

THE US ARMY AND ITS POSTAL SERVICE ABROAD DURING WORLD WAR II

This exhibit was created by, and is the property of the late Al Kugel, and is being supplied by his heirs as a courtesy to the Military Postal History Society. (See <http://militaryphs.org>) The Military Postal History Society (MPHS) is a non-profit organization for philatelists and stamp collectors interested in the collecting and studying of the postal aspects of all wars and military actions of all countries, including soldiers' campaign covers, naval mail, occupation and internment covers, patriotics, propaganda, V-mail, censorship and similar related material.

**OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS
SOUTH WEST PACIFIC AREA**

The US Army at War

Australia, New Guinea



Lt Gen R L Eichelberger
HQ. I ARMY CORPS, U.S.A.
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDING GENERAL
APO 301 San Francisco

U.S. ARMY POST OFFICE
JUL 20 1943 301
SERVICE



Mr. L. A. McQuiddy, P.O.
Adjutant, A.E.F. Siberia Veterans,
6034 S. LaBrea Ave
Los Angeles 43, Calif. USA

PASSED BY
BASE
U 2425
ARMY
EXAMINER

Rh. [Signature]

*Post Charles Thrall
A.S.N. 15084126
464 [unclear] Co. Arm. (B)
A.P.O. [unclear]
San Francisco
California*



AMERICAN BASE FORCES
NOV 18 1942
A.P.O. [unclear]

FREE

*Mr. Charles G. Thrall
Veterans of Foreign Wars.
Post No. 1154
Vincennes Indians
306 North 5th St.*

*Quoted
F. J. Brunner
1414 [unclear]*

In early 1942 the Japanese had set out to capture Port Moresby, New Guinea, from which they could more easily threaten the supply lines to Australia. Australian troops had contained the Japanese 30 miles short of their goal. The arrival of the US 32nd and 41st Infantry Divisions in Australia gave the Allies the forces necessary to begin offensive operations in New Guinea. These divisions were assigned to the US I Corps (Eichelberger), which became responsible for Allied operations in New Guinea.

APO 301, Rockhampton, Australia (HQ, I Corps). APO 929, Port Moresby, New Guinea.

The US Army at War
Offensive Operations

South West Pacific Area
New Guinea

Capt William A. Dittmann, 20652423
Hon Co 632 T.D. Bn A.P.O. #32
c/o P.M. San Francisco, Calif



Lt. James A. Crook O-670022
5th Bomber Command Hq. Center
APO 929 c/o PM San Francisco, Calif



Sgt. E. S. Meyer, Jr. (6998415)
35th Fighter Sqdn., 8th Fighter Group
A.P.O. 929 c/o San Francisco
San Francisco, Calif



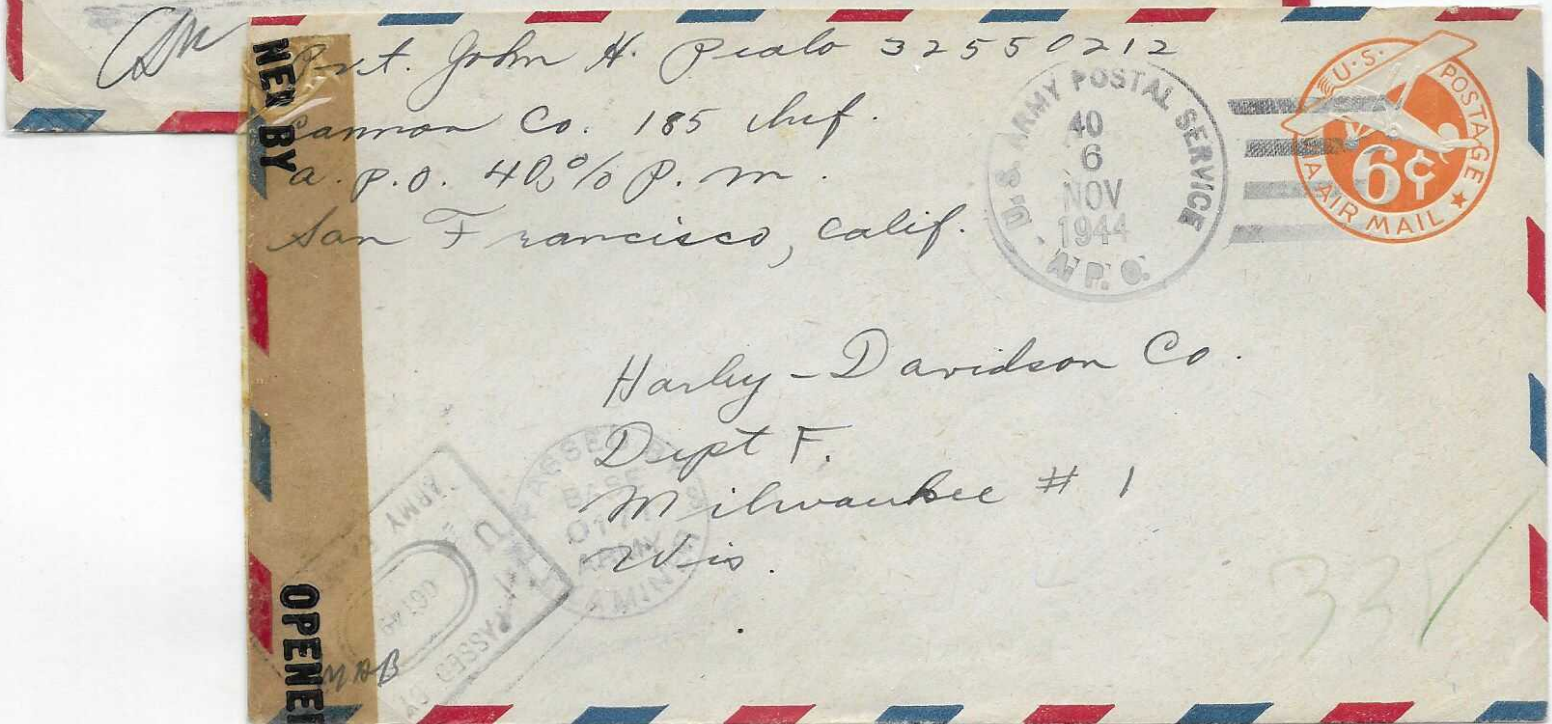
Miss Marion V. Philips
23 Downing Ave.,
Downingtown,
Pennsylvania,
U. S. A.

3036

APO 34, Saidor,
Netherlands New
Guinea (34th
Infantry Div.).
APO 929, Port
Moresby.

