Henry Stinemetts: Naval Cachet Maker and Cover Decorator Extraordinaire
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This article presents an overview of Henry Stinemetts, a noted naval cachet maker, who created highly decorated event covers from the late 1920s until 1960. It includes a brief biography of the man and an analysis of the style he developed over the years that he produced covers. Unlike Walter Crosby and Walt Czubay, Stinemetts made relatively few covers, and most were hand-decorated, making them one-of-a-kind. His style, too, was distinctive and best described as showman folk-art. An understanding of his biography helps define his style.

The Early Years

Alfred Henry Stinemetts, born 3 December 1878, spent his early years on ranches in Nebraska and Wyoming owned by the Patrick brothers. It is likely that while working on their PK Ranch in Wyoming, Stinemetts met William (Wild Bill) Cody who auditioned local cowboys at the nearby Sheridan Inn. Stinemetts’ skills in trick roping, riding and shooting earned him a role in the Wild West Show from 1899 to 1913 where he was known as the PK Kid. His world travels with the show allowed him to accumulate a huge postcard collection that he later used to decorate his covers.

When Cody sold the show in 1913, Stinemetts moved to The Dalles, OR where he drove the last four-horse stagecoach in the area. While there, he found time to publish a description of the Tum Water Indian Village in The Archaeological Bulletin in 1913. Stinemetts was in Canada in 1917 where he applied for and received a patent on a novel tire rim for automobiles. The US patent for the same invention followed and was useful in his vulcanizing business in New Mexico in the early 1920s.

In 1924, Stinemetts moved to the Hellman Building in downtown Los Angeles, CA. Soon after moving there, he became custodian of the building—a position he would keep until 1955. It was here that he began his illustrious career as a cover decorator and cachet maker. His position as a custodian gave him access to a ready source of materials for his cover decorations: discarded newspapers, greeting cards, post cards, gift wrapping, paper, and other items. An avid collector himself, Stinemetts sent many of his covers to his own address in the Hellman Building: 223 West 2nd Street, Los Angeles, CA; Room 135. He also joined many philatelic organizations including WCAMS (#23) RCD (#106) and in 1936, USCS (#1103).

The Stinemetts Style

The best description of Stinemetts’ covers is showman folk-art; i.e. he created show covers by decorating them with stickers and other items he painstakingly cut out from greeting cards, post cards, and newspapers. Additional decoration was provided by the liberal use of decorative paper and cloth. Over the 30 plus years, he produced covers, his style went through three overlapping phases. Phase 1 occurred 1929 to 1935 and involved covers cacheted by someone else, but decorated by Stinemetts. These included most of his aviation covers, early naval covers, and miscellaneous event covers. There were major disadvantages to having someone else cachet his covers. First, Stinemetts did not know beforehand the size of the cachet. Furthermore, he had no control over the quality of the cachet application or its location on the cover. Thus, many of his early covers were decorated only at the corners and under the stamp and any required labels on the cover (Figure 1). This left a large undecorated area for the cachet. After the cachet had been applied, Stinemetts could then add other decorations as space permitted (Figure 2).

Phase 2 occurred for the most part, from 1933 to 1955. It involved covers cacheted and decorated by Stinemetts and included most of his naval covers, and a few aviation and miscellaneous event covers. Since the artwork was usually done by someone else, the slogans of his cachets were their
most notable “Stinemetts” feature. They often involved poems, rhymes, or witty sayings and always delivered a message. His earliest known printed cachet celebrated the 1933 repeal of prohibition with a poem (Figure 3). His earliest known printed cachet with artwork was for Lincoln’s Birthday in 1935 and included a claim of ownership of the world’s finest cover collection (Figure 4).

Figure 3: First printed cachet with poem about the repeal of prohibition. Addressed to Harry Moore, mail clerk on USF CONSTITUTION.

Figure 4: First printed cachet with artwork. Notice the description of the cachet sponsor!

Phase 3 occurred from 1955 to 1960 and involved fully decorated covers. If an official cachet were present, it had been produced and/or applied to the cover during phase 2, but the decorations were applied during phase 3. A Christmas Day cover typical of this period is shown in Figure 5 with its decorations, text, stamp, and address label all surrounded by a border. This is referred to as the “Hemet” style as it appeared on covers made by Stinemetts after he moved to Hemet, CA in 1955.

Figure 5: Hemet style characteristic of phase 3. All decorations and text are surrounded by colored frame.

