

THE

PHILATELIST

AERO

ANNALS

★ ★ A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE ON AERO-PHILATELY ★ ★

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UNITED STATES

Counterfeit Autographs

1918 First Trip Covers

"Old philatelic fakes never seem to die; they don't even fade away." Thus, one can paraphrase this well-known saying because so often the same philatelic simulations keep appearing.

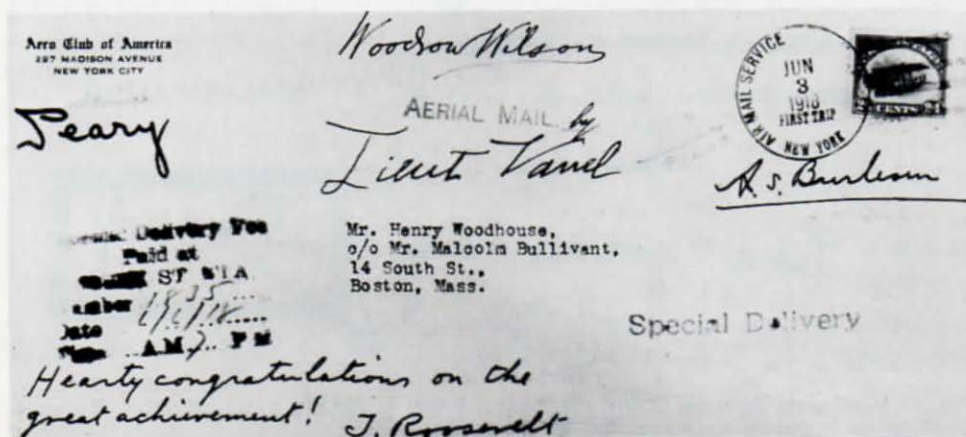


Fig. 1. A cover with the counterfeit autographs. (Photos by Boutrelle)

Years ago—a few air mail authorities have dated it in 1918 when the first U. S. government flights took place—a forger added historical significance to covers with the first and second air mail stamps of the United States. A few more of the 24c red and blue (C3) covers appear to have these counterfeit autographs than ones with the 16c green (C2) air mail. The writer does not recall seeing these fraudulent signatures on any 6c orange (C1) stamp first flight covers.

According to the writer's memory, not a year has gone by without a friend proudly showing him a great piece just acquired. Usually it is a May 15, 1918 or June 3, 1918 First Trip cover with the 24c air mail (C3) that has four historical autographs on it. These fakes always seem to have been written in approximately the same place on long legal-sized covers with the corner card of the Aero Club of America, 297 Madison Avenue, New York City and usually with the typewritten name and address of Henry Woodhouse. The counterfeit autographs are those of (President) WOODROW WILSON, (Rear Admiral Robert E.) PEARY, (Postmaster General) A. S. BURLERSON and (President Theodore Roosevelt) always written as this: "Heartly Congratulations on the great achievement! T. ROOSEVELT."

A few covers seen with these counterfeit autographs have an additional one of the 1918 pilot* such as the one illustrated in Fig. 1. However, most of

*According to the flight catalogs, such as the "American Airmail Catalogue" and the "Standard Airpost Catalogue (1931 edition)," the pilot for the June 3, 1918 flight from New York to Boston, Mass. was a French aviator by the name of Lt. VANNELLE, not Vanel as imitated on the illustrated cover.

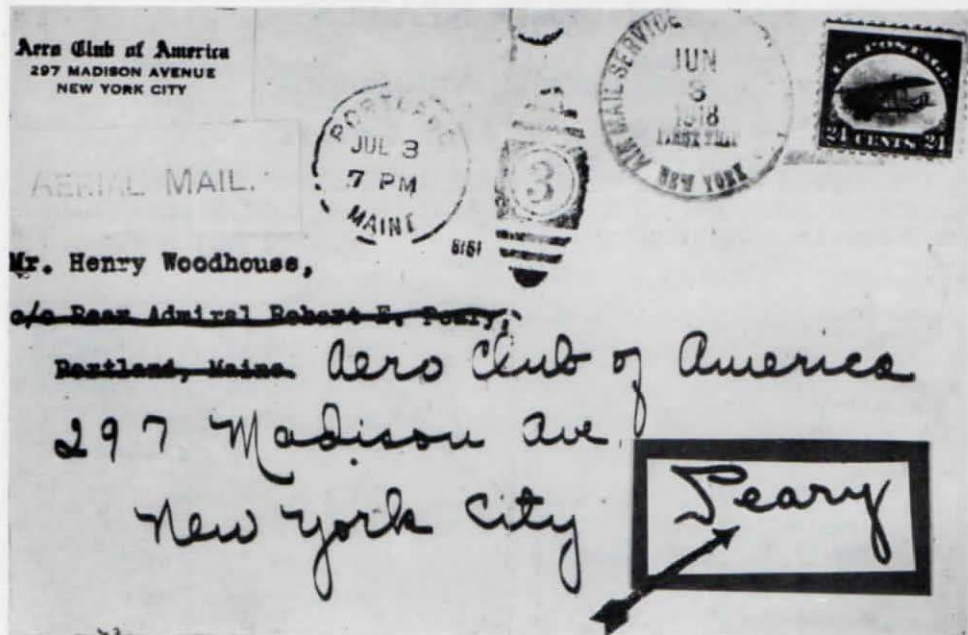


Fig. 2. A cover similar to Fig. 1 but with Admiral Robert E. PEARY's own handwriting. The arrow points to the forged signature as written on Fig. 1.

The image shows two handwritten signatures side-by-side. The signature on the left is a genuine autograph of A. S. Burleson, written in a fluid, cursive script. The signature on the right is a forged version of the same name, appearing slightly less fluid and more constructed. Both signatures are written in dark ink on a light background.

Fig. 3. (Left) A genuine A. S. BURLESON autograph and (right) the forged one as written on the Fig. 1 cover.

the covers seen are on the June 3, 1918 New York-Boston First Trip franked with the 24c air mail stamp and having only four counterfeited autographs, not the fifth of the aviator.

Comparison Of The Genuine With The False Autographs

This article will analyze and compare just two of the four autographs, those of Admiral Peary and Postmaster General Burleson. If one owns or can examine a genuine autograph of both Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, and then compare them to the forgeries on 1918 covers similar to the one shown here (Fig. 1), the differences are rather apparent so that one can see where these fraudulent signatures are far from perfect imitations.

The Peary Autograph

The true philatelic expert knows that it is always best to work with comparative material; reliance upon one's memory is helpful but secondary. Thus, the cover shown in Fig. 2 turns out to be a wonderful reference piece. This is a New York to Boston June 3, 1918 First Trip cover similar in many re-

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spects to the Fig. 1 cover. One exception is that the Fig. 2 cover was addressed to Mr. Henry Woodhouse, c/o Rear Admiral Robert E. Peary, Portland, Maine. After receipt, it was returned by Admiral Peary to the sender at a later date. This was most fortunate because *Admiral Peary re-addressed this cover in his own hand.* Consequently, this reforwarding address turns out to be most helpful material for a comparison to the counterfeit Peary autograph on Fig. 1. In order to make this comparison easier, the fraudulent autograph of Peary on the Fig. 1 cover has been mounted alongside his own handwriting on the Fig. 2 cover. There are, of course, five letters in the name "Peary." With the exception of the capital "P" the other four appear more than once in his handwritten address on Fig. 2. Just study the lower case "e," "a," "r" and "y" in both Figs. 1 and 2. The great variations need not be pointed out; they are obvious. Therefore, the "Peary" autograph on the Fig. 1 cover is counterfeit. Q. E. D.

