

# *United Nations Memorial Service Muir Woods, 19 May 1945*

This exhibit presents the little known story of a memorial service for Franklin D. Roosevelt held in 1945. The exhibit includes different philatelic elements as well as ephemera of various types.



The Cathedral Grove of redwoods in Muir Woods National Monument  
Mailed from Yosemite Lodge, California to Hannover, Germany  
11 March 1987, 33¢ international post card rate  
Card published by Muir Woods Inn, Mill Valley, California

The world was at war when U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt (1882-1945) began promoting the ideals of the *four freedoms* and suggested an international peace conference after the war.



President Roosevelt  
and the White House



*Un-watermarked paper*  
*Regular stamp issued on*  
*watermarked paper*



Four Freedoms depicted in souvenir sheet  
Want, Fear, Speech and Worship



Roosevelt agreed to a three power preparatory conference with British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Russian General Secretary Josef Stalin, to be held in Yalta in the Crimea, from 4-11 February 1945.



Prime Minister  
Winston Churchill  
*1st class letter rate*

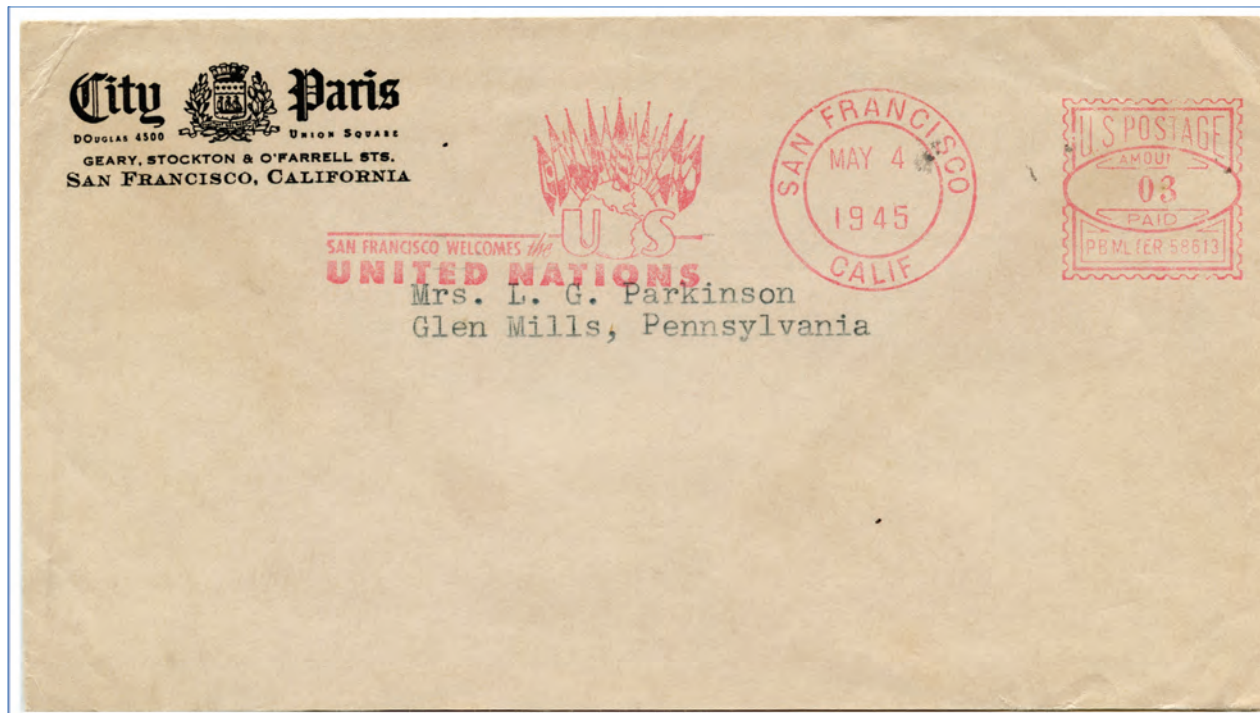


General Secretary  
Joseph Stalin  
*Oranienburg-Sachsenhausen camp  
German SS propaganda forgery*



Flags of the three nations attending the Yalta Conference  
Russia, the United States and Great Britain  
Private commemorative post card mailed 11 October 1945

The meeting site chosen for the peace conference was San Francisco, California in the U.S. and the date agreed upon was 25 April 1945.



Pitney Bowes postage meter device 58613  
with advertising slogan welcoming the United Nations  
Used during May and June 1945, Domestic first class letter rate (3¢ per oz.)

