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AUXILIARY MARKINGS

Vol. II, No. 4
Issue No. 8

A journal that reports about and studies the myriad markings
added to a letter that explain how it reached its final destination
Publication of The Auxiliary Markings Club
www.postal-markings.org

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Table of Contents

AMC President Message.....1 by Nancy B. Clark	The Second Type of Computer Generated Label.....6 by Bernie Moening
Unused or Reused, That is the Question.....2 by Eliot Landau	Story on "Miscellaneous Label".....7 by H.J. Berthelot
Hollywood Fan Mail Private Auxiliary Markings.....3 by Regis Hoffman	Editorial.....7,8,9 by Tony Wawrukiewicz
Auxiliary Markings on Tasmanian Registered Mail: Part I - Taxed and Underpaid Registration.....4,5 by David McNamee	Received under cover.....9 by Michael Ludeman
Catcher Missed the Mail Bag!?!.....5 by Gary G. Hendron	Released to the Homeland.....9 by Floyd Knell
Small Cover - Big Questions.....6 by Henry Wilhelm	Backward Forwarding.....10 by Henry Wilhelm
	Bibliography for Auxiliary Markings (new en-tries) 10

AMC President Message by Nancy B. Clark

The By Laws and Constitution have passed with close to a unanimous vote. This issue contains the ballot for the election of officers. This time, the mailing goes to Tony W., who worked with David Straight to prepare a slate. Thanks to them both for their hard work.

Please vote and return your ballot to Tony soonest. You can either tri-fold the ballot, seal it with tape, and mail as is, or enclose it in a separate envelope. I actually received no genuine auxiliary markings, but one knave prepared his cover with similar markings and another was good enough to pay the postage with a photo stamp featuring his high school picture!

The jury at Southeast Stamp Show awarded the Richard B. Graham Award for the best multi-frame exhibit featuring auxiliary markings to Regis Hoffman for his exhibit *Letters to the Stars*.

Congratulations to the second winner of the Graham Award. The President's Award was not presented. We had our second annual meeting, which was a presentation on electronic return markings and labels used for directional purposes by your President. Attendance was light, but enthusiastic.

Jerry Johnson has membership cards available for those members who would like to keep their number handy.

Check out the website to see the greatly increased listings for auxiliary markings. Thanks are due especially to Tom Fortunato for his hard work in developing the materials into a format which can be built upon. It will take several lifetimes to complete the task, but we have started the journey.

Nancy Clark

2006 Dues

Although no renewal form is included with this newsletter, now would be a good time to renew your membership for 2006. Please send your \$15.00 check to:
Auxiliary Markings Club c/o Jerry Johnson
6621 W. Victoria Ave.
Kennewick, WA 99336

Free Advertisements for Members

Don't forget that each member is allowed one free advertisement each year if it is 30 words or less, excluding address.

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Unused or Reused, That is the Question by Eliot Landau

In all my 50 years of collecting U.S. stamps and postal history, I can recall less than a handful of U.S. covers marked to show the reuse of a stamp and its rejection as postage. There is one European country that I collect where such markings in the nineteenth century are common enough that 25-30 examples are offered per year at auction.

On all the Lincoln stamps that I collect in great detail, ranging from 1866 through 1970, I cannot recall a single cover showing an attempted reuse of an already used stamp. Since one of those, the 4¢ Liberty of 1954 (Scott 1036 and 1058) was the basic U.S. stamp, either for the letter rate of the post card rate for the better part of a decade starting in 1958, I might have expected at least one to show up, but it hasn't.

Accordingly, I was quite surprised when my secretary of 20 years showed me the partly-illustrated oversized cover with documents coming to our firm with \$1.06 postage due. Apparently, the stamps on it were sufficiently mangled that the Postal Service assumed that they had been removed from the mail after they had gone through uncanceled, and then they had been re-used on this large manilla envelope. There is no cancel anywhere on the stamps so that the USPS could not definitely prove that they went through the mail uncanceled.

The marking reads, in simple sans-serif letters: "Stamps cannot be covered or re-used in any way."

Presumably, "covered" means where one stamp overlaps another and this is forbidden because it might hide a cancel underneath. The stamps used, a 45¢ Love bouquet, two 30¢ Cardinal definitives and the 1¢ transportation coil are all relatively recent. The transportation coil shows no folding, creasing or mangling, but there

is definitely some on the right side of the Cardinal stamp and on the Love stamp.

Of course we all know that it is possible that these stamps could have met their bad fate in any post office without ever having left it before. But the Postal Service apparently felt that any folding or mangling must have been evidence of prior use.

While this certainly does sometimes happen, it is unjustified on the appearance of the stamps. They bear absolutely no traces of any cancellation.

