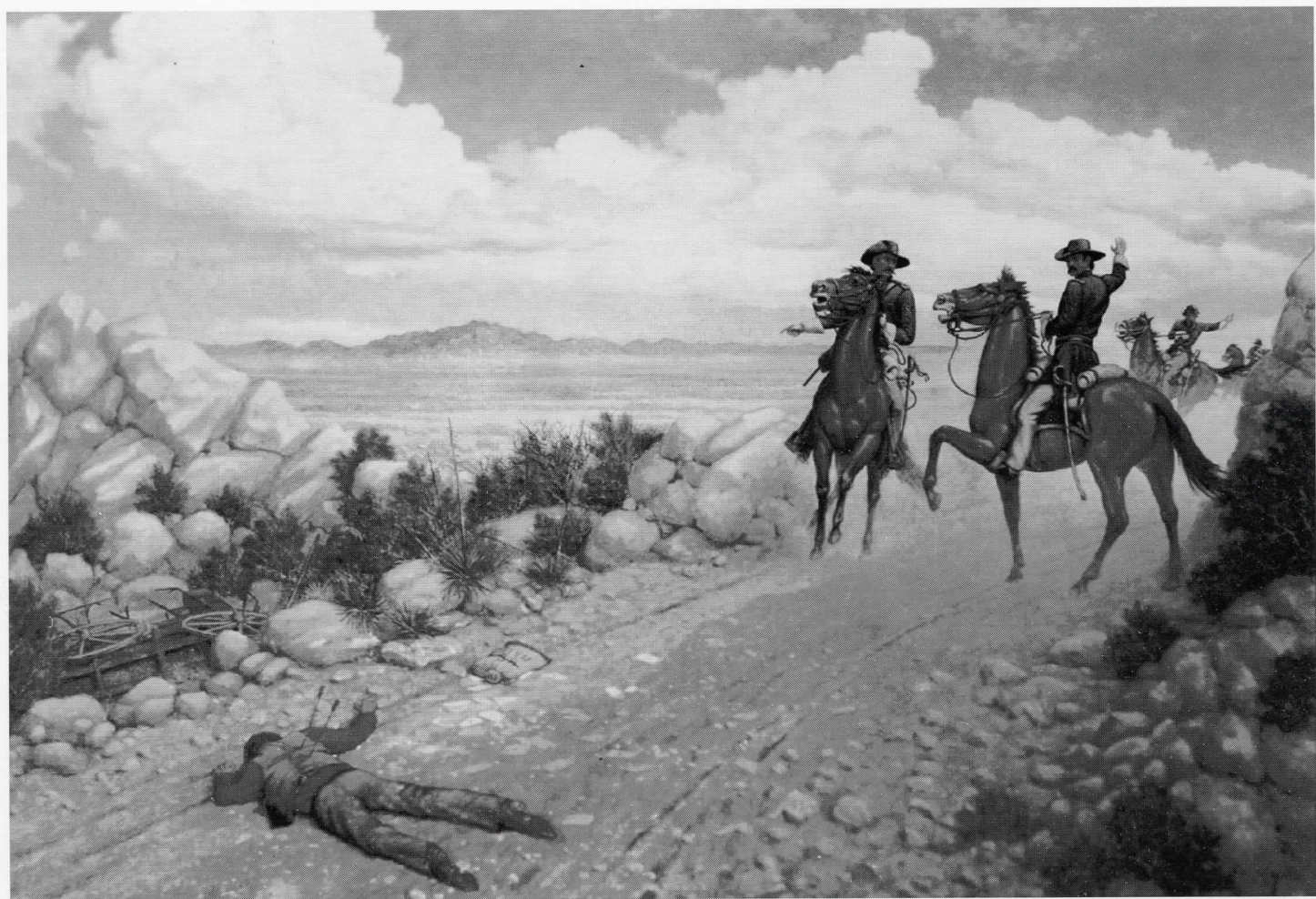


The Heliograph

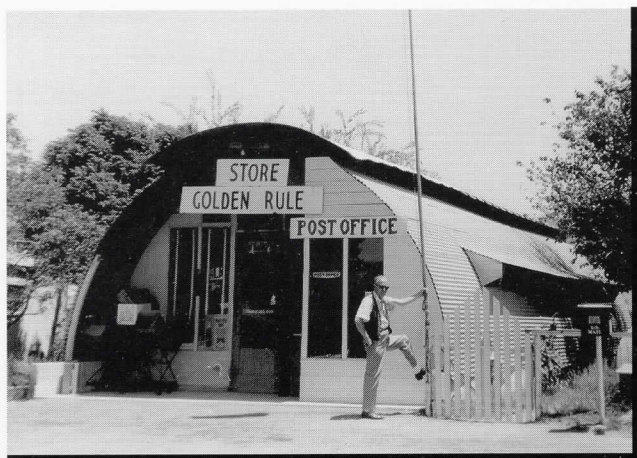


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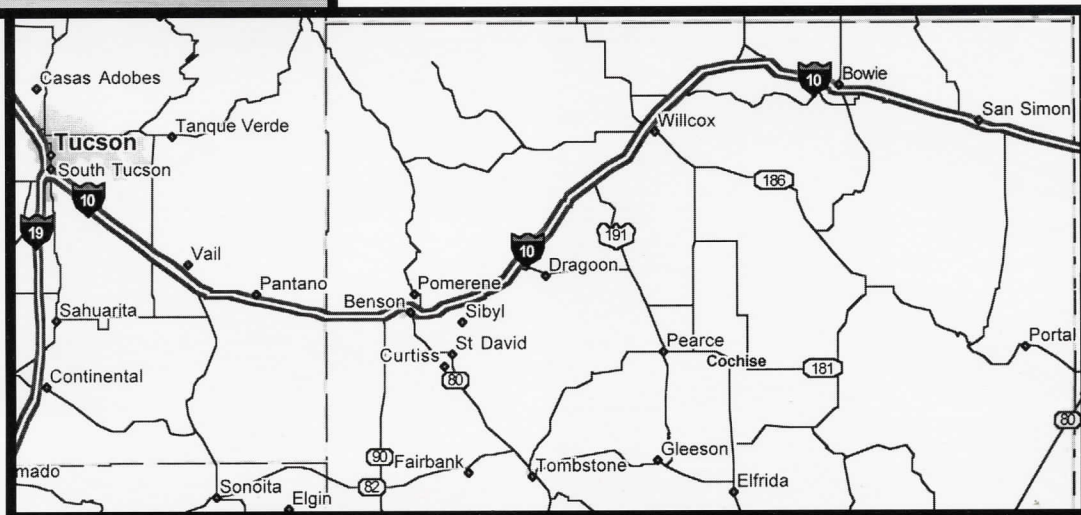
Fall 1999

On the Cover

Photograph of the painting by Cal N. Peters, one of a series presented to the Postal History Museum by the Arizona Philatelic Rangers.



Photograph of the old Dagoon post office, situated in the Golden Rule Store. **Bill Alexander** (former Executive Director of the Western Postal History Museum, now the Postal History Foundation) is shown "holding up" the flagpole in front of the post office. See page 10 for more Dagoon history.



The Postal History Foundation

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With the summer monsoon season upon us here in Tucson (and are we glad to see the rain after nearly six months of drought), our thoughts turn to this Fall issue of *The Heliograph* and to what mix of stories and other information will appeal to our readership. With that thought in mind, we are introducing a new feature called "What's New in the Slusser Library," which will highlight the acquisition of new books and materials as well as other types of events that will be of interest to those who read this journal. Among other things, we will include book reviews of recently acquired publications that we think you will find informative.

Also in the issue we bring you the conclusion of the saga of "Return to Sender," the entertaining (we hope) story of mail gone astray for one reason or another, from the collection of Ferd Lauber. We continue the stories behind the paintings on the walls of the Slusser Library with the short tale of mayhem and death outside of Dragoon, Arizona. Wartime mail is a treasure trove of fascinating stories, some happy and some sad, but all very moving in their own particular way. Such are the stories told in two pieces of mail from the opposite sides

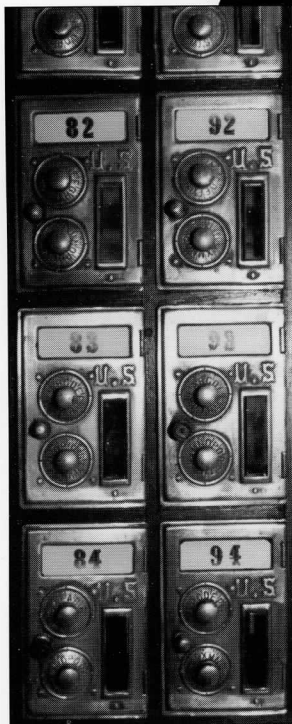
of the World War II conflict.

A new addition to the masthead of this publication (left-hand column, page one) is the notice of the availability of selected articles published in *The Heliograph* in a format accessible through your e-mail service. One advantage of accessing the electronic files is that many of them are in color, something not currently available in the printed pages of *The Heliograph*. Give it a try if you have a computer and e-mail service.

Last but not least, as editor, I am always looking forward to, and happy to receive from volunteers willing to give of their time and talents, articles contributed for publication in *The Heliograph*. (Am I beginning to sound like a broken record? Well, you get the picture.) In all sincerity, I would be delighted to hear from any and all who are willing to take pen (computer?) in hand and contribute an article to this publication. For the Winter 1999 issue, we will need to receive your handiwork (doesn't have to be in final, polished form) by mid-October. Of course, we'll be happy to receive contributions for publishing in the 2000 year cycle and beyond, so just start writing. I look forward to hearing from you.



An Unaccommodating Postmaster



"You seem unhappy," ventured a hotel loiterer to a glum-looking citizen of the woolly west, yesterday.

"Guess you'd be so too, if you lived where I do. I'm going on to Washington to see the President."

"Political trouble?"

"National trouble sir; international trouble. Don't letters come from all over the globe? Say, now!"

"Oh, I see; something wrong in the postoffice department."

"Wrong! I should say there was. You see I live at Snag Forks, and Bill Wilkins, he's been postmaster for nigh on to six year. At first he done the square thing. When the letters come they was dumped in a candle box on the bar-room floor, and the boys had no trouble a findin' their mail. But Bill ain't the man he used ter be. He's got as unaccommodatin' as a Texas steer. Fust he moved the box to the counter, and we had to nearly break our arms a divin' fer the letters. Then if the durned coyote didn't get a new painted consarn with glass in front so we couldn't git at the mail at all, and, as if that weren't insult enough to honest men, he went to work, rigged up a lot of boxes, and hang me if he didn't put locks on to 'em and to chargin' storage. I just tell you I'll git that Bill Wilkins out of that there place or die fur it, now you see."

This piece is reprinted from The Stamp Collector of July, 1886, Vol. 1, Num. 1, originally quoting the Chicago News.



A Soldier's Letter

By Frank A. Mallalieu

NOTE: The soldier's letter quoted in this article is printed unedited. It contains what some readers may consider graphic language.

WAR IS HELL! is a phrase that is familiar to most of us, regardless of our age or our experiences. Practically anyone over the age of a toddler has been exposed to the impact of war, whether by news coverage in newspapers, magazines or on television, in fiction and nonfiction books, or by any number of movies or television documentaries that have been made over the years. Of course for those who have served in battle the reality is that much more personal and intense. No one wants to have to endure a war or its results, nor should anyone try to forget the results that wars have wrought, however painful or upsetting they may be. This is brought all the more closely home when we are able to have direct communication with those who have experienced war, or as is more likely to happen, with the legacy they leave in written form. Such is the case with the two examples presented here.

