

OKINAWA – THE LAST BATTLE WORLD WAR II REAL PHOTO POSTCARDS



**GROGAN PHOTO COMPANY
DANVILLE, ILLINOIS**

**BY
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REVISED 9 DEC 2015

The Grogan Photo Company of Danville, Illinois produced a series of real photo postcards of the Okinawa Campaign, the last great battle of World War II. This paper is intended to provide some basic information on the postcards and act as a checklist for the collecting and cataloging of information about the postcards.

Grogan Photo Company was listed in the Danville, Illinois City Directory from 1938 to 1961. The address was 1107 Bahls St. (corner of Maple)

Elmer H. Grogan and his brother Raymond E. Grogan started the Danville plant in 1938, having previously started another photo company in Chicago in 1930.

During WWII the company's primary work was production of training photos for the Navy and other government branches, at the rate of 80,000 to 100,000 per day. Shortly after the war they started to produce the Okinawa Campaign postcards which they shipped to Okinawa for sale to the soldiers who were in the actual battles and those who arrived in the early years after the war. Grogan also produced similar postcards for the Philippines and New Guinea.

Grogan produced a set of photographs in a mailable envelope probably before they started to make the postcards. These photographs were only identified as Official U.S. Marine Corps Photos. One mailable envelope marked as Series 1 has been found and one of the photographs in the set of 10 is almost identical to Postcard 4-5 Operating Room in Cave. **See Appendix for examples.**

The Okinawa Campaign postcards were produced in two types of numbered series.

The dash number series cards were in groups of 12, except for the last two series.

1-1 to 1-12

2-1 to 2-12

3-1 to 3-12

4-1 to 4-12

5-1 to 5-12

6-1 to 6-9

7-1 to 7-9

These sets are known to have been sold in mailable envelopes marked "Mfg. In U.S.A. Grogan Photo Co. Danville, Ill." **See Appendix for example.** Used versions of these cards are rare since they were sold as sets and most of the service men mailed the packs home or brought the packs home with them.

The 3 digit serial number cards started at approximately 170 and ended at approximately 211. These were probably produced after the Dash Number Series and were more of a sight seeing nature with no battle action shots. The checklist for the 3 digit serial number postcards have some numbers with no information as no examples of these postcards have been found.

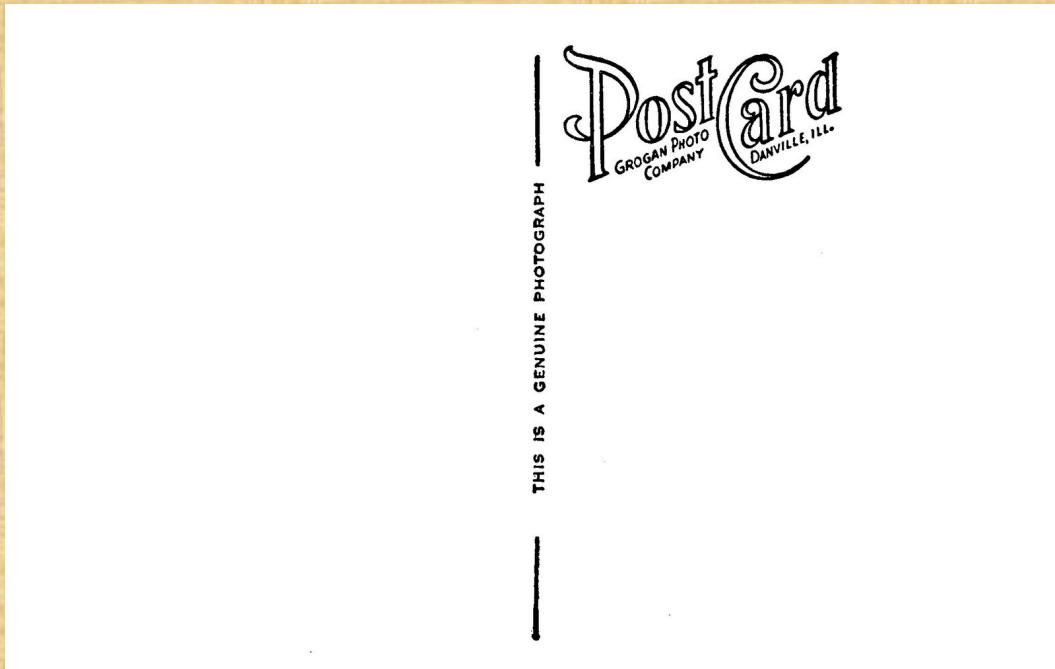
The Okinawa Campaign cards were produced using at least 8 different back printings which are illustrated on the following pages. The use of different back types varied from card to card and not all cards were printed using all the different back types, and, in fact, some of the back types were used on very few cards and are rare.

Actual production start dates are unknown but estimated to have started in 1946 or 1947 based on postal usage dates.

Earliest known postal usage from Okinawa is 12 April 1947 which is a written date on a "Free" mail postcard. The earliest postmarked card is 15 April 1947 on a "Free" mail postcard. The latest post office cancel used date found is 29 Sept. 1958. **See Appendix for examples.**

It is assumed at this point that the postcards were only available for sale on Okinawa.

