

Wartime
History and Organization

Forces in Belgium
Forces in Channel Islands

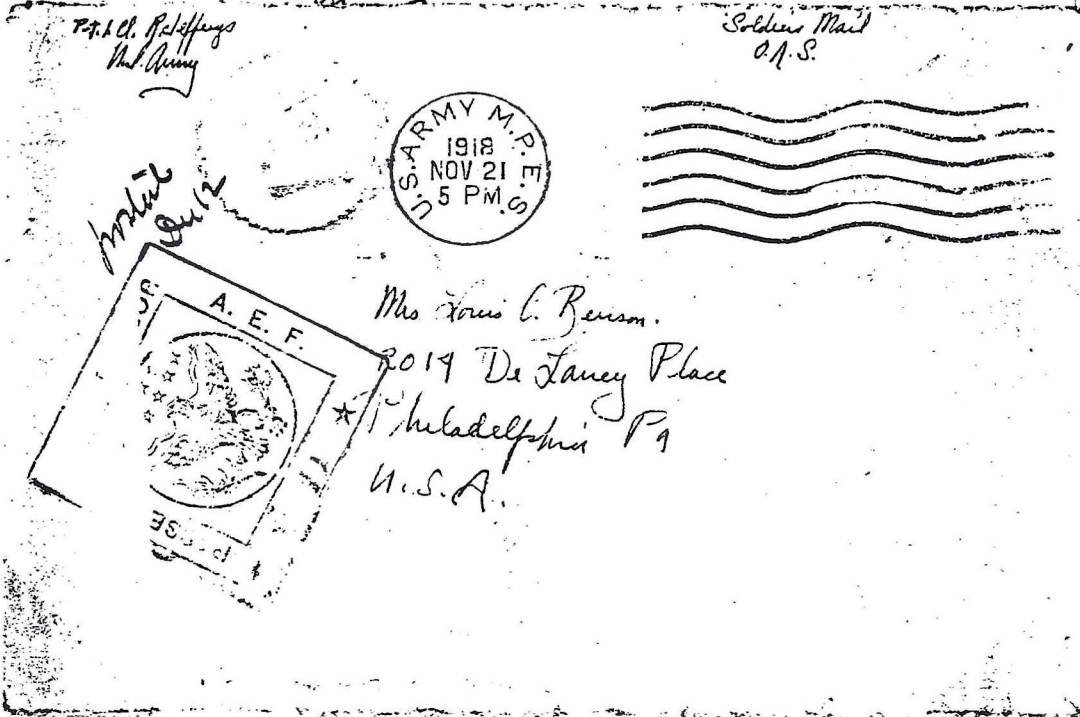


Pvt. I. C. *Robert L. Jefferys*
ON ACTIVE SERVICE
WITH THE *103d Trench Mortar Btry.*
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