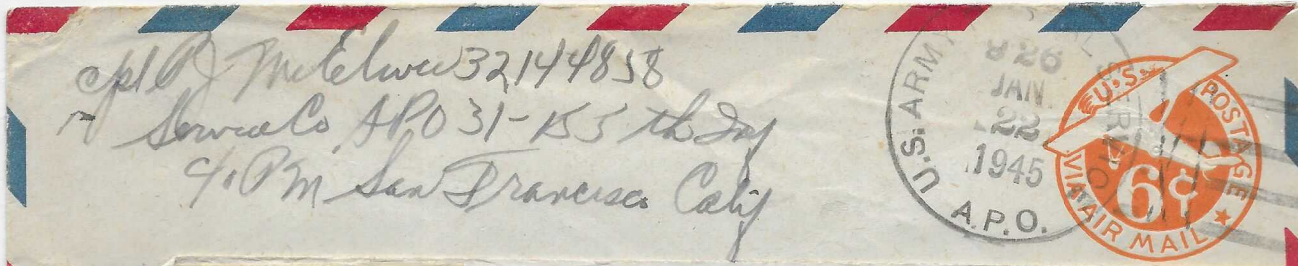
The 32nd Infantry Div. participated in the Battle of the Buna-Gona Beachhead (19 November 1942 - 1 January 1943) and in actions along the northeast coast of Australian New Guinea in January 1943. In January 1944 it assaulted Saidor, Netherlands New Guinea. It continued in New Guinea action through September 1944, at which time it began staging for the Philippines invasion.

Rugged terrain and jungles, plus the need to counter Japanese aircraft based in New Guinea and at Rabaul, New Britain, made air power essential in New Guinea. The 5th Bomber Command controlled all US Bombardment Groups Australia and New Guinea. The 8th Fighter Group moved to New Guinea in September 1942 and supported Allied ground operations as well as providing air defense.

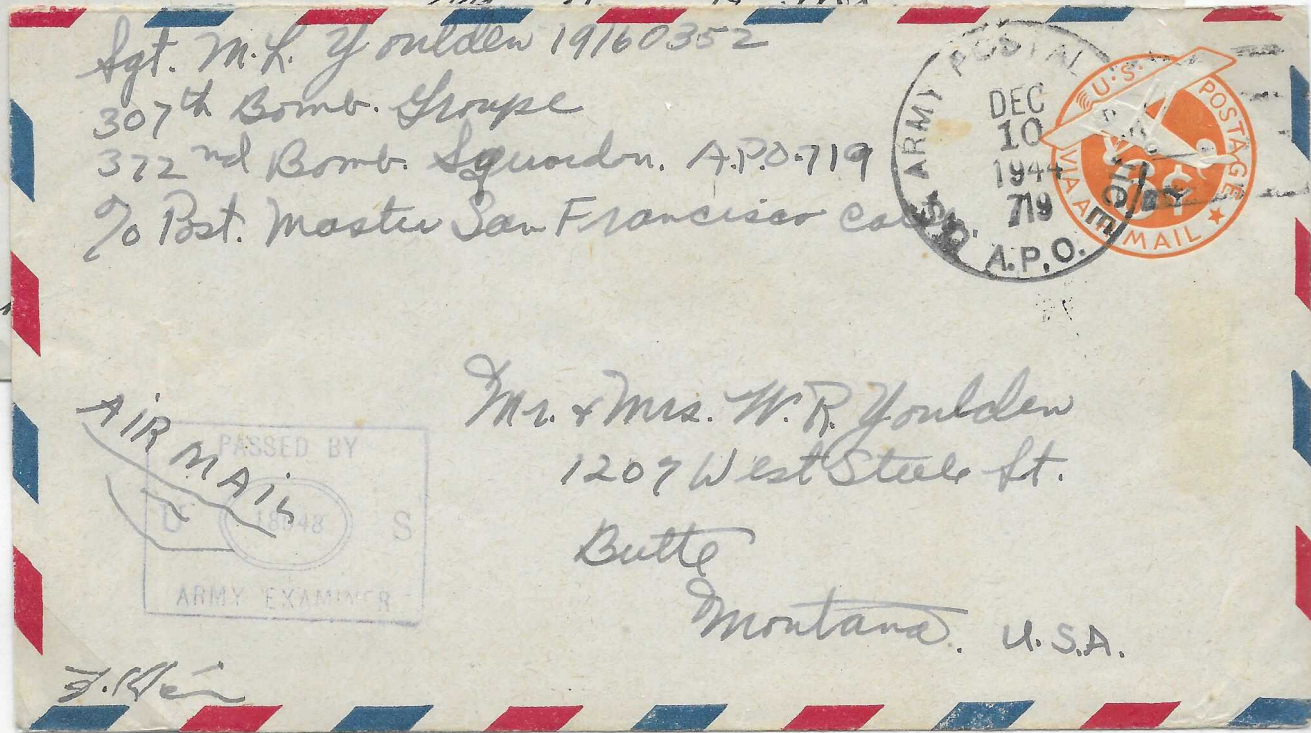
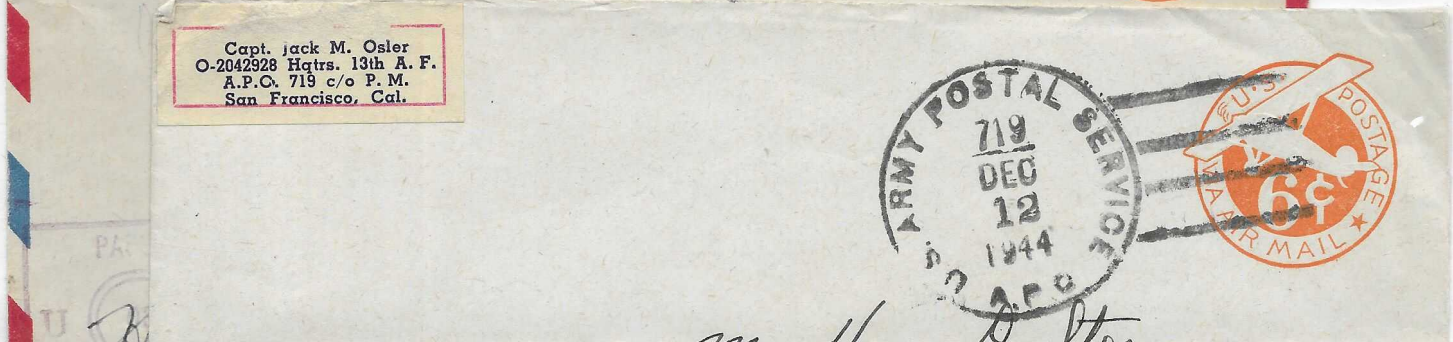


The ultimate goal of the campaigns in the Solomons and in New Guinea was the capture of the massive Japanese base at Rabaul, on the eastern end of New Britain. The US 1st Marine Division invaded at Cape Gloucester, on the western end of the island, on 26 December 1943. They were replaced by the 40th Infantry Division on 23-28 April 1944. By that time, the decision to attack Rabaul, which was defended by 91,000 Japanese troops in excellent defensive positions, had been abandoned in favor of moving on to the Philippines. The US forces held defensive positions until turning these over to the Australians in November 1944. Japanese forces at Rabaul surrendered on 6 September 1945.

