Great Britain
Uses of the King George VI Definitive Series

Exhibit Purpose

Present the KGVI definitive series to viewers, showing a broad range of uses of these stamps.

Importance of King George VI Definitives

King George VI ruled from 1936 until his death in 1952. The stamp series spanned turbulent wartimes when his country's survival was in jeopardy, and the subsequent recovery years. The series was in use from 1937 through 1953.

Organization by Denomination

The definitive issues are each presented separately, with a single stamp and heading to guide the viewer. The uses are shown by value, organized as follows:

Solo is a single stamp on a cover
Multiples of the same stamp used
Mixed uses *within* the series together

The exhibit has the added challenge of presenting covers where only use of the stamps from within the series are used.

The Series

First issued in 1937 in dark colors, a second issue in 1941 in lighter colors, and 1951 issues in colors complimentary to UPU.

British Currency

12d (pence) = 1 shilling
20 shilling = £1

References

King George VI Specialized Stanley Gibbons
Great Britain Domestic & International Postal Rates & Fees, 1871-1999, Anthony Wawrukiewicz.
Collect British Postmarks, Stanley Gibbons
Intercepted in Bermuda, Peter Flynn
Airmail Operations, Thomas Boyle, Jr.
British Empire Civil Censorship, K. Morenweiser

Order of Exhibit



Low Values ½d—6d



Mid Values 7d—1/-



High Values 2/6d—£1

Format for covers described in the exhibit

Description

Rate

Date

Additional information

Significant items boxed in **maroon**.

Great Britain

Uses of the King George VI Definitive Series Synopsis 2016

Title and Treatment
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The exhibit is restricted to use of the stamps within the series excepting the introduction where overlapping use is presented.

Rate information presented in brief summary form, yet described on individual covers. Information on routes and wartime related censoring and other markings are briefly described as they are not the main focus.
Cover Description are kept brief: Bolded text says why the cover is being shown, below that are the rate and date.
Stamps just to guide you: Shown to introduce each new value and help you navigate the exhibit.

Importance
The series presents issues used which spanned the wartime and recovery years of Britain. Covers selected to present the reach of the empire and the challenges of mail delivery at the time.

Knowledge, Study & Research
Descriptions on the side of the cover are kept short. Information below the covers give more detail, the selection of covers and detail presented demonstrates exhibitor knowledge.

Completeness
Each value is presented with solo, multiple and mixed use examples. Certain issues are much more difficult to find in intended postal use, the exhibit presents many covers where unusual combinations are shown.

The difficulty factor is in the aggregate of collecting and presenting all values, and showing the solo, multiple and mixed denomination covers assembled here.

Rarity
Relatively more pages are devoted to the challenging issues. Those issues are ones in use for a shorter time, with values not matching rates, and high values of the series. Maroon boxes around covers indicate significant items, bolded descriptions indicate why.

Condition
Better condition covers are shown, however war time mail processing, extensive forwarding, and wartime paper shortages and quality issues affect condition. In the exhibit care has been taken to show better items yet still show the typical use.

What you won't find
- Other commemorative stamps on covers shown
- Revenue uses, the exhibit is restricted to postal uses
- Cachet and philatelically inspired covers generally excluded, multiples of stamps used instead of a higher denomination issue are shown: these were typical of the times, and subject to availability and postal use of stock.
- First day covers generally excluded.
- Series used overprinted for Offices Abroad, an example is included for representational purposes only.
- Extensive descriptions of military & censor markings which are beyond the scope of this "Uses of" exhibit.
- All airline routing or carrier information, on certain covers this is added where of particular interest.

What you will find & Highlights
- Wide variety of destinations.
- Each issue 2 to 6 pages, balanced as appropriate while placing somewhat more emphasis on the more challenging issues and the high values.
- Extensive high values with larger items and franking.
- Wartime mail censored, forwarded, rerouted and more.

Conclusion—The series was replaced by the QEII definitives issued in 1952. King George VI ruled from 1936 until his death in 1952.

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Introduction

After the abdication of King Edward VIII, definitives for the new monarch were issued as a series beginning May 3, 1937. Like the Edward VIII issues, these were printed photogravure by Harrison & Sons in sheets of 240, 20 rows of 12, perforated 15 x 14. For this issue the watermark changed to GVIR and Crown.

Stamps were each issued in different colors, Universal Postal Union (UPU) colors used in the series are:

Green—Printed Matter Red—Post Card Blue—Foreign Letter.

Surface rates for British mail were set by mail type.

Surface Rates	To April 30 1940	May 1940	Oct. 1950
Printed Matter	½d	½d	1½d
Letter—domestic	1½d	2½d	2½d
Commonwealth & US	1½d	2½d	2½d
Rest of World	2½d	3d	4d
Post card—domestic	1d	2d	2d
Commonwealth & US	1d	2d	2d
Rest of World	1½d	2½d	2½d

Airmail rates are set by zones, simplified here as a guide.

Airmail Rates By Zone	All Wartime Rates	Post War Jan 17, 1947	Beginning Oct 1, 1950
Letter			Europe 4d
Zone A—Europe	Shown in Exhibit	6d	6d
Zone B—Americas		1/-	1/-
Zone C—World		1/3d	1/3d
Post card			
Zone A—Europe	Shown in Exhibit	3d	3d
Zone B—Americas		6d	6d
Zone C—World		7d	7d

Three Kings: Registered Insured To Switzerland



10½d rate
4d Insurance
3d Registration
2½d foreign letter
1937

With the rapid change in monarchs, in 1937 issues from three monarchs were used together on cover.

1937 Series



½d Deep Green

Issued May 10, 1937, the ½d stamp paid UPU Printed Matter rates and a Certificate of Posting fee.

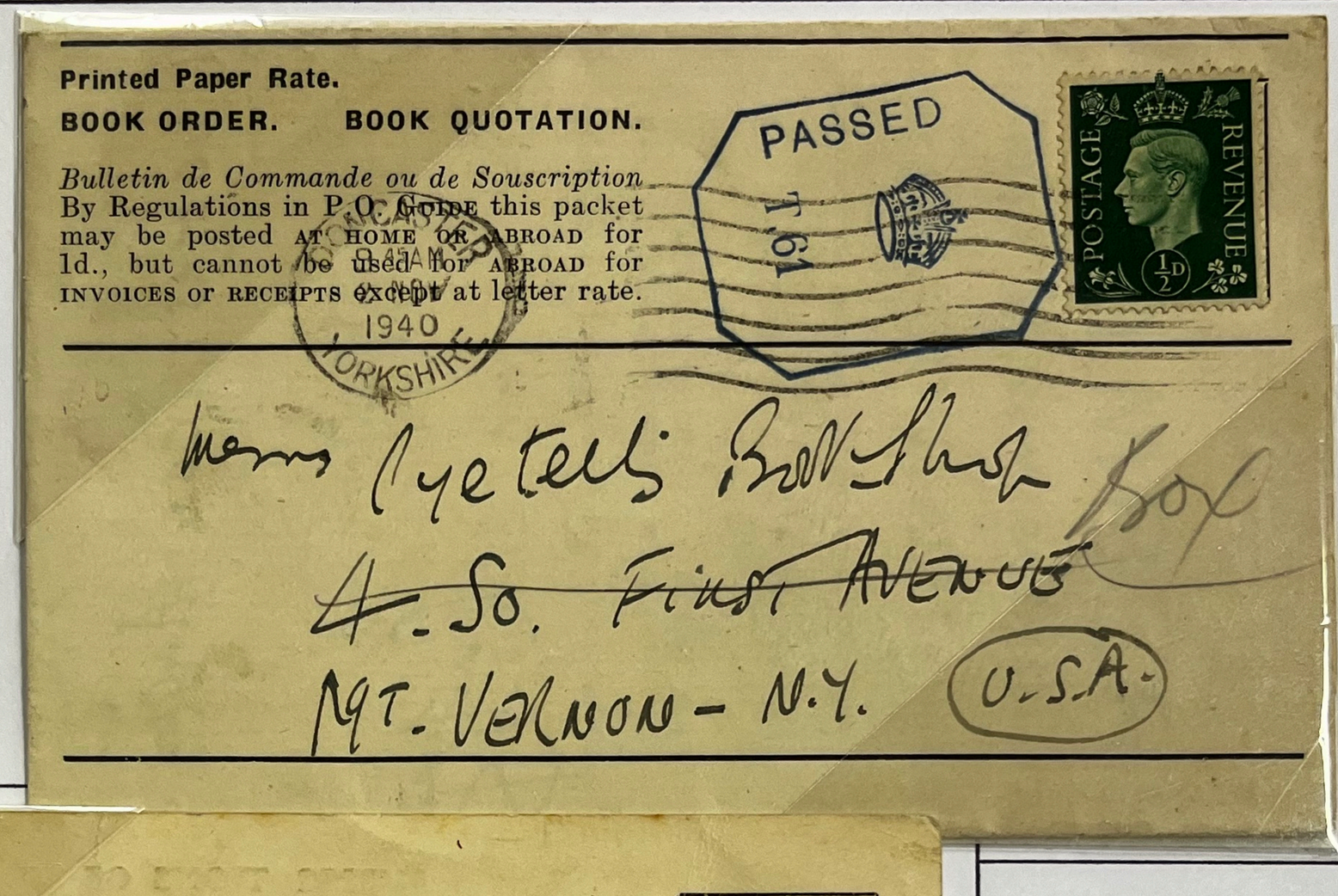
Issued in **Deep Green** in 1937, **Pale Green** in 1941 and **Orange** in 1951.

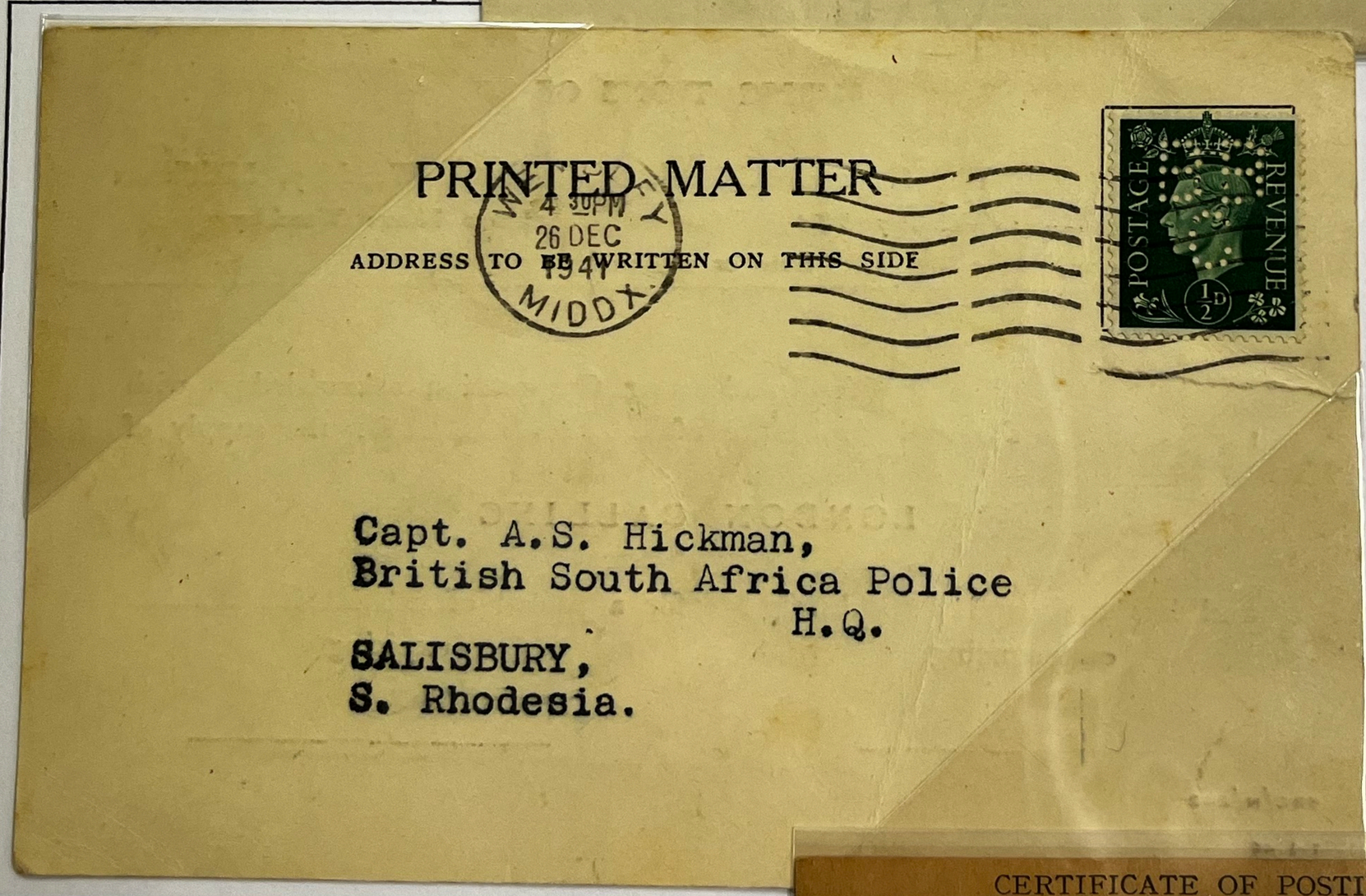
Price List Printed Matter to the US

½d Commonwealth and US rate

1940

British censor, "Passed T–61" T for Trade censor marking. US pencil marked for postal box.

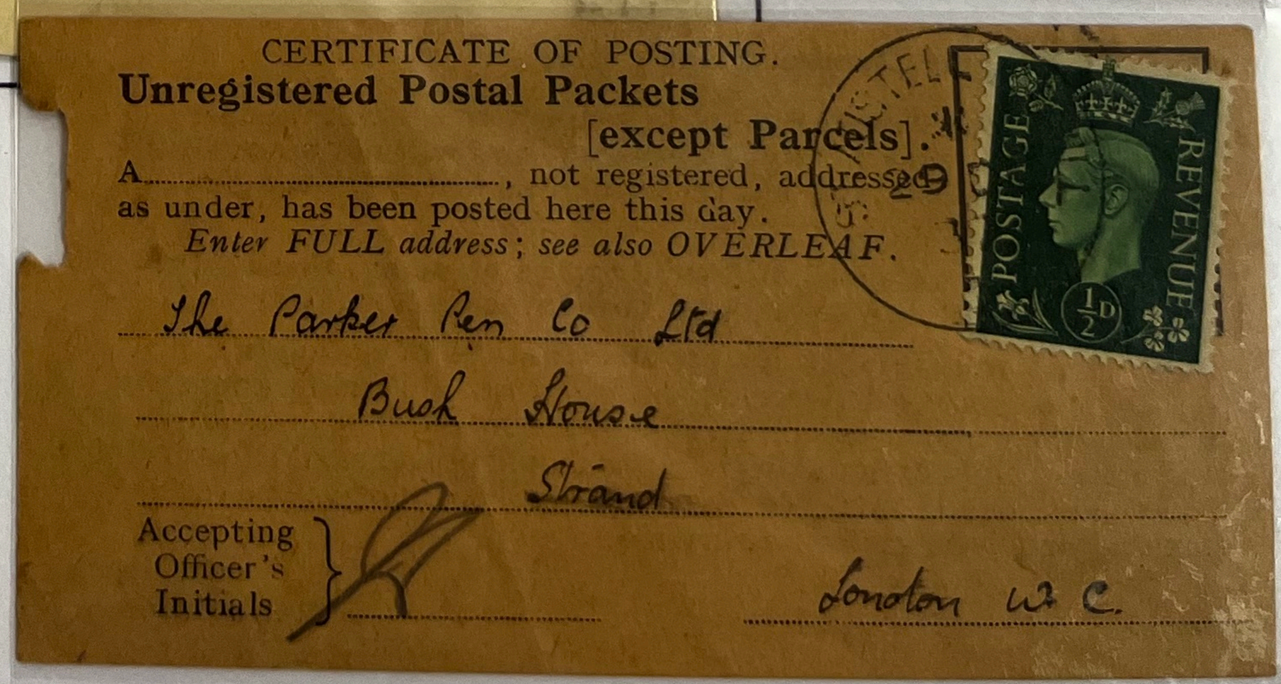




To Southern Rhodesia Printed Matter

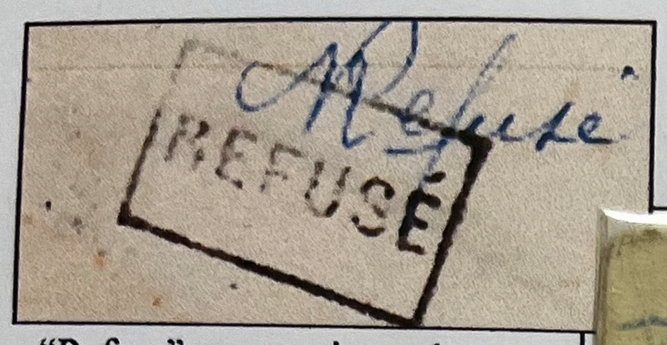
½d Pre-Printed Commercial Card 1941

Postmarked December 25, 1941, a public holiday.
Perfin: **BBC** from British Broadcasting Corp.



