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# U.S. NAVY

## IN

# NOVA SCOTIA PORTS

## 1880 - 1940

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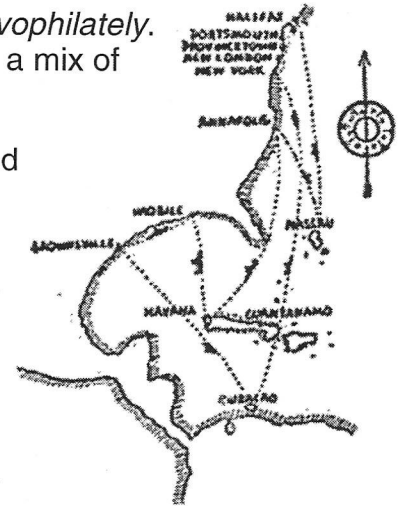
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**Purpose:** This exhibit illustrates naval mail collecting, known as *navophilately*. It's an engaging area with various themes that can be developed using a mix of philatelic and real mail items that are visually attractive and historically interesting. Research often leads to collateral materials connected to the chosen theme, adding to the richness of a collection and the fun and satisfaction of assembling it.

**Scope:** The title defines the theme chosen for that purpose and summarizes the scope of the exhibit. Each item in the exhibit is evidence of the presence of a U.S. naval vessel in a Nova Scotia port prior to the U.S. entry into World War II.

**Organization & Development:** The theme is presented by an overall chronological arrangement of materials. Structure and depth are added by grouping the items according to the purpose of the ships' voyages.

**Materials:** Most of the items in the exhibit are products of the system of shipboard post offices instituted by the United States Congress in 1908 to serve its naval fleet. Ships were supplied with distinctive cancelling devices and members of the crews were appointed as postal clerks, employed by both the Navy Department and the Post Office Department. Cancels identifying a ship's name, location and date naturally enticed collectors to assemble postal items into patterns; for example: cancels showing a particular ship in various ports - or *vice versa*, various ships in a particular port.



The interest in collecting ship cancellations surged during the 1930s (known as the "Golden Age" of ship cancels), spawning a boom in the production of cachets. Unabashedly 'philatelic' in the pejorative sense, the resulting covers add a lively sense of fun to the theme. The illustrations on this page are reproductions of graphic elements in the cachets of the Submarine Shakedown Cruise covers, listing and charting the ships' ports of call. Most of the cacheted covers in the exhibit indicate the purpose of the ships' voyages; but in some cases one has to rely on collateral material such as shipping registers and newspaper articles to establish that fact.

The first item, a US postal card, is a rarity due to: 1) the fact that it was 'real' mail; 2) its early date; and 3) its re-direction to Halifax. The final page of the exhibit marks the end of the Golden Age with the advent of World War II, when military security dictated the removal of ships' names and locations from their cancelling devices.