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A journal that reports about and studies the myriad markings
added to a letter that explain how it reached its final destination

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A New (1889) Example of New York City 'Stamps Detached' Marking by Tony Wawrukiewicz

This marking adds to the 1887-1937 items discussed in the Jan. 2020 *Auxiliary Markings* newsletter by Hotchner and Wawrukiewicz. The 1889 letter is a probable third-class advertising letter from a Rochester company that produced mailing chutes for high-rise buildings in multiple cities. The letter was mailed in a chute (see the handstamp (hs) on the item), and lost its postage (see the New York City hs).



Editorial by Tony Wawrukiewicz

Unfortunately, no one responded to Tom Breske and my request for undeliverable-related New York City (NYC) markings, but they may just not be out there.

However, John Hotchner was kind enough to send me some NYC 'Package Box' markings and associated articles, and this led to another article concerning these markings that I am proud of. He also sent along some customs-related covers for stamps-for-col-

lectors incoming items that added to the content concerning this topic that I also had written for this newsletter.

I am especially grateful to Jerry Johnson who sent along a fascinating article about WWII casualty items. Also, a thank you goes to Doug Quine for his general delivery-related article.

All this material arrived just-in-time because I was not sure what I was going to put into this newsletter. Thank you all!

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Still Further Insights into the ‘Found in Package Box Collection’ -Type Marking by John M. Hotchner and Anthony S. Wawrukiewicz

Introduction

When John Hotchner saw the article Tom Breske and I wrote in the July 2021 newsletter (“New York City ‘Found in Package Box Collection’ Revisited”), he sent us items with a number of similar markings including examples and information about similar Philadelphia markings, and information, from two articles, concerning possible similar markings from other cities. I (ASW) then contacted one of the authors of these two articles (Wayne Youngblood), and he added further information. This article thus expands on the information presented in July.

New examples from New York City (NYC)

Before we discuss the history of these ‘Package Box’ markings from other cities, we now present four grouping-types, plus one possible outlier, of these markings from NYC. In each case we first, not necessarily in chronological order, present an actual item handled by the Post Office Department (POD), then followed by only the markings alone, from other examples. By the way, one of Hotchner’s articles supports our idea that these markings were utilized in order to protect the POD from complaints about delays in mail handling when first-class items were incorrectly placed in package collection mailboxes.

In Figures 1 and 2 are two examples of the route-type marking shown in the July article. This is the earliest type of NYC ‘Package Box’ marking known to us, and it apparently represents a marking that indicates that the package mailbox was on a certain NYC mail route. In Figure 1 is the first marking of this type we have, and it was on a 1906 post card mailed and mishandled in NYC and addressed to Schenectady, New York.

A similar marking from a different route was on a 1908 NYC letter addressed to Little Rock, Arkansas.

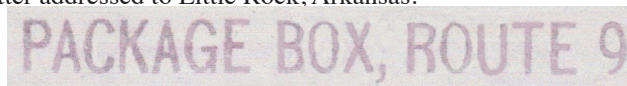


Figure 2. (1908, nas (not actual size), Courtesy Hotchner)

The next type of the NYC ‘Package Box’ marking introduced was more specific in that it identified a particular post office that handled the mishandled items. In Figure 3 is a 1908 post card mis-handled in NYC and addressed to Somer Ville (sic), New Jersey. The handstamp (hs) on the card indicates that the ‘2nd DIVISION (STATION H)’ of the NYC Post Office handled the mishandled post card.

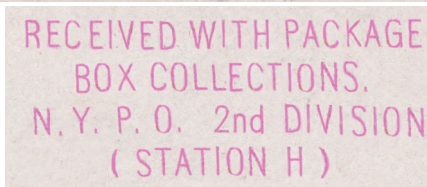
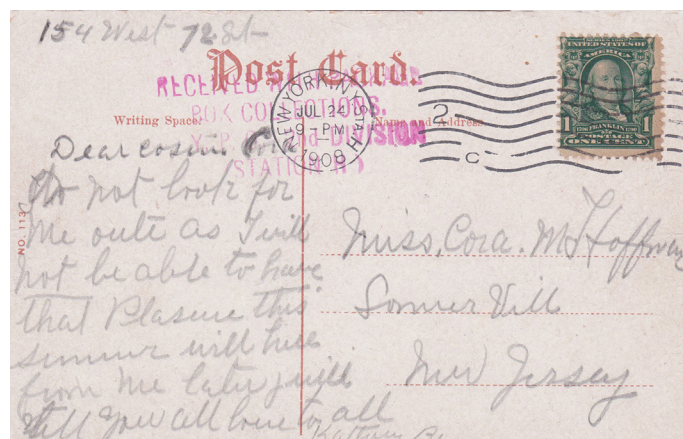


Figure 3. (1908, as, Courtesy Hotchner)

The somewhat briefer hs in Figure 4 was on a 1908 NYC post card addressed to Austria. Even though this hs is briefer, the same post office probably handled this card as handled the card in Figure 3.



Figure 4. (Circa 1908, as, Courtesy Hotchner)

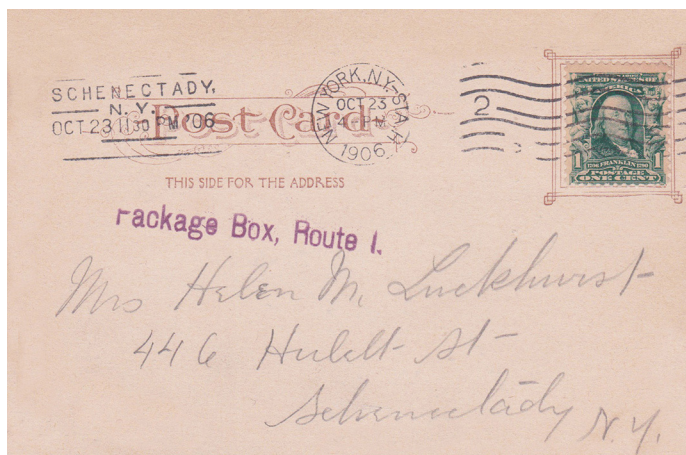


Figure 1. (1906, as (actual size), Courtesy Hotchner)

The marking in Figure 4 was on a circa 1912 (from stamp on card) NYC to Wallingford, Conn. post card. The Grand Central Station NYC post office handled the card (as indicated in the hs).



Figure 4. (Circa 1912, as, Courtesy Hotchner)

In about 1910 the NYC POD temporarily began using machine cancels as ‘Package Box’ markings. We say temporarily because we only have examples of this type of NYC marking used from 1910 (see the July 2021 newsletter article) until 1917.

The 1917 machine cancel marking is shown in Figure 5. It was on a 1917 NYC to Woodbridge, New Jersey postal card that was mishandled by the Penn. Terminal Station post office. The machine cancel is interesting because it has an unusual appearance compared to other NYC machine cancels we have seen.

