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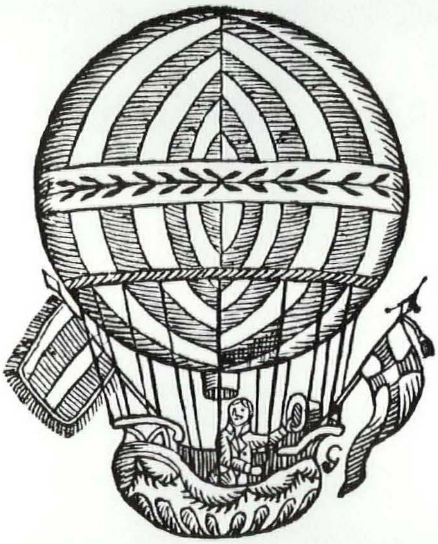

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IN THIS ISSUE

THE PRESTAMP & STAMPLESS PERIOD
FRANK MANDEL, Editor

HANDSTAMPED MULTIPLE RATE MARKINGS—THE CHICAGO "18"

FRANK MANDEL

Most collectors of postal markings of the stampless period eventually become familiar with manuscript and handstamped markings which represent multiples of the common or single domestic letter rates. With manuscript markings (and before 1845 nearly all ratings were done with pen markings), postmasters had complete discretion and flexibility—they could and did write out the double, treble and higher multiples as required.

When the rate structures were simplified on July 1, 1845, some postmasters acquired handstamps for multiple rates. The double 5¢ rate was automatically covered by the common "10" handstamps (single rate over 300 miles), but one also finds handstamped "20" rates, the double 10¢ and quadruple 5¢ rates, for use at some of the larger or busier offices.

On and after July 1, 1851, there was a proliferation of handstamps covering the double rate on prepaid letters (6¢); they are fairly easy to find even from smaller offices. Until April 1855, these handstamps also served to rate single prepaid letters to and from the West Coast. Also, by turning some of them *upside down* they also rated treble rate prepaid letters at 9¢. During the same period, unpaid double letters could be rated with 10¢ handstamps, some held over from the 1845-51 period, and these same handstamps could serve to rate single unpaid letters to and from the West Coast (and after April 1855, all single letters traveling between east and west), as well as letters to Canada, Cuba and several other common foreign destinations.

From July 1, 1845, multiple rates were determined by weight, progressing by one-half ounce intervals, so specialized handstamps above the double rate, covering weights over one ounce, are increasingly less common—the amount of mail to justify the creation of special handstamps for these higher multiples did not exist, and it was probably easy enough to write out the required amount in manuscript.

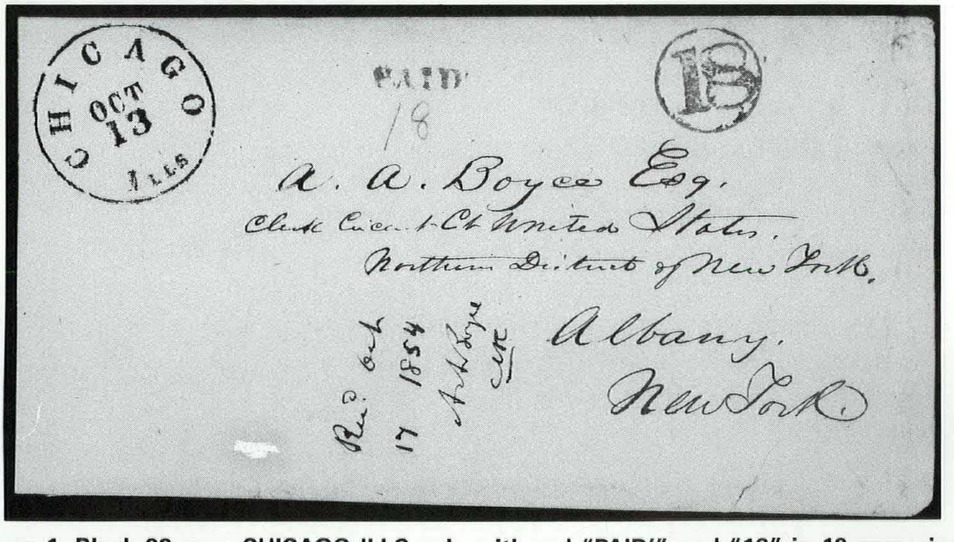

Figure 1. Black 32 mm. CHICAGO ILLS. cds with red "PAID'" and "18" in 19 mm. circle, also rated "18" in pencil below "PAID," on Oct. 13, 1854, slightly refolded "courthouse cover" to Albany, N.Y.; docketing refers to enclosed deposition. "18" represents a sextuple (6x3¢) multiple rate, a most unusual handstamp. (Photo courtesy of David L. Jarrett)

One occasionally finds an old handstamp created for another purpose, such as a 40¢ "California" handstamp of the 1849-51 period rating an unpaid octuple (8x5¢) letter of the 1851-55 period. Also, and even more unusual, a foreign mail handstamp reflecting a treaty rate might be enlisted into domestic service, so that a 24¢ rate handstamp usually found on mail to England is instead found on an octuple (8x3¢) prepaid letter.

Most often, the covers showing these higher multiples are in a larger format, such as "legal sized" folded letters or envelopes, since they were bulky and held heavier contents. Many of the surviving examples are "courthouse covers," which contained legal papers, depositions, interrogatories, and so forth. This is one of the areas where the activities of lawyers truly can be appreciated.

Figure 1 illustrates an unusual multiple rate handstamp. Chicago, Illinois, was by this time a large and important office. Even so, it is difficult to imagine that its volume of sextuple (6x3¢) letters covering weights from 2½ to 3 ounces was great enough to warrant a special handstamp for that rate. This marking is, in fact, quite scarce. The only other rate of the period it might have accommodated was the treble 6¢ prepaid rate to the West Coast. This 1854 use also predates Chicago's designation as a foreign exchange office (Dec. 1859), and "18" is not, to my knowledge, a foreign "through" rate to any common foreign destination. Chicago did use an integral "Paid 18" credit marking on prepaid French treaty mail, but not until after April 1, 1861.

Yet here we have it. I would be interested in seeing and reporting other such unusual handstamps. □

THE WAR AGAINST THE PRIVATE EXPRESSES: AN EXAMINATION OF THE POST OFFICE'S MONOPOLY POWER

(Continued from *Chronicle* 161:22)

The "late Congress," as we have seen, acting pursuant to the Articles of Confederation, clearly established a postal monopoly. It is unlikely that the Members of the *first Congress under the Constitution* would have misconstrued the intent of its immediate predecessors on this point; nor is there any evidence to suggest that the first Members *intentionally* disregarded the prior intent to have a monopoly.

In examining the Establishment Clause of the Constitution, one of the first things we notice is that the Framers eliminated the phrase "sole and exclusive," which had appeared in the Articles of Confederation. This omission naturally promotes the question whether Congress, in framing the new Charter and omitting the phrase, ever intended to give Congress a monopoly. In constitutional law terms, we would frame this issue to ask whether under the power granted to Congress by the Establishment Clause, it was ***necessary and proper*** for Congress to have a monopoly over the mails in order to fulfill the mandate of the grant. This inquiry occurs because of Article I, §8, Cl. 18 of the Constitution which provides, in pertinent part, that

> [Congress shall have the power] ... To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers.

One could readily argue, without embarrassment, that it is hardly *necessary* to prohibit private citizens and businesses from carrying letters in order for Congress to be able to construct and operate postal facilities, or itself to carry the mail. Yet the few courts that have considered the question of the monopoly power have readily assumed this premise, without analysis, and have affirmed the constitutionality of the monopoly power.[52]

If we are to make a case for upholding the constitutionality of the monopoly, it would seem that its rationale would have to rest in the history of the British and colonial postal systems, of which the government monopoly had always been an integral feature. As we discussed earlier, there is no convincing evidence one way or the other from the debates at the Constitutional Convention (or from other contemporary sources) of the original intent of the Framers. But if we accept this history-based rationale, we must then also examine the arguments that were launched against the monopoly power, particularly in the nineteenth century when the war against the private carriers was being vigorously waged by the government. Thereafter, whether or not the dissidents have persuaded us, we *must accept* that the *government acted as if* the constitutionality of the power was unquestionable. We will therefore then examine in Part III of this article the *scope that the power was given* by Congress when it enacted postal legislation to implement the monopoly.

C. The Case *Against* the Constitutionality of the Monopoly Power

There are few significant writings challenging the constitutional basis of the monopoly power. In the twentieth century, the writers who have examined the question, when read closely, really assume that the constitutional issue has been settled favorably on

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[52]See Section III, below, for a discussion of the narrow role of the courts in *testing* the monopoly of power.

behalf of the monopoly power, but have questioned the wisdom of, or the need for, exercising the power.[53] In the nineteenth century, I am aware of only two published challenges that today seem worth examining.

Lysander Spooner (the founder and operator of American Letter Mail Company) published a monograph in 1844 called *The Unconstitutionality of the Laws of Congress Prohibiting Private Mails.* The other writing challenging the monopoly was published in 1849 in *The Monthly Law Reporter.* Neither tract refuted the history-based rationale offered in Part II.B of this article; rather, both relied on arguments grounded in vague theories of natural law, with an occasional foray into history and constitutional interpretation.

Spooner's monograph offers twenty-eight arguments, each individually numbered, but all loosely grouped into four, often overlapping, categories: historic, philosophic, economic and constitutional interpretation.[54] Spooner also attempted to construct his version of the defense that the Postmaster General *would have made* of the monopoly power if the Postmaster General had been called upon to defend it. Spooner, having once established this straw man, goes on to refute the Postmaster General's reasoning.

The arguments in the monograph that are based on Spooner's perception of the history of the monopoly power can be summarized this way: In the past, governments assumed a monopoly over the transmission of mail because they were despotic. They needed to control the flow of information. Such an origin, he wrote, would have no place in a republic. (#11)[55] Moreover, while it might be said that an exclusive authority to establish the post office is a *prerogative of sovereignty,* and, therefore, a prerogative of government,

> *our governments have no prerogatives of sovereignty,* except such as are granted to them by our constitutions ... [and] these prerogatives are limited by the terms of the grants, without any regard to the extent of similar prerogatives under monarchical or despotic governments. (#27)

When the Congress created the Articles of Confederation, Spooner wrote, it included the words *"sole and exclusive"* in describing Congress' power over the mails. However, when Congress adopted the Constitution, it omitted this phrase, reducing the authority of Congress to a simple power, not an exclusive one. This clearly showed that the Framers did not intend to give the *Congress of the Constitution* the *same exclusive power* that the Framers had given to the *Congress under the Articles of Confederation.* (#19)

Spooner's historical view naturally depended upon his philosophic orientation.[56] In this regard, Spooner believed in the natural law compact thought to exist between a government and its governed, as explained by John Locke. Spooner wrote that

> The power granted to Congress, on the subject of the mails, is both in its *terms,* and in its *nature, additional to,* not destructive of, the pre-existing rights of the State, and the natural rights of the people. (#7) [Emphasis in original]

He went on to say that "in matters of government, the people are principals, and the government mere agents." It is only as the agent and servant of the people that Congress can establish the post office. (#8) He then added,

> If there were any doubt as to the legal construction of the authority given to Congress, that doubt would have to be decided in favor of the largest liberty, and the natural

[53]See, for example, Miller, "End the Postal Monopoly," *The Cato Journal*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (Spring/Summer 1985), p. 149ff.

[54]While Spooner made twenty-eight arguments, he began his monograph by stating, "Of the following propositions, almost any one of them is sufficient, I apprehend, to prove the unconstitutionality of all laws prohibiting private mails."

[55]The numbers in parentheses correspond to numbered arguments in Spooner's tract.

[56]Obviously, too, his view was influenced by his desire not to be put out of business by Act of Congress, as he would be in 1845.

rights of individuals, because our governments ... profess to be founded on the acknowledgment of men's natural rights, and to be designed to secure them; and anything ambiguous must be decided in conformity with this principle. (#10)

Spooner's monograph contains only three arguments denying the constitutionality of the monopoly power based on economic reasoning. He wrote that it could not have been necessary to prohibit competition to obtain funds for establishing the mail because Congress, to carry out this power (as well as other authorized powers), was authorized, *"if necessary,"* to collect taxes, imposts, and duties, etc. This method of raising funds, he asserted, was the only *compulsory* method mentioned in the Constitution for providing financial support to any department of government. Furthermore, Spooner wrote, Congress "is under no more constitutional constraint to make the post-office support itself, than [it is] to make the army, the navy, the Judiciary, or the Executive Branch support itself." [*sic*] (#5) Moreover, he declared, merely because Congress *has the power to establish* forts, arsenals and lighthouses *does not require* that the forts, arsenals and lighthouses be self-supporting.[57] (#18) Spooner then sharpened his economic based attack:

> If Congress can restrain individuals from carrying letters on the ground that the *revenues* of the post office are diminished thereby, they [*sic*] may, by the same rule, prohibit any other labor that tends to diminish the revenues derived from any other particular source. [Congress] may, for instance, forbid the manufacture, at home, of articles that come in competition with articles imported, on the ground that such home manufactures diminish the revenues from imports. (#16)[58]

While Spooner's history and economic based arguments have superficial appeal, the core of his reasoning is found in Spooner's understanding of Constitutional interpretation, and his perception of the meaning of the words and phrases contained in that instrument. Spooner's view of Constitutional construction appears to have rested on his reading of documents relevant to the Founders' original intent in drafting the Constitution. On this basis, Spooner declared that the *conditions for finding the existence of the grant of an exclusive power under the Constitution were set forth by Hamilton and Madison in the Federalist Papers.*[59] Moreover, he asserted, the courts have always followed these conditions *when testing the exclusivity of a power* in the Constitution. Thus, he wrote that

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[57]This seems to beg the essential Constitutional question: *Does* Congress *have* the monopoly power, not, as Spooner appears to argue, *must Congress exercise* the monopoly power, assuming that it is vested with it?

[58]In fact, one of the two courts that considered the government's monopoly power under the Act of 1825 based its decision upholding the Act on just such revenue raising grounds. In *United States v. Hall*, 26 F.Cas.75 (No.15,281)(ED pa. 1844), the Court said,

> That the intention of the legislature in passing [this Act] was to prevent competition with the government on any of the mail routes, cannot be denied; some of the routes are profitable, and produce a revenue to the post-office department; but others are a burden, and exhaust this profit on their support. If the most profitable routes are to be occupied by private individuals or companies, the consequence must be that the remote routes, although of equal importance to those interested in them, must be abandoned, or supported from the treasury of the United States; which is well known to be contrary to the general policy of the government.

[59]Although I have not recently reread the *Federalist Papers* in their entirety, I was unable to find the source of Spooner's contention when I looked for it.

> *none* of the powers granted to Congress are held by them exclusively, except in these three cases [as set forth in the *Federalist Papers*]:... *Where an exclusive authority is, in express terms, granted to the union...*[60] or,... *where a particular authority is granted to the union, and the exercise of a like authority is prohibited to the states...*[61] or,... *where an authority is granted to the union, with which a similar authority in the states would be utterly incompatible.* (#28)[62]

Tested by these conditions, Spooner concluded, the power "to establish post offices and post roads" has no claim to be considered an exclusive power. Moreover, he wrote, it is not coincidental that the power of taxation was granted to Congress *in precisely the same terms* as the power to establish post offices and post roads. Yet no one would claim that the power to collect taxes is exclusive to Congress. If the power of taxation is not exclusive, he concluded, then the power to establish post offices is not exclusive, for both powers *are identical in their grants:*

> *The Congress shall have the power* ... to lay taxes ... to establish post offices and post roads... etc...

Neither power is expressed in exclusive terms; neither is prohibited to the states; nor is there any incompatibility between the exercise of concurrent taxing and postal powers by the federal and state governments. (#28)

Spooner began his exercise in Constitutional construction by quoting the Establishment Clause. He then declared that

> These words contain the whole grant, and therefore express the extent of the authority granted to Congress. *They define the power,* and the power is limited by the definition. The power of Congress, then, is simply "to establish post-offices and post roads," of *their own* — not to interfere with those established by others. (#1) [Emphasis in original]

The Constitution, he wrote, does not, by its terms, by necessity or by implication, prohibit the establishment of mails by others. (#2) Nor does the Constitution, by its terms, of necessity or by implication, express any surrender by the People or the states "of their own natural rights to establish mails, post-offices or post roads at pleasure." (#3) The simple grant of authority, Spooner declared, whether given to an individual or given to a government

> to do a particular act, gives the grantee no authority to forbid others to do acts of the same kind ... unless the acts of others would be incompatible, or in conflict, or collision with the act he is authorized to do. (#4)

In Spooner's view, mere competition and rivalry do not amount to conflict, collision or incompatibility. (#4)

Spooner acknowledged the power of Congress to make all laws that are necessary and proper for carrying into execution its power to establish post offices and post roads. But, he argued, this doctrine requires that all such laws, *to be constitutional,* must be "...a direct, positive, affirmative step in *actual* 'execution' of their own power. It must, in some way, contribute, *affirmatively,* to the establishment of *their own mails.*" (#4) [Emphasis in original]

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[60]Such as the grant of the exclusive power to legislate over the seat of government, set forth in Article I, Sec. 8, Cl.17.

[61]For example, the *grant* to Congress to coin money, and the *express collateral prohibition* that "no state shall coin money." Article I, Secs. 8 & 9, Cls. 5 & 10, respectively.

[62]For example, the right to conduct foreign policy. Art.II, Sec.2, Cl.2.

Spooner concluded,

> But the suppression of private mails is not an act at all in "execution" of the power… If Congress were to suppress all private mails, [it] would not thereby have done the first act in "execution" of the power given [to Congress] by the [Constitution] to establish mails. The entire work of executing [Congress'] power of establishing mails, would still remain to be done. (#4)

Again taking up the theme that mere competition would not be sufficient to create an exclusive power in Congress, Spooner declared that the power to establish post offices and post roads, like the power given to Congress *to borrow money*, is not an exclusive one. Although, he wrote, Congress could probably borrow money *more advantageously if the same power were prohibited to the states,* Congress cannot suppress the states' right to borrow money merely because of the increased cost to the government that results from competition for a finite quantity of funds. (#6) Moreover, he wrote, if the Framers had intended the postal power of Congress to be exclusive,

> [they] would have *required,* and not merely *permitted,* Congress to establish [the mails]—so that the people might be sure of having mails. But now Congress [is] no more *obliged* to establish mails, than [it is] to declare war. And in case [Congress] should neglect or refuse to establish [the posts], people could have no mails, unless individuals or the states have now the right of establishing them. (#22) [Emphasis in original]

Lastly, in his attempt to persuade through constitutional interpretation, Spooner wrote that Article I, Section 10 of the Constitution enumerates the acts which are prohibited to the states. He cited the obvious examples—coining money, conducting foreign policy, emitting bills of credit, passing *ex post facto* laws, laying any imposts or duties on imports and exports. Spooner then correctly noted that *there is no prohibition against the states establishing the mails.* His conclusion, therefore, was ineluctable, from his point of view: "The [Constitution] did not intend to prohibit [the states or the People from operating their own posts]." (#20)

A second challenge worth noting to the constitutionality of the monopoly power appeared in *The Monthly Law Reporter* in 1849, in an article called "The Post-Office Monopoly."[63] Much of this article is a restatement of or a direct expropriation from Spooner's monograph. But the article also traces in succinct narrative (and interpretation) the relevant postal statutes that preceded the Act of March 3, 1845, thoughtfully examining each statute in an attempt to discern some basis for the exclusive nature of the postal power. The article concluded that no such basis exists, either in the language of the Constitution itself or implicit in the statutes enacted pursuant to it.

The article next addressed the question whether a federal postal monopoly is necessary, and concluded that it is not. Rather, it stated, the monopoly had been tacitly accepted by the states and acquiesced in by the People because no one previously had any interest in disputing the power. That is,

> [at] the time of the adoption of the [Constitution], a postal system such as had existed under the [Confederacy], was thought necessary for the *accommodation* of the public. In the then unsettled state of the country, private enterprise could accomplish but little in comparison with the government, and consequently,… the postal system of the [Confederacy] was adopted, although many of its prominent characteristics were at variance with the new [Constitution]. [Emphasis in original]

The article then asserts that,

[63] Vol. I, No. IX (New Series), January 1849, p. 385ff.

it is said that a postal system is worthless without a monopoly; that competition would be fatal to it; that although the government can afford to carry letters between Boston and New York for five cents, [it] cannot afford to take them from Eastport to San Francisco for ten; and that unless the losses on the "long postages" can be made up out of the profits of the "short postages," the department will become bankrupt. Suppose it does? Do such considerations affect the constitutional question? Does the [Constitution] confer the power to *raise a revenue* east of the Alleghanies to support the post-offices west of the same range? [Emphasis in original]

The author next considered whether the government's right to raise revenue necessarily implies the right to raise funds through the Post Office, and concludes that it does not. The justification for this conclusion was found in the writer's statement that the only sources mentioned in the Constitution for raising revenue appear in the grant of the power of taxation and the power to collect duties on imports and exports. Therefore, he decided, not only is the postal monopoly power *not implied by the grant of power,* but it is *not necessary,* since the power to raise funds is provided elsewhere in the Constitution.