The Hemet style can be found on naval covers. As shown in Figure 6, a large hand-made cover cancelled on Christmas Day aboard USS VESTAL in 1937 and aboard USS WHIPPOORWILL in 1938 is decorated in the Hemet style. It is signed by Jimmie Allen, who serviced the cover in WHIPPOORWILL, and Biagio O. Furnari, the mail clerk. Large covers like this were often sent for servicing with minimal decorations at the corners and under the stamps. After they were serviced and returned to Stinemetts, final decorations were added. Since this cover has no naval cachet, it is likely that the decorations were added during phase 3. Thus, it is most appropriate to refer to this cover as an add-on cover since the final decorations were added long after its naval cancel was applied.

Figure 6: Add-on naval cover: cancelled Christmas Day 1937 and 1938 but not fully decorated until after 1955.

Stinemetts also created re-cycled naval covers during phase 3. As shown in Figure 7, a 1939 Valentine’s Day cover cancelled aboard USS SARATOGA shows the Hemet style and has no naval cachet. Note that the cancel and stamp are on paper that has been cut-out and applied to the cover. It is likely that this area was removed from another cover and “re-cycled” on this highly decorated cover. The presence of a Hemet, CA postmark dated 1 Jan. 1958 on the back of this cover supports this conclusion.

Figure 7: Re-cycled naval cover. Cut out of cancel and stamp area glued onto a fully decorated Hemet style cover. Hemet, CA postmark on reverse dated 1 Jan. 1958.

Stinemetts produced covers of three sizes: (1) #6 covers were for most of his regular customers and decorations were relatively minimal involving corners, stamps or small stickers; (2) #10 covers were for himself, special customers and friends and were often highly decorated; and (3) very
large covers, some up to 9 x 15 inches, for himself, friends, and people who helped him produce and service his covers.

**Anatomy of a Stinemetts Cover**

The basic components of a Stinemetts cover include (1) the envelope—some made from colorful paper, others covered with silk or decorative paper; and (2) decorations—colorful paper, tape or stickers at the corners, under the address and/or stamp and/or other required labels. Fully embellished covers have additional decorations, newspaper clippings, cachets and/or text glued to the cover. However, a number of problems were encountered early with this showman folk-art approach to cover decoration.

Some early covers like the 1932 Christmas cover shown in Figure 8, were made from colorful advertisements in magazines. However, the limitations of the use of decorative backgrounds are illustrated by the 1934 Christmas Day naval cover shown in Figure 9. This USS RELIEF cover signed by W. P. D’Amour with cachet art by Ted DeNyss was made by Stinemetts from decorative paper. The cachet and postmark disappear into the paper and additional decorations are distractions.

Figure 8: Early cover made from Old Dutch Cleanser advertisement in magazine; postmark (Santa Claus, IN, 23 Dec 1932) difficult to read.

Figure 9: The use of decorative paper on this 1934 Christmas Day USS RELIEF cover makes it almost impossible to see the cachet of children with Santa drawn by Ted DeNyss.

Problems encountered with silk-covered envelopes are illustrated in the July 4, 1929 aviation cover for the 3rd anniversary of CAM 1 shown in Figure 10. Ink from cachets and postmarks spread through the material producing blurred, light images. Stinemetts used several approaches to prevent these problems. These included printing the cachet on another material then gluing it to the silk; printing (not stamping) the cachet directly onto the silk; and/or providing a printable (stampable) surface in the area of the cachet or postmark. Several of these approaches were used on the 1940 Easter cover cancelled aboard USS WHIPPORWILL cacheted and decorated by Stinemetts shown in Figure 11.

Figure 10: The use of silk over 1929 cover for the 3rd anniversary of CAM 1 illustrates the problems of ink spreading through material producing blurred and light images.

Figure 11: To avoid problems with silk, Stinemetts provided a better surface for the postmark and printed the cachet on metallic paper then glued it to the cover.

The use of metallic paper for cachets introduced another problem—they did not travel through the mail well. Thus, customers would often receive covers with printed cachets and instructions for them to paste the metallic version over the printed one (Figure 12).

Figure 12: To avoid problems with metallic cachets, Stinemetts enclosed metallic cut-outs and instructed his customers to paste it over the printed cachet.

Stinemetts often used items cut from newspapers. These he secured to colored paper, thinning the ensemble with a sharp blade prior to applying it to the covers. This is illustrated on the cover Stinemetts prepared for the 20th anniversary of the first air mail flight by Earle Ovington (Figure 13).
The stamps used by Stinemetts often matched the color scheme and/or topic of the cover. At times, he would use vintage stamps or special issues. Many #6 covers carried stamps provided by his customers. Usually the rate would be correct on covers that went through the mail stream. The single piece, third-class rate can be found on some covers instead of the full first class rate. Sometimes excessive postage was used for philatelic reasons. On some large covers over an ounce in weight, postage for an ounce or less can be found. These were probably show covers or gift covers that did not enter the mail stream.