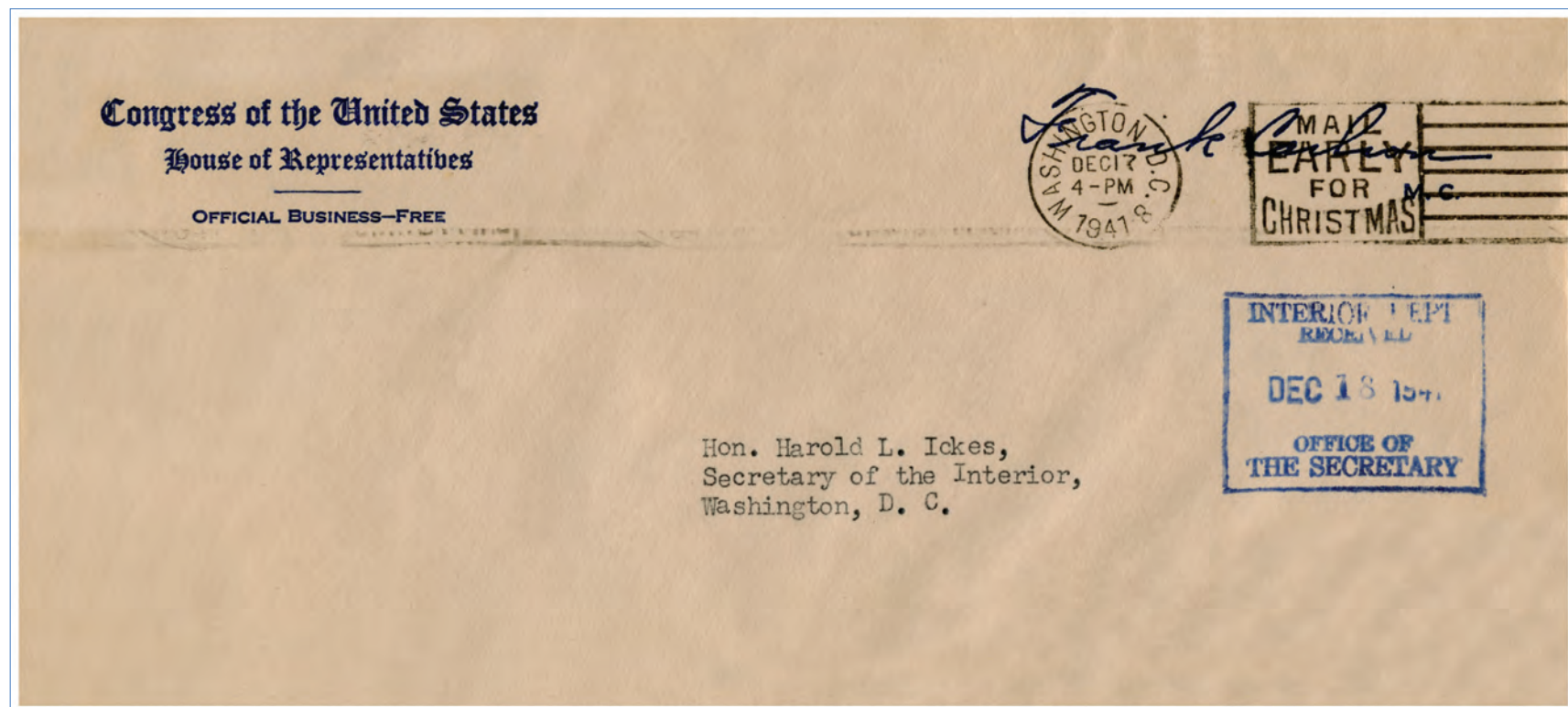
The *'Save the Redwoods League'* suggested in early February, one conference session should be held in Muir Woods, named for John Muir (1838-1914).



John Muir  
Conservationist



Muir Woods National Monument is close to San Francisco, the site of the United Nations Conference on International Organization. The woods are groves of rewood trees, the tallest trees in the world.



Addressed to Harold L. Ickes, Secretary of the Interior  
Frank Carlson, U.S. House of Representatives, free frank on official business envelope

The proposal for a Muir Woods session was accepted by the National Parks Service. They in turn forwarded it to the Secretary of the Interior, Harold L. Ickes (1874-1952).



Secretary Ickes sent the proposal to President Roosevelt with an accompanying letter and Roosevelt approved the plan to hold a session within the Muir Woods.



U.S. President  
Franklin Roosevelt



U.S. State Department to the UNCIO conference planning committee in the Waldorf-Astoria (rooms 601-603) Washington, D.C. to New York, New York, 11 April 1945, airmail 8¢ plus special delivery 13¢, two weeks prior to the conference

President Roosevelt instructed the Conference Planning Committee to include the Muir Woods session in the Conference agenda.

