TOP

Letter from Anderson, Indiana to Virginia Keckler mailed August 10, 1940

MIDDLE

Letter from Fort Wayne, Indiana to Virginia Keckler mailed October 1, 1940

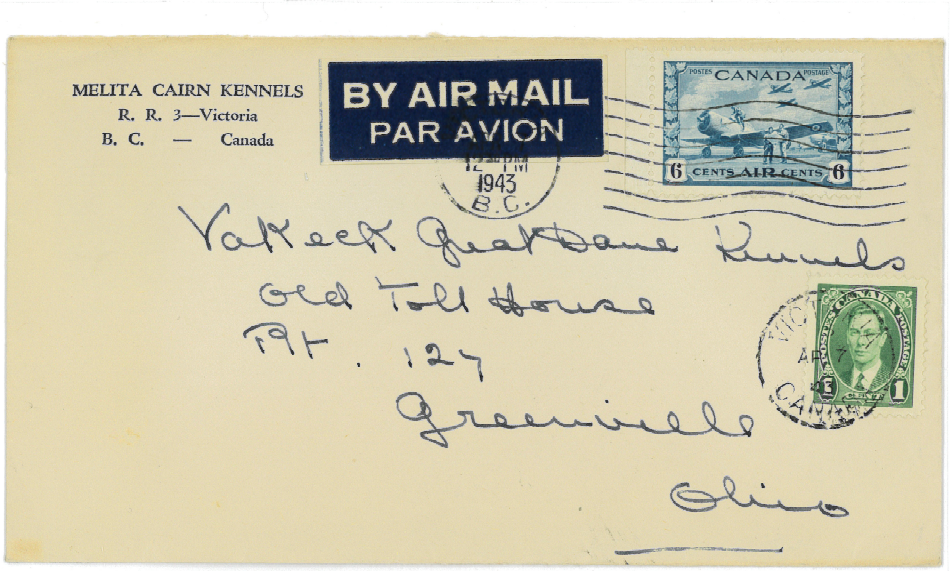
BOTTOM

Letter from Glenview, Illlinois to Vakeck Kennels mailed September 26, 1936.

Letter from New Paltz, New York to Virginia Keckler mailed March 17, 1936.

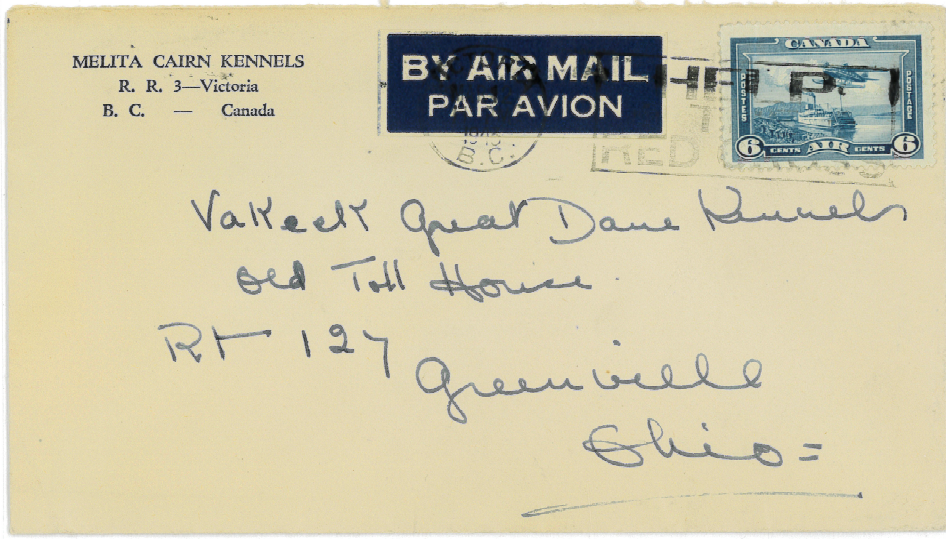
Letter from Norfolk, Virginia to Virginia Keckler mailed January 15, 1939.

In conjunction with their kennel business, the Kecklers corresponded with breeders and businesses throughout the world.

