

THE CHRONICLE November 2000 (No. 188)

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of the U.S. Classic Postal Issues

November 2000

Volume 52, No. 4

Whole No. 188

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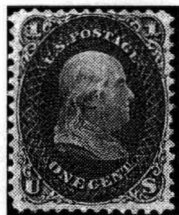
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*An Exhibition Collection Sale*

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**THE NAUGATUCK RAILROAD PRECANCEL**  
BERNARD BIALES

Precancels are rare during the classic period. However they precede even the first federal issue of 1847. Hale & Co., competing with the U.S. Post Office, used stamps in 1844-45. A number of used examples bear ruled manuscript crosses applied before use. A peculiar form of precancellation (actually a control marking) has long been known on the 1847 issue. The postmaster at Wheeling, [West] Virginia used a standard grid on the unsevered stamps so that each received one quadrant on a corner. They were marked again on cover. The precancel was surely intended to make the theft of the stamps a useless felony. In *at least* one case, the postage label was applied by the postmaster.<sup>1</sup>

Before discussing the Naugatuck Railroad precancels, which have not previously been studied, it is useful to supply some background about railroad agents and the associated covers. By 1847, steam mail carriers had become widespread and many such routes had a federal agent whose main job was to receive and distribute the mail bags. They could also receive unbagged letters at train stations or in transit. By 1852 (Chapter 33, Section 201 of the *Postal Laws and Regulations*) they were prohibited from receiving cash in payment of postage. Earlier stampless paid covers with route agent markings are known. They are rare. For a brief period (August 18, 1848 - April 19, 1849, *Pat Paragraphs*) stamps were issued to route agents. When George W. Griswold was appointed first route agent of the Naugatuck R.R., a small line in northwestern Connecticut, such deliveries had ceased.<sup>2</sup> During Griswold's tenure on the Naugatuck, he could have sold stamps, but only on his own account and risk.

A certain peculiarity of many railroad covers franked with the 1847 issue will prove germane to this discussion. Nearly 30% of these bear a notation in the hand of the addressee indicating postage has been paid. (Data based on the Levi Record and Frajola Sale # 20). Perhaps this was a defence against theft of the stamp before cancellation or an assurance that the route agent would add the stamp that had been paid for. Sometimes the franking overlaps such notation. This is also seen on non-route agent covers, but probably with much less frequency.

Several handstamp markings used by Griswold are known from stampless covers. One is a standard type NAUGATUCK R.R. ("R.R." inverted) dated circle of 32½ mm. diameter. It comes in a characteristic orangish red. Late uses are known canceling the 3¢ 1851, but in black. A "5" rate marking was used (*e.g.*, OCT 10 and NOV 27 [1850]). I know of no 10¢ rate marking. Lot 198 in Kelleher Sale #583 (24 Oct. 1989) shows a "PAID" of SEP 9 [no year]. The cover also bears a 5¢ 1847 canceled by two further, crossed strikes of the "PAID." Underneath the stamp is a manuscript "PAID 5" notation.

---

<sup>1</sup>For further discussion on the classic precancels, see "Classic United States Precancels," R. Malcolm Hooper, *Collectors Club Philatelist*, Vol. 65, No. 3 (May-June 1986), pp. 159-68.

<sup>2</sup>The records show George W. Griswold's term of service as running from July 11, 1849 - April 1, 1851; he was replaced by Lucius C. Northrup. A similarly named individual, A.W. Griswold, served as route agent on the Philadelphia, Baltimore & Washington line from September 30, 1844 - March 1, 1847, and again from September 4, 1850 - March 25, 1851. There is no indication of a relationship between George W. and A.W. Griswold, though one may have existed, nor based on the known period of service is there any evidence that A.W. may have been issued 1847 stamps. Charles L. Towle, *U.S. Route and Station Agent Postmarks* (Tucson, Arizona: Mobile Post Office Society, 1986), pp. 325,334.

(Based on the discussion of other examples that follow, it is possible that the stamp was purchased from a source other than Griswold.)

Turning to the first of the subjects of this essay (Fig. 1), we see a Naugatuck R.R. cover with pen canceled 5¢ 1847 (ex Rust). The pen lines stop abruptly at the margins with no trace of start up “transients,” suggesting they were applied *before* the stamp was applied to the cover.

Because of the unusual nature of this item, a detailed analysis is in order. This piece is a blue paper letter sheet (contents removed) with a “10000 THANKS” etiquette verso, addressed to Upper Middletown, Conn. There is a philatelic notation “Lot Kelleher Sale 10-21-44 Lot 4[?]28.” The geometry and orange red ink of the circle correspond to the stampless covers and the “PAID” matches the 5¢ cover described earlier. The brown shade and the poor impression correspond to the third printing of this issue (March 1849). The stamp sits well on the cover and black light examination reveals no irregularities. Strong transmitted illumination shows no hidden faults of the stamp. Confirming the pre-use nature of the pen marks, there is no bleed into the small scissors cut at lower right. The stamp was marked, then cut out of a larger piece. The absence of any sign of a rate marking establishes that the letter was originally paid by adhesive.

A second cover provides further evidence (Figure 2). This folded letter is postmarked NOV 12, with docketing 1849. My earliest record of the piece is the Sotheby, Park, Bernet auction of October 12, 1981, Lot 104. The Nov 12 contents include the statement “. . . I will pay the postage on this as it is not worth a ti[?] to you . . .” The 10¢ total of the two stamps is consistent with the Ohio destination. The analysis generally follows that for the previous cover. Taking into account that the cover is a bit more “aged” than the DEC 10 cover, the stamp color and impression match. Both frankings came from the same or similar panes. A very helpful feature is the manuscript “paid” underneath the pair. The handwriting matches that of the letter writer. Furthermore, the ink has bled into the pair a bit, indicating that the stamps were added soon after the letter was written. I also have a fairly convincing verbal report of another Naugatuck R.R. cover with a pair of precanceled 5¢ 1847s, but have not seen it.

In the light of these examples, it is worth examining a further Naugatuck R.R. cover. This is the attractive Newbury 5¢+10¢ cover of JAN 10 [1850] (Siegel sale #240, Lot 69)(Figure 3). This reappeared in LaTuchie sale #28, Lot 1407. While I have not examined the cover, the LaTuchie staff was kind enough to check several points. The letter is from James Kent, while traveling southward, and concerns transatlantic transportation for a woman and five children under the age of twelve; it calls for “. . . answer to Post Office Derby, Connecticut.” There is no indication of enclosures that would result in a multiple of the underlying 5¢ rate. Furthermore, at this time there was no such thing as a triple rate of 15¢. Under transmitted light, the 10¢ shows a “horrible” hairline tear running to the bottom of the stamp (not mentioned in the Newbury catalog). Only a “sm. scratch” is mentioned in the LaTuchie catalog. Perhaps the flaw has been reworked to disguise it. Working from the Newbury catalog illustration, the CDS tying the stamps does not match the CDS to the left. Given the presence of the “PAID” marking and the absence of a rate marking, the entertaining possibility exists that this once bore a single 5¢, pen-precanceled. LaTuchie’s offered the cover “as is” and it sold for an appropriately modest amount.

A pen-precanceled 1847 cover (Figure 4) was briefly noted and illustrated (with erroneous origin) in Hooper’s 1986 *Collectors Club Philatelist* article.<sup>3</sup> My earliest record of this item (from the Levi record, courtesy of Mr. Calvet Hahn) is the Siegel sale of May 19, 1970, Lot 80. It reappeared in the sale of Sept. 28 the following year and in 1972 received a Philatelic Foundation certification to Henry Wenk. The publication was preceded by appearance of the cover in Richard C. Frajola sale #20, Lot 335.

<sup>3</sup>Hooper, p. 161.

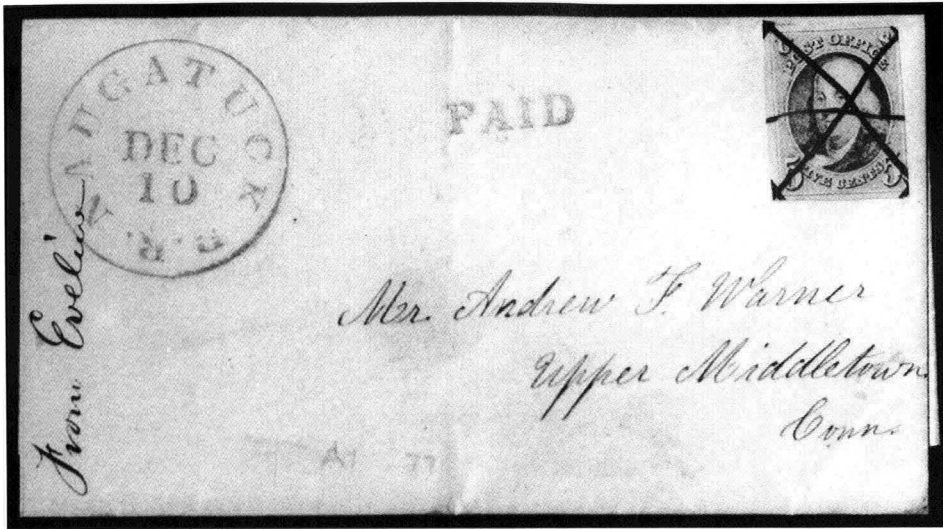


Figure 1. Naugatuck R.R. cover to Upper Middletown, Conn., pen-precanceled 5¢ 1847



Figure 2. Nov. 12 [1849] Naugatuck R/R. cover to Ohio, pen-precanceled pair of 5¢ 1847s

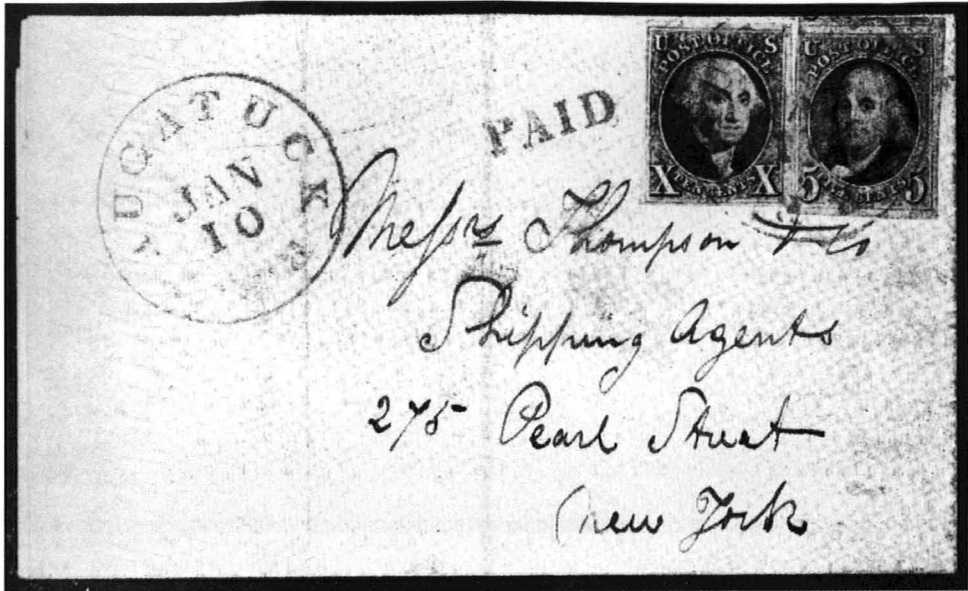


Figure 3. Jan. 10 [1850] Naugatuck R.R. cover, 5¢ + 10¢ 1847s, ex Newbury, questionable

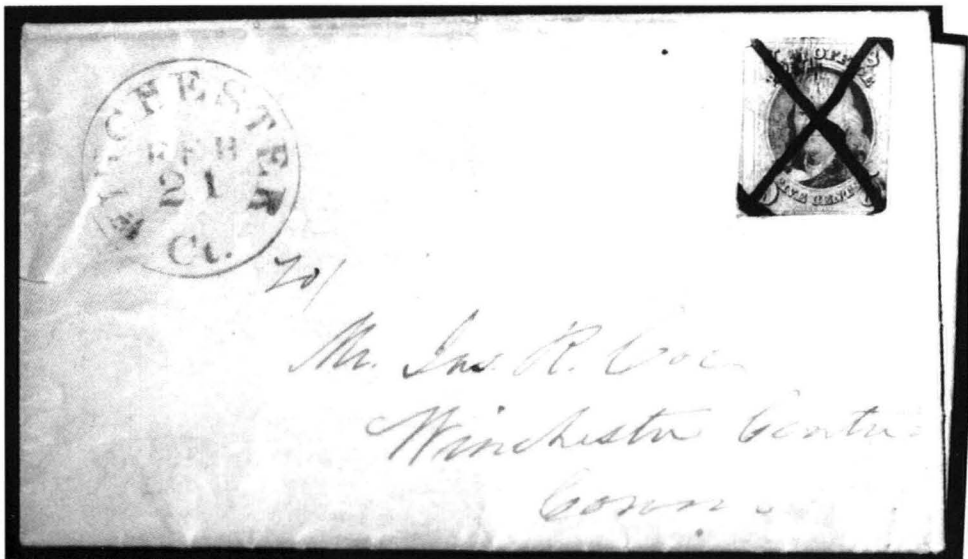


Figure 4. Winchester, Conn. pen-precanceled 5¢ 1847 cover to Winchester Centre, Conn., Feb. 21, 1851

The letter, from Joad Cos[?] to his brother Jas. R., in Winchester Centre, Conn., is datelined from Winsted, [Conn.], Feb. 21 [corrected from 20], 1851. The Hooper article gives North Stonington, but there is no mention of this town anywhere in or on the document, and it is located on the opposite edge of Connecticut from Winsted and Winchester Centre. Cos mentions James' illness, having "been to County Meeting this week," "intending to go to North Bridgewater two weeks from next week," etc.

The red postmark of Winchester is dated FEB 21. The Towle supplement notes that the "Extension [of the Naugatuck R.R.] to Winchester [now Winsted], 62 miles from Devon, opened Sept. 24, 1849."<sup>4</sup> Winchester (later Winsted) and Winchester Centre were two distinct offices at the time this letter was mailed, so this is not an unrated stampless cover for local delivery with a stamp added later.

The Naugatuck R.R. covers add a new chapter to the precancellation of the 1847s. Griswold, perhaps because he was forbidden to accept cash in his official capacity and did not want to turn customers away, apparently sold stamps to those wishing to prepay postage. Based on available survival statistics, those sales may have approached or even exceeded 1,000 stamps. As an anti-theft measure—or because it was inconvenient to use an old pen and inkwell on a moving train (an idea I was introduced to by Frank Mandel)—he precanceled his stamps and probably applied them himself after receiving payment.

Given that the Naugatuck precancels are known from as early as late 1849, during Griswold's term as route agent, and that the Winchester precancel came from a terminus of the Naugatuck route, also during Griswold's tenure, it also seems probable that there is a direct connection between Griswold and the Winchester post office. Did Griswold have some relationship with the Winchester postmaster, tangible or merely inspirational? Did he perhaps buy stamps at Winchester for re-sale? And if so, who in fact did the pen-precanceling, and whose was the original idea? □

<sup>4</sup>Charles L. Towle, *U.S. Route and Station Agent Postmarks: Historical Supplement. Railway Historical Notes with Maps* (Tucson, Arizona: Mobile Post Office Society, 1986), p. A70.

<sup>5</sup>Alan H. Patera, *The Post Offices of Connecticut* (Burtonsville, Md.: The Depot, 1977), p. 25. Winchester post office was established in 1802, and remained in operation until 1859 (*i.e.*, well past the dates of concern in this article), at which time it was changed to Winsted. Winchester Centre post office operated from 1826 until 1893, then as Winchester Center up to 1963 when it continued as a rural branch of Winsted. While the postal history of Litchfield County shows a somewhat confusing interrelationship of office names, including Winchester, Winchester Centre(re), Winsted, West Winsted, and Winstead, there seems no doubt that the Winchester of the postmark and the Winchester Centre of the address were two distinct locations when Joad Cos sent the pen-precanceled cover to his brother in 1851.

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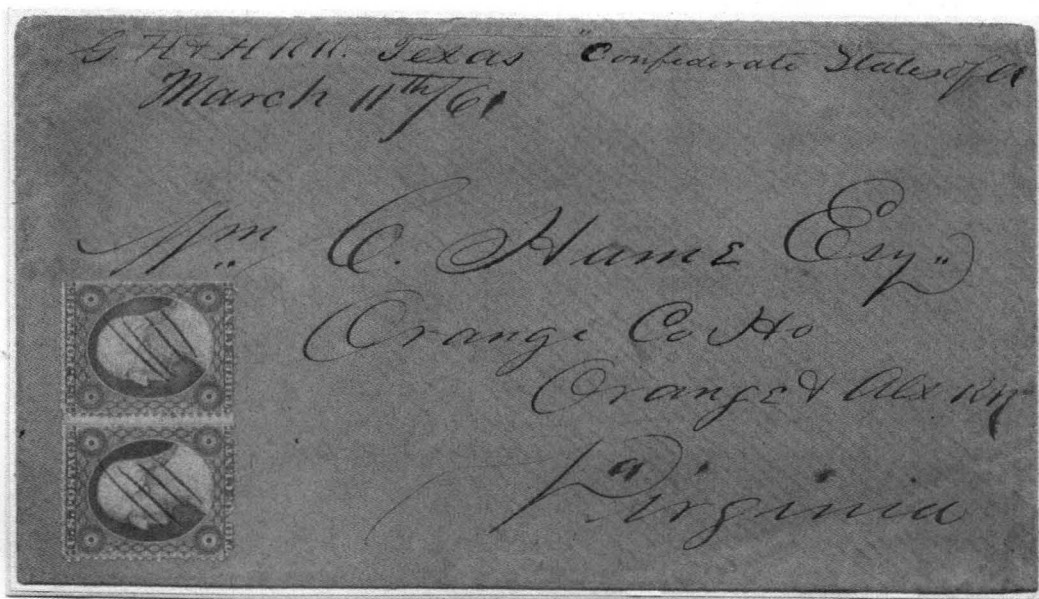
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**A UNIQUE CONFEDERATE TEXAS COVER**  
GORDON BLEULER

The subject cover is not a “new” find, but has reposed in the collection of the writer for more than fifty years. Though listed in Towle [see below], it has not been fully described previously. It is most remarkable as it represents not only a late use of the 3¢ 1857 stamps, but carries a unique postmark from Texas in the Confederate usage period prior to 1 June 1861 when the Confederate postal system assumed control of Southern post offices.

The buff orange envelope (Figure 1) enclosed a letter addressed to “Wm. C. Hume, Esq., Orange Co Ho, Orange & Alx RR, Virginia.” and is manuscript postmarked G.H & H RR. Texas “Confederate States of A” March 11<sup>th</sup>/61. This postmark is unique in several respects. It is the only known example of the abbreviated marking for the Galveston, Houston and Henderson Railroad and it is the only postmark recorded to date that includes “Confederate States of A[merica]” as a part of the marking. The postage was prepaid with a pair of 3¢ 1857 stamps, canceled in manuscript, representing double rate postage from Texas to Virginia.

The date of usage is only five days after Texas was admitted to the Confederate States of America at Montgomery, Alabama, on 6 March 1861, thus becoming the seventh state to join the C.S.A. At this time, the Galveston, Houston and Henderson Railroad had



**Figure 1.** The cover bears the unique manuscript postal markings, G.H & H RR. Texas “Confederate States of A[merica]” March 11<sup>th</sup>/61. The pair of 3¢ 1857 stamps prepays double rate postage from Texas to Virginia; each of the stamps is canceled with four penstrokes in black ink.

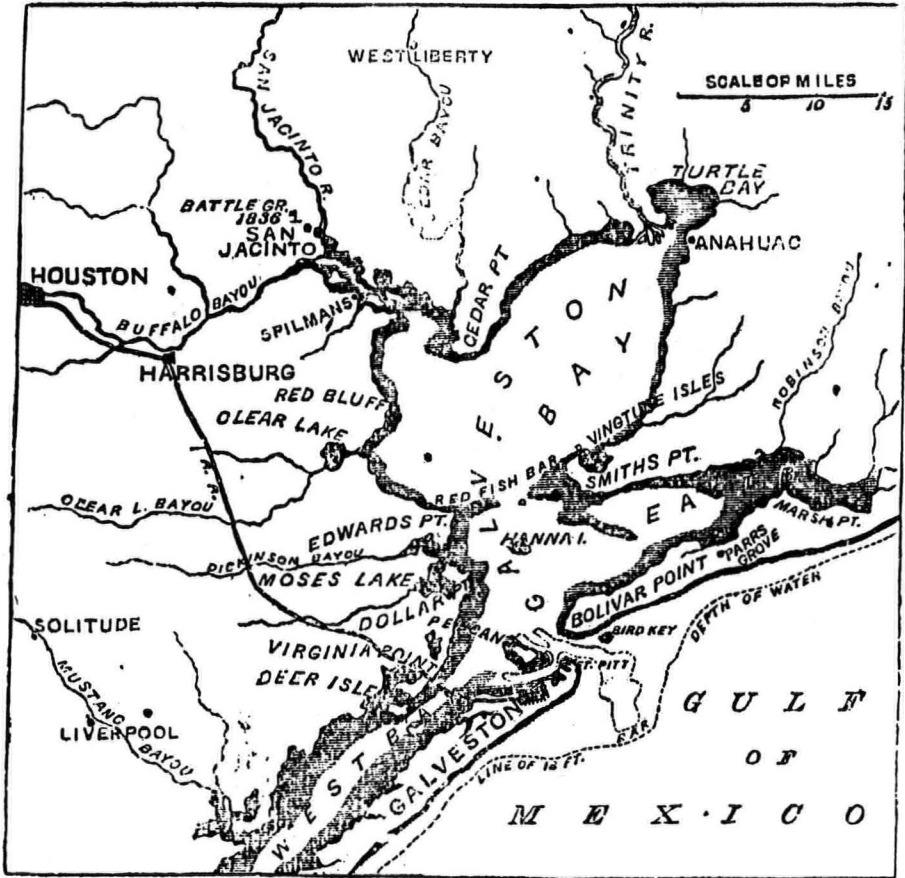


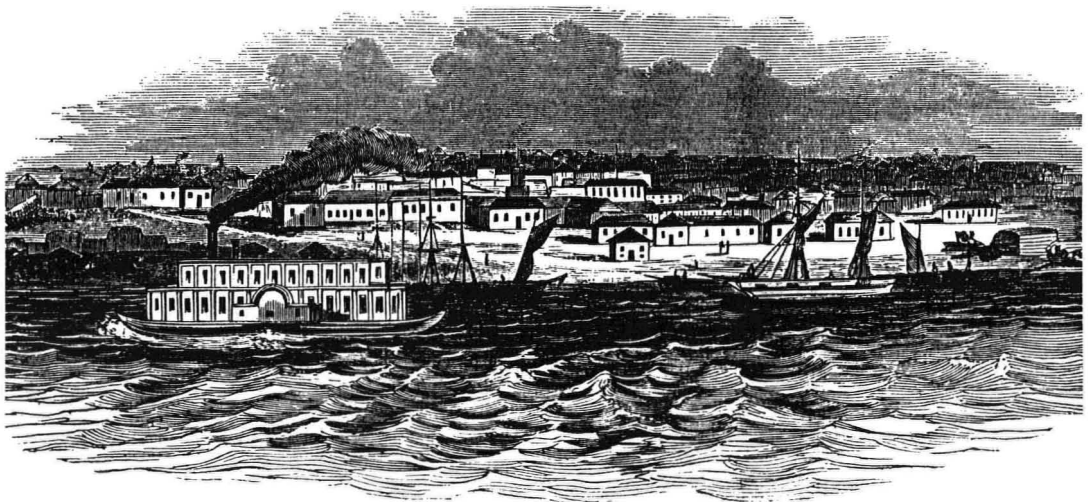
CHART OF THE HARBOR OF GALVESTON, TEXAS, WHERE THE "HARRIET LANE" WAS TAKEN.

