

1941 to 1995

**U.S. Military Bases in
Bermuda and some
questions about their
relationship with the
Bermuda Post Office**

 **Horst Augustinovic**



WAR DEPARTMENT
U.S. ENGINEER OFFICE
BERMUDA SUREVY
ST. GEORGE'S, BERMUDA

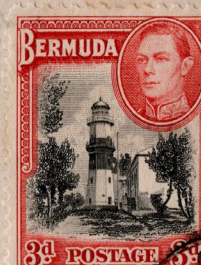
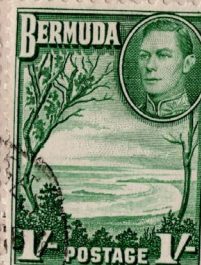
OFFICIAL BUSINESS



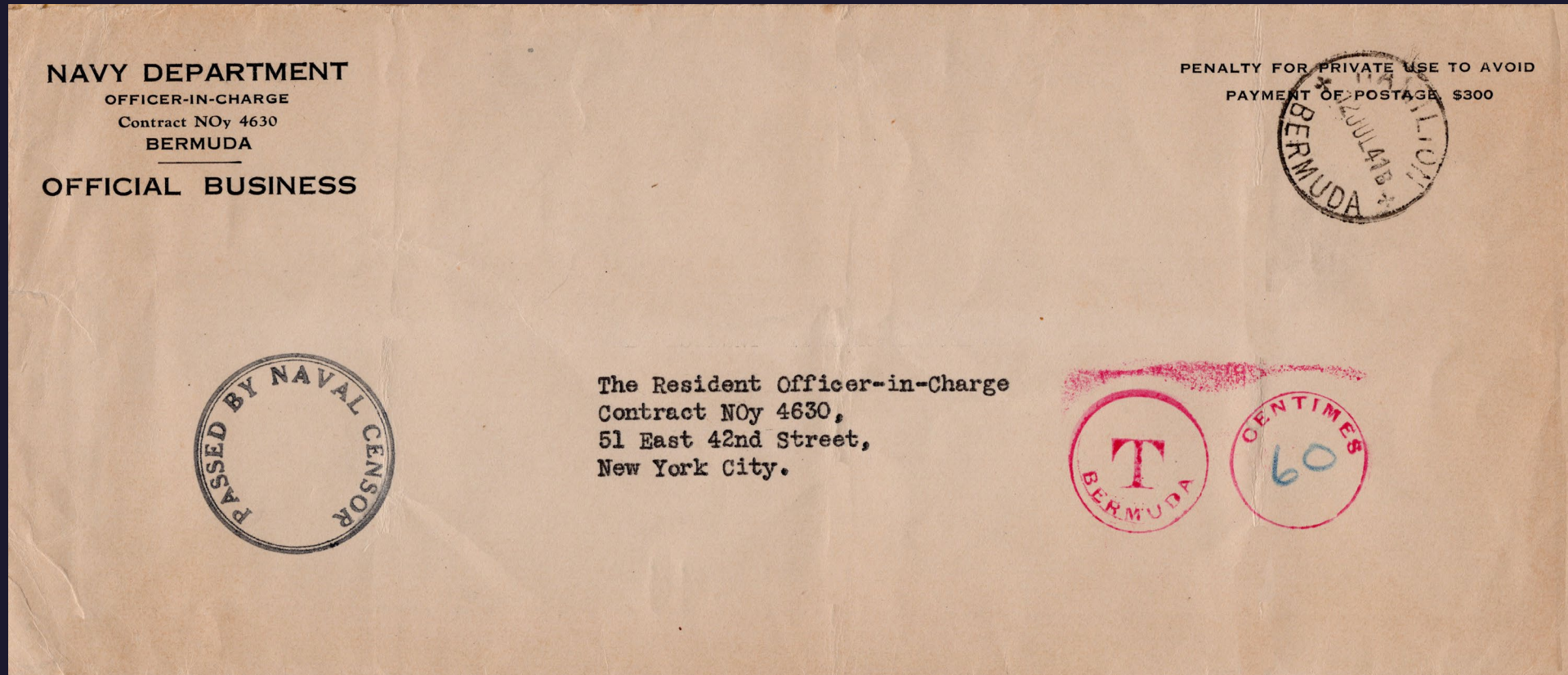
AIRMAIL

Mr. John W. Raymond, Jr.
Shaw, Naess & Murphy
Ford, Bacon and Davis, Inc.
Metcalf & Eddy
150 Broadway
New York, New York

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE TO AVOID
PAYMENT OF POSTAGE, \$300



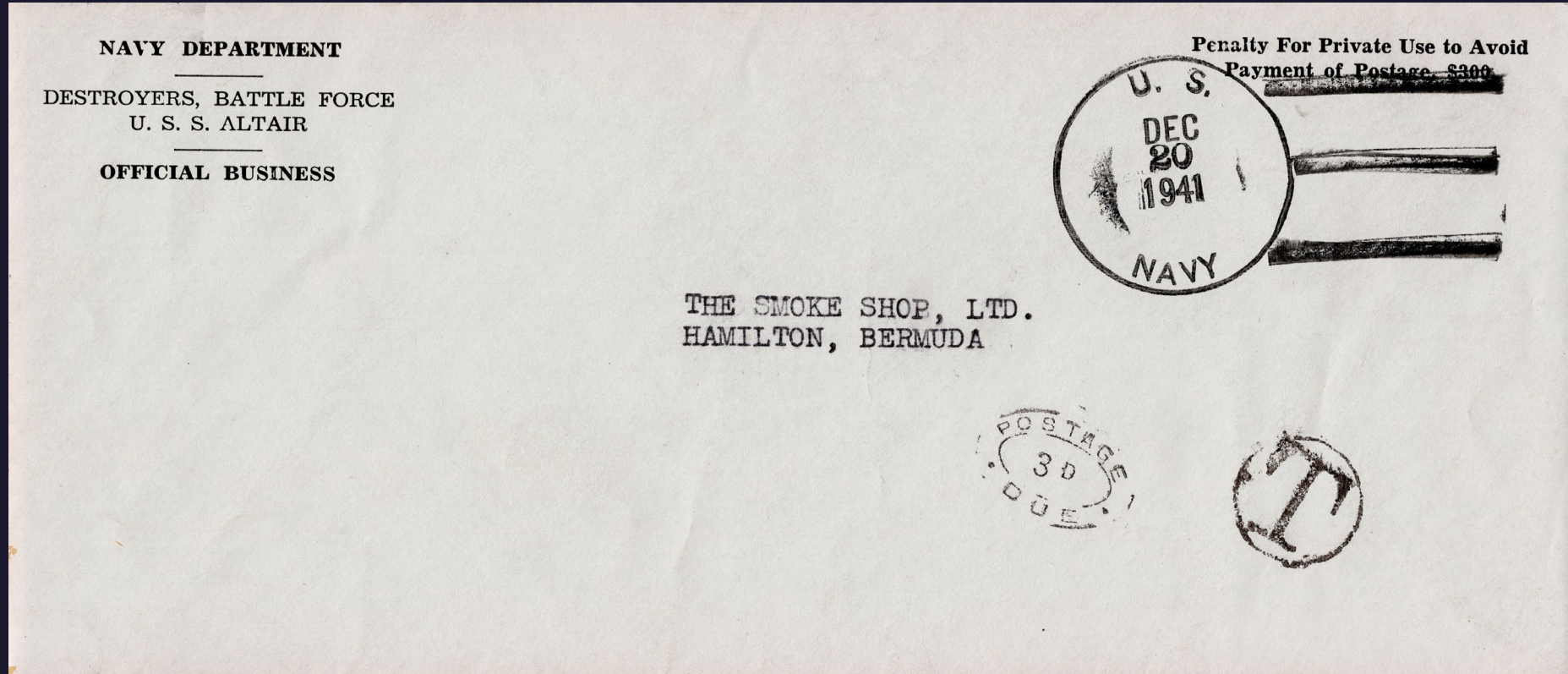
Early official U.S. mail was sent through the Bermuda Post Office. This cover from the 'BERMUDA SUREVY' (sic) was mailed in St. George's on February 8th, 1941, and passed by Bermuda Censor #23.



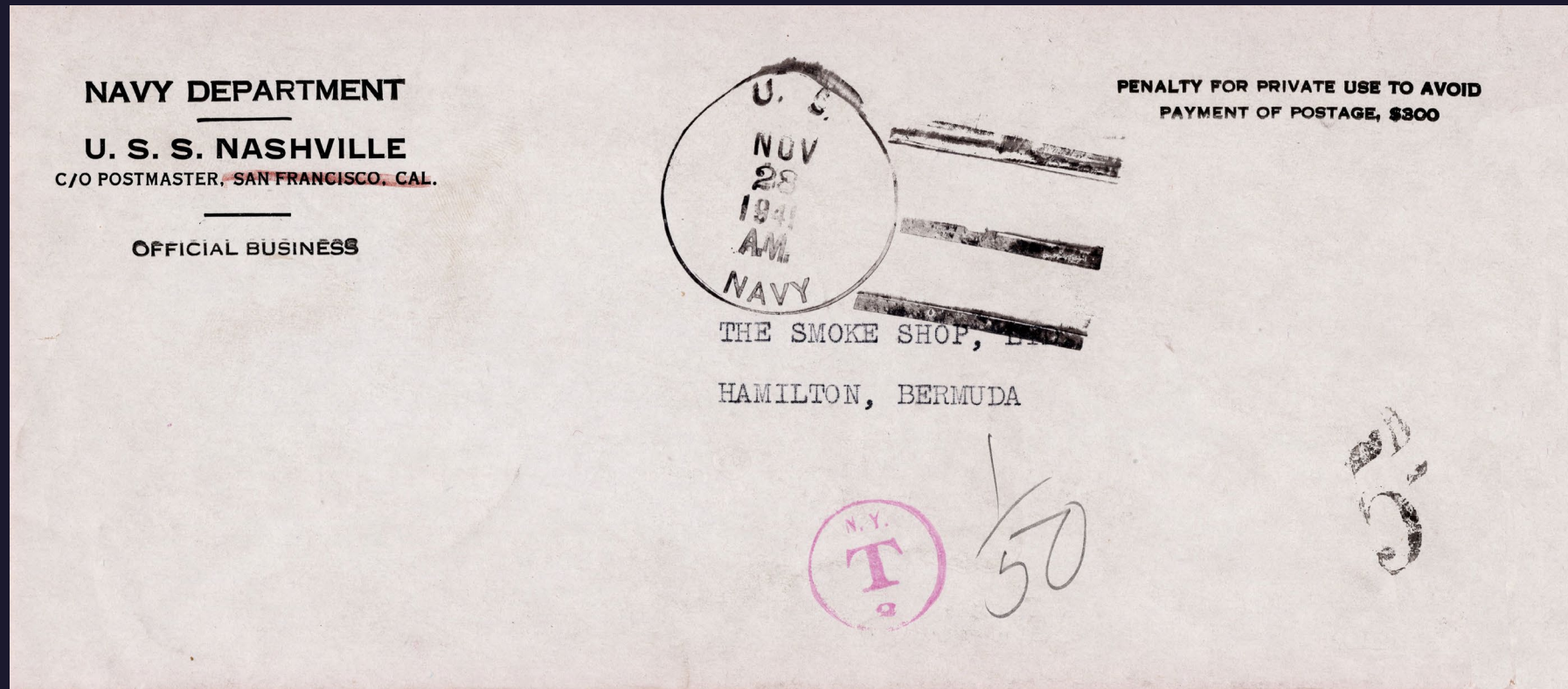
Mailed on July 12th, 1941, in Hamilton, this unpaid official letter from the U.S. Navy was taxed 60 centimes by the Bermuda Post Office. The surface rate to the U.S. was 3d and double the deficiency 6d, or 60 centimes was not charged in the U.S.



