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WWII Postal History:



U.S. Civilian Airmail to Greece (1939-41)

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Due to New York state restrictions to limit the spread of Covid-19, all Club future programs are postponed. Please check [www.collectorsclub.org](http://www.collectorsclub.org) for updates and information.

## Collectors Club Programs 2020

Sept. 9	How to put together a Postcard Exhibit, Elizabeth Hisey, University Park, Fla.
Sept. 16	The Amazing Local Posts of Philadelphia, 1843-1861, Dr. Vernon Morris, Jr., Sebring Fla.
Oct. 7	New York Valentines, Dale and Dione Forster, Portland, Ore.
Oct. 21	Netherlands Point Cancells - Their Uses and Misuses, John Hornbeck, Washington, D.C.
Nov. 4	CC Single-frame Exhibition, Dr. Louis Pataki, Chair.
Nov. 18	The Kingdom of Yugoslavia and the South East European Connection to the Americas and Australia, 1939-1941, Ratomir Zivkovic, New York, N.Y.

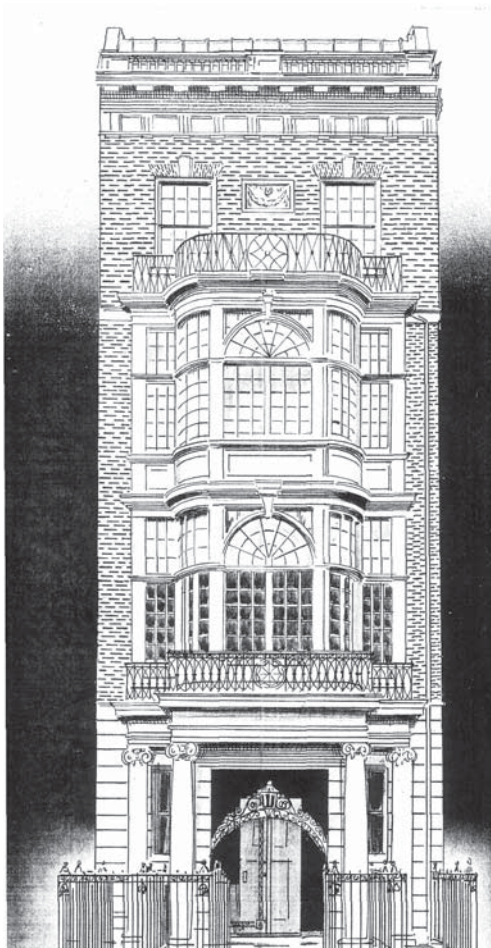
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# THE COLLECTORS CLUB

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# President's Message:

## The New Normal and Trying to Return

By Lawrence Haber

We seem to have finally settled into a rhythm. Every other week, on Wednesdays, we convene for a program at 5:30 p.m. EDT. During the preceding week we hold technical run-throughs to make sure that everything is in order. The programs themselves seem to be going along smoothly. But, more importantly, we appear to be achieving our goals with these programs.

We took the view that with the pandemic and the requirement to stay at home – or at least not to venture out much – that people are missing their usual stamp connections. Every World Series of Philately show through the remainder of the year, save one, has been canceled since when? And people are missing both stamp content and personal connections. We intentionally made our programs open to the entire philatelic public, not just our members. We have posted video for the programs, for all to share, for two weeks following the broadcast date. We wanted to reach people. Judging by our attendance data and the feedback we have received, it does appear as though we have become a feature in people's philatelic lives. And this delights us. We have also been delighted to see that many have chosen to join us. With no explicit effort on our part to "sell" the club, we have seen a significant volume of new member applications. To those new members, as well as for those who have been here for some time, it might be worthwhile to review the benefits of Collectors Club membership.

We have what must be the finest and most extensive library of philatelic programs in the world, given by some of the finest philatelists. Have you reviewed this content lately? Please do this and I am sure you'll return and return.

Our journal has been fully digitized and is available to facilitate both your research efforts and reading pleasure. And, while we are on the topic of this journal, have you thought of writing for the *Collectors Club Philatelist*? [Editor's Note: Amen!] For those who exhibit, have you considered that an article in this journal will be placed in front of the greatest number of judges? Might be worth it just to get an extra couple of points?

Our library's lending capability is being upgraded and soon you'll be able to both borrow books and obtain brief extracts from books and journals via scans.

On July 22, we began our program with a presentation to two young people who had just graduated our young peoples' program. The video is on the website and is available to members. Please have a look. Isn't this effort worth supporting, as well as our efforts with beginning adults?

Lastly, there is that term whose meaning I never quite understood: fellowship. That is, being a part of a group that holds to a common set of interests in which we are united, with a love of this hobby and what it can do to unite us all. With so much dividing people in this world, it is really wonderful to come together with a love of stamps, of postal history, of a hobby that never fails to lift our spirits and challenge our intellects.

Now that my commercial has come to a close, I'd like to cover some new territory.

At our most recent Board of Governors meeting, we agreed to extend our virtual programming efforts into and throughout the 2021-2022 season. For the time being we will plan on continuing to offer two virtual programs a month, on alternate Wednesdays. Also, provided the health situation is acceptable, we hope to offer one program a month in the Club House at 22 East 35th Street. And, we intend to live-stream the in-person events onto the web. As you would expect, these plans are being constantly evaluated and re-evaluated in light not only of everyone's health concerns, but the appetite for these programs, both the virtual and in-person ones.

For those in the New York metropolitan area, you know that the contagion rate has diminished, while it has grown elsewhere in the United States. We dearly hope everyone is bearing up and remaining well. Life has, to some degree, slowly been showing signs of returning to pre-COVID normal outside of Manhattan. But, Manhattan still seems to be very quiet. Our staff has returned to work in the Club House, but we are not yet prepared to reopen the building to members or to the public. We are monitoring everything, as you would expect, but I think we will probably be followers rather than leaders in the road towards pre-normal activities in the city. It will probably be a while.

But our goal remains unchanged. To celebrate our hobby and to use all the virtual/digital tools of our age to bridge the gaps that have appeared as a consequence of everything. Please stay safe. Stay healthy.

---

## Mitch Holyoake

Micheline "Mitch" Marie Lucienne Holyoake (nee Bosio) passed away July 28, 2020. She was 76. Mitch is survived by her husband Alan (of 49 years), and she was the much loved "Mum" to three sons, and grandmother to five grandchildren.

An enthusiastic supporter of philately, having supported her husband Alan with events across the world (and they traveled extensively together), Mitch was loved by all those she met. Her open heart and kind demeanor were immediately apparent.

Together, Mitch and Alan are recognized as leading supporters of philately and postal history. Along with Alan, they established and funded the Collectors Club Friendship Cup, the Franklin glass foyer display case at Smithsonian's National Postal Museum, were leading patrons of Stockholmia 2019, and the "Devonshire Bowl and Plate" for the RPSL One Frame competition.

With Mitch's passing we have lost one of the hobby's finest ambassadors and most precious smile.



— Wade E. Saadi

# Editor's Notepad

by Wayne L. Youngblood

## 2021 Lichtenstein Award Nominations Open

As a reminder, The Awards Committee of the Collectors Club has invited all members to submit nominations for next year's Alfred F. Lichtenstein Memorial Award, one of the world's most prestigious philatelic recognitions. The annual award has been given to a living individual for Distinguished Service to Philately ever since Theodore E. Steinway was selected in 1952.

The Lichtenstein Award Nomination Form and Guidelines can be downloaded from the Club's website.

Completed nomination forms are due by Oct. 1. Each nomination remains active for four years. There's still time to get your nomination in!

## Research Tools at Our Fingertips

Many years ago, when I first started writing, research was hard work. The sources were obscure and largely unavailable and, when they could be found, it was extremely labor intensive to find what we needed and extract it in a usable manner, usually writing much out on note pads or index cards. Philatelic research – when conducted properly – was truly uphill both ways. Seriously, though, it was hard work, and it was difficult to ever feel that we had done any kind of comprehensive work. I don't know how the giants of early 20th-century philatelic literature did it. But, of course, neither they, nor us, had any idea what we were missing.

As a kid I used to fantasize about something we all now take for granted: Google. The idea of being able to search the world for information in a few seconds with a few taps on the keyboard seemed like spaceman stuff. Yet here we are. But that's just the beginning.

In our post-millennial, computer-based world, there are multiple – and credible – sources of primary and secondary information that is easily accessed. Among those mentioned in the research pieces presented just this month alone is complete – and free – access to all *Postal Bulletins* (and numerous other official documents) produced by the U.S. Post Office Department and the U.S. Postal Service ([www.uspostalbulletins.com](http://www.uspostalbulletins.com)). This considerable and highly valuable resource has been made possible by postal history dealers Jim Forte and Michael Eastick, as well as several philatelic organizations. But there is much more.

Many additional websites exist to help both the casual and serious researcher. Included among those, of course, is the American Philatelic Research Library (APRL), which has a significant portion of its holdings available online, but also assistants who can perform light research for a very reasonable cost. But there are many others.

If you've ever done any genealogical research you've no doubt run into the formidable resources of [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com). The documents available through that source, ranging from birth, death and marriage certificates to muster roles and much more, are amazing. And then there's Fold3, [www.newspapers.com](http://www.newspapers.com), the Smithsonian and even the Library of Congress. Truly, the only limit is the time you have available to properly utilize these amazing resources. Good luck!

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# **Studying, Organizing and Collecting WWII Postal History: U.S. Civilian Airmail to Greece (1939-41) as a Model**

*By Steven M. Roth*

## **Introduction**

World War II brought confusion, chaos and disruption to formerly well-structured and orderly international ocean mail and airmail processes. Mail routes were interrupted, redirected or suspended altogether; some routes, rates and timetables were unpublished or deliberately misrepresented;<sup>1</sup> censorship delayed or totally obstructed transmissions; national borders were permanently closed or temporarily blocked; and the number of participating belligerents (for example, Italy and Russia) varied from time to time or they changed sides, affecting the handling of mail within or through their jurisdictions.

This situation was partly described in the first monthly issue of *The Official Foreign Air Mail Guide (OFAMG, January 1940)*<sup>2</sup> with respect to airmail to European destinations, in general :

Mail addressed for European points and marked for trans-Atlantic air mail service to which the required air mail postage has been affixed, is also entitled to the fastest transportation possible after it has reached Lisbon, the present terminus of the trans-Atlantic air mail route. However, it is to be remembered that though the European air mail service which was entirely curtailed at the beginning of the war has been considerably improved, all lines are not at present operating.

As a result of this circumstance, WWII offers the collector and postal historian a rich stew of ingredients with which to build or study challenging and interesting military and civilian-based postal history collections.

Assembling a collection of WWII postal history can be challenging, but is immensely rewarding. In my case, I decided to eschew the familiar WWII collecting areas – APO markings, prisoner-of-war markings, military censorship markings and the like – not because these collecting areas are less deserving of my time, study and buying resources, but because they already have been well documented in published philatelic works. Instead, I chose to build my primary WWII collection around civilian airmail carried from the United States to foreign-destinations, i.e., specifically, mail traveling through or addressed to Africa, Asia or the Middle East from 1939-45.<sup>3</sup>

The interest I have maintained in collecting and studying civilian airmail flown overseas during WWII rests with the way such mail was handled by the United States Post Office Department (USPOD), by the U.S. Office of Censorship,<sup>4</sup> and by foreign post offices and foreign censorship, as circumstances altered to reflect changing theaters of war, shifting areas of combat, changing occupied territories and, in some instances, the need for secrecy concerning mail routes and schedules.

## Airmail to Greece (1939-41) as a Model for Airmail to Other Countries

The difficulty delivering mail to Greece from the United States in the early days of the war reflected the vicissitudes of combat on the ground, as first Italy, then Germany, invaded Greece, usually causing the mail to be held in Lisbon, Portugal, or Vienna, Austria (the German censorship station for mail entering or leaving the Balkans), for some time before either being delivered within Greece or being returned to the sender.

To be sure, these problems were also experienced in other theaters of WWII, but they were experienced on a less-intense scale because they often occurred over longer periods of time or played out over larger geographic areas than Greece, thereby diluting their intensity. Greece suffered all of the known problems of mail to be delivered elsewhere in Europe, but Greece compressed those problems within a relatively small geographic area and over six to seven months, not over four or five years, as for other countries.

The problems generally encountered with respect to mail sent to Greece are illustrated, in part, by the covers shown as Figure 1 and Figure 2.



Figure 1. This cover was held in Lisbon, Portugal, until conditions in Greece allowed it to be sent on.

The cover shown in Figure 1 was mailed Aug. 23, 1940, before Italy invaded Greece on Oct. 28, 1940. It is deceptively clean and simple looking, but is part of the complex system officially and unofficially applied to airmail addressed to Greece. As I will explain later in this article, Figure 1 is an example of a cover sent to Greece via Lisbon. Such mail was then held there for possible onward transit when conditions on the ground permitted mail to enter that country. The alternative route at that time was the longer, slower and more expensive trans-Pacific Foreign Air Mail (FAM 14) route.

Figure 2 was mailed to Greece after Italy's invasion (Oct. 28, 1940), but before Germany invaded Greece (April 6, 1941) to rescue Italy's armed forces from destruction. Figure 2 is a ratty-looking cover, missing its postage stamp, for example, but a cover that tells a wonderful story.





Figure 2. Mailed to Greece Jan. 12, 1941, while Italy was fighting a losing battle against Greek forces.

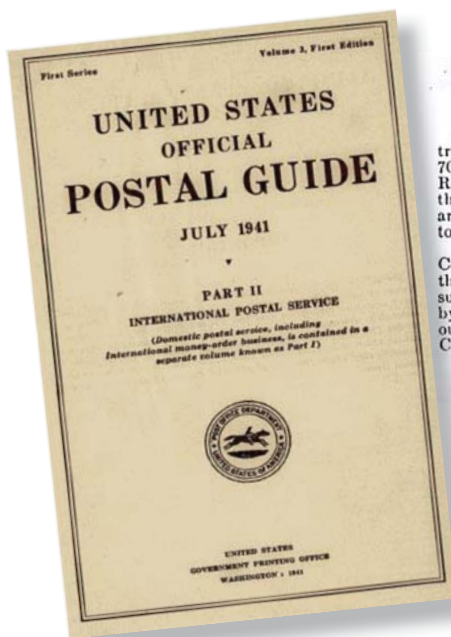
The Figure 2 cover traveled by airmail to Lisbon over the trans-Atlantic route (FAM 18), then by steamship to Cairo (based on an Egyptian receiving/transit backstamp), where Egyptian/British censorship opened the envelope, examined its enclosure, resealed the envelope with Egyptian/British censorship resealing tape and marked the envelope "No Service" in blue pencil, indicating that mail service to Greece beyond Cairo was suspended at that time. The cover was returned to New York City to eventually be returned to the sender.

