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The
Chronicle
of the U.S. Classic Postal Issues

February 2002

Volume 54, No. 1

Whole No. 193

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An Exhibition Collection Sale

William McCarren

Michael D. Rubins

What do the philatelists cited here have in common? These gentlemen had a vision, so when it came time for them to consign their stamps and postal history to auction, they trusted the philatelists at Matthew Bennett Auctions to translate that vision into their own individual "Exhibition Collection Sale" catalog.

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RAILROAD SERVICE
JAMES W. MILGRAM, M.D.

When railroads were expanding within the United States, the steamboats had been carrying the mail for decades. The Express Mail of 1836 was an attempt to speed the delivery of selected lightweight letters between the chief centers of commerce. The express service began with New York as its northern termination. Route 1, the ninety mile trip to Philadelphia, was let to the Trenton, Camden and Amboy Railroad Company (see *The Express Mail of 1836-1839* by the writer). Over the next few years it was the gradual extension of railroad lines that rendered the triple postage for the express too large an expense for only a small advantage in transit time. From their beginnings in the 1830s, the railroad lines carried mail. Private expresses in the northeastern portion of the country began as individuals undertook to carry letters over these train routes as well as on stage coaches.

As with mail carried by other forms of transportation, most of the early letters carried by railroads are unmarked as such. But railroads carried route agents for the mails they carried, and letters handed directly to one of these individuals were sometimes marked. There are two examples of "Rail Road" in old English style type from 1837, and a few 1838-1840 covers marked with manuscript or handstamped "Railroad" with a postal rate. Later the route agents used markings with the name of individual railroad companies. Like steamboat and express covers, railroad mail required payment of U.S. postage even if the letter never entered the regular mails. Railroads were designated to be post roads.

Steamboat mail envelopes containing only a bill of lading for merchandise carried on the same vessel were exempt from the additional U.S. postage. Only very rarely have similar items been seen for railroads. Freight bills, those often highly decorated slips of paper

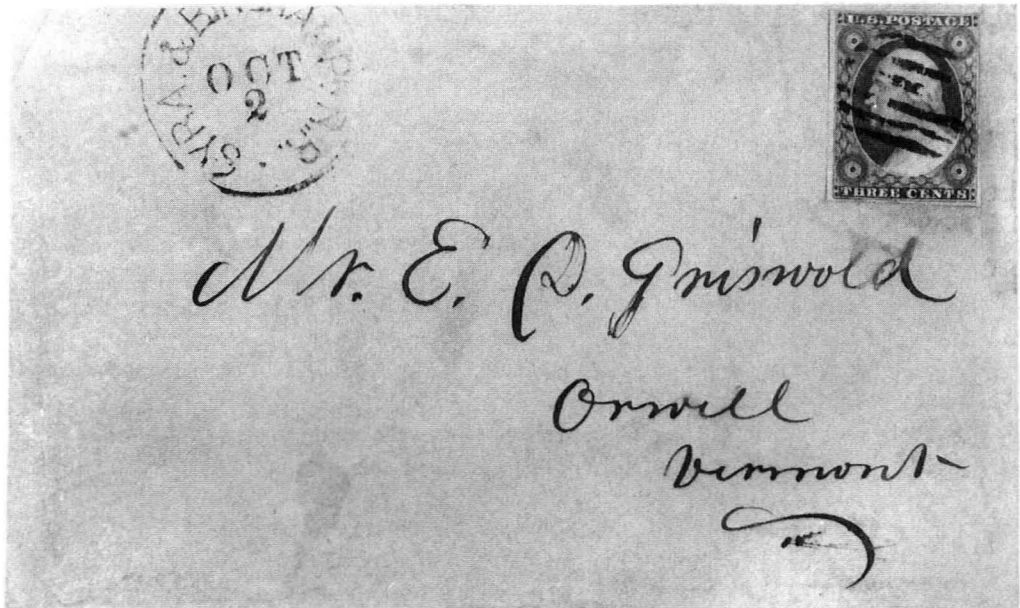


Figure 1. Route agent usage, "SYRA. & BINGHAMPN R.R. OCT 2" with 3¢ 1851



Figure 2. Printed R.R. corner card with "SYRACUSE N.Y. SEP 26 1860" canceling 3¢ 1857 stamp

from the steamboats, were generic from the railroads, and so most do not possess the individuality seen on steamboat billings. These were either mailed or handed directly to the customers. No special envelopes for railroad communication with their customers seem to exist.

However, unlike steamboats, which were individual moving carriers on public waterways, a railroad line is a stationery series of tracks carrying multiple trains that are owned by the railroad company. It should therefore not be surprising that letters exist concerning official business of the railroad between individuals at different stations along the line. Naturally the owners of these lines did not feel they had to pay U.S. postage for such correspondence carried solely by their employees, so certain of the railroad lines prepared special corner card envelopes or handstamps to be used on this special official business mail. These are the subject of this article.

It is somewhat surprising that these markings have not been included in the catalogs because they are letters sent by railroad. That is in distinction to ordinary railroad corner cards. To illustrate the types of mail seen, Figure 1 shows a cover bearing a 3¢ 1851 tied "SYRA. & BINGHAMPN R.R. OCT 2." This is a typical railroad route agent's postmark on unpostmarked mail handed directly to the railroad's agent on board. It is essentially a way letter, but the agents had postmarking devices while a way letter was postmarked at the next post office through which a letter passed. Steamboats with a route agent processed mail similarly with special handstamps or pen markings. Other way mail received along the route was postmarked at the post office where the steamboat turned in the mail. These route agents acted as post offices for these letters and thus the mail received no further postal markings in most cases.

Figure 2 illustrates a printed corner card for the same railroad. The 1860 postmark of Syracuse, New York is from one of the towns that had stations on this north-south railroad line. But since the destination of the letter was Clifton Springs (almost straight west of Syracuse), the letter probably was not carried by the Syracuse, Binghamton and N.Y. R.R. if the letter originated at Syracuse. In other words, we have a corner card without a letter

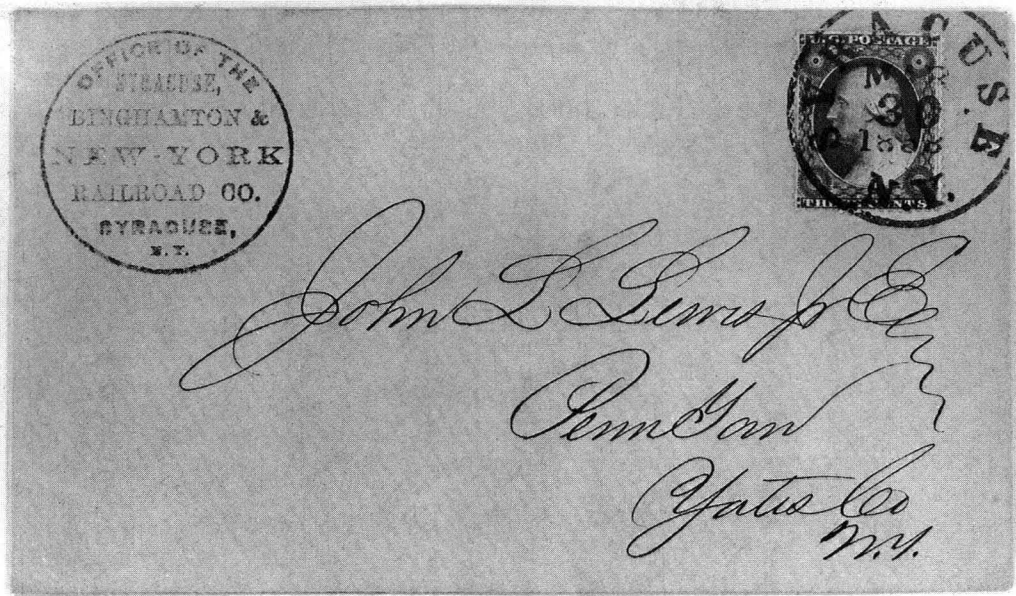


Figure 3. Handstamped blue corner card, "SYRACUSE, BINGHAMTON & NEW YORK RAILROAD CO.," postally used from Syracuse (1858)

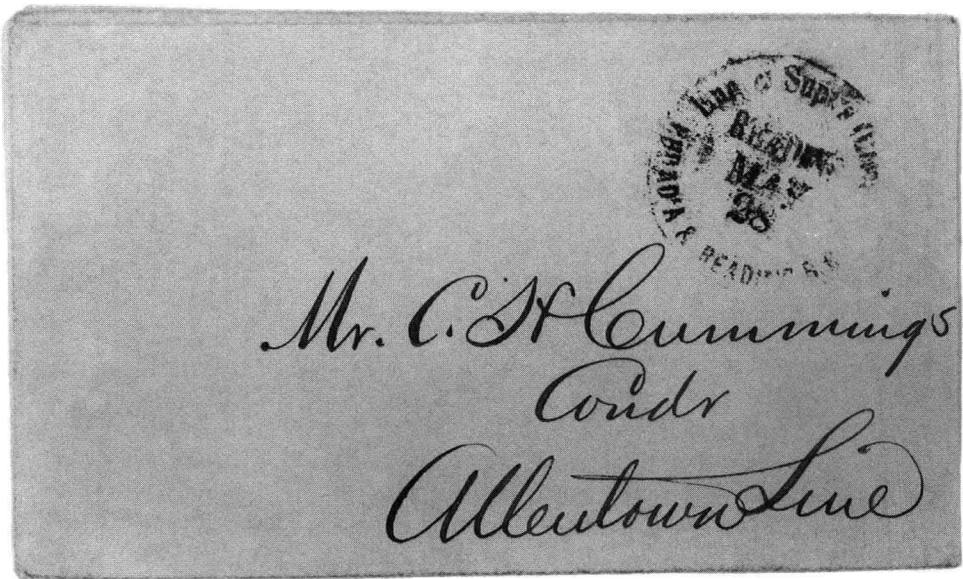


Figure 4. Railroad service usage with no postage and handstamp "Eng. & Supt's Office PHILADA & READING R.R. READING MAY 28"

so we cannot be sure as to the origin of the original letter. Since the writer did not modify the Syracuse in the corner card, the chances are the writer just used an envelope belonging to the railroad line for a letter that might have been concerning official business or private business, but the letter originated in Syracuse and thus was not carried on that train line. But during the 1850s and thereafter, a great many letters were carried by trains over a portion of their journey.

A blue handstamp from the same railroad company is shown in Figure 3. This device may have preceded the printed variety corner card in 1858. The postal usage is similar to the previous cover and is also from Syracuse to be carried in the regular mails. However, if this had been an official letter that was going to Binghamton, it is possible that this could have been sent over the railroad's own line without a stamp. As it is, the blue handstamp probably functioned as a handstamped corner card.

Figure 4 shows an envelope which was obviously a railroad service usage. The marking is "Eng. & Supt's Office PHILADA & READING R.R. READING MAY 28" with the address to a conductor on the Allentown Line. This would be an example of railroad official business mail sent without stamps.

Two covers in the William Wyer Collection (sold by Daniel F. Kelleher Auctions in February 1977) are "B. & N.Y.C. R.R. N. WRENTHAM APR 16" on a cover with no stamp (lot 252), and "DUANE STREET N.Y. & E. R.R. 1856 JUN 2" (lot 1033), a similar usage. Both of these were probably covers on railroad service.

During the 1850s it appears that the preferred terminology was "railroad service." An 1859 cover shown in Figure 5 was addressed with no stamp to Shushan. It bears a "RUTLAND & WASHTN R.R." handstamp together with a manuscript "R.R.S.," which stands for railroad service and indicates official usage.

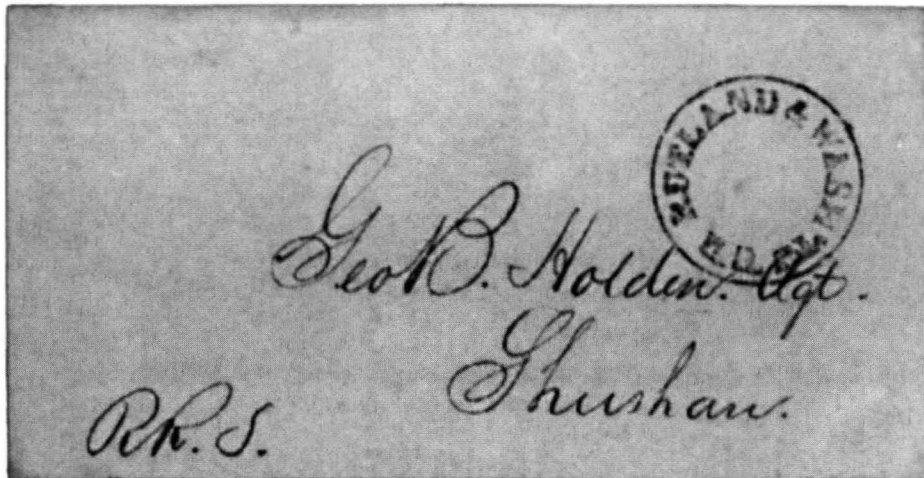


Figure 5. Manuscript "R.R.S." for railroad service, handstamp of "RUTLAND & WASHT'N R.R."

Figure 6 illustrates an 1851 letter from Boston to the Charleston, N.H. agent for the Sullivan R.R., correcting various ticket returns he made for October 1850 on trips from Boston to Windsor and from North Charles and Groton to Claremont and Charlestown. This cover bears a two line black 19 x 8.5 mm marking "RAILROAD SERVICE," showing that special handstamps had been made for official mail. Towle felt that this was a marking of the Fitchburg Railroad.

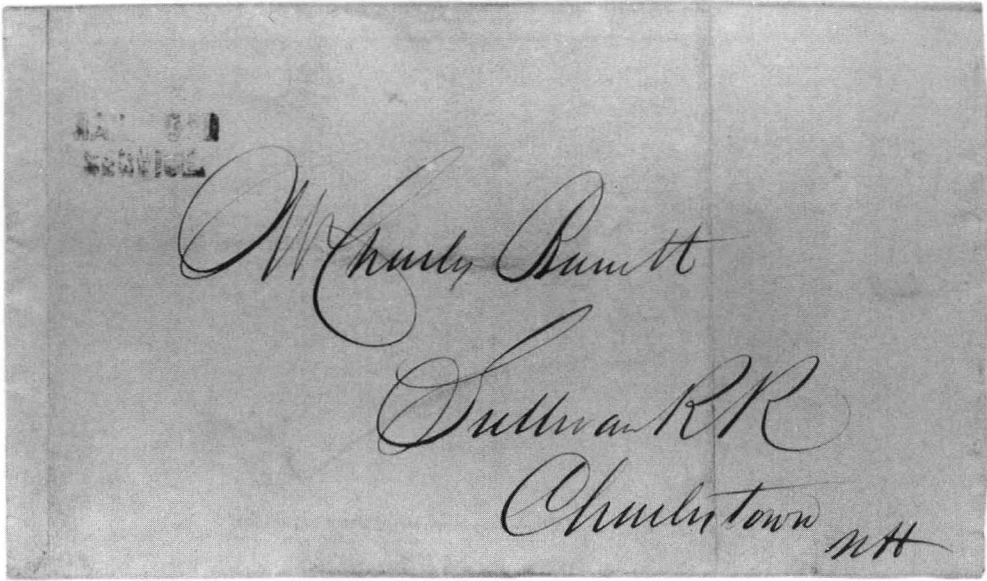


Figure 6. Black handstamp "RAILROAD SERVICE" on 1851 letter, possibly of Fitchburg Railroad

Belvidere Delaware, and Flemington Railroads,
OFFICE OF THE ENGINEER AND SUPERINTENDENT,
Lambertville, N. J., June 8 1857

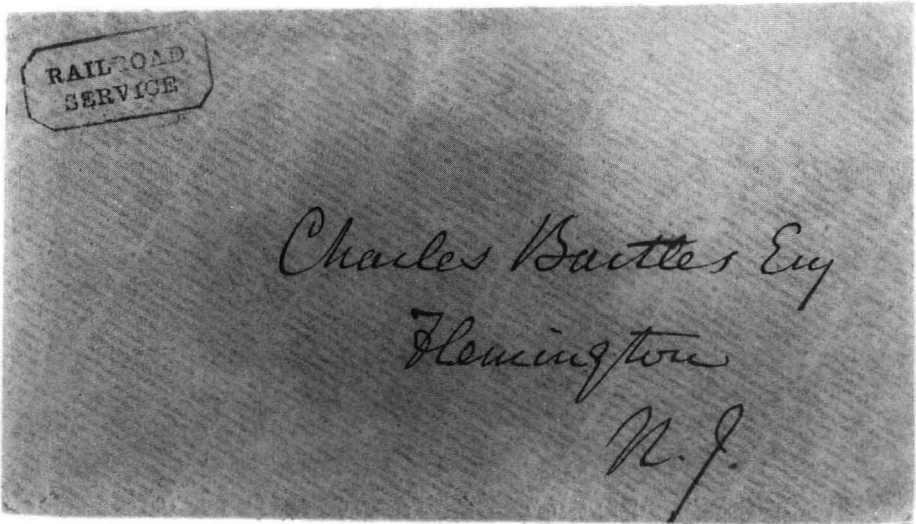


Figure 7. Black framed "RAILROAD SERVICE" on an envelope with lettersheet of Belvidere, Delaware, and Flemington Railroad in 1857; both Lambertville and Flemington are towns on the line

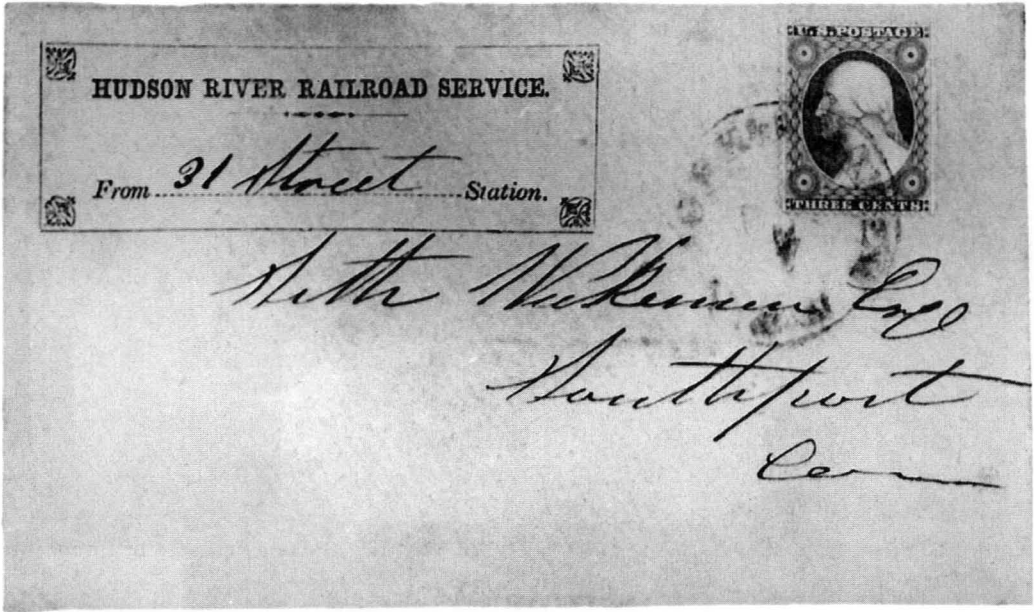


Figure 8. "HUDSON RIVER RAILROAD SERVICE" printed company frank for official business; envelope used postally with route agent's postmark to Southport, Connecticut

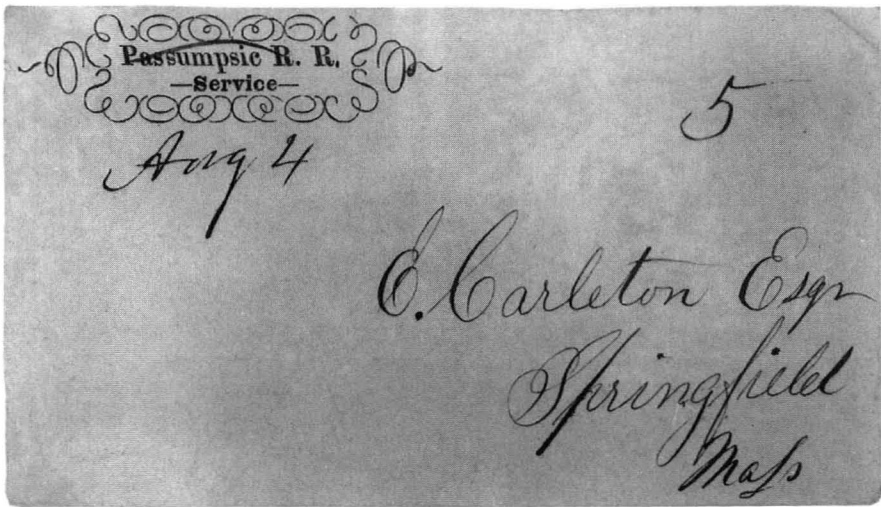


Figure 9. "Passumpsic R.R. Service" printed frank used as postmark with added date and postal rating "5"

A different handstamped marking with the same wording, 32 x 14.5 mm, is shown in Figure 7. Again we are fortunate to have the original letter, which is on printed letterhead stationery of the Belvidere, Delaware, and Flemington Railroad. It concerns official railroad business about damages.

Special envelopes were printed for official business of some of the railroads during the 1850s. These also used the word "service" to designate official business franking. One of these is shown in Figure 8 with a corner card "HUDSON RIVER RAILROAD SERVICE From _____ Station." The name of the station was written in, "31 Street" in this example. However, this envelope was mailed with a stamp, so the service corner card apparently only functioned as a regular corner card and not as a frank. The postmark is a route agent's marking, "N. YORK & N. HAVEN R.R.," from a different railroad company.

Lot No. 1373 in the famous Wyer sale bore a corner card "RUTLAND & BURLINGTON R.R. SERVICE RUTLAND VT." The envelope was sent postage free with a handstamped Middlebury Station route agent's marking in blue, "MIDDLEBURY R. & B.R.R. 1859 JAN. 6". This would be the intended official business usage for a railroad service envelope.

Figure 9 shows another printed frank, "Passumpsic R.R. Service." This cover represents the most unusual usage of all. The corner card was used as a postmark, with additional manuscript dating, "Aug 4," and a manuscript "5" for the unpaid postage. A line through the corner card was meant to show the usage was not on service (official business) and had to pay postage. This is the only example known to the writer of a printed railroad corner card being used for a postmark, in this case a railroad route agent's marking.

In the next decade and thereafter the terminology appears to have changed to "railroad business." Figure 10 illustrates a cover with the corner card of the Troy and Boston Railroad and with a printed "R.R.B." in the lower left corner. The envelope was adapted for personal use in 1863, so the "R.R.B." was crossed out and a 3¢ 1861 stamp affixed,

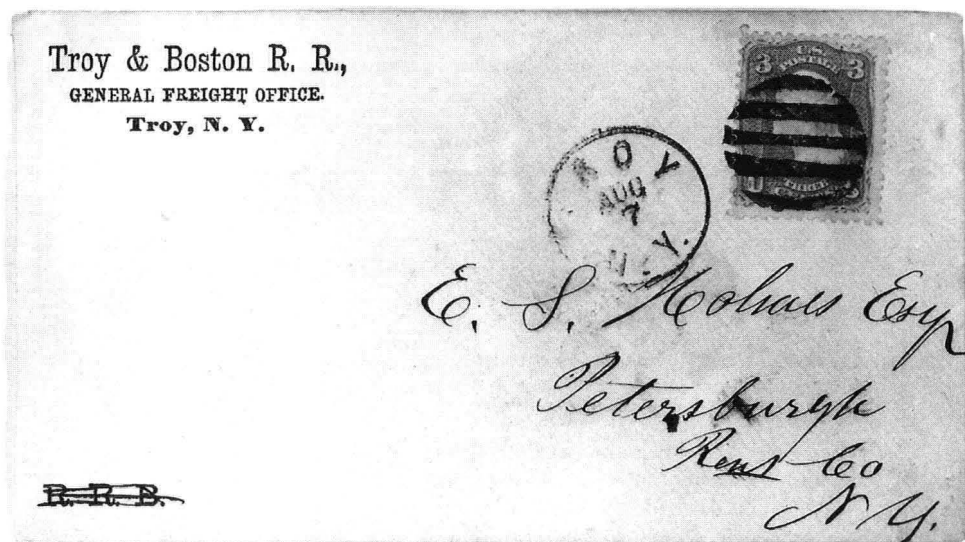


Figure 10. "Troy & Boston R.R., GENERAL FREIGHT OFFICE, Troy, N.Y." corner card and printed "R.R.B." for railroad business; the latter was crossed out and the letter was mailed at Troy, N.Y. with a personal letter dated "Delphi August 4th, 1863"

canceled at Troy, New York. Without a stamp, this could have been carried within the company. Or it could have been mailed and still have been official railroad business, although then the postal usage would have been that of a corner card rather than railroad business with carriage by the company's trains.

