

19¢ Prexie Postal History

by Richard Pederson

The 19¢ value in the Presidential Series of 1938 (Figure 1), hereinafter called the Prexies, depicts the nineteenth President of the United States (1877-1881), Rutherford B. Hayes. Robert L. Miller Jr. designed the stamp based on a Presidential medal provided by the United States Mint.

Prior to becoming President, Hayes was a lawyer, member of the U.S. House of Representatives and a three term Governor of Ohio. He volunteered for duty during the Civil War, eventually rising to the rank of Brigadier General. Hayes was elected President by the closest margin in U.S. history, winning by a single electoral vote. His administration marked the end of the post-Civil War Reconstruction period and was forced to deal with an economic depression and scandals inherited from the prior Grant administration.

His administration was also responsible for implementing Civil Service reforms and had to deal with the Great Railroad Strike of 1877 in which Hayes had to call in the U.S. Army and National Guard against the railroad workers who damaged or destroyed both physical facilities and trains. Estimates of 100 people died during the strike before it was put down by the military. Hayes did not run for reelection, withdrew from politics and served out the remainder of his life performing a variety of philanthropic work and as an advocate for educational charities and education subsidies for all children, including minorities.

All uses of the 19¢ Prexie are desirable, but it can be found in combination with other stamps on both domestic and international mail. Solo uses of the 19¢ Prexie are all scarce to rare and are among the most desirable prexie items. There was no specific rate for which the stamp was intended at the time of its use and, to my knowledge, all but fourth-class uses involve paying rate and fee combinations.

The 19¢ was issued in sheet format on November 10, 1938 (Figure 2) and was in continuous use until after 1956, when the last delivery of 19¢ stamps was made to post offices. An electric eye version of the 19¢ was released on January 7, 1942 (Figure 3). There was no 19¢ value in the Liberty series that replaced the Prexies.

Prior to the first day of issue, the Post Office Department sent out announcements to prospective purchasers of

First Day Covers (FDCs), an example of which is pictured in Figure 4.

[Note: for the purposes of this article, I will consider the Prexie period to last until the end of 1962. Deliveries of some Prexies were made to post offices until 1959 and many post offices still had some Prexies in stock into the early 1960s, so they are frequently found on non-philatelic mail until then.]

During the time it was in use, possible solo rate and rate/fee combinations for the 19¢ Prexie included the following:

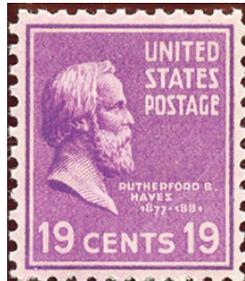


Figure 1. 19¢ Prexie sheet stamp, Sc. 819

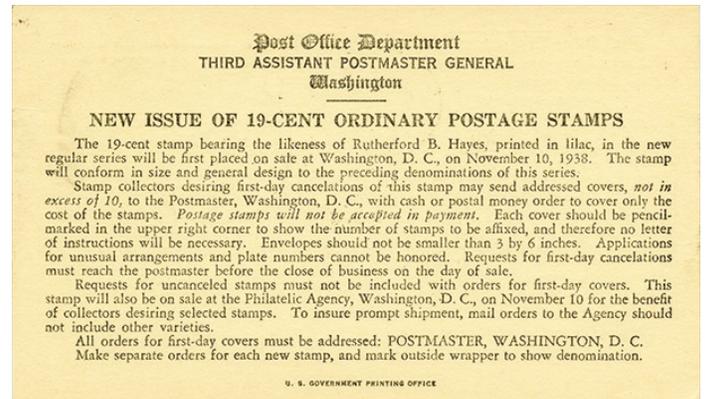


Figure 4. 19¢ announcement card.

1. A triple weight first-class letter sent special delivery, a rate and fee combination (3 x 3¢ first-class rate plus 10¢ special delivery fee) that was in effect through October 31, 1944 (Figure 5, page 30).

2. A double weight first-class letter sent special delivery, a rate and fee combination (2 x 3¢ first-class rate plus 13¢ special delivery fee) that was in effect from November 1, 1944, through December 31, 1948.

3. A double weight registered first-class local letter mailed at a carrier post office, with an indemnity value of \$5 or less, a rate and fee combination (2 x 2¢ first-class rate and 15¢ registration fee) in effect through March 25, 1944.