Figure 2. Map of the City of Galveston, Texas, Galveston Bay and vicinity. The map shows the position of Galveston Island and the Pass at Bolivar Point. The Galveston, Houston and Henderson Railroad extends from Galveston to Harrisburg and on to Houston as shown on the left central portion of the map. This map is reproduced from *Harper's Weekly*, dated January 24, 1863.



been completed from the City of Galveston to Houston, a distance of only fifty miles (Figure 2). The Henderson segment was never constructed and, after the War, the name of the railroad was changed to the Galveston, Harrisburg & San Antonio Railroad.

The railroad marking, the date, the “Confederate States of A” designation and the penstrokes canceling the stamps are all in black manuscript. These markings probably were applied by P.C. Hume, United States Railroad Agent who had been assigned by the United States Post Office Department, Washington, D.C., on 16 August 1860. The address is written in a different hand, probably by Mrs. P. C. Hume, and the letter is directed to a member of the Hume family in Orange Court House, Virginia.



PORT OF GALVASTON.

**Figure 3. Woodcut illustrating a steamer moving past sailing vessels and barges docked at the “PORT OF GALVASTON [sic].” This figure is reproduced from *Harper’s Weekly*, circa 1850-1860.**

We do not have a record of P.C. Hume’s arrival in Texas, but it likely was within a few weeks after his appointment as Railroad Agent. This was a rather hectic time as the “Clouds of War” were gathering and a crucial presidential election was soon to be held; political feelings and events were moving rapidly toward a climax. Shortly after the election of Abraham Lincoln to the presidency, the state of South Carolina seceded from the Union [on December 1860]; followed in January 1861 by five additional states, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia and Louisiana. These six states formed the Confederate States of America at Montgomery, Alabama, on 4 February 1861. They were later joined by Texas on March 6, Virginia on May 7, Arkansas on May 18, North Carolina on May 27 and Tennessee on July 3, a total of eleven states.

Texas seceded from the Union on February 1, subject to ratification by popular vote on February 23. After the vote, the Texas Congress met and decided to join the Confederacy effective March 2nd. When this information was received at Montgomery, Alabama, Texas was admitted on 6 March 1861, the seventh state to join the Confederacy.

P.C. Hume knew of these circumstances when his letter was dispatched to a member of his family in Virginia. He knew that his position as a Federal Route Agent in Texas was no longer in effect. The contents of his letter likely advised that he and his wife were returning to Virginia forthwith. As the Hume family was associated with the Orange and

Alexandria Railroad in Virginia, he probably hoped to find a position with a railroad in that state upon his return. This, of course, is pure speculation about the contents of his letter, but the timing makes the interpretation presented here likely.

The cover described in this short article has several unusual features which combine to make it an exciting relic of Texas Confederate postal history. In his volume on Railroad Agent markings,<sup>1</sup> Charles Towle illustrated this cover and assigned it a rarity rating of "10" indicating that it is unique or, if not, extremely rare. The unusual features which distinguish this cover include: 1) earliest recorded Texas railroad cover [more than ten years older than next recorded]; 2) only cover recorded with "Confederate States of A[merica]" as a part of the postmark; 3) use of a pair of 3¢ 1857 stamps in Confederate Texas; 4) as yet not listed in Confederate catalogues as a railroad marking; 5) only known example recording the name of the Galveston, Houston and Henderson Railroad (the line was re-named after the war).

Initially, the Galveston, Houston and Henderson Railroad served as a military railroad during the War and, as such, was quite important to the supply and defense of the City and Port of Galveston (Figure 3). When Union forces occupied Galveston in late 1862, they burned the trestles leading from Galveston Island. Early in 1863, Confederate forces attacked and retook the island from the Union. After the war, the name of the railroad line was changed to the Galveston, Harrisburg and San Antonio Railroad. Later it became part of the Southern Pacific Railroad, the Crescent and Star Route. □

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<sup>1</sup>Charles L. Towle, *U.S. Route and Station Agent Postmarks* (Tucson, Arizona: Mobile Post Office Society, 1986).

### **THE TYPE I 3¢ 1851-57 STAMPS: A PREVIOUSLY UNLISTED RECUT VARIETY** Wm. K. McDANIEL

This short article is written to report a previously unlisted recut variety on the 1851-57 Type I 3¢ stamp. Probably resulting from an error of recutting, the variety is described as follows: The right frame line on the listed stamp extends downward, just touching the upper right corner of the stamp below. This variety has been confirmed by examination of the Smithsonian photos of the Chase plate reconstructions, but can best be seen when viewing a vertical pair, the top stamp being from one of the noted positions.

A cursory examination of all the photos identified seven stamps showing this variety. They are as follows: 1L1<sup>1</sup>, 90L2<sup>E</sup>, 90L2<sup>L</sup>, 41L4, 29L8, 31L8 and 44L8. This gives a total of seven known examples of the variety. Coincidentally, all are left pane positions. With the exception of the Plate 1<sup>1</sup>, pair, all could exist perforated as well. Any other positions noted will be reported at a later date.

Based on current known positions, rarity factors are assigned as follows: imperforate, R4; perforated, R6.

Since this is a consistent variety, it will be designated as Variety #39 in any later publications of existing recut varieties, as follows: "Variety 39: Line joins lower right corner to upper right corner of stamp below." □



**Figure 1.** A block of four from the left pane of Plate 2 Late illustrating this new recut variety. Note that the vertical pair at right shows the vertical line extending downward from position 90L<sup>2</sup>, to position 100L<sup>2</sup>, joining the two parallel to and in alignment with the outer frame lines of the two positions.

## THE 24¢ REDDISH BROWN REVISITED

JOHN H. BARWIS

This is a reply—16 years late—to William K. Herzog’s 1984 request for information on an unusual 24¢ 1861 shade (*Chronicle* 123: 197-98).<sup>1</sup> The shade was called *brown lilac* by Stanley B. Ashbrook (in pencil on the back of Figure 1, dated October 10). Friend, Stames and Herzog referred to the shade as *Baltimore reddish brown*, as the four examples they recorded were used in Baltimore between November 20, 1863 and 8 January 8, 1864. Herzog noted that the shade falls between a full red lilac (Scott Number 70) and full brown lilac (Scott 70a), a “soft and very rich” hue, close to Methuen’s “8E6,” and felt that it was “one of the most beautiful 24 cent 1861 shades.”

Another example of this shade has been found, this one used from Philadelphia on February 8, 1864 (Figure 2). The hue is the same as that of the cover shown in Figure 1, but slightly richer and less faded than the stamp in Figure 1. The freshness of color is probably due to the fact that the cover in Figure 2 was part of a correspondence that had lain unseen until unearthed in 1999 in London.

The cover in Figure 2 was postmarked in Philadelphia on **FEB 5** by a red Exchange Office cds with integral 19 [cents], as credit to Great Britain for British Packet and inland postage. This marking was overstruck with the red 3 [cents] credit cds, probably when the clerk realized that the next Cunard steamer would not leave New York until 10 February.<sup>2</sup> The letter was sent via Hamburg-American steamer *Germania* (New York 6 Feb., Southampton 17 Feb.). The red **LONDON EC/ PAID** receiving postmark is weak, but visible as **18 FE/ 64**.

The stamp in Figure 2 is tied to its mourning cover only by a gum stain. However, the killer is the 11-bar framed grid recorded by the author as used by the Philadelphia Exchange Office from May 1858 until July 1868. Another indication that the stamp belongs is that several other letters from 1863-64 Collet correspondence (seen by the author) are all from Philadelphia to London, and all via the forwarding agents Brown & Shipley. All carry stamps tied by the same 11-bar grid.

Was this shade sold only in Baltimore? Perhaps it was available in Philadelphia as well. Or perhaps this example was purchased in Baltimore and used in Philadelphia, which even in the early 1860s was only a short train ride away. □

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<sup>1</sup>William K. Herzog, “The 24¢ ‘Baltimore’ Reddish Brown,” *Chronicle*, Vol. 36, No. 3 (Whole No. 123)(August 1984), pp. 197-98.

<sup>2</sup>Walter Hubbard and Richard F. Winter, *North Atlantic Mail Sailings 1840-75* (Canton, Ohio: U.S. Philatelic Classics Society, 1988), p. 177.

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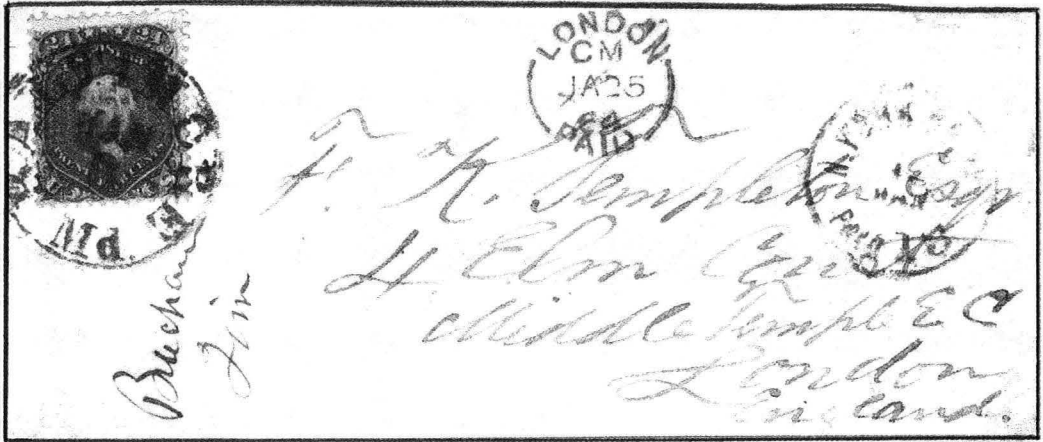


Figure 1. A "Baltimore reddish brown" mailed on Jan. 8, 1864; shown as Figure 2 by Herzog (1984). Ex Friend, Herzog. Collection of the author.

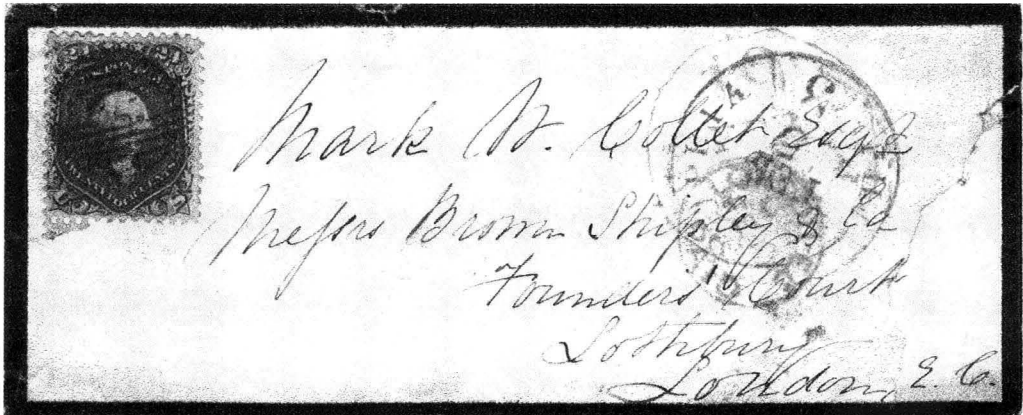


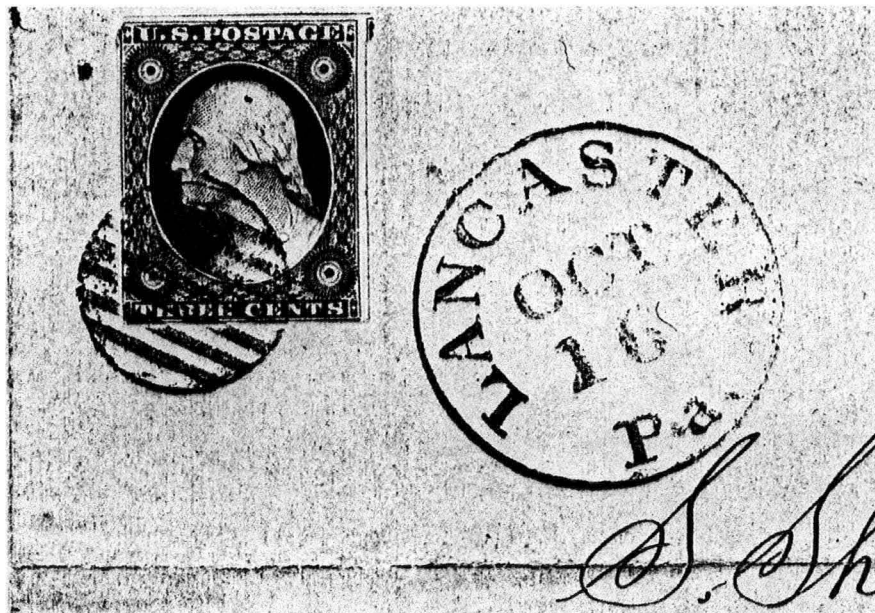
Figure 2. Reddish brown shade shown in Figure 1, but mailed from Philadelphia on Feb. 5, 1864. Collection of the author.

## ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF UNUSUAL SEPARATION ROBERT R. HEGLAND

In the November 1999 *Chronicle*, Van Koppersmith illustrated a strip of 3 1¢ Type IV imperforate (Scott No. 9), showing a vertical cut between the stamps up to 2-3 mm of the top of the stamp. The cover is dated SEP 9 [1853], entering the mails at Mobile.

Figure 1 shows a similar treatment of a 3¢ Type I imperforate (Scott No. 10). Dr. Amonette has identified it as pale-medium orange brown and it has been plated as 34LII (left inner line only partly recut). It was used from Lancaster, Pa. on OCT 16, 1851. The letter is from a bank cashier acknowledging receipt of a letter with enclosures. The stamp shows a rip at the upper left (1 mm) that removed some of the design, and at the upper right (2.2 mm) that shows some of the design from 35LII. The stamps had already been cut into a horizontal strip. Someone obviously cut between them, to allow easy separation by tearing the last 1-2 mm to remove a stamp to put on the envelope or folded letter. This is the same preparation as is seen in the 1¢ strip in the November article. Many covers would pass by this 3¢ cover because of these “defects.” However, I have been interested for many years in the way imperforate stamps were separated by the postal clerks and by businesses, and have acquired other “undesirable” copies that tell this story. There are many imperforate copies that are badly cut into by very even, regular cuts. There are other copies as mentioned in the November article that were very roughly torn from a sheet. We can’t tell whether these were done at the post office or at some other source but it is interesting to collect such examples and theorize about the handling of the postage stamps. There are some examples of this included in the USPS Exhibition Photocopy pages of my collection, including some from the perforated issues.

Other collectors who contributed to the above information: Dr. Amonette, Dick Celler and Wilson Hulme. □



**Figure 1.** 3¢ Scott No. 10, from horizontal strip with stamps “cut between” for easy separation

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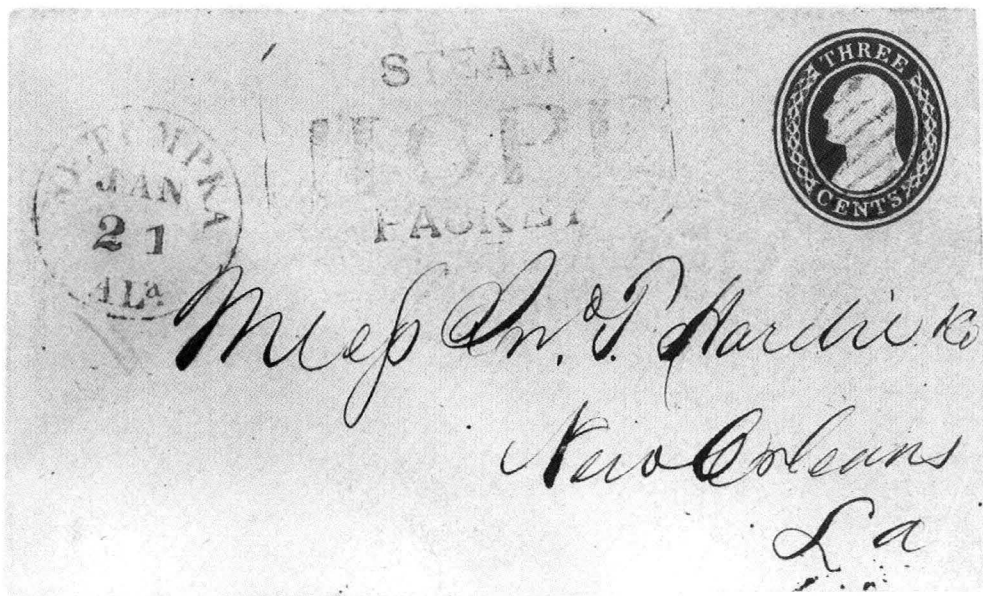


Steamboats plying their trade in this country in the nineteenth century call forth visions of both the romantic antebellum south and the mighty highways of commerce that were and still are our major rivers. Letters were often handed to steamboat pursers and captains for delivery to and mailing at the next town along the river with a post office, from whence it would travel on to destination in the domestic mails. For this favor, the pursers and captains typically collected a small fee and sometimes applied a handstamped, name-of-vessel marking to the letter to denote the carriage by the steamboat. Covers with these markings are relatively scarce and desirable, and thus become attractions to the faker, forger and purveyor of fraud. In this issue we shall examine one such cover, currently resting in the S.C.R.A.P. Reference Collection, that displays a faked marking of mythical usage. **Van Koppersmith** did the initial analysis and wrote the original monograph for the USPCS S.C.R.A.P. program, and **John Eggen** accomplished the review.

**STEAM PACKET HOPE ON 1854 EMBOSSED STAMPED ENVELOPE**  
(S.C.R.A.P. Number 92-099-01)

DESCRIPTION: The steam packet cover shown in Figure 1 is the United States 3¢ red on buff paper embossed stamped envelope issued in 1854, postmarked with blue *WETUMPKA/JAN 21/AL<sup>a</sup>* circular date stamp, canceled with blue 7-bar diagonal grid handstamp, marked with a large black *STEAM/HOPE/PACKET* handstamp, and addressed to New Orleans, Louisiana.

APPARENT USAGE: Given to or mailed aboard the steam packet *Hope* on the Alabama River system, delivered by the packet purser to the United States Post Office at the packet stop in Wetumpka, Alabama, and forwarded at the 3¢ per half ounce letter rate in the domestic mails to New Orleans, Louisiana.



**Figure 1. An embossed stamped envelope issued in 1854 purporting to show carriage aboard the steam packet *Hope* on the Alabama River system. The boxed black *STEAM/HOPE/PACKET* marking is fake.**

ANALYSIS: The U.S. 3¢ red on buff paper embossed stamped envelope of 1854 is genuine. The blue Wetumpka, Alabama circular date stamp and grid cancel is consistent in size and color with other markings from this period and, as such, should be considered genuine.

The black packet marking of a large, octagonal type measuring approximately 58x34mm is highly questionable and most likely fake for several reasons. First, the use of a Wetumpka circular date stamp is unknown in combination with any name-of-vessel steam packet marking from this or any other period.

Second, there are no known references to a steam packet *Hope* during this time period operating in or near Alabama waterways. Of the several steamboats named *Hope*, there were only two which fit the time period of this cover, that is, after 1853 and before 1861 which is the period of use of this particular embossed stamped envelope. The first was a 193-ton boat built in 1855 at Louisville which operated out of New Orleans on the Red River. The second was a 218-ton vessel built in 1859 which operated on the lower Mississippi River. A third steamboat named *Hope* operated in the Louisiana bayous in 1849-50 before the time period of this cover. Even though many of the smaller steamboats were tramp steamers traveling wherever business took them, there is no indication that any of the steamboats named *Hope* were used on Alabama rivers.

Third, the size and character of the name-of-vessel marking is in itself questionable. The design and type face used in this marking are both exceptions to recorded genuine purser marks, and the octagonal box is not representative of other contemporary steam packet markings. The type face is similar to that used during that time, but the alignment and thickness of the letters suggest that it was created with individual letters placed in a holder. Note the uneven alignment of the letters. The general thickness of the individual letters is not representative of set type or carved characters and were probably rubber. Even though many name-of-vessel handstamps were rather crude, a careful examination shows the letters contained in this marking are not consistent with contemporaneous type fonts. The design of these letters does not match those used in the 1850s, and this marking appears to have been made with a hobbyist's rubber stamp kit.

Finally, Wetumpka was the last and northernmost landing on the navigable Alabama River system in the 1850s, being 437 miles from Mobile and 34 miles up river from Montgomery. The source of the Alabama River is the confluence of the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers, and Wetumpka was actually about 10 miles up the Coosa River above the head of the Alabama River. However, the Coosa River was *not* navigable for some 137 miles above Wetumpka. Consequently, a cover postmarked in Wetumpka with any steamboat marking would have to have traveled *up* the river to Wetumpka from the direction of Montgomery. Before reaching Wetumpka, the steamboat purser would have to have applied the packet marking and then delivered the letter to the Wetumpka Post Office. One wonders why anyone would send a letter for New Orleans via a steamboat going *up* the river when any steamboat heading *down* the river would be faster. Such a scenario is unlikely. It would seem the faker of this cover was not knowledgeable about navigation on the Alabama and Coosa Rivers in the 1850s.

CONCLUSION: This cover is a genuine embossed stamped envelope originally mailed at Wetumpka, Alabama, addressed to New Orleans, Louisiana, to which a fake boxed black *STEAM/HOPE/PACKET* marking has been added. □

THE LITHOGRAPHED GENERAL ISSUES OF THE CONFEDERATE STATES  
OF AMERICA: PROOFS

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Identification of the Proofs of the CSA Lithographed Stamps has perplexed me for nearly 40 years. Recently I am getting much more comfortable on this subject and am now satisfied with the identifications. The ability to conveniently do high resolution scanning has brought a new tool into the picture to solve an old mystery. The problem starts with the lack of a lithograph proof that we can definitely trace back to the CSA archives and to what was then considered a proof; the Black Stone Y proofs are a possible exception. As far as I know, we do not have a single lithographed stamp or proof that can be traced back to the original source, the proof book, and was considered a proof by the CSA Post Office.

There are many unquestionable references to proofs and sample stamps in the literature. However, we may not take for granted that any such item was a special or different stamp in the sense of normal philatelic definitions. Still, we must assume, until proven otherwise, that there are at least some proofs or specimens that are truly special stamps and thus can be identified and so characterized.

The earliest record we have of such specimens is a letter from the CSA Postmaster General, John H. Reagan, dated November 21st, 1864. This letter is illustrated and discussed by Lawrence L. Shenfield in an article which appeared in the *Collectors Club Philatelist* of July 1957.<sup>1</sup> Fortunately this letter is also discussed, transcribed and illustrated in an article by Van Dyk MacBride in *Postal History Journal*, December 1961.<sup>2</sup> I say fortunately, as the illustration in the *CCP* is nearly illegible and is not transcribed. The text follows, from MacBride's article:

CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA.

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT.

Richmond, November 21st, 1864.

