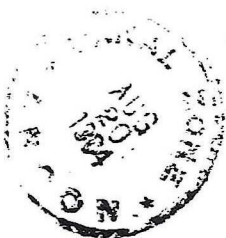


CANAL ZONE
Panama

Ancon
20 August 1904

CONSULAR SERVICE, U. S. A.



main



*Hon. Geo. W. Murphy
U. S. Vice Consul Gen'l,
Frankfort,
Germany*

The second issue of stamps used in the Zone consisted of a set of five U.S. values overprinted "Canal Zone/Panama" introduced on 18 July 1904. The cover above shows the first type of Canal Zone postmark as a dispatch mark of Ancon, and a similar transit mark of Cristobal of the same date is on the reverse. As was usual, the postage was cancelled with the first type of killer -- horizontal bars with the wording "Canal Zone."

CANAL ZONE
Panama

San Pablo
8 December 1904

La Boca
8 November 1904

Union Postale Universelle. — Union Postal Univer

Tarjeta Postal

(Carte Postale).

Escribase de este lado la Dirección y la Comunicación del Otro



Sr.

Capt N G Burton

via New York



Rev. W. Mortimer Heath

*Lytchett Rectory
Poole*

Dorset

Inglaterra

Rev. Wm Ed. Hoyle

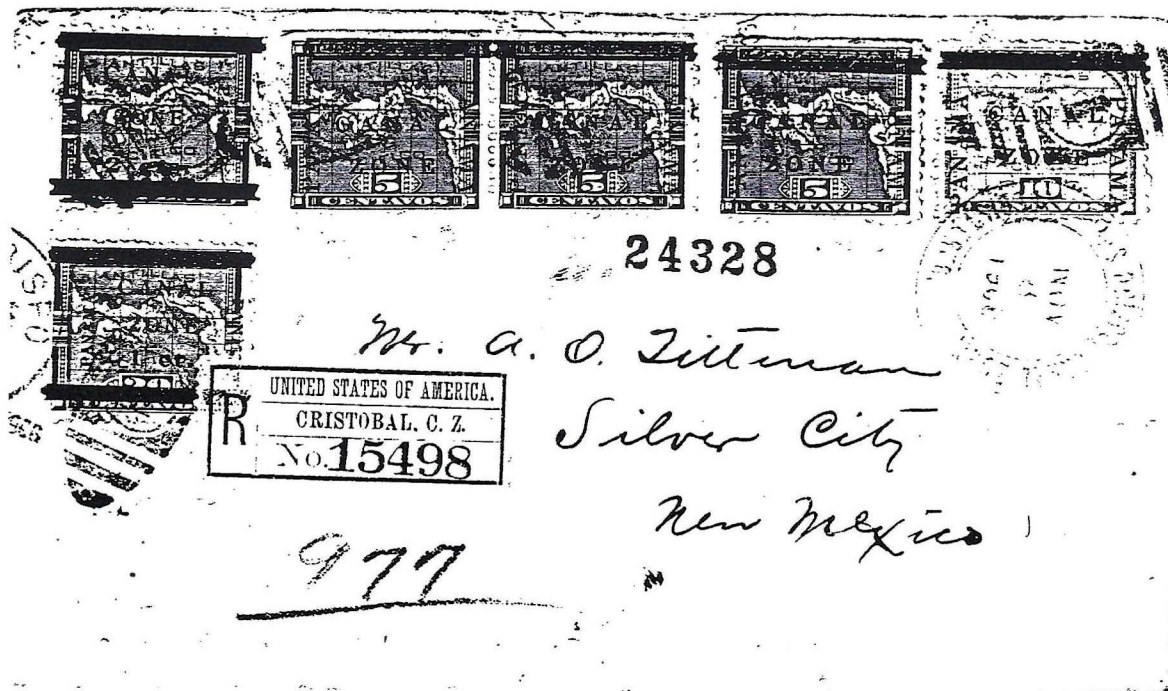
The second issue consisting of overprints on U.S. stamps was on sale in the Zone for less than six months, with only 7,850 complete sets being issued. The above cover and card show late usage of these stamps, which became invalid after 11 December, as a result of the Taft Agreement negotiated by William Howard Taft (later president) and the Panamanian authorities. In order that Panama not be deprived of postal revenue, the agreement provided for the United States would only sell overprinted Panamanian stamps (which would be purchased from Panama at 40% of face value) in the Canal Zone post offices.

San Pablo is the most elusive of the 1904 town markings. Covers for foreign destinations properly franked at the UPU rate are especially scarce.