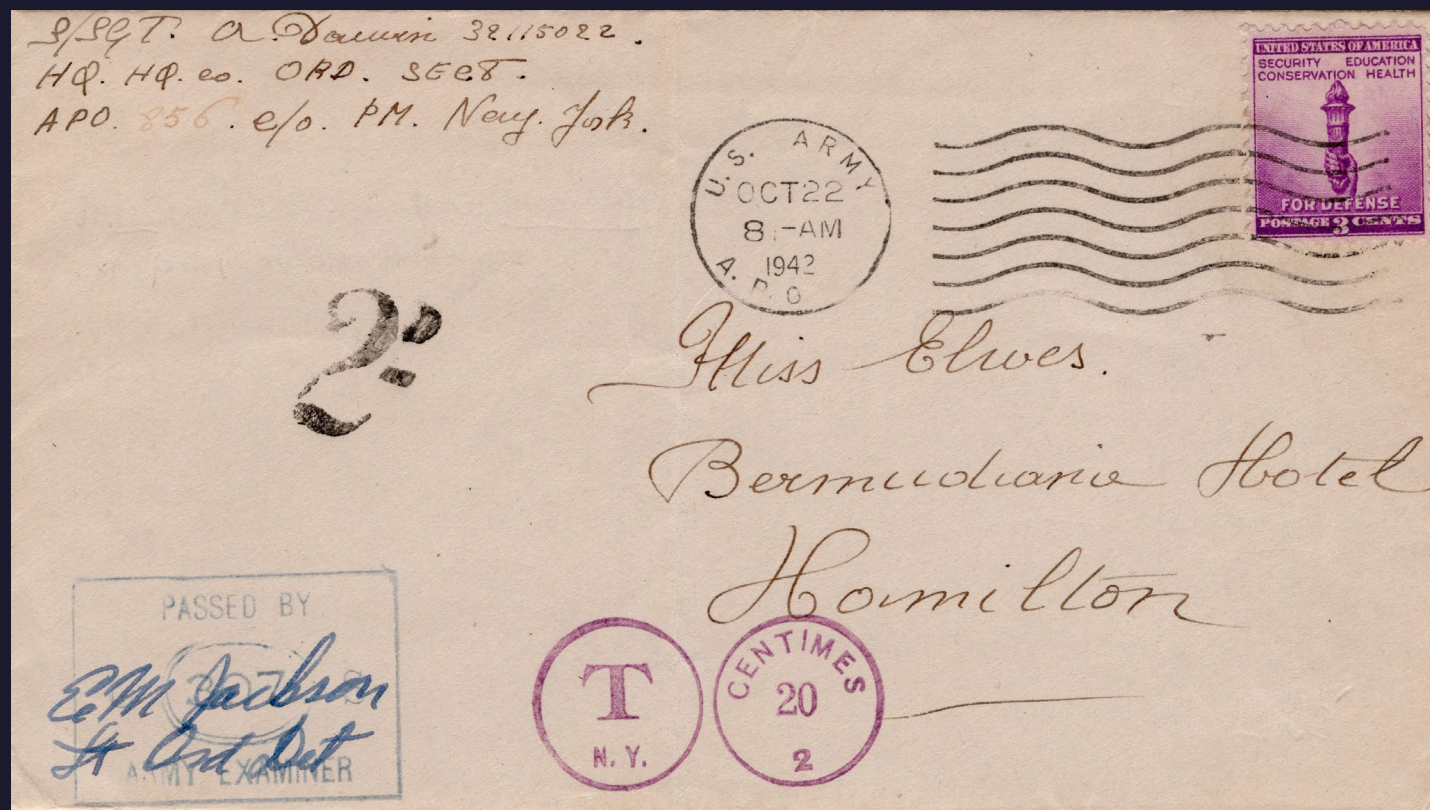
In 1941 the Air Mail rate to the U.S. was $7\frac{1}{2}$ d per half ounce. This personal letter sent by a sailor of the aircraft carrier U.S.S. 'Ranger' on April 3rd, 1941, was underpaid by $\frac{1}{2}$ d, taxed 10 centimes by Bermuda and 2¢ in the U.S.



In 1941 the local postage rate was 1½d per ½ oz. Probably mailed locally, this official letter to a private company was taxed 3d, double the deficiency, by the Bermuda Post Office.



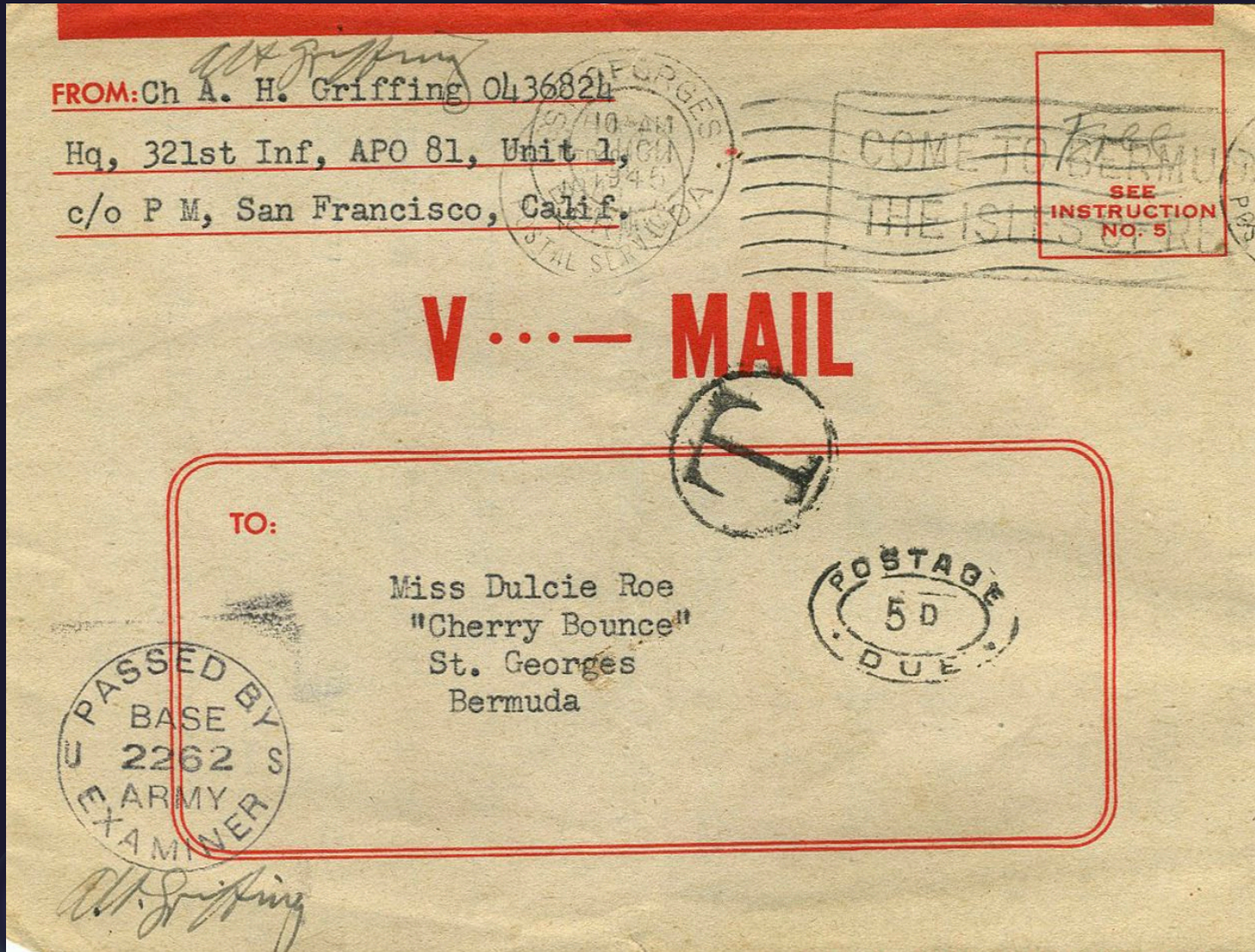
Another official letter from the U.S. Navy, but mailed in the U.S., was taxed 50 centimes, double the 5¢ surface mail rate, which converted to 5d in Bermuda.