Nov 9th 1918.
somewhere in Belgium

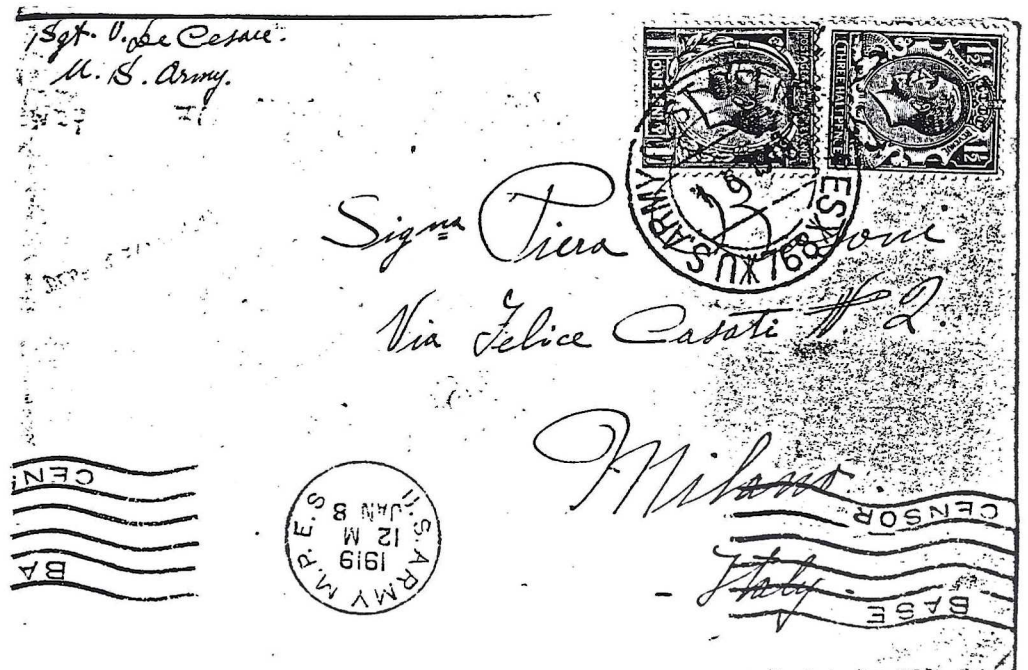
Belgium

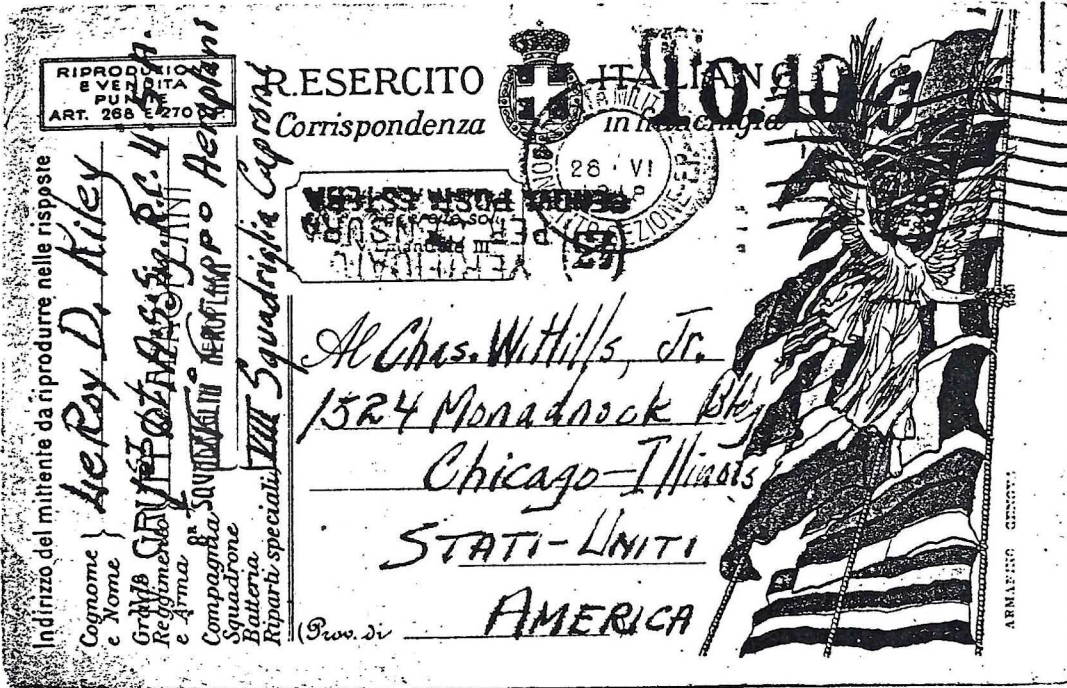
AEF mail from Belgium after the Armistice is not rare, but earlier mail is. On 18 October 1918 the 53rd FA Bde (including the 103rd Trench Mortar Btry.) was detached from the 28th Div. in the Argonne and sent to Belgium. Note long delay in posting letter.



Channel Islands

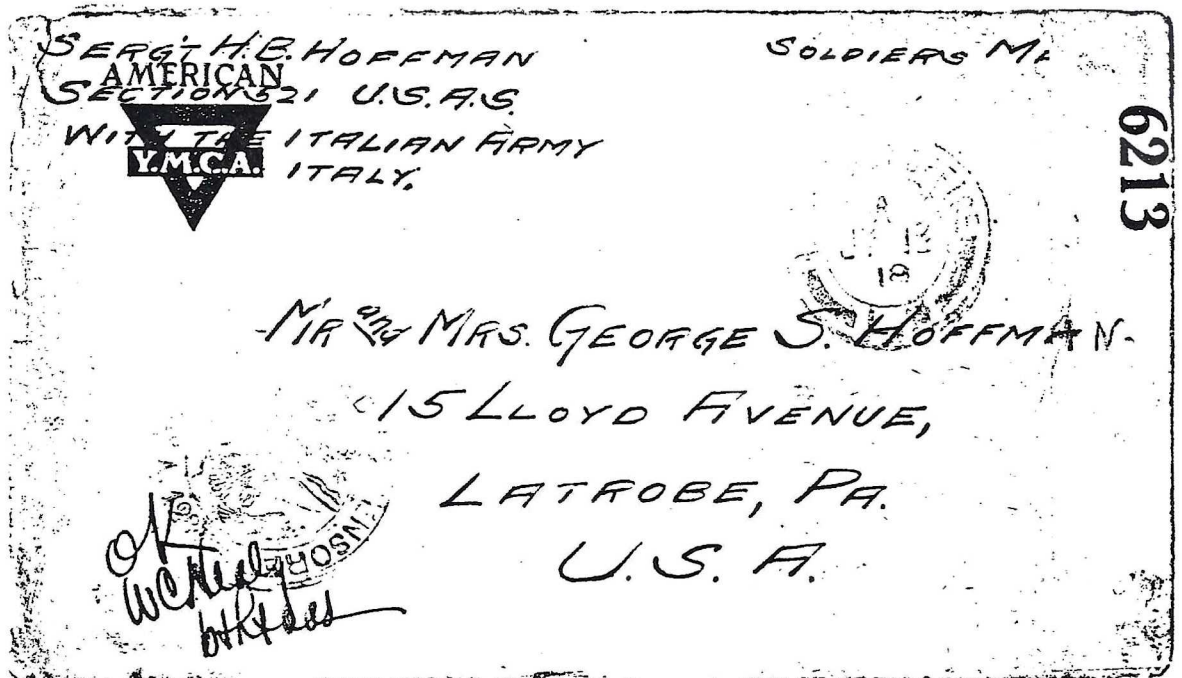
A small number of covers and cards from U.S. troops have been recorded with British stamps cancelled APO 768 (Cherbourg). One such card bears a French Navy handstamp as well. This mail has been attributed to a U.S. detachment on Alderney or Guernsey by French postal historians. No mention of such a unit is made in the U.S. Army's AEF Order of Battle, but small detachments are not mentioned there.





"I am on the front now. I was in the first squadron of Americans to fly over the Italian front."

British APO L3, Genoa. U.S. Army Ambulance Service mail before August 1918 is much scarcer than after.



Prior to 25 July 1918 the American military presence in Italy consisted of Army Ambulance units and a small group of pilots serving with the Italian Air Force. (Several USN air stations were opened in Italy, but official dates of opening are not reported; the earliest mail seen is from early August 1918.) These units were required to use British or Italian post offices.



