

"FLYING SOLO": SOLO STAMP USAGES TO GERMANY VIA AIR MAIL

Early U.S. pilots who "flew solo" are still well-known today. Charles Lindbergh was the first male pilot to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean; Amelia Earhart was the first female pilot to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean. Both have been honored on stamps issued by the United States and other countries from around the world.

From a philatelic perspective, quite a few US stamps have "flown solo" while transiting the international mails. This exhibit shows a sampling of "solo flights" of US stamps on mail traveling from the United States to Germany. This includes solo usages on mail that flew within the United States on its way to Germany, on mail that flew within Europe while en route from the United States to Germany, and on mail which flew over the ocean while traveling to Germany from a U.S. post office.



The 24 cent "Jenny" stamp was issued in 1918 to pay the 1 oz. rate for airmail service between Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, and New York. Shown above is a solo use of this stamp on a cover mailed aboard the SS Bremen on May 3, 1930, while the ship was traveling from the United States to Germany. The stamp (over)paid the combined 1 oz. 20 cent rate (5 cents for international surface mail and 15 cents for catapult service and airmail in Europe) for mail sent internationally via catapult mail. This mail was carried on an airplane launched from the ship via a catapult. Because the ship was traveling from west to east, the ship had a U.S. post office which used a U.S. sea post cancel.

Kurt Dauzmann

1952 N. ROCKWELL ST.,
CHICAGO, ILL.,
U.S.A.



Germany

*Frd. Joh. Mennersoh,
Kirchstr. 12
Barnen-Langerfeldt.*

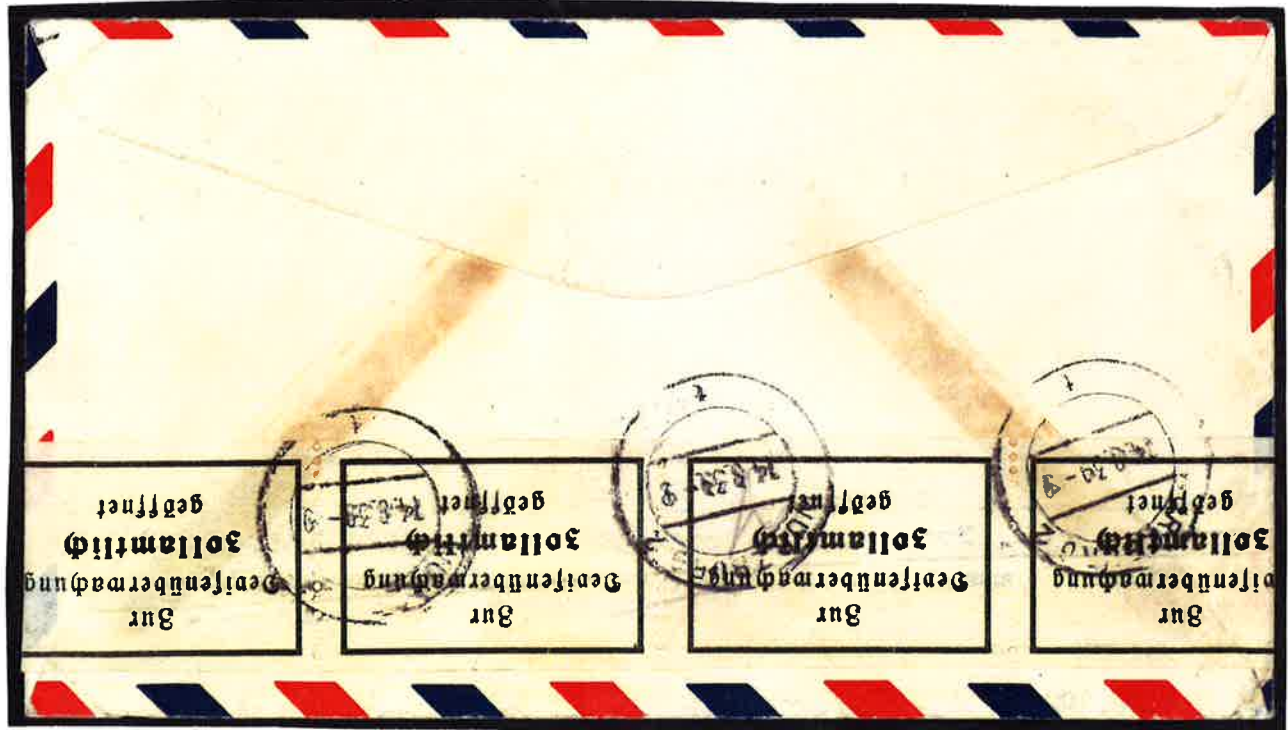
The 10 cent Spirit of St. Louis stamp issued in June of 1927 paid the U.S. domestic 1 oz. airmail rate in effect at that time. On this cover the stamp overpaid by 1 cent the 9 cent rate for airmail in the U.S. (4 cent surcharge) and surface mail to Germany (5 cents).

