

## 1943-44 Overrun Countries Series Stamps

Paul M. Holland

Overrun Countries Series (ORCS) stamps provide a fascinating glimpse into the history of World War II and the Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) era. Interestingly, the idea of issuing a series of stamps honoring each of the European countries overrun and occupied by Germany during the Second World War was originated in October 1942 by FDR himself, as recounted by Ernest A. Kehr, a well known stamp columnist and writer. Unlike the war-like stamp designs employed by other belligerent powers during World War II, FDR envisioned a series of stamps "...using flags of each of the overrun nations of Europe, printed in their correct colors and set in a frame that included the picture of a phoenix to symbolize regeneration." Details on this and many other aspects of these stamps are provided in my ORCS articles to follow.

Shown below is my oversize Postmaster General cover on official stationery franked with top margin examples of each of the European ORCS stamps with printed country names. At the left are other items from this era. These include a 1938 Yugoslav cover from FDR's personal stamp collection, sent to him from Belgrade using air defense stamp semi-postals depicting search lights defending the city from air attack. However, this effort was of little value in deterring the savage Luftwaffe bombing of Belgrade in April 1941. Also shown is FDR at his desk in the White House signing a sheet of Belgian Overrun Countries stamps, a volunteer artist's committee essay for Norway, and an obliterated Hitler-head stamp from Austria issued before replacement stamps could be produced after the war.



It should be emphasized that stamp collecting was an integral part of FDR's life and perhaps his primary means of relaxation. In fact, according to his White House Physician Admiral Ross McIntire, "Roosevelt spent well over two thousand hours while he was president tending to his collection." FDR was an avid worldwide stamp collector, and British Prime Minister Winston S. Churchill recalls watching him "with much interest and in silence for perhaps half an hour as he stuck them in, each in its proper place, and so forgot the cares of State." Regarding United States stamps issued during FDR's presidency, FDR was personally involved in reviewing each design and sometimes sketched out his own ideas for stamps. FDR's comprehensive knowledge of world geography stemmed in part from his stamp collecting, and often surprised his military advisers during World War II. Following FDR's death, his stamp collection was sold in a series of 1946 H. R. Harmer auctions, thereby becoming widely dispersed.

My own stamp collecting interests are focused on the FDR era, especially items from FDR's own collection, where I've been fortunate in acquiring more than 300 of his original (intact) stamp album pages with 5,000+ stamps, over 700 worldwide covers sent to him, and many other items. I also collect related autograph material, including hundreds of original signed letters on official government stationery from the FDR White House, members of his Cabinet, and especially Post Office Department officials such as his Postmaster Generals. When combined with my own representative 1840-1945+ worldwide stamp collection, covering the years that FDR himself collected, this provides me with valuable philatelic context, including many examples of postal history from the FDR era.

In my articles on ORCS stamps in the *US Specialist*, I provide historical background on World War II and wherever possible use signed letters from Post Office Department officials to introduce them. While naturally the *US Specialist* is focused on United States stamps, in telling the story and illustrating historical context I've employed worldwide stamps, postal history items and autograph material. Perhaps the most curious of these items are Belgian adversity covers made from surplus military maps due to paper shortages after World War II.

OVERRUN COUNTRIES SERIES articles in *The United States Specialist* by Paul M. Holland

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"1943-44 Overrun Countries Stamps: Belgium"	August 2021, pages 366-375.
"1943-44 Overrun Countries Stamps: France"	October 2021, pages 463-470.
"1943-44 Overrun Countries Stamps: Yugoslavia"	March 2022, pages 106-111.
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## Postal History



# 1943-44 Overrun Countries Series: Poland

by **Paul M. Holland**

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*This is the first time that a postage stamp has been issued by this Government bearing a foreign flag as the central subject. To the right of the flag appears the “Phoenix,” a mythological bird signifying renewal of life; to the left is a figure of a kneeling woman with shackles falling from outstretched arms, symbolizing liberation.*

— From a signed June 22, 1943 letter sent with a Favor First Day Cover of the 5¢ Poland stamp of the 1943-44 Overrun Countries Series by the Deputy Third Assistant Postmaster General, Roy M. North.

The idea of issuing a series of stamps honoring each of the European countries overrun and occupied by Germany during the Second World War originated with President Franklin D. Roosevelt himself. This is the subject of an account published by Ernest A. Kehr (a well known stamp columnist), in his book *The Romance of Stamp Collecting*, of a meeting with FDR in the White House just before lunch on October 13, 1942. The subject of their discussion was “war issue” stamp designs strongly advocated by a group of leading American artists that depicted “cannons and tanks; destroyers and flying fortresses; soldiers, sailors and marines.” FDR took exception to this approach as not conveying what we were trying to accomplish in the war, and instead “he advanced the idea of using flags of each of the overrun nations of Europe, printed in their correct colors and set in a frame that included the picture of a phoenix to symbolize regeneration.”<sup>1</sup>

FDR's preferred design approach was in sharp contrast with the war-like stamp designs employed by other belligerent powers during World War II. Since I maintain a representative worldwide stamp collection from 1840-1945, I have many examples of this including the semipostal "charity" stamps from Germany and Japan shown in Figure 1. The first shows Stuka dive bombers in action (Scott #B226), the second shows the Japanese raid on Pearl Harbor based on an actual photograph taken from a Japanese airplane during the attack (Scott #B7).



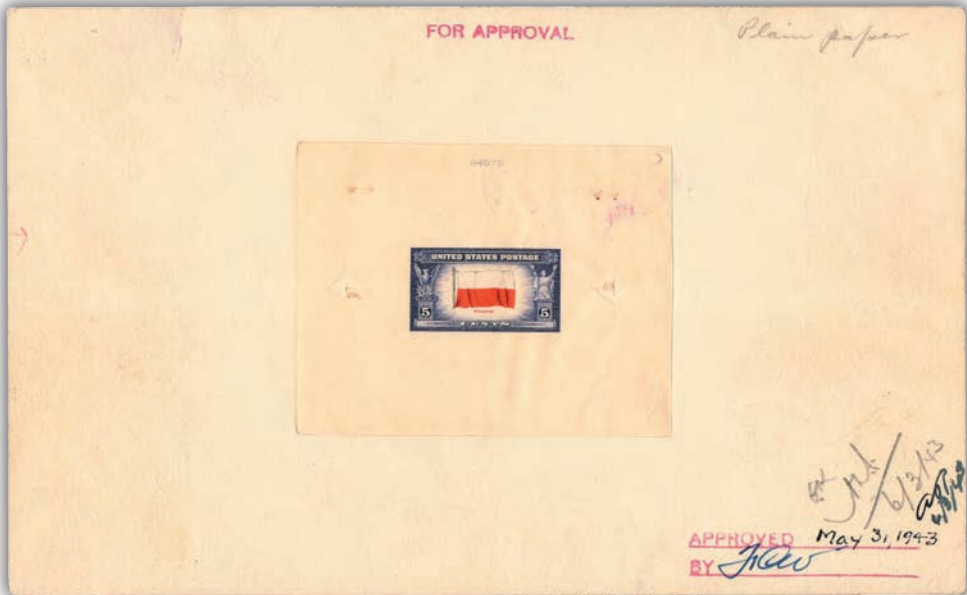
*Figure 1. The war-like designs of these German and Japanese semipostal "charity" stamps of 1942-43 are in marked contrast to FDR's concept for the Overrun Countries series.*

Besides Kehr's account, FDR's desire to produce a series of stamps for overrun countries is also documented in a typed White House memo one week later from FDR to his long-time secretary Marvin "Mac" McIntyre on October 22, 1942. This is addressed simply to "MAC" and states "Will you speak to the Postmaster General about the possibility of a series of Memorial Stamps in honor of each of the Nations which has been overrun by Germany — Norway, Holland, Belgium, Greece, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Poland and Luxembourg."<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that by the date of FDR's memo the global extent of the Axis powers had reached its zenith, and major turning points in the war were beginning to occur. These included the hard fought battles of Stalingrad in Russia and Guadalcanal in the Pacific (August 1942 to February 1943), and the impending North African campaign by the Americans and British that finally swept the Axis powers from the African continent (November 1942 to May 1943). By the time the first stamps of the Overrun Countries series were issued, a path to eventual Allied victory in the war seemed clear.

In response to FDR's memo and at the request of Washington officials, a meeting was held in New York City in early 1943. The participants included Deputy Third Assistant Postmaster General Roy M. North representing the Post Office department, Director Alvin W. Hall of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP), experienced stamp designers, members of the group of volunteer American artists mentioned earlier and Harry L. Lindquist, prominent philatelic publisher who arranged the meeting. Among the topics of discussion were the size, denomination and the frame around the flags for the proposed stamps. Artistically, the consensus was for a larger size and dark colored frames to better display the flags. Regarding the denomination for the proposed stamps, arguments for a 5¢ international rate prevailed, even though mail delivery to the overrun countries was temporarily blocked due to the war. Also, it was at this meeting that it was announced that the American Banknote Company would cooperate in producing these stamps as the BEP did not have the specialized equipment for printing these national flags stamps in multiple colors in a single operation.<sup>3</sup>



The design staff at the American Banknote Company prepared the initial stamp design based on FDR's suggestion. Their original wash drawing had the date 1776 to the left of United States Postage and 1943 to the right, with a Latin inscription "Ne pereat." (Let it not perish!) appearing above the head of the phoenix, but this and the dates were removed before the final model was approved by FDR on March 21, 1943. The first public announcement of a "series of eleven new postage stamps, commemorating the heroic and continuing resistance to the Axis powers by the peoples of over-run and occupied countries of Europe" was on May 11, 1943, with Denmark and Korea to be added to the series later.<sup>3</sup> The large die proof for the Poland stamp was approved by Postmaster General (PMG) Frank C. Walker on May 31, 1943 as shown by his initials at the bottom right in Figure 2.



**Figure 2. Large die proof for the Poland stamp approved by PMG Walker**  
(Image: Smithsonian National Postal Museum).

The stamps were printed by the American Banknote Company under government contract in sheets of 200 cut into panes of 50. Because the plates were not produced by the BEP no plate numbers were used. Instead of a plate number the country name was printed over the top right stamp of each pane in black during the initial color offset printing of the flags, where up to three different colors could be used. For the Polish flag only bright red and black were needed. This was followed by printing the outer engraved (intaglio) frame in blue violet. The Poland stamp thus became the first three-color postage stamp issued by the United States. Because the intaglio plate for the frame was not country specific it could be used for more than one stamp. Nearly 20 million of these Polish flag stamps were printed. The first day of issue for the stamp was June 22, 1943 with both Washington, DC and Chicago, Illinois selected for first day sales. The inclusion of the city of Chicago was due to the unusually large number of Americans of Polish descent in the region.

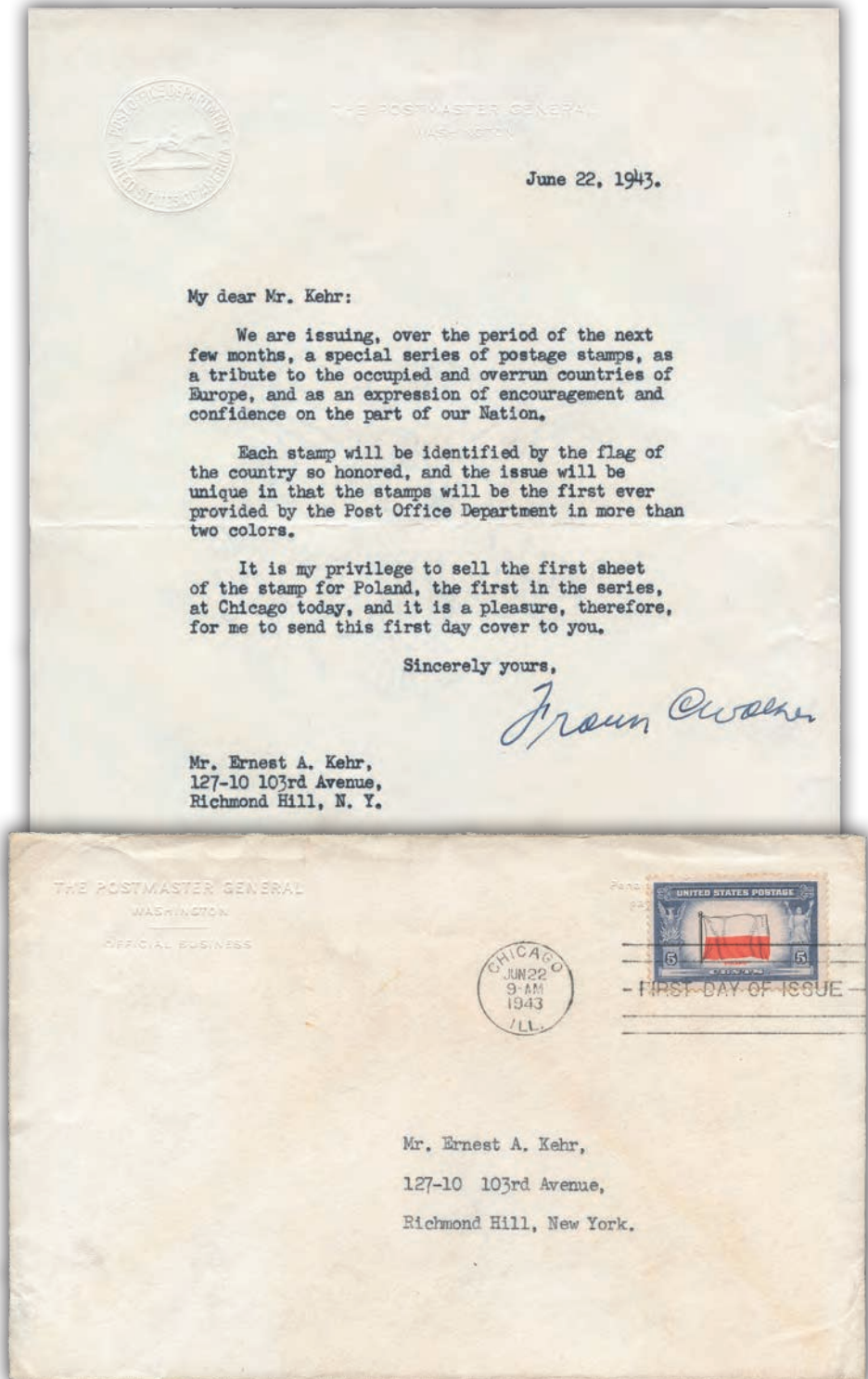


Figure 3. Postmaster General favor first day cover sent to Ernest A. Kehr for the Poland Overrun Countries stamp with letter signed by PMG Frank C. Walker.

I feel very fortunate in having the actual favor first day cover (FDC) for Poland sent to Ernest A. Kehr with letter signed by Postmaster General Frank A. Walker from Chicago shown in Figure 3. This is especially interesting since the stamp for Poland is the first of the series, PMG Walker was present in Chicago on June 22, 1943 for the first day ceremony, and Kehr was himself eyewitness to the germination of the idea for the Overrun Countries series stamp designs by FDR during their October 13, 1942 meeting. FDR's official White House Visitor's log shows this meeting to have been a brief one, followed by FDR having lunch with Admiral Leahy. However, according to Kehr when "a secretary interrupted to announce the arrival of Admiral Leahy with 'important news.' The President asked that he be kept waiting while he continued to discuss an appropriate design for the stamps."

PMG Walker did not send out nearly as many favor FDCs with signed letters as his predecessor PMG James A. Farley, frequently opting to send favor FDCs on official PMG stationery with enclosed printed notices about the stamp instead. For example, I have a complete set of fourteen of these for Overrun Countries stamps, including both of the first day cities for Poland, sent to Mrs. W. W. Howes, wife of the former First Assistant Postmaster General William W. Howes, all with printed notices from the Post Office Department. The one for Poland canceled in Washington, DC is shown in Figure 4.



**Figure 4. Favor FDC for Poland stamp sent by PMG Walker to Mrs. W. W. Howes with printed Post Office Department notice instead of letter.**

Also, under PMG Walker, Deputy Third Assistant Postmaster General Roy M. North became an increasingly important figure and liason with FDR concerning new postage stamp issues, whereas Walker remained one of FDR's most important political advisors. This is reflected in the importance of favor FDCs sent out by Deputy Third Assistant PMG North.

Regarding favor FDCs for the Overrun Countries stamps, Roy North specially arranged for the Ambassadors or Foreign Ministers (in exile) of each of these nations

THE DEPUTY THIRD ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL  
WASHINGTON

June 22, 1943.

Hon. Harold L. Ickes,  
Secretary of Interior,  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

The stamp on this letter, honoring the courage and valor of the Polish people, is the first in a series of postage stamps to be issued paying tribute to the overrun and occupied countries of Europe.

This is the first time that a postage stamp has been issued by this Government bearing a foreign flag as the central subject. To the right of the flag appears the "Phoenix," a mythological bird, signifying renewal of life; to the left is a figure of a kneeling woman with shackles falling from outstretched arms, symbolizing liberation.

It is a pleasure for me to send this first day cover to you.

Respectfully,

*Roy North*

THE DEPUTY  
THIRD ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL  
WASHINGTON

*J. Ciechanowicz*  
Ambassador of Poland



Hon. Harold L. Ickes,  
Secretary of Interior,  
Washington, D. C.

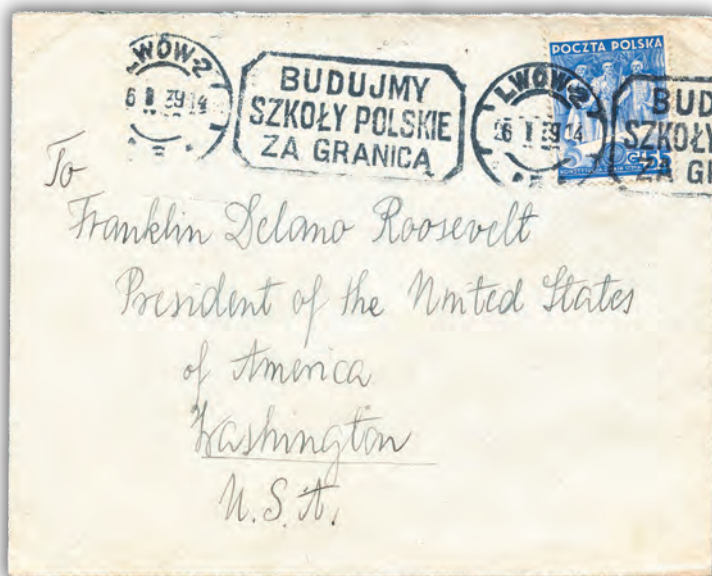
Figure 5. Deputy Third Assistant PMG favor FDC for Poland stamp signed by the Ambassador of Poland, with letter signed by Roy North sent to Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes.



to autograph these covers, if it was possible. For example, North got Ambassador Jan Ciechanowski of Poland to sign the favor FDC he sent to Harold L. Ickes, FDR's Secretary of the Interior. This is shown in Figure 5 along with North's enclosed signed letter. I'm fortunate to have this in my collection as Harold Ickes was the other prominent stamp collector in the Roosevelt administration along with FDR himself. This cover is from lot 752 of the 1948 Edson Fifield auction of the Harold L. Ickes stamp collection.<sup>4</sup>

Since the United States did not recognize Germany's conquest of Poland, Jan Ciechanowski continued to be treated as the Polish Ambassador. In fact, the White House Visitor's Log shows a number of short meetings with FDR during the war years.

FDR also received lots of mail from around the world and many of the more interesting covers were saved in his personal stamp collection. I'm fortunate in having over 500 covers sent to FDR from some forty different foreign countries, including a number sent to FDR from Poland. This example from January 26, 1939 was sent to FDR from Lwow, Poland about seven months before the start of World War II. Shown in Figure 6, it is franked with Scott #328, paying the international surface rate and is hand-addressed to "Franklin Delano Roosevelt." The slogan cancellation translates as "Let's build Polish schools abroad." Before the war, Lwow was a multicultural city of Poles, Jews and Ukrainians with a population of over 300,000. During World War II, it was first annexed to the USSR as part of the German-Soviet Frontier Treaty, then occupied by the Germans when Hitler turned on Stalin and invaded Russia in June 1941. It suffered immensely under occupation.



*Figure 6. January 26, 1939 cover sent to FDR from Lwow, Poland about seven months before the start of World War II.*

Of all the Overrun Countries, Poland unquestionably suffered the most. Besides extremely harsh treatment of its population, the establishment of numerous concentration camps, and the deliberate destruction of Warsaw following the Warsaw Uprising in August 1944, a number of Nazi death camps were constructed in Poland. These

included Chelmno, Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka, Majdanek and Auschwitz-Birkenau where millions were systematically murdered, the victims mostly being Jews. In fact, it is estimated that of the 3.3 million Jews living in Poland before the war, over 90% perished. In April 1946, amidst the extreme devastation following World War II, Poland issued the semipostal stamp (Scott #B45) shown in Figure 7.

This macabre stamp from my representative worldwide collection depicts “Death” Spreading Poison Gas over Majdanek Prison Camp. The design features a skeleton dressed in a Nazi SS uniform. To me, this striking stamp image surrounded by its crude and rough perforations highlights both the difficult post-war conditions in Poland and the horrors of its wartime occupation.



*Figure 7. This Polish semipostal stamp from April 1946 depicts some of the horrors of the German occupation of Poland.*

## References

1. Ernest A. Kehr, *The Romance of Stamp Collecting*, Thomas Y. Crowell Company: New York, 1947, pages 262-263.
2. Brian C. Bauer, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Stamps of the United States 1933-45*, Linn's Stamp News: Sydney, Ohio 1993, page 293.
3. Max G. Johl, *The United States Postage Stamps of the Twentieth Century*, Vol. 4, New York: H.L. Linquist, 1938, page 219.
4. *The Harold L. Ickes World Wide Stamp Collection. Parts One and Two*, New York: Edson Fifield sale 33, November 15-23, 1948, lot 752.





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## Postal History



# 1943-44 Overrun Countries Series: Czechoslovakia

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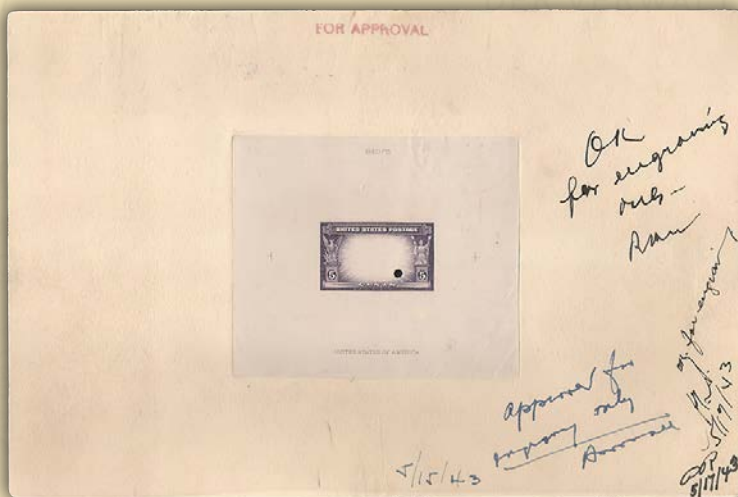
*The 5-cent postage stamp honoring Czechoslovakia, which appears on this first-day cover, is the second in the series designed to commemorate the continuing resistance to the Axis powers by the peoples of the overrun and occupied nations of Europe.*

— From a signed July 12, 1943 letter sent with a Favor First Day Cover of the 5¢ Czechoslovakia stamp of the 1943-44 Overrun Countries Series by Postmaster General, Frank C. Walker.

The series of stamps honoring each of the European countries overrun and occupied by Germany during the Second World War originated with President Franklin D. Roosevelt himself. This was discussed by the well known stamp columnist Ernest A. Kehr, who was eyewitness to this during a meeting with FDR in the White House on October 13, 1942.<sup>1</sup> Because the design motif was to be a full-color reproduction of the flag of each of these nations surrounded by a frame incorporating a phoenix to symbolize regeneration, the American Banknote Company was selected to produce these stamps as the Bureau of Engraving and Printing did not have the specialized equipment required for printing these national flags stamps in multiple colors in a single operation.

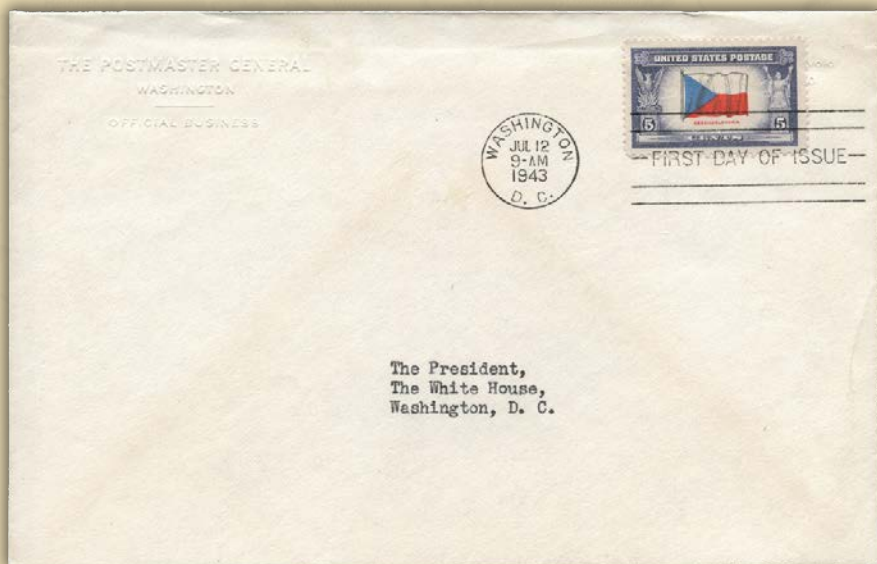
During the printing process, an initial color offset printing of the flags in up to three different colors was used, followed by printing the outer engraved (intaglio) frame in blue violet. Because the intaglio plate for the frame was not country specific, it could be used for more than one stamp. The approved die proof for the frame only is shown in Figure 1. In the case of the Czechoslovakia stamp, three different colors for the flag were

required, blue, bright red and black, and thus when coupled with the frame printed in blue violet, this stamp became the first four-color postage stamp issued by the United States.



*Figure 1. Large die proof of the intaglio frame for Overrun Countries stamps.  
(National Postal Museum)*

Plate proofs show that The American Banknote Company employed an unusual “shared” layout for the full sheets of 200 during the printing of the stamps for Czechoslovakia and nine of the other Overrun Countries with two different stamp types per sheet. For example, in this case the top two panes of 50 were for Czechoslovakia, the bottom two for Norway. The shared full sheet pairings used were (top/bottom) Czechoslovakia/Norway, Luxembourg/Netherlands, Belgium/France, Greece/Yugoslavia and Albania/Austria, respectively. Only the stamps for Poland, Denmark and Korea were printed in full sheets of 200 before they were cut into panes of 50 for issue.<sup>2</sup>



**Figure 2. Czechoslovakia Overrun Countries stamp Favor FDC sent to FDR by PMG Walker.**





THE POSTMASTER GENERAL  
WASHINGTON

July 12, 1943.

My dear Mr. Kehr:

The 5-cent postage stamp, honoring Czechoslovakia, which appears on this first-day cover, is the second in the series designed to commemorate the continuing resistance to the Axis powers by the peoples of the overrun and occupied nations of Europe.

I trust that this cover will make an attractive addition to your collection.

Sincerely yours,

*Frank C. Walker*

Mr. Ernest A. Kehr,  
127-10 103d Avenue,  
Richmond Hill, New York.

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL  
WASHINGTON  
OFFICIAL BUSINESS



FIRST DAY OF ISSUE

Mr. Ernest A. Kehr,  
127-10 103d Avenue,  
Richmond Hill, New York.

Figure 3. Favor first day cover sent to Ernest A. Kehr for the Czechoslovakia Overrun Countries stamp with letter signed by PMG Frank C. Walker.

Nearly 20 million Czechoslovakia flag stamps were printed, with the first day of issue for the stamp being July 12, 1943 in Washington, DC. Since the original concept for the Overrun Countries stamps was developed by FDR with Kehr being an eyewitness to this during their White House meeting, I feel fortunate in having the actual favor first day covers (FDCs) for this stamp sent to both FDR and Ernest A. Kehr by Postmaster General (PMG) Frank Walker. The cover sent to FDR (shown in Figure 2) is simply addressed to "The President, The White House, Washington, D.C." but unlike other favor FDCs sent to FDR by Walker in my collection, it lacks a signed letter. However, my favor FDC for the Czechoslovakia stamp sent to Ernest A. Kehr does have the signed letter shown in Figure 3.

Favor FDCs for the Czechoslovakia stamp were also sent out by the Deputy Third Assistant Postmaster General Roy M. North. As was the case for the Poland stamp, North made special arrangements for the Ambassador of Czechoslovakia (in exile) Vladimír Ladislav Dionýz Svetožárov Hurban to autograph these covers, as shown by the example in Figure 4 that was sent to General George C. Marshall at the War Department. Unfortunately, the signed letter that almost certainly would have been enclosed with this favor FDC for Czechoslovakia is absent, likely retained somewhere in War Department files.



**Figure 4. Deputy Third Assistant PMG favor FDC to General George C. Marshall signed by the Ambassador of Czechoslovakia.**

The choice of General George C. Marshall as the recipient of this favor FDC, seems especially appropriate since the theme of the Overrun Countries stamps is perhaps best expressed by the use of the phoenix to symbolize regeneration. In fact, the theme of post-war regeneration was practically embodied by Marshall, who later as Truman's Secretary of State led the massive US economic aid and political commitment to European recovery that became known as the Marshall Plan. In recognition of this work, George C. Marshall was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1953.

The German occupation of Czechoslovakia itself occurred in stages, beginning with the manufactured Sudetenland crisis that was carried out as a coordinated plan of propaganda and agitation for this German-speaking area of Czechoslovakia to be annexed to Germany. The resulting September 1938 Munich Agreement directly led to the incorporation of the Sudetenland into the Reich, while at the same time removing the best mountainous defensive barrier for the Czechs from the equation. This made the subsequent “bloodless” conquest of the rest of Czechoslovakia easy, especially since Germany had already annexed Austria during the March 1938 “Anschluss.” This left the remaining portions of Czechoslovakia nearly defenseless, surrounded on three sides by her much larger neighbor. In March 1939, lacking support from France or Great Britain, Czechoslovakia capitulated and the German army entered without armed resistance, leading to the creation of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia.