CANAL ZONE
Panama

Cristobal
26 February 1908

Bas Obispo
8 November 1908



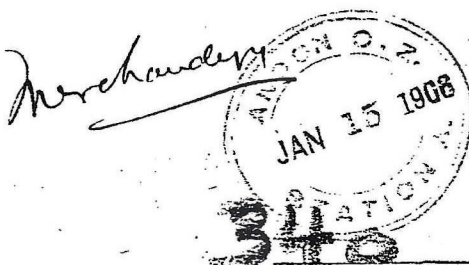
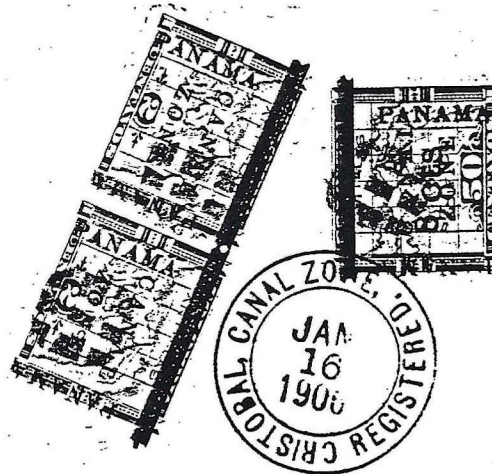
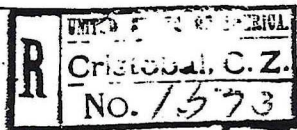
In late 1906, overprints on Panama definitive stamps were introduced to replace the series originally issued by Colombia. However, as the lower cover indicates, the earlier issue remained in use.

The Bas Obispo post office operated from 29 December 1905 until 5 February 1914, shortly after which the town was abandoned as the waters of Lake Gatun rose. Cancellations from this town are moderately scarce -- covers more so. The Cristobal Registration label, applied in transit, is uncommon.

CANAL ZONE
Panama

Ancon, Sta. A
15 January 1906
16 June 1906

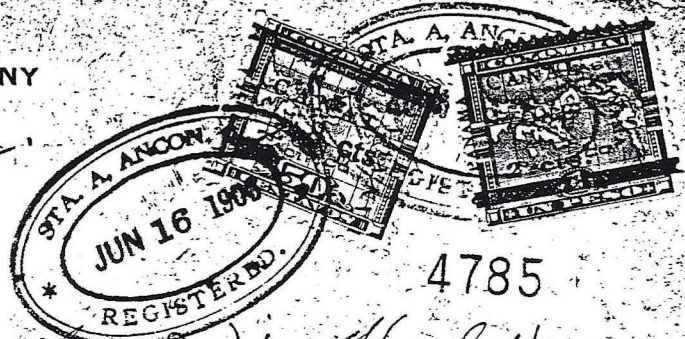
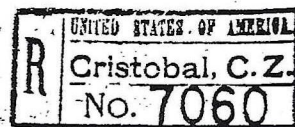
*From Jerry
Ancon, C.Z.*



*Mr. W. G. Robb
Rock Falls,
Ill.*

RETURN IN 5 DAYS TO
PANAMA BANKING COMPANY
PANAMA

D. M. Hazlett



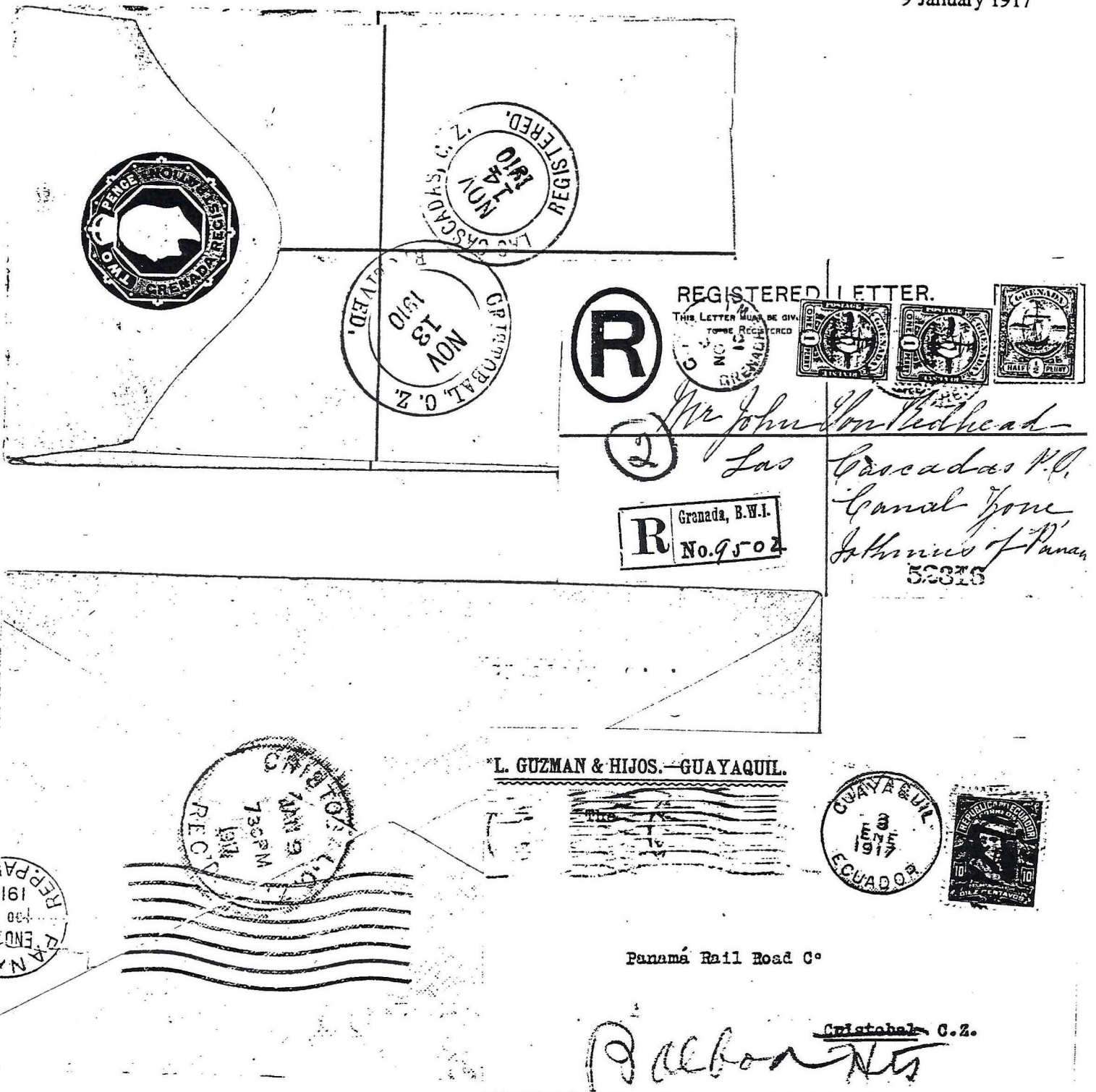
*Mrs. D. M. Hazlett
St. Louis, Mo.
2616 S. Grand Ave.
27013
48231
U.S.A.*

