THE CHRONICLE May 2004 (No. 202)

The Chronicle
of the U.S. Classic Postal Issues

May 2004 Volume 56, No. 2 Whole No. 202

THE CHRONICLE of the U.S. Classic Postal Issues, published quarterly in Feb., May, Aug. and Nov. by the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society, Inc. at Briarwood, Lisbon, MD 21765. Second class postage paid at Canton, Ohio 44711 and additional mailing office. Subscription price $24.00. Printed in the U.S.A. POSTMASTER send address changes to Briarwood, Lisbon, MD 21765.

The Chronicle
of the U.S. Classic Postal Issues

ISSN 0009-6008

May 2004	Published Quarterly, in February, May, August and November	Vol. 56, No. 2 Whole No. 202

$4.50 Members *Official publication of the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society, Inc.* *Annual Dues*
$6.00 Non-Members (Unit 11, A. P. S.) www.uspcs.org *$27.50*

Address changes should be sent to Secretary, back issue orders to Publication Sales Chairman, other correspondence to Editor-in Chief. Reports of new items or articles should be submitted to appropriate Section Editor or Editor-in-Chief. Do not send stamps or covers unless requested. Any items sent will be carefully guarded but no liability attaches to an editor.

IN THIS ISSUE

GRINNELL REDUX

Editor's Note: This is very probably the last major article completed by Cal Hahn (March 10, 1927 - May 4/5, 2004). He wrote the initial version earlier in the year, but was still revising it up to his unexpected death, which occurred the night of 4-5 May. His letter submitting several corrections is hand addressed, and was postmarked May 4, 2004.

Those who knew Cal and his writings will find the article characteristic, and an appropriate memorial. Approximately half of it appears in this issue; the rest will be published in *Chronicle* No. 203. Regrettably, the *Chronicle's* publishing schedule doesn't allow time for an obituary–that will have to wait for the next issue as well.

In my article in the *U.S. Stamp Specialist*,[1] "In Re Grinnell," the basic assumption was that the objective of the new expertization by the Royal Philatelic Society, London, was to establish that the "Grinnell missionary stamps" were the same as the accepted cataloged Hawaiian Missionaries and that the original 1922 trial analysis had been erroneous. The article then attempted to lay down the four philatelic areas in which the Grinnells would have to pass certain standards to be accepted, *e.g.*, ink, paper and gum, printing method and postal history.

Basic Facts

The Act of June 18, 1851, which was approved August 4th by King Kamehameha III, authorized establishment of the first Hawaiian postoffice at the Honolulu office of the *Polynesian*, where Henry M. Whitney became first postmaster and set the rates of postage, published September 13th. The first postage stamps of 2¢, 5¢ and 13¢ were announced in the Saturday, October 4th edition of the *Polynesian*. The earliest known use on cover of one of the accepted stamps is the Tomlinson cover postmarked January 3, 1852 that went on the *Honolulu* (or the *George Washington*) via Lahaina and arriving at San Francisco on February 12th where it was postmarked on the 18th to go on to Brookfield, Conn. It has PFC 67323.

The effect is that there is a two months gap during which stamps might have been essayed (September-October) and a three months gap (October 4 to January 3rd) during which no stamps are recorded on cover. It is during these gaps that the Grinnell heirs now allege their stamps were produced.

The missionaries are known with some 13 types of killers on the stamps or covers, including two basic types of Honolulu CDS markings. The late Frederic Wheeler published records showing that four handstamps of each Honolulu CDS type were ordered from the Gregory Company in San Francisco.[2] Descriptions of three of each set of four were published in 1980. These were the four with Hawaiian Islands at bottom (MH 236.11, with 16 strikes on accepted missionaries) and four with U.S. Postage Paid at bottom (MH 236.05 with 34 strikes on accepted missionaries). According to the George

---

[1]This differs from the unauthorized edited version released by Mystic Stamp in its Grinnell monograph that leaves out important arguments and documentation.

[2]Frederic A. Wheeler, "The Honolulu Straightline and Its Historical Background," *The American Philatelist*, January 1985.

Linn list, there are 52 used Grinnells with killers of which thirteen have MH 236.11 and fourteen have the MH 236.05 Honolulu CDS markings. Fifteen have 7-bar cork killers and two or three have square dot killers.

Three types of the MH 236.11 Hawaiian Island at bottom have been identified on accepted missionaries and other stamps (out of some 16 stamps, pieces or covers documented in the missionary Census section of the *Advertiser* sale.) A 4th additional MH 236.11 is reported on an 1864 cover from the Bishop correspondence. A 5th different type is found on the Grinnells.

Three of the four types of the MH 236.05 Postage Paid handstamp are known on accepted missionaries and other stamps, with some 34 missionary stamps, pieces or covers recorded in the *Advertiser* sale census. It is the heirs' contention that the fourth of this type was used on the Grinnells.

The Grinnell heirs published a rebuttal to my paper in the same publication as well as a second article in *Chronicle*. In so doing they have accepted that the Grinnells do not match the accepted cataloged missionaries and shifted the argument to a new ground—that of a previously unrecognized unique set of earlier printings. It is to this second line of argument that this piece is addressed.