The 15 cent "Map" Airmail stamp issued in September of 1926 paid the 1 oz. CAM rate for letters traveling between 1000 and 1500 miles. On this card the stamp paid the 3c international card rate, the 8c surcharge for air service in the U.S. and the 4c surcharge for air service from London to Germany.

The 20 cent "Map" airmail stamp issued in January, 1927 paid the 1 oz. CAM rate for letters traveling more than 1500 miles. On this cover the stamp appears to pay the double weight rate for air within the U.S. (4 cents for the first oz., 8 cents for the second oz.) plus the double weight international surface rate (5 cents for the first oz., 3 cents for the second oz.)



The 50 cent Trans-Pacific Airmail stamp issued in February, 1937 was used to pay for airmail postage for trans-Pacific airmail rates between the U.S. and Asia. On the cover below, the stamp paid for the letter to travel via airmail from Hawaii to the U.S. mainland (20 cents) and then from the U.S. mainland via airmail to Germany (30 cents). The cover bears a Crosby Cachet. It arrived in Germany on August 14, 1939, shortly before the Germans attacked Poland.



The 15 cent Statue of Liberty airmail stamp was issued on August 20, 1947 to pay the 15 cent per oz. airmail rate to Europe. On the cover below, the stamp fulfilled its intended use. The airplane carrying the letter crashed on Dec. 23, 1951. The crew approached the Milan-Malpensa airport in low visibility due to fog. About eight kilometers from the runway the aircraft hit the ground, lost its undercarriage, caught fire and came to rest in a field, broken in three parts. All 48 persons aboard successfully evacuated the airplane; three passengers were slightly injured. The airplane was destroyed. The remnants of the cover were recovered and sent to Germany in an Italian "ambulance cover."



Mod. 94 A - F.to 11,4 x 16,2 - Ediz. 1951

**AMMINISTRAZIONE DELLE POSTE
E DEI TELEGRAFI D'ITALIA**
Administration des Postes et des Télégraphes d'Italie

Aus dem Unfall des Flugzeuges
New York-Mailand vom 23. Dez. 1951
besonders beschädigte Korrespondenz

All'Ufficio Postale
(Au Bureau des Postes)

(a) Lipszig O. 5

(b) Russ. Zone

(a) Provincia, Dipartimento, Cantone, ecc.
(b) Indicazione dello Stato quando si tratti di paesi esteri.

Herrn Graulich
Lipszig 05
Elisabethstr. 37

R

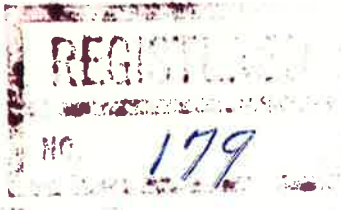
A. Chicca, Tivoli - ord. 285 del 19-2-1951 (1.000.000)

The \$1 Airlift stamp was issued on April 4, 1968 to pay for the airlift of parcels to and from members of the Armed Forces located outside of the contiguous 48 states. Although the Post Office announced publicly in March of 1968 that this stamp could be used to pay regular postage rates for non-airmail articles, the Post Office advised its employees on January 1, 1970 that this stamp could only be used to pay postage on airmail articles. On the cover below, which was mailed some time during 1970, the stamp pays the 20 cent 1 oz. airmail rate to Europe in effect from May 1, 1967 to July 1, 1971 and the 80 cent registration fee in effect from July 14, 1969 to May 16, 1971.

