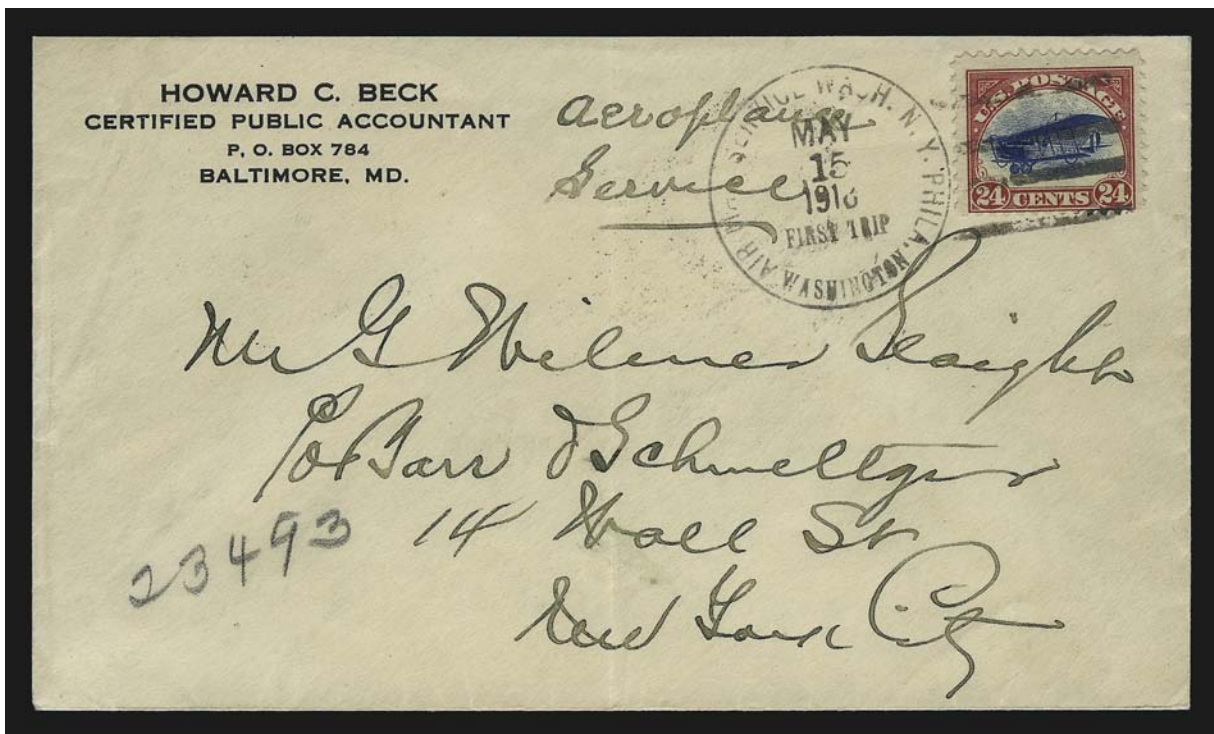


1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

The First U.S. Government Airmail Flight – May 15-16, 1918

The first U.S. Government airmail service was hastily organized in 1918 for a May 15 inaugural flight. Planes and pilots from the U.S. Army Signal Corps—daredevils who hoped to serve in World War I—were ordered to prepare for the relay flights between Washington D.C., Philadelphia and New York. Matching “First Trip” duplex markings were used by all three city post offices on mail for the May 15 flight.

Washington D.C. to New York City



Washington D.C. May 15 “First Trip” duplex. 24¢ stamp pays 14¢ airmail postage and 10¢ special delivery fee. AAMC 101A1.

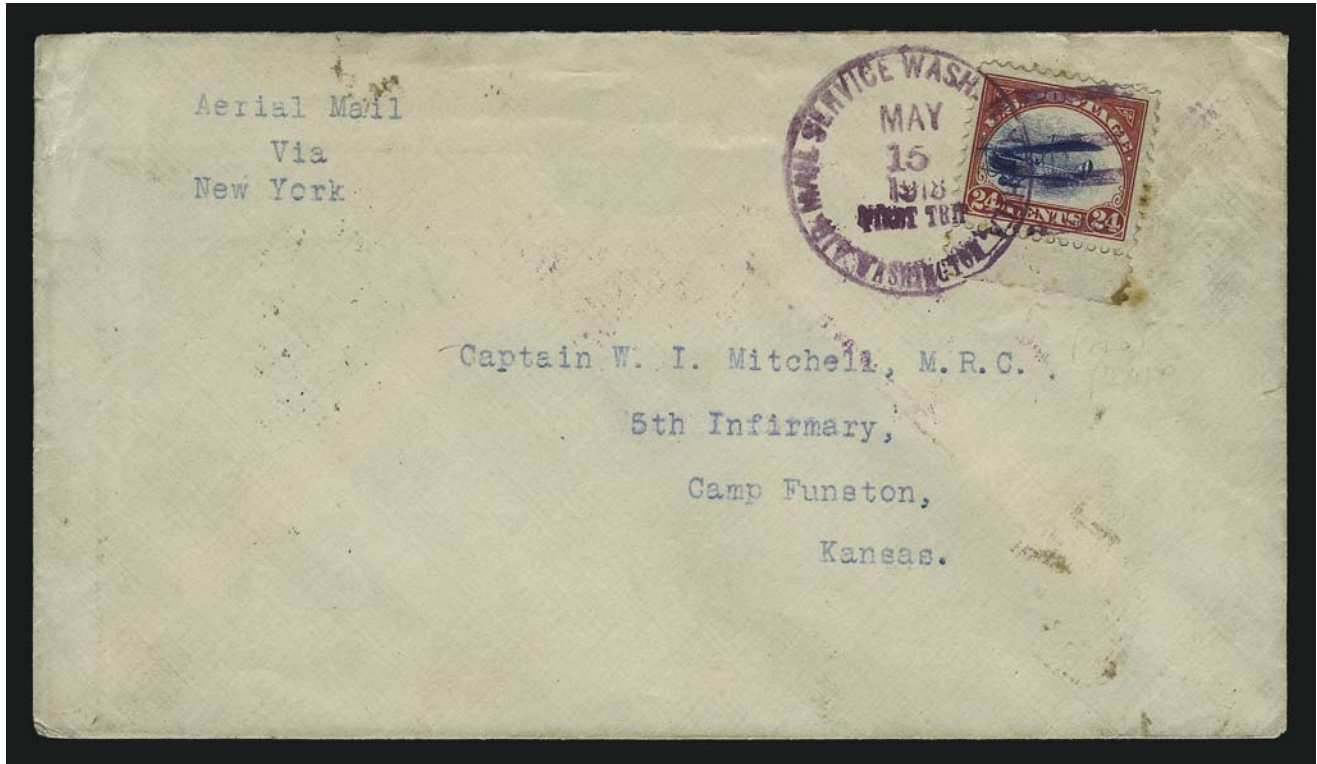
Crash Mail from Washington D.C.

On May 15, 1918, at 11:47am, Lt. George L. Boyle took off from Potomac Park Polo Field in Washington D.C., heading south instead of north. After flying about 25 miles, he crashed in a farmer’s field near Waldorf Md. The mail was unharmed and was carried on the next day’s flight.

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

The First U.S. Government Airmail Flight – May 15-16, 1918

Washington D.C. to Philadelphia



Washington D.C. May 15 “First Trip” duplex. Flown to Philadelphia and sent by train to Camp Funston, Kansas. AAMC 101B1 (300 flown).

Stamp has shifted vignette (nearly enough to be a “Fast Plane”)

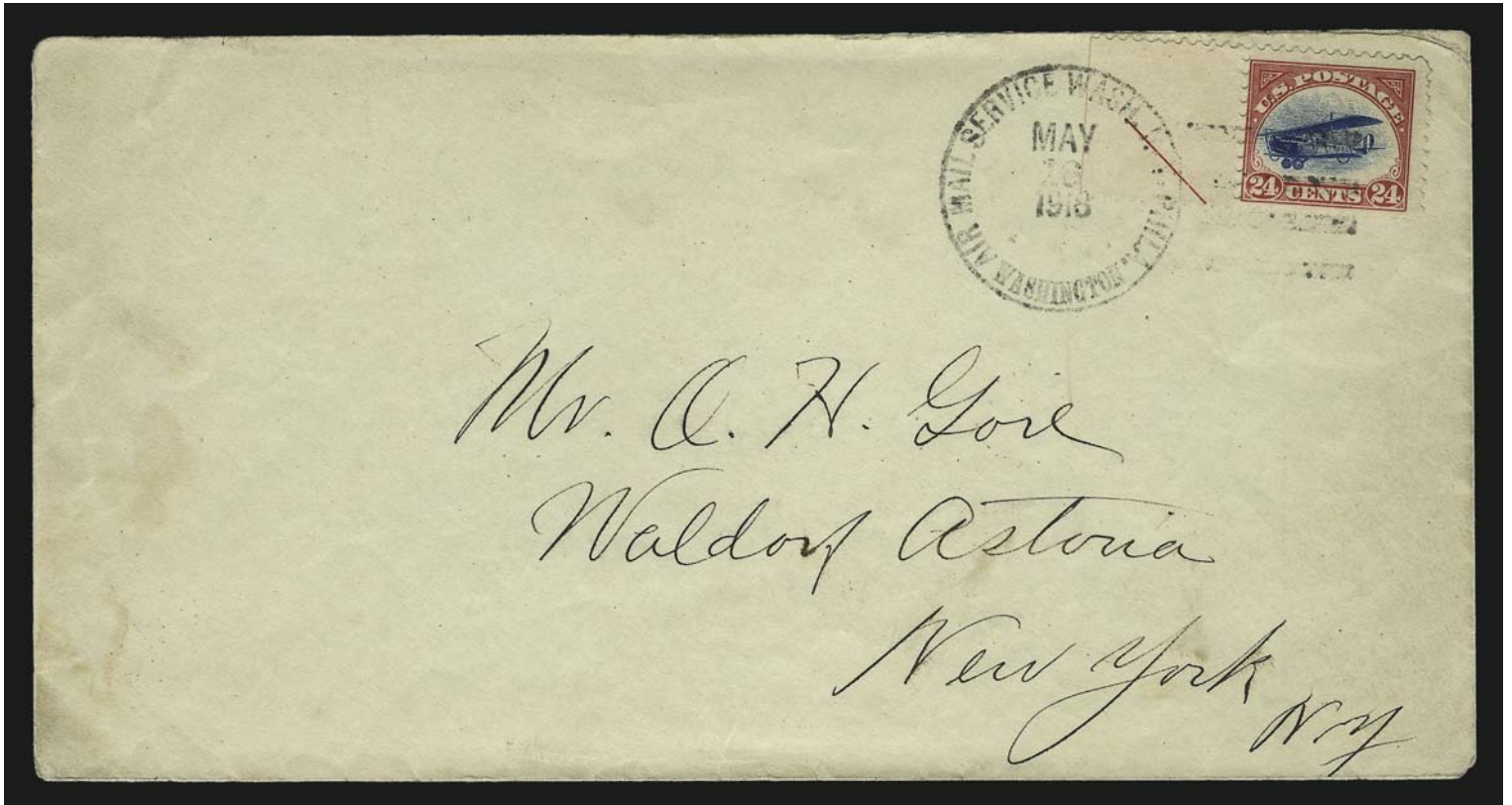
Crash Mail from Washington D.C.

On May 15, 1918, at 11:47am, Lt. George L. Boyle took off from Potomac Park Polo Field in Washington D.C., heading south instead of north. After flying about 25 miles, he crashed in a farmer’s field near Waldorf Md. The mail was unharmed and was carried on the next day’s flight.

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

The First U.S. Government Airmail Flight – May 15-16, 1918

Washington D.C. to New York City



Washington D.C. "May/16/1918" duplex. AAMC 101A12.

Stamp has left guide arrow selvage.

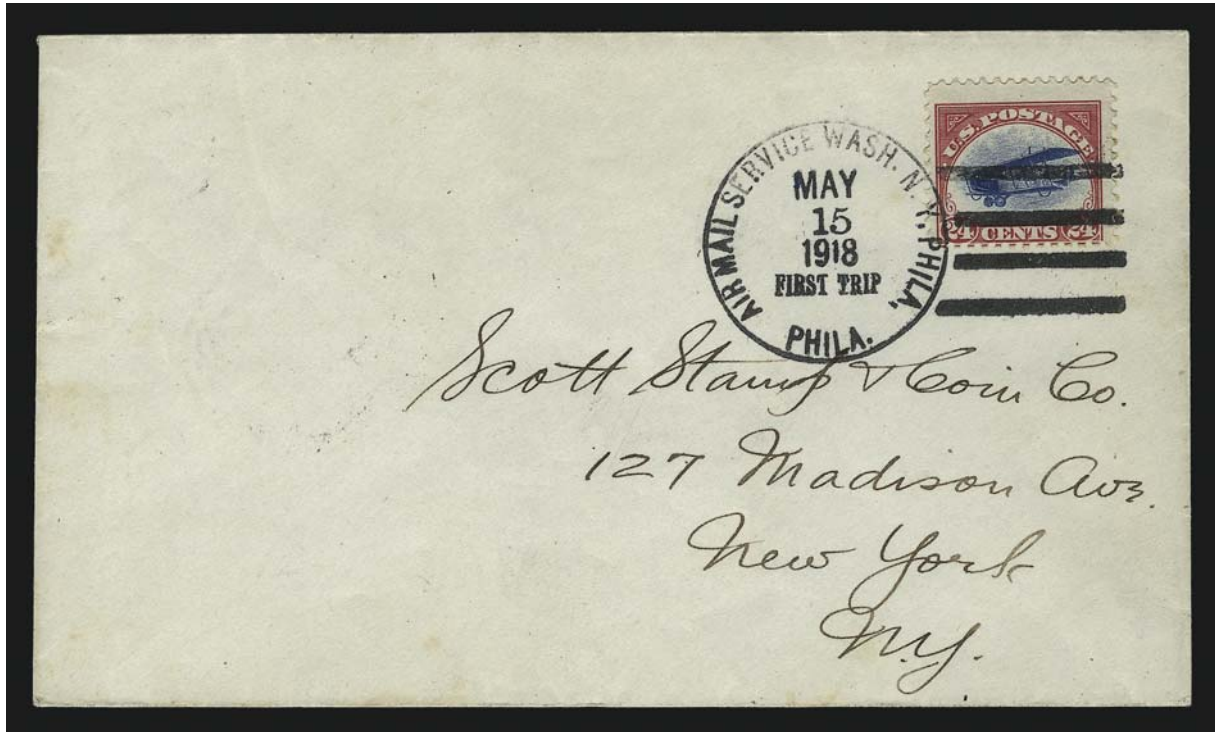
Additional Mail on May 16 Flight from Washington D.C.

All of the mail collected on May 15 and up to 11:00am on May 16 was flown on the second (successful) flight from Washington D.C. on May 16.

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

The First U.S. Government Airmail Flight – May 15-16, 1918

Philadelphia to New York City



Philadelphia May 15 "First Trip" duplex. AAMC 101C1.

Only 350 letters/cards flown on this leg of the May 15 flight.

