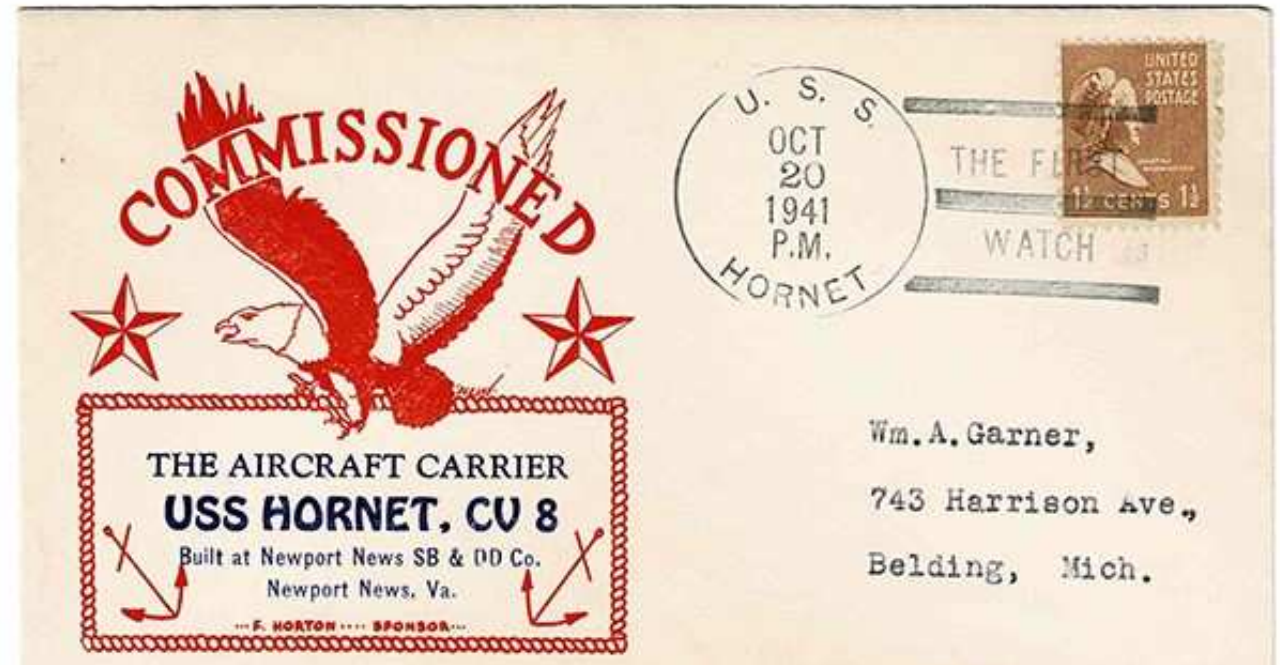


A Tale of Two Hornets

(U.S. Aircraft Carriers - CV 8 and CV / CVA / CVS 12)



This cover commemorates the Commissioning and the First Day of Postal Service for the USS Hornet (CV-8). The 1¢ cent postage stamp was the 3rd class greeting card rate at this time.

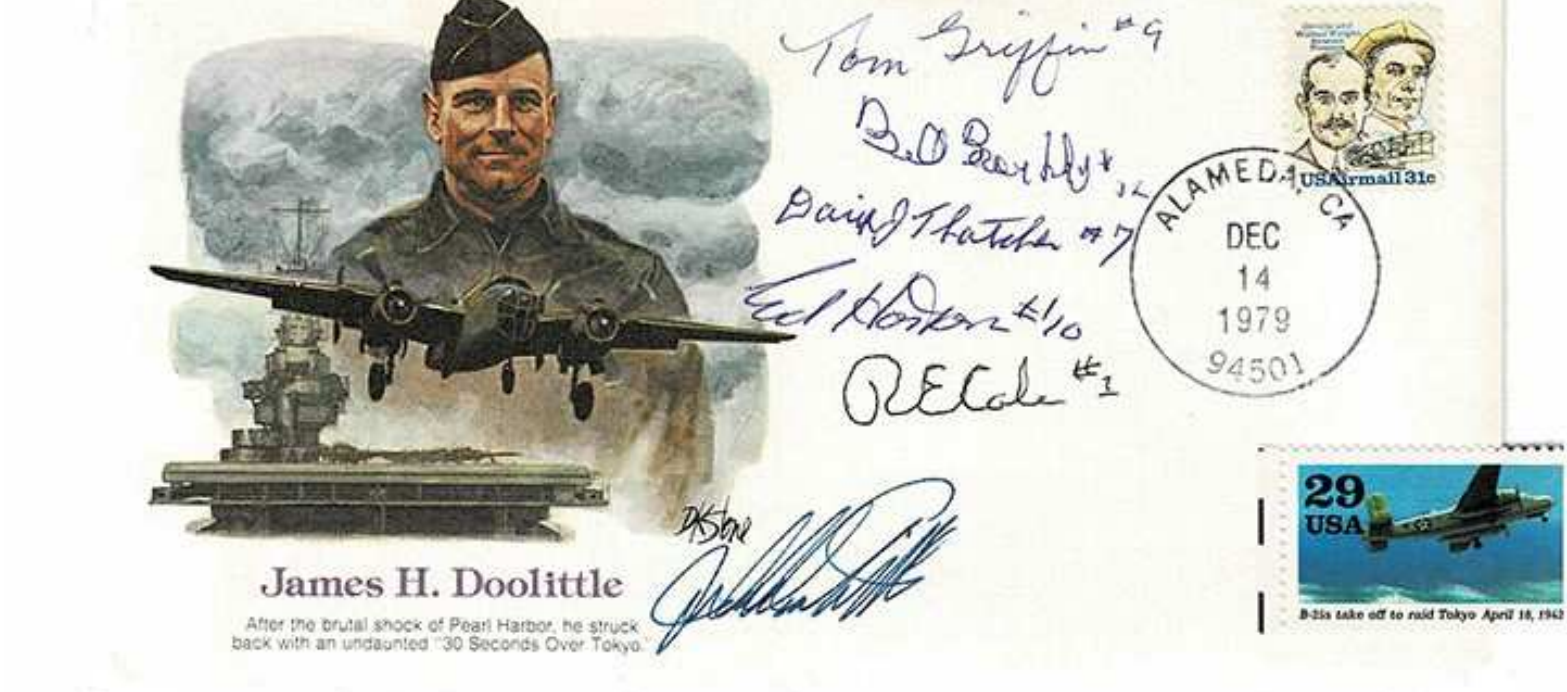
The purpose of this exhibit is to show the contributions of these two aircraft carriers, to several historical activities of our nation, and how the loss of the first U.S.S. Hornet created the second due to its short, but important, role in World War II. This topical exhibit uses a combination of covers and stamps to tell this story in a chronological sequence. Since there are no known previous exhibits on this topic, this collector had to locate a variety of covers and then research to determine what activities were undertaken by the crews aboard these ships on those dates. Before the viewer starts to follow this exhibit, the U.S. Navy ship designations: CV; CVA; and CVS, must be explained at this time. "C" stands for Cruiser. Because the original carriers were built on converted cruiser hulls, they retained the "C" designator. "V" is the letter the Navy assigned to heavier than air, aircraft. A suffix "A" shows that the carrier has been deemed an Attack vessel. A suffix "S" means that it has been outfitted for anti-submarine warfare.

Following the actions of these ships in times of conflict, this exhibit illustrates the Hornet's participation, three times, in the recovery of Apollo spacecraft, followed by its final decommissioning and its near scrapping, but its rescue to survive as a floating museum. While many of the covers are difficult to locate, four of the five covers which are difficult to find, are known to be scarce due to this collector's 52 history of collecting Astrophilately. These five covers are identified by a red dot near the upper right corner of pertinent covers. This exhibit also honors the men who sailed aboard both of the Hornets, in peace and in war. God bless them.

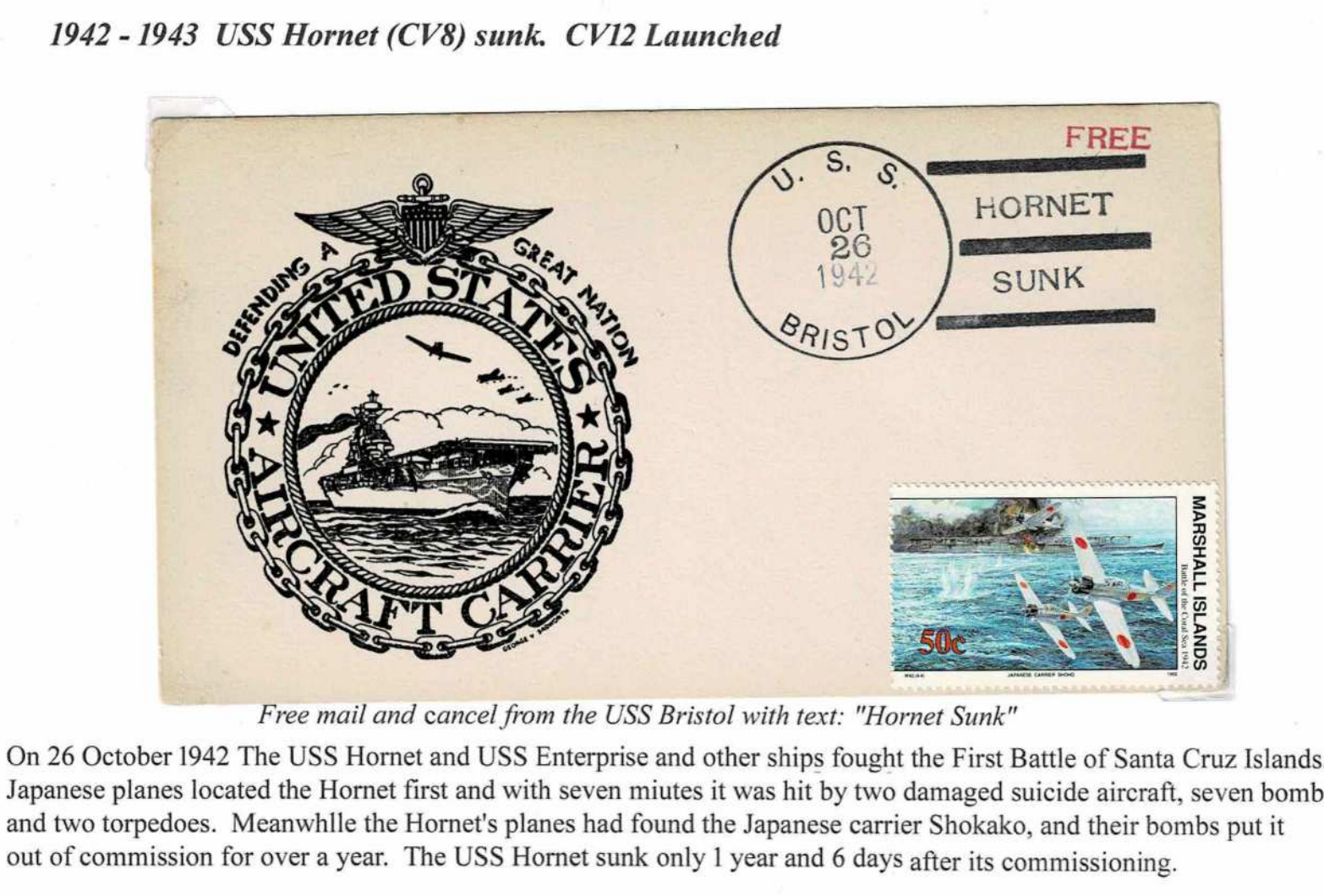
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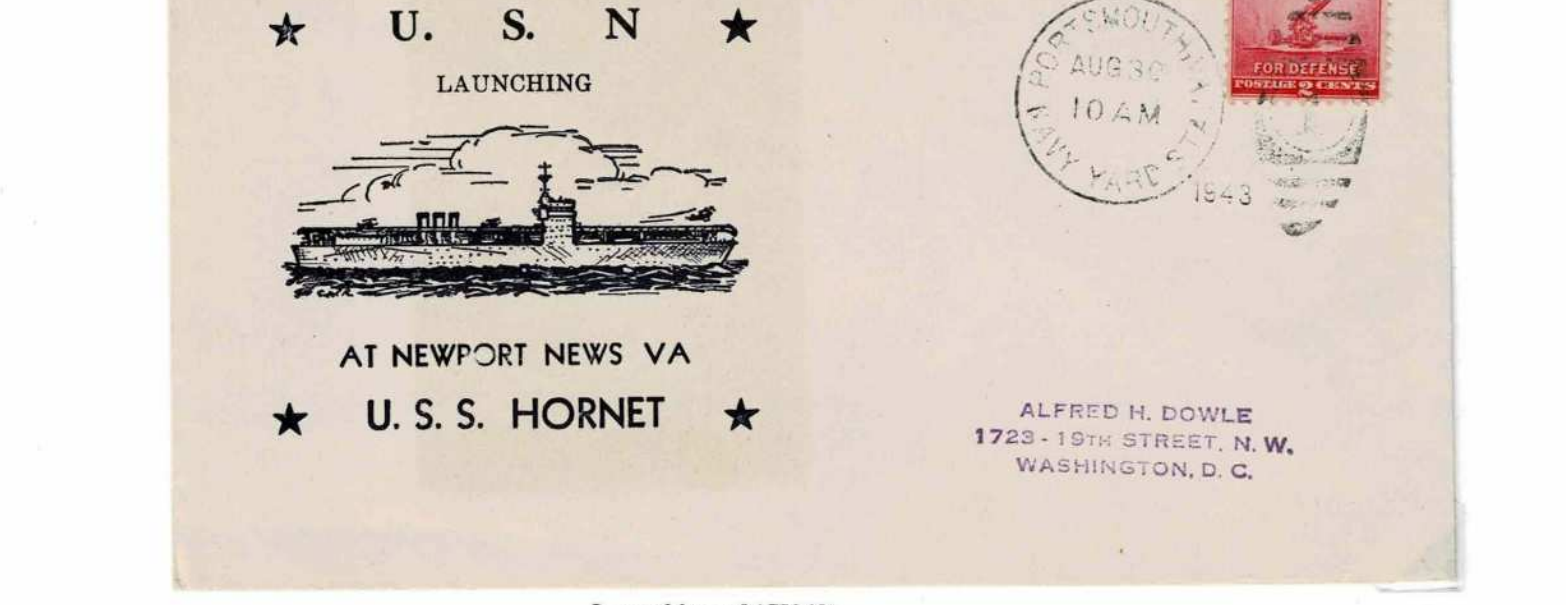
Official first day cover with the cachet, cancel and stamp all using the same illustration. On 18 April 1942, 16 B-25 Bombers were lifted by crane to the deck of the 157 day old USS Hornet, CV-8, Essex class Aircraft Carrier. On 18 April 1942 these bombers took off on a one-way bombing run from the deck of the ship for a 30 seconds over Tokyo mission to prove to the Japanese government and its people that it was not the safe bastion which they had believed it to be. (No covers are known to exist for this secret mission. The Hornet left from Alameda, Ca.)