I’m always searching for the history in postal history, and I find that foreign covers addressed to President Franklin D. Roosevelt from his personal stamp collection provide a fascinating “window” into this era. Shown in Figure 5 is my March 2, 1937 Czechoslovak cover sent to FDR from Šternberk/Sternberg in the Sudetenland the year before the 1938 Munich Agreement. Note that the typed address to Franklin Roosevelt is entirely in German to “dem Herrn Präsidenten der Vereinigten Staaten”, with the honorific “Sr. Hochwohlgeboren” above, which translates directly as “High Well-born”, or more loosely as “Your Excellency.” Also note that the circular date stamps in the Krag machine cancellation show the town name in both Czech and German, with the



*Figure 5. March 2, 1937 Czechoslovak cover sent to FDR from Šternberk/Sternberg in the Sudetenland before the 1938 Munich Agreement.*

stamps (Scott #110 and #212) depicting Karlstein Castle and Tomáš Masaryk, the first president of Czechoslovakia who died in 1937. Masaryk's replacement, Edvard Beneš who had previously been the Foreign Minister, was curiously left completely out of the negotiations in Munich between Adolph Hitler, Neville Chamberlain and others that led to the Germans annexing the Sudetenland, and thus later resulting in the demise of the only democracy in central and eastern Europe.

While there had been no armed resistance to the initial invasion by the Germans, one of the most remarkable acts of resistance during all of the German occupations in Europe occurred in Prague on May 27, 1942. This was the bold daylight assassination of Reinhard Heyrich, Reichsprotektor of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia as he drove in an open car. Code named Operation Anthropoid, this was approved by the Czechoslovakian government-in-exile under Edvard Beneš and carried out by members of the Czechoslovak army-in-exile who parachuted into Czechoslovakia aided by British Special Operations. This event has been the subject of several books and movies.

At 38 years old, Heyrich was one of the most powerful men in Nazi Germany. He was not only SS Obergruppenführer and General of the Police, he also headed the combined security services of Nazi Germany including the Gestapo, and had been given overall charge of the "Final Solution to the Jewish question," convening the secret Wannsee Conference in Berlin on January 20, 1942 that directly led to the Holocaust. Much younger than most of the senior Nazi leadership, Reinhard Heyrich was clearly a rising star with a great future in the Thousand Year Reich, had it lasted that long, but Heyrich died in agony about a week after being attacked from sepsis caused by his wounds.

Ironically, the German occupation authorities in Bohemia and Moravia seem to have memorialized the success of Operation Anthropoid by issuing a black 1943 semi-postal "charity" stamp (Scott #B20) depicting the deathmask of Reinhard Heyrich. An example of this stamp from my 1840-1945 representative worldwide collection is shown in Figure 6. Note the unusually large amount of the surcharge.

After Heyrich's assassination a wave of brutal reprisals by SS troops shocked the world. The destruction of the small Czech village of Lidice was perhaps the most notorious of these atrocities. Here, German intelligence had falsely linked the assassins to Lidice and, in a reprisal, all the men were executed, the women deported to Ravensbrück concentration camp and the children taken prisoner, with many of them being killed later. The village of Lidice itself was burned and the ruins completely leveled.



*Figure 6. Ironically, this 1943 semipostal stamp seems to memorialize the successful assassination of Reinhard Heyrich (top) and Czech resistance to the German occupation.*





Figure 7. Cachet Craft FDC for the Czechoslovakia Overrun Countries stamp.

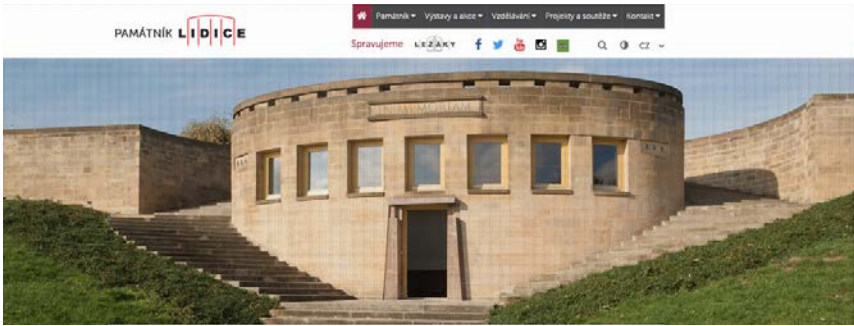
The destruction of Lidice became the theme of the first day cover for the Czechoslovakia Overrun Countries stamp shown in Figure 7. Here Cachet Craft’s red and blue cachet design highlights Lidice, vowing “We won’t forget!” showing Czechoslovakia in chains with a torch and V for victory, with the statement “Czechoslovakia will live and be free again.”

References

1. Ernest A. Kehr, *The Romance of Stamp Collecting*, Thomas Y. Crowell Company: New York, 1947, pages 262-263.

2. Max G. Johl, *The United States Postage Stamps of the Twentieth Century, Vol. II, 1935-1947*, New York: H.L. Linquist, 1947, pages 222-3.

Learn More About Lidice



To learn more about the destruction of Lidice, visit the Lidice Memorial website at [www.lidice-memorial.cz](http://www.lidice-memorial.cz). The site is available in multiple languages, including English, and it documents the history of the village and its cruel annihilation by the Nazis on June 10, 1942.



### Postal History



## 1943-44 Overrun Countries Series: Greece

by **Paul M. Holland**

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*This stamp was first placed on sale at Washington, D.C., and the Postmaster General sold the first sheet of these stamps to the President in the presence of the Ambassador of Greece.*

*I am glad to send this first day cover to you with the autograph of the Ambassador of Greece.*

— From a signed October 12, 1943 letter sent with a favor first day cover of the 5¢ Greece stamp of the 1943-44 Overrun Countries Series by the Deputy Third Assistant Postmaster General, Roy M. North.

The Overrun Countries stamps for Greece were printed in three colors, pale blue and black for the Greek flag vignette, with the outer frame in blue violet. Shown in Figure 1 is a proof for this design as approved by Postmaster General Frank C. Walker on August 28, 1943. These stamps were printed in sheets of 200 stamps by the American Banknote Company using a rotary press and a “shared” layout with two different stamp types per sheet. Since the sheets were cut into panes of 50 stamps before being issued, this situation is only observed in plate proofs of the full sheets. In this case, the top two panes of 50 stamps were for Greece, the bottom two for Yugoslavia.<sup>1</sup>

Franklin D. Roosevelt was an enthusiastic stamp collector who not only took a strong interest in all of the stamps issued during his Administration, but often played an active role in their design, as in the case of the Overrun Countries stamps. He then purchased sheets of each new stamp when it was released, as shown in the publicity photograph in



**Figure 1. Proof for the Overrun Countries stamp for Greece approved by Postmaster General Frank C. Walker** (Image courtesy United States Postal Service, Postmaster General's Collection. Courtesy Smithsonian Institution, National Postal Museum).

Figure 2. In the photo, FDR points to the first sheet of the Greece Overrun Countries stamp held by the Greek Ambassador Simon P. Diamantopoulus at the right.<sup>2</sup> The Third Assistant Postmaster General Roy M. North and Postmaster General (PMG) Frank C. Walker are shown behind FDR (left to right). FDR later signed the same sheet shown in this photograph, while also getting the signature of the Greek Ambassador. This is revealed in the description of lot 256 of the February 1946 H. R. Harmer sale where this Greece Overrun Countries stamp sheet from FDR's stamp collection was sold.<sup>3</sup>

A favor first day cover (FDC) for the Greece Overrun Countries stamp with letter signed by Postmaster General Frank A. Walker is shown in Figure 3. This was sent to Ruth Carter, the teenaged daughter of Amon Carter, a famous Texan and publisher of the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, a major newspaper that had the largest circulation of any newspaper in the South.



**Figure 2. FDR purchased the first sheet of the Greece Overrun Countries stamp.**



THE POSTMASTER GENERAL  
WASHINGTON

October 12, 1943.

My dear Ruth:

It gives me great pleasure to send you this letter in a first-day cover to which will be affixed the postage stamp being issued today in honor of Greece.

This is the eighth stamp included in the special series portraying flags of the European nations that have been overrun and occupied by the Axis powers.

Sincerely yours,

*Frank C. Walker*

Miss Ruth Carter,  
P. O. Box 1036,  
Fort Worth, Texas.

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL  
WASHINGTON  
OFFICIAL BUSINESS

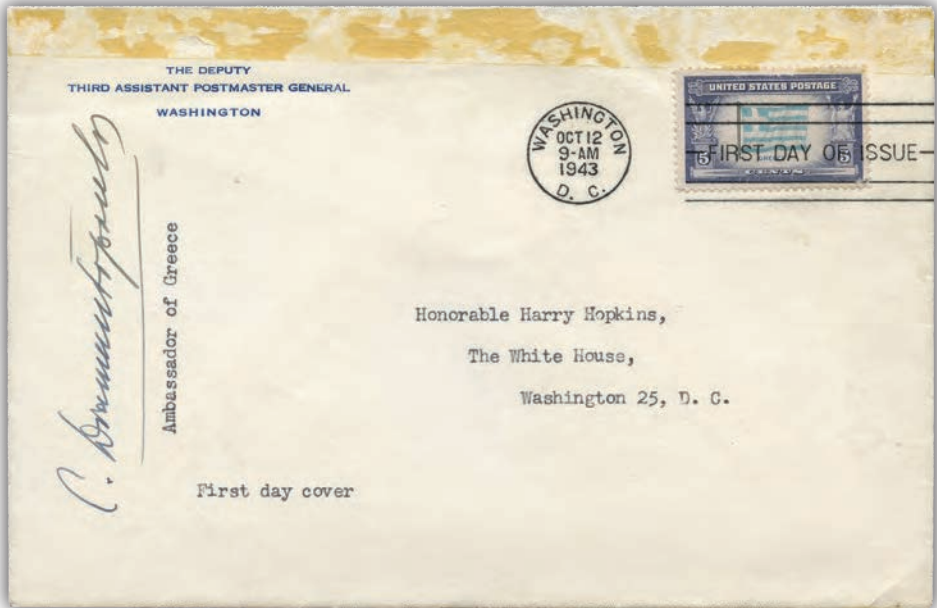


Miss Ruth Carter,  
P. O. Box 1036,  
Fort Worth, Texas.

Figure 3. Postmaster General favor first day cover for the Greece Overrun Countries stamp with letter signed by PMG Frank C. Walker.



Deputy Third Assistant PMG Roy M. North also sent out favor FDCs for the Over-run Countries on official government stationery. As with his favor FDCs for Poland<sup>4</sup> and Czechoslovakia,<sup>5</sup> North specially arranged for ambassadors-in-exile to autograph these covers whenever possible. For example, North got the Greek Ambassador, Simon P. Diamantopoulos, to sign favor FDCs for Greece. An example of one of these covers sent to Harry Hopkins while he lived at the White House is shown in Figure 4. This is without enclosed letter and there is damage to the top of the cover due to its being mounted using adhesive tape. In fact, this same type of damage occurs on all of the other Harry Hopkins covers that I've seen, suggesting that they were all taped into a scrapbook.



**Figure 4.** Deputy Third Assistant PMG favor FDC for Greece stamp signed by the Ambassador sent to Harry Hopkins while he lived at the White House.

Harry Hopkins was one of FDR's closest aides and confidants through much of his presidency, and they are shown together in Figure 5. In the early years, Hopkins was one of the most important figures of the New Deal, supervising all of FDR's major public relief programs including the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, the Civil Works Administration (CWA), and the Works Progress Administration (WPA). During World War II, Hopkins became a key policy maker for the Lend-Lease program that provided massive amounts of military aid to the Allies, and was FDR's primary diplomatic liason with both Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin.



**Figure 5.** President Franklin D. Roosevelt with Harry Hopkins in September 1938.

THE DEPUTY THIRD ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL  
WASHINGTON

October 12, 1943.

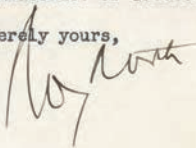
Dear Mr. Carter:

The envelope carrying this letter bears the commemorative postage stamp issued in honor of Greece. This is the eighth in our series of stamps paying tribute to the overrun and occupied countries of Europe.

This stamp was first placed on sale today at Washington, D. C., and the Postmaster General sold the first sheet of these stamps to the President in the presence of the Ambassador of Greece.

I am glad to send this first day cover to you with the autograph of the Ambassador of Greece.

Sincerely yours,



Hon. Amon Carter,  
Fort Worth Star-Telegram,  
Fort Worth, Texas.

THE DEPUTY  
THIRD ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL  
WASHINGTON

*C. Diamantopoulou*  
Ambassador of Greece



Hon. Amon Carter,  
Fort Worth Star-Telegram,  
Fort Worth, Texas.

First day cover

Figure 6. Deputy Third Assistant PMG favor FDC for Greece stamp signed by the Ambassador with enclosed letter sent to Amon Carter.

The story about how Harry Hopkins came to live at the White House beginning on May 10, 1940 is an interesting one. Hopkins suffered from a chronic digestive disease and after a long meeting following Germany's blitzkrieg invasion of the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg earlier that day, the President urged an exhausted Hopkins to spend the night at the White House. FDR really liked having his closest advisor nearby and this overnight stay in the Lincoln suite became greatly extended. Ultimately, the widowed Hopkins continued living in the White House until December 21, 1943. This White House living arrangement included his young daughter Diana, for whom Eleanor Roosevelt assumed a guardianship role. This was a situation that often prevailed at the White House during the FDR era, where the Executive Mansion was treated like a small, intimate hotel with the residential floors being occupied by "a series of houseguests, some of whom stayed for years."<sup>6</sup> In fact, a number of FDR's closest aides simply lived at the White House including Louis Howe (1933-1936) and Missy LeHand (1933-1942), as well as Harry Hopkins (1940-1943).

Other favor FDCs for the Greece Overrun Countries stamp were sent out by the Deputy Third Assistant PMG Roy North. An example with a signed letter sent to Amon Carter is shown in Figure 6. He (along with his daughter and son) were on the favor FDC list since Carter was an valued supporter of FDR's New Deal and the publisher of the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, a major newspaper with a distribution area of some 350,000 square miles. This influential newspaper had the largest circulation in the southern United States.

Amon Carter was known as a strong civic booster for Fort Worth, especially when it was at the expense of Dallas. For example, Amon Carter personally convinced both Phillips Petroleum and American Airlines to move their corporate headquarters from Dallas to Fort Worth. Carter was also a strong and effective advocate for obtaining New Deal projects and during the war years, for having defense plants built in the Fort Worth area. In fact, John Nance Garner, Roosevelt's vice president and himself a Fort Worth native once said, "That man wants the whole government of the United States to be run for the exclusive benefit of Fort Worth."

Franklin D. Roosevelt's reputation as a stamp collector caused some of his many admirers to send him first day covers such as the one shown in Figure 7. This example, together with a closeup of the Harmer auction backstamp (inset) showing that it came from his stamp collection, has a engraved Farnam cachet showing a version of the coat of arms of the Kingdom of Greece. This has a crowned shield displaying a white cross that is flanked by a pair of figures representing the Greek mythological hero Herakles (Hercules) holding wooden clubs. Examination of the Harmer auction backstamp indicates that this was sold on February 5, 1946 in one of the lots of first day covers addressed the President.<sup>3</sup>

Besides sending out favor FDCs, Postmaster General Walker also received some first day covers, as shown by the example in Figure 8. Based on the printed corner card, this was sent to Walker by a registered nurse at Duval County Hospital in Jacksonville, Florida.

The German occupation of Greece may have had important consequences for how the fighting in World War II evolved. The story begins with Benito Mussolini's ill-fated decision to invade Greece from Italian-occupied Albania on October 28, 1940 without first informing his Axis partner Adolf Hitler. Mussolini was no doubt jealous of Hitler's

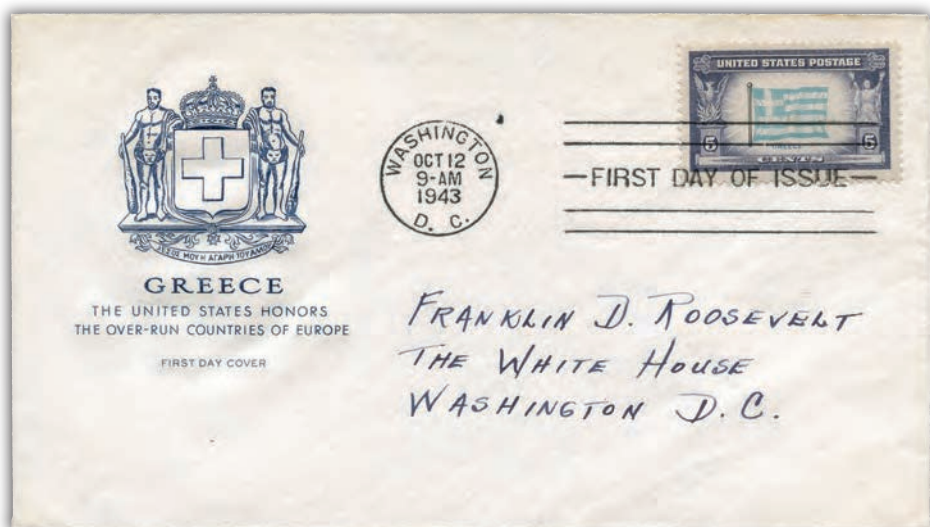


Figure 7. First day cover with engraved Farnam cachet for the Greece Overrun Countries stamp sent to FDR.

FROM THE FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT COLLECTION  
AUCTIONED FEB., APRIL, 1946 BY H. R. HARMER INC., N.Y.

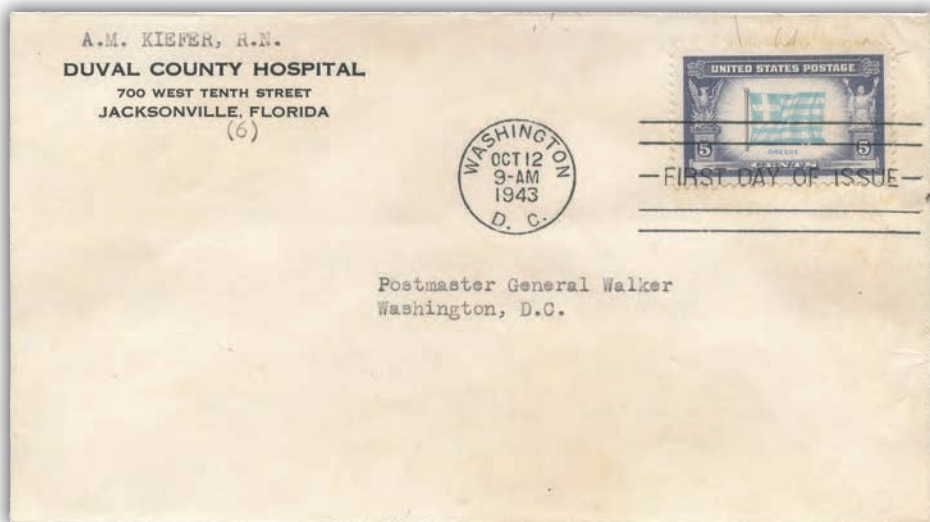


Figure 8. First day cover for the Greece Overrun Countries stamp sent to Postmaster General Walker.

rapid conquest of most of Western Europe earlier that year and wanted to demonstrate his own prowess. However, Italy's invasion of Greece quickly turned into a fiasco and it later became necessary for the German army to intervene. This diversion caused a delay of more than five weeks in the planned start date of the German invasion of Russia, from May 15 to June 22, 1941. While there is still debate over the effect of this delay on the military campaign in Russia, it may have contributed to the defeat of German forces before Moscow when there was a sudden onset of snow and winter weather in November 1941. This doomed Germany's hope for a quick and decisive victory over the Soviet Union in World War II.



Regarding the Greek campaign, British intervention in the stalemated Greco-Italian war belatedly forced Hitler to act and the Germans invaded northern Greece on April 6, 1941. With most of their army fighting the Italians at the border with Albania, the remaining Greek forces were quickly overwhelmed and Greece surrendered to the Germans three weeks later on April 20, 1941. A photograph of German troops raising the Reichskriegsfahne (swastika-emblazoned war flag) at the Parthenon in Athens, Greece is shown in Figure 9.

Greece was then divided into three zones for occupation by Italy, Germany and Bulgaria, which had joined the Axis powers on March 1, 1941. A combination of the massive expropriation of Greek food supplies and indifference by the Axis occupiers, coupled with a British blockade, resulted in the Great Famine of 1941-44. Especially severe during the winter of 1941-42, an estimated 300,000 people died before relief supplies could be provided by the International Red Cross. By mid-1942, significant armed resistance to the occupation had also developed, especially



**Figure 9.** German troops raising a swastika emblazoned war flag at the Parthenon in Athens, Greece (image courtesy Deutsches Bundesarchiv).

## Amon Carter

### A Texas-Sized Personality



**Amon Carter** wearing his trademark narrow-brimmed “Shady Oak” Stetson.

Amon Carter was one of the most colorful characters of the FDR era. Carter was known as a civic booster for Fort Worth, whose disdain for Dallas was legendary in Texas. He famously said that, “Fort Worth is where the West begins ... and Dallas is where the East peters out.” It’s also said that he so hated to spend money in Dallas that when visiting that city he would top up his car’s gas tank before leaving Fort Worth and pack a sack lunch to avoid having to eat at a Dallas restaurant. However, his frugality in this regard was apparently undermined by his wife, who is said to have maintained a secret charge account at Neiman Marcus.

Once, when local authorities made an effort to end the ongoing feud between Fort Worth and Dallas, a ceremony was held at the county line to officially bury the hatchet on the rivalry. Leaders from both cities were presented with hatchets, and shovels with which to bury them. After the ceremony, a reporter mentioned to Carter that the handle of his hatchet was still sticking out of the ground, to which Carter replied he “might need his hatchet later.”

against the Italians. This allowed the creation of “liberated” areas in the mountainous interior. Finally, with the advance of the Red Army into Eastern Europe and the desertion of Romania and Bulgaria from the Axis alliance, the Germans were forced to withdraw from mainland Greece in October 1944.

### Acknowledgement

The author would like to thank Baasil Wilder, librarian at the National Postal Museum, for providing the image used in Figure 1.

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## Postal History



# 1943-44 Overrun Countries Series: Belgium

by **Paul M. Holland**

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*This is the sixth in our series of stamps for the Overrun and Occupied Countries of Europe.*

*I had the pleasure today of accompanying Count Robert van der Straten-Ponthox, Belgium Ambassador, to the White House where the President purchased the first sheet of these stamps.*

— From a signed September 14, 1943 letter sent with a favor first day cover of the 5¢ Belgium stamp of the 1943-44 Overrun Countries Series by the Deputy Third Assistant Postmaster General, Roy M. North

The stamp for Belgium is perhaps the most colorful issue of the Overrun Countries series, using black, yellow and dark rose for the flag vignette, with the frame printed in blue violet. These stamps were printed by the American Banknote Company in sheets of 200 using a rotary press and a “shared” layout with two different stamp types per sheet, with the top two panes of 50 stamps for Belgium, the bottom two for France.<sup>1</sup> Since the sheets were cut into panes of 50 stamps before being issued, this shared layout is only observed in plate proofs of the full sheets.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt was an enthusiastic stamp collector who not only took a strong interest in all of the stamps issued during his Administration but was often actively involved in their design, as with the Overrun Countries stamps. He then purchased sheets of each new stamp went it was released. In Figure 1, FDR is shown at the White House signing one of these sheets in the presence of Deputy Third Assistant



Postmaster General Roy North and Count Robert van der Straten-Ponthox, Belgium Ambassador-in-exile.<sup>2</sup> He also got the Belgian ambassador to sign it as revealed in the description of lot 255 in the February 1946 H. R. Harmer sale where this sheet of Belgium Overrun Countries stamps from FDR's collection was sold.<sup>3</sup>



**Figure 1. FDR in White House signing sheet of the Belgium Overrun Countries stamp.**

A favor first day cover (FDC) for the Belgium Overrun Countries stamp with enclosed letter signed by Postmaster General Frank A. Walker is shown in Figure 2. This was sent to Amon Carter, Jr., son of the famed Amon Carter, publisher of the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, a major newspaper with the largest circulation of any newspaper in the South. Together with the favor covers for the Greek overrun countries stamp for Amon Carter and

his daughter Ruth shown in the July 2021 edition of *The U.S. Specialist*,<sup>4</sup> this completes a “family trifecta” of favor FDCs that were sent to Amon Carter, his daughter and son.

However, what is remarkable about this Postmaster General favor FDC for Amon Carter, Jr. is that it was sent while he was a German prisoner-of-war. After graduating from Culver Military Academy and attending the University of Texas, he had been commissioned as a second lieutenant in the US Army, then called to active duty in July 1941. Serving in the First Armored Division during the North African campaign, Amon Carter, Jr. was captured by the famed Afrika Korps under Field Marshall Erwin Rommel following a series of battles fought around the Kasserine Pass in February 1943. After being flown to Italy, he was taken to Germany, and finally ended up in Oflag LXIV, a German prisoner-of-war camp in Poland. Initially reported as missing-in-action, it was not until April that his parents learned that he was alive but in captivity. He remained a prisoner-of-war until after Germany surrendered in May 1945.<sup>5</sup> Shown in Figure 3 is an overrun countries favor FDC with signed letter for Belgium that was sent to Major General James A. Ullo by Deputy Third Assistant PMG Roy North, who arranged for the cover to be signed by the Ambassador of Belgium.

Major General James A. Ullo was the US Army's Adjutant General during World War II, who had responsibility for personnel administration over ten million soldiers. This included tens of millions of promotions and reassignments, millions of awards and all official casualty notifications such as missing-in-action, prisoner-of-war, wounded and sadly, death notifications. All notification telegrams and confirmation letters went out under General Ullo's name, and thus some of these would have concerned Amon Carter, Jr. It is said that due to Ullo's position, his name has appeared on tens of millions of official documents - possibly more than any other individual in history.

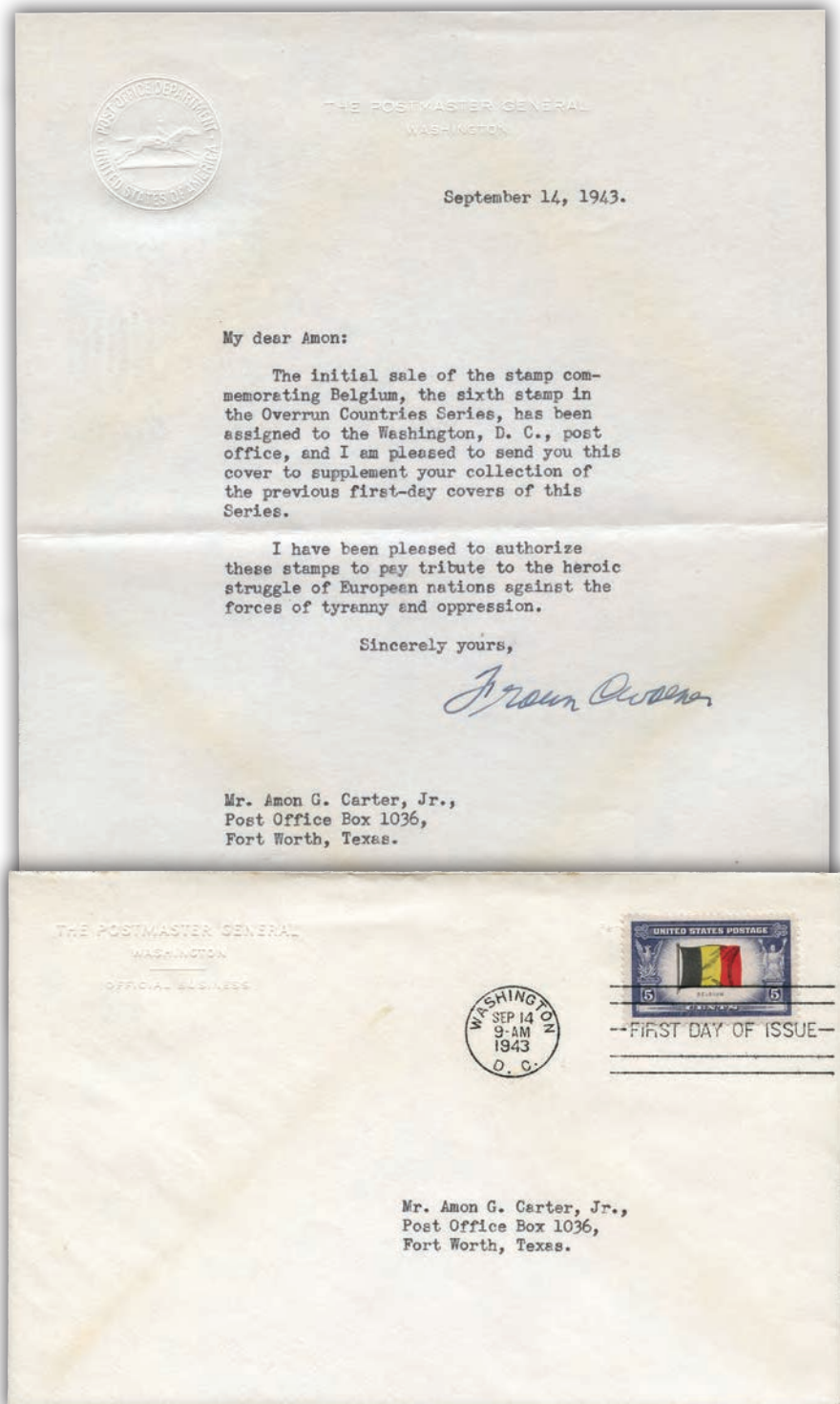


Figure 2. Postmaster General favor first day cover for the Belgium Overrun Countries stamp with letter signed by PMG Frank C. Walker to Amon Carter, Jr.

