

10¢ Prexie Postal History

by Richard Pederson

The 10¢ value in the Presidential Series of 1938, hereinafter called the Prexies, depicts the tenth President of the United States, John Tyler. He became President in March 1841, following the death of William Henry Harrison who was in office only 31 days, and served until 1845. He was the first U.S. President to serve in that office without being elected as President.

The 10¢ Prexie was issued in sheet format on September 2, 1938 (see Figure 1) and was in continuous use until 1958 when the last delivery of stamps was made to post offices. The 10¢ value was also available as a horizontal coil which had a first day of issue on January 20, 1939 (Figure 2 shows a used coil strip of 10) and was available for use until after the last delivery to post offices in 1955.



Figure 1. 10¢ Prexie.



Figure 2. 10¢ Prexie used coil strip of 10.

The principal solo use for the 10¢ Prexie was to pay the one-half ounce foreign airmail rate to South and Central America that was in affect from November 1, 1946 thru June 30, 1961. Figure 3 pictures a cover bearing a solo 10¢ Prexie mailed from New Orleans, Louisiana to Tegucigalpa, Honduras on June 29, 1953. Figure 4 shows a second example with a single 10¢ Prexie paying the airmail rate to Venezuela. In this case, the intended recipient was no longer in Venezuela, so Venezuelan stamps were added to forward the letter back to the U.S. at his new address in Palm Beach, Florida.



Figure 3. 10¢ solo on air mail to Honduras.



Figure 4. Air mail to Honduras forwarded to U.S. with Venezuelan stamps added.

It is also possible to find in-period domestic solo uses of the 10¢ Prexie on second, third, and fourth class mail, but these are rarely encountered. A non-philatelic solo use of the 10¢ Prexie horizontal coil, whether on domestic or international mail, is one of the most difficult Prexie solo uses to find.

In addition to the solo usages discussed above, the 10¢ Prexie was frequently used in multiples or in combinations with other stamps to pay a wide variety of domestic and

international rates, including those for airmail, postage due, return receipt service, parcel post, registration service, and special delivery service. The cover whose front and back are shown in Figure 5 uses a 10¢ Prexie to pay the added registration fee required for a registered airmail letter package mailed from London, England to Lawrenceville, New Jersey and valued (in England) over 2 Pounds 18 Shillings but under 28 Pounds. The Figure 6 cover uses two 10¢ Prexies plus six 3¢ Prexies and a 2¢ For Defense issue to pay the 40¢ international airmail rate to Rio De Janeiro, Brazil. This cover also has red stamp from the Board of Economic Warfare stating that the technical information contained inside is approved for export.



Figure 5. 10¢ added registration fee.

Figure 7 shows a 10¢ Prexie along with a 30¢ Transport airmail stamp to make up the unpublished (per Beecher and Wawrukiewicz in *U.S. Domestic Postal Rates, 1872-*

2011) 40¢/one-half ounce rate required for airmail service from American Samoa to Kansas City, Missouri. The cover, mailed on August 2, 1944, contains a marking indicating it was passed by the civil censor (since there is no APO address and sending location is identified) at American Samoa. American Samoa is an unincorporated U.S. territory and during wartime, censorship of civilian mail was necessary to prevent the intentional or inadvertent disclosure of information about such things as military movements, fortifications, and military force concentrations.



Figure 6. Air mail to Brazil.



Figure 7. Censored air mail from American Samoa

Final examples of the 10¢ Prexie used for international mailings are pictured in Figures 8 and 9. In Figure 8, three 10¢ Prexies pay the 30¢ rate for an up to one-half ounce letter using the Foreign Airmail Service (FAM) from New York to Zurich, Switzerland. The letter, which was mailed on November 3, 1943, was returned to the sender, Phillips Process Co., Inc., because FAM service had been suspended due to World War II. This rate applied until November 1, 1946 when it was superseded by a 15¢ airmail rate to Europe. An example of the 15¢ rate is shown in Figure 9 where a 2¢ message card is supplemented with a 10¢ Prexie and 2¢ Liberty issue coil. The card was mailed from Englewood, New Jersey to the Oxford Philatelic Society in Oxford, England. The Reply card is no longer attached so was evidently used to reply to the sender.



Figure 8. 10¢ Prexies paying FAM rate to Europe.



Figure 9. Air mail to Great Britain.

On domestic mail, the 10¢ Prexie was often used either by itself or in combination with other stamps to pay for postage and various fees. The Figure 10 cover mailed from the Fremont, New Hampshire “Tax Collector” in December 1956 uses the 10¢ Prexie to pay the 3¢ first class surface rate and 7¢ return receipt fee in addition to the certified mail fee which was paid by the 15¢ certified mail stamp.



Figure 10. Certified first-class mail with return receipt.

The airmail cover shown in Figure 11 is franked with the 6¢ airmail stamp honoring 50 years of powered flight paying the domestic first class airmail rate and two 10¢ Prexies paying the 20¢ special delivery fee. The cover was mailed on November 5, 1953 from the Western Novelty Company in Milwaukee, Wisconsin to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. A second airmail cover bearing two 10¢ Prexies and a censor marking is pictured in Figure 12. In this instance, the letter which was mailed from Honolulu, Hawaii to the Bank of America in Berkeley, California on June 29, 1943, pays the 20¢ FAM 14 airmail rate for up to one-half ounce. That rate was in effect between Hawaii and the continental U.S. from April 21, 1937 thru January 14, 1945.