D. Lysander Spooner's *Straw Man*

Spooner, in his monograph, also set forth his version of a defense of the monopoly power that might have been offered by the Postmaster General. The arguments, hypothetically offered by the Postmaster General, were generally two:

1. The postal grant is found in the same Clause and is expressed in the same words *as the exclusive grants of power* to coin money, to regulate commerce, to declare war, etc.

Spooner noted that nearly all of the powers granted Congress are included in the same Section, but that no one would argue that therefore they are all exclusive powers. As examples he cited the power of taxation and the authority to borrow money, both of which are also found in the same Section of Article I, and both of which are similarly expressed. Spooner also commented that the Postmaster General's argument failed to recognize that the *exclusive nature of his examples* (e.g., the power to coin money) arose from *express prohibitions contained elsewhere in the Constitution.* Spooner gave as an example the prohibition that *"no State shall coin money."* But for these express prohibitions, Spooner wrote, the states' powers would have been concurrent with that of the federal government in these areas. Otherwise, he inquired, why were such prohibitions inserted into the Constitution?

2. The Postmaster General says that doubt as to the exclusiveness of the power must vanish upon reference to the Tenth Article of the Amendments to the Constitution. This declares that *"The powers not delegated to the United States by the constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people."* The power to establish the mails *is* plainly and distinctly *delegated* to the United States. It is, therefore, not a power reserved to the states or the People.

Spooner called this argument "far-fetched and unnatural," noting that this language was part of the first ten Amendments, *not part of the original Constitution.* Moreover, he wrote, the purpose of the ten Amendments was not to enlarge upon the power of the federal government; these Amendments were adopted for the avowed purpose of quieting the fears of those who thought that too much power had been given to the government. Not one of the amendments, he added, granted any new power to Congress or enlarged any of the powers that originally had been given to Congress. Rather, each of the ten Amendments purported either to prohibit Congress from enlarging its powers beyond the original grant, or secured some principle of civil liberty against all pretenses of power by Congress. The Amendment noted by the Postmaster General, Spooner wrote, was obviously designed as a prohibition upon the enlargement of any power previously allowed to Congress.

(to be continued)

DID YOU EVER STOP TO THINK ABOUT . . .

ROBERT B. MEYERSBURG

. . . how all of those local posts came into being in the early years? In my carrier presentations I called their founders "entrepreneurs," but I could never uncover any background material to let me know more about the whys and hows. Here is a little meat to flesh out the bones.

New York May 29, 1848

My dear brother,

I do believe that you are aware that the Government some years since established a branch Post Office at Chatham Square which after a while was discontinued but has been kept open since that time by an individual.

Another office has been opened recently for the reception and delivery of letters and papers in Broadway corner of Canal St. It has appeared to me that an office for this purpose located in Broadway in the vicinity of the N.Y. Hotel would be more extensively patronised than either of the above named, and as Horace Goodwin is seeking some employment for the support of his family I suggested to him that I was of opinion that if he was to open an office somewhere in this vicinity perhaps he might receive sufficient patronage to make it an object. But after having the subject under consideration for several days he thinks as his family depends on his exertions for their daily support he should not dare to make the experiment and has therefore given it up. I have been thinking that perhaps you might be inclined to undertake an enterprise of this kind yourself. I cannot doubt that several hundred Dollars a year might be made over and above the incidental expenses. It would certainly be a great recommendation to this neighborhood to have an office of this kind established. The plan would be, in the first place to get an order from all those who felt disposed to patronise the enterprise on the Post Master to deliver their letters and papers to the person who opens the office.

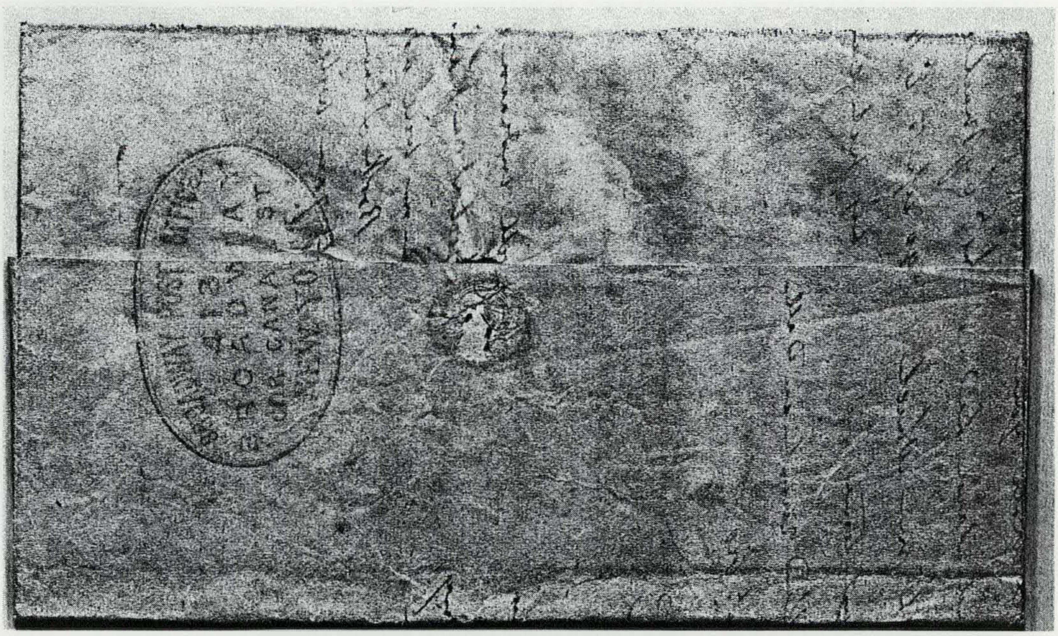
The letters and papers to be received by him as soon as they are assorted after the arrival of the morning and afternoon mails, and brought immediately to the office in Broadway. In this way letters may be received about two hours earlier than by the carriers for Penny Posts and besides, those which come by the Southern mail might be delivered about 3 oclock P.M. whereas by the present method they would not be delivered until half past 10 to 11 oclock the next day. The office to be kept open from 7 or 8 oclock A.M. till say 9 oclock P.M. All letters deposited in the office assigned for the mails to be conveyed to the Post Office in time to prevent their lying over. In short the plan would be to afford every accomodation and facility to those who patronised the enterprise which could be afforded if the Post Office was located in the immediate vicinity of the N.Y. Hotel. The compensation would be two cents for every letter received and delivered whether from the P.O. or sent to the P.O. It does appear to me that the advantages of an establishment of this kind would be so great, that if well conducted, it could not fail to be patronised to considerable extent in the outset, and constantly increase afterwards and finally pay the person well who might undertake it, but to him it would be another close confinement. It would be necessary to incur an expense of \$150 to \$200 Dollars for rent, and perhaps 50 to 100 Dollars for filling up an office in a suitable manner, and also from 50 to 100 Dollars a year for a competent boy. I have spoken to a number of my acquaintances in relation to this matter, Mr. Wolfe among the rest, and all who are not engaged in active business downtown seem to feel very desirous that an arrangement of this kind should be carried into effect, with the exception of one or two who prefer going to the P.O. downtown for exercise. Mr. Abbott and Mrs. Okill are decidedly in favor of it. There is now in this neighborhood, besides the N.Y. Hotel, Julians Hotel, the Bond St. House, Mrs. Cardles and Mrs. Seatons boarding houses, besides numerous others not far off. Then there is the University, Theological Seminary, and in the winter months the Medical College at the Stuyvesant Institute, all

of which would aid the concern more or less. I think too that some patronage might be obtained as high up as Union Square. It is impossible to say what amount of revenue might be derived from such an enterprise but I should not be disappointed if it should nett a Thousand Dollars a year over and above the incidental expenses for the first year and increase afterwards if there should be no rival establishments got up, and it should not be found necessary to reduce the compensation from 2 to 1 cents. At the new Post Office on the corner of Broadway and Canal St. only one cent is charged for each letter whether recd. from or sent to the P.O. My impression is that two cents would not be objected to unless with some of the large schools. One of the Abbott schools has two hundred scholars. They have an arrangement at present with a carrier who calls every day at 12 oclock and delivers the letters from the P.O. and at the same time receives what they have to send to the P.O. and he charges but one cent for every letter. I do not see why an undertaking of this kind should not be reputable, and I know nothing which would be connected with it which could be unpleasant except the confinement.
I would like to have you write me immediately, and say how the matter strikes your mind, and whether you think it would be desirable on your part to undertake such an enterprise. You can decide more definitely after further reflection. I do not wish to influence you, but which ever way you may decide, to have it altogether voluntary on your part, I will add this much that I cannot think there would be any risk for you to undertake it, so far as regards remuneration.

Your affec. bro.

E. Goodwin

With admirable optimism and foresight, E. Goodwin arranged to have this letter collected for the mails and forwarded therein to Mr. Lee Goodwin in East Hartford, Connecticut, by the



AN EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION

The article which is featured in this 1847 Section represents an important first for this journal. It is the first time that a discovery of a catalogue-listable plate variety on either denomination of the 1847 issue has been reported in the *Chronicle*.

Such an event may have been anticipated far earlier since the *Chronicle* has for over three decades been the only philatelic periodical whose scope was specifically intended to cover the 1847 issue. The fact that a catalogue-listable report has not occurred sooner may be explained in part by the fact that most 5¢ 1847 plate varieties had been reported before the *Chronicle* expanded its coverage, and the contents of the 10¢ plate had been even more thoroughly described by Elliott Perry in the *Collectors Club Philatelist*.

However, it cannot be reasonably denied that another factor which operated to delay a discovery and report such as this one has been the narrow focus on postal history which has monopolized scholarly attention in the *Chronicle* for the better part of four decades, and which, as a result, has chilled interest in the traditional philatelic investigation of plate varieties. This point has been made before. However, it is so dramatically underscored by the discovery now being announced that it merits restatement here, because the loss to the collecting community is so clearly demonstrated. If plate study had been given its fair share of scholarly attention during this period, the discovery of the "T" crack doubtless would have been made far sooner. However, with plate study disparaged and neglected, collectors of U.S. classics have, for all these years, been denied the excitement of searching for a "T" crack, and the pleasure of discovery of examples of this important variety. Surely other varieties of equal and possibly greater importance remain to be discovered on the uncharted 5¢ plate.

With the discovery of the "T" crack serving as a powerful example of the benefits which may be gained from traditional plate study, hopefully this aspect of classic U.S. philately will not be denied its fair share of scholarly attention in the future.

Though at first blush it may seem paradoxical to say this, I take particular pride in the fact that this discovery has been made by someone else, Wade Saadi, and that my role in this report has been merely to serve as an editor. However, this position is consistent with the wish I have repeatedly expressed in the past: that my editorship of this section would encourage contributions by others, rather than having this section serve solely as my bully pulpit. The Classics Society was founded on a fundamental premise of shared scholarship, and I believe its journal should reflect this principle. It is therefore most satisfying to note that in the relatively brief period of the revival of the 1847 section, Wade Saadi has become the third non-editor whose work has been published. I encourage others in the classic U.S. philatelic community to come forward. The three contributors thus far make up a short but distinguished list. Hopefully, as it grows, membership on this list will be regarded as a badge of high honor in philately.

It is important to note that Wade Saadi is not solely an 1847 specialist, but, to the contrary, maintains a keen interest in the full panoply of early U.S. classics. He is well known and respected in the philatelic community for his scholarly approach to collecting. This brief introduction should carry the message to readers that they need not be 1847 specialists to join the ranks of authors published in this section. The only requirement is that there be something important to say. Mr. Saadi's discovery meets that requirement easily.

□

THE DISCOVERY OF A PLATE CRACK ON THE 5¢ STAMP OF 1847

©1994 WADE E. SAADI[1]

After considerable investigation and analysis, I have concluded that I have discovered a plate crack on the 5¢ 1847 issue. No such variety has been reported previously on this stamp in the almost 150 years of its existence.[2]

The crack consists of a prominent line of color separating the top left part of the "T" of "POST" from the rest of the "T," almost as if the top left part of the "T" were broken off the stem. The line of ink that crosses the "T" extends slightly upward into the background shading, crossing the top frame line. As well, it extends downward to the colorless oval bordering the vignette. These extensions appear as wispy, almost fragmented lines of color. I will refer to the variety as the "T" Crack (Figures 1 & 2).

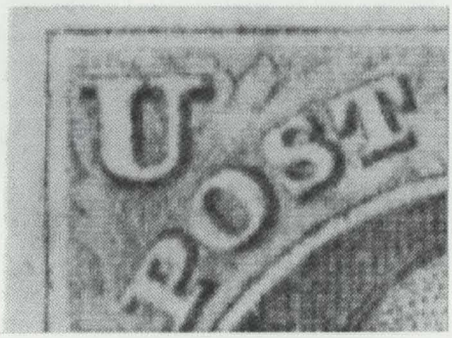


Figure 1. Regular "T"

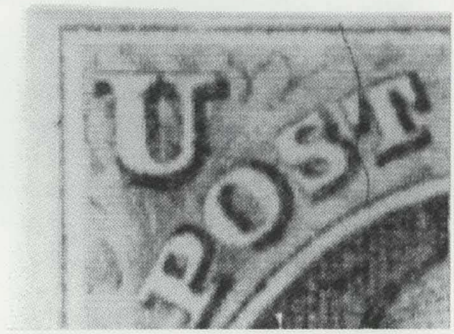


Figure 2. Plate Crack "T" (enhanced)

I. A Plate or Printing Variety?

The variety was first noticed on a 5¢ 1847 with a blue "5" cancel (Reference #1). It is in the pale red brown shade, on piece, and the cancellation is from Philadelphia. It appears to belong to the second of five deliveries,[3] descriptions of which will be discussed later.

Since no such variety had been reported before, I thought this might be a *printing* variety; perhaps a foreign object such as a tiny thread between the plate and the paper. As is well known, *printing* varieties normally exist as one of a kind; in rare cases examples on some issues exist which appear similar to other such examples, although not exactly the

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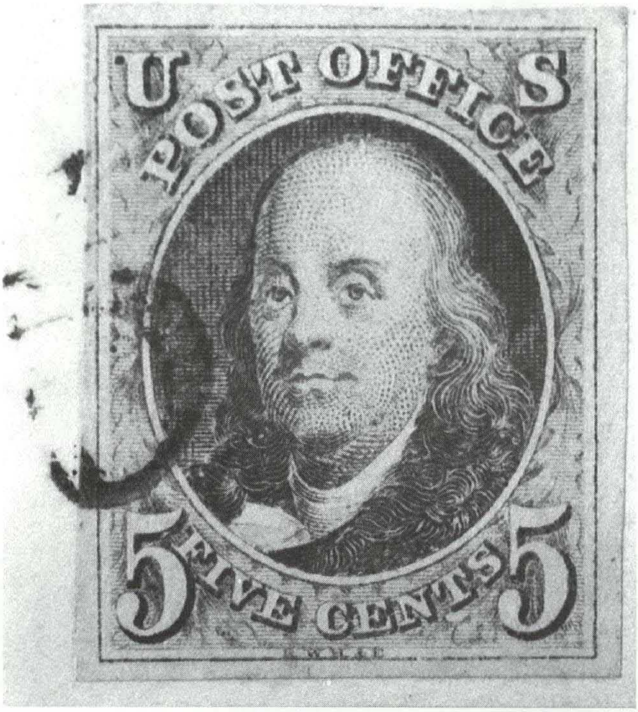
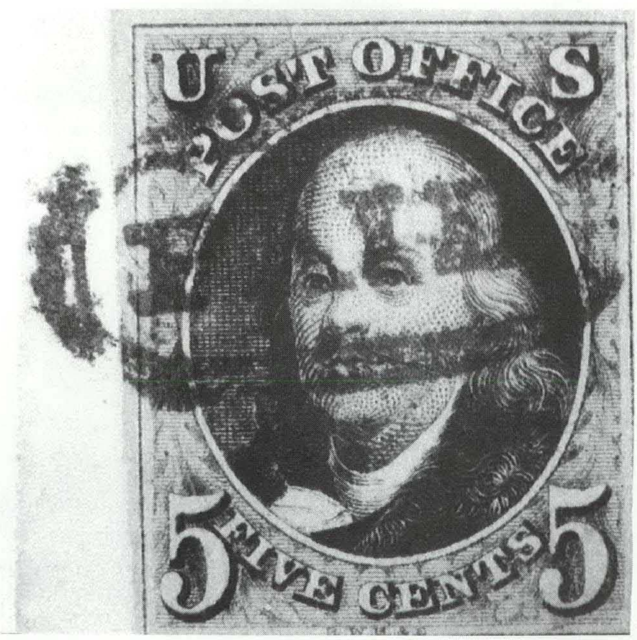
[1]Special thanks to those who actively helped, especially Jerome S. Wagshal for his mentoring, editorial commentary and support. Also, the Philatelic Foundation—particularly William T. Crowe and Elizabeth C. Pope.

[2]About one week after finding the confirming copies, I announced the discovery at the Collectors Club, on the evening of December 1, 1993, as part of a talk I was giving on the 5¢ and 10¢ Issues of 1847. I gave a brief synopsis of the variety and showed color slides of the first two examples identified.

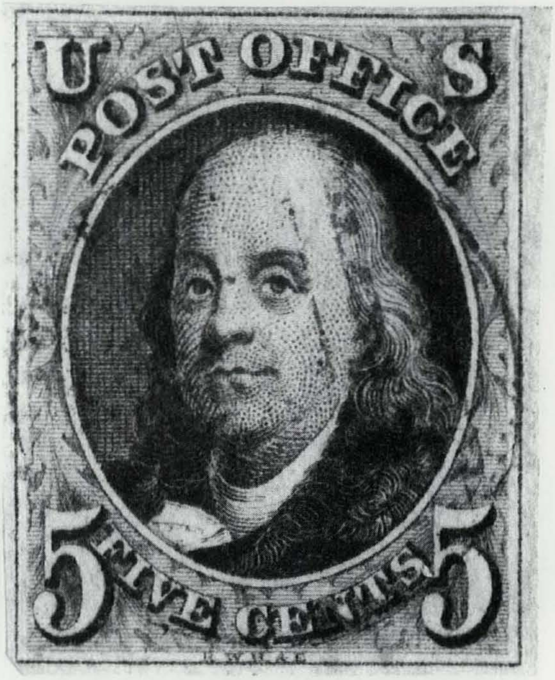
[3]As used here, "delivery" means the stamps which were prepared to meet one of the five orders, whether they were produced in one or several printing runs. It is reasonable to assume that the sheets of stamps for each of the five deliveries were printed shortly before the deliveries were made. However, no specific correlation between "printings" and "deliveries" has been established, and while that is a most fascinating and challenging subject it lies outside the scope of this article. See, e.g., Calvet Hahn, "Reexamining the 1847 Colors," *Collectors Club Philatelist*, Vol. 65, No. 3 (May-June 1986), pp. 195-217; No. 4 (July-Aug. 1986), pp. 271-94); and No. 5 (Sept.-Oct. 1986), pp. 367-90.



Ref. #1



Ref. #2



Ref. #3

same. On the other hand, *plate* varieties are constant. In particular, cracks are almost exactly the same throughout the production of the stamp except for the slow changes due to plate wear or to worsening of the crack.

In an attempt to establish whether or not this was a plate variety, I searched over 300 5¢ stamps available to me, without finding another with this line. Over the next several months, I checked many more copies, still without finding a second one showing the crack.