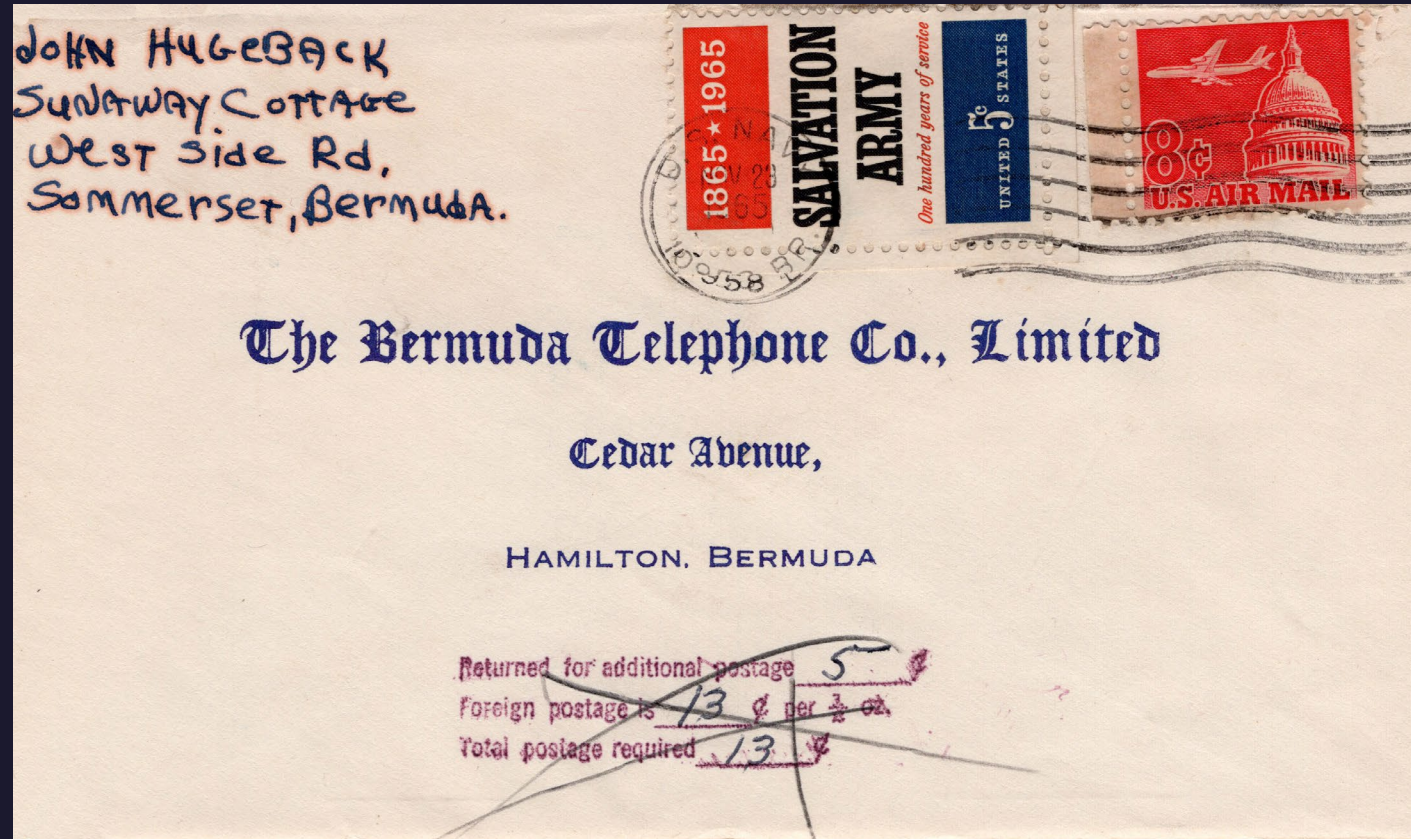
A letter posted in Bermuda on October 22nd, 1942, to Miss Elwes, a British censurette, was prepaid 3¢, the surface mail rate to Bermuda. Presumably it was sent to New York in error. If so, why was it taxed 20 centimes and 2d in Bermuda?



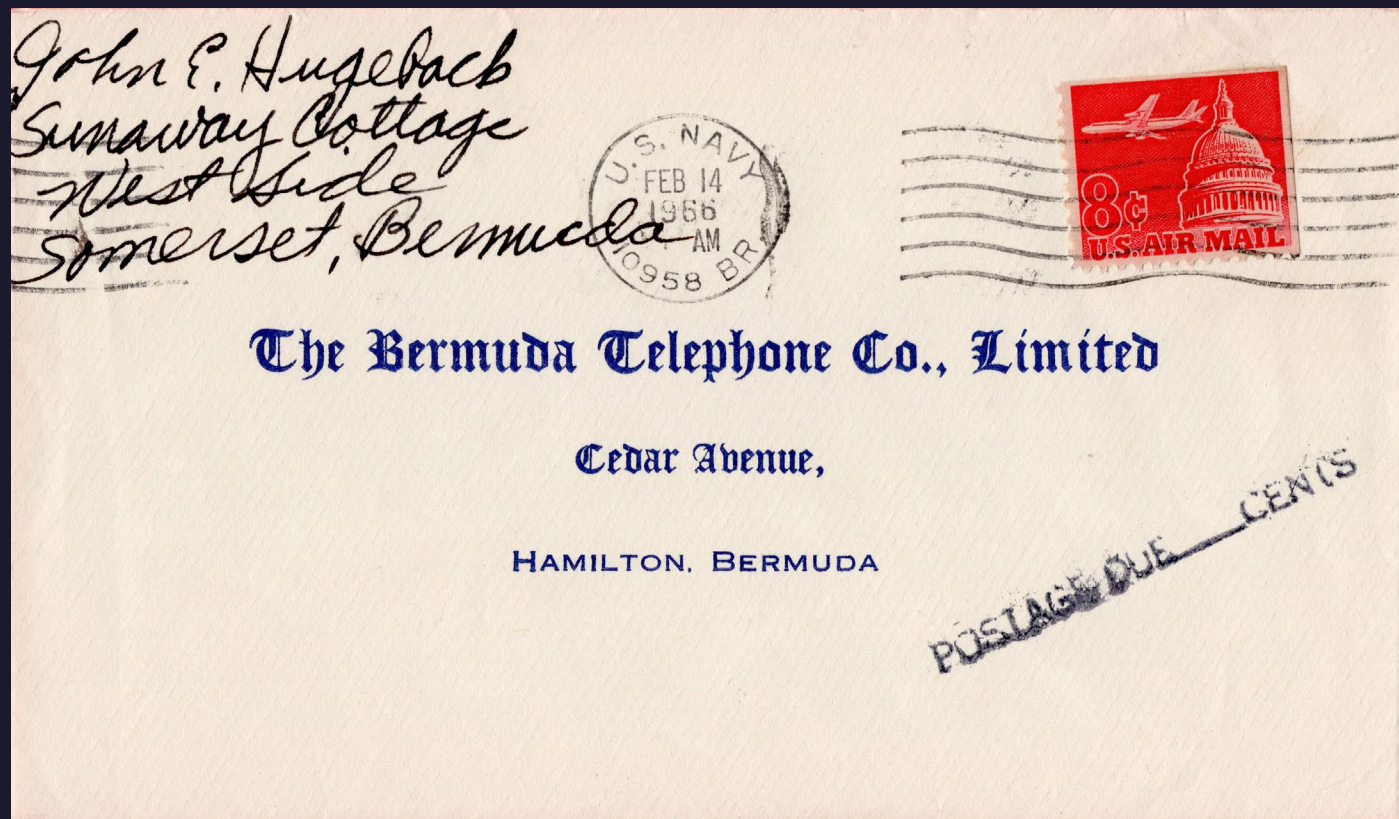
Another 'local' letter, sent to New York rather than the Bermuda Post Office, was again taxed 20 centimes in N.Y. and 2d in Bermuda. If these letters were sent to the U.S. in error, should they have been taxed?



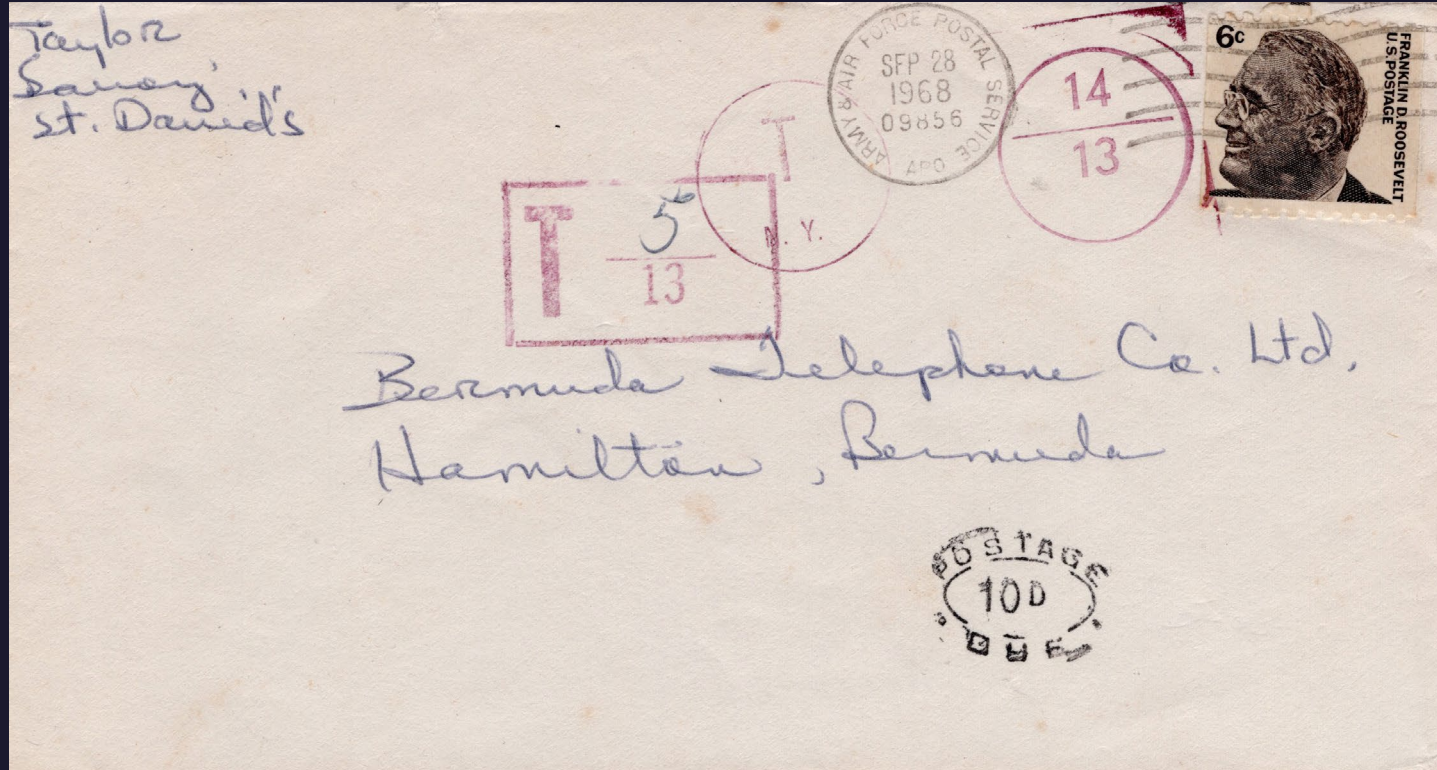
A scarce V-Mail sent to Bermuda in March 1945, was taxed 5d by the Bermuda Post Office, double the deficiency of the 5¢ surface mail rate.



In 1961 the airmail rate to Bermuda was increased to 13¢. Pre-paid 8¢, this local letter from a member of the U.S. Navy paying his utility bill, was returned to the sender for the additional 5¢. Why was the 13¢ airmail rate, rather than the 5¢ surface rate applied?



