

Yesterday in U.S. Stamps & Postal History:
**The Issues of the United States Allied
Military Government in World War II**

By Harry W. Wilcke M.D. (From USS & PH, Spring 1993)

When I founded U.S. Stamp News, I also acquired the quarterly U.S. Stamps & Postal History magazine. This article was a special section within Volume II, No. 2.

When I decided to reproduce this article, I thought it would work out better than it did. The reproduction process was awkward, and we were unable to find enough replacement images to make it worth reworking the article in color.

Still, the information and the images in the original version were worth bringing to you, so please excuse the varying page sizes (which are full pages broken into quarters) and occasional below-average images (which looked that way in the USS&PH article and appear to have come from poor images that were the only source available). JFD.



Fig. 22 (The article opened with this image, which is why we reproduce it here.)

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[Publisher's Note: *With the distinguished writing of Dr. Harry W. Wilcke—and the able assistance of Joseph V. Bush—U.S. STAMPS & Postal History is proud to introduce this important Handbook and Catalog of the issues of the U.S. Allied Military Government during and after World War II.*

As Dr. Wilcke notes below, these postage stamps, most of which were printed, issued, and supervised under postal operations directly administered by our country, have received scant notice in the specialized catalogues of U.S. issues, even though our postal services in other nations militarily occupied by the U.S. (i.e., the Philippines, Cuba, etc.) have such recognition. We agree that this situation very much needs to be corrected.

*This Handbook comes to our readers as part of your subscription to **USS&PH**. It is the first of many such handbooks which will be made available **only** to our readers. RLN]*

INTRODUCTION

Whereas 1991 commemorated the 50th anniversary of the start of America's fighting involvement in World War II, 1993 marks the 50th anniversary of the start of the peace process in that war.

To this end, preparations were made months and even years in advance to develop a system for governing the occupied territories under military control. This system was first called the Allied Military Government in Occupied Territories (AMGOT), but the name was soon shortened to Allied Military Government (AMG). The AMG set up training programs in several places including North Africa. The military establishment assigned servicemen who were experienced in various aspects of government to the program.

As part of the plan, communications were considered most important and the restoration of postal services was given high priority. The U.S. War Department ordered the production of postage stamps for use

in these temporary military possessions. The job was assigned (as shown in Fig. 1) to the U.S. Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP), a part of the Treasury Department, which designed, printed and distributed stamps to be used by civilians in the occupied territories. In addition, the War Dept. also ordered the production of currency for each of the occupied countries (Fig. 2).

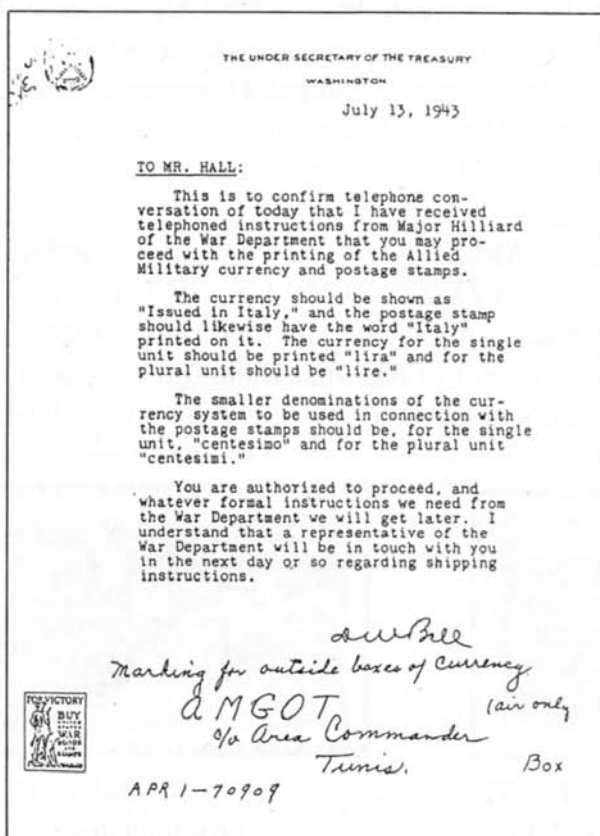


Fig. 1. Order to the Bureau of Engraving and Printing to proceed with printing the first AMG stamps for Italy in July, 1943.



