

BEYOND POSTAL HISTORY

PREXIES & WORLD WAR II

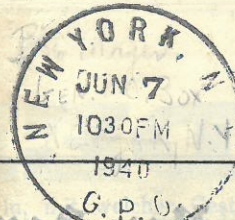
At the suggestion of President Franklin Roosevelt, an avid stamp collector, the United States Post Office introduced a new series of definitive stamps in 1938. Technically known as the Fifth Bureau, over the years the stamps have become known simply as the "Prexies". The Prexies consists of 32 face different designs issued in a variety of colors and formats, including sheets, booklet panes as well as horizontal and vertical coils. In addition, two stamps were overprinted for emergency use in the Canal Zone.

Because millions of Prexies were printed, none of the stamps are considered rare. The challenge is to find postal history beyond rates and routes --
To show covers with historical significance.



A 20c Prexie prepaid the half ounce "Clipper" air mail rate (in effect April 1937 thru January 1945) on this December 7, 1941 cover mailed from the U. S. Mainland to Schofield Barracks, an Army Post Adjacent to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

Bob Mayer 1240 PARK AVE
176 E 87th St Box 518 City
Mittwoch, 29. Mai 1940



G.P. Luftpost-Woch

BEZUGSPREIS

für zweimalige Ausgabe und Reichsausgabe
(einmal täglich, vereinigt Abendblatt, I. und
II. Morgenblatt) in Deutschland monatl. RM
6.— zuzügl. ortsübl. Zustellgeld. Postpreis:
RM 6.— einschließl. Postzeitungsgebühr bei
zweimalig. Ausgabe 48 Pf., mit Stadt-Blatt
58,5 Pf., Reichsausgabe 89,2 Pf., zuzüglich
Zustellgeld bei zweimaliger Ausgabe 72 Pf.,
Reichsausgabe 42 Pf. Im Ausland nach dem
Tarif der am Weltpostverein beteilig. Post-
anstalten. Unter Streifband Portozuschlag.
Einzelpreis: zweimal. Ausgabe: Abend- und
I. Morgenblatt (vereinigt): 20 Pf.,
II. Morgenblatt (vereinigt): 20 Pf.,
Reichsausgabe: 20 Pf.

Befördert durch
Transatlantikflug

Frankfurt

(Frankfurter Handelszeitung) und Handel

Fernsprech-Sammel-Nr.: Ortsruf 2 02 02 Fernruf 2 03 01 — Draht

Kein Bluff.

EW Im allgemeinen pflegt man Kriegspläne geheim zu halten. Wie jedoch die Engländer im Falle einer kriegerischen Verwicklung mit Deutschland diesen Krieg zu führen gedachten, das war seit langem bekannt. Seit Jahren war sich alle Welt darüber einig, daß England die Blockaderezepte aus dem Weltkrieg wieder hervorholen wollte, und je mehr die deutsche Wehrmacht erstarkte, desto deutlicher wurde, daß England diesmal überhaupt auf den Versuch verzichten werde, eine militärische Entscheidung zu suchen, bevor Deutschland auf wirtschaftlichem Gebiet die Gurgel zuge- drückt sein werde. Nie ist ein Kriegsplan hemmungsloser

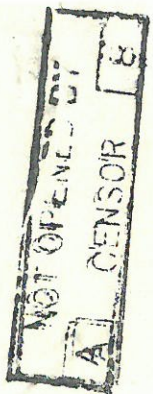
nicht den angenehm klingenden Einflüsterungen flüchtig ur- teilender Ratgeber vertraut, sondern wären sie unvorein- genommen den Dingen auf den Grund gegangen, so hätten sie einer solchen groben Täuschung nicht erliegen können. Aber sie haben in Klischees gedacht, sie haben phantasielose Analogien mit dem Weltkriege gezogen, in den Deutschland doch reich eingetreten sei, während es diesmal schon vor Ausbruch des Krieges auf manches habe verzichten müssen, sie haben sich auf vage Gefühle verlassen und auf schlechte Informationen gestützt. Sie haben die Abwehrkraft des Geg- ners nicht richtig eingeschätzt und wohl auch nicht richtig

Specially prepared weekly editions of the "Frankfurter Zeitung", sent to the US in bulk by the Trans-Atlantic Clipper Service, and then remailed to subscribers at the second class transient rate. Most copies of the newspaper never made it to the United States as the British, then at war with the Germans, confiscated them in Bermuda when the Clipper stopped to refuel.

REBELLION

Fourteen 5¢ Prexies paid the 70¢ per half ounce Trans-Pacific air mail rate in effect July 1940 thru the beginning of World War II.

Backstamps show a four-week delay in delivery caused by the fundamentalist Ali Rashid rebellion against British authority of 1941.