4. A quadruple weight registered first-class local letter mailed at a non-carrier post office, with an indemnity value of \$5 or less, a rate and fee combination (4 x 1¢ first-class rate and 15¢ registration fee) in effect through March 25, 1944.

5. An air mail special delivery post card, a rate and fee combination (4¢ air mail rate and 15¢ special delivery fee) in effect from January 1, 1949, through December 31, 1951.

6. A registered first-class letter with supplemental surcharge because declared value exceeded indemnity value, a rate and fee combination (3¢ first-class rate, 15¢ registration fee and 1¢ supplemental surcharge) a rate in effect through March 25, 1944.

7. A fourth-class local parcel weighing more than 27 pounds but less than or equal to 29 pounds (5¢ for the first pound plus 1¢ for each additional two pounds = 19¢), a rate in effect through December 31, 1948.

8. A fourth-class Zone 1 or 2 parcel weighing more than ten pounds but less than or equal to 11 pounds (8¢ for the first pound plus 1.1¢ each for the additional 10 pounds = 19¢), a rate in effect through December 31, 1948.

9. A fourth-class Zone 3 parcel weighing more than five pounds but less than or equal to 6 pounds (9¢ for the first pound plus 2¢ each for the additional five pounds = 19¢), a rate in effect through December 31, 1948.

10. A fourth-class Zone 6 parcel weighing more than one pound but less than or equal to 2 pounds (12¢ for the first pound plus 7¢ the additional pound = 19¢), a rate in effect through December 31, 1948.

11. A fourth-class local parcel weighing more than nine pounds but less than or equal to 10 pounds (10¢ for the first pound plus 1¢ each for the nine additional pounds = 19¢), a rate in effect from January 1, 1949, through September 30, 1951.

12. A fourth-class Zone 1 or 2 parcel weighing more than three pounds but less than or equal to 4 pounds (12¢ for the first pound plus 2.1¢ for the three additional pounds = 18.3¢ rounded to 19¢), a rate in effect from January 1, 1949, through September 30, 1951.

13. A fourth-class Zone 3 parcel weighing more than two pounds but less than or equal to 3 pounds (13¢ for the first pound plus 3¢ each for the two additional pounds = 19¢), a rate in effect from January 1, 1949, through September 30, 1951.

14. A fourth-class Zone 4 parcel weighing more than one pound but less than or equal to 2 pounds (14¢ for the first pound plus 4.5¢ for the additional



Figure 2. First Day Cover (FDC) for 19¢ Prexie with Harry Ioor cachet.



Figure 3. Electric eye FDC with Fidelity cachet.

pound = 18.5¢ rounded to 19¢), a rate in effect from January 1, 1949, through September 30, 1951.

15. A fourth-class local parcel weighing more than three pounds but less than or equal to 4 pounds (15¢ for the first pound plus 1.25¢ for each additional pound = 18.75¢ rounded to 19¢), a rate in effect from October 1, 1951, through September 30, 1953.

16. A fourth-class Zone 4 parcel weighing more than eight ounces but less than or equal to a pound, a rate in effect from October 1, 1951, through September 30, 1953 (Figure 6).

I have listed possible solo uses that I could identify. I have never seen many of those listed and there may be no examples in existence.

The first solo use that I'll show (Figure 5) pictures a triple weight first-class special delivery letter weighing more than two ounces but less than or equal to three ounces, a rate in effect through October 31, 1944. The cover was mailed on November 14, 1941, from the East Liberty Station in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to another location in Pittsburgh. The cover contains a letter and likely also included a price list or other enclosure.

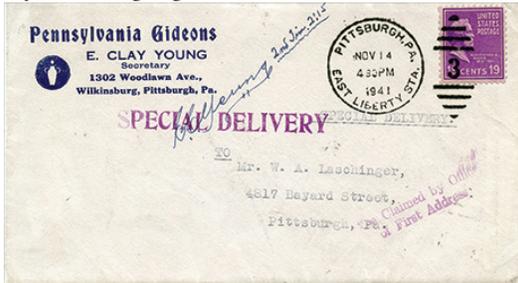


Figure 5. Front and reverse of a triple weight special delivery envelope with a 19¢ solo.

