

18¢ Prexie Postal History

by Richard Pederson

The 18¢ value in the Presidential Series of 1938 (see Figure 1), hereinafter called the Prexies, depicts the 18th President of the United States (1869-1877), Ulysses S. Grant. William A. Roach designed the stamp based on a Franklin Simmonds statue of Grant located in the Rotunda of the United States Capitol in Washington, D.C.

Grant graduated from West Point and served in the Army during the Mexican War. He was promoted several times and served until July 31, 1854, when he resigned as a Captain, for personal reasons. Following the outbreak of the Civil War, Grant rejoined the Army as a volunteer in June 1861, at the rank of Colonel, and in August 1861, was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General. Due to his successful campaigns on the western front, in March 1864, President Lincoln promoted Grant to Lieutenant General and gave him command of all Union armies. In that capacity, on April 9, 1865, he accepted Robert E. Lee's surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia at Appomattox Court House, effectively ending the Civil War, as all other Confederate forces surrendered shortly thereafter.

After the war, in 1866, Grant was promoted to General of the Army. In 1869, he succeeded Andrew Johnson as U.S. President and, at age 46, was the youngest President elected up to that time. As President, Grant was a strong advocate of civil rights and under his leadership the 15th Amendment was passed, which prohibited the federal and state governments from denying citizens the right to vote based upon their color or race. His administration strongly supported Reconstruction in the South, using Federal troops, when necessary, to support the laws. The Department of Justice was also created during his first term of office and was instrumental in protecting black people and the Republican-led Reconstruction governments in the South. Unfortunately, a considerable amount of corruption occurred in the Federal government during Grant's presidency, much resulting from poor executive appointments, although none of the corruption was tied to Grant.

The 18¢ Prexie is relatively easy to find on cover or parcel as a solo, multiple, or in combination with other stamps. It was issued in sheet format on November 3, 1938 (see Figure 2) and was in continuous use until after 1956, when the supply of 18¢ stamps for distribution to post offices was exhausted.

Prior to the first day of issue, the Post Office Department sent out announcement cards to prospective purchasers of First Day Covers (FDCs), an example of which is pictured in Figure 3. An electric eye perforated version of the 18¢ value was issued on January 7, 1942 (see Figure 4).



Figure 1. 18¢ Prexie sheet stamp.



Figure 4. Electric eye FDC with Fidelity cachet.

Domestic solo uses of the 18¢ are relatively easy to find, but those in the international mail (except for Canada and Mexico) are very scarce. During the time it was in use, possible solo rate and rate/fee combinations for the 18¢ Prexie included the following:

1. The 3¢ domestic first-class rate plus a 15¢ registration fee for an item with an indemnity value less than or equal to \$5, a rate/fee combination in effect through March 25, 1944 (see Figures 5 and 6).
2. The 3¢ domestic first-class rate plus a 15¢ special delivery fee for an item weighing less than or equal to two pounds, a rate/fee combination in effect from January 1, 1949 through December 31, 1951.
3. A registered government penalty envelope with an indemnity value less than or equal to \$5 (15¢ registration fee) and return receipt requested (3¢ fee), a rate/fee combination in effect through March 25, 1944 (see Figure 7).
4. The 8¢ domestic air mail rate plus a 10¢ special delivery fee for an item weighing less than or equal to one ounce, a rate/fee combination in effect from March 26, 1944 through September 30, 1944 (see Figure 8).
5. The 5¢ domestic air mail rate plus a 13¢ special delivery fee for an item weighing less than or equal to two pounds, a rate/fee combination in effect from October 1, 1946 through December 31, 1948.
6. Six times the 3¢ domestic first-class rate, a rate in effect through July 31, 1958 (see Figure 9).
7. Three times the 6¢ domestic air mail rate, a rate in effect through March 25, 1944 (see Figure 10).
8. Three times the 6¢ concession air mail rate for military personnel, a rate in effect from December 25, 1941 through September 30, 1946 (see Figure 11).
9. Three times the 6¢ domestic air mail rate, a rate in effect from January 1, 1949, through July 31, 1958.
10. The 3¢ domestic first-class rate plus a 15¢ certified mail fee, a rate/fee combination in effect from June 5, 1955, through June 30, 1957.
11. A fourth-class local parcel weighing greater than 11 pounds and less than or equal to 12 pounds, a rate in effect through March 25, 1944.
12. A fourth-class Zone 2 parcel weighing greater than 9 pounds and less than or equal to 10 pounds, a rate in effect through March 25, 1944.
13. A fourth-class local parcel weighing greater than 8 pounds and less than or equal to 9 pounds, a rate in effect from January 1, 1949, through September 30, 1951.
14. A fourth-class Zone 8 parcel weighing up to 1 pound, a rate in effect from January 1, 1949, through September 30, 1951.
15. A fourth-class local parcel weighing greater than 2 pounds and less than or equal to 3 pounds, a rate in effect from October 1, 1951, through December 31, 1951.
16. A fourth-class local parcel weighing less than or equal to 1 pound, a rate in effect from October 1, 1953, through January 31, 1960 (see Figure 12).
17. A Universal Postal Union (UPU) surface letter weighing more than two ounces and less than or equal to three ounces (8¢ for the first ounce and 5¢ for the second and third ounces), a rate in effect from August 1, 1958 through June 30, 1961.
18. A surface letter to Spain and most of South America, Central America, and the Caribbean weighing more than 5 ounces and less than



Figure 2. First Day Cover (FDC) for 18¢ Prexie with Harry loor cachet.

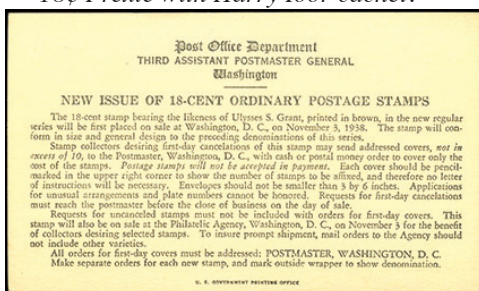


Figure 3. 18¢ Prexie announcement card.

or equal to 6 ounces (3¢/ounce), a rate in effect through October 31, 1953.

19. UPU surface rate and Canada and Mexico treaty rate for printed matter and commercial papers weighing more than 22 ounces and less than or equal to 24 ounces (1-1/2¢ for each two ounces), in effect through September 30, 1953.

20. UPU surface rate and Canada and Mexico treaty rate for printed matter and samples of merchandise weighing more than 14 ounces and less than or equal to 16 ounces (4¢ for the first two ounces and 2¢ for each additional two ounces), in effect from August 1, 1958, through June 30, 1961.

21. UPU, except for the Postal Union of the Americas and Spain (PUAS), Canada, and Spain, surface rate for printed matter (books, sheet music, and publisher's periodicals) and samples of merchandise weighing more than 32 ounces and less than or equal to 34 ounces (2¢ for the first two ounces and 1¢ for each additional two ounces), in effect from January 1, 1959, through June 30, 1961.

22. Treaty surface rate to Canada or Mexico for a six times weight letter weighing more than five ounces and less than or equal to six ounces, in effect through July 31, 1958.

23. Treaty surface rate to Canada and Mexico for an up to one ounce registered letter (3¢ + 15¢ registration fee), a rate/fee combination in effect through January 31, 1945 (see Figure 14).

24. Treaty air mail rate to Canada for a triple weight letter weighing more than two ounces and less than or equal to three ounces, in effect through March 25, 1944.

25. Treaty air mail rate to Canada or Mexico for a triple weight letter weighing more than two ounces and less than or equal to three ounces, in effect from January 1, 1949, through July 31, 1958.