Dear Sir:

Your note of September 28th enclosing specimens of the Postage Stamps of Nova Scotia and requesting specimens of the Postage Stamps of The Confederate States is received; and I take pleasure in enclosing, herewith, specimens of our stamps.

Specimens, marked 1 and 2, are of the first printed for the Department, on stone; 3 and 4 were next printed on Electrotpe-plates, in Great Britain, by De Larue & Co.[sic.]; 5, 6 and 7 are those now in use, printed on steel-plates in this city. Such of them as are un gummed are taken from specimen-sheets, those intended for use have been exhausted.

Trusting that these may reach you safely;

I am, very respectfully,

Your obdt. servt.,

/s/ John H. Reagan.

A. Woodgate, Esq.,  
Post Master General,  
Halifax,  
Nova Scotia

<sup>1</sup>Lawrence L. Shenfield, "Confederate States of America: The Essay Die Proofs and Proofs of Issued Stamps, Printed in Richmond; The "SPECIMEN" Overprints of the De La Rue Printing," *Collectors Club Philatelist*, Vol. 36, No. 4 (July 1957), pp. 161-66, 173-74.

<sup>2</sup>Van Dyk MacBride, "Postmaster General Reagan, C.S.A., Writes to A. Woodgate, P.M. of Nova Scotia," *Postal History Journal*, Vol. VI, No. 1 (Whole No. 7)(December 1961), pp. 22-24.

The letter leaves no doubt that there were officially retained lithographed stamps, without gum, and they were the first printing and perhaps special in other ways. Perhaps they were from final press sheets submitted for approval before the printer went into mass production. Perhaps they were printed from the transfer stones of 50 units before the printing plates of 200 were made up!

It is unfortunate that the letter no longer has the stamps. Perhaps one day they will show up, numbered, most likely in manuscript, perhaps on the front, the back or even mounted on a sheet of paper with the numbers below!

We also have many references to H. St. Geo. Offutt, 1st Asst. Postmaster General of the Confederate States P.O.D., and his Proof Book. The press of the day published on this subject, at least as early as the April 1868 *American Stamp Mercury*, which contains Offutt's famous letter of April 14, 1868 in which he states, in part:

All designs were submitted to me for approval and I have proof impressions of all designs that were ever considered by the Department.<sup>3</sup>

Another early piece of evidence is an auction catalog for a sale held on Thursday evening, December 20, 1877, by George A. Leavitt & Co. The preface to this sale states in part:<sup>4</sup>

Among the stamps which appeal to a select class of large collectors, may be named the Confederate States proofs, which were presented to the owner by Mr. H. St. George Offutt, late acting Post Master General of the Confederate. These are believed to be unique.

The CSA material was sold as lots 54 through 63 with the proofs being:

- lot 54: Perforated, set 1863, issue 2, 5, 10 and 10 c these are undoubtedly genuine having been presented to the owner by Mr. H. St. George Offutt, Very rare, 4 items realizing \$1.20
- lot 60: Die proof in blue with large margins of the 10 c 1863 Confederate States 1 item realizing \$0.75
- lot 61: Die proof in green, large margins, 20 c 1863, Confederate States, 1 item realizing \$0.75
- lot 62: Die proof same as last, in red The above three are the only ones we have seen, and are probably unique, 1 item realizing \$0.75
- lot 63: Die proof in black, of the 5 c 1861, Confederate, very rare 1 item realizing \$1.00

The first four lots listed above are all easily identified with material now known to exist. However, when you get to our lithograph we have problems. Lot No. 63, a black proof of the 5¢ 1861, is not known to exist as described. There are three evident possibilities. First, the year could have been 1862 and not 1861 and the item a typographed De La Rue design of which there are a number of proofs. Or the 5¢ is in error for a 10¢ Black Stone Y proof of which we have several. There could also have been a 5¢ Black Hoyer proof that is now known today.

The Offutt proof book evidently was transferred from Offutt to C.B. Corwin. Corwin read a paper before the Brooklyn Philatelic Club, January 16, 1889 which was printed in the *American Philatelist*.<sup>5</sup> With respect to our lithographs I quote in part from this long and detailed article:

I am pleased to submit (Exhibit B) a beautiful impression of this stamp, which is one from the *first sheet* that was printed. This stamp, you will observe, is one of the few

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<sup>3</sup>H. St. Geo. Offutt, in *American Stamp Mercury*, Vol. I, No. 6 (April 1868).

<sup>4</sup>We thank David Beech of the British Library for providing the above information from the original catalog in the Earl of Crawford Collection.

<sup>5</sup>C.B. Corwin, "Notes on the Confederate Government Issues," *American Philatelist*, Vol. III, No. 5 (February 11, 1889), pages 122-33.

remaining in the accompanying book, which was used by Colonel Offutt for the purpose of inserting therein proofs, early impressions, essays, and other data appertaining to postal issues of his Bureau. Unfortunately the greed of philatelists and the liberality of the owner have combined to almost completely denude the book of its contents and but few remain, and, after I am through with the book, there will be none, as I have been presented with the few remaining specimens. You will notice that the book has stamped upon its cover—

CONFEDERATE STATES  
OF AMERICA

---

Stamps

---

THOMAS DE LARUE & CO.  
LONDON.

and was sent by Messrs. De LaRue to the Confederate Governments as specimens of their handiwork, from which they could arrive at an idea of what could be produced by that establishment.

This book was in active philatelic demand for a few years after the war, and you can see the result in its barren leaves.

As it now stands, as far as I know, we do not have a lithographed proof that we can definitely tie to the proof book. I hope one of you readers will immediately prove that I am wrong.

There are a number of old references in the literature to people describing magnificent stamps, wide margins, etc. that just must be proofs. The great names of Confederate philately, such as August Dietz, John Drinkwater, Lawrence Shenfield, etc., are often mentioned in this regard. The below remark is from the previously mentioned Shenfield article:<sup>6</sup>

In 1932, the late John Drinkwater, famous British dramatist and collector of Confederate State [*sic.*] Stamps, sent to August Dietz an unused 5c 1861 Hoyer and Ludwig lithographed stamp with large even margins, of remarkably brilliant impression and in an unusual shade of green. The specimen was un gummed. Obviously it was from Stone A or B. When Dietz compared this stamp with the clearest printed examples in his own collection and others, no other 5c value came close to matching the marvelous brilliance of the Drinkwater copy. In fact, to quote Dietz' own words, "the impression of this stamp resembled the sharpness and depth of a steel plate engraved stamp."

Since that time, the writer has a record of two other examples of the 5c value—one in brilliant green, one in deep bluish green; and a total of five examples of the 10c Hoyer and Ludwig value . . . .

Without adequate illustrations or the stamps themselves, we can draw nothing from such remarks with respect to the proofs of the lithographs.

### Characteristics of the Proof

Over the years I have settled on a number of observations and concepts for distinguishing the lithographed proofs.

I find the proofs (only plate proofs are apparently known) to have normal stamp margins and most examples are defective. These two observations are consistent with their migration to the collecting community in the 1865-1890 period. Margins were not worshiped like today, and in fact in the 1850-1860 period they were often deliberately cut off by collectors. I think to strip the adjoining 8 stamps of their margins to make a spectacular single

---

<sup>6</sup>Shenfield, pp. 163-64.



Figure 1. 5¢ Green, Hoyer & Ludwig, Plate Proof



Figure 2. 5¢ Green Hoyer & Ludwig, Stone A or B, issued stamp, used from Richmond, Virginia, November 1, 1861

copy would have been frowned upon. Thins are to be expected from the original mounting and the normal collector mounting of the period. In essence, the proofs didn't stay pristine and undiscovered for 100 years.

For the 5¢ Hoyer & Ludwig, all examples that I consider proofs are of one specific shade, a peculiar light green with a bit of a bluish tinge. The paper is quite white with one exception; I think that the exception has yellowed with time, perhaps from being in contact with poor paper. This exact shade is not a spectacular one by any means, but one that I have not seen on a used stamp. There are many 5¢ stamps that are in truly spectacular shades—solid apple greens, bright greens, emerald greens, deep intense green, Wizard of Oz Emerald Greens, etc.—but these are mostly found on cover and properly used. On the 5¢ that I consider proofs I would put the number at about 5 but am sure more exist.

The 5¢ Hoyer & Ludwig proofs are spectacular in that the portrait and the solid inscription bands truly stand out from the crosshatch background. This crosshatch seems quite thin and is less visible than with the issued stamps. I take this appearance to be from the lack of plate wear but perhaps these proofs were printed from the transfer stone as samples before the printing stone was laid down. If this is the case, they would be one step closer to the original design than the issued stamp. Stone A & B is not plated, multiples beyond pairs are rare, especially unused, thus though these stamps and proofs have evident plating marks the positions are not identified. For comparison with the proof (Figure 1) we are illustrating a single that was used from Richmond, Virginia on November 1, 1861 (Figure 2). It is of a similar impression and shade to the proofs and is an early printing but it definitely does not have the appearance of a proof.

For the 10¢ proof the above basics apply, although I can not say there is a specific shade that I associate with the proofs. However, all that I consider proofs are of a deeper blue than the normal issued stamp. With the blue lithographed stamps, neither the 5¢ nor 10¢ values have the wonderful range of color of the 5¢ greens or to a lesser extent the 10¢ reds, though there are still some quite nice and distinct shades. All examples of the 10¢ proofs that I have seen can be plated to the transfer stone positions, *i.e.*, the unit of 50 subjects. To date I have personally seen stamps that I consider proofs from positions No. 1, 12, 25, 34, 41 and 45, no duplicates from any position, thus a total of 6 examples of which two are in extremely poor condition. I am sure another 5 or so exist.

The 10¢ Hoyer & Ludwig proofs are similar in the fine printing of the portrait and uniform solid area to the 5¢, *i.e.*, extremely sharp impressions but perhaps not quite to the extent of the 5¢.

There is one interesting phenomenon on the 10¢ that I refer to as the "Halo Effect." There is an irregular solid area (a "halo") between the sides and top of the portrait and the fine crosshatching. It is quite striking on high magnification. In the issued stamps the portrait blends more with the background. Something resembling this halo effect has been seen on one stamp in a dark blue and showing a filled-in impression, and reported on another that I have not yet seen. Again with the proof (Figure 3) we are showing a used copy that is a fine impression and somewhat similar to the proofs (Figure 4); it is used from Prince Edwards C.H., Virginia, July 14, 1862.

Now as the characteristic for a proof I call the lines of color to be extremely thin and uniform in the design— or to use the more common term, sharp impressions. I have not seen any difference in paper thickness, while paper is perhaps a smidgen whiter than with the issued stamps.

This sharp impression distinction is quite subjective. Originally these stamps were not illustrated in catalogs, but even today the auction catalogs do not give an image that one could say is definitive for this detail.

We can not draw any different conclusions from the 10¢ Black Stone Y stamps that are most certainly proofs, however the above notes all apply. The color being black easily distinguishes them from the issued stamps, all are somewhat defective, the paper is essen-



Figure 3. 10¢ Blue, Hoyer & Ludwig, Plate Proof, position No. 45



Figure 4. 10¢ Blue Hoyer & Ludwig, issued stamp, position No. 29, used from Prince Edwards C.H., Virginia, July 14, 1862





Figure 5. 10¢ Black, Stone Y, Plate Proof, position not known



Figure 6. 10¢ Blue, Stone Y, issued stamp, used from Richmond, Virginia, February 27, 1863, position not known

tially normal white stamp paper, perhaps a fraction better than some. The 10¢ Black Proofs (Figure 5) are not fine impressions *per se*, however when compared with the issued Stone Y stamps (Figure 6) they are fine impressions. Again, the black stamps could have been pulled from the transfer stone of 50.

Regarding rarity: for the 5¢ and 10¢ Hoyer & Ludwig lithograph proofs I estimate less than 10 of each have survived. For the 10¢ Black Stone Ys I know of only two singles and one pair which is badly cut in on one side. I hope the pair is still a pair and has not been cut apart, as the plating of Stone Y is now within reach.

The lithograph proofs were late to be added to the catalogs. They are not mentioned in *Phillips' Specialized Priced Catalogue of Confederate States General Issues* which appeared in 1927. The 1945 edition of the *Dietz Confederate States Catalog and Hand-Book* lists only the 10¢ Black proof, with the 5¢ Green and 10¢ Blue proofs being added to the 1959 edition. The first such listing in *Scott's Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps* is also the 10¢ Black proof in 1959, followed in 1960 by the 5¢ Green and the 10¢ Blue. The late listing of the 10¢ Black Proof can be attributed to rarity, with the other two being a combination of rarity and problems in identification.

I would like to give special thanks to J.E. Molesworth, Jerry Palazolo and Scott Trepel for assistance in the study that led to this article.

Future articles: If you have anything unusual or perplexing relating to the CSA lithographs, please advise. The old literature mentions fabulous things that have never been confirmed or properly described, illustrated or identified. Help on the Lithographed Proofs is most welcome. Please contact the author at: P.O. Box 36006, Louisville, KY 40233, or by e-mail at: [pbbooks@attglobal.net](mailto:pbbooks@attglobal.net).

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## CONTINENTAL VS. AMERICAN PAPERS: THE EKU OF KING SCOTT'S NEW CLOTHES

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Once upon a time, in the land of U.S. Specialized, King Scott decided to get new clothes. Both his soft American everyday suit which he bought after February 4, 1879 and his hard Continental suit which he bought in late spring 1873 were reliable but somewhat worn. He had heard of an exciting new variety, the "Soft Continental."

He commissioned the kingdom's two finest haberdashers, Mr. Tailor and Mr. Sly, to make suits for him and he would wear the best of them for the anniversary of his coronation. Mr. Tailor made a fine suit which was a Continental in all of its respects except that its paper fabric was a softer more open weave than the old textile and mildly bleached to resemble the white color of the hard 1873 suit.

Mr. Sly appeared before the king with empty hands but persuaded him that he was actually holding the new lighter weight soft Continental. He told the king that it would feel "as soft as your own skin."

The king went to try them both on. He liked the feel of the Soft Continental and admitted that it was well-made and logical. "But," he said, "my subjects deserve to see me in the very best available." He convinced himself that it was the Sly American. He paraded before his subjects. Unfortunately, most in the court realized that King Scott "was in the altogether, as naked as the day that he was born."<sup>1</sup>

Many years ago, when my elderly uncle referred to something as being unlikely, instead of "When pigs can fly," he said, "Comes the Millennium . . ." Well, the millennium came and Scott's 2001 *Specialized Catalogue of U.S. Stamps & Covers* (the *Specialized*) accepted what most collectors of the large Bank Note issues have known for many years, that Continental Bank Note Company (CBNC) not only issued stamps on hard paper but also issued them on soft paper. The full language of the *Specialized* lengthy note is set out as Appendix A to this article.<sup>2</sup>

The way in which Scott did this in the Millennium *Specialized* has set off a flurry of excitement and a rush to find new earliest known uses (EKU) for soft paper stamps on covers that predate the buyout of CBNC. The takeover of CBNC by the American Bank Note Company (ABNC) was on February 4, 1879. Scott had a choice of ways in which to handle this major catalogue change and, as this article will show, its choice was not the most rational one and, in my opinion, left the king naked. In fact, their note on EKUs contradicts itself.

Students of the large Bank Note issues of 1870-1889 have long known that there were many different papers used in their production.<sup>3</sup> Many years ago, the Scott catalogues adopted a convention of referring to all of the soft open wove papers as being the products of ABNC and the hard paper issues of 1873-1879 as being those of the CBNC, as each of those companies had held the contracts in those periods of time.

Advanced collectors already knew that National Bank Note Company had used a few

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<sup>1</sup>From "The King is in the Altogether," score by Frank Loesser, sung by Danny Kaye in the movie *Hans Christian Andersen* (1952).

<sup>2</sup>Scott's 2000 *Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps & Covers* (Sidney, Ohio: Scott Publishing Co., 1999), p. 31.

<sup>3</sup>See, e.g., Lester G. Brookman, *The United States Postage Stamps of the 19th Century* (New York: H.L. Lindquist, 1966), Vol. II, pp. 241, 258 and 279.

different but very similar hard papers in 1870-73, including so-called thin hard and medium thick papers. There were also a few experimental chemical paper essays made.<sup>4</sup>

The large variety of Continental papers can be difficult for even those who have studied them carefully. It is only after many years of study that both Ronald Burns' 3¢ exhibit and my 6¢ exhibit have put before the public at least ten different Continental papers. Most of our colleagues are only confident of identifying three to six of them. Yet, the differences among hard, intermediate and soft Continentals are not difficult for most.

In 1985 through 1990, I had the good fortune to acquire large amounts of dated 6¢ Bank Note covers used from March 28, 1870 (the EKU for Scott No. 148) through August 13, 1882. It can be difficult to find year-dated covers in the first nine years of that period because the use of year dates in circular date stamps was not common. Many covers were not docketed on sending or on receipt. Eighty-two covers came from a correspondence from two sisters to their husbands who had gone to work in the mines of Nova Scotia. The sisters wrote regularly from 1870 through late 1879. The other approximately 450 covers consisted mostly of otherwise undistinguished double weight domestic mail.<sup>5</sup>

These covers became my research base enabling the identification of grilling, shade and paper differences and placing approximate dates on the varieties. Ronald Burns of Indiana was performing similar studies on the even less expensive and more readily available 3¢ green large Bank Notes. We reached quite similar results.

The studies established that there were two main periods of grilling from 1870 through early 1871 and the largest proportion of covers with ungrilled stamps was to be found from late 1870 through early 1872. Grilling resumed intensively in mid-1872, probably as National was under closer scrutiny because the entire government was being watched more carefully due to the Credit Mobilier scandal and because the three year stamp production contract was coming up for renewal.

The study also discovered that Continental went from thin hard paper to a thicker medium weight in 1876 and then began experimenting. Most collectors could probably recognize the medium soft or "intermediate" papers<sup>6</sup> once they were taught how to examine the more open weave but with many more fillers than the soft papers introduced in 1878. Because the change in the *Specialized* focuses on the difference between the Continental very soft papers introduced about late summer 1878 versus the different papers used by American, the rest of this article will make that its focus. However, the *Specialized* fails to distinguish the later 1878 soft papers from the 1876-78 earlier medium soft varieties and thus creates a trap for those who try to pin down an EKU of an undefined paper variety.

### Continental Paper Varieties<sup>7</sup>

Starting in 1876, Continental began broad experimentation with different papers, in part to better control perforation shifts due to shrinkage and because they no longer needed the hard thin papers which performed better in the grilling process. Grilling was discontinued as of the 1873 contact. While these experimental papers were not the soft newsprint paper introduced by the American Bank Note Company in summer and fall of 1879, many were sufficiently soft to have an effect on the appearance of the stamps as well as on their color.

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<sup>4</sup>The chemical paper essays are very scarce as most were mistakenly discarded as stained or water-damaged stamps.

<sup>5</sup>See Eliot A. Landau, "Letter to the Editor," *Collectors Club Philatelist*, Vol. 68, No. 5 (Sept.-Oct. 1989), pp. 343-44.

<sup>6</sup>Brookman, pp. 241 and 258.

<sup>7</sup>The next two sections are adapted from the author's "Tips on Identifying the Large Bank Notes," first published with pictures in *U.S. Stamp News* in early 1998 and then again in Landau, *et al.*, eds., *Linn's U.S. Stamp Facts: The Nineteenth Century* (Sidney, Ohio: 1999) as Appendix C, pp. 251-57.

The thin hard paper used by National and continued by Continental to 1876 is somewhat translucent due to its thinness, rather bright white in color (unless it is aged due to its later treatment), and makes a definite snapping sound when held at one end and the other end is flicked with a finger. The ABNC mid-1879 newsprint type of paper has a straw or ivory color, shows a much more open weave<sup>8</sup> when held to the light but the design does not show through when it is not held to the light because the fibers are thicker, and the sound when flicked with a finger is dull and not a sharp or crisp sound. These tests are also important for distinguishing hard and intermediate paper Continentals from soft paper Continentals and Americans.

The hard National-Continental 1870-76 papers are hard not because they are thin but because they are heavily "sized." This means that papers have been impregnated with starches, stiffeners and/or fillers which add to their weight. Thus, their total weight is similar to that of stamps printed on the thicker heavier fibers used in open-weave soft paper. The starches and fillers are usually white to off-white in color and very responsive to bleaching. Because the spaces between the fibers are filled in, stamps printed on these papers by National and Continental tend to appear brighter and the engraved details stand out more sharply. The technical reason for this is that the ink sits up on top of the paper better because the starches fill in more of the depressions or openings between fibers in the weave of the paper. There is a more complete surface to support the intaglio ink and little actual absorption by the fibers.

On medium soft and soft papers, there is progressively less starch or filler used. Even though the intaglio (engraving) ink is thicker than most other inks when applied, it still has some tendency to be absorbed by the fibers causing the image to soften or blur a bit. This also makes the colors duller. This is most noticeable on the 30¢ gray black where the color becomes duller and takes on a slightly greenish hue when printed by Continental on softer papers. This is also rather noticeable on the 15¢ which tends more toward yellow rather than yellow orange or the American orange color.<sup>9</sup>

The next identification problem involves the many various papers used by CBNC. This is properly a matter of concern to specialists and truly advanced collectors and becomes very complicated. There is a whole spectrum of 12 separately identified papers on the 6¢ Continental alone including hard, medium and soft. Each comes with various degrees of strong, medium and weak bleaching. There is also false laid paper, "silk fibers," and at least two distinct varieties of experimental chemically treated papers.<sup>10</sup>

From mid-1876 through February 1879, CBNC used progressively softer papers with a variety of bleaching intensities. In late summer 1878, CBNC started using a relatively uniform, mildly bleached soft paper and all stamps were printed on it by CBNC and ABNC until the introduction of the unbleached newsprint in summer 1879. The *Specialized* is in error when it says CBNC from August 1878 through early 1879 "occasionally used a soft paper . . ." Only soft paper was used during this period. There is an entire spectrum of hard to soft papers in 1876-1878, so that defining a clearly Continental soft and assigning EKU dates becomes meaningless.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>The paper-makers' term "open weave" or "open wove" is the same as Scott's "porous weave" and refers to the small holes which transmit light when the stamp is held up to a light source and seen under magnification.

<sup>9</sup>Brookman, pp. 279 and 281.

<sup>10</sup>More accurately "colored cloth fibers" as it was not exclusively silk nor usually colored cloth that was used to add cloth fiber in the hard papers.

<sup>11</sup>It is important to note that the paper experiments also affected the Officials. Even an issue with a very low printing such as the 6¢ Official can be found on hard, intermediate, soft bleached and newsprint papers.

### Soft Paper Continentals and Americans

The next important point for the average collector also is the most difficult, trying to distinguish the softer paper Continentals from the two types of soft paper Americans. *It is absolutely impossible to confidentially separate stamps printed by the Continental Bank Note Company from late summer 1878 from those printed by the American Bank Note Company from February 4, 1879 until at least June or July 1879.* This is because the changeover was not simply a change of contracting party. Rather, CBNC was acquired by the ABNC lock, stock and ink barrels as well as paper stock and printed stamps not yet gummed or perforated.<sup>12</sup>

This means that many stamps that were printed by Continental on Continental bleached and mildly bleached soft paper (and probably some on very lightly bleached soft paper) were still in stock when the takeover took place. These were later issued by American even though they did not print them. We cannot even be sure that the elimination of the ugly olive shade on late Continental printings of the 3¢ was really done by American because the return to a full green has been noted by some observers on covers dated in January 1879. If correct, they would predate the merger.