Next, shown in Figure 6 is a solo 19¢ on a Zone 4 parcel sent in 1953, from Dearborn, Michigan, to Gibsonville, North Carolina. The box contained a three-inch diameter bronze medal commemorating the 50th anniversary of Ford Motor Company. The 19¢ in postage paid the parcel rate in effect for an item weighing more than eight ounces but less than or equal to a pound. This is a rare example of the 19¢ exactly paying the fourth-class rate.

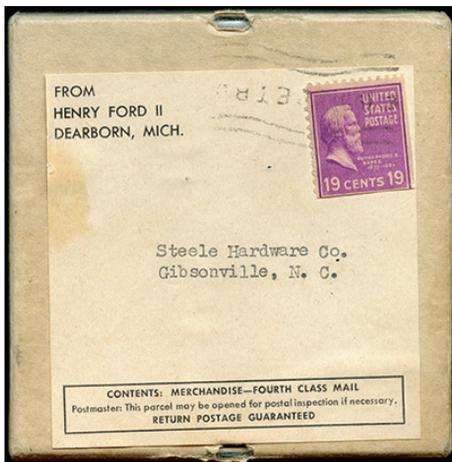


Figure 6. Front of a fourth-class parcel weighing more than eight ounces and less than or equal to a pound with a 19¢ solo.

The Figure 7 cover, shown front and reverse, has a solo 19¢ Prexie on an air mail special delivery cover mailed on February 22, 1947, from El Paso, Texas to Dallas, Texas, where it was received the same day. At that time, the special delivery fee was 13¢ and the air mail rate was 5¢, so the cover was 1¢ overpaid.



Figure 7. Front and reverse of an air mail special delivery cover that is overpaid by 1¢ with a 19¢ solo.

The Figure 7 cover has a solo 19¢ Prexie on an air mail special delivery cover mailed on February 22, 1947, from El Paso, Texas to Dallas, Texas, where it was received the same day. At that time, the special delivery fee was 13¢ and the air mail rate was 5¢, so the cover was 1¢ overpaid.

Figure 8 pictures a cover with a single 19¢ Prexie mailed on March 16, 1939, from Upper Darby, Pennsylvania to Berlin, Germany. At that time, the UPU surface rate was 5¢ for the first ounce and 3¢ for each additional ounce so the cover appears to be greatly overpaid as even a quadruple weight letter would only have been 17¢, and this is not a large envelope.

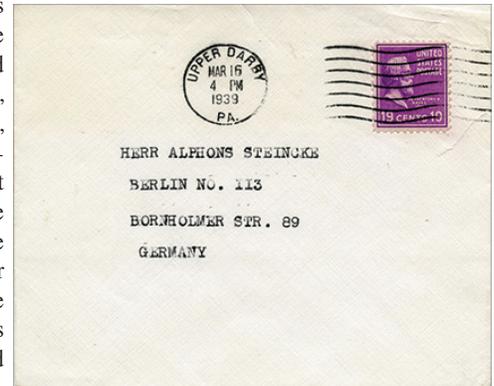


Figure 8. 19¢ Prexie on a first-class surface letter to Germany that was overpaid.



Figure 9. Front and reverse of a registered return receipt requested bank tag with five 19¢ Prexies.

Next in Figure 9, I'll show the front and reverse of a registered, return receipt requested bank tag which was attached to a parcel mailed from the National Bank of Commerce in Seattle, Washington to a Zone 8 destination in New York City, on August 7, 1943. The tag contains five 19¢ Prexies which is the third largest reported multiple of the 19¢ on cover or parcel. At that time, the return receipt fee was 3¢ and, for Zone 8, the first pound in weight was 15¢ and each additional pound was 11¢. Thus, the 95¢ in postage consisted of a 3¢ return receipt fee, 15¢ for the first pound and 77¢ for seven additional pounds.

Figure 10 shows a piece of third-class matter that was insured and sent on September 23, 1961, from Milford, Connecticut to Milton, Massachusetts. It is marked "LETTER ENCLOSED POSTAGE PAID." A 19¢ Prexie and an 18¢ Prexie combine to pay the 3¢ third-class

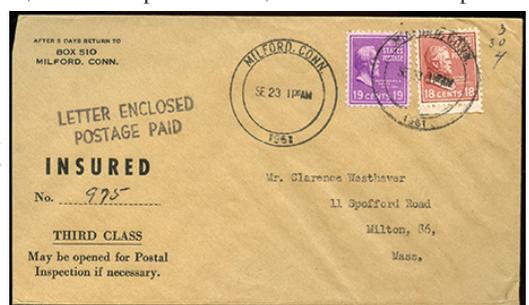


Figure 10. Insured third-class mail piece with 19¢ and 18¢ Prexies and an enclosed letter.

rate, 4¢ for the enclosed letter and 30¢ insurance fee for insurance coverage up to \$100. This constitutes a very late use, but is still within the Prexie period.

