

Spring 2004



Issue No. 29

The Prexie Era

The Newsletter of the USSS 1938 Presidential Era Study Group

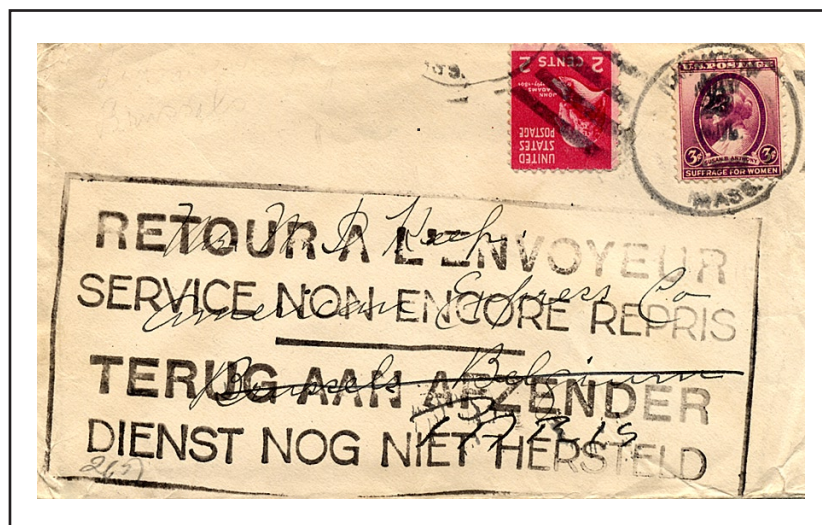
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An Unusual “Return to Sender” Handstamp

From postal history dealer Ken Pitt comes the following cover with this unusual handstamp:



The handstamp measures 5.25 inches by 2.25 inches. This cover was received in France on August 2, 1940.

Executive Order 8389

I have received several inquiries concerning Executive Order 8389 issued by President Roosevelt in 1940. The first question came from subscriber Rob Haeseler. He wrote to me in June 2002: “I am searching for the text of an executive order....It is a purple rubber handstamp marking on a commercial, censored cover from Peru to New York City, in June 1942. It says, “Supposed to contain matter subject to the provisions of Executive Order 8389 as amended.”

SUPPOSED TO CONTAIN MATTER
SUBJECT TO THE PROVISIONS OF
EXECUTIVE ORDER 8389 AS AMENDED

I barely had time to say I would look into this when Rob wrote again to tell me he had found the answer. EO 8389 replaced EO 6060 which had been issued in January 1934. It regulated transactions in foreign exchange, transfers of credit, and the export of coins and currency. The EO originally was issued to safeguard American currency and property as a measure of the Great Depression. When the President signed EO 8389 on April 10, 1940, the purpose was to control or prohibit currency trading with Nazi occupied Norway and Denmark. Subsequent amendments to EO 8389 reflected events during World War II. This included authorizing the postal authorities to open mail suspected of containing contraband currency or coins.

When Did Mail Service Resume in Hawaii after December 7, 1941: A Follow-Up

Subscribers (and postal history dealers) Labron Harris (who originally posed the question) and Greg Sutherland followed up this question with the following information:

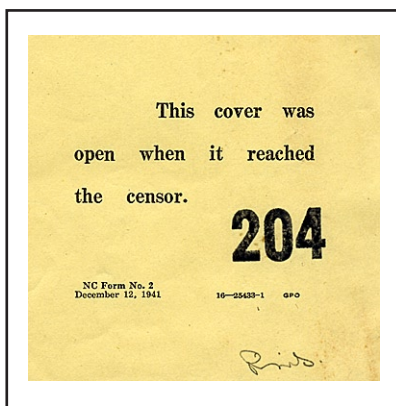
From Labron: I have researched my 1941 outgoing covers from Hawaii after 12/7/41. I have at least 36 covers of this time period with a fairly even dispersion of the dates. The one date I have the most of [4] is 12/09/1941.

This does not help in knowing when the mail was actually sent to the mainland or even to Hawaii; this just shows that the mail was received and cancelled by various post offices to be sent out at some date. I have one airmail special delivery cover cancelled 12/10/41 at 1PM which was received 12/20/41 in Washington, DC, at 8PM. It was censored "ICB 45". The 9 covers I have censored before 12/11/41 are either Navy or ICB censored, and while the covers' cancels are dated, the censor marks are not. I also have dated Army censors on the 12th and 13th so I know local censorship began at least by 12/12/41. I hope these thoughts have helped you understand the problems I have had in trying to make sense of this interesting time in our country's postal history.