The Ancon A postal station was opened in Panama City after the Isthmian Canal Commission decided to stop accepting mail for the U.S. at its office on 27 August 1905. The attraction of the Ancon A station was its use of domestic postal rates on mail to the U.S., as opposed to the U.P.U. rates charged by the Panamanian post office. This station closed on 30 April 1908.

Although registered, the packet front received the regular circular Station A postmark, with the Cristobal double ring and boxed registration markings being applied in transit on the following day.

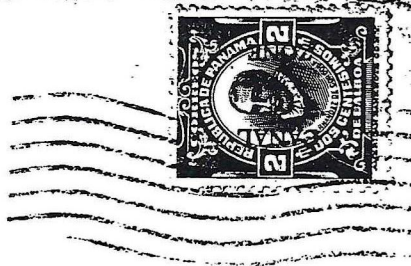
CANAL ZONE
Panama

Cristobal
10 November 1910
9 January 1917

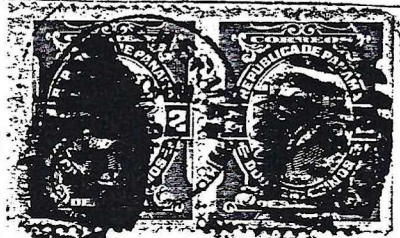


Receiving marks were used to backstamp all arriving mail during the first ten years of the Canal Zone post office. However, on 23 February 1915, the practice was discontinued except for registered mail and items addressed to general delivery, hotels and YMCA's. Above examples of rubber and steel receiving marks of Cristobal were used to record transit dates on foreign mail. Upper cover also shows Las Cascades registration mark as receiver.

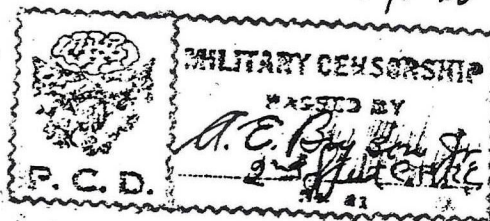
Fort Sherman
22 July 1918



Sicut Bryson
St. Shrews, C.Z.



Miss Katherine Kiefer
56 "P" St N.W.
Washington
D.C.



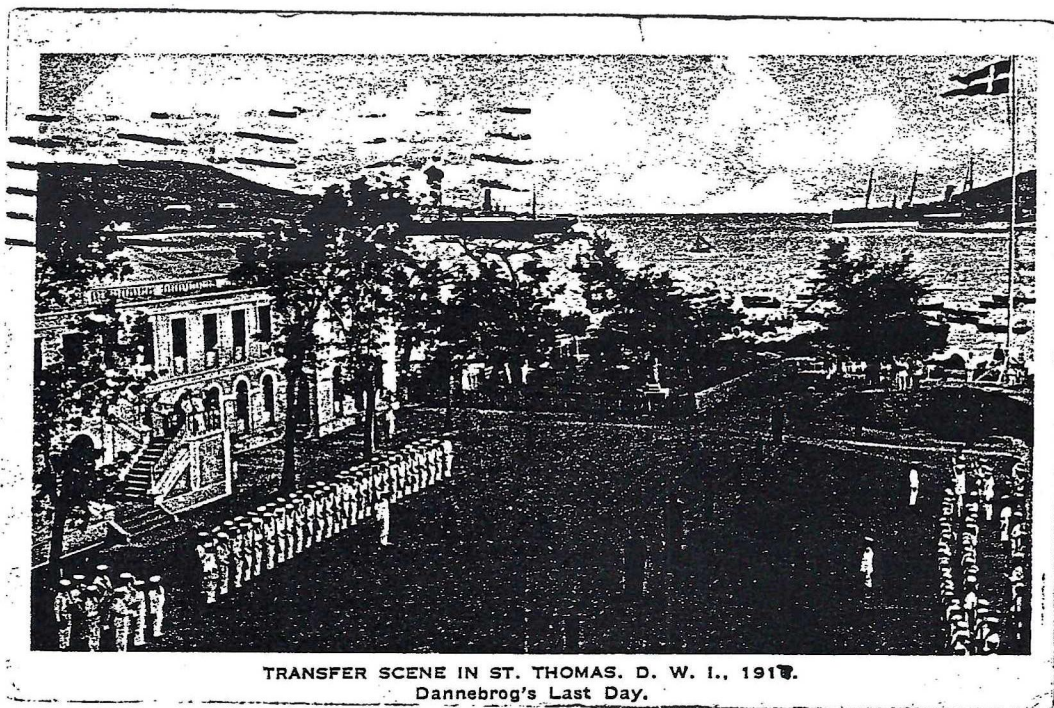
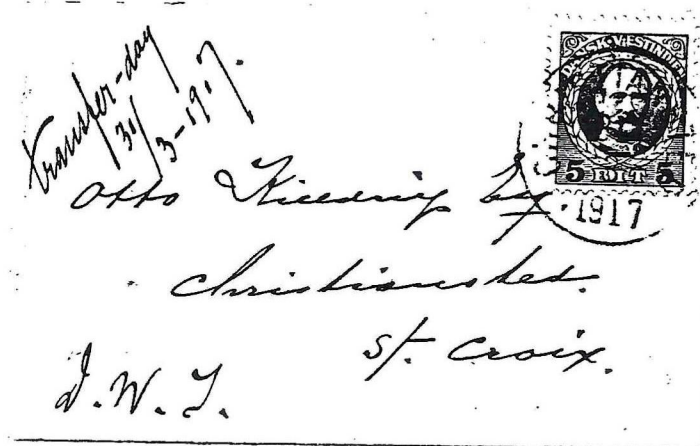
During World War I, mail from the Canal Zone became subject to censorship. Upper cover from the Headquarters of U.S. Troops in Ancon to the War department in Washington was postmarked on the day war was declared but the censorship mechanism was apparently not yet functioning. The post office at Fort Sherman was opened in May 1916 and functioned until May 1927.

