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November 2003

Volume 55, No. 4

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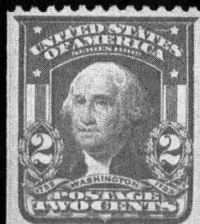
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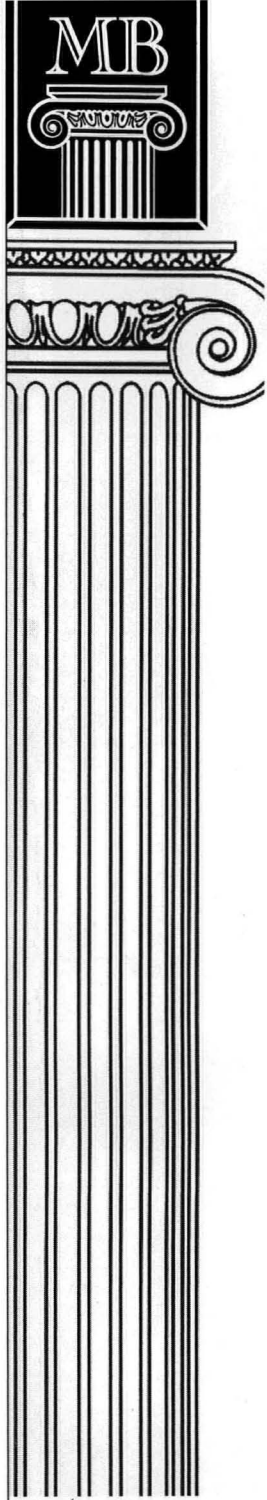
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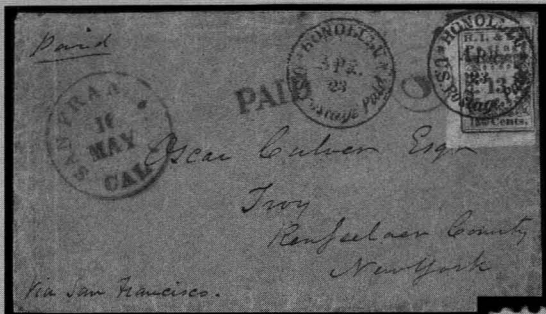
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IN THIS ISSUE

U.S. CARRIERS & INDEPENDENT MAILS

What Is a “Drop Letter” and a “Drop Dead Letter”?,
by *Vernon R. Morris Jr., M.D.* (continued from *Chronicle* 199:180)247

GUEST PRIVILEGE

Due 6 Cents, by *James W. Milgram, M.D.* (continued from *Chronicle* 182:100) 269

CONFEDERATE STATES

Unique Intra-State Trans-Mississippi Express Mail Cover, by *Joe H. Crosby*293

THE BANK NOTE PERIOD

Detroit, Michigan Patent Cancel Use- A New Discovery, by *Charles A. Wood* ..297

OFFICIALS *ET AL.*

Usages of Department of Justice Official Stamps, by *Alan C. Campbell*
(continued from *Chronicle* 199:230).....302

THE FOREIGN MAIL

Another Part Paid British Mail Cover Is Found, by *Richard F. Winter*308

THE COVER CORNER

Additional Answers to Problem Covers in Issues 197-198311

Additional “Have Your Letters Directed . . .” Markings313

New Problem Cover for This Issue314

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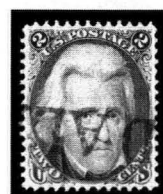
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WHAT IS A "DROP LETTER" AND A "DROP DEAD LETTER"?

VERNON R. MORRIS JR., M.D.

(continued from *Chronicle* 199:180)

Act of May 8, 1794

A 1¢ emolument was due the postmaster to hold a letter. An emolument is defined as "profit arising from office or employment; compensation for services" similar to a tip, reward, or commission.²⁸ (Figure 11)

Carriers served the local post office. Carrier delivery was 2¢. Section 28 reads: And be it further enacted that letter carriers shall be employed at such Post Offices, as the Postmaster General shall direct, for the delivery of letters in the places respectively where such Post Offices are established; and for the delivery of each such letter, the letter carrier may receive of the person to whom the delivery is made **two cents**; PROVIDED, that no letter shall be delivered to such letter carrier for distribution, addressed to any person who shall have lodged at the Post Office a **written request** that their letters shall be retained in the office.²⁹

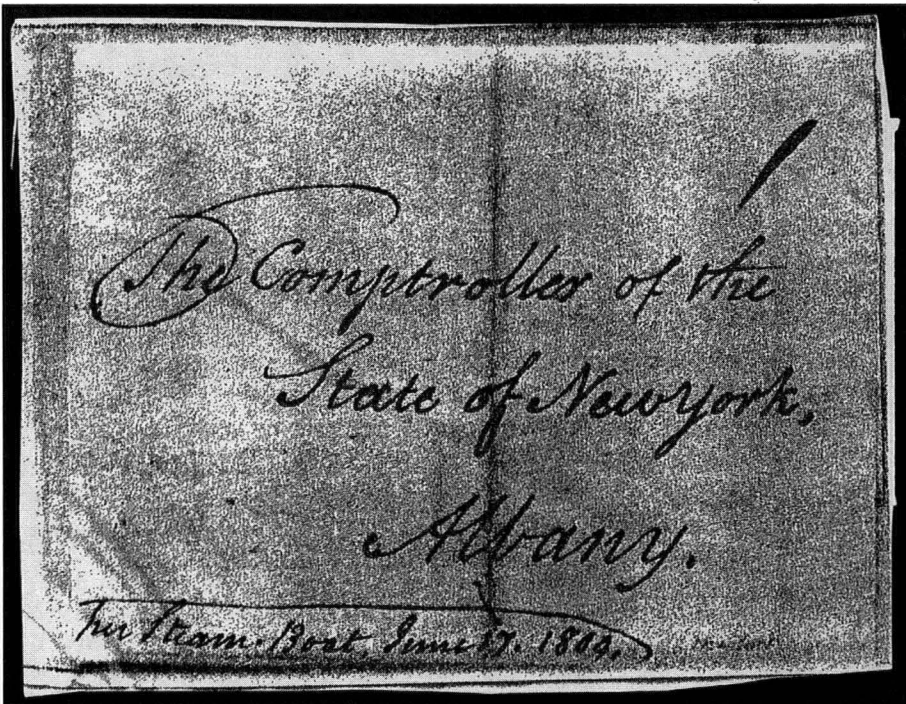


Figure 11. This manuscript "1" rated folded letter was dropped at the Albany Post Office. The manuscript "per Steam Boat, June 17, 1800" records this letter as the third earliest steamboat letter to Albany. Courtesy Calvet Hahn.

²⁸Webster's *Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language* (New York: Portland House, 1997).

²⁹Hahn, "The Early Development of Carrier Service," p. 10.

In 1753, Ben Franklin established a penny post in Philadelphia.³⁰ Intracity delivery service existed in London by 1680, Massachusetts by 1689,³¹ and New York by 1692.^{32,33}

Effective June 1, 1794 this law re-enacted the nine intercity zone rates of the Act of February 20, 1792.

Act of March 2, 1799

The 1¢ emolument remained in effect. Section 27 elaborated upon “drop” emolument versus carrier delivery fees:

... letter carriers shall be employed at such post offices as the Postmaster General shall direct, for the delivery of letters in the places respectively where such post-offices are established; and for the delivery of each such letter, the letter carrier may receive of the person to whom the delivery is made, two cents; Provided that no letter shall be delivered to such letter carrier for distribution, addressed to any person who shall have lodged at the post-office a written request that his letters be detained in the office. And for every letter **lodged at any post-office, not to be carried by post, but to be delivered at the place where it is so lodged, the postmaster shall receive one cent of the person to whom it shall be delivered.**³⁴

(See Figure 12) The intercity zones distances were reduced to six.

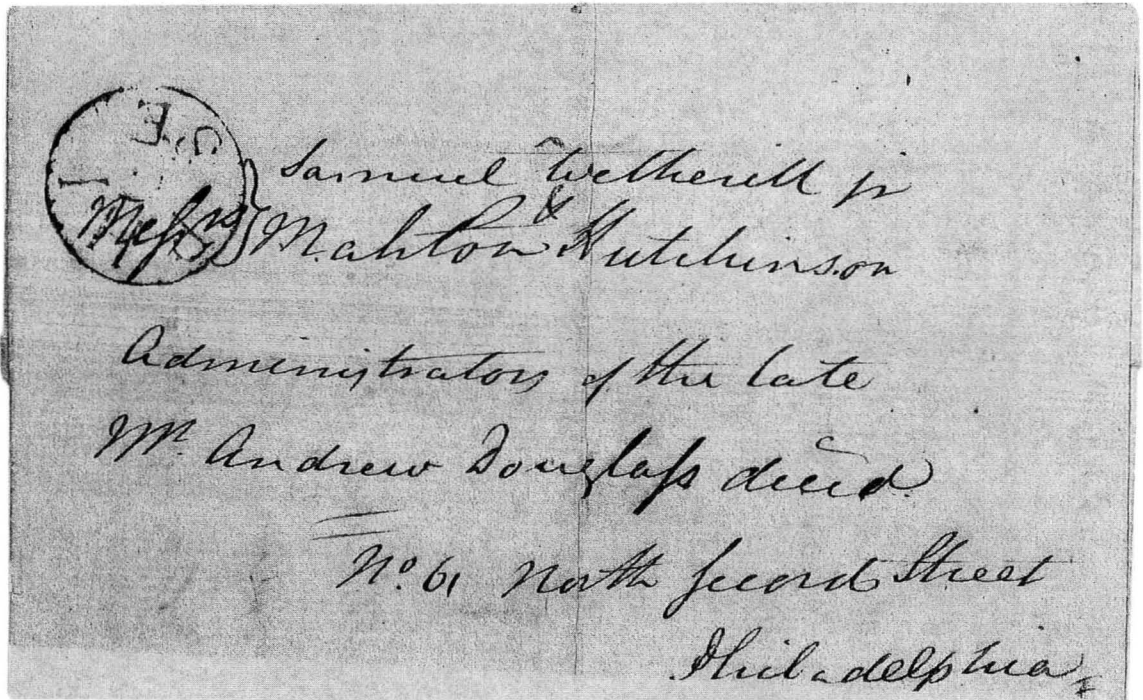


Figure 12. A folded letter sheet internally docketed Sept 6 1802 and transported outside the mails from “Rockwell near Germantown,” which is in Philadelphia County. Unrated and addressed to the Old City of Philadelphia, magenta circular “PHI / 6 / SE” datestamp, Clarke Type 50a, indicates that it was “dropped” at the main post office in Philadelphia for the recipient to pick up.

³⁰John F. Watson, *Annals of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania in the Olden Times*, Vol. 2 (Philadelphia, Pa.: E.S. Stuart, 1891), p. 392.

³¹Hahn, “The Early Development of Carrier Service,” p. 16.

³²Calvet M. Hahn, “Letter Carrier Service In New York,” *Chronicle*, Vol. 25, No. 4 (Whole No. 80)(November 1973), p. 246.

³³Steven M. Roth, “The War Against the Private Expresses: An Examination of the Post Office’s Monopoly Power,” *Chronicle*, Vol. 46, No. 1 (Whole No. 161)(February 1994), p. 17.

³⁴Steven M. Roth, “The Writing Says: ‘2¢.’ Why?,” *The Penny Post*, Vol. 4, No. 4 (October 1994), p. 23.

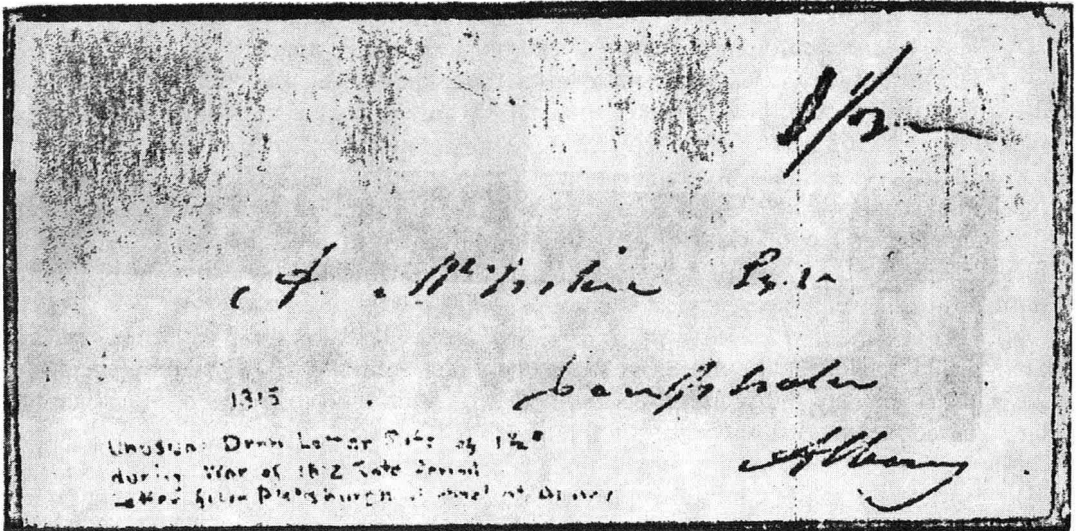


Figure 13. Internally docketed August 26, 1815, transported outside the mails from Pittsburgh to Albany, this cover was dropped at the Albany Post Office for pick up by the recipient McIntyre who was charged 1 1/2¢. Courtesy Calvet Hahn.

Act of December 23, 1814

All postal rates were increased 50% for the fourteen months between February 1, 1815 and March 30, 1816 to finance the War of 1812. The “drop” emolument was not specifically increased since it was not a rate. Emoluments went to the postmaster, and certainly would not benefit the war effort. Nevertheless, at least nine covers from this period are recorded bearing a manuscript “1 1/2.”³⁵ (Figure 13) Since the postmaster also received a percentage commission of overall revenue, he did in fact benefit from the increased War Rate.³⁶

Act of March 3, 1825

The local “drop” emolument remained 1¢. Effective July 1, Section 36 reiterated that “for every letter lodged in any post office, not to be carried by post, but to be delivered at the place it is so lodged, the postmaster shall receive one cent of the person to whom it shall be delivered.”³⁷ The term “**Letter Box Letters**” was introduced in 1832 for letters “not for transmission.”³⁸ The Philadelphia Post Office generally applied either a cds or rate marking on “drop” letters, but usually not both.³⁹

In 1823, seven letter carriers worked in Philadelphia⁴⁰ and an equal number in New York⁴¹ as part of their respective post offices rather than as part of a comprehensive federal system. Whereas New York had established many carrier collection boxes throughout the city by 1833,⁴² Philadelphia had none until circa 1851.⁴³

³⁵Hahn, “Origin of the Drop Letter Charge,” p. 362.

³⁶*Ibid.*

³⁷Roth, “The War Against the Private Expresses,” p. 21.

³⁸Hahn, “Origin of the Drop Letter Charge,” p. 286.

³⁹Hahn, “The Early Development of Carrier Service,” p. 24.

⁴⁰Elliot Perry, “The Carrier Stamps of the United States: Philadelphia,” *Chronicle*, Vol. 34, No. 3 (Whole No. 115)(August 1982), p. 173.

⁴¹Hahn, “The Early Development of Carrier Service,” p. 16.

⁴²*Ibid.*, p. 24.

⁴³Perry, p. 177.

Act of July 2, 1836, For the Reorganization of the Post Office

The 1¢ “drop” emolument remained a perquisite of the Postmaster.

The Postmaster General was analogous to a present day general manager of a federal carrier system which allowed the postmasters to micromanage their own post office, including the hiring and firing of carriers. Whereas prior acts of Congress stipulated carrier delivery at 2¢, this “Reorganization of the Post Office” law in Section 41 modified the language into “*not to exceed 2¢*.”⁴⁴ Section VIII of the Postal Regulations which implemented this law on October 4, 1836 allowed the Postmaster to “direct” the carrier fees,⁴⁵ hence, the beginning of the “Discretionary Period,” which lasted until 1860. The full utility of this power, however, wasn’t exercised until 1849.

This was the *first law to specify carrier collection*. It required the collection fee “to the Mails” be paid by the sender, but the delivery fee “from the Mails” could be paid by the addressee.⁴⁶ City mail (collection and delivery within the same city) also appears to have started, at least in New York. Furthermore, in 1836 New York established a branch post office and carrier collection boxes in the upper part of the city.⁴⁷

However, a subtle conflict of interests was developing in the few burgeoning large cities. The Postmaster was receiving emoluments from “drop” letters and (locked) rental boxes for letters *not* delivered. These disincentives were at odds with the development of a large and efficient corps of carriers who were paid *to deliver* letters.

Act of May 18, 1842

The “drop” emolument remained 1¢. This law concerned *Postmaster accountability* and possible excessive income from local services. For the first time it also mentioned *branch post offices*:⁴⁸

It shall be the duty of postmasters at New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore and New Orleans, and the other several cities of the Union, each and every year hereafter, to render a quarter-yearly account to the Postmaster General under oath. In such form as then latter shall prescribe, for the purpose of giving full effects to this proviso, of all **emoluments or sums by them respectively received for boxes, or pigeon-holes, or other receptacles for letters or papers, and by them charged for** to Individuals; or for the delivery of letters or papers at or from any place in either of said cities, other than the actual post office of such city; and of emoluments, receipts and profits, that have come to their hands by reason of keeping branch post offices in either of said cities.

Emoluments were funds collected on site for miscellaneous services such as the rental of locked boxes and drop letter charges. Emoluments had not been previously reported to Washington, and could contribute significantly to the local postmaster’s compensation.

By 1844, the New York Post Office housed 3,228 rental boxes.⁴⁹ As mentioned earlier, the base income of several postmasters was \$2,000 before perquisites. Postmasters of the few largest cities had been earning more than the Vice President of the United States, whose salary until 1873 was \$5,000 a year. *This law limited a Postmaster’s total income to \$5,000 per year.*⁵⁰

Act of March 3, 1845

A Federal “drop rate” was established. The postmaster no longer received an emolument and the funds went to the United States Treasury. This law **first coined the**

⁴⁴Steven M. Roth, “The Reform of the Penny Post in 1836,” *Chronicle*, Vol. 45, No. 3 (Whole No. 159)(August 1993), pp. 161-167.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, p. 166.

⁴⁶Perry, p. 227.

⁴⁷Hahn, “The Early Development of Carrier Service,” pp. 19-20.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, p. 23.



Figure 14. Red Philadelphia cds on a December 18, 1843 letter originating from and addressed to the old city of Philadelphia. Courtesy Norman Shachat.

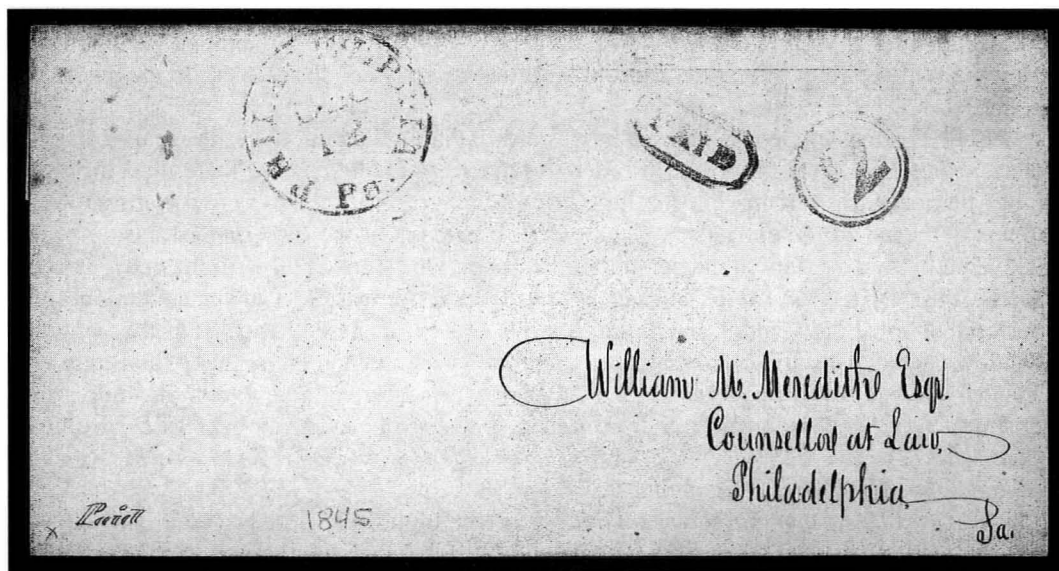


Figure 15. An unusual example of a prepaid drop letter. Blue Philadelphia numeral 2 in double circle handstamp, blue Philadelphia PAID in octagon handstamp, blue Clarke type 59a Philadelphia Dec 12 cds on an 1845 large envelope written to an attorney in Philadelphia, but no street address.

term “drop letter.” The rate was boldly doubled to 2¢ (Figure 15)! Effective July 1, Section 1 clarified that “all drop letters, or letters placed in any post office, not for transmission by mail, but for delivery only, shall be charged with postage at the **rate of two cents each.**” Sympathy for postmasters was not in vogue and Congress was anxious about the large intercity rate reductions.

2¢ in the 1840s was not an insignificant amount of money. By definition the drop “rate” goes to Washington. The liberal interpretation of a “drop letter,” however, also involved the service of a carrier, whose 2¢ “fee” would remain locally in the carrier department. A letter dropped off at a post office in a city with a carrier department such as Philadelphia would be held there to be picked up for 2¢. If not called for within the prescribed time, would the carrier be willing to deliver the letter, similar to his instructions for delivering incoming letters “From the Mails?” Of course he would similarly want to be paid his 2¢ “fee” as well. For delivery to a street address, either business or home, **4¢ for the combined “rate” and “fee” was objectionable.**⁵¹ The recipient was more likely to refuse acceptance and the carrier’s labor bear no fruit. Clearly, in the late 1840s a “drop letter” did not include carrier delivery service.

Drop service was expensive and understandably avoided at this time, especially if the house or business address was known and direct delivery provided by local post or even via city mail directly by carrier. Exceedingly few examples remain which are government marked with both the 2¢ “rate” and 2¢ “fee.” Private posts were likewise affected but probably to a lesser degree (Figure 16).

Intercity postage was significantly reduced, responding to competitive pressure of the newly defunct independent mails. Rates had been determined by distance and the five zones were reduced to two, 5¢ under 300 miles and 10¢ over.⁵² A single rate was no longer determined by the number of sheets but by ½ ounce increments.

Reorganization of 1849

The high 2¢ “drop rate” was retained throughout the land. Figure 17 illustrates a local folded letter sheet canceled with a numeral “2” due from the recipient. At this time 2¢ was the “drop rate” and not consistent with the carrier “fee” for delivery to the business address.

The Postmaster General, however, was aware that in the large cities the letter carriers were losing to the private posts. In order to improve market share of local mail in large cities he needed to circumvent the high “drop rate,” resulting in the provision that “All letters delivered to the carriers . . . addressed to persons in the City or Districts . . . are delivered by said carriers to the persons addressed at One Cent each, **without being taken to the Post Office, or made subject to the drop letter rate.**”⁵³ Carrier collection and delivery of local “city mail” in the large cities was sequestered away from the general window of the Post Office. The high 2¢ “drop rate” was retained at the many thousands of smaller post offices throughout the country, but not in the few large cities. Secondly, the Postmaster General exercised his discretionary power to alter carrier fees as he deemed necessary. Effective February 19, 1849 *all carrier fees were ordered reduced by 50% in Philadelphia, New York, Boston, and Baltimore.*⁵⁴

Carrier Department prepayment adhesives (see Figure 17) were issued in nine cities, which greatly increased the facility of collection boxes for outbound mail. New York was

⁵¹Elliot Perry, “U.S. Letter Carrier Stamps of Philadelphia Under the Fee System 1849 to 1863,” *National Philatelic Museum*, Vol. VI, No. 4 (1954), p. 489.

⁵²Phillips, p. xviii.

⁵³Roth, “A 5¢ 1847 Letter Revisited,” p. 27.

⁵⁴Perry, p. 176.

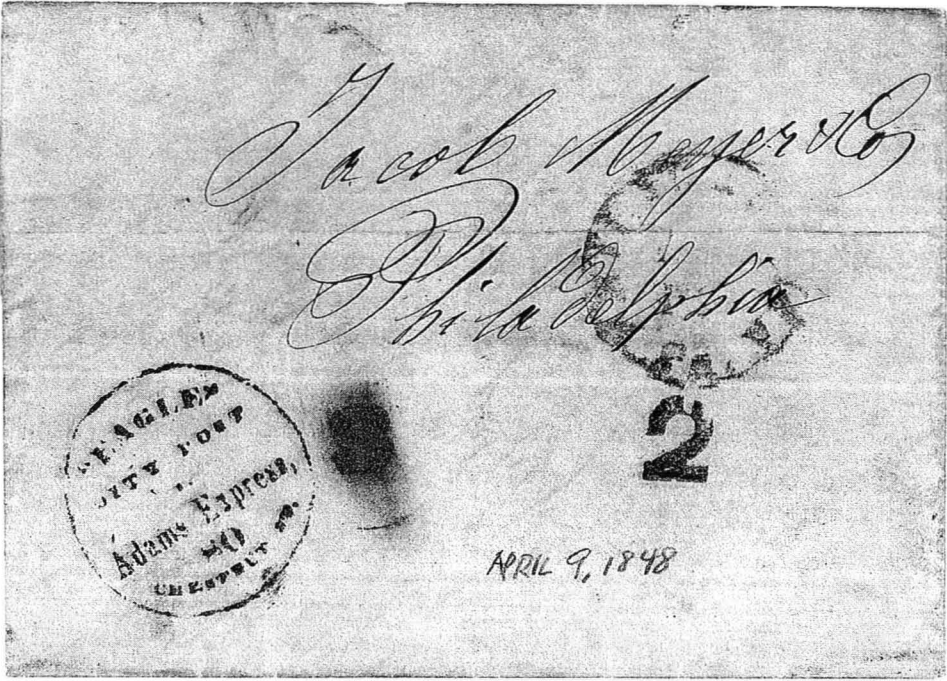


Figure 16. An out of town man on a business trip used a private post to deliver and "drop" this letter at the post office, 5¢ collect due from the recipient. This folded letter sheet is internally docketed "Philadelphia April 9, 1848"; red Eagle City Post circular handstamp with matching red numeral "3"; blue Philadelphia cds with "attached 2", Clarke type 59b, handstamp, addressed to an individual, without street address, in Philadelphia. The letter contents are telling. The sender was from New York and was very briefly in Philadelphia on business. He declares "your store have been closed and I did not now where to finde you."

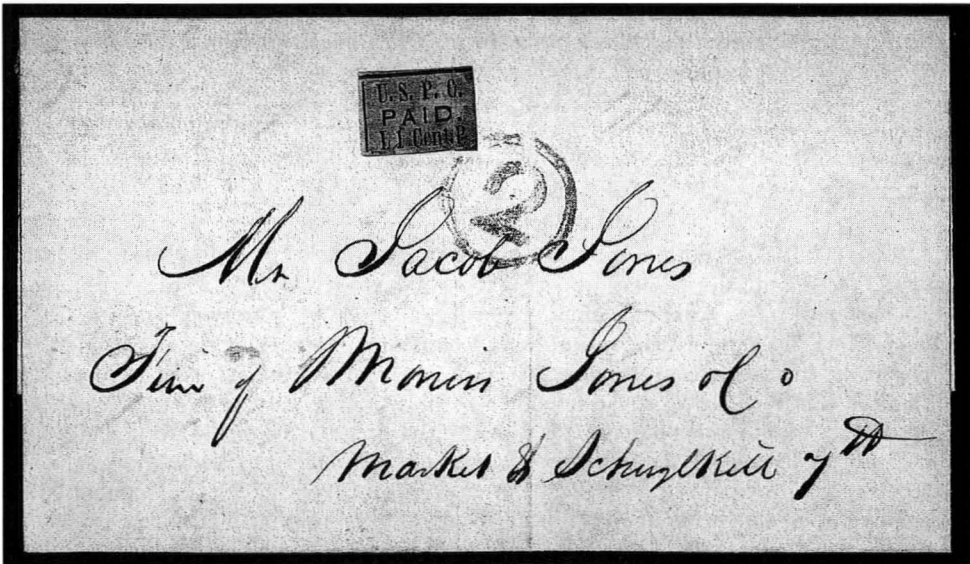


Figure 17. Philadelphia Carrier Department typeset adhesive prepaying collection service to the Philadelphia Post Office, canceled by a blue numeral "2" in double line circle. Inside datelined November 26, 1849 the letter was to be held for pick up, and charged 2¢ collect in cash or charged to an account. Total cost was 3¢.



