

U.S.S. TROUT

The Submarine with the “Golden Belly”

This exhibit shows the U.S.S. Trout’s story via cachet covers that show the keel laying, commissioning and various items from the first day of post office and special events. Included is a contemporaneous magazine advertisement and actual letter transported from the Philippines back to Pearl, Feb 1942.



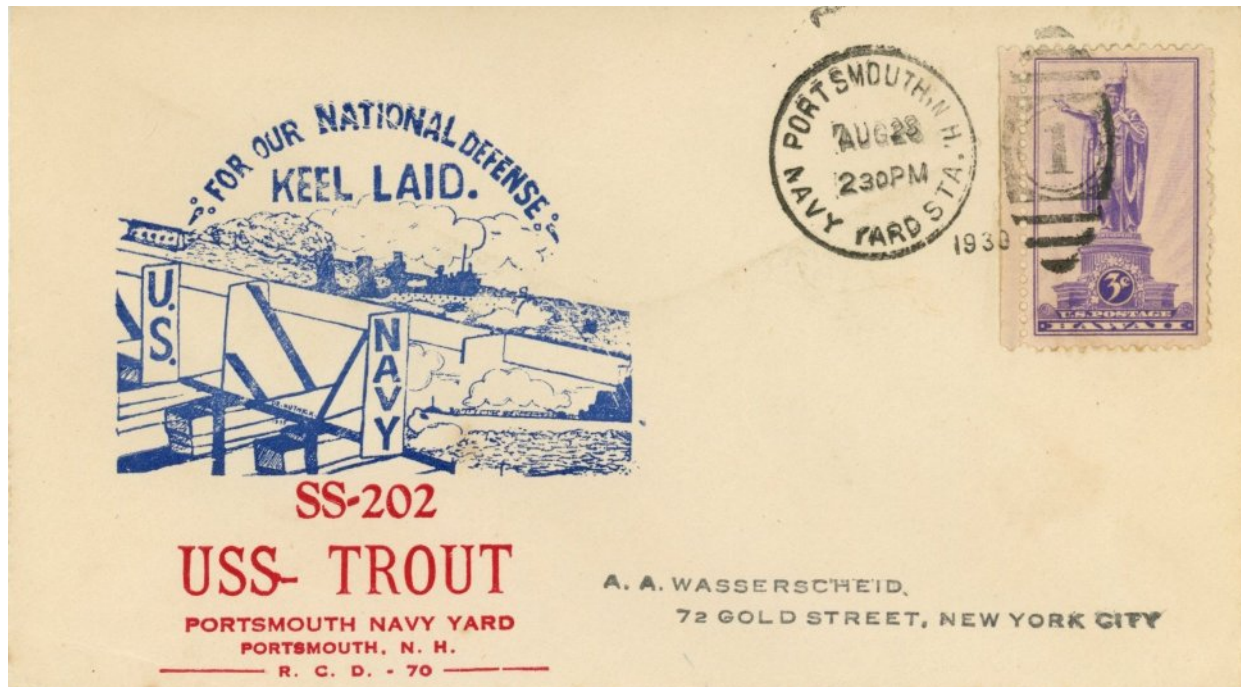
Reduced image from archival photograph, underway probably on the east coast

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: The diesel submarine USS Trout’s keel was laid 28 Aug 1939, launched 21 May 1940 and first day of PO 25 Nov 1940. On 2 July 1941, she departed New York and transited the Panama Canal enroute to Pearl Harbor, arriving 4 August. Conducting training operations, she was on patrol off of Midway when the war started returning to Pearl on 20 Dec. On her second patrol she performed an unusual mission in transferring ammunition to the beleaguered base in Corregidor in January 1942. On 3 February 2000 she docked and unloaded her cargo. 4 February she took on 20 tons of gold, silver and securities and set off to return at 0300. Accompanied by the USS Litchfield (DD 336) she entered Pearl and moored at Sub Base 9 Wednesday 4 Mar 1942 after offloading the gold onto the cruiser USS Detroit.

The Trout went on another 8 patrols and was credited with sinking 12 enemy ships totaling 37,144 tons. She received Presidential Unit Citations for 3 different patrols which included the successful trip to the Philippines and Corregidor and 11 battle stars. On her last Patrol 11 in the East China Sea, she engaged a troop convoy enroute to Guam and sunk a transport carrying an entire regiment of Japanese soldiers. Being the only sub in the area it must be assumed that the Japanese records recording the sinking by depth charges 29 Feb 1944, relate to the loss of the 81 men on the Trout.

KEY USCS: Universal Ship Cancellation Society; ANCS: American Naval cancellation Society; RCD: Registered Cachet Directors; ICG: International Cover Guild; Argonauts Crew 24: Group of ANCS cachet makers specializing in submarine covers. Numbers indicate their membership number.

Keel Laid 28 August 1939

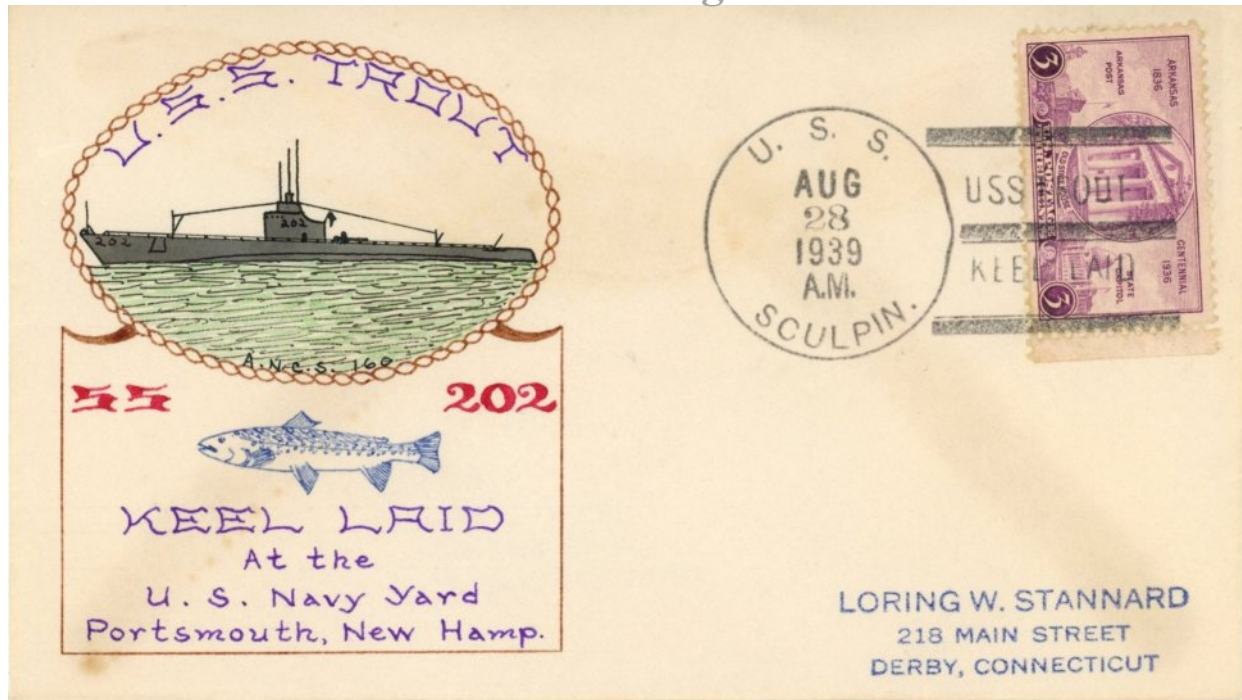


Cachet by Dr. S.E. Hutnick of West Philadelphia, 1934-1946, USCS 78, RCD 70. Thermographed in blue and red. Base Keel Laid cachet is generic design by him from 1935 in blue, undoubtedly used on many covers. The boat name and ship/boat number done in red. His return address hand stamped on reverse. Estimated at 500-1000 covers made for each event.