THE DEPUTY THIRD ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL  
WASHINGTON

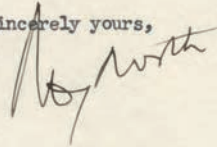
September 14, 1943.

Dear General Ulio:

The envelope carrying this letter bears the commemorative postage stamp issued for Belgium, which was first placed on sale today at Washington, D. C. This is the sixth in our series of stamps for the Overrun and Occupied Countries of Europe.

I had the pleasure today of accompanying Count Robert van der Straten-Ponthox, Belgium Ambassador, to the White House where the President purchased the first sheet of these stamps.

Sincerely yours,



Maj. Gen. James A. Ulio,  
Stoneleigh Court,  
Washington, D. C.

THE DEPUTY  
THIRD ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL  
WASHINGTON



*Robert van der Straten-Ponthox*  
Ambassador of Belgium

Maj. Gen. James A. Ulio,  
Stoneleigh Court,  
Washington, D. C.

First day cover

Figure 3. Favor FDC with signed letter for Belgium that was sent to Major General James A. Ulio.



During World War II, official Postmaster General stationery and facilities were authorized for use by the US Army Postal Service in at least a few cases. Direct evidence for this is shown in the form of an unaddressed “Back the Attack” FDC for the Belgium overrun countries stamp in Figure 4. This cover, on official embossed Postmaster General stationery, shows first day usage with an Army Postal Service slogan cancellation reading “Back the Attack – Sept. 9-26, 1943” instead of a usual “First Day of Issue” cancellation. The cover itself is signed by a Captain J. V. Staples, and there is a special Army Postal Service cachet that shows that this was employed as part of a drive for selling War Bonds.

Following the successful German invasions of Denmark and Norway in April 1940, a massive blitzkrieg attack on the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg and France was launched on May 10, 1940. Belgium was quickly overwhelmed and after 18 days of fighting, Belgian forces were pushed back into a small pocket in the northwest of the country. Their sudden surrender on May 28 was ordered by King Leopold III without consulting either his government or allied forces, leading to a political crisis and the King’s eventual abdication after the war. In the meantime, following the surrender of the Belgian army the government fled and formed a Belgian government-in-exile on the Allied side, after first fleeing to France and then to Great Britain.



**Figure 4. Unaddressed “Back the Attack” FDC from US Army Postal Service on official Postmaster General stationery for the Belgium overrun countries stamp.**

Following the end of World War II in Europe, there were severe shortages of everything from food to paper, and in some cases this led to the use of “adversity” covers similar to those employed during the later stages of the American Civil War in the South. Here, paper that had already been printed on one side was re-purposed to create envelopes with the blank side out. Since military maps were typically printed on high quality paper, these were often used.

I'm fortunate to have several such adversity map covers from post-war Belgium in my collection. Shown in Figure 5 is a hand-addressed airmail cover to Albany, New York from December 2, 1945 sent with stamps from the 1944 liberation issue (Scott #328, #355, #360, #337). An exploded view of the envelope shows it was created from a surplus 1:100,000 scale United States Army Map Service (AMS) map for Freiburg (X2), a heavily forested area at the French-German border in the Black Forest region. Note that the detailed map legend has reference to roads in both France and Germany.

This early December 1945 usage clearly demonstrates that surplus war maps became available as a source of quality paper with one blank side about six months after World War II ended on May 8, 1945. Numerous 1:100,000 scale maps of Germany had been produced for the war effort and the overall size of these maps at 36" wide by 25" high was well suited for producing envelopes. Measurements on my exploded map covers show that they approximate regular parallelograms with a distance of about 8 inches (20 cm) between opposite sides. In this size and configuration, paper for twelve envelopes can be cut from each of these large map sheets (four across and three down). In fact, it is likely that the size of these envelopes was scaled to optimize making them from these surplus war map sheets.

Another map cover is shown in Figure 6. It was posted on March 23, 1946, less than a year after the end of the war, and franked with Scott #278 paying the printed matter rate. It was mailed to the Clinton Stamp Company in New York City by a stamp dealer whose printed envelope cachet shows a return address on the avenue de Stalingrad, a major street in Brussels re-named in honor of the battle that marked a World War II turning point. It seems likely that a printed list of newly available Belgian stamps was enclosed. The exploded inside view of this cover reveals that it was made from a 1:100,000 scale map of an area in central Germany near Marburg, a university town. The map clearly shows brown contour lines with wooded areas in green, rivers in blue, roads in magenta and railroads in black. At the right edge of the map fragment shown, both the latitude and numbering of the square kilometer grids (in blue) can be seen along with a "German Glossary" with English translation. Distance scale bars in both miles and kilometers are shown at the far right. Above the glossary is a small locator map that indicates that this map (R.3) is the one for Marburg, with map codes showing how it fits with adjacent maps.

Finally, I show another adversity map cover from my collection in Figure 7. The corner card shows this was sent by the famous doll maker UNICA in Courtrai, Belgium at the printed matter rate (Scott #277) to a commercial firm in Toledo, Ohio on December 11, 1947. This usage again helps illustrate how in the difficult post-World War II economy, companies employed low-cost printed envelopes made from surplus war maps for business mailings to the United States. This AMS map cover is for Ellwangen (V-4) in south central Germany. Note the statement printed on the map "For use by War and Navy Department Agencies only" as well as the detailed map legend. The heavy double dashed magenta line across the middle of the map shows a portion of the famous Reichsautoban or German Autoban identified as being "under construction." I've actually driven this same stretch of Autoban (now the E50) from Heidelberg to Nuremberg during a family vacation to visit German Christmas markets in December 2001. Interestingly, General Eisenhower was so impressed by the German Autobans that he launched the United States Interstate Highway system once he became President.



Figure 5. Hand addressed airmail map X2 cover sent to Albany, New York on December 2, 1945.





Figure 6. March 23, 1946 Belgian map cover sent at the printed matter rate by a stamp dealer.



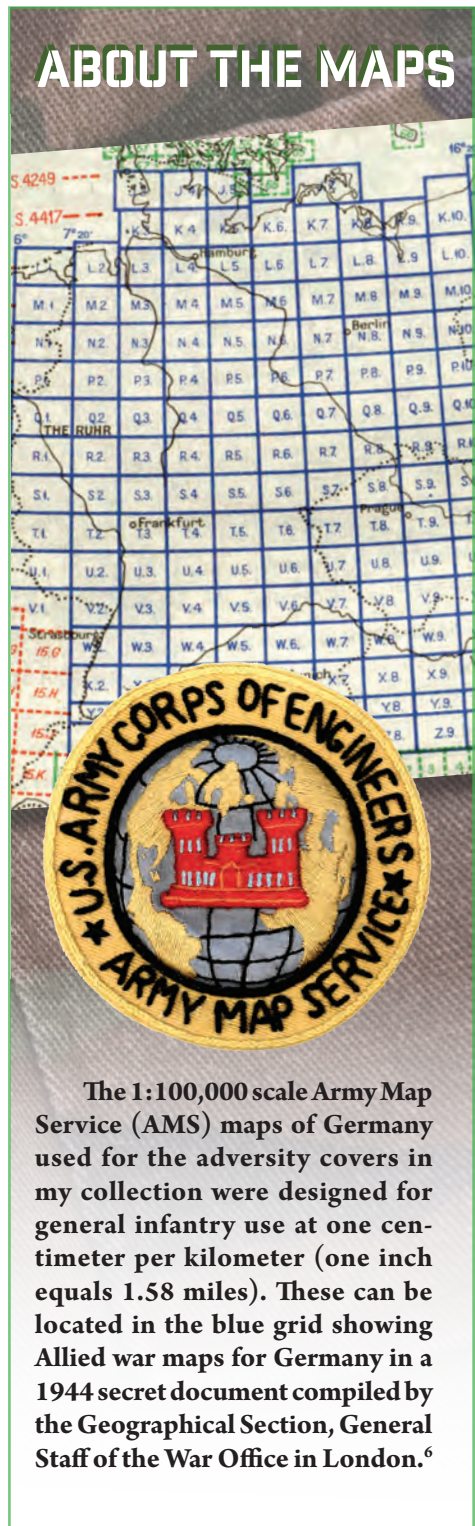
Figure 7. Printed matter rate V-4 map cover sent by doll maker UNICA in Courtrai, Belgium to a commercial firm in Toledo, Ohio on December 11, 1947.



Collecting the FDR era including official letters enclosed with favor FDCs, postal history and other contemporary items can offer some unusual and surprising historical insights. Here, the Overrun Countries stamps, whose design can be directly attributed to FDR, provide a link to the history of World War II and its immediate aftermath. For example, digging deeply into the background of Amon Carter's family reveals that a seemingly innocuous favor FDC with letter to his son Amon Carter, Jr. was sent at a time when his son was a German prisoner-of-war. This helps illustrate how World War II affected even some of the most prominent families in America. Other favor FDCs show wartime cooperation between the Post Office department, foreign ambassadors-in-exile and the US Army Postal Service. Finally, Belgian postal history items help highlight paper shortages following the end of World War II, and this is demonstrated by the use of adversity covers created from surplus United States military maps.

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6. Notes on G.S.G.S. Maps of Germany Denmark and Central Europe (Secret), Directorate of Military Survey, War Office, London, March 1944, pages 10-12 (declassified December 20, 1967).



The 1:100,000 scale Army Map Service (AMS) maps of Germany used for the adversity covers in my collection were designed for general infantry use at one centimeter per kilometer (one inch equals 1.58 miles). These can be located in the blue grid showing Allied war maps for Germany in a 1944 secret document compiled by the Geographical Section, General Staff of the War Office in London.<sup>6</sup>



## 1943-44 Overrun Countries Series: France

by **Paul M. Holland**

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✉ pholland.thorleaf@gmail.com

*The stamp which I am having affixed to this envelope depicts the flag of France, in natural colors, and is the seventh stamp of our special series issued in honor of the European nations overrun and occupied by the Axis powers.*

— From a signed September 28, 1943 letter sent with a favor first day cover of the 5¢ France stamp of the 1943-44 Overrun Countries Series to Ernest A. Kehr by Postmaster General, Frank C. Walker

Among the Overrun Countries, France represents an unusual case. In fact, in FDR's original memo to his long-time secretary Marvin "Mac" McIntyre on October 22, 1942, France is deliberately omitted with the memo stating, "Will you speak to the Postmaster General about the possibility of a series of Memorial Stamps in honor of each of the Nations which has been overrun by Germany – Norway, Holland, Belgium, Greece, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Poland and Luxembourg."<sup>1,2</sup> Unlike France, the leaders of each of these countries had fled and established governments-in-exile.

France was not originally included in this memo because at the time the United States had full diplomatic relations with the Vichy French regime. The US hoped to use American influence to encourage the Vichy government to resist active military collaboration with Germany and avoid any actions that could adversely affect Allied efforts during World War II. This was a delicate balancing act that might be upset by issuing a stamp honoring French resistance to Axis occupation. However, by September 23, 1943 when Postmaster General (PMG) Frank C. Walker announced that an Overrun Countries stamp for France would be released on September 28, 1943, the situation



had changed dramatically. In fact, a decision on this had clearly been made even earlier. The Overrun Countries stamps for France had already been printed by September 4, 1943, using the “shared” layout on full sheets of 200, where the top two panes of 50 were Belgium stamps, the bottom two for France.<sup>3</sup>

But before going into the complex backstory on Vichy France, let’s take a look at the favor first day cover (FDC) for France. The cover was sent to Ernest A. Kehr with a letter signed by Postmaster General Walker. Kehr later recalled a October 13, 1942 White House meeting with FDR where the original concept design for Overrun Countries stamps was devised. According to Kehr, the meeting was scheduled to be short but when “a secretary interrupted to announce the arrival of Admiral Leahy with ‘important news,’ the President asked that he be kept waiting while he continued to discuss an appropriate design for the stamps.”<sup>1,4</sup> The favor FDC sent to Kehr is shown in Figure 1.

Deputy Third Assistant Postmaster General Roy M. North typically arranged for the ambassadors or foreign ministers (in exile) of each overrun country to autograph favor FDCs on official stationery if possible. However, in the case of Vichy France, this was not feasible, so instead North got PMG Walker to sign these covers. While I do not have an example of one of these with signed letter in my collection, Roy North had a few “extra” covers signed for his use. Note the lightly pencilled “Mr. North” on one of these covers as shown in Figure 2.

Finally, official Third Assistant Postmaster General stationery from the Philatelic Agency was used to mail stamps to collectors, and these sometimes provide unusual first day usage. Shown in Figure 3 is such an example where the fifteen cent registration fee has been paid by a vertical strip of three Overrun Countries stamps for France taken from the left margin of a sheet. Note also that regular postage was paid using an example of the baseball commemorative stamp (Scott #855). Because a lightly applied blind double oval cancellation was used on these stamps, only the registration back stamps reveal its status as a first day cover for the France Overrun Countries stamp.

The surprisingly quick fall of France occurred following the German blitzkrieg invasion on May 10, 1940 and French Prime Minister Paul Reynaud telephoned the new British Prime Minister Winston Churchill on May 15 to say, “We have been defeated.”<sup>5</sup> By May 20, the spearhead of the Wehrmacht’s rapid advance had cut through the Ardennes and reached the English Channel, threatening to cutoff Allied forces. The French commanding general was replaced and an attempt by the Allies to breakout of the pocket failed. By May 26, the English began evacuating the British Expeditionary Force (along with many French troops) from Dunkirk. Nearly 340,000 soldiers were rescued.

In June, the German army wheeled into the rest of France with rapid advances seemingly everywhere. Paris was declared an open city on June 10 to avoid bombardment, and the Germans marched into Paris on June 14. Faced with these rapid advances throughout France, Reynaud resigned as Prime Minister on June 17. He was succeeded by Marshall Philippe Pétain, hero of Verdun in World War I. Pétain promptly delivered a radio address to the French people announcing his intention to ask for an armistice with Germany, even though the French had previously pledged to the British not make a separate peace with Germany.

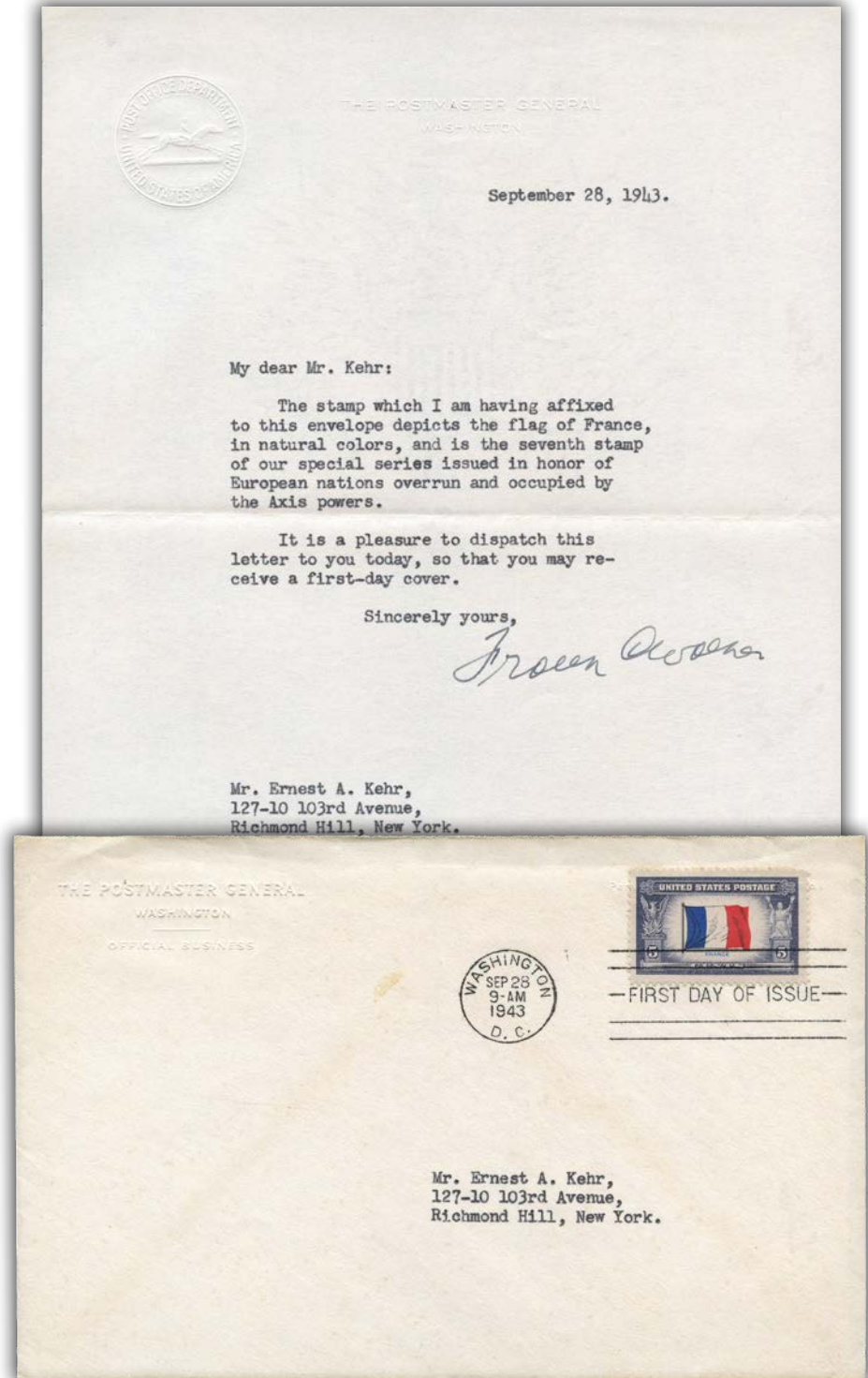


Figure 1. Postmaster General favor first day cover sent to Ernest A. Kehr for the France Overrun Countries stamp with letter signed by PMG Frank C. Walker.



Figure 2. PMG Frank Walker signed FDC for Deputy Third Assistant PMG Roy North.

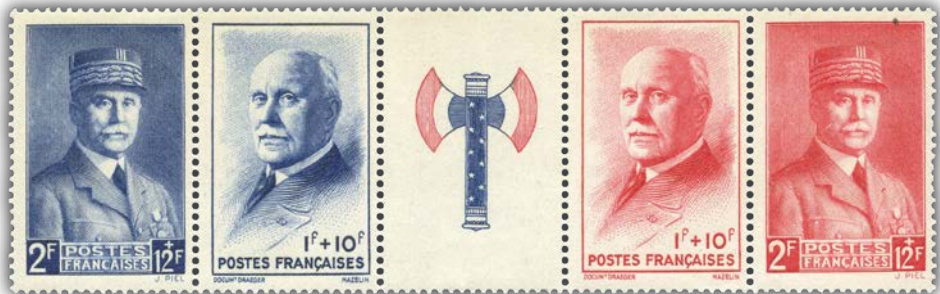


Figure 3. FDC on official Third Assistant PMG stationery from the Philatelic Agency.

The terms of the armistice signed on June 22, 1940 were severe, permitting the Germans to occupy nearly all of Western and Northern France including Paris, with nearly two million French soldiers remaining German prisoners of war until 1945. Adolf Hitler made a brief appearance at the armistice talks and, the day after the agreement was signed, visited Paris for the first and only time.

The eighty-four year old Pétain then transformed the unoccupied Southeastern region of France into an authoritarian regime. Known as Vichy France, the new government sometimes willingly collaborated with the Axis. Under Pétain the national motto of the French Republic, “Liberté, égalité, fraternité” (freedom, equality and brotherhood) was replaced with “Travail, famille, patrie” (work, family and fatherland). Interestingly, under the terms of the armistice, the large and powerful French fleet had not been required to surrender to the Germans and remained in port.

Figure 4 shows a se-tenant strip of semi-postal stamps (Scott #B149-#B152) depicting Pétain in several portraits. The strip also includes a stylized dual-headed francisca, the Frankish throwing axe that became an emblem of Pétain and Vichy France.

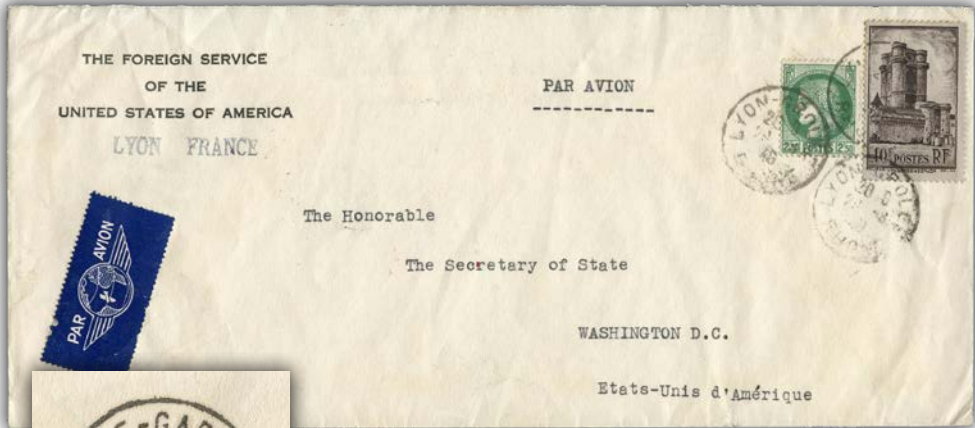


*Figure 4. Portraits of Pétain and stylised francisca in a se-tenant strip of stamps.*

World War II offers collectors a fascinating area for postal history and I’m fortunate in having the official US Foreign Service/State Department airmail cover shown in Figure 5. This was mailed on August 28, 1940 from Lyon, the largest city in the unoccupied part of France after the June 1940 armistice. Franked with Scott #338 and #346, the transit marking shows that it went via the airport in Marseille on August 31. There are no censor markings on the cover, and the H. R. Harmer auction backstamp shows that this came from FDR’s own stamp collection. This was sent to the Secretary of State in the midst of desperate times, tagged by Winston Churchill as “the Darkest Hour,” when Great Britain was left alone in the war against Hitler.

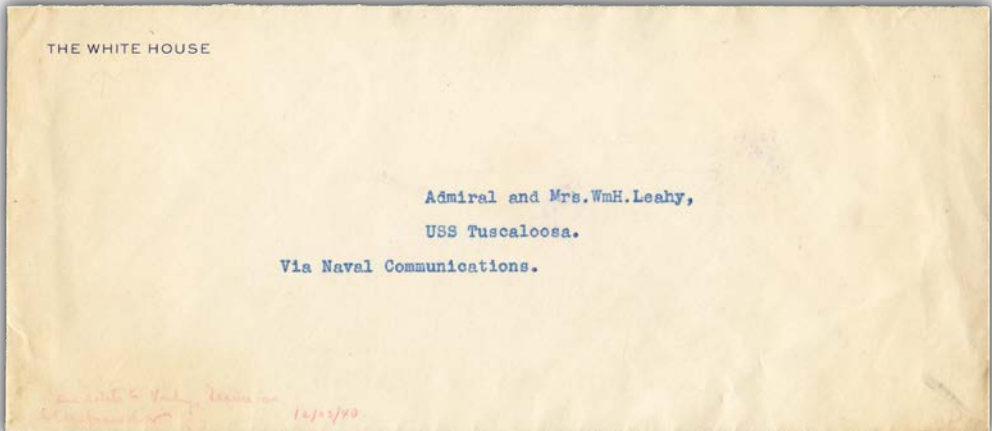
President Roosevelt and his Secretary of State Cordell Hull hoped to use American influence to encourage the Vichy government to resist becoming a member of the Axis powers. The aim was to convince the French to oppose military collaborations with Germany, such as offering air basing rights in French-mandated Syria or allowing the Germans to move war supplies through French territories in North Africa. In other words, the United States position was that France take no action (unless explicitly required by the armistice terms) that might adversely affect American interests. In return for Vichy cooperation, American food supplies would be allowed to flow to unoccupied France. To help ensure this objective, FDR turned to his old friend Admiral William D. Leahy to serve as ambassador to Vichy France.





**Figure 5. State Department airmail cover mailed on August 28, 1940 from Lyon, France.**

In my pursuit of FDR-related philatelic items, I came across an unusual White House cover sent via Naval Communications to Admiral and Mrs. WmH. Leahy, USS *Tuscaloosa*, shown in Figure 6. Although not formally postal history since it was sent by Naval Communications and has no postal markings, it can be dated by context to December 22, 1940. The cover itself shows signs of age, is open at the top, and there are no other markings, apart from a light notation in red pencil, "En route to Vichy, France as Ambassador 12/23/40." This was probably added later. The White House envelope is undoubtedly genuine. I have over a hundred other White House covers from the FDR era in my collection, and the style, size and intaglio printing of the corner card match. The blue typed address is also consistent with the FDR White House where both black and blue typewriter ribbons were used.



**Figure 6. White House cover sent via Naval Communications to Admiral and Mrs. WmH. Leahy, USS *Tuscaloosa*.**

Earlier in Decenber 1940, FDR had been cruising aboard the same USS *Tuscaloosa* on a inspection tour of the naval bases obtained in his recently negotiated deal. Roosevelt had traded 50 old American destroyers for basing rights, but was now struggling with

one of the greatest challenges of his Presidency. His quandary was how best to provide support for Great Britain while facing an American public that opposed entering the war. It was here that he hit upon the idea of the Lend-Lease program to aid the British. Regarding France, the best strategy he could devise was to provide American food aid to Vichy France while encouraging them to forestall cooperation with the German war machine. FDR was especially concerned that the powerful French fleet not fall into the hands of the Germans. Admiral Leahy already knew Marshal Pétain and key members of the French admiralty, and so he was especially well equipped to deal with this delicate and difficult assignment.



**Figure 7. In a LIFE photo, Admiral and Mrs. Leahy are shown aboard the USS Tuscaloosa on December 22, 1940.**

The White House cover likely contained a personal note from FDR, as the Leahys were long-time friends of the Roosevelts. On December 19, Admiral Leahy had met with FDR and Sumner Welles from the State Department for more official instructions. Figure 7 shows Leahy and his wife aboard the USS *Tuscaloosa* on December 22, 1940 in Norfolk, Virginia. That the addressee is “Admiral and Mrs. WmH. Leahy, USS *Tuscaloosa*” clearly establishes the date by context. The *Tuscaloosa* left early the next morning, and sailed into the European war zone bound for Lisbon. The “stars and stripes” were painted on the roofs of Turrets II and III and she flew her largest colors. Finally, the ship was escorted by the destroyers USS *Upshur* and

USS *Madison* for protection against U-boats. After arriving in Lisbon on December 30, the Leahys traveled by train to Vichy, France.

While the term “Naval Communications” usually implies message transmission by coded radio-telegram, military couriers were also used to carry messages. This cover was probably carried by pouch from Washington to the large naval base at Norfolk along with other couriered messages. With a flight distance of less than 160 miles, there would have been frequent courier service by military personnel between Washington and the Naval Communications center at Norfolk. This provided fast, regular and secure delivery of documents for the Navy. In the early 1970s, when I was in the Navy and stationed at Norfolk, one of my night watch duties was to pick up classified messages from the Naval Communications Center. I would take the messages back to our headquarters building, read them and then decide whether our commanding officer (a senior Navy Captain) needed to see them right away.

At the time of his appointment as Ambassador to France, William Leahy had served as Chief of Naval Operations from 1937 to 1939 and was Governor of Puerto Rico from 1939 to 1940. Following the United States entry into the war, he remained Ambassador to France until May 1942, shortly after the death of his wife in Vichy.

After the Allied invasion of North Africa on November 8, 1942, the Axis powers moved swiftly to take over the remaining unoccupied region in France. By November 11, German tanks had reached the Mediterranean coast. However, French naval commanders

managed, by a combination of negotiation and deceit, to delay the invaders long enough to scuttle the French fleet at Toulon on November 27. Their actions prevented the Germans from capturing the French fleet. Thus by the time Leahy left his diplomatic post in May 1942, the French armada was no longer a concern, the Allied campaign in North Africa had resulted in defeat of all Axis forces there, and Vichy France had become an occupied vassal state with an increasingly active French Resistance movement.

Later, Leahy became the highest ranking United States military officer of World War II. His appointment to the newly created rank of Fleet Admiral on December 15, 1944, made him the most senior 5-star flag officer in the US armed forces, senior to George Marshall, Ernest King, Douglas MacArthur, Chester Nimitz, Dwight Eisenhower, and Henry "Hap" Arnold (in rank order). He reported directly to FDR, serving as his top military advisor and chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

As for Marshall Philippe Pétain, at the end of World War II he was convicted of treason and sentenced to death. But due to his age and World War I service, the sentence was commuted to life in prison. He died in 1951 at the age of 95.

## References

1. Paul M. Holland, "1943-44 Overrun Countries Stamps: Poland," *The United States Specialist*, April 2021, pages 160-164.
2. Brian C. Bauer, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Stamps of the United States 1933-45*, Linn's Stamp News: Sydney, Ohio 1993, page 293.
3. Max G. Johl, *The United States Postage Stamps of the Twentieth Century, Vol. II, 1935-1947*, New York: H.L. Linquist, 1947, pages 231-233.
4. Ernest A. Kehr, *The Romance of Stamp Collecting*, Thomas Y. Crowell Company: New York, 1947, pages 262-263.
5. Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War: Their Finest Hour*, Houghton Mifflin Company: Boston, 1949, page 42.



## Precancel Stamp Society

***Interested in Learning More about Precancels?*** Request a copy of "The ABCs of Precancel Collecting" and also receive a sample copy of the PSS Forum, the Precancel Stamp Society's monthly journal. Contact: Dick Kalmbach, Promotional Secretary, PSS, 2658 Ironworks Drive, Buford, GA 30519-7070. Email: [promo@precancels.com](mailto:promo@precancels.com).



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## Postal History



# 1943-44 Overrun Countries Series: Yugoslavia

by **Paul M. Holland**

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✉ [pholland.thorleaf@gmail.com](mailto:pholland.thorleaf@gmail.com)

*The cover carrying this letter bears the commemorative postage stamp issued in honor of Yugoslavia. This stamp is the ninth in the “Overrun and Occupied Countries” series.*

*It was first placed on sale today at Washington, D. C., and the first sheet of these stamps was sold by the Postmaster General to the Ambassador of Yugoslavia.*

*I am glad to send this first day cover to you with the autograph of the Ambassador.*

— From a signed October 26, 1943 letter sent with a favor first day cover of the 5¢ Yugoslavia stamp of the 1943-44 Overrun Countries Series by the Deputy Third Assistant Postmaster General, Roy M. North.