Figure 18. 1859 photograph showing a street collection box at the northwest corner of 9th and Chestnut Streets in Philadelphia. From *Old Philadelphia in Early Photographs 1839-1914*, by Robert Looney, p. 135.

already stationed with 112 boxes by 1842,⁵⁵ which were used for city mail. Outbound mail could be sent collect, whereas the cost for carrier collection service “To the Mails” could not be passed on to the recipient of another city.

Act of March 3, 1851

Effective July 1, Section 1 reduced the “**drop rate**” to 1¢ (see Figure 9). Section 10 empowered the Postmaster General to:

establish post routes within the cities or towns, to provide for conveying letters to the post office, **by establishing suitable and convenient places of deposit**, and by employing carriers to receive and deposit them in the post office; and at such offices it shall be in his power to cause letters to be delivered by suitable carriers, to be appointed by him for that purpose, for which NOT EXCEEDING one or two ¢ shall be charged, to be paid by the person receiving or sending the same; and all sums so received shall be paid into the Post Office Department; provided, the amount of **compensation allowed by the Postmaster General to carriers** shall in no case exceed the amount paid into the Treasury by each town or city, under the provisions of this section.

⁵⁵Calvet M. Hahn, “Letter Carrier Service in New York,” *Chronicle*, Vol. 26, No. 4 (Whole No. 84)(November 1974), p. 244.

Government collection boxes were recently established at convenient locations throughout Philadelphia.⁵⁶ (Figure 18) Since the carrier had to be paid for outbound letters, prepaid carrier department adhesives obviated the need to personally travel to the post office or locate the carrier on his route or at his home.

This Act included another wave of intercity rate reductions. One-half ounce up to 3,000 miles was only 3¢ prepaid or 5¢ collect. A prepaid letter sent from Philadelphia to New Orleans, for instance, was reduced from 10¢ to 3¢.

Act of March 3, 1855

The “drop rate” remained 1¢ (Figure 19).

Effective April 1, 1856, Section 1 required all intercity mail be prepaid, 3¢ up to 3,000 miles. Drop mail, however, was not included in compulsory prepayment. Charge accounts, which comprised only 1% of all mid-century letters,⁵⁷ came to an end.

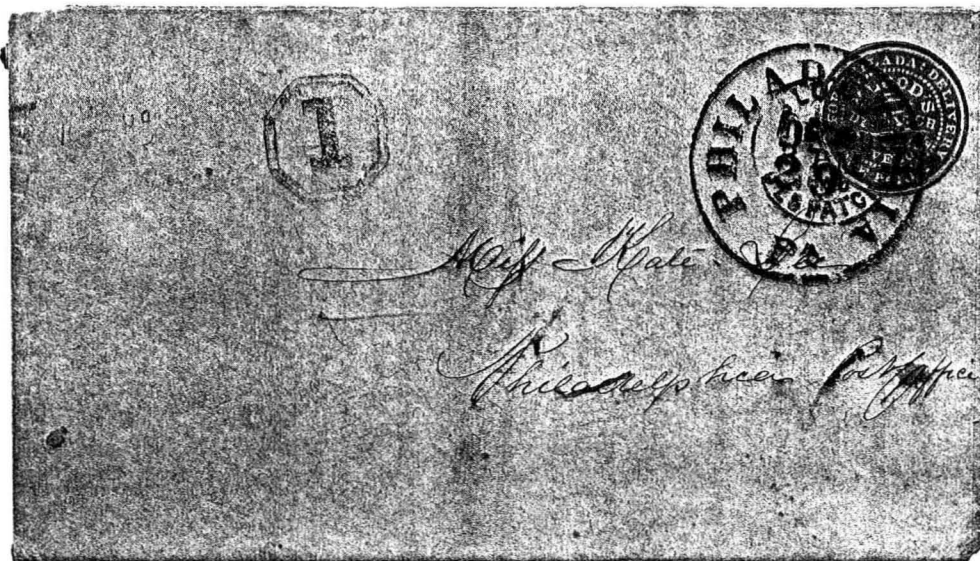


Figure 19. Blood’s entire delivered in 1856, canceled by a Philadelphia December 26 cds, to the Philadelphia Post Office where it was held for the addressee who was charged 1 cent, designated by the numeral “1” in double octagon. Courtesy John Bowman.

Reorganization of 1857

The “drop rate” remained 1¢. Prepayment of “drop” letters was optional according to Section 77 of the Postal Regulations of 1857.⁵⁸

City mail in Philadelphia during the 1850s was dominated by Blood’s Penny Post, despite a concerted effort by the local and federal government to compete. Philadelphia Postmaster Westcott established a Sub Post system effective December 1, 1857. In addition to the main Post Office, four districts each with a Sub Post Office were established; three of these branch offices extended into districts adjacent to the old city.

In the late 1850s the “drop” situation became more complex. A letter could be dropped at a Sub Post Office for delivery in the main post office in the old city. Also, a letter could be dropped into a district collection letter box. The Philadelphia Postmaster’s

⁵⁶Perry, p. 177.

⁵⁷Calvet M. Hahn, “Uncle Sam’s Charge Account Postal System,” *S.P.A. Journal*, July 1978, p. 729.

⁵⁸Evans, p. 203.

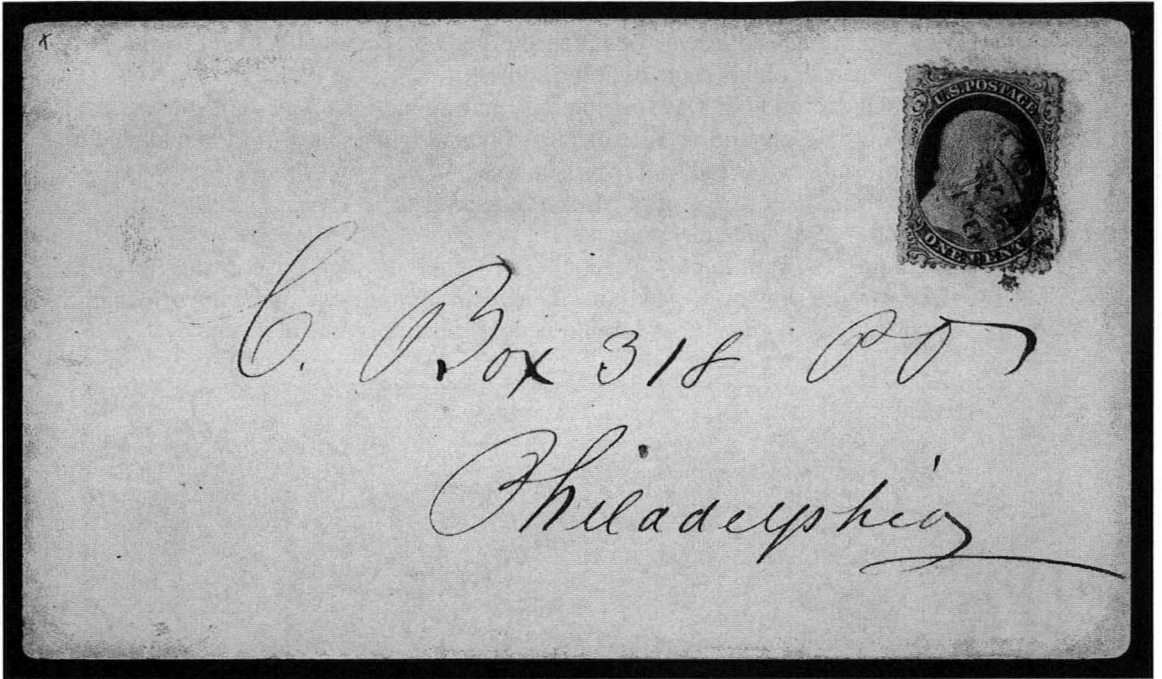


Figure 20. 1857 1¢ general issue adhesive canceled by U.S.P.O. Despatch handstamp on a cover addressed to "Box 318 P.O. / Philadelphia."

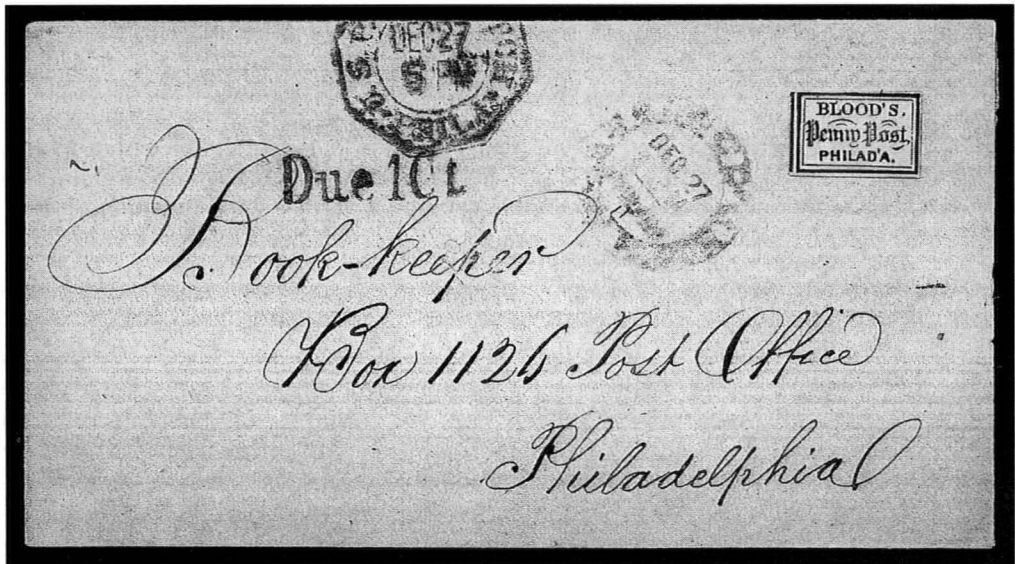


Figure 21. December 27 envelope delivered by Blood's Penny Post to the Philadelphia Post Office and Box 1126.

official notice stated “No charge will be made for carrying letters to the Post-office. Letters for city Delivery, Two cents each (One Cent Postage–One Cent for Carrier).”⁵⁹ (“Postage” meant federal.) Free carrier collection throughout this network for outbound “To the Mails” was quite remarkable and reflects the government’s determination to compete with Blood’s Penny Post. City mail, however, wasn’t cheap. Although the carrier received only 1¢, Washington received equal remuneration, for intracity handling. During the prior 12 years, the only revenue Washington received for intracity mail was the “drop” service. Examples of letters “dropped” at the main Post Office by carrier (Figure 20) or Blood’s Penny Post (Figure 21) confirm the 1¢ “drop” rate was still very much alive.



Figure 22. 1871 photograph showing a gas street lamp collection box at 2nd and Walnut Streets in Philadelphia. From *Old Philadelphia Photographs in Early Photographs 1839-1914*, by Robert Looney, p. 144.

⁵⁹Elliot Perry, “The Carrier Stamps of the United States: Philadelphia,” *Chronicle*, Vol. 34, No. 4 (Whole No. 116)(November 1982), p. 241.

Act of June 15, 1860

The “drop rate” remained 1¢. Effective July 1, 1860, Section 233 authorized rental boxes in branch offices with revenues directed to the carriers fund.⁶⁰

Section 2 removed the Postmaster General’s discretionary power to determine and arbitrarily manipulate the carrier fees city by city. All carrier services were 1¢ and not additive. Section 2 reads: “That on all drop letters delivered within the limits of any city or town by carriers, under the authority of the Post office Department, one cent each shall be charged for the receipt and delivery of said letters, and no more.”

Lamp-post letter collection boxes (Figure 22), which were patented in 1858,^{61,62} made it more convenient to drop a letter.

Act of February 2, 1861

The “drop rate” remained 1¢. Effective February 27, Section 14 finally required **prepayment of all drop letters**: “And all drop letters shall be prepaid by postage stamps.”⁶³ If not prepaid, a double charge was possible (Figure 23).



Figure 23. An 1864 “DROP LETTER” in federally occupied New Orleans franked with an overpaid 3¢ demonetized government issue adhesive. The correct prepaid rate was 2¢. The handstamped marking “DUE / 4” indicates a double charge. Courtesy Scott Trepel.

Act of March 3, 1863

Effective July 1, 1863, the “drop rate” was doubled again, to 2¢ per ½ ounce: And be it further enacted, That the rate of postage on all letters not transmitted through the mails of the United States, but delivered through the post office or its carriers, commonly described as local or drop letters, and not exceeding one-half ounce in weight, shall be uniform at two ¢, and an additional rate for each half ounce, or fraction

⁶⁰Henry A. Meyer, “Good-by, Penny Post,” *S.P.A. Journal*, September 1963, p. 17.

⁶¹Evans, p. 176.

⁶²Robert J. Stets, “Penny Posts in the U.S. Before 1809,” *The Penny Post*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (July 1993), p. 9.

⁶³Evans, p. 203.

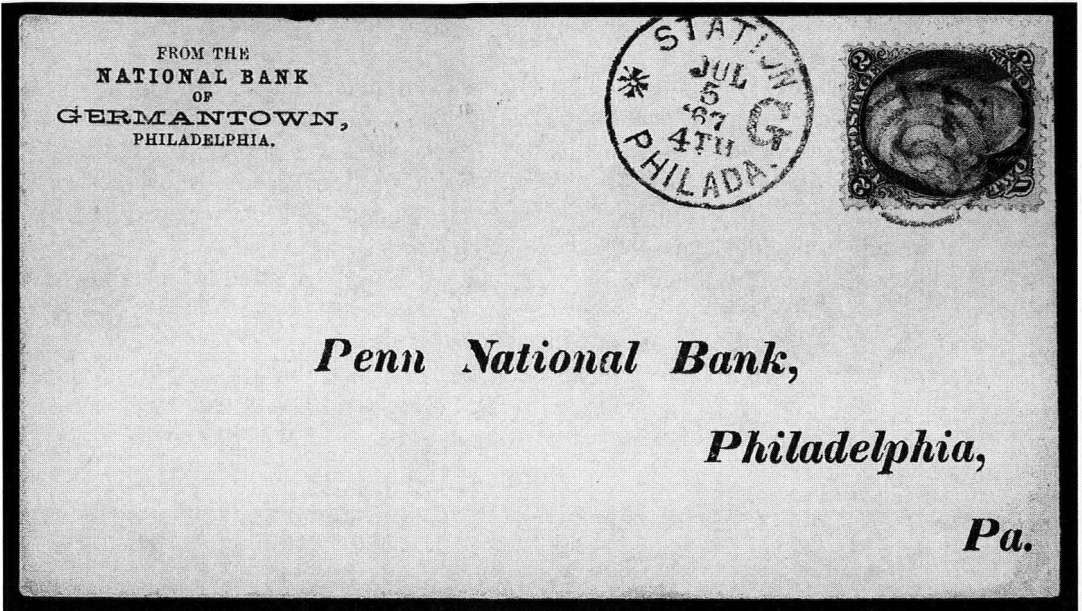


Figure 24. 1863 2¢ government general issue adhesive prepayment of a local or drop letter. Dropped at Philadelphia Station G in Germantown, this letter was more likely than not held at the main Philadelphia Post Office to be picked up. Even if delivered to the Penn National Bank, at this time the term “drop letter” applied.



Figure 25. A double rate, 4¢, drop letter for up to 1 ounce. This vertical pair of 2¢ general issues was tied to a locally addressed New York City envelope by a blue geometric box cancel, with April 26, 1867 docket at left. Courtesy Matthew Bennett Inc. from sale 244, March 23, 2002, lot 189.

thereof, of additional weight, to be in all cases prepaid by postage stamps affixed to the envelope of such letter: but no extra postage or carrier's fee shall hereafter be charged or collected upon letters delivered by carriers, nor upon letters collected by them for mailing or delivery.

A **“drop letter”** became synonymous with city or local mail (see Figure 24). For the first time, weight applied to drop or local mail. Double charges were possible (Figure 25).

The first 2¢ government general issue, the “Black Jack,” was printed. Effective July 1, 1863, Section 23 *terminated the carrier “fee” system*. Carriers became employees on a fixed salary. Only 49 cities maintained a Carrier Department. 137 carriers served New York, 119 served Philadelphia and 192 served the remaining 47 cities.

For the first time in this country, intercity mail was a uniform rate (3¢) regardless of distance.

Act of March 3, 1865

Effective May 1, 1865, Section 15, reduced the “drop rate” back to 1¢ per ½ ounce in towns that had no carrier service. This of course did not pertain to Philadelphia or New York (Figure 26). Small towns had objected strenuously to such a high rate for merely holding a letter.⁶⁴

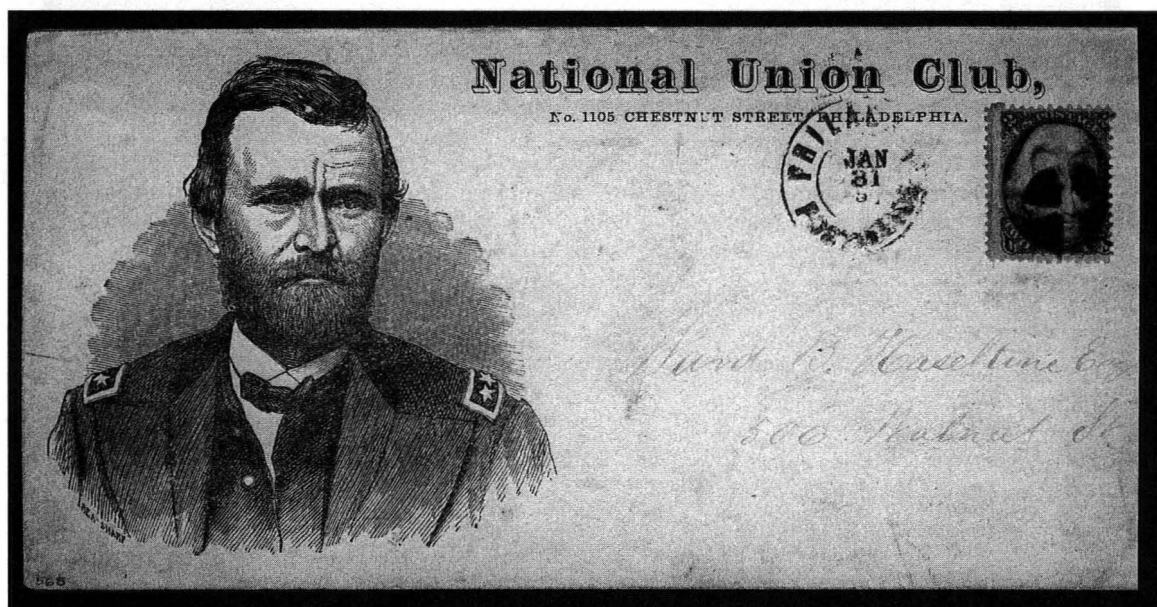


Figure 26. Following the Civil War, the local or drop rate reduction did not apply to cities with a carrier department. The Philadelphia cds is Clarke type 107d used after November 19, 1867.

The “Drop Dead Letter”

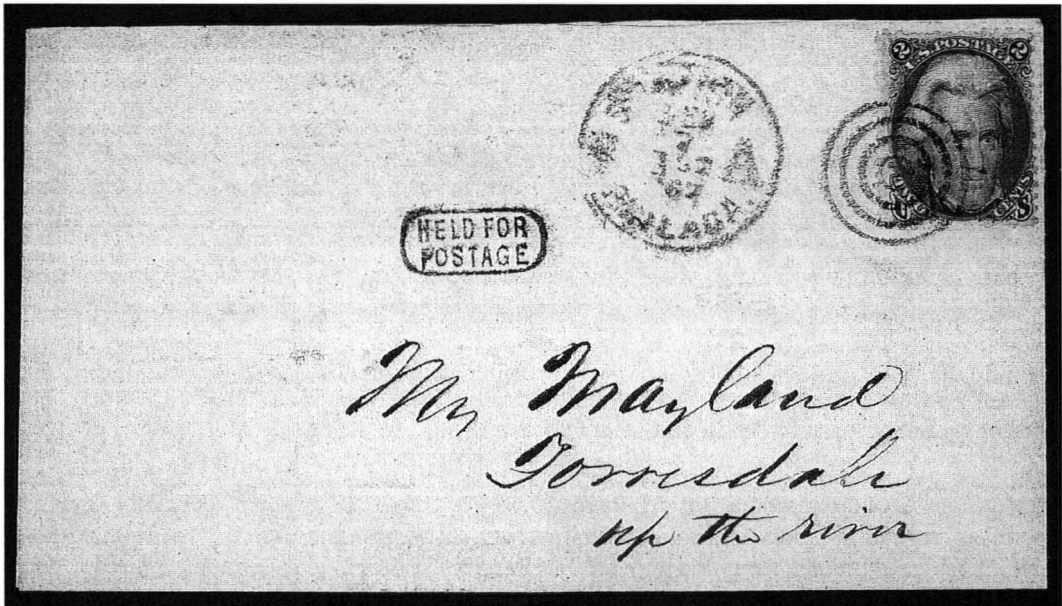
In the philatelic world, a “drop dead letter” is not one received from a worst enemy, an ex-spouse or the IRS. Nor would it have been sent by the uni-bomber or an anthrax terrorist. Those are more correctly termed “drop dead” letters.

During the recent Sarasota 50th Anniversary Show, Bob Odenweller told a story about the late Herbert J. Bloch. Mr. Bloch knew all about “drop” letters and the dead letter office. But he was always searching for a **“drop letter” that went to the Dead Letter Office**, a concept that appealed to his wry sense of humor. Figures 27, 28 and 29 are

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, p. 203.



Figure 27. This February 7, 1867 letter was six months too early for the “drop” rate to apply for Torrissdale, in Northeast Philadelphia. Being underpaid, it was held two days before visiting the Dead Letter Office, so marked on the reverse.



candidate examples from the 1860s when the wider interpretation of a “drop letter” was appropriate.

The first candidate, the February 7, 1867 letter shown at Figure 27, was dropped in Philadelphia at Station A in the old city. The 2¢ general issue adhesive for local “drop” delivery received a duplex Station A cancel. However, it was addressed to “Mr. Mayland /Torrissdale / up the river.” Torrissdale was located in the extreme northeast portion of Philadelphia County in the vicinity of the confluence of the Poquessing Creek and the Delaware River. Torrissdale had its own post office for the five years from August 25, 1862

to August 19, 1867, toward the end of “postal consolidation” in Philadelphia. Six months following this letter, the post office became Philadelphia’s Station N.⁶⁵ At about that time the community was also renamed Torresdale. At time of mailing in February 1867, however, the intercity rate of 3¢ applied. The “HELD FOR POSTAGE” in lozenge handstamp indicates that another cent was due. Only two days later the reverse was handstamped “DEAD / FEB 9 / PHILA. POST OFFICE.” The letter was incorrectly franked as a “drop letter” and therefore was underpaid. Although the Pennsylvania Consolidation Act of 1854, effective February 2, technically enlarged the City of Philadelphia to the limits of the County, full implementation of postal consolidation required another 15 years. Had this letter been dropped six months later, or had the Consolidation Act been postally implemented in 1854 or shortly thereafter, this letter would have been correctly franked as a “drop” letter and probably not found its way to the Dead Letter Office. Thus while at first glance this cover appears to qualify as a “Drop Dead Letter,” it is not.

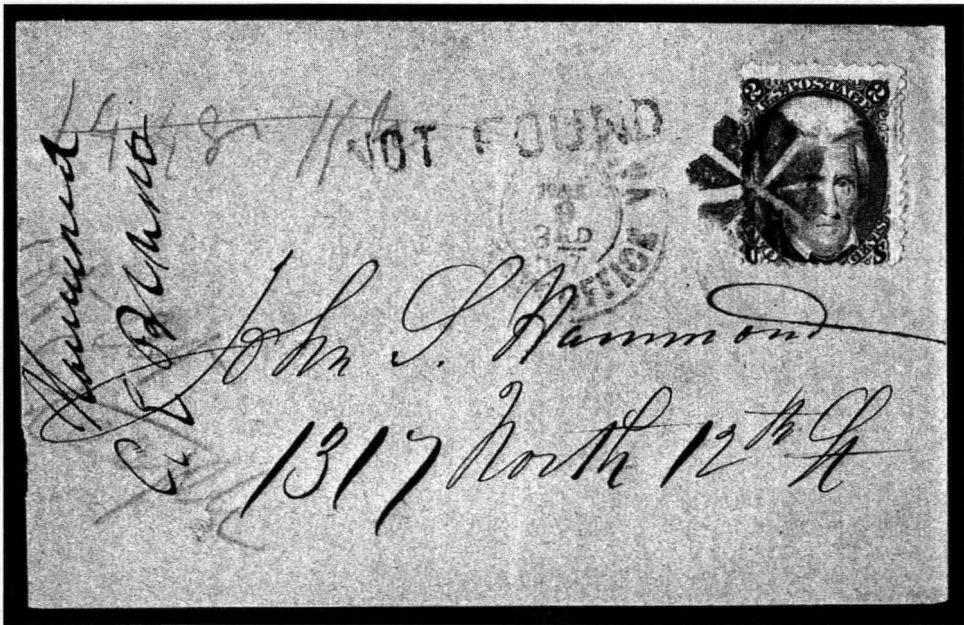


Figure 28. The 2¢ government general issue adhesive prepaid the local or drop letter to a street address with a May 9, 1867 Philadelphia cds, handstamped “NOT FOUND.” This letter probably went to the Dead Letter Office.

The second candidate (Figure 28) is a May 9, 1867 “drop letter” correctly franked with a 2¢ general issue adhesive addressed to John Hammond at 1317 North 12th St., which is a few blocks north of Girard in the Penn District. However, John Hammond was “NOT FOUND.” In all likelihood this letter went on to the Dead Letter Office, although it was not specifically marked as such. In 1867, the various nearby Philadelphia districts had been consolidated into one postal system for several years, providing for local service throughout, and qualifying this a “drop” letter, which was probably also a “dead” letter.

⁶⁵Robert J. Stets and John L. Kay, *Independent Post Offices of Philadelphia County 1800-1867* (Horsham, Pa.: The Assoc. Stamp Clubs Of Southeastern Penna. & Delaware, Inc., 1979), p. 40.

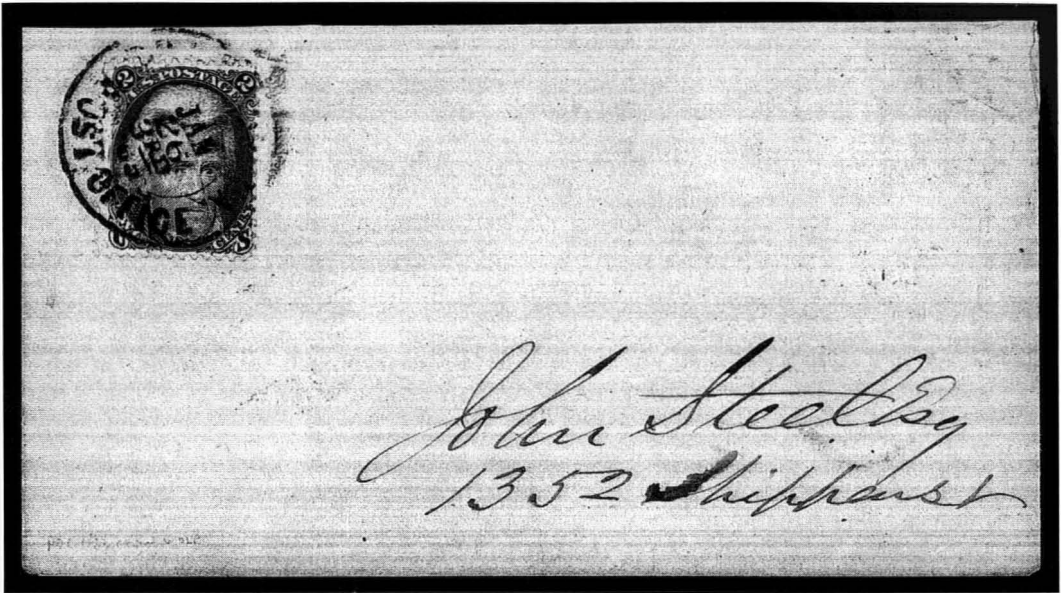
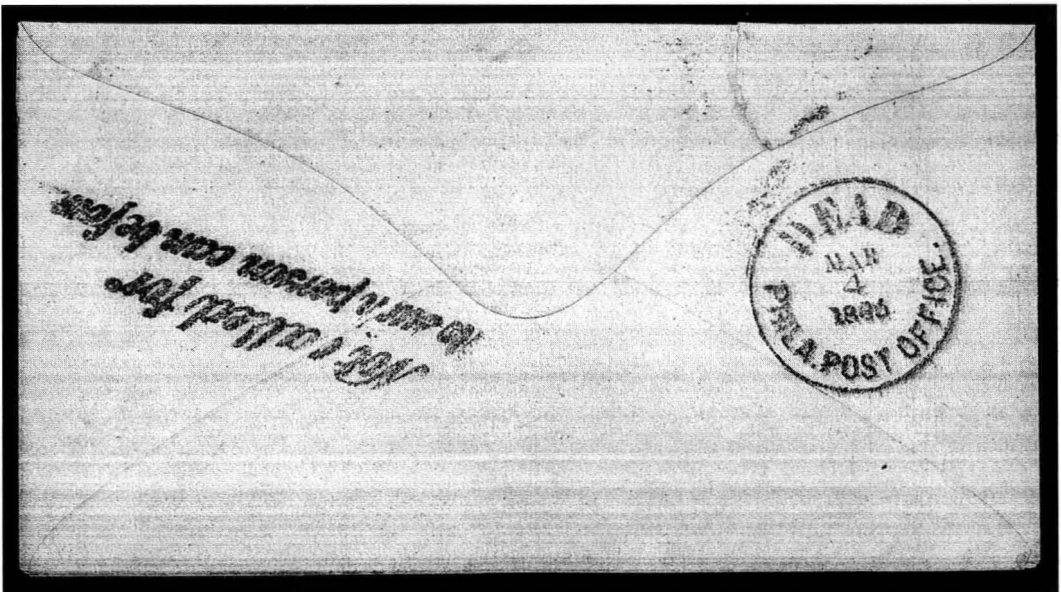


Figure 29. 2¢ government general issue adhesive canceled by a Philadelphia Jan 26, 1865 cds, Clarke 107a, on an envelope addressed locally to John Steel Esq. The reverse reveals two handstamped markings: "Not called for / No such person can be found" and a "DEAD / PHILA. POST OFFICE | MAR / 4 / 1865." A true drop letter which went to the Dead Letter Office (the "Drop Dead Letter").



