

## THE NIGHT THAT STAMPS BLEW AROUND BERGEN

BY FREDERICK A. BROFOS (H-11) SCANDINAVIAN COLLECTORS CLUB

People who were out early in Bergen, Norway, one December morning in 1943, may have noticed an unusual lot of paper blowing around the streets or just lying on the ground. Those awake enough to take a closer look found miniature sheets with startling new designs for Norwegian postage stamps. They were really clever political leaflets, which had been flown over by bomber from England and dropped that very night in the Bergen area.

There were four different designs of these Allied propaganda stamps for Norway and two sizes of each. Dropped at the same time were pictures of King Haakon, Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin, together with statements by them regarding Norway.

The general idea was to have patriots take these "stamps" with their biting anti-nazi cartoons and stick them up in conspicuous places around town. On streetcar windows or in telephone booths were just two of many places where ordinary people could safely enjoy them. Perhaps someone might even be bold enough to use them on letters of annoyance addressed to local party leaders . . . Anyway, the Germans and their N.S. helpers were furious and moved heaven and earth to destroy the embarrassing leaflets. Those not found shortly by either patriots or nazis were probably ruined simply by lying in the snow. Unfortunately, very few of these interesting war mementos have survived. Another reason for this fact is that during the war it was downright dangerous to be caught in possession of "enemy propaganda". It didn't take much to be thrown into a concentration camp in those days.

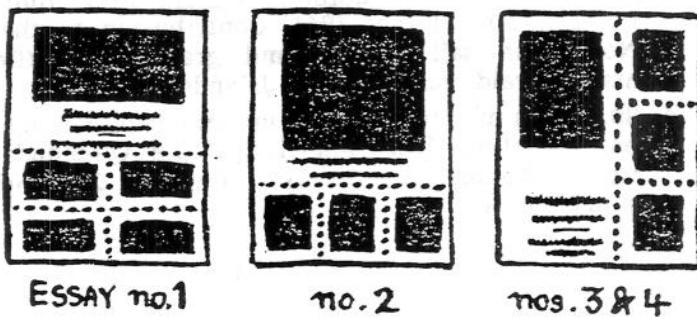
Of the few miniature sheets that, in spite of all, were saved for posterity, most have since been subdivided and spread around as single stamps. A detailed description of the complete sheets should therefore be of interest.

A good job of printing was done, apparently from photogravure plates, either in England or the United States. White gummed paper without watermark was used. The size of the sheets was 5 1/4 x 8 1/2 inches (about 133 x 216 mm.). All carried the text: "Utkast til den norske frimerkekonkurranse — Tre andre utkast følger pr. luftpost" (i.e. essay for the Norwegian postage stamp competition — Three other trial designs follow by airmail). Each sheet had one large stamp and three (the 15 ore value with four) small stamps in the same design. They were called 1st. to 4th essay and may be listed thus:

1. 15 ore green "Alt for Tyskland!" (i.e. All for Germany!). Design: SS trooper confiscating farm animals etc.
2. 30 ore ultramarine "Wir fahren gegen Engelland!" (i.e. We travel to Angel land!). Design: Hitler, in armor and lifebelt, swimming.
3. 20 + 20 ore red "Lofoten 4 mars 1941. Bidrag til mulkten". (i.e. Lofoten 4th, March, 1941. Contribution to the fine). Design: Giant Norwegian sailor lands and grabs nazis. (Refers to Allied commando raid on Lofoten Islands).
4. 30 pieces of silver (Judas money) Prussian blue "Vanaere og forakt har Quislings faerd ham bragt" (i.e. Quisling's actions have brought him dishonor and disgust). Design: Quisling's head in a hangman's noose. --



The small stamps were line perforated, essay No. 1 with  $11\frac{3}{4} \times 10\frac{1}{4}$ , No. 2 with  $11\frac{3}{4} \times 10$ , and Nos. 3 and 4 both with  $9 \times 11\frac{3}{4}$  (horizontal perf. listed first). The large stamps were imperforate, except on the right side of Nos. 3 and 4 which was line perforated  $11\frac{3}{4}$ . The small stamps were imperforate along the edges, that is to say on either one or two sides. The sheet composition appeared thus:



About 47 different aerial propaganda leaflets were dropped over Norway by the Allies during the war, from a beginning of two in 1940 up to fifteen in 1945. However, only the four above mentioned were connected with philately. They were like a ray of sunshine in a time of darkness.

The intriguing question remains as to who accomplished the drop and who inspired the idea in the first place?

At the beginning of the war, it was the Royal Air Force (R.A.F.) that flew over from England with leaflets to be dropped on Norway. Later on, in the course of the last 20 months of the war, a great part of this work was taken over by a section of the U.S. Army Air Force, namely the "406th. Bombardment Squadron, 8th. U.S.A.A.F.". This squadron, which was trained in night flying by the R.A.F., had the job of dropping leaflets over Europe, as well as various other "secret assignments" which are not divulged even today. The 406th. bombed more than 7000 targets with a total of 1,800 million leaflets and news sheets in around 330 night flight missions. Unlike all other groups of U.S. heavy bomber planes, the 406th. did not fly in formations but instead flew singly. They often met concentrated resistance from enemy fighter planes and anti-aircraft guns.

The propaganda stamps were dropped on Norway in December 1943, which would seem to indicate that the mission was accomplished by the 406th.

Some authorities believe that the leaflets were dropped over Bergen in the course of several nights. In that case one can imagine how angry the nazis must have been, after carefully cleaning up, to see loads of leaflets again pouring from the sky.

So much for who accomplished the drop. Now, who stood behind the whole idea?

The American propaganda departments at the time were the "Office of War Information" (O.W.I.) and the "Office of Strategic Services" (O.S.S.). The British equivalent, which originally had consisted of three independent agencies, was finally united in one "Political Warfare Executive" (P.W.E.).

Unfortunately, there was a continuous conflict between O.W.I. and O.S.S. about who should cooperate with P.W.E. and who should execute the various functions. Later on, an independent Anglo-American organization was formed, which came to be known as the "Psychological Warfare Division" (P.W.D.). With the formation of S.H.A.E.F. (Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force), meetings were held between P.W.D., O.W.I. and P.W.E. as well as the Russian propaganda service to effect a better coordination of ideas. However, efforts at cooperation with the latter agency at least were without result.

Out of this maze of rival offices it has not been able to identify the inspired originator of the four "Essays for the Norwegian stamp competition". That it was an "Allied" idea, and that the Norwegian government in exile in London had no connection with it other than perhaps giving its blessing, one would imagine from the old-fashioned spelling on the 4th design ("faerd" instead of "ferd" and "bragt" instead of "brakt"). Nevertheless, whoever originated them, they certainly liven up any war collection, as well as forming a rather unique chapter in the philatelic history of World War II.

WE WILL WIN  
Frederick A. Brofoss

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Among the modern stamps of Norway, my favorite is undoubtedly the so-called "London Issue". Beautifully printed by Thomas De la Rue & Co., London, they were first issued on January 1, 1943, by the Norwegian government in exile in Great Britain. With the addition of two more values, the set was reissued in Norway on June 22, 1945, following the Liberation. One could really see and feel, as one rubbed a finger nail across, that they were engraved. I thought they even smelled different from ordinary stamps. Anyway, I still have a sheet each of the 5 and 7 øre values, which I bought at that time in Norway. Each stamp in the series shows the crowned monogram of the exiled King Haakon VII. That "H7" design was surreptitiously painted and drawn everywhere in Norway during the German occupation. I remember often doing it myself in the snow with ski poles. The 20 øre stamp is of particular interest, as it pictures the "We Will Win" slogan done on a country road. In Norwegian, "Vi Vil Vinne" was doubly effective with its three "V"s.



The other day, I ran across an interesting memento I had saved from the war years, which shows both the slogan and royal monogram. It was in late 1944 or early 1945, when I was a school boy, that I happened to enter a telephone booth by the street in front of Majorstua Station in Oslo. To my surprise, I found that someone had boldly stamped through the phone book pages with a rubber stamp in violet, showing the forbidden monogram and patriotic slogan. Upon discovery, the book would, of course, immediately be seized and replaced by the authorities. So, I did not hesitate to rip out a page for my "Wartime Memorabilia Collection". Oblivious to the danger of possessing "enemy propaganda", I ran off home with my prize. I didn't show it to anyone, however, as I probably wouldn't have been allowed to keep it. Those were the days of fear and secrecy, when the long dark shadow of the swastika lay across the land.

Jepmann. Valkyrie	Andersen, Birger, Tannlege. D. O. S.
67754	10-15 Jun 1944 eg etter av-
Inekker. Testes	tale. Karl Johansgt. 27. . . 31628
78093	- Bolig. Drammenkvn. 4/c . . . 45168
Kolonialfor. Ths.	Andersen, Birger. Tannlege. Tannlege.
40503	10-15 Jun 1944 eg etter avtale.
E. Snekker. Stiles	Karl Johansen 27. . . . 31419
125. V. Aker 91184	- Bolig. Norge 770 16. Vin-
L. Fullmekter	dieren. 1. . . . . 47244
166285	Andersen, Birger H. Reklaktor. Dag-
S. Kontor og Lager	bladet. Valkyriegg 13. . . . 65037
14892	Andersen, Bj. me. Mand. Hande-
Skredder B. G. W.	lingsvært. 23. . . . . 61707
Nordstrand. 88952	Andersen, Bjarne E. Kontor.
Salgsdirektør	Brennenavnsl. 13. . . . . 72177
	66326 - Bolig. Wergelandsv. 7. . . 33463
B. Kjøpmann	Andersen, Bjarne E. Markv. 48. 73355
17651	Andersen-Bjørge, Adelsteen. Nifheim.
Reklamesjef.	Fn. 5. Jar . . . . . 35331
18338	Andersen, Bjarne Reichweitz.
L. Tegner	1. . . . . 44532
14873	Andersen, Bjørn Oscar. Ekokrykker.
L. Sekretær i Eidspiva	Bernhi. Herres veg 22. Smestad 99831
itt. Bjerregaards	Andersen, Bjarne. 87711. En gros og
	agentur. Grensen 517 . . . . . 32653
78001	Andersen, Brita. Arbeidsgt. 13. . . 41740
Fru. Haga	

## Three Covers From the Liberation of Norway

By Frederick A. Brofoss

During World War II, the German occupation forces in Norway were opposed by a secret organization of patriots known as the Home Front ("Hjemmefronten"). One can imagine that a considerable amount of mail must have been sent by this underground resistance movement, although the covers obviously would bear no indication of their true origin. Other things being too risky, what was usually sent were the so-called illegal newspapers. These one-page typed or mimeographed sheets mostly contained the latest BBC news from London. This was important, as all radios had been confiscated and the Nazi-controlled regular newspapers suppressed all news unfavorable to them and exaggerated or distorted the rest. As the Nazi police began to seize and examine large mailings, the secret newspapers were eventually distributed more and more from hand to hand.

Immediately after the Liberation, the Home Front members came out into the open and their para-military organization called the Home Forces ("Hjemmestyrkene") were prominent on the streets with their special armbands and hand machine pistols. The illustrated cover, (Fig. 1) from May or early June, 1945, shows that they even had their own imprinted envelopes and is a real "pièce de résistance" in more than one way. As indicated by a dark violet strike at upper right, the letter was sent from the Intelligence unit which, together with other forces, had occupied the former "N. S. Partihus" (Quisling Party HQ) at Kristian Augustgate, Oslo. It was sent by courier to Major Diesen, a Norwegian liaison officer at Allied Military Headquarters, Storgaten 33, Oslo, the former German Military HQ.