ON ACTIVE SERVICE
WITH THE
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

Aug 27 1918, 191

Remember in Italy

Dear Mother,

*lines
P.M.*

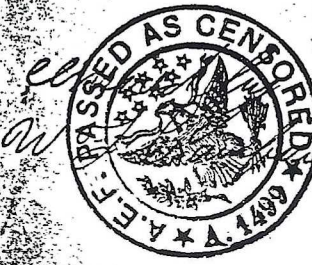
*Pvt. Paul E. Wise
Co. 2, 332nd Inf.*

Soldiers Mail

AMERICAN RED CROSS

*The American E. F. in Italy
hard A. P. O. #901*

Mrs Pearl E. Wise



*Corp. Edward J. Brady
M. G. Co. 332nd Inf.
American Ex. Forces
A.P.O. #901*



*Mrs. H. E. Chman
1920 Paul Place S.H.
Canton Ohio U.S.A.*

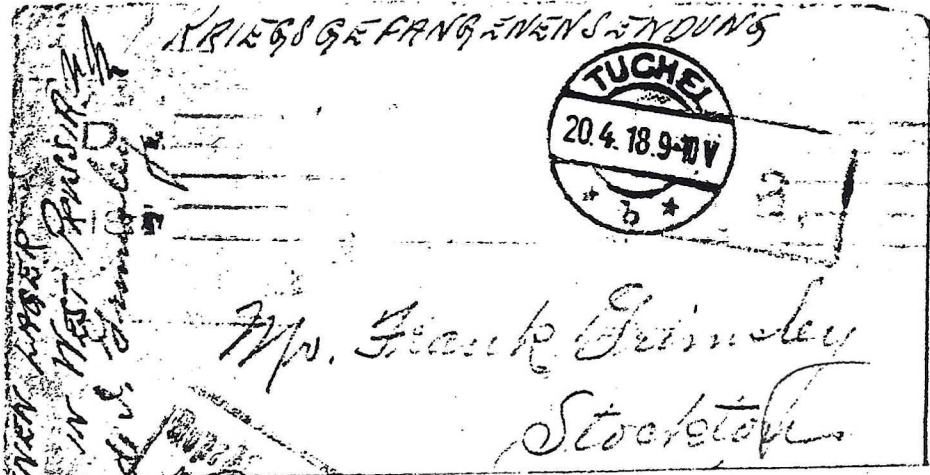
In July 1918 the Italian Army was on the verge of mutiny and collapse. The Allies sent combat forces, with the U.S. contributing the 332nd Infantry Regiment and the 331st Field Hospital. The AEF troops left France by train on 20 July. They were assigned APO number 901, but no postal personnel or equipment were sent with them. Through mid-September 1918 mail was sent without postmark to France for processing.

Atts. N° 229. Friedlaender, Josua, Unteroffizier
P. W. E. C. N° 2 in France
c/o P. W. Information Bureau A. P. O.
Expeditionary Forces

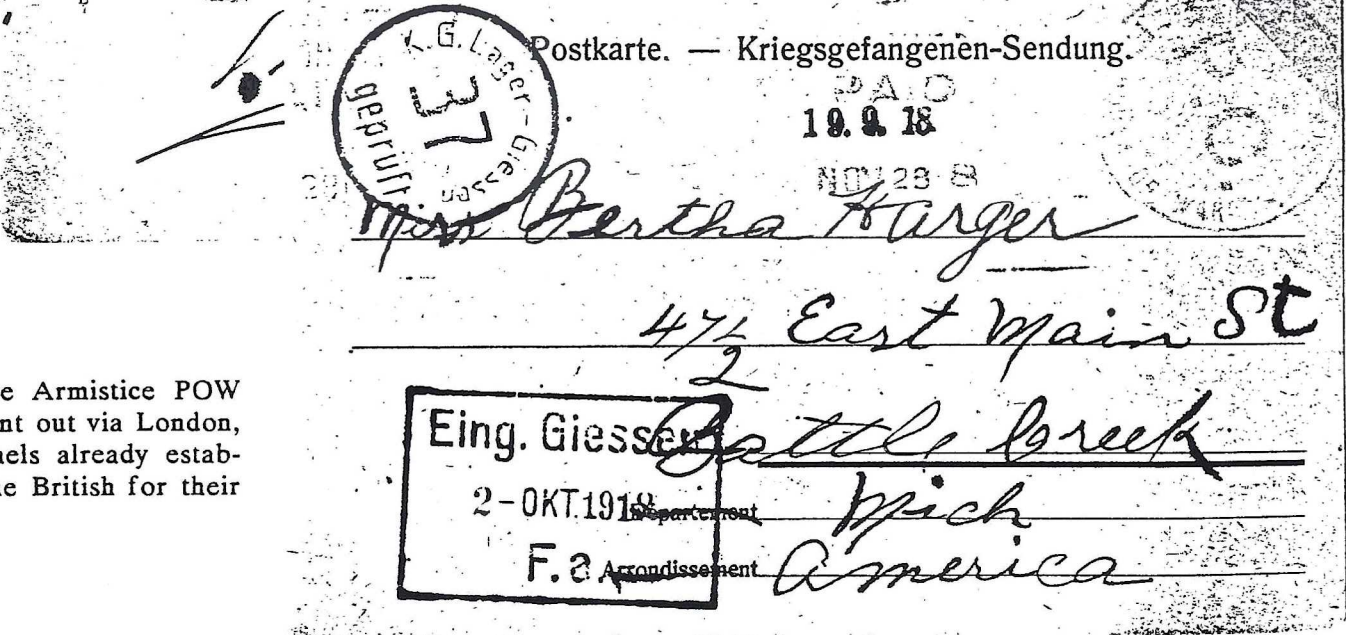
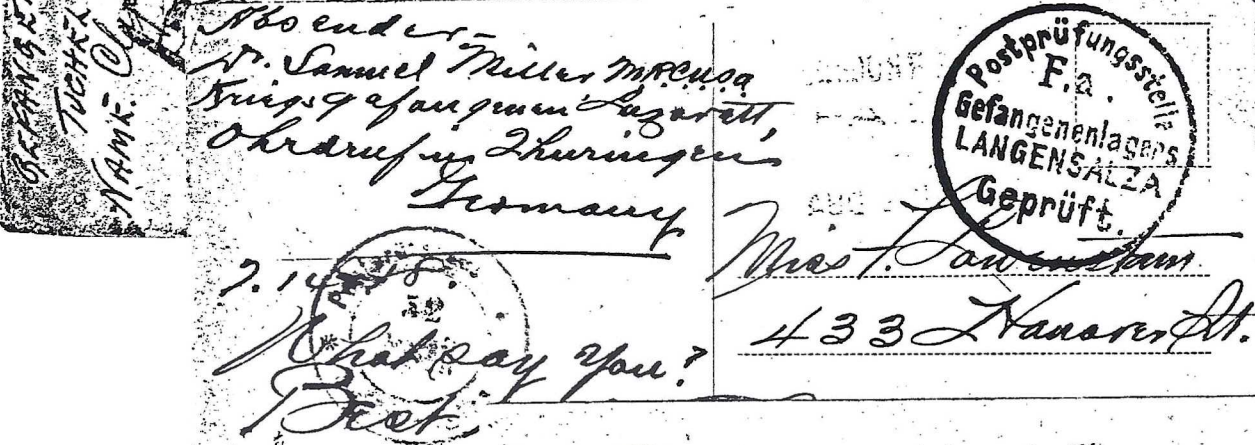
9.18.1919
Kriegsgefangenen Sendung
Uderoff Josua Friedlaender
461. Post Reg. 4 Kamp. eingez. 3/11.18
Central Postal Directory
U. S. A. 19
P. O. 717
LABOR Co 2
France
2nd Lt., U.S.A.

