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IN THIS ISSUE

GUEST PRIVILEGE

DEAD LETTER OFFICE RETURN ENVELOPES, 1862 CLERK IDENTIFICATION LETTERS

THOMAS R. WEGNER

A number of recent articles have discussed the appearance of "letters" on Dead Letter Office (DLO) return envelopes used during the Civil War period. These "letters" are found in the lower left corner of the official return envelopes. There is now a source available for the 1862 period which clearly identifies the purpose of these letters.

There is a document in the National Archives entitled "Memorandum of Monthly Account of Dead Letters Returned to the Writers, 1862."[1] This consists of a legal-size ledger which was used by the DLO to keep records concerning the performance of DLO operations for the February 1862 to January 1863 period. It is a slim folio, and is a unique reference; there are no similar records for other years. The question about clerk identification letters can be answered through the use of this document.

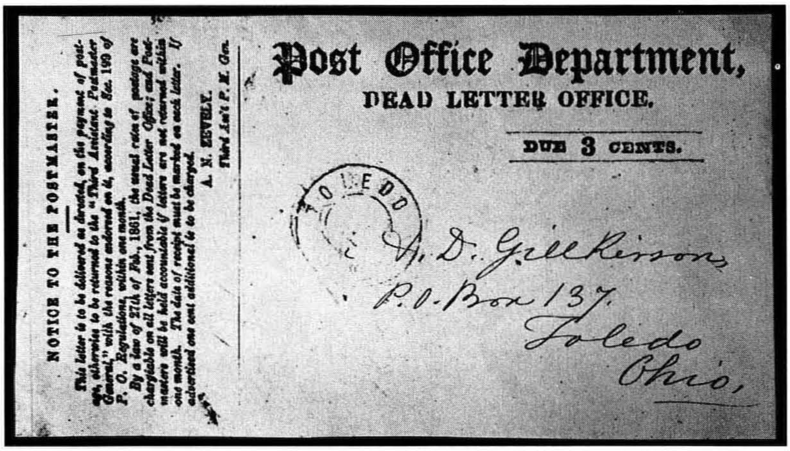

Figure 1. DLO return envelope, Law of February 27, 1861, printed without clerk identification letter.

But before we proceed, a brief history of the use of DLO return envelopes may be in order. Research reveals that the DLO began to use official dead letter return envelopes following implementation of the Law of February 27, 1861, which dictated that "the usual rates of postage are chargeable on all letters sent from the Dead Letter Office." Examples of envelopes from this initial period (Figure 1) show no clerk identification letters.

The next group of DLO return envelopes is printed with the Law of January 21, 1862, which provided that "double postage is chargeable on ordinary letters sent from the Dead Letter Office." The text on these envelopes varies. The envelope in Figure 2, whose text closely resembles that of its 1861 predecessor, is very likely an early version of the 1862 group. It also shows no clerk identification letter, suggesting at least that the identification procedure was implemented sometime after effective date of the Law of January 27, 1862. The return envelope in Figure 3, with rather different formulation of text, and dated by hand "Feby 19/62," does show a printed identification letter. (The text of this envelope also eliminates earlier provisions regarding advertising.)

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[1]Records of the Post Office Department, Record Group 28, Miscellaneous Records of the Division of Dead Letters.

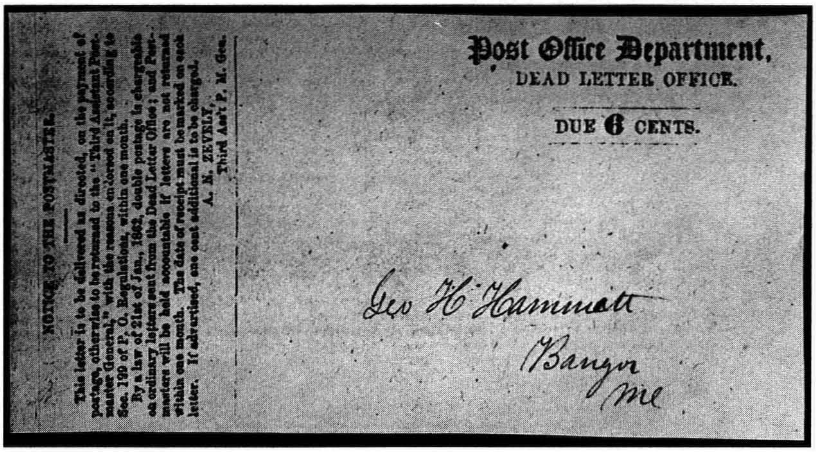

Figure 2. DLO return envelope, Law of January 21, 1862, printed without clerk identification letter.

A subsequent group of return envelopes was printed following the Act of March 3, 1863, and carries a reference to that Act. This group also used clerk identification letters (Figure 4). In fact, the use of identification letters continued into the "FREE" period of DLO return envelopes which began in 1866 (the previous fee for return of dead mail through the DLO was eliminated from 1866 until 1920).

The "Memorandum of Monthly Account..." ledger includes monthly and semi-annual reports identifying individual DLO clerks, their assigned code letters, the number of pieces of mail directed and sent out by each, the number of those pieces refused, the percentage of refusals, and the average number of items sent per day by each clerk. If one could date a return envelope to February 1862–January 1863, the time period covered by this report, it would be possible to identify who processed that mail.

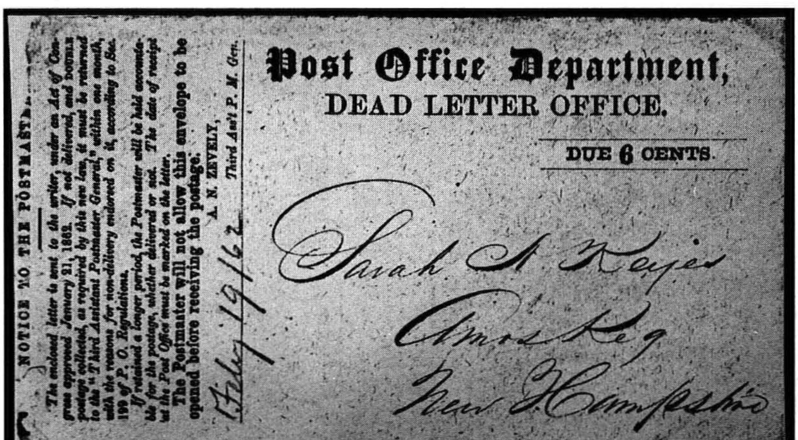

Figure 3. DLO return envelope, Law of January 21, 1862, printed with letter "K."

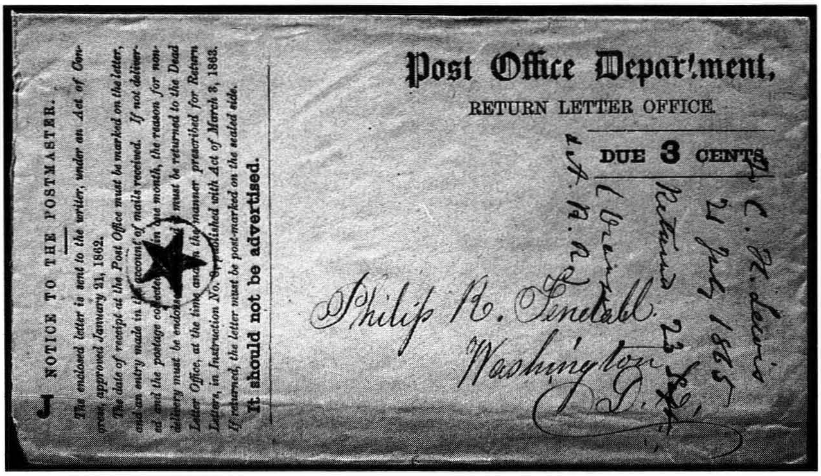

Figure 4. DLO return envelope, added reference to Act of 1863; letter "J."

Figure 5 could possibly be placed in this time frame. It's an 1862 style envelope, and presumably was used that year; it's imprinted with the letter "Z." With a Philadelphia "REC'D AUG 2" marking, the envelope may have been mailed the last of July. The letter "Z" was used by three different clerks during the 1 February-31 July fiscal reporting period, but the monthly report for July 1862 shows only one clerk identified with that letter, a Mr. Garriot. During that July, Mr. Garriot returned 2,861 pieces of correspondence. Of that total, 0 were returned to banks, 662 to business firms, and 2,199 to individuals. He worked 20 days, and his average was 143 returned items per day.

Figure 6 has no indication of date. "F" envelopes were used by Miss A.W. Taylor (February 1862), Miss Heinsberger (March, April and May 1862) and Miss A.K. Evans (June 1862 through January 1863). Any of these DLO clerks could have used this undated (1862) "F" return envelope.

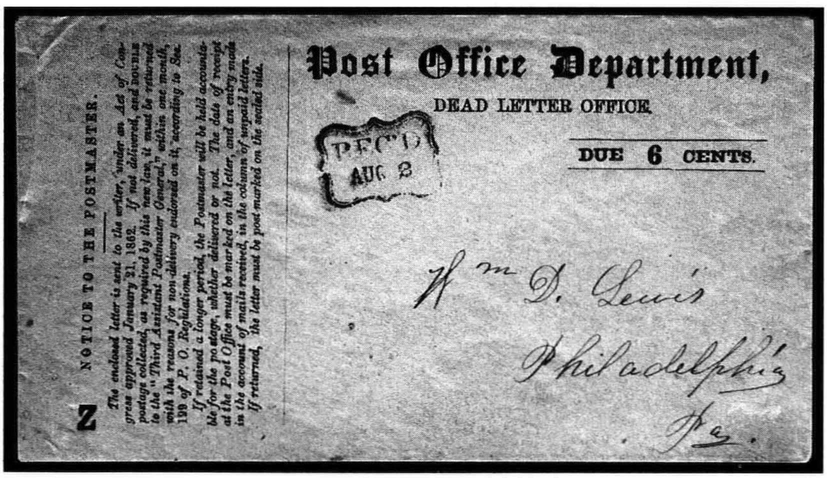

Figure 5. Clerk identification letter "Z."

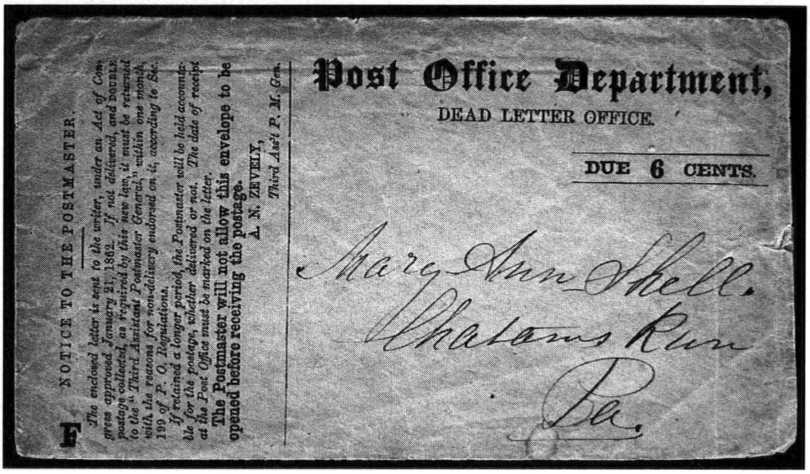

Figure 6. Clerk identification letter "F."

Figure 7 has a Philadelphia "REC'D SEP 22" (1862) marking. The September monthly report indicates Miss Mary A. Mclean used the "C" envelopes to return dead mail. Her returns for the month totaled 3,093; of that amount, she returned 15 to banks, 568 to business firms and 2,510 to individuals.

But what happened if envelopes printed with a particular identification letter were (temporarily) unavailable? Evidence suggests that envelopes bearing other pre-printed letters were used, on which the using clerk then applied his or her own identifying letter by handstamp. Figure 8 shows such usage, with the letter "L" applied to an "S" envelope. Mr. D. Lennox used the letter "L" from February through July 1862, while Mr. R.W. Bates used that letter from September 1862 though January 1863. Either of these two clerks could have used the added "L" to identify himself as the processor of that dead letter.

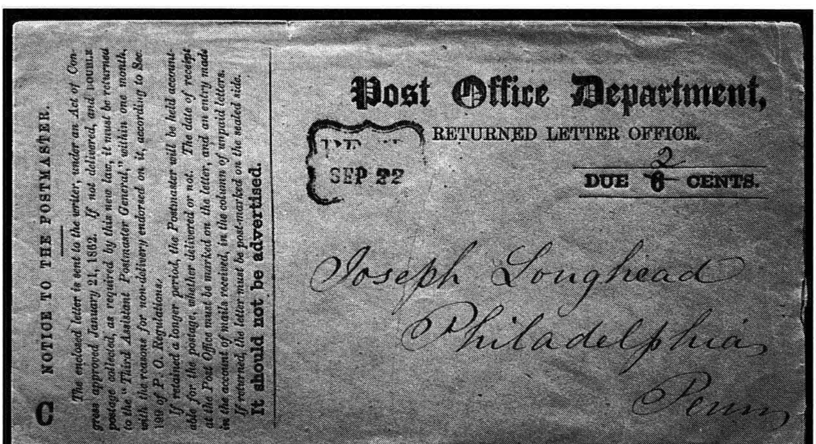

Figure 7. Clerk identification letter "C."

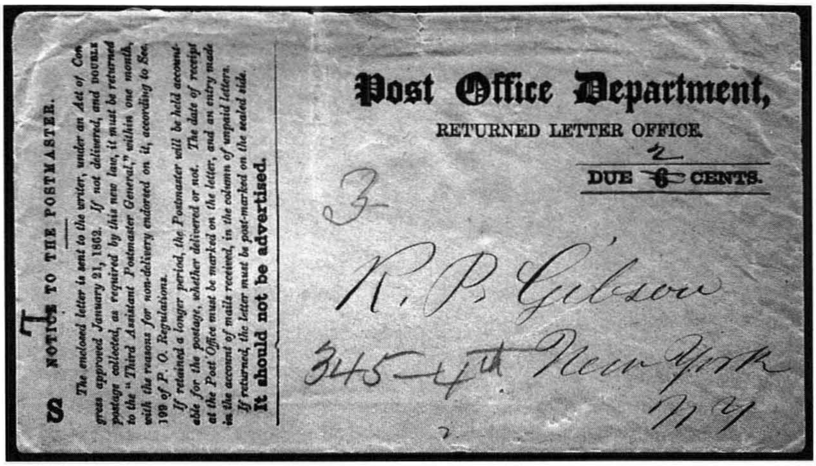

Figure 8. Clerk identification handstamp "L" added to "S" envelope.

It therefore appears that the National Archives have given us the necessary clues to solve the question of these mystery letters. They were established to identify the clerks responsible for processing and returning specific pieces of dead letter mail, and to document individual workloads—perhaps as a tool in developing aggregate statistics for the entire operation. The high number of pieces for each "letter," and the use of the entire alphabet (with exception of "I"), logically rule out any other type of categorization. Obviously, if production and performance were being recorded based on these identification letters, clerks had a strong incentive to use their handstamps if forced to use "incorrect" printed envelopes. Finally, there is good evidence to suggest that the identification letters were initiated on or slightly before February 1, 1862, coincidental with the accounting period covered by the "Memorandum of Monthly Account." □

RATING MARKS INCORPORATING HUMAN FIGURES

FRANK MANDEL

Until quite recently, the only United States rating mark known to me that incorporated a human figure was the so-called "Hartland Mailman." Figure 1 illustrates the well-known example which resided at various times in the Meroni, Lehman, Salzer and Alexander collections.

Figure 1. Cover from Hartland, Michigan, to Dansville, New York, possibly 1852. Used with the famous "Hartland Mailman" rating mark, fancy "PAID/3" in a tablet held by a human figure. Town marking with "dashes" on either side of state name measures 28 mm.; circle around rating mark is 33 mm. All markings in black. (Photo courtesy David L. Jarrett)

Figure 2. Enlarged photograph of the "Hartland Mailman." This is one of the most elaborate designs for a rating mark found on United States covers. (Photo courtesy David L. Jarrett)

Hartland, Michigan, was a small office in Livingston County, located on Ore Creek about 44 miles east of Lansing. It had a population of some 300 inhabitants in the 1850s, and was the site of a thriving flour mill. It reported total postages of $110.89 in 1853.

Attention is drawn to the style of the town marking in this cover, with characteristic dashes on either side of the state name. This style was used at several hundred offices throughout the United States during the 1850s. Ongoing investigation by me indicates that it is an early form or predecessor of the better known markings of the New York City postal handstamp distributors, Collin & Co. This company supplied the small offices that did not qualify for standardized postmarking devices at government expense. While the firm also supplied identifiable rating handstamps of simple design, a surprising number of its client post offices used fancy or unusual rating marks, especially with this early style town marking with the dashes. The "Hartland Mailman" is the most elaborate of these. It was probably custom-made, for it is known from no other offices. Figure 2 is an enlarged illustration of this unusual marking.

In the recent David G. Phillips sale of the Marvin Preston collection, a second such oddity emerged. Figure 3 is an enlarged photograph detailing the rating mark of an undated cover which originated at Turin, New York. The town marking associated with it is unexceptional. Turin was a larger office than Hartland. It was located in Lewis County, in the northeast central part of New York state, and had a population of about 1,500 inhabitants in the 1850s. Its 1853 postages totaled $243.77, so it probably was supplied with its town marking handstamp through a government contractor. The rating mark is another matter, though.

Figure 3. Enlargement of rating mark from Turin, New York, showing a face in profile, facing left, at one side of "PAID/3." On Feb. 15 (no year date) cover to Lawrence, Michigan. Standard town marking [not illustrated] measures 34 mm., rating mark approximately 20x18 mm., brown in color. (Photo courtesy David L. Jarrett)

It clearly shows a face in profile, forming the whole left side of the PAID/3 marking. The significance of this is lost to us, but it is just possible that it was not purely decorative. The date of the postmark is February 15, during the St. Valentine's Day period, so could this have been a crude attempt at the face of the beloved?

While the cover is undated, it likely was used in the 1852-1855 period. During that same time span, Turin also used an unusual "trime" 3¢ rating mark, based on the "CIII" design of the small 3¢ coins then in circulation. The postmasters there evidently had some imagination, at least where their rating marks were concerned. □

THE REFORM OF THE PENNY POST IN 1836

I. Introduction: The Pre-Reform Period

The practice of having a system of penny posts which delivered mail from the post office has existed in North America since well before the ratification and adoption of the Constitution in 1789. Indeed, as originally formulated, the delivery of mail by the penny posts was *mandatory* under certain circumstances. This was the *forerunner* of the later system under the Constitutional Post which required (and was practiced in the large cities where letter carrier service was available) that all incoming letters be delivered unless there was lodged with the postmaster written *instructions not to deliver the mail.*[1] As Calvet M. Hahn pointed out twenty years ago in the first of his series of articles concerning the letter carrier system in New York City,[2] home delivery was authorized in the very first postal law under which Richard Fairbanks of Boston operated, and was later repeated in the Neale Patent laws of 1692. This practice was thereafter made a part of the Act of Queen Anne of 1711,[3] was described briefly in the *New York Post Boy* in 1753,[4] and was reflected in Goddard's Provisional Post during its operation.[5]

Penny posts continued to operate after the implementation of the Constitution, although the first postal act adopted by Congress in 1792 did not provide for such a system.[6] We know, however, that the delivery system (and perhaps a collection system, too) did continue to operate prior to and during the time until the adoption by Congress of the next major piece of postal legislation (in 1794), because city directories in Philadelphia and New York, to cite two examples, list individuals who worked as letter carriers. For example, in Philadelphia Clement Biddle's *Philadelphia Directory* shows "William Blake, letter carrier, 68 Spruce Street" in 1791 and 1792; James Hardie's *Philadelphia Directory and Register* shows William Blake as a letter carrier at 6 Carter's Alley in 1793. Blake continued to be listed as a letter carrier in 1794, when he was joined in this listing by Josiah Johnson, 6 Carter's Alley.[7]

In 1794, Congress took its first step in recognizing the existence of penny post systems when it passed the Act of 1794.[8] Section 28, which was to become the model for all subsequent letter carrier legislation over the next forty-two years, provided:

---

[1] For a discussion of this requirement, see S. Roth, "A 5¢ 1847 Letter Revisited: Was It a Carrier Delivered Overpaid Drop Letter?," *Chronicle* 157:24-26 (Feb. 1993).

