

# La Posta: A Journal of American Postal History

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**Randy Stehle**



**Doug DeRoest**

**The Stehle-DeRoest Catalog  
of Non-Standard US Postmarks  
1900-1971**

**OUR 40TH YEAR OF PUBLISHING AMERICAN POSTAL HISTORY 1969-2009**



# La Posta: A Journal of American Postal History



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*COVER:* Against a background montage of early 20th century non-standard postmarks, photos of Randy Stehle and Doug DeRoest remind us of their decade-long project to catalog these unusual markings. A sample chapter of the newly reedited project appears in this issue, but readers are urged to consult our online edition in order to access the entire free catalog.

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## Publisher's Page



*The entire La posta production staff—Bill & Cath—not-so-hard at work in the “press room.”*

### The Stehle-DeRoest Catalogue

About twenty years ago I recall having a long phone conversation with Randy Stehle concerning the subject of non-standard postmarks. Privately procured handstamps had been used in some U.S. post offices in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century despite the fact the POD regulations had specifically forbidden the use of anything but Department-issued devices to cancel stamps and postmark first class mail.

Randy's greatest enjoyment in the hobby came from the hunt. Gifted with an encyclopedic memory, Randy voraciously followed the national post card show circuit in search of unusual and desirable postmarks. Over the years, he conducted 133 mail bid sales in *La Posta* offering over 10,000 lots and sold copious quantities of similar material through other retail outlets. He once told me that he owed his ability to make a down payment on his first home in the Bay Area largely to his proficiency in discovering desirable postmarks on post cards.

The upshot of the phone conversation was that Randy decided he would undertake a census of 20<sup>th</sup> century non-standard postmarks. At the time he was in his early thirties and still very busy with his “daytime” profes-

sion as an accountant. He was also somewhat concerned with his skill as a draftsman, and, while the organization of large amounts of postmark details was right up his alley, he was troubled by the prospect of producing an illustrated catalog.

Fortunately, I had recently encountered another relative newcomer to postal history named Doug DeRoest. Doug lived in La Grande, Oregon—a fair-sized town on the eastern slope of the Blue Mountains. He was a keen local historian in his early forties and became fascinated with postal history as a vehicle that could be used to explore new roads into the past. Like Randy, Doug was interested in acquiring a research specialty that blazed new trails and Doug was an accomplished draftsman.

Randy published his first article on the subject in *La Posta* in Volume 21, Number 2 (April-May 1990). Doug followed a few months later with an expansion on some of the work I had published in my 1987 edition of *Postmarks on Postcards*. Randy and Doug's series ran through 37 installments and concluded somewhat prematurely in 1998.



The strategy had been to publish their work serially so as to involve more people within the hobby in expanding the census. They were very successful at this and the list of contributors grew steadily throughout the 90s. By the time publication of the series stopped, Randy reported that they had amassed data on nearly 4,500 different non-standard 30<sup>th</sup> century postmarks. The ultimate goal was to update all the published material, reorganize it, and publish the study as a catalogue.

Tragically, Doug died in 2001. Still in his early fifties, our community of Oregon postal historians were shocked by his loss.

The non-standard project—on hiatus since 1998—was abandoned. Doug's drafting skills were essential to completion of the project and it was never completed.

Randy's untimely death in May caused me to reflect extensively on his many contributions to our understanding and appreciation of US postal history. He was a tireless researcher and, if possible, I believe he found even greater joy in solving some of the puzzles in our hobby than he did in turning up that next great postmark discovery. For example, I worked closely with Randy in his most recent study of Los Angeles postal stations and provided him with some fairly complicated maps showing changes in location through time. As he began organizing the project and turning up new pieces of information, hardly a day would pass when I failed to receive a new email from him describing this or that new discovery. He was very excited. It reminded me of those heady days two decades earlier when Randy and I would literally talk for hours on the phone about his concerns and discoveries in the non-standard postmark project.

It suddenly came to me that the most lasting tribute I could offer to the memory of my friend, and at the same time benefit the larger postal history community, was to reorganize the non-standard postmark project and post it online as a free service for all to enjoy. A check with Randy's widow Robin found her in concurrence, and I have been hard at it over the past six weeks producing a color-enhanced, fully reorganized Catalogue of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Non-Standard Postmarks.

The publication should be available free-of-charge on the La Posta Publications YUDU library site by the time you read these words (consult Announcements on the [www.la-posta.com](http://www.la-posta.com) home page for a direct link). Anyone may use the publication online, download it to their computer hard drive from the site, or print it out

direct from the YUDU site. The entire catalogue shall remain available on line, and will hopefully be updated from time to time as new discoveries are made known.

We begin this issue with a sample of the newly reorganized Stehle-DeRoest catalogue that presents their type A.1 Target Killers. This is the only portion of the catalogue that will appear in La Posta so I am hopeful that all interested readers will take advantage of the online presentation. Once again, please refer to our La Posta website for a direct link to the catalogue.

*Richard W. Helburn*

## Catalog of Postal Stationery of Canal Zone Released

The 2009 revision of Canal Zone Postal Stationery by Irwin J Gibbs (editor) and George T. Krieger (associate editor) has just been released.

The catalog is a cooperative venture of United Postal Stationery Society and Canal Zone Study Group. The publication covers all envelopes and postal cards issued during the time the United States Postal Service administered postal operations in the Canal Zone. In addition to updating prices and other information in the previous catalog, the publication contains a history, postal rate table, earliest reported uses and other new information. New are listings and prices of specimens of Canal Zone Postal Stationery that have come into collectors hands following recent archival auctions. This new publication is 70 pages printed on glossy paper in 8.5 by 11 inch format with a laminated 4-color cover and is saddle stitch bound. It is available from Bob Wilderman at the UPSS Publications Office, P.O. Box 3982, Chester, VA 23831 (e-mail [upsspubs@aol.com](mailto:upsspubs@aol.com)) for \$20.00 (\$16.00 if UPSS member) plus \$5.00 shipping for up to two books to U.S. addresses (Virginia residents add 5.0% sales tax). For non-USA destinations, please contact the publications office for rates. Many additional references on United States and foreign postal stationery, corner mounts and other collector aids are also available from UPSS. Society information, the current society auction offerings, and the complete publications and supplies listing may be viewed on the Web site [www.upss.org](http://www.upss.org).

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# A Catalogue of Non-Standard Postmarks, 1900-1971

By Randy Stehle & Doug DeRoest

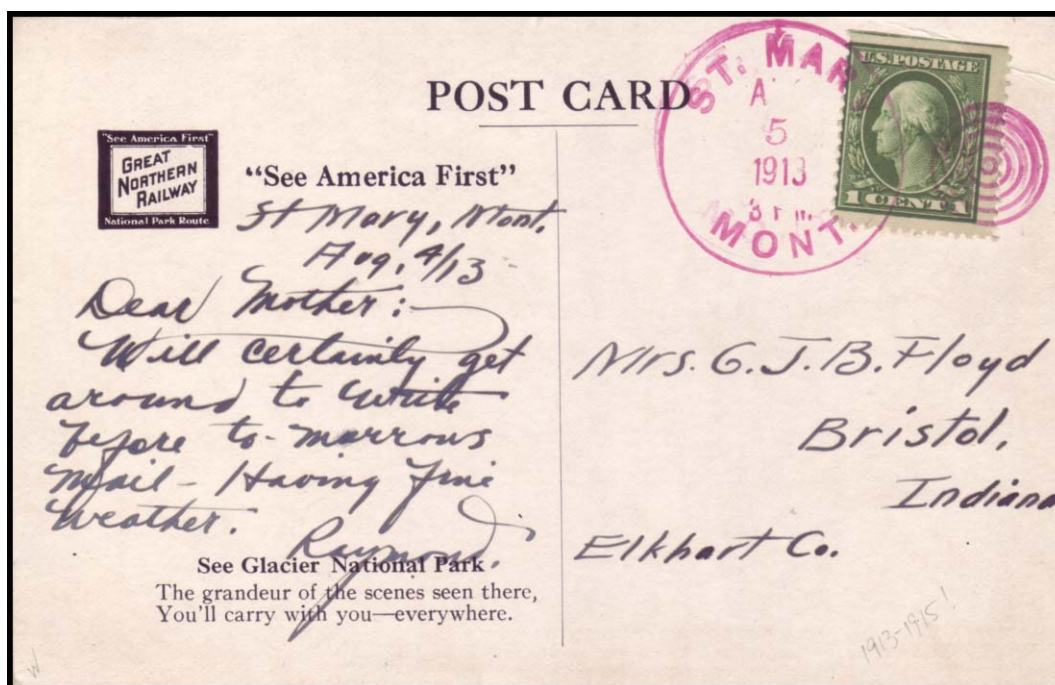


Figure 1 The Saint Mary post office served Glacier National Park in Montana from 1913 to 1915. It used a non-standard type A.1 handstamp in August 1913 as shown here.

## Type A.1 Duplex Target Cancels

### Scope

We begin now the illustrated catalog portion of our study. All non-standard town markings have been arranged and illustrated according to the type outline presented earlier. The first type—listed as Type A.1—are those postmarks that mimic 19th century target duplexes. The period under study is 1900 to 1971, and we will be listing postmarks, where known, from all United States, territories and possessions.

Altered and composite devices will be shown within the alphabetical listing of each type and not as a separate group. Such markings will be denoted as “altered” or “composite” or both in the “Notes” column. A quick recap of what is *not* being covered by this study includes damaged, “receiving” marks (if standard); “transit” marks; parcel post; M.O.B.; registered; mailing division; fancy cancels and special events (i.e., philatelically inspired designs); clerk markings; mailer’s permits; RFDs; ship cancels; auxiliary markings; and provisional and emergency markings (if standard). What is under study is the regular sending and receiving town marks used on first class mail by any class post office, branch or station.

The appearance of the indicia part of the postmark (month, day, year and time) never makes a device non-standard. This part of the device was removable and not integral to the handstamp. Letters and numbers in the date could, therefore, be omitted, inverted, and substituted with ease in a standard design postmark. On the other hand, the presence of interior ornamentation (stars, crosses, curved lines, etc.) in the postmark does make the postmark non-standard.

### Projected Numbers of Non-standard Markings

Our total list of nonstandard markings stands at over 3,800, and we fully expect many others to be discovered over time. It is interesting to speculate as to how many nonstandard markings have been used over the 71 years of our study period.

For a starting point we will need to know how many post offices existed during this period. *Table 1* lists the total number of fourth class post offices by state in descending order by number of offices as of June 30, 1902. This date approximates the time when U.S. offices were at a maximum. By the middle of 1902

States and Territories,	Fourth-class offices,	Average compensation of fourth-class postmasters.	Rank in number of fourth-class offices,	Rank compensation fourth-class postmaster
Pennsylvania .....	4,701	\$203.36	1	
Virginia .....	3,677	118.26	2	
Kentucky .....	3,190	101.59	3	
North Carolina .....	3,138	97.43	4	
New York .....	3,088	262.00	5	
Texas .....	3,064	170.09	6	
Ohio .....	2,863	209.05	7	
Missouri .....	2,728	171.19	8	
Tennessee .....	2,707	99.34	9	
Georgia .....	2,581	123.99	10	
Alabama .....	2,554	108.32	11	
Illinois .....	2,161	266.21	12	
Mississippi .....	2,107	114.29	13	
West Virginia .....	2,090	124.77	14	
Arkansas .....	1,982	121.22	15	
Indiana .....	1,823	202.58	16	
Michigan .....	1,803	234.89	17	
Wisconsin .....	1,606	222.55	18	
California .....	1,540	226.83	19	
Minnesota .....	1,494	223.78	20	
Iowa .....	1,462	315.67	21	
Kansas .....	1,370	250.61	22	
South Carolina .....	1,297	121.67	23	
Louisiana .....	1,250	159.27	24	
Maine .....	1,143	217.25	25	
Florida .....	1,122	151.81	26	
Maryland .....	1,028	174.95	27	
Nebraska .....	911	282.05	28	
Washington .....	868	187.38	29	
Oregon .....	856	163.74	30	
Oklahoma .....	777	170.35	31	
New Jersey .....	767	285.51	32	
Colorado .....	701	225.00	33	
North Dakota .....	690	194.76	34	
Massachusetts .....	634	371.73	35	
South Dakota .....	616	216.79	36	
Indian Territory .....	576	184.73	37	
Vermont .....	500	261.04	38	
Montana .....	498	187.08	39	
New Hampshire .....	492	260.17	40	
Idaho .....	461	172.30	41	
Connecticut .....	368	344.75	42	
New Mexico .....	359	154.90	43	
Utah .....	324	215.07	44	
Wyoming .....	324	153.66	45	
Arizona .....	226	182.77	46	
Nevada .....	182	159.92	47	
Delaware .....	125	229.59	48	
Rhode Island .....	118	359.63	49	
Hawaii .....	85	287.99	50	
Alaska .....	83	114.21	51	
Porto Rico .....	77	266.39	52	
District of Columbia .....	4	131.89	53	
Tutuila (Samoan Islands) .....	1	490.00	54	

*Table 1 United States ranked in order of the number of fourth class post offices, June 30, 1902.*

post office numbers were approximately 1,000 less than the all time high reached in 1900. The advent of rural free delivery brought a sharp decline in the number of post offices beginning in 1901, and, when combined with a number of other social and economic factors, resulted in a total of only 29,100 fourth class offices by 1940. Although this study is

not restricted to postmarks used by fourth class offices, the evidence suggests that these were by far the greatest users of nonstandard equipment.

An approximation of the total number of fourth class post offices in operation from 1902 to 1940 would be 1) the number in existence in mid-1902; plus 2) those



established from 1903 -1940; plus 3) those higher class offices relegated to fourth class; and 4) any name changes. Thus, this total through 1940 becomes:

In operation 6/30/1902	71,193
Established 1903-1940	31,000
Relegated to 4th Class	200*
Name changes	5,000
Total	107,400

\*Figures available from 1903-1911 only

The year 1940 was selected as a cutoff here because very few offices established after this date appear to have used non-standard devices until the advent of the United States Postal Service (USPS) in 1971 relaxed restrictions on the use of privately procured postmark devices.

In order to have a rough estimate of the percentage of existing offices using nonstandard postmarks, we can use California as a model. There is some question as to whether California, with its diverse geography and fairly large number of offices, is a good representation of the nation as a whole, but a substantial amount of postmark census work has already been done on California through the efforts of John Williams in his California Postmark Catalog project, and we may use his results to make some rough projections.

During the period from 1902 through 1940 California had approximately 2,700 fourth class post offices. Thus far, we are aware of over 160 California offices that used non-standard postmarks, meaning that nonstandard postmarks were used by roughly 6% of the state's post offices. If we project this percentage to the nation as a whole, we can estimate the total number of offices using non-standard post marks to be 6,400. Assuming that California still has many unreported non-standard usages, the total for the whole country may be closer to 10,000. Naturally, we are basing our projections on some pretty shaky assumptions, and can therefore put little faith in them, but it will be interesting to see the total number of nonstandards reported over the next decade or so.

The statistics on offices using more than one nonstandard postmark are worth noting. Thus far, we have identified 131 post offices which are known to have used more than one non-standard postmark. This represents roughly 10% of all known offices known to have used non-standard equipment.

These 131 offices have resulted in 312 different non-standard listings. Most—101 offices—used only two nonstandard postmarks, but a few offices used as many as five different types. The record, thus far, is Tahoe, California, which is known to have used eight different nonstandard postmark types. It does appear that use of one non-standard postmark may have led to the use of subsequent non-standard devices. Note in our listing the use by Buck Hill Falls, Pennsylvania, of three different type A.1 devices, and the use of four different types by Farmington, Michigan.

## Characteristics of Post Offices Using Nonstandard Postmarks

Several trends and tendencies have been noted in connection with the type of post offices that are known to have used nonstandard equipment. Although this analysis is based upon only about 1,200 reports, and must therefore be considered preliminary, it seems worthwhile to share these results here.

Date of establishment appears to be the most critical factor. The vast majority of reports (98%) were from offices established prior to 1930. Only 23 offices established after 1930 are known to have used nonstandard postmarks. This would seem to support the belief that the efforts of the POD to curtail nonstandard equipment use were successful. However, there are a substantially larger number (several hundred) of examples of non-standard postmarks used in the post-1930 period by older post offices. It appears that older post offices—particularly those that had used nonstandard equipment earlier—were more prone to use non-standard devices than those offices established after 1930.

One other characteristic of post offices using non-standard devices seems to be the size of the office. When the first 1,200 reports were separated into “active” or “dead” post offices, only one-third were from discontinued post offices. If one assumes that the size of an office correlates positively with its longevity, then it would appear that the larger fourth class offices may have used non-standard postmarks more often. On the other hand, the fact that many short lived, small post offices have not yet been documented through the use of any postmarks may play a role in this factor. Catalogs for Alaska, Arizona and New Mexico, which present fairly complete listings of postmarks for all post offices, do, however, suggest that the short-lived post

offices really did not use many non-standard devices, and it does appear that mail volume played a role in nonstandard postmark use.

## Distribution Patterns

One of the goals of this study has been to see if there are any discernable patterns of distribution among the various non-standard postmark types. What we mean by “distribution patterns” is 1) are some devices so similar in design that they must have come from the same manufacturer, and, if so, can these manufacturers be identified?; and 2) do similar devices tend to be used in certain geographic regions and therefore indicate a single source?

Some of these patterns have been observed for the vertical bar killers (heavy distribution in Texas and adjacent states) and for some of the pseudo-machine devices (similar characteristics indicating the same manufacturer). However, much more study needs to be done in this area before any conclusions can be offered.

## Catalog Section

The headings on the descriptive information for the tracings are:

**CODE** - The letter designation is taken from the Type Chart. The numeric suffix identifies each device within the type and, at present, is in multiples of ten. We have done this in order to leave space for additional discoveries as they occur.

**TOWN** - Alphabetically, and then chronologically, arranged within each type. Post office names appear as they do in the postmark.

**STATE** - A two-letter abbreviation has been used in order to facilitate the use of a computer in record keeping.

**PO DATES** - Dates the post office was in existence taken from either published listings or unpublished working lists. Errors in operating dates may be present, and if you spot one please notify the authors. Lack of a date indicates lack of information (parts of GA, AL, and many branches & stations from all over the country are not presently listed).

**EKU/LKU** - Earliest and Latest known usage. Please report any date extensions to the editor.

**POSTMARK (PMK)** - The diameter of the cds portion of the device in millimeters. If the postmark is a double or triple circle, then two or three numbers

will appear. Some of the discovery examples are poorly struck, and measurements should be considered to be within plus or minus one millimeter.

**KILLER (KLR)** - The diameter of circular killers in millimeters or the vertical height of non-circular killers. The number (if any) in parentheses shows the number of circles in the killer (or the number of bars in some other types). As some examples are not well struck, measurements shown here are also within one mm.

**S/I - Scarcity Index.** This is a somewhat subjective estimate of the value of a fine specimen on cover or post card. We believe that any nonstandard postmark on a clean cover or card is worth at least \$2.00. The collecting of such postmarks as a specific subject of interest is still in the early stage, and most of the value we have assigned is based upon the time the post office operated, the demand for the particular state or section of a state, the cross demand from other collectors (i.e., flags, machines, town & county, fancy cancels, fort collectors, etc.), and a variety of other factors. These S/I Values are open for comments and we encourage readers to send up their thoughts, as well as any new reports and date extensions.

### Scarcity Index and Current Market

S/I	Dollar Range
1	\$2 to \$5
2	\$5 to \$10
3	\$10 to \$20
4	\$20 to \$35
5	\$35 to \$50
6	\$50 to \$100
7	\$100 to \$200
8	\$200 to \$500
9	Over \$500

**NOTES (N)** - Any additional comments regarding particular nonstandard postmarks.



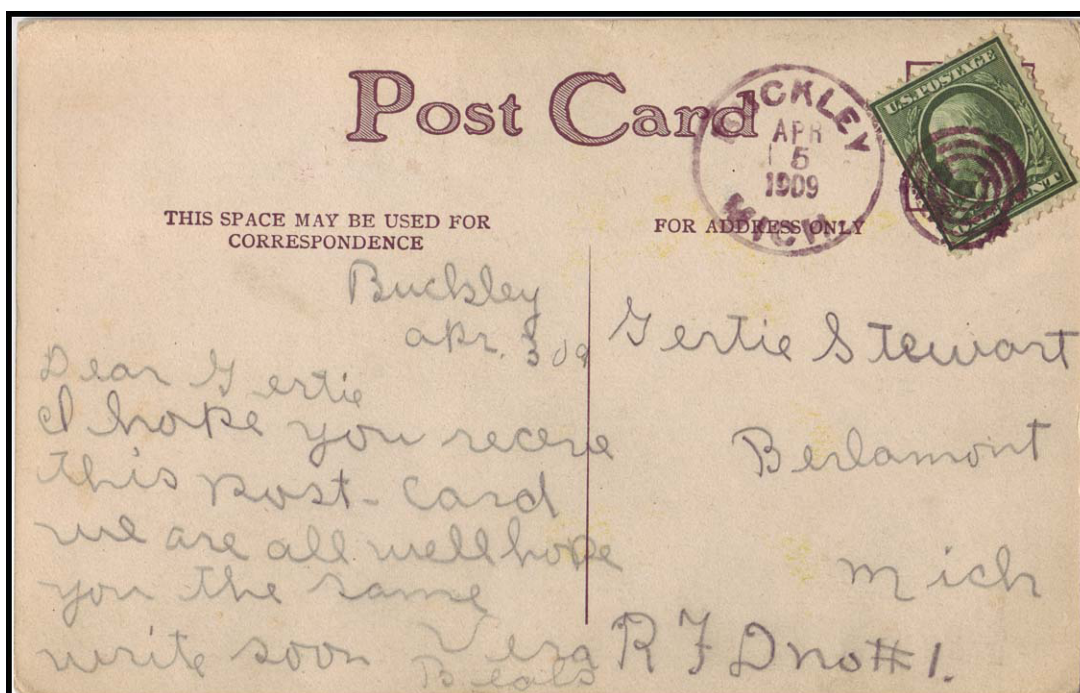


Figure 2 A selection of type A.1 non-standard duplexes shows numerous design variations.