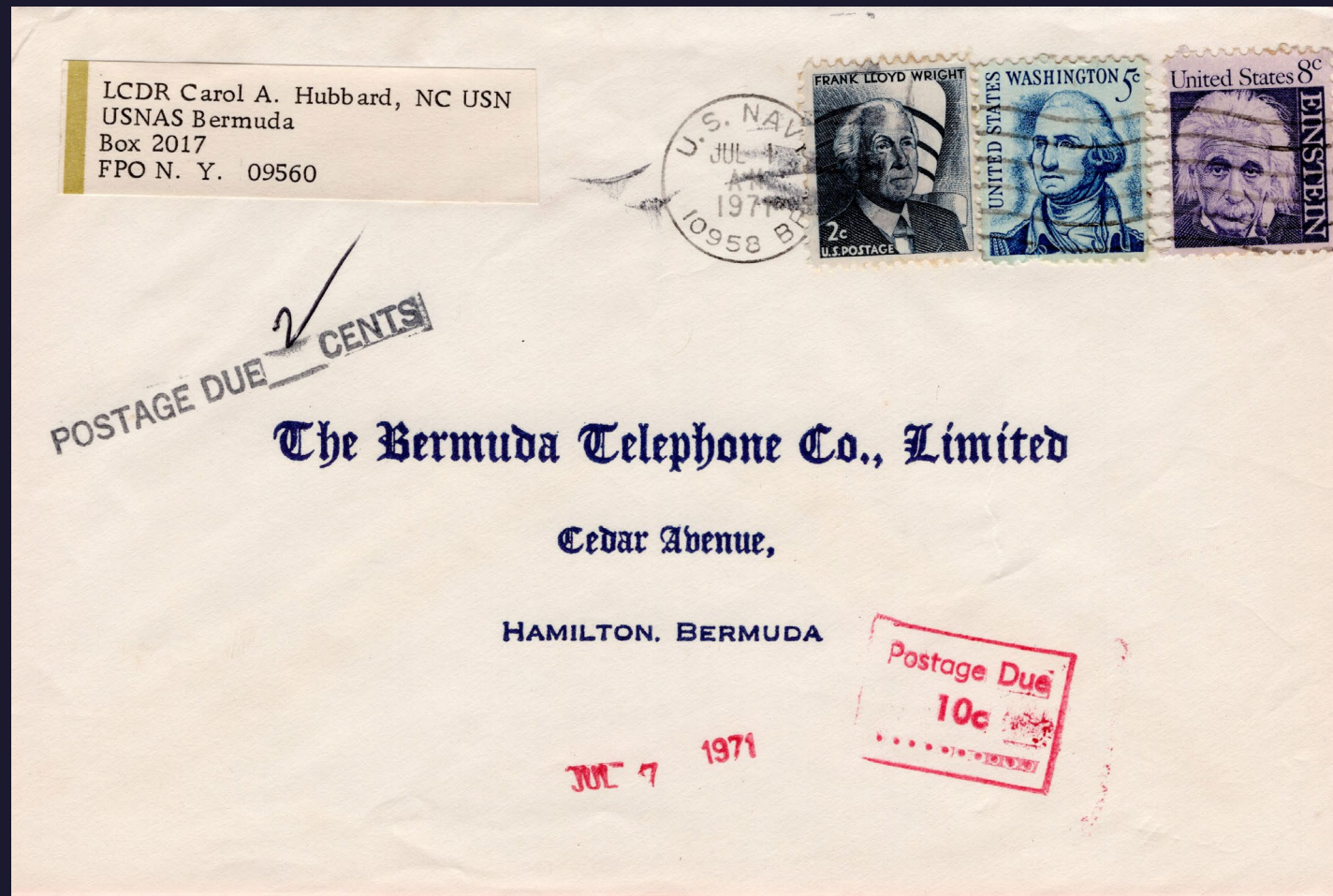
From the same sender, this letter, posted three months later on February 14th, 1966, was forwarded to the Bermuda Post Office who did not bother to collect the postage due.



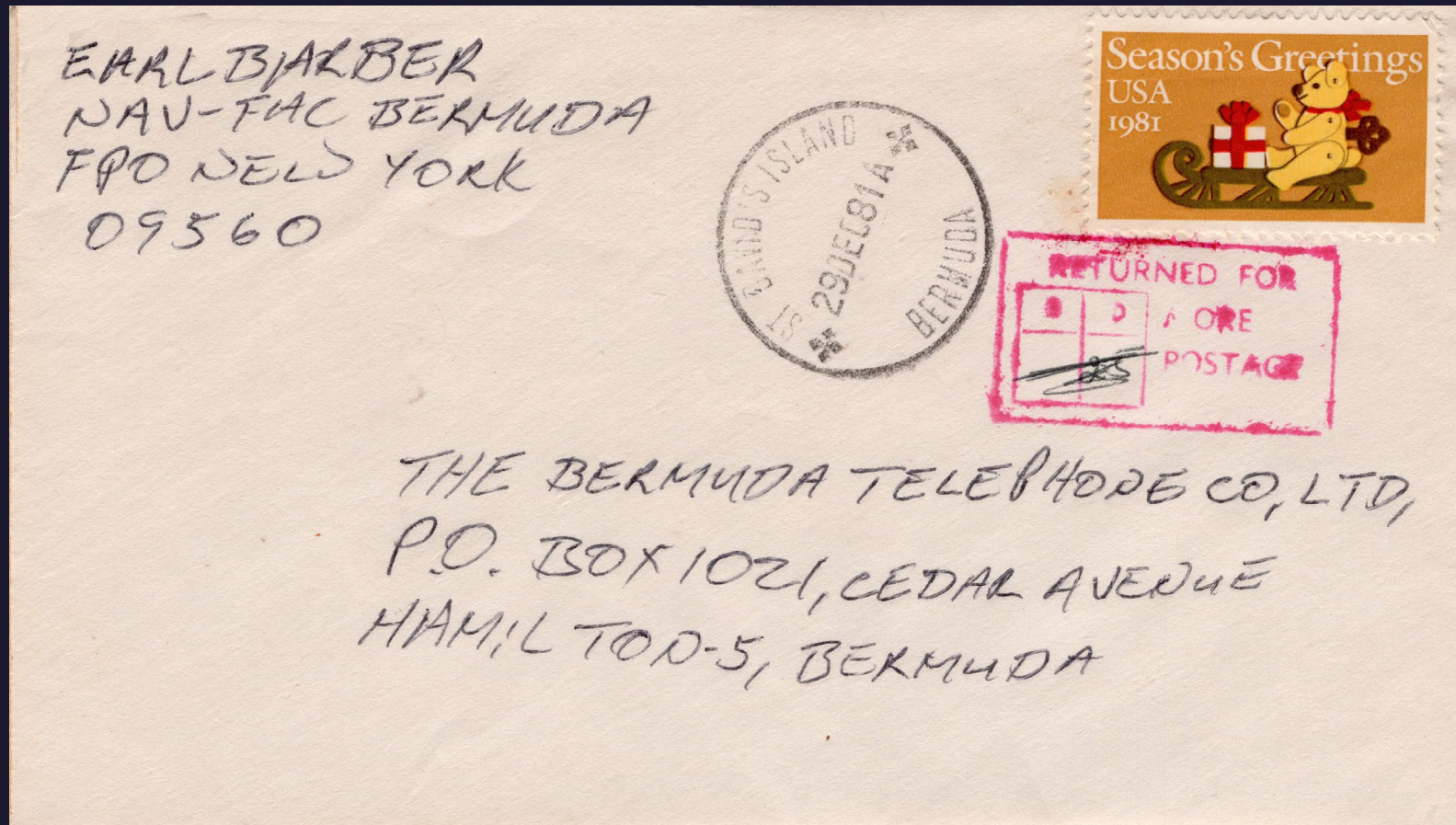
Mailed in Bermuda on September 28th, 1968, this letter was sent to New York in error. As the airmail postage rate was 13¢, the letter was 7¢ underpaid and therefore marked 14/13. Does the additional T5/13 indicate 5d due to Bermuda which was doubled to 10d?



In 1970 the airmail postage rate to Bermuda was 15¢. This locally mailed 10¢ airmail letter was 5¢ underpaid and returned to the sender for the additional postage.



The airmail rate to Bermuda was still 15¢ in 1971 and this letter, pre-paid 13¢, was returned to the sender for the additional 2¢ postage. This was paid and the letter should have been delivered free of charge. The Bermuda Post Office obviously thought otherwise.



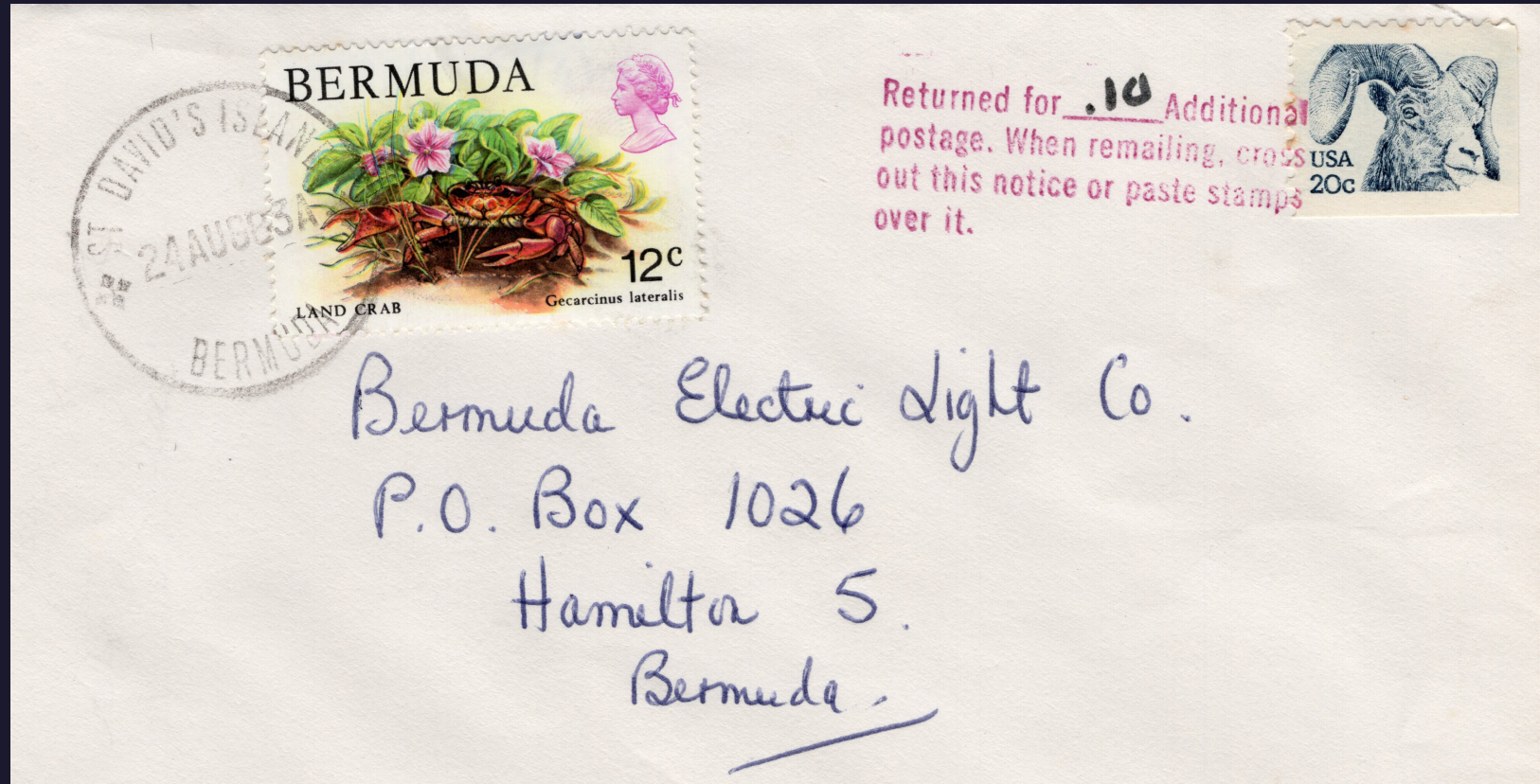
In 1974 the Bermuda Post Office built a Sub-Post Office in St. David's, partly to service the mail from the U.S. Base. The non-denominated 20¢ stamp would have overpaid the 15¢ postage rate had it been mailed on base. Mailed at St. David's it caused some initial confusion.



