designations appear in the upper half with designating letters PB and a number, with date and time in the center. The ARMY POST OFFICE was used by Army Corps or administrative bases, while the FIELD POST OFFICES were used to designate brigades. Raynor's Reference List of British Army Postmarks Used in the Great War shows:

- ARMY POST OFFICE PB-1 (two varieties) Murmansk;
- " " " PB-2 and PB-Z Archangel
- FIELD POST OFFICE PB-11, PB-13, PB-14, PB-44, PB-65, and PB-66, location unknown;
- " " " PB-15 Kem;
- " " " PB-22 Kandakstad;
- " " " PB-33 Petchenga;
- " " " PB-55 Archangel;
- " " " PB-88 Medveya Gora;
- " " " PB-99 Kola Syren

The A.E.F. was stationed along a wide front and most any of these marks may be seen on the mail.

B - British Navy marks:



LONDON

DEC 21 1939



This is usually in the form of two straight lines, as ill-
(continued on page 11)

The illustration at the top of this page is that of one of several varieties of labels used on mail in the U.S. during the World War. While but few varieties were used in the U.S., hundreds were used in other countries.

THE WAR COVER CLUB

New Member:

33 Parks, Thomas, 3531 78th St., Jackson Heights, L.I.,
N.Y. (General, all countries)

COMING EVENTS:

On January 27th, at 7.30 p.m. an informal meeting will be held at 307 Fifth Ave., Room 706, New York City, to which war cover collectors are invited. Lots are solicited for an informal auction. No commission charged, and reserves may be placed on items. Send to Secretary Maxwell Halpern, 1351 Noble Ave., New York City immediately.

The Annual Meeting of the Club will probably be held in New York City in April. Plan now to attend. This may be converted into a general meeting of cover collectors, the idea being that by getting a large group of cover collectors together at our invitation, a number may be converted to our branch of cover collecting! Write the Editor giving your views about this.

A War Cover section will be included at BIPEX (Bronx) Exhibition to be held in February. Prospectus may be obtained from Secretary Halpern. The Club will enter an exhibit.

PAST EVENTS:

Your Editor met our officers Milton B. Hunt and Rev. H.K. Robinson at the Hartford Philatelic Congress, and obtained much valuable data which will appear in the W.C.P. Rev. Robinson remarked that it would be fine if the cream from our respective collections could be assembled for one grand exhibition of U.S. World War Covers! Visualize such an exhibit by members of say 20 frames or more, covering every phase of U.S. World War philatelic history, properly written up and containing the finest War Covers in existence!

Member H.E. Guertin won a first prize for his War Cover collection at the recent EXUP Provincial Exhibition at Montreal. (Who can supply a good article or check-list of Canadian World War covers?) Member Wm. Montgomery exhibited at the N.F.S.C. Exhibition at the New York Museum of Science and Industry, Rockefeller Center, N.Y.

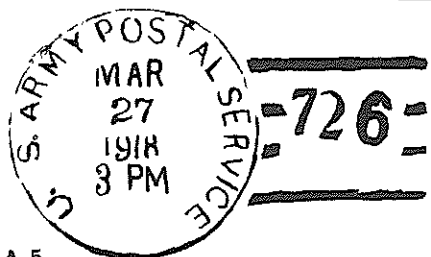
We hope that sections devoted to War Covers will be included at philatelic exhibitions generally; for this is a fine way to popularize the hobby. An even better way of doing so is to give talks at local stamp clubs and even before non-philatelic organizations, such as American Legion groups, Reserve Officers' clubs, &c. The Club Exhibit will be available for exhibition at local clubs after the showing at BIPEX. Write the Editor for details. In order to build up a representative Club Exhibit, will you loan five or six unusual items which can be included in the exhibit, with the understanding that they will be held for about a year.

A detailed check-list, giving the dates of establishment and discontinuance of A.P.O.'s in France, together with a two page map, may be obtained from the Editor for 25 cents.