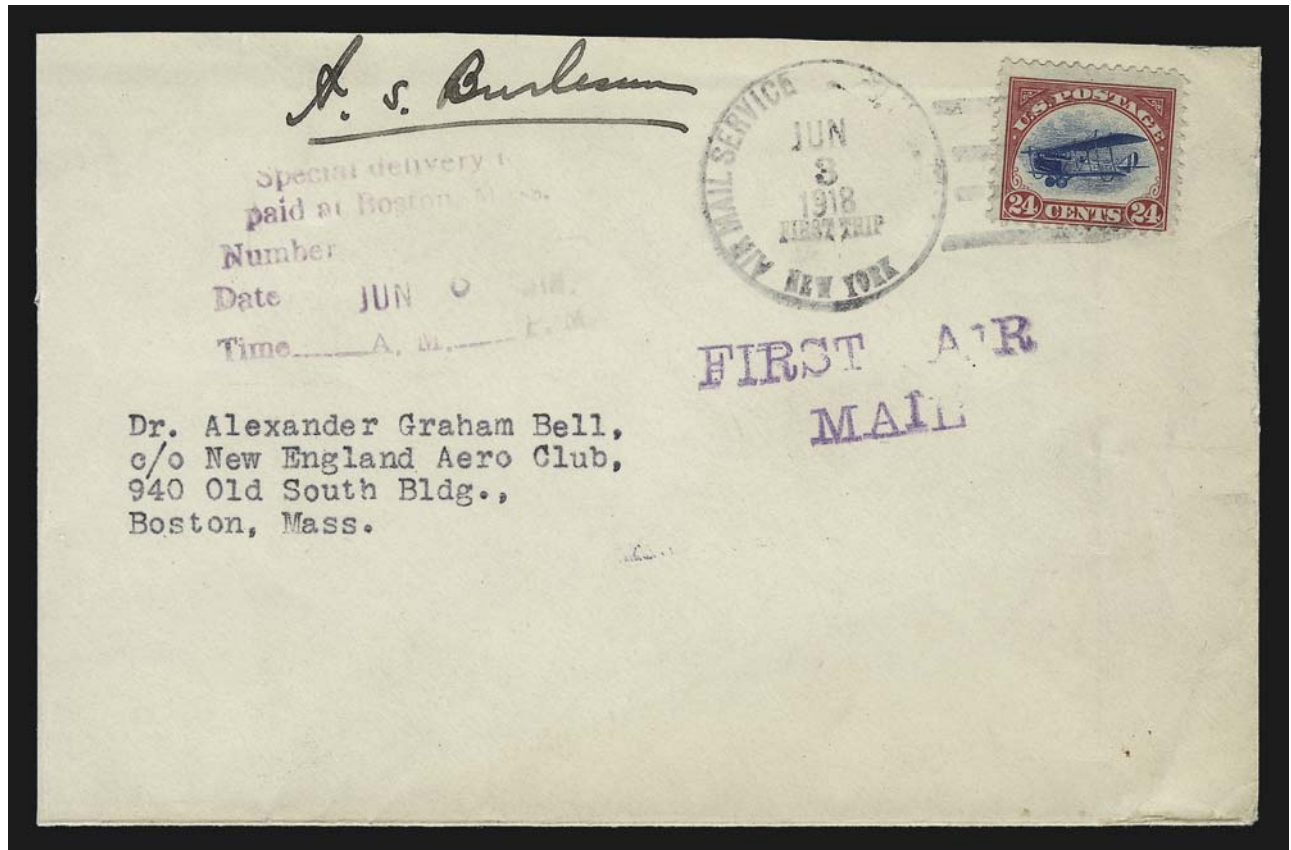
Philadelphia Mail on May 15

Shortly after Lt. Boyle crashed (around noon), he was able to telephone Capt. Benjamin Lipsner, who in turn telephoned Lt. Paul Culver to give him the news that the northbound plane would not arrive at Bustleton. He instructed Lt. Culver to fly Lt. Webb's plane (#38278) back to New York with the Philadelphia mail (350 letters and cards).

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

Washington D.C.–Boston via New York – June 1, 1918

New York City to Boston



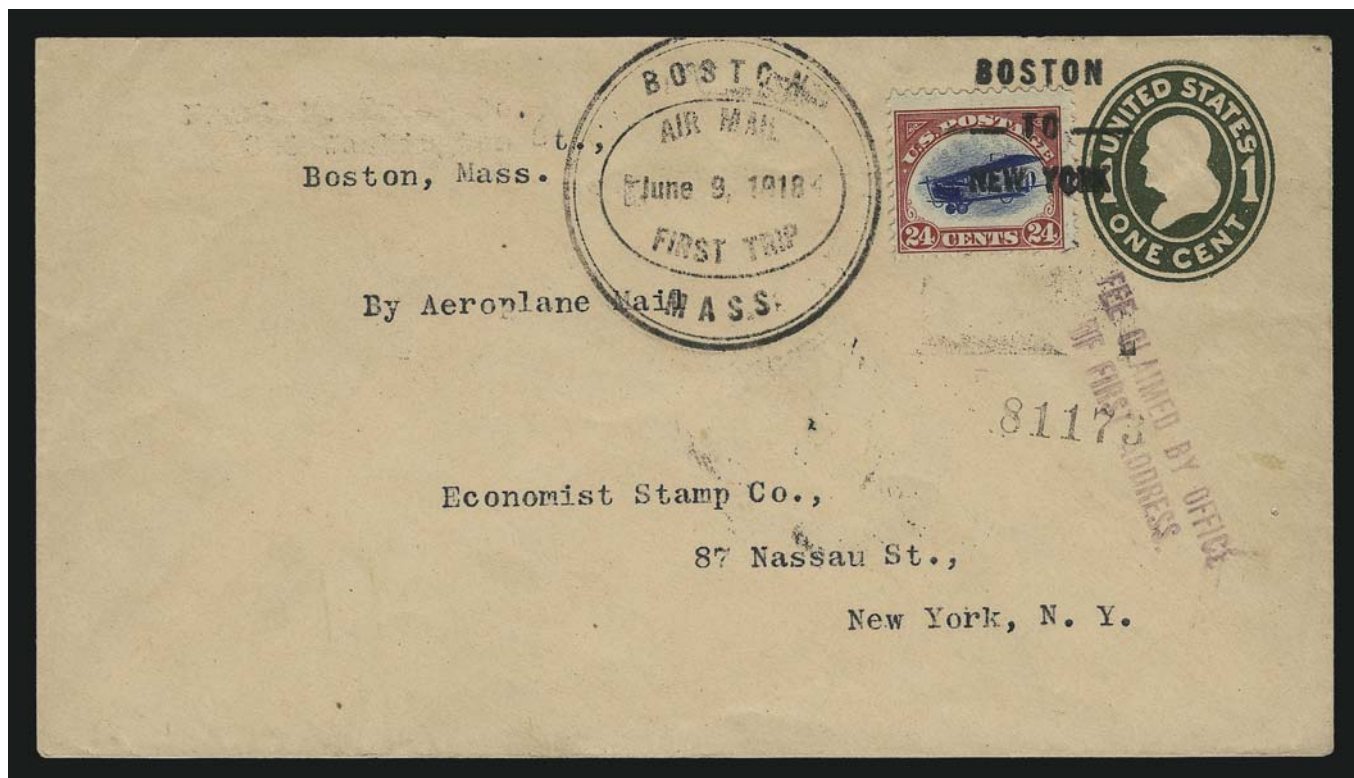
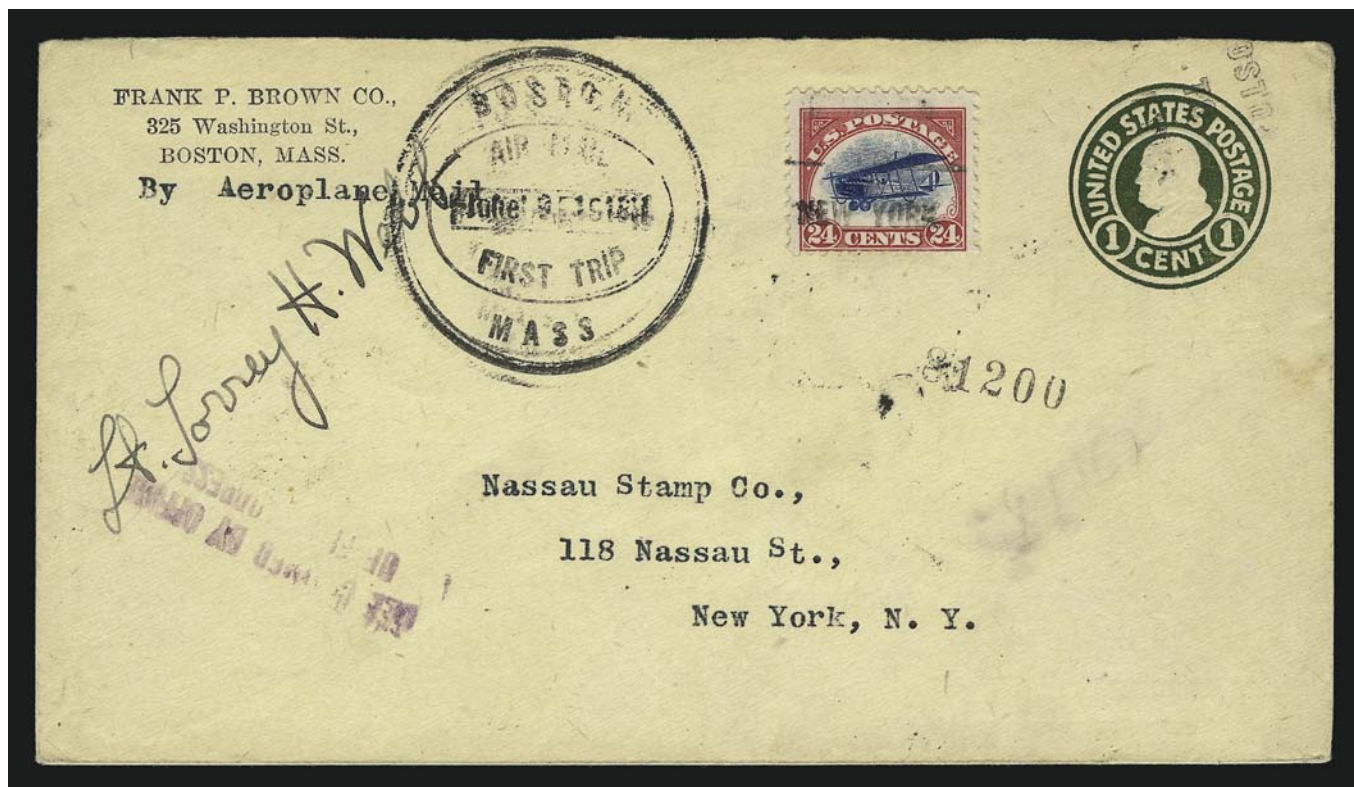
New York June 3 "First Trip" duplex and "First Air/Mail" handstamp.
AAMC 103.

Only 28 pounds of mail was carried on this flight. This cover is
addressed to Alexander Graham Bell and signed by
Postmaster General A. S. Burleson.

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

Boston to New York – June 8-11, 1918

This experimental flight which was scheduled for June 8 was flown on June 11 by Lt. Torrey H. Webb, who carried 64 pounds of mail.



Special large circular “Air Mail First Trip” datestamp and
“Boston-to-New York” three-line cancel. AAMC 105.

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

New York-Columbia Country Club, Washington D.C. June 15, 1918

This was a special authorized flight in a U.S. Army plane piloted by Capt. Weideman, a pilot on the New York to Washington run. One hundred covers addressed to members of the club and containing a Woodley Park Auxiliary "Thank You" card made out to the addressee were dropped on the golf course and later sold on behalf of the Woodley Park Chapter of the American Red Cross.



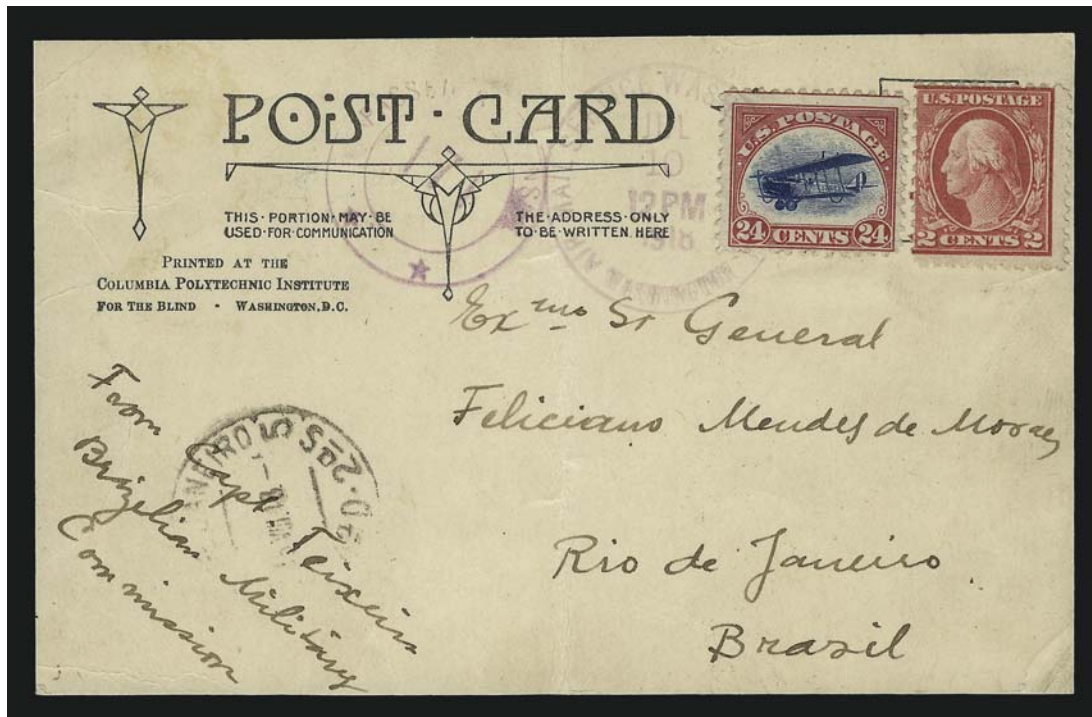
Special boxed "Airmail/New York/Columbia, Country Club/Washington/June 13, 1918" datestamp. AAMC 106.

With Red Cross label on back and "Thank You" card enclosed.

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

Washington D.C. to New York – July 10, 1918
Addressed to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Flown Postcard



Washington D.C. July 10, 1918 duplex.

Purple censor handstamp on postcard from a member of the
Brazilian Military Commission.

24¢ airmail postage to New York and additional 2¢ stamp
for UPU rate to Brazil.

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

**New York to Philadelphia – July 13, 1918
Last Day of the 24¢ Airmail Rate**



New York July 13, 1918, 11:00am duplex.

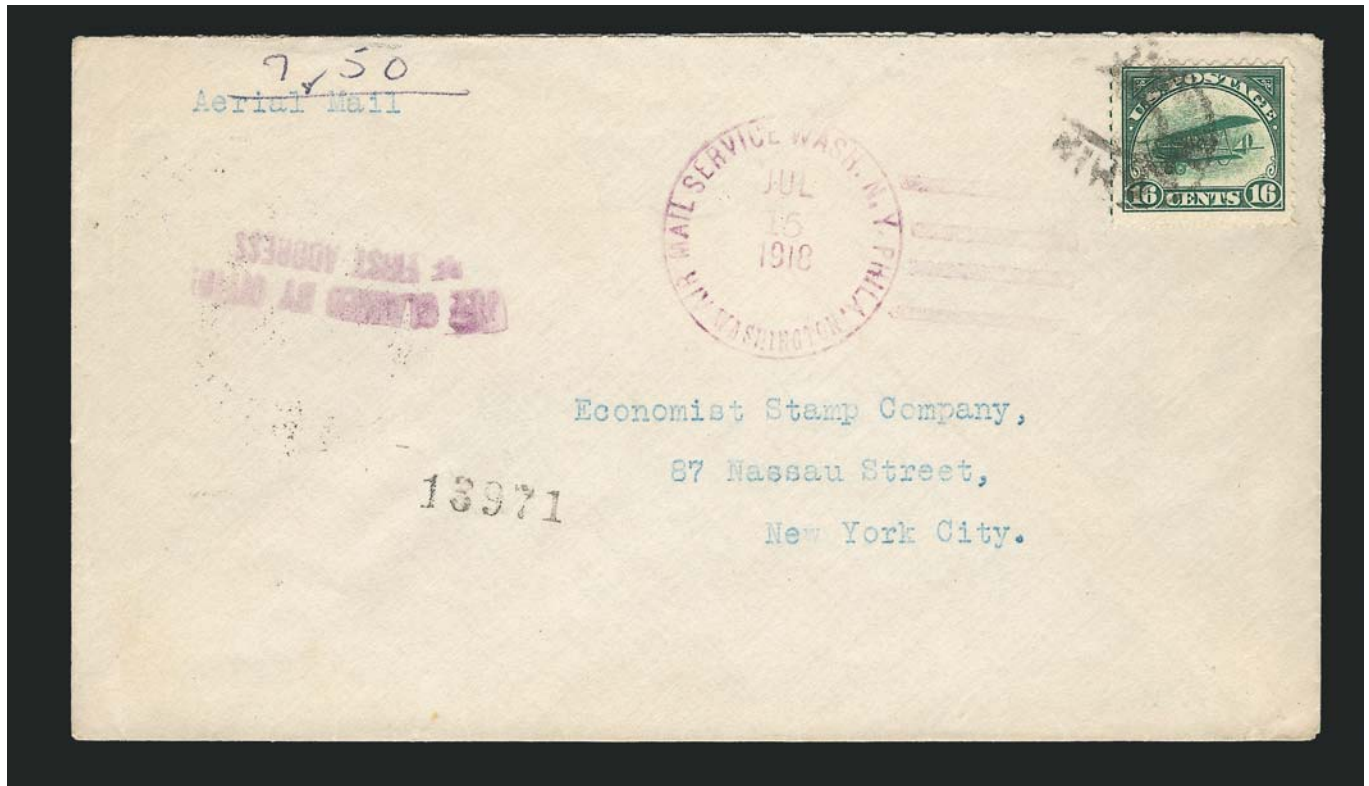
July 13 was a Saturday. There were no airmail flights on Sundays, so the first day of the reduced 16¢ airmail rate was Monday, July 15.