Editor's Note: The reference to "ICB" is to the Information Control Board. The reference was found on civilian mail. An example [postmarked January 28, 1942] on mail from the mainland to Hawaii, from my collection, is shown below.



This cover was accompanied by a label [NC Form No.2/December 12, 1941] from censorship, as follows"



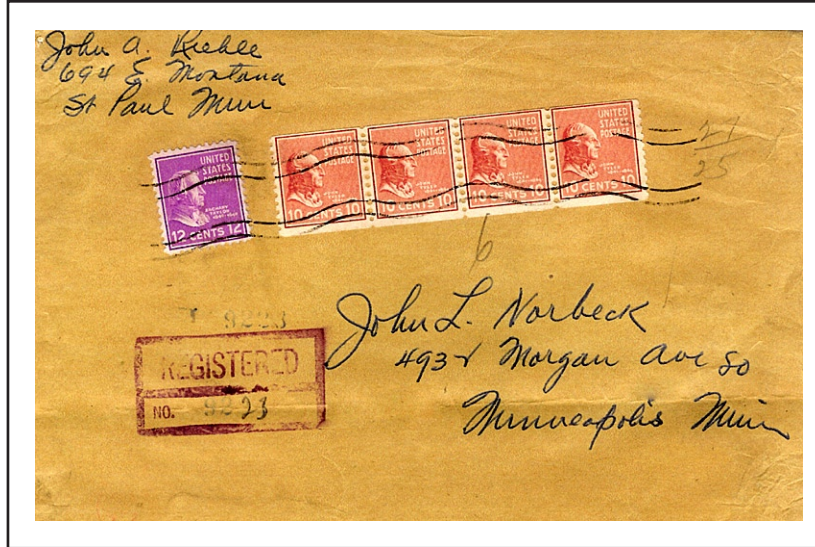
Greg Sutherland sent along some literature from his library, as well as reproductions of relevant covers he holds in his stock. The literature consisted of a book by Charles C. Gill titled, "Hawaii Censored Mail 1941-45/ Illustrated, Classified, Tabulated". Greg also included two articles by Mr. Gill published in the WEEKLY PHILATELIC GOSSIP magazine in 1942. Gill studied the information from 2,300 censored covers in his collection.

Another Interesting 10 Cents Coil Cover

by

Robert Schlesinger

I would like to share with the readers of the Prexie Era Newsletter a 10 cents cover I have in my collection. The cover has a strip of four of the 10 cents coil stamp. Despite the relatively short distance traveled by this cover [St. Paul to Minneapolis] the cover is of great interest.



The cover was mailed on June 30, 1949. The total postal charges were 52 cents, as follows: 27 cents postage [First Class x 9] + 25 cents registration fee [indemnity of \$5.00 or less]. This registry fee was in effect from January 01, 1949 to December 31, 1951.

This cover is a wonderful example of a non-philatelic use of the elusive 10 cents coil stamp.

A \$1.00 Prexie Cover with Special Handling to Midway Island

by

Guy Dillaway

Here is an illustration of a \$1.00 Prexie cover with a 20 cents special handling stamp. This cover was mailed in Denver to Honolulu to be sent on to Midway Island. It was missent to Manila. I assume the special handling stamp represented payment for the services at Midway Island.

Editor's Note: Illustration on page 5.

Remember: All subscriptions end
with Issue No. 31, Winter 2005.
Be sure to renew.



Return Receipt by Air from Guatemala

by

Dickson Preston

One of my special pleasures in collecting Prexie postal history is mixed uses with the 1922 Fourth Bureau issue or the 1954 Liberty issue. I was thus delighted to find the card illustrated here which shows a mixed use of a 7 cents Prexie with a 3 cents Liberty to produce an international usage I have not seen before — a return receipt card returned by air from a foreign country (Figure 1).