Lot No. 30 of the Wyer Collection was an 1869 cover with a printed corner card and "R.R.B." in manuscript. The company's blue oval handstamp was placed on the reverse side of the envelope, which is unpostmarked and contained a freight bill. The usage "R.R.B." continued for a long period of time. The writer recently saw a 1940s cover with this printed marking, and the designation still may be in use. □

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**THE 1866-68 15¢ BLACK: HISTORY, FIRST DAY,
PRODUCTION, VARIETIES AND USES OF
THE FIRST U.S. COMMEMORATIVE**
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Introduction

This article is a chapter from a book in preparation: *Lincoln Philately*. It details the new discoveries as to the origins of the 15¢ 1866-68 issues and the essay-proof material. It also brings to philately the story, almost forgotten by historians, of what took place on the first day of issue and why this is the first U.S. commemorative stamp. There is information on stamp production and varieties, cancellations and uses, common and uncommon, with illustrations of some interesting covers.

A. Background of the Issue

“With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right . . .” Abraham Lincoln’s Second Inaugural Address was delivered March 4, 1865 when it was clear that the Union forces would prevail, and the four-year-old Civil War soon end. It was only one month before the surrender of the Army of Virginia by General Robert E. Lee to General Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Court House, Virginia.

Lincoln was trying to set the tone for his proposals for postwar reunification and reconstruction. He strongly believed that it was the role of the federal government “to bind up the nation’s wounds.” He did not want to impose punishments on the former rebel states but to unify the country and try to put the war behind the people rather than make it the focus of the future.

A large group dominated the 1865-67 Congress which called itself the “Radical Republicans.” They bitterly disagreed with Lincoln’s Reconstruction Program. They were outraged that Lincoln had chosen a border state loyalist Democrat, Andrew Johnson of Tennessee, as his vice-presidential running mate on a “Union Party” ticket rather than running with a Republican vice-president.

When John Wilkes Booth fatally shot Lincoln in Ford’s Theater, Washington, D.C., on April 14, 1865, the Radical Republicans found themselves with America’s second “accidental president” in 24 years. For the next few years, leading up to a failed impeachment of Johnson in 1868, the Radicals literally and figuratively kept waving the “bloody shirt of America’s martyred Union Soldiers, wounded and dead.” They wanted vengeance, not reunion and reconstruction. This extended into their publicly unpopular dislike of Lincoln himself and their attempt to put aside any official recognition of closing the national year of mourning previously declared by President Johnson on April 15, 1865 and scheduled to end April 14, 1866.

B. Creation and First Day of Issue of the Memorial Stamp

From the issuance of the Penny Black in 1840 and for the next approximately 120 years, the people and subjects of stamp issues provided a picture of the issuing country, its values, places and the people who had made important contributions to it. Sadly, this no longer applies in an era when countries band together to issue omnibus celebrations of people, events and places with which they have little if any contact at all.

The United States, as a relatively young country, had very few stamp subjects at all. Indeed, from 1847 through 1863, only three people had ever been commemorated:

Benjamin Franklin, our first Postmaster General; George Washington, the first president; and Thomas Jefferson, the third president, who was especially admired for the acquisition of the Louisiana Territory which doubled the size of the nation. In 1863, General and President Andrew Jackson was added, about forty years after the end of his presidency. All of these issues had been definitives. That is, while featuring the person portrayed, they were not specifically issued to commemorate or memorialize the individual but were subjects chosen for a regular stamp issue expected to be in use over a long period of time.

Public sentiment was still very much in favor of Lincoln, the assassinated president, even if Reconstruction was not popular outside the South. Johnson correctly gauged this sentiment when he requested Postmaster General William Dennison to prepare a memorial stamp to be issued at the end of the official year of mourning in honor of Abraham Lincoln. While no official documents or correspondence have yet been uncovered on this subject between Johnson and Dennison nor from Dennison to the National Bank Note Company, the existence of the 15¢ black Lincoln issue of 1866 and some other file materials are the proof of its creation.

The pressure for a Lincoln issue began shortly after his death. In the Madden and Travers papers file (maintained by USPCS members Thomas J. Alexander and Wilson Hulme) there is correspondence regarding such an issue to Third Assistant Postmaster General A.N. Zevely and between him, his successors and the National Bank Note Company regarding such proposals. The first item is a letter from a prominent citizen and political power, S.C. Hawley, to Zevely dated May 22, 1865, in which he stated:

The highest manifestation of the regard of a nation for its heroes [sic] and great men is seen in the exhibition of their likeness on the coin . . . and official stamps . . . Abraham Lincoln by his life and death has won a place next if not equal to Washington.

He continued by saying that by placing Lincoln on stamps, the world would see how highly America values him and his accomplishments.

On June 17, 1865, James Macdonough of the National Bank Note Company (hereinafter "NBNC") wrote to Zevely and suggested putting Lincoln and the Washington portrait from the current 3¢ (Scott No. 65) together on the 30¢ replacing Benjamin Franklin. He offered to prepare and engrave models for the U.S. Post Office Department's (hereinafter "POD") consideration. On June 22, 1865, Zevely wrote back that he did not like the idea of the combination portrait but suggested that a model of Lincoln either for the 10¢ or "new rate stamps" should be considered.

At this same time, NBNC was already engaged in the preparation of essays for the forthcoming "packaged periodicals" stamps to pay for postage on bundles of newspapers and periodicals. On July 24, 1865, A.D. Shepard of NBNC wrote to Zevely, sending six essays of those stamps for his consideration and apologizing that they were very rough but he just wanted to get an idea of which direction the POD favors. Zevely responded two days later but the response is not in the file.

On August 27, 1865, Macdonough wrote to Zevely transmitting proofs of the 5¢, 10¢ and 25¢ newspaper and periodical postage stamps with white line embossing, apparently meeting Zevely's prior request for something "similar to the German or Prussian envelope stamps" which he showed him before. He noted that

the bold colors were similar to current French stamps and are possible on such embossings. Since I received no instructions, I chose Franklin, Washington and Lincoln for medallions in the center believing that they would be acceptable to POD and the public.

Zevely approved, but some production problems delayed the issue. In a letter dated September 23, 1865, Macdonough told Zevely that the 5¢ stamps had now been issued and delivered. Shortly thereafter, on October 3, 1865, Macdonough informed Zevely that the 10¢ and 25¢ had been completed and sent to the New York Post Office. The latter was the first U.S. stamp to feature Abraham Lincoln (Scott No. PR3).

There is no correspondence in the file, nor in any other source to the author's knowledge, regarding the exact date or request for a Lincoln memorial stamp and the decision to have it meet the 15¢ French treaty and Prussian closed mail rate. The Madden and Travers file does have correspondence from Macdonough to C.F. Macdonald, Acting Third Assistant PMG, dated March 12, 1866, sending proofs of the new 15¢ postage stamp for approval. The rest of the letter concerns improving the tenacity and taste of gum currently used on stamps.

File notes dated March 16, 1866 state that blue was the original choice of color. However, that was considered inappropriate for a memorial stamp. On March 23, 1866, A.D. Shepard wrote for NBNC to Macdonald sending "proofs in half sheets of the 15¢ Postage Stamp plate in two colors—black and blue . . ." He also noted that the black printed better than the blue and "the portrait of Mr. Lincoln, which will show to most advantage in the black ink," may also create a potential conflict in color with the current 12¢ stamp. Macdonald responded on March 24, 1866 instructing that the stamps be furnished in black "soon after the first of April." He also stated that a notice would appear in the next number of the "Mail" and postmasters would be supplied with the stamp on request. Finally, he instructed that printing of the 12¢ be discontinued until further notice. There is also a short note from Postmaster General Dennison dated with a "7" (apparently for April 7, 1866) in which he says that "I heartily approve the within copies . . ."

The expected release of the new stamps was also reported in the press of that time. The *Boston Post*, issue of April 10, 1866, reported:

Washington, April 9, 1866.

Postmaster General Dennison is having printed a postage stamp of the 15 cents denomination which will soon be ready for issue. A stamp of this price, it was found was greatly needed for the payment of postage on 1/4 [*sic*, should be 1/2] oz. letters for France. On the face of the stamp is a finely executed portrait of Abraham Lincoln.

This news story regarding Dennison confirms and matches the April 7 date on his note of approval of the stamp. On April 14, 1866, the *New York Weekly Times* carried an informational item saying:

The Postmaster General will soon issue a postage stamp of the denomination of 15 cents. It will bear the likeness of Abraham Lincoln and will be convenient in paying foreign postage.

That notice appeared on the actual date of issue, of which the paper was unaware.

Apparently President Johnson and Postmaster General Dennison felt that there should be some appropriate announcement or speech for the end of the mourning year and the issuance of the stamp. As was customary at the time, memorials were made to deceased persons on the last day of the year of their death to close the mourning period. While Lincoln was shot on April 14, 1865, he actually died close to 7:30 in the morning on April 15, 1865. Accordingly, April 14, 1866 was the last day of the year of mourning.

Johnson ordered that all the Executive Departments be closed on April 14, 1866, in remembrance of Lincoln. He sent Dennison to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Schuyler Colfax, to inform him of his actions. Dennison did so and told him of the new stamp being issued that day. The House was scheduled to be called to order at noon. Colfax realized how politically unpopular it would be not to follow Johnson's action.

At 11:45 A.M., Colfax burst into the office of his most reliable and quick-witted speechmaker, James Abram Garfield, of Ohio. He told Garfield of Dennison's visit and his decision to have the House adjourn out of respect for the martyred president. He asked Garfield to put together some remarks and then move to adjourn.

The House was gavelled into session at noon and Garfield began to wax eloquent. He spoke of a national sense of loss for Lincoln and all the dead and wounded in the Civil War. He addressed the feelings of loss and the need to respect the departed, but now move

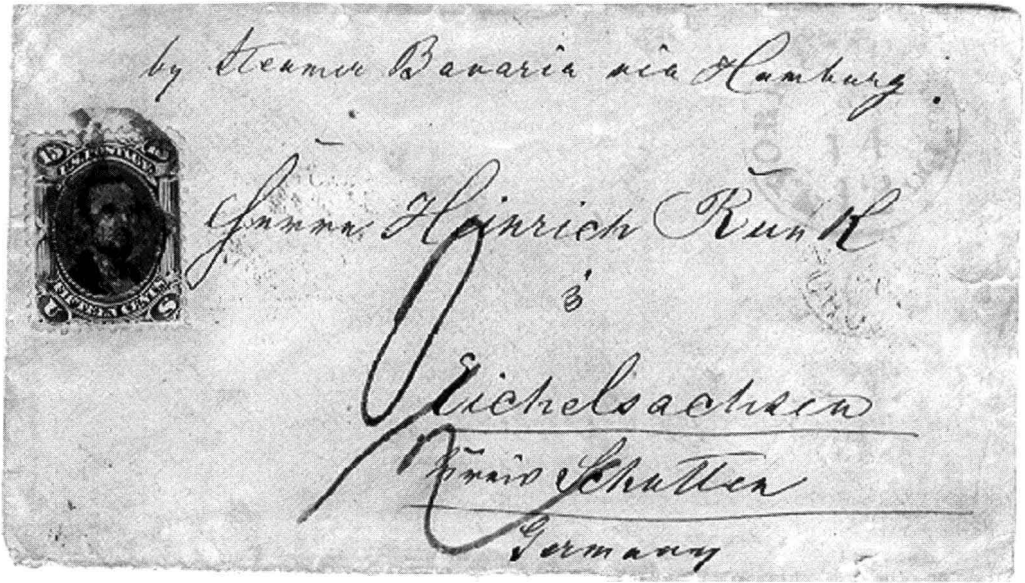


Figure 1. First Day Cover used April 14, 1866 to Germany

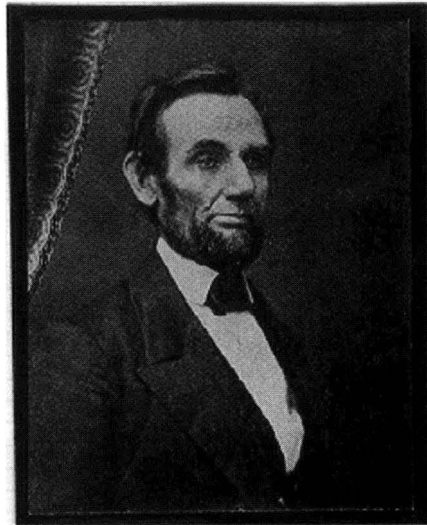


Figure 2. Photograph made January 21, 1861 in Springfield, Ill.

on. At 12:15 P.M., he moved that the House adjourn out of respect for Lincoln, and it did so.

While the POD closed in Washington, the order was not extended to post offices in the rest of the nation. The one in New York was busy issuing the new 15¢ memorial stamp. The only known first day cover was used from New York City April 14, 1866, marked to go by the "Steamer *Bavaria* via Hamburg" on a commercial cover to Eichelsachsen, Germany, which received an arrival backstamp of April 30, 1866. (Figure No. 1) The single stamp exactly paid the treaty rate. Previously considered the Earliest Known Use (EKU) of the 15¢ Lincoln, research has now established it as a true first day cover, being used on the day that the stamp was issued and an appropriate memorial speech made.

C. The Essay-Proof History and Production Facts

From 1847-1893, the POD obtained its stamps on contract from private security printing companies. The contract holder for the issues of 1861-68 was the National Bank Note Company. NBNC already had a die with a portrait of Lincoln which was prepared in 1862 for use on Treasury bonds. It had become well-known throughout the country because in 1865 that portrait was taken by the U.S. Treasury and framing elements added to make a Official Mourning Portrait which was widely distributed by the Treasury Department. The portrait was based upon a January 21, 1861 photograph by C.S. German which had been adopted as the first official portrait of the President. (Figure No. 2) It was then engraved by J. Buttre, made into an engraved vignette by American Bank Note Company (ABNC) (Master Die No. 141), and widely used by ABNC on currency and other documents (Figure No. 3).

Using the ABNC vignette as a start, NBNC mixed in elements of a late 1862 Matthew Brady photograph, especially as to the hair, and shortened the bust for its master die for Treasury Department bonds. (Figure No. 4) Later, NBNC reworked the die, returning to a smoother hairline and a longer bust but keeping the softened facial features. (Figure No. 5) The Official Mourning Portrait was re-engraved at the Treasury Department from NBNC's die and believed issued to the public on February 12, 1866, the 57th anniversary of Lincoln's birth. (Figure No. 6). Neither Clarence W. Brazer nor Falk Finkelberg ever recorded any early or intermediate essays for the vignette, frame or stamp. Essay proofs just showing the vignette as used on the stamp strongly cut down and slightly cut down at the bottom were made in late 1868 to early 1869 for the 10¢ and 90¢ 1869 essays respectively. (The one for the 10¢, newly discovered, can be found in Suburban Stamp Co. Auction Catalogue, Sale No. 134, Lot 48, November 17, 2001. It will shortly appear in *Scott's U.S. Specialized Catalogue*, and will also be treated in a separate *Chronicle* article.)

All of the progressive picture, essay and proof material shown here had been held by a currency collector who died in the late 19th Century. It subsequently passed to his heirs as part of an intact group consisting of 17 different engravings, most of them featuring or including Abraham Lincoln. This estate lot was obtained in a Weiss Philatelics 1998 auction from the granddaughter's estate.

The stamp (Scott No. 77) was designed by James Macdonough. The portrait was engraved by James P. Ourdan and the frame by William D. Nichols. The stamp die proof is unnumbered and is known as a large die proof (Figure No. 7) and as a large die proof overprinted in SPECIMEN in large carmine Roman letters for use in salesmen's sample books.

The stamp was printed in sheets of 200 divided into post office panes of 100 bearing an NBNC imprint together with "Plate No. 41." The original issuance was in black with later printings varying from full dark black to a lighter gray black. While trial color proofs exist in various colors including buff and rose, no serious consideration was ever given to any colors other than blue and black. Plate proofs on India exist in those colors and in

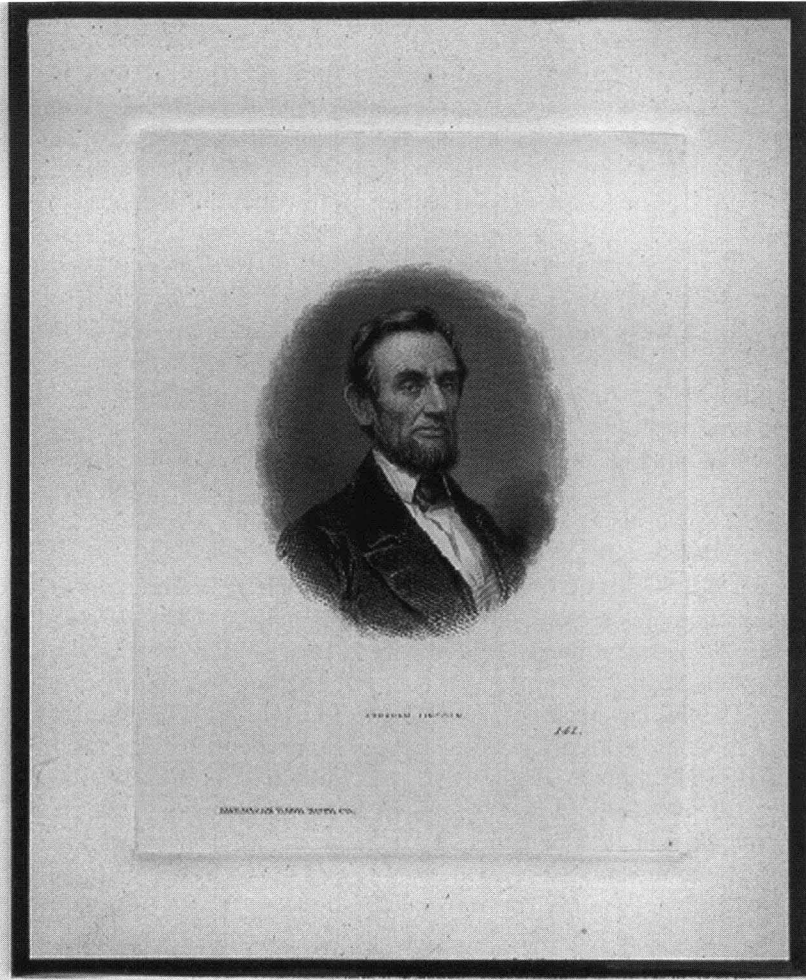


Figure 3. Buttre engraving as American Bank Note Co. Master Die No. 141

black on card stock. Zevely would never risk offending the Victorian sensibilities of the time by issuing a memorial stamp in any color other than black. 2,139,000 of the 1866 stamps were issued. Today, the largest known unused multiple is a block of 20 and there is a used block of six. The reissues of 1875 include this stamp on bright white paper, of which 397 gummed copies were printed. It is also included in the Atlanta trial color, Roosevelt and Panama-Pacific proof sets. Various specimens and numeral overprints also exist, but are scarce to rare. The numeral overprint is known in a block of six with one numeral out of position over Lincoln's face.

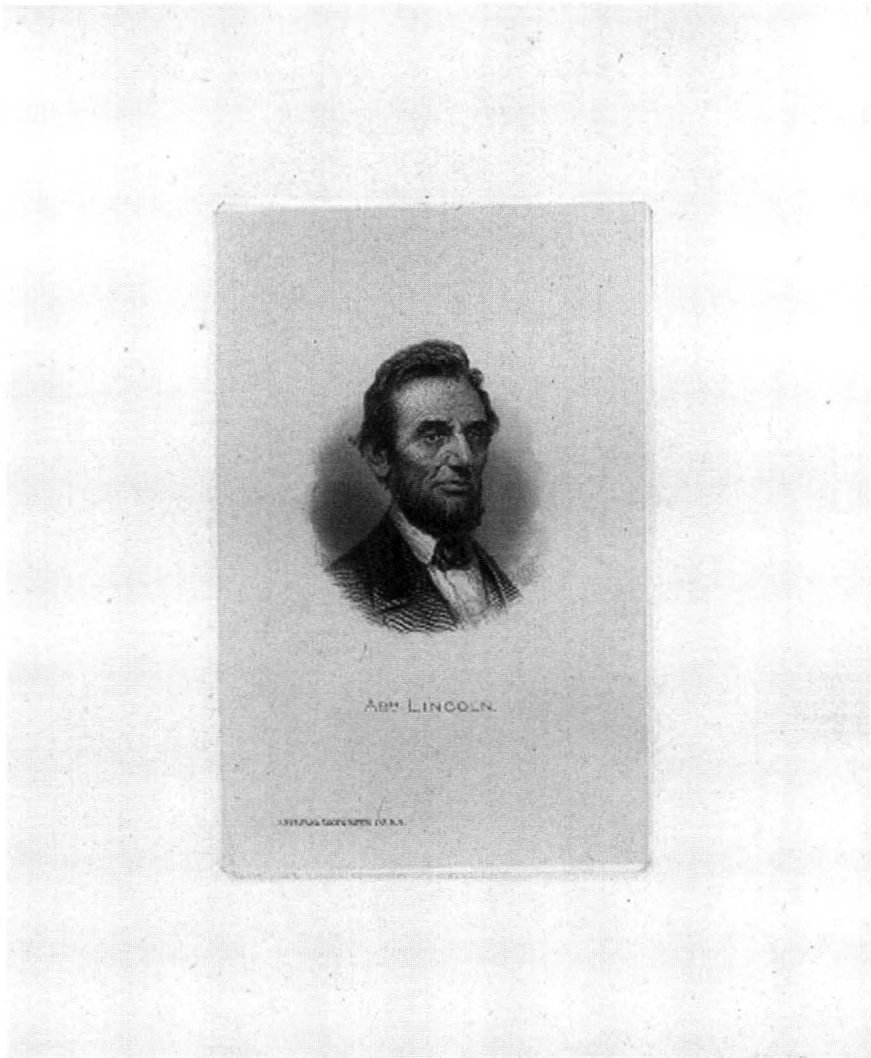


Figure 4. NBNC bust for Treasury Department bonds

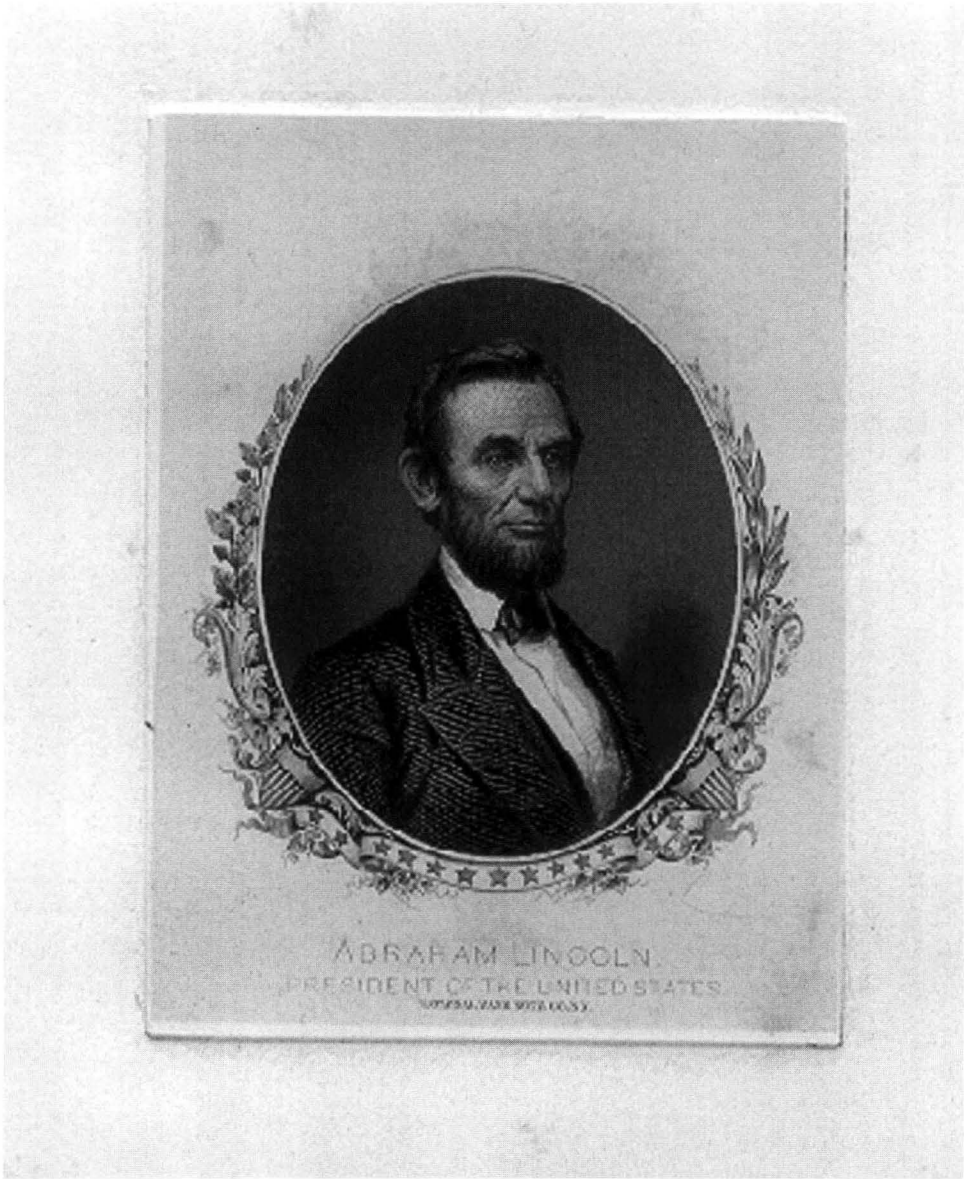


Figure 5. NBNC reworked die for mourning stationery, ca. May 1, 1865



Figure 6. Treasury Department official mourning portrait, issued February 12, 1866

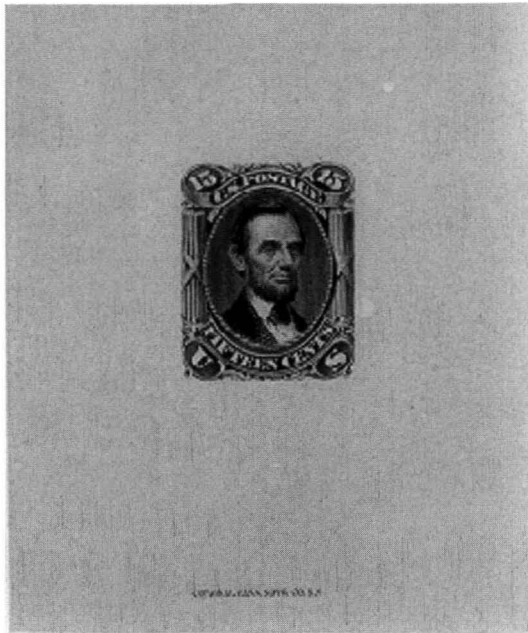


Figure 7. 15¢ stamp large die proof

It is estimated that 7,500 to 10,000 covers survived, most of them being single or double weight treaty rate usages to France. The second most frequent usage is the 15¢ Prussian closed mail and other 15¢ North German Union treaty rates.