Although the above list provides numerous possible rates for solo uses of the 18¢ Prexie, some of those uses are seldom, if ever seen. It should also be noted that although the above list is fairly comprehensive, it is not exhaustive as some other unusual rate/fee combinations are possible, such as those including fees for non-standard shapes and sizes, insurance, and certificate of mailing.

Domestic solo uses of the 18¢ are much easier to find than those in the international mail. Perhaps the easiest solo uses to locate are those sent during the earlier part of the Prexie era paying a registration fee. The cover shown front and reverse in Figure 5 was mailed from Detroit, Michigan, on March 14, 1949, to Atlanta, Georgia, where it was received on March 15th. The



Figure 5. 1949 cover with 18¢ solo paying the domestic first-class rate and registration fee.

18¢ Prexie paid the 3¢ first-class rate and 15¢ registration fee for an item with an indemnity value less than or equal to \$5, a rate and fee combination in effect through March 25, 1944. Another example of that rate and fee is pictured, front and reverse, in Figure 6, next column. The window envelope was mailed from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to California. It has a Glendale, California receiving mark dated September 13, 1940, and was then forwarded to La Canada, California. Two notices were sent to the intended recipient and it was "UNCLAIMED" and marked "RETURN TO WRITER." A third registered solo use of the 18¢ is shown front and reverse in Figure 7. The government penalty envelope was mailed from the War La-

bor Board in Denver, Colorado to the Farr Company in Denver. The envelope has a Denver receiving mark dated July 27, 1943. The government penalty envelope paid the regular first-class postage so the 18¢ Prexie paid the 3¢ return receipt fee and 15¢ registration fee.



Figure 6. 1940 cover, that was returned to sender, with 18¢ solo paying the domestic first-class rate and registration fee.

Figure 7. 18¢ solo paying the return receipt and registration fees on a 1943 government penalty envelope mailed domestically.

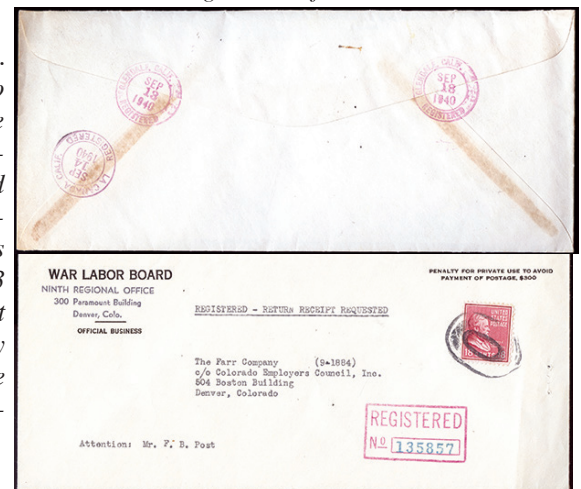


Figure 8 pictures the front of an envelope sent air mail special delivery, on July 2, 1944, from New York City to Portland, Maine, where it was received on July 3rd. The solo 18¢ Prexie paid the 8¢ air mail rate and 10¢ special delivery fee, a rate/fee combination that was only in effect from March 26, 1944 through September 30, 1944, making this a quite scarce solo use.

Figure 8. 18¢ solo paying the domestic air mail rate and special delivery fees on a 1944 cover.



Another uncommon solo use is shown in Figure 9, page 28. The oversized envelope was mailed on October 4, 1946, from Libby, McNeil & Libby Food Products in Portland, Oregon to a company office in San Francisco, California. The 18¢ Prexie paid for an up to six-ounce letter (6 x 3¢/ounce), a rate in effect through July 31, 1958.

Figure 9. 18¢ solo paying six times the domestic first-class rate on a 1946 cover.



Figure 10 pictures a somewhat more common, but still desirable use of the 18¢. The envelope was mailed, via air mail, on February 24, 1944, from New York City to Modesto, California. The 18¢ Prexie paid for a triple weight domestic air mail letter (3 x 6¢/ounce), a rate in effect through March 25, 1944.