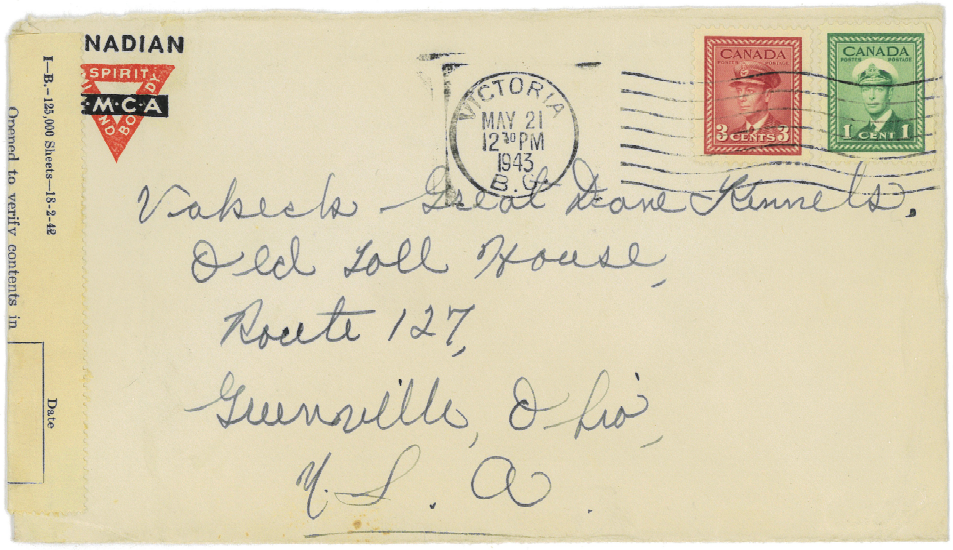


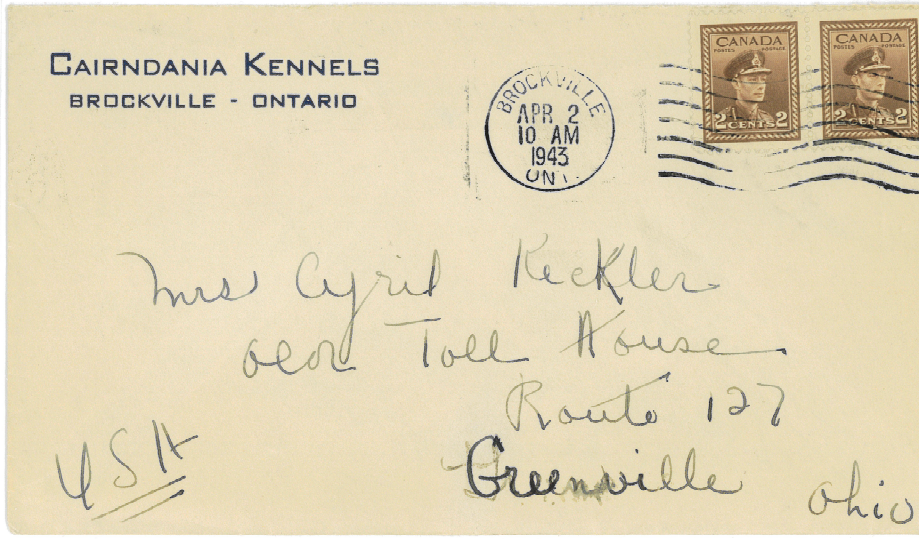
Canada has issued only thirteen airmail stamps, the last in 1946. The stamp on the letter from the Melita Cairn Kennels on the left was mailed on April 7, 1943 from Victoria, British Columbia. The stamp, issued in 1938, shows the Mackenzie River and a steamer and seaplane.

The letter on the right, mailed in 1945, pictures planes and student flyers. It was issued to commemorate Canada's contribution to the war effort of the Allied Nations.



This letter was sent from Victoria, Canada to the Vakeck Kennels on May 21, 1943. During World War II, some mail was censored. Note the censor tape which sealed the envelope after it was opened .The censor tape reads: "Opened to verify contents in accordance with requirements of Foreign Exchange Control Board and officially sealed by . . ." The signature is not recognizable, but this letter was opened before it left Victoria.