World War II was certainly one that had an impact that changed the future of mankind and the world beyond what anyone could ever have imagined. The stories that have come out of the conflict are endless and enduring. While the perspective of the War for the readers of this publication is undoubtedly that of the Allied powers united in opposition to the evils of the German and Japanese thrust for

power and domination, it should be remembered that suffering and pain is universal. It touches the vanquished as well as the victors. The purpose of this article is not to philosophize on the morals and ethics of war, or lack thereof, but to present personal stories that may touch the hearts of us all.

The cover in Figure 1 was written by a soldier in the Army associated with the 552nd Bomb Squadron located in Sunninghill, England (APO 638). The author, 1st Lt. Warren J. Friedman, was writing to a friend, Ken Putman who was employed with the Formfit Company in Chicago, Illinois. The letter is dated September 30, 1943, and was mailed on October 2, 1943. The cover is the familiar 6-cent orange air post stamped envelope canceled with the U.S. Army Postal Service A.P.O. postmark, with an Army censor marking "PASSED BY EXAMINER, BASE 1093 ARMY." The cover is backstamped "U.S. ARMY POSTAL SERVICE, 14 BPO, OCT 8 1943." From the text of the letter it is not clear as to exactly what were Lt. Friedman's duties. It seems that he may have been some kind of scheduler or coordinator of air flights from the bomb(er) squadron to which he was assigned. Whether he was actually one of the pilots himself and just rotated through these duties is uncer-

tain. Being so close to the action (bombing runs flown from England to targets in Germany or other enemy locations) as well as to the lives of his friends and associates, the impact of what was happening was undoubtedly a very intensely personal situation for him. This is reflected in the tone and content of the letter he sent to his friend back in the United States. The text of the letter is as follows, completely unedited:

Dear Ken,

Thanks loads for your swell letter and to show you just how much I appreciate it, here's the answer almost the night of the day that I received it.

You said that you intended to circulate my letter. I wish now that I could remember just what I said, because I have a feeling that it was most likely quite juvenile.

Your letter seemed to be filled with concern for the state of the American mind. I think you are looking at the black side of the thing, Ken.

I, personally, have a heluva lot of confidence in the American people and their ability and willingness to do a job. I think that any laxness you see is due to lack of imagination. Those Americans who don't seem to be doing their job are not non-patriots – but just haven't been close enough to the war. I am in a theater of operations but can hardly consider myself in it. I am, however, quite close to it.

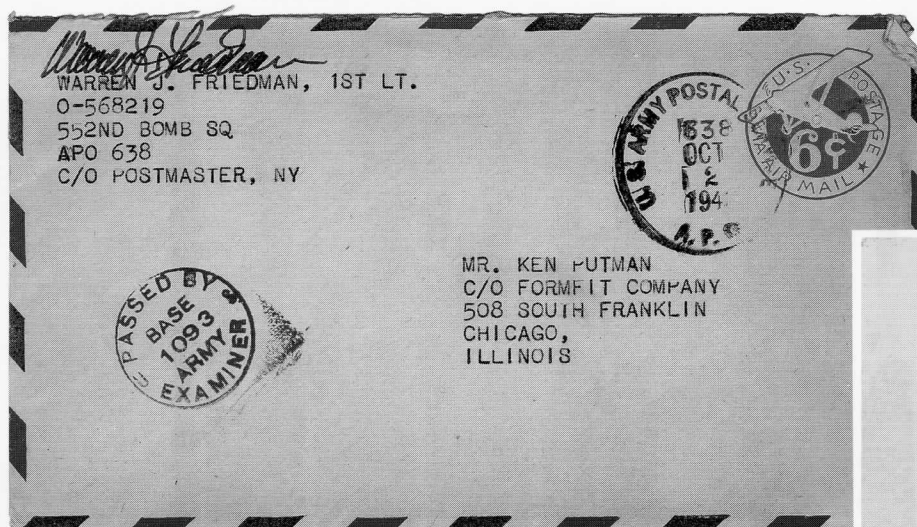


Figure 1. Cover mailed from soldier on duty in Britain during World War II.

You really don't know what it is like until you get up in the morning and look at the sky. It's black with clouds, or its raining, or the sun is shining. If the sun is shining, you get that funny feeling. You look at the alert list and some time during the day they are off. You look at your watch and try to go about your regular duties.

You look at your watch again, they ought to be at the coast now. Later, they must be over the target now, – they are on the way back. Let's get out to the line. I hear them. No, its a flight of another type of plane. Pretty soon they come in. Two, four, six eight, ten, twelve, – oh hell I lost count, start again, three, six, nine. Christ, look at that one barrel housing in. There goes his flare. What color is the nose wheel? What's her name? Wonder if it's wounded on board or mechanical trouble. Say, how many did you count? One's missing – maybe he landed at another field. Start counting our ships as they come in. Hot damm, there's Captain Charley – he made it. Better chase back to the office and get the battle casualty reports, if any, and please God, let there be none. The phone rings – "You dumb son of a bitch, why in the hell can't you get the right number." Shouldn't have bawled him out so but the ring of the phone is like the blowing of taps over a casket as it is lowered into a grave while the flag is being taken off to be delivered to some poor lonely woman.

Sometimes the phone doesn't ring and pretty soon they are all in talking and laughing and getting ready to go out and raise hell with the English pubs or perhaps write a letter – or just go to bed. They are all excited – kee rist the flak was heavy. Joe got an FW 190, – the hell he did, the spits did – it looked like the

Figure 2. Page one of 1st Lt. Friedman's four-page letter.

movie Hell's Angels – Bill sure ran into trouble – lucky he got out.

Those boys have just gone out into war – a day off perhaps and then they have to steel themselves to back to that hell again.

Sometimes, the phone does ring. Okay, Herm – I got it. Are you sure? All right, I'll get the dope in to you in plenty of time. Give me some chance to get all the dope. Hello, operator, get me Operations. Sgt. Newman – who was flying Ship No. XXXXX. Thanks I got them down. Paul, get me these service records and the rest of the stuff I need. God dammit. Look – he's married – wife's expecting. I bawled the hell out of Smith this morning too. Damm those lousy bastards. Jesus, only nineteen huh. It's all mixed up – why don't the yellow dogs quit. They know we've got them beat.

It's all mixed up Ken. But then so is the whole God damm world. You can ask any of these boys and men I'm talking about, or ask Jim Leopold, or any of the others.

The point I'm trying to get at is this – when the sun is shining in England, it means one thing to me. My best friend may be dead before I get back into bed.

If you see that and feel it, you soon realize that every minute this war lasts more of them are going to be killed and you

DEAR KEN,

THANKS LOADS FOR YOUR SWELL LETTER AND TO SHOW YOU JUST HOW MUCH I APPRECIATE IT, HERE'S THE ANSWER ALMOST THE NIGHT OF THE DAY THAT I RECEIVED IT.

YOU SAID THAT YOU INTENDED TO CIRCULATE MY LETTER. I WISH NOW THAT I COULD REMEMBER JUST WHAT I SAID BECAUSE I HAVE A FEELING THAT IT WAS MOST LIKELY QUITE JUVENILE.

YOUR LETTER SEEMED TO BE FILLED WITH CONCERN FOR THE STATE OF THE AMERICAN MIND. I THINK YOU ARE LOOKING AT THE BLACK SIDE OF THE THING, KEN.

I, PERSONALLY, HAVE A HELUVA LOT OF CONFIDENCE IN THE AMERICAN PEOPLE AND THEIR ABILITY AND WILLINGNESS TO DO A JOB. I THINK THAT ANY LAXNESS YOU SEE IS DUE TO LACK OF IMAGINATION. THOSE AMERICANS WHO DON'T SEEM TO BE DOING THEIR JOB ARE NOT NON-PATRIOTS – BUT JUST HAVEN'T BEEN CLOSE ENOUGH TO THE WAR. I AM IN A THEATER OF OPERATIONS BUT CAN HARDLY CONSIDER MYSELF IN IT. I AM, HOWEVER, QUITE CLOSE TO IT.

YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS LIKE UNTIL YOU GET UP IN THE MORNING AND LOOK AT THE SKY. IT'S BLACK WITH CLOUDS, OR ITS RAINING, OR THE SUN IS SHINING. IF THE SUN IS SHINING YOU GET THAT FUNNY FEELING. YOU LOOK AT THE ALERT LIST AND SOME TIME DURING THE DAY THEY ARE OFF. YOU LOOK AT YOUR WATCH AND TRY TO GO ABOUT YOUR REGULAR DUTIES.

are ready to work your ass off day and night to see to it that it doesn't go one minute overtime.

I have purposely done a little swearing in the above, Ken, so that the Forum editor won't see fit to print it. Maybe it is worth printing and maybe it isn't. I don't want to sound like a preacher or a fearless soldier or patriot or anything like that. I'm just another guy who wants to get the hell back home. I'd rather you didn't use this letter for anything else than your own personal use – nothing else. I don't like the publicity not even if all the swear words are deleted.

Am looking forward to the next Forum. As for pictures, all mine come back from the censor marked "Not for Publication."

Ken, I though you would like a little picture of what is going on because you seem to really grasp the idea of what is going on. I want to thank you for myself for all that you seem to be doing. I know this: that the Forum alone helps my morale which incidentally is never very low.

That's all my feeble brain can think of right now. I'll sign off, reread this letter to correct grammatical mistakes and see what in the hell I said that I shouldn't.

Sincerely, Warren

Although somewhat graphic in his use of profanity, the author really lets the reader (that is us, here and now, as well as its original recipient) know what is in his heart and soul. This is as about as close as one can come to really understanding what many were going through during a very difficult time in the history of the world.

But what were the citizens of the enemy countries thinking and feeling at the same time their loved ones were fighting and dying during this War? The mothers and fathers and sisters and brothers of the enemy soldiers were human beings as well. When they lost their loved ones they felt the same kind of pain and suffering. The postcard [Figures 3 and 4] addressed to Karl Bernhard in Darmstadt, Germany, was canceled on April 19, 1943, about five and a half months before Lt. Friedman's letter to Ken Putman. This was at a point in time when the German army was deeply involved in fierce battles on the Eastern/Russian front. Essentially it was a make or break situation for Hitler and the future of his Third Reich. A defeat of the Russians would open the way for Hitler to throw the full might of his military machine against the Allies fighting on the Western front. If Germany's efforts against Russia failed it meant the beginning of the end for Hitler and his regime, which as it turned out was the case. The losses suffered on both sides, both military as well as civilian, were staggering. It certainly was not unusual for the kind of message borne by a card like we see here to be sent to relatives and loved ones back home. In this case it took nearly three and a half months for the official news to reach the next of kin, which it is assumed to have been Otilie Feldrappe. Considering the enormity of the situation and the great distances involved, this is not too surprising. The common Hitler-head postcard bears a Darmstadt-Wiebelsabach bahnpost (railway) cancel. Otilie's message to her relatives is as follows:

My Loved Ones!

Want to let you know that Karl was killed in action in Russia on January 3, 1943. When you come at Easter, I will tell you the rest.

In intense pain, mourning,

Your Sister and Sister-in-Law,
Otilie

Figure 3. A German woman writes to family members reporting the death of a loved one on the Russian front.