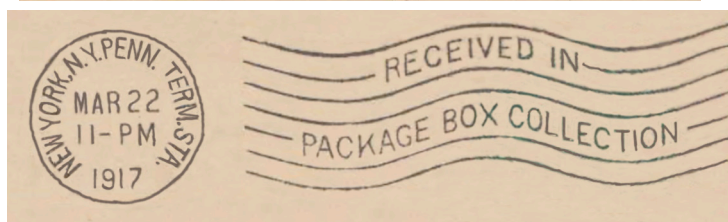
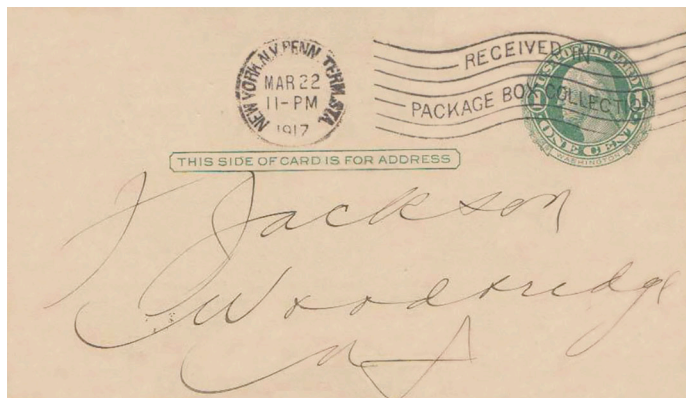


Figure 5. (1917, as, American Machine Cancel, Courtesy ASW)

In Figure 6 is a 1912 more generic NYC machine cancel that was on a NYC to Titusville, Penn postal card.



Figure 6. (1912, as, International Machine Cancel, Courtesy Hotchner)

In Figure 7 is another, slightly different format from the example in the July 2021 article, Grand Central Station machine cancel. It was on a local 1915 NYC mishandled postal card.



Figure 7. (1915, as, Universal Machine Cancel, Courtesy Hotchner)

From at least 1930 until 1951 we have seen examples of two subtypes of the straight-lined fourth type of hs ‘Package Box’ markings. The first subtype is illustrated in Figure 8, and it was placed on a 1940 mishandled NYC letter.

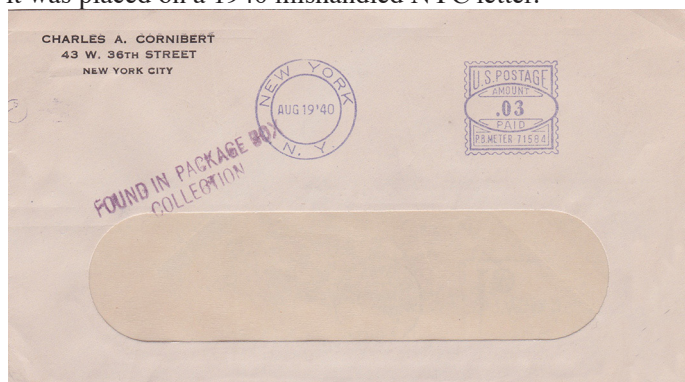


Figure 8. (1940, as, Courtesy Hotchner)

A 1930 example of this first subtype was on a mishandled NYC to St. Louis, Missouri letter.



Figure 9. (1930, as, Courtesy Hotchner)

The third example of this linear first subtype, shown in Figure 10, was on a 1938 NYC to Detroit, Mich. letter. This hs is the only serifed example we have seen.



Figure 10. (1938, as, Courtesy Hotchner)

In Figure 11 is a 1943 example of the second linear subtype of 'Package Box' markings. It was on a mishandled NYC to Minneapolis, Minn. post card. The other example of this subtype of marking was shown in the July 2021 article (a 1942 example).

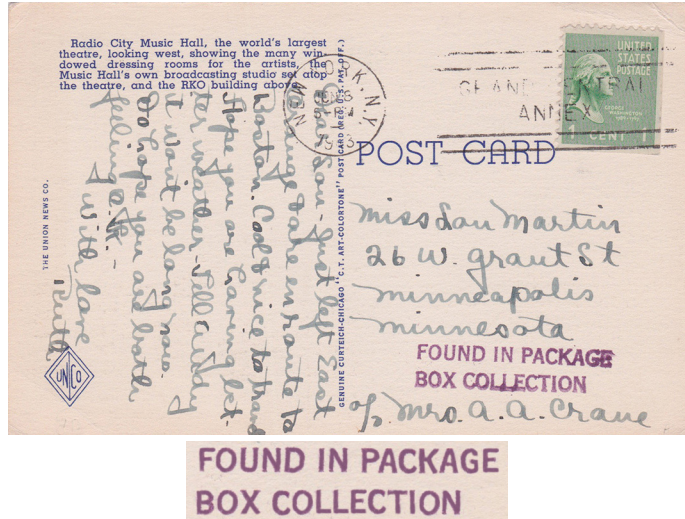


Figure 11. (1943, as, Courtesy Hotchner)

Before discussing the placement of 'Package Box' mis-handled item markings for other cities, we want to illustrate an "Outlier" type that was shown in the July 2021 article. Hohertz had a 1940 example of this fancy marking, shown in Figure 12., while Hotchner has a 1939 hs on a official letter from the NYC Church Street Annex to Montpelier, Vermont.



Figure 12. (1939-40, as, Courtesy Hotchner and Hohertz)

Discussion of 'Package Box' markings from other cities

Hotchner has two articles that he has gleaned from Linn's (Unknown author in the April 8, 1991 issue) and *Stamp Collector* (Authored by Wayne Youngblood on March 29, 1999).

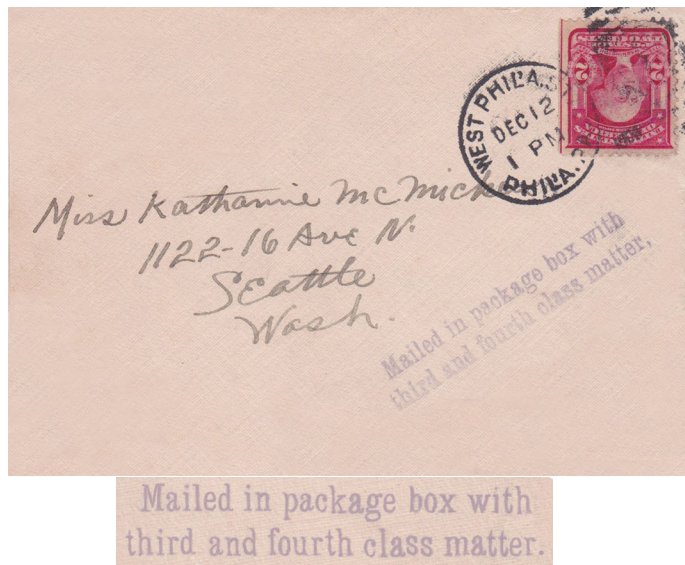


Figure 13. (Circa 1908, as, Courtesy Hotchner)

This led me to approach Youngblood, and he directed me to two more comprehensive articles about package-box markings, his in the June 2008 *American Philatelist* and Randy Stehle's article in the Nov. 1991 issue of *La Posta*. Part of the information that follows is excerpted from these articles.