The Overrun Countries stamp for Yugoslavia was printed in four colors: blue, dark rose and black for the flag vignette, with the outer frame being printed in blue violet. A “shared” layout was used by the American Banknote Company for printing these stamps, using a rotary press for full sheets of 200 with two different stamp types per sheet. Since the sheets were cut into panes of 50 stamps before being issued, this situation is only observed in plate proofs of the full sheets. In the present case, the bottom two panes of 50 stamps were for Yugoslavia, the top two for Greece.<sup>1</sup>

A favor first day cover (FDC) for the Yugoslavia Overrun Countries stamp with enclosed letter signed by Postmaster General Frank A. Walker is shown in Figure 1. This was sent to Amon Carter, Jr., son of Amon Carter, famous publisher of the *Fort Worth*





THE POSTMASTER GENERAL  
WASHINGTON

October 26, 1943.

My dear Amon:

Please accept, with my best wishes,  
this cover postmarked at Washington, D. C.,  
on the first day of sale of the Yugoslavia  
stamp.

This is the ninth stamp included in  
the series which we are issuing in honor  
of the overrun and occupied countries of  
Europe.

Sincerely yours,

*Frank C. Walker*

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL  
WASHINGTON  
OFFICIAL BUSINESS



Mr. Amon G. Carter, Jr.,  
P. O. Box 1036,  
Fort Worth, Texas.

Figure 1. Postmaster General favor first day cover for the Yugoslavia Overrun Countries stamp with letter signed by PMG Frank C. Walker to Amon Carter, Jr.

THE DEPUTY THIRD ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL  
WASHINGTON

October 26, 1943.

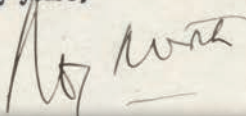
Dear Mr. Carter:

The cover carrying this letter bears the commemorative postage stamp issued in honor of Yugoslavia. This stamp is the ninth in the "Over-run and Occupied Countries" series.

It was first placed on sale today at Washington, D. C., and the first sheet of these stamps was sold by the Postmaster General to the Ambassador of Yugoslavia.

I am glad to send this first day cover to you with the autograph of the Ambassador.

Sincerely yours,



THE DEPUTY  
THIRD ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL  
WASHINGTON



*[Handwritten signature]*  
Ambassador of Yugoslavia

Honorable Amon Carter,  
Fort Worth Star-Telegram,  
Fort Worth, Texas.

First day cover

Figure 2. Deputy Third Assistant PMG favor FDC for Yugoslavia stamp, signed by the Ambassador.

*Star-Telegram*. What is remarkable about this Postmaster General favor FDC for Amon Carter, Jr. is that it was sent while he was a German prisoner-of-war. Serving as a young officer in the First Armored Division during the North African campaign, Amon Carter, Jr. was captured by the Afrika Korps (commanded by Field Marshall Erwin Rommel). His incarceration came after a series of battles fought around the Kasserine Pass in February 1943. After being flown to Italy, he was taken to Germany, and finally ended up in Oflag LXIV, a German prisoner-of-war camp in Poland. His parents learned that he had been captured in April 1943, so unlike the earlier favor FDCs sent to Amon Carter, Jr. that are in my collection, this was addressed to a post office box. Carter remained a prisoner-of-war until Germany surrendered in May 1945.<sup>2</sup>

Deputy Third Assistant PMG Roy M. North also sent out favor FDCs for the Over-run Countries on official government stationery. As with his other favor FDCs, North arranged for ambassadors (in exile) to autograph these covers whenever possible. An example of one of these covers sent to the father, Amon Carter, is shown in Figure 2. This was signed by Ambassador Constantin Fotitch of Yugoslavia.

The byzantine politics of the Balkans is reflected in the chaotic history of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, formed after World War I when the Kingdom of Serbia was merged with portions of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire. This resulted in a new state that incorporated a volatile ethnic mixture of Serbs, Croats, Slovenes and other nationalities. A glimpse of this chaotic history is provided by two covers that came from Franklin D. Roosevelt's stamp collection.

The first, shown in Figure 3, is franked with stamps depicting King Alexander I who was assassinated on October 9, 1934 in Marseille. This occurred at the beginning of a state visit to France to sign an Franco-Yugoslav agreement aimed at thwarting Mussolini's ambitions to breakup Yugoslavia and seize portions of its territory, especially along the Dalmatian coast. The cover was sent to the US Secretary of State from Belgrade on December 24, 1934 and is franked by a horizontal pair plus single (Scott 106 and 109) of the black-bordered mourning stamps issued after the assassination.

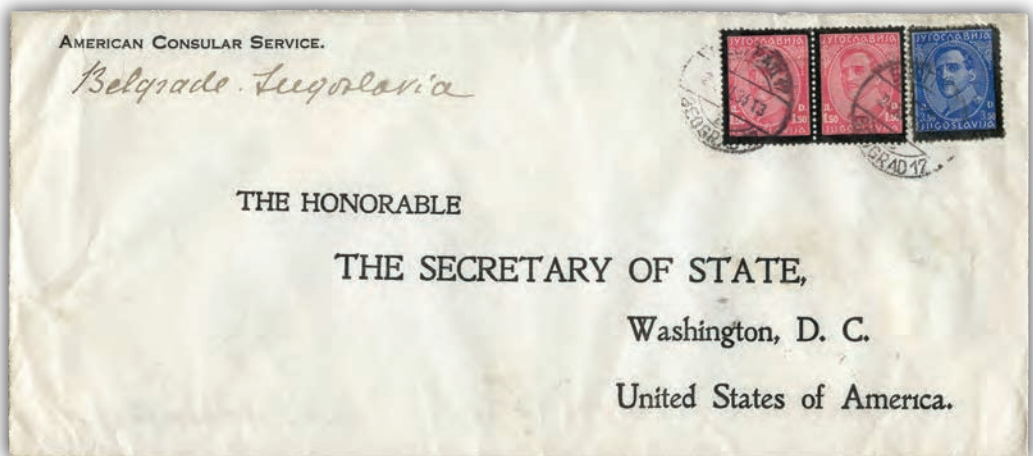


Figure 3. Secretary of State cover with mourning stamps sent from sent from Belgrade on December 24, 1934.

Following the King's assassination, his 11-year-old son assumed the throne as Peter II, but due to his age, his older cousin Prince Paul ruled as regent. A portrait of the 11-year-old King Peter II is shown on the stamps used to frank the registered cover sent to FDR shown in Figure 4. This was posted from Vinkovci on January 8, 1939, less than nine months before World War II began. Vinkovci is a small city in eastern Croatia, which later became part of a Nazi puppet state called the Independent State of Croatia. Interestingly, the cover is addressed to FDR entirely in German, with backstamps showing it arrived in Washington, DC on the January 18. The stamps include a block of four and a single of Scott 119 and horizontal pair of Scott 120.



Figure 4. Registered cover sent to FDR from Vinkovci, Yugoslavia on January 8, 1939.

On March 25, 1941, the Regent Prince Paul succumbed to fascist pressure and signed the Tripartite Pact, thereby joining the Axis. This led to the regent being toppled two days later in a pro-British coup d'état when King Peter II, although only 17 years-old, was proclaimed to be of age. Hitler viewed this development as a serious threat to his Southern flank in the Balkans and on April 6, 1941, the Germans, Italians and Hungarians invaded Yugoslavia. This action resulted in the postponement of Operation Barbarossa, Hitler's planned invasion of the Soviet Union, until June 22, 1941.

The Blitzkrieg offensive against Yugoslavia began with the bombing of the capital, Belgrade, and ended eleven days later when Yugoslavia surrendered and signed an armistice. The Kingdom of Yugoslavia was then dismembered, with parts annexed to Germany, Hungary, Bulgaria and Italy. For example, the Kosovo region was annexed to Albania which itself was already an Italian Protectorate. The remaining portions became the Independent State of Croatia (a Nazi puppet state) that openly collaborated with



Germany, Montenegro (occupied by the Italians), and a rump Serbian state that was brutally occupied by German troops. Three wartime stamps illustrating these relationships are shown in Figure 5. On the left is a 1943 semi-postal stamp (Scott B35) from Croatia honoring the Croatian Legion that was wiped out fighting for the Germans at Stalingrad. Next is a 1941 overprinted occupation stamp from Montenegro that depicts King Victor Emmanuel III of Italy (Scott 2N20). The one at the right is a disturbing 1941 semi-postal occupation stamp from Serbia (Scott 2NB16) issued to raise money for anti-semitic propaganda, turning the whole notion of a “charity” stamp on its head.



Figure 5. Wartime stamps from Croatia (Scott B35), Montenegro (Scott 2N20) and Serbia (Scott 2NB16).

Under Axis occupation, a strong resistance movement developed in Yugoslavia with two main factions. The Chetniks were conservative Serbian royalists that fought in the name of King Peter II. He had fled to London and formed a government-in-exile initially backed by the Western Allies. The Partisans were a more widely-based, communist-led movement under Tito backed by the Soviet Union. Later, the two groups turned against each other, especially when it was found that the Chetniks had been cooperating with the Germans and Italians against the Partisans. By October 26, 1943, when the Overrun Countries stamp for Yugoslavia was issued, Italy had capitulated and joined the Allies. In response, the Germans swiftly occupied Montenegro and siezed Albania, which then became a German puppet. The borders of the Nazi puppet state of Croatia were also greatly expanded to include other areas previously occupied by Italy.

In June 1944, an agreement between the Partisans and government-in-exile was belatedly signed, and the chaotic and complicated politics of the Balkans continued. Bulgaria changed sides and declared war on Germany September 10, 1944. Romania abandoned the Axis and declared war on Germany on September 23, 1944. By then, the Partisans controlled much of Yugoslav countryside and the Red Army liberated Belgrade a month later. The German army continued its retreat, holding onto Sarajevo until April 15, 1945, by which time the war was virtually over. The total World War II death toll in Yugoslavia is estimated at one million, including civilians, resistance fighters and reprisals against collaborators. King Peter II was not allowed to return to Yugoslavia after the war, and the monarchy was abolished on November 29, 1945, when a republic was declared.

## References

1. Max G. Johl, *The United States Postage Stamps of the Twentieth Century, Vol. II, 1935-1947*, New York: H.L. Linquist, 1947, pages 222-3 and 235.
2. Paul M. Holland, “1943-44 Overrun Countries Stamps: Belgium,” *The United States Specialist*, August 2021, pages 366-375.



## Letters to the Editor



## Regarding "1943-44 Overrun Countries Series: Yugoslavia"

As a career specialist in Balkan history and politics [Senior Political Analyst for the Balkans, Radio Free Europe, Munich 1977-1994 and Prague 1994-2008], please accept my congratulations on a wonderful job of distilling an incredibly complex period in a concise and accurate fashion. This is no mean feat! And the philatelic items chosen as illustrations are a very good selection.

**...the cover is addressed to FDR entirely in German, with backstamps showing it arrived in Washington, DC on January 18...**

Perhaps I can shed some light on why the letter to FDR was written in German. In Croatia, as throughout the former Austria-Hungary, German was the accepted language of communication between the subject peoples of the Habsburgs and between them and Western foreigners in general. It was thus natural for a Croat in addressing a Western leader to use German and to assume that the recipient also knew the lingua franca of Central Europe. If the letter had been written in Serbia, the writer would have probably used French, the preferred Western language in much of the non-Habsburg Balkans. English was not widely spoken in former Yugoslavia until probably the last 30 years or so.

In 1973-74, I was an exchange student studying Balkan history at the University of Sarajevo in Bosnia, which had been under Habsburg rule from 1878-1918, on a Fulbright travel grant and Yugoslav government scholarship. People I encountered in my travels in Bosnia and Croatia automatically assumed from my Levis and Michigan sweatshirt that I was a Western foreigner and consequently addressed me in German. Scholarly articles and books almost always included a summary in German. The situation was similar in Czechoslovakia and Hungary. But by the late 1990s, when I returned to the region, English had taken over from German, especially among young people, because of the impact of music, television, and movies from the US and Britain. So nowadays, nobody in Croatia would think of writing to Joe Biden in German.

**Patrick Moore** | USSS# 16392  
Bonn, Germany



## Postal History



# 1943-44 Overrun Countries Series: Albania

by **Paul M. Holland**

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*The stamp on this letter, honoring Albania, is the tenth commemorative postage stamp in our Overrun Countries series.*

*It was first placed on sale today at Washington, D. C., and I had the pleasure of selling the first sheet of these stamps to the the Postmaster General, Honorable Frank C. Walker.*

*I am glad to send to you this first day cover bearing the autograph of the Postmaster General.*

— From a signed November 9, 1943 letter sent with a Favor First Day Cover of the 5¢ Albania stamp of the 1943-44 Overrun Countries Series by the Deputy Third Assistant Postmaster General, Roy M. North.

The Overrun Countries stamps for Albania were printed in three colors, dark red and black for the Albanian flag vignette, with the outer frame in blue violet. These stamps were printed in sheets of 200 stamps by the American Banknote Company using a rotary press and a “shared” layout with two different stamp types per sheet, with stamps for Albania at the top and Austria at the bottom. Since the sheets were cut into panes of 50 stamps before being issued, this situation is only observed in plate proofs of the full sheets.<sup>1</sup> As noted in the letter above, the first sheet of these stamps was sold to the Postmaster General.

A favor first day cover (FDC) for the Albania Overrun Countries stamp with a letter signed by Postmaster General Frank A. Walker is shown in Figure 1. This FDC was sent to Ruth Carter, the teenage daughter of Amon Carter, a famous Texan, and publisher of



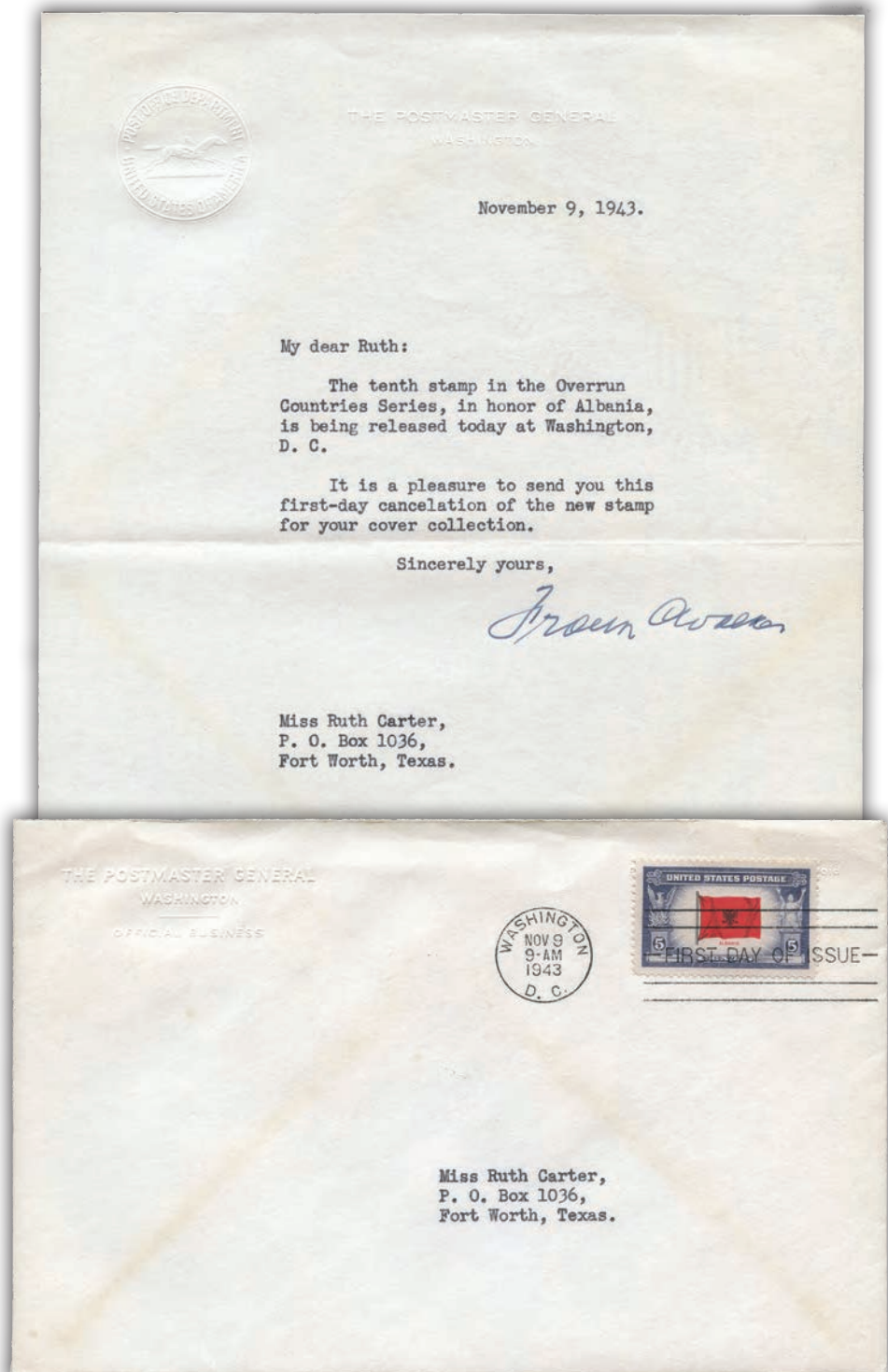


Figure 1. Postmaster General favor first day cover for the Albania Overrun Countries stamp with letter signed by PMG Frank C. Walker.

the Fort Worth Star-Telegram. This major newspaper had the largest circulation of any newspaper in the South. Such favor covers were routinely sent to various Carter family members, and I'm fortunate in having a number of these in my collection. These include favor covers for the Yugoslavia overrun countries stamp sent to Amon Carter and his son that were shown previously,<sup>2</sup> thus completing another trio of favor FDCs sent to Amon Carter, his son, and daughter. Note that in this signed letter, PMG Frank Walker states, "It is a pleasure to send you this first-day cancelation of the new stamp for your cover collection."

Deputy Third Assistant PMG Roy M. North also sent out favor FDCs for the Over-run Countries on official government stationery. Whenever possible, North specially arranged for Ambassadors (in exile) to autograph these covers. However, as in the case of France, this was not feasible for Albania, so instead, North got PMG Walker to sign the Albania covers. An example of one of these sent to Marvin McIntyre at the White House is shown in Figure 2.

Marvin McIntyre was a long-time member of FDR's inner-circle and was one of his closest aides. For example, McIntyre was on duty at the White House the afternoon of December 7, 1941, while FDR was receiving news concerning the Pearl Harbor attack. He then attended the emergency meeting that FDR called with his top White House aides and key cabinet officials such as the Secretaries of War and the Navy. McIntyre is also shown (Figure 3) on the December 17, 1934, cover of Time Magazine as a key

member of FDR's "White House Secretariat." Here, Louis Howe and Steve Early are shown at the top; Marguerite "Missy" LeHand is shown on the lower left, and Marvin McIntyre is at the lower right. Louis Howe was FDR's closest political advisor, living in the White House and serving in a role equivalent to White House Chief of Staff until his death in 1936. Steve Early was FDR's Press Secretary. Missy LeHand also lived in the White House and was FDR's Personal Secretary. Marvin McIntyre's involvement with FDR dates from his 1920 campaign for Vice President, and in the White House McIntyre managed FDR's appointments calendar and correspondence. I'm fortunate in having numerous examples of signed correspondence on official White House stationery from each of these members of FDR's White House Secretariat in my collection.



**Figure 3.** *Time Magazine* cover of December 17, 1934 showing FDR's "White House Secretariat" (Marvin McIntyre at lower right).

THE DEPUTY THIRD ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL  
WASHINGTON

November 9, 1943.

Dear Mr. McIntyre:

The stamp on this letter, honoring Albania, is the tenth commemorative postage stamp in our Overrun Countries Series.

It was first placed on sale today at Washington, D. C., and I had the pleasure of selling the first sheet of these stamps to the Postmaster General, Honorable Frank C. Walker.

I am glad to send to you this first day cover bearing the autograph of the Postmaster General.

Sincerely yours,

*Frank C. Walker*

Hon. Marvin McIntyre,  
Secretary to the President,  
The White House,  
Washington 25, D. C.

THE DEPUTY  
THIRD ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL  
WASHINGTON



Honorable Marvin McIntyre,  
Secretary to the President,  
The White House,  
Washington 25, D. C.

*Frank C. Walker*  
Postmaster General

First day cover

Figure 2. Deputy Third Assistant PMG favor FDC for Albania stamp signed by PMG Frank C. Walker that was sent to Marvin McIntyre at the White House.





Figure 4. FDC on official Third Assistant PMG stationery from the Philatelic Agency (inset shows the back stamp).

Other official usage includes covers on Third Assistant Postmaster General stationery from the Philatelic Agency used to mail stamps to collectors. These sometimes provide unusual first day usage. Shown in Figure 4 is such an example where the fifteen-cent registration fee has been paid by three of the Albania Overrun Countries stamps. Note that regular postage was paid using a 1940 commemorative stamp for the Coronado Expedition (Scott 898). Also, a penciled docket to the right of the address indicates that there was “no response” and that a note was left for the recipient on 11/10/43. Because a lightly applied blind double oval cancellation was used on these stamps, only the registration back stamps reveal its status as a first day cover for the Albania Overrun Countries stamps.

The modern Albanian nation emerged during the gradual dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, beginning in 1912. Albania was initially defined as an autonomous region and, together with the Northern portion of Epirus, was incorporated into a newly created country of Albania at the end of World War I. I’m fortunate in having three of Franklin D. Roosevelt’s original stamp album pages (annotated in his own hand) from Albania and Epirus that include a selection of stamps from 1922 and 1914, respectively.





*Figure 5. King Zog I in a military uniform.*

Ahmet Zogu became a key player in Albanian politics, and he was later elected president in 1925 and given dictatorial powers. In 1928, Zogu struck an alliance with Benito Mussolini's Italy and proclaimed Albania a monarchy. He became King Zog I and is shown rather rakishly dressed in a military uniform in Figure 5.

However, this arrangement did not work out well for the self-proclaimed King Zog as Italy's influence increased markedly until Albania had become almost wholly dependent on Italy by the end of the 1930s. Hitler's successful 1938 annexation of Austria and the Sudetenland in Czechoslovakia was followed by his seizure of the rest of Czechoslovakia on March 16, 1939. These actions aroused the envy of Mussolini, who increasingly saw Italy becoming a second-rate member of the Axis, even though he had always viewed himself as the senior partner. In response, Mussolini proceeded with his own plan to annex Albania, issuing an ultimatum on March

25, 1939, and invading on April 7. There was little effective resistance, and by 1:30 pm on the first day, all Albanian ports were in Italian hands. King Zog and his family fled to Greece, taking with them gold from the Central Bank. On hearing this news, an angry mob sacked the King's residence. Zog was never allowed to return to Albania, spending the rest of his life roaming the world in exile.

On April 12, 1939, the Albanian parliament deposed Zog and offered the Albanian crown to King Victor Emmanuel III of Italy. The Italians then set up a fascist government and withdrew Albania from the League of Nations. Albania later became the base for the ill-fated Italian invasion of Greece in October 1940. However, Germany's Blitzkrieg invasion of Yugoslavia and Greece in April 1941 resulted in the dismembering of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Kosovo and parts of Montenegro were then annexed to Albania. When Italy left the Axis in September 1943 and joined the Allies, German troops immediately occupied Albania. Later the Germans withdrew from the southern Balkans in response to military defeats by the Red Army, and Albanian Communist and Partisan forces led by Enver Hoxha took over. Hoxha's strict Stalinist-style rule lasted until his death in 1985, and Albania became the most isolated country in Europe.

## References

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2. Paul M. Holland, "1943-44 Overrun Countries Stamps: Yugoslavia," *The United States Specialist*, March 2022, pages 106-111.



### Overrun Countries Series



## 1943-44 Overrun Countries Series: Norway

by **Paul M. Holland**

USSS #16849 | Santa Barbara, CA 93111

✉ [pholland.thorleaf@gmail.com](mailto:pholland.thorleaf@gmail.com)

*The envelope carrying this letter bears the commemorative postage stamp issued for Norway, which was first placed on sale today at Washington, D. C. This is the third in our series of stamps for the Overrun and Occupied Countries of Europe.*

*It is a pleasure for me to send you this cover which also bears the autograph of the Ambassador of Norway.*

— From a signed July 27, 1943 letter sent with a Favor First Day Cover of the 5¢ Norway stamp of the 1943-44 Overrun Countries Series sent to Marvin McIntyre at the White House by Deputy Third Assistant Postmaster General Roy M. North

According to Ernest A. Kehr (a well-known stamp columnist), the idea of issuing a series of stamps honoring each of the European countries overrun and occupied by Germany during the Second World War originated during his October 13, 1942 discussion on stamps with President Franklin D. Roosevelt in the White House. The meeting began with them discussing a group of volunteer artists hoping to improve the designs for U. S. postage stamps. Led by Paul F. Berdanier, Jr., art director of the J. Walter Thompson advertising agency, some of the ideas suggested by these artists had included issuing “war stamps” such as the sets from Canada or South Africa that depicted cannons, tanks, navy ships, soldiers, sailors and airmen. However, FDR instead “advanced the idea of using flags of each of the overrun nations of Europe, printed in their correct colors and set in a frame that included the picture of a phoenix to symbolize regeneration.”<sup>1</sup> The meeting was followed up by a typed White House memo from FDR to his long-time

secretary Marvin “Mac” McIntyre on October 22, 1942, that states, “Will you speak to the Postmaster General about the possibility of a series of Memorial Stamps in honor of each of the Nations which has been overrun by Germany -- Norway, Holland, Belgium, Greece, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Poland and Luxembourg.”<sup>2</sup>

Files at the American Philatelic Research Library (APRL) provide information on some early design work on Overrun Countries Stamps that was done by artists of the Society of Illustrators and submitted to the Post Office Department but rejected. Among these essays are the three for Norway, shown in Figure 1. These are all distinctively different from the final issued stamps or anything mentioned in Max Johl’s book.<sup>3</sup> They show US and Norwegian flags within a wreath, a warrior with a Norwegian flag shield defending the oppressed, and a Norwegian flag with a downtrodden figure over the slogan “They shall rise again,” respectively. The artist for the first and third of these is Gordon Aymar, and the one in the middle is Warren Chappell.



**Figure 1. Early 3¢ essays for the Norway Overrun Countries stamp by volunteer American artists**  
(images courtesy of the American Philatelic Research Library).

A more formal meeting about stamps for the overrun countries of Europe was held in New York City in early 1943 at the request of Washington officials. Meeting participants included Deputy Third Assistant Postmaster General Roy M. North representing the Post Office Department, Director Alvin W. Hall of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP), experienced stamp designers, Paul F. Berdanier, Jr. chairman of a group of volunteer American artists, and Harry L. Lindquist, a prominent philatelic publisher who helped arranged the meeting. At the meeting, it was announced that the American Banknote Company would produce these stamps since the BEP did not have the specialized equipment for printing national flags stamps in multiple colors in a single operation.<sup>3</sup>

The artistic consensus that emerged from the meeting was that stamps of a larger size with dark-colored frames would better display the flags, and arguments for a 5¢ denomination to meet the international rate prevailed. However, before FDR approved the final design for these stamps, it is clear that some early essays were also prepared at the American Banknote Company, and two of these for Norway, published in an earlier article in the *US Specialist* by James H. Patterson, are shown in Figure 2.<sup>4</sup> The first shows the Norwegian flag in outline surrounded by a frame that includes the Statue of Liberty. The second shows an ensign-style flag with oval medallions.



*Figure 2. Some 5¢ essays for Norway by the American Banknote Company.<sup>4</sup>*

Ultimately the final design with a unified engraved outer frame, using multi-color offset printing for the flags of each of the overrun countries, was selected. It should be noted that an earlier wash drawing for the outer frame produced by the design staff at the American Banknote Company had the date 1776 to the left of United States Postage and 1942 to the right. There was also a Latin inscription, “Ne pereat.” (Let it not perish!) appearing above the head of the phoenix, but this and the dates were removed before the final model was approved by FDR on March 21, 1943.<sup>3</sup> American Banknote Company essays are a complex topic.<sup>5</sup>

The die proof for the Norway Overrun Countries stamp was approved on June 25, 1943, by Postmaster General (PMG) Frank C. Walker. Four colors were used in printing the Norway stamps, blue violet for the outer engraved frame, with color offset printing of the Norwegian flag in dark rose, deep blue and black. Plate proofs show that The American Banknote Company employed a “shared” layout on full sheets of 200 during the printing of the stamps for Norway, with the bottom two panes of 50 for Norway and the top two for Czechoslovakia.



The first day ceremony on July 27, 1943, was held at the White House, with Deputy Third Assistant PMG Roy North selling the first sheet of stamps to President Franklin D. Roosevelt in the presence of the Norwegian Ambassador Wilhelm M. de Morgan Stierve. I’m fortunate in having an original Associated Press photograph of this event (Figure 3) along with the favor FDC sent to Marvin McIntyre, recipient of the FDR memo that initi-

*Figure 3. FDR purchasing the first sheet of the Norway Overrun Countries stamps from Roy North in the White House with the Norwegian Ambassador looking on.*



THE DEPUTY THIRD ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL  
WASHINGTON

July 27, 1943.

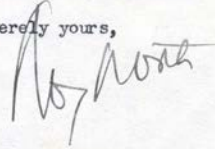
Dear Mr. McIntyre:

The envelope carrying this letter bears the commemorative postage stamp issued for Norway, which was first placed on sale today at Washington, D. C. This is the third in our series of stamps for the Overrun and Occupied Countries of Europe.

It is a pleasure for me to send you this cover which also bears the autograph of the Ambassador of Norway.

I had the added pleasure today of selling the first sheet of stamps to the President.

Sincerely yours,



Hon. Marvin McIntyre,  
Secretary to the President,  
The White House,  
Washington, D. C.

