

**U.S. NAVY IN NOVA SCOTIA PORTS**  
**1880 - 1940**  
Synopsis

**Background:** Navophilately is an area rich in variety for thematic collectors. Geography, nationality, history (especially military history), ship types, individual ships' histories, and deployment purposes are broad categories that contain lots of interesting themes. Its an engaging area because the materials are visually attractive and historically interesting. This philatelic specialty is the province of the Universal Ship Cancellation Society (USCS) - an American Philatelic Society affiliate (AF0098) since January 31, 1980.

**Purpose:** This exhibit illustrates one of the many possibilities for defining a naval theme. Listings have been made for U.S. naval vessels in Cuban, Mexican and Spanish waters (*see USCS website, Data Sheets*), but this exhibit appears to be the first effort to document their presence specifically in Nova Scotia ports. According to one prominent naval cover dealer, mail to and from Canadian ports generally is scarce.

**Scope:** The title summarizes the scope of the exhibit, the constraints being: 1) each item must be evidence of the presence of an American naval vessel in a Nova Scotia port not later than 1940. The time limitation was adopted because the military secrecy required by World War II had a disrupting effect on navophilately, effectively ending its "Golden Age" during the 1930s.

**Organization:** The overall arrangement is chronological with the items grouped according to the purpose of the voyage that took the ship into Canadian waters: cadet training, ice patrol, shakedown cruises, presidential visits, and the exchange of destroyers for military bases.

**Treatment:** In most cases, a cancellation shows the ship's location. However, the postal card on Page 2 is inbound **to** the ship rather than outbound from the ship, and the re-direction note is only *tentative* evidence of the ship's presence in Canadian waters. In this case, a local shipping register and newspaper item corroborate the note, thereby illustrating the value of research and the relevance of collateral materials to the exhibit.

Rate/route information is not a focus of this exhibit. Most of the items reflect the fact that ship mail addressed to U.S. destinations was officially treated as domestic U.S. mail to which domestic rates applied: 1 cent for postal and post cards, 3 cents for first class surface letters, and 6 cents for air mail letters. An interesting exception is a cover included on the 1939 training cruise page. It was deposited in the Canadian postal system, addressed to a Halifax destination, franked with American postage stamps. It drew a Canadian postage due penalty of 4 cents for failure to pay the applicable carrier drop letter rate.

**Elements of presentation:** The **STENCIL** font was used to give the exhibit a military flavour consistent with the theme. The 11 x 17 page size is well-suited to grouping the materials according to the purposes of the ships' voyages.

**Significant items:** Three items have somewhat special significance. (1) The postal card on the tall ship training page is a rarity due to the combination of the Nova Scotia location, the early date, and the inbound (to the ship) delivery. (2) The cancellation "Seal Cove N.S." on one of the covers in the 1936 presidential cruise page is revealed as an error by the chart of that cruise showing the relevant location to be Seal Cove on Grand Manan Island in New Brunswick. (3) The Sydney cancellation that appears in the 1939 presidential cruise page is unlisted by the USCS.

### **Research resources:**

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([http://www.uscs.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/DS12\\_Foreign-and-Domestic-Port-Locations.pdf](http://www.uscs.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/DS12_Foreign-and-Domestic-Port-Locations.pdf)).

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(<https://www.uscs.org/cover-collecting/about-collecting-naval-covers/naval-covers-fakes-forgeries-and-frauds/>)

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*Yarmouth Telegram*, July 24, 1936.

Young, John P., *Navophilately before the USCS, 1930-32*, (Universal Ship Cancellation Society, 1992) ([www.uscs.org/resources/articles](http://www.uscs.org/resources/articles))