[2] C.M. Hahn, "Letter Carrier Service in New York," *Chronicle* 80:246 (Nov. 1973).

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] *Ibid.* Quoting from Mr. Hahn's article: "All letters for Persons living in the Town that remain uncall'd for on Post Nights will, on Monday Morning, be sent out by a Penny Post provided for that Purpose..."

[5] *Ibid.*

[6] Act of February 20, 1792, effective June 1, 1792.

[7] James Hardie, *Philadelphia Directory and Register*, 1794. For a listing of the letter carriers shown in the directories who were working in Philadelphia from 1785-1803, see S.M. Roth, "Philadelphia Carriers," *The Penny Post*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (Aug. 1991), 28-30.

[8] Act of May 8, 1794, effective June 1, 1794.

> . . . that letter carriers shall be employed at such post-offices as the Postmaster General shall direct for the delivery of letters in the places, respectively, where such post-offices are established; and for the delivery of each such letter, the letter carrier may receive of the person to whom the delivery is made two cents; *Provided*, That no letter shall be delivered to such letter carrier for distribution, addressed to any person who shall have lodged at the post-office, a written request that his letters shall be detained in the office. And for every letter lodged at any post-office, not to be carried by post, but to be delivered at the place where it is so lodged, the deputy postmaster shall receive one cent of the person to whom it shall be delivered.

This language was repeated in all subsequent major postal legislation prior to 1836.[9]

II. The Reforms of 1836

When Congress passed the Act of 1836,[10] it had nothing less in mind than the comprehensive reorganization of the Post Office Department and its fiscal operation. Indeed, Congress styled the law "An Act to change the organization of the Post Office Department, and to provide more effectively for the settlement of their accounts thereof." The letter carrier system authorized by previous federal legislation obviously was not to be immune from such goals. To that end, Section 41 of the Act provided:

> . . . that the Postmaster General shall be authorized, whenever the same may be proper for the accommodation of the public in any city, to employ letter carriers for the delivery of letters received at the Post Office in said city, except such as the persons to whom they are addressed may have requested, in writing addressed to the Postmaster, to be retained in the Post Office; and for the receipt of letters at such places in the said city as the Postmaster General may direct, and for the deposite [*sic*] of the same in the Post Office. And for the delivery by a carrier of each letter received from the Post Office, the person to whom the same may be delivered shall pay not exceeding two cents; and for the delivery of each newspaper and pamphlet, one-half cent; and for every letter received by a carrier to be deposited in a Post Office, there shall be paid to him, at the time of the receipt, not exceeding two cents; all of which receipts by the carriers in any city, shall, if the Postmaster General so direct, be accounted for by the Postmaster of said city, to constitute a fund for the compensation of the said carriers, and be paid to them in such proportions and manner as the Postmaster General may direct. Each of the said carriers, shall give bond with sureties, to be approved by the Postmaster General, for the safe custody and delivery of letters, and for the due account and payment of all moneys received by him.

Thus, Section 41 either introduced the following notions as new concepts to the carrier system or codifications of previously existing practices unstated in the laws. All of them (with minor variations) would govern the penny post system for the next twenty-five or so years:

1. the *collection* of letters for delivery *to the Post Office*, not merely for delivery from the Post Office;
2. a carrier fee which would now *"not exceed"* two cents, rather than be *pegged at two cents*, thereby giving the Postmasters in each city the opportunity to compete with the private posts as needed;
3. fees for the delivery of newspapers and pamphlets;
4. the creation of a general fund as an alternative means of compensation for the carriers, to be established by each postmaster who so chose, rather than compensating each carrier on a piece-work basis; and,

---

[9] Act of March 2, 1799 (Sec. 27); Act of April 30, 1810 (Sec. 34); Act of April 18, 1818 (Sec. 34); and Act of March 3, 1825 (Sec. 36).

[10] Act of July 2, 1836, effective July 2.

5. the requirement that each carrier provide a surety bond to be approved by the Postmaster General.[11]

III. The Implementation of Section 41

Typically, when a new postal law was enacted, the Postmaster General in due course would promulgate and distribute to postmasters Instructions or Regulations that would serve to flesh out the bare bones of the statutory provisions. This also occurred with respect to the Act of 1836. However, as a prelude to creating his Regulations, Postmaster Amos Kendall sent the following letter to Philadelphia Postmaster James Page:[12]

> Post Office Department
> 29 July, 1836
>
> P.M.
> Phila., Pa.
>
> Your letter of the 27th Inst. communicating copies of the orders issued by you while in the New York Office and of a letter to Mr. Coddington,[13] has been received.
>
> You have my entire approbation of the energetic course pursued by you & my thanks for the essential service rendered to the public & the Dept.
>
> I request that you will communicate with the P. Masters of Boston, New York and Baltimore in reference to a system of Penny Posts under the new law. If you could conveniently meet together & freely interchange the results of experience and reflection, it would be the surest way of arriving at satisfactory conclusions. Please report the result to the Dept. for consideration.
>
> On adverting to the law, I find that the Letter Carriers must be employed by the PM Genr. Probably, the practice will be to let the P. Masters of the Cities nominate them to the PM General for confirmation or appointment. Their bonds must also be sent him for approval. At least you may pursue that course for the present and until some general rule be adopted.
>
> A.K.[14]

It appears that Postmaster Page thereupon met with Postmasters Coddington, Nathaniel Greene (Boston) and John S. Skinner (Baltimore) to study Section 41 and to recommend its implementation as requested by Postmaster General Kendall. Page wrote to Kendall the following, submitting the group's Report, which was dated September 15:[15]

> Phila. P. O. Sept 19. 1836
>
> Sir,
>
> I have the honor to send you the Report of the Post Masters who met in New York.
>
> They did not deem it necessary to enter into the details of regulations for the carrier branches or the adequacy of them as it is too local in character.

---

[11] Postmaster General Amos Kendall took this bonding requirement seriously, not treating it as a mere technicality. Thus he wrote to Postmaster James Page of the Philadelphia Post Office on August 4, 1836: "I have appointed Henry Bonner a letter carrier in Philadelphia according to your recommendation. I return the bond enclosed to me with pencil marks indicating the changes which will be necessary in any new bond to make it conform to the late act of Congress." National Archives, RG 28, M610, Reel 50.

[12] Page was the Postmaster of the Philadelphia office from April 1833 through April 1841.

[13] Jon J. Coddington was appointed the Postmaster of New York City in 1836.

[14] RG 28, Entry 27, "Records of the Immediate Office of the Postmaster General – Letters Received" (1808-1836), Box 1 (Sept. folder).

[15] *Ibid.* My thanks to Thomas M. Stanton who first called my attention to this report.

I am now preparing and will soon have finished such rules as I think will be useful in operating the system and will forward them for your inspection in the course of this month.[16]

Very respectfully,
Your servt
J. Page
PM.

IV. The Report Sent to Amos Kendall[17]

Postmasters Page, Coddington, Greene and Skinner formulated recommendations and issued a report which was destined to be the basis, in large measure, for the Regulations to be issued by Amos Kendall to achieve carrier system reforms. To that end, they sent the following to the Postmaster General:

The undersigned having had under consideration the 41st Section of the late Act of Congress, changing the organization of the Post Office Department, and providing more effectively for the betterment of the accounts thereof, in compliance with the wishes of the Post Master General respectfully submit their views on the subject of a new system of Penny Posts.

These may be considered under the several heads of the nomination and removal of Carriers–Their Duties and Compensation.

The Nomination and removal of Carriers

By the section referred to the power of appointment is vested altogether in the Post Master General–with him also will rest as a matter of course the power of removal. It will be bad practice however to make these agents too independent of the Post Masters. As now organized they are a difficult branch to manage and do not consider themselves as entirely subject to their orders.

For obvious reasons the exclusive right of nomination should rest with the Post Master and each also should have the right of suspension in cases of improper conduct subject to the final supervision of the Post Master General. The increase in the Carriers and the arrangement of their several duties should rest with the respective Post Masters who in these matters might too have the power of making such changes as they may deem necessary for the public accommodation and the good of the Department.

Their Duties

These should be the taking charge of and promptly and faithfully delivering all such letters, papers and documents as belong to, and are intended for the residents of their several walks willing to receive their mail matter in that way. They should also be required in every case where such an arrangement may by the Post Master of any particular City be deemed necessary, to have an office or depot for the receipt of letters as contemplated by the said section. A Carrier opening such office or depot should take charge of and promptly hand over to and mail in the main office with a proper bill of the letters so mailed, and paying the postage for the same if any are due. The compensation for this particular service to be as directed by the Act of Congress, two cents for each letter. The depots to be under the regulations of the P.M's.

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[16] I was not able to find any such "rules" at the National Archives after a thorough search of the records. The proximity of the date of the report and of the issuance of the final Regulations (approximately two weeks) argues that Page never submitted such rules.

[17] *Ibid.* All spellings, punctuation and usages are as in the original, which was in Page's handwriting. My thanks to Thomas C. Mazza and to Richard A. Leiby, Jr., who helped me interpret several otherwise unintelligible words as written by Page.

The Carriers should be further called on to abide by and perform all the rules and duties that may be from time to time enjoined on them by the Post Masters–but it is suggested that they should not be permitted to assist in making up or opening & examining the letter mails. Too much care can not be exercised in the receiving and examining of the mails and the duty should be performed by the clerks alone. It is now occasionally attended to by the carriers in some of the offices for want of sufficient aid in the clerks branch. The chances of fraud are therefor greater. The change recommended will go far to prevent depredation in the large offices.

Their Compensation

It is believed that no change will be necessary in the present system with a view either to a general fund, or the equalizing of the different districts. This would suppose all of equal capacity and industry & of course work injustice. An alternative of the present mode of payment might induce neglect of duty, since the careless and idle would be just as much paid as the attentive and active carrier. Now if a district is small as to revenue the carrier will be more industrious in his efforts to increase it, and will dispose of more letters and better serve the public and the Department. Should a District become too prosperous, the Post Master can very soon remedy the evil by cutting off a portion of it and either make a new one out of it, or add it to a smaller walk.

General Views

The carriers should be under the supervision, direction and control of a clerk specially appointed by each Post Master for that purpose to be aided by such other clerks as may be necessary. These clerks should open the mails, compare the bills with the contents of such package, note the errors–correct the unders and overs–keep records of missing letters and mails, and after the Box Letters are taken out, pass the remainder over to the carriers and superintend them while selecting, checking any omission on their part, before the left letters are sent over to the general delivery window.

The Carriers should be called on each day to pay for such letters as they take from the office and do not return.

There are many details necessary to perfect and carry out the system which need not be repeated here as each Post Master will feel himself bound to make such local regulations as may advance the success of the Department and succeed on the part of all connected with his office in a satisfactory exchange of duty.

New York Sept. 15 1836

John S. Skinner
N. Greene
James Page
Jon. J. Coddington

The Hon. Amos Kendall
Post Master General

V. The Regulations

The Regulations which implemented Section 41 were issued on October 4, 1836, merely two weeks and one day after the Report was sent to Postmaster General Kendall. A true copy of the Regulations as printed and issued appears in the *Appendix* to this article.[18] In large measure the Regulations tracked the recommendations set forth in the Report, giving evidence of the deference shown by Postmaster General Kendall to these Postmasters who had "big city" carrier operations experience. In some instances, as would be expected, the Regulations went beyond the scope of the recommendations. In no significant instance did the Postmaster General adopt a Regulation which contradicted a recommendation in the Report.

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[18] RG, Entry 27, Records of the Post Office Department, "Scrapbook of Circulars, Notes, Instructions, Resolutions and Newspaper Clippings" (1823-1871), Box 1.

Appendix A: The Regulations of October 4, 1836

REGULATIONS

PRESCRIBED BY THE POSTMASTER GENERAL,

For a system of Letter Carriers in the Cities of the United States, under the 41st section of the "Act to change the organization of the Post Office Department," &c., approved 2d July, 1836.

I. When it shall be deemed proper for the accommodation of the public in any city, that a system of letter carriers shall be introduced, application to authorize it must be made to the Postmaster General.

II. Postmasters of cities where letter carriers have been, or may be, authorized, will divide their several cities into as many districts as they may think proper, and nominate to the Postmaster General a carrier for each district.

III. The Postmasters will see that the carriers appointed by the Postmaster General execute bonds, with ample security, according to law; and will forward them, when executed, to the Department.

IV. No letter carrier will be permitted to enter upon duty until he shall have executed a bond satisfactory to the Postmaster.

V. All letters received in the Post Office for persons residing in any district, shall be handed to the carrier of that district for delivery, "except such as the persons to whom they are addressed may have requested, in writing addressed to the Postmaster, to be retained in the office."

VI. The carriers will be permitted to receive letters for deposite in the Post Office, at all places within their respective districts.

VII. Whenever it may be deemed necessary to establish depots for the receipt of letters, by the letter carriers, to be put into the Post Office, the Postmasters shall recommend proper places to the Postmaster General for his decision thereon.

VIII. The letter carriers shall receive two cents for every letter, and one-half cent for every newspaper delivered, and two cents for every letter received to be deposited in the Post Office; all of which shall be allowed them for their compensation, unless otherwise directed by the Postmaster General.

IX. The Postmasters shall report to the Postmaster General, quarterly, the amount of each letter carrier's compensation.

X. The letter carriers shall be under the orders and control of the Postmasters, or such clerks in their respective offices as they may designate. They will settle and pay over to the Postmaster or clerk, daily, the postages of all unpaid letters and papers handed them for delivery, and of all paid letters received to be deposited in the Post Office.

XI. The letter carriers shall perform such duties in relation to the mailing letters received by them to be deposited in the Post Offices as the Postmasters shall direct; but they shall not be employed in making up or opening or examining the letter mails in the Post Offices.

XII. The Postmasters will promptly report to the Postmaster General any contumacy of letter carriers in refusing to obey their lawful directions, or in disregarding the regulations of the Department, as well as all official delinquencies or private misconduct which render them undeserving of confidence and trust.

XIII. The several Postmasters are authorized to make and enforce such additional rules for the government of letter carriers in their respective cities, not incompatible with law, as may be necessary to carry these regulations into full effect.

Post Office Department,

October 4, 1836.

Extract from an Act to change the organization of the Post Office Department.

Sec. 41. *And be it further enacted*, That the Postmaster General shall be authorized, whenever the same may be proper for the accommodation of the public in any city, to employ letter carriers for the delivery of letters received at the Post Office in said city, except such as the persons to whom they are addressed may have requested, in writing addressed to the Postmaster, to be retained in the Post Office; and for the receipt of letters at such places in the said city as the Postmaster General may direct, and for the deposite of the same in the Post Office. And for the delivery by a carrier of each letter received from the Post Office, the person to whom the same may be delivered shall pay not exceeding two cents; and for the delivery of each newspaper and pamphlet, one-half cent; and for every letter received by a carrier to be deposited in the Post Office, there shall be paid to him, at the time of the receipt, not exceeding two cents; all of which receipts by the carriers in any city, shall, if the Postmaster General so direct, be accounted for to the Postmaster of said city, to constitute a fund for the compensation of the said carriers, and be paid to them in such proportions and manner as the Postmaster General may direct. Each of the said carriers, shall give bond with sureties, to be approved by the Postmaster General, for the safe custody and delivery of letters, and for the due account and payment of all moneys received by him.

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Len J. Mason reports a New York red carrier cancellation on a 10¢ 1857 (either outbound trans-Atlantic or inbound from California). The Section Editor has no record of any other. If any reader can add another to the list, both Len and I would appreciate hearing from you.

REVISITING THE 1847 GENERAL ISSUE OF UNITED STATES POSTAGE STAMPS: WHERE HAVE WE BEEN? WHERE SHALL WE GO?

JEROME S. WAGSHAL

> All stood amazed until an old woman tottering out from among the crowd, put her hand to her brow, and peering under it in his face for a moment, exclaimed, "Sure enough! it is Rip Van Winkle — it is himself! Welcome home again old neighbor. Why where have you been these twenty long years?"
>
> - Washington Irving, *Rip Van Winkle.* First published 1905.

> What's past is prologue.
>
> - William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, II, i.

Many who read this will be surprised to learn that prior to this issue the 1847 Section has not been listed on the masthead of the *Chronicle* for nine years. The 1847 Section has been missing from the *Chronicle* since August 1984. Having been asked to resuscitate the section, I feel it would be inappropriate to ignore this long absence, no more than one would see an old friend for the first time after nine years of absence and pick up the conversation in the middle of a routine subject, while ignoring the fact that so much time had passed since the last meeting.

There has been an even longer absence of published study of the two stamps themselves, as distinguished from postal history articles about the usages of these two stamps. This, too, merits some reflection. Some effort to reacquaint ourselves with the study of the 5¢ and 10¢ 1847 stamps, and the history of 1847 scholarship generally, may be helpful after such a long absence, because it may serve as the foundation for future work. So, in this new beginning, let us take a little time to recall the work of the past. In that way, we may better know how to attempt to build in the future.[1]

The Golden Years: 1914 through 1957
Chase, Ashbrook, Perry and Brookman

The two 1847 stamps — *as stamps* — were zealously studied in the years when the great philatelic scholars of the past were doing their best work. It is surely no mere coincidence that the four philatelic scholars whose memories are honored by the four prestigious cups awarded by our Society are the ones who have published the greatest studies of the two 1847 stamps. Each of these four men made a major contribution to the study of the 5¢ and/or 10¢ 1847 stamps, and the role each played is worth reviewing.

In order to set this period in a chronological framework, and by way of brief summary, here is what each of the four contributed to the study of our first two stamps, and when they did it:

1916-1917: Carroll Chase. In the *Philatelic Gazette* (a once prestigious philatelic monthly), between May 1916 and January 1917, Dr. Chase brought out a series of articles entitled "The United States 1847 Issue."

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[1]Of course each of these scholars was also interested in the usages of the two 1847 denominations, that is, the postal history of the period. Each of the four had a balanced interest, studying both the stamps themselves and their usages. The writings of each in the postal history field are well known and need not be detailed here.