Finally, about six months after identifying the first copy, I discovered a second, substantiating copy (Reference #2). It was on a folded address sheet, postmarked "PHILAD^{A} / OCT 23" and docketed "1847," patently from the first delivery. It was in a very dark brown (seal brown) shade with a blue "PAID" in octagonal cancel, characteristic of Philadelphia. Although this second copy was strong evidence of a plate variety, I wanted to see still more copies to provide further corroboration. However, no third copy was discovered during those six months ending in October 1993. My investigation was more successful when the photographs of the "patients" at the Philatelic Foundation were examined. The Philatelic Foundation has thousands of pictures[4] of the 5¢ 1847. By examination of this trove, six definite examples and two possible ones were found. This was proof beyond any doubt of a plate variety.

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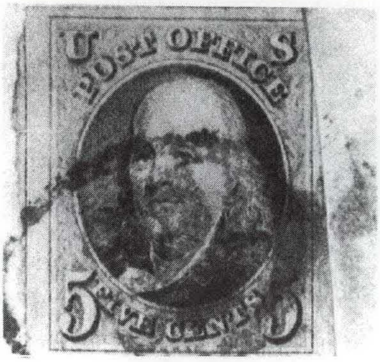
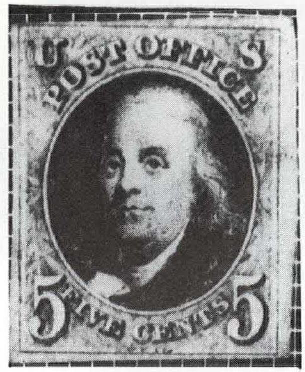
[4] The photographs at the Foundation, although invaluable, varied in their quality. Those made before 1985 were much smaller (3/4" x 1" = .75 sq. in. area) and in black and white. Later ones are over twice that size (1 1/8" x 1 1/2" = 1.6875 sq. in. area) and in color. The color, while more aesthetic, was not of any major worth to this research, except occasionally to distinguish lines of the engraving from a cancel. Although the smaller photographs do not show the detail of the larger ones and surely caused a few instances of the crack to go unnoticed by me, nonetheless, the smaller photos showed four of the six examples I found (Ref. # 5, 7, 8 & 9) and both of the possible ones (Ref. #4 and 6). Two photos in the larger format showed exemplary specimens of the plate crack (Ref. #10 and 11).



Ref. #4

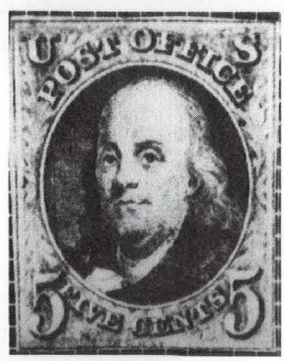


Ref. #5

Ref. #6

Ref. #7

Ref. #8



Ref. #9

Ref. #10

Ref. #11

While this article was in preparation, Jerome S. Wagshal produced yet another example of the "T" crack, which he identified after learning of the variety (Reference #3). This provided an opportunity to examine a third copy in the original, rather than merely in photographs.

II. A Plate Crack or Other Type of Plate Variety?

The irregular configuration of the line suggests a crack rather than some other type of plate variety. A scratch, for example, would be likely to be a straighter line or one having a smoother, more continuous curve. A thread on the transfer roll would create a line looking like a thread and would be more likely to show on several positions in slightly altered form, as on plate seven of the 1857 1¢ stamp, whereas the line on the 5¢ stamp appears to come from one position only. Examination of the frame lines on the known examples show their characteristics to be constant as well.[5]

However, there was some variation in the appearance of the "T" Crack among the examined *photos*. On some photos, the line started above the top frame line, through the "T" and downward to the oval medallion. Others only show in the top left part of the "T"; this characteristic is the most easily visible part of the plate crack and is always present. This diminution could be due to the quality of the photos examined or caused by plate wear. Since the three *originals* which were studied exhibited the same complete appearance, the photographs alone cannot resolve the question as to whether the crack changed during the later printings.

Here is a listing of the "T" Crack examples presently identified:

Ref. #[6]	**P.F. Cert.#**	**Probable Delivery**	**Appearance of Crack and Description**
#1	125,699	2nd	**Complete,** on piece, blue numeral "5" cancel of Philadelphia, pale red brown shade, discovery copy.
#2	250,732	1st	**Complete,** on folded address sheet, postmarked "OCT 23" and docketed "1847," blue "PAID" in octagonal cancel of Philadelphia, seal brown shade.
#3	No Cert.	2nd	**Complete,** blue closed circular grid cancel, red brown shade.
#4	20,900	3rd	**"T" only,** on folded address sheet, postmarked "NOV 20" and docketed "1849," blue "2" (drop usage) in oval with matching "BALTIMORE" cds at left, brown shade, frame line of adjacent stamp shows at left. Ex-Hart.
#5	30,168	3rd	**Partial,** cancellation removed, brown shade.
#6	65,044	4th	**"T" only,** blue 7-bar closed circular grid cancel, brown shade.
#7	87,089	2nd	**Almost complete,** horizontal pair (left stamp is the variety), blue 7-bar closed circular grid cancel, dark brown shade, slight age staining.

[5]There is a diagonal line (tick mark), about 0.1mm long, running southwest outside the left frame line, approximately 2mm from the top frame line. This mark exists on all stamps showing the variety, but a similar mark may exist on other positions.

[6]Reference numbers are included as it is the intention to maintain a census of all known copies. As new discoveries are made, their inclusion into this list will serve that end.

#8	88,789	3rd	**Partial,** blue "5" in circle cancel (probably Philadelphia), pale brown shade.
#9	122,482	4th	**"T" only,** blue cancellation, red brown shade, creases.
#10	193,764	2nd	**Complete,** red closed circular grid cancel, red brown shade, slight creases.
#11	251,467	1st	**Complete,** red New York open square grid cancel, red brown shade.

It appears from the above classification of these eleven copies that the printings of the 1st and 2nd deliveries produced the majority of **complete/almost complete** examples and the 3rd and 4th deliveries the **partial/"T" only**.[7] However, this conclusion is based largely on the examination of the Philatelic Foundation photographs, which may not show complete details.

Based on the examination of the 11 examples listed above, one could suppose that the "T" Crack is "V" shaped and shallow, running perpendicular to the surface, as opposed to diagonal and long, running close to the surface. This is suggested by the fact the crack seems to lessen in definition as the printings (deliveries) progressed. As the lines on the 5¢ plate wore and became more shallow, so did the crack. The diagrams following illustrate this point, and the related assumptions made by Ashbrook[8] and Neinken[9] about the "Big Flaw" crack on Plate No. 2 of the 1¢ 1851 (actually first printed in 1855). In both sets of diagrams, a cross section of the initial state of the plate is at left. To the right are the hypothetical stages of the plate as the wear progresses over time.

Probable Character of the 5¢ 1847 Surface Crack

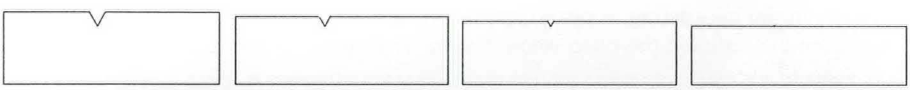


Figure 3. This crack is "V" shaped, shallow and vertical. As the plate wore, it appears the crack did not worsen, but instead gradually diminished, becoming more shallow and narrow. When the plate was acid etched before the 4th delivery, the crack may have disappeared or else printed so faintly as to make it very difficult to see.

Probable Character Of A Plate Flaw - Type Crack

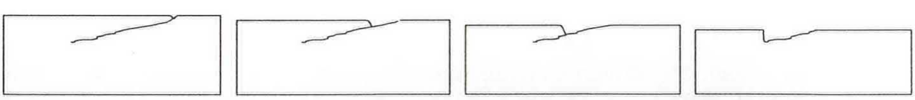


Figure 4. This crack is long and travels under the surface of the plate, fairly close to the surface. As time progressed, the plate wore and pieces cracked off, forming deeper and wider spaces in the plate for ink to gather. This type of crack gets worse with use, as the "Big Flaw" on Plate #2 of the 1¢ 1951.

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[7]It is important to remember that only three of the subjects from the preceding list were graded with the actual stamps in hand. The other eight were judged from photos of varying quality. Therefore, a certain allowance for error must be made with respect to which delivery a stamp derives from and to which degree of clarity it grades. The margin of error for both the printing and the clarity should be minor.

[8]Stanley B. Ashbrook, *The United States One Cent Stamp of 1851-1857*, H.L. Lindquist, 1938, p.194.

[9]Mortimer L. Neinken, *The United States One Cent Stamp of 1851-1861*, U.S. Philatelic Classics Society, 1972, p. 177.

I spoke to an official at the U.S. Banknote Company[10] who concurred with this plate wear analysis, albeit unfamiliar with this particular instance. Agreeing that this type of crack could diminish over time, he suggested that surface cracks can be caused by the hardening process. The operation is known as quenching, where the plate is heated and held at a high temperature, then suddenly submerged in a liquid bath, causing the temperature of the plate to plummet several hundred degrees in seconds. Such stress, while hardening the plate, can cause cracks and in extreme situations induce the plate to warp.

III. An Estimate of the Number of Surviving Copies

Having established the existence of the "T" plate crack, the next question is: How many copies were printed and how many have survived? Enough is known about the 5¢ 1847 to make a reasonable estimate. These are the relevant facts:

1) This variety appeared on the original state of the plate as one of the 200 positions. We can assume that the plate was not divided into two panes during the latter part of its use, or alternatively, that an equal number of stamps from each pane were delivered to the Post Office.
2) Only one plate was used to print the issue. However, it probably had two states, the late state having been created in all likelihood prior to the printings of the fifth delivery.
3) The plate was acid etched sometime before the 4th delivery to "enhance" the impression and to "clean" the "dirty" plate.[11] The intention was to deepen the lines of the plate, thereby allowing them to hold more ink. The lines were widened twice as much as they were deepened, since the acid ate away at the left and right sides simultaneously, as it ate away at the bottom. While this helped to strengthen medium to deep lines, it gave them a soft or fuzzy appearance.[12] Many of the extremely fine lines completely disappeared from the stamps of the 4th and 5th deliveries.
4) Wearing of the plate occurred as the printings progressed, caused by the oxide-based dyestuffs in the inks acting as abrasives. Repeated, inconsistent wiping between every impression exacerbated the plate wear. The 5¢ 1847 plate therefore deteriorated in its later years of use.
5) There were five deliveries of the issue. Quantities and dates of delivery to the Post Office were as follows:[13]

Delivery	Quantity	Delivery Date
1st	600,000	June 3, 1847
2nd	800,000	March 15, 1848
3rd	1,000,000	March 20, 1849
4th	1,000,000	February 5, 1850
5th	1,000,000	December 9, 1850

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[10]Conversation with Mr. Robert Christophersen, Executive Vice-President., U.S. Banknote Company, on March 11, 1994.

[11]The plate gave impressions belonging to the 3rd delivery which frequently are described as "dirty" and "worn." It is likely the acid bath aided in cleaning a residue of the ink from the plate, in addition to etching. Removal of the residue was necessary for the plate to hold the ink. Close examination of several examples from the 3rd delivery show the almost complete absence of foliate background lines. Yet, while fuzzy, these foliate lines reappear in the 4th and 5th deliveries. It is my opinion that these fine lines did not show on these 3rd delivery copies due to a gummy/oily substance filling the fine lines of the plate and preventing the ink from entering. Had these fine lines been worn so badly as to produce such poor copies, they could NOT have been restored by etching, as there would have been no lines left to deepen. Rather, the acid bath acted in a dual role: first, as a cleaning agent, removing particulate from the fine lines; and second, as an etching tool, deepening the medium to heavy lines.

[12]Calvet M. Hahn, "Reexamining the 1847 Colors, Part II," *Collectors Club Philatelist*, Vol. 65, No. 4 (July-August 1986), pp. 291-94.

[13]John N. Luff, *The Postage Stamps of the United States*, Scott Stamp & Coin Co., Ltd,. 1902, p. 63.

6) No copies of the crack have been attributed to the 5th delivery. The plate was likely reworked at least once, this being indicated by the rarity of the "C," "D" and "F" double transfers and their existence in only the late printings. This reworking likely involved the reentering, burnishing and recutting of certain positions, and may have caused the shallow crack to disappear. Since no example of the "T" Crack has yet been found from the 5th delivery, and most of the other extremely fine lines are absent from the stamps of that delivery, it has been eliminated from the computation.

7) Somewhere between 7 and 10 covers are estimated to exist for every 10,000 issued stamps of the 1847 issue.[14]

8) Roughly 2 to 3 times as many off-cover stamps are estimated to exist as there are covers.[15]

Based on these eight factors, I estimate that approximately 50 copies of the "T" Crack variety may survive, of which less than a third may be on cover. Here are the details of the computation: The total of the 1st through the 4th deliveries is 3,400,000, which divided by 200 equals an estimated **17,000** stamps delivered which show the crack. Assuming that 8.5 (the average of 7 and 10) covers remain for every 10,000 stamps issued, we can estimate **14** covers survive. If 2.5 (the average of 2 and 3) off-cover stamps remain for every cover, then 2.5 x 14 = **35** surviving off-cover stamps. Thus, 14 (estimated covers) + 35 (estimated off-cover) = an estimate of **49** examples remaining. I further estimate that about 7 (approximately 15%) will never be identified due to obliterating cancellations. That leaves an estimated **42** identifiable examples.

Based on the number issued for each of the 4 deliveries compared to the total of those deliveries, I would estimate 40% of the 42 copies (approximately 17) would show **complete/almost complete** characteristics of the crack (those from the first two deliveries). The Foundation photos show eight copies of varying grade, including the 2 possible candidates, which is roughly 25% of those believed to exist.

IV. The Plate Position of the "T" Crack Variety

Although the plate position of the crack has not yet been established, about one-fourth of the positions on the plate can be eliminated. Although the 5¢ 1847 issue has never been completely plated, certain positions have been identified. Using this information, the known characteristics of certain rows and the 11 copies discovered to date, the following positions can be eliminated for the reasons given. The "Reference Letter" column relates to the plate layout diagram (Figure 5).

Ref. letter	Position	Reasoning
P	1st vertical row of each pane, 1-91L & 1-91R	There is a position dot in the left trifoliate of the "T" crack copies. Stamps from these vertical rows show no position dots(s). Also, the copy on cover (Ref. #4) shows a frame line of an adjacent stamp at left, and this confirms that the crack position cannot be on the left-most row of either pane.
Q	10th vert. row of each pane, 10-100L & 10-100R	The horizontal pair (Ref. #7) shows a stamp adjacent at the right.

[14]Estimates of Elliott Perry and Creighton Hart, as cited in Jerome S. Wagshal, "The Discovery of a Fifth Major Double Transfer on the 5¢ 1847 Stamp," *Opinions V: Philatelic Expertizing—An Inside View*, The Philatelic Foundation, 1988, pp. 22-23.

[15]*Ibid.*

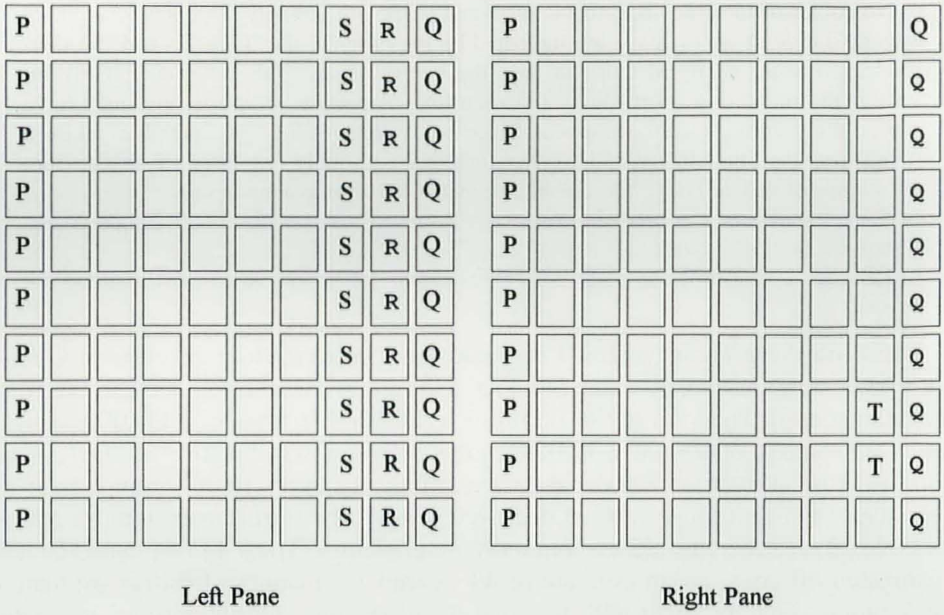

Figure 5. From this we are left with a possible 148 positions, having eliminated 52 from contention.

R	9th vertical row of left pane, 9-99L	Stamps from the early deliveries (1st-2nd) of these positions always show the "Dot in the 'S'"variety. No examples of the crack show this dot.
S	8th vertical row of left pane, 8-98L	Since the right stamp of the horizontal pair (Ref. #6), which is from the 2nd delivery, does not show the "Dot in the 'S' ," this row is also eliminated.
T	79R and 89R	Of the 5 double transfers,[16] the two which have been plated are 80R or 90R. They are Type "A" and Type "B" respectively. Since the right stamp of the horizontal pair (Ref. #6) is not a double transfer from those positions, 79R and 89R are eliminated.

As more copies are identified, the likelihood increases that the plate position of the "T" Crack can be determined and we can learn more about the nature of the crack in the later printings. I request everyone who has access to copy(ies) of the 5¢ 1847 to examine them carefully. Please send clear photos or photocopies to Wade E. Saadi, 274 Bay Ridge Parkway, Brooklyn, New York 11209. □

[16]There are six double transfers indicated in the *Scott Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps*, Types "A" through "F." However, it is this author's belief, as well as the position of other students of this issue, that the Type "E" double transfer (Mower Shift) is not a double transfer at all. What appears are plate scratches or flaws, not the consistent doubling of lines attributed to a double transfer. While this variety is extremely desirable, with less than a dozen certified copies, it seems rather to have been caused by something other than a re-entry.

QUINTESSENTIAL COVERS: PART 1

HUBERT C. SKINNER

There are covers and, then, there are covers. Many collectors are content to have an attractive example of a stamp on its original cover, solely to represent another dimension to their collecting or, perhaps, to balance and complete an album page. Others search for covers to unusual destinations, or for scarce routes and combinations of routes, or rare rates and multiple rates to enhance the significance of an exhibit of a single value or an entire issue of stamps in a comprehensive study of the subject issue. In most of these pursuits there is nothing unusual about the stamp itself or the cancellation (obliterator) other than that a fine, sound, attractive copy well-tied to cover is desired.

However, a small percentage of covers is collectible for numerous compelling reasons. Such covers are of intense interest to "hard-core" specialists and are a great privilege to own because they represent a degree of uniqueness which is more than singular—in such cases, there *are* degrees of uniquity (some covers *are* "more unique" than others!). Further, superb condition is not an essential aspect—though if an item is in flawless condition this fact considerably enhances its appeal. Recently, several examples of this *ne plus ultra* class were sold at auction to fortunate new owners when the Ishikawa Collection was dispersed. The "Beaver Cover" with first issue stamps of both the United States and Canada, the "Waukegan Cover," and the fabulous "Running Chicken" are among those treasures which are a privilege to own and hold. Of course, "high-ticket" value in six figures is not a requisite; many much more modest covers will qualify as quintessential.*

This writer intends to introduce to our readers some of these remarkable covers. Covers offered as candidates for inclusion in this category may be "nominated" by our readership: to nominate a cover, simply send us a publishable photograph together with a description of the item.

A Quintessential Cover

The first item we will consider is one acquired recently by its current owner, who has admired and lusted for this folded letter for more than thirty years. He first encountered it when reading and studying Ashbrook's classic monograph on the 1¢ stamps. It is illustrated on page 116 of Ashbrook's Volume I and in Brookman's *The 19th Century Postage Stamps of the United States* (1947 ed., Vol. I, p. 105; 1966 rev. ed., Vol. I, p. 120). Some time later (1965), it was offered at auction and, though the present owner had bid a substantial amount, he suffered the ignominious fate of being the underbidder. The cover then disappeared for more than a quarter of a century and remained in seclusion until it appeared at auction once again (May 1992). This time, the current owner was successful in acquiring the cover and has offered it to this writer for description (see Figure 1).

