

Censored, Rerouted, Suspended, Resumed: U.S. International Mail in World War II

Purpose

This exhibit illustrates the impact of World War II, from 1939-1947, on U.S. mail to foreign destinations resulting from censorship, rerouting of the mail, suspension of service, and the gradual resumption of mail service.

Scope

Included is mail originating at civilian post offices in the U.S. and its possessions & territories. The exhibit shows air and surface letter mail, as well as registered and Expres service and printed matter mail generated from 1939-1945. It also includes examples of resumed service beginning in 1944, ending in 1947 when service was restored to the defeated nations.

Presentation

The concepts of censorship, rerouting, and suspension of service described and illustrated in the first three chapters, are applied in Chapters 4 and 5.

Importance

This exhibit brings together aerophilately, censorship, rates and routes, suspension of service, and an understanding of the course of the War. Combined, they shape a story showing how mail generated in the U.S. and dispersed to the rest of the world was affected by world events from 1939 to 1947.

Significant items

Covers of philatelic or historical note are flagged and annotated in bold.

Plan

1 Censored Mail

- 1.1 Beginnings
- 1.2 Bermuda Station
- 1.3 Mail to the Caribbean
- 1.4 Trinidad Station
- 1.5 Axis Censorship
- 1.6 Office of Censorship

2 Rerouted Mail

- 2.1 Airmail Beyond Europe
- 2.2 Airmail Europe to West Africa
Suspended
- 2.3 Surface Mail to Europe via Asia
- 2.4 Trans-Pacific Emergency Route

3 Suspended Service

- 3.1 The "Winter War"
- 3.2 Occupied Countries
- 3.3 Neutral Countries
- 3.4 After Pearl Harbor

4 Mail to Allied & Neutral Countries

- 4.1 Allied Countries - Europe
- 4.2 Neutral Countries - Europe
- 4.3 Allied Countries - Americas
- 4.4 Neutral Countries - Americas
- 4.5 Allied Countries - Pacific Region
- 4.6 Allied Countries - Africa
- 4.7 Neutral Countries - Africa
- 4.8 Allied Countries - Middle East
- 4.9 Allied Countries - Asia
- 4.10 Neutral Countries - Asia

5 Resumed Mail Service

- 5.1 Non-illustrated Postcards
- 5.2 Surface Letter Mail
- 5.3 Air Letter Mail
- 5.4 Special Services
- 5.5 To the Defeated Nations