THE DEPUTY  
THIRD ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL  
WASHINGTON

*R. Impenstone*  
Ambassador of Norway



Hon. Marvin McIntyre,  
Secretary to the President,  
The White House,  
Washington, D. C.

First Day Cover

Figure 4. Deputy Third Assistant PMG favor FDC for Norway stamp signed by the Ambassador of Norway, with letter signed by Roy North sent to Marvin McIntyre at the White House.

ated the Overrun Countries stamp series shown in Figure 4. In fact, the favor FDC sent to him by Roy North was autographed by the Norwegian Ambassador, both of whom are present in the photograph.

Other favor FDCs for the Norway Overrun Countries stamp were also sent out. Shown in Figure 5 is the one sent to Vice President Henry A. Wallace by Deputy Third Assistant PMG Roy North. Again, note the autograph of the Norwegian Ambassador and that this was sent to Wallace at the United States Senate. I do not have the letter.



**Figure 5. Favor FDC sent to Vice President Henry A. Wallace by Roy North.**

However, I do have an important June 24, 1942 letter on official stationery signed by Henry Wallace as Vice-President (Figure 6), where Wallace regrettably declines an invitation to a special Forum in Los Angeles to discuss his famous "Century of the Common Man" speech of May 8, 1942. In this speech, Wallace laid out a positive vision for the war beyond the simple defeat of the Nazis. It inspired Aaron Copland's "Fanfare for the Common Man," written in 1942 for the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra under conductor Eugene Goossens. Copland's short orchestral piece was designed as a musical tribute honoring those engaged in World War II. While you may not know this piece by name, you will surely recognize the music, and a web link to a version performed by the National Symphony Orchestra at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC, has been provided.<sup>6</sup>

Regarding other favor FDCs, Postmaster General Frank C. Walker did not send out nearly as many with signed letters as his predecessor PMG James A. Farley, frequently opting to send favor FDCs on official PMG stationery with enclosed printed notices about the stamp instead. For example, I have a complete set of fourteen of these for Overrun Countries stamps sent to Mrs. W. W. Howes, wife of the former First Assistant Postmaster General William W. Howes, all with printed notices from the Post Office Department. The one for Norway is shown in Figure 7.

OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT  
WASHINGTON

June 24, 1942

Mr. Herman Lissauer  
Director, The Modern Forum, Inc.  
432 Philharmonic Building  
Los Angeles, California

Dear Mr. Lissauer:

I certainly appreciate the cordial invitation you have extended me to participate in a discussion on the subject of my speech of May 8th. However, the pressure on my time is so heavy now that I do not see any opportunity whatever of making a trip to California in the near future, or even as late as next fall.

You may be interested to know that the speech in question has been the subject of forum discussions on various occasions.

With appreciation of your interest, and with best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,



H. A. Wallace

*Figure 6. June 24, 1942, letter on official stationery signed by Henry Wallace as Vice-President (shown cropped).*

President Franklin D. Roosevelt had unusually close ties to the Norwegian royal family. In exile from Norway during the war, Crown Princess Märtha and her three children, Princess Ragnihild, 10, Princess Astrid, 8, and 3-year-old Prince Harald (now King Harald V of Norway), fled to the United States in August 1940. At FDR's invitation, they stayed either in the White House or at Hyde Park until they were able to find a suitable place to live, eventually settling at an estate called Pook's Hill in Bethesda, Maryland, where they lived for the duration of the war. Crown Princess Märtha was a favored White House guest and frequent participant in FDR's informal social gatherings at the end of each day, plus many other events, with FDR and Princess Märtha some-



*Figure 7. Favor FDC for the Norway stamp sent by PMG Walker to Mrs. W. W. Howes.*

times jokingly referring to one another as Godfather and Godchild. Meanwhile, the king of Norway, Haakon VII, and Märtha's husband, Crown Prince Olav, established a Norwegian government-in-exile in London. A fictionalized account of this story is told in *Atlantic Crossing*, a PBS mini-series.

By way of background, Norway had studiously remained neutral during World War I and again proclaimed its neutrality at the beginning of World War II. But on April 9, 1940, a surprise attack on Norway was ordered by Hitler to preempt potential Allied plans to block Swedish iron ore exports to Germany and provide naval bases for U-boat operations. Fortunately, German efforts to swiftly capture the Norwegian government were thwarted when the flagship of the German invasion fleet was sunk at the entrance to Oslo. This allowed the entire Norwegian parliament (the Storting), the royal family, and the cabinet to evacuate Oslo by train and car, first to Hamar and then on to Elverum, near the Swedish border. In Elverum, the parliament met and passed an emergency measure that gave full authority to King Haakon VII and his cabinet until the Storting could safely meet again. With this in hand, the king firmly rejected German surrender demands and escaped into Norway's remote interior with his son, Crown Prince Olav. It was also decided at the time that Crown Princess Märtha, with her children, should flee across the border from Elversum to her native Sweden. When they were initially denied entry into Sweden because they lacked passports, Crown Princess Märtha simply ordered her driver to ram through the border crossing gate.

I'm fortunate in having more than 500 worldwide covers sent to FDR from 45 different countries in my collection. Shown in Figure 8 is a July 6, 1937, hand-addressed cover from Elverum, Norway, franked with a pair of Scott 169 paying the international surface rate.



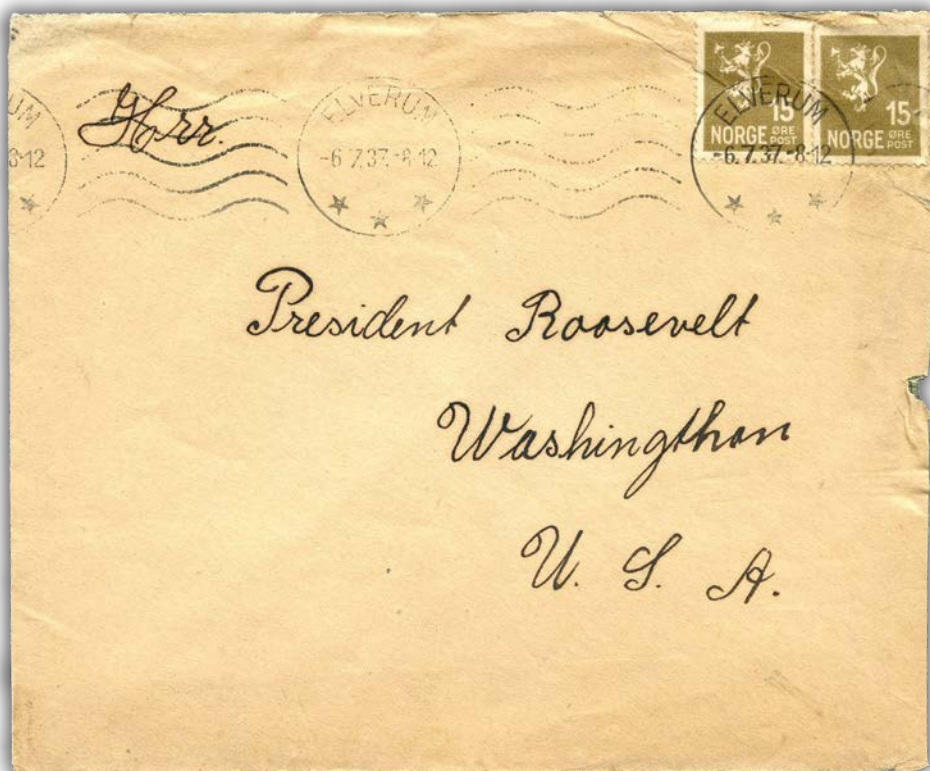


Figure 8. July 6, 1937 cover sent to FDR from Elverum, Norway.

President Roosevelt was a strong supporter of Norway's government-in-exile. As a gesture of this, on September 16, 1942, the US Navy gave a newly-built warship named *King Haakon VII* to the Norwegian Royal Navy, with Crown Princess Märtha accepting delivery at the Washington Navy Yard (see Figure 9). At this event, FDR also gave his famous "Look to Norway" speech, which included the words: "If there is anyone who still wonders why this war is being fought, let him look to Norway. If there is anyone who has any delusions that this war could have been averted, let him look to Norway; and if there is anyone who doubts the democratic will to win, again I say, let him look to Norway."

Shown in Figure 10 from my representative worldwide stamp collection are the 1943-45 stamps issued by the Norwegian government-in-exile. These were printed in London and were valid for mail carried aboard Norwegian ships until after the liberation of Norway, whereupon they became regular postage stamps. They depict the famed Norwegian destroyer *Sleipner*, a convoy sailing under the midnight sun, airplane and pilot, Vi Vill Vinne ("we will win") painted on a road by the Norwegian resistance, Norwegian ski troops and King Haakon VII.

The Norwegian government-in-exile played an active role during World War II. In early June 1940, King Haakon VII, Crown Prince Olaf and some 25,000 Norwegian soldiers were evacuated to Great Britain, along with thirteen ships and a few aircraft from the Royal Norwegian Navy. These formed the nucleus of the Free Norwegian forces, which operated closely with the Allies. Others remained behind and joined the Norwegian



Figure 9. FDR, Crown Princess Märtha and Eleanor Roosevelt on September 16, 1942.



Figure 10. 1943-45 stamps issued by the Norwegian government-in-exile.

resistance. Perhaps the most famous action of the Norwegian resistance during the war was the sabotage and destruction of Norsk Hydro's heavy water plant and a stockpile of heavy water at Vemork, which crippled the German nuclear program. However, it was Norway's large merchant fleet of over a thousand vessels that likely provided the most significant contribution to the Allied war effort.

Shown in Figure 11 is a cacheted first day cover for the Norway Overrun Countries stamp. Note how this Staehle red and blue cachet design incorporates the Vi Vill Vinne "we will win" slogan of the Norwegian resistance. See also the 20 ore stamp issued by the Norwegian government-in-exile in Figure 10.



*Figure 11. Staehle FDC for the Norway Overrun Countries stamp.*

Late usage of a block of four of the Norway Overrun Countries stamp on a registered mail cover is shown in Figure 12. Sent from San Jose, California, to nearby Burlingame on June 15, 1948, the block of four paid the 20¢ registration fee with 3¢ in postage paid by the iconic 1933 New Deal stamp, thus philatelically spanning much of the FDR era.

The Roosevelt and Norwegian Royal families remained very close during the war. For example, in Figure 13, children of the Roosevelt and the Norwegian Royal families are shown together watching FDR's fourth Inaugural Address from the steps of the White House on January 20, 1945.

No discussion of Norway during the war would be complete without Vidkun Quisling, leader of the fascist Nasjonal Samling (National Union) party. Having met with Hitler to urge German occupation before the invasion began, Quisling attempted to seize power in a radio-broadcast coup d'état effort on April 9, 1940. However, this failed because the Germans were still trying to convince the legitimate Norwegian government to peacefully accept German occupation and refused to recognize Quisling's coup attempt. Nonetheless, he was later named "minister president" in February 1942 under Reich commissioner Josef Terboven. Quisling is depicted (Figure 14) on three 1942 semipostal stamps issued under German occupation from my representative worldwide collection. These show Quisling, the date of his inauguration, and a meeting of his National Union party.



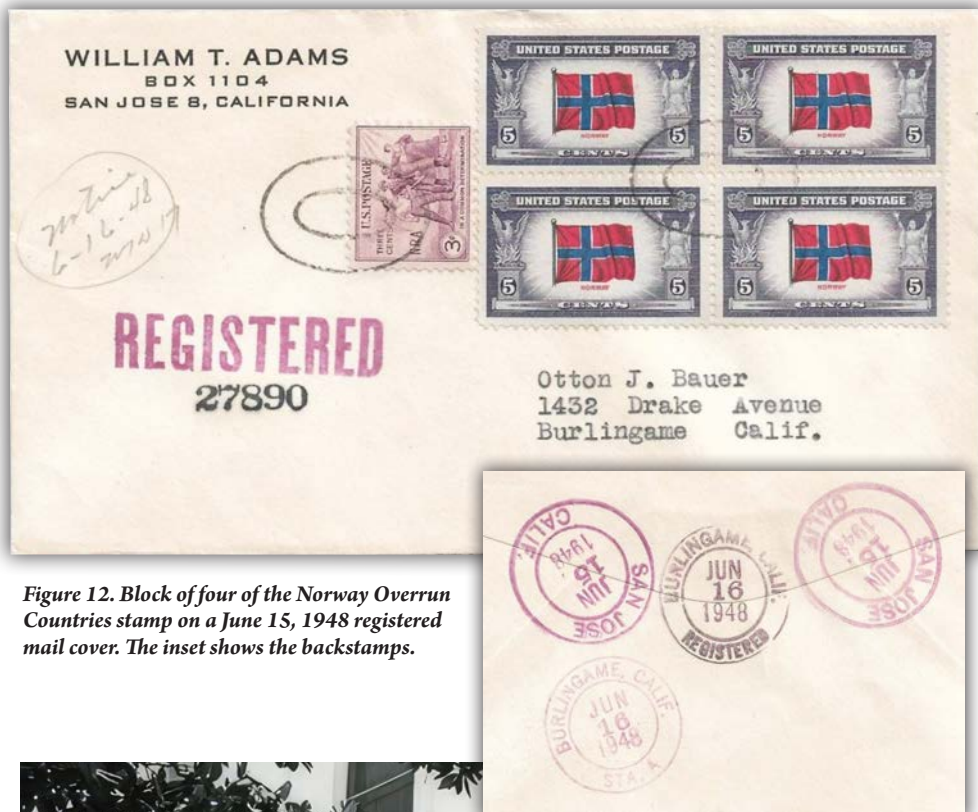


Figure 12. Block of four of the Norway Overrun Countries stamp on a June 15, 1948 registered mail cover. The inset shows the backstamps.



Figure 13. Children of the Roosevelt and the Norwegian Royal families view FDR's Inaugural Address from the steps of the White House, January 20, 1945.



In spite of the blitzkrieg occupation of Norway, the long-term military impact was problematic for Germany. The Norwegian ports proved to be less useful than anticipat-



**Figure 14.** 1942 Norwegian semipostal stamps depicting Quisling issued under German occupation.

ed, and once France was overrun, iron ore from Lorraine replaced Swedish sources for much of the needs of the German war machine. Instead, the occupation of Norway tied down a large number of German troops that were urgently needed elsewhere. Quisling, although he remained in power through the end of the war, found that his attempts to convert the church, schools and youth to National Socialism were, for the most part, bitterly opposed by the Norwegian people. This led to the development both of strong passive and active resistance movements. Following the war, he was put on trial, found guilty and executed for treason, with the name “quisling” entering the language as a synonym for “traitor.”

As for Crown Princess Märtha and her three children, they returned to Norway following the end of World War II, where she received a hero's welcome. Her youngest, Prince Harald, who had lived in the FDR White House when he was three years old, is now King Harald V of Norway.

## Acknowledgment

The author would like to thank Scott Tiffney of the American Philatelic Research Library for providing the images used in Figure 1.

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2. Brian C. Bauer, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Stamps of the United States 1933-45*, Linn's Stamp News: Sydney, Ohio 1993, page 293.
3. Max G. Johl, *The United States Commemorative Postage Stamps of the Twentieth Century: Volume II 1935-1947*, H. L. Lindquist: New York, 1947, pages 219-224 and 228-229.
4. James H. Patterson, “American Banknote Company Proofs and Essays for the Overrun Countries Series of 1943-44,” *The United States Specialist*, December 2003, page 539.
5. Thomas K. Schilling, “Missing Essays and Proofs from the American Banknote Company Archives of the Overrun Countries Series (909-921),” *The United States Specialist*, April 2023, pages 151-154.
6. Link to Aaron Copland's “Fanfare for the Common Man” performed by the National Symphony Orchestra at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HKgk6G0lekQ>



### Overrun Countries Series



## 1943-44 Overrun Countries Series: Netherlands

by **Paul M. Holland**

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✉ [pholland.thorleaf@gmail.com](mailto:pholland.thorleaf@gmail.com)

*The envelope carrying this letter bears the commemorative postage stamp issued for Netherlands, which was first placed on sale today at Washington, D. C. This is the fifth in our series of stamps for the Overrun and Occupied Countries of Europe.*

*I had the pleasure today of selling the first sheet of this stamp to His Excellency, Dr. A. Loudon, Ambassador of the Netherlands, whose autograph appears on this cover.*

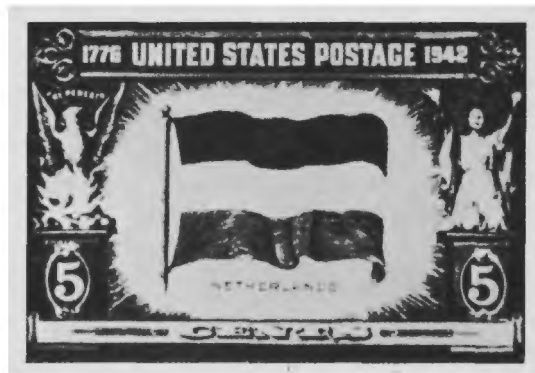
— From a signed August 24, 1943 letter sent with a Favor First Day Cover of the 5¢ Netherlands stamp of the 1943-44 Overrun Countries Series sent to Marvin McIntyre at the White House by Deputy Third Assistant Postmaster General Roy M. North.

I've long been interested in essays of postage stamps of the FDR era, and again files from the American Philatelic Research Library have provided information on early design work on Overrun Countries Stamps done by volunteer artists of the Society of Illustrators. These essays were submitted to the Post Office Department but rejected. Three are shown in Figure 1, all showing the Dutch flag and using the country name Holland rather than the Netherlands. Note that although the name Holland is often used even by the Dutch for their country, only two of the twelve provinces of the Netherlands are technically part of Holland, where the largest cities, Amsterdam, Rotterdam and the Hague, are located. The artist for the first two of these essays was Edward Wilson, with the sketch for the third by Crane.



**Figure 1. Early 3¢ essays for the Netherlands Overrun Countries stamp by volunteer American artists** (images courtesy of the American Philatelic Research Library).

Other early essays were prepared by the American Bank Note Company, and one of these for the Netherlands was published in an earlier article in the *US Specialist* by James H. Patterson, shown in Figure 2.<sup>1</sup> This essay is based on a wash drawing for the outer frame that was produced by the design staff at the American Bank Note Company. Especially note the date 1776 at the left of United States Postage and 1942 at the right. There is also a Latin inscription, “Ne pereat.” (Let it not perish!) appearing above the head of the phoenix, but this slogan and the dates were removed before the final model was approved.<sup>2</sup>



**Figure 2. American Bank Note Company 5¢ essay for the Netherlands.**<sup>4</sup>

The final approval process at the White House began with a March 6, 1943 memo sent to Edwin “Pa” Watson, one of FDR’s secretaries, along with an enclosed proof for the Netherlands stamp. This was followed by an FDR memo of March 11, 1943, to Roy North saying, “I think this stamp is grand.”<sup>3</sup> A large sunken die proof for the Netherlands stamp in the final issued design marked approved was signed by Postmaster General Frank C. Walker on July 10, 1943.<sup>1</sup>

Four colors were used in printing the Netherlands stamps, blue violet for the outer engraved frame, with color offset printing of the Netherlands flag in dark rose, blue and black. Plate proofs show that The American Bank Note Company employed a “shared” layout on full sheets of 200 during the printing of these stamps, in which the bottom two panes of 50 were for Netherlands Overrun Countries stamps and the top two for Luxembourg.

THE DEPUTY THIRD ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL  
WASHINGTON

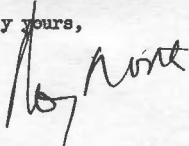
August 24, 1943.

Dear Mr. McIntyre:

The envelope carrying this letter bears the commemorative postage stamp issued for Netherlands, which was first placed on sale today at Washington, D. C. This is the fifth in our series of stamps for the Overrun and Occupied Countries of Europe.

I had the pleasure today of selling the first sheet of this stamp to His Excellency, Dr. A. Loudon, Ambassador of Netherlands, whose autograph appears on this cover.

Sincerely yours,



Hon. Marvin McIntyre,  
Secretary to the President,  
The White House,  
Washington, D. C.

THE DEPUTY  
THIRD ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL  
WASHINGTON



Hon. Marvin McIntyre,  
Secretary to the President,  
The White House,  
Washington, D. C.

First day cover

Figure 3. Deputy Third Assistant PMG favor FDC for the Netherlands stamp signed by the Dutch Ambassador, with letter from Roy North sent to Marvin McIntyre at the White House.



At a first day ceremony on August 24, 1943, Deputy Third Assistant PMG Roy North sold the first sheet of stamps to Dr. A. Loudon, Ambassador of the Netherlands, as described in the letter accompanying the favor FDC he sent to Marvin McIntyre at the White House. North's letter is shown in Figure 3, along with a favor FDC for the Netherlands Overrun Countries stamp autographed by the Ambassador of the Netherlands.

I don't have a favor FDC with signed letter from Postmaster General Frank C. Walker, as he frequently opted to send these covers on official PMG stationery with enclosed printed Post Office Department notices about the stamp instead. One of these for the Netherlands Overrun Countries stamp sent to Mrs. W. W. Howes, wife of the former First Assistant Postmaster General William W. Howes, is shown in Figure 4.



**Figure 4. Favor FDC for the Netherlands stamp sent by PMG Walker to Mrs. W. W. Howes.**

Like Norway and Denmark, the Netherlands had remained neutral during World War I and again proclaimed its neutrality at the beginning of World War II. However, in a massive German blitzkrieg offensive, the Netherlands was attacked on May 10, 1940, as part of Case Yellow, the Wehrmacht's plan to draw Allied forces away from the Ardennes where the main blow against France was to come. The German Luftwaffe also wanted Dutch airfields for staging air attacks on Britain.

Fortunately, the ferocious German parachute assault on the first day, designed to capture the Dutch government and Royal Family in the Hague along with key airfields, was thwarted by heroic resistance by the Dutch army. This strong defensive stand allowed Queen Wilhelmina and the royal family to leave the Netherlands on 13 May by British destroyer. However, a German ultimatum and the subsequent carpet bombing of Rotterdam led to capitulation by the army on May 14, 1940, in order to spare the civilian population, with a formal surrender the next day. By then, the Queen and Dutch government had escaped to London to form a government-in-exile, thus retaining control of the important oilfields of the Dutch East Indies, strategic colonies in the Caribbean and South America, and much of the Royal Dutch Navy.

Among the worldwide covers sent to FDR in my collection is a March 29, 1938, hand-addressed cover from the Netherlands postmarked 's-Gravenhage, an archaic name literally meaning "The Count's Wood," now known as the Hague. Shown in Figure 5, this cover is franked with Scott 172, 171, 168 and 167 paying the international surface rate. The five-cent stamp at the left depicts Queen Wilhelmina and the blue crayon notation 4/5 on the front was applied in the White House's mailroom, showing that the cover was received on April 5.



Figure 5. March 29, 1938, cover sent to FDR from the Hague, Netherlands.

Initially, the Dutch royal family were guests at Buckingham Palace. Princess Irene, the youngest daughter of Crown Princess Juliana, was christened there on 31 May, with Queen Elizabeth (wife of George VI) becoming her godmother. In London, Queen Wilhelmina took firm charge of the Dutch government-in-exile, setting up a chain of command, and immediately began broadcasting radio messages to her people. After the fall of France in June 1940, some in her government, including the Dutch prime minister, proposed a policy of collaboration with the Germans similar to that of Vichy France. However, Wilhelmina strongly rejected this and had him replaced, leading British Prime Minister Winston S. Churchill to describe her as "the only real man among the governments-in-exile" in London.

To guard the succession, it was decided to send Crown Princess Juliana (later Queen of the Netherlands from 1948 to 1980) and her daughters Beatrix and Irene to Canada in June 1940. Quite proud of his own Dutch ancestry, FDR had let Queen Wilhelmina

of the Netherlands know he would be very happy to offer Crown Princess Juliana and her children refuge in either Hyde Park or Washington, where he and Eleanor would care for them “as if they were members of our own family.” Although Crown Princess Juliana and her children primarily remained in Ottawa, they were close enough to Hyde Park that they frequently visited Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt. As was the case with Princess Märtha of Norway, President Roosevelt established a warm bond with the Dutch Crown Princess, with whom he adopted the moniker “your old uncle.” FDR also became godfather

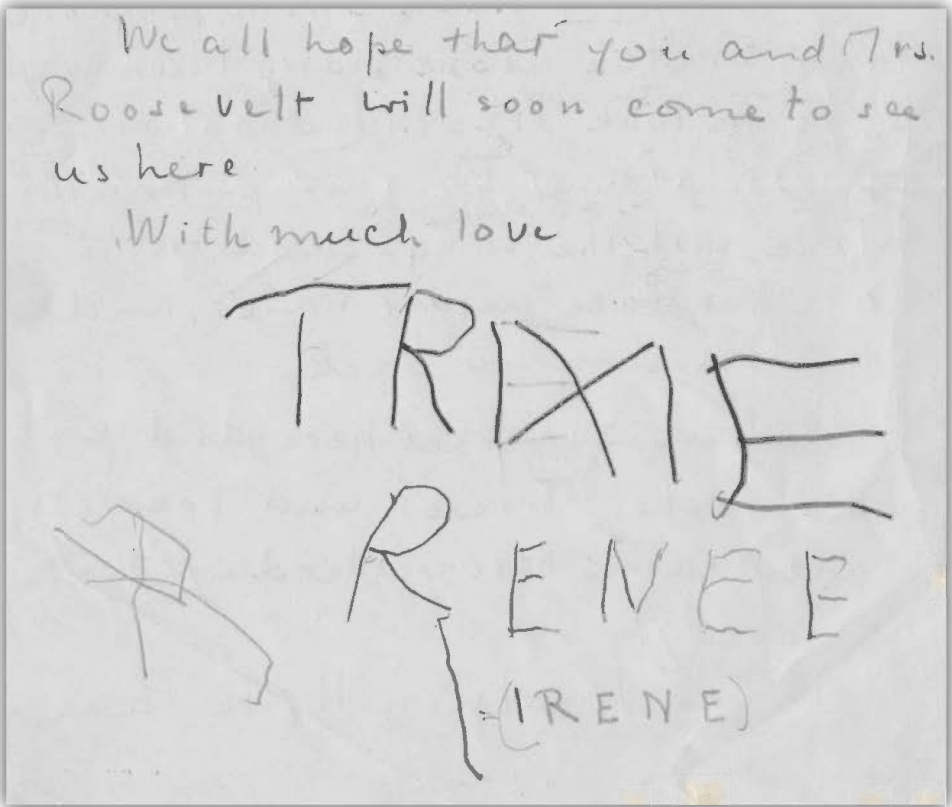


*Figure 6. October 1943 picnic at Val-kill in Hyde Park with Dutch princesses Irene and Beatrix and Crown Princess Juliana at the table with FDR (photo by FDR's cousin Margaret Suckley).*

to Juliana's third daughter, Princess Margriet, when she was born in Ottawa in January 1943, and adored her other daughters, Beatrix (known as Trixie) and Irene. In Figure 6, the Dutch royals are shown at a Roosevelt family picnic at Val-kill in Hyde Park on October 9, 1943. Princesses Irene and Beatrix are at the left, and their mother, Crown Princess Juliana, is seated at the table with FDR.

For several months in the summer of 1942, Crown Princess Julianna moved to an estate in nearby Lee, Massachusetts, that was close enough for frequent back-and-forth visits with the Roosevelts at Hyde Park. On one such visit, seeing that the young princesses were having trouble swimming in the pool at Val-kill, FDR gave each of them a set of water wings. Shown in Figure 7 is a portion of their July 22, 1942, thank you letter to the Roosevelts (now in The National Archives) signed in pencil by four-year-old Trixie, who later became Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands, and her younger sister Irene, who was not quite three years old. In their dictated letter, they say that when they swim with their water wings, “Mummy says that we look like little dogs as we splash along.” They also say how much they liked “the picnics and the swimming and the poney(sic) and the puppy and Falla.” Falla, of course, was FDR's famous dog. Visits by Crown Princess Juliana continued throughout the war, the last being with Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt at the White House on March 17, 1945, at a dinner celebrating their final wedding anniversary together.

As a gesture of FDR's strong support for the Netherlands' government-in-exile, during Queen Wilhelmina's visit to the United States in the summer of 1942, President Roosevelt presented her with a newly built 173-foot submarine chaser (PC-468) on



**Figure 7. Portion of July 22, 1942, thank you letter to the Roosevelts from Dutch princesses Beatrix (future Queen of the Netherlands) and Irene (image courtesy of The National Archives).**

August 8, 1942. In his remarks, he stated, "From the earliest days of history, the people of The Netherlands - your people - have been willing to fight for their freedom and independence. They have won out in the face of great odds. Once more they are fighting for that independence. Once more they will win and maintain it." Renamed the *Queen Wilhelmina*, this vessel operated in the Caribbean and, among other accomplishments, rescued two downed American aviators on June 19, 1944, north of Curaçao. Of great interest to me and my family, a few days before this rescue on June 16, 1944, a nearly identical 173-foot US Navy Submarine *Chaser* (PC-585), shown in Figure 8, saved the life of my father and the crew of his PBY navy patrol plane when they went down in the Coral Sea following a "bad gas leak." On the following page is a cropped portion of my dad's wartime logbook with his hand-written entry briefly describing this event at the far right. Note their operations in the area of Guadalcanal and Espiritu Santo (later the fictionalized locale of the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical *South Pacific*). Because they couldn't run the engines to control the orientation of their downed seaplane, they began taking on water in the heavy Pacific swells and had to bail continuously to stay afloat. After being rescued the following day, an attempt was made to tow the seaplane, but it filled with water and sank.