CENSORSHIP

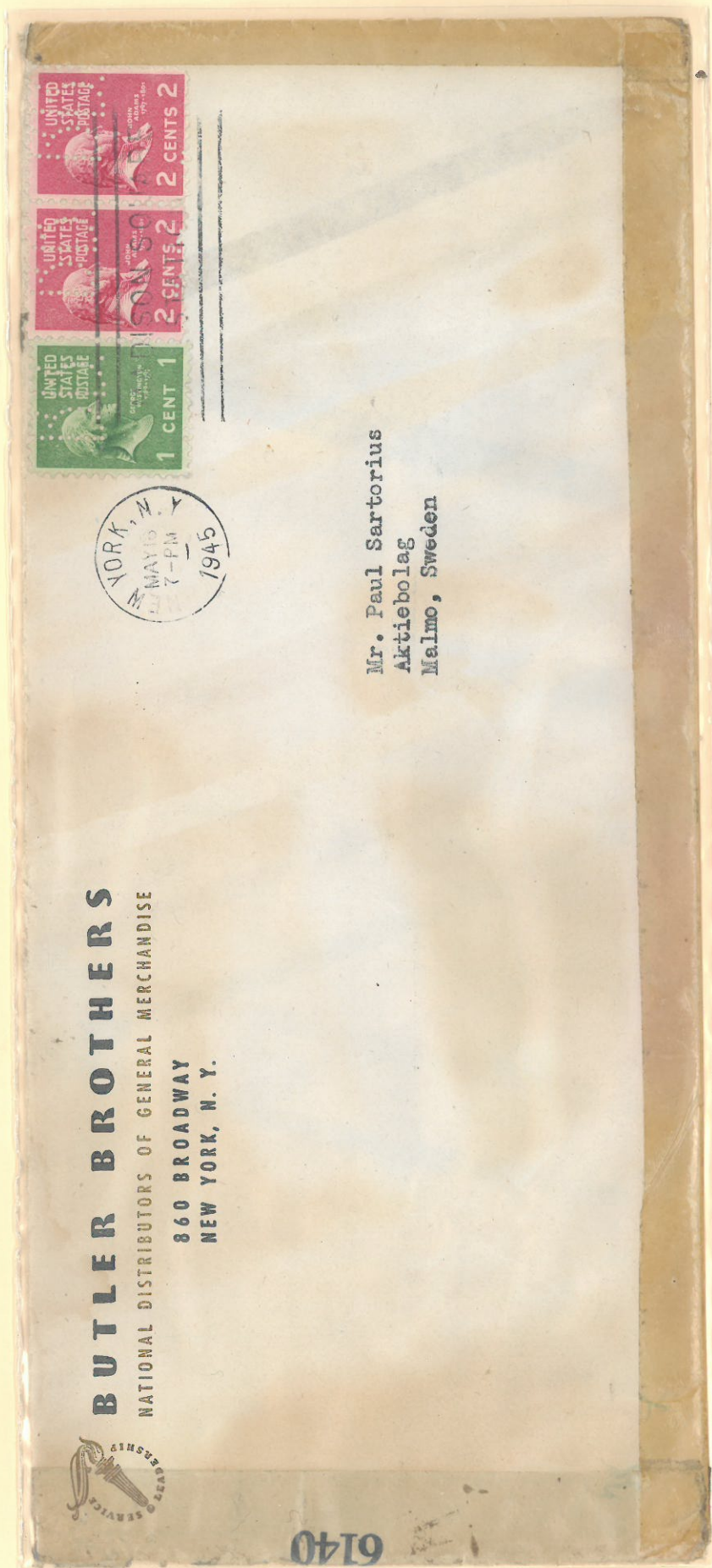
Three Prexies with perfins paid the 5c per ounce UPU surface rate on this May 1945 cover to Sweden, chemically censored with acid to uncover possible secret messages.

Chemicals were used to detect invisible inks (lemon juice, vinegar and urine) which could be made visible thru heating or brushing with chemicals.

Each color streak used inside the cover represents a separate agent used to try to identify any invisible writing.



Inside of envelope showing evidence of acid testing



CASUALTY OF WAR

This double-weight
surface envelope
was mailed on
December 15, 1939
addressed to the
Captain of the SS
Panachrandos
c/o The Furness
Shipping Company
in Belgium.

Censored and received
January 26, 1940, by the
shipping office and
returned March 6, 1940.
On January 16, 1940
the unescorted freighter
was hit by a torpedo
from a German U-Boat
(U-44) west of Brest
France and sank in three
minutes with the loss of
all 31 on board.



CAPT. B. CATSIKIS - S/S "PANACHRANDOS"

Return to

Mrs. Continental Grain Co.

219 Produce Exchange

New York, N.Y.

CONTINENTAL GRAIN CO.

219 PRODUCE EXCHANGE

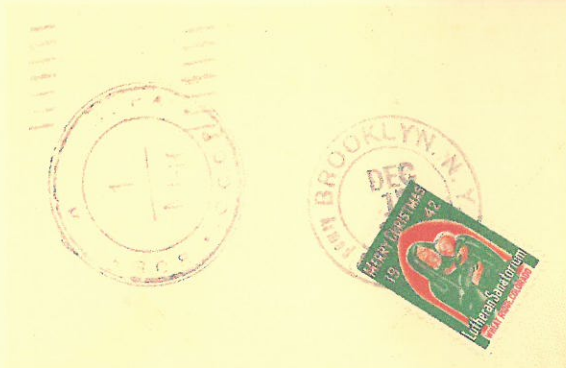
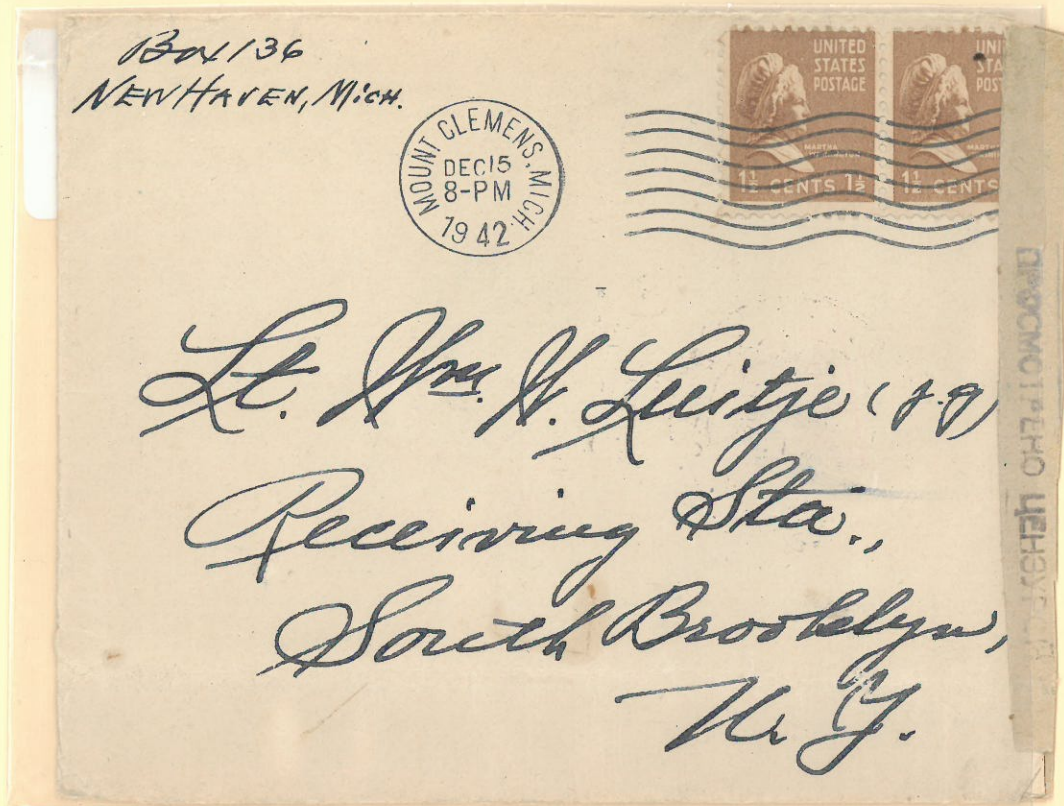
NEW YORK, N. Y.