The stamp denomination was designed to pay the prevailing 15¢ treaty rates to France, and to most German States and the Austro-Hungarian Empire by Prussian closed mail. A few of the original stamps and many of its E and F grilled 1868-69 varieties (Scott No. 91 and 98, respectively) were also frequently used to pay the 15¢ registry fee which went into effect January 1, 1869. Uses for high domestic rates exist on large covers but are uncommon.

John Tiffany incorrectly referred to this as the “issue of April 1st, 1866.” He also erroneously stated that it was “issued originally for registered letters,” probably mistaking the date of the 15¢ rate, which did not come into being until January 1, 1869, almost three years after the stamp’s issuance. He correctly noted that Acts of the 39th Congress, Session 1, Chapter 281, approved July 27, 1866, authorized all post offices to obtain and use gram denominated weights including a weight of 15 grams (which is only one-half gram less than one half ounce), which would apply to the use of the stamp on the French treaty and Prussian mail and, later, German Postal Union rates of 15¢ per quarter ounce.

While the grills and their varieties will be discussed in the next section, there are three other significant groups of varieties on the stamp. Two are plate varieties. The first is a major double entry of the upper right hand frame and the top and right side frame and ornaments (Figure No. 8). There are also a few minor double entries known, primarily in the top and bottom outer lines. This minor type of double entry is not too uncommon and occurs in different positions. It is a result of the rocking motion of entering the transfer die onto the plate. The major double entry is rather scarce, but often is not identified by dealers and can be found as a bargain with careful hunting.

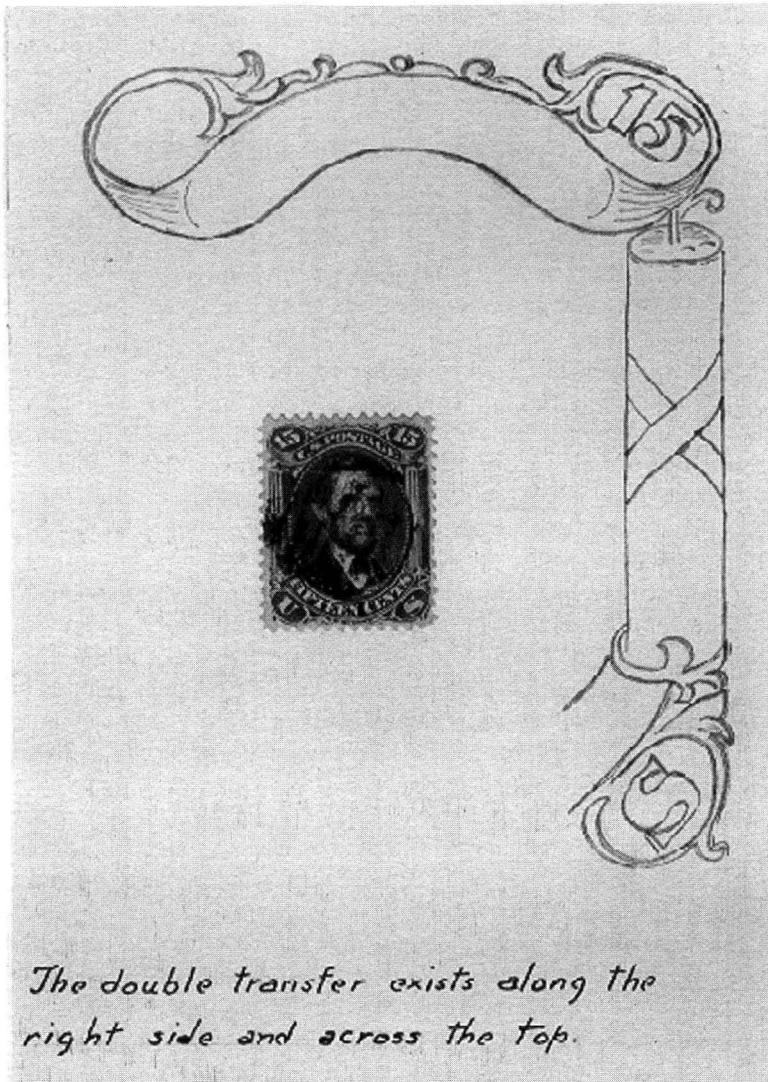


Figure 8. Major double transfer

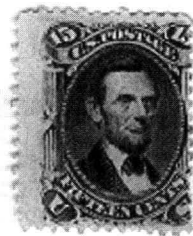


Figure 9. Progressive plate crack from left to right

The second plate variety group is the progressive crack from the left side. This surface edge crack extends to the right from the left margin opposite the position dot at the crossing point of the band holding the left fasces (Figure 9). At its worst, it crosses all the way into Lincoln's right cheek, almost touching the right nostril (on the left of his nose as seen on the stamp). The crack can be found in many stages from slight to complete and then mild on the worn plate. In later stages, the same plate position also exhibits a scratch above the left numeral "15."

The third major variety group is perforation varieties. This issue was notoriously badly perforated and off-center copies are the rule rather than the exception. Straddle freaks showing all of the "U" or the "S" of the adjacent stamp at one side or the other or at top or bottom of a shifted set of perforations are not very scarce. Two-way shifts to one side and then to the top or bottom can readily be found, even on cover.

The uncommon freaks are foldover misperforations. Only two are recorded by the author. Further, a diagonal perforation shift (which is probably also from a foldover) exists with the perforations running from the upper right "1" in the numeral down through the "N" in "CENTS." Two copies have been discovered thus far with double perforations across the bottom label and at the bottom of the stamp.

D. The Grilling Experiment Varieties

In 1867, the POD requested the National Bank Note Company to experiment with Charles Steel's new patent for grilling postage stamps to prevent their reuse. Steel's idea was to take a plate with small metal bosses or pyramids on it, and impress it into the paper with a soft pad underneath, or a plate into which the same shapes had been cut. This created male (protruding) and female (indented) surfaces to impress the pyramids into the paper after printing. The pyramids were to weaken the fibers of the paper so that canceling ink would more fully permeate the paper and any attempt to wash it out should shred the stamp. The image of the embossing or male grill is a smaller version of the pyramid, shapes seen on a meat tenderizing mallet.

The first experimental grills covered the whole stamp and were too large. When stamps were sought to be separated, they did not tear at the perforations but tore through the grills. Smaller grills did not have that effect.

The only one of the early experimental grills known on the 15¢ black is the "Z" grill (Scott No. 85F). On the "Z," "E" and "F" grills which were used on the 15¢ stamp, the embossed pyramid points project down from the face of the stamp. The "Z" grill differs in that where the points of the pyramids can be discerned, they are ridges which are horizontal and parallel to the top and bottom of the stamp. The other grills either show indistinct points or show small vertical ridges which are parallel to the sides of the stamp. The size of the "Z" grill is 13-14 rows by 17-18 rows and usually measures approximately 11 millimeters by 14 millimeters with the horizontal or side-to-side dimensions given first.

Only two copies of the "Z" grill have been recorded and certified by the Philatelic Foundation. Another copy is owned by 1861-67 issue specialist and Champion of Champions winner for his exhibit of those issues, Richard Drews. On that copy, there is a rather clear impression of a "Z" grill but it comes up into the paper from the back of the stamp as an "inverted grill." While most experts who have seen it note that its characteristics are those of a genuine "Z" grill, the absence of other inverted "Z" grills for confirmation has led the Philatelic Foundation thus far to decline to issue a certificate that it is genuine.

The author, who was present when the stamp was discovered by Mr. Drews when both of us were offered portions of a collection of classic U.S. issues by a now long-deceased Chicago area dealer, can confirm that the collection from which it came had been formed in the early portion of the 20th century up till approximately 1930. It remained in the hands of one of his children after his death until it was being broken up in the late

1970s. The author has examined the stamp carefully and concurs that it has the characteristics of a genuine “Z” grill. Reports of other experimental grills being inverted would give greater credence to this example.

The other two grills found on the 15¢ are the “E” grill (Scott No. 91) and the “F” grill (Scott No. 98). It is estimated that 2,500,000 grilled 15¢ stamps were issued, of which the largest surviving multiple is an “F” grill unused block of 20 (two high by ten across) in very poor condition and the largest unused multiples are blocks of four. It is estimated that 4,000 to 6,000 covers with “F” grilled stamps survive.

The issued quantity of the “E” grill is estimated at 500,000. The largest known unused multiple is a block of four, since the block of eight in the Caspary sale was broken into two blocks of four. The largest known used multiple is a block of four and it is estimated that 1,500 to 2,000 covers survived.

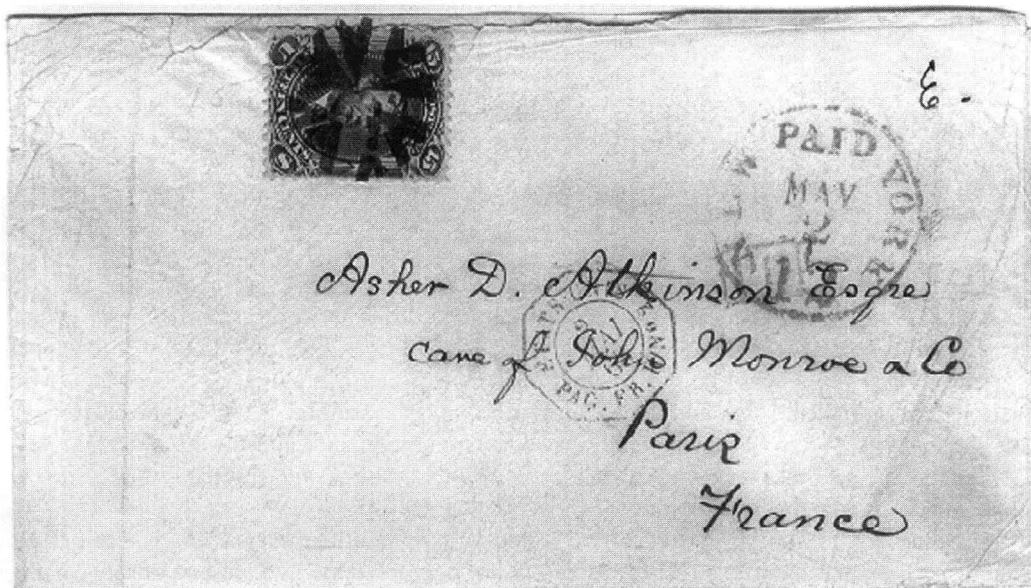


Figure 10. EKU of “E” grill, New York City, May 2, 1868

The “E” grill has 14 rows by 15 to 17 rows and measures approximately 11 millimeters by 13 millimeters. The present earliest known use of that grill is May 2, 1868 (Figure 10).

The “F” grill has 11 to 12 rows by 15 to 17 rows, measuring approximately 9 millimeters by 13 millimeters. Its current earliest known use is May 4, 1868. Since all the lower values of the “E” and “F” grills are known with earlier dates, it is still possible that earlier dates will yet be established for the 15¢ “E” and “F” grills.

Figure 11 shows a sophisticated attempt to create such an earlier date. The counterfeiter used a genuine cover which had a 15¢ or 30¢ ungrilled stamp, removed it, replaced it with an almost uncanceled “F” grill and added the target killer. Thus he tried to foist off an earliest known use of March 1868. Differences in the ink of the target and the town postmark, a very slight shift in position and traces of yet other ink cancellations on the perforation tips at the left side gave away this clever fake (cover courtesy of Alan Berkun).

The number of “E” grill 15¢ stamps produced cannot be definitely determined. However, their frequency in comparison to “F” grills is significantly less, on the order of 10 to 15 percent of the total number of grilled 15¢ stamps. This is not entirely reflected in the catalog price differential, especially of the used stamps. Part of this is due to a tenden-

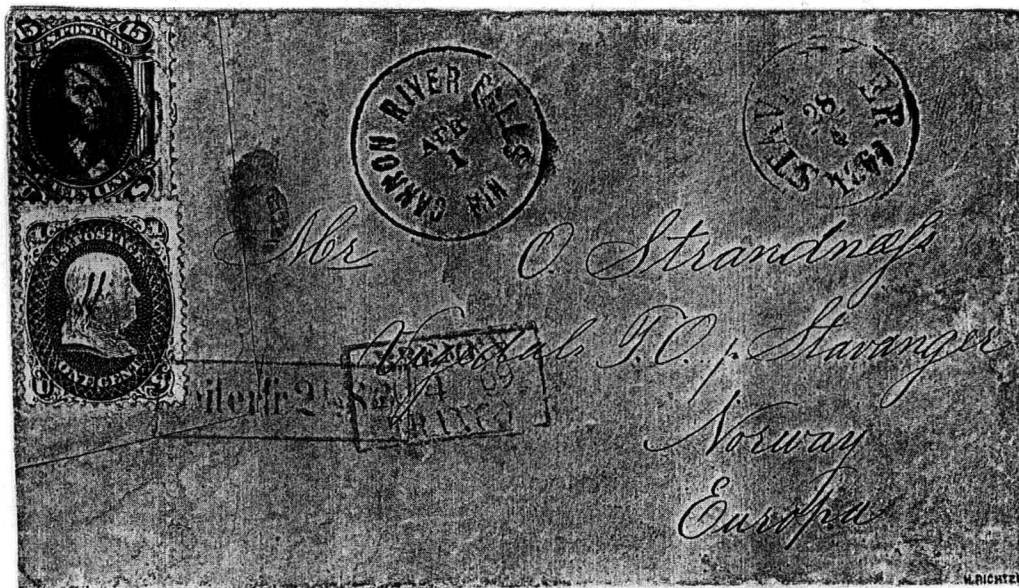


Figure 11. March 30 letter in April 1, 1868 cover with attempt to fake new EKU for the “F” grill (courtesy Alan Berkun)

cy (slight among American collectors and very pronounced among foreign ones, especially European collectors) to collect only one of each face-different stamp. On this basis, a collector would be perfectly satisfied to have the 1866 issue represent that and all the grilled varieties. Even those who make a distinction between the original issue and grills would be satisfied with either one and acquire a more readily available “F” grill rather than pay the higher price for an “E” grill. This somewhat limits demand, and resultant catalog value, for the “E” grill in proportion to the price it would deserve were priced in accordance with its actual scarcity.

Both the “E” and “F” grills can be found with split grills, quadruple split grills and double grills. There is even a recorded example of a doubled grill where one of the grills is a quadruple split grill with portions showing in each corner with the other grill occupying most of the middle of the stamp but slightly off center. The only alleged triple grill ever brought to the author’s attention proved to have two poorly faked “F” grills on top of a moderately impressed genuine “E” grill. That stamp is no longer in circulation but confined to a study collection.

Probably the most significant variety found on the grilled 15 issues is in the paper thickness of many of the “F” grill stamps. Sometime during 1868, NBNC began using a thinner paper which had more sizing in it. This extra sizing actually produces a stiffer (“harder”) but more brittle stamp.

Sizing most commonly comes from the family of starches, *e.g.*, potato starch, and rarely from the family of gums (such as gum arabic and gum acacia). It is used as a filler to give body and substance, literally to fill in the spaces between the wood pulp and rag fibers used in making paper. Open wove papers have less filler so that the paper when held to light seems to show more holes, whereas those with more filler have a more solid and opaque appearance. (See the author’s comments on similar paper varieties on the Continental Bank Note Company issues of 1873-79 in the *Chronicle* and *Linn’s* articles in the bibliography.) The thin heavily-sized paper takes a much sharper impression of the grill during the grilling process.

The author disagrees with Michael McClung’s speculation that some grilled stamps were “printed on thin paper so that more than one sheet could be run through the grilling

machine at the same time.” It is not supported by evidence. The author has seen only about five copies in which portions of the design from the face of the stamp underneath appear to have been picked up by offset and impressed onto the pyramid points of the back of the stamp. This could be an indication that at least a few thin paper copies of the 15¢ black were grilled at least two sheets at a time, or could simply signify that still-wet printed sheets were on the bottom when others were put on top of them. But there are very few in the context of the many hundreds of such thin paper stamps examined.

That the thin paper was created for the grilling process seems to be undoubtable because (1) it was never used before, (2) it was never used after, and (3) it takes extremely sharp grill impressions and best serves the purpose of the patent. It is important to remember that grilling was an experiment and the POD was monitoring the results and the quality control more closely than it customarily examined stamps in later years. (Consider the fact that the 1870 Nationals were ordered to be issued only with grills. However, during the period 1870-73, the ratio of ungrilled to grilled stamps is at least eight to one for the 3¢ and 6¢ values and five to one for the 1¢ value. Many of those grills are very poorly impressed, unlike the “E” and “F” grills.)

One of the most significant measures of paper in the contracts for U.S. stamp production is the weight of paper specified. It is important to note that the weight of 15¢ “F” grills on regular paper versus those on “thin paper” is very close to the same. In fact, when the author and some friends assembled slightly over 300 copies of each and divided them into groups of 100 each, the smallest variation between batches of the regular paper and the thin paper was approximately 0.5 grams and the largest variation only 2.1 grams. The combined variation for 300 copies on regular paper and 300 on thin paper was 1.2 grams. The large numbers to be measured were chosen purposely in order to minimize differences of unevenness in individual stamp size, variations in paper resulting from the manufacturing process and varying amounts of filler or fiber organic remnants (rag fiber), and to minimize differences between the irregularity of how much paper was left or lost in the separation along perforation lines. A conscious effort was made to avoid obviously oversized or undersized copies and no straight-edge margin copies were included. This study, made in 1991, is very convincing evidence that the amount of filler in the thin paper was closely regulated in order to maintain a uniformity of weight and meet the specifications under which the contracts with the POD were approved.

Since both the regular paper of the grilled and ungrilled 15¢ and the thin paper fall within the definition of “hard” papers, they cannot be readily distinguished by using the snap of the finger test across the paper. In fact, the thin paper makes a somewhat sharper snap than the regular paper because of its extra sizing. However, the thin paper is distinctly thinner and usually has a slightly darker or grayed appearance in comparison to the dull white to cream color of the regular paper. When held to the light, the thin paper is more translucent and some people have described the backs of stamps as having an almost “wax paper appearance.” Except for the relatively minor difference in paper color, the two papers are not easily distinguishable when on cover.

The grilling experiment was not a complete success. Most inks in use in 1868 and thereafter can be detected under ultraviolet light even after they have been cleaned or washed away and are invisible under regular light. While such cleaning never was common, it should be remembered that 15¢ would pay for a very fancy meal at many restaurants around 1870. Accordingly, the amount involved was sufficient to induce some people to wash cancellations on this denomination and reuse the stamps. The author has in his exhibit an example of the 15¢ “F” grill which has been washed, and reused from Cincinnati, Ohio on a June 18, 1873 registered cover together with a 3¢ ungrilled 1870. This is also the latest date of usage recorded at a time reasonably close to the availability of the stamp.

(to be continued)

**THE PEMBINA POST OFFICE - RED RIVER B.N.A MAIL SERVICE:
AN UPDATE**
JEFFREY M. FORSTER

It always is a pleasure to locate a missing philatelic item such as the one pictured in Figure 1 after writing an article which describes the usage that cover reflects. In the *Chronicle* for February 2001 (Whole No. 189), I described the Red River B.N.A. Mail Service from Red River Settlement (now Winnipeg) and the Pembina Post Office located in Dakota Territory, both geographically found on the Red River.

The article described the private courier service which existed from Red River Settlement and which allowed mail coming from there to be delivered to other parts of Canada through the United States mails. The underlying problem with Canadian mail service from western Canada to eastern Canada was the inability to use the routes east because of the geographical location of Red River and its weather.

As the earlier article stated, the rate in 1869 if fully prepaid from the United States to Canada was 6¢, 10¢ if unpaid. The cover in Figure 1 is a strip of three 2¢ 1869 stamps (Scott No. 113), each tied with a black target cancel. It has a Pembina, Dakota Territory postmark, and appears to be dated September 6th. It is addressed to Duncan McArthur, the same addressee in Figures 2 and 3 in the prior discussion, and was sent via the U.S. mails to McArthur in Montreal, Canada.

This cover was reposing in Dr. John L. Robertson's collection, and he has graciously provided a photograph of it. It, together with the two earlier reported, are the only covers that I have been able to determine which were sent via Pembina, Dakota Territory to Canada with 1869 stamps. Figure 1 apparently was lot 399 in the Henry C. Gibson sale held by Philip H. Ward, Jr., on June 14-15, 1944. There was no photograph in that auction catalog but it would appear that the item appearing in Figure 1 was the Gibson cover.

If any readers have additional covers featuring this rather unusual usage of the United States mails taking letters from Canada through the United States and back into Canada, I would again be happy to update this listing. □



Figure 1. Pembina, Dakota Territory cover to Montreal, September 6 [1869], with strip of three 1869 2¢ stamps

WANTED

The Postal History of the State of Franklin

On 2 June 1784, the State of North Carolina offered portions of its Western regions to the Federal Government because it was unable to administer or protect the territories. Although North Carolina withdrew the offer on 20 November, the counties of Washington, Sullivan and Green independently organized the unofficial State of Franklin, which included the cities of Greenville (the appointed capital) and Jonesboro, and numerous smaller towns, in what now the northeastern corner of Tennessee.

The State of Franklin was created in August 1784, and ceased to exist on the last day of February 1788. The counties became part of Tennessee, when the former Governor of Franklin, John Sevier, became the first Governor of Tennessee. Postal history from the State of Franklin is documented.

We are seeking postal history from or to the State of Franklin docketed or otherwise documented as being posted during the recorded existence of the State, approximately between the periods of August 1784 and February 1788.

Please provide photocopies of available items, detailing specifics and the price for the material being offered.

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**THE 1876 LINCOLN 3¢ ESSAY
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This article discusses an examination of Lot 51 from Lawrence Bustillo's November 17, 2001 Suburban Stamp Company auction. It will also answer the question of whether the 1876 Philadelphia 3¢ Lincoln does or does not exist. Mr. Bustillo's kindness and cooperation in this examination and the permission to do this article are gratefully acknowledged.

Clarence Brazer and *Scott's U.S. Specialized Catalogue* list, as 184-E7, a 3¢ essay with a vignette of Abraham Lincoln by the Philadelphia Bank Note Co. in 1876 for the stamp printing contract renewal. A cautionary note is given. Brazer clearly states that he is relating a description that he was given of an item *which he himself had never seen*. Brazer describes it as being four of the standard 184-E4 3¢ frames but with a Lincoln vignette mounted in the center instead of Washington. He lists two colors, blue and green. Compare the similar presentation of a beardless Lincoln 1¢ essay listed in Brazer and Scott as No. 206-E4, where the four separate frame and vignette combinations were assembled onto one piece of medium card.

Presumably, the colors listed by Brazer would have been the colors of the lithographed or intaglio frames. It is reasonable to assume that large numbers of those frames would have been available to anyone preparing such essays. There would be no reason to substitute something else for it, especially not something as difficult and expensive as a photograph was then. Even in 2001, the frame essays are commonly available from dealers and auctions with multiples bringing less than \$60.00. One CHICAGOPEX 2001 dealer had singles at \$20.00 each.

Examination of the Lot 51 item (Figure 1) shows that the frame does not appear to be printed in brown nor is it on glazed card as was described. Rather, it is a very aged black photograph which has acquired sepia undertones as the photograph aged. It is very definitely a photograph and not a lithograph. This becomes especially obvious in the gray shaded areas at top and bottom which show photoscreen dots rather than any other type of shading under 30X magnification.

The back of the piece shows that it was, at some time, pasted down with a glue which has browned with age. It also shows that after being lifted from the surface it was pasted on, it has been hinged at least two different times, once with an old style heavy paper hinge and once with a lighter more modern glassine type of hinge.