Some covers were sent for servicing fully decorated. Others were partially decorated at time of cancel. Any decoration under the stamp or postmark had to be affixed prior to cancellation. Other decorations or cachets could be added later depending upon the addressee. Items going directly to customers had to be complete at time of cancellation. Most of the very large and ornate covers were gifts, special orders, or items for Stinemetts’ own collection. Thus, they were often sent back to him under separate cover for completion. As we have discussed, some covers were not fully decorated until after 1955 when Stinemetts moved to Hemet, CA even though they were serviced in the 1930s.

Did Stinemetts Produce Only Event Covers?

Although the vast majority of Stinemetts items are event covers, he did produce a few other philatelic items. For example, Stinemetts decorated a cork blotter as part of a series of items celebrating the Washington Bicentennial in 1932 (Figure 14). The limitations of using an absorbent surface for rubber stamped cachets are clearly illustrated on this blotter. The only first day cover (FDC) we are aware of combined Stinemetts’ interests in both planes and ships. Cacheted by Walter Crosby, the FDC was for the 1932 LA Olympics 5 cent stamp issue (Figure 15). The fact that this was an FDC was probably incidental for Stinemetts as his interest was in the first night flight occurring on the same date and the rest of the journey. This cover was flown from Los Angeles to New York City and then put aboard SS BREMEN to England. Several hundred miles from shore, the cover was transported by catapult mail to Southampton, England, and was then flown by regular airmail to Friedrichshafen, Germany. In the early 1930s, Stinemetts prepared a large figural post card of USS MACON with a pair of 1923 Golden Gate 20 cent definitive (Figure 16). Although it was never postmarked, perhaps it was prepared for one of the MACON’S visits to San Francisco in 1934. Since the airship was lost in an accident at sea, Stinemetts may have decided to keep this item as a memorial.

How does one Know a Cover is a Stinemetts Cover?

The single most important factor in identifying a Stinemetts cover is its style—both its decoration and the text on the cachet. Most also bear his name somewhere on the front or back of the cover. Some have his RCD #106. Others bear an embossed AHS. One final clue is the presence of a portion of a restaurant menu inside the cover as a filler.
The Style Reflects the Personality

The highly decorative style of Stinemetts reflects his showman personality that he certainly cultivated during his years as the PK Kid in the Cody Wild West Show. The use of witty and demonstrative slogans on cachets not only reflected his personality but also his patriotism and love of country. Over the course of his career as cachet maker and cover decorator, he was very generous to those who helped him prepare and service his covers by gifting them with very elaborately decorated covers. In his correspondence with customers, friends, and those involved with servicing his covers, he always requested their opinions of his covers. Responses to these requests included phrases like “your handiwork opened my eyes, I never knew there was anything so beautiful;” “the covers you send for me are the best in my collection, no others can even come close to them;” “thank you for the swell covers you had been getting out, and to tell you how proud I am to have them in my collection;” “I want to take time right now to thank you for all those covers. Thanks isn’t very much to say but what more can I say. I mean it;” “they show more work and better taste than the majority also you do not flood collectors with many events which means a better job. Keep up the good work.”

Acknowledgements

In the next article, we will concentrate on the naval covers of Henry Stinemetts starting with the oldest known cover for the Washington Bicentennial cancelled aboard USS WEST VIRGINIA, 22 February 1932 to his last naval cachet for New Years Day 1941. We hope that after you read this article, you will help us develop a census of Stinemetts’ naval covers. We gratefully acknowledge the help of members who have been working with us on this project to date. They include Don Tjossem, Steve Shay, Phil Fettig, Bob Rawlins and Paul Huber.

References

This is the second article in a series on Henry Stinemetts, a noted naval cachet maker. In a previous Log (August 2013), we presented an overview of Stinemetts—his biography and essential details concerning his style and career as a cover decorator and as a cachet maker. Herein, we present his early activities as a cover decorator that occurred between 1929 and 1935.

