

PMCC: Collecting Preferences

(for inclusion with initial membership application)



→ Please consult the definitions on the following pages for more information.

APO	Army or Fleet POs	ODD	Odd, Unusual Postmarks
AS	Any Size	PC	Precancels
AUT	Autographs of Postmasters	PFP	Pray For Peace Slogans
BE	Beginner	PH	Postal History
BR	Branches	PICT	Pictorial Postmarks
CAC	Cacheted Covers	PMG	Postal Markings
CAN	Canadian	PMK	Postmarks
COV	Covers	PNL	Penalty / Franked Envelopes
CPO	Community Post offices	POP	Post Office Photos
CPU	Contract Postal Units	PST	Postal Stationery
CS	County Seats	RPO	Railroad Post Offices
DPO	Discontinued Post Offices	SL	Slogans
DT	Dates or Calendars	SMT	Small-Town Postmarks
ERR	Errors, Misprints	SOTN	Socked-on-the-Nose
EV	Everything	SP()	Specialty: (Specify!)
F	Foreign	SS	Souvenir Sheets
FC	Flag Cancels	ST	Stamps
FDC	First-Day Covers	STC	Stampless Covers
FF	First Flight Covers	T()	Topical: (Specify!)
G	Given Names	TR	Transit
HC	Hand Cancels	US	United States
HPO	Highway Post Offices	USPC	U.S. Postal Cards
LD	Last Days	USPS	USPS Cancels
LP	Local Posts	VC	Post Office View Cards
MAR	Maritime	WC	War Censor Covers
MC	Machine Cancels	X	Will Exchange
MET	Meters	Y	3x5s
METT	Meter Tapes	Z	2x4s
MPP	Mailer Postmark Permits	ZC	Postmarks with ZIP Codes
NMO	Name Origins		

Definitions

APO

Army or Fleet POs: postmarks from the various Post Offices of U.S. Military Installations, Ships, and Bases. Both the Army Post Office and Air Force Post Office are called APO; the Navy Post Office is designated FPO: Fleet Post Office. Here is an example of an APO postmark:



AS

Any Size — postmarks on whatever size paper they are found on, whether full cover or any size of cut.

AUT

Autographs of Postmasters — usually on a card or cover bearing the post office's cancellation.

BE

Beginner ... welcome aboard!

BR

Branch Postmarks: cancellations from various branches, stations, Community Post Offices (CPOs), and Contract Postal Units (CPUs).

CAC

Cachet Covers. These usually include beautiful artwork or embossing that coordinates with the theme of the stamp, postmark, or notable event or person being celebrated.

CAN

Canadian — postmarks and/or other postal items from Canada.

CPO

Community Post Offices — formerly known as Rural Stations / Rural Branches, operated under contract.

CPU

Contract Postal Units — non-USPS-staffed retail operations, predominantly in urban areas; CPOs are a subset of CPUs.



CS

County Seats — postmarks from the seat of various states' counties or parishes.

DPO

Discontinued Post Offices: a common preference in postmark collecting. Postmarks from DPOs generally increase in value over time owing to their increasing rarity. Here is an example of a DPO cancel from West Virginia.



DT

Dates or Calendars. Examples include the collection of postmarks from specific dates from each year (such as one's birthday, anniversary, etc.) or the filling of a calendar with postmarks from every day of a month or year. This can be challenging as some dates are difficult to find, such as Sundays or holidays. Some people try to collect them all from the same area, or a city with a special name, while others collect dates from any Post Office.

ERR

Errors or Misprints: postmarks that contain errors or misprints of any kind. Examples include wrong dates, upside-down items, and misspellings. For example, this postmark contains a typo of the word "East."



F

Foreign — postmarks or postal history items from specific counties or from all over the world.

FC

Flag Cancels. Flag cancels have a waving flag design used as the killer portion of the postmark. These cancels were most common from 1896 to 1940.

FDC

First Day Covers. A special cancel is issued to commemorate the first day a new postage stamp is issued. This cancel is often issued in a city with significance for the stamp, and the covers are often decorated with significant artwork or cachets. Here is an FDC for the first U.S. Triangle Stamps.



FF

First Flights: special cancels issued on the first flight on new air mail routes. Some special cancels have been issued for space missions as well.

GN

Given Names — postmarks from towns and cities with specific names.

HC

Hand Cancels. Hand cancels have been issued throughout postal history and are still used today. Modern hand cancels are often referred to as "four-bars" → → → because of the four stripes in the killer. Old hand cancels can be valuable and come in many shapes, sizes, designs, and colors. Most modern post offices also have round date stamps → used for receipts and cancelling.



HPO

Highway Post Offices. A fairly short-lived successor to Railway Post Offices, these were busses outfitted as mail sorting operations, so mail could be processed while in transit. These operated mostly in the 1950s and 1960s.

LD

Last Days — postmarks from the last day of operation of a post office; a subset of discontinued post office (DPO) cancels.