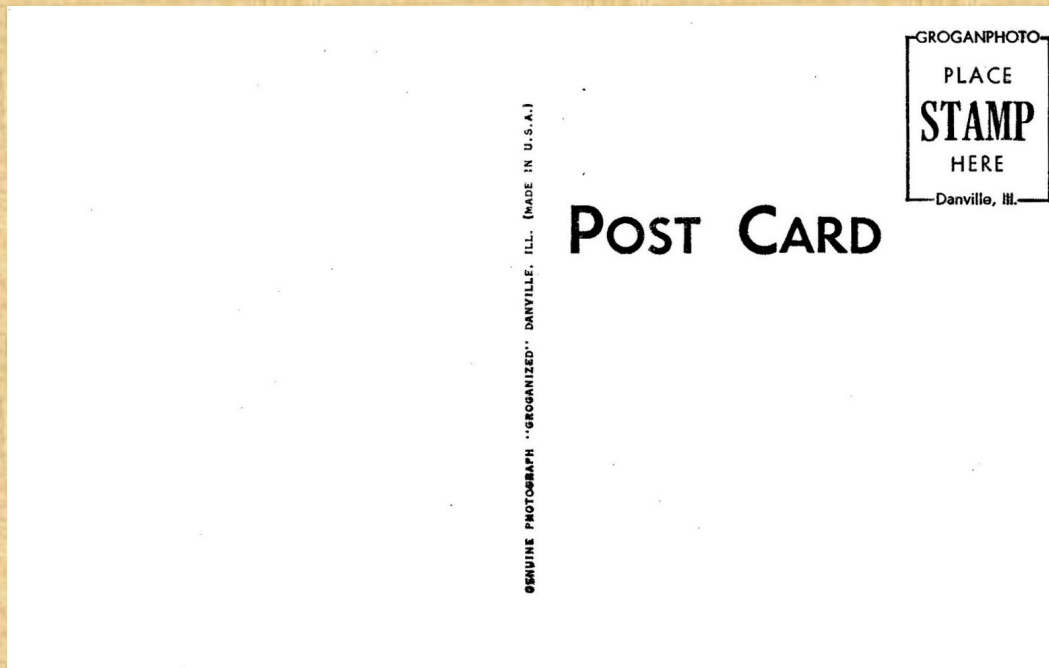
Cards that were mailed from a Ryukyu post office with Ryukyu stamps and postmark are very rare. **See Appendix for examples.**



Type I Grogan Photo Company, Danville, Ill.

Known on the following WWII Okinawa Campaign Real Photo Postcards

1-1	2-1	5-1	7-1	171	192
1-2	2-2	5-2	7-2	172	196
1-3	2-3	5-3	7-3	174	197
1-4	2-4	5-4	7-4	175	198
1-5	2-5	5-5	7-5	177	199
1-6	2-6	5-6	7-6	178	200
1-7	2-7	5-7	7-7	179	201
1-8	2-8	5-8	7-8	180	202
1-9	2-9	5-9	7-9	181	203
1-10	2-10	5-10		184	
1-11	2-11	5-11	170	187	206
1-12	2-12	5-12		188	207
					208
					209
					211



Type II Groganphoto Danville, Ill. (Groganized)

Known on the following WWII Okinawa Campaign Real Photo Postcards

174

175

177

178

179

180

181

182

184

187

188

196

197

200

201

203

206

208

209

POST CARD



CORRESPONDENCE

ADDRESS

Type III EKC (Eastman Kodak Company used by Grogan Photo)

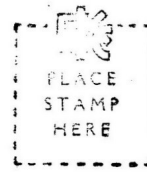
Known on the following WWII Okinawa Campaign Real Photo Postcards

1-4	2-1	3-1	4-1	5-1	6-1	7-1
	2-2	3-2	4-2	5-8	6-2	7-2
		3-3	4-3		6-3	7-4
		3-4	4-4		6-4	
		3-5	4-5		6-5	196
		3-6	4-6		6-6	
		3-7	4-7		6-7	
		3-8	4-8		6-8	
		3-9	4-9		6-9	
		3-10	4-10			
		3-11	4-11			
		3-12	4-12			