CENSOR

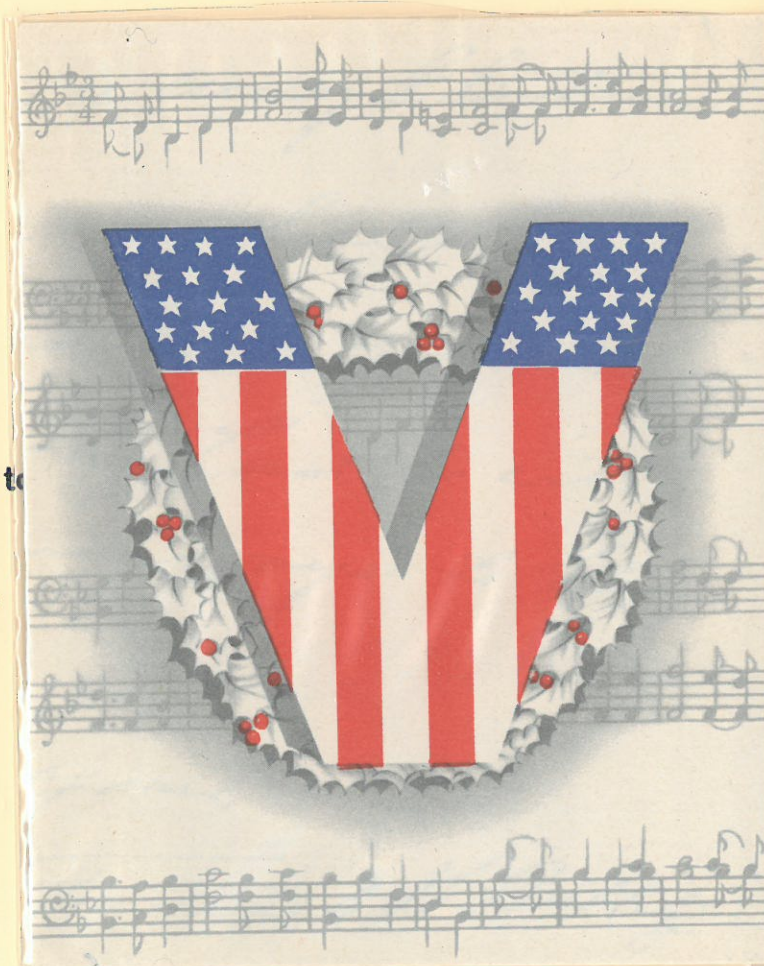
1457

"UNDERCOVER" ADDRESSES

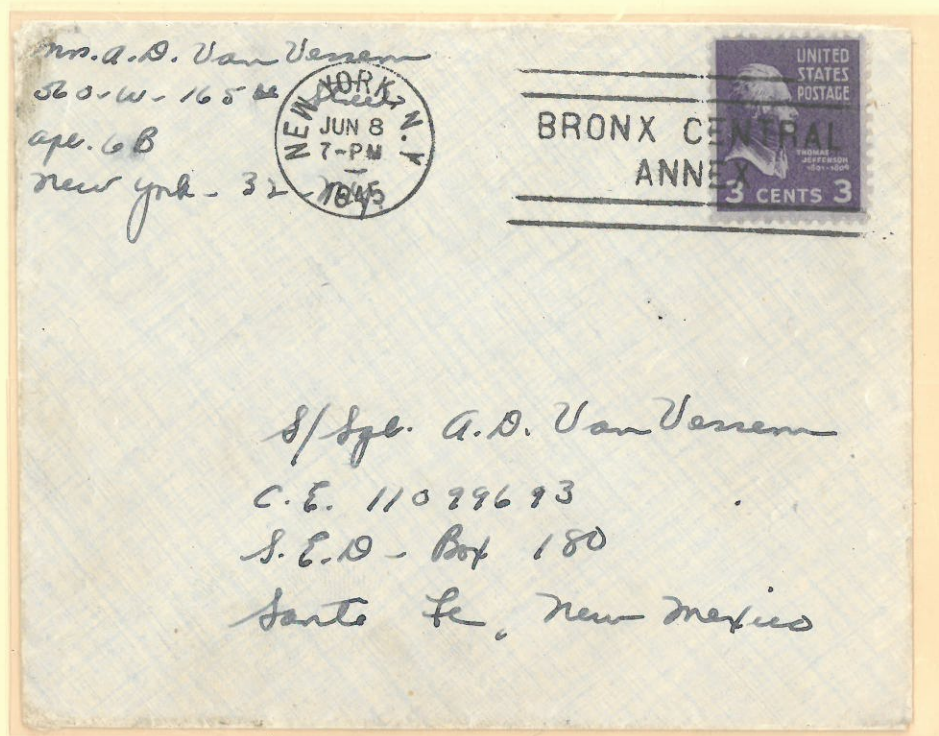
Two 1.5c Prexie stamps prepaid this December 1942 Christmas card mailed from Michigan to "Receiving Station, South Brooklyn, NY" with Russian censor tape and censor marking on reverse.