### Sources for Studying Airmail to Greece (and to Europe and beyond)



As in any area of postal history, the collector and student usually are best served by first finding and examining original government source material relating to the subject matter. In the case of foreign-destination civilian mail, these documents were those published by the USPOD to guide and instruct deputy postmasters and, in the case of airmail, the privately published *OFAMG* (further discussed in a bit) to guide its business-mailer subscribers.

With respect to civilian ocean mail and airmail going abroad, the officially published documents were the *Postal Bulletin* (PB), the annual *Official Postal Guide, Part II* (PG) and the monthly *Postal Guide* supplements (PGS), all as described in greater detail following. But,



**FOREIGN AIR MAIL SERVICE—GREECE, BELGIAN CONGO**

Air-mail service is available for transportation of articles for Greece via the trans-Pacific route to Cairo, thence by ordinary means. The postage required is 70 cents per half ounce. Articles for that route should be marked "Via Pacific Route." This routing is made available to senders because of interruption of through service to Greece via the trans-Atlantic air-mail route. However, articles mailed with postage at the rate of 30 cents per half ounce will continue to be sent via Lisbon for possible onward forwarding.

While there appears to be no air-mail service by which mails for the Belgian Congo may be expedited to that country, the domestic air-mail service within the Belgian Congo is still in operation. If senders desire their articles carried by such domestic air service after reaching an exchange office in the Belgian Congo by ordinary means, they should prepay the postage required of 9 cents per half ounce in addition to the regular postage and mark them "By Air Mail in Belgian Congo."

The current Foreign Air Mail Service leaflet should be corrected accordingly.

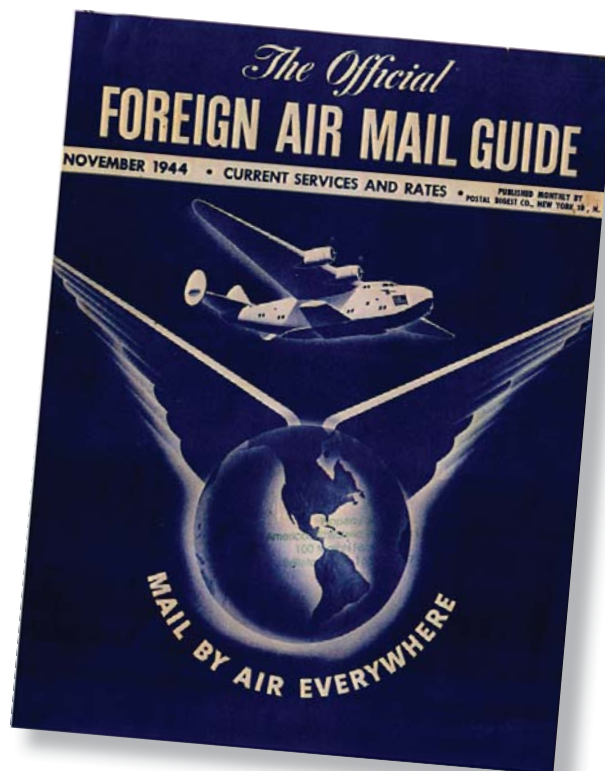
PGS January 1941

for reasons I will discuss, although these official documents (now available online without charge<sup>5</sup>) contain important and useful information relating to foreign destination civilian airmail, they are not always reliable when used to interpret covers.

Another source vital to the understanding of airmail to foreign destinations is the *OFAMG*, a subscription-based monthly newsletter that was privately published by Otto Praeger's Postal Digest Co. for business mailers, from January 1940 through December 1946. The *OFAMG* was not an official publication, even though it used the word "Official" in its title.

This monthly (and therefore, usually, timely) publication, which I consider essential to any understanding of foreign-destination airmail during WWII, first came to my attention in two articles (cited in Endnote 6) written by postal historian and WWII philatelic scholar Ken Lawrence, who described the *OFAMG* and demonstrated its importance in interpreting foreign-destination airmail covers in the face of misleading government documentation.<sup>6</sup>

Once the collector or student has studied the *PBs*, *PGs*, *PGSs* and the *OFAMG*, he or she must also always look to the best source of postal history — the covers themselves. For no matter what official or unofficial publications might indicate the processes and practices should be, often for reasons having to do more with conditions on the ground or, in the case of WWII, for reasons of wartime official secrecy, the covers followed routes and timetables not related to the published routes and timetables; they showed rates





inconsistent with the published rates, or they reflected treatment otherwise inconsistent with POD documentation.

### **My Methodology for Building this Collection**

I approached assembling this collection in a way that seems deceptively simple and straight-forward. I first read the non-philatelic history of Greece in WWII to learn about key events and their dates. I combed through the official USPOD publications for the relevant time period and copied everything that mentioned mail to Greece, or that otherwise seemed to be relevant. I then did the same with the *OFAMG* issues from 1940-41. I also acquired or scanned both sides of every airmail cover I could find addressed from the United States to Greece, arranging this material chronologically. Finally, I rearranged these cover images to fit within the framework of what I had found in the USPOD documentation and in the *OFAMGs*, comparing and contrasting this arrangement with the prior chronological arrangement of the same covers.

### **Appendix: The Table**

Because I respect classification as a discipline useful to understanding data, I created a chronological table (Table) reflecting, by date and source, all notices concerning this collecting area that appeared in the *PBs*, *PGSs* and in the *OFAMGs* relating to the availability or suspension of mail service to Greece. I also compiled anecdotal notes concerning covers that appeared to support or to be at odds with the official and/or private positions concerning routes, the handling of the mail and the availability or suspension of postal service. I added this information to the Table under the column titled "Comments."

The table has enabled me to organize, search for and accumulate foreign-destination airmail to Greece (and elsewhere) in a focused way. The work is frequently evolving, based on covers and other materials I find, all of which I have noted in the table, as appropriate.

I have attached the table to this article as an Appendix. I will send an MS Word file of the table via email ([stevenroth@comcast.net](mailto:stevenroth@comcast.net)) to anyone requesting it so that collectors can modify it to suit their own collecting interests. It can be used for most WWII civilian airmail flown overseas.

### **How I Have Organized This Article**

It is my intent in this article to discuss airmail to Greece (1939-41) as illustrative of the broader problems affecting foreign-destination airmail to Europe, the Middle East and Asia during WWII.

Although my focus will be on airmail, many problems were found with steamship mail carried overseas from the United States. This class of ocean mail, which often traveled on solitary ships when sent from a neutral country (such as the United States), eventually was carried aboard ships that traveled as a part of a convoy, the speed of which was determined by the slowest ship in the group. Accordingly, ocean mail to Greece during the latter part of 1940 and into mid-1941, consumed extensive transit times when compared to the transit times for such mail before WWII.

This factor is important when interpreting covers that were intended to be sent via airmail (and were franked by the sender with airmail postage, the letters



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of which were placed by the sender in airmail-style envelopes), but which, because of circumstances (heavy freight loads, lack of space on aircraft, or for military reasons not otherwise discernible from the covers), did not travel via airmail. Indeed, the most salient clues in determining if such covers traveled via air or ocean, were the port of embarkation (New York for steamship mail) and the number of transit days from the port of embarkation to the destination (allowing for other influencing factors, for example, such as temporary holds by censorship). I discuss this in a bit in connection with my discussion of two theories that attempt to explain the cover shown as Figure 5.

### Author’s Note for Readers

Unfortunately, the time periods for the application of some of the USPOD notices and the *OFAMG* listings, and the relationship of these time periods to some historic dates (such as the date Germany invaded Greece) do not fit neatly into the convenient categories I have set up in this article to aid the reader (such as “Mail Before Italy Invaded Greece, pre-Oct. 28, 1940”), but, instead, overlap two or more categories or time periods. This is readily seen by glancing at the table. Yet these notices, listings and historic dates must be discussed in all relevant places in this article, even though doing so sometimes requires that I repeat information already mentioned in another section.

### The Relevant Dates Affecting Airmail to Greece

Ken Lawrence, in his articles cited in Endnote 6, made the point instinctively known or eventually learned by successful postal history collectors of every subject matter, but worth restating here: to understand WWII postal history, one must know the non-philatelic, diplomatic and military history of the war. It is not enough to just know and recognize postal markings, routes and rates. To that end, the key non-philatelic historic dates concerning mail sent to Greece were few, and are well-documented (below right):

#### Some Postal History Events

The postal history events I am concerned with are official USPOD notices that appeared in the *PBs* and in the *PGSs* during the relevant period, indicating changes in routes and/or postage rates because of route changes, or the suspension or resumption of mail service.

Except in a very limited sense to establish a baseline, as discussed shortly, I was not particularly concerned with the annual *PGs* (1939, 1940 and 1941) that offered static route and rate information each July, upon publication.

One needs to acknowledge, however, that the *PBs* and *PGSs* sometimes were out of step with the conditions on the ground in terms of timeliness, so that,

Date	Historic Event
October 28, 1940	Italy invades Greece
April 6, 1941	Germany saves Italy from defeat by invading Greece.
April 9, 1941	Greece surrenders to Germany
May 20, 1941	Germany invades Crete
June 1, 1941	Crete falls to Germany

notwithstanding its stated practices, decisions by the USPOD (and, obviously, by belligerents who were not guided by USPOD official documents) to deliver or hold specific mail, to suspend or resume service in general, or to return mail to its sender, often did not reflect the information contained in the official USPOD publications.

### A Brief Summary of the USPOD's Publications and the OFAMGs

The basic document one should first look at to check an applicable foreign destination airmail postage rate and the original preferred route is the *PG*, for the years of publication 1939-41, looking under the name of the country to which the cover was addressed (in this case, Greece).<sup>7</sup> This booklet, published in July, was issued in two volumes: Volume I for domestic mail; Volume II for international mail. Volume II set forth the routes and postal rates, among other information, for foreign destination airmail, as of July for the year of publication.

Obviously, an annual publication such as the *PG* could not keep up with changing conditions during WWII, so the USPOD also published monthly supplements (the *PGSs*) in an effort to reflect current USPOD practices and policies. These are helpful to the collector and student, but have their own inherent problems, as described by Lawrence in his two articles cited in Endnote 6, and as discussed further on in this article.

In addition to a lack of timeliness, the *PGs* also suffered from using vague language. Sometimes, for example, the description of a route would specifically name the destination city (such as Lisbon or London). Other times, it would simply mention a country, for example, France. Other times, it would be even more vague as to destination. In the instance of mail to Greece, the three *PGs* set forth the language quoted in the table below:

<b>U.S. Official Postal Guides, Part II: Mail to Greece (including Crete)</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Airmail: FAM 18</b>	<b>Steamship from New York</b>
<i>PG</i> 1939	"Through trans-Atlantic twice weekly ... From London or Paris only to Greece daily."	"New York via France about three times a week; ... New York via Naples about twice a month."
<i>PG</i> 1940	"Trans-Atlantic three times weekly ... Time of onward transit in Europe is now uncertain."	"New York via France about three times a week ... New York via Naples, about twice a month."
<i>PG</i> 1941	"Trans-Atlantic three times weekly to Italy. Time of onward transit from Italy uncertain."	"New York via Portugal or Spain, once a week."

The *PGSs*, published by the USPOD, and distributed monthly to deputy postmasters, were intended to fill the gap from August to June each year. But as Lawrence showed in his articles, using as case examples airmail to Portuguese Guinea, Turkey and Greece, the [*PBs* and] *PGSs* cannot be fully relied upon, either because they failed (in the case studies presented by Lawrence) to disclose



relevant information (for example, the reason for the termination of an airmail route to Portuguese Guinea), or failed to indicate that a route had been changed from FAM 18 (trans-Atlantic) to FAM 14 (trans-Pacific) until many months after that change had occurred. Yet, in both instances, the privately published, business-oriented *OFAMG* offered the business mailer and – now – the collector and postal historian, timely and full notice of, and explanations for, those changes.

The *PBs* were published Monday through Friday, except for holidays. They set forth the services provided by the USPOD, its operations and policies, the location of the services and changes in postage rates and other similar information, for domestic and foreign-destination mail. The *PBs* are useful sources of information for the postal historian, but, as Lawrence demonstrated, were not always reliable during wartime.

The *OFAMGs*, on the other hand, a full digital set of which I own (and a full digital set of which I recently contributed to the American Philatelic Research Library for the use of other collectors and postal historians) were accurate, usually timely and are indispensable to the postal historian studying wartime foreign-destination airmail. This publication is especially useful when explaining covers that do not seem to conform to the notices placed in the *PBs* or the *PGSs*.

All of this notwithstanding, the notices contained in the official documents and in the *OFAMG* merely reflected the views of the USPOD and those of the private publisher of the *OFAMG*, respectively. They obviously did not reflect the views, practices and policies of foreign mail services that might have participated as feeder airlines or as ground services in transporting or delivering Greece-bound letters after their carriage by Pan American Airways to Lisbon. They also did not reflect the practices and views of foreign censorship or foreign military that might have been involved in the processing of the mail, all of which also must be considered when interpreting this category of United States airmail.

### **The Illustrative Covers<sup>8</sup>**

Before Oct. 28, 1940, when Italy invaded Greece (but after the start of WWII in September 1939, and, presumably, after the closure of the Mediterranean Sea to commercial air traffic by Italy, starting in June 1940), airmail from the United States to Europe was flown twice weekly over FAM 18 from New York to Lisbon. There, an Italian feeder air service took control of the mail bags and transported the mail to Spain and Italy for onward service by air or train to various European destinations, including Greece.<sup>9</sup> The airmail postage for the entire process to and within Europe, including air transport on the Continent, was 30¢ per one-half ounce. An additional charge was made for mail destined for countries beyond Europe and carried by foreign contract airlines from Europe.<sup>10</sup>

Mail also was carried to Europe (including to Greece) by steamship from New York via France or Naples. The postage for this so-called “Regular” mail (also known as mail “by ordinary means”) was 5¢ per ounce or fraction thereof.<sup>11</sup>

### **Mail Before Italy Invaded Greece (Pre-October 28, 1940)**

Figure 3 shows a registered cover mailed Dec. 16, 1939, from Massachusetts to Greece via New York City that was flown via FAM 18 to Lisbon. There is no transit backstamp indicating its date of arrival in Greece before being sent to Athens, but



the cover arrived in Athens on Dec. 23, where it was marked on its verso side with an arrival handstamp. It was then turned over to Greek censorship, which had commenced operations in September 1939, when the Greek government put the country on a wartime footing. The cover was opened, examined, passed, resealed and released by Greek censorship (specific dates unknown).



Figure 3. The postage and fees for this cover (45¢) were calculated as follows: 30¢ trans-Atlantic airmail postage + 15¢ registry fee. The time of transit from New York City was seven days.

The cover shown in Figure 4 was carried by steamship from New York City. There are no transit markings to indicate whether it was carried to France or, instead, to Italy, for onward transmission. It arrived in Greece, based on a backstamp, on Sept. 30, 1940, 12 days after its original mailing from Saint Louis, Mo. In contrast to mail later carried by steamship during the war (and subject to slow convoy conveyance), this was a quick voyage, well within the average time for such voyages before WWII, as stated in *PG 1939*.<sup>12</sup> Once in Greece, the letter was turned over to Greek censorship, which opened, examined, passed, resealed and released the cover for delivery.