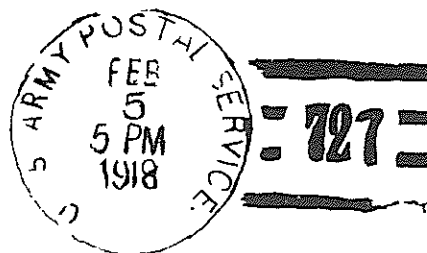
A.E.F. ARMY POST OFFICES (Types A-5 to A-7)

Type A-5 (with its variants A-6 and A-7) is similar to A-1 but with the APO number placed within the killer bars. It is a rubber hand-stamp used at only a few APO's. All known APO's are illustrated, from which it will be seen that there is a wide variety of styles of numerals denoting the APO.

Earliest known use: Feb. 5, 1918 (APO #727, Type A-5 (H.K.Robinson))
Latest known use: Mar. 2, 1919 (APO ?), Type A-6 (Editor)
 - Type A-5 -



A-5

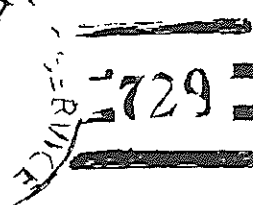
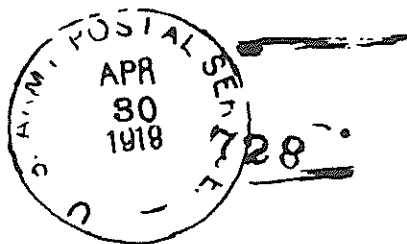
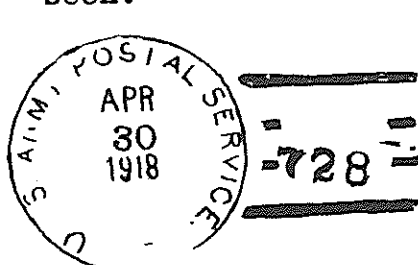


APO NO. 726 (Blois, Loir-et-Cher)

Early Mar.26-18 (M.Hunt). Late Apr.27-18 (Editor). All in Magenta. Hour slug always 3 PM (8 ?)

APO NO. 727 (41st Division. This was a replacement division stationed at St. Aignan)

Early Feb. 5 5 PM,1918 Black (H.K.Robinson). Only one seen.



APO NO. 728 (Army Artillery Hdqrs. 1st Army. Bar-sur-Aube)

Early Apr. 30-18 Purple (Editor) Two copies known, both with the same date. However, from the illustrations it will be seen that the '728' in one was struck separately.

APO NO. 729 (1st Division)

Early Feb.18-18 (H.K.Robinson). Late Aug.27-18 (H.M. Sanford) All Black. Impressions used in March are battered, with bottom killer bar missing. (None have been seen used during April to July) It is probably the August use indicates the introduction of a new postmarking stamp!

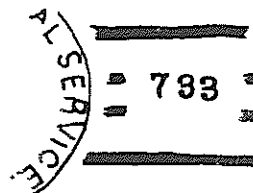
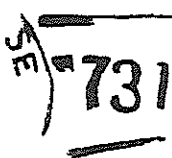
APO NO. 731 (Neufchateau, Vosges)

Early Feb.27-18* (C.M.Farquhar). Late Apr.11-18 (M.B.Hunt) Color ?

APO NO. 733 (Angers, Main-et-Loir)

Early Apr.11-18 (Editor)

Late May 2-18 (Editor) All with hour slug 5 PM. Black.





APO NO. 743 (35th Division)

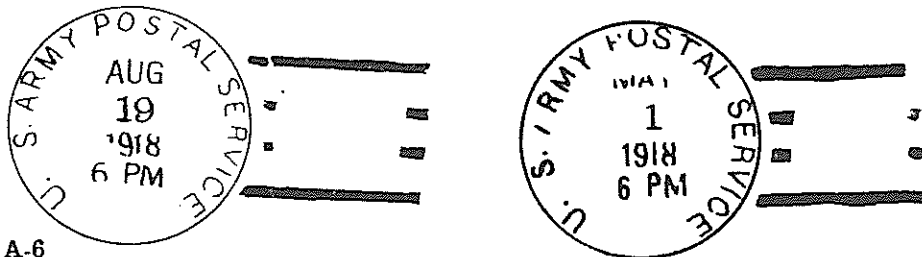
Early 4 PM Aug. 21-18 (H.K. Robinson). Only one seen.