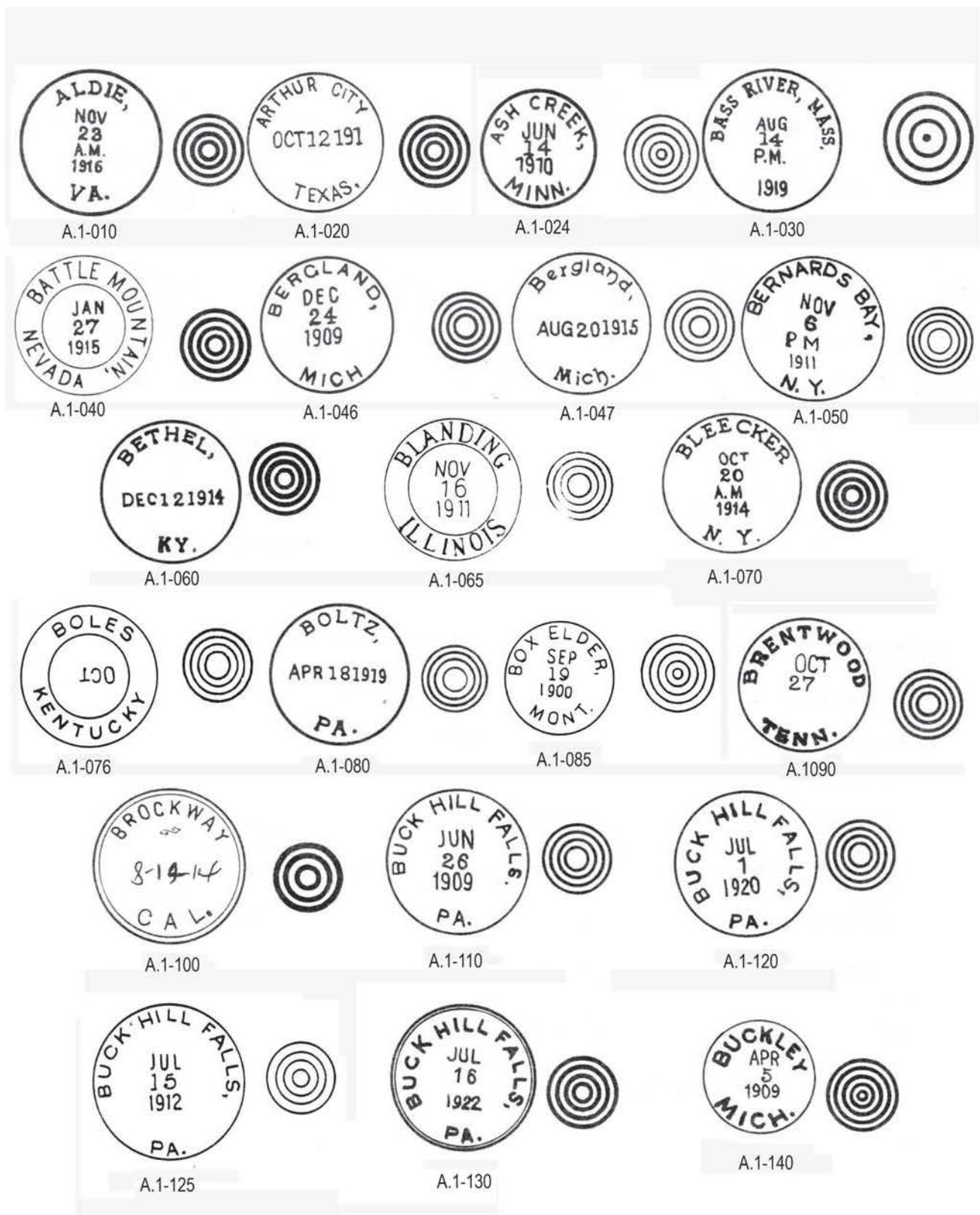


## Whole Number 238

CODE	TOWN	STATE	PO DATES	EKU	LKU	PMK	KLR	N	S/I
A.1-010	ALDIE	VA	1811-	23-Nov-16		31	16(4)	1	2
A.1-020	ARTHUR CITY	TX	1886-	12 OCT 1?		30	16(4)	1	2
A.1-024	ASH CREEK	MN	1894-1939	14-Jun-10		25	16(5)		2
A.1-030	BASS RIVER	MA	1919-1960	23-Dec-18	9-Jun-23	30	21(4)		2
A.1-040	BATTLE MOUNTAIN	NV	1856-	22-Dec-14	27-Jan-15	35x18	18(4)		3
A.1-046	BERGLAND	MI	1903-	24-Dec-09		29	16(4)		2
A.1-047	BERGLAND	MI	1903-	20-Aug-15		31	16(4)	1	2
A.1-050	BERNHARDS BAY	NY	1850-	6-Nov-11		32	15(4)		2
A.1-060	BETHEL	KY	1843-	12-Dec-14		30	16(4)	1	2
A.1-065	BLANDING	IL	1888-1912	16-Apr-09	16-Nov-10	31x20	16(4)		3
A.1-070	BLEECKER	NY	1840-1918	20-Oct-14		31	16(4)	1	2
A.1-076	BOLES	KY	1888/1964	?? OCT 11		31x20	16(4)		2
A.1-080	BOLTZ	PA	1919-1965	18-Apr-19	15-Feb-21	30	16(4)	2	2
A.1-085	BOX ELDER	MT	1889-	19-Sep-00	23-Mar-01	25	16(5)		3
A.1-090	BRENTWOOD	TN	1856-	15-Mar-10	27-Oct-1?	30	17(4)		2
A.1-100	BROCKWAY	CA	1901-1966	7-Aug-14	19-Aug-14	33x31	15(3)		3
A.1-110	BUCK HILL FALLS	PA	1903-	26-Jun-09	15-Jul-12	32	16(4)	1	2
A.1-120	BUCK HILL FALLS	PA	1903-	16-Aug-16	9-May-21	30	16(4)	1	2
A.1-125	BUCK HILL FALLS	PA	1903-	15-Jul-12	19-Jul-12	34	17(4)		2
A.1-130	BUCK HILL FALLS	PA	1903-	16-Jul-22		31x29	16(4)		2
A.1-140	BUCKLEY	MI	1906-	9-Jul-08	5-Apr-09	25	16(5)		2

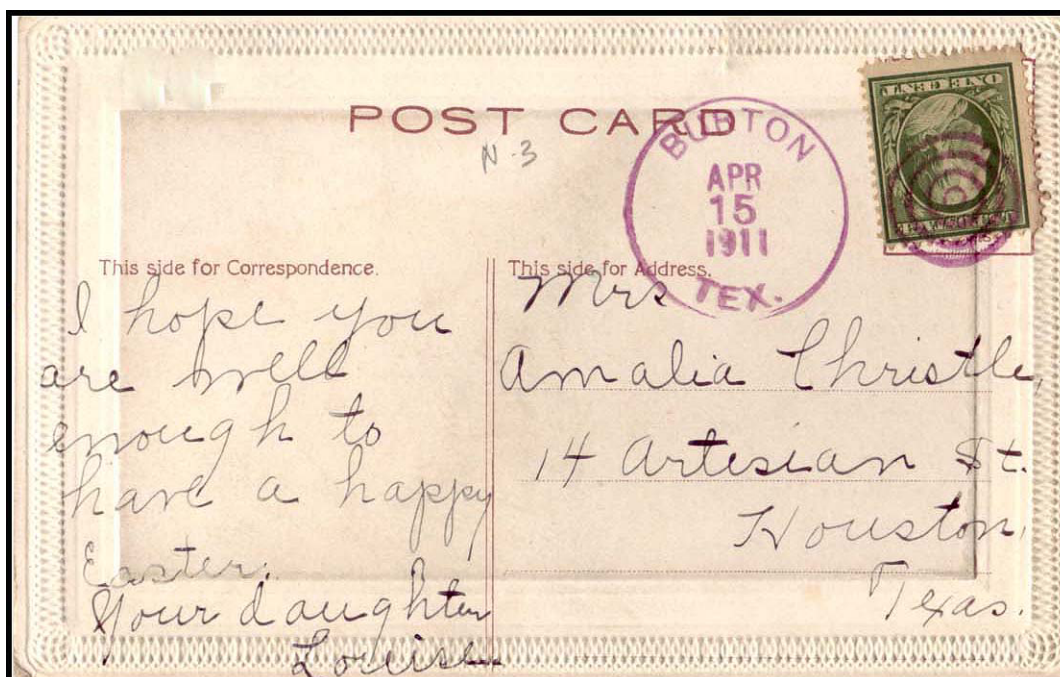




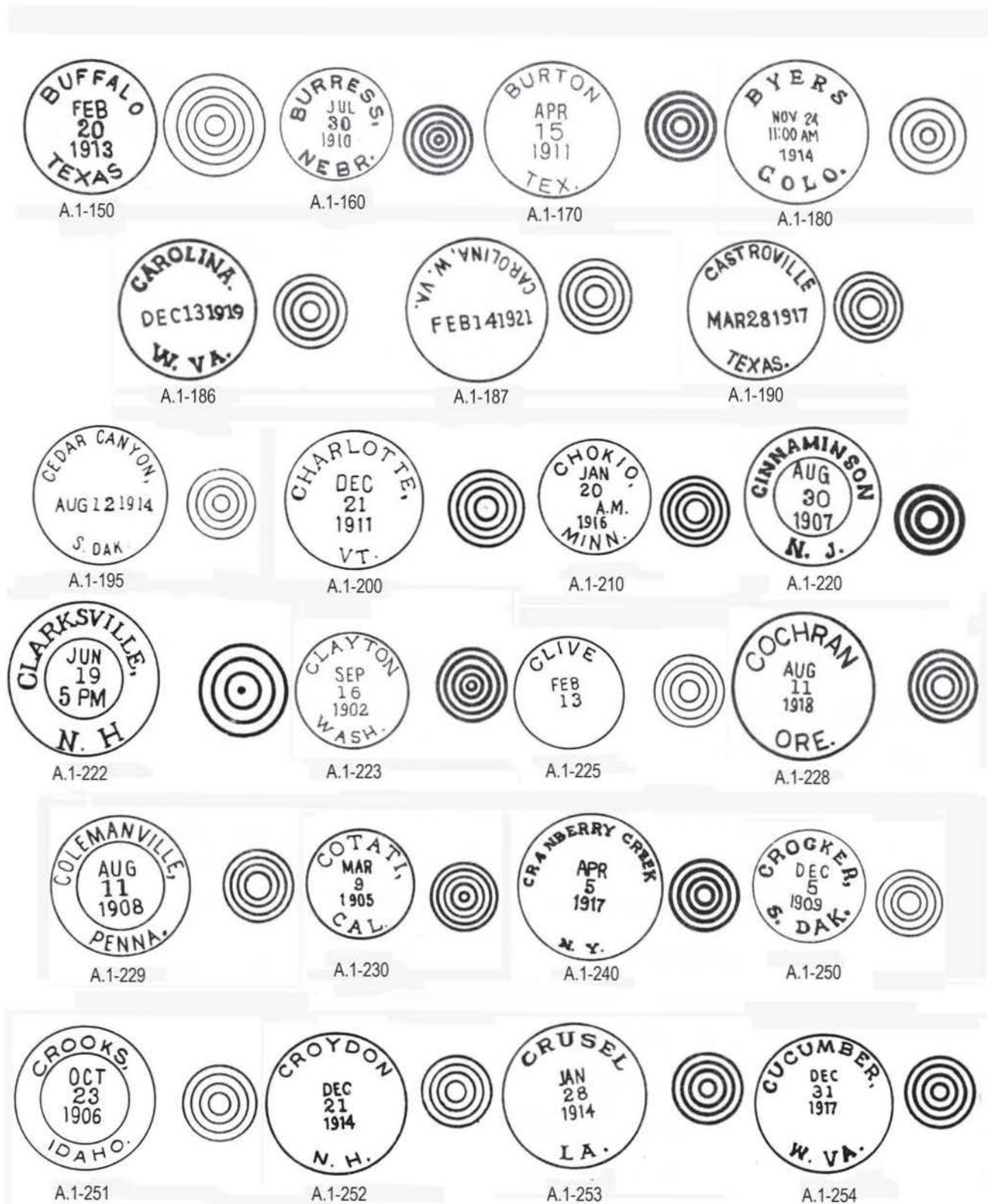


**Plate 1** (illustrations are approximately 80% of original size)

CODE	TOWN	STATE	PO DATES	EKU	LKU	PMK	KLR	N	S/I
A.1-150	BUFFALO	TX	1876-	20-Feb-13		29	23(4)	1	2
A.1-160	BURRESS	NE	1887/1942	17-Nov-09	30-Jul-10	24	15(5)		3
A.1-170	BURTON	TX	1870-	31-Dec-10	14-Dec-12	29	16(4)		2
A.1-180	BYERS	CO	1873-	?? Apr 13	23-Dec-15	31	17(4)		2
A.1-186	CAROLINA	WV	1917-	13-Dec-19		30	16(4)	1	2
A.1-187	CAROLINA	WV	1917-	14-Feb-21		31.5	16(4)	1	2
A.1-190	CASTROVILLE	TX	1847-	?? Sep 13	28-Mar-17	30	15(4)	2	2
A.1-195	CEDAR CANYON	SD	1914-1949	12-Aug-14		30	15(4)		3
A.1-200	CHARLOTTE	VT	1879-	21-Dec-11		30	17(4)		2
A.1-210	CHOKIO	MN	1891-	20-Jan-15		25	15(4)		2
A.1-220	CINNAMINSON	NJ	1836-1915	30-Aug-07		30	17(3)		3
A.1-222	CLARKSVILLE	NH	1854-1913	19 JUN 0?		32.5X19.5	21(4)		3
A.1-223	CLAYTON	WA	1894-	16-Sep-02		25	16(5)	1	2
A.1-225	CLIVE	IA	1882-1972	13-Feb-10		25	16(4)		2
A.1-228	COCHRANE	OR	1918-1948	11-Aug-18		31	16(4)	1	3
A.1-229	COLEMANVILLE	PA	1854-1914	11-Aug-08	27-Aug-13	30x19	16(4)	2	3
A.1-230	COTATI	CA	1894-	10-Oct-04	9-Mar-05	24	15(5)		2
A.1-240	CRANBERRY CREEK	NY	1819-1930	5-Apr-17		31	16(4)	1	2
A.1-250	CROCKER	SD	1907-1983	14-Jul-09	5-Dec-09	24	14(4)		2
A.1-251	CROOKS	ID	1906-1920	23-Oct-06		31x20	17(4)		4
A.1-252	CROYDEN	NH	1824-1965	21-Dec-14		30	16(4)		2
A.1-253	CRUSEL	LA	1911-1916	28-Jan-14		31	16(4)	1	4
A.1-254	CUCUMBER	WV	1903-	31-Dec-17		30	16(4)	1	2







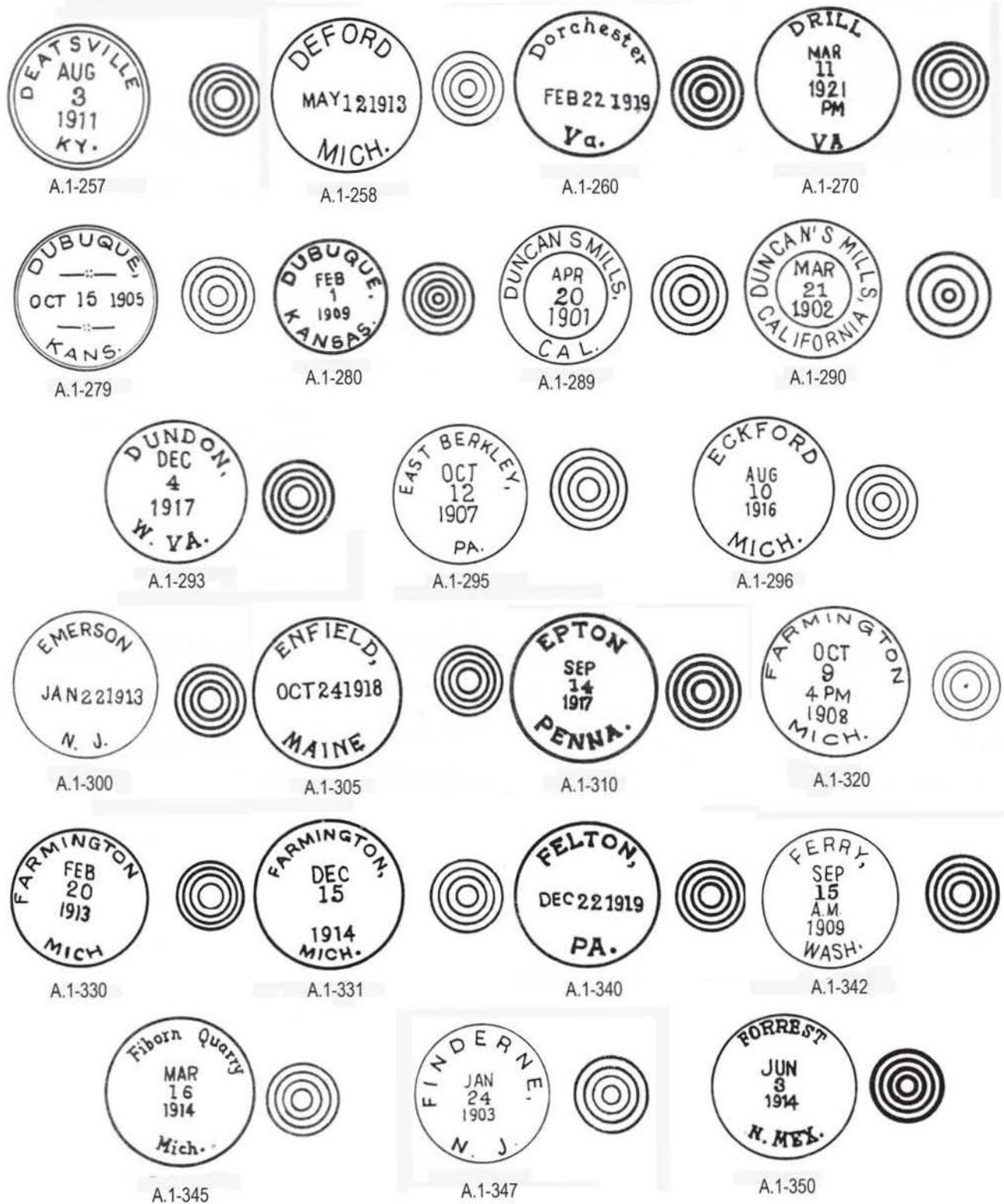
**Plate 2** (illustrations are approximately 80% of original size)

## Whole Number 238

CODE	TOWN	STATE	PO DATES	EKU	LKU	PMK	KLR	N	S/I
A.1-257	DEATSVILLE	KY	1870-	3-Aug-11		30x28	16(4)		2
A.1-258	DEFORD	MI	1884-	12-May-13		32	17(4)		2
A.1-260	DORCHESTER	VA	1895-1964	22-Feb-19		31	16(4)	1	2
A.1-270	DRILL	VA	1908-1963	11-Mar-21		31	16(4)	1	2
A.1-279	DUBUQUE	KS	1879-1909	15-Oct-05		30x28	16(4)		3
A.1-280	DUBUQUE	KS	1879-1909	1-Feb-09		24	15(5)		3
A.1-289	DUNCANS MILLS	CA	1862-	20-Apr-01		30.5x19.5	17(4)		3
A.1-290	DUNCAN'S MILLS	CA	1862-	21-Mar-02	11-Jul-29	29x18	18(4)		2
A.1-293	DUNDON	WV	1915-1960	4-Dec-17		30	16(4)	1	2
A.1-295	EAST BERKLEY	PA	1875-1908	12-Oct-07		29	17(4)		3
A.1-296	ECKFORD	MI	1884-1934	24-Nov-15	10-Aug-16	31	16(4)		2
A.1-300	EMERSON	NJ	1909-	22-Jan-13		31	16(4)		2
A.1-305	ENFIELD	ME	1835-	24-Oct-16		31	15(4)	1	2
A.1-310	EPTON	PA	1886-1932	14-Sep-17		21	16(4)	1	2
A.1-320	FARMINGTON	MI	1826-	9-Oct-08		30	15(4)		2
A.1-330	FARMINGTON	MI	1826-	27-Apr-10	20-Feb-13	29	16(4)		2
A.1-331	FARMINGTON	MI	1826-	15-Dec-14		32	16(4)	1	2
A.1-340	FELTON	PA	1874-	22-Dec-19		30	15(4)		2
A.1-342	FERRY	WA	1904-1944	15-Sep-09		30	16(4)		3
A.1-345	FIBORN QUARRY	MI	1907-1936	16-Mar-14		31	16(4)	1	2
A.1-347	FINDERNE	NJ	1872-1927	24-Jan-03	15-Nov-07	29	16(4)		3
A.1-350	FORREST	NM	1908/1967	3-Jun-14		30	15(4)		3







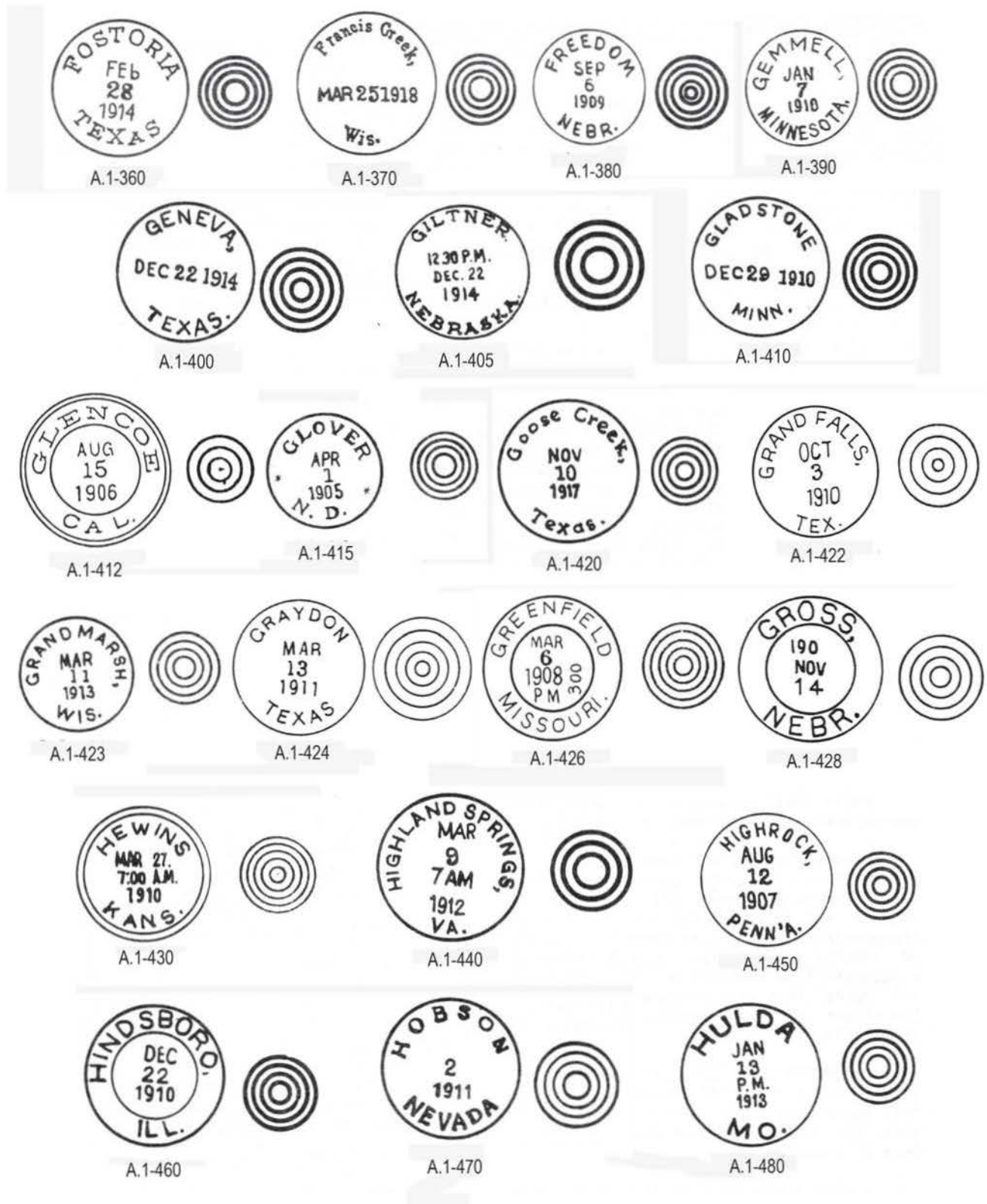
**Plate 3** (illustrations are approximately 80% of original size)

## Whole Number 238

CODE	TOWN	STATE	PO DATES	EKU	LKU	PMK	KLR	N	S/I
A.1-360	FOSTERIA	TX	1906-1959	28-Feb-14		30	16(4)	1	2
A.1-370	FRANCIS CREEK	WI	1917-	25-Mar-18		30	15(4)		2
A.1-380	FREEDOM	NE	1886/1946	6-Sep-09	31-Oct-10	24	15(4)		2
A.1-390	GEMMELL	MN	1905-1974	1-Jan-10	7-Jan-10	24	15(4)		2
A.1-400	GENEVA	TX	1884-	22-Dec-14		30	14(4)		2
A.1-410	GLADSTONE	MN	1888/1923	29-Dec-10	15-Sep-11	30	16(4)		2
A.1-411	GILTNER	NE	1895-	21-Dec-14	22-Dec-14	31	15(4)		2
A.1-412	GLENCOE	CA	1878-1916	12-Feb-06	21-Jan-07	33x30½x20½	16(4)		4
A.1-415	GLOVER	ND	1887-1943	1-Apr-05		24	15(4)		3
A.1-420	GOOSE CREEK	TX	1913-1948	10-Oct-17		30	15(4)		2
A.1-422	GRAND FALLS	TX	1897-	3-Oct-10		28.5	18(4)		2
A.1-423	GRAND MARSH	WI	1850/	11-Mar-13		24	16(4)	1	2
A.1-424	GRAYDON	TX	1895-1919	13-Mar-11		29	22(5)		3
A.1-424A	GREENFIELD	MO	1850-	19-Dec-07	6-Mar-08	31.5x19.5	17(5)	2	2
A.1-425	GROSS	NE	1895-1959	14 NOV 07	27-Nov-08	31x20	18(4)	2	2
A.1-430	HEWINS	KS	1887-	27-Mar-10	20-May-10	30x27	17(5)		2
A.1-440	HIGHLAND SPRINGS	VA	1891/1975	9-Mar-12		32	18(3)	1	2
A.1-450	HIGHROCK	PA	1904-1957	12-Aug-07	13-Feb-09	30	15(4)		2
A.1-460	HINDSBORO	IL	1873-	22-Dec-10	21-Apr-11	30	16(4)		2
A.1-470	HOBSON	NV	1902/1936	11-Dec-10	24-Dec-11	30	19(4)		5
A.1-480	HULDA	MO	1904-1916	13-Jan-13		31	15(4)		3