VIRGIN ISLANDS

Fearful of potentially increased German influence in the Caribbean, the United States purchased the Virgin Islands -- consisting of three principal islands and about 50 small islets and cays -- from Denmark for \$25 million on 17 January 1917.

St. Thomas
31 March 1917

Mailed on Accession Day

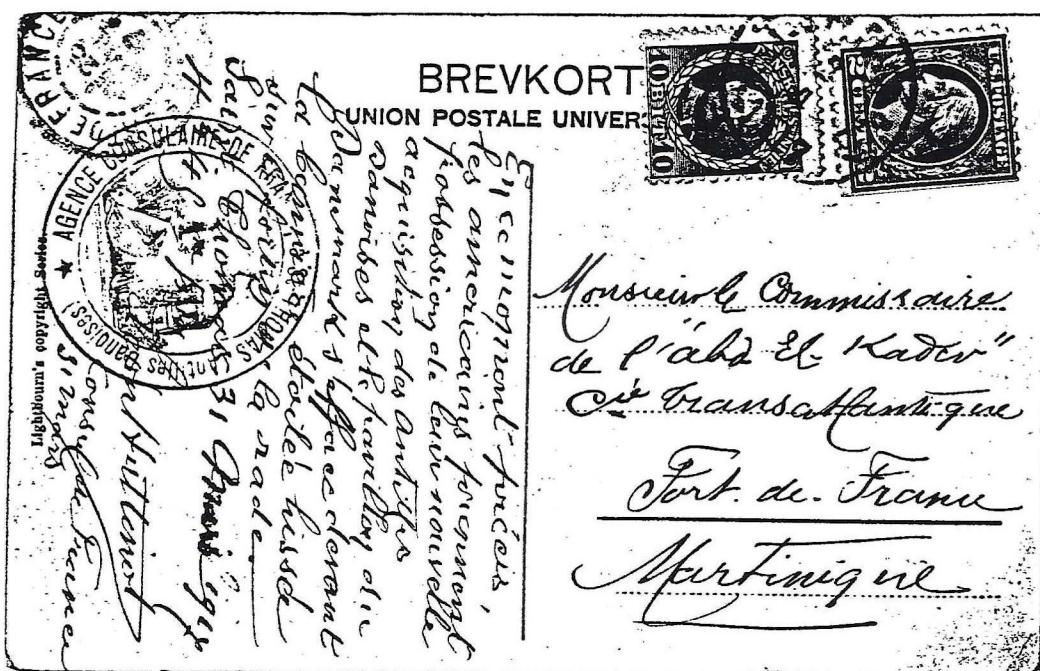


The formal transfer of sovereignty took place at 4:00 PM on 31 March 1917. Thus, mail postmarked on Accession Day was done in the final hours of the Danish administration of the post office.

VIRGIN ISLANDS
St. Thomas

St. Thomas
2 April 1917

First Day of U.S. Post Office



This postcard was written by the French Consul at St. Thomas on 31 March at the very moment that the United States took formal possession of the Virgin Islands. As the first of April was a Sunday, it was not postmarked until Monday, the second, which was the opening day of the U.S. Postal Administration.

VIRGIN ISLANDS
St. Thomas

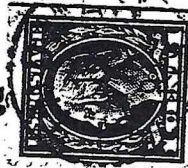
St. Thomas
7 April 1917

St. Thomas, April 7th 1917
His Excellency,
Commander Pollock U. S. N.
Acting Governor.
Your Excellency:

I regret very
much that when you called
yesterday, we were at service
and all the servants were
in the church or out.