The vignette is printed on a medium thin white board rather than the thin card stock usually used at this time. It appears that the vignette is not printed on India bonded to board, but directly on a white finished card. It also shows signs of aging which may have migrated through from the glue which secures it to the frame or from the oxidation which has discolored the photographed frame.

The fact that the vignette is *not* printed on India or wove paper to make a mock-up essay is extremely important. I am not aware of any other essays of the 19th century where a vignette was printed on card to mount with a frame. Most were printed on India and a few are on bond or wove paper. One reason is simply that the thicker edge of the board is clearly a distraction in trying to appreciate what the overall image would appear to be.

The 90¢ 1869 paste-ups using the first design frame with the vignette of Lincoln all use vignettes cut out from the 15¢ black stamp (Scott No. 77) so they are on hard wove paper. The National Bank Note Company paste-ups in late 1869 for the 1870 contract 3¢ and

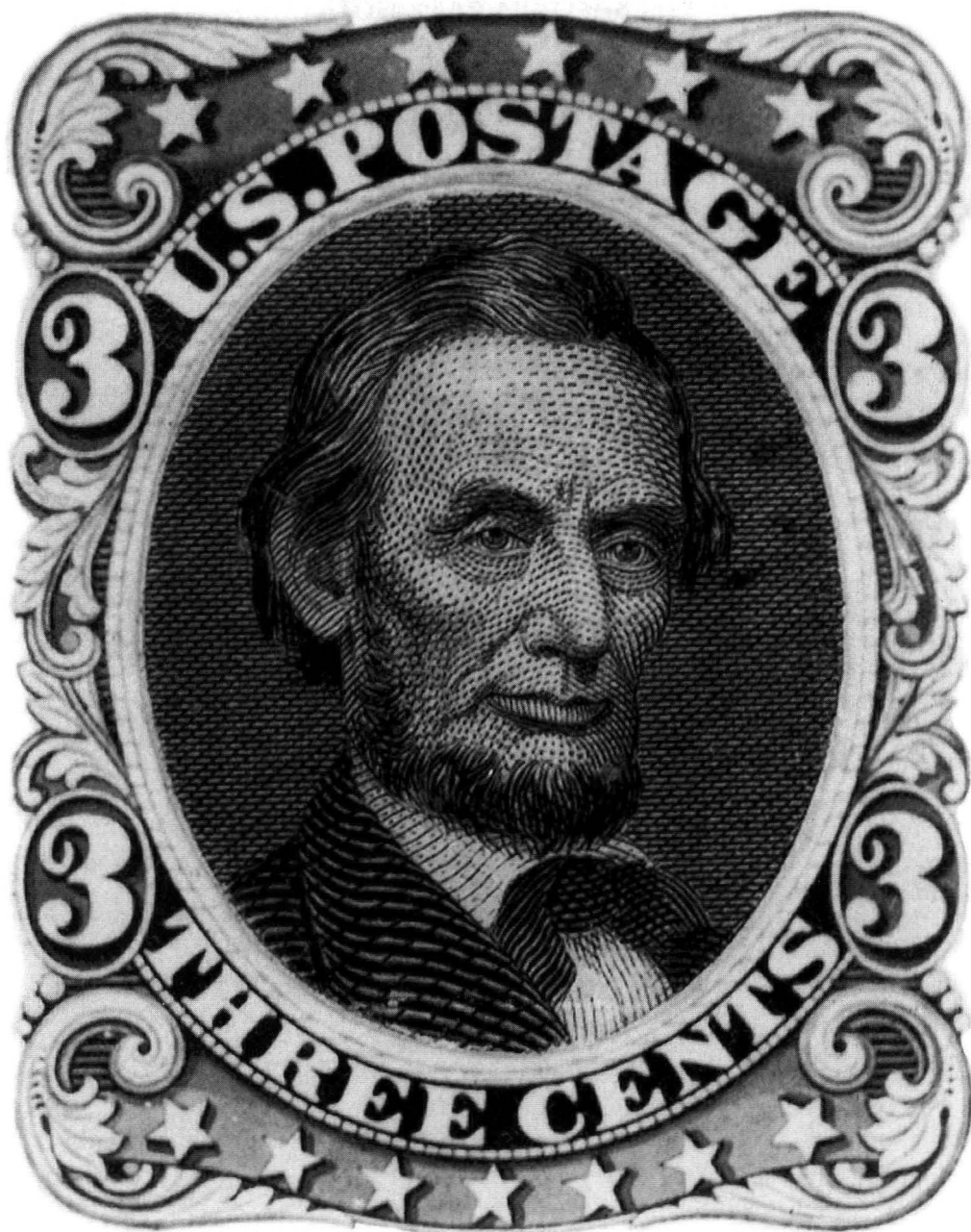


Figure 1. Purported 1876 Philadelphia Bank Note Co. essay

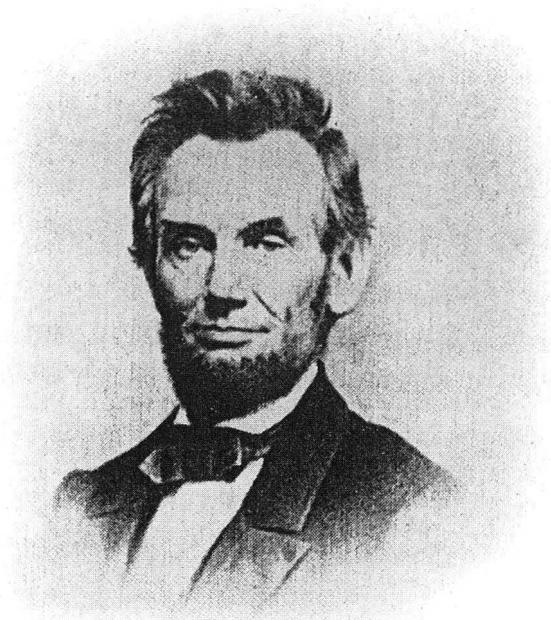


Figure 2. Lincoln photograph, ca. Mar. 1863, by Matthew Brady Studios, Washington, D.C. (Lorant No. 56)

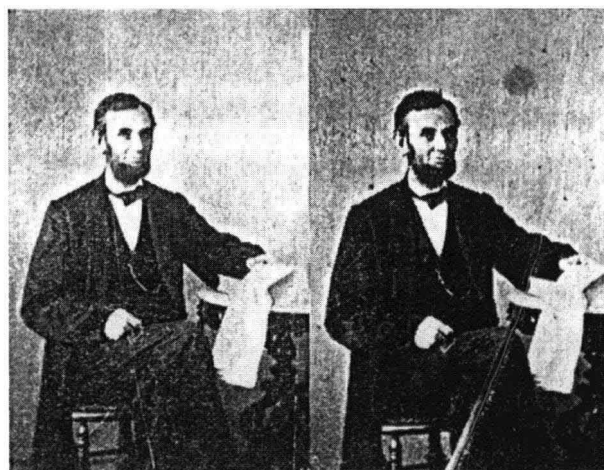


Figure 3. Lincoln stereoscopic photographs, by A. Gardener, August 9, 1863, Washington, D.C. (Lorant No. 61)

6¢ essays all have vignettes printed on India except one that appears to be wove paper. So too, the 1879 and 1881 essays. It is also worth noting that printing directly on light card stock does not appear until the 1875 specimens, plate proofs and U.S. Centennial printings.

It makes more sense to paste a lighter weight material on a heavier weight one for the sake of stability in handling. In this case, the card is the thicker and heavier material. The photographic paper is less sturdy even though it is a relatively thick paper.

The portrait used for the vignette is a rather rough rendering from its original photographic sources. This vignette is taken from Lorant Nos. 56 and 61 (Figures 2 and 3). While Lincoln often joked that he was “the ugliest man ever to become president,” this vignette makes him look worse than he actually was. The only other time this portrait had ever been considered for a stamp was on the very first essay for No. 222. It was promptly rejected and has never been used in the United States. Liberia, Nicaragua and a few other foreign countries have used it.

The author spoke with James Lee to inquire whether he saw anything similar in the material he recently acquired from the Schernikow hoard of Philadelphia Bank Note Company proofs and essays. He informed me that there was nothing like it. He also said he, too, examined the “photo-essay.” He stated that he agrees that it is not a recent fabrication. He also feels that it was not produced by the Philadelphia Bank Note Company and was made some time after the preparation of the 1876 essays. We believe it probably dates from 1900 to 1930 as that would give sufficient time for the aging of the photograph and the yellowing of the vignette, and would explain the use of a heavy paper hinge.

This essay raises more disturbing questions than it answers. While there is little doubt from its appearance (without laboratory testing) that the piece was created and assembled more than 60 years ago, nobody can accept that it was made as a combination photo and engraving essay 124 years ago, *more than 30 years before the other earliest known photo-essays*.

It is also inconsistent as to its cardboard type, choice of portrait and the use of a photographed background when numerous intaglio and lithographed frames were available. It should not be entitled to any history or provenance because of the unseen and unverified listing in Brazer, when Brazer clearly states that it was reported to him with a group of four in colored frames as one would expect if the intaglio or lithographed frames had been used.

It should also be significant that, with one exception discussed below, there has been nothing seen like this in the collections of all of the major Lincoln collectors of the 20th century: Ray Vogel, Bill Ainsworth, Nonie Green, Christian Ruger and myself. Nor is it in any of the auction materials from the Clarence Brazer and Falk Finkelberg collections, nor did it appear in the Morris albums taken from the Bureau of Engraving and Printing and American Bank Note Company files when I went over them with Harvey Warm in 1986 before their dispersal. There was not anything like this essay, nor any such early photo-essays, nor this engraving in David Beall’s or Falk Finkelberg’s materials. These were seen while they were alive and *before* certain selected pieces were privately sold or given to other collectors after which the remains were sent to auction.

For all of these reasons, Mr. Bustillo correctly exercised his professional judgment and withdrew it from sale. Perhaps, at some future date, new information may come forth which would cast more light on this piece. For the present, it is undeserving of being considered authentic.

Now for the good news on 184-E7! Figure 4 shows one of the previously unphotographed “blocks of four” reported but not seen by Brazer. It consists of the 3¢ dark blue frames of the type listed as 184-E4 and the same vignette as above in virtually the same shade of blue as the frames. The vignettes were apparently trimmed to be slightly larger than the hole in the frame and they are bonded to the frames from behind and beneath.

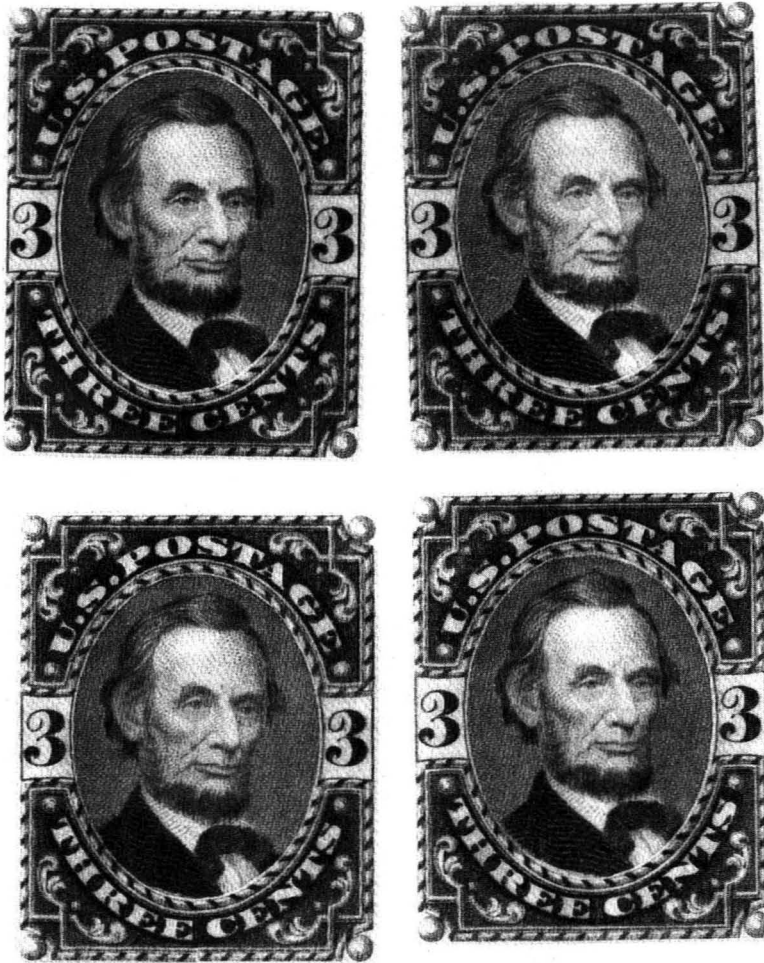


Figure 4. Four 1876 Philadelphia Bank Note Co. 3¢ frames with Lincoln vignettes in blue mounted on card

All are printed by intaglio on India paper and then glued to the medium weight card stock. Perhaps the green version, if it did exist and still exists, may yet appear.

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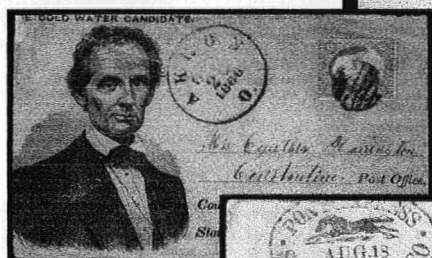
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AN ORIGINAL ISSUE SPECIAL PRINTING SET

WILLIAM E. MOOZ

In a previous article on the scissor cutting of the 1875 special printings,¹ the author referred to "original sets" of the stamps sold by the Office of the Third Assistant Postmaster General. These original sets were defined as sets which had been ordered from that office, made up by the clerks in that office and sent to the purchaser, and which were then retained in their original configuration until today. Such a set is difficult to identify accurately, and a bit of detective work is usually necessary to come up with at least an inference. This article describes such a case.

Recently, a complete set of the special printing of the Treasury Department stamps was auctioned. When this set was received, the back of each stamp showed that it had been fastened to an album page by a small glue spot in each of the four corners. These spots are shown in Figures 1 and 2. The existence of the spots and the similarity of the spots among all of the stamps in the set implied that the set had been obtained as such and all mounted at the same time.

To follow this thought, the auctioneer was contacted concerning the origin of the lot. The auctioneer's reply read as follows:

This set was recently purchased by me . . . from a collector in eastern Canada. I was able to contact the collector and he told me that this particular set was acquired within the last ten years from the estate of the son of a former postmaster from Newfoundland. He felt that the postmaster was the person who originally acquired the set and subsequently willed the collection to his son upon his passing. Since then, the son has also passed away.

Now a bit of detective work was in order. At the top of the list was a search of the invoice copies of the Third Assistant Postmaster General for the period from May 1879 to July 1882, looking for a set which was purchased by someone in Newfoundland. Although it would seem simple to recognize the sale of this set, since it went to a Newfoundland address, it was not located, and it is presumed that the set was sold either before May 1879 or after July 1882, since the sought after record did not appear in the extant records. There was also the possibility that the set had been purchased from a stamp dealer. Next, some suppositions about the time line of possession of the set were made. The key points are that the set was bought by the consignor "within the last ten years," from "the estate of the son" of the "former postmaster," who was believed to have been the original owner of the set. The question is whether the postmaster, when, say, 30 years old, could have bought this set and then have the time line which seems to exist. Suppose that the set was bought from the Office of the Third Assistant Postmaster General in 1882 when the postmaster was 30 years old. Next suppose that the son of the postmaster was born in 1892, when the postmaster was 40 years old. If the son died at the age of 75, it would have been in 1967. Adding ten years to this date takes us to 1977, which is almost 25 years too short of completing a time line, but seems tantalizingly close. Perhaps the postmaster was younger when he bought the set. Perhaps he acquired the set from a dealer some years after 1882. Perhaps the son passed away at the age of 85 or 90 years. Perhaps the sale of the set from the son's estate took place some years following the son's death. Any of these events could close the gap.

¹William E. Mooz, "Scissor Cutting of the 1875 Special Printing Issues," *Chronicle*, Vol. 51, No. 3 (Whole No. 183)(August 1999), pp. 169-206.

Figure 1. Reverse of scissor cut 1¢ Treasury SPECIMEN showing glue spots

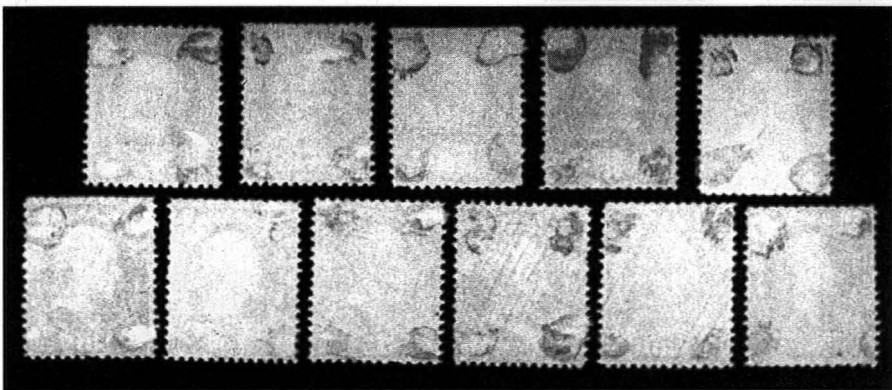


Figure 2. Reverse of scissor cut Treasury SPECIMEN set showing glue spots



Figure 3. Front of scissor cut Treasury SPECIMEN set

So the stamps themselves were then examined for evidence of scissor cutting. The set is illustrated in Figure 3. This set has not been as carelessly separated by scissors as many have. However, it seems fairly clear that the set was separated by stacking and scissor cutting the tops and the bottoms of the stamps. Perhaps the clerk had stacked the sheets and then scissor cut one row, from which he then separated a set by tearing along the perforations. □

USAGES OF NAVY DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL STAMPS

ALAN C. CAMPBELL

Introduction

In 1999, when Robert L. Markovits won the APS Champion of Champions competition at Stampshow in Cleveland, his exhibit continued in the tradition of the great collections of United States official stamps—Ackerman, Knapp, Hughes, Waud, Ehrenberg, Starnes, and Lanphear—by showing the stamps of the Executive Office and the eight subordinate departments. For those who collect this field broadly, as their holdings grow and mature over a twenty year period, the ten frame limitation enforced in competitive exhibitions becomes a serious constraint. Worthwhile material—forerunner free franks, penalty envelopes from the transitional period, official stamped envelopes, even special printings and proofs—may be squeezed out, and each new acquisition compels the deaccessioning of an old favorite. This is a vast field which cannot be exhibited in depth, but only with highlights. Few can afford to maintain a massive background reference collection.

So in the future, I would expect to see more competitive exhibits which are specialized studies of the stamps of a single department. Lester C. Lanphear III broke ground with a comprehensive showing of the Department of the Interior in the early 1990s. Dr. David Lobdell has been collecting the War Department for over forty years, and could easily fill ten frames. In recent years, Theodore Lockyear has been a regular participant in the Champion of Champions competition with his five frames of the Department of Justice. The degree of difficulty, of course, varies from department to department, depending on the availability of covers: specialized studies of Treasury, War, Interior and Post Office would each require ten frames, while at the other extreme, Agriculture covers are so rare that anyone foolish enough to undertake this speciality will quickly become disillusioned. With the increased popularity of military postal history, it might seem surprising that no retired admiral has ever formed a specialized collection of the Navy Department stamps. The explanation for this is simple: virtually all of the most important covers (with the exception of the long-missing Starnes material), including the rare high value frankings and the fascinating covers forwarded to sailors overseas, are equally divided between the exhibit collections of Robert L. Markovits and Lester C. Lanphear III. A collector starting from scratch today could readily find some 3¢ covers, but to find a 1¢ cover or a 6¢ cover might take him ten years. Since no one has attempted a specialized study of this department, the basic research appears never to have been done. The purpose of this article, then, is to outline how and where these controlled stamps were used, and to suggest what sort of covers an ideal collection of the Navy Department ought to contain.

Historical Background

At the end of the Civil War, the Navy's fleet consisted of 471 ships, many incorporating the most advanced naval architecture, ordnance, and steam engineering. Most of the fleet was quickly demobilized, and the iron-clad coastal monitors—unsuitable for active service in peacetime—were mothballed. The Navy returned to its prewar strategy of passive coast defense and a commerce-raiding system of naval warfare. The station squadrons of self-sufficient wooden sailing vessels were reestablished. Steam power was problematic, because the U.S. lacked overseas colonies where reliable coaling stations could be established. By 1870, there were only 52 seaworthy vessels in commission. A feud developed between line officers prejudiced against steam (many of whom were now ashore and awaiting orders) and staff officers—engineers, constructors, the pay corps and medical corps—few of whom were unoccupied.

Adolph E. Borie, Grant's first Secretary of the Navy, was a Philadelphia businessman appointed to serve as a figurehead for Admiral Porter, who was notably hostile to the steam engineers. But Borie caused a scandal by getting drunk at a June Week ball at the Naval Academy and was forced to resign after a few months' service. Senator Cattel of New Jersey persuaded Grant to appoint his business partner, George M. Robeson, as Borie's replacement. Robeson in turn steered many lucrative contracts to the Cattel brothers, and received over \$300,000 in bribes for his efforts over the next seven years. Robeson focused on overhauling the monitors and building up the Navy yards at League Island, Mare Island and Pensacola. The yards were kept busy with Republican workers, and his stockpiling policy kept the contributions coming from grateful Republican contractors and suppliers. Voted large appropriations by a conniving Congress, the Navy Department spent \$6,000,000 annually on labor and materials, and in the end had nothing to show for it but a worthless collection of antique vessels.

The chief naval crisis during Grant's presidency stemmed from the *Virginius* affair. In October 1873, a fast ex-Confederate paddlewheel steamer—serving as a gunrunner to the Cuban rebels—was captured by the Spanish flotilla, resulting in the summary execution of the captain and crew. On Grant's orders, and at a cost exceeding \$5,000,000, Robeson had all the squadrons rendezvous at Key West. Even in the event of a declaration of war against Spain, there were no serious plans to deploy the fleet, since the assembled vessels were clearly too slow and feeble to contest the Caribbean even against the decrepit Spanish fleet. An observer commented: "the authorities in Washington allowed the foreign attaches to come and inspect us and report our warlike condition. We were dreadfully mortified by it all."¹ Congress then appropriated \$900,000 for the reconstruction of armored vessels.

When Hayes succeeded Grant, Robeson was replaced by Richard Thompson of Indiana, a man "so densely ignorant of naval affairs as to have expressed surprise, so it was reported, on learning that ships were hollow."² During his service, Robeson had been subjected to four partisan congressional investigations, but Thompson managed to keep the Navy free from scandal. He deferred to the Democrat-controlled Congress, which was skeptical about any more misguided appropriations to modernize the fleet. The Navy had fallen into such disrepute that Senator John Sherman proposed that it be run as a subordinate bureau of the War Department (then conveniently under the command of his brother, General William T. Sherman).

In 1881, when Garfield assumed the presidency, there was a large federal surplus. American industry was growing rapidly, and along with it foreign trade, and it was obvious that the merchant marine—in decline since the panic of 1857—needed to be rebuilt. Also, when the War of the Pacific began in 1879, both Chile and Peru deployed British-built cruisers, either of which could have destroyed the entire U.S. Navy single-handed. It was obvious that in order to protect the shipping lanes, the fleet would have to be rebuilt. Unlike his predecessors, Garfield's Secretary of the Navy, William Hunt, had a long-standing personal interest in the Navy. After Arthur succeeded Garfield, Hunt resigned and was replaced by William E. Chandler. Towards the goal of naval reconstruction, repairs on the obsolete wood vessels of the Old Navy were limited to 20% of their value, and in 1883 four new steam vessels were commissioned to begin the building of the new Navy.

¹Robert W. Love, Jr., *History of the U.S. Navy, Vol. 1: 1775-1941* (Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1992), p. 336. This and the Sprouts' book are my sources for this historical summary.

²Harold and Margaret Sprout, *The Rise of American Naval Power, 1776-1918* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1942), p. 181. It has been observed that the first qualification of a Secretary of the Navy was that he should never have seen salt water outside of a pork barrel.

During the 1870s, the Navy's manpower averaged 7,500 officers and seamen combined, with about 6,000 men afloat. The average annual pay was approximately \$7,500,000. The crews were dominated by foreign nationals and young boys, with 22% being punished each year and 10-20% defecting. Many of the officers were geriatric and incompetent, and the Navy yards were cesspools of corruption. The strength of the Marine Corps varied from 1,500-2,000, mostly privates housed at barracks at each of the yards. The annual budget for the Navy Department varied from \$15,000,000 to \$25,000,000, depending on appropriations for ship repair. Throughout this period, the bastion of staff authority resided in the eight bureaus under the civilian control of the Secretary. These were, with their respective budgets:

Bureau of Equipment and Recruiting	\$1,955,000
Bureau of Ordnance	\$1,009,000
Bureau of Yards and Docks	\$2,378,000
Bureau of Medicine and Surgery	\$136,000
Bureau of Provisions and Clothing	\$1,792,000
Bureau of Steam-Engineering	\$2,012,000
Bureau of Construction and Repair	\$3,576,000
Bureau of Navigation	\$573,000

The budget figures given above are taken from the Secretary of the Navy's Annual Report for 1874.³ The Bureau of Navigation controlled the Naval Observatory, the Office of the Signal Officer, the Hydrographic Office, the Nautical Almanac and the Superintendent of Compasses. The Chief of the Bureau of Navigation was a powerful position, because its incumbent controlled the assignment of all officers. Also part of the Navy Department were the Office of the Secretary, the Office of the Admiral, the Marine Corps (more a military police force than an amphibious landing force at this time), the Naval Academy, the Naval Asylum⁴ and the Naval Examining and Retiring Board. In 1873, the offices of the Navy Department were dispersed through a number of buildings in the capital, but in 1871, ground had been broken for a grand new building on 17th Street to house the State, War and Navy Departments, completed in 1876 at a cost exceeding \$5,000,000.