1924-1926: Elliott Perry. In a series of articles in the *Collectors Club Philatelist,* starting in 1924 and stretching into 1926, Elliott Perry, individualist extraordinaire, presented his greatest work on the 1847 stamps, the complete plating of the 10¢ denomination.

1918-1957: Stanley B. Ashbrook. In a somewhat sporadic fashion, Ashbrook carried forward Chase's research on the 1847 stamps for about forty years, by identifying double transfers on the 5¢ value and doing other plating work on this stamp. Unlike Chase, Perry or Brookman, Ashbrook never brought his research together into a single cohesive presentation.

1947-1967: Lester G. Brookman. In the first volume of the original two-volume edition of his work on 19th century U.S. stamps, Brookman presented an informative discourse on the 1847 stamps for the general U.S. collector. Brookman's essay on the 1847 issue was carried over with minor changes in his second (1966-67) three-volume edition. Brookman's books preserved some of Ashbrook's plating work, and remain the most readily accessible reference to the two 1847 stamps.

To better understand the contribution which each of these four philatelic giants made to the study of the 1847 stamps, let us take a closer look at their work. The observations which follow will be well known to some readers of this journal, but I believe they nevertheless may be of value in giving a frame to the picture.

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As in almost everything having to do with serious philatelic scholarship involving classic U.S. stamps, the story begins with Dr. Carroll Chase.[2] Dr. Chase's series of articles in the 1916-17 *Philatelic Gazette*, totalling some 70 pages, represents the first attempt to treat the 1847 issue comprehensively, and remains to this day the only published effort of this kind.

Dr. Chase reviewed what was then known about the 1847 issue, including new information which he had assembled. Like the easily recognizable style of an early painting by a master who came to the height of his powers later in life, Dr. Chase's format in the 1847 articles presages that which he later used in writing about the 3¢ 1851-1861 stamp. In the *Philatelic Gazette,* Chase began with the postal laws which set the rates underlying the 1847 issue. He next discussed the firm making the stamps, essays for the stamps, die proofs, the design itself, the mystery of the date of issue, the number of stamps issued, the makeup of the plates, plate varieties such as shifts, efforts at plating, varieties of paper and color and impression, the gum, comparative rarity of singles and multiples, demonetization, plate proofs, and then the usages. His treatment of the usages (what we now tend to consider as postal history) includes sections on use from Canada, bisects (including the first list of 10¢ bisects), cancellations—including town cancels, "PAID" cancels, numerals, railroad cancels (including a list of known railroad markings), steamboat and steamship markings, and unusual obliterations. The government "counterfeits" are also covered. Chase ended with a "check list" for a specialized collection. If 3¢ 1851-1861 collectors have a *déjà vu* experience in reading this description, little wonder.

In 1942, Ashbrook made the following assessment of Chase's work on the 1847 issue, and I can do no better than to quote it:

> Way back in 1916, during the grim days of World War I, there appeared in the old *Philatelic Gazette*, a very fine series of articles on the classic issue of 1847, by Dr.

[2]Prior to Chase, Luff's 1900 work presented valuable statistics obtained from banknote company files, as well as the rudimentary knowledge of that time. However, Luff's chapter on the 1847 issue cannot be considered the beginning of true scholarly study of the 1847 stamps. Ashbrook agreed with this assessment; see his statement regarding the Chase articles in the *Philatelic Gazette*: "For the first time, we had a real story of the 1847's..." (quoted more fully a little later in the text).

Carroll Chase. What a fine study it was, and well do I recall how eagerly I absorbed each word. For the first time, we had a real story of the 1847's and a world of helpful data on which to build specialized collections. This article was the climax of Chase's activities in these stamps because shortly after the article was concluded the Chase collection changed ownership.[3]

Not many philatelists today have even heard of the *Philatelic Gazette*, much less have access to this ancient periodical. This is unfortunate because, although much of Chase's work has become outdated by new knowledge,[4] other portions of what he wrote are still of great value. Perhaps if Chase had brought his articles together in pamphlet form after their serialized publication, his studies would have been more accessible to the philatelic public. Further, he might thereby have encouraged someone to publish an update of his research, as Neinken later updated Ashbrook's 1¢ 1851 book and his 10¢ and 12¢ 1851-1861 pamphlets.

After 1917, Ashbrook took up where Chase left off, writing about selected subjects within the scope of the 1847 issue in various venues, including *Stamps* magazine, the *Stamp Specialist* volumes, and his own *Special Service*. However, he never published anything remotely equivalent to the comprehensive treatment of the 1847 issue which Chase published in the *Philatelic Gazette*, or to that which Ashbrook himself presented in his work on the 1¢ 1851-1861 stamp.

Ashbrook's study of the 1847 stamps concentrated primarily on the 5¢ stamp. Elliott Perry had previously published his plating of the 10¢ stamp during 1924 through 1926, and this substantially completed the study of the 10¢ denomination when the focus was on it as a stamp. Only the 5¢ stamp remained to present a challenge for the philatelic student.

This brings us to a real mystery surrounding Ashbrook's research on the 1847 issue: what happened to Ashbrook's research materials on the 5¢ stamp? It will be recalled that Ashbrook, in speaking of Chase's *Philatelic Gazette* articles, stated that they were "the climax of Chase's activities in these stamps because shortly after the article was concluded the Chase collection changed ownership." Ashbrook did not mention, in this statement, what happened to Chase's research materials. However, several years ago in the course of my research at the Philatelic Foundation which culminated in the identification of the 5¢ 1847 double transfer "F" ("the Wagshal shift"),[5] important and hitherto unpublished documentation was revealed.

In 1959, a 5¢ 1847 stamp showing what was then unknown doubling of the design (and which I subsequently identified as a copy of the Wagshal shift) was sent to Dr. Chase for his opinion. He declined to pass on it, stating that "All my 1847 documentation went to Stan. Ashbrook many years ago so I have nothing to go by." Surely this is why Ashbrook had written in 1942, some 17 years earlier, that the *Philatelic Gazette* article "was the climax of Chase's activities in these stamps . . . ." An illustration of Dr. Chase's letter, in his distinctive hand, is shown as Figure 1.

It is a fair assumption that Ashbrook's research material on the 5¢ stamp included Dr. Chase's "documentation," referred to in his 1959 letter, as well as additional materials which Ashbrook himself accumulated over the years. Ashbrook died in January 1958, and

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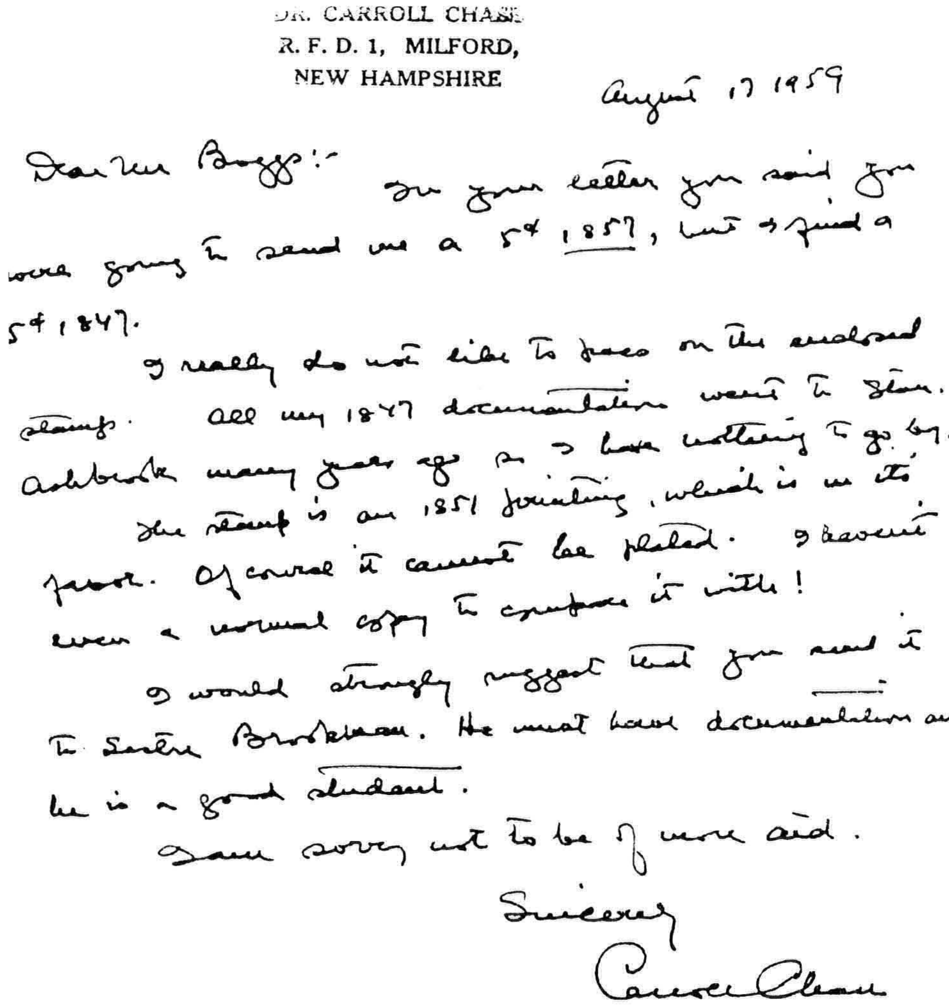
[3]Ashbrook's statement appeared on page 3 of his article "The Five Cent of 1847 Double Transfers," in the *Stamp Specialist* (Yellow Book), published by Lindquist in 1942, pp. 3-13. Chase was still alive at that time, and could have refuted Ashbrook's statement that Chase had ceased his work on the 1847 issue after the publication in the *Philatelic Gazette,* had Ashbrook been inaccurate in that respect. However, Chase's letter, shown later in the text, confirms Ashbrook.

[4]For example, Chase lists only two double transfers on the 5¢ stamp.

[5]See Wagshal, "The Discovery of a Fifth Major Double Transfer on the 5¢ 1847 Stamp — The Wagshal Shift," *Opinions V,* The Philatelic Foundation, 1988, p. 9-30.



DR. CARROLL CHASE
R. F. D. 1, MILFORD,
NEW HAMPSHIRE

August 17 1959

Dear Mr Boggs:- In your letter you said you were going to send me a 5¢ 1857, but I find a 5¢ 1847.

I really do not like to pass on the enclosed stamp. All my 1847 documentation went to Stan. Ashbrook many years ago so I have nothing to go by.

The stamp is an 1851 printing, which is in its favor. Of course it cannot be plated. I haven't even a normal copy to compare it with!

I would strongly suggest that you send it to Lester Brookman. He must have documentation and he is a good student.

I am sorry not to be of more aid.

Sincerely
Carroll Chase

Figure 1. Letter from Carroll Chase, August 17, 1959, referring to transfer of his 1847 documentation to Stanley Ashbrook.

his "library" was sold by H.R. Harmer on November 25, 1958. Although most of Ashbrook's materials which went on the block involved the 1851 issue, the following four lots were listed under the 1847 issue:

> 782 **5¢. Hundreds of photos** in 2 large albums with corresponding drawings and illustrations showing plating marks of far more plated positions than has heretofore been revealed. Evidence indicates that S.B.A. had been planning to publish this work. Also photos of plate proofs on India from original plate. A rare opportunity for some one to complete the plating of this stamp, if such is possible.

> 783 **5¢. A box with hundreds of prints** including a number of plate position drawings taken from the stamps and from plate proofs. Desirable collateral material to the preceding lot.

784 **5¢. Many hundreds of prints,** a large number plated, also many drawings and illustrations of plated positions. Desirable collateral material to the two preceding lots.

785 **5¢. Large sections of photos of Plate Proofs,** many plated. Also hundreds of prints including many of the outstanding 5¢ plus 10¢ combination covers.

The present whereabouts of this material, including particularly the "2 large albums" of lot 782, is unknown.[6] I am told that this material is not with the Philatelic Foundation.[7] No present collector of the 1847 issue who has been asked has acknowledged owning it. If the Chase "documentation" was included with the Ashbrook material sold in 1958, as seems likely, this means that a half century of research (1917 to 1957) by the two greatest scholars of classic U.S. stamps, Chase and Ashbrook, is missing. If some reader can provide information regarding the whereabouts of this valuable trove of research, that assistance will be gratefully acknowledged.[8]

As things stand now, relatively little remains of the research of the three philatelic greats: Chase, Ashbrook and Perry. The Chase-Ashbrook materials are missing, as stated above. And Perry's plating of the 10¢ 1847 stamp in the *Collectors Club Philatelist* has never been reprinted since it was first published two-thirds of a century ago. As a result, it has become a scarce piece of philatelic literature, a collector's item in itself. All that remains easily accessible for the general philatelic public are the relatively few positions of each denomination illustrated in Brookman.

1958 is a fitting year to serve as a dividing point in this review, because by this year all three old masters had ceased their 1847 studies. Although Perry survived to 1972, the last issue of his *Pat Paragraphs* was published in February 1958,[9] the month after Ashbrook's death.

The *Chronicle* Years: Post-1958 to Date

With Ashbrook's passing in 1958, there was no clear heir to the study of the two 1847 stamps. However, when the *Chronicle* changed its format to the present magazine style in 1963, it formalized its coverage by issue and, as part of this change, created this 1847 section.

At that point, the study of the 1847 issue took a sharp turn. Starting in 1963, and for the next 22 years, the 1847 section devoted itself almost exclusively to postal history subjects. This reflected both the personal interests of the editors, and an underlying philatelic philosophy.

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[6]Lot 782 realized $750.00; lot 783, $57.50; lot 784, $32.50; and lot 785, $150.00. There was also a fifth lot, No. 786, which contained material relating to the 10¢ stamp, but since this stamp had been plated by Perry back in 1924-26 this material was less vital to the ongoing research of the 1847 issue.

[7]Information provided by William Crowe, senior expert of the Philatelic Foundation. Ashbrook's card file, which is a different assembly of research material, is in the Foundation archives.

[8]Michael C. O'Reilly published a request for information on this material in 1975, in *Chronicle* No. 88, pp. 212-13, without success. In *Chronicle* No. 93, p. 14, O'Reilly stated that he had been informed that the owner wished to remain anonymous.

[9]From June 1931 through February 1958, Perry published his *Pat Paragraphs,* little booklets on a wide variety of philatelic subjects. Prominent among the subjects covered was his listing of the states, and towns in each state, that were sent supplies of the 1847 stamps, together with estimates of the number of 1847 covers from each state.

A. The Hart Years: 1963 to 1984

Starting with issue No. 47, Creighton Hart took over as the 1847 section editor.[10] Hart made the direction of his philatelic interest clear from the beginning, stating:[11]

> ... I decided about 1940 [the reader will recall he was writing almost a quarter of a century later, in 1963], that I would assemble a collection of 1847 covers from each of the areas that officially received a supply of the stamps of our first issue. To do this, I discovered that I must acquire covers from thirty states and three territories. In addition, I must also include the District of Columbia and Panama ...
>
> ... To tally the results, I started a detailed record of 1847 covers including, when possible a colored transparency. This detailed list now includes information on approximately 2,000 1847 covers ... My articles on 1847 covers from the various states will be based on this information.

For the next two decades, over some 78 issues, Hart persevered with this massive project, publishing many 1847-related postal history articles which presented census data about the number of recorded covers from some 19 of the 35 jurisdictions which were his original focus. In addition, he published census studies of some important cities (e.g., New York, Philadelphia and Chicago), as well as of covers addressed to foreign destinations, railroad and waterway covers, and listings of 10¢ bisects.

This is extremely valuable data and well deserving of praise. As this is being written, Hart's data are being brought together and supplemented by Tom Alexander, who tells me that he intends to publish it in book form some time this year. (See the accompanying article.) To provide an interim reference to the geographic work in the *Chronicle,* the table at the end of this article presents an index to this material for the years of Hart's editorship.

In addition to his census data, Hart published a number of 1847-related articles on subjects which fall within the general postal history area, such as, for example, the Wheeling, Virginia, grid; domestic postal rates of the 1847 period; 1847 issue covers with carrier stamps; and earliest usages. However, the study of the stamps themselves languished, with only a handful of articles that were directly stamp related. In short, Hart published almost entirely in the area in which his scholarly interest lay — postal history.

B. Everything's Up To Date in Kansas City They've Gone About As Far As They Can Go

When Hart retired from the 1847 section editorship in 1984, no successor was appointed. The absence of an 1847 section editor did not entirely preclude an occasional 1847-related article in the *Chronicle,* but for some nine years, over the course of some 36 issues, only about six articles were published on the 1847 issue.[13]

This was no lingering oversight, but rather an editorial judgment. I well recall a conversation with Susan McDonald in which I urged revival of the 1847 section with greater attention to the stamps themselves. Her reply, which reminded me of the song from *Oklahoma,* was, "Hasn't everything that can be said about the stamps been said?"

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[10]Although the Baker brothers, Hugh and David, were nominally the joint editors of the 1847 section for the first two issues of the *Chronicle's* magazine format (Nos. 45 and 46), the bulk of the material even in those initial issues consisted of articles by Creighton Hart.

[11]*Chronicle* No. 45, July 1963, p. 4.

[12]These included (with the issue numbers in parentheses) articles on the Mower shift (92 and 93, by Garrett); the Knapp shift (65, 71 and 73); an early 5¢ 1847 color (46); the 1847 trial colors (111); and the temporary 1847 dies and plates (117).

[13]With the exception of Hart's call for plating copies (see footnote 14, *infra*), all the articles, including all those by Susan McDonald, fell into the area of postal history. See *Chronicle* No. 129*, 142*, 145*, 150 and 153*. (Numbers marked with an asterisk reflect articles authored entirely, or in one case in part, by Susan McDonald). Several other articles in the Carriers section related to the 1847 issue (e.g., Nos. 151, 152 and 153).

Although I disagreed with that assessment, and still do, it was a defensible position. The Chase-Ashbrook plating studies of the 5¢ had disappeared, there were no known successors attempting to continue research on that subject, and the general opinion had been repeatedly expressed that the 5¢ stamp could not be plated.[14] The 10¢ denomination, on the other hand, had long since been plated and the results published, and what more could be said about that subject? If these premises are accepted, only postal history subjects remained for scholarly research and publication.

And that, in short, is all that was published during the past nine years. Indeed, as noted above, with rare exceptions, that has been the focus of scholarly effort on the 1847 issue since 1958—about 35 years. In this respect it can be fairly maintained that the study of the 1847 issue probably presents the most extreme example of the predominance of the postal history approach to philatelic scholarship that one can find in the past three decades of classical U.S. philately.

Prior to 1958 the scholarly study of the stamp and of its usages had been given a holistic approach which was pioneered by Dr. Chase, as described above. This approach was reflected in the work of all three of U.S. philately's greats—Chase, Ashbrook and Perry. Each accomplished major plating advances in their respective areas of principal interest (Chase—3¢ 1851; Ashbrook—1¢ 1851 and 1857; and, of course, Perry—10¢ 1847), and each also published significant postal history research in the major areas of his philatelic interest. Chase had separate postal history chapters in his 3¢ book; Ashbrook published a separate Volume 2 for his postal history chapters; and Perry published his postal history studies in his *"Pats,"* separately from the 10¢ 1847 plating. As far as I am aware, none of these three greats of philately ever indicated any awareness of any real line of demarcation between the two subjects, any preference for one subject or the other—and certainly no tension between the two.