At first glance, the usage appears to be that of an ordinary 3¢ rate cover—the intercity rate—franked by a strip of three of the Type II 1¢ stamps of 1851. However, there is no townmark present and the strip is obliterated by four strikes of the remarkable "1" in shaded octagon struck in blue at Philadelphia (see Figure 2). This numeral marking represents the new 1¢ postage rate for drop letters and circulars (reduced rates beginning 1 July 1851—Act of 3 March 1851). As the folded letter is addressed to the Whelan firm in Philadelphia, it was received uncanceled and marked at Philadelphia as a drop letter.

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*Quintessential—of the "fifth essence"—based on ancient classical philosophy. Quintessence represents an "ethereal" [incorporeal] fifth element, a dimension beyond the fundamental four elements [earth, air, fire and water] recognized by Aristotle and others among the Greek philosophers.

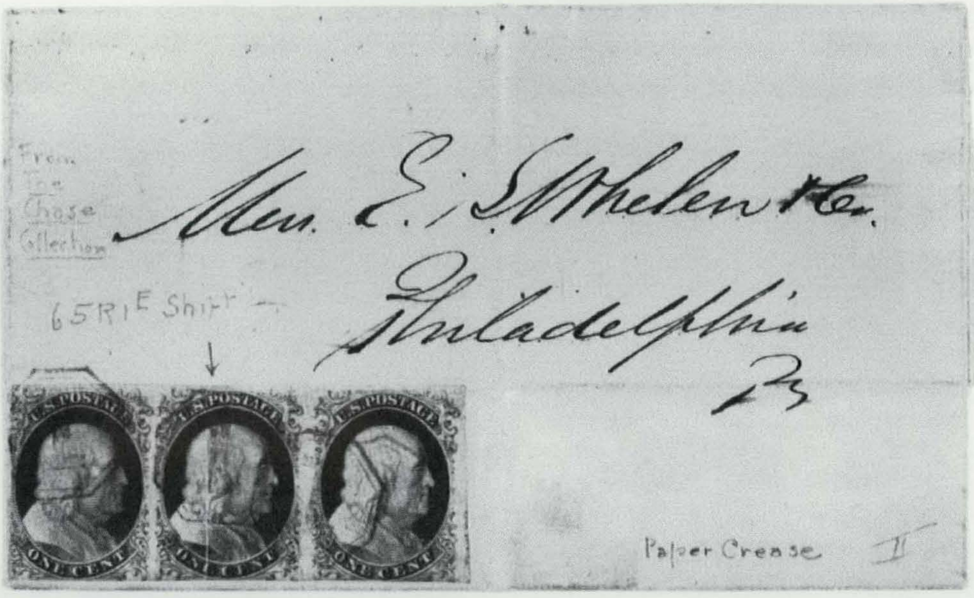

Figure 1. Folded letter datelined "New York 11 July 1851" and addressed to Philadelphia where it entered the mails as an overpaid drop letter. The strip of stamps is canceled by four strikes in blue of the Philadelphia Numeral One in octagonal frame [Skinner-Eno: NS-A 2]. The center stamp is the most prominent double transfer position on Plate One Early.

Inside, the letter is headed "New York 11 July 1851," which explains the 3¢ postage placed on the cover and reveals that it was written only ten days after the new rates went into effect. It is, thus, an early use of the 1851 issue. The letter was carried "out of the mails" from New York to Philadelphia where it was "dropped" into the post. It is not a "bootleg" cover, as the full inter-city rate of 3¢ was prepaid by the strip of 1¢ stamps. However, it does present an anomaly—a strip of three canceled by multiple strikes of the 1¢ rate marking designed for a 1¢ cover (Figures 1, 2, 5).

Figure 2. The Philadelphia Numeral One in Octagonal Frame [reproduced from Skinner-Eno, p. 260].

As an early use, the strip of stamps is a fresh, clear and crisp early printing from Plate One Early. Further, one of the stamps has two pre-print creases, which adds to our interest. Much more important, however, is the plate position of the strip. It is 64-65-66R1E, the middle stamp being a major double transfer, the "most pronounced" on Plate One Early. The presence of this position is the reason that Ashbrook termed it "a very remarkable strip" when he described this major double transfer position and this cover, as follows:

> Of the eight double transfers . . . , No. 65R1E is the most pronounced. This is a marvelous example of this variety as the illustration attempts to demonstrate. [Figure 3] The strong re-entry is shown at the bottom of the stamp and very little at the top, even in very early impressions. Nearly every line from the chin down is duplicated, and especially is this true in the center part. Thru the bottom label the re-entry is most pronounced and most every line of the chest and shoulder is doubled. Needless to state this is quite a rare stamp, equally as rare as the Type I, 7R1E. But the latter is a type and major variety, whereas 65R1E is a minor variety, so perhaps this is the reason I have seen far fewer copies of 65R than I have of 7R. Years ago when the study of our Early Issues was not so neglected as in the present day, this scarce major shift, 65R1E, was a well known stamp, much appreciated for its remarkable double transfer and eagerly sought by specialists of the One Cent stamp.

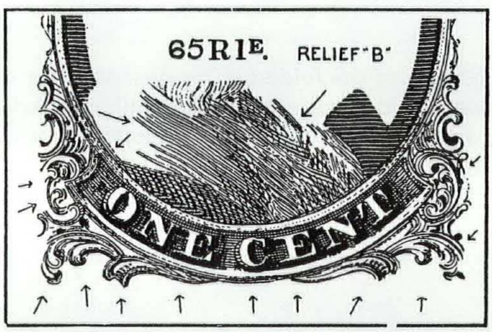

Figure 3. The major double transfer, position 65R from Plate One Early [reproduced from Ashbrook (1938), Vol. I, p. 115].

> I recall a very remarkable strip of 64R1E, 65R1E and 66R1E on a cover that was formerly in the Chase Collection. This folded letter sheet is dated New York, July 11, 1851 (quite an early use) and was addressed to Philadelphia, the stamps being tied four times by the Philadelphia blue numeral "1" in a double lined octagon. Quite a scarce numeral rate handstamp used as an obliteration. No markings are shown by the New York Post Office. This cover changed hands at the sale of the Chase Collection in 1925 and is now in the collection of Mr. Wm. West of Philadelphia. [Ashbrook, 1938, I, p. 116]

In summary, this distinctive and unique cover is collectible for many reasons. It is an inter-city letter with 3¢ postage affixed which was "dropped" at Philadelphia where the scarce 1¢ rate marking designed for circulars (see Figure 5) and drop letters was used to cancel the stamps, a rather uncommon use (as an obliterator) of a rather scarce rate marking. This cover is a very early usage of the new 1¢ stamps and its appeal is further enhanced by two pre-print creases in the strip of three. Finally, the middle stamp is one of the most prominent double transfers in United States philately, a rare and extremely desirable plate variety eagerly sought by specialists in the 1851 issue. It has the additional advantage of a distinguished ownership pedigree (ex Chase, ex West, ex Gibson, etc.) and bears the notes and signature of Stanley B. Ashbrook, the master student of the 1¢ stamps—a quintessential cover very much treasured by its present owner/caretaker.

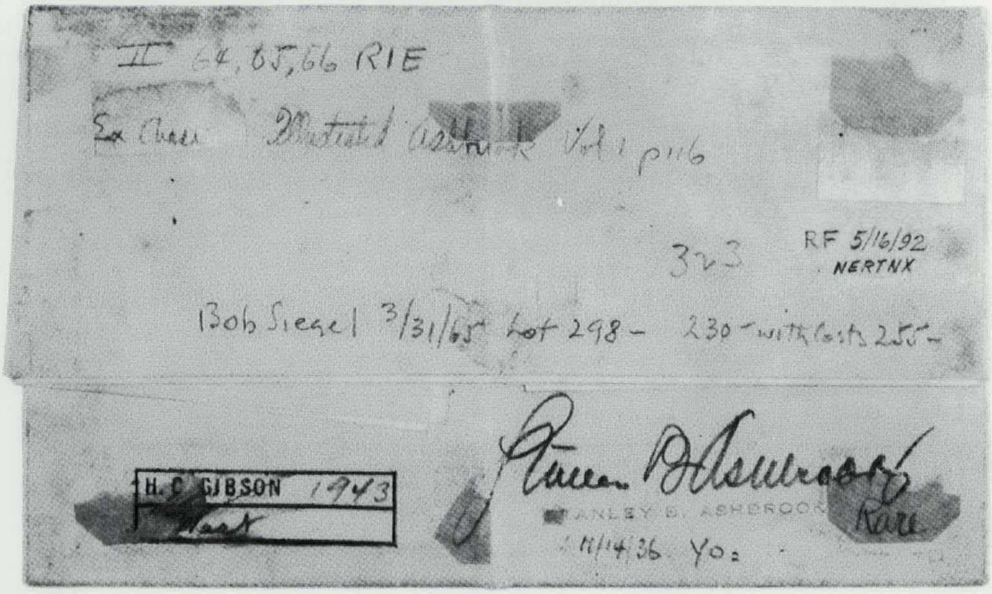

Figure 4. The philatelic history of the folded letter described here is demonstrated by the notes present on the reverse side. It is signed by Stanley B. Ashbrook, whose notes appear on the front of the cover; these and other notations reveal details of past ownership and the auction record of this item.

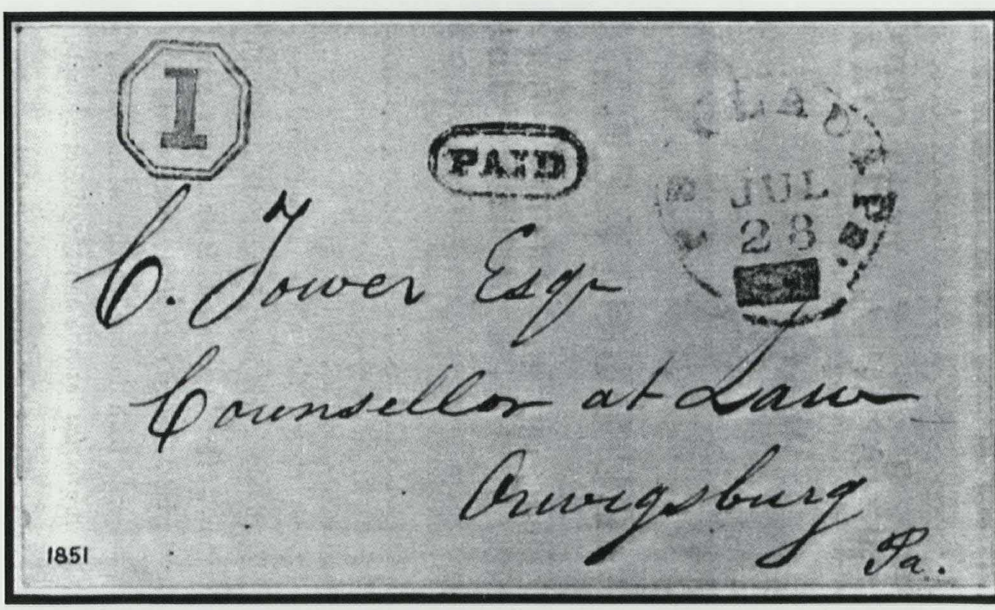

Figure 5. A prepaid folded circular illustrating the normal use of the Numeral One in Octagonal Frame rate marking at Philadelphia on "JUL 28" [1851], during the first month of the new reduced postal rates.

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THE ISHIKAWA 1869S: ANOTHER LOOK

SCOTT R. TREPEL

Your Section Editor has waited until others reported the results of the Ishikawa sale for two reasons.

First, as a professional auctioneer who competes with the Christie's firm, there is the question of whether or not I should even attempt to publish my observations. Sour grapes, possessing inside information, biased judgment and self-promotion are just a few of the accusations I would expect to face if my commentary were critical or revealing. Therefore, anyone who does not like what I have to say is welcome to point out errors, deficiencies and dogma. My conscience is clear because I have allowed objective journalists to take the lead.[1]

Second, I was interested in seeing how erudite philatelists such as Mr. Wagshal and Mr. Rose would view the Ishikawa sale and I hoped that their published commentary might provoke new thoughts of my own. They did.

To recite prices realized is not my purpose here. Instead, I wish to focus on what I believe are misconceptions about the Ishikawa collection and relate a little known, but very significant, fact about the U.S. classics market at the time of the Ishikawa sale. I also wish to incorporate the sale of Ishikawa's 1869 Inverts into the continuing series on the Inverts.

A Great Collection in Average Time

In almost every account of the formation of the Ishikawa collection, it has been said that he accomplished the task *in a very short time:* five years. I disagree. Not only is this frequently-cited formation time understated, but the characterization of Ishikawa's collecting career as short-lived and impetuous is unjustified when compared to other major collectors.[2]

Ishikawa worked at this collection for much longer than five years; 20 years is more accurate. Some of his best pieces were among the 1¢ 1851-57 issues, which he acquired during the early to mid-1970s while specializing in the 1¢ stamp. After placing second at the 1976 Interphil exhibition with his 1¢ collection, Ishikawa began his quest for the ultimate 1847-1869 U.S. classics collection, culminating in the 1981 Vienna debut that earned him the coveted Grand Award. Ishikawa then retired from active collecting—he even attempted to sell the U.S.—but re-entered the market in 1986 for another year, in order to improve the exhibit for the 1987 International in Canada. Working with the late Harvey Warm from 1986 on, Ishikawa culled many items from the Vienna version of the exhibit (shown in his coffee-table book) and made some very significant additions: 1851-57 issue covers from the 1986 Grunin auction; patriotics from the Paliafito collection sold through Harvey Warm; 1861-68 issues from the Wunderlich collection, also sold through Warm; the 10¢ 1869/Wurttemberg mixed franking cherry-picked from Elliott Coulter's collection;

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[1]Readers are referred to "A Report and Commentary on the 1847 Issue in the Auction of the Ishikawa Collection," by Jerome Wagshal (*Chronicle* 160, Nov. 1993, pp. 228-37), and "The Ishikawa Sale and the 1869 Issue," by Jon W. Rose (*Chronicle* 161, Feb. 1944, pp. 33-40).

[2]The concensus of opinion on how Ishikawa went about forming his collection was summed up in the Wagshal commentary, *op. cit.*, p. 235: "Added to this disregard of cost was the relatively great speed with which Ishikawa assembled his holding. [Therefore, he was] a collector . . . so impatient that he [was] willing to sacrifice prudence for speed of acquisition."

and, during this year, Ishikawa acquired his three unused 1869 Inverts in a private transaction that removed them from the Weill brothers' domain, where they had been firmly ensconced for two decades. Warm once estimated that Ishikawa had spent another $2 million over eighteen months to dress up his exhibit for its last competitive showing at Toronto. If Warm had not succumbed to lung cancer, I know that Ishikawa would have surprised the philatelic world by entering an entirely new area of U.S. philately in a big way. Without a trusted agent working within the U.S. market, however, the contemplated seven-figure transaction fell apart, and Ishikawa curtailed his collecting.

Compared with major U.S. collectors of the past—I will use Gibson, Waterhouse, Hind, Worthington, Caspary, Lilly, Wunderlich and Grunin as examples, without prejudice to others—I believe that Ishikawa falls somewhere in the middle in terms of time spent assembling the major components of a world-class U.S. classics collection. The scorecards (in years) appear in parentheses. The information is based primarily on Dr. Stanley M. Bierman's biographical studies of great stamp collectors.[3]

Henry Gibson worked with Philip Ward to form his postmasters' provisionals and 1847s (including Ishikawa's mint 10¢ 1847 block) beginning in 1910 and reaching his peak in 1926 with private treaty purchases from the Lozier collection (Gibson: 16). Sir Nicholas Waterhouse began to concentrate on U.S. in 1914 and reached his zenith in U.S. at the 1923 International in London, where he exhibited his prime collection; a year later, Waterhouse sold out and later started over again (Waterhouse: 9). Arthur Hind, although a collector since 1891, made the bulk of his major acquisitions between 1909 and 1929, during the time of the Worthington and Ferrary sales (Hind: 20). George Worthington bought his first stamp album in 1884, but did not hit his stride with U.S. until the turn of the century. By 1914 his finances were in critical shape, and his collecting halted for all practical purposes (Worthington: 14).

Of the collectors active after World War II, Alfred H. Caspary probably spent the longest time of all building his U.S. collection, along with Hawaii and foreign countries. Beginning in earnest in 1918, Caspary's collecting career spanned 37 years until his death in 1955. However, if one were to analyze his U.S. collection, the major acquisitions were undoubtedly made between 1921 with the Ferrary dispersal and 1946 with the end of the Green sales, a period of 25 years (Caspary: 25).

Josiah K. Lilly scrapped his first attempt at collecting U.S. just after the war and began to build a significant collection with the guidance of Raymond and Roger Weill and Ezra Cole. Assuming that Lilly was collecting up until his death in 1966, that establishes a 20-year career (Lilly: 20).

Most of today's living collectors who have established themselves among the majors have been what I term *rotational collectors*. That is, the collector studies and acquires in one area over a period, then sells (rotates) all or part of the collection and moves into a new area. Rudolf Wunderlich, who wrote one of the introductions for the Ishikawa catalogue, has collected, in succession, U.S. 19th century, 20th century, classic essays and proofs, 1869 issues, 1861 issues, and more. Louis Grunin first built an award-winning collection of U.S. 20th century, then in turn formed collections of 19th century on and off cover, 1847 covers, New York provisionals, 1851-57 covers, and so on. While these collections evolved over a 30-year period, in each case the final result was the product of an intense effort to acquire significant material in a period of several years (Wunderlich and Grunin, average period for each specialized U.S. collection: 10).

Ishikawa is no different. He possessed the means and had the inclination to tackle classic U.S. at a time when significant items could be acquired. These key pieces were tied together with available representative material to create peaks and valleys, and the whole

[3] Stanley M. Bierman, M.D., *The World's Greatest Stamp Collectors* and *More of the World's Greatest Stamp Collectors*, boxed set edition (Sydney, Ohio: Linn's Stamp News, 1990).

collection was mounted in eight to ten 16-page exhibit frames. While certain well-respected collectors who have amassed voluminous study collections over several decades might sneer at Ishikawa's efforts, claiming that his collection was hurriedly put together with more money than connoisseurship,[4] I think he not only achieved his formidable goal, but surpassed it with a collection containing more key pieces and quality items than ever exhibited before. Knowing something about the legendary U.S. collection acquired by the Weills for $4.07 million in 1969, I must reserve the title "Greatest Ever Formed" for that phenomenal U.S. 19th and 20th century holding, to which Ishikawa's collection (and all others, I dare say) relates as a subset. But Ishikawa's 1847-1869s were certainly the best ever entered into competitive exhibitions.

Anyone who has tried will agree that it requires as much, if not more, connoisseurship and collecting ability to assemble 160 coherent pages of significant philatelic material—shall we say the wheat—as it does to assemble 50 volumes stuffed with an ample amount of chaff. Perhaps one day a wealthy eccentric philatelist will indulge my desire to see a contest in which a self-proclaimed *serious* student of philately is given $9 million to build a 160-page U.S. 1847-69 collection as quickly as possible and win an international Grand Award. If you think locating, acquiring and exhibiting a collection of major U.S. rarities—or "hanging bucks" as detractors like to say—is simply a matter of money, think again. As a professional who has been asked to build such a collection on infrequent occasions—and who would happily profit from the exercise—I have discouraged all but two collectors from even attempting it, because the result would be frustration and a third-rate collection.

This is my rebuttal to cocktail party critiques of the Ishikawa collection. I will carry it in my coat pocket with good humor, waiting for the next serious philatelist who berates the Ishikawa collection or his efforts. Regardless of unavoidable gaps, sporadic lapses in quality, how much was paid, or the notion that powerful representation of U.S. classics is a level below finesse (are we judging stamps or women's figure skating?), I say Ishikawa's collection will weigh in as the greatest ever exhibited in the 20th century.

The U.S. Market vs. $9 Million

Now for some cocktail napkin statistics.

By my estimate, U.S. stamp auction firms sell approximately $50 million worth of stamps in an average year, more or less, over thousands of lots, dozens of sales, and across a wide range of countries, including the U.S. Of this sales volume, I would estimate that $15 million of 19th century U.S. trades hands through auctions in one year. Assuming that the 1,000 members of the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society constitute approximately two-thirds of the market for classic U.S., that means 1,500 auction buyers spend an average of $10,000 per buyer per year on classic U.S. The real number of classic U.S. auction buyers is probably smaller, so the average per buyer is probably higher.