The Burleson Autograph

Postmaster General Burleson's signature is not scarce, because there are many U. S. proofs with his signature. In Fig. 3, one of his autographs taken from a proof has been placed on the left. To its right is the counterfeit autograph as written on the Fig. 1 cover. Each one of the ten letters in these two "A. S. Burleson" signatures show wide differences. Proof that the one on Fig. 1 cover is a forgery. Again Q. E. D.

Conclusion

A forger wants to imitate the original as closely as possible. Consequently, he usually has the genuine to use as a model from which to copy. Since famous Americans, such as Admiral Peary, Postmaster General Burleson and President Woodrow Wilson, either personally participated or were closely connected with the 1918 first flights, they did oblige a few with their autographs. These, however, are exceedingly scarce.

It is entirely different with the counterfeit autographed covers. They are relatively plentiful. It cannot be estimated how many were manufactured. But compared to the rare covers with genuine autographs, our estimate would be something as one genuine to every 1000 counterfeits. Thus, one can see that his chances of securing a genuine item for his collection are very slim.

Since covers such as the one in Fig. 1 with the forged signatures of Woodrow Wilson, Peary, A. S. Burleson and T. Roosevelt have been coming into philatelic hands rather regularly, it is hoped that this analytical article will prove helpful. The newer collector and dealer appears to be unaware of these counterfeit covers, and thus are the ones fooled. Nevertheless, the writer was surprised about a year ago when a veteran collector of United States stamps, who occasionally writes for various stamp papers, came up with one of these fraudulent covers. After he was informed by the writer, this collector admitted that he had never known nor heard of these forged signatures. If this article is successful in getting the word around, then in time this information may stop the sale of these deceptive covers. This is our hope. (H. M. G.)

TO JOIN AERO PHILATELISTS

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UNITED STATES

The 16c Air Mail Stamp of 1918

Fake Cancellation, July 15, 1918 On Cover With Block Of Four

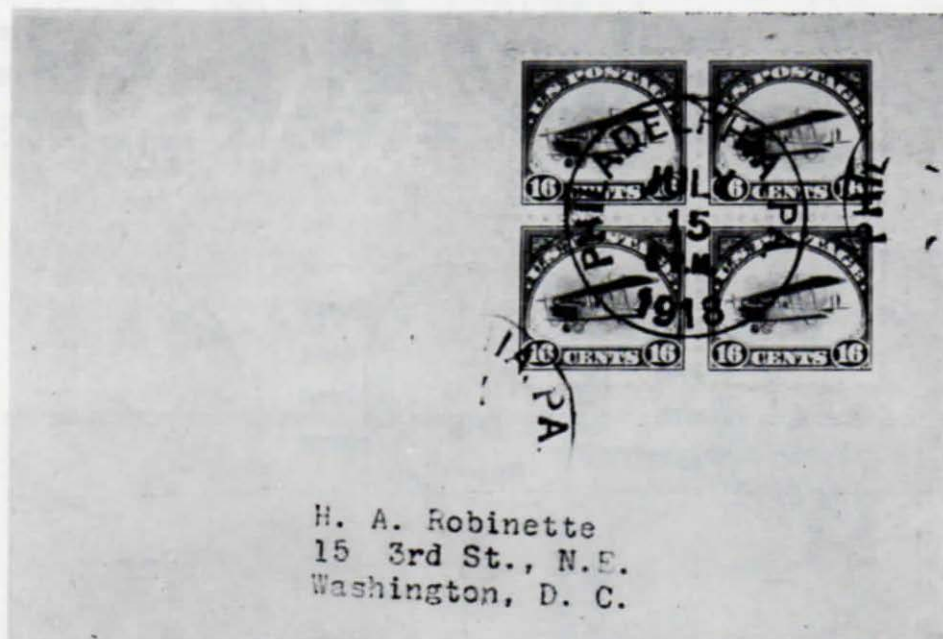


Fig. 1. Cover with counterfeit Philadelphia, July 15, 1918 cancellation on block of four of the 16c air mail stamps of 1918, Scott C2. (W. J. Chamberlin collection)

In the April, 1961 issue of the *AERO PHILATELIST ANNALS*, Volume VIII, Number 4, an article was published on a counterfeit May 15, 1918, First Trip, New York cancellation found on a block of four of the 24c air mail stamp of 1918, Scott C3. The promise was made that future articles would be included in this magazine if additional counterfeit May 15, 1918 cancellations should be found on *FIRST TRIP* covers emanating from Philadelphia or Washington. No such material has been seen in the intervening six months. This is not surprising. The counterfeit cancellation is the exception which is all to the good for philately.

Aero Philatelists held its fourteenth annual convention in Atlantic City from October 21-23, 1960. On display in the air mail section were more than eighty frames of exceptional air mail material submitted by members of Aero Philatelists from all over the country. The writer recalls one very interesting exhibit of *Early United States Air Mail And Zeppelin Covers* submitted by Mr. W. J. Chamberlin of Corvallis, Oregon. One cover, purporting to have a

first flight, Philadelphia, July 15, 1918 cancellation on a block of four of the 16c air mail stamps of 1918, Scott C2, aroused our curiosity. Unfortunately, because of the press of administrative duties occasioned by the first day of issue ceremonies for the new 7c fire-red air mail coil stamp, the annual convention and the Saturday night banquet, it was impossible to examine this cover and cancellation as closely as would have been desired. The writer later correspond-