APO NO. 745 (5th Division)

Early Jul. 5-18 PM (Editor) Pink. Only one seen.

- Type A-6 -

This is the basic Type A-5 with the APO number removed.

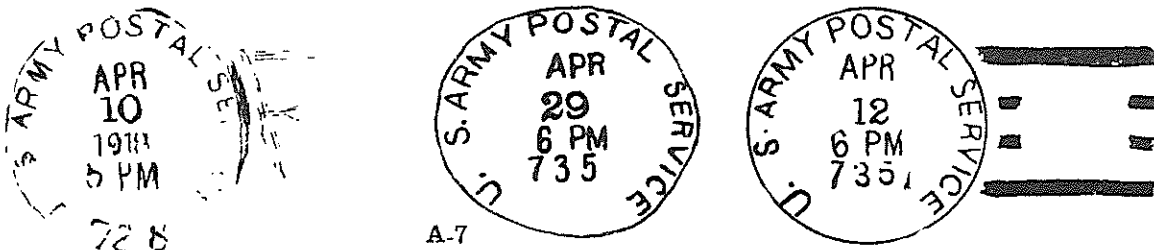


A-6

Early May 1-18 (E. Carey). Late Mar. 2-19 (Editor). Violet, Purple and Black. Copies have been seen used in July, August, October and November. So far, no Type A-6 has been positively identified as having been used at any given APO. Type A-6 will be referred to in comments about Type A-10.

- Type A-7 -

This is the basic Type A-5 with the APO number in the circle. Sometimes the killer bars are missing.



A-7

APO 728 (Army Artillery Hdqrs. 1st Army, Bar-sur-Aube)

Early Apr. 10 5 PM 1918 Magenta (H.K. Robinson) Only copy seen. Note that the APO number is a permanent part of the design, at bottom of circle.

APO 735 (la Rochelle, Charente-Inferieure)

Early Apr. 12 6 PM 1918 (With killer bars) (H.K. Robinson).

Late Apr. 29 6 PM 1918* (No killer bars)

(Dr. Coleman)

APO NO. 907 (Bar-le-Duc)

Early Nov. 2, 1918 (H.K. Robinson).

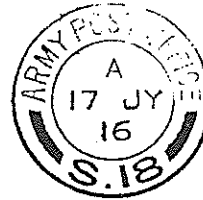
Late Nov. 27, 1918 (S.W. McCune). Both without killer bars. (Note the sequence of uses of pmks. at Bar-le-Duc. Type A-7 Nov. 2 to 27, Type A-1 Dec. 10 to Jan. 3, 1919, and A-3 from Jan. 4 to 5th, 1919.) See Sep. 1938 A.C.P.



U.S. HOSPITALS UNDER BRITISH COMMAND

In The Philatelic Adviser, "Phil the Diarist" comments on the article by Milton Hunt in our February, 1938, issue:

"'Base 18, General Hospital, North-Western Hospital, Chicago, Ill., at Dannes-Camiers, using Army Post Office S.18.'



"I can still vividly recall this Stationary Post Office--a wooden hut on the road to Etaples. I more than once called in there to have a chat with a friend...I was stationed not more than half a mile away in the summer of '17.

"My next association with Americans was while on duty at the Army Repatriation Camp at Morn Hill in 1919-20...Must write an article about this one day!"



Thanks, "Phil." We shall look forward to the article and hope to republish it in the W.C.P.