Back of cover has handstamped World War I marking:

SEND A LETTER BY AIRPLANE,
ESPECIALLY TO ONE "OVER THERE".
IT WILL BE A REAL TREAT

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

Washington D.C. to New York City – July 15, 1918
First Day of the 16¢ Airmail Rate



Washington D.C. July 15, 1918 duplex.

July 13 was a Saturday. There were no airmail flights on Sundays, so the first day of the reduced 16¢ airmail rate was Monday, July 15.

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

Washington D.C. to Philadelphia – July 15, 1918
First Day of the 16¢ Airmail Rate



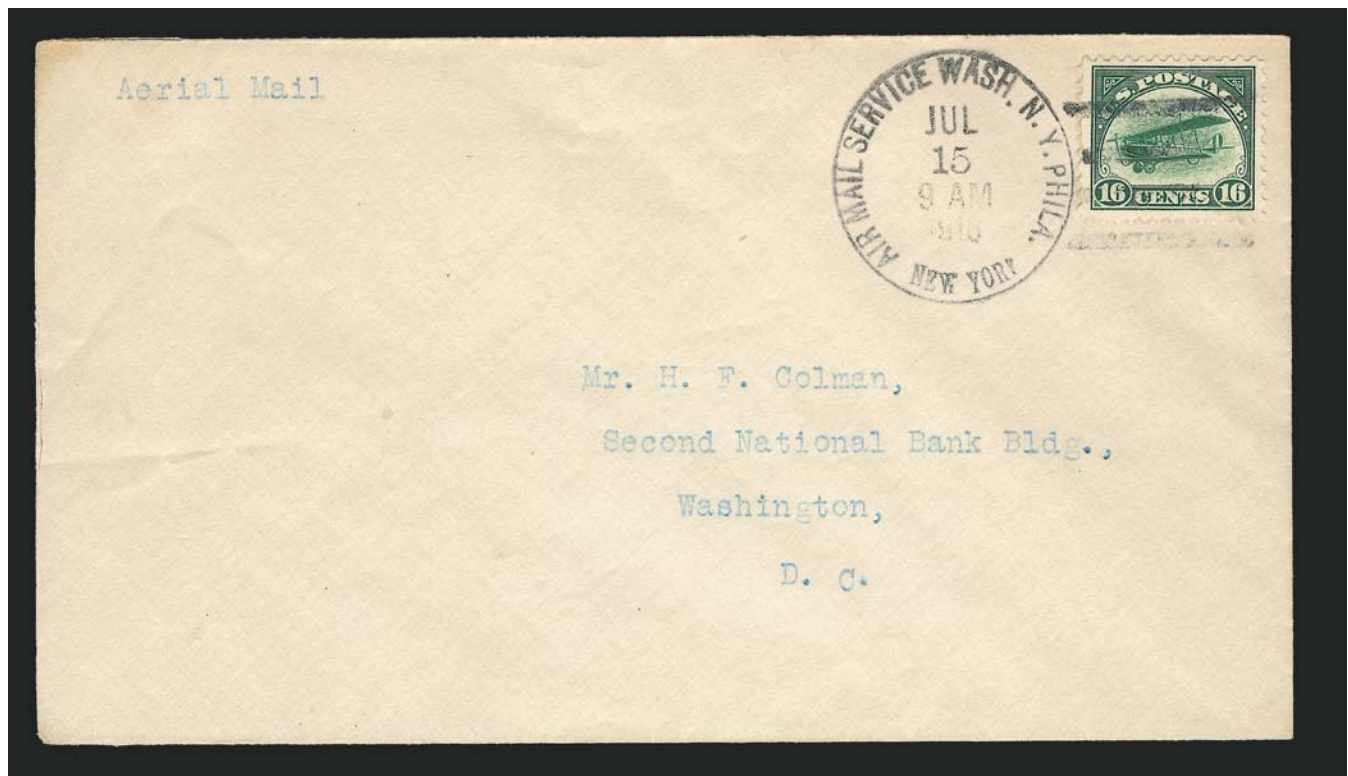
Washington D.C. July 15, 1918 duplex.

Flown to Philadelphia and sent by train to Camp Funston, Kansas.

July 13 was a Saturday. There were no airmail flights on Sundays, so the first day of the reduced 16¢ airmail rate was Monday, July 15.

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

New York to Washington D.C. – July 15, 1918
First Day of the 16¢ Airmail Rate

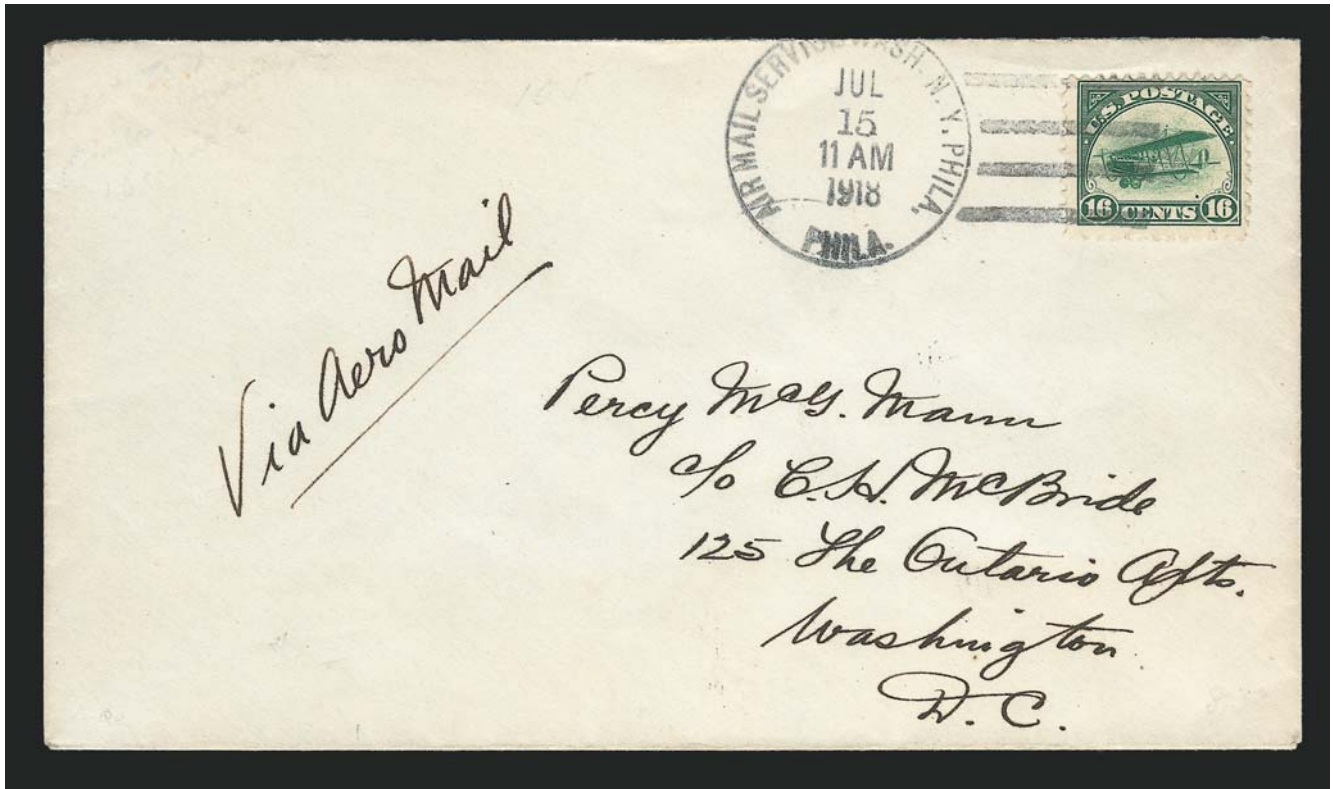


New York July 15, 1918 duplex.

July 13 was a Saturday. There were no airmail flights on Sundays, so the first day of the reduced 16¢ airmail rate was Monday, July 15.

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

Philadelphia to Washington D.C. – July 15, 1918
First Day of the 16¢ Airmail Rate



Philadelphia July 15, 1918 duplex.

July 13 was a Saturday. There were no airmail flights on Sundays, so the first day of the reduced 16¢ airmail rate was Monday, July 15.

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

Washington D.C. to Philadelphia – July 15, 1918
First Day of the 16¢ Airmail Rate



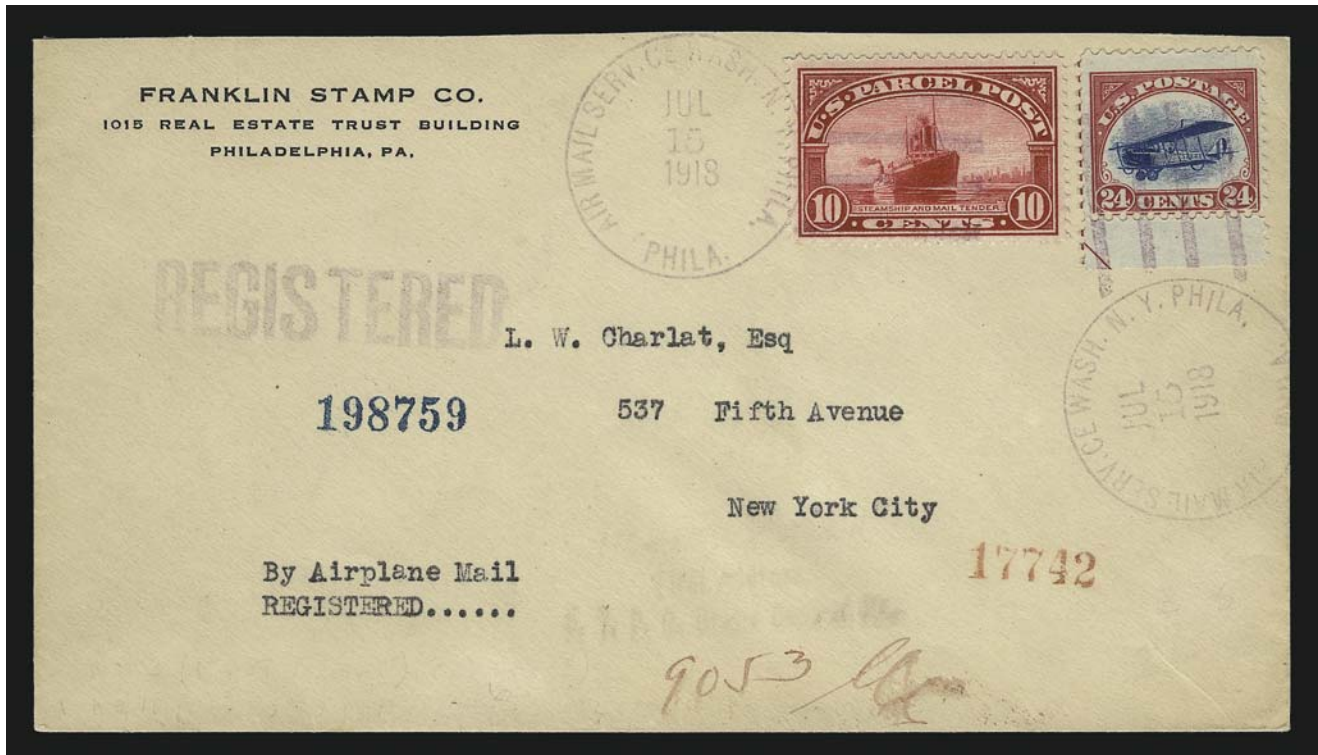
Washington D.C. July 15, 1918 duplex.

24¢ stamp overpays the new 16¢ rate.

“Help Humble the Hun” anti-German World War I label with illustration of planes dropping bombs.

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

**Philadelphia to New York City – July 15, 1918
First Day of the 16¢ Airmail Rate**



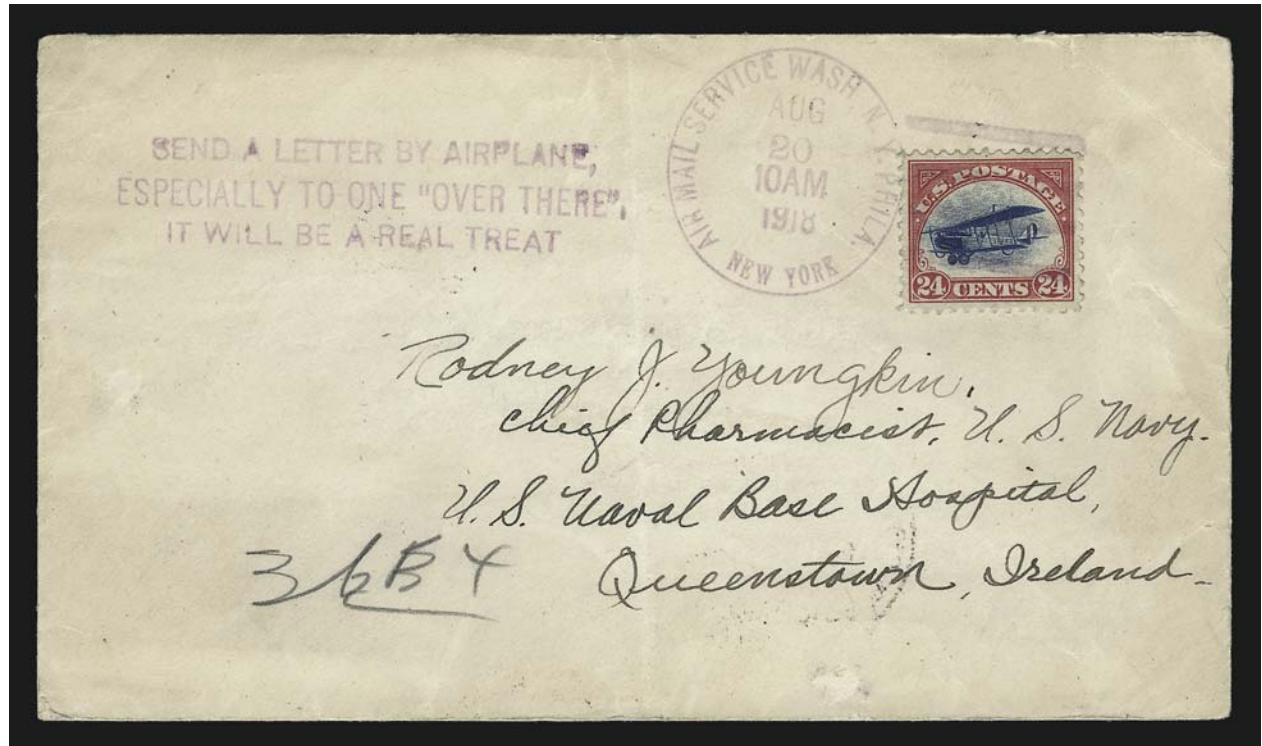
Philadelphia July 15, 1918 duplex.

10¢ Parcel Post stamp pays the registered mail fee
and 24¢ stamp overpays the new 16¢ airmail rate.

Registered airmail covers are unusual.

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

**New York to Philadelphia – August 20, 1918
Addressed to Queenstown, Ireland**



New York August 20, 1918 duplex. 24¢ overpays 16¢ rate.

Addressed to U.S. Naval Base Hospital in Queenstown, Ireland.