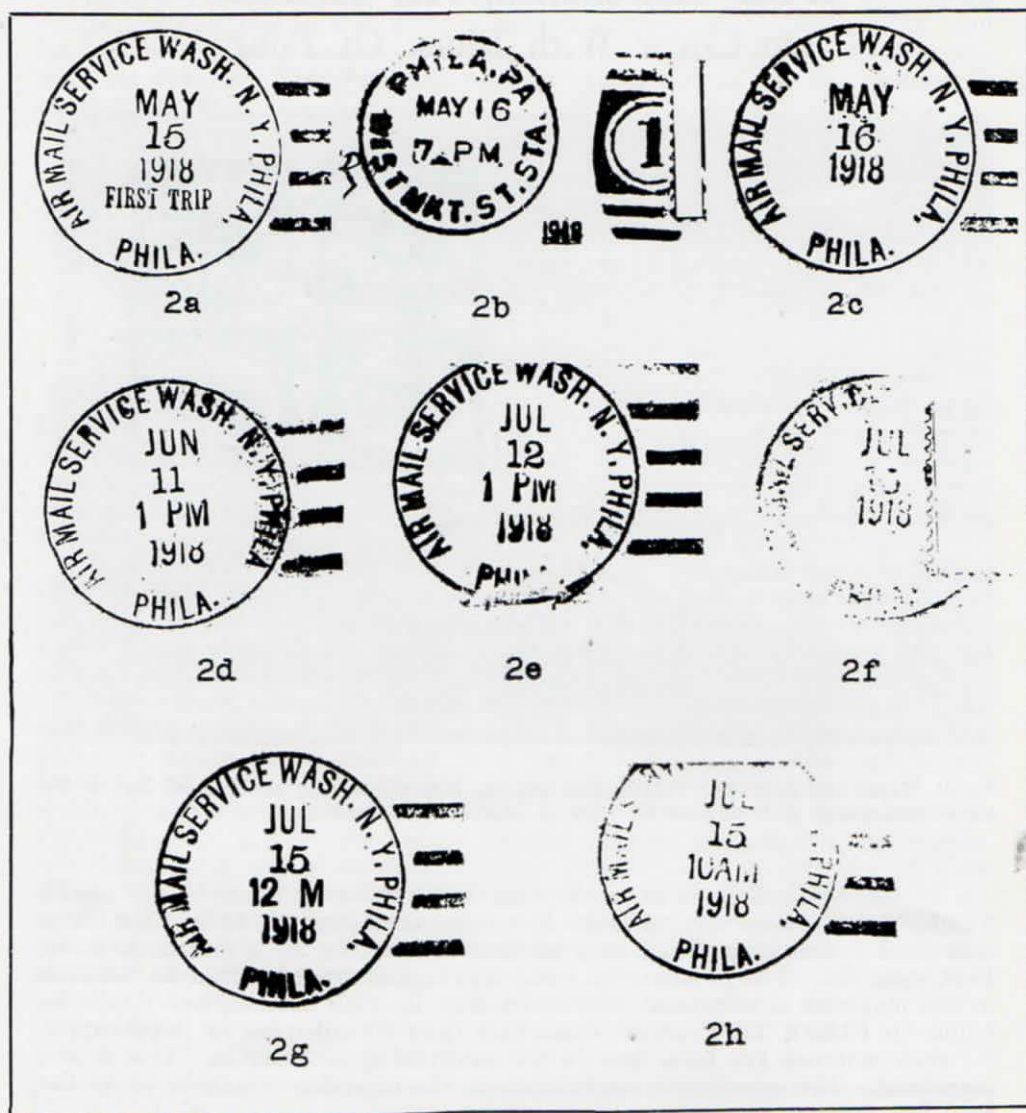


Fig. 2. Various types of 1918 and 1919 cancellations used on air mail stamps on covers emanating from Philadelphia, Pa.

ed with Mr. Chamberlin and he was kind enough to submit his cover for examination and study. *Now it definitely may be stated, after considerable study, that this cover shown in figure 1 bears a counterfeit cancellation.*

Some counterfeits may defy detection. With due deference to some of our better philatelic forgers, this one seems to be a rather crude job, good enough to fool only the relative newcomer in philately who does not know the genuine. But, with the increase in first day cover collecting, there exists today for the fakers a virgin territory of new collectors interested in acquiring first day or first trip cancellations on some of the older United States air mails stamps. Of course, a block of four on first day or first flight cover is an even more desirable piece.

A cursory glance at this counterfeit cancellation, when seen in the frames at Atlantic City, indicated that "there was something rotten in the State of New Jersey." This did not resemble any of the known cancellations from Philadelphia. Over the years, the writer has examined a great number of July 15, 1918 covers emanating from that city. Not only did this cancellation bear no similarity to known legitimate Philadelphia cancellations, it did not even resemble any cancellations found on air mail stamps during 1918 or any year thereafter. It should be stressed, of course, that Philadelphia cancellations are less common than those of New York or Washington. When the first scheduled air mail route was established on May 15, 1918, it included all three cities, Washington, New York and Philadelphia. However, although Washington and New York continued to remain focal points on this first air mail route, Philadelphia lost this distinction after a little more than one year. The last flight from Philadelphia to New York and Washington took place on Saturday, July 19, 1919 on the occasion of the first flights at the new reduced 2c air mail rate.

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On the following Monday, July 21, 1919, Philadelphia was dropped from the air mail route.

For comparative purposes, illustrated herewith are the various kinds of cancellations used from Philadelphia during the period noted above, May 15, 1918 to July 19, 1919. (See Figure 2.) These cancellations fall into the following five main groupings:

- (1.) The large circular rubber handstamp reading AIR MAIL SERVICE WASHINGTON N. Y. PHILA. inside the top perimeter and the point of origin, PHILA. at the bottom of the circle. The diameter of the circle is 32.5mm. and the handstamp has 4 killer bars at the right, in addition. May 15, 1918 cancellations include the words FIRST TRIP. (See Figure 2a.)
- (2.) The same circular handstamp as in (1.) above without the words FIRST TRIP. The date slug comes with and without the hour. Where no hour appears, the date is a three-line inscription. Those with the hour slug are in four lines, the hour being invariably on the third line. (See Figures 2c, 2d, 2e, 2f, 2g, 2h, 2j and 2L.)
- (3.) Circular steel handstamp as in Figure 2b measuring 26mm. in diameter. The year appears outside and slightly to the S. E. of the circle. The words PHILA. PA are inside the top perimeter and the

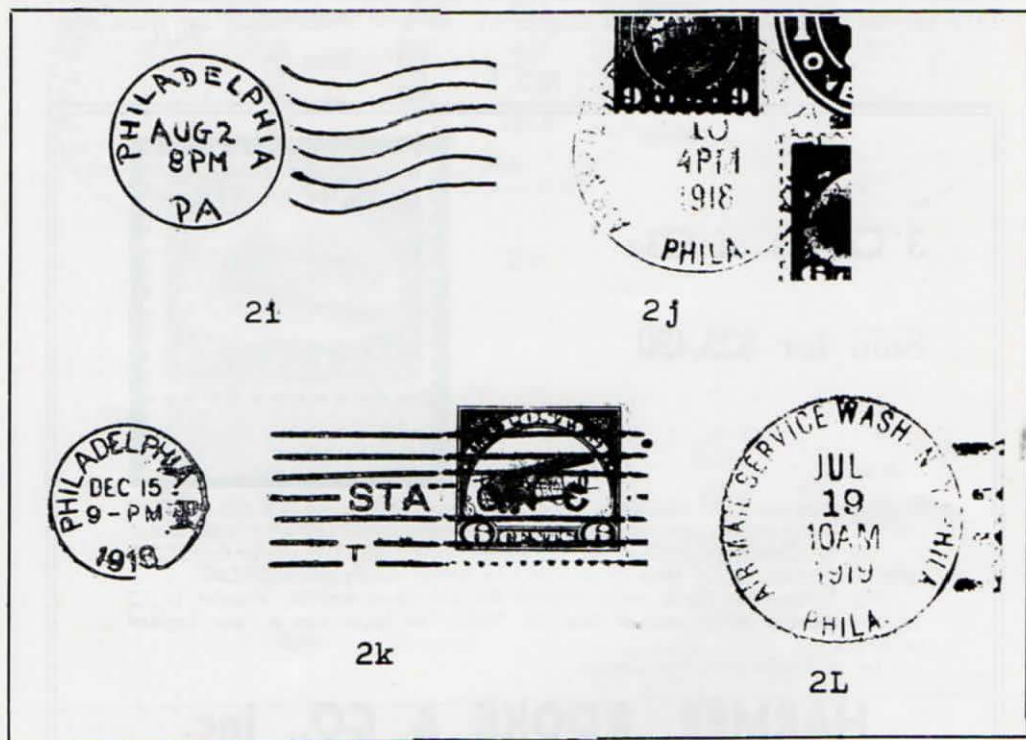


Fig. 2. (Continued)



Fig. 3. Counterfeit Philadelphia, Pa., July 15, 1918 cancellation on a block of four of the 16c air mail stamps of 1918, Scott C2. (William P. Laird collection. Photo by Boutrelle)

name of the station appears at the bottom of the circle. Date and hour are in two lines. There is a variant of this type in which the word PHILADELPHIA is not abbreviated. Both types come with horizontal grid killers at right. These have number centers with three bars above and below the center portion.