C. The Effect on the Philatelic Community of the Chronicle's Emphasis on Postal History Aspects of the 1847 Issue

What has been the effect on the philatelic community, and on collecting trends, of the *Chronicle's* strong focus on 1847 postal history for the past three decades? Although I know of no way to answer that question in specific, quantitative terms, nevertheless there can be no doubt that the *Chronicle's* past focus on postal history has had a major impact on the collecting community's attitude towards the 1847 issue.

The demographics of philately are hard to come by. However, I would estimate that there are perhaps 200 to 250 moderately active collectors of the 1847 stamps, who go beyond having one of each value in their albums.[15] To the extent I have been privileged to know these men and women, I have found that in one way or another there is almost invariably a strong scholarly element in their approach to collecting. And personal scholarship can of course be strongly influenced by the trend of published scholarship. Among one example of many that could be given, this is reflected in the fact that Chase's published study of the 3¢ stamp obviously inspired later students to take up the skills of plating, indeed, so intensely that they formed a national group to study that one stamp—and Ashbrook's study of the 1¢ stamp was the impetus for such later students as Neinken, Fortgang and Oakley.

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[14]In 1988, a few years before this conversation took place, Hart published a call in the *Chronicle* (No. 139, p. 178) for straddle pane copies and corner copies so that these could be plated. Tom Alexander has stated, in a phone conversation, that there was no response whatever to this call, and the project did not get off the ground.

[15]I take responsibility for this estimate. However, Michael Laurence, Publisher and Editor of *Linn's* and a long-time student of the demographics of philately, agrees.

Thus it is a fair conclusion that the *Chronicle*'s emphasis on postal history has had a major impact on influential collectors, and they, in turn, have influenced the commercial market by the direction of their collecting. Moreover, there has probably been a circular interaction, rather than simply a one-way street. Not only has scholarly emphasis on postal history undoubtedly affected collecting trends, but, concurrently, collecting trends have influenced the focus of scholarly research, each acting to reinforce the other.

The effect on the philatelic market is palpable in many respects:

- Attempts to further the plating study of the 5¢ stamp have largely disappeared, with the exception of a few dedicated collectors working on their own, almost in secret.
- Some plate varieties of the 5¢ denomination still command interest, principally the double transfers. There is also some interest in the philatelic community on the varying colors in which the 5¢ denomination was issued.
- In the case of the 10¢ stamp, there is interest in the major plate varieties, but almost no interest in the many minor plate varieties identified by Perry.
- For the most part, the collecting of off-cover 1847 stamps has degenerated into a condition contest having to do mostly with the size of margins or the size of (number of copies in) multiples.
- With perhaps one exception, no one known to this author is skilled in plating the 10¢ stamp. Copies of this stamp which are plated are almost invariably from collections formed before 1958.
- Major collections formed in recent years focus heavily on covers—and awards follow as well. The sales of the Hart, Garrett and Kapiloff collections illustrate this point.

Where Do We Go From Here?

Without undertaking a full-scale rebuttal of the McDonald philatelic philosophy, it is my opinion that, regardless of whether the 5¢ stamp can or cannot be plated down to the last position, far more can be accomplished on the subject than has hitherto been published, and it can be of great interest to the collecting community. Even assuming the loss of the Chase-Ashbrook plating studies on the 5¢ stamp, there is no reason why their research cannot be replicated, and, indeed, continue on. One objective of my editorship will be to try to encourage this. I hope to say more about this in another issue in the near future.

And even though the 10¢ 1847 stamp has long since been plated, that information has become inaccessible to modern collectors. Its re-publication, possibly in revised, more user-friendly form, is long overdue. Moreover, there may have been important but as yet unidentified changes on the 10¢ plate which merit further investigation.

To those who may read into these comments a disdain for 1847 postal history, this is a misreading. Postal history studies about our first issue are continuing by many active and able scholars, and are fascinating to any scholarly collector of the issue. Important postal history studies should find a home in the *Chronicle*. However, with Chase, Ashbrook and Perry as my role models, it will be my hope that the "Rip Van Winkle" of stamp study will emerge hale and hearty after a long sleep, and contribute to a more balanced approach to the scholarship of the 1847 issue.

A Final Thought

In my opinion, the most valuable function served by a journal such as the *Chronicle* is to provide a vehicle for initial publication of research which may some day become a treatise in book or pamphlet form. Many of the great books of classical U.S. philately had their origins in earlier serialized publication in periodicals such as the *Chronicle*. Hopefully, the work of this section will be such that it will merit future collection and re-publication in pamphlet or book form, so that the learning will not be lost, as Chase's articles in the *Philatelic Gazette* have, as a practical matter, been lost.

It is a wonderment that in the more than three-quarters of a century since Chase published in the *Philatelic Gazette,* no one has grasped the baton and published an expanded and corrected general treatise on the 1847 issue. Such a comprehensive treatise on this country's first general stamp issue is long overdue. Hopefully, the future work of the 1847 section of the *Chronicle* will enable someone among us to take important steps towards that goal, in the study of the stamps as well as of their usages.

A Short Index to Hart's Census Articles in *Chronicle*

[NOTE: References are by *Chronicle* Whole Number and page number] □

COMING: A MASSIVE CENSUS OF 1847 COVERS

JEROME S. WAGSHAL

Speaking on June 27, 1993, with Tom Alexander, USPCS past president, former editor of the 1851 Section of the *Chronicle,* and perhaps best known as the revisor of the Simpson work on 1851 cancellations, I was impressed to learn of Tom's current project. Tom is preparing a massive census of 1847 covers for final publication. His effort keeps a promise made to his friend, the late Creighton Hart, who was the section editor of the Chronicle's 1847 section for over two decades. The basis of Tom's work is data collected by Hart for about 40 years, supplemented by information provided by Susan McDonald and by Tom himself. In our conversation, Tom gave a preliminary description of his forthcoming book:

This work, to be privately published by Tom, will list approximately 9,000 5¢ covers and 3,000 10¢ covers, about 12,000 covers in all. Tom's estimate is that this may account for up to 90% of known 1847 covers, but any such estimate is inherently uncertain. The census will of course be accompanied by a call for information from those having knowledge of covers not listed in this work. It will be interesting to see how many surface after the census is published.

The basic format of the listing will consist of three main sections — 5¢ covers, 10¢ covers and combination covers. There may be added sections for categories of particular interest, such as foreign mail covers, route agent, railroad and waterway covers, and bisects.

Within the main sections, the listings will be geographic and alphabetical, by state. Within each state, the listings will be alphabetical by town. Each cover will be described by six categories of information: (1) the date; (2) number of stamps; (3) color of the postal markings; (4) the address; (5) name of addressee; and (6) notes pertaining to the listed cover. The notes will contain such information as whether the cover has ever been the subject of an expert committee's opinion, and, possibly, the color of the stamp(s).

Tom believes that this work will run between 400 and 600 pages, and he expects to have it available before the end of the year.

This reference should be a valuable mine of information for 1847 students. Tom does not presently plan to tabulate the information beyond the basic format indicated above, rather intending to leave that task for others. However, he noted, as an example of the possible future use of this work, that putting together covers with the same addressee revealed that some important finds have been slipped into commercial channels over the years without much fanfare.

Anyone having 1847 covers which he or she believes may not be presently known are invited to send such information to Tom at this time. Address your information, organized to the extent possible in the manner noted above, and, if possible, accompanied by a photocopy of the cover and any contents, to Thomas J. Alexander, 12604 W. 105th Terrace, Overland Park, KS 62215. □

THE "BIG SHIFT"–10¢ GREEN OF 1855

HUBERT C. SKINNER

Len J. Mason of Boise, Idaho, has written to us about the supposed "Big Shift" on the 10¢ stamp of 1855. This is an old enigma of philately which has not been adequately described and explained in the literature. The nature and status of this equivocal stamp is reviewed here for our readers.

The single known example of the "Big Shift" was discovered early in 1926 by Ernest R. Jacobs of Chicago. It was illustrated in the *American Philatelist* in June 1926 with accompanying notes by the editor, Mr. Fennel, based on information supplied by Mr. Jacobs. Fennel astutely observed that any knowledgeable collector would immediately recognize the stamp as a "whale of a shift" or a double print. However, close examination reveals that the design is not doubled all over but only at the top and the bottom and, thus,

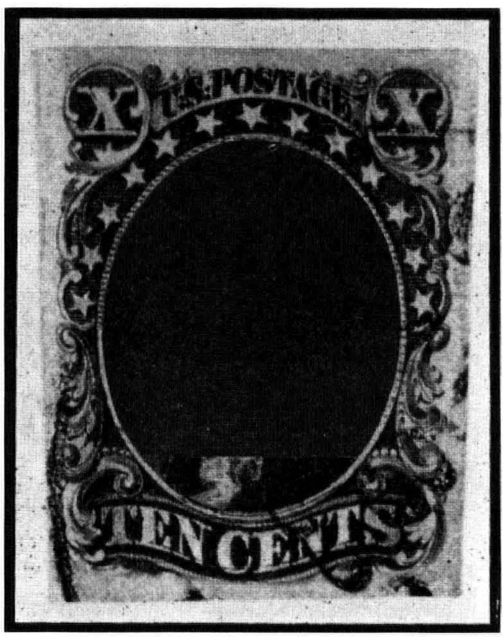

Figure 1. Ashbrook's Figure 22 (1936).

must be a shift. He commented, "Note the extreme doubling in the upper label, the reduplication of the outer lines of the figure X and formation of a colon after the U. and S. by reason of the duplication of the periods. The Ten Cent stamp of the 51 series has been a popular field for research by specialists for many years and in view of the intensive study given it by Stevenson, Perry, Ashbrook and Dr. Chase it almost seems unbelievable that an unknown variety turn up at this time." Further, though not mentioned by Fennel, a prominent line through "EN CENT" appears in the bottom label. Jacobs is quoted as suggesting that this intriguing stamp came from one of the eight defective positions which were entered when the plate was made and that a small printing was run off before the plate was removed and reworked by recutting the defective positions. If true, there would be seven other pre-recut positions which have not been recognized by plating students. In addition, this position would have had to be burnished off the plate entirely, re-entered and then recut before returning the plate to service.

In 1936, Stanley B. Ashbrook published a small book on the 10¢ stamps, *The United States Ten Cent Stamp of 1855-1857*. In this volume, he reported the "Big Shift" variety and illustrated it (p. 32). Ashbrook's illustrations are reproduced here (Figures 1 and 2). Initially, Ashbrook accepted the variety as genuine, compared it with the other four shifts on plate one, and discussed the new variety at length in a section titled "The Missing Link" (1936, pp. 40-44). He was not satisfied with Jacobs's explanation but was "more inclined to the opinion" that the "Big Shift" comes from either plate position 1 or 2 as both these positions exhibit misplaced transfers which he believed came about through re-entering these two positions. Thus, the "Big Shift" would have come from a short press run before the plate was withdrawn, the two positions burnished out and re-entered before returning the plate to service. The recutting by hand of the eight other defective positions would have been done at this time. He stated, "My reconstruction of the plate is without doubt the Plate in its second state, and while my work is not complete, I am positive the 'Big Shift' does not come from this second state." Further, he observed, "Only one copy of this stamp is known to exist, indicating that the Plate in its 'first state' was used only a very short time, perhaps only a few days."

Figure 2. Ashbrook's Figure 22A.

Ashbrook's remaining discussion concerns why the plate was put into service, however briefly, with such an obvious defect in the top row of plate one, and the probability of locating another copy of this "201st position." He followed with a detailed examination of the elements of the design of the "Big Shift" compared with the "A" and "B" reliefs, based on the proposition that it was originally entered with the "A" relief and later re-entered with the "B" relief. Finally, he noted the then current owner of the "Big Shift," Stephen D. Brown, of Glens Falls, N.Y., and acknowledged his kindness in lending the stamp for study. This "unique and outstanding double transfer, one of the most interesting plate varieties ever found" (for which Brown paid $1000.00) realized $520.00 (lot 549) in the Stephen D. Brown Sale on October 31, 1939. Can any one of our present readers report the current whereabouts of this fascinating variety? Len Mason tells me that this stamp reportedly is in the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia, but his efforts to locate it have been unsuccessful.

In 1947, Lester G. Brookman's monumental work on *The 19th Century Postage Stamps of the United States* first appeared. Brookman commented briefly on the "Big Shift" and called it one of "the great plating mysteries." He did not illustrate the variety and noted "to date all the efforts of many students to find a duplicate copy have failed and the mystery of the stamp seems to increase rather than lessen with the passing of the years" (1947, Vol. I, pp. 137-138). In the expanded and revised edition of this work, he added a single sentence, "I never saw the item in question but some important students whose judgement I trust do not feel that this is a genuine double transfer" (1966, Vol. I, p. 166). Again, he did not illustrate this enigmatic variety.

In 1960, Mortimer L. Neinken presented his extensively revised and expanded version of the work begun by Stanley B. Ashbrook, which he titled *The United States Ten Cent Stamps of 1855-1859.* He noted four major re-entries (commonly mislabelled "shifts") and "in addition several others which are quite minor." He described the four positions and illustrated each by a plating drawing. None of these resemble the "Big Shift" found by Jacobs and Neinken makes no reference to the existence of this perplexing variety.

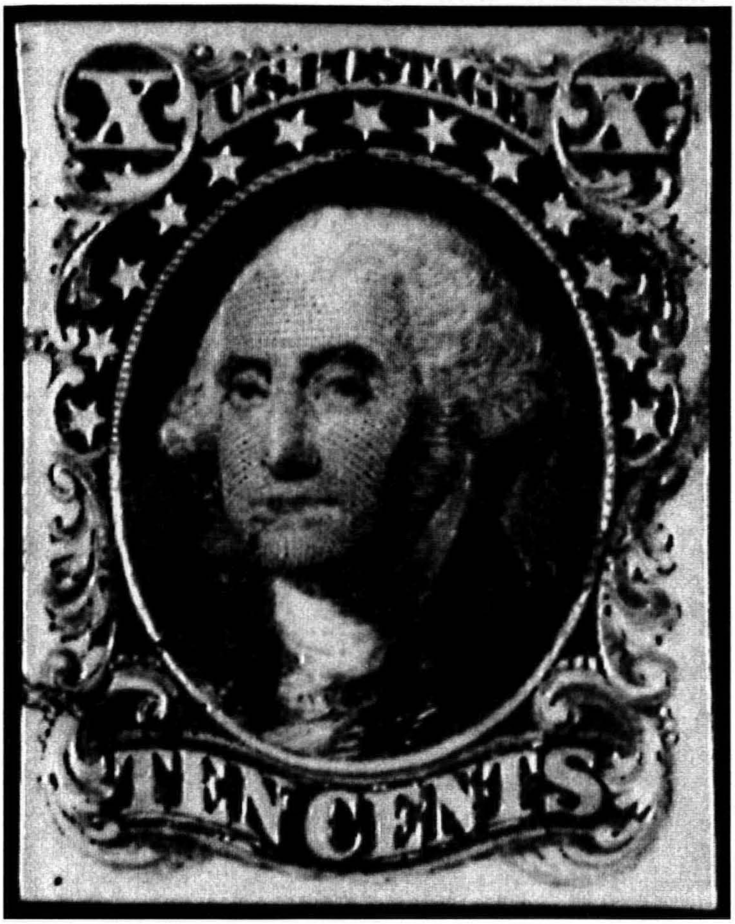

Figure 3. Type I stamp–Position 98L1 (an "apparent double transfer").

In October 1976, Len Mason purchased at auction (Wolffers 52, lot 118) an imperforate ten cent stamp described as an "apparent double transfer of TEN CENTS." This stamp returned to the market in March 1981 with the sale of Mason's collection (Sotheby 54, lot 126). It is illustrated here in Figure 3. When he first examined this stamp, Mason noted the white "lines" under "TEN" and "ENT" in the value tablet at the bottom and was reminded of the elusive "big shift" which has a line through "EN CENT". He submitted it to the Philatelic Foundation for an opinion and wrote to Mortimer L. Neinken on March 13, 1977, about the stamp. Neinken responded promptly with the following:[1]

> In reference to the Big Shift on the 10¢, there was a good reason for my not including it in my 10c book. The reason is that no such item ever existed. The stamp illustrated in

---

[1] Mortimer L. Neinken, unpublished letter to Len J. Mason, March 17, 1977.

> Ashbrook's brochure is a forgery. Years ago, and long before I wrote my book on the 10¢ stamp, I discussed this shift with Stan Ashbrook, and the answer I received was this:-
>
> "My face is red. If I had to do this brochure over again, I would certainly have omitted this item, because I have come to the conclusion that such a shift never existed on the original plate."

This letter from Neinken clearly explains why no mention of the "Big Shift" appears in his 10¢ book and, further, clearly presents Stanley Ashbrook's opinion on the "Big Shift" subsequent to the publication of his own book on the 10¢ stamps. When the Philatelic Foundation returned the subject stamp to Mason, a separate sheet (surely another communication from Neinken) was attached to the certificate stating "The Big Shift does not exist."

Editor's Comments

We are grateful to Len Mason for reviving our interest in the legendary "Big Shift" and for providing the critical information contained in Mortimer Neinken's letter of March 17, 1977. It is compelling that we must accept the august opinions of Ashbrook and Neinken in lieu of any new or contrary evidence that would contravene their conclusions. No definitive opinion or judgment of the genuineness of an item can be made without direct examination. Thus, unless someone can advise where the "Big Shift" resides today, it must be considered a bogus plate variety.

In regard to the stamp shown in Figure 3, the stamp formerly owned by Len Mason, we can do a bit more. This stamp is a fine example of 98L1, a type I stamp with full bottom right shell, from the bottom row of the left pane of plate 1, entered with the "C" relief. Thus, it cannot be identified with nor confused with the "Big Shift" which [if it were genuine] was initially entered with the "A" relief and later re-entered with the "B" relief. Our careful examination of the enlarged photograph shown here (Figure 3) reveals no evidence of a significant double transfer or "shift" on this position (98L1). There are several tiny areas that can be interpreted as minor "doubles" but no major element of the design appears to be doubled aside from the white "lines," "dots," and "dashes" adjacent to the letters "TEN CENTS" in the value tablet at the bottom. This observer believes that these "markings" are artifacts of the engraving process, produced by a somewhat "dry print" in this area of the design. Several examples of partial dry prints have been observed by this writer where similar "white areas" lie immediately adjacent to the letters in the value tablet on the 10¢ stamps. The background of the value tablet is one of the darkest areas of the design and, thus, subject to this phenomenon. Several 10¢ stamps in the writer's personal collection exhibit "white areas" adjacent to the letters of "TEN CENTS" quite similar to those on the stamp illustrated here. These include a type I imperforate (92R1), a type II imperforate, a type III imperforate, a type III perforate, and a pair and single of the Type V perforate.

The 10¢ Stamps of 1855

A brief review of the characteristics of Plate I is presented here for those unfamiliar with the plate layout or who may not have access to Neinken's definitive book on the 10¢ stamps. The information included here is drawn freely from the basic research and plating work of John N. Luff, Elliott Perry, William L. Stevenson, Carroll Chase, Stanley B. Ashbrook, and Mortimer L. Neinken (see bibliography).