POST CARD

CORRESPONDENCE

ADDRESS

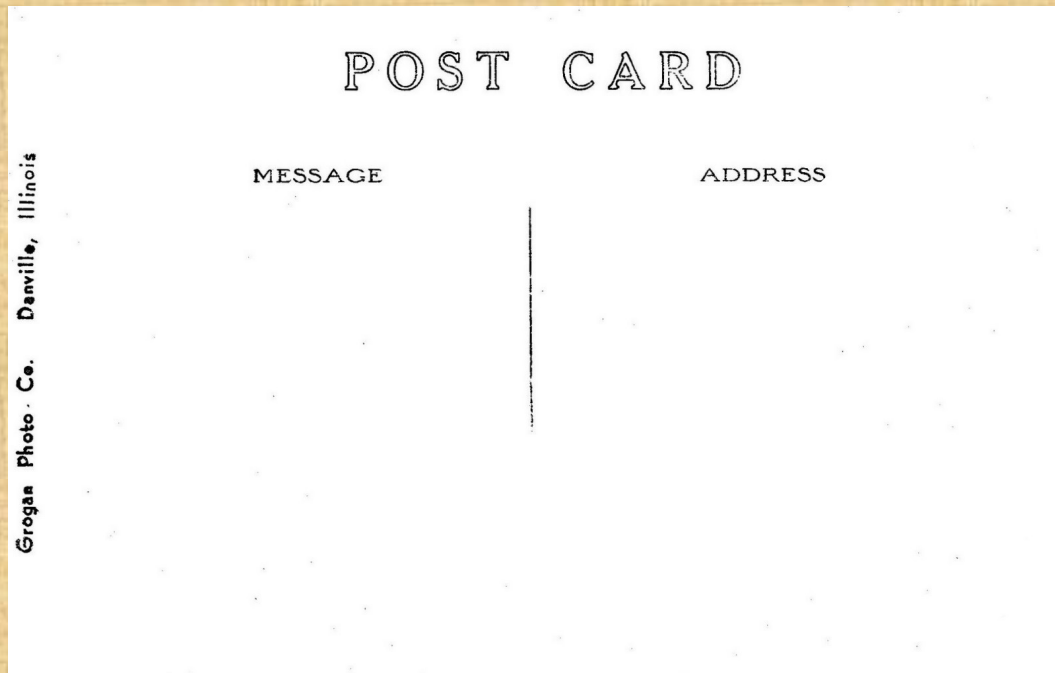


Grogan Photo Co. Danville, Illinois

Type IV EKC with Grogan Photo Co. Danville, Illinois divider

Known on the following WWII Okinawa Campaign Real Photo Postcards

175



Type Va Unknown manufacturer with Grogan Photo Co. Danville, Illinois vertical on left

Known on the following WWII Okinawa Campaign Real Photo Postcards

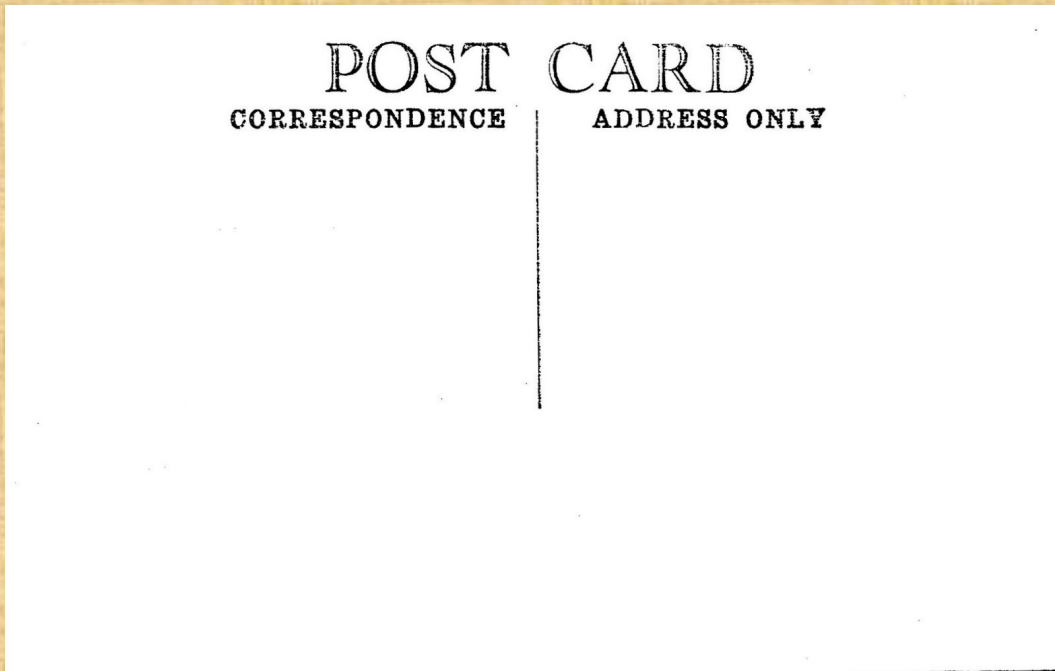
- 170
- 182
- 184
- 187
- 188
- 195
- 200
- 202
- 203
- 204
- 207
- 208
- 209
- 211



Type Vb Unknown manufacturer with Grogan Photo Co. Danville, Illinois vertical on right

Known on the following WWII Okinawa Campaign Real Photo Postcards

182



Type VI Unknown manufacturer with divided back POST CARD

Known on the following WWII Okinawa Campaign Real Photo Postcards

5-9

7-9



Type VII Blank Back

Known on the following WWII Okinawa Campaign Real Photo Postcards

200

DASH SERIAL NUMBER SERIES CHECKLIST

	Type I	Type II	Type III	Type IV	Type Va Vb	Type VI	
1-1	X						1 APRIL 1945 L DAY LANDING 6TH MARINE DIV
1-2	X						THE GENERAL AND THE PRIVATE
1-3	X						OBSERVING ARTILLERY FIRE ON OUTSKIRTS OF NAHA
1-4	X		X				TAKING OF SUGARLOAF HILL - VICINITY OF NAHA
1-5	X						TAKING NAHA
1-6	X						CHOW LINE
1-7	X						CLEANING OUT CAVE - VICINITY OF NAHA
1-8	X						CIVILIANS AID IN FEEDING SICK AND WOUNDED
1-9	X						WATCHFUL WAITING
1-10	X						TANKS IN ACTION OUTSKIRTS OF NAHA
1-11	X						MOTOBU PENINSULA - ON ROAD TO NAGO
1-12	X						FARMING IN OKINAWA
2-1	X		X				L DAY 1 APRIL 1945 ON OKINAWA
2-2	X		X				MARINES MOVING THRU RICE PADDYS
2-3	X						MUD VICINITY OF NAHA
2-4	X						JAP PILLBOX NAHA
2-5	X						CAM JAP LANDING CRAFT MOTOBU
2-6	X						CHURCH SERVICES AT NAGO
2-7	X						TOMBS OF OKINAWA
2-8	X						NAHA CAPITAL OF OKINAWA
2-9	X						GOOD LUCK GIVE EM HELL
2-10	X						RICE PADDIES IN NORTH OKINAWA
2-11	X						ATTACH OF MOTOBU MOUNTAINS
2-12	X						OKINAWAN CHILD SLEEPING WITH MARINES
3-1			X				L DAY
3-2			X				PIONEERS
3-3			X				QUESTIONING A JAP PRISONER
3-4			X				GENERAL SHEPHERD
3-5			X				RUINS OF NAGO
3-6			X				YONTAN AIRFIELD
3-7			X				NATIVE HAVING HORSE TROUBLE
3-8			X				CLEANING RIFLE
3-9			X				BOMBARDMENT OF NAHA
3-10			X				OKINAWA JAP PERSONNEL TRENCH
3-11			X				MARINES ATTACKING MOTOBU MT
3-12			X				FLAMETHROWERS OUTSKIRTS OF NAHA