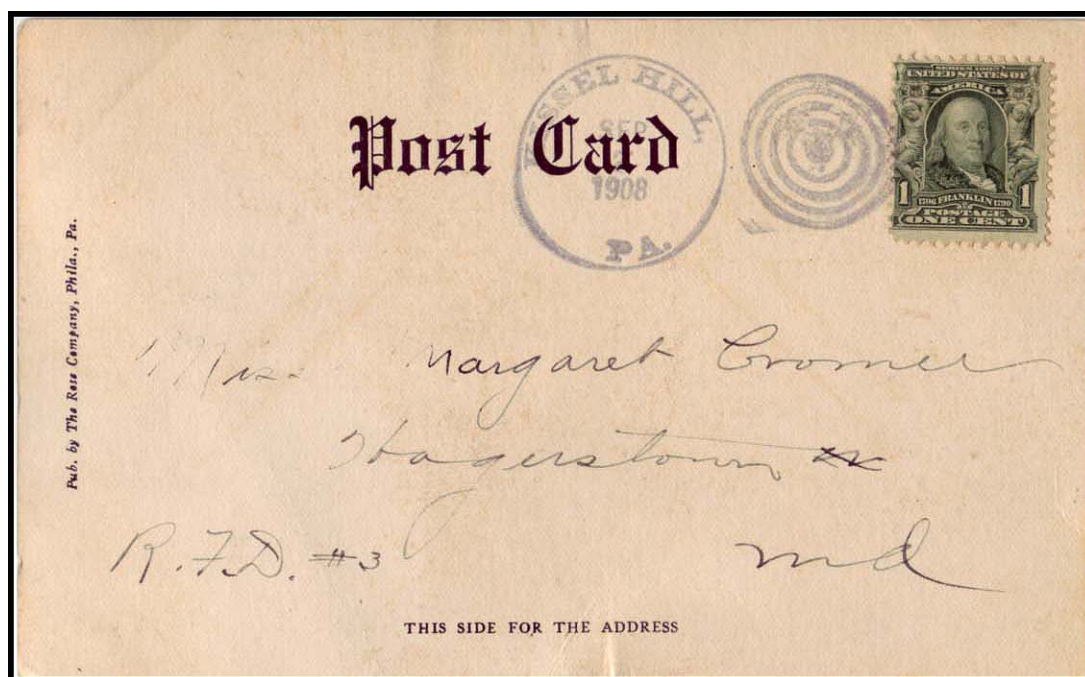




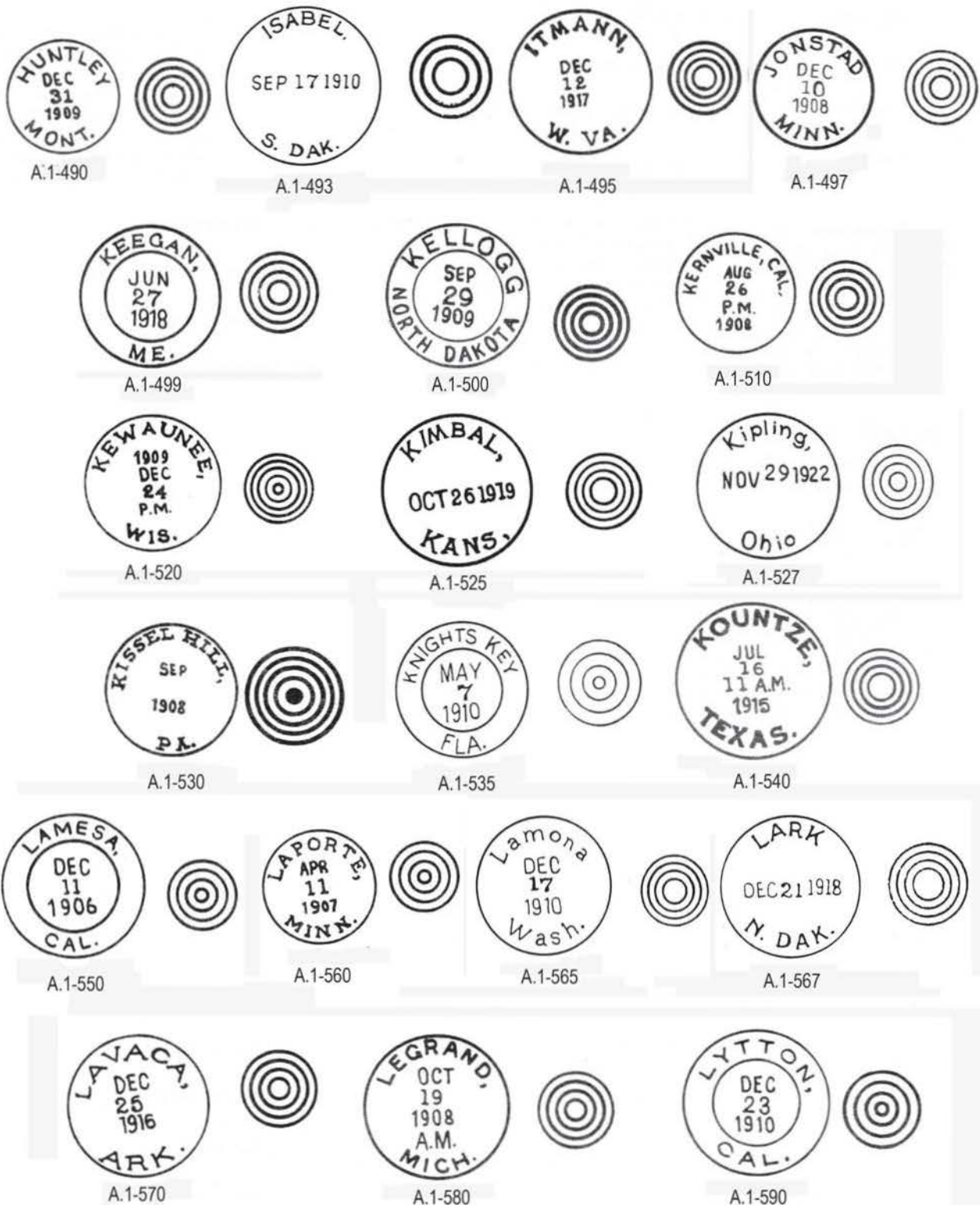
**Plate 4** (illustrations are approximately 80% of original size)

## Whole Number 238

CODE	TOWN	STATE	PO DATES	EKU	LKU	PMK	KLR	N	S/I
A.1-490	HUNTLEY	MT	1877/-	31-Dec-09		24	15(4)		2
A.1-493	ISABEL	SD	1910-	17-Sep-10		34	18(3)		3
A.1-495	ITMANN	WV	1917-	12-Dec-17		31	16(4)		2
A.1-497	JONSTAD	MN	1902-1914	10-Dec-08		25	16(4)		3
A.1-499	KEEGAN	ME	1907	27-Jun-18		31x19.5	16(4)	1	2
A.1-500	KELLOGG	ND	1898-1910	20 OCT 07	29-Sep-09	30x19	16(4)		3
A.1-510	KERNVILLE	CA	1868-	26-Aug-08		25	16(4)		2
A.1-520	KEWAUNEE	WI	1852-	24-Dec-09		28	16(4)		2
A.1-525	KIMBAL	KS	1888-1950	26-Oct-19		31	16(4)	1	2
A.1-527	KIPLING	OH	1899-	29-Oct-22		31	16(4)		2
A.1-530	KISSEL HILL	PA	1888-1918	3-Sep-08		28	15(5)		3
A.1-535	KNIGHTS KEY	FL	1908-1912	7-May-09		29x19	18(4)		4
A.1-540	KOUNTZE	TX	1882-	16-Jul-15		32	16(4)	1	2
A.1-550	LAMESA	CA	1891-	11-Dec-06	20-Dec-07	30x15	15(4)		2
A.1-560	LA PORTE	MN	1901-	11-Apr-07		24	15(4)		2
A.1-565	LAMONA	WA	1895-1985	17-Dec-10		29	16(4)		3
A.1-567	LARK	ND	1907-1985	21-Dec-18		30	16(4)		2
A.1-570	LAVACA	AR	1881-	25-Dec-16		29	16(4)	1	2
A.1-580	LEGRAND	MI	1901-1920	19-Oct-08		30	17(4)		3
A.1-590	LYTTON	CA	1895-1954	24-Mar-10	22-Aug-12	31x14	16(4)		2



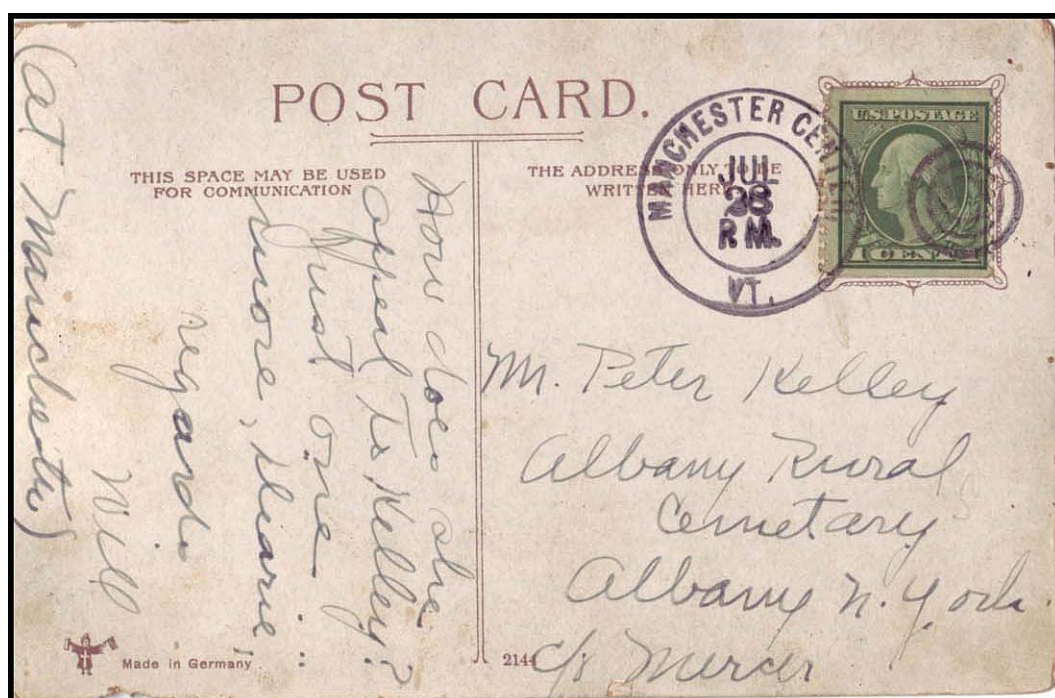




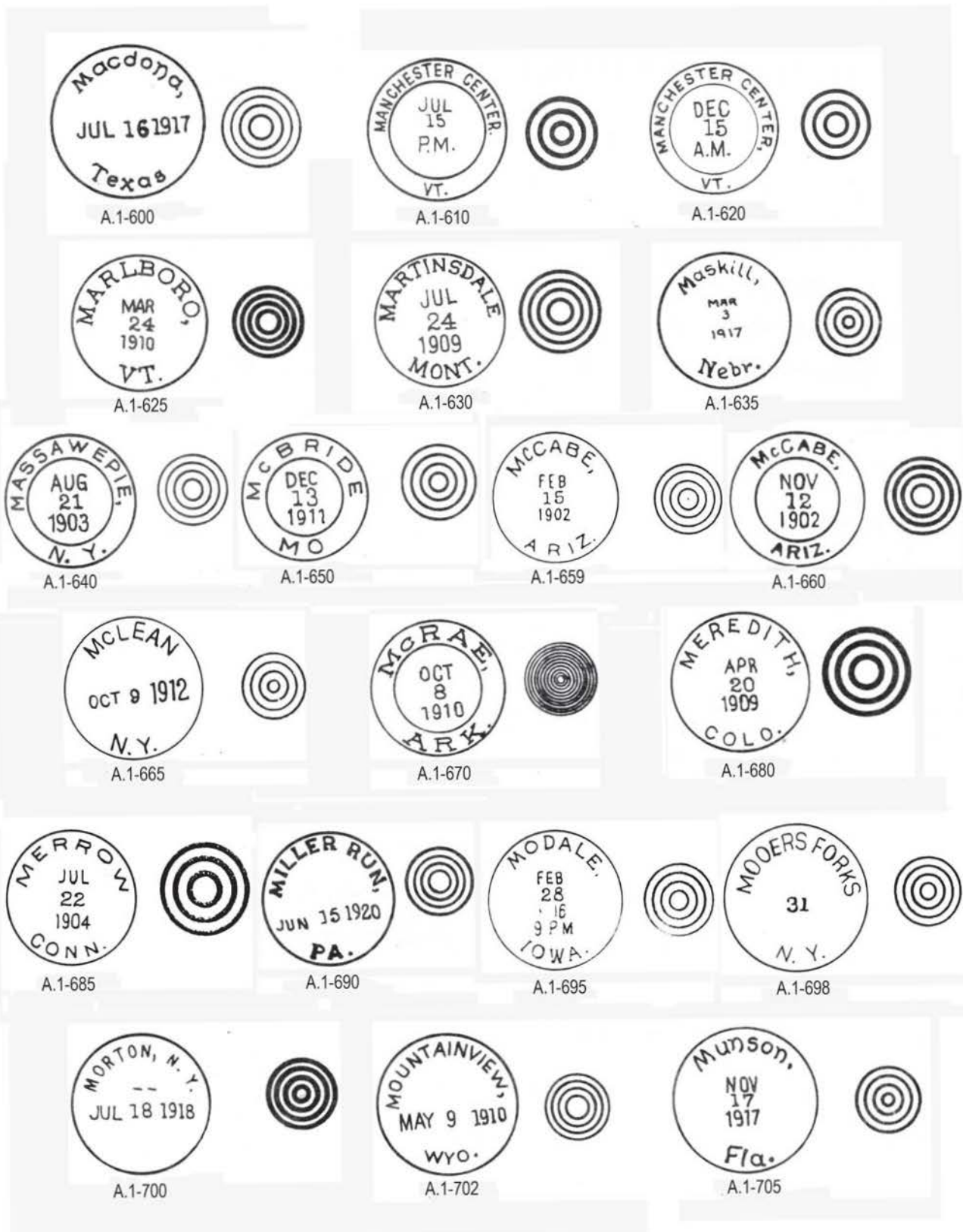
**Plate 5** (illustrations are approximately 80% of original size)

## Whole Number 238

CODE	TOWN	STATE	PO DATES	EKU	LKU	PMK	KLR	N	S/I
A.1-600	MACDONA	TX	1886-	16-Jul-17	1-Jun-22	30	15(4)	1	2
A.1-610	MANCHESTER CENTER	VT	1893-	15-Jul-24	17-May-28	31x16	15(3)	3	2
A.1-620	MANCHESTER CENTER	VT	1893-	18-Aug-28	4-Aug-34	30x15	15(3)	3	2
A.1-625	MARLBORO	VT	1812/	24-May-10		30	16(4)	1	2
A.1-630	MARTINSDALE	MT	1878-	24-Jul-09		30	17(4)		2
A.1-635	MASKELL	NE	1908-	1917		30	16(4)	1	2
A.1-640	MASSAWEPIE	NY	1895/1913	21-Aug-03		31x20	17(4)		2
A.1-650	McBRIDE	MO	1905-1961	13-Dec-11		29x13.5	16(4)	1	2
A.1-659	MCCABE	AZ	1897-	20-Dec-01	10-Apr-02	28.5	16(5)		7
A.1-660	McCABE	AZ	1897-	16-Apr-02	12-Nov-02	30x14	17(4)		7
A.1-665	McLEAN	NY	1826-	9-Oct-12		31	16(4)		3
A.1-670	McRAE	AR	1890-	8-Oct-10		30x19	17(11)		2
A.1-680	MEREDITH	CO	1893-	20-Apr-09		31	20(3)		2
A.1-685	MERROW	CT	1883-1980	2-May-04	22-Jul-04	30	20(3)		2
A.1-690	MILLER RUN	PA	1916-1934	15-Jun-20		31	16(4)	1	2
A.1-695	MODALE	IA	1858-	28-Feb-16		31	16(4)		2
A.1-698	MOOERS FORKS	NY	1868-	31-Aug-12		32	16(4)		2
A.1-700	MORTON	NY	1894-	18-Jul-18		31	17(4)	1	2
A.1-702	MOUNTAINVIEW	WY	1898-	9-May-10		31	16(4)	1	2
A.1-705	MUNSON	FL	1913-1954	17-Nov-17		33	16(4)	1	3



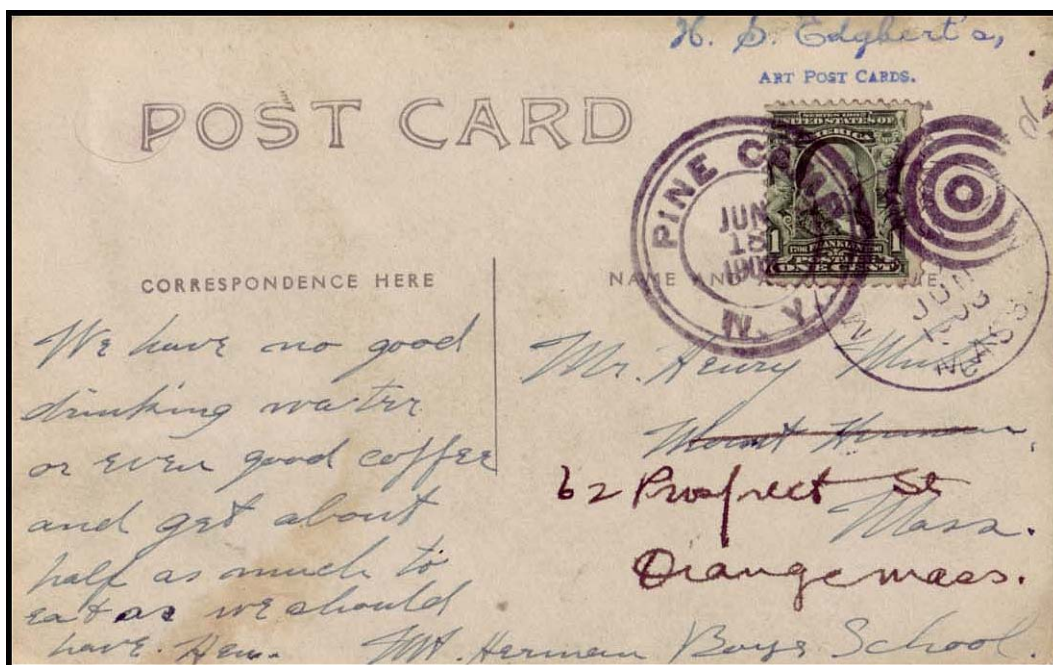




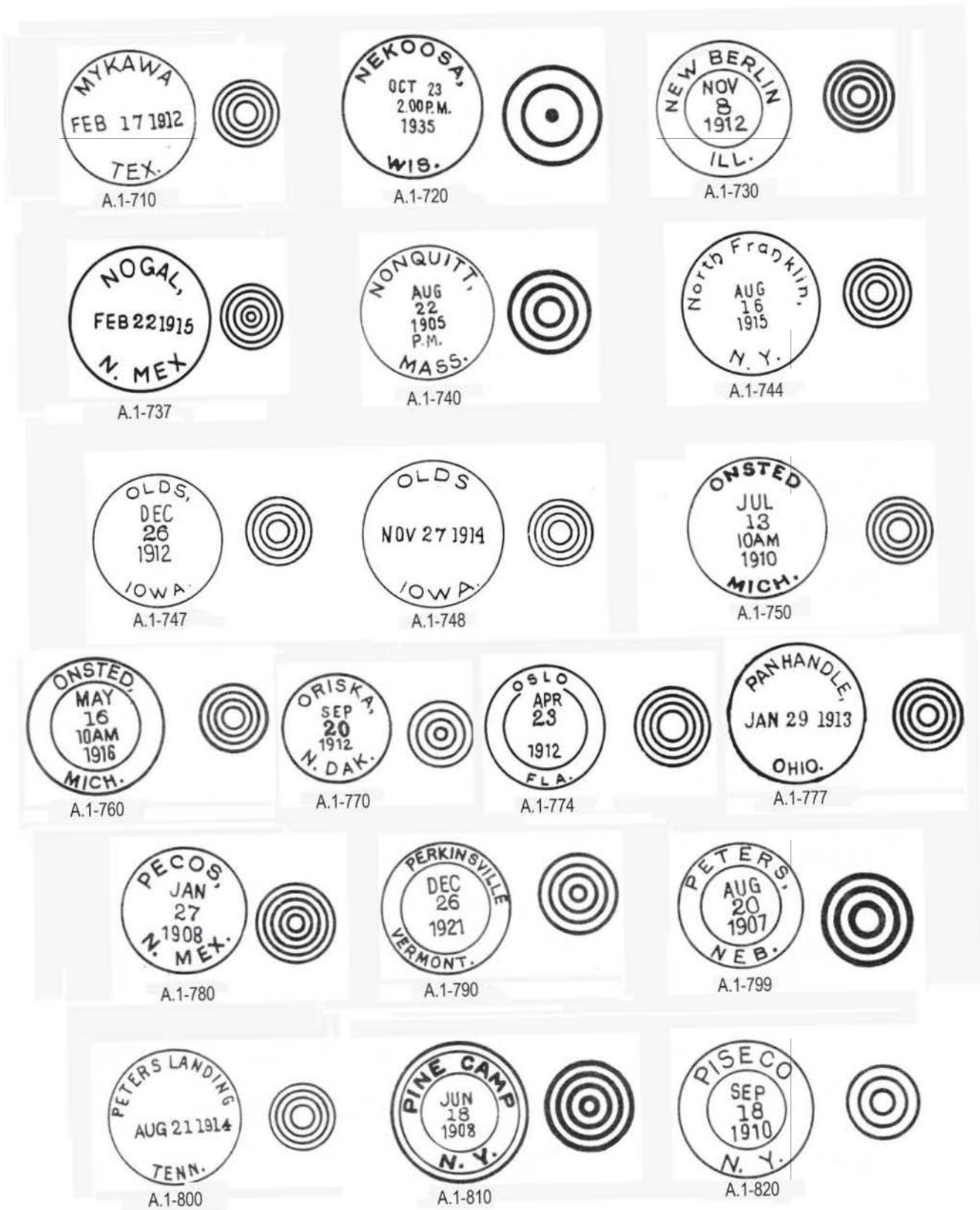
**Plate 6** (illustrations are approximately 80% of original size)

## Whole Number 238

CODE	TOWN	STATE	PO DATES	EKU	LKU	PMK	KLR	N	S/I
A.1-710	MYKAWA	TX	1907-	17-Feb-12		30.5	16(4)	1	2
A.1-720	NEKOOSA	WI	1893-	5-Mar-31	3-Nov-41	31	17(3)		2
A.1-730	NEW BERLIN	IL	1864-	8-Nov-12		30x27x18	17(4)		2
A.1-737	NOGAL	NM	1882-	8-Oct-12	22-Feb-15	31	16(4)	2	2
A.1-740	NONQUITT	MA	1884-1964	22-Aug-05		29	19(3)		2
A.1-744	NORTH FRANKLIN	NY	1837/1917	16-Aug-15		31	15(4)		2
A.1-747	OLDS	IA	1884-	24-Dec-12	26-Dec-12	29	16(4)		2
A.1-748	OLDS	IA	1884-	27-Nov-14		32	16(4)		2
A.1-750	ONSTED	MI	1884-	9-Mar-10	13-Jul-10	31.5	16(4)	1	2
A.1-760	ONSTED	MI	1884-	16-May-16	20-Apr-17	31x26	15(40)	1	2
A.1-770	ORISKA	ND	1881-	20-Sep-13		24.5	16(4)		2
A.1-774	OSLO	FL	1898-1919	23-Apr-12		27x19	17(4)		3
A.1-777	PANHANDLE	OH	1911-1923	29-Jan-13		30.5	16(4)		3
A.1-780	PECOS	NM	1883/	8-Aug-06	15-Aug-08	28	19(50)		2
A.1-790	PERKINSVILLE	VT	1828-	26-Dec-21		30x21	17(4)		2
A.1-799	PETERS	NE	1902-1934	20-Aug-07		28x18	20(3)		3
A.1-800	PETERS LANDING	TN	1869/1956	21-Aug-14		30	16(4)	1	2
A.1-810	PINE CAMP	NY	1908-1914	18-Jun-08	29-Aug-10	31x27x13	15(4)		2
A.1-820	PISECO	NY	1881-	18-Feb-10	1-Sep-10	30.5x18.5	15(3)		2



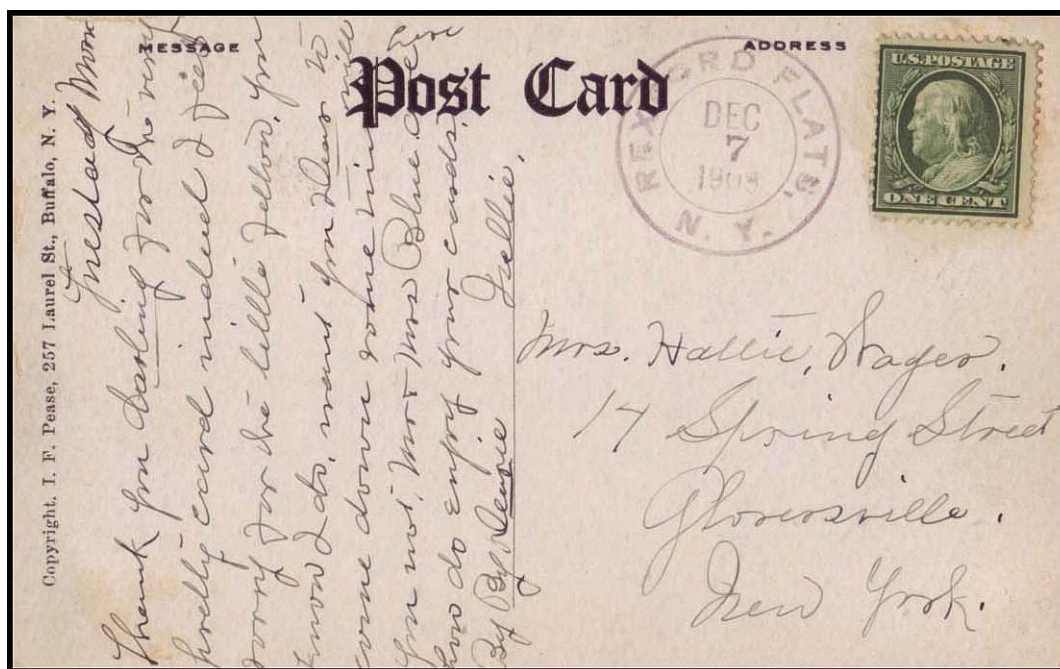




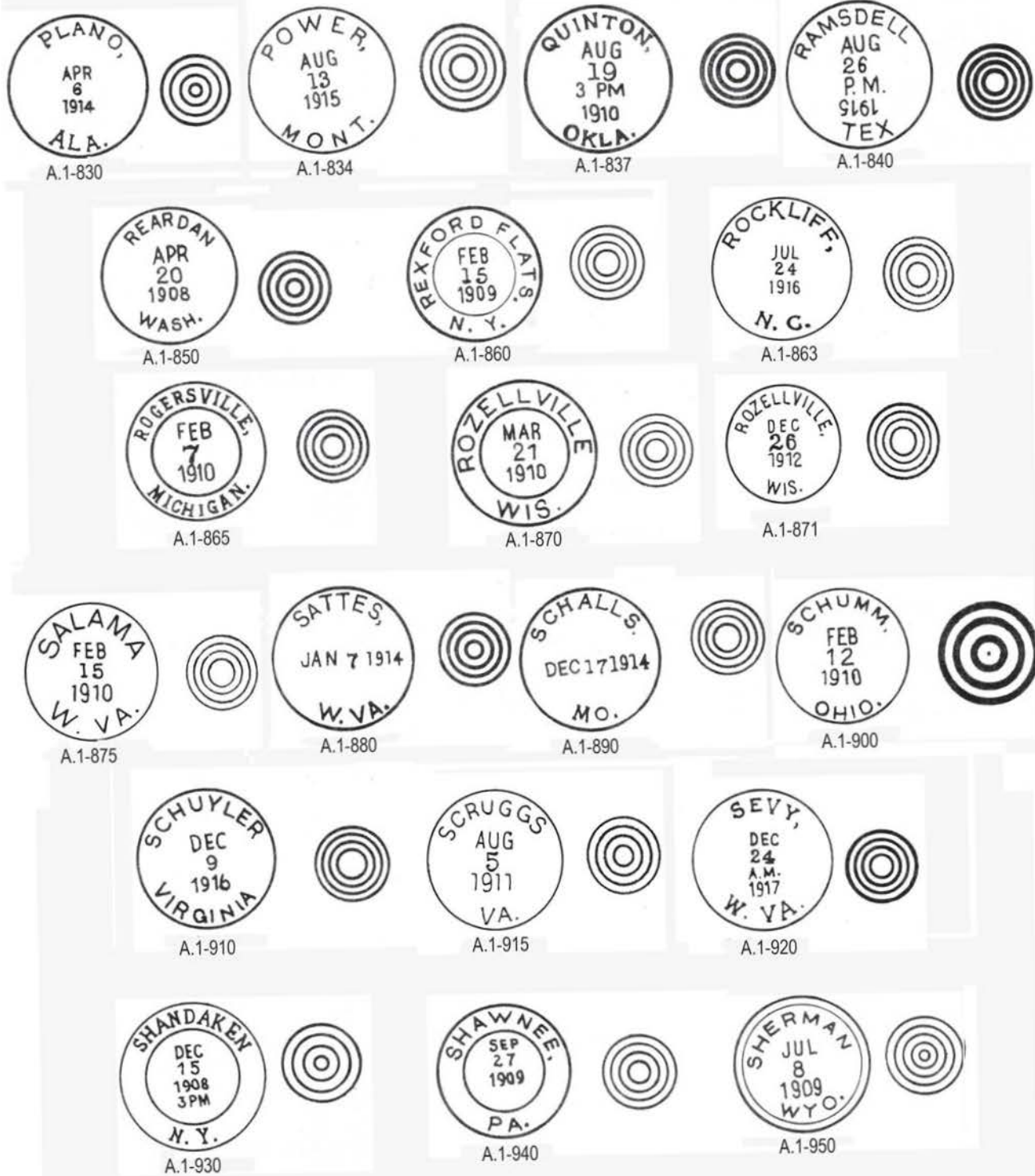
**Plate 7** (illustrations are approximately 80% of original size)