Purser Associates, the Danbury-based auction agents, tracked all of the buyers in the Christie's Ishikawa sale. There were 194 registered buyers. Assuming some agents bought for more than one person under a given registration number, I will round the number of buyers up to 200. The total number of dollars spent (including the 15% buyer's premium) was $9,277,209. That becomes an average of $46,386 per buyer, or 4.6 times the average annual purchases for *each and every* buyer of U.S. classics—all in two days for 746 lots.

Prior to the Ishikawa sale, there was a great deal of apprehension that the market would be overwhelmed by so much dollar volume. This did not happen, because the supply reaching the market was small relative to the demand.

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[4]Wagshal again provides the keynote commentary, *op. cit.*, p. 237: "Without denigrating Ishikawa's accomplishment as far as it went, there is something missing . . . from his collection as a whole. It does not quite hang together . . . It is not quite possible to find a common thread in the collection . . . As one commentator recently put it, the collection had power but not finesse."

Obviously, an extraordinary number of "mega-pieces" (my thanks to Mr. Wagshal for defining this term) going to a few "mega-buyers" skews the statistics and averages. However, these transactions involve only a few individuals, the extreme tip of the iceberg. Whether or not the market at this exalted level can absorb large dollar volume is more a function of wealth and determination among a few persons than a reflection of the general market's strength. In the case of the Ishikawa sale, I believe the market for "mega-pieces" was about average in historical terms.[5] For items valued between \$100 and \$20,000, the sale was extremely strong in terms of prices and competition, which is a better reflection of the whole classic U.S. market.

A market does not become saturated when \$9 million of diversified material is sold to 200 buyers, but when a huge quantity of like items chases after a static number of buyers. The best example of market saturation in classic U.S. is what happened after 1985 when the Frank S. Levi, Jr. collection of 10¢ 1855-57 Greens hit the market, followed a few years later by the Walter C. Klein and Philip Rust holdings. More 10¢ Greens were looking for buyers than could be found, and prices dropped to historical lows. Many of the fine to very fine singles of no special merit are still chasing buyers.

More Than Just Ishikawa's Collection

One of the great strengths of Ishikawa's collection was its showing of blocks and large multiples. The market for classic U.S. blocks is one that I have followed closely as a participant and researcher. The nature of blocks makes them easily identifiable and, in certain cases, establishes certain pieces as icons of philately; for example, the 24¢ 1869 Invert block in 19th century and the Inverted "Jenny" blocks in 20th century. For this reason, I track the movement of these pieces from owner to owner. When a new collector enters the market and acquires key U.S. blocks, he declares himself to be a "major player" in the game of collecting.

The majority of important U.S. blocks became available to the market after the 1967-68 Lilly auctions and the 1969 Weill acquisition of the \$4 million U.S. collection. In the early 1970s these blocks became the objects of desire for a newly emerging group of mega-buyers: Ryo Ishikawa (1¢ 1851-57 issues), Walter C. Klein (19th century U.S. blocks), and Louis Grunin (1847-69 issues), among others. Grunin's off-cover material reached the market after he took the Grand at Interphil 1976, at which point Klein and Ishikawa picked up most of the key blocks. In 1987 the Klein collection of blocks was dispersed in sales held by Christie's. Because Ishikawa's cash offer for the entire Klein block collection had been refused, he declined to participate in the auction; thus, the significant blocks were acquired by a new group of mega-buyers. When the Weill stock was sold at auction, the few major blocks not in collectors' hands reached the market. In 1992, the Ivy, Shreve & Mader firm sold the Roland Anderson and David Hanschen block collections. One year later, the Ishikawa sale unleashed many of the mega-pieces that traded during the 1970-80 period.

What is generally not known, because the transaction was not publicized, is that another major collection of classic U.S. blocks traded one month prior to the Ishikawa sale. Among the mega-pieces in this collection were the 15¢ 1869 Type I block of six with original gum, ex Caspary, and a vertical block of six of the 90¢ 1869 with original gum, one of two recorded blocks of this size.

Counting the Ishikawa auction and this very substantial private treaty sale, the Autumn of '93 could go down in philately history as a record-breaking point in the classic

[5]If one analyzes the mega-prices in important sales of the past—Worthington, Ferrary, Hind, Crocker, Green, Caspary and Lilly—it is evident that the market rises on the strength of mega-buyer activity, drops at the point of liquidation, and resurges as the next cycle of mega-buying begins. This cycle, I suppose, is what professionals count on when committing capital to the acquisition of mega-pieces.

U.S. market. If we had a Dow Jones average, it might have broken 4,000 with record trade volume.

If there were any lingering fears that the U.S. classics market was thin and vulnerable, this retrospective should dispel them.

Fig. 1. The 1869 24¢ Invert block (as pictured on the cover of Christie's catalogue for their sale of Ryohei Ishikawa's 1847-1869 U.S. collection).

The 24¢ 1869 Invert Block

The last lot of the Ishikawa sale was the renowned 24¢ 1869 Invert block illustrated in Figure 1. Estimated by Christie's to bring $750,000 to $850,000, there was a considerable amount of pre-sale speculation about how much it would fetch and who would buy it. Having personally hammered down the 24¢ 1918 Inverted "Jenny" plate block for $1 million (plus $100,000 premium), I was among those who envisioned the 1869 Invert block breaking that auction record. Others felt that the 1869 Invert block was a more difficult sell: a piece that was rarer and philatelically more significant than the "Jenny" block, but for the same reason was perhaps less appealing to the average multimillionaire on the street who might bid on a whim. In art world terms, the 1869 Invert block was an Italian Old Master painting of museum quality but a difficult subject, which might bring $10 million; on the other hand, the "Jenny" block was a brilliant French Impressionist picture worth twice that sum, because it speaks to the mega-rich.

Regardless of the pre-sale predictions, no one could have imagined the actual sale event. It is worth describing in detail.

The auctioneer, Christopher Burge, who is at the top of his class, announced the offering of lot 746, the 24¢ 1869 Invert block. In retrospect, I suspect Burge had determined that the Ishikawa sale up to this point had been a success in terms of reaching a particular dollar volume and decided that Christie's could exercise its own discretion in picking a selling point for the block. If the 1869 Invert block brought less than the estimate, Burge could reason, the upside from other lots would make up the difference. Indeed, throughout the sale, mega-pieces were opened for bidding at half of the low estimate, and they sometimes sold for well under estimate.

My presence in the saleroom was known to Burge, with whom I have enjoyed a professional relationship since my first days at Christie's in 1981. Throughout the session he called, I engaged in a sort of insider-game that exists between auctioneer and bidder, especially when the bidder is an auctioneer who finds himself on the other side of the fence: exaggerated bidding gestures, large advances on opening bids (knowing full well that the selling price will be much higher) and facial expressions indicating obvious displeasure with an auctioneer who is only doing his job by milking the floor for as high a bid as possible. These were the sort of sporting activities that preceded the selling of the 24¢ Invert block. They are what make auctions fun and unpredictable.

Going into the last session, having watched virtually all of the major pieces sell for substantial six-figure sums, I was convinced that the 24¢ Invert block would live up to my expectations. It was, after all, the icon of 19th century U.S. philately, the quintessential combination of classic engraving, philatelic interest, and ultimate rarity (there are five Inverted "Jenny" blocks, but only one 24¢ 1869 Invert block). Ishikawa had paid $700,000 for it in 1977, which was 16 years earlier. That money invested in an interest-bearing savings account at 5.5% simple annual interest would be worth *1.65 million* pre-tax dollars today.

Thus, when Burge opened the bidding, looked at me and asked "Scott, how about $450,000?," my reaction was instinctive. "Sure, $450,000." The bid was placed. It was followed by Burge's practiced repetition of the bid. There was no advance on his part (no bid on the auctioneer's book, no higher reserve), and no higher bid from the floor. After a half minute, the hammer came down amidst silence, interrupted only by hushed murmurs of puzzlement and disbelief.

As the audience rose in the aftermath of the sale, I moved swiftly to the podium to ask Burge how the stellar piece of the sale could be sold for "only" $450,000 ($497,500 with the premium). He admitted that Christie's hopes for a sale at the estimate level had been dashed by the prior evening, with the top prospects bowing out and no one emerging as a potential buyer. Faced with no market at $750,000, the decision was made to sell the block at any reasonable price, rather than wait for a sunnier day.

My impulse to spend a half-million dollars without much forethought was perceived by some to have been the 1990s equivalent of Frank Marquis's legendary purchase of the Boscawen provisional at the 1933 Hind sale. Marquis opened the bidding at $5,000, certain that others would top him. When the lot was knocked down to Marquis at his bid, the auctioneer refused to accept his argument that the bid was made in jest. As a result of his purchase and inability to pay for it, Marquis lost his marbles and was later found wandering in a state of amnesia. He died soon after.[6]

Fortunately, I have managed to avoid Marquis's fate. The 24¢ Invert block, which is the jewel of the Siegel firm's inventory, is safely held in a New York City bank vault. Mr. Siegel, who passed away in December, just two months after the Ishikawa sale, had always coveted the Invert block and, upon seeing it in his hands, reminisced about attending the 1938 Crocker sale as a much younger man. I had the impression that he was greeting an old friend.

[6]Bierman, *The World's Greatest Stamp Collectors*, pp. 146-47.

History of the Invert Block

The discovery of the 24¢ 1869 Invert block has been traced to Liverpool, England, during the mid to late 1880s or early 1890s (accounts differ on the year). It has been written and often repeated that the block originally comprised six stamps—two across and three high—and that a horizontal pair was separated from the block and still exists.[7] I have strong doubts about this, which will be explained momentarily. Nevertheless, the block was bought from its discoverer, the so-called "Upside Down Man" (who probably clipped it from a Liverpool merchant house's files), by a vest-pocket stamp dealer. He sold it to Thomas Ridpath, a leading Liverpool dealer who later negotiated the sale of another unique item, the British Guiana 1c Magenta. Ridpath paid only £5 (then approximately $25) for the block. The satcheleer who accepted this modest sum later realized his mistake and, according to legend, he was so distraught, the subject was never again discussed.

From Ridpath the block made a transatlantic journey to New York City, where it was acquired by William Thorne, a wealthy figure in business circles and the second president of the Collectors Club of New York. Thorne was a pioneer in collecting stamps in blocks. This approach was unusual and earned mixed reviews when his collection was exhibited at the London Philatelic Exhibition at the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colours in 1897. One commentator called Thorne's blocks "the apotheosis of bloating."

Fig. 2. The only recorded 1869 24¢ Invert pair, canceled by an 8-wedge rosette.

Thorne has been credited with the alleged act of severing a horizontal pair from the vertical block of six, in order to form a symmetrical block of four. This story has been embellished further by identifying the existing 24¢ Invert pair (see Figure 2, previously shown in *Chronicle* 159, p. 191) as *the* pair from the original block of six. This is not possible. One look at the cancellation on this pair—an 8-wedge rosette compared with the block's segmented grid—puts this myth to rest. The more likely scenario, if we accept the basic premise that this piece consisted of six stamps, is that Thorne acquired the block still intact on part of the original parcel wrapper, which was franked with two additional, but separate, inverts. I nominate three stamps for possible fifth and sixth stamps from this original piece: see Figures 3, 4 and 5 (these were previously shown in *Chronicle* 159). I base these nominations on the stamps' centering, the relative positions of vignette and frame, and the similarity of the cancellations. If one were to assemble the block and three singles for side-by-side comparison, it might be possible to reconstruct the stamps into a larger multiple from the original sheet by matching the perforations. However, because the cancellations do not tie the stamps together at the points between each stamp, they were never joined as a block when used, nor could they have been separated by Thorne, as the legend has it. The alleged motive for severing the pair also does not ring true. Why would a collector who cherished blocks want to reduce what was undoubtedly the greatest block in his collection? Symmetry? I doubt it.

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[7]Michael Laurence, "The 24¢ 1869 Invert Block," *Chronicle* 85 (Feb. 1975), pp. 36-38.

Fig. 3-5. Three 1869 24¢ Invert singles with segmented grid cancels matching the cancels on the Invert block.

Around 1900, Thorne sold his first collection containing the 24¢ Invert block to A. W. Batchelder of New England Stamp Company. The transaction probably involved New England's travelling representative, Warren H. Colson. One of Batchelder's most valued clients was the San Francisco banker, William H. Crocker, who began his collection of United States and foreign rarities in 1884 and, by the turn of the century, had already assembled a world-class holding. Through fortuitous acquisitions from the collections formed by Craig, "Castle," de Coppet, Ayer, and Worthington, the Crocker collection evolved into what is today still heralded as one of the greatest worldwide collections ever formed.[8]

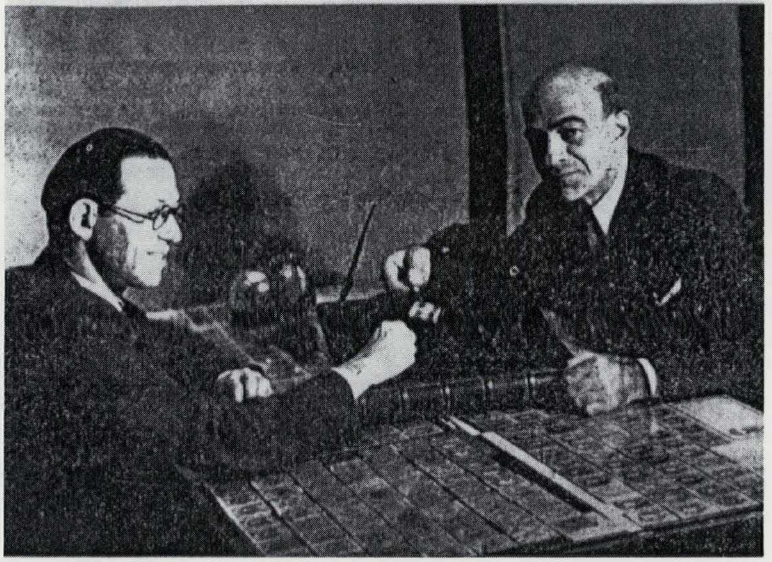
One measure of the 24¢ Invert block's significance is its place in the publication released by Harmer, Rooke & Co. prior to the 1938 auction sale of the Crocker collection. Entitled *The Wm. H. Crocker Collection of Rare Stamps of the Whole World*, this 42-page soft cover booklet featured a commentary by Fred J. Melville and displayed major rarities from the Crocker collection. It also employed color lithography to illustrate five items, the centerpiece being the 24¢ Invert block, described by Melville as "one of the most wonderful of all the surprising survivals in philatelic material." This color photo was also printed on the cover of the sale catalogue.

The block's last appearance at auction, when the Crocker collection was sold, was also surrounded by considerable fanfare. Theodore Behr, who attended the sale in London, was connected by a special transatlantic telephone line to his principal in New York City, the flamboyant dealer, Y. Souren. The block sold to Souren for approximately $12,000 (converted from sterling), and the first-time use of transatlantic telephone cable to conduct the bidding drew enormous press coverage. Fox Movietone News, newspapers and magazines (*Life, Newsweek, Time, The New Yorker*) told the story of Souren's pioneering journey along the "Information Superhighway." Figure 6 shows a *Mekeel's* article on the sale with a photograph of Souren and Behr holding the block.

It is well-known stamp lore that Souren kept the Invert block between two glass plates, especially fitted for his jacket pocket, and enjoyed flashing his prize to anyone who might be interested. It might comfort my insurance broker to know that this practice has not been carried on by the present generation.

Souren sold the block to a prominent collector, Esmond Bradley Martin, for $25,000, but the sale was either rescinded or Martin decided to sell the block back to Souren after a brief time. Souren found another buyer in Leslie White, a Connecticut industrialist, who kept the block until 1949 when he sold his entire collection to Raymond and Roger Weill.

[8]Bierman, *The World's Greatest Stamp Collectors*, pp. 105-10.



Above photo showing the rare 24c block, 1869, inverted center with its purchaser, Y. Souren, of New York City, at right. Mr. Souren bought it for $12,500 by Trans-Atlantic telephone at the London auction. Theodore D. Behr, seated at left, brought it back to America. Photo by Ernest A. Kehr.

Stamp History Made With Purchase By Trans-Atlantic Phone

By Ernest A. Kehr.

When Y. Souren of 394 Park Avenue, New York City, had a special private Trans-Atlantic telephone line installed between his own office and the auction "floor" in London he intended only to purchase a few stamps which he needed and which, through their rarity come up for sale only once in a lifetime, but the innovation was so unusual that it yielded a million dollars worth of publicity in addition.

Ever since Thanksgiving Day, when the call was placed and the auction lots purchased, Mr. Souren has been stormed by newspaper men, newsreel cameramen, radio commentators and feature writers who published the story in type, on celluloid and across ether waves.

Mr. Souren has, in the past, done many things to merit philatelic praise, but by this act he accomplished an achievement which is not only a stamp collector's "ace" but a communications novelty that has opened a new field through which the familiar Trans-Atlantic telephone service may seek business.

The story of Mr. Souren's purchases that amounted to more than $40,000 and included the unique block of 24c stamps of 1869 with inverted vignette, was of course carried by the philatelic press but in addition a front-page release over the Associated Press wires supplied it to newspapers that have never even thought of stamp collecting as news. The Fox Movietone News cameramen ground out reels of film while Lowell Thomas described the acquisition.

Mr. Souren was also added to the honor roll of Famous Firsts of American history when this episode was dramatized over the facilities of the Mutual Network in this country and the Canadian Radio Commission chain.

National publications such as *Life, Newsweek, Reader's Digest, Time, New Yorker* and others, in telling of this purchase gave stamp collectors a flare of publicity such as has never been seen before.

Fig. 6. Mekeel's news story on the 1938 sale of the 1869 24¢ Invert block (from *Mekeel's Weekly Stamp News,* Dec. 19, 1938, p. 608).

The Weills placed the block with an anonymous collector, whose vast United States collection was purchased by the New Orleans dealers in 1969 for $4.07 million. This is the collection referred to earlier, which is certainly the most valuable U.S. collection ever formed. In 1974 the block was sold by the Weills to another anonymous client residing in Texas, who in turn sold his collection back to the Weills around 1976. This was the year of Interphil, at which time the block was displayed among the Aristocrats of Philately, and Ishikawa's 1¢ 1851-57 exhibit was eclipsed by Louis Grunin's U.S. 1847-69 issues. One year later, Ishikawa would acquire the Invert block as a major step toward assembling the greatest U.S. exhibit ever shown.

Conclusion

Re-reading this commentary on the Ishikawa sale and history of the Invert block, I feel that a new chapter in philately has been written. Years from now, when I and the others who participated in the legendary Ishikawa sale are gone, the Star Trek generation of philatelists will look back and make the final judgment about what kind of collector Ishikawa was, how much or little his stamps sold for, and how smart (or stupid) Trepel was for buying the Invert block. To you, the ultimate judges, I can say it was fun, however it turns out. □

NOTES FROM THE NEW SECTION EDITOR

[Editor-In-Chief's Comments: Jack Reinhard became Section Editor of the Bank Note Section with Issue No. 161 of the *Chronicle*, but because an article by out-going editor Dick Searing was already set in print Jack has had no public opportunity to take the helm until now. He's already impressed me both with the breadth and depth of his subject knowledge and with his vision for his Section. I'm pleased to welcome him to our ranks.]

I am now the third editor of the Bank Note Section since the Section's inception in 1973. Following Morrison Waud and Richard Searing is not going to be easy, but it's a challenge I have accepted and look forward to with great enthusiasm.

The Bank Note issues came of age with their inclusion among the other classic issues in the *Chronicle of the U.S. Classic Postal Issues*. Over the past twenty-one years there have been many articles regarding the stamps, their uses, their cancellations and their postal history, but even though a lot has been written there is still a lot of ground to cover.

Because we have four issues per yearly volume I would like to try to spread out the subject matter of the Section to create a blend of topics. Therefore I will try to devote one issue to postal history, one to a particular stamp study, one to cancellations, and finally, one to a Bank Note issue topic. These are only the broad divisions; each, of course, can take on many directions.

The job of Section Editor is supposed to be to edit and not to be the sole writer. Therefore, I am appealing to you Bank Note issue enthusiasts, authors, exhibitors, specialists or whatever to write to me at the address on the masthead and identify yourselves. Many fine articles regarding the Bank Note issues have appeared in local club publications and exhibition programs, but without national exposure they are lost to the people (we Bank Note enthusiasts) who would enjoy them the most. I'm not soliciting to reprint such articles, but those authors with their designated "Bank Note" topics could become the foundation for a *Chronicle* article. Let me hear from you.

Not only do we need articles but we also need reviewers—people with expertise in a particular area—to assist in reviewing incoming manuscripts. Again, please let me hear from you.