Thank you very much
for

Postage



His Excellency,

Commander Pollock U. S. N.

On Board the "Hawcock"

St. Thomas

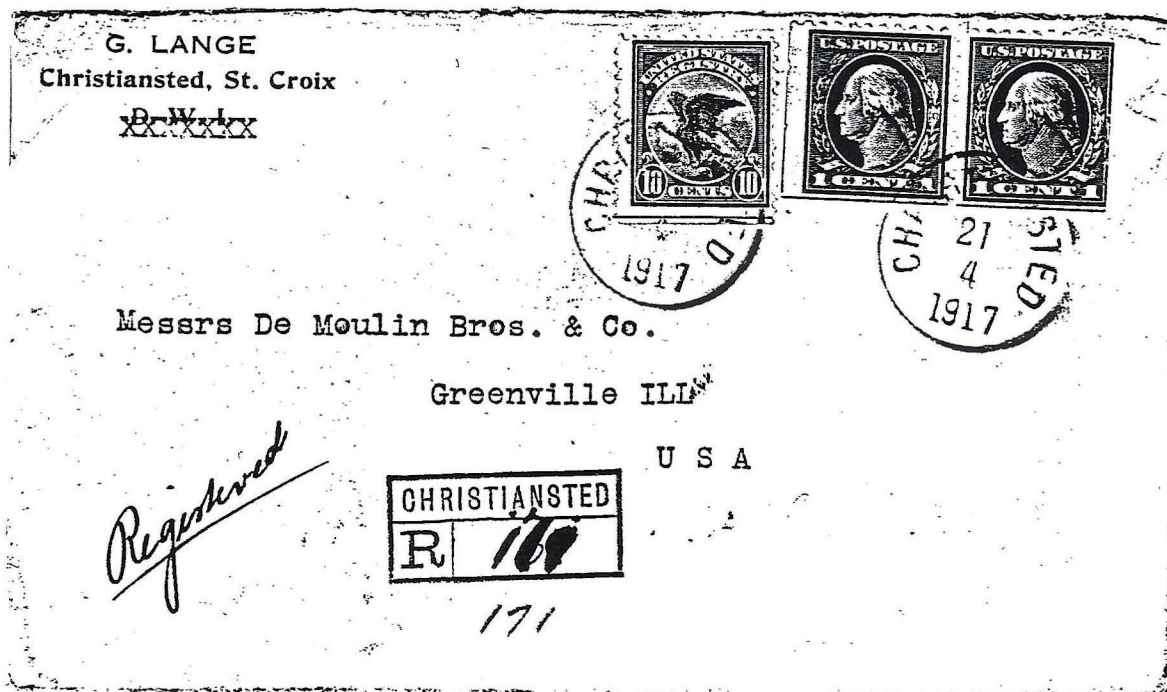
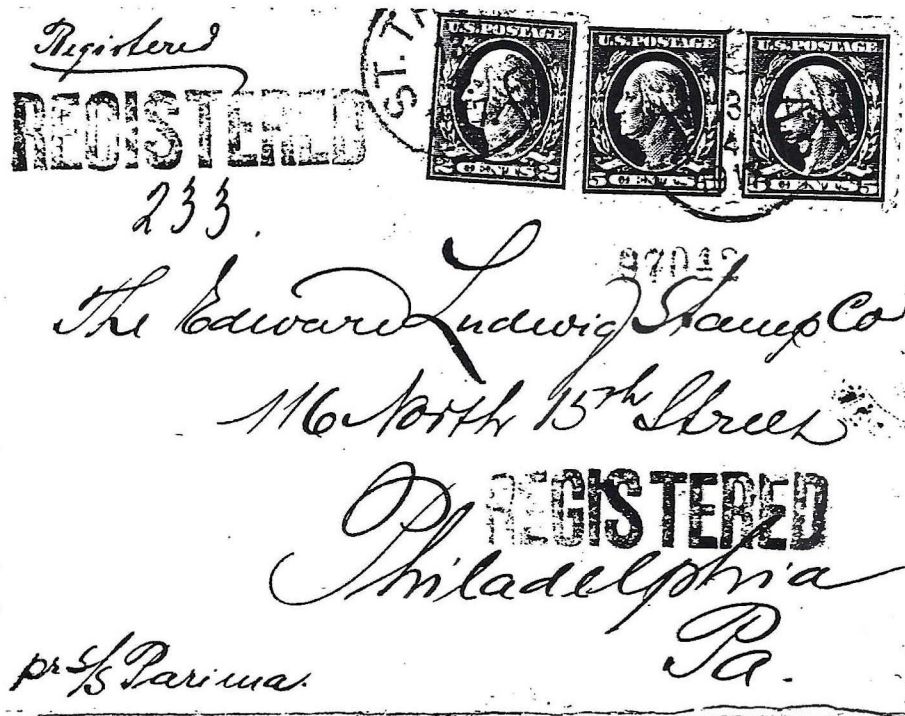
In the early months after the accession to the United States, mail continued to be cancelled with the old Danish postmarks. Moreover, for six months after the United States took possession, old Danish West Indies stamps retained their postal validity. The rate of exchange was 5 bits to 1 U.S. cent. In this case, the writer affixed only a 5 bit D.W.I. stamp, which was worth only 1 cent (instead of the 2 cent letter rate). As a result, postage due was assessed. In payment, a 1 cent U.S. stamp was affixed and canceled with the "St. Thomas" postmark.