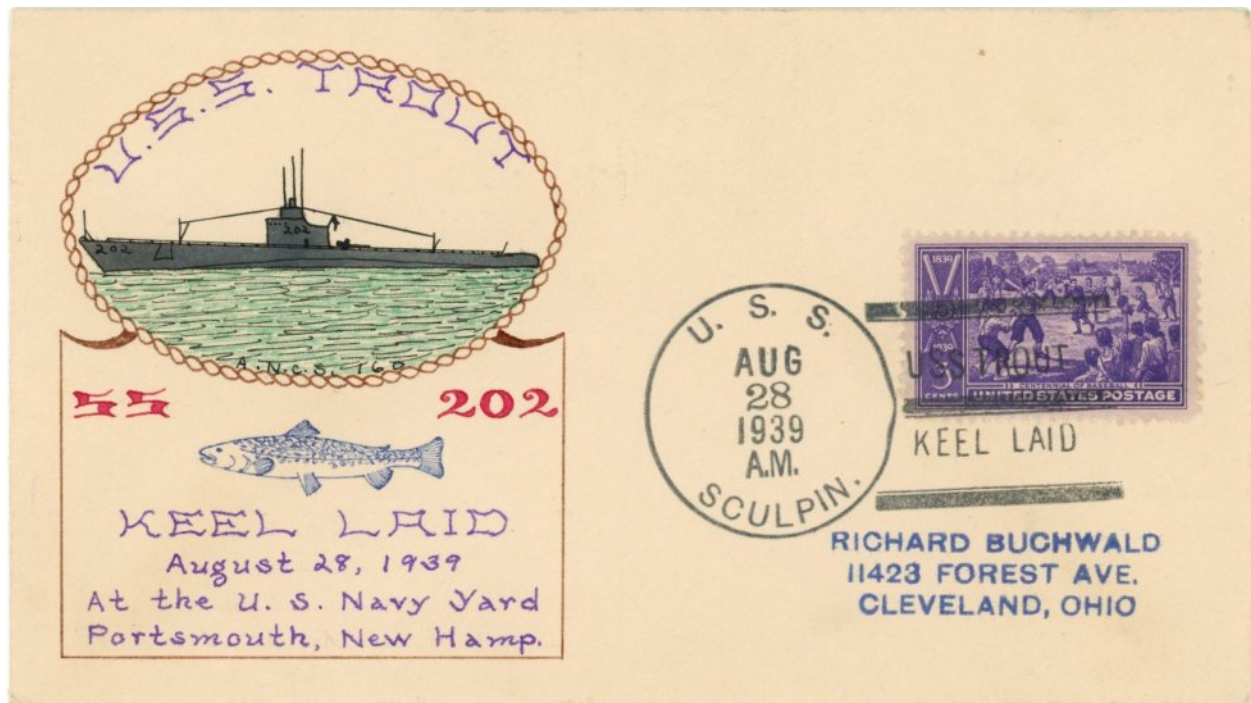


Cachet by Lloyd A. Nace, Detroit MI, 1934-1941, USCS 318, ANCS 54, and T.M. Holcomb, Mt. Holly, ND/Germantown PA, 1936-39, USCS 94, ANCS 15. Thermographed in black. Nace did many printed and thermographed cachets for events. His USCS logo hand stamped on reverse. The later frequently designed cachets with Nace.

Keel Laid 28 August 1939

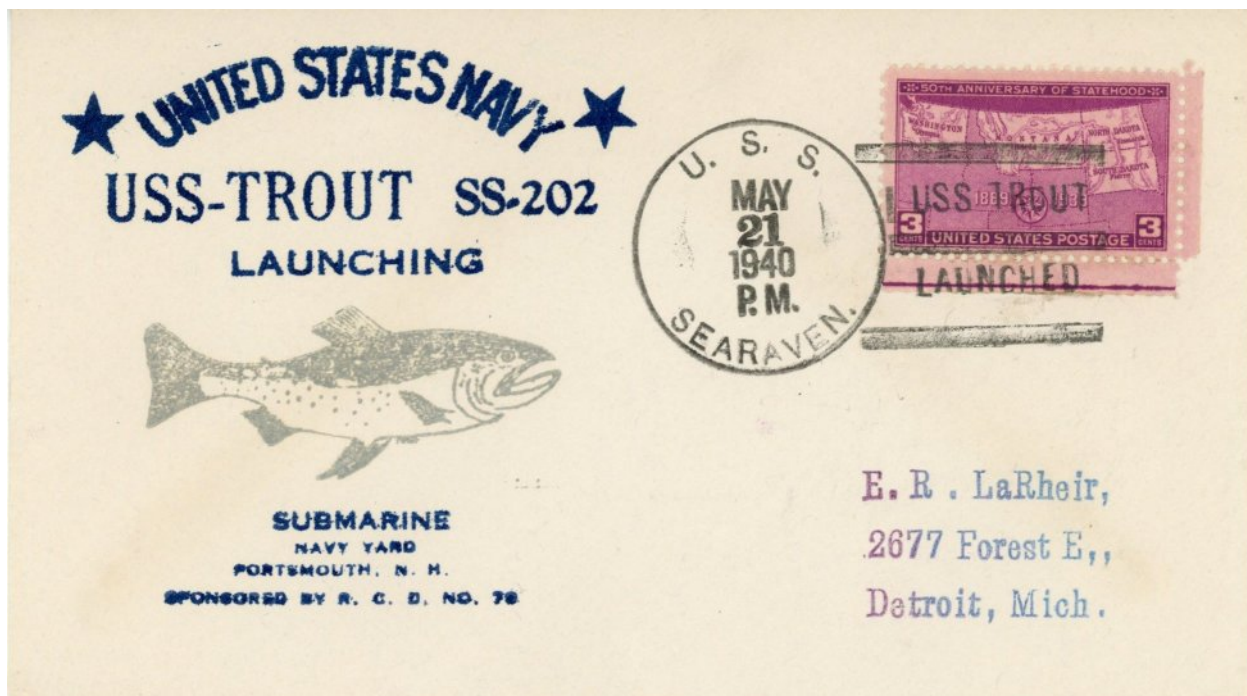


Cachet by Gow C. Ng of Portsmouth, NH, 1931-1945, USCS 190, ANCS 160 In NG's distinctive hand-drawn/colored inking and water color style. He began serious production 1935 with a series of submarine KLC events in numbers that may reach 100-125. These covers were serviced on the USS Sculpin (SS191) which was commissioned some 8 months earlier after she assisted in the rescue mission of the damaged USS Squalus. She was part of training off the east coast prior to departing 28 Jan 1940 for Hawaii.



Similar cachet as above but with the date of event above the location. This cachet appears to be printed without the texture of the original drawing of the above example, yet the trout has different details when looked at under magnification.

Launching 21 May 1940



E. R. LaRheir,
2677 Forest E.,
Detroit, Mich.

Cachet by Dr. S.E. Hutnick of West Philadelphia, 1934-1946, USCS 78, RCD 70. Thermographed in blue for the text and gold for the trout design. Serviced on the USS Searaven (SS 196), commissioned 2 Oct 1939. Searaven was still on the east coast prior to being assigned to the Philippines where she serviced the troops after the war started.