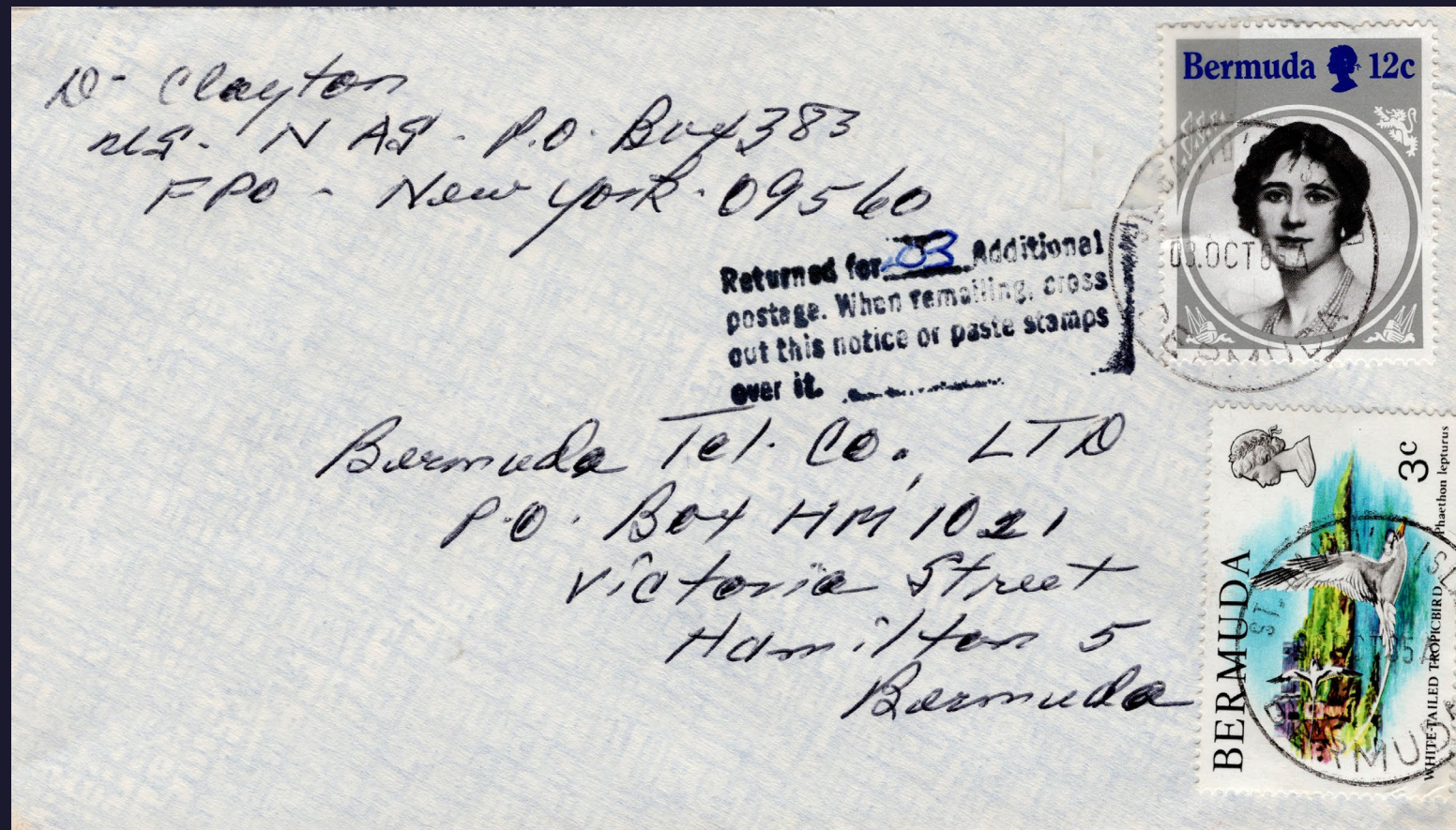
Mailed at the U.S. Navy Annex in Southampton, this letter was prepaid with the 18¢ B stamp valid only on domestic mail. The international postage rate was 30¢ in 1981 and the tax calculation T12/30 shows the 12¢ shortage which was charged in Bermuda as 8¢ due.



Mailed at the U.S. Navy Annex in Southampton, this letter, like the previous one, also required an additional 10¢ postage. The sender decided to mail it in St. David's at the local 10¢ local rate instead.



The postage rate to Bermuda was 30¢ in 1983 and this letter required an additional 10¢ postage. The sender obviously decided to mail it at the St. David's Post Office at the 12¢ local postage rate instead. Local postage had increased from 10¢ to 12¢ on August 1st, 1983.



The sender of this letter mailed on base with a stamp requiring an additional 3¢ postage, decided to mail it at Bermuda's St. David's Post Office instead. Just to be safe he not only franked it with the correct 12¢ local stamp but also the 3¢ required for the U.S. stamp.