President Roosevelt died of a stroke on 12 April 1945 at home in Warm Springs, Georgia, less than two weeks before the start of the San Francisco peace conference.



Franklin D. Roosevelt  
Mourning Issue, Greece  
Offset multiple print



U.S. President  
Harry S. Truman



Veterans' War  
Memorial Building  
Die proof on card

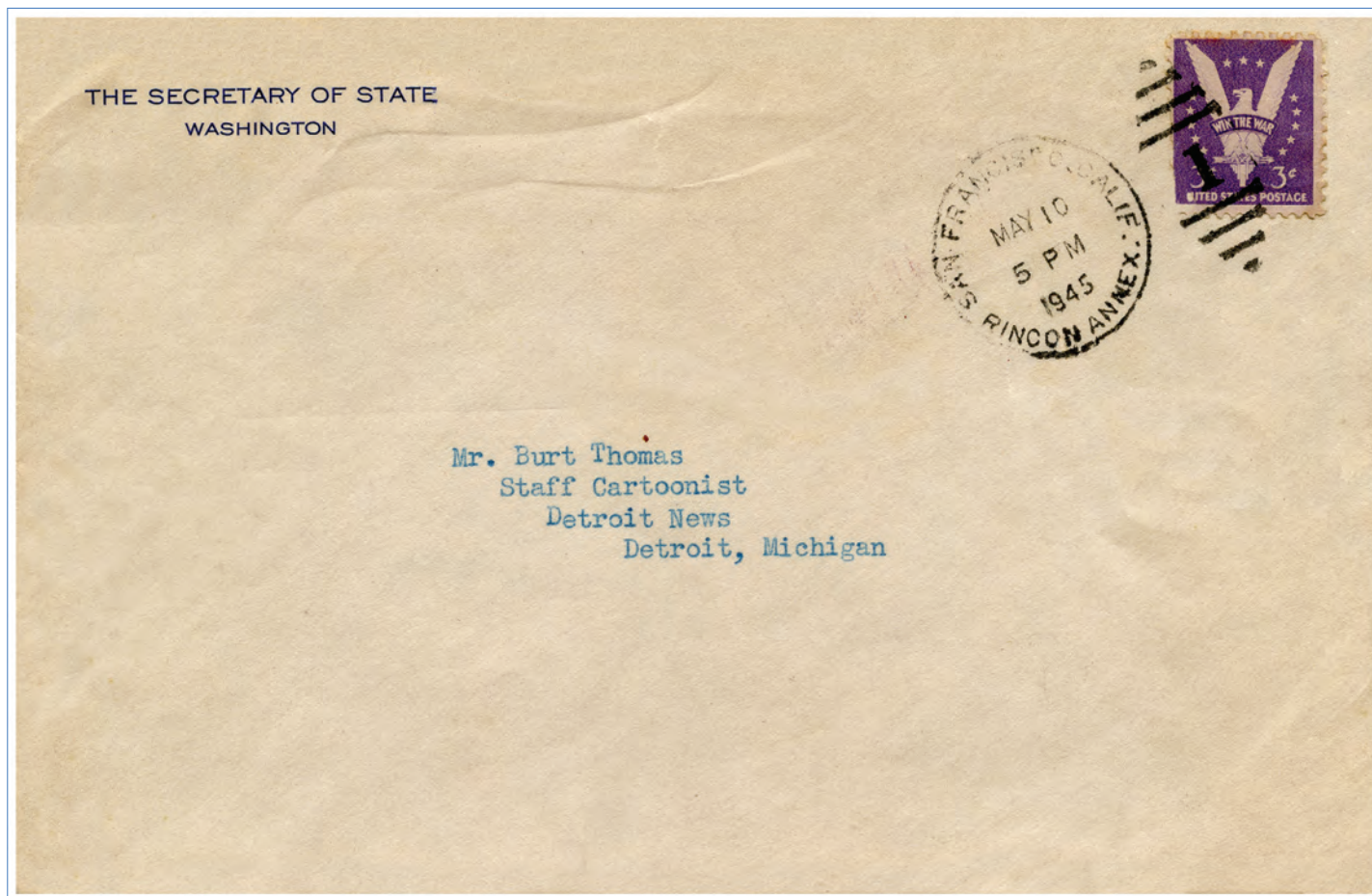


President's home in  
Warm Springs, Georgia  
Photo essays

President Harry Truman (1884-1972) finalized plans for the San Francisco conference, held in the Opera House and Veteran's War Memorial Building.