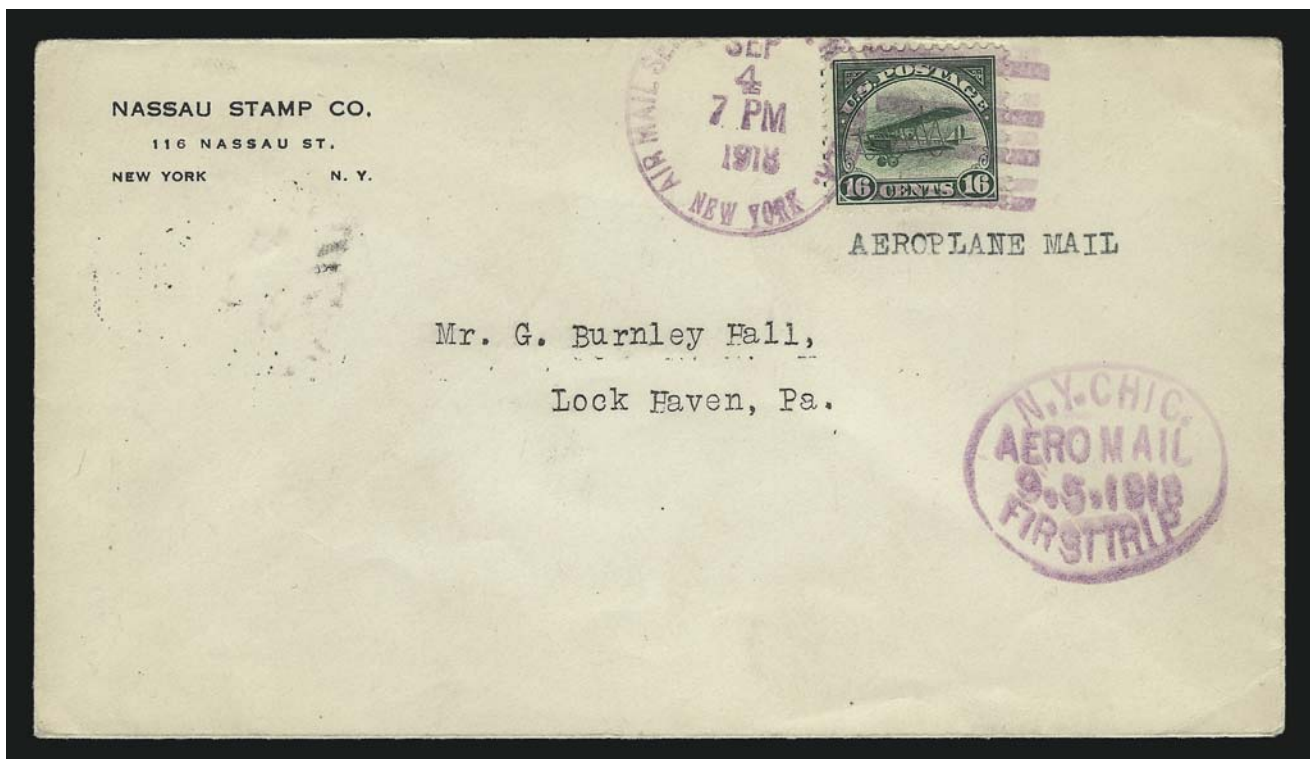
Handstamped World War I marking:

SEND A LETTER BY AIRPLANE,
ESPECIALLY TO ONE "OVER THERE".
IT WILL BE A REAL TREAT

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

**New York-Chicago via Lock Haven PA, Cleveland and Bryan OH
September 5, 1918**

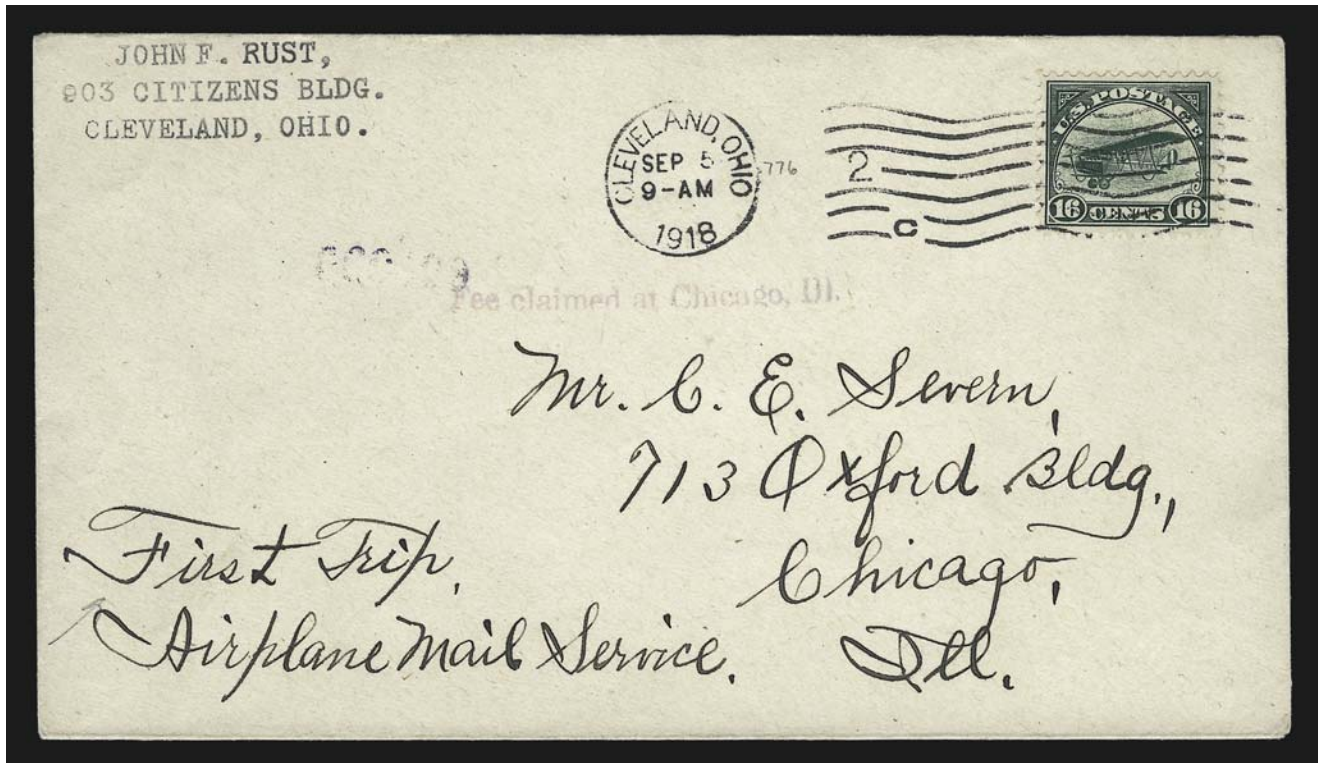
This trip laid the groundwork for the transcontinental airmail route.



Special "N.Y.-Chic/Aero Mail/First Trip" oval datestamp and standard New York duplex. AAMC 108b.

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

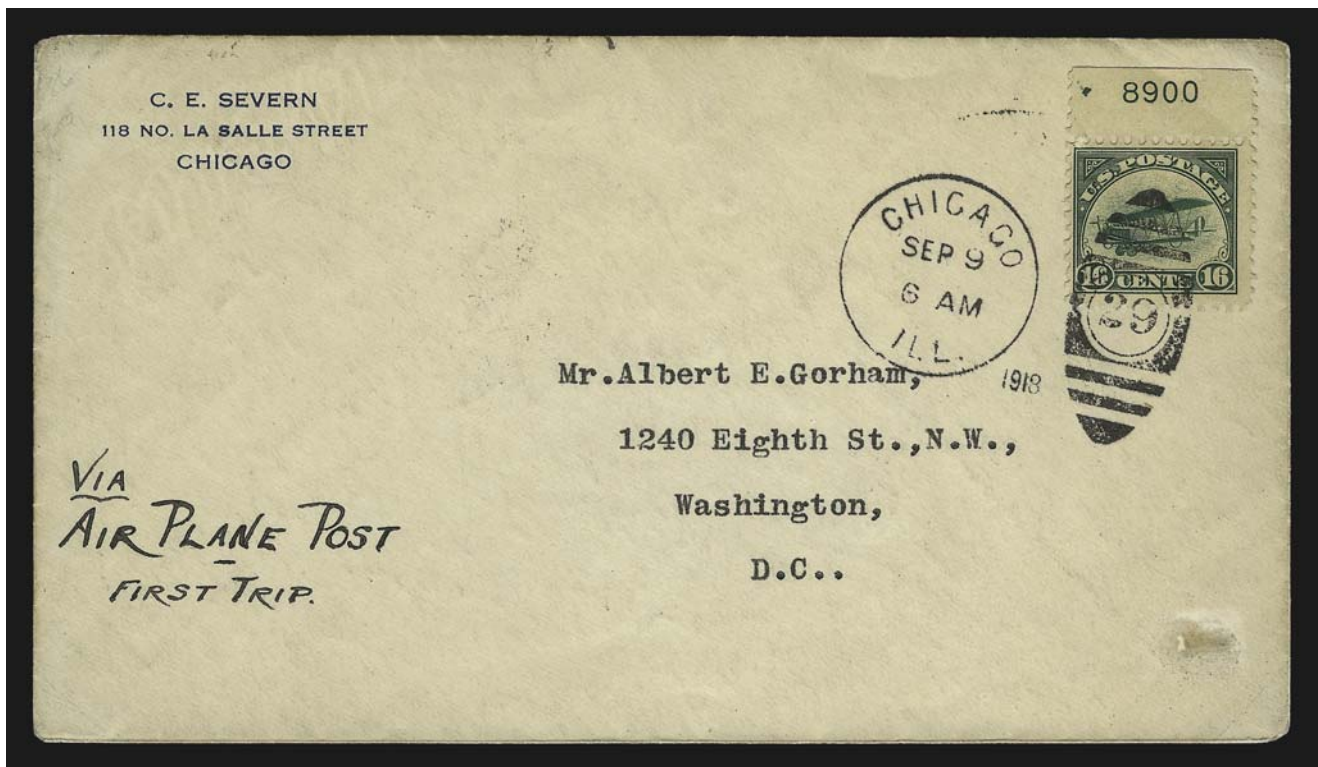
**New York-Chicago via Lock Haven PA, Cleveland and Bryan OH
September 5, 1918**



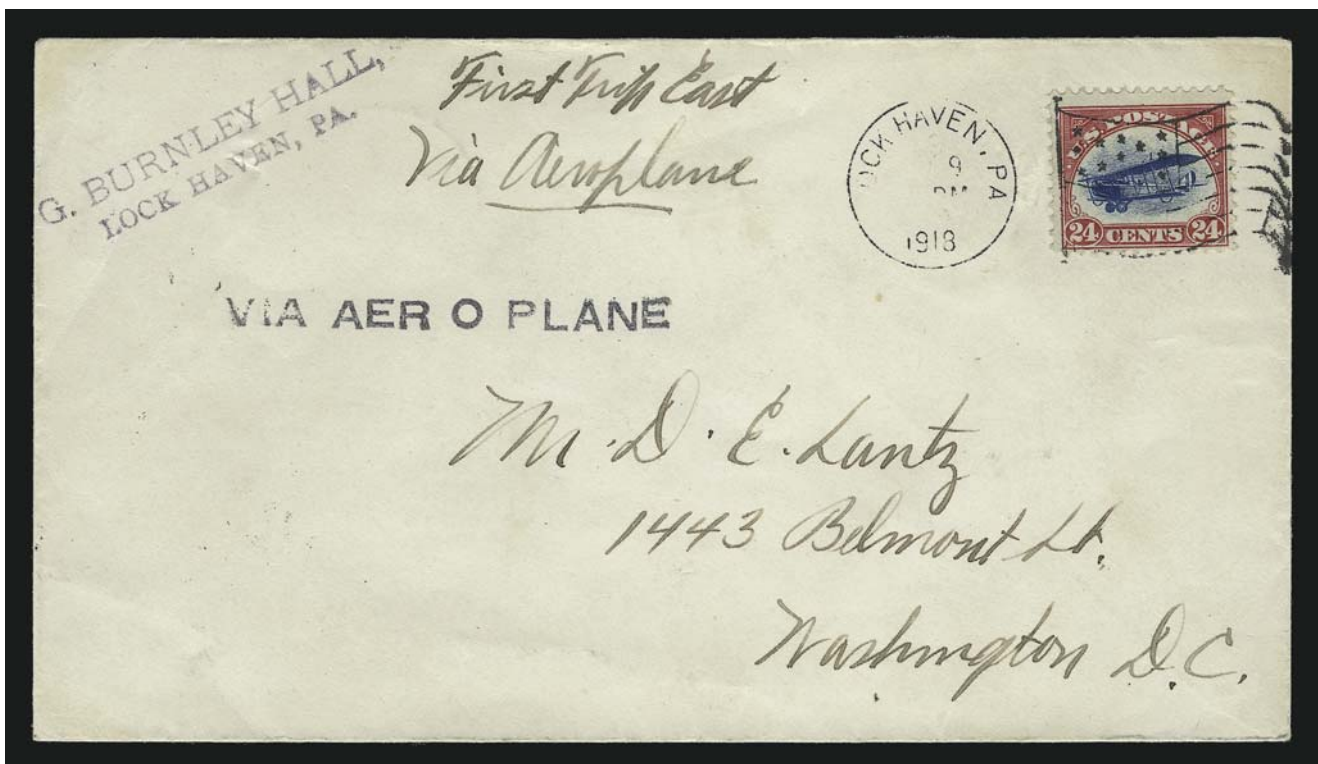
Cleveland to Chicago, September 5, 1918. AAMC 108d.

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

**Chicago-New York via Bryan, Cleveland and Lock Haven PA
Return Trip September 9, 1918**



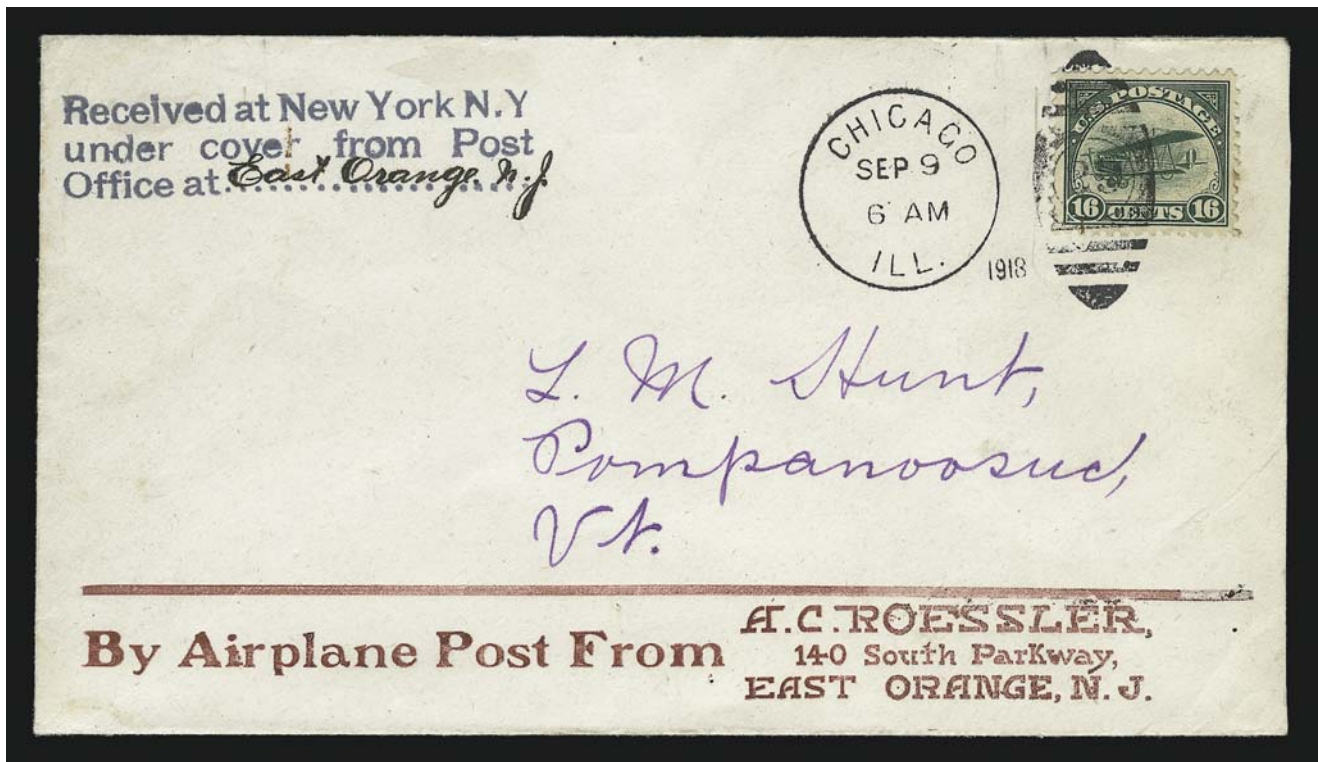
Chicago to Washington D.C. AAMC 109.