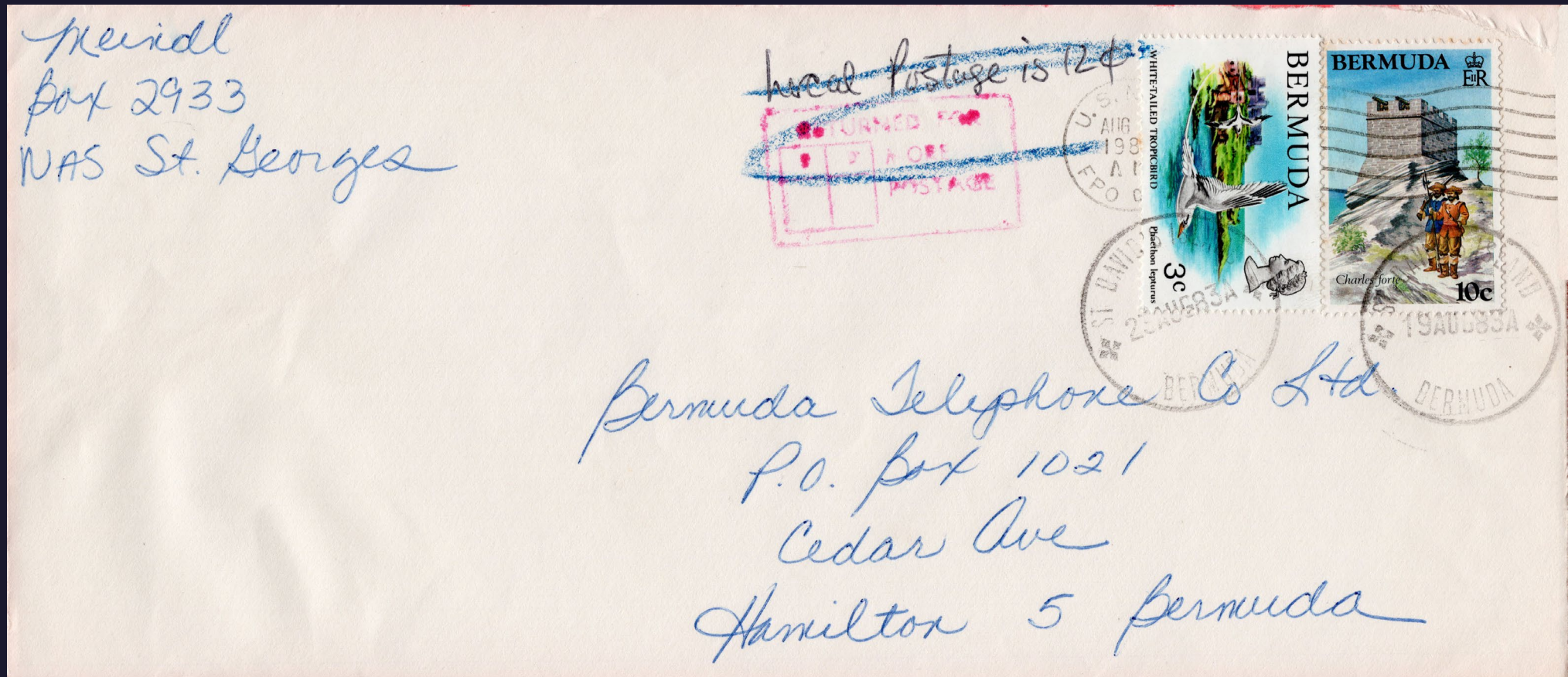
F. Hurst H.
P.O. Box 3143
NAS BERMUDA



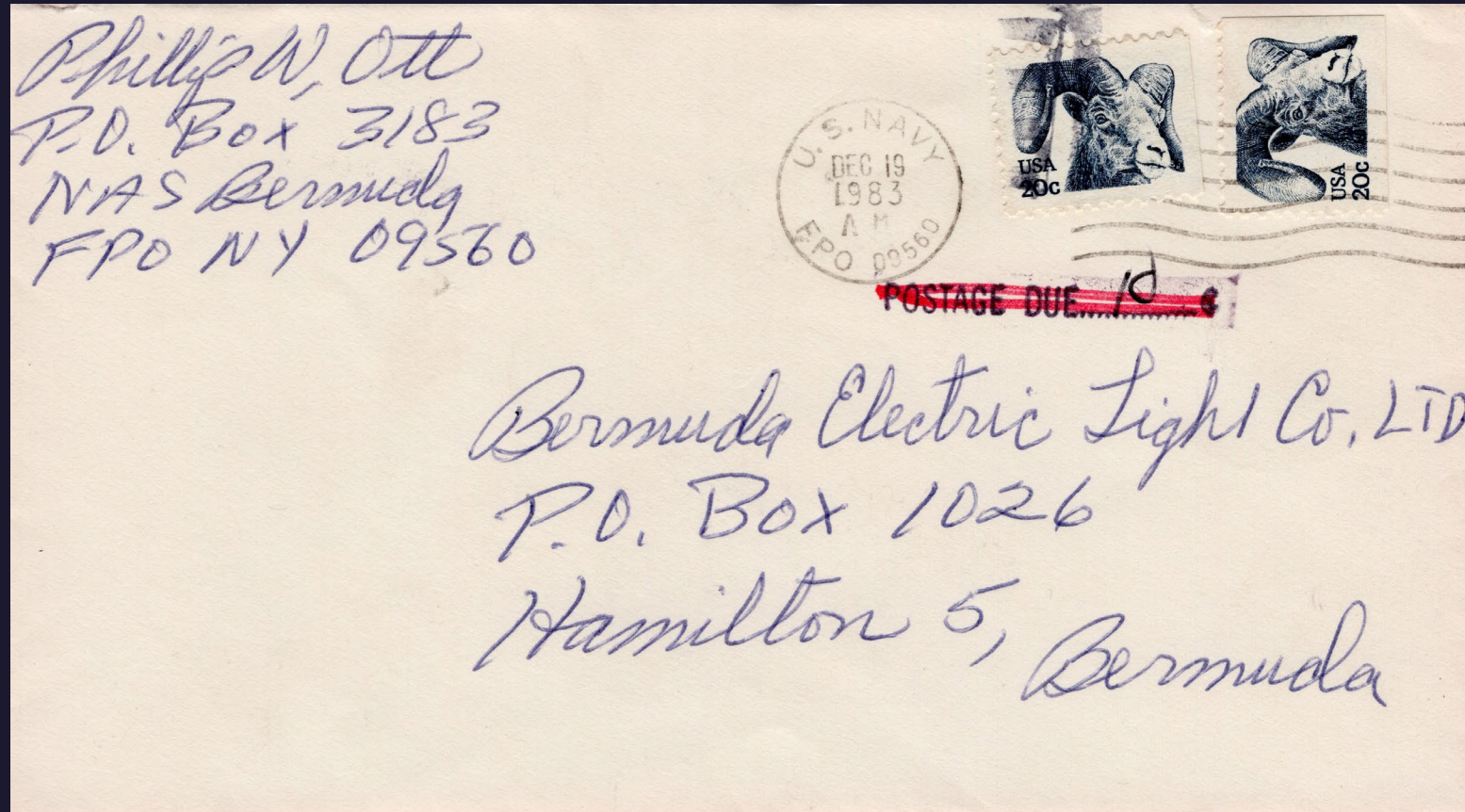
BERMUDA Tel. CO.
P.O. Box 1021 CEDAR AVE.
HAMILTON 5, BERMUDA.



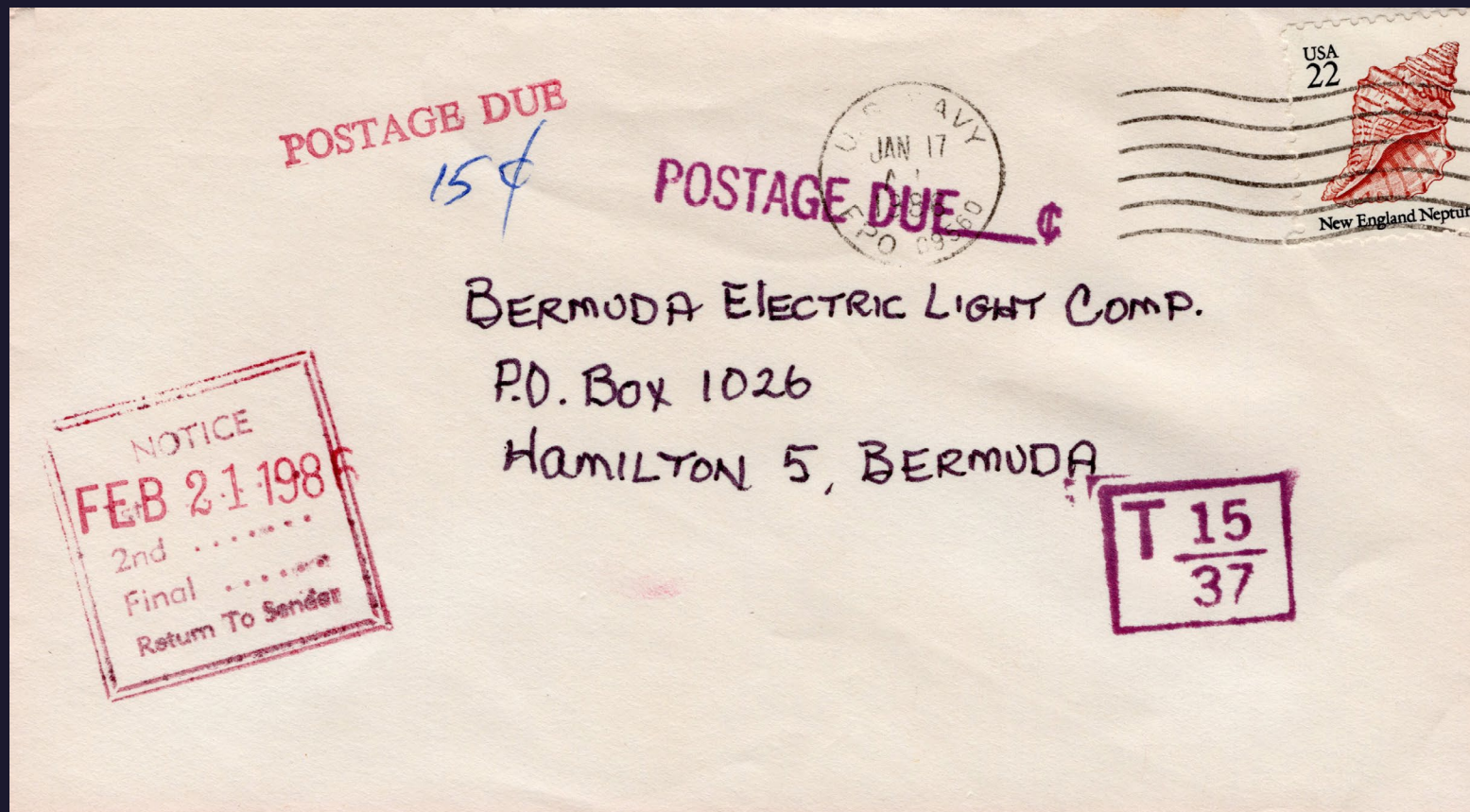
In this case the letter also required an additional 3¢ U.S. postage and the sender instead decided to mail it at the St. David's Post Office, overpaying the 12¢ local rate by 1¢.



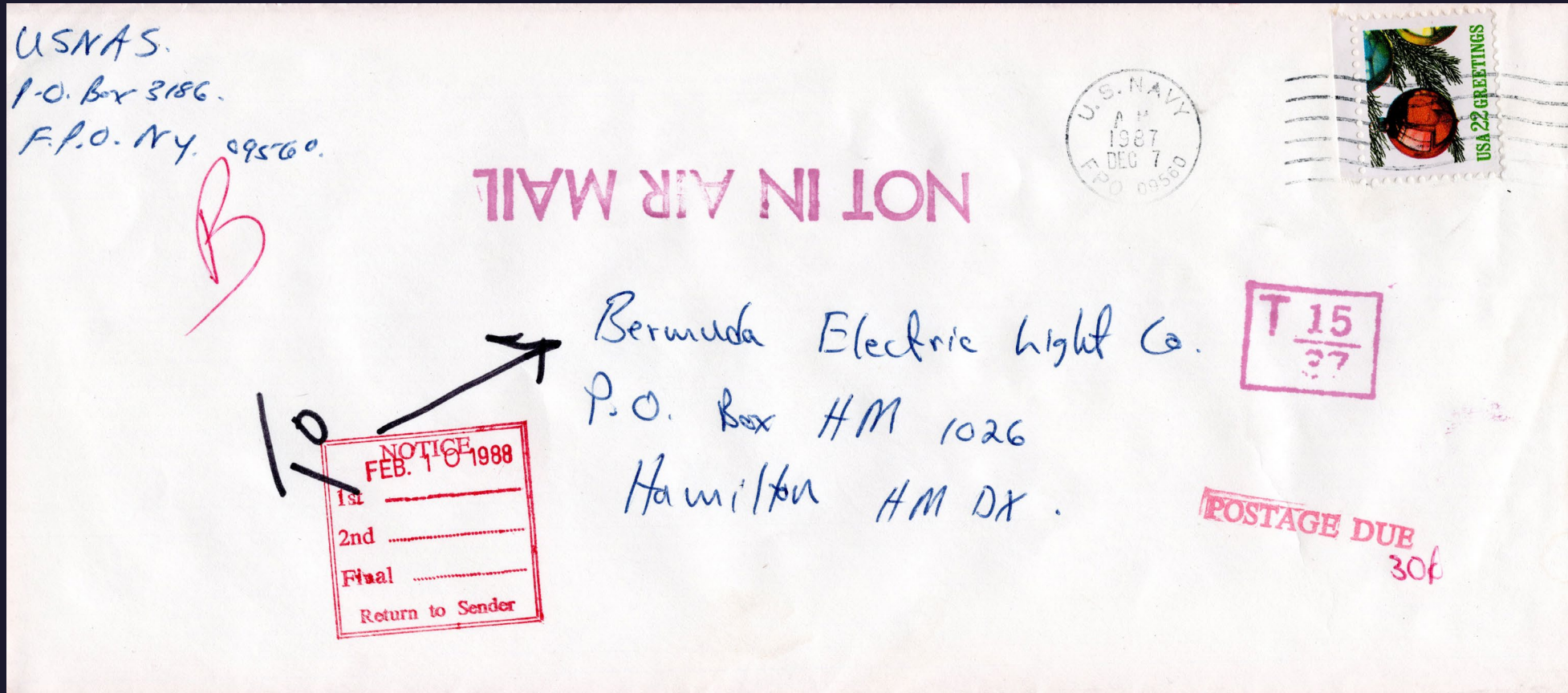
Mailed in August 1983 on base with a 10¢ Bermuda stamp cancelled by the U.S. Navy, this cover was returned to the sender for the additional 2¢ postage. As Bermuda's lowest postage stamp was 3¢, the sender had to pay an extra cent for the 3¢ stamp.