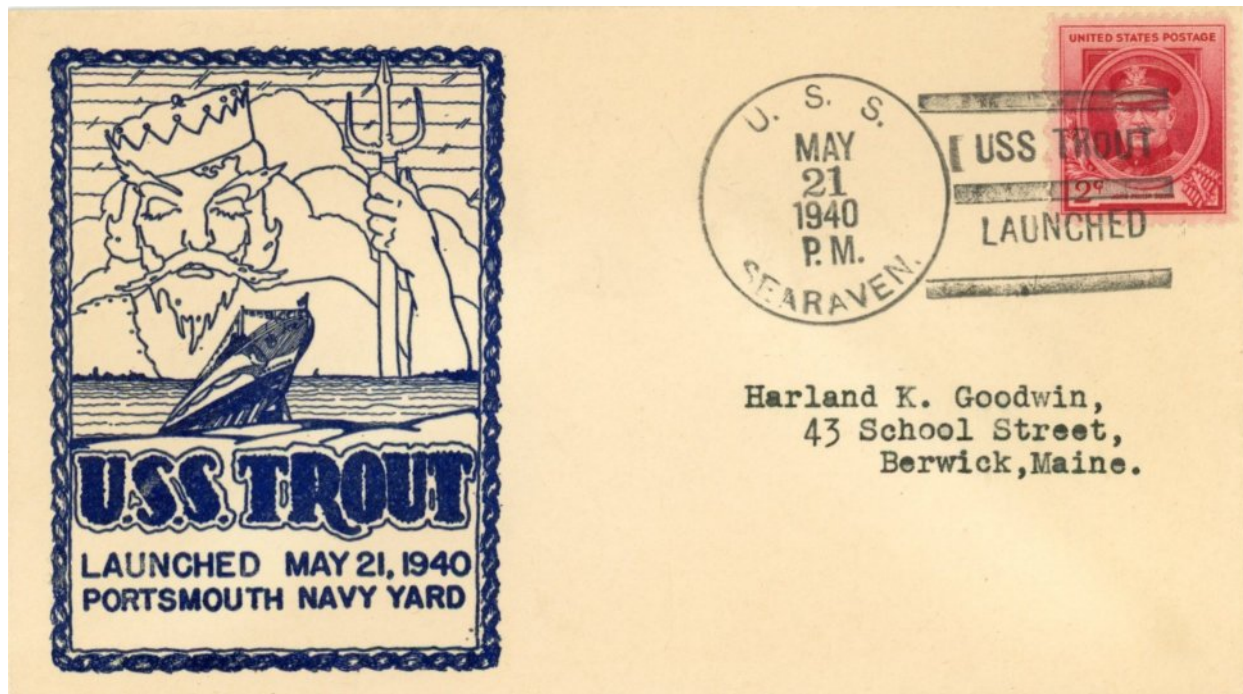
C.R. Butterfield
Gen. Peabody
Halifax Mass.

Cachet by Gow C. Ng of Portsmouth, NH, 1931-1945, USCS 190, ANCS 160. Also in his distinctive hand-colored inking and water color style. Almost identical to the second example of the prior design with date of event above event. Instead of ANCS 160, his name is now in the ocean field.

Launching 21 May 1940



Another cachet by Lloyd A. Nace, Detroit MI, 1934-1941, USCS 318, ANCE 54, and T.M. Holcomb, Mt. Holly, ND/Germantown PA, 1936-39, USCS 94, ANCS 15. Cachet thermographed in red. Nace and Holcomb did many printed and thermograph cachets for events. His USCS logo is hand stamped on reverse.



Cachet by Francis C. Pace (?) of York Beach, ME, ANCS 996, Argonauts Crew. Thermographed in blue. Although all Pace's designs are reported signed, this is believed to be his because of style of cachet. Addressed to a Harland Goodwin of North Berwick whose son Dan was a cachet maker in the 60s for nuclear subs. York Beach is only 14 miles away from Portsmouth where the ship was launched.



Cachet by Portsmouth Naval Shipyard Improvement Association, artist F.C. Pace. ANCS 996, the Argonauts Crew, 1940. Serviced on the Searaven and at Portsmouth, cover taken onshore to PO. The Association sponsored cachets from 1938-1941. Quantities issues are believed to be in the thousands.

Commissioned/First Day of Postal Service 25 November 1940

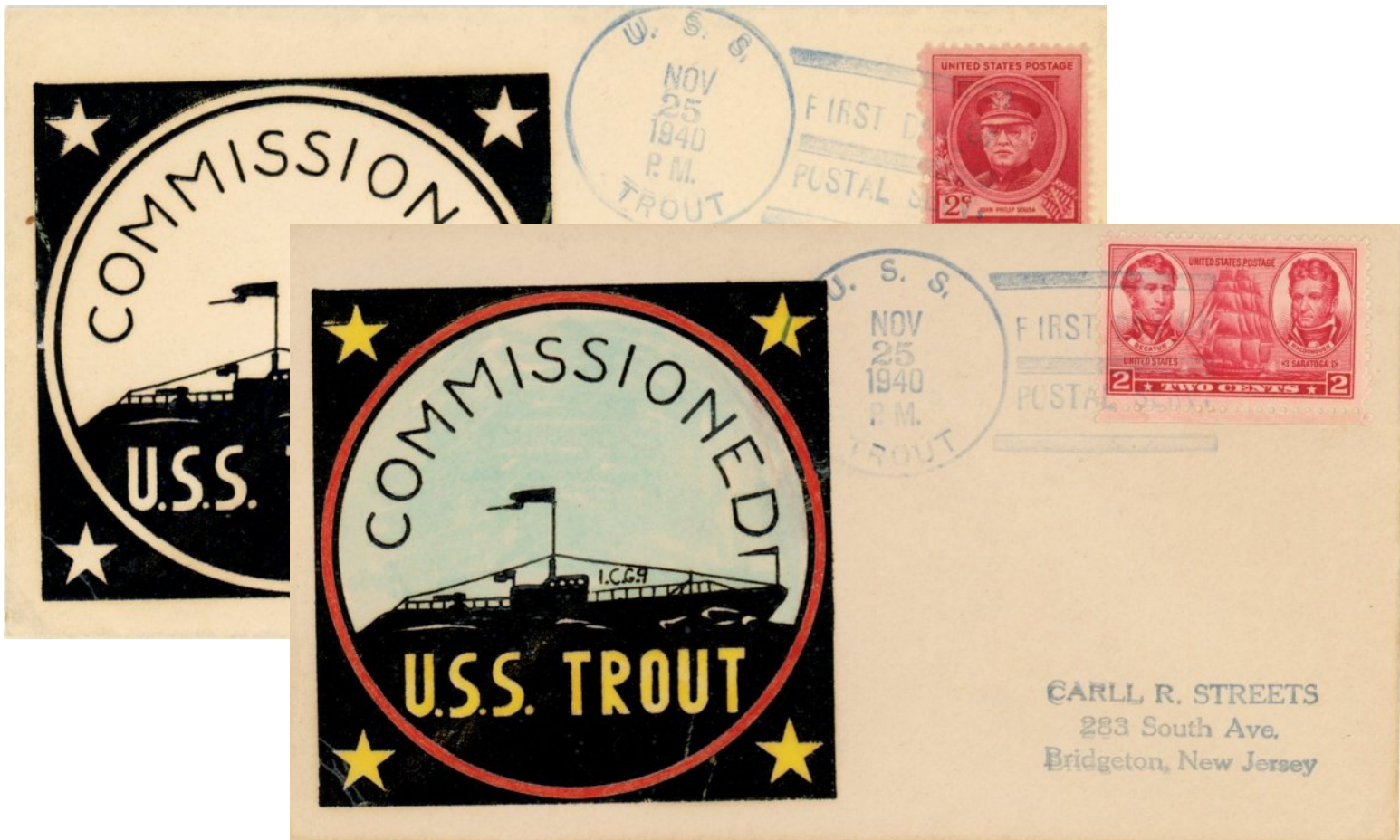


Cachet by Gow C. Ng of Portsmouth, NH, 1931-1945, USCS 190, ANCS 160. Done in his distinctive colored inking and water color style. Quite different than the prior three shown Ng examples with First Day of P.O. Service and SS 202 with trout above the name and drawing of boat. His name is in the ocean field.

Commissioned/First Day of Postal Service 25 November 1940



Cachet by Eugene L. Mueller of Chicago IL, 1932-1941, USCS 255, ANCS 9, ICG 12. Colored ink drawing on FDPS stating ON GUARD. Mueller was a prolific cachet maker for many events of ships/boats during his time span of a decade. Stated up to 100 covers per event though they are not commonly found for sale.