I have seen my secretary put stamps on the wrong return envelope, remove them and place them on another one. They are inevitably creased and sometimes torn. I have broken down old estates where there are torn and creased stamps which I credit at face value. We then use them on philatelic correspondence. These are stamps that were never postally used before. None of my correspondents complained that they were charged postage due or that a mark like this one was applied.

We are all aware that the USPS is seriously deficient in cancelling stamps

on mail that we receive. This is especially true for large envelopes or parcels and where large blocks of older stamps are used. Every second or third auction house catalog that comes to my office mailed with large amounts of postage arrives uncanceled or with only an origin or receiving handstamp and no killers on the stamps. These latter examples are hard to explain because obviously some postal employee had a datestamp in hand with which to hit the cover and then was too lazy to apply it to the uncanceled stamps right in front of him or her, in violation of every cancellation regulation that has existed since 1847.

Considering that the USPS must know that their employees are failing to cancel large amounts of postage, it seems inappropriate of them to punish the public for using creased or small-piece-missing postage stamps which bear absolutely no evidence of prior postal usage other than the factually unjustified assumption of a mistaken postal worker.

In any case the result is a new and unusual auxiliary marking to report, which



Hollywood Fan Mail Private Auxiliary Markings

by Regis Hoffman

Introduction: Hollywood fan mail is a unique blend of postal, social and entertainment history. Fans would send a letter to their favorite Hollywood movie stars, expressing opinions on the star's latest film, requesting pictures and autographs, and even proposing marriage. During the course of its travels, Hollywood fan mail could receive a variety of auxiliary markings. Importantly, there is a distinction between auxiliary markings applied by the postal authorities, and those applied by private firms. This article is only concerned with the latter type.

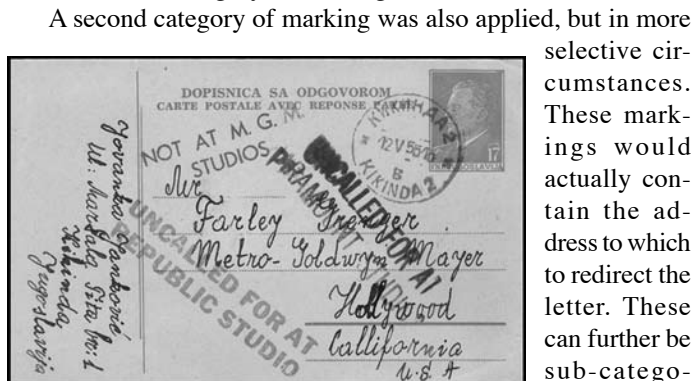
Two previous articles discuss Hollywood fan mail. "Movie Star Mail - More Than Meets the Eye," Regis Hoffman and Thomas J. Richards, *The American Philatelist*, April 2001 introduces the fascinating world of Hollywood fan mail. "The Development of the Hollywood Fan Mail System," Regis Hoffman and Thomas J. Richards, *The Congress Book 2002*, illustrates every Hollywood fan mail auxiliary marking recorded by the authors to that date, listing the earliest and latest recorded usage, and a rarity scale. Since then, new markings have been recorded, and will be presented in this and subsequent articles in this newsletter.

Hollywood fan mail is known from 1919 to the present day; however the heyday of fan mail spans the years 1935 - 1950.

Genesis of the Auxiliary Markings: Auxiliary markings on Hollywood fan mail come from a variety of sources. To understand their origin, we must examine their travels.

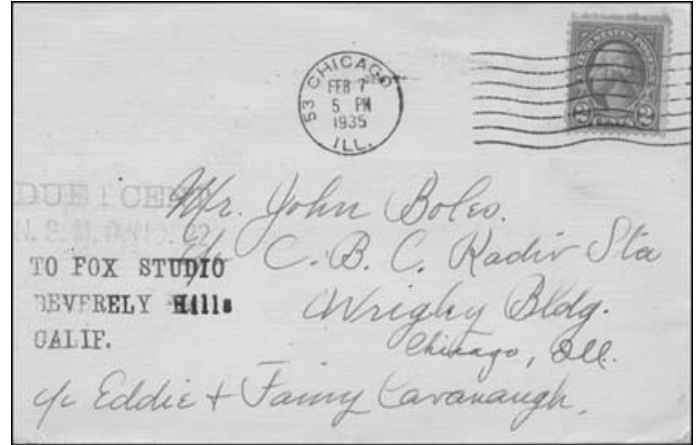
A fan would typically write their favorite star in care of a Hollywood movie studio, for example, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM). During the Golden Age of Hollywood (roughly 1930-1950), the studios had fan mail departments to process the incredible volumes of fan mail received by the stars. Importantly, the major stars were under contract to a studio, and did not change studios with any regularity. Although not common, stars would sometimes switch studios, or be loaned to another studio.