SAINT LOUIS, MO
MAY 21
1919
1030AM
UNITED STATES POSTAGE
2 CENTS
N° 229 - Josua Friedlaender Unteroffizier
Prisoners of War, Camp N° 2 in France c/o P. of W. Mail Section
American E. F.
A. P. O. 717.
St. Nazaire
France.

The AEF acquired responsibility for several thousand German POWs during and after the Meuse-Argonne offensive. Plans to evacuate these men to the U.S. were cancelled after the Armistice, and the prisoners were kept in camps in France pending Germany's acceptance of the Versailles Treaty at the end of June 1919. Lack of APO postmarks is the norm for outgoing POW German mail, suggesting that it normally was sent in sealed pouches rather than as individual pieces. Mail to and from Germany was free, but mail to and from the U.S. required postage.



Clyde Grimsley was one of the first group of Americans (10 men from the 2nd Bn., 16th Inf., 1st Div.) taken prisoner, on 3 November 1917 near Bethlemont. He was in Tuchel camp from mid-November 1917 until 29 July 1918, when the 50 American POWs there were transferred to Rastatt.



Prior to the Armistice POW mail was sent out via London, using channels already established by the British for their POW mail.

4,765 members of the AEF became prisoners of the Germans. Mail to and from these POWs was free under the Geneva Convention. Thus far Americans have been identified in 9 camps, the scarcest of which is Tuchel, the most common Rastatt. Fewer than 30 items from, and less than 10 to, U.S. POWs are recorded.

AMERICAN RED CROSS
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES
FRANCE



Germany **SOLDIERS MAIL**
Basel
Crusor
Kriegsgefangener
Ab. Gessel Ruderman

< Only recorded mail from
a member of the AEF to an
AEF POW.

Prisoner of War Mail.
No Postage

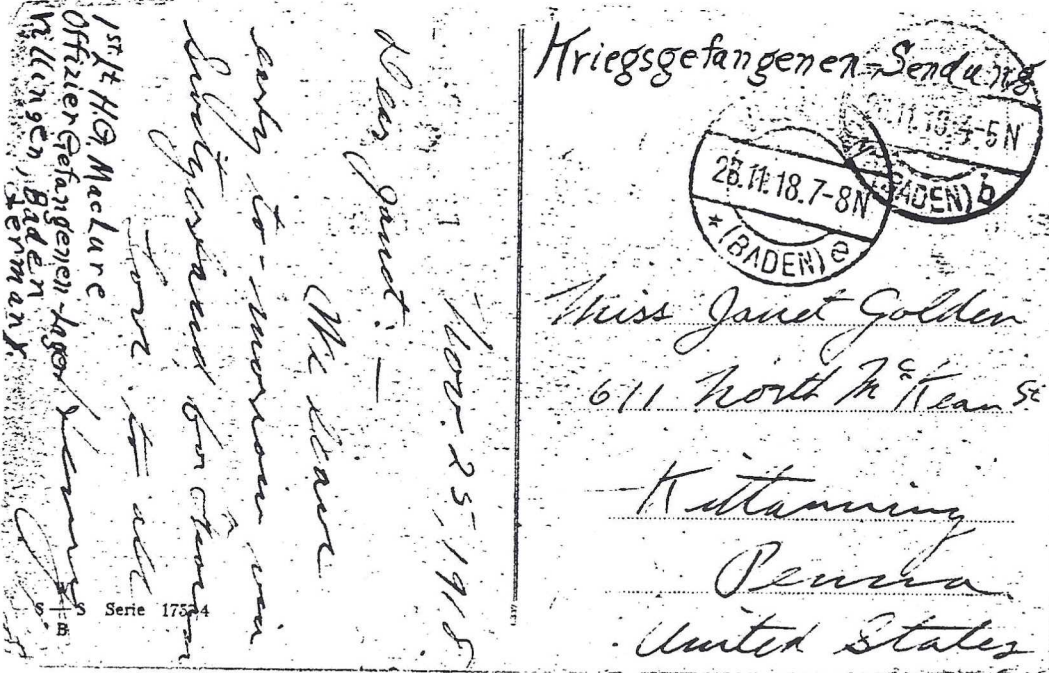


1st Lieut. Charles R. Codman,
American Prisoner of War, Air Service,
Kriegsgefangenenlager Rastatt,
Grand Duchy of Baden,

via New York.

Moments letter
Forwarded to Addressee
c/o *Alice Floyd*
Vancouver
Wash.
R.F. 104
DIRECTOR SERVICE GIVEN
CENTRAL DIRECTORY DIVISION
PIER 36, N. Y. C.
Prisoner of War Mail
No Postage
OCT 27 1918
JUL 31 1918
AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR
Kriegsgefangenenlager
Karlshöhe
Baden Germany

