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## Holiday Stamps of Approval

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# Holiday Stamps of Approval

by Helen Greene

**F**ROM Anywhere to Everywhere" is the slogan of the parcel post. Giving and receiving which comes with the Christmas season entails the mailing, sorting and delivering of gifts, a great responsibility to the parcel post.

Last month was designated by the Post Office Department as National Parcel Post Month to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of its establishment. No other agency affords the same coverage or convenience with 45,000 post offices and 35,000 rural routes covering 1,280,000 miles every day.

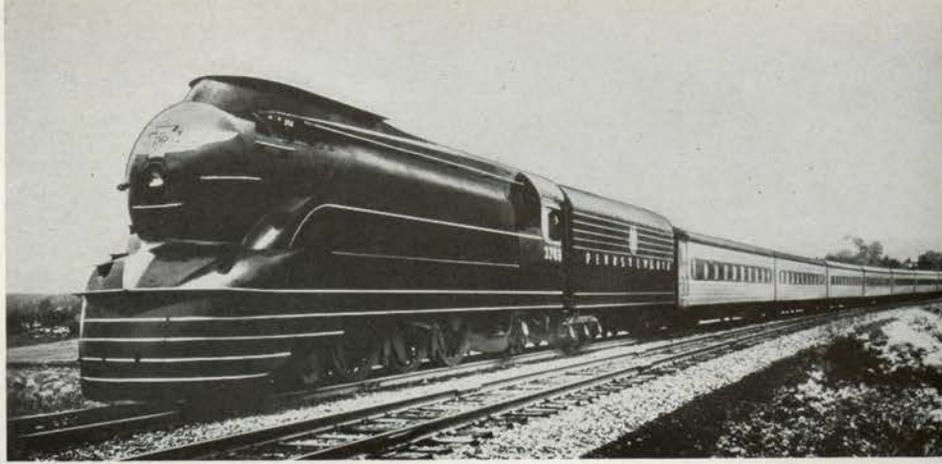
Overseas holiday period of mailing commences about the middle of November. It is not possible to state when parcel post packages will be delivered, due to customs formalities, but all parcels should be mailed as early as possible.

Persistent demands for more and better service have resulted in raising the limits of weight and bulk, modification of rates and general expansion of facilities. Any parcel not exceeding 100 inches in length and girth combined, with a limit of 70 pounds for weight, may be sent by parcel post. The length is the distance from end to end and the distance around the thickest part is the girth.

All parcels sent by parcel post should be securely wrapped in strong paper and tied with stout string or twine. Boxes may be used to which the lids are nailed or screwed, provided the lids can be readily removed for examination of the contents.

If umbrellas, canes and similar articles are reinforced by strips of wood breakage may be prevented. Hats must be packed in strong boxes of double-faced corrugated fiberboard of adequate size. Cut flowers and candies are best enclosed in strong containers securely fastened. Books must have the edges well protected with stiff material.

Articles easily broken may be safely packed with ample cushioning material of excelsior completely surrounding them and should be labeled "Fragile." Photographs, for example, should be protected by two layers of corrugated card board laid at right angles. Perishable articles must be marked "Perishable," and it is a good idea to send them as special-delivery matter by the



addition of a special-delivery fee to the regular postage. In this way more rapid delivery is insured.

If, in the opinion of the acting employee, the package produced for mailing is not correctly or sufficiently wrapped it can be rejected. Postal officials advise that the name of addressee be placed on one side of the package only with your return address on a slip of paper inside the parcel in case the wrapping becomes torn or damaged.

Packages cannot be delivered which lack addresses through carelessness of wrapping or carelessness on the part of the sender in using addresses. These articles go to the dead letter offices. Eventually the gifts are sold and the money is kept by the Post Office Department.

It is interesting to note that in the year of 1937 over 12 million letters were undeliverable in the United States. Of these letters, 100,000 contained money totaling \$230,000. Profits to the government from undeliverable and unreturnable packages were nearly \$100,000.

For a very small additional fee parcels may be insured for their present value. The package travels along with the ordinary mail, but in the event that it is lost the department will pay the actual cost of the contents.

If the article is a valuable one which cannot be replaced, then it is suggested that you send it by registered mail because mail of this type never leaves the postal employee's hand. Rarely ever is a registered package lost because employees must sign a receipt for it every time the article is transferred to another post office or train.

"Do's and don'ts" arise for the all-important subject of Christmas cards as the Christmas season draws near. Suggestions for signatures are many to provide variety and personality.

Signatures may be either printed or engraved. The lettering of the signature, however, should either match or contrast with that of the card sentiment. A new note in printing is the use of block letters of gold, silver or a vivid color—red, green or yellow. White may be used against a background of color. To achieve a smart effect print the name in block letters and the greeting in script or vice versa.

The handwritten signature adds a more personal touch and is growing in popularity. It can be adapted to almost any card by using script or semi-script for the wording of the greeting. One

disadvantage, of course, is the expense of having the special name plate made.

Special greetings can be created from the cards in booklet form with the inside page bare. The sender then writes his own message or selects a greeting of his preference. This permits the use of any color in printing, individual written notes, or a plate can be produced with the seasonal greeting and a signature.

The correct form of engraved signatures is to use the name first because Mr., Mrs. or Miss should never be part of the signature. This means that calling card plates are not permissible for engraving Christmas cards.

Informal cards with gay, friendly messages may be signed either "The Jimmy Browns" or if the first names are used, the husband's or wife's may come first. Engraved signatures require the husband's name be placed first and if hand-written the wife's name first.

The envelopes should be addressed by hand in ink with particular attention paid to the initials and spelling of the name. In the case of two envelopes the name and address are written in full only on the outer envelope.

The name and address of the sender is often written on the flap of an envelope, serving not only as a return address but also as a notification of the sender's present address.

Christmas greeting cards may be mailed with 1½ cents postage, unsealed and with your name and a sentiment such as "Good Wishes" provided no information is conveyed. But if you say, "Will arrive on 8 o'clock train," put a 3 cent stamp on the envelope if you expect it to be sent. In view of the rate, these Christmas greetings bearing 1½ cents postage cannot be forwarded or returned to the sender, nor are they entitled to directory service. They become dead letters if undeliverable. Therefore, if you are in doubt as to the correct address use a 3 cent stamp, which entitles you to all the service due first class mail.

The use of bright colored cards and envelopes, such as red, green and blue, is undesirable as the color makes the writing more or less illegible and difficult to dispatch. Also, envelopes of odd sizes, particularly very small envelopes, are difficult for dispatchers to handle in distribution when they tie the packages for train travel.