Return receipt cards returned by air in domestic service are scarce enough. Effective 15 July 1938, a mailer could have Form 3811, the return card, sent airmail by placing a 6 cents stamp on the form and adding “Return by Air Mail.” Six cents was the prevailing domestic airmail rate for either letters or cards.¹

An unusual example from 1941 in the Jeff Shapiro collection shows that the same principle applied for airmail to the territories (Figure 2). In this case the 20 cents clipper rate from the U.S. mainland to Hawaii was paid to send the card back by air to the original sender in Honolulu. So far, I have not seen any documentation for this use, but the rule seems to have been that a return receipt could be sent by air at the prevailing rate for airmail along the same route the card was sent.

Beginning 15 November 1949, or possibly earlier in 1949, the extra fee was changed to coincide with the 4 cents airmail post card rate which began 1 January of that year.² An example from 1954 was carried on the same transpacific air route as the 1941 return card, but by that time the postage was reduced to 4 cents since that domestic rate also applied to airmail between the U.S. and its territories (Figure 3).

The example sent by air from Guatemala in 1957 illustrates the same rule in international use. Effective 13 July 1954, the sender of a letter to a U.P.U. country could obtain delivery of the return receipt by airmail by paying a fee equal to the airmail rate for a single post card to the destination country.³ In this case, the amount paid is the 10 cents U.P.U. airmail post card rate, in effect 1 June 1954 to 30 June 1961. Like the two domestic examples shown, this fee was paid in addition to the registration and return receipt fees that would have been franked on the original cover.

Can anyone show some additional examples of this use involving Prexies to foreign countries? How about one on or after 1 July 1961, when the rate went up a penny – what a great opportunity for an 11 cents solo franking!



Figure 1

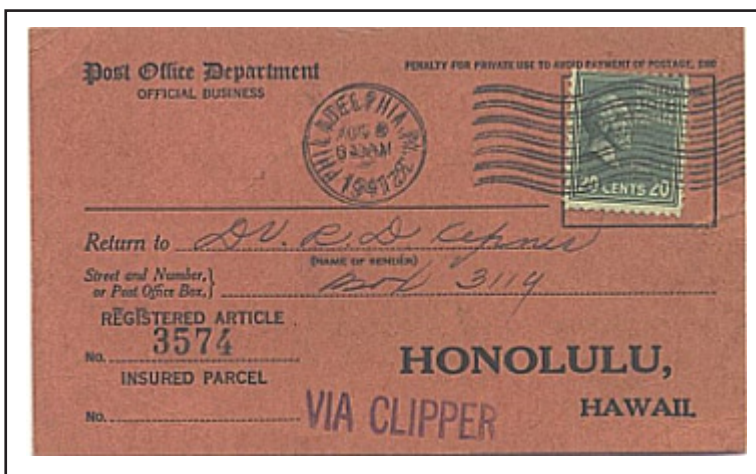


Figure 2

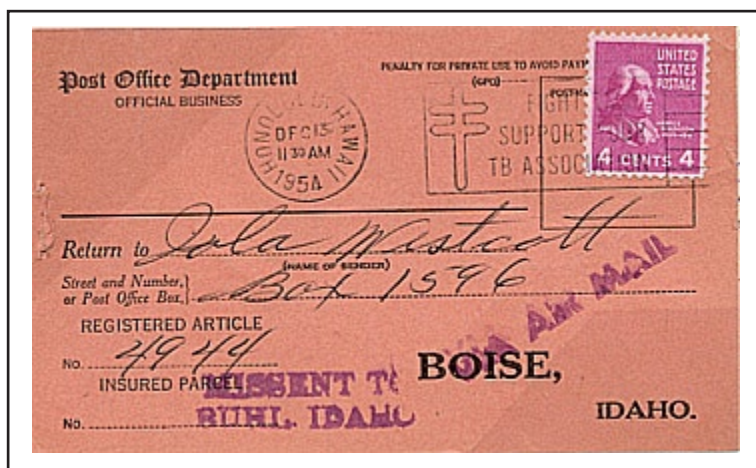


Figure 3

Notes:

¹ Beecher and Wawrukiewicz, *U.S. Domestic Postal Rates, 1872-1993*, 1st edition, p. 197.

² *Ibid.*, p. 197.