Herbert R. Ert
1626 E. Duval Street
Philadelphia, Pa. 19138
USA

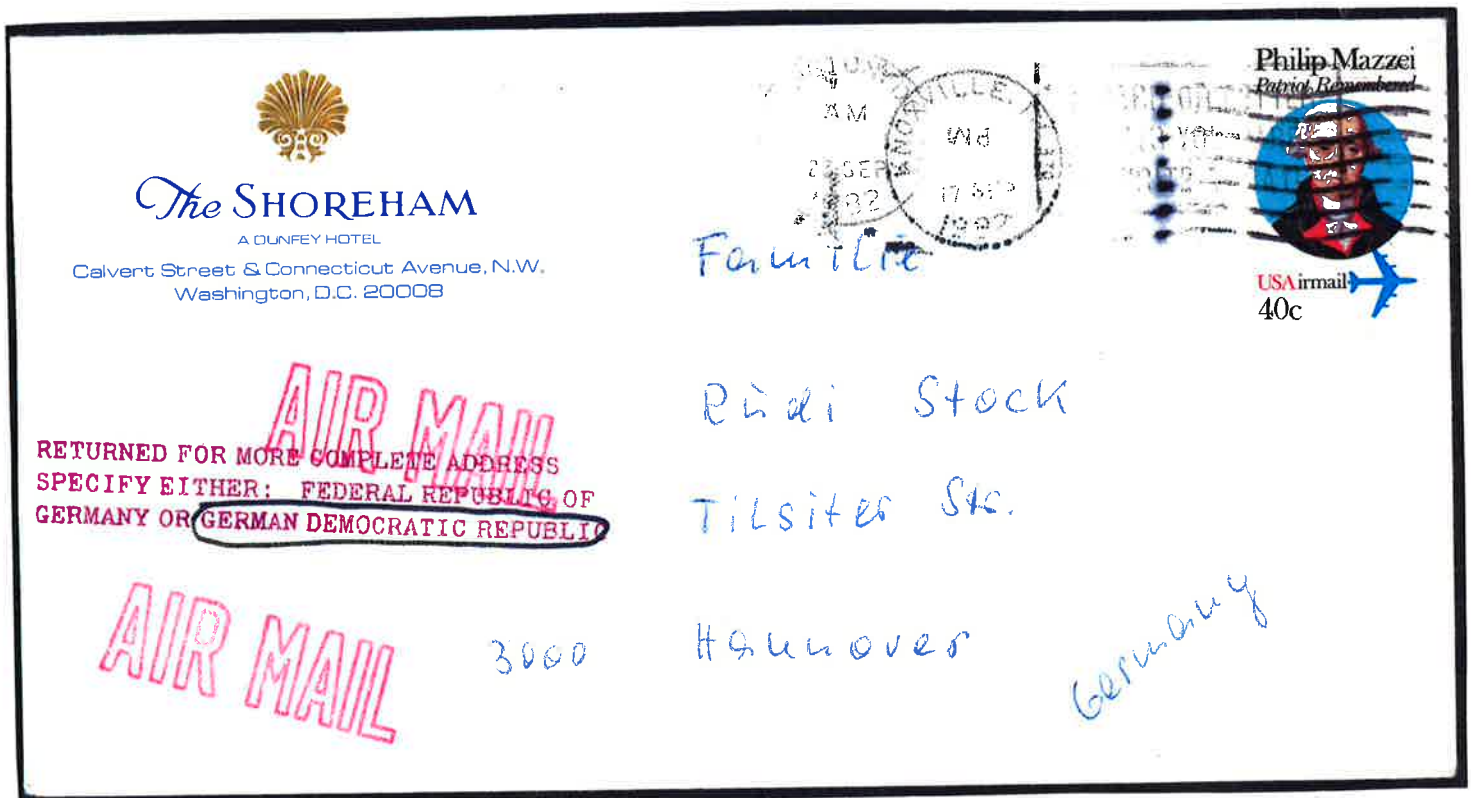


Frau Eileen Voigt
355 Marburg
Universitätsstr.40
West Germany



AIR PAR AVION **MAIL**

The 40 cent Philip Mazzei airmail was issued perforated 11 in 1980 and perforated 10.5 x 11.25 in 1982 to pay the 40 cent per ½ oz. airmail rate to most foreign countries. The stamp fulfilled its intended purposes on the cover below sent to Hannover, Germany on Sept. 17, 1982. But the "solo flight" of this stamp almost did not occur because of the sender's failure to specify whether the addressee was in Federal Republic of Germany or in the German Democratic Republic. While anyone familiar with Germany at that time knew that Hannover was in the communist-led Germany Democratic Republic, the U.S. Postal Service required senders to specify to which of the two German "Republics" mail was addressed. Because the sender failed to specify which German "Republic" the letter was addressed to, the Postal Service returned the cover to the sender with an appropriate instructional marking. The sender then specified that the letter was to go to the German Democratic Republic by circling the appropriate designation in the instructional marking.



