

U.S. Commemorative Overprints

Usage of the 1928 Hawaii and Molly Pitcher Issues

Perspective

During the 1920s, commemorative stamp issues were held to only a handful each year. In 1928 several events were scheduled to be stamp subjects but the Battle of Monmouth and the Hawaii Sesquicentennial were not originally on the U.S. Post Office's agenda.

After much political lobbying, a request was made to 'surcharge' 2¢ and 5¢ regular issues with "Hawaii 1778-1928". The BEP confirmed such overprinting "could undoubtedly be provided in the same manner as stamps are now precanceled."

On hearing of the success of the 'Hawaii' proponents, supporters of the 'Battle of Monmouth' renewed their efforts to get approval for their stamp. After a deluge of political requests, approval to overprint a 2¢ value with "Molly Pitcher" was given.

The overprint issues were not well received by postal employees or the public. Some postmasters suggested the stamps were valid only in Hawaii or were already canceled and not valid postage. The public considered them unaesthetic and cheaply designed. No further overprint issues were produced by the Post Office.

Focus

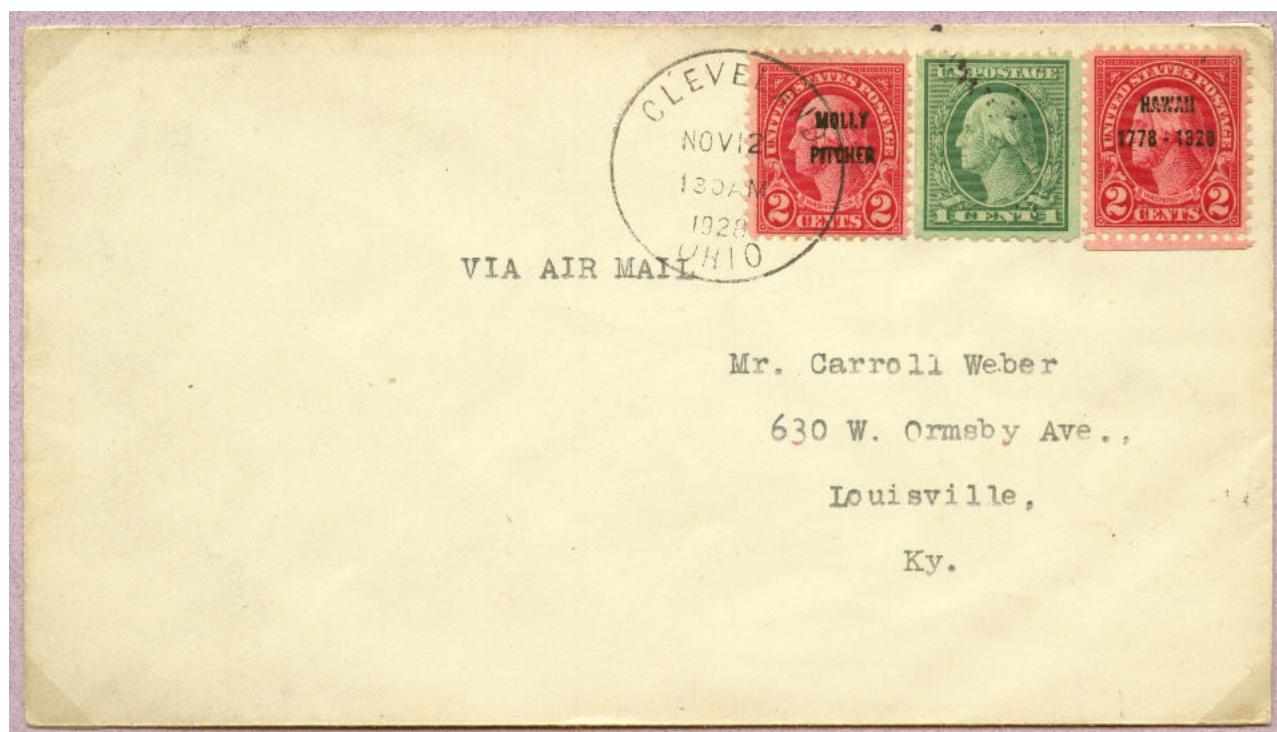
The issues were in common circulation for approximately two years and use of these stamps is the ultimate test of their reason for issue. Although receiving very blunt criticism, they still serviced the mailing public's need for postage.

Difficulty of acquisition is therefore the definitive factor in collecting this area. Surviving commercial mail is the true measure of these issues' success and such is very elusive when compared with other more esoteric collecting areas.

Exhibit organization follows:

Rates	Letter, Post Card and Weights
Services	Special Delivery and Registration
Routes	Rail, Sea and Air
Destinations	Mail to Foreign Countries
Origins	Mail Originating outside the U.S.

Examples of usage of both overprints are displayed for each of the areas above.



'Hawaii' and 'Molly Pitcher' issues
Domestic airmail rate 5¢ (<1 ounce), Cleveland, Oh., to Louisville, Ky., November 12, 1928