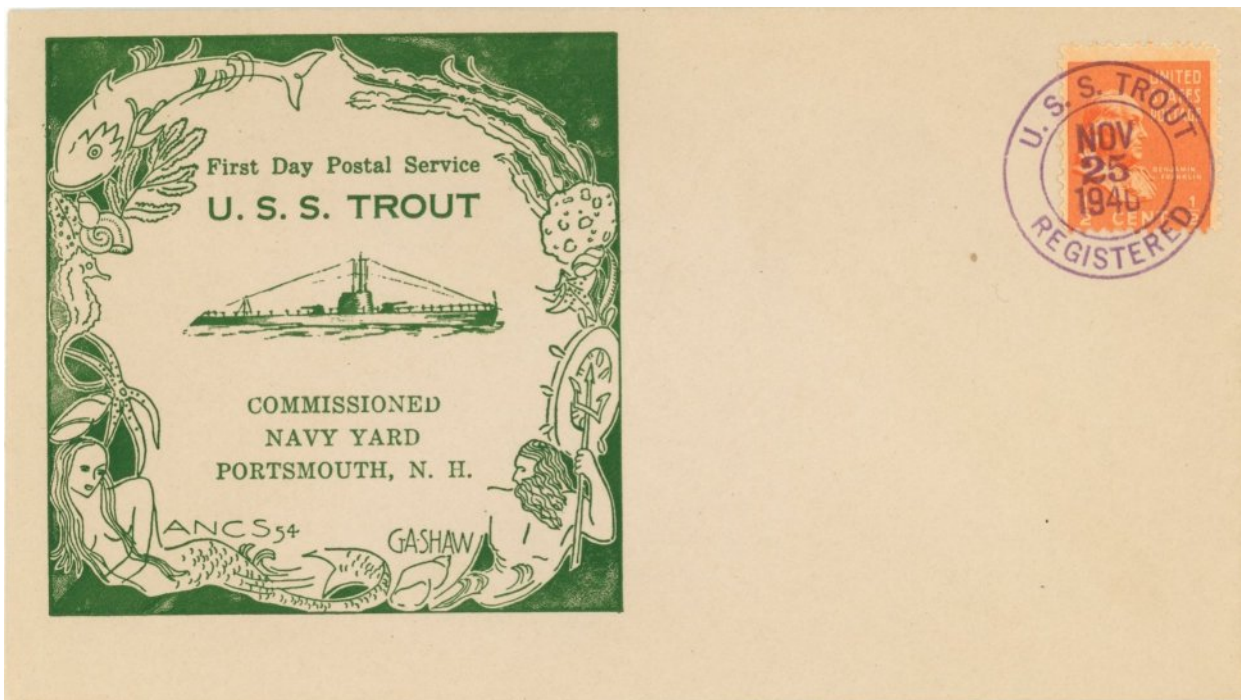


Cachet by Lloyd A. Nace, Detroit, MI, 1934-1941, USCS 318, ANCS 54, ICG 9, RCD 17. Thermographed in black with ICG number in front of tower. Second example with hand painted watercolors in blue and yellow. Stated numbers printed were >100 but hand-tinted probably less.

Commissioned/First Day of Postal Service 25 November 1940

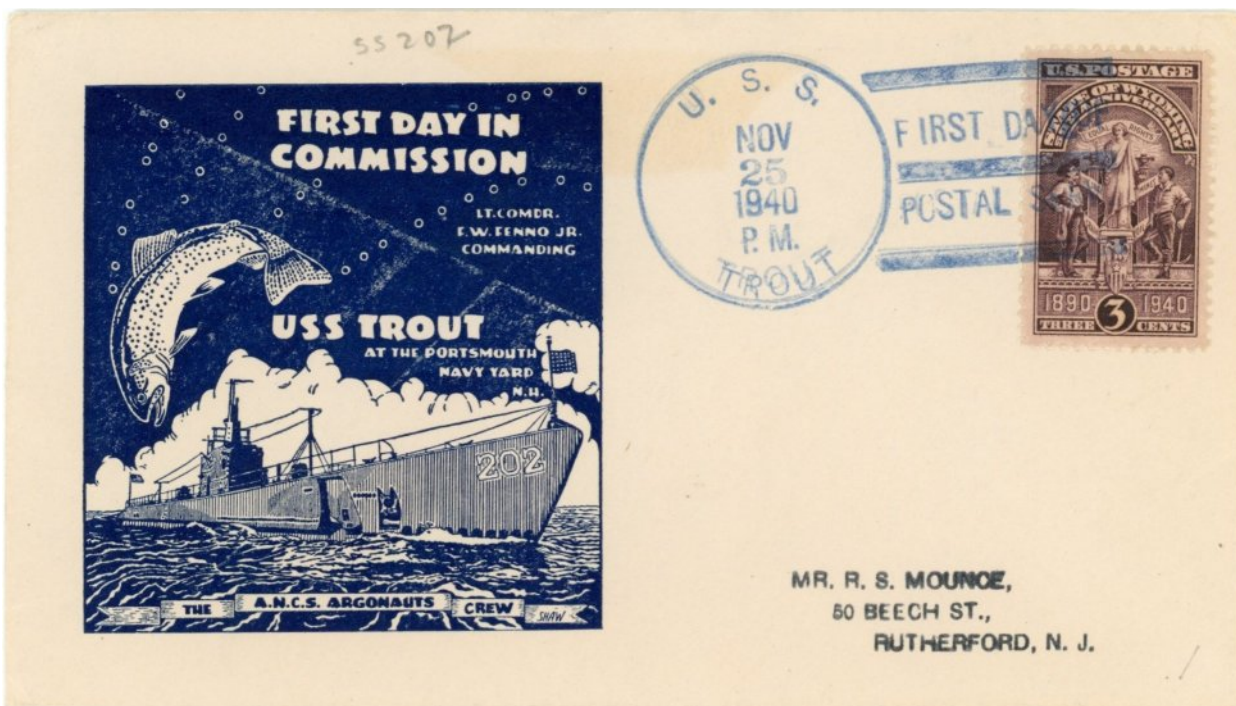


Cachet by Wilfred R. Cyr. 1941-1944, ANCS 1177. Thermographed in black and in silver, commissioned by the ANCS Argonauts as were other cachets done by him. He also did cachets for other Portsmouth Naval Shipyard events.

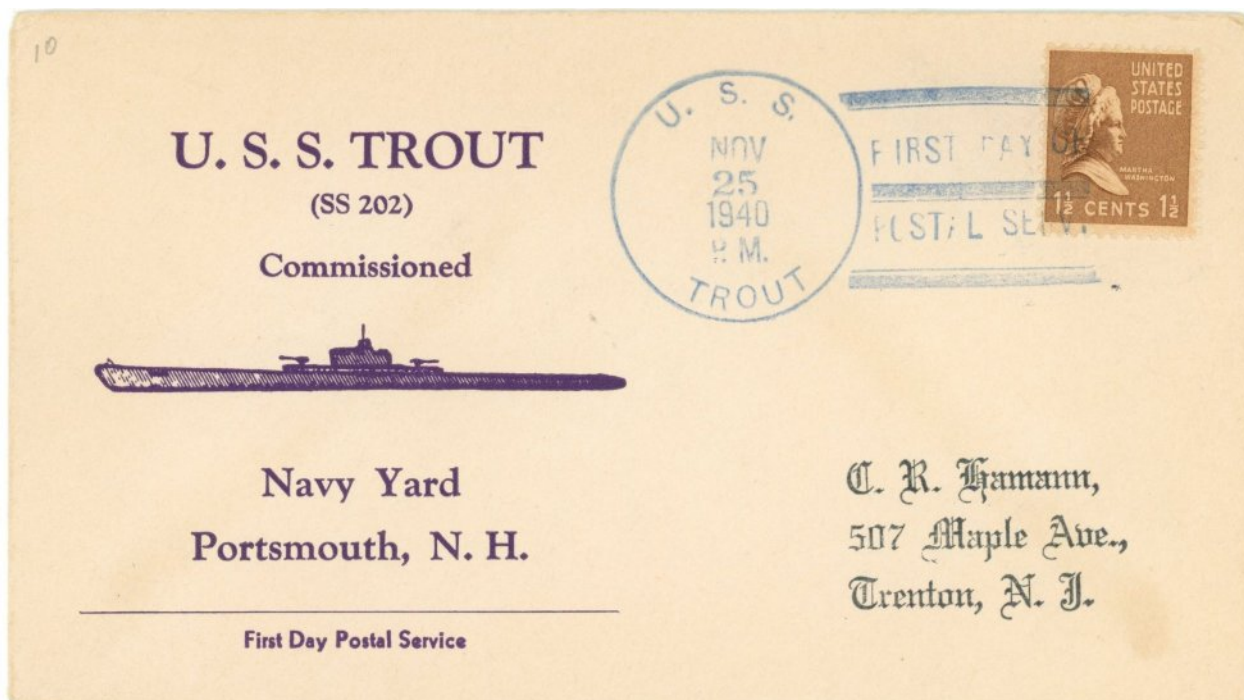


Cachet by Gordon A. Shaw, Detroit, MI, 1938-1950, ANCS 149. Co-designer ANCS 54 who is Lloyd Nace, lithographed in green. Unaddressed but hand-back cancelled with registration cancel.