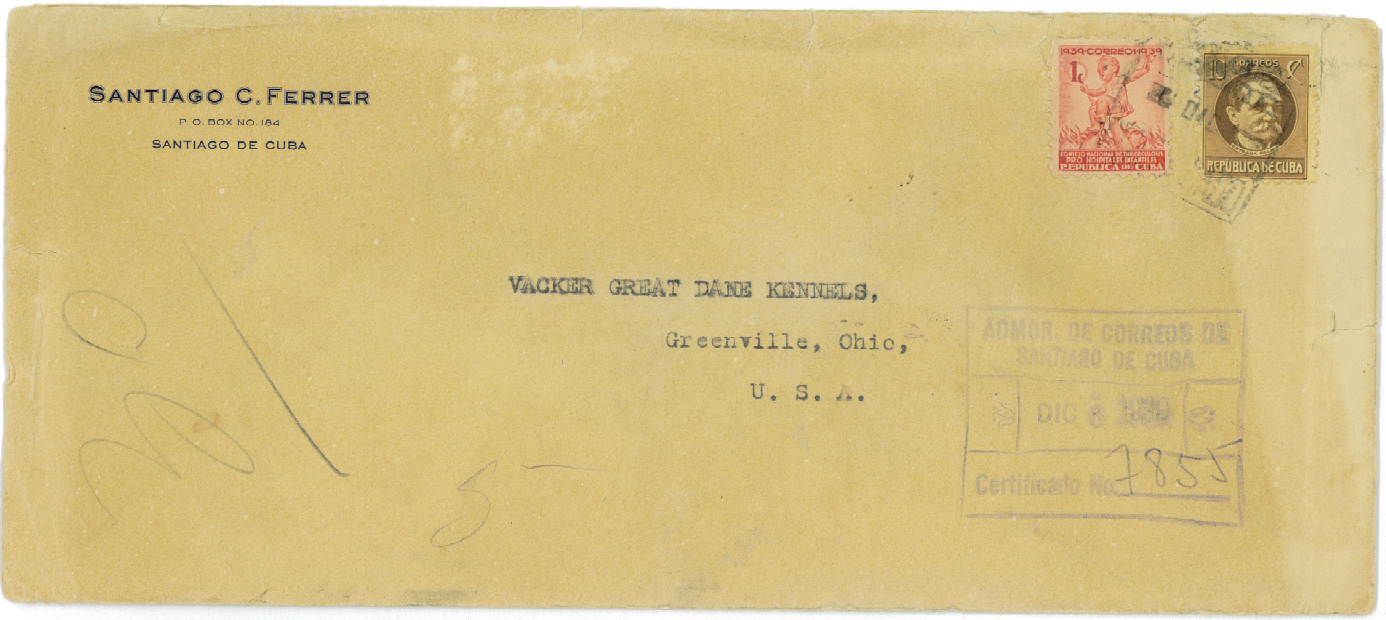




Letter from Brockville, Ontario, mailed to Cyril Keckler on April2, 1943.

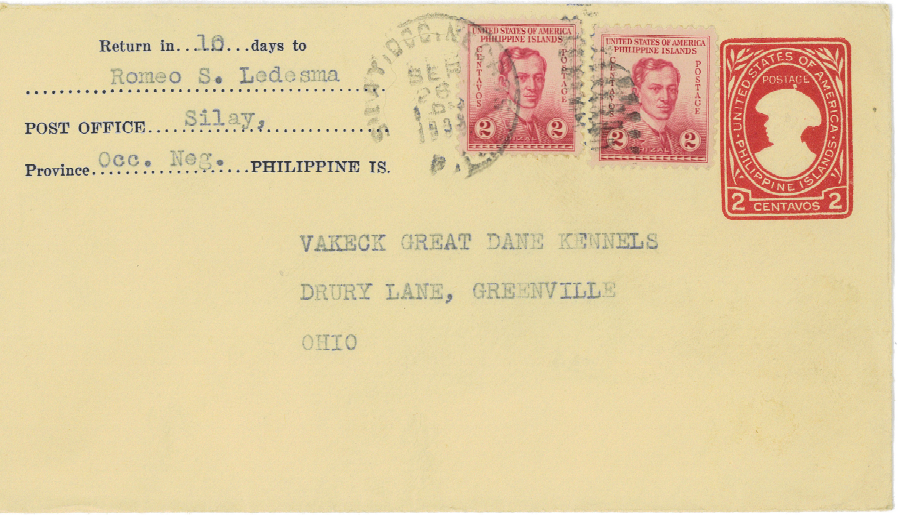
The Vakeck Kennels appeared to do business in Cuba on a regular basis.