They indicate, and we now show by example, that Philadelphia, Penn. produced such rubber-stamped, metal die-hub machine cancels, and steel-die duplex markings.

In the left hand column, in Figure 13, is a rather rare 1908 rubber-stamp that was on a mishandled Philadelphia, Penn. to Seattle, Wash. letter. By the way, Stehle showed such an example.

Next, in Figure 14 is a 1931 Philadelphia, Penn. machine cancel that was on a mishandled local post card.



Figure 14. (1931, as, International Machine Cancel, Unknown Source)

Finally, the 1991 Linn's article mentioned had a 1932 Philadelphia steel-die duplex illustrated. It's shown in Figure 15. We have seen no such NYC marking. The 1991 Linn's article also mentioned that in a 1940s issue of *Postal Markings*, a collector's journal, that the Philadelphia marking in Figure 15 was used from at least 1913 until 1932.

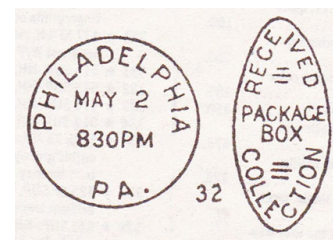


Figure 15. (1913-32, nas, Unknown Source)

The Stehle article makes an important statement, with illustrations, about 'Package Box' markings from Boston, showing an American machine cancel and a duplex cancel from that city.

On the other hand, Stehle makes two statements that I (ASW) cannot agree with, one that the route-type marking always has the associated post office in the marking. All three examples we have seen and illustrated show no such add-on. Also the New Orleans marking is as follows - 'FOR DEPOSIT ONLY.' I do not see how this is a 'Package-Box' marking.

By the way, Youngblood, in his 2008 article, illustrates an oval 1924 NYC marking almost identical to that in Figure 12, but used in the NYC City Hall Station, so, instead, having that post office name in the marking.

WWII Casualty Markings

by Jerry Johnson

To me there were a huge number of casualties in World War II for the United States personnel serving in the Army, Navy, Marines and Coast Guard. A summary:

- Battle Deaths: 291,557
- Other Deaths: 113,842
- Wounds not mortal: 670,846
- Total: 1,076,245

This article gives a brief overview of markings related to people: (1) in the hospital, (2) missing in action, (3) killed in action, and (4) prisoners of war. Given the large numbers noted above, covers for these four situations are not hard to find.

I use two essential documents for evaluating covers from World War II:

(1) *The United States Post Office in World War II*, edited by Lawrence Sherman, M.D., The Collectors Club of Chicago, 2002.

(2) *United States Numbered Military Post Offices – Assignments and Locations - 1941-1994*, Edited by George Cosentini and Norman Gruenzer, The Military Postal History Society, 1994.

The first one provides information on a wide variety of topics such as rates, censorship, organization of the military postal system, delivery of mail, locator systems, prisoner of war mail, and many other topics.

The other book gives the locations of all the Army and Navy post offices. Mail for troops in Europe went to APOs at New York and those for the Pacific went to San Francisco. For example, Army Post Office (APO) 253 (3rd armored division) had its base of mailing operations in New York, and before troops were sent overseas, there were 7 location of this division in the US. Then, when the troops were sent to Europe in 1943, there were 33 unit locations before the unit was deactivated in November of 1945. So, with the cancellation date one can determine the location of the addressee. When a person sent a letter to someone in the 3rd armored division, they would address it to APO 253, New York, NY.

The various markings illustrated in this article will be a mix of hand-written ones and printed markings.

Hospitalization

Figure 1 shows a cover sent from Swannanoa, North Carolina in August of 1944 to a Sergeant Miller. The sender noted that he was in a hospital with the parenthetical 'Hosp'.

Sergeant Miller could not be found as there were four directory searches noted. The item was returned to the sender noted by the purple pointing hand marking indicating the need for a better address. Since the boxed 'HOSPITALIZED' marking was also in purple, I assume that it was applied at the same time as the returned marking.



Figure 1. (as)

The next item shown in Figure 2 is a third class item sent to a serviceman in the U.S. (APO 187 was a desert training center in California).

There were 4 directory searches without locating the serviceman. However, somewhere along the way a manuscript "Hospitalized" was added. The item was returned to the sender. This third class item was a 1945 one cent minimum bulk mailing. Third class mail that was forwarded or returned after being sent to active military personnel serving in the U.S. was not charged for that service (similar items returned from overseas locations were charged a postage fee).



Figure 2.

Missing in action

Many soldiers were missing in action. One of the more frequent types noted were associated with bombing missions. Figure 3 shows a cover sent from Renton, WA in December of 1943. It was addressed to a staff sergeant in the 388th Bomb Group of the 560th Bomb Squadron that was serviced by APO 634. This APO was the headquarters of the 8th Air Force in Wellingborough, England.

The serviceman was not located. Manuscript markings from an officer at APO 633 (England) noted that the person was missing in action. The officer listed a date of January 17, 1944. The 388th Bom Group flew many B-17 missions and records for that group lists a large number of planes that were lost as a result of enemy fire. Cancellations on the back side show one from APO 587 (France) dated January 24, 1944; presumably this was the APO that sent the letter back to the U.S. It was received in New York on February 23, 1944.



Figure 3.

Another item sent to APO 634 is shown in Figure 4. This V-Mail letter has a red marking noting that it could not be delivered ('IT IS REGRETTED THIS ITEM / COULD NOT BE DELIVERED AS / THE ADDRESSEE HAS BEEN REPORTED / AS MISSING IN ACTION'). At the right side there is a manuscript marking 'Missing in Action, March 22, 1943'; it was signed by a captain. There are two faint 'returned to writer' markings.