Since this is my first active issue it might be appropriate to say a little about myself. I have been collecting the Bank Note issues, almost exclusively, for nearly the past twenty-five years. My specific interests lie with the 7¢ Stanton, the 5¢ Taylor and the 1¢ Franklin of 1887. I have authored several articles regarding the Bank Note issues and in the mid-seventies even wrote a column regarding them for *Strictly U.S.* I joined the USPCS in 1973, shortly after this Section was inaugurated.

My predecessor served this Section for 14 years, his predecessor for seven. I only wish I could live so long if, in that progression, my tenure is to be 21 years. A heartfelt thanks is extended to Richard Searing for his many years as editor of this Section. I know we will again hear from him within this Section.

M. Jack Reinhard □

THE FOREIGN MAIL
RICHARD F. WINTER, Assoc. Editor

INDICATIONS OF A U.S.-BRITISH MAIL ARRANGEMENT PRIOR TO THE 1848 CONVENTION

RICHARD F. WINTER

(Continued from *Chronicle* 161:67)

Covers

Postmaster General Wickcliffe's 28 November 1843 proposal to the Liverpool Postmaster contained the names of ten cities in addition to New York for which separate letter sorting and packaging was requested. Separate bagging would allow letters to pass through the Boston post office without being assorted and placed formally in the mails there. The ten additional cities were: Philadelphia, Baltimore, Richmond, Petersburg, Charleston, Savannah, Augusta, Mobile, New Orleans, and Washington, D.C. I have recorded covers to five of these cities, all of which show postage due rating at the arrival city and not at the United States entry port of Boston where the letters first arrived. None of the covers have markings that can be attributed to Boston. Examples of covers from each of these locations will be shown, described, and dates of known use will be provided. It is my hope that this article will encourage others to locate covers from the cities expected to have profited from this arrangement, examples of which currently remain unknown to me. The order of the cities described here is based on the most common to least common covers I have recorded. The period of use for all locations is from **October 1844 to April 1848.**

Philadelphia

Covers to this city, brought to the United States by the British mail packets, are the most common of all letters rated at a city other than the arrival port. In all, I have recorded 33 covers marked at Philadelphia between early October 1844 and late March 1848. Figures 2a and 2b illustrate the two rate markings used at Philadelphia on these covers. Each marking is known to have been used only in Philadelphia.

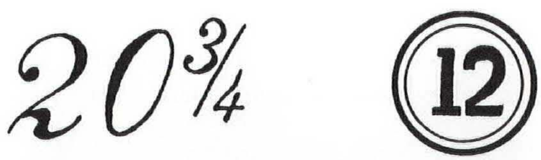


Figure 2. Two Philadelphia numeral rate markings, one an italic style 20$^{3}/_{4}$¢ rate marking (normally found in blue and rarely in red) and the other, the well-known double circle 12¢ in blue.

The earliest example that I record of a Philadelphia-rated cover arrived at Boston on 3 October 1844 and probably reached Philadelphia one or two days later. It bears the scarce 20$^{3}/_{4}$ handstamp shown in Figure 2a for the 2¢ ship fee plus the 18$^{3}/_{4}$¢ United States inland fee from Boston. This is the only example that I have with the rate handstamp struck in red ink. The remaining eight examples show the handstamp struck in blue ink. The Figure 2a marking is scarce because it was used only from October 1844 to the end of

June 1845. At that time, 1 July 1845, the United States inland rates changed and the handstamp was no longer needed.

Figure 3 shows this marking on a folded letter that originated in Edinburgh, Scotland on 1 October 1844. The next day it received the orange PAID at EDIN^{B}. circular datestamp when it was posted. A black oval backstamp shows Liverpool transit on 4 October, in time for the same-day departure of the Cunard steamer *Acadia*, which arrived at Boston on 20 October 1844. Docketing on the left edge of the letter shows arrival in Philadelphia on 21 October 1844. Edinburgh marked in red pen the prepayment of the outgoing packet letter rate, 1 shilling. Philadelphia marked the postage due of $20^{3}/_{4}$¢ with the Figure 2a handstamp in blue.

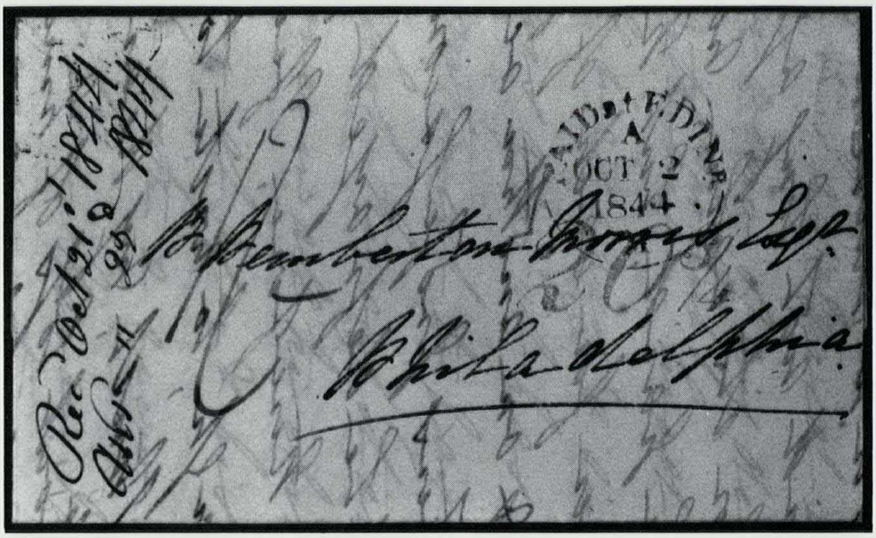


Figure 3. Edinburgh, Scotland, 1 Oct 1844, to Philadelphia by Cunard *Acadia* to Boston. One shilling prepaid and $20^{3}/_{4}$¢ due from addressee. Philadelphia letters arriving at Boston rated $20^{3}/_{4}$¢ until 1 Jul 1845 when U.S. internal rates were reduced, at which time letters were rated for 12¢ postage due.

Figure 4. Manuscript 12¢ rate marking at Philadelphia in first week of Jul 1845 after rates changed, before double circle 12 rate marking appeared. Birmingham, England, 11 Jun 1845 by Cunard steamer *Acadia*, arriving at Boston 2 Jul 1845. (Hegland collection)

I have recorded twenty-three covers with the 19 mm double circle 12 marking, shown in Figure 2b, a well-known Philadelphia marking. This is the most common of the Philadelphia markings used during the alternative rating period and the one depicted in Figure 1 at the beginning of this article. As noted earlier, the rate was applicable from 1 July 1845. I have seen this rate marking on a cover arriving at Boston as early as 19 July 1845, which means that it must have been struck in Philadelphia about the 21st, perhaps the earliest that we shall see the marking used on a transatlantic cover.

Only one cover in my survey shows a manuscript 12 rating in black ink. This cover reached Philadelphia in the first week of July 1845. The use of a manuscript rate marking would suggest that the double circle 12 rate marking was not in use at the start of the new rating period. Figure 4 shows this cover, a folded letter written in Birmingham, England on 5 June 1845. The letter was posted in Birmingham on 11 June 1845 and received a black circular datestamp with that date. The manuscript marking at the left in red, which looks like the letter "W," indicates that one shilling postage, the outgoing packet letter rate, was prepaid. A black oval transit marking on the reverse shows processing at Liverpool on 12 June 1845. The letter arrived in Boston on 2 July 1845 aboard the Cunard steamer *Acadia*, which left Liverpool on the scheduled date of 19 June 1845. It would have reached Philadelphia shortly thereafter. Note that as with all other covers shown in this article, there are no Boston postal markings on the letter. My records do show Boston markings on all other incoming Cunard steamship mails for Philadelphia until the Fall of 1843.

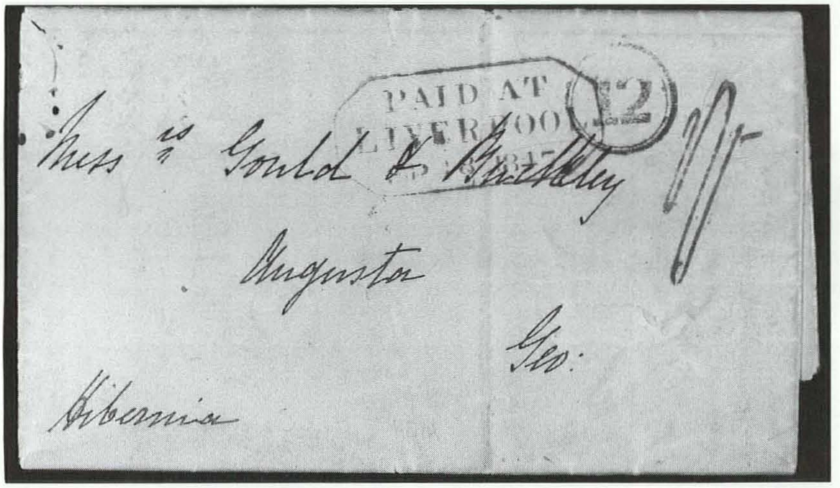


Figure 5. Liverpool letter of 18 Sep 1847 to Augusta, Georgia, rated at Philadelphia with 12¢ postage due. One shilling packet letter rate paid in Liverpool. Reason for rating at Philadelphia unknown.

One unusual example of the 19 mm double circle 12 marking is illustrated in Figure 5. This folded letter originated in Liverpool on 18 September 1847 and was addressed to Augusta, Georgia, one of the cities for which separate parcels had been requested. Either that part of the proposal was not accepted or a mistake was made, for this letter clearly went to Philadelphia, where it was officially entered into the United States mail system and rated for 12¢ postage due at destination. This letter was included in the mail bags carried to Boston by the Cunard steamer *Hibernia* from Liverpool on 19 September 1847, and arrived on 3 October 1847. Both the octagonal PAID AT/LIVERPOOL/SP 18 1847 and the one shilling handstamps were struck in red ink.

New York

Postmaster General Wickcliffe's 28 November 1843 letter to the Liverpool Postmaster, shown earlier in the article, indicated that an arrangement had already been made for letters to New York to be separately bagged. Nevertheless, I have record of a letter to New York that arrived in Boston on 6 December 1843 showing not only a Boston circular datestamp when it was entered into the United States mails but also a Boston handstamp rate marking. So, it is not clear to me when the separate bagging for New York actually started. One example of a letter addressed to New York with a manuscript rate marking in early November 1844 shows no Boston markings and suggests that New York was the rating location. My records have 29 covers to New York during the period early November 1844 to early February 1848 that I believe were rated at New York due to the absence of Boston markings and the presence of distinctive New York markings. Three of those covers show manuscript rate markings. The place of marking may be argued, except that the covers have no Boston circular datestamps even though Boston was careful to mark their incoming ship letters.

Figure 6. The three New York rating marks used during the period for letters carried to New York in closed bags thru Boston. Each was struck in red ink. Rates were for 2¢ ship plus 5¢ or 10¢ inland fees. These markings are known to be used only at New York.

Figures 6a, b, and c show the three different rate markings applied at New York, markings found on 26 of these covers. The three manuscript examples all came before the New York handstamps were put into use about May 1846. Figure 7 pictures one of the manuscript examples, a 1 June 1845 folded letter from Paris to New York. The letter shows arrival at London on 3 June (red PAID circular datestamp) and a black Liverpool transit marking of the same date. It was transported to Boston on the Cunard steamer *Caledonia*, departing Liverpool on 4 June and arriving at Boston on 19 June 1845. Docketing shows arrival in New York the next day. A manuscript 18 decimes rate marking on the reverse shows the prepayment, which was eight decimes French internal postage for a $7\frac{1}{2}$-10 gram letter and 10 decimes owed to Great Britain under the 1843 Anglo-French Convention.[15] The postage due on this letter, marked in blue ink at New York, was $39\frac{1}{2}$¢ for the 2¢ ship fee and 2x$18\frac{3}{4}$¢ United States inland fee from Boston to New York for a double-rate letter. The clerks at New York must still have been using the pre-1 July 1845 rating procedures (determining charges by number of sheets in the letter and not by weight) to have considered this letter two rates, or more than $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce (15 grams.) The French thought the letter weighed up to 10 grams. Boston had a 26 mm circular rate marking that showed the numerals $39\frac{1}{2}$ (Blake & Davis No. 298) which would have been used

[15]For further information on how the French calculated postal rates on foreign letters during this period, see Richard F. Winter, "Mails from U.S. to France via England: 1836-1849," *The Congress Book, 1984, Fiftieth American Philatelic Congress*, pp. 185-192.

if the letter had been rated in Boston. The cover shows no Boston circular datestamp or rate marking.

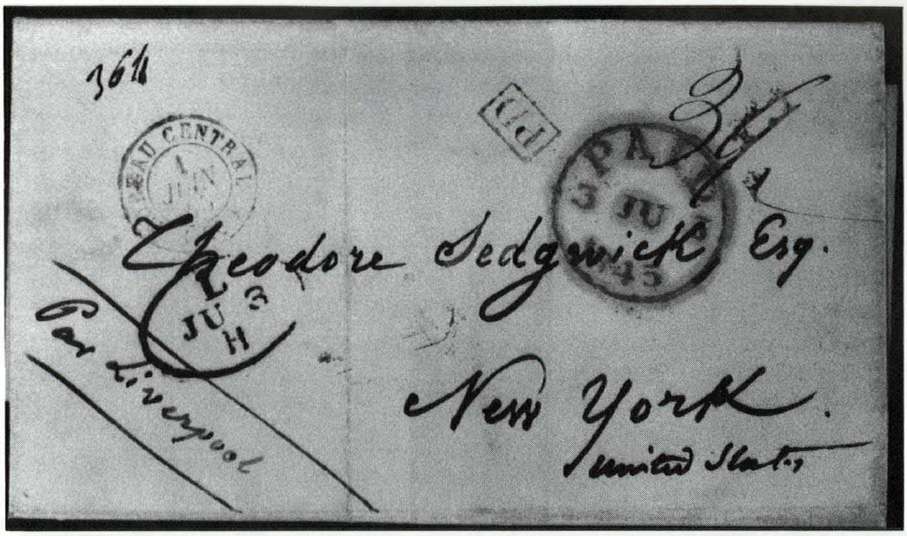


Figure 7. Manuscript rating of 39½¢ (2¢ ship plus 2x18¾¢ inland fees) for a double rate letter from Paris (1 Jun 1845) to New York. Letter carried by Cunard *Caledonia* from Liverpool to Boston (19 Jun). Letter shows none of the markings known to be in use in Boston at the time, passing through there in a closed bag. (Hegland collection)

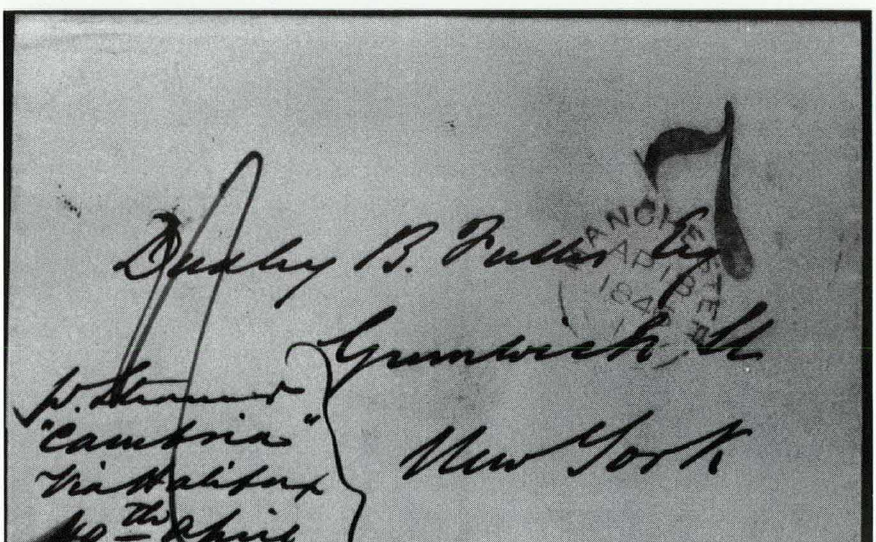


Figure 8. Earliest New York rate marking on mails landed at Boston, the 25 mm numeral 7 in red on 18 Apr 1846 folded letter from Manchester. Prepaid one shilling, the letter was carried on Cunard *Cambria*, which ran aground at Cape Cod on 2 May. The mails were transhipped by ox cart and rail to Boston, then to New York.

The first example of the New York rate handstamp is the 25 mm red "7" shown in Figure 6a, of which I have recorded 16 uses for ratings beyond Boston from about 18 April 1846 until about 2 February 1848. Figure 8 illustrates its use. This folded letter was posted in Manchester, England on 18 April 1846, receiving the circular datestamp in red. It was endorsed in the lower left "p. Steamer/'Cambria'/Via Halifax/19th April" and addressed to New York with a prepayment of one shilling for the packet letter rate (marked in red pen to the left through the routing endorsement). A black oval Liverpool transit mark on the reverse shows arrival at Liverpool on 19 April. On the same day the Cunard steamer *Cambria* carried this letter to Halifax and Boston. En route to Boston, *Cambria* ran aground in a dense fog on 2 May off Truro, about five miles south of the Highland Lights on the end of Cape Cod. Her mails were landed and carried to Wellfleet (a town on the Cape) about 106 miles by land from Boston. After much difficulty, the mail agent procured transportation for the mails by ox teams to Plymouth and thence to Boston by the Old Colony Railroad, arriving on 5 May 1846.[16] This letter was, of course, in a sealed mail bag and was sent on to New York, probably arriving the next day on 6 May 1846. It was rated in New York for 7¢ postage due (2¢ ship and 5¢ United States inland fees for a distance of less than 300 miles from Boston to New York) with the handstamp shown in Figure 6a. No other markings appear on this letter.

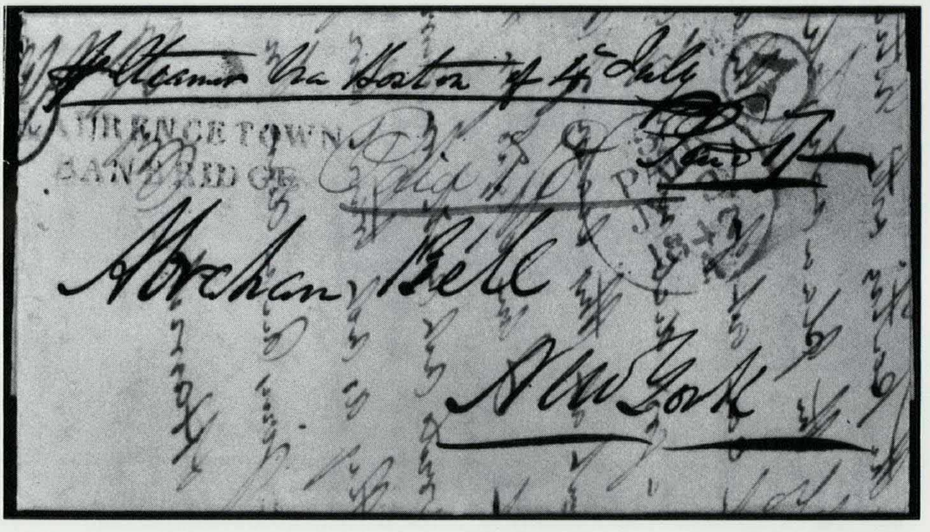


Figure 9. New York's second type of 7¢ rate marking, a 12 mm circle 7 struck in red on 2 Jul 1847 folded letter from Banbridge, Ireland. Two line blue LAURENCETOWN/BANBRIDGE receiving house marking and 3 Jul Dublin PAID cds in orange. One shilling packet postage prepaid in Ireland.

A second type of rate marking used at New York was a 12 mm red circle with enclosed "7" shown in Figure 6b. I have six covers recorded with this marking struck during the period from about 21 March 1847 until about 10 December 1847. Figure 9 illustrates its use. This folded letter, addressed to New York, was written in Gilford, Ireland, a small market-town, four miles N.W. of Banbridge. The letter was posted at the Laurencetown receiving house of Banbridge and received a blue two-line marking in the upper left, LAU-

[16]*The Boston Post*, Tuesday, 5 May 1846.