APO 40, Cape Gloucester, New Britain (40th Infantry Div.).



Capt. Jack M. Osler
O-2042928 Hqtrs. 13th A. F.
A.P.O. 719 c/o P. M.
San Francisco, Cal.



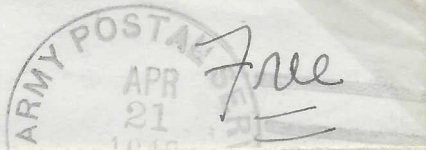
Except for Morotai, in the Moluccas Islands, US ground forces bypassed the Dutch East Indies (and British Borneo). Morotai, however, was needed as an airbase to support the landings in the Philippines. On 15 September 1944 the 31st Infantry Division invaded. In the face of light opposition, it secured the island a few days later. Work was begun immediately on bomber fields (the existing airfield was found to be suitable only for fighters) and in October the 13 Airforce moved its headquarters and various combat groups to Morotai.

The 307 Bombardment Group was stationed on Morotai from October 1944 to September 1945. Earlier in the war it had attacked Wake Island. From Morotai it launched attacks against the Philippines, Borneo and French Indochina.

The US Army at War
Offensive Operations

South West Pacific Area
Philippines

General Walter Krueger
Headquarters, Sixth Army
Office of the Commanding General.
APO 442



San Francisco
Office of the Commander-in-Chief
General Headquarters, APO 500
c/o PM, San Francisco, Calif.



GENERAL

H.B.
Ma

SAUL

1347

BROOKLYN

NEW YORK

U. S. A.

1347 East 17 St.
Brooklyn 30, N. Y.
Oct. 23, 1944.

CENSORED:

Lloyd Lehrbas

LLOYD LEHRBAS,
Colonel, A. C.

Dear General MacArthur

We are all thrilled to hear that our troops landed in the Philippines. We hope that you will soon be back in Corregidor.

I am 10 years old and a collector of stamps. I hope you will be able to mail back to me the enclosed envelope bearing a Philippine postmark, perhaps Manila or Batavia. If you have the time to enclose a message to me, I should be very proud and happy.

I buy War stamps every week in my school, P. S. 199, Brooklyn, to help us win the war and drive the Japs out of the Pacific.

Good luck to you and all the troops.
Good luck to you, Saul.
Don't like letters.
Yours sincerely,
Saul Moskowitz

By mid-1944 MacArthur had secured control of the Army divisions and air groups that had fought the Solomons campaign as well as new divisions from the US, giving him a total of over 1 million men with which to invade the Philippines. Ground troops were divided between the 6th and 8th Armies. The initial landings on Leyte and Luzon were carried out by the 6th Army.

MacArthur's autograph was not often given. Young Saul Moskowitz certainly pushed all the right buttons to get one.

APO 442 Leyte. APO 500, Hollandia, New Guinea.

The US Army at War
Offensive Operations

South West Pacific Area
Philippines

Cpl. Chester MacLeod Jr. 32552617
Service Co. 44th Tk. Bn.
A.P.O. #72 7/2 P.M.
San Francisco Calif.



APO 72, Tacloban, Leyte (mailed from APO 201, HQ 1st Cavalry Div. The 44th Tank Battalion went ashore on 20 October as a Corps asset. When this cover was sent it was operating with the 1st Cavalry Div.) APO 7, Leyte (7th Infantry Division; in combat from 20 October to 156 December). APO 321, Mindoro.

Major A. G. Fry D-35164
1st Hq. 7th Inf Div.
APO #7-90 P.M.
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.

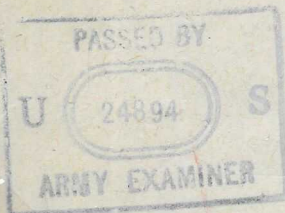


Rec'd S.I. 45.
m. 45

Linnell, Huntington
207 N. 190 90 670
376th St. S. S. S. S.
A.P.O. #21 9 P.M.
San Francisco, Cal.



A.G.