This step leads to the first category of auxiliary marking. Often the writer guessed as to which studio the star worked. If the star was not at that particular studio, the studio would apply a mark. These markings generally read "Not At A." Or "Uncalled For At A." The first illustration is a dramatic example of fan mail bouncing from studio to studio. Sent from Yugoslavia in 1955 to actor Farley Granger at Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, he was "Not At M.G.M. Studios", so the letter was forwarded to another studio. It was "Uncalled For At paramount" and "Uncalled For At Republic." Primarily these are handstamps, but they can also be in manuscript. These are the most common type of Hollywood fan mail auxiliary markings, but note that only about 1-2% of fan mail bears this category of markings.



rized as markings that redirect the letter:

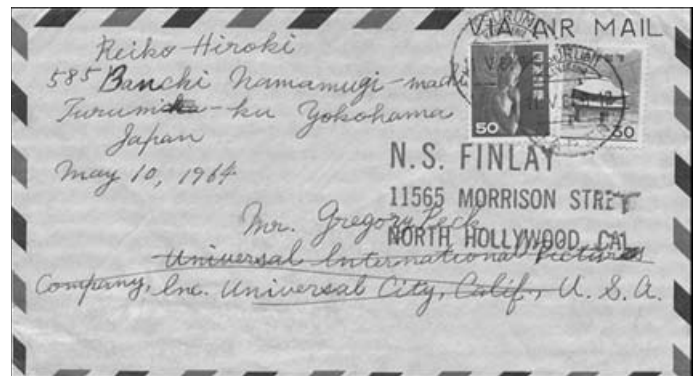
1. To another studio. This category is not very common - an example is shown in the second figure. The writer addressed the letter to actor John Boles at a radio station in Chicago. This is unusual; John Boles was also a singer, and I surmise he may have appeared on this radio station. Because his fan mail was handled by Fox Studios, a redirection handstamp was applied reading "TO FOX STUDIO BEVERLY HILLS CALIF."



2. To a specific address. This occurs most frequently on fan mail that was not addressed to a Hollywood studio, but to the studio's publicity department located in another city (typically New York City).

3. To another organization. Most often this organization was one that maintained lists of the stars addresses. Examples are markings that forward a letter to the Screen Actors Guild (the union of actors), or that forward a letter to a casting company. These are very scarce.

4. To a private fan mail service. As the contract system waned, fan mail increasingly was handled by private firms who were paid by the stars to respond to their fan mail. An example is shown below on a fan mail letter to actor Gregory Peck. It is addressed in care of Universal Pictures; however his fan mail was processed by a private agency, and so a handstamp was applied to redirect the letter to "N.S. FINLAY." These too are very scarce.



The final category of auxiliary markings is those that are applied by private fan mail service companies that indicate that the star was not with that particular firm.

The "To Fox Studio" and the "N.S. Finlay" markings are new; next time we will show some additional fan mail markings.

Auxiliary Markings on Tasmanian Registered Mail:

Part I – Taxed and Underpaid Registration

by David McNamee

The usual markings of registered mail include some indication that it is indeed “Registered” and usually the number appearing in the post office’s register is also applied to the letter. However, registered mail occasionally encounters problems that result in additional interesting auxiliary markings, some of which are also rare.

Even before the 1846 *Report on the Post Office in Van Diemen’s Land* proposed a system of registering valuable sent by post, Tasmania had picked up the British system of marking “Money Letter” on letters containing coins and bills of exchange. The earliest recorded date is 12 August 1844, and this marking is known as late as 8 August 1887. Meanwhile, a registration fee system was set up, and the earliest recorded manuscript marking “Registered” appears on a letter dated 9 February 1847. Both “Money Letter” and “Registered” both existed in parallel for forty years, even though the official Post Office term was “Registered.”

The Money Letter illustrated in Figure 1 is unusual. All letters in country towns such as Port Sorell went through the hands of the Postmaster. The only way to mail a letter was to take it to the Post Office. The Postmaster collected the fees for postage and registration. It seems unusual for the Postmaster to have got the weight wrong, but that is what the manuscript marking tells us:

“4 [d] to pay over 1/2 oz”



Figure 1

This is one of two recorded examples of taxed registered mail in the pre-adhesive period (before 1 November 1853). Apparently the Postmaster in Launceston disagreed with the weight and postage collected in Port Sorell. The deficiency was collected from the recipient.

The pair of covers in Figure 2 illustrates the 1901 version of the same phenomena. Both letters paid 5d (2d x 2 + 1d) for the 2d single Letter rate plus 3d Registration Fee, and they arrived in Hobart the next day (c.d.s. backstamp). Each was marked for registration with an R in circle handstamp in black. Both were overweight (one is marked “1 oz”) and each required 2d additional postage.