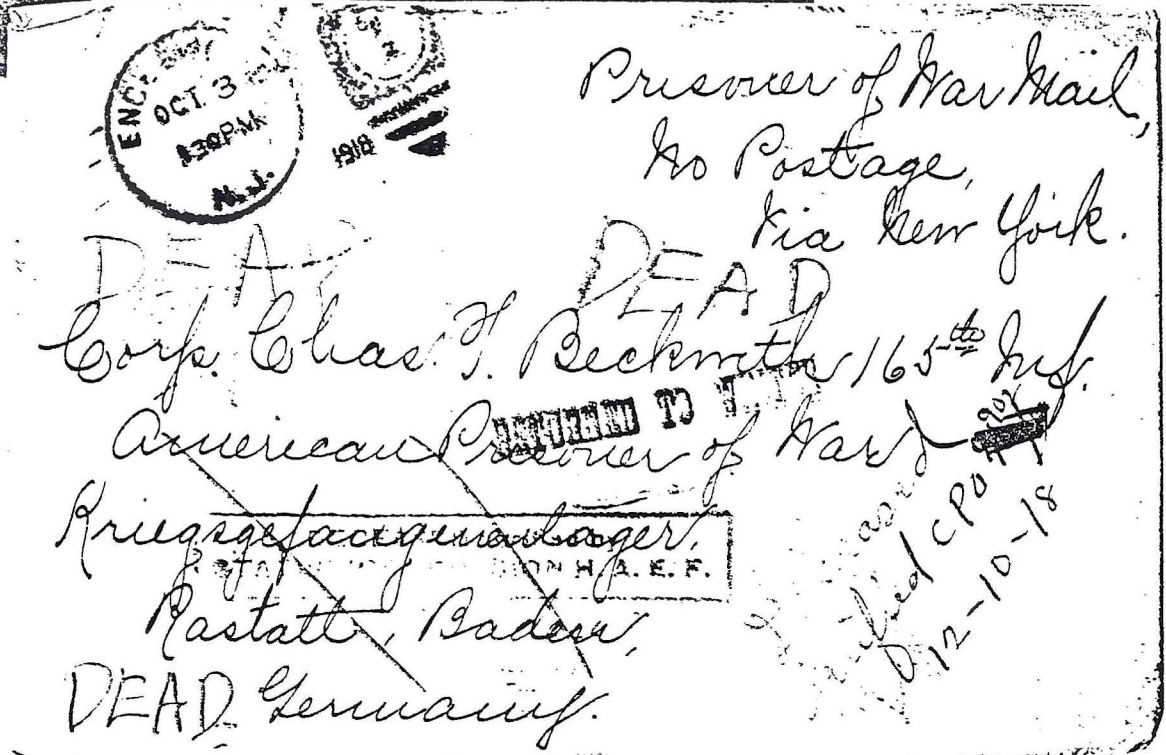
~~RECEIVED TO USA~~
OCT 27 1918



The great majority of
liberated Prisoners of
War were evacuated
through Switzerland.

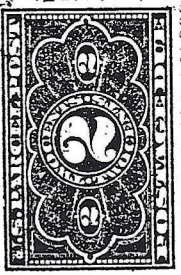


Sender's unit and camp
not identified. No other
mail is recorded from
USN POWs.



Not all of the American POWs made it home. Letter dated 22 November 1918 tells mother of the death of her son 4 days earlier, and the location of his grave. The American Help Committee at Rastatt camp appears to have been affiliated with the YMCA. Only recorded cover from this group.

PENALTY FOR PRELATE USE TO AVOID
PAYMENT OF POSTAGE \$3000.



WAR DEPARTMENT
From Major Hugh A. Payne J.G.
Staff - A. S. F. Paris

OFFICIAL BUSINESS.

Edward H. Floyd-Jones, Esq.

~~Massapequa Long~~
Massapequa Long
N.Y.



3911 COLLECT POSTAGE

.02 CENTS

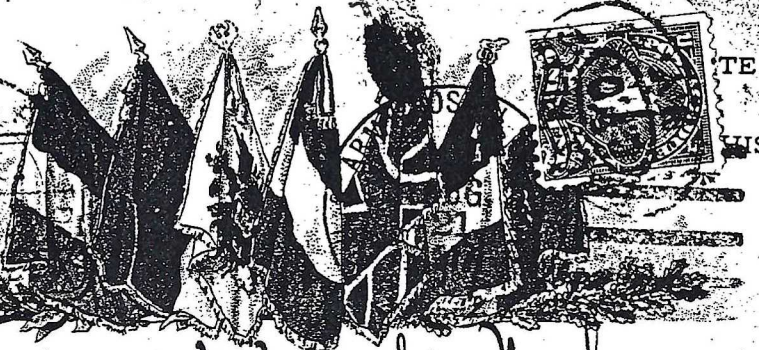
Hopkinton Iowa

From Private H. H. Hamhead
Base Hospital #4
CLEARFIELD U.S.
JUN 1917
4 30 PM

Rev. Edward C. Reeve
South Second St.
Clearfield Pa.
U.S.A.

Until October 3, 1917, there was no military free frank. Soldiers in the field (interpreted as abroad for the AEF) could send unstamped letters without penalty so long as the military origin was noted.

CORRESPONDANCE
DES ARMÉES
DE LA
RÉPUBLIQUE

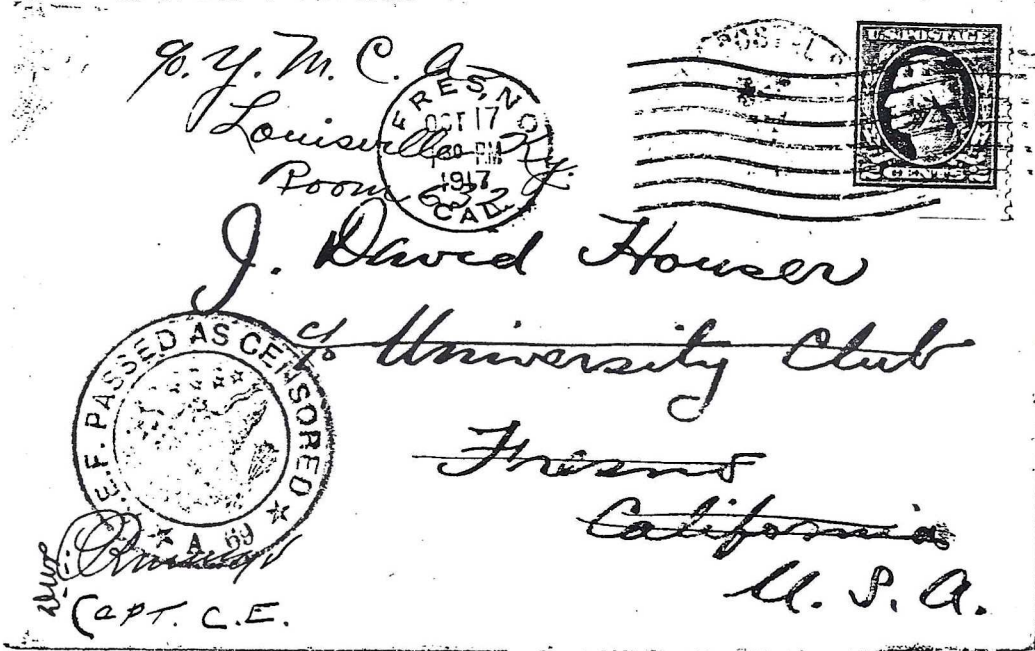


EXPÉDITEUR:
Nom: H. H. Hamhead
Grade: H. H. Base Hospital #4
Régiment: H. H. N.Y.
Escadron ou Bataillon:
Canton ou Bataillon:
SECTEUR POSTAL
N.Y.