Solo Flights of Definitive Stamps – Fourth Bureau Issue

The Fourth Bureau Issue was the current definitive issue when the U.S. started regular domestic airmail service and when airmail from London to the European continent started. Because of the variety of airmail rates in effect while the Fourth Bureau issue was current, a variety of denominations from this issue could go on "solo flights."

The 7 cent McKinley stamp below underpaid the 9 cent rate in effect in 1929 for a 1 oz. letter sent surface mail to Germany (5 cents) and then sent via airmail once in Europe (4 cents). Even though the cover was insufficiently paid and marked postage due by the New York City post office, it was sent by airmail via France once it was in Europe.



The 9 cent Jefferson stamp below paid the 9 cent rate in effect in 1931 for 1 oz. letter sent airmail within the U.S. (4 cents surcharge) and via surface mail to Germany (5 cents).



The 8 cent Grant stamp shown here paid the 8 cent rate in effect in 1936 for a 1 oz. letter sent airmail within the U.S. and via surface mail to Germany.



AMERICAN EXPRESS COMPANY
253 POST STREET
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

VIA SS. QUEEN MARY SAILING
JUNE 24th.

Mr. A. Heffner, Manager,
Hotel Rose,
Wiesbaden, Germany.

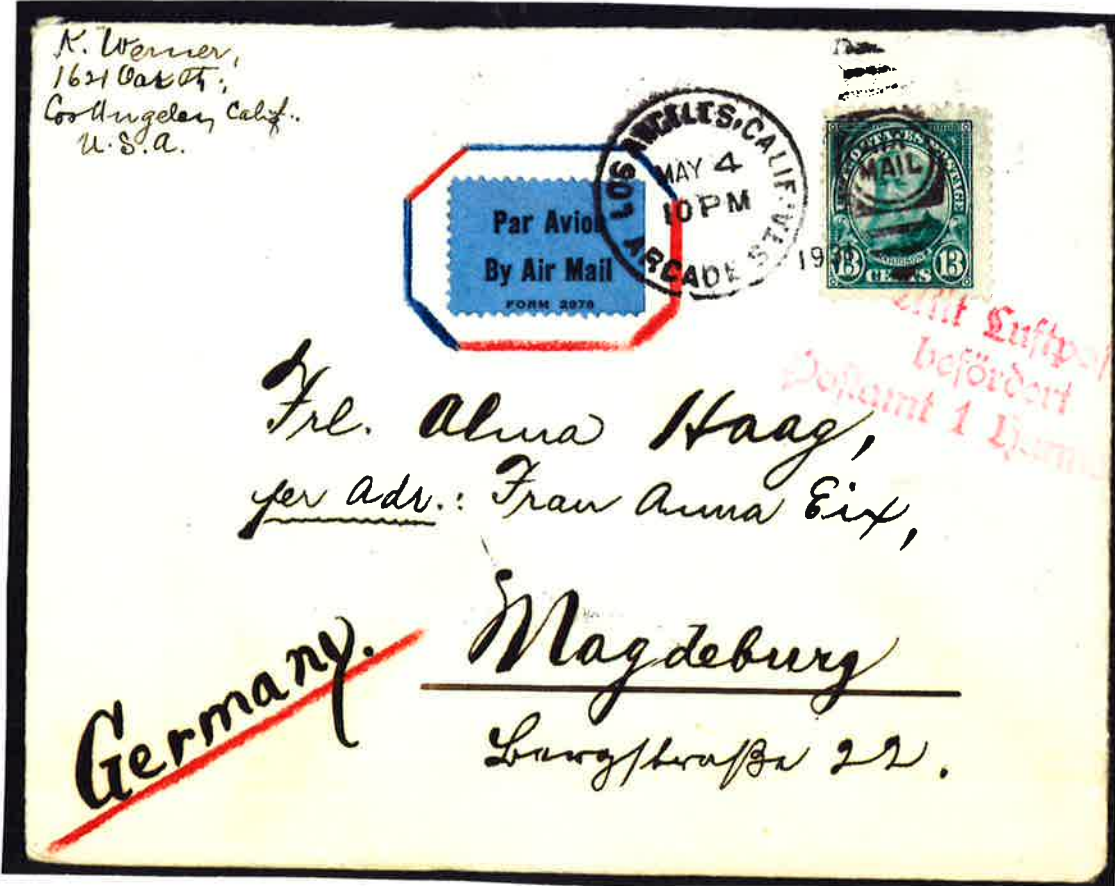
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.
JUN 24 8-PM '36