"Phil the Diarist" writes for The Philatelic Adviser, published by R. C. Alcock, Ltd., 11 Regent Street, Cheltenham Spa, England. It is the British magazine of postmarks, replete with War Cover items, and well worth the low subscription price of only 75 cents a year, six issues.

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DURATION OF THE BRITISH ARMY POSTAL SERVICE IN FRANCE

Again, from The Philatelic Adviser we glean that -

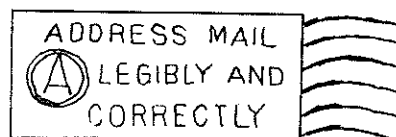
The British Army Postal Service in France was in existence from August, 1914...General Price and his staff landed in France nine days after war was declared. At that time the department numbered 10 officers and 290 other ranks. At the time of the Armistice there were 55 officers, 2970 other ranks, and 412 mobile and 111 stationary offices.

The British Army Postal Service in France was closed September 30, 1920, after which date mail was handled by French and Belgian civil P.O.s, and the postage rate of 2½d for the first ounce, 1½d each ounce thereafter on letters was charged.

So much from The Philatelic Adviser. Compare this with the total number of A.E.F. post offices of 170, both mobile and stationary. We presume the date of closing given applies only to British A.P.O.'s in France and Belgium, and that it was continued after that date by the British Army of Occupation; for, although the last A.E.F. post office in France was closed late in 1919, that of the American Army of Occupation, A.P.O. 927, was not closed until July 31, 1921, and the illustration shows the latest known use of an A.E.F. postmark in Europe.



A-36



Who can beat this record?

A.E.F. COVERS WANTED (with postmarks showing A.P.O. numbers. Will pay cash. Send on approval. Maxwell Halpern, 1351 Noble Ave., New York City.

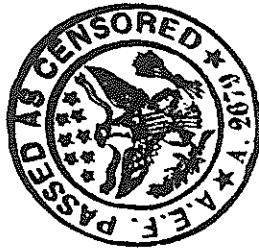
SOLDIERS' BALLOT VOTED BY MAIL

SOLDIERS' BALLOT VOTED BY MAIL



NOV 27 1918

County Auditor,
Clay County,
Vermillion, S. D.
U. S. A.



W.H.Montgomery submits 4 such covers, and Miss Eva Gray and H.V.Crowell report similar items, all addressed to election officers in So. Dakota, and all with either 3c, 6c or 9c in postage stamps. All have regular censor marks, though some do not have SOLDIERS' BALLOT..

Your Editor wrote to the Secretary of State, S. Dak. some years ago for information and was told this was a routine method of handling Absent Voters' ballots.

Query: Why the use of postage stamps?

Our guess is, though postage was unnecessary, the various election officers home in So. Dak. made either a regular practice of placing stamps on all such Absent Voters Return Ballot envelopes, or did so only on ballots sent to

the boys overseas! in ignorance of the fact that postage was not required.

Any definite information will be most welcome.

Similar official envelopes with Soldiers' ballots were used in 1864, but without the use of stamps. More about this later.

FORM 5V-2

OFFICIAL RETURN ENVELOPE FOR ABSENT VOTER
CERTIFICATE OF OFFICER

I, W. H. Montgomery, hereby certify that the enclosed is a return envelope which was used by an absent voter in 1918.

official return envelope provided therefor, and sealed the same. the contents thereof, he folded and enclosed said ballot in the other person was present, and without revealing to me or anyone privately marked the within ballot, in my presence and when no

Name of Officer W. H. Montgomery
Rank or Commission on Major
Dated this 29th day of Nov, 1918.

MITCHELL PUB. CO., MINNEAPOLIS, DAK.

THE A.E.F. NORTH RUSSIA (Continued from p. 4)

ustrated. This indicates that no charges are to be collected from the receiver. A great deal of this material also has the London P.O. mark. These covers frequently have a censor mark put on by the ship's censor. As these censor marks differ with the ship, it is necessary to have a check-list of ship's censor marks to identify the ship. Several are found with censor marks of Hospital Ships.