Lt. W. Luitje was in charge of the Navy armed guard crew of one of eight American and Panamanian vessels sailing in convoy to Murmansk to supply the Soviet efforts against the Nazis. Upon arrival, instead of being returned to England, because of advanced warnings of German ambush, the convoy was sent to Archangel and became known as "the lost convoy". Mail continued to be addressed to "Receiving Station, South Brooklyn" from where it was sent to England for delivery by British warship.



"UNDERCOVER" ADDRESSES



In order to maintain secrecy of the development of the atomic bomb, mail to the Manhattan Project's principle laboratory at Los Alamos, N.M., was funneled through a number of Santa Fe, NM post office boxes. One such, P.O. Box 180, set up for military staff, as seen on this 1945 Prexie-franked first class cover.



P.O. Box 1663 was established for scientists. This cover was addressed to the Assistant Director of Plutonium Bomb Implosion Research and his wife. Note the August 7, 1945 postmark - One day after the Hiroshima atomic bomb drop and two days before the destruction of Nagasaki.

PRISONER OF WAR CAMPS

PRISONER OF WAR POST
KRIEGSGEFANGENENPOST
SERVICE DES PRISONNIERS DE GUERRE

BY AIR MAIL
PAR AVION

10851
U.S. CENSOR

RANK AND NAME (CAPITAL LETTERS) 1ST LT. JOHN K. SMITH
UNITED STATES PRISONER OF WAR.
PRISONER OF WAR No. 2878
(SEE NOTE ON FLAP)
CAMP NAME AND No. STALAG LUFT #3 0-673747
SUBSIDIARY CAMP No. STALAG LUFT #1
COUNTRY DEUTSCHLAND (GERMANY)
VIA NEW YORK, N. Y.

AYWARD
JUL 10
4 PM
1944
W. 113

6 CENTS 6

While the standard air mail rate to Europe was 30 cents per half ounce during World War II, the 6 cents military air mail rate was extended to Prisoner of War mail in the Spring of 1944, as per this July 1944 cover.

6490

ANTONI KRUKOWICZ
POLISH REFUGEE
CAMP WALIWADE
KALHAPUR - INDIA
BLOCK - no - 138/5

WEST BREAM
FEB 17
10 CENTS 10

10 CENTS 10

25 CENTS 25

25 CENTS 25

1944
N. Y.

SPEEDED TO YOU
VIA AIR MAIL
REPLY BY AIR MAIL

Two 25c Prexies partially paid the 70c per half ounce air mail rate to fly this censored 1944 cover via the South Atlantic and across Africa to a Polish refugee camp in India. This rate and routing were in effect December 1941 thru October 1946.

**PRISONERS
OF WAR**



B. O. SOUTH
460 Larkin Street
San Francisco 2
California



14-B

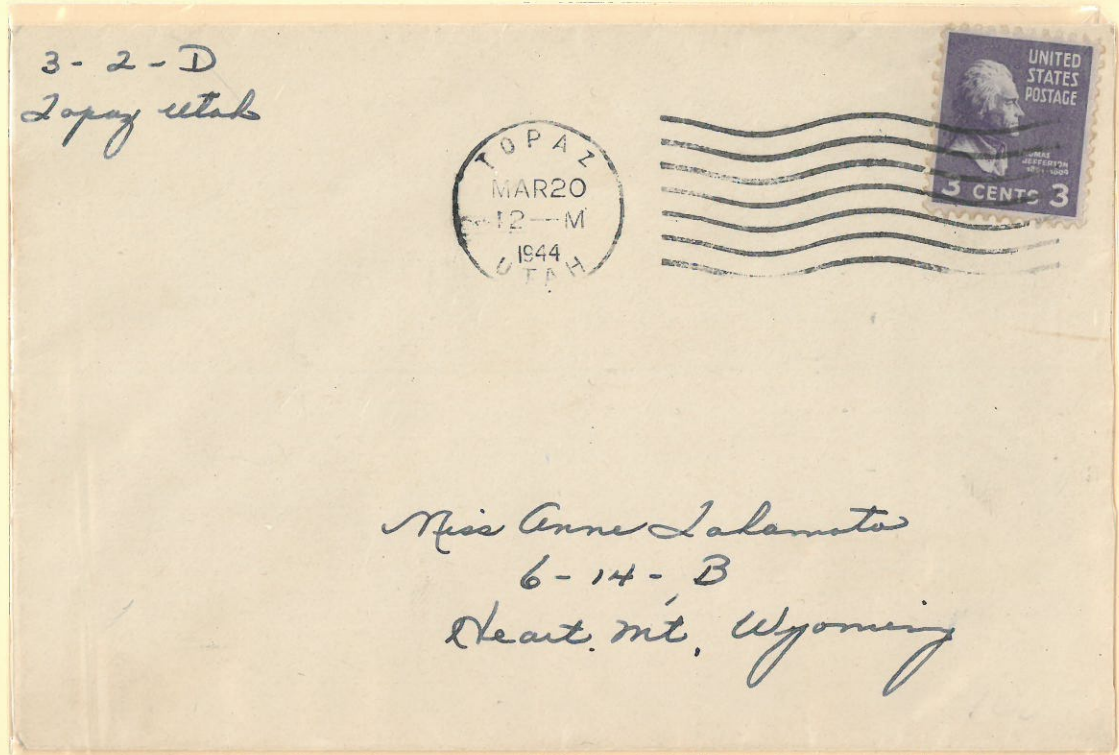
Mrs Roy W. Day
P.O. Box 251
Coolidge,
Arizona

Postmaster: Contents - Recorded Voice
from Prisoner of War in Japan.
Please **HAND CANCEL**

A 6c Prexie prepaid two times the 3c first class domestic surface rate on this 1945 packet prepared by California short-wave operators, who received and recorded a Tokyo broadcast announcing the capture of American flyers. In this case it was an American from Arizona and the recording was sent to his mother.