Figure 11 pictures the front and reverse of a letter that was sent registered return receipt requested, with receipt showing the delivery address, from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to another Pittsburgh address. A pair of 19¢ Prexies and a pair of the Defense issue combined for 40¢ in postage to pay the 2¢ local rate, 15¢ registration fee and 23¢ required for a receipt showing the delivery address. The cover is marked with a pointing finger "RETURNED TO WRITER" with the reason given as "Moved, Left no address."



Figure 11. Front and reverse of registered return receipt showing delivery address requested cover with two 19¢ Prexies and two 1¢ Defense issues.

The local registered return receipt requested double weight Figure 12 cover, shown front and reverse, was mailed on July 22, 1947, within Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

The 27¢ in postage is made up by a 19¢ Prexie and an 8¢ Prexie. The postage paid 4¢ for a double weight local letter, 3¢ return receipt fee and a 20¢ registration fee for an item with an indemnity value up to \$5. The cover has a "STA. A COLUMBUS, OHIO Second Notice, No Reply to First Notice Mailed. JUL 24 1947" handstamp and a "Return to Writer UNCLAIMED" pointing finger marking.

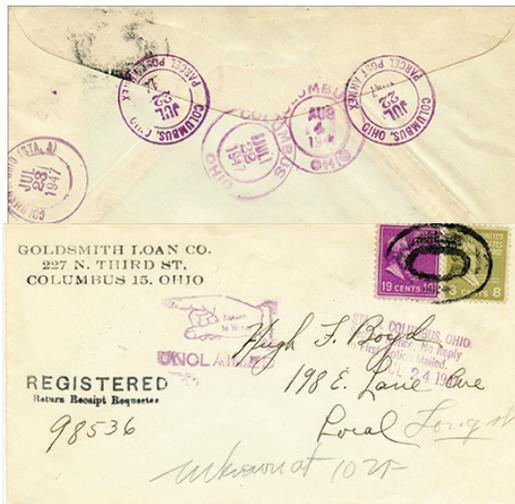


Figure 12. Front and reverse of registered return receipt requested cover 19¢ and 18¢ Prexies.

Figure 13 pictures the front and reverse of a registered cover mailed on May 20, 1946, from

Figure 13. Front and reverse of a registered first-class cover with 19¢ Prexie and 1¢ FDR commemorative uprating a 3¢ stamped envelope.



Elmira, New York to Ocala, Florida where it was received on May 22nd. A 19¢ Prexie and a 1¢ Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) memorial issue were added to a 3¢ stamped envelope to pay the 23¢ required for the 3¢ first-class rate and 20¢ registration fee on an item with an indemnity value of \$5 or less.

Figure 14 shows the front and reverse of an American Locker Company parcel tag used to mail locks and/or keys from Portland, Oregon to the Union Bus Depot in Great Falls, Montana, a Zone 4 destination and then pay for the return to Portland. The package weighed more than three pounds and less than or equal to four pounds with the first pound costing 24¢ and each additional pound 6.9¢, thus 24¢ plus 20.7¢, which is rounded up to 45¢. The tag has a production year of 1956, so it is possible to determine the appropriate date range for determining the fourth-class rate.

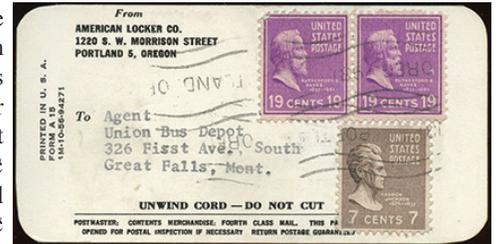


Figure 14. Front and reverse of a fourth-class American Locker Company tag with each side containing a pair of the 19¢ Prexie along with a 7¢ Prexie that were used to pay for mailing locks and keys from and to Portland, Oregon.