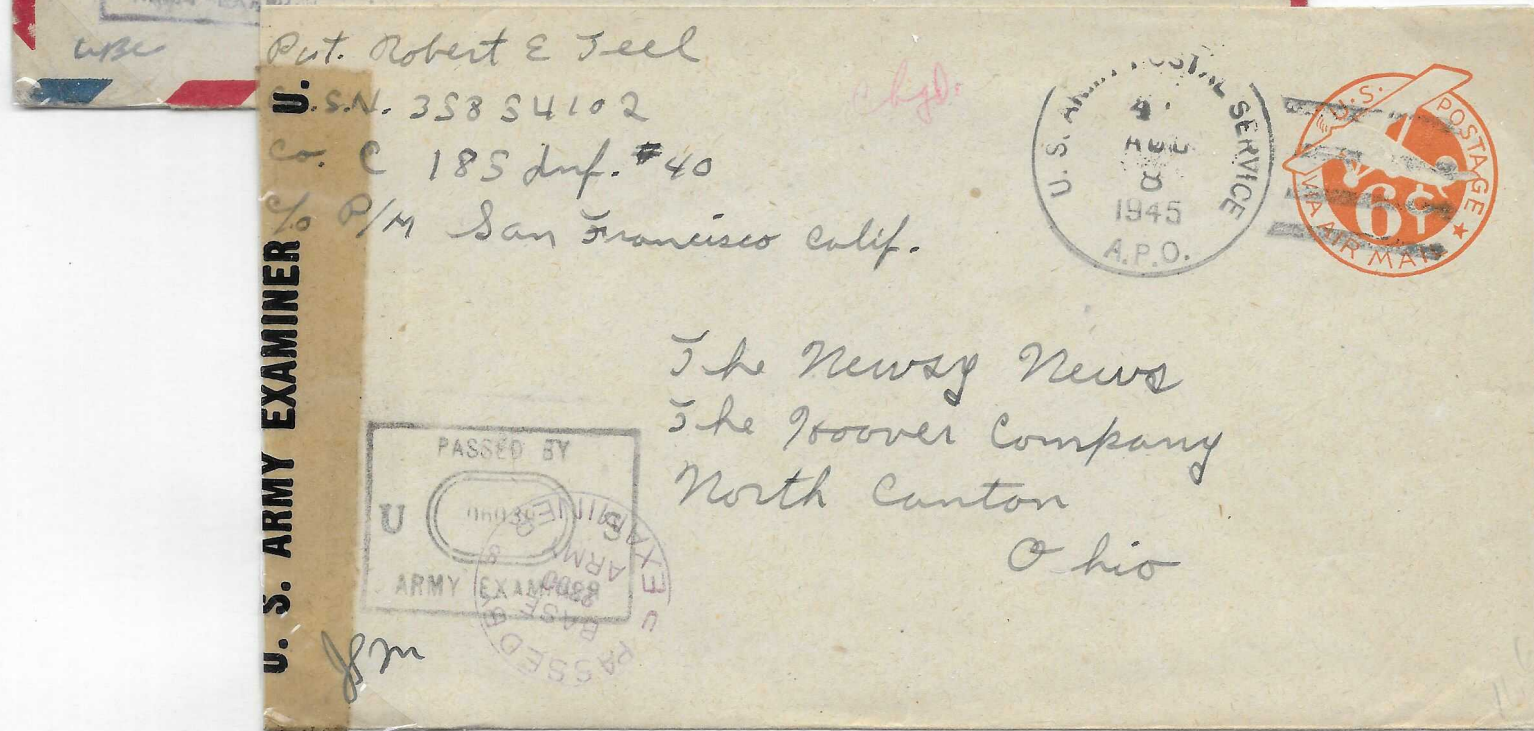
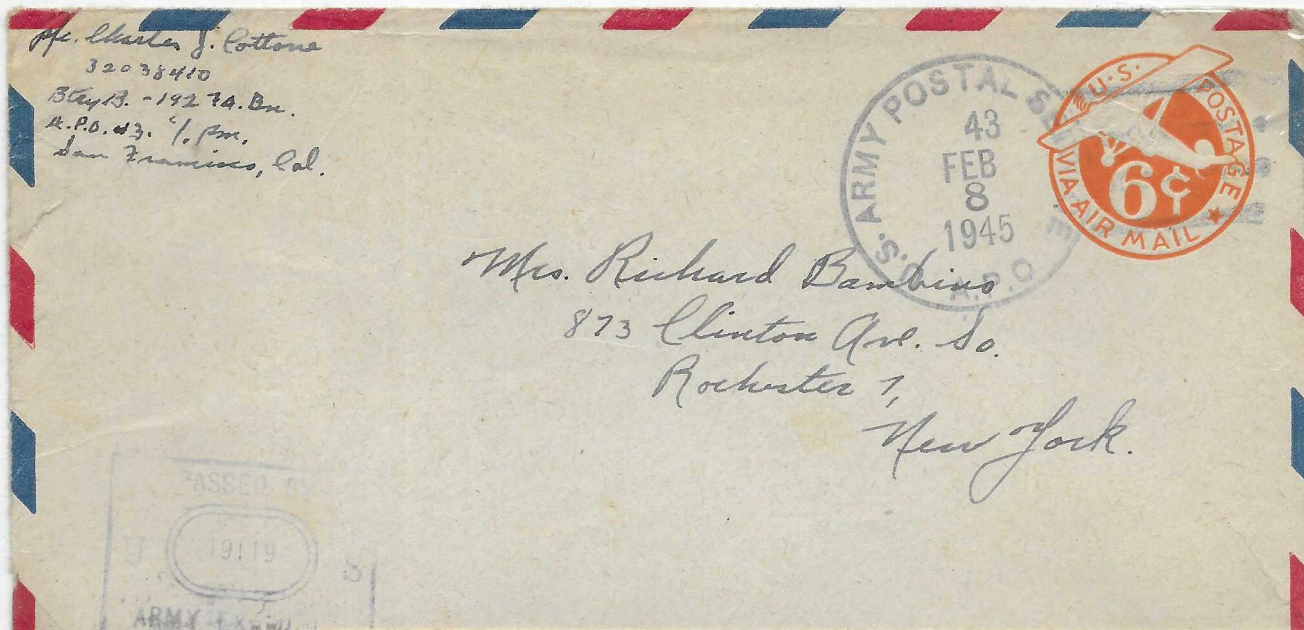


COH

Mrs. Bertha Hoff
940 - Washington - St
Redlands - Calif
U.S.A.

The Leyte invasion, 20 October 1944, was carried out by the First Cavalry Division and the 7th, 24th and 96th Infantry Divisions. The island was declared secure on 25 December though mopping up continued into February 1945. Also on 25 December control of the was transferred to the 8th Army.

On 12 September a the invasion of Minoro Island was carried out by a separate command, the Visayan Task Force (19th Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division, and 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment). Airfield construction was begun almost immediately and the first field was in operation on 23 December.