Because this was a deficiency, they were in effect *taxed registered mail*. Each letter is also marked “T1 Bal 20/2/01.” Under the rules at the time, the deficiency was doubled so that each deficient letter was liable for 4d due. One cover is marked “8d To Pay,” being the total on both covers, and a 4d Pictorial cancelled February 22, 1901, with the Hobart Registered c.d.s. was affixed to each cover, so it would seem likely that the deficiency was recovered from the Postmaster in Andover.



Figure 2

Overweight letters might be a matter of adjusting one’s postal scale; however, failing to collect the fee for registering the letter has got to be gross inattention! The three covers Figures 3 through 5 are examples of notations on registered mail for *underpaid registration*.

Figure 3 is a registered letter carrying the R in circle handstamp and registration number “19” in manuscript. However, the letter is franked with only the 2d postage of a regular (unregistered) letter, missing any evidence that the 3d registration fee had been paid. Normally the registered letter would have been franked 5d (2d postage + 3d fee). The letter is marked in manuscript by the Hobart Postmaster “3d Defct” and “Obtain Envelope.” Apparently he wanted to give the Sorell Postmaster a good tongue lashing and needed to recover the evidence after the letter was delivered.



Figure 3

Figure 4 is similar: a registered letter from Mangana missing the postage stamps to indicate the registration fee was paid.



Figure 4

The letter has all the markings of registered mail, including R in circle handstamp, manuscript registration number "4" and the

British custom of "crossed lines." The Hobart Postmaster has written "Mem 12/2/01" to indicate that the Postmaster at Mangana was written to about the shortage. A further note reveals "Additional postage paid (343) E.M.H. 15/12/01." The "343" was the Post Office numeral assigned to Mangana, and "E.M.H." was the Chief Clerk at the Hobart G.P.O. "T1 Bal" indicates that the Managana accounts were charged to make up the deficiency.

Figure 5 illustrates a third style of marking: "PM Charged/29-4-01" to indicate that the Derby Postmaster was charged the missing 3d postage for registration.



Figure 5

It is hard to believe that some of these village postmasters were so overworked that they made these kinds of mistakes with mail they personally handled. The various markings that resulted make interesting additions to both a collection of auxiliary markings and of registered mail.

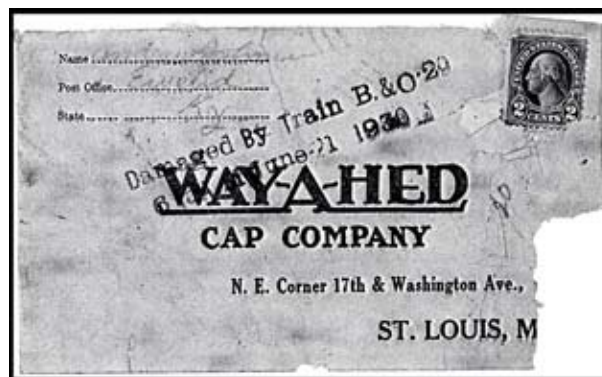
Catcher Missed the Mail Bag!?

by Gary G. Hendron

I first spied this cover while glancing through the regular bi-monthly 50-lot auction at the Webster Groves Stamp Club (St. Louis). As I quickly turned the page, I thought to myself, "Who would purchase a ratty cover like that." Going through the lots again to determine which lots I wanted to bid on and what my bidding strategy would be, that ratty old cover suddenly became a most attractive cover when I noticed the special marking "Damaged by train B. & O - 29/6:15 am June 21 1930."

Just what was the problem that caused this mess? Was there a train wreck involved or some other mishap? Sticking out of the missing lower right corner, I could see a protruding yellow insert. Pulling out the insert and opening it up revealed a letter that was written on B & O letterhead. Dated October 22, 1932, four months after the accident, and apparently in response to a just received letter from H.W. Heymen, representing the addressee of the mangled cover, it stated that although there wasn't any record of a train wreck on June 21, the probable cause might have been a misconnection with the catcher that was to snag the mail bag somewhere in Kentucky. This and perhaps other covers fell un-

der the wheels of the moving train, eventually receiving the neat auxiliary marking. Had the catcher missed the bag completely, a marking similar to the one I have on another cover could have been used. This cover, which I can't locate at present, roughly states "Delayed because catcher missed the mail bag."



Small Cover - Big Questions by Henry Wilhelm

This small September 5, 1939, New York, N.Y. to Albany, N.Y. Prexie cover was purchased on eBay because of the two-line handstamp (hs) "SUBJECT TO LETTER RATES/CONTAINS WRITING." This marking was unknown to me. Also, I am curious why it isn't on the list of Post Office Department (POD) auxiliary markings shown in the July 2005 newsletter.



