

THE CHRONICLE August 1996 (No. 171)

The
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of the U.S. Classic Postal Issues

August 1996

Volume 48, No. 3

Whole No. 171

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CHRISTIE'S

A CENSUS OF MULTIPLES (THREE OR MORE) OF THE 5¢ 1847

MALCOLM L. BROWN

There are certain issues in classic U.S. philately which do not go away. One of the most tenacious of these is the question of whether the 5¢ 1847 stamp can be plated. This question has been the subject of debate since at least the mid-1920's when Elliott Perry succeeded in plating the 10¢ 1847. Regardless of whether or not a full plating of the 5¢ stamp can be accomplished, the challenge continues to intrigue students of the 1847 issue. Indeed, work on the 5¢ plating appears to have accelerated and become more enthusiastic in recent years.

Past plating efforts have established the overall configuration of the 5¢ 1847 plate: we know that this plate, like the 1847 10¢ plate, contained 200 positions arranged in two side-by-side panes of 100 positions each, with each pane of 100 arranged in 10 horizontal rows by 10 vertical rows. The gutter between the two panes of the 5¢ plate was approximately 7 to 7.5 mm.

All available evidence indicates that the 5¢ transfer roll contained a single relief, which was placed in position for entering each of the 200 plate locations by the use of guide dots. As a first step, very light horizontal and vertical guide lines were scribed onto the plate, and then dots were placed at the intersections of these lines. These dots served to guide the placement of the edge of the transfer roll. The plate was, of course, a mirror image of the printed sheet it produced, and in describing the relationship of the guide dots to the positions with which they were involved it is easier to do so in terms of the printed sheet rather than the mirror-image plate. Thus on the printed sheet the guide dot for each position was located in the position immediately to the right, and, specifically, can be found in the left trifoliate of the position to the right.

Figure 1 shows the general area in which these guide dots are located.

Since each guide dot is a position guide for the position to its left, no guide dots appear in the first vertical row on the left of either pane, and the guide dots for the positions in the tenth vertical row of each pane appear in the selvedge to the right of that row. The characteristics of these dots, their shape, number (sometimes there is more than one guide dot for a given position), and their location within the trifoliate are useful in distinguishing some of the positions.

However, locating specific positions in relation to one another generally requires the study of multiples or margin position pieces. The intent of this article, and of the table which is its principal feature, is to provide a census of major multiples of the 5¢ stamp which have existed in the past and may still exist, and which may be useful to students in furthering this plating effort.

This table presents the listing of multiples of three or more stamps presently known to me. There have been unverified reports of the existence of a very large block, possibly amounting to most of a pane, but these reports have not been confirmed. Of course I would welcome reports of any multiples I have missed.

The multiples listed in this table include both those whose plate positions are known and those whose positions are not presently known. The number and size of the multiples whose position is known indicates that the material exists for the study of the characteristics of a large number of positions on the 5¢ plate.

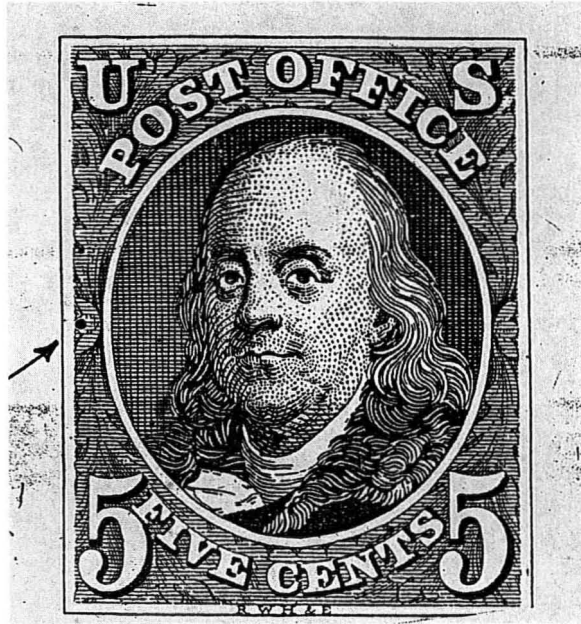


Figure 1. General location of guide dots on 5¢ 1847 stamp

The Left Pane

The multiples which would best assist in a study of the left pane are plate proofs.

Probably the most significant article which has previously appeared in the literature on this subject is one by Karl Burroughs in the 1947 *Essay-Proof Journal*, which documented the known large pieces of 5¢ plate proofs. According to Dr. Henry Marasse, whose article on 1847 plate proofs appeared in the last issue of the *Chronicle*, these plate proofs were probably made before the 5¢ stamp was issued on July 1, 1847.

As can be seen from the table, four large plate proof multiples account for over half of the positions on the left pane. There are 62 plated proofs in these blocks, and, with 6 overlapping positions, they involve 56 different positions. These plate proof multiples are as follows:

Position - Left Pane	Number	Color	Overprint Specimen
35-40, 45-50, 55-60, 65-70, 75-80	30	Black	Yes
31-34, 41-44, 51-54, 61-64	16	Brown	Yes
41-42, 51-52, 61-62, 71-74	10	Black	Yes
9-10, 19-20, 29-30	6	Black	No

At least six other positions on the left pane have been plated. The three corner positions not covered by the above four proof blocks are known, namely, 1, 91 and 100, the first being represented by a brown overprinted proof as well as known stamps. There is also a black proof example of position 81, and a pair of 89-99 has been plated.

The Right Pane

It is a curious fact that almost none of the known plate positions of the proof blocks are from the right pane. Of course, as the table indicates, there are several unplated plate proof multiples, and some or all of these may be from the right pane.

Three important right pane multiples are:

1. The reconstructed block of six, consisting of two vertical strips of three, positions 79-80, 89-90, and 91-100. This famous reconstruction, of a strip owned by Ashbrook which was joined in 1918 with one owned by Judge Robert Emerson, was last sold in the May 21, 1996, Robert A. Siegel Rarity Sale, where it realized a hammer of \$27,500.*

2. An irregular block of five, positions 82-83 and 91-93. This important item was sold in Philip Ward's April 26, 1943 sale of the William West collection.

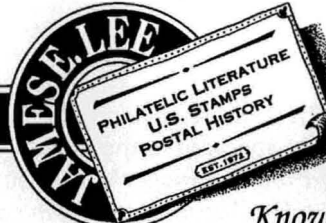
3. A horizontal pair of black plate proofs with "SPECIMEN" overprints in red, positions 89-90, which includes double transfer "B." This item was previously owned by the author, and later sold as lot 25 in Kelleher's sale of November 8, 1994, where it realized \$440. It is discussed in the article by Dr. Marasse referred to above.

The plating research of the 5¢ stamp has extended beyond the positions noted above, though some of this research has yet to be published. There is little doubt that study of the multiples listed in the table has aided in this research, and will continue to do so.

A factor which may make plating the 5¢ more difficult is that there are probably two states of the 5¢ plate. This makes the plating of the 5¢ stamp more complicated since both states of the plate will have to be charted for a complete plating. Nevertheless, the plating of the first state, which in all likelihood is the more common state, will probably help in the plating of the late state.

However these issues eventually turn out, the study of the multiples listed in this table will surely be helpful in this 5¢ plating work. □

***Editor's Note:** Current Scott Catalogue value for two strips of three plus premium for the two double transfers is \$4,950, suggesting that there is added value created by the reconstruction.



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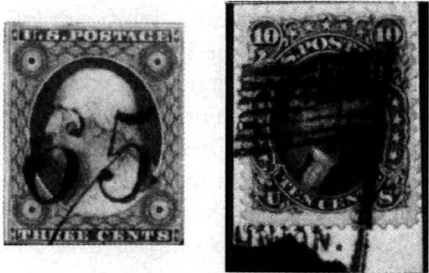
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5¢ 1847 PLATE MULTIPLES				
Qty	Size (HxV)	Description	Provenance	Plating
1	Blk 30 (10x3)	Unused, top 3 rows		1-10;11-20;21-30;L or R
1	Blk 30 (6x5) ¹	Pl. proof in black incl. Dot in S (Original block was 50)		35-40;45-50;55-60;65-70; 75-80L
1	Blk 16 (4x4) ¹	Pl. proof in brown		31-34;41-44;51-54;61-64L
1	Blk 16 (4x4)	Pl. proof in black	Kelleher sale (?)	47-50;57-60;67-70;77-80R
1	Blk 16 (4x4) ²	Unused	Crawford, Ackerman, Ward, Ishikawa ³ p.1	
1	Blk 12 (4x3) ²	Used; LR stamp is rejoined		
1	Blk 12 (6x2) ²	Used	1941 NYC find. Scott Stamp & Coin Co.	45-50;55-60L
1	Irreg. Blk 12 ¹	Pl. proof in black		31-32;41-42;51-52;61-62;71-74L
1	Irreg. Blk 11	Unused	Ackerman	
1	Irreg Blk 11	Used	Hawkins	
1	Blk 10 (5x2)	Unused; UL corner	Siegel 1967 Rarities, lot 8; Siegel June 9, 1992, lot 4	1-5;11-15L
1	Reconstr. Blk 10	Used; 5 pairs	Christie's sale May 5, 1993, lot 4003	Probably right pair
1	Horiz. strip of 10	Cover	Ackerman, Sweet, Ishikawa ³ p.8; Christie's Sept. 28, 1993, lot 22	91-100L
1	Blk 8 (4x2) ¹	Pl proof in black, incl. Dot below E		13-16;23-26L
1	Blk 8 (?) ¹	Pl proof		
1	Blk 8 (4x2)	Unused; RH margin	Caspary (Harmer Jan. 16-18, 1956, lot 19); Lilly (Siegel, Feb. 7, 1968, lot 1)	7-10;17-20L

5¢ 1847 PLATE MULTIPLES (p. 2)

1	Horiz. strip of 8	Unused	Wolfers Oct. 31, 1984, lot 272; Ishikawa ³ p.2	91-98L (?)
1	Irreg. Blk 8	Unused	Slater, Caspary (Harmer Jan. 16-18, 1956, lot 18); Lehman-Klein II (Christie's Sept. 1968, lot 21)	
1	Blk 8 (4x2) ²	Used	1941 NYC find; Sweet	Possible bottom row
1	Blk 8 (4x2)	Used	Waterhouse; Ward; Sinkler; Duckwall; Sweet	
1	Blk 8 (4x2)	Used	Hirzel; Swiss Museum; <i>Chron.</i> 113, p.23, Fig. 2	
1	Blk 8 (2x4)	Used; red grid cancels; reconstr. 2 vertical strips of 4	Hirzel; Swiss Museum	
1	Blk 6 (2x3) ¹	PI proof in black incl. Dot in S	Hackett (Harmer Feb. 1956 lot 60); Rust; Solens; A. Miller	9-10;19-20;29-30L
1	Blk 6 (3x2) ¹	PI proof in orange; LH stamps w/o guide dots		LH row of L or R
1	Blk 6 (3x2) ¹	PI proof in orange; dot in top margin of LR stamp		
1	Blk 6 (3x2)	Unused. LH margin. Blk is rejoined	Caspary (Harmer Jan. 16-18, 1956, lot 17); Ring (Harmer, Dec. 3, 1968, lot 2016)	
1	Blk 6 (3x2)	Unused	Siegel Rarities 1993 sale, lot 20	
1	Blk 6 (3x2)	Unused	Wolfers April 29, 1983 sale, lot 2330	
1	Blk 6 (3x2)	Unused	Siegel Rarities 1979, lot 19	
1	Blk 6 (?x?)	Unused	Hirzel; Swiss Museum	
1	Blk 6 (2x3)	Used; top margin	Ring (Harmer Dec. 3, 1982, lot 12)	
1	Blk 6 (2x3)	Used; Ashbrook reconstruction	Emerson Delux (Kelleher Nov. 16, 1946, lot 265); Kelleher Dec. 13, 1982, lot 12	79-80;89-90;99-100R incl Dble Transfers A&B

5¢ 1847 PLATE MULTIPLES (p. 3)

1	Blk 6 (2x3)	Used	Siegel Rarities 1978, Lot 24	
1	Horiz strip of 6	Used on piece	Hirzel; Swiss Museum	
1	Irreg. Blk 5	Unused. LL corner	West (Ward April 25-30, 1943, lot 5)	
1	Irreg. Blk 5	Used	Siegel Dec. 12-14, 1995, lot 167	
1	Horiz. strip of 5	Unused; RH margin	Harmer April 22, 1969, lot 152	
1	Horiz. strip of 5	Unused; LH margin	Kelleher Nov. 8, 1994, lot 557	
1	Horiz. strip of 5	Unused; end stamp torn	Marvin Schlanger	
1	Horiz. strip of 5	Used; RH margin	Sotheby, Oct. 21, 1981, lot 52	
1	Horiz. strip of 5	Cover with 10¢ 1847	Gibson (Ward, June 14-15, 1944, lot 31)	
1	Horiz. strip of 5	Cover with Canada Beaver	Gibson (Ward, June 14-15, 1944, lot 32); Ishikawa ³ p. 18	
9	Blk 4 ¹	Pl. proofs		
1	Horiz. strip of 4 ¹	Pl proof in black; top row		4-7 L or R
12	Blk 4 ⁴	Unused		
8	Blk 4 ⁴	Used		
1	Blk 4	Used; in light brown shade	Hirzel; Swiss Museum	
1	Blk 4	Used; in true brown	Hirzel; Swiss Museum	
1	Blk 4	Cover	Rohloff (Siegel, June 16, 1977, lot 138)	
1	Blk 4	Cover, Fredonia, NY	Knapp (Parke-Bernet, May 5-10, 1931, lot 2193); Ishikawa ³ p. 7	
1	Blk 4 + single	Cover, Philadelphia to England	Siegel Rarities 1993, lot 22	
1	Horiz. strip of 4	Unused	Kelleher, May 6, 1986, lot 151	

5¢ 1847 PLATE MULTIPLES (p. 4)				
1	Horiz.(?) strip 4	Unused; dark brown shade	Hirzel; Swiss Museum	
3	Horiz. strip of 4 ⁴	Used		
4	Horiz. strip of 4 ⁴	Cover		
1	Horiz. strip of 3	Unused; LH margin	Siegel Rarities 1990, lot 19	
1	Horiz. strip of 3	Unused	Caspary (Harmer, Jan. 16-18, 1956, lot 15)	
1	Horiz. strip of 3	Unused	Harmer, Jan. 24, 1968, lot 762	
1	Vert. strip of 3	Unused	Caspary (Harmer, Jan. 16-18, 1956, lot 16)	
1	Vert. strip of 3	Cover	Siegel, April 29, 1981, lot 24	
1	Vert. strip of 3	Cover	Siegel Rarities 1982, lot 143	
9	Horiz. strip of 3 ⁴	Used		
1	Irreg. Blk 3	Unused	Siegel, March 25, 1969, lot 15	
1	Irreg. Blk 3	Used	Herst, Feb. 28, 1968, lot 139	
1	Irreg. Blk 3	Used	Siegel, April 23, 1968, lot 11	
1	(2) Horiz. strip 3	Cover incl. DTs A and B	Siegel, Dec. 12-14, 1995, lot 543	78-80;88-90R
1	Horiz. strip of 3	Cover	Siegel, Dec. 12-14, 1995, lot 453	
1	Horiz. strip of 3+ 2x10¢	Cover to Nova Scotia	John R. Boker Jr. collection	

¹Karl Burroughs, "5¢ 1847 Plate Proofs," *Essay Proof Journal*, April 1947.