Certificate of Posting
Fee paid with the ½d
1938

Multiple Use



"Refuse" manuscript and French handstamp on reverse
Scan at 60%.

To France
Postage Due

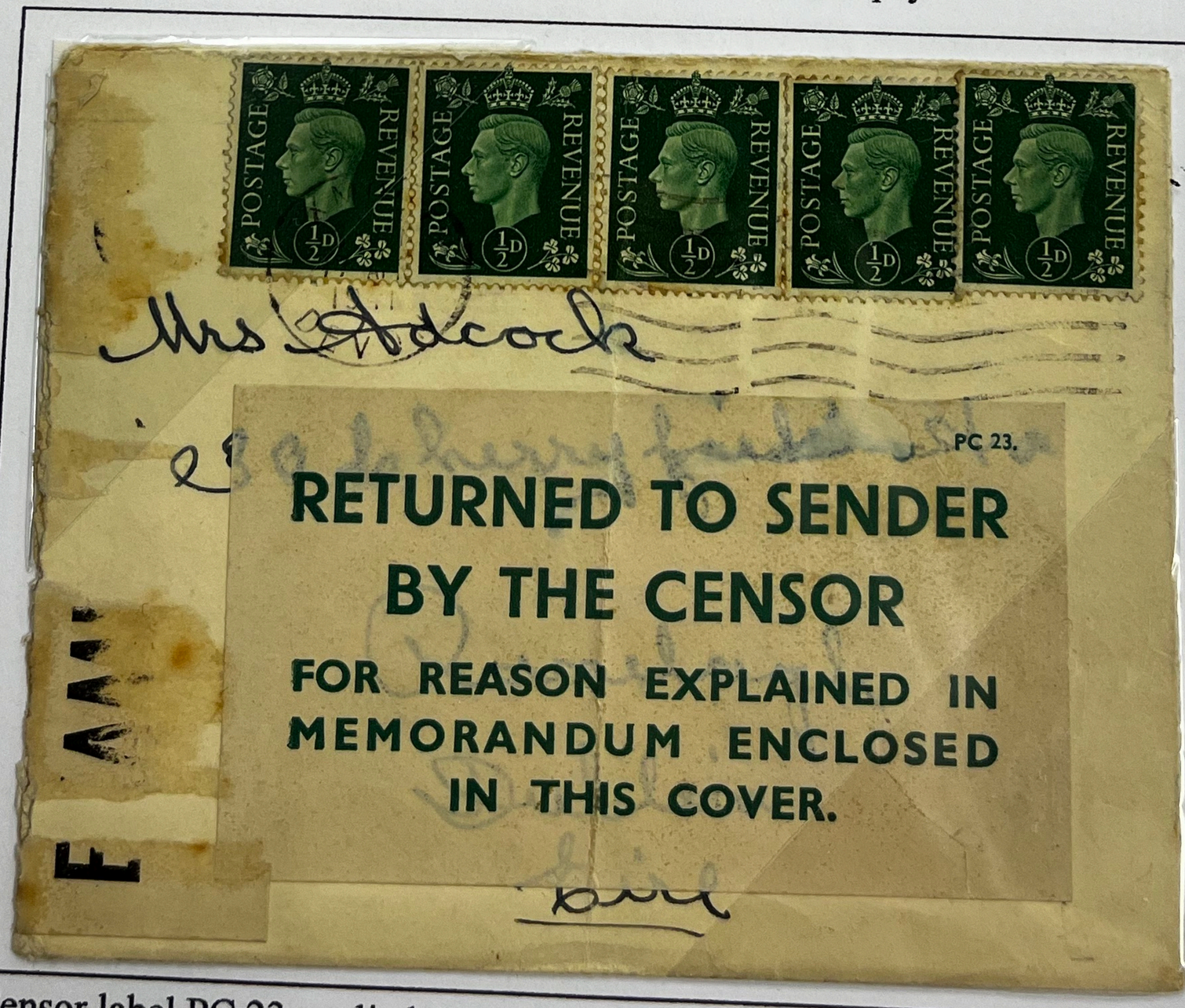
Surface letter rate 2½d
Shortpaid 1d
1938



Short paid 1d, two times short pay assessed Postage Due on delivery, 1f80c French Postage Due stamps marked off as uncollected, letter refused. T hexagon British due marking. Upon return 2d due manuscript marked to pay.

Censor Returned Letter to Ireland

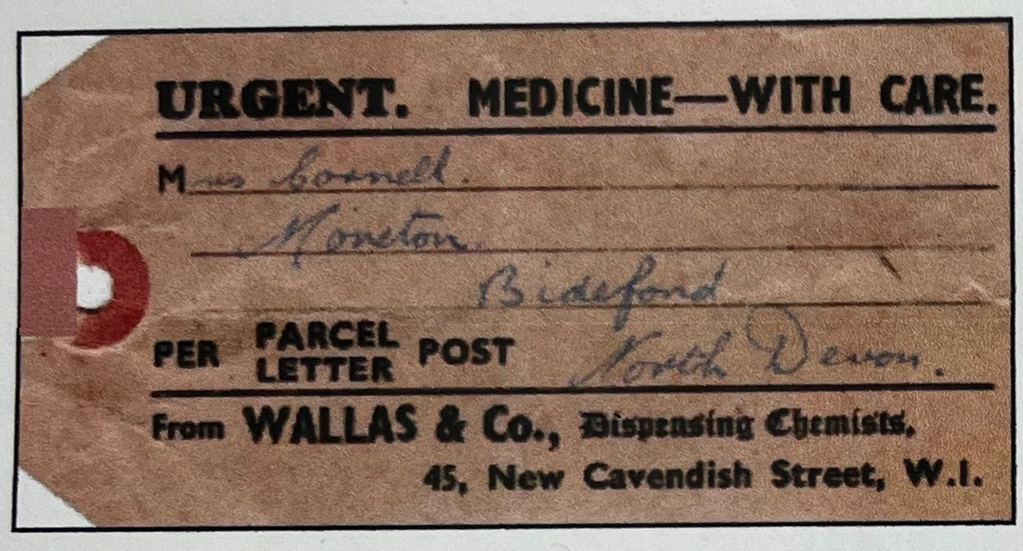
2½d
Commonwealth and US rate
1941



Censor label PC 23 applied over addressee, and returned.

Multiple Use





Parcel Post 7 x ½d. Paid 3½d for 7 oz., 1941.

Tag: Parcel Post Letter

Mixed Use

Two Kings Franking

"Poached Egg" Test Stamp

Underpaid 1½d surface letter, Double Deficiency due

½d underpaid 2 x ½d = 1d due

1940



Testing labels, termed "poached eggs," were issued in 1936 for testing purposes and were not valid for postage in 1940.

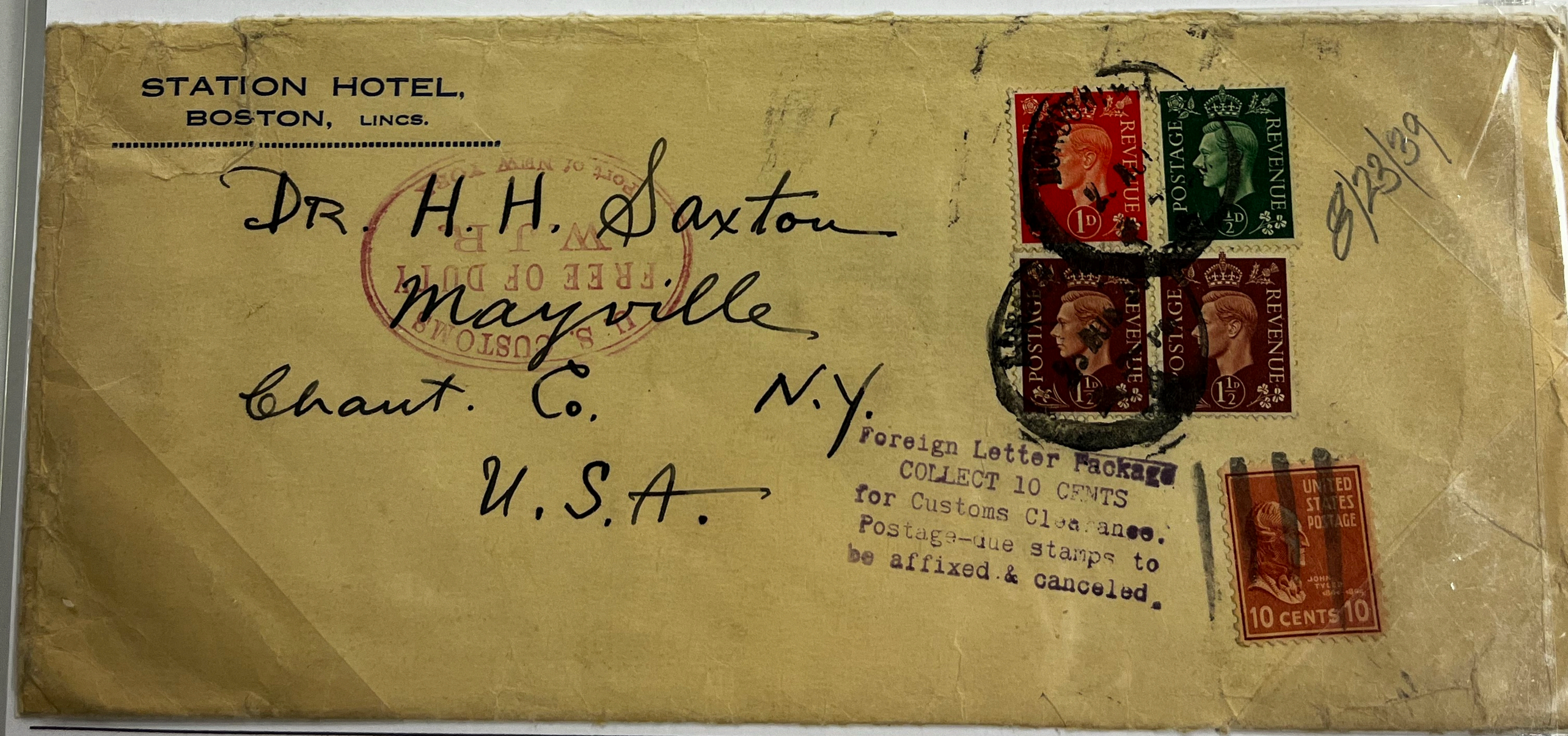
Mixed Use

To Honduras
Foreign Surface Letter

3d surface letter rate
1941



Censored letter, PC 90 label, transatlantic and backstamped via Belize and Puerto Cortes, Honduras for arrival in Ceiba, transit time 67 days.



Double Weight surface letter package, rate 4½d , 1939. 10c US foreign letter package customs inspection fee paid by 10c Tyler Presidential definitive. Oval US Customs Free of Duty handstamp applied in New York.

1941 Series



½d Pale Green

Issued October 6, 1941, this second ½d stamp was also used for the UPU Printed Matter rate. The stamp was printed in pale green, using less ink owing to wartime shortages.

Solo & Multiple Use



Undeliverable & Returned ↑
Army Field Post Office Mail

Printed Matter ½d rate
944

rmed Forces Envelope →

1d unsealed letter
1945

Multiple Use

Military Concession Rate to North Africa

1½d Surface

1943



Paid 1½d rate with 3 x ½d, stamps lower perfs scissor cut or strip for coil. Letter is holiday mail to a military hospital, addressed APO 698, Algiers, Algeria. TB holiday greeting seal applied.

Block of Six Surface to US

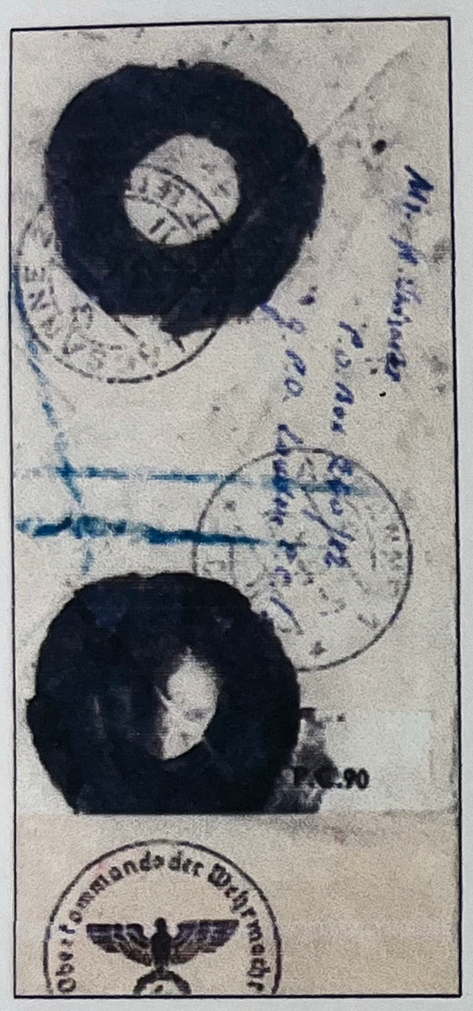
6 x ½d for 3d surface letter

1943



Top margin block of six is not a booklet pane as the orientation of the margin and no staple holes, which a booklet pane would have.

Mixed Use



Reduced reverse partial

Private Messaging to Polish POWs

Sent to Helene Lübke

Switzerland

Place of mailing obliterated

2½d Surface

3d Registration

1944



Helene Lübke , a Polish woman living in Laussane, used four addresses, including this Case 1711, and provided, at her own expense, a trans-mailing service to Polish POWs. British censorship includes PC90 censor label, defacing the Registration label, re-registered at London, and fully obliterating the datestamp. German *Geõffnet* German sealing label "d" indicates censor in Berlin. Red Geprüft/Zensurstelle hand stamp with one star at the left from the Munich Foreign Mail Examination Office, processor for Swiss mail, red boxed 2165 is the number of the individual censor examiner.