BUY U.S. SAVINGS BONDS
ASK YOUR POST OFFICE
8c
VIA AIR MAIL

The 11 cent Hayes stamp shown below paid the combined rate in effect in 1936 for a ½ oz. letter sent airmail within the U.S. (3 cents), surface mail to Europe (5 cents) and then via airmail to Germany once it arrived in Europe (3 cents).



The 13 cent Harrison stamp shown below paid the combined rate in effect in May, 1931 for a 1 oz. letter sent airmail within the U.S. (4 cents surcharge), surface mail to Europe (5 cents) and then via airmail (via either London or France) once in Europe (4 cents).



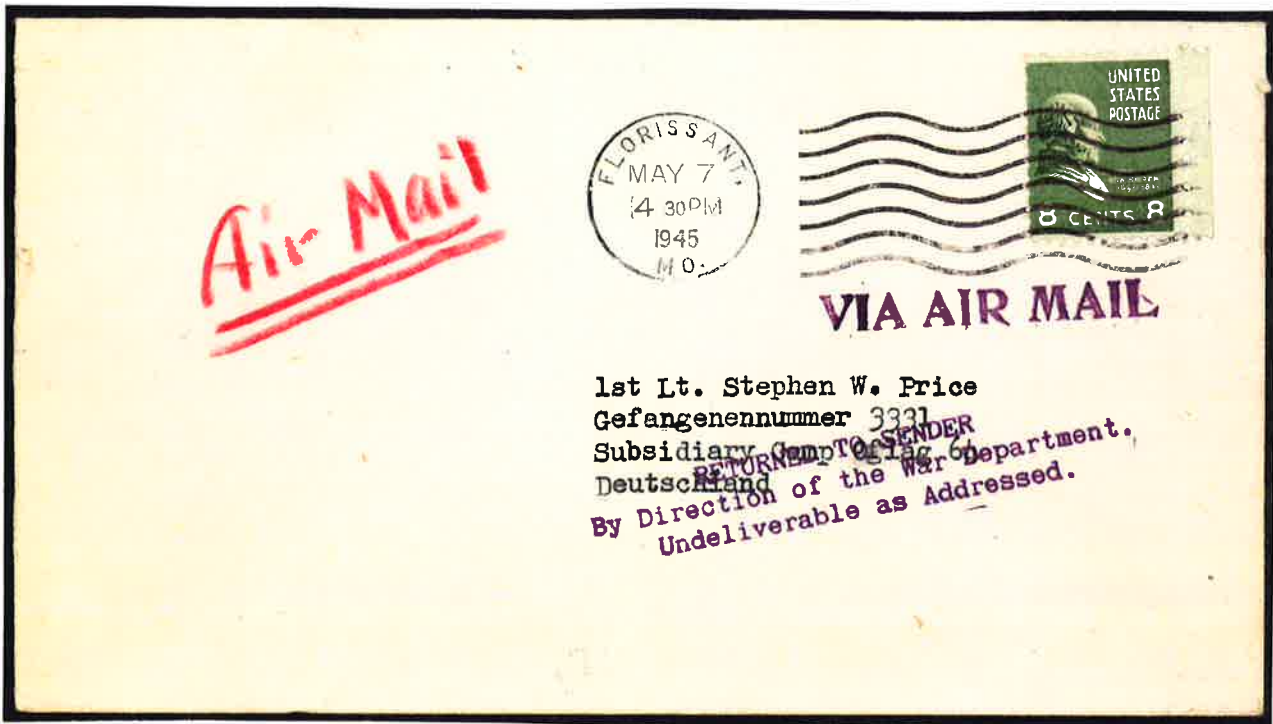
The 50 cent Arlington Amphitheater stamp shown below paid the 30 cent rate for a 1 oz. letter sent via trans-Atlantic mail to Europe, the 15 cent registration fee, and the 5 cent fee for a return receipt. The cover was first mailed from Chicago to Premysl, Poland on September 8, 1939, shortly after the start of the German invasion of Poland. The cover arrived in unoccupied Poland, where the Polish post office wrote a note on the reverse stating that the cover could not be delivered because of the German Invasion. The cover returned to the U.S. and received New York City transit marking dated Oct. 23, 1939. Not long thereafter, following the completion of the German invasion of Poland and the partition of Poland between Germany and the USSR, the letter was sent back to Europe via Russia, this time addressed to Premysl, Germany, transiting Moscow on December 4, 1939. The border between German-occupied Poland and Russian-occupied Poland ran through the middle of Premysl. The addressee could not be found, and the cover arrived back in Chicago on Feb. 17, 1940. A most remarkable cover.