What we do know is that American had large quantities of stamps in stock of most or all of the lower values that had been printed by Continental by the end of January 1879 and not yet transferred to the stamp agent. Some of these were yet to be gummed and perforated. While they may have been issued by American, they are truthfully stamps printed by Continental. Since American continued, for the most part, to use the same plates and, even when they made new plates, used the same dies as Continental, there is nothing besides inks and papers to differentiate the stamps. There was still a significant stock of paper from Continental available to American and presumably (but not truly known) a supply of the inks. We also know that many (13 out of 15) of the same personnel involved in stamp production were continued. The early items produced at ABNC by the *same* workers from the *same* plates with the *same* inks on the *same* papers cannot be told apart from those same items produced under Continental's ownership.

Without the presence of an imprint or plate number from one of the new American plates, it is not until printings beginning in late June and July of 1879 that we can identify stamps as being the product of ABNC. This is when American introduced the virtually unbleached newsprint as its basic paper for stamp production, which it continued to use until production was transferred to the Bureau of Engraving and Printing in 1894.

The easiest and cheapest way to get an understanding of what the newsprint paper looks like, feels like and sounds like, and to allow for some of the variation for inks which may bleed through, is to buy reference copies of the inexpensive re-engraved or new design issues. I especially recommend Scott Nos. 206, 207, 210, 212 and 213. You should be able to get all of these for a total of \$1.50 to \$2.50 in badly centered copies. Remember, the centering is not important because you are going to be focusing on the back of the stamp.

It is, however, important to see what the different effects of blue, green and brown inks can do to the appearance of the back of the stamp. If you want to have more examples to look at, you can go to the 1893 Columbian issue, especially the 1¢ and 2¢ values, although, by then, American seems to have requested its paper maker to use a bit more bleach than it had in the past. Any and all of these should show you the effect of the larger fibers and the more open weave. Many copies even show little pinpoints of light coming

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<sup>12</sup>Interestingly, the *Specialized* picked up this language from my memorandum to them (based on the fn. 7 article) in their long note. However, it also said that the pre-summer 1879 paper "is approximately the same texture and thickness" as the newsprint while ignoring the difference in the papers' colors.

through from the face of the stamp when held to a light source and definitely when magnified 10X or more.

After you have had enough practice at identifying the stamps off cover, you will probably be able to recognize most of them on cover. This is important because many of the dates for the EKU of the American stamps compiled on the usually reliable old American First Day Cover Society (AFDCS) list completely fall apart on this issue. As formerly listed in the *Specialized*, many of them obviously could not be accepted, such as the February 4 and 7, 1879 dates for the 2¢ and 3¢ when there was not enough time for American to yet produce anything. The January 20, 1879 date for the 15¢ is clearly wrong. It is a full 15 days before CBNC was even acquired by ABNC. Because the papers cannot be distinguished from each other, the April and May 1879 dates on other values have been rejected.

In fact, except for those dates from and after July 1879, all of the other EKUs are most likely based on Continental-type soft paper issues on cover and not on identifiably American issues. For the high values which were not distributed until well after the takeover (because of low demand and because the previous stocks on hand were sufficient), some of the post-1879 EKU dates may be reliable except the 30¢ where a new February 1881 date has recently replaced an 1882 date. On some low values, especially on the 3¢ green, an EKU will never be reliably known unless the stamp is removed from cover or (unlike most of them) the paper was not very wet when it was printed. The reason for this is that the green ink (more than any other color) spreads and colors the paper. It is, therefore, more difficult to tell the American newsprint paper from the Continental soft papers and only the newsprint can give us a reliable EKU.

In addition to paper, color is a helpful indicator for the 15¢, 30¢ and 90¢ values. The 15¢ turned from a yellow or yellow orange more toward orange and red orange. However, there are some later uses with what appear to be yellow oranges on newsprint paper, known on cover in 1881 through 1884. Not all of them are from small post offices which would be more likely to have unused stocks from the later printed soft paper Continentals.

Similar observations apply to the 30¢ Hamilton which was printed in full black by American but, because of the soft paper, grayish blacks are known on newsprint. On the 90¢, the carmine color reappeared without the rose tinge common to the Continentals. I am not aware of any definitely identified rose carmines ever appearing on newsprint.

Faced with this information, the *Specialized* had two reasonable options available—and a third, which it took. The first was to consider all the mid-1879 newsprint stamps as being American issued and reserve the American numbers for them excluding the Continental soft papers. The second was to classify stamps by their apparent manufacturer, Continental or American. The third was to classify stamps by their appearance as hard paper or soft paper.

Under the first approach, every Scott number for CBNC printed issues would have had a subletter added for soft paper or even one for soft and another for intermediate paper. A note would also have been placed at the head of the Continental listings explaining that CBNC started experimenting with varieties of soft papers in 1876 and used readily recognizable soft papers starting at least by late summer of 1878. This choice would have reflected the actual facts without endangering the classification system already existing in the Scott numbers according to printer.

By considering all soft paper varieties with strong bleaching to be Continental products or ones which could not be distinguished from being Continental products, there would not be any anomalies such as EKU dates under an American number for stamps that clearly were not printed by them. It also avoids the otherwise difficult and still unresolved issue of the soft papers used from 1876 to 1878.

On the softest of those CBNC examples, it is possible under the new *Specialized* options to misattribute earliest known uses to stamps under the ABNC numbers which were

printed even as early as 1877. When all of the varieties of medium soft to soft papers with more or less filler and strong, medium or mild bleaching are assembled, the colors and appearances of the paper create a virtually continuous spectrum. It is not until the introduction of the unbleached newsprint paper stock in summer to fall 1879 that anyone can confidently look at paper type alone and be sure that they are looking at an American product instead of one from Continental.<sup>13</sup>

By choosing the third alternative, the *Specialized* has started a hunt for EKUs by numbers that appear under the banner "printed by American Bank Note Company." Under the banner appears a note that says whether or not something was printed by American Bank Note Company, if it appears to be soft paper, it will be considered under those Scott numbers traditionally reserved for ABNC.

Had the *Specialized* wanted to distinguish solely on the basis of hard and soft paper, it also could have left the Continental numbers intact but put in a note warning that Continental introduced soft papers before the end of its contract and then proceed to classify all soft paper stamps under the ABNC numbers but precede them with a warning that the stamps under these numbers were printed either by CBNC or by ABNC, rather than continuing the use of a misleading banner and then explaining their way out from under it. This would also be factually inaccurate because of the inability to distinguish CBNC products printed and issued before February 4, 1879 from those printed on the same paper with the same ink and same plates but actually printed and perforated by ABNC.

The greatest vice in the *Specialized* note titled "Identification by Paper Type" occurs where it totally contradicts itself as to whether a stamp on cover must be considered Continental or American. The note starts to follow Brookman who, after distinguishing the intermediate paper from the soft paper, then went on to say that

it is so difficult to distinguish these printings [by CBNC] from those made by American that it is sensible to consider all such stamps as American printings.<sup>14</sup>

The *Specialized* note refers to the difficulty of telling the ABNC and the CBNC soft paper apart (ignoring newsprint) and then says because of that "all undated soft paper stamps have traditionally been classified as American Bank Note Co. printings."

However, the same cannot be said for stamps which can be dated. Brookman states, These soft paper Continentals can be proved to have been printed by Continental only when the date of their use can be shown and when such dates prove the stamp to have been used before the American printings were made.<sup>15</sup>

The *Specialized* note seems to agree with Brookman when it says:

However, if a stamp bears a dated cancellation or is on a dated cover from Feb. 3, 1879 or earlier, collectors (especially specialist collectors) must consider the stamp to be a Continental Bank Note printing.<sup>16</sup>

Had it stopped there, the *Specialized* note would not have created the problem that it has. However, *its next paragraph directly contradicts its own statement* in saying:

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<sup>13</sup>Of course, there are those very few exceptions where a plate made by American might have some of its selvage with distinctive plate markings shown on cover, but these are few and far between during 1879.

<sup>14</sup>Brookman, p. 241. However, Brookman also noted the ability to tell the 15¢ Continental soft paper stamps from the American printings. While observing "it's a practical classification as far as most collectors are concerned," he also noted "an explanation in the catalogs could let any collector have a fair sense to recognize these stamps." *Ibid.*, p. 279.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 241.

<sup>16</sup>*Specialized*, p. 31.



Earliest known uses for American Bank Note Co. issues are given for stamps on the soft, porous paper that has been traditionally associated with that company. But, for reasons given above, sometimes that date will precede the Feb. 4, 1879 consolidation date.<sup>17</sup>

In other words, the *Specialized* recognizes that any usage prior to Feb. 4, 1879 absolutely cannot be an ABNC product but then turns around and extends the ABNC numbers to EKUs that will extend clearly back into the Continental era. Depending upon the expertizer, this could be in 1878 or even a year or 18 months earlier. The situation is completely contradictory and anomalous. *You cannot on the one hand say that a stamp must be Continental because it was used on cover before Feb. 4, 1879 and then turn around and identify any August through December 1878 usage as being the EKU of the American Bank Note Co.!*

If you succumb to the Scott's new confusion, you will probably start going through your stacks of duplicate covers with 1876 through 1878 dates and try to find the earliest ones which appear to be on soft paper. This will probably cause a serious drain on expertizing facilities at the American Philatelic Expertizing Service and the Philatelic Foundation as well as the private services. There are very few people who would be willing to expertize an EKU on soft paper without lifting the stamp from the cover for close examination. That, in itself, is going to present further problems.

Of course, if the second option were used and American EKUs were confined to those on newsprint, there is often a sufficient margin showing on at least one side of a stamp to identify that type of paper without lifting it from the cover. Also, the newsprint variety is so open in its weave (the *Specialized* uses the word "porous") that it should be readily detectable by placing a strong light source inside the envelope and examining the front of the stamp as the light shines through. Of course, certain types of envelope paper can create their own patterns and problems, but those are likely to be few and most collectors can recognize where the envelope paper is strongly patterned and/or uncommonly thick.

Perhaps Scott can reconsider and recognize the fact of the soft papers made by Continental. They can place them under the traditional Continental numbers as varieties. If that were done, it is very doubtful whether there would be any significant premiums for the varietal EKUs. If they choose to leave all soft papers under the American numbers but change the heading to reflect both Continental and American sources, they will still have to give serious further thought to trying to list EKUs for the recognizable newsprint ABNC issues. In the meantime, the hunt has started. My friend Alan Berkun just sent me APS Certificate No. 128236 dated October 12, 2000, giving an EKU of December 18, 1878, for Scott No. 183. Both of us know that date will be pushed back substantially unless the *Specialized* is corrected.

While I do not dispute the good faith of the editors of the *Specialized*, I feel strongly that they have made the wrong choice and created confusion where more accurate resolutions were available. They forgot that the *Specialized* is just that, a *specialized* catalog for those who are able and willing to get into the important details of U.S. stamps.

They did not have to adopt a solution more fitting for a generalized catalog for beginning collectors who might not make the distinctions. Most intermediate collectors learn the difference between the hard papers and the newsprint, even if they cannot confidently deal with the bleached soft papers. Indeed, they have been doing it for years.

If one were approaching this problem totally anew and there were not already existing number assignments and a long history of usage of them, yet another even more accurate solution would be possible. The hard paper Continentals could be left with their present numbers. Sub-numbers could be assigned for the experimental papers *except* the

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<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*

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bleached very soft paper used from late summer 1878 through summer 1879. Those very soft bleached papers could then be given new numbers, identified by their paper type, and the statement given that they could have been printed either by Continental or by American in the period summer 1878 through summer 1879. Then separate numbers under the banner "printed by ABNC" would be applied to the unbleached newsprint issues. If these were current Machin or Ashton-Potter printings, we would have the wonderful luxury of individual numbers and as complete accuracy as can be obtained in matching the printer and the paper.

Not content with trying to divide collectors using the *Specialized* from others, Scott added a note intended to set aside those who do study the paper differences at the intermediate level and consign them to the ranks of devotees of arcane specialization by saying:

Only the most dedicated and serious specialist students attempt to determine the Stamp printer of the issues on soft, portous [*sic*] paper in an absolute manner (by scientifically testing the paper and/or comparing printing records).<sup>18</sup>

Of course, the latter is virtually no help here.

As shown in this article, it is really not that difficult to learn to distinguish hard, intermediate, soft bleached and newsprint papers. I have never had difficulty teaching it to anybody with examples easily drawn from almost any American dealer's stock book. I have had a number of people comment to me that the article I wrote for *U.S. Stamp News* and which also appears in my Linn's book (see footnote 7 above) was more than sufficient to teach them how to do it. Scott needs to have more confidence in the basic abilities of those collectors who use the *Specialized*.

### Conclusion and Recommendation

No one at CBNC could ever have foreseen the difficulties that would be created when starting their experimentation with differing degrees of softness in paper in 1876. Nor could they have foreseen how philately, then in its infancy, would start studying its products in so much detail that differences in paper could become so important to later generations of classifiers, describers and catalogers. The true complexity of Continental's product line in the six short years of 1873-79 easily rivals the complexity of technical production on Great Britain's Machin Head series or that of recent Canadian definitives with their printing on different papers with different perforations and different tagging by different printing houses.

In trying to deal with these differences, Scott's *Specialized* found itself on the horns of a dilemma. For decades after the initial decision to separate the 1876-1889 production by paper types, the mounting evidence of the differences used within Continental alone caused the classification scheme to fail. When it was first thought that there were hard and soft papers and that hard papers came from NBNC and CBNC and that all soft papers came from ABNC, the renumbering of the 1930s made great sense.

It was easy to consider all of the so-called "secret mark" stamps on hard paper to be Continentals and all the same stamps on soft paper to be Americans and assign them different series of catalog numbers. It was reassuring to have all of the one type of paper belong to one printer and all of the other to another and lead collectors into believing that it was just that simple. It made it easy for Scott because they could say that the distinction between the two printers was to be found in their papers so that the catalog number distinction became one of both printer and paper alike.

As the evidence began to mount that Continental used many different papers and that as early as mid-1876 it began experimenting with differing degrees of softness and of bleaching, it was no longer possible to claim that the demarcation of printer and paper were the same. A collector could now find a distinctly soft paper stamp used on 1877 or

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<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*

1878 covers. The same collector might be able to distinguish Continental's soft paper used in March or April of 1879 after the merger of CBNC and ABNC and then contrast it with an obvious newsprint paper only a few months later and start to question why the catalog did not recognize the obvious differences in apparently American papers.

Given the difficulty of the situation, the editors of the *Specialized* chose to preserve the Continental numbers for the hard papers but then confused collectors by placing both Continental and American soft papers under the banner of ABNC without recognizing the obvious difference between ABNC unbleached newsprint and the other many types of bleached soft papers.

The best solution would be to simply admit that Continental used both hard and soft papers and the latter were the bleached variety while reserving the unbleached newsprint soft papers for the American catalog numbers and heading. This would keep the Continental catalog numbers for all hard papers and give subnumbers such as 156a, 157a, 158a, 159a, etc., to cover all the many soft paper varieties of Continental as well as those bleached soft papers found in the period from February 4 through the start of the use of bleached newsprint in mid-summer 1879. A short note could explain that there are some bleached soft paper stamps which may have been printed by American in the six months after February 4, 1879 but they are indistinguishable from those printed by Continental except for the few which bear identifying ABNC imprints or their new plate numbers.

This would totally avoid the futile and frustrating chase for EKUs among all the numerous varieties of soft paper back to 1876. It would still permit filling in EKUs for the unbleached newsprint issues which actually were printed and prepared by ABNC. It also has the advantage of limiting any erroneous naming of the printer and producer of issues to the five or six months following February 4, 1879 rather than trying to bring two to two and one-half years of Continental production under the heading of ABNC. There are many more millions Continental products capable of being misidentified as American than there are the relatively fewer short-term uncertain products of American which might be mislabeled Continental.

Hopefully, the *Specialized* can be restored to its proper role as the advanced and detailed catalog for collectors of U.S. classics and later stamps. The rush to assign EKUs to only one of many Continental paper varieties and place them under ABNC numbers can be corrected before too much further damage is done. Then we can all hunt for the newsprint paper EKUs, confident in their American identity.<sup>19</sup> Then the king will be properly dressed and King Scott will be restored to his proper place on the throne. □

#### **APPENDIX A: Scott's Position on the ABNC Papers**

(from *Scott's 2000 Specialized Catalogue of U.S. Stamps & Covers*, p. 31)

PRINTED BY THE AMERICAN BANK NOTE COMPANY

The Continental Bank Note Co. was consolidated with the American Bank Note Co. on February 4, 1879. The American Bank Note Company used many plates of the Continental Bank Note Company to print the ordinary postage, Departmental and Newspaper stamps. Therefore, stamps bearing the Continental Company's imprint were not always its produce.

The A.B.N.Co. also used the 30 cent and 90 cent plates of the N.B.N. Co. Some of No. 190 and all of No. 217 were from A.B.N. Co. plate 405.

Early printings of No. 188 were from Continental plates 302 and 303 which contained the normal secret mark of 1873. After those plates were re-entered by the A.B.N. Co. in 1880, pairs of multiple pieces contained combinations of normal, hairline or missing marks. The pairs or other multiples usually found contain at least one hairline mark which tended to disappear as the plate wore.

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<sup>19</sup>Even ABNC issues not in dispute can have earlier EKUs. James McCusker's Nov. 18, 2000 Auction No. 145, Lot 33, is an EKU of May 4, 1882 for Scott No. 209 with a new APS certificate.

A.B.N. Co. plates 377 and 378 were made in 1881 from the National transfer roll of 1870. No. 187 from these plates has no secret mark.

Identification by Paper Type:

Collectors traditionally have identified American Bank Note Co. issues by the soft, porous paper on which they were printed. However, the Continental Bank Note Co. occasionally used a soft paper from August 1878 through early 1879, before the consolidation of the companies. When the consolidation occurred on Feb. 4, 1879, American Bank Note Co. took over the presses, plates, paper, ink, and the employees of Continental. Undoubtedly they also acquired panes of finished stamps and sheets of printed stamps that had not yet been gummed and/or perforated. Since the soft paper that was in use at the time of the consolidation and after is approximately the same texture and thickness as the soft paper that American Bank Note Co. began using regularly in June or July of 1879, all undated soft paper stamps have traditionally been classified as American Bank Note Co. printings.

However, if a stamp bears a dated cancellation or is on a dated cover from Feb. 3, 1879 or earlier, collectors (especially specialist collectors) must consider the stamp to be a Continental Bank Note printing. Undated stamps off cover, and stamps and covers dated Feb. 4 or later, traditionally have been considered to be American Bank Note Co. printings since that company held the contract to print U.S. postage stamps beginning on that date. Only the most dedicated and serious specialist students attempt to determine the stamp printer of the issues on soft, porous [*sic*] paper in an absolute manner (by scientifically testing the paper and/or comparing printing records).

Earliest known uses for American Bank Note Co. issues are given for stamps on the soft, porous paper that has been traditionally associated with that company. But, for reasons given above, sometimes that date will precede the Feb. 4, 1879 consolidation date.

## THE SCOTT CATALOGUE EDITOR RESPONDS TO ELIOT A. LANDAU

JAMES E. KLOETZEL

Catalogue Editor, Scott Publishing Co.

Thanks to *Chronicle* Editor-in-Chief Charles Peterson for making it possible for me to respond to Eliot Landau's article on the stamp papers used by Continental Bank Note Company (CBNC) and American Bank Note Company (ABNC) and the treatment of these papers in the *2001 Scott Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps and Covers*.

It certainly is normal for one who has been championing one way of listing certain stamps to be somewhat miffed when that way is not adopted by others, but if the upset results in the airing of all of the ideas surrounding the issue, that is certainly a good thing for collectors of this area of U.S. philately. It remains to be seen whether "King Scott" will be found to be parading around in the altogether, but preliminary reports indicate that this might not be the case. Other than an admitted flurry of activity in some quarters to locate new Earliest Known Uses (EKUs), the philatelic fraternity seems to have accepted the new Scott note and EKU dates as a logical, historically consistent way to deal with a complex issue.

### The Landau Argument

The central disagreement between Mr. Landau's approach and the approach adopted by the Scott catalogue appears to be that Landau favors a numbering system that would consider ABNC stamps to be only those printed on "newsprint" soft paper from mid-1879 on, while Scott has decided to maintain the long-standing system wherein stamps printed on hard paper are considered to be CBNC stamps and stamps printed on soft paper are considered to be ABNC stamps. Mr. Landau would consider all stamps printed on the mid-1878 to early-1879 soft paper to be CBNC printings whether they were printed by CBNC or ABNC, while Scott has favored a more traditional approach that considers all undated

soft paper stamps to be ABNC printings whether they were printed by ABNC or CBNC. Mr. Landau considers the Scott approach a sell-out to non-specialized collectors, while Scott feels its listing system speaks to the needs of average, intermediate and advanced collectors alike by providing a listing system that can be understood and followed by all while at the same time pointing out that there is a degree of complexity here that the true specialized student may wish to look into. Mr. Landau asserts that it is “really not that difficult” to distinguish “intermediate,” “soft bleached” (sometimes “very lightly bleached”) and “newsprint” soft papers, and he even indicates that his article shows that it is not difficult. Scott maintains that it would indeed be difficult for most collectors to distinguish the last two soft papers in question and that the article has not shown in anything like the necessary detail how it can be done. Scott feels that almost all collectors would have a great deal of difficulty dealing with a system of listings where one type of soft paper becomes a lettered minor of an earlier major catalogue number, and another soft paper (which they usually are not able to distinguish from the first type) is a later major catalogue number unto itself.

In the final analysis, Mr. Landau had hoped for a new classification system that would break out the CBNC “soft” and “intermediate” papers from the ABNC soft papers used after mid-1879. What he got was a restatement of the traditional approach that has differentiated the hard CBNC printings from the soft ABNC printings plus a new note that explains (for the first time in the Scott catalogue) that there is a complex issue involving papers and printers here that the really serious collector will want to consider. The fact that Scott now indicates that soft-papers EKUs may predate the actual ABNC takeover date of February 4, 1879, is hardly revolutionary. As Landau correctly points out, previous EKUs noted by the American First Day Cover Society (and, he could have added, the American Philatelic Society expert committee and the Scott catalogue itself) included dates for a number of “ABNC” stamps that simply could not be correct since they were too soon after the takeover for the stamps to be anything but CBNC-printed and distributed stamps. If anything, the new Scott policy will result in the substitution of real soft-paper EKUs for previous EKUs that were determined only by the formal takeover date of February 4, 1879 rather than the dates on which such stamps actually were first used.

Mr. Landau implies that the Scott editors have just now accepted “what most collectors of the large Bank Note issues have known for years,” namely that CBNC also issued stamps on soft paper. Let me assure Mr. Landau that the Scott editors also have known for many years what the facts of the matter are, just as Lester Brookman knew clearly what the facts were (though Brookman says almost nothing about this issue in his great work, but hints at his acceptance of what the Scott catalogue has adopted). This is not a matter of new knowledge forcing some kind of decision on the catalogue, but rather a conscious decision on the part of Scott that it was time to introduce the “paper issue” as a means to acquaint more collectors with the actual complex situation.

