

# U.S. Commemorative Overprints

## Usage of the 1928 Hawaii and Molly Pitcher Issues

### *Perspective*

During the 1920s, commemorative stamp issues were held to 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 release agenda.

After much political lobbying, a request was made to 'surcharge' 2¢ and 5¢ regular issues with the text "Hawaii 1778-1928". The BEP confirmed that 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 for approval of their stamp. After a deluge of political requests, the consent to overprint a 2¢ value with the text "Molly Pitcher" was given.

Overprinted 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, resulting in no further overprinted issues by the Post Office.

### *Focus*

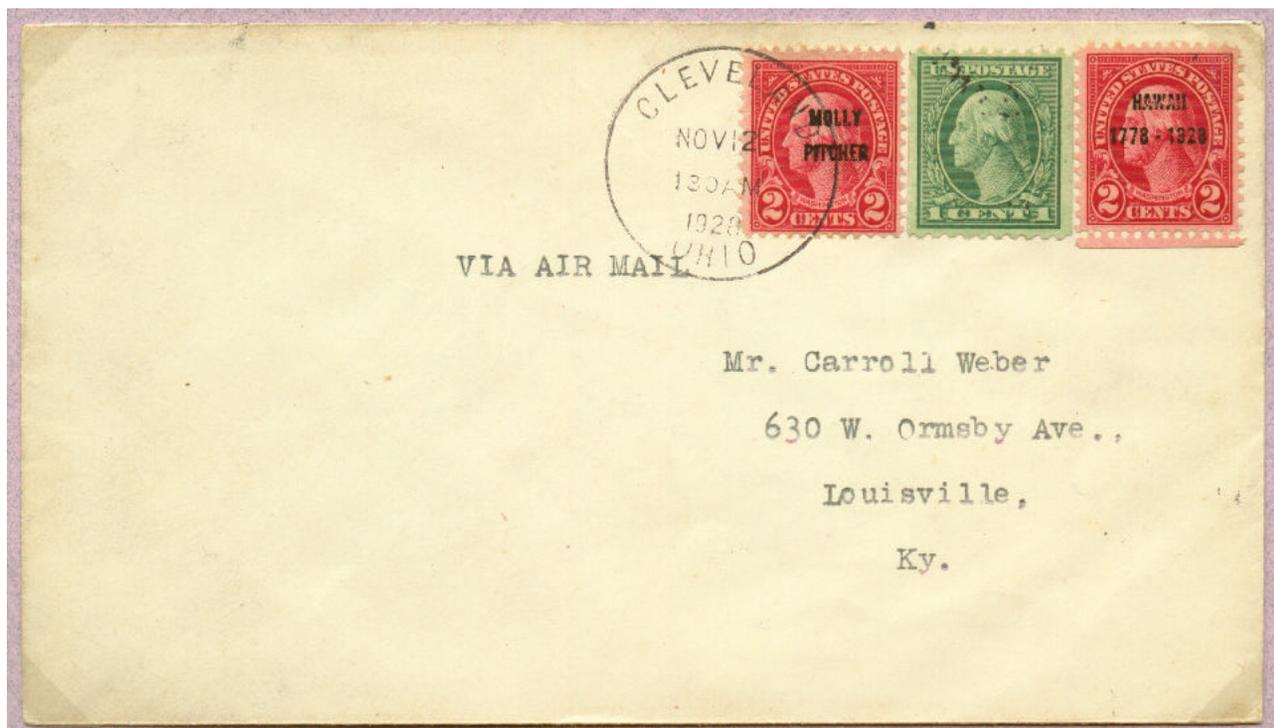
The issues were in common circulation for approximately two years and use of these stamps is the ultimate test of their reason for issue. Although receiving very blunt criticism, they serviced the mailing public's need for postage, regardless of bad press.

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.



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