The third example is shown in Figure 29. This letter was dropped into the local governmental mail on January 26, 1865, addressed to John Steel Esq. at 1352 Shippen St. The reverse was handstamped "DEAD / PHILA. POST OFFICE / MAR / 4 / 1865" and "Not called for / No such person can be found." Attorney Steel could not be located during

the five week interval. Shippen Street was renamed Bainbridge Street in 1870⁶⁶, and is located just south of and running parallel with South Street, the southern boundary of the old city, in the districts of Southwark and Moyamensing. These two districts never had their own post office and for decades had been served by the main post office in the old city. Hence, it was correctly franked with a 2¢ adhesive as a “drop letter” for local delivery. **This is the proverbial “Drop Dead Letter” fully decorated with the correct adhesive, rate, locations and markings.**

Herbert Bloch may never have located a “drop dead letter” for several reasons. First, “drop letters” were more likely deliverable than inbound intercity mail. Familiarity with who resides in town, died, or moved away, and when they did so, was generally greater among residents of the same town than elsewhere in the country. Second, drop or “box” letters were not advertised,⁶⁷ and were probably just burned at location, especially prior to 1845 when the Treasury Department had no expectations of receiving a handsome “rate.” Third, dead letters referred to Washington after three months were saved from burning if they contained “valuable papers or matters of consequence.”⁶⁸ Money was kept by the Post Office Department until the “rightful claimant” should be found. Drop letters, however, were seldom valuable or saved.

“Overpaid” Drop Letters

“Drop letters” were franked with postage in excess of the current requirement for a variety of reasons. Creighton Hart⁶⁹ and Steven Roth⁷⁰ published articles about Philadelphia covers with unexplainable high postage. These covers generally bear a 5¢ 1847 general issue adhesive, were written to a Philadelphia street address, and often included a blue numeral 2 in double circle handstamp which sometimes canceled the adhesive. Most often cited is the Benjaline French correspondence.⁷¹ (Figure 30) Mr. Hart understandably wondered why the 5¢ 1847 adhesive was not bisected to more closely approximate the 2¢ carrier delivery fee. He concluded the overpayment probably resulted from “romance.” The street addresses, however, are outside the old city of Philadelphia. Prior to the Pennsylvania Consolidation Act of 1854, the County of Philadelphia possessed approximately 21 post offices in addition to the main Post Office in the old city. Mail between these post offices within the same county by definition was intercity mail and cost 5¢. (Figure 31) For at least four and possibly six years following the Act of July 1, 1845 a Philadelphia blue numeral “2” handstamp was used in the old city for either a “drop rate” or carrier service.⁷² Would the fastidious and frugal Quakers and Germans pay more than was legally required for a relatively local service? In the author’s opinion many of *these letters were correctly franked with a 5¢ adhesive for intercity mail* even though the destination in the late 1840s may have been only a short distance outside the old city. The blue numeral “2” *in double circle handstamp probably represents carrier collection service “to the Mails”* (Figure 32) rather than a “drop rate,” since a “drop letter” could only be held, or if not called for be possibly carrier delivered locally (in the old city and possibly the closest portion of some of the adjacent districts which had no post office at

⁶⁶Robert I., *Alotta, Mermaids, Monasteries, Cherokees, and Custer* (Chicago: Bonus Books, 1990), p. 17.

⁶⁷Wierenga, *Postal Laws and Regulations of the United States, 1832 and 1843*, p. 28.

⁶⁸Theron Wierenga, comp., *Postal Laws and Regulations of the United States of America, 1847* (Holland, Mich.: Theron Wierenga, 1980), p. 15.

⁶⁹Hart, p. 119.

⁷⁰Roth, “A 5¢ 1847 Letter Revisited,” pp. 21-29.

⁷¹R. Kaufmann “Elite” sale #61 of October 11, 1989, lot 293; R. Kaufmann “Hart” sale #66 of April 30, 1990, lot 173; R. Kaufmann “Hart” sale #66 of April 30, 1990, lot 177; and more recently, Matthew Bennett “Como” sale #252 of November 2, 2002, lot 68.

⁷²To be discussed in a future article.



Figure 30. 5¢ 1847 government general issue adhesive canceled by one of two blue Philadelphia numeral "2" in double circle (Stets C-22) handstamps, manuscript "all pd," on an undated cover to North 7th St above Poplar / West side / Philadelphia. The street location is not in the old city but much further north, just beyond the Spring Garden District, and in Penn District of Philadelphia County.

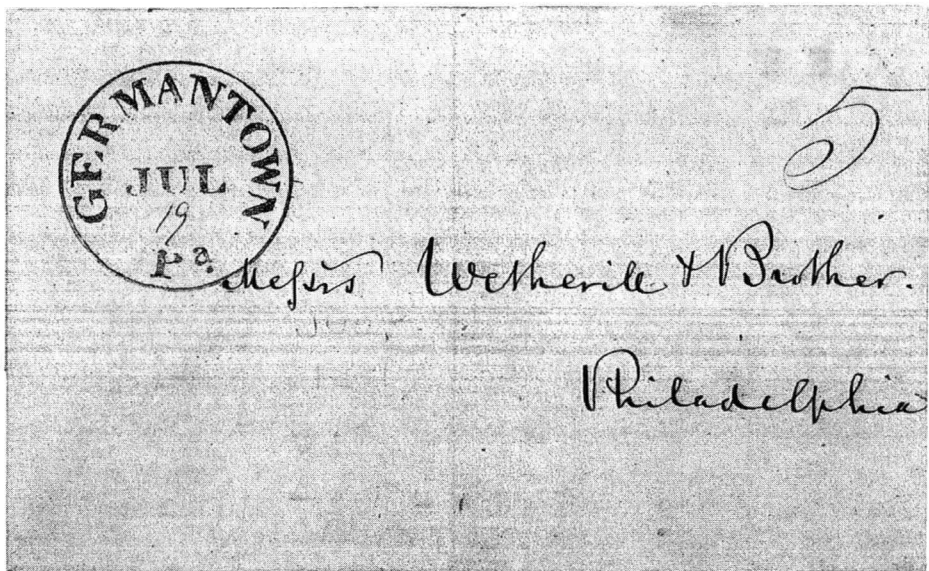


Figure 31. This 1847 folded letter bears a Germantown July 19 cds, manuscript "5" due from recipient at the Philadelphia main post office. Germantown, Pa. was a town in Philadelphia County which several years later became consolidated into the City of Philadelphia. In 1847 the correct rate between these post offices was the intercity rate for under 300 miles of 5¢.

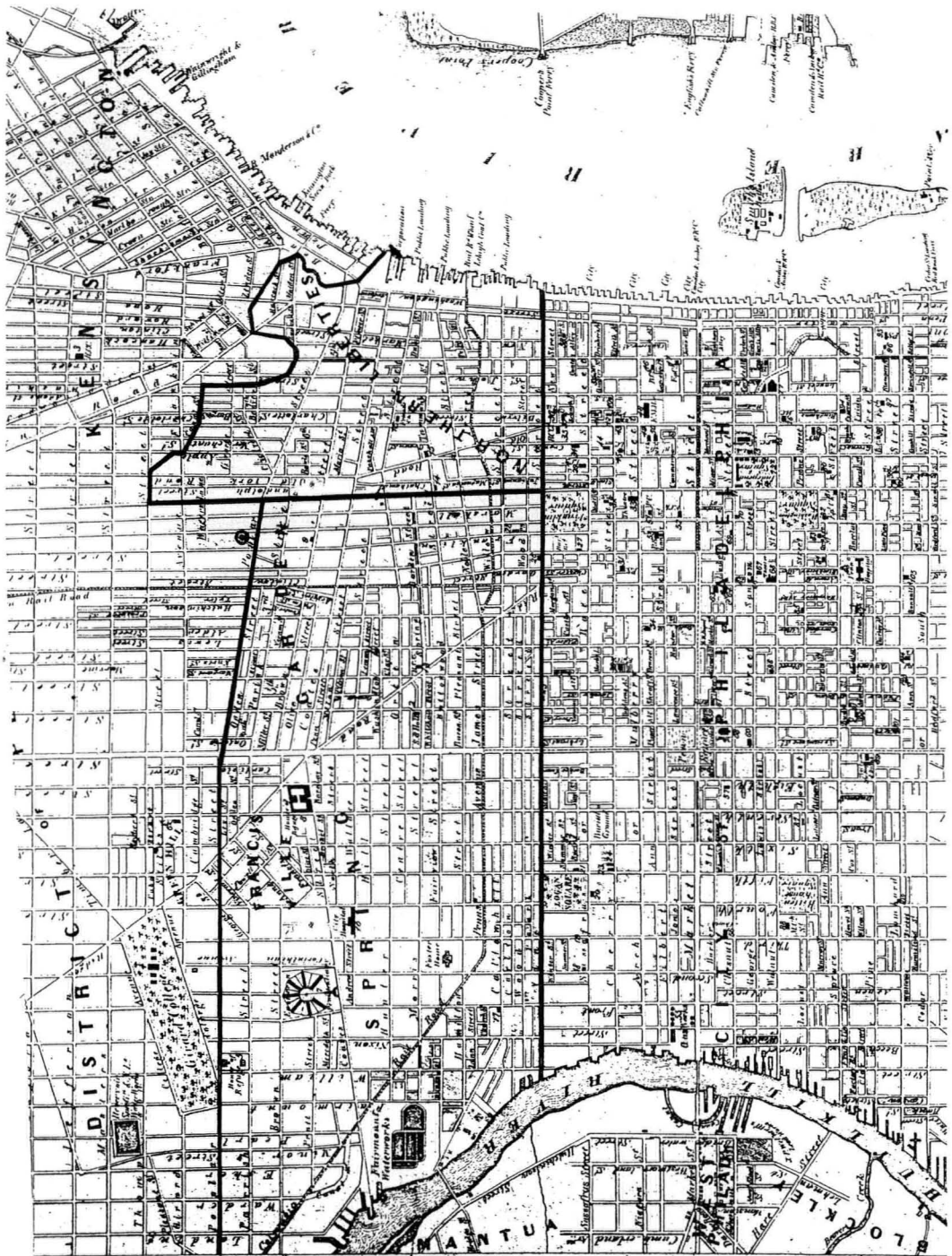


Figure 32. 1849 street map of central Philadelphia showing Poplar Street highlighted as one of the boundary lines between districts as far east as 6th Street. To the north was the Penn District and to the south was the Spring Garden District. Benjaline French was located "above" or north of Poplar Street, marked by a bulls eye, and removed from the old city, which is shaded gray, by more than the width of the Spring Garden District.



Figure 33. A May 22, 1867 Philadelphia cds on an envelope bearing a government general issue 2¢ and 3¢ adhesive, each canceled by a fancy circle of diamonds. The sender indicated a local street address but also underscored please forward. 2¢ would have been sufficient if the new address was also in Philadelphia, or only the 3¢ adhesive if Miss Laura Cooke moved to another city. But certainly both were not necessary. The “drop letter” was overpaid by either 2¢ or 3¢ depending on the final destination.

that time), and was not for transmission to another post office as defined by the Act of 1845. Moreover, even 14 years later, outbound mail, according to the Act of 1863, included carrier and/or “drop” service.

A true example of an overpaid “drop” letter is shown in Figure 33. The sender apparently had no knowledge of the recipient’s probable new location. A 2¢ general issue adhesive was applied for the local service to the known and probable old address. A 3¢ general issue adhesive was also applied, conceivably to forward this letter to another post office if necessary. This surely must have been an important letter to Miss Laura E. Cooke for the sender to so cover all the possibilities. Romance?

Drop Rate “Chain Reaction” in Large Cities

The Federal Government established an intercity mail monopoly on July 1, 1845. **Doubling the “drop rate” caused a chain reaction.** The public, especially in cities with a carrier service, avoided the post office for local mail because it became too expensive. Private posts blossomed. Stiff intracity competition developed. The carrier departments did not materially participate in the ballooning intracity markets of Philadelphia and New York during the 1840s when immigration and commerce were exploding. In 1849 the Postmaster General exercised his discretionary power and reduced carrier fees by 50% in the four largest cities. An unsatisfactory complicated ever-changing carrier system resulted for many years. Eventually Congress realized the futility of this course and abolished the discretionary power on July 1, 1860. By July 1, 1863 the fee system ended as the Federal Government had secured an intracity mail monopoly.

Significance

Only twice was the “drop rate” at a high of 2¢: once, following the termination of the Independent Mails, between July 1, 1845 and July 1, 1851, to partially compensate the Federal Government for a large intercity rate reduction; second, shortly following the demise of private post competition, between July 1, 1863 and May 1, 1865. In each case

the federal government took advantage of its monopoly position, but faced unexpected consequences because the public didn't tolerate the increases very well. The former allowed the private posts in the large cities to blossom during the late 1840s. The latter, in the midst of civil war, caused an uproar in the 20,000 towns which did not have carrier service.

Winners and Losers

The postmasters of each post office in the country, especially the largest cities, were winners from 1792 until July 1, 1845, as recipients of a 1¢ emolument for each drop letter they held, and also until July 1, 1860 from the revenue generated by rental boxes, neither of which required any true labor. The Postmaster General was a winner from July 2, 1836 until June 30, 1860 during the discretionary fee system through his power over the fees which the carriers were able to charge in some 49 cities.

The Treasury Department was the biggest winner from July 1, 1845 until July 1, 1851, and between July 1, 1863 and May 1, 1865, with the doubling of the “drop rate.” Additionally, Washington was still a winner after May 1, 1865 in the tens of thousands of post offices with no carrier department, by collecting 1¢ for simply holding a letter for pick-up without transmission. At the same time, in the 49 post offices with a carrier department, the Treasury received 2¢ for local mail, a virtual windfall compared to 3¢ for transportation of a letter across the continent.

The carriers in the four largest cities were the losers after February 19, 1849, as their “fee” and compensation suffered a 50% reduction at the hands of the Postmaster General, although partially offset by the Congress on July 1, 1860, as the revenue from the rental boxes became theirs. The private posts were big winners following the 1845 doubling of the “drop rate,” but ultimately the big losers by 1862 due to the government legislated monopoly of local postal service.

Conclusion

A “drop letter” was the simplest form of local intracity mail in the early to mid nineteenth century throughout the United States. In the 49 cities with a carrier department, **the “drop letter” meaning and service widened by the 1860s to include collection and delivery to a street address.** The postmasters and city letter carriers with their respective financial incentives are important collateral topics.

The “drop” revenue was controlled by Congress. From the eighteenth century until July 1, 1845 the “drop” charge was a perquisite emolument (reward or tip) to the postmaster for serving as the custodian of the letter until it was picked up. No transportation of the letter was involved. By July 1, 1845, it became a “rate” and the funds went to Washington. By the late 1850s, the revenue from a drop letter in those cities with branch post offices was split equally between the U.S. Treasury Department and the local Carrier Department.

Changes in the “drop rate” often had far-reaching, profound and sometimes unexpected ramifications. The federal government twice doubled the “drop” rate—once after private intercity mail was abolished in mid-1845, and again shortly after private intracity mail was abolished in mid-1863. The opportunistic government met public resistance, but of course had its way.

The “drop” rate increase of July 1, 1845, redirected the energy of private enterprise from intercity mail to intracity mail.

Although millions of letters were forwarded each year to the Dead Letter Office during the early 1860s,⁷³ a disproportionately low percentage consisted of drop letters. Those few which arrived were generally not valuable and were consequently burned.

Thanks to Norm Shachet, John Bowman, Harvey Bennett and Scott Trepel for material. Much appreciation is due for decades of research shared by Steve Roth and Cal Hahn. A special thank you goes to Scott and Cal for their personal review of this article, and especially to Cal for his numerous and lengthy personal conversations. □

GUEST PRIVILEGE

DUE 6 CENTS

JAMES W. MILGRAM, M.D.

(continued from *Chronicle* 182:100)

Editor-in-Chief's Note: This article was originally intended to run in consecutive issues of the *Chronicle*. However, although the entire text was set by the printers and returned, only the illustrations for the first article were processed, and all attempts to trace the remaining original photos were futile. Fortunately, the author was able to produce a new set of photographs, with some slight revisions and substitutions, so the article is now continuing here after a hiatus of more than four years.

The concept behind this article is to take a specific postal marking, such as a rate marking, and show different usages in various time periods. When I first dreamed this up, I had no idea how interesting some of the usages could be. I picked the unpaid 6¢ rate because there were many different usages over a long period of time. But one could pick “due,” “forwarded,” “advertised,” “paid 3,” etc., just as easily.

The previous section of the article dealt with the following usages:

- the unpaid 1792 postage rate for less than 30 miles
- 6¢ ship rate to port of entry
- 6¢ postage rate 1816-1845
- 6¹/₄¢ rate

Early Steamboat Markings

The invention of practical steamboats began on the Hudson River. Regular mail between New York and Albany was often transported by steamboats. At first such letters bore only the usual postal markings. The sender wrote the word “steamboat” on some of the early letters. By 1810 Albany began to use a handstamped “SHIP” to distinguish many

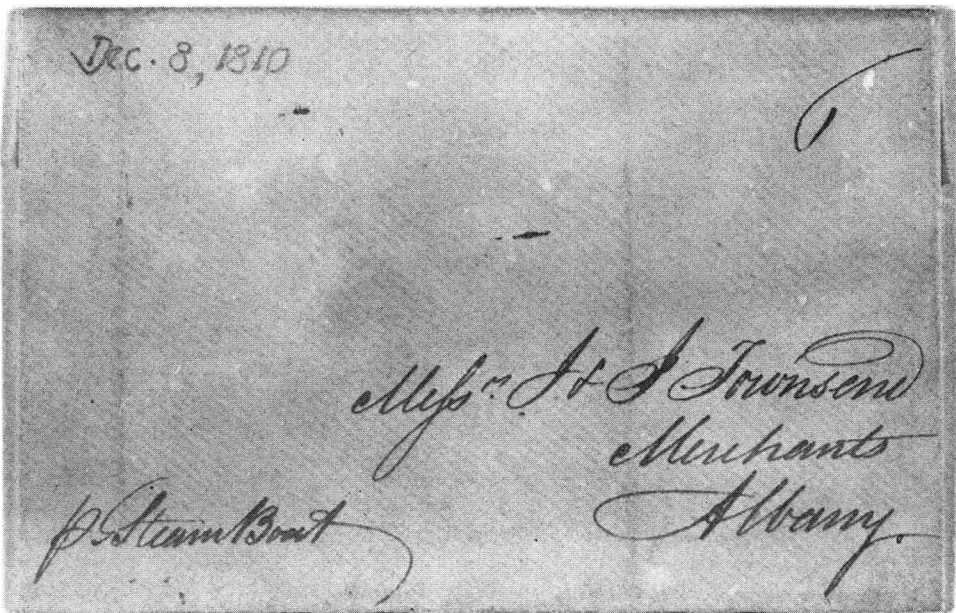


Figure 26. 1810 Hudson River steamboat letter rated “6” to Albany, port of entry

of the early steamboat letters. Postal charges were levied for the distance a letter traveled in the mails plus the ship fee of 2¢; the early steamboats were not mail carriers over established routes. If a letter was addressed to the same city as the destination of the steamboat, it was treated in a similar fashion to a ship letter. In Figure 26 is a cover addressed to Albany, port of entry, so it is rated “6” as a ship fee letter, December 8, 1810 “pr SteamBoat.”

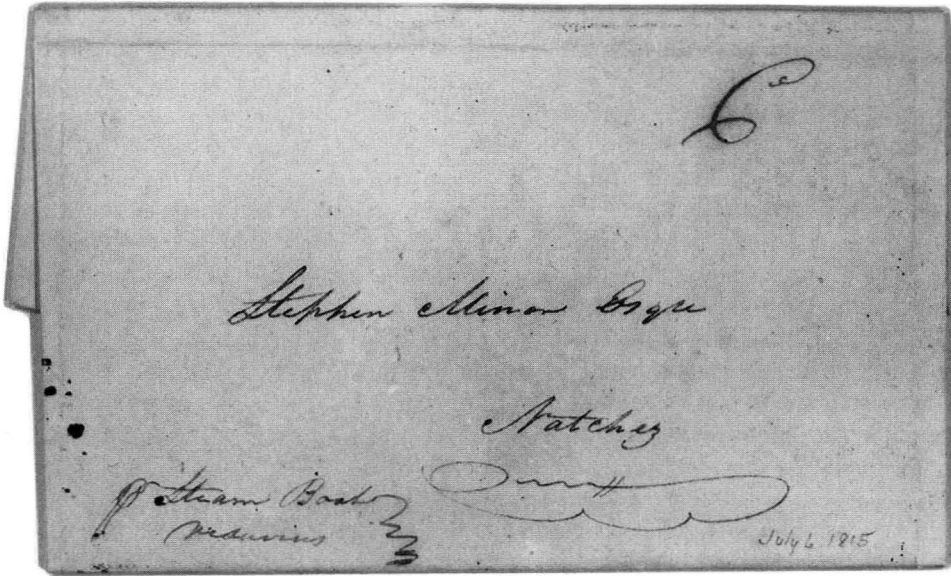


Figure 27. “Pr Steam Boat Vesuvius” in manuscript on July 6, 1815 letter to Natchez rated “6” for port of entry; this was during the war rate period when the correct rate was actually 9¢

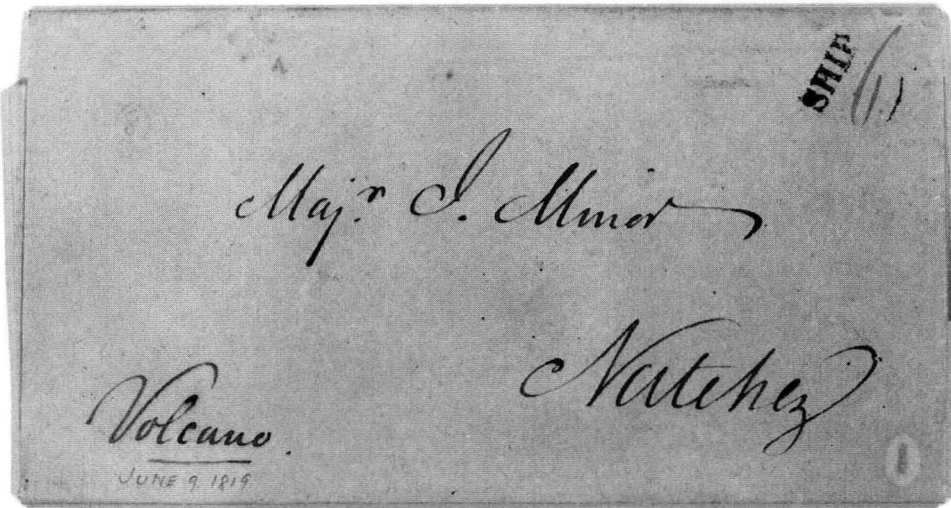


Figure 28. “Volcano” in manuscript, early steamboat letter June 9, 1819 to Natchez where the letter was delivered to the post office by the steamboat personel, with black “SHIP” and ms. “6” rating

Then steamboats spread to the western rivers, in particular the Mississippi and Ohio River chain. The earliest steamboat letters just have manuscript markings by the sender. However, during the second decade of the nineteenth century some of these steamboat letters also were rated as ship letters at certain post offices. Covers exist from Natchez showing 6¢ ratings on covers addressed to Natchez, port of entry (Figure 27). In 1819 a "SHIP" handstamp, applied in red or black, was added (Figure 28). It should be remembered that letters addressed to post offices beyond the port of entry were charged regular postage plus 2¢. It was not until 1825 that the Post Office Department established a separate classification for steamboat letters, although a red "STEAMBOAT" handstamp was used at New York the year earlier. A later "STEAM 6" usage in the 1850s will be discussed subsequently.

Early Railroad Covers



Figure 29. Red "RAIL WAY" straight line with matching "BOSTON MS SEP 16" and ms. "6" on printed 1827 circular concerning the building of a railroad from Boston; the addressee was actually the selectmen of a neighboring village which would be served by the proposed railroad

The postage rate of 6¢ for a letter carried under 30 miles can be found with some of the very early railroad markings. The cover in Figure 29 is certainly the earliest U.S. railroad-related cover of which I am aware. It is dated in 1827 and contains a printed circular that proposes a railroad between New York and Boston. The red "RAIL WAY" straight line matches the "BOSTON MS SEP 16" postmark. It is my guess that the marking was promotional in character to encourage the addressees to pay the postage. But it appears to have been applied in the Boston post office. There is almost an 11-year period until the early 1838 railroad postmarks.

The cover in Figure 30 is one of the earliest handstamped railroad postmarks, a red straight line "WILMINGTON DEL. R.R. SEP 29, 1838" with manuscript "6." The cover is remarkable also for the postal marking relating to payment of the postage "Charged 10 Mo 1." This means that the 6¢ postage due was charged to a box account of the merchant firm D.S. Brown on October 1 (Quaker dating). Another of these early railroad postmarks (1840), red "RAILROAD" with a 6¢ due postal rating, is shown in Figure 31.