The international postage rate was 30¢ in 1983 and this letter required an additional 10¢. The sender probably only had 20¢ stamps which would explain the 10¢ over payment.



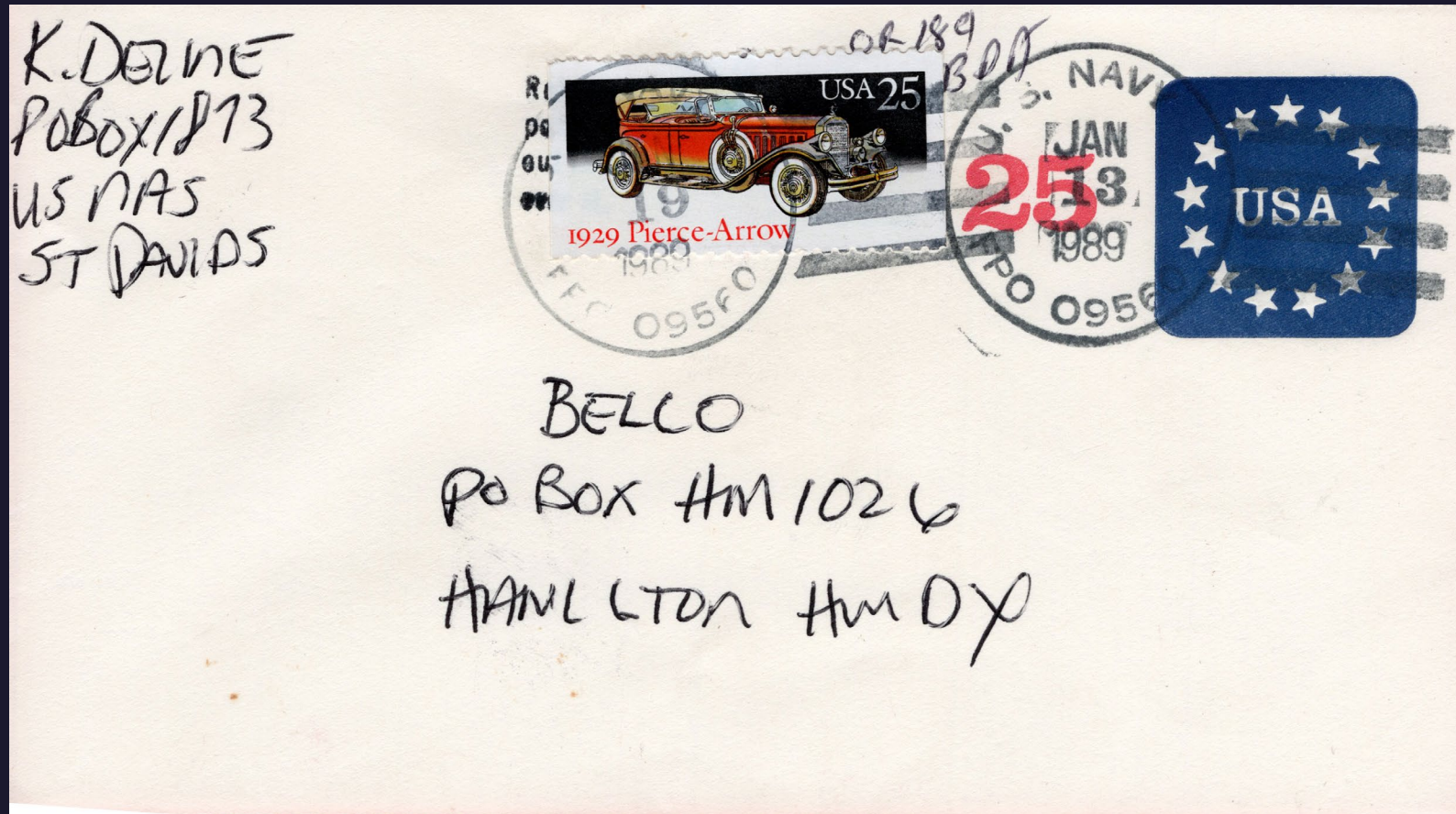
By 1986 the international postage rate had increased to 37¢ and this letter, prepaid at the domestic 22¢ rate, was taxed 15¢. Bermuda should have doubled that to 30¢, but obviously did not do that.



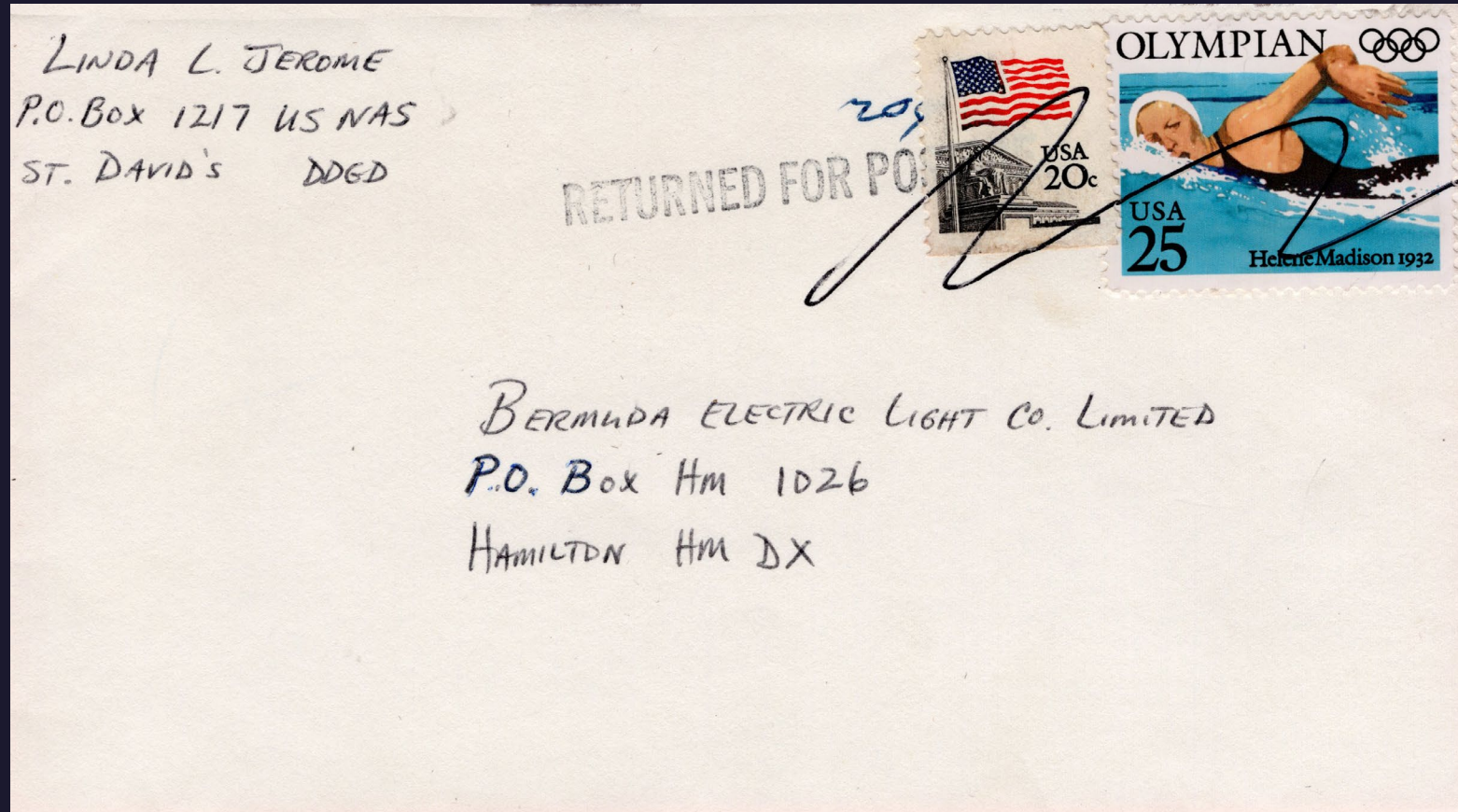
Similar to the previous letter, the Bermuda Post Office did charge double the 15¢ shortage two years later.



Mailed at the U.S. Navy Annex in Southampton, this letter was correctly prepaid 37¢, however, the 'domestic only' 22¢ envelope was not accepted in 'international' mail and instead of paying an additional 22¢ the sender decided to mail it at the local 15¢ rate instead.



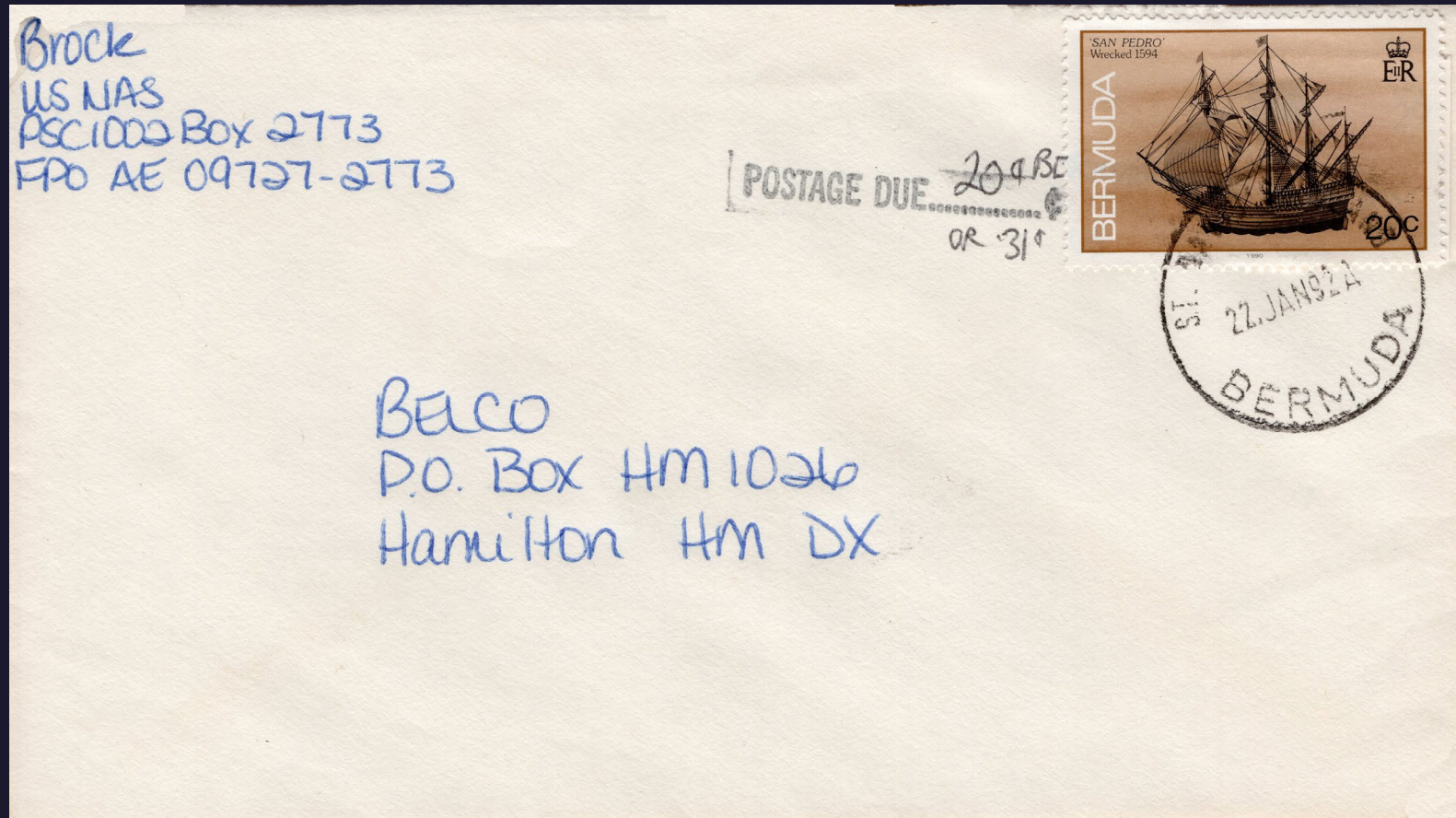
Two years later the domestic 25¢ envelope was accepted as postage, however, an additional 20¢ was required to cover the 'international' 45¢ rate. Interestingly the sender was given the option of mailing it at the 18¢ domestic Bermuda rate, but decided to overpay it with a 25¢ U.S. stamp.