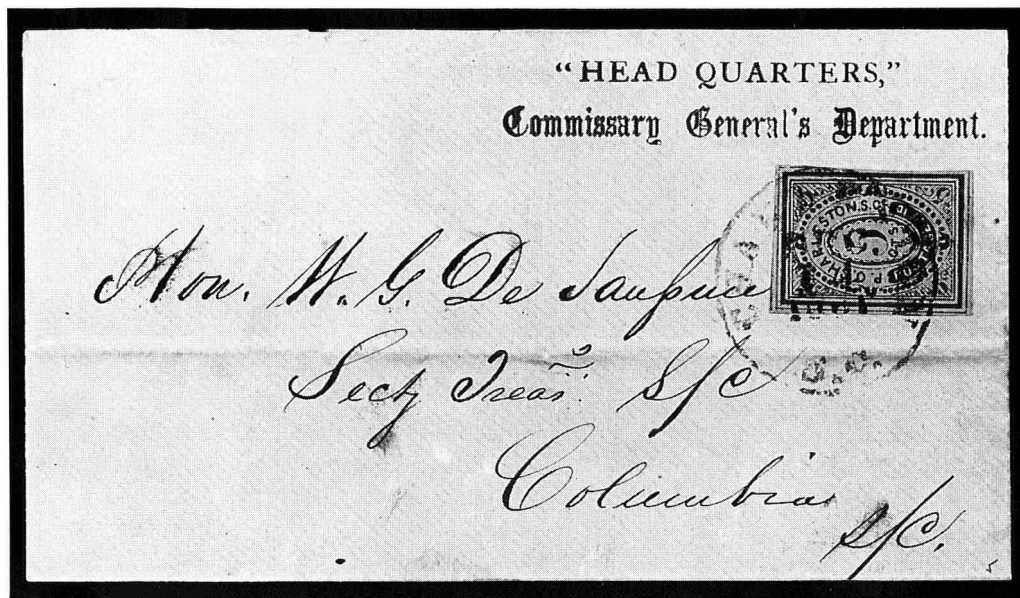
²Lester G. Brookman, *The United States Postage Stamps of the 19th Century*, Vol. I.

³Ryohei Ishikawa, *The United States Stamp 1847-1869: The Ryohei Ishikawa Collection*, privately published.

⁴Personal record book of Malcolm L. Brown.

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EARLIEST KNOWN USES IN THE 1851-1857 ERA
WILSON HULME, KEIJI TAIRA, RICHARD CELLER,
ELLIOT OMIYA and MARK ROGERS

This is the first comprehensive listing of the earliest known usage (EKU) for each plate of the United States 1851-1857 issues since Simpson/Alexander (1979). Some of these usages were discovered more than sixty years ago and reported by Carroll Chase and Stanley Ashbrook (*Stamps*, May 16, 1936). Others have been discovered only recently and have not been published previously.

Interest in this area remains high among collectors. The non-predictable nature of new EKU discoveries and the varied means of reporting such discoveries have made tracking them very difficult. Some, but not all, of these new discoveries have been reported in publications such as the *Chronicle*. In general, tracking down changes has been undertaken by individual collectors or small groups for their own use. Working lists so created have not been accessible to collectors at large.

Besides making this information widely available, we hope to improve the understanding of when individual plates were first used. This listing will provide a starting point, but we recognize that it is not sufficient by itself. First, there may be errors in the listings below, and we need your help to correct them. Second, we propose that the *Chronicle* become the place for reporting EKUs, including interim reports of new discoveries as well as recurring comprehensive summaries. We ask readers to scrutinize their collections for possible earlier dates of usage. We propose that any item which may be a new EKU be examined by at least two experienced platers of that issue. We have followed this rule with the items identified below as "New EKU" in the listings presented here, and believe that this cross-checking is essential to minimize errors. Our group also maintains a record of prior listed EKUs and other early items for each denomination, even though these may no longer be the earliest usages known. These listings provide background, context and analytical information to build a more complete record of the first usage of each plate.

Communications can be directed to any of the individuals named at the top of this article, or e-mail may be sent to:

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Keiji Taira: kg3ct57@slip.net

One Cent - Imperforate

Plate	Date	Reference	Origin
1 ^E	July 1, 1851	Scott Catalogue; Siskin Checklist p. 42. Two postmarked covers known	Boston, MA New York, NY
1 ^L	June 18, 1852	Scott Catalogue; Neinken One Cent p.107	
2	Dec 5, 1855	Scott Catalogue; Neinken One Cent p. 172	New York, NY
3	May 6, 1856	Ashbrook, Vol. I, p. 214	
4	April 8, 1857	Shreve's Auction May 30, 1996 lot #13 ("Fisher Sale"); Special Service p.119	Saco, ME

Three Cent - Imperforate

Plate	Date	Reference	Origin
"0"	Sept 8, 1851	Chronicle #12 p. 3	
1 ^E	July 1, 1851	The authors record over 40 items from more than 20 cities	
1 ^I	July 12, 1851	Chronicle #2 p.6	New York, NY
1 ^L	Oct 4, 1851	Scott Catalogue; Chronicle #68 p. 157	Syracuse, NY
2 ^E	July 23, 1851	Chronicle #65 p .19	New York, NY
2 ^L	Jan 12, 1852	Siegel Sale #533, July 18, 1978 lot #378; Chronicle #2 p. 6	Orwell, OH
3	Jan 15, 1852	Chronicle #12 p. 3; Siegel sale #533 July 18, 1978 lot 380	Philadelphia, PA
4	Mar 28, 1855	Chronicle #116 p. 255	Foxcroft, ME
5 ^E	July 19, 1851	Chronicle #55 p. 50	Mansfield, OH
5 ^L	Sept 3, 1855	Alexander/Simpson	
6	Feb 18, 1856	Chronicle #12 p. 3; "Fisher Sale" lot #19	Elmira, NY
7	Feb 9, 1856	Chronicle #138 p. 111	Haverhill, MA
8	Apr 14, 1856	Chronicle #12 p. 3	

Five Cent - Imperforate

Plate	Date	Reference	Origin
1	Mar 24, 1856	Scott Catalogue	Philadelphia, PA

Ten Cent - Imperforat

Plate	Date	Reference	Origin
1	May 12, 1855	Neinken Ten Cent p. 11; "Fisher Sale" lot 22	Eastport, ME

Twelve Cent - Imperforate

Plate	Date	Reference	Origin
1	Aug 4, 1851	Scott Catalogue; First Days Vol. 23 #4 p. 19; "Fisher Sale" lot 24	Brattleboro, VT

Carriers

Plate	Date	Reference	Origin
Franklin Carrier Plate 1	Sep 1851 issue date	No EKU information	
Eagle Carrier Plate 1	Jan 3, 1852	McKeel's May 24, 1948 p.360	

One Cent - Perforated

Plate	Date	Reference	Origin
1 ¹	July 25, 1857	PerfCentennial book p. 147	Castleton, VT
2	July 25, 1857	Scott Catalogue; Neinken One Cent p. 171	Philadelphia, PA
4	July 26, 1857	Scott Catalogue	
5	Jan 2, 1858	PerfCentennial book p. 149.	Baltimore, MD
7	Dec 1, 1857 ¹	Special Service p. 119	
7	Dec 31, 1857 ¹	PerfCentennial book p. 149; NeinkenOneCentp.361	NYandBoston SB and RRR
8	Nov 17, 1857	Scott Catalogue; PerfCentennial book p.150	
9	Sept 18, 1859	PerfCentennial book p. 150	Washington, DC
10	June 14, 1860	PerfCentennial book p. 151	Willamantic, CT
11	Jan 12, 1861	PerfCentennial book p. 151	
12	Jan 21, 1861	Scott Catalogue	New York, NY

¹Ashbrook's *Special Service*, 1952-1953, lists the December 1 date with no details. On page 149 of the *Perforation Centennial* book, Morris Fortgang pictures a printed circular dated December 30, 1857; the postmark is December 31. Neinken's *One Cent* book lists December 30, 1857. There is no indication why Fortgang and Neinken did not use Ashbrook's earlier listing.

Three Cent - Perforated

Plate	Date	Reference	Origin
2 ^L	July 16, 1857	Reporter #6	South Acton, MS
3	July 16, 1857	Chronicle #30 p. 3; Siegel Sale 533 July 18, 1978 lot 428	Schenectady, NY
4	May 9, 1857	Chronicle 71 p.-124	Farmington Falls, ME
5 ^L	April 15, 1857	New EKU not previously reported	Baltimore, MD
6	April 30, 1857	Chronicle #71 p. 124	Washington, DC
7	Feb 28, 1857	Chronicle #71 p. 124. Three covers known	New York, NY(2) Philadelphia, PA
8 ^o	Apr 15, 1857	New EKU not previously reported	Moore's Ordinary, Va.
9 ^E	Sept 14, 1857	Reporter #6; Stampazine Auction #1253; two items recorded	Rockford, IL Stockbridge, MA
9 ^L	Jan 8, 1859	New EKU not previously reported	
10 ^E	Jul 11, 1857	Chronicle #54 p.10	Addison, NY
10 ^I	May 13, 1858	New EKU not previously reported	New York, NY
10 ^L	Jan 3, 1859	Alexander/Simpson	
11 ^E	July 29, 1857	Alexander/Simpson	
11 ^I	May 1, 1858	Reporter #6	
11 ^L	Dec 17, 1858	Reporter #2	Salem, MA
12		No EKU information	
13		No EKU information	
14	Oct 26, 1857	Reporter #6	
15	Oct 30, 1857	Alexander/Simpson	
16	Oct 28, 1857	Alexander/Simpson	
17	Mar 16, 1858	New EKU not previously reported	Lancaster, MA
18	Nov 19, 1857	Alexander/Simpson, Chronicle #2, p. 6	
19	Dec 26, 1857	Chronicle #44 p. 14	
20	Oct 5, 1858	New EKU not previously reported	
21	Jan 18, 1859	Alexander/Simpson	
22	May 11, 1859	Alexander/Simpson	
23	May 24, 1859	Reporter #4	
24	June 18, 1859	New EKU not previously reported	New York, NY
25	June 25, 1859	New EKU not previously reported	Boston, MA

26	Aug 11, 1859	Reporter #3	
27	Sept 2, 1859	Alexander/Simpson	New York, NY
28	May 11, 1860	New EKU not previously reported	Mansfield Centre, CT

Three Cent - Perforated (Alpha Plates)

For several early 3¢ Type II plates, top row and centerline reconstructions exist which have not yet been tied to a plate number. Dr. Chase assigned "alpha" designations to these various reconstructions. H and I are the left imprints for plates 13 and 17. As no one has seen either plate number, it is not known which letter belongs to which plate number. P, R, S, U, V, W, X, Y and Z represent top row and centerline reconstructions of plates 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21 and 22. Due to the scarcity of multiples, these reconstructions have not yet been tied to plate numbers. Some items that have been reported previously are omitted from the following listing because plate identification and/or the date are in question. We would appreciate the opportunity to examine any 3¢ Type II multiples which can assist in resolving the alpha plate identifications.

Plate	Date	Reference	Origin
H	Mar 11, 1858	New EKU not previously reported	
I	Jan 27, 1858	New EKU not previously reported	Lynn, MS
P	Nov 20, 1857	Reporter #6	
R	Dec 4, 1857	Reporter #6	New York, NY
S	Jan 22, 1858	Reporter #3	
U	Sept 24, 1858	Reporter #6	Detroit, MI
V	Feb 8, 1858	Reporter #3	Richmond, VA
W	Oct 29, 1857	New EKU not previously reported	Framingham, MA
X		No EKU information, probably mid 1859	
Y		No EKU information, probably late 1857	
Z ^E		No EKU information, probably early 1859	
Z ^L		No EKU information, probably mid 1859	

Five Cent - Perforated

Plate	Date	Reference	Origin
1	Aug 23, 1857	Scott Catalogue; "Fisher Sale" lot 32	New Orleans, LA
2	May 4, 1860	Scott Catalogue	

Ten Cent - Perforated

Plate	Date	Reference	Origin
1	July 27, 1857	Scott Catalogue; "Fisher Sale" lot 33	Lancaster, PA
2	April 29, 1859	Siskin Checklist p. 6; Siegel Sale #412 lot 874	New Orleans, LA

Twelve Cent - Perforated

Plate	Date	Reference	Origin
1	Jul 30, 1857	Scott Catalogue	
3	Jun 1, 1860	PerfCentennial book, p. 88	

Twenty-Four Cent - Perforated

Plate	Date	Reference	Origin
1	July 7, 1860	Scott Catalogue	

Thirty Cent - Perforated

Plate	Date	Reference	Origin
1	Aug 8, 1860	Scott Catalogue	

Ninety Cent - Perforated

Plate	Date	Reference	Origin
1	Sept 11, 1860	Scott Catalogue	

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CHICAGO POSTMARKS OF 1863 WITH INITIALS
LEONARD PISKIEWICZ

The Chicago double circle postmarks with initials or letters have been described occasionally in the philatelic literature in recent decades, beginning probably with Delf Norona's 1935 noting of their existence in his *Cyclopedia of United States Postmarks and Postal History*.¹ Richard Graham has written about them and their meaning in articles in the *Chronicle*^{2,3} and *The American Philatelist*⁴ and in a chapter in Harvey Karlen's *Chicago Postal History*.⁵ This article deals with the letter postmarks used on intercity mail and does not address similar letter postmarks used on drop letters.

The letters observed in these postmarks include RA, SB, GA, X and U (see Figure 1). In previous articles, the letter U was not reported, but a single example appeared in a recent Richard C. Frajola, Inc. auction.⁶ Graham reported the research of Richard McPherren Cabeen, who indicated that not enough cover data had been accumulated to correlate letters with geographic patterns of cover origins or destinations. But Graham did report that Cabeen noted a

connection between the letter combinations and the initials of some of the post office personnel at the time. Mr. Cabeen gave the following names as being listed in Andreas' *Chicago*, Vol. III, page 601.

John L. Scripps, Postmaster (and part owner of the Chicago Tribune)
George B. Armstrong
Samuel Bangs
A.F. Bradley
P.D. Leeward
Robert A. Gilmore⁷

At first glance, this explanation seems plausible, but problems appear when details are checked. The reference to "Andreas' *Chicago*, Vol. III, page 601" does not check out. A.T. Andreas' *History of Chicago* contains nothing of the sort of information quoted above on page 601 of Volume III. A search through all the volumes of Andreas' *History of Chicago* failed to locate this reference. And Andreas is not known to have written another three-volume work entitled simply *Chicago*. Apparently Cabeen got his references mixed

¹Delf Norona, *Cyclopedia of United States Postmarks and Postal History*, reprint ed. (Lawrence, Massachusetts: Quarterman Publications, 1975), p. 323.

²Richard B. Graham, "Chicago Double Circle and Local Postmarks with Initials," *Chronicle*, Vol. 21, No. 4 (Whole No. 64)(Nov. 1969), pp. 155-59.

³Richard B. Graham, "Chicago Postmarks of 1863 with Initials," *Chronicle*, Vol. 35, No. 4 (Whole No. 120)(Nov. 1983), pp. 266-68.

⁴Richard B. Graham, "Chicago Postmarks with Initials," *The American Philatelist*, Vol. 86, No. 3 (March 1972), pp. 203-05.

⁵Richard B. Graham, in Harvey M. Karlen, *Chicago Postal History* (Chicago: Collectors Club of Chicago, 1971), pp. 94-104.

⁶Richard C. Frajola, Inc., Auction No. 53, Oct. 9, 1993, lot 143x.