The initial definitive work on nineteenth century United States postage stamps is *The Postage Stamps of the United States* by John N. Luff, published by The Scott Stamp & Coin Co., Ltd., in 1902. Luff reports the date of issue of the 10¢ imperforate stamp as May 4, 1855, probably taken from official records. The earliest known cover is May 12, 1855.

The only previous 10¢ value was the 10¢ black Washington stamp of 1847 which became obsolete and invalid (demonetized) on July 1, 1851 when the new reduced postage rates went into effect. Thus, there was no 10¢ stamp between mid-1851 and early May 1855 when the new 10¢ green stamps were issued. An Act of Congress approved March 3, 1855 (effective April 1, 1855) increased the first class postage rate for distances greater than 3,000 miles from six to ten cents. This Act further provided that postage on domestic letters must be prepaid and that after January 1, 1856 "the Postmaster-General may require postmasters to place postage stamps upon all prepaid letters, upon which such stamps may not have been placed by the writers."

The need for 10¢ postage stamps was immediate and pressing. Several students have suggested that this need caused the preparation of Plate 1 to be hurried and attribute some of the imperfections of this plate to that fact.

The earliest students of the 10¢ green stamps were Elliott Perry and William L. Stevenson, who began their work about 1916. Carroll Chase studied these stamps but did not attempt reconstruction of the plates. About 1919, Stanley B. Ashbrook began working on the 10¢ value in addition to his first love, the 1¢ blue stamps. Ashbrook completed the initial plating of the 10¢ value.

Plate 1

The first plate made, Plate 1, consists of two panes (each 10x10), side by side, separated by a single center line which is positioned 4 mm. to the right of the left pane and 4¾ mm. to the left of the right pane. An imprint reading "Toppan, Carpenter, Casilear & Co., BANK NOTE ENGRAVERS, Phila., New York, Boston & Cincinnati" was engraved along the left and right outer margins of the plate and is placed about 3 mm. from the stamps of each pane. The plate number reads "No. 1" ["o" raised with period centered below] and is positioned ⅞ mm. below the center of the imprint on each side of the pane. Three different reliefs were used to enter the positions onto Plate 1. These are designated as follows:

"A" Relief—design complete at top, incomplete at bottom, sides full and complete

"B" Relief—design incomplete at top and bottom, sides full and complete

"C" Relief—design incomplete at top, nearly complete at bottom [left shell slightly broken at bottom], sides full and complete

The design differences on the 10¢ stamps are a near replication of the types designated for the 1¢ designs. The positions were entered such that the "reliefs" are arranged in alternating horizontal rows on the finished plate (except for the tenth row). The arrangement of the reliefs on the plate is indicated below with the "type" designations used for the three different reliefs shown in parentheses.

"A" Relief (Type II)–rows 1, 2, 4, 6, and 8

"B" Relief (Type III)–rows 3, 5, 7, and 9

"C" Relief (Type I)–row 10 only

There are three positions on the plate, known as the "misplaced reliefs," which do not follow the pattern indicated. For these three positions (1L1, 2L1, and 3R1), the "B" Relief was used instead of the "A" Relief when they were entered. In addition, eight positions were recut by hand. Four of these are "A" reliefs (54L1, 55L1, and 76L1 [recut at B]; 74L1 [recut at T]); and four are "B" reliefs (3R1, 65L12 and 86L1 [recut at top]; 64L1 [recut at both top and bottom]). The eight recut positions are known as Type IV stamps.

Plate 1 was in use for approximately four years. All imperforate 10¢ stamps come from this plate and many of the perforated ones. After Plate 2 was made (earliest known use is May 27, 1859), Plate 1 was retired. 10¢ stamps from Plate 2 have slightly incomplete designs at the sides and are designated Type V.

It should be noted that only the type designations currently in use are cited here. Perry and Stevenson had somewhat different terminology for their designated types. Chase and Ashbrook revised the types in 1921; these are still in use.

Conclusion

We acknowledge Len J. Mason's inquiry which revived our interest in the "Big Shift" and other varieties of the 10¢ stamps. We encourage other readers to contribute their thoughts in a similar way. Written articles of any length on subjects pertinent to this section are solicited. Share your research and discoveries with the rest of us! □

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SHADES OF THE 3¢ 1861

MICHAEL C. McCLUNG

In a previous article (*Chronicle* 144, Nov. 1989, pp. 262-66), I wrote about the earliest shades of the 3¢ 1861, namely the pinks. In another article (*Chronicle* 147, Aug. 1990, pp. 173-77), I discussed the final shades of the same denomination—the grilled shades. This article deals primarily with the dozens of shades of this stamp which were printed during the six years that followed the issuance of the pinks and which preceded that of the grills.

For years I tried to make sense out of the shades of the 3¢ 1861. I made color charts with loose stamps showing the progression from one shade to another; these charts became so convoluted that they seemed to need three or four dimensions instead of two. Also, I found shades that did not appear related to any others, I found closely related shades that were years apart in their period of usage, and I found unrelated shades that were used simultaneously. I had isolated well over 100 shades and continued to find more. After several years I was forced to admit that I was not much closer to my objective than when I started. So I began again with a different approach and was surprised to discover that it actually worked.

I gathered all the year-dated 3¢ covers I could find (about 6,000) and placed them all in exact chronological order. Examination of the stamps on these covers in this arrangement yielded some satisfying revelations:

1. Each shade fell into a fairly well defined time period of usage.
2. Many shades had broad ranges, so what I considered to be separate shades were actually from different positions in the same shade range. This allowed me to consolidate my color chart to 54 regularly issued shades.
3. There is no well defined evolution of shades. Nor is there much in the way of uniformity except that 3¢ stamps produced in 1861, '62 and '63 are usually found in some shade of pink or rose; those printed later are generally red or brown, but there are many exceptions.
4. It seems that each time a batch of ink was mixed, a new shade appeared. It is entirely possible that two printers, operating presses in the same room, could have been producing 3¢ stamps of decidedly different colors at the same time.

After making the above observations, I was able to construct a chronological color chart. I found loose stamps that were representative of each of my 54 time-period shades and arranged them in order on pages. The order of placement was based on the earliest usage of each shade in my cover study. The next step was to name the shades; in doing this I tried to use traditional descriptions and avoid fanciful appellations. I also endeavored to base all the descriptions on a standard for which I selected a common 1862 shade; I named it standard rose.

The final step in completing my color chart was to select and mount loose stamps that represented the full range of each shade. For some shades this required a dozen or more stamps and for some shades only one.

Figure 1 is a chronological listing of the shades including the approximate time of their issuance. I have listed an approximate time of issuance for each shade because the 6,000 subjects in my study are the tip of the iceberg of surviving covers, so it would be foolish to attempt to establish earliest known usage for each shade at this time.

At the top of the listing in Figure 1 are six shades of pink. The determination of these shades comes as a result of continuing research and will be covered in detail in an

1. Pink	August 1861
2. Lavender pink	" "
3. Carmine pink	" "
4. Rose pink	" "
5. Deep rose pink	" "
6. Salmon rose pink	" "
7. Brilliant rose	" "
8. Bright rose	" "
9. Salmon rose	" "
10. Pale carmine rose	Late 1861
11. Brownish carmine rose	" "
12. Carmine rose	" "
13. Brownish red rose	Early 1862
14. Bright brown red	" "
15. Red rose	Mid 1862
16. Standard rose	" "
17. Intense rose	" "
18. Claret	Early 1863
19. Lake rose	" "
20. Coral rose	" "
21. Pale red rose	" "
22. Pinkish rose	" "
23. Deep pinkish rose	" "
24. Dull lake rose	" "
25. Lilac rose	" "
26. Pale lilac rose	" "
27. Pastel rose	Mid 1863
28. Deep red rose	" "
29. Deep rose	" "
30. Dull red rose	" "
31. Crimson rose	" "
32. Pale yellow brown	" "
33. Reddish claret rose	Late 1863
34. Claret rose	Early 1864
35. Carmine lake	" "
36. Deep lilac rose	" "
37. Lake brown	Mid 1864
38. Brick red	" "
39. Bright rose red	Early 1865
40. Pale rose red	" "
41. Dull red	" "
42. Rose brown	" "
43. Pale rose brown	Mid 1865
44. Brown red	" "
45. Pale brown red	Late 1865
46. Light brown	Early 1866
47. Brown	" "
48. Dull rose	Mid 1866
49. Pale rose	Early 1868
50. Brownish rose red	" "
51. Lake red	Mid 1868
52. Rose red	" "
53. Dull rose red	" "
54. Orange red	" "

Figure 1. The shades of the 3¢ 1861 listed in chronological order of issuance with approximate delivery dates.

upcoming article intended to be a follow-up to my earlier article on the pinks. The list in Figure 1 does not include pigeon blood pink because the listed shades are general in nature and are made up of broad ranges (for the most part). Pigeon blood pink is a specific shade that makes up a small potion of one of these ranges. The subject of pigeon blood pink will be dealt with in depth in the upcoming article.

A few remarks should be made about some of the other shades. Several shades (brilliant rose, bright rose, salmon rose, intense rose, pinkish rose, pale lilac rose, and pastel rose) are commonly mistaken for pink or rose pink. The late Dr. Clarence Taft referred to these shades as "Brooklyn pinks."

Brownish carmine rose has a very broad range and some copies approach the color of the 1875 reprint, but they do not contain quite enough brown. The deepest end of this shade range shows a slight purplish tint and was dubbed "raspberry" by the late David Beals.

Bright brown red seems out of place chronologically; it looks like it belongs with the 1865 shades. This seems to be a small printing, and every copy I have seen was canceled at New York City.

Lake rose comes from a large printing and is often found on Union occupation mail from New Orleans, Vicksburg, Memphis and Nashville in 1863. Some copies of this shade so closely approach "The Lake" (Scott #66, now relegated to the back of the book) that one would swear they were all printed from the same ink. This similarity has been noted by several authors, but I have not seen any proof that the issued stamps were or were not from the same printing as the "finished trial color proofs."

Crimson rose is usually blurred and looks like it is the result of a very bad job of printing. Pale yellow brown and lake brown look like changelings (or fadelings), but I have seen enough copies of each shade from enough different origins (all in the correct time periods) to consider them to be valid shades.

I did not find a single shade that originated in 1867. Dull rose first appeared in mid-1866 and continued in use throughout 1867 and into mid-1868; this shade has a very broad range and is probably the most common of all.

The last seven shades on the list are the ones known to occur on the grilled stamps. The relationship between these shades and their corresponding grills was discussed in *Chronicle* 147; since that writing I have made slight changes in the names of two of these shades in order to avoid confusion with earlier printings. The shade I referred to as brown red in the previous article is now brownish rose red, and the one I formerly called dull red is now dull rose red. The grill shades occur on ungrilled stamps, but only dull rose, which was in use for a year before grill production began, is common on 3¢ stamps without grills.

Obviously, there is still much work to be done in this area. I would like to see a universally accepted color reference standard established for each shade of this stamp. I am very interested in learning of the work of other students who have researched the shades of the 3¢ 1861. A follow up to this article will include a first endeavor at assigning rarity factors to all the shades. □

USED 24-CENT 1869 INVERTS

SCOTT R. TREPEL

(Continued from *Chronicle* 156:269)

Correction

Table K listing the North-Center 24¢ Inverts in *Chronicle* 156 did not include a photo or identification for Figure 4. It is shown here as Figure K-4, which may be added to the previous survey. The listing is as follows:

TABLE K ADDENDUM

Figure 4. Circular cork cancel. Reperfed at right. PFC 157926.

Figure K-4.

Balance of 24-Cent Inverts

The survey of used 24¢ Inverts continues from *Chronicle* 156:269. The used 24¢ Inverts centered evenly between the top and bottom or centered toward the top perforations were illustrated in the previous installments. In this article the balance of the recorded 24¢ Invert singles—each centered toward the bottom—is listed in Tables N, O and P; those that could be pictured are shown in Figures 1-40. These are classified as South-Center, South-West and South-East examples, depending on the position of the frame between the left and right perforations.

The South-Center Inverts

To qualify for this category, the frame in green must be centered toward the bottom and equidistant to the right and left perforations. Table N provides details for each South-Center stamp. There are 11 stamps in this category, all of which show a lower-left shift of the vignette. Four of the South-Center Inverts form the unique block of four in the Ishikawa collection. This block will be the subject of a future article after the Ishikawa collection is sold this fall by Christie's auction house.

Figure 1.

Figure 2.

Figure 3.

Figure 4.

Figure 5.

Figure 6.

Figure 7.

TABLE N

Figure 1. Segmented cork cancel, part of red cds (transit?). Small thin spot, closed tear at left, reperfed at top. PFC 112529.

Figure 2. Cork cancel. Bottom perfs touch, small tear at left not noted in PFC 12683. Ex H. R. Harmer sale, May 23, 1950, A. Richard Engel Collection, Frank G. Back stock.

Figure 3. Segmented cork cancel. Corner perf crease at upper right. PFC 133724. Ex Green (Heiman Jan. 1946), H. R. Harmer sale, Feb. 18, 1970, Siegel Rarities 1984.

Figure 4. Smudged cork cancel. Cancel and part of design erased. PFC 23664. Siegel Rarities 1987.

Figure 5. Four squares cork cancel. Faults. No PFC. Harmer Rooke sale, Jan. 11, 1955.

Figure 6. Circle of 8 wedges cancel. Short perf at top left. PFC 6040. Siegel Rarities 1977.

Figure 7. Light cork cancel. Top perfs clipped, faint creases, small tear at bottom. PFC 144131. Ex Herst sale, Feb. 6, 1964.

Figure 8 (No Photo). Block of four. Segmented cork cancel. Ex Thorne, Hunter, Crocker. This unique 1869 Invert block will be the subject of a future article.

The South-West Inverts

To qualify for this category, the frame in green must be centered toward the bottom and toward the left side perforations. This is the second largest group of 24¢ Inverts with a total of 13 examples. Table O provides details for each South-West stamp.

Figure 9.

Figure 10.

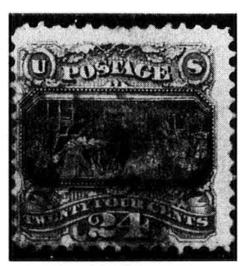

Figure 11.

Figure 12.

Figure 13.

Figure 14.

Figure 15.

Figure 16.

Figure 17.

Figure 19.

Figure 20.

Figure 21.

TABLE O

Figure 9. Circle of wedges cancel. PF states "reperfed at left" (author disagrees, few short perfs at left). PFC 55126, 121309, 114376. Ex West.

Figure 10. Faint cancel. Light crease, small tear at bottom, freak perforations. PFC 33744. Ex Harmer Rooke sales (Nov. 17, 1970; Oct. 19, 1971; Jul. 6, 1972), Schiff sale, Nov. 19, 1972.

Figure 11. "Red town cancel, filled-in thin" (Siegel). PFC 8501 "not repaired," 219845. Ex Siegel sale, Aug. 27, 1957, Frank G. Back stock (Christie's).

Figure 12. Cork cancel. Repaired. PFC 28145. Siegel sales (Jul. 28, 1968; Feb. 9, 1971), Sotheby's sale (Oct. 1979).

Figure 13. Circle of 8 wedges cancel. PFC 32217 "internal crease in grill," 34094 "slight creasing." Signed HFC (Colman). Ex Siegel sale, Nov. 25, 1969.

Figure 14. Cork cancel. Corner perf crease. PFC 122789. Ex Shanahan's sale, Jun. 14, 1958.

Figure 15. Cork cancel. Sound. PFC 115790. Ex Stolow sale, Jun. 6, 1983, Frank G. Back stock (Christie's)

Figure 16. Cork cancel. Small repairs. No PFC. Ex Kelleher sale, Nov. 16, 1957, H.R. Harmer sale, Oct. 1979.

Figure 17. Circle of 8 wedges cancel. Faint toning, thin spot. No PFC. Siegel Rarities 1976.

Figure 18 (No Photo). Grid cancel. Freak perforations into "24," "natural creases" (Stolow). No PFC. Ex Stolow sale, Nov. 8, 1962.

Figure 19. Circle of 8 wedges cancel. Sound. PFC 179203. Ex H. R. Harmer sale, Jun. 17, 1980.

Figure 20. Cork cancel. Margins added and portions drawn in. PFC 209197.

Figure 21. Segmented cork cancel, part of red transit. Sound. PFC 190753. Ex Consul Klep, Clifford C. Cole (Siegel sale), also has RPS certificate 19098.

The South-East Inverts

The final category of 24¢ Inverts is the South-East group, comprising 20 examples, by far the largest group among the different centering categories. To qualify for this category, the frame in green must be centered toward the bottom and toward the right side perforations. Table P provides details for each South-East stamp, including the horizontal pair and the example of what is believed to be the only 24¢ Invert cover.

Included among the South-East stamps is the used copy in the Tapling collection (British Library). This stamp has had the right margin and perforations added. It is canceled by a segmented grid and shows the downward vignette shift found on several other examples. Unfortunately, the author does not have a photograph to show the Tapling stamp, but lists it as Figure 38.


Figure 22.


Figure 23.


Figure 24.


Figure 25.


Figure 26.


Figure 27.


Figure 28.


Figure 29.


Figure 30.


Figure 32.


Figure 33.


Figure 35.


Figure 36.


Figure 40.


Figure 37.


Figure 39.

TABLE P

Figure 22. Circle of 8 wedges cancel. Creases. PFC 59552. Ex Hessel (H.R. Harmer Jun. 10, 1976).

Figure 23. Circle of 8 wedges cancel. Creases. No PFC. Ex Stolow sale, Jun. 2, 1954.

Figure 24. Circle of wedges cancel. Sound. PFC 76161. Ex H. R. Harmer sale, May 2, 1979.

Figure 25. Segmented cork cancel. Closed tears at top and bottom. PFC 10326. Ex Apfelbaum sale, Mar. 25, 1959, Gerber private treaty, Oct. 7, 1959.

Figure 26. Heavy cork cancel. Vignette badly faded. PFC 31427, 144305. Ex Siegel sale, Kelleher sale, Feb. 1, 1979.Figure 27. Cork cancel. Closed tear at bottom. PFC 43592. Ex Klein ad, Dec. 10, 1938.

Figure 28. Cork cancel. Sound. PFC 116415.

Figure 29. Segmented cork cancel. Sound. PFC 20402. Ex Harmer Rooke sale, May 3, 1939 (Curie collection).

Figure 30. Circle of 8 wedges cancel. Condition? No PFC. Ex Harmer Rooke sale, Jun. 26, 1941.

Figure 31 (No Photo). Circle of 8 wedges cancel. Small hole in grill. No PFC. Ex Mercury sale, Jun. 3, 1970.

Figure 32. Cork cancel, part of red "PD" in oval. No PFC. Ex Siegel Rarities 1978.

Figure 33. Smudged cork cancel. Bottom perfs into frame, corner perf crease. Ex Siegel sale, Jun. 12, 1980.

Figure 34 (No Photo). Heavy cork cancel. Faint staining. Ex Irwin Weinberg private treaty ad, Apr. 1, 1984.

Figure 35. Circle of 8 wedges cancel. Sound? Ex Fox sale, Apr. 21, 1952.