### **Soft Paper and EKUs**

Mr. Landau feels that “the *Specialized* fails to distinguish the later 1878 soft papers from the 1876-78 early medium soft varieties and thus creates a trap for those who try to pin down an EKU of an undefined paper variety.” Actually, the new Scott note clearly indicates that CBNC used a soft paper from August 1878 through early 1879, and says, “Since the soft paper that was in use at the time of the consolidation and after is approximately the same texture and thickness as the soft paper that American Bank Note Co. began using regularly in June or July of 1879, all undated soft paper stamps have traditionally been classified as American Bank Note printings.” This statement indicates that Scott is not talking about the 1876-78 “medium soft” varieties mentioned by Landau. It is the late-1878 and early-1879 bleached, mildly bleached and “probably some on very lightly bleached” paper that Scott refers to. Yet Mr. Landau says, “There is an entire spectrum of hard to soft papers in 1876-1878, so that defining a clearly Continental soft and assigning

EKU dates becomes meaningless.” However, Scott is defining the ABNC soft paper as one that only encompasses papers used by ABNC alone or by both ABNC and CBNC. That would be the late-1878 to early-1879 CBNC paper, the same paper used by ABNC, plus the “virtually unbleached newsprint” soft paper used only by ABNC. Since all parties agree that these two papers are distinguishable from the previous paper experiments by CBNC, we may then assume that expertizing bodies also will be able to distinguish these papers and make judgments about EKUs.

### **The “Three Options”**

Mr. Landau says that Scott had three options for handling this paper situation. The first was to reserve ABNC numbers for only the mid-1879 and later “newsprint” soft papers and exclude the CBNC soft papers from the American listings (but include them as lettered minors under the CBNC listings). This is the option favored by Mr. Landau. The second option was classify the stamps by what Mr. Landau calls their “apparent manufacturer, Continental or American.” (It would appear that these two options would result in the same listings, though Mr. Landau does not develop the second “option.”) The third option was “to classify stamps by their appearance as hard paper or soft paper.” The latter is the option adopted by Scott. More accurately, this third option is the policy *continued* by Scott.

Under the first option mentioned, one or more lettered minors would be added to the CBNC listings, certainly for the late “soft” paper, and probably a second for “intermediate” paper. Mr. Landau suggests a note to explain CBNC’s experimentation with soft papers beginning in 1876. (It is not clear how this note would help the average—or even the advanced—collector distinguish the papers.) Overlooked is the necessity of a note that would have to be added to explain that the first ABNC printings used the identical soft paper that CBNC used in its last months of existence, but that these ABNC stamps are not listed. Thus, the proposed numbering system would be based on a system of convenience, or “practical classification” to use Lester Brookman’s term. This point is central, because the course chosen by Scott also is a system of practical classification. It must be emphasized that what we are talking about here is the choosing of the best system of practical classification; we are not talking about the choosing of a system of practical classification rather than some true and factual system of classification.

Mr. Landau says the adoption of his proposed classification system would get rid of any “anomalies” such as EKU dates “under an American number for stamps that clearly were not printed by them.” What Mr. Landau does not say is that his system would also eliminate EKUs and any mention of some legitimately ABNC-produced stamps, which demonstrates that we are talking here about two systems of practical classification, not of fact versus fiction or good versus evil. The system proposed by Mr. Landau effectively replaces the heading “Printed by the American Bank Note Company” from the catalogue before the listings of Scott 182-191 and replaces it with a heading that would read something like “Printed by the American Bank Note Company after mid-1879 on Soft Porous Paper that is Almost Identical to That on the Stamps Shown as Minor Lettered Numbers under the Continental Bank Note Company Listings Nos. 156-166. (Expertization Required for All These Stamps).”

### **The Unnamed Fourth and Fifth Options**

Actually, there were two other options open to the Scott catalogue and to collectors that are not mentioned in the Landau article. The fourth option would have been to extend to its conclusion the logic of Mr. Landau’s argument and eliminate entirely the ABNC listings for Scott 182-191. Because the experimentation with papers may be considered a continuum spanning both the CBNC period and the early ABNC period, and because ABNC took over the presses, plates, papers, inks, printed sheets of stamps and even the employees of CNBC, it could easily be argued that all the stamps between Scott 156-166 and 182-191 should be considered as one set under the heading “Printed by Continental Bank Note



Company and American Bank Note Company.” (I’ll let others debate how the 1875 and 1880 Special Printings would be handled under this fourth option.) Lettered minor listings for the mid-1879 “newsprint” soft papers could then be added to the other soft-paper minors favored by Mr. Landau under option 1. This option would leave out no stamps, and all majors and minors could have their own EKUs. I am somewhat surprised that Mr. Landau did not present this option as his preferred solution to the “paper problem.” This option admittedly would be a rather revolutionary change to the catalogue and to the way these stamps have been listed and collected for more than a century. But it was not brought up as an option, nor was it considered to be a suitable change by the Scott editors.

A fifth option would have been to do nothing. This option also was rejected, because it was felt that it was time to introduce to *U.S. Specialized* users the complexity of these stamps. It was decided to do this without upsetting the pattern of listings that have served U.S. philately well for more than 100 years. Mr. Landau is correct in saying that the new Scott guidelines follow the thinking of Lester Brookman. More accurately, it could be stated that both the new and the previous Scott guidelines follow his thinking. Mr. Landau is not correct in stating that Scott “would not have created the problem that it has” had it not pointed out that soft-paper EKUs henceforth will be given under the ABNC listings and may predate the Feb. 4, 1879 takeover date. In fact, as we have seen, the current EKU dates given in Scott for several stamps are dates that cannot correctly represent stamps manufactured and distributed by ABNC. The new Scott note and guidelines simply clarify that fact and remove the somewhat artificial policy of declaring that stamps dated February 4 or later are to be considered ABNC stamps. The new guidelines essentially replace one small area of practical classification with another one. A careful reading of Lester Brookman will demonstrate that this is the basic policy that he favored. All undated soft-paper stamps are to be considered ABNC stamps as a matter of “practical classification,” while all soft-paper stamps bearing dates that prove they could not have been produced and distributed by ABNC must be considered by specialists to be CNBC stamps. The new Scott guidelines simply remove the rather artificial February 4 date as an EKU cutoff date and recognizes that these soft-paper stamps were used both before and after that date. It will be up to collectors to determine the importance of EKUs for the mid-1878 to mid-1879 soft papers.

As to the search for new EKUs putting a “serious drain on expertizing services at the American Philatelic Expertizing Service and the Philatelic Foundation as well as the private services,” it is hard to see how this tiny pool of stamps would greatly expand expertizing work emanating from a field full of avid searchers who have uncovered and documented more than 300 new EKUs between Scott 1 and Scott 634A in the last three years alone. The “problem” of having to lift some of these Bank Note stamps from covers in order to establish EKUs is a situation we live with currently, and the new Scott guidelines change nothing in that regard.

### Conclusion

We may all agree that there is no simple treatment for the listings of these large Bank Note stamps that will speak to the complexities of paper types and period of usage to the satisfaction of the truly specialized student. All options considered by Mr. Landau and by Scott amount to “practical classifications” that are meant to satisfy both the known facts and the actual collectors of these items. As I often tell collectors and dealers, there is practically no area in the *Scott U.S. Specialized Catalogue* that could not be specialized further if one wanted to. It is the job of the Scott editors to decide how far specialization should go in order for the catalogue to be both useful for the specialists and usable by less specialized collectors. In the present case, Scott has chosen a rather non-radical approach that maintains the historical continuity of the current listings while presenting new information that alerts the collector to the existence of complexity and the possibility of further specialized study. □

**THE STONEHAM, MASSACHUSETTS EGGE U.S. MAILBAG PADLOCK  
CANCEL**  
JOE H. CROSBY

The cancellation illustrated in Figures 1 and 2 has been variously referred to in philatelic literature as a “padlock,” a “mailbag,” and a “mail bag padlock.” Indeed the Philatelic Foundation Certificate for Figure 1 says it is a “used fancy mailbag cancel of Stoneham, Mass. and we are of the opinion that: it is genuine.” This cancellation does not depict the mail bag or pouch. It is really the *lock* to secure the mail bag.

To properly differentiate it from other 19th Century cancellations, I propose that we call it the *Smith-Egge U.S. Mailbag Padlock Cancel*. Why? Because the Smith & Egge Manufacturing Company of Bridgeport, Connecticut (also known as Smith-Egge Company) manufactured iron locks under contract with the Post Office Department in 1881, 1882 and 1883. These locks measure 3 inches tall, 2 inches wide, and ½ inch thick. Figure 3 showing this lock was generously provided by postal historian and fellow route agent, Frank R. Scheer, courtesy of the Railway Mail Service Library. Frank reports that this model of lock was in use between 1880 and 1891. When the cancellation (Figure 1) is compared to the actual padlock (Figure 3), it is obvious what inspired the design of this particular marking.

Sept. 1, 1884 is the only date known for Stoneham, Mass. to have used this cancellation, as indicated in Figure 2 by Cole.<sup>1</sup> I have recorded three Scott #210 covers with the marking, each postmarked on Sept. 1—7 AM, 7 AM, and 10 AM (no year date)— and one with a lot description identifying the year to be 1884, no doubt based on its contents or backstamp.

But the story does not end there. Skinner & Eno<sup>2</sup> have reported a very similar cancellation from Stoneham, Mass. on the 1861 issue which does not show a keyhole but is in every other way the same as that used in 1884. (Figure 4). I have seen a photo<sup>3</sup> of this version without keyhole on a #65 single, but not on cover, nor does Skinner & Eno report it on cover. It is obvious why it is attributed to Stoneham, Mass. Several things are possible. There could have been an earlier cancellation designed from an earlier lock that had the keyhole on the back side of the lock and thus was not included in the cancellation design. However, I have been unable to demonstrate the existence of such a lock. There could have been a late usage of a #65 in 1884 and the killer had become worn in the keyhole area so that it filled in with black ink. In order to clarify this situation, we would like for members to report *any* Smith-Egge U.S. Mailbag Padlock Cancels on *any* stamp, whether on cover, on piece, or loose. Results will be published here in a future *Chronicle*. □

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<sup>1</sup>James M. Cole, *Cancellations and Killers of the Banknote Era 1870-1894* (Columbus, Ohio: U.S. Philatelic Classics Society, Inc, 1995), p. 133.

<sup>2</sup>Hubert C. Skinner and Amos Eno, *United States Cancellations 1845-1869* (State College, Pa.: American Philatelic Society, 1980), p. 179.

<sup>3</sup>Wolffers Sale 105, June 23, 1982, Lot 57 [small photo illustration, not suitable for reproduction here].



Figure 1. Stoneham, MA cancel, U.S. Mail with Star and Keyhole on Mailbag Padlock, Scott #210 2¢ issue of 1883

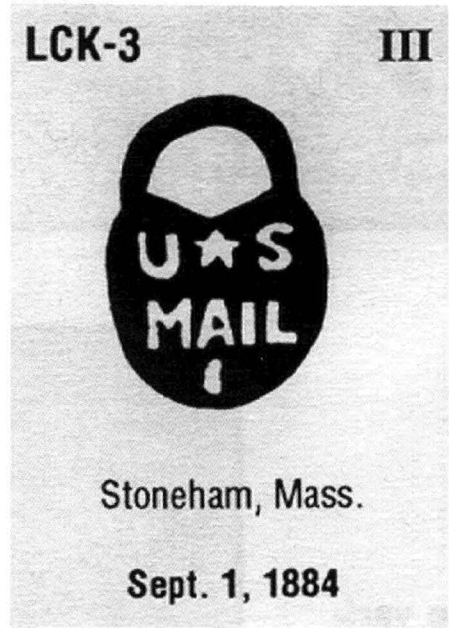


Figure 2. Stoneham, MA U.S. Mail Padlock cancel illustrated by Cole



Figure 3. Actual U.S. Mail mailbag padlock ("Smith & Egge Mfg. Co." on front of hasp)

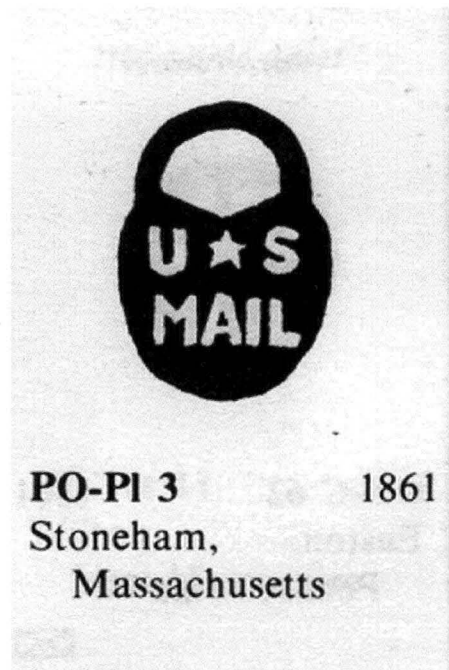


Figure 4. Stoneham, MA U.S. Mail Padlock cancel as illustrated in Skinner-Eno

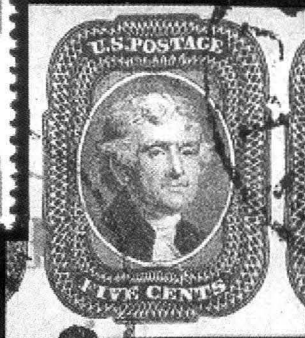
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## **HIGH VALUE OFFICIAL STAMPS ON COVER** **ALAN C. CAMPBELL**

To make a quick judgment of how seriously any given exhibit of classic United States stamps and postal history should be taken, simply station yourself in front of the last frame and count how many covers of the highest value are on display. With a very few exceptions—30¢ 1867 A grill, 90¢ 1867 F grill (one cover known), 90¢ 1869 (only known cover stolen), 90¢ 1870 grill—all of the 24¢, 30¢ and 90¢ values do exist on cover and generally in sufficient quantities that judges can fairly expect them to be shown. Now in the past decade, there has been a renaissance in competitive exhibits of the official stamps of 1873-1884, with at least six collectors (Rollin C. Huggins, Jr., Matthew Kewriga, Lester C. Lanphear III, Theodore Lockyear, Robert L. Markovits and myself) showing at the national level. In jury critiques, should one of us inquire as to how our exhibit might be improved, the standard brusque refrain has been, “show more high values on cover.” So we trudge out of the room muttering to ourselves, “Well, thank you very much, but that’s easier said than done.” In self-defense, then, this article will carefully document how scarce high value official stamps are on cover, by listing all those recorded with a 24¢ value or higher. Of course, within the small fraternity of official specialists, it is well known that virtually any 7¢, 10¢, 12¢ or 15¢ departmental stamp is also difficult to locate on cover. This article, though, will focus only the highest values, so as to catch some of the reflected glamour and prestige which has traditionally emanated from the same values of the regular issues. A preeminent cover will be illustrated from each department with the exception of Post Office, where neither of the 30¢ covers in the Ackerman sale of 1933 has since resurfaced.

The 24¢, 30¢, and 90¢ regular issue stamps were prepared to pay specific high pre-GPU international rates, and, for the most part, this is how they were used and how they survive on cover. Domestic usages, typically on parcel wrappers and extra-size legal courthouse covers, are rarer, but their awkward size and dog-eared battered appearance generally make them unpresentable. Regrettably, this is precisely the format in which most high value official stamps are to be found on cover. They were put into service on July 1, 1873, only two years to the day before the 5¢ GPU rate went into effect. Moreover, none of the departments posted any significant amount of foreign mail. The only important surviving correspondences of official covers going overseas are the Conant to London (from Secretary of the Treasury John Sherman) and the Bingham to Japan. Inasmuch as neither includes a single official stamp above the 15¢ on cover, they pale in comparison with such legendary correspondences as the Payan to France, the Heard to China, the Davis to Peru, or the Reverend Bissell to India. Pre-GPU or non-UPU treaty rate covers, besides the beauty of their colorful foreign transit markings, are preferred by collectors for the mundane reason that they can be mounted properly on a standard 8½" x 11" page. Legal size covers are an exhibitor’s nightmare, but their prevalence among official covers has forced most of us to go to oversize pages (although there is one stubborn holdout whose exhibit can be identified instantly from across the room by the predominant slashing diagonals). Of the 42 covers in my inventory, only three are of small size and of these three, only one is to a foreign destination.

In Figure 1, courtesy of auctioneer Matthew Bennett, Inc., we illustrate a remarkable stamped envelope (3¢ green on amber entire - Scott No. U161) from a New York manufacturer of surgical instruments, with an advertising corner card illustrating medals awarded by the U.S. Centennial Commission in 1876. This cover, originally postmarked on April 2

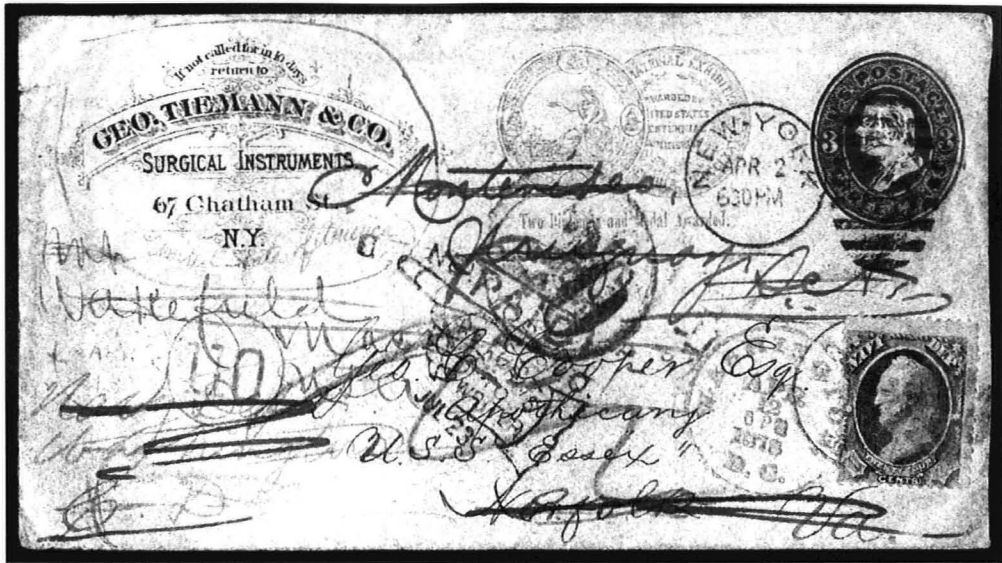


Figure 1. 24¢ Navy added as supplemental postage to forward a 3¢ stamped envelope to Montevideo, Uruguay, courtesy of Matthew Bennett, Inc.



Figure 2. \$2 State and 30¢ State (17) and 10¢ State on a parcel front to Stuttgart, Germany, the legendary departmental cover, courtesy of Robert L. Markovits

[1878], is addressed to George C. Cooper, an apothecary on the U.S.S. *Essex* at Norfolk, Virginia. Because this vessel had already left port, the cover was forwarded from Norfolk to the Navy Department in Washington, D.C. There it was determined that the ship had sailed for Montevideo, Uruguay, so a 24¢ Navy stamp was added to make up the 27¢ British mail rate via England. The Navy stamp, placed over the Norfolk postmark, was canceled at the main Washington, D.C. post office with the distinctive violet ink (faded here to a dull red) used throughout 1878. The cover then made its way via New York (April 13) and London (April 28) and, per the backstamp, arrived in Montevideo on May 22. But George Cooper was no longer attached to the ship. Per a note on the reverse, probably entered by an officer on board, he had been discharged from the U.S.S. *Essex* on July 17, 1877, and was thought to be living in Wakefield, Massachusetts. The cover was then forwarded back to the United States, although there are no transit marks for the reverse routing. The Wakefield, Mass. address proved to be a dead end, and the letter was sent on to the Dead Letter Office in Washington, D.C. (July 19), which returned it to the original sender on July 23. This is the most spectacular of a small group of fascinating usages, where the Navy Department supplied supplemental forwarding postage for mail addressed to their personnel at sea. In a previous article we illustrated a similar usage, also forwarded from Norfolk in 1878, which caught up with a Navy captain in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.<sup>1</sup> But like the cover illustrated here, several other examples exist which went on frantic and ultimately fruitless quests to catch up with the addressee.

The survival rate for official stamps on cover is far lower than regular issues, because the bulk of this mail went between government offices: either the clerks skinned the stamps off to save for collectors, or the envelopes were lost when the files were later purged. Moreover, high value official stamps were mostly used on heavy mailings, where the survival rate is low, as opposed to being used on foreign mail like the regular issues, where the survival rate is relatively high. So for high value official stamps on cover, these two factors together will reduce the survival rate exponentially and compound the acquisition degree of difficulty. From the tables in Luff, we calculate that for the 31 different official high values, a total of 2,351,360 stamps were issued. With 42 covers found, this yields a survival rate of 0.0000179. To put it another way, of every 55,985 high value official stamps issued, one cover has survived. How does this compare with the survival rate for high value regular issues on cover? The rate for 24¢ 1869 covers is .000321; for 30¢ 1869 covers, .000190. For the 24¢ large Bank Note stamp, the rate is .000176; for the 30¢, .000500.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, high value official stamps have survived on cover at less than 10% of the rate of their regular issue counterparts. Taking into account the fact that all the high value official stamps were issued in far lower quantities than the regular issues, and that a much higher percentage of these official stamps went unused, the degree of acquisition difficulty for high value official stamps on cover is phenomenally high.

Of the 42 covers found in this census, twelve were not intact covers *per se* but were cover fronts or parcel labels on package wrappers. In the specialized market for official postal history, such items are priced and sold as if they were intact covers. In Figure 2,

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<sup>1</sup>Alan C. Campbell, "Usages of the 7¢ Stanton Official Stamps," *Chronicle*, Vol. 52, No. 1 (Whole No. 185) (February 2000), Figure 13, page 57.

<sup>2</sup>These statistics are derived from Linn's *U.S. Stamp Facts, 19th Century*, 1999. The figures for the 1869 issues, derived from an actual census, should be fairly accurate, while the numbers for the large Bank Note issues are mostly estimates. I did not calculate the survival rate for the extremely rare 90¢ large Bank Note covers, because the estimates for the 90¢ Continental (fewer than 20) and the 90¢ American (fewer than 100) seemed wildly overstated. I would have expected values used exclusively on foreign mail to have survived at a higher rate than those used chiefly on domestic letters. While this seemed to be true for the 7¢ large Bank Note (.00317), it did not hold up for the 10¢ 1869 (.000454).

courtesy of Robert L. Markovits, we illustrate the famous piece that was described in the 1933 auction catalog of Congressman Ackerman's collection as "the Kohinoor of the Department covers." I have discussed this cover previously, and would like to mention here only that this is a large mailing label on part of the front of the wrapping for a bundle of books.<sup>3</sup> This of course is the unique piece on which the specialized catalogue listing for the \$2 State on cover is based. The catalogue listing for the 90¢ State on cover is also based on two nearly identical cover fronts to Matamoros, Mexico. Surely everyone would agree that this is a sensible approach, to stand in awe that such pieces could have survived and acknowledge them as fully legitimate "covers," instead of quibbling over whether the back of the wrapping survives intact. After years of disputation, the issue was finally resolved (or gracefully finessed) in the 2001 edition of the catalogue, with the creation of a new listing category: "on parcel label." In Figure 3, courtesy of Lester C. Lanphear III, we illustrate a 24¢ Agriculture stamp tied to a parcel label posted in Washington, D.C. addressed to Wyoming, Pennsylvania (PFC #0189853, issued 6/7/88). A 3¢ Agriculture cover from the same correspondence was illustrated here previously.<sup>4</sup> Mr. Lanphear's label, although roughly trimmed, still adheres to the parcel wrapping (as if that should make any difference), and represents the only known usage of the 15¢, 24¢ or 30¢ Agriculture stamps.