Figure 4. Carried by steamship. The 5¢ franking reflected the UPU postage rate up to one ounce for ocean mail.

Figures 3 and 4 represent simple, plain-vanilla examples of mail carried to Greece after the war started, but before Greece saw armed combat.

After Italy entered the war on June 10, 1940 (but before it invaded Greece), commercial airmail traffic across the Mediterranean Sea ceased. The United States now needed a safe and reliable air route for mail to the Balkans. It found it in FAM 14, the trans-Pacific route via San Francisco → Hong Kong → Rangoon → Cairo (with several fueling stops between San Francisco and Hong Kong).

But there were problems with this alternate route.

For example, long transit delays, particularly along Britain's Horseshoe Route, meant that airmail sent to Greece after mid-February 1940, likely would never arrive at its destination since, in all probability, such mail would encounter combat conditions emanating from Germany's invasion of Greece in the first week of April. This route, too, was slow and expensive (70¢ per one-half ounce) compared with the trans-Atlantic route (30¢ per one-half ounce).

My statement that there were problems with the trans-Pacific route is corroborated, I believe, by the fact that I have never seen a cover franked 70¢ (that is, intended by its sender to travel via the trans-Pacific route) that actually arrived in Greece.

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Once the Germans entered Athens (April 27, 1941), Britain suspended its mail services to Greece in compliance with its Trading With the Enemies Act of 1939. From the point of view of United States postal history, this closed the British Horseshoe Route to the United States, so that, effective May 1, the United States ceased using the trans-Pacific route for airmail to Greece, although the route remained open and was used by the USPOD for other destinations.

But all was not lost. Because Greece had surrendered to Germany (April 9), the United States, as a neutral country again had access to the trans-Atlantic route, via Lisbon, Berlin and Vienna (the German censorship station for all mail entering or leaving the Balkans) for mail to Greece, thereby eliminating the necessity of keeping the trans-Pacific route open for that mail destination.

But this proved to be a false benefit. The Germans insisted that all airmail addressed to the Balkans (including Greece) be flown from Lisbon only by Deutsche Lufthansa (DLH), which carried the mail directly to Vienna where it was examined by German censorship. Theoretically, such mail then was (a) condemned and held, (b) held but later released for onward transit to its destination, or (c) returned to its senders. In fact, almost all this mail was held in Vienna for varying periods of time, then returned to its senders. None that I have seen was sent on to Greece.<sup>13</sup>



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From June 1940, until Jan. 21, 1941 (when the *PB* first announced that airmail to Greece would be carried via the trans-Pacific route), the official POD position concerning trans-Atlantic airmail to Greece remained ambiguous, as shown at the end of the following *PB* notice.<sup>14</sup>

Air mail service is available for transportation of articles for Greece via the trans-Pacific route to Cairo, thence by ordinary means. The postage required is 70 cents per half ounce. Articles for that route should be marked "Via Pacific Route." This routing is made available to senders because of interruption of through service to Greece via the trans-Atlantic air-mail route. *However, articles mailed with postage at the rate of 30 cents per half ounce will continue to be sent via Lisbon for possible onward forwarding ...* [Italics added by author for emphasis]

This was repeated in the February issue of the *PGS*.<sup>15</sup> See Figure 1 for an example of a cover handled under the italicized exception described in this *PB* notice.

Notably, the *OFAMG* offered its subscribers a different take on this situation. Although from June 1940 (when Italy closed the Mediterranean to commercial air traffic), through October 1940, when Italy invaded Greece, the *OFAMG* continued to repeat the same transit information it had offered before concerning the trans-Atlantic route (i.e., that such service was available three times a week). In the November 1940, issue, however, the *OFAMG* inserted a new notice stating that trans-Atlantic airmail had been suspended. This notice was repeated in the December 1940 issue. Then, in January 1941, when the *PB* was still advising deputy postmasters that mail to Greece should go via the trans-Pacific route, the *OFAMG* stated:

Air Mail Service to Greece is available despite the war with Italy, being routed via Germany as per schedule shown.<sup>16</sup>

Neither the *PBs* nor the *PGSs* mentioned this Berlin trans-Atlantic routing.

The *OFAMG* continued to list this officially unpublished USA → Lisbon → Berlin trans-Atlantic routing, through the April 1941 issue. In May, it changed its listing and noted that all trans-Atlantic service again had been suspended. This notice was discontinued in the June 1941 issue of *OFAMG*, when that issue stated, one month after the official USPOD notice in the *PB*, that:

Air Mail Service to Greece (excepting Crete) is now dispatched via the trans-Atlantic route ... [and] is ... no longer dispatched via the trans-Pacific route.<sup>17</sup>

The *PB* for May 1, 1941, announced, with more detail than the subsequent (and just quoted) June issue of the *OFAMG*, and with a special mention of Crete (but with no mention of the routing via Berlin) that:

Beginning at once, air mails for Greece (except the island of Crete) will be sent by the trans-Atlantic air mail route with postage at the rate of 30 cents per half ounce. Air mails for Crete will continue to be sent via the trans-Pacific route, with postage at the rate of 70 cents per half ounce, or by steamship to Capetown thence by air from Capetown to Cairo, with postage at the rate of 45 cents per half ounce in addition to ordinary postage...<sup>18</sup>

Crete fell to Germany on June 1, 1941. With the end of combat there, airmail for Crete again began to travel via the trans-Atlantic route, per this notice in the June 21 issue of PB:<sup>19</sup>

Air mails for Crete (Greece) will now be dispatched by the trans-Atlantic air mail route. The postage required is 30 cents per half ounce.

Ordinary mails (other than air mails) will be dispatched by steamship to Lisbon for onward dispatch therefrom.

This notice also appeared two months later in the *PGS*.<sup>20</sup>

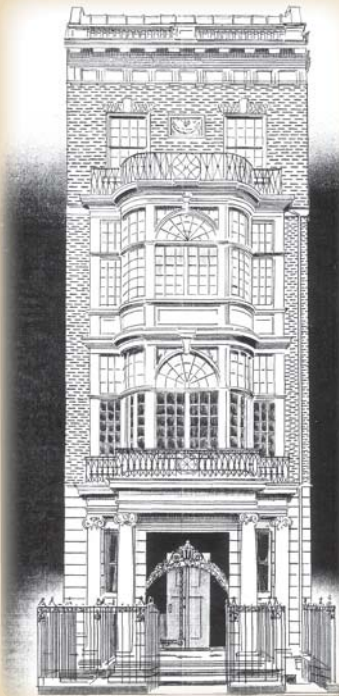
Based on the omission of references to Berlin as part of the routing in the June 1941 and subsequent issues of the *OFAMG*, I have assumed that this airmail route, once again, like the steamship route in the previously mentioned *PB*, was sent via Lisbon, but then not conveyed onward to Berlin. This route continued to be listed in the *OFAMG* through the November 1941 issue. But then, when the United States entered the war in December 1941, the *OFAMG* stated, reflecting the USPOD's official notice in November (before the United States entered the war), that:<sup>21</sup>

Mail service to Greece including air mail has been discontinued.

This suspension of all mail service to Greece remained unchanged throughout the war.

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Before the publication of the announcement in November suspending all mail service to Greece, while the trans-Atlantic service via Lisbon and Berlin



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was still being listed by the OFAMG (but still not officially by the USPOD), the OFAMG, beginning with the February 1941 issue also gave parallel notice of the availability of airmail service via the trans-Pacific route, tracking word-for-word the USPOD's announcement of trans-Pacific service that was contained in the Jan. 21, 1941, *PB*.<sup>22</sup> This announcement notified subscribers to the *OFAMG* that they had two available choices when sending airmail to Greece (something the USPOD never did) — the trans-Atlantic route via Lisbon and Berlin, and the trans-Pacific route via Hong Kong. The listing of the trans-Pacific route in the *OFAMG*, however, ceased with the publication of the June 1941 issue, which listed only the resumed trans-Atlantic route.

But there is one more factor to be considered by the collector and postal historian.

In accordance with the USPOD's announcements advising the public of the availability of trans-Pacific airmail service to Greece, the *OFAMG*'s announcements indicated that "for a reasonable period of time" (which seems, based on covers I've examined, to have been approximately 120 days), a cover franked with 30¢ postage (for trans-Atlantic airmail carriage) could be flown via the trans-Pacific 70¢ route, without payment of additional (40¢) postage. This practice has been referred to in philatelic literature, but not officially in the USPOD's publications, as a "legacy franking" or as a "legacy rate," respectively. Covers showing a legacy franking to Greece are scarce. And those that actually were delivered in Greece, and not returned to the sender, are rare. Figure 5 is a possible example of a legacy rate cover that was delivered to Greece.

The cover shown in Figure 5 was franked with 30¢ postage on Oct. 20, 1940, for transport via the trans-Atlantic route. It possibly (as I'll explain shortly) was carried instead over the trans-Pacific route at the 30¢ legacy rate. It arrived in Greece on Dec. 31, 1940 (per two Greece backstamps). The trans-Pacific routing seems to be confirmed (a) by the absence of any evidence of censorship at the Bermuda station, a trans-Atlantic censorship stop, (b) by the British/Egyptian censorship re-sealing tape applied in Cairo and (c) by the Egyptian censorship handstamps on the cover's front and verso sides. The cover does not show a Hong Kong censorship marking, but does have two Greece receiving markings on its verso side. The transit time (41 days), however, is more consistent with a cover carried by ship than transported by air.

Postal historian Louis Fiset questions the trans-Pacific routing I have just suggested, and offers an alternative transit scenario for Figure 5. Fiset states that he doubts Hong Kong was involved in examining this letter because he does not recall ever seeing Hong Kong transit mail without some evidence of Hong Kong censorship activity on the cover. He also states that Hong Kong censors were required to examine 100% of the mail that transited Hong Kong.<sup>23</sup>

Because of the absence of any evidence on the cover that it passed through Hong Kong censorship, Fiset suggests that the cover might have been carried by steamship from New York to England, then from England to Capetown, notwithstanding the sender's intent to send it by airmail. If Fiset is correct, the cover would then have been carried along the British Horseshoe Route from Durban to Cairo. This would be consistent with the long transit time, although the transit time of this cover is substantially longer than the transit



time suggested by the PG 1940 for ship mail, likely indicating that the cover was delayed somewhere in transit.<sup>24</sup>



Figure 5a. The cover was in transit 41 days, including time spent with British/Egyptian censorship in Cairo.



Figure 5b. Note the two partial receiving markings applied in Athens, both dated Dec. 31, 1940.

I agree with Fiset that censorship in Hong Kong was required to examine all mail entering its jurisdiction. I do know, however, that Hong Kong censorship did not, in fact, examine all transit mail. The Hong Kong censorship office even had a handstamp it employed (“Not Opened By Censor”) when it failed to examine mail (see Figure 6 for an example of such mail).<sup>25</sup> Isn’t it possible, therefore, that some unexamined mail slipped through the system in Hong Kong without receiving this handstamp?

As for the 41 days transit time that favors Fiset’s interpretation of this cover’s routing, the typical transit time by ship from New York to England, then by ship from England to Capetown, was 22-28 days in 1939, and was 19-28 days in 1940.<sup>26</sup> Surely the substantially longer 41 days transit time for this cover suggests that

it was delayed somewhere in transit. I believe that the delay likely occurred in Egyptian/British censorship at Cairo.

For now, for the reasons I previously stated as (a-c), and because there are reasonable explanations for the long transit time that are unrelated to ocean travel, I am persuaded that Figure 5 was a legacy rate cover that was flown via the trans-Pacific route.

### Mail to Greece During the Italian Invasion (Oct. 28, 1940 - April 5, 1941)

As previously described, as an emergency replacement route after Italy closed the Mediterranean Sea, airmail to destinations (such as Greece) that previously had been sent via Lisbon, now was routed over the trans-Pacific route from San Francisco via Hong Kong and Cairo by air, then from Cairo by a combination of land and sea transit. The postage for this emergency routing was 70¢. This was set out in a notice in the *PB* on Jan. 21, 1941, in the *PGS* in May 1941 and in the *OFAMG* beginning in the issue for February 1941. It seems, however, that this route was in place well before the official and private announcements, as evidenced by covers examined by this writer.

Figure 6 was flown in March 1941 over the trans-Pacific route, when Italy, with its back to the Albanian border, was fiercely fighting the Greek military in an attempt to preserve its army from total defeat in Greece. It is an example of transit mail that entered Hong Kong, but was not examined by Hong Kong censorship.

The cover was flown to Hong Kong (March 20 backstamp) where it was passed without being opened and examined by Hong Kong censorship. (Handstamp: "NOT OPENED BY CENSOR"). From Hong Kong, the cover was flown to Cairo. At Cairo, it was opened, examined and re-sealed (British/Egyptian censorship re-sealing tape), stamped "NO SERVICE" (since combat conditions in Greece caused service to that country to be temporarily halted) and stamped "Postal Censor." The cover then was returned to the sender in the United States (Handstamp: "RETOUR"). It arrived back in New York approximately after 210 days in transit, in October 1941 (NYC backstamp).



Figure 6. Sent via FAM 14, but returned to the sender because of conditions on the ground in Greece.



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Although there was no official USPOD notice of the re-opening of the trans-Atlantic route to Lisbon until the May 1, 1941, issue of *PB*, and the May issue of *PGS* (in both instances after Germany had invaded Greece), the *OFAMG*, in its January 1941 issue, as we saw earlier, had given notice of the reopening of the trans-Atlantic air route via Berlin.

Under this resumed service, mail that arrived in Lisbon was taken by DLH to Vienna, where it was opened and examined as part of the German censorship program for mail entering or leaving the Balkans. Mail for Greece, if such mail wasn't condemned by Vienna censorship, was returned to New York City rather than being sent on to Berlin for transmittal to Greece. In New York, the mail either was held by New York censorship or returned to the sender with an appropriate "service suspended" type handstamp, even though service had not necessarily been suspended – rather than refused – by German authorities.

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Before the advent of the Berlin/Vienna trans-Atlantic route, however, as previously described, there was another possibility for sending airmail to Greece, albeit an unreliable method. This permitted the sender to mail a cover to Lisbon via FAM 18, but with the possibility that the cover might be held indefinitely in Lisbon until combat conditions in Greece were such that the cover could be sent on and delivered. This approach was very precarious since combat conditions in Greece were rarely quiet. Most such mail was eventually returned to the senders from Lisbon. Figure 7, however, is one such cover that was delivered to Greece, rather than returned to its sender.

The Figure 7 cover was mailed before the official USPOD announcement (Jan. 21, 1941) that trans-Pacific service had been instituted, and before there was an official USPOD announcement (Nov. 28, 1941) that trans-Atlantic service to Lisbon had ceased.



