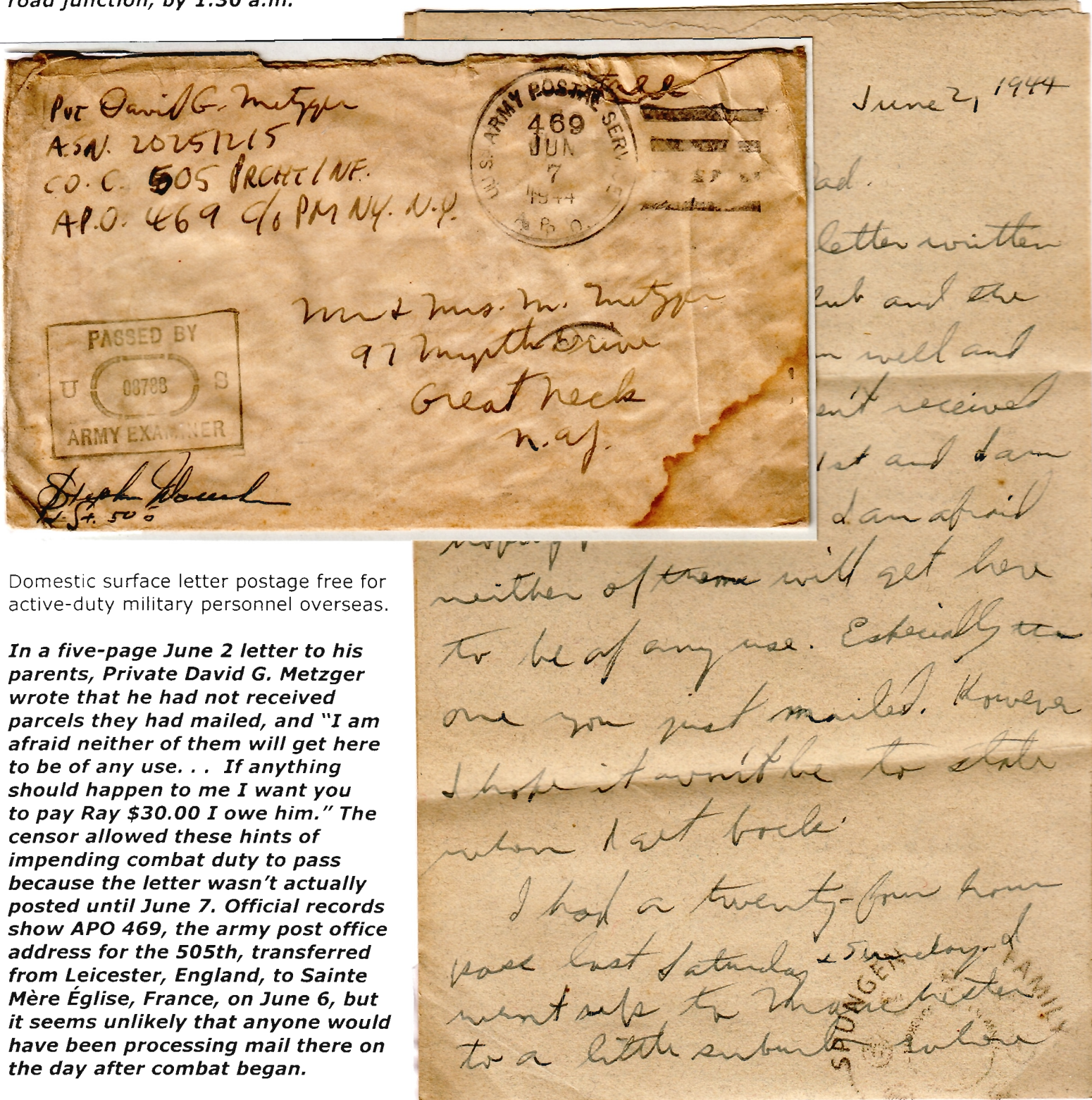


The Western Front: D-Day, June 6, 1944

As the Red Army advanced on the Eastern front, armed forces of the United States, Great Britain, and Free France mounted the largest amphibious landing in history on the beaches of Normandy, opening a new front against Germany from the West.

Attacks began just after midnight, as two airborne divisions parachuted into position behind German lines. By dawn units of the U.S. 82nd Airborne Division had captured key sectors behind Utah Beach. The 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment had taken Sainte Mère Église, an important road junction, by 1:30 a.m.



Domestic surface letter postage free for active-duty military personnel overseas.

In a five-page June 2 letter to his parents, Private David G. Metzger wrote that he had not received parcels they had mailed, and "I am afraid neither of them will get here to be of any use. . . If anything should happen to me I want you to pay Ray \$30.00 I owe him." The censor allowed these hints of impending combat duty to pass because the letter wasn't actually posted until June 7. Official records show APO 469, the army post office address for the 505th, transferred from Leicester, England, to Sainte Mère Église, France, on June 6, but it seems unlikely that anyone would have been processing mail there on the day after combat began.

FOUNDATION