Of the 42 legitimate covers found, I know the whereabouts of 26. Nine high value official covers were lost when the Charles J. Starnes collection was stolen in 1983. Even though I have severe reservations as to whether they still exist, I have included them in this census because most have a famous provenance. Collectors who scour the auction catalogues of the great official cover collections of earlier generations are entitled to know what measure of hope to hold out that long-missing covers will resurface. Seven other high value official covers could not be accounted for. Of these seven, five were last seen in the Ackerman Sale of 1933, one at a John Fox Auction in 1955, and one in the "Crystal" Sale of the Ehrenberg collection in 1981. The Ackerman catalogue was not illustrated, and the cover unaccounted for from the Ehrenberg sale was not pictured. Since our research into official covers has improved greatly in the intervening years, it is possible that a few of these missing covers might not now be deemed legitimate. This was the case for a 24¢ State refolded cover, ex-Ackerman, sold in the Ehrenberg Sale as Lot 359, which did not subsequently stand up to expertization. Reservations have been expressed about other high value covers, especially when the stamp is not tied.

Official covers in general are not easy to fake, simply because the starting point is usually a period official business envelope with an imprinted corner card. It would simply be too expensive to reproduce one from whole cloth. Mr. Markovits' fascinating one frame exhibit of "Unofficials" does contain a couple of fake covers that were made up by utilizing some unused proof specimens of official envelopes. The style of these envelopes was a giveaway, since it did not match that of any known to have been used by the departments, although the faker also committed the unpardonable blunder of affixing perforated proofs instead of real stamps!<sup>5</sup> In a few cases, forgers have replaced the original stamps on regular issue covers and added fake handstamped corner cards and fake postmarks, but these are usually easily detectable. Unused prestamped reply envelopes from a number of departments also exist, and fake postmarks and killers have been added to a few of them, most

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<sup>3</sup>Alan C. Campbell, "Color Cancellations on U.S. Official Stamps, 1873-1884," *Chronicle*, Vol. 51, No. 1 (Whole No. 181) (February 1999), p. 46, Footnote 22.

<sup>4</sup>Warren S. Howard, "What Have We Done? Congress Probes the Departmentals, 1873-1874," *Chronicle*, Vol. 51, No. 3 (Whole No. 183) (August 1999), p. 212, Figure 4A.

<sup>5</sup>Lewis Kaufman, "Unofficial Officials: Fake Departmental Covers," *Philatelic Opinions III* (New York: Philatelic Foundation, 1985), page 85-88.



notably on Agriculture covers (the John Hagen collection, sold by Dennis J. Swinehart in the early 1980s, contained two of these). The best raw material for faking official covers are the official imprinted envelopes that were sometimes posted with regular issue stamps. Then the faker's challenge will be to remove the Bank Note regular issue stamps, substitute unused official stamps, and somehow get the tying postmark or killer to match up. High value official covers, though, pose a unique danger, in that if a lower value official stamp can be found on a legal cover not tied but with a socked-on-the-nose killer, it can be lifted and replaced with a higher value official stamp. For this reason, collectors are cautioned to be circumspect about high value official covers when none of stamps are tied.

Of the 42 covers found, nine were to foreign destinations: Brazil, Canada, Germany, Japan (2), Mexico (2) and Uruguay (2). But three of these were in the stolen Starnes collection, leaving only six for collectors today. In Figure 4, courtesy of Dr. David H. Lobdell, we illustrate a War cover to Japan franked with a pair of 24¢ War stamps, opened up to show the markings on the back. Also owned by Dr. Lobdell is a 6¢, 30¢ War cover from the same correspondence. The stamps on this second cover were mistakenly identified in both the Hughes and Duckworth catalogs as being the soft paper issue, but the 1876 docketing renders this impossible. I will excerpt here some comments prepared by Dr.

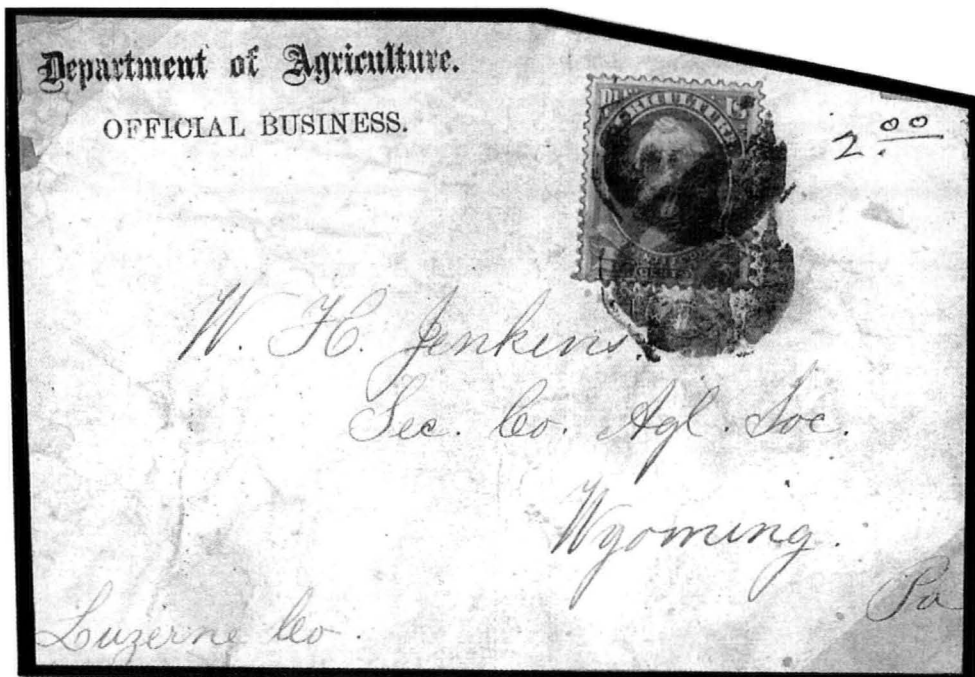


Figure 3. 24¢ Agriculture on a parcel label, courtesy of Lester C. Lanphear III

Lobdell about this spectacular pair of covers, which rival the Commander Caldwell covers—a 24¢ Navy to Uruguay and a 12¢, 30¢ Navy to Brazil—owned by Charles Starnes (since 1983, in philatelic limbo and sinking fast).<sup>6</sup>

Both covers were sent by the War Department's Chief Signal Officer to "Benjamin Smith Lyman, Chief Geologist and Mining Engineer to the Kaitakushi." Lyman was a Harvard graduate who later studied at the Ecole de Mines in Paris and set himself up as a consulting geologist. Between 1873 and 1879 he was chief geologist to the Japanese government, principally working for the Kaitakushi, which was an agency with the responsibility for the colonization and development of the natural resources of the northern island of Hokkaido. (Hokkaido was Japan's version of our frontier in '70s, so that while we were sending homesteaders into our West and killing off the Indians, they were populating Hokkaido with ethnic Japanese and doing a number on the native hairy Ainu.)

The pair of 24¢ War stamps pays four times the treaty rate of 12¢ per half ounce for mail from the United States to Japan. (Although the General Postal Union rate of 5¢ per half ounce for international mail was already in force for many countries, Japan did not sign the GPU until the following year.) The letter was mailed in Washington, D.C. on May 9 and reached Yokohama on June 29, 1876, where a red "Yokohama Paid All" was applied by the US postal station there. It then took nine more days to travel less than twenty-five miles to Mr. Lyman at his lodgings in Yedo (the old name for Tokyo). How did it get from the US to Japan? There were two possible routes: (1) via New York to London, where it would have been put on a British ship round the Cape of Good Hope to the Orient, or (2) via the recently-completed transcontinental railroad to San Francisco, where it would have been put on an American ship to Yokohama. Since the envelope lacks New York and London transit markings, I favor the Trans-Pacific route.

Both covers were at one time in the collection of Congressman Ackerman, the leading collector of United States official covers in the early part of this century. When Ackerman's collection was auctioned in 1933, at the very nadir of the Great Depression, the 24¢ cover fetched \$20 and the 30¢ cover \$12—and at that, they brought more than any of the other fifty War Department covers in the auction. Let's hope that none of us have to sell our stamps during a Depression!"<sup>7</sup>

Of the domestic usages, perhaps the most spectacular cover surfaced in November 1998 in a Matthew Bennett, Inc. auction. Nathan Goff served as the U.S. Attorney in Clarksburg, West Virginia from 1868 to 1881, and over half the surviving Justice covers derive from mailings sent from Washington, D.C. to him or to the clerk of the U.S. District court there, John Moore. In the Bennett sale, a large portion of the Goff/Moore correspondence never previously seen was consigned by an old-time Baltimore stamp dealer. "In the early 1970s, the consignor traveled to Philadelphia for the purpose of negotiating a sale of the Goff covers with legendary dealer Philip Ward. Upon seeing the high value Justice Department covers offered to him, his eyes popped and he was at a momentary loss of words."<sup>8</sup> For Justice covers, we official collectors would be dead in the water without the Goff correspondence, and from the collector's point of view, it is a crying shame that groups of covers such as this weren't liberated from government archives more often.

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<sup>6</sup>Charles J. Starnes, "Universal Postal Union Mail to Non-Member Countries," *Chronicle*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (Whole No. 81)(February 1974), pp. 41-43.

<sup>7</sup>Editor's note: These two covers were bought by Dr. Lobdell at the Harmer, Rooke March, 1963 auction of the H. G. Duckworth Collection of Officials, with Robert L. Markovits acting as his agent. The 24¢ pair on cover (lot #327) realized \$42, while the 6¢, 30¢ cover (lot #334) sold for \$35. But during Dr. Lobdell's stewardship, these two covers have appreciated in value at a far better rate!

<sup>8</sup>Matthew Bennett, Inc. 206th Public Auction, November 15, 1998, page 113. The cover discussed here was Lot #229, illustrated in color on the back cover.

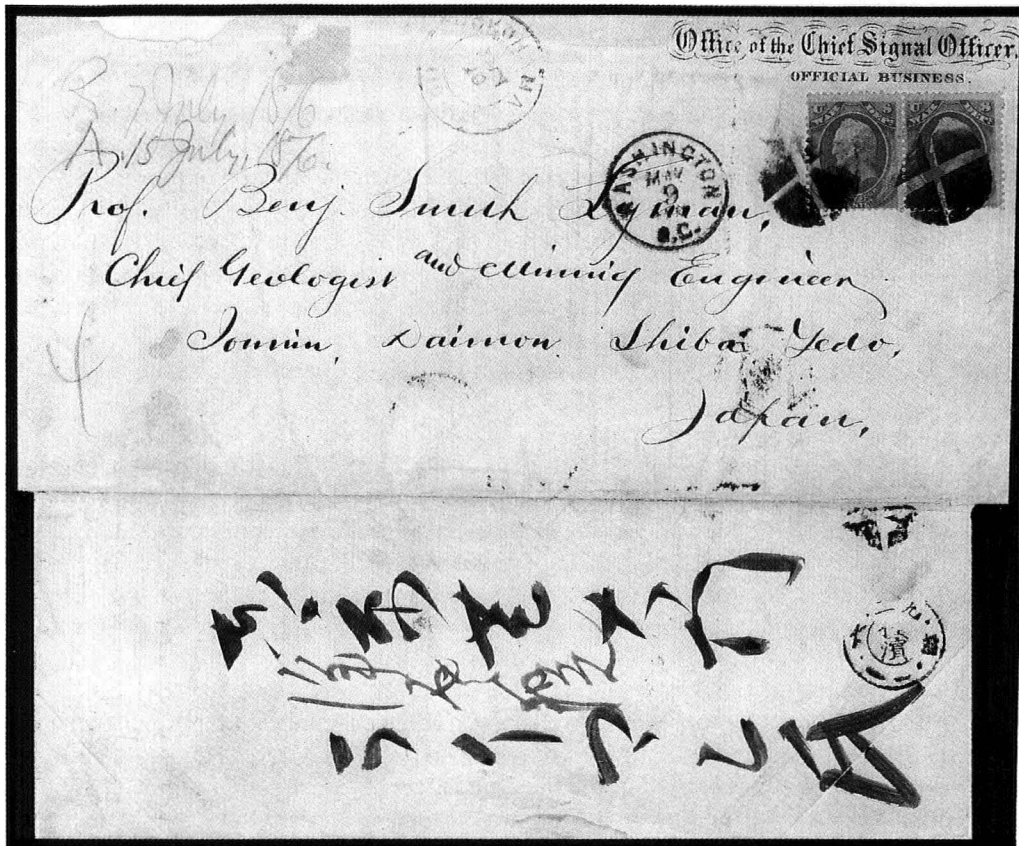


Figure 4. 24¢ War pair paying four times the treaty rate to Japan, courtesy of Dr. David H. Lobdell

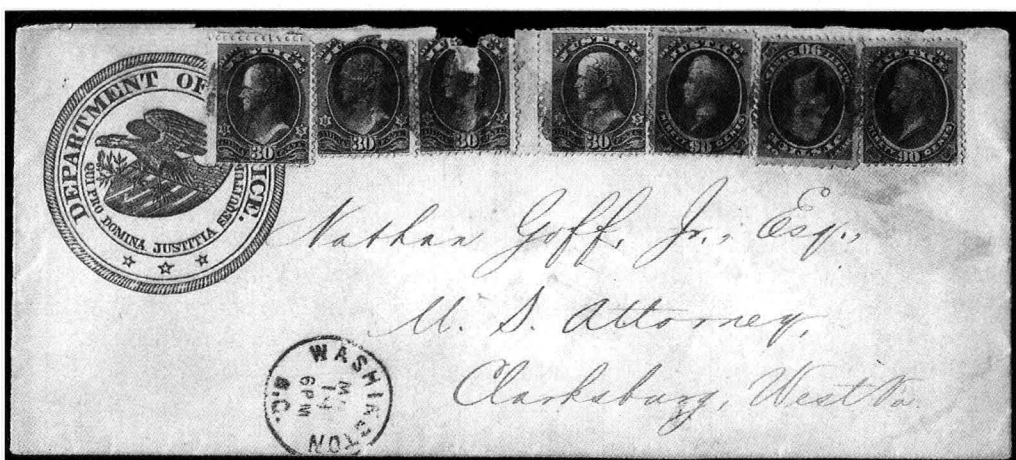


Figure 5. 90¢ Justice (3) and 30¢ Justice (4) on a cover used as the mailing front of a tied bundle of courthouse documents, courtesy of Theodore Lockyear

Which gives us pause to wonder, could a find comparable to the Goff correspondence still be moldering away in the basement of a courthouse somewhere? In Figure 5, courtesy of Theodore Lockyear, we illustrate a breathtaking legal cover franked with three 90¢ and four 30¢ Justice stamps. Since the envelope could hardly have contained four pounds of paperwork, we theorize that it was used as a mailing front on a tied bundle of courthouse documents, with the pressure from the string biting a notch into the top of the cover.

With the addition of this cover to his exhibit, Mr. Lockyear was finally able to show all values of the Department of Justice on both hard and soft paper on cover. It is not possible to accomplish this feat in any other department with the exception of the short Executive set, which Mr. Lanphear completed with the purchase of the unique 10¢ cover.<sup>9</sup> Dr. Lobdell has completed the War Department except for the 30¢ value on soft paper (not known to exist), and Robert Markovits has completed the Department of State through the \$2.

Another official envelope that appears to have been used as a mailing front is illustrated in Figure 6, courtesy of Lester C. Lanphear III. This is a legal size penalty envelope from the Land Office at Larned, Kansas addressed to a private citizen in Lyons, Kansas. Notes on the back and glue residue suggest that this envelope was pasted to a larger one containing homestead proofs. The 90¢ Interior stamp pays the 10¢ registry fee and postage at regular first class domestic rates, since at this time the penalty clause was not valid for field office correspondence with private citizens. This is the only legitimate 90¢ Interior cover recorded (PFC #0232519, issued 12/28/90), and is one of only two solo usages of 90¢ official stamps, the other being Dr. Lobdell's 90¢ War cover.

In Figure 7, courtesy of Matthew Bennett, Inc., we illustrate an unusual four-value Treasury franking paying sixteen times the domestic first class rate. This large envelope, with the hand-written corner card of the Superintendent of Construction for the Post Office and Sub [*sic*] Treasury Building at Boston, was mailed to Farmington Falls, Maine. Even though it suffers from an advanced case of smallpox, this cover will attract spiriting bidding in an upcoming auction, since no major collection of official covers since Ackerman has contained a 30¢ Treasury cover.<sup>10</sup> 456,000 30¢ Treasury stamps were requisitioned in the fiscal years 1874-1879, the stamp used catalogues a humble \$9.00, and yet this may well be the only cover to have survived.

Counting the four stamps issued on soft paper, the catalogue lists 31 different high value official stamps, 24¢ denomination and above. Thirteen of these have never been reported on cover, not counting the 30¢ Navy stamp, of which the only reported cover (ex-Starnes) was stolen and is presumed lost to philately. Of the seventeen other high value official stamps which can be found on cover, only three have at least four examples reported: Scott #O22 24¢ Interior - 6; O66 30¢ State - 7; and O92 30¢ War - 4. The other fourteen high value official stamps survive on cover in quantities ranging from one to three. By comparison, the 1860 90¢ regular issue (#39) is very rare on cover and catalogues \$225,000 in the 2000 edition of the *Scott Specialized Catalogue of U.S. Stamps and Covers*. Six examples of this stamp on cover are known. Since I would prefer to continue collecting in this field, I would not begin to argue that high value official covers deserve to be valued in this same range. Still, when our exhibits are judged, heavy bonus points in the "difficulty of acquisition" category should be credited whenever we manage to show even a few of these extremely rare covers. Cost notwithstanding, there are simply not enough of them to go around.

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<sup>9</sup>Lester C. Lanphear III, "10¢, 2¢, 3¢ Executive Combination Usage," *Chronicle*, Volume 49, No. 1 (Whole No. 173)(February 1997), pp. 45-52.

<sup>10</sup>The whereabouts and legitimacy of the ex-Ackerman cover are unknown.

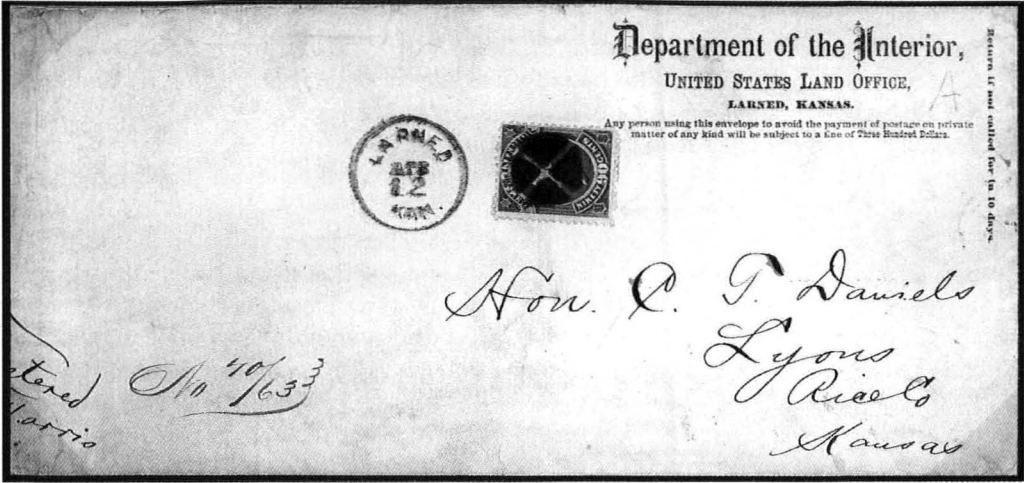


Figure 6. 90¢ Interior on a registered penalty envelope pasted to a package of homestead proofs, courtesy of Lester C. Lanphear III



Figure 7. 30¢ Treasury and 2¢, 6¢, 10¢ Treasury on an oversized cover from Boston, courtesy of Matthew Bennett, Inc.

In the 2001 edition of the *Scott Specialized Catalogue of U.S. Stamps and Covers*, the 24¢ Agriculture parcel label was finally listed, and the entry for the \$2 State was changed from “on cover” to “on parcel label.” From the research presented here, I would recommend a few further changes. The price of \$500.00 for a 24¢ Interior cover seems absurdly low and should be stricken. A new price should be entered for the 24¢ Navy on cover, based on the realization in the upcoming Bennett sale. The listing for the 24¢ State on cover should be unpriced, since the basis for the current price is an auction realization for a cover that received a bad certificate. A new price should be entered for the 30¢ Treasury on cover, again based on the realization in the Bennett sale.

In conducting this census, I relied on photocopies of the current major collections, on auction catalogues of the Steinmetz, Ackerman, Knapp, Hughes, Duckworth, Ehrenberg and Stone sales, on marginally legible bootleg third generation photocopies of the Starnes collection, and notes made on a few other auction lots. I counted full covers, cover fronts and parcel labels, but did not include stamps on piece. As a control to measure the completeness of this survey, I was able to compare it with the ongoing census of rare official covers started by Charles Starnes and maintained by my assistant section editor, Lester C. Lanphear III. I am indebted to Robert L. Markovits, who reviewed an early draft of this article; to Mr. Lanphear, who made many valuable suggestions; to Dr. David H. Lobdell, for supplying the eloquent analysis of his 24¢ War cover; to Mr. Theodore Lockyear, for the opportunity to reproduce here his spectacular Justice cover; and to Harvey Bennett and George Eveleth, for furnishing photocopies of the important covers from the upcoming Matthew Bennett, Inc. auction. I am eager to hear from any collector who either currently owns one of the high value covers listed here but unaccounted for, or who can report a new discovery.

#### **Afterword by Assistant Section Editor Lester C. Lanphear III**

On one of my visits to Charles Starnes he told me, “The one regret I have is never owning a 90¢ departmental cover.” Since his entire collection was stolen in 1983 and not a single piece has been recovered, I suppose those of us collecting today should considerate it fortunate that he was never able to buy a 90¢ cover.