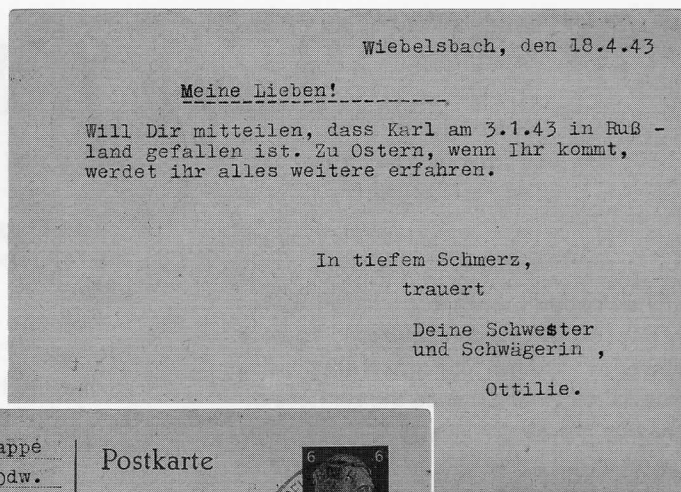


Figure 4. This postcard mailed by Otilie Feldrappe in 1943 bears a bahnpost cancel.

There is no way of knowing the relationship of Karl, the soldier killed in action, to Otilie Feldrappe or Karl Bernhard. Was he husband, son, father, brother, cousin or just a close friend? Although we'll never know, the very brief but to-the-point message is poignant in its way at relaying the pain and grief that is felt during wartime when friends and family are killed. These written

communications convey messages of sorrow, sadness, and as expressed by Lt. Friedman, concern for what the future holds. Wartime is never a happy time, but one that calls upon every individual to make do with the best of a bad situation. Pithy and overused as the expression is, War is indeed Hell. Only by learning from the lessons of war can this world hope to find stability and peace. ☐

Coming in the Winter issue of

The Heliograph

The Peggy J. Slusser Library:

MEMORIAL TO BELOVED DAUGHTER IS UNIQUE PHILATELIC FACILITY

Spotlight On...: RANYTA SULLIVAN IS DRIVING FORCE BEHIND EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

The education programs of the Postal History Foundation have assisted thousands of budding philatelists across the nation. Learn more about the dedicated volunteer who has helped make this possible.

Juan Bautista de Anza:

HIS EXPEDITIONS AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOUTHWEST

Read the fascinating story of this intrepid soldier-explorer who led two expeditions in 1774 and 1775-6 from Mexico overland through Tubac, Tucson, Yuma, and southern California to the San Francisco Bay area, where his expedition founded the Presidio and Mission.

Peggy J. Slusser Library

By Frank A. Mallalieu

The Postal History Foundation makes an ongoing effort to acquire up-to-date reference material and other descriptive material that will enhance the services offered by the Peggy Slusser Library. For the most part this will be in the form of books or in other written and/or illustrative formats.

To introduce the types of documents and publications that are available for use by patrons for either research and educational purposes or just for the fun of perusing interesting and informative material, the Editor of *The Heliograph* (or anyone else who might care to volunteer a review of a particular publication) will present a brief but succinct review of a new acquisition.

For this Issue I am providing a review of the *American Air Mail Catalog*, Volume One, Sixth Edition. This is the first volume in a projected multi-volume series of the American Air Mail Society's updating of its previous series of Air Mail Catalogs released between 1974 and 1985, along with its Pricing Supplement of 1990. This represents a massive effort to provide the latest and most accurate information with regard to the use of air transportation in its many forms for the movement of mail or for other collateral functions. Because more than ten years have passed since this information (including valuations) was current, the publication of these volumes has been and will continue to be eagerly awaited.

The AAMS has produced a first-rate publication with issuance of this first volume in the new series. Much credit goes to the staff of the AAMS for the beautiful job they have done. Volume I follows in general the same format used previously. The publication is a hardbound book of over 500 pages printed on glossy stock that provides for excellent readability of both the printed text and the illustrations. The volume is about 50% larger in size allowing for the use of larger type, which is a boon for those who may have a problem with reading smaller type. It should be noted that this is not merely a reprint

The **Peggy J. Slusser Library** was constructed in 1996 to house Postal History Foundation research materials, especially the extensive collection of Civil War literature, documents and ephemera that had been the lifelong interest of philatelist Peggy Slusser. Designed by architect **Les Wallach**, it was given as a memorial to Peggy by her parents, **W. Blaine** and **Bessie I. Slusser**. Look for a feature article in the Winter issue highlighting recent additions and features of this unique facility.

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

New to this shelf:
American Air Mail Catalog,
Vol. I, 6th Ed.



of the old information with updated prices. According to the AAMS a number of the sections have been re-researched and rewritten.


The volume starts with the U.S. Pioneer Flight Covers (1910-1916), followed by U.S. Government Flight Covers, U.S. Express Covers, Interrupted Flight Covers, Airport Dedication Covers and finishes with Mexico First Flight Covers. The coverage of U.S. Express covers represents a presentation of material not seen in any comprehensive way in more than seventy years, according to the editor. Also, the coverage of the Mexico First Flight Covers provides for the first time in nearly sixty years a listing of these items, certainly a welcome addition for collectors of this area of philately or even those who just find it interesting.

If I have anything to find fault with in this new Sixth Edition it is the absence of the chronological listing of all the items covered in this volume, which in the previous editions was found at the very end of the book. This was (and is) a very handy reference tool which often enabled the reader to find immediately whatever particular flight he was searching for without having to look through page after page, even if one knew the specific cat-

egory in which it would be found. It is not known if this absence of the chronological listings will occur in all future volumes of this Sixth Edition, or will perhaps just one such comprehensive list appear at the end of the final volume. I certainly hope at least this much is planned.

It should also be noted that some of the categories of air mail flights that appeared in the previous Volume I are not included in this volume, specifically the Zeppelin Flights. Because of space constraints, it is assumed, this category will be included in one of the next volumes to be issued.

This is a wonderful source of information and will be one of the most respected and used reference tools for those interested in the history of the air mails. It is obvious that it was lovingly compiled by all those involved in its production. It is a significant addition to our Library and one that will be much consulted in the years ahead. I look forward to all the remaining volumes and I am sure that they will be just as impressive as this first.

If you are interested in consulting this book for reference purposes or just to peruse, see the Library staff at the Slusser Library. They will be happy to help. 

THE WORLD'S FIRST AIRMAIL SERVICE



The Great Barrier Island Pigeon Post

By Frank A. Mallalieu

Although it is not well known, the world's first commercial airmail service operated between Auckland, New Zealand, and its Great Barrier Island, about 65 miles to the northeast of Auckland (directly north of the Coromandel Peninsula), from 1896 to 1908. The story as to how this came about and the reason for its establishment makes for an interesting and unusual tale.

The Great Barrier Island was discovered by Captain James Cook (who undoubtedly discovered more islands and continents than any other human being in the history of mankind) in 1769. He actually discovered two adjacent islands, naming the smaller Little Barrier and the larger Great Barrier. The two islands formed what Captain Cook considered a natural barrier between the Pacific Ocean and the Hauraki Gulf to the east of what is today the city of Auckland, hence the name "Barrier" for the islands. There is a Maori legend of two chiefs, named Kupe and Ngahue, who far back in time discovered Great Barrier Island and had named it "Aotea" meaning "white cloud."

Early on in the European settlement of Great Barrier Island the non-native inhabitants became aware of the wealth of the island's natural resources and of its potential for commercial development. The forests of Kauri trees and copper ore in the ground became the focus of development along with the abundant game in the forests and fish in the surrounding seas. Naturally these resources attracted sports enthusiasts and naturalists of all kinds.

The only means of communication between the Island and the mainland was by sea, in the form of a weekly steamer that plied the waters between them. Because of these constraints it usually took in excess of two weeks to receive a response to a letter sent to Auckland, and much longer for mail sent further distances. Ironically, a maritime tragedy unrelated to the mail service for Great Barrier Island became the catalyst for the initiation of a new kind mail service for the Island. On October 24, 1894, the ship S.S. Wairarapa which was en route from Sydney, Australia, to Auckland was wrecked off the coast at Miner's Head, Great Barrier Island. (This fact is rather puzzling, as Auckland is on the west coast of the North Island, which coast faces west towards Australia, and Great Barrier Island is off the east coast of the North Island, as previously noted. It seems strange that a ship would sail all the way around the top of North Island down to Hauraki Gulf into the bay that forms the eastern boundary of the city of Auckland. This route added over 400 miles to a sea trip from Sydney to Auckland that common sense would seem to indicate was totally unnecessary.) Notwithstanding this anomaly, a great tragedy had occurred. The wreck resulted in the loss of 121 lives, despite the frantic efforts of the ship's captain and crew to save as many people as possible.

After the news had arrived in Auckland many days later, a Mr. Walter Fricker, who was a pigeon fancier and who was deeply shocked at the great loss of life, had the inspiration for establishing a pigeon mail service between the Island and the mainland. Out of this tragedy came the realization that a swifter means of communication between the two was not

only desirable but also very much needed, and Mr. Fricker seemed to be in the right place at the right time. Fricker set himself about the task of procuring an adequate number of homing pigeons for this enterprise and then approached Captain Duthie, the skipper of the ship "Iona" of the Northern Steamship Company line, for help in the training of the pigeons. The birds were placed in baskets aboard ship and were successively released from the baskets as the ship sailed further and further away from the mainland. This mechanism was used to test the birds' ability to find their way back to the mainland and to see if this was a viable means of transporting the mail. Finally the birds were released from Great Barrier Island, climaxing a successful experiment which proved Fricker's concept was viable.

INITIAL MESSAGE

The initial message carried to the mainland was the report of an excursion to the Great Barrier Island. This message was transported by a bird name Ariel who carried five sheets of letter-sized paper, quite a feat it would seem for a relatively small bird flying such a long distance. The letters were wound around one of the bird's legs with a piece of cotton string, to be replaced later with rubber bands. On September 5, 1896, the pigeons were employed to carry (in the opposite direction) the results of New Zealand's just completed



general election. These endeavors were considered so successful that Mr. Fricker decided to establish a full time business of sending mail making use of these pigeons. He engaged a Miss Springhall, who was the postmistress at Blind Bay, Okupu (on the Island) who consented to the use of her offices as the departure point for the mail to be flown back to the mainland (one wonders if the New Zealand Post Office knew of this initially and why it condoned its use for many years after it was originated).

Mr. Fricker engaged a Mr. Smales to act as his agent in running the business from the mainland, which officially opened in March 1897. The business was a success, especially with the mining personal on the Island. Each week six to eight pigeons were sent by steamer to Miss Springhall. Initially the messages were written on tissue paper, which was superseded by special "Pigeongram" forms (apparently a more durable material). Each pigeon could carry up to five messages. A charge of two shillings was made for each message sent. In addition to this income Fricker's company received subsidies from other individuals/companies who had an interest in seeing his endeavors succeed. Despite all this the service was not profitable, and appeals to the government for financial help were rejected.

Eventually Mr. Fricker and Mr. Smales had a parting of the ways over the running of the business, and Mr. Smales decided to open a competing pigeon mail service. In the meantime Mr. Fricker moved his operation to Oroville about four miles inland from Okupu. Engaging a new agent who was also an accomplished pigeon breeder, a two-way service (from the mainland to the Island and back) was successfully inaugurated. Other enterprising individuals also established pigeon mail service from the mainland to the Island with varying degrees of success. One enterprising individual, Samuel Holden Howie, who was only 18 years of age when he started his service, branched out with outposts at various locations on the mainland and the Island, including Port Fitzroy, Whangaparapara, Port Charles, Waiheke, Marotiri Islands and an ostrich farm at Whitfield Park.