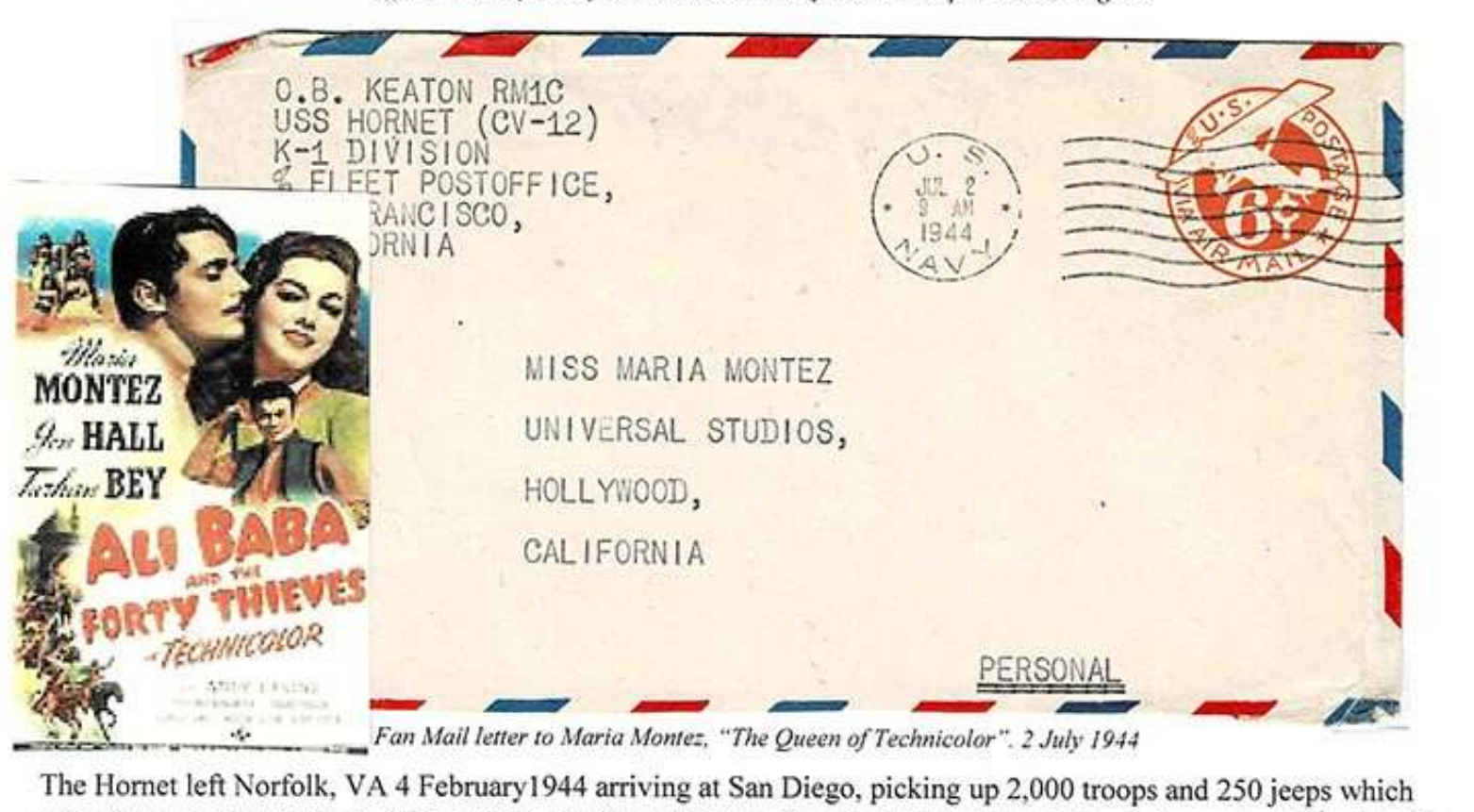
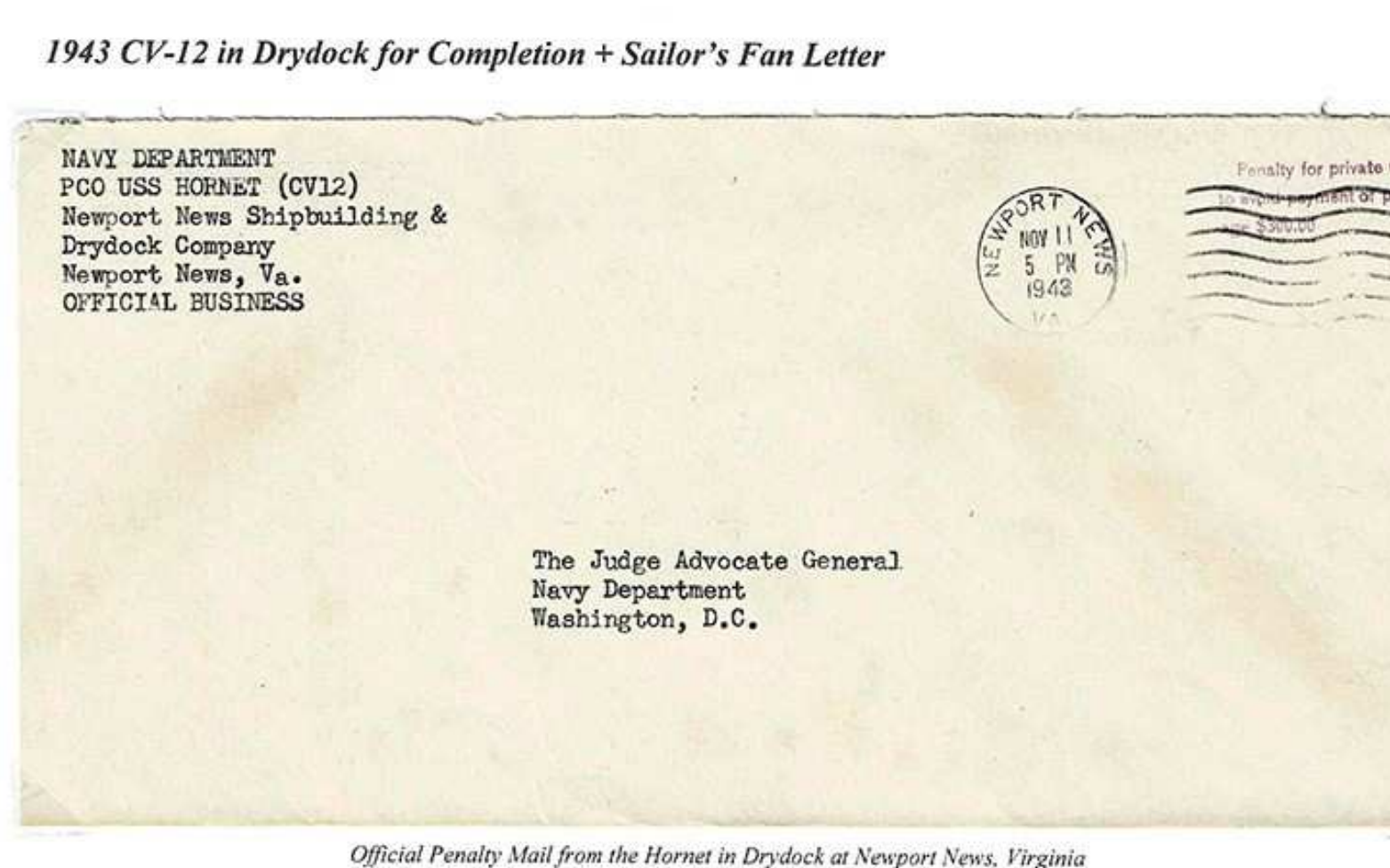
Commemorative cover signed by five of the last seven Doolittle Raiders. All have since passed away. Led by Lt. Col. James Doolittle, the planes had intended to make landings in China, but having been spotted early they launched from the USS Hornet 250 miles earlier than planned. The surprise attack was somewhat successful and the 16 bomber and 80 crew members dodged Japanese fire. One landed in Russia and the crew was jailed. The other 15 bombers either ditched at sea or crash landed in China where villagers helped them. Four crewmen died and seven were captured and killed by the Japanese. Japanese killed many in Chinese villages for helping the Americans.



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The Hornet left Norfolk, VA 4 February 1944 arriving at San Diego, picking up 2,000 troops and 250 jeeps which were taken to Pearl Harbor. On March 8, 1944 the Hornet left for the Marshall Islands arriving on the 20th. The 1st Japanese aircraft shot down by an F6F Hellcat from the Hornet on March 29th. The Battle of the Philippine Sea began on June 19th and the Hornet's aircraft shot down 52 of the 378 enemy aircraft destroyed in what was called "The Great Marianus Turkey Shoot." On July 2nd the Hornet arrived at two Jima, shooting down 35 aircraft the next day.