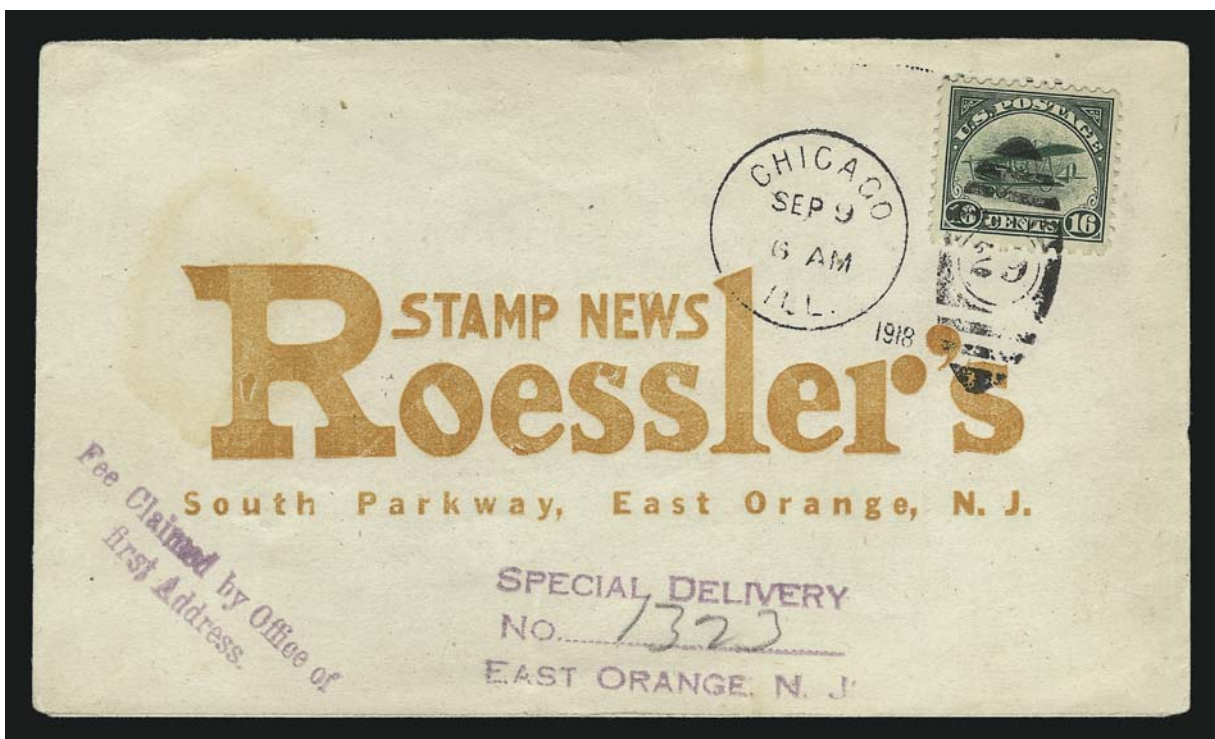
Lock Haven to Washington D.C. AAMC 109c.

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

**Chicago-New York via Bryan, Cleveland and Lock Haven PA
Return Trip September 9, 1918**



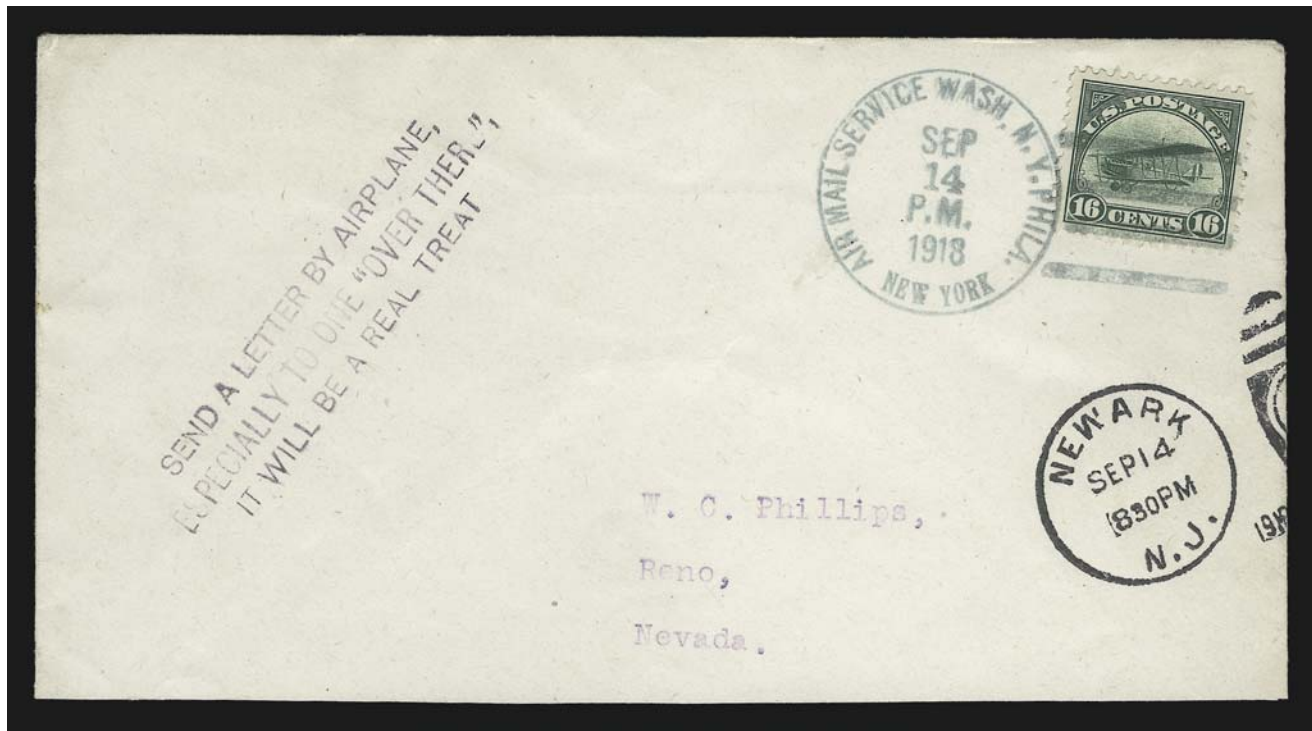
Chicago to Vermont. AAMC 109.



Chicago to New Jersey (Roessler cover). AAMC 109.

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

Experimental Airfield, Newark NJ

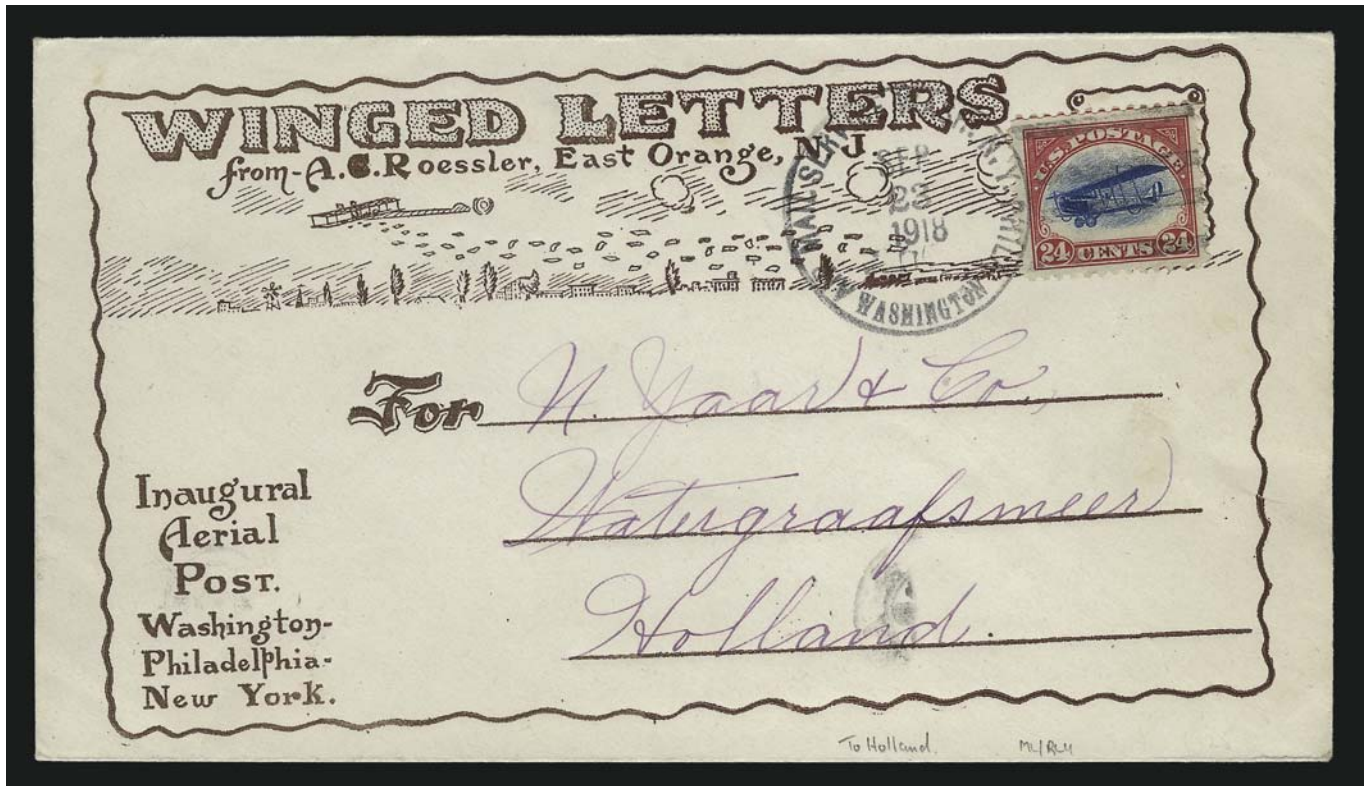


Handstamped World War I marking:

SEND A LETTER BY AIRPLANE,
ESPECIALLY TO ONE "OVER THERE".
IT WILL BE A REAL TREAT

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

Washington D.C. to New York – September 23, 1918
Addressed to Holland

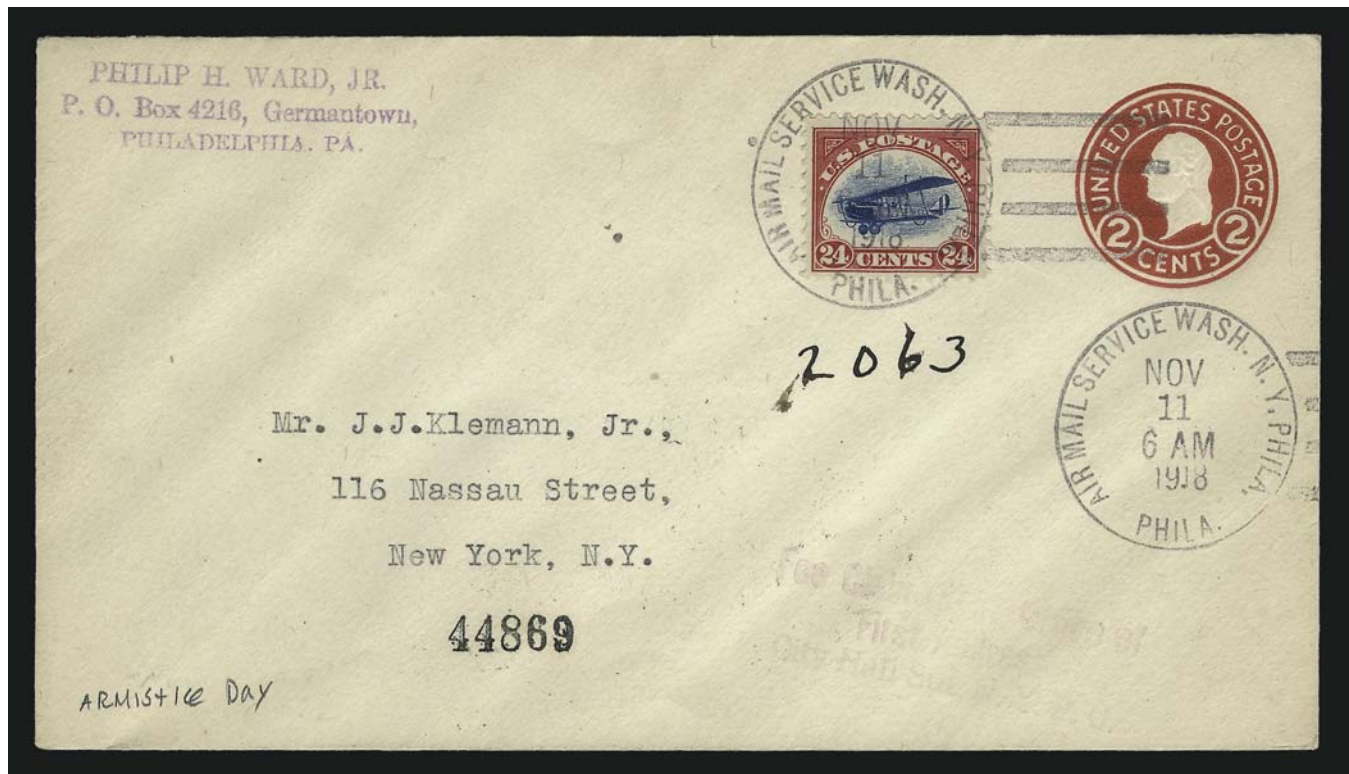


Washington D.C., 1918 duplex.

Roessler "Winged Letters" envelope with censor label on back.
Overpaid 16¢ rate.

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

**Philadelphia to New York –November 11, 1918
Armistice Day**

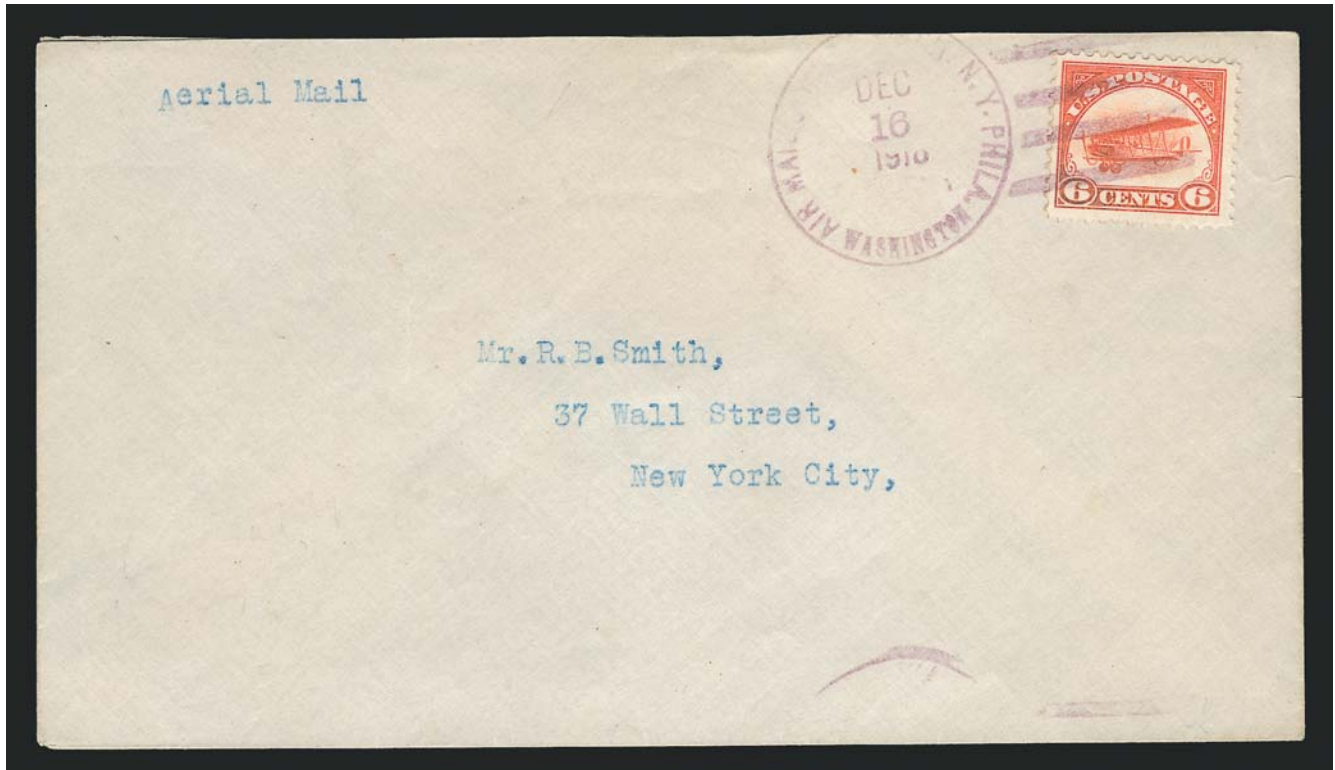


Philadelphia November 11, 1918 duplex.

Prepared by Philip H. Ward to commemorate Armistice Day.