INTERNMENT CAMPS

In February 1942, President Roosevelt, bowing to political pressure, authorized the forced relocation and incarceration of people of Japanese ancestry who lived on the Pacific Coast to Governmental internment camps throughout the Interior West.



A 3c Prexie paid the first class letter rate to mail this 1944 cover from a resident of the Topaz (UT) Internment Camp to another resident housed in the Heart Mountain (WY) Internment Camp.

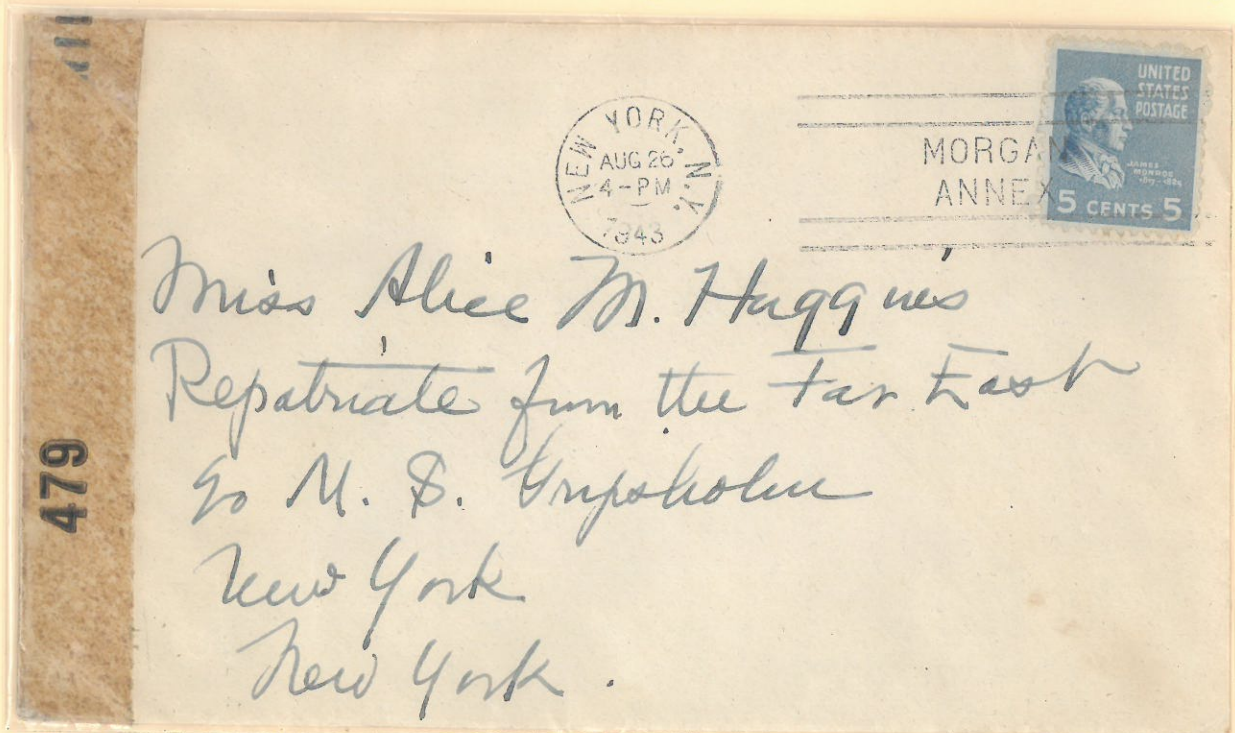


A 1c Prexie prepaid the 1c domestic post card rate on a 1944 post card mailed to Seabrook Farms in New Jersey whose owners arranged for Japanese Internees to work as farm hands in conditions not much better than the Internment camps.

A MISSIONARY'S TALE



A 5c Prexie paid the international surface fee on this November 1941 cover to a US missionary in Japanese-occupied China. While enroute, war was declared against Japan and mail service was suspended. Unbeknownst to the writer, the addressee, Missionary Alice Huggins had been arrested by Japanese authorities as an enemy agent.



From 1942 thru 1945, the Swedish ocean liner the MS Gripsholm was chartered by the International Red Cross to make humanitarian voyages to repatriate P.O.W.'s and Civilian Internees from Asia. The 5c Prexie paid the international surface rate to bring this cover to the newly-freed Missionary.