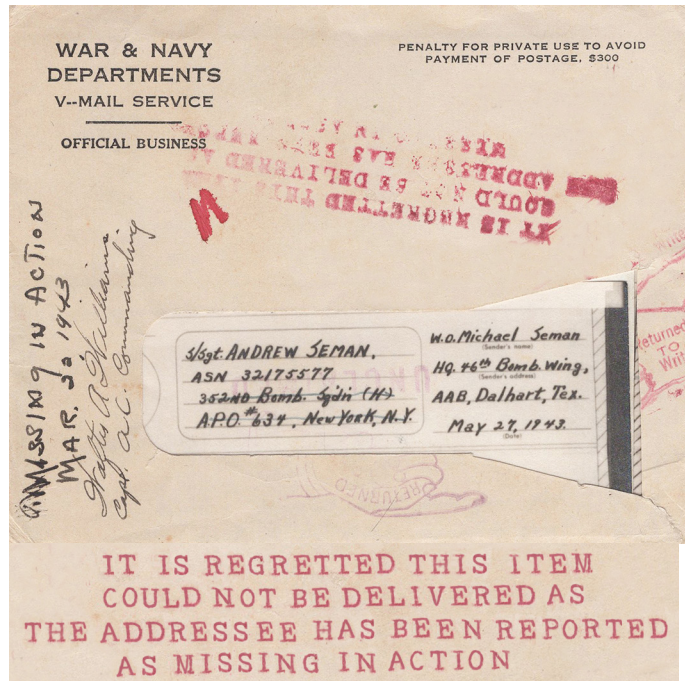


Figure 4. (as)

The next cover, in Figure 5, was sent in January of 1945 to a private who was with the infantry in Belgium (APO 452 at Virton). A 'Missing 2/18/45' comment was signed by an officer. Army 'VERIFIED' marking and 'RETURN TO SENDER'. The soldier was missing in the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium.

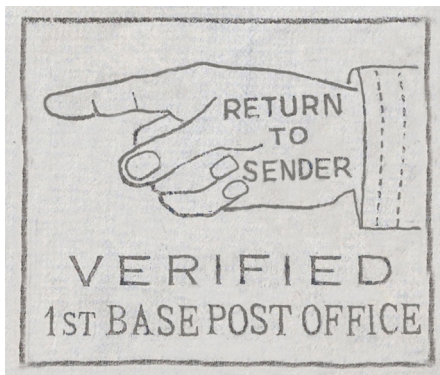


Figure 5. (as)

Deceased/ Killed in action

Many soldiers were killed in action. A V-Mail sent from New Mexico in February of 1943 is shown in Figure 6. The item was returned in October of 1943 with the notation 'Deceased'. For a detailed discussion of this cover and the one in Figure 4 please see *Auxiliary Markings*, Issue 50, April 2016, page 8.

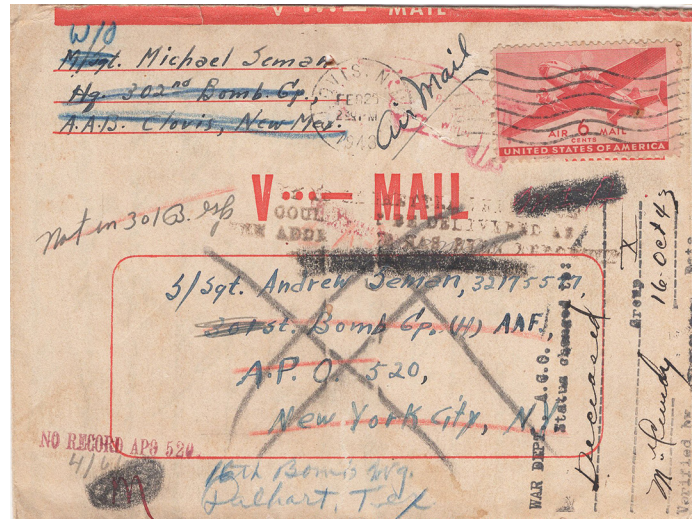


Figure 6.

A penalty cover for V-Mail service sent to a serviceman in Sicily (APO 252) in August of 1943 is shown in Figure 7. This cover has the same red marking as the one in Figure 4, except denoting that the addressee was deceased. A manuscript note was added by a Captain. In addition, there is a Casualty Status verification on the back side. The A.G.O. was the Adjutant General's Office which was responsible for personnel records.

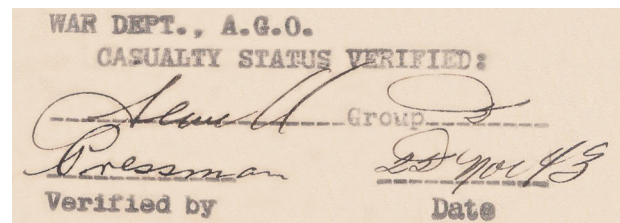
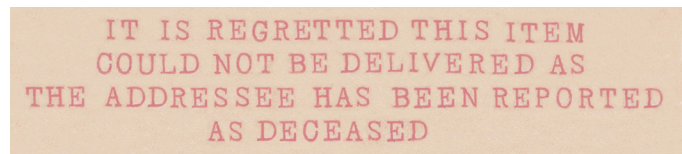
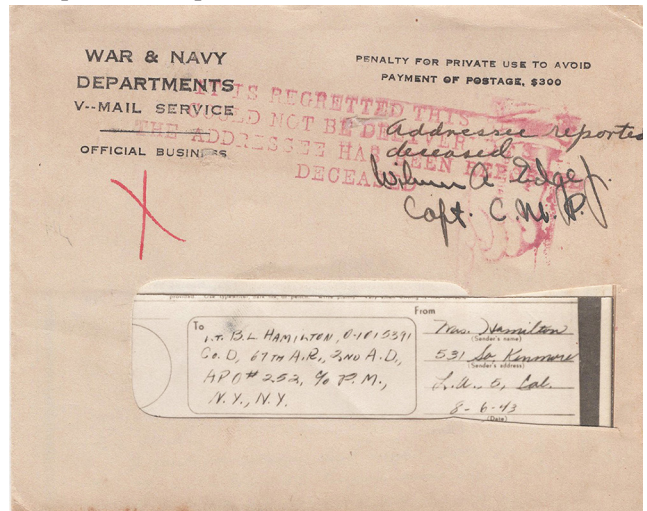


Figure 7. (as)

The next cover, in Figure 8, has a couple of things about it for which I am not certain I have the correct answer. It was sent from Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin to a Sergeant Brewer whose address was with APO 32. APO 32 was assigned to the 32nd Infantry Division. The Wisconsin and Michigan National Guards were federalized at Lansing, MI and were designated the 32nd Infantry Division, and it had the 126, 127, and 128 Infantry Regiments. The address for serviceman Brewer was for the 127th Infantry Division. So, he most likely was from Wisconsin as that is what is given in the return address. So why was the envelope canceled at Wilmington, N. C.? One can only assume that the sender was in North Carolina at the time of the mailing. Figure 8 also shows the back side of the envelope.

The boxed red marking had been crossed out. Upon close examination one can see the word 'DECEASED'; the date above the marking is 29 May 1943. To the left is the A.G.O. status verification marking, dated October 30, 1943. Now for a puzzling item. On the left side of the front of the cover there is a signature from an officer written in ink. Above that, in pencil, is 'Killed In Action', 1-21-43. So, the back has dates of May 29, 1943 and October 30, 1943 relating to his death; but these dates are only when the cover was processed via the APO. The 127th Infantry Regiment was sent to the Pacific theater in May of 1942. There is a lot of information in Wikipedia about the 32nd Infantry Division and the three regiments. If Sgt. Brewer was in killed in January of 1943, it would have been in the battle at Bona-Gona, New Guinea. That is interesting as the cover was posted in February of 1943.

it is dated September 16, 1943. The item was returned to the sender (pointing finger marking on front).