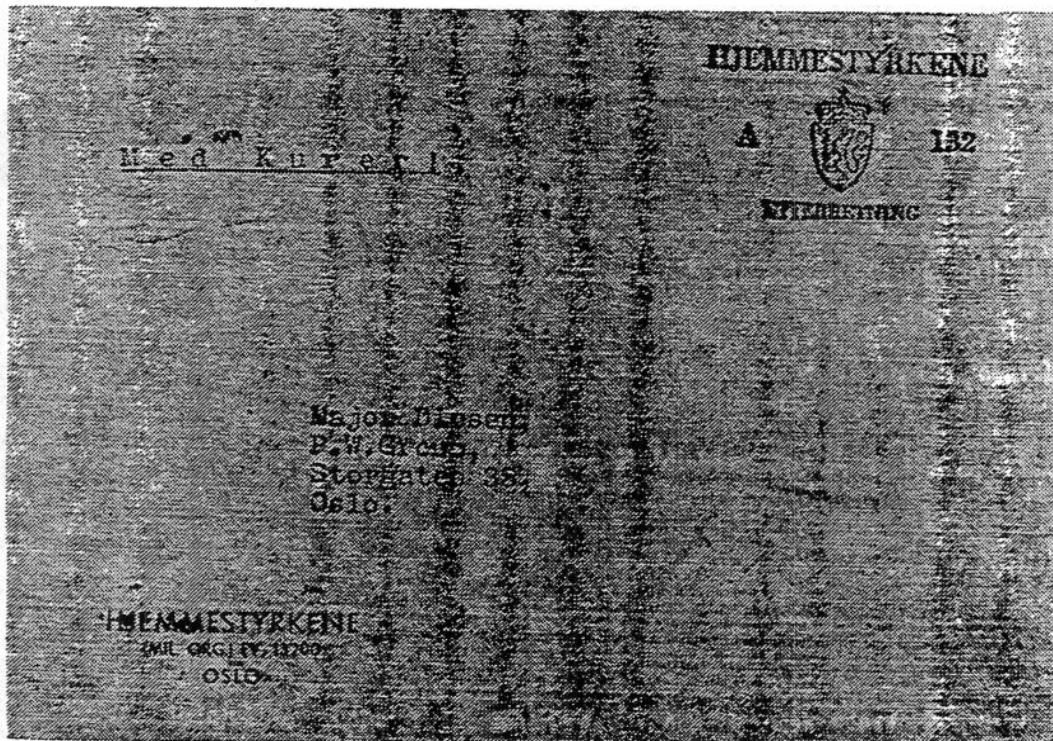


Fig. 1

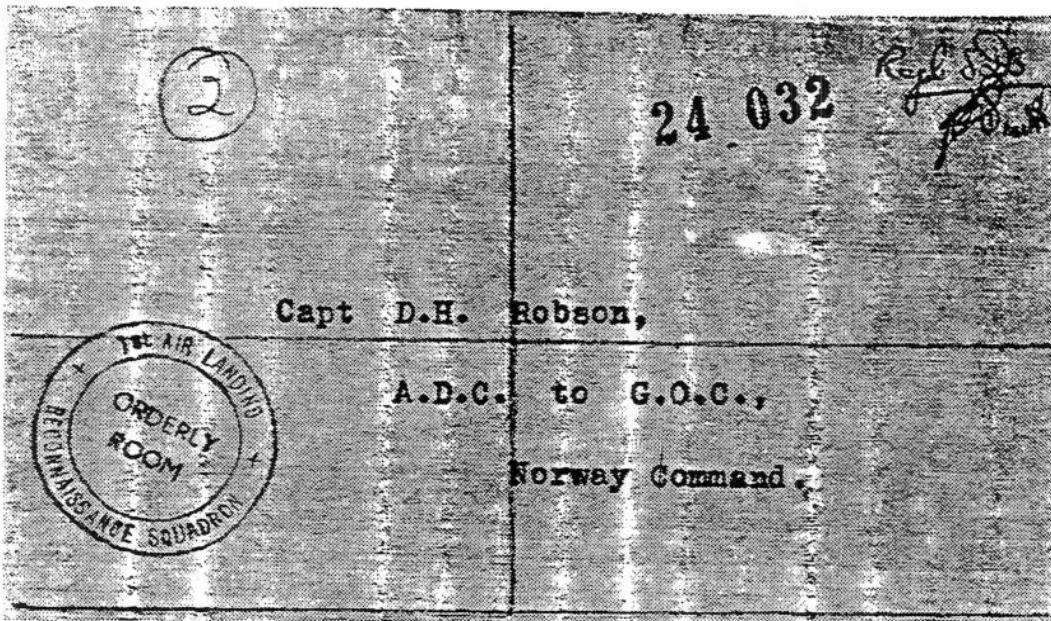


Fig. 2

Figure two shows another interesting cover from about the same period. It bears a red strike at lower left, reading "1st. Air Landing, Reconnaissance Squadron, Orderly Room." Probably sent from the British paratroop outfit nicknamed The Red Devils (because of their red berets) that arrived among the first liberators of Norway. Addressee is Captain D. H. Robson, Aide de Camp to the General Officer Commanding, Norway Command (General R. Urquhart) at Allied HQ, Oslo. It bears the blue crossed lines commonly used by the British to denote registered letters. A registration number is

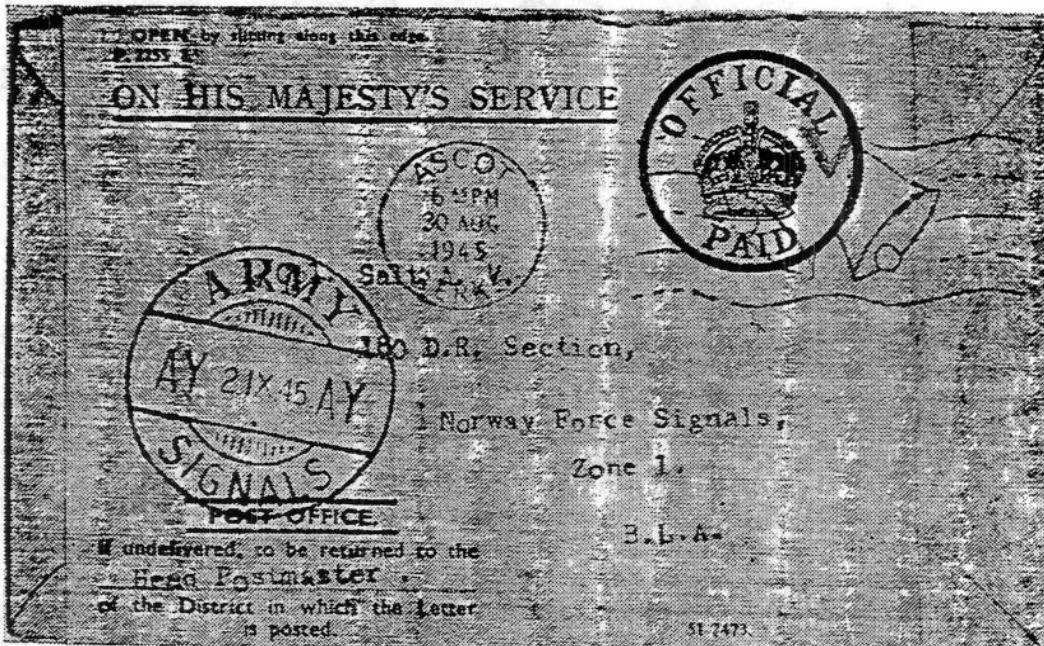


Fig. 3

struck in black and a manuscript "Regd. SDS, J. O. Smith" appears at upper right, indicating conveyance by Signal Dispatch Service. This was the British Army equivalent of the U. S. Army Signal Corps and was in charge of military communications.

The third cover, (Fig. 3), is an official envelope sent from the Head Postmaster of Ascot, Berks., England, on August 30, 1945. It bears the machine cancel commemorating the end of WW II, with Victory bells, the letter "V" and its equivalent in Morse code. The cover is addressed to Lance Corp. A. V. Salt, 180th. Dispatch Rider Section, Norway Force Signals, Zone 1, B.L.A. (British Liberation Army?) and carries the receiving mark of Sept. 2, 1945, the day the Japanese signed their own surrender document. This postmark is of particular interest as it was used by the British Army Signal Unit at Allied Military HQ in Oslo (Storgate 33, 2nd. floor). The postmark shows the code letters AY, which distinguish it from similar markings used at other locations during the war.

The three covers from the Liberation of Norway that we have just examined form a postal history trio difficult to match today. However, all were unappreciated by their original recipients and thrown away. Fortunately I was at the right place at the right time to retrieve them for Philately.

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**Two British Registered Fieldpost Covers of Norwegian Interest**



Fred Brofos, responding to my call for help in the May LUREN, sent along some illustrations. The two British Registered Letter Envelopes are used in the WW II period. The first, a 5 1/2 d brown, was used in England in 1944 by the Norwegian Army FPO. The other one, a 3 d dark green, was used by the British Army FPO 786 in Norway. FPO 786 was, at the time, on the second floor of Kampen High School in Oslo. The school had been requisitioned by the Germans as a barracks, then taken over by the British liberation forces. The FPO was only open to military personnel, not the general public, so covers are rare.



# LUREN

## SCANDINAVIAN

## COLLECTORS CLUB

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## ALLIED POSTAL CENSORSHIP BETWEEN NORTH NORWAY AND FINLAND

by Frederick A. Brofos

Having for a long time been interested in all kinds of censor marks and labels, the cover illustrated on page 8 of LUREN, Vol 13 No 9 immediately caught my attention. Here, it seemed to me, was something of unusual interest: a cover sent between two Scandinavian countries, but which had passed through a war zone whose very existence is unknown to the average person. It had been mailed in the summer of 1919, during the disturbed period following WW I. Finland, under the able leadership of General Mannerheim, had only the previous year attained its independence from Soviet Russia. Peace was short though, because already on June 6, 1919, war broke out again between Finland and Russia, due to conflicting claims to Karelia. Hostilities lasted until the Treaty of Dorpat (October 14, 1920) when Finland acquired a narrow strip of territory lying between the Russian port of Murmansk and the Eastern frontier of Norway, together with the ice-free port of Pechenga (re-named Petsamo). This neighborhood way up in the far North, has of course long since been gobbled up again by the Russian Bear.

The Russo-German Peace Treaty of Brest Litovsk (March 3, 1918) ended Russian participation in WW I. The war continued, however, among the other combatants. It was important for the Allies to try and keep the huge stocks of supplies and ammunition, which had previously been contributed to the Czarist government, out of German hands. Furthermore, they didn't want a large transferral of German troops from the Eastern to the Western front. A direct intervention, it was thought, might encourage at least some of the Russians to continue the battle against the Germans. To accomplish these goals, it was decided to send forth an Allied Military Expedition to North Russia. "Operation Polar Bear", it was called for short, and the participants received a uniform shoulder patch showing a grey bear on an iceberg against a light blue (to page 3...)

background.

Consisting of British, French, American and Canadian contingents, the force was under the overall command of the British Brigadier Ironside. The Americans consisted of one reinforced infantry regiment, which, at its maximum, contained 5630 men. It was over-optimistic of certain Allied visionaries to hope that their far too inadequate forces would be able to strike South and Eastwards and link up with the Czech Legion and Admiral Kolchak at the Urals, and Generals Mannerheim and Yudenitch on the Baltic. It was considered that this contribution to a White Russian counter-revolution would soon topple the Bolshevik regime.

The invasion of Russia got off to a good start with the port of Murmansk being occupied on June 23, 1918, followed by Archangel on August 2. A puppet government was installed under the White Russian General Miller. (A stamp issue attributed to him is bogus.) Minor but hard fighting dragged on for more than a year in this undeclared war with the Bolsheviks. The French alone were ardent advocates of a more extensive intervention, but the British and Americans held back. After all, WW I was now over; shooting on the Western Front had ended on November 11, 1918, and the Peace Treaty of Versailles was signed June 28, 1919. The half-frozen Allied soldiers in North Russia longed to go home and there was even some mutiny. The authorities finally realized they would get nowhere without reinforcements, which were not forthcoming. The Americans pulled out in August, 1919, and the other Allies left soon afterwards. Archangel was evacuated September 13, and Murmansk abandoned October 12, 1919. The adventure was over. It had been a little like another Vietnam--60 years ahead of time. Strangely enough, the Allies were again active on those selfsame Northern routes during WW II, but that time they were making heroic efforts to help and supply the Red Army!

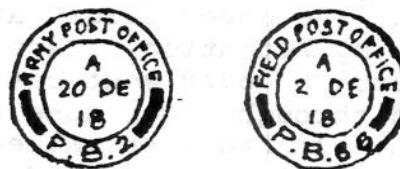
Now, let us return to the aforementioned envelope sent between Norway and Finland during that complicated period of history. Postage was only 20 øre abroad when it was sent from Vardø, Northern Norway, on July 29, 1919. It acquired a receiving machine postmark at Viborg, Southern Finland, on August 6, 1919. In between those two places, the letter was examined by Allied authorities who affixed the two labels reading: OPENED BY BASE CENSOR No. 11. The censorship probably occurred after the mail boat from Norway arrived at Murmansk, as Archangel lies far more Eastward in relation to Finland. One can imagine that the mail was driven down the Allied-occupied Murmansk railroad, perhaps to Kandalaksja or further, before entering Finnish territory. Vardø was at that time the point of origin for all mail from Norway to Russia. A Norwegian postal circular of September, 1918, states that: Between Vardø and Archangel there now runs a fortnightly mail route. Mail may only be sent to the Murmansk coast and Archangel, but no parcel post.

Before leaving the tundra, mention should be made of the Allied fieldpost during this campaign. The postmarks were of the usual British double circle type, inscribed at the top either: ARMY POST OFFICE or FIELD POST OFFICE. Below were the letters: PB (for Polar Bear) and a code number indicating the place of origin, for example PB-1 for Murmansk and PB-2 for Archangel. There were also other numbers for various smaller places. All are quite rare today. The Canadians, being accustomed to severe winter weather at home, were assigned the duty of transporting the mail by dogsled across the frozen countryside.

It is rather mind-boggling to reflect that, if this expedition had only been stronger, world history might have turned out quite differently...

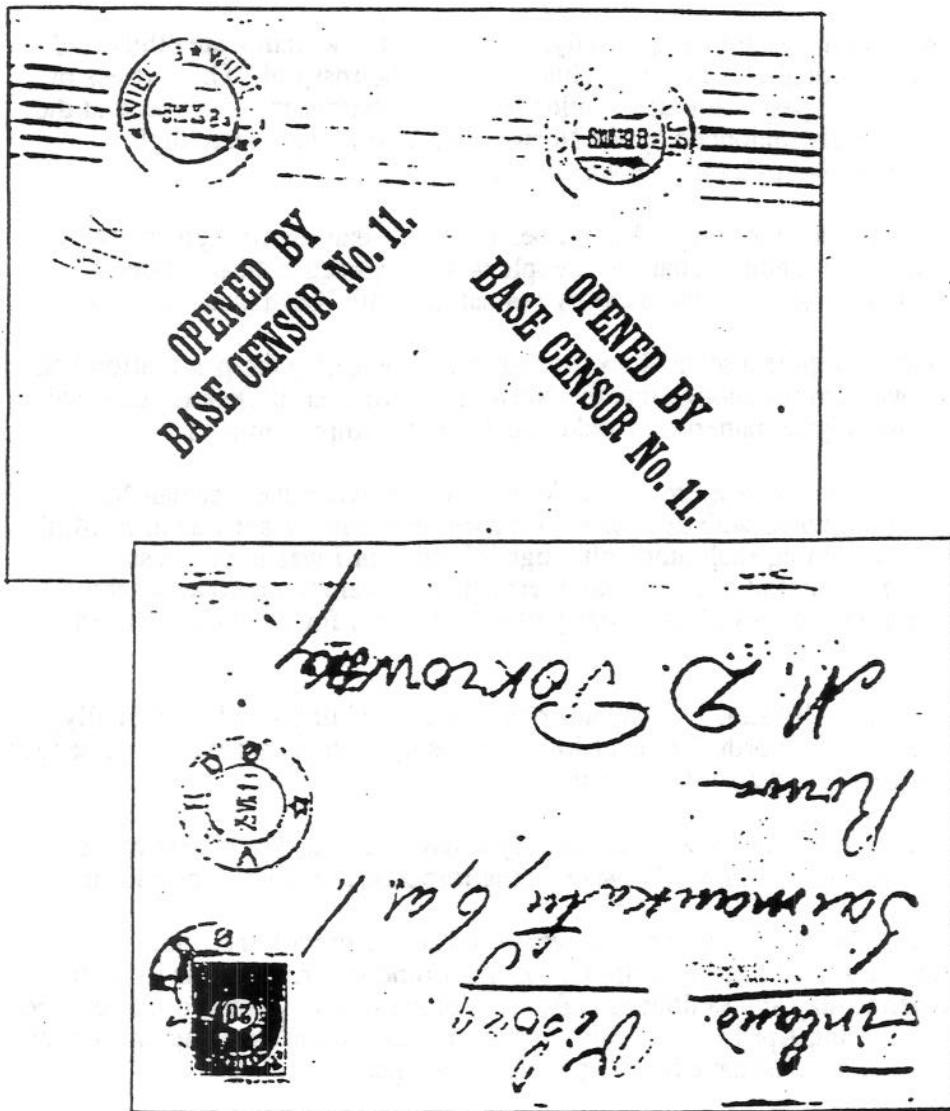
p.s. The above-mentioned cover appeared in a recent Chapter 17 auction and I was delighted to acquire it at a good deal less than I had expected. This indicates an honestly run auction in which one may bid confidently without fear of being taken to the cleaners, and furthermore, that one can still acquire bargains -- if one knows what to look for.