The cover also shows another hs "POSTAGE DUE _____ CENTS," with a manuscript 1 1/2 added.

A logical guess is that someone at the post office decided, as is stated in the hs, that the cover was a normal letter containing writing. That is, the 1 1/2¢ paid for an 1 1/2¢/2ounce third-class item, but as the item contained writing and was thus a first-class

item, the 3¢/ounce first-class rate should have been paid. Note that the cover was not sealed and it could be easily checked as to whether it contained writing.

A 1¢ postage due stamp was added, partially covering up one of the markings and presumably convincing the post office worker that a 1/2¢ due stamp could not also be added.

I have a question concerning the 1¢ due stamp. It has irregular cancel markings, but does not seem to be tied to the cover. Might someone have simply used a scrap stamp with old markings as long as the payment due was collected? Many casual actions have been seen in the mailstream over the years. Anyone have any thoughts?

A bigger question for me is the pencil manuscript "73" below the 1¢ Washington stamp. Had someone at the post office added a this marking to the cover? Altogether a fun, interesting, and curious cover.

(Editor's note: I will try to answer the questions raised. As the author notes, the first hs isn't listed as available from the POD in the auxiliary markings list of the July 2005 newsletter. In the first place, this 1939 hs has a different format from the POD ones so it was presumably from another source. In addition, these lists were from published lists up to 1932, while the item discussed today is dated 1939. Possibly this hs was not available from anyone before 1932 or at least not directly from the POD. The 1¢ postage due stamp is a precanceled stamp precanceled by a PO worker before application. This is a not uncommon event on due covers. The marking "73" could well be the number of a POD worker or carrier who handled the item.

The Second Type of Computer Generated Label by Bernie Moening



This cover is an up to one ounce February 28, 1989, official mail cover, mailed at the 25¢/ounce first-class rate, intra-city in Lima, Ohio. The manuscript "CMU" and "0115" under the 22¢ indicium is made by a Central Markup Unit postal clerk. The 0115 refers to route 15 in the 45801 ZIP. This marking was probably placed as an indicator of where to send the cover when it was first mailed.

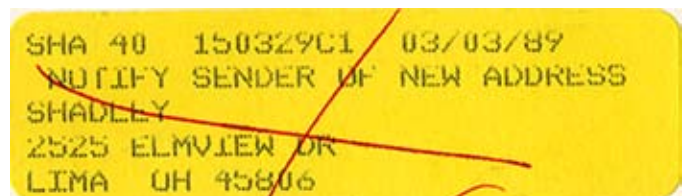
However, the cover also has an early Central Forwarding System computer generated yellow label on it. That is, the CMU recognized that the addressee had moved and sent it to the CFS clerk in Lima who in turn sent this letter to CFS.

CFS used the first three letters of the last name and the first two digits ("SHA 40") of the address to extract this yellow label. The

number 150329 is the identifying mark of the CFS clerk and the "C1" indicates first-class matter being forwarded. The date is that when the item entered CFS. Today the first four letters of the last name and three digits of the address are used to extract this yellow label.

The Shadleys at Elmview Drive apparently put in a change from a similar address and ZIP, and Allen's mail was sent to the address or perhaps Allen moved or there is feuding. At any rate the Shadleys living at 2525 Elmview Dr. knew that Allen

was not there, wrote this on the letter and tossed it into the mail for "Return to Sender."



Story on "Miscellaneous Label"

by H.J. Berthelot

On page 3, Issue 5 (January 2005) of *Auxiliary Markings*, three miscellaneous labels were illustrated. The comment with them indicated they they 'tell no story, they are just interesting.' Figure 1 illustrates the label from the January 2005 article, one used to return a February 19, 2002, letter in Portland, Oregon. It was in red.



Figure 1 (Feb. 19, 2002, use, in red)

I have an envelope (Figure 2) on which a variety of that label was used. The story behind that envelope and label follows.

