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The Prexie Era

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Restoring Postal Services to the Liberated European Countries

by

Louis Fiset

With the invasion of Normandy on June 6, 1944, the slow, difficult liberation of the overrun countries of Europe began. As German military forces were pushed back, the infrastructures in liberated areas, then whole countries, were restored. Civilian mail service to the people within these liberated areas soon followed, although it was severely limited at first.

Initially U.S. postal regulations permitted only non-illustrated post cards sent by ordinary means and whose content was restricted to personal and family matters. Gradually, one-ounce letter mail of a personal or business nature was allowed. Finally, airmail, registration, special delivery, money order, and parcel post services resumed. Pre-war postal rates prevailed.

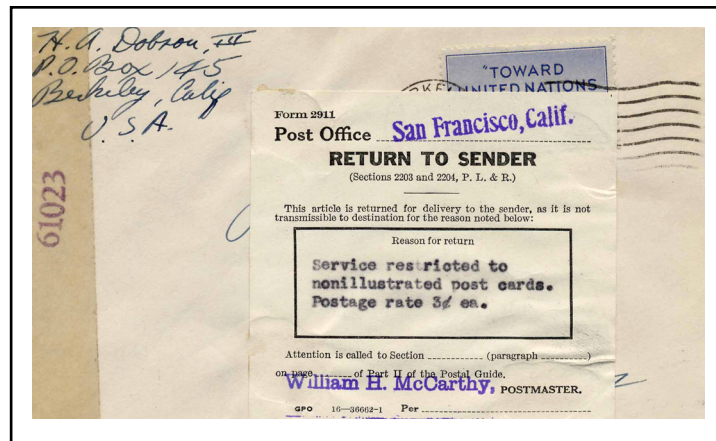
The timetable for the resumption of postal services to each country varied according to when it was liberated. However, by the end of 1945 most postal services to Europe had returned to normal.

The accompanying illustration shows part of this gradual return of full postal service. It is a non-illustrated post card to Paris. It was postmarked on October 5, 1944 and censored at the New York censor station. Post card service to Paris had recently resumed, on September 23, 1944. This card, with its French language personal message, was received in Paris on December 14, 1944.



The second illustration [see page 3] is a cover to Norway, which was to be sent by ordinary means. It was postmarked June 9, 1945, and censored at the San Francisco censor station. It was then returned to sender because one ounce letter mail was not yet permitted to Norway. This occurred on July 2, 1945, when all classes of regular mails were permitted, including airmail, registration and parcel post services. On that day the same increased mail services to Belgium, Denmark, France, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands resumed.

Collectors should be on the lookout for mail reflecting this gradual resumption of mail service to the liberated European countries. This mail is scarce, but by no means rare. You simply need to know what you are looking for. A careful examination of relevant postal bulletins will reveal when a particular mail service resumed to an individual country. A useful discussion of resumption of postal service to liberated countries using the mail to France as a case study may be found in Lawrence Sherman, MD (ed.) *The United States Post Office in World War II* (Chicago: The Collectors Club of Chicago, 2002), pages 295-298.



My thanks to Steve Roth for providing the Norway cover illustration.

Disaster Covers: Some Covers That Survived A Train Wreck and Fires

by

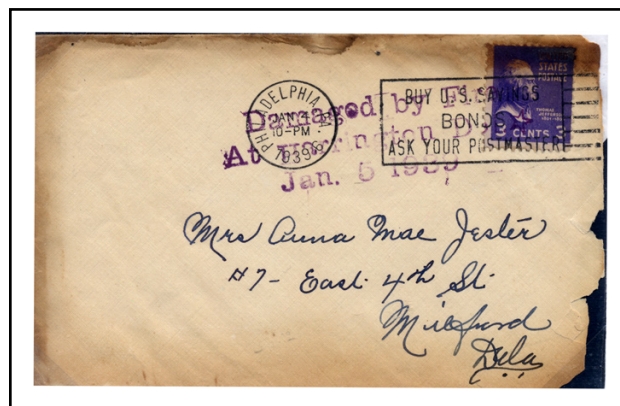
Millard H. Mack

Here are some covers from my collections that survived some very rough travels:

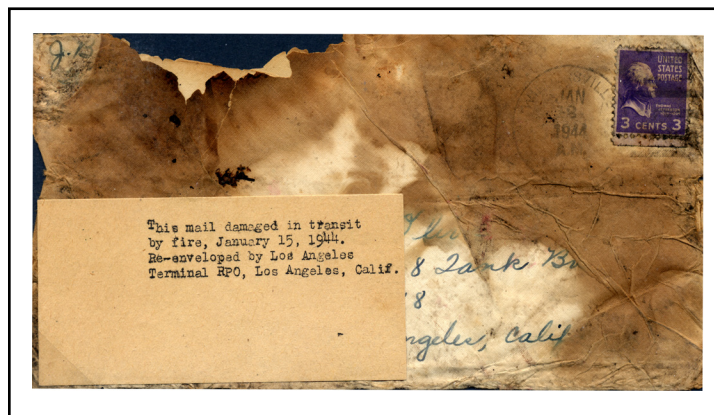
Damaged in Pouch/Run Over By Train



Damaged by Fire



Damaged by Fire with Re-Envelope Label



Continued at page 9

Collect-on-Delivery “Change of Terms” Fee

by

Terence Hines

The collect-on-delivery “change of terms” fee was imposed when a COD mailer wanted to change the terms by which the addressee of the package could pay. As listed in the second edition of the Beecher book (Table 41-3, p. 256) the fee was introduced July 1, 1930 at 10 cents. It was raised to 20 cents on March 26, 1944 and reduced back to 10 cents on Nov. 1, 1944. It stayed at 10 cents until July 25, 1968 when it was increased to 35 cents. Payment of the fee was evidenced by affixing appropriate stamps to USPOD Form 3818.

This is a truly obscure fee and, according again to the Beecher book (p. 251), used copies of Form 3818

“are very rarely seen.” The book illustrates two used Forms 3818, neither with Prexies. A Prexie usage on the Form is shown here. The front of the Form [not illustrated here] shows that it was mailed June 23, 1954 from Rutland, VT. The reverse of the form shows a solo use of the 10 cent Prexie postmarked in Rutland on the same date. The circular date stamp is from Rutland’s general delivery section.

Albert [Chip] Briggs showed a similar usage in his exhibit at NOJEX 2004: “Domestic Usages -- U.S. Presidential Series”.

A final comment. Obviously, any Prexie usage on a Form 3818 is rare. But note that the 20 cent fee was in effect for only a few days over 7 months in 1944. Now THAT would be an item!

Example of Unpublished Inter-Island Pacific Ocean Airmail Rates

by

Steven M. Roth

Ken Lawrence, writing in his column in AMERICAN PHILATELIST in 1997 [“FDCs, Nesbitt Envelopes and Presidentials”, April 1997, p. 312], described the previously undiscovered airmail rates applicable to inter-island mail (among other destinations) in the early 1940s. The discovery had been made by Stanley Jersey at the National Archives.

Here from my collection is an example of a cover which demonstrates the rate from Hawaii to the Philippine Island in 1941.



The rates for mail flown from the United States were: Hawaii - 20 cents; Midway Island - 30 cents; Wake Island - 35 cents; Guam - 40 cents; and, Philippine Islands - 50 cents. This cover was mailed at Honolulu, bound for Manila, on May 8, 1941. It was correctly rated 30 cents.

Reminder: All subscriptions will end with
the next issue of the Newsletter

Two Late Solo Uses of the 7 Cents Prexie

by

Dickson Preston

There really are no straight-forward solo uses for the 7 cents stamp during the normal life of the Prexies, from 1938 to 1958. Most collectors show either a parcel post rate, and insured third class letter, or the 7 cents return receipt fee paid alone on a registered federal government cover sent within the Washington, D.C. area, for which only the return receipt fee had to be paid. One possibility is the 7 cents air mail rate to Saint Pierre et Miquelon, in effect from 1 October 1946 to 31 December 1948, but I have never seen one of these paid with any kind of franking.

However, two mainstream rates which came into effect soon after the Prexie era provide good opportunities for 7 cents solo frankings. These are the 1958 7 cents domestic air mail rate and the 1961 7 cents international surface post card rate. Even though the 7 cents Jackson was replaced by the 7 cents Wilson from the Liberty Series on 10 January 1956, there were still enough Prexies around through the early 1960s to provide legitimate uses of the earlier stamp.

Figure 1 shows a 7 cents Jackson used to pay the 7 cents per ounce air mail rate in effect from 1 August 1958 until 6 January 1963. This was the airmail rate increase that accompanied the letter rate increase to 4 cents, which many regard as the beginning of the Great Postal Inflation.