Thanks, Fred, for the article and the very interesting information about this Arctic campaign. As you mentioned in a letter, this PB cancel is illustrated in the cancellation section in the front of the Scotts Specialized US Catalog. We also appreciate your vote of confidence in our auction...appropriate since the Spring Auction List accompanies this LUREN.



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Allied Postal Censorship between North Norway and Finland, 1919.



## German Cruiser Interned in Norway, 1914/18

The moon was down and it was snowing heavily, as the German warship, stealthily and without a pilot sneaked through the dark night into the Trondheimsfjord. The fortress of Agdenes was silently sailed past, without a challenge. The embarrassing fact was that the ship had gone by completely unnoticed by the Norwegians, due to their searchlight remaining unused - for economy's sake - it was later revealed.

So it was, at 9 o'clock on the morning of November 17, 1914, that the foreign cruiser unexpectedly appeared in Trondheim harbor. People were surprised to hear sudden gunfire, but luckily it was only a formal exchange of salutes with Kristiansten fortress.

Needless to say, there was quite a scandal and uproar over how easily the penetration had happened. The case was serious enough that the Norwegian Minister of Defense traveled North from Oslo to investigate matters and make much needed improvements.

Fortunately, the Norwegians were more alert in World War II, when the German Navy again tried to barge in uninvited, with dire results for them that time. As it was, in 1914, the two countries were not fighting each other, although World War I was in progress elsewhere. Norway being neutral, the 450-man German crew were interned at nearby Hommelvika, where the naval vessel itself was parked in the bay for the duration of the war.

It was the auxiliary cruiser "Berlin," which had so boldly arrived uninvited. Originally, the "Berlin" had been one of the North German Lloyd Steamship Company's stately passenger ships, but was reconverted and armed due to the war.

Presumably, the British Royal Navy was particularly active in North Sea waters at the time, forcing the Germans to choose quickly between being torpedoed, captured, or interned.

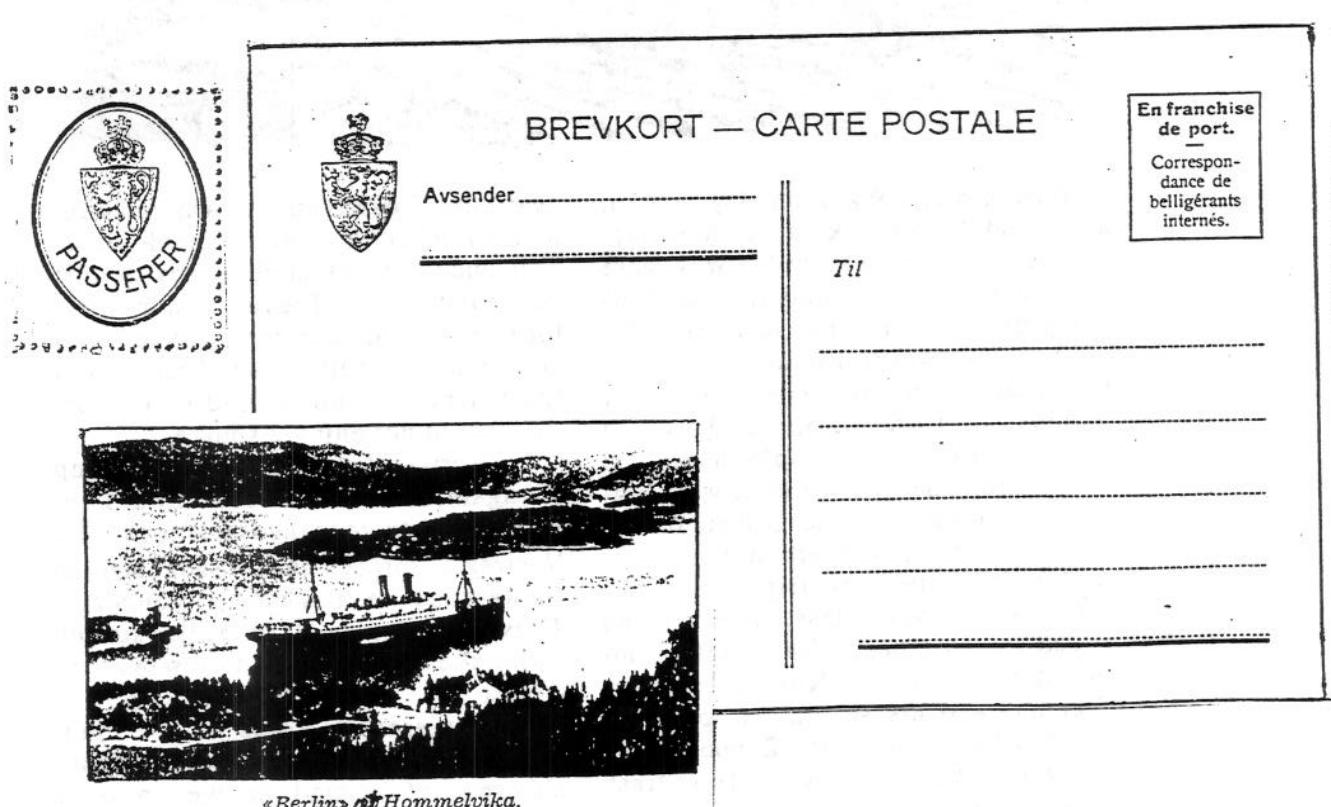
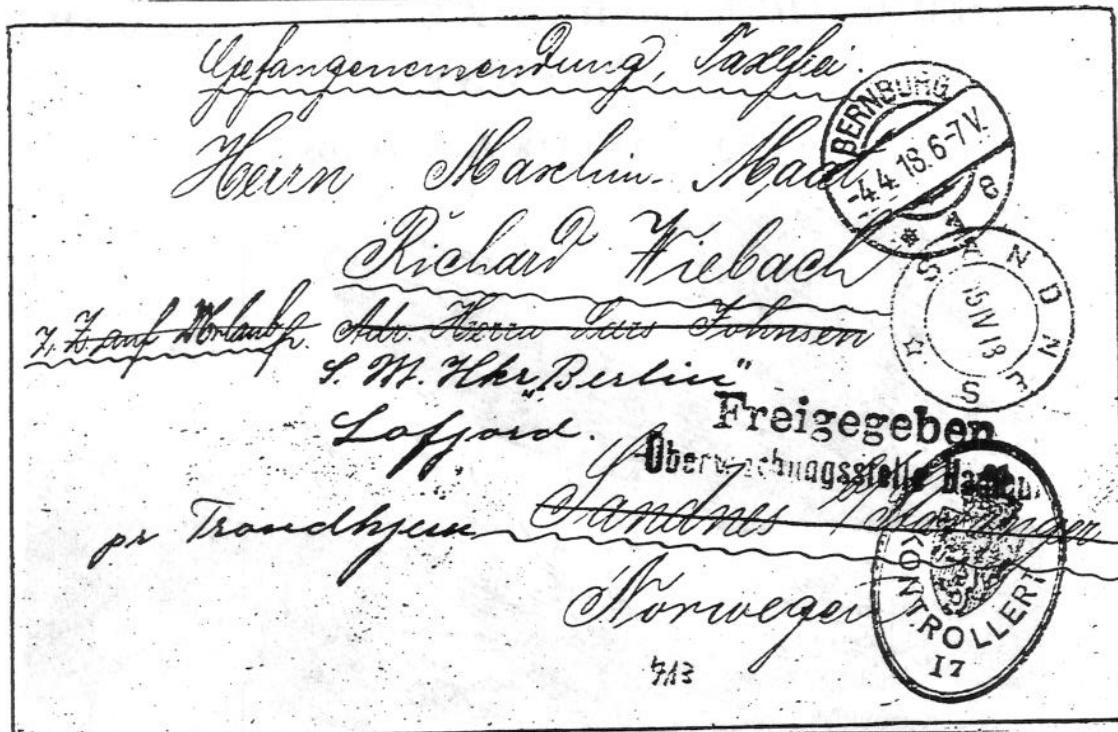
At first, the easy-going Norwegian authorities were not very strict with their new prisoners. The captain of the "Berlin", Kapitän zur See Pfundheller, who was ill with diabetes, was allowed to stay at a sanitarium, after first promising in writing not to escape. Nevertheless, the following April he suddenly disappeared and wasn't seen again. It was the general opinion that he must have had help with his escape.

After that episode, the guarding of the "Berlin" was noticeably sharpened. Guard duty was strictly carried out, both day and night, and no one was allowed to go ashore without the accompaniment of a Norwegian soldier. The vessel was illuminated by searchlight at night and motorboats continuously patrolled around in the water.

Illustrated is a postage free P.O.W. cover sent from Germany April 4, 1918, to a crew member of the "Berlin", interned in the inlet of Hommelvika (Lofjord) near Trondheim. It shows the 2-line censormark of Hamburg and a rare oval Norwegian one, reading KONTROLLERT (Checked), both in dark violet. Sometimes, a red perforated label was used instead, inscribed PASSERER (Passed). A special red postal card was also produced, including the text "En franchise de port, Correspondance de belligérants internés". (Free of postage. Correspondance of interned belligerants).

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German Cruiser Interned in Norway, 1914/18



## Dramatic Crash of Zeppelin L.20 in Norway

by Frederik A. Brofos



During World War I, on May 3, 1916, at around 10 o'clock in the morning, people in South Western Norway were startled by a huge Zeppelin that suddenly blew in from the North Sea. Its wild maneuverings did not make sense to anyone. In the neighborhood of Sandnes, it began to drop rapidly, going down with a great splash in the Gansfjord. The front gondola was completely submerged and 8 men of the crew of 16 jumped overboard.

Nearby were some frightened fishermen who, nevertheless, rowed out and saved the aviators. The airship commander, however, Kapitänleutnant Stabberf and his second in command swam ashore. Now, the Zeppelin rose up again and drifted westward on a fresh wind. The remaining crew threw out a couple of anchor ropes, but in vain, the airship crashed into a mountain peak

near Lake Stokkavann. It was an awful moment when the collision took place. The once elegant airship was almost bent over double. The rear gondola was torn loose and four men jumped out. One man was badly cut and bruised, but the others were not so badly hurt that they could not enjoy a smoke.

Surprisingly, the Zeppelin rose up yet again, but all of a sudden broke over and drifted down in the Hafrsfjord. The Norwegian torpedo boat "Trods" arrived and rescued the three men still onboard. They were brought to Maledsetten where the whole German crew was interned.

The internment camp on the moor included a small fieldpost office. Probably most of the mail sent went postage free, as provided for under the Hague Convention, for prisoners of war and internees. Such stampless mail tends to

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Maldesletten Fieldpost cancel. German survivors of crash were interned here.

be easily discarded. The postmark illustrated here is therefore among the scarcer of all Norwegian field postmarks.

One of the rescued Germans related that their Zeppelin L.20 had dropped

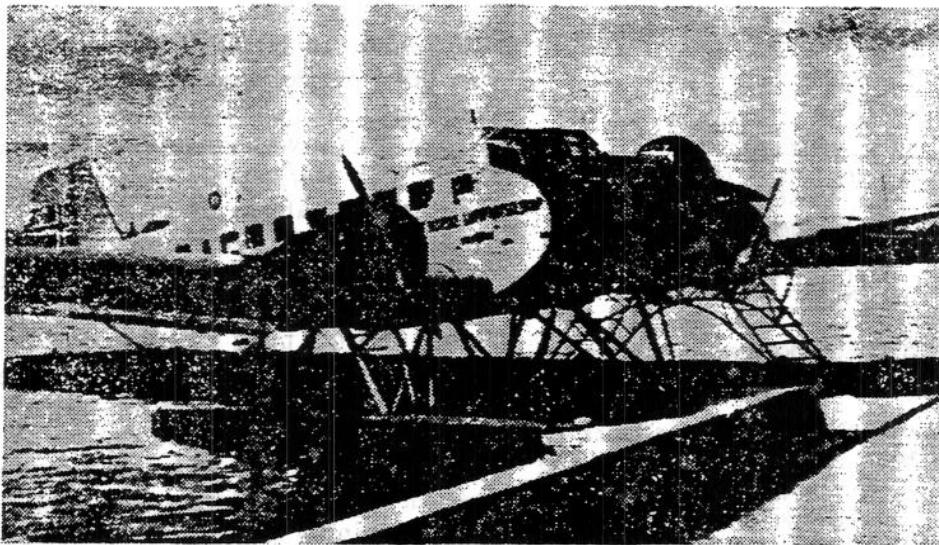
100 bombs on England and that they had been out for one and a half days when they ran out of gasoline.

The drama was not over yet, however. The Norwegian Army Colonel Johannessen, afraid of further explosions around inhabited places, gave the order to his troops to fire on the Zeppelin wreck. A terrible explosion followed of what must have been hydrogen gas. Even in Stavanger, 8-10 miles away, people thought there was an earthquake. At Hafrsfjord, the flames shot heavenward and turned everything burnable on the airship into ashes. Only a giant aluminum skeleton was left, like a row of dinosaur bones, on the shore.