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

Washington D.C. to New York – December 16, 1918
First Day of the 6¢ Airmail Rate



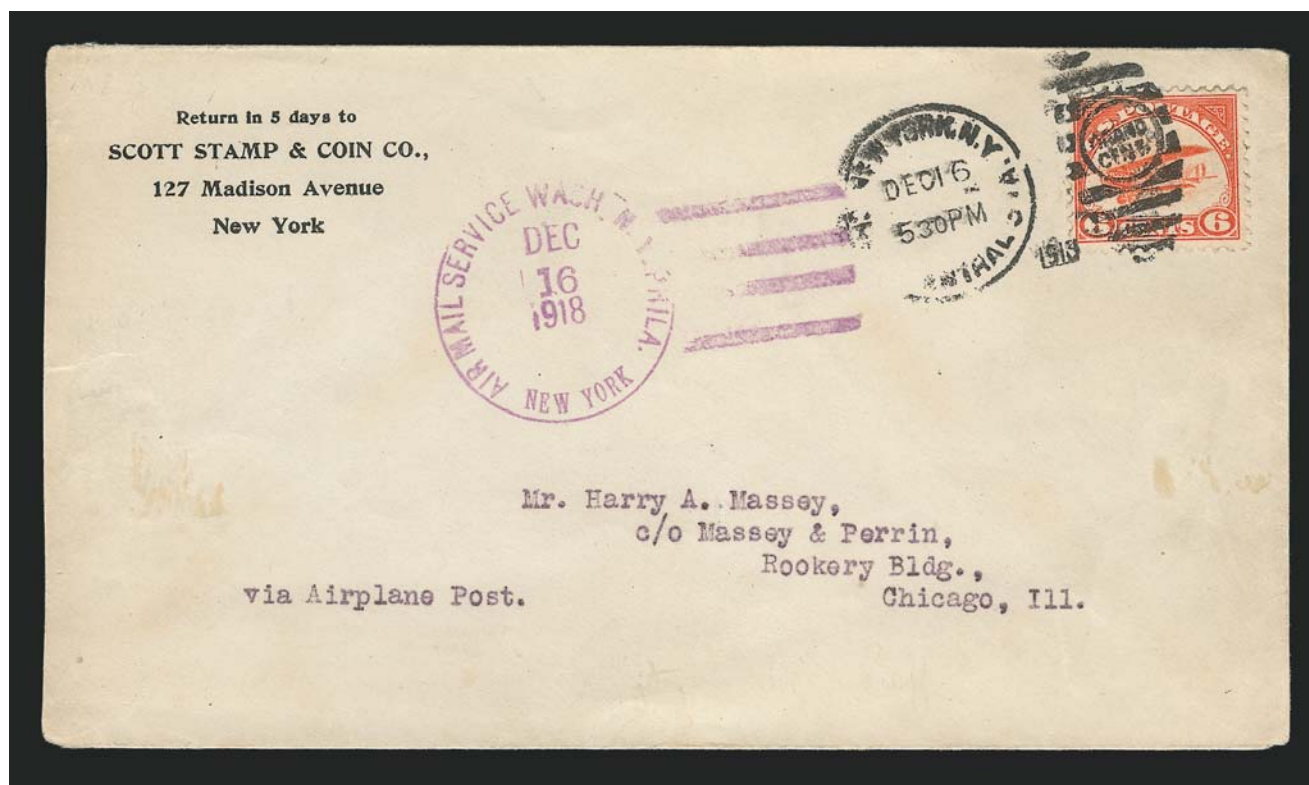
Washington D.C. December 16, 1918 duplex.

December 14 was a Saturday. There were no airmail flights on Sundays, so the first day of the reduced 6¢ airmail rate was Monday, December 16.

Interest in First Flights and rate changes waned by December 1918; therefore, December 16 First Day of Rate Change covers are much scarcer than their May 15 and July 15 counterparts.

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

New York to Philadelphia – December 16, 1918 First Day of the 6¢ Airmail Rate



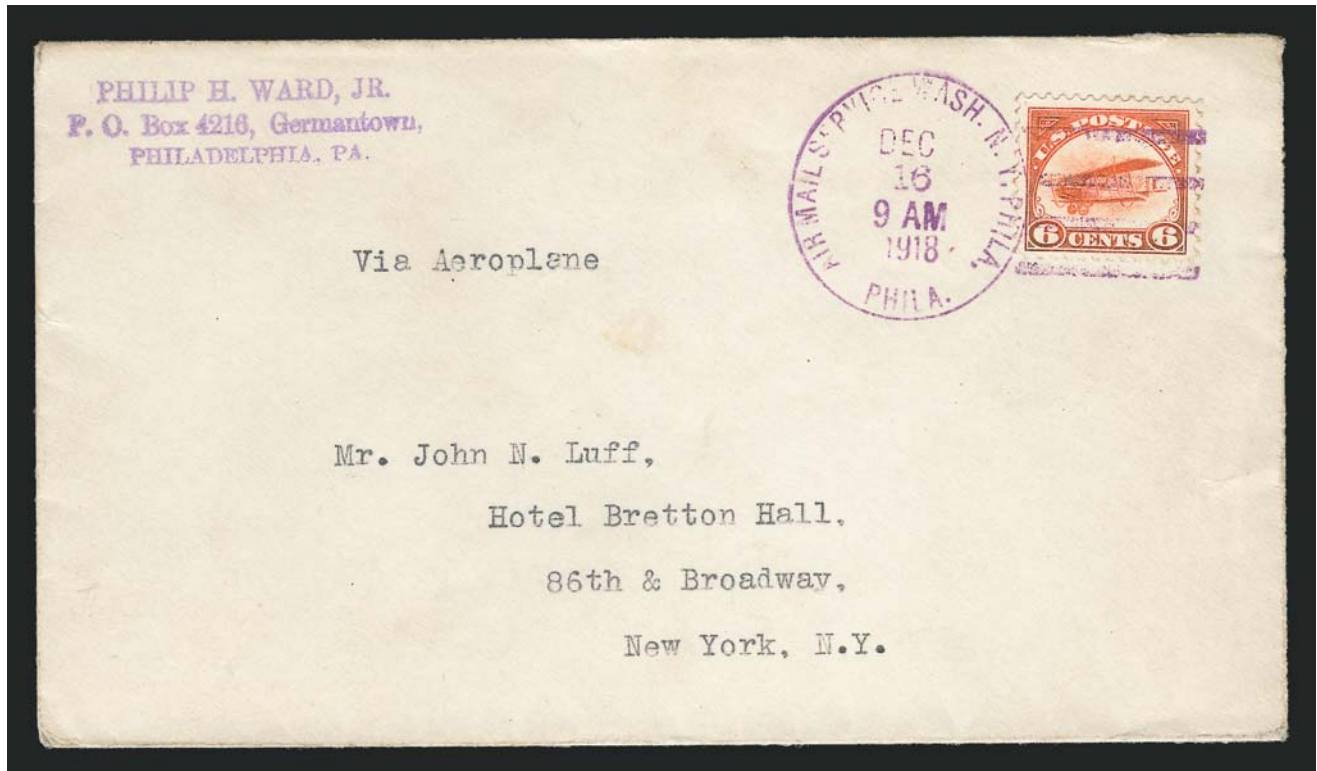
New York December 16, 1918 duplex.

December 14 was a Saturday. There were no airmail flights on Sundays, so the first day of the reduced 6¢ airmail rate was Monday, December 16.

Interest in First Flights and rate changes waned by December 1918; therefore, December 16 First Day of Rate Change covers are much scarcer than their May 15 and July 15 counterparts.

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

Philadelphia to New York – December 16, 1918
First Day of the 6¢ Airmail Rate



Philadelphia December 16, 1918 duplex.

December 14 was a Saturday. There were no airmail flights on Sundays, so the first day of the reduced 6¢ airmail rate was Monday, December 16.

Interest in First Flights and rate changes waned by December 1918; therefore, December 16 First Day of Rate Change covers are much scarcer than their May 15 and July 15 counterparts.

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

Washington D.C. to Philadelphia – December 17, 1918
Second Day of the 6¢ Airmail Rate



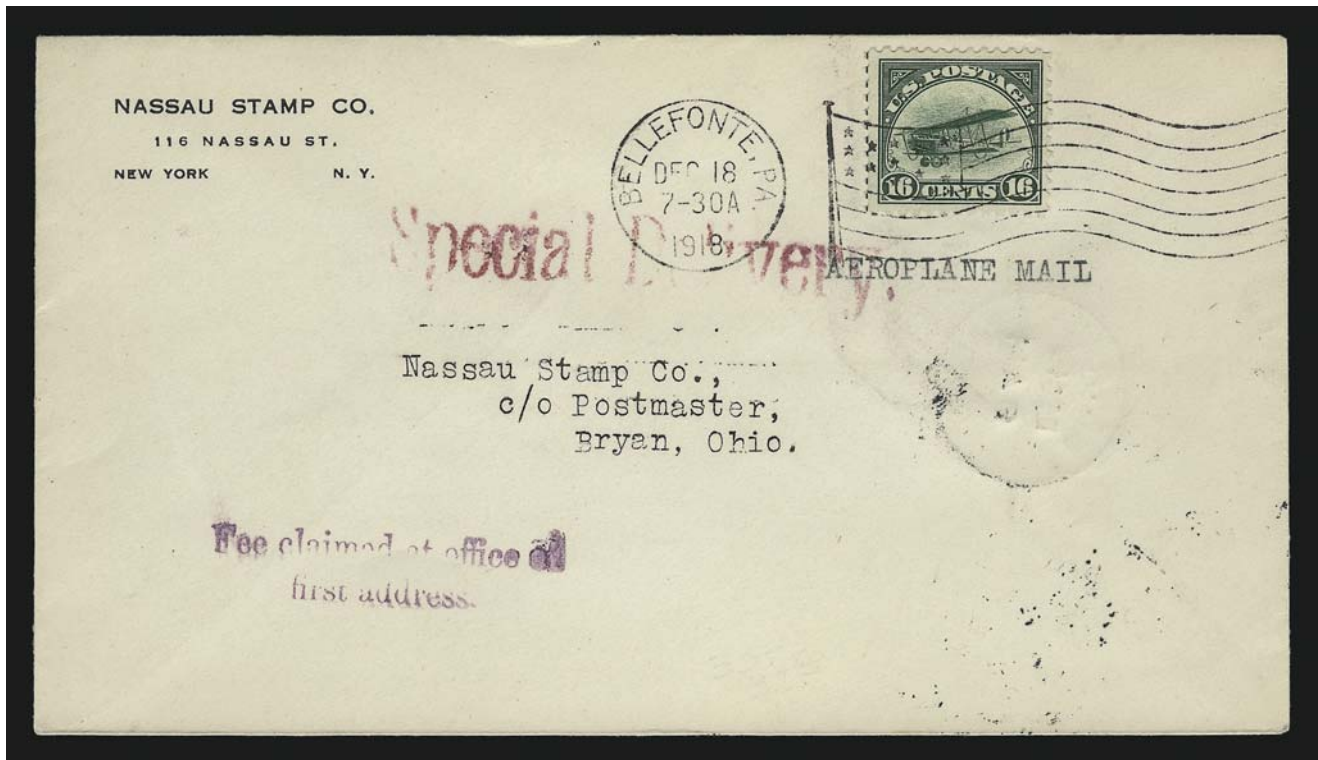
Washington D.C. December 17, 1918 duplex.

Flown to Philadelphia and sent by train to Moody TX.

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

New York-Cleveland-Chicago Experimental Flight

December 18, 1918



Bellefonte PA December 18, 1918 (not flown). AAMC 110b.



Chicago December 18, 1918. AAMC 110e.

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

Washington D.C. to Philadelphia – February 4, 1919
Treasury Department Official Business



Washington D.C. February 4, 1919.

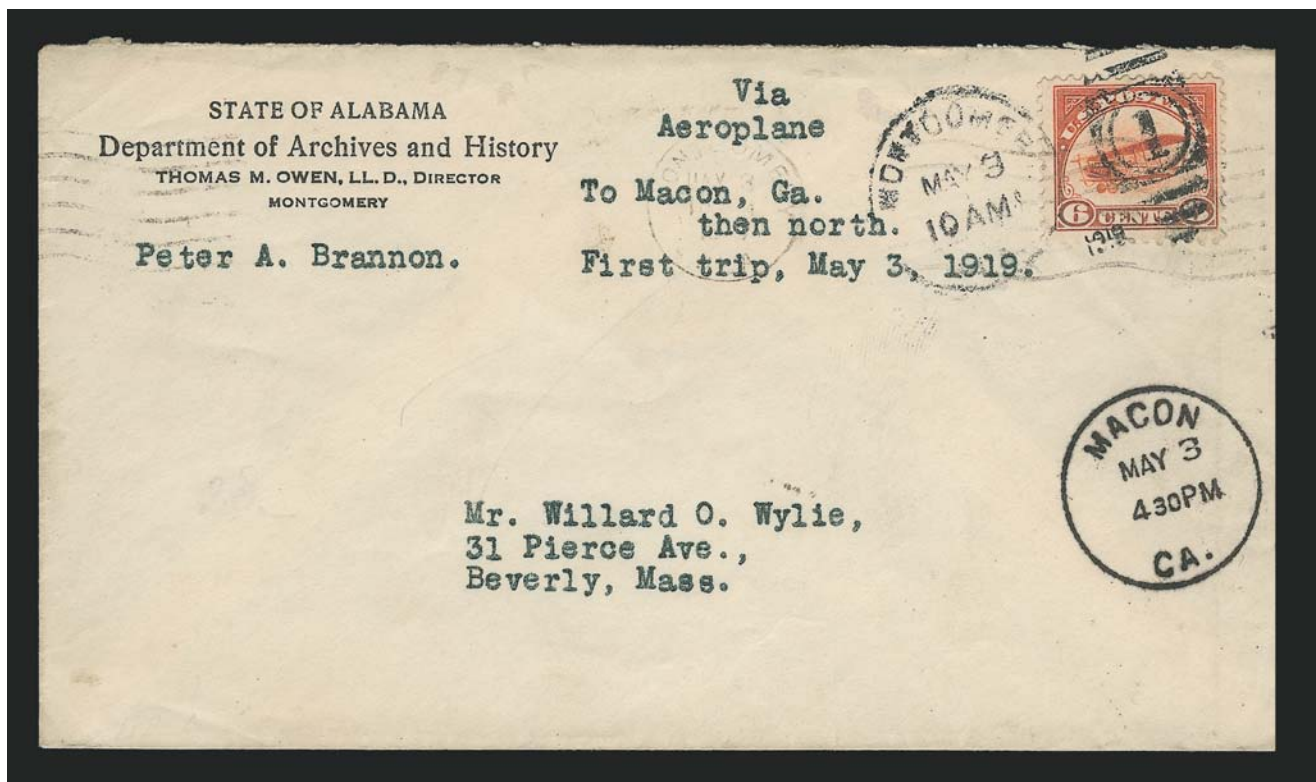
Non-philatelic use of 16¢ airmail stamp on penalty envelope from the
Treasury Department, Bureau of War Risk Insurance
to an officer at Camp Lewis, Washington.

Flown to Philadelphia and sent by train to Washington State.

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

Macon GA – Montgomery AL – Atlanta GA May 3-10, 1919

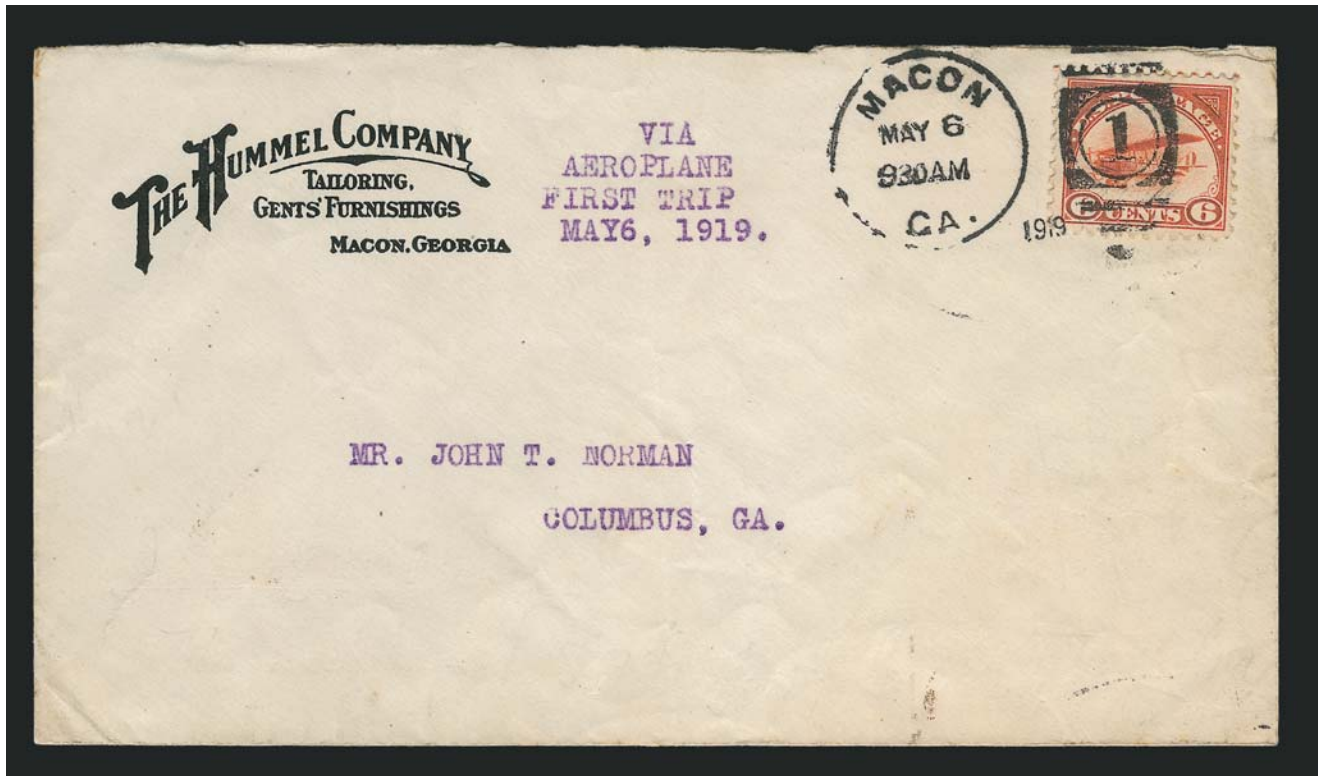
Prompted by the Southeastern Aeronautical Congress in Macon GA from May 2 to 10, experimental route 613003 was authorized to provide airmail service between Macon GA and Montgomery AL from May 3 to 10, except Sunday, May 4. Columbus GA requested similar service as a midpoint between Macon and Montgomery, but the city lacked adequate landing facilities. On May 6 the pilot from Macon made a hazardous landing at the makeshift field at Columbus. He repaired his plane and continued to Montgomery, along with added mail from Columbus. The pilot from Montgomery made no attempt to deliver mail in Columbus on May 6. On May 7 the Montgomery pilot did drop some mail at Columbus, primarily newspapers and packages. No other mail was flown into or out of Columbus, as flights continued between Macon and Montgomery. Service between Macon and Atlanta began on May 8 and continued in both directions through May 10. Numerous covers were prepared and cancelled in Macon on May 7 for the first trip to Atlanta on May 8.