**Aviation:** Prior to 1932, Stinemetts was primarily involved with decorating covers that he sent to various aviation events around the US. These included airport openings, first flights, air races, and a variety of commemorative events. The individual or organization responsible for the event provided the cachet for these covers. He did not make his own cachets during this time. Examples of his aviation covers are shown in Figures 1 to 4. Typical of Stinemetts’ showman folk-art style, each example has decorated corners and some decoration under the stamp, air mail etiquette, and address labels. Many also have additional decorations and cutouts. On each of these covers, Stinemetts had to leave a large plain area on the left front of the cover for the application of the cachet. In Figure 2, the overlapping of the rubber-stamped cachet with the plane shows that the cutout was added prior to the cachet. However, in Figure 4, organizers, fearing that the cachet would interfere with the decorations, applied the cachet on the back of the cover. This forced Stinemetts to cut out a cachet from a second cover and glue it onto the front. In a purchase from Stinemetts’ estate, we acquired correspondence between Stinemetts and organizations involved with these aviation events. He invariably requested a critique of his covers when he submitted them for servicing. Responses were enclosed with the cacheted covers upon their return to Stinemetts and were highly laudatory—most stating that his were the most outstanding of any covers received.

**Washington Bicentennial:** In 1932, Stinemetts, like many other philatelists, prepared a series of covers for the Washington Bicentennial. Two from this series are shown in Figures 5 and 6 both of which show a similar decorative style to that seen with the aviation covers. The earliest known naval cover decorated by Stinemetts was part of his Washington Bicentennial series—the cover he sent to Hawaii for cacheting by the Hawaii Philatelic Association. The cachet also commemorated US Battleship Fleet Maneuvers in Hawaiian waters and was cancelled aboard USS WEST VIRGINIA on 22 February 1932 (Figure 7).
USF CONSTITUTION: One of Stinemetts’ first naval series was for the 1931-34 national cruise of USF CONSTITUTION to thank the U.S. public for their support of the ship’s restoration. A large hand-made cover picturing Isaac Hull, Commander of CONSTITUTION, was prepared by Stinemetts and was cancelled when the ship was in Oakland on 12 April 1933 (Figure 8). The cover was cacheted by the Oakland Chamber of Commerce and had a brief biography of Hull on the reverse. Albert N. Brown, VP of the American Air Mail Society arranged for the servicing of this cover. In a letter to Stinemetts, Brown stated that his covers were exceptional and could grace the display cases of a museum. Although not a museum, a number of Stinemetts’ CONSTITUTION covers are shown in Leon Field’s book about this cruise (Figures 9 - 11). Two other CONSTITUTION covers are shown in Figures 12 and 13.
USS MACON: USS MACON was a topic of a number of Stinemetts covers in 1933 and 1934. One commemorated the opening of the Naval Air Station (later Moffett Field) that was built to house MACON (Figure 14). A second was cancelled aboard USF CONSTITUTION on Navy Day, 1933 and was cacheted by Crosby (Figure 15). A third was completely undecorated and was cancelled aboard USS RELIEF (AH 1) on 13 November 1933 during MACON’s maneuvers the US Battle Fleet (Figure 16). It was cacheted by the Fighting Bob Evans Chapter of the USCS, Cachet Director W. Crosby. Perhaps, Stinemetts simply overlooked decorating this cover. The presence of a rubber-stamped address on the front suggests this to be the case. This address was almost always covered up with a highly decorated address label during the decoration process.

A large handmade cover for the 1934 Fiesta and Exposition in San Pedro, CA epitomizes the showman folk-art style of Stinemetts (Figure 17). It has three red rubber stamp cachets: one for the MACON; a second for the US Navy anchored in the San Pedro Harbor; and a third for the Century of Postal Progress sponsored by the San Pedro Post Office employees. It is decorated with various airmail etiquettes and a large newspaper cutout of the Whiskerinos Parade. It has been signed by 24 different individuals involved with the post office and naval cachet preparation. Despite multiple postal markings, it is unlikely that this cover ever entered the mail stream. The cover has three decorated franked areas representing the 6¢ domestic airmail rate, the 3¢ first class domestic rate, and the 10¢ special delivery rate. The 19¢ total postage would have been sufficient to cover the 18¢ air mail rate for this 2.75 oz. cover, but not the 28¢ air mail special delivery rate. The cover was probably carried by Stinemetts who acquired the signatures and postal markings in hand-back activities. The result was an outstanding show cover.

Another multi-cacheted, long cover addressed to Stinemetts is shown in Figure 18. Although undecorated, this one has a rubber stamp cachet for the San Pedro Exposition like the previous cover, and two different colored
cachets for USS MACON and CONSTITUTION by Crosby with artwork by Cecil Klark. It was cancelled aboard USS GREBE on 12/17/1934 and signed by Crosby, Klark, and W. C. Lobdell, Naval Mail Clerk. Two other similar covers are shown in Figures 19 and 20. A 1935 mourning cover for the lost crews of USS AKRON and MACON decorated by Stinemetts is shown in Figure 21.