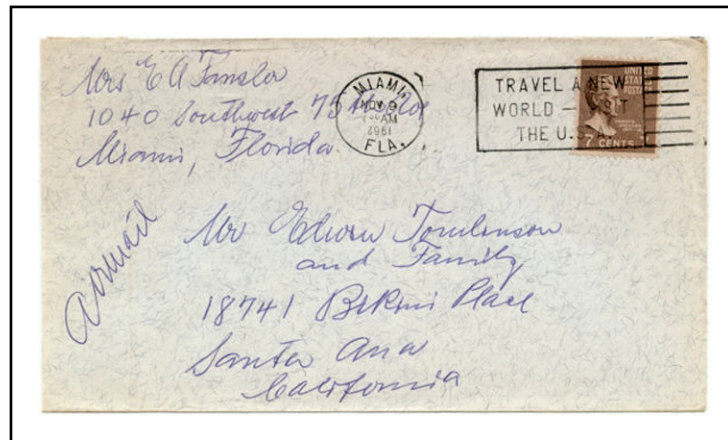
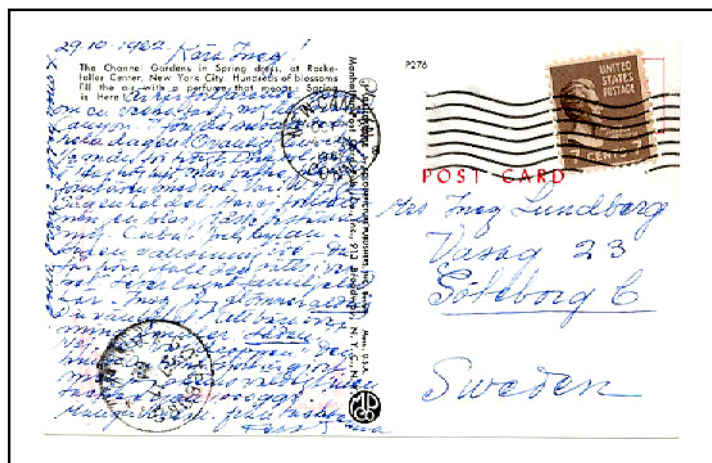


Figure 2 shows a scarcer usage, the 7 cents international surface post card rate in effect 1 July 1961 to 30 April 1967. This tourist card left New Canaan, CT on 29 October 1962 and arrived in Goteborg, Sweden on 27 November, after a journey of 29 days. For a mere 4 cents more, the sender could have had the card, delivered in less than one week using air mail, and, in the process, she might have created a real collectors' item, an 11 cents prexie solo franking.

[*Figure 2* illustration on page 7]

Figure 2

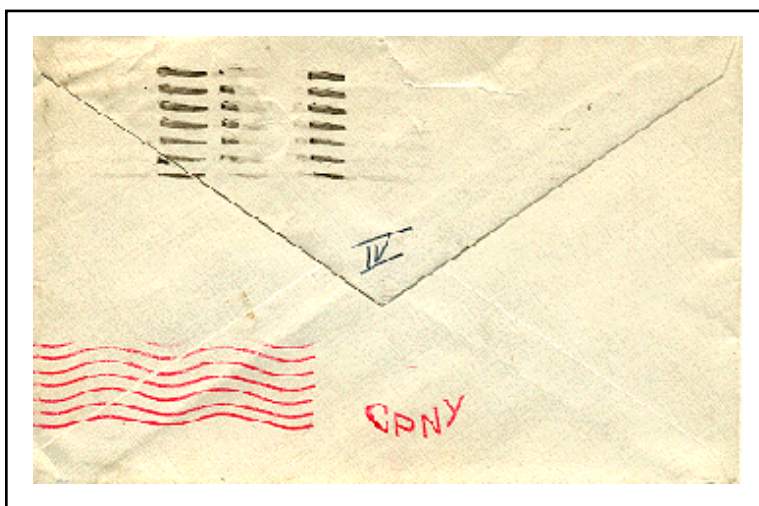


The International Postal Supply Company's Machine Marking "CPNY". What Does It Represent?

by

Terence Hines

Subscriber Terry Hines submitted the following cover to me and asked if I know anything about the marking.



Terry asked that I solicit information from readers.

Here is what I have in my files with respect to this mark. This machine marking was produced by the International Postal Supply Company. It is found on mail to and from the military during World War II. Terry's cover is postmarked May 10, 1944. It is addressed to a sailor c/o Navy Fleet PO, New York, NY.

There are differing opinions as to what the letters “CP” in the marking mean. One school of thought is that they stand for “Control Point”. Another is that they represent the phrase “Censor Post”.

For the benefit of subscribers who do not take the digital edition of the Newsletter (and, therefore, cannot see the cover in color), the marking and the wavy canceller are in red.

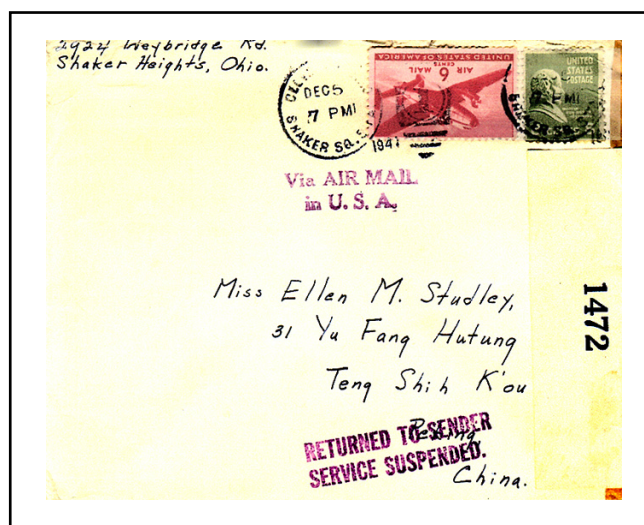
What do you know about this marking?