Fig. 2. Type of currency issued by the Allied Military Government in Germany.

WHAT ARE AMGs?

These three capital letters, though often seen in articles and advertising in philatelic journals, are still something of a mystery to most collectors. In a philatelic sense, the expression AMG refers to the occupation stamps issued by the Allied Military Government. These were printed for the most part by the BEP to be used in Italy, France, Germany, and Austria.

Demand in immediate post-war Europe soon outstripped the supply of the BEP-produced stamps and the AMG printed additional issues locally in the occupied countries. All of these were produced under the strict supervision of the U.S. and the Allies.



Fig. 3.
High value of
Sicily AMG issue.



Fig. 3A. Naples
Overprint on Italy
Royalist issue.



Fig. 3B.
The AMG Bari
Wolf issue.

PHILATELIC ACTION OF THE AMG

As soon as Sicily became secure, the first AMG was put in place. In August, 1943, the restoration of the postal services began, and the AMG put the BEP-produced stamps for Italy into use (Fig. 3). The AMG worked so well in Sicily that it was then introduced into areas of mainland Italy as they were conquered. However, in view of the Italian surrender in September, 1943, the original AMG stamps were not put on sale on the mainland and hence the first issue is usually called the AMG Sicily issue.

In Naples, the AMG overprinted three Italian stamps of the 1929 Royalist series with *GOVERNO MILITAIRE ALLEATO* (Fig. 3A). At about the same time, the AMG granted permission for the Italian provisional government of Marshal Badoglio to issue a single stamp which has since come to be known as the *Bari Wolf Issue* (Fig. 3B).



Fig. 4. AMG-VG
Overprint on
Italian stamp.



Fig. 5. The AMG-FTT
Overprint of the
Local Type

Later, in the disputed territory of Venezia Giulia at the head of the Adriatic Sea, the Allies introduced an AMG after occupying the area in

1945. This continued until the peace treaty was signed with Italy in 1947. Throughout that period, the AMG issued postage stamps (Fig. 4).

Subsequently, the AMG was continued in the Free Territory of Trieste (FTT) for an additional eight years until the dispute with the Yugoslavians was resolved. The FTT was divided between Italy and Yugoslavia by the United Nations in 1954. During those years of military occupation the AMG issued a significant number of stamps (Fig. 5).



Fig. 6. AMG
France II issue
with value
overprint



Fig. 7. AMG
Germany
"AM POST"
issue.



Fig. 8. AMG
Austria
"Posthorn"
issue

After the invasion of France, the stamps printed in Washington for the AMG in that country were put into service. These U.S.-produced issues, although controversial, were widely employed by the French postal system (Fig. 6).

The most extensively used issue of the AMG series was that produced for Germany. Because of the stamp wording, it became known as the *AM Post* issue (Fig. 7).

The final AMG series for Europe was for Austria. The BEP printed 17 values and these were used to limited degree after the Austrian liberation (Fig. 8). Later, 15 of the values were overprinted *PORTO* by the Austrian government for use as postage dues.

To summarize, the AMG produced a series of 132 basic stamps for use in these temporary United States military possessions in Europe. These include the Sicily, the Naples and the AMG-VG issues for Italy, the two sets for France, plus those for Germany and Austria.

Also under the AMG collecting umbrella, we note several other entities including the Italian Provisional Government issue, called the *Bari Wolf*. Then, the AMG-FTT issued in excess of 200 postage stamps in the Free Territory of Trieste. Also, two of the *AM POST* issue were later overprinted as Travel Permit Stamps in Germany.



Fig. 9. AMG Administrative Revenue stamp.