STAMPS ADDED

In August of 1898 Mr. Henry Bolitho conceived the idea to start using stamps in conjunction with the pigeon mail service (probably the term "label" is a more accurate description of these emissions, as they were not officially sanctioned by the Post Office). Mr. Howie enthusiastically embraced the concept, and Mr. Bolitho agreed to pursue the printing of the stamps. In a few months the stamps were ready, and on November 17, 1898, the world's first piece of mail bearing what could be considered an airmail stamp was carried by Pigeon Post from Great Barrier Island to Auckland on the mainland. The first issue of the stamp was an oblong label inscribed "GREAT BARRIER ISLAND" in a ribbon at the top with a pigeon carrying a letter in its beak beneath the ribbon. (Of course, the pigeons did not carry the mail in this manner.) Beneath the pigeon was a banner inscribed "SPECIAL POST," and printed vertically at the left and right edges was the stamp's value, "ONE SHILLING" [Figure 1]. The color of the stamp was deep blue, and only 1800 of the stamps were printed. The New Zealand government objected to the use of the words "SPECIAL POST" and in subsequent issues the words "PIGEON GRAM" were substituted. Some of the



Figure 1. The first Pigeon Post stamp used was introduced by Samuel Howie.

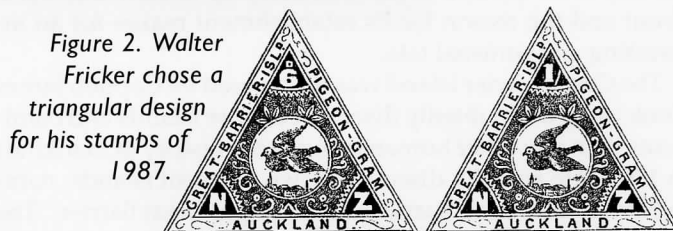


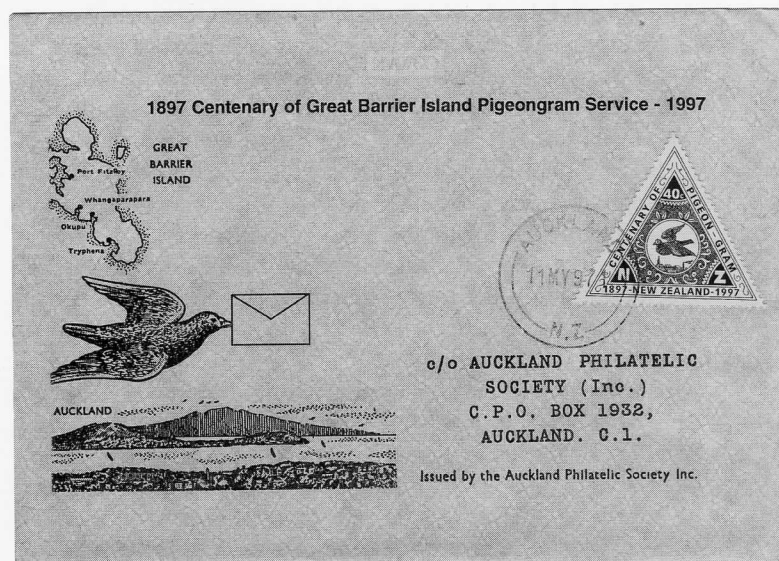
Figure 2. Walter Fricker chose a triangular design for his stamps of 1987.

issues of this stamp were overprinted with the name of the location from which the mail originated. There were six printings of the oblong stamps, some of which are extremely scarce (and valuable) because of their very small printings.

Not to be outdone, Mr. Fricker also had a stamp printed up for use on the mail handled by his company. This stamp was triangular in shape with a framed border inscribed "GREAT BARRIER ISLd. - PIGEON GRAM - AUCKLAND," with a pigeon in flight over a city situated within a circle in the middle of the stamp [Figure 2]. This stamp came in two values, 1 shilling (in a red color) for the flight from the Great Barrier Island to Auckland and 6 pence (in a blue color) for the flight from Auckland to the Great Barrier Island. The difference in the price of the stamps was attributed to the greater cost of training pigeons on the Great Barrier Island than on the mainland.

GINGER'S HEROIC TRIP

An entertaining story has been told (and an inspiring one at that, if authentic) about one of the most famous of all the pigeons employed in the pigeon post service. Of some 500 or so birds used by Mr. Howie over the years that he ran his business, one named Ginger was renowned for being able to fly the mail route in both directions. On one occasion Ginger arrived from the Island with a message and settled in its roost with the other birds (at this point in time Ginger was only



flying from the Island to the mainland). Mr. Howie being occupied with other matters at the time did not immediately retrieve the message, but eventually sent an assistant to get the dispatch. Alas, by this time Ginger had pecked the message to pieces, obviously wanting to remove the paper from its leg. Being very annoyed, the assistant gave the bird a couple of whacks with his hand and then threw the bird into a tub of water. Fortunately, Ginger recovered and immediately flew away for dear life. Ginger was not to be seen in the loft the rest of the night and Mr. Howie was gravely concerned that he had lost one of his best pigeons and a precious commodity. To his amazement Ginger showed up the next day with another message attached to his/her leg. When Ginger had received the whacks from the assistant it had returned to the Island. From then on, whenever Mr. Howie wanted Ginger to fly to the Island he gave the bird a couple of gentle whacks and off it went! As a further embellishment of this bird's fame another story is told of how it saved a young boy's life. On this memorable occasion Ginger was sent off from the Island in a blinding rain storm with a message, as follows: "Charlie has smashed his arm from the wrist to the elbow, by a rifle bullet, send a steamer at once to the Barrier, also if possible a surgeon." Actually two birds were sent off with message because of the severity of the weather, with the hope that at least one of them would make the trip successfully. Ginger made it safely through the storm after an exhausting journey, having nearly expired from the severity of the trip. Upon receipt of the message a ship was sent over to the Island, and it was reported that the young boy recovered completely from his injuries.

The two rival companies continued to compete for the pigeon mail service to and from the Great Barrier Island well into the first decade of the 20th Century. When King George VI of England visited New Zealand (as the Duke of Cornwall) during these years, greetings from the residents of the Great Barrier Island were sent to him by the Pigeon Post. When Queen Victoria died in 1903 the news of her death was carried to the Island's residents by Pigeon Post. In late 1908 a telegraph cable was laid from the Tryphena, Great Barrier Island, to the mainland at Port Charles and the era of New Zealand's Pigeon Post came to an end.

Figure 3. Cover commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the Great Barrier Island Pigeon Post. Figure 4. Reverse of Fig. 3 (further reduced) showing cancel of Claris, Great Barrier Island.

Figure 5. New Zealand commemorated the 100th Anniversary of the inauguration of the Pigeon Post with a miniature sheet.



Figure 6

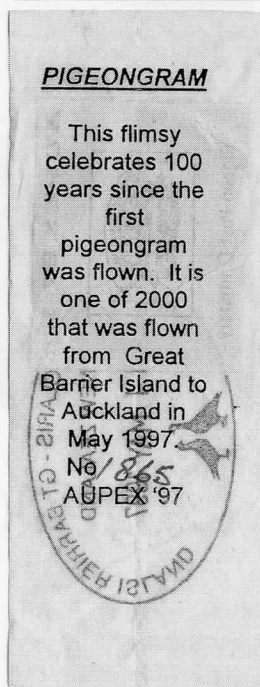



Figure 7

Figures 6 and 7 show the "flimsies" which were sent by pigeons from Great Barrier Island to the mainland commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the Pigeon Post.

PIGEON POST COMMEMORATED

In 1997 the New Zealand Post Office issued a triangular stamp (similar to Mr. Fricker's original Pigeon Post stamp) to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the inauguration of the Pigeon Post. Figures 3 and 4 show the front and back of a cover bearing the stamp canceled in Auckland and back-stamped at Claris, Great Barrier Island. Issued in a red color with a value of 40 N.Z. cents, the domestic letter rate. It is almost an exact replica of the original with the exception of the substitution of the wording in the border. Obviously the stamp had to carry the country's name, which the original did not. In addition, the N.Z. Post Office issued a miniature sheet [see Figure 5] bearing exact reproductions of four of the six original pigeon post stamps. Each of the four stamps forms the vignette of a larger label inscribed "AUPEX 97 - \$1.25 - Pigeon Post Centenary," all of which are rouletted and can be removed from the miniature sheet. Making use of this attribute, the four labels were used on *flimsies* (tissue paper strips to which the labels were attached) that were actually flown (by pigeon) from the Great Barrier Island to Auckland in May 1997. Figures 6 and 7 show the front and back of the flimsy. Only 2000 each of the flimsies were issued and each is numbered on the back.

All the stamps that make up the original pigeon post issues are scarce to extremely rare and command very high purchase prices, if and when they ever come on the philatelic market. The Scott stamp catalog does not list these stamps, probably because they are considered a local issue (which, of course, is certainly true). Nevertheless, they are listed in the Campbell Patterson catalog, one of the most definitive and highly respected New Zealand catalogs published. Although not unique (there have been other uses of pigeons for sending of the mail), it was certainly one of the most unusual and successful of such services and one whose story makes for a fascinating footnote in the history of philately. 

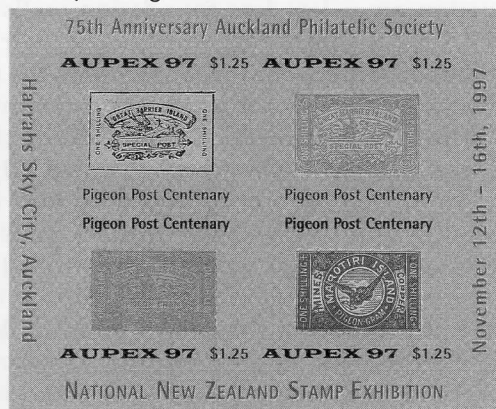
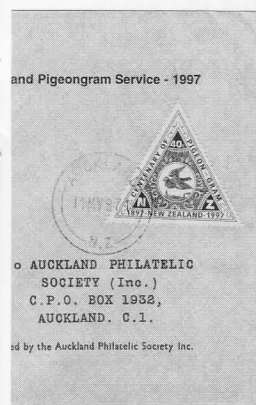


Figure 1. Photograph of painting by Cal N. Peters, on display in the Slusser Library at the Postal History Foundation.

From the Archives of the Postal History Foundation

By Frank A. Mallalieu



Dragoon Mail


Continuing the stories of the Cal Peters' western paintings hanging on the walls of the Peggy Slusser Library, this month we feature a painting of a mail robbery on the road from Dragoon, Arizona, to Tucson in 1871.

Based on a true event, the painting [Figure 1] portrays Captain Gerald Russell with some members of his infantry coming upon the remains of a burned out mail wagon with its dead driver lying alongside the road at Dragoon Pass on April 15, 1871. Because of the absence of any of the mail, except for a random letter or two, the apparent intent of the robbery was to steal the mail. As the driver was killed by an arrow, it is presumed that the perpetrators of the crime were Indians.

Unfortunately, very little historical evidence exists to reveal any more information than this brief description. It is not known what group of Indians may have been responsible for this tragedy, or what their purpose would

have been in stealing the mail other than to obtain money from the letters (assuming there would have been cash in the mail being transported). There is nothing that indicates that quantities of gold or other precious metals were included in the shipment. The individuals who committed this robbery were never apprehended and the incident remains a mystery shrouded in the mists of time.