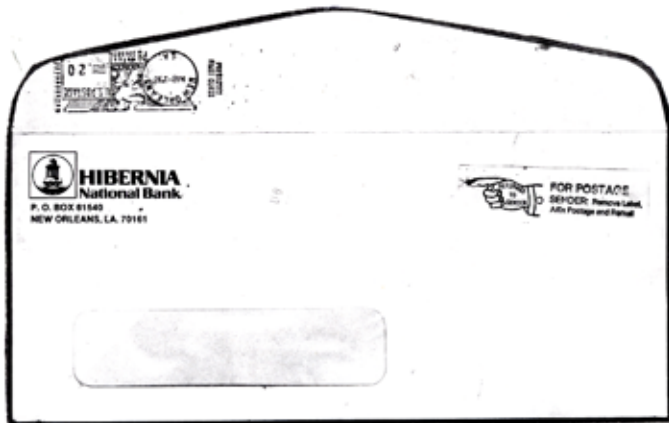


Figure 2 (March 2, 1982, use)

An employee at the Hibernia National Bank in New Orleans, Louisiana, inadvertently imprinted a postage meter on the back side of the envelope, which was addressed to a bank client in the city. Dated March 2, 1982, the postage meter was not noticed by the postal clerk processing the envelope. Thus the envelope was handled as "unpaid" at the New Orleans post office, the "RETURNED TO SENDER" label was affixed and the envelope sent back for postage. This label is shown enlarged in Figure 3.



Figure 3 (1982 use)

When the envelope was received by the bank, an employee there added a new postage meter, dated March 12, 1982, over the label (see Figure 4). Re-mailed, the envelope was delivered without further delay.



Figure 4 (March 12, 1982, meter)

Of interest is the fact that this new label was used 20 years before the one in Figure 1. Could it be an experimental use from New Orleans?

(Editor's note: When I mailed the January 2005 *Auxiliary Markings*, I received one newsletter back with the blue Return to Sender label shown just below!)



Figure 5

Editorial

by Tony Wawrukiewicz

Two editorials and 10 pages, what is this newsletter coming to? A big thank you all of you who responded to my plea for more material. Thanks to you, you scarcely see my name in the Table of Contents. I have almost enough additional material for the January 2006 *Auxiliary Markings*.

I expanded this issue to 10 pages, not because of the added material sent me but because I, the officers and the board felt that we needed to publish an appropriate response to an editorial by Jim Graue in his position as editor of *The Airpost Journal*. In his

column he raised concerns about the use of the phrase "Auxiliary Markings." His editorial, John Hotcher's able response and my comments will be found on page 8.

The variety of articles found in this issue is wonderful, embracing many different, interesting and even fascinating aspects of auxiliary markings (I love this phrase!).

Especially exciting is the fact that we are getting contributions from postal workers who can and do give us special insights into the processes behind the markings.

Editorial

by Tony Wawrukiewicz

Jim Graue in the position as editor of *The Airpost Journal* has raised, in his mind, serious concerns about the use of the phrase "Auxiliary Markings." I and others feel strongly that his points are not well taken, and we would ignore them except that they were published in a journal with a wide readership. John Hotchner has already replied very ably, and his reply is to appear in *The Airpost Journal*.

For our members who do not belong to the American Air Mail Society, his comments, John's response and Jim's further response follow. After all this I have added my two cents worth.

On "Auxiliary" Markings, an editorial by Jim Graue

In reading the seminar program for a major stamp show recently, I noted one titled "Discussion of Auxiliary Postal Markings." It had prompted me to give my attention to what this means.

Auxiliary markings is the commonly used term encompassing all postal markings other than the postmark(s): Auxiliary = Supplementary or additional.

As a loose catch-all term, I suppose this is fine, but the problem is that it really tells you nothing at all about the "why" of any marking. Auxiliary marking . . . fine, we know we have a "supplementary or additional" marking aside from the postmark(s). Why? The term "auxiliary" offers nothing in response.

Since "auxiliary" is a hollow and essentially meaningless term in the context of mail, why do we use it? I really don't know . . . and it is time we stopped!

Due consideration will quickly lead one to conclude that "supplementary or additional" markings on mail fall into two distinct and, most importantly, meaningful classes. Postal markings aside from the postmark(s) are either directional or advisory. Let's look at these terms more closely.

Directional = Relating to direction or guidance, especially of thought or effort. I hate it when the dictionary uses the word to define itself but in this case there is enough added to give it substance. If we say "providing direction to effort" we are there. Direction to who? To the postal service personnel handling that item. Directional markings give direction and guidance to postal workers on "where" and "how" to send or otherwise treat the mail. Looking at how long some of my mail is taking to arrive, maybe "when" should be added to this list, but that is another subject. Another question that a directional marking can answer is "how much," e.g., postage due or allocation of rate. The main question it responds to is "how," an important point to bear in mind when one is analyzing the covers in a collection.

Advisory = Giving information. This is totally different in intent and mission than "directional." Giving information to whom? To the recipient (usually the addressee). Advisory markings give information to the reader, either interim or final postal personnel or, primarily, the addressee and sometimes the sender. The question being answered is "why." Why was this mail delayed? Why is this mail damaged? Why did this mail travel by train when the sender asked and paid for airmail service? Why was this mail undeliverable? All these and many more "why" questions are answered by advisory postal markings.