This package was mailed to Virginia Keckler from Havana, Cuba by registered mail on January 27, 1940. Markings on the back indicate that it arrived at the Miami Florida Division of Foreign Mails on January 29, 1940. Today this office is called the Miami International Service Center – Inbound International Mail, and is managed by the United States Postal Service Office of the Inspector General. All inbound international mail is subject to inspection by U.S. Customs and Border Protection at one of five centers in the country to ensure compliance with federal regulations.

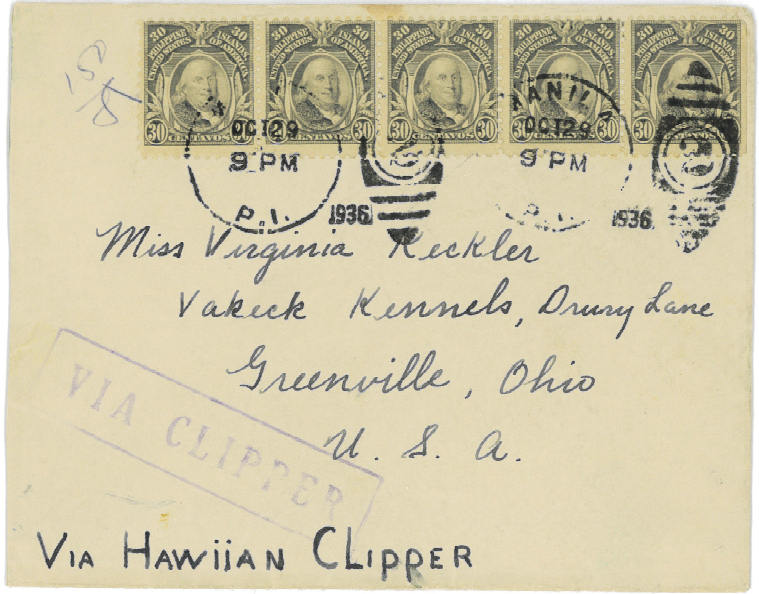


Letter to the Vakeck Kennels was mailed from Havana, Cuba on December 6, 1939 by registered mail. The markings on the back indicate it arrived in Miami, Florida on December 11, and was delivered to the Vakeck Kennels on December 13. Not bad for 82 years ago.

Letter mailed from Manila, Philippines on September 20, 1936 to Virginia Keckler/Vakeck Kennels. The stamp reads "United States of America Philippine Islands." The United States took possession of the islands in 1898 after the Spanish-American war. The islands were a territory of the United States from 1898 to July 4, 1946, when the United States recognized their independence.



Letter mailed from Silay, a city in the province of Negros Occidental in the Philippine Islands, on September 26, 1938 to Vakeck Great Dane Kennels. This 2 cent stamped envelope was issued by the U.S. during its occupation of the Philippines in 1935. The stamp pictures Juan dela Cruz. He was not a real person, but an image created by a newspaper editor in the early 1900s. The image is often used to represent the "Filipino every man". He is usually shown wearing the native hat, a salakot.