In reviewing the sales catalogues of great official cover collections of the past as well as the current collections, an interesting fact stands out: the maximum number of different 90¢ values on cover any collector has owned is two. The short list of collectors who have been able to accomplish this feat: Hughes, Lanphear, Markovits, and Waud. □

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## Inventory of High Value Official Stamps on Cover

No.	Stamps	Description	Owner
1.	24¢ Agriculture	Third class from Washington, D.C. to Wyoming, Pa. on parcel label (no postmark)	LCL
2.	24¢ Interior	Patent Office, 8x domestic rate, Washington, D.C. to New York, N. Y., on oversized cover	ACC (ex-Ackerman)
3.	24¢ Interior	Land Office, Watertown to Warburg, Dakota Terr., 1879, registered first class legal cover	RLM (ex-Waud)
4.	24¢ Interior + 12¢ Interior	Land Office, Larned to Lyons, Kansas, registered first class legal cover	RLM (ex-Ackerman, Knapp, Waud)
5.	24¢ Interior	Reduced legal cover to Portland, Ore.	LCL
6.	24¢ Interior + 2¢ Interior	Land Office, Larned, Kansas (cover badly frayed)	(ex-Ackerman)
7.	24¢ Interior	Washington, D.C., Maltese cross cancellation	(ex-Ackerman)
8.	24¢ Interior	Washington, D.C., legal cover with corners frayed	CJS (exHughes)
9.	24¢ Interior	Land Office, Carson City to Virginia City, Nevada, small cover	CJS
[10.]*	30¢ Interior	Patent Office, Washington, D.C. legal cover	(ex-Needham, Ackerman, Hughes, Duckworth)
11.	30¢ Interior	book rate label, Washington, D.C.	RLM
12.	30¢ Interior	Washington, D.C. to Springfield, Ill., book rate label	CJS
13.	90¢ Interior	Land Office, Larned to Lyons, Kansas, registered legal penalty envelope	LCL (ex-Ackerman, Stone)
[14.]*	90¢ Interior	Washington, D.C., badly frayed cover front	(ex-Needham, Ackerman)
15.	24¢ Justice	Washington, D.C. to Clarksburg, W.V. first class legal cover	LCL
16.	24¢ Justice (2)	Office of the Solicitor of the Treasury Washington, D.C. to Clarksburg, W.V., 1878, first class extralegal cover	TL (ex-Ehrenberg)
17.	30¢ Justice	Office of the Solicitor of the Treasury, Washington, D.C., 1876, legal cover	CJS (ex-Ackerman, Hughes)
18.	30¢ Justice + 3¢ +6¢ Justice	Washington, D.C. to Clarksburg, West Virginia legal cover	TL
19.	90¢ Justice (3) + 30¢ Justice (4)	Washington, D.C. to Clarksburg, West Virginia legal cover	TL
20.	24¢ Navy	Washington, D.C. to Montevideo, Uruguay, 1876, legal cover paying 23½¢ treaty rate	CJS
21.	24¢ Navy	3¢ small stamped envelope, forwarded from Washington, D.C. to Uruguay, 1878	upcoming Bennett auction
22.	24¢ Navy + 2¢ + 6¢ Navy	Nautical Almanac Office printed matter parcel front to Benton, Maine	RLM (ex-Waud)
23.	30¢ Navy + 12¢ Navy	Washington, D.C. to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil via New York and London, 1877, double treaty rate legal cover	CJS
24.	30¢ Post Office	Washington, D.C. legal cover, 1883	(ex-Steinmetz, Ackerman)
25.	30¢ Post Office strip of 5	Washington, D.C. extra legal cover	(ex-Ackerman)
26.	24¢ State	Washington, D.C. to Sherbrooke, Canada, 1878	CJS (ex-Hughes)

27.	24¢ State	Diplomatic pouch mail from the Consulate at Beirut, Syria, Washington, D.C. to Crawfordsville, Georgia legal cover	RLM (ex-Ackerman, Knapp, Waud)
[28.]**	24¢ State	Washington, D.C. to New Orleans reduced, refolded and readdressed cover	(ex-Ackerman, Ehrenberg)
29.	30¢ State	Diplomatic pouch mail from the Consulate at Mexico City to Baltimore, July 20, 1877, with large green seal on back flap	CJS (ex-Hughes)
30.	30¢ State	Washington, D.C. to Philadelphia, Pa., July 10, 1873 legal cover	(ex-Ehrenberg, Ackerman)
31.	30¢ State + 10¢ State	Washington, D.C. to Charleston, S.C., book rate parcel label	LCL (ex-Ehrenberg)
32.	30¢ State + 12¢ State	Washington, D.C. to New York, parcel label dated April 6, 1874	(upcoming Bennett auction, ex-Ackerman)
33.	90¢ State + 30¢ State + 6¢ State	Washington, D.C. to Matamoros, Mexico, June 17, 1874, on parcel front	RLM (ex-Waud)
34.	90¢ State + 30¢ State + 10¢ State (2)	Washington, D.C. to Matamoros, Mexico,	John Fox, 4/15/55 on parcel front
35.	\$2 State + 30¢ State (17) + 10¢ State	New York, N. Y. to Stuttgart, Germany, 1882, international printed matter rate on a package front	RLM (ex-Ackerman, Knapp, Hughes, Waud)
36.	30¢ Treasury	Washington, D.C. legal cover	(ex-Ackerman)
37.	30¢ Treasury + 2¢, 6¢, 10¢ Treasury	Boston to Farmington Falls, Maine, extra-legal cover (foxed)	upcoming Bennett auction
38.	24¢ War pair	Washington, D.C. to Yedo (Tokyo), Japan legal cover	DHL (ex-Ackerman, Knapp, Hughes, Duckworth)
39.	30¢ War + 6¢ War	Washington, D.C. to Yedo (Tokyo), Japan, 1876, legal cover	DHL (ex-Ackerman, Knapp, Hughes, Duckworth)
40.	30¢ War + 6¢ War	Fort Apache, Arizona Territory to Washington, D.C., 1883, on over-sized cover	LCL (ex-Steinmetz)
41.	30¢ War + 6¢ War (4)	Office of the Chief Signal Officer, Washington, D.C. to Webster, Maine, 1875 printed matter parcel front	ACC
42.	30¢ War (two pairs)	Quartermaster's Dept. - Jeffersonville Depot to Philadelphia, Pa., legal cover front	CJS (ex-Hughes)
43.	90¢ War	Medical Dept. of the Army, Nebraska, legal cover	DHL (ex-Steinmetz, Hughes, Duckworth)
44.	90¢ War + 24¢ War (4)	Mobile, Alabama to Washington, D.C., parcel label on package front	RLM (ex-Waud)
45.	90¢ War pair + 24¢ War (4)	Mobile, Alabama to Washington, D.C., parcel label on package front	LCL (ex-Ehrenberg, Hughes)

\*The Henry Needham collection is notorious for containing covers with high value stamps fraudulently added. The authenticity of these two covers is so questionable that neither has been included in the final tally. The 30¢ cover surfaced in 1985 and was certified as fraudulent by the Philatelic Foundation (PFC #148565).

\*\*After the "Crystal Sale," this cover was reportedly certified as fraudulent, although neither the PF nor APS records indicate such a cover was reviewed. A few years later, it resurfaced in a Kaufman auction with no mention of a bad certificate and was resold. Extensively reworked, this cover's small size makes it dubious-looking, but the distinctive violet canceling ink of 1878, although faded, does tie the stamp, and the



Department of State handstamp looks authentic. This cover probably deserves reconsideration. Although I have seen other dubious high value official covers over the years (including a 30¢ Interior cover which I had killed in 1990 - PFC #219273, and a 30¢ Treasury which bit the dust earlier this year - PFC #0348782), I included only these three [#10, 14 and 28] from well-known collections in the inventory.

The provenances cited are derived from the following major sales of official covers:

Steinmetz	Eugene Klein	1929
Ernest R. Ackerman	J. C. Morgenthau	1933
Edward S. Knapp	Parke Bernet	1940
James E. Hughes	Bruce G. Daniels	1953
H. G. Duckworth	Harmer, Rooke	1963
Rae D. Ehrenberg	"Crystal" Collection, R. S. Siegel #577	1981
Morrison Waud	private treaty	1982
Charles J. Starnes	stolen	1983
Marshall Stone	R. S. Siegel #728	1990

<b>Key to initials:</b>	ACC	Alan C. Campbell	TL	Theodore Lockyear
	DHL	David H. Lobdell	RLM	Robert L. Markovits
	LCL	Lester C. Lanphear III	CJS	Charles J. Starnes

### Census Results: High Value Official Stamps on Cover

Scott No.	Stamp	Stamps Issued	Covers Found*	Cover Numbers	Scott Cat. Val. (2001)
O8	24¢ Agriculture	60,265	1	1	unpriced
O9	30¢ Agriculture	82,265	0		unlisted
O22	24¢ Interior	134,125	6 (8)	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, (8), (9)	\$500.00
O23	30¢ Interior	138,300	1 (2)	11, (12)	unpriced
O24	90¢ Interior	64,377	1	13	\$4500.00
O32	24¢ Justice	6,400	2	15, 16	\$2750.00
O33	30¢ Justice	8,600	2 (3)	(17), 18, 19	\$7500.00
O34	90¢ Justice	3,200	1	19	\$16,500.00
O43	24¢ Navy	26,000	2 (3)	(20), 21, 22	unpriced
O44	30¢ Navy	29,600	0 (1)	(23)	unlisted
O45	90¢ Navy	12,270	0		unlisted
O54	24¢ Post Office	87,625	0		unlisted
O55	30¢ Post Office	133,255	2	24, 25	unpriced
O56	90¢ Post Office	65,200	0		unlisted
O65	24¢ State	13,800	1 (2)	(26), 27	\$1750.00
O66	30¢ State	20,100	7	29-35	unpriced
O67	90¢ State	6,643	2	33, 34	unpriced
O68	\$2 State	3,508	1	35	unpriced
O69	\$5 State	363	0		unpriced
O70	\$10 State	363	0		unlisted
O71	\$20 State	363	0		unlisted
O80	24¢ Treasury	100,000	0		unlisted
O81	30¢ Treasury	456,500	2	36, 37	unpriced
O82	90¢ Treasury	312,500	0		unlisted
O91	24¢ War	200,925	3	38, 44, 45	unpriced
O92	30¢ War	336,641	4	39, 40, 41, 42	unpriced
O93	90¢ War	48,172	3	43, 44, 45	\$2000.00
O103	24¢ Interior soft	?	0		unlisted
O112	30¢ Treasury soft	?	0		unlisted
O113	90¢ Treasury soft	?	0		unlisted
O120	30¢ War soft	?	0		unlisted

\*Numbers in parentheses indicate total covers reported if the Starnes covers are included.

# The Long-Anticipated Comprehensive Study of 1847 Issue Postal History

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By Thomas J. Alexander

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Commentary includes discussions of some of the problems faced by postmasters in dealing with the first issue of stamps. Characteristics of mail from each state and territory as well as those of many towns and cities are covered; mail to and from famous persons are noted as are large correspondences, both commercial and those sent to wives and girlfriends.

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### United States: 1847 Cover Census

By Thomas J. Alexander

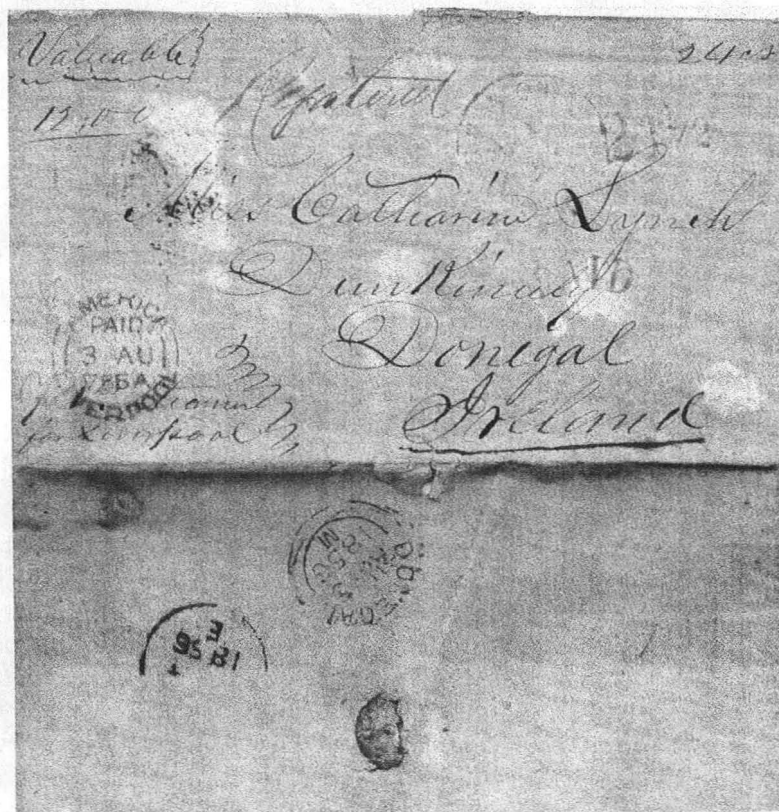
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**EARLIEST RECORDED REGISTERED LETTER UNDER THE  
U.S.-U.K. TREATY OF 1848**  
RICHARD F. WINTER

Route Agent Julian H. Jones of Romsey, England, submits the cover illustrated in Figure 1 as the earliest recorded registered letter under the United States-United Kingdom Postal Convention of 1848. In a 1989 *Chronicle* article, I discussed the additional articles to the convention that allowed registered mail between the two countries effective on 1 May 1856.<sup>1</sup> In the article, I showed an 11 February 1858 cover from St. Charles, Missouri to Dumfries, Scotland. At the time, it was the earliest registered letter that I had seen under the postal convention. Martin Willcocks advanced the earliest date to February 1857 when



**Figure 1. 16 July 1856 registered letter from New York to Donegal, Ireland, prepaid in cash 24¢ international fee plus 5¢ registered fee. New York credited 21½¢ to the U.K., 19¢ plus half the registered fee or 2½¢. Earliest recorded registered letter under U.S.-U.K. convention of 1848.**

<sup>1</sup>Richard F. Winter, "Registered Letters Under the U.S.-British Treaty of 1848," *Chronicle* 143:206-209.

he illustrated a cover in his February 1993 *Postal History Journal* article.<sup>2</sup> A registered letter between the two countries in 1856 had not been seen until the one illustrated in Figure 1 surfaced with a British postal history dealer.

This folded letter originated in New York on 16 July 1856 and was addressed to Donegal, Ireland. It concerned a settlement of the estate of the addressee's uncle and enclosed a draft for £467 7s2d, payable in London. The letter was endorsed "P 1st Steamer/for Liverpool." As required by the 1856 additional articles to the convention for registered mail, the letter was prepaid. The 24¢ international rate to the United Kingdom plus the 5¢ United States registered fee were paid in cash. The New York exchange office marked the letter with a curved **PAID** and a 21½ credit marking, each a handstamp in red ink. This office also marked a red **NEW-YORK B<sup>R</sup>. PK<sup>T</sup>**, circular datestamp of 23 July, the date the mails were forwarded on the Cunard steamship *Africa*. A red **AMERICA/PAID/LIVERPOOL** datestamp showed the arrival of *Africa* at Liverpool on 3 August 1856 and a blue circular datestamp on the reverse provided the date the letter arrived at Donegal, 5 August 1856.

As explained in my *Chronicle* article, the United States credit to the United Kingdom of 21½¢ consisted of the normal 19¢ credit for transatlantic service by a British contract steamship plus half the 5¢ registration fee or 2½¢. This rate marking is quite uncommon and seen only on registered letters under the convention that were carried by British contract steamship across the Atlantic. The credit to the United Kingdom on those registered letters carried on American contract steamship was 5½¢. This cover not only shows an 1856 use of registered mail to the United Kingdom but also advances the earliest recorded date by almost seven months. □

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<sup>2</sup>Martin Willcocks, "Early United States Registered Letters Abroad," *Postal History Journal*, February 1993, pp. 20-22.

## 11¢ RATE TO URUGUAY RICHARD F. WINTER

Route Agent Richard B. Graham submits the cover illustrated in Figure 1, providing the first example that I have seen of a very scarce rate to Uruguay, a rate unlisted in both Starnes and Wawrukiewicz/Beecher.<sup>1</sup> Actually, the 11¢ rate to Uruguay was a published rate, but was apparently missed by the authors of the two rate studies mentioned.

From July 1875, there were two rates for letters from the United States to Uruguay. The first was a 27¢ rate per 15 grams or ½ ounce by way of the United Kingdom and British mail service to Uruguay. Prepayment was compulsory. This rate consisted of the 5¢ General Postal Union rate to the United Kingdom plus 22¢ for British service to Uruguay (one penny less than the 12 pence rate from the United Kingdom to Uruguay). Interestingly, this rate was not listed in the *Postal Guide* until July 1876, a year after it went into effect.<sup>2</sup> The rate listed in the *Postal Guide* to Uruguay was the second of the two rates, 23¢ per 15 grams or ½ ounce by United States packet to Brazil. The *Postal Guide*

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<sup>1</sup>Charles J. Starnes, *United States Letter Rates to Foreign Destinations 1847 to GPU-UPU*, Revised Edition (Louisville, Kentucky: Leonard H. Hartmann, 1989), p. 47; Anthony S. Wawrukiewicz and Henry W. Beecher, *U.S. International Postal Rates, 1872-1996* (Portland, Oregon: Anthony S. Wawrukiewicz, 1996), p. 57.

<sup>2</sup>*United States Official Postal Guide* (Boston: H.O. Houghton and Company, and New York: Hurd and Houghton), issued quarterly from October 1874 (No. 1) to June 1879 (No. 20), then monthly until January 1880, when an extensive issue was published to start each year and smaller supplements monthly thereafter.

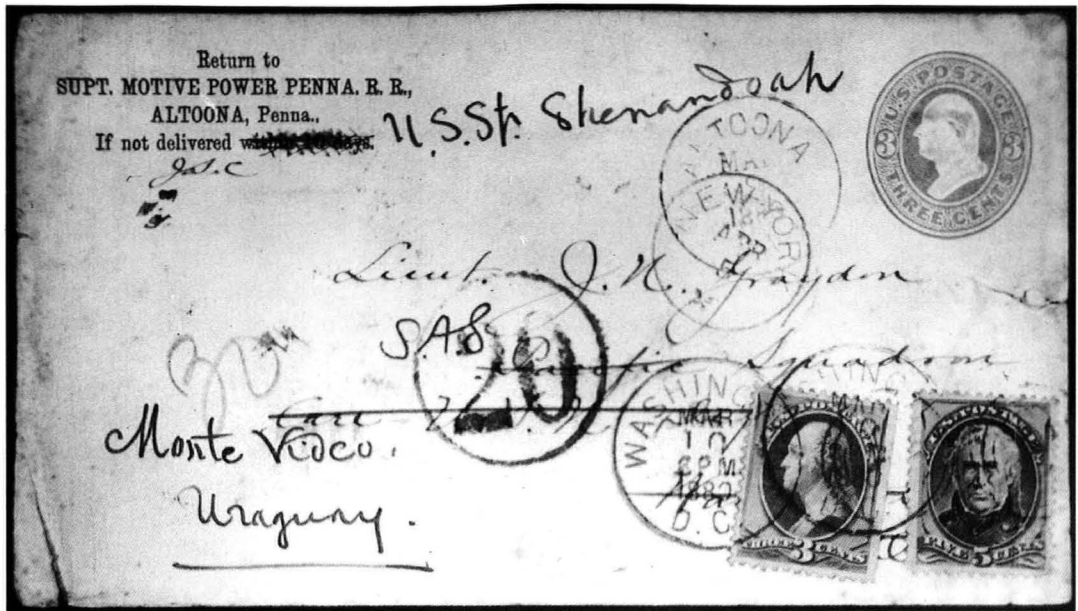


Figure 1. 9 May 1880, Altoona, Pa. cover to Washington, D.C., readdressed to Montevideo, Uruguay, paid 11¢ for rate to Uruguay by American steamship to Brazil and British packet to Buenos Ayres. New York marked 30 centimes credit to the U.K. First reported cover showing this short-lived and unrecorded rate.

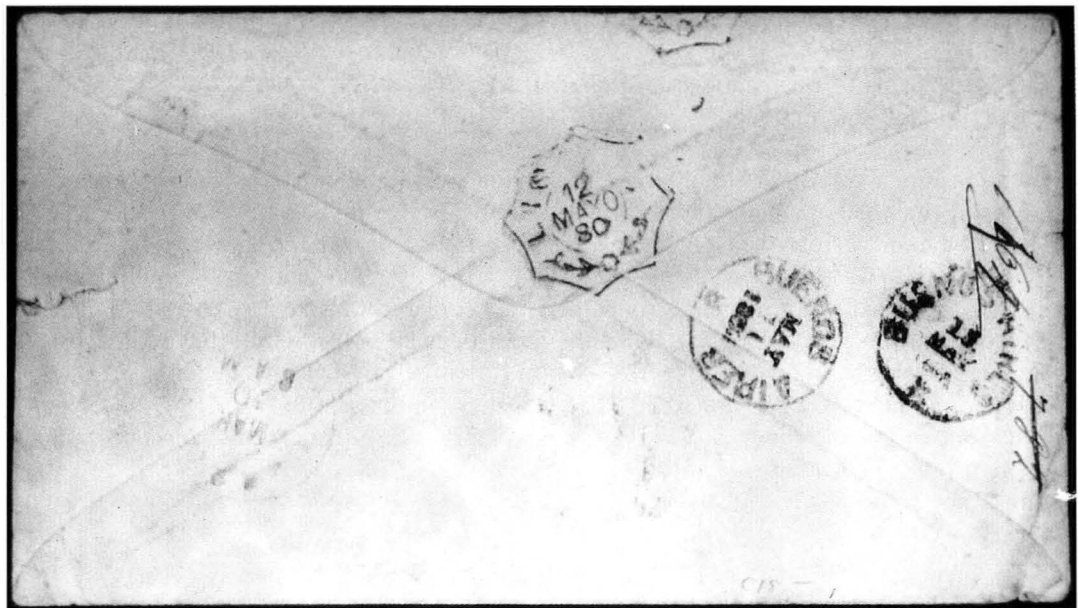


Figure 2. Reverse side of Figure 1 cover with arrival datestamps of Buenos Ayres and Montevideo, the later marking of the head office of Montevideo with the word LISTAS, used on mail without a precise address and placed on a list of mail to be picked up.

stated that mail to the Argentine Confederation, Paraguay and Uruguay was via Rio de Janeiro through the Brazil Post Department and was subject to an additional charge by the Brazil office. Both rates went into effect on 1 July 1875. The 27¢ rate continued until Uruguay joined the Universal Postal Union on 1 July 1880. The 23¢ rate, however, was listed for the final time in the October 1876 *Postal Guide* and did not appear in the January 1877 or later *Guides*. Referring to mail to the Argentine Confederation, Paraguay and Uruguay, the July 1876 *Postal Guide* stated "The most reliable and regular mail communication with the above places is, via England in British mail, but is occasionally had via Rio de Janeiro through the Brazil Post Department . . ." Since the United States and Brazil Mail Steamship Company ceased operations from New York to Brazil in the fall of 1875, this statement is quite understandable.<sup>3</sup> With the collapse of that steamship company the 23¢ rate could only be used if an occasional vessel to Brazil could be found to carry the mail.

The New York and Brazil Steamship Company started up again in May 1878 for another three years. It was during the operations of this second line that the 11¢ rate per 15 grams or 1/2 ounce was introduced. The rate was first listed in the July 1879 *Postal Guide* for mail from the United States to Uruguay via Brazil and Buenos Ayres. Prepayment was required. Also listed by this route were rates for registered mail, for an additional 10¢, and printed matter. The 11¢ rate consisted of the 5¢ General Postal Union rate to Brazil plus 6¢ for mail service from Brazil to Argentina. By July 1879 both Brazil and Argentina were members of the Universal Postal Union.<sup>4</sup> Since the route is listed to Buenos Ayres, I presume that mail went in closed bags to Argentina and the Universal Postal Union credit from the prepayment went to Argentina. Transit postage from Argentina to Uruguay was due from the addressee. The 11¢ rate continued until 1 July 1880, when it and the 27¢ rate, were replaced by the 5¢ Universal Postal Union rate.

The cover shown in Figure 1 originated in Altoona, Pennsylvania on 9 March 1880. It was addressed to "Lieut. J.W. Graydon, Pacific Squadron, care - U.S.N Dept., Washington D.C." Apparently, the letter writer did not know where Lt. Graydon was located so he (or she) addressed the letter to the Navy Department in Washington, D.C. Actually, Lt. Graydon was not in the Pacific Squadron but in the South Atlantic Squadron. The Navy Department readdressed the letter in bright red ink to "U.S. Str. Shenandoah, S.A.S. [South Atlantic Squadron], Monte Video, Uruguay."