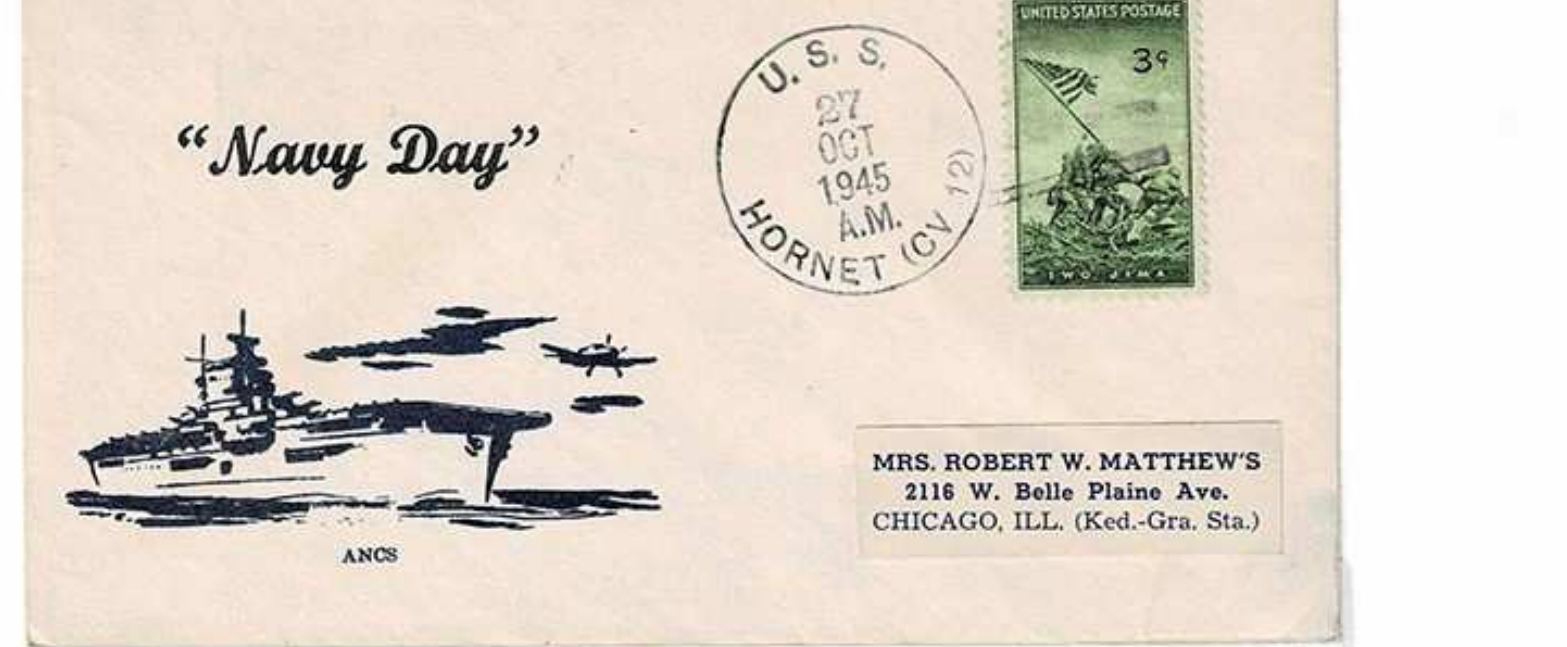
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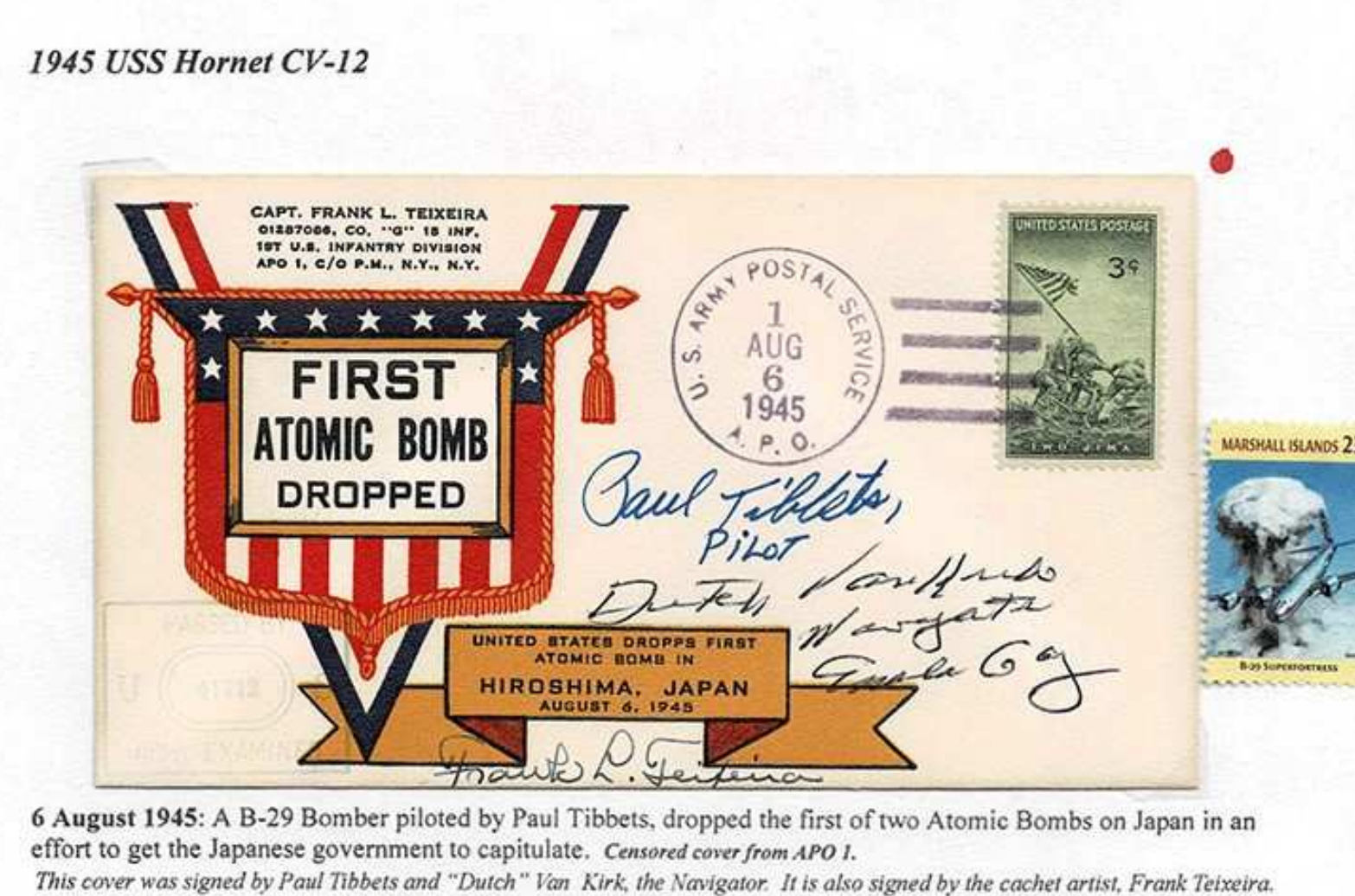
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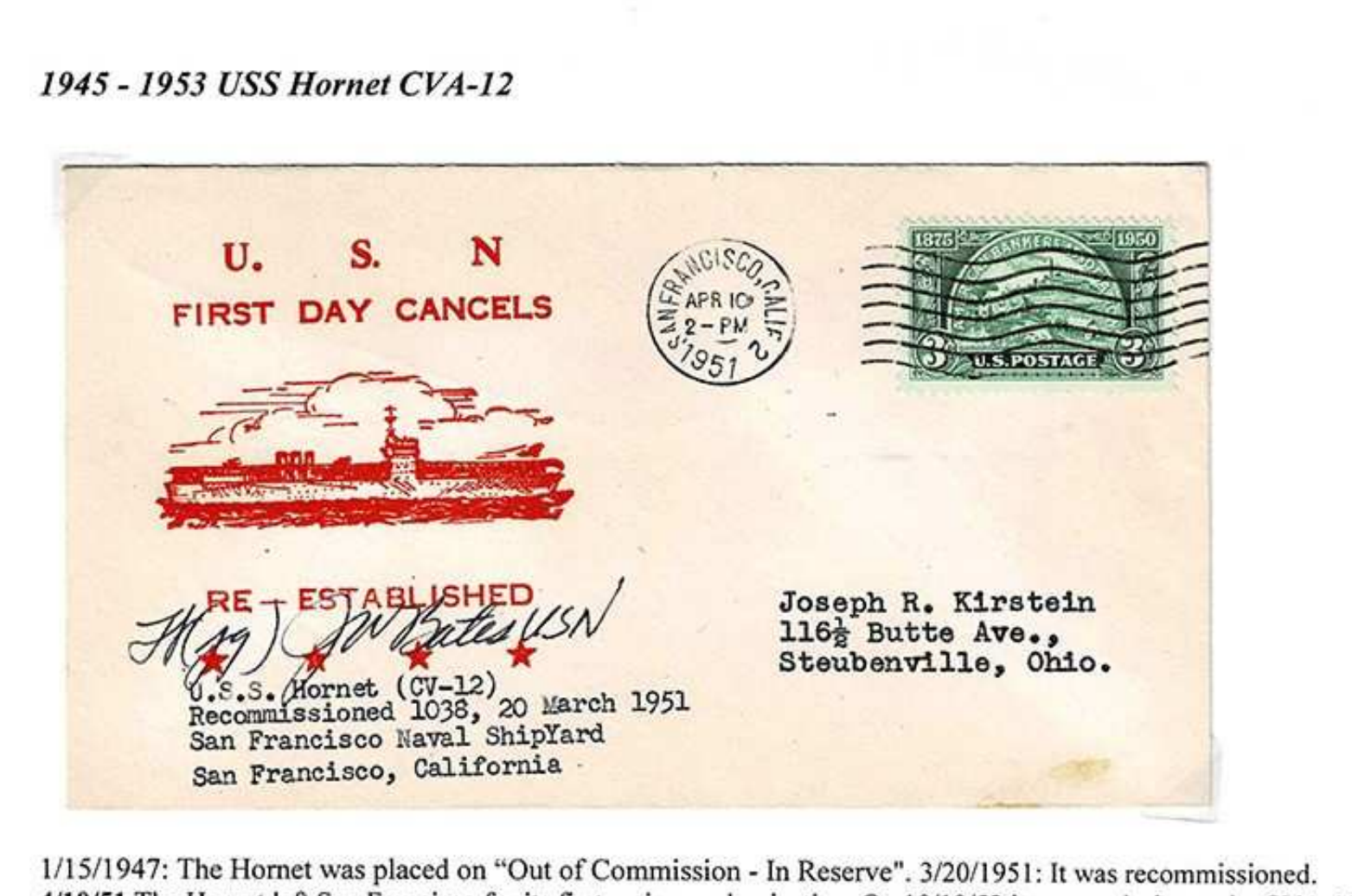
25 October 1945 Battle of Leyte Gulf or 2nd Battle of the Philippines ended. Admiral Halsey's aircraft sank four 4 carriers, 3 battleships, 6 heavy and 1 light cruiser, 8 destroyers, along with their entire 116 carrier based aircraft and pilots. The US lost 1 light & 2 escort carriers, 2 destroyers, and 40 planes. Cover used for 1st anniversary of this important conflict.



6 August 1945: A B-29 Bomber piloted by Paul Tibbets, dropped the first of two Atomic Bombs on Japan in an effort to get the Japanese government to capitulate. Censored cover from APO 1. This cover was signed by Paul Tibbets and "Dutch" Van Kirk, the Navigator. It is also signed by the cachet artist, Frank Teixeira.