Distribution of Official Stamps

On January 5, 1874, at the first session of the 43rd Congress after the issuance of the official stamps, a resolution was passed asking all the secretaries to list the officers and employees of their respective department who were being furnished official stamps. George M. Robeson, Secretary of the Navy, responded on January 9:⁵

List of officers, or offices, to whom official postage-stamps have been furnished for official correspondence.

³These annual reports, published by the Government Printing Office, provide a wealth of information. They typically contain a glowing account by Robeson on the state of the Navy, a dissenting report from Admiral Porter, and reports from all the bureau chiefs replete with accounts and statistics. The Bureau of Medicine and surgery submitted ship-by-ship charts recording the treatment of various diseases, while the Bureau of Steam Engineering submitted the results of experiments on different boiler and screw designs, supported by diagrams and calculations. Incredibly, my local library, besieged by dozing street people, was quickly able to retrieve the reports for 1874, 1878, 1880 and 1881 from deep storage.

⁴The Naval Asylum was established in 1811 "to provide a permanent asylum for decrepit and disabled naval officers, seamen, and Marines." Funded by the pension contributions of active duty personnel, it was located on a 23-acre site in Philadelphia called "the Plantation." The name was changed to the Naval Home in 1880, and the entire facility was relocated to Gulfport, Mississippi in the early 1970s.

⁵43rd Congress, 1st Session, Senate, Ex. Doc. No. 17.

The eight bureaus of the Navy Department, including Naval Observatory, Hydrographic Office, Nautical Almanac Office, Signal Office, naval hospitals.

The commandants of the several navy-yards, *and the rendezvous, receiving-ships, and offices connected therewith.*⁶

The Superintendent of the Naval Academy.

The Admiral of the Navy.

The purchasing paymasters at Portsmouth, N. H., Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, Norfolk, and San Francisco.

Naval stations at League Island, New London, Mound City, and New Orleans.

Naval examining and retiring board.

Such of the vessels of the United States Navy as may be in our ports.

This is ground zero for establishing where the Navy Department official stamps might have been used. But it is not definitive, since over the years when the official stamps were valid for postage, 1873-1884, some facilities were closed and new ones opened elsewhere. By 1878, the Philadelphia Navy Yard was being closed down and its activities transferred to League Island; the naval stations at Mound City, Illinois and New Orleans had been closed down; a naval station had been opened at Key West and a torpedo station established on Goat Island, near Newport, Rhode Island. The paymaster for the Brooklyn Navy Yard was in New York; the paymaster for the Kittery, Maine Navy Yard was just across the Piscataqua River in Portsmouth, New Hampshire; the paymaster for the Charlestown Navy Yard was in Boston. Based on one surviving cover, mail from the Mare Island Navy Yard was posted at Vallejo, California. There was also a small facility at Sackets Harbor in upstate New York on Lake Ontario, and a wharf at Erie, Pennsylvania. Somewhat perplexing is Robeson's inclusion of a paymaster at Baltimore: there was no Navy yard or station there, so he might have been referring to the paymaster of the U. S. Coast Survey. Robeson fails to mention a paymaster at Pensacola (although plagued by yellow fever epidemics, there was a Navy yard there in 1874, and one cover has survived posted at nearby Warrington, Florida). There were some facilities including a hospital at Yokohama, Japan, but it is highly unlikely that official stamps were sent to the U. S. post office there.

Robeson does not mention the U. S. Government Despatch Agency in New York, where a Post Office Department official kept a supply of departmental stamps to aid in forwarding private mail to government officers overseas. While most of the extant covers bear Department of State official stamps, there is one cover to Newfoundland with a supplemental 2¢ Navy stamp (#30 in the survey here). Another cover addressed to a cadet on the U.S.S. *Pensacola*, care of the U.S. Consul in South Africa, received a supplemental 10¢ State stamp. The reference to official stamps being supplied to Navy vessels in port is intriguing. Presumably this was for the official correspondence of the line officers. The three covers known posted in Newport from the Captain's Office of the Training Ship *New Hampshire* are obvious examples, while the ship's letter from the U.S.S. *Swatara* posted in Washington, D.C. may have been carried outside the mails to the Navy Department and the official postage added there.⁷ The ship's letter from the U.S.S. *Colea* was unfranked, marked postage due in New York, sent to Washington where the 3¢ Navy stamp was added, and forwarded to Baltimore. Even with the reduced fleet size, it would have been a logistical nightmare to keep all Navy vessels continuously supplied with a stock of official stamps, and it seems implausible that official stamps were rushed to port each time a ship

⁶Clause in italics omitted by Rae D. Ehrenberg in her summary, "Authorized use of the U.S. Official Stamps by the Various Departments," *33rd Philatelic Congress Book* (n.p.: American Philatelic Congress, 1967), p. 46.

⁷Illustrated in Alan C. Campbell, "Usages of Official Stamps in Washington, D.C., 1873-1884," *Chronicle*, Vol. 51, No. 4 (Whole No. 184)(November 1999), Figure 5, page 283.

docked so the officers' official mail could be franked. Still, this is the most logical explanation for an off-cover 3¢ Navy stamp and a 6¢ Navy cover postmarked Port Royal, South Carolina: Navy vessels docked there, even though there was no station *per se*.

Presumably a courier system other than the regular mails was in place for transmitting urgent and sensitive communications between the Office of the Admiral and the commanding officers of ships at sea, similar to that used by the War Department, although I have not been able to find any concrete evidence of this. In the Stephen Albert collection of Bank Note covers, there was a tantalizing 3¢, 24¢ 1872 cover with a printed address: Assistant Engineer Hiram Parker, Jr., U.S.N., U.S. Steamer "Lancaster," Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Care of U.S. Consul.⁸ This cover was posted at Pottsville, Pennsylvania, so it may not have been an official usage. But similar envelopes with pre-printed addresses to officers afloat were found in a collection of unused envelopes that are thought to have been proofs for government use. If the correspondence to officers was heavy enough to justify pre-printing overseas addresses, it is very frustrating that none of these covers used from the 1873-1884 period have survived franked with official stamps.



Figure 1. New York steamship cancellations

In Figure 1, we illustrate socked-on-the-nose New York steamship cancellations on five off-cover Navy values. Because no such covers have survived, it is unclear whether the stamps were applied at sea before the letters were brought in by contract carriers, whether the steamships themselves actually carried official stamps, or whether the stamps were applied on shore by the dispatch agent. Robeson's response specifically mentions that Navy official stamps were furnished to the rendezvous receiving-ships associated with the Navy yards. However, because a steamship cancellation has also been found on a 15¢ Treasury stamp, I favor the explanation that such letters were carried in a packet to the main New York post office, where the dispatch agent there—known to have stocked Navy, Post Office, State, and Treasury official stamps for just this purpose—would have applied the appropriate stamps.

In conducting a census of the surviving corner cards, I have had access to photocopies of the active collections of Rollin C. Huggins, Jr., Lester C. Lanphear III, Robert L. Markovits, Dr. Alfred E. Staubus, Dr. Dennis W. Schmidt, and my own; a poor photocopy of the long-missing Starnes collection; and various auction catalogues. Unfortunately, relatively inexpensive 3¢ Navy covers with unusual corner cards are often not illustrated in auction catalogues, and in the older sales, the corner card was often not mentioned, so a few items may have been missed. Actually, Navy Department covers have traditionally fascinated many non-specialists, so I hope that this listing will inspire route agents to report others. It is composed exclusively of official covers franked with Navy Department stamps. Early penalty envelopes, when they represent the only reported example of a particular corner card, will be discussed towards the end of this article. A great many of the entries are based on a single example. The only relatively common corner cards are the Navy Department (*i.e.*, the Office of the Secretary), the U.S. Naval Asylum at Philadelphia, and the Navy Pay Office at Boston. The most elegant printed corner cards have "Navy Department" in a bold Gothic type and the name of the bureau below in an

⁸Richard C. Frajola Net Price Sale No. 2, September 1989, lot 260; Robert G. Kaufmann Auction Galleries Public Auction 65, March 31, 1990, lot 226.

italicized script. In Figure 2, courtesy of Robert L. Markovits, we illustrate the only Navy pictorial imprinted corner card, depicting the two-cannons-crossing-an-anchor emblem of the Bureau of Ordnance. This is one of only two examples of this corner card franked with official stamps, and one of four recorded 1¢, 2¢ Navy combination usages. This emblem, similar to that found on various War Department arsenal covers, has also been seen on early Navy penalty envelopes. The Hydrographic Office had a large pictorial handstamp depicting an eagle perched on a fouled anchor, which has been seen struck on the backs of three 1876 covers addressed to Lieutenant J. E. Craig. That the Admiral of the Navy, who was working out of his house, was furnished stamps but no printed envelopes and so had to add his own handwritten endorsement, may be symptomatic of the ongoing tension between the bureaucracy and the line officers. Corner cards found are listed under the city where the letter was posted. Those marked with an asterisk have been recorded on penalty envelopes from the transitional period.

Washington, D.C.

Bureau of Equipment and Recruiting
 Bureau of Ordnance
 Bureau of Yards and Docks
 Bureau of Medicine and Surgery
 Bureau of Provisions and Clothing*
 Bureau of Steam-Engineering
 Bureau of Navigation & Office of Detail
 Navy Department
 House of Representatives

Boston

Navy Pay Office*
 U.S. Navy Yard, Paymaster's Office
 U.S. Torpedo Station, Newport, R. I.

Philadelphia

U.S. Naval Asylum*
 Assist. QM's Office, USMC (handstamp)
 Pay Director, U.S. Navy Yard
 Pay Office, 427 Chestnut Street
 Naval Construct's Office, U.S. Navy Yard,
 League Island

Cambridge, Maryland

Navy Paymaster, U.S. Coast Survey
 U.S. Coast Survey

Newport, Rhode Island

Captain's Office, Training Ship
New Hampshire

Warrington, Florida

O.B. (ms)

Nautical Almanac Office
 U.S. Naval Observatory
 Navy Yard
 Paymaster Office, Navy Yard
 U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey (ms)
 Ship's Letter, U.S.S. *Swatara* (ms)
 Hydrographic Office (handstamp)
 Office of the Admiral (ms)
 Judge Advocate General

Annapolis

U.S. Naval Academy*
 Superintendent, U.S. Naval Academy

New York

Commandant's Office, Navy Yard
 Navy Pay Office, 29 Broadway
 Navy Pay Office, 17 State Street (red
 overprint)
 Pay Department, Navy Yard
 Ship's Letter, U.S.S. *Colea* (ms)

Brooklyn

Paymaster J. T. Stevenson, U.S.N.,
 Navy Yard, New York

Vallejo, California

Inspector of Provisions and Clothing,
 Navy Yard, Mare Island

Notably missing from this survey are any covers from the Bureau of Construction and Repair, which had a larger annual budget than any of the other bureaus. A fair number of covers survive from the Navy Yards in Washington, New York, Boston and Philadelphia, yet I record only one each from Mare Island and Pensacola, and, incredibly, none from Portsmouth or Norfolk. Still, it is wrong to assume that since official covers haven't survived from these places, they didn't once exist. Until penalty envelopes were authorized, official stamps, despite their unpopularity, were the only fiscally sane choice of postage for the federal bureaucracy. In emergencies, regular postage stamps might occasionally be purchased as an out-of-pocket expense, but this was never a common occurrence. The gaps in the record are simply due to the terrible attrition rate for official covers. Most of the sur-

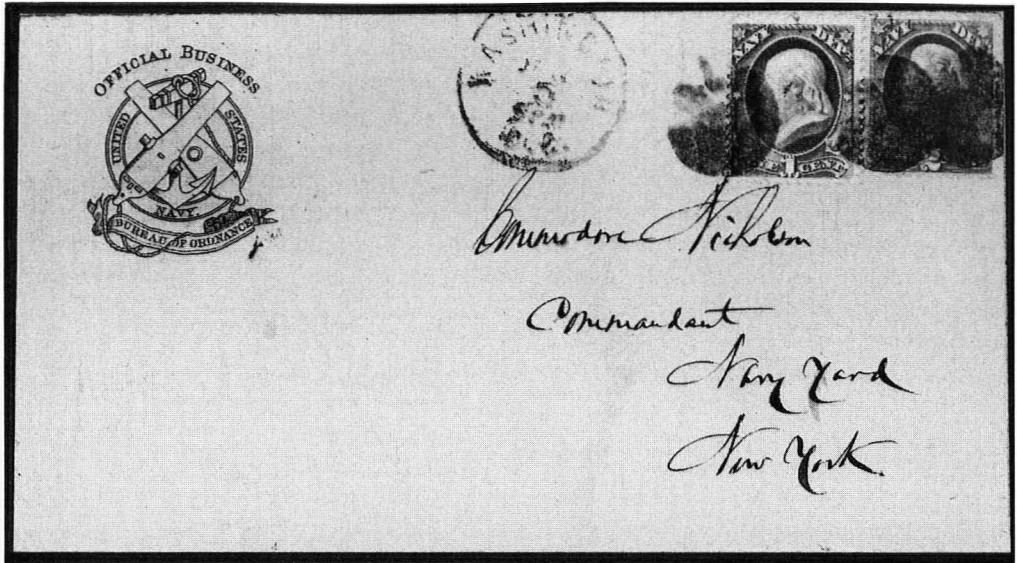


Figure 2. Bureau of Ordnance pictorial corner card, courtesy of Robert L. Markovits

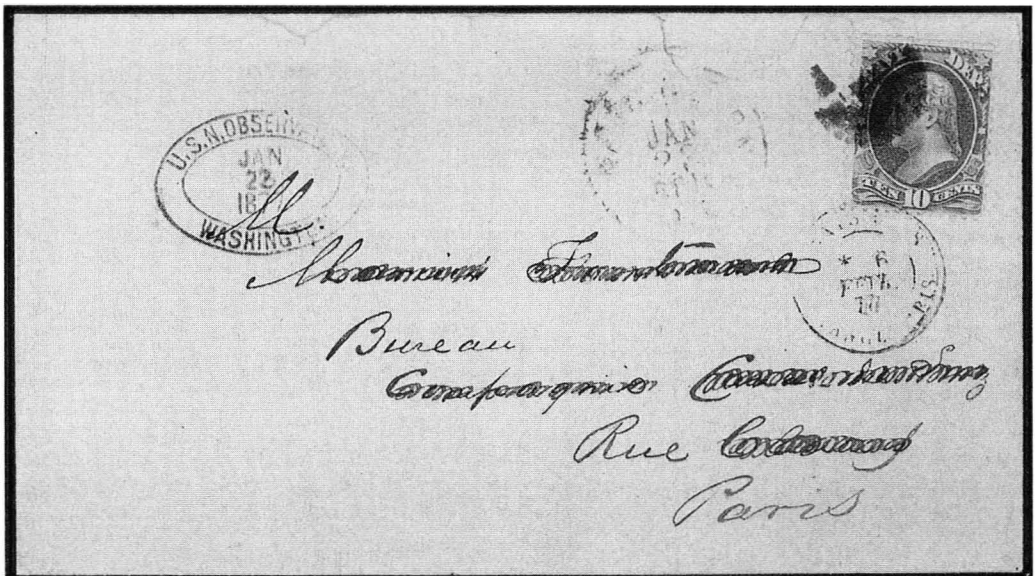


Figure 3. 10¢ Navy on cover from the Naval Observatory to France, 1877, courtesy of Lester C. Lanphear III

viving covers are addressed to Naval officers or private individuals. Covers addressed to bureaucrats would have gone into government archives and have rarely made it out into collectors' hands.

One purpose of this survey was to assist in the attribution of cancellations on off-cover Navy stamps. Many of the distinctive cancellations of Washington, D.C, New York, Boston, Philadelphia and New Orleans are instantly recognizable. Blue cancellations have been reported on all Navy values except the 90¢, but few are strikes of the crisp geometrics of New Orleans, the only one of the major ports listed above where blue canceling ink was used during this period. Some Navy stamps may have received blue cancellations in Savannah, and the one cover cited posted in Vallejo from the Mare Island Navy Yard also has ultramarine blob killers. Except in the most unusual circumstances, Navy Department mail would have been posted exclusively at ports, so I am relieved to report that in my exhaustive collection of off-cover used official stamps, there are no mystifying strikes of Chicago or Cincinnati blue cancellations on Navy stamps.

Foreign Destinations, Registered Mail, Third Class Mail, Local Mail

Despite the obvious need for regular communication with station squadrons in foreign waters, little foreign mail from the Navy Department has survived. I record only six covers, three of which were in the Starnes collection stolen in 1983 and may have been lost to philately forever. These were the celebrated pair to Commodore Caldwell (24¢ to Uruguay, 12¢, 30¢ combination to Brazil)⁹ and a 2¢, 3¢ combination on an 1875 cover to Italy. The remaining three are now in the collection of Lester C. Lanphear, including a strip of four 3¢ stamps on a cover from the Office of the Admiral to Japan (12¢ treaty rate, 1879), and a 3¢ pair from Annapolis, addressed to London and forwarded by the dispatch agent B.F. Stevens to Constantinople (5¢ U.P.U. rate, overpaid 1¢, 1882). In Figure 3, courtesy of Mr. Lanphear, we illustrate a 10¢ cover from the Naval Observatory to France (double U.P.U. rate, 1877, ex-Ehrenberg). This is the only recorded 10¢ Navy cover. A



Figure 4. New York foreign mail cancellations

handful of strikes of New York foreign mail cancellations survive on off-cover Navy stamps, including both the classic large geometrics and the later numeral in vertical barred ellipse and the third class double oval. In Figure 4, we illustrate a selection of these. The 30¢ stamp was canceled in Washington, D.C. (Maltese cross, November 1873) and then routed to New York, where the Foreign Department at the main Post Office applied a red "New York Paid All" transit marking. Only one registered cover with an official stamp has been reported (#46 in the following survey), and I have never seen an off-cover stamp with the distinctive registry cancellations of Washington, D.C. or New York. Three 1¢ solo covers (one ex-Starnes) constitute the only surviving usages of Navy stamps to pay the single unsealed circular rate. In Figure 5, courtesy of Robert L. Markovits, we illustrate a remarkable parcel front from the Nautical Almanac Office, franked with a 2¢, 3x6¢, and a 24¢ Navy stamps. This, along with a 6¢ cover canceled by a New York CR double oval

⁹Charles J. Starnes, "Universal Postal Union Mail to Non-Member Countries," *Chronicle*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (Whole No. 81)(February 1974), pp. 40-43.

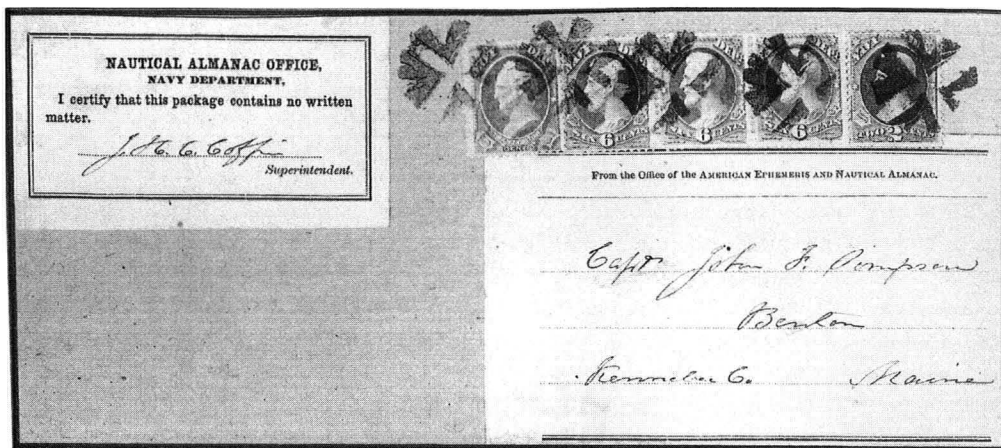


Figure 5. Parcel front from the Nautical Almanac Office, courtesy of Robert L. Markovits

(Circular Room), are the only recorded examples of Navy stamps used to pay a multiple printed matter rate, although a fair number of off-cover strikes exist of the later Washington, D.C. oval and double oval third class postmarks. A handful of 2¢ covers survive showing payment of single and double local rates within the nation's capital and elsewhere.

Forwarded Private Mail

When a private letter addressed to a Naval officer or seaman was undeliverable because his ship had already sailed, the letter was then forwarded to Washington, D.C. A clerk there would research the itinerary of the vessel, readdress the letter, add the necessary supplemental postage in Navy stamps to make up the foreign rate, and repost the letter, often in the care of the nearest U.S. consulate. Calculating when the mail on board ship might catch up to and rendezvous with a Navy vessel in a foreign port was not an exact science, and some of these letters chased their recipients around the globe before being pronounced undeliverable. Five such covers, bearing a combination of regular issue and official stamps, have been recorded. There also exist three examples of inboard foreign letters where the Navy Department in Washington, D.C. provided official postage for forwarding within the U.S., resulting in a combination franking of foreign and official stamps. And one cover has survived, mailed in Japan via San Francisco to Washington, D.C., that was forwarded to Aspinwall, Colombia with a 6¢ Navy stamp. This fine courtesy is in some ways similar to the Department of State's practice of adding State adhesives to private letters from diplomats overseas so that once out of the pouch they could enter the regular U.S. mails. These nine extraordinary covers (all of which, with the exception of the celebrated 24¢ cover to Uruguay recently illustrated here,¹⁰ are in the firm grasp of either Robert L. Markovits or Lester C. Lanphear III) deserve to be the subject of a dedicated, in-depth article. A related but long-missing item from the Ackerman collection was a piece of a cover posted at Amherst, Mass. with 2¢ and 3¢ Banknote stamps, with supplemental Navy postage (2x2¢ and a 10¢) added in Washington, D.C.¹¹

Most of these covers bear a "FORWARDED" handstamp struck in black. In Figure 6, we illustrate five off-cover Navy stamps canceled with the same handstamp. It has been suggested that these constitute the remnants of a presentation set, even though they were purchased one at a time from different sources. Official presentation sets were usually

¹⁰Alan C. Campbell, "High Value Official Stamps on Cover," *Chronicle*, Vol. 52, No. 4 (Whole No. 188)(November 2000), Figure 1, p. 288.

¹¹J. C. Morgenthau & Co., Inc., 1933, lot #103.

neatly favor-canceled to demonetize them in the departmental mailrooms with a variety of receiving handstamps. These stamps, with their single, double and triple strikes applied horizontally and diagonally, do not look like careful conscientious work. Because the same handstamp has been seen on official covers from other departments, it was probably applied at the main Washington, D.C. post office. Although no Navy cover has been reported showing the forwarding official postage stamps canceled in such a way, I have seen non-official covers with supplemental regular large Bank Note stamps killed by the "FORWARDED" handstamp.



Figure 6. "FORWARDED" handstamps

Illegitimate Private Usages

Covers franked with official stamps but lacking an imprinted corner card or a manuscript "O.B." designation are typically suspected of being private, illegitimate usages, but it is rarely possible to confirm this. There has survived a large correspondence addressed to Captain Maddox, Assistant Quartermaster of the U.S. Marine Corps in Philadelphia, which is clearly illegitimate, because Maddox's docketing on the covers indicates they contained personal letters from his sister. All were posted at the main post office in Washington, D.C. during the 1876-1878 period except for one 1878 cover with a violet Georgetown postmark (confirmation that this branch was also enlisted in the trial of an experimental canceling ink). The covers from this correspondence are typically of small size, franked with one or two 3¢ Navy stamps. The pencil docketing on some has been erased to improve their appearance, but the marketplace has been slow to absorb those examples docketed in pen. One dealer recently offered the self-serving but creative explanation that since during the free frank period mail from and to government officials went free of postage, the Maddox covers were by time-honored tradition legitimate personal usages. Never mind that the official stamps were specifically authorized for use only on official business mail. Captain Maddox had been furnished his own supply of Navy stamps for official purposes, and presumably misappropriated a sheet or two for his sister's use. In Figure 7, courtesy of Robert L. Markovits, we illustrate a legitimate 1875 cover from Captain Maddox, with a handstamped Marine Corps corner card. This is the only reported example of a Marine Corps corner card franked with official stamps. Aside from the Maddox correspondence, official covers addressed to Marines are fairly scarce, with most examples being from a correspondence addressed to Major Thomas Field, posted from Philadelphia to Atlantic City or from Washington, D.C. to Philadelphia. In Figure 8, courtesy of Lester C. Lanphear, we illustrate the best of these, a 3¢, 12¢ combination paying the quintuple domestic rate. With the loss of the Starnes material, this is believed to be the only 12¢ Navy cover in private hands. These covers also lack corner cards, so they could be private usages too, or perhaps the Marine Corps had not been furnished imprinted envelopes and the sender in this case neglected to add the required "O.B." endorsement.