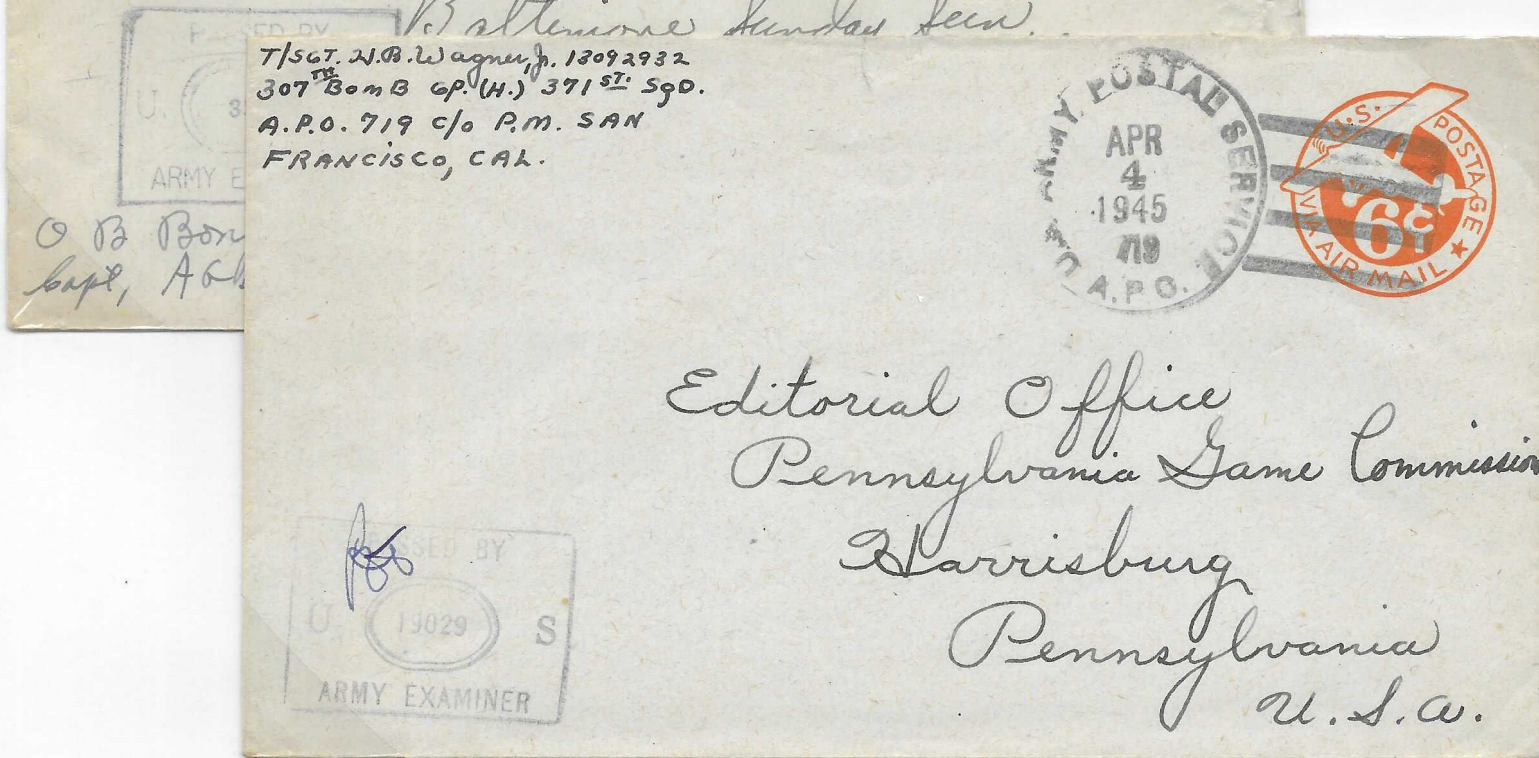
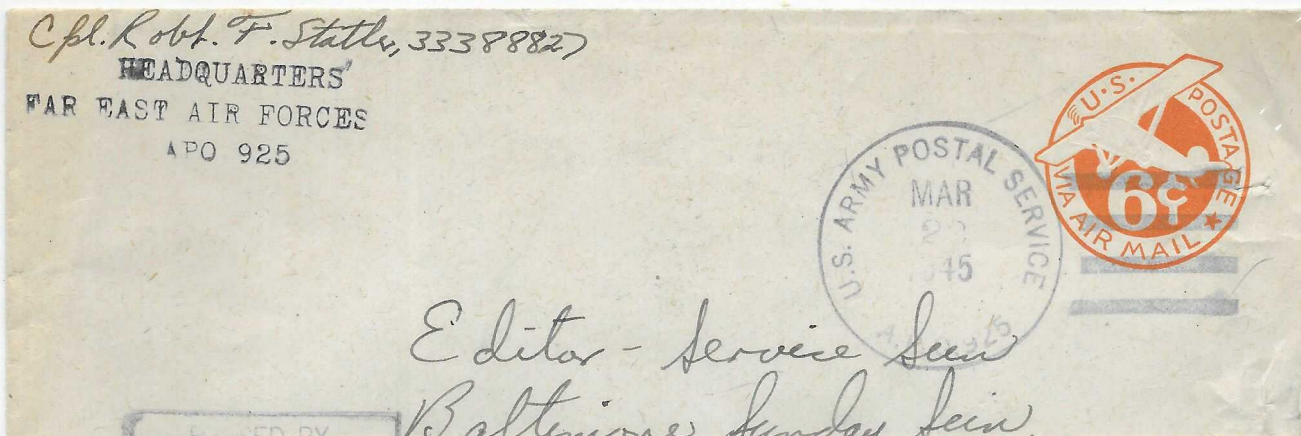


The US invasion of Luzon began on 9 January 1945 across the beaches on the Lingayen Gulf, close to where the Japanese had invaded on 22 December 1941. The principal units involved were the 6 and 43rd Infantry Divisions (I Corps) and the 37th and 40th Infantry Divisions (XIV Corps) of the 6th Army.

APO 37, 37th Infantry Division. APO 40, 40th Infantry Division.

The US Army at War
Offensive Operations

South West Pacific Area
Philippines, Dutch East Indies



Air power played an important part in the decision to invade the Philippines, as Nimitz supported MacArthur's desire to return to the Philippines on the grounds that air fields in Luzon would be necessary for the planned invasion of Taiwan. However, the success of forces in the Pacific Ocean Area in island hopping beyond Taiwan made effectively shelved that plan, and the Japanese surrender following the dropping of atomic bombs on 6 and 9 August 1945 quickly rendered all further invasions moot. Bases in the Philippines did provide support for local ground operations and for bombing in support of Australian operations in Borneo as well as strategic bombing of Indochina and China.

The US Far Eastern Air Forces command had been dissolved following the fall of the Philippines in 1942. In 1944 it was re-activated, initially containing the 5th and 13th Air Forces. 307th Bombardment Group, flying from Morotai, supported ground operations on Leyte and bombed airfields on Leyte, Luzon, Negros, Ceram and Halmahera Islands. In September 1945 it began ferrying liberated Allied POWs from Okinawa to Manila.

APO 925, Leyte, Philippines. APO 719, Morotai, Dutch East Indies.

**OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS
CENTRAL PACIFIC AREA**

The US Army at War

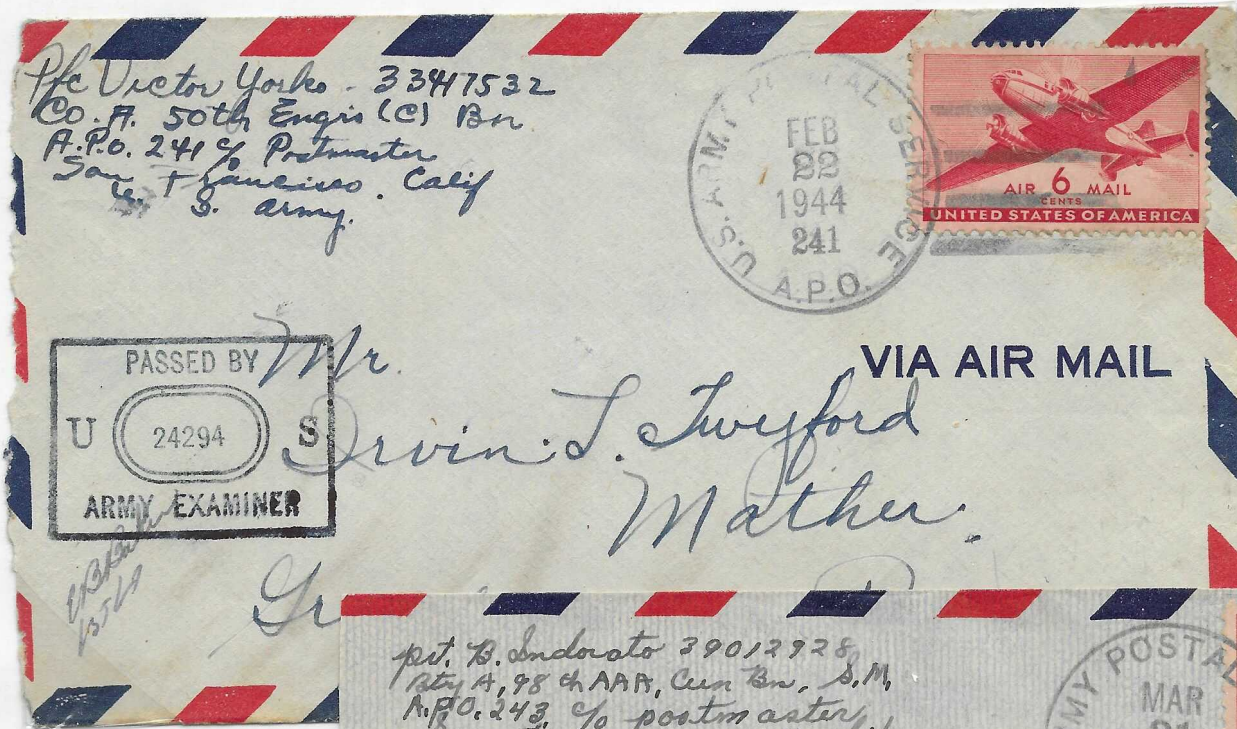
Baker Island, Gilbert & Ellice Islands



The Central Pacific Area was one of the 3 sub-areas of the Pacific Ocean Area commanded by Adm. Nimitz. This led, as in the South Pacific Area, to a great deal of the land combat being carried out by the US Marine Corps. It was in this Area that the concept of "island hopping" came into its prime.

The initial operations in this area were against the atolls of Tarawa and Makin in the Gilbert Islands. To assist these landings, airfields were built on Baker Island and on the atoll of Funafuti (in the Ellice Islands). The capture of Tarawa was a Marine Corps operation. The capture of Makin was effected by the 165 Infantry Regiment, 27th Infantry Division, between 20-23 November 1943. Airfields were developed on both atolls.

APO 457, Baker Island. APO 240, Funafuti, Ellice Islands. APO 459, Makin, Gilbert Islands.



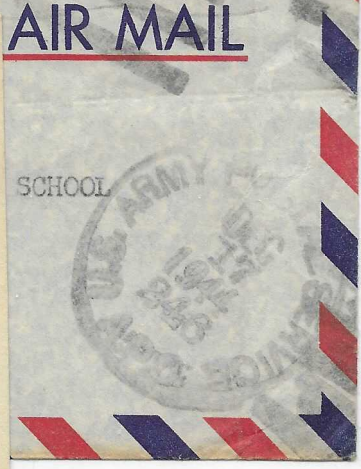
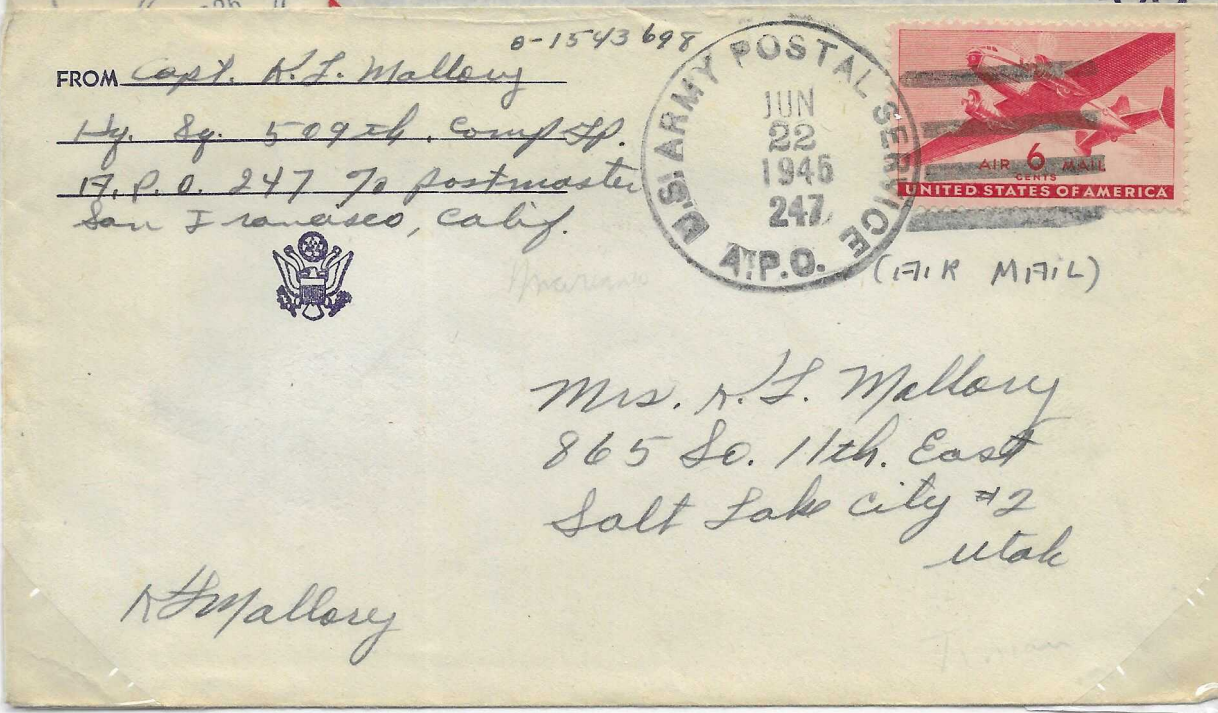
Army operations in the Marshalls were directed against the atolls of Kwajalein and Eniwetok. Kwajalein was invaded by the 75th Infantry Division on 1 February 1944 and was declared secure on 6 February. Eniwetok was captured by Army (106 Regimental Combat Team, 27th Infantry Division, landed 19 February) and Marine forces in action lasting from 17-21 February 1944.

APO 241, Kwajalein. 50th Combat Engineer Battalion landed 2 February.

APO 243, Eniwetok. 98th AAA Gun Battalion (Semimobile) landed on Kwajalein 1 February; later transferred to Eniwetok

The US Army at War
Offensive Operations

Central Pacific Area
Mariana Islands



The 509th Composite Group was responsible for dropping the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It arrived on Tinian in May 1945.