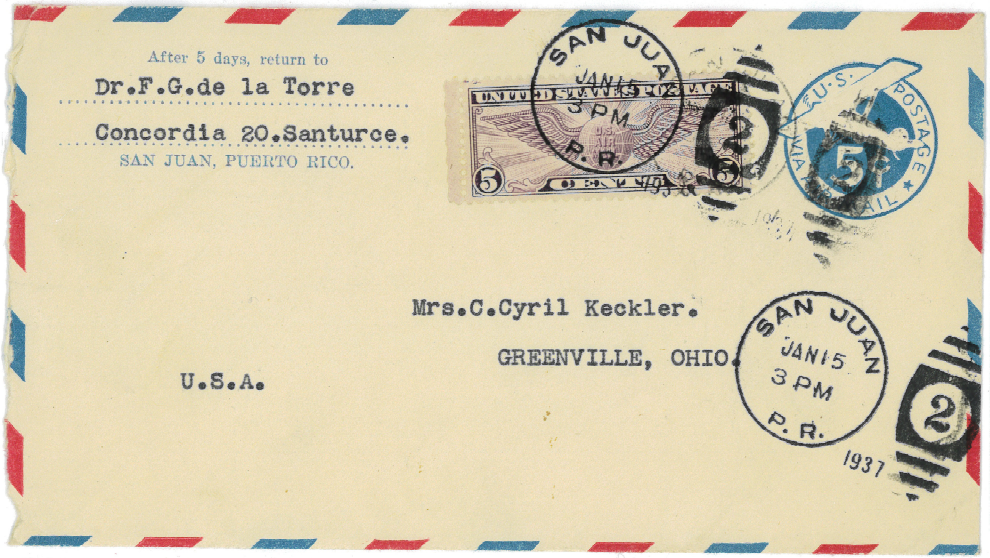


Letter sent from the Philippine Islands to Virginia Keckler on October 29, 1936. It was carried on the Hawaiian Clipper, one of three PanAmerican Airbus Martin M-130 flying boats. This plane's first fight was in May of 1936. The Clipper disappeared with six passengers and nine crew enroute from Guam to Manila on July 28, 1938. Its fate is still unknown.

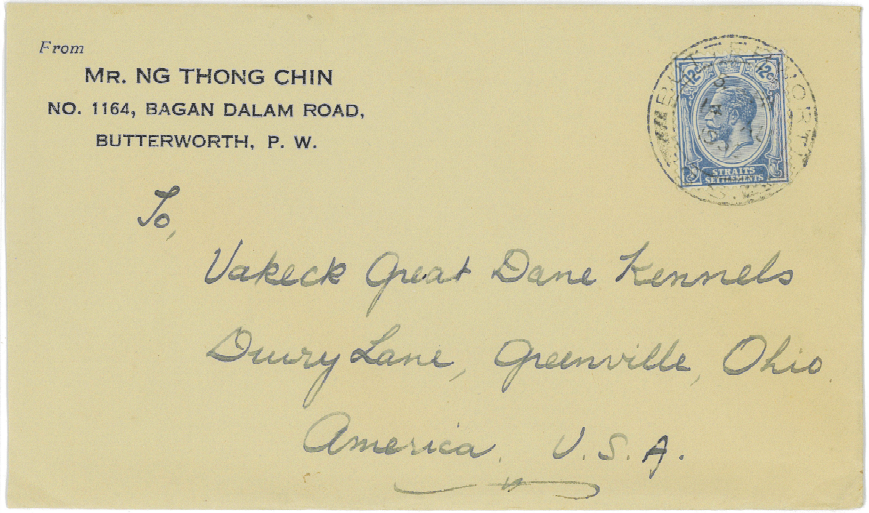
Photo from the official Civil Aeronautics Authority Investigation, 1938

Letter mailed from San Juan, Puerto Rico. Note the United States stamp. It was issued on November 25, 1937, the same day as the letter was mailed to Cyril Keckler. This is a "First Day Cover." Puerto Rico has been a territory of the United States since 1898, when the United States defeated Spain in the Spanish-American War. Though still a territory of the U.S., Puerto Ricans have been U.S. citizens since 1917.

Letter sent from Bermuda, a British colony, to the Vakeck Kennels in December, 1935. In that year, the same stamp was issued by 44 nations of the British Commonwealth to honor the Silver Jubilee of King George V who is pictured on the stamp.