Lester C. Lanphear III has assembled three covers from another correspondence, posted in New Orleans with 3¢ Navy stamps. Two of these were intercepted, handstamped "Insufficiently Paid" and returned to the sender, but a third one got through. Earlier this

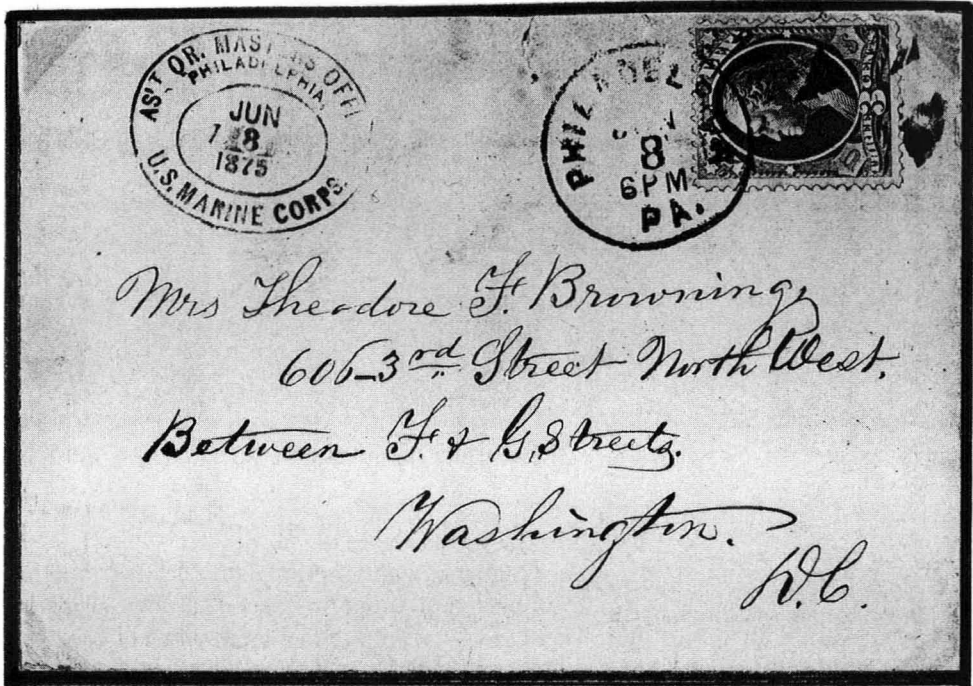


Figure 7. Handstamped Marine Corps corner card, courtesy of Robert L. Markovits

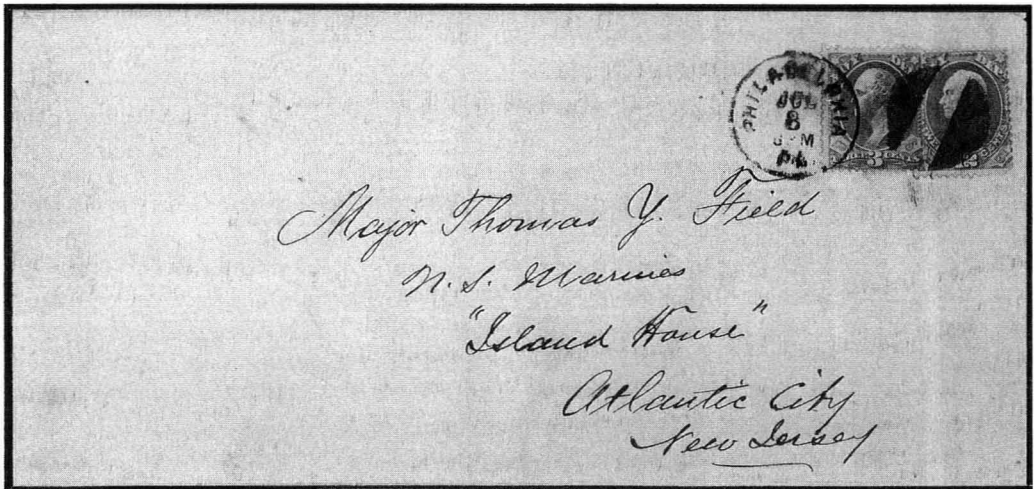


Figure 8. 3¢, 12¢ Navy combination cover, courtesy of Lester C. Lanphear III

year, a 3¢ Navy cover postmarked in Brooklyn came up for sale at auction.¹² An alert postal clerk wrote "Navy Dept. stamp" around the adhesive and then handstamped the cover "Held for Postage." Such examples of illegitimate private usages being detected are extremely rare. None of the many letters to Maddox from his sister were ever intercepted, probably because the clerks at the main Washington, D.C. post office were more familiar with and hence less suspicious of the blue Navy Department stamps.

Census of Covers

All values of the Navy Department official stamps are scarce on cover, except for the 3¢. I would estimate that well over one hundred 3¢ covers have survived, and because of their fairly humble catalog value (\$150.00 currently, and static for many years) it is neither practical nor worthwhile to attempt an accurate census. Among specialists, there is little consensus as to the relative scarcity of covers from different departments. Agriculture covers are certainly the rarest in terms of overall numbers, and Executive covers are the second rarest. Beyond that, it is a toss-up as to whether there are fewer Navy, Justice or State covers. In each case, one or two common values (3¢ Navy, 3¢ and 6¢ Justice, 3¢ and 6¢ State) exist in fairly large numbers, while all other values are scarce, rare or non-existent.¹³ This survey includes all covers that Lester C. Lanphear and I have recorded, except for a mixed franking with a 6¢ Navy in a German Lincoln exhibit (shown in Chicago in 1986) that I was not able to track down. A few others undoubtedly exist, including, I am led to believe, some important ones that their present owners do not want publicized at this time.

1¢ Navy Covers (11 recorded, #1-10, #45)

- | | | |
|-----|---|---|
| 1. | 1¢ circular rate, legal size, Bureau of Steam Engineering | ACC |
| 2. | 1¢ circular rate, legal size, Navy Department | CJS (ex-Hughes, Ackerman) |
| 3. | 1¢ circular rate, legal size, Bureau of Steam Engineering | TOL |
| 4. | 1¢, 1¢ domestic rate, Ship's Letter, U.S.S. <i>Swatara</i> , 1883 | LCL (Siegel #626, 4/13/83, lot 820) ¹⁴ |
| 5. | 1¢, 2¢ domestic rate, legal size, Commandant's Office, Navy Yard, New York, to Key West | ACC |
| 6. | 1¢, 2¢ domestic rate, Bureau of Ordnance | RLM (ex-Waud) |
| 7. | 1¢, 2¢ domestic rate, Navy Pay Office, D.C., violet local 1878 cds. | AC (ex-Korff) |
| 8. | 1¢, 2¢ domestic rate, 1882, cc. erased, to a Marine, possible foreign origin | RLM (ex-Waud) |
| 9. | 1¢ pair 3¢ Bank Note, forwarded UPU rate to Panama | RLM (ex-Waud, Hughes) |
| 10. | 1¢, 1¢, 1¢, domestic rate, no corner card | TOL |

2¢ Navy Covers (26 recorded, #5-8, #11-30, #47, #55)

- | | | |
|-----|--|---------------|
| 11. | 2¢ local rate, U.S. Coast & Geodetic Survey (ms), 1881, to Peary | ACC (ex-Waud) |
| 12. | 2¢ local rate, no cc., 1881, to Peary | RLM (ex-Waud) |

¹²Matthew Bennett, Inc., January 20, 2001, Lot #695.

¹³My personal opinion is that Justice covers are rarer than State, and State rarer than Navy. Assuming equal appeal (*i.e.*, demand factor is a constant), the valuations in the specialized catalogue (\$500 for 3¢ Justice cover, \$450 for 3¢ State cover, \$150 for 3¢ Navy cover) indicate that 3¢ Navy covers are far more common. Now even though covers of the 6¢ Navy are far scarcer than the 6¢ Justice and 6¢ State, the preponderance of 3¢ covers in all three departments is the deciding factor. 3¢ State covers are more common than 3¢ Justice covers, the very slight difference in catalogue value influenced by the fact that many State covers are sexy diplomatic pouch mail, while 3¢ Justice covers are typically legal-size and rather mundane.

¹⁴Illustrated in Campbell, *Chronicle* 184, *op. cit.*, Figure 5, p. 283.

- | | | |
|--|---|--------------------------------------|
| 13. | 2¢ local rate, Paymaster's Office, Navy Yard, D.C. | CJS (ex-Ackerman) |
| 14. | 2¢ local rate, New York City Delivery cds. | ? (ex-Ackerman) |
| 15. | 2¢ local rate, Nautical Almanac Office, 1879, indigo | CJS (ex-Knapp, Ackerman) |
| 16. | 2¢ local rate, Paymaster's Office, Navy Yard, D.C. | DLS (ex-Lehto) |
| 17. | 2¢ local rate, Navy Yard, D.C., 1874, red cancel | RE (ex-Lehto) |
| 18. | 2¢ local rate, legal size, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, 1874, red cancel | ACC |
| 19. | 2¢ local rate, legal size, Navy Department, red cancel | LCL (ex-Ehrenberg, Burrus, Ackerman) |
| 20. | 2¢ local rate, Newport, R. I., on a reduced penalty envelope | LCL |
| 21. | 2¢, legal size, Bureau of Provisions and Clothing, 1874 carried outside the mails to Yokohama, Japan | RLM (ex-Waud) |
| 22. | 2¢ right sheet margin pair, double local rate, no cc., D.C. | ? (ex-Knapp, Ackerman) |
| 23. | 2¢, 2¢ double local rate, Paymaster's Office Navy Yard, D.C., 1876 | RLM (ex-Waud, Knapp) |
| 24. | 2¢ pair, double local rate, Naval Constructor's Office, Navy Yard, League Island (handstamp), from Philadelphia, 1882 | AC (ex-Stone, Ackerman) |
| 25. | 2¢ pair, double domestic rate, Captain's Office, Training Ship <i>New Hampshire</i> , from Newport, R. I. | LCL (ex-Ehrenberg) |
| 26. | 2¢ pair, double domestic rate, Captain's Office, Training Ship <i>New Hampshire</i> | CJS |
| 27. | 2¢, 3¢ GPU rate, legal size, Navy Department to Italy, 1875 | CJS |
| 28. | 2¢, 3¢ Bank Note, UPU rate, forwarded to London, 1879, addressed to a Marine | RLM (ex-Waud) |
| 29. | 2¢, 3¢ Bank Note, UPU rate, forwarded to Panama | ? (ex-Knapp) |
| 30. | 2¢, 5¢ Garfield, 7¢ treaty rate, from Baltimore to Newfoundland, 2¢ applied as postage due by dispatch agent in N.Y. | RLM (ex-Waud, Hughes) |
| 31. | 2¢, 2¢, 2¢, 3¢, triple domestic rate, legal size, Navy Pay Office, N.Y. | ACC (Siegel #616, 4/13/83, lot 821) |
| 6¢ Navy Covers (16 recorded, #32-46, #55) | | |
| 32. | 6¢, double domestic rate, legal size, House of Representatives, 1874 | ACC (ex-Shumsky) |
| 33. | 6¢, double domestic rate, Bureau of Equipment and Recruiting, 1880 | RLM (ex-Waud) |
| 34. | 6¢ double domestic rate, D.C. violet killer, 1878-1879 | ? (ex-Ackerman) |
| 35. | 6¢, double domestic rate, Navy Pay Office, N.Y. | CJS |
| 36. | 6¢ double domestic rate, docketed October 12, 1876, Hydrographic Office (handstamp on reverse) | AES |
| 37. | 6¢ double domestic rate, docketed December 8, 1876, Hydrographic Office (handstamp on reverse), line through "N" | AES |
| 38. | 6¢ double domestic rate, Cambridge, Mass. to the Coast Survey Steamer <i>Aragon</i> , Baltimore, Md. | CJS |
| 39. | 6¢ double domestic rate, Judge Advocate General, Washington, D.C., face only, address cut out | ? (ex-Steinmetz) |
| 40. | 6¢ double domestic rate, private usage, Washington, D.C., to Capt. Maddox in Philadelphia | ? |
| 41. | 6¢ sextuple circular rate, Navy Pay Office, New York (CR= circular room in double oval cancel), return address overprinted in red | AES (Siegel #616, 4/13/83, lot 826) |

42. 6¢, overpayment of UPU rate to Aspinwall, Colombia, forwarded private letter from Japan via San Francisco and Washington, D.C. LCL
43. 6¢, 3¢, triple domestic rate, legal size, no corner card, Philadelphia to Major Field, USMC, in Atlantic City, N.J. RLM (ex-Waud)
44. 6¢, 3¢, triple domestic rate, reduced legal size, Bureau of Navigation, Washington, D.C. ?
45. 6¢, 1¢, 3¢ Bank Note, treaty rate, forwarded to Brazil, 1878 RLM (ex-Waud)
46. 6¢, 10¢ Bank Note, double domestic rate registered, legal size, Port Royal, S.C. ? (ex-Ehrenberg)
- 7¢ Navy Covers (3 covers recorded, #47-49)**
47. 7¢, 2¢, triple domestic rate, legal size, Navy Department RLM (ex-Waud)
48. 7¢, 3¢ Bank Note, treaty rate, forwarded to Brazil, 1878 RLM (ex-Waud)
49. 7¢, 3¢ Bank Note, treaty rate, forwarded to Brazil, 1877 LCL (ex-Stone)¹⁵
- 10¢ Navy Covers (1 cover recorded, #50)**
50. 10¢, double UPU rate, legal size, U.S. Naval Observatory to France, 1877 LCL (ex-Ehrenberg)
- 12¢ Navy Covers (2 covers recorded, #51 and #56)**
51. 12¢, 3¢, quintuple domestic rate, legal size, no cc., from Philadelphia to a Marine LCL (Siegel #616, 4/13/83, lot 828, ex-Hughes)
- 15¢ Navy Covers (1 cover recorded, #52)**
52. 15¢, quintuple domestic rate, legal size, Navy Department CJS
- 24¢ Navy Covers (3 covers recorded, #53-55)**
53. 24¢, treaty rate, legal size, Navy Department to Uruguay CJS
54. 24¢, 3¢ stamped envelope, treaty rate, forwarded to Uruguay, 1878 ? (ex-Lehto)¹⁶
55. 24¢, 6¢, 6¢, 6¢, 2¢, printed matter rate on label from Nautical Almanac Office RLM (ex-Waud)
- 30¢ Navy Covers (1 cover recorded, #48)**
56. 30¢, 12¢, treaty rate, legal size, Navy Department to Brazil CJS

90¢ Navy Covers (none recorded)

Collector's Initials: AC (Albert Chang), ACC (Alan C. Campbell), CJS (Charles J. Starnes, deceased), RE (Ralph Ebner), LCL (Lester C. Lanphear III); TOL (Theodore O. Lockyear); RLM (Robert L. Markovits), DWS (Dr. Dennis W. Schmidt), AES (Dr. Alfred E. Staubus)

Major Sales: Congressman Ernest R. Ackerman, J. C. Morgenthau & Co, Inc., 1933 (lots #97-125); Edward S. Knapp, Parke-Bernet Galleries, Inc., 1941 (lots #2710-2715); James E. Hughes, Bruce G. Daniels, 1953 (lots #233-243); Rae Ehrenberg ("The Crystal Collection"); Robert A. Siegel, 1981 (lots #298-305, #307); Morrison Waud, private treaty 1982; Charles J. Starnes, stolen, 1983; Robert A. Siegel, 616th Sale, 4/12/83, lots #820-826, #828); Marshall Stone, Robert A. Siegel, 1990 (lot #86, #89-92, #96); George Lehto, Matthew Bennett, Inc. (lots #691-697).

Conversion to Penalty Envelopes

The use of penalty franks was authorized on March 3, 1877, and this new method of transmitting official business mail was enthusiastically embraced by the Navy Department.

¹⁵Illustrated in Alan C. Campbell, "Usages of the 7¢ Stanton Official Stamps," *Chronicle*, Vol. 52, No. 1(Whole No. 185)(February 2000), Figure 13, p. 57.

¹⁶Illustrated in Campbell, *Chronicle* 188, *op. cit.*, Figure 2, p. 288.

After the fiscal year 1879, no value higher than the 6¢ was ordered, and no official stamps at all were requisitioned in the fiscal years 1881 and 1884. Initially restricted to use at the seat of government (*i.e.*, Washington, D.C.), the use of penalty envelopes was extended to all officers in March 1879, although the Attorney General later ruled in January 1882 that they were not valid for field office correspondence with private citizens. Therefore, until they were declared obsolete on July 5, 1884, the official stamps continued to serve a limited purpose. Field officers of the Navy Department, such as the commandants and paymasters of the various Navy Yards, would have needed official stamps for official business correspondence with private citizens. A very few early Navy penalty covers have survived with the required supplemental official franking.¹⁷ The precipitous fall-off in ordering the higher values might suggest that the field offices only needed the lower values, and that usage of the higher values had always been predominately out of Washington, D.C. However, based on the evidence from off-cover used official stamps with distinctive cancellations, all values through the 90¢ were extensively used in Boston and New York and presumably elsewhere. Also, through the 1880s, Navy official stamps continued to be used on a limited basis in Washington, D.C. Unlike the Executive Office and the Agriculture, Justice, Post Office and Treasury Departments, where it is virtually impossible to find used stamps with the steel numeral cancellation used by the main D.C. post office from 1880 on, such stamps on and off-cover have survived from the Navy Department.¹⁸ My sense is that the Navy Department decided that for some of the lesser bureaus, it was expedient to use up the remaining stocks of official stamps and corner card envelopes designed for use with official stamps, as opposed to having these obsolete envelopes overprinted with penalty clauses. In doing so, the Navy Department's approach resembled to a degree that of the War Department, which never truly embraced the concept of penalty envelopes during the transitional period and continued ordering large quantities of their official stamps, all values through the 90¢, into 1884.

Assistant Editor Lester C. Lanphear III has the definitive collection of early penalty envelopes. Navy Department penalty envelopes from the transitional period, 1877-1884, are uncommon. Mr. Lanphear's collection includes an 1879 cover from the Secretary's Office, a corner card which has not been found franked with official stamps.

Acknowledgments

I am grateful for the continued cooperation of my fellow collectors, and would especially like to thank my friend Major Ted Bahry (USMC, retired) who first suggested that the annual reports of the Secretary of the Navy might prove to be a gold mine of information. Assistant Editor Lester C. Lanphear has long maintained his own census of rare official covers, and was kind enough to review and supplement this survey. □

¹⁷Specifically, items #20, #25 and #26 in this survey.

¹⁸Campbell, *Chronicle* 184, *op. cit.*, pp. 276-289.

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A NEW CALIFORNIA MAIL AGENT MARKING IN MANUSCRIPT
THERON WIERENGA

Background

The author's work, *The Gold Rush Mail Agents to California and their Postal Markings*, 1849-1852, illustrated a number of manuscript mail agent markings. These markings were applied to loose letters that the mail agent accepted for delivery while he was on board the steamers on his trip from San Francisco to New York, and ashore at the various ports along this route.

Mail carried by steamships on the San Francisco to New York route, or collected en route, can be divided into at least four different types. The first type was the normal bagged mail. Letters mailed in California were collected at the San Francisco post office and placed into bags with a way bill accounting for the number of bags and specifying the post office where the bags were to be delivered. Mail for New York and the East Coast would be placed in separate bags from mail addressed to New Orleans and the Gulf Coast. At either Chagres or Havana the mail agent would see that the correct bags were sent to the appropriate post offices.

The second type of mail included loose letters such as those collected at Panama or Havana. Mail could be deposited in the United States Consul's office at Panama, where the consul also acted as the resident mail agent. This mail also was bagged and forwarded with those bags originating in San Francisco. The following is a quote from the *Postmaster General's Order Books*:

September 7, 1850

Ordered, The following advances made by A.B. Corwine as Post Office Agent and United States Consul at Panama, at the dates, for the conveyance of the United States Mails, and by the trips herein specified, are recognized and referred to the Auditor for payment and adjustment, under the treaty of 6th March 1844, with the Republic of New Granada, to wit:

Date of Payment	Course across Isthmus	Date of transit	Ship bringing Mail	Ship carrying Mail	No. of Bags	No. of Pounds	Reales	Dollars
Aug 22 '50	Pan to Chag	Aug 8,'50	Made up in Panama	Falcon	2	39	300	37.50
" "	"	" 9 "	" " "	"	3	125	420	52.50
" "	Chag to Pan	" 16 "	Falcon	Tennessee	76	4002	5100	637.50
" "	Pan to Chag	" 22 "	Panama	Georgia	31	1673	2220	277.50

In additional entries made in the *Postmaster General's Order Books*, there are often entries for two or three bags of mail taken on a steamship that obviously did not carry the large monthly mail. These entries show carriage from Panama to Chagres on the Atlantic coast and were those bags made up at Panama. In other cases, the two or three bags are shown as a separate mail when they were destined to travel with the large number of mail bags arriving from San Francisco. The letters in these bags became what the author terms steamship letters, and had markings like the two-lined **STEAM/SHIP** and separate **30** rate mark applied at New York and other port cities. Specific steamship rates were applied to these letters and they were not marked with ship rates. Mail collected at other ports of call along the steamship route from San Francisco to New York, such as Havana, also became steamship mail and had those specific rates for steamship mail applied. The following from the *New York Herald* of November 29, 1854, gives a little insight into the process for collecting mail at ports such as Havana:

Havana, Nov. 23, 1854.

It was with extreme gratification that I observed a vast improvement at Messrs. C. Tyng & Co's., the agents for the Black Warrior line of steamships, on going to their office on the 12 inst., to mail my letter for the Herald. Permit me to explain: Hitherto, at the office of Messrs. C. Tyng & Co., as well as at the office of Messrs. Drake & Co., the mail bags of the various steamers have been suspended in the agents' offices. The result of this has been that your correspondent, and other like him, who defer closing their letters until the latest moment, have frequently had great difficulty in dropping their communications into the bags without the superscriptions being perused by some person or other who had followed closely at their heels; the mail bags being often filled to their utmost capacity, when, too, without much difficulty, a letter, or even letters, might (and at Messrs. Drake & Co.'s even now) may be extracted from the bags, and no one, except perhaps the thief or his employers, be any the wiser. Indeed, a friend of mine mentioned to me a few days ago that he had inadvertently dropped a letter destined for Charleston, via New Orleans, into the bag of the New York steamer, both bags hanging up at the same time, in the office of Messrs. Drake & Co., and that he had, without any trouble, upon the error he had committed recurring to his mind, gone back and took his letter from the New York steamer's bag and dropped it into that of the one bound for New Orleans. "As readily," he added, "might I have taken from the New York bag half a dozen letters, the property of other parties." Messrs. Tyng & Co. have, however, caused an extensive enclosed letter box to be attached to their office door, so that, as far as they are concerned, that evil is remedied. It is to be hoped that Mr. Morales, the managing partner of the house of Drake & Co., will adopt some similar measure with the mail bags of the various steamers for which they are the agents. This may appear to your readers as rather "small potatoes" about which to write, but to a man situated as I am, anxious to let you and them know all that transpires here of interest, and which he can only do at considerable personal risk, and being enabled to place his letters in the mail bags with the certainty that the addresses will not be read by any of the numerous "spies" who infest this city, the matter is one of serious moment . . .

Those letters specifically mailed on board ship with the mail agent were the third type of mail. There appears to be some variation as to how these letters were handled over the years, although firm conclusions are difficult given the scarcity of mail agent markings. It is possible that some of these letters were given to the resident mail agent at Panama upon arrival from San Francisco, where they would be included in the bagged mail originating at Panama. It must be remembered, however, that there would have been little time for this. The mail agent's responsibility was to see the mail across the Isthmus of Panama and on board ship at Chagres with as much dispatch as possible. From cover evidence the mail agent often just kept the letters he collected on board ship and deposited them at the post office in New York after applying his handstamped or manuscript marking. An example of a handstamped marking is the well-known **PAN. & SAN. FRAN. S.S.** marking applied by Gouverneur A. Ferris and Bannister Midgett. It is also known from cover evidence that a number of mail agents choose not to purchase handstamps, and instead applied manuscript markings.

Mail agent James B. Devoe arrived in New York on the steamship *Georgia* on March 8, 1850. The *New York Herald* of March 9, 1850 compliments Devoe on his rapid trip from San Francisco bringing the mails and states:

We learn that Mr. DeVoe has made the quickest trip from San Francisco to New York on record. He was commissioned as the special agent to convey the California mail of Feb. 1, to the United States. He left San Francisco on that day in the steamer Panama, and reached Panama in nineteen days, and Chagres in twenty-three days. Thence he proceeded to Havana in the Georgia, in three days and fourteen hours - thence to this city in less than four days. The whole travelling time from San Francisco to New York was only twenty-seven days. Actual time from city to city was thirty-five days! While at Chagres he overhauled the California mails of the 15th of January, which left San Francisco seventeen days before him. This is extraordinary speed.

per steamer. 40 } Pacific S. Ship. Vay
 San Francisco, Feb 2.