Figure 10. 18¢ solo paying three times the domestic air mail rate on a 1952 cover.



During World War II, a special air mail rate was established to provide for the sending of first-class mail to and from service personnel and employees stationed outside the U.S. This rate of 6¢/ounce, called the concession air mail rate, was in effect from December 25, 1941, through September 30, 1946.

Figure 11. 18¢ solo paying triple the concession air mail rate on a 1945 cover from an APO to the U.S.



The Figure 11 envelope, which is marked “WAR DEPARTMENT ESSENTIAL OFFICIAL AIR MAIL,” was mailed on October 26, 1945, from Army Post Office (APO) 782, in Leghorn, Italy, to the Army War Bond Office in Chicago, Illinois, where it was received on October 30, 1945. The 18¢ Prexie paid for a triple weight concession air mail letter (3 x 6¢) sent from the APO to the U.S.

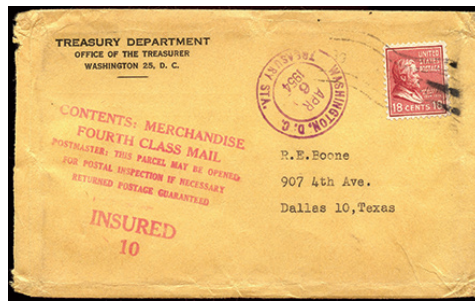
18¢ solos can also be found on domestic fourth-class mail (parcels). Figure 12 pictures an American Locker Company (ALC) parcel tag, probably used to mail locks and/or keys, locally, from the Trailways bus terminal in Portland, Oregon to the ALC office in Portland. The tag was printed in July 1955, so the 18¢ Prexie paid for an up to one pound local parcel mailed after that date and prior to the end of the rate period on February 1, 1960.



Figure 12. 18¢ solo paying the fourth-class rate on a local parcel weighing up to one pound.

Another interesting solo use is shown in Figure 13, next column. The envelope, which likely contained a proof set of U.S. coins, was mailed from the Treasury Department in Washington, DC to an address

in Dallas, envelope as fourth-in all like-is a third-piece item ounces or in 1954, item was parcels ounces or less where handled as third-class and those over eight ounces were handled as fourth-class. Third-class mail usually had a dumb (no date) cancel and, in fact, the stamp is cancelled with a undated roller cancel. There is a separate red Treasury Department date cancel, but that is present because it was a requirement for insured mail, which this was. The 18¢ Prexie likely paid the 8¢ third-class postage for an 8 ounce package (2¢ for the first two ounces and 1¢/ounce for up to six additional ounces) and a 10¢ insurance fee for an item valued between \$5 and \$10.



Texas. The is marked class, but likelihood, it class single weighing 8 less, since when the mailed, of eight

The final solo use I will show, a registered first-class parcel to Canada, that is shown, front and reverse, in Figure 14, is a

Figure 13. 18¢ solo paying the third-class single piece rate and insurance fee on a 1954

over eight ounces were handled as fourth-class. Third-class mail usually had a dumb (no date) cancel and, in fact, the stamp is cancelled with a undated roller cancel. There is a separate red Treasury Department date cancel, but that is present because it was a requirement for insured mail, which this was. The 18¢ Prexie likely paid the 8¢ third-class postage for an 8 ounce package (2¢ for the first two ounces and 1¢/ounce for up to six additional ounces) and a 10¢ insurance fee for an item valued between \$5 and \$10.