After Roosevelt's unexpected death, Pedro Leao Velloz (1887-1947), Foreign Minister and Chairman of the Brazilian delegation, suggested the Muir Woods session be replaced with a memorial service for Roosevelt.



Secretary of State Stettinius to Detroit News newspaper, Detroit, Michigan  
10 May 1945 (9 days prior to the ceremony)

Secretary of State Edward R. Stettinius (1900-1949) planned the Muir Woods memorial service.



More than 500 delegates were taken by chartered buses to the Muir Woods National Monument for the memorial service. Delegates also toured informational displays.



'Cathedral Grove' in Muir Woods  
Real photo post card



Post card depicting a park ranger and two delegates viewing a 1,000 year old Redwood tree slice dating to approximately 900 A.D.

The peaceful '*Cathedral Grove*' was chosen as the site for the memorial service and designated as the first '*Quiet Zone*' in a national park.

*"where serenity and quiet for reflection are protected as natural resources"*.



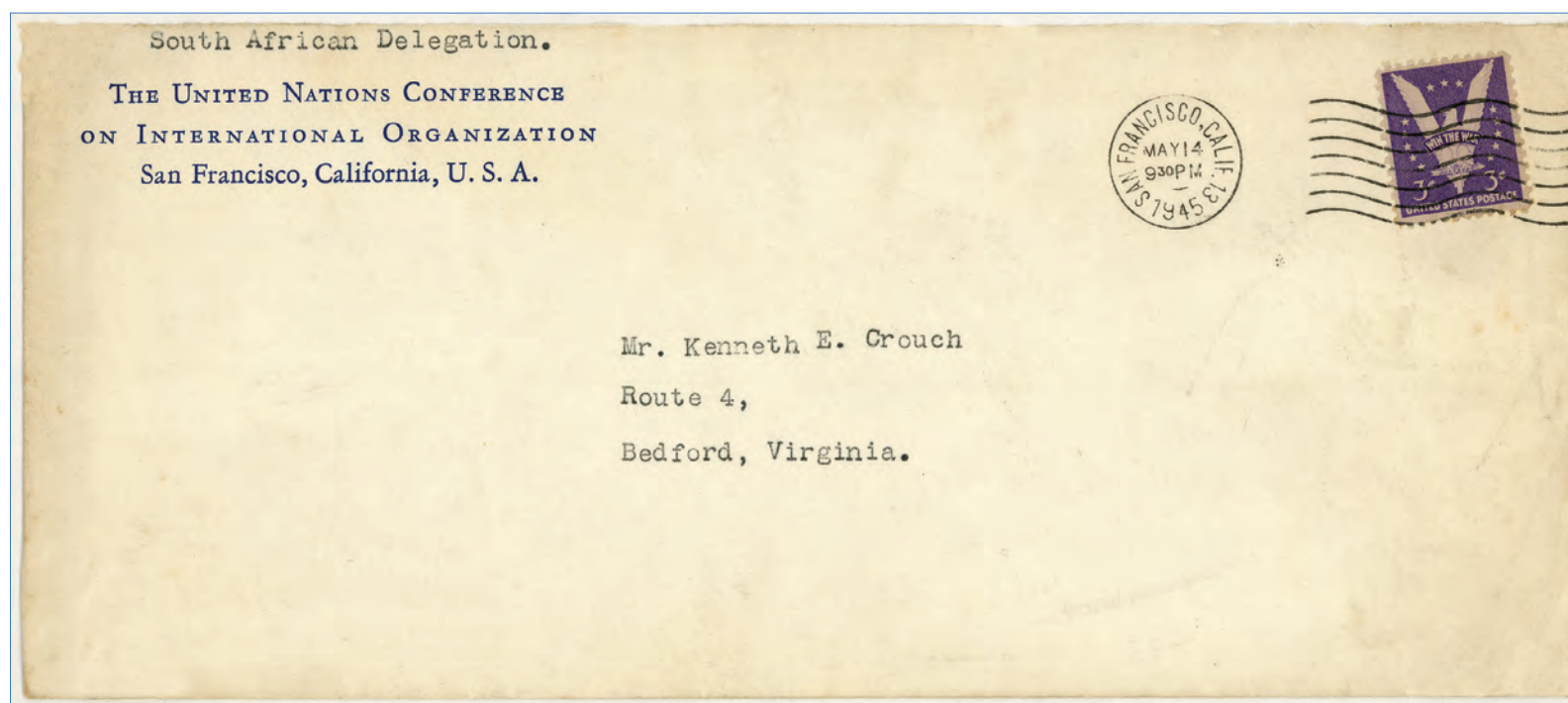
Promotional Label depicting *Cathedral Grove*



An Honor Guard of wounded soldiers stood as the U.S. Navy Band opened the ceremony. Hundreds of delegates then crowded among the 'Cathedral Grove' trees.