- (4.) Circular machine cancellation as in Figure 2i. The diameter of the circle is 21mm. and there are six wavy lines at right. Note the absence of the year. The cover from which this illustration was made is backstamped August 3, 1918.
- (5.) Circular machine cancellation as in Figure 2k. with seven horizontal killer lines at right. Diameter of the circle is 21mm.

Examination of these five major types of Philadelphia cancellations indicates that only type 2i bears a remote resemblance to the counterfeit cancellation shown in Figure 1 and this only because of the position of the unabbreviated "PHILADELPHIA" in the top of the circle. All the known genuine cancellations used on July 15, 1918 first flight covers from Philadelphia with the 16c air mail stamp are as shown in Figures 2f, 2g and 2h. So, one may reason that the maker of the counterfeit was trying to simulate one of these. However, he failed miserably in many particulars. Compare the characteristics of both the genuine and counterfeit cancellations, as follows:

Genuine cancellations — Figures 2f, 2g, and 2h.

1. The height of the letters in "JUL" is $3\frac{1}{2}$ mm.
2. The height of the letters in the hour, "12M," is $3\frac{1}{2}$ mm.
3. The letters in "JUL" are thin and narrow, slightly under 2mm. wide.
4. The top stroke of the "1" in "15" points to the left. The top strokes of the "1's" in "1918" are very short and point downward to the left.
5. The base of the "1" in "15" has a horizontal bar.
6. The "5" in "15" leans to the right.
7. The "5" in "15" has a long tail.
8. There is a round ball at the end of the tail in "5."
9. The "5" in "15" is 3mm. wide. The "8" and "9" of 1918 are 2mm. wide.

10. July is abbreviated "JUL"
11. The cancellation bears the words AIR MAIL SERVICE WASH. N. Y. PHILA. at the top and sides of the circle and the word PHILA. at the bottom.

Counterfeit cancellation — Figure 1.

1. The height of the letters in "JULY" is $3\frac{3}{4}$ mm.
2. The height of the letters in the hour, 6PM, is $2\frac{3}{4}$ mm.
3. The letters in "JULY" are thick and $2\frac{1}{2}$ mm. wide.
4. The top strokes of the "1" in "15" and in "1918" point downward to the left. All such strokes are uniform in width.
5. The base of the "1" in "15" has no horizontal bar.
6. The "5" in "15" is upright.
7. The "5" in "15" has a short tail.
8. There is no round ball at the end of the tail in "5."
9. The numbers "5", "8" and "9" are $2\frac{1}{2}$ mm. wide.
10. "JULY" is spelled out with the "Y" at end.
11. PHILADELPHIA PA. occupies the top and sides of the inside of the circle and "1918" appears at the bottom where "PHILA." normally appears in the genuine.

The counterfeiter prepared an attractive cover for his victims. Note that the handstamp is almost perfectly centered on the block of four 16c stamps. Should any reader feel that this counterfeit cancellation is an isolated example, a photograph of a similar, although not so well centered counterfeit cancellation supplied by Mr. William P. Laird of Minneapolis, Minnesota (See Figure 3.) is shown. Points of similarity can be seen at a glance and need no further analysis.

There are other general characteristics of this counterfeit cancellation which are unlike genuine cancellations used on the July 15, 1918 flights. First, all genuine handstamps used in the 1918 period invariably have four horizontal killer bars at the right of the circle. Second, on almost all genuine July 15, 1918 cancellations, the hour is 12M, although several with 10AM have been noted. (See Figure 2h.) Third, on all genuine July 15, 1918 cancellations, there are no periods after either AM or PM. As a matter of fact, the writer has examined hundreds of covers with both handstamps and machine cancellations, and can categorically state that no periods were ever seen after AM or PM on these cancellations. The Post Office Department just did not use them. In contrast to these three general characteristics on genuine cancellations, the counterfeit cancellation has no bars at right, is cancelled 6PM and there are periods after both "P" and "M" in the hour.

If the cancellation on the cover shown in Figure 1 seemed doubtful when first seen in the frames at Atlantic City, there was something about the appearance of the envelope itself which aroused suspicion. The paper was light powdery blue in color, similar to air mail envelopes in use today. The weight and texture of the paper were also very similar to the paper used by air mail envelope manufacturers nowadays. On the face of the envelope, in the upper center portion, there is a rather prominent watermark in script letters reading Sky-Rite. (See Figure 1.) On the upper left part of the flap on reverse appears the legend — also in watermark — "SKY-RITE" Reg. U. S. PAT. OFF." On the upper right part of this flap the watermarked legend reads DES. PAT. PEND. In general appearance, the envelope resembled those of current vintage; it certainly bore not even a remote likeness to the hundreds of envelopes which the writer has seen used on air mail flights during the 1918 period.

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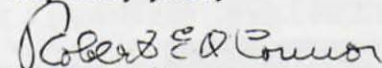
Dear Mr. Silver:

Upon receipt of your letter of May 22 asking for information concerning the watermark "Sky-Rite", I checked with the Writing Paper Manufacturers Association, which is one of our Divisional Associations. They keep a record of watermarks and brands, and their records indicate that the Agency Paper Company, New York, N. Y., manufacturers of desk calendars, desk calendar pads, etc., are the owners of this watermark. The registration number is 418,043, serial number 483, 414; date it was first used is February 8, 1945. The registration date is November 27, 1945.

This company does not seem to be listed in the paper trade directories and may be out of business, or its name changed. The U. S. Patent Office in Washington, D. C., may be able to give you further information about the company and we suggest you contact that office.

I hope the above will be of some help to you.

Very truly yours,



Robert E. O'Connor
Executive Secretary

AKS

P. S. We are returning, herewith, the photostatic copy of an envelope showing the watermark, which you sent us.

Fig. 4. Letter received from the American Paper and Pulp Association giving the pedigree of the envelope shown in Figure 1.

During the period of study of this cancellation, the writer had been in contact with Dr. S. J. Penchansky of Bayonne, New Jersey. In the course of building up one of the foremost first day cover collections in this country, Dr. Penchansky had had occasion to become enmeshed in the nets of some of our philatelic deceivers and had acquired from them some first day cover items with counterfeit cancellations. Our consultation revealed that the counterfeit cover shown in Figure 1 was of the same vintage as some on various first day covers acquired by Dr. Penchansky, and subsequently donated by him to the excellent reference collection of such material in the hands of the Philatelic Foundation of New York. It was while studying this material at the Foundation's offices that a suggestion was received which opened another avenue of detection. The curator of the Philatelic Foundation suggested we write to the American Paper and Pulp Association in New York to get the pedigree and age of the paper used for the envelope. This inquiry was most productive. Shown in full is the reply received from that organization. (See Figure 4.)