The final solo use I will show, a registered first-class parcel to Canada, that is shown, front and reverse, in Figure 14, is a



Figure 14. 18¢ solo paying treaty surface rate and registration fee on a 1940 cover from Massillon, Ohio to Alliston, Ontario, Canada.

relatively scarce use. Treaty rates were established with Canada and Mexico that, for some mail classes and fees, kept prices like those within the U.S. The registered mail piece was sent on July 12, 1940, from Massillon, Ohio to Alliston, Ontario, Canada, where it was received on July 17, 1940. On the way to Alliston, it made stops in the U.S. at Buffalo, New York, and in the Canadian province of Ontario at Toronto, Toronto & North Bay Railway Post Office (RPO), Hamilton & Meaford RPO, and Collingwood. It was marked “DUTY FREE” at Collingwood on July 16th. The 18¢ Prexie paid the 3¢ treaty rate to Canada for a first-class parcel weighing up to one ounce and a 15¢ registration fee, a rate/fee combination in effect through January 31, 1945.

Multiples of the 18¢ were sometimes used to pay multiples of the domestic first-class and air mail rates or to pay various rate and fee combinations. The Figure 15 ALC parcel tag has two of the 8¢ paying the 16¢ in postage required for a fourth-class item weighing up to two pounds mailed to a Zone 5 destination (26¢ for the first pound + 9.25¢ which would be

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Figure 15. Two 18¢ Prexies paying the fourth-class rate for an up to two pound package sent to a Zone 5 destination.

rounded up to 10¢ for the second pound). The tag was printed in October 1956, so the 18¢ Prexies paid for a Zone 5 parcel mailed after that date and prior to February 1, 1960, the end of the rate period.



Figure 16. Two 18¢ Prexies paying for a 1942 triple weight registered air mail letter with return receipt requested.

Figure 16 pictures the front and reverse of a registered air mail cover, with return receipt requested, that was mailed on June 30, 1942, from Lincoln, Nebraska to Los Angeles, California. The cover was received in Los Angeles on July 1, 1942. The two 18¢ Prexies paid 18¢ for a triple weight air mail letter (3 x 6¢), 3¢ for the return receipt fee, and a 15¢ registration fee for an item with an indemnity value less than or equal to \$5, a rate fee combination in effect through March 25, 1944.

Figure 17. Two 18¢ Prexies paying for a 1942 six times weight insured first-class package sent from APO 860 in Iceland.



Figure 17 shows a rare use of the 18¢ Prexie. The two 18¢ stamps, on the censored cover front paid the rate for a first-class package mailed from APO 860 in Iceland to Baltimore, Maryland, where it was received on October 28, 1942. According to a notation on the cover front, the envelope contained a necklace with a value of \$7.50, so the registration fee would have been 18¢ for an item with an indemnity value of more than \$5 and less than or equal to \$25. The remaining 18¢ in postage paid for an up to six times weight first-class mail piece. This cover front was in the Les Winick international gold medal collection of Iceland.

Often, the 18¢ Prexie is seen in both domestic and international mail, used in combination with other stamps, to pay a combination of rates and fees. The Figure 18 3¢ stamped envelope,



Figure 18. Three stamped envelope uprated with an 18¢ Prexie to pay the domestic air mail rate and registration fee on a 1943 cover.

shown front and reverse, is uprated with an 18¢ Prexie. It was sent registered on April 3, 1943, from Seattle, Washington to Los Angeles, California, where it was received on April 4th. The 21¢ in postage paid the 6¢ air mail rate for an up to one-ounce letter and 15¢ registration fee for an item with an indemnity value up to \$5, a rate/fee combination in effect through March 25, 1944.

The 2¢ window envelope, with added 18¢ Prexie, shown front and reverse in Figure 19, was mailed locally on May 31, 1940, from Jefferson City, Missouri. It was registered and marked "Return Receipt Requested" and "FEE PAID."



The 20¢ in postage paid the 2¢ local rate at a carrier post office, 3¢ return receipt fee, and 15¢ registration fee for an item with an indemnity value up to \$5, a rate/fee combination in effect through March 25, 1944. After four unsuccessful attempts to deliver the envelope, it was marked "RETURNED TO SENDER" on June 13, 1940.

Figure 19. Two cent stamped envelope uprated with an 18¢ Prexie to pay the local rate plus return receipt and registration fees on a 1940 cover.