In passing, we should remember that there were also fiscal issues for the AMG-VG and the AMG-FTT which present the possibility of extending an AMG collection (Fig. 9). And finally, the AMG produced postal stationery in Venezia Giulia, the Free Territory of Trieste and in the Germany Bizone.

AMG COLLECTING

Of the basic AMG collection of 132 stamps, 70 were printed by the BEP in Washington. These emissions were designed by members of the BEP, people who are also associated with the U.S. stamps of the time. The other 62 AMG stamps were printed overseas as a matter of expediency.

There are other facets of AMG collecting: for instance, all the values printed at the BEP are collected in Plate No. blocks just as are issues of the United States. Due to the wartime conditions of procurement and quality control, there are many varieties of papers, perforations and inks which add interest to these stamps. Some spectacular errors have surfaced through the years. Essays, proofs and specimens add interest to a number of the issues.

While the AMG stamps are recognized by and listed in the *Scott Catalogue*, they are widely scattered under the listings of these liberated countries. Efforts to have them listed in the *Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps* as temporary U.S. possessions have to date been unsuccessful.

The popularity of the AMGs seems greater in Germany and Italy than in the United States. This fact not only affects retail prices of the material but is making it increasingly difficult to buy large lots and collections even in the U.S.A. where the foreign dealers are regularly placing bids.

Prices have been rising at the rate of 10% a year in Italy, which boasts three major catalogs dealing in the Italian AMG issues. Buyers there are avidly seeking the few errors and varieties that exist.

In Germany, the *Michel Catalog* is boosting the AMG issues in a major fashion. The listings in their specialized catalog have risen from a few paragraphs a few years ago to nearly 15 pages at present.

In the U.S.A., a more complete historical account of the AMGs along with comprehensive listings of the varieties appears in the *Bush AMG Catalog-Handbook*. This is obtainable from Joseph V. Bush, Inc., P.O. Box 626, Bonita, CA 91908.

This present handbook and catalog of the AMG issues is presented by **U.S. STAMPS & Postal History** magazine in an effort to give an overview of this material that is not readily available to the American collecting fraternity. It is hoped that during this time of recollections of the World War II period, some who have seen some of the AMG stamps and wondered what they represented, or who have been unaware of this very interesting collecting area will be alerted to its potential and will find the same pleasure from collecting AMGs that many have in the past.

THE AMG CATALOG LISTINGS

AMG SICILY



Fig. 10. AMG Sicily plate block with both colored and black plate numbers.



Fig. 11. AMG Sicily marginal inscription block for the color plate.

Printed by the BEP in Washington, D.C. for the U. S. War Department. Design: Original wash drawing by Wm. K Schrage; approved June 4, 1943 Engravers: Edw.Helmuth: Frames, lettering; C. Arlt: center ornament; J. Vail: numerals

This issue was printed by offset lithography on a two color press. The basic stamps are in color with country and monetary designation added in black. It was apparently the plan to use the same design for all of the occupied countries by simply replacing the country name and monetary designation. However, the design of the first nine stamps included unit values 1, 2, 5, 10, 15, 25, 30, 50, and 60. Unfortunately, these values did not fit in with the monetary systems of the countries other than Italy and new designs had to be executed for the later AMG issues.

The stamps were printed in sheets of 400, which were divided into four post office panes of 100. The sheets contained marginal inscriptions as well as plate numbers in both color and in black. (Figs. 10 & 11)

It should be pointed out that the plate numbers used are those in the BEP offset plate series and were therefore quite different from the intaglio series seen on the United States stamps of the period. The offset plate numbers were normally trimmed off the finished product at the BEP but in the case of the AMG issues, they were left in place.

The Plate numbers used are:

Colored stamp plates:

44687—15 Centesimi	44464—1 Lira
44688—25 Centesimi	44463—2 Lire
44460—30 Centesimi	44465—5 Lire
44467—50 Centesimi	44466—10 Lire
44462—60 Centesimi	

Black overprint plates

44622—Overprint of “ITALY” and “CENTESIMI”
44621—Overprint of “ITALY” and “LIRA” (singular)
44620—Overprint of “ITALY” and “LIRE” (plural)



Fig. 12. AMG Sicily
misperforated
stamp



Fig. 13. AMG
Sicily. Doubling of
color background.