Figure 7. One of a few known covers sent to Lisbon, held there and eventually allowed to proceed to Greece when combat conditions quieted.

The cover was handled under the previously unofficial practice, later clearly stated in the Jan. 21, 1941, *PB* notice, that, as an alternative to the 70¢ trans-Pacific emergency route, and as an alternative to accepting the 30¢ legacy rate as full payment over the trans-Pacific route, for a limited time the postal authorities were authorized to forward letters franked with 30¢ to Lisbon, there to be held "for possible onward forwarding."

Figure 7 was held in Lisbon for almost 60 days, then forwarded onward to its destination, as evidenced by the Greece receiving marking, dated Jan. 30, 1941, on its verso side. In Greece, the letter was examined by Greek censorship, as evidenced by the re-sealing tape, before being released.

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The cover shown in Figure 8 (as did the Figure 5 cover) demonstrates the challenge of interpreting the evidence presented by a cover. It offers two possible conclusions: That the cover was flown via airmail, but was held by British and/or German censorship for a long period of time, or that the cover was carried by ship, and not flown over the trans-Atlantic route as intended by the sender who had franked the cover with 30¢ postage for airmail handling.

It is likely that the Figure 8 cover went by sea from New York to Bermuda, where the cover was examined by British censorship (Bermuda examiner's resealing tape for Bermuda Examiner 4238, partially covered by the German re-sealing tape). From Bermuda, the cover likely went to Lisbon by ship, where it was picked up by DLH, and sent to Vienna for examination, as evidenced by the German re-sealing tape partially covering the British tape. At some point, it was returned to New York, where it was stamped, "RETURN TO SENDER / SERVICE SUSPENDED," and returned. The cover's transit time, from its mailing in the United States to its return to the United States, was 253 days.

It is possible, however, that the Figure 8 cover was flown by Pan American Airways via the trans-Atlantic route, examined in Bermuda and then was flown onward by Pan American to Lisbon, where the Germans picked it up for transmittal to the Vienna censorship station for examination. In that event, German censorship would have held the cover for a very long time, something it was known to do, before returning it to New York.

It is impossible to tell if the cover was actually treated as airmail because there are no transit or

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receiving backstamps to indicate the cover's route or travel dates, or to show when the cover arrived in Europe, so as to determine if the 253-days delay was a transit delay or was a British and/or German censorship delay, or some combination.<sup>27</sup>



Figure 8. This cover was 253 days in transit or experienced some other delay. Germany invaded Greece five days after this cover was mailed.

### Mail to Greece During Germany's Invasion and Occupation (April 6, 1941 - Dec. 11, 1941<sup>28</sup>)

Germany came to Italy's rescue on April 6, 1941. It is likely that its motivation for invading Greece was not only to preserve Italy's armed forces (even though Hitler had ordered Mussolini to stay out of Greece), but also to give Germany a "foot in the door," along with its then-ally, the Soviet Union, to invade other Balkan countries and, in Germany's case, to strategically place itself in the position to seize Romania's oil fields, as it eventually would do.

The German invasion of Greece presented the United States with an interesting situation with respect to its airmail to Greece.

Since combat conditions in Greece were ostensibly the reason why mail to that country often was held in Lisbon or Vienna, and then usually returned to the sender, Germany's invasion of Greece on April 6, 1941, would seem to have resolved this problem for neutral countries (such as the United States), since three days after Germany invaded, Greece (other than Crete) surrendered to the Germans. Major combat came to an end in Greece, as of April 9. From that time forward, previously held mail could have been sent on to Greece for delivery to the addressees.

And yet mail regularly continued to be held in Lisbon or Vienna, then returned to its sender by allied authorities or by the Germans, rather than delivered to Greece. Figures 9 and 10 are examples.

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Figure 9. This cover never made it beyond Vienna before being returned to New York City.



Figure 10. This postal card was returned to its sender from Vienna via New York after five months. Mailed from California, June 9, 1941, the card was returned and arrived in New York Nov. 30, 1941, where it was marked, "RETURN TO SENDER / SERVICE SUSPENDED." Note the scarce manuscript "PC 90" censorship marking, indicating the postal card had been examined in Bermuda.

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Figure 11. Note the penciled note: "Via N.Y."

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The last mention of trans-Pacific route airmail service to Greece in the *OFAMG* was in the May 1941 issue. In June, the *OFAMG* stated in its comment section that airmail to Greece (excepting Crete) would go via the trans-Atlantic route. The USPOD official documents did not mention the cessation of airmail over the trans-Pacific route.

Figure 11 nicely shows this transition.

The sender of the Figure 11 cover franked the envelope with 70¢ postage for transmission over the trans-Pacific airmail route, via Hong Kong and Egypt. The Boston post office, however, somehow recognizing that trans-Pacific service no longer was available even though this fact had not yet been published by the USPOD in the *PB* or *PGS*, marked the front of the cover, in pencil, "Via N.Y.," and sent it to New York (rather than to San Francisco) for airmail carriage to Lisbon. The cover made it to Lisbon and then to Vienna.

Once in Vienna, the cover was opened, examined and resealed by German censorship, which held it for several months. The cover eventually was returned by the German authorities to New York (Nov. 30, 1941, receiving a marking on verso side) from where the cover was either held by New York censorship or was returned to its sender.

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## Mail Service to Greece Ends

Mail service to Greece, until the end of the war, was officially suspended Nov. 28, 1941, with this notice in the *PB*:<sup>29</sup>

Due to the present disturbed conditions abroad facilities for the onward transmission of mails for Greece has been interrupted as the result of which mail for Greece dispatched from the United States since the invasion of that country is being returned to origin with the labels of the sacks endorsed "Service Suspended."

Under the circumstances, postmasters are directed to decline to accept for mailing, effective immediately and until further notice, any mail articles addressed for delivery in Greece. Such mail for Greece as is returned from abroad as well as any mail received at New York from offices of mailing prior to the receipt of this information or inadvertently thereafter, will be returned to the senders appropriately endorsed.

Postmasters are directed to cause due notice of the foregoing to be taken at their offices and the widest possible publicity without expense to the Department to be given thereto.

This applies also to air mail.

Taken at face value, this notice suggests that mail – airmail and ocean – had been transmitted to Greece without interruption through Nov. 28. Of course, as has been described in this article, that was not true.

### Conclusion

With these few covers, I have attempted to show, using Greece as a model, the difficulties, complexities and the disparate published instructions available for deputy postmasters and for the public to use in determining how to send an airmail letter to Europe, through Dec. 12, 1941, when mail to occupied countries ceased upon the entry of the United States into the war. Similar problems arose with respect to mail addressed to Asia or to the Middle East.

Hopefully, this model has illustrated the point explicated by Ken Lawrence in his cited articles that the postal historian, the collector and the student of WWII mail cannot use only one source to fully tell the story of foreign-destination mail during WWII. I would add that even with multiple and varied sources, the whole story of some covers still cannot always be told.

### Acknowledgements

Several collectors and students of postal history generously read this manuscript and offered corrections and other suggestions to improve it. My thanks to Clifford J. Alexander, Louis Fiset and Ken Lawrence for reviewing this article and for offering valuable comments and corrections.

### Appendix: Airmail to Greece (1939 - 1941)

As mentioned previously, I conclude this piece with the following appendix, a chronological table reflecting, by date and source, all notices concerning this collecting area that appeared in the *PBs*, *PGSs* and in the *OFAMGs* relating to the availability or suspension of mail service to Greece, as well as anecdotal notes. I will send an MS Word file of the table via email ([stevenroth@comcast.net](mailto:stevenroth@comcast.net)) to anyone requesting it so that collectors can modify it to suit their own collecting interests.



**Appendix: Airmail to Greece (1939 - 1941)**

Year	Month	Route	Status	Source	Comments
1939		FAM 18	Service available via Trans-Atlantic route	OFAMG 12/1939; PGS December 1939.	Prior to and after outbreak of War on Sept. 3, 1939.  To Lisbon, then to France and England by rail through Spain; then by ordinary means. Or: Lisbon to Italy; then air to Greece.
1940	01	FAM 18	Service available via Trans-Atlantic route	OFAMG 01/1940	To Lisbon, then to France and England by rail through Spain; then by ordinary means. Or: Lisbon to Italy; then air to Greece.
1940	11	FAM 18	Service Suspended	OFAMG 11/1940	<b>NOTE:</b> I have a cover dated Nov. 25, 1940, that made it to Greece after the date of suspension. Likely already in transit when suspension occurred.
1940	12	FAM 18	Service Suspended	OFAMG 12/1940	
1941	01	FAM 18	Service Resumed	OFAMG 01/1941	Air service available via Berlin, Germany "despite the war with Italy."
1941	01	FAM 14	Trans-Pacific Service Commenced	PB No. 18116 [01/21/1941]	Via trans-Pacific route at 70¢ because trans-Atlantic service was interrupted. Can also go via FAM 18 to Lisbon, but will be held until conditions allow onward transmission.
1941	02	FAM 14 & FAM 18	FAM 14 continued // FAM 18 Service Resumed	PGS February 1941; OFAMG 02/1941	Air to Cairo; then by ordinary means. Postage 70¢. FAM 18 operating at same time [OFAMG 02/1941] [Legacy Rate recognized but mail sent to Lisbon to be held, or to be forwarded if possible.]  <b>NOTE:</b> I have a cover that was returned because there was no service to Greece at this time.
1941	05	FAM 18	Service Resumed	PGS May 1941	Airmail to Greece (other than Crete) via trans-Atlantic route at 30¢. No mention of FAM 14.  But see, OFAMG 05/1941, suspending service. I have two covers, each dated May 1941, that were suspended and returned after reaching Berlin or Vienna in May 1941.



					Note: The above 1940-1941 guides represent US Postal policies of resumption. This mail went via Germany; Germany suspended service and returned mail to U.S. as early as February 1941, through May 1941, based on covers in my collection and files.
1941	04	FAM 18	Service Revised and continued	OFAMG 04/1941	Lisbon to Germany; then via Prague and Vienna by rail.
1941	04	FAM 14	Service Continued	OFAMG 04/1941	Trans-Pacific by airmail to Cairo; then by ordinary means.
1941	05	FAM 18	Service Suspended	OFAMG 05/1941	But see, PGS May 1941, resuming service.
1941	05	FAM 14	Service Continued	PGS 05/1941	Trans-Pacific route continued. Air to Cairo, then onward by ordinary means.
1941	06	FAM 14	Service discontinued	OFAMG 06/1941	Trans-Pacific service quietly omitted. Statement in comment section that air mail to Greece now would go via trans-Atlantic route
1941	06	FAM 18	Service Resumed	OFAMG 06/1941; PB No. 18217 [06/12/1941]	Via Lisbon and England. Not via Italy or Germany. Airmail to Crete via FAM 18. Then, ordinary means from Lisbon.  NOTE: I have a postal card showing suspended service on FAM 18 during this period.  NOTE: I also have a cover sent 06/02, examined by German censorship, and returned to NYC because service was suspended.
1941	07	FAM 18	Service Continued	OFAMG 07/1941	Crete now included and no longer used FAM 14. Service to Greece resumed via FAM 18. FAM 14 service suspended. See also, PGS August 1941.
1941	08	FAM 18	Service Resumed	PGS August 1941	Airmail to Crete resumed at 30¢ via trans-Atlantic route.
1941	11	FAM 18, FAM 14 and Ordinary Means	All service suspended	OFAMG 11/1941	All service suspended due to disturbed conditions in Greece.
1941	12	FAM 18 & FAM 14 and Ordinary Means	All service Suspended	OFAMG 12/1941	All mail to Greece suspended. This lasted until the end of the war.
1941	12	FAM 22	New service commenced	OFAMG 12/1941	Airmail via South Atlantic route FAM 22 to/from Miami, South America, and West Africa.

## Endnotes

1. There is a significant philatelic controversy that is chronologically beyond the scope of this article, but which is critical to any understanding of foreign-destination airmail during WWII. This concerns the problems associated with the origin, operation and termination of Foreign Air Mail Route 22 (FAM 22), also called Pan American Contract Route 6, which was in operation from Dec. 6, 1941, and which continued in operation after the United States entered WWII, and had shutdown other trans-Pacific airmail routes beyond Hawaii.

The study of mail carried on FAM 22 has generated much heat among collectors and students, in part because of the very nature and purpose of this route – that is, to be a secret conduit of military supplies, weapons, spare parts and personnel to the British in Africa, under cover of being just another foreign-destination civilian airmail route – albeit one, we now know – that used fake timetables and fake route information as part of its covert mission.

The best explication of this “confusing” mail route, its origin and operation, appeared in a two-part article written by Ken Lawrence in the *American Philatelist*: “Via Miami 1941-1945 / FAM 22 Trans-Atlantic Air Mail / Part I: To and From Africa” (January 2014) and “Part II: To and From the Near East and the Far East” (February 2014).

The best account of the heated debates among postal historians concerning FAM 22 is set forth in a monograph written and published by Ken Lawrence, *The FAM 22 Debate Explicated* (Arrow Philately May 2015), still available from the author at PO Box 98, Spring Mills PA 16875-0098 (Cost: \$15 post-paid in the United States; \$18 to foreign addressees).

2. *The Official Foreign Air Mail Guide*, January 1940. Hereafter, in these endnotes, *OFAMG*.
3. As invariably seems to happen to those of us who collect and study postal history, I found myself with ancillary WWII collections (undercover mail, censorship enclosure slips and return-to-sender labels, and mail to non-combatants held in the United States, among others) and, inevitably, also started two other collections that provide chronological bookends for my WWII collections: the postal history of the “Isolationists vs. the Interventionists” (a collection I call, “Those Angry Days: 1939-1941”), and, at the other end of the spectrum, a postal history collection of the “Cold War (including the Korean and Vietnam Wars) 1945-1991.”
4. For a discussion of the history, structure and operation of the United States Office of Censorship during WWII, see, Steven M. Roth, *The Censorship of International Civilian Mail During World War II* (La Posta Monograph Series, Volume 6, 1991). This non-philatelic monograph does not concern itself with censorship devices, return-to-sender enclosure slips, censor handstamp markings or other collecting aspects of censorship, but discusses, in great detail, based on the author’s declassification of several thousand formerly classified documents located at NARA, the day-to-day workings of the United States Office of Censorship immediately preceding and during WWII.
5. The two URLs for the *PBs* and *PGs*, respectively, are found at the following: [www.uspostalbulletins.com](http://www.uspostalbulletins.com), and <http://stampsmarter.com/Learning/PostalGuide.html>.
6. Lawrence, Ken, “World War II Postal History Research,” *Linn’s Stamp News*, Nov. 17, 2014, p.48; “World War II Air Mail to Turkey,” *United States Stamp Specialist*, October 2015, p.469.
7. The postal guides ceased publication after the release of the 1941 edition, and resumed publication in 1946.
8. All illustrations are of covers in my collection.
9. *United States Official Postal Guide*, Part II (1939), p.165. *The United States Official Postal Guide*, Part II (1940), p.176, is silent with respect to the routing of airmail. See, also: *PB* No. 17811, Nov. 2, 1939; *PB* 17821, Nov. 16, 1939. See, also: Richard W. Helbock, ed., “Overseas Airmail Usages,” *Prexie Postal History* (La Posta Monograph Series, Volume 2, 1988), p.58ff.

