

# Postal History Journal

Published by the Postal History Society  
APS Affiliate No. 44

Issued February, June, October.

Annual dues \$35 U.S., \$40 Canada & Mexico  
\$50 rest of world (or \$15 for electronic journal,

Special to non U.S. members only)

P.O. Box 477, West Sand Lake NY 12196, U.S.A.

[www.postalhistorysociety.org](http://www.postalhistorysociety.org)



For this journal, the editors have been awarded the American Philatelic Congress Diane D. Boehret Award 2014; Reserve Grand Stampshow 2015; gold medals Napex 2009, Colopex 2007, Chicagopex 2018, APS Stampshow 2017; large gold APS Stampshow 2018.

---

**NUMBER 176**

**ISSN 0032-5341**

**JUNE 2020**

CONTENTS copyright 2020

## RESEARCH FEATURES

COVER ILLUSTRATION	47
WERE AMERICAN MAILS DELAYED during WORLD WAR I? by Sarah Badertscher and Frank W. Garmon Jr.	2
ABIDING by the NEUTRALITY ACT of 1939: "AFFIDAVIT FILED" & a Story of Emigration by David F. Frye	7
The GREAT POMEROY TRUNK ROBBERY by Clifford J. Alexander	21
PUSHING OPEN the PRISON DOORS: Snail Mail and the Resistance of the Postal System by Matthew Yasuoka, Therese Quinn, Erica R. Meiners	29
Princeton IL Post Office at 1908 Farmer's Carnival	41
POSTAL ARCHAEOLOGY: The Origin of Writing by Diane DeBlois & Robert Dalton Harris	42

## REVIEWS & COMMENTARY

AMERICAN POSTAL HISTORY in OTHER JOURNALS by Ken Grant	48
FOREIGN POSTAL HISTORY REVIEWS with Rob Faux	59

## SOCIETY FORUM

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE, Yamil Kouri	64
POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY OFFICERS and BOARD of DIRECTORS	47
POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY MEDAL RECIPIENTS	24

Publication supported by a bequest of Jesse and Diane Boehret

# Were American Mails Delayed During World War I?

By Sarah Badertscher and Frank W. Garmon Jr.

American entry into World War I created new challenges for the Post Office Department. The logistics of transporting and delivering thousands of pounds of letters and parcels to millions of soldiers was immense. Following traditions established in previous American wars, Postmaster General Albert Sidney Burleson petitioned Congress to allow soldiers to send mail to the United States for free and to treat outgoing letters addressed to soldiers as regular domestic post. By the time the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) landed on the continent in June of 1917, the Post Office Department was waiting for them. Postal officials surveyed the British and French postal systems extensively and by the end of the war 151 military branch post offices were in operation across Europe. The Post Office Department delivered mail and unaddressed magazines for the leisure of entire regiments to France daily, departing from New York City by steamship and arriving in France at Bordeaux roughly a week later. From there, mail would be transmitted to Boulogne-Billancourt, a neighborhood in Paris, to be distributed to the different companies on the Western Front. By August 1917, soldiers received mail from home every day, uninterrupted. Many newspapers placed advertisements in their columns, asking men and women on the home front to donate their magazines that were in good condition to be mailed to soldiers abroad. Transporting and delivering such a large volume of mail required a large operation. Theo Van Dam notes that at “one point, the Military Postal Express Service handled more mail than the entire French civilian postal system.”<sup>1</sup>

American postal officials had “every reason to believe” that mail deliveries during the 1917 Christmas season would be “unprecedented.” The Department began preparing for the holiday surge several months in advance, encouraging postmasters to emphasize the importance of early mailing. Officials were surprised, however, to learn that family members of soldiers complained that their letters were taking as long as three months to reach soldiers in the trenches. This figure did not register with the Department’s official records from the 1918 fiscal year. The Annual Report from the Postmaster General revealed that more than 60% of American soldiers could expect mail anywhere from fifteen to thirty days, while more than 80% could expect delivery within thirty-five days of the date postmarked. Fewer than one fifth of the soldiers in Europe received their mail more than thirty-five days after the date postmarked, and, even then, the figure reported by the Post Office was closer to five or six weeks, not three months. Newspaper accounts suggested that most mail took an average of three weeks to reach soldiers abroad, in line with the Department’s expectations. Given that mail to France typically arrived in one to two weeks before the war, the American postal service handled the wartime disruptions quite well.<sup>2</sup>



*Figure 1: Christmas mail arrives at Bruvans, France, 1917. (U.S. Army photograph)*

American postal officials could note confidently that their efforts had outperformed the Canadian postal service. Despite being the same distance from Europe and facing many of the same logistical challenges, American troops received their mail much faster than their Canadian counterparts. Canadian soldiers complained frequently of receiving their mail more than a month or two after being postmarked. Parcels coming from Canada took, on average, two or more months to arrive on the front lines. One Canadian soldier complained that “we were all disappointed about the Canadian Xmas mail, especially as we have been getting no letters.” By contrast, the American postal service could guarantee that parcels postmarked by November 15 would be delivered in time for Christmas morning.<sup>3</sup>

The Post Office Department worked closely with the War Department to ensure letters were distributed to soldiers once the mail arrived on the continent. The War Department, however, had more pressing priorities than mail delivery and the slower service can be attributed to military oversight rather than postal negligence. During the 1917 Christmas season, the Post Office distributed ninety-four carloads containing between 260,000 and 275,000 parcels to the various division headquarters. A close examination of the delivery records reveal that postal workers had delivered ninety carloads of parcels by December 25, and the remaining four by December 27, due to inclement weather at sea. In addition to the packages handled by the Post Office Department the Army independently oversaw the delivery of more than 250,000 Christmas packages sent directly to the port of embarkation.<sup>4</sup> As of March 1918, however, the Postmaster General noted that the Army had still failed to distribute “many thousands of these boxes.” While families of soldiers abroad

filed complaints to the Post Office Department because of this extreme delay, Postmaster General Burleson was adamant in explaining that it was the War Department and not the Post Office that had failed to deliver packages to the AEF in a timely manner. A letter from Burleson to Samuel Gompers, the President of the American Federation of Labor, the following summer is typical. In the letter Burleson notes that delivery “of mail to the individual soldiers has always been effected not by the Post Office Department but by the Army” and therefore “all complaints of failure or delayed delivery in France should, consequently, be taken up with the War Department.”<sup>5</sup>



*Figure 2: Christmas mail sorted at Pier 86, North River, N.Y.C., for the American Expeditionary Forces. The mail comes from every part of the country. November 20, 1918. Lt. George Lyon. (Army). (National Archives.)*

Censorship of the mail also fails to account for postal delays, even though all soldiers’ mail required censorship under the Espionage Act of 1917, and later the Sedition Act of 1918. While these acts proved disruptive for publishers, who now faced the loss of their second-class mailing privileges if they failed to cooperate with postal regulations, the laws did little to delay mail deliveries. Congressman William P. Borland of Missouri wrote to Burleson with concern that censorship might be impeding postal operations. He suggested that censoring mail in transit might improve the speed of service. Burleson replied noting that censorship had no effect on postal operations. Soldiers’ letters were reviewed by company commanders, and not by the Post Office Department. The Postmaster General noted that the “remedy for such delay as exists should be sought in the more expeditious handling by the Military authorities, rather than in a change of the method of censorship.”<sup>6</sup>

Postal officials anticipated large mail volumes again during the 1918 Christmas season. Burleson noted in a letter to the Secretary of War that General Pershing convened a committee “composed of a representative each from the War Department, and the Post Office Department, the Red Cross, the Y.M.C.A., and the Knights of Columbus” to coordinate with one another in preparation for

the Christmas season. New regulations designed to minimize the number of parcels in transit permitted soldiers to request packages sent to them after receiving permission from a regimental or higher commander. Members of Congress received numerous letters from citizens proposing that the number of Christmas gifts sent via parcel post should be unlimited. An amendment attached to a Post Office Appropriations bill in the Senate proposed limiting soldiers to one parcel per month from immediate family members.<sup>7</sup> A solution emerged in the form of Christmas Package Coupons issued to each soldier with instructions to send the coupon to family members who could use the label to return a package to Europe.<sup>8</sup> As a testament to postal efficiency that year, the Postmaster General reported that all of the election ballots for the midterm election of November 1918 arrived in time to be counted in the election. Burleson wrote to the Chairman of the Democratic National Committee, Congressman Scott Ferris of Oklahoma, reassuring him that the mail would be picked up and shipped off in a timely fashion. In this way, the Post Office was able to ensure that democracy was able to be carried out even as the nation was at war.<sup>9</sup>

For all the bad press that the Post Office receives today concerning “slow service,” or “snail mail,” the U.S. Postal service is still one of the most efficient and expedient postal systems in the world. Throughout American involvement in World War I, the U.S. Post Office aided soldiers in remaining in contact with their loved ones back home. Morale was high when food, clothes and cherished words could be sent easily back and forth across the ocean, a necessary comfort during the War to End All Wars.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> “Mails to Soldiers Prompt. U.S. Agency in France Working Smoothly, Mr. Burleson Says” 4 August 1917 *The Evening Star*, p. 2; *Annual Report of the Postmaster General* (U.S. Government Press: Washington, D.C., 1919), p. 8, 11; R. W. Sackett. “Air Mail in the AEF?” *The American Philatelist*, 95, no. 6 (June 1981), p. 501-504; “Packages for the United States Soldiers Fighting in France are Opened and Closely Examined” 27 January 1918 *The Sunday Star*, p. 4; “Gifts Suitable for American Soldiers on Duty” 26 August 1917, *The New York Times*, p. 11; Theo Van Dam, *The Postal History of the AEF, 1917-1923* (Fishkill, NY: Published by the War Cover Club by Printer's Stone, 1990), p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Postal Bulletin No. 11477, 17 October 1917; Lynn Heidelbaugh, “Holiday Parcels in World War I,” *Pushing the Envelope*, Smithsonian’s National Postal Museum, available online at <https://postalmuseumblog.si.edu/2017/12/one-of-the-most-frequent-questions-i-get-asked-as-a-curator-is-about-care-packages-namely-what-did-family-and-friends-send.html>; *Annual Report of the Postmaster General* (U.S. Government Press: Washington, D.C., 1918), p. 7; H. M. Sanford. “The Mail of the AEF.” *The American Philatelist*, 51, no. 5 (June 1937), p. 547-552, 595.

<sup>3</sup> M. Hanna, “War Letters: Communication between Front and Home Front”. In *1914-1918 Online*. 2014, October 8. Retrieved July 8, 2019, from <https://encyclopedia>.

1914-1918online.net/article/war\_letters\_communication\_between\_front\_and\_home\_front; John Russell Clark to Eva Auchinachie, 27 December 1917, quoted in Robert Sibley, "Christmas War Letters – 1917" *Ottawa Citizen* 27 December 2014, available online at <https://ottawacitizen.com/news/national/christmas-war-letters-1917>; "Post Office Department Arranges Christmas Cheer for Fighters Abroad." 11 November 1917. *The Sunday Star*, p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> Albert Sidney Burleson to Newton D. Baker, Secretary of War, 14 August 1918. *Office of the Postmaster General, Letters Sent 1789-1952*. The National Archives and Records Administration. RG 28, Box 71.

<sup>5</sup> *Annual Report of the Postmaster General* (U.S. Government Press: Washington, D.C., 1918), p. 7-8; Albert Sidney Burleson to Samuel Gompers, 20 July 1918. *Office of the Postmaster General, Letters Sent 1789-1952*. The National Archives and Records Administration. RG 28, Box 71.

<sup>6</sup> Albert Sidney Burleson to William P. Borland, House of Representatives, 25 July 1918. *Office of the Postmaster General, Letters Sent 1789-1952*. The National Archives and Records Administration. RG 28, Box 71.

<sup>7</sup> Albert Sidney Burleson to Newton D. Baker, Secretary of War, 14 August 1918. *Office of the Postmaster General, Letters Sent 1789-1952*. The National Archives and Records Administration. RG 28, Box 71.

<sup>8</sup> Ed Dubin and Al Kugel, "WWI 100: Philately Tells the Story of U.S. Centennial in the Great War" *American Philatelist*, April 2017, p.345.

<sup>9</sup> Albert Sidney Burleson to Scott Ferris, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Democratic Congressional Committee. 26 August 1918. *Office of the Postmaster General, Letters Sent 1789-1952*. The National Archives and Records Administration. RG 28, Box 71.

---

**Sarah Badertscher** is a senior at Christopher Newport University majoring in Political Science, with minors in French and Leadership Studies. Born and raised in Annapolis, Maryland, she now lives in Alexandria, Virginia. Last summer she participated in CNU's Summer Scholars program and conducted research at the National Archives in Washington D.C. Badertscher studied abroad in Aix-en-Provence, France this spring.

**Frank W. Garmon Jr.** is a postdoctoral fellow at Christopher Newport University with the Center for American Studies. Garmon studied history and economics at Christopher Newport University, before completing his MA and PhD in history at the University of Virginia. He specializes in economic and business history, has collected stamps for more than twenty years, and has started researching for a second book project examining the business history of the Post Office Department from the telegraph through early airmail.

# Abiding by the Neutrality Act of 1939: “AFFIDAVIT FILED” & a Story of Emigration

By David M. Frye

## Introduction



Figure 1: Otto Sochaczewer sent an envelope by registered air mail from New York, New York, to Manningham, England, on April 8, 1940 (original: 152.0 mm × 231.0 mm).

Despite the September 1939 onset of the open military conflict that marked the outbreak of World War II, postal services continued to offer their patrons as much of the menu of routine operations for as long as proved practical. The envelope depicted in Figure 1, for example, shows various markings on its front and a collection of postmarks on its back. This whole assembly of in-transit handling marks presents the traces of the sort of mix of routine and extraordinary postal operations employed by the U.S. Post Office Department (USPOD) in the period between Germany’s invasion of Poland and Japan’s bombing of Pearl Harbor.

A close reading of the cover’s postage stamps, postmarks, and auxiliary markings will support an account telling how the envelope both reflects its his-

torical period and records the work of postal clerks to implement interim postal requirements. An investigation of the envelope's sender, Otto Sochaczewer, will show how his life entwined with the same geopolitical forces that shaped the appearance of this eighty-year-old envelope. In this text, presentations of the applied postal markings use virgules (/) to separate the lines of text in multiline elements. The dimensions of the identified markings were obtained using a 0.5-mm-graduated metric rule (H-3412A, Shinwa Measuring Tools Corp., Schaumburg, Illinois). Summaries of the details of the envelope's postage stamps, postmarks, and auxiliary markings appear in the Appendix in Tables 1, 2, and 3, respectively on page 20.

### Preparing for Registered Air Mail

The postal clerk who accepted this envelope from its sender, Otto Sochaczewer, left no doubt that the mailing would honor the sender's typed instruction—"via AIRMAIL"—by marking the envelope four times with an auxiliary marking, "VIA AIR MAIL," presented in Fig. 2(a). Then, because Mr. Sochaczewer also typed the notice, "REGISTERED," requesting the USPOD treat the letter as registered, the clerk added one purple auxiliary marking—"REGISTERED"—and two blue notations of the letter's registry number: "640204." These markings appear in Figs. 2(b) and 2(c), respectively. The USPOD had set the air-mail rate for letters from the continental United States to Europe at 30¢/half-ounce on May 23, 1939 (Wawrukiewicz and Beecher, 1996, p. 104). The international registration fee of 15¢, effective December 1, 1925, provided an indemnity against loss of \$9.65 or 50 francs (Wawrukiewicz and Beecher, 1996, p. 233). This indemnity would be equivalent to \$176.85 in 2019 dollars, adjusting for inflation (U.S. Dollar Inflation Calculator, 2019).

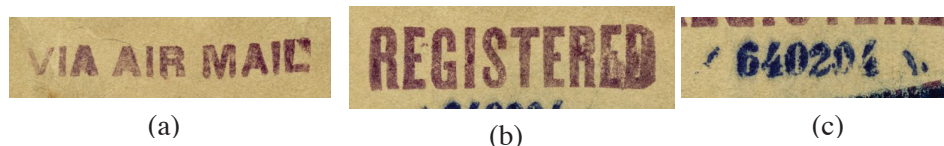


Figure 2: VIA AIR MAIL (original: 47.5 mm × 5.5 mm). (b) REGISTERED (original: 47.0 mm × 10.5 mm). (c) 640204 registry number (original: 32.0 mm × 5.0 mm).

The letter bears a mix of three stamp denominations from two issues, as summarized in Table 1 in the Appendix. The total of the stamps, \$1.95, represents 15¢ for the registry fee and \$1.80 for a letter weighing between 2.5 and 3 oz., where each half ounce costs 30¢. The postal clerk also marked the letter with the vertical and horizontal intersecting lines of blue, the internationally recognized convention for identifying a letter sent by registered mail. Four postmarks applied to the back of the envelope bear the date April 8, 1940, indicating that Mr. Sochaczewer posted his letter on that date, a Monday. The clerk applied two magenta postmarks straddling the end flaps on the back of the envelope; this placement provided a way of showing evidence of tampering.

These postmarks noted the location of mailing: “NEW YORK, N.Y. (TIMES SQ. STA.).

### **Abiding by the Neutrality Act of 1939**

In normal times—times of peace—these preparations would have set all essential pieces in place for the letter to begin its journey from New York to Manningham. However, because April 8, 1940, fell during the early days of a war in which the United States had not yet entered, the USPOD applied an additional step to its handling of this letter destined for Great Britain. The front of the envelope bears two handstamps that state “AFFIDAVIT FILED.” These unusual markings refer to the provisions outlined in “Shipment of Articles or Materials by Mail Under the Neutrality Act of 1939, to Certain Foreign Countries,” released in *The Postal Bulletin* on January 23, 1940, not quite three months before the date of mailing (U.S. Post Office Department, 1940).

This bulletin entry, authorized by Ambrose O’Connell, Second Assistant Postmaster General, applied new procedures to “shipments under the [Neutrality A]ct of articles or materials by parcel post and *in the regular mails*” [emphasis added] to “belligerent countries,” which included the United Kingdom. Thus, this letter, addressed to Manningham, England, fit the initial screen for inclusion in this procedure. Next, the entry offered “guidance of mailing post offices accepting articles or materials in parcel post packages and articles or *materials of material value* in small packets, *letters*, or other class mail” [emphases added].

The postal instruction distinguishes the treatment of “Air mails (by aircraft from the United States)” and “Mails (other than mails for dispatch by aircraft from the United States).” This letter would have fallen into the air-mails category. Within this category, List E stipulates:

No articles or materials (neither with nor without the declaration) shall be accepted in the air mails for dispatch by the trans-Atlantic air service to the following belligerent countries and neutral countries mails for which pass through certain belligerent countries: ... Great Britain and Northern Ireland (USPOD, 1940, p. 1)

Thus, whether or not a sender made a stipulated declaration regarding the contents of a mail piece, the instruction states that such pieces containing “articles or materials” could not be sent by air mail to belligerent countries, including Great Britain. There were exceptions, however, for “articles or materials sent in the regular mails which are not of material value.”

The instruction then outlines the steps to postal clerks and customers to follow for sending a piece of mail to “certain foreign countries”:

When parcel-post packages, small packets, any letter or other class mail containing articles or materials of material value, that require the declaration under oath as indicated above, are presented, the mailing post office shall obtain the declaration under oath, and then stamp or write, in prominent letters on the address side of the

article, “AFFIDAVIT FILED,” with the initials of the clerk accepting the article. ... After the mail article is marked “AFFIDAVIT FILED,” it shall be given dispatch in the usual way (USPOD, 1940, p. 1).

The text of the affidavit appeared in the bulletin under the heading, “Form of declaration under oath.”

Mr. Sochaczewer’s letter received two “AFFIDAVIT FILED” auxiliary markings before it left the Times Square Station. Figure 3, below, presents one of the two markings, along with the clerk’s identifying notation written below “IT FIL.”