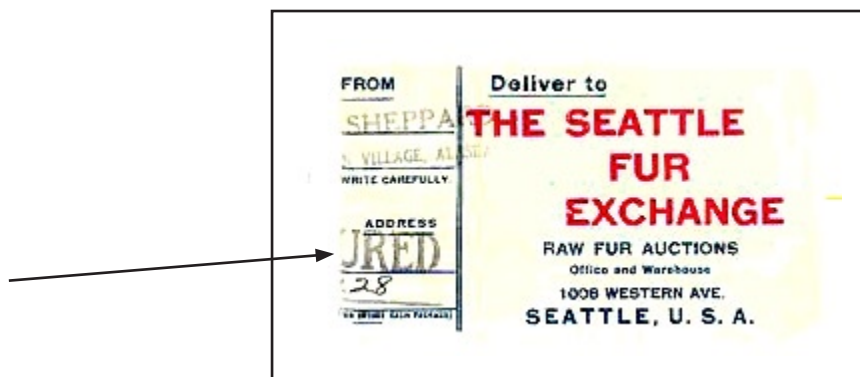
³ Beecher and Wawrukiewicz, *U.S. International Postal Rates, 1872-1996*, p. 235.

An Interesting Prexie Franking

by

Joseph G. Bock

Here is an interesting insured mail tag used to ship raw fur [10 mink pelts] from Mountain Village, Alaska in July 1945. This was sent by surface parcel post. It was not flown via airmail.



First Class mail could not be insured. Parcel Post and Airmail 3rd and 4th Class could be. Air Parcel Post did not yet exist. My analysis of the rate is as follows: 15 cents insured mail [\$50 indemnity]; 15 cents 1st pound parcel post [Zone B]; 77 cents [7 pounds @ 11 cents per pound]; 2 cents discount for mail on Rural Route; 3 cents surcharge (3%) per parcel minimum = \$1.08 Total.

Censorship of Philatelic Material in World War II

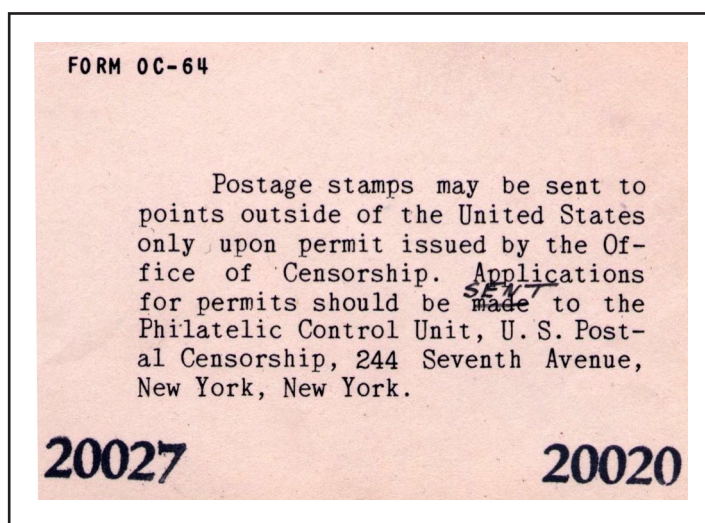
by

Steven M. Roth

During World War II, the United States Office of Censorship regulated the dispatch or carriage of postage stamps to points outside the United States (other than to Canada). A person who wanted to send or carry stamps had to apply for a permit to do so. This was in addition to any permit or license that might be required by the country on the receiving end of the package (for example, stamps sent to London would require an import license issued by the Board of Trade in England).

Obtaining a permit to send or carry postage stamps outside the United States did not, however, end the process. The permit holder remained subject to all the rules and regulations in respect of censorship, as well as to all instructions concerning postage stamps which had to be strictly followed.

