



## Little-Known Ships at Pearl Harbor – without onboard postal facilities

Many collectors are familiar with cancellations from ships at Pearl Harbor, as most of the larger ships had their own post office and cancellation device prior to December 7, 1941. What is not widely recognized, however, is that there were many other smaller or obscure vessels present that had no postal facility on board. Mail associated with these ships is seldom seen.

This exhibit focuses on these little-known ships, and is, in essence, a study of known covers; some 35 vessels are featured, all either at, or in the vicinity of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Besides Navy ships, it also includes Coast Guard, Army, and civilian vessels. Multiple examples are displayed when possible, to present a better picture of what mail “looks like” for vessels without postal facilities. Most of the covers are commercial mail, however, philatelic examples do exist in some cases. There are also a couple included that are connected to a ship through research of a former crewmember. Several covers in the exhibit represent the only known example of mail associated with the ship. Some of these are new discoveries.

**Purpose:** To present a comprehensive study of known covers from Pearl Harbor ships that did not have an onboard post office.

**Organization:** The exhibit begins inside Pearl Harbor itself with Navy ships, and then “travels” to vessels at the Section Base near the channel entrance. Finally, it moves to Honolulu Harbor where the Coast Guard, Army, and commercial vessels were located.

Especially important covers are indicated by double-line borders. Also, pointed out as the exhibit progresses, is information based on personal research on how mail was handled by these vessels.

**Scope:** Includes examples from Navy, Coast Guard, Army, and civilian vessels at Oahu present during the attack on Pearl Harbor without an onboard post office. Also included are two ships that historically did have an onboard post office, but not at the time of the attack on Pearl Harbor. Most covers are from the time period 1933-1945, but a few are earlier/later.

### **Content Highlights:**

**Frame One** – Navy vessels at Pearl Harbor. Includes the only known covers associated with the tug OSCEOLA (YT-129), small oiler YO-20, and the former torpedo testing barge YTT-3. Also of interest is the YO-30 cancellation.

**Frame Two** – Navy vessels at the Section Base, Bishops Point, and the Coast Guard at Honolulu Harbor. Features the only known cover from minesweeper CROSSBILL, and the seldom seen REEDBIRD. Also of special interest are the net tenders MARIN and WAPELLO.

**Frame Three** – More Coast Guard at Honolulu, and Army vessels. Includes the only known cover from cutter TIGER, the seldom seen RELIANCE, and the buoy tender KUKUI. Also, the only known known covers from the dredge COL. P.S. MICHIE.

**Frame Four** – More Army vessels, and then civilian ships at Honolulu. Features the only known covers from the tug MATHILDA FOSS and the transport HALEAKALA. Also of note are covers from SS DICKENSON, and M/S JAGERSFONTEIN, both of which arrived at Honolulu during the attack.