Figure 36. Faintly canceled. Small repairs closing tears. PFC 141417.

Figure 37. Circle of 8 wedges cancel. Top perfs clipped, thin spot. Ex Fox sale, Jan. 18, 1961, Siegel sale, Aug. 9, 1966.

Figure 38 (No Photo). Segmented cork cancel. Right margin and perfs added. Tapling collection (British Library)

Figure 39. Cork cancel. Corner crease at lower left. PFC 11718 stating that the stamp is genuinely used (removed and replaced) on 1874 courthouse cover to Paducah, Kentucky, presumably from another Kentucky post office. Ex Ackerman. This cover will be the subject of a future article.

Figure 40. Horizontal pair. Circle of 8 wedges cancel. Sound. PFC 13742, 33103. Ex Fox sale, Feb. 20, 1961, Siegel Rarities 1970, Kelleher sale, Feb. 1, 1974.

Summary

In total, there are 81 recorded used 24¢ Inverts, including the only known multiples of the 1869 Inverts: a pair and block. Of these stamps, 25% belong to one centering category and virtually all have similar types of cork cancels. Working with photographs of these 81 stamps, there is a strong possibility that multiples can be reconstructed.

In the first article in this series (*Chronicle* 135:192), the author had recorded 77 used 24¢ Inverts (plus four unused) and predicted that the count would increase 15-20%. At this date only four more have been recorded, but the author still estimates that as many as 85 used copies exist. Examples missing from this survey or corrections to the existing data will be greatly appreciated.

(To be continued)

THE BANKNOTE PERIOD
RICHARD M. SEARING, Editor

A THREE CENT BANKNOTE COVER TO EASTERN SIBERIA
RICHARD SEARING

In response to my first article on the 3¢ Banknote stamp issues, reader Michael Ercolini has sent in a rare and interesting cover mailed from San Francisco on June 8, 1880, to Nicolaefsk on the Amur River, Eastern Siberia (Russian Empire). Figures 1 and 2 show the front and back of this cover, respectively.

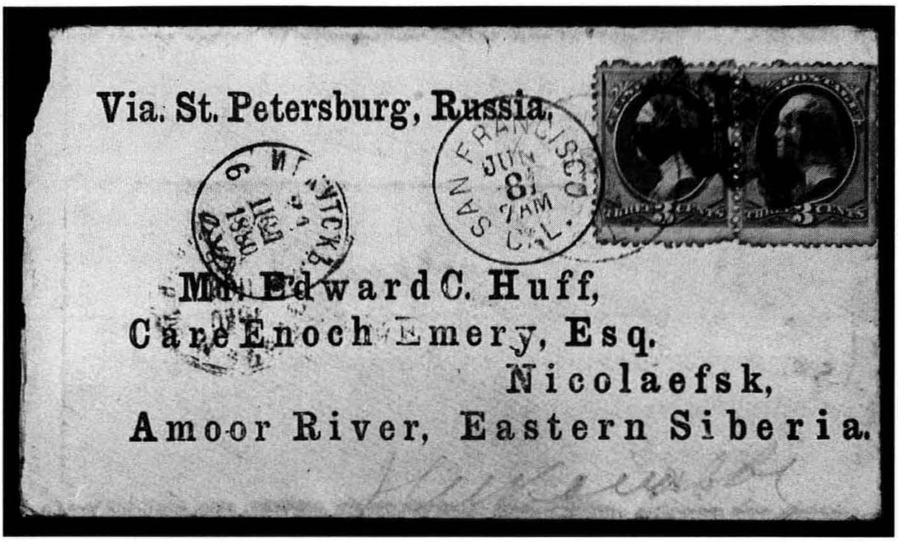

Figure 1. Cover from San Francisco to Nicolaefsk on the Amur River, Eastern Siberia, mailed June 8, 1880.

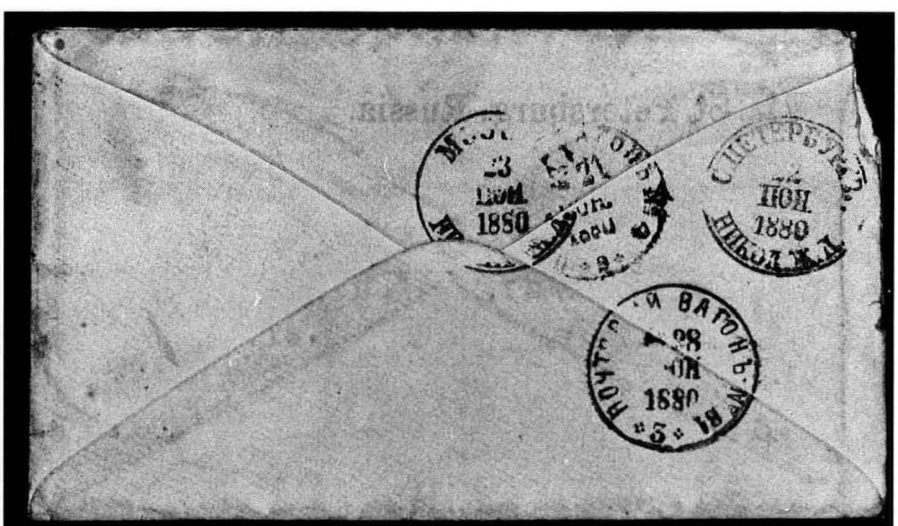

Figure 2. Reverse of San Francisco—Nicolaefsk cover, showing backstamps.

The cover does not show any indication of how it passed to and through Europe to Russian territory. My guess is that mail was transported by North German Union ship to either Bremen or Hamburg. The letter then presumably travelled by rail in a closed bag across Germany and Russian-controlled Poland to the frontier town of Wierzbolow. There it received a railway post back stamp on June 21 (old style calendar). Mr. Ercolini notes that the letter arrived June 22 at St. Petersburg on the Nikol(aevskaya) rail line, then continued on to Moscow, where it arrived June 23. These markings are shown in Figure 2.

Five days later, the mail was placed on the Perm to Ekaterinburg train, after which the letter apparently traveled for over a month and was received at Irkutsk on July 21, as shown in Figure 1. This was still a great distance from its destination of Nicolaefsk, so we can only guess when it finally arrived.

The letter is from a well-documented correspondence between Mr. Huff and a lady in San Francisco who had the envelopes printed for this purpose. Mr. Ercolini further states that she habitually underpaid or overpaid the 5¢ UPU rate, and that the Irkutsk arrival mark is dated eleven months earlier than the previously recorded example. Your comments on this very interesting usage are encouraged, and any corrections/additions most welcome. □

REFERENCES

A.V. Kiryuskin and P.E.Robinson, *Russian Postmarks, An Introduction and Guide*, 1989, p. 61.
P.E. Robinson, *Siberia: Postmarks and Postal History of the Russian Empire Period*, 2nd ed., 1990.

WHY IS THIS STAMP (THE TWO CENT WASHINGTON SCOTT 211B) NOT RARE?

WILLIAM E. MOOZ

When I was a novice stamp collector, I was intent on "filling spaces" in my United States album. As long as I kept to relatively common issues, this presented no financial problem, but eventually I got "squeezed down" to scarcer (and more costly) stamps. Soon I was to the place where the blank spaces in my album included some of the really tough stamps to find, and of course, these were ever more expensive to buy. Inevitably, these blank spaces included those dedicated to the stamps produced specifically for stamp collectors from 1875 to 1884, and commonly known as "reproductions, reprints, reissues, and special printings." As any student of U. S. philately knows, this group of stamps includes some of the rarest U. S. stamps,[1] and many of them are extraordinarily elusive and expensive.

Eventually I purchased a couple of these lower priced stamps to fill spaces without any real appreciation for how they fit into the scheme of things, or what their history was. One of the stamps that I purchased is illustrated in Figure 1, and was a Scott 211B. It was one of the lower priced stamps in this group, and at the time that I bought it in the late 1960's or early 1970's, it was not prohibitively expensive. Number 211B was identified in the Scott catalogue as the 1883 special printing of the 2¢ Washington, Scott 210.

About 1970 I became interested in the history of the 1875-1884 program to issue these stamps, and spent many hours in the National Archives in Washington, D. C., poring through the records. Doing so provided me with background information and a keen appreciation of the mechanics of the program. It also led me to investigate some very curious questions, and eventually to write an article on the 1882 5¢ Garfield special printing (Scott 205C) entitled "Why Is This Stamp Rare?"[2] The Garfield stamp is in the peculiar and confusing situation of being on the surface a rather common stamp (2,463 sold), but at the same time being one of the most difficult U. S. stamps to obtain, and one of the most expensive, with a 1993 catalogue value of $20,000.[3] Scott 211B, stated to be the special printing of Scott 210, the 2¢ Washington stamp of 1883, and the subject of this article, is exactly the opposite. It is in theory an extremely rare stamp (55 sold, as we shall see), but appears to be easy to obtain, and is priced modestly in the 1993 catalogue at $500.[4] How can this be?

To begin this story, we need to look at the history of the program, and to examine the records of the Post Office Department.

In 1875, for reasons which are no longer clear, or even relevant, the Post Office Department decided to obtain "specimen copies" of all stamps that had previously been issued for use, and to offer these for sale to "stamp gatherers," through the Office of the Third Assistant Postmaster General. There is some evidence, and some speculation that an exhibit of these stamps was also planned for the Centennial Exhibition in 1876.[5]

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[1]W.V. Combs, "The Rarest United States Stamps," 31st *American Philatelist Congress Book,* 1965, pp. 49-53.

[2]W.E. Mooz, "Why Is This Stamp Rare?," *Chronicle,* Vol. 44, No. 1 (Whole No. 153) (February 1992), pp. 40-52.

[3]*Scott 1993 Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps,* Scott Publishing Company, p. 385.

[4]*Ibid.,* page 385.

[5]W.V. Combs, *U.S. Departmental Specimens,* American Philatelic Society, 1965, page 3.

Initially, this program required that all of the stamps issued from 1847 through 1875 be printed and made available to the public. Apparently it was intended for the program to continue after this initial issue of the stamps. This meant that subsequent to 1875, each new regular issue was also accompanied by a special printing of that issue. One can easily conclude that this was the intention of the Post Office Department, because the circular which advertised the program was first printed in 1875, and was later updated and reprinted at least once more in 1882. The regular issue stamps went through the stamp agent to the postmasters for sale and use in regular postage, and the special printings (or specimens) of these same stamps went to the Office of the Third Assistant Postmaster General, where they could be purchased by the public.[6]

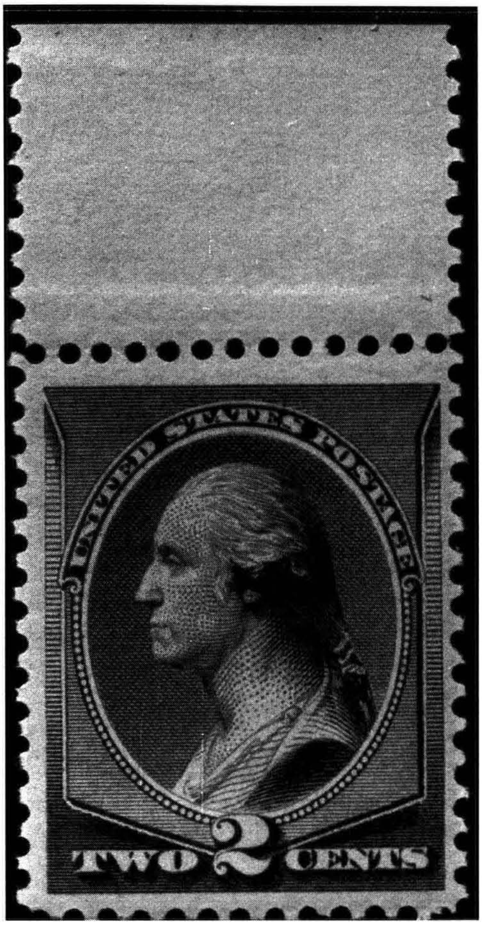

Figure 1. The author's Scott No. 211B (1885 steam press printing).

This peculiar situation lasted until the program was brought to a close on July 15, 1884.[7] But by that time, the contemporaneous issue of "regular" stamps and their "special printings" had included what are now designated Scott numbers 180, 181, 192 through 204, 205C, 211B, and 211D. Since examples of these stamps could be bought at any post office, one would wonder why a person would go to the trouble of writing to Washington to buy them. And in fact, few people did, and the numbers of these stamps sold attests to their great rarity (that is, with the exception of the 5¢ Garfield, Scott #205C, which is a

[6]Circular, "Specimen Postage Stamps," Post Office Department, March 27, 1875.

[7]J.N. Luff, *The Postage Stamps of the United States,* The Scott Stamp & Coin Co., Ltd., 1902, page 346 (page 255 in the 1937 reprint).

special case). Just a glance at the Scott catalogue will show that these are very expensive stamps, as befits their rarity. (That is, with the exception of Scott #211B, which is also a special case, and the subject of this article.)

With this history as a background, let us examine the records dealing with the 2¢ Washington special printing.

Orders for these special printings were issued by the Office of the Third Assistant Postmaster General, and records of the payment for them appear in the "Stamp Bill Books," some of which have been preserved in the National Archives. Stamp Bill Book No. 3[8] contains the relevant records on this stamp. A copy of the page appears in Figure 2, where we see that a payment was made to the American Bank Note Company in December 1883 for 2,000 of these stamps. Two thousand stamps was not very many, in this program. The initial orders for the pre-1875 issues were for 10,000 stamps each,[9] and in some cases this was insufficient and more had to be ordered.[10] But by the time that the special printings were issued almost simultaneously with the stamps being offered at the post office, the demand by the public had cooled off to the place where 2,000 stamps seemed like plenty. So 2,000 stamps were presumably delivered to the clerks at the Office of the Third Assistant Postmaster General, where they were sold to those who requested them.

How many were sold? The Third Assistant Postmaster General's office kept copies (press copies)[11] of each invoice for the stamps that they sold, but unfortunately the records of these sales are now incomplete. For this particular stamp, the existing press copies are of no use at all, since they end on July 26, 1882, almost a year and a half prior to the delivery of the stamp to the Office of the Third Assistant Postmaster General. So we have no invoice records of who bought these stamps, what dates they were purchased, and how many were sold.

But while these detailed records are missing, we have another way to determine the quantity sold. At the termination of the program, in very good and traditional governmental procedure, the stamps remaining in inventory were carefully counted on July 16, 1884, and then destroyed on July 23, 1884.[12] The records of the numbers of stamps which were destroyed were available to John Luff, who listed these in his 1902 book.[13] Based on the number which we know were received on December 5, 1883, and the number subsequently destroyed in July 1884, we see that a total of 55 stamps[14] were sold during the seven months that they were available. Indeed this is a very rare stamp. Using the same reference sources, we can see that this number of stamps is similar to Scott 211D, the 4¢ Jackson special printing, of which 26 were sold[15] during the same seven months. Yet, the 4¢ Jackson special printing has a catalogue value of $15,000,[16] and the 2¢ Washington special printing has a catalogue value of $500. Granted that 55 stamps is more than twice 26 stamps, this by itself is hardly a reason for the catalogue values of one to be 30 times that of the other.

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[8]Records of the Post Office Department, Record Group 28, Stamp Bill Book No. 3.

[9]Records of the Post Office Department, Record Group 28, Stamp Bill Book No. 1, page 235, for example.

[10]Stamp Bill Book No. 3, *op. cit.*, entry for February 28, 1881, for example.

[11]Records of the Post Office Department, Record Group 28, Press Copies of Invoices, 1879, GSA, National Archives and Records Service, Washington, D.C.

[12]Luff, *op. cit.*, page 346, (page 255 in the 1937 reprint).

[13]*Ibid.*, pages 348-364 (pages 256-265 in the 1937 reprint).

[14]*Ibid.*, page 355 (page 260 in the 1937 reprint).

[15]*Ibid.*, page 355 (page 260 in the 1937 reprint).

[16]Scott, *op. cit.*, page 385.

A student of economics, even if he knew nothing about stamps, would immediately conclude that, despite what the records indicate, there must be many more of the 211B than there are of the 211D. This hypothesis is one subject of this article.

The 1993 Scott Specialized catalogue is a place to start, and in it we find a footnote which reads, "No. 211B is from a trial operation in 1885 of a new steam-powered American Bank Note Company press."[17] This statement can immediately be seen to conflict with the Stamp Bill Book records illustrated in Figure 2. The special printing of the stamp was bought in December 1883, 55 copies were sold, and the remainders were destroyed in July 1884. Thus they could not have been printed on a steam press in 1885.

From the Scott catalogue we turn to other, more detailed sources of information. Foremost among these is certainly the monumental study of the 2¢ Washington stamp authored by Edward L. Willard.[18] Willard devotes a bit more than eight pages[19] to a discussion of this stamp, and carefully exhibits all of the proper pieces of data. Let us look at the evidence. First, Willard discusses and illustrates the information available from the Stamp Bill Book, and the information from Luff. Willard apparently had no quarrel with the figure of 55 stamps sold. But then Willard introduces the subject of the steam press, which is alluded to in the Scott catalogue.

This introduction appears as an excerpt from a section of the June 1, 1902, issue of the *American Journal of Philately* (of which Luff was the editor, at the time) headed "Notes," which Willard describes as ". . . a combination of fact and rumor which had reached Mr. Luff and was passed on for the interest of readers."[20] This excerpt describes how Mr. H. F. Colman showed Luff ". . . some interesting things in the nature of a special printing of the 2 cents red brown of 1883."[21] Luff unfortunately does not tell us exactly what he was shown, i.e., whether it was one or more panes of 100 stamps, one or more sheets of 200, a single, or a multiple or multiples of the stamps. However, the excerpt continues as follows:

> The impression is taken from a plate of 200 stamps, which has been perforated but not cut apart between the two panes. As a result, the sheet originally contained ten horizontal pairs imperforate between, though not the usual imprint, "American Bank Note Company," at the middle of the top of each pane, and midway between these imprints was engraved in large Roman capitals "STEAMER AMERICAN BANK NOTE CO." "Steamer," of course, means steam press. This would appear to have been a special printing made on the steam press. Whether or not it is the special printing which was delivered to the Post Office Department for sale to collectors on December 5th, 1883, we are unable to say, as little or no information is obtainable as to the antecedents of the sheet, beyond the fact that it was purchased at the P.O. Department in Washington. The stamps are somewhat lighter in color than the ordinary variety and are very carefully printed; the gum is yellowish, the perforation the regulation 12.[22]

It is surprising to me, at least, that Luff apparently failed to recall that only 55 copies of the special printing had been sold, and that all remainders had been destroyed. Although Luff is not explicit about what he was shown, he talks about the antecedents of the "sheet," which would imply that he saw a sheet of 200 (since he describes the imperforate pairs). If so, he would have seen more stamps than had been sold, and this should have alerted him immediately that these were not the stamps delivered on December 5, 1883. Further, Luff noted that these had been printed on the steam press, and this fact should have convinced him that they had not been printed until 1885, as we shall later see.

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[17] *Ibid.*, page 385.

[18] E.L. Willard, *The United States Two Cent Red Brown Of 1883-1887,* Volume 1, H.L. Lindquist Publications, Inc., 1970.