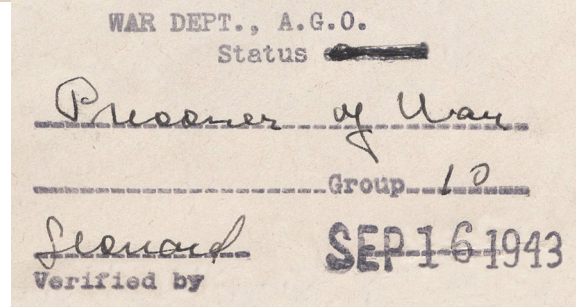
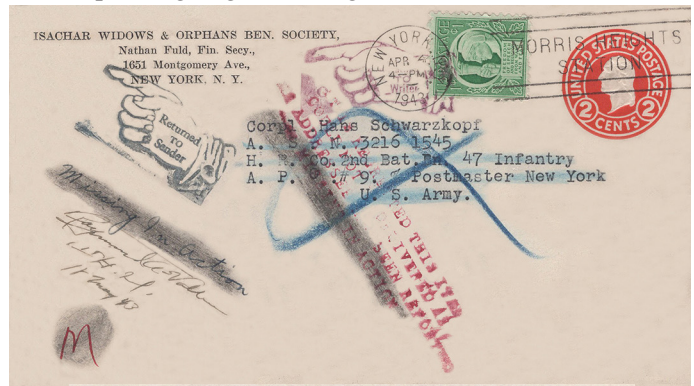


Figure 8. (as)

The final cover is an air mail letter sheet sent in 1945 to an American POW in Germany (Figure 9). The six cent rate was for service personnel and POW's abroad. The letter format reflects the International Red Cross Treaty arrangement for a special form for mail to POWs among belligerent nations. It was returned by the direction of the War Department; this may have been due to the fact that the prisoner of war number was not given. The number 7288 may be a censor number.

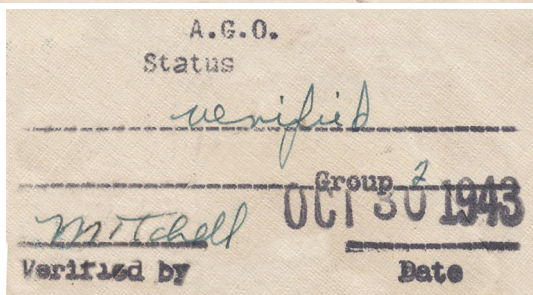


Figure 8. (as)

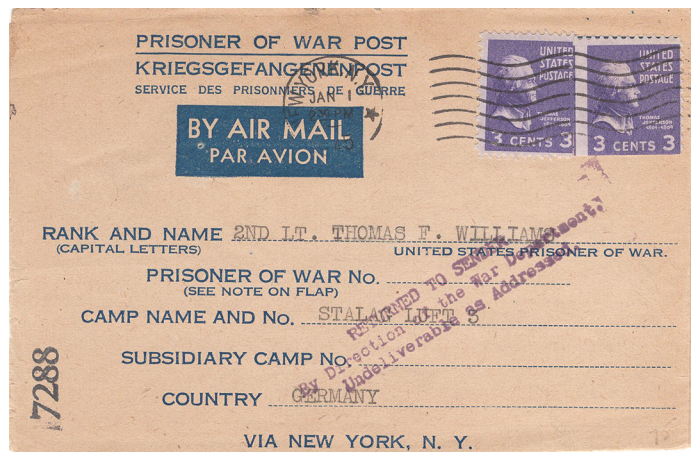


Figure 9.

Prisoner of War

Many soldiers were thought to be missing in action and then were found to be prisoners of war. Figure 11 shows a cover sent from New York City in April of 1943 to a soldier who at that time was in Algeria (APO 9). The same red marking seen in Figures 4 and 7 is on the front side. At the left side there is a manuscript marking denoting 'Missing In Action'. The 'Missing In Action' has been crossed out for both of these markings.

The reason for the crossed-out portions of the markings can be seen on the back side of the cover in Figure 12. The A.G.O. form notes that the soldier was a prisoner of war, and

References:

1. *The World Almanac and Book of Facts*, 2019, page 145.

Over What Time Period Were Stamps for Collectors Free of U.S. Customs Duty? by Tony Wawrukiewicz

John Hotchner has written multiple articles for *La Posta*. Among them has been a series of articles concerning customs duties, a series that began with the second quarter issue of 2017. In writing these articles, he has had access to many items coming into the U.S. that contained the admonition 'PASSED FREE OF DUTY,' thus indicating that no customs duty was collected. He wondered why this was so.

In writing a chapter entitled "Customs Duties and Customs Clearance and Delivery Fees, 1873 – 2019." for my book entitled *Further Insights into U.S. Postal History, 1794 – 2019*, I attempted to answer his question. When I first wrote that chapter, I noticed that, over the years, the U.S. Post Office Department promulgated multiple rules and regulations concerning what items were supposed to be assessed with customs and which items were not to be so assessed.

I also noticed that a majority of the pre-1940 examples I had were all 'Passed Free of Customs Duties'. Then, I carefully examined all of these items, and found eight of them that were 'Not Liable to United States Customs Duties' because they contained 'Stamps for Collectors or Collections Only'. Then I checked my post-1940 material and found a few examples as late as 1957 where philatelic material was clearly 'Passed Free'. When I saw this, I then began to search out references that confirmed these findings. These follow, and then I discuss some of the examples I have between 1923 and 1957.

First and foremost, I found that the yearly July 1917 to 1923 *Postal Guides* added the following concerning incoming items that were free of duty:

...written communication, money, and genuine postage stamps not dutiable.

Then, Section 632, (c) of the 1924 *PL&R* stated:

Sealed articles. When a sealed article shall be found to contain only written communications, money, genuine postage stamps, facsimiles of canceled foreign or domestic postage stamps, or merchandise not exceeding \$1 in value, or on which the duty or fine is less than 25 cents, apparently intended as gifts, or presents, it may be delivered to the addressee.

That is, in this case, no custom duties were to be assessed. Section 2233.3 of the 1932 *PL&R* confirmed this, but the 1940 and 1948 *PL&Rs* did not. On the other hand, however, per Section 43 of the 1939 July, Part II of the *Postal Guide*, the customs clearance fee for cancelled and uncanceled postage stamps was not to be collected, so I assume that they were also not dutiable. The same section of the 1941 Part II of the *Postal Guide* confirmed this latter finding, as did Section 42 of the 1953 July, Part II of the *Postal Guide*.

My willingness to believe that from 1917 to some uncertain recent date, customs duty was not collected on stamps for collectors is supported both by all these references and the fact that, from 1917 to at least 1957, there are multiple items like those in the figures illustrated here in this article that confirm this fact.