Legitimate use of cut out postal stationery indicium

2½d surface letter

1947

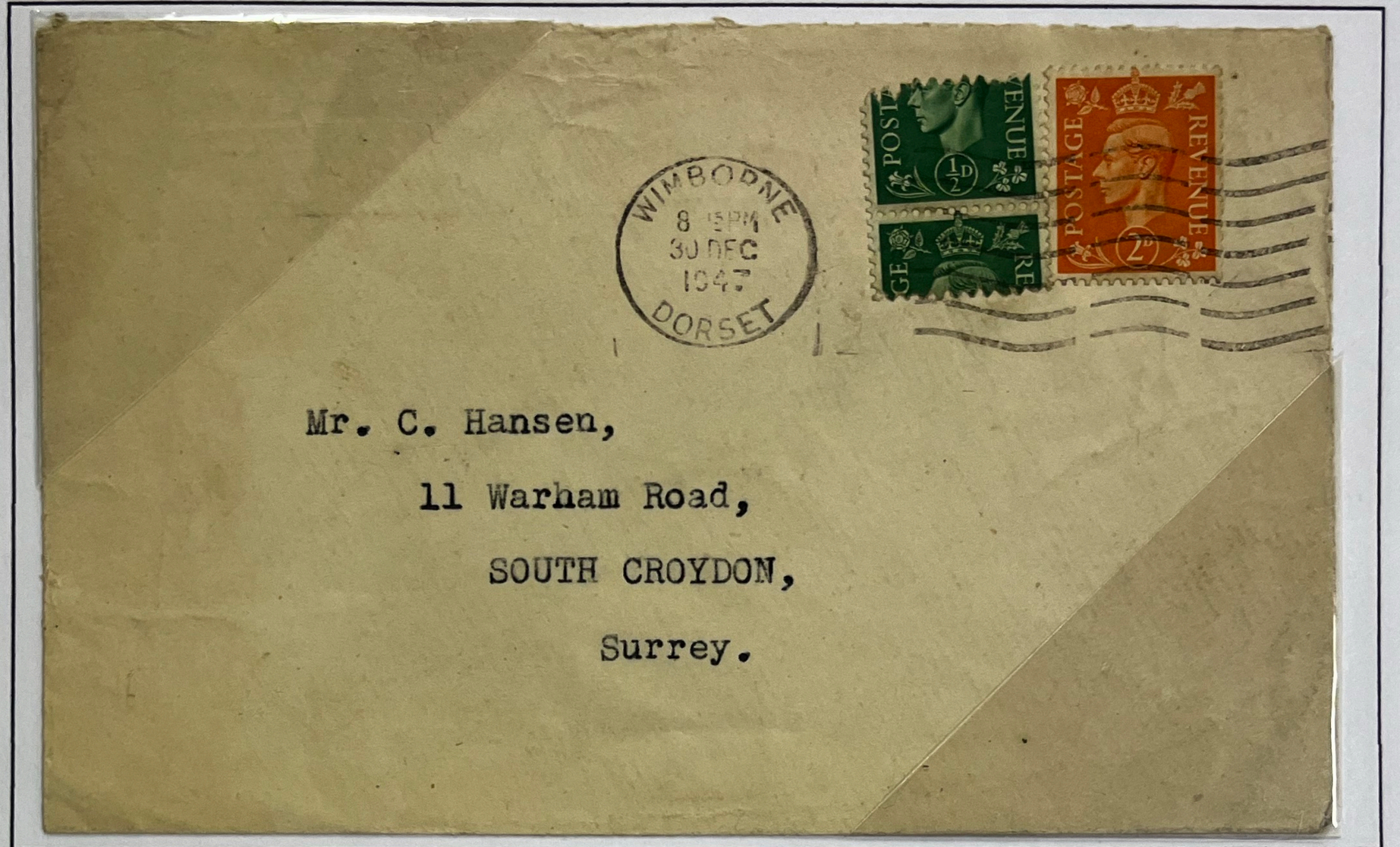


Economy Use: white label applied to envelope for reuse.

Multiple Use

Dispenser Miscut

2½d Inland Letter
1947



Stamps misaligned when roll loaded in stamp dispenser creating miscut. Serration on franking accepted, a full stamp represented on the cover.

Express Delivery

8½d Express Delivery
Inland Letter
1945



Express Delivery rate 6d with five ½d singles, one from the 1937 series, paying letter rate.

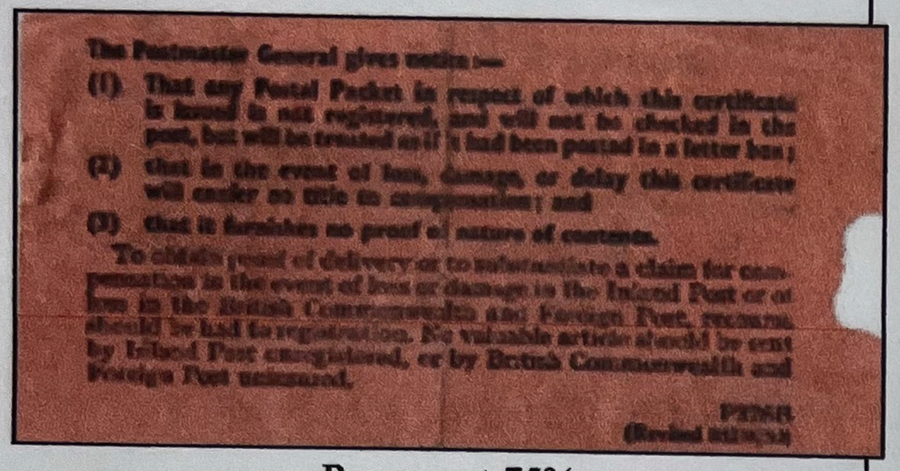
1951 Series



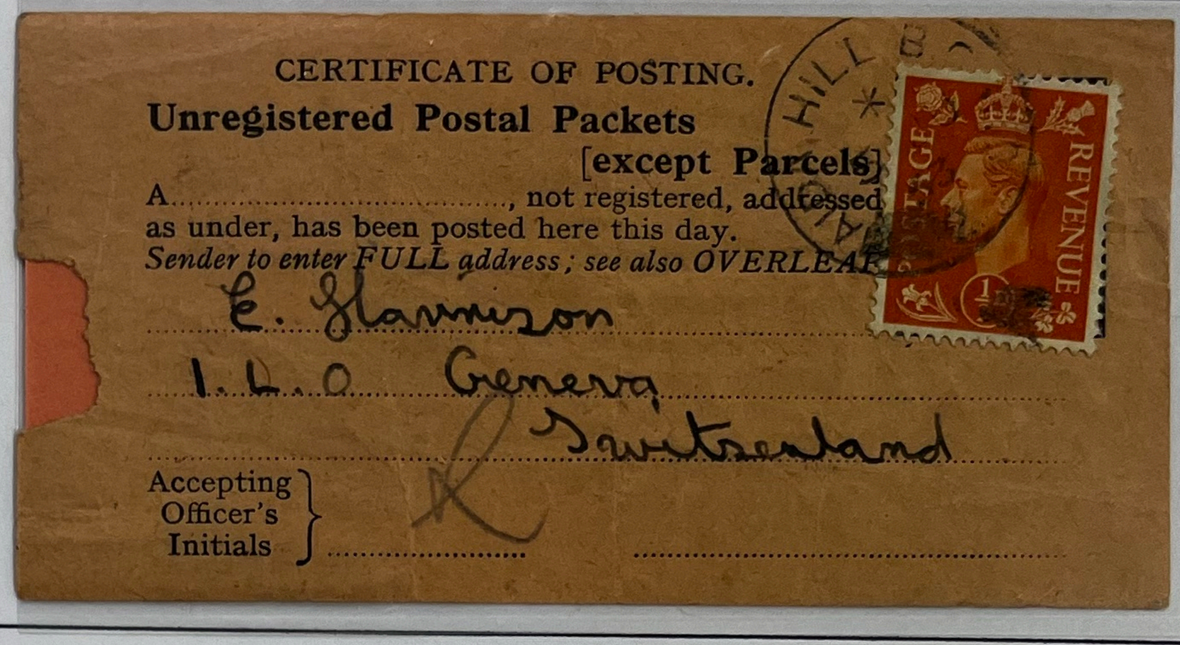
½d Orange

Issued May 3, 1951, the ½d stamp was issued with a color change to orange. A rate change on Printed Matter from ½d to 1½d in October 1950 necessitated a change from the UPU Green for Printed Matter.

Solo Use



Reverse at 75%



Certificate of Posting fee paid with the ½d issue, 1953.

Multiple Use

To South Australia

Surface letter
3 x ½d rate
1951



Slogan cancel, "Civil Defense Join Now" used November 1—30, 1951.

Mixed Use



Postal Seal covers additional franking. On reverse: Addressing instruction and delivery attempts.

Undeliverable Surface Letter

2½d Inland Letter

2d under postal seal, ½d visible

1954



To Scotland
From APO 328
serving in Northern Ireland

2 ½d Military Concession Rate
1952



1937 Series



1d Scarlet

Issued May 10, 1937, the 1d stamp paid the Commonwealth and US post card and UPU 2 oz. Printed Matter rate.

Issued in **Scarlet** in 1937, **Red** in 1940 and **Blue** in 1951.

Solo Use

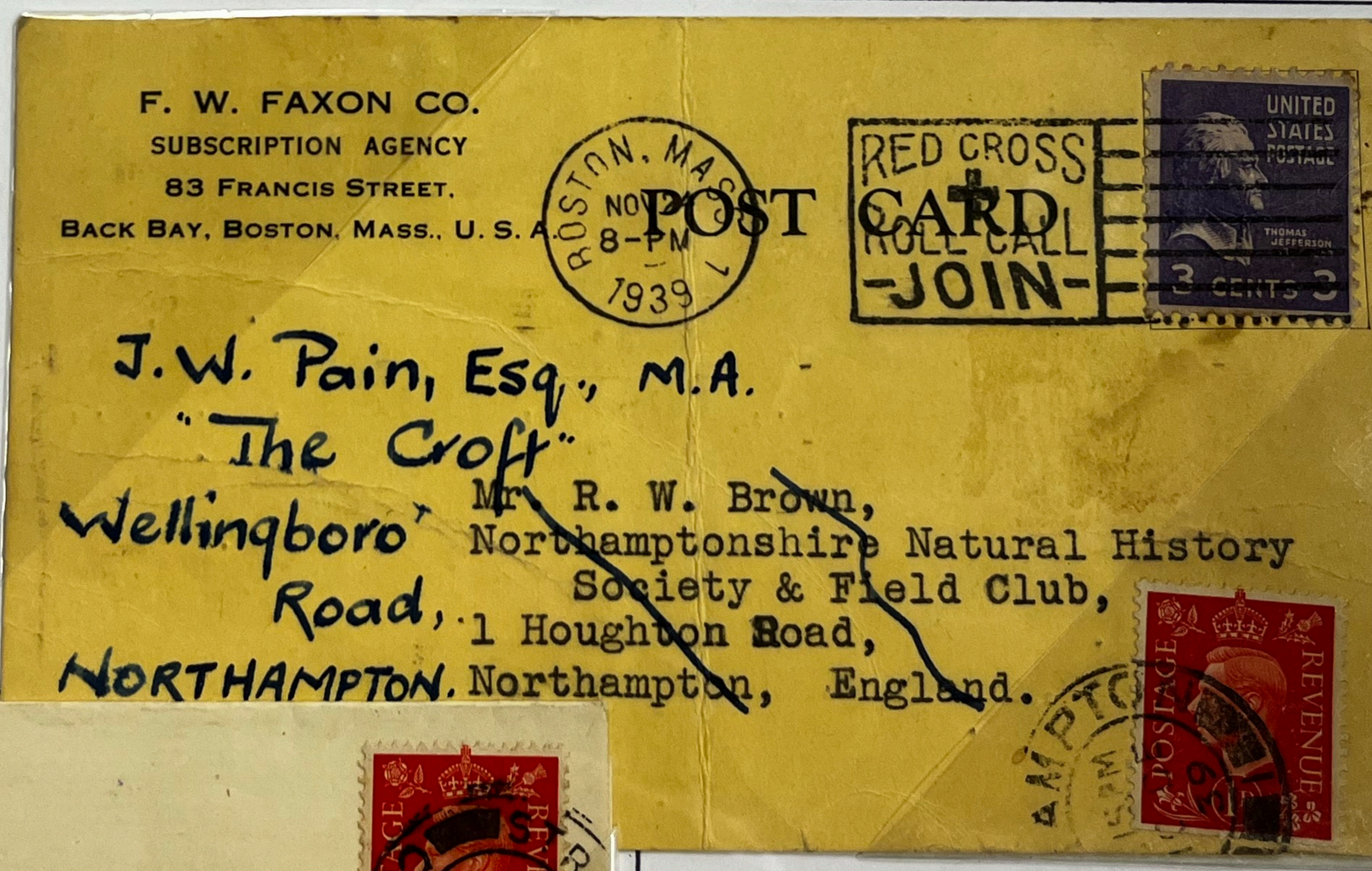
Coronation Commemoration

Inland
Post Card 1d
1937



Remailed Post Card

Inland
Post Card 1d
1939



←**Wrapper**

Printed Matter
UPU rate 1d for 2 oz.
1940

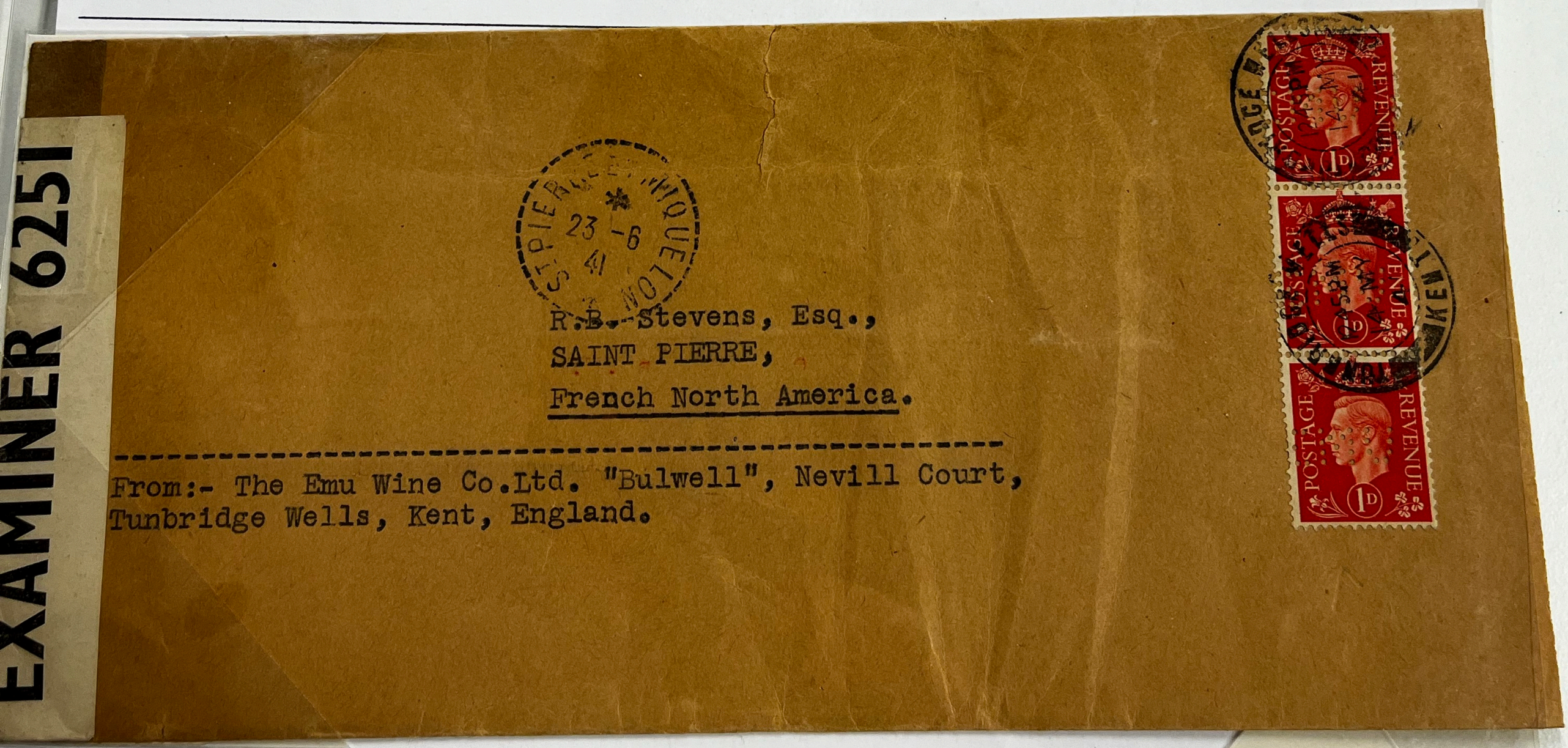
Multiple Use

Red Cross Postal Scheme Switzerland

3d Surface rate



International Red Cross Postal Scheme channeled wartime mail across enemy lines. Opened and censured, address restored by censor when PC 90 label covered all or part of the original addressing on the envelope.



To Saint Pierre, French North America (Saint Pierre and Miquelon) 3d Surface, 1941

Perfin "EMU" Emu Wine Co. Censor opened and tape resealed with PC 90 label, surface delivery 39 days.