Are Fakes Possible?

First it is necessary to set the parameters. Could the Grinnells be fakes? A leading forgeries expert, Varro Tyler, said "no" on the basis of the inability of forgers to obtain copies of the genuine items as models both because of price and close control of the accepted missionaries. I countered by showing that forger Sam Singer had originals sent him by Stanley Gibbons to repair in 1894-96. Additional evidence not discussed then is that the well-known Hawaiian forger, Brewster Cox Kenyon of Long Beach, California (Figure 1), had access to the genuine items in 1895. Varro Tyler tells us Kenyon began his forgery career in 1892. Mr. Kenyon is known for his forgeries of the 1893 overprints of Hawaii and for his attempts to buy original paper used to produce genuine Hawaiian numeral stamps for his forgeries. He also has a track record of forgeries of U.S. material.

The additional evidence is the July 11, 1895 monograph *History of the Postal Issues of Hawaii* by Brewster Cox Kenyon, illustrating the Ayer missionaries before their repair (Figure 2). Kenyon obtained the original stamps from F.W. Ayer at that time, as noted in his preface, and thus could have used them as models for forgery. The answer to the question is unequivocally yes—the Grinnells could be fakes. The answer to the concomitant question, "Could they be genuine?" is less clear. The answer depends upon the techniques for expertizing unique items. In this endeavor two assumptions will be tested: 1) that they are genuine and 2) that they are fakes.

Expertizing Methods

The basic method of expertizing is a detailed comparison with an accepted item, rather than a study of other forgeries, for there can always be a new unknown forger. The best forgers such as Sperati and John Fox utilized the weakness of various experts' approaches to pass their material. If the expert used examination of the embossing on a Sperati to determine genuineness, it would be genuine and the frame would be the forged section. If it was a watermark that was tested, that would be genuine and the stamp image was now printed on bleached out correctly watermarked paper.

In regarding expertizing it is well to remember, "Appropriate ink and paper do not, of course, assure authenticity, for a forger may well use just the right ink formula or get hold of just the right piece of stationery for the document he is producing."[3]

---

[3]*Manuscripts*, Fall 2003, p. 350.

Figure 1. Brewster Cox Kenyon, noted forger of Hawaiian and U.S. philatelic material

It could be that the adhesive was genuine, but didn't belong on the cover to which it was presently affixed. Finding an off-cover photo or establishing that the cancellation ink or gum used was too modern is sufficient to condemn such. A classic John Fox example is a cover with four 10¢ Confederate stamps postmarked at Mobile paying the 40¢ trans-Mississippi rate to Amarillo, Texas, As the destination town was not founded until the 1880s, the cover had to be a fake.

This basic expertizing method fails a) when the description of a genuine item is unknown or b) the item is unique. In my series on the "Incunabula of Locals and Carriers,"[4] I attempted to deal with the former case. The earliest catalogs listed certain items well before the incentive to create bogus stamps existed, although counterfeits of genuine items were known earlier. How could the genuine unknowns be identified from a host of later bogus and counterfeit productions? My revised website version of this study (presently being reedited) gives ten case studies of items falling into this class.

---

[4]Calvet M. Hahn, "The Incunabula of Philatelic Literature on Locals and Carriers," *Collectors Club Philatelist*, May-June 1993 and March-April 1994. (See revised website version www.pennypost.org.)