Dragoon Springs was the location of a way station on the Butterfield Overland Stage route during the latter part of the 19th Century. The station was constructed in 1858 as a stone corral with a roofed room in one corner and a flagpole in the middle. The only spring to serve the needs of those manning the station was one mile away in a small canyon, not the best of situations considering the potential conflicts with the native Indians in the area. The earthquake of 1877 has been blamed for the drying up of the spring that served the station and it was abandoned. Prior to its abandonment, there had been hostile encounters with Indians at the station with loss of life among the defenders of the property. Today all that remains of the station are a few low foundation walls plus the grave markers of some of those who lost their lives in the encounters with the Indians. Although the way station was abandoned, there was a thriving community of some sort at Dragoon in that era, as evidenced by the letter [Figure 2] postmarked at Dragoon and dated July 3, 1883.

An interesting sidelight to this story is shown in the photograph of Alexander Miles' mule-drawn freight wagon at Dragoon Summit, circa 1883 [Figure 3]. This type of freight wagon was used at that time to haul ore from the mines to the nearest railway depot or loading facility as well as for carrying supplies to the mines, ranches, and other types of settlements in the area. 

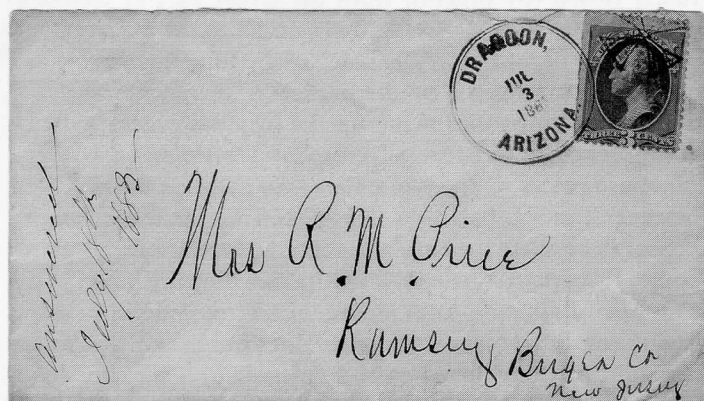
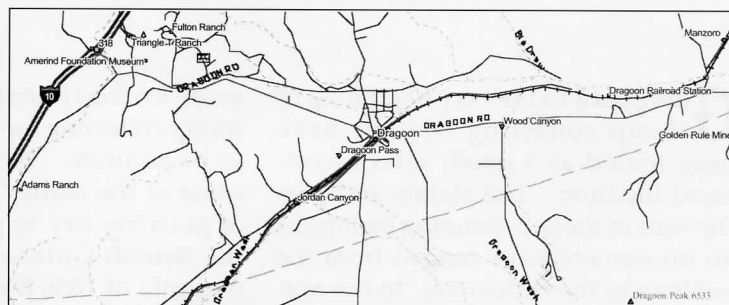


Figure 2. Cover postmarked at Dragoon, Arizona, July 3, 1883.



Figure 3. Mule-drawn freight wagon belonging to Alexander Miles, circa 1883.



Director's Corner

By Betsy Towle

This summer The Postal History Foundation became the subject of an article in the Tucson Newspapers' weekend supplement. This supplement lists all the attractions in Tucson including possible places to visit to avoid the heat of our summer. As a result of the article we received many visitors, which kept Lena and myself very busy.

I thought I would share with you the features of the Foundation that the visitors seemed to enjoy the most. Keeping in mind that not all the visitors are stamp collectors, some of what strikes them as interesting, are things we as collectors take for granted.

THE PHILATELIC WINDOW: The vast array of U.S. stamps that many visitors never see in their post offices at home is fascinating to them. The urge to collect U.S. stamps is stimulated, and many who no longer collect think about starting again. While the majority of U.S. mint collectors grumble about the number of stamps issued every year, these novices see the issues as exciting.

THE YOUTH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT: When the teachers are present working with chil-

dren or getting ready for classes (yes, even in the summer), they are happy to spend time with visitors explaining how to use stamps in the classroom, or how to work with their children or grandchildren to get them started



in the hobby. The most frequently asked question is, "Is there one of these (PHF) in every large city?" Unfortunately we have to answer in the negative. The PHF is a unique institution in the education field.

THE STAMP PROCESSING ROOM: On the desks are stamp sorters that we have designed and constructed out of cardboard. The U.S. stamp sorters are marked with various denominations; the foreign stamps are marked by the letters of the alphabet. Then the stamps are further sorted by type, or country, and filed for future use. Some of the sorters are double-decked for sorting either back-of-the-book items or cancellations.

THE LIBRARY: The art work, the collections, the federal documents, and the wide range of collecting possibilities amaze all visitors. Recently we had a junior high science teacher

Left: Katy White, age 12, works on a summer stamp project. Right: Collectors taking advantage of library research materials.



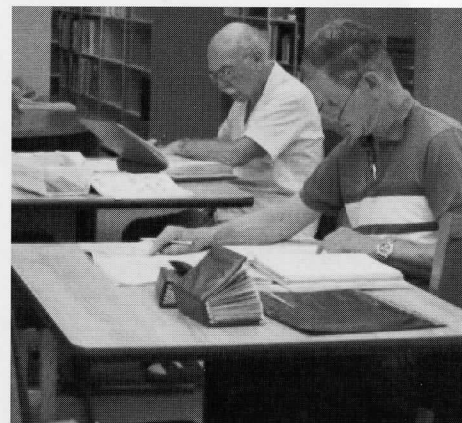
Lena Rogers conducting a tour of the PHF facilities for visitors.

◀ A stamp sorting tray

visit with her friend, a collector of U.S. stamps. We toured the library's topical section and searched for the listing of insects on stamps. Her first question was, "How do I buy those stamps?" And another collector is born!

The most amazing feature to all the visitors is the volunteer staff. They see them working diligently, sorting, filing, teaching, selling, cataloging, preparing exhibits—whatever tasks need to be done. They see us as a family working together to accomplish our goals.

The volunteers are our most valuable assets. For almost forty years they have been the enabling force to keep the Postal History Foundation alive and growing. We are all grateful for their support.



And You Thought Stamps Weren't a Good Investment!



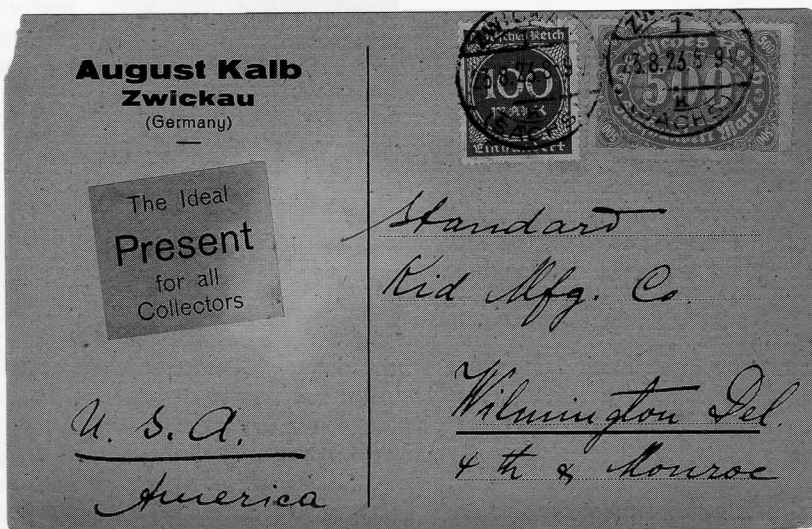
Going back to the very beginning of stamp collecting, stamps have been touted as a good, solid investment medium. The claims and predictions of those promoting stamps as an investment have ranged from the sublime to the ridiculous. In the not-too-distance past the accumulation of mint sheets of newly issued commemorative U.S. stamps (picture the 3-cent commemoratives of the 1940s and 1950s) was practically guaranteed to be the means for financing one's children's college education. Sadly, almost none of the audacious claims

made for the riches to be reaped from stamp collecting have ever turned out to be accurate. While it is true that some of the really "big ticket" items of philately (try to pick up a copy of the British Guiana 1-cent black on magenta of 1856 if at all possible) increase in value and provide a good profit for the investment made, most stamp collectors will never rise to the rather rarified realm the acquisition of such material as this entails.

Notwithstanding the inherent risks in investing in stamps as a way to acquire financial security, there has

never been a shortage of individuals who have been more than willing to help collectors part with their money in their search for wealth. The cover shown in Figures 1 and 2 is just one such example. August Kalb must have been quite an entrepreneur and promoter. This post card, mailed to an address in Wilmington, Delaware, in 1923, at the height of the astronomical increases in inflation in Germany, was a blatant appeal to collectors to invest in the stamps he was selling as a means for getting rich fast. His appeal went beyond investing for something of fairly finite value, *i.e.* the cost of a college education, to claim that an investment in his stamps would provide for one's old age (as in retirement years), "as it is the surest and most remunerative old-age insurance." Forget Social Security, forget stocks and bonds, forget annuities, collecting stamps does it all! Even if Kalb couldn't convince the recipient of his advertising as to the merit of his stamps as an investment, his fall-back position was that such stamps made an "Ideal Present," as indicated by the sticker applied to the front of the post card. He must have been quite a salesman!

Without seeing a list of exactly what stamps comprised his Collection A and Collection B, we'll never know just what kind of a bargain we would have gotten for our 50-cent or \$1.00 investment (a lot more money in 1923 than now, obviously). Some of the issues he vaguely refers to may be of some value today. However most of the so-called German Inflation issues of the early 1920s are as worthless today as they were back then (yes, there are some exceptions, especially for genuinely canceled stamps). Even if he included some of the more highly-valued stamps of the era in his "collections," it is not likely that one could have lived comfortably solely off the profits of such an investment. Of course, one can always dream....



Figures 1 and 2, reverse. Post card solicitation of investment in one August Kalb's profit-promising Collections.

For a few cents (on account of the low exchange of the German money)

I could send you complete series of **German** genuine postage-stamps.
Collection A **5** (which you could send me through cheque
Collection B **1** or bank-bills).

These collections will be forwarded to you at once, post-paid, after receipt of the amount in question. Don't let this opportunity pass! In a very short time these already very valuable stamps of the overthrown empire and the first years of the German republic* will be of immense value. To collect stamps means to provide for old age as it is the surest and most remunerative old-age insurance.

I'd be very much obliged to you should you have the kindness to give my address to your friends interested in postage-stamps. Collection B is the most complete.

Yours very truly
August Kalb, Zwickau, Germany
Articles for Collectors.
Telephone 1817.

*Inclusive of all the postage-stamps in use at present.



Editor's Note: The German spelling of Nuremberg (Nurnberg) is used in this article.

The Arizona Rangers at IBRA '99

By Werner Helms

The International Stamp Exhibition (die Internationale Briefmarkenausstellung, or IBRA) held in Nurnberg, Germany, from April 27 to May 4, 1999, was a smashing success by any measure one might want to employ.