DASH SERIAL NUMBER SERIES CHECKLIST

	Type I	Type II	Type III	Type IV	Type Va Vb	Type VI	
4-1			X				LANDING 6TH MARINE 1 APRIL 45
4-2			X				OKINAWAN BEAUTY
4-3			X				MAJOR GENERAL SHEPHERD
4-4			X				YONTAN AIRFIELD - L DAY
4-5			X				OPERATING ROOM IN CAVE
4-6			X				FLAMETHROWERS IN ACTION - NAHA
4-7			X				MARINES MOVING
4-8			X				SUGAR LOAF HILL VICINITY NAHA
4-9			X				TYPICAL OKINAWAN SCENERY
4-10			X				SUGAR REFINERY
4-11			X				BRIDGE DEMOLISHED BY JAPANESE
4-12			X				BE KIND TO ANIMALS
5-1	X		X				WADING ASHORE L DAY
5-2	X						L DAY
5-3	X						DUMMY JAP PLANE YONTAN AIRFIELD
5-4	X						ARTILLERY IN ACTION
5-5	X						HE ISNT SO BRAVE NOW
5-6	X						TWO MARINES AND AN _ _ _
5-7	X						ROCKETS IN ACTION JAP AIR ATTACK
5-8	X		X				EVEN MARINES MUST REST
5-9	X					X	VIEW OF YONTAN AIRFIELD
5-10	X						WAITING FOR TROUBLE VICINITY OF NAHA
5-11	X						THE JAPS WERE WELL ENTRENCHED IN CAVES
5-12	X						MAIL FROM HOME

DASH SERIAL NUMBER SERIES CHECKLIST

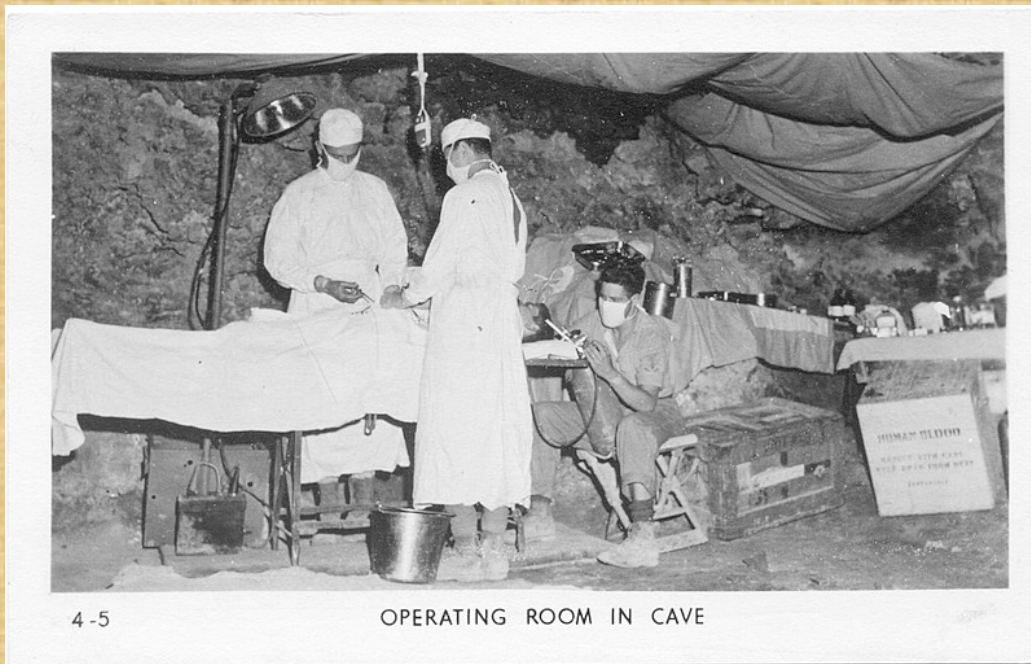
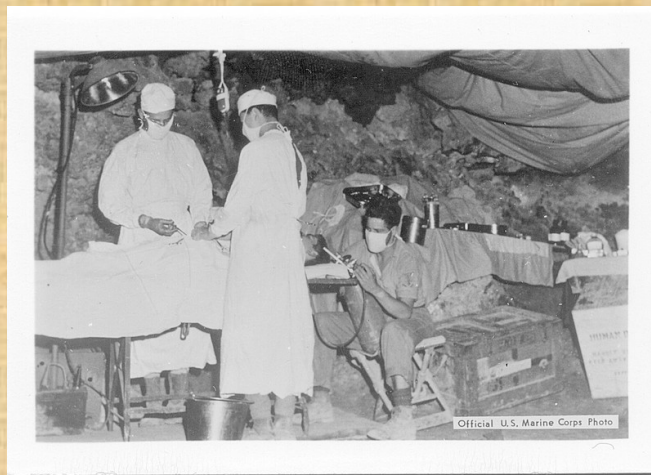
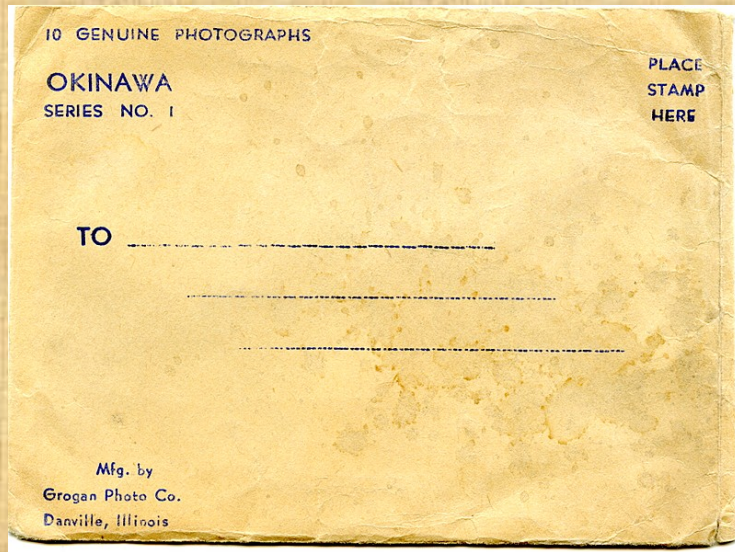
	Type I	Type II	Type III	Type IV	Type Va Vb	Type VI	
6-1			X				DEDICATION 6TH MARINE CEMETERY
6-2			X				TAPS-6TH MARINE DIV CEMETERY
6-3			X				CAPTURED GUN OROKU
6-4			X				NAHA AIRFIELD
6-5			X				FLAMETHROWERS
6-6			X				SOUTHERN TIP OF OKINAWA
6-7			X				NAHA
6-8			X				SENAGA SHIMA
6-9			X				SUGAR LOAF HILL
7-1	X		X				6th MARINE DIVISION CEMETERY ON OKINAWA
7-2	X		X				ENTRANCE 6TH MARINE CEMETERY
7-3	X						OUTSKIRTS OF NAHA
7-4	X		X				RADIO TOWERS EAST OF NAHA
7-5	X						ADMIRAL OTA'S CP
7-6	X						ADVANCE ON OROKU PENINSULA
7-7	X						BRIDGE BETWEEN NAHA AND OROKU PENINSULA
7-8	X						YONTAN AIRFIELD
7-9	X					X	JAP GUN FOUND OVERLOOKING NAHA AIRFIELD