## Whole Number 238

CODE	TOWN	STATE	PO DATES	EKU	LKU	PMK	KLR	N	S/I
A.1-830	PLANO	AL	1877-1914	6-Apr-14		31	16(4)	1	4
A.1-834	POWER	MT	1910-	13-Aug-15		31	19(4)	1	2
A.1-837	QUINTON	OK	1902-	19-Aug-10		31	16(4)	1	2
A.1-840	RAMSDELL	TX	1903-1926	26-Aug-15		31	16(4)	1	3
A.1-850	REARDAN	WA	1890-	20-Apr-08	31-Dec-08	29	15(4)		2
A.1-860	REXFORD FLATS	NY	1824-1911	7-Feb-08	31-Mar-11	29x13	16(40)		2
A.1-863	ROCKLIFF	NC	1906-1919	24-Jul-16		30	16(4)		3
A.1-865	ROGERSVILLE	MI	1873/1919	7-Feb-10	18-Dec-10	30x19	16(4)	1	3
A.1-870	ROZELLVILLE	WI	1877-1929	21-Mar-10	4-Jan-12	33x21	16(4)	1	2
A.1-871	ROZELLVILLE	WI	1877-1929	26-Dec-12		25	16(4)		3
A.1-875	SALAMA	WV	1887-1910	15-Feb-10		29	16(4)		3
A.1-880	SATTES	WV	1883-1924	7-Jan-14		30	16(4)	1	2
A.1-890	SCHALLS	MO	1877-1915	17-Dec-14		30	16(4)	1	2
A.1-900	SCHUMM	OH	1881-1953	12-Feb-10		28	17(4)		2
A.1-910	SCHUYLER	VA	1887-	9-Dec-16		30	17(4)	1	2
A.1-915	SCRUGGS	VA	1880-1941	5-Aug-11		30	16(4)		2
A.1-920	SEVY	WV	1914-1918	24-Dec-17		31	16(4)	1	4
A.1-930	SHANDAKEN	NY	1805-	15-Dec-08	4-Jan-09	30x15	15(4)		2
A.1-940	SHAWNEE	PA	1843-1909	5-Aug-09	27-Sep-09	29x13.5	17(4)		3
A.1-950	SHERMAN	WY	1868-1919	11-Aug-07	31-Oct-10	29x26	16(5)		3



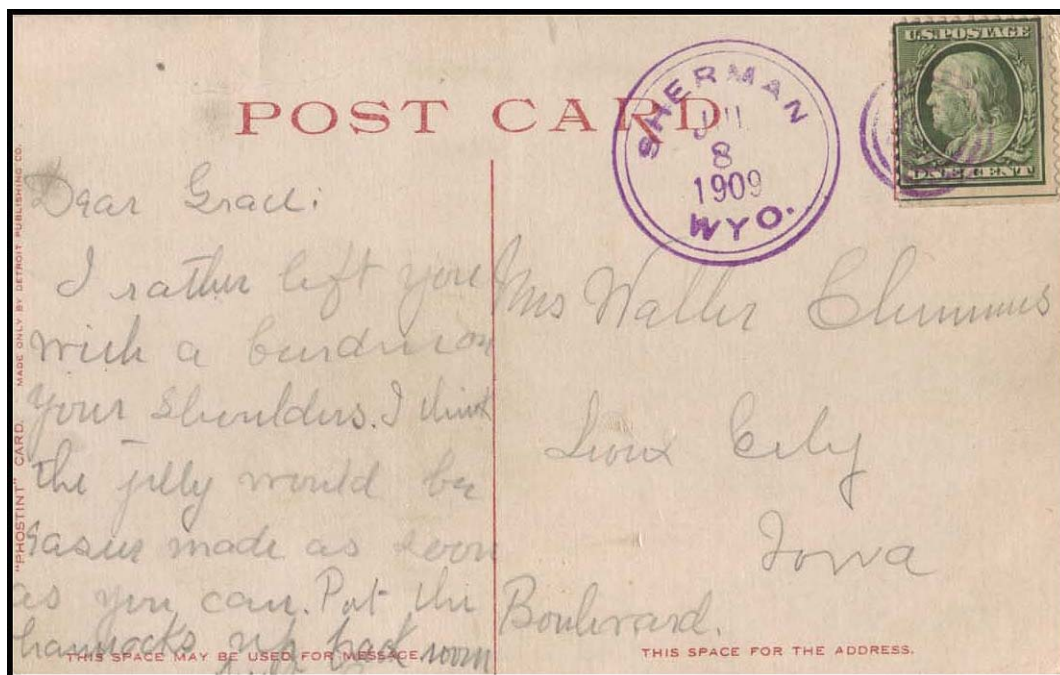




**Plate 8** (illustrations are approximately 80% of original size)

## Whole Number 238

CODE	TOWN	STATE	PO DATES	EKU	LKU	PMK	KLR	N	S/I
A.1-960	SILESIA	MT	1900-1975	3-May-13		30	15(4)		2
A.1-970	SILESIA	MT	1900-1975	8-May-13		30	15(4)		2
A.1-975	SLACK	WY	1891-1913	1-Apr-07	12-Dec-07	31x21x19	16(4)		4
A.1-980	SMITHFIELD	IL	1868-	16-Sep-09	14-Jan-13	30	17(4)		2
A.1-984	SODUS POINT	NY	1826-	2-Jan-11		32	17(4)		2
A.1-987	SOUTH BLOOMINGVILLE	OH	1857-	30-Aug-17		30	15(4)		2
A.1-990	SOUTH CASCO	ME	1856-	13-Aug-08	19-Jul-09	32x17	16(4)		2
A.1-995	SPORTING HILL	PA	1851-1914	19 ??? 14		29	16(4)	3	3
A.1-1000	SPRAGUE	WI	1907-1945	23-Jun-13		31	16(4)	1	2
A.1-1010	SPRAKERS	NY	1883-	2-Jan-14	3-Jun-14	30	15(4)	2	2
A.1-1017	STANDISH	NY	1886-1958	2? Dec 1?		30	16(4)	2	3
A.1-1020	STANLEY	ND	1899-	22-Nov-09	27-Jan-10	29x26	17(5)		2
A.1-1030	STEELE	MD	1896-	28-Jan-04		25	15(4)	1	2
A.1-1035	STISSING	NY	1870-1932	10-Oct-06		30	17(4)		2
A.1-1040	ST. MARY	MT	1898/1915	5-Aug-13		33	16(5)		6
A.1-1050	TELLER	AK	1900-	1-Jun-07	6-Aug-08	30	16(4)		7
A.1-1052	TENNANT	IA	1903-	29-Sep-17		30	16(4)	1	2
A.1-1055	TERREBONNE	MN	1881-1915	14-Feb-14		32	16(4)		3
A.1-1056	THORNBERG	IA	1893-	11-Feb-15		31	16(4)	1	2
A.1-1058	TIPTONVILLE	TN	1865-	25-May-10	6-Aug-10	29.5x19	17(4)		3







A.1-960



A.1-970



A.1-975



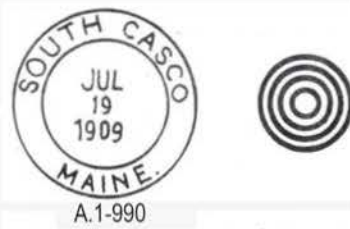
A.1-980



A.1-984



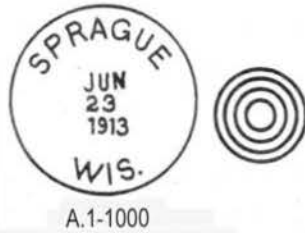
A.1-987



A.1-990



A.1-995



A.1-1000



A.1-1010



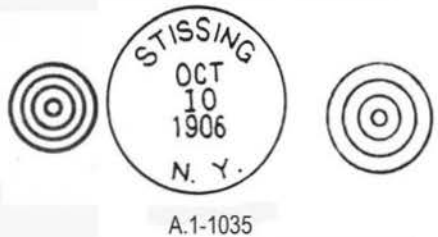
A.1-1017



A.11020



A.1-1030



A.1-1035



A.1-1040



A.1-1050



A.1-1052



A.1-1055



A.1-1056



A.1-1058

**Plate 9** (illustrations are approximately 80% of original size)

## Whole Number 238

CODE	TOWN	STATE	PO DATES	EKU	LKU	PMK	KLR	N	S/I
A.1-1060	TOWNLEY	MO	1905-1919	28-Jun-07		29x17	15(4)		3
A.1-1070	TOWNSEND	WI	1903-	26-Jul-17		32	16(4)	1	2
A.1-1080	TRAIL	MN	1910-	22-Apr-16	6-Jun-16	30	15(4)	2	2
A.1-1090	TURKEY CREEK	FL	1892-1943	6-Apr-12		30x13	17(4)		2
A.1-1100	TURNPIKE	PA	1877-1926	8-Jan-16		30	15(4)		2
A.1-1105	UPLAND	NE	1887-	19-Jan-09		31x28	19(3)		2
A.1-1108	VERDI	NV	1869-	19-May-00		31	17(3)		4
A.1-1110	VERO	FL	1891-1925	2-Apr-17		32x20	17(4)		2
A.1-1120	VINEYARD	NY	1898-1931	5-Jul-07		30	17(4)		2
A.1-1130	VOSBURG	PA	1889-1931	5-Apr-12		30	16(4)		2
A.1-1135	WADDAMS GROVE	IL	1876-196?	14-Oct-07		28	17(2)		2
A.1-1140	WANAKENA	NY	1902-	21-Apr-11	3-Aug-11	30x19	16(4)		2
A.1-1141	WANAKENA	NY	1902-	26-Oct-08	1-Dec-10	31.5x21	18(4)		2
A.1-1150	WARDSBORO	VT	1892-	2-Aug-37	18-Sep-44	30	17(4)	1	2
A.1-1157	WASHINGTON GROVE	MD	1889-	26-Dec-14	13-Apr-16	31	16(4)		2
A.1-1160	WASHINGTONVILLE	PA	1850-	24-Nov-16	6-Mar-18	30	16(4)	1	2
A.1-1170	WATSON	CO	1889-1918	24-Jun-14	3	2x19	20(3)		5
A.1-1180	WELLINGTON	TX	1894-1929	21-Jan-14	15-Jun-14	32	17(5)	1	3





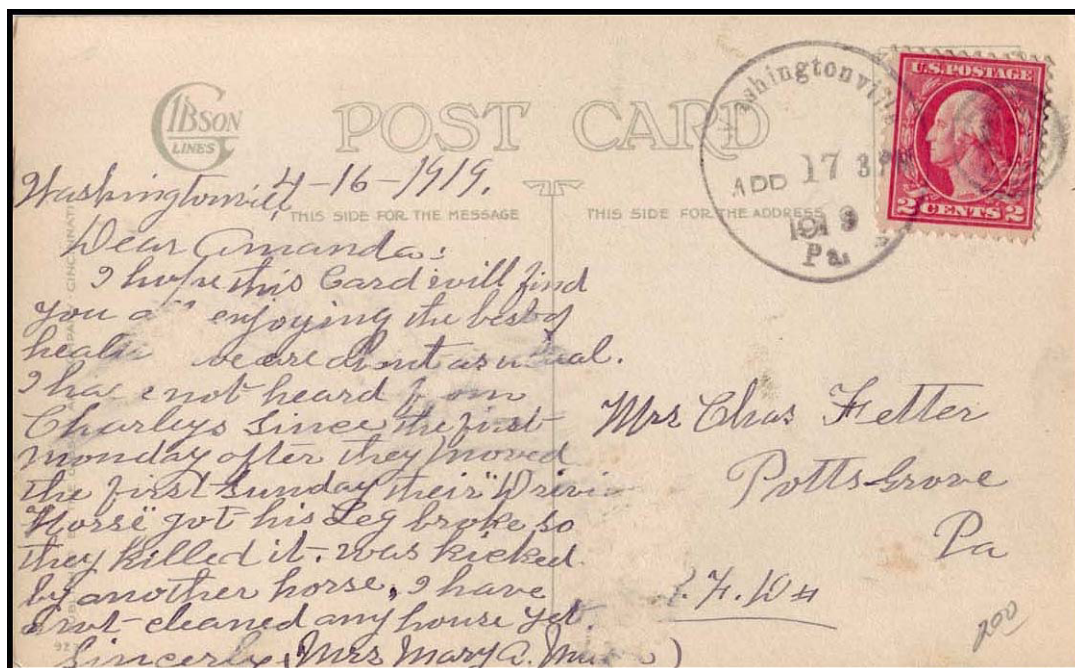


Plate 10 (illustrations are approximately 80% of original size)

## Whole Number 238

CODE	TOWN	STATE	PO DATES	EKU	LKU	PMK	KLR	N	S/I
A.1-1189	WEST BOWDOIN	ME	1856-	19-Sep-06		29	16(4)		2
A.1-1190	WEST BOWDOIN	ME	1856-	29-Mar-11	28-Mar-13	31	18(4)		2
A.1-1200	WEST LIBERTY	IL	1878	31-Jul-15		31	16(4)	1	2
A.1-1204	WEST LINE	PA	1893-	30-Jul-07		31	18(4)		2
A.1-1210	WEST POINT	IL	1858	30-Sep-07	1-Oct-09	28	16(4)		2
A.1-1215	WHEELERVILLE	PA	1883-1952	19-May-15		31	16(4)		2
A.1-1220	WHEELWRIGHT	MA	1894-	13-Aug-06	3	1	17(4)	1	2
A.1-1230	WILBUR	WV	1889-	27-Oct-18	19-Jan-10	29x18.5	16(4)		2
A.1-1240	WIMMERS	PA	1890-1919	1-Oct-18		30	15(4)		3
A.1-1250	WORLAND	WY	1902-	29-Jul-07		30	16(4)		2
A.1-1260	YORKLYN	DE	1873-	16-Jun-15		31.5	16(4)	1	2
A.1-1270	ZENDA	WI	1902-	25-Feb-15		31	16(4)	1	2

NOTES: (1) Earliest listed is on piece. (2) Latest listed is on piece. (3) No year date in CDS; confirmed by date in message.





## The Postmasters General of the United States

### XLIII. George von L. Meyer, 1907-1909

by Daniel Y. Meschter

George von Lengeerke Meyer's career in government was an exercise in inconsistency<sup>1</sup>. A Boston patrician his first political success was election to the Boston Common Council in 1889 where he would have rubbed elbows with commoners, sons of Irish immigrants of plebian origins. Beginning with McKinley's appointment as ambassador to Italy in 1900, he was well regarded as a diplomat there and later as an informal ambassador to Wilhelm II of Germany and Ambassador to Russia. Lastly, he was popular as Secretary of the Navy under Taft from 1909 to 1913, including the advent of World War I.

On the other hand, respecting his tenure as Postmaster General, a Boston columnist wrote at the time of his death in 1918: "Many non-partisan observers concluded that Mr. Meyer was miscast as Postmaster General because the office is really a business, and not once into which a man with little previous knowledge of postal affairs can fall without mature training<sup>2</sup>."

"Nevertheless," the columnist went on, "while the burden of the work fell on the shoulders of the First Assistant Postmaster General, Frank H. Hitchcock," who came to the Post Office Department from Commerce with George Cortelyou in 1905 and succeeded Meyer as Postmaster General in 1909, "many reforms were brought about while Mr., Meyer was administering the Post Office Department<sup>3</sup>."

What Meyer really lacked, it turned out, was both legal and legislative experience since the two most important of his proposed reforms required Congressional approval.

George von Lengerke Meyer was born in Boston in June 1858 to a wealthy East Indian trader dealing principally in natural rubber. The elder Meyer almost certainly was of German extraction from his Germanic surname, his choice of an aristocratic-sounding German family name (von Lengerke) for his son's middle name, and that son's report with a German monarch while he later was ambassador to Italy. It is likely both spoke German fluently.

While some kind of a connection no doubt existed between the Meyer/Meier and the Lengerke/Lengerken/etc. families, no direct evidence of a common origin or genealogical relationship has been discovered<sup>4</sup>.

Wayne A. Wiegand's description of his upbringing gives us an insight into his character: "He was raised in a patrician society that was becoming disaffected from national affairs because of the unfamiliar political alignments created by industrialization, immigration, and problems of urbanization<sup>5</sup>."

He was educated in Nobles School, which is still extant, a private institution then located in or near Boston for the preparation of boys for entry into Harvard College from which he graduated in 1879.

He was employed by mercantile houses during his first several years after leaving college after which his social prestige opened opportunities for him to enter large companies and banks and rapid advancement to senior officer positions in addition, of course, in Linder and Meyer, a company his father established to trade in the West Indies

He became interested in politics during this time. His social prestige again served him well. He was elected twice to the

Boston Common Council and to the Massachusetts House of Representatives from 1892 to 1897, serving as Speaker during his last four years. He gained national recognition as a member of the Republican National Committee from Massachusetts from 1892 to 1896. He then returned to his State Street business at the same time he became an effective fundraiser for presidential candidates that brought him to the attention of the 1900 Republican candidate, William McKinley.

Wealthy, socially poised, well-educated and knowledgeable about world affairs, stylish in appearance and as comfortable with the middle as the upper classes, his selection as an ambassador to a European nation seemed almost obvious. McKinley saw it that way when he appointed Meyer ambassador to Italy in 1900 and Roosevelt followed suit when he took office a year later.

In Rome, perhaps Europe's most popular meeting place next to Paris at the moment, Meyer spread his wings, so to speak, and easily mingled with the European aristocracy that still held the reins of power to a consid-



George von L. Meyer

erable extent throughout Europe. Among others he developed a close relationship with the bombastic Wilhelm II of Germany who the pragmatic Roosevelt recognized as a threat to world peace. He encouraged the liaison and used Meyer as a surreptitious courier for the exchange of messages instead of through the regular ambassador in Berlin.

At the time Roosevelt took office following his election to the presidency in his own right in 1904, he reappointed Meyer ambassador to Russia on March 5, 1905. It was usual for a newly inaugurated president to reassign his appointees both at home and overseas; but in Meyer's case this appointment was a sensitive one.

Roosevelt was apprehensive of Russian ambitions to open the Pacific to Russian hegemony beginning with the opening of the port at Vladivostok and completion of the Trans-Siberian Railway. Fulfillment of its longer range objective, however, required access to a warm water port; Vladivostok was open to shipping only during the summer months. Russia focused its diplomacy on acquiring Port Arthur across the Korea Bay west from northern Korea,,

China was still pursuing an isolationist policy, except to defend its own territory from Russian and Japanese incursions. Russia generally regarded Japan as a second-rate military and naval power, although continued defeats in Manchuria during the Sino-Japanese War (1894-95) were eroding public morale and confidence in the Czar.

Following Japanese military reverses in its war with China, Russia succeeded in obtaining a lease on Port Arthur from the Chinese in 1900. This, of course, was not a presence the Japanese could tolerate in view of their ambition to absorb Manchuria into the Japanese empire. Japan declared war on Russia on Feb. 8, 1904 and established a siege by blockading the entrance to the port. The Russians finally surrendered Port Arthur in January 1905 in the face of a Japanese artillery barrage.

Meanwhile, Russia dispatched its Baltic fleet on an eight month, 18,000miles voyage via South Africa and the Indiana Ocean to reinforce Port Arthur. Roosevelt realized a day of reckoning was at hand when either Russia or Japan would dominate the Far East depending on how the Russian strategy played out. With the fall of Port Arthur to Japan, which the Baltic fleet only learned at Madagascar, Roosevelt decided it was time to get someone with the diplomatic skills Meyer had

demonstrated at Rome on the scene in St. Petersburg. Meeyer's instructions included opening a dialogue with Czar Nicolas II personally.

The fall of Port Arthur forced the Baltic fleet, now called the Second Pacific Squadron, to head for Vladivostok for maintenance and re-supply. It had a choice of several routes of which the fleet admiral chose the shortest and most dangerous through the narrow Tsushina Straits between the southernmost Japanese home island and Korea.

The Japanese detected the Russian fleet in time to position its much inferior fleet at the north end of the straits where it "crossed the 'T'" across the path of the Russian fleet coming through in single file on the night of May 27, 1905. The Russian fleet could neither escape into the open waters of the Sea of Japan ahead nor retreat back down the straits. "Crossing the 'T'" was a classic naval maneuver seldom achieved in battle. The Russians were utterly defeated. Virtually their entire fleet was destroyed losing eight battleships; twenty seven cruisers, destroyers and auxiliary vessels; and 5,000 men. Only three vessels reached Vladivostok. The Japanese lost three torpedo boats and 116 men.

Japan was aware of Roosevelt's interest in promoting world peace and so asked the United States to arrange a peace conference to end the Russo-Japanese War. On the other hand, popular opinion was that in the face of defeats on land and sea, the Russians were not ready to engage in negotiations that could only put an end to Russian ambitions in the Far East.

Under these circumstances, persuading Czar Nicholas that a peace conference was in Russia's best interest fell to George Meyer. That he succeeded was due in large part to the personal contact he was able to develop in only a few months in St. Petersburg, his diplomatic skill, and, perhaps most importantly, the Czar's distraction by the outbreak of the Revolution of 1905 across Russia that Nicholas neither understood nor knew how to deal with. Maintaining the autocracy for his son, Alexi, to inherit remained his paramount objective.

Roosevelt carefully kept his hand off the conference that occupied most of August 1905 in the Portsmouth, New Hampshire Naval Base. A treaty was signed on September 5th. The Japanese thought it was too lenient and the Russians too harsh. Roosevelt was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 1906 and George Meyer earned Roosevelt's enduring respect.

Meyer's reward was a seat in Roosevelt's cabinet. When he returned to the United States after completing six years in the Foreign Service, Roosevelt appointed him Postmaster General on March 6, 1900<sup>7</sup>, probably not so much for what he could bring to the Post Office Department as a trusted adviser on European affairs which he could see were becoming more and more ominous with the bellicose "Kaiser Willie" on the German throne and a militarily weak Russia

Meyer did not start out viewing the Post Office Department as a sine cure. He consulted with the President in mid-August, no doubt following discussions with his First Assistant, Frank Hitchcock, and reviewing annual reports and postmaster general recommendations dating back as far as John Wanamaker. The program he proposed was: (1) Establish a domestic parcel post service; (2) Reduce the overseas letter rate; (3) Establish a postal savings bank; (4) Manufacture and install stamp affixing and vending machines; (5) Sort incoming foreign mail on board U.S., British, and French ships<sup>6</sup>.

The establishment of a domestic parcel post and postal savings banks required Congressional action which it had long been loath to take (1 and 3). Even though an overseas package service had been instituted by conventions with foreign governments and on rural delivery routes, the express companies had always opposed the Post Office Department offering a domestic parcel post service and succeeded blockings its authorization in Congress. In the same manner, the banking industry succeeded in blocking the establishment of a system of postal savings banks. Meyer urged the establishment of a postal savings system as a way to reduce widespread distrust of banks and the practice of hoarding money, especially by rural residents, in the interest of improving the national economy. But Meyer was unable to influence Congress to take action on these issues.

The idea of cheap letter postage throughout the British Empire took its first step toward realization in 1898 when a number of the dominions agreed on a rate of one British penny per ounce or two cents in Canada. Imperial Penny Postage took effect on Christmas Day, 1898 for which Canada issued its famous "Map Stamp" depicting the British Empire. The British Post Office urged the Americans to follow suit which it hesitated to do until Meyer, with the President's backing, entered into an agreement reducing the rate between the U.S. and Great Britain, Ireland, and Canada from

five cents per half ounce to two cents an ounce, following the Canadian rate, effective October 1, 1908<sup>7</sup>. Other overseas rates remained the same.