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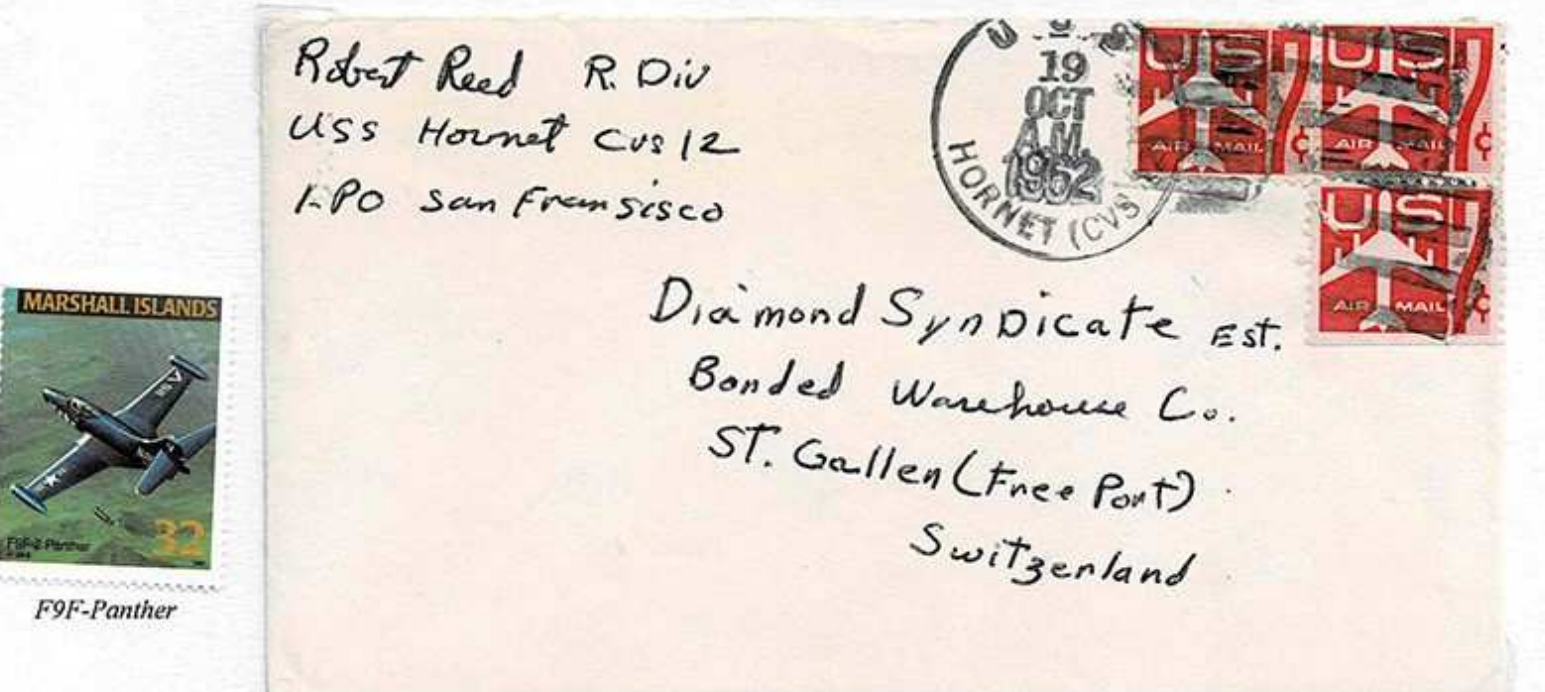
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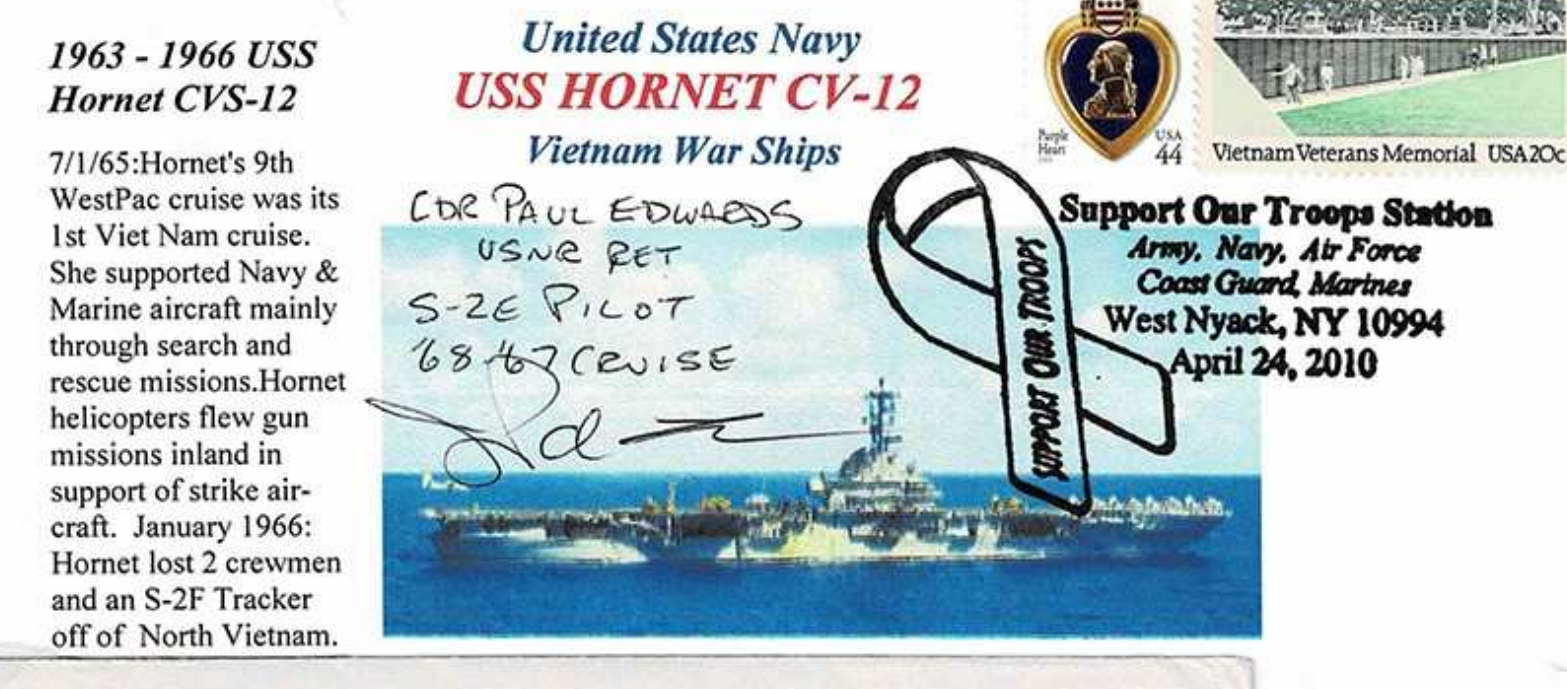
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In May 1954 she was sent on a "Round the World" cruise, and was off the shores of China in July and August 1954 when she was called upon to assist in the rescue of survivors off the coast of Hainan Island. They were survivors of a Chinese attack of a commercial aircraft. Three unnamed aircraft from another carrier were conducting a search when attacked by two Chinese Mig-15s. Two F9F-9 Cougars from the Hornet shot down both Migs in what was known as the Hainan incident.



In November 1961 Hornet helped fight a fire that devastated Hollywood Hills, and fed electricity to the Southern California grid. On 19 October 1962 the Hornet was near Japan on its 8th Western Pacific (WestPac) tour. The planes, flying from its deck, included: F2H-3 Banshees; F9F Panthers and Cougars; F3-3 Furies, and S-2F & S-2 Trackers, E-1 Tracers, and C-1 Trainers. Those in italics were ASW (anti-submarine warfare propelled craft).



7/1/65: Hornet's 9th WestPac cruise was its 1st Viet Nam cruise. She supported Navy & Marine aircraft mainly through search and rescue missions. Hornet helicopters flew gun missions inland in support of strike aircraft. January 1966: Hornet lost 2 crewmen and an S-2F Tracker off of North Vietnam.



8/25/66: Hornet recovered the unmanned Apollo Saturn capsule, AS-202. This is a Machine Cancel cover postmarked aboard the Hornet on the date of the recovery. The printed cachet by Morris Beck is one of 424 covers numbered B674. Another 438 bear Beck number B673.



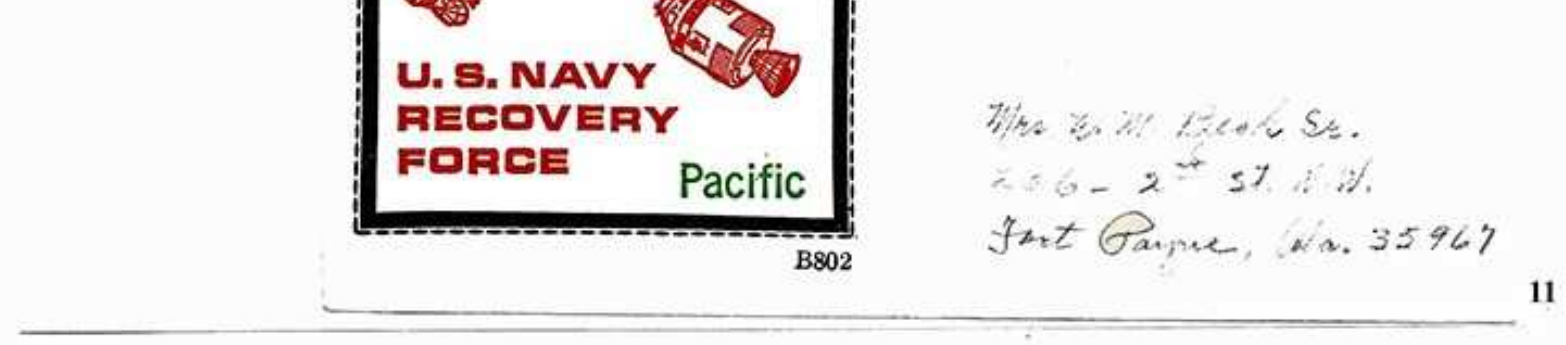
8/25/66: USS Hornet cover with a scarce Hand Cancel. The Navy Rubber Stamp Cachet (NRS/C) was applied by a US Navy Postal Clerk and as such is an official route marking. Most HC for this date are considered to be poor.