[19] *Ibid.*, pages 54-63.

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 58. Willard identifies this individual as "H.F. Coleman" [sic].

[21] *Ibid.*

[22] *Ibid.*

August 31st 1883.

Specimen Postage Due Stamps furnished during month of August 1883. by the American Bank Note Company of New York.

Number	Denomination & Issue	
5.000	1. Cent. - 1879.	
5.000,	$ 5.00	

Allow five dollars & pay out of appropriation for the manufacture of adhesive postage stamps for the fiscal year ending June 30" 1884. These articles were purchased in open market, the exigencies of the service requiring their immediate delivery.

31st December 1883.

Specimen Postage Stamps furnished during month ending as above by The American Bank Note Company of New York.

Number	Denomination & Issue	
5. 000	1 Cent - Executive	
5. 000	1 " - Agriculture	
2. 000	2 . Washington (1883)	
2. 000	4 . Jackson. (")	
14. 000	$ 15.00	

Allow fifteen dollars & charge to appropriation for the manufacture of Postage Stamps for fiscal year ending 30 June 1884. These articles, not provided for by contract were purchased in open market the exigencies of the service requiring their immediate delivery.

Figure 2. Entry dated December 31, 1883, from Stamp Bill Book No. 3, showing Post Office Department purchase from the American Bank Note Company of 2,000 copies of the 2¢ Washington (1883) special printing.

From this description by Luff, Willard then researches the Hoe steam press itself, which was proposed as an alternative to the hand operated "Spoke Press," which had been in use up to that time with the exception of limited use of earlier steam presses by the Continental Bank Note Company during the period of 1873 to 1876.[23] The Hoe steam press was devised as a high speed method of printing stamps. Willard suggests that a set of unnumbered plates were prepared, of 200 subjects each, with the legend at the top as noted above. He then suggests that there were several of the printed sheets from this press forwarded to Washington as examples of the product of this new press, and that some of these subsequently left the possession of the Post Office Department. Willard noted that there was information leading to at least four sheets which left the Post Office Department.

Jack Reinhard, a specialist in Bank Note Company stamps, has spent over 20 years studying multiples of the steam press stamps (Scott 211B) which have appeared in auction catalogues and other philatelic literature. By studying photographs of these multiples, Reinhard has been able to graphically "reconstruct" a total of five distinguishable steam press printing sheets of 200.[24] Consequently, the number of 2¢ Washington 1885 steam press stamps released by the Post Office Department appears to have been at least 1,000.

Willard's work was given support by the findings of Randy Neil, as published in the April 1984 issue of the *American Philatelist*[25] and in a subsequent letter to the editor.[26] Neil had found additional evidence which pinned down the exact date of the delivery of the steam press stamp to the Third Assistant Postmaster General as May 23, 1885. Neil illustrated and reported that a corner margin pair (positions R10 and R20) existed with a penciled notation "40 total." The "40 total" notation apparently does not refer to 40 sheets but to 40 stamps in a given block because Jack Reinhard reports the existence of a block of 66 (lot 151, Robert A. Siegel Auctions, 528th sale, Rarities of the World, April 11, 1978 and lot 148, Robert A. Siegel Auctions, 618th sale, Rarities of the World, April 23, 1983) with a similar margin notation of 84 (the "4" of "40" and the "4" of "84" appear to have been written by the same person). Apparently, at least one of the original sheets was separated into large notated multiples which were subsequently separated into smaller units.

In personal communication,[27] Neil advises that it was his work which resulted in the note in the Scott catalogue which states that the origin of Scott 211B was the steam press printing.

Finally, Willard notes that H. F. Colman sold these steam press stamps, and that he applied a hand stamp guarantee to the reverse which usually was simply H.F.C. Willard correctly concludes that these stamps were not the 1883 special printing, and opines that they ". . . might be identified as essays made at the time of the contract of 1885, and sent to the Post Office Department as evidence of their success on the steamer press."[28]

It is interesting to me to note that after Willard correctly isolated and identified the relevant facts, he then drew some conclusions which are not supported by the evidence. He does this by first addressing the 1883 special printing, of which 55 were sold. These stamps he dismisses, using a peculiar bit of reasoning. Willard says, "We do not believe that Mr. Luff ever considered these stamps within his definition of a special printing."[29]

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[23]Luff, *op. cit.*, pages 139-140 (pages 103-104 in the 1937 reprint).

[24]Personal communication, M.J. Reinhard to A.E. Staubus, June 16, 1993.

[25]R.L. Neil, "Newfound Evidence Disputes a Scott Listing for the U.S. 2-cent 1883 Issue," *American Philatelist,* April 1984, pages 344-347 and 384.

[26]W.E. Mooz, Letter to Editor, "Puzzle Cleared, But Error Added," *American Philatelist,* July 1984, pages 680, 682 and 684.

[27]Personal communication, R.L. Neil to W.E. Mooz, March 22, 1993.

[28]Willard, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

[29]*Ibid.*, page 63.

This statement is especially puzzling since Luff's description of these stamps appears in his section on special printings,[30] and because of the evidence shown in Figure 2.

Following this erroneous path, Willard goes to the next step by saying, "In accordance with the foregoing evidence, Scott Catalogue numbers 211B and 211Bc should be dropped from listing and relisted under the heading 'Essays and Proofs' in the United States Specialized Catalogue."[31] With this conclusion, Willard apparently consigns the existence of the 55 copies of the special printing to a nameless or numberless oblivion, while correctly relegating the steam press stamps to their more proper place in the catalogue. In the process he retains their designation as 211B. The current 1993 edition of the Scott Specialized catalogue appears to do the same thing, by attributing 211B to the steam press.

Let us now review the facts. It is incontrovertible that there was a special printing which was made in 1883. The records are clear about this, Luff detailed the purchase and sale of the stamps, and neither Willard nor Neil disputes it. It is also clear that 55 copies of this stamp were sold, but to persons unknown. This special printing was not made by the steam press, because of a very simple reason. This is that the special printing was delivered to the Third Assistant Postmaster General's office in December 1883, 55 copies were sold, and the remaining 1,945 stamps were counted on July 16, 1884, and then destroyed. In fact, the 1875-1884 program to issue and sell these special printings died on July 16, 1884, and as a result the steam press printings could not have been sold under that program. The new steam press was not used until 1885, and, as Neil points out, its use was expressly forbidden by the Post Office Department from 1877 to 1885.[32]

Figure 3. Block of 16 of the steam press printing showing the "STEAMER–AMERICAN BANK NOTE CO." imprint and an imperforate vertical gutter block of four.

It is equally incontrovertible that the steam press printings exist, and exist in reasonable quantities (probably 1,000, perhaps more, were issued). After all, the "STEAMER–AMERICAN BANK NOTE CO." imprint (Figure 3) is evidence that they exist, and the steam press stamps do not seem to be especially rare. Even though there were only apparently ten imperforate pairs of these stamps per sheet of 200, these show up at auction with some regularity, and if one considers that these pairs were only 5% of the total number of stamps, the perforated stamps must not be uncommonly rare, as the catalogue value indicates.

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[30]Luff, *op. cit.,* page 354-355 (pages 259-260 in the 1937 reprint).

[31]Willard, *op. cit.,* page 63.

[32]Neil, *op. cit.,* page 346.

The problem is that the special printing and the steam press printing have not been properly identified, separated, and individually catalogued, and consequently seem to have become confused, commingled, and combined under a single listing in the Scott catalogue. While Willard simply dismisses the 55 copies of the special printing, Neil almost does the same thing by stating, "They are lost in the countless thousands of 2-cent 1883 issues because they probably looked just like those that were regularly issued. Ned Willard thought so, too."[33] Because of this confusion between the special printing and the steam press printing, both may be listed under the Scott designation of 211B. The result is that when one purchases a copy of Scott 211B, one does not know whether it is one of the 55 copies of the 1883 special printing or one of the more common 1885 steam press stamps. This is why this stamp does not appear to be rare.

We can go back to early Scott catalogues to try to unfold what happened. The first mention of the 2¢ Washington special printing appears in the 1901 Scott catalogue, where it is listed on page 9 as 211A. The listing following it is that of 211B, the 4¢ Jackson special printing. In the 1902 catalogue the listing was identical. Then in 1903 the listing was expanded to include, under 211A, an "a" entry, which listed the horizontal pairs, imperforate between variety. The listing of these two stamps, and the "a" variety, continued with these identifications until 1906, when they changed. The 2¢ Washington special printing changed from 211A to 211B, and the 4¢ Jackson special printing changed from 211B to 211D, both of which are their current designations. In this change, 211A disappeared as a stamp designation, and 211Bc was assigned to copies of 211B which were horizontal pairs, imperforate between. The timing of this, in conjunction with the data in Luff, allows for a reasonable explanation of what probably happened.

The first listing, in 1901 and 1902, is consistent with Luff's findings, as reported in the Special Printing section of his 1902 book. Then, in 1903, the catalogue added "a. Horizontal pair, imperf. between." This addition must have been as a result of the encounter between Luff and Colman in 1902, in which Luff saw the steam press stamps, including the imperforate pairs. As noted above, Luff seems to have been confused concerning these, and must have eventually concluded that the steam press stamps and the special printings were identical. If he had any residual doubts in this regard, they appear to have been laid to rest in 1906, when the designation of 211A disappeared, and 211B seems to have been relegated to the steam press stamps.

What is needed to straighten this mess out is to first recognize the fact that there are two stamps, which no one seems to dispute, then to properly catalogue them, and finally to develop guidance as to how to tell these apart. To not go through at least the first two of these steps is to improperly deny the existence of one of the truly great rarities in U.S. stamps. As part of this, I agree with both Willard and Neil that the steam press stamps should be removed from the special printing category and moved to somewhere else which more correctly describes what they are.

Morrison Waud indicated that because the steam press printings were not separated into panes of 100, "they were not intended for sale to the public but were furnished to the government as samples of the steam press printings."[34] However, after making this statement, Waud then argues that perhaps the steam press printings should be left as special printings ("let sleeping dogs lie") or, as a compromise, simply noting them as "Not Regularly Issued," rather than listing them as proofs.

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[33]Neil, *op. cit.*, page 347.

[34]M. Waud, "Two Cent Brown of 1883," *Chronicle,* Vol. 31, No. 2 (Whole No. 102) (May 1979), pages 134-137.

In whatever section they are listed, an appropriate Scott number should be assigned. It would appear logical that the designation of Scott 211A should be reassigned to the 1883 special printing, and 211B and 211Bc could be retained as the proper identification of the steam press printing. It should also be noted that the steam press sheets were intended as samples for examination by the Third Assistant Postmaster General without being required to be cut into panes. Consequently, while the resultant imperforate pairs (211Bc) are extremely interesting and desirable, they should not be considered "errors" in the normal philatelic use of this term. The proper location in the catalogue for 211A is with the rest of the special printings. I believe that this is what was originally intended, since the 4¢ Jackson special printing was originally listed as Scott 211B, and these two special printings were printed and delivered at the same time and to the same place.

That would take care of the first two points. The third is considerably more difficult, since it requires that criteria be developed which would allow the special printing and the steam press printing to be differentiated. Although this may be a formidable task, and although it may never be done to everyone's satisfaction, it should not preclude the listing of the two stamps as separate items, because it is beyond doubt that they both were printed and sold. Historical accuracy would demand no less, and it is entirely consistent with historical Scott philosophy. For example, Scott 164, the 24¢ Continental Bank Note Company printing, was listed until 1972 together with an explanatory note. From 1973 to 1992 it was not listed, but the explanatory note was retained. Finally, the stamp was relisted in 1993 due to the positive identification of a copy of the stamp.

I will omit discussion of the regular issue, Scott 210, since there seems to be little problem in identifying this stamp. This will allow me to concentrate on some of the differences that might be expected to exist between the special printing and the steam press stamp. First, the special printing ought to be ungummed. Reference to Figure 2 will show that the special printing was one of four stamps on the same order. These included the special printing of the 4¢ Jackson stamp, 211D; the third special printing of the 1¢ Agriculture Department stamp, Scott O1SD; and the fifth special printing of the 1¢ Executive stamp, Scott O10SD.

The Jackson special printing is without gum. The Agriculture Department third special printing is the subject of some dispute, since there has never been agreement on a way to identify this third printing. And the Executive fifth special printing was apparently destroyed at the end of the program in its entirety without a single copy having been sold or retained.[35] However, those who disagree on the identification of the Agriculture Department third special printing are in agreement that the stamp was delivered without gum. Since at least two of these four stamps were delivered without gum, and since the preceding special printings (Scott 180, 181, 192-204, 205C) were all apparently delivered without gum, it seems most unlikely that the 2¢ Washington special printing would have gum. There would be no reason to gum a stamp that the Third Assistant Postmaster General's office was perfectly happy to receive in ungummed condition.

Second, if the stamp is a horizontal pair imperforate between, or has selvage which reads "STEAMER," it is clearly the steam press printing. One can go further by stating that if there is any of the "STEAMER–AMERICAN BANK NOTE CO." imprint in large block letters showing, it is also the steam press printing. However, if there is any imprint in the smaller block letters (AMERICAN BANK NOTE COMPANY), as illustrated in Willard's book (figure 31) and in Siegel's 1978 Rarities of the World sale (lot 151) or 1983 Rarities of the World sale (lot 148), then it could be either the 1883 special printing or the 1885 steam press printing.

But suppose that the stamp is without gum and has no selvage? This is where things really get tough, since there is no way to tell whether the gum was originally there and had

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[35]Combs, *U.S. Departmental Specimens,* page 20.

been soaked off. One potential difference which could distinguish between the two printings is the stamp's color. Morrison Waud[36] reported a review of the Scott 211B records of the Philatelic Foundation as of January 19, 1979, and notes that all accepted copies were in the light brown shade which did not appear on the regularly issued stamps until the fall of 1885 according to Willard. Waud speculates that the 1883 special printings possibly were of a very deep red brown shade without gum. If Waud was correct in his speculation, then the real difficulty will be to distinguish the rare 1883 special printing stamp from the common regularly issued 1883 stamp (Scott 210) with its gum removed, rather than from the 1885 steam press stamp.

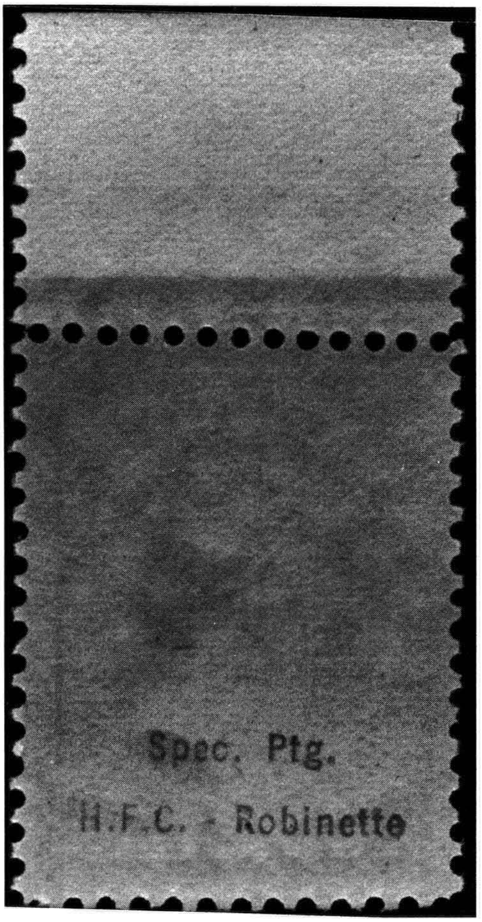

Figure 4. Reverse side of author's Scott No. 211B (1885 steam press printing).

There is another clue that I would like to advance. As mentioned above, Mr. H. F. Colman is alleged to have had a heavy hand in the affair of the steamer printing. When I bought my copy of Scott 211B, I asked my friend Ezra Cole whether I should get a Philatelic Foundation certificate on the stamp. His reply was curt.[37] What he said was that since the reverse had the H.F.C. handstamp on it (Figure 4), there was simply no better guarantee that the stamp was authentic. Because of his comment, for years I felt that if the HFC handstamp was present, it was evidence that the stamp was the 1883 special printing

[36]Waud, *op. cit.,* page 135.

[37]Personal communication, Ezra Cole to W.E. Mooz, 1972.

and not the 1885 steamer printing. But that was before I had read of Colman's involvement with the 1885 steam press printing. A look into his history is instructive.

According to an article in *Mekeel's Weekly Stamp News,*[38] and a copy of his 1915 catalog, Mr. Colman had been dealing in stamps since 1893. This was a part-time venture for him, since he was a government employee at that time. He had been appointed a clerk in the Patent Office in 1885, and in 1889 he was transferred, at his own request, to the General Land Office in the Department of the Interior.[39] His stamp business was first operated by a young lady.[40] In 1901 he purchased the Washington office of the J. M. Bartels Co.,[41] and in October 1906 he hired George L. Toppan as business manager.[42] At some later date he left the government service to become a full-time dealer. In 1914 he became a life member of the APS, and his application for membership unfortunately lists his age only as "legal."[43] In 1927 he retired for health reasons, turning the business over to his then associate, H. A. Robinette, who continued the business at least until 1937. Colman died in California on November 24, 1932.[44] From his biographical information, he may have been about 67 years old at the time of his death.

Since Colman, in his own press release, and in his own catalogue, said that he had started in the stamp business in 1893, it seems unlikely that he was an original patron of the Office of the Third Assistant Postmaster General for the stamps available there. This is confirmed in part by a search of the press copies of the invoices, in which the name Colman does not appear. It is true that the press copies only cover the period till 1882, and that the 2¢ Washington special printing was not available for sale until December 1883 (when Colman was probably about 19 years old), so that there is no positive proof that Colman was not a purchaser of these stamps. However, December 1883 was some nine years before he became a dealer, so it is unlikely that he bought any of these stamps, or at least unlikely that he purchased a stock of them (remember that only 55 were sold).

It was about 1902 when Colman showed the 1885 steam press stamps to Luff which he described as a "special" printing. As mentioned, we do not know how many he had in his possession, but he advertised them in his catalogues, and as late as November, 1932, they continued to be advertised by Robinette.[45] So he had enough that they lasted at least 30 years, which indicates a reasonable quantity.

True, many of the stamps that he sold as the special printing, if not all of them, had the "HFC" handstamp on them. I believe that this mark is proof positive that any stamp which has it, is the 1885 steam press printing. Whether or not Colman ever had any of the genuine 1883 special printing is not known, but it seems highly unlikely. The whereabouts of the 55 copies of this rarity are unknown, and it is unlikely that a genuine copy of the 1883 special printing has ever been expertised based upon Waud's 1979 review of the Philatelic Foundation records.

Why is this stamp not rare? This is the wrong question, since we are really discussing two different stamps. The true 1883 special printing, which might be called 211A, is indeed rare and appears even rarer because we are unable, at this time, to list enough distinguishing features that would enable us to identify a copy with any certainty. Until

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[38]*Mekeel's Weekly Stamp News,* Vol. 20, No. 39 (Sept. 29, 1906), page 346.

[39]*Ibid.,* page 347.

[40]*The Stamp Collectors' Fortnightly,* Dec. 24, 1932, page 349.

[41]*Mekeel's Weekly Stamp News,* Vol. 15, No. 30 (July 25, 1901), page 276.