Meyer's proposal for the government to manufacture and install machines to affix stamps to envelopes, a useful tool for bulk mailers, and to vend stamps to the public did not come to pass. Industry was way ahead of him in the design and manufacture of such equipment, reducing the role of the Post Office Department to providing the stamps. The Post Office obliged as early as October 1906 before Meyer took office by releasing the current one- and two-cent denominations in imperforate sheets that could be cut into strips and splices to make the rolls the machines required. When experiments with perforating the strips (perf. 12) proved unsuccessful due to accidental separation, several of the machine manufacturers designed and used what are known as "private perforations" until the bureau adopted a more sturdy perf. 8½.

While Meyer was wrestling with providing coiled stamps to the affixing and vending machine industry, he also approved a new regular issue beginning with seven denominations from one to eight cents known as the Third Bureau Issue or, more familiarly, as the Washington-Franklin issue. Markedly different from the Second Bureau issue of 1903, the two basic designs are strongly reminiscent of the one cent Franklin and two cent Washington values of the First Bureau Issue of 1895 that give the series its popular name. With additional values issued from time to time and numerous varieties it became a lengthy series. Due to its attractive colors, complexities, and long life until replaced by the Fourth Bureau Issue of 1922-23, it is a favorite with many collectors.

Once having raised the subject of sorting trans-Atlantic mail on board ship, Meyer pretty much dropped the subject. Among the possibilities were that while the fast luxury liners had post offices of a sort on board to receive ship letters and cards from passengers and carried much letter mail as cargo, ship owners probably were loath to dedicate space for handling mail bags and sorting mail and to carry non-paying clerks in addition to the ship's already considerable staff. Meyer might also have discovered that the added cost did not justify shipboard sorting in face of the Post Office's increasing deficits.

Admittedly, Meyer's two years in office were hardly long enough to overcome congressional resistance to much of his agenda. With Roosevelt's enthusiastic support of William Howard Taft to succeed him as presi-



dent, it was clear Meyer's time was running out. Parcel post and postal savings banks would have to await another postmaster general.

On the other hand, Taft personally had small regard for the Navy even in the face of the growing threat of World War I, while Roosevelt was a strong supporter as a former assistant secretary during McKinley's first term. Thus it is likely that following his election over William Jennings Bryan making his third run for the presidency, Taft appointed Meyer Secretary of the Navy, no doubt at Roosevelt's recommendation. Once in office, Taft pretty much left him alone.'

Meyer proved to be an outstanding, forward looking Secretary. He spent most of his first year studying the organization of the Navy and especially its hidden inner workings. He found a moribund organization that hadn't been modernized in years. He regularly made on-board inspections of ships when the "fleet was in," naval bases, training installations, and proving grounds as well as interviewing both officers and crewmen at depth.

Even with a reduced budget he succeeded in increasing the number of vessels in commission by a quarter. He developed a far-reaching plan of organization designed to encourage enlisted personnel to think of the Navy as a career by liberalizing promotion opportunities and the previously brutal disciplinary practices inherited from earlier days. He gave greater authority to line officers, and creating a system of "aids," similar to the adjutants in the army, to facilitate internal communications among senior officers and the secretary's office. His numerous appearances made him personally popular among all hands. Above all, he did everything possible to prepare the Navy for the war he could see coming from his years in Europe. Even after serving a full four years, Meyer remained interested in matters affecting the Navy throughout World War I.

Approaching his sixtieth birthday in June, George Meyer had much to offer his country as a senior adviser in military and foreign affairs in preparation for peace time reconstruction and the health and vigor to carry out sensitive assignments when not long after the first of 1918 he fell ill with what was diagnosed as a malignant tumor in his stomach. He died at his home in Boston on March 9, 1918 at age 59. The Navy gave him a funeral at the Charleston Navy Base with full military honors as a token of their respect and affection for a former Secretary.

## (Endnotes)

<sup>1</sup> See Vexler; Wiegand, Wayne W., "Meyer, George von Lengerke," article in *American National Biography*," *New York Times*, March 10-11, 1918 (obit.) for biographical sketches of George von L. Meyer; several family genealogies also are available.

<sup>2</sup> *New York Times*, March 10, 1910 under a March 9 Boston dateline.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> Lengerken, Maja v. *The von Lengerke(n) Family, 1500-1997*. Lasst edited by Hans Jürgen von Lengerke, 1999, translated from German; private manuscript

<sup>5</sup> *Op cit.*

<sup>6</sup> *NYT*, August 15, 1907.

<sup>7</sup> *NYT*, June 4, 1908.

## POSTAL HISTORIANS ON LINE

(Continued from page 8)

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POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETIES (Listed by request)

(For a Listing of ALL U.S. State Postal History Societies see the

Empire State Postal History Society)— <http://www.esphs.org/usphs.html>

Machine Cancel Society—<http://www.machinecancel.org>

Michigan [Peninsular State Philatelic Society, Michigan's Postal History Society] — <http://www.home.earthlink.net/~efisherco/>

Military Postal History Society—<http://www.militaryphs.org>

Mobile Post Office Society — <http://www.eskimo.com/~rkunz/mposhome.html>

Postal History Society — <http://www.stampclubs.com/phs/index.htm>

Postmark Collectors Club — <http://www.postmarks.org>

The Postal History Foundation— [library.phf@mindspring.com](mailto:library.phf@mindspring.com)

# Maritime-Philatelic History of the S.S. *Eider* and Its Loss in 1892

She struck where the white and fleecy waves  
Looked soft as carded wool,  
But the cruel rocks, they gored her side  
Like the horns of an angry bull.

From: "Wreck of the Hesperus"

By: Henry W. Longfellow

By: Henry J. Berthelot

**O**n the evening of January 31, 1892, the *S.S. Eider* stranded on Atherfield Ledge, off the southwest shore of the Isle of Wight. There, the steamship's hull scraped against the rocks and was fractured, causing the ship to fill with sea water. While the mishap was heartrending to the passengers and crew, the loss of that steamship was not historically significant. Thus, when the newsworthiness of the event ended, the *Eider* became but a maritime statistic - one of the many nineteenth century ships to have succumbed to a "peril of the sea."<sup>1</sup>

Mail items salvaged from maritime mishaps present an interesting area of philatelic study. This narrative has a dual purpose: to present the history of the *Eider* and the events that culminated in its loss; and to examine how the mail being transported by the *Eider* on that fateful voyage was handled, focusing on the cachets that were used to identify mail items recovered by divers from the flooded ship. It is estimated that from 100 to 200 mail items salvaged from the ship exist today.

In a philatelic context, the dictionary defines "cachet" as "a slogan, design, etc., stamped or printed on an envelope [postal or post card] or folded letter." The term "cachet" will be used herein to mean "a postal marking that was affixed to or accompanied a mail item salvaged from a ship that encountered a peril of the sea." Intended to briefly explain why the mail item was delivered or returned in damaged condition, or inordinately delayed in reaching the recipient or being returned to its writer, cachets were: struck with a hand-stamp device made mainly of rubber, but occasionally made of metal; written by hand; or printed or handwritten onto labels. The labels may or may not have had an adhesive on the reverse. Labels without adhesives were fastened by various

means to, or placed with the salvaged mail item during reclamation. If the label had an adhesive backing, or if glue were applied at the time of use, the label was affixed to the salvaged mail item or utilized to secure envelopes that were opened from exposure to sea water. On occasions, badly-damaged mail items were placed in other envelopes issued by the postal administration that handled recovery of the mail. Referred to as "ambulances" when used in that manner, the government-issued envelopes protected the salvaged item and its content, as well as other mail matter with which it came in contact during transit. Any marking and/or label noted above may also have been applied to the ambulance.

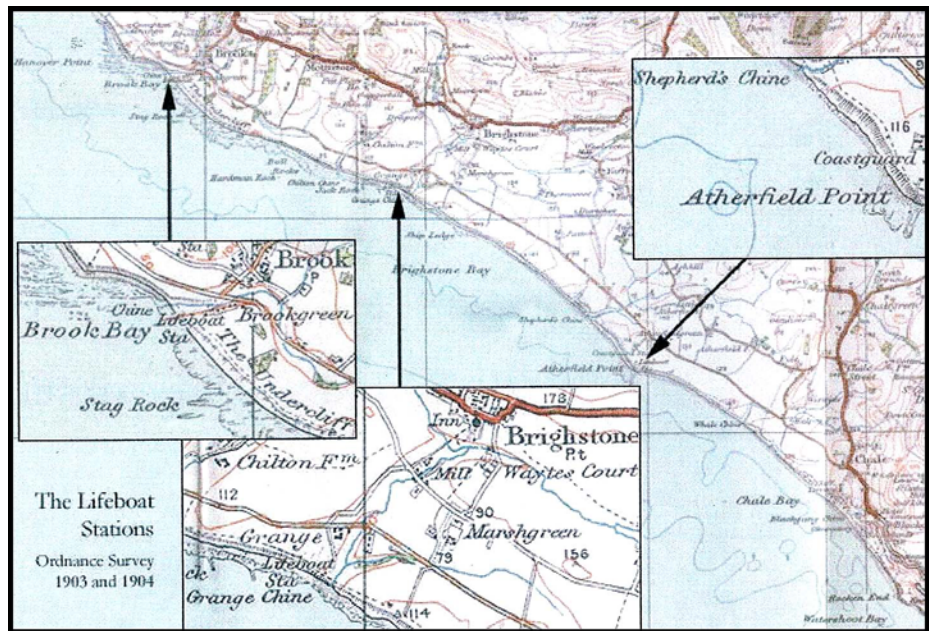
The *Eider* was built by John Elder & Co. of Glasgow, Scotland, for the Norddeutscher Lloyd (North German Lloyd) Line of Bremen, Germany. Launched on December 15, 1883, the ship was 135.50 meters long and 14.32 meters wide, with a registered tonnage of 4,719 tons. Although steam powered, the ship was also rigged with sails should that form of power be necessary. That dual form of locomotion was a common practice of the era. Designed for transatlantic service, the *Eider* plied the North Atlantic between New York City, New York, the Line's western terminus and Bremen, Germany, its eastern terminus, with an intermediate port call at Southampton, England.

On January 23, 1892, the *Eider* departed New York Harbor under the command of Captain H. Heineke. The ship carried 367 passengers, and was transporting cargo consisting of: cotton, corn and flour; gold and silver valued at £250,000; and 596 bags of United States mail, 386 bags for delivery to Southampton and 210 bags for delivery to Bremen. It has been reported that mail from Columbia and Chile, addressed to England, Germany and Austria was also being transported by the *Eider*.

In 1892, mariners had neither sonar nor radar. Ships navigated obstacles solely by “log-distances,” with adjustments for drifting and leeway. Astride the shipping lane in the English Channel, adjacent to the Isle of Wight, was Atherfield Ledge, at the time a very dangerous reef. Since channel currents toward the reef were always strong, there was the possibility that a captain’s “dead-reckoning” calculations could be impeded, especially during conditions of adverse weather. As an aid to ships navigating the area, a series of lighthouses was located on the English mainland and on the Isle of Wight.

“The Solent,” a strait located between England and the Isle of Wight, was the route used by ships to navigate safely the English Channel to and from Southampton. When an eastward-bound ship approached the Solent from the west, the ship’s bridge crew kept the Hurst Castle Lighthouse on the English mainland to their port [left] side and the Needles Lighthouse on the Isle of Wight to their starboard [right] side. Those lighthouses were four miles apart. At the southern tip of the Isle of Wight was located St. Catherine’s Lighthouse. The distance between the Hurst Castle Lighthouse and the St. Catherine’s Lighthouse was some ten miles.

To assist ships in distress around the coasts of England and Ireland, Sir William Hillary founded, in 1824, the National Institution for the Preservation of Life from Shipwrecks. The Institution, a charity dedicated to saving lives at sea, was an all-volunteer organization funded entirely by membership fees, donations and legacies from the public. In 1854, the Institution changed its name to, and since has been known as the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI). Three lifeboat stations (figure 1) were placed by the RNLI on the south west coast of the Isle of Wight: the Brook Bay Station, which opened on August 13, 1860; the Brighstone Grange Station, which also opened on that date; and the Atherfield Station which opened on October 27, 1890.



**Figure 1** Map showing locations of the three RNLI lifeboat stations on the southwest coast of the Isle of Wight. The Brighstone Grange and the Atherfield Stations were closed in 1915; the Brook Bay Station was in operation until 1937.

The *Eider* approached the Solent on Sunday evening, January 31, 1892, in weather described as “patchy, dense fog.” As a safety measure, the ship’s speed was reduced upon entering the fog. When a lighthouse was seen to port—the Hurst Castle Lighthouse—the bridge crew maintained the ship’s course to the right of that light. A short while later, as the ship entered an area free of fog, the bridge crew saw a lighthouse to starboard, which they mistook to be the Needles Lighthouse. Unfortunately, the Needles Lighthouse at the time was completely obscured by dense fog; the light seen from the *Eider*’s bridge was that of the St. Catherine’s Lighthouse. So instead of entering the Solent, the *Eider* steamed directly towards Atherfield Ledge and stranded about ten o’clock p.m., on the reef, approximately one-half mile from shore.

Distress rockets were fired from the *Eider* upon stranding, and about eleven o’clock p.m. the Lifeboat *Catherine Swift*<sup>2</sup> (figure 2) was launched from Atherfield Station to assist the *Eider*. In the meantime, since the ship was in no immediate danger, most of the passengers, in consultation with the captain, decided to wait until the next morning to disembark, if that were necessary. Thirteen passengers, however, insisted on being taken ashore without delay. Captain Heineke ordered one of the ship’s lifeboats be launched; those passengers were transferred to that lifeboat and landed safely that night on the Isle of Wight. When the *Catherine Swift* arrived at the ship, Captain Heineke declined its services; however, he





Figure 2 The Lifeboat *Catherine Swift* and its crew, circa 1892.

gave to the lifeboat's coxswain telegrams that requested sea tugs to assist his ship. The telegrams were sent from Atherfield Station upon that lifeboat's return to shore.

The *Catherine Swift* was launched again about seven o'clock a.m. on Monday, February 1<sup>st</sup>, and its crew pulled to the stranded ship. Once more its help was refused, but Captain Heineke allowed some of the *Eider*'s mail to be transferred to the lifeboat and taken ashore. Upon the lifeboat returning to its station, that mail was taken into custody by officials from the Newport Post Office on the Isle of Wight. Later that morning, the captain tried to re-float his ship by jettisoning some of its cargo. The attempt, however, was futile.

Unfortunately, a rainstorm with accompanying high winds developed in the area, forcing the sea tugs that were then en route to the wreck site to return to port. The adverse weather and a receding tide caused the *Eider* to list and begin scrapping against the rocks. For reasons of safety, Captain Heineke decided to evacuate the ship. The Brighstone Grange Station Lifeboat *Worcester Cadet*<sup>3</sup> and the Brook Bay Station Lifeboat *William Slaney Lewis*<sup>4</sup> were then summoned to assist the *Catherine Swift*. One news report pointed out that the crew from the Brook Bay Station had a "five hour pull against wind and seas" to reach the *Eider*, which was stranded some six miles from that station.

As soon as weather conditions permitted, and through Tuesday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 354 passengers and twenty-five crew members, and a portion of the mail were transferred from the ship and landed at the town of Atherfield (figure 3) by the three lifeboats. Taken across the island to Cowes, the passengers, crew and



Figure 3 Front page from the February 7, 1892 edition of the Frankfurt am Main *Kleine Presse* newspaper, depicting the evacuation of the *Eider*.

that portion of the mail boarded another steamer and were transported to Southampton. During that interval, the Prince of Wales was dispatched to Atherfield, where on Wednesday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> and Thursday, February 4<sup>th</sup> he oversaw the landing of the gold and silver from the *Eider*. News reports stated the transfer of specie was “carefully supervised by armed coastguards.” In all, the lifeboats made forty-one trips to the stranded ship. Fortunately, no loss of life or injury was sustained during the rescue and salvage operations.

The captain and some of the crew remained on board the *Eider*, hoping the ship could be re-floated. However, after a couple of days of constant motion against the rocks the hull of the *Eider* fractured and its cargo compartments were flooded. Subsequent salvage operations had to be conducted by divers.

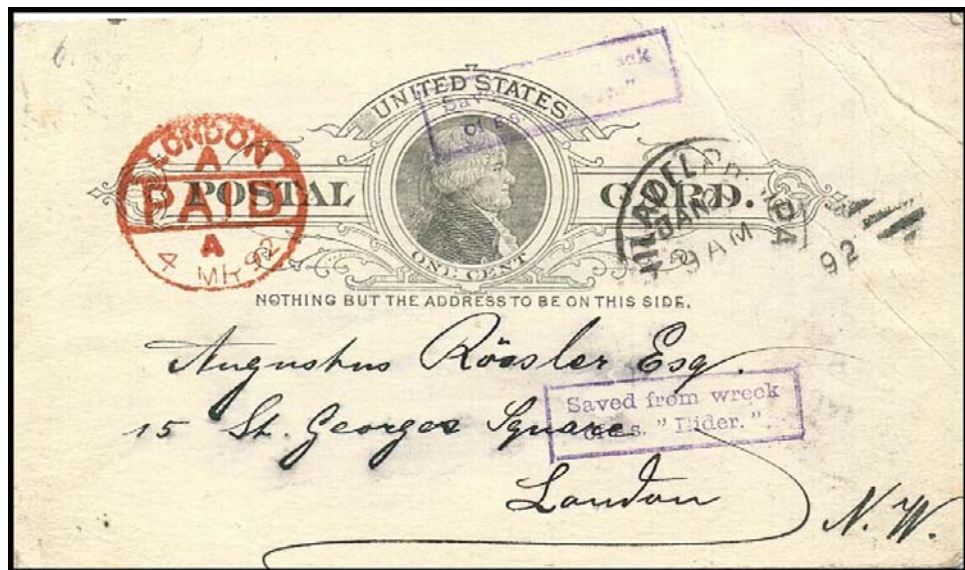
As relates to the mail, that portion carried to safety on February 1<sup>st</sup> aboard the *Catherine Swift*, “almost certainly all for Britain,” was processed and delivered in the normal manner. Since those mail items had not been damaged, and their delivery was not unduly delayed, no cachet was affixed to them. While the number of mail items recovered in water-damaged condition, by divers, was never mentioned, news reports over the next two months noted:

That on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, “all the specie and several bags of mail were landed, the latter in a wet condition”;

That by February 8<sup>th</sup>, “all the remaining mail bags, except for fifteen, had been recovered by divers. This mail was badly water damaged”;

That on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, the fifteen missing mail bags were recovered. The condition of the items in those mail bags was not described, however, it has been written that the “contents [of those mail bags] must have been in an almost hopeless condition.”

That portion of the mail recovered from the *Eider* by divers exists in various stages of water-damaged condition. Many of these mail items were identified as



**Figure 4** Mailed in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on January 20, 1892, this postal card was addressed to London, England. The card was struck with the “boxed English cachet.”

having been salvaged from the *Eider* with one of three cachets affixed with a hand-stamp device, or by one of two handwritten cachets.

### Cachets affixed by hand-stamp devices

Mail destined to Britain was processed in London, where postal officials used the double-line cachet,

#### Saved from wreck of s.s. “Eider”

to identify the items. This cachet, prepared in London and framed in a rectangular border, was affixed with a hand-stamp device, in violet ink (*figure 4*). It is referred to as the “boxed English cachet.” Even though a greater portion of the mail being transported by the *Eider* was destined to England, the boxed English cachet is the scarcer of the two “boxed cachets.” London postal officials, in conjunction with the boxed English cachet, consistently used London’s circular PAID date stamp on the salvaged mail. The date stamp seen, of March 4, 1892, was affixed in red ink.

It is believed that mail destined to Austria was also processed in London by Austrian postal agents assigned there. The Austrian mail items were identified with the triple-line cachet,

#### Gehoben aus dem gescheiterten Schiff “Eider”.





**Figure 5** Posted in New York, New York on January 22, 1892, this envelope was addressed to Vienna, Austria. The envelope has affixed the “boxed Austrian cachet.”

Framed in a rectangular border, this cachet, referred to as the “boxed Austrian cachet,” was prepared in London. Struck in violet ink with a hand-stamp device, the cachet translates, Salvaged from the / washed-ashore Ship / “Eider.” (figure 5) The boxed Austrian cachet is known to exist on more mail items *ex Eider*, notwithstanding the fact that a lesser portion of the mail being transported by the *Eider* was destined to Austria and Germany. Of the three hand-stamped cachets from this mishap, the boxed Austrian cachet is the most common. Usually, on mail items with this cachet, the word “FRANCO” was added in black ink, indicating that the item was “PAID.” The reverse of this envelope has affixed a Vienna, Austria, receipt stamp dated March 9, 1892.

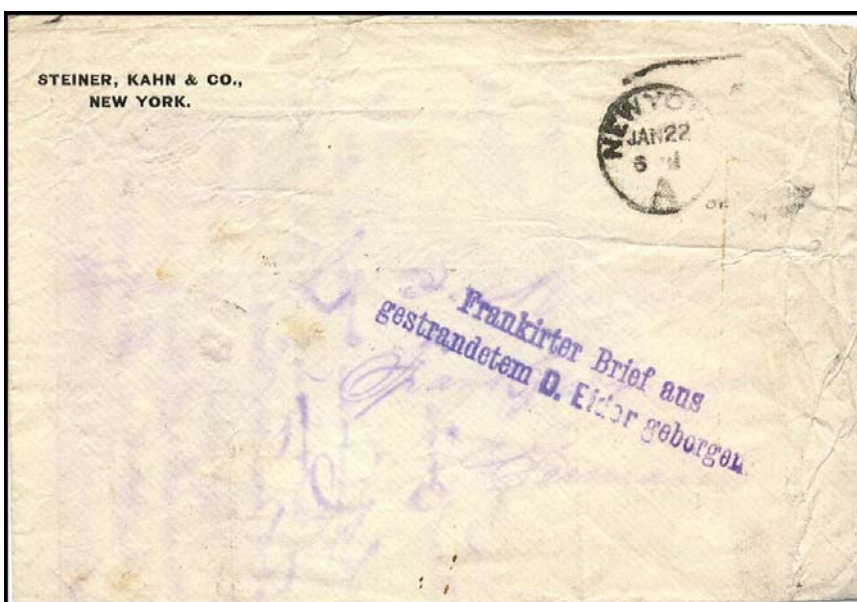
It is not known if the mail destined to Germany was sent en bloc to Bremen and separated in that post office by destination, or separated in London and forwarded to the particular German city of destination. My view, the mail destined to Germany was forwarded en bloc to Bremen, is based on a fact and a belief. The fact is that a registered mail item recovered from the *Eider* and addressed to Frankfurt am Main was processed in Bremen. While I am aware that registered mail items were handled differently than ordinary mail items were handled, even where a mail

service interruption had occurred, the fact that the registered “German” mail item was processed in Bremen indicates to me the German mail went to Bremen and from there was separated by city of destination. [Does anyone have an ordinary mail item salvaged from the *Eider*, addressed to a German city other than Bremen, but processed in Bremen?] The belief is that English postal officials, having processed the salvaged mail destined to Britain and knowing that Austrian officials reclaimed the salvaged mail addressed to Austria, considered German postal officials responsible for the tedious task of

processing the salvaged mail intended for that country.

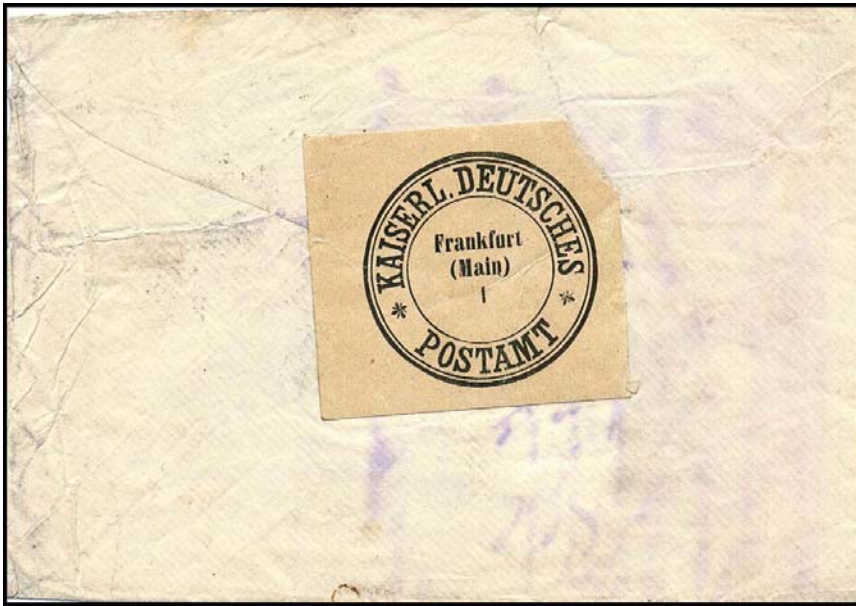
In Germany, some items received a double-line cachet struck with a hand-stamp device. Referred to as the “unframed German cachet,” it is seen here applied to an envelope addressed to Frankfurt am Main (figure 6). The cachet, affixed in black ink, reads

**Frankirter Brief aus  
gestrandetem. D. Eider geborgen**



**Figure 6** Sent from New York, New York, on 22 January 1892, this envelope was addressed to Frankfurt am Main, Germany. The envelope bears the “unframed German cachet.”





**Figure 7** A post office seal was affixed in the Frankfurt Post Office and over the back flap of the envelope seen in figure 6 to secure the envelope's contents.

which translates, Franked Letter of / the stranded Ship Eider recovered. The unframed German cachet is the scarcest of the three hand-stamped cachets. In this instance, a Frankfurt Post Office seal was affixed over the back flap to secure the envelope (figure 7). All mail items I have seen with the unframed German

cachet were addressed to Frankfurt. [Does anyone have a mail item with the unframed German cachet addressed to a city other than Frankfurt?]