So, if any necessity existed to further nail down this fraud, this was the clincher. How could a 1918 cancellation have been legitimately used on an envelope that was first manufactured and used in 1945? The answer is obvious, it could not.

In the number of years the writer has been specializing in the early air mail covers of the United States, he has seen *only one cover with a block of four of Scott C2 bearing a genuine July 15, 1918 cancellation*. This cover is in the collection of Dr. Penchansky. The cover, sent by P. H. Ward, Jr., bears a corner card of The Chelton Electric Co., (Germantown) Philadelphia, Pa. and is addressed to Mr. George H. Ward, c/o Underwood Typewriter Co., 14th and N. Y. Ave., N. W., Washington, D. C. Like Figure 2h, this cover is also cancelled 10AM. The only reason this cover is not illustrated is because the cancellation is very lightly struck and would not show in a printed illustration.

Again, all the counterfeit cancellations that have been noted were on blocks of four stamps of C2, not on single stamps. We surmise the reason for this is because covers with July 15, 1918 cancellations on Scott C2 were not too expensive until quite recently and, as long as a counterfeit cancellation was being applied to such covers, it was thought best to apply them to multiple pieces which would have a far greater sales value. From 1935 to 1956 the "Scott Specialized U. S. Catalogue" listed a July 15, 1918 first flight cover from a low of \$10.00 to a high of \$20.00. Prices in the "Sanabria Air Mail Catalogue" were approximately the same. Also, retail prices usually are at a discount from catalogue prices. From correspondence which the writer has seen offering these spurious items to unsuspecting collectors, the period of manufacture may be placed at about 1953. So, to manufacture a fairly valuable item, the counterfeiters applied the counterfeit cancellations to blocks of four stamps.

Luckily, most counterfeiters are not as conversant with philately as they should be. The two counterfeit cancellations shown in Figures 1 and 3 are extremely crude jobs, in the opinion of the writer. If one will but take the time to go over the points of difference previously noted between the genuine and counterfeit cancellations, he will see that no serious attempt was made to fool the informed collector. Our purpose, in publishing this article, is to make better informed collectors out of all U. S. air mail specialists. It will be appreciated if information about similar material would be sent to the writer, who will publish such information in future articles in this magazine. (P. S.)

FOR BOOKS ON AIR MAILS

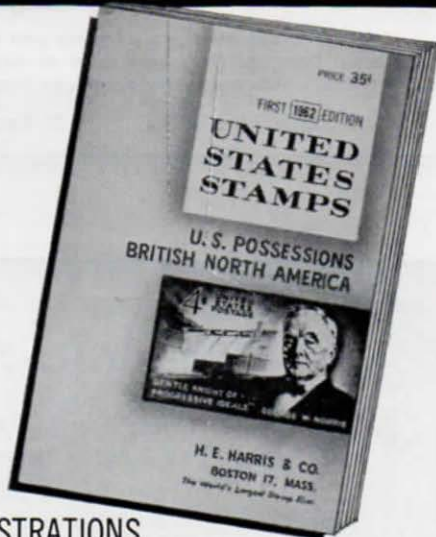
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New York 16, N. Y.

UNITED STATES

The 24c Red and Blue of 1918 The June Boston, Mass. First Flights



Fig. 1. Washington, D. C. to Boston, Mass. via New York, N. Y., June 1, 1918 cover. (All photos by Boutrelle)

Introduction

May 15, 1918 marked the inaugural of the regular U. S. air mail service between the three eastern cities of New York, Philadelphia and Washington. Reading the Postmaster General's reports for 1918, one sees that the U. S. Post Office Department's ambition was to make this domestic air mail service as extensive as possible, as quickly as practical. Consequently, Boston, Mass. was added as the fourth city for air post service at the beginning of June 1918, just about two weeks after the May 15th inaugural flights.

The history of the first flights to and from Boston, Mass. is interesting. This has been well described in past writings and each flight or leg is listed in the specialized air mail catalogues. Nevertheless, the present generation of U. S. air mail collectors does not seem to be as familiar as it should be with the Boston first flights. Therefore, this article will try to review this aerophilatelic history.

Furthermore, it must be remembered that the first air mail stamp of the United States, the 24c red and blue (Scott C3, Sanabria 1), was used on most all the first flight covers, as the rate was twenty-four cents. Only a few covers were prepaid with postage stamps.

Washington-Boston June 1, 1918 Experimental Flight

The illustration (Fig. 1) shows one of the covers mailed on June 1, 1918

from Washington, D. C. to Boston, Mass. via New York City. The arrow points to the June 1, 1918 Washington, D. C. cancellation, which is the same one that was first used on the May 15, 1918 inaugural flights from Washington to New York and Philadelphia, except that the words, "First Trip," beneath the year date "1918" have been removed.

According to the "American Air Mail Catalogue," 28 lbs. of mail were carried. This means that only a few hundred covers were sent on the June 1, 1918 experimental flight. The Fig. 1 cover was sent to New York City, where it was held for the mail going on the first New York-Boston, Mass. flight scheduled for June 3, 1918. The flight, because of an accident, had to be postponed until June 6, 1918.

The illustrated cover (Fig. 1) bears eight different postmarks and cancellations, as well as the sender's typewritten instructions on the left side of the envelope. Each marking will now receive comment.

On the right under the stamp is a *two-line marking* "*First Air/Mail*" in capital letters. This marking has not been seen by the writer on any other first flight covers from New York to Boston or return. Nor could any reference be found stating that this specific marking was used only on the June 1, 1918 first flight covers originating in Washington, D. C.

Below the aforementioned marking and to its left is the five-line Boston, Mass. Special Delivery June 6, 1918 postmark. This is the evidence that this cover arrived in Boston on June 6th on the first flight.

In the lower lefthand corner is a long one-line postmark reading, "Aerial Mail . . . Via New York," all with uppercase letters. This marking is found on all the New York to Boston first flight covers.

Above and just to the right of this latter postmark is the word, "Unclaimed," and above it "Returned to Writer" indication. Obviously, Captain Boyriver did not reach Boston. Therefore, the Boston, Mass. post office held this letter until June 18, 1918, and on that day returned it to the sender in Washington, D. C. This is indicated by the small circular machine cancellation with the wavyline flag, hit just to the left of the Washington June 1, 1918 cancel.

Many of the first flight covers of both May 15, 1918 and June 1-6, 1918 were sent by organizations interested in furthering air post. Thus, covers of the "Aero Club of America" and the "National Aerial Coast Patrol Commission" contained a form letter, which aero-philatelists find of interest. The letter in the Fig. 1 cover is illustrated in Fig. 2.