The Netherlands government-in-exile issued postage stamps in 1944, with examples from my representative worldwide stamp collection shown in Figure 9. Like similar





JUN 1944							
Date	Type of Machine	Number of Machine	Duration of Flight	Character of Flight	Pilot	PASSENGERS	REMARKS
13	PBY-508469	1.3	R	Self + Graves		Pilot 1.3 Co Pilot 0.0	Florida Is. - Guadalcanal
15	PBY-508469	4.7	M	" "	" "	2.4 2.2	Halawa to Santa <small>Bad Gas leak made landing in Coral Sea. Picked up by PC-585 June 16th</small>
20	PBM-3 6464	6.0	M	Capt. Schackzler		Pass. 6.0	Espiritu to Funafuti <small>Forward Tuto</small>

Figure 8. Submarine chaser PC-585 and logbook entry showing rescue of downed PBY.

stamps for the Norwegian government-in-exile,<sup>4</sup> these were printed in London and were valid for mail carried aboard Dutch ships until after the liberation, whereupon they became regular postage stamps. They depict the *Nieuw Amsterdam*, a Dutch soldier, the Royal Dutch Navy cruiser *De Ruyter*, Queen Wilhelmina and a Dutch pilot, with all higher values in the set depicting the Queen. The Dutch government-in-exile proved to be a staunch ally, declaring war on Japan on December 8, 1941, following the attack on Pearl Harbor, and providing naval vessels, pilots and soldiers for the war against the Axis powers.



Figure 9. 1944 stamps issued by the Dutch government-in-exile.

Shown in Figure 10 is a first day cover with a printed cachet designed by Dorothy Knapp for the Netherlands Overrun Countries stamp. Note the raised sword, flames, flag and Dutch windmill, with the slogan “The triumph of justice will turn the wheels of freedom.”

Conditions under German occupation for the Netherlands evolved over time. Because there was no cooperation from the Dutch government, German military control was turned over to a civilian occupation regime under Arthur Seyss-Inquart, the Austrian



Figure 10. Printed Dorothy Knapp cachet on FDC for the Netherlands Overrun Countries stamp.

Nazi who had briefly served as the Chancellor of Austria just before the Anschluss in March 1938 and as Deputy Governor General in German occupied Poland. Initially, Seyss-Inquart employed a “velvet glove” approach, leading to an economic boom due to wartime factory orders from Germany, and oppression was kept to a minimum. Attempts were made to promote the Dutch fascist Nationaal-Socialistische-Bewging (NSB) party led by Anton Mussert, which had never received more than about 4% of the vote before the war, by banning other political parties. Volunteers for a Legion Netherlands were also recruited to fight with the German army on the eastern front following the invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941, and semipostal “charity” stamps for this issued under German occupation in 1942 are shown in Figure 11. This Waffen-SS affiliated unit was reorganized several times and fought until the end of the war but never grew larger than about a brigade in size.



Figure 11. 1942 semipostal stamps issued under German occupation.

Dutch opposition and resistance increased as the German occupation dragged on, and the Dutch collaborationist General Hendrik Seyffardt, commander of the SS Volunteer Legion Nederlande, was assassinated in Amsterdam in February 1943 while campaigning for new recruits. Although Dutch resistance was mostly passive, such as refusing to obey edicts from the German occupiers, going into hiding or helping others to hide, participating in strikes and protests, etc., with mounting German defeats on the Eastern Front, repression in the Netherlands worsened. Jews were ordered to wear Star of David badges, men between the ages of 18-45 were rounded up for forced labor in German war factories, and deportations to concentration camps surged. It was against this backdrop that the tragic and well-known

story of Ann Frank occurred, and it is estimated that ultimately about 75% of Dutch Jews died in the Holocaust. Also, in response to Dutch resistance, the Germans began an embargo on food delivery to the western Netherlands in September 1944, triggering the Dutch famine of 1944-1945 that became known as the "Hunger Winter," with severe malnutrition becoming common, including 20,000 deaths from starvation.

Following the war, Arthur Seyss-Inquart was put on trial at Nuremberg (Figure 12), found guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity, sentenced to death and hanged. The leader of the NSB, Anton Mussert, was convicted of high treason, sentenced to death and shot by firing squad.



**Figure 12.** Arthur Seyss-Inquart on trial at Nuremberg in 1945.

As for Queen Wilhelmina, as the war drew to a close, she traveled to liberated areas of the southern Netherlands in mid-March 1945 (Figure 13), where she received a rapturous welcome. Several years later, as her health began to fail, she abdicated on May 12, 1948, passing the crown to Crown Princess Juliana. Queen Juliana ruled until 1980 when she, in turn, abdicated, making her daughter Beatrix, the little girl given water wings by FDR, Queen of the Netherlands.



**Figure 13.** Queen Wilhelmina upon her return to liberated areas of the Netherlands in 1945.

## Acknowledgment

The author would like to thank Scott Tiffney of the American Philatelic Research Library for providing the images used in Figure 1.

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### Overrun Countries Series



Figure 1. Early Overrun Countries essays shown in *Boy's Life* magazine.<sup>2</sup>

## Early Essays for Overrun Countries Stamps

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It's interesting to note that in his original October 22, 1942 memo to Marvin McIntyre on issuing overrun countries stamps, FDR lists only eight overrun European countries in the order "Norway, Holland, Belgium, Greece, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Poland and Luxembourg," omitting France, Albania, Denmark and Austria.<sup>1</sup> While searching for information on early essays for these stamps, I came across images of 3¢ overrun countries essays that were published in the "Stamps" column of the July 1943 issue of *Boy's Life* magazine.<sup>2</sup> These included two essays for Czechoslovakia and one each for Norway, Poland, France and Greece, as shown in Figure 1. While these feature flags as a design motif and occasionally exhibit a phoenix arising from flames, all are distinctively different than anything shown or mentioned in Max Johl's book.<sup>3</sup> The column goes on to state that "independent artists cooperating as a committee under the chairmanship



of Paul F. Berdanier, laid out numerous essays, or suggested designs at the suggestion of the Office of War Information, Deputy Third Assistant Postmaster General Roy M. North, and Alvin W. Hall, Director of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing.”<sup>2</sup>

Turning to Scott Tiffney and the American Philatelic Research Library (APRL) for further information from the Forrest Ellis file, I was not disappointed. This allowed each of the artists of the essays in Figure 1 to be identified. The first essay in the top row for Poland is credited to Paul Berdanier, Paul Shively and Sam Marsh. That for Norway is by Warren Chappell, and the one for Czechoslovakia at the right is by Paul Berdanier and Kanelous. The essays in the second row are by Edward Wilson (France), Hugo Steiner-Prag (Czechoslovakia), and W. A. Diggins (Greece), respectively.

A further source of information is provided in Ken Lawrence’s 1998 article in the *American Philatelist*, where he cites a December 1942 meeting in New York of officials of the Office of War Information, Post Office Department, and the Bureau of Engraving and Printing with Berdanier’s volunteer Society of Illustrators to solicit designs. In response, twenty-three drawings were submitted, “none of which were adopted.”<sup>4</sup>

Of these, twenty-two Overrun Countries stamp essays by volunteer artists of the Society of Illustrators are available on photographic paper in the Forrest Ellis file of APRL’s collection. These include essays for Norway, Holland, Belgium, Greece, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and Poland. Those for Norway and Holland (the Netherlands) have already been shown in other articles in the *US Specialist*.<sup>5,6</sup> The remaining sixteen early essays by volunteer artists of the Society of Illustrators provide supplementary information for my previous Overrun Countries articles.<sup>7</sup> Perhaps the most intriguing of these is the one with the slogan “They shall rise again” by Gordon Aymar. Based on the different flags and emblems displayed, the essay for this stamp was apparently designed to represent nine different overrun countries in Europe, the eight listed in FDR’s original October 22, 1942 memo, plus France. This “one size fits all” essay is shown in Figure 2.



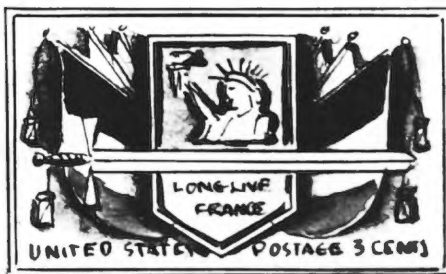
*Figure 2. Early essay by Gordon Aymar representing nine different Overrun Countries in Europe (Image courtesy APRL).*

France represents an unusual case among the overrun countries since the United States had originally established full diplomatic relations with the Vichy French regime, hoping to use American influence to discourage the Vichy government from active military collaboration with Germany and avoid any actions that could adversely affect Allied efforts during World War II. This delicate balancing act might be upset by issuing a stamp honoring French resistance to Axis occupation. However, following the November 8, 1942, Allied invasion of North Africa, the remaining unoccupied region in France was swiftly conquered by the German Wehrmacht, making the risk of offending the Vichy government moot. Fortunately, French naval commanders managed by a combination of negotiation and deceit to delay the invaders long enough to scuttle the French fleet at Toulon, thereby preventing its capture by the Germans.

There are four early essays for France, and their styles vary significantly. The first by Edward Wilson is a classic design based on the Winged Victory of Samothrace, an iconic sculpture at the Louvre Museum in Paris. The second essay by Paul Manship employs a



Figure 3. Early 3¢ Overrun Countries essays for France (Images courtesy APRL).



*bas relief* approach, showing a charging soldier with the slogan “For the rebirth of freedom.” The bottom two essays show a sword and crossed swords, respectively. The one on the left is by Crane. That on the right by Paul Shively and Alexander Kahn has the slogan “Like grasses spring from the tortured earth” surrounding a central medallion.

Three early essays for Czechoslovakia are shown in Figure 4. Note that the flag on the one at the left by Paul Berdanier and Kanelous has been left blank but has been completed in Figure 1; see especially the symbolic rising of a phoenix from the flames. The second, also reproduced in *Boy’s Life*, is by Hugo Steiner-Prag. The final example by Gordon Aymar employs a square format with the slogan “Czechoslovakia shall rise again.”

LONG LIVE CZECHOSLOVAKIA



Figure 4. Early 3¢ Overrun Countries essays for Czechoslovakia (Images courtesy APRL).

Shown in Figure 5 are three early Overrun Countries essays for Poland. The one on the left by Gordon Aymar again employs a square format, similar to his essay for Czechoslovakia. The Poland essay in the middle is by Paul Berdanier, Paul Shively and Sam Marsh, with more complete flag details shown in the *Boy’s Life* image in Figure 1. The final essay is by Edward Wilson.



Figure 5. Early 3¢ Overrun Countries essays for Poland (Images courtesy APRL).

There are two early essays for Greece shown in Figure 6. That on the left by Gordon Aymar shows a figure in front of a Greek flag with the slogan "Greece shall rise again." The essay on the right by W. A. Dwiggins shows a phoenix arising from the flames, with space provided for an image of the Greek flag. Note that a crudely sketched Greek flag has been added for this essay in Figure 1.



Figure 6. Early 3¢ Overrun Countries essays for Greece (Images courtesy APRL).

Two early 3¢ Overrun Countries essays for Yugoslavia were available from the Forrest Ellis file at APRL. These are shown in Figure 7. The essay on the left by Paul Berdanier and Alexander Kahn depicts a phoenix arising from the flames under a Yugoslavian flag. That on the right by Gordon Aymar shows the flag over what appears to be a ruined city in flames, perhaps Belgrade, after being bombed by the Germans.

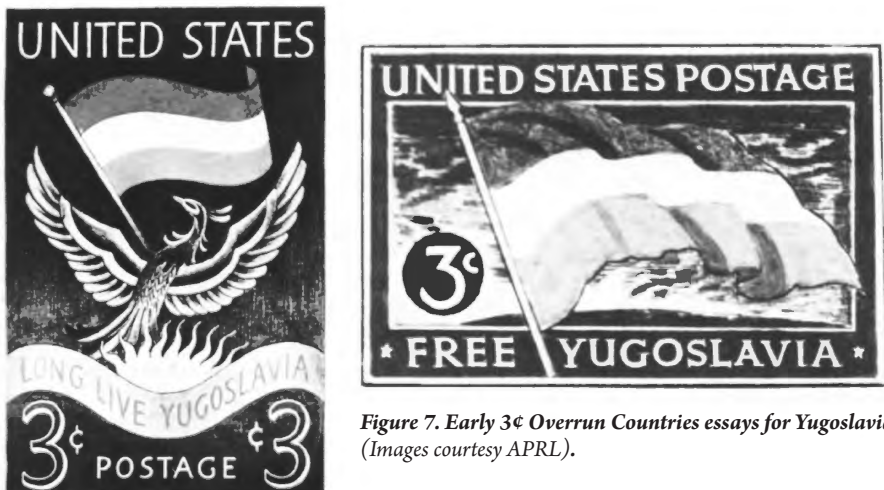


Figure 7. Early 3¢ Overrun Countries essays for Yugoslavia (Images courtesy APRL).



The final early essay from the Forrest Ellis file is one by Warren Chapel for the Belgian Overrun Countries stamp. Interestingly unlike the other early essays, this has a 5¢ denomination suggesting that it may have been one of the last early essays for Overrun Countries stamps produced by volunteer artists of the Society of Illustrators. Note the strong stylistic resemblance to Chapel's 3¢ essay for Norway shown in the top row of Figure 1 and in my earlier article on the Norway Overrun Countries stamp.<sup>5</sup>

Another area that remains to be fully explored is early essays produced by the American Bank Note Company. Several of these have been shown in a 2003 article in *The US Specialist* by James H. Patterson, including examples from Norway, the Netherlands, Poland and Greece.<sup>8</sup> Each of these essays is dated in pencil on the back "1/8/43."<sup>8</sup> Since I've discussed those for Norway and the Netherlands elsewhere,<sup>4,5</sup> I'll focus on the 5¢ American Bank Note Company essays for Poland and Greece, shown in Figure 9. The essay for Poland shows a phoenix rising from a fire instead of a Polish flag, and that for Greece shows a phoenix rising from fire on the left and a Greek flag at the right. Note that in each case that the Latin inscription "Ne pereat." (Let it not perish) appears above the head of the phoenix.



Figure 8. Early 5¢ Overrun Countries essay for Belgium (Image courtesy APRL).



Figure 9. American Bank Note Company essays for Poland and Greece.<sup>8</sup>



**Figure 10. The American Bank Note Company building at Broad Street in New York, circa 1908** (Image courtesy NY Public Library Digital Collections).

This suggests that these essays were prepared at a time when details of the twin motifs of incorporating a phoenix and overrun country flags were still being worked out. Also, the inscription barely visible in the bottom margin of each of these essays reads “American Bank Note Company.” Finally, as Tom Schilling has recently pointed out, the overall situation on essays and proofs from the American Bank Note Company for Overrun Countries stamps is complicated, and the full story is likely incomplete.<sup>5</sup>

Although some have criticized the final common design used for the Overrun Countries series for its sameness, in the words of Ken Lawrence, for beginning stamp collectors, these stamps are “often among their first prized acquisitions.”<sup>4</sup> Even now, as I flip through the pages of my representative worldwide stamp collection, I must say, the page with Overrun Countries stamps really stands out.

## Acknowledgment

The author would especially like to thank Scott Tiffney of the American Philatelic Research Library for providing the images used in Figures 2-8.

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### Overrun Countries



## 1943-44 Overrun Countries Series: Austria

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*The envelope carrying this letter bears the commemorative postage stamp issued in honor of Austria. This is the eleventh in our series of stamps being issued as a tribute to the European countries which have been overrun and occupied by the Axis forces of aggression.*

— From a signed November 23, 1943 letter sent with a Favor First Day Cover of the 5¢ Austria stamp of the 1943-44 Overrun Countries Series sent to Marvin McIntyre at the White House by Deputy Third Assistant Postmaster General Roy M. North.

It is interesting to note that in his original October 22, 1942 memo to Marvin McIntyre on overrun countries stamps, FDR lists only eight overrun European countries in the order “Norway, Holland, Belgium, Greece, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Poland and Luxembourg.”<sup>1</sup> Stamps for France, Albania and Austria were then added to these in a press release of May 11, 1943 for a “series of eleven new postage stamps, commemorating the heroic and continuing resistance to the Axis powers by the peoples of over-run and occupied countries of Europe.”<sup>2</sup>

Austria presents an unusual case among these European countries since Austria had actually been part of Germany for more than five years, dating from the time of the Anschluss on March 12, 1938. The idea of Anschluss, or the union of Austria with Germany to form a “Greater Germany,” dates back to the aftermath of World War I, when it was believed that without its empire, Austria would no longer be economically

viable. However, union with Germany was forbidden under the Treaty of Versailles. Once the Nazis came to power in Germany in 1933, pressure for Anschluss reemerged, and in a failed coup attempt, Austrian chancellor Dollfuss was assassinated in 1934. His replacement, Kurt Schuschnigg, resisted Anschluss but finally announced a March 13, 1938 voter referendum on union with Germany. Schuschnigg himself was pressured into resigning on March 11, 1938, by an ultimatum and invasion threats from Hitler. He was replaced as chancellor by the Austrian Nazi Arthur Seyss-Inquart, who then invited the German army into Austria the following day. Later, a plebiscite on Anschluss was held on April 10, 1938, where 99.7% approved in a closely watched non-secret ballot.

Designed by the American Bank Note Company, the die proof for the Austria Overrun Countries stamp was first approved on September 4, 1943, as shown in Figure 1. Three colors were used in printing the Austria stamp: blue violet for the outer engraved frame, with color offset printing of the Austrian flag in red and black. Plate proofs show that a “shared” layout was employed in printing full sheets of 200 stamps, with the bottom two panes of 50 for Austria and the top two for Albania.



**Figure 1. Large die proof for the Austria stamp as approved September 4, 1943** (Image courtesy of the Smithsonian National Postal Museum).

Overrun Countries stamps for Austria were issued on November 23, 1943, in Washington, DC, with the first sheet of stamps bought by Postmaster General (PMG) Frank C. Walker from Third Assistant PMG Ramsey S. Black. As in the case for other Overrun Countries stamps, Deputy Third Assistant PMG Roy North sent a favor FDC with signed letter to Marvin McIntyre at the White House. This is shown in Figure 2. McIntyre was, in fact, the original recipient of FDR's White House memo that initiated the Overrun Countries stamp series. Since there was no Austrian ambassador, Roy North had Postmaster General Walker autograph this favor FDC instead.



THE DEPUTY THIRD ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL  
WASHINGTON

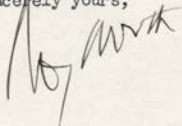
November 23, 1943.

Dear Mr. McIntyre:

The envelope carrying this letter bears the commemorative postage stamp issued in honor of Austria. This is the eleventh in our series of stamps being issued as a tribute to the European countries which have been overrun and occupied by the Axis forces of aggression.

This stamp was first placed on sale today at Washington, D. C., and it is a pleasure to send this first day cover to you with the autograph of the Postmaster General.

Sincerely yours,



Honorable Marvin McIntyre,  
Secretary to the President,  
The White House,  
Washington 25, D. C.

THE DEPUTY  
THIRD ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL  
WASHINGTON

*Frank Walker*  
Postmaster General



Honorable Marvin McIntyre,  
Secretary to the President,  
The White House,  
Washington 25, D. C.

First day cover

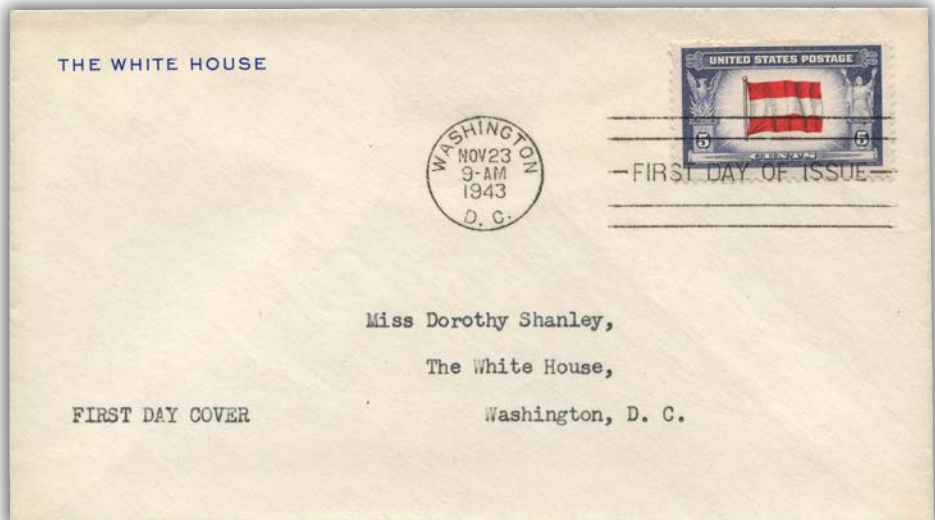
Figure 2. Deputy Third Assistant PMG favor FDC for Austria stamp signed by Postmaster General Walker, with letter from Roy North sent to Marvin McIntyre at the White House.



**Figure 3. Favor FDC for the Austria stamp sent by PMG Walker to Mrs. W. W. Howes.**

As Postmaster General, Frank C. Walker did not send out nearly as many favor FDCs with signed letters as his predecessor PMG James A. Farley, frequently opting instead to send unsigned favor FDCs on official PMG stationery with enclosed printed notices about the stamp. For example, I have a complete set of fourteen of these for Overrun Countries stamps sent to Mrs. W. W. Howes, wife of the former First Assistant Postmaster General William W. Howes, all with printed notices from the Post Office Department, with that for Austria shown in Figure 3.

FDCs were also created for stamps of the Overrun Countries Series using official White House stationery. I'm fortunate in having an example of one of these for the Austria



**Figure 4. Overrun Countries FDC on official White House stationery for Austria.**

stamp, as shown in Figure 4. This was sent to Miss Dorothy Shanley, who served in the White House during both the FDR and Truman administrations.

Shown in Figure 5 is an unaddressed FDC with Anderson cachet for the Austrian Overrun Countries stamp that includes a block of text recounting details of the Anschluss. Note that this is franked by a corner margin block of four that displays the country name in the margin, printed in black by offset printing in the upper right margin of each pane of fifty stamps.



Figure 5. FDC with Anderson cachet for the Austrian Overrun Countries stamp.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt received mail from around the world, and my worldwide postal history collection includes more than 500 covers sent to FDR from 45 countries. Shown in Figure 6 is an October 13, 1937, registered mail cover from Vienna sent to FDR five months before the Anschluss. It is franked with Scott 364, 366 and 368, depicting regional costumes of Austria. The back shows the return address to be from Vienna's district VIII, with registration backstamps showing arrival in Washington, DC (via New York) on October 22, 1937.

A second registered mail cover from my collection encapsulates much of the story of European countries overrun by Germany in World War II. Shown in Figure 7, this April 15, 1940 censored mail was sent from Vienna, Austria to Belgium only a few days after Denmark and Norway were invaded on April 9. Belgium itself was attacked several weeks later, on May 10, 1940, in a massive German Blitzkrieg invasion that led to the rapid conquest of Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and France. This occurred about two years after the 1938 Anschluss, accounting for the use of German stamps. Unusually, this cover is franked with German semipostal stamps whose surtax was used to benefit Hitler's National Culture Fund and the Postal Employees' Fund (Scott B149, B151, B157 and B159).

Note that the printed return address of Dr. Otto Kreisby from Vienna's District XVII on this cover has been scratched out and replaced with a handwritten address in





Figure 6. October 13, 1937, registered cover sent to FDR from Vienna, Austria.





Figure 7. OKW Censored registered mail cover sent from Vienna to Belgium

Vienna's District VIII, closer to the city center. Could this address change somehow be related to the Anschluss or the war? There may be an interesting story here, but without an enclosed letter or other information, it's difficult to say.

At the end of World War II, the Anschluss was immediately reversed, and Austria was again separated from Germany. The eastern and most populated parts of Austria, including Vienna, were occupied by the Red Army, and the provisional government set up there under Soviet occupation included postal service. For this, stamps were urgently needed, and so overprints were applied to the large inventory of German postage stamps available. The first four of these (Scott 390-393) from early May 1945 are shown in the top row of Figure 8. They were diagonally overprinted with Österreich (Austria) across the face of Adolf Hitler on German definitive postage stamps of the 1941 "Hitler head" series. Those at the left have the Österreich overprint only; those on the right also have



Figure 8. Immediate post-war occupation stamps for Austria.

an obliterating bar over Deutsches Reich. These apparently showed too much of Hitler's portrait and were superseded at the beginning of June 1945 by the overprinted stamps in the bottom row (Scott 398-402) that added vertical bars that thoroughly obliterated the profile of Hitler. These are among the last postage stamps that show Hitler. By July 1945, altogether new designs with an Austrian Eagle holding a hammer and sickle were issued for the Soviet zone, while in the Allied zone, stamps employed a Post Horn design. In November 1945, these stamps were replaced by regular postage stamps of the Second Republic of Austria, although the occupation of Austria did not formally end until 1955.

World War II was certainly the most terrible war in human history, with an estimated 70-85 million fatalities, mostly civilians. However, I'd like to end this holiday issue with one of the war's few "feel good" stories. As General George Patton's Third Army rapidly moved into southern Germany and Austria in the closing days of the war in Europe, advanced forces of the 2nd Cavalry Regiment became involved in Operation Cowboy, an effort to rescue the famous Lipizzan horses of the Spanish Riding School of Vienna that dates back to the sixteenth century. Its director, Alois Podhajsky, a famed horseman and bronze medallist at the 1936 Olympics, had evacuated the stallions from Vienna to St. Martin's, a small town in Upper Austria, for safety. Although St. Martin's was quickly captured by the Americans, the Lipizzaner breeding stock and mares were located in the small town of Hostau, Czechoslovakia, along with some Allied prisoners-of-war (POWs) a few miles inside the agreed-upon demarcation line for future Soviet occupation. Podhajsky begged the Americans to rescue them and save the future of the Spanish Riding School. This request fell on sympathetic ears, as General Patton himself was a horseman who had competed in the 1912 Olympics, and many of the soldiers under his command were experienced cavalymen.



*Figure 9. Photograph of Operation Cowboy from May 1945 (Lipizzanermuseum, Vienna).*



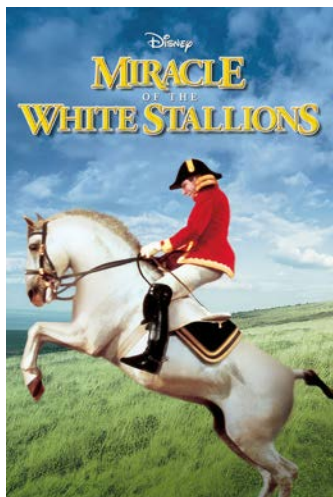


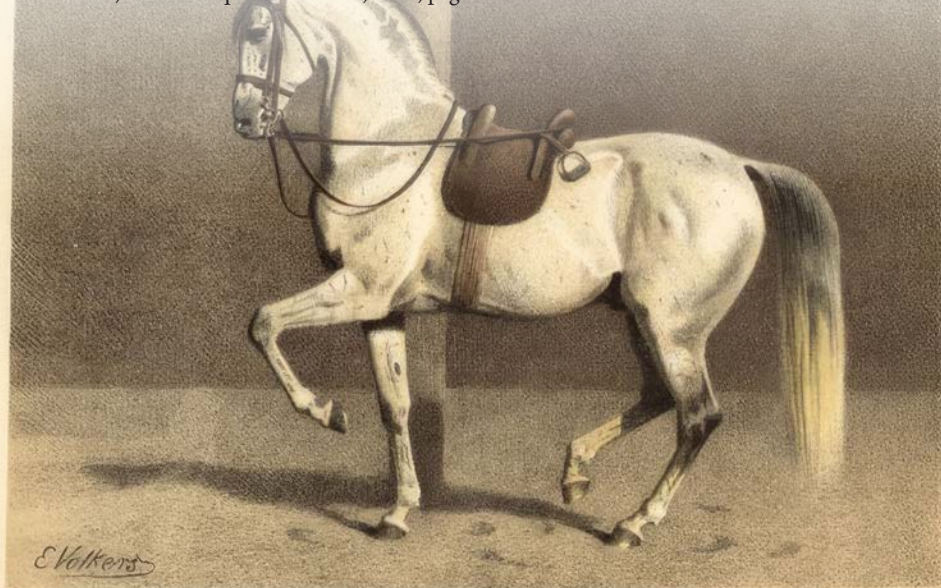
Figure 10. Cover image for Disney's *Miracle of the White Stallions*.

As a result, a daring raid by 2nd Cavalry reconnaissance troops was improvised that involved unusual cooperation among the US Army and elements of the German Wehrmacht, who much preferred to surrender to the Americans. In Operation Cowboy, Allied POWs in Hostau were liberated, Wehrmacht soldiers surrendered to the Americans, and the Lipizzaner breeding farm was secured. The problem then became evacuating the horses before the Red Army arrived since it was feared that the Russians might simply slaughter them for horse meat. Here, US cavalry troops, with help from newly freed Allied POWs, newly captive German POWs, and even some Cossack horsemen, rode and herded the horses using a convoy of vehicles to carry pregnant mares and new-born foals to safety, as shown in Figure 9.

After the war, Alois Podhajsky continued as director of the Spanish Riding School, which had temporarily relocated to Wels in Upper Austria. In 1955, the Spanish Riding School finally returned to Vienna, where it remains today. The story of Operation Cowboy and the rescue of the famed Lipizzan horses was later dramatized in a 1963 Disney movie, *Miracle of the White Stallions* (Figure 10). Putting Operation Cowboy into perspective, US Colonel Reed, one of the key participants, said, "We were so tired of death and destruction, we wanted to do something beautiful."

## References

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LIPPIZANER.



## Overrun Countries



## 1943-44 Overrun Countries Series: **Denmark**

by **Paul M. Holland**

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✉ [pholland.thorleaf@gmail.com](mailto:pholland.thorleaf@gmail.com)

*The cover carrying this letter bears the commemorative postage stamp issued in honor of Denmark. This is the last in the series of twelve stamps issued as a tribute to the overrun and occupied Countries of Europe.*

*The stamp was first placed on sale today at Washington, D.C., and it is a pleasure to send you this first day cover autographed by the Minister of Denmark.*

— From a signed December 7, 1943 letter sent with a Favor First Day Cover of the 5¢ Denmark stamp of the 1943-44 Overrun Countries Series sent to Marvin McIntyre at the White House by Deputy Third Assistant Postmaster General Roy M. North.