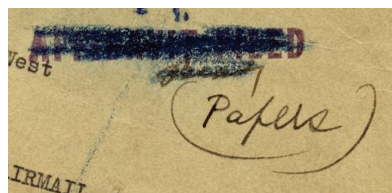


Figure 3: *AFFIDAVIT FILED* auxiliary marking (original: 46.0 mm × 5.0 mm) visible beneath postal clerk’s blue pencil cross-out. The clerk’s crossed-out identification appears beneath the marking. The penned notation “(Papers)” sits below the clerk’s name or initials.

The post office’s Registry Division (REG’Y. DIV.) recorded its reception and handling of the envelope with two circular date stamps, one of which is shown in Figure 4(a), and a two-ring oval postmark appearing in Figure 4(b). The clerk applied these postmarks in the customary location on the back of the envelope. Finally, a second postmark of the same shape, shown in Figure 4(c), documented the envelope’s passing into the “FOREIGN” mails. Note that a postal clerk later used a blue pencil to cover up the two auxiliary markings and the clerk’s identifier; even so, the marking texts remain legible. At the same time, most likely, a clerk appended a handwritten clarification —“(Papers)” —that noted the letter’s contents. On April 8, however, the letter took its first steps without these cross-outs and clarifying notation.

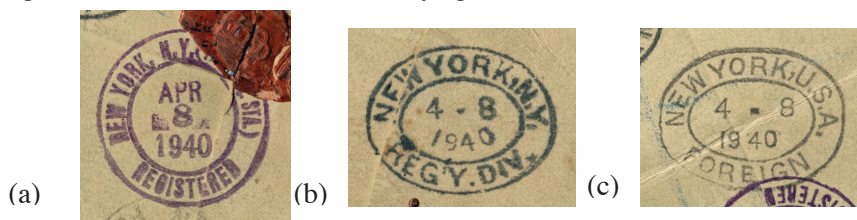


Figure 4: New York postmarks of April 8, 1940. (a) *REGISTERED* (original: 30.0 mm × 30.0 mm). (b) *REG’Y DIV.* (original: 31.5 mm × 25.0 mm). (c) *FOREIGN* (original: 32.0 mm × 25.0 mm).

This sequence of steps for mailing a registered air-mail envelope to Great Britain, supplemented by the application of the procedure for abiding by the Neutrality Act of 1939 would have been complete had the letter contained “material of material value.” The gap of dates exhibited by the backside postmarks—April 8 to April 11—provides some indication that a clerk or clerks

realized that the letter did not meet the requirements mandating the “AFFIDAVIT FILED” auxiliary marking. Thus, on April 11, the letter passed through the hands of the New York Post Office’s Registry Division a second time and received a second date stamp on its backside, as the image of the back of the envelope in Figure 1, above, shows.

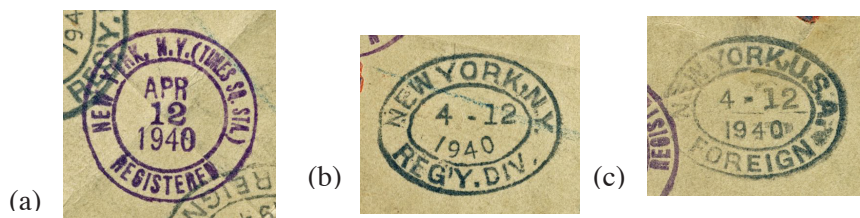


Figure 5: New York postmarks of April 12, 1940. (a) REGISTERED. (b) REG'Y DIV. (c) FOREIGN.

It is unclear whether a clerk changed the envelope’s markings, represented by the blue pencil obliterations of the two “AFFIDAVIT FILED” auxiliary markings and the clerk’s initials, on April 11 or 12. The envelope also does not record whether the mailing customer, Mr. Sochaczewer, conferred with the postal clerk to withdraw his declaration. In any event, the changes turned the letter back into more conventional piece traveling by registered air mail. Finally, the Registry and Foreign divisions applied their necessary two and one postmarks, respectively, to the backside of the envelope, as depicted in Figure 5 above. Ultimately, the letter made its way to England by clipper.

### Clarifying Instructions for Dispatching Exchange Post Offices

The concluding paragraphs of the postal bulletin’s instruction outline clearly the ban placed on mailing “materials of value,” those subject to the requirement for an affidavit, to belligerent countries. The section on dispatches by aircraft notes:

No dispatch shall be made by aircraft of articles or materials for the trans-Atlantic belligerent countries (those in Europe, on the Mediterranean and on the West Coast of Africa), neither to those countries direct nor to a neutral port in that zone for onward dispatch to such belligerent countries. This includes articles or materials for neutral countries for transit through said belligerent countries (see list E) [note: Great Britain appeared in list E] (USPOD, 1940, p. 2).

Finally, the instruction concludes with a general note covering the lengths to which clerks ought to go to assure the proper treatment of mailings. The description, cited below, mentions that clerks ought to make an informed judgment about the contents of mailings based on their appearance.

Where the declaration is required, any parcel post package, small packet, or letter *appearing to contain articles or materials of material value* [emphasis added], that are not marked “AFFIDAVIT FILED,” shall be withheld from dispatch. In the cases where the only reasonably available dispatch is by a vessel requiring the declaration, the dispatching exchange office shall take action toward securing the declaration. In cases where there are available dispatches at times by vessels requiring the declaration, the dispatching exchange office shall dispatch the articles or materials marked “AFFIDAVIT FILED” in the regular way by any available vessel, but articles or materials not marked “AFFIDAVIT FILED” shall be given dispatch only by an available vessel not requiring the declaration (USPOD, 1940, p. 2).

Given the complexity of the requirements for identifying and classifying mailings that were subject to the requirements arising from the USPOD’s mandate to abide by the Neutrality Act, the changes in handling applied to this letter during the four days it spent in the New York post office seem reasonable. In the end, the letter, because it contained papers and not any “materials of value,” was not subject to the requirement to bear documentation that the sender had filed an affidavit swearing to the contents of the mailing. Thus, a clerk crossed out the “AFFIDAVIT FILED” notations, added the “(Papers)” comment, and dispatched the letter on April 12, 1940.

### **Tracing the Outlines of the Life of Otto Sochaczewer**

#### *Clues from the Envelope*

The sender of this large brown envelope mistyped his name but corrected himself by overtyping the first two letters of his first name. The traces of his mailing’s preparation take the form of sans-serif addressing and service-specifying text. Otto Sochaczewer typed:

From: Otto Sochaczewer  
230 Central Park West  
New York City  
REGISTERED — via AIRMAIL BY CLIPPER.  
Mr. Alexander Jacoby  
1, Woodview  
Manningham, Bradford  
England

In addition to the correction of his first name, he also partially depressed the caps key on his typewriter when he was typing the initial letter in “York.” After backspacing and correcting himself, he continued. His choice to orientate the envelope vertically stands out as unusual; he prepared it in the portrait rather than landscape format and placed the flap at the bottom rather than the top of the backside. Then, when he had closed the clasped envelope, he added red sealing wax at three spots along the flap’s edge. The middle one still shows the imprint of an interlocking O–S monogram, illustrated in Figure 6. He apparent-

ly had the means to afford a custom-made tool or ring for personalizing his correspondence.

### *Life in Berlin*

Efforts to find out any details of the life of the recipient, Alexander Jacoby, came to naught. The search for information about Otto Sochaczewer, in contrast, proved to bear significant fruit.

One source brings some clarity to a picture of Otto's work before he came to the U.S. in 1938. A history of Jew clothiers in Germany's Third Reich refers to Otto Sochaczewer in a section devoted to tracing the fate of Sally Fraenkel's women's coat company. The history recounts:

A close look into the Berlin directory shows that attempts were made to drive "Sally Fraenkel" from Hausvogteiplatz, probably by the owners of the building; but the company executives were able maintain their location by renting space in an adjacent building. Between 1936 and 1939, the ladies' coat company moved not once, but twice – and the moves coincided with a change in ownership of the respective buildings. The company did not move into Mohrenstrasse 38 until the end of 1936. Until 1937, Jewish button manufacturer Otto Sochaczewer owned the buildings on Jerusalemer Strasse 24 and Mohrenstrasse 38. Sochaczewer, who was also persecuted, dissolved his company, sold his property, and emigrated to Amsterdam in May 1938. The new owner of the two buildings was W. Eichmann, non-Jew and retired high-level civil servant (Federal Ministry of Justice and Consumer Protection, 2016, p. 49).

This reference reveals that Otto was a button manufacturer and owner of commercial properties in Berlin. Another source notes that his business, founded in 1926, engaged in "*Knöpfe und Besätze en gros & Export*," the wholesaling and export of button and trimmings (Jewish Businesses in Berlin 1930–1945, 2019). He managed to extricate himself and at least some of his resources before he and Gertrud left Germany for Amsterdam, well in advance of the onset of World War II. From there, they came to the United States. It seems reasonable to conclude that Otto resumed work in the garment industry in New York. Perhaps his post-war trips to Europe enabled him to re-establish his business connections.

When Otto Sochaczewer sold his property, he parted with a painting by Peter Paul Rubens, shown in Figure 7. According to a report of the provenance of *Reconciliation of Romulus and Titus Tatius: Oil Sketch*, Otto Sochaczewer purchased the work from M. Gutmann of New York and sold it in 1937 (McGrath, 1997). The painting's date of sale aligns well with Otto Sochaczewer's sale of his buildings in 1937 and his emigration from Berlin to Amsterdam in May 1938.

Figure 6: O-S monogram imprinted on red sealing wax applied to clasp of envelope (original seal: 17.5 mm × 38.0 mm).



### *Emigration and Naturalization*

On October 15, 1938, Otto Sochaczewer and Gertrud, his wife, arrived in New York. Former residents of Amsterdam, they crossed the Atlantic Ocean aboard the *S.S. Nieuw Amsterdam*, which had departed Rotterdam on October 8, 1938. The “List or Manifest of Alien Passengers ...,” showed entries for Otto and Gertrud on the first two lines of the page. Their notations in the column headed “Race or People” listed “Hebrew” for each.

Each filed a Declaration of Intention in the U.S. District Court of the Southern District of New York on November 4, 1938. According to Otto’s declaration, No. 423394, he “was born in Berlin, Germany, on April 19, 1885.” Gertrud filed her declaration, No. 423393, stated that she “was born in Breslau, Germany, on September 18, 1887.” They were married on September 5, 1909, in Berlin, when she was almost twenty-two and he was twenty-four.

When they arrived in New York in 1938, Gertrud described herself as a white female with a fair complexion, grey eyes, and dark blonde hair. She was 5 foot 3 and weighed 125 pounds. Otto, a white male, was 5 foot 10, weighed 178 pounds, and had a fair complexion with brown eyes and grey hair. The photographs attached to their Declaration of Intention filings appear in Figure 8 below.



*Figure 7: Reconciliation of Romulus and Titus Tatius. Oil Sketch, Peter Paul Rubens, ca1622–1626 (RKD–Netherlands Institute for Art History, 2019).*



*Figure 8: The Sochaczewers. (a) Otto. (b) Gertrud.*

They listed one child, their daughter, Ellen Wartensleben, who was born July 31, 1910, in Germany. She and her husband, Willy, a merchant born in Hamstadt and ten years her senior, had traveled to the United States on the *S.S.*

*Hamburg* on September 29, 1932, according to a manifest of “non immigrant passengers.” She lived in London when the couple arrived in New York but had moved to Philadelphia by the time Otto and Gertrud had filed their Petitions for Naturalization, Nos. 485314 and 485315, respectively, on April 26, 1944. The couple declared their allegiance to the United States and became citizens in August 1944. Otto became a citizen on August 10, and Gertrud followed on August 29.

When the Gertrud and Otto became U.S. citizens, four years after Otto had signed his name to his affidavit documented on the envelope, they swore to the truth of their stated desires to become citizens. Their Petitions for Naturalization state:

It is my intention in good faith to become a citizen of the United States and to renounce absolutely and forever all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, State, or sovereignty of whom or which at this time I am a subject or citizen, and it is my intention to reside permanently in the United States. I am not, and have not been for the period of at least 10 years immediately preceding the date of this petition, an anarchist nor a believer in the unlawful damage, injury, or destruction of property, or sabotage; nor a disbeliever in or opposed to organized government; nor a member of or affiliated with any organization or body of persons teaching disbelief in or opposition to organized government .... Wherefore, I, your petitioner for naturalization, pray that I may be admitted a citizen of the United State of America .... I, aforesaid petitioner, do swear (affirm) that I know the contents of this petition for naturalization subscribed by me, that the same are true to the best of my own knowledge, except as to matters therein stated to be alleged upon information and belief, and that as to those matters I believe them to be true, and that this petition is signed by me with my full, true name: SO HELP ME GOD.

The Sochaczewers signed their names to these statements in an historical context that elevates the import of their disavowal of their ties to Germany, their home country. On August 10, the day Otto became a citizen of the United States, American troops in the Pacific Theater freed Guam. Then, on August 29, the day that Gertrud joined Otto, an anti-German uprising, *Slovenské národné povstanie*, began in Slovakia.

The immigration records show that the Sochaczewers lived at various addresses in New York. When they filed their Declaration of Intention documents on November 4, 1938, they listed their residence as the Essex House, 160 Central Park South, New York. Otto’s draft registration card, filed in 1942, first listed a home address of 7 Chestnut Drive, Great Neck, Nassau, New York. A strike-through on the card changed the address to match the information they supplied when they filed their Petitions for Naturalization, on which they noted their home address as 1009 Park Avenue, New York.

When they boarded the *S.S. Nieuw Amsterdam*, Otto’s “calling or occupation” appeared as “director.” Her entry listed “housew[ife].” Otto later stated his occupation as “merchant” on his Declaration of Intention and “exporter” on his

Petition for Naturalization. Gertrud listed her occupation as “housewife” in both cases.

### American Lives

Passenger manifests (summarized in Table 4, an Appendix on page 20) show that Otto made several transatlantic trips both by sea and by air in the years following their initial immigration to the United States. This record must be partial because trips to and from the United States do not align in pairs. Even so, the manifests available online reveal some travel and personal details. The manifest for their April 22, 1939, departure from Southampton for New York notes that Otto and Gertrud could read and write both German and English. Gertrud traveled with Otto on occasion. Various manifests show that Otto listed his occupation as manager, director, and manufacturer. When both Otto and Gertrud flew from Amsterdam to New York in 1955, the manifest showed that Otto checked ten bags weighing an aggregate 106 kg (234 lbs.). The weight and count of checked bags are notable. Given his various occupational descriptions, especially “merchant” and “exporter,” one might conclude that he used the bags to bring merchandise to the United States.

Some additional documents point to the nature of Otto’s career. He registered for the draft in 1942, four years after he and Gertrud had emigrated to the United States and two years before he took his oath as a U.S. citizen. He was fifty-seven at the time, as his D.S.S. Form 1, depicted in Figure 9 shows. Here, he listed his employer as Gerard Wiener Co., Inc., 1261 Broadway, N[ew] Y[ork]. The building is a twelve-story hi-rise still standing in New York. The Gerard Wiener Co. no longer exists, so a search for its line of business reached a dead end.

Even before the end of World War II, Otto took on charitable work to aid others. He served as one of three co-chairmen of the Immigrants’ Victory Council (IVC), as documented by his name’s appearance on the letterhead of an offering of congratulations and welcome, dated February 18, 1944, written to John W. Pehle, the first director of the War Refugee Board. President Franklin D. Roosevelt had created the board through Executive Order 9417 on January 22, 1944 (Jewish Virtual Library, 2019). The letter noted:

REGISTRATION CARD—(Men born on or after April 28, 1877 and on or before February 16, 1897)			
SERIAL NUMBER 1019	1. NAME (Print) Otto	Middle Sochaczewer	ORDER NUMBER
2. PLACE OF RESIDENCE (Print) 7 Chestnut Street, Great Neck, Nassau, N.Y.	(Town, identify village, or city) (County) (State)		
3. MAILING ADDRESS Same			
4. TELEPHONE Great Neck 4923	5. AGE IN YEARS 57	6. PLACE OF BIRTH Berlin (Town or county) Germany (State or country)	
7. NAME AND ADDRESS OF EMPLOYER (Who Will Always Know Your Address) Gerard Wiener Co., Inc., 1261 Broadway, N.Y.			
8. EMPLOYER'S NAME AND ADDRESS Same			
9. PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OF BUSINESS Same			
I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE.			
D. S. S. FORM 1 (Revised 4-1-42)		16-2100-3	
		Otto Sochaczewer (Registrant's signature)	

Figure 9: Otto Sochaczewer’s draft registration card from 1942.

The IVC is the central body of all refugees from Nazi oppressed countries of Central Europe. Its aim is to intensify the war effort of immigrants and to help them in their adjustment to the American way of life (Immigrants' Victory Council, 1944).

Because Otto Sochaczewer appeared on the list of leaders of the IVC, one can assume that he both endorsed and worked to support the mission of this organization. His position as co-chairman placed him in a circle of leaders that included the IVC's chairman, Manfred George, a Berlin-born, Jewish attorney, author, journalist, and translator who founded *Aufbau*, a newspaper that aided Jews attempting to reestablish family ties in the wake of World War II (Wikipedia.org, 2019). In addition, Rudolph Callmann, one of the IVC's co-chairmen, was lawyer and author who "served as vice president and member of the executive committee of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, board chairman of the American Federation of Jews from Central Europe, and member of the presidium of the Council of Jews from Germany" (*The New York Times*, 1976). Thus, this letter shows Otto Sochaczewer's association and collaboration with Jewish leaders who immigrated to the United States and worked to address the plight of other Jews caught up in the catastrophe wrought by Germany's Nazi regime.

The later years of the lives of Otto and Gertrud Sochaczewer passed without leaving much public record. Otto died in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on October 1, 1969. He was eight- four. His ashes were inurned at the West Laurel Hill Cemetery, Bala Cynwyd, Pennsylvania, on November 5, 1969 (West Laurel Hill Cemetery & Funeral Home, 2019). Gertrud, serving as the executrix of Otto's estate, appeared in the Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania, on February 1, 1971, to resolve Otto's will (*Philadelphia Daily News*, 1971). Gertrud died in Dade, Florida, on February 18, 1979, at the age of ninety-one (Ancestry.com, *Florida Death Index, 1877-1998*). Her remains were interred next to Otto's on March 27, 1979.

### Conclusion

An almost eighty-year-old envelope plucked from a two-dollar bin at a local stamp show bears on its front and back the marks of efforts by the postal patron, Otto Sochaczewer, and the clerks in the New York Post Office to abide by the terms of the Neutrality Act of 1939. The complications arising from the interim arrangements in the USPOD to apply the act's requirements to postal operations led to the array of markings on the envelope. In particular, the use of the "AFFIDAVIT FILED" auxiliary marking and its subsequent revocation show that the details of those arrangements left room for questions about the interpretation of those requirements.

The envelope now is empty; thus, the contents of the communication between Otto Sochaczewer and the mailing's recipient are lost. Even so, the name and address of the sender offer enough of a lead to uncover a brief biography of

a couple—Otto and Gertrud—who navigated the perilous landscape of prewar Europe and escaped the rise of the Third Reich. Their emigration to the United States during the period when belligerents were on the rise in Europe evokes parallels with the passage of the envelope through the mails when the Neutrality Act had identified those same belligerents.

The full story of this envelope remains untold. The history of its handling by England's Royal Mail cannot be deciphered from the markings on the envelope. The sources that could contain the details from which to construct a biography of Alexander Jacoby remain unidentified. The nature of the relationship of Otto Sochaczewer and Alexander Jacoby lives on as a mystery. The identification of other envelopes with the "AFFIDAVIT FILED" auxiliary marking would aid in developing a deeper understanding of the USPOD's instructions for abiding by the Neutrality Act. Even so, the wealth of evidence the envelope offers and the depth of resources available to aid in interpreting that evidence come together to create this portrait of an empty envelope that retains the power to tell a story that is both postal and personal.

### Textual References

Federal Ministry of Justice and Consumer Protection, *Fashion and Persecution: The Fate of Jewish Clothiers in the Nazi Dictatorship on the Premises of Today's Justice Ministry*, October 2016.