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## The Last Flight Of The "Sea Eagle"

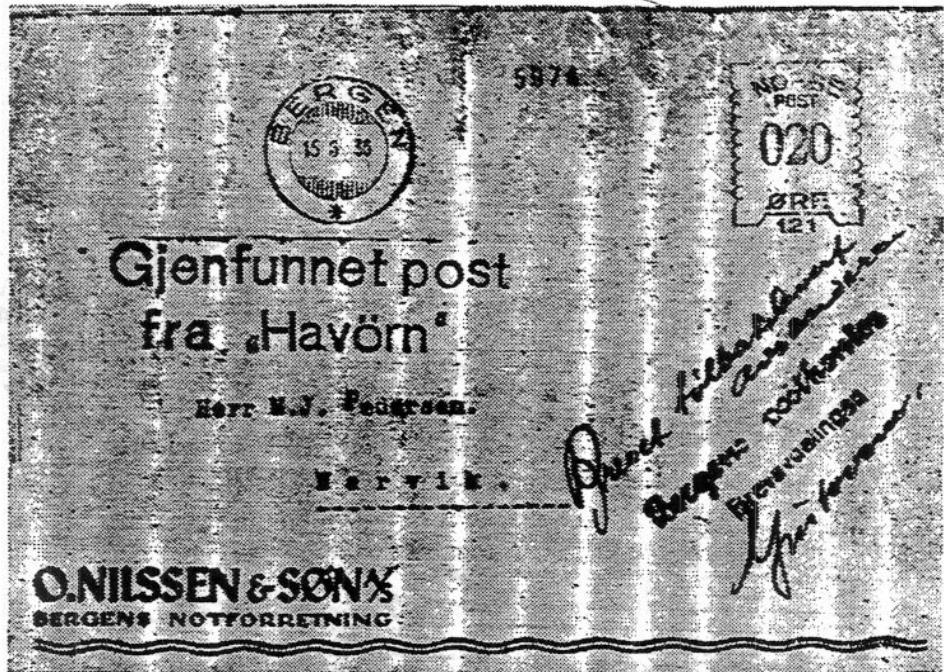
By Frederick A. Brofos



This is the sad tale of a pioneer Norwegian mail plane called the "Sea Eagle," or in Norwegian, "Havørn," which made its last descent in mid-summer of 1936. It is still remembered today, largely because of the tragedy of its crashing and destruction, which shocked everyone for a long time. Some of the mail it carried was salvaged with great difficulty and is now treasured by postal historians and airmail specialists. The Post Office applied a special explanatory handstamp (see illustration). I used to have two of these rare crash covers, but I donated one of them to the fine Norwegian Postal Museum which I always enjoy visiting when in Oslo. I notice that such covers have steadily risen in value from Kr 500 in 1978 to Kr 1500 in 1981.

Two interesting photos of the ill-fated plane are shown here. For the superstitious, it carried on its fuselage the somewhat ominous identification code LN-DAE (i.e., DIE!). It also carried a new invention, produced by a French communications firm. The outer part of this direction-finding apparatus was a round gadget which can clearly be seen in the photo, protruding from the plane's roof in front of the tail stabilizers. It was called an "RC-5 installation" or the "Busignies Automatic Radio Compass" after the inventor. As with so many crashes, there is a touch of mystery about what exactly went wrong. With no survivors and plane parts scattered over inaccessible mountain tops, one can only speculate.

The "Havørn" was a 3-motor "Junker W52" plane, one of several often run with German pilots by DNL—the Norwegian airtravel company. It had been used to inaugurate the Oslo-Bergen airmail route in 1935, from which trip special cacheted first-flight covers exist. Later it was used on the Bergen-Trondheim-Tromsø airmail route. It was here, on June 16, 1936, a few minutes past 7 in the morning, in a thick fog, that the plane crashed into Mount Risenika in the Lifjell area near the mouth of the Sognefjord. The plane was smashed to bits and all aboard—3 passengers and 4 crewmen—were immediately killed. It was considered the worst disaster up to that time in the early air traffic history of Norway. An extremely difficult and dangerous rescue operation was undertaken to remove the bodies and the mail from high up on the mountain top.



The violet cachet applied by the Post Office translates: "Re-found mail from "Havørn." Most of the salvaged letters appear to have been returned to the senders by the Bergen Post Office, who made an additional notation to that effect on the covers.

#### Bibliography:

1. Erling Stark: "Norskluftpost 1911-1977" and Supplement 1981, published by and available from Oslo Filatelistklubb.
2. Contemporary Norwegian newspapers.

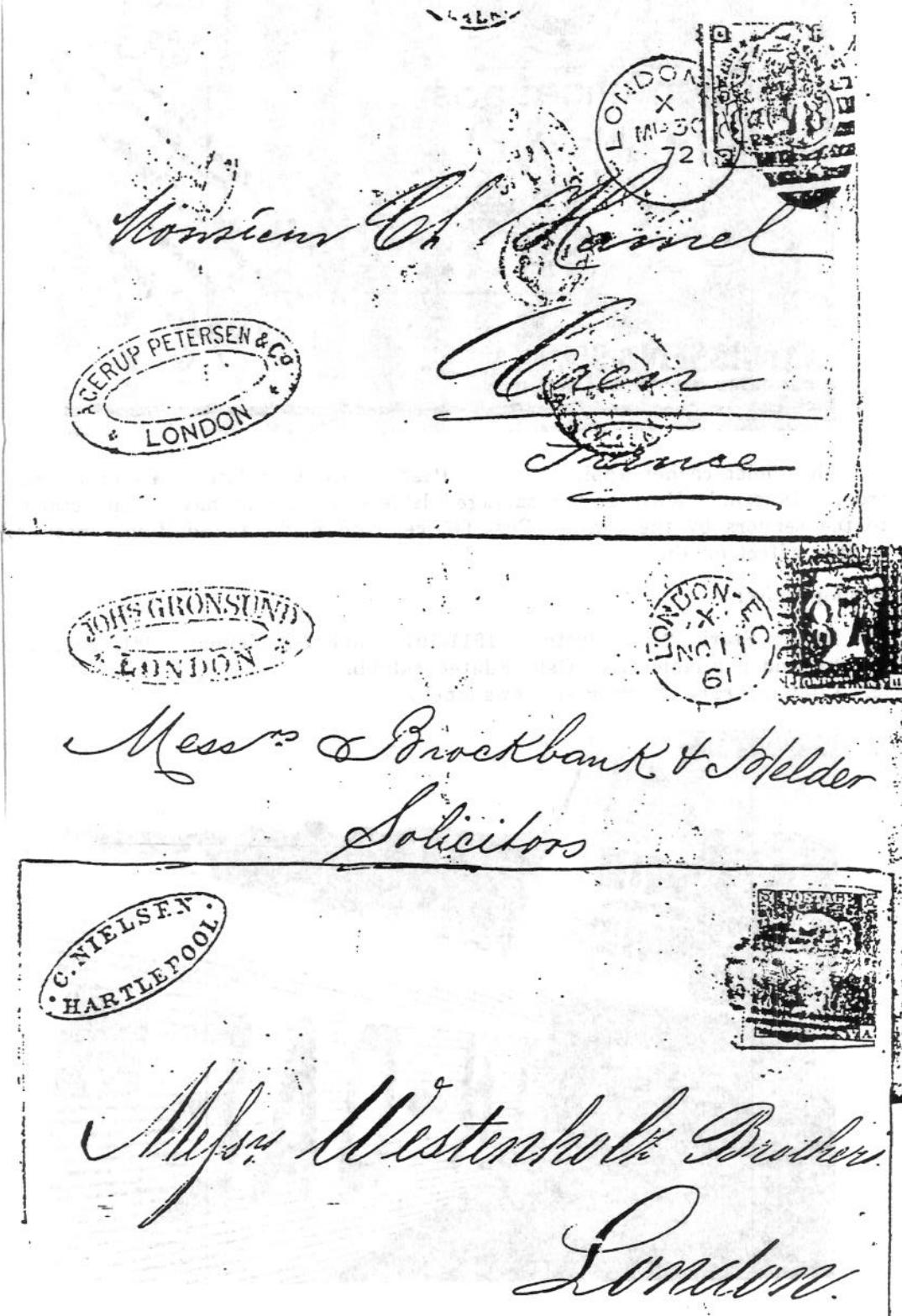


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## SCANDINAVIANS ABROAD

Frederick A. Brofos

Shown here are three old British envelopes (from 1845, 1861, and 1872) which have one interesting thing in common; they were all written by businessmen with Scandinavian names. With their neat little oval name-seals, they look nice in my "Scandinavians Abroad" collection.



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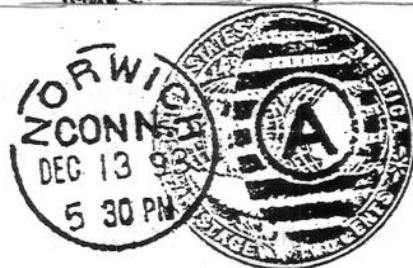
An attractive multi-colored 1899 cover, from North Dakota, advertising cooking stoves, shows a firm name with obvious Norwegian antecedents. In a similar vein are the two other envelopes, from Ole Amble (1886) and Erik Enequist (1898). With a lot of looking around, patience and luck, quite a remarkable assortment can be put together.



ERIKENEQUIST,  
LONG ISLAND CITY, N.Y.

Ole Amble,  
GOWEN, MICH.

Consulate Of Sweden  
and Norway  
New York N.Y.

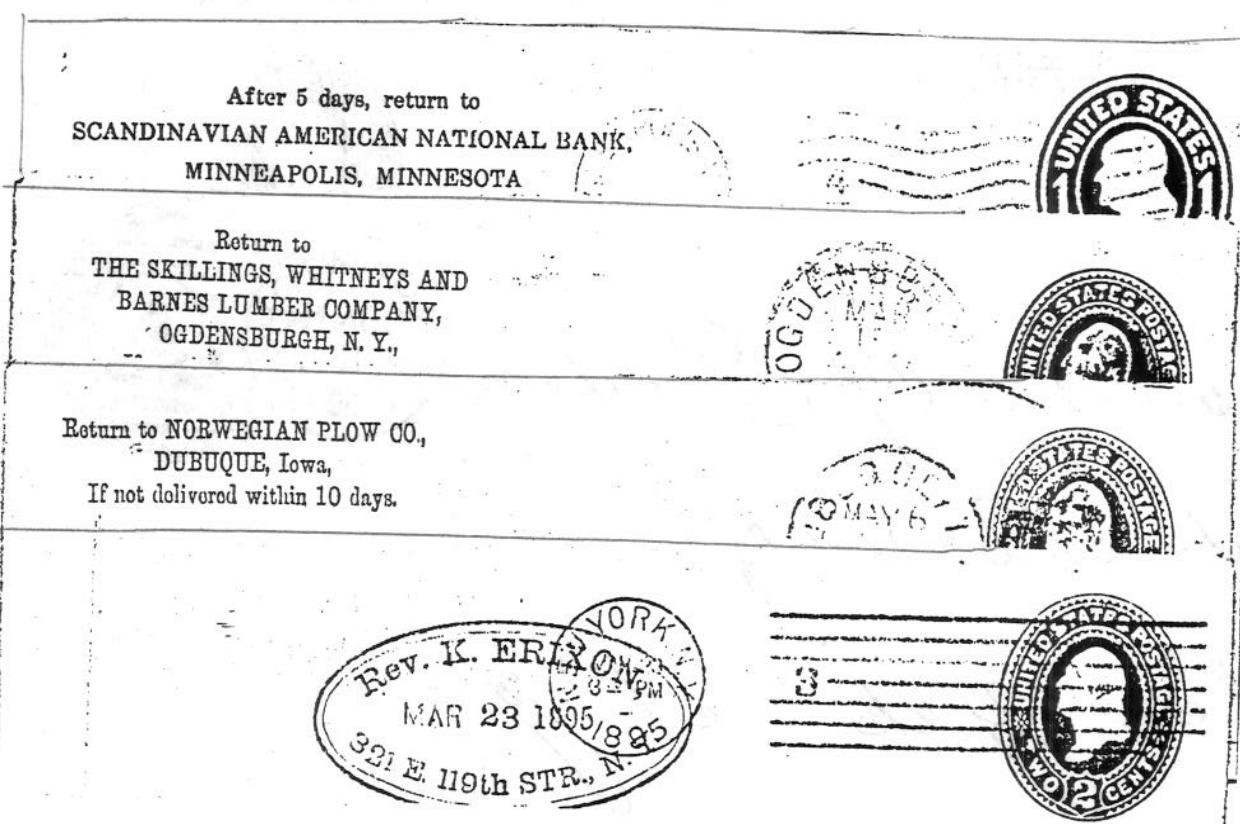
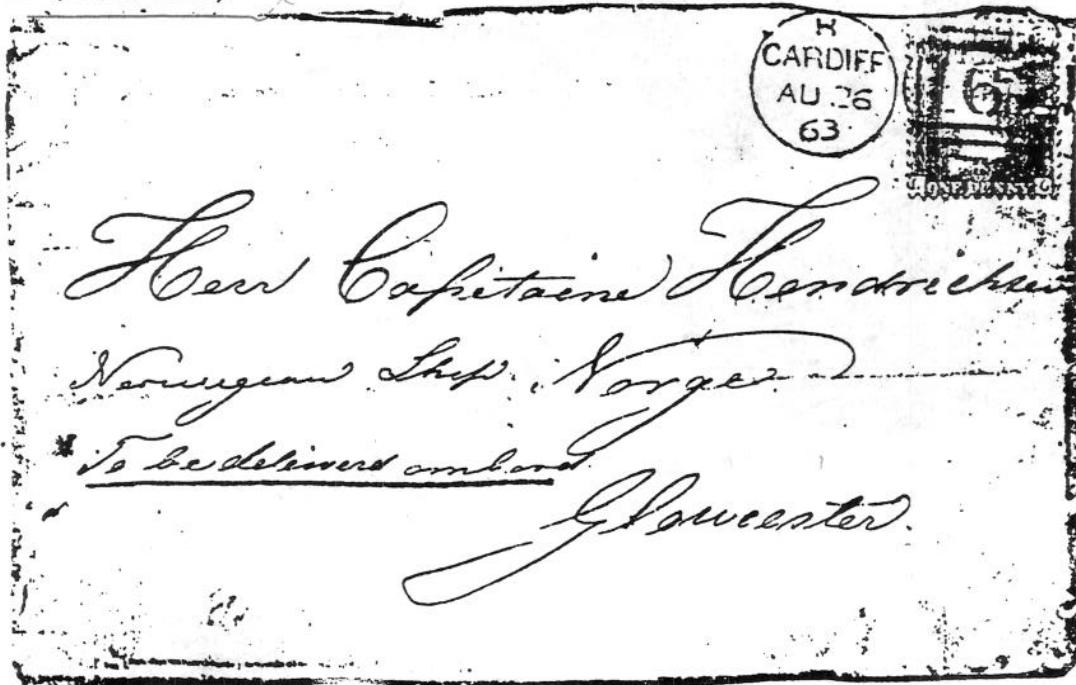


## SOME NORWEGIANS ABROAD

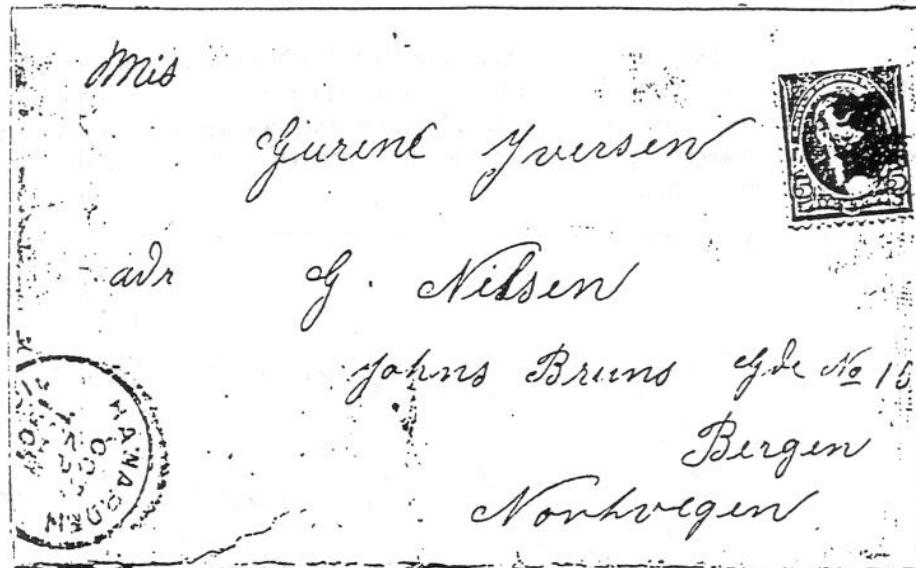
Frederick A. Brofos

Here and there, from time to time, I have picked up certain old covers which don't have any particular stamp or postmark value. What interested me was that they all appear to have been written many years ago by various Norwegians abroad. Apparently, some were immigrants whose English was often quaint and amusing.