Note that the letter is addressed to Commander Pollock, then Acting Governor of the U.S. Virgin Islands.

VIRGIN ISLANDS
St. Thomas
St. Croix

St. Thomas
13 April 1917

Christiansted
21 April 1917

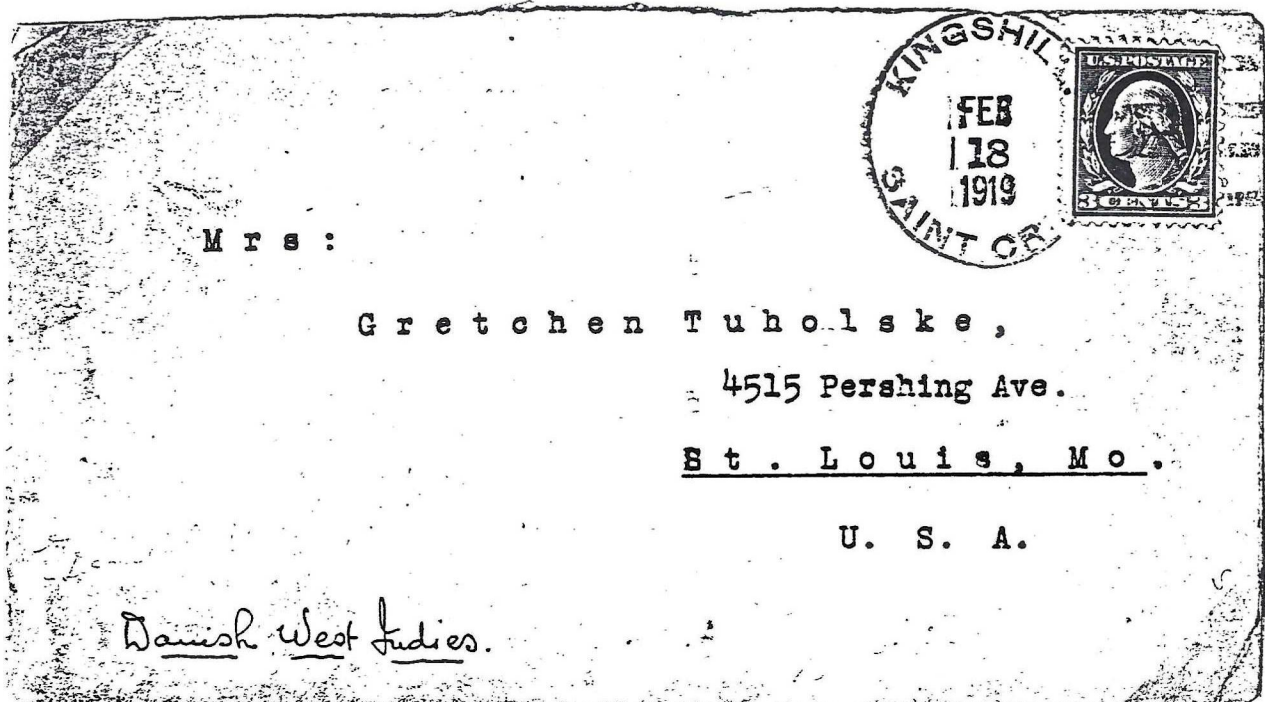
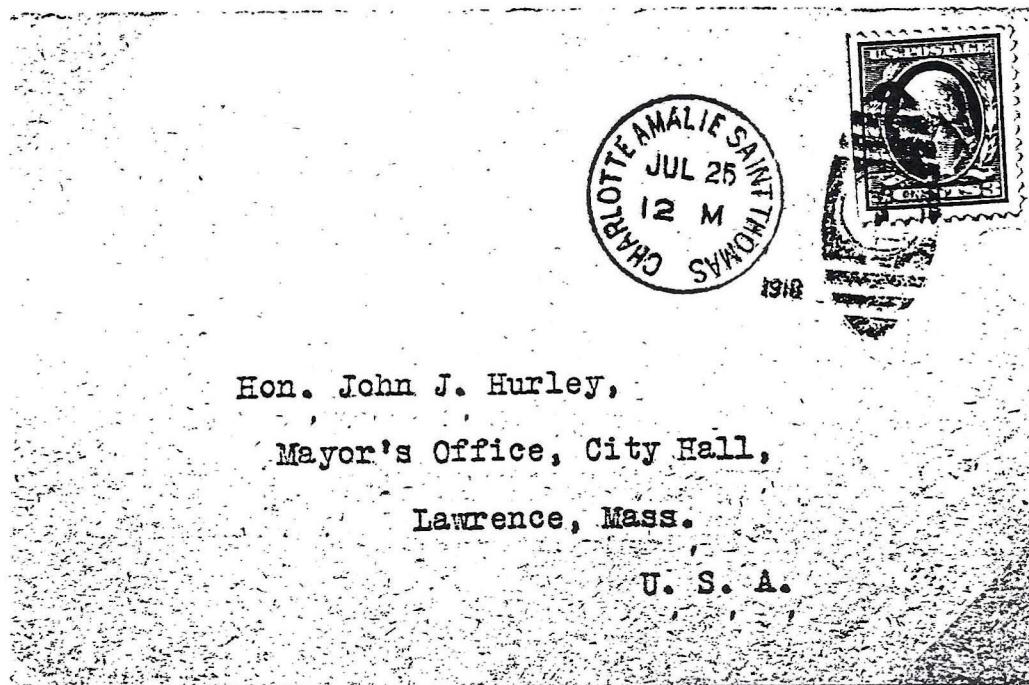


Mail from the Virgin Islands in the early months after the accession to the United States continued to be cancelled with the old Danish postmarks, although the St. Thomas registered cover is backstamped with a new "Charlotte Amalie/Saint Thomas" double-ring marking.