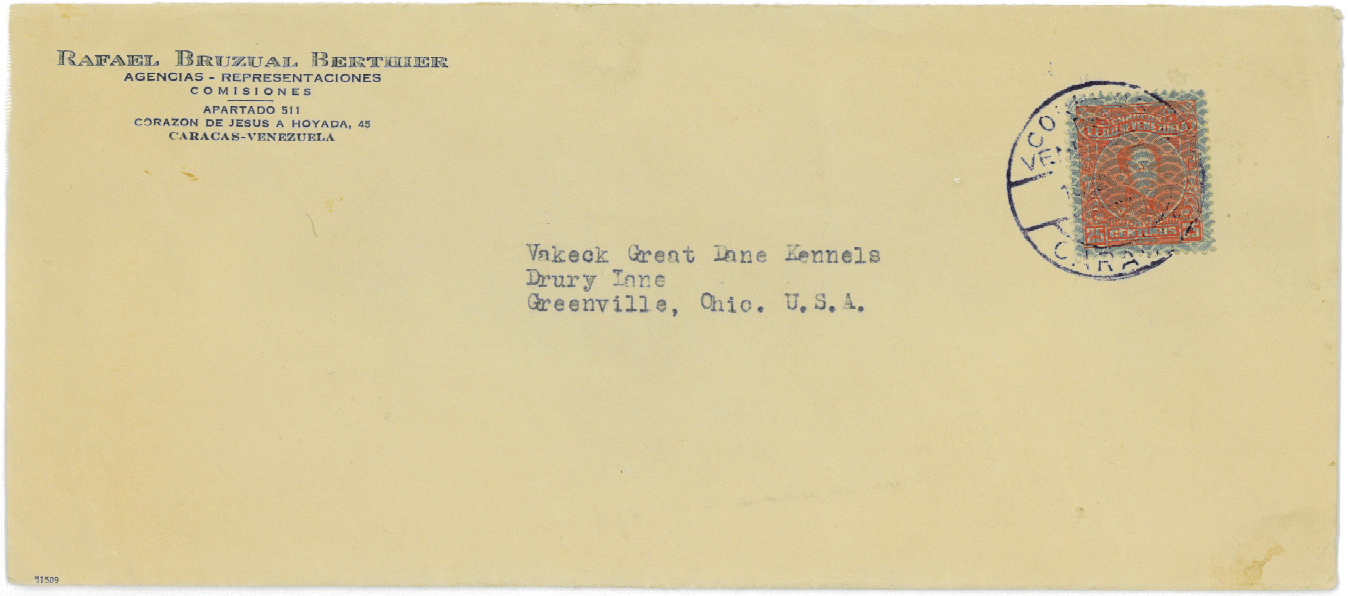


Letter mailed from the Straits Settlements to the Vakeck Kennels, probably in the early thirties. Straits Settlements were a British Crown Colony in what is now Malaysia, which is why it pictures King George V.



Letter from San Juan, Puerto Rico to Virginia Keckler mailed January 15, 1937. This is the most valuable envelope in the collection. Stamped airmail envelopes (see blue plane imprint) were produced by the U.S. Government for use in Puerto Rico, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands. All the airmail envelopes from 1929 to 1965 were printed by the International Envelope Corporation in Dayton, Ohio (located downtown by the river).

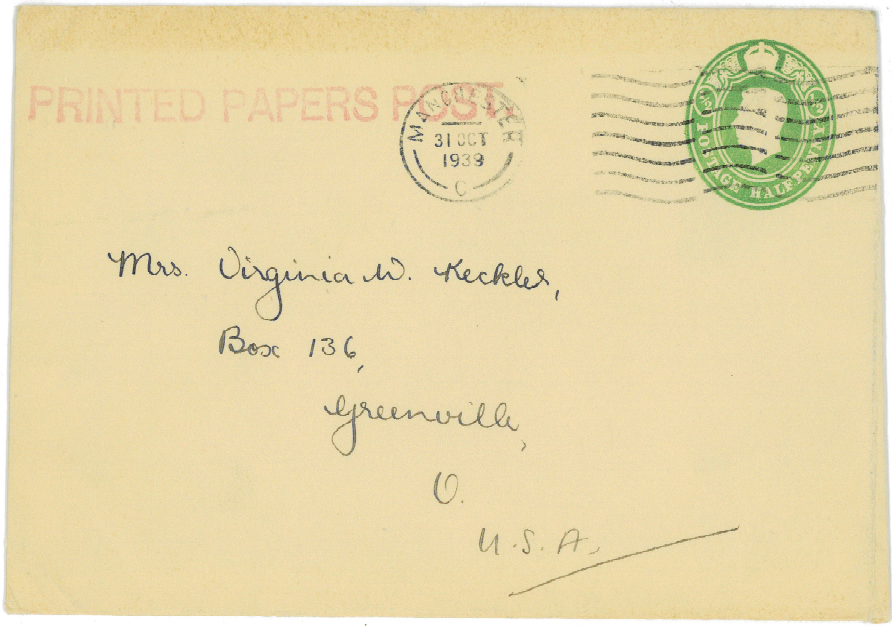
In 1936-37, the post office in Puerto Rico ran out of airmail envelopes and ordered more from the Dayton company. The last 5 cent airmail envelopes had already been printed so the company printed some extras. However, the contract with the government had changed, so the extra envelopes were printed on paper with a different watermark. These extra envelopes are rare, which increases their value to postal history collectors.