STEAM SHIP
 To Columbia Younger, Esq
 Liberty, Mo. Co.
 State of Missouri.
 United States of America

Figure 1. Mazatlan, Mexico to Liberty, Missouri, February 9, 1850, with mail agent James B. Devoe's manuscript marking written on board the *Panama* en route to Panama City. Devoe used "Feb 2" in his notation, the day after the steamship departed San Francisco, and not the date he received the letter, which was 9 February. This is the earliest recorded mail agent marking on the Panama route to California.

Wm S. Illinois
 Oct 24/56 10 ds

Mr Wm R. Foster.
 Coldwater.
 Branch Co.
 Mich.

Figure 2. The manuscript mail agent marking of W.P. Pepper, written on the voyage of the *Illinois* from Aspinwall to New York, via Havana, in October 1856. This is the latest mail agent marking recorded used on a letter collected along the Panama route.

The following statement also was in the same newspaper:

The Georgia brings all the mails by the steamers Panama and California; they amount to a large number, besides two thousand five hundred way letters, collected from the passengers on board.

From the number of letters quoted here one wonders if all of these letters collected by the mail agent were postmarked. It is quite probable that he did, given that during the 35-day long trip he would have had to inscribe less than 75 letters per day. Three examples of Devoe's manuscript mail agent marking are known from this trip. One is illustrated in Figure 1. All three examples have a very similar manuscript marking. Devoe dated each letter 2 February, the day after the steamship left San Francisco, regardless of when he received the letter along the route.

A parallel to this third type of mail, which was carried on the steamships from California, occurred when a letter was mailed with the despatch agent (the consul) at the United States Consul's office in Panama after the mail had been closed and the way bill made out. These loose letters were handstamped with the **PANAMA/N.Y.** or straightline **PANAMA** marking. A few letters also show manuscript markings applied by the resident post office agent at Panama during the tenures of William Nelson and Thomas Ward. In both the cases of mail agent markings and despatch agent markings at Panama, these scarce markings occur on only those letters mailed on board ship or after the normal mail had closed at Panama.

Figure 2 shows a cover that represents the latest recorded manuscript mail agent marking carried over the Panama route. This small envelope with no contents was struck with a light strike of the 29mm **STEAMSHIP/10** marking of New York. The upper right corner contains a manuscript postmark that reads "U S M. S. Illinois/Oct 24/56 10 cts." The steamship *Illinois* arrived at New York on October 28, 1856, having left Aspinwall on October 21. The passenger list of the *Illinois* contained the name "W.P. Pepper, mail agent." The October 24 date noted on this cover indicated that the letter probably was given to the mail agent during the steamer's stop at Havana. The manuscript notation here clearly demonstrates that this was a postal marking and not a docketing by the addressee. The ship name included the letters "U S M.S." to show that this was a United States Mail Steamship. The notation also shows the date and the postage due on the letter, "10 cts." Notice also that the notation is enclosed in a two-sided box drawn around the postal marking. This feature is characteristic of many manuscript mail agent postal markings.

The fourth type of mail was that which is simply termed "bootleg" letters. These letters should have entered the mails at New York or other ports as steamship mail, but instead were privately carried and deposited in the post office of the port of arrival, avoiding the higher postage rates. These letters can be identified from their contents, proving their origin on the Pacific Coast or along the steamship route to New York or other ports, but showing only domestic postage.

New California Mail Agent Marking

The cover in Figure 3 recently has been restudied and is now viewed as a manuscript mail agent marking. This item appeared in the Richard Frajola sale of the Thomas Alexander collection, March 8-9, 1990. The manuscript notation, "San Diego. Oct 3-1852," was thought to be an endorsement by the sender since the address was written in a similar handwriting. Although one could assume this, such notations by a sender are seldom seen on letters. Also, the style of the endorsement is typical of an agent endorsement. Another possibility was that the San Diego inscription was a manuscript townmark applied at the San Diego post office. The date of this marking coincides with the latest known use of a manuscript San Diego townmark in *California Town Postmarks 1849-1935*, by John H. Williams. Some further research into the use of manuscript townmarks at San Diego led to a correspondence with Oscar Thomas, of Lake Forest, California, who is working on a census of manuscript California townmarks. He reports five covers showing manuscript San Diego townmarks, all with 40¢ rates. These are dated 8 August 1849, 4 July 1850, 16

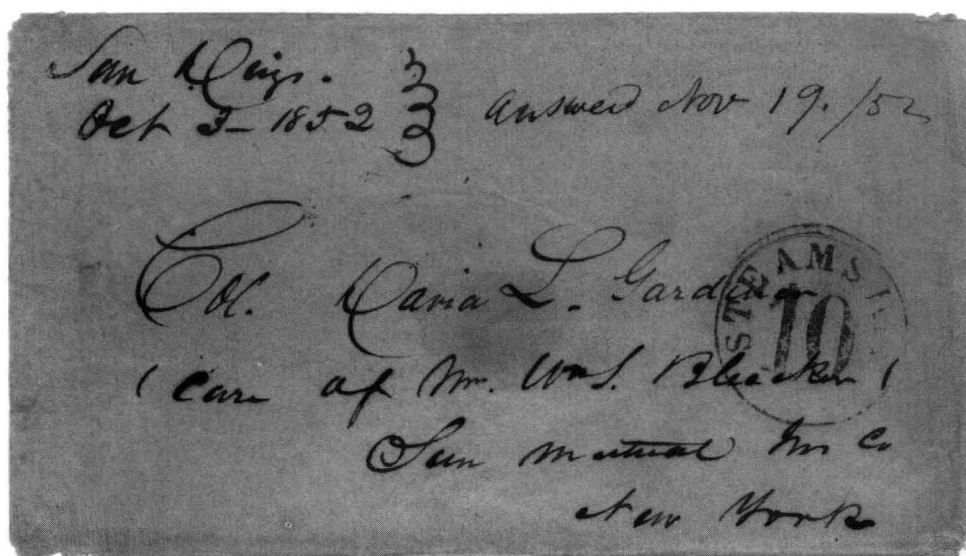


Figure 3. Mail agent George Howe's manuscript endorsement on an envelope carried by the *Tennessee* from San Francisco to Panama, October 1852. Howe received this letter when the steamer called at San Diego.

December (probably 1849), 13 May (probably 1850), and an unknown date and year. These dates fit quite well with the fact that San Diego started to use a circular townmark in 1850. This evidence would seem to confirm that the inscription on the cover in Figure 3 is not a townmark applied at the San Diego post office. The presence of the 28 mm. **STEAMSHIP/10** marking of New York and the lack of a manuscript rate to go with the San Diego marking led to the suspicion that this marking may have been a mail agent marking. The squiggly line to the right of the inscription, a portion of a box around the marking, leads one to believe that this was an agent postmark. Notice that the previous two covers show a box around the postmark. The mail agent markings of Henry D. Beach, as illustrated in *United States Incoming Steamship Mail, 1847-1875, Second Edition*, are very similar in style, including the squiggly line.

George Howe was the mail agent on the October 1, 1852 trip of the *Tennessee* from San Francisco. The *New York Herald* of October 30, 1852, reported the following:

The *Georgia* arrived New York October 29 at 10 p.m., from Aspinwall October 20 with the California mails of October 1. The *Georgia* arrived Kingston October 22 at 2 a.m., and cleared October 23. The *Tennessee* arrived Panama October 19 from San Francisco October 1.

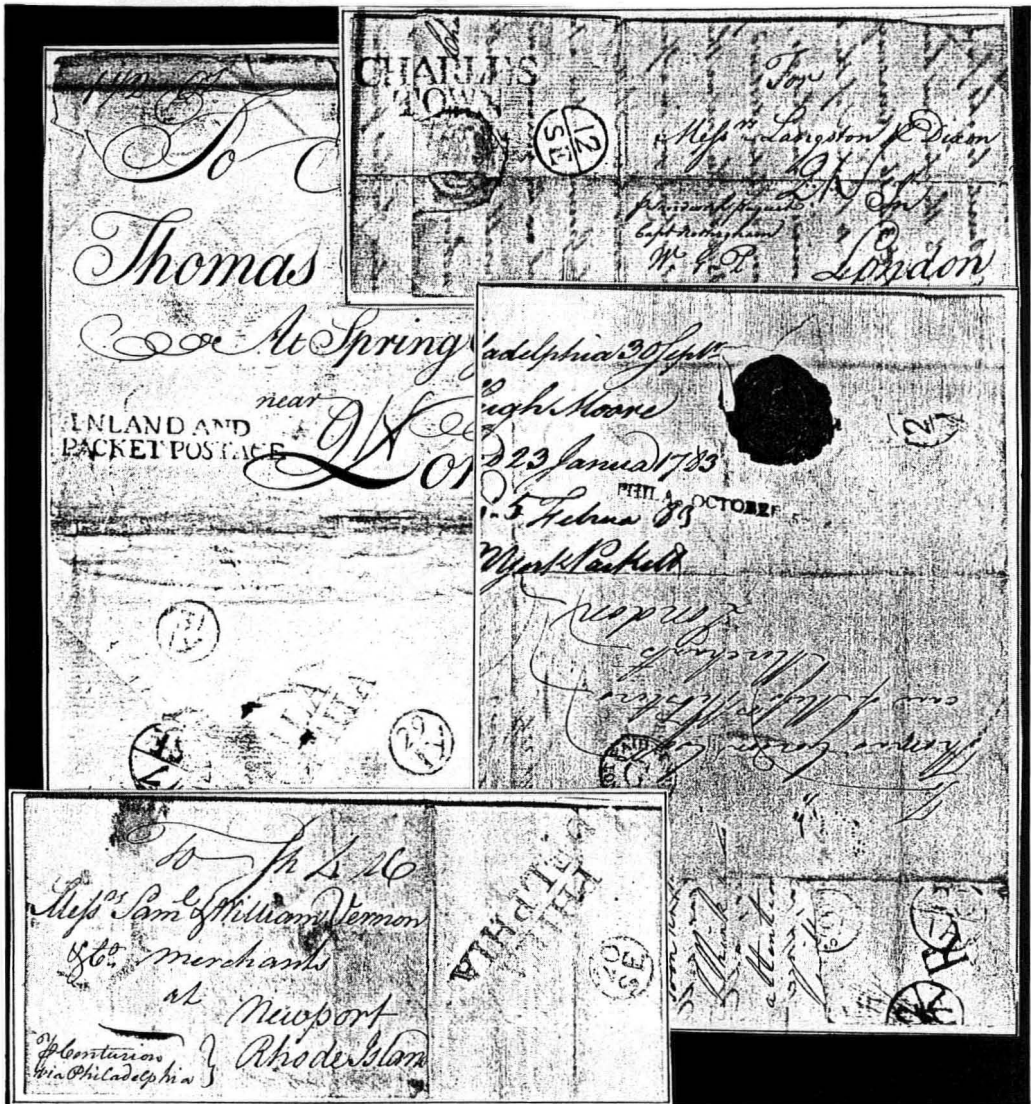
The *Postmaster General's Order Books* contains the following:

November 1, 1852 New York to San Francisco: Government Agency
 Ordered, Allow account of George Howe, at \$55.36 expenses in charge of the U.S. Mail across the Isthmus between the 16' and 20' October 1852, returning, embracing 5 days allowance on the Isthmus, and ref to the auditor to pay.

This is the only reference to Howe found, and it must be that he was a temporary mail agent. In exchange for an individual's passage from San Francisco to New York, the Post Office often employed individuals as mail agents on the trip. The steamship companies with a mail contract were not to charge passage for a mail agent and so the Post Office saved on salary expense.

The author would appreciate seeing photocopies, or better yet, computer scans of any California mail agent markings, either handstamped or manuscript. My e-mail address is twiereng @muskegon.k12.mi.us. □

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ANSWERS TO PROBLEM COVERS IN ISSUE 191

The trio of stampless and unpaid depreciated currency covers from Aasnaes, Norway to Manistee, Michigan, Figures 1 to 3, brought no response in the previous issue. They have been carried over, trusting that some of our Route Agents would share their knowledge.

But first, let's correct the errors in dates that occurred in the summary table in the November issue:

Figure	Entered Mail	Routing	U.S Postage Due
1	Aug. 6, 1873	via England	17 (cents)
2	Jan. 23, 1874	via Tydskland [Germany]	16 (cents)
3	Nov. 1, 1875	?	10 (cents)

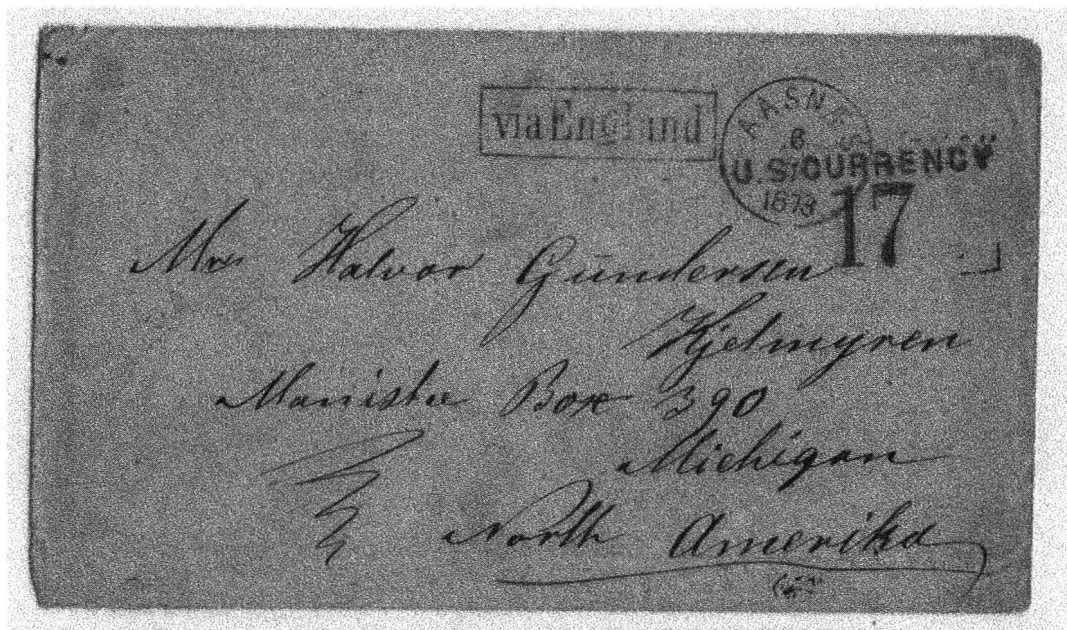


Figure 1. 1873 unpaid letter, Norway to Michigan

Figure 4 illustrates the combined cover backs showing transit routes for each cover. Note that all are different. All markings are in black except for the three "U.S. CURRENCY / 17, 16, & 10" markings which are in blue. Also, there is a black "T" on the 1875 cover hidden under the "0" of the blue "10."

The questions are:

- 1) What was the routing of each cover?
- 2) How were the U.S. postage due rates calculated, viz., 17, 16, 10 (cents)?
- 3) [A new question] What is the significance of the "T" on the 1875 cover?



Figure 2. 1874 unpaid letter, Norway to Michigan

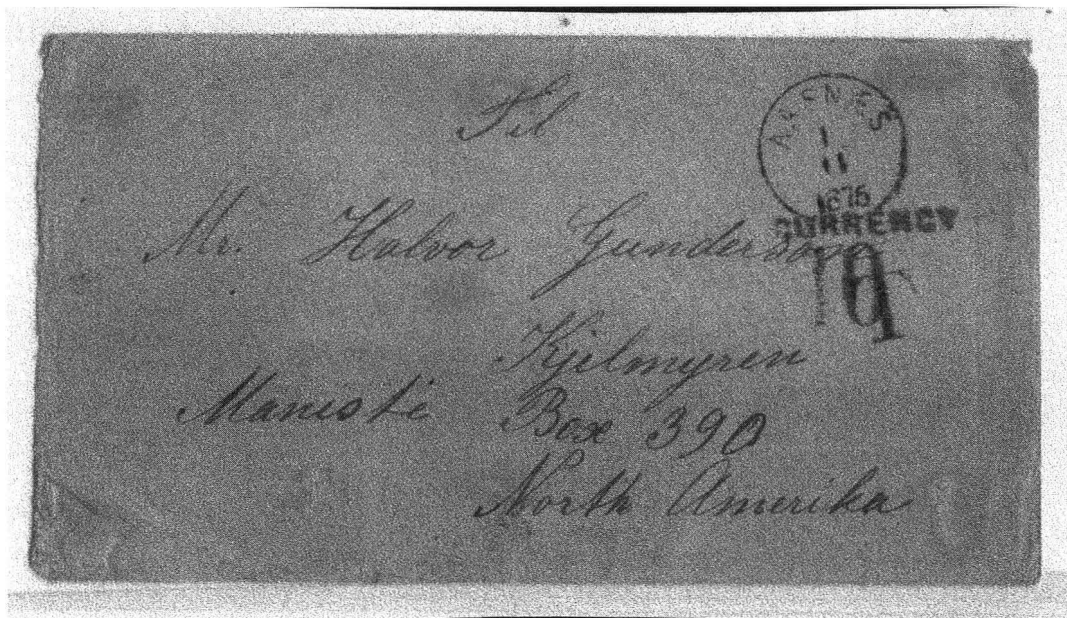


Figure 3. 1875 unpaid letter, Norway to Michigan

In the absence of other input, your editors have provided an opinion for our readers to critique. George E. Hargest, in his *History of Letter Post Communication Between the United States and Europe, 1845-1875*,¹ provides all we need to know:

- First, on 15 March 1873 the U.S. signed a postal convention with Sweden and Norway (united under the same king at this time), to become effective 1 July 1873. A single letter was 15 grams (about 1/2 ounce), but postage rates were complex—different rates for prepaid and unpaid letters, and whether they were:

¹George E. Hargest, *History of Letter Post Communication Between the United States and Europe 1845-1875*, 2nd ed. (Lawrence, Ma. : Quarterman Publications, Inc., 1975), pp. 158-59.

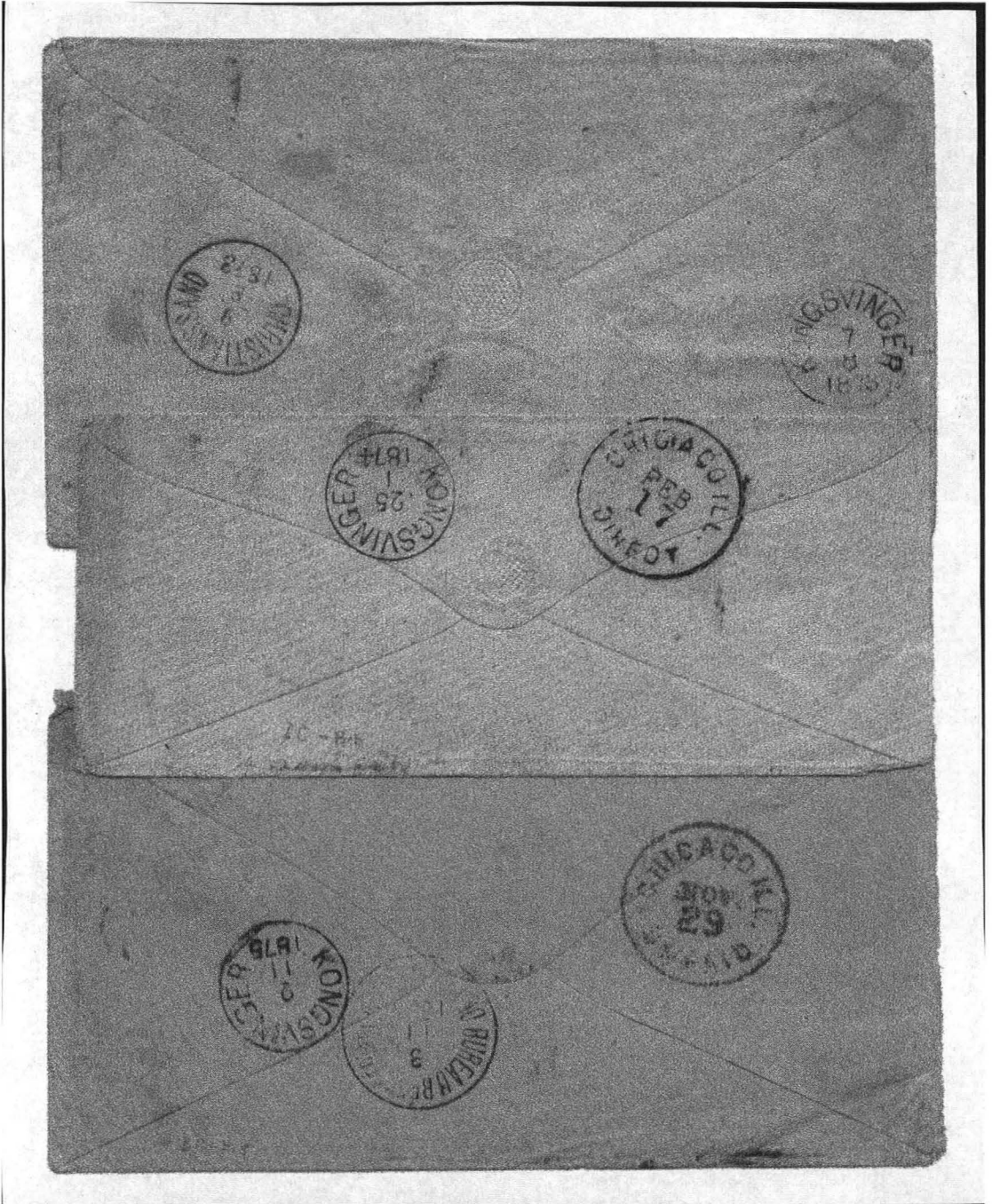


Figure 4. Reverse of the trio of Norway to Michigan covers (Figures 1, 2 and 3 respectively)

A) carried by closed mail via England, regardless of the route from Norway or Sweden;

B) carried by direct steamship between ports in U.S. and in Sweden or Norway.

- Second, the Norse American Line between Bergen and New York received the sea postage on all mail carried. This was a minuscule \$13.01 for the year ending 30 June 1874. The September 1874 edition of the *U.S. Mail and Post Office Assistant* had the following notice:

Mail for Sweden and Norway

. . . there is at present no direct steamship communication between the U.S. and Sweden and Norway, and that correspondence mailed in the United States addressed to those countries can, therefore, only be forwarded in the closed mails of England and Germany.

Therefore, answers to the questions are:

1) None of the three letters went direct from Norway. All three were forwarded through England or Germany and ostensibly carried by the North German Lloyd or by HAPAG to New York: Figures 1 and 2 under the terms of the 1873 S/N-US convention; Figure 3 under the 1875 General Postal Union convention.

2) All covers were sent unpaid in closed bags from Christiansand, so all were rated upon arrival at the exchange office in Chicago. Typical from the U.S. Civil War to UPU, foreign unpaid mail was surcharged for the difference between specie and depreciated paper money. This amount to be collected was always expressed as in "U.S. NOTES" or in "U.S. CURRENCY." The 1873 and 1874 covers were each rated 15¢ by the 1873 Convention plus the depreciated currency ratio. Calculating backwards, this was approximately 1.15 and 1.08, respectively, for the 1873 and 1874 covers. Thus, the amounts to be collected (note rounding to nearest integer) were:

1873 cover – 15¢ x 1.15 = 17.25, or 17¢

1874 cover – 15¢ x 1.08 = 16.20, or 16¢

3) Norway and the U.S. were charter members of the GPU (later the UPU). The 1875 cover is of interest because it is an example of early application of GPU rules effective 1 July 1875. Letters lacking prepayment of the 5¢ per half ounce international rate were to be marked with a "T" by the originating office. The receiving office would thereby be alerted to double the rate for postage due. This was done with the large "10" which on this cover was overstruck on the bold "T."

ANSWERS TO PROBLEM COVERS IN ISSUE 192

Figure 5 shows an interesting "Army Letter" cover from Old Point Comfort, Va. to a box number address in Detroit, circa 1865. All markings are in black. It has a soldier's endorsement at left and a crossed out line "~~OFFICIAL BUSINESS~~" at above left. Two "Due 3" [cents] markings and two consecutive dates (MAY 17 & MAY 18) fill the right side. The upper left side and the back flap each have a large oval (28 x 49 mm.) handstamp "HAVE YOUR / LETTERS DIRECTED / TO YOUR / STREET & NUMBER."

Route Agent Jim Blandford has recently acquired this cover and asks the following questions:

1) Why two receiving dates?

2) Why two different due marks ? Were both applied at Detroit?

3) What was the purpose of the large oval handstamp? Was it applied at Detroit only, or also at other P. O.s?

Route Agents Bernard Biales and Lewis Leigh provided the same analysis. They identified dates "MAY 17 & MAY 18" as attempted delivery (carrier) and/or advertised mail dates. This prompted Greg Sutherland, our Assistant Cover Corner Editor, to research the topic. He found the following in *The United States 1¢ Franklin 1861-1867*, by Don



Figure 5. Old Point Comfort cover (1865) to Detroit, Mich.