In 1989 the international postage rate was 45¢. As the sender of this letter had prepaid it at the domestic 25¢ rate, it was returned to the sender for the additional 20¢ postage.



The international postage rate was still 45¢ in 1991 which the sender of this 'domestic' letter tried to make up with a 29¢ stamp. The U.S. Navy accepted the 29¢ stamp, but requested an additional 16¢ stamp which the sender paid with the non-denominated F stamp equivalent label.



This letter was probably pre-paid with a 19¢ U.S. stamp and 31¢ short of the international rate. The U.S. Navy pointed out the option of sending the letter at the 20¢ domestic Bermuda rate, which the sender did at the St. David's Post Office.

D W S INC.
U.S.N.A.S.
BERMUDA

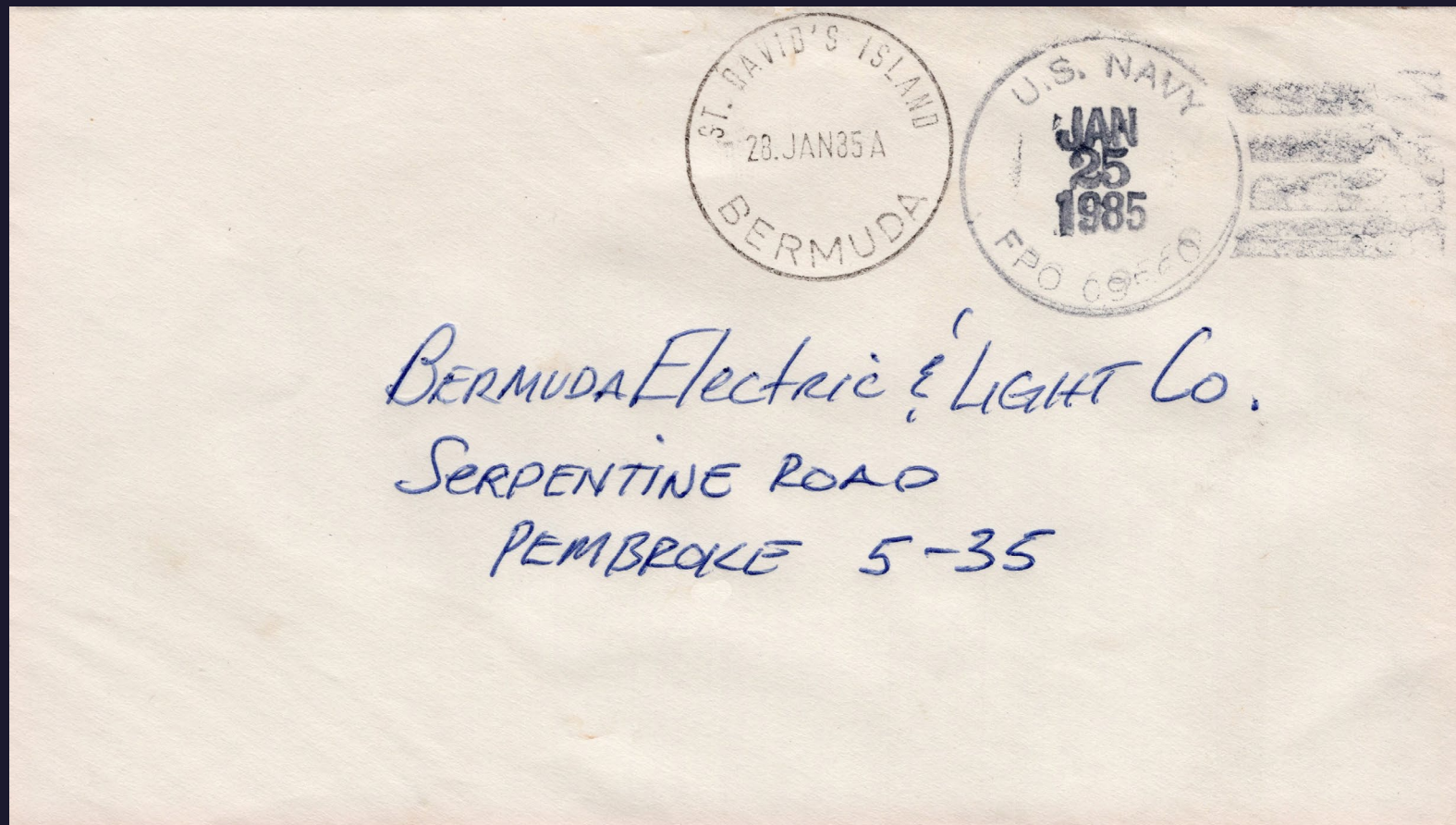
Bermuda Telephone
 P.O. Box HM 1021
 Hamilton HM DX.



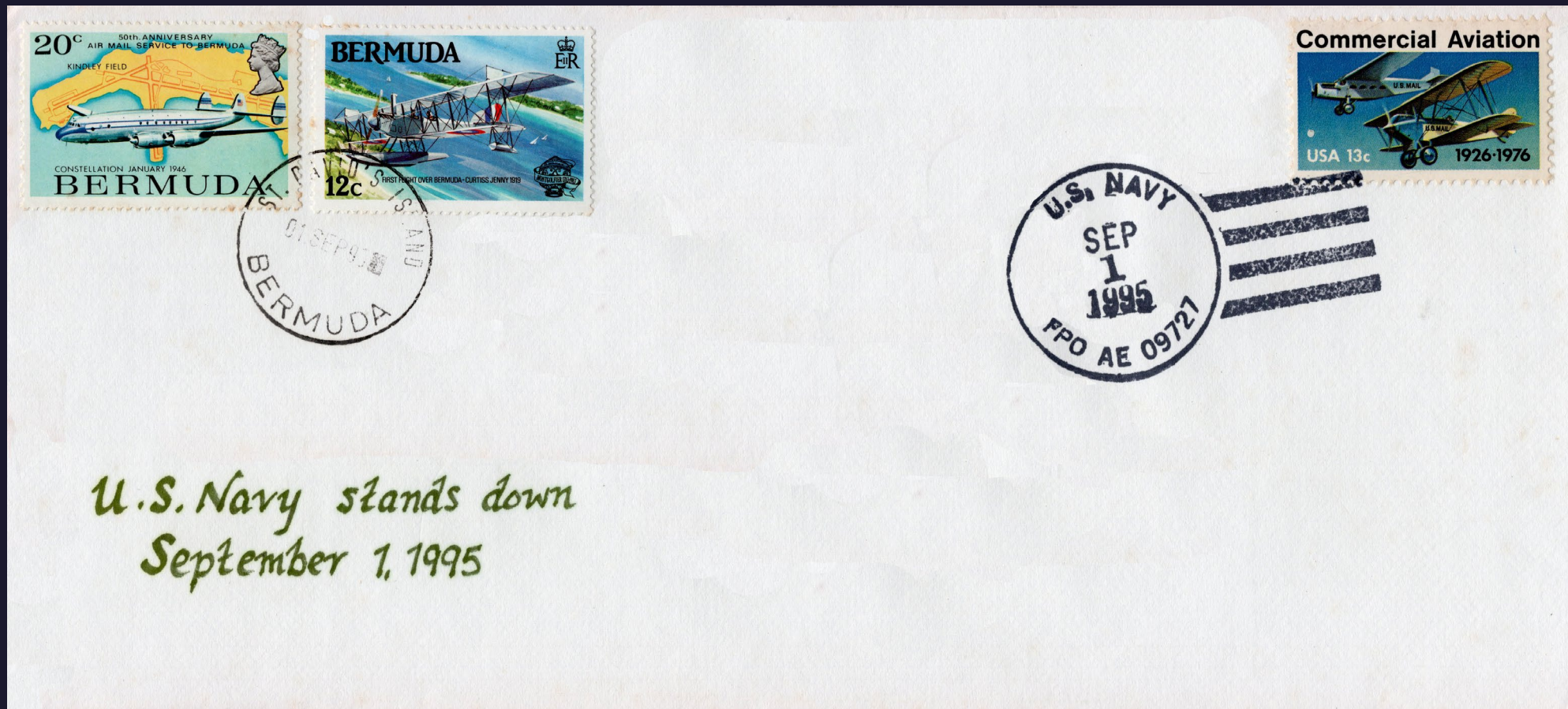
In 1990 the local postage rate increased from 18¢ to 20¢. This letter from the U.S. Naval Air Station was mailed at the old rate. As Bermuda did not have 2¢ stamps available, the Post Office requested an additional 3¢, which the sender did with both a U.S. and Bermuda stamp.



I have no idea what went on with this letter as the instructional marking is covered up by the stamps. The domestic postage rate was 25¢ in 1993 and the sender correctly paid the shortage with a 5¢ stamp. Why he also applied a U.S. 29¢ domestic rate stamp remains a mystery.



Sometimes both the U.S. Navy and the St. David's Island Post Office seem to have decided that collecting postage due just wasn't worth it.



On September 1st, 1995, the U.S. Navy closed down their bases in Bermuda. The St. David's Island Sub-Post Office continued for 19 more years and was shut down in November 2014 due to lack of business.