THREE DIGIT SERIAL NUMBER SERIES

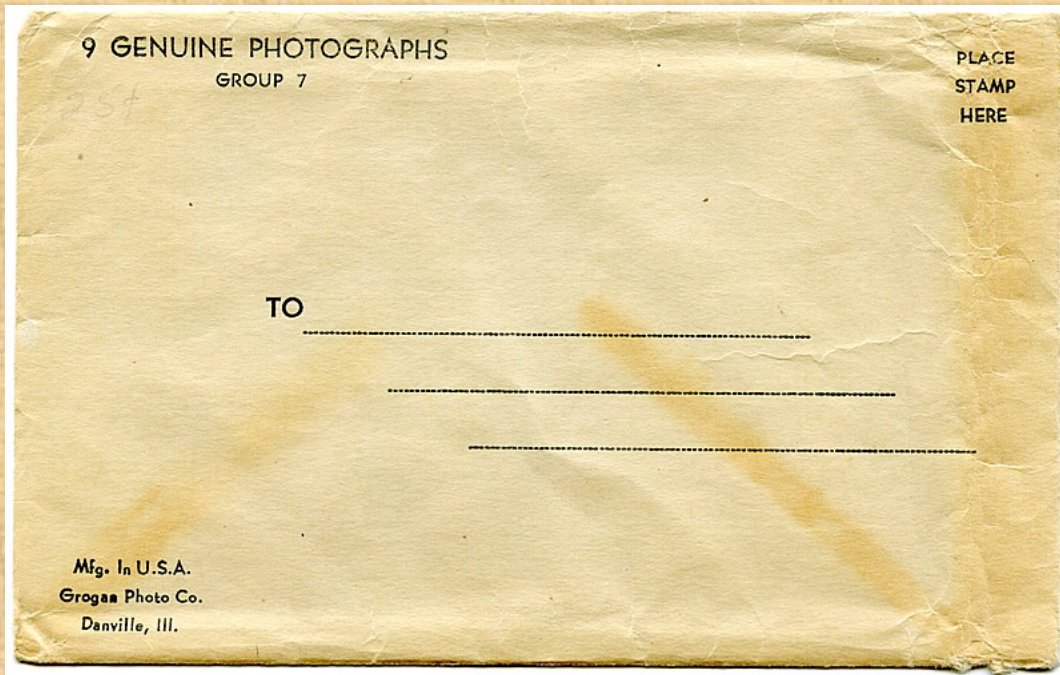
	Type I	Type II	Type III	Type IV	Type Va Vb	Type VI	Type VII	
170	X				a			ISHIKAWA RESETTLEMENT CAMP
171	X							DEFENDED TOMBS, NAHA OKINAWA
172	X							INTERIOR OF TOMB
173								
174	X	X						ISLAND CEMETERY ISA
175	X	X		X				POLICE GYMNASIUM
176								
177	X	X						NAHA HARBOR AND BAY
178	X	X						RUINS OF SHINTO SHRINE
179	X	X						STEPS TO SHINTO SHRINE
180	X	X						ENTRANCE TO SHINTO SHRINE
181	X	X						SHRINE RUINS NAHA PARK
182		X			a, b			NAHA PARK AND SHRINE
183								
184	X	X			a			TYPHOON WAKE
185								
186								
187	X	X			a			SAWTOOTH RIDGE
188	X	X			a			CHOCOLATE DROP HILL
189								
190								
191								
192	X							OBASCOM HQ OKINAWA
193								
194								
195					a			INTERIOR NATIVE HUT OKINAWA
196	X	X	X					OKINAWAN KIDS
197	X	X						DESERTED VILLAGE
198	X							OBASCOM CHAPEL
199	X							OBASCOM CHAPEL, OKINAWA
200	X	X			a		X	BOYS HIGH SCHOOL
201	X	X						SHURI CHRISTIAN CHURCH
202	X				a			OKINAWA MEMORIAL CHURCH
203	X	X			a			MEMORIAL CHURCH
204					a			RUINS OF SHURI OKINAWA
205								
206	X	X						BAILEY BRIDGES
207	X				a			IE SHIMA CEMETERY RYUKYUS
208	X	X			a			AERIAL VIEW IE SHIMA
209	X	X			a			ERNIE PYLE MEMORIAL IE SHIMA
210								
211	X				a			SNIPERS HILL IE SHIMA