All following references to this and to other Part II editions of the Postal Guides will be cited in the format, “PG 1939,” “PG 1940” or “PG 1941,” as the context requires, with appropriate page numbers.

10. *PG* 1939, p.165. Helbock, *ibid.*, p. 69.
11. *PG* 1939, p.165.
12. *PG* 1939, p.165. Steamship transit times from the United States to Europe before WWII typically were nine to 13 days. *PG* 1939, p.165; *PG* 1940, p.176. Even after WWII started, neutral ships (such as those

from the United States) not traveling as part of a convoy could make the crossing in the pre-war times. This changed for the worse once the Atlantic became unsafe for neutral shipping, and all ships traveled as parts of convoys.

13. Thomas H. Boyle, Jr., *Airmail Operations During World War II*, American Airmail Society 1998, pp. 189-93.

14. *PB* No. 18116, Jan. 21, 1941.

15. *Postal Guide Supplement*, February 1941.

Hereafter, all references to the Postal Guide Supplements will be cited as PGS, with the appropriate dates inserted: PGS [month] [year].

16. *OFAMG*, January 1941.

17. *OFAMG*, June 1941.

18. *PB* No. 18188, May 1, 1941.

19. *PB* No. 18217, June 12, 1941.

20. *PGS* August 1941.

21. *OFAMG*, December 1941; *PB* No. 18334, Nov. 28, 1941.

22. *OFAMG*, January 1941.

23. This statement is correct. See *History of the Postal and Telegraph Censorship Department 1938-1946*, Volume 1 (reprinted by Civil Censorship Study Group, Warrington, no year), para. 1361, p. 536; See also, Konrad Morenweiser, *British Empire Civil Censorship Devices / World War II / British Asia* (Civil Censorship Study Group 6th ed. 2011), p. 111. But this point begs the question whether unexamined mail (which was evidenced by the "Not Opened By Censor" handstamp) ever passed through censorship without receiving any notation or the previously cited handstamp.

24. *PG* 1940 p. 314 (19-28 days).

25. Morenweiser, *ibid.*, p. 113.

26. *PG* 1939, p. 297 (22 to 28 days); *PG* 1940, p. 314 (19-28 days).

27. If the long delay of this cover resulted from censorship, it is likely the cover was held for a long period by the German censorship station in Vienna before being returned to New York for return to the sender, rather than by the British in Bermuda, since Bermuda censorship tended to release mail fairly quickly, unless a letter presented some problem or was condemned.

28. The United States ended mail service to all occupied countries in Europe on Dec. 12, 1941, *PB* No. 18344, Dec. 12, 1941.

29. *PB* No. 18334, Nov. 28, 1941.



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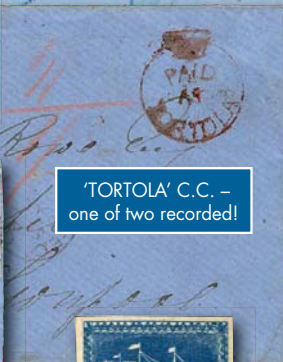
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ex Dublin Find (1899)  
ex Earl of Crawford (1913)



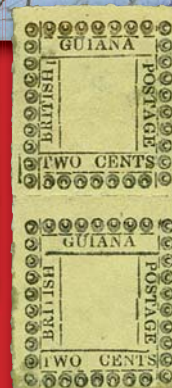
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# Re-Federalization of Confederate Postal Operations I

By Daniel M. and Catherine F. Telep

From my youth, study of the Federal and Confederate postal operations during the American Civil War (1861-65) has always been my philatelic *sweet spot!* At my age, that's a lot of study! Recently, the aspect of that study that has emerged to the forefront of my interest is what I've been calling the "Re-Federalization" of postal operations in former Confederate cities once they fell to Union occupation and subsequently endured that period in our history known as Reconstruction.

Richard Graham, my late friend from Columbus, Ohio, pioneered this rich philatelic area of study by collecting, exhibiting and publishing articles about examples. Acquiring several pieces of his material, I became motivated to write and publish my own article on the subject in the September 2019 issue of the *American Philatelist*, titled "Re-Federalization: How America's Mail System Returned to Order." This article provides additional insights and different material for the Collectors Club members.

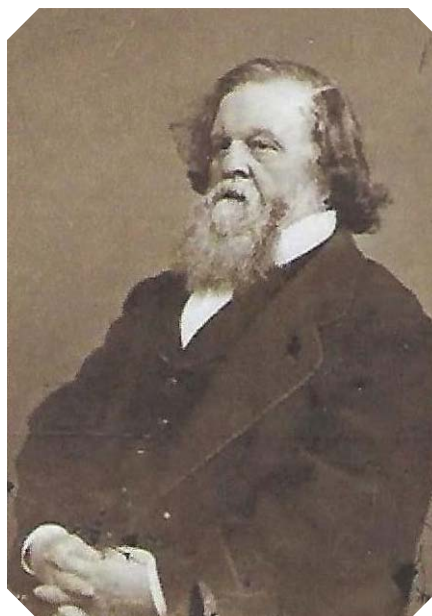


Figure 1 (left). Cover sent from CSA Gen. Howell Cobb (above) to his wife in Macon, Ga. Curiously, it is addressed "in care of" Gen. Cobb.

Figure 2 (below). July 15, 1865, Montgomery, Ala., to Oregon, Wis.



The cover shown in Figure 1 is from Gen. Howell Cobb, CSA, to his wife at home in Macon, Ga. The cover was sent from Atlanta with a blue Atlanta, Ga., handstamp.



Figure 3 (right).

Figure 4 (below right).

Figure 5 (bottom).

The Figure 2 cover was mailed from Montgomery, Ala., on July 15, 1865, early after the end of the "War of the Rebellion," as the federal historians like to refer to it. A new handstamp had not yet been obtained, so it is canceled by pen. However, Charleston, S.C., did have a post-war handstamp device, Figure 3, dated Aug. 28, 1865, to Maine. The Union soldier writes to his parents that,

"... I have heard nothing new about going home." Figure 4, with a duplex Mobile, Ala., cancellation on June 22, 1865, was carried into the post office, canceled and delivered locally. One can only wonder what the writer's letter contained.

Between the fall of Little Rock, Ark., to Union occupation in 1863 and Lee's surrender ending the war in April of 1865, Figure 5 shows two different Little Rock cancellations: an unusual straight-line cancel, undated, and a circular handstamp dated Feb. 4, 1865.

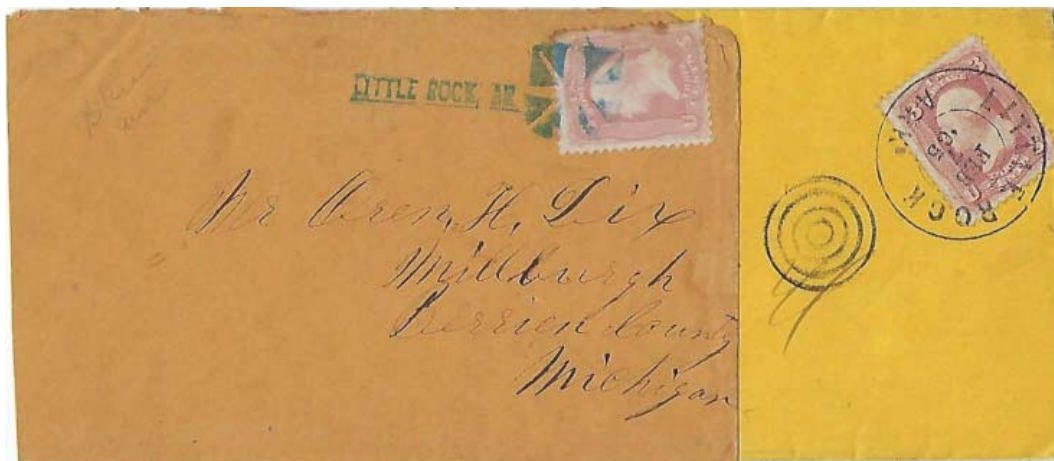
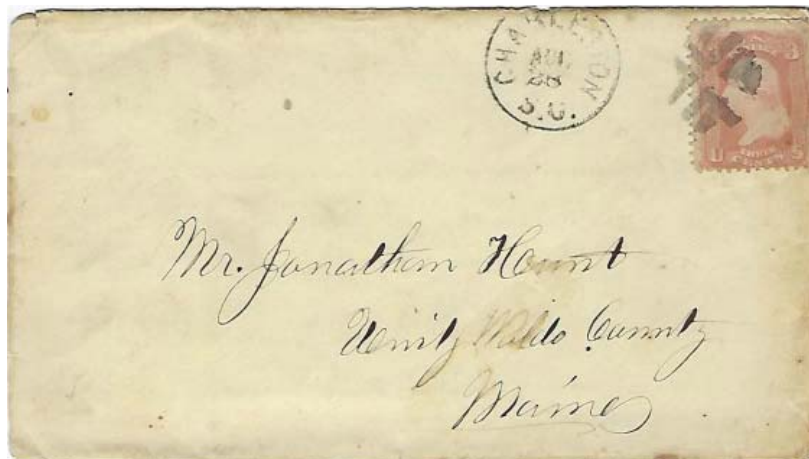


Figure 6 (right).  
 Figure 7 (below).  
 Figure 8 (bottom).

The cover featured in Figure 6, sent from New Orleans, La., after the post office reopened subsequent to the capture of the city in 1862, was mailed to Castleton, Pa., dated July 25, 1864. There the postmaster added the Castleton handstamp and manuscript "Fwd. 3¢" to Rockland, Maine.



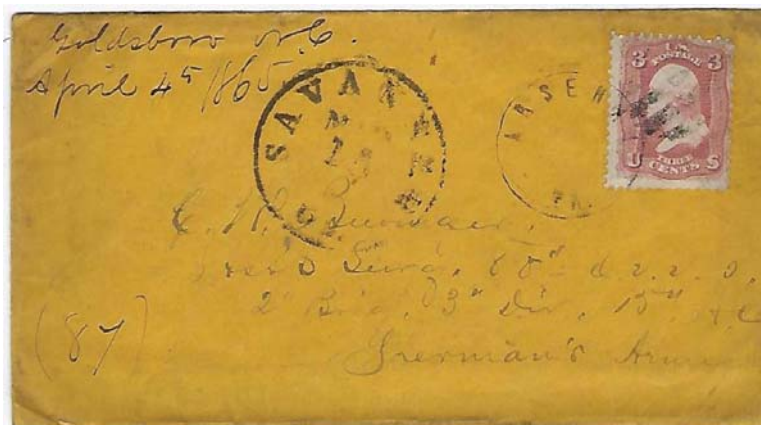
The Figure 7 cover, from Chattanooga, Tenn., April 17, 1864, is addressed to



New Brighton, Pa., but was missent to Brighton, Mich., where it was hand stamped May 11 and redirected to the right location. Like New Orleans and Little Rock, Chattanooga was federally occupied in late 1863 and the Confederate troops evacuated, leaving the postal operations to be

re-federalized while the war was still raging. The soldier writes, "... I believe that I am battling in a good cause ... I have been wounded in the leg ... Our lives are in the hands of an all-wise Providence."

Among the favorites in my growing refederalization collection, shown in Figure 8, originated in Pittsburgh area's Arsenal, Pa., probably in late February 1865, is addressed to a soldier serving





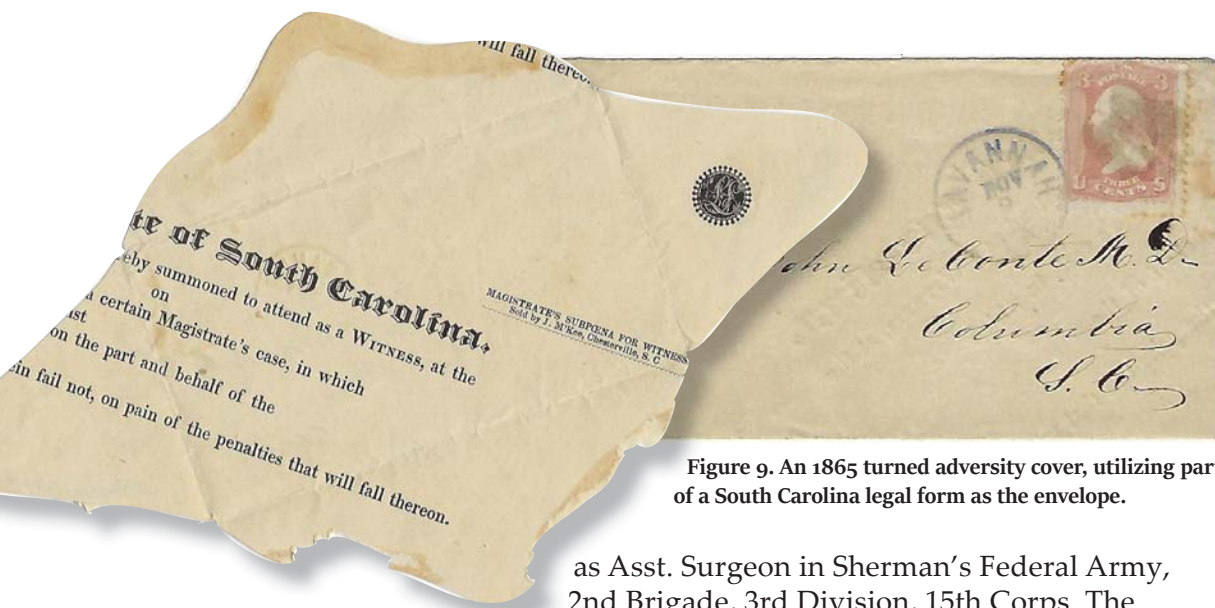


Figure 9. An 1865 turned adversity cover, utilizing part of a South Carolina legal form as the envelope.

as Asst. Surgeon in Sherman's Federal Army, 2nd Brigade, 3rd Division, 15th Corps. The Army's location late in the war was supposedly in the Savannah, Ga., neighborhood, but the federal postal operations there forwarded the letter to Goldsboro, N.C., March 15, and it was received in Goldsboro on April 4, 1865. The romance of this cover is that the Savannah handstamp used on it to forward the item is the very same handstamp Confederate Savannah used throughout the War!

Finally, also from Savannah, Ga., is the Figure 9 cover, dated Nov. 9, 1865, an envelope fashioned from a South Carolina legal form, typical of the paper shortage common in Confederate philately and still present in the South even during refederalization.