Immigrants' Victory Council, "Letter to the War Refugee Board," February 18, 1944; [http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/\\_resources/images/wrb/wrb0257.pdf](http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/_resources/images/wrb/wrb0257.pdf), accessed 8 September 2019, in Records of the War Refugee Board, 1944–1945, Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library & Museum, Box 11.

Immigration and Naturalization Service, Passenger and Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1897–1957. Microfilm Publication T715, 8892 rolls. NAI: 300346. Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service; National Archives at Washington, D.C. Year: 1938; Arrival: New York, New York; Microfilm Serial: T715, 1897–1957; Microfilm Roll: Roll 6235; Line: 1; Page Number: 46. [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com); accessed 8 September 2019.

Jewish Businesses in Berlin 1930–1945, [http://www2.hu-berlin.de/djgb/www/find?language=en\\_US](http://www2.hu-berlin.de/djgb/www/find?language=en_US); accessed 29 September 2019.

Jewish Virtual Library, "The War Refugee Board: Background & Overview," <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/background-and-overview-of-the-war-refugee-board>; accessed 26 September 2019.

KLM, "Passenger Manifest," Flight KL 631, Amsterdam to New York, August 22, 1955.

Elizabeth McGrath, *Rubens: Subjects from History, Volume II: Catalogue & Indexes*, London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 1997.

*The New York Times*, "Rudolph Callmann, 83, Dies; Lawyer Aided Jewish Refugees," <https://www.nytimes.com/1976/03/15/archives/rudolph-callmann-83-dies-lawyer-aided-jewish-refugees.html>; accessed 26 September 2019.

*Philadelphia Daily News*, "Orphans' Court Division, Court of Common Pleas, Audit List," January 29, 1971, p. 36.

Gertrud Sochaczewer and Otto Sochaczewer, "United States of America: Declaration of Intention," November 4, 1938, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA); Washington, D.C.; *Index, 1917–1950 Declarations of Intention, U.S. District Court, Southern Dist. of New York, M1675*; Microfilm Serial: *M1675*; Microfilm Roll: 77.

Otto Sochaczewer, Draft Registration Card, *Fourth Registration Draft Cards (WWII)*. New York State Headquarters ca. 1942. NAI: 2555973. The National Archives at St. Louis, Missouri.

Scandinavian Airlines System, "Passenger Manifest," Flight No. 91211, departing New York, May 11, 1955.

*S.S. America*, "List of Outward-Bound Passengers (United States Citizens and Nationals)," New York to Bremerhaven, Germany, May 1, 1953.

*S.S. Hamburg*, "List or Manifest of Alien Passengers for the United [States] (Non-Immigrant Passengers!)," sailing from Hamburg, September 29, 1932.

*S.S. Mauretania*, "Cabin Class List of Outward-Bound Passengers," New York to Le Havre, May 4, 1949.

*S.S. Nieuw Amsterdam*, "List or Manifest of Alien Passengers for the United [States]," sailing from Rotterdam, June 2, 1938; October 8, 1938; from Southampton, April 22, 1939.

Trans World Airlines, Inc., "Passenger Manifest," Flight 861/04, Frankfurt–London–New York, June 4, 1957.

U.S. Dollar Inflation Calculator, [www.in2013dollars.com](http://www.in2013dollars.com); accessed 11 Sept. 2019.

U.S. Post Office Department, "Shipment of Articles or Materials by Mail Under the Neutrality Act of 1939, to Certain Foreign Countries," *The Postal Bulletin*, Vol. LXI, No. 17866, January 23, 1940.

Anthony S. Wawrukiewicz and Henry W. Beecher, *U.S. International Postal Rates, 1872–1996*, Portland, Oregon: Cama Publishing Company, 1996.

West Laurel Hill Cemetery & Funeral Home, "Records," <http://westlaurelhill.com/webcemeteries/records>; accessed 26 September 2019.

Wikipedia.org, "Manfred George," [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manfred\\_George](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manfred_George); accessed 26 September 2019.

---

David M. Frye collects items to inform his study of U.S. postal history of the 1960s and Tanzania's post-colonial postal history. His writings have appeared in *The Airpost Journal*, *Auxiliary Markings*, *B.E.A.—The Bulletin of the East Africa Study Circle*, *Postal History Journal*, *The Postal Label Bulletin*, *The United States Specialist*, and *The Vermont Philatelist*. A member of the Board of Directors of the Postal History Society, he lives in Franklin, Massachusetts, and works in nearby Framingham as a clerk for the U.S. Postal Service.

**Table 1.** Applied Postage Stamps

Stamp	Issue	Value	Count
James A. Garfield	Presidential Issue	20¢	2
William Howard Taft	Presidential Issue	50¢	3
Frances E. Willard, Educator	Famous Americans Issue	5¢	1

**Table 2.** Back-side Postmarks

Date	Text	Color	Count
APR / 8 / 1940	NEW YORK, N.Y. (TIMES SQ. STA.) / REGISTERED	Magenta	2
4 - 8 / 1940	NEW YORK, N.Y. / REG'Y. DIV.	Black	1
4 - 8 / 1940	NEW YORK, U.S.A. / FOREIGN	Black	1
4 - 11 / 1940	NEW YORK, N.Y. / REG'Y. DIV.	Black	1
APR / 12 / 1940	NEW YORK, N.Y. (TIMES SQ. STA.) / REGISTERED	Magenta	1
4 - 12 / 1940	NEW YORK, N.Y. / REG'Y. DIV.	Black	1
4 - 12 / 1940	NEW YORK, U.S.A. / FOREIGN	Black	1

**Table 3.** Front-side Markings

Text	Type	Size (mm)	Color	Count
REGISTERED – via AIRMAIL BY CLIPPER.	typed	51.0 × 3.0	Black	1
VIA AIR MAIL	inked	47.5 × 5.5	Purple	4
REGISTERED	inked	47.0 × 10.5	Purple	1
640204	inked	32.0 × 5.5	Blue	2
REGISTERED MAIL cross	pencil	83.0 × 150.0	Blue	1
AFFIDAVIT FILED	inked	46.0 × 5.5	Purple	2
Postal clerk's identifier	pen	18.5 × 7.0	Black	1
Strike-through of AFFIDAVIT FILED	pencil	53.0 × 7.0	Blue	2
Strike-through of postal clerk's identifier	pencil	18.0 × 3.0	Blue	1
(Papers)	pen	34.5 × 15.5	Black	1

**Table 4.** Transatlantic Crossings

Origin	Destination	Craft	Departure	Notes
Rotterdam, Netherlands	New York, N.Y.	<i>SS. Nieuw Amsterdam</i>	June 2, 1938	Otto
Rotterdam, Netherlands	New York, N.Y.	<i>SS. Nieuw Amsterdam</i>	Oct. 8, 1938	Otto & Gertrud
Southampton, Great Britain	New York, N.Y.	<i>S.S. Nieuw Amsterdam</i>	April 22, 1939	Otto & Gertrud
New York, N.Y.	Le Havre, France	<i>R.M.S. Mauretania</i>	May 4, 1949	Otto; 2 mo.; cabin class
New York, N.Y.	Bremerhaven, West Germany	<i>S.S. America</i>	May 1, 1953	Otto; 2 mo.
New York, N.Y.	No listing on manifest	Scandinavian Airlines System (SAS)	May 11, 1955	Otto; Fl. SAS 91211
Amsterdam, Netherlands	New York, N.Y.	Koninklijke Luchtvaart Maatschappij N.V. (KLM)	Aug. 29, 1955	Otto & Gertrud; Fl. KL 631
Frankfurt, West Germany	New York, N.Y.	Trans World Airlines (TWA)	June 4, 1957	Otto

# The Great Pomeroy Trunk Robbery

by Clifford J. Alexander

Early on Wednesday morning, December 13, 1843, a small Pomeroy & Co. express trunk disappeared from the deck of the steamboat *Utica* as it was docked in New York City. A *New York Herald* newspaper editor opined, “this is one of the most mysterious robberies that ever occurred. It will ruin poor Pomeroy.... [and] seriously affect the whole system of express lines.”<sup>1</sup> Newspapers called the theft the “Great Pomeroy Trunk Robbery.”

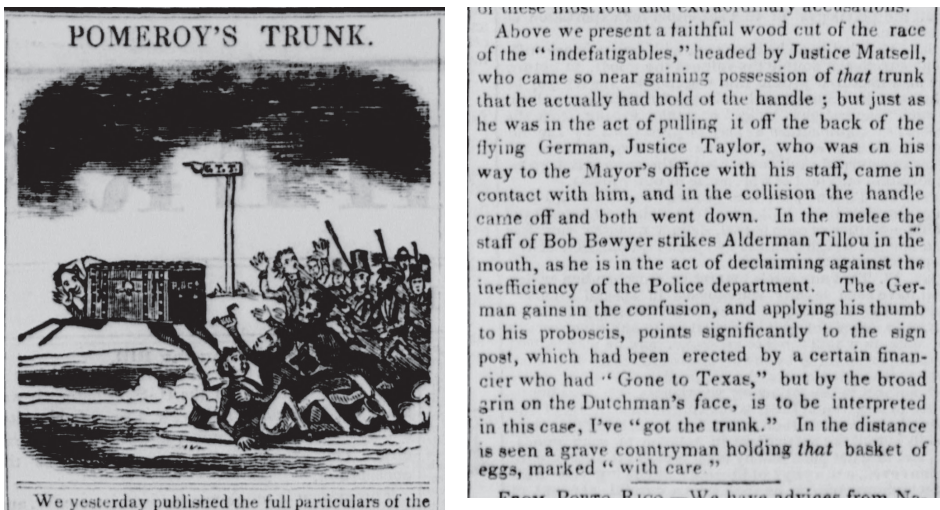


Figure 1: *Pomeroy & Co. robbery cartoon, and its explanatory paragraph, published by the New York Herald on January 14, 1844.*

For weeks it was one of the biggest stories in New York newspapers. Attention initially focused on the Pomeroy messenger and two businessmen who travelled with him on the messenger’s return trip from New York to Albany. Newspapers quickly published detailed lists of the contents, but no leads turned up for over four weeks, when a perceptive Merchant’s Bank teller noticed that he had been given a bank note from the robbery.

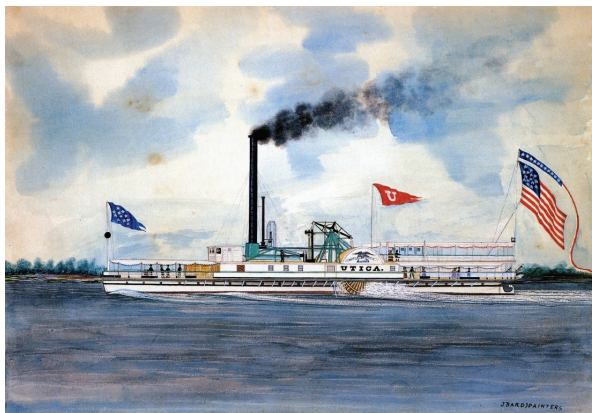
The incident - with all its side narratives - offers an interesting view of the express operations of Pomeroy & Co. during its early years of operation.

## The New York City Trip

At 10:00 am on Tuesday, December 12, 1843, Amasa Copp, a Pomeroy & Co. express messenger, left Albany for New York with a black leather trunk about 30 inches long and 18 inches wide. Because of ice on the Hudson River below Albany, he had to travel 25 miles by stage along the west side of the Hudson River to Coxsackie, New York, which he reached early that afternoon.

Copp boarded the steamboat *Utica* at Coxsackie for the trip on the Hudson River to New York City. Copp placed the trunk, which had the words “Pomeroy & Co.” or “P. & Co” painted in white, on the *Utica* deck near the bridge. The captain later said he told Copp not to leave the trunk on the deck unattended, but Copp did not move it to a safer place. When the *Utica* arrived in New York shortly after midnight, the Pomeroy agent was not at the dock to take the trunk.

Figure 2: Watercolor of the Hudson River steamboat *Utica*, by James Bard (1815-1897) [Mariners' Museum, Newport News VA]



Because the trip was especially tiring, Copp took a nap before his return trip to Albany. On Wednesday morning, Copp boarded the steamboat *Eureka*, to Bridgeport, Connecticut. During the winter months, when ice closed the northern section of the Hudson River, a popular way to travel from New York City to Albany was by steamboat to Bridgeport and from there north on the Housatonic and Western Railroad.



Figure 3: Advertisement for the winter arrangements from New York to Albany on the Long Island Sound steamboat *Eureka*, New York Herald, December 26, 1843.

Three businessmen also boarded the *Eureka* that morning. One was Philo N. Rust, proprietor of the Syracuse House hotel in Syracuse, New York. The second was Thomas U. Banks, who operated a stage and mail contract business in Texas. The third was Daniel D. Howard, one of two brothers who owned Howard's Hotel on the corner of Broadway and Maiden Lane in lower Manhattan.

Pomeroy's New York City agent assumed the trunk was safe and waited until later that morning to retrieve it. When the agent arrived at the *Utica*, the trunk was missing and no one on the ship knew who took it or when.

On Thursday, December 14, news of the theft reached Albany. Newspapers reported that several "interested parties" went to Copp's home in Troy to interview him. Copp admitted he was careless but denied knowing anything about the theft.

Beginning on December 18, Pomeroy published the advertisement shown in Figure 4 announcing rewards for "recovery and delivery of the contents" of the trunk. Pomeroy offered \$3,000 and three banks whose drafts and notes were stolen offered an additional \$3,000.

The trunk contained twenty-one packages and letters with over \$46,000 in cash, primarily bank notes, and \$300,000 in drafts. Approximately 70 of the drafts were on banks and 45 on brokers and others. A draft is an order for an intermediary issuer, typically a bank or broker, to pay a sum of money to a designated person. The issuer restricts the writer's account for the draft amount to assure payment when it is presented to the issuer.

Newspapers listed the amounts of each draft in the trunk along with the names of the payees and issuers. Because drafts must be presented to issuers themselves, payment was quickly stopped and there were no losses relating to drafts due. However, the bank notes were fully negotiable and some of these had large denominations. They all had serial numbers, but only one sender, the Union Bank of Albany, had written down amounts and serial numbers.

**\$3,000 REWARD.**—Three Thousand Dollars will be paid for the recovery and delivery of the contents, to the undersigned, of a black leather bank trunk, about thirty inches long and eight or nine inches wide, with the edges sharp. It was iron bound, with wood, straps running along the top and bottom, also, strapped with iron. It is believed to have been marked "Pomeroy & Co." or "P. & Co." on the ends. The said trunk is supposed to have been stolen from on board the steamboat *Utica* on the 13th inst. It contained a large amount of checks, bank notes, and drafts, enclosed in packages in carpet bags and directed to different brokers and banks in the city of New York.

The above reward will be paid in addition to all other rewards offered by other persons interested.

**POMEROY & CO., 2 Wall st. N. Y.**  
New York, Dec. 16, 1843.

The payment of the above reward is guaranteed by the parties interested in the recovery of said Trunk and its contents; in addition to which there is also the following reward of \$3,000 offered by Pomeroy & Co. of Albany, and guaranteed by the undersigned, making the whole amount of the reward offered  
**6000 DOLLARS.**

**ALBANY, December 15, 1843.**  
We, the undersigned, having a deep interest in the recovery of the Trunk and Money recently stolen from the steamboat *Utica*, do hereby guarantee the full and prompt payment of the Reward of Three Thousand Dollars offered by Pomeroy & Co. of this city, in the ratio of our respective interests  
**WASHBURN & CO.,**  
**THEODORE OLCOTT,**  
Cashier of the Canal Bank.  
**E. E. KENDRICK,**  
Cashier of the Mechanics' and Farmers' Bank.  
**JOHN PAINE,**  
Cashier of the Bank of Troy.  
**WM. J. FRYER,**  
**JOSHUA G. O'NEILL.**

d18 tfins rrc

Figure 4: Reward advertisement published by the *New York Herald* December 28, 1843.

### Pomeroy & Co.

George E. Pomeroy established Pomeroy & Co as a package express in May of 1841. Pomeroy initially operated between Buffalo and Albany, but in 1841 added the Hudson River route. In the fall of 1841, Crawford Livingston and Henry Wells joined the firm.

Figure 5 is an early Pomeroy & Co. cover datelined July 2, 1842, from Buffalo requesting that a map of the Erie Canal left at the office of the Chief Clerk of the New York State Canal Department be sent to the writer. A note at the bottom states that the letter was sent “Per Mr. Kinney of Pomeroy’s Express.”



Figure 5: Pomeroy & Co. cover from Buffalo to New York City datelined July 2, 1842.


A. L. Stimson’s history of the express business states that Pomeroy had an arrangement with Pullen & Copp at the time of the trunk robbery to carry Pomeroy’s bags to New York City.<sup>2</sup> The person identified as Pomeroy’s messenger was the named principal of Pullen & Copp.

Express companies typically had arrangements with other expresses to transport items over routes they did not serve or for which they did not have their own messenger. Although Pomeroy was a competitor on the Hudson River route, its principal business was the Buffalo and Albany route.

Pullen & Copp did not serve areas of New York State west of Albany. It primarily operated on the Hudson River but also had an arrangement with another express to transport items north as far as Montreal, Canada. Figure 6 is a Pullen & Copp advertisement that ran in the *New York Herald* from November 24, 1842 to November 5, 1843.

Figure 6: Pullen & Copp’s first advertisement that appeared in the *New York Herald* on November 24, 1842.

**PULLEN & COPP'S**



**NEW YORK, ALBANY, TROY AND MONTREAL EXPRESS.**

Messrs. Harnden & Co. having disposed of their route from New York to Albany and Troy, the subscribers, the old conductors of Harnden & Co's Northern Express, from New York, will continue to run as heretofore, leaving New York, Albany and Troy, Daily, and connect at Troy with Jacobs' Montreal Express, and will forward Specie, Bank Notes, Packages, Bundles, Cases of Goods, &c., to any place between New York and Montreal, and throughout the Canada's. Also East, from Troy and Albany to Boston, and West from Albany to Buffalo.

All business entrusted to their charge will be promptly attended to. Particular attention will be paid to the collection of notes, drafts, acceptances, &c., and prompt returns made for the same.

**PULLEN & COPP.**

Offices—Pullen & Copp, 2½ Wall street, New York.  
 Thos. Gough, 15 Exchange, Albany.  
 A. G. Filkins, 228 River street, Troy.  
 B. Jacob's Exchange Court, St Paul st, Montreal.

**REFERENCES.**

<b>New York.</b> Prime, Ward & King, Jacob Little, & Co., John T. Smith, & Co., Pepon & Hoffman, Carpenter & Vermilye, Houshton & Co. Drew, Robinson & Co.	<b>ALBANY.</b> E. J. Hampshire, Thos. Gough.	<b>Troy.</b> Jno. Payne, F. Wells, S. K. Stow, C. S. Douglass, F. Leake
---	--	--

n24

### **Apprehension of the Thief**

When the case broke, the facts quickly became clear. On January 12, a messenger of the Bank of New York (BNY) appeared at Merchants' Bank in New York City with a new \$500 note having a serial number "B6." The teller identified it as one that had been in the stolen trunk. The Union Bank of Albany, issuer of the note, had sent a letter reporting the amount and serial number to all New York City banks.

BNY had received the note from a German named Lachner in exchange for a bill of goods. A marshal was sent to Lachner's house, together with a BNY employee who was brought along to confirm that he was the person who presented the note. When they arrived at the house, Lachner tried to escape but was restrained. In the house, the marshal found all of the cash except for \$1,000. Lachner had tried to burn the drafts and other papers, but they could still be identified.

Lachner was brought to jail and admitted that he saw the trunk on the deck when the *Utica* first arrived and thought it might contain valuables. He left but later returned to the boat to see whether the trunk was still there. He then went on board and carried it away. Although a witness who worked at the docks had told a marshal that a man meeting Lachner's description had carried off an object wrapped in a buffalo skin the night of the theft, authorities apparently had not looked for Lachner until the bill of goods transaction.

### **The Bizarre Investigations**

The case was solved, thief apprehended, cash and burned papers recovered in two days after Lochner entered the BNY office on January 12. Perhaps more interesting than the capture were events between December 14, 1843, when the theft was discovered, and January 12, 1844. During these four weeks, a series of curious investigations, arrests and hearings occurred involving people connected to George Pomeroy.