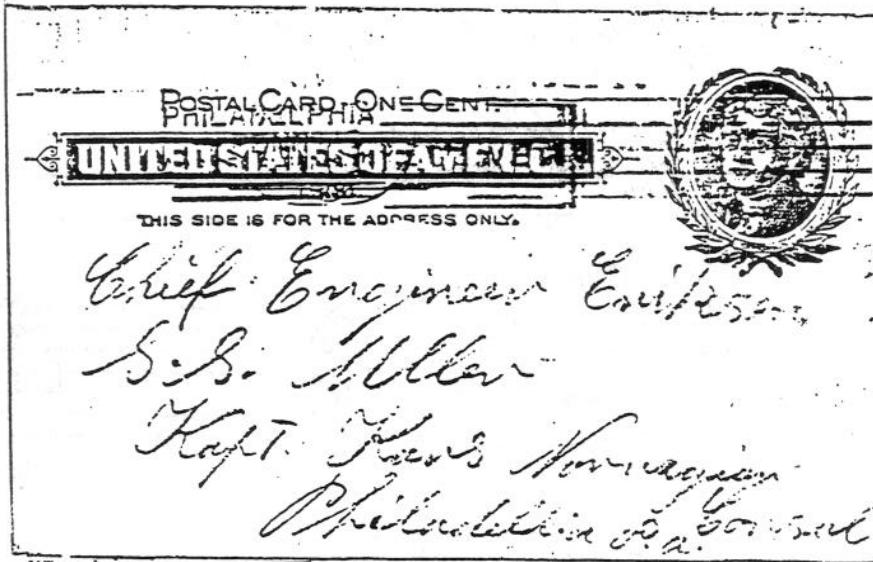
We start off with an English cover showing a Victorian Penny Red stamp sent in 1863 from Cardiff to Gloucester, addressed to a Captain Hendrichsen of the Norwegian ship "Norge". "To be delivered ombord" (i.e., on board).



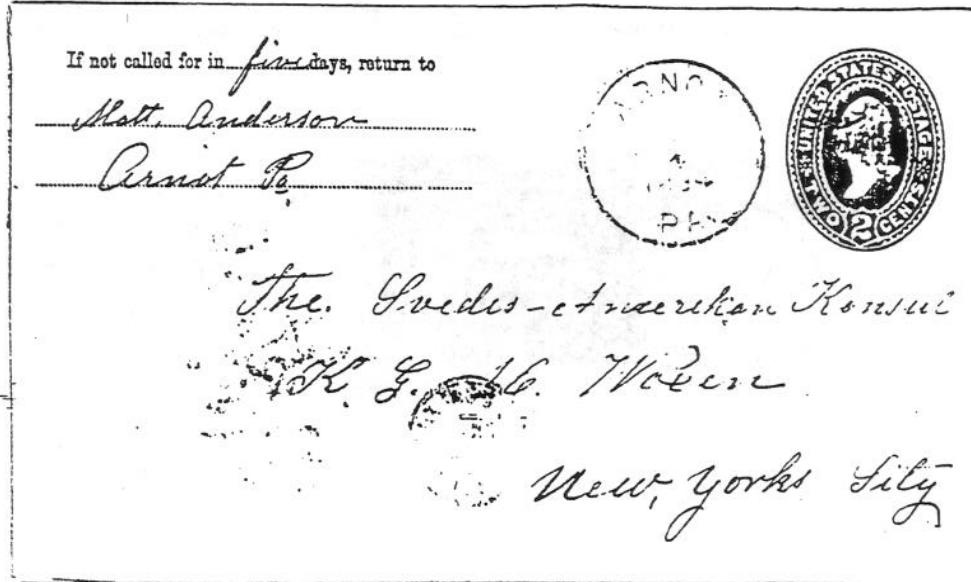
Next is a letter from Hawarden, Iowa, 1901, sent to a girl of Bergen in "Nortvegen" (i.e., Norway).



A postcard sent from Philadelphia, Pa., 1900, is addressed to Chief Engineer Eriksen of the S/S Uller (Kapt. Kars) c/o Norwegian Consul, Philadelphia, Pa.

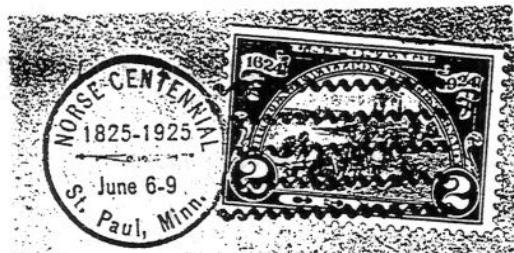
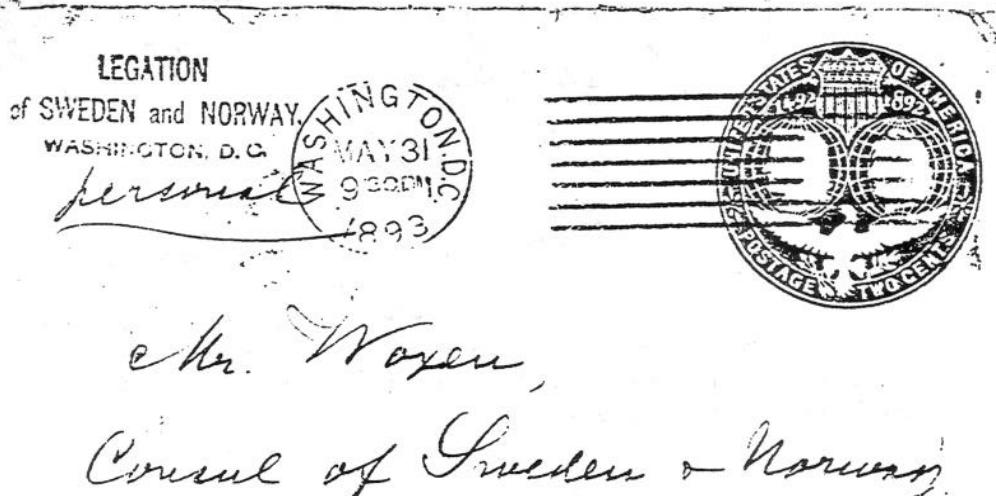
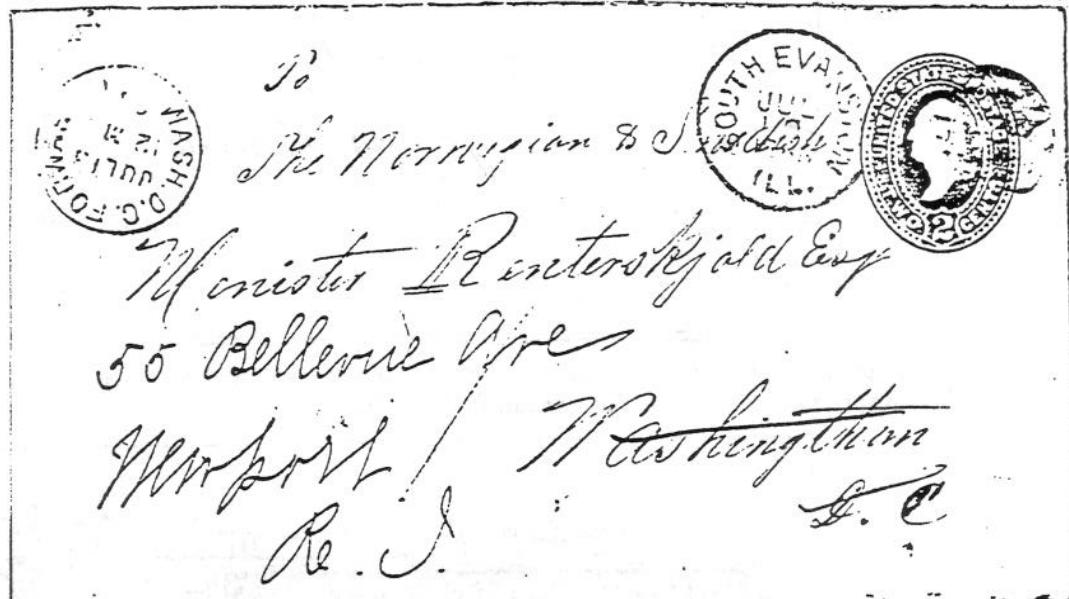


There is also a cover from Matt. Anderson of Arnot, Pa, 1894, to "The Svedes-Amerikan Konsul K.G.H. Woxen, New Yorks City".



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Finally, an 1888 envelope to none less than the Norwegian and Swedish Minister at "Washington DC", and forwarded to Newport, R.I., the social center in July. In those days, there was no Ambassador or Embassy, only a joint legation with a Minister, the Swedish Baron de Reutenskjold. I believe the letter was from a Norwegian, as he spelled the name wrongly with a "j" as done in Norway, and also placed "Norwegian" first in the title.



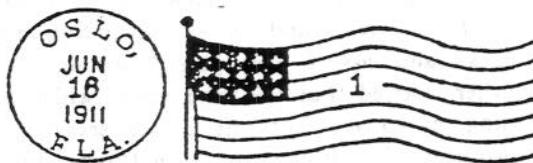
RARE POSTMARK FOR NORSE  
CENTENNIAL 1825-1925  
JUNE 6-9, ST. PAUL, MINN.

NORWEGIAN SETTLEMENTS  
IN FLORIDA

Investigating the postal history of early Scandinavian-related places in various parts of America can be a fascinating undertaking.

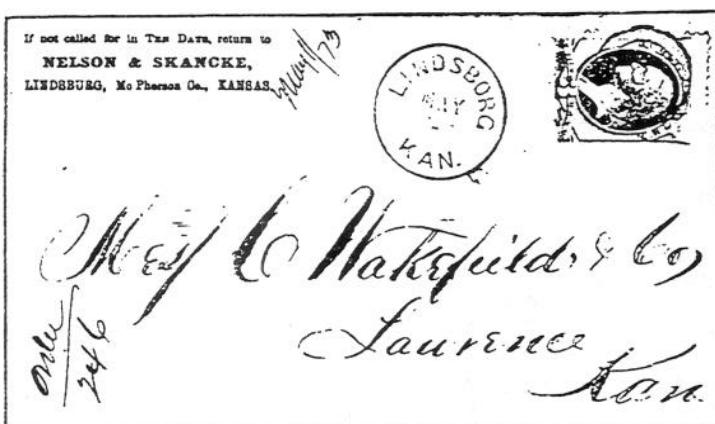
In the area around Vero Beach, on the east coast of Florida, which I have just visited, there used to be a number of small Norwegian settlements. Even today, some of the old family names linger on. Among the earliest settlers were the Helseth brothers. John Helseth became a successful farmer, raising pineapples, citrus, and vegetables. He was followed, in 1886, by his brother Olaf Helseth from Minneapolis, Minnesota, who purchased the Ludwig Hevelsrude place. John had settled on the ridge south of Vero, at a point which he named VIKING in 1895, when a postoffice was authorized and he was commissioned postmaster. Another postoffice in the neighborhood was established around 1896 and called OSLO. For a time, this was located in the home of one Ole Helseth, and then in that of a Mr. Bendikson. Both

postoffices were discontinued years ago. However, there still remains an Oslo Road and several businesses, such as Oslo Citrus Growers Association, and the Oslo Nursery, which preserve the old name.



I have not seen a Viking, Florida, postmark, nor any of the early ones from Oslo, Florida. Around 1908 an attractive flag postmark was used at Oslo. Shown here is an enlarged drawing of it. Later on, a regular-type handstamp with four horizontal killer bars came into use there; I have seen it from 1913.

## Scandinavians in Kansas



Just holding this yellow envelope in my hand seems to form a link with the past. I can almost conjure up the hard life of the frontiersmen struggling there on the endless prairie so long ago. Not only the names of the senders (Nelson & Skanke), but also the name of the place itself, LINDBORG, indicates an early Scandinavian settlement in Kansas back in 1873.

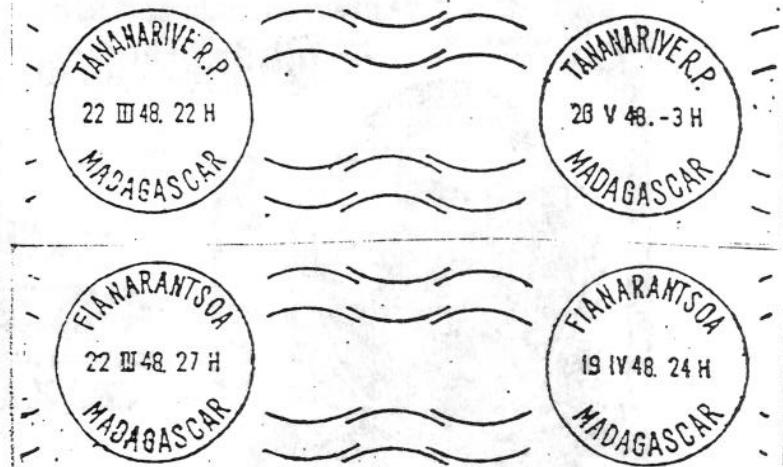
Even in those days, however, there seems to have been a slipping tendency to misspell "borg" as "burg", as appears in the printed return address on the envelope.