⁷Graham, "Chicago Double Circle . . .," p. 157; the "G" of "Gilmore" was mistakenly underlined instead of "A" in this reference.



Figure 1. Chicago "GA" letter postmark, Nov. 9 [1863]

in his hand-written notes on the letter cancels that he distributed to interested collectors, including Graham, in 1967 (furnished to this author by Graham).

However, most of the names listed by Cabeen were associated with the post office in one way or another in the 1860's. George B. Armstrong was assistant postmaster under Scripps and is listed as such in the Chicago city directories of 1863 and 1864. Samuel Bangs is not listed as a clerk in the Chicago Post Office in the *U.S. Register* for either 1863 or 1865 (there was no *U.S. Register* for 1864), nor is that name listed in the Chicago city directories of 1863 and 1864. However, the name of George S. Bangs is well known as successor to Armstrong as superintendent of the Railway Mail Service; Bangs previously had been postmaster of Aurora, Illinois. Bradley appears in the *U.S. Register* for fiscal year 1865 as a Chicago Post Office clerk, but Leeward does not. However, both Bradley and Leeward are mentioned by Andreas as chief clerk and assistant, respectively, on the first officially recognized R.P.O. run on June 9, 1864 between Chicago and Clinton, Iowa.⁸

Robert A. Gilmore is alleged to be the connection to the letters RA, and, indeed, Gilmore was postmaster of Chicago, appointed November 16, 1866, serving until his untimely death by drowning in Lake Michigan on August 9, 1867. However, during 1863 Gilmore served in the Union Army in the 26th Illinois Regiment; he was mustered out as lieutenant-colonel October 27, 1864.⁹ Further, Gilmore did not appear in Chicago city directories of 1863 or 1864. At the close of the Civil War, Gilmore resumed a position in Chicago with the Chicago & Rock Island Railroad as General Ticket Agent.¹⁰

⁸A.T. Andreas, *History of Chicago*, Vol. I (Chicago: A.T. Andreas, 1884), p. 390.

⁹A.T. Andreas, *History of Chicago*, Vol. III (Chicago: A.T. Andreas, 1886), p. 558.

¹⁰Charles Ulysses Gordon, "The Postmasters of Chicago," typewritten manuscript, Oct. 1953, Chicago Historical Society Library.

The individuals listed under Scripps above were involved in the early years of the R.M.S. and the Chicago Post Office, but linking them to this letter postmark experiment of late 1863 is problematical. Supporting documentation of their involvement *during 1863* is lacking.

But what of the postmarks themselves? What do they tell us? The postmarking devices used during this time were originally designated by Norona as types A-14 and A-15 (Figure 2),¹¹ differentiated by the distance between the first "C" of Chicago and the "T" of Ill. These postmarks are known used from September 7 through September 10, 1863 *without* letters. The earliest postmark *with* letters is known from September 11, 1863 (a Friday), and the latest known is November 13, 1863 (also a Friday). Postmarks with year dates and without letters resumed by November 16, 1863 (Monday), but I have not seen any postmarks from November 14 or 15, 1863 (since these dates were Saturday and Sunday, the scarcity of postmarks on these dates is understandable). During this time, the Chicago Post Office was open seven days a week, but with reduced hours on Sunday.



Figure 2. Chicago CDS's, Norona Types A-14 and A-15

The cancelers duplexed with these CDS's initially were four-ring targets, but after one to two weeks of use these were changed to simple cut corks. In general, these corks lasted from a few days to a week of use before being replaced.

Examination of more than one hundred letter postmark covers and photocopies of covers has provided some very revealing data. First, it is apparent that each of the Norona types A-14 and A-15 represents two distinct postmarking devices. Figure 3 illustrated the four devices used. Differences between the sub-types a and b, which are very subtle, can be illustrated in black and white by the orientations of the letters indicated by the added lines. The differences are best shown by overlaying transparencies of the sub-types. The different cut corks used with the CDS's frequently served to verify differentiation of the sub-types. It should be noted that additional devices may have existed but were not found among the covers studied.

Considering the fact that four devices were used for the letter postmarks, I then tabulated each sub-type by letters and postmark dates for the 100+ covers examined for the nine week letter postmark period. Different devices were used with different letter combinations at different times, suggesting that specific devices were not assigned to specific individuals but rather were all mixed together and locked up overnight; the following day the devices were sometimes used with the same letters but frequently were not. On most days, I have found two devices used, but I have recorded three days (October 1, October 7 and October 16) on which three devices were used. On ten different days, I have found two letter combinations used in the same device on the same day.

¹¹Norona, *op. cit.*, p. 324.



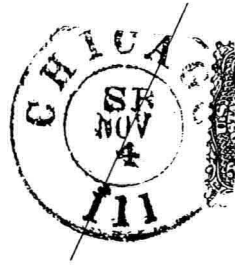
A-14a



A-14b



A-15a



A-15b

Figure 3. Chicago CDS's, Norona sub-types A-14a and b, A-15a and b

A fascinating correlation of letters and devices soon became apparent. Letter combinations RA and X were associated exclusively with each other, while SB and GA formed their own association. The associations are manifest in two distinct ways. First, paired letters, e.g., RA and X, are found used in the same device on the same day or successive days, sometimes going back and forth, e.g., RA to X to RA, etc. That is, the letters RA and X were removed and replaced in a given device for use in applying postmarks. The same pattern of use is observed for SB and GA.

Second, and more fascinating, is the geographic distribution of cover designations as related to the letters (see Table 1). The vast majority of RA and X covers are addressed to states east of Lake Michigan and the Illinois-Indiana state line (including Kentucky). Likewise, the vast majority of SB and GA covers are addressed to western states, including two covers to Mississippi. Such correlations are apparent if one examines the list of letter postmark covers in Karlen's *Chicago Postal History*,¹² but Cabeen's sample of covers was smaller than the group studied here and, apparently, Cabeen allowed exceptions to the correlations to shape his conclusion. Of 109 covers with readable addresses which I examined, only six failed to fit this east-west separation scheme.

The fact that outgoing mail was separated into eastern and western groups and received postmarks that were never used concurrently in both groups is corroborated by a fleeting reference to the "Eastern Room" in a contemporary account of the distribution area of the Chicago Post Office.¹³ Similarly, a reference to the "western room" of the Cairo, Illinois post office appears in a similar account.¹⁴ These accounts and the evidence

¹²Graham, in *Chicago Postal History*, pp. 102-03.

¹³*The Beginnings of the True Railway Mail Service* (Mobile Post Office Society, 1989), p. 15; reprint of a publication originally issued in 1906 by the Lakeside Press, Chicago, for private circulation.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 18.

of the postmarks indicate that an initial separation into eastern and western destinations was made on outgoing mail, perhaps in a separate sorting before the final sorting for direct posting to post offices and for intermediate distributing offices, but certainly before post-marking. In any case, it appears that postmarking of the sorted mails was accomplished in physically separate locations, *e.g.*, the “Eastern Room” and the “Western Room.”

Even more intriguing than this east-west division of letter combinations are the distinctions within the letter pairs. RA cover destinations concentrate in Kentucky, the New England States, Michigan and New York. X covers, while less numerous, show some concentrations: New Hampshire (Concord, from the Quimby correspondence), Pennsylvania (three covers, all to Pittsburgh), New York (including two to New York City), Indiana and Kentucky. The large number of covers to Kentucky in the RA category reflects the fact that most of them bear “CAMP DOUGLAS EXAMINED./PRISONER’S LETTER.” oval markings. However, of three covers from a commercial correspondence to Hopkinsville, Kentucky, two show X postmarks. Has anyone ever seen a Camp Douglas cover with a postmark letter combination other than RA?

TABLE 1. Letter Postmarks vs. Destinations

RA (60)	X (19)	SB (24)	GA (10)	U (1)
20 - Kentucky ¹	4 - New Hampshire ⁴	12 - Illinois	2 - Illinois	1 - New Hampshire ⁵
18 - New England ²	3 - Pittsburgh, Pa.	5 - Iowa	2 - Iowa	
7 - Michigan	3 - New York	1 - Wisconsin	2 - Wisconsin	
7 - New York	2 - Indiana	1 - Missouri	1 - Minnesota	
1 - Indiana	2 - Kentucky	1 - Mississippi	1 - Mississippi	
1 - South Carolina	1 - Michigan	1 - New York ⁶	1 - Mass. ⁶	
1 - Missouri ⁶	1 - Ohio	1 - New Hampshire ⁶	1 - Canada West	
1 - England	1 - Mass.	1 - England ⁶		
4 - unreadable ³	1 - Maine	1 - unreadable		

¹includes 16 with Camp Douglas EXAMINED marking

²New England breakdown:

6 - New Hampshire (incl. 4 Quimby)

5 - Massachusetts

3 - Connecticut

3 - Vermont

1 - Rhode Island

³includes 1 with Camp Douglas EXAMINED marking

⁴all 4 to Quimby, Concord, N.H.

⁵to Quimby, Concord, N.H.

⁶violates east-west separation scheme

Covers with SB postmarks are addressed primarily to Illinois towns outside Chicago, with a few to Iowa and other western states. GA covers show addresses predominantly to the north and west of Chicago.

In addition to the 100+ covers studied here, there are 24 covers listed (by description only) in Karlen's book¹⁵ (and originating in Cabeen's notes) that apparently are not reflected in this study. These listings show the same destination distribution.

The distribution basis of the letter combinations is clearly geographic. But could this be related to the clerks in the Chicago Post Office? This seems unlikely if each letter combination was limited to one individual clerk. Combinations RA and SB can be found on all days of the week during this nine week period, though not enough covers have been seen to account for every day of the nine weeks. One would have to argue that clerks worked essentially every day of the week or very irregular schedules with different days off week to week to account for this finding. Besides, one must remember that RA and X often used the same device while SB and GA used another device. This is hardly consistent with the notion of a specific device being assigned to a specific clerk.

Obviously, outgoing mail was sorted by the Chicago Post Office according to the destination before postmarking. To the extent that the letters in the postmarks may relate to clerks, it is possible that clerks familiar with separation schemes for the east or west were assigned the letter postmarks. More likely, however, postmarking and sorting tasks were done by different clerks who were able to distinguish among outgoing mail routes, essentially rail routes.

In 1863 there were about a dozen mail routes emanating from Chicago. It was not immediately obvious how the postmark letters might relate to the mail-carrying railroads, but one tantalizing coincidence furnished a clue. Covers bearing GA postmarks are addressed primarily to regions north and west of Chicago, regions where the dominant rail line was the Galena and Chicago Union Railroad. Could GA signify the Galena line?

The Michigan Central Railroad is the logical choice for outgoing mail with RA postmarks addressed to Michigan, New York and New England (conveyed eastward by antecedents of the New York Central). But what, then, would have been the connection to Kentucky, destination of many RA covers? A possibility is the Louisville, New Albany and Chicago Railroad (commonly known as the Monon Route), running between Louisville, Kentucky and Michigan City, Indiana. Mail could have departed from Chicago eastbound on the Michigan Central and then could have been transferred to the Monon at Michigan City.¹⁶ The Michigan Central Railroad used the terminal facilities of the Illinois Central on the lakefront south of the Chicago River. This depot was known as the Randolph Street Station,¹⁷ and its direct descendant still exists near the corner of Michigan Avenue and Randolph Street and is still known as Randolph Street Station (currently used by the Illinois Central and the South Shore Line). It seems quite plausible that RA signified Randolph Street Station.

¹⁵Graham, in *Chicago Postal History*.

¹⁶J. David Baker, *The Postal History of Indiana* (Louisville, Kentucky: Leonard H. Hartmann, 1976), pp. 586, 607.

¹⁷George H. Douglas, *Rail City Chicago USA* (San Diego: Howell-North Books, 1981), pp. 31, 35. Depots used by railroads were also found in two contemporary sources: (a) *Halpin & Bailey's Chicago City Directory for the Year 1863-64* (Chicago: Halpin & Bailey, 1863); (b) *Chicago Business Directory* (Chicago: W.S. Spenser, 1864).

The apparent correlation of letter combinations GA and RA with rail routes prompted an attempt to correlate all railroad mail routes departing from Chicago in 1863 with the letter combinations. A published statement by George Armstrong, then assistant postmaster, indicated, "There are 48 arrivals and departures of mails from and to all parts by railroads diverging from Chicago."¹⁸ With arrivals most likely equaling departures, this statement indicates 24 outbound trips per day. During 1863, there were eleven route agent mail routes emanating from Chicago tabulated in the *Report of the Postmaster General* for 1863 and 1864. These routes are listed in Table 2 with pertinent data from the Reports, together with the postmark letter combinations that appear to pertain to each route. Since there are eleven routes and only five known letter combinations, at least some letter combinations must refer to more than one route.

Armstrong's statement about "48 arrivals and departures" on a daily basis is substantially supported by the data in Table 2. The data indicate an absolute minimum of 19 round trips per day (presumably with Sundays excluded), but the three routes showing six trips per week all are annotated to indicate that six per week was the minimum, and, in fact, compensation for these routes reflected the rates for two trips per day. Therefore, consistent outbound traffic of 22 trips per day (again, Sundays excluded) can be inferred from the data, close enough to Armstrong's assertion and leaving room for an extra trip or two on the busiest days, depending perhaps on extra trains in railroad schedules. In any case, these eleven routes accounted for substantially all mail departing Chicago in late 1863.

The postmark letter assignments in Table 2 are based on comparison of cover destinations with the areas served by the routes. On this basis, the correlation of letter combinations with expected routes of travel is very high (about 90%). It is particularly interesting that five routes appear to have been GA routes. All five of these routes departed Chicago from the Galena & Chicago Union's station and trackage on the north side of the Chicago River in 1863, including the route to Galesburg on the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy. The CB&Q did not have access to Chicago on its own tracks to the south side of the downtown areas until June 20, 1864.¹⁹ Therefore, postmark letter combination GA apparently refers not to the railroad but to the station area operated by the Galena line. In view of the probability that the letters RA also referred to a station, it is entirely consistent for GA to refer to a station also.

The situation with letters SB, however, seems different. Covers with SB postmarks were destined primarily for Illinois towns and probably departed Chicago via the Illinois Central, the Rock Island and the Alton Railroads, all of which left Chicago in a southerly direction but from different stations. If SB was to serve as a common identifier, it could be interpreted as "South Bound."

The X postmarks can be correlated with destinations along the Pittsburgh, Ft. Wayne and Chicago Railroad with a southward connection to Kentucky and an eastern connection across Pennsylvania to New York City and onward to New England. But the meaning of X remains an enigma. Perhaps some designation containing "cross" (e.g., cross-country, cross-roads) or some title containing the word "express" could be the source of this letter. An intriguing possibility is that the station used by this railroad was located at Canal and

¹⁸*U.S. Mail and Post Office Assistant*, Nov. 1863, reprint ed. (Chicago: Collectors Club of Chicago, 1975), Vol. I, p. 151.

¹⁹Charles L. Towle, "Chicago's First Railroad—Postal Pioneer," *Chronicle*, Vol. 38, No. 2 (Whole No. 130)(May 1986), p. 134.