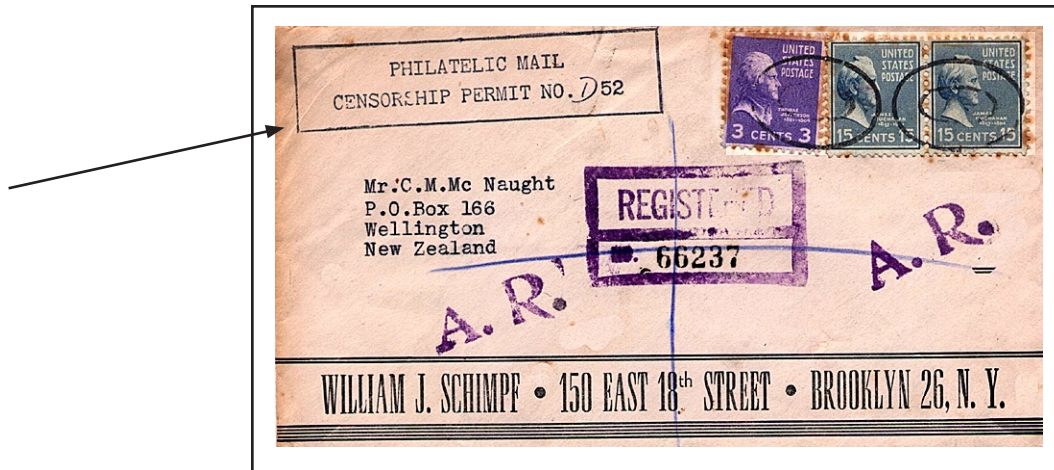
Mail found to contain postage stamps to be sent abroad, but for which no permit had been issued, was subject to being confiscated or returned to the sender by the censorship office.



The permits were valid for six months after the date of issuance. They were not transferable. Shipments of stamps under the permits were required to conform to all post office and censorship regulations applicable to other type packages. The permit was subject to cancellation at any time.

The Philatelic Control Unit of the Office of Censorship issued INSTRUCTIONS TO HOLDERS OF PERMITS FOR THE EXPORT OF POSTAGE STAMPS. This was Form 663-Rev. In summary, the Instructions required that postage stamps to be sent or taken to a foreign country had to be prepared for shipment and dispatched in accordance with the requirements of the Instructions [Section 1]; that a Philatelic Export Certificate had to be obtained [Section 2]; that prompt dispatch of shipments depended on strict adherence to the requirements of the Instructions [Section 3]; that shipments could not be made to persons whose names were on the list of Blocked Nationals or to persons in enemy countries [Section 4]; that shipments could not be made to certain neutral countries because the stamps would be readily available to our enemies [Section 5]; that certain stamps themselves are objectionable (*i.e.*, stamps of enemy or enemy occupied countries) [Section 6]; that a philatelic export permit issued by the Office of Censorship is required to carry stamps abroad [Section 7]; that no package may con-

tain any labels from the Office of Censorship [Section 8]; and, shipments of stamps to prisoners of war, interned civilians and detained civilians were prohibited [Section 9].



The Instructions required that the applicant disclose the names, addresses, countries of origin, years in the United States, and ages of all employees who were of “enemy alien nationality”. The form also set out five conditions to be obeyed. Specimen signatures also were required as part of the application.

Editor’s Note: I will make available by return e-mail (i) a copy of the Application for Philatelic Export Permit, and (ii) the Instructions, to anyone who sends me an e-mail requesting these.

I want to thank Louis Fiset who made available to me the label and cover I used as illustrations.

Stamp Removed From a POW Lettersheet: Another Viewpoint

by

Dickson Preston

I was intrigued by the POW lettersheet shown in Issue No. 28 [page 7]. You [SMR] suggested that the German censors might have removed the stamp because it bore a United States patriotic subject. I think this might have been the case, but I have another lettersheet on which part of the stamp remains. In this case, the stamp was the 6 cents John Quincy Adams Prexie. It does not seem likely to me that the Germans would have had any particular animus against our sixth president although with the Nazis you never really know. It is more likely that the stamp was removed to check for any secret messages underneath it. This kind of checking might also have been the case for the lettersheet shown in Issue No. 28.

Another World War II Forerunner of Interrupted Mail

by

Steven M. Roth

In Issue No. 28 I showed some “forerunners of interrupted mail” covers from Mongolia, Spain and Finland. Below is another forerunner cover -- this one addressed to China in December 1937. The cover was addressed to Soochow in Kiangsu Province in East China at the Yellow Sea. Japan had invaded China the previous

July, and occupied Soochow in September 1937. The letter was probably held by the Post Office at San Francisco since there is no evidence on the cover that it ever reached China.



Post-World War II “Return to Sender/Service Suspended” Cover

by

Steven M. Roth

The lettersheet below was sent to China in July 1949, at a time when Beijing was occupied by the Communist Army, and the Nationalist Army was in retreat from the North.



Editor’s Note: I need material for The Prexie Era Newsletter No. 30. Please help by contributing something.