New York-Boston First Flight

As previously mentioned, the first flight from New York to Boston, Mass., scheduled for June 3, 1918, was postponed until June 6, 1918. The Fig. 3 cover clearly demonstrates this. According to "The Standard Airpost Catalogue (1931)," a French Army aviator, Lieut. Vannelle, was selected to fly this inaugural mail on June 3, 1918. But his plane met with an accident at Belmont Park, N. Y. This is the well-known race track of New York City on nearby Long Island. The course's track and large infield happened to be the most accessible to New York for an airplane's takeoff in 1918. Of course, no air fields existed at that time. Three days later, on June 6th, Lieut. Torrey H. Webb of the U. S. Army, the pilot who had successfully completed the first New York-Philadelphia flight on May 15, 1918, carried the mail from New York to Boston on its inaugural trip.

The aero-philatelist's greatest interest in these Boston first flight covers probably is the new cancellation used. The arrow on Fig. 3 points to the blank portion; the previous words, "Wash. N. Y. Phila." have been removed from

National Aerial Coast Patrol Commission

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WASHINGTON, D. C.

June 1, 1918.

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Captain Boyraver,
c/o Postmaster,
Boston, Mass.

Dear Sir:

At the request of Rear Admiral Robert E. Peary, President of the Aerial League of America, Chairman of the National Aerial Coast Patrol Commission and member of the Board of Governors, Aero Club of America, I am sending you a message of greeting by the first Aero Post leaving New York for Boston, via the preliminary established epochal route from Washington to New York.

The inauguration of this-- the second-- grand event in the aerial transportation of our mails, places another outstanding milestone on the map of aeronautical progress.

The rapid development of the art of flying over land and sea-- advanced twenty years, due to its utilization for war purposes-- and the inauguration by the postal authorities of the Aerial Mail Service, will soon make it possible to transport mail on aerial trunk lines from coast to coast, and will lead to trans-Atlantic air service in the near future.

These are days of great achievement, and "Aerial Supremacy for Peace and War" should be our slogan.

Sincerely,

W. H. L. Howard

Secretary.

H-G

"THE EMPIRE OF THE AIR"
A FACT -- NOT A PHRASE

Fig. 2. The letter enclosed in the Fig. 1 cover.

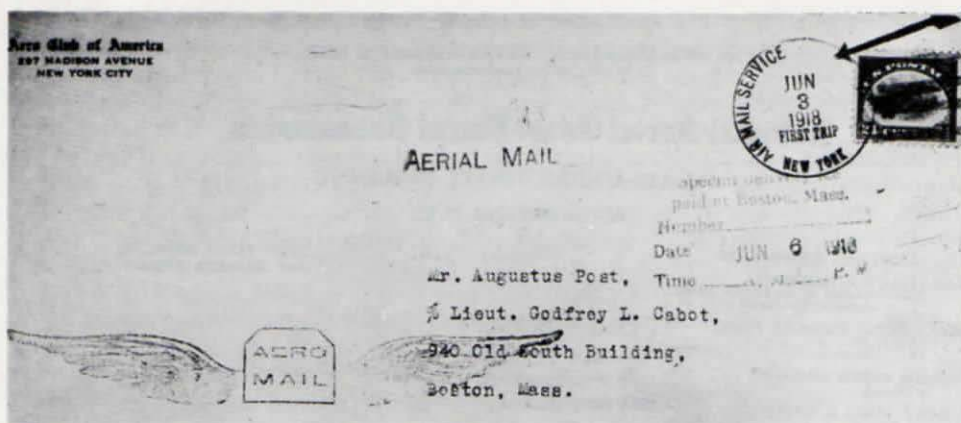


Fig. 3. First flight New York to Boston flown June 6, 1918.

the type of New York, Philadelphia, Washington used on the earlier flights.

According to the records and the catalogues, 4,400 pieces of mail from New York to Boston were carried, a good part being on the large-sized envelopes of the "Aero Club of America," as the Fig. 3 cover. The writer has sought unsuccessfully for many years a New York-Boston first flight on a regular, not legal size cover. They should exist, but he has not found one.

Thus, New York-Boston first flight covers are common. (See page 29 in this number on the counterfeit autographs.) The Boston, Mass. Special Delivery postmark on the Fig. 3 illustration seen directly beneath the New York cancellation offers the evidence that the first flight took place on June 6, 1918.

Boston-New York First Flight

Covers with C3 on the return first trip from Boston, Mass. to New York,



Fig. 4. Boston to New York cover cancelled June 8, 1918, but not flown.

N. Y. are generally underrated and undervalued. According to the "American Air Mail Catalogue," 64 lbs. of mail were transported. Estimating that each letter weighed an ounce and with 16 ozs. to the pound, a rough calculation would indicate that the Boston-New York first air mail amounted to between 1,000 and 1,100 covers, just about a quarter of the New York-Boston first air mail.

The return first flight also had to be postponed. It was scheduled for June 8, 1918, but it did not take place until June 11, 1918. Covers are known

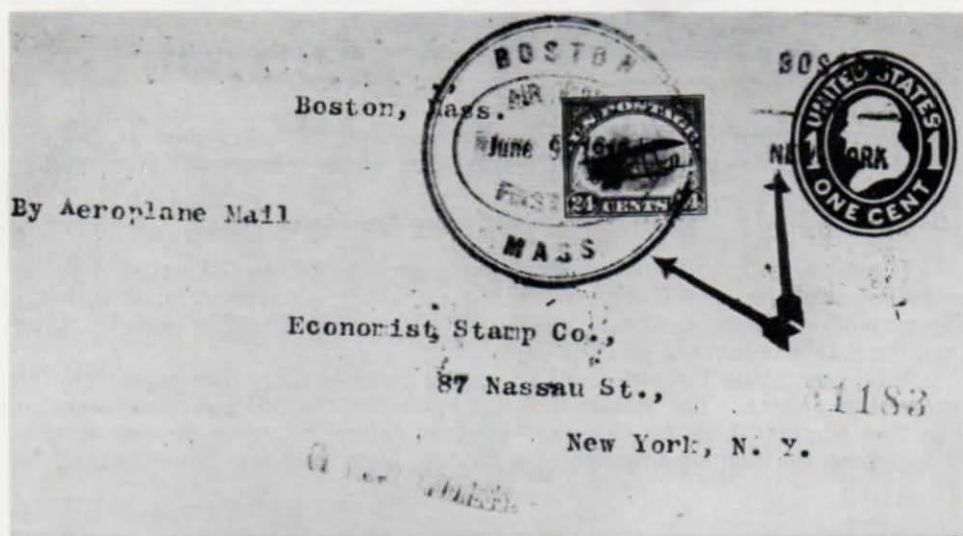


Fig. 5. A cover Boston to New York on the first flight; the arrows show the new type cancel.

cancelled Boston, Mass. June 8, 9 or 10, but no source was found that indicated which date was the scarcest or the most common.

The cover shown in Fig. 4 is interesting, because it proves that there was no air mail service from Boston on June 8, 1918. The 24c stamp is cancelled "Boston, Mass., June 8, 1918, 1:30 p. m." the date of the scheduled first flight. But the New York City receipt mark, appearing on the back of the Fig. 4 cover, and shown in the lower right hand corner with an arrow, is dated June 8, 1918, 11 p. m. Although bearing the large-winged "Aero Mail" rubberstamp in the lower left, the time indicated on the cancellation and the one on the backstamp show a gap of 10½ hours, signifying that the Fig. 4 cover went by surface, not air mail.