But before illustrating these multiple examples, one also needs to be aware as to when customs clearance fees (CCF) were or were not collected for items containing stamps for collectors. This information is gleaned from the chapter on "Customs Duties and Customs Clearance and Delivery Fees, 1873 - 2019" in my *Further Insights into Modern Postal History, 1794 - 2019*. From 1915 to 1930, the CCF was only collected if the item was dutiable. From 1930 to 1939, there were a number of items spared from collection of the CCF, but not stamps for collectors. These latter items were added to items where the CCF was not collected from 1939 to 1953. This probably remained so until May 14, 1957 when, henceforth,

the CCF was only collected if an item was dutiable.

As an introduction to the various items that illustrate this article, the first (1923) and earliest example is shown in more detail so as to illustrate how and why they were all handled. In Figure 1, five images from this 1923 cover show various aspects of the U.S. customs handling of a registered up to 80 grams 1923 letter package from Switzerland to Washington, D.C. The 140 centimes in postage paid the following: the first 20 grams required a payment of 40 centimes, and each of three added 20 grams in weight required the payment of 20 centimes each. The registration fee was an added 40 centimes, thus totaling the 140 centimes in postage paid.





Figure 1. (1923, nas)

The various aspects of the U.S. customs handling where no custom duty was collected is shown first where it was 'PASSED FREE of U.S. Custom Duties', as it was 'NOT LIABLE TO / UNITED STATES / CUSTOM DUTIES'. because the letter 'CONTAINS POSTAGE / STAMPS FOR COLLECTIONS / ONLY'. Therefore, this and all items now illustrated contained 'Stamps for collectors' that were 'PASSED FREE' as they were 'NOT LIABLE FOR UNITED STATES CUSTOMS DUTIES'. As just noted, this item was mailed before the custom clearance fee was collected.

In Figure 2 is a registered Jan. 1930 Canada to U.S. letter package (2¢ postage, 10¢ registration fee paid by 12¢ on letter package). The complex return address indicates that the package contained 'NOT DUTIABLE' 'POSTAGE STAMPS'. This item was also mailed before the custom clearance fee was collected on non-dutiable items.

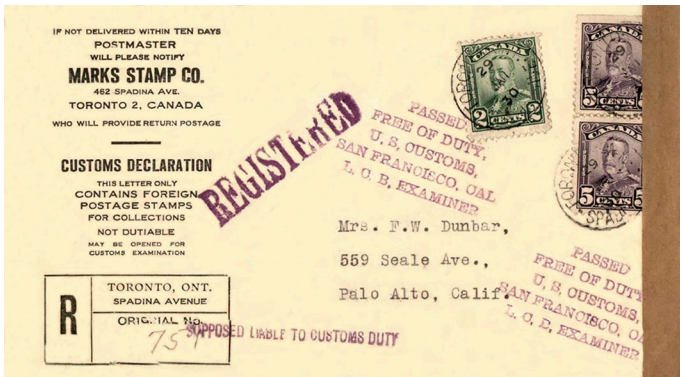


Figure 2. (1930, nas)

In Figure 3 is a 1932 registered Great Britain to U.S. letter package (2 1/2 pence UPU surface postage, 2 pence registration fee paid by 4 1/2 pence on letter package). It was 'PASSED FREE OF DUTIES' because of the reverse label that indicated that the package carried 'POSTAGE STAMPS FOR COLLECTIONS'. This item was mailed when the custom clearance fee was now collected on non-dutiable items (as indicated by the 10¢ in postage due stamps).

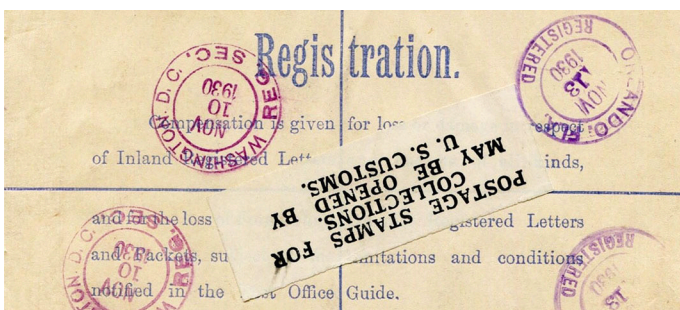


Figure 3. (1930, nas)

In Figure 4 is another (1932) registered Great Britain to U.S. letter package (again, 2 1/2 pence UPU surface postage, 2 pence registration fee paid by 4 1/2 pence on letter package). It was 'PASSED FREE OF DUTIES' because 'Postage Stamps for Collectors' were in the letter package. Incorrectly, the CCF was not collected.



Figure 4. (1932, nas)



The Figure 5 item is reproduced from the Jan. 2021 newsletter. It is an up-to-four ounces 1935 Switzerland to Chicago letter package containing 'postage stamps for collections'. The handstamp indicates that the postage is on the reverse. 120 centimes paid 30 centimes for the first ounce, then 20 centimes for each of three added ounces, and 30 centimes for the registration fee. Again, no custom duties were collected. The 10¢ customs clearance fee was correctly paid.





Figure 5. (1935, nas)

In Figure 6 is a 1937 Great Britain to U.S. letter package paid at the 1 1/2 pence treaty rate. There was no customs handstamp placed, but the letter carried an explanatory label that stated 'POSTAGE STAMPS FOR COLECTIONS / NOT LIABLE TO CUSTOMS DUTY', so was certainly passed free, even if no official handstamp was placed indicating this. Incorrectly, the CCF was not collected.

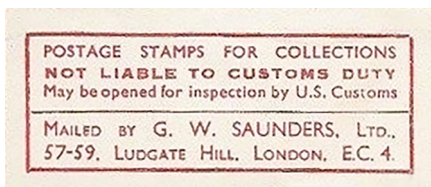


Figure 6. (1937, nas)

The next, last, and latest item, in Figure 7, was handled more typically. It is a 1957 registered letter package. I can-

not determine how the 11 1/2 pence postage placed paid for the item's transport as a registered, surface item. Typically, because 'CONTENTS:- / PHILATELIC MATERIAL / FOR PRIVATE / STAMP COLLECTION' meant that it was 'PASSED FREE'. As previously noted, at this point in time, as the contents were not dutiable, no CCF was collected.

