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Article: Answer to Problem Cover in Issue No. 117

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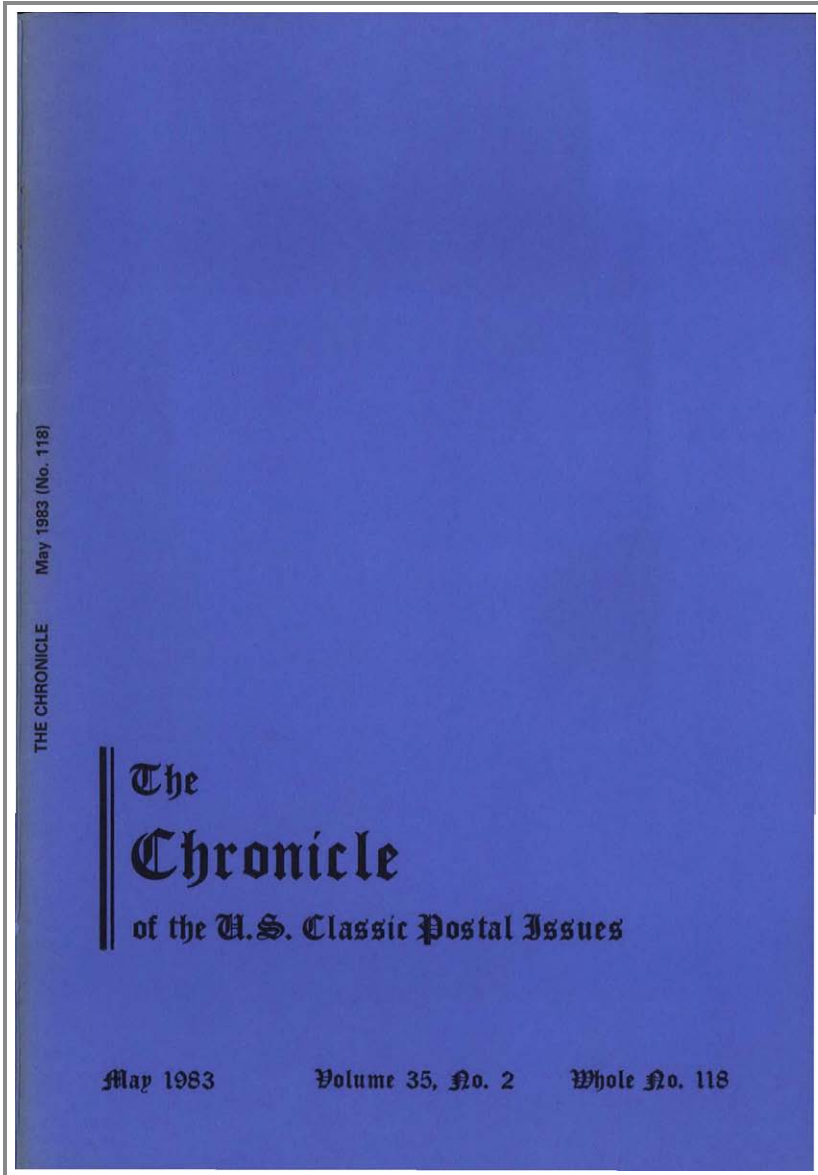


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ANSWER TO PROBLEM COVER IN ISSUE NO. 117

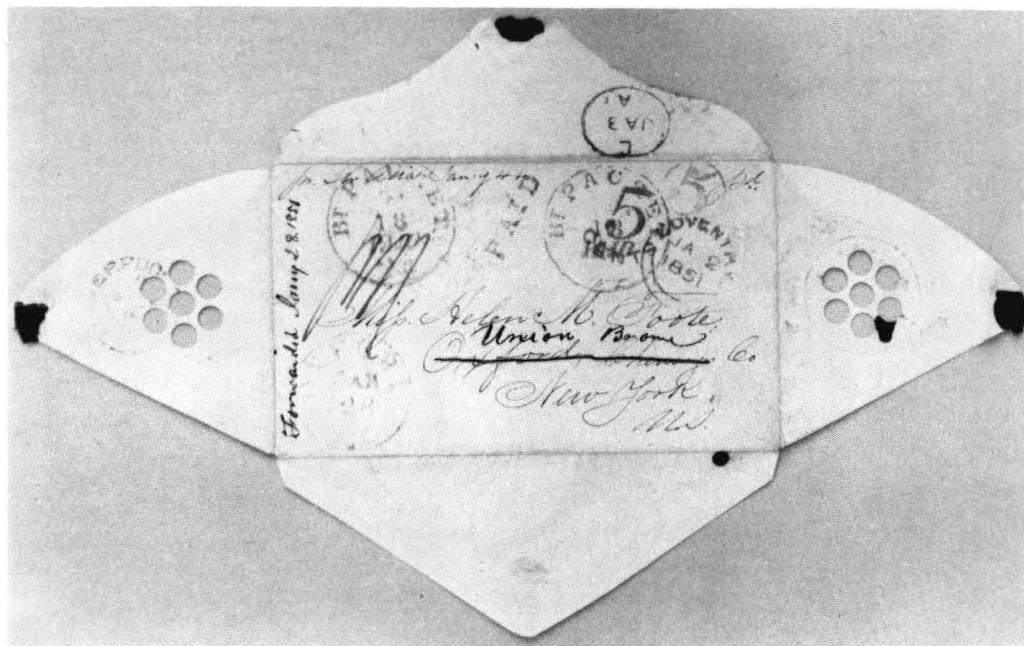


Figure 1. Envelope from England with odd cut-out rosettes.

Figure 1 shows the problem cover from the last issue. As previously written, it originated in Coventry, England, 2 Jan. 1851. The sender prepaid one shilling (the squiggles that resemble an "M") and the letter left England on a British packet from Liverpool, where the 5 cents credit marking was applied. The markings applied in N.Y. show 24¢ paid. Thus the letter was fully prepaid to Oxford in Chenango County. From there it was forwarded to Union in Boone County, receiving the Oxford c.d.s. at lower left and (due) "5" marking at upper right. A simple, but colorful cover rate-wise; but what about the holes in the flaps? This is an unusual item, somewhat similar to the patented "Leeds" envelope which had an open latticework at the front through which the stamp underneath could be cancelled. According to Dick Corwin, a machine for cutting such envelopes was patented in 1845 by Warren de la Rue, of the printing firm, and Edwin Hill, brother of Rowland Hill. The same pair invented an envelope-folding machine, which was shown at the 1851 Exhibition. At this writing we have no positive answer to the reason for the cut-outs, but Cal Hahn, Joanne Haag, and your Editor have come up with a list of possibilities which readers can comment on for the next issue.

1. This is a ladies' envelope and scented paper was used inside.
2. That the holes were for fumigation to make cutting unnecessary.
3. The holes permitted perusal proving the enclosure was inside.
4. The holes permitted inspection of contents by the Post Office obviating destruction of the seal.
5. There was tampering with the mails during this period and the holes were a safety measure.

PROBLEM COVERS FOR THIS ISSUE

George Hargest has died, and an obituary appears elsewhere. His letters of the past three years, written in a shaky hand, showed a keen and continuing interest in mails to and from the