About three years prior to the show, at a meeting of the Rangers at SESCAL in Los Angeles, discussions were held about the possibility of a future Rangers meeting to be held in conjunction with an international stamp exhibition at a venue outside the United States. After much consideration of the various alternatives, and the fact that the largest number of "foreign" Rangers live in Germany, it was decided to pursue the possibility of a Ranger meeting at IBRA '99. Receiving an enthusiastic response from the Rangers contacted (especially those living outside the United States), the organizers of IBRA '99 were contacted along with the Bund Deutscher Philatelisten (Association of German Philatelists) regarding the proposed meeting of the Rangers. With positive feedback, and permission from the IBRA '99 organizers, plans for the meeting went full speed ahead. Notification of the proposed meeting was publicized in the APS journal, *The German Postal Specialist* of the GPS, the *Airpost Journal* of the AAMS and the *Philatelic Exhibitor* of the AAPE. The response was outstanding.

On opening day, April 27, and for the entire nine days of the Exhibition, and notwithstanding the large crowds, the Rangers were out in force as evidenced by the wearing of their gold Ranger badges. The halls, with a floor space of more than 39,000 square meters (roughly 350,000 square feet), one could view the world's finest philatelic gems, see the special prizes in the display cases (including the authentic Hopi Kachina doll of a bear, which was presented by a group of dedicated Rangers to IBRA '99), peruse the many and varied dealer's tables, and visit any of the 100-plus foreign postal administration booths. In addition there were many rest areas as well as a variety of entertainment events, including a fashion show, folk dances, and a presentation by the U.S. Air Force Band. Needless to say, the food and drink available in Nurnberg was legendary.

For those interested in non-philatelic activities, there were visits to Nurnberg's many castles, museums, and other local destinations, as well as day trips to Prague, Czechoslovakia. There were also many IBRA '99 galas and receptions, including a Frankanarian May folklore festival which music and dancing, stage shows, a carousel and Ferris wheel, along with food and drink!

On May 2, designated "America Day" at the exhibition, the Arizona Ranger Dinner was held in conjunction with the Bund Deutscher Philatelisten Salon. This was an invitation-only event held at the Maritim Hotel, one of Nurnberg's finest hotels. Of

By John Birkinbine

President, Arizona Philatelic Rangers

Two Ranger Directors Ride Into the Sunset

The Arizona Philatelic Rangers experienced a great loss recently when two longtime members of the Board of Directors passed away.

Walton E. Tinsley, known to everyone as "Gene," was a resident of Los Angeles, Calif. He became a Ranger on March 24, 1961, a month and a half after the founding of the organization. Gene was the fourteenth person to join this embryonic group which formally recognized and actively supported the planned structured education of youth in philately. At this early date, free classes and philatelic activities were offered to the physically disadvantaged children who came from all over the country to attend a well-known special school for asthmatic children in Tucson. This philatelic program really benefitted the young individuals as a therapeutic aid, with future good to come to the hobby in general as the children became adults.

Gene's active interest in this program later resulted in his election to the Board of Directors. When the asthmatic school closed due to lack of finances, the youth philatelic education program was transferred and enlarged to encompass local public, parochial, and private schools. In addition, a base of operations was established to promote and support adult philatelic research along with a public philatelic library. The various actions and activities which Gene initiated and implemented on behalf of the Rangers and the Postal History Foundation resulted in his being elevated to a Sheriff. This is a great honor, with fewer than two percent of the Deputy Sheriffs attaining this level. True to form, Gene continued his supportive activities right up to his death.

The Rangers have also lost **William H. Wallace**, known as "Bill." Bill became the fifty-seventh Ranger on January 15, 1965, when the various youth and research programs were being implemented under the original Western Postal History Museum name. His business acumen contributed much towards the early growth and success of the institution, and continued as it approached the 21st century under the new Postal History Foundation name. Bill was elected to the Ranger Board of Directors and served actively for many years until his untimely death. His jovial personality always helped to brighten the day, particularly during difficult periods. He will be sorely missed.

The families of both of these Rangers can be proud that their longtime efforts will continue to benefit children and philately for many generations to come.

the 186 attendees, 32 were Rangers, which increased to 35 with the presentation of the Ranger star to three new members. As is a tradition of the Rangers, those in attendance not wearing their Ranger badges were "fined" for their oversight. In this particular case, two Chiefs, **Michael Dixon** and **Bud Sellers**, were cited for their lapses. It was a most successful evening.

ENDER

The Saga of Undelivered Mail Concludes...

By Frank Mallalieu in collaboration with Ferd Lauber

To be delivered personally only!

Return receipt demanded!

D. L. O. Record

No. 1018

Request

U.S. MAIL

PAID

NEW YORK, N. Y.

No. 71316

REGISTERED

JUN 26 1907

WIS.

32760

George Meredith Esq.

London England

Figure 1. This cover was mailed from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, June 25, 1897, with great faith in the renown of one George Meredith.

Figure 2 is another example of an insufficiently addressed cover. In this case the cover was mailed from Shotten, Germany, on February 2, 1883, with the United States being the destination. The recipient, a Mr. August Rahn, lived on Fulton Avenue, somewhere between Hill and Lewis streets. So far so good, but unfortunately with no city or state indicated it created a bit of a problem as to where to forward the letter. An astute employee of the Post Office Department noted the problem and stamped the cover with a "NO POST OFFICE NAMED" marking, as well as a "DEFICIENCY IN ADDRESS" marking. The cover was received in New York on March 10, 1883, (marking on back) and the someone in the Post Office Department thought the destination might be Cincinnati, Ohio, as indicated by the manuscript "try Cincinnati, Ohio" on the front of the cover. A good guess, as there are a Fulton Avenue and a Hill Street in Cincinnati, as well as a Lewis Avenue (but not a Lewis Street). This doesn't mean that they all existed in 1883, nor am I able to determine that they are in immediate proximity to one another. Strangely, it doesn't appear that the cover was forwarded to Cincinnati. The back of the cover bears a "DEAD LETTER OFFICE" marking from New



Figure 2 is another example of an insufficiently addressed cover.

York, dated March 14, 1883. Being a dead letter in New York apparently was not sufficient, as the cover was forwarded to Washington, D.C. (received there on April 17, 1883) with instructions to attempt delivery within seven days, after which it was to be sent to the Dead Letter Office. These instructions are contained on a Post Office Department label pasted to the back of the cover. For all the effort extended, one wonders why this cover never made it back to Germany.

RETURN TO SENDER

Talk about dedication in trying to deliver the mail! just look at the efforts made by the German Reichpost with the letter shown in Figure 3. This letter was mailed Boston, Massachusetts, on November 30, 1896, with a destination of Freiberg (Baden), Germany. Freiberg must be as common a town/city name in Germany as Springfield is in the United States. There are no fewer than five (5) different Freiberg cancels on the reverse of the cover, including Freiberg (Briesgau) on December 12, 1896, Freiberg (???) on December 14th, Freiberg (Unstrut) on December 16th, Freiberg (???) on December 17th, and Freiberg (Seliesen) on December 18th. The front of the cover bears two return to sender markings: "Unbekannt./inconnu." (Unknown, in German and French) and "Zurück nach _____" (Return to Writer). The cover finally made it back to Boston on January 8, 1897, from whence it was dispatched to the Dead Letter Office on January 9, 1897. Despite the sender's explicit instructions in the upper left hand corner on the front of the cover "If not delivered return to 1671 Cambridge Street, Cambridge, Mass, U.S.A." Did he have a premonition that his letter might not make it? Alas, if he did, he was right!

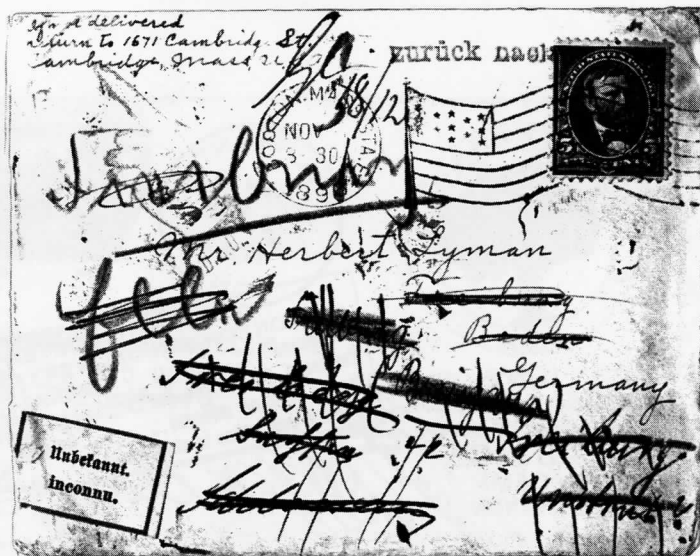


Figure 3. Mailed from Boston, this cover made the rounds of Freibergs in Germany.

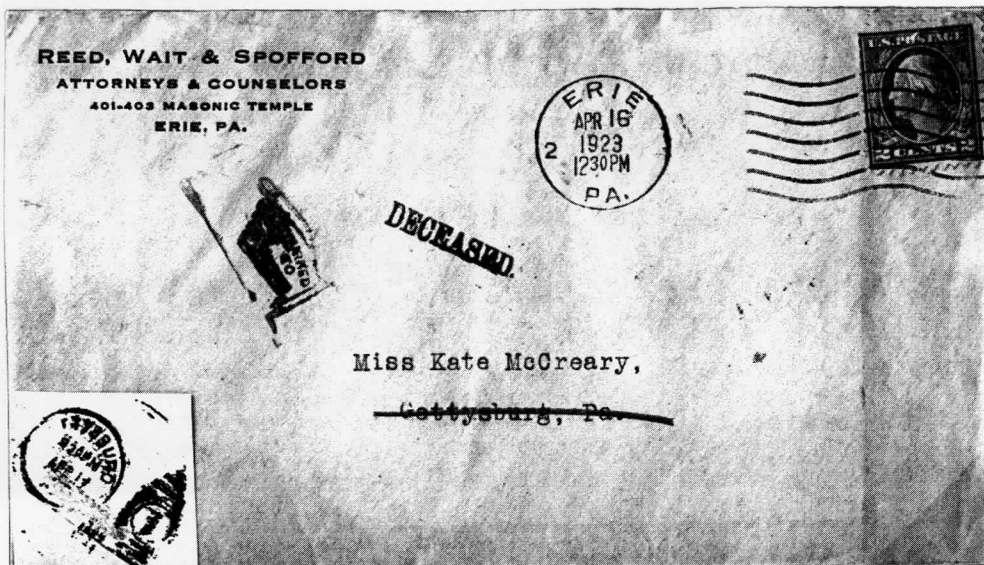


Figure 4. It was too late to collect genealogical information from Miss Kate McCreary.

Sometimes the reason that mail is not delivered or deliverable is shrouded in mystery, conjuring up myriad scenarios as to the cause or causes for such a happening. Such is not the case with the cover in Figure 4. Miss Kate McCreary of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, never received her letter for the simple reason that she had died. The rubber-stamped "Return to Sender" seems almost secondary to the finality inherent in

the "DECEASED" marking (a rather uncommon marking, seldom seen on the mail). The enclosed letter to Miss McCreary, which has survived, was from a lawyer named J. E. Reed, written on the letterhead of the Erie (Penn.) County Historical Society (of which he was Secretary). Mr. Reed was seeking some genealogical information which obviously he never received (at least not from Miss McCreary).