Although Denmark had remained neutral during World War I and signed a 10-year non-aggression pact with Germany in 1939, it was nonetheless invaded early in the morning of April 9, 1940, as a stepping stone in Hitler's preemptive invasion of Norway. Fearing that Copenhagen would be bombed, the Danish government quickly surrendered. Unlike the case for many other overrun countries, the government did not go into exile. Under the terms of the armistice, there was economic cooperation with Germany, and the Danish government and king continued to function fairly normally until August 29, 1943, when the government resigned in protest at increasingly harsh



German demands. At this point, the Danish government refused further cooperation, the navy scuttled most of its ships, with many of its officers fleeing to neutral Sweden, and Denmark was placed under direct German military occupation.

Originally no Overrun Countries stamp had been planned for Denmark. That one was issued apparently came about due to a May 17, 1943 letter written to Postmaster General Frank Walker by A. E. Pade, a Denver stamp dealer of Danish descent who believed that “a stigma had been cast on the otherwise good name of Denmark...” and that “Americans of Danish descent would deeply resent this discrimination.”<sup>1</sup> On June 17, 1943, Pade received a reply from Deputy Third Assistant Postmaster General Roy M. North stating that “The Department has this matter under advisement and it may be possible to make provisions for a Denmark stamp before the series is completed, which, at best, will not be until late this year.” Finally, a Post Office Department press release on June 28 stated, “Denmark had been added to the list of (overrun) countries being honored.”

The die proof for the Denmark Overrun Countries stamp was approved on October 19, 1943, with three colors used in printing these stamps, blue violet for the outer engraved frame and color offset printing of the Danish flag in red and black. These were printed in full sheets of 200, unlike many other Overrun Countries stamps that employed a “shared” layout on the press sheet. They were then cut into four panes of 50 stamps each.

The first day ceremony for the Denmark Overrun Countries stamp was held at the office of Postmaster General Frank C. Walker on December 7, 1943, the second anniversary of the Pearl Harbor attack. Here, Hendrik de Kauffmann, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of Denmark to the United States, purchased the first sheet of stamps from Ramsey S. Black, Third Assistant Postmaster General.

Hendrik de Kauffmann was perhaps the most unusual character of all Overrun Countries ambassadors and foreign ministers, and someone who seemed to epitomize Scandinavian stubbornness. Although there was officially no Danish government-in-exile, he remained at his post and, on the first anniversary of the occupation of Denmark (April 9, 1941), on his own initiative, signed “in the Name of the King,” an agreement for the defense of Greenland. This treaty, dated June 7, 1941, authorized the United States to defend the Danish colony of Greenland from German aggression. It was signed by the US Secretary of State Cordell Hull and approved by President Roosevelt. For this, Kauffmann was nicknamed “the King of Greenland.” The Danish government in Copenhagen, struggling to maintain its uneasy relationship with the German occupiers, was not amused. Kauffmann was formally charged with high treason and stripped of his rank. Both of these actions were simply ignored by Kauffmann who carried on, continuing his occasional visits with FDR in the White House during the war.

Special favor FDCs for the Overrun Countries were sent out by Deputy Third Assistant PMG Roy M. North who had arranged for the Foreign Ministers or Ambassadors of the overrun countries to autograph these covers whenever possible. My example sent to Marvin H. McIntyre at the White House is shown in Figure 1.

Sadly, this Overrun Countries favor FDC cover for Denmark, signed by Hendrik de Kauffman, was the last favor FDC that Marvin McIntyre received before his death on December 13, 1943. Making this memento especially poignant, McIntyre had been

THE DEPUTY THIRD ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL  
WASHINGTON

December 7, 1943.

Dear Mr. McIntyre:

The cover carrying this letter bears the commemorative postage stamp issued in honor of Denmark. It is the last in the series of twelve stamps issued as a tribute to the overrun and occupied countries of Europe.

The stamp was first placed on sale today at Washington, D. C., and it is a pleasure to send you this first day cover autographed by the Minister of Denmark.

Sincerely yours,

*Roy North*

Hon. Marvin McIntyre,  
Secretary to the President,  
The White House,  
Washington 25, D. C.

THE DEPUTY  
THIRD ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL  
WASHINGTON



FIRST DAY OF ISSUE

Hon. Marvin McIntyre,  
Secretary to the President,  
The White House,  
Washington 25, D. C.

*Hendrik de Kauffmann*  
Minister of Denmark

First day cover

Figure 1. Deputy Third Assistant PMG Roy North favor FDC for Denmark stamp signed by Hendrik de Kauffmann, Minister of Denmark, sent to Marvin McIntyre at the White House.



Figure 2. Time Magazine cover of December 17, 1934, showing FDR's "White House Secretariat," with Marvin McIntyre on the telephone at lower right.

the recipient of FDR's original White House memo that initiated the series of Overrun Countries stamps, and this cover was still sealed when I acquired it.

Marvin H. McIntyre is one of my favorites among the key figures of FDR's small inner circle. A former newspaperman, his involvement dates back to FDR's 1920 campaign for Vice President. In the White House McIntyre managed FDR's appointments calendar and correspondence, and he's shown on the cover of Time Magazine as a member of FDR's secretariat talking on the telephone at the lower right in Figure 2. Also shown are Louis Howe, Steve Early and "Missy" LeHand, FDR's "Chief of Staff," press secretary and personal secretary, respectively. McIntyre himself had a wonderful sense of humor and was intimately involved in nearly all aspects of the FDR administration from the very beginning, as shown by his wide-ranging correspondence. Upon his death, FDR remembered McIntyre's "never-failing humor, his cheerful spirit, and his ever-ready helpfulness."

Content and context are everything in autograph collecting, and I'm fortunate to have an array of original Marvin H. McIntyre correspondence in my collection. Perhaps my favorite items are from the crisis period in February 1933, just before FDR took office on Saturday, March 4, 1933. These were obtained from the famed Malcolm Forbes autograph collection of signed documents related to US Presidents. Shown in Figure 3 is McIntyre's February 26, 1933, letter on FDR's personal stationery from Hyde Park, NY, to David Stern, publisher of the Philadelphia Record. This was written in the midst of the worst banking crisis in American history and about ten days after an assassination attempt on FDR's life in Miami had nearly succeeded. Note here that insiders such as Missy LeHand and McIntyre often referred to Franklin D. Roosevelt as "F. D." as seen in this letter and the following telegram.

Reflecting on the assassination attempt in the third paragraph, McIntyre says "You sure missed out on the most exciting night of our Miami trip. Frankly, it didn't impress me much at the time, but since has had a tendency to make me a bit more serious minded." Five shots were fired from the crowd at a February 15<sup>th</sup> nighttime rally from about 25 feet away, hitting five people including Anton Cermak, the Mayor of Chicago, who later died from his wounds. Since FDR had been propped up on the backseat of a convertible to address the crowd (Figure 4), he was "a sitting duck" and lucky to have escaped death or serious injury.

Shown in Figure 5 is McIntyre's original February 27, 1933 telegram sent to David Stern that McIntyre refers to in the handwritten scrawl at the bottom of his letter that stated, "Just wired you not to take our phone conversation too seriously." The telegram goes on to say, "HAD JUST BEEN TALKING TO FRANTIC BANKERS STOP WILL BE GLAD TO TAKE THIS UP WITH WOODIN..." concluding that there will not be time for "F. D." to talk things over with Stern before the inauguration. Note the typos in this short telegram, i.e. NOR for FOR and innauguration (sic) misspelled, suggesting how frantic things must have been at the time.

It was William H. Woodin, FDR's newly designated Treasury Secretary who was to play a major role in resolving the banking crisis during the first week of the new FDR administration. At a time three years into the Great Depression and following "runs" on virtually every bank in the country that had not already failed, all of the nation's banks had



FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT  
HYDE PARK, DUTCHESS COUNTY  
NEW YORK

February 26, 1933.

Dear Dave:

Your letter of February 22nd with its enclosure referring to Ralph W. Wescott just arrived. I am taking the liberty of showing it to F.D. with your recommendation.

I suppose, if necessary, he can get at least part of the State organization to back it up in the event that real consideration can be given to it. In the event decisions have already been reached as to the posts to which you referred, is there any other place you feel he would fit into?

You sure missed out on the most exciting night of our Miami trip. Frankly, it didn't impress me much at the time, but since has had a tendency to make me a bit more serious minded.

Have been advocating some action along the lines recommended at your dinner party by Mr. Fox. Do you think it a practical measure as one of the immediate steps? Rather, I mean some step along that line?

Hope to be seeing you soon.

Sincerely,

*M. H. McIntyre*

M. H. McIntyre.

J. David Stern, Esq.,  
Philadelphia Record,  
Philadelphia, Pa.

*P.D. just wired you not to take  
our phone conversation too  
seriously - M.H.M.*

Figure 3. February 26, 1933, letter from Marvin McIntyre to David Stern, publisher of the Philadelphia Record (author's collection, ex-Malcolm Forbes).



Figure 4. FDR in Bayfront Park, Miami, shortly before the assassination attempt on February 15, 1933.

PATRONS ARE REQUESTED TO FAVOR THE COMPANY BY CRITICISM AND SUGGESTION CONCERNING ITS SERVICE 1201 S

**AN ANSWER IS EXPECTED**  
BY THE SENDER OF THIS MESSAGE. PLEASE GIVE IT TO THE MESSENGER OR TELEPHONE IT TO  
**WESTERN UNION** 2477-D

**WESTERN UNION**  
COMB CARLTON, PRESIDENT J. C. WILLEVER, FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

so on full-rate telegrams and day letters, and the time of receipt at destination as shown on all messages, is STANDARD TIME.

Received at Western Union Building, 230 So. 11th St., Philadelphia, Pa. 1933 FEB 27 PM 10 36

NC1836 49 NL=POUGHKEEPSIE NY 27

J DAVID STERN=2

PHILADELPHIA RECORD PHA=

CONFIDENTIAL DO YOU NOT TAKE MY PHONE TALK TOO SERIOUSLY  
HAD JUST BEEN TALKING TO FRANTIC BANKERS STOP WILL BE GLAD  
TO TAKE THIS UP WITH WOODIN AS I DONT SEE ANY CHANCE NOR F  
D TALKING IT OVER WITH YOU BEFORE INNAUGURATION WILL ADVISE  
YOU A LITTLE LATER=

M H MCINTYRE.

MINUTES IN TRANSIT  
FULL-RATE DAY LETTER

WESTERN UNION GIFT ORDERS SOLVE THE PERPLEXING QUESTION OF WHAT TO GIVE

Figure 5. February 27, 1933, telegram sent by McIntyre to David Stern, publisher of the Philadelphia Record (author's collection, ex-Malcolm Forbes).

been closed under an emergency “Bank Holiday” with cash being in very short supply. The Emergency Banking Bill (the first piece of FDR’s “hundred days” legislation) was rushed through Congress on Thursday, with FDR’s famous first “Fireside Chat” following on Sunday evening. In the meantime, Woodin had come up with the idea that the Treasury could simply issue Federal Reserve Bank Notes against good assets held by the banks, such as loans. The Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) went to work 24 hours a day printing new currency so that it could be rushed out to major banks by the weekend.<sup>2</sup> By the time banks began reopening their doors on Monday morning, March 13, 1933, after FDR’s “Fireside Chat,” confidence in the nation’s banking system had been almost miraculously restored.

Besides the Overrun Countries favor FDCs sent out by Deputy Third Assistant PMG Roy North to Marvin McIntyre and others, Postmaster General Frank C. Walker also mailed favor FDCs on official stationery. These typically came with printed Post Office Department notices about the stamps instead of letters. An example from my collection of the Denmark Overrun Countries stamp is shown in Figure 6.



**Figure 6.** Favor FDC on official PMG stationery for the Denmark stamp sent to Yukon, Oklahoma.

Among the commercial cachets created for the Denmark Overrun Countries stamp is the Staehle cachet on an unaddressed first day cover franked by a corner margin block of four, shown in Figure 7. Note the close similarity of this Staehle cachet to that for the Norway stamp<sup>3</sup> and that the block of stamps displays the offset printed country name Denmark in the upper margin.

My worldwide postal history collection includes over 500 covers sent to FDR from 45 different countries around the world. Figure 8 shows an unsealed December 15, 1933, hand-addressed cover from Copenhagen franked with Scott 210 depicting King Christian X and paying the special international surface rate for unsealed Christmas cards.



The card is addressed to The Honorable Franklin Roosevelt, Hyde Park, Dutchess Co., NY, USA. The slogan cancel states that Postgiro (money orders) save time and money.



Figure 7. FDC with Staehle cachet for the Denmark Overrun Countries stamp.

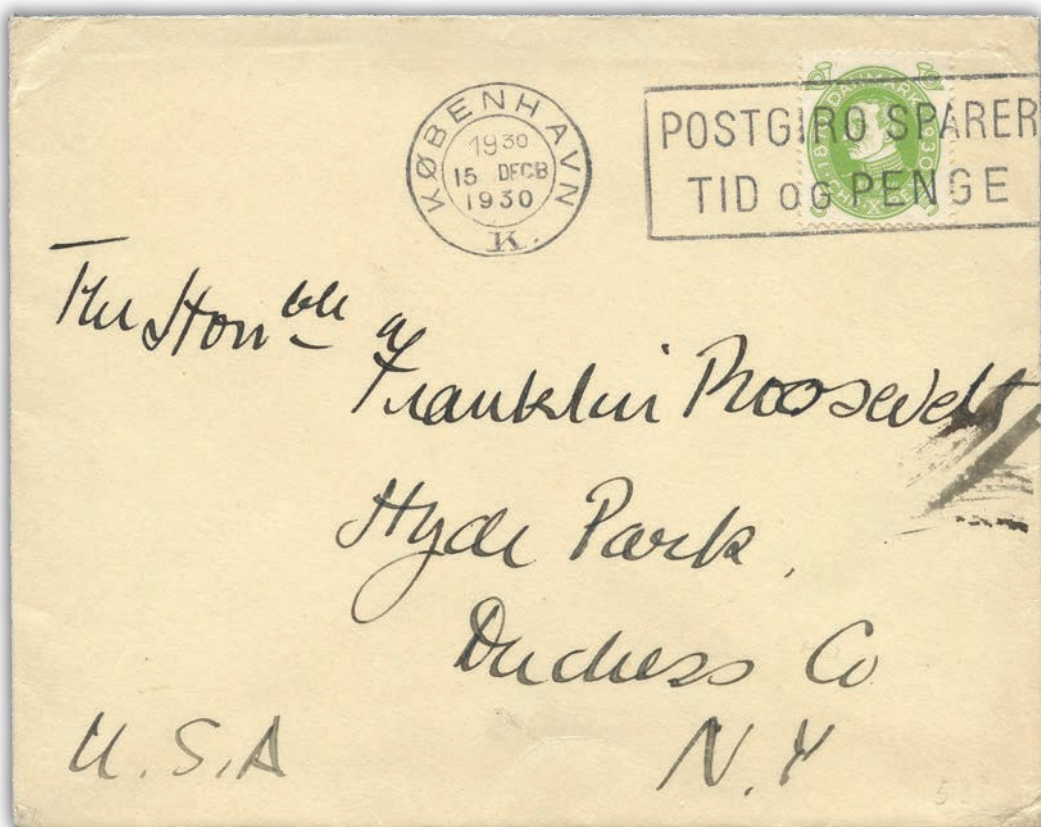


Figure 8. December 15, 1930 Christmas card cover sent to FDR at Hyde Park from Copenhagen.



King Christian X, king of Denmark from 1912 to 1947, was the older brother of King Haakon VII of Norway. Both were grandsons of Queen Victoria, and their many royal first cousins included King George V of Great Britain, Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany, Tsar Nicholas II of Russia, and King Constantine I of Greece. Both remained on the throne during World War II, with King Haakon VII fleeing to Great Britain with the Norwegian government-in-exile and King Christian X remaining in Denmark, where he was a popular figure who took daily horseback rides through the streets of Copenhagen without a bodyguard, even during the German occupation (Figure 9). He became a steadfast symbol of Danish resistance, under which only minimal cooperation was made with the Germans under terms of the armistice. These terms were relatively light compared to those in other occupied countries, such that if Denmark offered no overt resistance, Germany would respect Danish political independence. For example, in Denmark, unlike other Nazi-controlled territories, Jews were never forced to wear the Star of David.



*Figure 9. King Christian X on his daily horseback ride through the streets of Copenhagen during the German occupation.*

Another Christmas greeting sent from Copenhagen to neutral Sweden twelve years later is shown in Figure 10. Mailed on December 18, 1942, to Degerfors, Sweden, it is franked with Scott 238D depicting a sailing ship. There is also a 1942 Danish Christmas seal that shows the two-year-old royal granddaughter Margrethe, who later became the Queen of Denmark. The slogan cancel translates as “send the Christmas mail in good time”. Regarding this cover, it is also interesting to note that there is censor tape and a handstamp on the back.

The Danish Government began censoring all foreign mail shortly after the outbreak of World War II in October 1939 as part of an attempt to keep Denmark neutral. Later, during the German occupation, this continued as part of a policy of measured accommodation towards the occupying power. This limited outside contact by mail to Germany, Scandinavia and other neutral countries. Curiously, the censor tape and handstamp shown resemble the German OKW type but are from Denmark’s Post og Telegrafvaesenet (post and telegraph service), where Kontrolleret translates as “controlled.”

This cover highlights the close cultural ties and Denmark's proximity to neutral Sweden, which was to play an important role in one of the most celebrated rescue operations of World War II. During the summer of 1943 it was becoming increasingly clear that Germany would lose the war, and strikes and other overt resistance to the occupation increased. The Germans then demanded that the Danish government declare a state of emergency. This was refused, and the government resigned in protest leading to the Germans declaring martial law. Soon afterward, Nazi plans for the arrest and deportation of Danish Jews were leaked on September 28, 1943, by German diplomat Georg Ferdinand Duckwitz. The Danish resistance movement then managed to hide and later evacuate nearly all of Denmark's 7,800 Jews by sea to nearby Sweden using fishing boats



Figure 10. December 18, 1942, cover from Copenhagen to Degerfors, Sweden. Note the 1942 Danish Christmas seal and censor tape (author's collection).





Figure 11. Large December 7, 1943, Postmaster General combo favor FDC featuring all twelve Overrun Countries stamps for Europe, each with printed country name (author's collection).

and other small craft. Others remained in hiding with help from Danish citizens, and as a result, 99% of Denmark's Jewish population survived the Holocaust.

The Denmark stamp closed out the original Overrun Countries series designed to honor the European nations occupied by the Axis during World War II. I'm fortunate to have a full matched set of favor FDCs with signed letters for these Overrun Countries stamps sent to Marvin McIntyre at the White House by Deputy Third Assistant PMG Roy M. North, all autographed by either Foreign Ministers or Ambassadors of the overrun countries or the Postmaster General. Sale catalogs of both the Franklin D. Roosevelt stamp collection in 1946<sup>4</sup> and the Harold L. Ickes stamp collection in 1948<sup>5</sup> show that both men also received nearly identical sets of these favor FDCs.

More recently, I've acquired the spectacular combo FDC on official Postmaster General stationery featuring the stamps of all twelve European Overrun Countries stamps, shown in Figure 11. This 6.5" x 10.5" cover, postmarked December 7, 1943, is franked with each of the twelve corner margin singles with the country name printed in black above each stamp. This position only occurs once on each pane of 50 stamps. I've never seen another such cover on official Postmaster General stationery, and curiously,

although I've made a careful search of the sale catalogs from both the FDR and Ickes stamp collections, no similar item appears.



**Figure 12. Hendrik de Kauffmann.**

Following the Liberation of Denmark in May 1945, one of the first acts by the Danish Parliament was to revoke the charge of high treason against Hendrik de Kauffmann (Figure 12 - the "King of Greenland"), and he was able to officially represent Denmark at the 1945 San Francisco Conference and sign the new United Nations Charter. King Christian X, after falling from his horse in late October 1942, had become somewhat of an invalid during the remainder of the war. He died in April 1947, and his son, Frederick IX, became king. When King Frederick IX died in 1972, his daughter Margrethe became the

first female Danish sovereign under the 1953 Act of Succession and currently reigns as Queen Margrethe II. She is presently the world's longest-serving sovereign.

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4. *The President Franklin D. Roosevelt Collection*: H. R. Harmer, Inc., New York, Part One February 1946, lot 392.
5. *The Harold L. Ickes World Wide Stamp Collection*. Part One, New York: Edson Fifield sale 33, November 15-23, 1948, lot 752.





## Overrun Countries



## 1943-44 Overrun Countries Series: **Luxembourg**

by **Paul M. Holland**

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✉ [pholland.thorleaf@gmail.com](mailto:pholland.thorleaf@gmail.com)

*The envelope carrying this letter bears the commemorative postage stamp issued for Luxembourg, which was first placed on sale today at Washington, D. C. This is the fourth in our series of stamps for the Overrun and Occupied Countries of Europe.*

*It is a pleasure for me to send you this cover which also bears the autograph of the Minister of Luxembourg.*

*I had the added pleasure of selling the first sheet of stamps to the President.*

— From a signed August 10, 1943 letter sent with a Favor First Day Cover of the 5¢ Luxembourg stamp of the 1943-44 Overrun Countries Series sent to Marvin McIntyre at the White House by Deputy Third Assistant Postmaster General Roy M. North.

Luxembourg is a very small country sitting at the crossroads of Europe between the great powers. This is perhaps epitomized by the first stamps of Luxembourg issued in 1852 that were curiously denominated in two different currencies, Silbergroschen (Prussian currency) for letters going across the border into the German postal system, or Centimes for local usage and letters going elsewhere.

Examples of these from my representative worldwide stamp collection are shown in Figure 1. Note also that the portrait depicted on these stamps is that of King William III of the Netherlands, who was also the Grand Duke of Luxembourg.



*Figure 1. In 1852, the first stamps of Luxembourg appeared in two different currencies.*

Curiously, when William III of the Netherlands died in 1890, the succession to the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg was bound by the 1783 Nassau Family Pact. As a result, the crown of Luxembourg passed to a male heir of another branch of the House of Nassau rather than William III's daughter, Wilhelmina, who became Queen of the Netherlands. However, in 1907, a law was passed allowing female succession for Luxembourg in the absence of any remaining dynastic males of the House of Nassau, leading to the grand duchy's first reigning female monarch, who, upon her abdication in 1919, was succeeded by her 23-year old younger sister Charlotte. Grand Duchess Charlotte of Luxembourg then ruled for more than 45 years, from January 1919 until November 1964.

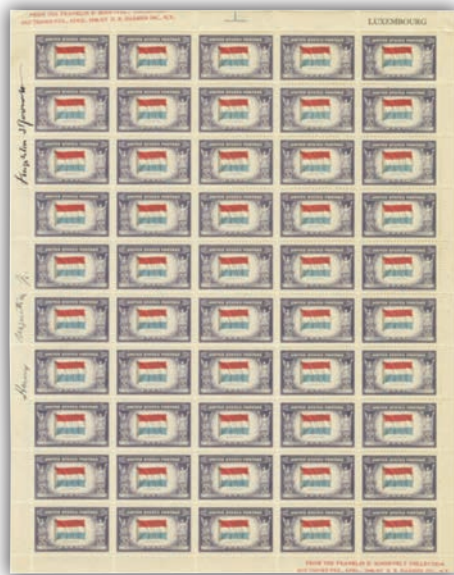


*Figure 2. FDR purchasing the first sheet of the Luxembourg Overrun Countries stamps from Roy North in the White House with Hugues Le Gallais, the minister of Luxembourg looking on.*

When the Germans invaded in the early morning hours of May 10, 1940, the Grand Duchess Charlotte fled along with her government to France. Luxembourg had been a neutral country, as in World War I, but again, Germany violated Luxembourg's neutrality. On the day of the invasion, the capital, Luxembourg City, was occupied by noon, and most of the rest of the country was occupied by that evening.

The die proof for the Luxembourg Overrun Countries stamp was approved on July 10, 1943, by Postmaster General (PMG) Frank C. Walker. Four colors were used in printing this stamp: blue violet for the outer engraved frame, with color offset printing of the flag in dark rose, light blue, and black. Plate proofs show that The American Banknote Company employed a "shared" layout for full sheets of 200 during the printing of Overrun Countries stamps for Luxembourg, with the top two panes of 50 for Luxembourg and the bottom two for the Netherlands.<sup>1</sup>

The first day ceremony on August 10, 1943, was held at the White House, with Deputy Third Assistant PMG Roy North selling the first sheet of stamps to President Franklin D. Roosevelt in the presence of Hugues Le Gallais, minister of Luxembourg. This event is shown in Figure 2.



**Figure 3. First sheet of Luxembourg stamps sold, later signed by the FDR and Henry Morgenthau, Jr. in the left margin** (image courtesy Heritage Auctions).

Interestingly, this original sheet of Luxembourg Overrun Countries stamps sold to FDR by Roy North and preserved in his stamp collection is shown in Figure 3. Note that in the auction image, the stamp sheet has been signed by both FDR and his Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau, Jr., in the left margin. During the original 1946 sale of FDR's stamp collection, this was listed as Lot 252.<sup>2</sup> I'm fortunate to have a similar autographed sheet for the 1935 Connecticut Tercentenary stamp.<sup>3</sup>

Deputy Third Assistant PMG Roy North explicitly mentions selling the first sheet of Luxembourg stamps to FDR in the letter and favor FDC he sent to Marvin McIntyre at the White House. These are shown in Figure 4. Note that North also got Hugues Le Gallais, the minister of Luxembourg, to autograph the cover.

I also have another Deputy Third Assistant PMG favor FDC sent to Henry A. Wallace, Vice President of the United States. Like other favor FDCs in my collection, those addressed to Henry Wallace as Vice President typically lack enclosed letters (suggesting these were removed and filed). In contrast, those sent to him as Secretary of Agriculture generally include the signed letters. This cover, addressed to Wallace at the United States Senate, is shown in Figure 5.

However in lieu of a letter, I have another contemporary item related to Wallace in my collection. In early 1943, Vice President Wallace was dispatched by FDR on a



THE DEPUTY THIRD ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL  
WASHINGTON

August 10, 1943.

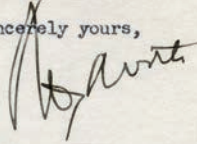
Dear Mr. McIntyre:

The envelope carrying this letter bears the commemorative postage stamp issued for Luxembourg, which was first placed on sale today at Washington, D. C. This is the fourth in our series of stamps for the Overrun and Occupied Countries of Europe.

It is a pleasure for me to send you this cover which also bears the autograph of the Minister of Luxembourg.

I had the added pleasure of selling the first sheet of stamps to the President.

Sincerely yours,



Hon. Marvin McIntyre,  
Secretary to the President,  
The White House,  
Washington, D. C.

THE DEPUTY  
THIRD ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL  
WASHINGTON

*Hugues Le Gallais*  
Minister of Luxembourg



FIRST DAY OF ISSUE

Hon. Marvin McIntyre,  
Secretary to the President,  
The White House,  
Washington, D. C.

First day cover

Figure 4. Deputy Third Assistant PMG favor FDC signed by Hugues Le Gallais, the minister of Luxembourg, with letter from Roy North sent to Marvin McIntyre at the White House.

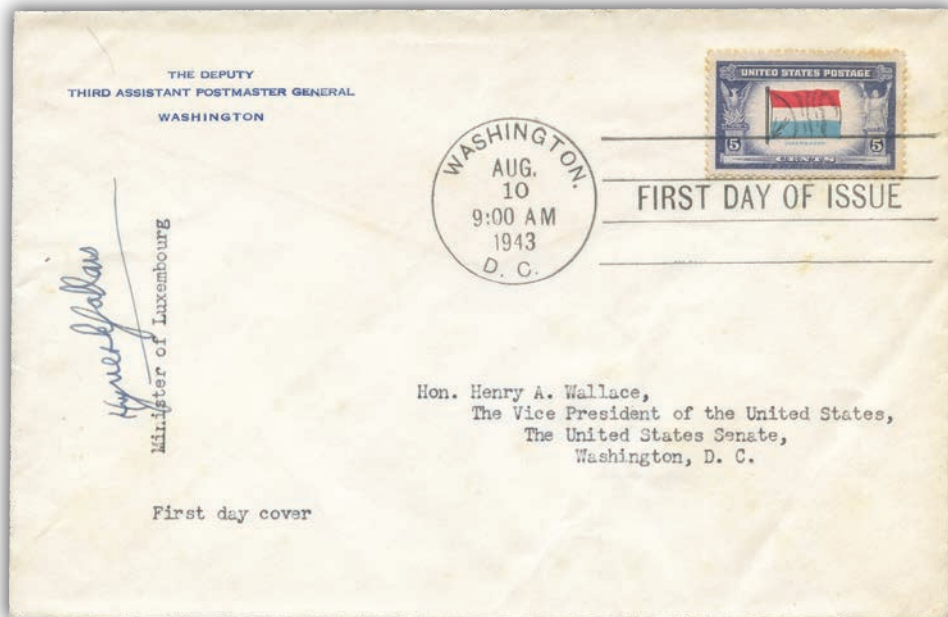


Figure 5. Favor FDC sent by Roy North sent to Vice President Henry Wallace at the US Senate.

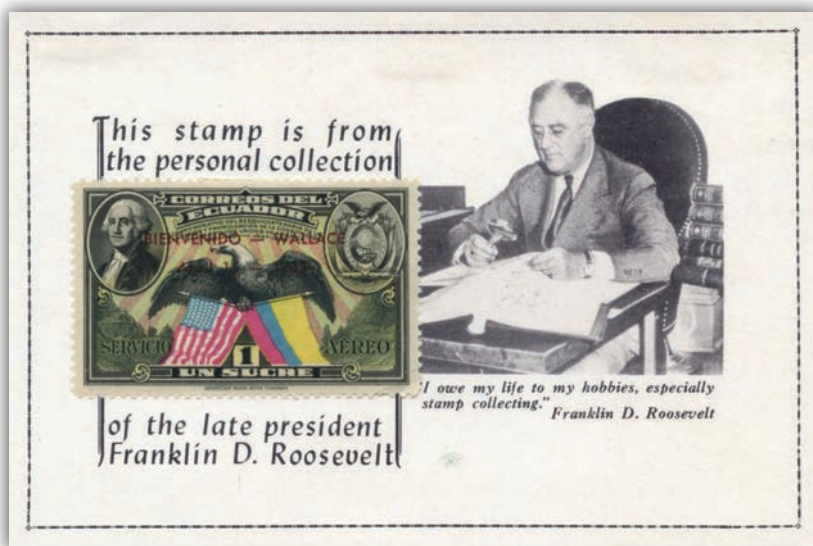


Figure 6. Airmail stamp from FDR's stamp collection commemorating Vice President Henry A. Wallace's visit to Ecuador on April 15, 1943.

wartime goodwill tour of Latin America, making twenty-four stops across Central and South America. Wallace visited Ecuador on April 15th, receiving a warm welcome due in part to his ability to deliver speeches in Spanish. This visit was commemorated by special airmail stamps of Ecuador overprinted "Bienvenido - Wallace Abril 15 - 1943", one of which (Scott C103) from FDR's own stamp collection is shown in Figure 6.<sup>2</sup> This was mounted on a special card from the Gimbels Stamp Department under Jacques Minkus and has an authentication stamp on the back (not shown).

