



Military Corner

Military Covers

As far as I know, Military covers don't begin appearing until the period in between World Wars I and II; that's 1918-1941. There are some early Red Cross covers from the World War I era, but the ones I've seen are Patriotics rather than Military. The earliest actual Military covers that I have any record of are probably several Crowns. One, San Diego USMC, is actually dated 1938, but even if the others were earlier, they couldn't be prior to 1933, since that's when Crown started. There are two Military DQ's listed, both from Pearl Harbor that are most probably from around then, as well. Of course, the first Navy Ship cover was issued in 1923, so it's reasonable to assume that there were probably some Military covers that were earlier than the 1933-1938 period. Perhaps someone like a Jim Benes or John Mathot might let us know if they know of such.

The Golden Age of Military covers came with World War II. By then, the big match manufacturers were going strong, and that coincided with the explosion of military bases and personnel around the country. Also ready in the wings and raring to go at the same time, lucky for us, was the era of great matchcover art, plus Walt Disney, plus a resulting wave of nationalism, etc. And so we have most of the treasures in this category. Currently, there are 7,343 Military covers listed, and I haven't updated those lists since 2005. I would be surprised if the total eventually tops 10,000 one day.

For those of us who served in the Military, this category is even more special, I think. In successive articles in this series, we'll explore the wonderful world of Military covers.