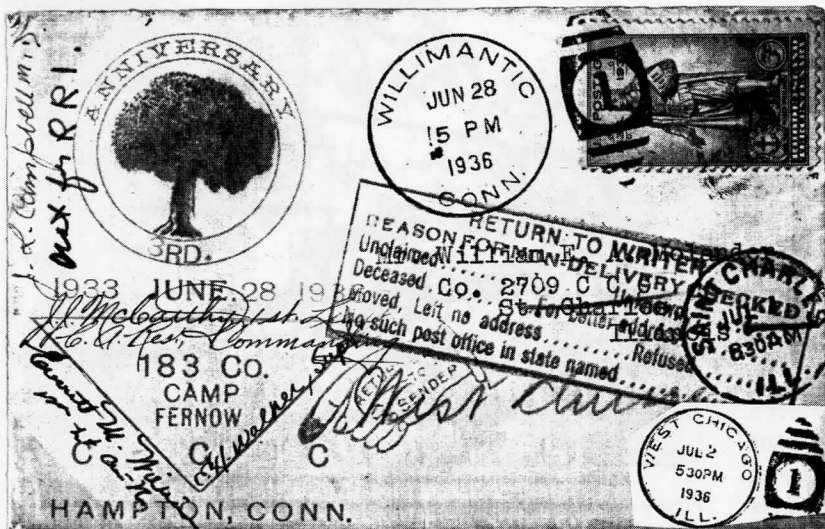


Figure 5 shows a "Plain Jane" postal return marking.

The ways in which post offices throughout the country marked mail for return to its sender are many and varied. Some are decorative and fanciful as in several of the pointed finger variety while others are simply of the "Plain Jane" variety, as shown here in Figure 5. The straightforward boxed post office marking used on this cover, mailed from Willimantic, Connecticut, on June 28, 1936, addressed to St Charles, Illinois, and received on July 1, 1936, is one such example. The cover is addressed to a William Molander at the C.C.C. (Civilian Conservation Corps) in St. Charles. The cover contained an invitation to attend the 3rd anniversary of the C.C.C. camp in Hampton, Connecticut. Ironically, the reason checked in the boxed marking for non-delivery of this letter was that the addressee was "unknown." although the cover was readdressed to West Chicago, Illinois, where it was received on July 2nd. Evidently someone in the post office felt William could be found in West Chicago. This was not to be and William never got his invitation.

An interesting postal situation is on display in the cover shown in Figure 6. Hans Smolaf mailed this letter to the *Neue Wiener Tagblatt* (a newspaper) on May 24, 1938, at 6 o'clock in the afternoon, using a common German Hindenberg Head stamp. The reason for use of a German, rather than an Austrian, stamp is that the German Anschluss (annexation) of Austria had just been voted in by the citizens of Austria on April 10th, and use of German stamps became common practice. For some unknown reason the letter was refused by the newspaper, and was stamped "ZURUCK – retour" (Return to Sender). The postal service in Vienna wouldn't return the cover for free, so postage due charges were assessed (the large "T" marking). The manuscript "12" indicates that 12 pfennig postage was due, although postage due when it occurred on international mail normally was twice whatever the initial postage was. Locally, as in this case, only the exact amount of the original postage was assessed as postage due. However, the presence of two 12-pfennig postage due stamps (Austrian stamps at that, because no German postage due stamps existed), would appear to confuse the issue. One of the 12-pfennig postage due stamps has a rubber stamp marking across it reading "UNGULTIG," meaning *invalid*. Of course if one of the Austrian postage due stamps was invalid, then it would seem logical that the other was invalid as well. The invalid postage due stamp was canceled on Mar 25th at 8 o'clock in the morning. The second postage due stamp was canceled on May 25th at 7 o'clock in the evening, some eleven hours later.



Figure 6. Postal confusion following German annexation of Austria resulted in inconsistent handling.

Evidently someone in the post office had second thoughts on the validity of the use of the Austrian postage dues and let the letter proceed on its way. (A cancel on the back of the cover is dated May 25th at 1 p.m.; for what reason it was applied is not known.) One assumes that Hans got his letter back and that he paid the postage due charges. Did he ever figure out why the newspaper refused his letter?

RETURN TO SENDER

Before Hitler and Stalin became bitter enemies during World War II, the German-Russian alliance provided for more or less normal mail service between the two countries. As shown in Figure 7, Adolf Leidner sent a letter to Moscow which didn't make it to the intended addressee. Mailed from Berlin on January 20, 1940, it wasn't received in Moscow until February 8, 1940, 18 days later. It is quite surprising that the cover took so long to get to Moscow, considering it was sent Special Delivery ("Eilbote Express" label), Registered, as well as Airmail. Of course it had to go through the German censors as indicated by censor tape and markings on the back. It wouldn't seem that Adolf got his money's worth, considering the 1 mark, 90 pfennings in postage that he paid. To make matters worse it was never delivered to the addressee as noted, the individual being unknown in Moscow, or at least at the address denoted on the cover (*Retour-Inconnu*, meaning "Return, Unknown"). On its return to Germany the cover made much better time. It left Moscow on February 14, 1940, and arrived back in Berlin on February 20th, a mere six days. Though originally mailed from Berlin, it was returned to Adolf at his address in Aschaffenburg on February 21st. It is particularly nice that this cover has survived, as the 1 Reichsmark (Danzig overprint) stamp is very seldom seen postally used on cover, and has a very high value so used.

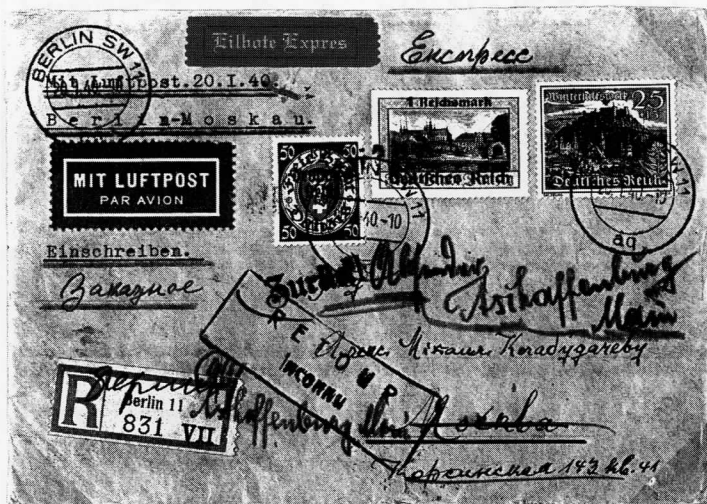


Figure 7. The extra expense for Airmail, Special Delivery, and Registered status didn't assure delivery of this cover.

Wartime circumstances can really mess up delivery of the mail, as evidenced by the cover shown in Figure 8. To give the Army APO mail service credit, it really made an attempt to deliver this particular cover to Lt. Harry E. Meyers. It was mailed from Lancaster, Pennsylvania, on February 16, 1944, with the destination of APO 777, the headquarters of the 15th Army Group (APO 777 was located in Italy at the time of the mailing of this cover). Lt. Meyers apparently was no longer at APO 777 when this cover arrived. Its subsequent journey forward is a bit difficult to follow from the markings on the cover, but apparently it was forwarded to something known as 6th TAC SS SW to CAS to APO 645, which would have been in England at that point in time, April, 1944. From there it journeyed on to APO 595, also in England, and also the headquarters of the IX Fighter Command, where it was received on May 9, 1944 (note the rubber stamped marking "DIRECTORY SERVICE GIVEN A.P.O. 595, NO RECORD 9 MAY 1944"). By this time it was apparent that Lt. Meyers could not be found and his whereabouts was unknown. The cover contains the stamped marking "RE-

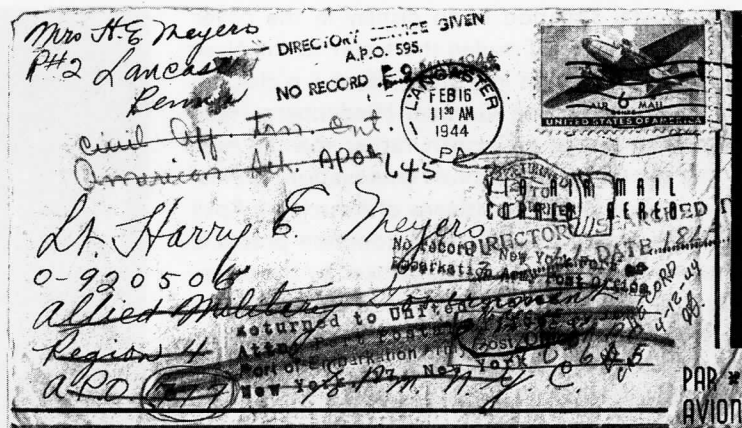
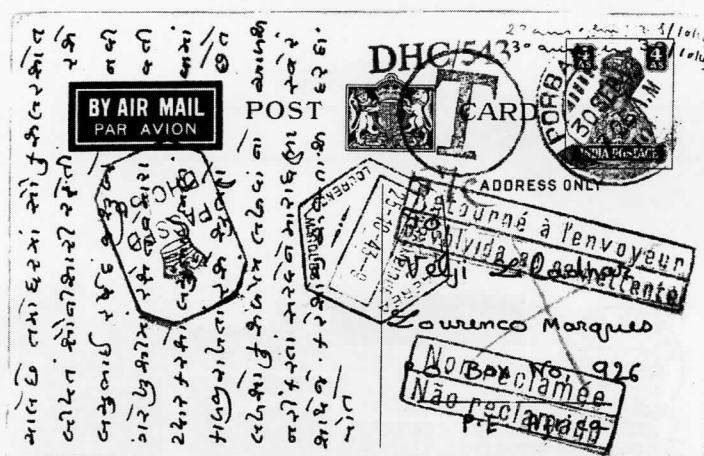


Figure 8

TURNED TO SENDER (within pointed finger), No record - New York Port Embarkation Army Post Office," with a date of June 1, 1944. There is another marking "DIRECTORY SEARCHED, DATE..." but the meaning of this is not clear. There are some additional markings on the cover whose meanings also are not clear. What is clear is that the Army really tried to get this letter to Lt. Meyers. It is hoped that it eventually did, even if only when he was reunited with his wife who sent it in the first place.

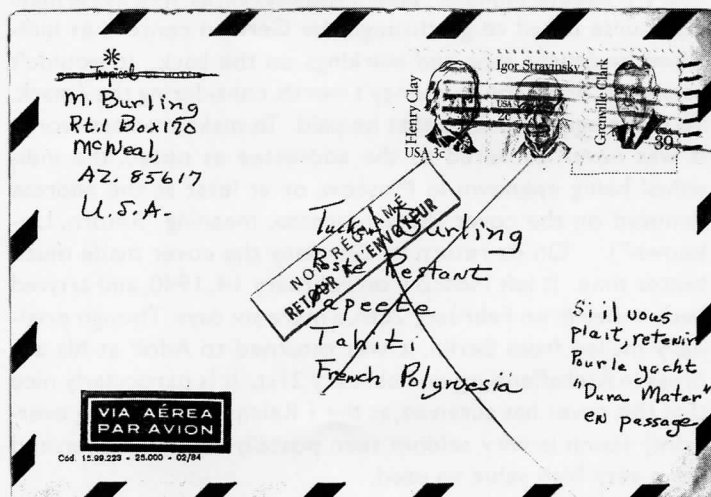
Figure 9. Rare cover to Lourenco Marques



When was the last time anyone came across a legitimately mailed (non-philatelic) cover to Lourenco Marques? When was the last time anyone could identify the location of Lourenco Marques? Well it did exist at one time, being part of the Portugese East Africa Colony. Later it became the capital of Mozambique, and was renamed Maputo. The post card shown in Figure 9 was mailed from Porbander, India, on September 30, 1943, and received in Lourenco Marques on October 25th. It bears two British (India) censor markings. Apparently the 4-annas Indian stamp was insufficient postage and the post card was assessed postage due (large "T" in circle) with a manuscript "57 c(entimes)" just beneath it. The individual to whom the post card was addressed was not located (or maybe just didn't want to pay the 57 centimes postage due) and the Lourenco Marques post office stamped the card with an *Non reclamee* (Unclaimed) marking as well as a *Retourne a l'envoyer* (Return To Sender) marking. An interesting piece of postal history.