Commissioned/First Day of Postal Service 25 November 1940



Another cachet by Gordon A. Shaw as above sponsored by the ANCS Argonauts Crew. Backstamped with Alex Hesse, Jr., ANCS 81, a prolific cachet maker in his own right as artist of some 80 different cachet event covers. He was a member of the Argonauts Crew as well .

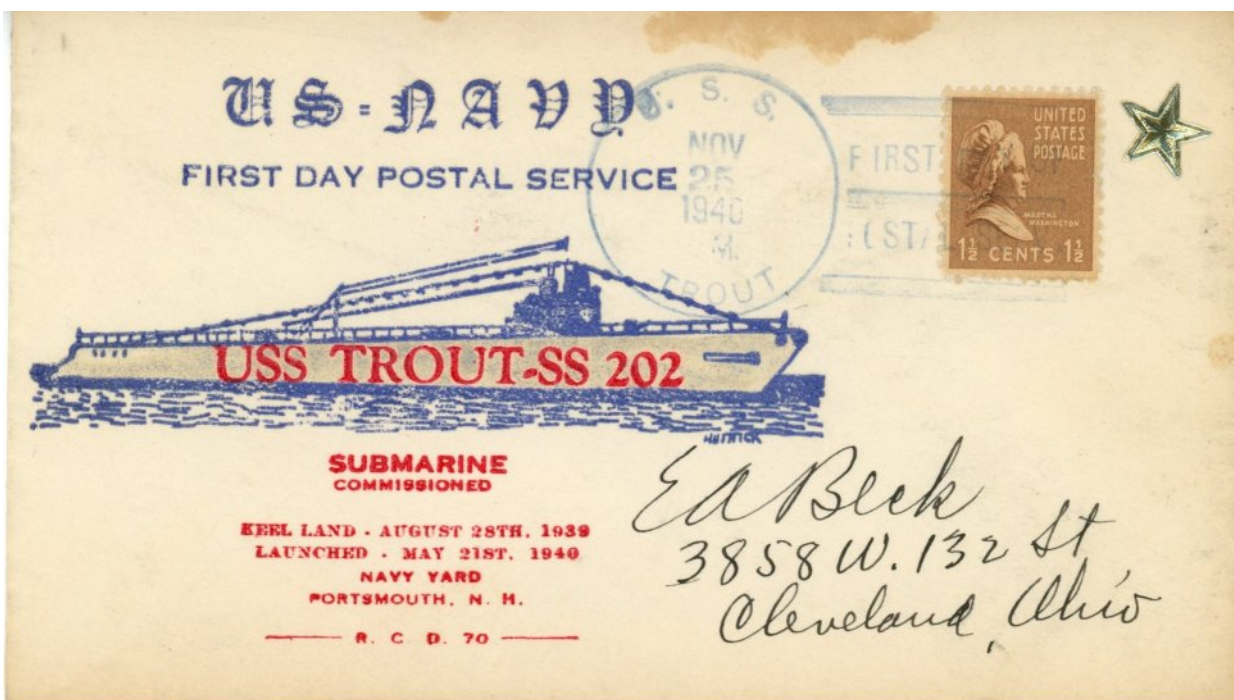


Cachet by Al Cohen, Philadelphia, PA, 1939-1942, USCS 1792, RCD 247. Printed by recess in purple. His name and address on reverse.

Commissioned/First Day of Postal Service 25 November 1940

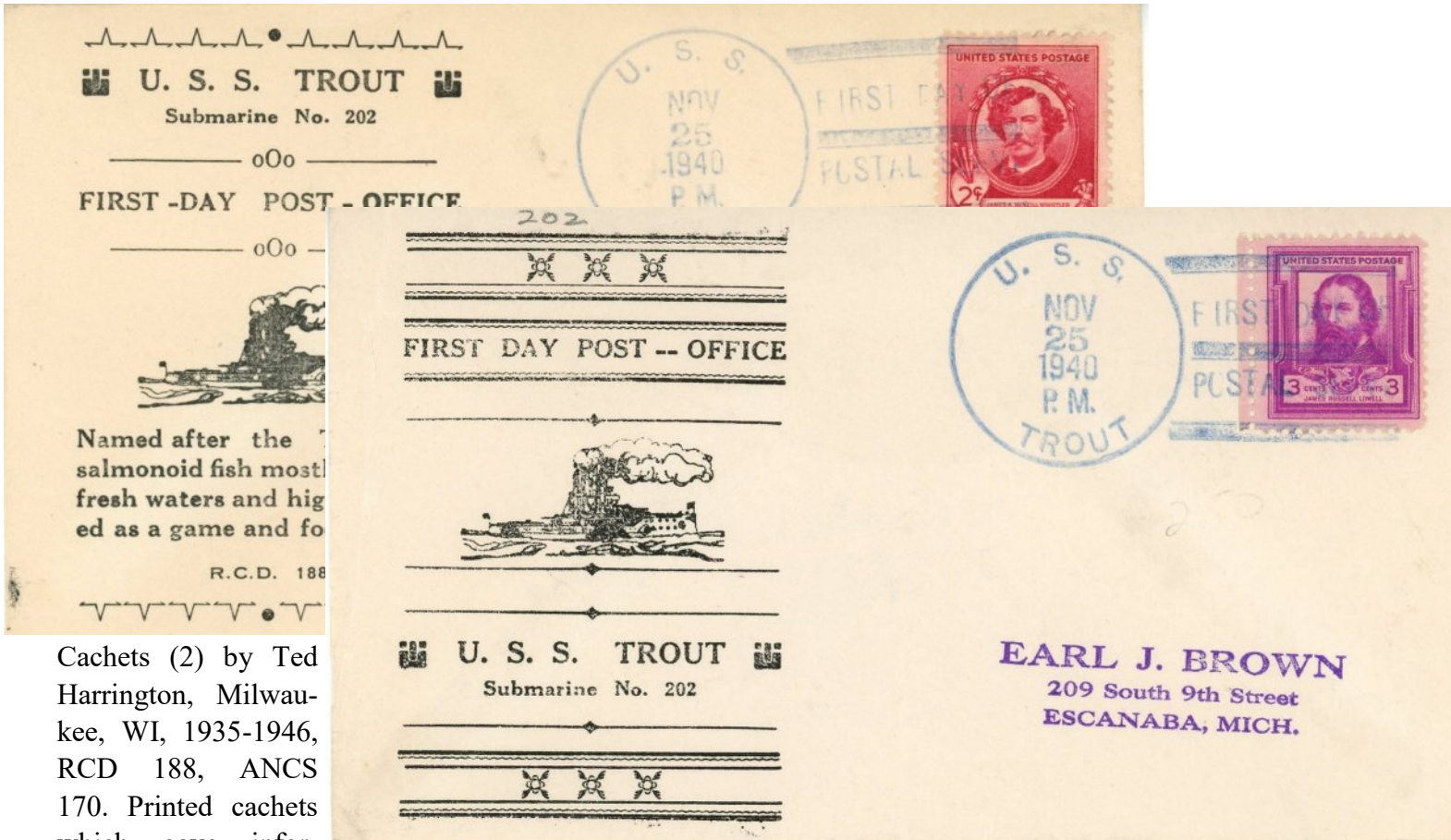


Cachet unknown but mailed to D.C. Bartley from Seattle, WA, sponsor and servicer from 1932 –1960s. He was a Chief Pharmacist Mate in the Navy and president and director of USCS. Thermographed in two colors with a green water color wash. Back date-stamped DEC 2 1940.



Another cachet by Dr. S.E. Hutnick of West Philadelphia, 1934-1946, USCS 78, RCD 70. A generic cachet for US Navy/First Day of Postal Service along with an outline of a submarine in blue. Print in red is submarine name and other information. Three colors, red, blue and a silver wash for the boat. His handstamp address on the reverse/.