We would do ourselves a favor if we scrapped the term "auxiliary" as the hollow and meaningless term it really is and referred to postal markings as either "directional" or "advisory." It will

help everyone understand the meaning and intent of the marking and should lead to a better analysis and understanding of it and its significance.

To the Editor:

It is wonderful that philately allows for individualism, and personal creativity. When one has the bully pulpit as an editor, it is perhaps too much a temptation to apply that creativity beyond the scope of the subject matter for which the magazine is published. I think this is what Jim Graue has done in his "Editor's Entry" in the August 2005 *APJ*, in which he lectures AAMS membership on the meaning of "Auxiliary Markings".

I am certain that Jim meant to enlighten and elucidate. What he has accomplished is something else entirely. The term "Auxiliary Markings" is venerable, a philatelic term of art generally understood in the hobby for what it is: a satisfactory catch-all for messages added to a letter or package to indicate why it received some sort of special handling in the postal system. The messages can be divided in many ways, and Jim has pointed out one of them. But there is still a need for an overarching term, and "Auxiliary Markings" has been accepted by the hobby.

Equally important, it has been accepted by the Auxiliary Markings Club, formed in 2003. A definition and much more detail is available on our website: <<http://www.postal-markings.org>>www.postal-markings.org.

Jim is entitled to his opinion, and I'm certain this response will not change it. But I am hopeful that the membership of AAMS will not adopt his vision.

John Hotchner

John, (Jim Graue's response):

Delighted to have your letter. A discussion worth while. It goes into the October issue (September is already finished and has a letter on the subject). My reply to your view . . .

Editor's Note: I love the passion! "Auxiliary Markings" is a great term for use precisely as John has defined it, an "overarching term . . . a catch-all." What I was attempting to point out, but apparently not with the clarity desired, is that it is not a very satisfactory descriptor when referring to the purpose or intent of any given specific marking.

Is a discussion of how best to describe markings outside the scope of the subject matter of the *Airpost Journal*? Only if "auxiliary markings," either directional or advisory, were never used for airmail. They were, of course, used in profusion on airmail for both directional and advisory purposes so it is appropriate for us to address them.

My "vision" is that collectors see the purpose of "auxiliary markings" and describe them with terms that reflect that purpose. The "overarching" term "auxiliary markings," applying as it does to all markings, falls short of telling us anything at all about specific purpose. If the more definitive descriptors are unacceptable to the Auxiliary Markings Club, one has to wonder why.

My editorial response: The phrase: "Auxiliary Markings" is an overarching one that encompasses exactly what we search out and collect. I have used this phrase comfortably, ably and descriptively for 25 years, and as John says, so has our hobby, for

many more years. It has worked and continues to work well for the hobby and our club, as an all-encompassing phrase.

Jim, it is NOT a ‘very satisfactory descriptor when referring to the purpose and intent of any specific marking’ because that is NOT what it is meant to do! As an all-encompassing phrase, of course it is not specific. But neither are other general and also well-accepted and well-understood phrases such as Stamp Collecting,

Postal History, Aerophilately, Revenues, Illustrated Mail, etc.

Jim, please, ‘more definitive descriptors are acceptable to the AMC,’ just not when we describe the overall scope of our interests. Aerophilately is a beautiful and very descriptive term for what the members of the AAMS collect, but it is very nondefinitive, as it should be. It, too, like the phrase “Auxiliary Markings,” is not hollow, just overarching.

“Received under cover..”

by Michael Ludeman

The auxiliary marking on this cover is an intriguing one that is, in a way, collector driven. Apparently, in the past, collectors mailed covers in a separate envelope from one location to another, where the contents letters were then mailed (as franked first-class letters) with this different origin post office name.

In this case this August 8, 1923, letter was mailed in a separate envelope from El Paso to Albuquerque. It was then mailed on August 8, 1923, from Albuquerque, New Mexico where the post office there added the handstamp “Received under cover from *El Paso, Tex* to be mailed at this office.”



Received under cover
From *El Paso, Tex*
to be mailed at this office

Released to the Homeland

by Floyd Knell



purple handstamp of the Germans: “This voluminous correspondence delays the mail of your fellow prisoners.”

The soldier was no longer at Stalag Luft: “Entlassen nach der Heimatt - released to the homeland.” The letter was thus returned to sender: “Zurück an den Absender” and “RETURNED TO SENDER By Direction of the War Department, Undeliverable as addressed.” This return was approved “Geprüft 85” by German censor/mail handler #85.

Entlassen nach der Heimatt

(Editor’s note: This is quite a cover with a rich history. It includes markings this editor has never seen, and its story relates a Prisoner of War (POW) history of which I was unaware. I have shown this cover to two experts in Stalag and WWII military mail and they have added some details to the description below; they both called it an awesome cover.)