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The difficulty factor is in the aggregate of collecting and presenting all values, and showing the solo, multiple and mixed denomination covers assembled here.

Rarity
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Condition
Better condition covers are shown, however war time mail processing, extensive forwarding, and wartime paper shortages and quality issues affect condition. In the exhibit care has been taken to show better items yet still show the typical use.

What you won't find
- Other commemorative stamps on covers shown
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- Extensive high values with larger items and franking.
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Conclusion
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1941 Series



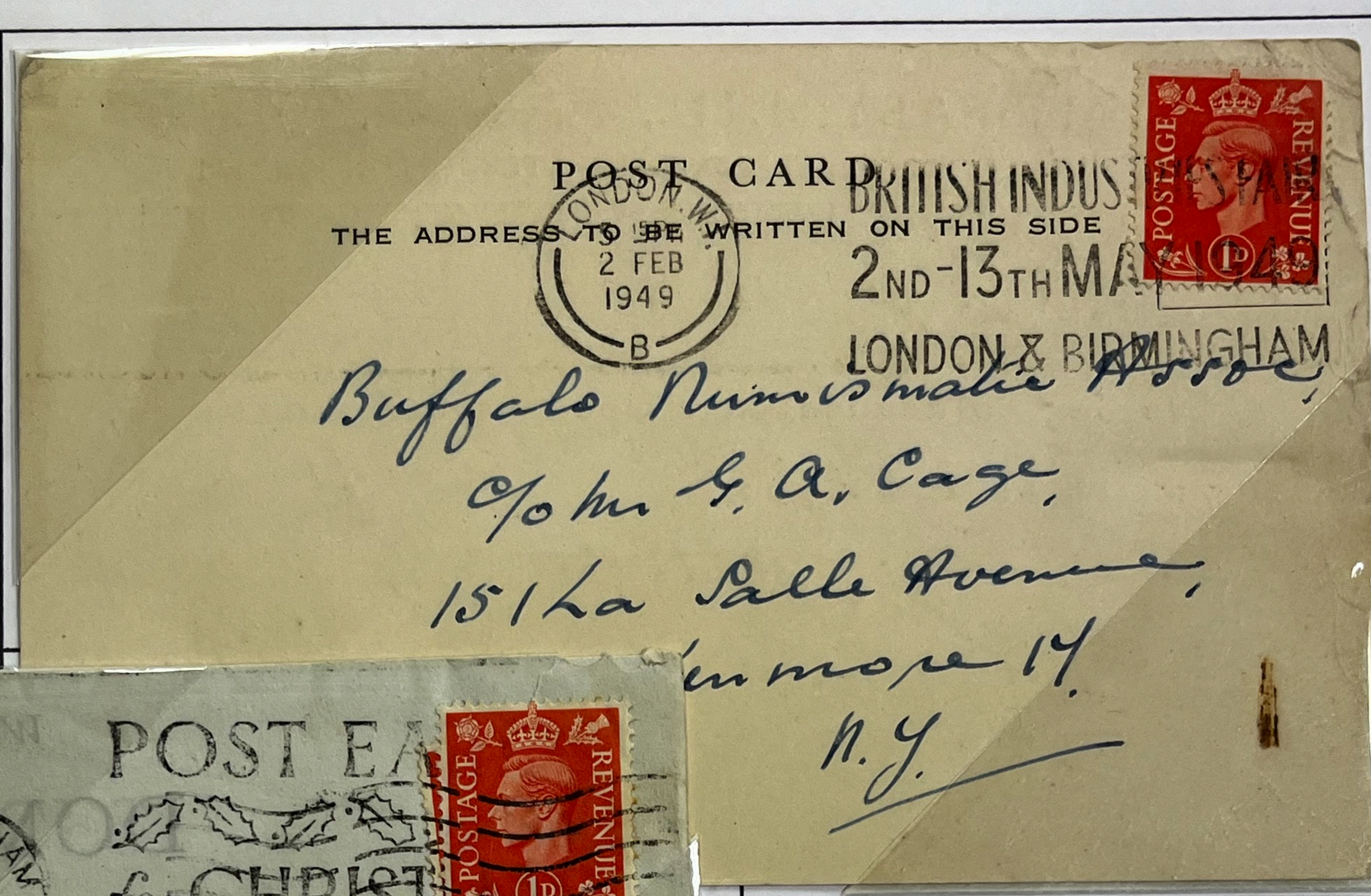
1d Red

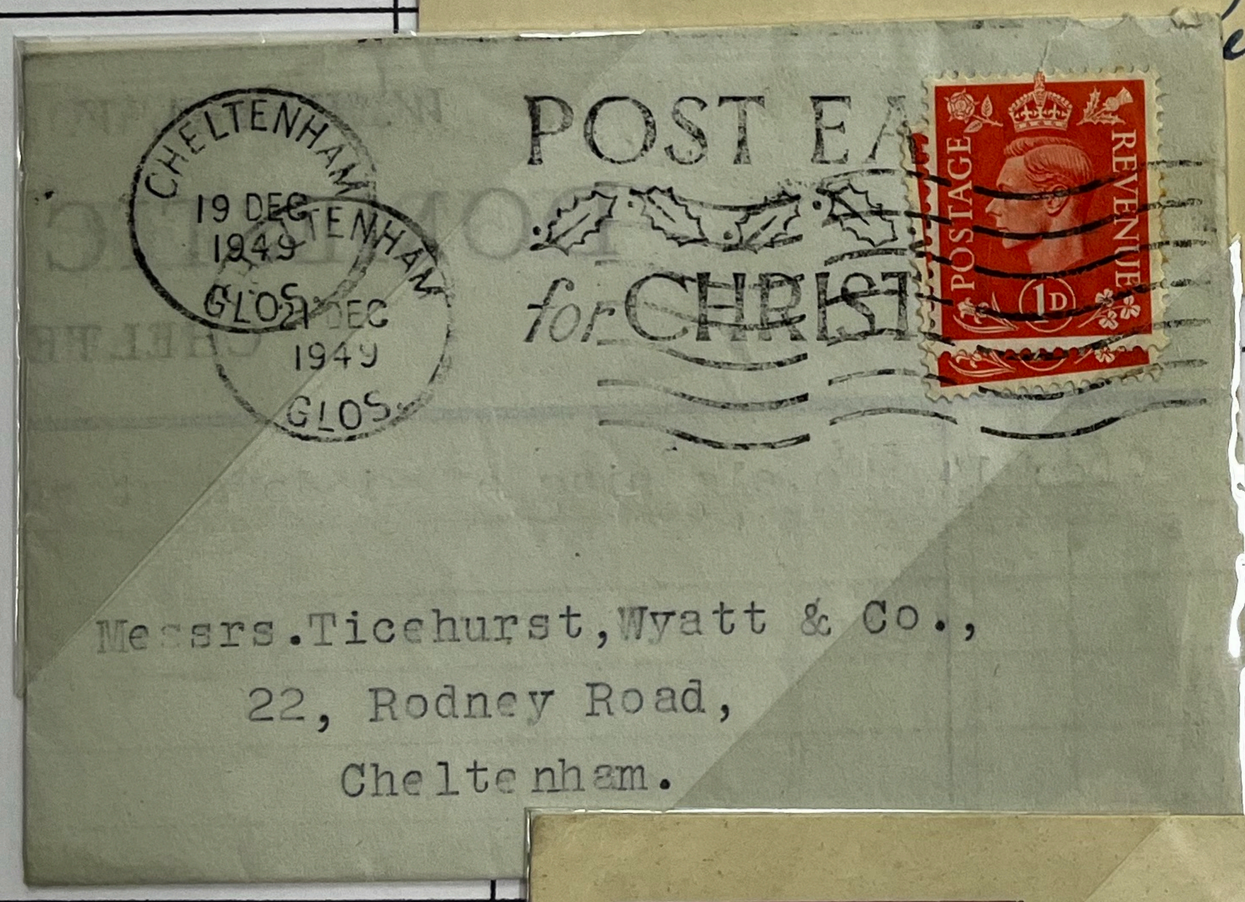
Issued October 6, 1941, the 1d stamp paid the UPU Post Card rate. It later met the Printed Matter rate, which increased to 1d on May 1, 1949. The new color red used less ink to print than the earlier scarlet colored stamp.

Solo Use

British Industries Slogan Post Card

1d
1949





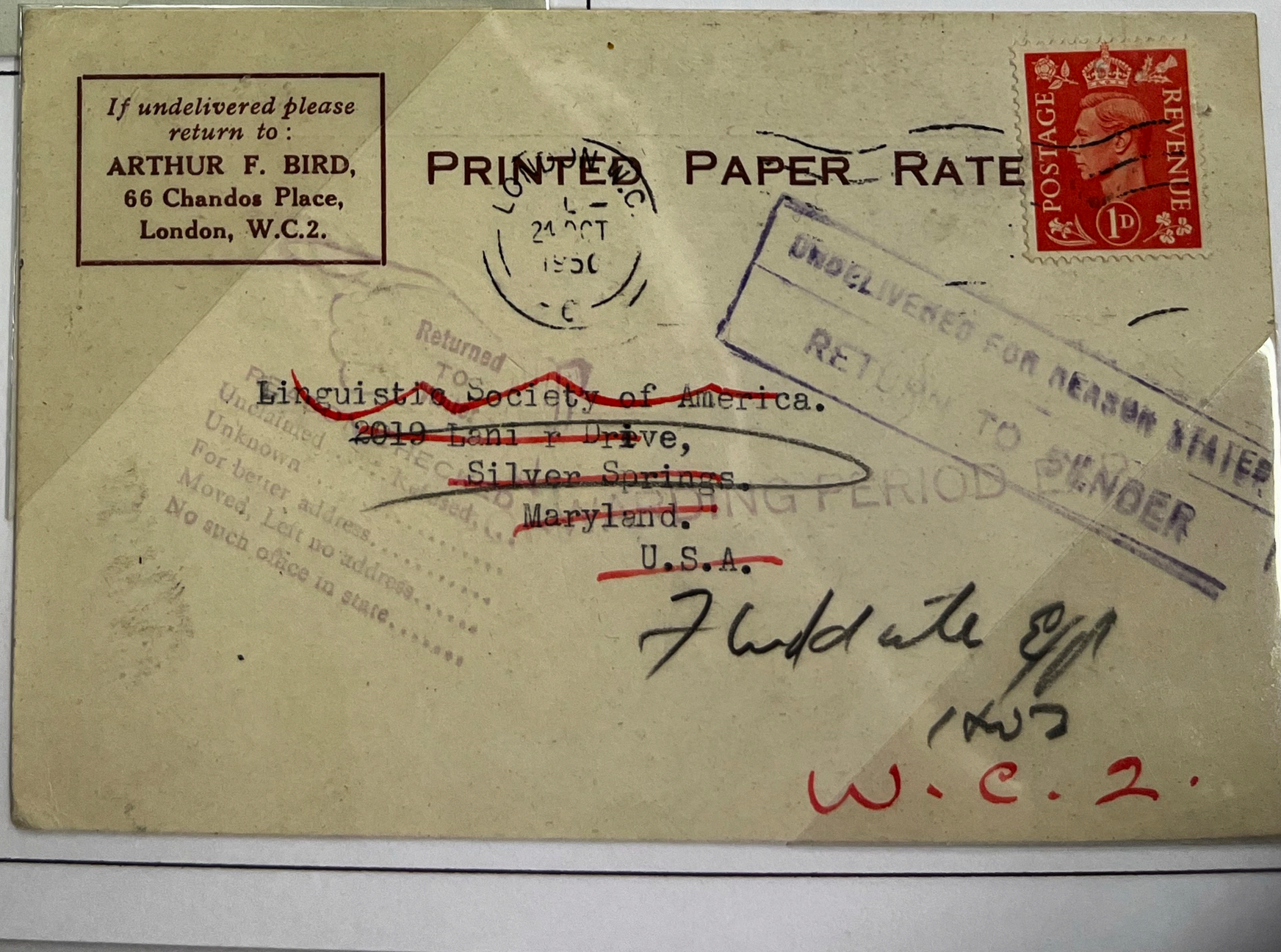
Re-Use Letter
Second Stamp Applied Over First

Printed Paper
1949
Folded Letter, mailed again two days later.

Undeliverable & Returned

Printed Matter Rate
to US 1d
1950

Printed Matter rate allowed for returns. Handstamped, "Forwarding Period Exp."