Thanksgiving: Several examples are known for 1933 Thanksgiving covers cacheted by Byrd Powell, USCS #46, Fighting Bob Evans Chapter, and decorated by Stinemetts (Figures 22 and 23). These were cancelled aboard USS PENNSYLVANIA (BB 38). The same turkey cachet with a second cachet showing the first Thanksgiving appeared on a 1934 cover (Figure 24). This cover was cancelled aboard USS RELIEF. Although Stinemetts produced his own cachet for Thanksgiving in 1935, he still decorated covers cacheted by others. Figure 25 shows a Crosby cacheted, Stinemetts decorated Thanksgiving cover cancelled aboard USS MISSISSIPPI (BB 41) and addressed to Mrs. Escal Moore, wife of Harry Moore, mail clerk aboard USF CONSTITUTION. She worked in Crosby’s shop and may have helped Stinemetts with his covers over the years, as she was the recipient of many gift covers from him. The turkey stickers and embossed “AHS” on the front are clues to the identity of the decorator.

Christmas: In 1934, Stinemetts decorated Christmas covers cacheted by several other individuals. His use of decorative paper on a cover cancelled aboard USS RELIEF almost completely masked a cachet by Ted DeNyss (Figure 26). This cover was signed by W. P. D’Amour aboard the ship.
A highly decorated 1934 cover cacheted by Sarah Litton of the Fighting Bob Evans Chapter is shown in Figure 27. This was cancelled aboard USS NORTHAMPTON (CA 26). In 1935, Stinemetts decorated a double cacheted Crosby cover for USS CHAUMONT (AP 5) (Figure 28). This cover sported the first air post special delivery stamp—a stamp used often on covers cacheted by Stinemetts in 1935 and 1936.

Other Events: Stinemetts decorated a triple cacheted Crosby cover for Lincoln’s Birthday in 1934 (Figure 29). This cover was cancelled aboard NORTHAMPTON and was signed by Crosby, S. G. Morris (artist), and L. Miller (mail clerk). Similarly, Stinemetts decorated a triple cacheted Crosby cover for Washington’s Birthday in 1935 (Figure 30). Two different postmarks were used on this cover for USS GREBE (AM 43). Shamrocks and a castle scene adorn a 1935 St. Patrick’s Day cover cancelled aboard the NORTHAMPTON (Figure 31). Two covers for Navy Day in 1935 bearing double Crosby photo cachets were decorated by Stinemetts (Figures 32 and 33). The cover cancelled aboard the USS CHICAGO (CA 29) was postmarked 28 October, due perhaps to the fact that the 27th fell on a Sunday. However, the cover cancelled aboard the USS PENNSYLVANIA was correctly postmarked on 27 October.

In 1935, Stinemetts began to cachet and decorate his own naval covers. This probably coincided with the time it took him to make the connections required to have his cachets designed and printed as well as serviced aboard ship. Naval covers cacheted and decorated by Henry Stinemetts will be the subject of the third article in this series which will appear in a future issue of the Log.

Acknowledgements
We gratefully acknowledge the help of members who have been working with us on this project to date. They include Don Tjossem, Steve Shay, Phil Fettig, Bob Rawlins and Paul Huber.
This is the third article in a series on Henry Stinemetts (Figure 1), a naval cachet maker who produced highly decorated event and holiday covers. In two previous Logs, we presented an overview of the man and his philatelic style (See Reference 1), and his activities as a cover decorator from 1929 to 1935 (See Reference 2). This article reviews the naval covers he cacheted and decorated from 1935 to 1941. It represents a survey of Stinemetts covers from collections of a number of members of the USCS (See Acknowledgements at end) and contains summary tables of all known naval cachets produced by Stinemetts and all known ship cancels on covers bearing those cachets.

Figure 1: Photograph of Henry Stinemetts in his room at the downtown Hellman Building in Los Angeles seated below picture of Buffalo Bill Cody, for whom he worked from 1899 to 1913.

The Cachets

From November 1935 to January 1941, Stinemetts produced 47 naval cachets for a variety of events and holidays (Table 1). As discussed in previous articles, many of the cachets were printed on various types of paper in different colors, and components of the cachets were often glued-on cut-outs that had been printed in various colors on metallic paper. Thus, although only one example of each cachet is shown in Table 1, there were numerous variations within certain cachets. For example, with the 1937 Independence Day cachet, various colors were used for the lettering, the stars, and both the eagle and Uncle Sam figures. The figures were not only printed directly onto cover, but were also metallic cut-outs in various colors. Examples of some of the numerous variants of this cachet are shown in Table 2.