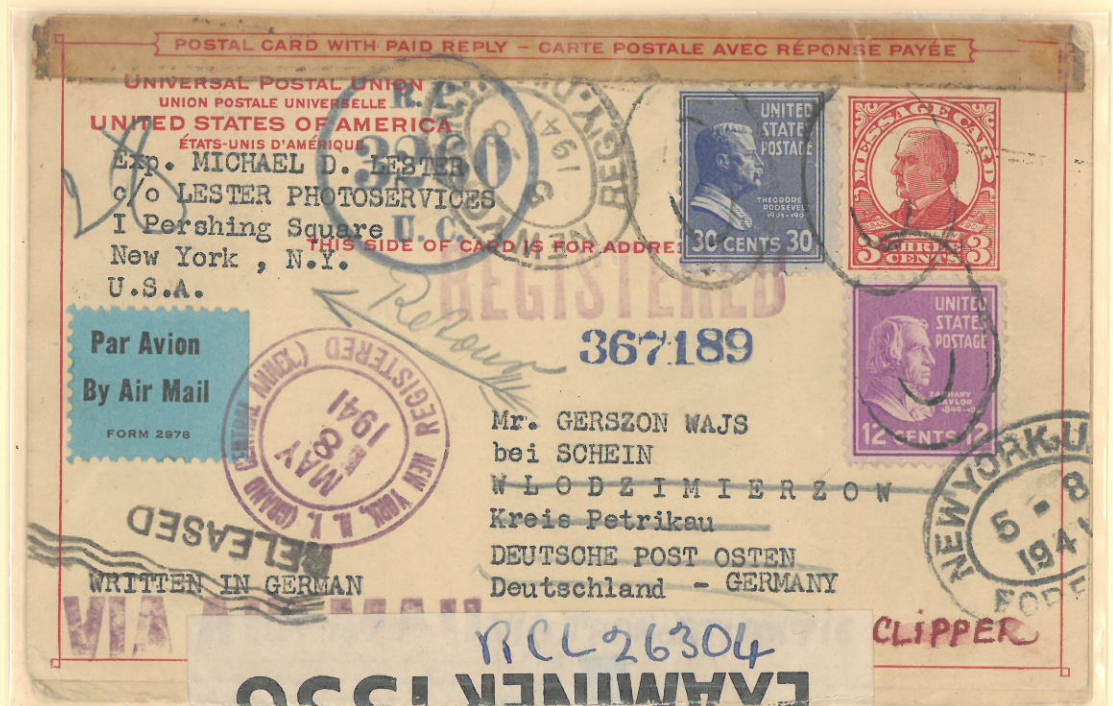
RETURNED MAIL



A 2c Prexie upgraded a 1c postal card to prepay the international surface rate on this 1941 censored card written in German, sent to a Lithuanian refugee in Japan, the mid-point of a pre-arranged route out of Nazi-occupied Europe via the Trans-Siberian Railroad. War was declared, all escape plans were cancelled and mail service was suspended.



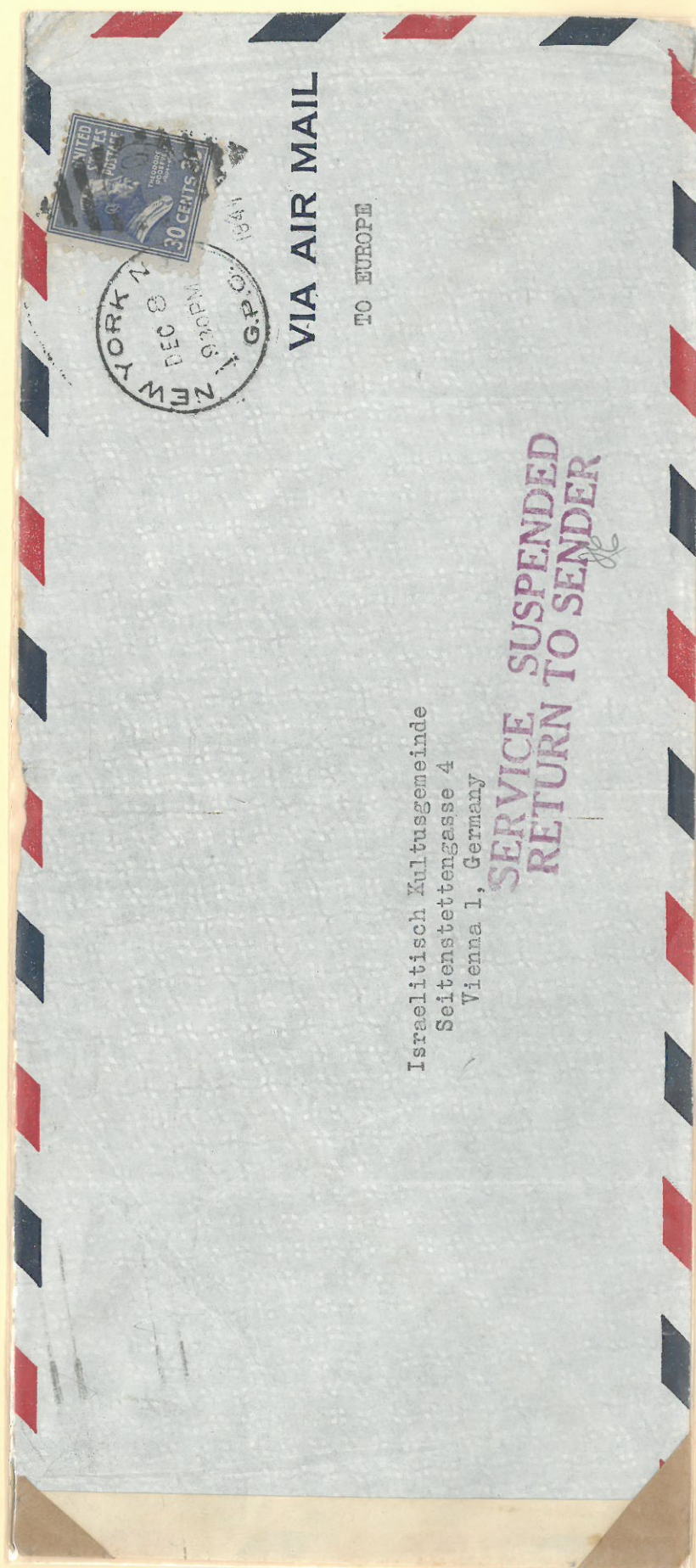
Reverse



A 30c Prexie was added to 15c in other postage to prepay the 30c charge for international air mail and the 15c fee for international registry to send this international reply post card postmarked May 8, 1941 to Nazi-occupied Poland. The cover was seized in transit by the British who had declared war on Germany and was held until the authorities released the item in 1946. The cover then went on to its destination but was returned because the addressee was unknown, likely a victim of the War.

RETURNED MAIL

A solo 30c Prexie prepaid the 30c per half ounce air mail rate to Nazi-Occupied Austria to the Gestapo supported agency assigned the task of "resettling" Jews deported from "Greater Germany". Mailed December 9, 1941, three days before the United States declared war against Germany, mail service was suspended and this censored cover was intercepted and returned.



A SAILOR'S STORY



1940 family correspondence between Lt. Commander E. M. Crouch, serving on the Destroyer USS Edsall (DD 219), stationed in Manila and his wife in California with Ten 5c Prexies (six on the front and four on the reverse) paying the 50c air mail rate per half ounce to the Philippines, in effect April 1937 thru June 1946.