TABLE 2. Railroad Mail Routes Diverging from Chicago, 1863¹

Letters in p'mark	Route No.	Termini	Corporate title of carrier	Distance (miles)	Trips/week	Annual pay	Ann'l cost/mile
X	9051	Pittsburg to Chicago ²	Pittsburg, Ft. Wayne, and Chicago ²	469½	12	\$93,900.00	\$200
U-?	12501	Toledo to Chicago	Michigan Southern and Northern Indiana	242	12	36,300.00	150
RA	12506	Detroit to Chicago	Michigan Central	285¼	12	42,787.50	150
GA	11501	Chicago to Milwaukie ²	Chicago and Milwaukie and Chicago ²	87	12	8,700.00	100
GA	11502	Chicago to Freeport	Galena and Chicago Union	121	12	12,100.00	100
GA	11503	Chicago to Clinton	Galena and Chicago Union	138	6+	13,800.00	100
GA	11505	Chicago to Galesburg	Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy	164.7	12	19,764.00	120
GA	13001	Chicago to Green Bay	Chicago and Northwestern	244	12	24,400.00	100
SB	11504	Chicago to Davenport	Chicago and Rock Island	183	12	18,300.00	100
SB	11506	Chicago to St. Louis	Chicago and Alton	288¾	6+	28,475.00	100
SB	11507	Chicago to Centralia	Illinois Central	253	6+	— ³	100

¹taken from 1864 *Report of the Postmaster General* (except postmark letter assignments)

²old spellings of "Pittsburg" and "Milwaukie" as used in *Report* . . .

³amount paid for FY 1863: \$42,100; no figure given for FY 1864

Madison Streets, a few blocks west of the Post Office and *across* the South Branch of the Chicago River. However, that station was known as the Union Depot, also used by the Chicago and Alton and the Cincinnati and Chicago Air Line Railroads.

Two unknowns still remain unresolved. First, the letter U is known from one example, a cover from the large Quimby correspondence to Concord, New Hampshire. Many such Quimby covers are known with RA and X postmarks, and the lone example with the letter U offers no clue as to routing. It is conceivable that use of the letter U was a single instance of mistaken use in place of X, since the Pittsburgh, Ft. Wayne and Chicago Railroad departed from the Union Depot. Secondly, the present state of the data does not allow an unequivocal assignment of a letter combination to the Toledo & Chicago route. There is a lack of covers to provide strong evidence for an assigned letter designation: for example, a cover addressed to northern Ohio. Since it was one of the highest paid routes (in terms of dollars per mile), this is a curious situation. Resolution of this quandary will probably require the discovery of a cover to a northern Ohio destination.

Considered in its entirety, this explanation for the array of letter combinations shows plausible consistency. The chart in Figure 4 summarizes the above discussion and illustrates the relatively simple distribution scheme. The Eastern Room dispatched mail on three mail routes—to Detroit (RA), Pittsburgh (X) and Toledo (possibly U?)—a very simple coding system. Judging by the relative numbers of covers surviving, the Eastern Room accounted for about three-quarters of outgoing mail. This rudimentary code would have been easy to follow, facilitating dispatch of the relatively large volume of mail.

The Western Room, in contrast, would have handled about a quarter of the total outgoing mail, supplying eight routes. GA-coded mail was dispatched to five routes leaving from the Galena Station, while SB mail was distributed to the remaining three routes departing from three separate stations. This would have been only a first-step separation code. A full set of eight separate codes for all eight western routes may have been thought to be more complicated than it was worth or may not have been thought necessary or appropriate for the problem the code was intended to solve.

The foregoing discussion presents an explanation of WHAT the letter combinations represent. There remains the question of WHY they were used. It seems clear that this was an experiment that failed or produced no significantly useful results. One would not expect government bureaucrats to publicize a failure in which they were involved. Therefore, it seems improbable that any reference to this failed experiment would be found in any government document, and to date none has been found. Consequently, it remains to reconstruct the intent of the experiment from what is known of the mail handling problems at the time in the Chicago Post Office.

Chicago assistant postmaster George B. Armstrong proposed and implemented several measures in attempting to rectify the problems in mail distribution by the Chicago Post Office and, in a more general sense, by the entire United States Post Office. This led him to formulate the *en route* distribution of mail on railway cars that became the Railway Mail Service.

Aside from the delays caused by sorting at distributing post offices (there were three dozen listed in the 1866 *PL&R*²⁰), Armstrong was very concerned with what he considered the unacceptably large amount of misdirection of mail. In the first of three letters to Third Assistant Postmaster General A.N. Zevely describing in detail his proposal for reforming

²⁰U.S. Post Office Department, *The Postal Laws and Regulations*, reprint ed. (Holland, Michigan: Theron Weirenga, 1981), Regulations section, p. 15.

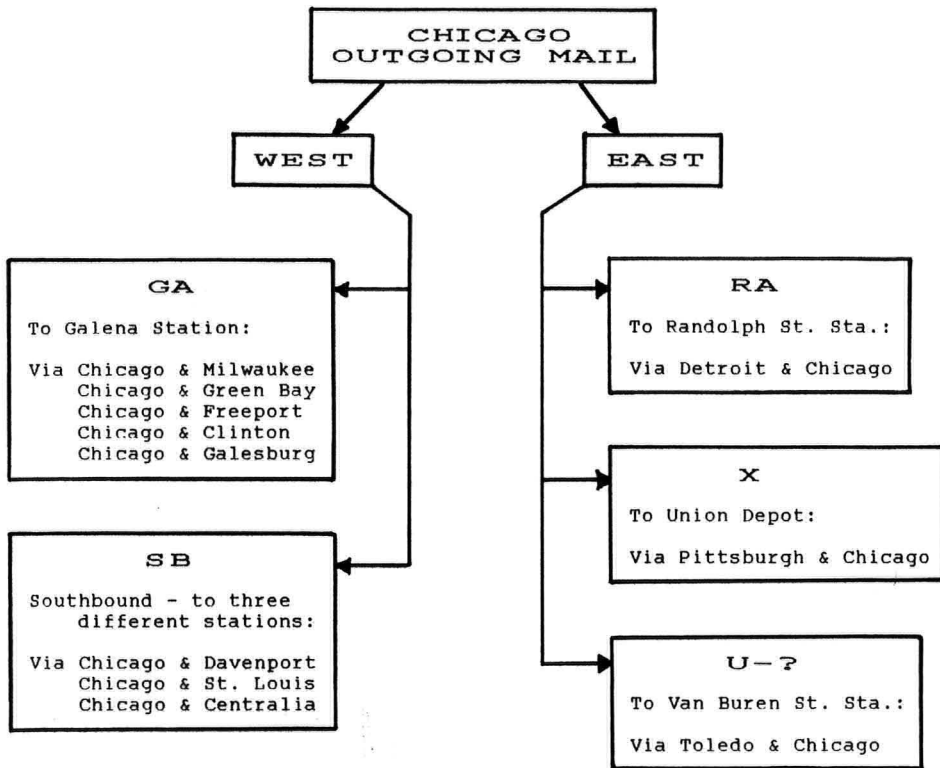


Figure 4. Apparent letter-code distribution system for Chicago outbound mail, 1863

the Post Office mail distribution system (May 10, 1864), Armstrong stated, “. . . no small amount of misdirected packages, as is well known to the post office, daily travel in the mails . . .”²¹ That Chicago had a particularly large problem in this regard is highlighted by data from the 1863 *Report of the Postmaster General*. In a table listing (among other items) the number of misdirected letters so badly directed that they were sent to the Dead Letter Office, the Chicago Post Office is listed as having the highest number, having sent 6,786 such letters to the DLO, while the second highest, Boston, sent only 413.²²

One of the factors that Armstrong considered important in reducing misdirection was the elimination of wrapping letters to each post office in wrapping paper, an opportunity for making a mistake in direction:

It is proper to repeat, however, that both in large and small offices misdirections of packages are known to be frequently made; and this constant exposure to liability of misdirection of whole mails is very objectionable. There is only one way to remedy this: To dispense with the use of wrappers entirely, except in the case of mails to distant places where they are required to protect letters from attrition and separation in transit. In the plan submitted, wrapping will be done away with, excepting in the cases just named; and as the quantity of paper used for this purpose will be comparatively tri-

²¹*Beginnings of the True Railway Mail Service*, p. 24.

²²U.S. Post Office Department, *Report of the Postmaster General, 1863*, reprint ed. (Holland, Michigan: Theron Weirenga), Table No. 15, p. 50.

fling, the saving in this item of expense will be considerable, while the objections to the use of wrappers are removed.²³

The importance of this seemingly minor proposal was succinctly expressed in the official *History of the Railway Mail Service* published in 1885:

. . . Mr. Armstrong pointed out objections to the then existing method of mailing direct, and made a suggestion which, having afterwards been adopted, proved to be of incalculable benefit to the service.

It was simply to dispense with wrappers for letters or packets of letters, and, instead, to tie them together so that one of the letters of legible address be *facéd outside*. By this simple method not only paper, labor, and the time of wrapping and writing were saved, but the commission of many errors in writing the direction was entirely prevented, and the means afforded of quickly detecting and correcting errors in bagging; whereas with the wrappers, which it was forbidden to open except at the place of address, errors were perpetuated from hand to hand, in transit, without the opportunity of correction, and letters were thus continually being miscarried and delayed in reaching their proper destinations.²⁴

Could this have been the basis of the letter postmark experiment? Could the elimination of wrapping have been implemented so that the letters in the postmarks could easily be seen by clerks bagging letter packages, providing the clerks a guide as to the direction of each letter packet? It is apparent that routing information was the function of the postmark letters. If wrapping were eliminated, the postmark letters could theoretically serve a useful purpose. Even if wrapping were not eliminated, the postmark letters could still have served as a direction guide for the clerks doing the wrapping.

Letters recorded in the personal letterbook of Chicago Postmaster J.L. Scripps (still extant, in the Smithsonian's National Postal Museum) indicate that experiments in the elimination of use of wrapping paper on letter packages were conducted approximately one year previous to the letter postmarks experiment. The following letter to the postmaster of Boston documents perhaps the first attempt at this innovation:

Oct. 4, 1862

Sir:

By the direction of W.A. Bryan, Chief Clerk of the P.O.D., who is now in this city, the letter packages made up at this office for Boston, will not for several weeks to come, be enclosed in wrappers but securely tied with twine. The packages will be composed of 80 letters each. The object of the experiment is to test whether letters so done up will pass to destination as free from damage in handling and friction in transit as when enclosed in wrapper. The saving in wrapping paper, if the plan should be adopted after a successful trial, will be large.

I would be pleased to have your own views in regard to this matter after the expiration of say ten days from the date of the receipt of this note.

²³*Beginnings of the True Railway Mail Service*, p. 26.

²⁴Quoted in *Beginnings of the True Railway Mail Service*, p. 8.

Truly Yrs
J.L. Scripps P.M.
G.B. Armstrong A.P.M.

P.M.
Boston, Mass

I am requested to ask [unreadable] to do up the packages for this office in the same manner - say for a month.

A follow-up letter in Scripps' letterbook addressed to Geo. W. McLellan, Second Asst. P.M. General, further describes these experiments:

Oct. 22, 1862

Sir:

In reply to yours of the 10th instant, I have to say that when W.A. Bryan, Esq., Chief Clerk of the P.O.D. a fortnight since, he instructed me by [unreadable] of expenses to dispense with wrappers [unreadable] for packages for certain of the larger offices for a period of thirty days. Baltimore is one of the designated places. I am satisfied that the mails may be sent in this manner with perfect safety. But the Clerks prefer the old method at which they are expert to one with which they are not familiar, and for that reason do up the packages in a very [unreadable] manner. I trust the Department will not wholly abandon the experiment upon so partial a test. I am not at present having packages tied up in the manner in use in New York for circulars. The packages are secure from coming to pieces, while the envelopes provide a sufficient protection for the enclosures. The adoption of this method will save the Department from thirty to fifty thousand dollars per annum, now expended for wrapping paper.

Very Respectfully
J.L. Scripps P.M.

This letter makes two significant observations: (1) the clerks were resistant to change and (2) the experiment in Chicago was continuing. In addition to discontinuing wrapping, the Chicago Post Office had, some years previously, discontinued way-billing of letters dispatched direct to post offices, eliminating a costly and increasingly useless exercise.²⁵

No further letters regarding the discontinuance of wrapping are found in Scripps' letterbook, but it can be surmised that the initial experiments were successful. A notice published in the *U.S. Mail and Post Office Assistant* in November 1864 read in part, "As far as practicable, the wrapping of mail packets, especially to neighboring offices, may be discontinued. Care should be exercised to see that all packages are firmly secured with twine."²⁶ Thus, it appears likely that outgoing Chicago mail, rather than being wrapped, was faced and bundled with twine, allowing the postmarks with initials or letters to be visible to postal clerks.

In summary, the data from this study indicate that the initials or extra letters in the upper date slot of the postmarks most likely refer to train stations for outgoing mail routes.

²⁵*Beginnings of the True Railway Mail Service*, p. 14.

²⁶*U.S. Mail and Post Office Assistant*, p. 198.

To be sure, there are still points to be clarified, such as the meanings of the letters X and U, and the designation for the mail route to Toledo. Also, the nuances of the distribution scheme with respect to letter combinations GA and SB, where the areas served by the two groups of mail routes overlapped, are by no means clear from the cover data. However, the overall distribution scheme is substantially clear from the cover evidence.

The correlation of approximately 90-95% of the letter combinations on the covers studied with anticipated routes of travel may reflect the degree of misdirection decried by Armstrong in his proposal for Post Office reform. The use of these letters in postmarks may well have been coupled with experiments in dispensing with wrapping of letter packages in an attempt to reduce the amount of misdirection.

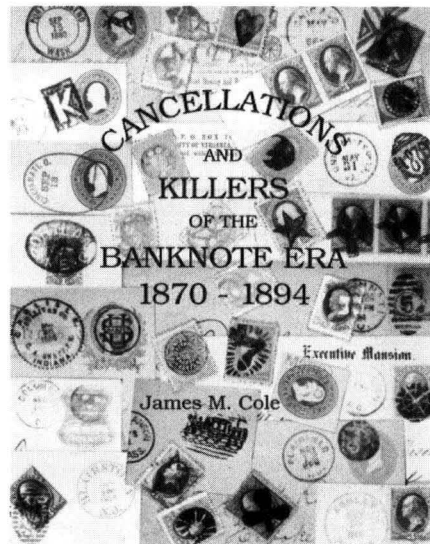
I wish to acknowledge the assistance of many collectors, too numerous to mention, who have provided copies of covers from their collections for this study. In addition, I wish to acknowledge contributions of significant information by Harvey Karlen and Seymour Stiss. I do not regard this study as completed, and solicit further information and copies of letter postmark covers, especially covers that might shed additional light on the handling of these most unusual postmarked items. □

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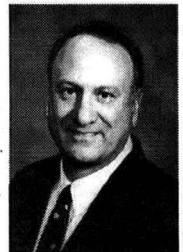
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MORE ABOUT THE 1865 NEWSPAPER AND PERIODICAL REPRINT
WILLIAM E. MOOZ

The article published in the November 1993 issue of the *Chronicle*¹ did not suggest the proper listing for the reprints of the 5¢ Newspaper and Periodical stamp. As we have seen, the Scott catalogue, following Luff, errs in the statement that the total number of stamps from all printings of the 1865 1¢ reprint was 6,395. This error apparently occurred because Luff did not take into account the number of stamps provided by the second and third printings in 1881 and 1884. This meant that he was 10,000 stamps short in his accounting, and that the total number of stamps sold was 16,395. The catalogue record also errs in identifying only a single soft paper printing by the American Bank Note Company (PR8) and attributing it to 1880. Proper listings might follow the format below:

1875

REPRINT OF 1865 ISSUE

Produced by the National Bank Note Company

Perf. 12

Hard white paper, issued without gum

PR5 5¢ dull blue (10,000)
dark blue
block of four

a. Printed on both sides

b. Produced by the Continental Bank Note Company from new plates, perf. 12
(quantity unknown)

c. Produced by the Continental Bank Note Company from new plates, imperforate
(quantity unknown)

1881

REPRINT OF 1865 ISSUE

Produced by the American Bank Note Company

Perf. 12

Soft porous paper, issued without gum

PR8 5¢ bright blue (5,000 maximum)

1884

REPRINT OF 1865 ISSUE

Produced by the American Bank Note Company

Perf. 12

Soft porous paper, issued without gum

PR8a 5¢ dark blue (645 minimum)

NOTE: 750 stamps which were remainders from the regular 1865 issue of this stamp were initially sold as reprints by the Office of the Third Assistant Postmaster General because of delays in obtaining the reprints. These 750 stamps cannot be identified as different from the regularly issued stamps.