C - U.S. Naval marks; These marks are distinctly U.S. Naval marks and show that the sender was a member of the ship's crew or that the mail was dispatched by a Naval unit. The U.S.S. Des Moines, the U.S.S. Olympia and the U.S.S. Chester were in North Russia and so marked mail.

D - Russian Post Offices:
 Dr. Coleman in U.S. Army Post Offices Overseas reports these.



CENSORSHIP MARKS: Censorship marks are as varied as the methods of postal dispatch, and frequently indicates censorship by more than one person. Present on almost all mail is the mark of company officers. This is usually in manuscript and is in the lower left hand corner. Other marks are:

EXAMINED BY
 L 12

That this was used by a regimental officer ← is shown by its use on a cover when the sender was in France on his way home.



This is in an oval double ring. This may mean Examiner No. 5. This is an administrative or base number as it is found on Canadian mail from North Russia. ←



This is found in a double oval ring. This may mean Passed Expeditionary Censor. ←

Censor marks of naval ships. →

ON ACTIVE SERVICE
 WITH A. E. F. IN RUSSIA
 NO STAMPS AVAILABLE

← An interesting mark on Y mail in purple



To the collector of World War Covers, the mail from the A.E.F. North Russia, is one of the rarest and most interesting items. The mail for the most part has British military or naval markings and one does not associate it with the A.E.F. A study of some of the marks illustrated above, will enable collectors to know these rarities.

An interesting article by Herbert E. Smith in Recruiting News of March, 1938, gives a brief but fairly complete history of this Expedition, which is summarized as follows:

The Expedition was decided upon by the Supreme War Council to guard the war material in North Russia and prevent it from falling into the hands of enemy troops, also to aid a force of 25,000 Czechs who were trying to get out of Russia via Archangel to join the Allies on the Western front. The Expedition was organized May 24, 1918, in England under

Major Generals Poole and Maynard and sailed for Murmansk at once. At this time the forces consisted of English, French and Serbian troops.

On July 17, President Wilson agreed to furnish an American contingent of three battalions of infantry and one of engineers. General Pershing selected the American contingent from the 85th Division which was then in England. Men of the 359th Infantry, 1st Bat. 310th Engineers, 537th Field Hospital and the 337th Ambulance Co., were assembled at Cowshott Camp in Surry. August 27th, the Expedition, consisting of 143 officers and 4344 men sailed from Newcastle-on-Tyne and arrived at Archangel Sep. 4th. All Allied contingents were under the command of Major General Poole. On April 1st and 8th, 1919, the 167th and 168th Companies of the Transportation Corps arrived in Murmansk to operate the railroad. Withdrawal of the forces began in June, 1919, and by the latter part of the month the service troops had returned to America via of Brest. The transportation units left the last of July.

REFERENCES: Recruiting News, March, 1938; Service with Fighting Men, Vol. 2 (Association Press YMCA); History of the American Red Cross Nursing.

- o -

SPANISH CIVIL WAR CENSORMARKS (1936-38)

Some of the many types of censor-marks used on mail from Spain are illustrated. Get your Spanish war covers now.

1 **SAN ROQUE (CADIZ)**
CENSURA MILITAR

2 **CENSURA**
VALENCIA

6 **CENSURA MILITAR**
RIOTINTO

3 Censura Militar de Alimudevar

4 **CENSURADA**

7 Censura Militar

5 **CENSURA MILITAR**
AHILLONES (Badajoz)

SAN SEBASTIAN

FOR SALE: Form post cards sent to Russian and Italian Prisoners of war in Austria. Interesting postal and censor markings. 3 varieties for \$1; 6 British Army or Field Post Office marks on cover for \$1. M.B.Hunt, Southport, Conn.

HELP WANTED: Please submit AEF covers with new early or late dates of use of Types A1 to A7 APO's for the record. These lists will be republished in the W.C.P. in revised form and due credit given you. Also, submit all your Type A-9 to A-15 covers to the Editor, to be published in the March issue.