Postmaster General Frank C. Walker did not send out nearly as many favor FDCs with signed letters as his predecessor PMG James A. Farley, frequently opting to send favor FDCs on official PMG stationery with enclosed printed notices about the stamp instead. For example, I have a complete set of fourteen favor FDCs for Overrun Countries stamps sent to Mrs. W. W. Howes, wife of the former First Assistant Postmaster General William W. Howes, all with printed notices from the Post Office Department. The one for the Netherlands is shown in Figure 7.



Figure 7. Favor FDC for the Netherlands stamp sent by PMG Walker to Mrs. W. W. Howes.

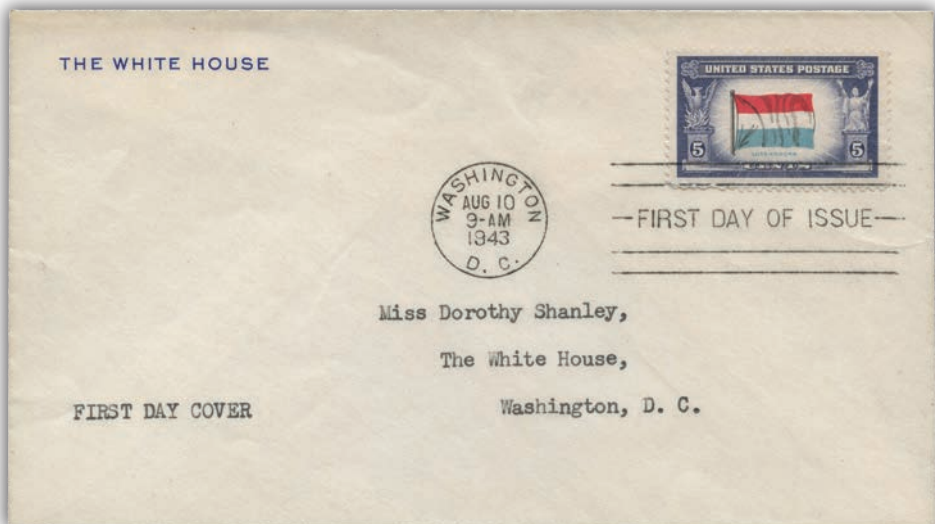


Figure 8. FDC on official White House stationery for the Luxembourg stamp.



FDCs on official White House stationery were also created for stamps of the Overrun Countries Series. An example from my collection of the Luxembourg stamp is shown in Figure 8. This was sent to Miss Dorothy Shanley who served in the White House during both the FDR and Truman administrations.

A printed Dorothy Knapp cacheted cover for the Luxembourg stamp is shown in Figure 9. Note the spear and raised sword forming a V for victory, flag and the slogan “A Nation Small Will Risk Its All For Liberty.”



Figure 9. Printed Dorothy Knapp cachet on FDC for the Luxembourg Overrun Countries stamp.

Luxembourg is indeed a small country, the smallest of all those honored in the Overrun Countries series. As a result, in my substantial collection of worldwide covers sent to FDR, I have only the June 1, 1933 cover mailed to FDR from Remick in the Moselle region of Luxembourg, shown in Figure 10. It is franked by Scott 185, which depicts Grand Duchess Charlotte and pays the international surface rate.

When the Grand Duchess Charlotte fled the May 1940 German invasion, she took up residence at the Château de Montastruc in south-western France. Then French military resistance collapsed and following the formal capitulation of France in July, the Grand Duchess with her government-in-exile then escaped to London in August 1940. In the meantime, the Germans proposed to restore the Grand Duchess to her functions, but Charlotte refused, and she began making radio broadcasts to her homeland.

With the occupation, Nazification and Germanisation of Luxembourg began. German became the official language, with the use of French being banned in August 1940. By early 1941, the Nuremberg Laws had been introduced, French-sounding names were Germanised, and even the wearing of berets was forbidden. German definitive postage stamps were overprinted for use in Luxembourg on October 1, 1940. By this time, the German Reichsmark had been declared legal tender in Luxembourg. Then, on December 5, 1940, existing stocks of Luxembourg stamps were re-valued in German Reichspfennings, and these were used until August 1942, when Luxembourg was annexed and directly incorporated into the German Reich, as had been the case for Austria. Luxembourg then became part of Gau Moselland, the Moselle district in

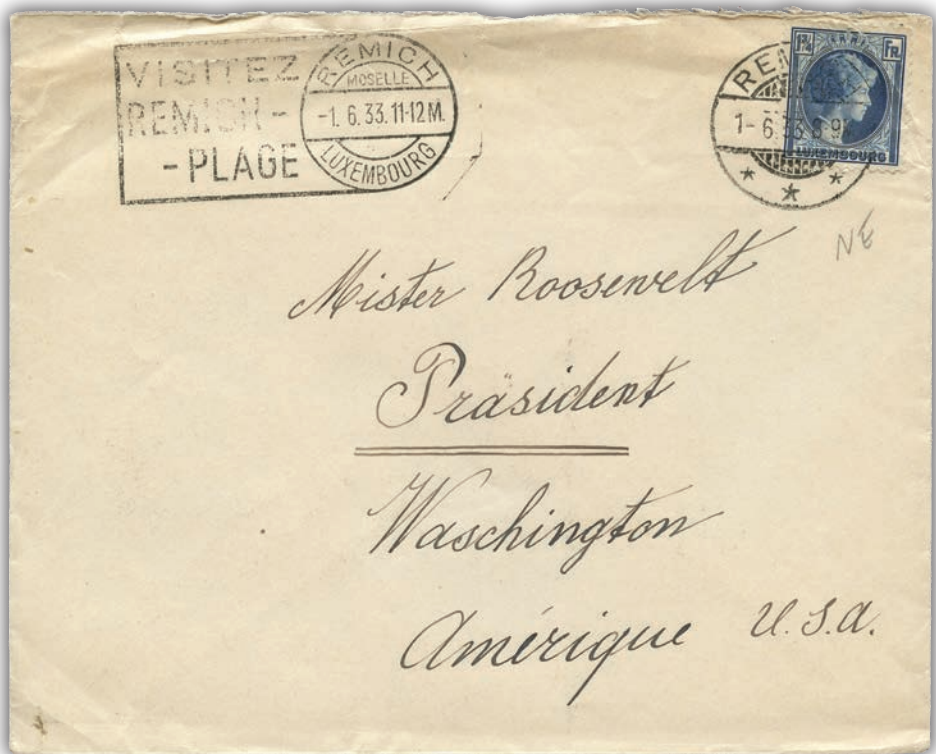


Figure 10. June 1, 1933, cover sent to FDR from Remick, Luxembourg.

Germany. Luxembourgers were subject to being conscripted into the German army, and German postage stamps were used. While I have complete sets of occupation stamps issued for Luxembourg in my representative worldwide stamp collection (Scott N1-N32), a single example of each type is shown in Figure 11. The “Luxemburg” overprint occurred on German definitive issues depicting Hindenburg, and the re-valued Luxembourg stamp shown depicts the Grand Duchess Charlotte.

Luxembourg’s government-in-exile was established in London, with the Grand Duchess and her family moving to Canada, where they settled in Montreal. Grand Duchess Charlotte also traveled about the United States, strongly supporting FDR’s efforts against isolationism before the Pearl Harbor attack, then as a wartime ally, with the Grand Duchess staying at the FDR White House on several occasions. Among her wartime speeches were the words “I am happy to be among the people of the United States who, under the enlightened leadership of President Roosevelt, have become the guardians of freedom and justice. President Roosevelt’s statement that the United States will never recognize territorial changes brought about by violence is a strong comfort to the small and weak.”



Figure 11. The 1940 occupation stamps of Luxembourg were in German currency.

The Grand Duchess Charlotte's son Jean volunteered for the British Army in 1942. He participated in the landings in Normandy, the Battle of Caen, and the liberation of both Brussels and Luxembourg. Although Luxembourg was nominally liberated on September 10, 1944, it suffered significant damage during the mid-December 1944 German counter-offense known as the "Battle of the Bulge."

Wartime usage of one of the Luxembourg Overrun Countries stamps is shown on the airmail cover in Figure 12. This was sent from Pittsburgh, PA, to Syracuse, NY, on April 16, 1945, with the additional 3¢ in postage paid by the 1944 Philippines Resistance stamp, a stamp produced as part of an effort to recognize countries overrun by Japan in the Pacific.<sup>4</sup>

Following World War II, a special memorial souvenir sheet was produced in remembrance of the late President Roosevelt to aid the war victims of Luxembourg City. Figure 13 shows a map, flags and images of FDR with the Grand Duchess Charlotte, over the words "Don't worry my dear child, I'll take you home again" spoken by President Roosevelt in Washington, DC. Below this, it states, "This great humanitarian kept his word. The Luxembourg nation owes him an eternal debt of gratitude." The souvenir sheet itself is franked with new Luxembourg definitive stamps depicting the Grand Duchess (Scott 223 and 227) that were issued after the liberation and canceled on September 10, 1945.

On April 30, 1963, Grand Duchess Charlotte paid yet another visit to the White House, this time for a state dinner with President John F. Kennedy, accompanied by her son Prince Jean of Luxembourg. In JFK's remarks, he recalled the gallant role the duchess had "played in 1940 when your country was overrun," along with the distinguished military role of her son during World War II. In November 1964, Grand Duchess Charlotte abdicated in favor of her son, Jean who then ruled as the Grand Duke of Luxembourg until the year 2000.



Figure 12. April 16, 1945 airmail cover with Luxembourg stamp.



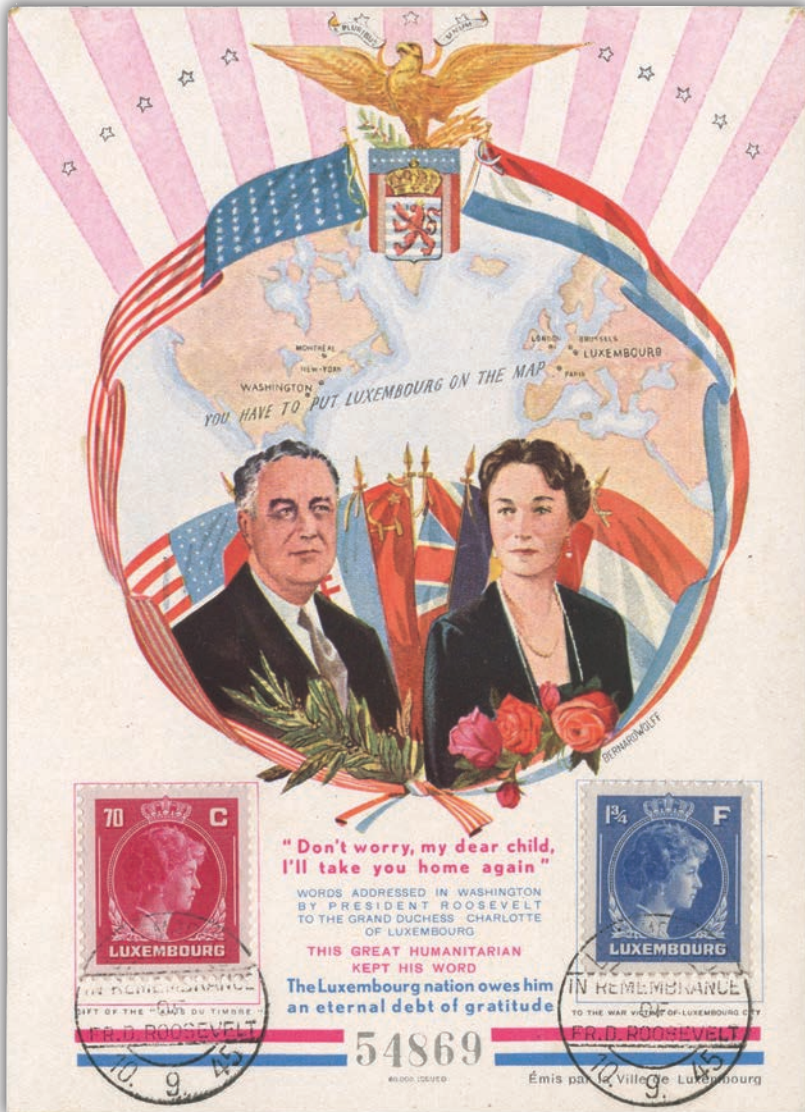


Figure 13. September 1945 memorial souvenir sheet in honor of FDR.

This article completes the series for the twelve Overrun Countries of Europe beginning with Poland in the April 2021 issue of *The United States Specialist*. The author wants to especially thank the editor for his skill in helping to bring these fascinating stories to life.

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*The Overrun Countries Series*

## 1943–44 Overrun Countries Series: Korea

by **Paul M. Holland**

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“ It gives me great pleasure to send you this first-day cover bearing the new commemorative postage stamp honoring Korea.

In line with your famous declaration at Cairo, the American people are sympathetic to and hopeful of the aspiration and ambition of the Korean people to be a free nation again. This stamp is, therefore, truly significant of things to come and will be appreciated by Koreans all over the world. ”

—From a signed December 2, 1944, letter sent with a Favor First Day Cover of the 5¢ Korea stamp of the 1943–44 Overrun Countries Series sent to President Franklin D. Roosevelt at the White House by Deputy Third Assistant Postmaster General, Roy M. North.

If there's an outlier among the Overrun Countries Series stamps, it is Korea. Released nearly a year after the others on December 2, 1944, it was the last to be issued and the only one from Asia. This short article is designed to include the Korean stamp and complete the series.

The Overrun Countries Series stamps for Europe had proven to be very popular with the public and so in early 1944, FDR suggested that stamps might also be issued to

honor Asian countries overrun by Japan. The preliminary list included the Philippines, Korea, Thailand, Manchuria, Formosa, Hong Kong, Macao, Timor, Burma, Malaya, New Guinea, North Borneo, Indochina, and the Dutch Indies. However, after review by the State Department it was concluded that only stamps for the Philippines and Korea would be appropriate, as the Thai government had actually declared war on us, others such as Manchuria were either legally part of China or were European colonies that had been “liberated by the Japanese.” Thus, from a diplomatic perspective, issuing such stamps would first require the assent of either the Chinese government or European colonial powers.<sup>1</sup>

Regarding the Philippines, which had long been a United States territory, a 3¢ stamp paying the domestic letter postage rate was developed with a unique design commemorating the resistance of the United States and Philippine defenders on Corregidor. Details on this are given elsewhere.<sup>2</sup> As a consequence the 5¢ Korean stamp became the last of the “flag stamps” issued to commemorate overrun countries, and the only one issued for Japanese occupation.



*Figure 1. Chiang Kai-Shek, FDR and Winston Churchill at the Cairo conference, November 1943.*

The November 1943 Cairo declaration, issued jointly by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek on behalf of the United Nations stated that “Korea shall in due course, become free and independent.” This decision had been reached during their discussions on war aims against Japan. In Figure 1, they are shown sitting together at FDR’s villa in Cairo, Egypt on November 27, 1943.



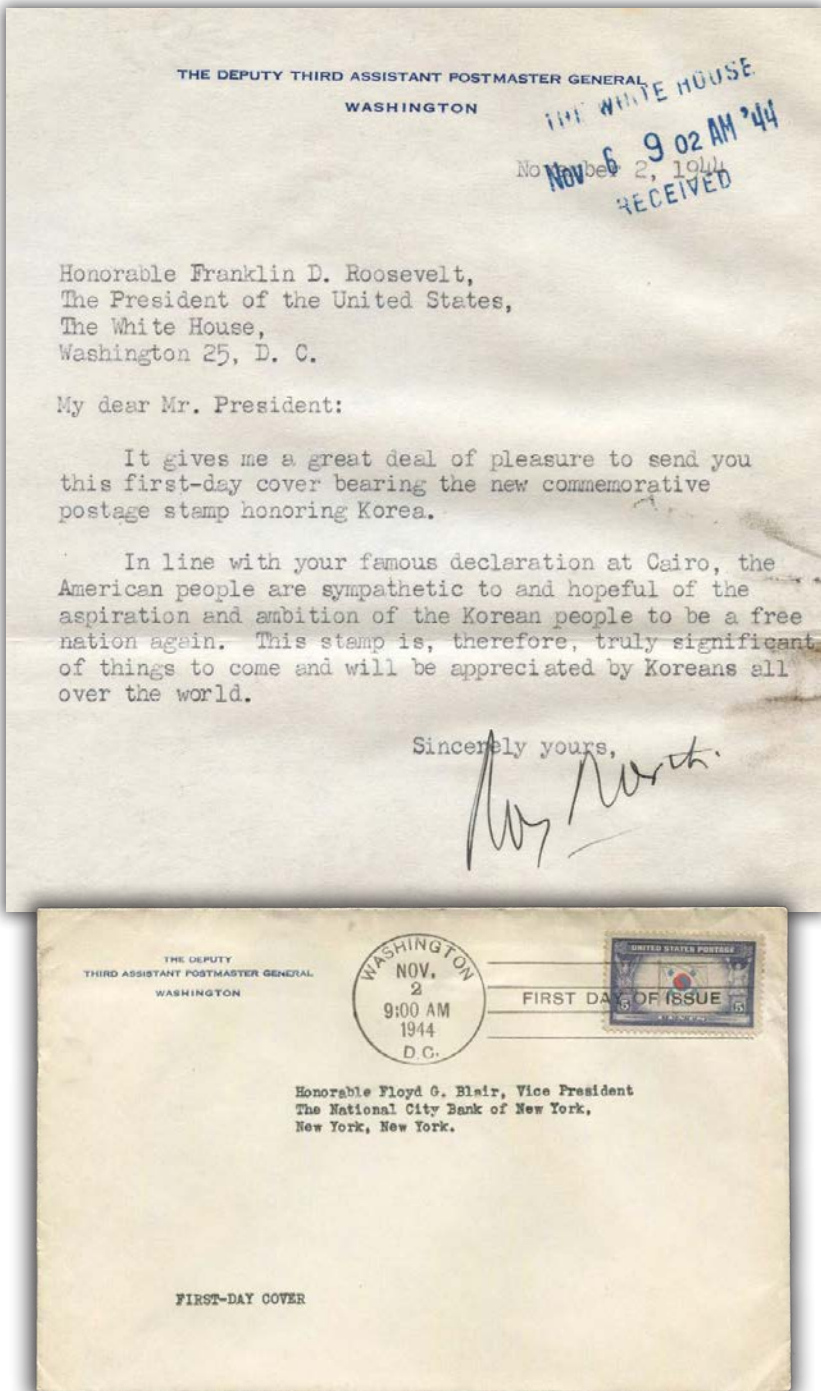


Figure 2. Deputy Third Assistant PMG Roy North favor FDC letter (cropped) for Korea stamp sent to FDR at the White House, with mismatched cover.

On April 13, 1944, the Post Office Department first revealed that a postage stamp honoring Korea would be issued, with further details to follow. That this would be another 5¢ flag stamp in the Overrun Countries series was announced on August 15, 1944. Two months later, the die proof for the Korea Overrun Countries stamp was approved on October 12, 1944. Four colors were used in printing these stamps, blue violet for the outer engraved frame, with color offset printing of the Korean flag in red, black and light blue. Like the Denmark stamp, these were printed in full sheets of 200, unlike many other Overrun Countries stamps that employed a “shared” layout on the press sheet. Overrun Countries stamps for Korea were then cut into four panes of 50 stamps each for distribution.<sup>3</sup> The first sheet of these stamps was sold by PMG Frank C. Walker to Marian and Lillian Lee, young twin girls from Korea dressed in traditional costume at a special ceremony.<sup>4</sup>

As in the case of other Overrun Countries stamps, special favor first day covers (FDCs) were sent out by Deputy Third Assistant PMG Roy M. North. For European countries, North had specially arranged for the Foreign Ministers or Ambassadors of each of the Overrun Countries to autograph these FDCs, with Postmaster General Frank C. Walker’s signature substituted for this where needed. I’m fortunate in having a complete signed set of these sent to Marvin H. McIntyre at the FDR White House, although my matched set ends before the Korea stamp was issued since McIntyre died on December 13, 1943.

However, in the case of the Korea Overrun Countries stamp, I do have an original signed favor FDC letter sent to President Franklin D. Roosevelt by Roy North in my collection. Due to significant environmental damage, this is shown slightly cropped in Figure 2, but the official cover addressed to FDR is missing. In lieu of this, I show an auction image of another favor FDC for the Korea Overrun Countries stamp (without letter) sent by Roy North. What’s especially notable here is the lack of a signature on the favor FDC, and that there is no mention of any such signature in the FDR letter. Note also the official White House receiving stamp on my letter.

So why is there no signature on the Korea favor FDC? Perhaps this is best considered in the context of the long history of Korea, beginning with the Joseon dynasty (1392–1897), which eventually became weak, isolationist, and stagnant. It was replaced by the Korean Empire (1897–1910) with a brief period of social reform and modernization, but following the Russo-Japanese War, Korea was forced to sign a protectorate treaty with Japan. Ultimately, Korea was simply annexed by Japan in 1910. As a result, unlike the countries of Europe, there was no previous Foreign Minister or Ambassador to the United States to sign such a favor FDC, so it may have seemed pointless to have PMG Walker sign it instead.

Besides the Overrun Countries favor FDCs sent out by Deputy Third Assistant PMG Roy North, PMG Frank C. Walker also mailed out favor FDCs on official stationery. These typically came with printed Post Office Department notices about the stamps instead of letters. My example for the Korea Overrun Countries stamp sent to Mrs. W. W. Howe with enclosed notice is shown in Figure 3. She was the wife of the former First Assistant Postmaster General William W. Howes. The notice simply reprints information provided in the Postal Bulletin of October 13, 1944.

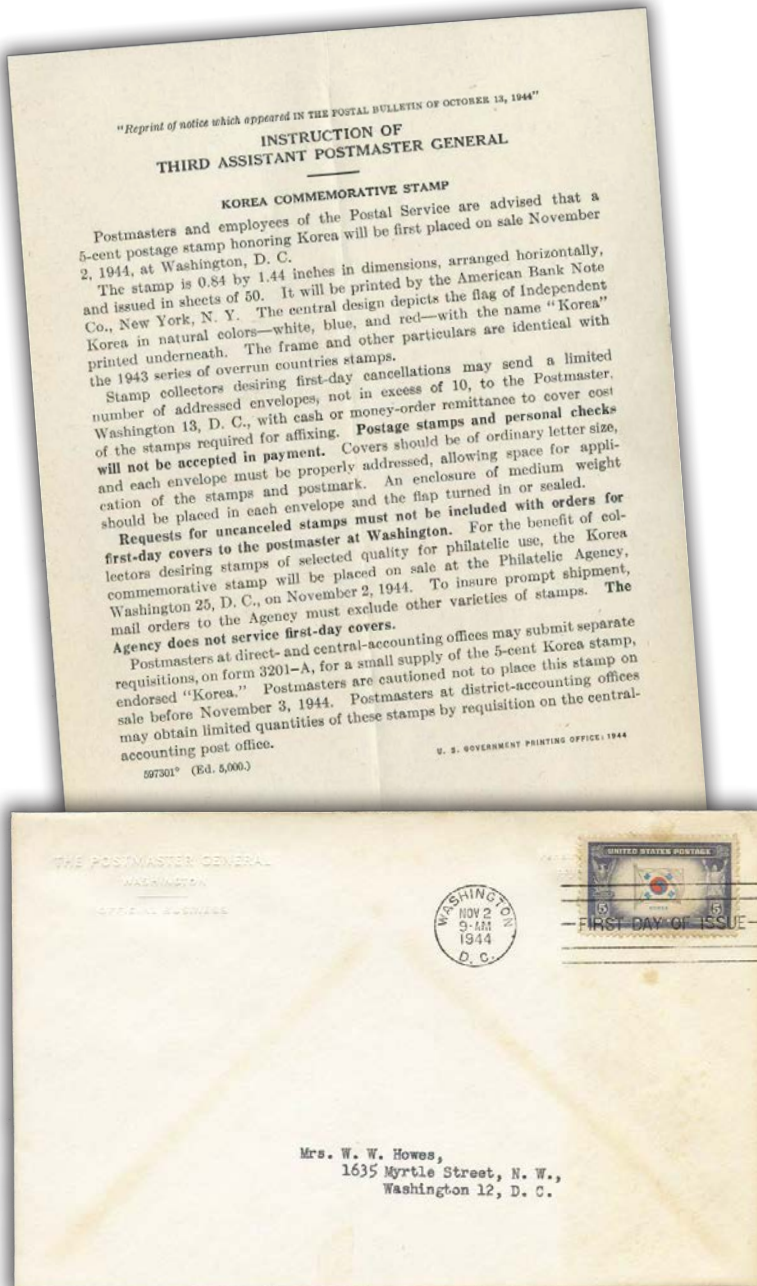


Figure 3. Favor FDC on official PMG stationery with enclosed notice for the Korea stamp.

Other FDCs for the Korea Overrun Countries stamp were sent out on official stationery. My example on official United States Senate stationery of US Senator Joseph C. O'Mahoney that was sent to a constituent in Casper, Wyoming, is shown in Figure 4.



A member of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, Sen. O'Mahoney knew about stamps and the Post Office Department very well, since O'Mahoney had been Farley's First Assistant PMG in 1933, before becoming a Senator from Wyoming.

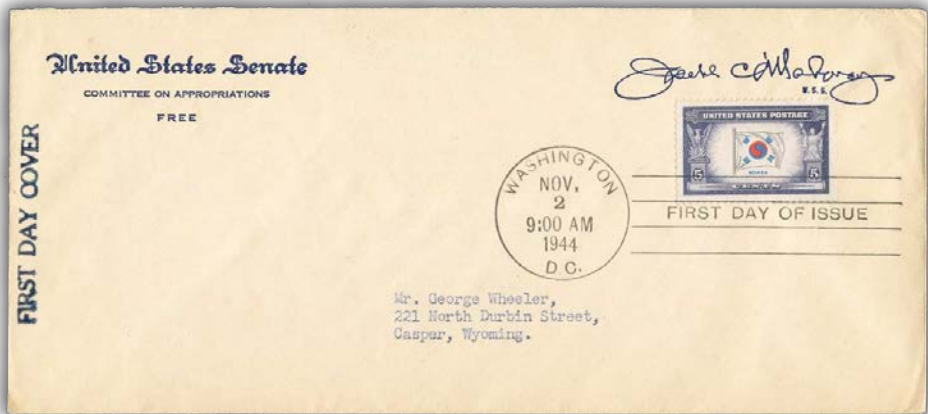


Figure 4. Favor FDC of the Korea Overrun Countries sent on official stationery of US Senator Joseph C. O'Mahoney.

Among the commercial cachets created for the Korea Overrun Countries stamp, is the Anderson cachet on my unaddressed first day cover franked by a corner margin block of four shown in Figure 5. Note that this cachet describes how “Korea has been under the yoke of Japan by increasing degrees since 1895 when China renounced her claims to sovereignty.” Also note “KOREA” offset printed in black in the upper right margin of the “plate block.”

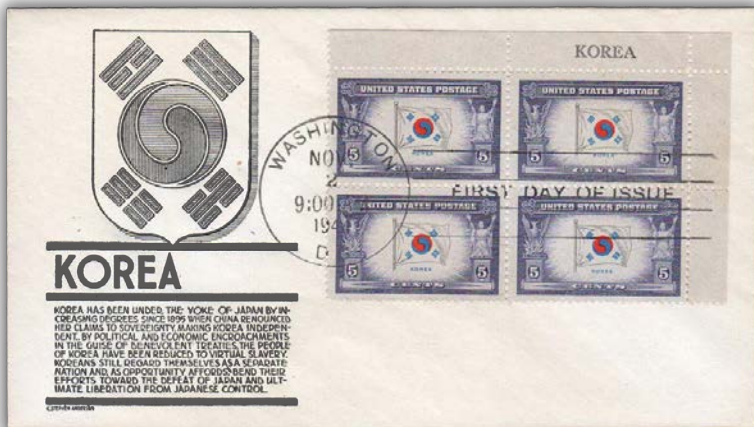


Figure 5. FDC with Anderson cachet for the Korea Overrun Countries stamp.

In Figure 6, I show an example of airmail usage of the Korea Overrun Countries stamp on my wartime cover posted from a Lt. Colonel stationed at Fort Meade, Maryland, to his wife in Portland, Oregon, shortly before Christmas in December 1944. This cover

provides a poignant reminder of wartime separations at the holidays. Note the addition of a 3¢ Telegraph commemorative postage stamp to make up the then current 8¢ airmail rate.



**Figure 6. Airmail cover franked with Korea Overrun Countries stamp, December 1944.**

Finally, it should be mentioned that the Korea Overrun Countries stamp was removed from sale at the Philatelic Agency on December 30, 1944. This gave it the shortest sales life of any of the Overrun Countries stamps, creating somewhat of a furor in philatelic circles. While collectors and philatelic writers appealed to the Post Office Department to order additional stamps to be printed, this was rejected, and thus, the tenure of the series of Overrun Countries stamps came to a rather sudden end.<sup>3</sup>

Nonetheless, these colorful stamps have long been popular with collectors, and in the words of Ken Lawrence, for beginning stamp collectors, these stamps are “often among their first prized acquisitions.”<sup>5</sup> Even now, as I flip through the pages of my representative worldwide stamp collection, I must say that the page with Overrun Countries stamps really stands out.

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