## FROM NORWAY TO MADAGASCAR

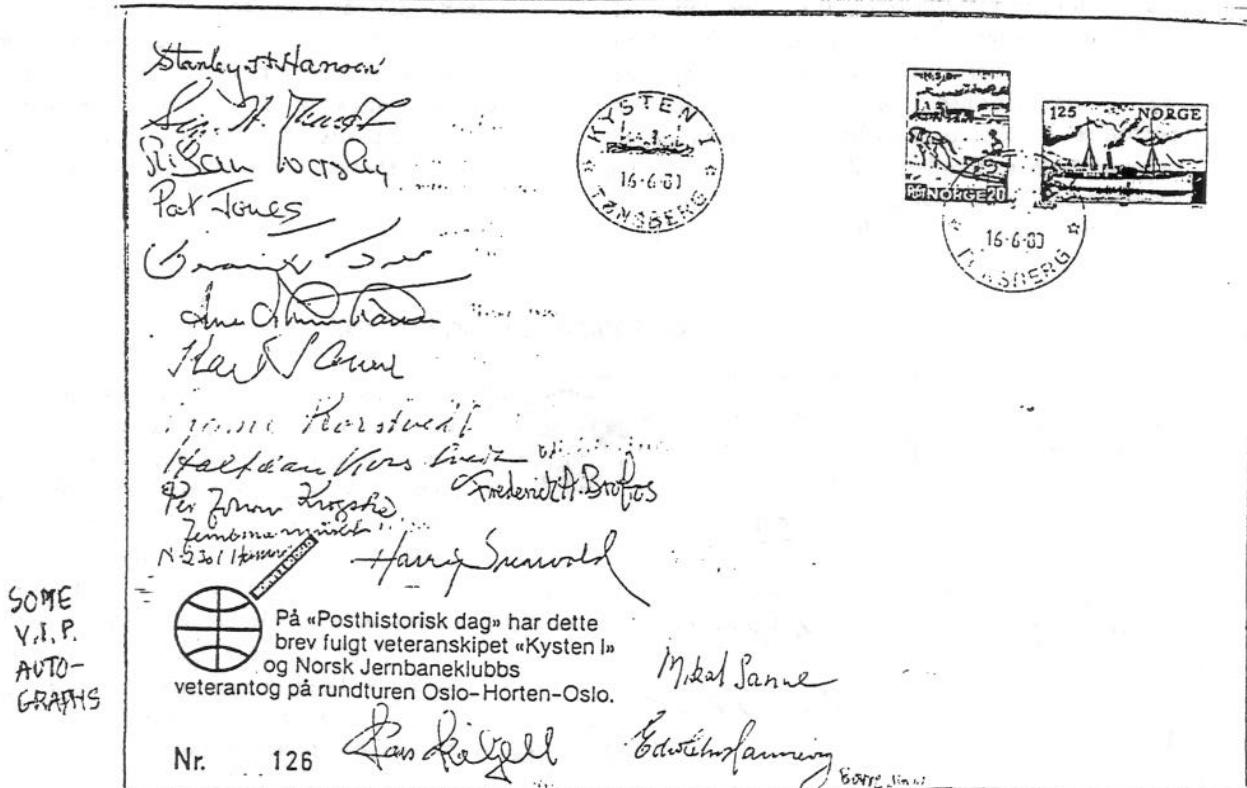
Frederick A. Brosos

Whenever Madagascar is mentioned, an experienced Norway collector automatically thinks of the primitive-looking stamps issued by the Norwegian Missionary Society in Madagascar back in the 1890's. Rare and interesting they are indeed, and I remember once seeing one of the world's best collections of them during my visit to the great NORWEX 80 exhibition in Oslo. A delightful excursion had been arranged along the beautiful Oslofjord aboard the small steamer "KYSTEN I" (with a special postmark), for foreign visitors and members of the Norwegian Postal History Society. We were sitting on the upper deck after a hearty meal, with the sound of live accordion music in the background, and the Norwegian postal flag fluttering in the breeze from the ship's stern.

In the course of genial conversation and recollections, Karl Sanne, the well-known authority of WWII Norwegian exile post, suddenly produced from a briefcase an album with his marvellous collection of Norwegian missionary stamps. The grand array, including strips, blocks and covers, was passed around. I was rather worried that the wind might whisk something overboard but the owner seemed quite unconcerned. Fortunately, nothing did get blown away.



There is, however, another link between Norway and Madagascar, which is less known to philatelists. Three cancelling machines were produced by the Norwegian firm of Krag and sent to Madagascar in 1948. These were of their type 12 motor machines, with multiple impression postmarks showing the broken wave design so familiar from machine cancels of Norway. One was used at the main postoffice in the capital of Tananarive, another at Fianarantsoa, and a third at some unidentified place. It is not known how long they were operative. It seems unlikely that they are still functioning now, after 42 years in the tropics. Nevertheless, they remain part of postal history.



## Scandinavian Activity in the Far East

Sometimes one runs across evidence of enterprising Scandinavians in unexpected places. I was, however, rather surprised to find a bank note from an undertaking in China called "The Sino-Scandinavian Bank." Even a Viking ship was pictured on the front of the note. The banking business in China was somewhat chaotic until the Treaty of Nanking was signed in 1839. Thereafter, assorted British banks dominated the scene for the next half century. Eventually, other foreign banks also gained a foothold, thus: Germany in 1889, Russia 1895, Japan 1898, USA, and France 1902, Belgium 1903, Holland 1904, and finally the Scandinavians in 1922. In order to encourage and stabilize local business activities, most of the foreign banks issued their own special bank notes. The regular Chinese government issues circulated alongside them.

The head office of the Sino-Scandinavian Bank (Hua Wei Yin Hang, in Chinese) was at Peking and it had branch offices in six other towns, namely Chang Li, Chinwangtao, Suiyuan, Tientsin, Yungchi, and Yungtsun. Each had its own bank notes, some were overprints on head office notes, while others were distinctive designs. Denominations were in "Yuans," "Cents," or "Copper Coins." The Great Wall was sometimes shown instead of the usual Viking ship. Of course, the *ancient* Vikings probably never did reach as far as China. The last issues were in 1926 and I suppose operations ceased then, at least in the production of bank notes.

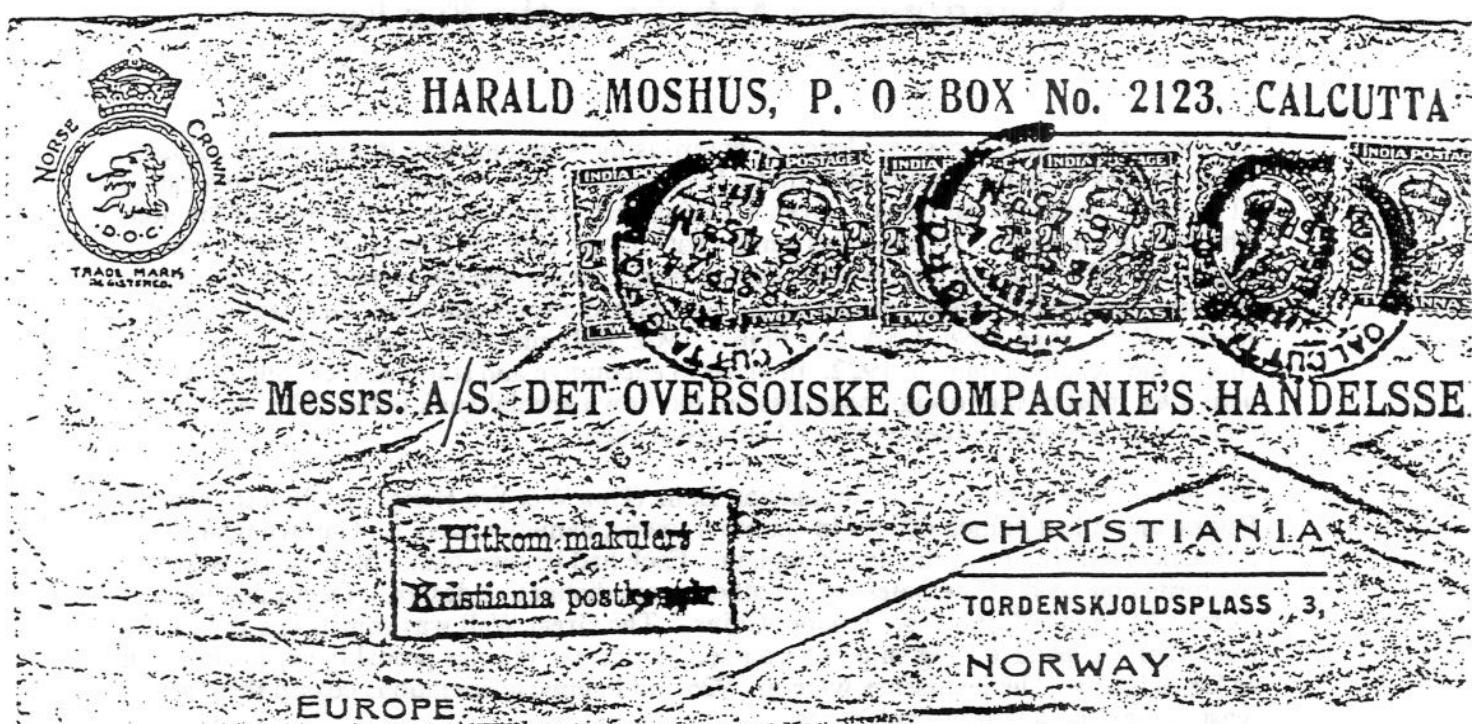
Although I am not going to hold my breath waiting, I shall keep a lookout for a cover from one of these banks. It is just possible that special perfins (SSB?) or meter machines may have been in use.



A 5-Yuan note from Peking overprinted for use at Yungchi.

Norwegian Damaged Mail Marking  
by Frederick A. Brofos

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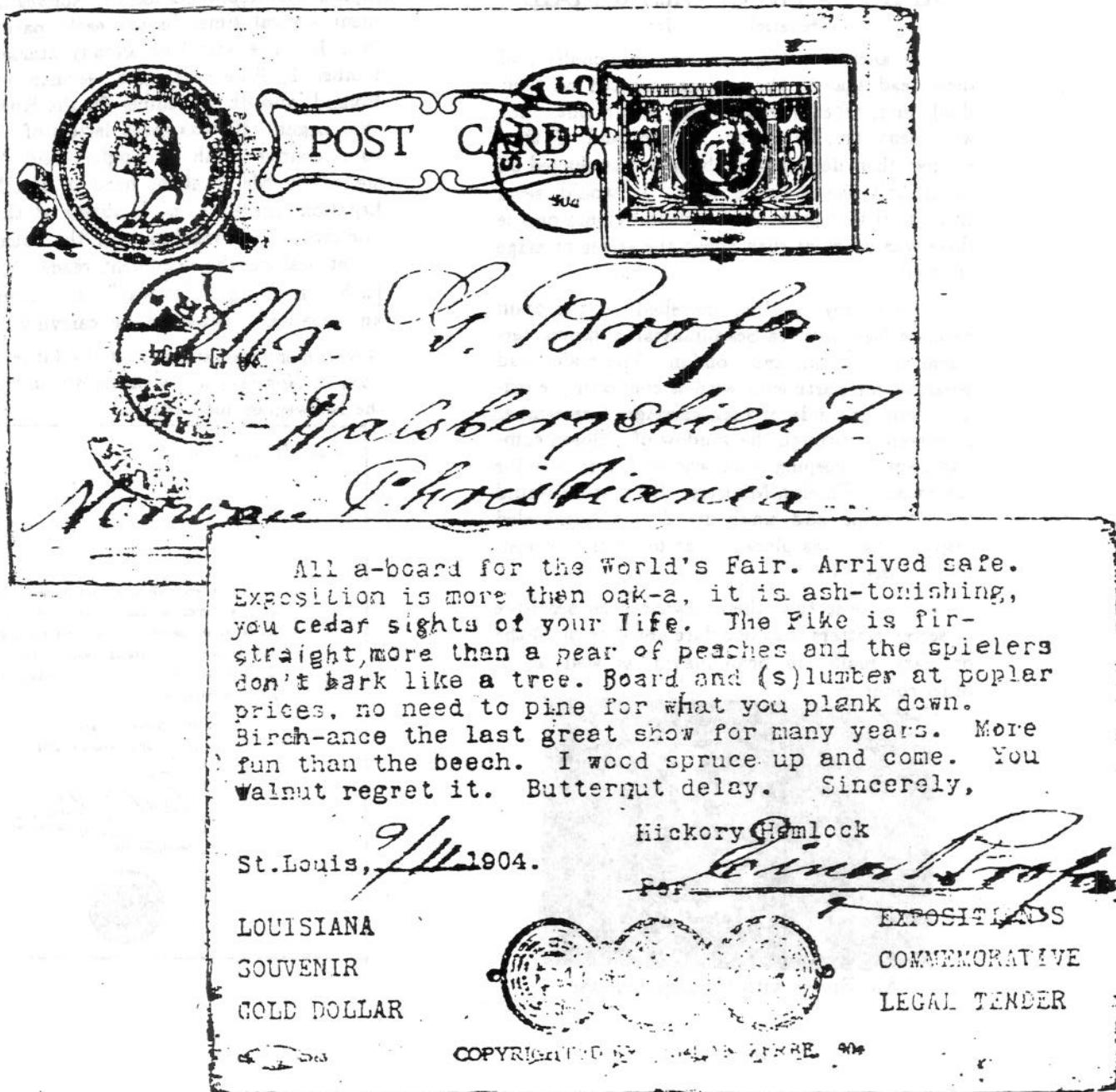
Browsing through a box of miscellaneous foreign covers at a stamp show, and not expecting to find anything Scandinavian, all of a sudden I hit a small bonanza: A bit of "Norwegian" from India. Sent in September, 1924, from a Norwegian firm in Calcutta with a "Norse Crown" trade mark (upper left), it arrived in Norway in bad condition. There, a marking that I have not run across before was applied in violet, reading "Hitkom makulert / Kristiania postkontor", and meaning "Arrived destroyed / Kristiania post office". Probably this marking did not continue in use much longer, as from January 1, 1925, the name of the capital city was changed from Kristiania to Oslo.