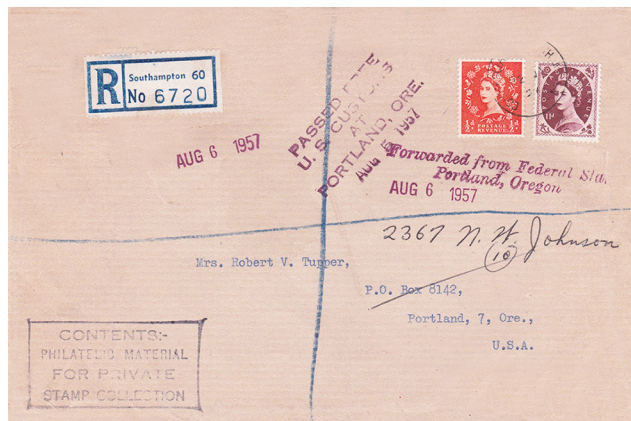


Figure 7. (1957, nas)

Importantly, the research that explained this aspect of U.S. customs handling required access to the *U.S. Postal Laws and Regulations* (accessible through the website <http://www.uspostal-bulletins.com>), and the *U.S. Official Postal Guides* (available from the American Philatelic Research Library (APRL) by sending a more than 60 Gigabyte flash drive to the APRL).

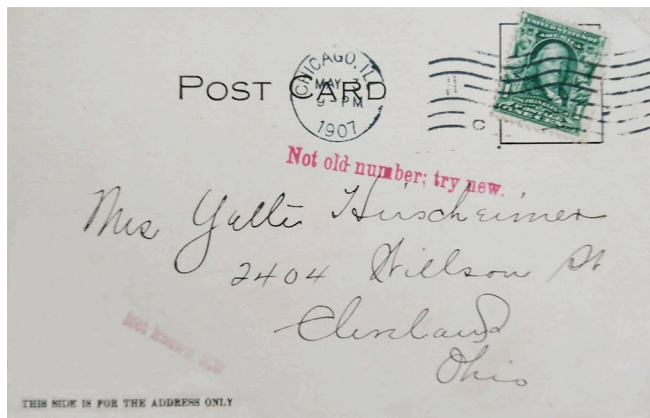
Finally, except for the final item, I was able to ascertain how the postage placed on the letter paid for the transport to the U.S. by using the "Incoming Foreign Surface Mail Rates, 1879-1950" table in Chapter Twenty-Nine, in *U.S. International Postal Rates, 1872-1996* by Anthony S. Wawrukiewicz and Henry W. Beecher (available from the American Philatelic Society).

Incorrect Number by Tony Wawrukiewicz

This 1907 Chicago to Cleveland post card was undeliverable because 'Not old number, try new'. This is confusing to me because no new number was listed on the card.

There was no return address on the card, so it could not be returned to the writer.

Not old number; try new.



A Second Look at Stamps for Collectors Free of U.S. Customs Duty

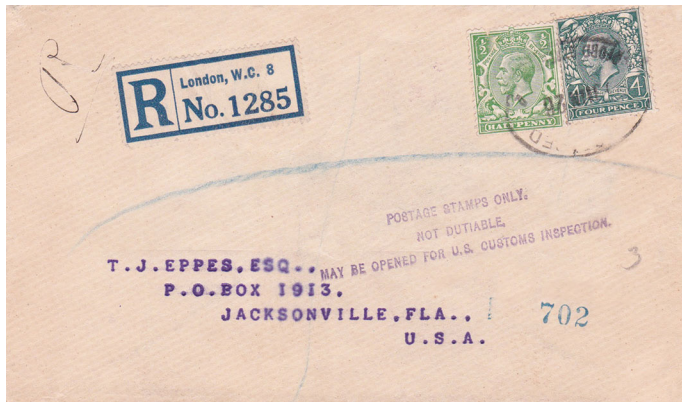
by John M. Hotchner and Anthony S. Wawrukiewicz

Introduction

John Hotchner knew of the article I wrote (in this newsletter) basically showing that, as of 1917, stamps for collectors were not assessed customs duties, but at times, as illustrated in the article, these items were still assessed the Customs Clearance Fee (CCF). Knowing this, he sent me further examples where, after 1917, no customs duties were collected on stamps for collectors, and we show them now.

New examples

In Figure 1 is a 1926 registered England to the U.S. letter containing 'POSTAGE STAMPS ONLY / NOT DUTIABLE, / MAY BE OPENED FOR U.S. CUSTOMS INSPECTION'. So, clearly, in 1926, stamps for collectors, were not dutiable. Correctly, in 1926, no CCF was collected.



POSTAGE STAMPS ONLY.
NOT DUTIABLE.
MAY BE OPENED FOR U.S. CUSTOMS INSPECTION.

Figure 1. (1926, as (actual size), Courtesy Hotchner)

In Figure 2 is another registered (1950) England to the U.S. letter carrying a long-winded, yet precise, hs message indicating that the letter package carried non-dutiable 'stamps for collection'. Again, because it was mailed in 1950, on this date, as the contents were non-dutiable, no CCF was collected.



Figure 2. (1950, as, Courtesy Hotchner)

No covers are shown for the last two examples because the markings themselves tell the story. The two hs in Figure 3 were on a 1938 registered cover from Hungary to the U.S. As the typed marking indicates (as does the second hs), the contents were 'Postage stamps for collector...', were thus duty free, and were 'PASSED FREE' in Washington, D.C.

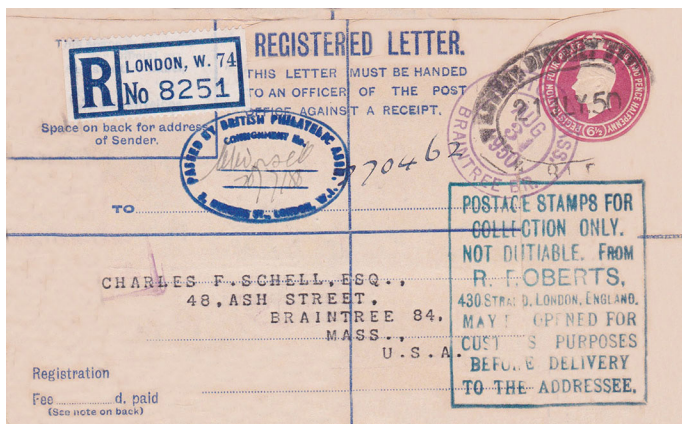
Another cover hs indicated that the CCF was correctly collected, and, as my book chapter indicated, the postage due stamps that indicated this fee was collected were not always placed on the actual item (in this case they were not).

CONTENTS:Postage stamps for collector.Not
----- dutiable.If necessary,open for
customs or postal inspection.

PASSED FREE
of U.S. Customs Duties
U. S. Customs Bureau Post Office
WASHINGTON, D. C.

Figure 3. (1938, as, Courtesy Hotchner)

The two hs in Figure 4 were on a June 28, 1957 registered cover from Canada to the U.S. As the typed marking indicates (together with the second hs), the contents were postage stamps for collector...', were thus duty free, so were 'PASSED FREE' in St. Paul, Minn. As it was mailed after May 14, 1857, since no customs duty was collected, correctly, no CCF was collected.



K. BILESKI POSTAL STATION "B"
WINNIPEG CANADA. Contents: Used
postage stamps for collectors, may
be opened for postal inspection.

PASSED FREE
U. S. CUSTOMS
ST. PAUL, MINN.