¹William E. Mooz, "The Special Printings of the 1865 Five Cent Newspaper and Periodical Stamp," *Chronicle*, Vol. 45, No. 4 (Whole No. 160)(November 1993), pp. 261-72.

**VARIETIES OF UNITED STATES OFFICIAL STAMPS:
90¢ NAVY SHORT TRANSFER AND 3¢ TREASURY DOUBLE IMPRESSION
ALAN C. CAMPBELL**

One of the rewards of collecting in a neglected field such as the United States official stamps of 1873-1884 is the heightened chance of making new discoveries. Over the years, my own interest has been primarily oriented towards cancellation studies. Not until recently have I begun to study the plate and printing varieties, in part because these stamps—despite the haste in which they were produced—were actually printed with great uniformity. Through general osmosis and some patient coaching by other collectors, I have become able to recognize most of the more obvious varieties, such as the 15¢ Interior, 12¢ Navy, 6¢ State and 24¢ Treasury double transfers, the 10¢ State and 30¢ Treasury short transfers, the 6¢ Navy line through “N,” and the 10¢ Navy plate scratch. All of these plate varieties are detectable by the naked eye, and all are now listed in the Scott specialized catalogue, thanks in part to articles that appeared in this section under the previous editor.¹ A number of other varieties—chiefly double transfers—have been found by eagle-eyed specialists, but no master listing has ever been published. The most comprehensive guide we have is a series of articles, department by department, that appeared in *Official Chatter*, the house organ of Rollin C. Huggins, Jr., between July 1987 and October 1992. The 2¢ Executive foreign transfer of the 6¢ Agriculture, a subtle variety first described by Admiral Combs, sounds spectacular in theory, but in my experience it is difficult to appreciate what you can't see.² Still, as they say, even a blind chicken pecks a piece of corn once in a while.

In Figure 1, we illustrate an unused 90¢ Navy stamp which has the unusual distinction of containing both plate and printing flaws, alongside a normal plate proof for comparison.³ Preprinting paper creases of this one millimeter width are seldom encountered on the regular official stamps. They are also sometimes found on the 2¢ and 6¢ 1875 special printings of the Executive set. Unlike the regular issue Bank Note stamps and most other classic U. S. postage and revenue stamps, preprinting paper creases on official stamps are almost invariably horizontal. The explanation for this phenomenon is fairly straightforward. In intaglio printing, the plates were ordinarily fed lengthwise on the flat bed under the impression cylinder, in order to get more even pressure from a longer pass. Disregarding the sheetlets of the Department of State dollar values, 90 of the 99 plates used to print the official stamps were one hundred subject plates, narrower in width than in length. Unlike two hundred subject plates, these were fed top to bottom through the press. Most preprinting paper creases occur perpendicular to the direction of printing, when on rare occasions the dampened paper buckled under pressure and doubled over on itself, in effect ironing the pleat into place and preventing ink from being transferred to the masked portion. The only official multiple I know of which demonstrates this is an imperforate

¹See Alfred E. Staubus, “Short Transfer Variety on the 10¢ State Department Stamp,” Vol. 43, No. 1, Whole No. 149 (February, 1991), pp. 47-51; Staubus, “Double Transfer Variety on the 90¢ Interior Department Stamp,” Vol. 43, No. 3, Whole No. 151 (August, 1991), pp. 200-204; Staubus, “The 12¢ Navy Department Double Transfer: Plate Position 50,” Vol. 43, No. 4, Whole No. 152 (November 1991), pp. 272-274; Rollin C. Huggins, Jr., “That Elusive Crack,” Vol. 43, No. 3, Whole No. 155 (August, 1992), pp. 204-207.

²W. V. Combs, “2¢ Executive Official: A New Double Entry,” *The American Philatelist*, Vol. 75, No. 12 (September, 1962), pp. 900-901. The catalogue erroneously lists this variety as a double transfer.

³My thanks to Lester C. Lanphear III for photographing all items in this pair of articles.



Figure 1. 90¢ Navy short transfer with preprinting paper crease, and normal plate proof

right margin block of four of the 2¢ Navy greenish black trial color proof on wove paper in the Robert L. Markovits exhibit collection.⁴ Uncharacteristically, the preprinting creases affecting three stamps in this block are mainly vertical, but in two places they taper to a point, suggesting that such flaws were sometimes internalized and extended only across a few stamps.

On closer examination of the 90¢ Navy stamp, it is also apparent that a portion of the frame design, outside the six-pointed star in the upper left corner, is missing. At first glance, it occurred to me that this might be an example of an incomplete print where the thickness of the overlapped paper resisted being pressed fully into the incised plate. Later, another collector happened to ask me in passing if I owned a copy of the 90¢ Navy short transfer variety. After being prompted that Rollin C. Huggins, Jr. had identified an example of this variety in his collection, I checked my reference photocopy and found there a matched set of blocks taken from the upper left corner of proof sheets on India paper. The short transfer variety clearly occurs at position 1. Reexamining my own stamp, it was immediately obvious that not only did the missing portions of the design match, but the wing margins to the left and top, showing no trace of the adjoining stamps' framelines, confirmed that this copy was also from position 1.

In Figure 2, courtesy of Lester C. Lanphear, we reproduce the top plate number and imprint strip of six for the 90¢ Navy stamp, cropped from photographs taken from the plate proof sheets once owned by the Earl of Crawford and Congressman Ackerman. This illustration confirms that the 90¢ Navy short transfer at upper left variety actually occurs at both positions 1 and 5, with the incompleteness of design being more exaggerated at position 1. Incidentally, at position 14, a much less pronounced weakness in the upper left frame line also occurs. According to Baxter, almost all short transfers, especially those incomplete at the top, are caused not by a partial rocking in of the relief roll at that position, but instead by a failure to ease off pressure on the return pass at the position above, allowing the transfer roll to rotate onto the previous entry and iron out a portion of the design.⁵ This theory, while plausible, would obviously not cover partial short transfers

⁴Although plate proofs in greenish black exist both imperforate and perforate and have been known for years, they are still not listed in the catalogue

⁵James H. Baxter, *Printing Postage Stamps by Line Engraving*, The American Philatelic Society, 1939, pp. 60-61.

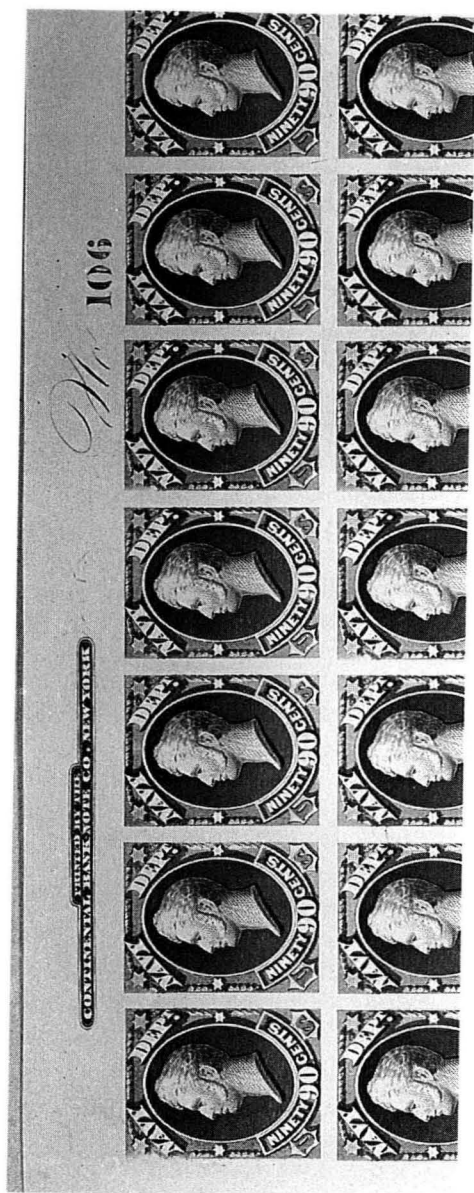


Figure 2. 90¢ Navy plate proof imprint and plate number strip

affecting a corner of the stamp and occurring in the top row of such plates as the 90¢ Navy. Instead, I would follow Staubus, who, in his article on the 10¢ State short transfer, cited Ernest A. Kehr's explanation that such varieties were caused by a siderographer's overzealous burnishing out of excess metal ridges forced up along the forward edge of the transfer relief as it rocked onto the plate.

The 90¢ Navy short transfer at upper left is a constantly recurring plate variety, unchanging for every stamp from positions 1 and 5, which deserves to be listed in the catalogue. At present, I know of only two other used copies, one in the collection of Rollin C. Huggins, Jr. and the other in the collection of Alfred E. Staubus. Between July 1, 1873 and July 1, 1879, only 12,270 90¢ stamps were requisitioned by the Navy Department, meaning that at most 246 examples of this variety were issued. Many copies were postally used on packages and lost to philately, so this variety is undoubtedly quite scarce now. Still, because it is so obvious and unmistakable once one knows what to look for, I am confident that it is only a matter of time before more examples are discovered and reported.

In Figure 3, we have the discovery copy of the 3¢ Treasury double impression, along with a normal plate proof for comparison. Baxter distinguished among three different varieties: a slipped or "kiss" impression, where the damp paper on the inked plate shifts slightly prior to printing; a true double impression or double print, where an already printed sheet is run in error through the press a second time; and a pulled impression, when a printed sheet is improperly removed from the plate, causing the still wet summit of the ink ridges to shift and smear. He also remarked that the appearance of a slipped impression can result when the impression cylinder irons out a paper buckle or air bubble, although more often this results in a crease.⁶ Other students use the term "kiss" impression to describe the outcome when the corner or side of a sheet, in being lifted off the plate, slips back down and touches or "kisses" the plate again, resulting in a faint, usually partial second impression. The term "slurred print," seldom encountered in this country, has been coined to describe a stamp where some linear duplication of the design was caused by the paper "cockling, flapping or moving during the actual printing."⁷ It has been theorized that the appearance of a double impression can be simulated by a double offset, where still wet ink from a freshly printed sheet is transferred to the back of another sheet placed on top of it, and then retransferred back to the original.⁸ It has also been suggested that some double impressions may result from stamp paper having been used to blot a portion of an insufficiently wiped plate: then, instead of being discarded, this blotted paper was inadvertently run through the press. Historically, double impressions, with their dizzying, out-of-focus appeal, have long been considered major printing errors worthy of separate catalogue listings, whereas slipped and pulled impressions, with their less dramatic fuzzy or smeared appearance, tend to be dismissed as interesting oddities. Regrettably, I have not been able to locate a well-illustrated analysis explaining in a scientific fashion how to tell one variety from another on classic United States stamps, and some students remain deeply skeptical

⁶Baxter, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

⁷L. N. & M. Williams, *Fundamentals of Philately* (State College, Pa.:The American Philatelic Society, Inc., 1971), p.132.

⁸Jerome S. Wagshal, "Some Comments on Plate and Printing Varieties on 19th Century Stamps and the Expertization Process," *Opinions V* (New York: Philatelic Foundation of New York, 1988), p. 42. However, if as has been suggested tissue was interleaved between freshly printed stacked panes as early as 1869, then it is extremely unlikely a double offset could have occurred on the Banknote stamps. Likewise, the sharp pregumming offsets sometimes found on the back of official stamps would have been caused not by ink being transferred between stacked wet sheets, but by a blanket transfer resulting from an inked plate being run through the press without paper and leaving a legible impression on the cylinder blanket, which was then transferred in reverse onto the back of the next sheet.



Figure 3. 3¢ Treasury double impression and normal plate proof

as to whether it is possible to definitively attribute most examples of these varieties to a specific printing misadventure.

Among the various experts I consulted, the consensus of opinion was that the term “double impression” should be reserved to describe only those stamps where pressure from the cylinder caused two separate and distinct misregistered printings of the image.⁹ In the classic scenario, the printer’s assistant confuses an already printed sheet with blank stock and places it face down on the reinked plate: when run through the press again, the result is two equally strong but misregistered impressions. However, I am told by advanced students that the appearance of two equally strong misregistered impressions is a very rare phenomenon in U.S. philately. In most of the recorded examples on regular issue Bank Note stamps, either one impression is strong but incomplete, or else it is weak and complete.¹⁰ In the latter case, which is typical for most printed-on-both-sides varieties, a more plausible explanation is that the printing began with an initial weak impression, caused by a partially inked or overwiped plate or by insufficient dampening of the paper. Even though this was not accountable “security paper” *per se*, once this weak impression was noticed, an attempt might still have been made to salvage the paper by proceeding with a second printing, either on the front or back. Judging from the poor quality control exercised over the grilling of stamps during an era of widespread government corruption, the same lax standards may well have applied to misprinted or misperforated stamps¹¹. A double impression created in this way would have a weak first impression and a second strong impression, the latter slightly misregistered horizontally, vertically, and even in rotation from the former. Of course, extreme misalignments, resulting in two-headed monsters, would ordinarily be discarded as printer’s waste.

⁹I am indebted to Jerome S. Wagshal, Calvet M. Hahn, Bernard Biales and Eliot Landau for sharing their thoughts on intaglio printing and the likely causes of double impressions. I am especially grateful to Eliot Landau for his meticulous review of an earlier draft of this article.

¹⁰In examining photographs of seven different double impressions on the 3¢ Bank Note regular issue, I found five of them to be quite similar, showing a light first impression vertically misregistered from a second strong impression. My sources were Calvet M. Hahn, “The National Bank Note Issues,” *The Collectors Club Philatelist*, September-October 1989, p. 315; Hahn, “Salmagundi,” *op. cit.*, March-April 1989, pp. 114-116; Wagshal, *op. cit.*, pp. 43-47; and photocopies of the Levi records, courtesy of Mr. Wagshal.

¹¹Eliot Landau, “Letter to the Editor,” *The Collectors Club Philatelist*, September-October 1989, pp. 345-46.

In another sequence of events, as the printer turns the power wheel and the traveling bed bearing the plate is forced under the impression cylinder, he might notice that an air bubble or paper buckle is preventing the paper from seating properly. He could then back the plate out, smooth the paper down, and make another pass, without lifting the sheet and reinking the plate. Since the same reservoir of ink in the engraved grooves would be expended to produce both impressions, a gradient from dark to light might be observed on the first false or ghost impression, and a reverse gradient from light to dark on the second. The ink used to print these stamps had a thick, paste-like consistency, and only a portion of the ink in the grooves was actually transferred to the paper on a single impression. Such a process might yield only a row or two of double-printed stamps from the top or leading edge of the plate, and these stamps would be less dramatic both in degree of misregistration and in the intensity of their images, than double impressions produced by pulling the paper and reinking the plate. However, if the printer had backed out the plate in order to lift and reposition a misaligned sheet of stamp paper, then the two impressions could be radically offset. At this time, no definitive nomenclature has been agreed upon to distinguish among these various types of double impressions.