Figure 10. Double-rate letter from Belfast, Ireland, 16 Jul 1847 to New York, carried by Cunard steamer *Hibernia* to Boston. Letter rated at New York with 25 mm numeral 12 for the 2¢ plus 2x5¢ U.S. inland fees from Boston to New York. Double packet letter rate of 2 shillings prepaid. (Hegland collection)

RENCETOWN/BANBRIDGE. On the reverse is a green circular datestamp from Banbridge dated 2 July 1847. The letter was marked in manuscript "Paid 1/0" to indicate the one shilling packet rate was prepaid. An orange circular PAID datestamp on the front shows the letter passed through Dublin on 3 July. Dublin also restated the prepayment in manuscript "Paid 1/-." On the reverse, a black oval transit marking of Liverpool indicates the letter's arrival there on 3 July, in time for the next-day sailing of the Cunard steamer *Britannia*. Upon arrival in Boston on 17 July 1847, the closed mail bag that contained this letter was sent to New York. Internal docketing shows the letter reached its destination in New York on 18 July. The New York post office rated this letter for 7¢ postage due by striking the Figure 6b mark.

The last of the New York rate marks is the handstamp shown in Figure 6c, the 25 mm red companion marking to Figure 6a. This rate marking was used at New York on double-rate letters from Boston, a distance of less than 300 miles. I have listed four covers that were landed at Boston with this marking during the period from about 8 November 1846 until about 2 February 1848, one of which is shown in Figure 10. Posted in Belfast, Ireland on 16 July 1847, this folded letter was addressed to New York. Two strikes (one partial) of the orange Belfast circular datestamp are on the cover. The letter was prepaid two shillings for a double-packet letter rate. The letter's contents advise that the duplicate of another letter had been enclosed. The two-shilling prepayment was written first in pencil and later in red ink on the upper right. The letter passed through Dublin on 17 July and received the circular PAID datestamp in orange. A black oval transit mark of Liverpool on the reverse shows its arrival there on 17 July, well in advance of the 20 July sailing of the Cunard steamer *Hibernia* for Halifax and Boston. *Hibernia* arrived in Boston on 2 August 1847. The mails for New York were sent on and the letter was probably processed the next day in New York. It was marked with the Figure 6c red handstamp for 12¢ postage due (2¢ ship plus 2x5¢ U.S. inland fees.)

New Orleans

The farthest and most southern of the cities to rate incoming mails through Boston, New Orleans, used a 21 mm handstamp "12," which is very distinctive and easily recognized. (See Figure 11.) I have recorded thirteen covers with this marking during the period late August 1845 until early April 1848. The markings may be found in either blue or black ink. Figure 12 illustrates this New Orleans rating of incoming packet letters arriving at Boston. This cover originated in Liege, Belgium on 2 April 1846 and was addressed to the Catholic Bishop of New Orleans. A manuscript 24 on the reverse shows a prepayment of 24 decimes. This included the four decime Belgium inland, eight decime British transit, and 12 decime transatlantic packet fees. Of this prepayment, Great Britain was entitled to 20 decimes or 1 shilling 8 pence, which is marked in the upper right in manuscript. Since

Figure 11. Distinctive 21 mm New Orleans rate marking struck in blue and black ink on mails landed at Boston in closed mails destined for New Orleans.

Figure 12. Liege, Belgium, 2 Apr 1846 to New Orleans carried by Cunard steamer *Caledonia* to Boston. Letter prepaid 24 decimes (manuscript on reverse) for all transit fees thru England to U.S. arrival port. One shilling eight pence of prepayment due England. Postage due of 12¢ marked at New Orleans.

the letter was paid as far as possible, Liege also struck the boxed PD markings in red. The letter passed through London on 4 April and received a PAID circular datestamp in red. A black Liverpool oval transit marking on the left shows its arrival at Liverpool on 4 April also. The letter crossed the Atlantic in the mail bags carried by the Cunard steamer *Caledonia*, departing the same day and arriving at Boston on 20 April. The letter was then forwarded without Boston markings. Arrival in New Orleans is not shown on the letter, but mails from Boston typically took about seven to ten days to get to New Orleans. Here the letter was rated, for the first time in the United States, with the large blue handstamp of New Orleans, a 12¢ postage due for the 2¢ ship and 10¢ United States inland fees.

Figure 13. Blue 8 mm rate marking of Baltimore used on letters arriving at Boston and rated at Baltimore.

Baltimore

I have recorded eleven covers that can be attributed to inward rating at Baltimore by the distinctive blue 8 mm "12" handstamp shown in Figure 13. The covers are of the period from early July 1846 until September 1847. This marking is smaller than any of the Boston rate marks and in a color not used by Boston at this time, much in the same way the New York and New Orleans markings are much larger than any rate marks used at

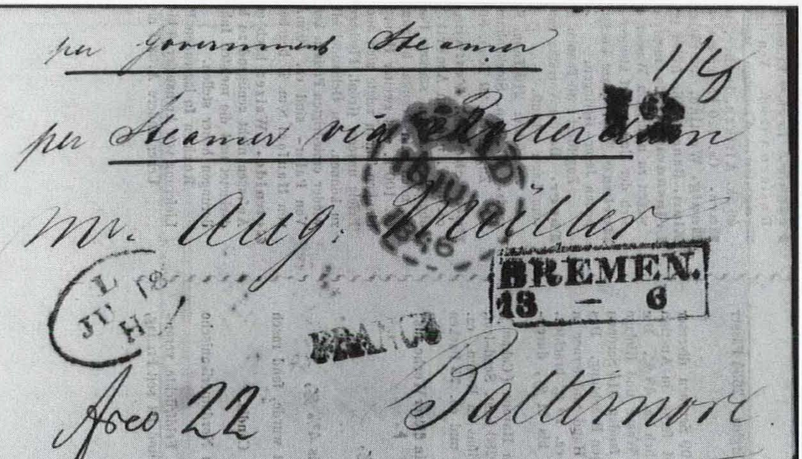


Figure 14. Bremen, 13 Jun 1845, to Baltimore posted in Prussian post office at Bremen and sent overland thru Belgium to England. Letter prepaid 22 silbergroschen for all transit fees to U.S. port. England entitled to 1/8 of prepayment. Baltimore rated letter for 12¢ postage due (2¢ ship and 10¢ inland fee). Letter landed at Boston in mails carried by Cunard steamer *Britannia*.

Boston. Figure 14 presents a crisp example of the rate marking that was often not clearly struck. This folded letter originated in Bremen on 13 June 1845 and was addressed to Baltimore. The long rectangular boxed BREMEN marking in black is that of the Prussian post office in the free city of Bremen. A prepayment of 22 silbergroschen was made and written in the lower left corner "fr(an)co 22" along with a black FRANCO handstamp. The letter was endorsed "per Government Steamer/per Steamer via Rotterdam," the intended route, although a backstamp, ALLEMAGNE PAR HERVE, shows that the letter went through Herve, Belgium and probably crossed the Channel from Ostend, as opposed to Holland. Arrival in London is shown by a red PAID circular datestamp of 18 August. The 1/8 in the upper right represents the amount of prepayment that belonged to Great Britain. A black oval Liverpool transit marking on the letter shows its arrival there on 18 June. On the next day, the Cunard steamer *Britannia* departed Liverpool with the mails for America, arriving at Boston on 4 July 1846. The letter was sent south, arriving in Baltimore on 6 July 1846, according to docketing in the letter. The Baltimore post office rated the letter for 12¢ postage due with a blue handstamp "12" (2¢ ship and 10¢ United States inland fee from Boston).

Figure 15. Bordeaux, 14 Jun 1847, to Charleston carried from England by Cunard steamer *Caledonia* to Boston (4 Jul). Letter prepaid 30 decimes (manuscript on reverse) for French and British transit fees. Charleston marked letter in pen for 12¢ postage due. (Evans collection)

Charleston

I have recorded only two covers that show postage due rating that I attribute to Charleston. Each is a manuscript "12" marking. The rating in Charleston of these two covers was during the period 24 December 1845 until 8 July 1847. Although it is known that Charleston used a red 30 mm circular marking with a 9 mm numeral "12" in the circle during this period, neither cover shows this marking. Figure 15 illustrates a Charleston-rated cover. Originating in Bordeaux, France on 14 June 1847, this folded letter was addressed to Charleston and prepaid 30 decimes, which was inscribed on the reverse in pen. The 30 decimes paid the French internal rate for a 10-gram letter traveling 700 km from Bordeaux to Calais (20 decimes) plus the 10-decime amount owed the British under the 1843 Anglo-French Convention. All transit fees to the United States arrival port were prepaid. The letter was endorsed "via l'Angleterre/p. packet anglais," for its intended passage by way of England and a British packet. A red circular PAID datestamp shows its arrival at London on 18 June 1847 and the black oval transit mark of Liverpool, arrival there that same day. The letter was included in the mails carried out the next day by the Cunard steamer *Caledonia*, which reached Boston on 4 July 1847. The letter was sent to Charleston where it arrived on 8 July 1847 according to internal docketing.

Conclusion

Although documentation has not been found to confirm that the proposal of Postmaster General Wickcliffe was accepted, there is overwhelming evidence that some agreement was concluded. There are too many covers that show the absence of the Boston arrival port markings, even though United States postal regulations required that incoming ship letters be rated at the arrival port. Instead, these letters show rate markings distinctive to the cities of destination. If the letters were, in fact, in sealed mail bags or special parcels that were not opened until arrival at those cities, they could not be "mailed" in the United States until reaching the cities regardless of when they arrived on U.S. territory. If we assume that Postmaster General Wickcliffe was successful in convincing the Liverpool Postmaster to accept his recommendations, there must be covers from at least six other cities than those already recorded which may not be recognized for what they are. Those cities are: Washington City; Richmond and Petersburg, Virginia; Savannah and Augusta, Georgia; and Mobile, Alabama. It is easy to overlook this very interesting aspect of postal history until it is pointed out. Most collectors and postal historians see the proper rates on such covers but don't think to question **where** the rates were applied. Yet, with this background information and a careful eye, perhaps some of our readers will discover they too have examples of the elusive cities that performed the rating of these incoming packet letters to Boston.

Postscript

All the activity described in this article took place long before the United States and Great Britain concluded a postal convention, which was signed in London on 15 December 1848 and became effective on 15 February 1849. It would appear that, beginning in the Fall of 1844, four and one half years before the convention, an arrangement for mail handling between the two countries became effective. Astoundingly, instead of a bilateral agreement between the two governments, the arrangement was concluded between the Postmaster General of one country and the city Postmaster of the other country. □

"STEAM CHINA"—THE FIRST POSTAL MARKINGS Of U.S. STEAMSHIP MAIL FROM CHINA AND JAPAN

JAMES W. MILGRAM, M.D.

A large straight line postmark reading "STEAM CHINA" was postulated to have been associated with mail carried on the steamer *Colorado,* a vessel owned by the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, on her first three voyages from Japan in 1867.[1,2] This article will describe the varieties and usages of this marking.

The Pacific Mail Steamship Company was the firm established by William Aspinwall and associates to carry the mail from Panama to the West Coast (California and Oregon) in 1848. With the discovery of gold in California, the future of this company proved golden as well. In 1867 it undertook a regular mail contract across the Pacific Ocean between Hong Kong and San Francisco, via Japan.[3] Figure 1 illustrates an official company envelope addressed to the Managing Director of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company. The text of the advertising on the envelope mentions the routes to the Far East which caused the "STEAM CHINA" marking to be designed.

Letters brought to the United States under this mail steamship contract were charged a postal rate of ten cents per single rate from countries with which there was no international convention.[4] These letters were rated at the steamship rate, not ship rates, when they entered the United States. The ten cents rate, in this case, was for transit from port of arrival to destination as well as steamship transit over the Pacific Ocean from the Orient to the United States. There was no discount if the port of arrival was also the final destination of the letter.

The *Colorado* made three crossings from Yokohama, Japan, to San Francisco in 1867, arriving on March 20, June 13, and September 14. Nine covers from these three voyages were recorded in my 1977 *American Philatelist* article[2] and two more have been located since then.[5,6] All eleven covers are described in Table 1.

It has developed that there are actually three different forms of "STEAM CHINA" markings on covers carried on these three trips of the Colorado: the "STEAM CHINA" handstamp is known in both red and black inks, and there is a reverse type, a black "CHINA STEAM." It appears that on the March 20, 1867, voyage, the marking was either a red or black "STEAM CHINA." On the June 13, 1867, voyage the same marking was applied but only in black ink. And on the third voyage arriving at San Francisco on September 14, 1867, the words in the marking were reversed and applied in black ink, "CHINA STEAM."

The postal rate for an outgoing ship letter from Hong Kong was eight cents.[5,7] Figure 2 shows one of the two covers previously described but not illustrated in the *American Philatelist* article, a cover bearing an eight cent Hong Kong stamp tied with "B62" in a

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[1]James W. Milgram, M.D., "The 'Steam China' Postmark," *Stamps*, 23 November 1974, pp. 520-530.

[2]James W. Milgram, M.D., "Steam China Postmarks," *American Philatelist,* November 1977, pp. 881-883.

[3]W.H. Halliburton, Conrad Roger and Robert M. Spaulding, Jr., *Pacific Crossings From Japan, 1858-79* (Silver Spring, Md.: Murray H. Schefer, 1969).

[4]Theron Wierenga, *United States Incoming Steamship Mail 1847-1875* (Muskegon, Mich.: Theron Wierenga, 1983), pp. 46-48.

[5]Ryohei Ishikawa, *Forerunner Foreign Post Offices in Japan British—U.S.—French* (Tokyo: Philatelic Publ., 1976).

[6]Jack Yao, personal communication.

[7]W.R. Wellsted, "Trans Pacific Mail," *Postal History Bulletin,* No. 153, 1968.

	Date of San Francisco Postmark	U.S. Postage	Other Postage	Steamship Marking	Other Markings	Destination
1.	Mar 20	Unpaid 10	8¢ Hong Kong	black STEAM CHINA	Per "Colorado" (ms); Navy Letter, U.S.Asiatic Squadron (ms)	San Francisco, Calif.
2.	Mar 20	Unpaid 10	8¢ Hong Kong	black STEAM CHINA	Per "Colorado" (ms)	San Francisco, Calif.
3.	Mar 21	Unpaid 10	8¢ Hong Kong	red STEAM CHINA	Due 10c (ms); via San Francisco California (ms)	Woodstown, N.J.
4.	Mar 21, 1867	Unpaid 20	16¢ Hong Kong	red STEAM CHINA	20 (ms); Due 20c (ms); per "Colorado" (ms); via San Francisco, California (ms)	Woodstown, N.J.
5.	Mar 21	Unpaid 10	8¢ Hong Kong	red STEAM CHINA	p "Colorado" (ms); From U.S.Str. "Wachusett" (ms)	Plymouth Notch, Vt.
6.	Mar 21	Unpaid 10	8¢ Hong Kong	red STEAM CHINA	per "Colorado" via San Francisco (ms)	Boston, Mass.
7.	Mar 21	Pair 3¢ stamps	None	black STEAM CHINA	Colorado (ms); "DUE 4"(hs)	Bristol, N.H.
8.	Jun 14	Unpaid 10	None	black STEAM CHINA	From U.S.S. "Hartford" Yokohama, Japan (ms)	Chicago, Ill.
9.	Jun 14	Unpaid 10, Forwarded 3¢ stamp	None	black STEAM CHINA	per "Colorado" (ms); Warren R.I. cds	Lafayette, Ind.
10.	Sep 14	10¢ stamp	None	black CHINA STEAM	oval Kanagawa Japan forwarder; per Colorado (ms)	San Francisco, Calif.
11.	Sep 14	10¢ stamp	None	black CHINA STEAM	oval Kanagawa, Japan forwarder; pr "Colorado" (ms)	San Francisco, Calif.

TABLE 1: "STEAM CHINA" COVERS

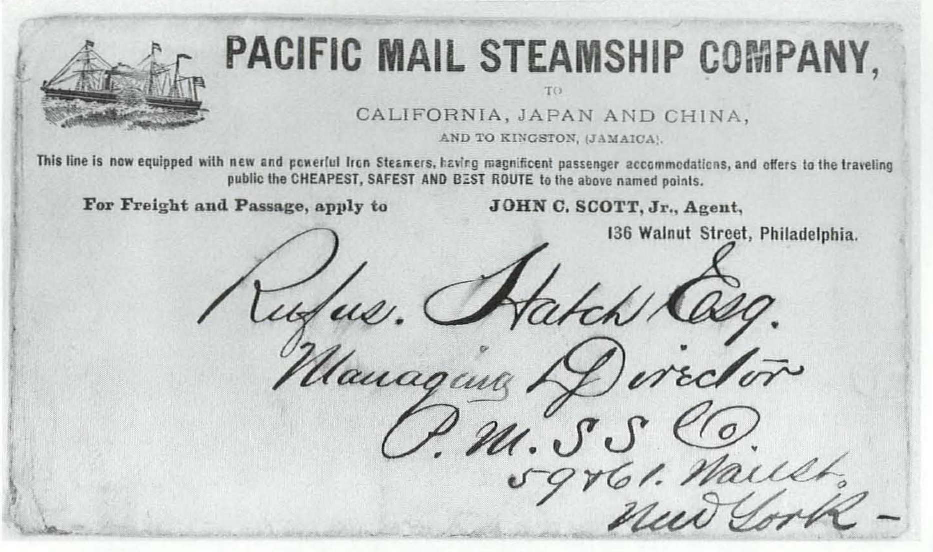

Figure 1. Illustrated Pacific Mail Steamship Company cover carried by hand from an agent in Philadelphia to the Managing Director of the company in New York. The text mentions the existence of service to Japan and China.

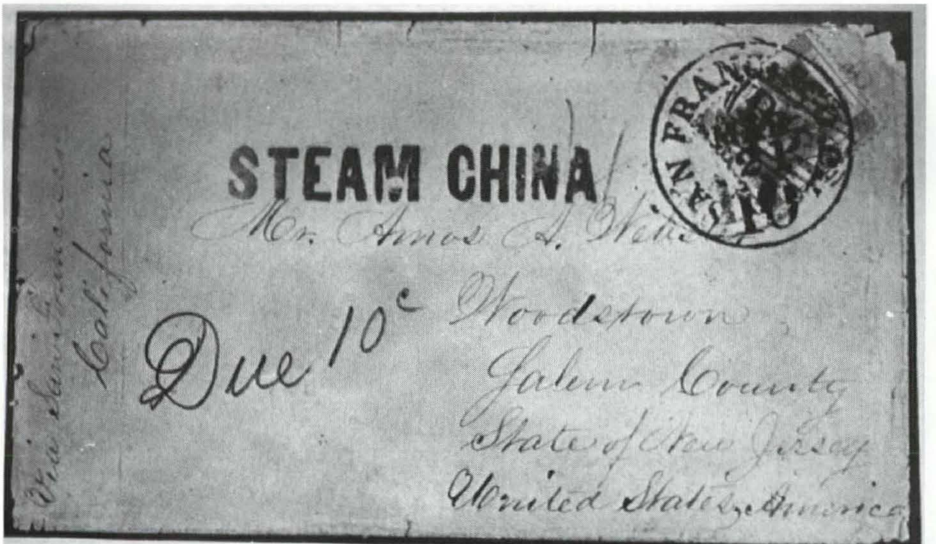

Figure 2. Eight cent Hong Kong stamp tied with Hong Kong post office numeral grid "B62" on cover directed "via San Francisco, California" to Woodstown, N.J.; carried on maiden voyage of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company's *Colorado* into San Francisco where it received "SAN FRANCISCO CAL MAR 21 10" postmark in black; manuscript "DUE 10c" and a red straight line "STEAM CHINA."

grid. There is a manuscript "4" (four pence), a Hong Kong marking for an outgoing ship letter. This cover bears a red "STEAM CHINA" straight line marking. The stamp is also tied by "SAN FRANCISCO CAL. MAR 21 10" in black. This marking is the steamship postmark for an unpaid letter. The Hong Kong stamp paid only the outgoing ship letter rate for that colony. There is also a manuscript "Due 10c." The letter went by regular mails to Woodstown, New Jersey.