## WOODEN NOVELTY CARD SENT TO NORWAY

Frederick A. Brofos

The great attraction in 1904 was, of course, the World's Fair at St. Louis, Mo., or the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, as it was officially named.



My father, Einar Brofos, who lived in Chicago at the time, took the train down to Missouri and visited the great fair in September of that year. He sent off several of the special postcards available there. One, that has survived among family relics, is an unusual souvenir card printed on wood. Showing the exposition medal with Jefferson's head and the special gold commemorative dollars, this card includes some humor of the time in the printed text on the reverse. The card was produced and copyrighted by one Zampan Zerbe. A nice 5 cent McKinley expo stamp was affixed and cancelled in St. Louis on September 12. The card arrived in Kristiania on October 20, as proven by the "TUR 1" arrival mark. It was addressed to my grandfather Gustav Brofos, who no doubt showed it around to his friends explaining the curious play on words regarding trees that was considered quite a joke over there in America.

## DIPLOMATIC COURIER MAIL

Frederick A. Brofos

In ancient times, couriers occasionally had their head shaved, the message written on their skull, and, when the hair had grown out, they were sent on their way. When and if they reached their destination, the hair was shaved off again and the message read. It would seem either that hair grew quicker in Babylonia or else there was no great rush about the secret message after all.

As a boy, I often travelled on the train between Newcastle (a Scandinavian shipping terminal in England) and London. The trains had separate compartments with a connecting corridor along one side of each carriage, I remember once seeing, through the window of a closed compartment, a sleeping man who was a courier for the Swedish Foreign Ministry. So that he would be left alone and undisturbed, his wax-sealed dispatch case was placed so as to be clearly visible to passers-by.

I suppose that there always <sup>has</sup> been sensitive or secret matters that one dare not entrust to the ordinary mails, in Scandinavia as well as in other countries.



Mr. Brofos with his despatch case

Among the papers of my late father, Einar A. Brofos, I found some interesting documents proving that he too was actually a courier of diplomatic despatches for the Norwegian Government several times in the early part of World War II. The war had already started on September 1, 1939, with the German invasion of Poland, and on November 30 the Russo-Finnish War began. He was given letters of certification as a courier, both in English and Norwegian, signed by Mr. Colban, head of the Norwegian Legation (there was no Embassy at that time in London). The translation of the French on the violet seal on the document reads, "Legation of H. M. the King of Norway". It was unusual for an American citizen to be carrying Norwegian Government despatches, but my father, who was born in Norway, was well-known and trusted by the Norwegian authorities.

<i>Royal Norwegian Legation</i>  
<p>It is hereby certified that the bearer hereof, Mr. F. A. BROFOS, American Citizen, Norwegian born, who is leaving London for Norway on the 18th December, 1939, is carrier of official despatches from the Royal Norwegian Legation in London to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Oslo.</p> <p>Royal Norwegian Legation, London, 18th December, 1939.</p> <p><i>Erik Colban</i> Norwegian Minister.</p>

U.S. Diplomatic Mail from Scandinavia (Part I)



Fig. 1

Once in a while one runs across a curious cover with foreign stamps cancelled in the United States. Usually these are also marked "Paquebot" and derive from mail brought ashore at U. S. ports from foreign ships. Interesting as this ship mail may be, there is yet another and much scarcer type of cover to be found bearing foreign stamps cancelled in the U. S., and this comes from diplomatic mail. Several covers of this latter category repose in my collection, but only three of them are from Scandinavia. They are as follows:

1) Cover from American Consular Service, Christiania, Norway, addressed to a private person in Washington, D. C., franked by two of the red 10-skrone Posthorn stamps of Norway (1910 issue). These are cancelled by a Washington, D. C., hand-postmark in black dated June 22, 1918. In addition,

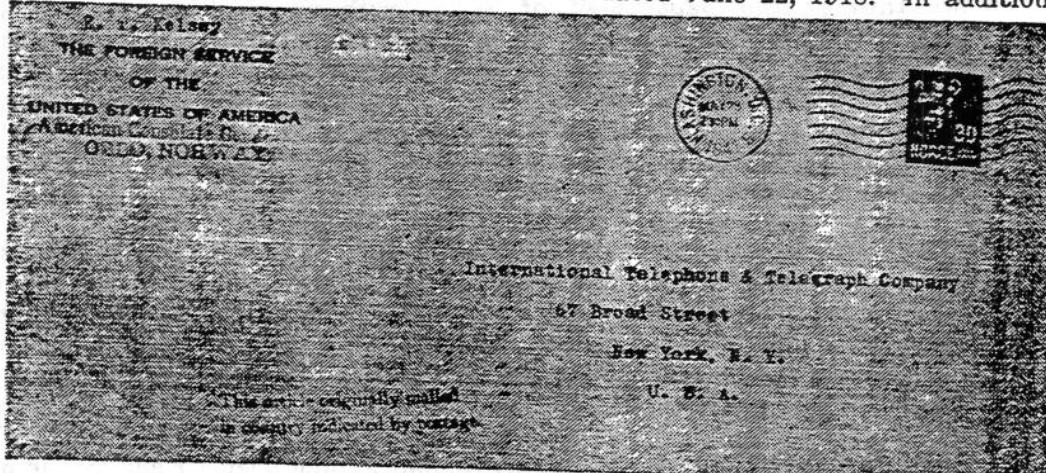


Fig. 2

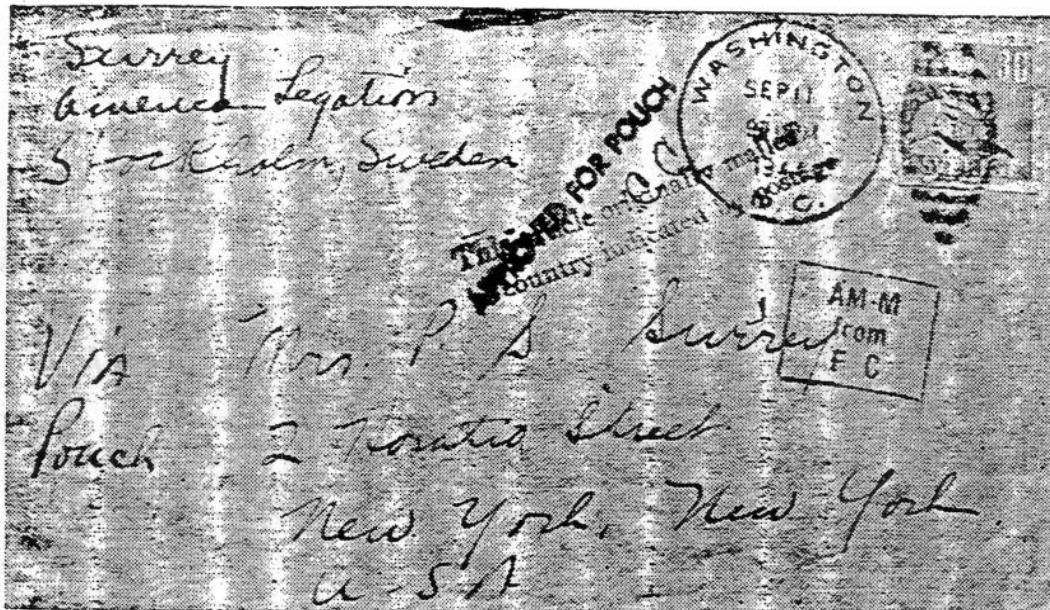


Fig. 3.

a 4-line handstamp in magenta has been struck on the envelope reading: "Washington, D. C., P. O. / This article was originally / mailed in country indicated / by postage." On the reverse is an oval strike in grey reading: "Consular Bureau, / Dept. of State.", with date in middle: JUN 21 1918.

2) Cover from American Consulate General, Oslo, Norway, to a company in New York City, franked by a Norwegian 30 øre blue Lion stamp (1937 issue). This is postmarked by a Washington, D. C., machine cancel dated May 28, 1941. A 2-line handstamp in magenta has been struck on the envelope reading: "This article originally mailed / in country indicated by postage."

3) Cover from staff member of American Legation, Stockholm, Sweden, addressed to a relative in New York City. Franked by a Swedish 30 øre blue King Gustav V stamp (1939 issue). This bears a Washington, D. C., hand-cancel dated Sept. 11, 1944. In addition to a magenta marking identical to that on cover No. 2, there are two markings in grey. One reads "Approved for pouch", the other "AM-M / from / FC" in three lines within a box frame. The latter mark I interpret to mean "American Mail from Foreign Country."

When mail originating abroad is received at the Washington, D. C., post office through the Department of State (with uncancelled foreign stamps affixed), they are cancelled by Washington, D. C., postmarks and an additional endorsement is added to explain the U. S. postmark on the foreign stamps. This mail, which arrives not only from Scandinavia but from all over the world, comes from the diplomatic dispatch pouches or mail bags sent by the U. S. Foreign Service. Besides the official despatches from the American embassies, legations and consulates abroad, employees thereof are at times permitted to send important private mail by the pouch.

This arrangement for U. S. diplomatic mail has been in effect for some time, as appears from my 1918 cover, and may have started before the turn of the century. Current regulations continue to call for the mail to be franked by stamps at the foreign letter rate of the country of origin.

Now, who can report whether this arrangement also works the other way round and whether a letter to, say Norway, sent by the Norwegian diplomatic pouch from their embassy in Washington, has to carry a U. S. stamp, which is later postmarked in Oslo? And are similar arrangements made by the other Scandinavian countries here, too?

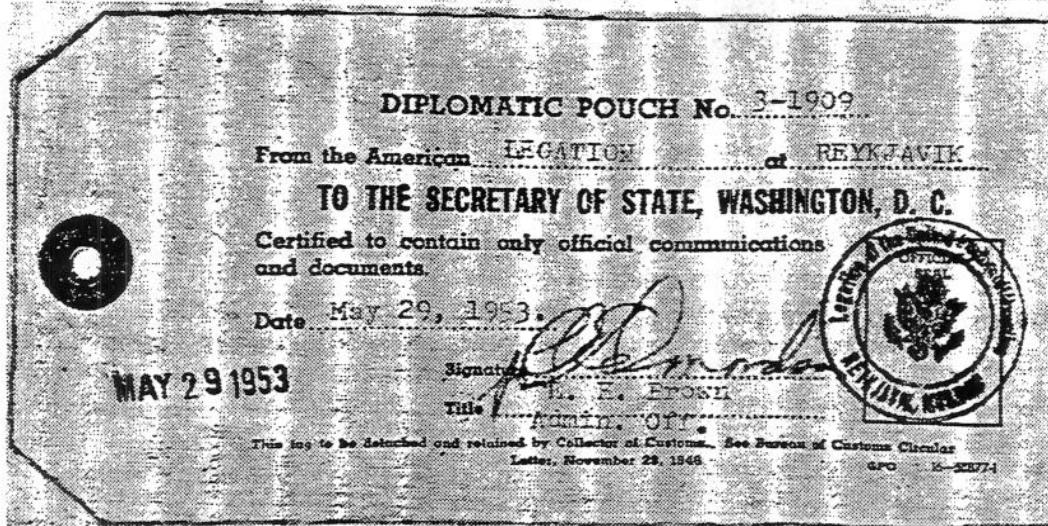
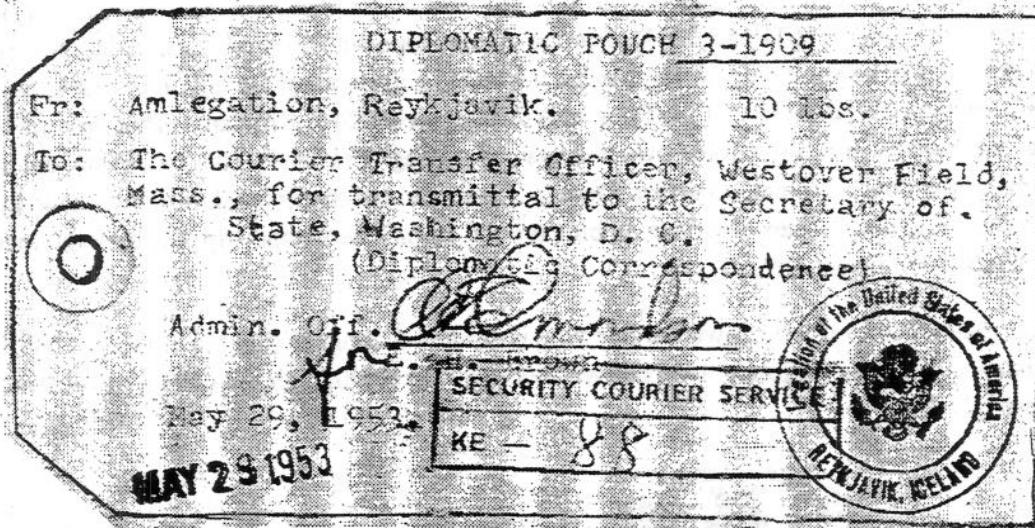
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## U. S. Diplomatic Mail from Scandinavia (Part 2)

By Frederick A. Brofos (H-11)

We have seen how private mail from abroad written by persons attached to the U. S. Foreign Service has to bear stamps of the country of origin. An example of official mail bearing foreign stamps cancelled in Washington, D. C., may be seen as cover no. 2 in my previous article. Its official character is born out by the letter which it still contains.

At a recent stamp show a certain cover caught my eye. It was a white legal-size stamped envelope with 2c U. S. embossed stamp, Scott U429 (1916/32), together with three 2c red stamps of the Washington type in use 1912/20. These stamps, totalling 8c postage, were cancelled with four violet impressions of the official oval rubber stamp of the Royal Danish Legation with the Danish Coat of Arms in center. The return address in the upper left corner was a blue rubber stamp impression reading "Consulate of Denmark / Boston". The envelope was addressed to "The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Copenhagen, Denmark".



In connection with diplomatic mail, I have included an illustration of two interesting address tags from a 10 lb. pouch sent to the Secretary of State in 1953 by the U. S. Legation in Reykjavik, Iceland.