## Re-Federalization of Confederate Postal Operations II

By Daniel M. Telep

After Part I of this story on refederalization was written, my friend Harvey Teal of South Carolina passed (1928-2020). I was fortunate to have known him and to be able to acquire a portion of his South Carolina collection just last month, including 70 postwar examples from Confederate towns that included 15 adversity usages. As I stated in Part I, also in this issue, the Reconstruction period after the war was a painful time for Southern people. We just watched the 1993 movie *Sommersby*, which was set during this time period. The movie graphically depicts the poverty, destruction, hatred and violence that was so common.

Nevertheless, life went on. Besides the politically charged appointment of postmasters, and the difficult and cumbersome project of re-establishing postal routes and personnel throughout the South, paper and envelope shortages limited mail use. With this article, several adversity refederalization examples will be shown, but let's begin with the turned covers, one first used as Confederate and then turned to be used federally.

In Figure 1 the 10¢ blue-green Archer & Daly Jefferson Davis stamp is handstamped Bennettville, S.C., Oct. 30, 1864. The addressee, Mr. W.W. Sellers, refolded and readdressed this envelope (Figure 2) to send a letter to Mr. Robert C. Hamer at Little Rock, S.C., Jan. 24, 1866. The letter was hand-delivered by Robert B. Stackhouse, whose name was noted because the Little Rock post office was not yet opened; it didn't re-open until April 17, 1866. The enclosed letter discusses the sale of a house in New York,

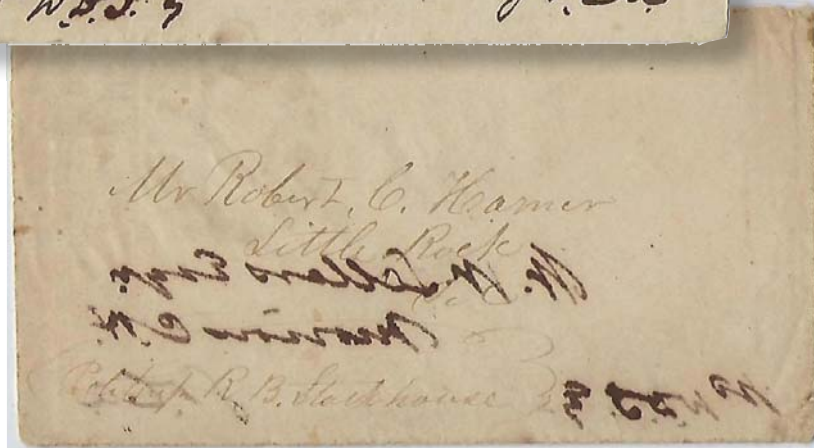
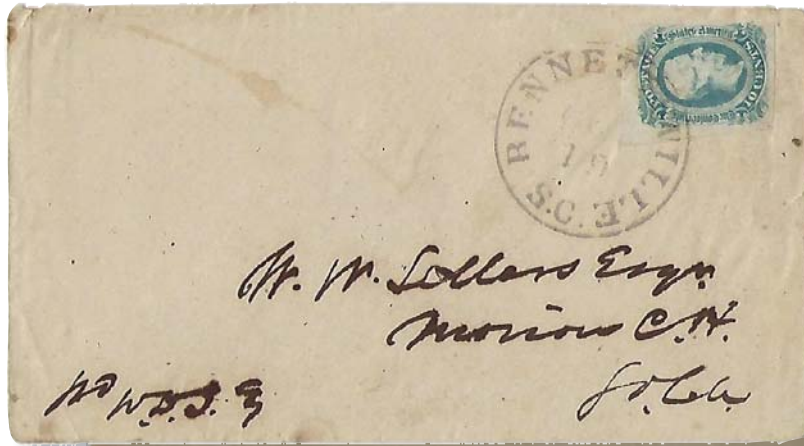


Figure 1 (top).

Figure 2 (second from top). These images show both sides of an 1864-66 turned cover.

Figure 3 (above).

Figure 4 (left). Another adversity cover showing a turned use of a U.S. stamped envelope.





Figure 5 (left).

Figure 6 (below).

Figure 7 (bottom).

All three of these covers were formed by utilizing parts of various South Carolina legal forms.

where settlement in the United States courts had not yet been completed. Mr. Sellers provides legal advice on what next steps Mr. Hamer needs to take.

A 3¢ stamped envelope issue of 1864, Figure 3, originally sent from Orangeburgh, S.C., on Feb. 8 to Lewisville, S.C., was turned, Figure 4, and sent to Branchville, S.C., on Oct. 15 from Orangeburg C.H., SM (St. Matthew's Parish) South Carolina post office, presumably due 3¢.



Printed legal forms were made into envelopes with 1861 issue 3¢ stamps. The cover shown in Figure 5, sent Dec. 18 from Columbia, S.C., to Winnsboro, S.C., and Figure 6 sent Dec. 28 from Hodges, S.C., to Charleston, S.C. The cover shown

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Figure 8 (left).

Figure 9 (below).

Figure 10 (bottom).

Figures 11 and 12  
(facing page).



in Figure 7 uses a printed form for the Requisition for Confederate Ordnance, with an 1861 issue stamp from Charleston, S.C., on June 28, to Stateburg, S.C.

First mailed from Charleston on April 23 to Cheraw, S.C., with 1861 issue 3¢ stamp, the envelope shown in Figure 8 was turned and reused from Cheraw to Sumter, S.C.,

Figure 9, without a stamp. Either the Cheraw postmaster didn't have stamps, or the sender didn't have money; both conditions were prevalent during Reconstruction! The postmaster used his Confederate handstamp and marked it "Due 3."

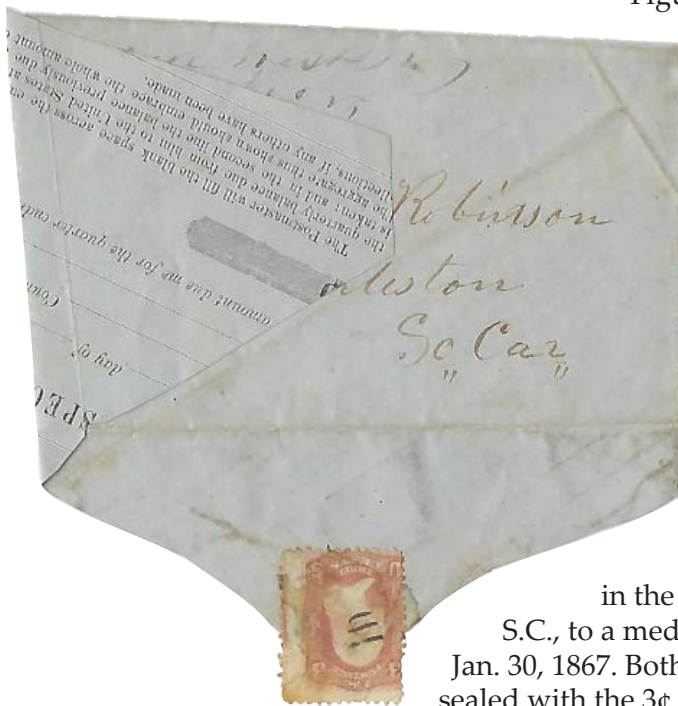
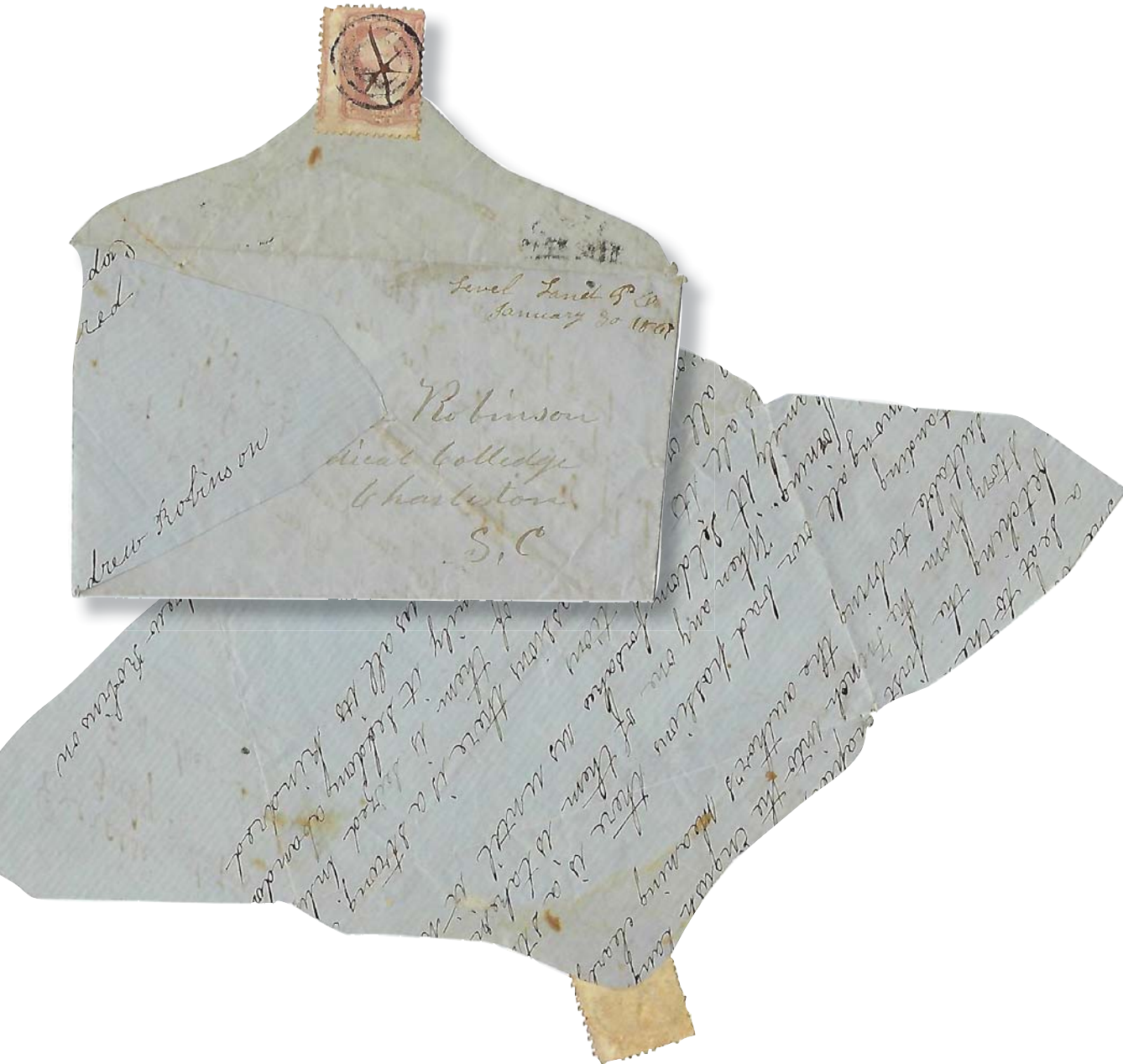


Figure 10 shows a governmental transportation form made into an envelope, sent from the very small town of Due West, S.C., with a manuscript date of Dec. 22, 1865, to Charleston. Figure

11, made from a letter written in the 1850s, is sent from Level Land, S.C., to a medical college in Charleston on Jan. 30, 1867. Both of these adversity covers are sealed with the 3¢ 1861 issue stamp on their flaps.





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# Malaya's Timeless Design XI

## Crown Colonies

Lin Yangchen

### Comet crash mail, India, May 2, 1953

The coconut definitive has not only weathered the storms of World War II and the Indonesian War of Independence, but has also survived plane crashes. The aerogramme shown below from Penang was salvaged from the crash site of BOAC (British Overseas Airways Corporation) Flight 783 in the remote Jagalgori district near Calcutta (now Kolkata), India, in 1953. It was marked locally (Baldwin 1966) with one of two or three hurriedly made salvaged-mail rubber cachets.



Each line of text in the cachet is in a different typeface, beginning with the distinctive Copperplate Gothic of 1901 and followed by a serif and a sans-serif. This cachet has the notorious G-for-C error in "Calcutta" (Baldwin 1966). The error probably came about amidst the haste and the difficulty of reading the characters flipped backwards as the chop was being fabricated. The overall kerning (distances between letter pairs) is visibly inconsistent, but neither the rubber stamp maker nor his equipment meant to typeset a monumental literary work.

The machine cancel of the stamps themselves is dated April 30, two days before the crash, the same day the accident aircraft had been issued a certificate of maintenance in London for 73 flying hours. *(continued on page 302)*

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On May 2, 1953, the first anniversary of the maiden commercial flight of the *Comet*, and 50 years since the first powered flight by man-made heavier-than-air machines, Flight 783 took off from Dum Dum Airport in Calcutta en route from Singapore to London. It flew into a severe thunderstorm and suffered a catastrophic wing failure and in-flight breakup while climbing through 10,000 feet. The dismembered sections of the airframe plummeted to the ground in flames. All 43 passengers and crew on board were killed. Some were on their way to London for the coronation of Elizabeth II.



The colorful coconuts, stuck on the back flap of this cover to serve as envelope seals and festooned with a riot of circular datestamps, were embarking on the long voyage to England, after bidding farewell to their rustic tropical "hometown" (they had, in fact, been printed in London earlier) of Gemas in Negri Sembilan. Their destination was the University Correspondence College, a distance-learning institution established in 1888 and, as it turned out, a harrowing diversion had to be endured before reaching the sanctuary of Cambridge.

On the front of the envelope (following page), despite the empty space at lower left, the cachet was again applied in the cramped upper-right quarter. This, too, is the "Calcutta" error. One imagines that the task of applying the emergency cachets was extra work on top of regular postal duties, with limited time available to customize the positioning and rotation of the cachet. Nevertheless, a standard operating procedure was probably in force to avoid overprinting the cachet on top of existing cancellations and stamps, so as not to obscure any postal information for subsequent processing. Some stormwater damage is evident.





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Collector Club 5/2020



Additional damage to the envelope is seen in the upper-left corner. As this was a Registered letter, it was painstakingly resealed with the official label of the General Post Office in London, bearing the Imperial State Crown and torn to size. It apparently took two weeks for this to be done, as suggested by the date slug of May 15 in the violet registration chop on the back.

It was not immediately realized that the *Comet* was unsafe. Queen Elizabeth II herself traveled on a *Comet* flight on June 30, 1953. It was only after two more fatal crashes with no survivors the following year that lengthy investigations would finally reveal the full extent of the *Comet's* dangerous structural flaws. Amid the withdrawal of the airworthiness certificate and grounding of the *Comet* fleet, sweeping design changes and radical innovations in avionics were introduced that made flying safer for future generations.

The cover shown on the next page features a printed airmail étiquette in four languages, including local Jawi and Chinese, embodying the cultural diversity of Malaya. The sender was serving in the British Royal Artillery at the height of the Malayan Emergency. The words "Forces Mail" handwritten above the étiquette indicated that it qualified for the discounted postage rates for HM Forces deployed overseas. The letter departed Penang for Singapore as late as noon on the day before the crash.