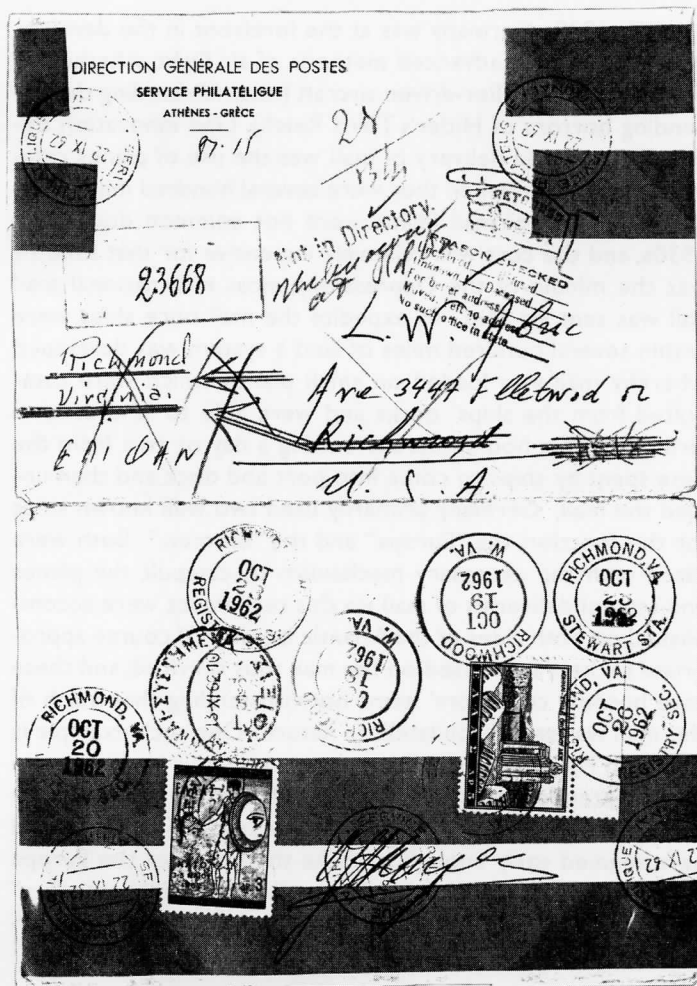
If mail sent to land-based locations can get fouled up, think of the endless possibilities where the destination is at sea! The cover in Figure 10 certainly qualifies for this distinction. Mailed from McNeal, Arizona, sometime in July 1987 (there is no date stamp attached to the "Killer Bars" cancel), it was addressed to Tucker Burling in Papeete, Tahiti, French Polynesia, with the additional instruction in French *Poste Restant*, meaning "to be left until called for." If that wasn't sufficient instruction the sender asked that the letter be held for the arrival of the yacht "Dura Mater" which was in passage to Tahiti presumably. Written in French (*Si il vous plait, retenir Pour le yacht "Dura Mater" en passage*), the sender hoped that the Tahiti post office would retain the letter for a period of time in which to permit Tucker to arrive and claim his mail. Alas, this was not to be. The boxed marking "NON RECLAME RETOUR A L'ENVOYEUR" (UNCLAIMED RETURN TO SENDER) dealt the death knell to the sender's wish. Did Tucker ever make it to Tahiti?

Figure 10. The yacht didn't dock or Tucker didn't check for mail.



It is an interesting observation that otherwise mundane covers sent through the mail take on a much more appealing and fascinating demeanor when they encounter difficulties that result in a myriad of postal markings or other impressions. The cover in Figure 11 would appear to have been a straight-forward transmission of some stamps from the Philatelic Service of the Greece Post Office (being sent Registered) to a recipient in Richwood, Washington. Postmarked on September 22, 1962, it was received in Richwood on October 18th. The stamps are from fairly common issues of the time. What makes the cover so interesting are the postal marking resulting from the recipient not being found in Richwood. Someone in the post office in Richwood evidently felt that the intended recipient might actually live in Richmond, Virginia (based on what, one can only guess). The cover was forwarded to Richmond on October 19th and received there on the same day. An effort was made to locate the recipient but he or she was not to be found. A "Not in Directory" and a "RETURNED TO SENDER" in pointed finger with an "Unknown" checked on the cover attest to the efforts made. Having no luck, the cover was returned to Athens, Greece, where it was received on November 13, 1962. It is interesting to speculate how this cover came into private hands. Having been returned to the Greece Post Office it would seem logical to assume that the cover would have been discarded (after removal of the contents). Luckily the cover avoided that fate and survives today as a neat bit of postal history.

Figure 11. The post office folks tried to get this philatelist his stamps, but unfortunately, it was not to be.



An 1888 letter from the U.S.A. to Poland [Figure 12] makes for an interesting story with its fascinating array of postal markings. Mailed from Oswego, New York, on August 29, 1888, this cover was addressed to one Hirsch Lavaie in Russia Poland (Poland being part of the Russian empire at that point in time). The address for Mr. Lavaie as shown on the cover was quite extensive, taking up five lines of the address. The cover was received in the New York, N.Y., Registration Division on August 31, 1888, and sent on to Russia Poland. It was received at the Alexander Warsaw Provincial Frontier Post Control on August 30th. From there it was forwarded to the Ostrovie Post Office Center on August 30th and 31st and finally received at the Chervenip Post Control on August 31st. Unable to find Mr. Lavaie the cover was marked in manuscript, "addressee unknown -retour" (return). It was received at the New York Registration Division on December 2, 1888, and forwarded to the Dead Letter Office (D.L.O. #10048 stamped on front and Minor Letter D.L.O. stamped on back). The explanation for the unusual circumstance whereby this cover was received in Russia Poland (August 30th) the day before it left New York (August 31st) is that the Russian calendar was 14 days behind the Western world (until 1917). It seems odd that someone would go to the trouble to spend the money to send a registered letter at 20 cents (a considerable sum for mailing a letter at that point in time) to a foreign location and not place a return address on the letter. Hirsch Lavaie never got his mail and the sender never knew it wasn't delivered.

Figure 12. This cover received lots of special treatment, but, alas, it bore no return address.



In the 1930s Germany was at the forefront in the development of the most advanced methods of air flight, whether by dirigibles or propeller-driven aircraft (notwithstanding the impending horrors of Hitler's Third Reich). One innovation developed to speed delivery of mail was the use of planes catapulted from ships when they were several hundred miles from shore. Because airmail flights were not common during the 1930s, and the cost was relatively expensive for that time (it was the middle of the Depression), most international mail still was sent via ship. To expedite the mail once ships were within several hundred miles of land a system was developed whereby mail was loaded on small planes which were catapulted from the ships' decks and were able to land at local airfields within hours, thereby cutting a day or two from the time spent by ships to come into port and dock and then unload the mail. Germany primarily used two well known ships for this function, the "Europa" and the "Bremen." Both were fitted with the necessary mechanism to catapult the planes and several deliveries of mail via this techniques were accomplished on both sides of the Atlantic ocean. Of course appropriate cachets were used on the mail thus serviced, and these have become collectors' items notwithstanding that much of this mail was strictly philatelic in nature. One such example is shown in Figure 13, or to be more correct, this is an example of mail intended for catapult service that didn't make it. The cover was mailed from Bremen on July 26, 1935, which would have seemed early enough to make the sailing of the Europa which was scheduled for July 31st ("Deutsche Schleuderflug" or German Catapult Flight cachet). The cover was then for-



Figure 13. This cover was intended for "catapult" service.

warded to Cherbourg, France, where it was placed aboard the S.S. Westerland for delivery to New York. It was received in New York on August 2nd but the intended recipient, a Mr. Thummel, could not be located. It was marked "REBUT" and "UNCLAIMED" (on both front and back) and returned to the post office on August 2nd (they didn't waste a lot of time trying to find Mr. Thummel, obviously). For some mysterious reason there is a Hoboken, N.J., backstamp dated September 17th. It is not clear what happened to this cover between August 2nd and September 17th, but it is certain it never got to Mr. Thummel.

RETURN TO SENDER


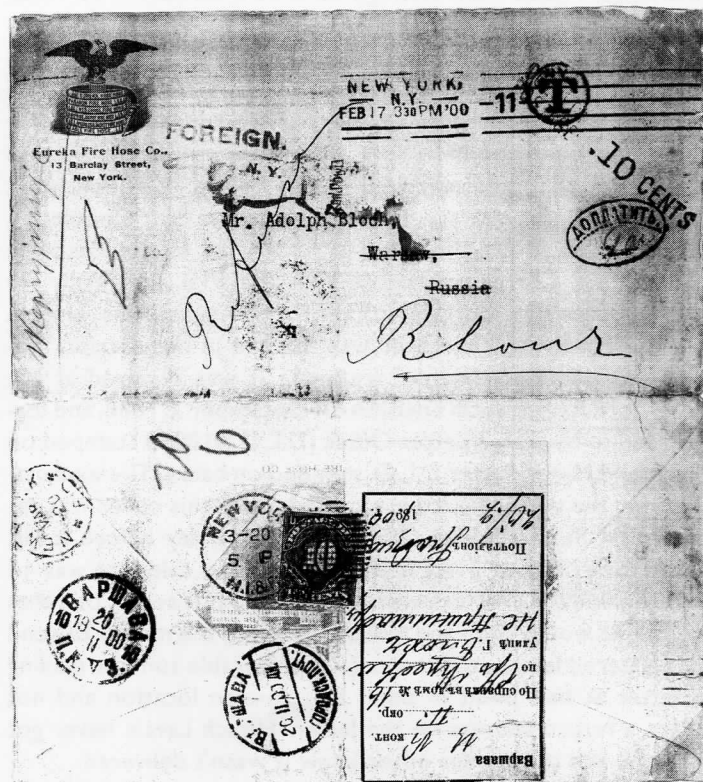
Figure 14 is another cover with many interesting postal markings relating to the attempted delivery of mail. Mailed from New York, N.Y., on February 17, 1900, it was addressed to a Mr. Adolf Bloch in Warsaw, Russia (Poland). It arrived in Warsaw on February 20th (14 days behind the western calendar). Mr. Bloch could not be located and the cover was returned to sender, although there are no markings to indicate this other than a New York backstamp dated March 20th. Before leaving Poland the postal authorities attached a label written in Russian, which translates as indicating that an attempt was made to deliver the mail to Mr. Bloch who was not listed in the Post Office Directory. The meaning of the egg shaped marking on the front is a mystery. Once returned to New York, the cover was assessed 10 cents postage due. There was no doubt about it as evidenced by the "T" and .10 cents markings and the attached 10 cents postage due stamp. A bit of overkill, but it makes for a nice collectible cover. 

Figure 14. Where was Mr. Bloch?



*See page 13 for a report of the
Arizona Philatelic Rangers
at IBRA in Germany in April and May.*



The Postal History Foundation
Tucson, Arizona