There are two printings of this issue which are distinguished by the type of paper used:

First Printing: White wove paper (definite pattern seen when backlighted)

Second Printing: Clear wove paper (indistinct striations when backlighted)

Only the first four values have been seen on the clear wove paper. There is evidence that the higher values of the second printing were never issued but were destroyed by the Control Commission when the

issue was withdrawn from sale by the various AMG post offices.

There are numerous interesting varieties of the stamps in this series from the paper and gum types to printing errors and perforation freaks. (Figs. 12 & 13)



Fig. 14. AMG Sicily stamps used as postage dues.

As there were no postage due stamps issued by the AMG, stamps of the AMG Sicily series were occasionally used for this purpose. (Fig. 14). The stamps were used extensively in the restoration period and many interesting covers are to be found. (Fig. 15)



Fig. 15. AMG Sicily on cover from civilian to military mail system in Italy.

THE STAMP LISTINGS

Lithography Unwatermarked Perforation 11

CAT No.*	Description	MINT	USED
August 24, 1943			
1	15c Pale Orange (5,000,000)	1.00	1.00
September 15, 1943			
2	25c Olive (15,380,000)	1.00	1.00
3	30c Light Gray (15,100,000)	1.00	1.00
4	50c Light Violet (15,780,000)	1.00	1.00
5	60c Orange-yellow (11,910,000)	1.00	1.25
6	1L Yellow-green (10,530,000)	1.00	1.00
October 14, 1943			
7	2L Deep Rose (7,750,000)	1.00	1.50
8	5L Light Blue (7,920,000)	1.00	3.00
9	10L Buff (7,800,000)	1.00	4.50

* Catalog numbers from the *Bush AMG Catalog-Handbook*. Values derived from the *Sassone Italy Catalog*, 1993

AMG NAPLES

Due to the change in political environment in Italy, the AMG stamp series was not introduced into mainland Italy. The mainland came under the rule of the Italian Provisional Government of Marshal Badoglio. The then current Italian stamps were not considered offensive and their use was eventually permitted.

Once Naples had been secured militarily, three Italian stamps of the Royalist issue were overprinted in Italian: “GOVERNO MILITARE ALLEATO” under the control of the Allied Military Government at the printing plant of Richter and Co. which was found essentially intact in that city. (Fig. 16) The overprints were applied by offset lithography in shades of dark blue and red.



Fig. 16.
AMG Naples plain
paper proof of
gutter pair
(50c purple)

When these stamps were issued in December of 1943, a First Day of Issue ceremony was held for the first time by the Italian postal service. (Fig. 17) The idea was well received and has continued to the present.

Fig. 17.
First day cover
of the AMG
Naples series.
First FD ceremony
in Italy.



These stamps were used to a limited degree on the mail. However, quantities of the issue were utilized in accounting for postage due payments. The stamps were pasted in ledgers in the amount of each day's totals. Some of the pages have survived, and the stamps may be collected in that form (Fig. 18).



Fig. 18.
AMG Naples used
for postage due
accounting on piece
of account book.

Special note: The less-than-widely-known nature of these Allied Military Government issues does not mean that they are generally unavailable. Many AMG stamps, in mint and used condition, can be found from numerous U.S. specialty dealers. Usages on cover can often be located in dealers' boxes, sometimes mixed in with covers from the countries occupied by the AMG.

THE STAMP LISTINGS

Photogravure Watermark: Crown Perforation 14

Issued December 10, 1943

CAT No.*	Description	MINT:	USED
10	20c Red/Blue Overprint (360,000)	1.25	3.50
11	35c Blue/Red Overprint (50,000)	8.50	20.00
12	35c Blue/Vermilion Overprint (20,000)	45.00	55.00
13	50c Purple/Red Overprint (500,000)	0.20	1.50
14	50c Purple/Orange Overprint (200,000)	0.65	1.75

* Catalog numbers from the *Bush AMG Catalog-Handbook*;
Values derived from *Sassone Italy Catalog*, 1993.