Miss Keta Jakin Meehouse
W.S. Meehouse
50 Court St
Brooklyn New York

SECTEUR POSTAL
N.Y.

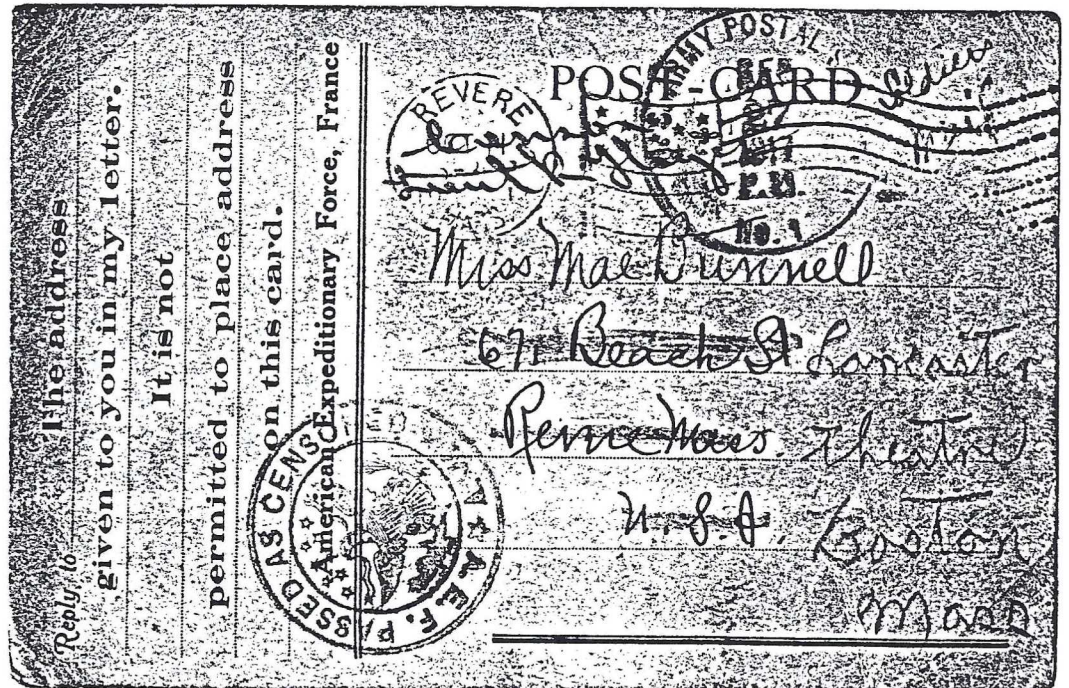




Soldiers' letters posted via the U.S. APOs required 2¢ per ounce as the 3¢ war rate did not go into effect until 2 November 1917, after the free frank was granted.

Postage paid here with AEF Booklet single.

Mail sent without postage before the free frank was granted on 3 October 1917 was not charged postage due when delivered after that date.



Wartime
Postal History

Rates
Mail to U.S.



Even after free postage was granted to the troops, fees for special services had to be paid.

Registry fee (10c throughout AEF period) paid with AEF booklet pane stamps, sent via APO 2 (Paris).

1033
Registered

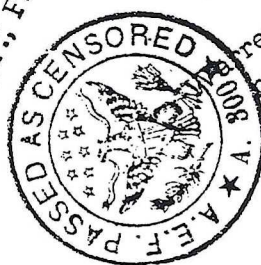
Mr. Geo H. Bash
H. E. Bash
H. E. Bash
H. E. Bash

REGISTERED



Mr. C. E. Bash
28 Huntington
Indianapolis
Indiana
U.S.A.

Return to



FORAM to America
MAY 15 1918
SUBSCRIPTIONS OFFICE
THE GREGG PUBLISHING CO.
4, E. 4th St., No. 3,
New York, France,

John L. Babcock
Major, M.R.C.

Stamp possibly applied in U.S. Two special delivery covers observed, above from Lt. Bash to his wife and one from another officer to Lt. Bash's family, 30 Nov. 1918.



DR. D. PEARSE
1000 W. ALK. ST.
PORTLAND, OREGON

Soldiers Mail

contents.

2571

**DEFERRED LEGAL
SUPPORTABLE
TO CUSTOM DUTIES**

Miss Helen Larwood,

561 - 9th Ave. West.

Eugene, Oregon.

U.S. A.