Figure 11. Air mail special deliver.

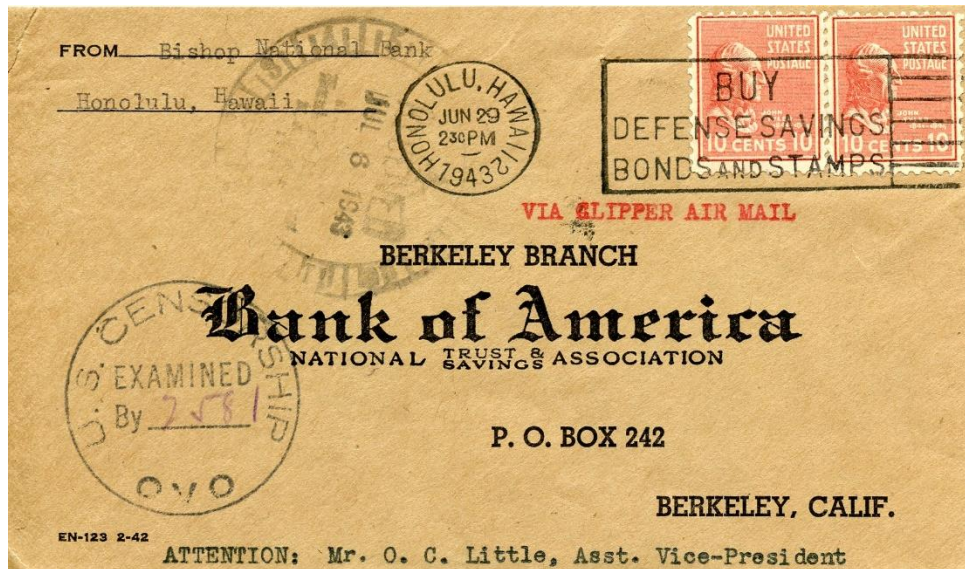


Figure 12. Air mail from Hawaii.

The parcel tag shown front and back in Figure 13, which is dated May 26, 1942, has 26 copies of the 10¢ Prexie along with a single 2¢ “ARMY AND NAVY” defense issue for a total of \$2.62 in postage. Since a fourth class parcel mailed from Crystal, Oklahoma to St. Louis, Missouri would be subject to zone 4 rates, a likely rate breakdown is 35¢ for insurance up to \$200, 10¢ for the first pound, and \$2.17 for 62 additional pounds (3.5¢ x 62).



Figure 13. Fourth-class mailing tag with 26 of 10¢.

Next, I will show an example of the 10¢ Prexie being used to pay for Certified Mail service. The Figure 14 cover, sent from Hillsborough, California to New York City, on August 16, 1957, contains three 10¢ Prexies which pay the 20¢ fee for certified mail service, the current 3¢ first class rate, and, likely, a 7¢ return receipt fee.

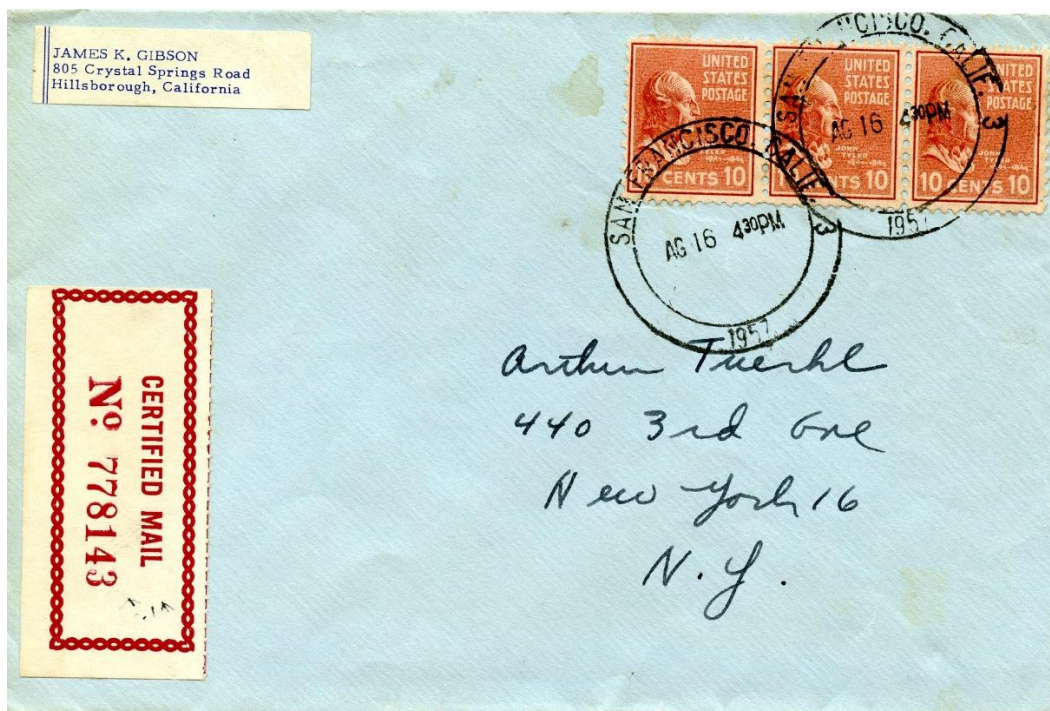


Figure 14. Three 10¢ Prexies paying for certified first-class mail with return receipt.