Montgomery AL to Macon GA, May 3, 1919. AAMC 115a (36 flown).

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

Macon GA – Montgomery AL – Atlanta GA
May 3-10, 1919



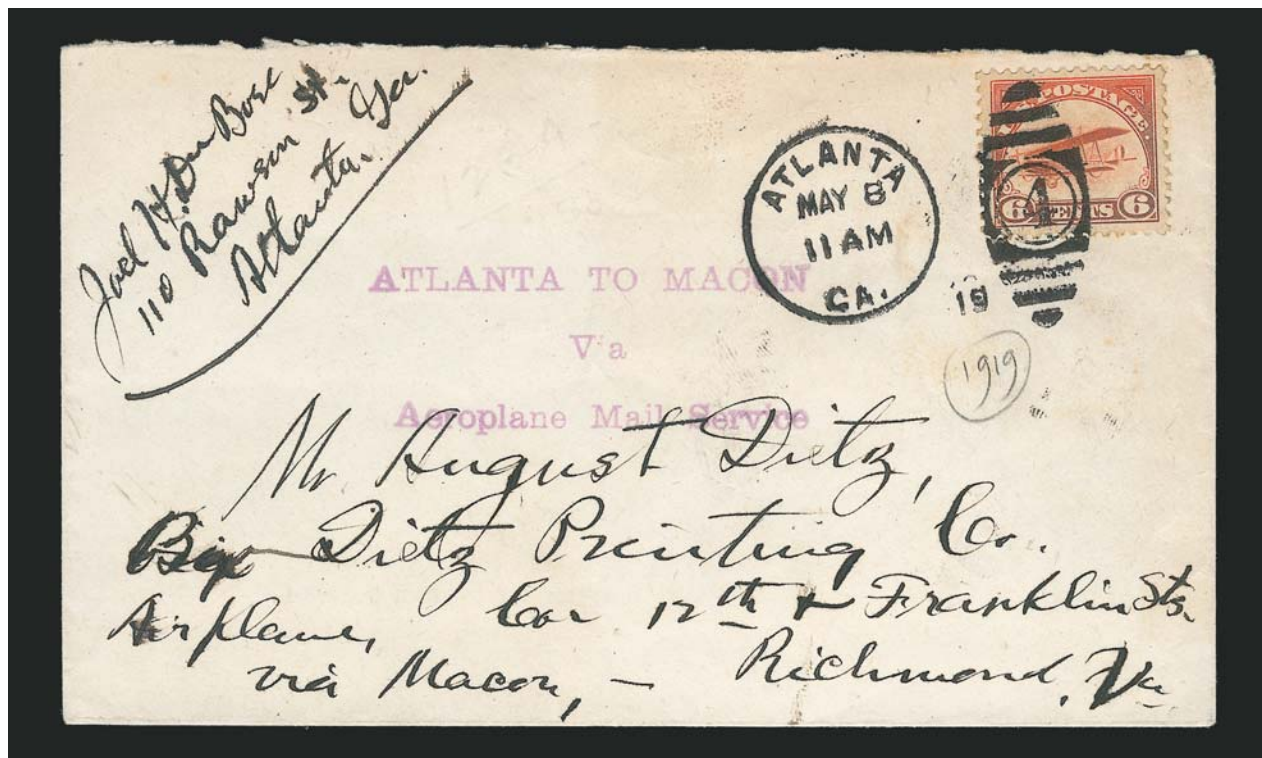
Macon to Columbus GA, May 6, 1919. AAMC 115b (115 flown).



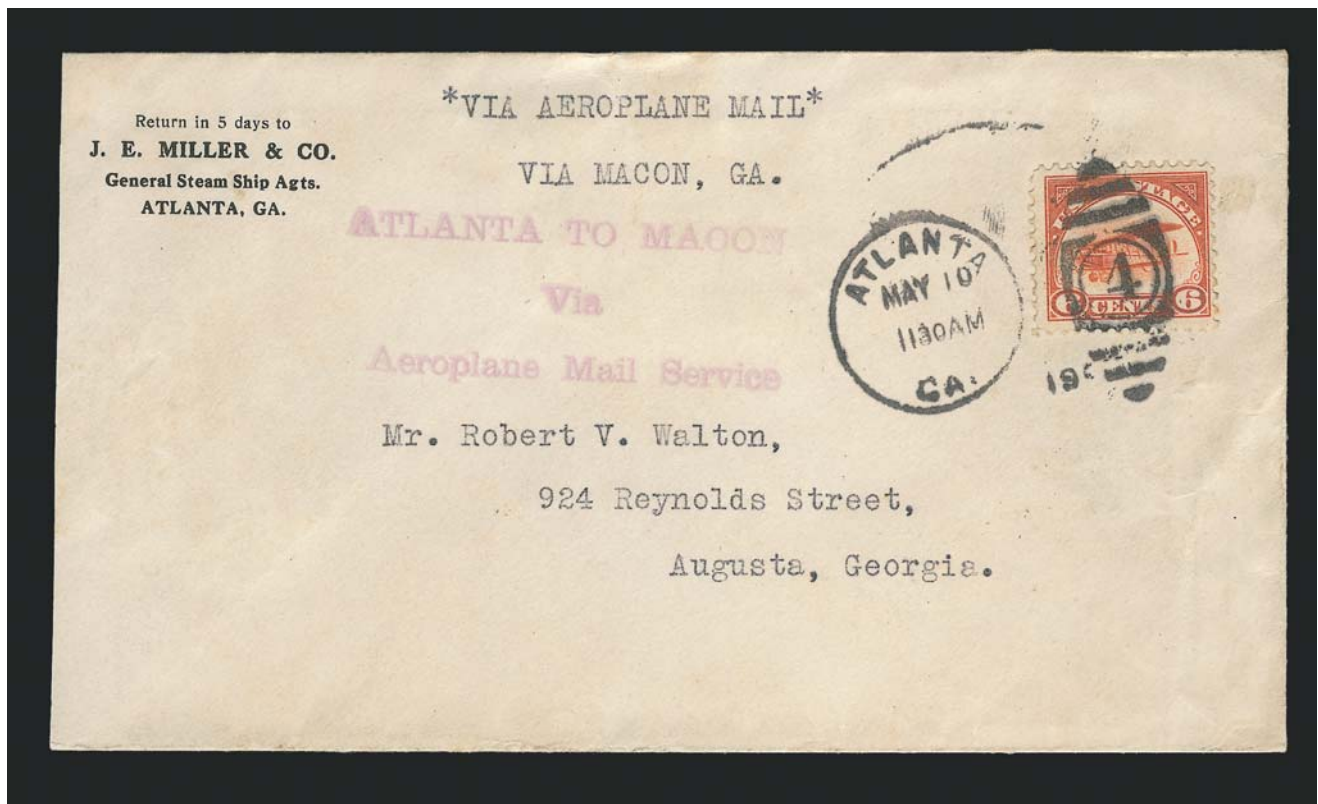
Columbus GA to Montgomery AL, May 6, 1919. AAMC 115c.

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

Macon GA – Montgomery AL – Atlanta GA
May 3-10, 1919



Atlanta to Macon GA, May 8, 1919. AAMC 115f (500 flown).

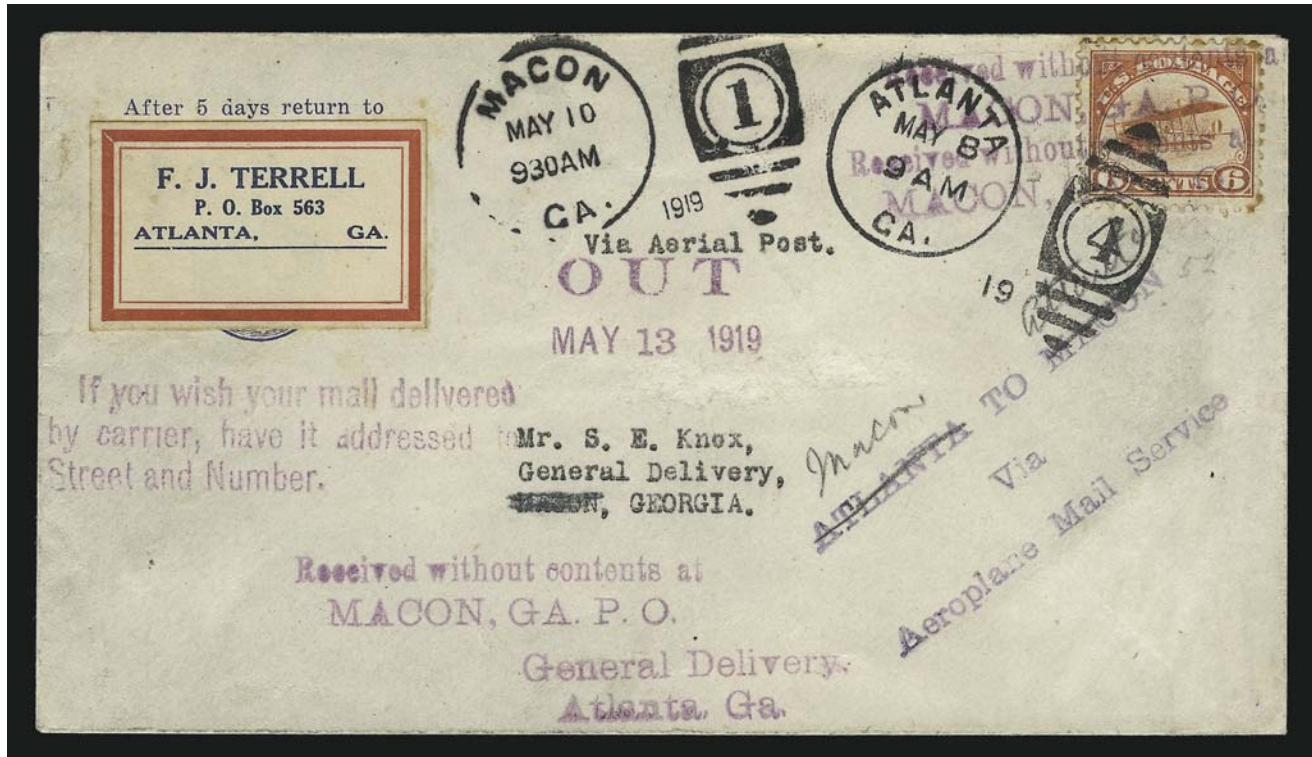


Atlanta to Macon GA, May 10, 1919. AAMC 115f (500 flown).

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

Macon GA – Montgomery AL – Atlanta GA
May 3-10, 1919

Round Trip Flight

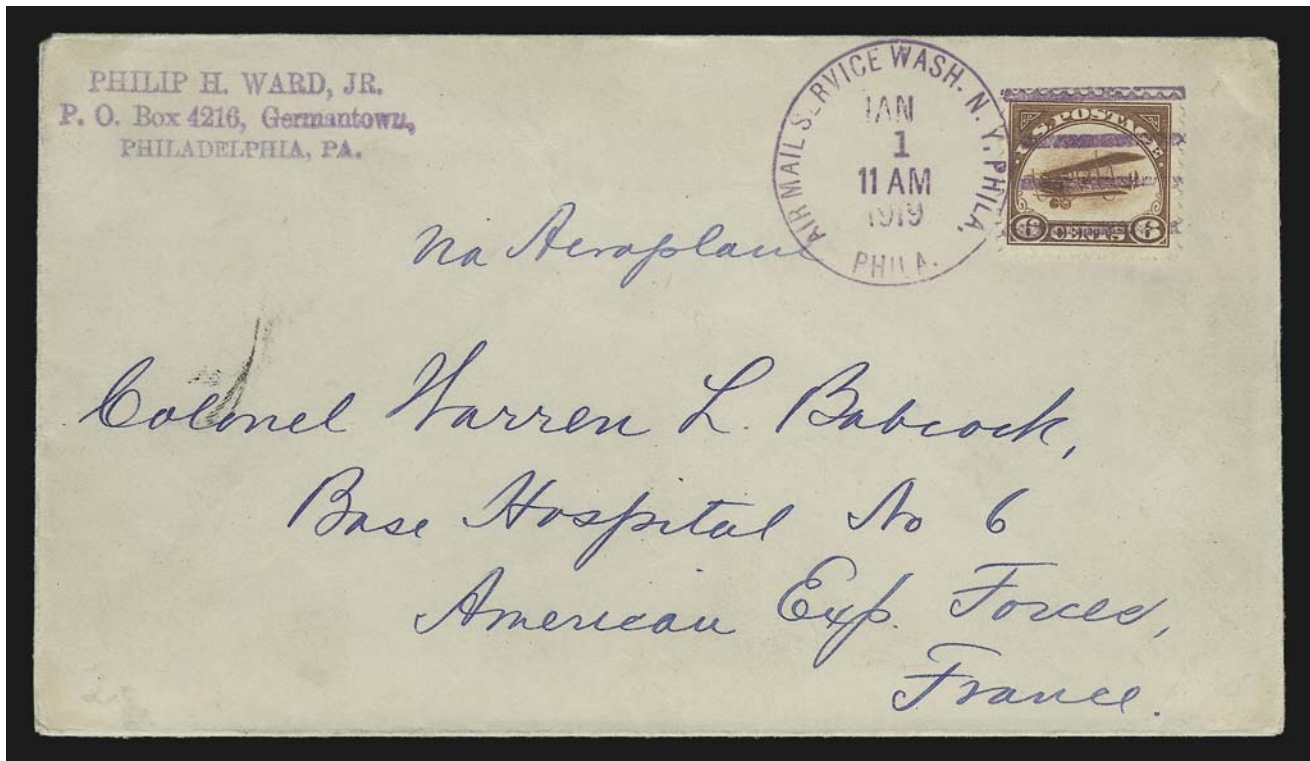


Atlanta to Macon GA, May 8, 1919 (AAMC 115f)
and
Return Trip from Macon to Atlanta GA, May 10, 1919 (AAMC 115e)
with three-line "Atlanta to Macon" cachet changed by hand.

Unlisted in AAMC.