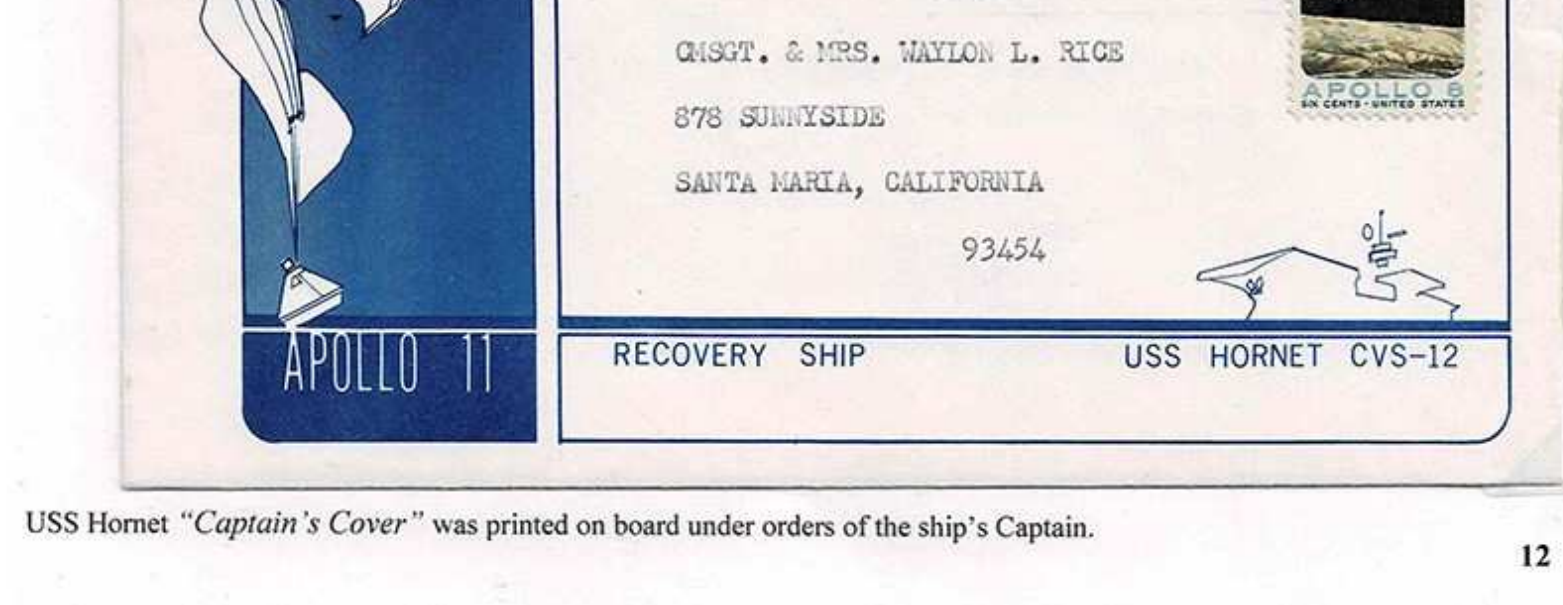
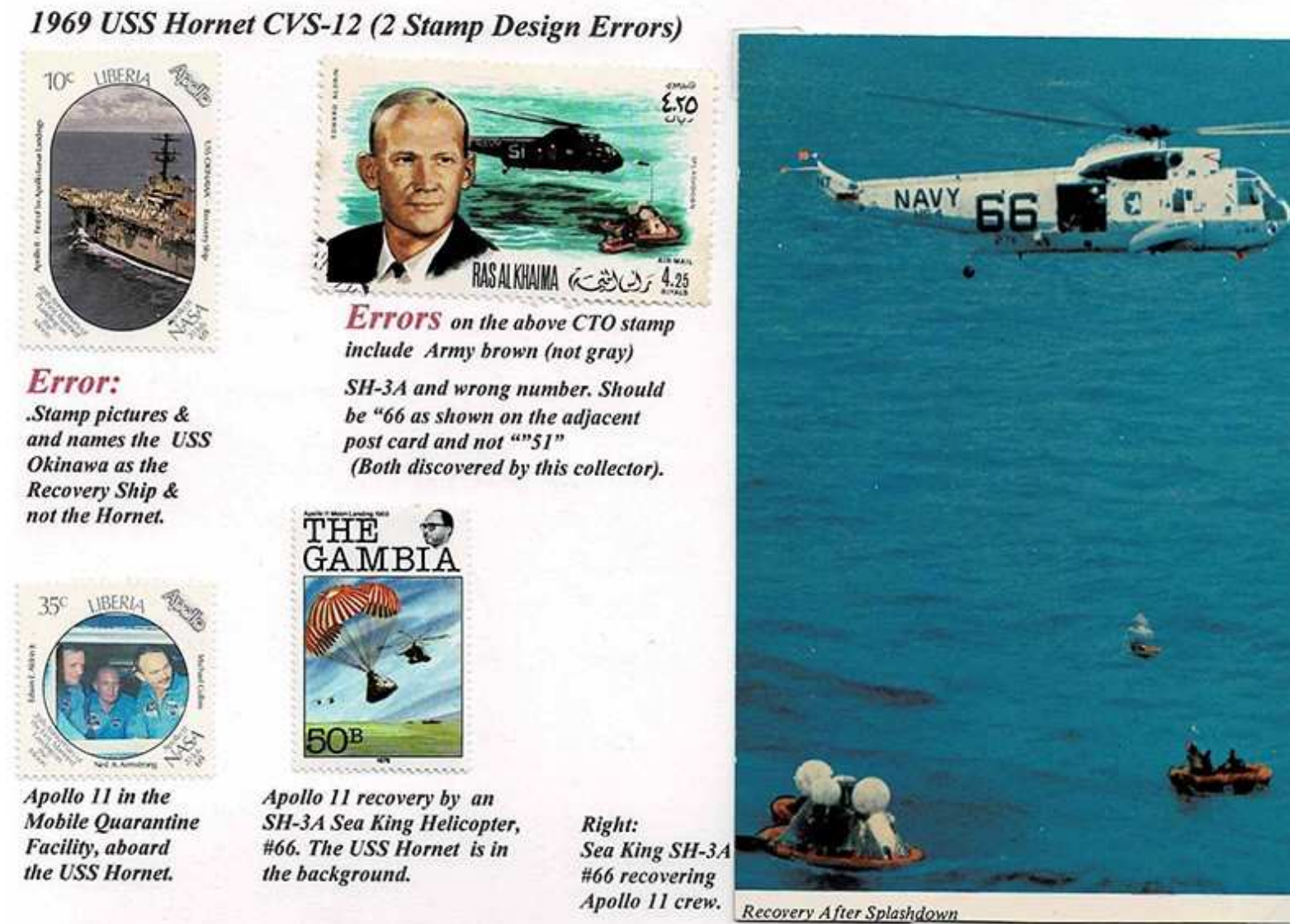
There were two Beck numbered cachets on the Hornet for Apollo 11. This bears Beck #B802 and was addressed to Morris Beck's father.



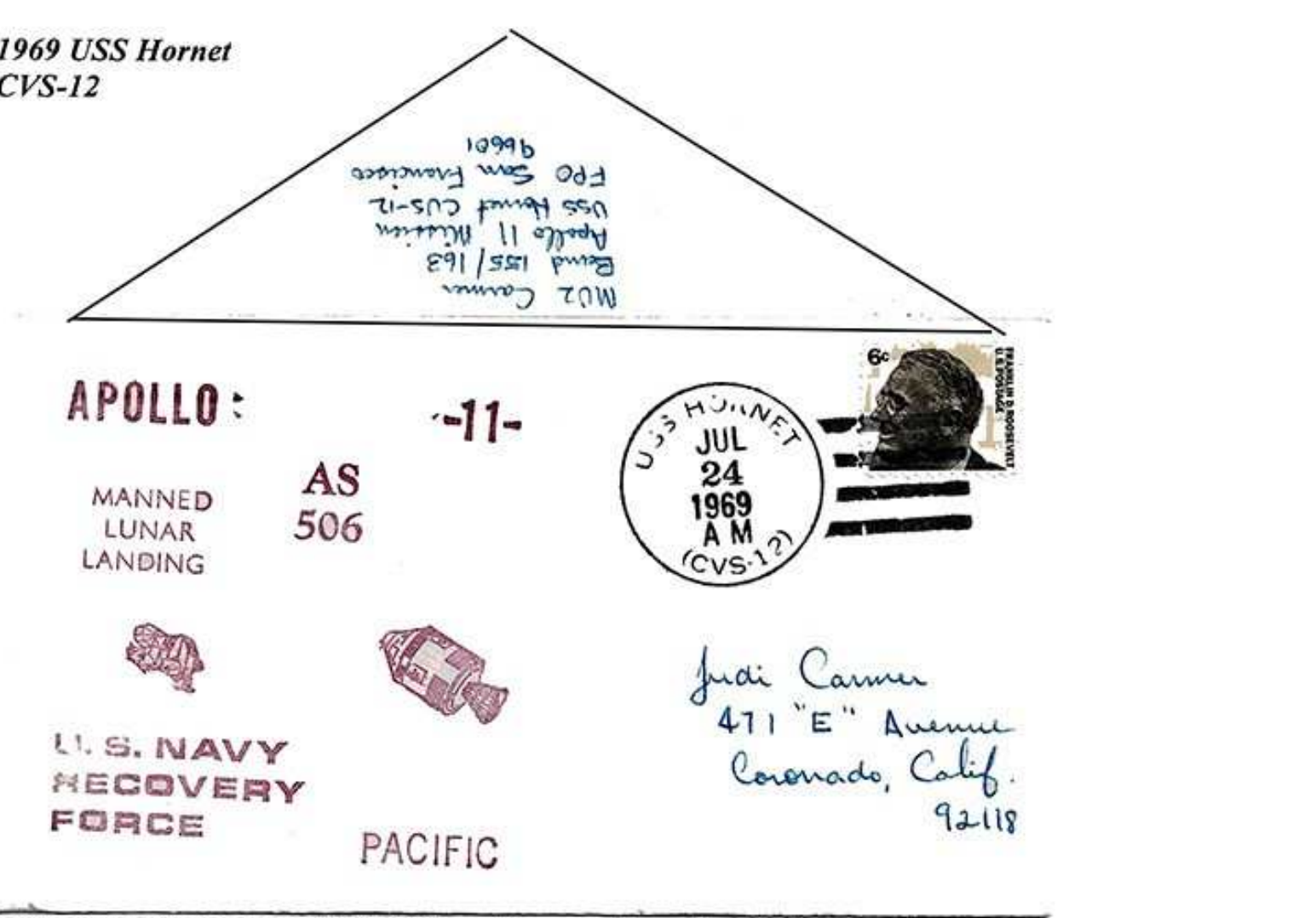
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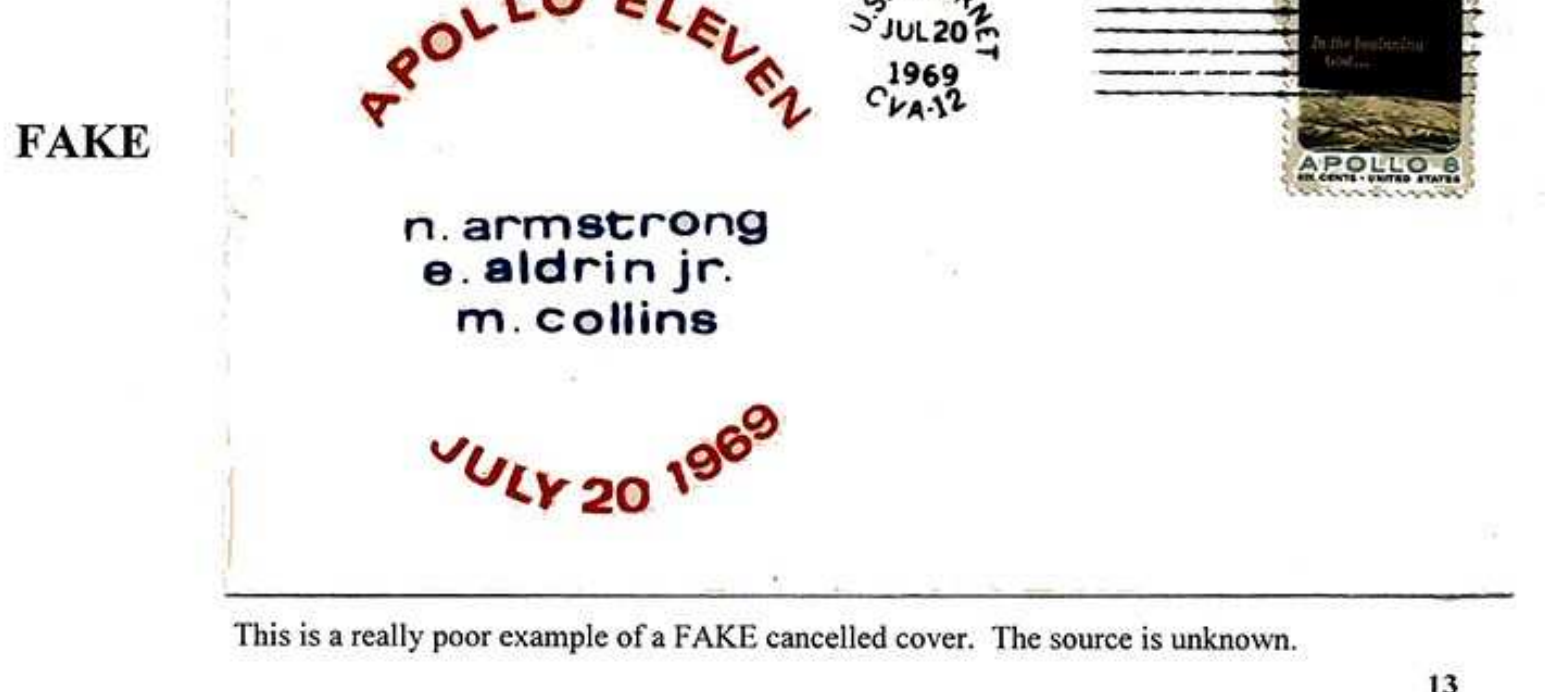
Rare: NASA Recovery Team cover for the splashdown of the Apollo 12 crew. This also bears the Navy Rubber Stamp cachet and a Hand Cancel from the Hornet on the date of the recovery of Conrad, Gordon and Bean, the crew of the second manned lunar landing.