Here we see a second type of the cachet. The first line is typeset with a condensed version of Copperplate Gothic, with more letterspacing but less wordspacing than the previous cachet such that "SALVAGEDMAIL" looks like a single word. I suspect that this was not an exercise of artistic license, but a case of adjacent letters not being able to be placed closer to each other for physical reasons. Consequently, the distance between "D" and "M" was reduced



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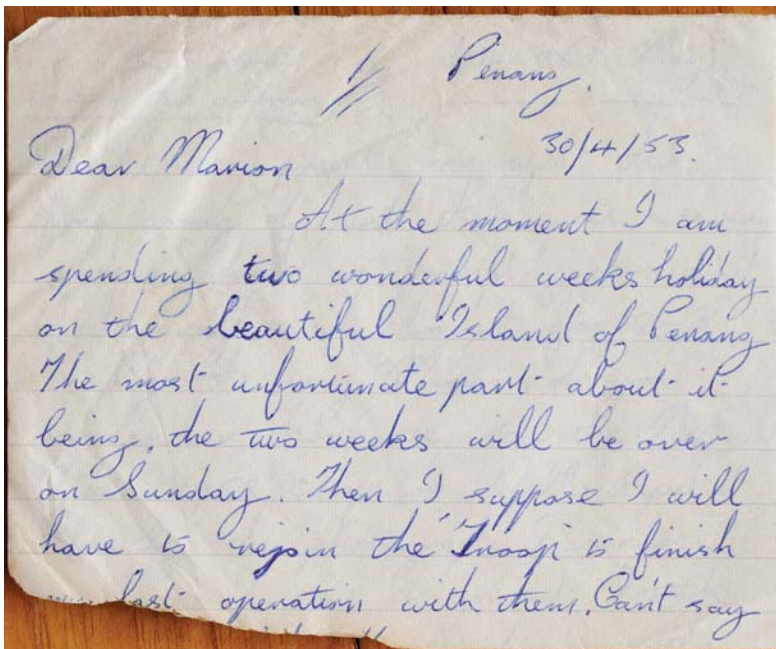
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out of the necessity of constraining the length of the first line to be no greater than the second. The second and third lines feature slab serifs, giving them a typewritten and mechanistic disposition.

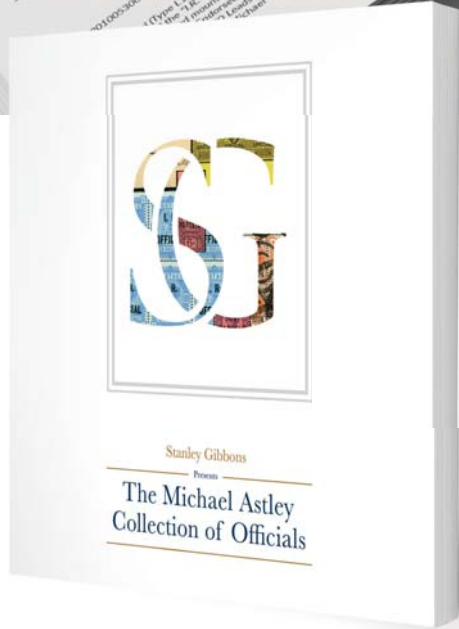
The original two-page letter enclosed in the envelope is shown below, the text of which is transcribed as follows (the enclosed photo it mentions is missing):



Dear Marion

At the moment I am spending two wonderful weeks holiday on the beautiful Island of Penang. The most unfortunate part about it being, the two weeks will be over on Sunday. Then I suppose I will have to rejoin the 'Troop' to finish my last operation with them. Can't say ... [paper torn off]





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*As usual we are having roasting weather, it makes me feel pleased that we are only three minutes walk from the sea. incidentally the sea is where most of my leave has been spent.*

*Since I last wrote to you we have had another profitable patrol. This time we found quite a big camp that contained a large amount of bandit equipment, amongst this fine array of junk there was a sewing machine, which we promptly carried out of the jungle and flogged for 80\$.*

*By the way Marion do you remember how we saw the New Year 1952 come in. Well to put it bluntly the photograph I enclose was how I saw it go out. I took ... [paper torn off] down on the 31st Dec, 1952 on the Kati rubber estate, I just thought you might like to see how 52 went out at my end.*

*There doesn't seem to be very much more to tell you at the moment so I will close hoping everyone at your house is keeping fit and well.*

*Will write again soon.*

*Cheerio from Eric*

In all, five different fonts are shared between the two cachets for these crash covers. The use of so many incongruent typefaces is probably a symptom of the limited lettering available of each typeface in the workshop. Nevertheless, the authorities standardized the wording for both cachets to eliminate any possibility of confusion as to the incident referred to by them.

The crash of G-ALYV was probably the first time in history that Malayan mail was involved in the crash of a jet aircraft, yet it has received scant coverage in Malayan philately. A survey of philatelic auction catalogs indicated that besides Penang and Negri Sembilan, points of origin of mail carried on the plane included Brunei, Burma, Hong Kong, India, North Borneo and Singapore. See Holley (2015) for an overview of Malaya disaster mail.

Another plane carrying coconut definitives went down in bad weather on Christmas Day 1954 in Prestwick, Scotland. The BOAC Boeing 377 Stratocruiser, nicknamed *Cathay* and registered G-ALSA, was en route from London to New York and carrying a £900,000 consignment of diamonds. I have seen a cover bearing several coconut definitives of various denominations, including a half-burnt \$1 and two stamps with the crash cachet applied directly on them.

*[Editor's Note: This is the 11th of several installments by Yangchen on his deeply specialized interest in the extremely diverse Coconut definitives of Malaya. He has not only studied these stamps from virtually every aspect for many years, he also has exhibited, including at World Stamp Exhibition 2015 in Singapore. His exhibit, The Stamp That Took Malaya by Storm – Graphic Design and Diversification, reflects only a small portion of Yangchen's extensive study and expertise regarding these stamps. The exhibit – and this work – has relevance to virtually anyone considering the evolution and study of a specific stamp design or issue. His entire study, including updates, as more information becomes available, appears on his personal website, [www.linyangchen.com/philately](http://www.linyangchen.com/philately). His extensive list of references is found on his website as well: [www.linyangchen.com/Malaya-stamp-literature](http://www.linyangchen.com/Malaya-stamp-literature).]*

**Note:** The next installment of this ongoing and important series will continue with the Malay States.



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# What's That I **Don't** See on the Board?

By Larry Haber

Some years ago, we began a project offering collectors the opportunity to commemorate special philatelic items dear to them on a multi-positional plaque on the second floor of the Clubhouse. Think of it as a “micro-exhibit,” one item, very special to the collector.

Some months ago, we began a new project to highlight some of these special items in the pages of the *Collectors Club Philatelist*. Our goal is to help better understand the item, why it was selected for display and provide some background on the collector.

As you know, we have been exiled from our club house since early March, due to impact of COVID-19. Consequently, the item we see here has not yet been mounted on to the board. Once we are able to all return to our usual daily activities in Murray Hill, placing this item up there will be among our first orders of business. In the interim, we thank Matthew for his indulgence and commitment to the Club.



## Matthew Healey

### What is this item?


This is a Great Britain one-shilling stamp of the late 1860s and early 1870s, purloined from the registration sheet, or “imprimatur,” as they are popularly known. As you can see, it is position AK from the top row of plate 5, and is graced with the marginal plate number that appeared twice on each press sheet. The other plate-number single, position TB, is in the Royal Philatelic Collection, making this example unique in private hands. Its provenance includes several famous-name GB collections including that of the Earl of Crawford, who at one time, I believe, was an honorary member of our Club.

Plate 5 imprimatur stamps are interesting because when the plate was registered in 1869, it was printed on paper with an “Emblems” watermark. When Plate 5 was eventually put to press two years later, however, it was printed on paper with a “Spray” watermark. Had any of the plate 5 “Emblems” stamps ever found their way into use, they would rank among the highly sought-after “abnormals” of Victorian philately. To date, not a single used example of plate 5 on Emblems has surfaced, indicating that none of the “extra sheets” printed at the time of registration was ever likely released. But who knows? Perhaps one is lurking out there somewhere, awaiting discovery ...

### Why did I select it for display at the Collectors Club?

My earliest collecting began at age six or seven, when I unearthed my father's old Minkus *Master Global* album in the back of his closet and spent many a rainy afternoon happily surfing the world. When I was 15, I mounted a modest (and

modestly nerdy) exhibit of Dead Countries in my high school library, but alas, it didn't win me any dates. I dabbled in worldwide collecting as an adult and have written regularly for *Linn's Stamp News* for the past decade. I took the plunge into classic Great Britain seven or eight years ago. Rather than going crazy plating line-engraved, or splashing out mad sums on high values, I decided to focus on studying the mid-range surface-printed stamps, especially the one-shilling denomination, whose evolution in usage throughout the 19th century nicely tells the story of how global communications developed during the Victorian era. At some point in the near future, I hope to make an exhibit out of it all. I am grateful to Pat Moeser, Robert Odenweller and several others for encouraging me to join the Collectors Club and the RPSL, take my collecting to the next level and to think about one day exhibiting.

**About the Collectors Club Centennial plaque:** If you would like to place your item on this very special display board in the Clubhouse, some spots are still available. To further explore this opportunity, please contact Larry Haber at [info@collectorsclub.org](mailto:info@collectorsclub.org). 

## So Why Aren't There More?

*Wayne L. Youngblood*

A number of years ago, as I was sifting my way through a large accumulation of mixed material, I happened across the item shown in Figure 1, which, because of the volcano in the background, I laughingly dubbed the “smoking canoe,” an apostrophe-shaped marking rising from the front port hull. It's actually a small void of the cyan ink with well-defined edges.

Before proclaiming this variety as a plate flaw (rather than just a random inking freak), I sought a confirming copy for many years (unsuccessfully). Since these stamps were printed in press sheets of 200 (four panes of 50) and from only a single sleeve combination (A11111), it stood to reason that – in theory – one in every 200 stamps should exhibit the flaw if, indeed, it was a plate flaw. I never found another mint, used or on-cover example.

Although gravure sleeves are technically a form of intaglio printing (recess printing, like line engraving), characteristics of sleeves and printing evidence are very different, since gravure sleeves are much shallower and are created by a photographic process. Eventually, having never found a confirming example, I chalked the stamp up to being an inking flaw. Fast forward about 20 years, to when I received a color photocopy of a full pane from a collector wondering if he'd found a new plate flaw (Figure 2). He identified it as being position 12 from a lower-right position pane.

Although the flaw matches, it's important to note that it's not an exact match, so – however interesting – this is likely an inking flaw. Still, I would think more examples would have turned up over the years. Have you seen one?



Figure 1 (and enlargement) top.  
Figure 2 (and enlargement)  
above.

## Luis Alemany (1940-2020)

On the Thursday before Easter, April 9, 2020, Luis Alemany died in Madrid after a serious illness. With the passing of Alemany, philately has lost one of the most important International collectors of recent decades.

The “Philatelic Life’s Work” of Luis Alemany consisted of forming nearly 100 different collections. From Spanish classics via the Civil War to fiscal stamps and vignettes, each era and all aspects of Spanish philately were represented by its own collection. From the year 2000 onwards, various international collecting areas were added. Luis Alemany showed his collections at exhibitions all over the world in competitive and non-competitive classes. More than 120 Large Gold medals, 40 of them at FIP international exhibitions, as well as 45 Grand Prix awards, eight of them at FIP international exhibitions, bear witness to his impressive lifetime achievements in philately.



Alemany (right) with the author.

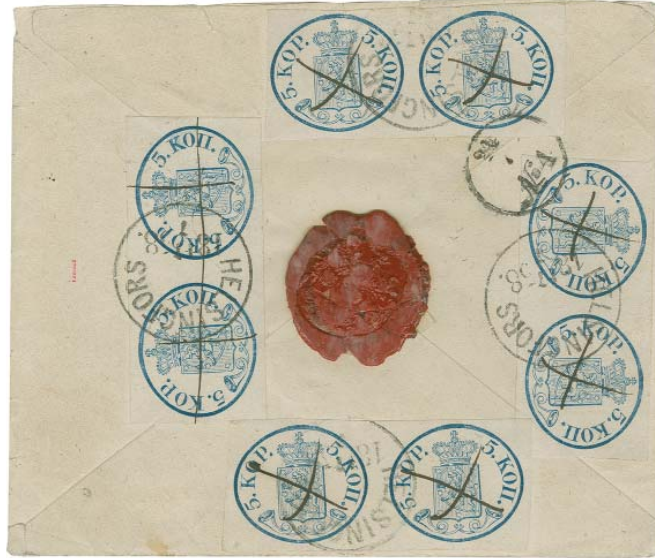
I was fortunate to meet Luis Alemany several times and to get to know him personally. This was during the publication of three of his collections in the *EDITION D'OR* book series: *The 'Bull's Eyes' of Brazil of 1843*, *The Classic Issues of Finland 1856-1876* and *Netherlands Postal History 1852-1867*.

I particularly remember the first meeting with Luis and his son Nacho in his architectural bureau in Madrid. It was April 25, 2012, the day after the Champions League semi-final match between Borussia Dortmund and Real Madrid. Dortmund had won 4-1 after a fantastic game. I knew that Luis Alemany was a really big fan of Real Madrid – with good reason! For generations, Alemany’s architectural bureau has been something of an “in-house” architectural bureau for Real Madrid. Luis Alemany and his team planned and created sports facilities and training centers not only for football [soccer], but also for all other sports in the Royal Sports Club. Alemany’s most famous project was probably Real Madrid’s “Santiago Bernabeu” football stadium, designed and built by his father in the 1940s. It was later extended and extensively modernized by Luis and his team for the 1982 World Cup. The Santiago Bernabeu Stadium is today the most famous football stadium in the world, along with Wembley in London and the Maracanã in Rio de Janeiro.

On the morning after the football match, I was with Luis and my companions Dieter Michelson and interpreter Ulrich Dorf. We discussed the football match; I proudly told them about my modest Borussia Dortmund shareholding and Luis told us about “his” stadium. We both laughed. Then the subject of philately. I mentioned that I privately own a collection of classic Spanish stamps, the postal history of the small Spanish port of Denia on the Mediterranean Sea. And to my



surprise it turned out that Luis also had a “home collection” of Denia! But what a fantastic collection! It turned out that we both had a holiday property in Denia. I had a small one; he had a much bigger one. Without knowing about each other, we had both started a collection of Denia postal history. Like the property, Luis’s Denia postal history collection was much more substantial than mine! Later it turned out that our properties in Denia were only about 150 meters apart as the crow flies. Small world.



The Finland, ‘Fabergé’ cover.

I was particularly impressed by the family’s strong support for Luis Alemany’s philatelic interests. With increasing age, traveling became more difficult, but Luis was accompanied his son Nacho to exhibitions all over the world. We met Luis and Nacho in Monaco and London, but also in Rio de Janeiro and Jakarta. Luis and his son Nacho were always present when his *EDITION D’OR* books were presented.