The invasions in the Marianas in which Army troops took part were of Saipan and Guam. Only Marines went ashore at Tinian. Bombers flying from each of these islands could reach both the Philippines and the Japanese home islands.

The initial invasion of Saipan was carried out by Marines on 15 June 1944, with elements of the 27th Infantry Division joining the battle between 16 - 20 June. The island was declared secure on 9 July, though the 27th Infantry Division continued mopping up through August.

Guam was invaded by Marines and the 77th Infantry Division on 21 July 1944. The island was declared secure on 10 August but mopping up my Army forces continued well into 1945.

APO 27, Saipan (27th Infantry Div., of which 102nd Engineer Battalion was a member). APO 246, Guam. APO 247, Tinian



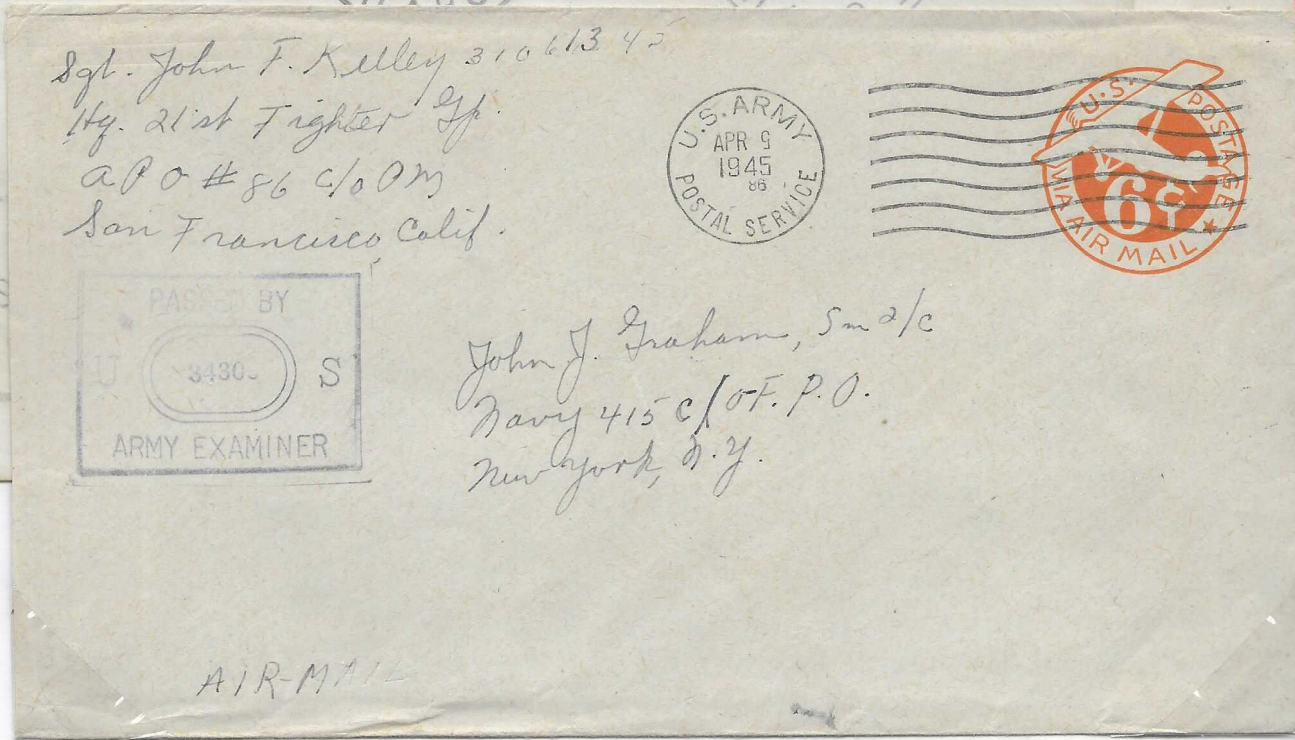
The September 1944 invasion of the Palau Islands represented a detour in the drive toward Japan, but it was seen as necessary in order to provide additional forward air bases from which to support MacArthur's impending operations in the Philippines. The capture of Angaur was carried out by the 81st Infantry Division between 17 September and 21 October 1944. Pelileiu was first invaded by the Marines on 15 September. On 23 September the 81st Infantry Division contributed the 321st Infantry Regiment to this battle and on 16 October it took over responsibility for the Island which was declared secure on 27 November. Meanwhile, elements of the 323rd Infantry Regiment (also 81st Infantry Division) were sent to occupy Ulithi Island (22-24 September), and to take the atoll of Ungulu (9 October).

Elements of the 494th Bombardment Group moved to Angaur in late September to help build the bomber field there. The Group began combat operations from that field on 3 November 1944.

APOs 81 and 264, Angaur.

The US Army at War
Offensive Operations

Central Pacific Area
Iwo Jima

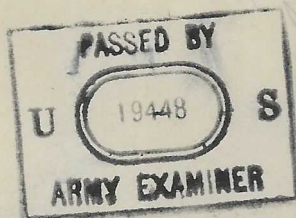
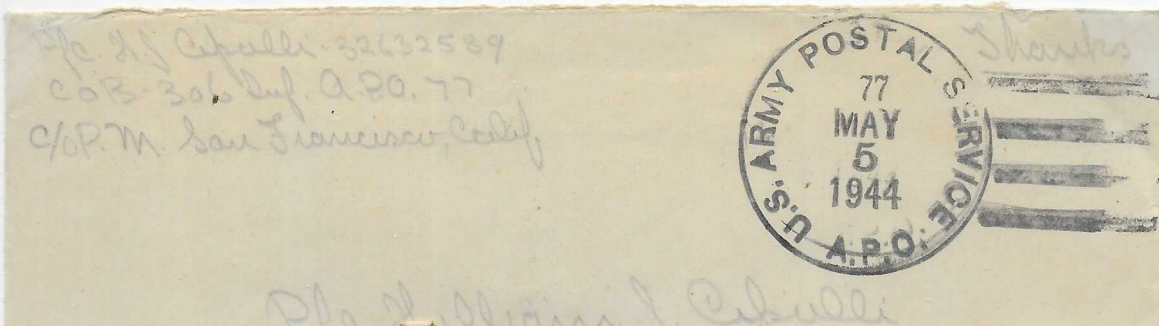


APO 86, Iwo Jima
(opened 14 March
1945).