Having said all that, I hesitate to speculate exactly how the 3¢ Treasury double impression was produced. Perhaps a whole sheet was printed in this way, perhaps only a row or two. One impression is weak throughout, while the other, shifted .3 mm. upwards, is consistently strong. The doubling is most evident across the top of the letters of "TREASURY" and also in the upper part of Washington's profile, where the horizontal lines of the shaded vignette background impinge onto his nose and forehead. The illusion of horizontal misregistration is caused by vertically superimposing one oval forehead over another. The double frame line at the bottom of the strong impression is intrinsic to the die itself, and the weak impression extending beyond it is very faint. The certificate of authenticity issued for this stamp by the Philatelic Foundation (#0267798, 12/31/92, "O74 VAR, used double impression") mentions a light diagonal crease at the top. This may be significant, in as much as at least one of the other regular issue Bank Note double impression varieties also shows a horizontal crease, giving credence to the notion that a paper buckle might have spoiled the first impression.

This 3¢ Treasury double impression variety is less dramatic than the well-known 3¢ War double impression (O116b), an example of which is shown in Figure 4 (PFC #0128332, 3/8/84, courtesy of Lester C. Lanphear III), alongside a normal plate proof for



Figure 4. 3¢ War double impression and normal plate proof

comparison. I know of at least three examples of this variety, all of them unused, all presumably from the same sheet and possibly from the row. Here, the first impression fades quickly from top to bottom, while the second impression, shifted .8 mm. upwards, has a reverse gradient, from light at the top to strong at the bottom. Consequently, the resulting image appears to be .8 mm. shorter than a normal stamp. Had the second impression been shifted downwards, the image would have been elongated by .8 mm.



Figure 5. 90¢ Navy double impression

A double impression of the 6¢ Post Office stamp has been authenticated but never listed in the catalogue. The catalogue does list a double impression variety for the 2¢ Post Office stamp (O48b), but most of the purported examples I have seen show only a fuzzy bleeding in the bold numeral “2” and in the wording “OFFICIAL STAMP,,” which seems more typical of excess welling ink rather than a true double impression. The *ne plus ultra* of all official double impressions is of course the unique 90¢ Navy, ex-Colonel E. H. Green, currently in the exhibit collection of Robert L. Markovits, shown in Figure 5.¹² In this spectacular stamp from the right hand sheet margin, the first partial impression is very strong and offset 3.5 mm. from the complete second impression out into the selvage. Conventional explanations for double impressions are useless when confronted with a stamp like this. Aside from the blotting paper theory advanced earlier, the only possible interpretation I can offer for this error is that the paper was misaligned horizontally and the plate fed sideways into the press; then, after only the right side of the first vertical row of stamps was printed, the plate was backed out and the paper lifted and repositioned correctly. Such an explanation might also apply to the most spectacular of all Bank Note double impressions, a 3¢ green regular issue (147b), where the first strong impression, complete except for the top 20%, is offset a staggering 5 mm. south and 1 mm. west of the second complete impression. This tall stamp, tied on a cover to Westport, New York, is clearly from the bottom row of the sheet, since the perforating gauges were ordinarily set wider around a sheet’s perimeter. Of course, a sheet with only one row of wildly misprinted stamps would stand a much better chance of escaping destruction as printer’s waste. □

¹²Photograph courtesy of Christie’s, catalogue of June 12, 1991 sale, Lot # 910.

PLATE VARIETIES ON THE 3¢ JUSTICE AND 30¢ TREASURY DEPARTMENTAL STAMPS

ROY D. CRAIG, JR.

The only plate varieties previously reported on the 3¢ Justice departmental stamp (O27) have been a double transfer in the left margin (position 37)¹ and a double transfer in the numeral “3” (position 56).²



Figure 1. 3¢ Justice card proof with plate scratches



Figure 2. 3¢ Justice special printing with plate scratches

An entirely different plate variety can be clearly seen in Figures 1 and 2. Figure 1 is the relatively common plate proof on card (five printings of five hundred each in 1879, 1885, 1890, 1893 and 1894). Figure 2 is the scarce special printing of 1875 (178 copies sold by the Office of the Third Assistant Postmaster General between 1875 and 1884) showing the typical scissor separation on all four sides. Both items show the same supplemental lines on the die in four areas. The most obvious of these is a line extending from the top left of the numeral “3” down into the middle projection of the numeral. There is a second line extending into the lower margin from below the “NT” of “CENTS.” This line continues into the margin until cut off, and presumably would extend even further if the adjacent stamp were still attached. The third line cuts into the upper left of the “N” of “CENTS.” The fourth line is easier to find on the Special Printing, where it is located immediately below the left side of the “M” of the “SPECIMEN” overprint. It extends vertically for one millimeter.

The orientation of these supplemental lines, which are not parallel to or consistent with engraved lines on the normal die, does not suggest a double transfer, but seems more typical of a foreign entry. However, a photograph of a proof sheet for the 3¢ Justice stamp, while clearly showing the previously described double transfers at positions 37 and 56, even under magnification betrays no evidence of this new variety. Since this plate was never reentered or reworked, all double transfers and foreign entries would automatically show on a proof sheet. Clearly, then, this variety represents some sort of later damage to the plate. The 10¢ Navy plate scratch (position 3) represents a strong precedent, since from a surviving proof plate block on India paper without this variety we know that the

¹Rollin C. Huggins, Jr., *Official Chatter*, July, 1988.

²Identified by Lester C. Lanphear, III from a photograph of the plate proof sheet.

scratch occurred some time after the plate was completed.³ Another related example would be a horizontal plate scratch between positions 95 and 96 on the 15¢ State which definitely happened before the stamps went to press. In the case of this new 3¢ Justice variety, it is hard to imagine exactly what sort of accident could have caused four separate and distinct scratches at a single position.

Normally, one would expect a plate variety such as this to be first identified on a regular 3¢ Justice stamp, simply because so many more were issued: 182,000 copies delivered by the Stamp Agent between 1873 and 1884. Statistics of manufacture by the Continental and American Bank Note Companies are incomplete, but we do know that Continental delivered 85,500 copies of the 3¢ Justice in the calendar year 1873, and another 37,500 in 1875. If the plate was damaged after 1873, then this greatly reduces the number of copies printed with this variety. Still, since the plate was damaged prior to the special printing during the first half of 1875, and since at least 59,000 regular 3¢ Justice stamps were printed and issued after 1875, this variety must occur on the stamps themselves. Since no large multiples or plate pieces have survived of the 3¢ Justice stamp, special printing or card proof, it is very unlikely that we will ever be able to determine the exact position of this variety.

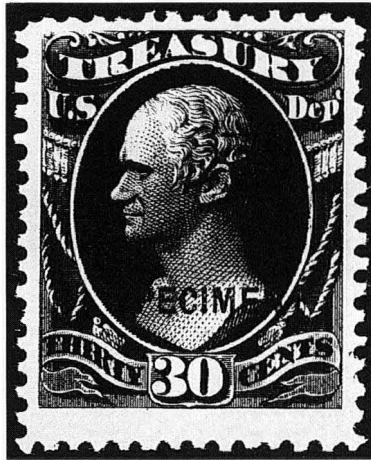


Figure 3. 30¢ Treasury special printing with short transfer

An altogether different situation surrounds the stamp illustrated in Figure 3. The *Scott Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps* lists a short transfer on the 30¢ Treasury. In fact, short transfers are found at four different plate positions. One variety is found in position 41 across the entire top.⁴ A second variety is located on the upper right side (position 45). Two additional positions (26 and 95) show short transfers on the upper left side. All of these varieties are widely known and numerous examples of each can be found on the regular stamps.

The stamp pictured in Figure 3 is the rare special printing of 1875, of which only 74 copies were sold. Admiral W.A. Combs, in his detailed study of these stamps, reported and illustrated the existence of the probably unique stamp with the short transfer in the upper

³Rollin C. Huggins, Jr., "That Elusive Crack", *Chronicle*, Vol. 43, No. 3 (Whole No. 155)(August 1992), pp. 204-207.

⁴Rollin C. Huggins, Jr., *Official Chatter*, June 1991.

right.⁵ This specific variety is listed but unpriced in the special printings section of the catalogue. Now we report the existence of a 30¢ Treasury special printing with short transfer in the upper left, typical of position 95. Since sheets of the special printings were cut up and prepackaged as sets in anticipation of greater sales, it sometimes occurs that more copies of a particular variety have survived than one would expect to see if stamps were being torn off a single sheet one at a time on an as-needed basis. An example of this would be the 24¢ Post Office "SEPCIMEN" overprint error from position 21, where two copies are known even though only 84 stamps were sold. Still, this particular special printing variety may well be unique.

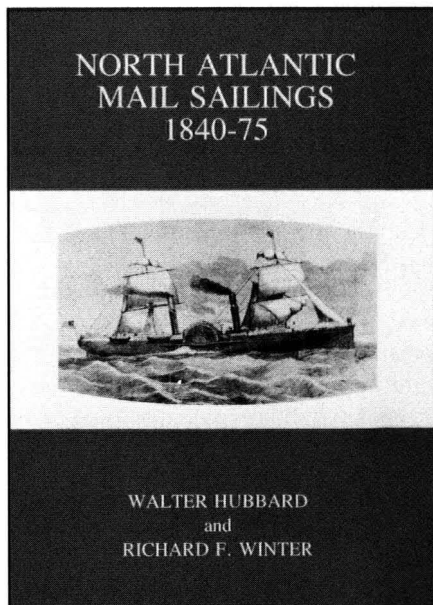
Editor's note: The identification of a new 3¢ Justice plate variety in this article was made possible by a remarkable coincidence: both the discovery copy and the confirming copy, purchased at auction from different sources, resided in the author's collection undetected, until the day he decided to examine all his stamps for plate varieties. Considering the scarcity of these two items (25 copies maximum of the card proof can exist, 2-3 copies of the special printing), the odds against this happening are tremendous. Normally, one would expect a collector to tentatively identify a variety, and then invite other specialists to check their collections, or spend years searching through dealers' stocks to find a confirming copy. In this case, the light bulb went off when Reverend Craig was able to put the two items side-by-side and assure himself that what he was seeing was not an isolated printing flaw, but a true unvarying plate variety. He was initially encouraged to publish his findings by the previous section editor, Alfred E. Staubus. □

⁵W.A. Combs, *U. S. Departmental Specimen Stamps* (State College, Pa.: The American Philatelic Society, 1965), p. 32.

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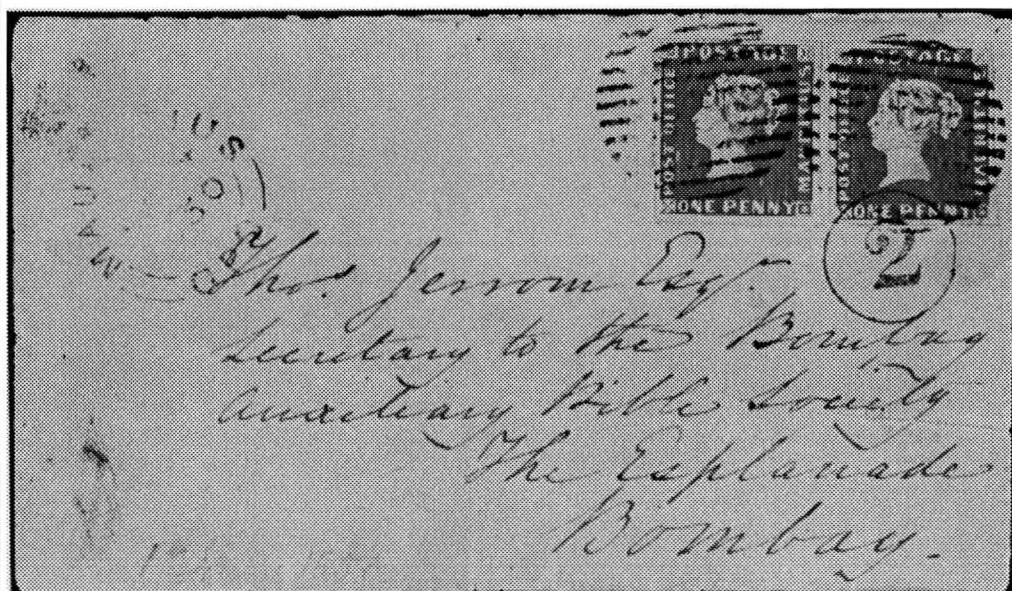
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BOOK REVIEW: TRANSATLANTIC MAIL STUDY GROUP HANDBOOK
RICHARD F. WINTER

Transatlantic Mail To And From British North America From The Early Days to U.P.U. By J.C. Arnell, FRPSC, OTB. Published by the British North America Philatelic Society (BNAPS) as Transatlantic Mail Study Group Handbook No. 4, 1996. 108 pages plus four pages of introductory text and table of contents. 167 illustrations. Ten chapters and a bibliography. Softbound with stapled pages, Canadian \$30 plus \$3 handling charge, from BNAPS Book Department, P.O. Box 66660, Stoney Creek Postal Outlet, Stoney Creek, Ontario, Canada L8G 5E6.

Over the years, Dr. Arnell has written extensively about transatlantic mails, especially as they related to the mails of British North America. His latest effort, published in time to be introduced at CAPEX '96, the World Philatelic Exhibition of Toronto, Canada (sponsored by The Royal Philatelic Society of Canada under the patronage of the Fédération Internationale de Philatélie [F.I.P.]), is intended to provide a general view of British North America mails which crossed the Atlantic. Using over 160 illustrations of covers from his own collection, with excellent captions to explain the rate markings and special features of these covers, Dr. Arnell has provided, in this reviewer's opinion, the best summary of a broad and fairly complex subject area that is available to collectors today. I can think of no other writing that presents such a clear overview in one easy-to-use publication than the one now available from the founder of the BNAPS Transatlantic Mail Study Group.

The production of this monograph was most unusual, a precursor for publishing in the future when small printings are required and the text size is manageable. This book was printed on a Xerox Docutech, a super laser printer. The author prepared a "camera ready" text, which was converted from the desktop publishing software that he used to a single Postscript file, to be used by Docutech. All of the cover illustrations were scanned into the original digital files and incorporated into the text. The final Postscript digital file was retained on disk to be used on the Docutech when needed. Each order for Dr. Arnell's monograph, no matter the size of the order, will be printed from the digital file when the order is received.

In the Introduction, Dr. Arnell identifies a number of what he considers to be the major aspects of the B.N.A. transatlantic mails. He then dedicates a chapter to each aspect. They generally fall in chronological order of their influence on the mails being studied. The major aspects, which have become individual chapters in the monograph, are: Private or "By Favour" Letters, Ship Letters, Falmouth Packet Letters, Ferriage, Pioneer Steamers and Freight Money, British Contract Steamers, U.S. Contract Steamers, Canadian Contract Steamers, and finally Later Developments.

The strength of this monograph has to be in the excellent reproductions of covers from the Arnell collection and the thoughtful picture captions which focus on the features of each cover which the author has selected as his teaching tools. A typical Arnell cover illustration and picture caption, from his chapter on Ferriage, is shown in Figure 1. His detailed explanation helps sort out the numerous manuscript rate markings on this cover. In the case of Figure 1, they were the prepayment of 11 pence in Glasgow for internal postage to the forwarding agent in Liverpool, 27¢ U.S. ship letter rate to the B.N.A. border exchange office, and 1 shilling 11 pence Currency postage due in Dundas, Upper Canada, which included U.S., B.N.A., and ferriage fees.