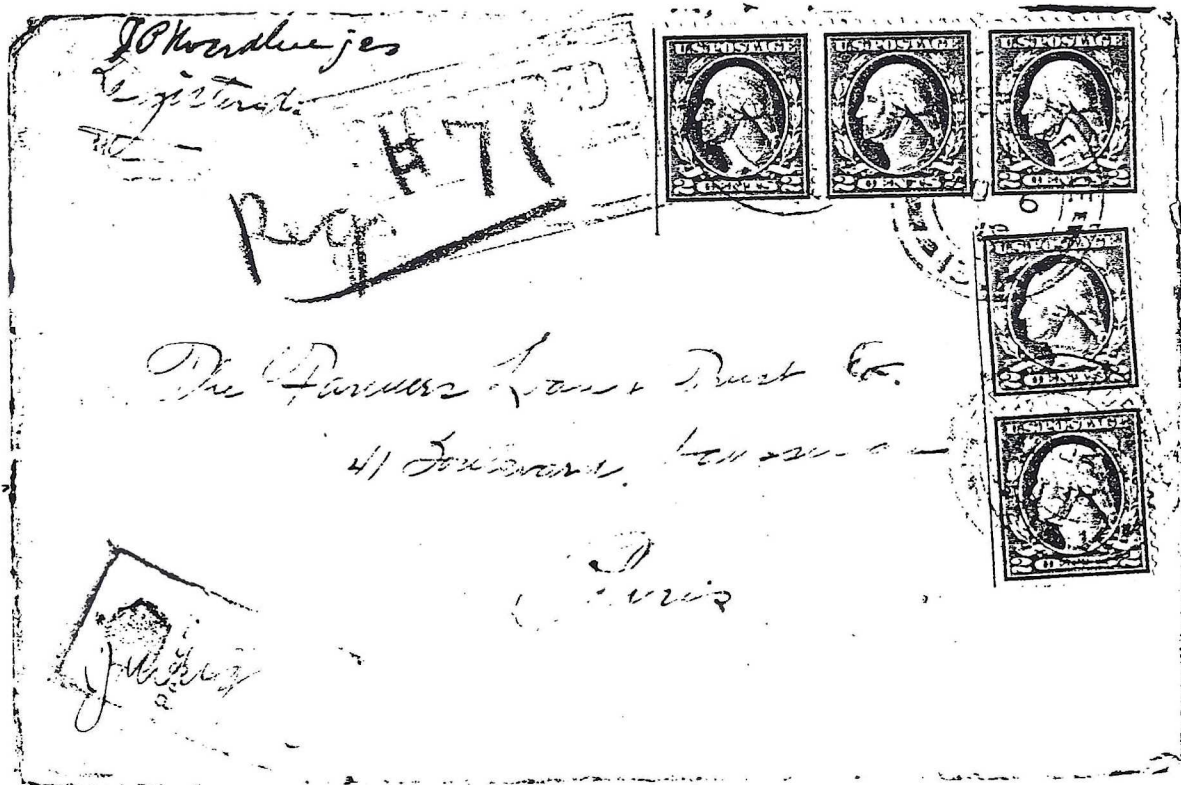
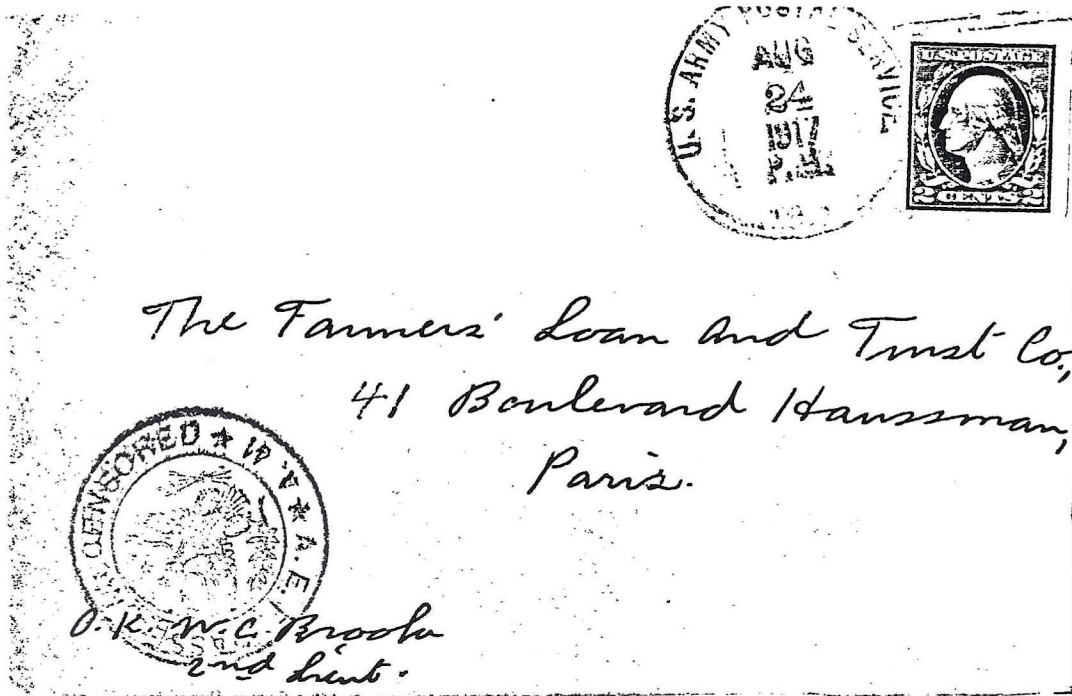
from.
Sgt. L.F. Larwood,
U.S. Army.

Reg 32
14832



2nd Lt. Q.M. Corps.

Postage on parcels had to be paid at domestic rates. Parcel post is uncommon as few package wrappers were saved. Use of stamps denominated above 10c is extremely unusual on any class of AEF mail.



Unofficial letters and cards sent to France via the APO was sent on the same basis as mail to the U.S. After the free frank was announced (20 October 1917), regular mail was sent stampless, but registered mail still required postage for the registry fee. All stamps above are from AEF booklet panes.

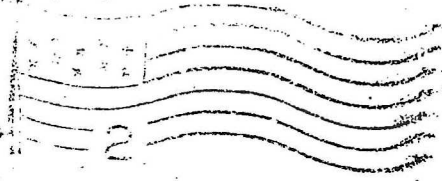
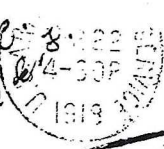
Officers' Mail.
S



Mr. & Mrs. Fred. Evans
Victoria,
British Columbia,
909.

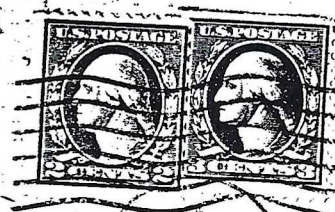


Robert DeWitt
2nd Lt J.A.O. Kelly
U.S.P.O. 702 A.P.O.



Office

J.A. Ward
St. Nazaire, France
A.P.O. 701 A.E.F.