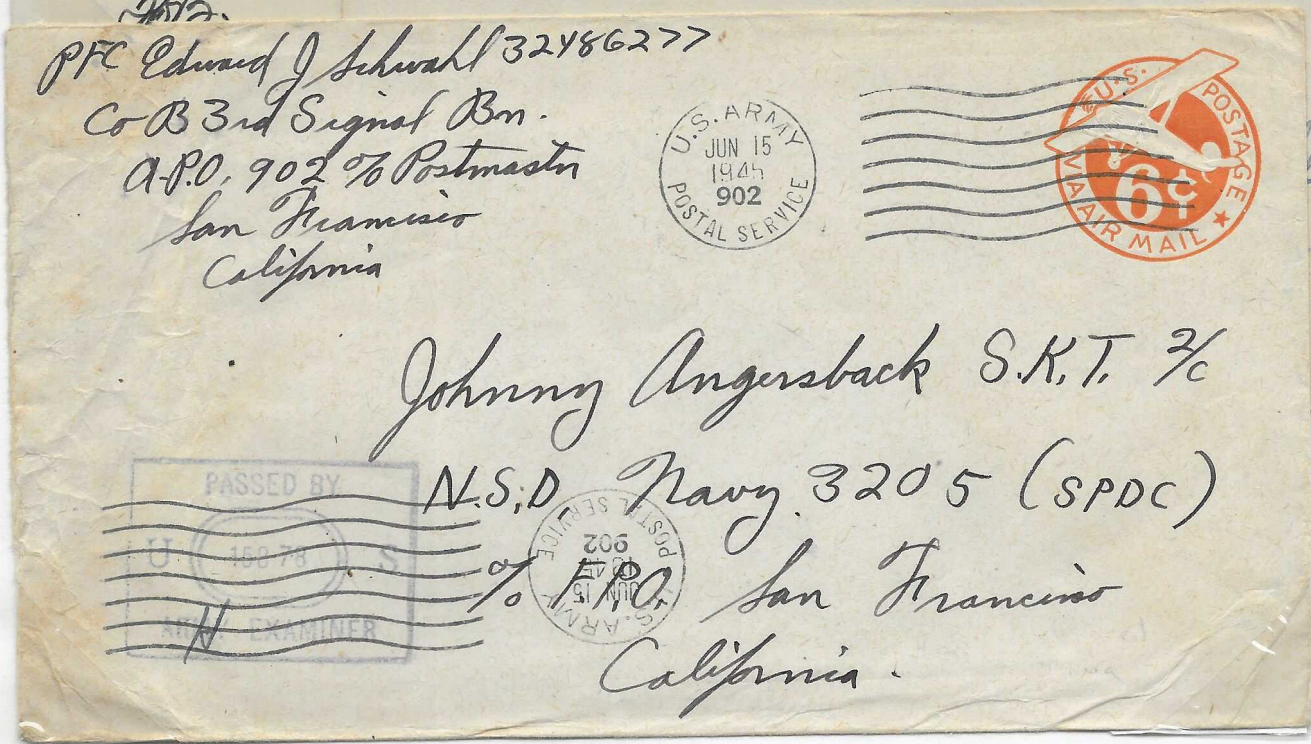
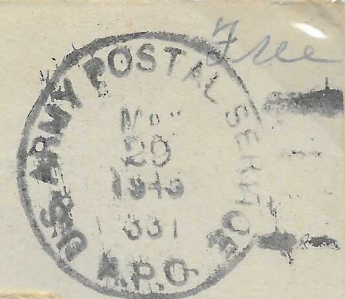
Iwo Jima was captured between 19 February and 16 March 1945 by US Marines. The island was viewed as critically important as a base from which fighters could accompany bombers en route from the Marianas to Japan, and on which bombers unable to make it back to the Marianas could stop short. Securing the island cost the lives of 5,593 Marines, but in addition to the lives saved by the fighter escorts that flew out of Iwo Jima, 2,251 bombers carrying 24,781 crewmen were able to find a safe landing there. (The first B-29 emergency landing was on 4 March, while the battle was still in progress.)

The 7th Fighter Command moved to Iwo Jima in March 1945, as did the 7th Fighter Group (26 March).

On 20 February the Marines captured the first of 4 airfields and on 25 February it was ready for emergency use (1st landing on 1 March). The 506th AAA Gun Battalion, which landed on 25 February, was one of the first US Army units on Iwo Jima.



*Pvt. Roy A. Bradley 6957412
Co. E 902 Engr. Avn. Bn.
A.P.O. 331 C/O P.M.
San Francisco Calif.*



Okinawa was invaded on 21 June 1945 by the US 10th Army, consisting of the Marines' III Amphibious Corps and the Army's XXIV Corps (the main units of which were the 7, 77 and 96 Infantry Divisions). The island was declared secure on 21 June 1945. Once cleared, Japanese airfields were put into service by American fighter aircraft supporting the attack.

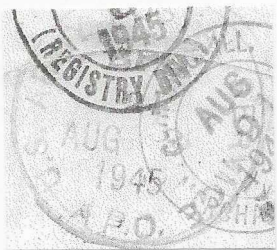
From 1-5 May the 77th Infantry Division was engaged in the Battle of the Maeda Escarpment. On 4 May the 306th Infantry Regiment fought off strong Japanese counterattacks. The 902nd Engineer Aviation Battalion landed on Okinawa on 2 April.

APO 77 (77th Infantry Division) opened on Okinawa on 15 April, APO 331 in May. APO 902 on 15 June 1945.

The US Army at War
Offensive Operations

Central Pacific Area
Okinawa, Ie Shima

First day of APO 337 on Okinawa
and its first registered cover. Also,
very few examples of the 21st
Postal Regulating Station postmark
are known.



Ie Shima, about 4 miles off the west coast of central Okinawa, was the site of a Japanese airfield. It was captured by troops of the 77th Infantry Division between 16 and 21 April 1945. The famous war correspondent Ernie Pyle was killed here by Japanese sniper fire. APO 245 opened on Ie Shima sometime in May 1945.

The US Army at War
Offensive Operations

Japan

T/5 M Howard
39725337
Co A 1st Bn
GHQ AFPAC
APO 500
% PM San Francisco

Capt Carmen Rossi
AGO
GHQ AFPAC
APO 500
% PM San Francisco

Special V-J Day
Cancellation for
General Headquarters
Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers
Yokohama, Japan



*Robert
Walt, APO*

Col. C. S. Lander
G-2, General Headquarters
SUPREME COMMANDER for the ALLIED POWERS
Army Post Office 500
San Francisco, Calif.



Lieut. Margarethe Brandt, ANC N-767351
89th Field Hospital
A.P.O. 73
San Francisco, Calif.

横濱市

横濱郵便局

*Margarethe Brandt
A.P.O.*

On 2 September 1945 General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, as Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers in Japan, presided over the Japanese surrender ceremony aboard the *USS Missouri*. Special Tokyo Bay postmarks had been authorized for Allied warships in Tokyo Bay at that time. Not to be outdone, someone in MacArthur's headquarters had a special cancel made for APO 500, the main office of which was still in Manila.