APPENDIX

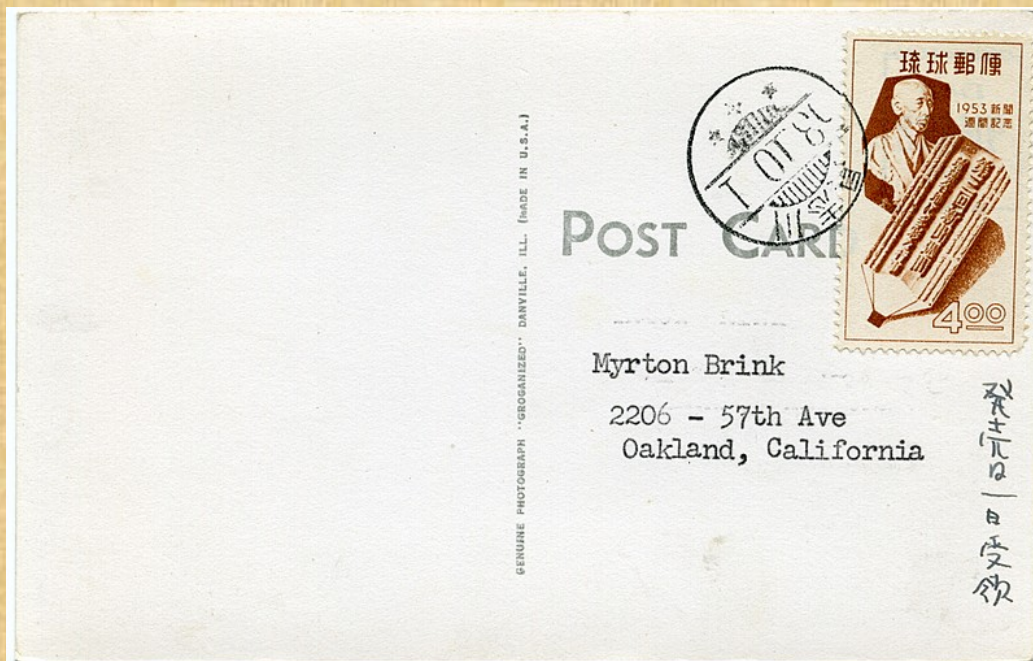
**EARLY GROGAN MARINE CORPS PHOTOGRAPHS AND ENVELOPE SOLD BY GROGAN
ONE OF THE PHOTOS WAS USED TO MAKE THE GROGAN POSTCARD
4-5 OPERATING ROOM IN CAVE**