## Cachets Written by Hand

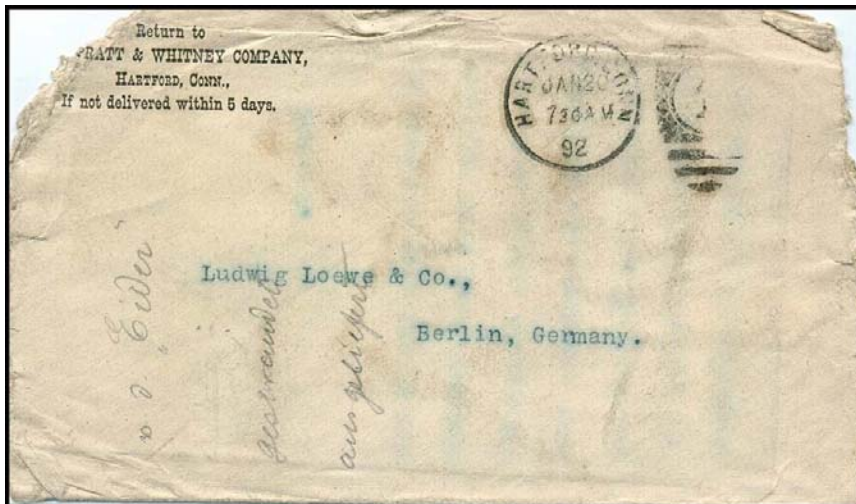
The two manuscript cachets are as follows:

On an envelope addressed to Berlin (figure 8) was written,

v(on) d(ampfer) "Eider"  
gestrandete  
aus geliefert

which translates, from steamer "Eider" / stranded / sent out. Since the back flap was without glue

owing to the envelope having been immersed in sea water, the Berlin Post Office officially secured the envelope with that city's Post Office seal (figure 9). The reverse of the envelope also has affixed the circular hand-stamped marking, "Bestelit / vom / Postamte



**Figure 8** This envelope was posted in Hartford, Connecticut, on January 20, 1892, addressed to Berlin, Germany. A manuscript cachet was used in the Berlin Post Office.

**Figure 9** A post office seal was affixed in the Berlin Post Office and over the back flap of the envelope seen in figure 8. The circular, rohrpost (pneumatic tube) marking evidences transmission of the envelope within Berlin.



13 / 5/3 . 92 / 7 ¼ - 8N.” Thisrohrpost (pneumatic tube) marking, struck in black ink, translates, “Received / from / Post Office 13 / 5 March [18]92 / 7:15 - 8:00 PM; the

marking documents the envelope’s transmission in Berlin’s pneumatic mail system on March 5, 1892.

In the December 6, 2006 Spink Auction<sup>5</sup>, lot number 18, described as a “United States 1¢ wrapper (additional stamp floated off) to Weisbaden,” had affixed on its reverse a five-line manuscript cachet, in German. Illustrated on page 10 of the Spink catalog, that cachet, is believed “to be the scarcest of all forms of [cachets on] mail recovered from this wreck.” [*Does anyone have a mail item salvaged from the Eider with a cachet different from those illustrated, or the one referred to above?*]

A mail item addressed to Syria is also known to exist from this mishap. [*Does anyone have a mail item salvaged from the Eider that was posted in a country other than those mentioned, or addressed to a country other than those noted above?*]

Attempting to compile a list of existing mail items *ex Eider*, I would greatly appreciate from readers a copy of their cover, or the following information: place and date of mailing; destination; cachet and color of ink used to affix; and any other postal marking applied to the cover. If there be a sufficient number of replies, I will submit the list to this journal for publication as an addendum.

The derelict ship was floated off Atherfield Ledge on March 29, 1892 and towed to Southampton. Since the salvors demanded more than the ship’s book value, the ship was ultimately auctioned off and insurers covered the loss of the *Eider*.

In closing, I note the German Emperor, to show his gratitude to the all-volunteer organization, sent gold watches to the three lifeboat coxswains and donated £200 to the RNLI. The Norddeutscher Lloyd also expressed its appreciation for the service rendered to the *Eider* by donating £105 to the RNLI.

## Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup> Under maritime law, this phrase is the “fortuitous action of the elements at sea, of such force as to overcome the strength of the well found ship or the usual precautions of good seamanship.”

<sup>2</sup> The *Catherine Swift* was 31 feet long and 7¼ feet wide. A self-righting type boat, with 8 oars, it was acquired through the legacy of Mrs. Catherine Swift of Kensington and Chale. Coxswain of the *Catherine Swift* was William [Rufus] Cotton.

<sup>3</sup> The *Worcester Cadet* was 34 feet long and 8 feet wide. Built by Woolfe & Son at a cost of £363, the boat was a self-righting type, with 10 oars. It was provided by the Worcester Cadet life-boat Fund. Coxswain of the *Worcester Cadet* was James Cotton.

<sup>4</sup> The *William Slaney Lewis* was 34 feet long and 7.6 feet wide. Built by Hansen & Sons at a cost of £347, the boat was a self-righting type, with 10 oars. It was acquired through the legacy of Mr. W.S. Lewis of Wellington, Salop. Coxswain of the *William Slaney Lewis* was John Hayter.

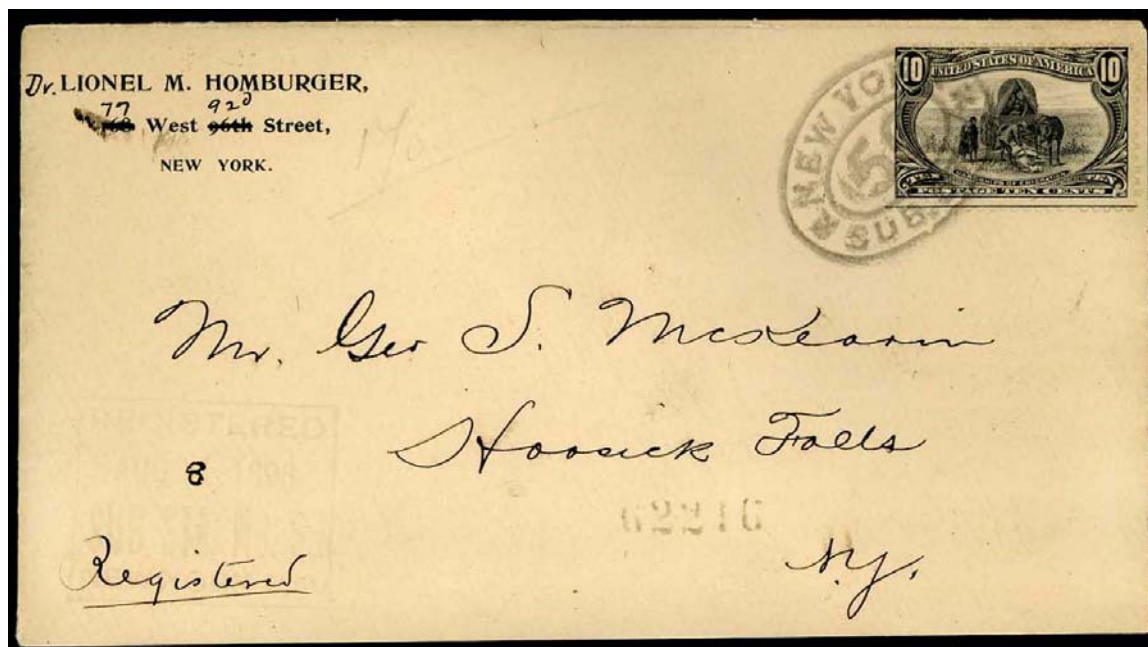
<sup>5</sup> Spink, 69 Southampton Row, Bloomsbury, /London WC1B 4ET, England.

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# CDS, DCDS, Double-Oval, Other Markings and Individualized Forms Used at US Postal Sub-Stations



**Figure 1** A double oval cancel from New York City's Sub-Station No. 56 used on a registered cover.  
(Courtesy of Ruby Stamps)

**By Dennis H. Pack**

Most post offices and their dependent offices use a variety of devices to postmark letters, cancel stamps, designate registered or special delivery mail, identify the office, or tell when an item was received by that office. They also use official forms and stationery with their name printed on it. Postal sub-stations were no different.

This is the last article in the current series about postal markings containing *sub* or *sub-station* that were applied at postal sub-stations between 1890 and 1910. Previous articles explored duplex cancels, straight-line markings and boxed straight-line markings. They also updated the census of those markings. This article looks at the remaining markings reported used at sub-stations, including circular date stamps (CDS), double circle date stamps (DCDS), double oval cancels, an oval handstamp, and non-standard cogwheel markings. It also updates the census of these markings and begins a new list of official forms and stationery with the sub-station name printed on it. *Figure 1* shows a double oval cancel applied to the stamp on a registered cover mailed at New York, Sub-Station No. 56. The cancel

is mute as to the date it was applied, but a faint registration marking tells that the cover was mailed August 8, 1898.

## Introduction

The US Congress consistently urged the Post Office Department (POD) to provide the most service at the lowest cost. The POD had to develop new and innovative solutions to the challenges they faced. The demand for postal services in cities increased with the population. Establishing branch post offices helped, but they were expensive. Postmaster General John Wannamaker hit upon the idea of placing postal sub-stations in drug stores and other businesses in cities to make postal services more widely available at low cost.<sup>1</sup>

Starting in 1890, sub-stations were established that had *sub* in their names and in their postmarks. Nearly all of them accepted first class mail, registered letters and packages, issued money orders, and sold stamps and other postal supplies. Before 1897, a few of them cancelled first class mail, but most of them funneled letters to full stations or the main post office for cancel-



ing. In 1902, *sub* was discarded from their names and postal markings, and all sub-stations became numbered stations, forerunners of today's contract postal units.<sup>2</sup>

This article covers five categories of markings and two types of individualized printed forms. Sub-categories have been created in the listing when several examples of a particular type or design have been reported.

- Circular date stamps
  - Circular date stamps
  - Circular date stamps that include REC'D
- Double circle date stamps
  - Double circle date stamps that include REGISTERED
  - Double circle date stamps that include M.O.B.
  - Double circle date stamps that include REC'D
- Double oval cancels
  - Double oval cancels that contain SUB
  - Double oval cancels that contain SUB-STA
- Oval handstamp that contains REG
- Non-standard cogwheel dial that contains REGISTERED
- Official stationery with a printed sub-station name
  - Advice of Money Order forms with printed sub-station name
  - Money Order Business envelopes with printed sub-station name

Each category and sub-category is described and illustrated below. The designations in parentheses are those used in the census.

## Circular Date Stamps (CDS)

Even though the circular date stamp with the name of the post office around the rim and the date in the center was the standard postmark at most post offices for many years,<sup>3</sup> their use would not be expected at sub-stations since most sub-stations did not handle first class mail, especially after 1897. Only one circular stamp, shown in *figure 2*, has been reported from a sub-station. The dial contains "SUB-STA 33", the date and time the marking was applied and "N.Y." Four copies of this marking have been reported, used either as receipt or forwarding markings. The impression in *figure 3* is used as a receipt marking on a postal card.



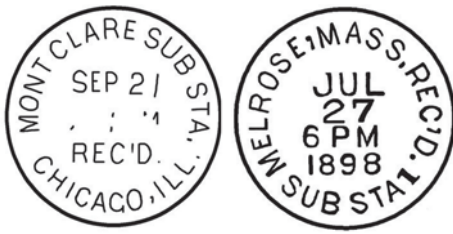
*Figure 2* Circular date stamp.

### CIRCULAR DATE STAMPS THAT CONTAIN REC'D (CDS W REC'D IN CNTR, CDS W REC'D IN RIM)

Between 1879 and 1913, POD regulations required that all first class mail be backstamped to make it possible to easily determine how long it took to reach its destination.<sup>4</sup> Specific devices with RECEIVED or REC'D were made, but these were usually provided only to post offices that handled large quantities of mail. Two designs of circular date stamps specifically



*Figure 3* Circular date stamp from New York City's Sub-Station No. 33 used as a received marking on a postal card.



**Figure 4** Circular date stamps with REC'D.

intended for use as received markings at sub-stations are shown in *figure 4*. One design, used at two Chicago, Illinois, named sub-stations, has REC'D in the center of the dial and no year date. The other design, reported from Chicago, Illinois, Sub-Station No. 48, and Melrose, Massachusetts, Sub-Station No. 1, locates REC'D in the rim of the dial.

*Figure 5* shows a Canada postal card bearing the Melrose, Massachusetts, Sub-Station No. 1 received CDS.



**Figure 5** A circular date stamp with REC'D in the rim applied at Montrose, MA, Sub-Station No. 1 to a Canada post card. (Courtesy of Albert Aldham)

## Double Circle Date Stamps

Double circle date stamp markings consist of two concentric circles with the name of the sub-station and its parent post office at the top and the purpose of the marking at the bottom. Double circle date stamps have been reported used at sub-stations on registered mail, for money order business (M.O.B.) and as a received marking. Examples of each appear in *figure 6*.



**Figure 6** Double circle date stamps.

## DOUBLE CIRCLE DATE STAMPS THAT INCLUDE REGISTERED (DCDS REG)

As pointed out in the second article in this series, registration markings are the most common postal marking reported used at sub-stations. Most of them are straight-line or boxed straight-line markings. Double circle date stamps that include REGISTERED are uncommon, being reported from five sub-stations, only one of which is not in Washington, DC. *Figure 7*

shows a cover mailed from the German Embassy in Washington, DC, to the German Consulate in Shanghai. It bears a Washington, DC, Sub-Station No. 20 double circle date stamp registration marking dated January 12, 1901.





**Figure 7** Double circle date stamp registered marking applied at Washington, DC, Sub-Station No. 20 to a cover mailed from the German Embassy in Washington to the German Consulate in Shanghai.

### DOUBLE CIRCLE DATE STAMPS THAT INCLUDE M.O.B. (DCDS MOB)

The US postal money order system was created in 1894 as a convenient means of securely sending small amounts of money through the mail. By the 1890s, money orders could be purchased and redeemed at most post offices, stations and sub-stations. Markings with M.O.B. were used on forms and papers associated with money order business. *Figure 8* contains three forms associated with money order business bearing Double Circle Date Stamps that include M.O.B. Two of them were sent from the sub-station that issued the money orders to the office where they were to be paid. The third is a receipt given to a patron who purchased the money order. The receipt bears

the latest reported use of a double circle date stamp containing M.O.B. marking from a sub-station, April 9, 1906.

### DOUBLE CIRCLE DATE STAMPS THAT INCLUDE REC'D

Double Circle Date Stamp markings that include REC'D are a variation of the CDS REC'D markings described above. They have only been reported used at Tory, NY, Sub-Station No. 1. A cover with this marking on the front is shown in *figure 9*.

### Double Oval Cancels

Double oval cancels were used to obliterate stamps on registered mail, parcels, and undated mail such as printed matter and periodicals. While the cancels are



**Figure 8** Double circle date stamp money order business markings on money order forms.





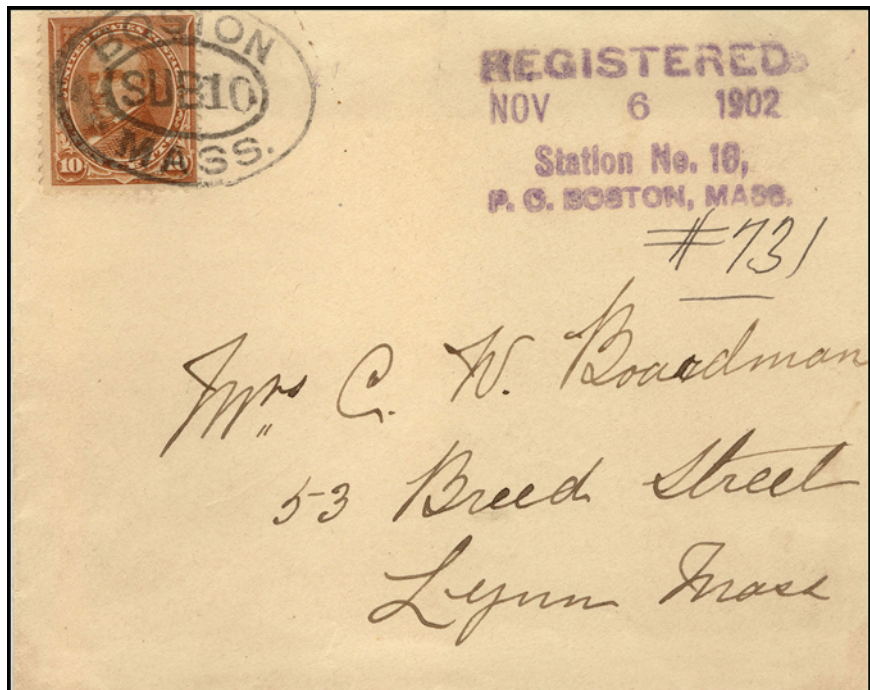
**Figure 9** Double circle date stamp received marking on a cover from Troy, NY, Sub-Station No. 1.

mute as to date, their date of use can usually be determined from other markings on the item. Two designs of double oval cancels that contain *sub* or *sub-station* appear in figure 10.



**Figure 10** Double oval cancels.

**Figure 11** Double oval cancel with SUB applied at Boston, MA, Sub-Station No. 10. The registered marking is from Station No. 10 and is dated after sub was removed from its name.



### DOUBLE OVAL CANCELS THAT CONTAIN SUB.

All of the reported double oval cancels that contain SUB were used at Boston, Massachusetts, sub-stations. Seven cancels have been reported from seven different sub-stations. A late use of a double oval cancel used to cancel the stamp on a registered cover is shown in figure 11. The registration marking, which indicates that the cover was mailed at Station No. 10, is dated seven months after all sub-stations were designated numbered stations.

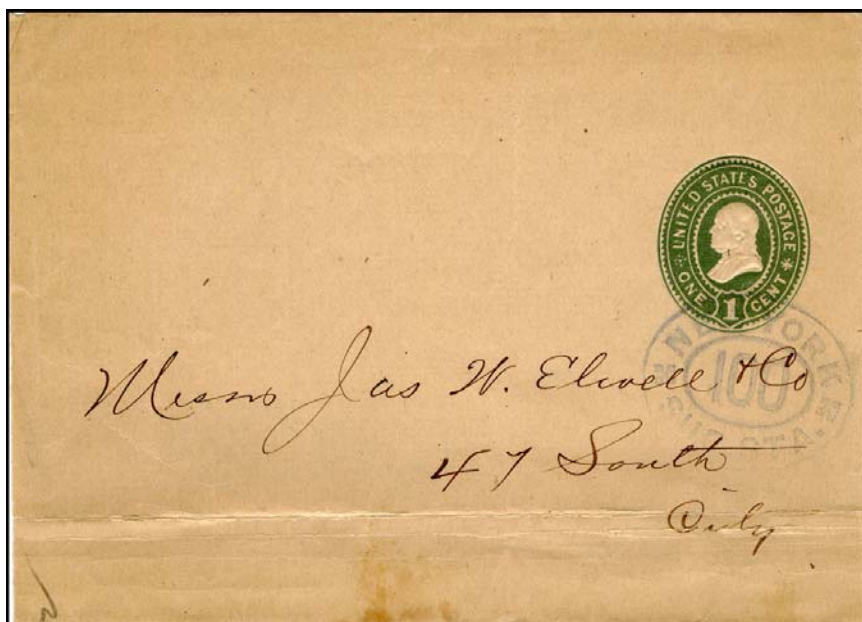
### DOUBLE OVAL CANCEL THAT CONTAINS SUB-STA.

All of the reported double oval cancels that contain SUB-STA were applied at New York City sub-stations. They are

reported used on registered letters, newspaper wrappers and to identify where a first class letter was mailed. Figure 12 contains a newspaper wrapper bearing a double oval cancel with SUB-STA from New York City's Sub-Station No. 100.

### Oval Handstamp that Contains REG

Figure 13 shows an oval handstamp that contains REG used at Baltimore, Maryland, Sub-Station No. 220. It is the only reported sub-station marking of this design.



**Figure 12** A newspaper wrapper bearing a double oval cancel with SUB-STA applied at New York City's Sub-Station No. 100.

Sub-Station No. 220 was established at South Towson, Maryland, July 1, 1897, and changed to the South Towson Station January 1, 1897. The cancel is on piece in the Willett-Thompson Collection of the Postmark Collectors Club. The stamps it cancels are from the Washington-Franklin Issue, so it was used after the sub-station had been changed to a station.



**Figure 13** Oval handstamp with REG.

### Non-standard Cogwheel Dial that Contains REGISTERED.

Baltimore, Maryland, stations and sub-stations used a series of attractive circular postmarks with a cogwheel design. As shown in *figure 14*, some units were identified as sub-stations and some as stations. At the time the Station No. 21 marking was struck, the unit was a sub-station, as far as this writer can determine. These



**Figure 14** Non-standard cogwheel registered markings.

postal markings that contain *sub* are part of the census. Thanks to Gordon E. Katz for information about Baltimore stations and sub-stations and for scans of their markings.

### Census of CDS, DCDS, Double-Oval, Other Markings Used at US Postal Sub-Stations

This installment of the census of sub-station postal markings contains 143 markings. *Table 1* is the key to the listings. Those sub-station markings not in this part of the census are in the census listings that appear with the other articles in this series.

*Table 2* breaks down the markings in the census by type. It is not surprising that the double circle date stamp with MOB is the most common. The issuance of money orders would have been a major activity of sub-stations nationwide. The DCDS MOB markings are reported from 45 sub-stations in 25 cities in 14 states. Seven are reported from Oakland, California, Sub-Station No. 1, and four each from Washington, DC, Sub-Station No. 29, and Minneapolis, MN, Sub-Station No. 7. Only one or two markings are reported from the other sub-stations that are identified as having used these markings.

The second most common marking is the double oval cancel with SUB-STA used at New York City's sub-stations. Fifty-five cancels are reported from 35 sub-stations numbered between three and 150. These cancels were still commonly used after sub-stations became numbered stations in 1902. The latest datable use of a double oval cancel with SUB-STA is shown in *figure 15*.



TABLE 1 - KEY TO SUB-STATION POSTMARK CENSUS LISTINGS

State	The state where the sub-station is located.
City	The post office with administrative responsibility for the sub-station.
Sub-Station	The name or number designation of the sub-station.
Postmark Type	Abbreviations used to describe the markings: <b>CDS</b> a circular date stamp. <b>CDS REC'D IN CNTR</b> a circular date stamp with REC'D in the center. <b>CDS REC'D IN RIM</b> a circular date stamp with REC'D along the edge. <b>COGWHEEL</b> a circular marking the outer edge of which has the appearance of a gear with cogs. <b>DCDS</b> a double circle date stamp. <b>DOVAL W SUB</b> a double oval marking containing "SUB". <b>DOVAL W SUB-STA</b> a double oval marking containing "SUB-STA". <b>MOB</b> Money Order Business. <b>OVAL</b> a cancel that is elliptical in shape. <b>REC'D, RECEIVED</b> a received marking. <b>REG</b> a marking used on registered mail.
Date	The date of the postmark. <b>X</b> indicates a digit is unreadable. <b>NOYR</b> indicates that the postmark does not include a year date. <b>ND</b> indicates the marking does not contain a date.
Format	<b>card</b> = post card. <b>cover</b> = cover. <b>cutsq</b> = cut square. <b>cutrnd</b> = cut round. <b>cutsiz</b> = cut to size. <b>illus</b> = a published illustration. <b>m.o. slip</b> = Advice of Money Order form. <b>piece</b> = part of cover or wrapper. <b>reg pkg rcpt</b> = a registered package receipt form. <b>PCG</b> = government postal card. <b>regy bill</b> = registry bill
Source	<b>PC</b> = private collector. <b>SLR</b> = seller or dealer. <b>CPM&amp;PH</b> = Leonard Piskiewicz's <i>Chicago Postal Markings and Postal History</i> . <b>CTP</b> = John Williams' <i>California Town Postmarks 1849-1935</i> <b>CCGC</b> = Harvey M. Karlen's <i>Chicago Crabgrass Communities</i> . <b>WDGS</b> = Carl Steig's, "Washington, DC Stations," Part VII, <i>La Posta</i> , Vol. 32, No. 3 (June-July 2001). <b>PMCCA0810</b> is a page from the Postmark Collectors Club DVDs of the Willett-Thompson collection. <b>CA0810</b> = the California listing, page 0810.

Table 2 – The number of each type of marking reported.