Wherever in the world of philately the name Luis Alemany was mentioned he had friends, in Argentina and Brazil, as well as in Colombia and many European countries. Everyone spoke with affection and admiration about the ever-friendly collector from Madrid who shared his fascination for philately with so many people. As a collector and exhibitor, he was without a doubt one of the absolute top-class philatelists worldwide. Nevertheless, he always met everyone he spoke to – in philately and also in everyday life – on equal terms, always modest and interested, which made him even more likeable.

In 2013 we were able to auction the collection, “Brazil – Bull’s Eyes of 1843,” at Corinphila in Zurich. It was a memorable auction. The top item, the only existing complete sheet of the 1843 60 Reis stamp, sold for 600,000 Swiss Francs! In 2015 Corinphila sold the complete “Finland Classics” collection by private treaty to a collector in Scandinavia. This included the most spectacular cover in the philately of Finland: four pairs of the first stamp of 1856, the 5 kopeks blue, used on cover to Lübeck from the Fabergé collection. Soon afterwards we at Corinphila were able to sell his incomparable collection of Netherlands postal history in three parts at our auction near Amsterdam in the Netherlands.

Philately has lost forever one of the truly great collectors. I will miss him. Luis will take his place among the very highest in the annals of philately. With the *EDITION D’OR* books, at least some of his great collections have been handed down intact to posterity for future generations of collectors.

— Karl Louis

*Karl Louis, FRPSL, is a managing partner of Corinphila Auktionen AG, Zurich.*

# The Collectors Club

## Membership Update: Jan. 1 through Aug. 7, 2020

We are pleased to welcome the following new and reinstated (\*) members:

### Approved by the Board of Governors; Jan. 29, 2020:

Chrysostomou,	Haris New York, NY	Resident
---------------	--------------------	----------

### Feb. 26, 2020:

Ozdinc, Armagan	Lionville, PA	Non-Resident
Wynns, John	Tucson, AZ	"
Maras, Julie	Zagreb, Croatia	Overseas

### June 3, 2020

*Abramson, Murray	Brookline, MA	Non-Resident
Paul Barker	Whitby, ON, Canada	"
Bell, James	Ocala, FL	"
Berkes, Robert	El Segundo, CA	"
Caprio, Francis	Spring Hill, TN	"
*Crowe, William	Danbury, CT	"
Droege, Thomas Lee	Durham, NC	"
Gallagher, Tony	San Francisco, CA	"
Newswanger, James	Pocono Pines, PA	"
Palay, Myron	Lakewood, OH	"
Ward, Alan	University Park, FL	"
Wilcox, David	Ridgefield, CT	"
Harder, Philipp Ingo	Chur, Switzerland	Overseas
Milic, Vladimir	Bayreuth, Germany	"
Watson, Bob	Wellington, New Zealand	"

### July 29, 2020

Ahrens, Philip	Yarmouth, ME	Non-Resident
Buck, Charles	Westport, CT	"
Herbert, Greg	Owings Mills, MD	"
King, Dennis	Alexandria, KY	"
Kouril, Douglas	Arlington, VA	"
*Krupnick, Jon	Ft. Lauderdale, FL	"
Lee, Eric	Quincy, IL	"
Lucas, Cran	Shreveport, LA	"
Marulli, Alfred	Palm Beach, FL	"
McGill, Douglas	El Segundo, CA	"
Newton, Barry	Peninsula, OH	"

**Explore our website and see just how much more the Collectors Club can offer.**

Preston, Dickson	Seattle, WA	“
Trainer, Ryan	Vienna, VA	“
Widger, Lorry	Vero Beach, FL	“
Wilson, Barry	Gibsonia, PA	“

Congratulations to our new members. A membership certificate will be forwarded to the address on file for each. Please do keep us updated as to current address and email so that we can continue to serve you. Electronic outreach is increasingly important as we continue to expand our offerings.

**New Applications received:**

New applications are posted for 30 days after receipt prior to Board of Governors action. The following applicants have applied for membership from July 14 through Aug 7, 2020:

Bendix Jr., Richard	Chicago, IL	Non-Resident
Bouvier, Joseph Robert	San Antonio, TX	“
Dail, Sean	Raleigh, NC	“
Feinstein, Michael	Northridge, CA	“
Kardasis, Nick	Wellesley Hills, MA	“
Overmoe, Brad	Salt Lake City, UT	“
Templer, Darryl	La Jolla, CA	“
Zaiko, Sheryl	Allen, TX	“

**We note with sadness the passing of:**

Antizzo, Joe	Past Member	June 2020
Holyoake, Mitch	Wife of Alan Holyoake	July 2020

In these uncertain times we are not always aware of these events in a timely manner. Please help by letting us know at [info@collectors.org](mailto:info@collectors.org).


Respectfully submitted;  
 Mark E. Banchik; Membership Co-Chair  
 Lawrence Hunt; Membership Co-Chair

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# Book Reviews

**The Egyptian Maritime Postal History 1845-1889, by Hany Salam, published by le Musée des Timbres et de Monnaies de Monaco, December 2019, hardbound plus color jacket, A4 format, 105 pages (21 by 29.7 cm) in English and French, replete with color and black & white illustrations and maps; bibliography and table of contents; price €50, postage included, orders: Kaaistraat 19, 8800 Roeselare, Belgium. [Patrick@maselis.be](mailto:Patrick@maselis.be).**

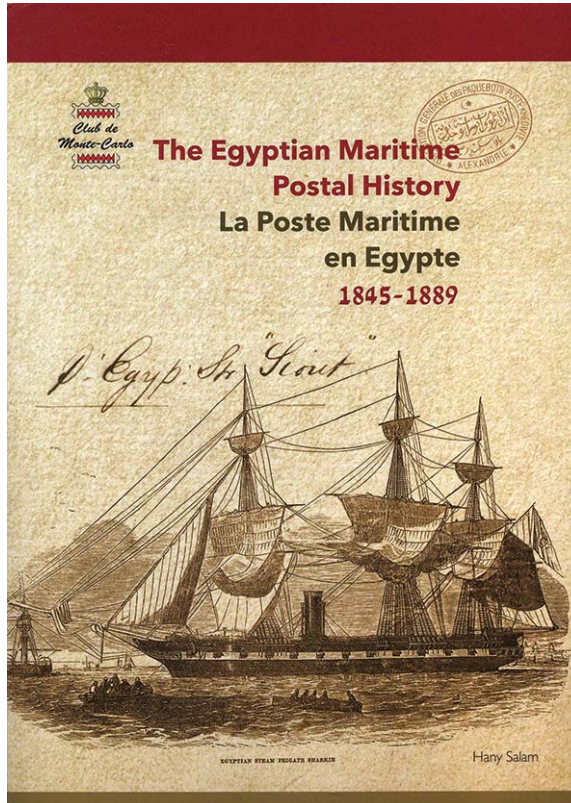
In his foreword to this most welcome book, Patrick Maselis says that “More than a publication about sea mail, this history book takes us back to Egypt during the time of the viceroys and the 19th century, at a time when the Western world was showing a growing interest in rediscovering the traces of an ancient civilization.”

The book is well articulated in four main sections. Chapter 1 deals with Egypt’s early attempts to have its national merchant shipping company serving the routes of the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. Egypt found itself in a most strategic position where Asia, Africa and Europe converged, a continental and maritime crossroads of enormous importance.

In 1807, the Viceroy of Egypt defeated the British forces and took control of Alexandria; as a result, he became the ruler of all Egyptian territories. It took two decades to reach the less-tempestuous times conducive to the formation of a new Egyptian fleet that was able to maintain communication between Alexandria and Constantinople. Concerned about the size of the Egyptian fleet and army, the superpowers coerced Egypt to implement downsizing which led to the expansion of a trade fleet. By 1850, Egypt had a fleet of nine packet boats carrying mail and passengers.

The next ruler undid most of the progress achieved during the 1840s; he even gave the best Egyptian ship to the Sultan as a gift. A new fleet (*El Dayra* and *El Elhameya*) secretly owned by the Prince served the route Alexandria-Constantinople during the 1850s.

In 1855, the company of the Red Sea Steamers was established; these ships made calls at Suakin and Massawa, which were considered the gates to East Africa. In 1857, the Medjide Company of Steamships operating on Mediterranean and Red Sea routes was launched. From a postal history perspective, we learn



about the private trading ships between 1793 and 1836 – the overland mail route and the establishment of foreign maritime lines in 1836 with the terminus at Alexandria. Additionally, we get detailed information about the packet boats of the Egyptian company 1845-49.

Section 2 delves into the coming of age of the Egyptian merchant navy: 1865 consular letters; and consular and official letters from 1866-70; foreign mail delivery; and postal rates.

Section 3 examines the administration of the Khedivial Packet Boat Post (PPK) from 1870-98 and mail routes and shipping lines.

Section 4 sheds light on shipping agents in the Mediterranean ports, including Alexandria, Port Sa'id, Jaffa, Haifa, Beirut, Tripoli, Latakia, Alexandretta, Mersina, Cyprus, Rhodes, Crete, Scio, Smyrna, Metelino, Dardanelles, Gallipoli, Constantinople, Kavala, Lagos, Saloniki, Volo, Syra and Piraeus, as well as the Italian lines and their home ports: Corfu, Trieste, Venice, Ancona and Brindisi. The Red Sea ports agencies are also discussed: Suez, Yanbu, Jeddah, Sawakin, Massawa, Al Hudaydah (Hodeida) and Aden. The book ends with a useful listing of the cachets of PPK Agents.

The author must be congratulated for having succeeded in presenting such a complex subject in a very articulate, orderly and highly informative manner. He also provides ample views of historical developments that had a major impact on Egyptian maritime postal history. The book is lavishly produced and generously illustrated; congratulations also go to the Club de Monte-Carlo under whose patronage a series of important monographs has added to our knowledge while promoting philately and postal history.

— Giorgio Migliavacca

**La Lettera: forma, estetica, curiosità, aspetti sorprendenti (The Letter: appearance, aesthetics, quirks, amazing aspects), by EBBE (Enrico Bertazzoli and Beppe Ermentini), introductory essay by Clemente Fedele, editorial contributor: Lorenzo Carra, hardbound, A4 format, 228 pages, in Italian, 600 color illustrations, published by Collezionisti Italiani di Francobolli Ordinari, Milan 2019, €60 plus postage and handling (Paypal payment). Available from [anielloveneri@libero.it](mailto:anielloveneri@libero.it) or [segreteria@cifo.eu](mailto:segreteria@cifo.eu). CIFO members (€30 annual fee) will have, among various benefits, a reduced price of €30 for one copy of the book.**

In his introductory essay, Clemente Fedele makes it clear that the subject matter focuses on “the cover,” which should have been the title of the book. However, *La Lettera* was the title chosen by the co-author, the late Beppe Ermentini – a Renaissance man, a great architect, a sophisticated collector of postal history and classical issues of Italy, as well as popular president of the Italian Federation of Philatelic Societies. When the editorial project was discussed with postal historian and “cover” specialist Enrico Bertazzoli and the contributing team, it was decided to respect Beppe’s choice because the covers from his collection form the backbone of this truly handsome book; additionally, he was a pioneer in the field, which, as we can see from the title, encompasses various aspects.

The following quote from Fedele’s essay will give more insight: “*Leaving the boundaries of linguistics one can access those of materiality, nowadays illuminated by methodologies called material culture studies or better of a material*



culture where there is no lack of well-established academic investigations, in particular of the Anglo-Saxon area. A model applicable to postal history, and perhaps to later chronologies, characterizes James Daybell's precious volume, *The Material Letter in Early Modern England. Manuscript Letters and the Culture and Practices of Letter-Writing, 1512-1635* (London 2012). For the period before the time of the envelopes, but not only, it is worth mentioning the book by Giovanni Riggi di Numana, *The Epistolary Secret in the period of the paper civilization* (Turin 2008), which in addition to being a model of approach to the folding of letters – useful for archivists, museum operators and correspondence curators – it indicates the way that can bring collectors to a higher level of awareness."

The 2000 project did not take off because of Beppe's death in 2003; however, Bertazzoli had received a very detailed outline of what Beppe had in mind and the celebrations of the centenary of the birth of Beppe in 2019 imparted momentum to the publication.

The book begins with a 1477 letter to acquaint the reader with what a 543-year-old letter looks like; as the book explains, the envelope or cover became more popular during the second half of the 1800s: *"From the outset, alongside considerations of an aesthetic nature and practicality, the need must have emerged to make this new type of container as opaque as possible to avoid the risk of peeping. The oldest envelopes do not have any such devices, and their sealing was generally carried out according to the methods used for folded sheets."*

But the needs were addressed in due course and the marketing of the new product fueled the imagination of the manufacturers at a time when the use of the postal service was popular and the gradually declining tariffs made letter writing affordable for the masses. The well-to-do could add a personal touch to the letter by placing it in what would be generally described as a fancy cover, indicating social status and good taste. The covers were not lined, but this rapidly changed: *"Initially, the paper used for manufacturing the envelopes was fairly uniform. In due course manufacturers increased in number and each of them entered the market offering increasingly varied products to satisfy the requests of the customers while remaining competitive. Therefore, almost all existing types of paper used varied in texture, thickness, color processing, including types of standard or specially made watermarked paper."*



During the 1900s manufacturers made repeated attempts to standardize the sizes of covers and letter sheets for the sake of competitiveness, but only in 1977 did the standardization become a reality, as the post office imposed higher tariffs on mail that exceeded standard measurements.

The book examines the folding and sealing of the letters of the 1700s and early to mid-1800s, and the role of perforated and gummed letter seals. The fascinating ornamented covers and letter sheets and Valentine covers are next; the examples pictured in this book are simply exquisite.

During the late years of the 1800s and early decades of the 1900s, the inner parts of covers were lined with colored paper; the next step was to print the inner part with tight latticework patterns – all to prevent the readability of the letter inside the cover. The manufacturers patented some of their covers, but most of them placed their logo in a prominent spot of the inner printed pattern. Patented patriotic covers featuring the colors of the Italian flag, and inner part romantic designs featuring couples in love, followed suit. The variety of designs is endless.

I distinctly remember that Beppe was very fond of small, tiny covers. Bertazzoli, for his part, is equally acquisitive and contributed several illustrations. The commercial advertising covers and envelopes are dealt with in an extensive chapter where the sky is no limit.

The publisher has lavished this production with tormenting, teasing and tantalizing color illustrations; to put it mildly, the book is a feast for the eyes.

– *Giorgio Migliavacca*

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# Gems of Philately

December 2020

To be sold at Public Auction in our San Francisco auction gallery

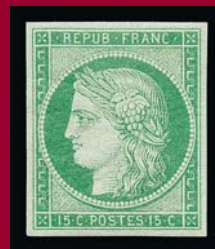


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