I'll conclude by showing some international uses of the 19¢

Prexie. First, is the registered air mail cover from Jamaica, New York to Calgary in Alberta, Canada that is shown front and reverse in Figure 15. The cover, which contains three 19¢ Prexies, a 1¢ Liberty issue and a 3¢ Children's commemorative, was mailed on December 18, 1956, and received in Calgary on December 20th but, evidently, not delivered until the 27th. At that time, there was a 7¢ air mail rate to Canada for the first ounce and 6¢ for each additional ounce. The registration fee for an item with an indemnity value greater than \$100 but less than or equal to \$200 was 30¢. Apparently, this was a quintuple weight letter, so the postage works out as 7¢ for the first ounce, 24¢ for four additional ounces and 30¢ registration, totaling 61¢.



Figure 15. Front and reverse of a registered air mail cover to Canada with three of the 19¢ along with a 1¢ Liberty issue coil and 3¢ Children's issue commemorative.

Next, is a registered air mail cover from Detroit, Michigan to Baden, Germany. The cover, which is shown front and reverse in Figure 16, page 32, was mailed on September 2, 1955, and received in Germany on September 6th. It contains 85¢ in postage made up of a block of four 19¢ Prexies and a pair of 4½¢ Prexies which pay the 55¢ registration fee and 30¢ air mail

rate for a double weigh letter weighing up to one ounce.

Figure 17, below, pictures the front and reverse of a censored air mail cover mailed on June 25, 1942, from New York City to Maracaibo, Venezuela, where it was received on June 30th. A 19¢ Prexie and two 3¢ Defense issues pay the 25¢ FAM air



Figure 16. Front and reverse of a registered air mail cover to Baden, Germany with four of the 19¢ and a pair of the 4½¢ Prexie paying the air mail rate and registration fee.



Figure 17. Front and reverse of a censored air mail cover to Venezuela with 19¢ Prexie and two 3¢ Defense issues paying the air mail rate to Venezuela.

mail rate to Venezuela that was in effect.

The Figure 18 cover, shown front and reverse next column, was mailed from Louisville, Kentucky to a U.S. Military officer stationed in Heidelberg, Germany. The cover was mailed on September 2, 1952, and received in Heidelberg on September 4th. From what I can tell, the cover contains franking well above what was needed and contains stamps that the sender believed would



Figure 18. Front and reverse of a cover with a block of four 19¢ Prexies along with other stamps on a piece of philatelic mail to Germany.

appeal to the recipient, who was a stamp collector. Even if this was a quadruple rate letter, the postage required would have been \$1 (4 x 15¢ air mail rate plus 40¢ registration fee), although \$1.06 in postage is attached consisting of blocks of four of the 19¢ and 4½¢ prexies and a plate block of the 3¢ Lafayette commemorative. The four special delivery stamps in the form of a plate block are certainly excessive as, at that time, there was no international special delivery service to Germany and special delivery service in the U.S. was just 20¢. Special delivery stamps were also not valid for payment of ordinary postage or registration fees. Although certainly philatelic, this still makes for an interesting and attractive piece of postal history.



Fig. 19. Front and reverse of trans-Atlantic air mail letter to England with a 19¢, 10¢ and 1¢ Prexies paying the 30¢ air mail rate.

The cover pictured front and reverse in Figure 19 was mailed on June 23, 1939, from Milwaukee, Wisconsin to Plymouth, England. The 19¢ Prexie

along with 10¢ and 1¢ Prexies paid the 30¢ required for Trans-Atlantic air mail service to England. Once received in Plymouth on June 30th, it was forwarded to its final destination as the addressee was no longer in Plymouth.

The final cover I'll show, pictured front and reverse in Figure 20, is a registered air mail letter sent from New York City, on June 24, 1947, to APO 757 in Frankfurt, Germany, where it was received on June 28th. The 5¢ air mail stamped envelope was uprated with 19¢ and 1¢ Prexies to pay the 15¢ registration fee and 10¢ air mail rate in effect at that time.



Figure 20. Front and reverse of registered air mail letter to APO 757 in Germany with 19¢ and 1¢ Prexies uprating a 5¢ air mail stamped envelope.

If you have any interesting 19¢ Prexie usages you would like to share or have any comments, clarifications, or corrections, please send them to me at rich@pedersonstamps.com or by mail at 15312 Gammon Green Walk, Midlothian, VA 23112.

References:

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