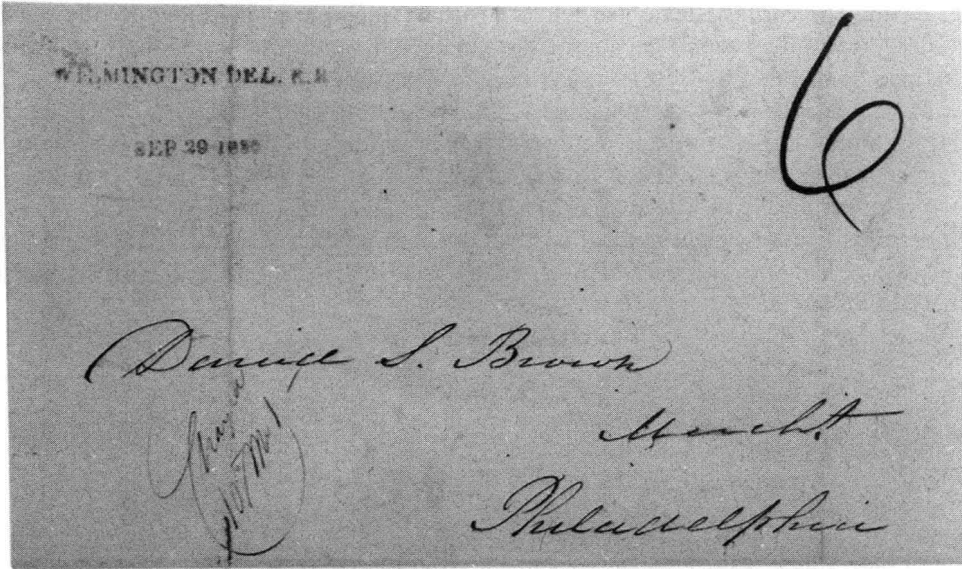


Figure 30. Red "WILMINGTON DEL. R.R. SEP 29, 1838" postmark with "6" rating. The cover also shows a Quaker-dated charged to a box account. This is a postal marking applied by the postmaster at Philadelphia. First year of railroad postmarks



Figure 31. Red oval postmark from Utica obliterated and "RAILROAD" applied instead (at Utica); this 1840 cover was rated "6" for the distance from its origin (unknown) to Utica, its destination

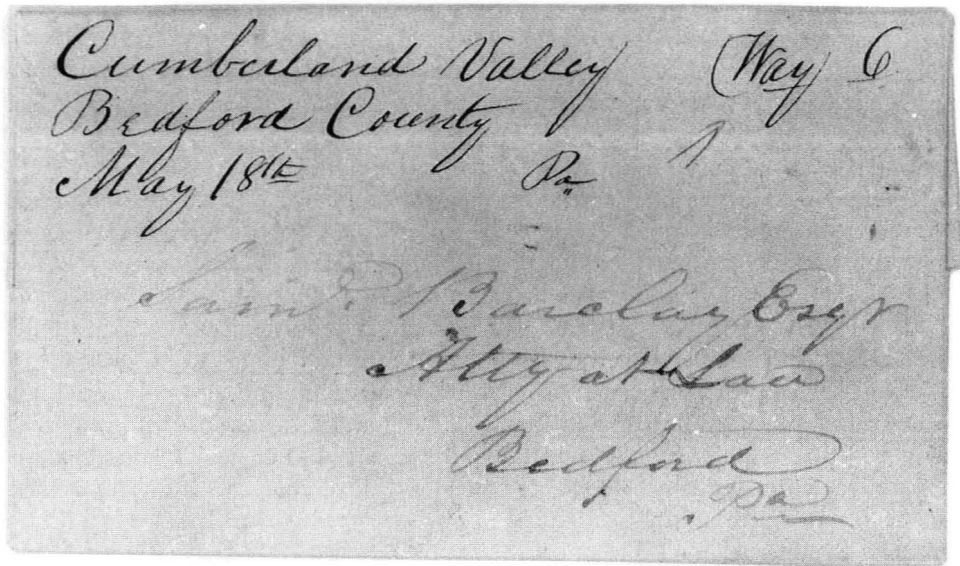


Figure 32. "Cumberland Valley Bedford County Pa. May 18th" and "Way 6" all in manuscript, an unusual cover showing a manuscript county postmark as well as a stage way fee

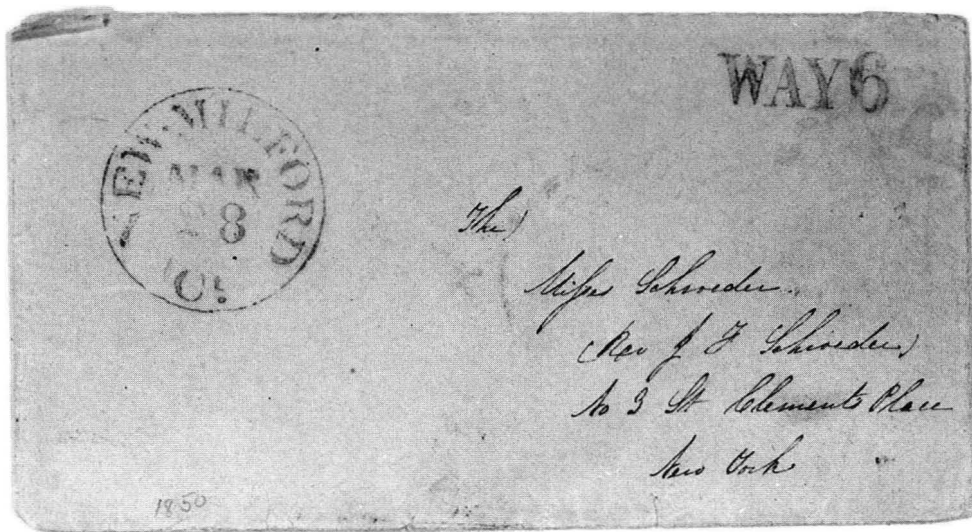


Figure 33. "NEW MILFORD Ct. MAR 28" and "WAY 6" all in red, handstamped stage way marking

Way 6 Markings on Stagecoach Mail

A charge of 1¢ over and above the regular postage was authorized for a letter given to a mail carrier between post offices when that carrier claimed the fee at the office to which he presented the letter for mailing. Such fees were generally added to the unpaid postage. This designation of a letter handled in such a fashion as a “way” letter existed in Colonial times. The Act of May 8, 1794 authorized the 1¢ fee for a “way” letter. This fee was usually passed on to the recipient of the letter as an additional postage charge. Rarely it was prepaid.

Since the lowest postal fee was 6¢ for the period up to June 30, 1845, no way letter showed a 6¢ due fee if the mail carrier claimed the fee and it was added to the postage. The lowest way letter was rated “Way 9.” There are some way letters (marked as such) without an increased fee showing in the postal charges. One of these was shown in Figure 2. But with the reform of postal rates that occurred in 1845, postage was reduced to 5¢ when the letter traveled under 400 miles. This was effective July 1, 1845.

Thus a fee of 6¢ was charged for an unpaid 5¢ postal fee plus the 1¢ way fee. Way letters could be given to stage coach or horse riders on regular postal routes. Such letters were not numerous in number, and most such rates are in manuscript (Figure 32). Sometimes the postal rate is handstamped and the 1¢ added in manuscript. An example is an 1849 cover with circular “MANSFIELD N.J. SEP 6” and “5” with manuscript “1 way/6.” An unusual combination usage shows the manuscript “Way 6” with 1851 postmark of South Royalton, Vermont. But the cover could not be delivered, so there is a blue “ADV 2” applied at Lowell, Massachusetts. A few towns prepared a handstamp “WAY 6” to show such a usage. An example from New Milford, Connecticut in 1850 is shown in Figure 33.

Way 6 Markings on Steamboat Mail

More numerous were letters given between post offices to the captains of vessels that held a mail contract for transporting mail over a waterways route. The postmasters at the

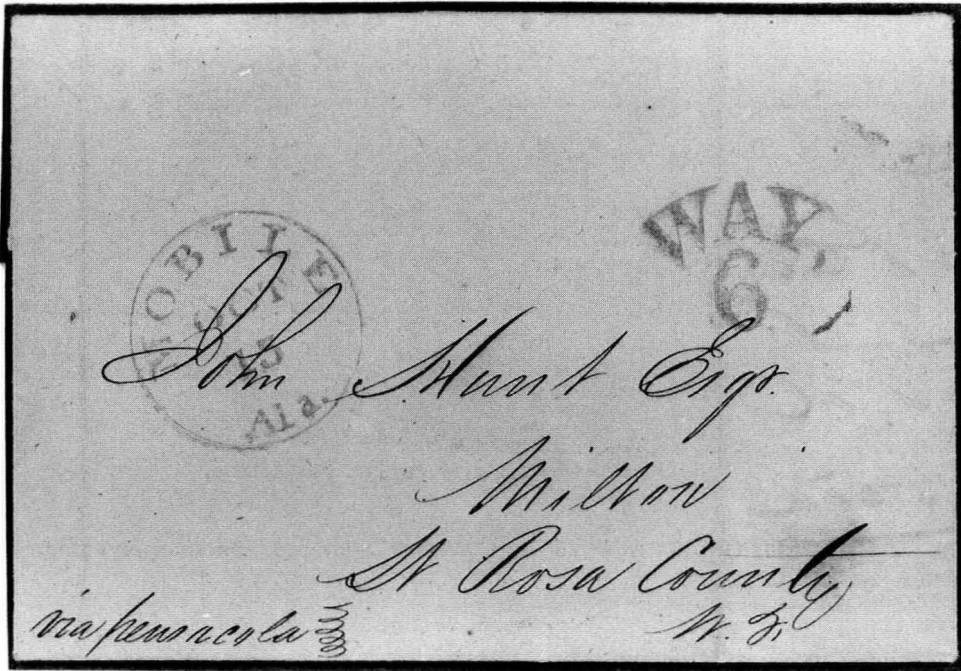


Figure 34. Red “MOBILE Ala. OCT 15” (1846) and “WAY 6” on contract ship mail

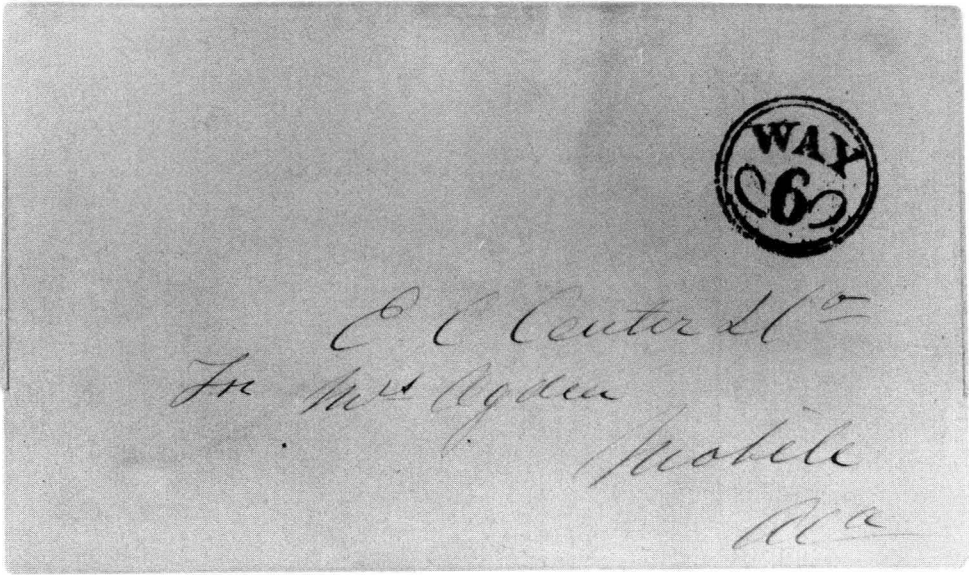


Figure 35. Blue “WAY 6” decorated handstamp to Mobile, rated as a way letter although of ship origin (steamship)

towns where these letters were put into the mail employed handstamps to simplify their handling of such letters. A full listing is shown in *The American Stampless Cover Catalog*, Volume 2. These waterways way markings were used on both ship and steamboat mail where there were contract steamboat and ship mail routes. An unusual cover is a letter which was rated “WAY 6” for origin from Long Island Sound steamboat, but the letter was given to a railroad route agent so there is a postmark “NORWICH & WORCHESTER R.R. JUN 8” [1849] also in orange ink.

Beginning in 1853 many contract steamboat covers were still marked “way,” but the additional 1¢ was not charged to the postage. The steamboat captains still received a 1¢ fee. However, the fee had been discontinued at New Orleans in December 1852. In 1855 on prepaid contract steamboat way letters, 1¢ was paid to the captain but was not charged as postage. Unpaid non-contract steamboat way letters were charged like ship letters, 6¢ to port of arrival and 2¢ plus regular postage if sent to another post office.

Figure 34 shows an 1846 Mobile, Alabama, usage by ship, “Via Pensacola,” with arc “WAY, 6.” Another fancy handstamp in blue (Figure 35) used a few years later is addressed to Mobile rather than a different town. The distance the mail carrier carried the letter to Mobile was counted as mileage, so the fee was 5¢ postage and 1¢ way. Had the ship’s captain not had a mail contract, this could have been a ship letter to port of entry. Mobile had other handstamps for 10¢ postage plus a way fee.

The other city commonly using way 6 steamboat markings was New Orleans. A manuscript “way” with a large handstamped “6” in black would be an early example from the 1840s. The largest marking of this type is the 33mm double circle “WAY 6” (shown on an 1850 cover in Figure 36). Earlier a marking reading “WAY 6 CENTS” in rimless circle was employed; this marking is seldom struck clearly. On steamboat mail coming down the river, the common marking is the black “WAY 6” shown on the cover in Figure 37. This cover also bears a stencil-type of vessel-named steamboat marking for the “Steamer Grenada.” The town postmark is usually in red on these covers. This cover also has a large red “6” like the earlier marking in black. The “WAY 6” can be seen in red too; the colors

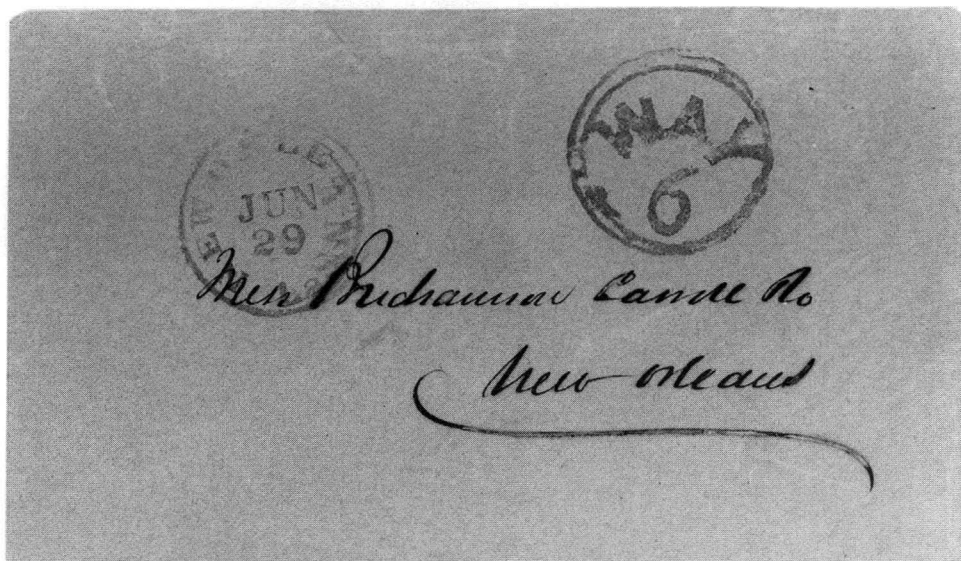


Figure 36. Red circular “WAY 6” with matching “NEW ORLEANS La. JUN 29” (1850) on waterways usage of unknown origin



Figure 37. Red “NEW ORLEANS La.”? date and “6,” black “WAY 6” on steamboat cover with vessel-named marking stencil “RED RIVER PACKET Steamer Grenada L. McKENNY MASTER”

used in the handstamps did not appear to have any postal significance. The “WAY” without a number was also used as a canceling device on stamps and stamped envelopes. From 1848 to 1851 New Orleans also used a rimless oval “WAY 11 CENTS” for letters traveling a longer distance.

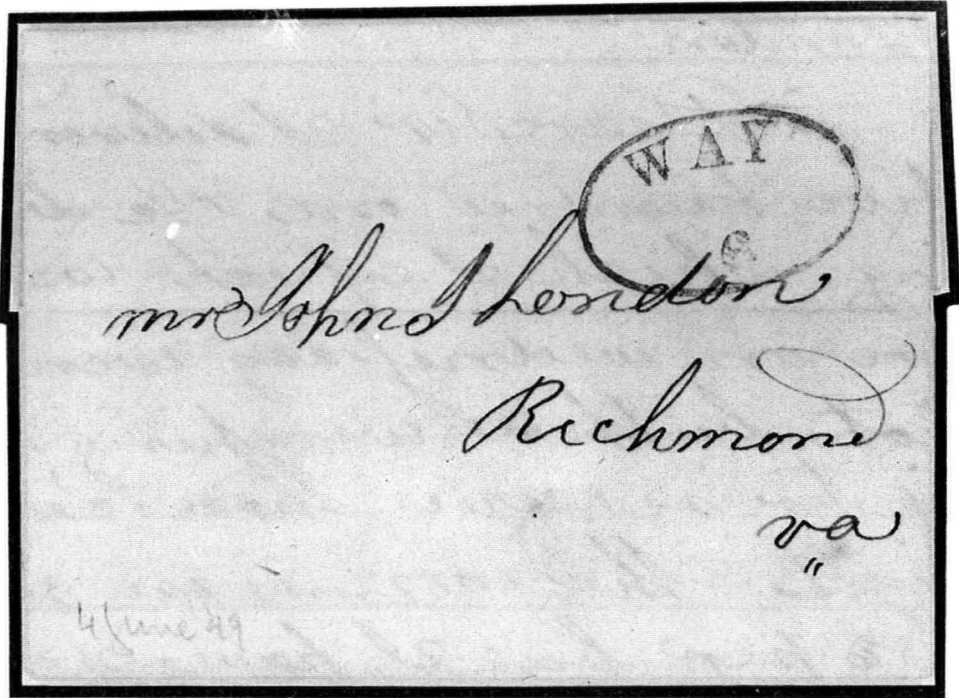


Figure 38. Red oval "WAY 6" applied on river mail June 4, 1849 at Richmond

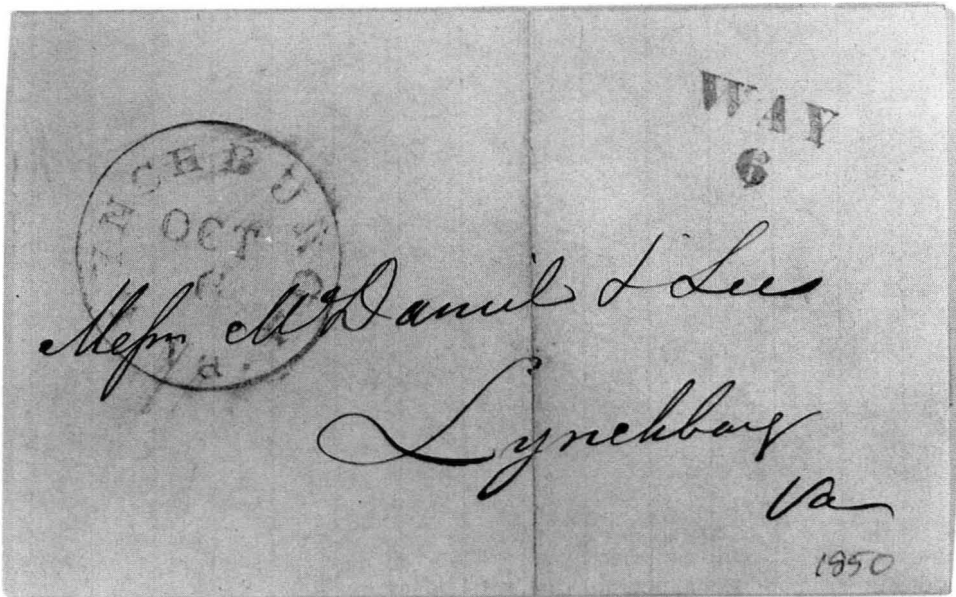


Figure 39. Red "WAY 6" with "LYNCHBURG Va. OCT 6" (1850) to Lynchburg

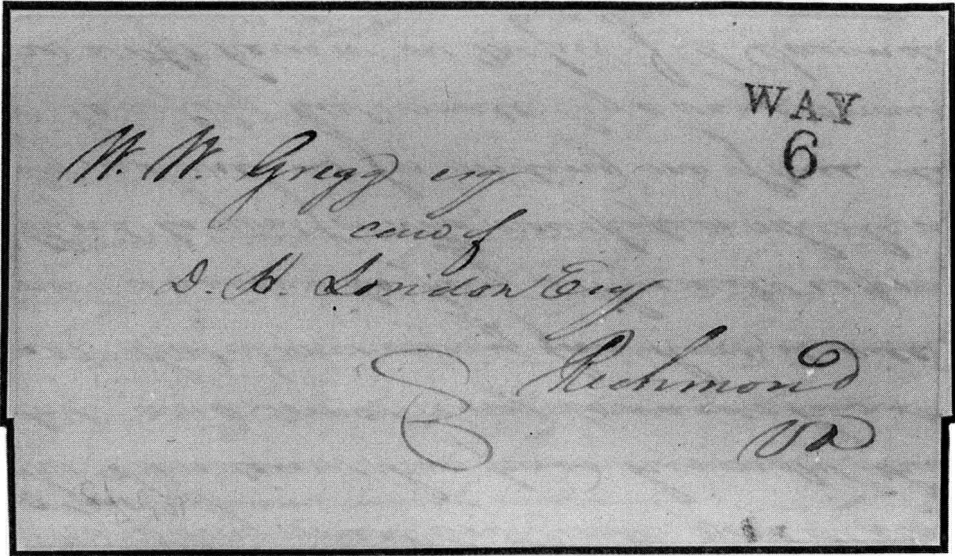


Figure 40. Richmond postmark "WAY 6" applied in July 1851

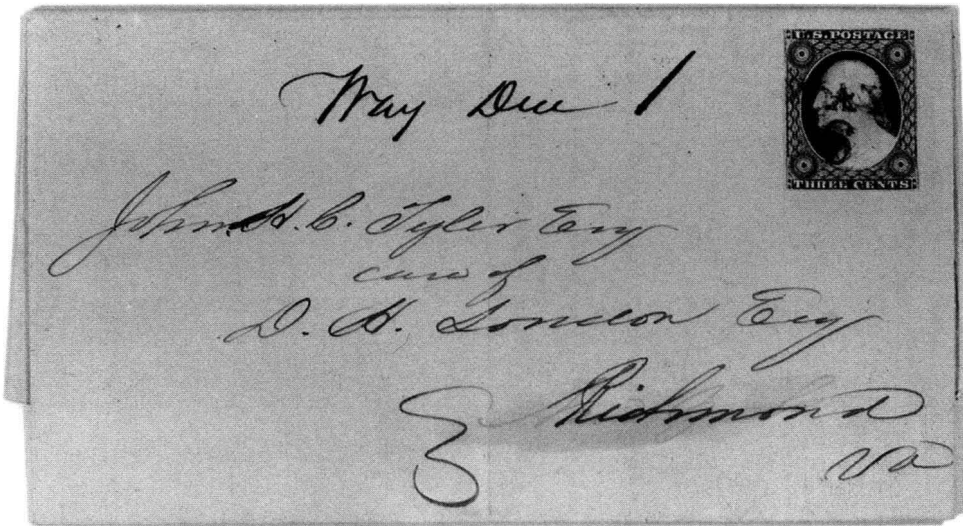


Figure 41. 3¢ 1851 stamp canceled by same "WAY 6" as in Figure 40, with ms. "Way Due 1" indicating the additional postage due, total postage of 4¢

River and canal mail at Lynchburg and Richmond, Virginia was marked with special handstamps. While manuscript markings were sometimes employed, a handstamp was used at Richmond in 1849 (Figure 38). Figure 39 shows a similar usage at Lynchburg, Virginia in 1850. Figure 40 shows a different Richmond handstamp on a stampless letter of July 8, 1851. This is actually a different postal rating because on July 1, 1851 the postage was 3¢ if paid and 5¢ if unpaid. Figure 40 shows the unpaid rating which is a 2¢ penalty for not prepaying the postage. However, this same handstamp was sometimes used as a canceling device even when the postage was prepaid. In Figure 41 is a cover from Soldier's Joy, Virginia, June 19, 1852. The 3¢ 1851 stamp is canceled with a "WAY 6," but the true postage is the stamp plus the "Way Due 1." A very similar cover, also to

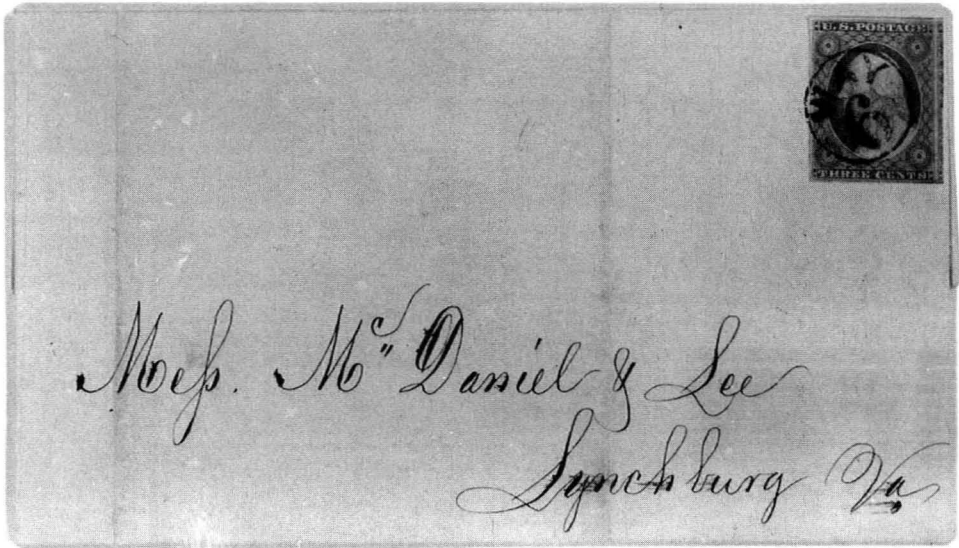


Figure 42. 3¢ 1851 stamp canceled by blue "WAY 6" to Lynchburg, no additional way charge indicated

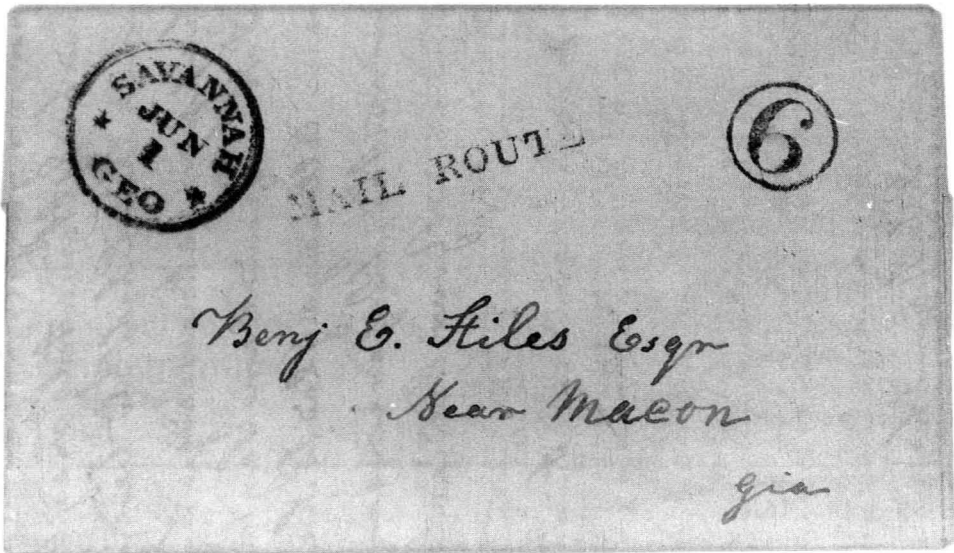
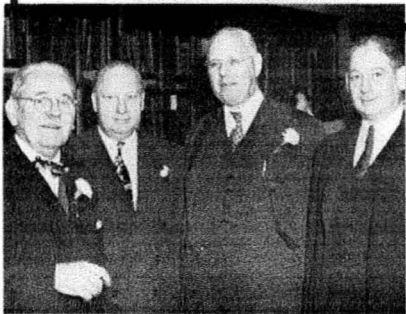


Figure 43. "MAIL ROUTE" with "SAVANNAH GEO JUN 1" [1849] and "6" in circle, all in red, letter sent to different post office in Georgia

Since the early 60's, members of the Classics Society have come to us when it was time to sell.



We were the last U.S. stamp dealer to handle the famed "Running Chicken" cover.



Remember these fellows? (Theodore Steinway, Harry Lindquist, Alfred Lichtenstein and Max Johl). My father, Albert, a New York stamp dealer, introduced me to all of them when I was but a youngster in his shop.

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Richmond, has an additional Richmond town postmark too. At Lynchburg, Virginia, a blue "WAY 6" in a circle was used on waterways way covers that entered the mails from the Kanawha Canal. This marking (Figure 42) was used to cancel stamps in a manner similar to Richmond. It is not clear whether there was additional postage charged beyond the stamp: there does not seem to be any "way charge" of 1¢ here.

In the 1846-1849 period waterborne mail carriers sometimes picked up way letters which were then deposited at the Savannah, Georgia post office for further service. These letters were handstamped in red "MAIL ROUTE" and were rated "6" for the way fee plus 5¢ postage (Figure 43). There are other covers with stamps showing the "MAIL ROUTE" marking in black and manuscript "way 1 due" markings.

Unpaid Circulars

The rate of postage for printed circulars under the Act of March 3, 1847 was set at 3¢ each prepaid, effective March 1847. Postage on printed matter was *subject to double rates* if not prepaid. The circular rate was changed by the Act of March 3, 1851 to five different rates depending on distance, with *double rates* if unpaid.

Three different circulars from Cuba to different Maine towns all came into the United States at Charleston. Each bears a red "6." The earliest, from 1849, bears a handstamped red oval "PRINTED REPORT" and a "CHARLESTON S.C. OCT 20" in a different red, and is rated twice 3¢ to Bath, Maine. A January 20, 1851 circular to Topsham, Maine was charged the same rate. This cover also bears a manuscript "Missent & fowd," but there are no postal markings indicating additional postal charge.