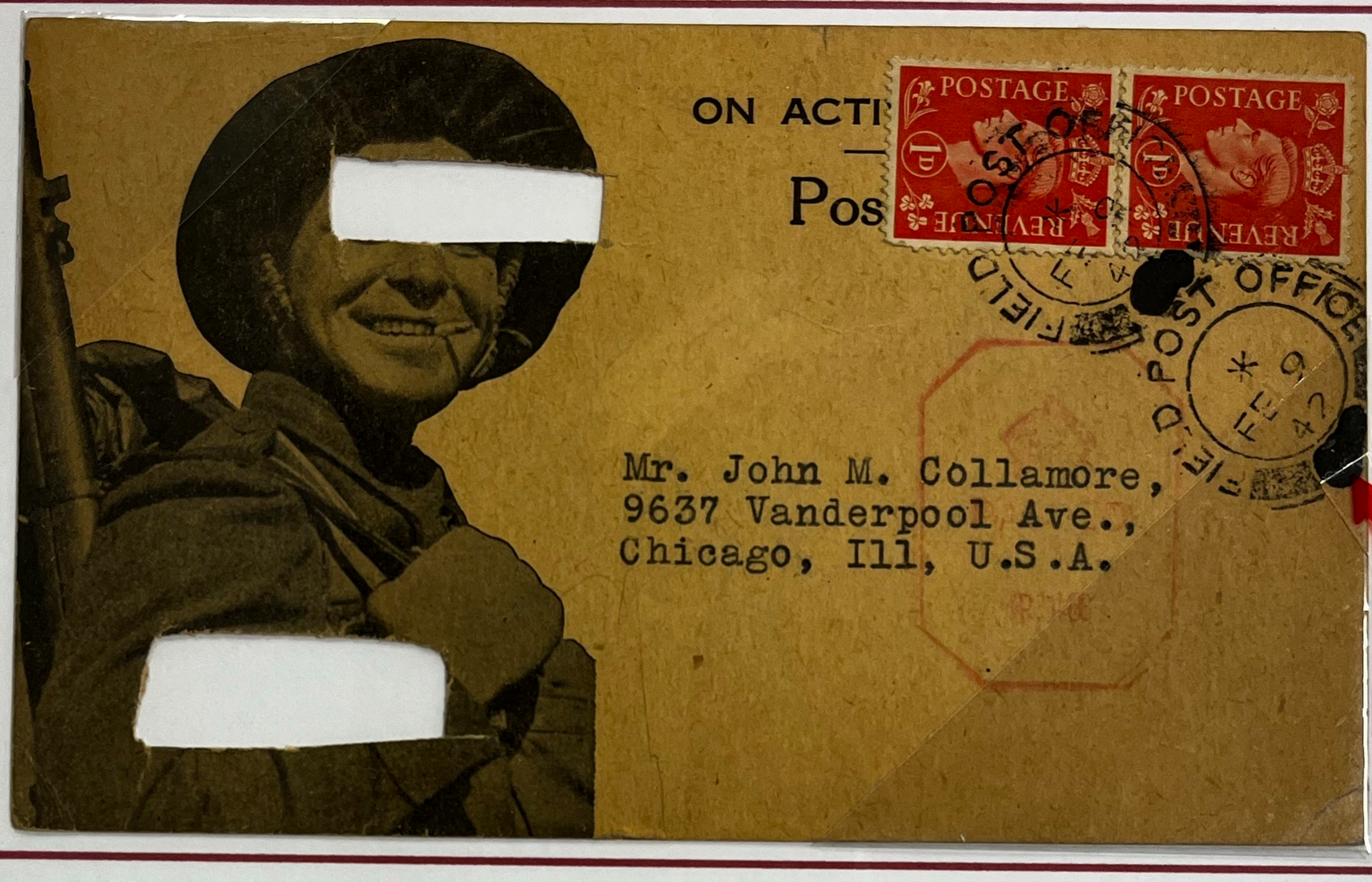


Multiple Use

Post Card - Troop Information Cut Out by Censor

British Censorship Cut text from card

2d Post Card
1942



← Blackened Out Military Unit Number on FPO cancel

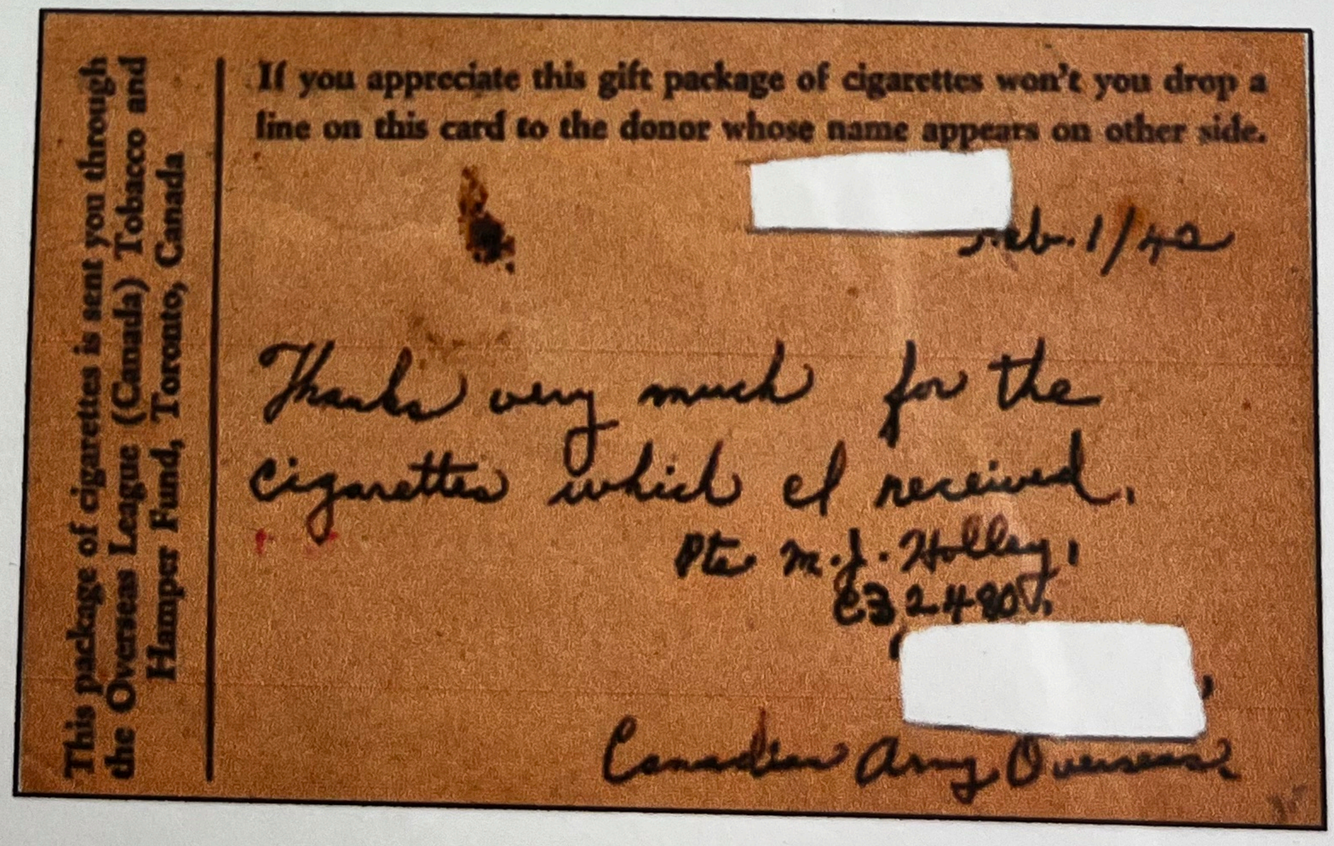


↑
Unit numbers location on cancel—tied to troop location

On Active Service Promotional Tobacco Card returned by soldier. Censor applied red handstamp crown marking on front after removing text containing sensitive troop location.

Military Censorship: Excising the Company Name and Location

Rarely seen: Censor Cut info to ensure security.



← Military Company

← Location

Package of Cigarettes sent free to Canadian soldier.
Soldier used reply card.

Multiple Use

Kobe, Japan Paquebot

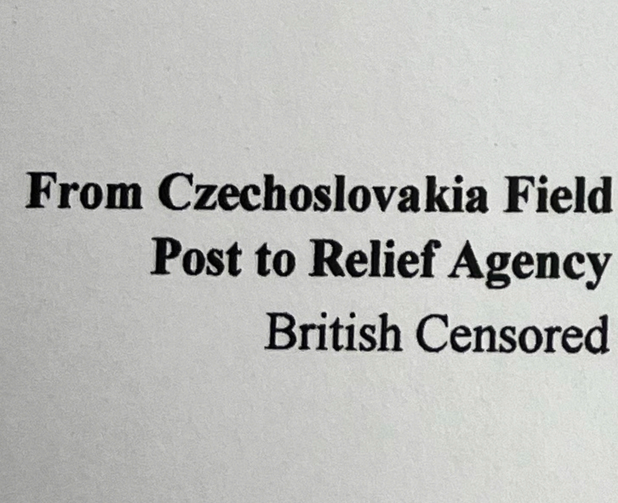
3 x 1d for letter rate 1951



Letter posted at sea, Liverpool licensed City of Coventry, Kobe Japan cancel to the US.

From Czechoslovakia Field Post to Relief Agency
British Censored

1 oz. letter at 4½d rate 1943



Reverse: Censor Approved



To Czechoslovakia Relief in Chicago, Czechoslovakia Army in exile cancellation, slogan promotion cancel for International Students Day.

Mixed Use





7d additional franking & sheet margin tabs used on reverse. Served as added Security Seal.

Airmail to Nairobi, Kenya: Commonwealth rate of 1/- paid with multiple stamps to secure the letter from tampering.

To Netherlands

3d surface letter 1949



niet gevonden →
= Not Found
Boxed "Inconnu Onbekend"
Applied in Netherlands

Attempted delivery unsuccessful, returned, manuscript notation: Addressee is not at No. 62 Kwalekerbergwe
Notations indication address check at 64, 66 and 68.

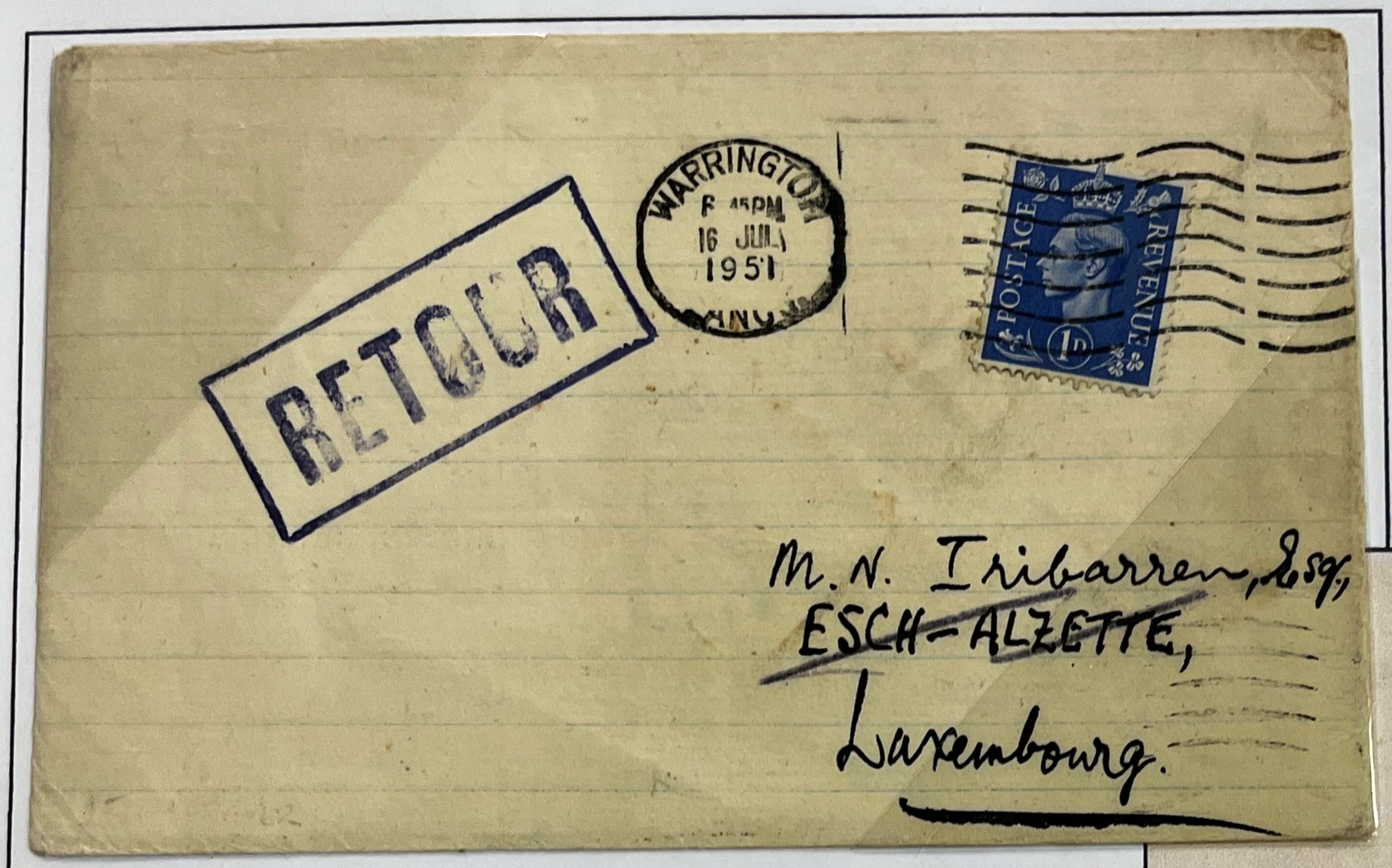
1951 Series



1d Blue

Issued with a color change for UPU to blue on May 3, 1951, the 1d paid the UPU Printed Matter rate.

Solo Use



To Luxembourg

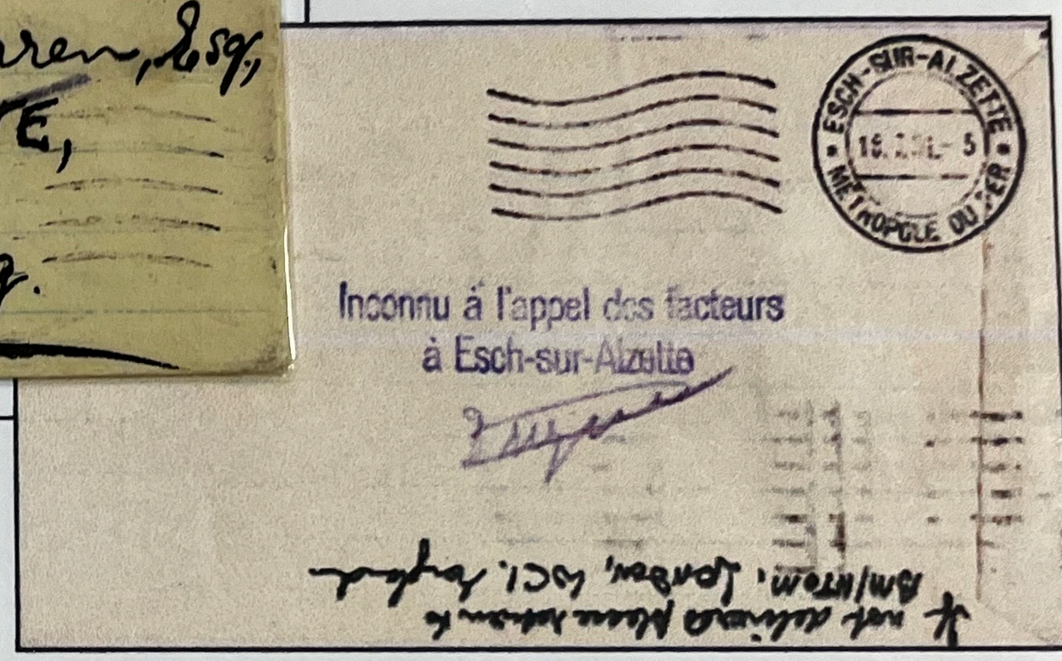
Retour - Returned

Printed Matter Unsealed

Letter 1d rate

1951

Reverse Reduced



Addressee Unknown, Returned from Esch-Sur-Alzette, Luxembourg →

Multiple Use



Slogan Canceled Block of Four from Belfast

4d Surface rate to US

1953

"British Industries Fair, 27 APL—8 May 1953 London & Birmingham" eight line Universal cancel.

Multiple Use

To British Army Occupation of the Rhine

Booklet Pane
3d used for 2½d surface letter, 1952



Lower three booklet labels advise of new inland printed paper rate of 1½d. Canceled with Universal-style seven continuous wavy lines postmark.

Mixed Use

Surface Letter to Canada

From Booklet Pane
2½d surface letter
1952



As Seal on Reverse



Mixed Use

Londonderry, Northern Ireland Maritime Mail



Printed Paper 1½d rate 1952

Applied on ship →

Maritime cancel and cachet of HMS Battleaxe Weapons–Class Frigate, 1952. Sent at new increased Printed Matter rate of 1½d.

Surface Letter to US Slogan Cancel Industrial Fair



2½d Surface rate 1953

"British Industries Fair, 27 APL—8 May 1953 London & Birmingham" eight line Universal cancel.

1937 Series



1½d Red-Brown

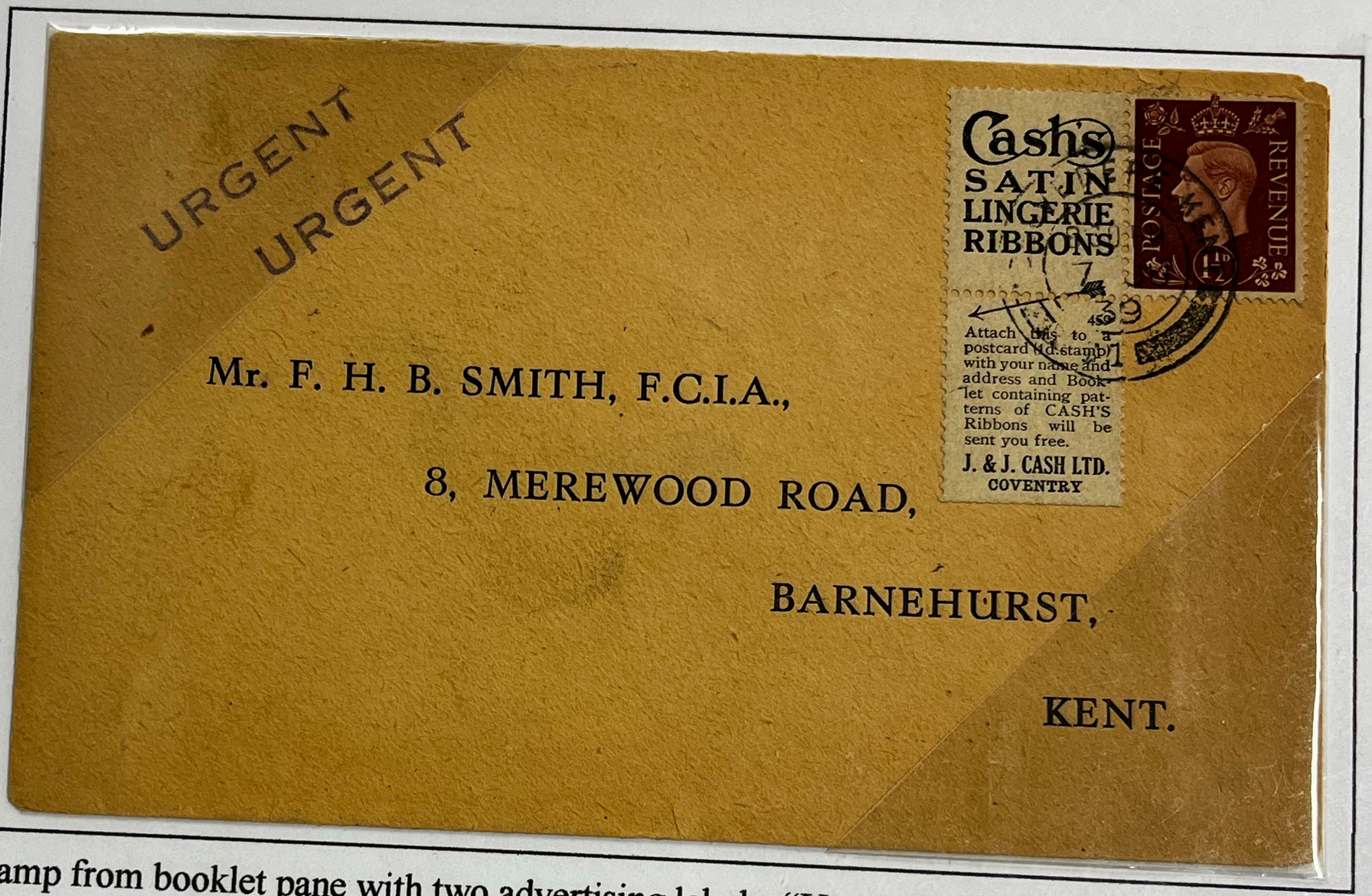
Issued July 30, 1937, the 1½d stamp paid a domestic letter rate.