Letter mailed from Caracas, Venezuela to Vakeck Kennels, probably in the earlies thirties.

Although the envelopes in this collection include mail from all over the world, most of the Vakeck Kennels mail came from Europe.

Letter mailed from Pakistan to Virginia Keckler, probably in 1947 or 1948. India was divided into Pakistan and India in 1947 because the Hindus and Muslims in India were unwilling to coexist in the same nation. Pakistan used overprinted Indian stamps until they started printing their own stamps in 1948.



Letter sent to Virginia Keckler from Manchester in Great Britain on October 31, 1939. The postal marking "PRINTED PAPERS POST" means that it was sent at a discount rate because it contained printed items such as books, newspapers, or photographs. Personal letters could not be included. From the size of the envelope, it most likely contained photos.

Photo] [*Ralph Robinson, Redhill*

CHAMPION ZARINA OF SUDBURY.

Winner of the Kennel Club's 50 Guinea Ouborough Challenge Cup for best dog or bitch; also the Great Dane Club's Cup for best harlequin, three years in succession; best Dane, Club Show, August, 1933, and many other Trophies.

The "Sudbury" Kennel of HARLEQUIN GREAT DANES

The only Kennel in England to have bred and reared ~~SIX~~ CHAMPIONS of the Harlequin Variety, besides many other first prize winners.

AT STUD.

"ZADOR OF SUDBURY." First-prize winner, litter brother to **Ch. Zarina,** and sire of more winners than any other harlequin. **Fee 5 Guineas** (prepaid).

"ZIONIST OF SUDBURY."—Excellent outcross for the Zador progeny, sire of the well-known winners **Zyperion, Zerza** and **Zastur of Sudbury.** Other good ones to follow. **Fee 5 Guineas** (prepaid).

"ZANOFF OF SUDBURY."—Tall son of **Zador,** big winner and present holder of the Great Dane Club's two harlequin Cups; sire of many good litters. **Fee 5 Guineas** (prepaid).

"ZYPERION OF SUDBURY."—Young son of **Ch. Zarina,** winner and present holder of the Great Dane Club's Movement Cup. **Fee Five Guineas** (prepaid).

MRS. F. HATFIELD, SUDBURY, SUFFOLK

This flyer, sent to Vakeck Kennels picturing an English champion harlequin Great Dane, was marked in Sudbury, Suffolk in Great Britain in 1935.

Notice that the name of the country does not appear on these stamps. Great Britain is the only country whose postage stamps do not bear the name of the issuing country. In 1874, the Universal Postal Union exempted Great Britain from this requirement because Britain was the first country to produce postage stamps. However, a profile of the reigning monarch is required.

V. Keckler.
Vakeck Kennels.

The German Influence on America's Great Danes and the Impact of World War II.

Germany is considered the homeland of the Great Dane breed, where it was developed from a variety of large hunting dogs. Chancellor Otto von Bismarck (1815-1898) named the Great Dane the German National Dog. The Great Dane first appeared in the German show ring in 1863. It was valued for its size, handsomeness, and good temperament. In 1878, a committee was formed in Berlin to study the breed, and in 1888, the Council for German Great Danes was founded and subsequently established a breed standard.