However, the third item (Figure 44), which shows a black "PRINTED CIRCULAR," is dated May 8, 1851. In this case the charge appears to have been for 2,500 miles, 3¢, double since unpaid.

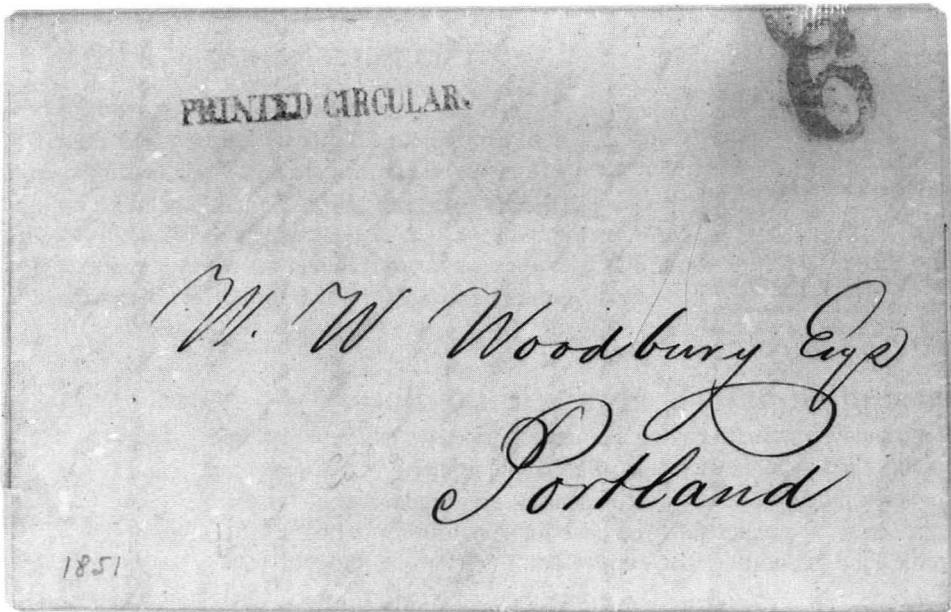


Figure 44. "PRINTED CIRCULAR" on a printed newsletter from Cuba dated May 8, 1851, rated "6" in red, a double rate for unpaid printed matter, at Charleston and sent as a circular to Portland, Maine; there is a written letter as well which indicates the ship's name was *Isabel* (a well-known steamship)

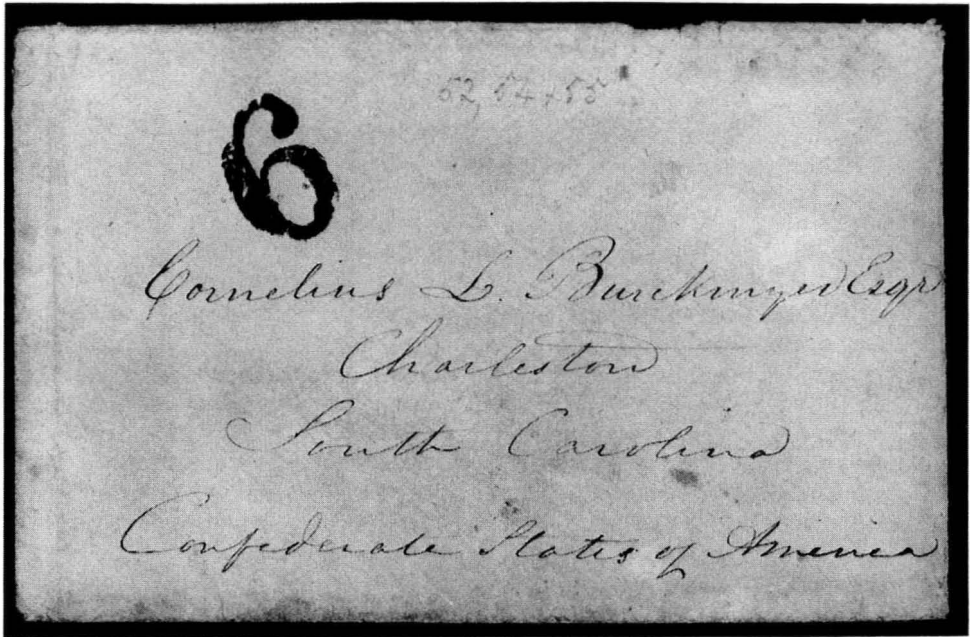


Figure 45. Incoming blockade cover addressed "Charleston, South Carolina, Confederate States of America"; it bears the same "6" in black which is the postage in the C.S.A. for a ship cover going to port of entry

This "6" marking was also used at Charleston in red and later black for ship letters addressed to Charleston, the port of entry for the years 1840 to 1860. One example has a letter apparently from Mexico (Anandalo), February 18, 1851. The cover is addressed to Charleston and bears the red "6" for port of entry postage fee. The "6" was also used during the Confederacy for the same purpose (Figure 45). The address reads "Cornelius L. Buckmyer Esqr. Charleston South Carolina Confederate States of America."

Other Auxiliary Fees

The rate for prepaid postage in 1851 was 3¢ for the normal rate and 6¢ for the California rate (over 3,000 miles). If a letter was forwarded, another postage rate was due. This could be prepaid by stamps (3¢) or it could be unpaid (5¢). The cover in Figure 46 was prepaid at the 3¢ fee in 1852 or 1853. But it was then forwarded back to New York which, since it was an unpaid fee, cost 5¢. Prior to the forwarding it had been advertised, and there are two different red "adv 1" and "Adv 1" handstamps. The forwarding fee was shown with an unusual "For'd" red handstamp and a black "5." The postmaster at Westfield then totaled the unpaid postage and used a handstamped "6" for the total, making a very unusual cover.

After 1855 prepayment was required, and most forwarded mail bears stamps for the second charge. But if paid originally with a 3¢ stamp, a forwarded cover could show a Due 3 postal marking. A cover with a 3¢ stamp tied "CLEVELAND O MAR 18" was forwarded "STEUBENVILLE O. MAR 20" with "Ford 3" charge, but it was again forwarded "COLUMBUS O. MAR 30" to Zanesville with a second "Ford 3" which the postmaster totaled to "6," a fee of 6¢ for a twice-forwarded letter. If a letter was a double weight letter, and then that letter was forwarded unpaid, the charge could be Due 6 for the second usage. After June 30, 1863 the charge would be 6¢ for a single weight letter and 12¢ for a double weight letter, double the postage for unpaid postage.

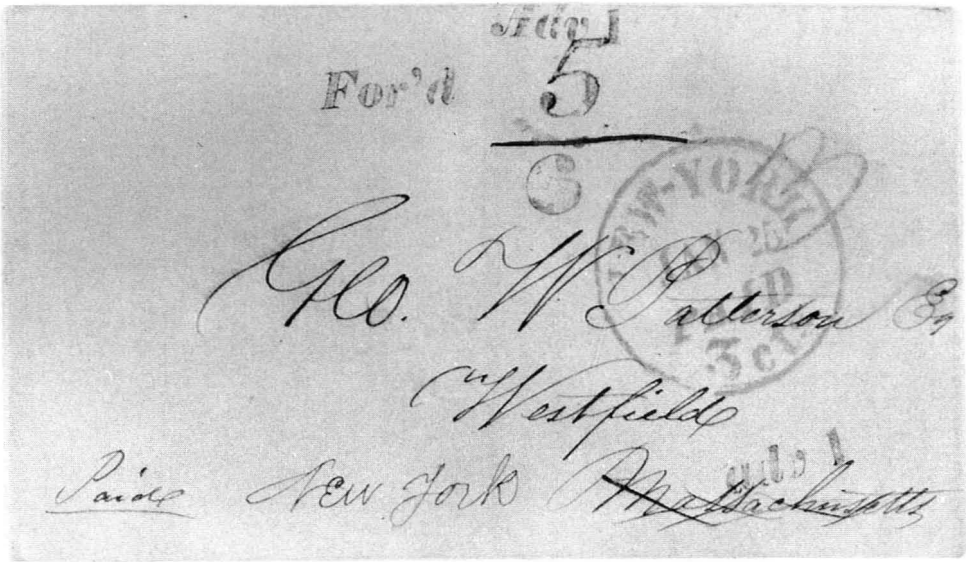


Figure 46. "NEW-YORK JAN 25 PAID 3 cts" to Westfield, Massachusetts where it was advertised for 1¢; it was then forwarded at a 5¢ fee back to New York where total postage of 6¢ was collected, all handstamped rating

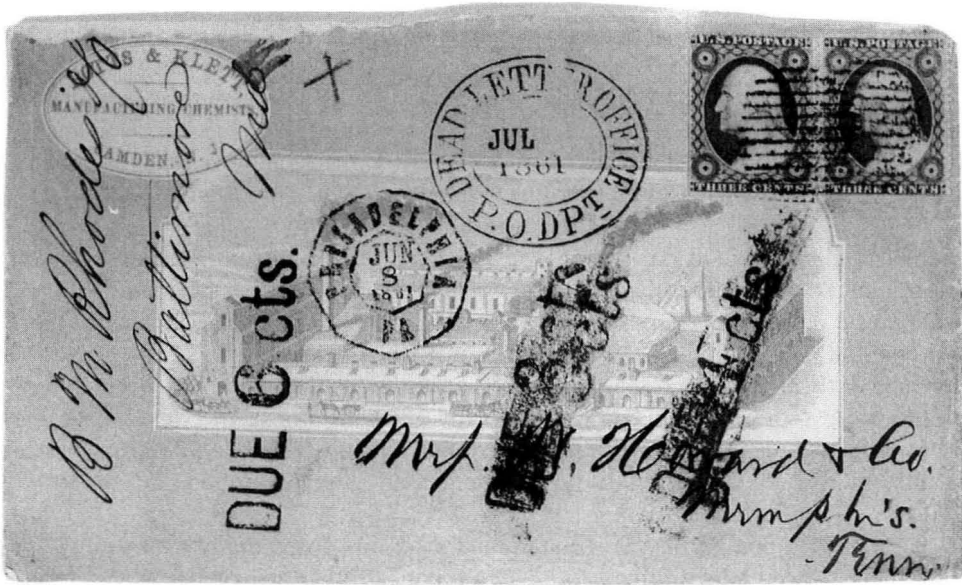


Figure 47. Pair of 3¢ 1857 stamps on illustrated cover, "PHILADELPHIA PA JUNE 8 1861" addressed to Memphis (across the lines); "DEAD LETTER OFFICE P.O.DPT. JUL 1861" postmark and pencil cross, marked with various DUE handstamps including "DUE 6 cts." and annotated with Baltimore business firm's name

In Figure 47 is a cover with a pair of 3¢ 1857 stamps paying double postage at Philadelphia on June 8, 1861 when these stamps were still good for postage. However, the addressee is a company in Memphis, Tennessee, and as of June 1, 1861 the mails had been interrupted to the South. Thus the letter was sent to the Dead Letter Office (oval postmark) which in turn returned it to the sender charging a forwarding postage fee. It can be seen that a "DUE 3 cts" was applied first; this was the single rate marking. But it is obliterated along with a "DUE 4 cts" of unknown significance. The "DUE 6 cts." is a Washington marking which was used in the following year for letters going south. However, here the marking was used just for forwarding postage. There is no penalty charge as there was in 1862. Note this is not the penalty charge of 1863 for unpaid postage.

A cover bearing a 3¢ 1861 stamp was apparently undercharged one rate, 3¢. Then it was forwarded from Leominster, Massachusetts to Northboro, Massachusetts. This created a Due 6 charge in addition to the undercharged 3¢. During the 1860s and 1870s the post office at Leominster employed adhesive labels for many different auxiliary usages, including forwarding. This cover bears both an "UNDERCHARGED DUE 3 CENTS" label and a second label "FORWARDED 1862 DUE SIX CENTS." The postmaster (evidently at Northboro) wrote a total "Due 9 cts."

When the Civil War began, the United States issued a new set of stamps and demonetized the older issues, stamps and stamped envelopes. After certain dates, varying with the post office, mail paid with the old issue was marked unpaid and was sent postage due. The Philadelphia post office employed a special handstamp "OLD STAMPS NOT RECOGNIZED." In Figure 48 is a star die envelope which is marked with this handstamp and bears an octagon "PHILADELPHIA PA AUG 22 1861." But this cover was rated with the old octagon "6" used for port of entry ship letters and a "DUE" handstamp. One can only speculate that the cover was overweight, because similar covers only bear "DUE 3" handstamps.

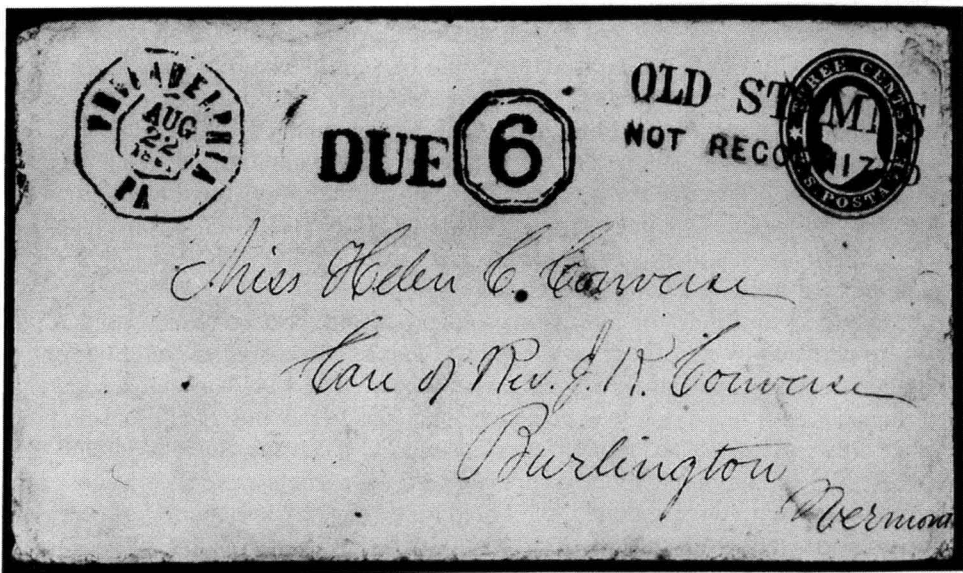


Figure 48. 1860 3¢ star die entire marked "OLD STAMPS NOT RECOGNIZED," "PHILADELPHIA PA AUG 22 1861," "DUE" and separate "6" in octagon, all in black; in 1861 there was no penalty rate, so the original postage must have been underpaid

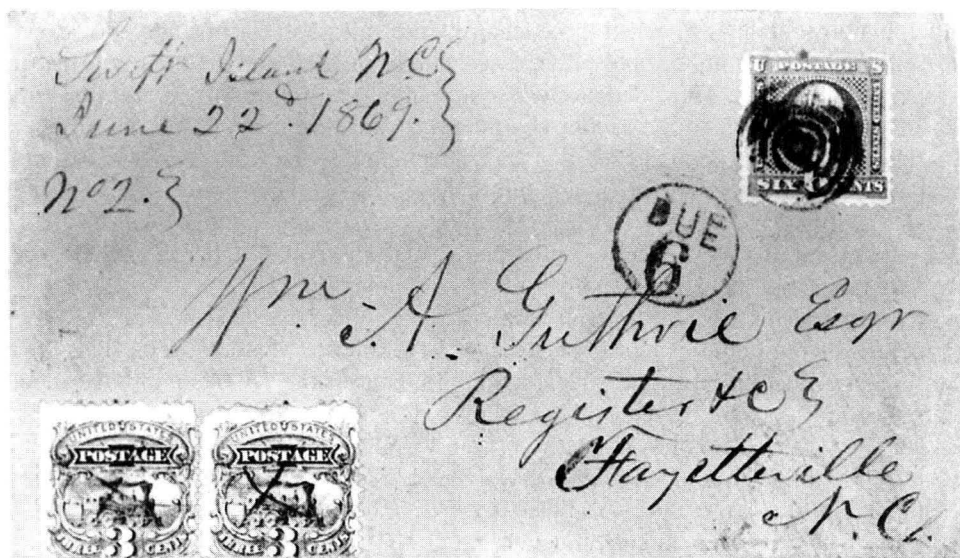


Figure 49. Registered cover "No. 2" with 12¢ in postage paid by 1869 issue stamps. The correct rate was 15¢ for registration and 3¢ single postage. The cover is marked "DUE 6" in circle for the unpaid postage.

Another unusual usage is shown by the cover in Figure 49, a registered cover with "Swift Island N.C. June 22d 1869" postmark. A pair of 3¢ 1869 stamps are canceled by pen and a 6¢ 1869 stamp is tied by a target. The registration was 15¢ plus 3¢ postage. The cover bears 12¢ so it was rated "DUE 6" probably at Fayetteville, the destination.

Civil War Soldiers' Covers

During the Civil War soldiers' letters could be sent due, so the Due 3 rate was the common postmark on unpaid soldiers' letters. If a soldier's letter had a stamp but was then forwarded, then the cover would be marked "Due 3." And many Civil War soldiers' letters paid a single rate with a 3¢ stamp, but the letters were overweight; these are charged "Due 3." However, if the original letter was sent due and was then forwarded, then a total of 6¢ was due. An 1862 soldier's letter bears a "WASHINGTON D.C. OCT 7" postmark with a "Due 3" rating mark. But it was forwarded to Foxboro with "SOMERVILLE MS. OCT 9" where the postmaster wrote "Due 3 cts/Ford 3 cts/06."

One of the provisions for mail from soldiers during the Civil War was that letters which were certified by an officer or chaplain as being from a soldier could be sent with the postage due. One of the aims in issuing postage stamps in 1847 was that senders would prepay their postage. In 1851 it was made advantageous to pay postage because a prepaid letter cost only 3¢ against an unpaid letter costing 5¢. Then the Act of March 3, 1855, effective April 1, made prepayment compulsory. At first letters were held at post offices and patrons were sent notices about a letter held for postage. After a period of time, letters still unpaid were sent to the Dead Letter Office. So this provision for soldiers' mail in August 1861 was the first new allowable class of unpaid letters in quite some time.

The typical soldier's letter was a folded double sheet that fit into a fairly small envelope. Even two such sheets were generally under 1/2 ounce in weight, so letters were mostly "Due 3" rates. However, it was possible for a soldier's letter to be overweight, and then it was rated "Due 6." Figure 50 shows a patriotic cover with proper certification postmarked "WASHINGTON D.C. OCT 10, 1861" and "DUE 6." This was probably an

overweight usage. The 1862 cover in Figure 51 with blue “G B D MAR 10” (General Banks Division military post office) was rated in manuscript “due 6 cents” probably for the same reason. Collectors know that these double rated covers are uncommon.

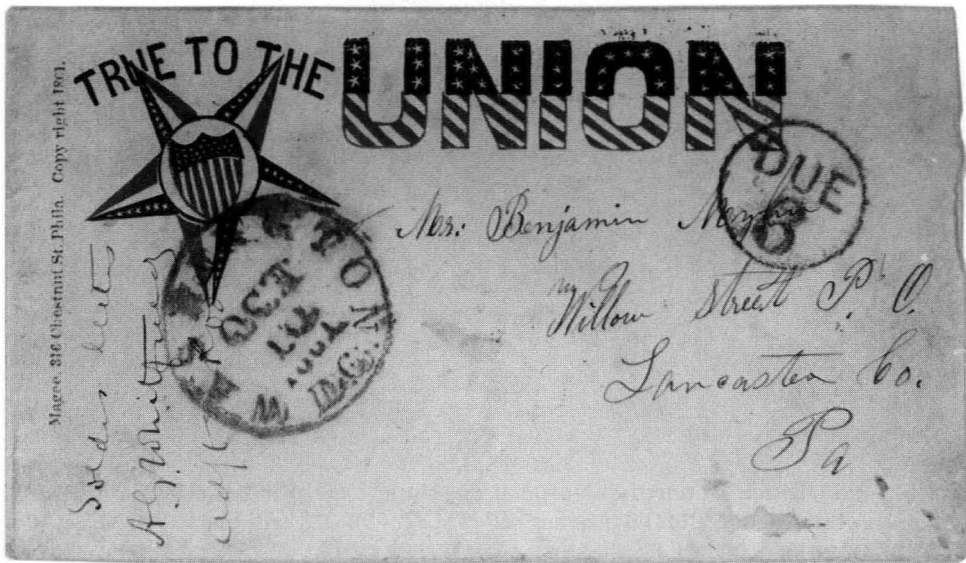


Figure 50. Civil War soldier's letter with certification (lower left) on patriotic envelope; it is postmarked "WASHINGTON D.C. OCT 10 1861" and "DUE 6" in circle, a double due letter

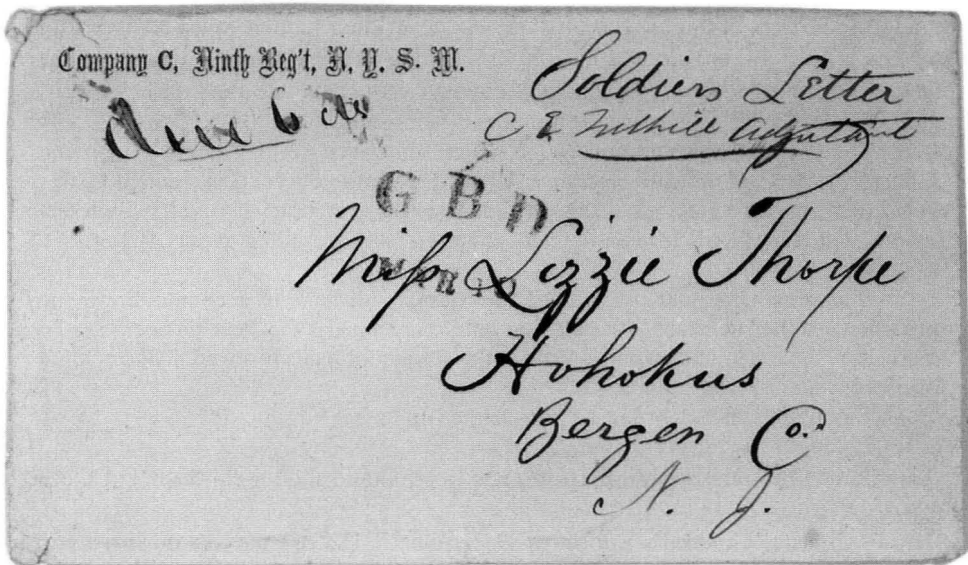


Figure 51. Blue “G B D MAR 10” Bank’s Division postal marking sent “due 6 cts.,” the letter properly certified as a soldier’s letter by the Adjutant of the unit, which is designated in the cornercard “Company C, Ninth Regt. N.Y.S.M.” [New York State Militia]; this cover was rated as a double from its entry into the mails

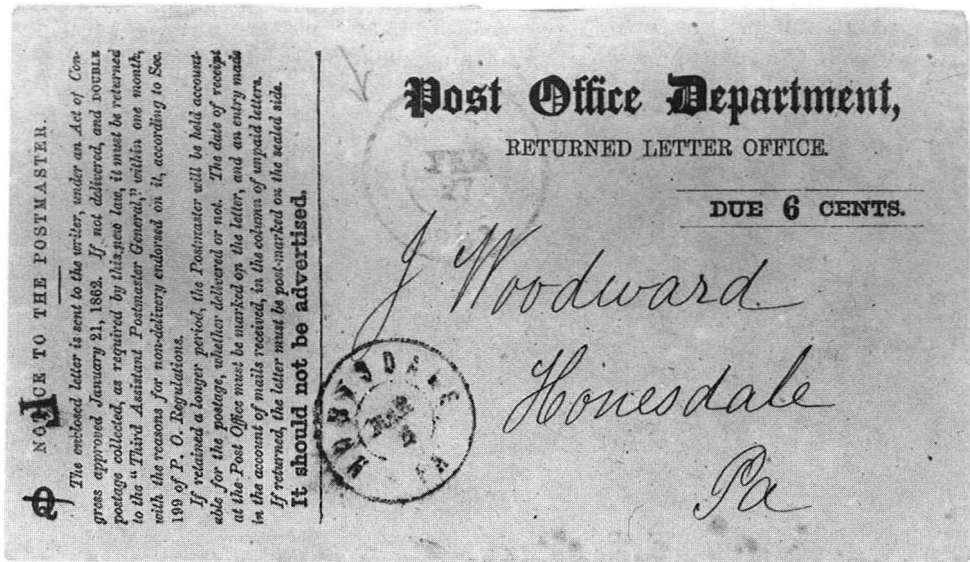


Figure 52. Post Office Department official envelope excerpting the law about unpaid letters and rated "DUE 6 CENTS"; bears red "D.L.O. FEB 27" and black "HONESDALE PA MAR 6" postmarks

The Return of Ordinary Dead Letters

The Postmaster General's Reports for the five years preceding 1862 discuss how the number of dead letters that originated as unpaid letters stayed rather a steady number. The Act of January 21, 1862 authorized the Postmaster General to cause all dead letters to be returned to the writers at double the postage whenever their names could be ascertained. In Figure 52 is an official envelope enclosing a returned letter, There is a Dead Letter Office postmark of February 27 and a Honesdale, Pennsylvania, March 3 postmark. The envelope is rated "DUE 6 CENTS." The notation on the cover reads:

The enclosed letter is sent to the writer, under the Act of Congress approved January 21, 1862. If not delivered, and DOUBLE postage collected, as required by this new law, it must be returned to the "Third Assistant Postmaster General" within one month, with the reasons for non-delivery endorsed on it, according to Sec. 199 of P.O. Regulations.

If retained a longer period, the Postmaster will be held accountable for the postage, whether delivered or not. The date of receipt at the Post Office must be marked on the letter, and an entry made in the account of mails received, in the column of unpaid letters.

If returned, the letter must be post-marked on the sealed side.

It should not be advertised.

This is why the postmaster at Honesdale postmarked the letter—to begin the 30 day period.

The Postmaster General's Report of December 1, 1862 states that during a period of nine months, from February 1 to November 1, 1862, 726,360 letters were placed in new envelopes and redirected to the offices where originally mailed. Of that number, 19% or 139,680 letters were again returned to the department. Thus the system was effective in weeding out the majority of undeliverable letters. The gross revenue to the POD from 583,074 letters during this nine months which were charged 6¢ each was \$34,984, which

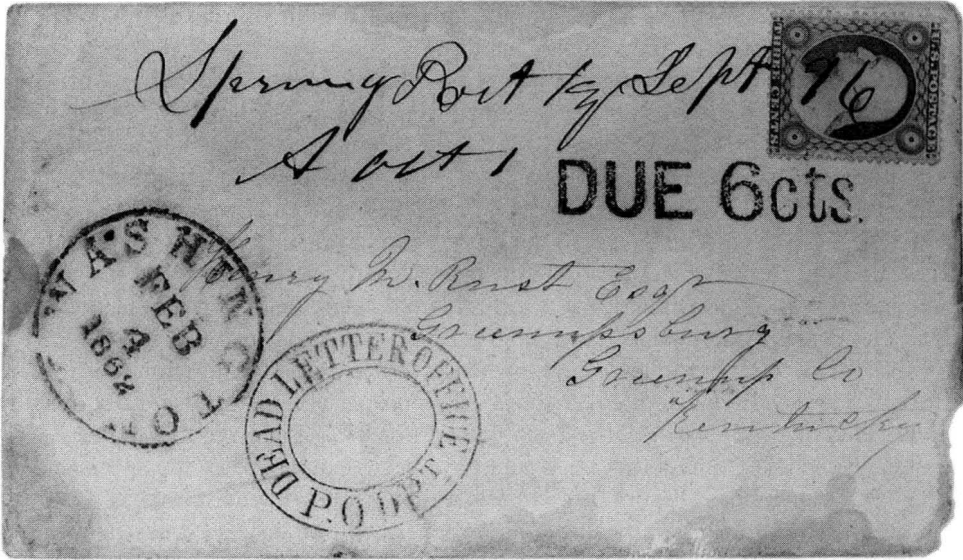


Figure 53. 3¢ 1857 tied by ms. "Spring Port Ky. Sept 16," with "Advt 1," black "DEAD LETTER OFFICE P.O. DEPT" double oval, and black "WASHINGTON D.C. FEB 4 1862" postmark with black straightline "DUE 6 cts.,"; the stamp was demonetized by the date of use, so this was an unpaid letter which was returned to the Dead Letter Office and returned to sender under the 1862 law at double postage



Figure 54. Strip of three of 1¢ 1857 canceled in pen, on envelope annotated "via Norfolk Va. Flag of Truce," marked "No Postage" to the left of the demonetized stamps, and with March 6, 1862 markings of the Dead Letter Office and the Washington, D.C. post office where the "DUE 6 cts." was applied. The cover was sent to the addressee at this double rate, since the sender was across the lines in the Confederate States

at the same rate would yield \$46,645.92 in one year, being \$26,645.92 more than the cost incurred in sending them out. The Postmaster General recommended reducing the return rate of postage on such letters to 3¢, an amount which would still cover the costs. These were dead letters not containing valuable enclosures.