Edward Crouch was transferred from the USS Edsall early in 1942. Just weeks later, on March 1, 1942, the ship was lost south of Borneo in the Indian Ocean after being crippled by the Japanese battle cruiser Chikuma and subsequently sunk by air strikes from and estimated 26 dive bombers. Crouch was eventually promoted to Commander of the Pacific Destroyer Division #57.

Records indicate that Commander Crouch perished while a passenger aboard the U.S.S. Indianapolis three and a half years later. The U.S.S. Indianapolis was torpedoed and sunk by the Japanese submarine I-58 on July 30, 1945 after delivering vital parts for the first atomic bomb to the U.S. Air Base at Tinian a few days earlier. This bomb, code name "Little Boy", was dropped on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945.

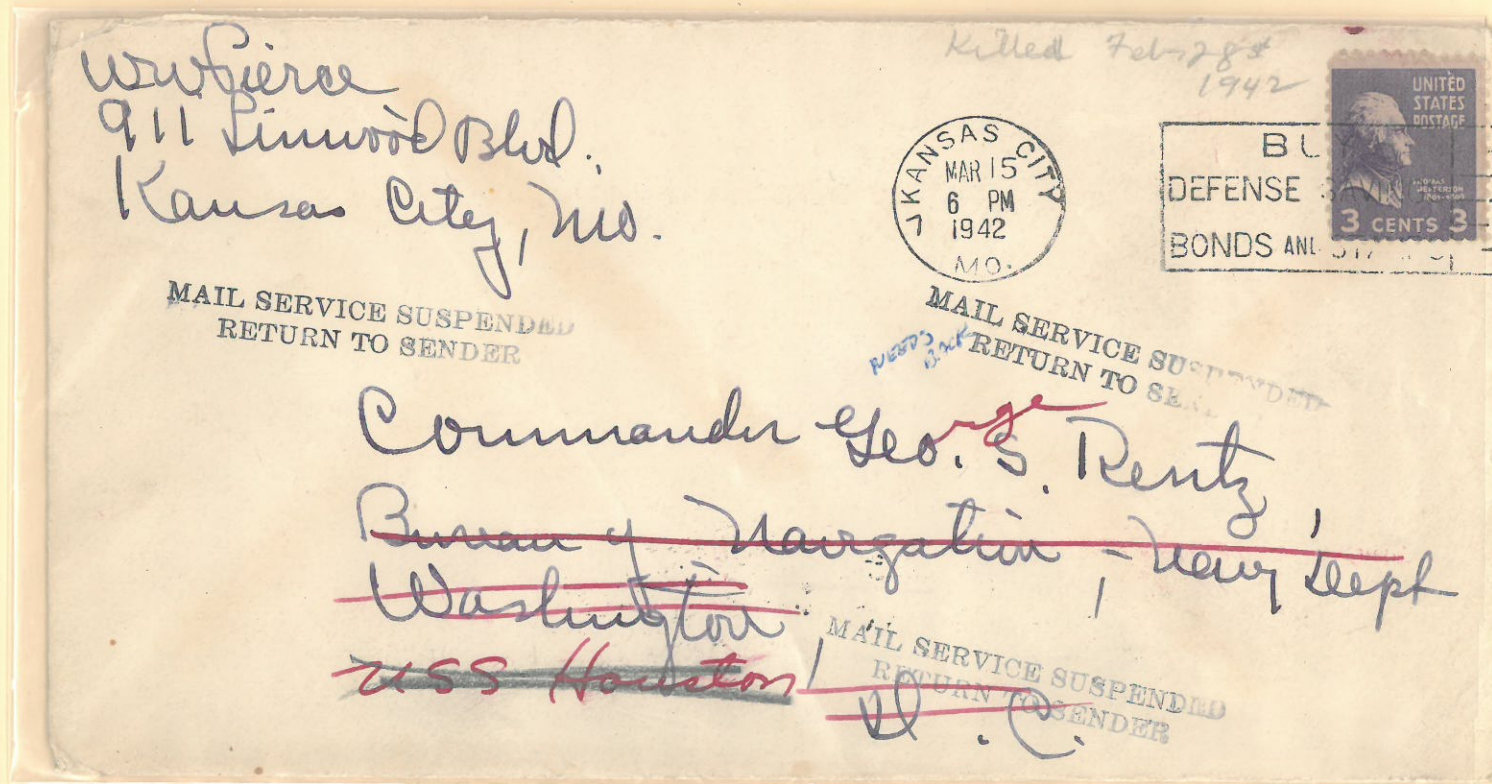
RETURNED

RETURNED TO SENDER
SERVICE SUSPENDED.

Reverse



A 3c Prexie paid the first class letter fee on this March 1942 cover addressed to Plum c/o Postmaster. "Plum" was military code for the Philippine Islands designed to keep locations secret from the Enemy. The addressee had been captured by the Japanese and was involved in the infamous Bataan Death March which began on April 9, 1942. The cover was never delivered and marked "returned to sender".



A first class letter was mailed on March 15, 1942 to the Captain of the USS Houston via Washington, D.C. The Houston was sunk by the Japanese on March 1, 1942, but this information was kept secret from the public for several months. As a result, this cover was held and not returned until May, 1942.

"UNDERCOVER" ADDRESSES



A 3c Prexie coil prepaid the one ounce Pan American Union surface rate to Chile on this censored May 1943 cover to an "undercover" address representing the Comité de Protección a los Inmigrantes Israelitas, offering information to reunite families and for resettlement in Palestine.



An 18c Prexie was added to a 6c air mail envelope paying the 15c registration fee (with indemnity < \$5) and 3c for return receipt service on this 1942 cover mailed to the "undercover" address of Box 300, Bismarck, ND for mail to a POW housed at Fort Abraham Lincoln but forwarded. The Fort housed Axis Merchant Mariners caught in West Coast Ports at the beginning of World War II.