Solo Flights of Definitive Stamps – Prexies

The Presidential Series of 1938, "Prexies," was the current definitive series for a period that started prior to the U.S. involvement in WWII and did not end until the early 1960's for some denominations. Thus, a variety of Prexies made "solo flights" to Germany.

The 8 cent Van Buren stamp shown below paid the rate for a single ounce letter traveling airmail within the U.S. and then via surface mail to Germany. On the date on which this cover was mailed (May 7, 1945), the head of the German High Command, Alfred Jodl, signed the unconditional surrender of all German forces. Regular civilian mail service to Germany had not yet resumed. This letter was addressed to an American POW, but it was returned to the sender as undeliverable as addressed by the War Department.



The 11 cent Polk stamp below paid the international airmail rate for a postcard going to Germany which took effect on July 1, 1961. This card was mailed on August 21, 1961. The use of this stamp to pay this rate is difficult to find.



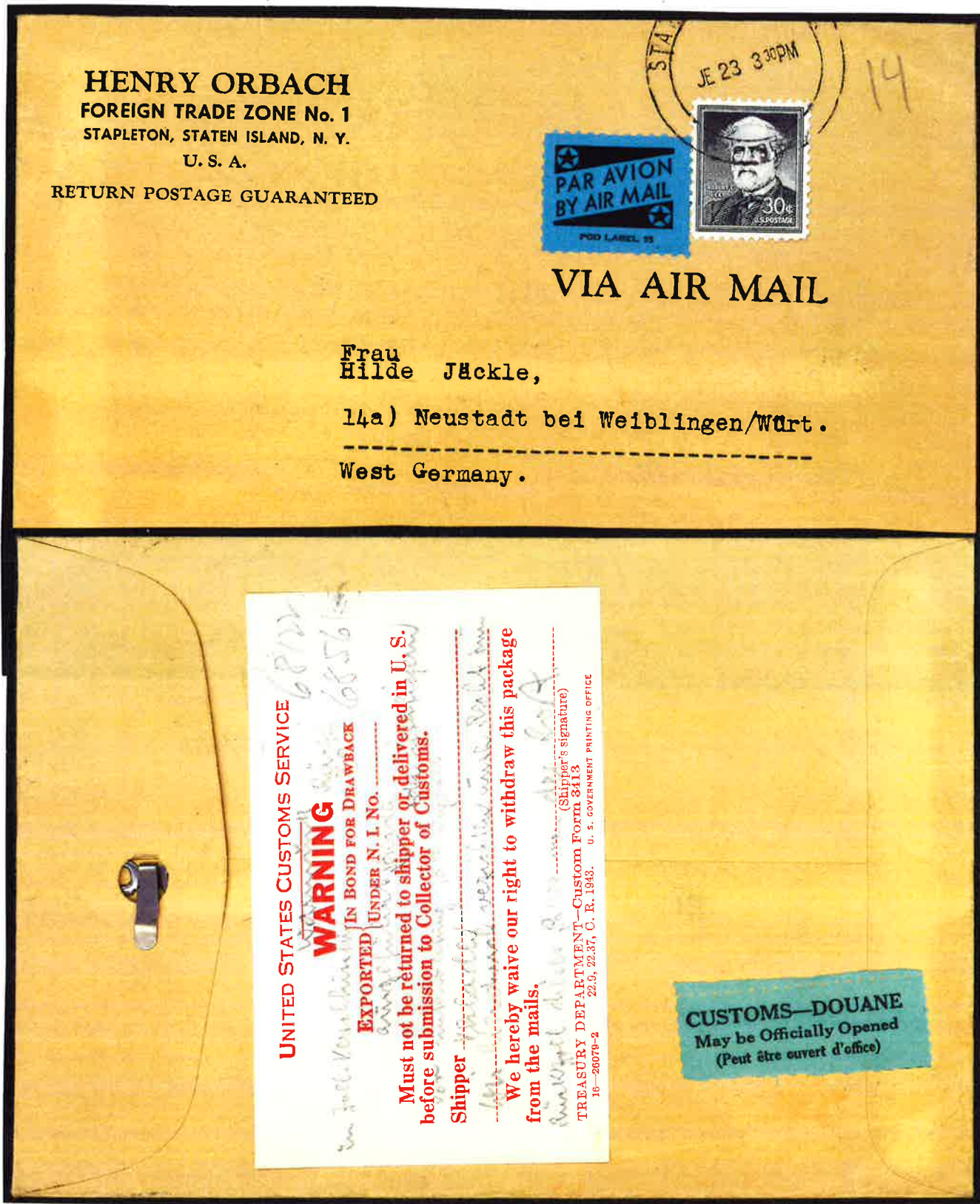
The \$1 Wilson stamp shown below was printed in purple and black in 1938 and in red violet and black in 1954. It started its flight to Germany from New York City on February 11, 1955. It paid the triple 15 cent airmail rate to Europe and the 55 cent registration fee in effect from November 1, 1953 to July 1, 1957.