Fig. 5 illustrates one of the covers on the first air post from Boston to New York. It is cancelled Boston, Mass. June 9, 1918. The two backstamps (Fig. 6) show the June 11, 1918 New York City receipt markings, proving this the date of the first flight. The large double-circle cancellation on the Fig. 5 cover, in the writer's opinion, is one of the most interesting and distinctive of all United States cancellations. Notice it is in two sections; one is the large

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Fig. 6. The two New York, N.Y. backstamps on the Fig. 5 cover.

double-circle cancelling the 24c air mail stamp and the other part on the embossed 1c Franklin envelope with the three-line words, "Boston-To-New York."

Why Commercial Covers Are Scarce

If one specializes intently with a stamp such as C3, as the writer does, he seeks not only the first flight covers, but especially commercial mail with the 24c air mail stamp used only during the May 15 to July 15, 1918 period. After this, the rate was lowered to 16 cents.

While searching through the U. S. postal records, the writer came upon an interesting matter. The public did not patronize the 1918 air mail service. The New England business firms saw nothing gained by using the new service. It had been the regular practice of a Boston, Mass. business house to mail its

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correspondence to New York, Philadelphia or Washington late in the day. This mail caught the early evening train leaving Boston and was delivered the following morning. The postage rate for letters in 1918 was three cents. If special delivery service was wanted, another 10 cents or a total of 13 cents was required.

Air mail from or to Boston calling for 24c postage saved no time. As seen by Fig. 6, the mail reached New York from Boston at 6 p. m., an hour when most all commercial firms were closed. Thus the air mail letter reached its final destination no faster than one sent by train. Since many New Englanders are known to be conservative with their spending, they did not wish to spend an extra 11 cents per letter. Consequently, a collector has great difficulty in finding C3 used on commercial covers during its short lifetime in 1918.

Acknowledgements

The author is grateful to Stanley R. Rice and Philip Silver for their suggestions and encouragement in writing this phase of the 1918 air mail, the Boston, Mass. first flights. (H. M. G.)



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UNITED STATES

24c Air Mail of 1918 — "Grounded Plane"



A true "grounded plane" variety showing how far down the blue center with the airplane must be shifted. (Photo by Boutrelle)

This article has come about as a result of some dealers in this country offering the popular, although uncataloged, variety of the first air mail stamp of the United States, known as "*the grounded plane*." Many copies offered for sale by dealers have the blue center with the plane shifted to the bottom of the frame. This, however, does not qualify such copies as a true "*grounded plane*" variety.

In order to qualify as "*the grounded plane*," the wheels of the airplane must touch the bottom frame with the words "cents." Illustrated is a clear example of "*the grounded plane*" variety; study it. Since copies as this command a price far in excess of the normal Scott C3, care should be taken to know the variety and not to collect a copy just with the center shifted towards the bottom. (H. M. G.)

Richard S. Bohn Memorial Award First Recipient, Henry M. Goodkind

AERO PHILATELISTS' Board of Directors on October 13, 1961 created an award recognizing the distinguished services to aero-philately rendered by any person in the world. This newly created aero-philatelic honor will be fittingly named for the founder of AERO PHILATELISTS, and, therefore, be known as the *Richard S. Bohn Memorial Award*.

At the same meeting after voting for the creation of this award and making the necessary arrangements for its financing, AERO PHILATELISTS' Board of Directors unanimously selected HENRY M. GOODKIND, the editor of AERO PHILATELISTS' publication since their inception in 1946, the first recipient. John J. Britt was chosen as the Chairman of the *Richard S. Bohn Memorial Award Committee*.

The first award will be presented at the Convention Dinner on November 18, 1961. It is expected to have this yearly at future AERO PHILATELISTS dinners during the annual convention.

UNITED STATES

The 24c Air Mail Stamp of 1918

Additional Double Rate Covers

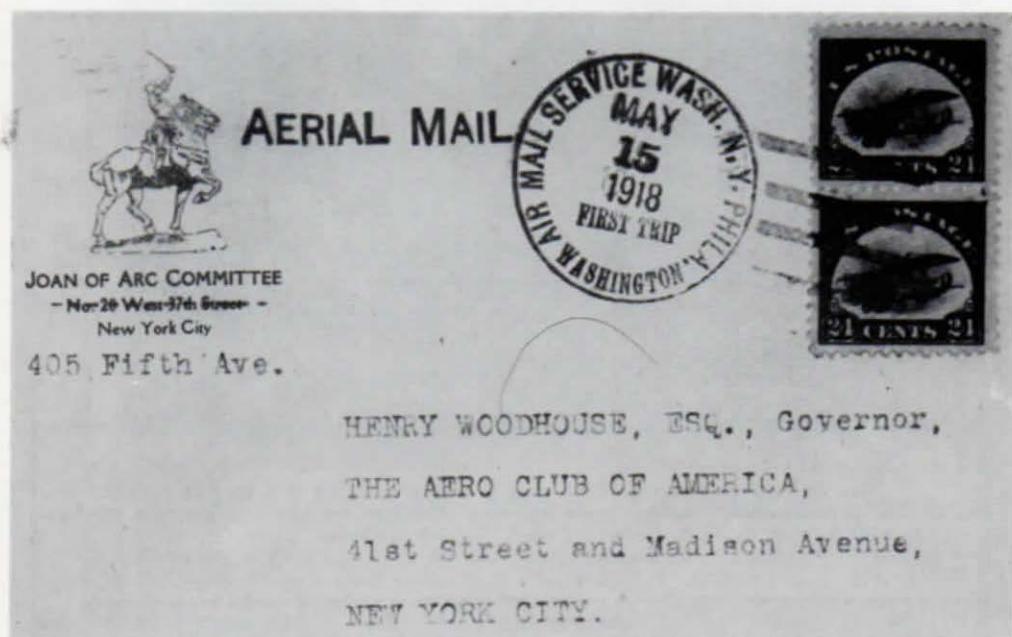


Fig. 1. Double rate cover of the 24c air mail stamp of 1918, used on the first flight from Washington to New York, May 15, 1918. Author's collection.

In the January, 1960 issue of the *AERO PHILATELIST ANNALS* (Volume VII, Number 3) the promise was made that additional multiple rate covers of the 24c air mail stamp of 1918, Scott C3, used on the first flight of May 15, 1918 and "smoked out" as a result of the article would be duly photographed and recorded in future issues. In the period of one and one half years since that article appeared, three additional *double rate* covers have come to the writer's attention. We note them below for the record.

The cover shown in Figure 1, recently acquired by the author, is of the same type as the one illustrated on page 58 of the previous article. It was sent from Washington to New York by the Joan of Arc Committee with medal enclosed, thus requiring the double rate of 48c. Addressed to Henry Woodhouse, Esq., Governor, The Aero Club of America, 41st Street and Madison Avenue, New York City, it is backstamped New York, May 16, 1918 at 5 p.m. The appearance of this cover on the philatelic scene adequately answers the query

posed by us in the January, 1960 issue, "One may conjecture how many of these double rate covers with medals enclosed were sent on the first flight." Obviously more than one, as the cover shown in Figure 1 illustrates.