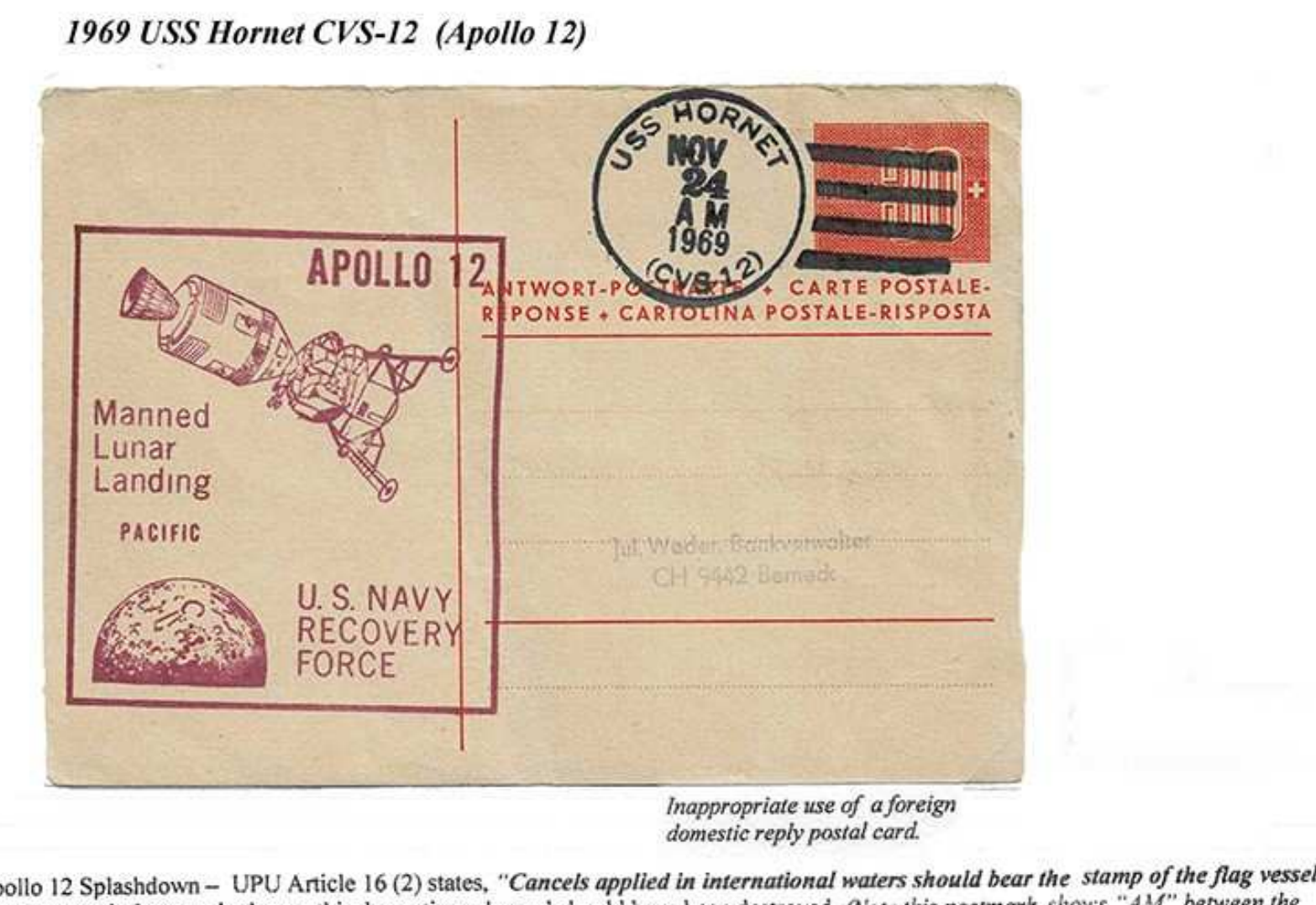
Decommissioning took place on 6/26/78. Capt. Carl Sieberlich was the last person to leave the ship and she was moved to Bremerton, WA where she was mothballed. In 1988 she was recommended for disposal and stricken from the record 8/19/89. Sold for scrap for \$200,000 to Astoria Metals in January 1993.



Cover mailed from aboard the USS Hornet by a member of the US Navy band that greeted the astronauts and President Nixon aboard this Primary Recovery Ship.



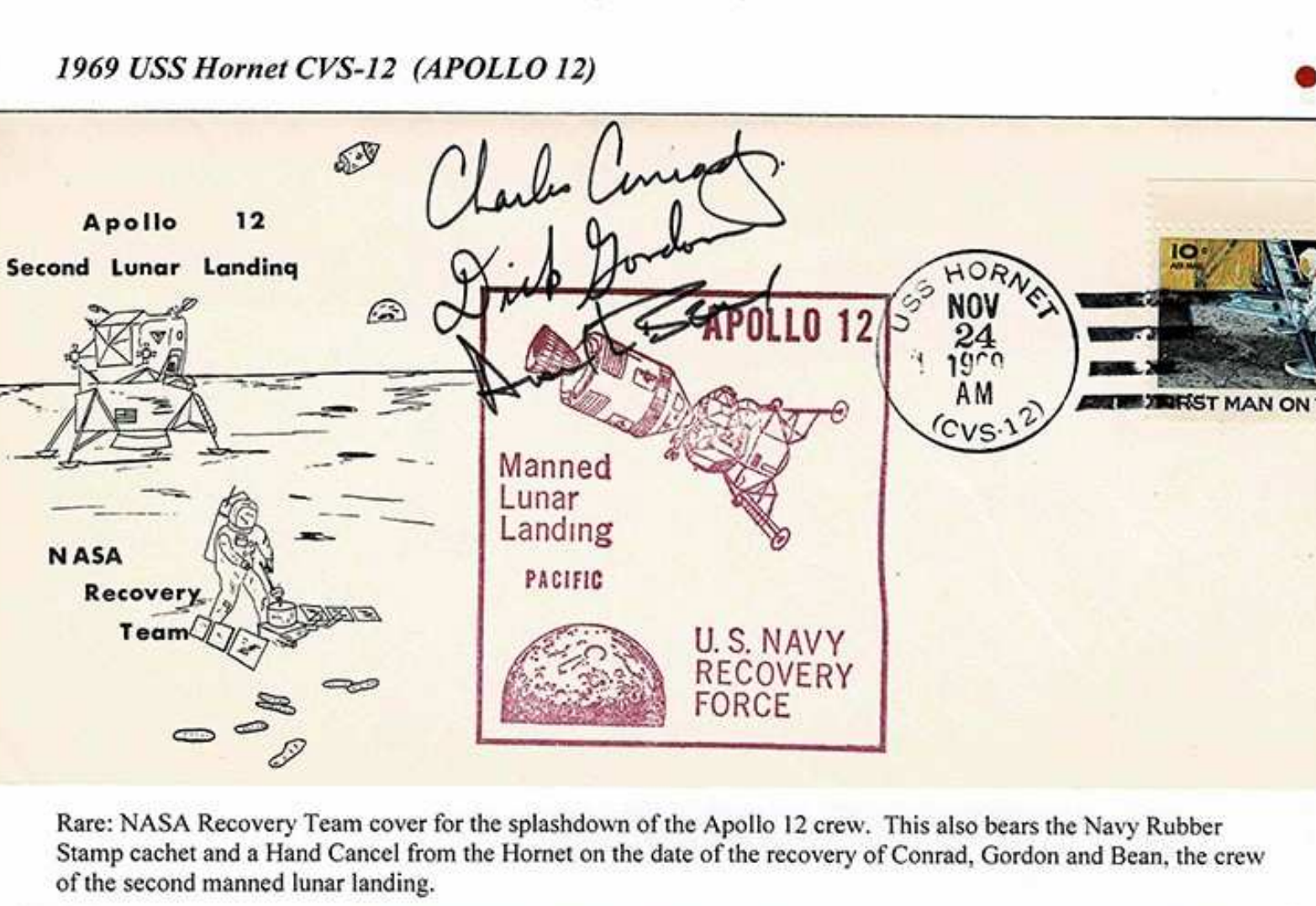
This is a really poor example of a FAKE cancelled cover. The source is unknown.



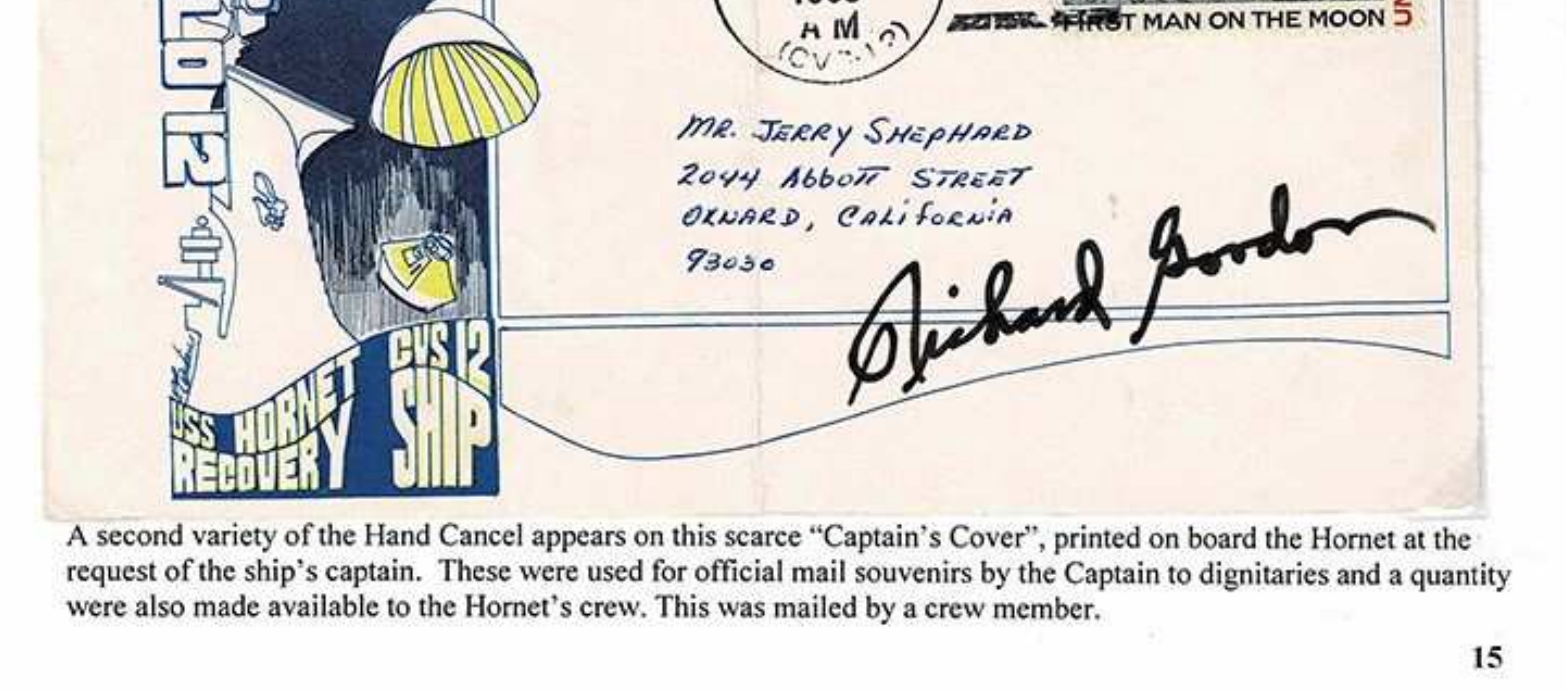
Apollo 12 Splashdown - UPI Article 16 (2) states, "Cachets applied in international waters should bear the stamp of the flag vessel." Since no vessel's name is shown, this domestic reply card should have been destroyed. Note the postmark shows "AM" between the "24" and the "1969", and that the postmark below differs with the "AM" below the "1969".