I will conclude with three philatelic covers that use the 10¢ Prexie coil. The first uses the 10¢ coil along with several other Prexie coil stamps (see Figure 15), to exactly pay the 20¢ airmail rate from New York to Hawaii. The next (see Figure 16), was sent from long time Vermont stamp dealer Sidney Harris to a customer in Ormond Beach, Florida. Harris, who dealt primarily in classis U.S. issues, used a pair of 10¢ Prexies to pay the 2¢ standard mail single piece rate plus 3¢ for the enclosed first class mail and 15¢ for insurance up to \$25. On the third cover (see Figure 17), the Postage Stamp Centenary stamped envelope pays the 5¢ airmail rate, the four 10¢ Prexie coils pay the registration fee, and the two James Fennimore Cooper Famous American stamps pay the 4¢ registry surcharge for an item with a declared value of up to \$200. Although philatelic, these covers are still nice uses as the 10¢ coil is one of the most infrequently encountered Prexies and all three are legitimate in-period uses.



Figure 15. Air mail to Hawaii with 10¢ coil.

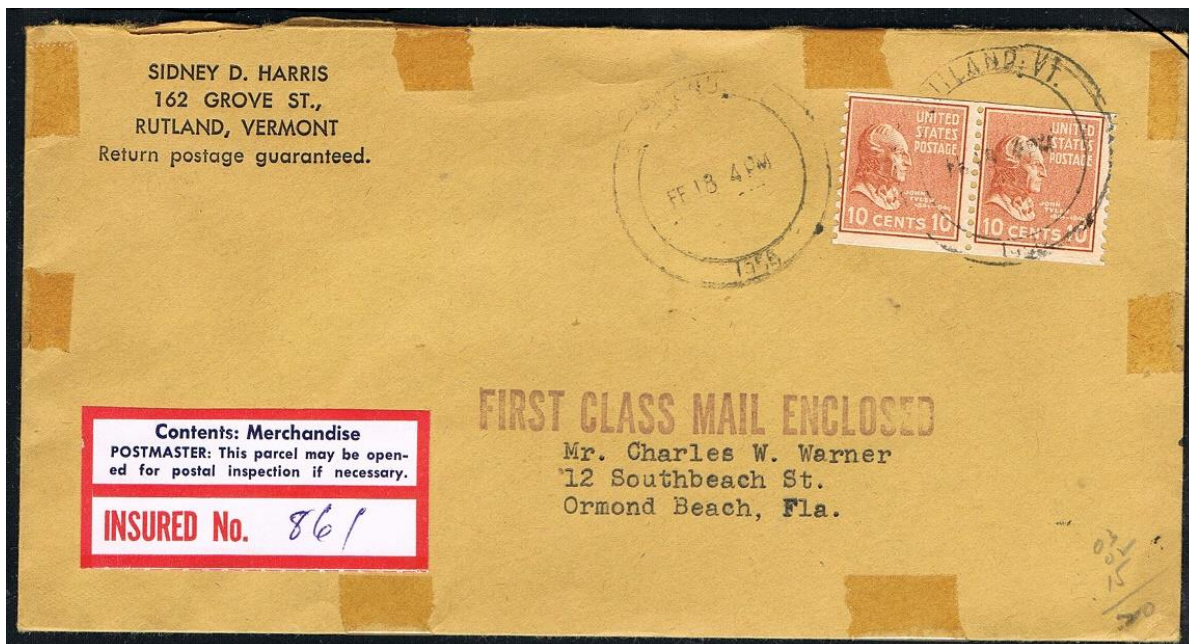


Figure 16. Pair of 10¢ Prexie coils paying 2¢ standard mail single piece rate plus 3¢ for the enclosed first class mail and 15¢ for insurance.



Figure 17. 10¢ Prexie coils paying registration fee on air mail to Cuba.

My thanks to John Hotchner who provided several of pictures that are included in this article. If you have any interesting 10¢ Prexie usages you would like to share or have any comments, clarifications or corrections, please send them to me at rich@pedersonstamps.com or by mail to P.O. Box 662, Clemson SC 29633.

References:

1. Roland E. Rustad, *The Prexies*, Bureau Issues Association, pp. 203-209, 1994.
2. Anthony S. Wawrukiewicz and Henry W. Beecher, *U.S. International Postal Rates, 1872-1996*, CAMA Publishing Company, 1996.
3. Henry W. Beecher and Anthony S. Wawrukiewicz, *U.S. Domestic Postal Rates, 1872-2011 Third Edition*, American Philatelic Society, 2011.