GROGAN POSTCARD MAILING ENVELOPE
THE DASH NUMBER POSTCARDS WERE SOLD IN SETS IN THESE ENVELOPES

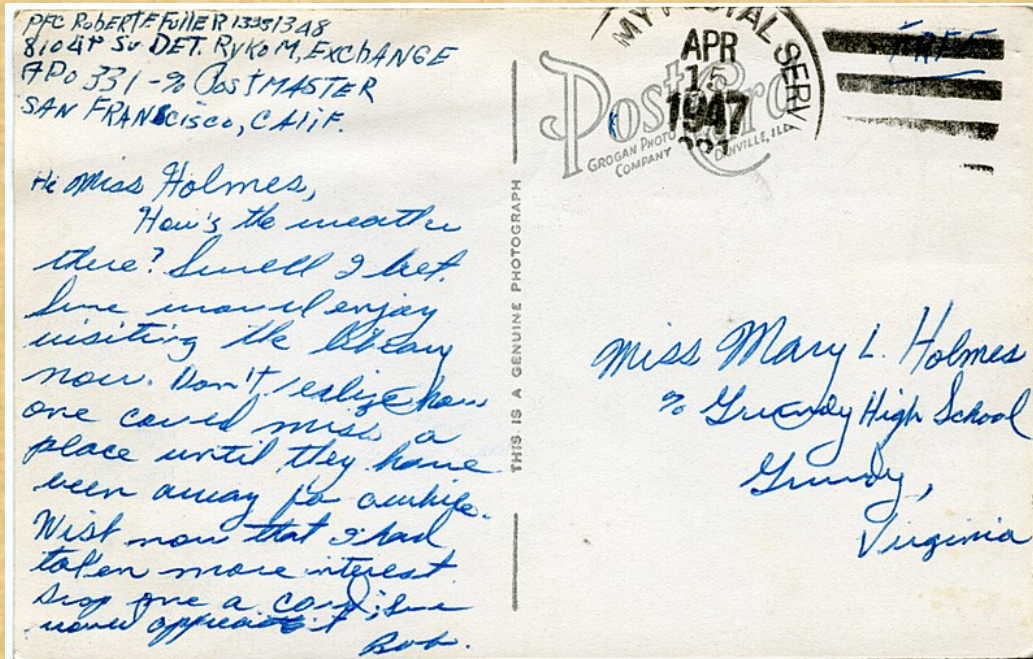


GROGAN POSTCARD #174 WITH RYUKYU POSTAGE AND POSTMARK
FIRST DAY OF ISSUE OF SCOTT #29 GUSHIKAWA POST OFFICE CANCEL

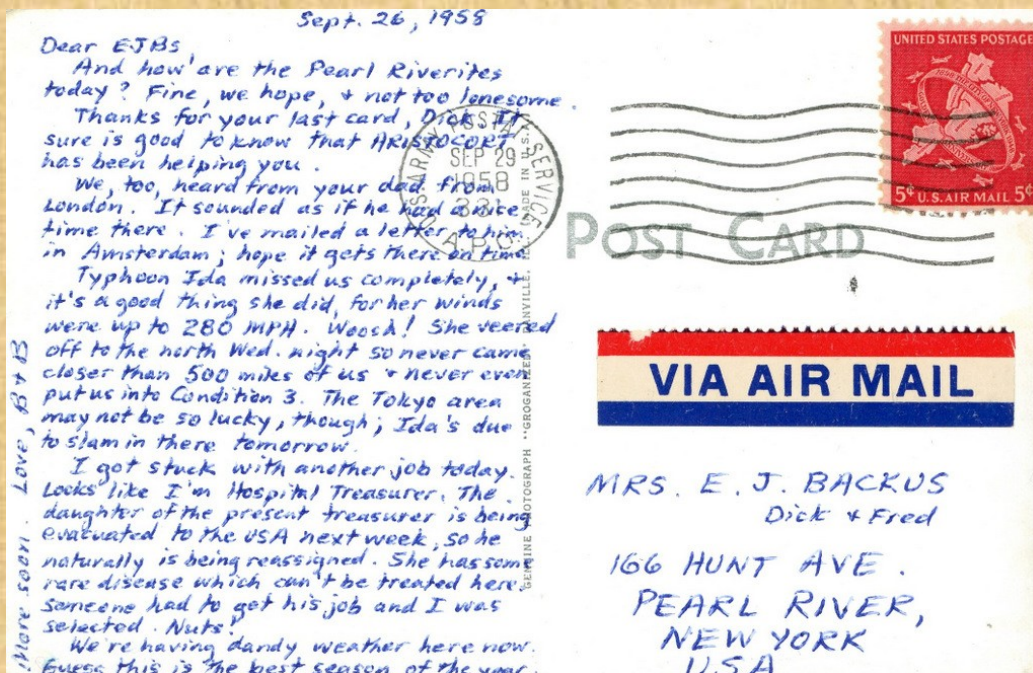


EARLIEST KNOWN POSTMARK 15 APRIL 1947
(AS OF THIS REVISION)

EARLIEST WRITTEN POSTCARD DATE IS 12 APRIL 1947
ON A NON-POSTMARKED "FREE" MAIL CARD



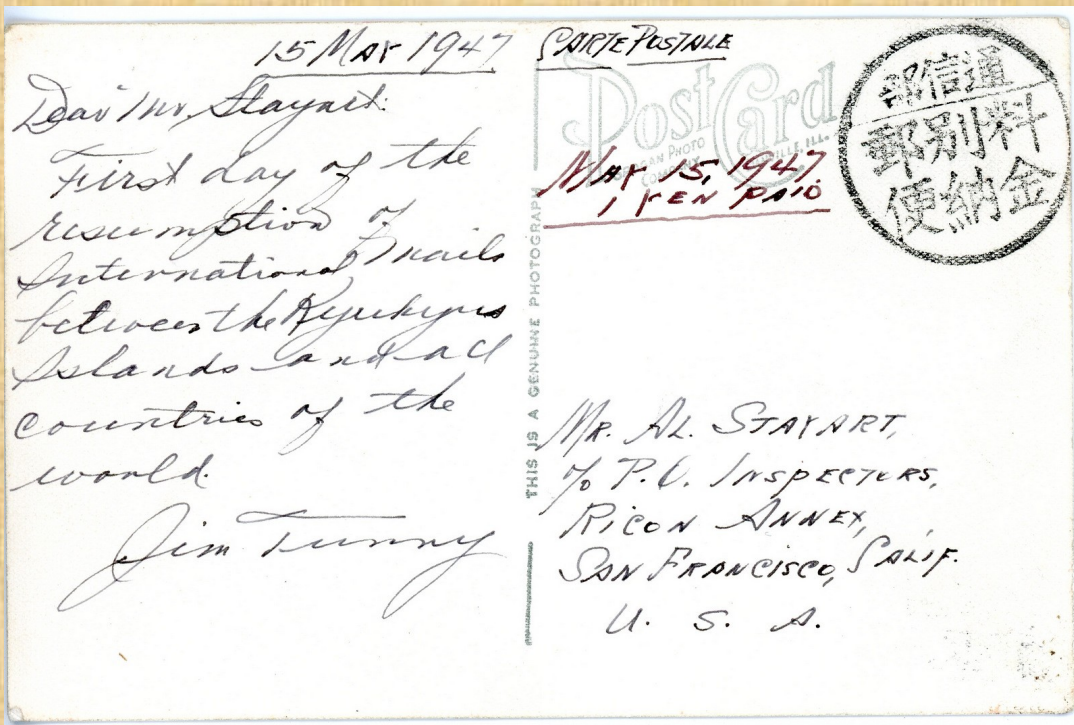
LATEST KNOWN POSTMARK 29 SEPT 1958
(AS OF THIS REVISION)