Marking Type	Quantity Reported
Circular date stamp (CDS)	4
CDS with REC'D in center	2
CDS w REC'D in rim	4
DCDS with MOB	57
DCDS with REC'D	2
DCDS with REG	10
Double oval with SUB	7
Double oval w SUB-STA	55
Oval with REG	1
Non-standard cogwheel with REGISTERED	1
Total	143



State	City	Sub-Sta	Pmk Type	Pmk Date	Format	Source
CA	Oakland	01	DCDS MOB	07-Jul-1898	MO slip	SLR
CA	Oakland	01	DCDS MOB	07-Jul-1898	MO slip	SLR
CA	Oakland	01	DCDS MOB	30-Jul-1897	MO slip	SLR
CA	Oakland	01	DCDS MOB	28-May-1896	MO slip	PC
CA	Oakland	01	DCDS MOB	13-Aug-1897	MO slip	PC
CA	Oakland	01	DCDS MOB	07-Sep-1897	MO slip	PC
DC	Washington	06	DCDS MOB	01-Jun-1897	MO slip	PC
DC	Washington	15	DCDS MOB	29-Jul-1896	MO slip	SLR
DC	Washington	18	DCDS REG	25-May-1900	cover	SLR
DC	Washington	20	DCDS REG	20-Jun-1901	cover	SLR
DC	Washington	20	DCDS REG	12-Jan-1901	cover	SLR
DC	Washington	20	DCDS REG	26-Feb-1900	cover	SLR
DC	Washington	29	DCDS MOB	10-Nov-1897	MO slip	PMCCDC60
DC	Washington	29	DCDS MOB	19-Aug-1897	MO slip	PC
DC	Washington	29	DCDS MOB	23-Oct-1897	MO slip	SLR
DC	Washington	37	DCDS REG	22-Apr-1901	cover	SLR
DC	Washington	37	DCDS REG	10-Mar-1899	cover	SLR
DC	Washington	37	DCDS REG	05-Dec-1900	cover	PC
DC	Washington	37	DCDS REG	10-Mar-1899	cover	SLR
DC	Washington	39	DCDS REG	16-May-1898	cover	SLR
IL	Chicago	031	DCDS MOB	30-Aug-1897	cutrnd	PMCCIL215
IL	Chicago	048	CDS REC'D IN RIM	12-Dec-1895	cover	CPM&PH
IL	Chicago	056	DCDS MOB	20-Apr-1897	MO slip	PMCCIL0219
IL	Chicago	056	DCDS MOB	11-Jan-1897	MO slip	PC
IL	Chicago	058	DCDS MOB	19-Jan-1898	MO slip	CPM&PH
IL	Chicago	Mont Clare	CDS REC'D IN CNTR	21-Sep-1894	regy bill	SLR
IL	Chicago	Riverdale	CDS REC'D IN CNTR	05-Nov-NOYR	Illus	CPM&PH
IL	Chicago	Woodlawn Park	DCDS MOB	27-Jun-1894	cutsq	PMCC
IL	Rockford	01	DCDS MOB	29-Nov-1900	cutsq	PMCCIL0999
MA	Boston	08	DOVAL W SUB	ND	cutsq	PMCCCHKT294
MA	Boston	09	DCDS MOB	17-Dec-1896	MO slip	SLR
MA	Boston	10	DOVAL W SUB	ND	cover	PC
MA	Boston	12	DOVAL W SUB	ND	cover	PC
MA	Boston	14	DOVAL W SUB	ND	cutsq	PMCCCHKT294
MA	Boston	20	DOVAL W SUB	ND	cutsq	PMCCCHKT294
MA	Boston	29	DOVAL W SUB	ND	cover	SLR
MA	Boston	76	DOVAL W SUB	ND	piece	SLR
MA	Lowell	01	DCDS MOB	27-Nov-1895	cover	PMCCMA0481
MA	Melrose	01	CDS REC'D IN RIM	09-Apr-1898	PCG	PC
MA	Melrose	01	CDS REC'D IN RIM	27-Jul-1898	PCG	PC
MD	Baltimore	003	NON-STNDRD COGGED CI	08-Dec-1897	cover	PC
MD	Baltimore	220	OVAL REG	ND	cutsq	PMCCMD030
MI	Grand Rapids	03	DCDS MOB	10-Jun-1899	cover	PC
MI	Grand Rapids	03	DCDS MOB	13-Apr-1900	cutsq	PMCCMI377
MN	Minneapolis	07	DCDS MOB	28-Mar-1909	MO rcpt	PC
MN	Minneapolis	07	DCDS MOB	09-Apr-1909	MO rcpt	PC
MN	Minneapolis	07	DCDS MOB	09-Apr-1909	MO rcpt	PC
MN	Minneapolis	07	DCDS MOB	28-Mar-1909	MO rcpt	PC
NJ	Newark	12	DCDS REG	19-Nov-1901	cover	SLR
NY	Brooklyn	057	DCDS MOB	29-Jun-1897	cutsq	PMCCNY0287
NY	Buffalo	02	DCDS MOB	07-Dec-1897	cutsq	PMCCNY0324
NY	Buffalo	10	DCDS MOB	31-May-1897	cutsq	PMCCNY0325
NY	Buffalo	12	DCDS MOB	20-Sep-1897	cutsq	PMCCNY0325

NY	Buffalo	14	DCDS MOB	26-Dec-1896	cutsq	PMCCNY0325
NY	Long Island City	02	DCDS MOB	16-Mar-1897	cutsq	PMCCNY1371
NY	New York	003	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	003	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	006	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	006	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	006	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	008	DCDS MOB	17-May-1897	cutsq	PMCCNY1724
NY	New York	010	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	PC
NY	New York	010	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	PC
NY	New York	010	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	010	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	011	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	PC
NY	New York	011	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	PC
NY	New York	012	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	PC
NY	New York	013	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	PC
NY	New York	013	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	014	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	PC
NY	New York	015	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	016	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	PC
NY	New York	016	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	PC
NY	New York	016	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	017	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	wrapper	PC
NY	New York	018	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	021	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	022	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	022	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	PC
NY	New York	022	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	PC
NY	New York	023	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	024	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	024	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	PC
NY	New York	028	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	031	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	031	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	032	DCDS MOB	10-Mar-1899	cutsq	PMCCNY1726
NY	New York	033	CDS	02-Dec-1896	cover	PC
NY	New York	033	CDS	03-Dec-1896	cover	PC
NY	New York	033	CDS	24-Apr-1897	GPC	SLR
NY	New York	033	CDS	06-Dec-1897	GPC	PC
NY	New York	033	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	PC
NY	New York	033	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	PC
NY	New York	033	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	PC
NY	New York	034	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	038	DCDS MOB	24-Mar-1897	cutsq	PMCCNY1726
NY	New York	038	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	041	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	PC
NY	New York	048	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	053	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	054	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	058	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	PC
NY	New York	066	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	095	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	095	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	098	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR

NY	New York	100	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	wrapper	SLR
NY	New York	102	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	104	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	104	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	104	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	PC
NY	New York	104	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	117	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	138	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	PC
NY	New York	143	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	SLR
NY	New York	150	DOVAL W SUB-STA	ND	cover	PC
NY	Rochester	01	DCDS MOB	31-Dec-1897	MO slip	PMCCNY2107
NY	Rochester	02	DCDS MOB	26-Apr-1898	MO slip	PMCCNY2107
NY	Troy	01	DCDS REC'D	30-Sep-1896	cover	PC
NY	Troy	01	DCDS REC'D	18-Sep-1896	cover	SLR
OH	Akron	01	CDS REC'D IN RIM	05-Aug-1897	cover	PC
OH	Akron	01	DCDS MOB	06-Apr-1897	cutsq	PMCCOH0016
OH	Alliance	01	DCDS MOB	01-Mar-1897	cutsq	PMCCOH0028
OH	Youngstown	01	DCDS MOB	03-MXX-1897	cutsq	PMCCOH1274
OH	Youngstown	02	DCDS MOB	22-Dec-1898	cutsq	PMCCOH1274
PA	Allegheny	01	DCDS MOB	16-Nov-1896	cutsq	PMCCPA0036
PA	Allegheny	07	DCDS MOB	21-Jan-1898	cutsq	PMCCPA0036
PA	Philadelphia	002	DCDS MOB	24-Dec-1896	cutsq	PMCCPA2070
PA	Philadelphia	008	DCDS MOB	13-Apr-1896	cutsq	PMCCPA2070
PA	Philadelphia	012	DCDS MOB	08-Jun-1896	cutsq	PMCCPA2070
PA	Philadelphia	014	DCDS MOB	03-Jul-1897	cutsq	PMCCPA2070
PA	Philadelphia	020	DCDS MOB	06-May-1896	cutsq	PMCCPA2070
PA	Philadelphia	036	DCDS MOB	05-Jun-1896	cutsq	PMCCPA2071
PA	Pittsburg	03	DCDS MOB	26-May-1896	cutsq	PMCCPA2189
PA	Scranton	02	DCDS MOB	03-Mar-1897	cutsq	PMCCPA2476
PA	Williamsport	01	DCDS MOB	27-Nov-1896	cutsq	PMCCPA2930
TN	Nashville	01	DCDS MOB	14-Mar-1896	cutsq	PMCCTN459
TN	Nashville	02	DCDS MOB	16-Sep-1896	cutsq	PMCCTN459
TN	Nashville	03	DCDS MOB	08-Jun-1898	cutsq	PMCCTN459
WA	Tacoma	01	DCDS MOB	12-Oct-1896	cutsq	PMCCWA547
WI	Green Bay	01	DCDS MOB	22-Jul-1896	cutsq	PMCCWI218
WV	Huntington	01	DCDS MOB	18-Jun-1897	cutsq	PMCCWV480







**Figure 15** The latest reported use of a double oval cancel with SUB-STA is from NYC Sub-Station No. 117. It is dated December 22, 1913, by registered markings on the back.

Table 3 shows the breakdown of dated markings in this study by year. The double oval cancels and one of the circular date stamps with REC'D in the center are

envelopes. The reported individualized forms are listed

not included because they cannot be dated by year. As in two previous articles in this series, the use of several markings in this study peaked between 1896 and 1898. One reason could be that many of sub-stations were converted to named stations early in 1898 after their functions were clarified.

Double circle date stamps registration handstamps are not reported used at sub-stations before 1898. Their reported use increased for the next three years. The registered double circle date stamp became the standard device used for many decades to backstamp registered letters.

### Official Printed Forms Individualized for Sub-Stations

The Post Office Department used dozens of different forms to conduct its business. Most of these were general forms in which the name of the office, station or sub-station was written by hand or handstamped. A few forms were individualized by having the name of the unit printed on them. This writer has seen two types used at sub-stations, both having to do with money order business: Advice of Money Order forms and MOB envelopes. The reported individualized forms are listed

**Table 3 – The breakdown by year of dated markings in this study.**

Marking Type	1894	1895	1896	1897	1898	1899	1900	1901	1909
Circular date stamp (CDS)			2	2					
CDS w REC'D in center	1								
CDS w REC'D in rim		1		1	2				
DCDS w MOB	1	1	16	24	7	2	2		4
DCDS w REC'D			2						
DCDS with REGISTERED					1	2	3	4	
Non-standard Cogwheel					1				
Total by year	2	2	20	32	11	4	5	4	4

State	City	Sub-Sta	Form
CA	Oakland	1	Advice of Money Order T2
DC	Washington	6	Advice of Money Order T2
DC	Washington	15	Advice of Money Order T1
DC	Washington	29	Advice of Money Order T2
DC	Washington	29	MOB Envelope No. 1-L
IL	Chicago	56	Advice of Money Order T2
NJ	Jersey City	8	MOB Envelope No. 1-L

in Table 4. This is not a census. It does not contain every form reported, just each type of form and the sub-station(s) reported to have used it.

Figure 16 shows two designs of Advice of Money Order forms. When a postal money order was purchased, the buyer was a given money order form to send to the payee, and the selling office sent an Advice of Money Order form to the post office where it was to be paid. When the payee submitted the money order for payment, it was compared to the Advice to make sure they agreed. The MOB marking for the selling office was stamped on the money order and the Advice at time of sale. The MOB marking of the paying office was stamped on the Advice when it was received and again when the money order was paid. It was also stamped on the money order when it was paid. The instructions on the Advice forms tell that they were to be retained four years after the money order was paid, then they could be discarded as trash.

MOB envelopes were used for money order business, including carrying the Advice of Money Order forms to the paying office. Two envelopes of the same design, but from different sub-stations appear in figure 17.

Recently, there has been increased interest in post office forms. Hopefully, this will lead to the reporting of more individualized forms from sub-stations.

## Conclusion

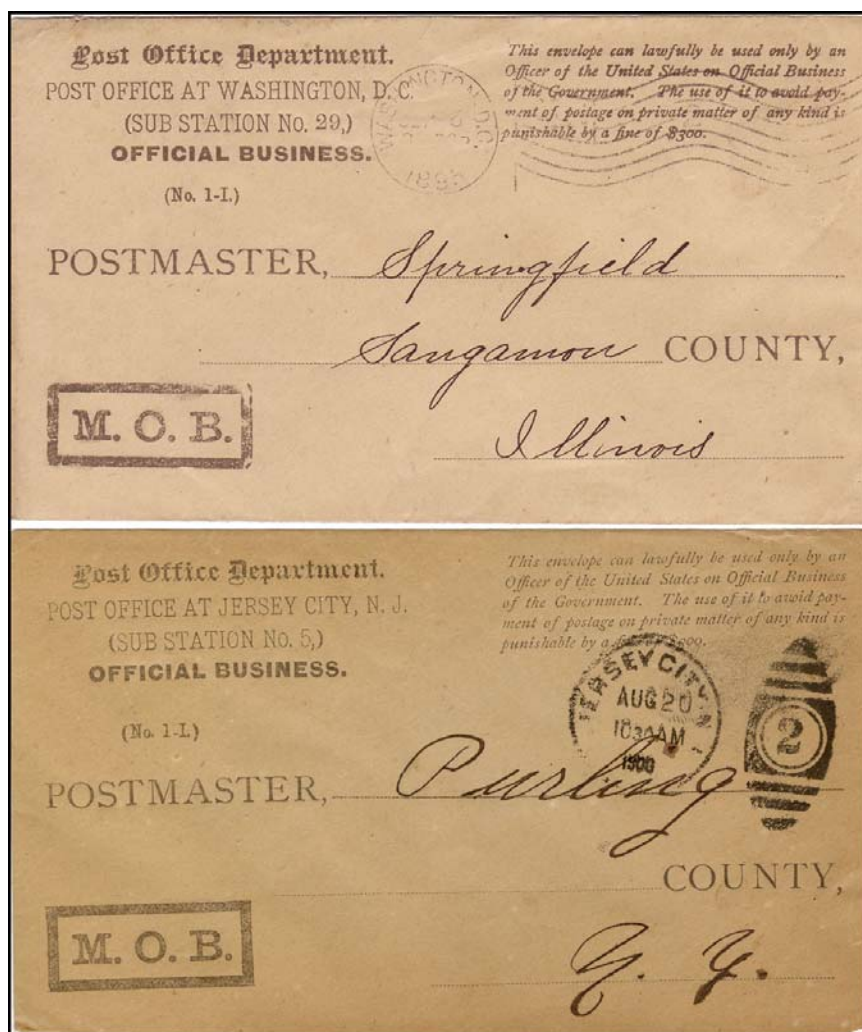
Postal markings dated 1890-1910 that contain *sub* or *sub-station* are artifacts of a period when the United States was experiencing great growth and the POD was facing new challenges. As the POD scrambled to increase services in urban areas, sub-stations sprang up nationwide. Sub-station postal markings do more than document a particular, short-lived type of postal unit. They help explain and illustrate the changes that took place in postal services that affect us today. I believe there is still much more to be learned from them.

Even though the complete census now contains 638 entries, there are undoubtedly many more sub-station markings to be reported. *La Posta* readers, collectors and dealers have generously reported the sub-station markings from their collections and stocks. I invite and encourage you to e-mail me scans at packd@hbc.com or mail me photocopies at 1915 Gilmore Ave., Winona, MN 55987. My sincere thanks to all have done so in



**Figure 16** Two designs of Advice of Money Order forms individualized with the printed name of the sub-stations that used them. Type 1 is on the left; type 2 is on the right.





**Figure 17** Money Order Business envelopes with the printed names of the sub-stations where they were used.

the past and who will continue to do so. I also thank Richard W. Helbock for publishing this series of articles.

## END NOTES

1 "Drug Store Post Offices," *New York Times*, September 1, 1889, p. 9.

2 PMG Order 595, November 12, 1897, in *Daily Bulletin* 5401, November 15, 1897, p. 1, and PMG Order 349 March 31, 1902, in *Daily Bulletin* 6731, April 2, 1902, p. 1.

3 Helbock, p. 14.

4 Scheele p. 120, and Helbock, pp. 105-106.

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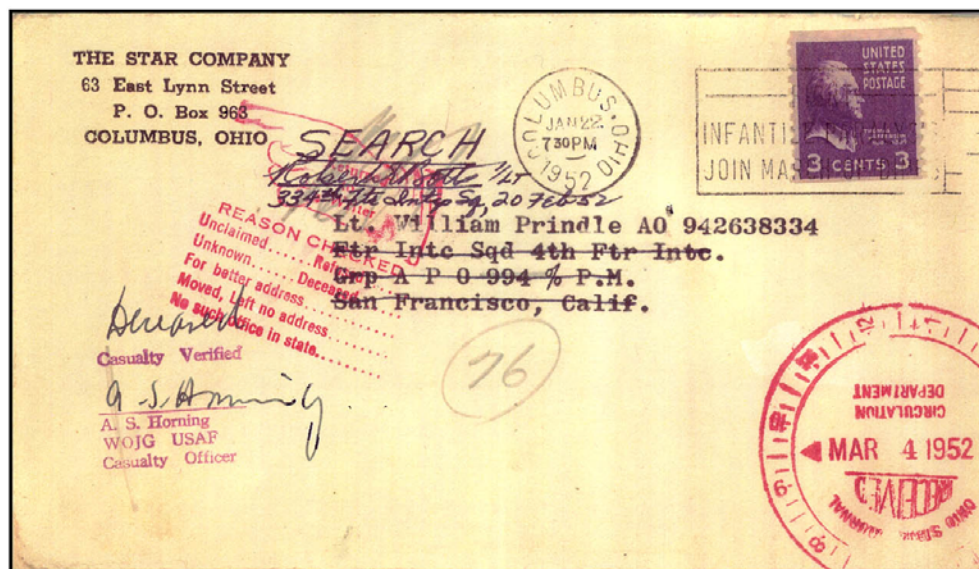
Scheele, Carl. H. *A Short History of the Mail Service*. Smithsonian Institution Press: Washington, 1970.



**Figure 18** Newark, NJ, Sub-Station No. 12 is the only sub-station outside of Washington, DC, reported to have used a double circle date stamp with REGISTERED.

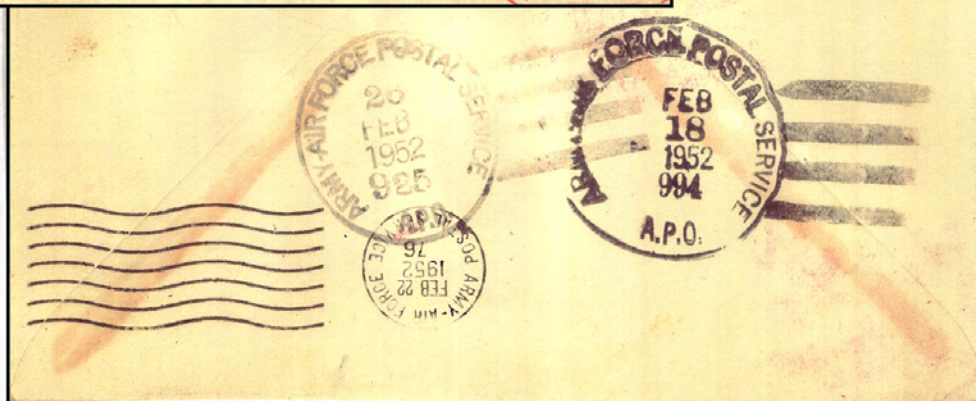


# In Memoriam - William F. Prindle, Korean War Pilot



*Figure 1 Mail sent from Columbus, Ohio, in January, 1952 to Air Force Lt. William F. Prindle in Korea. Prindle was killed in action on December 15, 1951.*

*Figure 2 Back of cover showing APO markings applied before returning the envelope back to the United States.*



By Michael Dattolico

## Part 1

Columbus, Ohio has been the birthplace of several American aviation heroes. Eddie Rickenbacker, born in 1890, was the top U.S. ace with 26 aerial victories during World War One. Curtis LeMay led U.S. Air Forces against the Japanese using tactics that hastened the Pacific war's end. In the 1950s, General LeMay commanded the Strategic Air Command (SAC) and was feared by the Communists. Donn F. Eisele, Air Force test pilot and later a NASA astronaut, was also a Columbus citizen. They are famous men in our nation's military history.

Not long ago, another Columbus flyer was discovered. His name was William F. Prindle. He wasn't an ace like Rickenbacker, the commander of vast air armadas like LeMay, or an astronaut like Eisele. Like his famous counterparts, Prindle flew airplanes for his

country. But unlike the others, Prindle flew airplanes for his country and was killed in action. Evidence verifying his existence today is sparse: a 60-year-old squadron photo, the after-action combat report of the pilot who shot him down and a few photos. Compared to the famous Columbus pilots, a historian might regard his experiences as insignificant. His poignant story is told here and features a piece of Prindle's wartime mail that is presented for your inspection. The cover is shown as figures 1 & 2.

The Prindles were mechanically talented folks. William E. Prindle, the pilot's father, was a civil engineer. His mother Frances was a dental technician, and younger brother Ted became an architect. Born in Columbus on June 8, 1921, William graduated from high school in 1939 and enrolled at Ohio State University's school of engineering. But Pearl Harbor halted his academic plans. Prindle was commissioned in the Army Air Corps as a pilot. He also managed to



*Figure 3* Portion of squadron photo showing 166<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron pilots at Lockbourne Air Force Base, Ohio in 1947. Lt. Bill Prindle is shown at left (arrow). His best friend, Don Griffith, is standing at right-center.

meet and marry a pretty Columbus girl while on leave. Prindle's widow Ardeth is now 91 years old yet recently spoke about their whirlwind courtship as if it happened yesterday.

"I was working in my father's store," Ardeth said, "when Bill came in. His friends told him he'd never get a date with me. I had a lot of boyfriends." Bill and Ardeth were married on November 9, 1944.

Bill Prindle returned to Columbus in late 1945 and began life again as a civilian. He reenrolled at OSU and took a job at Columbus Bolt & Forge as a machinist. Ardeth worked for the Federal government. She quipped, "Bill had a new car every year, and I had to ride the trolley to work."

Prindle joined the National Guard in 1946 and flew P-51 Mustang fighters at Lockbourne Air Base near Columbus. His friend, retired Colonel Don Griffith flew in the same unit, the 166<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron. At the Air National Guard's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary ceremonies in 2007, Colonel Griffith talked about those early days.

"The 166<sup>th</sup> operated out of Lockbourne Air Force base near Columbus. Maintenance on its dozen or so P-51 Mustangs was done inside an old converted hangar. A single Quonset hut on the flightline housed operations and maintenance together. We didn't have much of a mission."

In the beginning, members of the squadron would drill at different times, usually four days a month starting on a Thursday night, according to Griffith. After federal

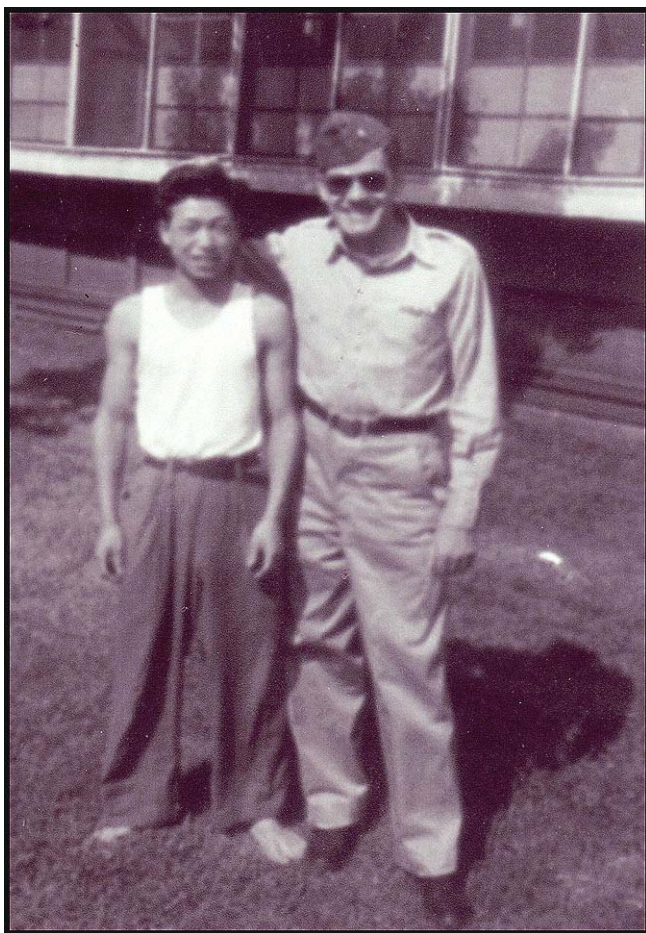
recognition of the Air National Guard in September, 1947, everyone trained the same weekend. "We called it a flying club," said Griffith, "because most guys went to Ohio State University on the G.I. Bill, worked part time and flew P-51s on the weekends." (Figure 3).

The Korean War began in June, 1950, and the 166<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron was ordered to active duty in February, 1951. Once they arrived, the pilots were transferred to other combat units. Three 166<sup>th</sup> pilots were selected to fly the F-86 Sabre jets with the 4<sup>th</sup> Fighter Interceptor Wing based at Kimpo Field near Seoul. Bill Prindle joined the 334<sup>th</sup> Fighter Interceptor Squadron while Don Griffith went into the 335<sup>th</sup>. They saw no immediate action; instead the men redid training and flying records. "We weren't flying," explained Colonel Griffith, "we were just doing paperwork—making ourselves look like the Air Force. We didn't start operating for six months." (Figures 4 through 6).



*Figure 4* Uncanny picture of F-86E #50-0680 assigned to the 4<sup>th</sup> Fighter Interceptor Wing. Lt. Prindle's plane was 50-0681. The "E" model featured a completely moveable tail assembly. The F-86E planes replaced the earlier "A" model in 1951.





*Figure 5 Photo of Lt. Bill Prindle and Japanese worker.*

The spring of 1951 through early 1952 was a tough time for the Air Force in Korea. Experienced Russian pilots, many of whom were instructors and World War II veterans, replaced less skilled Communist aviators. A number of Russian aces flying the MIG-15 suddenly confronted the F-86 pilots, and the results were devastating as the U.S. Air Force grimly fought to regain air superiority. Don Griffith shot down a MIG-15 during that period. Bill Prindle approached the end of his combat tour marked by harrowing experiences.

The Air Force lost 14 planes for the week ending December 23, 1951, which was a record loss at the time. All except one of the

planes went down due to Communist ground fire. The other plane was lost in air-to-air combat that week - F-86E #50-0681 flown by 1/Lt. William Francis Prindle. He was shot down by Captain Nikolai V. Sutyagin, the second-ranking Russian ace of the Korean War on December 15, 1951. Sutyagin's official log entry states, "15 December 1951 - shot up one F-86E of the 334 FIS. The unfortunate pilot (William F. Prindle) crashed and died while trying to land at Suwon airbase." Prindle's name actually appears in parentheses in Sutyagin's log.