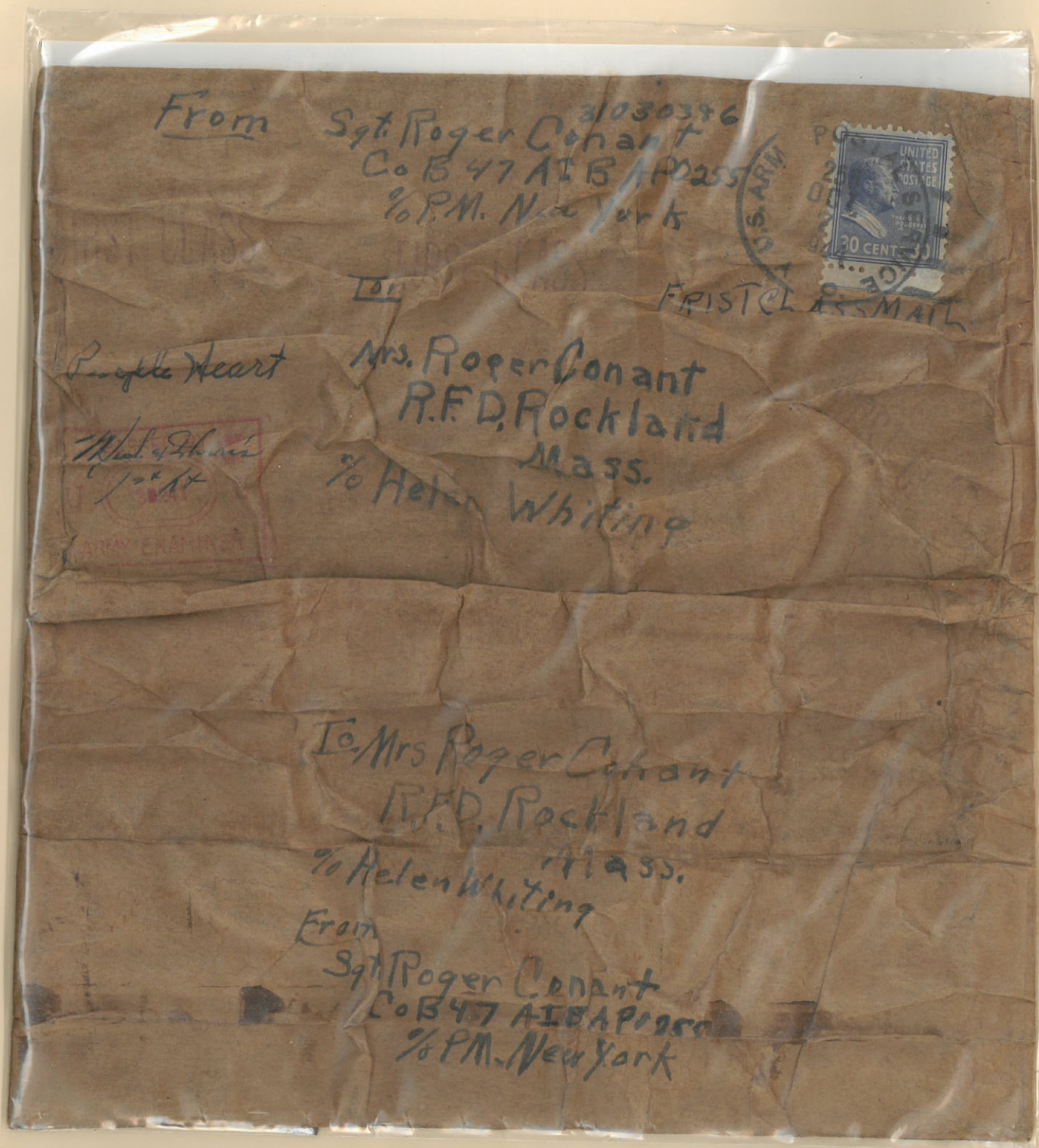
RETURNED MAIL



A solo 4 1/2 cent Prexie was used to pay three times the 1.5 cent per two ounce international printed matter rate on this censored, returned wrapper addressed to an oil storage facility in Japan. Mailed in early 1942 it was returned via British Columbia as mail service had been suspended on December 11, 1941 after the United States declared war against Japan.

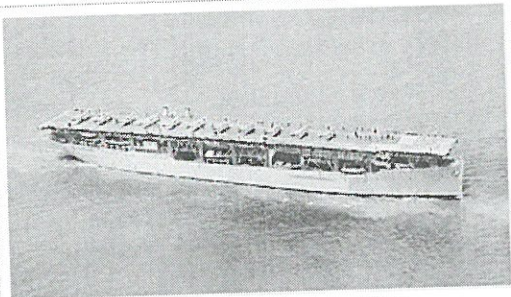
While similar returned wrappers sent worldwide can be found, this example, addressed to an oil storage facility in Tokuyama, Yamaguchi Prefecture, contains postal history plus irony. The irony comes from the fact that many historians conclude Japan attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 because of the US oil embargo put in place in July 1941 in retaliation for Japan's invasion of French Indochina and continuing expansion into China. Because of Japan's reliance on the US to supply 80 percent of its petroleum needs, the Japanese government considered the embargo to be a highly provocative act.

SOLDIER'S PURPLE HEART

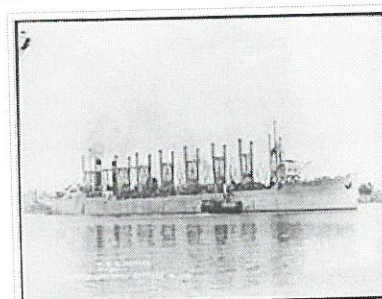


A solo 30c Prexie paid ten times the 3c per ounce first class rate on this package which contained a soldier's Purple Heart medal. Mailed from APO 255 (Waimes, Belgium) in 1944.

USS Langley (CV-1)



USS Langley underway, 1927



Jupiter 16 October 1913, the collier, before conversion to Langley, the aircraft carrier.