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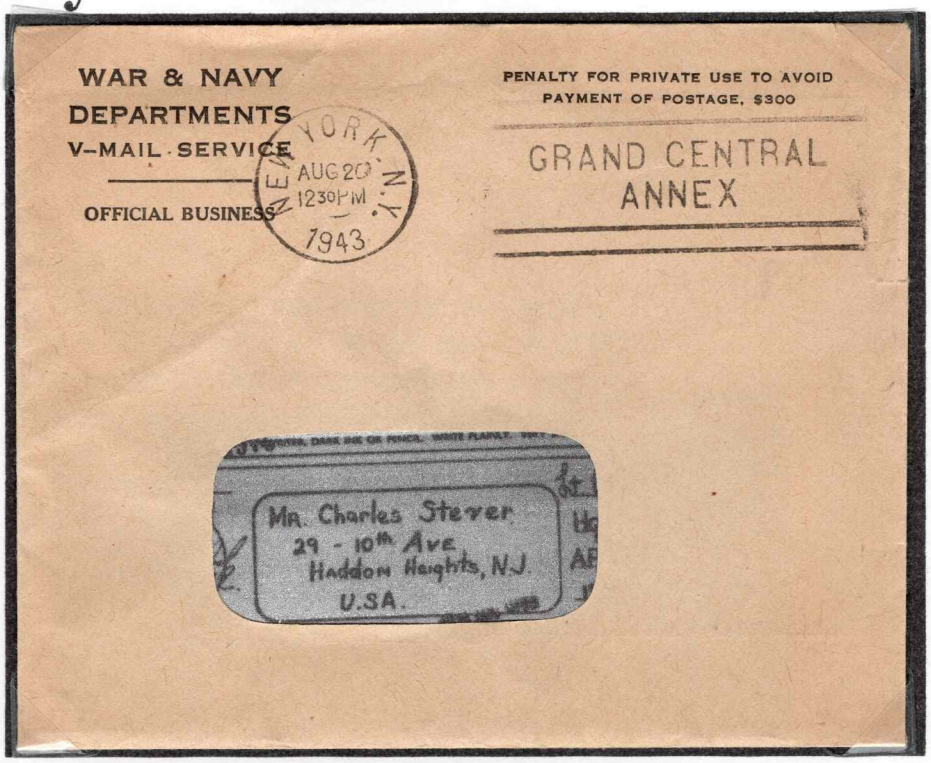
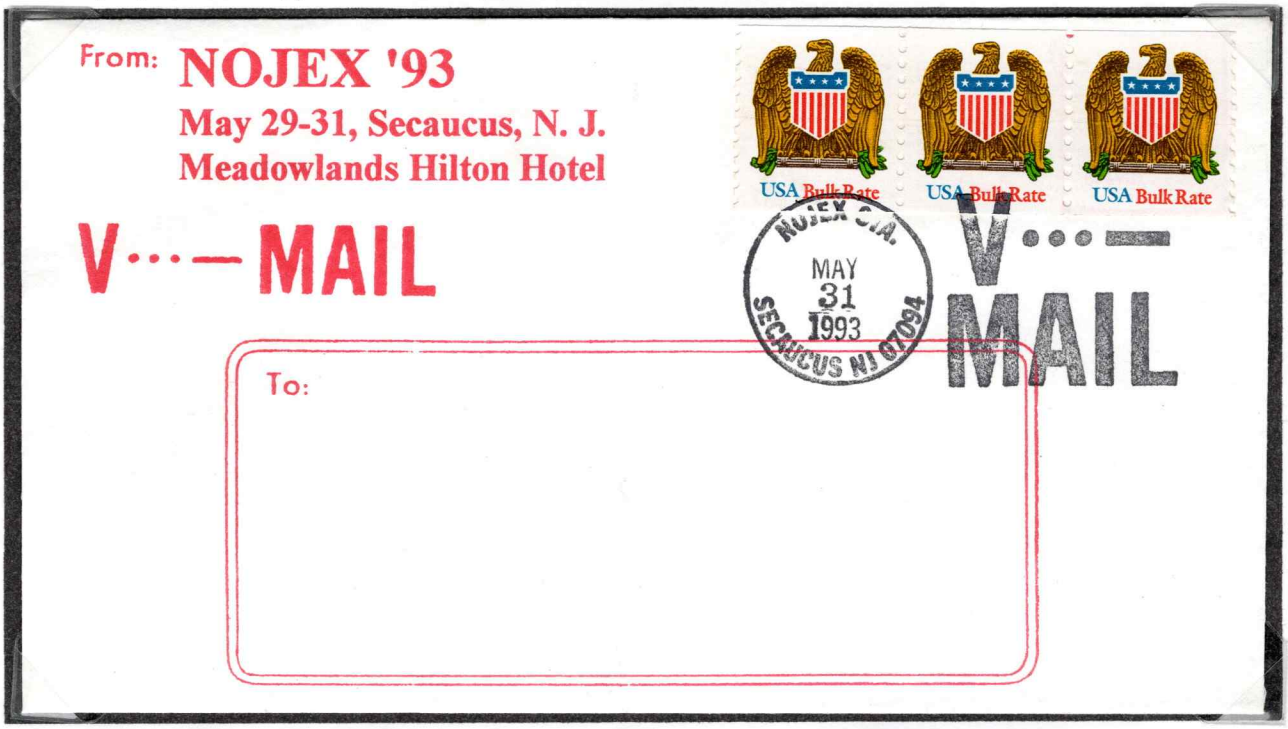
Victory "V" Mail in WWII

To increase the effectiveness of air transport logistics during the war, Victory or "V-Mail" was developed. This reduced the space and weight of the tremendous number of letters sent both to and from the troops in the theaters of operation. V-Mail was based on the British Airgraph of the 1930s in conjunction with Eastman Kodak, at the time, the world's leader in anything photographic.

With V-Mail, 37 sacks of mail weighing 2575 lbs. could be reduced to one sack weighing 45 lbs. This savings would allow additional war material to reach the operation areas.

The cover to the right contains a letter mailed by Lt. GJ Coil on 15 August 1943. Upon receipt in NYC, it was processed and forwarded on 20 August to Charles Stever in Haddon Heights, NJ. →



V-mail could be sent to or from the front. The writer used a preprinted letter sheet and fit the message within the margins of the page. Writers wrote a little larger than usual, as the final copy would be reduced considerably in size (See page two). Instructions for completing the form letter were on the back. The completed letter would be addressed, folded, sealed, and placed into the mail stream. Civilians at home or aboard would have to place the appropriate postage on the completed letter.

The letter would then go to a processing facility where it would be censored and then photographed and converted to microfilm, each letter reduced to the size of a thumb nail. The microfilm was then flown overseas in bulk where the letters would be printed from the microfilm by a special machine, placed in an envelope, and delivered to the addressee.