There is a particularly interesting class of these dead letters. They were considered as being without postage because the 1857 stamps were demonetized in 1862. In Figure 53 is one of three very similar covers from Spring Port, Kentucky in September 1861. This one bears an "Advt 1" for advertising. It was sent later to the Dead Letter Office (oval) and also bears a "WASHINGTON D.C. FEB 4, 1862" postmark. It was here the letter was marked "DUE 6 cts." and sent back to the writer. The cover in Figure 54 was sent by Flag of Truce, and the Norfolk, Va. notation is consistent with an 1862 usage. It was addressed to someone in Washington. The town of origin is unknown, but a northern postmaster has written "No Postage" alongside the three 1¢ 1857 stamps. There is a "DEAD LETTER OFFICE MAR 6 1862" postmark which is the same date as the Washington postmark. The "DUE 6 cts." is the charge for a cover sent lacking proper postage as of the Act of January 21, 1862. This probably would have been mailed to Mrs. Thompson, the addressee, since the writer was in the Confederacy. It would have been sent in one of the special "DUE 6 CENTS" POD envelopes (Figure 52). Note that this is not the penalty rate as was applied after June 30, 1863 for unpaid postage. Those letters will be discussed next, and some of them come from the Confederacy too.

Double Rate for Unpaid Postage

The Act of March 3, 1863, effective June 30, made prepayment of letter mail compulsory. It established a 3¢ first class mail rate for any distance. One of the provisions of this act was to establish a penalty of double postage rates for unpaid postage. This penalty rate of double unpaid postage also was applied to letters with partial payment of postage; the unpaid balance was doubled as a due rate.

Thus since the regular rate was 3¢, unpaid postage caused letters to be rated "Due 6" on and after June 30, 1863. This opened Pandora's box for many types of interesting covers with due markings. We will only cover the due 6¢ rated covers in this article.

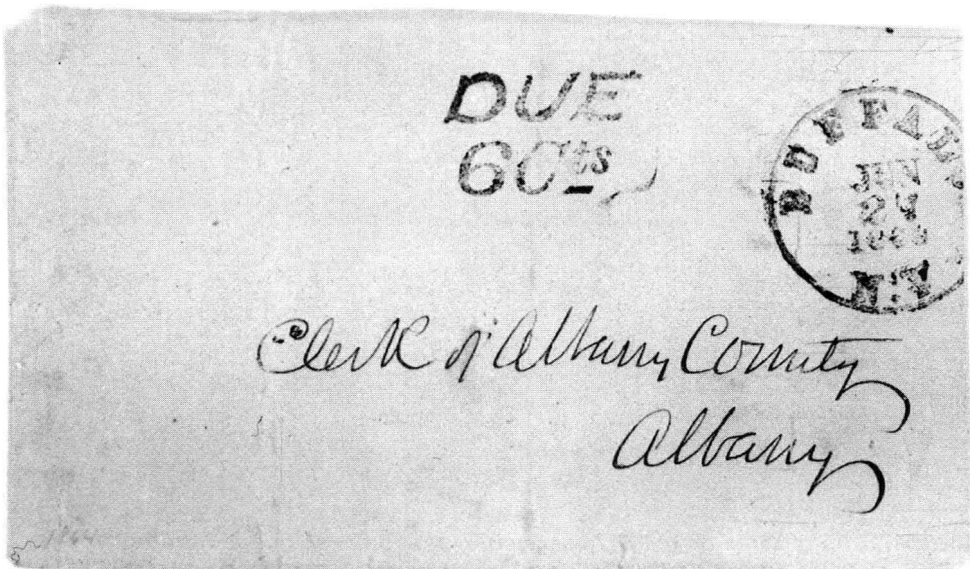


Figure 55. "BUFFALO N.Y. JUN 27 1864" and "DUE 6 Cts." to Albany, N.Y., an unpaid letter charged double rate since unpaid

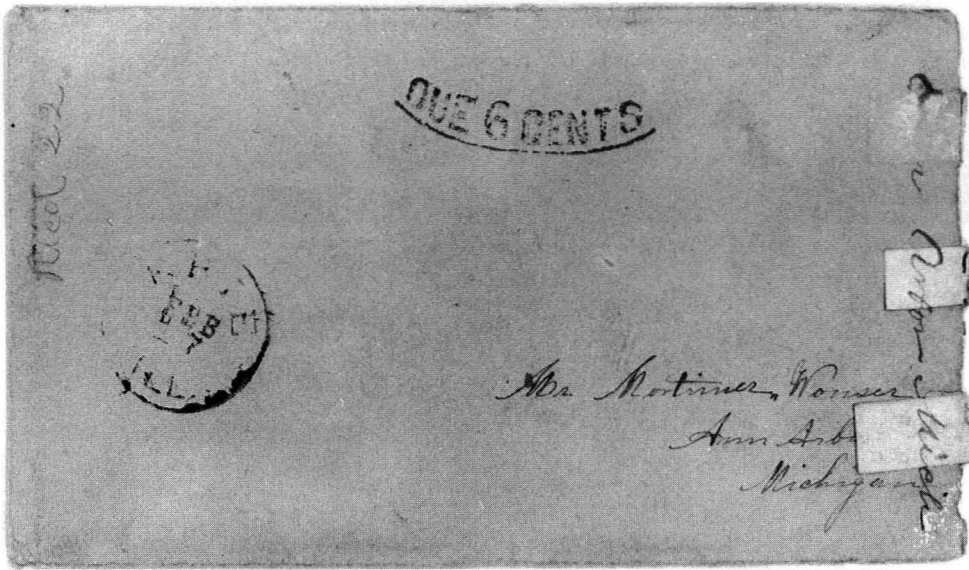


Figure 56. "XENIA O AUG 9 '54" with attached target killer and "DUE 6" in circle, all markings in blue; unpaid postage charged double fee

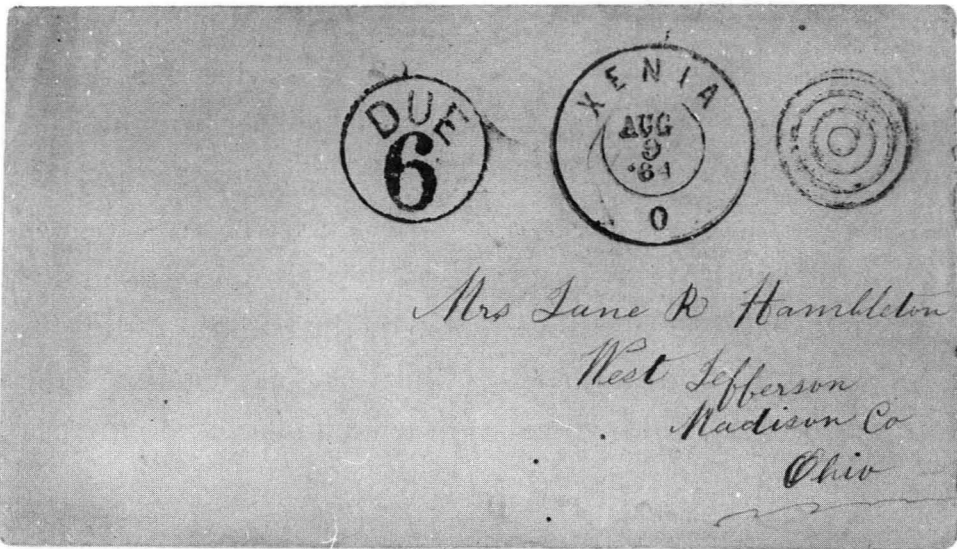


Figure 57. "ERIE ILL. FEB 27" (unknown year) and "DUE 6 CENTS" in reverse arc, addressed to Ann Arbor, Michigan, double postage charge since unpaid

At Figure 55 is a stampless cover with a "DUE 6 Cts" handstamp from Buffalo, New York, 1863 year date. This is probably a non-military usage because of the towns of origin and receipt. A blue "XENIA O, AUG 9 '64" (Figure 56) shows the target killer was attached to the town datestamp. There is a separate "DUE 6" in a circle, double unpaid 3¢ postage. A third example, from Erie, Illinois has a most unusual reverse arc postmark "DUE 6 CENTS" (Figure 57).

(to be continued)

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CONFEDERATE STATES

UNIQUE INTRA-STATE TRANS-MISSISSIPPI EXPRESS MAIL COVER

JOE H. CROSBY

Last year, while I was evaluating a worldwide stamp collection in the Estate of Emmett Robins, I came across a cover with a strip of 3 and a single of the milky blue Confederate States of America #11 stamps paying what appeared to be the 40¢ Trans-Mississippi Express rate on a cover mailed in January 1864 from Clinton, Louisiana to Shreveport, Louisiana. (Figure 1).

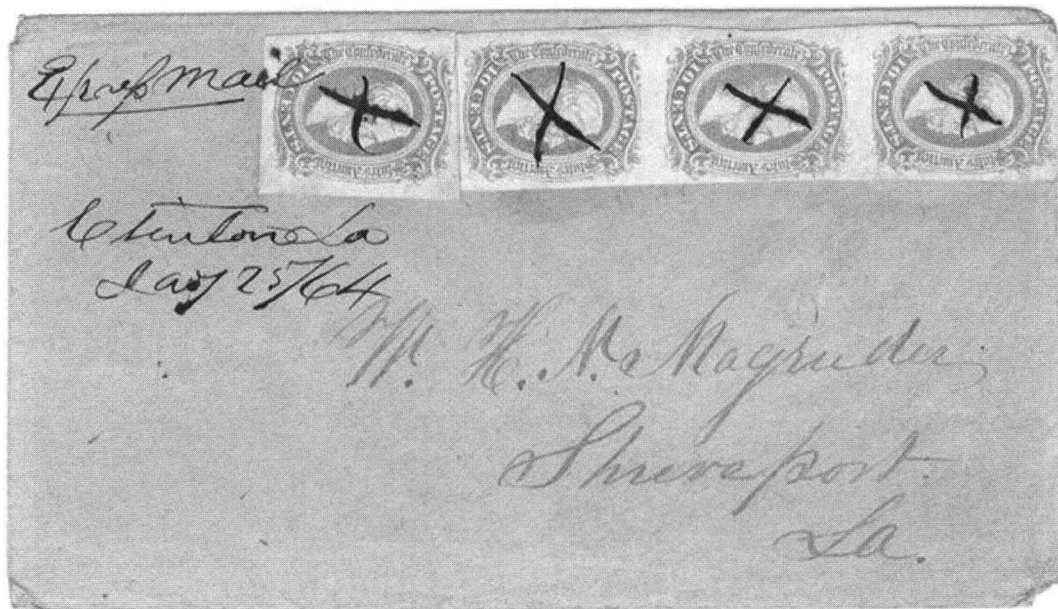


Figure 1. The only recorded Confederate States of America Trans-Mississippi Express Mail cover that was mailed intra-state

On the back was a pencil opinion signed by [Van Dyk] MacBride indicating it was a “genuine Trans-Miss Rate usage.” The Robins family could only tell me that their collector-father lived in Clinton, Louisiana, but they did not know when, where or how he came to own this cover. I immediately turned to *Trans-Mississippi Mails After the Fall of Vicksburg*, by Richard Krieger,¹ to check it out, but this cover was not listed there. The manuscript town marking and date matched the handwriting on a Clinton, La. cover dated Nov. 21/63 as illustrated in an article by Conrad Bush.² So, after a brief literature search,³ I

¹Richard Kreiger, *Trans-Mississippi Mails After the Fall of Vicksburg*, J.F. Dunn, ed. (New York: The Philatelic Foundation, 1984), which provides the complete story of the 40¢ rate used by the Confederate Post Office Department to carry mail across the Mississippi River after the Federal troops gained control of that important artery.

²Conrad Bush, “Short Distance Forwarded Cover,” *Confederate Philatelist*, Vol. 25, No. 4 (Whole No. 196)(July-Aug. 1980), p. 118.

³Lawrence L. Shenfield, *Confederate States of America, The Special Postal Routes* (New York: The Collectors Club, Inc., 1961); Hubert C. Skinner, Erin R. Gunter and Warren H. Sanders, *The New Dietz Confederate Catalog and Handbook* (Miami, Fla.: Bogg & Laurence Publishing Company, Inc., 1986).

sent the cover to the Confederate Stamp Alliance Authentication Committee and received an opinion that the cover is GENUINE, as follows:

CSA #11, pen canceled 10 cent blue strip of 3 and a single tied by manuscript "Express Mail" on East to West Trans-Mississippi cover with manuscript "Clinton, LA/ Jany 25/64" cancel to Shreveport, Louisiana.

But the most important thing about this cover was not mentioned in this certificate. This is the *only known Intra-State Trans-Mississippi Express Mail cover!* Of all 102 Trans-Mississippi express covers and pieces documented by Kreiger,⁴ and those few others reported since, none went from and to post offices located in the same state. Of course, Louisiana is the only state in which this could occur. None of the other Confederate States was bisected by the Mississippi River. Clinton, Louisiana lies in East Feliciana Parish, one of Louisiana's "Florida Parishes" east of the Mississippi River, and Shreveport, Louisiana lies on the Red River far to the west side of the state, nearly 300 miles away (Figure 2).

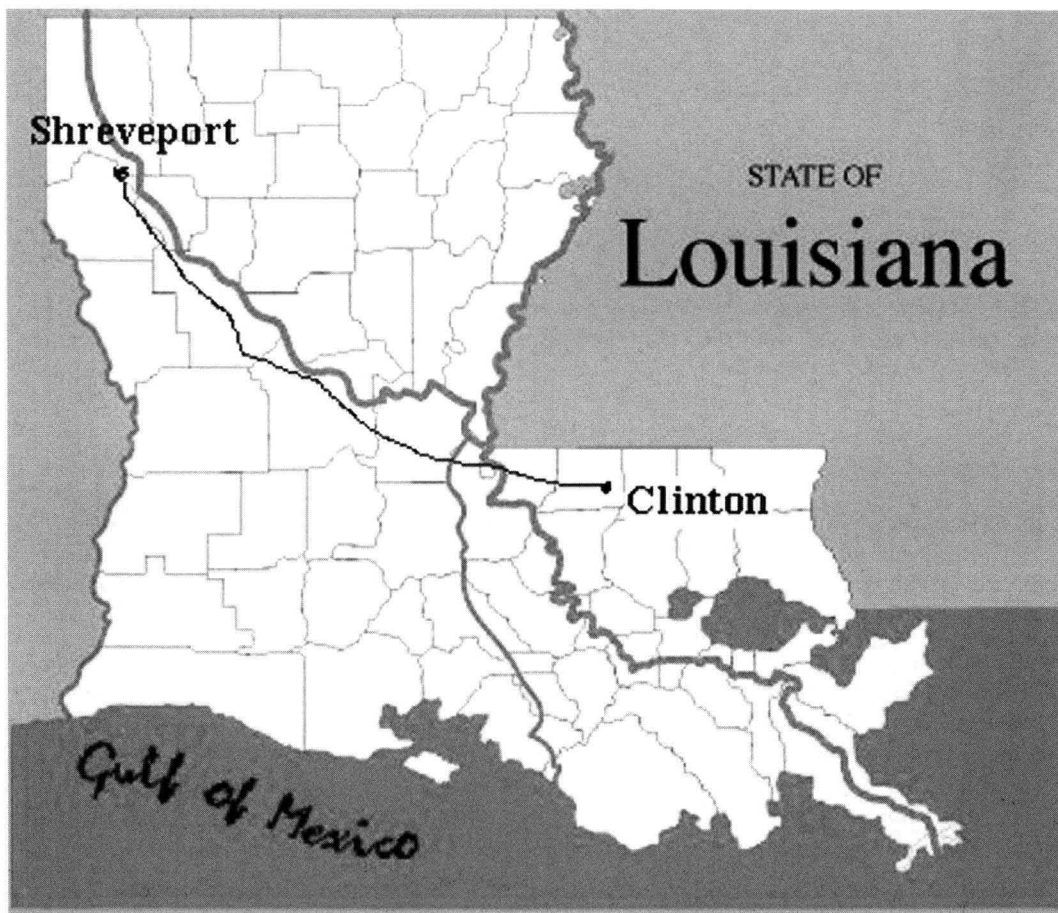


Figure 2. Map of Louisiana showing the locations of Clinton and Shreveport

⁴Kreiger lists WS2—a cover from West to East with no known point of origin and a final destination of Clinton, Louisiana paid with a strip of 4 of CSA #11—and indicates this cover needs further study.

Of course, we have no way of determining whether the express mail carrier of this particular cover crossed the Mississippi River in Louisiana as indicated on Figure 2 or slipped across the line into the State of Mississippi to make his crossing. Krieger indicates that although Shreveport was designated by PMG Reagan as a point for accumulating West to East Express Mail, "mail going from East to West was collected by the Special Agents from points that they established rather than concentration points established by the Post Office Department."⁵

It is still somewhat amazing that no other 40¢ CSA cover has surfaced that was intended to facilitate communication wholly within the State of Louisiana. □

⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 14-16; see also at p.11. As early as May 24, 1862, PMG Reagan had indicated that "mail matter from the East and going to the West of the Mississippi river will be collected together at Corinth or Grand Junction, at Grenada and Jackson, in the State of Mississippi and at *Tangipahoa in the State of Louisiana* or such other points as the special agents shall find most suitable and available for transmission to the West." Tangipahoa lies only 35 miles east of Clinton and further away from the river, and it seems entirely possible that such a point was used to aggregate the westbound mail from the Florida Parishes. However, Kreiger gives us no encouragement that this early order was actually implemented.

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DETROIT, MICHIGAN PATENT CANCEL USE- A NEW DISCOVERY
CHARLES A. WOOD

The cover shown here as Figure 1 first caught my eye because of the illustrated corner card of Detroit Chair Company. Detroit advertising covers form a part of my collection of Michigan postal history and this cover, though squared off at the left, was especially appealing. After admiring the detail of the illustration I began to examine the stamp, postmark and cancellation. At that point a small light bulb came on over my head.

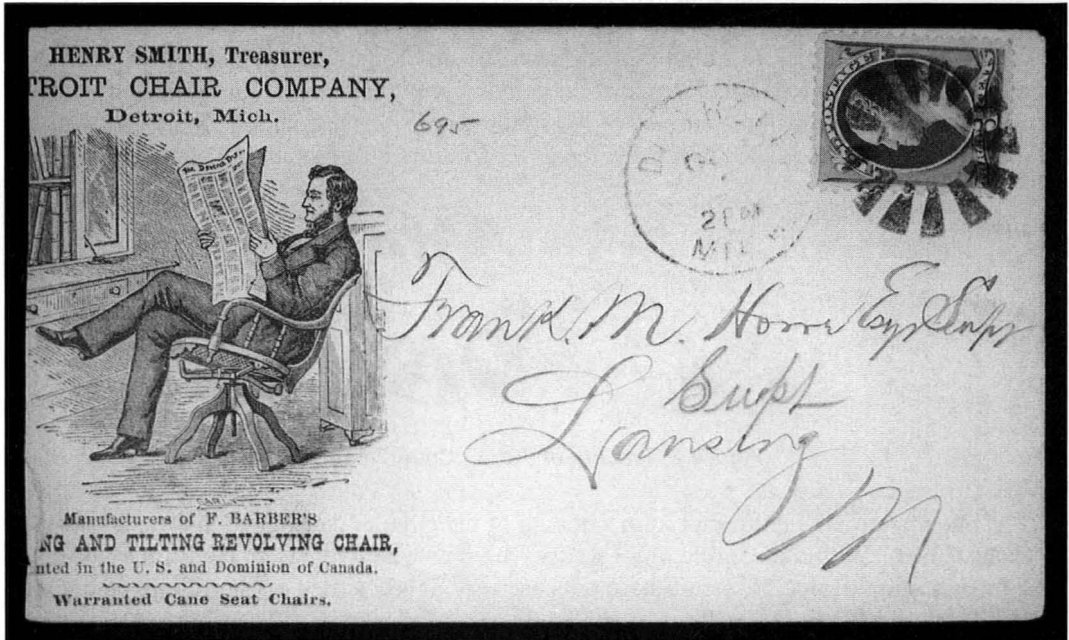


Figure 1. The "Chair Cover"

I recalled reading an article in *Linn's Stamp News*, the "Postal History" column of Sept. 23, 1996 by Richard Graham. Mr. Graham had written of the Gaston patent cancels used in Ohio in 1871 and he showed a Louisville, Ky patent cancel which featured a circle of wedges with pins inside the circle designed to pierce the stamps. That circle of wedges appeared to resemble the cancel on the "Chair Cover" and I pointed that out to its owner, good friend Bill Brooks.

We agreed that this just might be a patent cancel but, on second thought, this seemed unlikely. After all, only one design of patent cancel is known to exist from Michigan, a square of dots from Mount Clemens used in the 1860s. Further, the writer of the definitive article on patent cancels lived all his life in Detroit (1880-1960) and was also a collector of Michigan postal history. How could he have *not* known about a Detroit patent cancel?

The era of U.S. patent cancellations spanned the latter part of the 19th century when inventors were developing devices to pierce, cut or scrape a stamp to prevent reuse. These devices, and their resulting cancels, were most thoroughly researched and documented in the early 1930s by Detroitier Fred R. Schmalzreidt. His series of articles in *Collectors Club Philatelist* appeared from January 1931 to April 1933 and were later incorporated into a

single article in *Cyclopedia of United States Postmarks and Postal History*, edited by Delf Norona (1933). A 1975 reprint of the original book, produced by Quarterman Publications, Inc. of Lawrence, Mass., has become a handy reference for anyone studying this area of postal history.

Mr. Schmalzreidt's study includes a listing and illustrations of well over 100 examples, neatly grouped and cataloged. In the introduction to his article Schmalzreidt states, "All items in the check list have been seen by the writer, and the compilation of the list has been in progress over ten years, and represents all known Patent Cancellations." Again, how could this Detroit native not have discovered a Detroit patent cancel?

I borrowed the cover and examined, with a 20-power hand lens, the inside of the circle of wedges looking for dots of ink and holes or indentations in the surface of the stamp. The results were not conclusive; I needed someone with more experience and better equipment. That person turned out to be John Donnes of Louisiana.

At a get-together of collectors in New Orleans I showed John the cover and we examined it under his binocular microscope. Almost immediately John indicated that he could see indentations in the surface of the stamp where pins had apparently hit, as well as faint points of ink. He asked to borrow the cover to study it further and to photograph it.

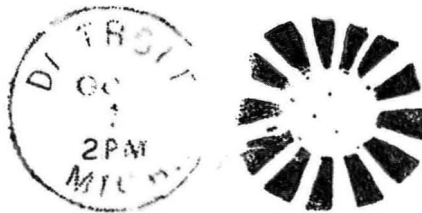


Figure 2. Tracing of "Chair Cover" cancel

Shown here as Figure 2 is John's tracing of the circular date stamp and cancel on the "Chair Cover." Within the circle of 13 wedges are dots which represent the location of pins in the canceling device. Some of these dots are very lightly struck on the stamp, others are quite bold and break the surface of the stamp with indentations. The photo in Figure 3 shows the location, within circles, of nine pin marks in an overall pattern of twelve.

A study of Figure 3 reveals that pins were arranged in rows of two and four. Thus, circled at top are pins 1 and 2. In the second row pins 3, 4 and 6 are shown but pin 5 does not appear. Row three is complete with pins 7, 8, 9 and 10. Pins 11 and 12, which would form a fourth row, are either missing or broken, a common defect in these devices. The row of four pins (pin 7 to pin 10, for instance) measures 114 mm in length.

Another photo of the same image as Figure 3 was taken with a flash at an acute angle to cast a shadow on pin depressions 1, 2, 4 and 9. These four are the most prominently struck on the chair cover stamp. The resultant shadows confirm that the pins of the canceling device touched at these points and left a slight depression or crater in the stamp surface. Of this photo, Mr. Donnes states that this cancel is, beyond question, a patent cancel.

John and I were pleased to have come this far with this single example. It seems to prove again that there are still discoveries to be made. But wait, there's more . . .

At the March 2001 NSDA show in NYC, I asked dealer Ed Hines if he had any covers with a Michigan connection. One of several he showed me was the Detroit cover addressed to Mary Olds and shown here as Figure 4.

The bold circle of wedges looked very familiar and Mr. Hines had made a note that it was possibly a patent cancel. I was sure at this point and my decision to purchase took no time at all.

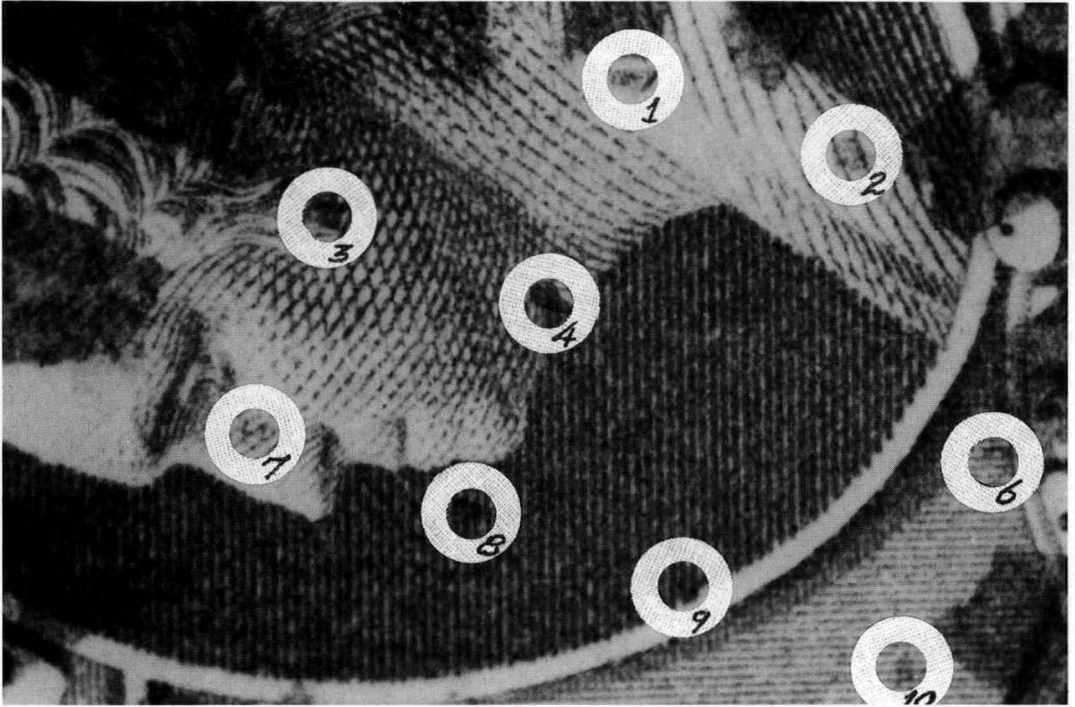


Figure 3. Location of 9 of 12 pins

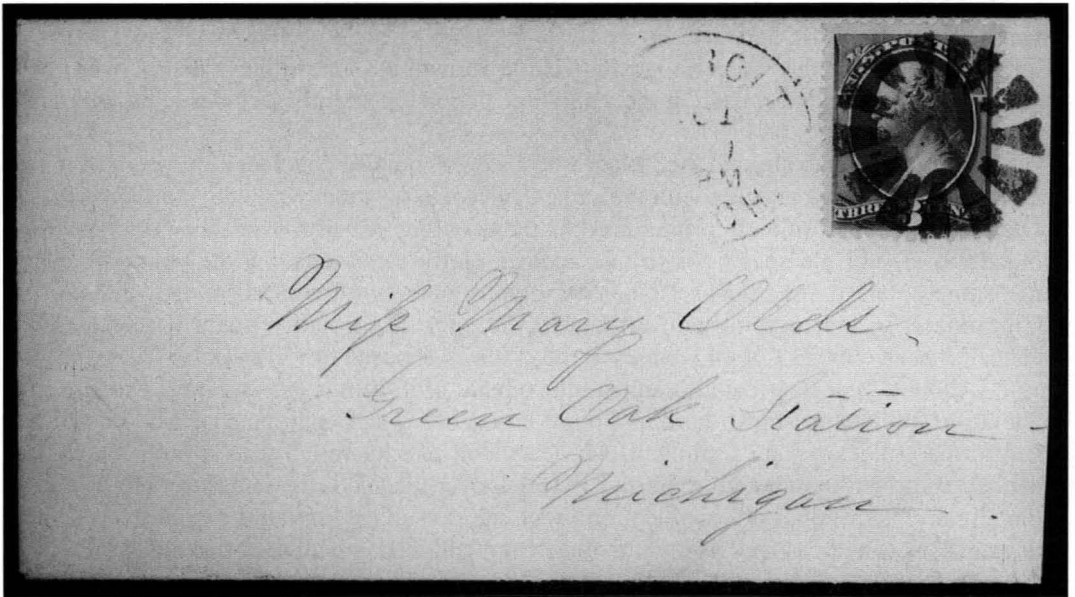


Figure 4. The Mary Olds cover

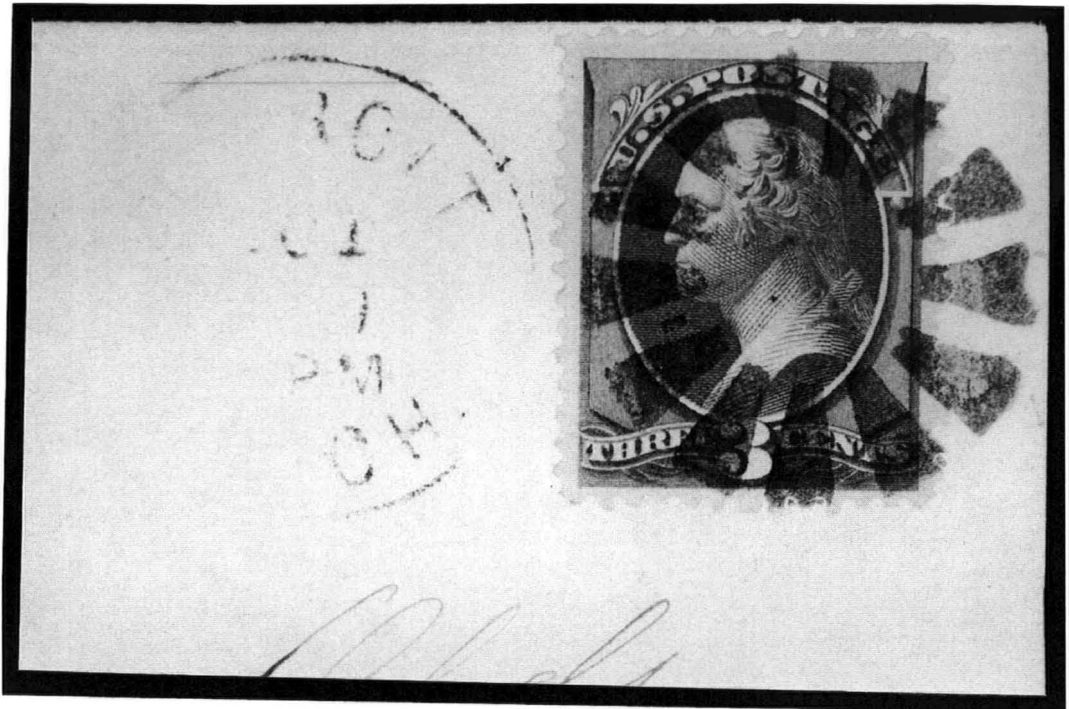


Figure 5. Stamp and cancel, Mary Olds cover

My comparison of the weak Detroit CDS and the circle of 13 wedges, shown here as Figure 5, confirmed to me that the same device had been used on the “Chair Cover,” Figure 1. The irregular size and spacing of the wedges, as well as measurements from observable points on CDS and killer, point to it being a duplex instrument. In Figure 5 a small rectangle of ink appears between wedges at about the 8 o’clock position. The same ink mark, between the same wedges, is visible, though weaker, in the “Chair Cover.” My conclusion: same device, used in the same time period, apparently October of an unknown year.