VIRGIN ISLANDS
St. Thomas
St. Croix

Charlotte Amalie
25 July 1918

Kingshill
18 February 1919



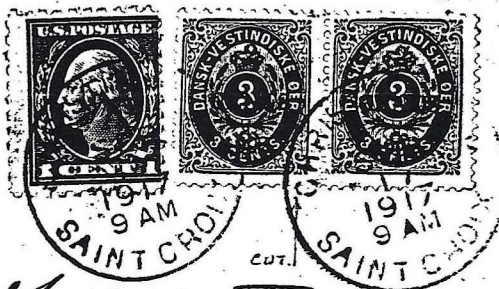
Charlotte Amalie was designated as the capital of the U.S. Virgin Islands. Its first postmark was a duplex circular date stamp with a "1" in the center; the above cover was mailed by a Marine Private of the 56th Company from the Marine Barracks on St. Thomas. Most of the mail from the Virgin Islands originated in the seaports. In fact, Kingshill was the only interior DWI town to have a post office. When U.S.-style postmarks were introduced, Kingshill was issued a rubber datestamp rather than a steel one, presumably on the theory that it would process a much smaller quantity of mail.

VIRGIN ISLANDS
St. Croix

Christiansted
5 April 1917
17 September 1917
29 September 1917



Atto Kildring Esq.
Christiansted



Atto Kildring
Christiansted

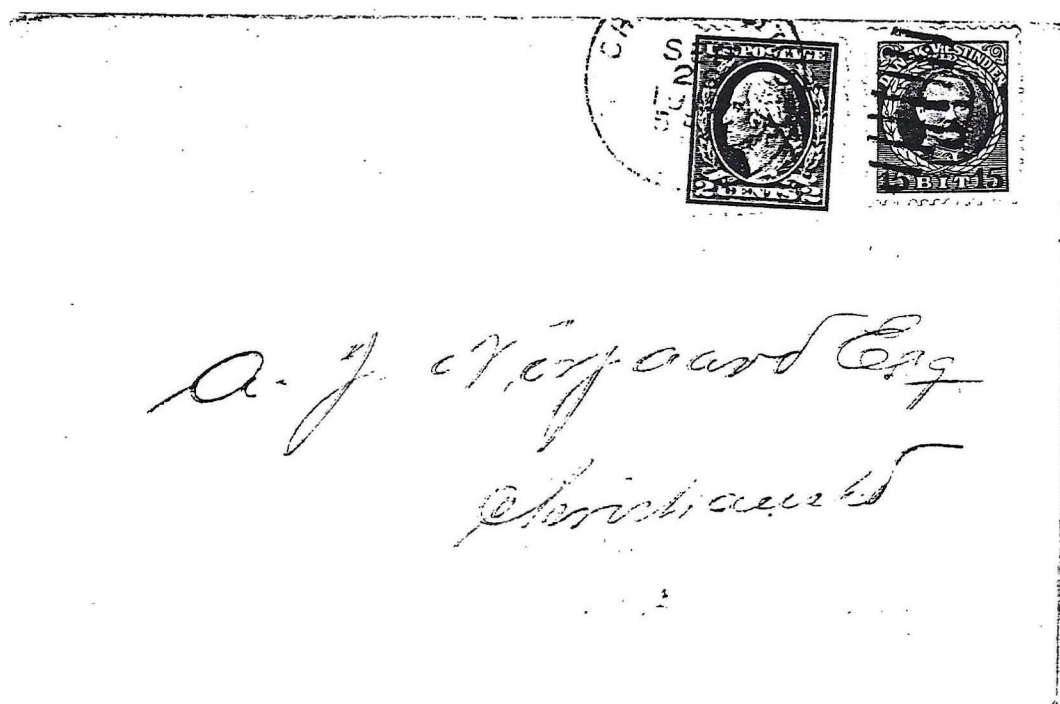
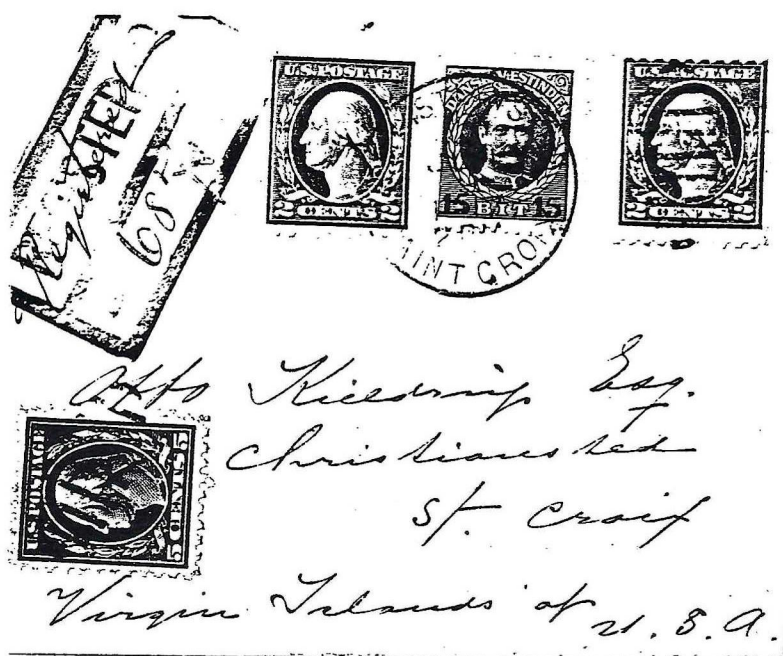