This cover, among others, was mailed to a son imprisoned in Stalag Luft 3 which housed Army Air Force prisoners shot down over Germany.

This item has a storied history. First it was mailed to Stalag Luft 3. Apparently the excessive size of individual letters or the number of letters to this flyer was deemed excessive, thus the

The red LAZ hand-written mark is a forwarding mark to the hospital (Lazarett).

Further research has determined the following. During the war there were four exchanges of sick and wounded American and German soldiers via the Swedish ship M.S. Gripsholm. Over the four voyages a total exceeding 2,000 U.S. POWs were exchanged for an equal number of Germans.

First Lt. Robin Taber of the 384th Bomber Group was a bombardier on the plane that was shot down, and he was captured on August 12, 1943. Taber came home on the Gripsholm by faking out the German captors and making them think he was “mentally ill.” When he made it home, he sent a letter to his fellow POW’s razzing them about it!

This exchange occurred on September 10, 1944, via the M.S.

This voluminous correspondence delays the mail of your fellow prisoners.

Backward Forwarding by Henry Wilhelmi

A purple “return to writer” pointing hand commands the center of this 1896 cover and is among the largest stamped hands I have seen. This one measures 2 7/8 inches in length. However, this cover is really remarkable for another reason, it apparently was “forwarded backward” to its writer.

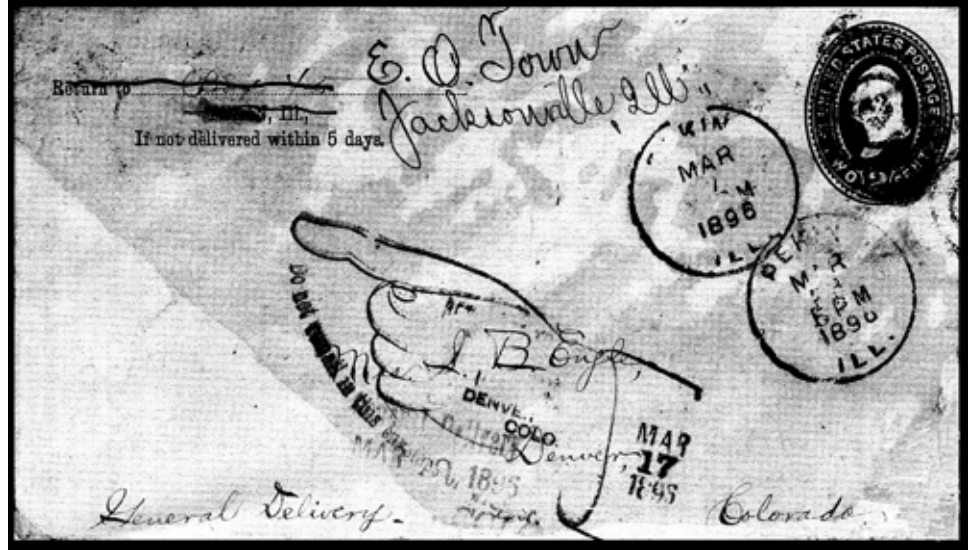
The 2¢ stamped envelope was postmarked in Pekin, Illinois and mailed to Denver on March 7, 1896. It was then stamped in purple on arrival in Denver “General Delivery March 9, 1896 Denver Colo.” in three lines. When the envelope was not picked up by the addressee, the pointing hand stamp was added on March 17, overlaying the General Delivery stamp. The stamp includes the date on the sleeve, a prominent curved admonition under the entire hand telling the writer “Do not remail in this envelope or wrapper,” and a three line “Return to Writer or Sender Denver Colo.” on the hand itself. It is not clear whether the stamp actually reads “Writer” or “Sender,” but either word conveys the same meaning.

Essentially, the cover was returned to its writer or sender because it was inadequately addressed.

Indicating this return the reverse of the cover has a Pekin, Illinois, March 19 “Rec’d” stamp, and return was attempted to “Box K” (see “Return to” line in corner card). At this time, someone crossed

out “Box K and Pekin, Ill.” and wrote in a person’s name and “Jacksonville, Ill.” Presumably, the sender of the item had moved, and, someone, possibly a postal employee, knew the sender’s new address. They placed it as a new corner card. Then, on March 28 (March 28, 1896, Pekin, Ill. cds on cover front), it was sent to the Jacksonville, Ill. address (March 29, 1896, Jacksonville, Ill. “REC’D” on the reverse).

Remarkably, it would appear that this cover was *forwarded backward* to its sender!



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for Auxiliary Markings - New Entries (for full Bibliography see www.postal-markings.org)

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