'Memorial Presentation'  
Publicity photo by Bureau Coast 5-19-1945

Field Marshall Jan C. Smuts (1870-1950) of South Africa was the featured memorial speaker praising Roosevelt.



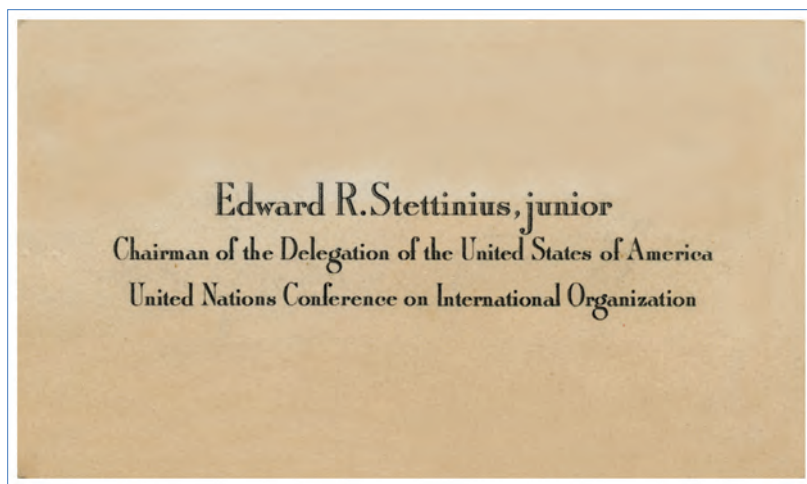
Typed corner card for the South African delegation, 5 days before the memorial service



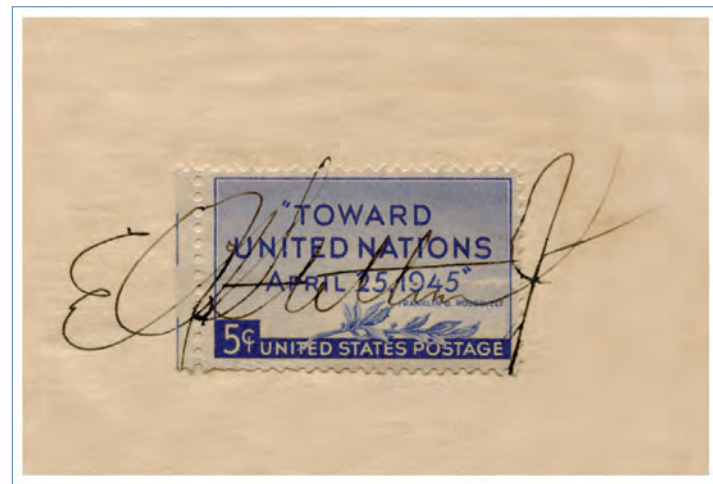
Edward Stettinius, Chairman of the conference, was the last speaker at the memorial service. He praised Roosevelt and unveiled a permanent bronze memorial plaque.

*“These great redwoods at Muir Woods National Monument, are the most enduring of all trees. Many of them stood here centuries after every man now living is dead. They are as timeless and as strong as the ideals and faith of Franklin D. Roosevelt.”*

*- Edward Stettinius, 19 May 1945*



Chairman of the Delegation of the United States  
Calling card of Edward R. Stettinius, Jr.



Edward Stettinius, Jr. signature over  
5¢ 'Toward United Nations' stamp

*“Here in this grove of enduring redwoods, preserved for posterity, members of the United Nations Conference on International Organization met on May 19, 1945, to honor the memory of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, thirty-first President of the United States, chief architect of the United Nations, and apostle of lasting peace for all of mankind.”*

*- Memorial plaque text in Cathedral Grove, 1945*

The United Nations Charter was signed on 26 June and Roosevelt's dream became a reality after the Charter was ratified by organization members on 24 October 1945.



Edward Stettinius signing the Charter for the United States



U.N. Service cover, New York, N.Y. to Sydney, Australia, 24 October 1955 (first day of issue - first printing)  
 "Return to Sender", "Unclaimed", "Retour" and "Examiner - Dead Letter Office, Sydney, N.S.W." auxiliary handstamps

Edward R. Stettinius, Jr. was appointed the 1st United States Representative to the newly formed United Nations from 17 January 1946 to 3 June 1946.