LP

Local Posts; mail handled by privately operated transportation routes, usually philatelic in nature, often including collector made "stamps" and sometimes "cancels." (This usually philatelic mail will also often be sent through an postal service operation for further processing and delivery.)

MAR

Maritime — postmarks and postal history items from ships and maritime post offices.

MC

Machine Cancels — cancellations applied by machine, not by hand.

MET

Meters — covers that bear postage issued by a meter embossing machine. These postal markings are normally not cancelled, and often have messages or advertising slogans.

METT

Meter Tapes: same as meters, noted above, but franked on an adhesive tape to be placed on parcels or covers.

MPP

Mailer Postmark Permits. There is a chapter in the PMCC devoted to people who collect MPPs. Think of a Mailer's Postmark Permit as a deputized hand-cancel: a person can apply for a permit to be allowed to cancel one's own mail with a special device and deliver it to a given post office for mailing.



ODD

Odd or unusual. These terms can take any definition you like, such as postmarks from unusual places, or odd types of stamps or ink. Here is a postmark from the Federated States of Micronesia. (Yes, that's a ZIP code.)



PC

Precancels: covers that are printed with cancels already embossed. These are usually associated with business and bulk mail processed for speed.

PFP

Pray for Peace: The slogan "Pray for Peace" has been issued over many years, from many cities around the country. Some collectors maintain a specific PFP collection from given areas or from all over. The PMCC Museum houses a huge collection of PFP cancels.

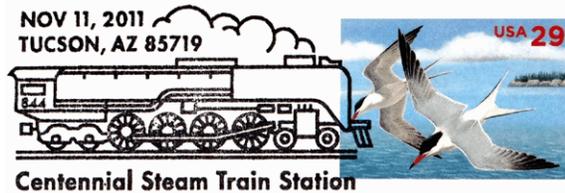


PH

Postal History: generally speaking; specializing more in the historical aspects of postmark collecting. Postal history encompasses many subjects, from history of post offices to postage rates and methods of mail delivery. One common topic studied involves the route a cover travels to reach its destination.

PICT

Pictorial Postmarks — cancellations that include pictures or graphics as part of the postmark. Such are issued for a limited time in specific locations to celebrate specific times or events, or for in conjunction with a new stamp issue. The PMCC Museum maintains a collection of pictorial cancellations from around the country. Lists of currently available pictorial cancellations are published in Linn's Stamp News, and USPS's Postal Bulletin. Here is an example: Centennial Steam Train Station — Tucson, AZ, Nov. 11, 2011.



PMG

Postal Markings. One can collect the myriad of other postal markings that appear on envelopes besides the actual cancellation. Examples of other postal markings include return-to-sender; censored; receipt required; and more ...

Found Loose In The Mails At
Southern Maryland Division 20790-9651

PMK

Postmarks — cancellations from post offices. 'Nuff said.

PNL

Penalty/Franked — postal markings for penalty postage fees or specially franked envelopes.

POP

Post Office Photos — photographs of post offices from a specific area or all over the map. The PMCC Museum houses a collection of 50,000 POVs. Thousands of images are available online through the PMCC Online Post Office Photos page. Post offices were also a common subject of old postcards; the Museum has many of these as well.

PST

Postal Stationery — stationery sold by the Post Office with embossed postage.

RPO

Railroad Post Offices: In the days of yore mail was commonly sorted, cancelled, and delivered right from the railroads. Various trains and routes had their own distinctive cancellations.

SL

Slogans: postmarks that bear slogans. One example is *Please Mail Early for Christmas* (↓). Many slogans have been issued throughout postal history, and many are still used today. There is a special slogan collection at the PMCC Museum.



SMT

Small-Town Postmarks. The romantic side of postmark collecting includes the small towns with single post offices and their own specific cancel. Today this often means a hand cancel with a four-bar killer.

SOTN

Socket on the Nose: also called "Bullseye Cancels", these are postmarks with the circle date portion directly on top of the postage stamp. Here is an [international] example:



SPQ

Specialty [specify]: Any special category.

STC

Stampless Covers: postmarks that predate the postage stamp itself. Many covers had the postage written on by the Postmaster.

TO

Topical [specify]: Any topical collection category. Examples can include Colors, Flowers, Odd Names, towns along Interstate Routes, 'Saints', Animals, County Seats, Historic Dates... There are endless possibilities; for example, the Presidents → → → ...



US

United States: U.S. postmarks.

USPS

USPS Cancels: USPS cancels that were used regularly for some time. These only show a state, ZIP district, and a date.



VC

Post Office View Cards: Picture postcards of post offices.

WC

War Censor: Mail with censor markings from during various wars.

X

Will exchange. Collector wishes to exchange postmarks with other collectors.

Y

3x5s: Postmarks on 3-by-5-inch paper or card.

Z

2x4s: Postmarks cut from envelopes to 2" x 4". This used to be a common practice, and many collectors still save the pieces which were cut to this size.

ZC

ZIP Codes — postmarks with ZIP codes shown; possibly specific sets.