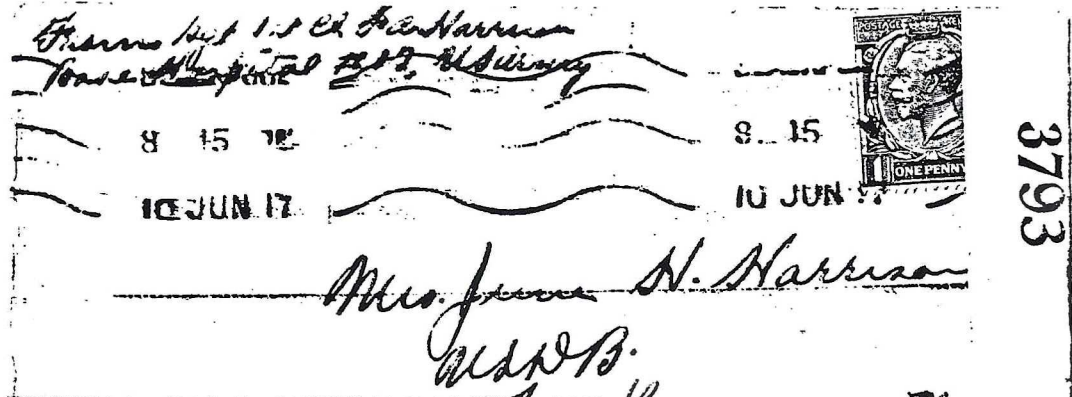


Common
Rubber Co
Jinggi
Sumatra

Mr. A.A. Ward
American Ceylon Mission
Tilippait
Ceylon



Soldiers' letters to other countries were to be paid at UPU (or relevant bi-lateral treaty) rates. This was not always done.



Carte Postale
Correspondance

Best Wishes to Dad,
Mother & Yourself.
Will. C. Knapp
A. E. F.
France

IMP. PROT. NEURDEIN ET CIE. - PARIS.

Actis Samis

Miss Rae Montgomery,
306 E. King St.,
York,
Pennsylvania

NEW YORK, N.Y.
JUL 22

*Leavenworth
Kansas
U.S.A.*

U.S. Air Service

YORK
11 15 PM
SEP 11 18

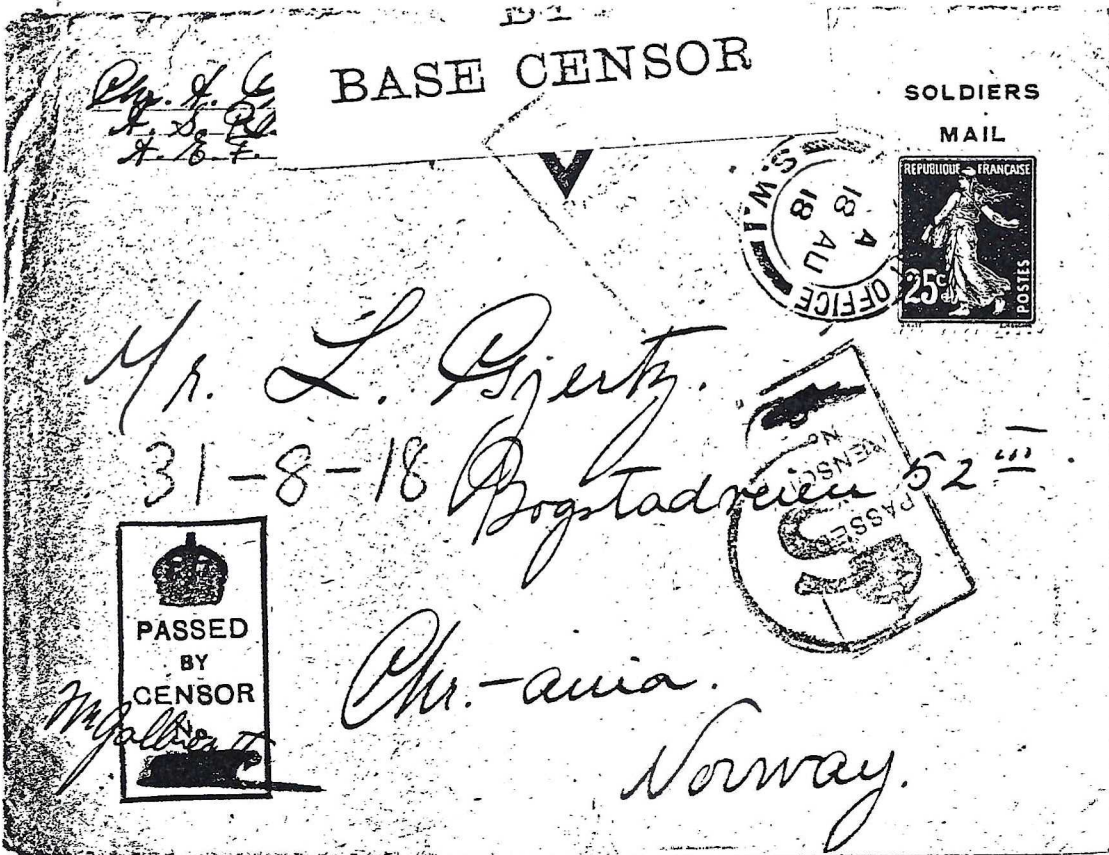
INTERNATIONAL
WAR BONDS
REAS CENSORED

Miss Ruth Stoin
611 Whittall St
ST. Paul, Minn
U.S.A.

Y.M.C.A.

Approved by [Signature]

Mail to the U.S. sent through British post offices (civilian in the U.K., military on the continent) was required to be paid at the Anglo-American concessionary rates until May 1918. This requirement was frequently ignored by the senders and not always enforced by the post offices on either side.



A.F.W. 2078.
W 289, M 1950. 4/17.
J. D. & Co.

BASE CENSOR

U.S. Inf.

Several letters may be forwarded in this Cover, but these must be all from the same writer. The Cover should be addressed in such case to the Base Censor.

Address: —

Mr. E. E. Spaak
Alingsås
Sweden.

NOTE:—
Correspondence in this envelope need not be censored Regimentally. The contents are liable to examination at the Base.
The following Certificate must be signed by the writer:—
I certify on my honour that the contents of this envelope refer to nothing but private and family matters.

Signature
Name only
Pvt. Harold E. Spaak.

Even after May 1918 mail to non-U.S. destinations (including Britain) sent by U.S. forces via British military post offices was supposed to be franked with stamps. The British post offices appear to have had a *laissez faire* attitude on this point.