A. J. Nygaard Esq.
Christiansted

Philatelists were active in the islands at the time, based on the existence of interesting combination covers which were overfranked and/or were posted with stamps from earlier issues, no longer on sale but still valid for postage.

VIRGIN ISLANDS
St. Croix

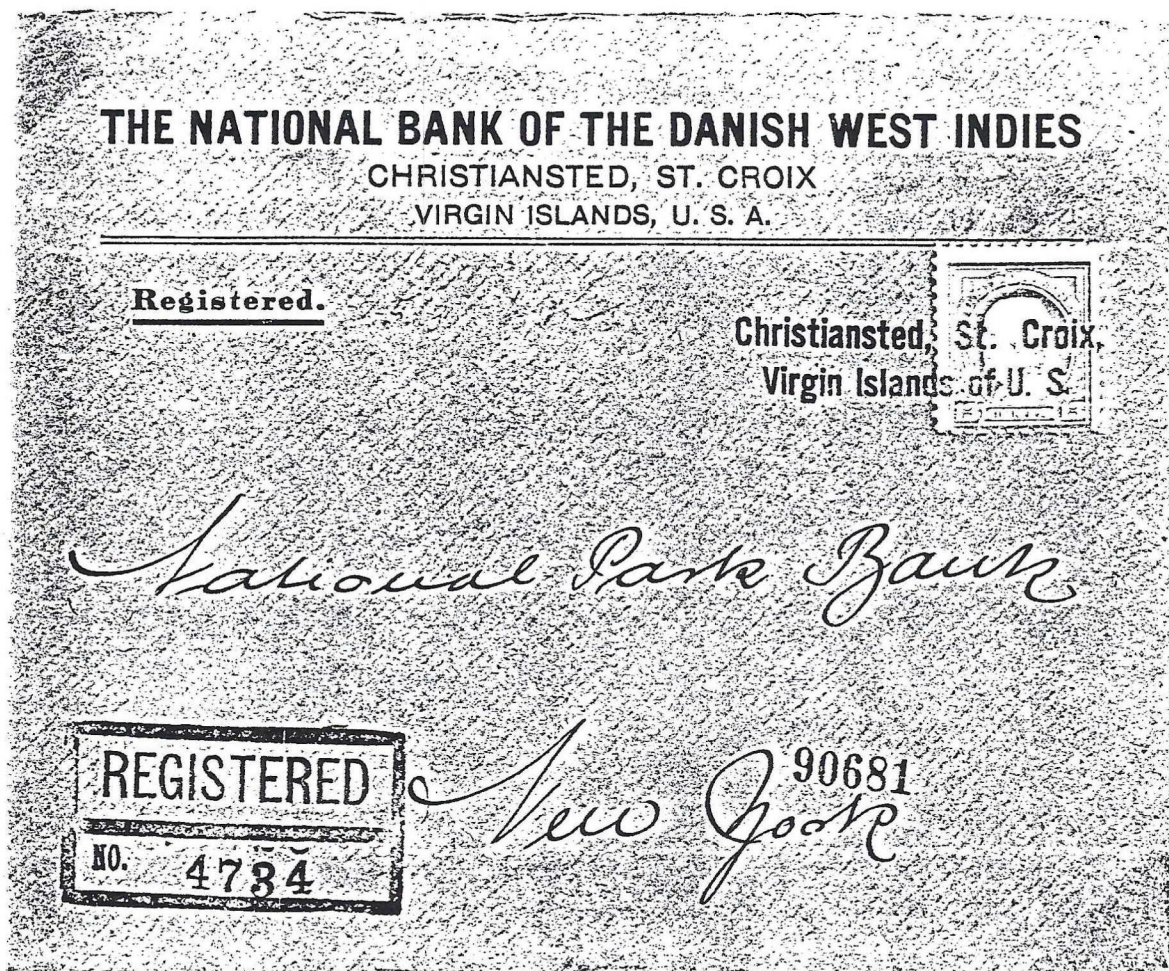
Christiansted
9 June 1917
29 September 1917



Although the validity of old Danish West Indies stamps was permitted for six months after the transfer of sovereignty, the use of combination franking on registered mail is unusual. The 15 bit DWI stamps on the above covers were used as 3 cents as part of the postage. Note that the lower cover was cancelled on the final day of validity of DWI stamps.

VIRGIN ISLANDS
St. Croix

Christiansted
25 June 1919



Bank mail from St. Croix to New York. Postage was properly cancelled with a 2-line undated marking. Double circle "Registered" markings with appropriate date were applied on the reverse.