Fig. 19 Badoglio
Essay prior to
Bari Wolf issue.



Fig. 20. The AMG Bari Wolf stamp used
on registered cover from Bari.

AMG BARI WOLF

With the Ministerial Ordinance of January 6, 1944, the Badoglio Provisional Government authorized the issuance of a special stamp to meet existing needs. Although Marshal Badoglio was the nominal head of the provisional government, his actions were under the sanction of the Allied Military Government authorities. It is on this basis that the stamps of this issue are considered a part of the AMG stamp issues.

The stamp itself shows the Capitoline Wolf with Romulus and Remus, the symbol of Rome, against an ornamental background. The Badoglio Government originally submitted a design with the signature of Marshal Badoglio emblazoned across the same background. (Fig. 19) This was vetoed by the Allies because it seemed too personal for a country that had just relinquished a dictatorship. First employed in the city of Bari (hence the name), the stamp was widely used throughout southern Italy. (Fig. 20)

THE STAMP LISTINGS

Lithographed Ungummed

CAT No.*	Description	MINT	USED
UNWATERMARKED			
B-1	50c Lilac and Light Salmon, Perf 11	----	----
B-2	50c Lilac and Light Salmon, Perf 11 x 11 $\frac{1}{2}$	----	----
B-3	50c Lilac and Light Salmon, Perf 11 $\frac{1}{2}$	0.30	0.35
WATERMARKED			
B-4	50c Lilac and Light Salmon, Perf 11 x 11 $\frac{1}{2}$	----	----
B-5	50c Lilac and Light Salmon, Perf 11 $\frac{1}{2}$	1.00	1.10

*Catalog numbers from the *Bush AMG Catalog-Handbook*. Values derived from the *Sassone Italy Catalog*, 1993.

This is an extremely fascinating issue in that there are numerous varieties to be collected including many ink and perforation types, printing flaws and errors as well as essay and proof material. (Fig. 21)



Fig. 21. AMG Bari Wolf with doubled wolf, one inverted.



Figs. 23. (left) AMG-VG stamp with inverted overprint. Fig. 24 (middle). AMG-VG stamp with double overprint. Fig. 25 (right). AMG-VG overprint missing from one stamp of a pair.



Fig. 26. AMG-VG 100L high value with double perfs at top.

Fig. 27. AMG-VG airmail stamp with double overprint, one inverted.



AMG-VG

The Allied Military Government issued a series of 31 stamps in Venezia Giulia, the disputed territory surrounding Trieste at the head of the Adriatic Sea. These were Italian stamps which were overprinted "AMG-VG" locally in Trieste. Four different types of overprints were used for the different stamp formats.

The set of AMG-VG stamps offers many varieties of watermarks and gums as well as double, inverted, displaced, etc. overprints. (Figs. 22-27. Fig. 22 appears on page 1 of this handbook) During the more than two years of the AMG-VG, these overprinted stamps were extensively used on both domestic and foreign mail. (Figs 28-29). The stamps also saw some use as postage dues. (Fig. 30)



Fig. 28. AMG-VG registered cover to the United States with 100L high value.



Fig. 29. AMG-VG letter to New York, "routed via ACCO"