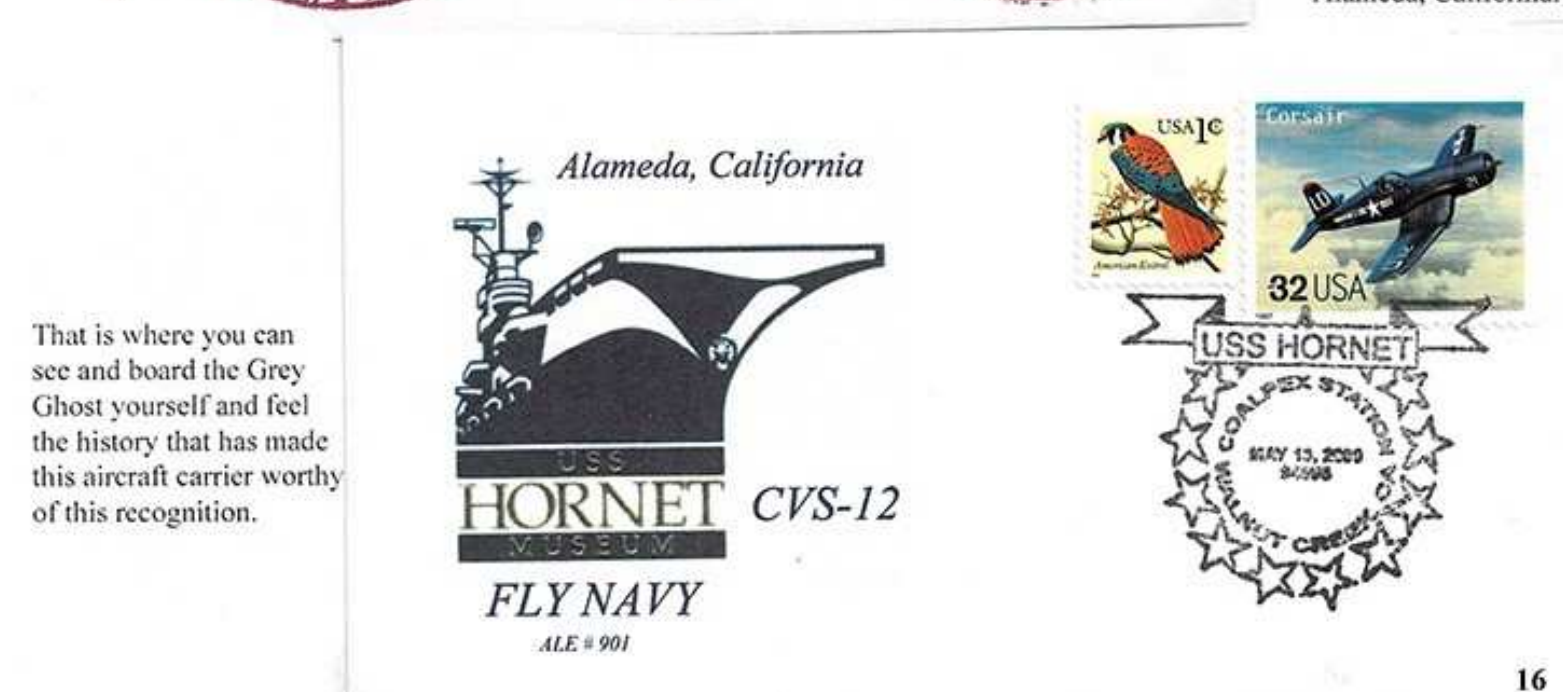
The words "Welcome Aboard" in this cachet led this collector to believe that this was a "Crew Cachet" which it turned out to be. Covers bought by a lower ranked officer were sold only to crewmen. (Another similar cover was created for Apollo 13).



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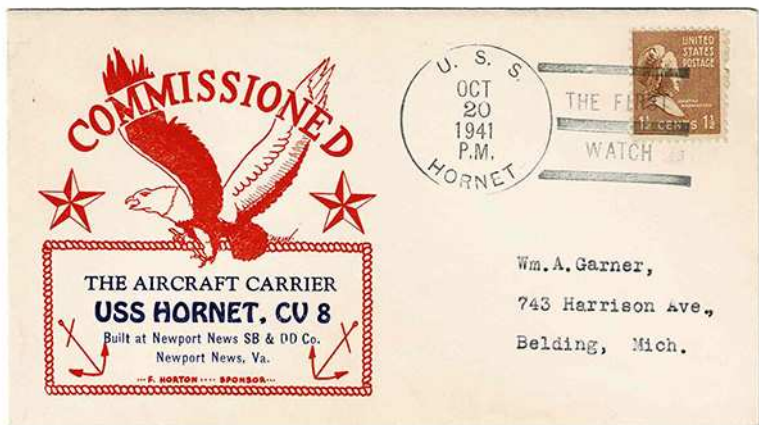
A second variety of the Hand Cancel appears on this scarce "Captain's Cover", printed on board the Hornet at the request of the ship's captain. These were used for official mail souvenirs by the Captain to dignitaries and a quantity were also made available to the Hornet's crew. This was mailed by a crew member.



The Hornet was towed for scrapping on 9/19/94. Asbestos, lead, PCBs & waste oil prevented her being scrapped. In November 1996 the non-profit Aircraft Carrier Hornet Foundation made a bid to put Hornet on Donation Field, Astoria Metals was given back their money and on 10/17/1998 the Hornet was officially recommissioned, becoming a floating museum in Alameda, California.

A Tale of Two Hornets

(U.S. Aircraft Carriers - CV 8 and CV / CVA / CVS 12.)



*This cover commemorates the Commissioning and the First Day of Postal Service for the USS Hornet (CV 8).
The 1½ cent postage stamp was the 3rd class greeting card rate at this time.*

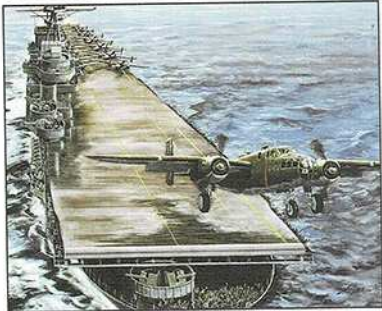
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Headers on each page show the year(s) of the activities represented and the activities which the covers represent. Also, they indicate which Hornet with which Navy designation took part.

1942 USS
Hornet
(CV-8)

OFFICIAL FIRST DAY COVER



Doolittle Raid on Tokyo
April 18, 1942



First day cover with the cachet, cancel and stamp all using the same illustration.

On 1 April 1942, 16 B-25 Bombers were lifted by crane to the deck of the 157 day old USS Hornet, CV-8, Essex class Aircraft Carrier. On 18 April 1942 these bombers took off on a one-way bombing run from the deck of the ship for a 30 seconds over Tokyo mission to prove to the Japanese government and its people that it was not the safe bastion which they had believed it to be. (No covers are known to exist for this secret mission, The Hornet left from Alameda, CA).



James H. Doolittle

After the brutal shock of Pearl Harbor, he struck back with an undaunted "30 Seconds Over Tokyo."

Tom Griffin #9
Bill Beardsley #4
Bainbridge Thatcher #7
Eed Horton #10
R.E. Cole #1



Commemorative cover signed by five of the last seven Doolittle Raiders. All have since passed away. Alameda, California is where the CVS-12 Hornet, can be seen today as a museum.

Led by Lt. Col. James Doolittle, the planes had intended to make landings in China, but having been spotted early they launched from the USS Hornet 250 miles earlier than planned. The surprise attack was somewhat successful and the 16 bomber and 80 crew members dodged Japanese fire. One landed in Russia and the crew was jailed. The other 15 bombers either ditched at sea or crash landed in China where villagers helped them. Four crewmen died and seven were captured and killed by the Japanese. Japanese killed many in Chinese villages for helping the Americans.

1942 - 1943 USS Hornet (CV8) sunk. CV12 Launched



Free mail and cancel from the USS Bristol with text: "Hornet Sunk"

On 26 October 1942 The USS Hornet and USS Enterprise and other ships fought the First Battle of Santa Cruz Islands. Japanese planes located the Hornet first and with seven minutes it was hit by two damaged suicide aircraft, seven bombs and two torpedoes. Meanwhile the Hornet's planes had found the Japanese carrier Shokaku, and their bombs put it out of commission for over a year. The USS Hornet sunk only 1 year and 6 days after its commissioning.



Launching of (CV-12)

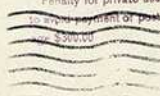
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1943 CV-12 in Drydock for Completion + Sailor's Fan Letter

NAVY DEPARTMENT
PCO USS HORNET (CV12)
Newport News Shipbuilding &
Drydock Company
Newport News, Va.
OFFICIAL BUSINESS



Penalty for private use



The Judge Advocate General
Navy Department
Washington, D.C.

Official Penalty Mail from the Hornet in Drydock at Newport News, Virginia

O.B. KEATON RM1C
USS HORNET (CV-12)
K-1 DIVISION
FLEET POSTOFFICE,
SAN FRANCISCO,
CALIFORNIA



MISS MARIA MONTEZ
UNIVERSAL STUDIOS,
HOLLYWOOD,
CALIFORNIA

PERSONAL

Fan Mail letter to Maria Montez, "The Queen of Technicolor". 2 July 1944

The Hornet left Norfolk, VA 4 February 1944 arriving at San Diego, picking up 2,000 troops and 250 jeeps which were taken to Pearl Harbor. On March 8, 1944 the Hornet left for the Marshall Islands arriving on the 20th. The 1st Japanese aircraft shot down by an F6F Hellcat from the Hornet on March 29th. The Battle of the Philippine Sea began on June 19th and Hornet's aircraft shot down 52 of the 378 enemy aircraft destroyed in what was called "The Great Mariana's Turkey Shoot." On July 2nd the Hornet arrived at Iwo Jima, shooting down 35 aircraft the next day.



Grumman TBM Avenger



U.S. wins Battle of the Coral Sea May 1942

GM TBF Avenger



Right: Grumman F6F in a dog fight with a Japanese Mitsubishi A6M-5 Zero at Tarawa 19 November 1943



Following the Great Mariana's Turkey Shoot, the Hornet continued to roam, bringing down hundreds more aircraft. On 25 August 1944 Admiral Mitscher awarded over 200 medals to 124 crewmen: 13 Navy Crosses; 2 Legion of Merits; 4 Silver Stars; 86 DFCs & Gold Stars. Hornet's fighter squadron had more victories and more "Ace" pilots than any other squadron.



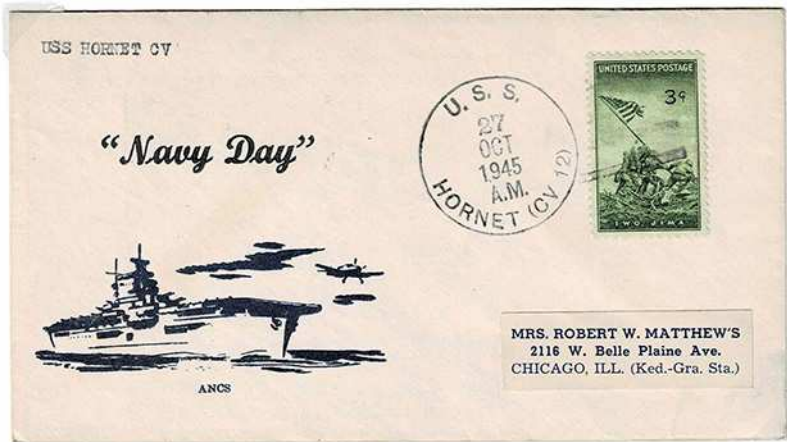
Curtiss SB2C Hell Diver landing on USS Hornet



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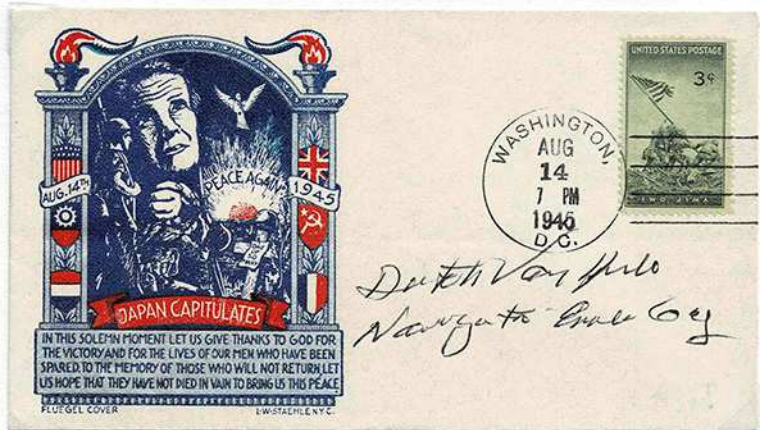


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This cover was signed by Paul Tibbets and "Dutch" Van Kirk, the Navigator. It is also signed by the cachet artist, Frank Teixeira.



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Theodore "Dutch" Van Kirk also signed this cover.





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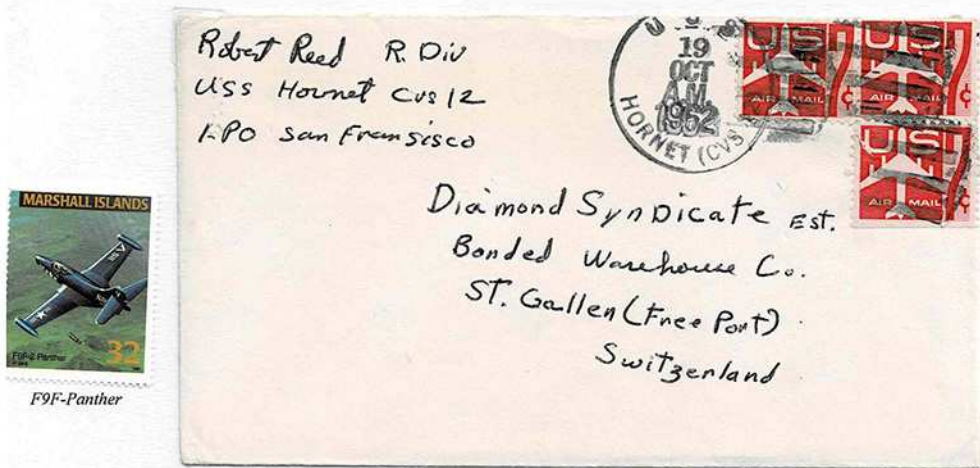


9/11/53: The Hornet was recommissioned.
9/17/53 was the first day of postal service following the recommissioning.