Issued in Red-Brown, Brown and Green.

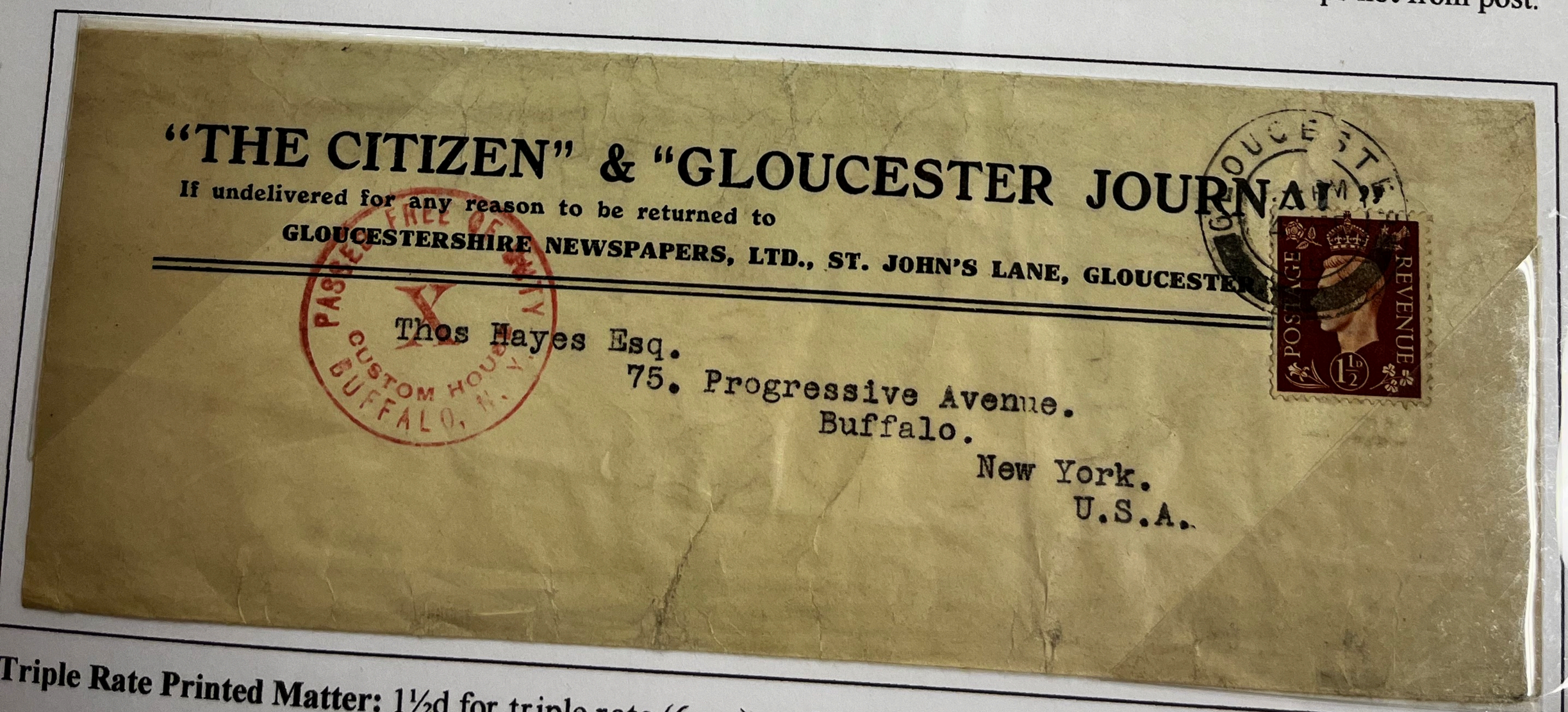
Solo Use

Domestic Letter

1½d rate
1939



Stamp from booklet pane with two advertising labels. "Urgent" handstamps not from post.



Triple Rate Printed Matter: 1½d for triple rate (6 oz.) surface rate, passed US customs, "Free of Duty" 1938.

Multiple Use

Samples: 24 oz.
Literary Agent Books

6d rate, 1½d per 6 oz
1938



Block of 4 of 1½d used to pay 24 oz. (4 x 1½d per 6 oz. weight), samples surface rate to the US. "Sample copies not for sale" indicated as required, and handstamped, "Passed Free U.S. Customs Denver."

Registered Airmail to India, Forwarded

Block of 6 x 1½d

6d Zone A Airmail
3d Registration
1937



Mixed Use



Rail Traveling Post Office (TPO) Scotland

TPO cancel applied on train (Up Train, going north)

2d Rate, 2 to 4 oz letter

1938

Airmail to Mexico

1/3d Zone C Airmail

10 x 1½d and 2d

1938

Paquebot canceled, "Posted and Received." Received and redirected in Mexico City, eight day delivery.

1937 Series

1½d Red-Brown

Mixed Use



To Lundy Island

Surface 1½d letter
1938

Empire Exposition Glasgow Slogan cancel, to Lundy additional ½d air surcharge for L.A.C.A.L. post. Lundy Air L.A.C.A.L. Post marking in use 15 days or less. The "Air Post" *later excised from the canceler* to appease the British GPO. ½ Puffin rate for local delivery.

Affixing machine cut stamps↓

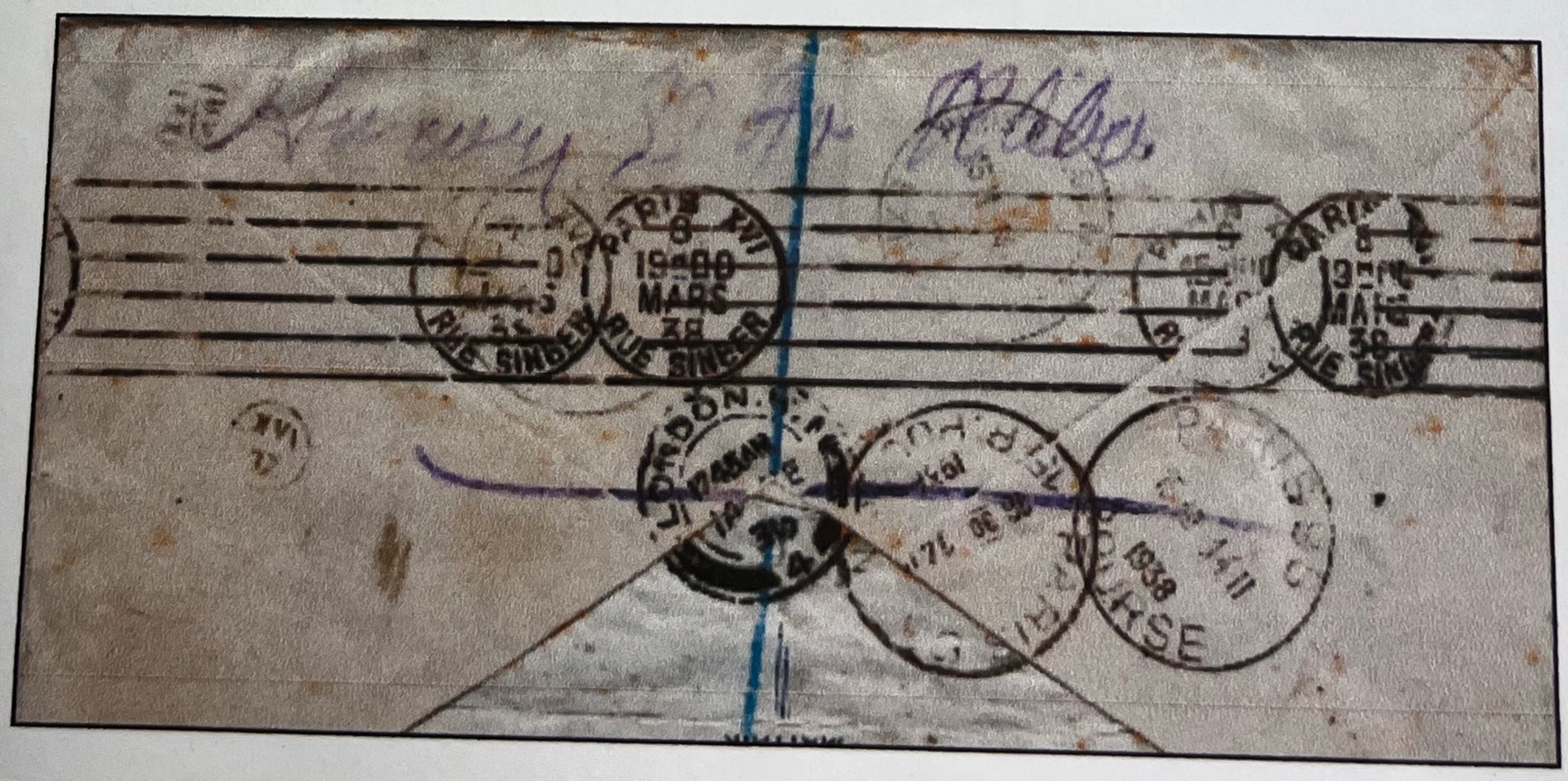


Sent as Tea Sample: Rate 7½d, 3d paid surface rate. Tariff for parcels less than 3 lbs, 7d. Boxed More to Pay, above 2 oz, due marking and notation, assessed as parcel, 2x 4d short pay, 8d due. Marked "*Late Fee*" by ½d, charge for parcel weight, 1938.

Mixed Use



Express Surface, Forwarded: To Switzerland forwarded to France. Four attempted delivery addresses, Total franking 8½d: 2½d surface rate and 6d Express, 1938. Express did not apply to forwarding service.



Reverse: Backstamps of delivery attempts and dates, total one month in transit.

1941 Series

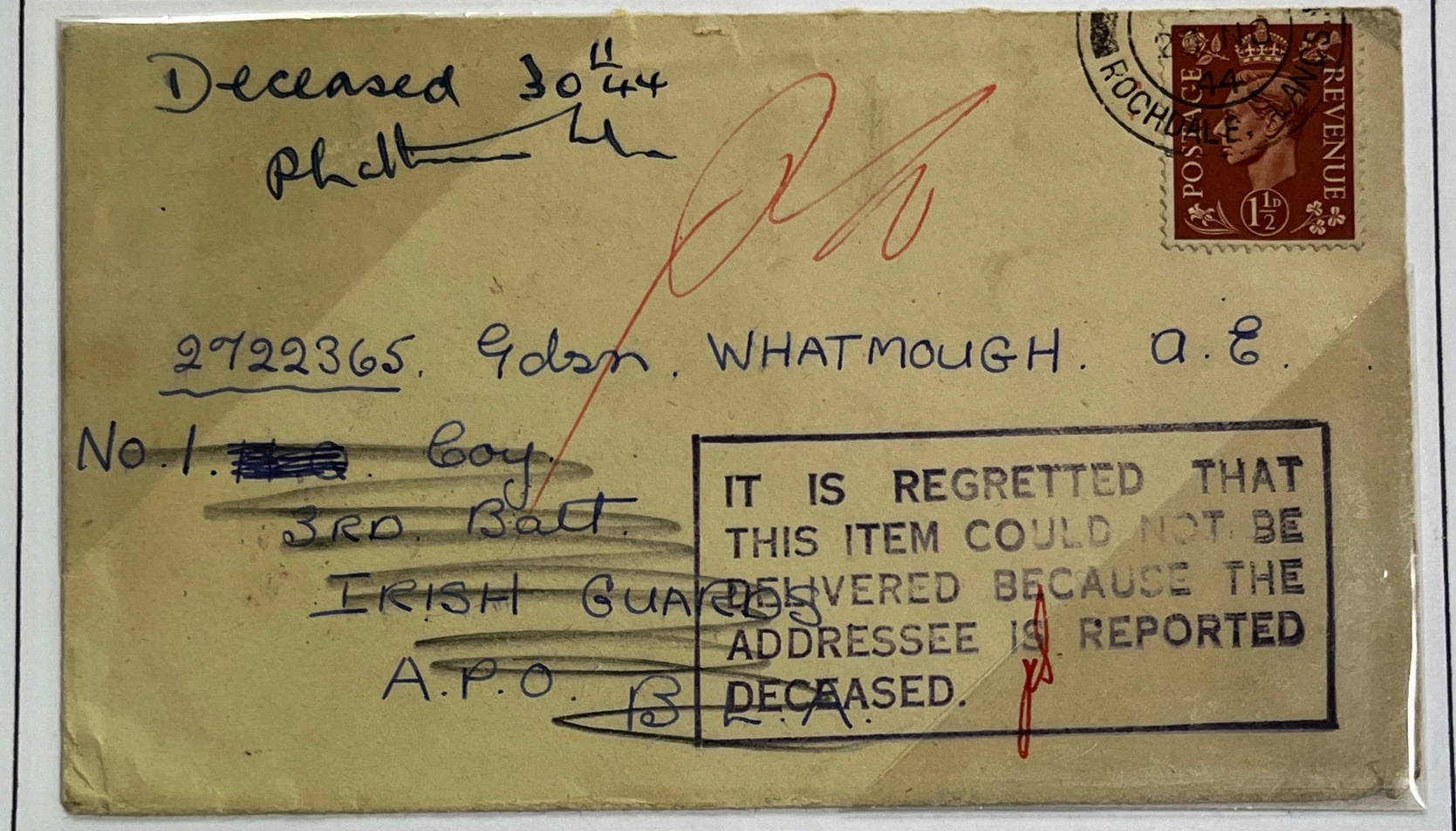


1½d Brown

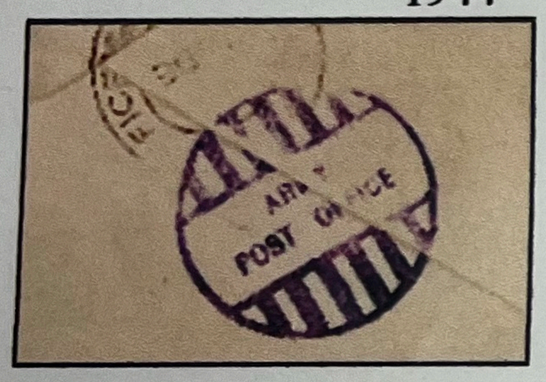
Issued October 6, 1941, the 1½d stamp paid the Military Concession, Printed Matter and Samples rates. It was issued later than other reprints owing to large existing stocks on hand.