While on the subject of ferriage fees ("separate charges levied in both the Canadas on letters crossing the Canadian-United States border in either direction after the War of

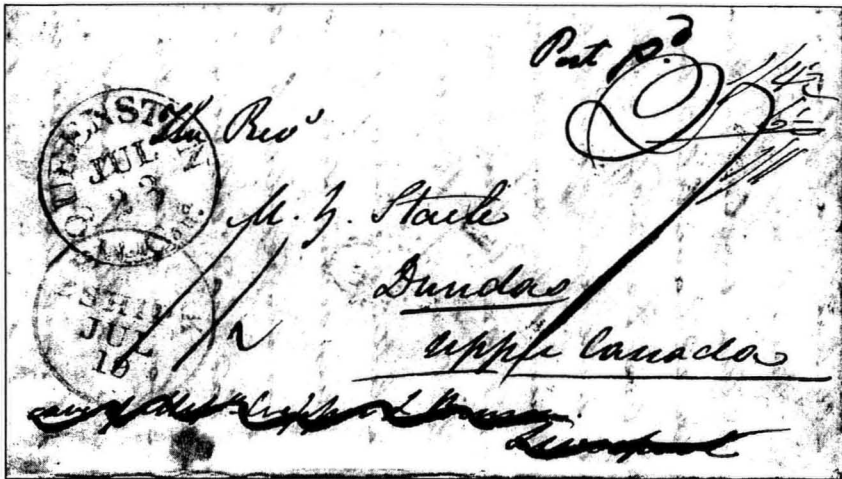


Figure 1. Example from Dr. Arnell's new transatlantic mail book

1812," to use the author's words), Dr. Arnell has used this monograph to advance his theory about the unusually high internal B.N.A. fees used on covers to destinations in Lower Canada, such as Montreal. In the spring of 1815, when the U.S. exchange office was moved from Burlington to Swanton, Vermont, which was close to the Canadian border, the Canadian postage would have been expected to have been reduced to 4 pence Sterling or 4½ pence Currency for a distance less than 60 miles from the Vermont (U.S.) border to Montreal. However, the Montreal postmaster, apparently without official approval, charged 9 pence Currency in addition to any unpaid U.S. transit fees. This, Dr. Arnell believes, was made up of a border transfer fee (1½d cy.), the Canadian inland fee (4½d cy.) and a fifty percent surcharge (3d cy.) similar to the post War surcharge used in the U.S. In April 1819, more than three years after the Americans had ended their 50 percent War surcharge, the Lower Canada internal fee was finally reduced, but only to 6d cy. This fee continued until February 1837, when the unofficial border transfer fee and the ferriage charges were dropped. Dr. Arnell likened the border transfer fee to a ferriage charge, although the mails were not transported across a body of water, requiring the extra fee as was the case in Upper Canada. Lacking any documented evidence to the contrary, Dr. Arnell's views on these extra charges have found favor among other experts of B.N.A. mails.

Some of the illustrated covers in this monograph are from or to the U.S. and not British North America. As the author explains in his Preface, the postal administrations of both B.N.A. and the U.S. were closely linked in the carriage of the transatlantic mails. Such examples, therefore, are not out of place in this monograph. Unfortunately for the reader, who may be a novice in this area of postal history, the pictures are not in color. The author's assumption that the reader knows the color of all the different markings on the covers is an unfortunate shortcoming. The absence of this important and valued information is not serious, but does limit the worth of the explanations which, otherwise, are very thorough.

Do not expect this monograph to provide specific details on subjects such as contract mail steamship sailing data, Falmouth Packet sailing dates, or accountancy markings found on B.N.A. mails. This information is provided in depth in books such as *North Atlantic Mail Sailings 1840-75*, by Walter Hubbard and Richard F. Winter (contract mail steamship sailing data), and *Handbook on Transatlantic Mail*, the first Transatlantic Study Group monograph edited by Dr. Arnell (Falmouth packet sailing data and B.N.A. postage rate handstamps). You can expect this monograph, however, to provide a fine overview of B.N.A. transatlantic mails and to show a fine array of well-captioned cover illustrations. □

NEW YORK EXCHANGE OFFICE MARKINGS - UPDATE

RICHARD F. WINTER

(continued from *Chronicle* 170, p. 138)

Editor-in-Chief's Note: This continues the updating of the list of markings in Chapter 32 of *North Atlantic Mail Sailings 1840-75* which was begun by Dick Winter in the previous issue of the *Chronicle*.

In keeping with the conventions established in that issue, all new data is shown in *bold italics*. If there is no new information on a particular marking, the marking is not shown. For completely new markings, *all* the data is listed in bold italics. New markings have sub-numbers (such as "8a"), or completely new numbers (such as "220") where the number was not previously used. All tracings are actual size.

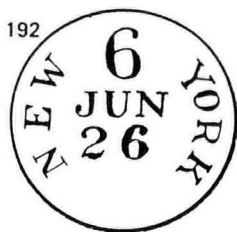
It is the intent to publish this first update "straight through," *i.e.*, it will not jump backwards in number sequence to pick up newly reported information. To do otherwise would soon make it impossible to keep track of individual listings. (Anyone who attempted to keep up with the changes to the Higgins & Gage postal stationery catalogues and similar ever-changing listings should understand and appreciate this decision.)

However, there was one instance of transposed lines in the initial update list which seems appropriate to correct at this time, since it occurred in the final row of the previous article, and the correction therefore can be made in the proper place in the sequential listing before going on to the new installment:

General — Without "Paid"

(begins on page 363)

[continued]



30 mm.
Blk: 1 Apr 57
22 Feb 68



32 mm.
Blk: 30 May 57
4 Mar 74
Red: 20 Oct 70
26 Jun 73



30 mm.
Blk: 20 Aug 57
14 Jan 63

198



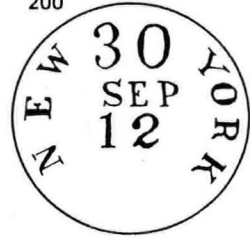
31 mm.
Blk: 12 Dec 57
11 Feb 78
Red: 19 May 70
19 Mar 73

199



31 mm.
Blk: 13 Jun 59
21 Jun 60

200



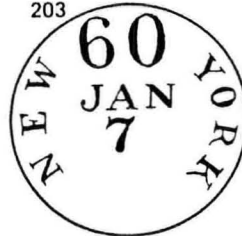
31 mm.
Blk: 20 Jul 57
8 Jul 61

201



30 mm.
Blk: 6 Jul 57
28 Mar 70

203



31 mm.
Blk: 5 Nov 61
7 Jan 63

204a



29 mm.
Blk: 22 Oct 67
22 Nov 67

204b



27 mm.
Blk: 28 Mar 63
14 Nov 63

204c



28 mm.
Blk: 2 Jun 51

General — With "Paid"
(begins on page 365)



30 mm.
Red: 9 Nov 52
21 Dec 69



29 mm.
Red: 7 Mar 63
17 Oct 63



31 mm.
Red: 4 Jul 57
21 Jun 73



30 mm.
Red: 4 Apr 57
23 Jul 59



30 mm.
Red: 7 Apr 57
20 Jul 72



31 mm.
Red: 1 May 57
26 Aug 61



30 mm.
Red: 5 Aug 57
1 Aug 58



31 mm.
Red: 23 Aug 58
27 May 59

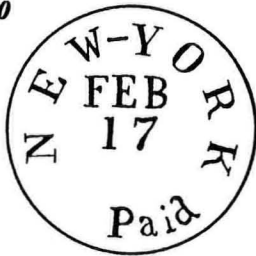


31 mm.
Red: 18 May 58
8 Feb 65



30 mm.
Blk: 20 Feb 49
Red: 3 Feb 49

220



33 mm.
Red: 17 Feb 58

221



25 mm.
Red: 29 Jan 68
25 Mar 68

222



30 mm.
Blk: 26 Mar 53
18 May 53

Miscellaneous (post 1 Jan 68)
(begins on page 366)

230



25 mm.
Blk: 18 Dec 68
20 Apr 78
Red: 11 Sep 69
26 Apr 76

*with or without stop
between New and York*

230a



24 mm.
Blk: 5 Apr 73

230b



24 mm.
Red: 1 Nov 76

231



26 mm.
Blk: 16 Apr 68
24 Aug 70
Red: 28 Sep 72

232



26 mm.
Blk: 13 Feb 68
9 Jul 70

233



25 mm.
Blk: 25 May 68
11 Jan 70
Red: 5 Apr 68
24 Jul 71

234a



23 mm.
Red: 21 Dec 70
8 Nov 71

234b



23 mm.
Red: 20 Aug 71
8 Nov 71

235



25 mm.
Red: 14 Jan 68
9 Jul 73

235a



25 mm.
Red: 18 Jul 71
17 Jan 72

235b



25 mm.
Red: 19 Aug 71
25 Mar 72

235c



25 mm.
Red: 5 Sep 71

236



25 mm.
Red: 21 May 72
5 Dec 85
Blk: 3 Dec 76
29 Aug 77

237



24 mm.
Red: 20 Apr 68
25 Dec 73

241



22 mm.
Blk: 16 Jul 76
6 Jan 85

242



25 mm.
Red: 12 Nov 73
24 Dec 74

243



25 mm.
Red: 15 Aug 74
6 Sep 76

244



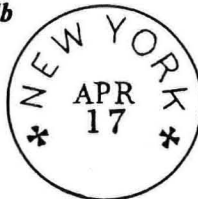
26 mm.
Red: 5 Mar 70
3 Jun 71

244a



25 mm.
Red: 11 Mar 75

244b



25 mm.
Blk: 17 Apr 75
22 Sep 77

245



25 mm.
Red: 8 May 75
26 Aug 76

245a



25 mm.
Red: 30 Mar 75

247



25 mm.
Red: 28 Jun 70
30 Jul 74
Blk: 10 Sep 70
8 Dec 75

248



26 mm.
Red: 23 May 70
29 Nov 76
Blk: 16 May 72
10 Jun 77

There are at least 5 variations of this marking, with spacings of 4.5, 6.5, 7.5, 8.0 and 9.5 mm. between the stars.

250



25 mm.
Red: 19 Nov 73
28 Nov 74

251



25 mm.
Red: 19 May 74
19 Jun 75

252



26 mm.
Red: 23 Oct 79
16 Dec 72

252a



25 mm.
Blk: 26 Apr 70
19 Dec 70

252b



22 mm.
Red: 9 Sep 76

252c



25 mm.
Blk: 17 Aug 68
11 Jun 69

252d



25 mm.
Red: 20 Apr 76
28 Sep 76
Blk: 12 Nov 75
9 Feb 77

252e



24x25 mm.
Blk: 11 Jan 76

253



25 mm.
Red: 26 Jun 73
4 Oct 73



25 mm.
Red: 6 Jun 74
10 Apr 75



25 mm.
Red: 17 Jun 73
8 Apr 75



25 mm.
Blk: 25 Jun 74
8 Dec 74



25 mm.
Blk: 25 Feb 75



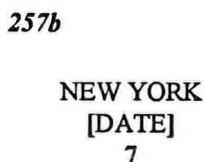
25 mm.
Red: 13 Nov 72
15 May 75



26 mm.
Red: 10 Oct 70
16 Nov 71



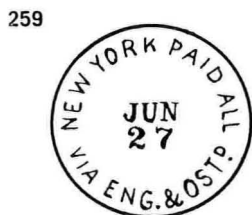
25 mm.
Red: 6 Aug 70



26 mm.
Red: 11 Sep 72



25 mm.
Red: 10 Jul 72
5 Aug 75



26 mm.
Red: 10 Jul 72
27 Jun 79

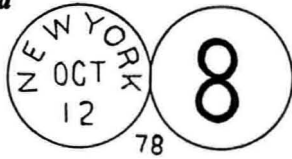


26 mm.
Red: 9 Aug 73
24 Jun 74



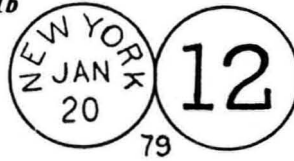
25 mm.
Red/Blk: 15 Aug 74
23 Aug 77

261a



19 mm., double
 Red: 12 Oct 78

261b



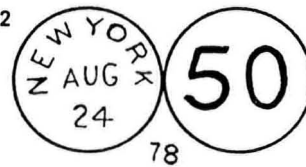
19 mm., double
 Red: 20 Jan 79

261c



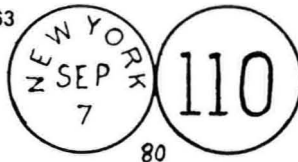
19 mm., double
 Red: 31 Mar 79

262



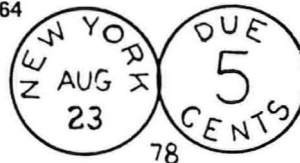
19 mm., double
 Red: 30 Mar 78
 6 Sep 90

263



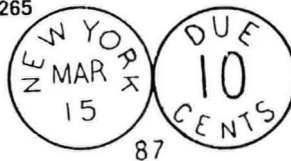
19 mm., double
 Red: 16 Jul 78
 7 Sep 80

264



19 mm., double
 Blk: 6 Jan 78
 12 Mar 81
 Also w, wo/yd

265



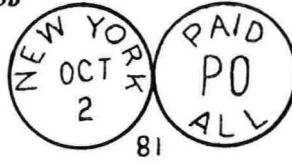
19 mm., double
 Blk: 9 Dec 77
 30 Jul 87
 Also, w, wo/yd

265a



19 mm., double
 Blk: 9 Nov 77
 13 Sep 78

265b



19 mm., double

Blk: 24 Jan 77

2 Oct 81

Blue: 31 Oct 77

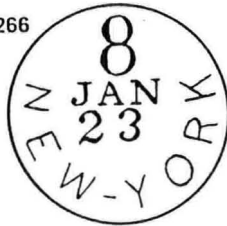
Red: 19 Dec 75

Also w, wo/yd

Letters in right circle:

A, B, C, H, K, PO

266



29 mm.

Red: 23 Oct 72

3 Feb 76

267



26 mm.

Red: 26 Jul 73

15 Jul 76

270



28 mm.

Red: 10 Jul 75

27 Sep 76

270a



24 mm.

Blk: 17 Aug 76

271



37x10 mm.

Red: Mar 71

271a



38x10 mm.

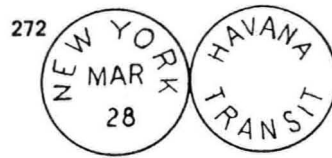
Red: Oct 74

Dec 74

271b

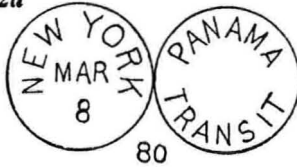


37x10 mm.
Red: 27 Apr 74
29 Apr 75



19 mm., double
Blk: 1 Nov 77
17 Jun 86
also w/wo yd

272a



19 mm., double
Blk: 8 Mar 80
26 Apr 80

272b



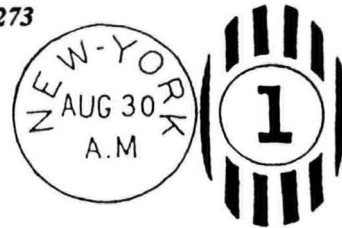
19 mm., double
Blk: 14 Jul 83
3 Jun 90

272c



23 mm.
Blk: 17 Feb 93

273



23 mm., duplex
Blk: 30 Aug 77
14 Apr 83
also w/wo yd

273a



23 mm., duplex
Blk: 12 May 77
9 Nov 81
also w/wo yd

273b



23 mm., duplex
Blk: 20 Feb 77
12 Dec 82
also w/wo yd

(to be continued)

ADDITIONAL ANSWERS TO PROBLEM COVERS IN ISSUE 169

Figure 1 is a cover that began as a local delivery 2¢ paid drop letter in Washington, D.C., and ended with 4¢ postage due upon forwarding to Philadelphia. The May 1996 *Chronicle* provided an excellent explanation by Bob Stets of this first month of use of U.S. Postage Due stamps.

