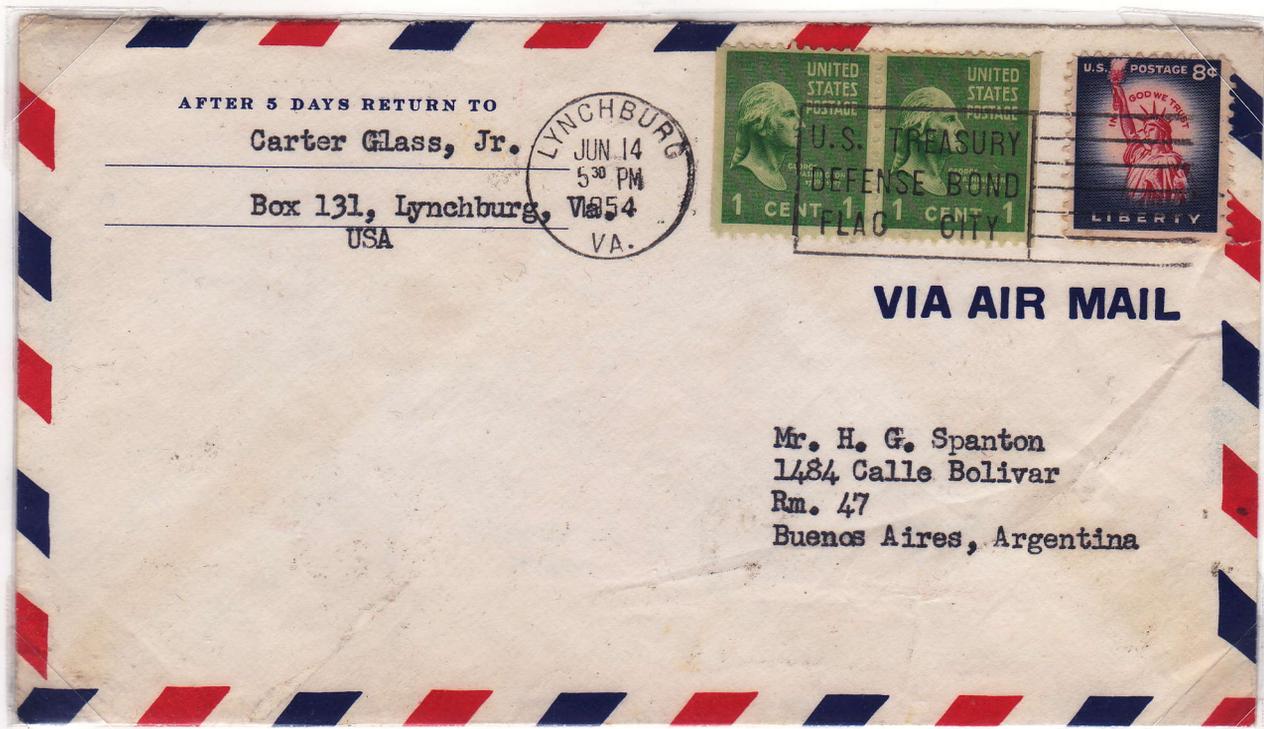


THE TWILIGHT OF THE PREXIES: 1954-1962



Two 1¢ Presidential Series booklet stamps combined with an 8¢ Liberty Series stamp to pay the 10¢ per half ounce air mail letter rate to Argentina in 1954.

This exhibit looks at usages of the United States Presidential Series stamps, often affectionately called Prexies by collectors, after the Post Office Department began to introduce the Liberty Series with the release of the 8¢ value on April 9, 1954.

Except for the two **CANAL ZONE** overprinted stamps that are beyond the scope of this exhibit, the Post Office Department issued all the denominations and formats of the Presidential Series in a nine month period during 1938-1939. By contrast, it took eleven years to do the same for the Liberty Series. Even ignoring the 25¢ Liberty Series coil stamp of 1965, which had no equivalent in the Presidential Series, it still took seven years to phase in the Liberty Series. During that time, many Prexies remained in current use. Each of the Presidential stamps continued to be produced and distributed to post offices during at least part of that period, some even after equivalent stamps in the Liberty Series had been issued. Many Prexies remained in post office stock for sale to customers after production and distribution had ended, and many others remained in the hands of the public after post office stock ran out.

This exhibit is organized in roughly chronological order, with each year beginning a new chapter in the slow transition from the Prexies to the Liberty Series. Except for the two items on the epilogue page, the end of 1962 is used as the cutoff date. The choice is not entirely arbitrary. The last shipments of Prexies had been sent to post offices during Fiscal Year 1960, which ended June 30 that year. The 11¢ Liberty Series stamp, the final one that had an equivalent in the Presidential Series, was issued June 15, 1961. By the end of the next year, the transition was nearly complete, and the great majority of post-1962 usages appear to be to or from philatelists.

Note: Coil and booklet stamps are identified as such in write-ups. Otherwise, the stamps are sheet stamps. Rates shown are for domestic mail and for surface mail unless otherwise indicated.