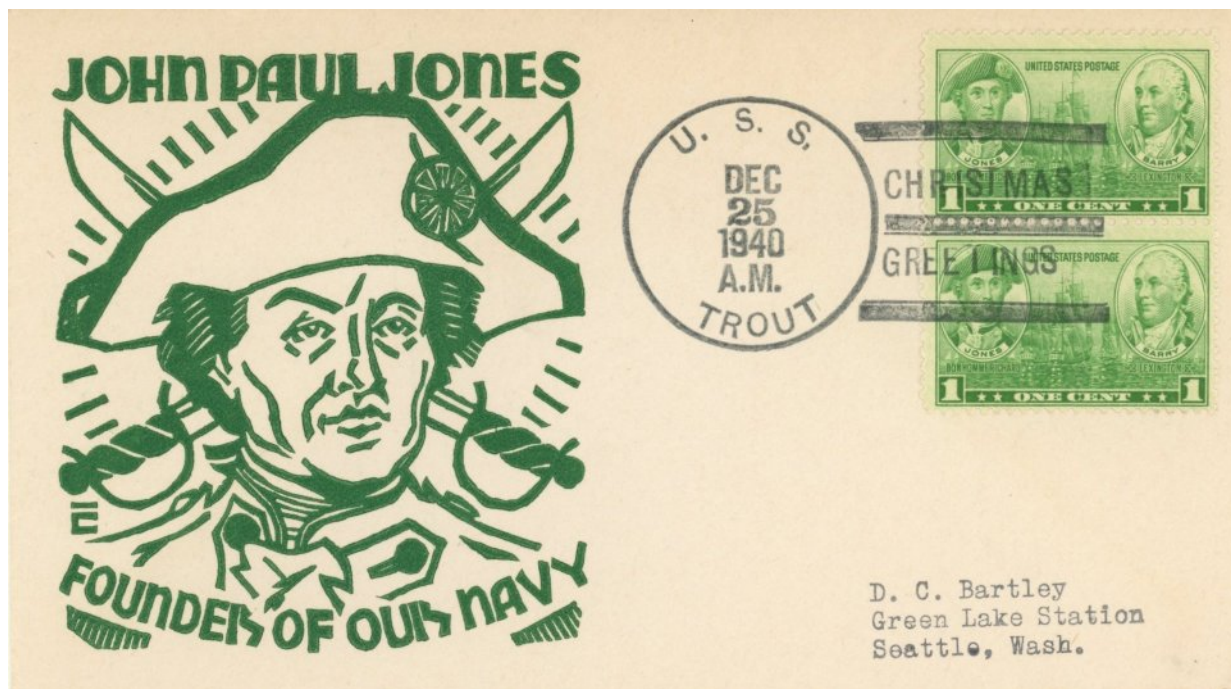
Commissioned/First Day of Postal Service 25 November 1940



Cachets (2) by Ted Harrington, Milwaukee, WI, 1935-1946, RCD 188, ANCS 170. Printed cachets which gave information regarding ship/boat and for specific events, such as First-Day Post Office. Name hand stamp on re-

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General Purpose Cachets/Special Cancel Inserts

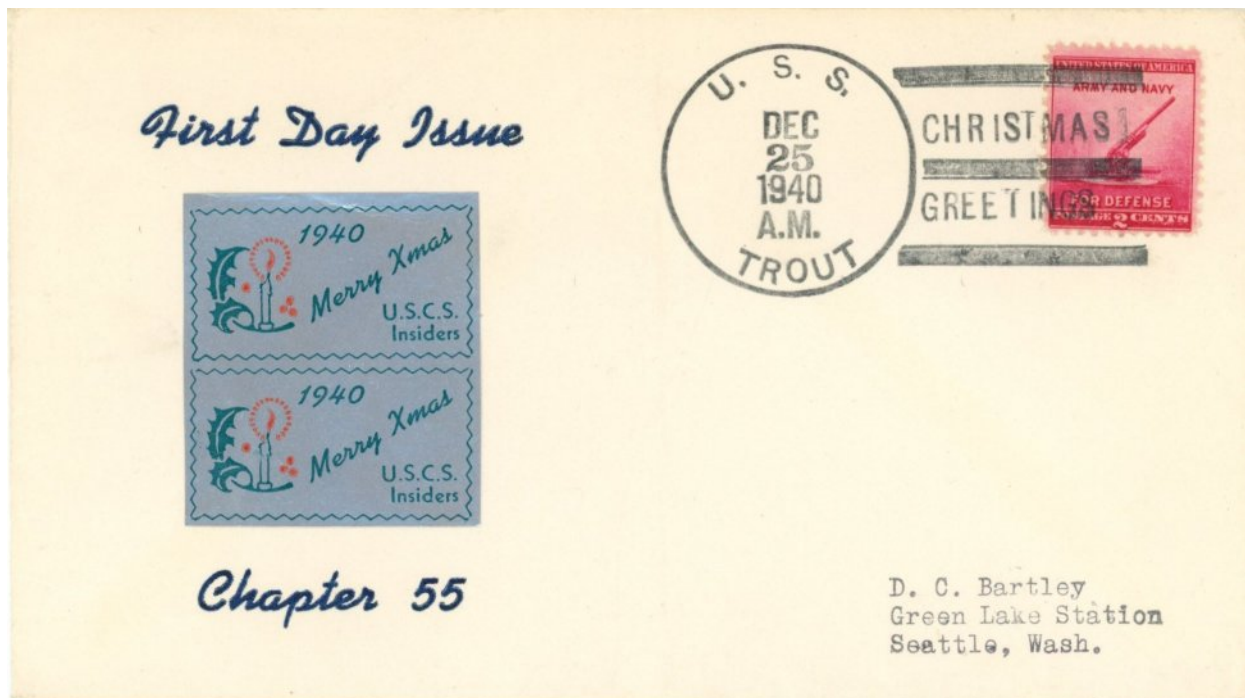


Cachet by John Coulthard of Modesto, CA, USCS 802, 1935-1947. Coulthard did art work for printed and rubber stamped cachets of various events. He drew designs for John Paul Jones Chapter #2 and used cut designs from linoleum blocks. Distinctive E cut into design lower left. Sent to D.C. Bartley in Seattle. CHRISTMAS/GREETINGS Dec 25 1940.