A short biography in the 1881 *Naval Encyclopedia* tells us a little about Lt. Graydon.<sup>5</sup> John W(eir) Graydon was born in Indiana and appointed to the Naval Academy from that state. He graduated a midshipman (with 73 other midshipmen) on 4 June 1869. He served on various vessels in the North Atlantic, European and South Atlantic Squadrons. He was promoted to ensign in July 1870, master in March 1873, and lieutenant in November 1877. He resigned from the naval service in September 1884. In 1879, Lt. Graydon was assigned to the U.S.S. *Shenandoah*, flagship of the South Atlantic Squadron. This vessel was a wooden hull, screw sloop of war built by the Philadelphia Navy Yard and commissioned on 20 June 1863.<sup>6</sup> She was decommissioned in April 1865 and re-entered service in November 1865 to operate with the Asiatic Squadron. She was decommissioned again in May 1869 and re-entered service in August 1870 to deploy to the European Squadron. She was decommissioned once again in April 1874 and re-entered

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<sup>3</sup>John L. DuBois, "The United States and Brazil Mail Steamship Companies 1866-1893," *The Congress Book 1998* (Santa Clara, California: The American Philatelic Congress, 1998), pp. 1-37.

<sup>4</sup>Effective 1 April 1879, the convention of the Universal Postal Union concluded at Paris, 1 June 1878, superseded that of the General Postal Union concluded at Berne, 9 October 1874.

<sup>5</sup>*A Naval Encyclopedia, Comprising A Dictionary of Nautical Words and Phrases; Biographical Notices, and Records of Naval Officers* (Philadelphia: L.R. Hamersly & Co., 1881), p. 963.

into service in September 1879, this time for service in the South Atlantic Squadron. *Shenandoah* sailed for Brazil on 4 October 1879 to serve as the flagship of Rear Admiral Andrew Bryson, who commanded the South Atlantic Squadron. Her duties included watching over American interests in the region while cruising between Rio de Janeiro, Montevideo and Buenos Ayres.

The Figure 1 cover was prepaid 3¢ with a Plimpton Manufacturing Company stamped envelope for the internal rate to Washington, D.C. There, officials in the Navy Department crossed through the original address and readdressed the letter. They added two Bank Note adhesives, a 3¢ green and a 5¢ Taylor, to make the full 11¢ rate to Uruguay. The added adhesives were postmarked in Washington, D.C. on 10 March 1880. The letter was sent to New York where it waited for the next mail steamer to Brazil. New York postal clerks marked the red circular datestamp of 5 April to indicate the date they forwarded the letter. On 5 April 1880, the United States and Brazil Mail Steamship Company steamship *City of Rio* departed New York for St. Thomas and Rio de Janeiro, arriving there on the estimated date of 2 May 1880.<sup>7</sup> Since there is no Rio de Janeiro postmark we can assume the mail was in a closed bag for Buenos Ayres. Figure 2 illustrates the reverse of the cover. Backstamps confirm arrival at Buenos Ayres on 11 May 1880. From there, the letter was carried across the La Plata river mouth to Montevideo. There is a partially struck datestamp of 12 May 1880 reading LISTAS, a postmark of the head office in Montevideo. This marking was used on mail that did not have an exact delivery address and that had been placed on a list of mail held at the main office waiting to be picked up.

Of the 11¢ prepayment, the United States was able to retain only the Universal Postal Union rate of 5¢. The remaining 6¢ was credited to Union member Argentina. Convention articles of the 1874 Berne treaty established postal handling requirements within the Union.<sup>8</sup> In the *Detailed Regulations* to this treaty, Article 6, Item 9 stated that credits and debits had to be expressed in francs and centimes. On this cover, just above the readdressed location of "Montevideo, Uruguay" in the lower left corner, is a red pencil "30." This was marked by a postal clerk in New York as the United States credit to Argentina. The value was 30 centimes or 6¢. At the destination in Uruguay, postage was still required for transit from Buenos Ayres. Uruguay was not a member of the Universal Postal Union in May 1880 so the letter could not be paid to destination. The large black "20" in a circle shows this postage due in Uruguay of 20 centesimos.

I would be interested to see other examples of this scarce rate if any route agent is fortunate to find one in his or her collection. □

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<sup>6</sup>*Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*, 8 vols. (Washington, DC: Department of Navy, 1959-81), Vol. VI, pp. 480-82.

<sup>7</sup>DuBois, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

<sup>8</sup>U.S. 19 *Statutes at Large* 577-609.

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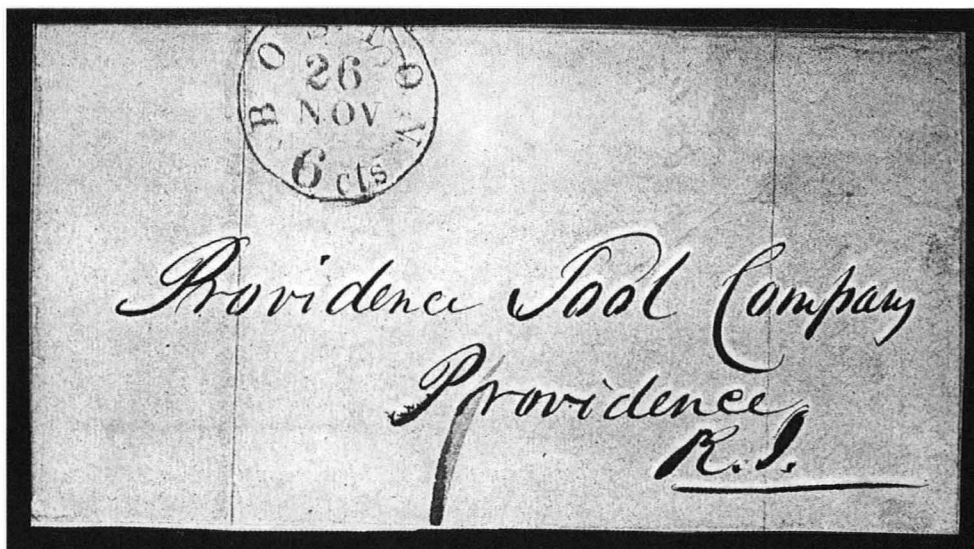
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### A REVISIT TO PROBLEM COVER IN ISSUE 183

Figure 1 was sent in by Route Agent Bernard Biales as a “simple” problem cover which appeared in *Chronicle* 183, August 1999. Prepayment of letter mail in either cash or stamps was required beginning April 1, 1855, and this cover is dated 1855 on a note inside. The red Boston CDS indicates a postage of “6 cts” paid, but with no indication of how. It was suggested that the cover could have been posted unpaid 3¢, which would be doubled to 6¢ collect, except that the 6¢ due should have been in black. So the open question remained, and Route Agents were asked to provide similar examples.



**Figure 1. Boston cover, dated 1855, to Providence, R.I.**

No other examples were uncovered, until Agent Biales submitted Figure 2, a similar Boston cover with a red CDS enclosing “3¢ cts” and a red “PAID.” An important difference is the “3” in pencil between the CDS and the “PAID.” This is sometimes called a “counter” rate. It was used by Post Office clerks to keep track of postage paid at the window on each letter as it was rated. The amount was added later in a more official marking, e.g., the red Boston CDS showing 3¢ paid. These pencil marks have frequently been removed by collectors who were not aware that they were in fact removing a piece of postal history.

So, Agent Biales returned to the problem cover to look for possible evidence of a 6¢ counter rate having been erased. To quote what he found:

“My face is red. The Boston 6 cts CDS 1855 cover, Figure 1, shows traces of a missing pair” of stamps at upper right. Therefore, there was no need for a counter rate; the stamps (presumed to be two 3¢ current issue, not tied), were evidence that postage was paid. The red Boston 6 cts CDS marking is appropriate; and the only unusual aspect of this cover is the missing stamps.

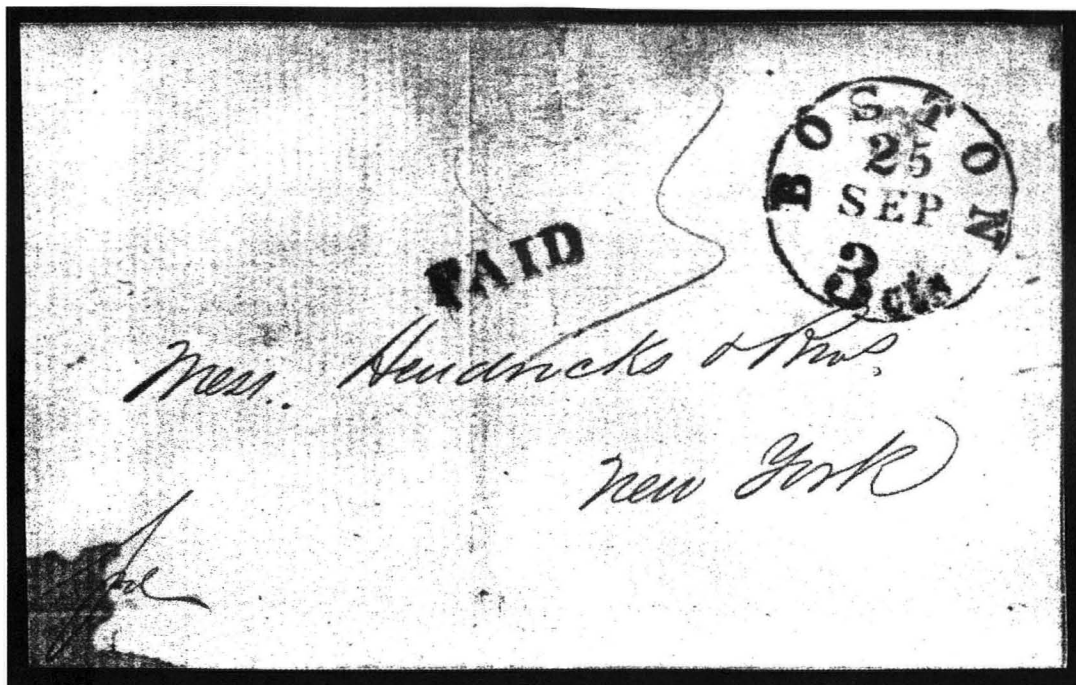


Figure 2. Boston cover, circa 1850s, to New York

### ANSWERS TO PROBLEM COVERS IN ISSUE 187

The cover in Figure 3 is a classic example of U.S. mail to France in the three-month period 1 January to 1 April 1857. Hargest writes: "As early as 1849, the United States was attempting to negotiate a postal convention with the French."<sup>1</sup> One of the obstacles was the unwillingness of the French government to adopt the half instead of the quarter-ounce scale for letters between the two countries. The result was that U.S.–French mail had to be sent via Britain as open mail allowed by the Anglo-French treaty of 1843, at the higher rates for non treaty mail, or direct to France for which there was little opportunity. In mid-1851, the rate by American packets was reduced and a French decree effective 1 December 1851 established new U.S.–French open mail rates.

In 1848, the U.S. and Britain concluded a postal convention which became effective 15 February 1849. But letters between France and the U.S. via Great Britain were exempted in anticipation of an agreement for the mutual exchange of closed mails "as may be most conducive to the interest of the three countries." Therefore, the 1843 open mail rates continued.<sup>2</sup>

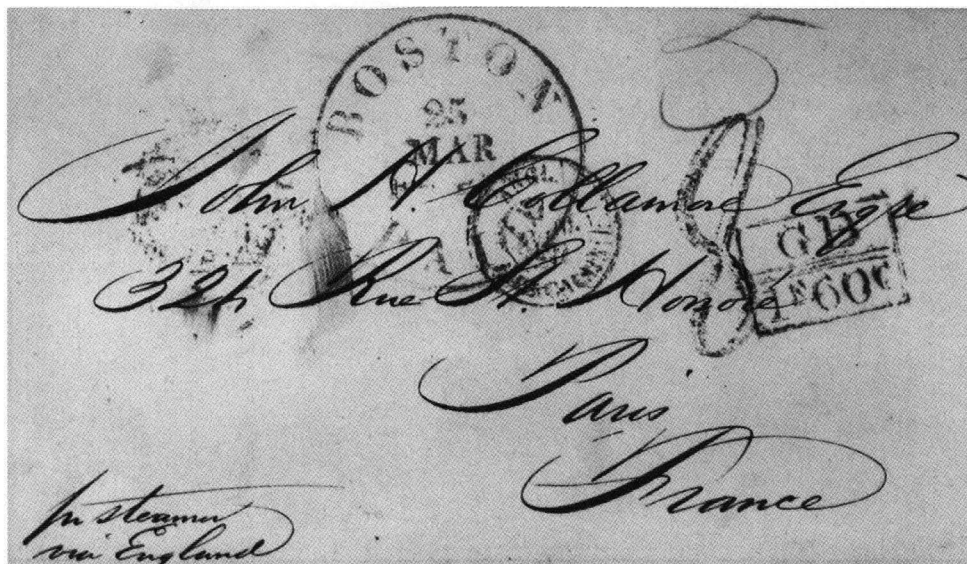
Meanwhile, as early as 1853, the British and French were also attempting to negotiate a new postal convention.<sup>3</sup> This resulted in a Anglo-French convention effective 1 January 1857 that provided for single-rate letters of 1/4 ounce (British) or 7 1/2 grams (French). But still, U.S.–French closed mails were not included. Finally, the U.S. and France completed a postal agreement to become effective 1 April 1857 which "admitted the United States to the closed mail provisions of the Anglo-French convention." This

<sup>1</sup>George E. Hargest, *History of Letter Post Communication Between the United States and Europe 1845-1875*, 2nd ed. (Lawrence, Ma.: Quarterman Publications, Inc., 1975).

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*

made possible the “via England” transit of closed mail between the United States and France, as well as direct mail, at reduced rates.<sup>4</sup> It also caused the U.S. to adopt the ¼ ounce single rate and a complex system of charges and credits.



**Figure 3. March 25, 1857 Boston to Paris**

The subject cover (Figure 3) was mailed from Boston on 25 March to Paris. It fits into the three-month period between the 1 January 1857 Anglo–French convention (which used the open mail provisions of the treaty to rate the letter) and the 1 April 1857 U.S.–French convention (which would have used the closed mail provisions of that treaty to rate the letter). The cover was prepaid only 5¢ for U.S. postage, as indicated by the “5” in pencil at upper right. It was carried by the British packet *America* from Boston and charged “8” decimes (black handstamp) due in France. This single rate was calculated as follows:

- Transit postage 40 centimes per 30 grams / 4 = 10c
- Sea postage 1 franc 20 centimes per 30 grams / 4 = 30c
- French inland postage = 40c
- Collected in France 80 centimes = 8 decimes
- Britain received its transit and sea postage from France -  
     1 franc 60 centimes per 30 grams / 4 = 40 centimes  
     as indicated by the black boxed “GB /1F60c”

The problem wrapper in Figure 4 brought no answers – it must be too easy to solve! We’ll carry it over to the February 2001 issue trusting that at least one of our Route Agents will respond. Where did it go? What was the total rate? Explain the two “2”s.

**PROBLEM COVERS FOR THIS ISSUE**

Route Agent John Donnes submits the “ONE CENT” United States postal card to Germany for review (Figure 5). It has a “1 CENT” Bank Note added and canceled “NEW YORK / date illegible / P. O.” with a black Maltese cross obliterator. The message on the reverse is headed New York, 8 März 1875. Below the stamps is a red CDS “NEW YORK / MAR / 11 / DUE 10 / [illegible—but may be U.S. CURRENCY]”. There are no receiving marks. Why was the “DUE 10” CDS applied?

<sup>4</sup>*ibid.*



Figure 4. Wrapper with 2¢ Black Jack

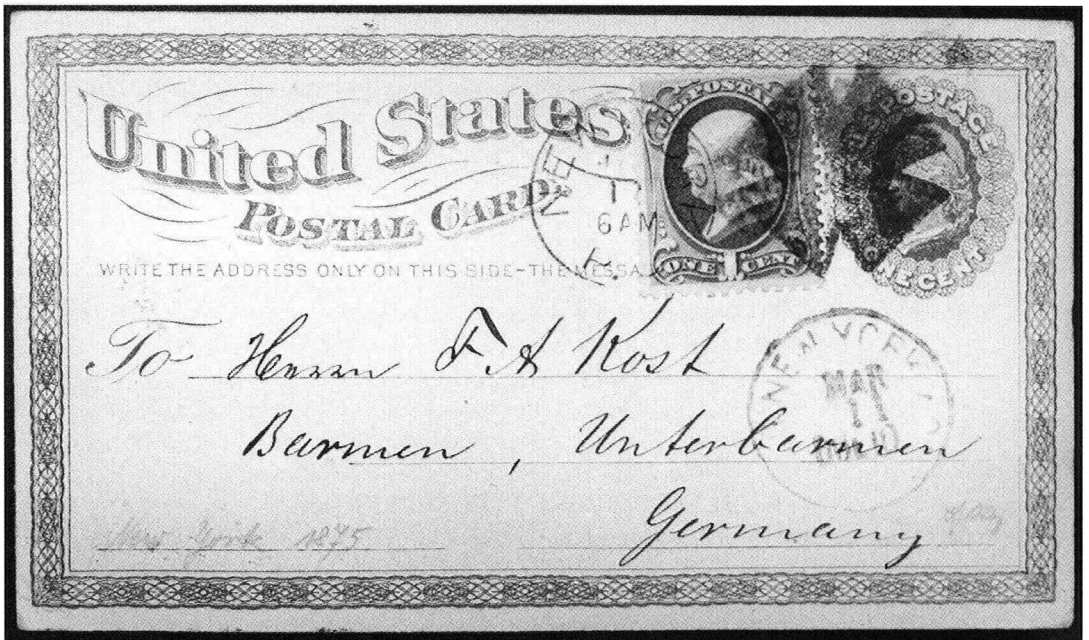


Figure 5. 1875 Postal Card with "NEW YORK / DUE 10" CDS

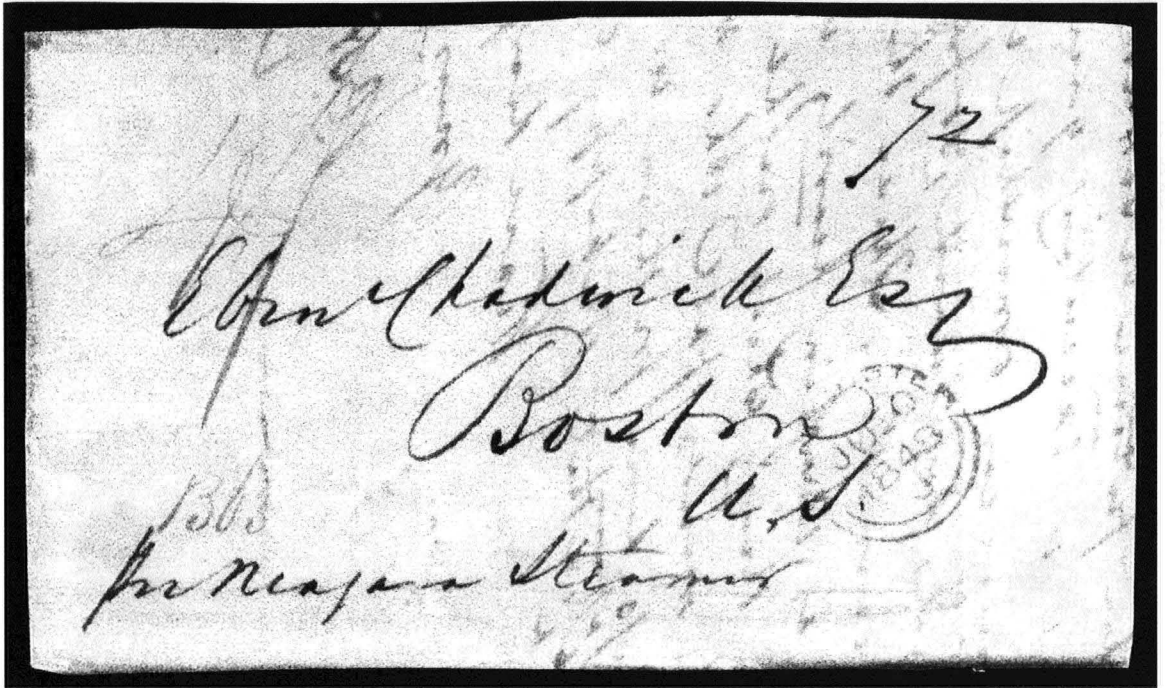


Figure 6. 1848 Cover from England to Boston

The cover in Figure 6 received a red CDS “MANCHESTER / JU 30 / J” on the obverse and a black oval “L / JY 1 / A” on the reverse. Addressed to Boston, U.S., no U.S. receiver marking is present. There are three sets of numbers: “4/-” and “B63” in red on the left front, and “72” in black at upper right. Please explain these three sets of numbers.

\*\*\*\*\*

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Please send to The Cover Corner Editor your answers to the problem covers for this issue, and any further discussion of previous answers to other problem covers, as soon as possible, preferably within two weeks of receiving your *Chronicle*. The "go to press" deadline for the February 2001 Cover Corner is January 10, 2001. I can receive mail at 9068 Fontainebleau Terrace, Cincinnati, Ohio, 45231-4808, and via an e-mail address: [RWCARLIN@aol.com](mailto:RWCARLIN@aol.com).

New examples of problem covers are needed for The Cover Corner. We have successfully experimented with copies of covers produced by high resolution copiers, either in black and white or in color, instead of requiring black and white photographs. This should make it easier to submit covers. Please send two copies of each cover, including the reverse if it has significant markings. It is also important to identify the color of markings on covers submitted in black and white. Thanks.

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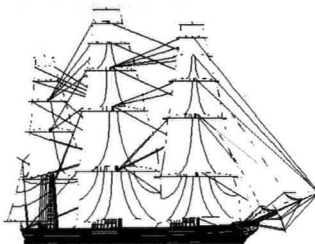
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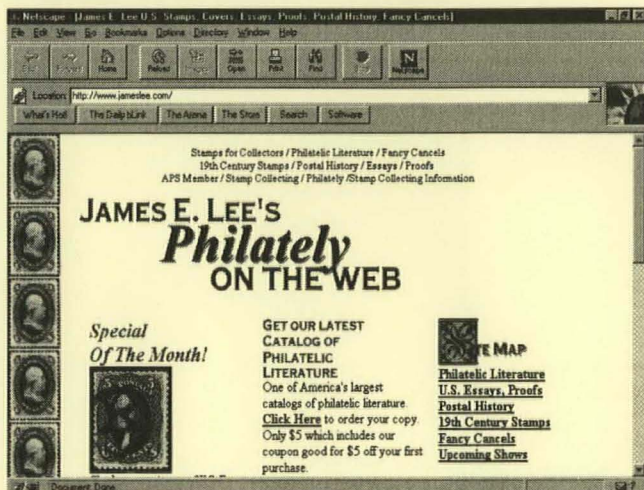


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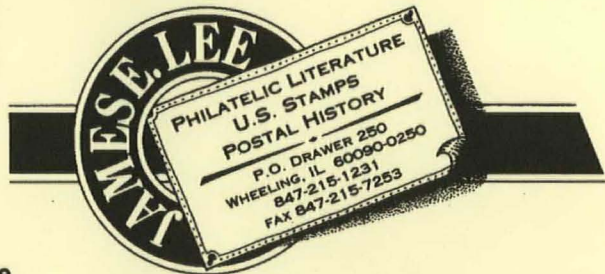


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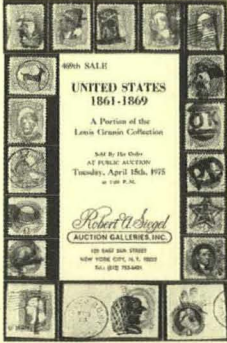
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