On February 28, New York newspapers published a long, detailed report by Philo Rust, one of the businessmen who travelled back to Albany with Copp, on accusations and actions against him and Thomas Banks. The following recital of facts incorporates information from Rust's report as well as contemporary newspaper articles.<sup>3</sup>

Authorities initially focused their attention on Banks and Rust because they were visiting New York City at the time of the theft and left on the same boat and train as Amasa Copp. Although Daniel Howard also left the city at the same time, he was well known in New York City and does not appear to have been a suspect.

Rust's report described his and Banks's travels during the weeks following the theft. While in Buffalo, Banks was approached by a sheriff and his bag was searched. The same officer interviewed Rust and told him that he was a suspect based on statements by a paid informant who had information indicating that

Rust and Banks were involved in the theft. Banks offered \$500 for the name of the informant, but the officer refused to provide any information.

On January 2, 1844, E. J. Stratton, a Deputy Marshall of Rochester, New York, obtained arrest warrants for Banks and Rust. The warrant was issued by a Judge Buchan based on an affidavit of Stratton in which he swore that an informant received information regarding the theft from a Mrs. Leggett. The affidavit also stated that Mrs. Leggett received stolen documents from Messrs. Rust and Banks.

In addition, Stratton's affidavit stated that Mrs. Leggett showed him some of the stolen money and a stolen draft on the Union Bank. Newspaper accounts described the woman as an accomplished forger who was already under surveillance by police for counterfeiting. Stratton's affidavit further stated that the woman named Copp as an accomplice.

Stratton proceeded with the arrest warrant to Syracuse. On December 29, Stratton met Rust at the Syracuse House and announced that Rust was under arrest. Stratton searched Rust's room and ordered Rust to go to Rochester, where the court that issued the arrest warrant was located.

Rust arrived in Rochester the next day with his attorney, who demanded to see the arrest warrant. When the warrant was produced, it was determined that it had been improperly obtained in the wrong jurisdiction and Rust was discharged.

Rust and his attorney also demanded to see the affidavit sworn to by Stratton and requested a hearing to determine the facts. At that time, newspapers were reporting that Lachner had been arrested for the theft. A hearing was held on January 17-18 before a magistrate in Rochester. The key testimony was by the informant and Mrs. Leggett.

The informant whose information formed the basis for Stratton's request for an arrest warrant testified that some of the information he provided Stratton was accurate but that he fabricated the part about seeing a draft on the Union Bank to make the story sound better.

Mrs. Leggett testified that she met three times between January 3 and 5 in Rochester with the U. S. Marshall for the Northern District of New York. The Marshall was Clark Robinson, brother-in-law of George Pomeroy. Pomeroy was married to Clark's sister, Helen E. Robinson. Deputy Marshall Stratton reported to Clark Robinson.

Mrs. Leggett contradicted the testimony of the informant and the statements made by Stratton in his affidavit. She denied knowing anything about the theft or the thieves, except what she heard or read in newspapers. She also denied telling the informant that she had received money or documents from the theft.

Mrs. Leggett testified that Marshall Robinson asked her questions at each meeting but told her he was looking into a case involving a steamboat. Mrs.

Leggett testified she asked Robinson for a loan of a few dollars and he agreed to do it but only after paying his hotel bill.

Mrs. Leggett also testified that she met in Rochester with Henry Wells, Pomeroy's partner in the express company. Wells "made her a handsome offer if she would show him one" of the documents from the theft. Wells said he "would indemnify [her] against all harm if she would do so...." Mrs. Leggett further testified that both Robinson and Wells gave her money for expenses.

Five days after the hearings, Rust sent to newspapers his report of the incident. Rust's report lays out in detail the testimony at the hearing of the informant and Mrs. Leggett. Rust's report made it clear that he was convinced Clark Robinson was the person who first raised suspicions about him and Banks and started in motion the investigations that led to their arrests. Rust believed it was no coincidence that Robinson was the brother-in-law of George Pomeroy.

### **What happened to the Principals?**

**Amasa Copp.** Stimson reported that Copp resigned from Pullen & Copp shortly after the theft.<sup>8</sup> The next mention of the name in a publication was in 1851 when an Amasa Copp was hired to be Chief of the Troy Night Police Force.

**Philo N. Rust.** Rust continued to operate the Syracuse House hotel in Syracuse, New York.

**Thomas Banks.** Banks returned to Texas where he reportedly continued to operate a stage and mail contract business.

**George E. Pomeroy.** On April 27, four months after the trunk was stolen, Pomeroy & Co. was dissolved. George Pomeroy established Pomeroy Letter Express as a separate independent mail company. After Pomeroy's Letter Express was closed in late 1844, George and his family moved to Clinton Michigan where he opened an unsuccessful newspaper. In 1863, he moved to Toledo, Ohio, and engaged in real estate.

**Henry Wells.** Following George's withdrawal, the express business continued to operate under the name of Livingston, Wells & Pomeroy Express. In November 1847, the name was changed to Wells & Company. It became part of American Express Company in March 1850, with Henry Wells as its first president.

**Clark Robinson.** Despite testimony suggesting otherwise, Pomeroy's brother-in-law Marshall Robinson claimed to have always believed in the innocence of Rust. On January 10, 1844, he wrote a letter, which Rust published, declaring that "I have no hesitation in saying that he [Rust] is one of the last men in the State whom I would suspect of any cognizance of, or participation in, such a transaction." He continued to serve as U. S. Marshall.

**Francis J. Stratton.** On January 14, Deputy U. S. Marshall Stratton resigned and sent a letter of apology to Rust. Robinson, Stratton's supervisor, asked Rust to help get Stratton reinstated, but Rust declined. Following the January 16-18 testimony, Stratton was arrested on a charge of perjury for signing an affidavit that falsely stated he had seen copies of stolen drafts.



**Lachner.** Lachner was held in the New York City Prison, a detention center in lower Manhattan. On January 14, 1844, the day after his arrest, he hanged himself in his cell.

Figure 7: “The Tombs” where the thief committed suicide.

Figure 8: folded letter ordering goods carried from Albany to the Paper Warehouse at 7 Minor Street in Philadelphia, with the only example of Livingston Wells & Pomeroy’s black on pink label.



My thanks to Steven M. Roth for his assistance with this article.

### Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> *New York Herald*, December 13, 1843.
- <sup>2</sup> A. L. Stimson, *A History of the Express Business*, (Applewood Books, Bedford Massachusetts, 1858 Ed.), pp. 273-278.
- <sup>3</sup> *New York Herald*, January 28, 1844.
- <sup>4</sup> A. L. Stimson, *History of the Express Companies: And the Origin of American Railroads*, (Kessinger Publishing, New York, 1858 Ed.), p. 91.

---

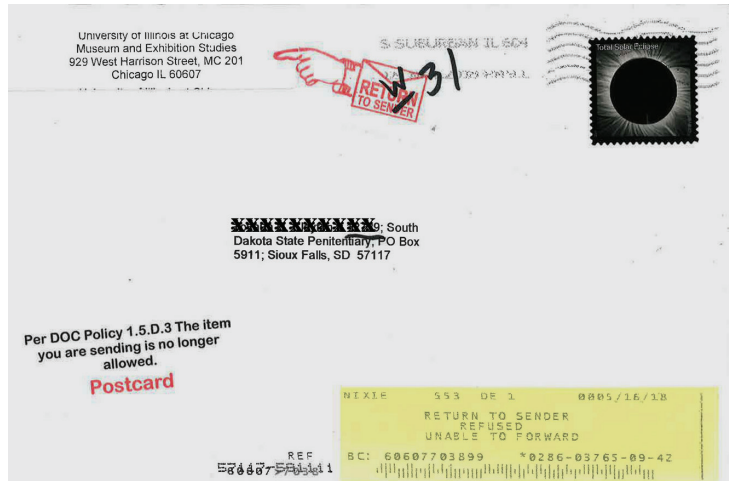
**Cliff Alexander** is a financial services attorney in Washington DC who primarily represents mutual funds and advisers. He began collecting stamps as a young boy. His interest in history attracted him to stamps and covers of independent letter mail companies, local posts and express companies that competed with the U.S. Post Office Department up to the Civil War. He also collects postal history of the carrier departments, Washington DC, Alexandria VA and Georgetown.

# Pushing the Prison Doors Open: Snail Mail and the Resistance of the Postal System

By Matthew Yasuoka, Therese Quinn, Erica R. Meiners<sup>1</sup>

Under the guise of security and safety, state and federal Departments of Corrections have always restricted mail to prisons. In September 2017, the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections implemented a new policy: all snail mail into corrections must be first sent to Florida to be photocopied. After a substantial delay, incarcerated people received only the copies, not the originals.<sup>2</sup> The ACLU sued the state prison system, arguing that its “legal mail” policy deprives incarcerated people of confidential access to their lawyers and violates their First Amendment rights<sup>3</sup> and the policy was eventually modified to exclude legal mail, while still affecting other correspondence.<sup>4, 5</sup> Several years ago, as the Prison Policy Institute reports, many jurisdictions instituted a “postcard only” (no letters) snail mail correspondence regulation for prisons and jail.<sup>6</sup> In addition to the assumption that this reduced contraband - even though most research suggests that prison staff are primarily responsible for all contraband that comes into a prison<sup>7</sup> - the postcard only rule was also marked as “more efficient” for the prison as there were fewer packages and letters to open and screen.

*Figure 1: Postcards no longer allowed notification, South Dakota Department of Corrections, 2018.<sup>10</sup>*



In an echo of previous political moments, today profit, technology, and privatization again emerge as key and overlapping threats to incarcerated people’s communications. As JPAY, a private for-profit company that has cornered the market on all money transfers related to incarceration (website description: “convenient & affordable correctional services, including money transfer, email, videos, tablets, music, education & parole and probation payments”), has

installed kiosks in a wide range of prison and sells tablets to incarcerated people who pay to receive and send emails, some Departments of Correction are restricting access to snail mail options.<sup>8</sup>

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS  
RETURN TO SENDER MAIL RECEIPT  
STATEVILLE CORRECTIONAL CENTER

Mail returned see item checked:

Resident's Name: [REDACTED] Date: 3/3/17  
 Sender's Name: [REDACTED] # 5  
 60007

- Cash, personal checks, cashier's check, money order
- Stamped envelopes, postage stamps, plain envelopes
- Stationary, paper, pencils, pens, spirals
- Unused greeting cards or post cards, music cards, hard plastic cards, laminated items
- Posters, road maps, atlas, pictures over 8X10
- Pictures with hand gestures, hand signs, scratched out or marked off hand signs or gestures
- Suspected gang related letter or photographs
- Inappropriate or nude pictures, pictures with inappropriate gestures, Polaroids, slides, altered or tampered
- Decals, stickers, fabric pieces, ribbon, yarn, magnets, beads, flowers, weeds, feathers, homemade bracelets
- Homemade cards (if heavily glued, pasted or painted or excessive glitter or tape)
- Clothing, glasses, contact lens, personal hygiene products
- Letters with perfume, lipstick, stains, foreign substance
- Offenders are not allowed to correspond with former residents without written approval from the Warden
- Offenders are not allowed to correspond with employees of the state active/retired without written approval from the Warden
- No enclosed communication from offenders of other institutions without proper approval
- Pictures of another inmate, other inmate information prohibited
- Personal information
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Dist: STA0126 (Rev. 5/2015)  
 Original Offender  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Copy with mail  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Copy retain

*Figure 2: Forbidden Mail Items, Illinois Department of Corrections, 2017.*

The postal service continues to be a critical, and often the only, line of communication for many inside prisons. Mail policies that derail access to the United States Postal Service, an agency of the federal government with a mandate to serve all of the nation's residents, erode rights to expression, counsel, and participation. The United States Postal Service rules governing "Mail Addressed to Prisoners," updated in 1996, are careful to point out that prison officials may refuse mail.<sup>9</sup>

As scholars and organizers - and as people who correspond with loved ones behind bars - we track and research the censorship of US mail for people in prisons and jails. People inside prisons are isolated and communication with the outside world is deeply regulated. Almost all prisons are located away from

urban spaces, outside visitors are, at best, discouraged, and bringing material into, or out of a prison is always a challenge. People inside prison also lack access to the internet, free telephone services, and other modes of communication – Twitter, text messaging, Facebook. Therefore paper—“snail”—mail is an effective, and often the only, tool for people inside to relay information to people on the outside. This short essay aims to briefly summarize the context of snail mail in corrections, the evolving landscape of censorship and for-profit privatization, and the myriad of ways people inside, and their loved ones in the free world, resist.

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS		18-05-807	4835-0316
<b>NOTICE OF PACKAGE/MAIL REJECTION</b>		Tracking Number	CSI-316 03/2018
463442	X	WHV	HA-4L
Prisoner Number	Prisoner Name	Facility	Lock

You have received  a package or  mail containing the following:

Photograph(s) on photo paper or card stock  Stickers, labels, postage stamps,  Mail that is taped, pasted/glued or otherwise joined to another item  X Letter or Card written with crayon, markers, highlighters.  Mail written on non-white, heavy weight paper, or construction paper  Greeting card with embellishments, not commercially produced, larger than 6"x8"  unknown sub.

From University of Illinois at Chicago NOTE: A copy of this notice is being mailed to the sender if rejected pursuant to PD 05.03.118 "Prisoner Mail". The sender has 10 business days to send a letter to the Warden of his/her opposition to this rejection. The sender will be notified of the final disposition. Sender must not use the bottom section of this form.

Museum and Exhibition Studies  
929 West Harrison St, MC 201  
Chicago, IL 60607

The item(s) identified above will not be delivered to you pursuant to:

PD 04.02.105 "Prisoner Funds"  PD 04.07.112 "Prisoner Personal Property"  PD 05.03.118 "Prisoner Mail"

*(This notice must identify the reason for this rejection and the policy section which supports the rejection; attach additional pages if necessary)*

Unapproved vendor (Z)  DOC Restricted publication (NN)  Mail contains property prisoner not authorized to possess ( D)  Threat to security, good order or discipline (NN)  Nude, pornographic, explicit or inappropriate material (NN)  Stationery Products available through Prisoner Store(E)  Used books (NN)

Mail deemed for the purpose of operating a business enterprise while within the facility  Prevents an effective search (00)  Other:

T. Moore Business office      Business Manager T. Moore      7/11/2018  
 Staff – Print/Type Name      Title      Signature      Date

THIS SECTION IS TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PRISONER ONLY	
Indicate what you want to have done with the item(s) identified above by marking <u>one</u> of the following:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Return to sender at my expense, (postage paid envelope or disbursement for postage included).	
<input type="checkbox"/> Send at my expense to: _____	
Whose address is: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Hold to be picked up by (photographs, books magazines & property only).	
<input type="checkbox"/> Destroy (mail & property only).	
<input type="checkbox"/> Turn over to Prisoner Benefit Fund (funds & postage only).	
<input type="checkbox"/> Donate to charity (property only).	
<input type="checkbox"/> Store for me in Record Office File (official documents only; e.g. Birth Certificate).	
<input type="checkbox"/> Item arrived without receipt/packing slip; I will provide purchase confirmation within seven days (I pay or hard copy acceptable).	
<input type="checkbox"/> I request a hearing.	
Prisoner – Print Name _____	Prisoner Number _____
Signature _____	Date _____
Send reply within 10 business days to: <input type="checkbox"/> Mail Room <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	

THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY MAIL ROOM STAFF	
Fifteen day hold expires on: _____	
Disposition of Package/Mail:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Mailed <input type="checkbox"/> Picked Up <input type="checkbox"/> Destroyed <input type="checkbox"/> Donated <input type="checkbox"/> Stored in RO file <input type="checkbox"/> Other – Allowed	Date Completed: _____
DISTRIBUTION: <input type="checkbox"/> Prisoner <input type="checkbox"/> Sender (if required) <input type="checkbox"/> Housing Unit/Mail Room <input type="checkbox"/> Counselor File	

Figure 3: Michigan Department of Corrections Mail Rejection Notification, 2018.

### **“Prison” Mail: The Historic Debate over Using Mail as a Punishment**

A 1913 report from the parole clerk of Arizona was included in the United States Senate’s 1913 Congressional record. The report looks at Arizona’s implementation of universal free mail to all persons who are incarcerated. The clerk observed,

A prison should be a place where high ideals are taught, more so than any other institution of man.... If restrictions are placed on these great educators—personal letters, newspapers, and magazines—it at once becomes apparent that all such institutions employing this primitive method or custom are in a very backward condition.<sup>11</sup>

The report documents the wide range of regulations surrounding access to mail for people incarcerated across the US. For example, in 1913 only four states - Alabama, Mississippi, Rhode Island, and Arizona - allowed the incarcerated to send unlimited mail. In ten states, persons who were incarcerated were limited to writing one letter per month, or fewer in California, and in Illinois, one letter every five-weeks.

In addition to these explicit restrictions, those who were incarcerated faced further barriers based on the whims of prison officials. George Thompson, who was convicted for trying to free slaves in Missouri and sentenced to twelve years in prison, wrote an account of his time in Missouri Penitentiary at Jefferson City and described the mail system.<sup>12, 13</sup> The prison officials could read the mail and destroyed incoming and outgoing mail that they disagreed with or to spite a particular incarcerated person. Kept from Thompson was one letter that attempted to share information about the plight of an enslaved person.

In 1881, the US Postmaster General issued a decision regarding mail addressed to people who are imprisoned. The Postmaster General wrote, “letters addressed to a convict [*sic*] serving a term of imprisonment should be delivered to the warden or other officer in charge of prisoners.”<sup>14</sup> However, the Postmaster General distinguished between the rights of those convicted and those who were not convicted. The Post-Master emphasized, “Letters addressed to a person imprisoned to await trial... should be delivered to ... the person addressed ... before conviction and sentence.... as the law presumes every person innocent.”<sup>15</sup> The Postmaster General’s order makes clear that the justification for depriving a person of their mail rested in the status of that person as either “innocent” or “guilty.” In essence, removal of mail served as a punishment.

Several decades later, just as the US began its build-up of a prison industrial complex, these questions about access to mail in prison moved squarely into the courts. In the 1974 decision *Procunier v. Martinez*, the Supreme Court acknowledged that both the sender and receiver of a letter have an “inextricably enmeshed” interest in the communication. Thus, censorship of mail to individu-

als in prison cannot be based solely on the legal status of those who are incarcerated.<sup>16</sup> Instead, the Court grounded its analysis of First Amendment rights within prisons using the same logic as its school speech cases. Citing *Tinker v. Des Moines*, the prominent case demarcating the limits of students' First Amendment rights within schools, the Court noted that First Amendment guarantees must be applied based on the special characteristics of the environment.<sup>17</sup> The Supreme Court is governed by the government's desire to preserve order, security, and rehabilitation, via criminal law, in the prison. While the Court noted that experts (including the Federal Bureau of Prisons) found that mail promoted rehabilitation, security and discipline allowed for some restrictions on correspondence.<sup>18</sup> In two sentences the Supreme Court simultaneously recognized rehabilitation as an important goal of the prison system, while subjugating it to other objectives like order and discipline. On that basis, the Court created the following balancing test, as any restriction: 1) must further an important or substantial government interest unrelated to the suppression of the free expression, and 2) limitation on first amendment freedoms must be no greater than is necessary or essential to the protection of the particular government interest involved. On the basis of its newly created standard, in *Procunier v. Martinez* the Supreme Court struck down a restriction that censored messages that "unduly complain' or 'magnify grievances,' expression of 'inflammatory political, racial, religious or other views,' and matter deemed 'defamatory' or 'otherwise inappropriate.'"<sup>19</sup>

While *Martinez* was the Court's first case involving the First Amendment, it was far from the last. *Martinez's* standard was short lived. Additionally, *Martinez* has since been used by the Court to justify greater restrictions on First Amendment rights.