Combination Airmail and Ocean Mail Cover to China

by

Joseph G. Bock

This cover, postmarked December 5, 1941, was flown from Ohio to the exchange office at San Francisco. There it was to be placed aboard a ship for transport to its destination. Before embarking for China, however, the letter was sent to the San Francisco censorship office where it was open, inspected, and then resealed. In the meantime, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. Postal communications with countries occupied or threatened by the Japanese had mail service suspended by the United States on September 11. This cover, therefore, was retained by the postal authorities at San Francisco, and marked “Return to Sender/Service Suspended” on or after December 11. It likely never left the United States.



Was 8 cents the correct rate for the combination of airmail in the United States and for ocean/surface carriage to China? Also, why the additional 6 cents airmail stamp?

Editor's Request: When you send me scanned images for your articles, please scan them at actual size, at 300 dpi, to give me flexibility in resizing the images for publication.

Comments on “An Interesting Prexie Franking” in *Prexie Era Newsletter*, No. 29

by

Ken Lawrence

Subscriber Ken Lawrence sent the following thoughts with respect to Joe Bock’s analysis of his parcel tag.

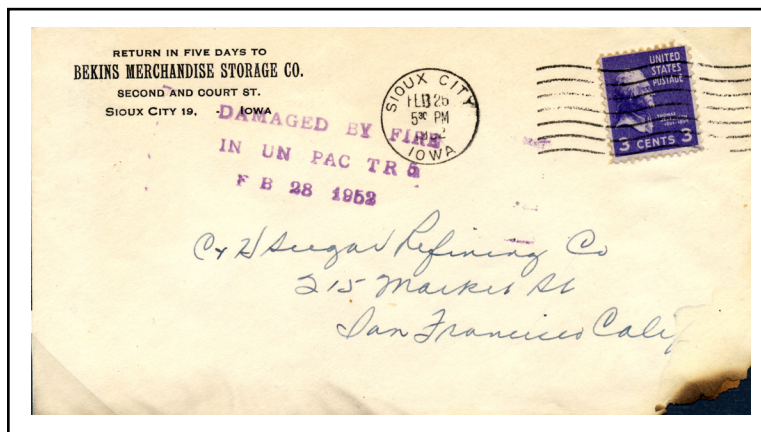
Ken wrote: “For a couple of reasons I feel certain your analysis is mistaken. I don’t believe there was rural delivery in Alaska. To the contrary, most mail was carried by air only. But more important than that, special regulations applied to fur mailed from Alaska. Every postmaster had to send a form filled out and signed by the sender to the Alaska Game Commission at Juneau listing each pelt, verifying that protected animals were not included, verifying that no unprimed skins were enclosed, and providing serial numbers of commission seals for beaver and marten skins. The postmaster also had to verify that each package for furs was labeled on the outside with the complete contents, which is why these mailing tags all have checklists of animals authorized to be shipped.

“You are correct that the destination was Zone 8 (all parcels mailed in Alaska were rated Zone 8 unless they were registered, in which case they were charged first class postage regardless of zone). So your insured fee was 3 cents, 10 cents, 15 cents, or 25 cents, depending on the level of indemnity, with the rest for postage.”

Joe Bock replied: Thanks, Ken, for your excellent analysis. So despite the remote Alaska origination, it was FLOWN, although it was NOT AIRMAIL. The relatively high fee was thus attributable to insurance and a location in Zone 8 which had the highest Parcel Post (4th Class) rate per pound.

Continued from page 4

Damaged by Fire



Millard H. Mack’s Challenge to Readers

Frequent contributor Millard Mack sent me an interesting cover from his Prexie collection and used it to pose a challenge to our subscribers. The cover he submitted [illustrated on page 10] contains thirty-four 3 cents Jefferson Prexies. Millard asks: what other Prexie Era covers can/will readers submit that are franked with a very large number of the same stamp?

Twenty-seven 3 cents Jeffersons on the front and seven 3 cents Jeffersons on the back:



What do you have that you can submit to meet Millard's challenge?

Mystery Cover: Can You Explain Its Routing?



Postmarked New York City December 9, 1941. Calcutta arrival backstamp March 6, 1942. Passed by Censor handstamp applied in India. Orange crayon date [probably date of answer to letter] July 3, 1942. [Answer will be given in Newsletter No.31.]