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

6¢ Airmail Rate



Philadelphia to New York – January 1, 1919
Addressed to American Expeditionary Forces Hospital No. 6 in France

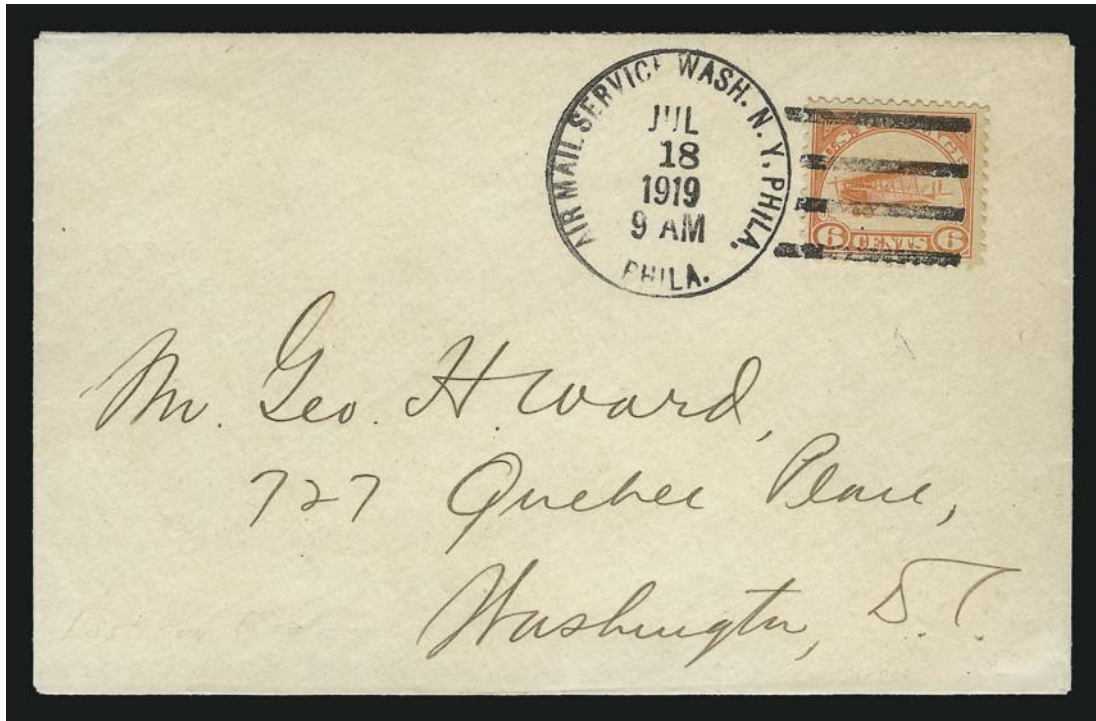


Washington D.C. to Philadelphia – January 16, 1919. Undeliverable.

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

July 18, 1919 – Last Day of the 6¢ Airmail Rate

The “Test and Experimental Period” of airmail service started on July 18, 1919, at which point the normal 2¢ surface mail rate was applied to airmail carried by plane and train. This period lasted until June 29, 1924.



Philadelphia to Washington D.C. – July 18, 1919.

One of two recorded covers showing the 6¢ airmail rate in effect on July 18, 1919, the commencement date for the “Test and Experimental Period.”

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

Jahn Special Flight, Washington D.C. – December 5, 1919

Leroy B. Jahn, inventor of a parachute device for dropping objects from planes without landing, interested the Post Office Department in his device and secured special permission to have pilot Walter H. Stevens of the Air Mail Service fly a plane over the Capitol grounds and drop eggs and other items before an audience of Army and Navy officials, Senators and Representatives. 134 covers were dropped while in flight.

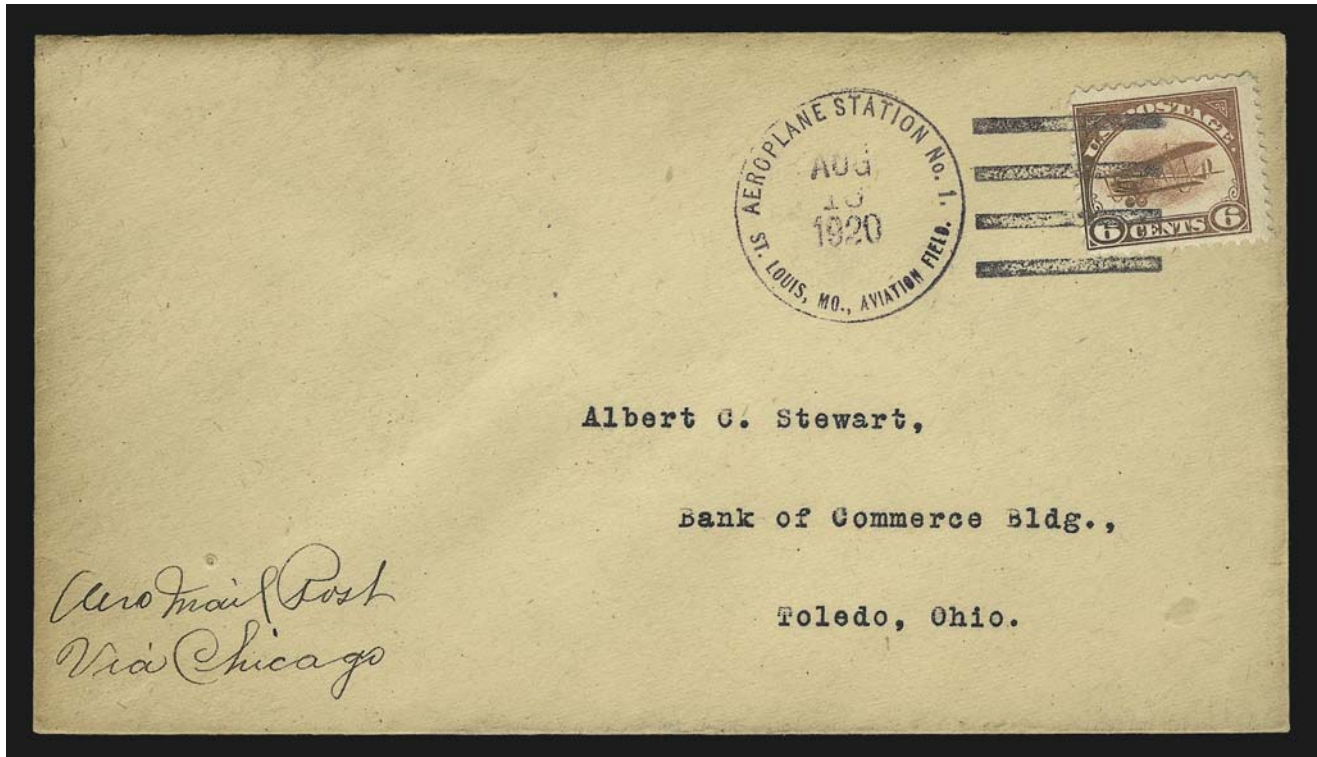


“Jahn Aerial Mail Dropping Apparatus” cachet, December 5, 1919.
AAMC 121 (134 flown).

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

St. Louis to Chicago, August 16, 1920

This experimental route opened on August 16, 1920, and was suspended on June 30, 1921. The old 1911 "Aeroplane Station No. 1" duplex was used.

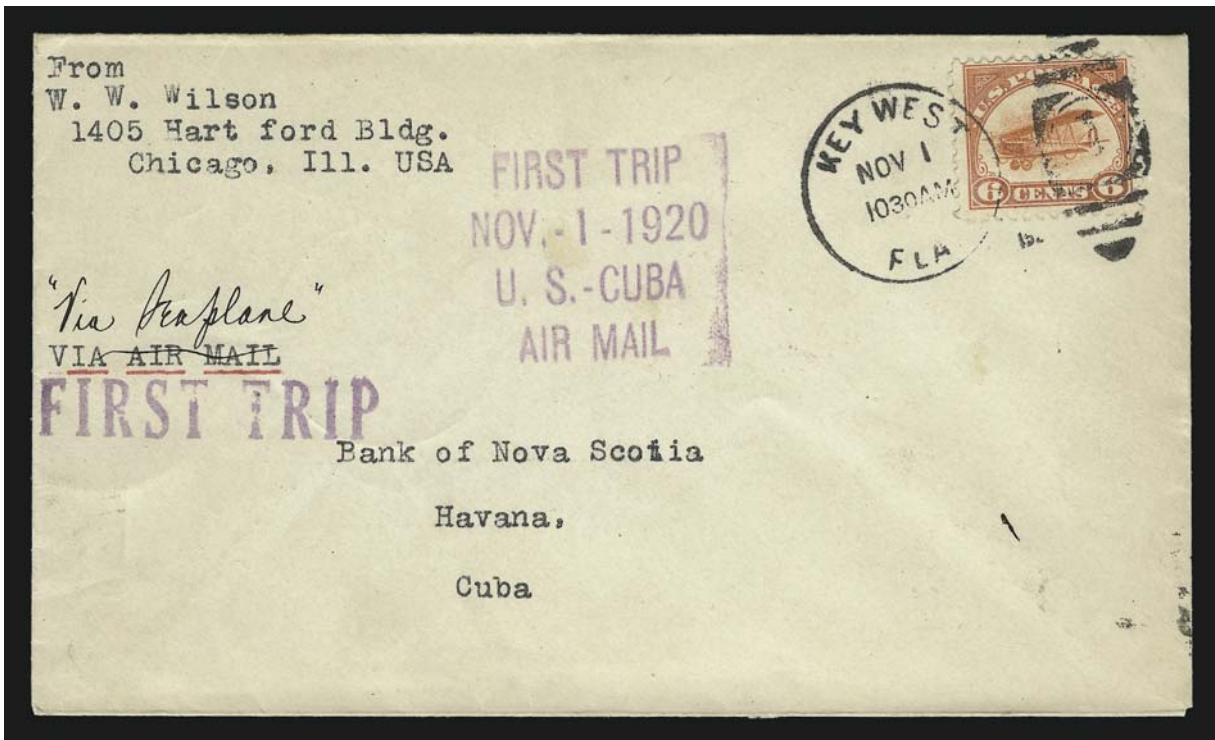


St. Louis to Chicago (by train to Toledo OH), August 16, 1920.
AAMC 121 (6 pounds flown).

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

United States-Cuba Flight – November 1, 1920

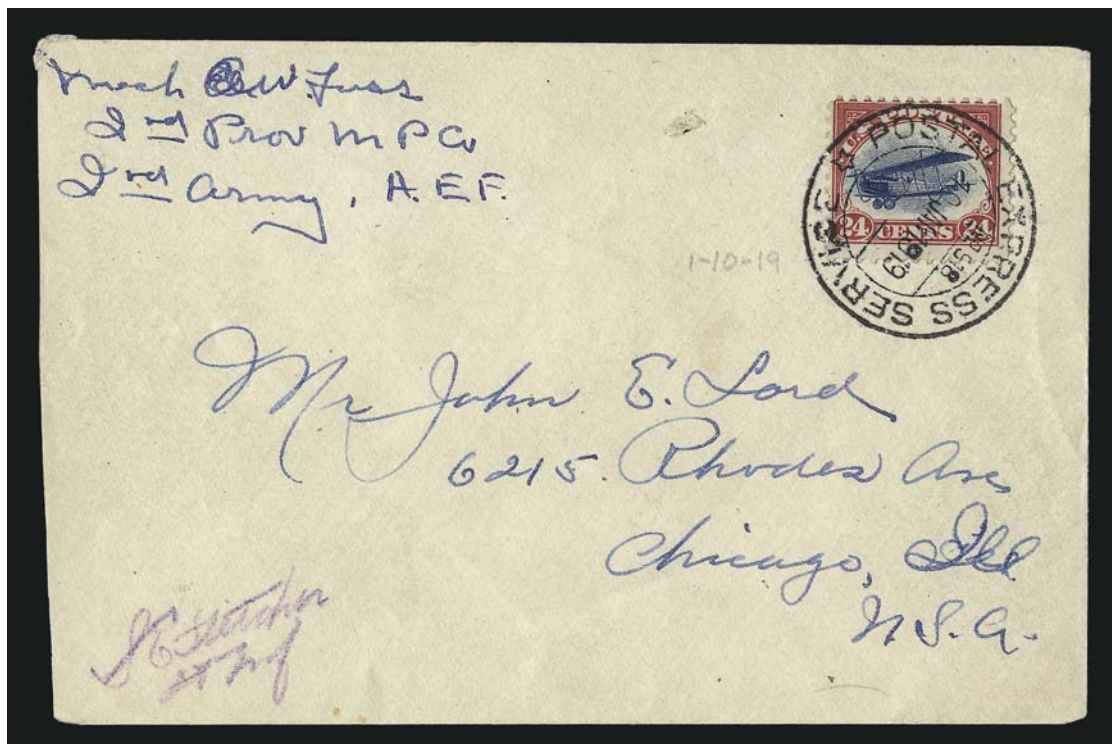
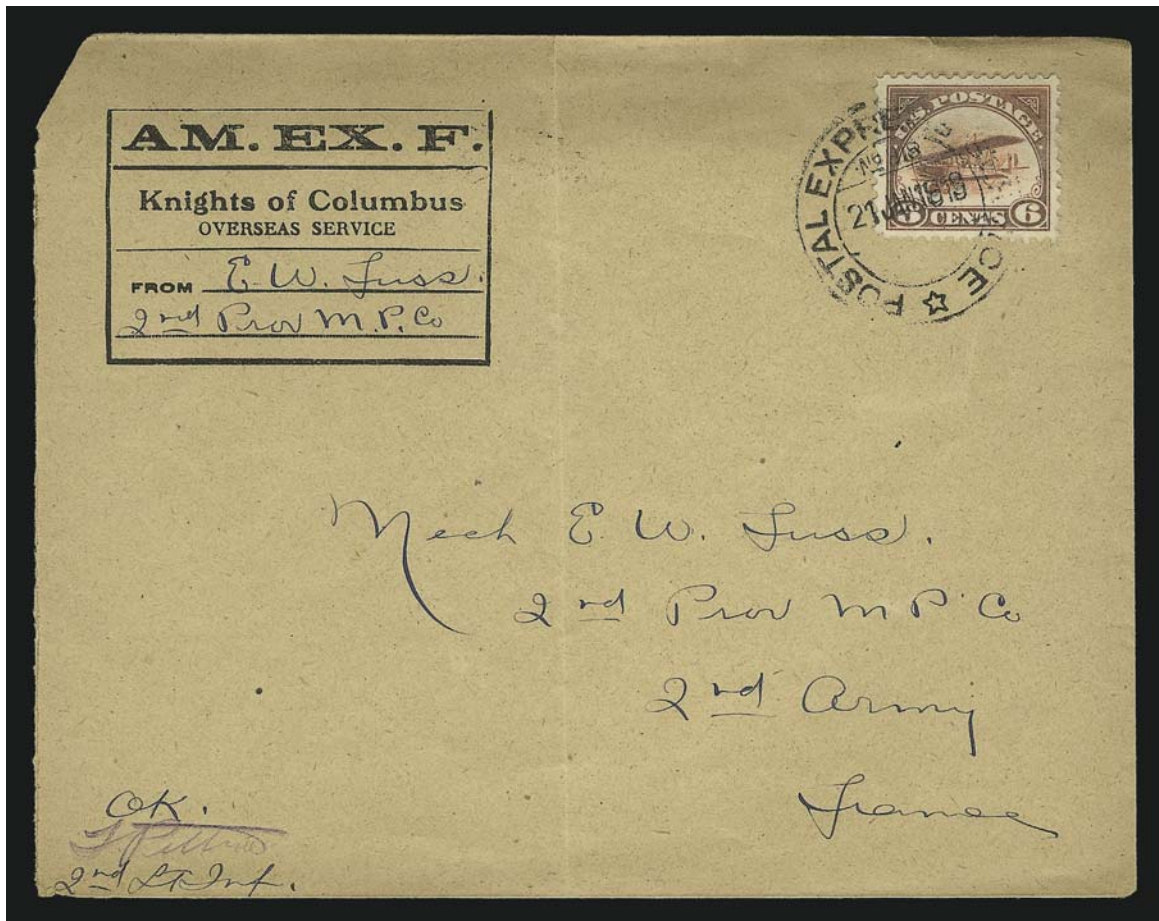
An experimental international airmail route was inaugurated between Key West FL and Havana, Cuba, on November 1, 1920. The route was flown by a contractor, Florida West Indies Airways. The route remained in use until June 1921.



Key West to Havana, Cuba, November 1, 1920. AAMC FAM4.

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

American Expeditionary Forces Postal Express Service



AAMC 121 (6 pounds flown).

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

Registered Mail to Newfoundland



Flown from New York to Boston, July 8, 1919.

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

Complete Sets on Cover



1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

**Combination with 1913 20¢ Parcel Post
First Government Stamp to Depict an Airplane**



Registered mail from New York to Philadelphia
December 22, 1924

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

Mixed United States-German Franking



Registered mail to Germany and sent by airmail from Bremen to Berlin
April 22, 1920

1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

First Transcontinental Airmail Route – July 1, 1924



1918 UNITED STATES AIR POST ISSUE

First Contract Airmail Service in the United States Detroit-Cleveland-New York – February 15, 1926



Detroit MI to New York, February 15, 1926
Addressed to Berne, Switzerland