Solo Use

Returned Civilian Letter to Military Addressee—Deceased



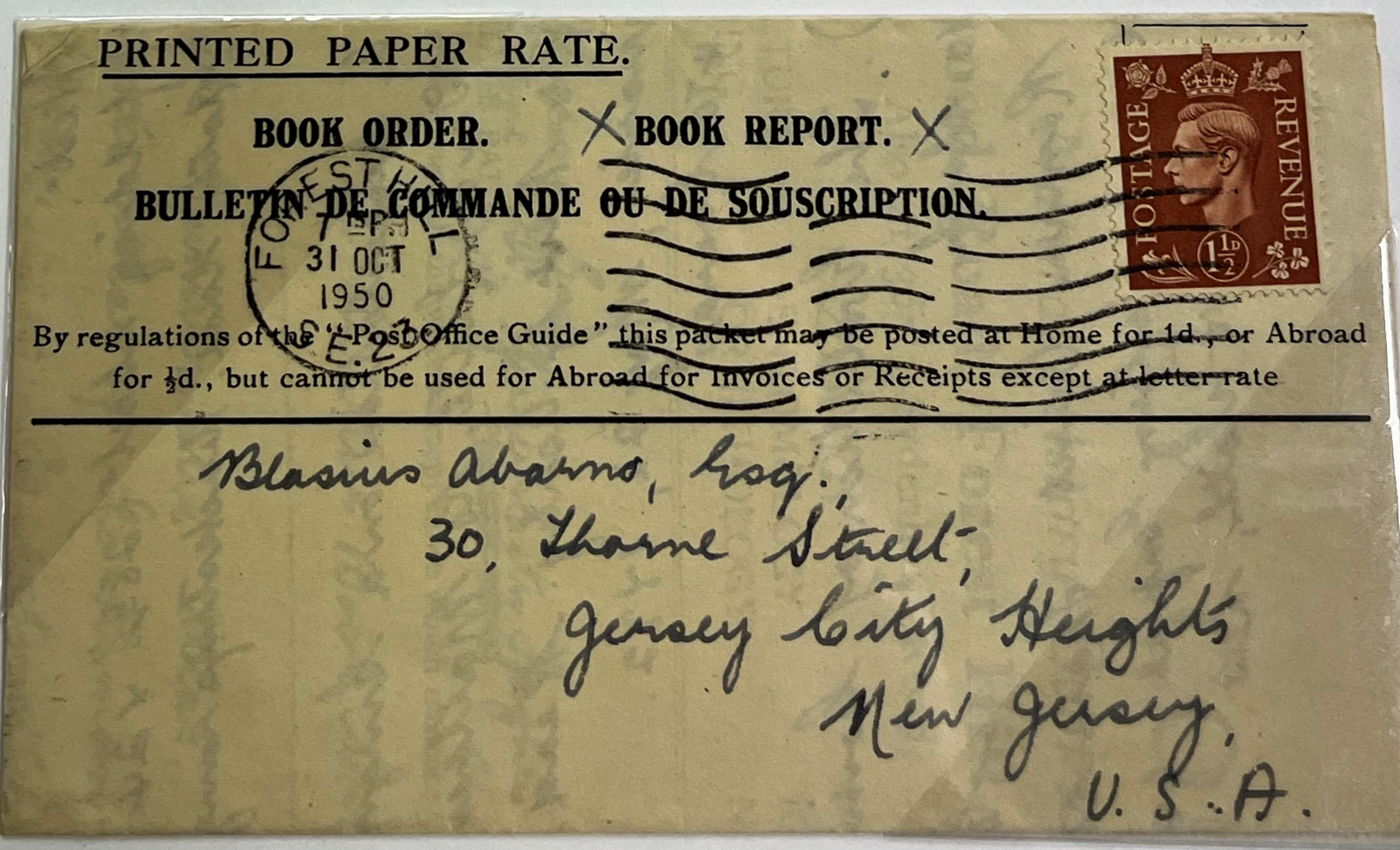
Military Concession 1½d Rate 1944



Datestamp and APO Handstamp, reverse.

Delivered to Irish Army APO Base in Normandy and handstamped with reason for return.

Printed Matter



1½d Surface Letter 1950

Rated 1½d for Printed Matter, rate increased from 1d October 1, 1950.

Solo Use

To Calcutta

South East Air Forces

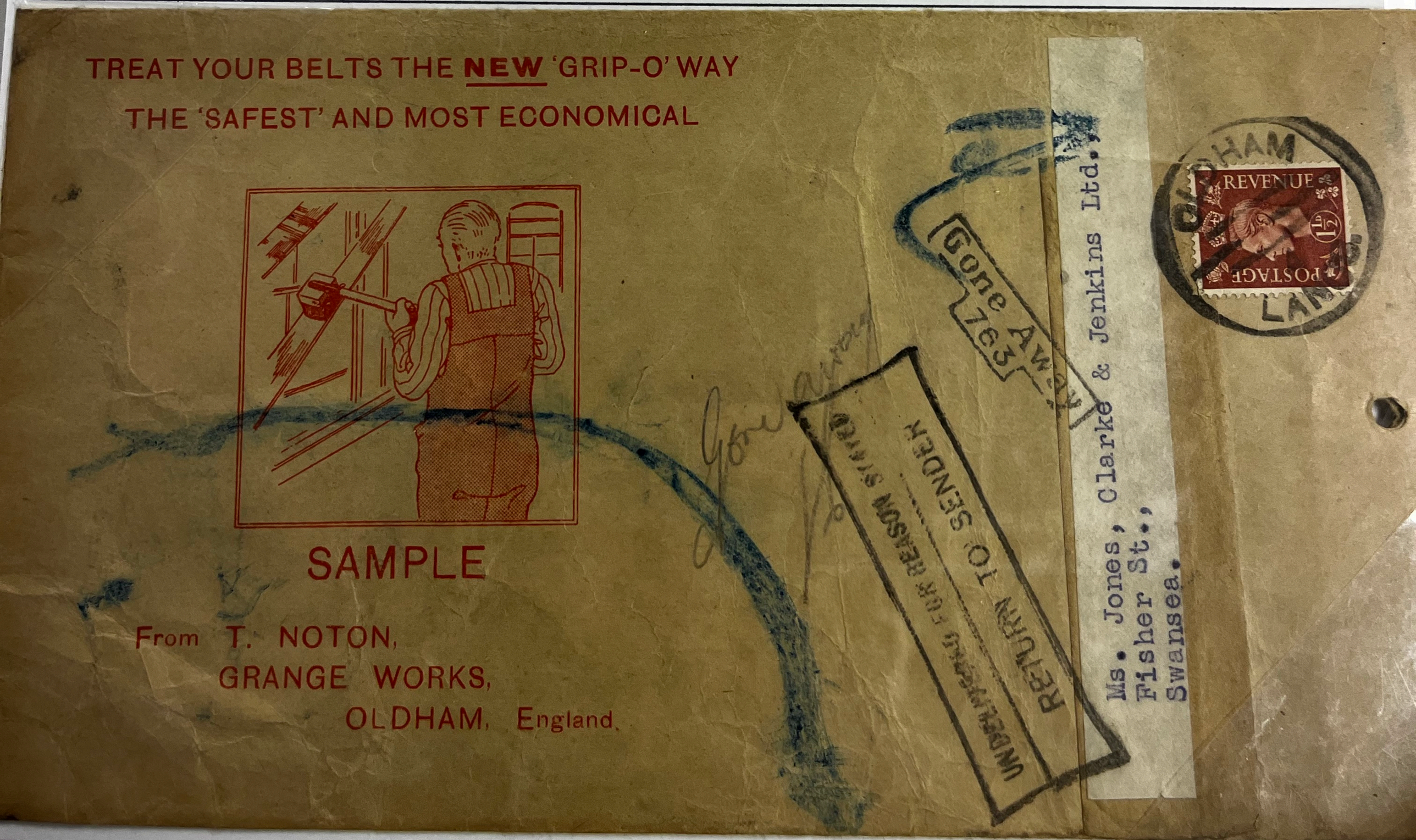
Military Concession 1½d

1945



↓ Relabeled & Reused Unsealed Sample Pouch

Sample rate 1½d. Handstamped "**Gone Away**" and "**Returned to Sender.**" Parcel handstamp canceled.



1½d Brown

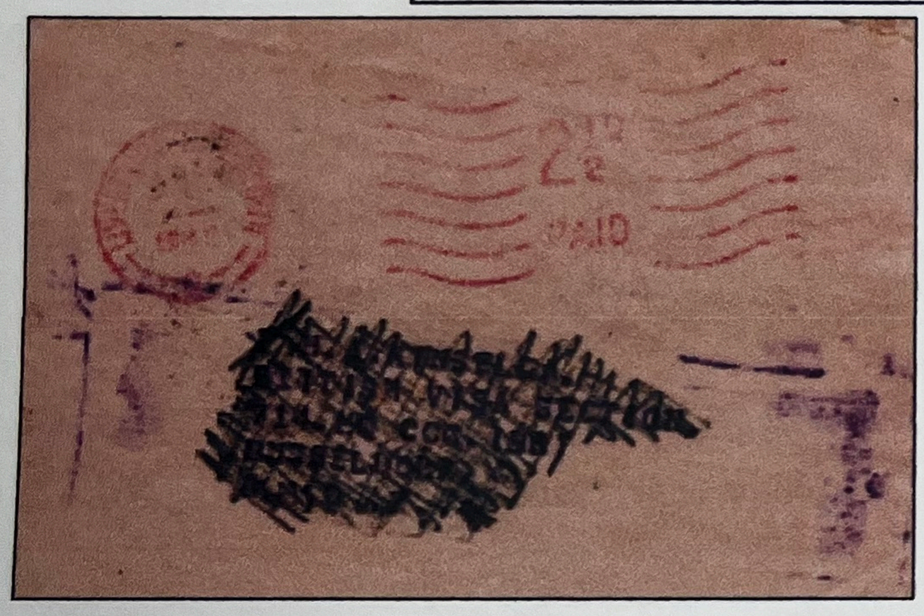
Solo Use

Domestic Letter
Reuse Label
Small Pouch



1½d Surface
1942
FPO 883 British
Liberation Army

Scan of Reverse ↓



Scan of reverse showing original use.

Czechoslovak Field Post to London

1½d letter front
Military Rate
1943



Multiple Use

To Switzerland
Red Cross Letter

Foreign Surface 3d rate
1943

Opened and sealed by British Censor.
Red Cross Postal Message Scheme used
for sending mail across enemy lines.



Multiple Use

Block of six plus four - 10 x 1½d Paying Airmail Rate

Airmail Zone B 1/3d
1945

From FPO 38 Central Mediterranean Force



Mixed Use

Military Concession Rate to US

Surface 3½d
1944



Military Concession rate 3½d surface rate for ½d to 1 oz. letter.

1951 Series

1½d Green



Issued May 3, 1951, the 1½d stamp was issued in green color and paid UPU Printed Paper rate, which increased June 1, 1951. The rate also paid the Military Concession surface letter.

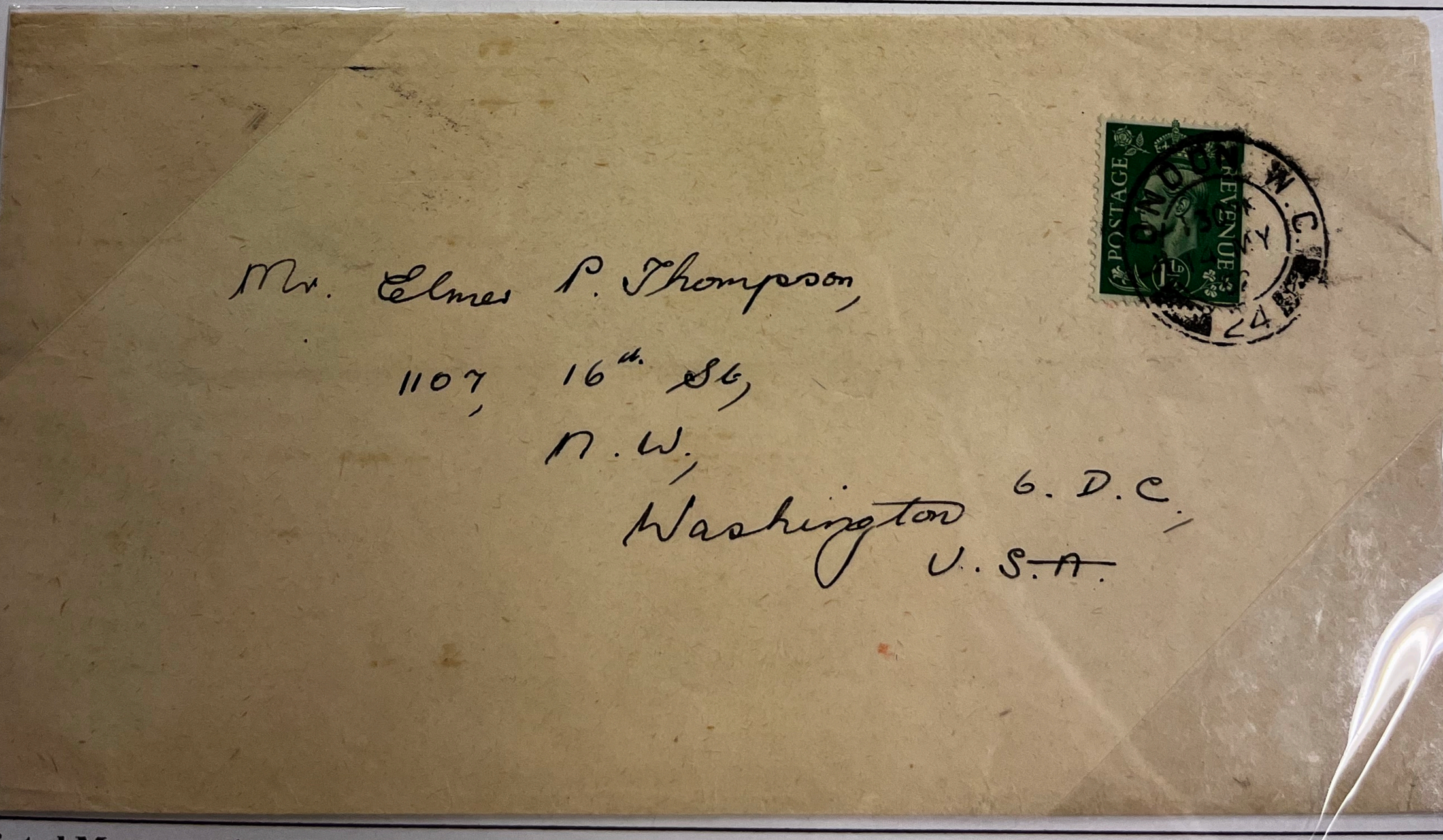
Solo Use

Maritime Mail
S.S. Kenya
Dar-Es-Salaam
Tanganyika

Military Concession
Surface rate 1½d
1951



TSS Troop Ship "Kenya" Paquebot posted on board ship, Paquebot CDS Dar-Es-Salam. Troops positioned related to escalation of Mau Mau militant African nationalists of the Kikuyu tribe in Kenya.



Printed Matter to the US 1½d rate, 1952.