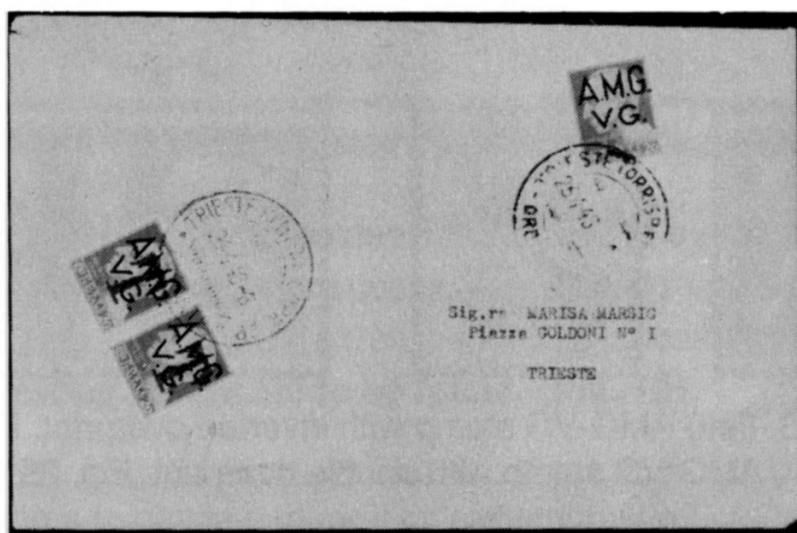


Fig. 30. AMG-VG stamps used as postage dues

THE STAMP LISTINGS

Photogravure Perforation 14

CAT No.*	MINT	USED
September 22, 1945		
WATERMARK: CROWN		
15 10c Dark Brown; Fasces in design (3,200,000)	0.30	0.30
16 50c Brown: Air Post stamp used as regular (3,071,851)	0.30	0.50
WATERMARK: WINGED WHEEL I		
17 20c Red-rose without Fasces (2,333,000)	0.30	0.50
18 60c Dark Slate Green (2,332,821)	0.30	0.30
19 1L Violet (11,949,022)	0.35	0.30
20 2L Dark Red (12,350,908)	0.40	0.30
21 10L Purple (2,785,115)	1.00	0.25
November 25, 1945		
UNWATERMARKED		
22 10c Brown (3,086,000)	0.30	0.30
23 20c Red-rose (1,000,000)	0.50	0.50
24 60c Red-orange (400,000)	0.30	0.30
October 16, 1945		
WATERMARKED: WINGED WHEEL I		
25 5L Dark Red (4,680,136)	0.75	0.50
July 10, 1946		
WATERMARK: CROWN		
26 20L Light Green (350,100)	2.50	3.50
WATERMARK: WINGED WHEEL I		
27 25L Dark Green (291,656)	4.50	6.50
28 50L Dark Violet-brown (213,700)	5.50	7.50
September 13, 1946		
WATERMARK: WINGED WHEEL III		
29 100L Dark Lake - First printing	22.00	25.00
29A 100L Carmine Lake Second printing (142,700 - both printings)	25.00	30.00

December 9, 1946**WATERMARK: CROWN**

30 20c Red-rose with Fasces (2,000,041)	0.30	0.30
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January 8, 1947**WATERMARK: WINGED WHEEL I**

31 25c Bright Green-blue (2,867,000)	0.30	0.30
32 3L Red (3,186,722)	0.50	0.50
33 4L Red-orange (2,594,792)	0.75	0.40

July 17, 1947**WATERMARK: WINGED WHEEL I**

34 2L Brown (2,119,000)	0.60	0.75
35 6L Purple (319,886)	2.00	2.25
36 20L Dark Red-violet (360,227)	45.00	25.00

AIR MAIL ISSUES**WATERMARK: WINGED WHEEL I****September 13, 1946**

37 25L Dark Blue (150,300)	2.00	2.50
38 50L Dark Green (171,363)	3.50	5.00

January 16, 1947

39 2L Dark Brown (314,806)	0.30	0.30
40 5L Dark Green ((180,242)	2.00	2.50
41 10L Carmine (178,843 Sold)	2.00	2.50

July 23, 1947

42 1L Slate (498,755)	0.30	0.30
43 25L Brown (121,102)	22.50	25.00

AIR MAIL SPECIAL DELIVERY**September 13, 1946**

44 10L Deep Blue (541,721)	5.00	4.50
45 30L Deep Violet (138,401)	12.50	13.50

*Catalog numbers from the *Bush AMG Catalog-Handbook*.
Values derived from *Sassone Italy Catalog, 1993*.

To Be Continued

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