John Donnes examined the “Mary Olds” cover and also concluded that both of these Detroit covers were canceled with the same device. He says that while the pinpoint marks on the Olds cover are not quite as pronounced as those on the “Chair Cover” they do appear to match up in size and spacing with one another. He further states that the pin points have the same relative spacing as Louisville patent cancels (attributed to J.C. Gaston of Cincinnati) in his own collection. Louisville cancels, possibly made with Gaston’s canceler, have either 12 or 14 wedges in the circle as opposed to 13 for Detroit.

About a year later, another apparent example of a Detroit patent cancel came to my attention. The stamp shown here as Figure 6 is a 24¢ War Department official owned by California collector Alan Campbell. Mr. Campbell had identified it as a probable patent cancel from Detroit. Though the killer is struck over the CDS, the lettering “TROIT” and the circle of 13 wedges are visible along with ink dots made, it would appear, by a patent device. This cancel, as well as the previous two mentioned, are all struck in black ink.

With three examples at hand, it certainly appears that a canceling device of the type attributed by some to J.C. Gaston, and used for a time in Louisville, Ky., was also used in Detroit, Michigan. Because Fred Schmalzreidt did not record its use, the period of application must have been strictly experimental and quite brief. Based on the examples shown here, the device seems to have worked no better in Detroit than in other cities.



A notation on the reverse of the “Chair Cover” gives a date of 1876, but this may or may not be docketing. In short, more examples of Detroit usage are needed to help pinpoint a date and to further establish the facts surrounding this facet of Detroit postal history. Anyone having information to contribute is asked to contact the writer via the editor of the Bank Note Period of the *Chronicle*.

The writer thanks the following for their contributions to this study in the form of examples and expertise: Wm. E. Brooks, Alan Campbell, Ed Hines, Richard Graham and John Donnes. Without John’s knowledge, experience and microscope this examination would not have taken place.

Figure 6. 24¢ War Dept. Official

Editor’s Note: While this excellent article was in process, a similar 13 segment patent cancel in blue was discovered on an off-cover 3¢ green Bank Note issue. It has been compared to the Detroit markings and found to have the same hole pattern as discussed above. However, the 13 segments are distinctly different. So while you are checking your Bank Note patent cancels for the Detroit design, don’t ignore blue ones, and report them as well. □

Matthew W. Kewriga

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USAGES OF DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE OFFICIAL STAMPS

ALAN C. CAMPBELL

(continued from *Chronicle* 199:220)

Census of Covers

In 1934, Philip H. Ward, Jr. believed that only Agriculture and Executive covers were rarer than Justice covers:

Until recent years, the 1¢ was not known, but a few years back several single were found on large, legal envelopes. The 3¢ is not difficult to find, although is scarce on a small, neat cover. The 6¢ is possibly a little commoner than the 3¢ on legal covers and is very scarce on small covers. Fine covers showing the other values outside of the 2¢ are not known to exist. There is a 10¢ on a large, poor, unsightly cover and a 30¢ in somewhat similar condition. None of the other denominations are known on any type of complete cover.¹²

In 1958, five years after the Hughes sale, Walter I. Evans ranked the scarcity of official covers in the following order: Agriculture, Justice, State, Executive, Navy, War, Post Office, Interior, Treasury.¹³ Rae Ehrenberg wrote in 1963: "Covers bearing the three cent and six cent stamps are more common than the other denominations, many of which are unknown on cover."¹⁴ This is an imprecise use of the word "many," since Hughes before her had managed to obtain all values on cover except for the 24¢ and 90¢, but clearly she had not seen the Goff find at this time. Fred Boughner wrote in 1979: "... the Justice issues are rather scarce on cover with some of the higher values such as the 15¢ through 90¢ stamps being almost philatelic unknowns to most dealers and specialists in official stamps."¹⁵ Rollin C. Huggins Jr. wrote in 1988: "... were it not for Clarksburg, West Virginia, Justice covers would be almost impossible to obtain. Over half of the Justice covers I have seen were addressed to Clarksburg."¹⁶

All values of the Department of Justice official stamps are scarce or rare on cover, except for the 3¢ value on hard paper. I estimate that approximately fifty 3¢ Justice on hard paper covers survive. This census tracks all other values and includes all covers recorded by myself and Lester C. Lanphear III. Written descriptions of the unillustrated 6¢ Justice cover in the Knapp sale (#2709), the unillustrated 1¢ and 6¢ Justice covers in the H. L. Duckworth sale (#310-311), and a 2¢ cover in the Harmer, Rooke auction of May 17, 1963 (#700) were too vague to determine if these covers are distinct from the others listed and therefore they were not included. The survey lists 76 covers, and a few others undoubtedly exist. I would estimate that a total of approximately 125 covers bearing

¹²Philip H. Ward, Jr., "Departmental Covers," *Mekeel's*, Jan. 1, 1934, Vol. 48, pg. 3. In this review of the Ackerman sale, Ward notes that Congressman Ackerman "collected Dept. covers for upward of forty years or more and had the pick of practically everything that was found." The newly discovered legal-size 1¢ Justice covers he mentions are surely from the Moore correspondence. Ward attended the sale and bought heavily.

¹³Walter I. Evans, "Collect U.S. Official Stamps!," *The American Philatelist*, Vol. 71, No. 5 (February 1958), p. 347.

¹⁴Rae D. Ehrenberg, "United States Official Stamps, 1873-1884," *29th American Philatelic Congress* (n.p.: American Philatelic Congress, Inc., 1963), p. 79. This article, an overview, was the best on the topic since the chapter in Luff. It seems odd that Charles Starnes and Morrison Waud, both well-known for their other writings, published so little on official stamps and covers.

¹⁵Fred. Boughner, "Official Antics," *Linn's Stamp News*, January 29, 1979.

¹⁶Rollin C. Huggins, Jr., *Official Chatter* (house organ), July 1988.

Justice official stamps have survived, with over half of these coming from the Douglass, Goff and Moore correspondences. As usual, I am in a quandary as to whether or not to count the Starnes covers, which were stolen twenty years ago and may well be lost to philately forever. The designation (187?) indicates a type of Washington, D.C. postmark (with the hour but no year) known to have been used from late 1874 to late 1877, and then again briefly in the early months of 1879. All covers to Goff and Moore are of course addressed to Clarksburg, West Virginia.

1¢ Justice Covers (12 recorded, #1-12)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. 1¢ printed matter rate, legal size, crimson seal, Dept. of Justice blanks, D.C. March 6 (187?) to Moore, franked | ? (Ackerman #78, Stone #68) |
| 2. 1¢ printed matter rate, legal size, crimson seal, Dept. of Justice blanks, D.C. Aug. 9 (1873) to Bexar District, Texas, franked (earliest recorded 1¢ Justice cover) | TOL (Ehrenberg #272) |
| 3. 1¢ printed matter rate, legal size, crimson seal, D.C. Feb. 9 (1874) to Moore, franked | LCL (Ackerman #79) |
| 4. 1¢ printed matter rate, legal size, crimson seal, Dept. of Justice blanks, D.C. Aug. 15 (1873) to Salem, Va., franked | RLM (ex-Waud) |
| 5. 1¢ printed matter rate, legal size, crimson seal, Dept. of Justice blanks, D.C. (1874) to Covington, Louisiana, franked, badly toned all over | DWS |
| 6. 1¢ printed matter rate, legal size, crimson seal, Dept. of Justice blanks, D.C. (187?) to Goff, franked | CJS (Hollowbush #385) |
| 7. 1¢ printed matter rate, legal size, crimson seal, Dept. of Justice blanks, D.C. July 31 (1874) to Goff, franked, docketed "Telegrams," with enclosure, damaged through cc. | GTT |
| 8. 1¢ circular rate, legal size, crimson seal, reduced at left through seal, portion of 2nd stamp, to Moore, franked, with 1873 enclosure | ? (Siegel 616th Sale, #815, ex-Waud, Hollowbush #386) |
| 9. 1¢ circular rate, small folded bankruptcy notice, U.S. District Clerk's Office, District of Iowa, from Dubuque, Iowa to NYC, August 12 (1876), blue cancel | CJS (Hughes 225) |
| 10. 1¢ circular rate, small folded bankruptcy notice, U.S. District Clerk's Office, District of Iowa, Dec. 26 (187?) from Dubuque, Iowa to Milwaukee | RLM (ex-Waud) |
| 11. 1¢,2¢ domestic rate, small cover reduced at left, Dept. of Justice straightline CC, D.C. Oct. 1, 1878 to Little Rock, Ark. | CJS (ex-A. Brown, ex-Moody) |
| 12. 1¢,2¢ domestic rate, small cover, Solicitor of the Treasury cc., D.C. Dec. 30, 1880 to NYC (<i>latest recorded use of Justice stamps on cover</i>) | RLM (Stone #71) |

2¢ Justice Covers (9 recorded - #11-19)

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| 13. 2¢ double printed matter rate, legal size, crimson seal, D.C. to Moore, no postmark, franked | TOL (Ackerman #80) |
| 14. 2¢, tied on ragged legal cover to Moore | CJS (Hughes #226) |
| 15. 2¢ local rate, small cover, cc. of H. C. Alleman, U.S. Attorney, Denver, Colorado, Oct. 30 (187?) | RLM (ex-Waud) |
| 16. 2¢ local rate, small cover, cc. of U.S. Attorney, District of Columbia, violet Mar. 1 (1878), local postmark | RLM (ex-Waud) |
| 17. 2¢ local rate, small cover, cc. Office of U.S. Attorney, Northern District of Illinois, Chicago black postmark | TOL |
| 18. 2¢ pair, double local rate, legal size reduced at L. through cc. of District Attorney, blue Cincinnati postmark and "2" in barred circle killer, Dec. 31 (187?) | CJS |
| 19. 2¢ pair, domestic rate overpaid, legal size, cc. of U.S. Marshal's Office, Trenton, N. J. March 13 (187?), to New Brunswick, N. J. | LCL |

6¢ Justice Covers (28 recorded - #20-43, #63-65, #69)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 20. 6¢ double domestic rate, small manila cover with no corner card, D.C. (187?) to Albany, N. Y., torn at upper left | TOL |
| 21. 6¢ double domestic rate, small cover reduced at left with Office of U.S. District Attorney, Newark, N. J. cc., to New Brunswick, N. J. | TOL (ex-Arch, Ehrenberg, #282) |
| 22. 6¢ double domestic rate, small cover with Department of Justice Gothic cc., D.C. (187?) | TOL |
| 22. 6¢ double domestic rate, legal size, crimson seal, D.C. (187?) to North Ashford, Conn., reduced at R., edge tears | DWS (Stone #74) |
| 23. 6¢ double domestic rate, legal size, crimson seal, D.C. (187?) to Columbus, Indiana, forwarded to Ark. and returned, with Columbus, Ind. postmark and skull-and-crossbones duplex transit marking | RLM (ex-Shumsky) |
| 24. 6¢ double domestic rate, legal size, crimson seal, violet D.C. Jan 30, 1878 to Talladega, Alabama, front only | ACC (ex-Waud, Ackerman #91) |
| 25. 6¢ double domestic rate, legal size, crimson seal, D.C. (187?) to Moore | RCH |
| 26. 6¢ double domestic rate, legal size, crimson seal, D.C. Oct. 20 (187?) to Moore | CJS |
| 27. 6¢ double domestic rate, legal size, crimson seal, D.C. to Goff, small faults | ? (Hollowbush #392) |
| 28. 6¢ double domestic rate, legal size, Office of the Solicitor of the Treasury, D.C. (187?) to Moore, reduced at right | RLM (ex-Waud, Ackerman #90, Duckworth #312) |
| 29. 6¢ double domestic rate, legal size, Office of the Solicitor of the Treasury, D.C. postmark, "beautifully tied" | ?(Ackerman #89, Hughes #228) |
| 30. 6¢ double domestic rate, legal size, Office of the Solicitor of the Treasury, violet D.C. June 24, 1878 to Goff, docketed | TOL (Ehrenberg #283) |
| 31. 6¢ double domestic rate, legal size, Office of the Solicitor of the Treasury, D.C. (187?) to Goff | GT (Hollowbush #391) |
| 32. 6¢ double domestic rate, legal size, Office of the Solicitor of the Treasury, D.C. March 25 (1876) to Goff | ? (Hollowbush #390) |
| 33. 6¢ double domestic rate, legal size, Office of the Solicitor of the Treasury, D.C. (187?) to Goff, docketed | ? (Bennett #219) |
| 34. 6¢ double domestic rate, legal size, Office of the Solicitor of the Treasury, D.C. July 15 (1874) to Goff | ? (Bennett #220) |
| 35. 6¢ double domestic rate, legal size, Office of the Solicitor of the Treasury, D.C. Feb. 27 (1874) to Goff, docketed | ? (Bennett #221) |
| 36. 6¢ double domestic rate, legal size, Office of the Solicitor of the Treasury, D.C. (187?) to Goff, docketed, right sheet margin | ? (Bennett #222) |
| 37. 6¢ double domestic rate, legal size, D.C. to Goff | ? (Bennett #261) |
| 38. 6¢ triple local rate, legal size, crimson seal, D.C. February 15 (187?) to Frederick Douglass | TOL (Siegel Sale #616, Lot 817) |
| 39. 6¢ triple local rate, legal size, crimson seal, red D.C. April 10 (1874) postmark and circle of V's killer, reduced through seal and oil stains (<i>only recorded Justice cover with red cancellation</i>) | ACC |
| 40. 6¢, 3¢ triple domestic rate, legal size, Office of the Solicitor of the Treasury, violet. D.C. Feb. 1 (1879) to Goff | TOL (Hollowbush #389, Ehrenberg #280) |
| 41. 6¢, 3¢ triple domestic rate, legal size, Office of the Solicitor of the Treasury, D.C. August 8 (187?) to Goff | TOL (Bennett #223) |
| 42. 6¢, 3¢ triple domestic rate, legal size, crimson seal, D.C. (187?) to Goff, both stamps damaged | ? (Bennett #224) |
| 43. 6¢ pair quadruple domestic rate, large frayed cover, tied by D.C. cork postmarks | ? (Ackerman #92) |

10¢ Justice Covers (4 recorded - #44-47)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 44. 10¢ triple domestic rate overpaid, legal size, crimson seal, D.C. April 21, (1879) to Goff | LCL (Hollowbush #389, Ehrenberg #285) |
| 45. 10¢ triple domestic rate overpaid, legal size, crimson seal, D.C. (187?) to Lt. R. L. Hoxie, Montgomery, Alabama. | National Philatelic Collection |
| 46. 10¢ quintuple local rate, legal size, crimson seal, D.C. April (1877) to Frederick Douglass, U.S. Marshal | RLM (ex-Waud) |
| 47. 10¢ quintuple local rate, legal size, crimson seal, March 31 (187?) to Frederick Douglass, U.S. Marshal | TOL (Ackerman #93, Hughes #229, Stone #75) |

12¢ Justice Covers (10 recorded - #48-57)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 48. 12¢ quadruple domestic rate, legal size, cc. of Office of the Solicitor of the Treasury, May 26 (1874), to Goff, waffle grid cancel, stamp repaired (<i>earliest recorded 12¢ Justice cover</i>) | ACC |
| 49. 12¢ quadruple domestic rate, legal size, crimson seal, D.C. June 26 (1874) to Lewiston, Idaho Territory, circle of V's killer, contained confirmation of Terr. Supreme Court Justice | LCL |
| 50. 12¢ quadruple domestic rate, legal size, obsolete free frank envelope of the Office of the Solicitor of the Treasury, D.C. to Goff | CJS |
| 51. 12¢ quadruple domestic rate, legal size, crimson seal, D.C. to Goff, crudely repaired at top | ? (Weiss Auction, Jan. 1983) |
| 52. 12¢ quadruple domestic rate, legal size, crimson seal, D.C. July 28 (1876) to Goff, pen docketing | GTT |
| 53. 12¢ quadruple domestic rate, legal size, crimson seal, D.C. Aug. 23 (1876) to Goff with fancy woven grid killer | TOL (Bennett #225) |
| 54. 12¢ quadruple domestic rate, legal size, crimson seal, D.C. violet Jan. 27, 1878 postmark, to Goff | RE (Bennett #226) |
| 55. 12¢ quadruple domestic rate, legal size, crimson seal, D.C. violet July 9, 1878 postmark, to Goff | TOL (Hollowbush #394) |
| 56. 12¢ quadruple domestic rate, legal size, crimson seal, D.C. violet Oct. 26, 1878 postmark, to Wilmington, Del., not tied | TOL (Hughes #230, Duckworth #313, Ehrenberg #287) |
| 57. 12¢ quadruple domestic rate, not tied, extra-legal size worn cover, crimson seal, D.C. June 28 (1876) to Clarksburg | ? (Hollowbush #395) |

15¢ Justice Covers (8 recorded - #58-65)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 58. 15¢ quintuple domestic rate, legal size, no corner card, D.C. October 17 (187?) to Moore | TOL (Ehrenberg, #288) |
| 59. 15¢ quintuple domestic rate, legal size, obsolete Office of Solicitor of the Treasury corner card, D.C. Nov. 10 (1873) to Montgomery, Alabama with iron cross killer | TOL (Ackerman #94?, Hughes #231, Siegel 4/83 #819) |
| 60. 15¢ quintuple domestic rate, legal size, crimson seal, D.C. Nov. 7 (187?) to Goff | LCL |
| 61. 15¢ septuple local rate overpaid, legal size, crimson seal, D.C. March 29 (187?) to Frederick Douglass, U.S. Marshal | RLM (ex-Waud) |
| 62. 15¢ quintuple domestic rate, legal size, worn, violet D.C. Oct. 4, 1878 postmark to Goff | ? (Hollowbush #396) |
| 63. 15¢, 6¢ septuple domestic rate, legal size, crimson seal, D.C. Feb. 6 (1876) to Goff, docketed, both stamps with right sheet margins | TOL (Bennett #227) |
| 64. 15¢, 6¢ septuple domestic rate, legal size, crimson seal, D.C. Aug. 14 (1873) to NYC (<i>earliest recorded use on cover of both 6¢ and 15¢ Justice stamps</i>) | RLM (ex-Waud) |
| 65. 15¢, 6¢ septuple domestic rate, legal size, crimson seal, D.C. July 12 (187?) to the U.S. Attorney, San Francisco, docketed | CJS |

24¢ Justice Covers (2 recorded - #66-67)

66. 24¢ octuple domestic rate, legal size, crimson seal, D.C. LCL
April (187?) to Goff, docketed, creased
67. 24¢, 24¢ 16x domestic rate, extra legal size, cc. Office of the TOL (Ehrenberg
Solicitor of the Treasury, D.C. violet Aug. 1, 1878 postmark #290, Hollowbush
to Goff #397)

30¢ Justice Covers (3 recorded - #68-70)

68. 30¢ 10x domestic rate, extra legal size, handwritten Office CJS (Ackerman #96,
of the Solicitor of the Treasury corner card, D.C. Dec. 9 Hughes #232)
(1876) to Little Rock, Ark., docketed
69. 30¢, 6¢, 3¢ 13x domestic rate, legal size, crimson seal, D.C. TOL (Bennett #228)
Jan. 26 (187?) to Goff

90¢ Justice Covers (1 recorded - #70)

70. 90¢(x3), 30¢(x4), legal size, crimson seal, D.C. March 19 TOL (Bennett #229)
(187?) to Goff

3¢ Justice Soft Paper Covers (5 recorded - #71-75)

71. 3¢ domestic rate, small cover, Department of Justice straightline LCL
corner card, D.C. March 13, 1879 to Baltimore, Maryland,
docketed (*earliest recorded 3¢ Justice soft paper cover*)
72. 3¢ domestic rate, legal size, Office of the Solicitor of the CJS
Treasury, D.C. April 25, 1879 indigo postmark to Goff
73. 3¢ domestic rate, legal size, Office of the Solicitor of the CJS (Hollowbush
Treasury, D.C. July 3, 1879 indigo postmark to Goff #412)
74. 3¢ domestic rate, legal size, Office of the Solicitor of the TOL (Bennett #254)
Treasury, D.C. July 3, 1879 indigo postmark to Goff
75. 3¢ domestic rate, legal size, Office of the Solicitor of the ACC (Bennett #255)
Treasury, D.C. July 7, 1879 indigo postmark to Goff, docketed

6¢ Justice Soft Paper Covers (1 recorded - #76)

76. 6¢ double domestic rate, legal size, manuscript "O.B." c.c., TOL
Helena to Virginia City, Montana Territory, stamp damaged

Collectors' Initials:

- ACC (Alan C. Campbell)
RE (Ralph Ebner)
RCH (Rollin C. Huggins, Jr.)
LCL (Lester C. Lanphear III)
TOL (Theodore O. Lockyear)
RLM (Robert L. Markovits)
DWS (Dr. Dennis W. Schmidt)
CJS (Charles J. Starnes, deceased - collection stolen in 1983)
GTT (George T. Turner, deceased, collection donated to the Washington Philatelic Society).

Major Sales:

- Congressman Ernest R. Ackerman, J. C. Morgenthau & Co., Inc., 1933 (lots #78-96)
Edward S. Knapp, Parke-Bernet Galleries, Inc., 1941 (lots #2708-2709)
James E. Hughes, Bruce G. Daniels, 1953 (lots #225-232)
H. G. Duckworth, Harmer, Rooke, 1963 (lots #310-313)
Frank A. Hollowbush, John A. Fox, Part I 10/14/65, Part II 7/8/66 (lots #385-397, #412)
Rae D. Ehrenberg ("The Crystal Collection"), Robert A. Siegel 577th Sale (lots #272, 276-280,
282-283, 285, 287-288, 290)
Morrison Waud, private treaty, 1982
Robert A. Siegel 616th Sale, 4/12/83 (lots 815-817, 819)
Marshall Stone, Robert A. Siegel 728th Sale (lots #68, 71, 73-75)
Matthew Bennett 206th Sale, 11/15/98 (lots 213-229, 254-255, 261)
George Lehto, Matthew Bennett Inc. 1/20/01 (lots 689-690)

Usages During the Transitional Period

The use of penalty frank envelopes in lieu of official stamps was authorized on March 3, 1877 and the Department of Justice seems to have embraced the new concept enthusiastically. Additional stamps of the 3¢-90¢ values continued to be requisitioned through the fiscal year 1879, probably to satisfy the postage needs of the U.S. district attorneys, clerks and marshals, since the utilization of penalty franks by Executive officers outside of Washington, D.C. was not authorized until March 3, 1879. Some remaining supplies of stamps were used at the departmental headquarters through 1878, but all but one usage from Washington, D.C. afterwards are from the Office of the Solicitor of the Treasury. The latest confirmed usage of any Justice stamps is Robert L. Markovits' 1¢, 2¢ combination cover from the Office of the Solicitor of the Treasury (previously illustrated here) postmarked at the main D.C. post office on December 30, 1880.¹⁷ Off-cover used Justice stamps with strikes of any of the steel numeral cancellations used there 1880-1884 are extremely rare. In as much as it was the Attorney General himself, Benjamin Harrison Brewster, who had opined on January 10, 1882 that penalty frank envelopes were not valid for field office correspondence with private citizens, one would have assumed that for strict compliance, the Department of Justice would have needed to continually order more stamps through fiscal year 1884 in order to satisfy the postage needs of the U.S. district attorney, clerks and marshals. But except for requisitioning 1,000 2¢ and 1,000 3¢ stamps in fiscal year 1884, this was not the case. Perhaps existing stocks in Washington, D.C. were adequate to supply these needs up until the very end. Penalty frank envelopes from field officers of the Department of Justice have survived from the transitional period, 1877-1884, but none of them bear the additional postage required by Brewster's ruling for correspondence with private citizens. As with the earlier envelopes prepared for use with official stamps, classic Justice penalty franks from outside the nation's capital were privately printed and show great variety in the style of their corner cards. A nice selection was previously illustrated here in Warren S. Howard's article, "The Classic Penalty Franks."¹⁸ □

¹⁷Alan C. Campbell, "Usages of Official Stamps in Washington, D.C., 1877-1884," *Chronicle*, Vol. 51, No. 4 (Whole No. 184)(November 1999), p. 285.

¹⁸*Chronicle*, Vol. 50, No. 3 (Whole No. 179)(August 1998), p. 209, Figure 3a-3e.

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ANOTHER PART PAID BRITISH MAIL COVER IS FOUND

RICHARD F. WINTER

In *Chronicle* 185, February 2000, Colin Tabcart wrote a scholarly article about his research into an unofficial agreement between the New York and Liverpool postmasters to allow letters paid at least one full rate to receive credit for partial payment, contrary to the provisions of the United States-United Kingdom Postal Convention of 1848.¹ These arrangements, which appear to have been unknown by the United States and British Postmasters General, were effective from the beginning of the convention in February 1849 until the end of December 1852, a period of almost four years. Tabcart's careful research led to his receipt of the society's Susan M. McDonald Award for the year 2000 in recognition of this outstanding article on United States postal history published in the *Chronicle*.