Just one year after its decision in *Martinez*, the Supreme Court once again addressed the First Amendment rights of those who are incarcerated.<sup>20</sup> *Pell v. Procunier* (1974) involved three journalists who were denied permission by a prison to interview three people who were imprisoned.<sup>21</sup> The Court struck a different tone. Rather than raise the importance of rehabilitation, the Court emphasized the importance of the correction system as a deterrent to crime.<sup>22</sup> It noted that this function occurred "by confining criminal offenders in a facility where they are isolated ..., a condition... most people ... find undesirable, they and others will be deterred from committing... criminal offenses."<sup>23</sup> The Court mentions rehabilitation briefly but immediately ties it to "the institutional consideration of internal security," which the Court believes is paramount. The Court, thus, decides that the regulation cannot be viewed in isolation, but must be viewed in light of alternative means of communication.<sup>24</sup> The Court points directly to mail as an alternative means of communication for the journalists and the people who were incarcerated. In fact, the Court uses its recent decision in *Martinez* to justify the restriction on interviews. The Court noted that while

there had long been complaints of prison censorship of mail that limited expression, those restrictions were no longer around. The reason? The Court concluded that its requirement that “any ‘decision to censor or withhold delivery of a particular letter must be accompanied by minimal procedural safeguards’” meant that “the medium of written correspondence affords inmates an open and substantially unimpeded channel for communication with persons outside the prison....”<sup>25</sup> On this basis the Court could now establish a new standard that accorded prison officials substantial latitude.

The Court applied its new standard in subsequent cases, such as *Thornburgh v. Abbott* which limited *Martinez* to cases involving outgoing mail.<sup>26</sup> At issue in *Thornburgh* was a prison regulation that authorized officials to prevent those inside prisons from receiving publications prison officials determined to be “detrimental to institutional security.”<sup>27</sup> Of the 46 publications barred from prisons, many were prison related texts that contained criticism of conditions in prison, including medical care, such as *Labyrinth*, *Torch*, and *The Call*.<sup>28</sup> The Court observed that *Martinez* and *Turner* were inherently at odds. As a result, it required that the Court limit *Martinez* solely to outgoing mail.<sup>29</sup> The court was careful to observe that it could have applied *Turner* in a manner that did not overrule *Martinez*, but the Court explicitly wanted to adopt the *Turner* standard due to the flexibility it granted prison officials.

Thus, the Court applied *Turner* and found that the regulation was permissible. The Court observed that some publications pose a security threat and reaffirmed that “alternative means” was meant to be interpreted broadly, or persons could receive other publications even if those did not contain the same or similar information.<sup>30</sup> Third, the Court found that the publications excluded were likely to have a ripple effect. As such, it concluded that the right sought would be detrimental to security. Fourth, the Court considered proposed less restrictive alternatives. One suggestion was providing the publications with articles removed that threatened security and order. The prison officials claimed that this would be a greater threat to good order than simply precluding the whole publication. The Court, here, draws an important distinction between *Turner* and *Martinez*. Under *Martinez*, the prison officials would have to show that the more restrictive practice was “generally necessary.” However, the Court concludes that this is improper because it has overturned the *Martinez* standard and as a result deference is given to the prison officials decision not to adopt alternatives.

In effect, today's legal landscape surrounding mail is governed by deference to prison officials.

Digital platforms are, unsurprisingly, posing challenges to this landscape. In May 2011 the United Nations Human Rights Council declared internet access a basic human right.<sup>31</sup> Still, most people in prison do not have direct access to the internet. When the prison industrial complex is met with rights-based demands

an entire - and highly profitable - cottage industry of mediated access emerges.<sup>32</sup> Predictably, states have attempted to curtail digital communication even further, such as Florida's attempt to ban "inmate online presence"<sup>33</sup> or Georgia's ban on printouts from webpages.<sup>34</sup> In a 2011 study of 43 states, the Institute for Higher Education Policy found that only seven percent of participating states offered internet-based instruction in prisons, noting that most states ban internet access entirely.<sup>35</sup> Since 2011 some progress has been made, but it remains unevenly distributed. An increasing number of states allow a highly restricted group of people who are incarcerated to purchase tablets, with very limited, monitored online access for pay. This raises economic questions that mirror connectivity issues which are also persistent outside of institution walls as internet access is strongly tied to questions of economic inequality.<sup>36</sup>

For example, restricted access to communication offers another opportunity to "capitalize on criminal justice" and "extract value" from incarcerated people.<sup>37</sup> For profit corporations, already with strong footholds in prisons through the provision (and profit) of "services" such as healthcare, telephones, and commissary supplies (Canteen Corporation controls the vending machines at the Santa Rita Jail in California where twelve packets of Top Ramen noodles cost about eighteen dollars, while in the free world these would cost likely under four dollars) extract both the state's tax dollars and the limited resources of people inside and their loved ones, a form of what Jackie Wang terms "racialized accumulation by dispossession" by providing curtailed and costly forms of internet use to incarcerated people, who are disproportionately Black, Latinx, Native American, and others of color. Charging fees as high as \$1.25 per message to upload emails from the tablet computers that are sold at inflated prices, private companies including American Prison Data Systems, Edovo and JPay profit while offering additional ways for prisons to control and surveil incarcerated people.<sup>38</sup> For example, in 2015 the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) issued a report detailing the heavy punishments received by hundreds of imprisoned people in South Carolina for accessing the internet, including a sentence of more than 37 years in isolation and a loss of 74 years-worth of "privileges" including telephone use and visitation, for one man who posted to Facebook 38 times.<sup>39</sup>

Additionally, the rise of digital technologies could justify further restrictions on person's rights. As the Court first set forth in *Pell* and *Turner* one factor considered is the availability of other means in the broadest possible sense. This creates a cruel cycle where opening up a channel of communication justifies the severing of others. The *Pell* Court explicitly used its lukewarm protection of mail privileges as a justification for restricting journalists' face-to-face access to persons who are in prison. Likewise, the *Turner* Court pointed to all the other magazines that prison officials allowed in for removing those containing concerns. In neither instance is the cited alternative a substitute for the asserted

right nor an analogue. Thus, digital technologies raise serious concerns for the rights of those inside under the current legal framework. Digital technologies could be viewed as a wide-reaching substitute for various rights. Prison libraries where people research the law to write their own appeals could be restricted with the preferred alternative of tablet-based access. Face-to-face communications with attorneys could be restricted for video calls so common in the pandemic workplace. Educational groups that currently teach in prisons could face further restriction on the basis that people can access online courses through the for-profit tablets. The overly optimistic and utopic vision of tech in neoliberal life as a substitute for everything raises particular concerns in the prison landscape.

Relegation of communication by people inside prisons to tablets raises further concerns due to the additional opacity created by algorithmic tracking. Outside of the prison walls, algorithms are already hurting the most vulnerable populations. Increasingly, algorithms are being used to make decisions on who receives public benefits. These models due to the data considered can lead to increases in improper benefit denials and punish people for using benefits at all.<sup>40</sup> Further, in areas such as housing, automated tenant vetting systems may reject individuals solely because they have lived in a “low-income neighborhood.”<sup>41</sup> Banks have been found using algorithms that offer worse rates to people of color and cost borrowers millions each year.<sup>42</sup> Thus, the expansion of digital technologies into the prison provides officials with new ways to monitor and surveil. These mechanisms of algorithmic control contain the same biases of human officials, while seeming objective. In the prison of the future, rather than officials deciding what communications to allow models of predictive policing could ban sites, block messages, and restrict communication.

### Resistances

People inside are always organizing. When people inside partner with outside entities power grows. In 2018 public backlash forced New York Department of Corrections to back down on their attempt to regulate all incoming mail: the Department of Corrections Directive 4911A (aka the “Secure Vendor Program”) sought to require all incoming packages to originate from only seven approved vendors, and “five of the vendors offered a combined selection of only 77 books.”<sup>43</sup> A coalition of inside/outside organizations and groups, including the Books Through Bars collective, successfully raised the visibility of this censorship (and for profit privatization) - including an op-ed in the *New York Times*.<sup>44</sup> This consistent public pressure forced the Governor of New York, Andrew Cuomo, to suspend and review the policy.<sup>45</sup>

People inside and their allies often instigate the litigation that functions to push doors slightly more open. Robert Martinez, of the case we discussed earlier, *Procurier v. Martinez*, was incarcerated in the California State Prison San Quentin, and, with others incarcerated in the state, filed suit against the De-



Figure 4: Card, 2018.

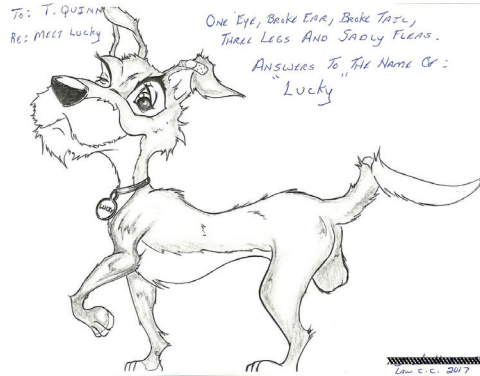


Figure 5: Drawing included in letter sent from an Illinois Department of Corrections facility, 2017.

partment of Corrections to challenge regulations that allowed the censorship of their mail, a policy the US Supreme Court found unconstitutional.<sup>46</sup> Prison Legal News (PLN), a prison advocacy periodical which has been censored by many state departments of corrections, has repeatedly sued to push for access. In 2017 PLN sued the Illinois Department of Corrections and was awarded \$75 000 and the right to be mailed inside Illinois prisons.<sup>47</sup> Yet litigation is often a weak tool for social change. As the movement from *Martinez* to *Pell* one year later shows, legal victories often are used to justify further restrictions. PLN had to sue IDOC again in 2018 as other prisons refused to deliver copies of their newsletter.<sup>48</sup> The constant cycle of litigation and re-litigation evokes the true function of the law. As Giorgio Agamben wrote, “All law is ‘situational law.’... Therein lies the essence of State sovereignty, which must therefore be properly defined... as the monopoly to decide.”<sup>49</sup> This logic evokes the Supreme Court’s deference to prison officials. The official is official and should not be second guessed. Or as Agamben put it, “the law is outside of itself.”<sup>50</sup> Further, there are other reasons to be wary of the law as a tool. Anthony Farley writes, “The story of progress up from slavery is a lie.... told juridically in the form of the rule of law... but the law does not forget its father.”<sup>51</sup> This false narrativity leads to a widespread belief in milquetoast progress narratives that constantly forget that, “The differences, juridically noted... are screens masking the traumatic fact... Slavery is white-over-black. Segregation is white-over-black. Neosegregation is white-over-black.”<sup>52</sup>

Beyond these wider systemic responses, many individual people in prison resist through their craft of writing the letter (figures 4 & 5). In many carceral sites, card making is a valued, and sometimes profitable, skill. Envelopes and hand-written letters, when not censored, can be works of art.

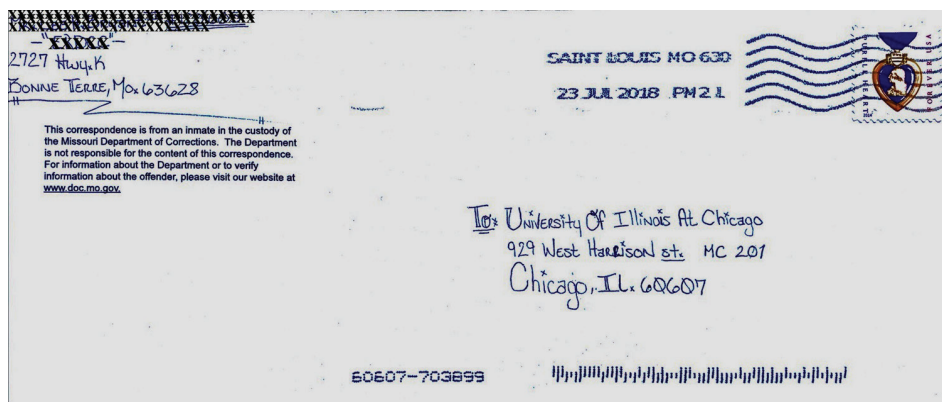


Figure 6: Letter sent from a Missouri Department of Corrections facility, 2018.

While prisons and jails repeatedly mark mail with an institutional stamp, often denoting “this mail sent from an inmate,” people inside also work to creatively mark their correspondence, making it distinctive and personalized in an increasingly automated age.

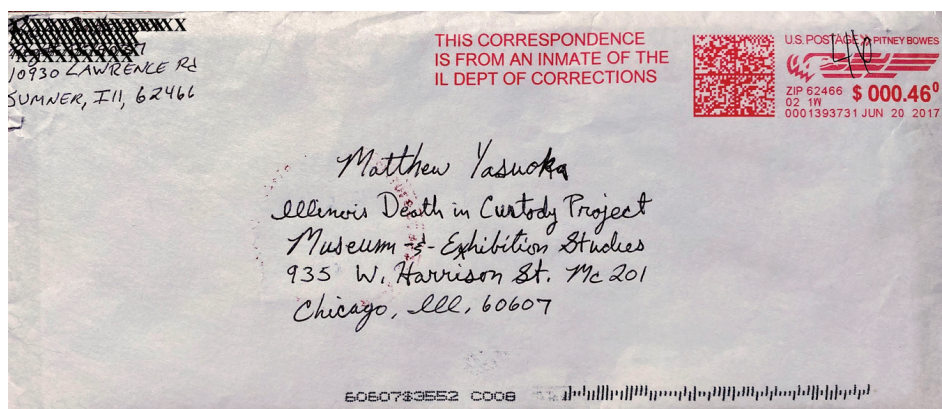


Figure 7: Letter sent from an Illinois Department of Corrections facility, 2018.

Survival is also a form of resistance. Obtaining goods that can be essential to staying healthy and alive—in this pandemic, for example, these include soap and other cleaning supplies—requires access to funds. Postage stamps, which “connect [incarcerated people] to the world”<sup>53</sup> are a commodity in prisons. With persistent though fluctuating value, stamps are used as currency inside, and in response prison administrators attempt to limit the number of stamps available per individual. Yet, in a one-step-removed way, the US Postal Service—as an enduring public institution—offers a means of subsistence, as well as connection.

NOTICE: Mailed from a MN CORRECTIONAL FACILITY  
Name: ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~  
OID#: ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~  
Address: 970 Dickhoff St NW  
City/State/Zip: Brainerd, MN 55003

Figure 8: Thumbnail of stamp on envelope sent from a Minnesota Department of Corrections facility, 2018.

### Conclusion

While some at the highest level of government have begun to wage war on the US Postal Service, it is imperative to think about the importance of a publicly owned post as part of the landscape. At a time of rising privatization, faster communication, and increasingly granular digital surveillance, perhaps a return to the tactile intimacy of snail mail, communication that travels and exists in a longer duration, can foreground the richness of human expression and erode the inside/outside divide. A return to less instantaneous, more physical forms of communication may serve to foster resistance to the forces that seek to reshape modern life. With this goal, we have joined with collaborators both inside and outside prisons to write and draw beautiful letters for incarcerated people, read and learn from the letters we receive back, and strategize ways to abolish prisons.

### Bibliography

Wang, Jackie (2018). *Carceral Capitalism*. South Pasadena, CA: Semiotext.

### Endnotes

(note that most articles were found on line - email the editors if you wish to be forwarded a link)

<sup>1</sup> This article is collaboratively written and has no first author; our name order reflects a publishing rotation.

<sup>2</sup> Candace Norwood, February 13, 2019, "Anti-Drug Smuggling Policies Are Increasingly Isolating Prisoners," *Governing*.

<sup>3</sup> Samantha Melamed, October 30, 2018, "The ACLU just sued Pa. prisons over legal mail policy," *Philadelphia Inquirer*.

<sup>4</sup> Erin McCarthy Holliday, February 22, 2019, "Pennsylvania Department of Corrections to settle lawsuit over inmate mail policy," *The Jurist*.

<sup>5</sup> Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, "Mail."

<sup>6</sup> Leah Sakala, February 7, 2013, "Postcard Only Mail Policies in Jails," *Prison Policy Institute*.

<sup>7</sup> Jorge Renaud, December 6, 2018, "Who's really bringing contraband into jails? Our 2018 survey confirms it's staff, not visitors," *Prison Policy Institute*.

<sup>8</sup> Victoria Law, August 3, 2018, "Captive Audience: How Companies Make Millions Charging Prisoners to Send An Email," *Wired*.

<sup>9</sup> United States Postal Service, Customer Support Ruling.

<sup>10</sup> This and all photographs included here are from the collections of the authors.

<sup>11</sup> 1913 Congressional Record Senate, 5481

<sup>12</sup> Thompson, George. *Prison Life and Reflections*. Hartford: A. Work, 1855.

- <sup>13</sup> Thompson (1855). p. 106.
- <sup>14, 15</sup> RIGHTS OF PRISONERS TO MAIL (1881, July 17). *New York Times* (1857-1922).
- <sup>16, 17, 18, 19</sup> *Procurier v. Martinez*, 416 U.S. 396, 409, 410, 412, 415, 94 S. Ct. 1800, 1809, 40 L. Ed. 2d 224 (1974) *overruled by Thornburgh v. Abbott*, 490 U.S. 401, 109 S. Ct. 1874, 104 L. Ed. 2d 459 (1989).
- <sup>20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25</sup> *Pell v. Procurier*; 417 U.S. 817, 820, 822, 822, 823, 824, (1974).
- <sup>26, 27</sup> *Thornburgh v. Abbott*, 490 U.S. 401, 413, 403, 109 S. Ct. 1874, 1881, 104 L. Ed. 2d 459 (1989).
- <sup>28</sup> Linda Greenhouse, 1989, May 16. Court expands right of wardens to censor inmates' reading. *New York Times* (1923-Current file).
- <sup>29, 30</sup> *Thornburgh*, at 413, 418.
- <sup>31</sup> United Nations General Assembly, 2011, 17 session, HRC. 17.27.
- <sup>32</sup> See, for example, Barker, T. (2015, February 15), 'Prison services are profitable niche for Bridgton company', *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*.
- <sup>33</sup> Reutter, D. (2015), 'Florida Withdraws Rule Proposal to Ban Prisoner Internet Presence', *Prison Legal News*, July 1.
- <sup>34</sup> Electronic Frontier Foundation, (2005, December 14), 'Amicus Curiae Brief filed in Williams v Donald.'
- <sup>35</sup> Gorgol, L. E. and Sponsler, B. A. (2011, May), 'Unlocking Potential: Results of a National Survey of Postsecondary Education in State Prisons', *Institute for Higher Education Policy*.
- <sup>36</sup> Rideout, V. and Katz, V. S. (2016, Winter), 'Opportunity For All? Technology and Learning in Lower-income Families', *The Joan Ganz Cooney Center at Sesame Workshop*.
- <sup>37</sup> Eisha Jain, April 9, 2028, "Capitalizing on Criminal Justice," *Duke Law Journal*.
- <sup>38</sup> Dan Tynan, October 3, 2016, "Online behind bars: if internet access is a human right, should prisoners have it?" *The Guardian*.
- <sup>39</sup> Dave Maass, February 12, 2015, "Hundreds of South Carolina inmates sent to solitary confinement over Facebook," *Electronic Frontier Foundation*.
- <sup>40</sup> Sidney Fussel, January 23, 2018, "How algorithmic experiments harm people living in poverty," *Gizmodo*; Alyssa Edes and Emma Bowman, February 19, 2018, "'Automating inequality': Algorithms in public services often fail the most vulnerable," *All Tech Considered*, *NPR*.
- <sup>41</sup> Patrick Sisson, December 17, 2019, "Housing discrimination goes high tech," *Curbed*.
- <sup>42</sup> Kristopher J. Brooks, November 15, 2019, "Disparity in home lending costs minorities millions, researchers find," *CBS News*.
- <sup>43</sup> Lisa Hoover, February 12, 2018, "NY backs down on 'draconian' censorship of prisoners' right to read," *Intellectual Freedom Blog*.
- <sup>44</sup> Tariro Mzezewa, January 12, 2018, To Make Prisons Safer Some are Banning... Book. *New York Times*.
- <sup>45, 46</sup> Vivian Wang, January 12 2018, Cuomo Halts a Controversial Prison Package Policy, *New York Times*.

<sup>47</sup> Lonnie Burton, May 5, 2017, “PLN Settles Censorship Suit Against Illinois County for \$75,000, Policy Changes,” *Prison Legal News*.