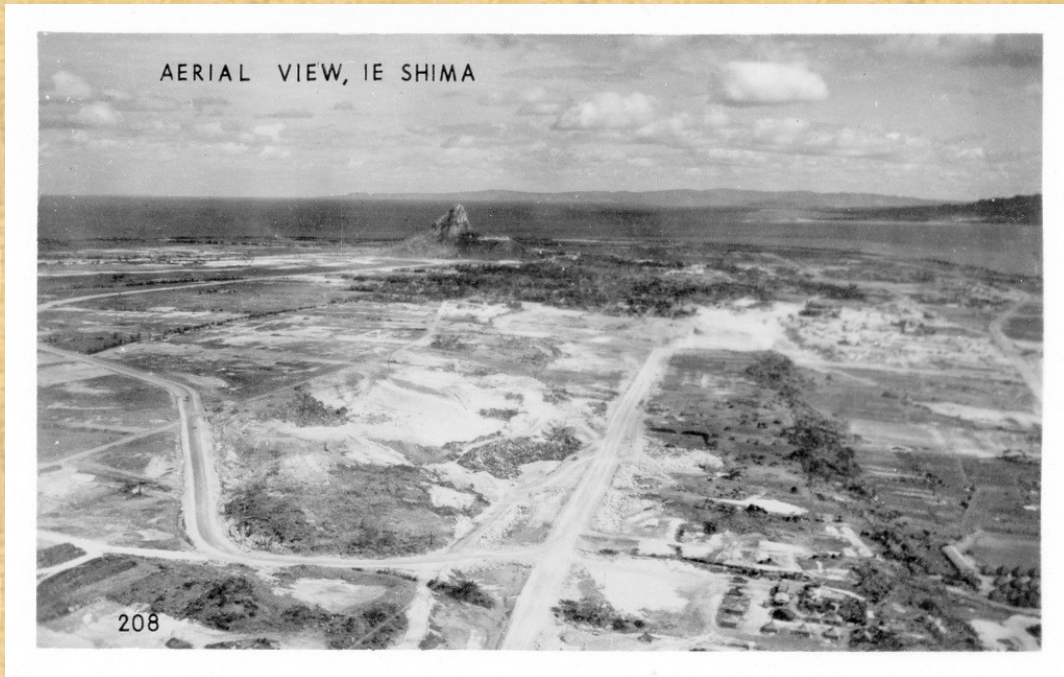
AFTER THE WAR OKINAWAN'S WERE NOT ALLOWED TO SEND INTERNATIONAL MAIL UNTIL 15 MAY 1947

THIS GROGAN POSTCARD IS THE ONLY KNOWN RYUKYU ISLANDS INTERNATIONAL MAIL FIRST DAY OF USE

THE CANCEL IS FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT OF THE OKINAWA CIVIL ADMINISTRATION



**GROGAN #208 AERIAL VIEW IE SHIMA
WITH RYUKYU ISLANDS IE SHIMA COMMEMORATIVE CANCEL
18 APRIL 1952 DEDICATION OF THE ERNIE PYLE MONUMENT**



EXAMPLES OF GROGAN OKINAWA POSTCARDS THAT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO IDENTIFY AS GROGAN BATTLE OF OKINAWA POSTCARDS WITHOUT HAVING THE CHECKLIST INFORMATION



IE SHIMA CEMETERY, RYUKYUS

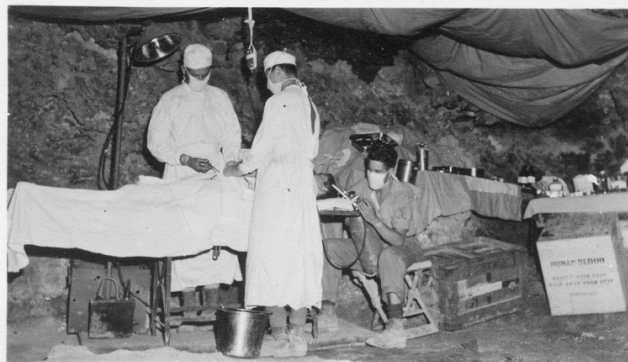


AERIAL VIEW, IE SHIMA



2-9

"GOOD LUCK-GIVE 'EM HELL"



4-5

OPERATING ROOM IN CAVE



3-2

PIONEERS



3-4

MAJOR GENERAL LEMUEL SHEPHERD, JR.



1-6

CHOW LINE