[42]*Mekeel's Weekly Stamp News,* Vol. 20, No. 39 (Sept. 29, 1906), page 346.

[43]APS membership application for H.F. Colman, Aug. 14, 1914.

[44]*Stamps,* Vol. 1, No. 13 (Dec. 10, 1932), page 440.

[45]*Stamps,* Vol. 1, No. 8 (Nov. 5, 1932), page 265.

such time that a positive attribution can be made, the true 1883 special printing probably should be cited in the Scott Catalogue with an explanatory note and separated from the steam press printing, perhaps something like this:

SPECIAL PRINTING
Printed by the American Bank Note Company

1883	**Soft porous paper, without gum**	**Perf. 12**	
211A A57	2c **deep red brown** (55)		
211D A58	4c **deep blue green** (26)	15,000.	

The American Bank Note Company printed and delivered 2,000 copies each of Nos. 211A and 211D without gum in December 1883. Post Office Department records indicated that 55 copies of No. 211A and 26 copies of No. 211D were sold. However, as of present, distinguishing characteristics for No. 211A are unknown (the designated deep red brown shade is based upon speculation) and, consequently, definitive identification and separation of No. 211A from Nos. 210 and 211B are not possible at this time.

SPECIAL PRINTING
Printed by the American Bank Note Company

1885	**Soft porous paper, with gum**	**Perf. 12**	
211B A57	2c **pale red brown**	500.	—
	Block of 4	2,100.	
	c. Horizontal pair, imperf. between	2,250.	

No. 211B is from a trial operation in 1885 of a new steam-powered American Bank Note Company press, quantity not definitively known.

That the stamp appears not to be rare is simply due to the fact that H. F. Colman came into possession of the 1885 steam press stamps, with the subsequent identification of these as Scott 211B, possibly as a result of Luff becoming confused. This has caused everyone to be confused by the situation. The stamp that currently is labeled 211B is not rare. But it is not the 1883 2¢ Washington special printing, which should be 211A. It is something else entirely.

Several individuals and organizations contributed to the data in this article. I would like to thank Jack Reinhard, Al Staubus, Bill Hatton, the American Philatelic Research Library, and the Bierman Philatelic Library for their assistance and counsel. □

THE TWO CENT WASHINGTON: EPILOGUE

M. Jack Reinhard

Reference was made in the preceding article ("Why Is This Stamp (The Two Cent Washington Scott 211B) Not Rare?," by William E. Mooz) to the existence of only five sheets (200 subjects) of the "STEAMER" special printing (Scott No. 211B). Five sheets are a presumption, however, determined by a review of material offered publicly for sale over the last twenty years. They can be counted by using the special imprint added to the top margin of the plate. The complete "STEAMER" imprint reads "STEAMER-AMERICAN BANK NOTE CO." But it is the "STEAMER" portion that becomes the real key. Five different pieces exhibiting the "STEAMER" portion are known to exist:

1) the block of 16 pictured in the preceding article which contains the full imprint;
2) a strip of 6 which displays the full imprint;
3) a block of four with attached "STEAMER" selvage;
4) a pair with attached "STEAMER" selvage where the perforations align through the upright part of the first "E" of "STEAMER"; and finally,
5) a pair where the perforations are to the right of the upright of the first "E" of "STEAMER."

Thus only five sheets are documented, but the resultant quantity—1000 total stamps—seems like a logical quantity to have been released. □

THE FOREIGN MAILS
RICHARD F. WINTER, Editor

NEW YORK EXCHANGE OFFICE MARKINGS—UPDATE

RICHARD F. WINTER

Chapter 32 of *North Atlantic Mail Sailings 1840-75* is devoted to the markings used on transatlantic mails brought to the New York post office by steamships before and after designation as an exchange office under various mail treaties. This chapter was added to the sailing data book because a comprehensive listing of postmarks used at this office related to overseas mails had not been published. Since I had been collecting this data and making tracings of the markings, it seemed appropriate to include the information in the book. Susan McDonald enthusiastically agreed.

The last tracings were sent to Susan, who edited the book, in November 1987. Since that time, I have been able to add a considerable amount of new information to this listing. This article provides changes to the information on 149 of the published markings, and adds 94 new markings to the listing. Almost two dozen collectors have contributed data since *North Atlantic Mail Sailings 1840-75* was published. I have listed those individuals at the conclusion of this article.

This update uses the tracings and numbering system of *North Atlantic Mail Sailings 1840-75*. New data is shown in italics. If there is no new information on a particular marking, it is not shown. For completely new markings, **all** the data is listed in *italics*. New markings have sub-numbers, such as "8a," or completely new numbers, such as "220," where the number was not previously used. The tracings are actual size. They may be photocopied and pasted in the book in their appropriate locations if desired.

I hope that our readers will continue to submit new data from which tracings may be made or information updated. Photocopies are the best sources so long as the markings are readable in those photocopies. Since it is important to be able to determine the date a marking was struck, the photocopies should also provide year date evidence where possible. Please send your data to me at the address shown in the masthead at the beginning of the journal.

American Packet — Unpaid
(begins on page 353)

1

29 mm.
Blk: 11 Nov 52
16 May 68
Red: 9 Apr 53
27 Aug 59

2

29 mm.
Blk: *17 Nov 63*
6 Dec 65

5

35 mm.
Blk: *5 Dec 50*
11 Aug 59

6

35 mm.
Blk: 14 Sep 51
9 Dec 56
Red: *22 Aug 52*
24 Jan 56

6a

31 mm.
Blk: 8 Mar 52

7

31 mm.
Blk: 7 Mar 53
13 Apr 64

8a

31 mm.
Blk: 9 Sep 62

9a

32 mm.
Blk: 26 Apr 55
8 Jan 57

10a

32 mm.
Blk: 19 Aug 54
15 Apr 57

12

31 mm.
Blk: 5 Dec 55
1 Mar 62

17

30 mm.
Blk: 15 Sep 60
8 Jun 67

18

31 mm.
Blk: *30 Oct 52*
29 Jan 59
Also w/yd 1858

20

30 mm.
Blk: 13 Dec 54
11 May 59

21

26 mm.
Blk: 9 Jun 60
23 Mar 69
Red: 26 Jan 61

21a

25 mm.
Blk: 12 Oct 61

23

24 mm.
Blk: *14 Mar 61*
20 Dec 62
Red: 19 Aug 61

25a

26 mm.
Blk: *14 Mar 61*

American Packet — Paid
(begins on page 355)

30

35 mm.
Red: *16 Feb 51*
24 Jan 56

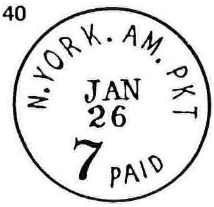
33

32 mm.
Red: 2 Apr 53
11 Jun 59

34

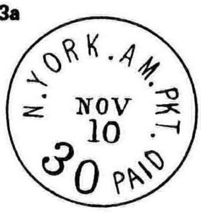
32 mm.
Red: 22 Jan 53
12 Feb 59

40



26 mm.
Red: *15 Sep 60*
9 May 67

43a



25 mm.
Red: *10 Nov 59?*

43b

26 mm.
Red: *2 Sep 62*

44

26 mm.
Red: *9 Jun 60*
21 Feb 66

Bremen Packet — Unpaid
(page 356)

50

29 mm.
Blk: 8 Jul 54
15 Apr 63

50a

31 mm.
Blk: 24 Jul 61

58

30 mm.
Red: 11 Mar 60

(To be continued)

THE COVER CORNER
SCOTT GALLAGHER, Editor

ANSWERS TO PROBLEM COVERS IN ISSUE 158

Figures 1 and 2 show the front and back of a cover used from Brazil to the U.S. The 200 reis Brazilian stamp was issued in 1877. There are no year dates on the cover, and no enclosure. A good analysis came from Antonio M. Torres, who lives in London and Madrid, and who has a great Brazilian postal history exhibit which he showed at GRANADA '92. Torres explains that this letter was never in a Brazilian post office, and that it was taken to a U.S. ship at a dock and handed to the ship's purser. The 200 reis stamp was applied by the sender to pay the U.P.U. rate for a letter weighing over one half ounce and under one ounce, and was equivalent to 10 cents U.S. The year of usage must be after 1875 due to this rate.

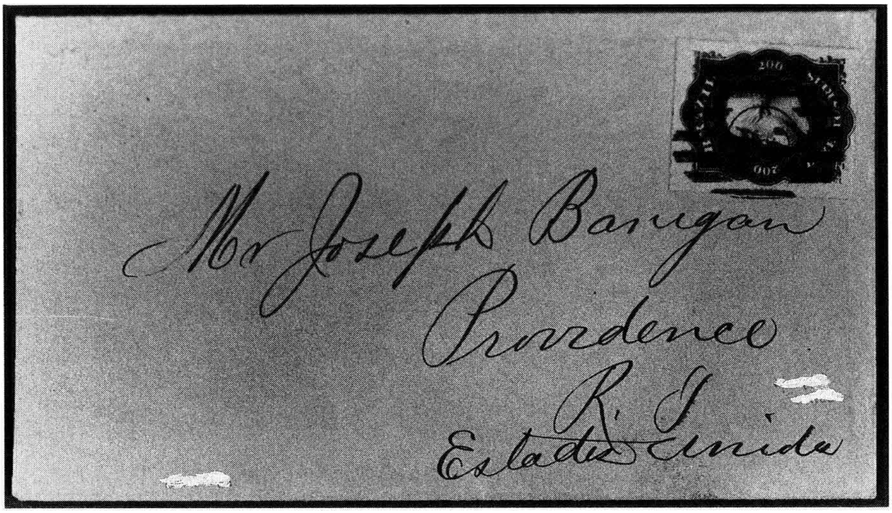


Figure 1. 200 reis cover, Brazil to Providence, Rhode Island.

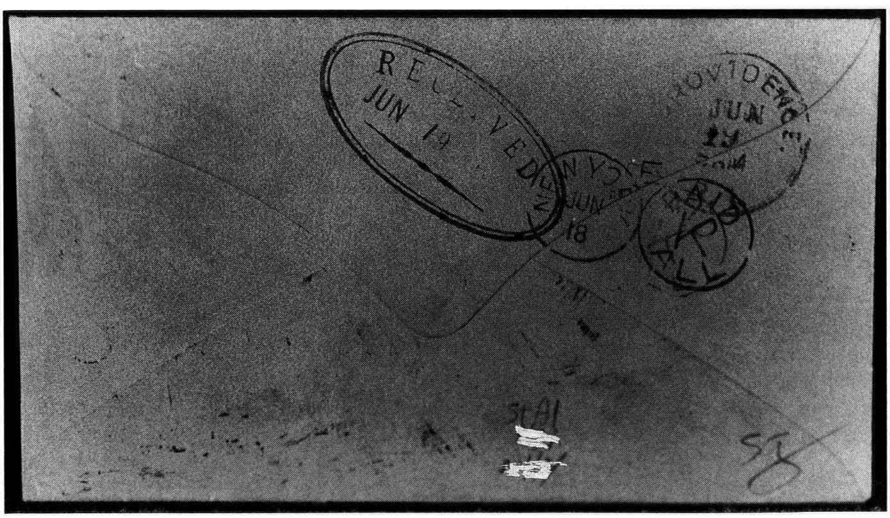


Figure 2. Reverse of Brazil to Providence cover.

Richard B. Graham believes the usage date is between 1880 and 1882 because of the New York hourglass "PAID ALL" marking on the back. Graham points out that the stamp was canceled at the N.Y. Foreign Branch Office by an oval barred killer with a "2" in the center. This identified the clerk; similar ovals are known numbered up to "12." Dick Graham further comments that this handling of incoming mail was a precursor to the "paquetbot" markings seen later.

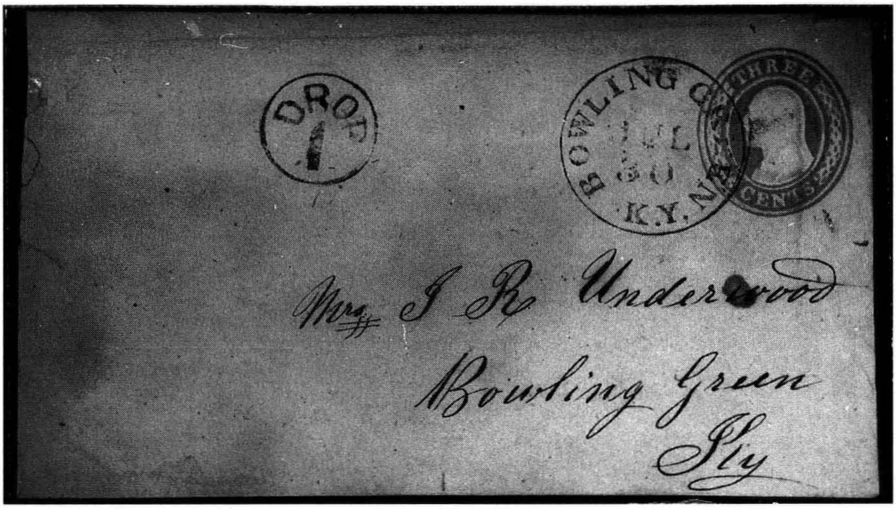


Figure 3. Bowling Green, Kentucky, "DROP 1" on 3¢ Nesbitt envelope, July 30 (year?)

Figure 3 shows a Nesbitt envelope used at Bowling Green, Kentucky, with no year date. It is not a simple problem, and the previous owner, Alan T. Atkins (deceased), although an expert on Kentucky usages, was never sure of the answer. Believe we now have one, with the help of Richard B. Graham and Mike McClung. One responder opined that this might be a Confederate usage, but since Bowling Green was occupied by C.S.A. forces in September 1861, and abandoned without a fight in February 1862, the July date means this cannot be a Confederate usage. What year was it? The cds was used before, during and after the Civil War; although the reopened P.O. also used a smaller double circle cds from April 1862 on. Dick Graham believes the year of usage is 1862. His reason is that the one cent drop letter rate was in effect until July 1863 and that the Nesbitt envelope was demonetized in the fall of 1861. He says that the one cent drop letter charge should have been paid with a stamp per an Act (Section 14) effective 27 February 1861, but apparently was paid by a penny in cash.

Mike McClung was a very late responder to this question, but provided a detailed, thorough and well-reasoned answer. He also dates it in 1862. In addition to those points noted above, he rules out usage prior to Fall 1861 because the indicia would have been valid and more than paid for postage and drop letter rate together. He further notes that there is confusion regarding when prepayment became compulsory for drop letters:

> Supposedly the Act of 1855 made prepayment a requirement for all domestic mail, but drop letters were excluded from the section on prepayment and were covered in a later paragraph. The first mention of prepayment of drop letters was in the Act of 3 March 1863, effective 1 July 1863.

PROBLEM COVERS FOR THIS ISSUE

Figures 4 and 5 show two covers with UNION EXPRESS markings. One is from Fort Davis, Texas to El Paso, Texas in 1889; and the other, with a pen canceled 3¢ Banknote stamp, is addressed to Blairsville, Pa. The submitter asks where this company operated, what the charge was, and years of operation. The Texas cover is backstamped by a receiving mark of El Paso, dated August 13, 1889. Why would this item, mailed at one Texas post office and received at another the next day, have been handled by an express company?

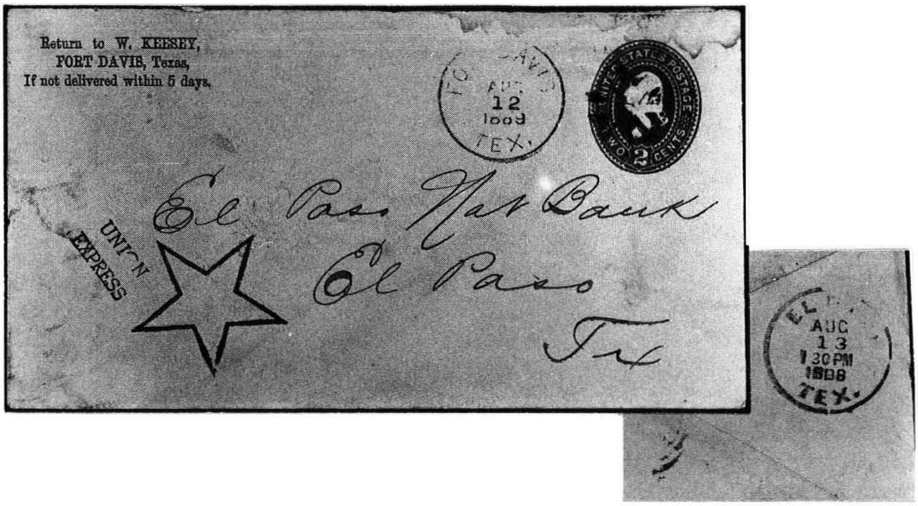


Figure 4. 1889 "UNION EXPRESS" cover, Fort Davis to El Paso, Texas.

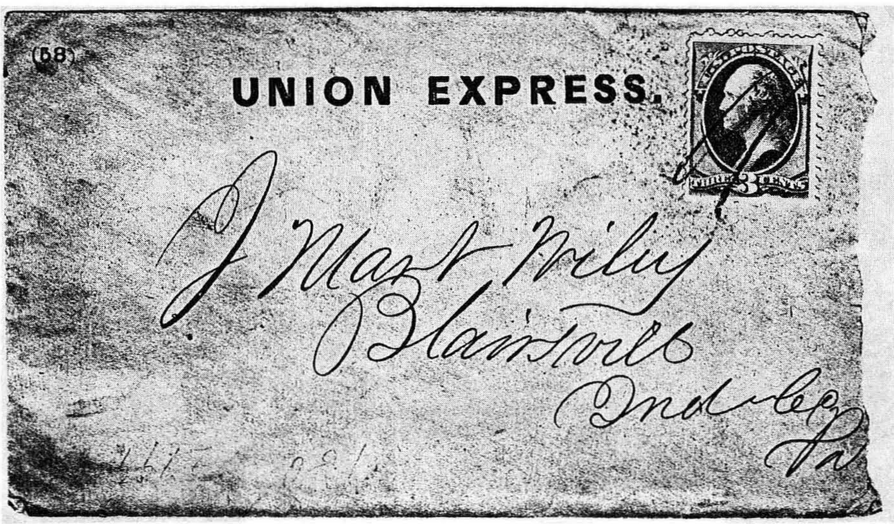


Figure 5. 3¢ Banknote on "UNION EXPRESS" cover, pen canceled, undated, to Blairsville, Pennsylvania.

Figure 6 is a Confederate cover with a strip of two plus three of C.S.A. 2¢ Scott #8 canceled with two strikes of the cds of Alexandria, La. Figure 7 shows a closeup of the strip. The cds is in vibrant red. The cover is marked "X Shenfield" on the front and "Fox 10/59" on the back, both in pencil, and also on the back is "answered" in ink. What is noteworthy about this cover?

Please send your answers, comments, and new submittals within two weeks to P.O. Box or FAX to 513-563-6287. □

Figure 6. Confederate cover, Alexandria, Louisiana, with (2+3)x2¢ Scott #8.

Figure 7. Enlargement of (2+3)x2¢ C.S.A. #8 from Alexandria, Louisiana, cover.

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