Elements of some cachets were carried over to later cachets. The cross that appeared in the 1936 Easter cachet, appeared later in the 1938 cachet along with the bunny and chick from the 1937 cachet (Table 1). The same eagle appeared at the top of the 1937 Independence Day, the 1936 Lincoln’s Birthday, the 1938 Thanksgiving, the 1936 Armistice Day, and the 1939 Armistice Day cachets (Table 1). In 1940, the identical cachet of Uncle Sam atop two flags appeared on both Stinemetts’ Destroyers for Bases (2 September) and Navy Day (27 October) cachets (Table 1). Stinemetts clearly did not waste any printed materials and used them frequently in many cachets.

Certain images used by Stinemetts for his cachets were also used by many other naval cachet makers. Since Stinemetts was not an artist, he enlisted help from a number of artists and cachet makers many of whom have not been identified to date. Some of those that have been identified include Clyde G. Morris (Thanksgiving 1935 and Navy Day 1938), Fred E. Medicus (Christmas 1935 and 1938), Harry Ioor (Independence Day 1936 and 1938), Leslie S. Merrell (Memorial Day 1936), Elanor Campbell (Easter 1937 and 1938), Heitmann (Memorial Day and Mother’s Day 1937), Harry E. Klotzback (St. Patrick’s Day 1937 and Navy Day 1938), Norman K. Mary (New Year’s Day 1937), and Ralph (Shorty) Burkholder (Valentine’s Day 1940).

Although the artwork on cachets was not original with Stinemetts, the slogans and sayings on the cachets were characteristic of him. Most were highly patriotic, loyal to country and its founding values. As war winds began to blow, the slogans became somewhat isolationist, but always supportive of the United States and its military.

The Ships

Naval cancellations from only 27 different ships have been found in the survey of Stinemetts covers conducted to date (Table 3). In an article in the 19 April 1943 Los Angeles Times, Stinemetts stated that he had covers cancelled on 175 ships, 46 of which had been sunk. This number included not only covers that he had cacheted, but those cacheted by others that were in his personal collection. Thus, it is unknown exactly how many different ships he used to service the covers bearing his cachets.

From personal correspondence between Stinemetts and the sailors servicing his covers and from signatures found on Stinemetts covers, it is apparent that he identified certain individuals that were very interested in naval philately. These he used frequently to service his covers. They were not necessarily the official mail clerks aboard ship. Stinemetts regularly gave these sailors (and their wives) highly decorated covers to thank them for their good service. Examples of these sailors and their ships include Mike B. Owens (USS TEXAS, USS OKLAHOMA, USS VESTAL), Rufus Falkner (USS MISSISSIPPI, USS RELIEF), Raymond St. John (MISSISSIPPI), Lyle E. Patterson (USS PENNSYLVANIA), C. E. Pierson (USS PERKINS), Jimmie Allen (USS WHIPPOORWILL), Louis C. Minkler (USS DOBBIN), C. Hartman (USS SARATOGA), and W. A. Foster (USS GREBE).
The Covers

There is insufficient space in this article to show even one cover with each cachet shown in Table 1. Thus, covers representing selected events, types and sizes of covers, decorations, and ship’s cancellations will be shown. In 1935, Stinemetts produced his first two naval cachets. For Thanksgiving, his cachet featured a large turkey atop a battleship (Figure 2). Smaller, less decorated covers did not have sufficient space to accommodate the bottom two lines of the cachet that indicated Stinemetts as sponsor. The 1935 Christmas covers sponsored by Stinemetts showed a jolly Santa in a wreath (Figure 3) that subsequently appeared as a cut-out on some Christmas covers in 1938 and 1939.

In 1936, Stinemetts prepared cachets for 11 holidays, and covers cancelled on 8 ships are known. The use of notable slogans evolved during this year. Washington’s birthday was celebrated on covers decorated with cut-outs featuring his portrait and patriotic symbols (Figure 4). Patriotic symbols also adorned the Memorial Day (Figure 5) and Independence Day (Figure 6) covers in 1936. Thanksgiving covers celebrated family, home, and a bountiful land (Figure 7). Both Christmas 1936 and New Years 1937 were represented on double-cacheted covers (Figure 8) as well as single covers.