The Air Force's Loss Incident Summary was terse: "PRINDLE, William F. 1LT USAF RCV (remains recovered). Aircraft damaged by MIGs, lost hydraulic system, aborted landing, bailed out, chute did not open." Colonel Don Griffith witnessed his death and recounted the event during a recent conversation. "He tried to land his plane," Griffith said, "but his hydraulics were gone and he couldn't control it. That's when he bailed out, but his chute didn't open. I saw it happen."

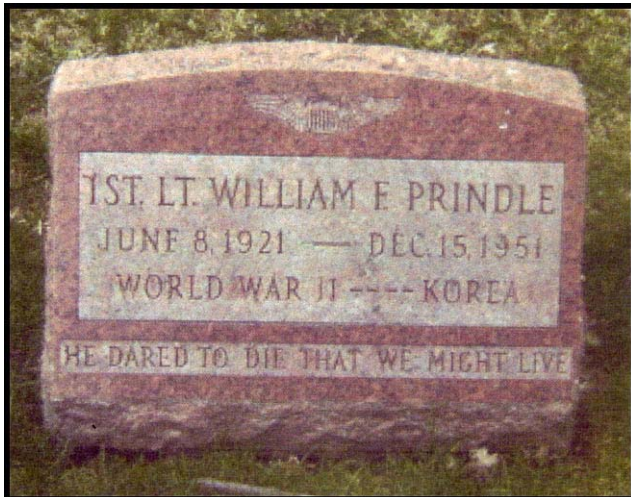
News moved slowly in 1951. The first public notice appeared in Columbus newspaper obituaries on February 13, 1952. Another was published on May 5<sup>th</sup> announcing that a memorial service would be held at the Lockbourne Air Force Base chapel. The cover's front is shown as *figure 1*. The contents likely pertained to Prindle's subscription to the Ohio State Journal newspaper. It was mailed at Columbus, Ohio, on January 22, 1952, to the pilot's overseas address which was shown as A.P.O. #994. The military base served by



*Figure 6 "R & R" in Japan. Donald Griffith (left) and Bill Prindle at the Johnson Air Base officer's club, 1951.*

that APO was Johnson Air Base, Irumigawa, Japan. Probably at that location Prindle's unit and APO number were crossed out and the circled "76" was written in pencil. A.P.O. #76 was at Kimpo Air Base, Korea, where the 4<sup>th</sup> Fighter Interceptor Wing was based. At some point a unit casualty officer verified that Prindle was deceased.

Figure 2 shows the backstamps which track the cover's movements. APO #994 is the earliest marking which was applied on February 18, 1952. On February 20<sup>th</sup>, a lieutenant of the 334<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron made the "search" notation on the front. The back shows an APO #76 machine cancel applied February 22<sup>nd</sup> at Kimpo Air Base where the 334<sup>th</sup> FIS was based. From there it was handled at Tokyo's APO 925. It reached Columbus on or about March 4<sup>th</sup> as evidenced by the Ohio State Journal's circulation department marking on the front.



**Figure 7** Grave marker of William F. Prindle at Union Cemetery, Columbus, Ohio.

William Francis Prindle is interred in Union Cemetery along the Olentangy River in Columbus. May he always be remembered. (Figure 7).

*To be continued*

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# Passed by Army Censor: Update No. 2

By Richard W. Helbock

**John Pollard** of Victoria, **Hal Vogel** of Willingboro, NJ and **Michael Dattolico** of Columbus, OH, have provided me with a sufficient number of new reports of 1941-1942 censor mark information not included in *Passed by Army Censor* to justify a second update. It is a simple fact that no book such as this, which is merely a census of known examples, can ever be complete. There will always be the possibility of new discoveries, and these can come not only in the form of date extensions for reported markings and new numbers found in recorded handstamp types, but entirely new censor designs. This is, after all, the thrill of the hunt!

The book has been organized on a chronological and world geographical basis according to the following scheme:

- Chapter 2 Newfoundland Lend Lease
- Chapter 3 Caribbean Lend Lease
- Chapter 4 Iceland & Greenland
- Chapter 5 Alaska
- Chapter 6 Hawaii
- Chapter 7 Panama Canal Zone
- Chapter 8 Puerto Rico
- Chapter 9 The Philippines
- Chapter 10 Canada
- Chapter 11 United Kingdom
- Chapter 12 South Atlantic
- Chapter 13 Sub-Saharan Africa
- Chapter 14 The Middle East
- Chapter 15 China-Burma-India Theater
- Chapter 16 Australia
- Chapter 17 South Pacific
- Chapter 18 North Africa –

Operation Torch

Newly reported discoveries will follow the same organization and will reference censor types, tables, charts and figures cited in the book. Reports of date range extensions and new numbers for standard censor types will be accompanied by an illustration of the standard handstamp only, but newly discovered handstamp varieties will be illustrated when possible.

## Chapter 2 Newfoundland Lend Lease

Type 801A.1 new earliest date is Jan. 5, 1942 (Pollard)

## Chapter 3 Caribbean Lend Lease

**Boxed Oval Censor Handstamps**

**Additions to Table 3-4** (Pollard)

APO #602 New Censor Number: 202

## Chapter 4 Greenland & Iceland

Evidence that the boxed oval “90” (figure 4-8) is really just a defective “900” (Vogel)

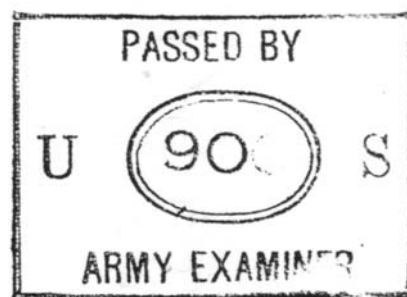


Figure 1

**Addition to Table 4-2**

APO 958 added to use of Censor Number 900

## Chapter 5 Alaska

FIGURE 2 APO 727 1943 provisional (Pollard)

FIGURE 3 APO 931 illegible straight line crossed (Vogel)

FIGURE 4 FORT GREELY P + Straight line (Vogel)

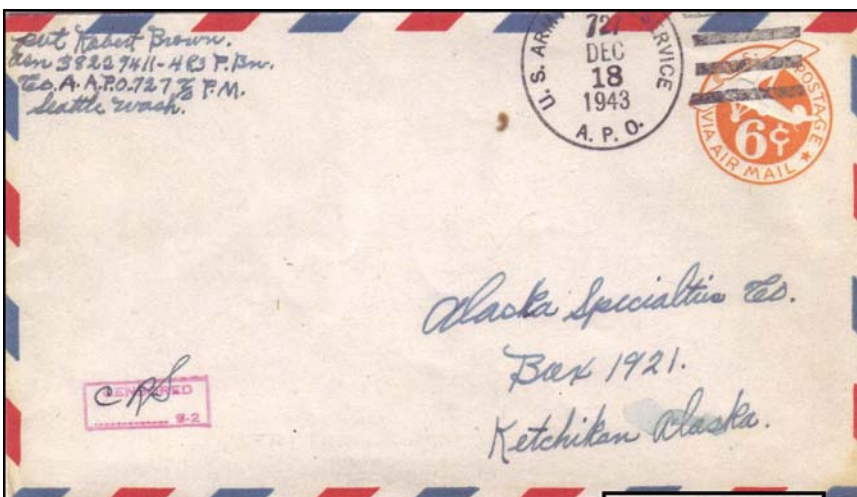


Figure 2

Inset shown full size





Figure 3

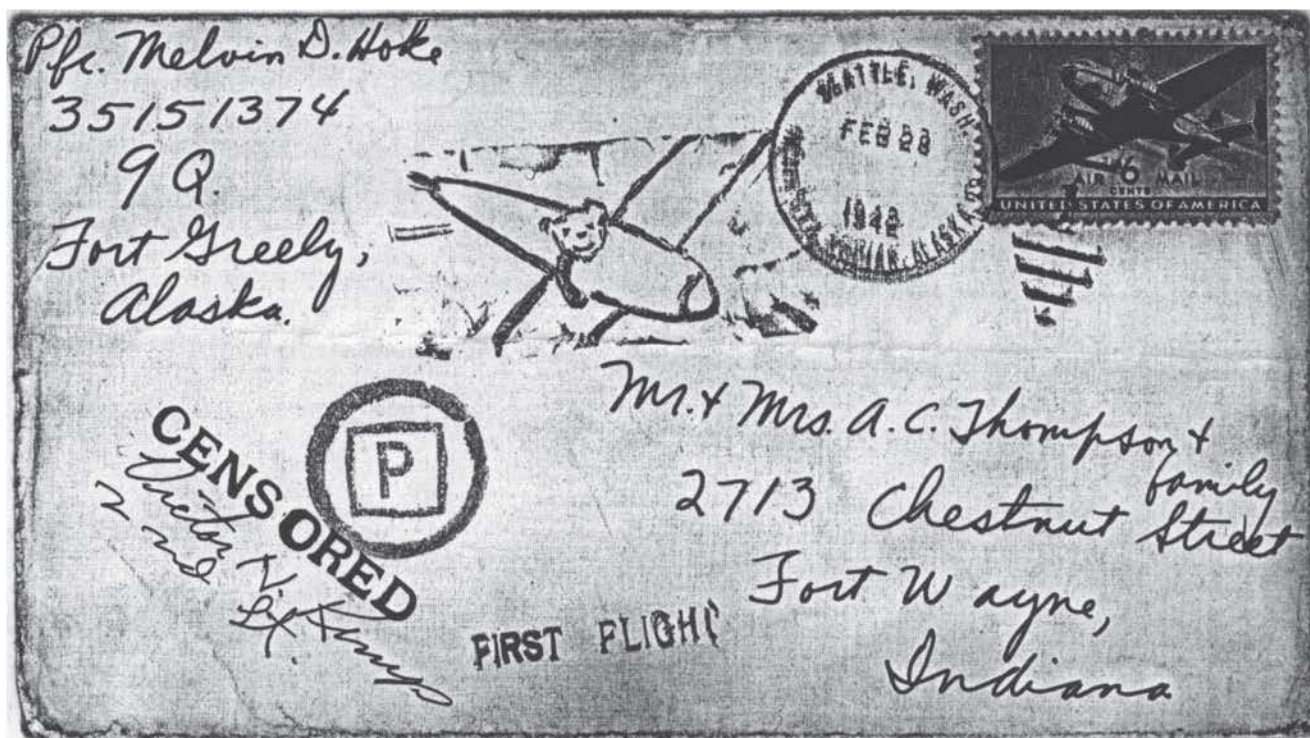


Figure 4





Figure 5

## Chapter 6 Hawaii

### Type A Censor Marks

Additions to Table 6-2: (Pollard)

APO 952 New Censor Number: 796

APO 958 New Censor Number: 92

APO 959 New Censor Numbers: 458 & 1041

APO 960 New Censor Number: 708

APO 961 New Censor Number: 1049 New Latest Date: 30 Sep 1942

APO 962 New Censor Numbers: 744

APO 40 New Censor Number: 1193

Figure 5 APO 962 above

## Chapter 7 Panama Canal Zone

### Additions to Table 7-2

(Pollard)

APO 826 New Censor  
Number: 00090

APO 827 New Censor  
Number: 00033

New Latest  
Date: 23 Feb 1943

APO 834 New Censor  
Number: 00025 New

Latest Date: 11 Oct 1942

## Chapter 8 Puerto Rico

### Additions to Table 8-5

(Pollard)

APO 851 New Censor  
Number: 20

## Chapter 9 The Philippines

Figure 6 below

## Chapter 10 Canada

### Additions to Table 10-4

APO 669 NEW

PROVISIONAL FIGURE 7

(Pollard)

## Chapter 11 United Kingdom

Boxed Oval Censor

### Handstamps:

Addition to Table 11-2: (Pollard)

APO 634 Boxed Oval No. 09288 postmarked 14 Nov 1942

## Chapter 12 South Atlantic

Boxed Oval No. 421 used on cover postmarked APO 643 (Parnamirim, Brazil) date 6 Dec 1942. Question: Was the handstamp—known used at Atkinson Field as late as 6 June—transferred to APO 643, or was APO 643 mail censored at Atkinson Field in December 1942?

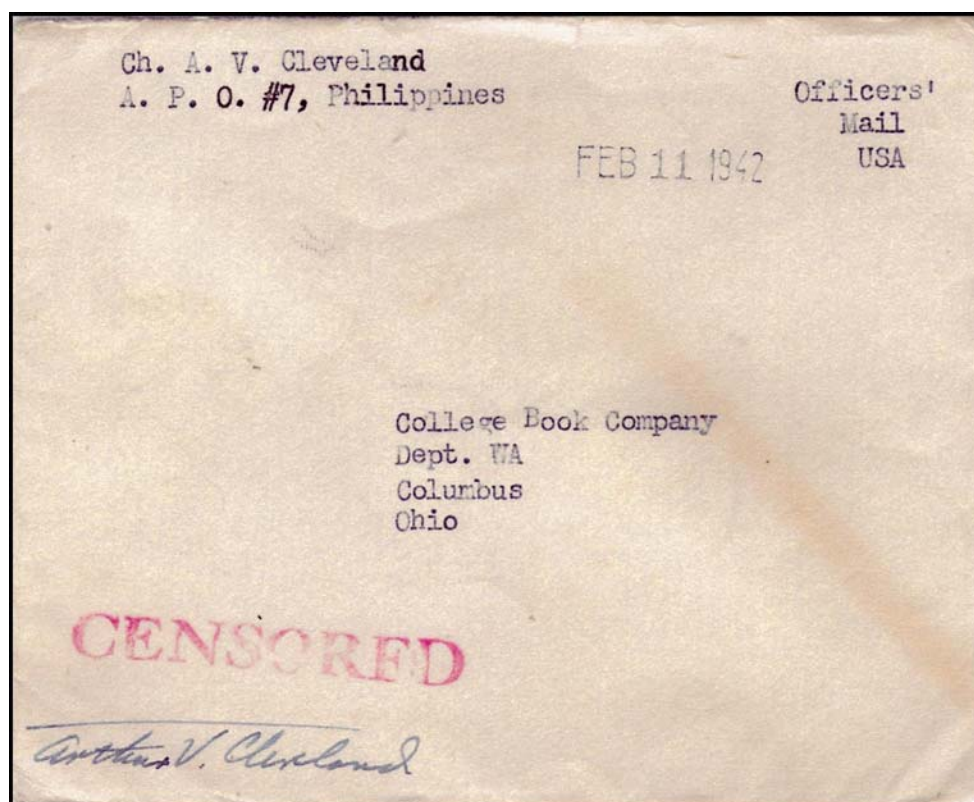


Figure 6 Earliest Type Phil-3 Censor handstamp (Dattolico)



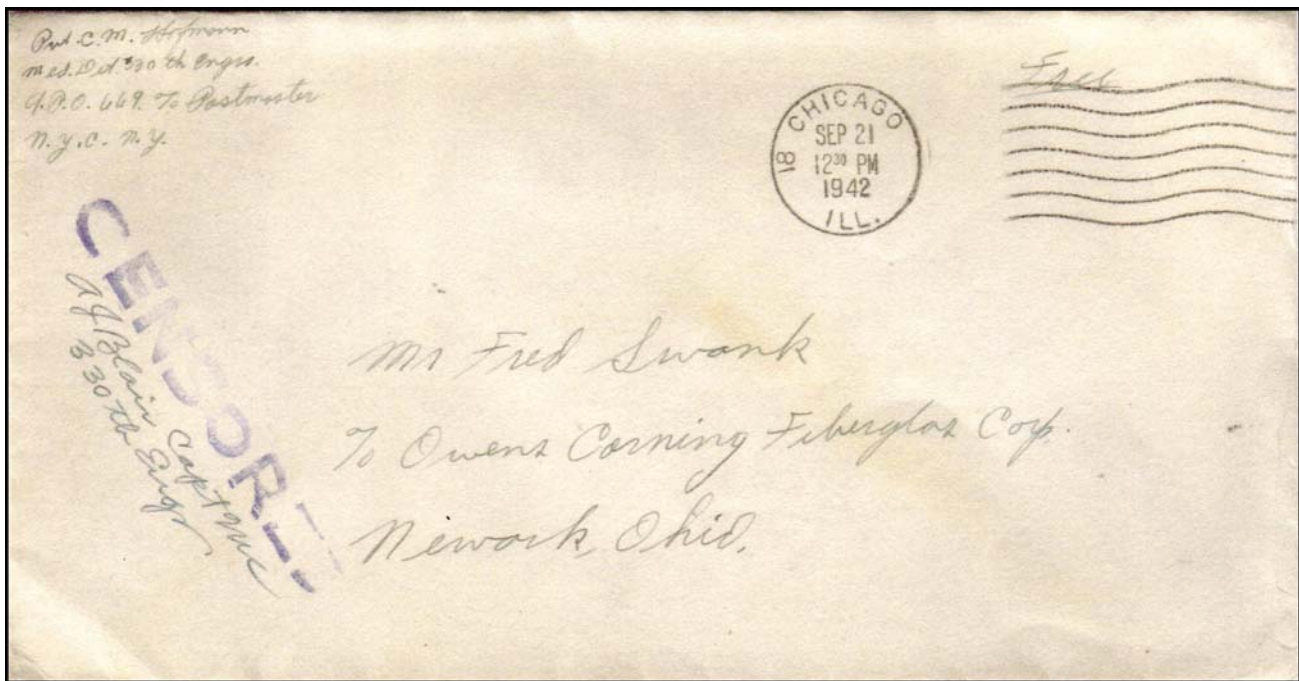


Figure 7

## Chapter 15 China-Burma-India Theater

### Shield Handstamps (Pollard)

New Type B "Examined by Theater Censor: *FIGURE 8*  
Addition to Table 15-4:

APO 886 add Censor Type B No. 25

## Chapter 16 Australia

New Personal Censor *FIGURE 9* (Pollard)

### Australia Type A Markings (Pollard)

Addition to Table 16-4:

Censor #34: APO 41 Add APO 922 39<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron

Censor #44 First report APO 32 HQ MP Company

*FIGURE 10*

Figure 8







Figure 9

Figure 10



## Chapter 17 South Pacific

Note figure 17-9 & appropriate text page 205. Pollard reports an example of Hawaii Type A with Number 60 on co with Btry C, 251<sup>st</sup> CA postmarked APO 913 on 4 Jan 1943

## Chapter 18 North Africa


APO 650 dated 24 Dec 1942 with HQ & HQ Squad., 12<sup>th</sup> Air Force Boxed Oval with number 10346 not previously reported used at APO 650 (Pollard).


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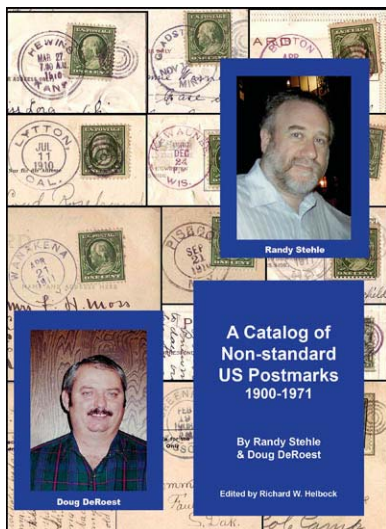
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**Subject: letter to the editor**  
**From: Don Glickstein**

Bill, I hope you'll consider this as a short letter to the editor, or a clarification.

The superb guest column by Joe Bageant in the July *La Posta* left us hanging about the supposed law that California passed that would ban the words "mother" or "father" in the schools.

As Mr. Bageant suspected, this truly was a creation of "far-right Internet propaganda." In October 2007, Governor Schwarzenegger, a Republican, signed the Student Civil Rights Act, which added sexual orientation to the state's anti-discrimination law. It was designed to help address the issue of gay students being harassed and bullied.

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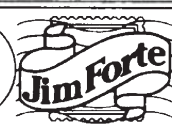
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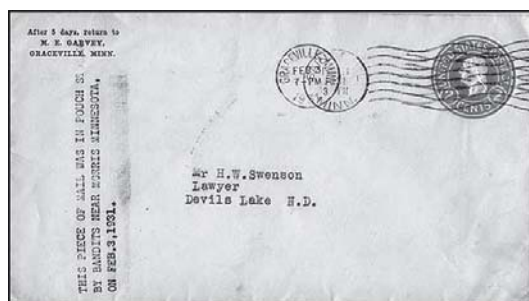
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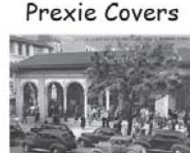
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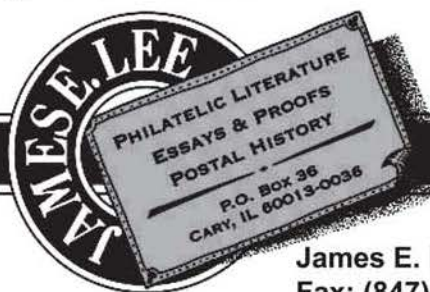
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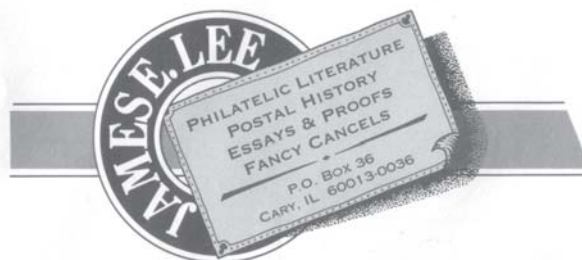
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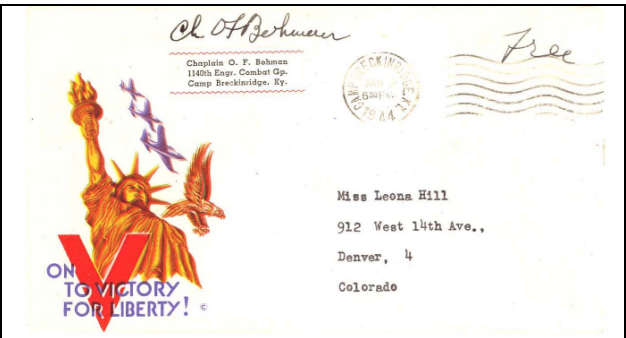
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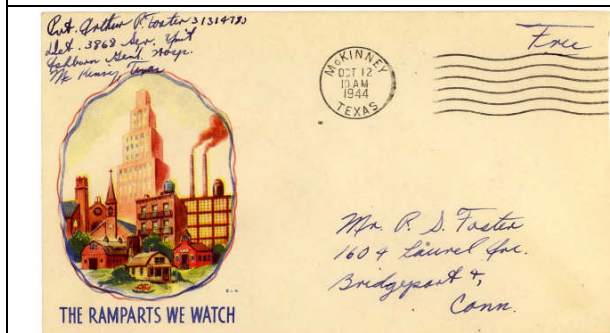
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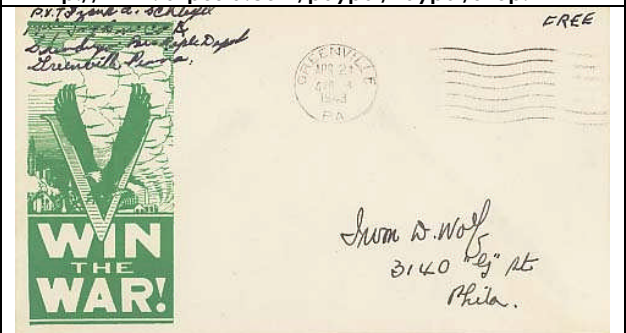
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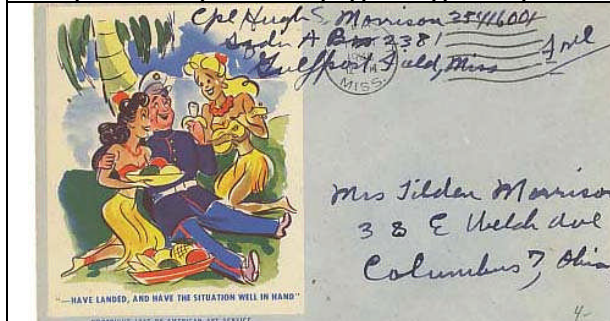
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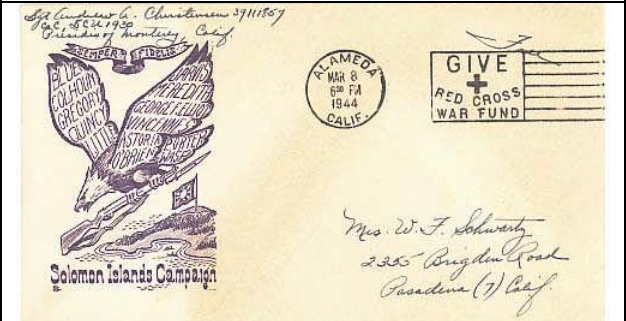
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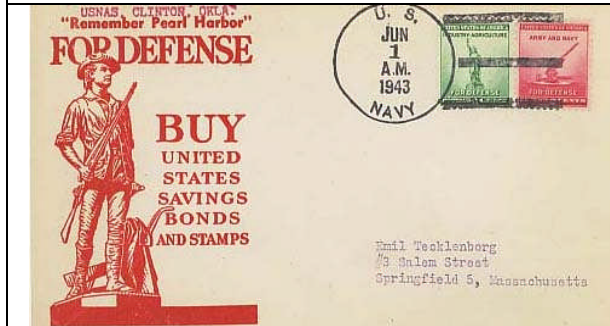
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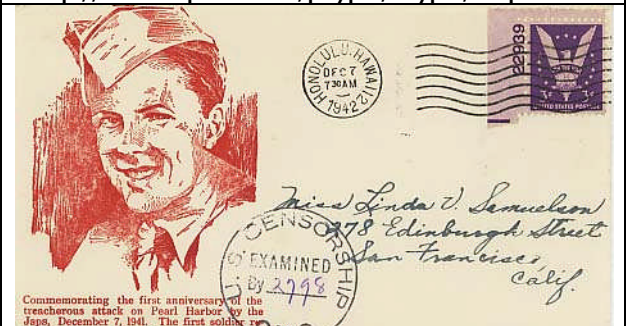
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