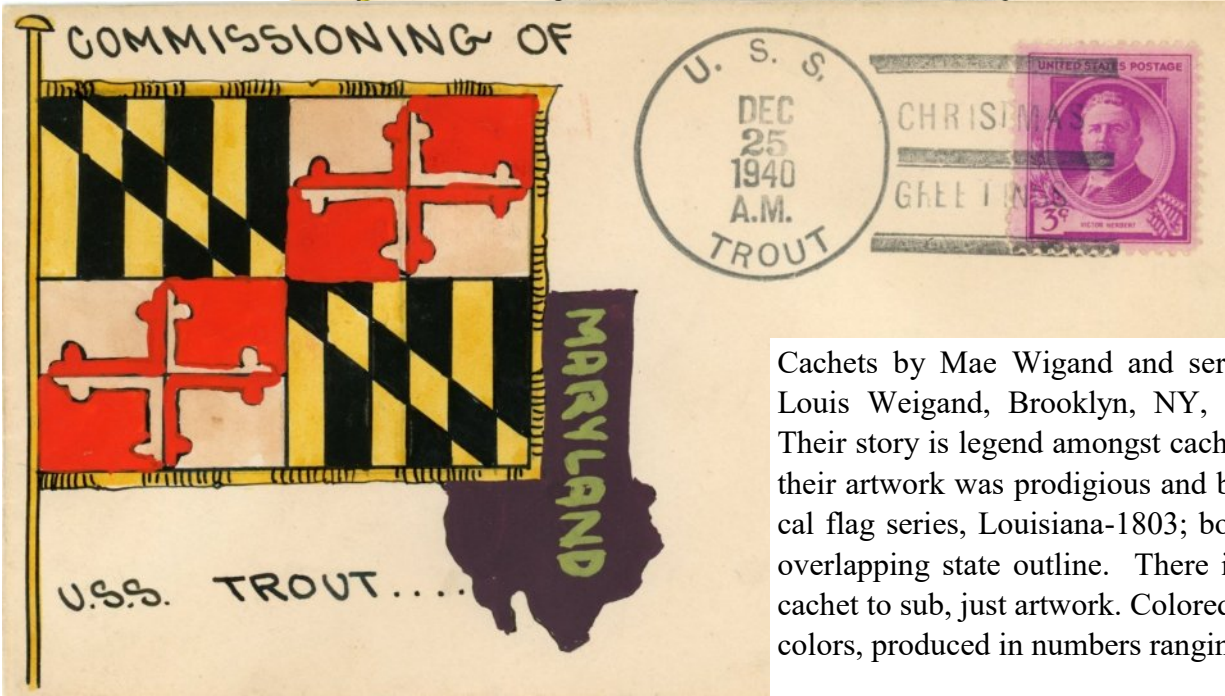
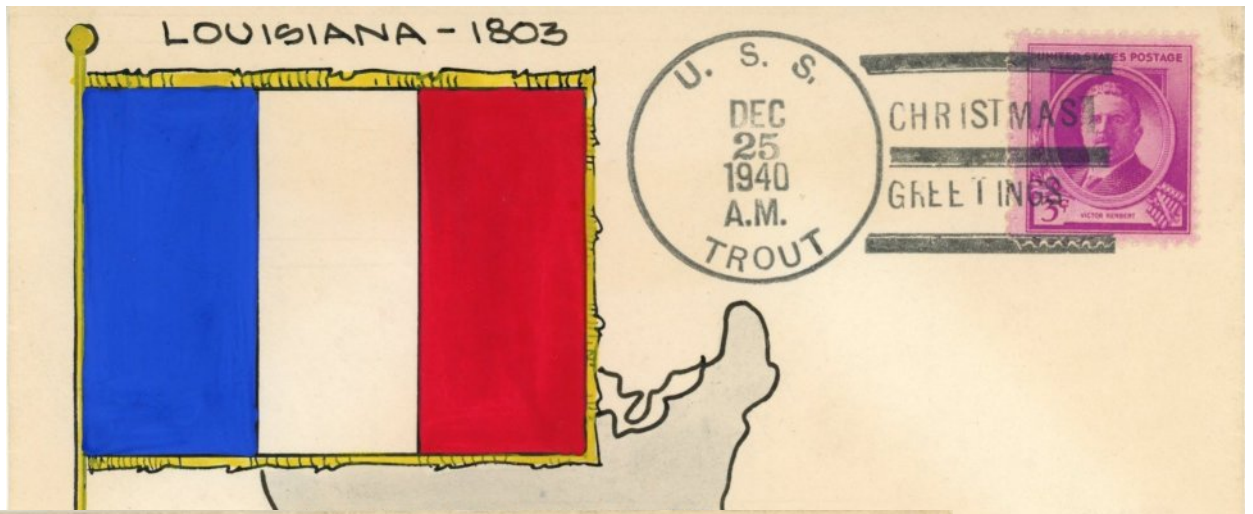
General Purpose Cachets/Special Cancel Inserts



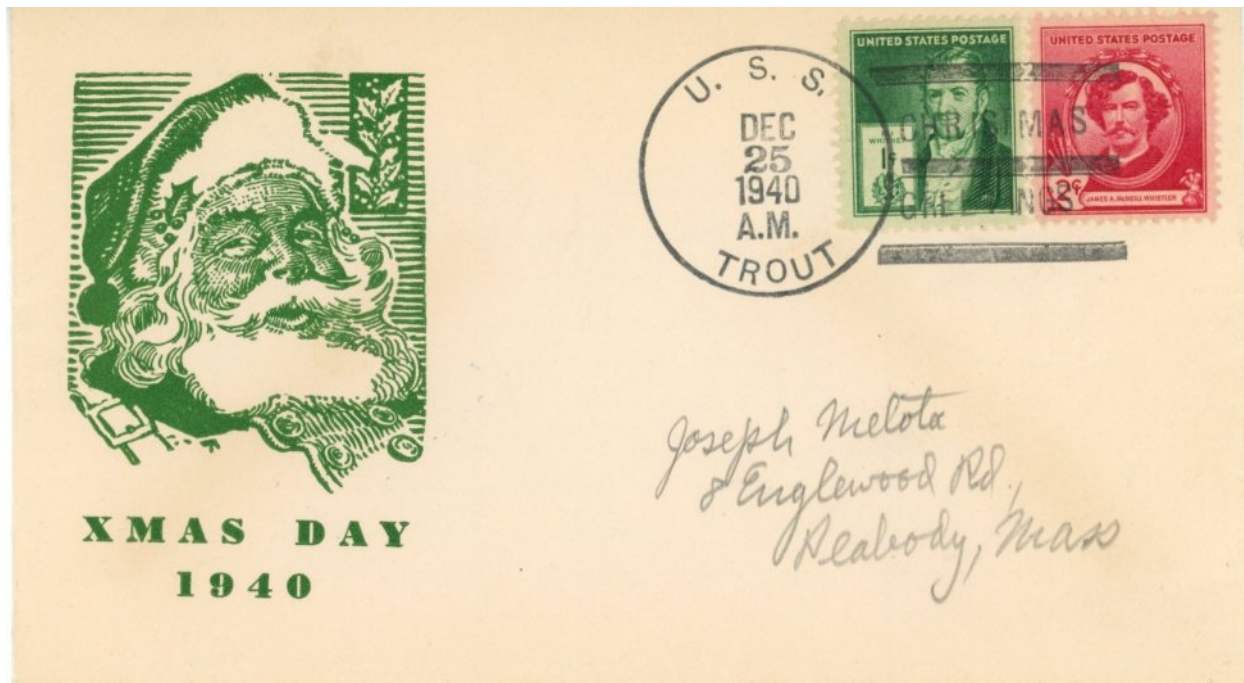
Cachet by George V. Sadworth, New York, 1940-1959, ANCS 178, Argonauts Crew. Printed from engraved plate in brown, generic design for submarines. Sold in quantity to various sponsors and other servicers for specific events or holidays, in this case Christmas Greetings DEC 23 1940.



Cachet and Christmas seal by USCS Insiders Chapter 55. For junior and shut-in members at large, organized 11 Nov 1940 creating their own Christmas labels for use on holiday mail. They were printed se-tenant as above and some issued in sheets of 10, design of "blue holly leaves, candle and wavy line border with date and 'Merry Xmas/U.S.C.S./Insiders'". Information from Rigastamps with help from Brian McInturff. Also addressed to D.C. Bartley.