1937 was Stinemetts’ most prolific year with 13 different holiday/event covers cancelled on 10 ships. Both Lincoln’s and Washington’s birthdays were celebrated on single covers as well as on double-cacheted covers (Figure 9). St. Patrick’s Day covers sported green, shamrocks, lyres and anything else Irish (Figure 10). The woman in the cachet on the 1937 Mother’s day covers seemed a bit stern, but this was offset by beautiful decorations (Figure 11). Halloween covers have been found only for 1937 (Figure 12) while Armistice Day covers featured a Doughboy and praise of those who gave all (Figure 13). In mid-1937 Stinemetts informed his customers and servicers that he would no longer be sponsoring naval covers. The disappointment expressed by both parties must have changed Stinemetts mind for he continued his production until New Year’s Day 1941.

In 1938, Stinemetts produced covers for eight events which were cancelled aboard 13 different ships. His Easter cachet featured elements of this 1936 and 1937 cachets and covers were decorated with chicks, birds, bunnies, and flowers (Figure 14). Independence Day covers were adorned with patriotic symbols, and the slogan on his cachet favored Americanism over all others (Figure 15). The Legionnaires convention in Los Angeles from 19-23 September was celebrated with a double cachet for the convention and “Special Navy Day” (Figure 16). Cancels for seven different ships have been found for this event alone as have #6, #10 and very large hand-made covers (Figure 17).

Stinemetts made cachets for only four events during 1939. The winds of war were blowing and slogans featured isolationism on his Independence and Armistice Day cachets (Figures 18 and 19). The desire for world peace was prominent on his Thanksgiving and Christmas cachets (Figure 20 and 21).

1940 was the last full year for which Stinemetts prepared naval covers. This included eight holiday/event covers cancelled aboard eight different ships. Valentine’s Day and Easter were celebrated separately on covers as well as on double-cacheted covers (Figure 22). Covers for Independence Day warned Europe to keep hands off America (Figure 23). The same patriotic cachet was used to celebrate the Destroyers for Bases agreement between the US and UK on 2 September and Navy Day on 27 October (Figure 24). Stinemetts made it clear that the Christmas 1940 cachet would be his last by stating “Finis” behind his name (Figure 25). Although Stinemetts would prepare covers for New Years Day 1941, he recycled the same cachet he had used in 1938 (Figure 26).

Help Us Complete the Survey

This article summarizes a survey of Stinemetts covers in only a handful of USCS members’ collections. We would like to solicit your help in identifying other covers that may exist in collections not represented here. We are especially interested in learning of Stinemetts cachets for events that are not listed in Table 1 as well as any ship cancels that are not listed in Table 3. Identification of additional artists and cachet makers that helped Stinemetts make his cachets would also be greatly appreciated. Please use the information in this article and our two previous publications on Stinemetts in the Log, to see if you have any covers in your collections that could provide any of this additional information. We can be contacted by email or regular mail (see information at the beginning of this article). Thank you in advance for any help you can provide.

Acknowledgements

We gratefully acknowledge the help of members who have been working with us on this project to date. They include Don Tjossem, Steve Shay, Phil Pettig, Bob Rawlins and Paul Huber. The photograph of Henry Stinemetts in Figure 1 was licensed from the UCLA Charles E. Young Research Library Department of Special Collections, Los Angeles Times Photographic Archives.

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Event:
- New Year's Day
- St Paddy's Day
- Thanksgiving
- Valentine's Day
- Veteran's Day
- Washington's Birthday
- Others

Table 1 -- Stinemetts Cachets 1935 to 1941—Part II
Figure 2: Earliest known Stinemetts naval cachet; ship by Clyde Morris.

Figure 3: Christmas cover with cachet artwork attributed to Fred E. Medicus.

Figure 4: Earliest of three Washington’s Birthday Stinemetts cachets known to exist. Theme tied nicely with Washington design of 1870 3¢ stamp.

Figure 5: 1936 Memorial Day cover; cachet artwork attributed to Leslie S. Merrell.

Figure 6: Large (14.5 x 9.5 inches) hand-made cover addressed to Mrs. Escal Moore (wife of Harry Moore) who probably assisted Stinemetts with his covers. Signed by Stinemetts “To a friend, Escal Moore, I present this cover.” Cachet artwork by Harry Ioor.

Figure 7: Elaborate Thanksgiving cover cancelled aboard USS Northampton.

Figure 8: Double-cacheted cover for Christmas 1936 and New Years 1937. Cachet artwork for New Years done by Norman K. Mary. From the collection of Don Tjossem.

Figure 9: Double-cacheted cover for Lincoln and Washington birthdays. From the collection of Don Tjossem.

Figure 10: Cachet artwork by Harry Klotzback on cover addressed to Raymond St. John who serviced Stinemetts’ covers aboard USS MISSISSIPPI. From the collection of Steve Shay.