Another example of a local use is pictured in Figure 20. The cover, which was mailed registered return receipt requested within Los Angeles, California, on November 12, 1941, contains a single 18¢ stamp and two 2¢ Prexies. The 22¢ in postage paid 4¢ for a double weight local letter, a 3¢ return receipt fee, and 15¢ registration fee for an item with an indemnity value up to \$5, a rate fee combination in effect through March 25, 1944.



Figure 20. One 18¢ and two 2¢ Prexies paying for a 1941 double weight local letter, return receipt fee, and registration fee.

Figure 21 shows the front and reverse of a cover containing four 18¢ Prexies and a 3¢ Boulder Dam commemorative, combining to pay 75¢ postage on a registered



Figure 21. Four 18¢ Prexies and 3¢ Boulder Dam commemorative paying domestic first-class rate, return receipt fee, and registration fee on 1955 cover from a New York City stamp dealer.

return receipt requested first-class mail piece. The envelope was mailed on May 11, 1955, from Hobbs Stamp Company in New York City, to Bridgeton, New Jersey, where it was received on May 12th. The 75¢ in postage paid the 3¢ first class rate, 7¢ return receipt fee, and a 65¢ registration fee for an item with an indemnity value up to \$50, a rate/fee combination only in effect from January 1, 1952 through June 30, 1957. This cover is notable as covers containing more than two 18¢ Prexies are scarce. This cover currently has the largest recorded number of the 18¢ Prexie.

I'll conclude with three items where the 18¢ Prexie was used in combination with other stamps to pay postage on items sent to international destinations. First is a registered envelope, pictured front and back in Figure 22, mailed on March 11, 1940, from Berkeley, California to Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, where it was received on March 14th and delivered on March 15th. The cover contains 21¢ in postage made up of an 18¢ Prexie which was added to a 3¢ stamped envelope. The 21¢ paid the up to two-ounce treaty surface rate (2 x 3¢/ounce) to Canada and 15¢ registration fee a rate/fee combination that was in effect through January 31, 1945.



Figure 22. Three cent stamped envelope uprated with an 18¢ Prexies paying the treaty rate for a double weight surface letter and the registration fee on 1940 cover to Canada.



Figure 23. Two 6¢ Transport air mail stamps and an 18¢ Prexie paying the Foreign Air Mail (FAM) rate on a 1946 air mail cover from Buffalo, New York to Merano, Italy.

The second item is an air mail letter, shown front and reverse in Figure 23, sent from Buffalo, New York to Merano, Italy. It was mailed from Buffalo, on February 18, 1946, with two 6¢ Transport air mail stamps and was returned to the sender for 18¢ in additional postage, which was paid with an 18¢ Prexie. The envelope was then placed back in the mail on February 28th and received in Merano on March 14th.

The final international item with mixed franking is pictured front and reverse in Figure 24. The cover, which was registered with a return receipt requested, was sent via surface mail from Riverside, California to Quebec, Canada, on June 8, 1944. The 3¢ stamped envelope was uprated with an 18¢ Prexie and 2¢ For Defense issue, which were used to pay the 3¢ treaty surface rate to Canada, 15¢ registration fee, and 5¢ UPU return receipt fee. Upon entering Canada, the contents were reviewed by the Canadian Foreign Exchange Control Board and after stops in Windsor and North Bay, Ontario, the cover was returned to the sender as the address it was mailed to in Quebec was apparently closed/not valid. The cover finally arrived back in Riverside, California on June 26th, 18 days after it was sent.

If you have any interesting 18¢ Prexie usages you would like to share or have any comments, clarifications, or corrections, please send them to me at rich@pedersonstamps.com or by mail at 15312 Gammon Green Walk, Midlothian, VA 23112.



Figure 24. Two 6¢ Transport air mail stamps and an 18¢ Prexie paying the Foreign Air Mail (FAM) rate on a 1946 air mail cover from Buffalo, New York to Merano, Italy.

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