However, this is not the only additional "Joan of Arc" double rate cover unearthed in the intervening period. We are indebted to Prof. Paul R. Cutright of Beaver College, Jenkintown, Pennsylvania for the photo of the cover shown in Figure 2. This is an additional double rate cover sent by the Joan of Arc Committee. It is addressed to The Reverend William J. Stewart, Rec-



Fig. 2. Double rate cover of the 24c air mail stamp of 1918, used on the first flight from Washington to New York, May 15, 1918. Professor Paul R. Cutright collection.

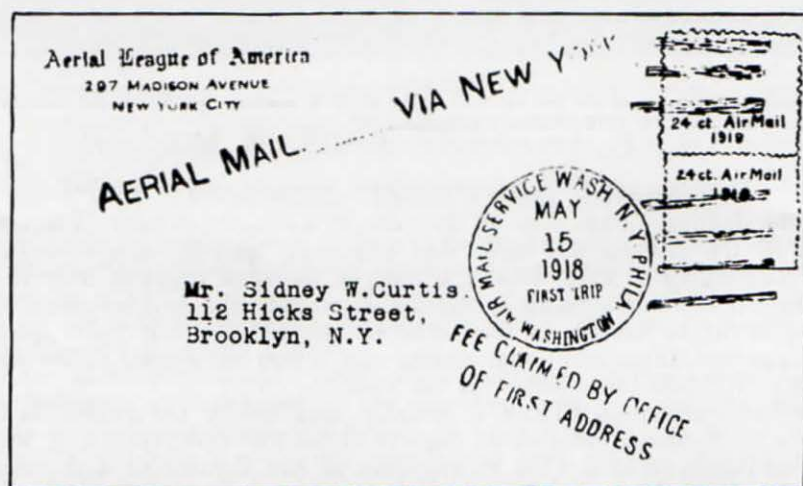


Fig. 3. Double rate cover of the 24c air mail stamp of 1918, used on the first flight from Washington to New York, May 15, 1918. Photographed from "Cyclopedia of U.S. Postmarks And Postal History" by Delf Norona, Article 22, Page 2.

tory of St. Elizabeth's Church, 4381 Broadway, New York City. Now, three of these "Joan of Arc" double rate covers are known; perhaps, in the future, additional such covers will be found.

One of the greatest impediments to proper philatelic research is the lack of adequate indexes of the writings of previous authors in magazines and other periodical media. Indeed, most of the philatelic periodicals have no index of authors or articles whatsoever. Only by dint of painstaking digging and searching, is it possible to find items which relate to a matter under study and, frequently, an author is not aware, until much later, that material touching on the subject of his article has previously appeared in print. Thus, searching through the "Cyclopedia of U. S. Postmarks And Postal History" by Norona, the writer came across an illustration for still another double rate cover of the 24c air mail stamp of 1918 used on the first flight of May 15, 1918.* This cover was also sent from Washington to New York and is addressed to Mr. Sidney W. Curtis, 112 Hicks Street, Brooklyn, New York. This corner card indicates it was sent by the Aerial League of America. Naturally, it is not known in whose collection this cover now reposes nor the reason for double rate usage.

So, we can now state for the record that six double rate covers of the 24c air mail stamp of 1918, Scott C3, used on the first flight of May 15, 1918 are known to exist. Further discoveries may increase this number in the future.

(P. S.)

*"Cyclopedia of U. S. Postmarks And Postal History" by Delf Norona, Article 22, page 2. Published by the American Philatelic Society.

ITALY AIR MAIL COVERS

#C1 World's first air mail stamp, flown Turin-Rome	2.00
#C1 do. error in arrival pmk. 22.IV. instead 22.V. 1917	4.00
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#C2 do. Naples-Palermo posted in Rome	4.00
#C2 do. return flight Palermo-Naples	2.00
1925, Special flight LEGHORN-ROME with unused 1/2off. air st.	2.00
1925, Same flight, 1/2offic. air st. cancelled	3.00
1926, "NORGE" airship Polar cover with 1/2offic. air stamp, Rome-Kingsbay	14.00
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UNITED STATES

World's First Air Mail Etiquette

Used May 15, 1918



Cover flown on the first trip May 15, 1918 from Philadelphia to Washington with the world's first air mail etiquette in the bottom corner left. (Photo by Boutrelle)

Those, who have become so fascinated with and interested in the first air mail stamp of the United States — the 24c red and blue of 1918 — continue to find to their surprise a number of *firsts* in air mail connected with this stamp. This is unexpected because almost 42 years have passed since this stamp was issued. Years ago in the *Aero Philatelists' News* (December 1, 1949, page 91), this writer in an article about the first air mail stamp of the United States itemized the following *seven air mail firsts* associated with Scott C3. They were:

1. First definitive air mail stamp of the world
2. First air mail stamp of the Western Hemisphere
3. First air mail stamp showing an airplane
4. First air mail stamp of the United States
5. First definitive air mail stamp for a regular public service
6. First bi-colored air mail stamp issued
7. First air mail stamp printed with a genuine error, the inverted center sheet.

Now an eight *first* can be added:

8. First air mail stamp used with an air mail etiquette. (See illustration.)

In making this claim for the world's first use of an air mail label or etiquette, it must be stressed that reference is to *an adhesive*, not a rubberstamp or privately printed cachet on an envelope calling for air mail service. Incidentally, these air mail etiquettes, as shown on the illustrated cover, are seen only on May 1918 air mail covers originating in Philadelphia, Pa. The writer has seen only a few, and *none* on May 15, 1918 from New York or Washington, D. C. (H. M. G.)

Aero Philatelists 15th Annual Convention

November 18, 1961 in New York, N. Y.

At the regular monthly meeting of the Board of Directors in September, it was decided to hold our 15th Annual Convention on Saturday November 18th in the Main Meeting Room of the Collectors Club, 22 East 35 Street, New York, N. Y.

Exhibition

The locale has twenty frames that the members will fill with aero-philatelic material; one frame to an exhibitor. This show will be noncompetitive and an invitation to exhibit has been sent out to each member. It is the Exhibition Committee's hope that those members, who have not exhibited often in the past, and the newer members whose collections have not been shown publicly, will take advantage of this invitation. Each exhibitor will receive a handsome Certificate of Appreciation.

Business Session

As usual, the affairs of *Aero Philatelists* will be discussed and voted upon in the Convention that will take place at 2 P. M. There will be election of the Directors for the Class of 1964; officers will render their annual reports and any other business that a member introduces on the floor will be considered. Finally, the officers for the year 1962 will be elected.

Dinner

Our convention dinners have gained a reputation throughout philately as being among the best. The one planned for November 18th sounds most promising from the reports. It will be at one of New York City's famous theatrical district restaurants — Leone's on West 48th Street. The food will be excellent, one may rest assured. As for entertainment, a few surprises are planned, including a speech by a talented philatelist, who has never before spoken in public. Information about tickets may be secured by writing to John J. Britt, c/o Aero Philatelists, 22 East 35 Street, New York 16, N. Y. A good representation of non-New York members is promised, because this 15th convention will take place during the ASDA show, when a number of them plan to be in New York.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



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ADDRESS

2. NAME

ADDRESS

EXTRACTS FROM BY-LAWS, ARTICLE III—MEMBERSHIP

Any person of good character interested in aero-philately, over the age of twenty-one, and who will be an asset to the Society, may become a member. Application for membership shall be in writing, and shall be accompanied by annual dues of \$5.00

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