Solo Flights of Definitive Stamps – Liberty Series

The Liberty Series began being issued in 1954. While this series was current, airmail rates to Germany changed only once. Thus, there was only a limited opportunity for solo flights to Germany by stamps from this series.

The 30 cent Lee stamp shown below paid the double airmail rate to Germany in effect when the cover was mailed. What makes this cover remarkable is the use of Custom Form 3413 on the reverse. This form was used on mail sent from Foreign Trade Zones located in the U. S. The form is necessary because goods may be exported from a Foreign Trade Zone free of duty and excise tax. Foreign Trade Zones were authorized by Congress in 1934. The Foreign Trade Zone is currently administered by Customs and Border Protection. This use of a Custom Form 3413 in combination with a solo usage of the 30 cent Lee stamp may be unique.



HENRY ORBACH
FOREIGN TRADE ZONE No. 1
STAPLETON, STATEN ISLAND, N. Y.
U. S. A.

RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED



VIA AIR MAIL

Frau
Hilde Jäckle,
14a) Neustadt bei Weiblingen/Würt.

West Germany.

UNITED STATES CUSTOMS SERVICE
WARNING IN BOND FOR DRAWBACK
EXPORTED UNDER N. I. No. *6856*
Must not be returned to shipper or delivered in U. S.
before submission to Collector of Customs.
Shipper *[Signature]*
We hereby waive our right to withdraw this package
from the mails.
TREASURY DEPARTMENT—Custom Form 3413
16-26079-2 22.5, 22.37, C. R. 1943. U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

CUSTOMS—DOUANE
May be Officially Opened
(Peut être ouvert d'office)

Solo Flights of Definitive Stamps – Prominent Americans Series

The Prominent Americans Series began being issued in 1965. The 20 cent George Marshall stamp shown below, issued in 1967, paid the 20 cent rate for a 1 oz. letter going to Germany in effect from May 1, 1967 to July 1, 1971. This cover was mailed from a U.S. APO in Viet Nam, by the Radio Officer aboard the German hospital ship Helgoland. The Helgoland was Germany's sole contribution to the conflict in Viet Nam. The ship arrived in South Vietnam in 1966. It had 10 doctors and 30 nurses on board from the German Red Cross, along with 150 beds and three operating rooms. The ship treated only Vietnamese civilians, without charge. It was the most modern medical facility in Viet Nam at the time. The ship left in 1971 after treating over 11,000 civilians.