Figure 11: One of only two known Mother’s Day cachets by Stinemetts addressed to Mike B. Owens who serviced his covers aboard a number of ships. Cachet art by Heitmann.

Figure 12: The only Stinemetts Halloween cachet known. From the collection of Don Tjossem.

Figure 13: Armistice Day cover with bi-colored cancel addressed to C. E. Pierson who serviced the cover.

Figure 14: Easter cachet created using elements from the 1936 and 1937 cachets. Serviced by Jimmie Allen who relayed to Stinemetts problems with the cancel ink taking on the gift areas of the decoration under the stamp.

Figure 15: Artwork of soldier on cachet and Uncle Sam attributed to Harry Ioor. Interesting slogan about “isms.”

Figure 16: Cachet for Legionnaires Convention and Special Navy Day addressed to naval mail clerk aboard the INDIANAPOLIS.
Figure 17: Large (14.5 x 8 inches) hand-made cover signed by both the CO and EO of USS VESTAL. Note the cut-out of a Crosby thermographed image used to frame the address.

Figure 18: Red paper-wrapped cover with slogan warning US to keep out of foreign entanglements.

Figure 19: Isolationist sentiments appeared on Armistice Day cover as well.

Figure 20: Silk-wrapped cover with world peace as the major wish expressed. Ironically, this cover was cancelled aboard USS ARIZONA.

Figure 21: This Christmas cover has the 1935 Santa head applied over the 1939 wreath cachet. Peace is again its message. The Dec. 22 cancel is unusual in that most Christmas covers were cancelled on Christmas Day.

Figure 22: Double-cacheted cover for Valentine’s Day and Easter 1940.

Figure 23: Independence Day cachet warned Europe to stay away. Serviced by Louis C. Minkler.

Figure 24: This patriotic cachet was used on both this Navy Day cover and a special event cover for the Destroyers for Bases agreement between the US and UK on September 2. Another interesting slogan about “isms.” From the collection of Don Tjossem.
|--------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|

*Metallic background on cut-outs in first image to the right is bronze while that of the second is gold.*
### Table 3 -- Ship Cancels<sup>a</sup> on Stinemetts Covers 1935 to 1941

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<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>1935</th>
<th>1936</th>
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<td>Ms, Wv</td>
<td>Ms, Ok, Pa, Pk, Kg, Vs</td>
<td>Ms, Tg, Vs, Wp</td>
<td>Ca, Mp, Ms, Nv, Pa, St, Wp</td>
<td>Db, Ms, Wp</td>
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<tr>
<td>Easter</td>
<td>Nh</td>
<td>Co, Ms, Ok</td>
<td>Wp</td>
<td>Ms, Pa, St, Tn, Wp</td>
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<td>Ok, Pk</td>
<td>Ca, Wp</td>
<td>Ms</td>
<td>Db, Ms, Pa, St, Wp</td>
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<td>Ms, Nh</td>
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<td>Ok</td>
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<td>Ms, Pa, Pk, Kg, Vs</td>
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<td>St Paddy’s Day</td>
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<td>Ms, Ok</td>
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<td>Pa, St, Tn</td>
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<td>Ms, Pa</td>
<td>Ms, Nh, Pa, Re</td>
<td>Os, Kg, Wp</td>
<td>Md, Kg, Wp</td>
<td>Az, Ms, Nv</td>
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<td>Ms, Tt</td>
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<td>In, Ms, Vs</td>
<td>Ms, Nv</td>
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<td>Others</td>
<td>Halloween (10/31)</td>
<td>Ok, Pk</td>
<td>Am, Legion (9/19-23)</td>
<td>Co, Cy, In, Md, Ms, Vs, Wv</td>
<td>Destroys for Bases (9/2)</td>
<td>Ms, Wp</td>
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</table>

<sup>a</sup>Ship Abbreviations

Ag=Algoma; Az=Arizona; Ca=California; Ck=Clark; Co=Colorado; Cy=Cuyama; Db=Dobbin; Gr=Grebe; In=Indianapolis; Md=Maryland; Mp=Minneapolis; Ms=Mississippi; Nh=Northampton; Nv=Nevada; Ny=New York; Ok=Oklahoma; Pa=Pennsylvania; Pk=Perkins; Re=Relief; Rg=Ranger; St=Saratoga; Tg=Tanager; Tn=Tennessee; Tp=Tippecanoe; Vs=Vestal; Wp=Whippoorwill.

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**Figure 25:** The last naval cachet prepared by Stinemetts as indicated by “finis” after his name. Once again, the message is Peace to Europe.

**Figure 26:** This 1941 cachet was recycled from the 1938 New Years Day cachet with the year removed from the latter.