<sup>48</sup> Lee Gaines, February 15, 2018, Lawsuit Alleges Illinois Prisons Improperly Censored Criminal Justice Newsletter, *Prison Legal News*.

<sup>49</sup> Agamben, Giorgio. (1995). *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Heller-Roazen, Daniel (Trans.). Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA. *Kindle* loc. 177.

<sup>50, 51, 52</sup> Farley, Anthony Paul. (2005). "Perfecting Slavery." *Loyola University Chicago Law Journal* 36, (2005): 225-256 at 222, 229, 229.

<sup>53</sup> Kenneth Foster, January 17, 2020, “In prison, stamps are the currency that binds everybody,” *Prison Writers*.

---

**Matthew Yasuoka** is from Hawaii. **Therese Quinn** teaches in the Museum and Exhibition Studies Graduate Program at the University of Illinois at Chicago. In 2020 she published *School: Questions About Museums, Culture, and Justice to Explore in Your Classroom* (Teachers College Press). **Erica R. Meiners** is a writer, educator and organizer. Her current work includes a co-edited anthology *The Long Term: Resisting Life Sentences, Working Towards Freedom* (Haymarket Press 2018). She teaches courses in gender and sexuality studies, justice studies and educational studies at Northeastern Illinois University.

---



In 1908, the town of Princeton, Illinois, hosted a Farmer’s Carnival, and businesses on Main Street decorated their store fronts. The post office erected this over-the-side-walk sign, with the figures and lettering formed of corn cobs and other natural ingredients. The work is signed “Bill & Flanagan.”

# Postal Archaeology: The Origin of Writing

By Diane DeBlois & Robert Dalton Harris

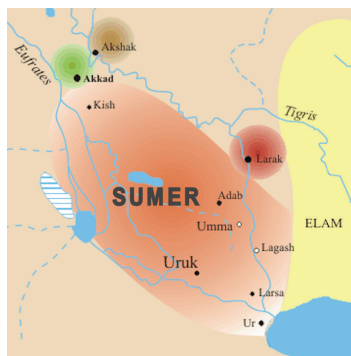
*Writing itself is a crucial component of civilization, together with the formation of capital and the emergence of cities.<sup>1</sup>*

Postal History lands squarely upon writing - the history of the message. The attraction for philatelists has to do with the prototypes of stamps and envelopes that figured in the development of the first written documents. We now learn that the form of the earliest writing was the spreadsheet.

Charles F. Meroni opened the Foreign Postal History section of his 1953 “Gold Medal Collection” with a “typical” example of a Babylonian Cuneiform Tablet with a message impressed into clay that was later baked, ca. 3000 BCE.<sup>2</sup>

Carl H. Scheele, writing for the Smithsonian in *A Short History of the Mail Service*, puts the development of writing with other markers of an emerging civilized society in ancient Mesopotamia, such as domestication of animals, the gradual growth of towns, and the growing importance of the market place, the temples and the palace. “The earliest written symbols - developed by the Sumerians some five thousand years ago - were at first crude pictographs impressed with a stylus in soft clay tablets.”<sup>3</sup>

Zaven M. Seron in 1984 introduced the history of writing with a cylinder seal (of agate but similar to the limestone one in our cover image) from ca. 2350-2150 BCE, pointing out that this was “typical of those impressed on messenger tablets of the Akkadian Period” in the “five thousand years of evolution in the development of the stamp.”<sup>4</sup>



*Figure 1: Sumerian clay tablet, ca. 2032 BCE, city of Umma, northeast of Uruk. [Siegel Auction Sale 885]*

The Robert A. Siegel 2004 sale of Dr. Robert LeBow's collection "5000 Years of Postal History" opened with "ca. 2032 BCE Sumerian Clay Tablet".<sup>5</sup> This same piece opened a Harmers of London 2008 sale of Paul M. Zatulove's "Journey of Ingenuity Collection." Accompanying John F. Dunn's review of this sale in *Mekeel's & Stamps*, the clay tablet was shown upside down compared with Siegel's - we chose the Dunn orientation for Figure 1.<sup>6</sup> The text of the tablet is said to be "2494 servant girl work days [committed] wages for the flour mill from Ur-Nintu" and to be dated in the second year of King Shu-Sin (his nine years of reign, 2037-2029 BCE, were given mythological narratives, this being the year that he built/caulked the boat of Enki, the god of water).

Denise Schmandt-Besserat has led the understanding that cuneiform symbols, or words, were not the earliest written communication. Her process, of carefully cataloguing the shapes and markings on 7,000 of the earliest clay tokens and then drawing conclusions, reminded us of stamp collecting. She rescued humble evidence from the trash heap into a tabulation of types and sub-types, referenced to archaeological site and dating. Her concluding theory ("new" in 1992 when her book was published) put number, and a system of counting and recording goods, ahead of speech as a source of writing, for a temple administration centered at Uruk, in present day Iraq.<sup>1</sup>



*Figure 2: Clay tokens from Uruk. Studies of these in context reveal that the fan shape with incised lines probably indicated a commodity made of metal but the same shape with a hole and a horizontal line as well indicated food. [Musée du Louvre, Département des Antiquités Orientales, Paris]*

These tokens were made of clay and then fired. The earliest - around 8000 BCE - were simple geometric shapes, palpably formed by fingers into spheres, cubes, cones, disks, cylinders. About 4500 BCE, the proliferation of sub-types - complex tokens - appeared in the same shapes, but with incised linear as well as punched markings and holes (Figure 2). Most of the excavated examples were found in the trash - presumably the ephemeral record of a transaction. Some tokens were found in clusters, suggesting a leather pouch had held them together. Some were found within globular clay 'envelopes' (Figure 3) and the perforated ones were found to have been strung on cords sealed with clay bullae.



*Figure 3: From Susa in present day Iran, ca. 3200 BCE, a globular clay envelope with seven accounting tokens found within it. The lenticular disks each stand for “a flock” of sheep (perhaps 10) while the cones represent measures of grain, three small and one large. These tokens were pressed into the surface of the ball before being encased inside after which a scribe-accountant rolled his cylinder seal all over the surface. [Musée du Louvre, Département des Antiquités Orientales, Paris]*

The clay envelopes, which had upon their surface impressions of the enclosed tokens, and notarized by sealings, were contemporaneous with a simple tablet impressed with the tokens but discarding them as rendered unnecessary. This cascade of efficiencies in recording information accompanied the corresponding complexity of the Uruk temple administration. The development of stylized drawings of specific objects - pictographs - on these tablets indicate the beginning of writing, introduced by numbers (Figure 4).<sup>7</sup>

*Figure 4: From Godin Tepe in present day Iran, ca. 3100 BCE, an impressed and incised tablet, the circular impressions standing for tens, and the wedges for units. The incised figure to the right is a depiction of a jar of oil, so that this tablet was a record of, in total, 33 jars of oil. [Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, Canada]*



These impressed clay tablets, officially sealed, might be thought of as receipts of single transactions. The practice evolved into a more complex impressed tablet - to record the reckoning and the type of commodity involved for several transactional reports - rather like a spreadsheet.<sup>8</sup> Figure 5 shows a typical example, the area of the tablet divided into sections corresponding to different accounts. The ideograms indicate this was a record of stored food.



*Figure 5: From Uruk in Iraq, 3200-3000 BCE. An impressed tablet bearing accounts in proto-cuneiform signs (known as writing stage Uruk III/, Jemdet Nasr period). For example, to the right of center at the top is an ideograph derived from a complex token, the disk with parallel lines indicating fabric. [Erlenmeyer Collection, Berlin Photo: Olaf M. Tessmer; Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Vorderasiatisches Museum, Berlin]*

Schmandt-Besserat more recently summarized these stages in the development of writing: (a) clay tokens representing units of goods used for accounting, 8000-3500 BCE; (b) three dimensional tokens transformed into two-dimensional pictographic signs also exclusively for accounting, 3500-3000 BCE; (c) phonetic signs, introduced to transcribe the name of individuals, marking when writing began to emulate spoken language, now applicable to all fields of human experience, 3000-1500 BCE; (d) the alphabet, with two dozen letters each standing for a single sound of voice, perfected the rendition of speech.<sup>9</sup> The example in Figure 1, as with the earlier token accounts, was not a 'letter' or communication over distance, but recorded a debt against stored food.

Understanding that writing was evolved from numbering has, in the 21st century, led to a re-assessment of the way our brains have evolved. The development of permanent ways to record stored goods accompanied new cognitive capacities. "To 'read' a symbol demanded two sets of novel connections: one cognitive-linguistic and the other cerebral. Among the long-established brain circuits for vision, language, and conceptualization, new connections developed and new retinotopic pathways - between the eye and socialized visual areas - became assigned to the tiny token marks." Our more complex reading brain evolved from an older token-reading brain.<sup>10</sup>

Understanding comics as sequential art inspired the artist Scott McCloud to find comic essence in the Sumerian writings, an ancient pedigree anchoring us moderns to that cognitive revolution.<sup>11</sup>

In “Postal Anthropology” (*PHJ* 174 October 2019) we focused on the development of the horse relay system of transmitting messages - at first on behalf of empire and only when introduced in Mediterranean Europe expanded to serve the commons. The evidence of the earliest writing in Sumer is similarly restricted to centralized power transactions, not in the service of empires but for the efficient governance of common interests for emergent agrarian and urban centers.

### Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> William W. Hallo, foreword to Denise Schmandt-Besserat, *Before Writing Volume I From Counting to Cuneiform*, University of Texas Press, Austin, 1992. Schmandt-Besserat’s continued studies are recorded on the University of Texas web site. A recent book relies on Schmandt-Besserat’s work, *Uruk: First City of the Ancient World*, Nicola Crüsemann, Margarete van Ess, Markus Hilgert and Beate Salje (eds.); Timothy Potts (ed. English-language edition), Getty Publications, Los Angeles 2020.
- <sup>2</sup> Charles F. Meroni, *Evolution of World Posts*, Chicago 1954.
- <sup>3</sup> Charles H. Scheele, *A Short History of the Mail Service*, Smithsonian Institution 1970, page 7.
- <sup>4</sup> Zaven M. Seron, *From the Winged Heels of Mercury*, Collectors Club of San Francisco 1984, pages 1 to 3.
- <sup>5</sup> Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries, Inc. Sale 885, Tuesday, November 9, 2005, *Part One: Foreign Countries*.
- <sup>6</sup> John F. Dunn, *Mekeel’s & Stamps*, January-March 2009, reprinted as “Yesterday in Mekeel’s: The Journey of Ingenuity Collection” in StampNewsOnline.net, Issue 9, September 2, 2011.
- <sup>7</sup> Frank J. Swetz of The Pennsylvania State University, “Mathematical Treasure: Mesopotamian Accounting Tokens,” *Convergence*, September 2012.
- <sup>8</sup> Assad Ebrahim, “The Mathematics of Uruk and Susa (ca. 3500-3000 BCE)” math-scitech.org December 28, 2019.
- <sup>9</sup> Denise Schmandt-Besserat, “The Evolution of Writing,” [sites.utexas.edu](http://sites.utexas.edu) 25 Jan. 2014.
- <sup>10</sup> Maryanne Wolf, *Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain*, Harper, New York 2007, pages 27 to 30. Wolf credits Schmandt-Besserat for an article “The Earliest Precursor of Writing” in a special issue on language, writing and the Computer, of *Scientific American*, 1986.
- <sup>11</sup> Scott McCloud, *Understanding Comics, the Invisible Art*, Kitchen Sink Press 1993.

---

**Diane DeBlois & Robert Dalton Harris** have edited this journal since 2000. They are each in the American Philatelic Society’s Writer’s Unit Hall of Fame, together in the Philatelic Dealers Hall of Fame, and were separately awarded the 2016 Luff Award for Excellence in Philatelic Research.

---

---

**COVER ILLUSTRATION:** A cylinder seal carved of limestone, ca. 3200 BC, and its 20th century impression on a wax tablet, from Uruk in what is now Iraq. The image is of the Priest-King En, wearing a long woven skirt, and his acolyte, wearing a short version, feeding stalks of wheat to the sacred herd (carved on the dome of the cylinder). We were going to depict postal cartoons on the covers to the three 2020 issues of *PHJ*, but the ancient Uruk imagery were cartoons, in a sense, requiring a familiarity with recognizable depictions. En always was shown wearing a round hat with rolled head-dress, and with a rounded beard while his underlings were clean-shaven. Both cattle and grain were central to the economy of Uruk, and the royal storehouse of grain and sacred herd of cattle were part of the responsibility of governance. The depiction of woven fabric implied sheep and looms. Images of En on other artifacts show him leading rituals, taking part in wild animal hunts, and punishing bound humans. This cartouche identified a person and function - most probably an official of the temple of Ianna, the Venus of Sumer. [From the Louvre, Oriental and Antiquities Department]

### **Postal History Society Officers & Board of Directors**

**Pres. & Acting Treas.:** Yamil Kouri, 405 Waltham St., #347, Lexington MA 02421

**Vice Pres. & Awards:** Douglas N. Clark, P.O. Box 427, Marstons Mills MA 02648

**Acting Sec.:** Diane DeBlois, P.O. Box 477, West Sand Lake NY 12196

**Publicity Chair:** David M. Frye, [phs-publicity@widesky.biz](mailto:phs-publicity@widesky.biz)

<b>Class of 2020</b>	Kenneth Grant	<a href="mailto:Kenneth.grant@uwc.edu">Kenneth.grant@uwc.edu</a>
	Terence Hines	<a href="mailto:terencehines@aol.com">terencehines@aol.com</a>
	Yamil Kouri	<a href="mailto:yhkouri@massmed.org">yhkouri@massmed.org</a>
<b>Class of 2021</b>	Timothy O'Connor	<a href="mailto:timoconnor1@comcast.net">timoconnor1@comcast.net</a>
	Juan Farah	<a href="mailto:juanlfarah@gmail.com">juanlfarah@gmail.com</a>
	Rob Faux	<a href="mailto:gff@genuinefauxfarm.com">gff@genuinefauxfarm.com</a>
<b>Class of 2022</b>	Steve Swain	<a href="mailto:swain.steve9@gmail.com">swain.steve9@gmail.com</a>
	Douglas N. Clark	<a href="mailto:doc@math.uga.edu">doc@math.uga.edu</a>
	Fernando Iglesias	<a href="mailto:fciglesias@earthlink.net">fciglesias@earthlink.net</a>
	David M. Frye	<a href="mailto:phs-publicity@widesky.biz">phs-publicity@widesky.biz</a>

---

### **Support our Journal advertisers!**

**& consider running a small ad: single insertion 2.5 x 2" just \$20.**

**promote an author; honor a collector; support the hobby.**

**Full page advertisement, 3 insertions \$400. Half page, 3 insertions \$250.**

---

## American Postal History in Other Journals

By Ken Grant

Many articles on U.S. postal history are published each month. In order to present a useful survey of recent publications, we adopt a rather narrow definition of postal history and present what is more an index than a literary endeavor. Unlike an index, however the present listing contains very little cross-referencing; so that a reader interested in trans-Atlantic mail should check each geographical location from which such mail might have originated. Editors not finding their publication reviewed here need only make sure the publication is available to the U.S. Associate Editor, Ken Grant at E11960 Kessler Rd., Baraboo WI 53913.

### General Topics

#### Advertising

Roger S. Brody's series on long-lived American companies continues with "And the Brand Played On: America's Centenarian Enterprises – Bristol-Myers Squibb." Brody shows a number of international postal reply cards used by the firm to promote its products. *U. S. Spec.* 90 No. 12 (December 2019).

"Southern Ruralist – Farm Journal Advertising" by Steve Swain discusses this southern farm journal and its use of the mails for promotion first as *Southern Ruralist* and later when it was merged to *Progressive Farmer*. *Ga. Post Roads* 28 No. 1 (Winter 2020).

"Kickapoo Joy Juice and Stanley's Snake Oil – A Pandora's Box from the Back-of-the-Book" by Jesse I. Spector and Donald Tocher provide background on patent medicines and the advertising that supported its sale. *LaPosta* 50 No. 4 (Fourth Quarter).

Chip Gliedman's "Framing the 1851 Issue: Early Advertising and Propaganda Collars" explains how advertising collars developed after the U.S. moved from a rate system based on the number of sheets of paper to one focused on weight. *Chron. of the U.S. Classic Post. Iss.* 72 No. 1 (February 2020).

Norman Shachat illustrates Type I and Type II illustrated advertising covers in "Craig Finley & Co. National Export Exposition Advertising Envelopes." *Penn. Post. Hist.* 48 No. 1 (February 2020).

#### Air Mail

Lawrence B. Brennan continues his history of Lakehurst, NJ's place in the development of air mail in "Navy Lakehurst: Part III – German Zeppelins which Called at Lakehurst 1928-1937." *NJPH* 47 No. 3 (August 2019).

"A. C. Roessler and Early Airmail" by John Lupia discusses how this early stamp dealer helped document early airmail postal history. *NJPH* 47 No. 4 (November 2019).

Jeffrey Shapiro provides background on an uncensored cover mailed shortly after the German invasion of Poland in "Quintuple Rate Prexies to the Dornier Airplane Manufacturer." *U.S. Stamp Spec.* 91 No. 2 (February 2020).

“MV Gripsholm Diplomatic Exchange Mail Goes Via FAM-22” by Louis Fiset analyzes the route and transit marks applied to mail of American Repatriates from the Far East in 1942. *U.S. Stamp Spec.* 91 No. 4 (April 2020).

### **Auxiliary Markings**

K. David Steidley explains the purpose for the auxiliary marking in “The ‘Received Under Cover by the Postmaster’ Marking. Based on evidence from his own collection the marking was used by individuals sending postcards wishing to have the postal cancel match the city featured on the image side of the card. *U. S. Stamp Spec.* 90 No. 12 (December 2019).

“Postage Due on Outgoing International Covers – Part One” by John M. Hotchner focuses on auxiliary markings on international covers on which postage due was collected in the United States. *LaPosta* 50 No. 4 (Fourth Quarter).

“The Free Franks of Benjamin Franklin as Documented in The Papers of Benjamin Franklin” studies Franklin’s use of free franks from 1744 to 1778 and provides a listing of the covers using this privilege. *Chron. of the U.S. Classic Post. Iss.* 72 No. 1 (February 2020).

Francis J. Crown, Jr. illustrates a cover mailed from Boston to Memphis in “Atlanta Unclaimed Auxiliary Marking.” Crown traces the travels of the cover from Memphis, to Birmingham, and eventually to the Ansley Hotel in Atlanta where the cover received unclaimed markings and was returned to sender. *Ga. Post Roads* 28 No. 2 (Spring 2020).

“Some New Express Hand Stamps” by Scott W. Prior illustrates a number of previously un-described express company hand stamps from Adams & Co.; Everts, Snell; Everts Wilson; Freeman; Hoag; Barlow, Sanderson; Langton; Sullivan; Swift; Wharton; Wheeler; and Wells, Fargo. *West. Express* 70 No. 1 (March 2020).

Anthony Wawrukiewicz, Thomas C. Breske, and Scott Steward in “Directory Assistance in Readdressing Misdirected Items” review rule changes in directory use in incorrectly addressed mail, known as ‘Nixies.’ *LaPosta* 51 No. 1 (First Quarter).

Richard Martorelli in “The USPOD’s Address Correction Service” provides background on the service that allowed mailers to pay for and receive corrected addresses for third and fourth class mail. *LaPosta* 51 No. 1 (First Quarter).

James W. Milgram in “Printed Postmarks on Stampless Covers (and Beyond)” looks at the small number of printed postmarks seen on stampless covers through the Civil War. These markings include circulars with printed town name, circulars with printed text and postal rating, and printed town-name postmarks. *Chron. of US Post. Issues* 72 No. 2 (May 2020).

“Unusual Natchez 1 Handstamps” by James W. Milgram illustrate this auxiliary marking on drop letter mail as well as for mail for which an advertising fee was collected. *Chron. of US Post. Issues* 72 No. 2 (May 2020).

## Civil War

“More on the Georgia Military Institute” by Francis J. Crown, Jr. provides additional information on the military service performed by the cadets of that institution. Crown discusses to covers mailed from Milledgeville where cadets and staff were moved as Sherman’s forces approached Marietta. Ga. Post Roads 28 No. 1 (Winter 2020).