In his article Tabcart illustrated and discussed four covers showing evidence of this partial-payment treatment. One of the covers, a 1 November 1851 letter from Liverpool to Providence, Rhode Island with a pair of one shilling adhesives, had been known for many years, but never understood for what it was. This cover, which was illustrated in Hargest as Figure 17, was used to illustrate a convention provision for correcting errors in the accounting for letters.² It was not recognized by him as a letter showing an accepted partial payment because, from reading the convention provisions, he knew that there was no allowance for partial prepayments of letters. Tabcart gave us the correct explanation for this unusual cover based on new evidence that he had assembled. The proper analysis of this cover and the illustration of three other covers in the Tabcart article provided the only covers known to the author which showed handling under the unofficial arrangement he described. I can now illustrate a fifth cover, which has just recently surfaced. This example provides a few additional considerations to be added to Tabcart's original work.

Figure 1 illustrates the outer sheet of a folded letter, which was posted in St. Leonard's-on-Sea, Sussex County, England, on 26 November 1851, and was addressed to Newport, Rhode Island. The postmark of St. Leonard's appears in blue ink on the reverse. The letter was paid one shilling, the rate for a single letter under 1/2 oz., with an 1847 green embossed adhesive, which was canceled by a barred oval killer with the numerals "682" for St. Leonard's. The letter was endorsed in the lower left corner, "Per Steamer/Nov' 29th," a reference to the desired steamship planned to depart England for the United States on that date. The letter writer wrote "paid" in the upper right corner before taking the letter to the post office, where the adhesive was purchased and applied over the notation. It was then sent to London, arriving on 27 November as shown by an orange circular datestamp on the reverse. Here, a postal clerk evaluated the letter as weighing over 1/2 oz. and requiring two rates. The clerk applied an orange handstamp, **INSUFFICIENTLY/STAMPED**, to the left of the adhesive (see Figure 2) indicating that the letter was insufficiently paid. Originally I thought that the notation in the upper left corner read "Above 1/2 or 48," and that it was marked at London. After discussing the cover with assistant section editor Jeff Bohn I accepted his alternative conclusion that it made more sense to consider that this notation was written by a postal clerk in Boston, which I

¹Colin Tabcart, "Part Paid Covers in the British Mail 1849-52," *Chronicle* 185:59-69.

²George E. Hargest, *History of Letter Post Communications between the United States and Europe, 1845-75* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1971), p. 37.



Figure 1. 26 November 1851, St. Leonard's-on-Sea, England to Newport, Rhode Island, paid one shilling, for single rate to U.S. Letter shows evidence of credit for one rate paid and debit for one rate unpaid. Boston clerk restated letter weight over $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. and 48¢ postage due, after first marking only 24¢ due for single rate.

INSUFFICIENTLY
STAMPED

Figure 2. London handstamp in orange ink to the left of the adhesive indicating letter insufficiently prepaid.

ABOVE $\frac{1}{2}$ Oz
RL

Figure 3. Black Liverpool handstamp under Boston marking on left side showing letter weight above the single rate of $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. Handstamp constructed to allow manuscript notation of weight, in this case "above $\frac{1}{2}$ oz."

5
CENTS

Figure 4. Liverpool credit handstamp of 5¢ for one rate prepaid struck on top of London marking shown in Figure 2.

will explain later. For reasons that I do not understand, the letter was sent to Liverpool without marking the accounting debit on the letter. It would have been normal for this accounting to have been done at London. If it had, since London was not a part of the unofficial arrangement, the letter would have received no credit for the prepayment, but would have been marked as an unpaid letter with 38¢ due to the United Kingdom. London would have applied their **38/CENTS** debit marking. Instead, the letter was sent to Liverpool with just the indications that it was insufficiently prepaid.

The Liverpool post office clerks treated the letter as a partial paid letter rather than an unpaid letter. First, the letter was marked with a black octagonal transit marking of Liverpool when it arrived on 28 November. This appears in the space between the address label and the endorsement of the lower left corner. Next a Liverpool clerk applied a straight-line handstamp, **ABOVE — OZ.**, and wrote in black ink “1/2” in the space provided to signify a weight measurement. This marking is very difficult to see since the Boston datestamp was later struck over it so I have illustrated it in Figure 3. Underneath are the same initials, “RIL,” that appear in the Hargest Figure 17 cover under the same handstamp marking. The Liverpool weight handstamps with initials below were placed on an angle in the upper left corners of the two letters. Since the letter illustrated by Hargest originated in Liverpool, we know that these initials were written at the Liverpool office. Following the procedures explained in Tabcart’s article, the Liverpool clerk marked the Figure 1 letter for a credit of 5¢ to the United States, the proper credit for the one rate paid. The credit handstamp in red orange ink, **5/CENTS**, was struck over the **INSUFFICIENTLY/ STAMPED** marking and is difficult to see, so I have provided a tracing of the marking in Figure 4. Next, the clerk marked a black **19/CENTS** handstamp in the lower right corner, a debit to the United States for the one rate unpaid. These two markings were the Liverpool versions of the credit and debit markings with the slanted style and not the upright style of similar markings used at the London office.³

The letter was included in the mail bags placed on board the Cunard steamship *Niagara*, departing Liverpool on 29 November and arriving at Boston on 12 December 1851.⁴ Here, the mail bags were opened and the letters marked on the following day, 13 December. This letter received a large black circular datestamp, **B^R PACKET/(date)/ 24/BOSTON.**, which showed postage due of 24¢. The Boston clerk, noting the 19¢ debit marking and thinking that the letter required one rate, first marked the letter for the postage due of a single, unpaid letter. Then, after considering that the British had marked the letter indicating that it weighed more than 1/2 oz. and was insufficiently prepaid, he weighed the letter and concluded that it was over the weight for one rate. He wrote in the upper left corner, “Above 1/2 oz” and “48” for the postage due of 48¢, the unpaid rate for a double letter weighing between 1/2 - 1 oz. This action supported the conclusion reached by Tabcart that the Boston post office was unaware of the agreement between the New York and Liverpool postmasters.

Aside from the fact that another nice example of this unusual postal handling can now be reported, this letter, unlike the previously reported examples, shows that the letter actually went through London on its way to the steamship at Liverpool. It was fortunate for collectors today that the London clerk elected not to rate this letter and left the accounting to the Liverpool clerk. I am convinced that there are more examples of this scarce rating of letters, but to date no others have been reported. The letters are uncommon because they have to show payment of one or more rates and still be insufficiently paid. However, they will show both debit and credit markings. The dual use of these conflicting markings was not in error but were conscientiously applied. I echo Tabcart’s request that readers search their collections for other examples of these elusive covers and report them to either author. □

³Colin Tabcart, *Robertson Revisited* (Limassol, Cyprus: James Bendon Ltd., 1997) provides detailed illustrations of all the debit and credit handstamps used at London and Liverpool as well as a number of other instructional markings used on maritime mail.

⁴Walter Hubbard and Richard F. Winter, *North Atlantic Mail Sailings 1840-75* (Canton, Ohio: U.S. Philatelic Classics Society, Inc., 1988), p. 30.

ANSWERS TO PROBLEM COVERS IN ISSUE 197-198

Route Agent Tim O'Connor submitted the following in answer to the colonial transatlantic covers in the February 2003 issue and again as Figures 4 through 6 in the May 2003 issue (Figures 1-3 here).



Figure 1. London to Philadelphia cover, 3 Jan. 1787, POST PAID "2"

Thanks for the colonials. It was nice to see the grouping. The rates are straightforward, representing a single, double and sextuple (1½ oz.) weight cover. Hence the one shilling packet rate for the Falmouth packet is Pd 1/, Pd 2/ and Pd 6/0, respectively. The Falmouth Packet landed in New York and the letters traveled to Philadelphia and were rated for the inland postage charge for a trip 61-100 miles. Cover 4 arrived 20 Feb 1787 and was rated according to the Postal Act of Oct. 18, 1782 which charged 2 dwt for the trip. Cover 5 and 6 made the same trip, but they were rated according to the Postal Act of April 5, 1788 which lowered the rates 25%. Under that Law the single weight rate for a trip to Philla. was 1 dwt 8 grs Troy. Cover 5 is a double weight, so 2 x 1.8 is 2.16. Similarly, cover 6 is 1½ oz, or 6 x 1 dwt 8 grs where 24 grs equals 1 dwt ... so 8 dwt. I believe that the manuscript 1/4 (of cover 5) and the 3/6 (of #6) are local Pennsylvania currency equivalents in shillings and pence. The circular POST PAID was applied in Philadelphia and is a marking that dates back to the late

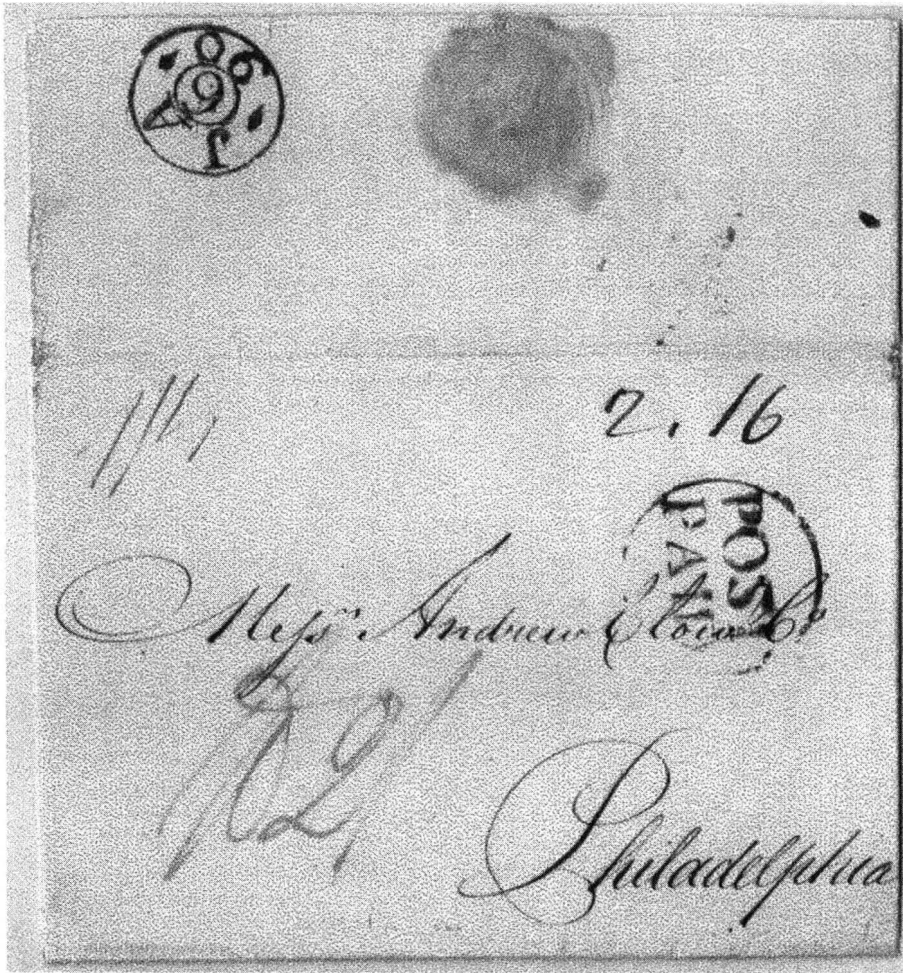


Figure 2. London to Philadelphia cover, 6 Jan. 1790, POST PAID "2.16"

1760s. What is unclear to me is whether the POST PAID was applied to represent prepayment of the transatlantic postage, or if the Postmaster used the mark after ALL the inland postage was collected. . . .

Can anyone answer the question regarding the "POST PAID" hand-stamp?

Also, Tom Mazza noted that "[t]he local currency of Philadelphia was not as valuable as sterling, with 3 pence sterling being equivalent to 5 pence local. The additional point of interest is that Philadelphia would add tuppence to incoming mail, in all probability for a carrier fee."

ADDITIONAL "HAVE YOUR LETTERS DIRECTED . . ." MARKINGS

Route Agent Cliff Woodward offers some additional insight into the most recent series of articles regarding the "HAVE YOUR LETTERS DIRECTED . . ." markings featured in the recent issues.

I have . . . a cover in my collection showing an additional example of the Syracuse, NY misspelled "LETTERS" version of the marking. [Figure 4] I thought the cover might be

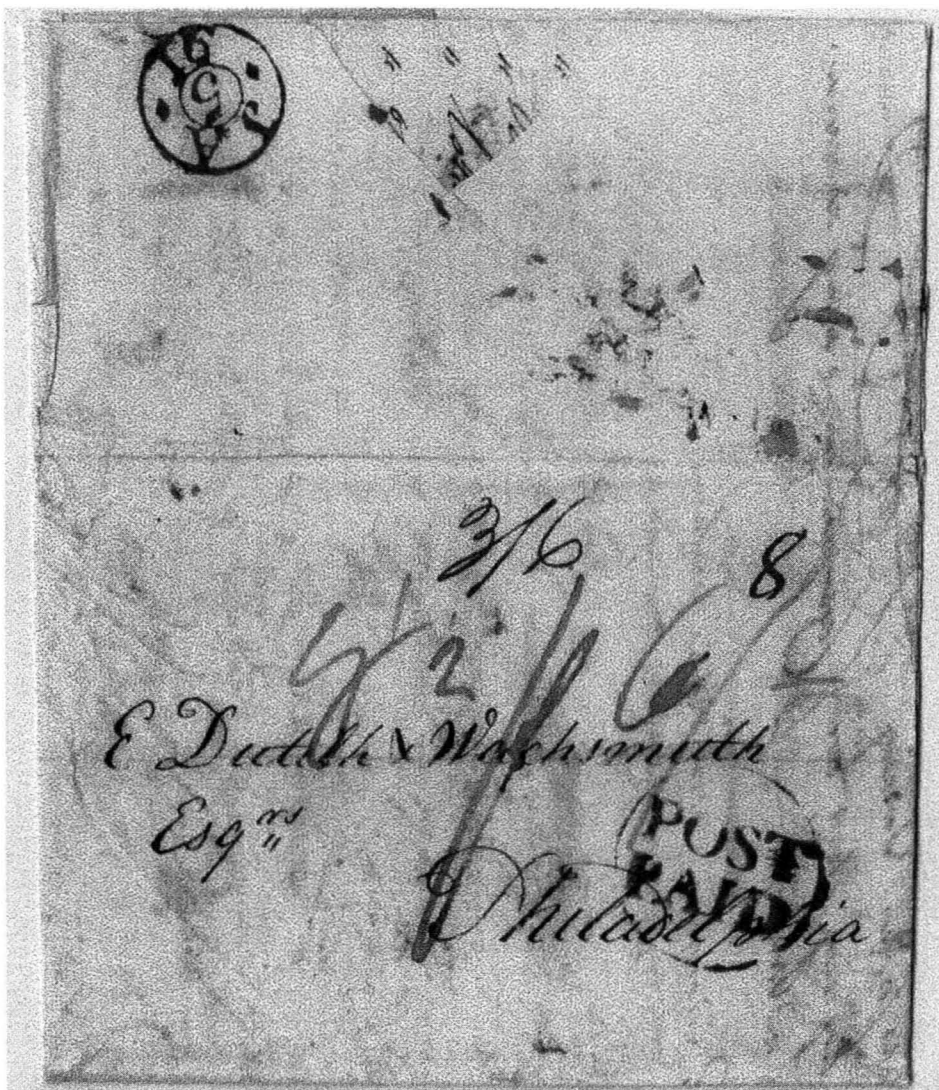


Figure 3. London to Philadelphia cover, 5 Jan. 1791, POST PAID "8"

of interest to your census as it is clearly docketed June 20th of 1869 (the origin is Woburn, MA). [I also have] four covers addressed to H.F. King, New Orleans, La. from Corry, Pennsylvania in 1885 exhibiting the circular "HAVE YOUR/MAIL/DIRECTED/TO/STREET & NUMBER." This is the same marking shown in *Chronicle* 197 on page 72. They date April 23, April 26, May 1 and May 13 of that year and all have a year-dated New Orleans receiving handstamp on the reverse. Some interesting features of these covers are as follows: 4/23 bears a manuscript "B" and "Not 18" markings in pencil, along with the notation "Camp & Comrl. c/o Merrick Foster & Merrick," 4/26 the same (the "B" is in a smudged mark above the Corry townmark), 5/1 the same. The 5/13 is the most gratifying, in a way, as the New Orleans post office must have made their desire known to the writer in Corry for he has additionally addressed this envelope to "No 5 Commercial Place." Proof that the campaign to properly address letters worked in at least one case. The "B" could refer to "Box" and "Not 18" to the box of that number. "Camp & Comrl." could refer to a corner of Camp & Commercial Streets, but I have not sought out a contemporary city map to confirm this.



Figure 4. Woburn, Mass. to Syracuse, N.Y., "Leters" misspelled

Per your Table 1 on page 236 of *Chronicle* 199, I believe a correction to the year date on this listing should read "ca. 1880-1885." Additionally, the listing for the Terre Haute cover should read "ca. 1875." I believe the quote from the Evans book in *Chronicle* 193 offers a straightforward explanation for the markings, *i.e.*, they were used as part of a campaign by the post office to educate the public regarding new policy. That would place them in the singular position of being early "public service" messages. Naturally one would expect these to appear on advertised covers, but that so many of them have survived on regular mail seems to bear this out.

As a final note on these cachets: When perusing a batch of common U.S. covers, my eyes were drawn to a 1½¢ U525 envelope with a duplex machine cancel 25mm x 20mm in size and with the same message as in our earlier cachets (Figure 5). However, this cover was over 60 years later, from 1932! In the meantime, the Post Office had made letter addressing more difficult for postal patrons by changing house numbers in most large cities so they would conform to a consistent system based on distance from the city center.

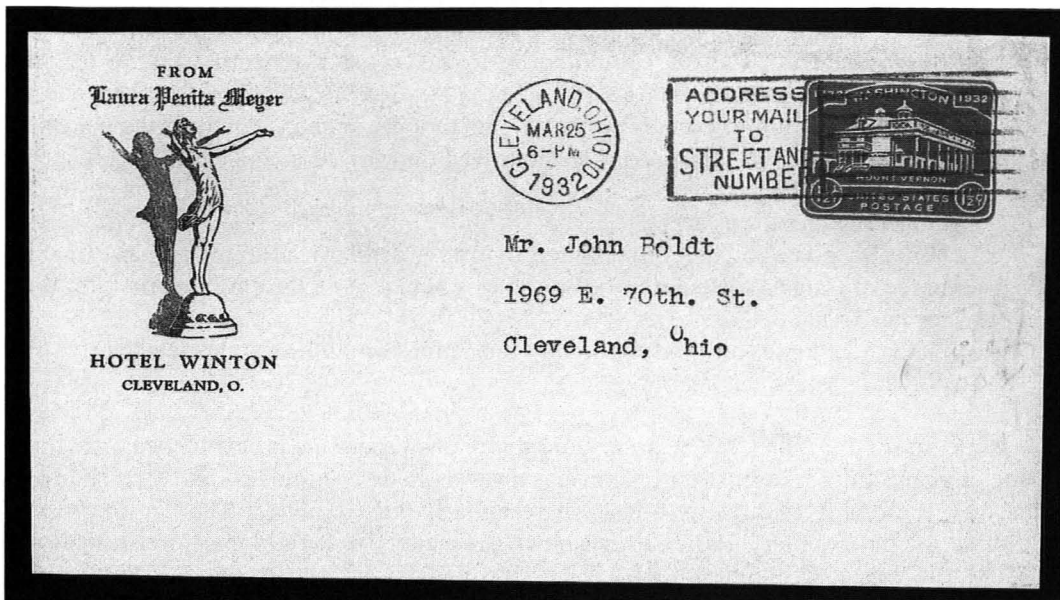


Figure 5. 1932 cover, Cleveland, Ohio, boxed "ADDRESS / YOUR MAIL / TO / STREET AND / NUMBER"

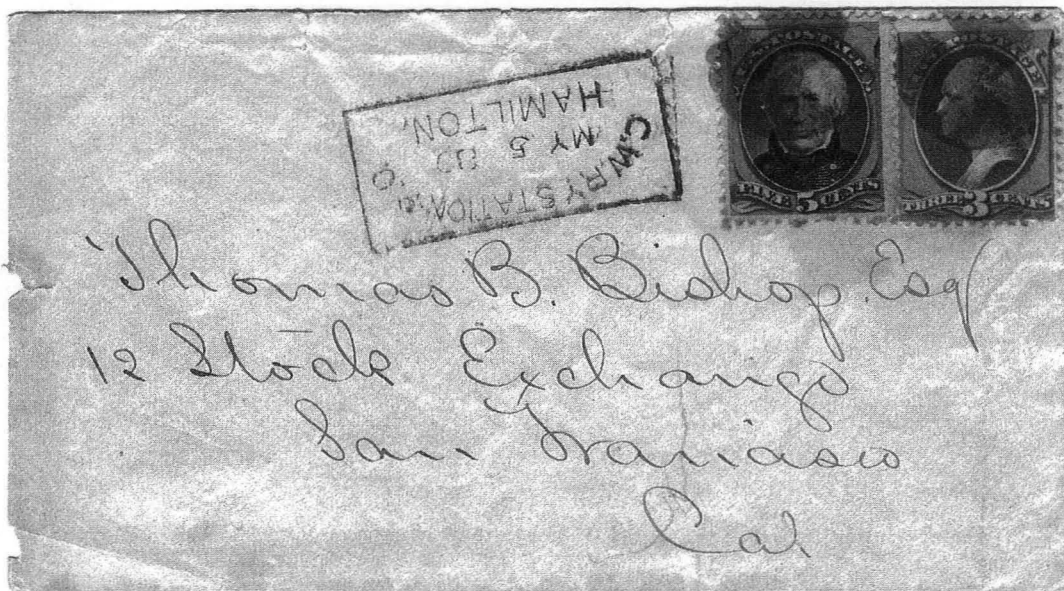


Figure 6. Canada to San Francisco, boxed "C.W.R.Y. STATION P.O. / MY 5 80 / HAMILTON" plus Hamilton My 5 80 CDS on reverse, 8¢ U.S. postage

PROBLEM COVER FOR THIS ISSUE

Two U.S. stamps—a 5¢ Jackson and a 3¢ Washington—are apparently the only postage paid on this cover from Canada submitted by Route Agent Ron Burns (Figure 6). As shown by a boxed “C.W.RY.STATION P.O. / MY 5 80 / HAMILTON” on the front, and a MY 5 80 CDS of Hamilton, Canada on the reverse (not illustrated), it entered the mails in Canada. Addressed to San Francisco, Cal., it arrived on May 12 as indicated by a second CDS (not shown) on the back.

Agent Burns' questions are:

1. Why 8¢ postage? A convenience overpayment? An attempt to pay the 5¢ Registered fee of Canada? (He notes the 3¢ stamp was placed on the envelope first, for the 5¢ overlaps the 3¢.)
2. Were U.S. stamps allowed for use in Canada for any purpose at this late date?
3. Why no postage due markings?

* * * * *

Please send to The Cover Corner Editor your answers to the problem covers for this issue, and any further discussion of previous answers to other problem covers, as soon as possible, preferably within two weeks of receiving your *Chronicle*. The “go to press” deadline for the February 2004 Cover Corner is January 10, 2004. I can receive mail at 605 Maple Trace, Cincinnati, OH 45231-4166 and via an e-mail address: RWCarlin@aol.com.

New examples of problem covers are always needed for The Cover Corner. High resolution copiers, either black and white or colored images, have proven to be quite successful in reproducing 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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c. Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation (Sum of 1b(1), (2), (3), and (4))			
d. Free Distribution (Sum of 1d(1), (2), and (3))			
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(3) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS			
e. Free Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means)			
f. Total Free Distribution (Sum of 1e and 1d)			
g. Total Distribution (Sum of 1c and 1f)		1,167	1,144
h. Copies not Distributed		283	306
i. Total (Sum of 1g and 1h)		1,450	1,450
j. Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation (1c divided by 1g times 100)		100%	100%

16. Publication of Statement of Ownership:
 Publication required. Will be printed in the **NOVEMBER 2003** issue of this publication.
 Publication not required.

W. Carlin Peterson, Editor-in-Chief **1 OCTOBER 2003**

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5. If the publication had Periodicals authorization as a general or requester publication, this Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation must be published. It must be printed in any issue in October or, if the publication is not published during October, the first issue printed after October.
6. In item 16, indicate the date of the issue in which this Statement of Ownership will be published.
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ADVERTISER INDEX

Matthew Bennett, Inc.	242
Edelman's Loan Office	317
Charles G. Firby	318
Leonard H. Hartmann	306
Ivy & Mader Philatelic Auctions, Inc.	320
Matthew W. Kewriga	301
Victor B. Krievins	244
Kristal Kare, Inc.	319
James E. Lee	Inside Back Cover
Andrew Levitt, Philatelic Consultant	280-81
Jack E. Molesworth, Inc.	Inside Front Cover
Schuyler Rumsey Philatelic Auctions	246
Shreves Philatelic Galleries, Inc.	241
Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries, Inc.	292, Back Cover
Stephen T. Taylor	295
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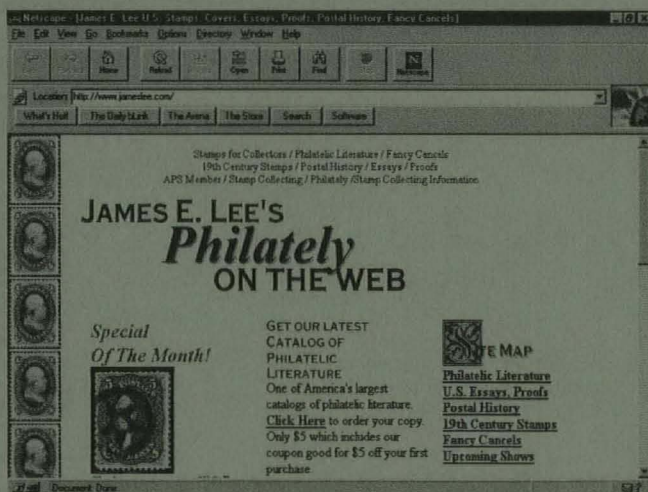


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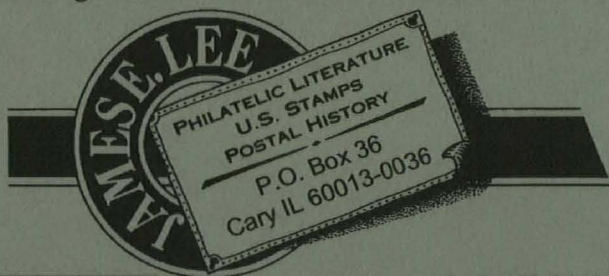
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At Public Auction
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Hale 1954

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EMERSON C. KRUG
Collection of
UNITED STATES
COVERS

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AT 2 P.M. EACH DAY

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Krug 1958

BOOK SALE
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1856-1861 ISSUES

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Hill 1959

The
NEWBURY
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Newbury 1962


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Lilly 1967

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UNITED STATES
POSTAL HISTORY COVERS
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Miss Katherine Matties



At Public Auction
Tuesday, Wednesday
May 20th, 21st, 1969

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Matties 1969

BOOK SALE
The
MORTIMER L. NEINKEN
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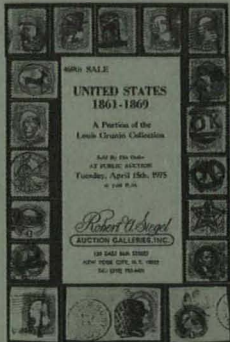
At Unreserved Public Auction
Thursday Afternoon, November 19th, 1970 at 1:00 P. M.
Friday Afternoon, November 20th, 1970 at 1:00 P. M.

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Neinken 1970

BOOK SALE
UNITED STATES
1861-1869
A Portion of the
Leach Green Collection

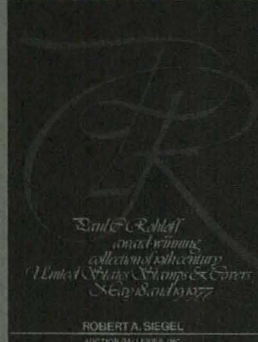


At Public Auction
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Grubin 1975




From the Award Winning
Collection of Postage
United States Stamps & Covers
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Rohloff 1977

BOOK SALE
THE AWARD WINNING
POSTAL HISTORY COLLECTION
OF
J. DAVID BAKER



At Unreserved Public Auction
Tuesday, April 4, 1978 at 1:00 P. M.

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Baker 1978

UNITED STATES
POSTAL HISTORY
FROM THE
MARC HAAS COLLECTION

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Haas 1980

BOOK SALE
Ex-Sheriff

Part I
OCTOBER 17, 12, 1980

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Sheriff 1985

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CLASSIC UNITED STATES
STAMPS AND COVERS

A PORTION OF THE PHILIP G. RUST COLLECTION

JUNE 25, 1987

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Rust 1987

BOOK SALE
UNITED STATES 1947 ISSUE
The Award Winning Kapiloff Collection




At Public Auction
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Kapiloff 1992

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At Public Auction
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