The next cover (Figure 3) is the companion to the cover in Figure 2 just described. This is a double rate cover and bears 16 cents in Hong Kong stamps with a manuscript "8" for double ship rate at Hong Kong. It has a red "STEAM CHINA" straight line marking and a "Due 20c" in the same handwriting as the "Due 10c" in Figure 2. It was rated "20" in manuscript and has a double circle "SAN FRANCISCO CAL MAR 21 1867." This is one of two usages of this double circle postmark on "STEAM CHINA" covers, the other being a March 21 short rated cover with a pair of 3¢ United States stamps that bears a

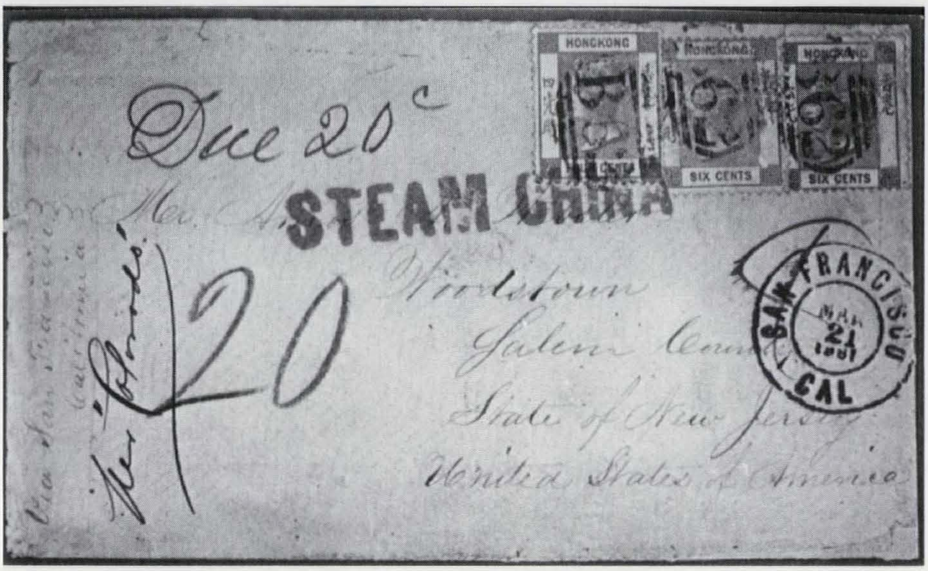

Figure 3. Four cent and two copies of six cent Hong Kong stamps tied by "B62" grid, on cover to Woodstown, N.J.; to San Francisco by the *Colorado*; double circle "SAN FRANCISCO CAL MAR 21 1867" and large manuscript "20"; "Due 20c" in pencil for double rate; red "STEAM CHINA."

"DUE 4." Both of these covers with the double circle postmark, therefore, demonstrate a rate other than ten cents. The cover in Figure 3 is the second with a red straight line "STEAM CHINA" marking from this voyage. It travelled in the same mail as the other cover to the Woodstown, New Jersey, addressee.

The third cover (Figure 4) is a newly discovered cover that is a single rate cover from Hong Kong. It bears a single eight cent stamp, a ms. "4," a directive "pr Colorado," a red straight line "STEAM CHINA," and a "SAN FRANCISCO CAL MAR 21 10" for an unpaid steamship letter. Ten cents was due from the addressee in Vermont. Its origin was a United States naval vessel on station at Hong Kong.

A fourth cover (Figure 5), presently in the collection of George J. Kramer, is a similar single rate cover from Hong Kong addressed to Boston. It has a red "STEAM CHINA" and black "SAN FRANCISCO CAL MAR 21 10" also. All four of these covers with Hong Kong stamps were in the mail carried by the steamer *Colorado* to the United States on its first contract voyage return.

Figure 4. Single copy Hong Kong eight cent stamp tied "B62" grid and "SAN FRANCISCO CAL. MAR 21 10," ms."4," and "pr Colorado"; "STEAM CHINA" in red; manuscript "From U.S. Str. Wachusett" at upper left.

Figure 5. Single copy Hong Kong eight cent stamp tied "B62" grid and black "SAN FRANCISCO CAL MAR 21 10"; bold red straight line "STEAM CHINA" and ms. "pr 'Colorado' via San Francisco"; addressed to Boston.

The other three covers recorded from the first trip of the *Colorado* bear black "STEAM CHINA" markings. I have been unable to confirm the black color on the two covers owned by the late Gene Daniels, which were single rate covers bearing Hong Kong eight cent stamps (Figures 1 and 2 in the *American Philatelist* article).[2] The third cover was the short rated cover (ex Donald Malcolm, Figure 3 in the *American Philatelist* article) already mentioned. It definitely has a black "STEAM CHINA."

The two known covers from the second voyage were both rated with the due 10 San Francisco postmark (one was later forwarded), and the "STEAM CHINA" is in black. The stampless cover (No. 8 in Table 1) contains a letter from the U.S.S. *Hartford* at Yokohama, famous as Farragut's flagship during the Civil War.

The final two listings in Table 1 are also from the same Macondray correspondence to San Francisco as the two March 20 covers. They are similar in usage. Both are franked with 10 cent 1861 U.S. stamps tied by "FORWARDED BY U.S. CONSUL Kanagawa Japan" in a fancy oval. There is a black straight line "CHINA STEAM" and a magenta "SAN FRANCISCO CAL. SEP 14 PAID" dated circle on each. Thus, on the third voyage of the *Colorado,* the steamship marking bears the words reversed.

Covers from later voyages of the steamship line (1868-1869) bear the magenta oval "CHINA AND JAPAN STEAM SERVICE" marking.

One question not resolved is where the "STEAM CHINA" or "CHINA STEAM" markings were applied. I mentioned previously the existence of other block-lettered postmarks at San Francisco—"U.S. SHIP," "WAY," "FOREIGN," "PURSER"—and it is possible that the markings were applied at the post office rather than at some office associated with the Pacific Mail Steamship Co. or on board ship. But they could have been applied elsewhere. Since the mail bags should have been sealed until they were opened at the post office in San Francisco, it is likely that the "STEAM CHINA" and "CHINA STEAM" markings were applied at the San Francisco post office.

As to why some markings from the first mail were marked in red and others in black, I have no explanation. The color appears to have been arbitrary. □

THE COVER CORNER
SCOTT GALLAGHER, Editor

ANSWERS TO PROBLEM COVERS IN ISSUE 161

Figure 1 shows a cover from Barbados to Boston in 1880 bearing a pair of one penny stamps of Barbados and a 5¢ U.S. postage due stamp.

A variety of answers came in on time (appreciated) and indicated the mystery to many of the rates from the Caribbean. Some thought the letter was double weight, since two pence equalled 5¢. One thought there was a carrier fee involved. A cogent analysis was received from Jamie Gough, whose postage due exhibit has won high national and international awards. He writes:

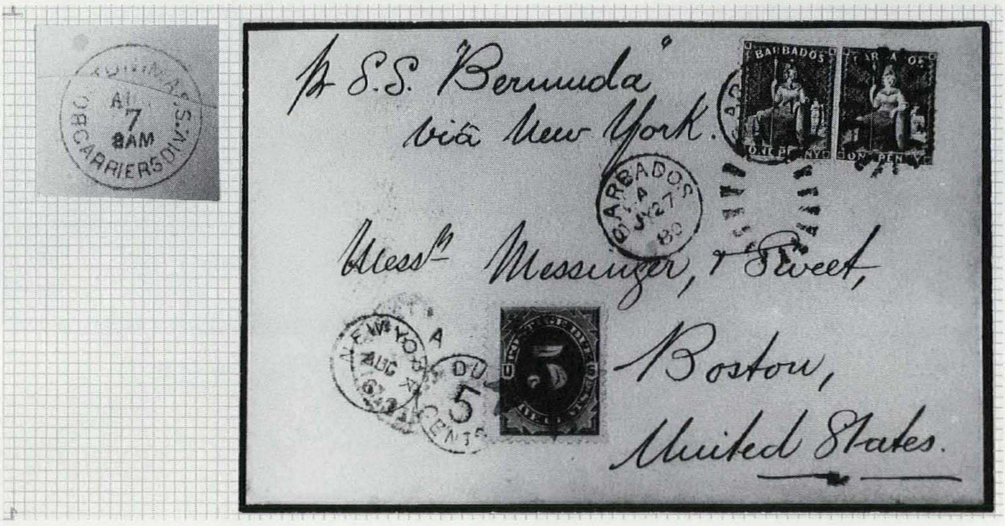

Figure 1. Barbados to Boston cover, 27 July 1880, backstamp "CARRIERS DIV. BOSTON MASS."

In 1880 Barbados was not a member of the UPU; it did not join until September 1, 1881. The 5¢ charge noted in New York was appropriate to all mail at the single rate arriving from non-UPU countries (except those with which the USA would have a bilateral arrangement). The 5¢ due appears to have been precanceled with the Boston Maltese Cross killer used on dues.

In the period of the UPU, especially the 19th century, the rules on franking and postage due were very simple and very rigid. What is generally not realized by most collectors today is the GPU/UPU was one of the earliest attempts at "free trade." The USA and the other founders of the union designed the UPU as a vehicle to foster trade and communications, consequently wanting governments to stop using their post offices as a key source of revenue for general government purposes. [To philatelists who collect Chile or Mexico, this is most obvious as rates fell tremendously with the admission to the UPU.] The underlying goal was to lower the barriers to postal use by almost all of the citizenry of the world.

Consequently, anytime a cover does not have a "T" marking of some sort while bearing postage due adhesives (the postage due adhesive was largely a convention used by UPU member states, though not all members), it is usually because the country of origin was not a member of the UPU. If a UPU country of origin did not place the "T" marking, then the dues probably do not belong to the cover. Note that this cover does not bear a characteristically British Caribbean colonial "T" marking since the "T" marking itself is a convention of UPU member states.

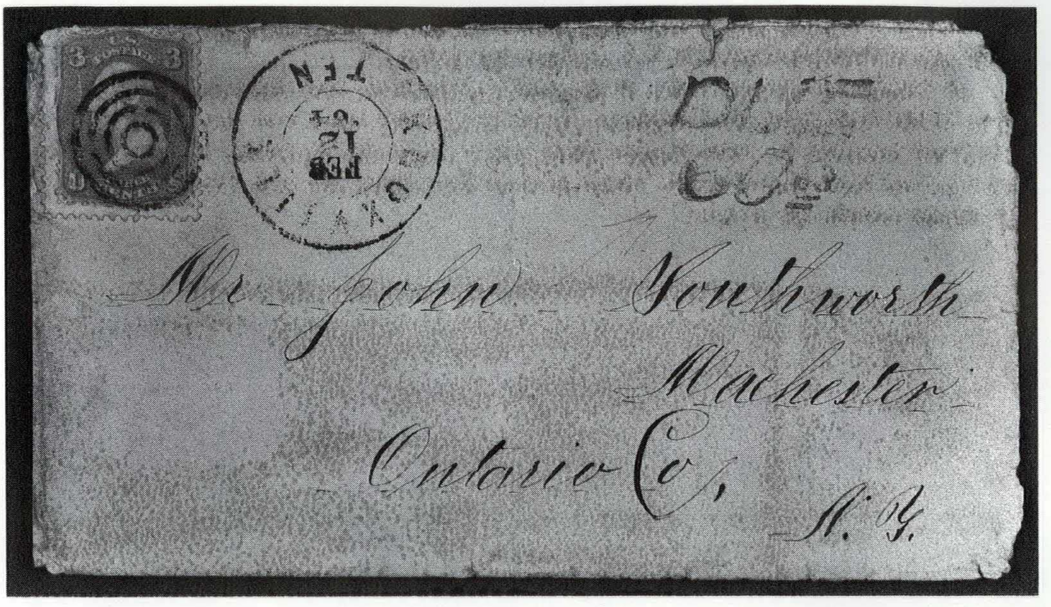

Figure 2. Knoxville, Ten., cover with puzzling "DUE" marking.

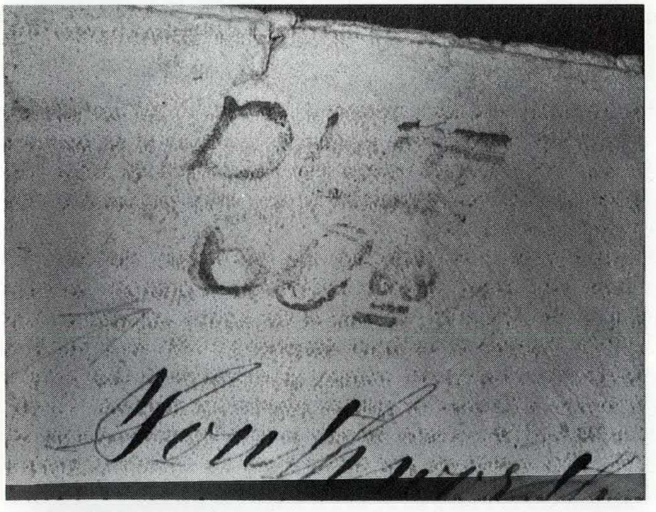

Figure 3. Enlargement of "DUE" marking on 1864 Knoxville, Ten., cover.

The rules basically stated that *only the country of origin* could determine postage due charges unless the country of origin was not a UPU member. And only the country of ultimate destination kept the money collected. This rigid rule was based on the observation (in early years) that countries tended to send as much unpaid/underpaid mail as they received from each other; the double deficiency then tended to make up for mail which the country of origin shipped abroad without compensation for the shipping costs.

In exhibits, I see a lot of very interesting, inventive and down-right funny reasons for due charges that simply did not exist. The key to spotting reasons for charges which do not exist is when you read, "an alert clerk in the destination post office . . . ," because the clerks on the receiving end had no authority to do so on international mail. Interestingly enough, while Great Britain was a founding member of the GPU/UPU (July 1, 1875), not all the British colonial postal administrations joined at that time—in fact, a few didn't join until twenty years later. This may say much about colonial autonomy despite any perceptions that may exist today about rule from London.

Thus, this was not a double weight (over ½ oz. and under 1 oz.) letter, and we appreciate Gough's explanation.

Figures 2 and 3 show a cover from Knoxville, Tenn., to Ma(n)chester, N.Y., during the Civil War. Several chided me for putting in this section such a simple non-scintillating item. However, there are some subtle sophisticated aspects to this letter. And what a response! A dozen verbal answers at Garfield-Perry, and written ones from Bernard Biales, Jerry Devol, Richard Frajola, Tom Kingsley, Van Koppersmith, Austin Miller, Hubert Skinner and Tony Wawrukiewicz. All correctly analyzed the marking as "DUE 6 Cts" with a double, or bouncing, strike of the marking implement. Some figured out that the cover weighed between ½ and 1 oz.

A thorough analysis of this "simple" cover was given by Richard Graham, who writes:

Re the Due 6 cts cover with Knoxville postmark of Feb. 12, 1864: Knoxville was occupied by Union forces, Burnside's troops, the 9th Corps, as I recall, coming down from Cincinnati via Kentucky and entered Knoxville on Sept. 2, 1863, according to one reference, or Sept. 9, according to another. My earliest dates with Knoxville double circle postmarks is in mid-December 1863, but it obviously took some time to receive the standard pattern double circle markings and I have other covers with mute markings—just a cancel on the stamp, etc., that date from earlier. The only one of these I can date, from an enclosed letter, is dated Dec. 13, 1863, and mail service from there may not have started before that. The earliest postmark date I have is Dec. 19, 1863.

Now, about the postal rate. As you know, it was 3 cents per half ounce at this time. However, the Act of March 3, 1863, effective July 1, provided for a double rate on all unpaid letters found in the mails, except properly endorsed and certified Soldiers Letters and the Navy counterparts. All other letters had double the unpaid balance charged as due postage. This remained in effect until the war ended, being again revised according to a bulletin of PMG Dennison dated May 1, 1865. After that, partially prepaid letters were simply charged whatever postage was due and totally unpaid letters (other than soldiers' letters, etc.) were marked "Held For Postage," and then sent to the DLO!

Thus, the problem cover had one rate unpaid, and thus weighed between ½ and 1 ounce. The due rate was doubled and 6 cents postage due charged under the law effective July 1, 1863.

The question of the due postage on such letters was the most frequently asked question I had during the years I edited the 1861 Section of the *Chronicle*.

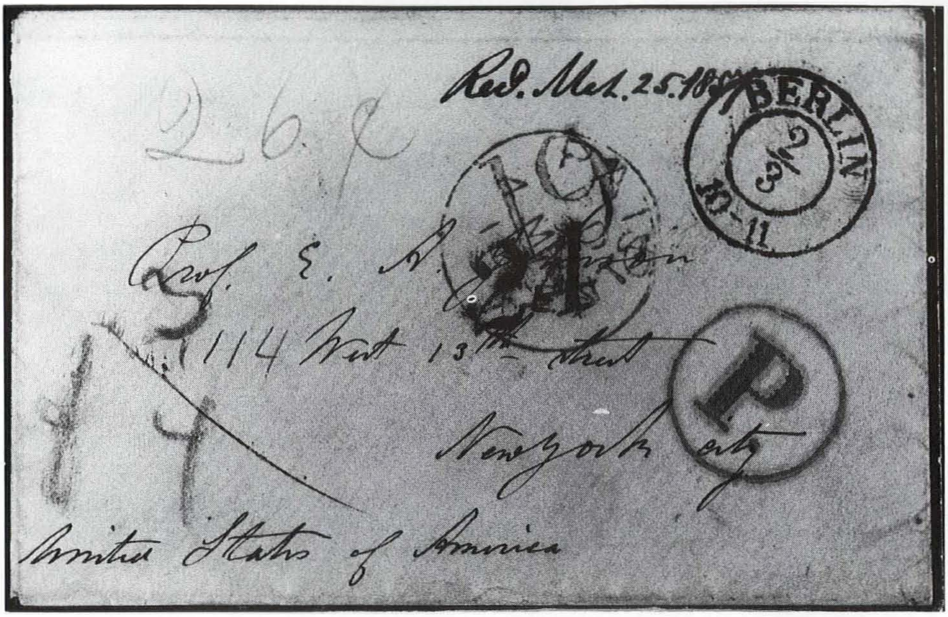

Figure 4. Germany to U.S. cover, 1857, with numbers "$1^{3}/_{4}$," "19," "24" and "26¢."

Figure 5. Hamburg-Cadiz cover, July 1842, marked "5R" and "ESTADOS UNIDOS."

PROBLEM COVERS FOR THIS ISSUE

Figure 4 shows a small envelope sent from Germany to the U.S. in 1857. Susan McDonald had a keen interest in transatlantic mail, and suggested just before her death that we use this item someday. It came from George Hargest, and has a number of markings on the front, and none on the back. The Berlin cds is in black; and the "PAID" (London?) and circled "P" are in red. There are four numerals: "1¾" in red, "19" in black, "24" in black, and "26¢" in pencil. Will you readers please attempt an explanation of these numerals, and cite how the letter got to New York?

Figure 5 shows a folded letter written in English by-lined "Hamburg 19 July 1842" and sent to Spain. The submitter is Antonio Torres of London (and Spain) who has just gotten married, and who may have an explanation. [*sic!*—**CJP**] On the front are "ESTADOS UNIDOS" and "5R," both in red. On the back in red is the receiving mark of Cadiz dated 9 August 1842. How did this letter get to Spain, and why is Malaga part of the address? The rate is five reales. Who got this, and was it divided?

Need some new problem covers. Will readers please try submittals? First just send a copy for consideration, and later we can arrange for the black and white photograph needed for the *Chronicle*. The item should be involved in some way with the U.S. during the 19th century. Please send something that seems puzzling to you, or strange, or possibly a faked item. Send these, comments, suggestions and answers to current problems to your Editor at the P.O. Box, or FAX to (513) 563-6287 within two weeks after receiving your *Chronicle*. □

NEW BOOK ON FORGED POSTMARKS

Have just received and read with keen interest the same day *Madame Joseph Forged Postmarks*, by Derek Worboys and edited by Roger West. This 122-page hardbound book has been published jointly by The Royal Philatelic Society and the British Philatelic Trust, both of London, England; and is available in America from Leonard H. Hartmann, P.O. Box 36006, Louisville, Kentucky 40233, phone (502) 451-0317 or FAX (502) 459-0538, at a price of $47.50 postpaid.

This is probably the best book on forged postmarks since *The Yucatan Affair*, published by the APS in 1974 and showing examples of over 1,200 faked markings by Raoul de Thuin. This book has over 400 fakes made by one person, "Madame Joseph" (a nom-de-plume) in Paris in the 1930s. As Robson Lowe writes, "Who is she? Would be an entertaining character to take to dinner."

The markings, mostly artful wood carvings and some metallic reproductions, do not have removable date slugs; so owners of stamps (mostly) and covers (few) can check against dates on items they have. This was helpful in analyzing covers associated with John A. Fox, since the markers found in his establishment (and now at the Philatelic Foundation in NYC) did not have removable date slugs either.

The markings covered are mostly, but not all, British-related, colonies included, with dates back to the 1880's. □

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