Patricia A. Kaufmann in “Capt. Sally Tomkins: Confederate Cavalry Officer, Unassigned” provides biographical information on Sally Louisa Tomkins who may have been a commissioned officer in the Confederate Army, making her potentially the first female American army officer. LaPosta 50 No. 4 (Fourth Quarter).

James W. Milgram indicates that roughly twenty companies were responsible for printing patriotic envelopes in “Patriotic Advertising Envelopes of Publishers and Sellers of Civil War Patriotic Covers.” Chron. of the U.S. Classic Post. Iss. 72 No. 1m (February 2020).

“Tales of the Civil War Blockade: The Government-Owned Robert E. Lee” by Steven Walske traces the history of the blockade runner *Giraff*, later renamed the *Robert E. Lee*. Walske provides a list of departure and arrival dates and ports during the Civil War. Chron. of the U.S. Classic Post. Iss. 72 No. 1m (February 2020).

Daniel M. Telep in “The Civil War History of Arsenal, Pennsylvania” gives background on the war manufacturing center next to Pittsburgh. Penn. Post. Hist. 48 No. 1 (February 2020).

James W. Milgram takes on a subset of popular nineteenth century valentines in “Comic Valentines Depicting Civil War Subjects.” LaPosta 51 No. 1 (First Quarter).

“Lincoln Campaign Covers Created by a Temperance Newspaper Publisher” by James W. Milgram looks at covers produced by M. H. Allardt, the publisher of *The Analyst*, a Cleveland weekly newspaper advocating temperance. Chron. of US Post. Issues 72 No. 2 (May 2020).

Steven Walske’s fourth article on Civil War blockade runners “Tales of the Civil War Blockade: The North Carolina-Owned Advance” includes its sailing data for 1863-64. The *Advance* was captured by the U.S. Navy in 1864 and commissioned as the USS *Advance*. The ship became part of the North Atlantic Blockading Squadron. Chron. of US Post. Issues 72 No. 2 (May 2020).

## Post Offices

Steven J. Bahnsen in “Two New Post Offices That Opened in 2019” discusses the post offices of Havelock, Iowa and Stonington, Illinois, which opened postal facilities in these small communities. LaPosta 51 No. 1 (First Quarter).

## Miscellaneous

Ed and Jean Siskin provide paleographic alphabet charts in order to help researchers read American and British handwriting in “Reading Early American

Mail.” They include a chart showing common abbreviations seen in 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century letters. NJPH 48 No. 1 (February 2020).

### **RPO/HPO**

“The Chicago & North Western Railway Opening” by Robert Baldrige provides background information on the earliest railroads in Wisconsin. Badger Post. Hist. 59 No. 2 (November 2019).

Bruce H. Mosher sketches the history of the two railroads that combined in 1879 and supported early expresses in “Early Expresses on the Union Pacific Railroad and Kansas Pacific Railway.” Among the expresses that used the railway are the Pacific Union Express Company and the Wells, Fargo & Company Express. Western Express 69 No. 4 (December 2019).

“Highway Post Offices: Temple & Brownwood HPO #170 (C197)” by William Keller offers a timetables and a route map for this Texas HPO, which began in 1955 and ended in 1959. Trans. Post. Coll. 71 No. 1 (Winter 2019-20).

Douglas N. Clark in “News from the Cities” devotes space to the Chattanooga electric car, showing details of the postmarks of this rare service. Trans. Post. Coll. 71 No. 1 (Winter 2019-20).

“Unlisted Railroad Postmarks” illustrates thirty-eight previously unrecorded RPO cancels not listed in the U.S. Transit Markings Catalog or the RPO Catalog. Trans. Post. Coll. 71 No. 1 (Winter 2019-20).

“Highway Post Offices: Aberdeen & Sioux City HPO MPOS #168 (Chronological #C195)” by William Keller discusses the end of the Aberdeen & Sioux City RPO and the commencement of the Aberdeen & Sioux City HPO. Keller includes routes and covers serviced while in operation. Trans. Post. Coll. 71 No. 2 (Spring 2020).

Douglas N. Clark provides news about Chicago and Baltimore RPOs in “News from the Cities: Street Car R.P.O.” Transit Post. Coll. 71 No. 2 (Spring 2020).

### **Rates and Services**

“M-Bag Mail” by Peter Martin discusses this service which allows for international mail containing books and printed materials sent to a single person at a single address to be delivered. LaPosta 50 No. 4 (Fourth Quarter).

“Foreign Registered Mail 1855-1875 Part Three: German” by James W. Milgram explores registered mail to and from Germany including other nations using the German international mail system.

Stephen L. Suffet’s “The 3-Cent PUAS Convention Letter Rate: An Introduction with Illustrations” looks at the Postal Union of America’s and Spain surface letter rate of 3-cents per ounce, which was in effect from 1932 until 1953. U.S. Spec. 91 No. 3 (March 2020).

“Spreadsheet Faults Can Affect Any Work, Not Just 1960s U.S. Parcel Post Rates” by Ronald Blanks looks at difficulties posed by rating parcel post wrappers and tags. LaPosta 51 No. 1 (First Quarter).

“Trans-Mississippi Stamps on Registered Covers to Foreign Destinations” by Labron Harris discusses the use of these stamps on registered covers during their official period of use and slightly thereafter. *Chron. of US Post. Issues* 72 No. 2 (May 2020).

## **WWII**

“Postal Patron Confusion over Resumed U.S. International Mail Service at the End of World War II” by Louis Fleet explains that because postal service was reinstated incrementally with not all services available, some mail was returned. *U. S. Spec* 91 No. 1 (January 2020).

Lawrence B. Brennan begins a history and postal history of a U.S. Battleship in “USS New Jersey (BB 62) – From Philadelphia to Camden: A Retrospective of 80 Years. Part I: World War II, First Commissioning.” *NJPH* 47 No. 4 (November 2019).

Ben Termini provides background on a correspondence between an airman who died in the war and his wife in “Joe & Maurine – A Lost American Dream.” *Jour. Texas Phil. And Post. Hist.* 68 No. 1 (February 2020).

“A World War II Postcard from the Station Hospital at Fort Belvoir, Virginia” by Peter Martin looks at a postcard mailed by a soldier to his wife reporting about his case of the flu. Martin provides information about Fort Belvoir and then earlier flu pandemic of 1918. *LaPosta* 51 No. 1 (First Quarter).

## **Geographic**

### **Alaska**

Eric Knapp discusses the government installations deemed necessary after the discovery of gold in the Klondike region in “Alaska’s Gold Rush Forts: The U.S. Army Forts and Camps 1897-1925.” *LaPosta* 50 No. 4 (Fourth Quarter).

### **California**

David D’Alessandris in “California Circular Rates Prior to July 1, 1851” examines the rates in effect to send circulars from California to England and France. In addition, he shows a circular sent from Oregon City, Oregon Territory to New York. *Chron. of US Post. Issues* 72 No. 2 (May 2020).

### **Colorado**

David F. New’s “Colorado Gold Rush Letters 1858-1872” gives a history of the settlement of Colorado focusing on various counties. New provides an index of Colorado Gold Rush letters as well as transcriptions of these early settler letters. The entire issue of *Western Express* is devoted to this monograph. *Western Express* 70 No. 1A (March 2020).

### **Florida**

Thomas M. Lera discusses a set of 165 Florida postcards featuring alligators in “Samuel Langsdorff’s Alligator Postcards Add to Any Collection, Presentation and Exhibit.” *Fla. Post. Hist. Jour.* 27 No. 1 (January 2020).

“Burdines: ‘The Florida Store’” by Juan L. Riera presents a history of a popular Florida department store in business from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century until 2004. Fla. Post. Hist. Jour. 27 No. 1 (January 2020).

“A Warning from the U.S. Marshal in Apalachicola” by Christine C. Sanders focuses on a 1838 stampless cover during the territorial period. The letter warns the recipient of a Mr. Betton, a “notorious rascal.” Fla. Post. Hist. Jour. 27 No. 1 (January 2020).

Jual L. Riera presents the postal history of a 28-acre island in “Greyhound Key Post Office.” The post office was in operation from 1955 to 1966. Fla. Post. Hist. Jour. 27 No. 1 (January 2020).

“Narauja / Naranga Post Office” by Thomas M. Lera provides a history of the postoffice from its opening in 1905, to its name change in 1906, and until it was integrated with the Homestead, Florida post office in 1958. Fla. Post. Hist. Jour. 27 No. 1 (January 2020).

### **Georgia**

Tony K. Crumbley provides an account on the origin of Rural Free Delivery in “The Birth of Rural Free Mail Delivery in Georgia.” Included in his article is a list of 161 cities with Georgia RFD markings along with illustrations of RFD cancels used in the state. Ga. Post Roads 28 No. 1 (Winter 2020).

“The Origins of Rural Free Delivery: An Emancipated Slave and a Georgia Politician” by Michael Wing tells the story of Jerry Parsons, a freed slave, who delivered mail on a five-mile route anticipating Rural Free Delivery. Parsons served Norwood, Ga. for forty years. LaPosta 50 No. 4 (Fourth Quarter).

“Lutherville, Georgia Inverted Postmark” illustrates a cover with an inverted day and date slug, which was inadvertently inserted upside-down. Ga. Post Roads 28 No. 2 (Spring 2020).

“The County and Postmaster Postmarks of Georgia” by Tony L. Crumbly discusses postmarks that included both the postmaster’s name and the county. He provides lists of the nine types of Georgia county and postmaster hand-stamps as well as a listing of Georgia locations where these marks were used. Ga. Post Roads 28 No. 2 (Spring 2020).

Steve Swain provides an introduction to confirmation of two-way radio communication in “QSL Cards – Georgia Postal History Whimsy.” Ga. Post Roads 28 No. 2 (Spring 2020).

### **Louisiana**

In “Louisiana Post Offices,” Steven J. Bahnsen provides photographs of fifteen Louisiana post offices take between 1973 and 2018. LaPosta 50 No. 4 (Fourth Quarter).

### **Maryland**

In “Three War Cover,” Ed and Jean Siskin examine an 1840 cover mailed from Baltimore to Elizabethtown, New Jersey and written by Captain Samuel

B. Ringgold, who later was dubbed “Father of Modern Artillery.” NJPH 48 No. 1 (February 2020).

### **Michigan**

Charles Wood in “Saginaw East Side Registered Business Reply” presents an illustrated advertising reply envelope for a soap company showing a beetle tracking ink across the face of the envelope and writing the return address. *Peninsular Phil.* 61 No. 4 (Winter 2020).

“Michigan Automobile Certificate of 1919” by Charles Wood shows the 1919 version of today’s vehicle registration mailed to the automobile owner on a post card. *Peninsular Phil.* 61 No. 4 (Winter 2020).

Charles Wood returns to the topic of Wheel of Fortune cancels in “Wheel of Fortune Cancels Again.” He illustrates cancels from the Michigan towns of Columbiaville, Oxford, Lake Lindon, and Kalamo. *Peninsular Phil.* 61 No. 4 (Winter 2020).

Cary E. Johnson in “Cover Analysis: Beyond Michigan” traces the journey of a stampless cover mailed from Dover, Michigan to Lurgan, Ireland. The cover was carried by stagecoach and train to New York, where it was carried by a sailing packet to Liverpool and then to Ireland. *Peninsular Phil.* 61 No. 4 (Winter 2020).

### **Missouri**

“Tales from the Trail – The Mexican War” by David F. New focuses on a folded letter sent by James M. Finley as part of the 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment Missouri Mounted Volunteers, which was created to fight in the war with Mexico. *West. Express* 70 No. 1 (March 2020).

### **Nevada**

Gordon L. Nelson provides background on a western express company operating in the Nevada territory in “Langton’s Humboldt Express.” The article includes a census of Langton’s Humboldt Express covers. *West. Express* 70 No. 1 (March 2020).

### **New Hampshire**

In “Hanover Center Cover Regarding Laura Bridgman,” Terence Hines provides background on Laura Bridgman, the subject of the cover. Bridgman was deaf, blind, and mute and who would be educated at the New England Asylum for the Blind. *Granite Posts* 31 No. 4 (Fall 2019).

Diane DeBlois and Robert Dalton Harris in “Postal Demography of Hillsborough County” using a statistical analysis of postal compensation data draw conclusions on growth in that New Hampshire county from 1820 to 1840. *Granite Posts* 31 No. 4 (Fall 2019).

A cover mailed from Greenland, NH to Gilmanton, NH is the subject of John D. Bowman’s “A Road Less Traveled: 1850 Cover Carried by Express, Two Railroads and a One-Horse Wagon.” The cover was addressed with direc-

tions “Via Farmington/ By S. B. Marden’s Express.” Chron. of US Post. Issues 72 No. 2 (May 2020).

### **New Jersey**

Robert G. Rose provides a history of one of the 99 New Deal communities created during the depression in “Jersey Homesteads: A New Deal Community’s Postal History.” Located in Monmouth County, Jersey Homesteads established a rural branch of Hightstown in 1936 and opened its own post office in 1940 as Jersey Homesteads. NJPH 47 No. 3 (August 2019).

“West End, New Jersey Cancellations” by Roger D. Curran looks at cancels from two West End post offices in Hunterdon and Monmouth Counties. NJPH 47 No. 3 (August 2019).

John Lupia continues his review of stamp dealers operating in New Jersey in “A Few Lesser Known Stamp Dealers of New Jersey, Part 3.” He shows covers from Thomas Jan Delikat, William George Klemt, and Duncan Tilghman Weaver. NJPH 47 No. 3 (August 2019).

“Hometown Post Offices: The Snufftown-Stockholm Conundrum” by Jean Walton outlines the history of the post office of Stockholm which served the community of Snufftown, which never had a post office. Walton lists both the various locations of the Stockholm post office as well as its postmasters beginning with Isaac Beach, Jr. in 1812. NJPH 47 No. 3 (August 2019).

Robert G. Rose in “The ‘Acquackanonk N. Jersey’ Oval Handstamp” provides background on this handstamp including photographs of the device and a census of covers. NJPH 47 No. 4 (November 2019).

“New Jersey to Niagara in 1834” by Jean R. Walton explores the route taken by a cover sent from Newton, NJ to Stamford, Canada West. Walton includes biographical detail of the family connected to the cover. NJPH 47 No. 4 (November 2019).

Donald A. Chafetz uses New Jersey covers to provide a snapshot of mail during the second decade of the twentieth century in “A Philatelic Time Capsule: Mostly the 1920s.” NJPH 47 No. 4 (November 2019).

“On the Auction Scene: 10-cent 1847 ‘Block of Four’ on Newark Cover” by Robert G. Rose documents the recent sale of the most valuable 1847 issue cover postmarked from New Jersey. NJPH 47 No. 4 (November 2019).

Jean R. Walton’s “Hometown Post Offices: Delaware, NJ, A Hidden Gem ‘NJ’s Oldest Operating Post Office in the Same Location’” provides a history of the Delaware post office, which has been in the same location since 1884 and perhaps as early as 1860. In addition to showing the post office, Walton provides covers, and a list of postmasters since 1824. NJPH 47 No. 4 (November 2019).

Vernon R. Morris, Jr. traces the origin of a cover sent to New York City in “Shrewsbury, N.J., September 27, 1721: Earliest Known Postally Rated Cover from New Jersey.” Based on the British Post Office Act of 1710, the cover was

mailed from Shrewsbury, N.J. rather than Shrewsbury, Mass. Chron. of the U.S. Classic Post. Iss. 72 No. 1m (February 2020).

Vernon R. Morris, Jr. continues his study of the earliest known rated cover from New Jersey in “The Birth of New Jersey’s Post.” Morris provides maps of postal routes as well as biographies of the sender and receiver of the cover. NJPH 48 No. 1 (February 2020).

Lawrence B. Brennan in “USS New Jersey (BB 62) – From Philadelphia to Camden, Part II A Retrospective of 80 Years. Korea & Vietnam, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Commissionings contines his history of the Iowa Class Battleship. NJPH 48 No. 1 (February 2020).

“Hunterdon County Rural Free Delivery, An Expanded Version” by James I. Walker undertakes a review of Rural Free Delivery service in Hunterdon County from 1900-1937. He provides a chronological list of county communities service dates as well as delivery maps. NJPH 48 No. 1 (February 2020).

### **New Mexico**

“Love at Los Alamos – The Manhattan Project” by Larry Nelson focuses on a post card sent by Maryella Weaver a member of the Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps who married Edmund Scheuer who also was stationed at Los Alamos and worked in the Manhattan Project. Coll. Club. Phil. 99 No. 1 (Jan/Feb 2020).

### **New York**

Jesse I. Spector provides a history of the Outdoor Cleanliness Association which focused on dirty sidewalks and dog waste in his “The Outdoor Cleanliness Association of the City of New York.” LaPosta 51 No. 1 (First Quarter).

“An Englishman in Manhattan in the 1790s” by John Barwis contains transcriptions of eight 18<sup>th</sup> century letters by John Cockin and presents a picture of New York during that period. Among the topics touched on are yellow fever and the state of US/English relations. Coll. Club Phil. 99 No. 2 (March/April 2020).

“The Albany Boatman’s Relief Association” by Josh Furman looks at a postal card from that organization, which provided life insurance for individuals under fifty connected with river pursuits. Excelsior! Whole 31 New Series (March 2020).

Glenn A. Estus in “The Trime Hand Cancel” discusses the connection between the reduction in postage rates from 5-cents to 3-cents and the connection between that rate and the 3-cent coin or trime. Estus illustrates various 3-cent paid markings, including a trime marking. Excelsior! Whole 31 New Series (March 2020).

“New Yorker by Birth, Floridian by Chance – and Choice” by Francis Ferguson discusses his family interest in collecting postal history from the Utica area, for its connection to the community of his birth. Excelsior! Whole 31 New Series (March 2020).

Glenn A. Estus in “Changes to Smith/Kay Since 1980” provides a list by county showing changes to Smith and Kay’s New York Postal History: The

Post Offices and First Postmasters from 1775 to 1980. *Excelsior!* Whole 31 New Series (March 2020).

“The New York Direct Mails to Bermuda, 1869-1877” by Michael J. Brown presents a history of these direct mails including an extensive listing of arrivals and departures of the various steamships that serviced the route. *Chron. of U.S. Post. Issues* 72 No. 2 (May 2020).

Julian H. Jones in “A New First Sailing Date for the Black X Line of Sailing Packets” presents a folded letter carried on the first sailing of the Black X Line. *Chron. of US Post. Issues* 72 No. 2 (May 2020).

#### **North Carolina**

Tony K. Crumbley offers a history of postal operations in “The Postal History of Warsaw, North Carolina.” Crumbley provides a list of Warsaw, North Carolina postmaster starting with Robert B. Saunders in 1839. *LaPosta* 51 No. 1 (First Quarter).

#### **North Dakota**

Chip Gliedman in “U.S. Postage Stamps Used at Red River Settlement, B.N.A.: Update and Three Additions to the Cover Census” discusses the use of US postage on covers mailed from Canada near Winnipeg and placed into the U.S. mailstream in Pembina (Minnesota Territory, now North Dakota). *Chron. of US Post. Issues* 72 No. 2 (May 2020).

#### **Pennsylvania**

“The Philadelphia Merchants’ Exchange” by Gus Spector gives a history of that Exchange, which was opened in 1834 and renamed the Philadelphia Stock Exchange in 1875. *Penn. Post. Hist.* 48 No. 1 (February 2020).

Steve Swain’s “Normal School Deltiology” discusses these schools intended to train teachers and illustrates fourteen Pennsylvanian normal schools. *Penn. Post. Hist.* 48 No. 1 (February 2020).

An 1831 letter addressed to a professor of Chemistry and Minerals at West Point is the subject of Philip G. Russel’s “Dr. Swift’s Mineral Collection.” A part of the mineral collection is housed in the Geology Department of Lafayette College in Easton, PA. *Penn. Post. Hist.* 48 No. 1 (February 2020).