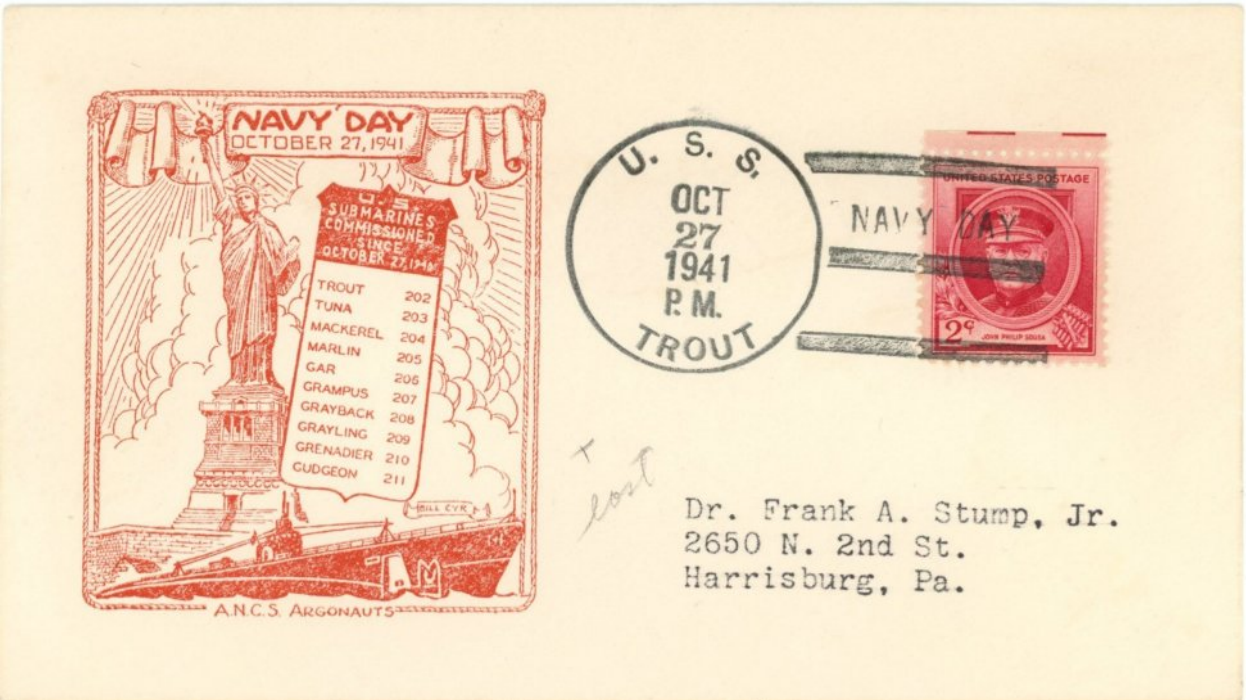


Cachets by Mae Wigand and serviced by her husband Louis Weigand, Brooklyn, NY, 1938-1949, ANCC 1. Their story is legend amongst cachet cover collectors and their artwork was prodigious and beautiful. Top, historical flag series, Louisiana-1803; bottom, state flag series, overlapping state outline. There is no relationship with cachet to sub, just artwork. Colored by tempura and water colors, produced in numbers ranging from 50-200.



Cachet by Donald Graf of N. Tonawanda NY, 1937-1951, ANCS 1750. Graf did many printed cachets for specific holidays with these kinds of general purpose designs. On board cancel with insert of Christmas Greetings. Identified with name hand stamp on reverse. Unknown numbers printed.

Commissioned/First Day of Postal Service 25 November 1940



Cachet by Wilfred R. Cyr, 1941-1944, ANCS 1177, Argonauts Crew. Cyr was invited to do cachets for the Argonauts Crew identified by name, Bill Cyr in ribbon above bow. A special cachet to honor Navy Day and the submarines built since Oct 1940, USS 202-211 on Navy Day Oct 27 1941, NAVY DAY in cancel bars.



Cachet by M. Fay Muridge, Tacoma, WA, 1937-1948, ANCS 822, RCD 180. Designed wide variety of cachets along with others like D.C. Bartley, Argonauts Crew and others. This is a general purpose Navy design postmarked just 17 days before war was declared and before her first Patrol of 22 days off of Midway where she saw no action.

"When Silence Was Golden"... Aboard the U. S. S. Trout

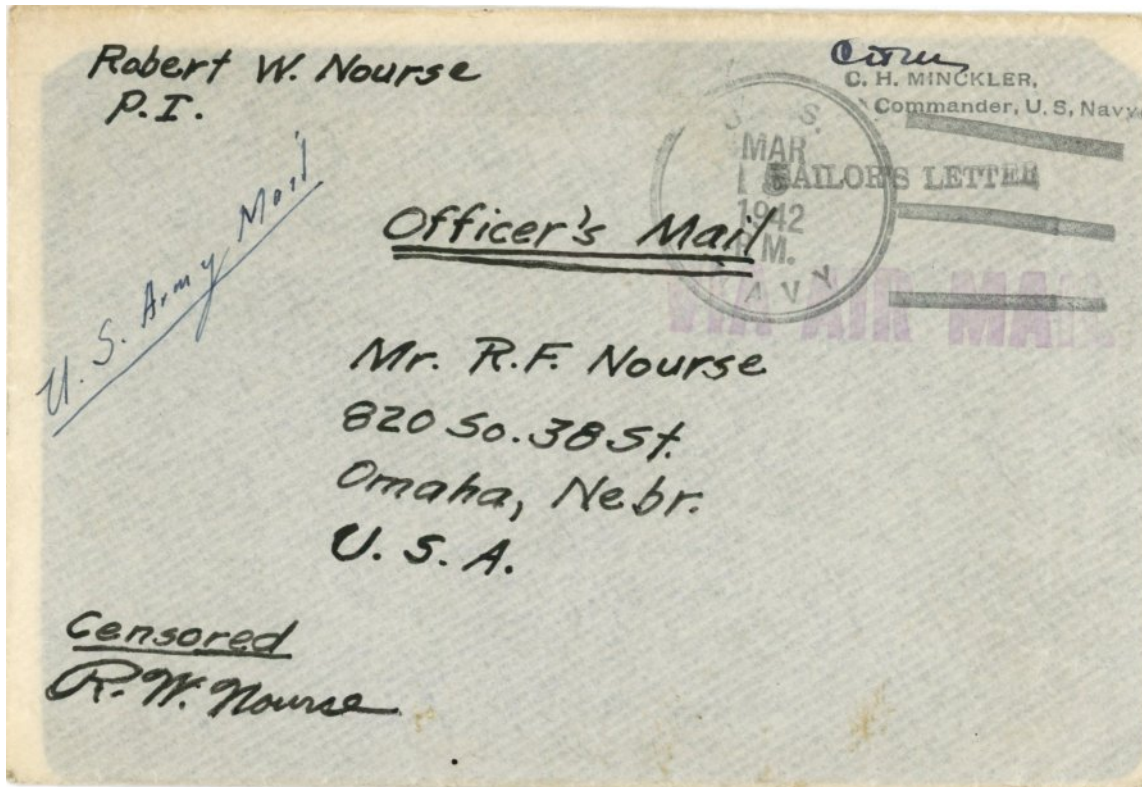
SILENTLY the submarine "Trout" crept into Corregidor with a precious load of ammunition and silently she lay under the very noses of the enemy as she loaded gold, passengers, and papers of state. "Her softly purring engines could hardly be heard a dozen feet away," said one of her passengers.

Silence was her protection, and the silence of her engines was a matter of precision and care by those who built them.



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Wartime Mail



2LT Robert William Nourse

Honored in Manila at the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial, tablets of the missing—Army.

Hand-written letter from Robert W. Nourse PI, self censored with Officer's Mail written above address, hand-stamped **VIA AIR MAIL** in purple and **SAILORS LETTER**. Also hand printed U.S Army Mail in blue ink. Upon arrival in Pearl it was signed C.H. Minckler, Commander, U.S. Navy of the AG Pelias AS 14, a submarine tender, and 3g cancel arrival date of 5 March 1942 PM.

This letter is not from a crew member of the boat, but an Army officer stationed in the Philippines who, on the night of arrival of the Trout at Corregidor, wrote the letter and handed it off probably to the mail clerk during the off-loading ammo and onloading of the bullion and securities. It was then carried aboard for the month's trip back to Pearl and handed off to the sub tender Pelias whose commander put it in the mail stream.

The contents while mostly salutations to his father and instructions regarding life insurance, contains very telling information regarding his situation: *"Regardless of the postmark on this letter, I am still in the same place. I weigh just under 170 lbs. now and feel fine. How this letter got out is something I cannot divulge and there may not be any more but as long s you receive \$100 every month and no news, I am OK. If anything happens to me you will be notified immediately and will also receive \$10,000 from the U.S. Conclusion: No News Is Good News. Put out all you can, don't worry, and ask F.D.R. to send us another P-40. The one we have is all worn out."*

Robert was captured by Japanese forces during the fall of Corregidor and interned until 13 Dec 1944. Put on board Oryodu Maru to be transferred to Japan. The ship was attacked by allied air and sunk in Subic bay. Recaptured he was put on Enoura Maru which was sunk off Formosa. His death, date and location are unconfirmed either in Formosa or in Japan where survivors were ultimately taken. He is listed as unaccounted for. The USS Trout was sunk 29 Feb 1944 with all 81 board lost,

Note: information related to the dates of Patrol 2 are taken from the boat's logs as shown in the publication The Golden Belly of 202 USS Trout by Edwin Arnold Kiefer.