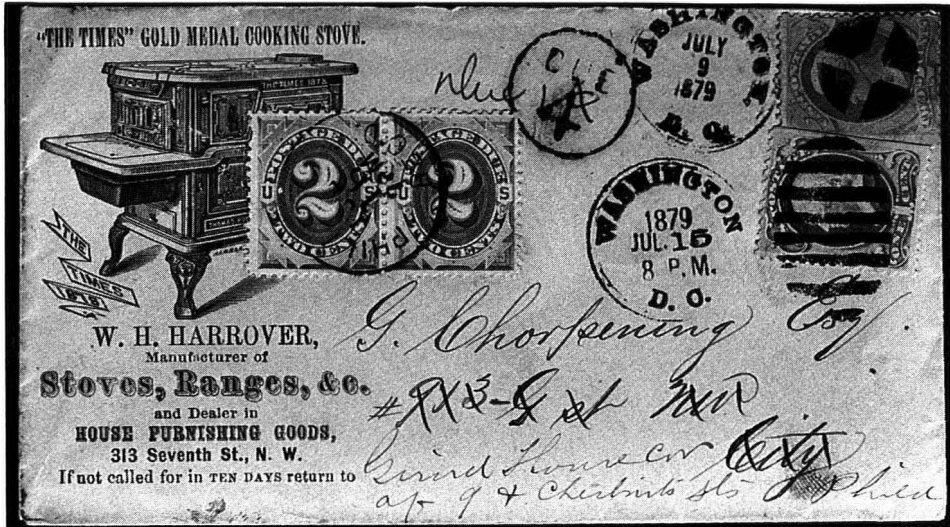


Figure 1. 1879 cover, first month of use of U.S. postage dues

After the May issue went to press, another well documented explanation was received from Warren Bower, somewhat different, but very plausible. Warren writes:

a) The letter was mailed at Washington, D.C., on July 9, 1879 prepaid 2¢ for the single local rate for carrier delivery.

b) The carrier returned the letter to the Main Post Office as not deliverable since the addressee had moved to Philadelphia.

c) Post Office Department rules were to "Return to Sender," if known, for the added 1¢ postage to make the one full rate (3¢) between cities. So the manuscript "Due 1¢" was a Washington notation. A 1¢ stamp was added by the sender and the cover mailed on July 15.

d) Received the next day at Philadelphia, the letter was judged to have been prepaid only 1¢, the postage added by the sender to forward it. Thus the letter was 2¢ underpaid (though it seems unfair) in accordance with *U.S. Postal Guide*, September 1879, page 23, Item 29, "Miscellaneous":

"A letter bearing a return request on the envelope, after having been transmitted to destination, and subsequently returned to the writer because of failure of delivery, cannot be again transmitted in the mails except it be prepaid anew."

e) Then the 2¢ short payment was doubled to a due charge of 4¢ in accordance with *U.S. Postal Laws and Regulations, 1879*, page 88, Sect. 267, "Double Postage on Unpaid Matter":

"If any mail matter, on which the postage is required to be prepaid at the mailing post office, shall by inadvertence reach its destination without such prepayment, double the prepaid rates shall be charged and collected on delivery (and credit given for any prepayment)."

f) The "DUE / 4" handstamp was applied by Philadelphia, which affixed and canceled the pair of 2¢ Postage Due stamps.



Figure 2. 1846 cover from Rotterdam to Philadelphia via London and New York

Figure 2 appeared as a problem cover in *Chronicle 169*, but no one provided an explanation of the rates of postage charged by the Dutch and Great Britain to transport this cover from Rotterdam to Philadelphia via London and New York. 300 Dutch cents postage was prepaid (as noted in manuscript on the back), and 12¢ U.S. postage was collected upon delivery as marked in the "NEW-YORK / SHIP" cds on the front. It has been ascertained that the cover did travel as endorsed leaving on the *Great Western* from Liverpool for New York on 30 May 1846.

Colin Tabcart of Fareham, England, who submitted this problem cover, has since written that, through the expertise of Cornelis Muys of the Netherlands and Dick Winter, he now has a tentative explanation which is subject to review and input by others. The basis is the Anglo-Dutch Convention of 1843, effective 1 January 1844 (see *Chronicle 127*, August 1985, pp. 158-160) as follows:

a) Prepaid postage was required of 120 Dutch cents, viz., 20 cents domestic plus 100 cents English, for a single weight letter (15 grams or 1/2 ounce); each country to use its own weight progression for letters over the single rate.

b) The problem cover was prepaid 300 Dutch cents for 2½ rates for 30-37 grams by packet through England to the U.S. border. The Dutch retained 20 cents per rate (4 pence), 100 cents per rate credited to England (1 shilling 8 pence); 8 pence for the North Sea crossing and 1 shilling for the UK inland / transatlantic packet charge.

There also was a ship letter rate under this Convention, but either the Dutch did not appreciate that the *Great Western* was a private ship, or it was ignored.

c) Therefore, of the 300 Dutch cents, 250 were due to England. This equates to 4½ sterling (4 shillings 2 pence) as shown on the cover.

d) The letter was correctly assessed by London as a "PAID SHIP LETTER," and so marked. It was sent to Liverpool for the sailing of the *Great Western*, but no adjustments to the rates were made as these had already been prepaid.

e) Leaving Liverpool on 30 May, the letter arrived in New York on 15 June. New York assessed it as a double weight ship letter (up to 1 ounce or 30 grams), with 12 U.S. cents due on delivery in Philadelphia.

Apparently, two errors in rating of this cover were made:

First, the Dutch did not consider the non-packet status of the *Great Western*, resulting in an overcharge which was credited to England.

Second, the U.S. assessed the cover as a double rather than a triple rate, perhaps because they did not bother to weigh it, or their weigh scale was inaccurate, resulting in an undercharge for the U.S. inland postage.

ANSWERS TO PROBLEM COVERS IN ISSUE 170

The cover in Figure 3, from the Leeward Islands to San Francisco via New York, is franked with both Leeward Islands and U.S. stamps. It is endorsed "Per Fontabelle / 27. 8. 97." Explain why and where the 2¢ U.S. stamp was added, and identify the ship *Fontabelle*."

Unfortunately, no one responded to this problem cover, perhaps due to the reduced period of time available for Route Agents to reply. Only a week to ten days vice a full two weeks or more existed between receiving the May *Chronicle* and the go-to-press date for the August *Chronicle*. So we will include responses on this cover in the November *Chronicle*.

Figure 4 is a pretty cover from Troy, New York to Rutland, Vermont, dated inside July 12, 1833. Why was this cover assessed an additional 2½ (cents) postage due?

Similar answers were received from R. M. Arndt, Don Johnstone, Bob Murch and Bob Stets. All agreed that "as the crow flies" Rutland is less than 80 miles from Troy, which would be a charge of 10¢ for a single letter carried from 30 to 80 miles. However, postage was charged based on actual distance traveled on the post road, which exceeded 80 miles and made the charge 12½¢. Bob Stets provides a detailed explanation (get out your atlas to follow):

The normal route for a letter from Troy to Rutland in the 1830's was via Lansingburgh, NY, Bennington, Shaftsbury, Arlington and Manchester, VT. The distance by this post road was 79 miles, confirmed by both the 1831 and 1836 *Tables of Post Offices in the United States*.



Figure 3. Leeward Islands cover to San Francisco via New York "Per Fontabelle"

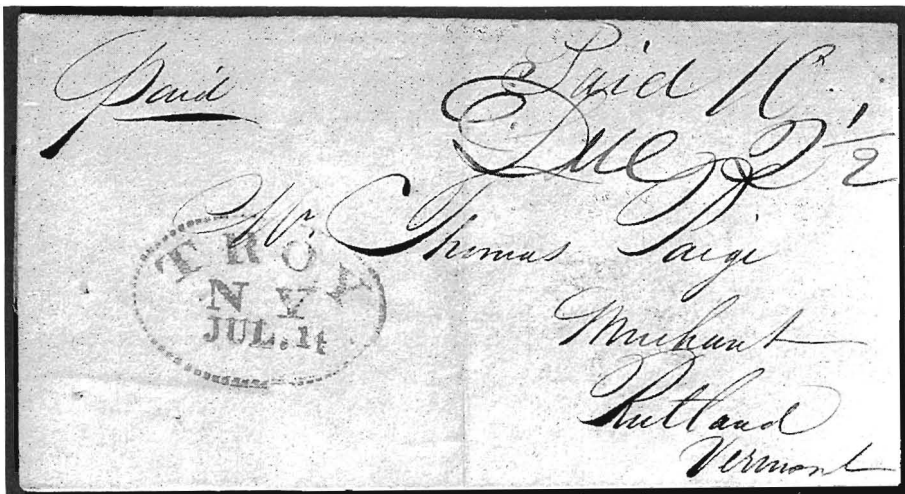


Figure 4. 1833 letter from Troy, NY, "Paid 10" and "Due 2 1/2"

But the Act of June 15, 1832 established a cross post from the Albany-Canada post road at Comstock, NY, to Rutland. This cross post road distance exceeded 80 miles.

Apparently, the problem cover was rated at 10¢ by the Troy postmaster, expecting it would travel the usual route (79 miles). For some reason, it was sent via the Albany-Canada and cross post road (over 80 miles). When delivered by the cross post rider to the Rutland postmaster, it was assessed the additional 2½ cents to cover the rate for a letter carried from 80 to 150 miles.

PROBLEM COVERS FOR THIS ISSUE

Figure 5 shows a cover with a double circle postmark “HUNTSVILLE / JUN / 15 / 1861 / ALA.” addressed to Jonesboro, Tennessee. It appears to have two light manuscript markings “6th” and “5.” The rate markings are a handstamp “PAID / 5” and a manuscript “Due 3.” Colors of markings are not known. Please explain the rate markings.



Figure 5. 1861 letter from Huntsville, Ala, “Paid 5” and “Due 3”

Figures 6 through 9 show the obverse and the reverse of a postal card and an envelope from Cleveland, Ohio and New Haven, Conn., respectively, to addresses in Germany. The envelope is directed “via England.” Both items are backstamped with a curious marking “*NEW YORK* / BRITISH TRANSIT,” the postal card having a central letter “D,” and the envelope an “N.” What is the meaning or significance of the letters “D” and “N” in these markings?

The inside heading of the folded letter in Figure 10 is shown in Figure 11. This cover originated in Calcutta on 8th January 1857. It apparently was privately carried to England and entered the mails in London on February 17, as indicated by the cds on the back: “KV / FE 17 / 1857.” The cover was addressed to the famous firm of Messrs. D. Gibb & Co. in San Francisco, and endorsed “per steamer via United States.” Postage from England was paid with one shilling three pence in stamps canceled by a London Inland Office obliterator “22.” The heading of the letter was docketed “Recd p Str. ‘Golden Age’ / 12th April 1857.” There appears to be a faint manuscript “433” on the face of the cover plus a clear handstamp “20.” All markings are in black. Please explain the following:



Figure 6. Front of postal card from Cleveland to Germany via New York

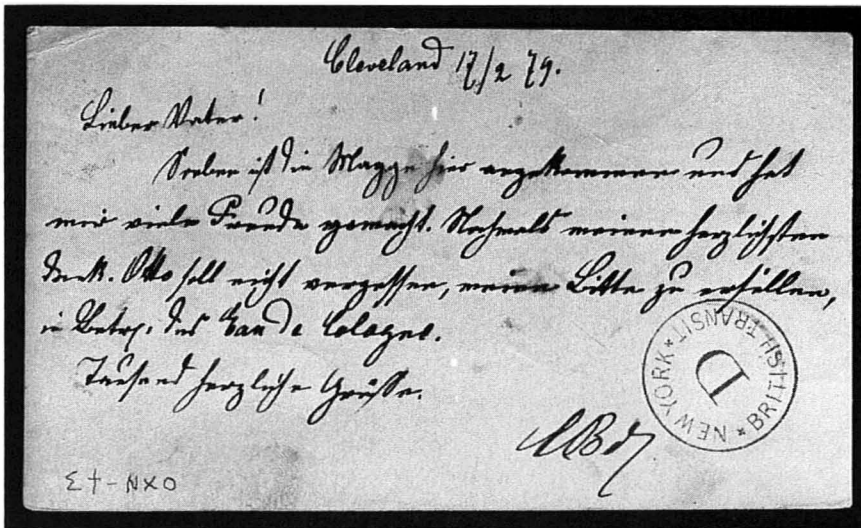


Figure 7. Reverse of postal card in Figure 6 showing "British Transit / D"



Figure 8. Front of cover from New Haven to Germany via New York



Figure 9. Reverse of cover in Figure 8 showing "British Transit / N"



Figure 10. Front and back of 1857 folded letter posted in London to San Francisco

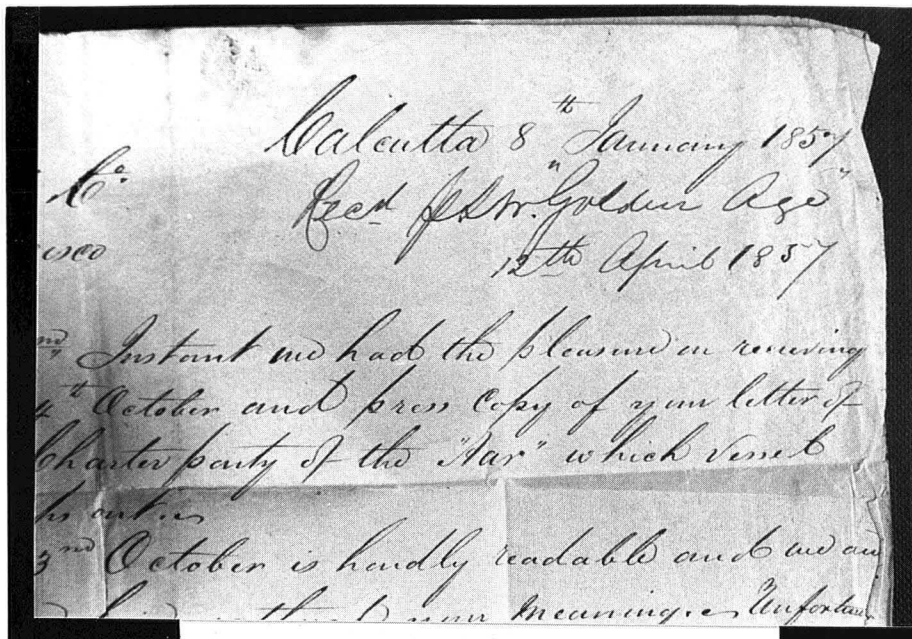


Figure 11. Heading of folded letter in Figure 10 showing "Recd p Str. 'Golden Age'"

- The one shilling three pence in British postage: what did it cover?
- Why no U.S. exchange markings?
- The Steamer Golden Age: who was the owner/operator?
- What does the "20" represent? Is this a San Francisco due marking?

* * * * *

Please send your answers to these problem covers, and any further discussion of previous answers to other problem covers, within two weeks of receiving your *Chronicle*. I can receive answers by mail at P.O. Box 42253, Cincinnati, Ohio 45242, as well as by Fax at (513) 563-6287. —Ray Carlin

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