#### **Texas**

“Texas Transatlantic Mail Through Portland, Maine’s Exchange Office” by Tom Koch looks at a piece of mail sent from Birmingham, England to Nueces-town, Texas and its route while carried on the Allen Line SS *Moravian*. *Jour. Texas Phil. And Post. Hist.* 68 No. 1 (February 2020).

#### **Wisconsin**

“Madison Territorial Covers” by John Paré looks at ten stampless folded letters under the rate structure of May 1, 1825. *Badger Post. Hist.* 59 No. 2 (November 2019).

Ken Grant’s “Wisconsin Local Anti-Tuberculosis Seals” looks at postcards mailed within Wisconsin and tied by seals of the Wisconsin Anti-Tuberculosis

Association and the short lived Milwaukee Anti-Tuberculosis League. *Badger Post. Hist.* 59 No. 2 (November 2019).

“Reduced to Ashes: Williamsonville, WI” by Christopher N. Barney provides a history of the Williamsonville post office, which was destroyed by the Peshtigo/Door County fire of 1871. The post office was in operation for only nine months and five days. *Badger Post. Hist.* 60 No. 1 (February 2020).

Steven J. Bahnsen provides photographs taken between 1985 and 2017 of sixteen post offices in “Wisconsin Post Offices.” *LaPosta* 51 No. 1 (First Quarter).

“Island History in the Mail: Washington Island RFD: Delivering by Horse and Automobile” by Cheryl R. Ganz traces the travels of a cover mailed from Detroit Harbor, Wisconsin and provides a biography of the letter carrier who both picked it up and delivered it. *Badger Post. Hist.* 59 No. 3 (May 2020).

John Paré presents an introduction to collecting Wisconsin postal history in “Getting Started on Wisconsin Postal History, Parts I and 2.”

### Wyoming

Ken Stach’s “Clippinger’s Express and the Pioneer Pony Express to the Black Hills” discusses the Pioneer Pony Express and Clippinger’s Express which delivered mail from Fort Laramie, Wyoming Territory to Deadwood City in the Dakota Territory. The services originated in 1876 as a result of the discovery of gold in the area. *Western Express* 69 No. 4 (December 2019).

### Journal Abbreviations

*Badger Post. Hist.* = *Badger Postal History*, Greg Schmidt, 1978 Fox Burrow Ct., Neenah WI 54956.

*Chron. Of U.S. Classic* = *The Chronicle of the U.S. Classic Postal Issues*, Michael Laurence, 101 West 90th Street Apt 8-H, New York NY 10024.

*Coll. Club Phil.* = *The Collectors Club Philatelist*, 22 East 35th St., New York NY 10016-3806. Wayne L. Youngblood, [wystamps@gmail.com](mailto:wystamps@gmail.com).

*Excelsior!* = *Excelsior! Journal of the Empire State Postal History Society*, George McGowen, PO Box 482, East Schodack NY 12063.

*Fla. Post. Hist. Jour.* = *Florida Postal History Journal*, Deane R. Briggs, 2000 N. Lake Eloise Dr., Winter Haven, FL 33884.

*Ga. Post Roads* = *Georgia Post Roads*, Douglas N. Clark, PO Box 427, Marstons Mills MA 02648.

*Granite Posts* = *Granite Posts*, publication of the New Hampshire Postal History Society, edited by Terence Hines, Box 629, Chappaqua, NY 10515-0629.

*Jour. of Texas Phi. & Post. Hist.* = *The Journal of Texas Philately & Postal History*, Lyle C. Boardman, 3916 Wyldwood Road, Austin TX 78739-3005.

*LaPosta* = *La Posta: The Journal of American Postal History*, Box 6074, Fredericksburg VA 22403.

*NJPH* = *NJPH The Journal of New Jersey Postal History Society*, 18 Balbrook Dr., Mendham NJ 07945.

*Peninsular Phil.* = *The Peninsular Philatelist*, 244 Breckenridge W, Ferndale MI 48220.

Penn. Postal Hist. = *Pennsylvania Postal Historian*, 382 Tall Meadow Ln., Yardley PA 19067.  
Trans. Post. Coll. = *Transit Postmark Collector*, Douglas N. Clark, PO Box 427,  
Marstons Mills MA 02648.  
U.S. Spec. = *The United States Specialist*, 951 Rose Court, Santa Clara CA 95051.  
Western Express = Journal of the Western Cover Society, Ryan Baum, PO Box  
4187, Davis CA 95617-4187.

## Foreign Postal History in Other Journals

Both general and specialized philatelic periodicals publish foreign postal history articles that may interest Postal History Journal readers. The following list attempts to provide brief descriptions of as many such articles as our volunteer group of reviewers can provide for each issue of the PHJ. If you are aware of a journal our group should be reviewing or if you are interested in being a member of this volunteer group, please contact the Foreign Postal History Associate Editor at [gff@genuinefauxfarm.com](mailto:gff@genuinefauxfarm.com).

### Air Mail

“Vatican City and the US Space Program,” by Michael Lamothe, traces the Vatican–NASA connections illustrated by the contents of cachets on event covers. *Vatican Notes: The Journal of the Vatican Philatelic Society*, Vol. 67, No. 381, Third Quarter 2019, pp. 10–19.

“The Development of Vatican City Airmail: Part II—The Era of Ala Littoria 1934–1943,” by Antonio Maria Rabasca, employs aviation-related ephemera and air-mail covers to illustrate a historical treatment of a period of Vatican airmail service. *Vatican Notes: The Journal of the Vatican Philatelic Society*, Vol. 67, No. 381, Third Quarter 2019, pp. 20–39.

### Disinfected Mail

Anthony Virvilis, in “Mail Transportation and Fumigation of Letters at Piraeus during the 1884 Cholera Epidemic” quotes and uses illustrations from 1884 publications to describe the extent of the epidemic throughout Europe, not just Greece. His postal examples were fumigated at Corfu. *Post Horn* No. 1.

### Insured Mail

Clive Jones’s explains the reasons that eight pieces of British insured mail (part of a UPU agreement effective from January 1, 1899) were “Insured Mail Anomalies.” *Postal History* No. 373 March 2020.

### WWI

Kevin Lowther, in *YMCA Worker Found Role in Brutalized French Village*, explored the village of Gerbéviller, site of a German massacre of civilians in August 1914, through mail to and from James A. Warren, who had been assigned by the Y to work with the French Army after the Armistice. A particularly interesting

detail was the explanation of a red star censorship marking on Warren's mail back to the U.S. *American Stamp Collector & Dealer*, March 2020.

### **Mail Boxes**

Dr. A. Bonnici provides a first-hand narrative of the British letter boxes he saved from desecration in 1974. He was a member of the Malta parliament at the time, and was able to persuade the Prime Minister to halt the process of obliterating the heraldic symbols of British royalty on the distinctive red pillar-boxes. Illustrated are examples of the defaced and saved boxes, and reproductions of notes from the archives on the subject of letter boxes in Malta. *Journal of The Malta Philatelic Society*, April 2020.

### **Unusual Mail**

Joseph Schirò researched an early tourist map of Malta that had been folded, wrapped around flowers, and mailed to England on September 13, 1858. He provides a narrative of the map and its predecessors, the writer and his stay in Malta, the recipient, etc. He also provides an interesting analysis of what the franking would have been - the stamps having fallen off. *Journal of The Malta Philatelic Society*, April 2020.

### **WWII**

Wendy Buckle presents three covers to and from "The Latvian Legion" a fighting unit created by the Waffen-SS with Latvian "volunteers." "No Latvian soldier was found guilty of war crimes, but arguments continue today" - an argument for the power of postal history. *Postal History* No. 373 March 2020.

"WWII Italian Internment Camp Descriptive Status Marks: Unrecorded 'Repatriated' Hand-Stamps," by Bill Clark, reports two previously undocumented auxiliary markings and places their use in historical context. *B.E.A.—The Bulletin of the East Africa Study Circle*, Vol. 23, No. 122, May 2019, pp. 32–33.

"WWII: Jack Kennedy—A Casualty of War," by Bill Clark, pieces together the history of a Catalina pilot who wrote air mail letter cards to his wife during the war and who died in a crash on his final approach to landing upon return from an anti-submarine escort mission. *B.E.A.—The Bulletin of the East Africa Study Circle*, Vol. 24, No. 124, January 2020, pp. 11–13.

"Fascist Revolution Exhibition Cancel," by Michael Lamothe, uses both covers and period ephemera to depict Benito Mussolini's efforts to promote his regime. *Vatican Notes: The Journal of the Vatican Philatelic Society*, Vol. 68, No. 383, First Quarter 2020, pp. 44–45.

### **Canada**

Jonathan Johnson OTB presented a two part article - "WWII Ocean-going Canadian Merchant Navy postal history" - in a highly organized fashion, a thorough catalogue of all aspects of this type of mail. The presentation is extensively illustrated, and captions are clear and to the point. Background information about the Merchant Navy is appropriate to the discussion. According to the author, this is the first discussion of this postal system, designed to handle the

needs of these sailors. This is an superior article which will serve as a framework for future discussions. This article will appeal to all interested in Canadian maritime mail, military mail and WW2 specifically. *BNAPS Topics*, Vol. 76, No. 4 and Vol. 77, No. 1.

### East Africa

“KUT Presentation Folders 1947–1959,” by Roger Gilbert, analyzes the contents and features of eighteen known postage stamp presentation folders from the reigns of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth II. *B.E.A.—The Bulletin of the East Africa Study Circle*, Vol. 23, No. 122, May 2019, pp. 34–40.

“Registration Labels of Post-Colonial Tanganyika and Tanzania,” Part II, by David M. Frye, presents the second of a two-part survey of registration labels used after independence on 9 December 1961. This installment employs the developed label typology that distinguishes labels by physical and textual characteristics and applies that typology to labels from towns other than Dar es Salaam. *B.E.A.—The Bulletin of the East Africa Study Circle*, Vol. 23, No. 122, May 2019, pp. 41–47.

“Design & Development: Victor Whitely’s Design’s for Uganda’s 1962 Independence Issue 2/- Stamp,” by Richard Scott Morel, curator of the British Library’s philatelic collections, draws on original artwork and background material and the author’s analysis to show the thought and artistry behind the named stamp issue. *B.E.A.—The Bulletin of the East Africa Study Circle*, Vol. 23, No. 122, May 2019, pp. 48–52.

“Tanganyika Travelling Post Offices—Part 9,” by Eric Coulton, extends his long-running study to review the work of railway postal agencies ending with independence on 9 December 1961. This section examines covers processed on the Central and Northern Railways with place names handstamped on the postage stamps. *B.E.A.—The Bulletin of the East Africa Study Circle*, Vol. 23, No. 123, September 2019, pp. 59–66.

“Young Warthog Formula Aerogrammes 1970–1981,” by Roger Gilbert, presents a typology of East African aerogrammes depicting a young warthog. *B.E.A.—The Bulletin of the East Africa Study Circle*, Vol. 23, No. 123, September 2019, pp. 66–68.

“Tanganyika’s 1961 Independence Issue—Part I,” by Richard Scott Morel, begins a study of the named issue by presenting original art and a narrative of the creative work behind the final designs. *B.E.A.—The Bulletin of the East Africa Study Circle*, Vol. 23, No. 123, September 2019, pp. 70–77.

“Tanganyika Government Air Survey—Part I, by Nick Green, sketches a history of the air survey unit and investigates the postal support the unit supplied from 1929 to 1935. *B.E.A.—The Bulletin of the East Africa Study Circle*, Vol. 24, No. 124, January 2020, pp. 1–9.

“Tanganyika’s 1961 Independence Issue—Part II,” by Richard Scott Morel, concludes a study of the named issue by depicting final color proofs for all de-

signs and summarizing production runs. *B.E.A.—The Bulletin of the East Africa Study Circle*, Vol. 24, No. 124, January 2020, pp. 14–18.

“GB Post Office Postal Stationery Wrapper to Zanzibar,” by John J. Curtis, portrays a wrapper, unique among 13,400 wrappers by virtue of its destination, and sketches the details of its journey and arrival. *B.E.A.—The Bulletin of the East Africa Study Circle*, Vol. 24, No. 124, January 2020, pp. 19–21.

“A Mid-2000s Tanzania Priority Mail Label,” by David M. Frye, identifies and analyzes a twenty-first-century usage of a priority-mail label that does not find support in rates and services resources published by the Tanzania Posts Corporation. *B.E.A.—The Bulletin of the East Africa Study Circle*, Vol. 24, No. 124, January 2020, pp. 21–23.

### **Ethiopia**

Ulf Johan Lindahl covers several chapters in “Ethiopia’s Unique Postal History” from Italian Prisoner of war mail of the 1890s, Alfred Ilg’s Independent post of 1899, Italian stamps used in 1900, the overprints, the first stamps, American Missions 1903-1904, Menelik’s Imperial Posts, reorganization by the French, American Legation mail, Royal Italian Commercial Agency Mail, Ira Daoua Provisionals, Was Tafari stamps. *Post Horn* No. 1

### **France**

Christopher Hallam explores two covers in “Clay Pipes and Leeches, a Glimpse of Anglo-Frenach Trade in the mid 19th century” that reveal the importation from France of those two commodities, before and after the reduction of tariffs by the Cobden-Chevalier Treaty of 1860. *Postal History* No. 373 March 2020

### **Great Britain**

Having studied 13,000 used examples of GB wrappers, John K. Curtis FRPSL presents 12, each the only recorded example to particular African countries. “Early West African Port Destinations of Great Britain Post Office Postal stationery Wrappers” provides a map and thumb nail descriptions of the twelve countries as well as descriptions of each wrapper. *Postal History* No. 373 March 2020.

### **Liberia**

Kevin Lowther presented a powerful article, “Stephen A. Benson, Frederick Douglass & John Kizell: The Debate Over Emigration of Free Blacks to Liberia” centered an 1860 sent by Benson, Liberia’s President, with concerns about Douglass being arrested for the raid on Harper’s ferry. *Kelleher’s Stamp Quarterly* 1st quarter 2020 whole no. 21.

### **Norway**

Georg Størmer FRPSL builds an excellent story around a “Letter to New York during the Panic of 1857” sent to a Norwegian-born businessman, and bearing the first Norwegian stamps. *Collectors Club Philatelist*, March-April 2020.

### **Philippines**

Kevin Lowther explains the situation, with covers, when “Three Postal Authorities Operated Briefly During Filipino Insurgency.” American occupation of

the islands in 1898 meant that the examples described were handled by: “Philippine Station” San Francisco post office; regular U.S. mail as early as January 2, 1899; soldier’s mail certified by officers for the 2 cent rate; soldier’s mail sent free; mail with overprinted U.S. stamps; Filipino Revolutionary Government mail. *American Stamp Collector & Dealer* February 2020.

### **Russia**

Loreanzo Carra analyzes an 1879 cover and its letter that was carried from Temir-Khan-Shra, to Rostov, Odessa, Volochysk, Podwoloczyska, Lviv, Krakow, Vienna, Ljubjana, Priest, Alexandria, Jaffa, to Jerusalem. *Post Horn* No. 1.

### **Vatican**

“Illuminated Manuscripts on Stamps Depict the Life of Jesus,” by James C. Hamilton, presents the biblical connections depicted in a twenty-stamp, five-year series issued from 1995 through 1999 by their use of details from ancient manuscripts. Maximum cards show the key features of each stamp. *Vatican Notes: The Journal of the Vatican Philatelic Society*, Vol. 67, No. 380, Second Quarter 2019, pp. 10–22.

“St. Stanislaus, Martyr & Patron of Poland,” by James C. Hamilton, uses the designs on first-day cover cachets and related commemorative stamps to illustrate the life of the saint and to trace his connection to Vatican City State. *Vatican Notes: The Journal of the Vatican Philatelic Society*, Vol. 67, No. 380, Second Quarter 2019, pp. 26–31.

“The Upheaval of the 16th Century Illustrated in Papal States Mail,” by Michael Lamothe, analyzes a folded letter sent by Malatesta IV Baglioni (1491–1531) of Perugia by courier to the Priori of Todi to show how its form reflects the mail of its time and its content comments on military arrangements. *Vatican Notes: The Journal of the Vatican Philatelic Society*, Vol. 67, No. 380, Second Quarter 2019, pp. 46–47.

“The Orphan Hospital of Santo Spirito: How a Saxon Pilgrim’s Inn in Rome Became the Hospital of the Holy Spirit,” by James C. Hamilton, tells the story of the hospital. Several nineteenth-century stampless and franked covers appear as illustrations. *Vatican Notes: The Journal of the Vatican Philatelic Society*, Vol. 67, No. 381, Third Quarter 2019, pp. 46–51.

“St. Patrick: Lough Derg & the Isle of Purgatory,” by James C. Hamilton, entwines an ecclesiastical history of Ireland’s patron saint and a postal history of the four-stamp 1961 Vatican issue honoring him. Both first-day and postally used covers appear. *Vatican Notes: The Journal of the Vatican Philatelic Society*, Vol. 67, No. 382, Fourth Quarter 2019, pp. 10–19.

“Papal States: An Interesting Bisect Cover and Some Detective Work,” by Tom Prautach, analyzes the markings on a mid-nineteenth-century folded letter sent from Camerino to Bologna. The cover’s bisect represents an unusual use on Papal States mail of the period. *Vatican Notes: The Journal of the Vatican Philatelic Society*, Vol. 67, No. 382, Fourth Quarter 2019, pp. 34–35.

“Fascist Era Year Dates: Propaganda via Vatican Postcards—1929–1943,” by James C. Hamilton, provides the history of the Fascist era dating system and illustrates its use on Vatican mail of the period. *Vatican Notes: The Journal of the Vatican Philatelic Society*, Vol. 67, No. 382, Fourth Quarter 2019, pp. 36–43.

“Corrado Mezzana: Unique Design Essays,” by Greg Pirozzi, introduces illustrations that depict sketches and essays for Vatican issues designed by Corrado Mezzana in the years from 1936 to 1951. *Vatican Notes: The Journal of the Vatican Philatelic Society*, Vol. 68, No. 383, First Quarter 2020, pp. 10–27.

### Journal Information

*American Stamp Collector & Dealer*, Wayne L. Youngblood, [wystamps@gmail.com](mailto:wystamps@gmail.com)  
*The Bulletin of the East Africa Study Circle*. ISSN 0951-4120. Hon. Secretary Michael Vesey-FitzGerald, Gambles Cottage, 18 Clarence Road, Lyndhurst, SO43 7AL Great Britain

*Journal of The Malta Philatelic Society*, Dr. Alfred Bonnici, [abonnici@maltanet.net](mailto:abonnici@maltanet.net)  
*Post Horn Magazine of International Postal History*, Via Cesare Pascarella, 5, 1-20157 Milano (MI Italy)

*Postal History, The Journal of the Postal History Society* [UK] 22 Burton Crescent, Stoke-on-Trent, ST1 6BT UK.

*Vatican Notes: The Journal of the Vatican Philatelic Society*. ISSN: 1945-1504. Dennis Brady, Secretary-Treasurer, 4897 Ledyard Dr. Manlius, NY 13104-1514.

## Society Forum

This space is set aside for commentary, announcements, questions and other information by, for and about members of the Postal History Society. The editors welcome correspondence: Box 477, West Sand Lake NY 12196, [<agatherin@yahoo.com>](mailto:agatherin@yahoo.com)

### President’s Message: Yamil Kouri

I hope our members and their families are well. Since the American Philatelic Society annual summer show in Hartford has been canceled, and it is likely that most other stamp shows this year will also be canceled, we will not be holding our annual meeting this year. Please continue to take the recommended precautions and I hope to see you next year.

### 2020 Recipients of the Postal History Society Medals:

J. A. (Jack) Forbes - “Cyprus: King George VI Definitives Used in Making Up Postage Rates of Air Mail Letters” (Sarasota National Stamp Expo)

Robert G. Rose - “Bristol Packet’s NEW YORK Handstamp: Was it Applied in London or New York” in *The London Philatelist* (Sarasota - best article)

K. David Steidley - “Uses of the 1 cent Franklin, Series of 1902; 1903-1909” (Aripex)

John Barwis - “Maritime Mail Routes from Colonial Victoria, 1837-1901” (Garfield Perry)