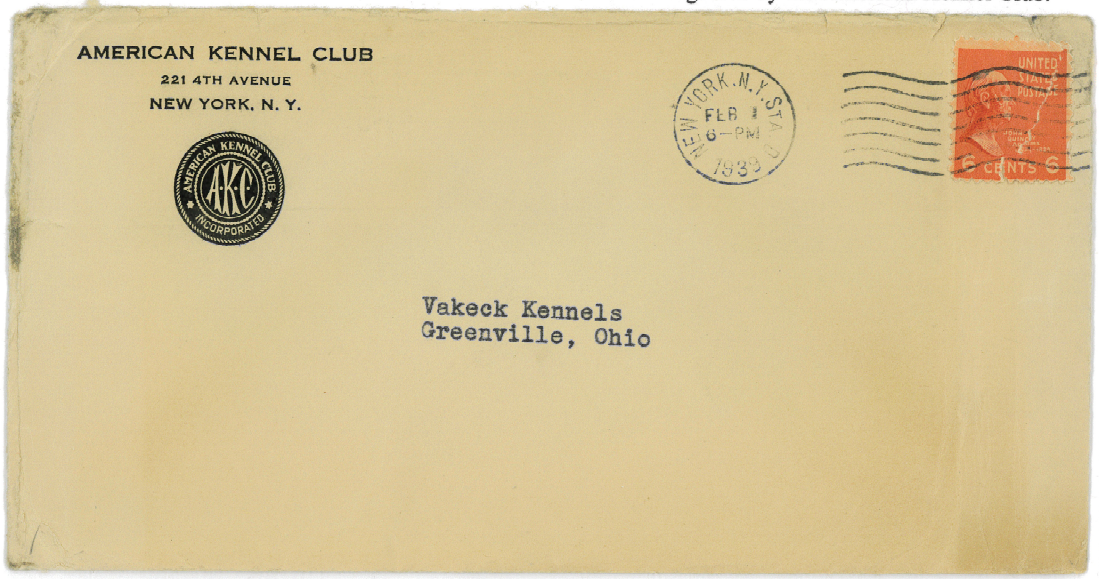
Mrs.
Virginia Keckler
in Greenville. Ohio
Drury Lane
Vakeck Kennels.

FACHSCHAFT FÜR DEUTSCHE DOGGEN

Fachschaft für Deutsche Doggen e. V.
im R. D. H. Gegründet 1888
CARL NARBE HANAU
Zuchtbuchwart

Letter sent from Hanau, Germany from the Council for German Great Danes to the Vakeck Kennels in 1932 or 1933. The images on the stamps picture Germany's President von Hindenburg, and were issued to celebrate his 85th birthday. Hitler took over Germany on Hindenburg's death in 1934.

In 1887, the Great Dane became one of the earliest breeds to be recognized by the American Kennel Club.



Letter from the American Kennel Club to Vakeck Kennels mailed from New York on February 1, 1939.

In 1899, the Great Dane Club of America was founded in Chicago, becoming one of the oldest breed specific clubs in the United States. In 1923, the Great Dane was officially recognized by the United Kennel Club, the largest all-breed performance-dog registry in the world.

Letter sent from Solln, a railway station in Munich, Germany, on April 13, 1936, to Virginia Keckler. The sender was Josef Stehberger.

World War II had been hard on the dog world. Breeders in Europe were exporting their stock in order to save them. In America, breeders cut traveling down from nationwide to local shows due to shortages created from the war.

Due to their excellent blood lines, much of the Vakeck Kennels breeding stock was imported from Germany. Virgina Keckler is quoted as having said, "The quality of a dog can be measured in only two ways. His show career, or the ability to produces sons and daughter of merit, or both."

One of the first of Vakeck Kennels imported Great Danes from Germany was Ilse St. Magn-Obertraubling, a female, in 1934.

LOCAL BREEDER BUYS IMPORTED GREAT DANE

Mr.and Mrs. C. Cyril Keckler, Greenville Great Dane fanciers, are announcing the purchase of an imported Great Dane bitch, Ilse St. Magn von Obertraubling, from the F.N. Nielson Importing Company of Chicago. Ilse is a German champion and was imported from the Deutschland last year. The Kecklers are planing to add the imported canine to their new kennelsto be located on East Water Street.

Greeenvile Daily Advocate, May 4, 1935

Josef Stehberg was the owner of the German Great Dane Kennels of St. Magn-Obertraubling. This collection includes seventeen letters from Mr. Stehberger to Virginia Keckler dated from April 13, 1936 to January 25, 1940.