Evans.²

An interesting feature of the Act of March 3, 1863, was contained in General Montgomery Blair's instructions for Section 14. Blair stated that the purpose for free delivery was for the convenience of the public and to reduce the labor in the post offices to the effect that "... citizens may have no excuse for clinging to the old custom of calling at the post office. Postmasters will especially discourage the use of private boxes, and steadily aim at reducing them to the lowest number possible."

A troubling thought from Agent Leigh—if postmasters are to discourage calling at the post office for mail, box holders would also be turned away. Is this how paying a fee to rent a P. O. box got started?

Agent Leigh checked further and identified the endorsing officer as "J[ames] W McIlravy / Adj't 30th Ohio Infy." His service record and mustering out of the 30th Ohio on August 13, 1865 definitely dates this cover as 1865.

The 1815 "SHIP letter from Amsterdam to Baltimore to Providence, Figure 6, is a straight forward War of 1812 cover, as long as you remember that the War Rates were in effect for only 14 months, from February 1, 1815 to March 30, 1816. The War Rates added a surcharge of 50% to the previous rates.

Route Agents Pat Walker and Norm Shachat recognized that this folded letter had two sheets and fell within the War Rate Period. Thus, for a distance of 301 to 500 miles (the range for Baltimore to Providence) the single sheet rate was 20¢ plus 50% = 30¢. For 2 sheets, this is doubled to 60¢ and the Ship Letter fee of 2¢ added for a total of 62¢ due.

Markings on this cover were exceptional – a "BALTIMORE MD / NOV / 10" CDS and a straight line "SHIP," both in bright red; a ms. rate "62" and a ms. docketing date at upper left "14 Novm." The inside heading is "Amsterdam August 25, 1815," which clinches the timing for this cover to be within the War Rate Period. Agent Shachat opines,

If the cover were received outside the War Rate Period, a simple triple rate (3 sheets) + 2¢ ship fee would add to the same "62" due. Note that the 2¢ ship letter fee is not affected by the War surcharge.

²Don L. Evans, *The United States 1¢ Franklin 1861-1867* (Sidney, Ohio: Linn's Stamp News, 1997), pp. 203-04.

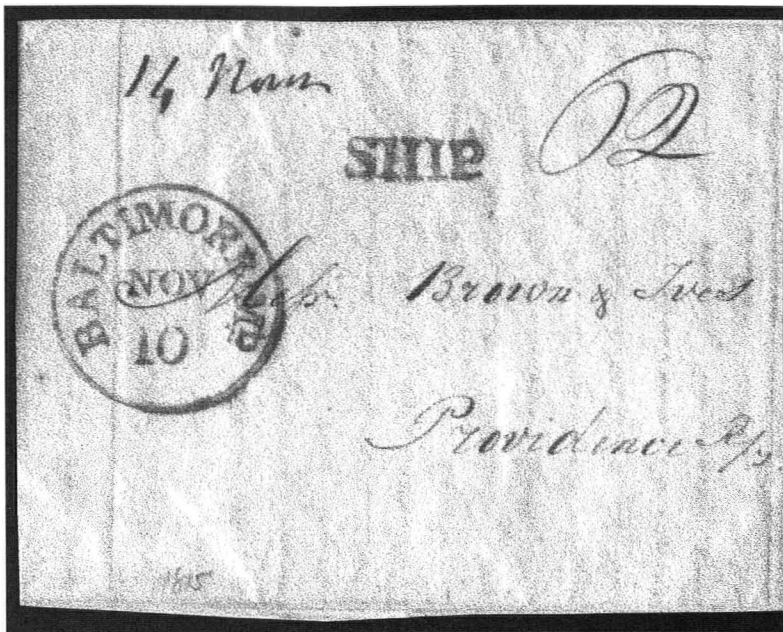


Figure 6. 1815 Letter from Amsterdam to Providence via Baltimore

Figure 7A, an unpaid cover to Watterford, Wisconsin in 1873, is a sequel to a similar group of three unpaid covers to Manistee, Michigan. They were featured in *Chronicles* 191 and 192 with U.S. postage due charged from 10¢ to 17¢. All four originated in the same period from the Norwegian town of Aasnaes. This cover bears a CDS date of “4 / 3 / 1873,” a black postage due h/s “U.S. CURRENCY / 20” at right, and a black European style “11” accountancy mark at left. Figure 7B is the reverse showing all transit markings in black and a boxed “via Tydskland” (Germany) routing h/s.

Three questions:

- 1) How was the postage due calculated?
- 2) What does the accountancy mark represent?
- 3) Where was the “11” accountancy mark applied?

No Route Agents responded to this problem Watterford cover nor to the trio of covers to Manistee, Figures 1 to 4. So your Editors will try again. The analysis of the Watterford cover parallels that for the three covers to Manistee, but with some differences. The primary difference is that this cover entered the mail at Aasnaes, Norway on 4 March 1873, which is prior to the July 1, 1873 effective date of the U.S. postal convention with Norway and Sweden. Transit via Germany (Tydskland) is shown on the reverse, Figure 7B.

Since there was no postal convention between the U.S. and Sweden / Norway prior to that which became effective 1 July 1873, mail between Norway and the United States went through nearby countries using the postal conventions and shipping contracts already in operation. For Norway, these were numerous for it was a period of changing rates, failing and new shipping lines, competition, losses at sea, war (Franco-Prussian), etc. Hargest’s Table B, “Postal Rates to Foreign Countries, 1868-1875,”³ and Starnes’ Table of Rates in *U.S. Letter Rates to Foreign Destinations, 1847 to GPU/UPU*,⁴ list options that were effective in March 1873:

³Hargest, p. 221.

⁴Charles J. Starnes, *United States Letter Rates to Foreign Destinations 1847 to GPU – UPU*, revised ed. (Louisville, Ky.: Leonard H. Hartmann, 1989), p. 33.

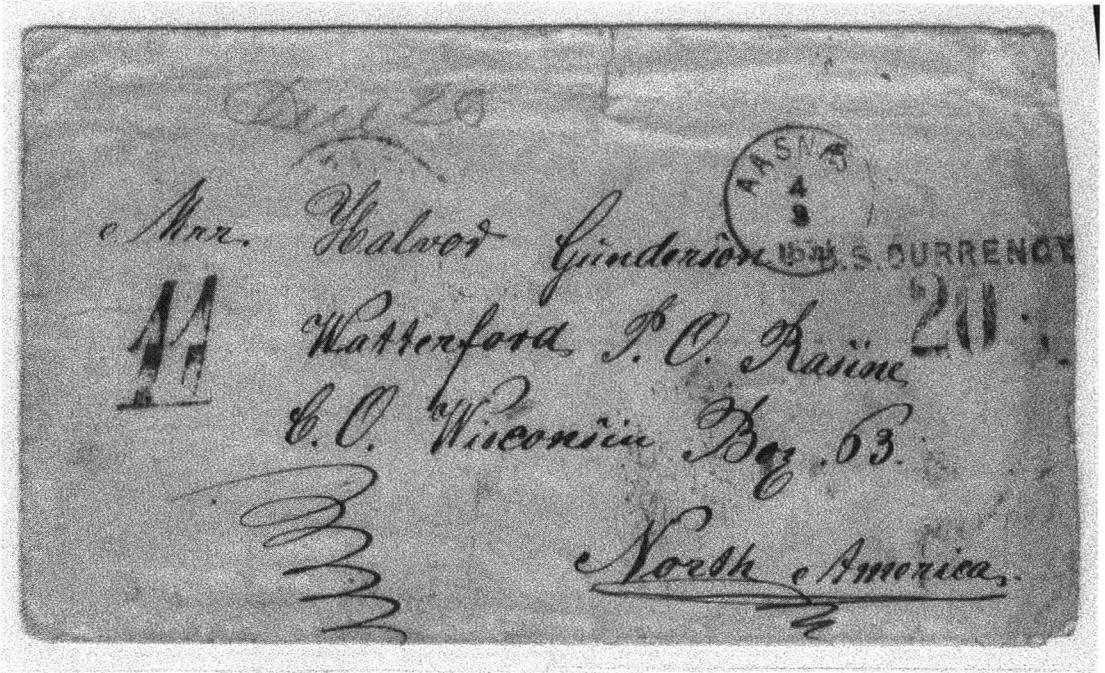


Figure 7A. 1873 unpaid letter Norway to Wisconsin

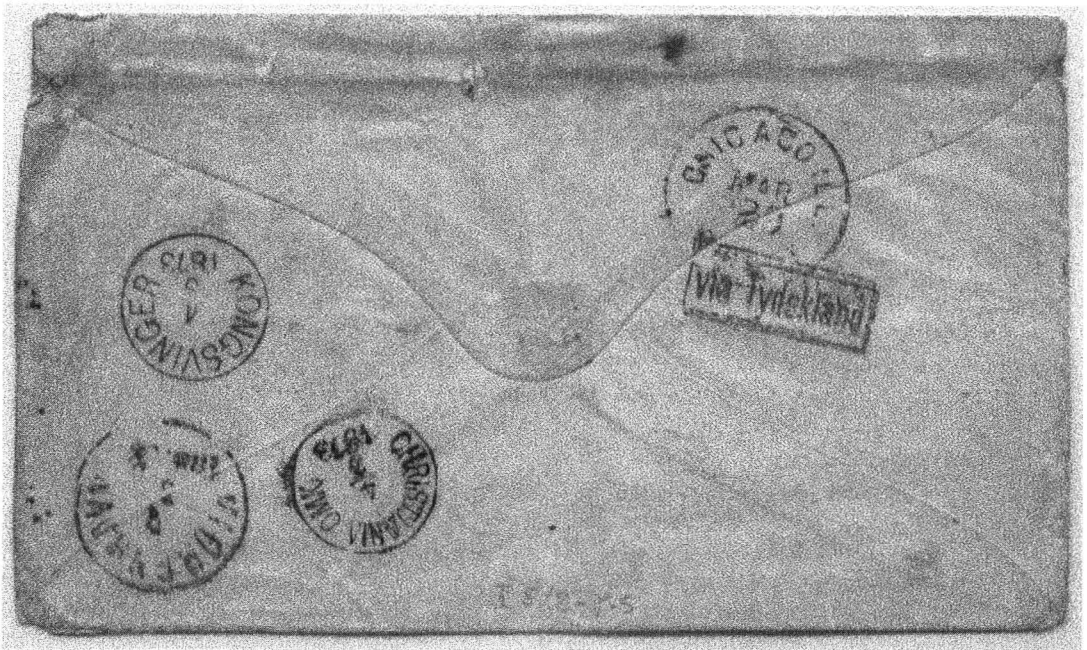


Figure 7B. Reverse of 1873 letter to Wisconsin

- A) North German Union – Closed mail via England.
 Rate – 11¢ - prepayment optional Effective - 2/73 to 7/73
 6¢ International rate + 1¢ British Transit + 4¢ Foreign
- B) North German Union – Direct (No stop in England)
 Rate – 10 ¢ - prepayment optional Effective – 2/73 to 7/73
 6¢ International rate + 4¢ Foreign
- C) U.S. Danish – Direct or closed mail via Germany Effective - 1/72 to 7/75
 Rate – 15¢ - prepayment optional, but 4¢ fine for unpaid or part paid
 7¢ International rate + 4¢ Unpaid fine + 4¢ Foreign (?)

Apparently the exchange office in Christiansand, Norway, sorted this letter by the fastest route available from options, sailing schedules and cost. The cover reverse, Figure 7B, shows the letter went through the Copenhagen and Chicago exchange offices for distribution and assessing of postage due. The large black h/s “11” would be converted to “U.S. CURRENCY / 20” (in black) to be collected from the receiver. This would be a depreciated currency ratio (by calculation) of 1.33, too high for this letter.

This all sounds plausible, but is only a guess at this time. Actually so far as we know, this cover is the only known example having the large “11.” Dick Winter has been asked to apply his wealth of knowledge and experience with transatlantic stampless covers, but he also is stymied. Following is what we know or surmise about our problem cover:

1) The large black “11” looks like a European type number with prominent top serifs. It has not been located in any available references. Van der Linden, *Marques De Passage*,⁵ has nothing.

2) Another difference between the previous three covers from Norway (Figures 1-4) and this (Figure 7) are the routing boxes “via Tydskland” and “via England.” The GPU cover (Figure 3) has none. But the other three covers each have one either on the face or the back. Significantly the “via Tydskland” box on the 1873 cover (Figure 7) is a smaller size, 10 x 27 mm. *versus* 10 x 37 mm.

3) The 1873 cover also has an indistinct Copenhagen transit CDS on its back.

4) All four covers have a Chicago transit CDS on their backs.

5) The 1873 cover is the only one of our four to have been posted (March 4, 1873) in the period of the U.S. – Danish convention, effective 1 January 1872, which provided for closed mails to or from Norway at a rate of 4 skilling per 30 grams of letters postage due marking.⁶ Note that the U.S. – Norwegian /Swedish convention was not effective until 1 July 1873.

Dick Winter and your Cover Corner Editor concur that this problem cover could well be an example of use of the U.S. – Danish postal convention with the small “via Tydskland” box applied at Copenhagen. The “11” accountancy marking may have been applied concurrently. The “U.S. CURRENCY / 20” marking was applied by the Chicago exchange office to indicate the depreciated currency postage due. However, we have not been able to rationalize the “U.S. CURRENCY / 20” postage due except to presume an error. But one cover is not sufficient to prove or to rebut a hypothesis; we need more examples.

This is a request to our route agents to send prints of covers in your collections which illustrate (or disprove) our problem cover’s history. For example:

- Scandinavia (Norway, Sweden, Denmark) covers to U.S. in period 1872-73.
- Any covers showing boxed “via England” or “via Tydskland,” both large and small.
- Covers showing the bold “11” or similar accountancy number.

⁵James Van der Linden, *Catalogue Marques de Passage and 1^{er} Supplement au Catalogue de 1993* (Luxembourg: Soluphil, 1993 and 1999).

⁶Hargest, p. 157.

Figure 8 is a cover from New York to Greytown, Nicaragua in 1875, paid 18¢ in U.S. postage (1¢, 1¢, 3¢, 3¢, 10¢). It received four strikes in black of a NY Foreign Mail cancel across the top of a New York corner card (blue h/s). The reverse has no postal markings; the obverse has two:

- 1) A red CDS "8 / JUN / 30 / NEW-YORK"
- 2) A small black CDS "A / COLON / JU 28" [? – month error]

The following answers are needed:

- A) How was postage determined?
- B) What was the U.S. share and how was it collected?
- C) When did Nicaragua join the GPU /UPU?
- D) The New York CDS is clearly JUN 30; the transit Colon "thimble" looks like JU 28, but this is too early. What happened?
- E) What postal history significance is there to the date of this cover?



Figure 8. New York to Greytown, Nicaragua in 1875

Route Agent Michael Brown sent a complete answer to this problem cover, as follows:

Greytown is present day San Juan del Norte on the Caribbean (east coast) side of Nicaragua. In 1875 it was served by British mail packets from Colon, Panama. This cover was mailed at New York on 30 Jun (1875 per the Colon CDS) and carried by U.S. Mail Packet to Colon. There it was exchanged at the British Mail Agency and sent on to Greytown by British packet.

The 18 cents U.S. franking is correct for the date mailed, 30 June 1875, which was the last day for the rate. The rate was divided 10 cents for US carriage to Colon and 8 cents for British transport to Greytown. The red CDS "8 / JUN / 30 / NEW-YORK" was applied at New York to denote the 8 cent credit to Great Britain, since the cover was prepaid to destination.

On July 1, 1875 the rate changed to 13 cents. With US entry into the GPU/UPU, the US rate to Colon was reduced to 5 cents. However, since Nicaragua did not join the UPU until 1882, the onward British rate from Colon remained 8 cents. Thus, the new rate effective 1 July 1875 became 13 cents (5 + 8 cents).

The British two letter abbreviation for July as used in the small "Colon" CDS was JY, so the "JU" must be in error.

For those wanting to look further, Michael has identified the NY Foreign Mail cancellation as type W6/GE-EP3, and the cover is listed in *The Foreign Mail Cancellations of New York City 1870-1878*, by Weiss.⁷

Figure 9: this cover came from a Union ship during the period of the U.S. Civil War. It has a pencil date across the bottom, "May 8 1862," ostensibly when received but could also be date of writing. There are no postal markings on the reverse; the obverse has two, both in black:

A) Circle "SOLDIERS LETTER / 24th REGT.MASS.VOL." with "N.E.G." across the middle

B) "Thimble" size circle "U.S.SHIP / 3 Cts"

Please provide answers to the following:

1. What does the abbreviation "N.E.G." stand for?
2. Why was postage of only 3¢ charged, vice 5¢, which was the ship letter rate at the time?

Route Agents Lewis Leigh and Bob Stets both contributed data about this cover. First, Bob Stets provides us a history refresher and a reference regarding ship letter rates as approved by an Act of Congress February 27, 1861 (effective May 1):

Sec. 9 *And be it further enacted* that every letter or packet brought into the United States, or carried from one port therein to another in any private ship or vessel shall be charged with five cents, if delivered at the post office where the same shall arrive; and if destined to be conveyed by post to any other place, with two cents added to the ordinary rates of postage.

(See postage rates for "U.S. Ship/Steamboat Letters."⁸) Thus, in 1862, ship letters (single) were usually charged 5¢.

Bob writes:

The letter illustrated was probably not written by someone on a ship, but by a soldier who was part of an occupying force along the South Carolina coast between Hilton Head and Charleston. Following the occupation of Hilton Head Island by Federal forces in November 1861, the Confederates decided that the sea islands along the South Carolina coast were indefensible and ordered everyone to evacuate. Federal military forces, mostly from New Hampshire and Massachusetts, then occupied them, living in the abandoned plantation homes. The 1st Mass. occupied Edisto Island (about 40 miles S.E. of Walterboro), and the 28th Mass. Vols. took part in the Battle of Secessionville (on the outskirts of Charleston).

Agents Bob and Lewis concur that the "N.E.G." stands for "New England Guard," the nickname of the 24th Mass. Vols. The "SOLDIERS LETTER" hand stamp substituted for the required officer's certification that it is due 3¢ rather than 5¢. Ordinarily 5¢ would be charged for a ship letter per the Act of Congress effective 1 May 1861, 3¢ for postage and 2¢ to the captain of the non-contract ship that delivered the letters to the post office. But captains of U.S. ships that carried tons of mail between the federal troops occupying coastal South Carolina and northern ports were not allowed to accept the 2¢ fee. Thus by identifying this mail at the port of arrival (usually Philadelphia or New York) as being brought in by a U.S. ship, the special rate for soldiers and sailors letters (3¢) was recognized.

The pencilled docketing on the lower front of the cover (May 8, 1862) serves to establish the date the letter was either addressed or received.

⁷William R. Weiss, Jr., *The Foreign Mail Cancellations of New York City 1870-1878* (Bethlehem, PA: the Author, 1990).

⁸Raymond W. Carlin, Chart of rates for Ship and Steamboat Letters, 1799 to 1883, in "Additional Answer to Problem Cover in Issue 198," *Chronicle* #185 (February 2000), p. 72.



Figure 9. "SOLDIER'S LETTER" with "U. S. Ship / 3 CTS."

PROBLEM COVERS FOR THIS ISSUE

The problem covers in Figures 10A and B and in Figure 11 enclosed legal depositions sent from Lebanon, Ohio to Connersville, Indiana, and from Baltimore, Md. to New Lisbon, Ohio. A common marking on both of these covers is the manuscript "A" found either on front or back. Both covers also have a "2" added to the postage to be collected, and the cover from Lebanon has a small "c" (or is it an "a"?) at lower left. Please explain the postage ratings on these covers, the significance of the "A" and "2," and the meaning, if any, of the small "c" on Figure 10A.

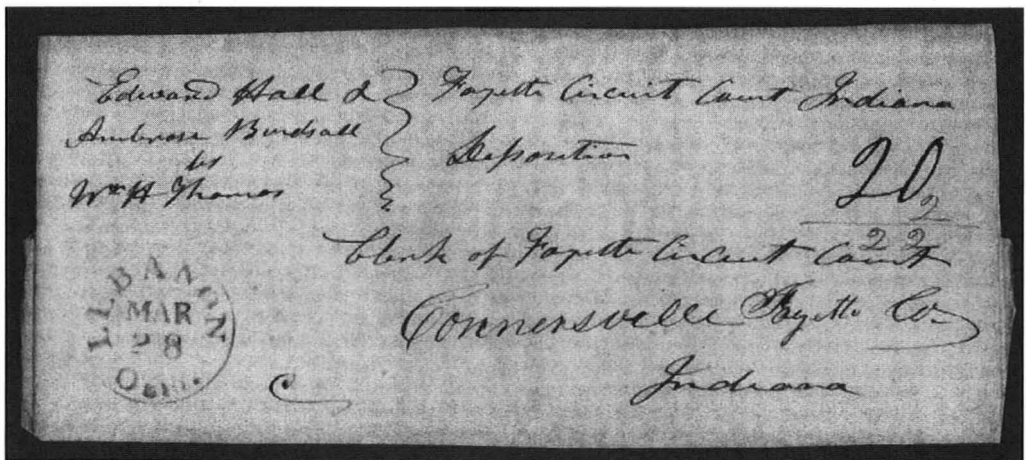


Figure 10A. 1848 legal deposition to Connersville, Indiana

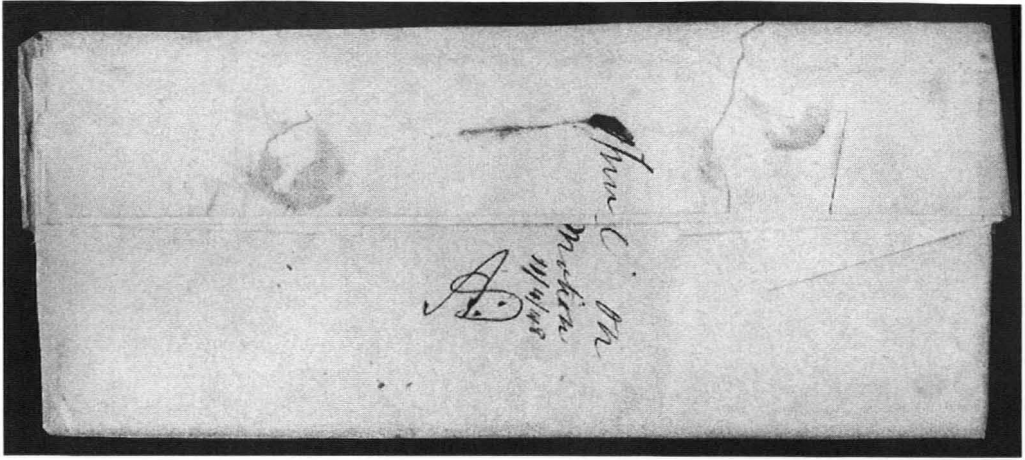


Figure 10B. Reverse of Connersville cover showing fancy "A"

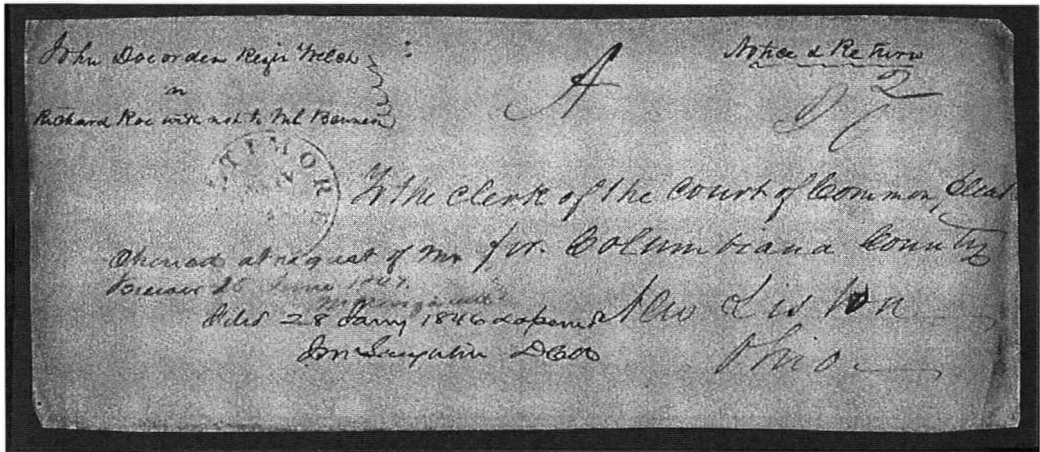


Figure 11. Face of legal cover to New Lisbon, Ohio with large "A"

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 May 2002 Cover Corner is April 10, 2002. I can receive mail at 9068 Fontainebleau Terrace, Cincinnati, Ohio, 45231-4808, and via an e-mail address: 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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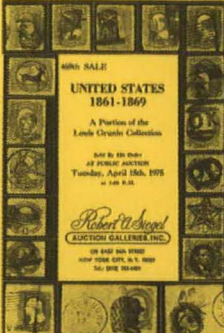
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