Multiple Use

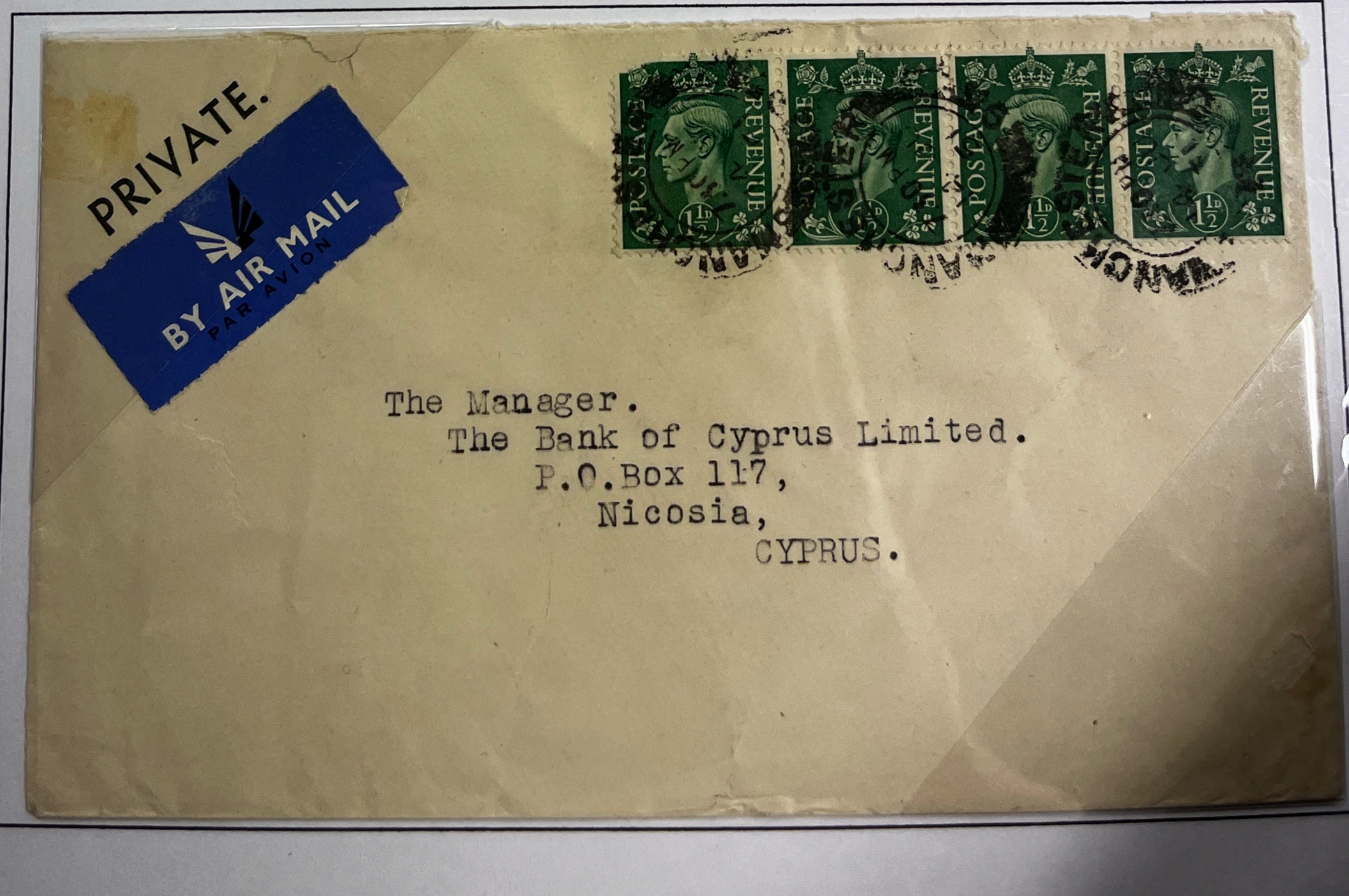
Airmail Post Card to Israel

Airmail Post Card
6d Zone A
1952



To Cyprus Airmail Letter

6d Zone A
Airmail rate
1951



Mixed Use

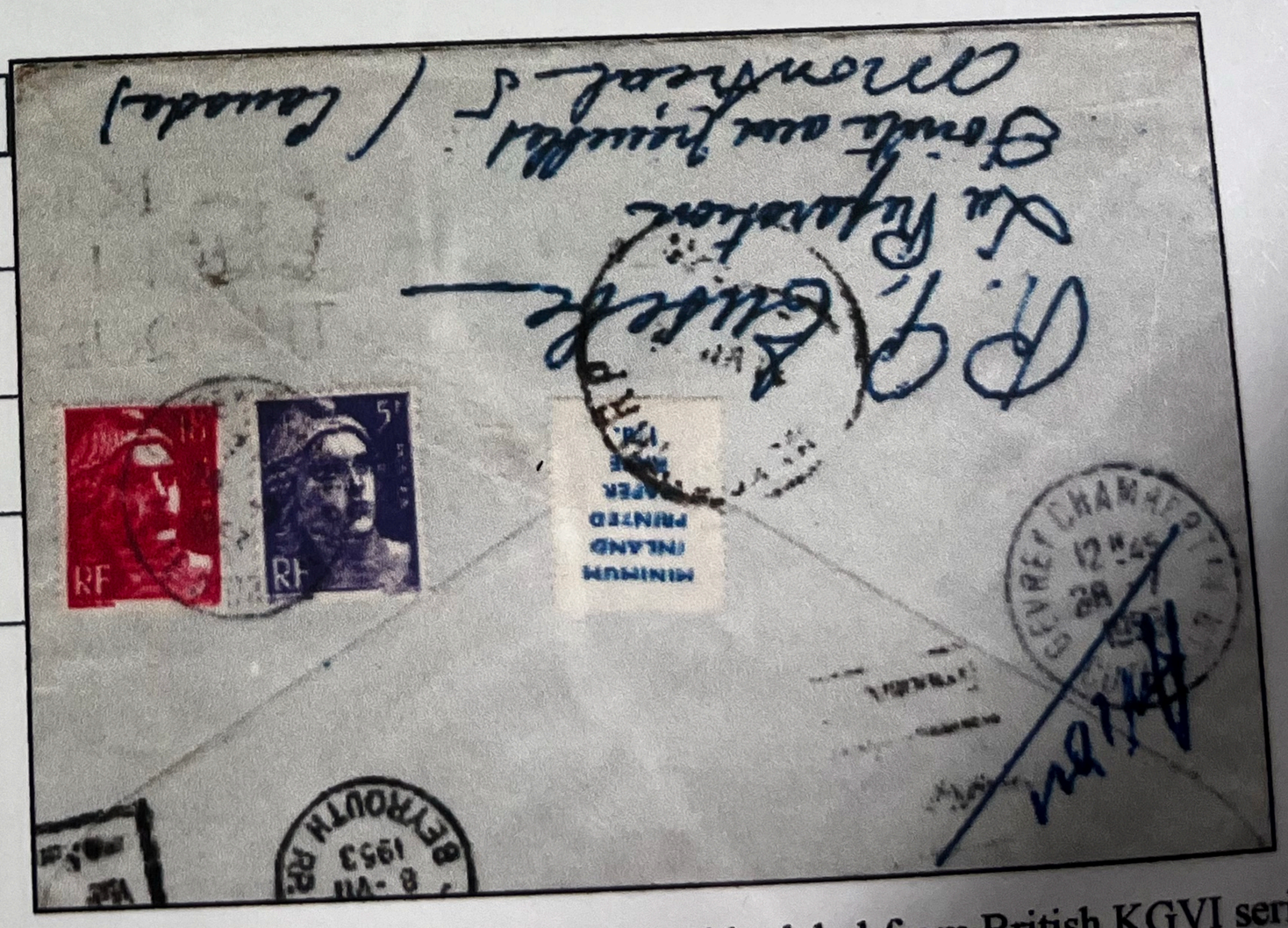
Three Countries Remailed Letter

4d Surface Letter
1953



To Lebanon, France, and returned to Canada. Late use of the "Long Live the Queen" slogan postmark, used 3 June to 30 June, 1953.

Tracing the Transit Franking		
June 28	Franking 4d	Watford, Herts, GB
July 8	10pi Airmail	Beyrouth, Lebanon
July 28	23f Surface	Gevrey Chambertin, France
Returned	Returned	Montreal, Canada



Reverse at 75% →

Reverse franking 23f France and booklet label from British KGVI serie

1937 Series



2d Orange

Issued January 31, 1938, the 2d paid the post card rate.

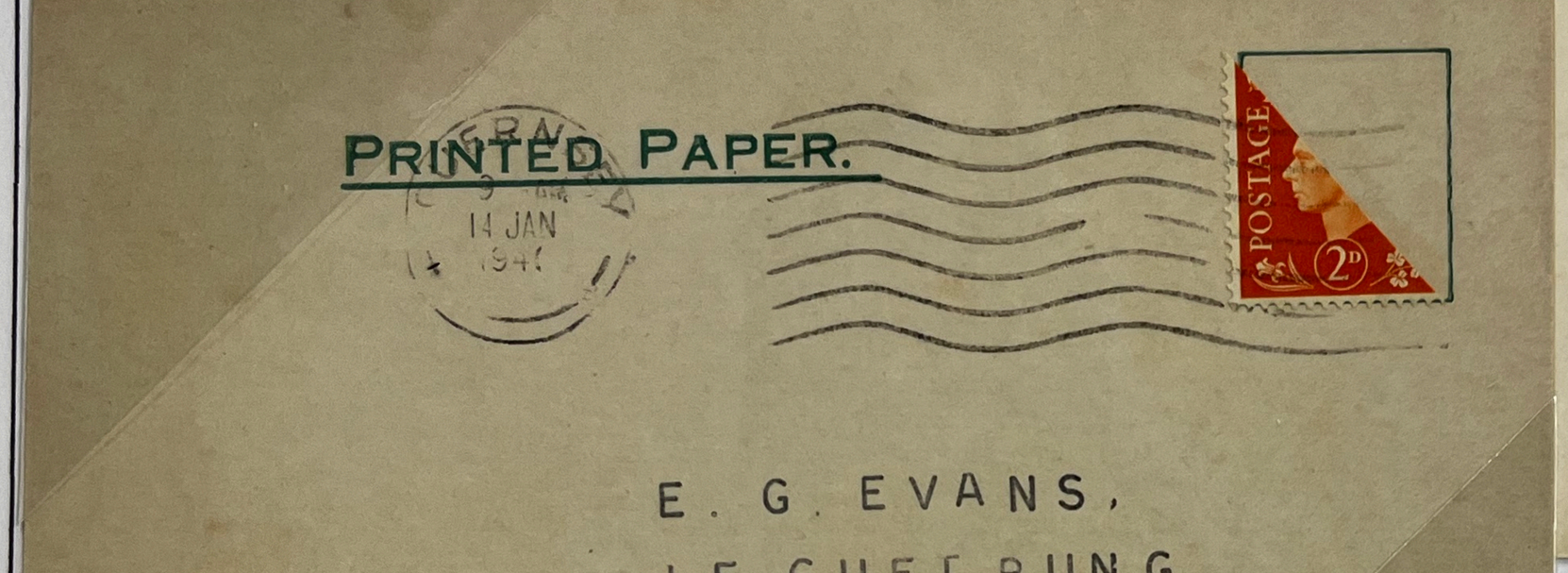
Issued in **Orange** in 1937, **Pale Orange** in 1941 and **Brown** in 1951.

Solo Use

From Isle of Man to Polish Army in exile Perth, Scotland

2d Post Card 1941





Guernsey Bisect

German Occupation

1d Printed Paper, local 1941

Owing to shortages, authority granted December 24, 1940 for prepayment of penny postage by diagonal bisect. Such stamps were used during the German Occupation.

Multiple Use

Airmail to US

6d Surface to US onward Airmail NY to LA 3 x 2d 1939



Mixed Use

Belfast to London

5d Airmail
1941



Surface mail Belfast to London, Airmail to a naval serviceman on HMS *Foresight,* a Royal Navy F-class destroyer. Inspected, notation restored by censor on PC 90 label. Handstamp, "Insuffiently Paid for Transmission by Airmail" for Belfast to London.

Advertising Vignette & Show Cancel

1½d Inland

3d Registration

1938



1941 Series



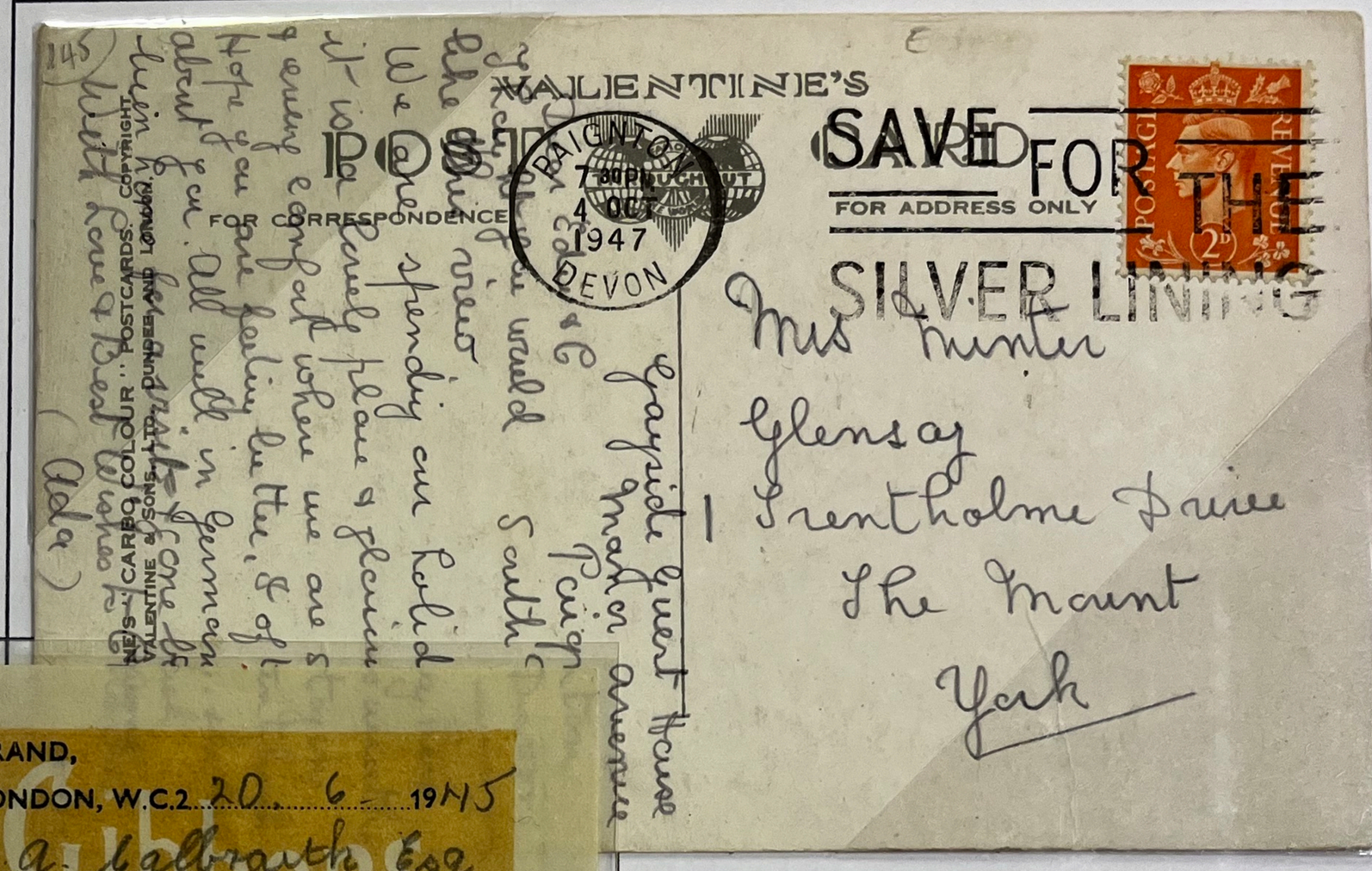
2d Pale Orange

Issued October 6, 1941, the 2d stamp paid the post card rate for inland, Commonwealth and mail to the US. The new pale orange color used less ink to print than the earlier deep orange color.

Solo Use

Slogan Domestic Post Card

2d Post Card rate
1947



↑ Save for the Silver Lining slogan cancel used September 29 until October 27, 1947.



2d Receipt

1945

Stanley Gibbons.

Multiple Use

To Burma

2d Pair, Foreign Surface Letter, 1951



Partial booklet pane pair, stitching holes evident in selvedge. Banbury Oxon machine cancel.

Multiple Use

Booklet Pane of Six

Left margin intact

Stitched selvedge

6 x 2d for rate of 1/-

Airmail rate, Zone B



Mixed Use



Twice Reused Envelope

2½d surface letter,
Maritime Mail
1945.

On Reverse: First Mailing, 2½d, 1945.



Note: Second use label remnants, below current label.

Mixed Use

Uprated Stationery

4 x 2d

1/- Airmail rate, Zone B,
1945



To Canada
6 x 2d Franking

Airmail Zone B
1/3d rate
1946



Franking mix for 1/3d rate paid 6 x 2d, with 2½d and ½d definitives.