



EMPIRE STATE
POSTAL HISTORY
SOCIETY

APS UNIT 28

www.esphs.us

Membership info:

George McGowan, PO Box 482,
E. Schodack, NY 12063-0482
geolotus2003@nycap.rr.com



MISSING IN ACTION

By Heather Sweeting

Before her death, my aunt gave me a group of family letters. Some helped me pinpoint from where our Welsh ancestors emigrated. Others showed me how difficult it must have been growing up in wartime when your friends and boyfriends were making sacrifices overseas.

This cover, which bears my aunt's address as a student at Syracuse University, was mailed on March 20, 1944, to Staff Sergeant Joseph Brockway A.A.F / A.S.N. (Army serial number) 12172379 / 566th Sqd. / 389th Bomb. Group (H) / A.P.O. 634 / New York, N.Y.

The cover bears several other markings — a square RETURN TO SENDER pointing finger in black with the words “VERIFIED / 1ST BASE POST OFFICE,” a bold purple strike of “MISSING IN ACTION / 566 B. SQD / 389 B. GP.,” the signature of Lieutenant M. J. Fischer in blue ink and, a black 20 APR 1944 date stamp below.

On its return to the US, the cover received two circular date stamps on the reverse — a US Army Postal Service APO marking on May 27, 1944, and a Syracuse University Station on June 15, 1944. It was then forwarded back to Syracuse University on June 15, 1944. As school was out for the summer, it was forwarded to her home address on Brinkerhoff Avenue in Utica.

American Air Museum (www.AMERICANAIMUSEUM.COM/UNIT/1248) records show Brockway was an Army Air Forces ball and turret gunner. His plane fell out of formation in a spin after bombing the target at Gotha, Germany, and crashed near Aechsen Germany, on February 24, 1944. His plane was a B-24 Bomber known as *The Oklahoman*. Brockway was taken as a POW.

WW2pow.info's website (www.WW2POW.INFO/INDEX.PHP?PAGE=DIRECTORY&REC=47933) shows Brockway listed as a POW at Stalag 9C Bad Sulza Saxe-Weimar 51-1. By August 6, 1945, he had been liberated from the camp, as Germany had surrendered on June 8 — VE Day.

I do not know what happened to Brockway after the war. ■