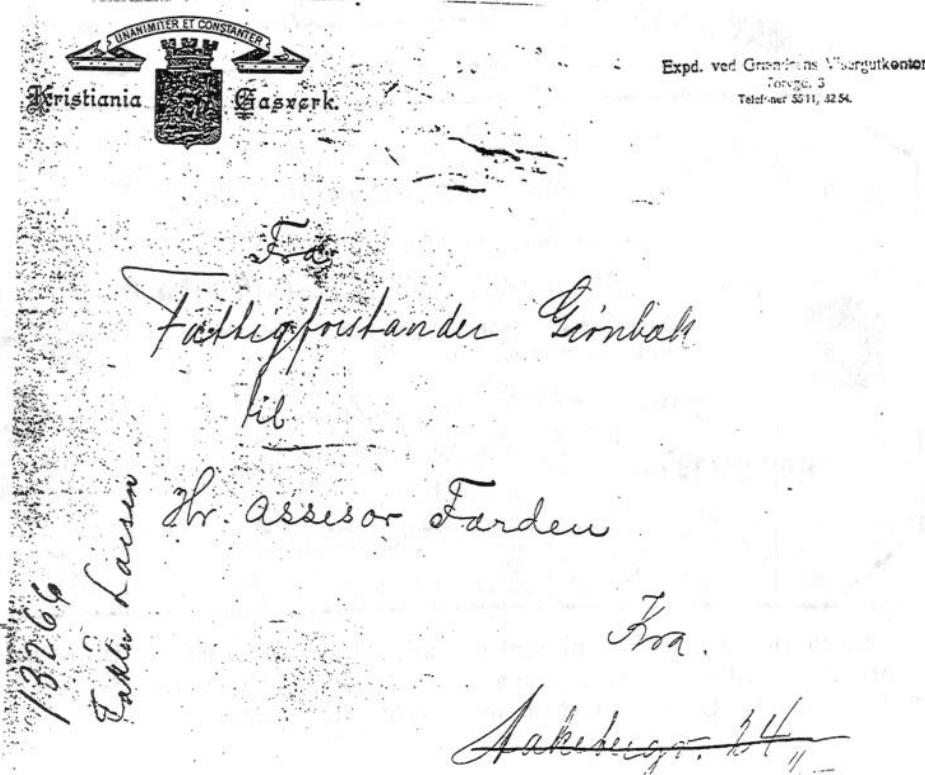
**Graendsen's Message Office, Kristiania  
by Frederick A. Brofos**

Little is known about this small private delivery service which operated many years ago in Norway. Its headquarters was at Torvgate 3 in Kristiania. There must have been some limitation on what could be handled there. The post office would otherwise have felt an infringement of its rights and suppressed the whole undertaking. Indeed, this may have finally happened in the end. Be that as it may, it is probable that regular letters were never permitted. Perhaps only urgent messages, parcels, and even flower bouquets were the acceptable thing.

I don't think the name of the firm refers to a person, but rather to an area adjacent to the old city limits. It means "border" in Norwegian. The mode of spelling ("Graendsen" versus the modern version "Grensen") would seem to indicate a use sometime around the turn of the century.

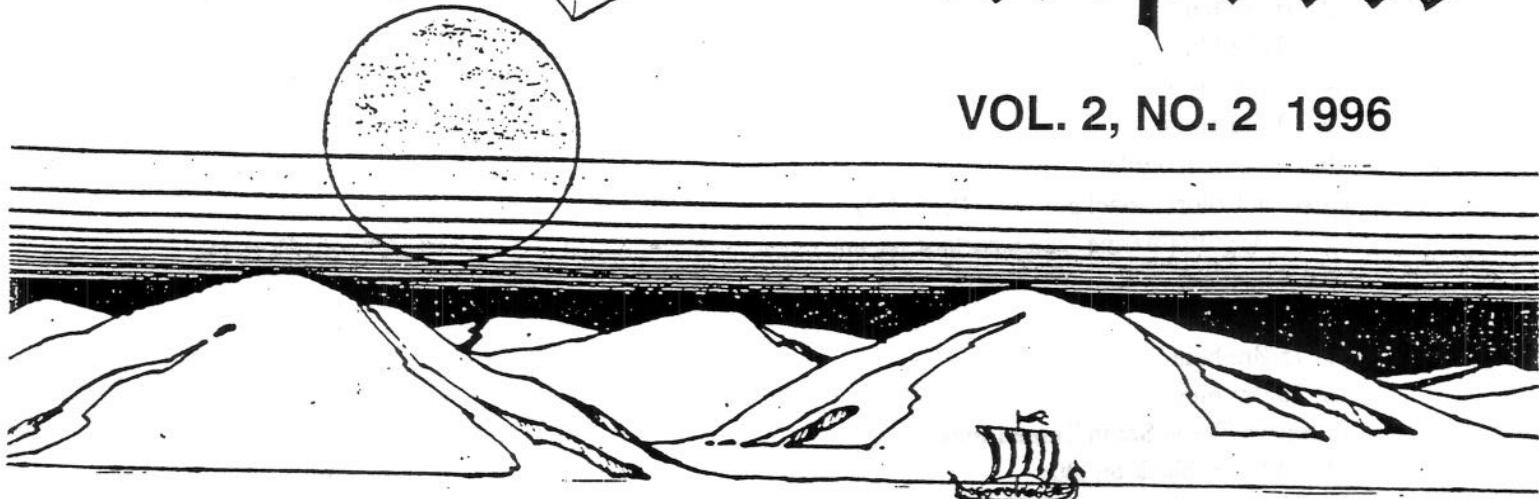
No kind of stamps are recorded. All I have seen is a large envelope I acquired from the great local post collection of the late Carl Pihl of Oslo. It bears a 3-line handstamp in violet reading in translation, "Serviced by Graendsens errand-boy office" together with their address and two telephone numbers (5511 and 3254). The brown envelope was originally sent from the Kristiania Gas Works and carries, in the upper left corner, the shield and motto of the city. It was originally sent to a Mr. Grønbaek, Supervisor of the Poor, at Aakebergveien 24 II Kristiania. This man cleverly reused the envelope by crossing out his own address and adding "Fra" and "Til" (i.e., From and To) and the name of the new recipient, Assessor Faerden. I imagine that the first delivery was made by a City Gas Works employee, perhaps distributing bills around town. The second trip was probably performed by Graendsens Message Office.

I am grateful to everyone down the line who preserved this interesting old envelope. It documents the existence of a long forgotten local delivery service which, although not quite a Local Post, is at least a close relation.



# Brofoss Reports

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## The Kristiania Stationery Dealer's Society Delivery Service by Frederick A. Brofos

As the name indicates, an association of stationery dealers in Kristiania, Norway had a special delivery office organized to assure the immediate arrival of birthday, wedding, and other announcements on the same day sent. It was also cheaper than any express service available to the Post Office. This was apparently an area in which the Post Office didn't object to a little competition. Indeed, this private delivery service flourished for a surprisingly long time. The Society, and perhaps the delivery office too, seems to have been founded in 1909. However, the earliest stamp seen strongly resembles in border design that of the Constitution Centennial stamps issued by the Post Office in 1914. Although none have been reported, maybe rubber handstamp franks were in use before. Congratulatory greetings to youth confirmed in their faith by the church were also handled. These messages were written on special decorative forms and envelopes sold in the stationery shops. A rival "greetings telegram" service was also operated by a certain Osvald Gubberud. Of course, a real telegram sent via the State Telegraph System was more expensive. Eventually they too offered special colorful greeting forms, at an additional cost.

At some point, the Society's name was changed to reflect the inclusion of some new members and became the "Oslo Soap & Stationery Dealer's Society". The name-change did not alter the stamps or envelopes, and appeared only on one of the last cancels. The cancellations, of which I have seen eight different ones, were invariably struck in violet. None have changeable dates, but two include the founding date of 1909.

Besides adhesive stamps, the Society also issued a number of large-size envelopes with the stamp, similar to the adhesives, printed directly thereon. The last large-envelope issued had, however, a design unlike any other. This showed a dove flying leftward with an envelope in its beak. At the bottom left side of the envelope is a multicolored picture of two youths leaving a church.

The Society was listed in the Oslo telephone catalog as late as 1952, with an address of Dronningensgate 13 (not far from the main Post Office). I think it was later disbanded.

### List of Stamp Issues

Letter Dove on White Background – Perf 11 $\frac{1}{2}$

1. No value indicated. Carmine
2. 10 Øre red
- 3. 10 Øre blue
4. 10 Øre brown
5. 10 Øre green
6. 15 Øre pale violet

Dove on Colored Background – Perf 11 $\frac{1}{2}$

7. 20 Øre ultramarine (chalk surface paper)

Text Change to "Oslo"

8. 15 Øre red
9. 15 Øre blue
10. 20 Øre blue

Primitive Type Set in Three Lines

11. 30 (Øre) black on blue
12. 30 (Øre) black on cream

### List of Stamped Envelopes

Letter Dove on Colored Background With "Kristiania" – Lithographed

1. 20 Øre yellow

Dove on Colored Background With "OSLO" – Lithographed

2. 15 Øre pink
3. 30 Øre pink Type 1 "OSLO" small letters
4. 30 Øre pink Type 2 "OSLO" larger letters

Same, but Typographed

5. 15 Øre pink
6. 30 Øre blue

New Modernized Dove Design

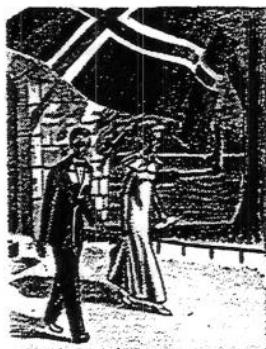
7. 40 Øre red



*Konfirmasjonsbilsen*

TIL hen Lili Johansen

Glenenggård 37  
Osg. 6 VI



THE ADHESIVE STAMPS



Origin of Frame

Perf  
11 $\frac{1}{2}$



Chalky Paper



Perf 11



## ENVELOPE CUTOUTS

Lithographed



Lithographed



Type 1



Type 2

Typographed



## CANCELLATIONS

Kortevarehandlernes  
Forening  
Oslo



Oslo Sape- &  
Kortevarehandlernes  
Forening



**Gubberud's Delivery Service, Kristiania**  
**by Frederick A. Brofos**

An enterprising fellow named Osvald Gubberud, who was a "Postpakmester" (i.e., Postal Package Master) at the Kristiania Parcel Post Office, also had an unofficial sideline. He ran a so-called Confirmation Telegram Service. This guaranteed the delivery, on the same day, of special congratulatory "telegrams", always so popular in Norway, that were sent by relatives and friends to youth just confirmed by the church. These were not real telegrams like those sent through the State Telegraph System which, incidentally also participated in this particular business. This private service probably operated more cheaply, by accepting messages directly by phone. With the State, one had to go and find a telegraph office (during limited office hours), fill out a form, and still get charged more.

An unintentional momento for philatelists from Gubberud's operation are the circa ten different stamps, produced over a period of time, for use on his envelopes. They were probably current during the first quarter of this century. An indication of that being the name "Kristiania", which appears on some issues, being later deleted. The capital's name of Kristiania was changed to Oslo in 1924. The following is a list of Gubberud's stamp issues.

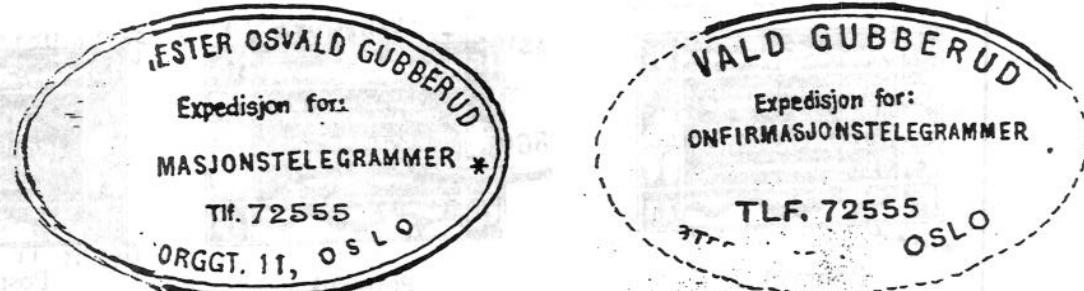
- |                           |                                |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. 20 Øre dark blue       | 6. 15 Øre dark green on yellow |
| 2. 15 Øre black on pink   | 7. 15 Øre dark red on yellow   |
| 3. 15 Øre black on blue   | 8. 15 Øre light green          |
| 4. 15 Øre black on yellow | 9. 15 Øre light brown          |
| 5. 15 Øre black on green  | 10. 15 Øre light red           |

The stamp design shows the firm name in the center and the denomination in the four corners. At the left and right side are a letter-carrying dove flying over the clouds, and three more along the bottom. At the top are some snowy mountains with forest on the left, a town at the right and telegraph lines connecting them. From #4 on, the name KRISTIANIA in the central text has been lined out. The first issue was on ordinary rough paper, sometimes white, but often colored. They are perforated 11 on #1 through #5 and 10 $\frac{1}{2}$  on #6 through #10. Numbers 3, 4, 5, 9, and 10 have been seen imperforate on one side or on a corner stamp on two sides. This would indicate that the edges of the sheet were left imperforate on some issues. However, on #10, I have an example which shows a margin tab at the bottom, but is imperforate on the left side.

Two large oval rubber-stamp cancellations, in violet have been noted. One includes the title "Postpakmester" while the other doesn't. They both show the office address of Gøteborgsgate 11, Oslo, and the phone no. 72555.

Incidentally, I think it was this same Gubberud who, in connection with his other job at the Post Office, patented a special type of handstamp for use on parcels. This was tried out at several different post offices. It was a rather large, oblong-shaped affair which, when struck on postage stamps, effectively obliterated them (perhaps too much so).

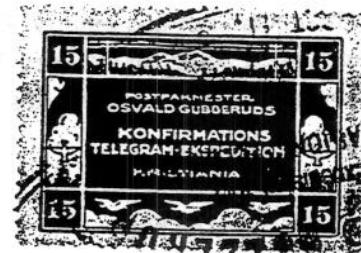
CANCELLATIONS



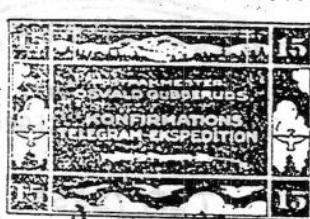
## ADHESIVE STAMPS

With Kristiania

Before 1925

Perf  
11

1925 and Later

Perf  
10 1/2

Postmark 2



Postmark 1



Postmark 1