1953 - 1962 USS Hornet CVA-12 to CVS-12



In May 1954 she was sent on a "Round the World" cruise, and was off the shores of China in July and August 1954 when she was called upon to assist in the rescue of survivors off the coast of Hainan Island. They were survivors of a Chinese attack of a commercial aircraft. Three unarmed aircraft from another carrier were conducting a search when attacked by two Chinese Mig-15s. Two F9F-9 Cougars from the Hornet shot down both Migs in what was known as the Hainan incident.



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1963 - 1966 USS
Hornet CVS-12

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United States Navy
USS HORNET CV-12

Vietnam War Ships

CDR PAUL EDWARDS
USN RET
S-2E PILOT
'68-69 CRUISE

Paul Edwards



Support Our Troops Station
Army, Navy, Air Force
Coast Guard, Marines
West Nyack, NY 10994
April 24, 2010



8/25/66: Hornet recovered the unmanned Apollo Saturn capsule, AS-202.

This is a Machine canceled cover postmarked aboard the Hornet on the date of the recovery. The printed cachet by Morris Beck is one of 424 covers numbered B674. Another 438 bear Beck number B673.

MRS HANS PETERSEN
44 BRUNSWICK AVE
METUCHEN N J

08540

8/25/66: USS Hornet cover with a scarce Hand Cancel. The Navy Rubber Stamp Cachet (NRSC) was applied by a US Navy Postal Clerk and as such is an official route marking.

Most HC for this date are considered to be poor.



969 USS Hornet
V/S-12

Type 1 Machine Cancel
with 22 mm hub and
loosely spaced wavy
killer bars.

Photographs of Buzz
Aldrin, Michael Collins,
USS Hornet Captain,
J Sieberlich, Cdr
Ron Jones of Recovery
helicopter #66, and
Admiral D.C.C. Davis,
Commander of the
Recovery Force.

APOLLO

MANNED
LUNAR
LANDING

AS
506



Buzz Aldrin

J Sieberlich
Cdr USN
USS HORNET
PACIFIC

CDR Ron Jones USN
Recovery Helicopter
Helo #66

A.C. Davis
Admiral U.S.N.
Com Recovery Force
(CX 130)

M. Beck



B801



Type 2 Machine Cancel
with 24 mm hub and
widely spaced wavy
killer bars, on a Beck
printed cachet, the
most popular of the
recovery ship covers.
This bears Beck #B801.

There were two Beck
numbered cachets on
the Hornet for Apollo 11.
This bears Beck #B802
and was addressed to
Morris Beck's father.



B802



Mrs. W. M. Beck Sr.
256 - 2nd St. N.W.
Fort Payne, Ala. 35967

1969 USS Hornet CVS-12 (2 Stamp Design Errors)



Error:

Stamp pictures & names the USS Okinawa as the Recovery Ship & not the Hornet.



Apollo 11 in the Mobile Quarantine Facility, aboard the USS Hornet.



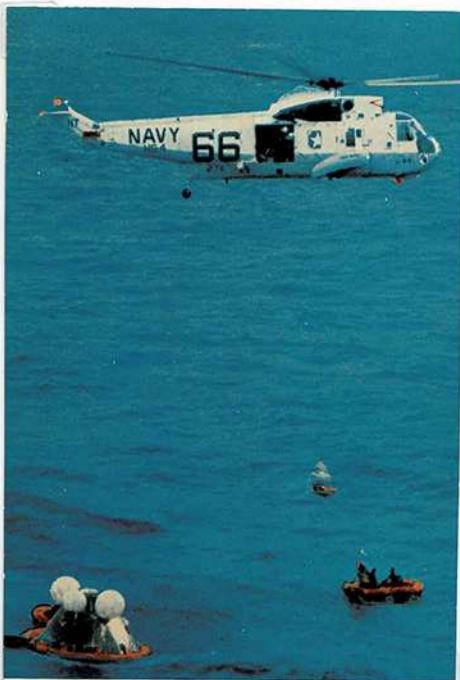
Errors on the above CTO stamp include Army brown (not gray)

SH-3A and wrong number. Should be "66 as shown on the adjacent post card and not "51" (Both discovered by this collector).



Apollo 11 recovery by an SH-3A Sea King Helicopter, #66. The USS Hornet is in the background.

Right: Sea King SH-3A #66 recovering Apollo 11 crew.



Recovery After Splashdown



USS Hornet "Captain's Cover" was printed on board under orders of the ship's Captain.

1969 USS Hornet
CVS-12

MJ2 Cammer
Band 155/163
Apollo 11 Mission
USS Hornet CVS-12
FPO San Francisco
96601

APOLLO :

-11-

MANNED
LUNAR
LANDING

AS
506



U. S. NAVY
RECOVERY
FORCE

PACIFIC

Judi Cammer
471 "E" Avenue
Coronado, Calif.
92118

Cover mailed from aboard the USS Hornet by a member of the US Navy band that greeted the astronauts and President Nixon aboard this Primary Recovery Ship.

FAKE

APOLLO ELEVEN

U.S.S. HORNET
JUL 20
1969
CVS-12

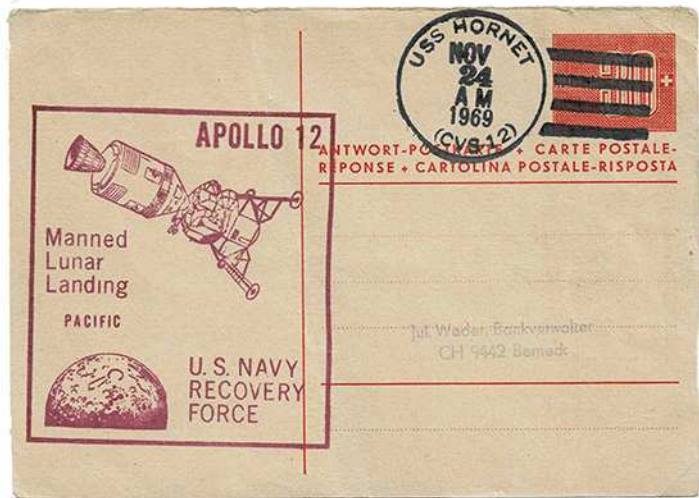
n. armstrong
e. aldrin jr.
m. collins

JULY 20 1969



This is a really poor example of a FAKE cancelled cover. The source is unknown.

1969 USS Hornet CVS-12 (Apollo 12)

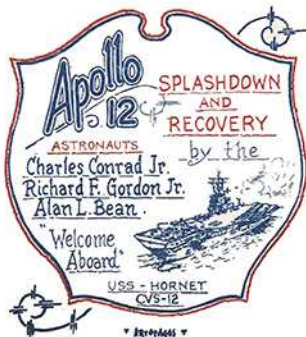


Inappropriate use of a foreign domestic reply postal card.

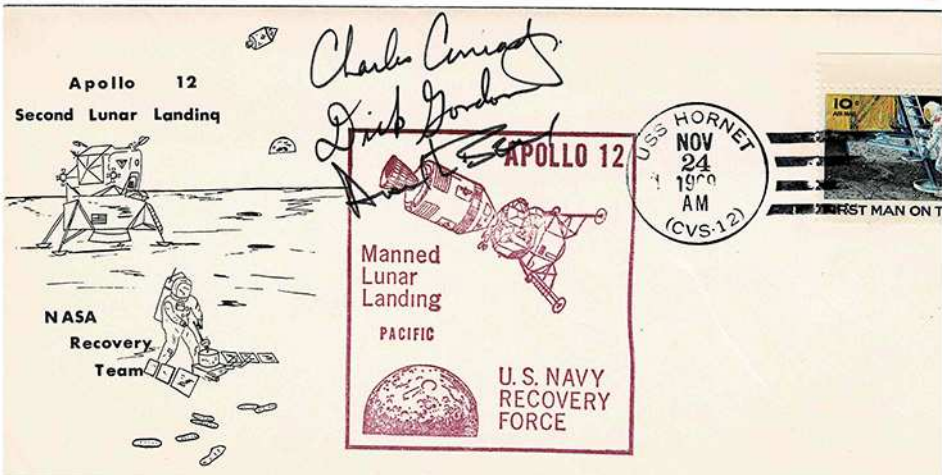
Apollo 12 Splashdown – UPU Article 16 (2) states, “Cancels applied in international waters should bear the stamp of the flag vessel.” Since no sender’s name is shown, this domestic reply card should have been destroyed. (Note this postmark shows “AM” between the “24” and the “1969”, and that the postmark below differs with the “AM” below the “1969”.

The words “Welcome Aboard” in this cachet led this collector to believe that this was a “Crew Cachet”, which it turned out to be. Covers bought by a lower ranked officer were sold only to crewmen.

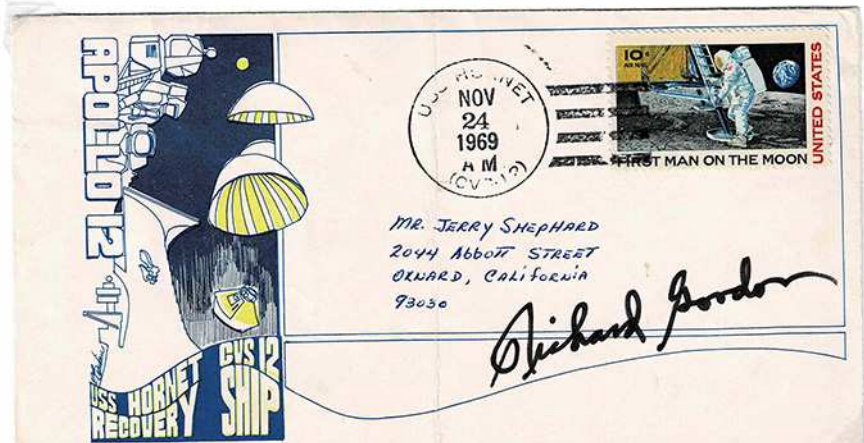
(Another similar cover was created for Apollo 13).



1969 USS Hornet CVS-12 (APOLLO 12)



Rare: NASA Recovery Team cover for the splashdown of the Apollo 12 crew. This also bears the Navy Rubber Stamp cachet and a Hand Cancel from the Hornet on the date of the recovery of Conrad, Gordon and Bean, the crew of the second manned lunar landing.



A second variety of the Hand Cancel appears on this scarce "Captain's Cover", printed on board the Hornet at the request of the ship's captain. These were used for official mail souvenirs by the Captain to dignitaries and a quantity were also made available to the Hornet's crew. This was mailed by a crew member.

1994 - to Present Day
USS Hornet
 CVS-12

Decommissioning took place on 6/26/70. Capt. Carl Sieberlich was the last person to leave the ship and she was moved to Bremerton, WA where she was mothballed. In 1988 she was recommended for disposal and stricken from the record 819/89. Sold for scrap for \$200,000 to Astoria Metals in January 1993

COMMANDING OFFICER
 USS HORNET (CVS12)
 FPO SAN FRANCISCO 96601



USS
HORNET
 CVS 12



DECOMMISSION

JACK E. SQUIRE
 26491 Farringdon Ave.
 Cleveland, Ohio 44132

TOWED TODAY FOR SCRAPPING
HUNTERS POINT CALF

COMM: NOV 29, 1943 • DECOMM: JUNE 27, 1970



The Hornet was towed for scrapping on 9/1/94. Asbestos, lead, PCBs & waste oil prevented her being scrapped. In November 1996 the non-profit Aircraft Carrier Hornet Foundation made a bid to put Hornet on Donation Hold. Astoria Metals was given back their money and on 10/17/1998 the Hornet was officially recommissioned, becoming a floating museum in Alameda, California.



That is where you can see and board the Grey Ghost yourself and feel the history that has made this aircraft carrier worthy of this recognition.