Figure 4. (1957, as, Courtesy Hotchner)

These four items from John Hotchner clearly further prove that how, from 1917 to 1957, the customs duty and customs clearance fees were or were not collected.

Living with General Delivery by Douglas B. Quine, PhD.

In the July 2021 issue of this newsletter, Tony Wawrukiewicz wrote about "General Delivery, an Introduction". It might seem this was an esoteric offering more than a century ago, but many of us lived with General Delivery mail.

In the summer of 1955, my father, Professor W. V. Quine¹, was about 1/3 the way through his 70 year affiliation with Harvard University and decided it was time to find a summer house for the family. A lake in easy driving distance of the university was the objective since it would allow comfortable temperatures for swimming and boating. The nearest available land proved to be in Harvard (a coincidence), Massachusetts, 30 miles west of Cambridge. This was an era before personal computers and the Internet. Long distance telephone calls were prohibitively expensive (3 minute domestic calls could cost more than an hour's minimum wage). Mailing letters and postcards through the post office was both economical and efficient. Mail was our lifeline; all personal and professional communications were done through the mail. My young sister and I corresponded extensively with our friends and my parents coordinated social visits, summer-time guests, bills, and academic publications by mail. We didn't have a telephone during the summer. Although the shore of Bare Hill Pond was well populated during the summer, the post office did not deliver mail there. They encouraged the rental of post office boxes. This suggestion offended my Dad's sense of justice and entitlement to free delivery of mail dating back to his youth as an avid philatelist².

parking made cars impractical, we thought nothing of taking a mile and a half country walk to the Harvard post office in the old town center each day to collect our mail. We would ask the clerk for the "Quine" mail (a unique name in town) which would be pulled out of the alphabetically arranged pigeon holes behind the counter. Naturally, there were drawbacks to the General Delivery. Since we were heavy correspondents, the postal staff would periodically remind us of the availability of rental post office boxes. General Delivery mail was also held for only 2 weeks (the dated hand stamp on the envelope face documenting its expiration date in the General Delivery bins). I don't know of any mail expiring and being returned to sender.

During the summer, we arranged for the forwarding of mail from our Boston house and from Dad's Harvard University office to our summer-time General Delivery (Figure 2). Dad thoughtfully provided his secretary with a hand stamp to simplify the process.

By the 1980's, postal automation was evolving and I changed careers from Biology to Postal Automation (my previous hobby³). The POSTNET barcode on the face of the cover became an essential tool to speed mail processing and reduce costs. Nevertheless, the old 12 operator Multi-Position Letter Sorting Machine (MPLSM) remained a core technology during the transition. Three 'Ident' identifying marks from the MPLSM on the back of this cover indicate it was manually processed on machine 'J' (by operator 1), on machine 'V' (by operator 5), and on machine 'P' (perhaps by operator 7). The ink color indicated the work shift.

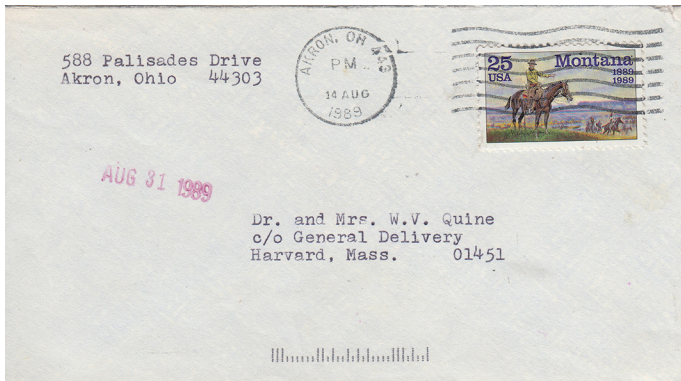


Figure 1. General Delivery mail addressed to Harvard, MA

We therefore used General Delivery for most of the nearly 45 years that we summered in Harvard. Living in Boston during the school year where excellent public transportation and impossible



Figure 3. Multi-Position Letter Sorting Machine (MPLSM) Ident Markings (enlarged)

Citations:

1. Willard Van Orman Quine in Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Willard_Van_Orman_Quine.
2. Quine, DB. 2008b. "Centennial of a Philatelic Philosopher." *Philatelic Literature Review (PLR)* 57 (4): 326-337.
3. Quine DB. 2016c. "POSTNET Barcodes: Enablers of Letter / Flat Mail Postal Automation, 1982 - 2013" Chapter 13: pp. 201-221 in (A. Wawrukiewicz, editor) *Insights into U.S. Postal History, 1855 - 2016*, American Philatelic Society Press.

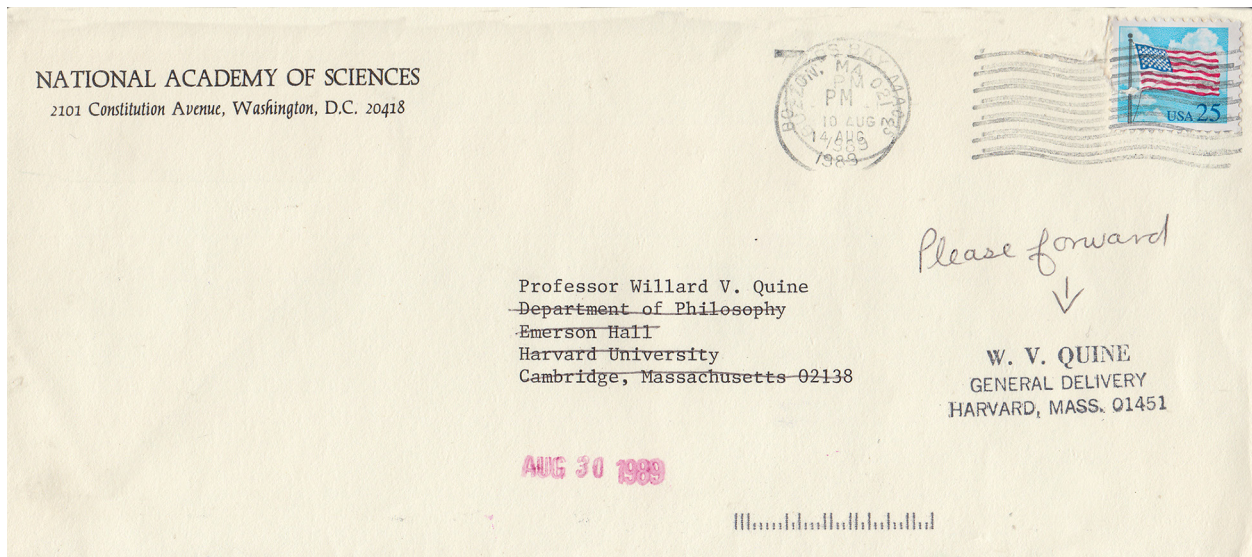


Figure 2. Mail forwarded to General Delivery, Harvard, MA