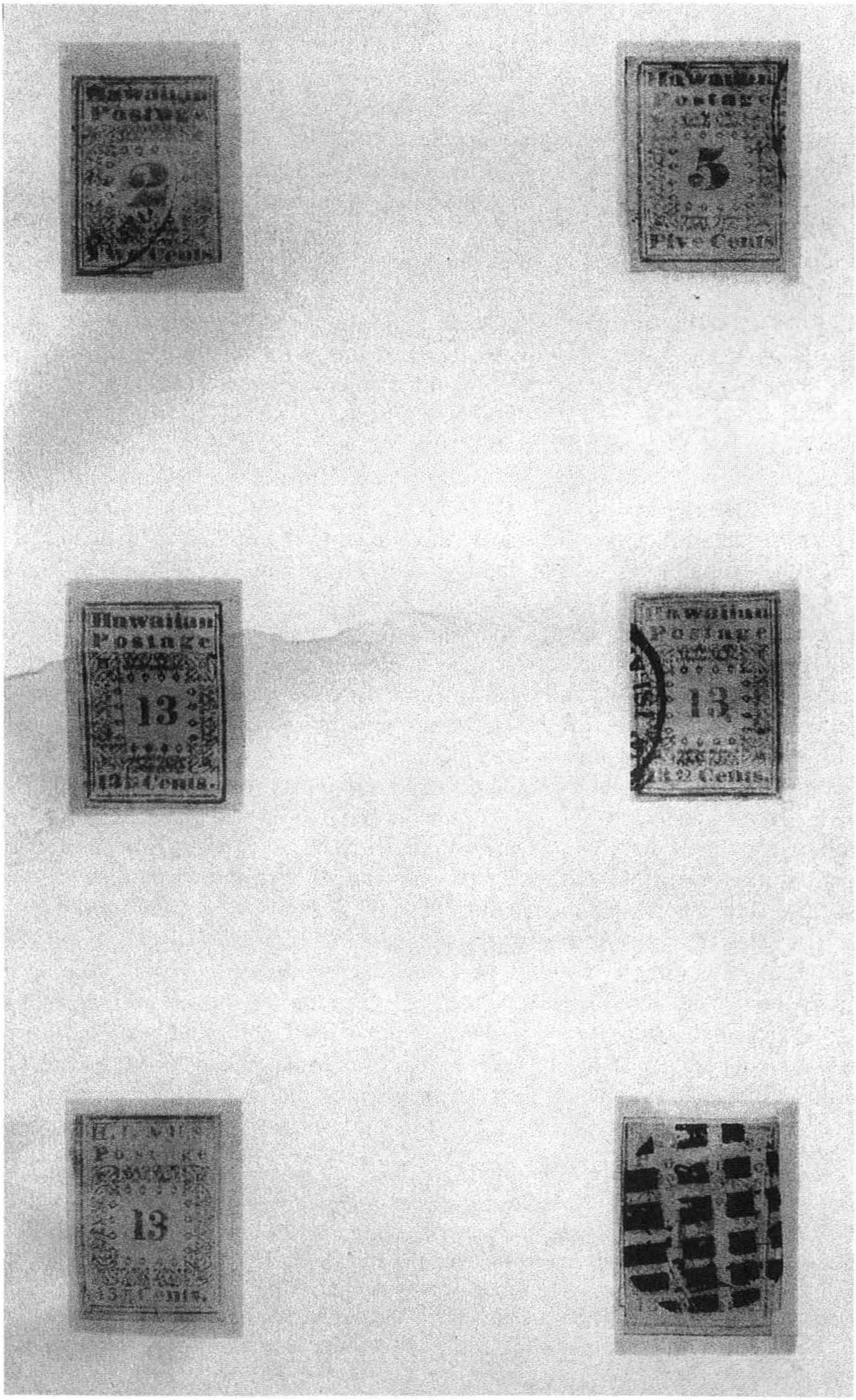

Figure 2. Illustration of Ayer missionaries in Kenyon's monograph

There are dozens of unique items in philately. The analysis of the genuineness of these is best done in terms of their position in history, *e.g.*, the milieu in which they were said to occur and what is logical and illogical about them. An element that is out of period condemns them. For example, use of a ballpoint pen on a cover before the invention of ballpoint pens or the use of a paper, ink, handwriting style or printing process on the subject item that was not yet invented. We have good dates for many types of paper, ink, handwriting and printing techniques. In the case of the Grinnells, for example, if the ink used to print or to cancel them were aniline they would automatically be condemned as that ink was first discovered in 1856.

An example of a unique item is the three skilling-banco color error,[5] where my analysis confirming its genuineness depended upon the logical inability of anyone to fake it at the time it first became known. Other examples would be the Armitage 90¢ cover reversal of Ashbrook's analysis,[6] the analysis of the long-condemned Miro cover from Japan[7] or examination of a Ferrarity alleged provisional.[8]

The New Thesis

The Royal has 55 Grinnells for expertizing. Vince and Carol Arrigo sent 26 of their former holding of the 43 Grinnell stamps offered to Klemann in 1918 and Patrick Culhane, whose Shattuck family holding consists of 33 stamps, sent 29. The heirs have produced a new scenario that moves the Grinnells into the unique classification for expertizing purposes. Approximately 1½ feet of documentation was supplied the Royal to evaluate the Grinnells.

The heirs propose the stamps they have, both canceled and uncanceled, were all associated with correspondence between the Emerson family of Waialua on Oahu, Hawaii and Hannah Shattuck of Pepperell, Mass., Samuel Emerson (then in Massachusetts, who became Waialua postmaster in 1857), Nathaniel Emerson and Gad Newell (father of Ursula Emerson) and others in New England.

Their documentation notes that William Emerson, son of John and Ursula Emerson and younger brother of Samuel, worked as an apprentice printer under Henry Whitney in Honolulu, who printed the accepted missionaries in 1851. This was between October 15, 1850[9] and sometime in November 1851 when an ill William[10] finally went home to Waialua[11] and stayed home for four months until mid-March 1852 according to the Arrigo *Chronicle* article. He went on board the whaler *Artic* March 17, 1852, dying on board April 24, 1852. His effects, which could have included some of the Grinnell stamps, particularly the unused newspaper 2¢ adhesive, were returned to the family later that year. Most of the canceled stamps, *none of which should have been found in the returned Book of Sermons*, would have been used to post letters from Waialua back to Massachusetts with the fourth set of the Honolulu CDS on the assumption that young William brought those

---

[5]Calvet M. Hahn, "Skilling Banco Error," *Scott Monthly Journal*, Sept. 1981.

[6]Calvet M. Hahn, "Three Coins," www.nystamp.org, Nov. 9, 1999.

[7]See www.nystamp.org, "New Research on the 1869 Issue."

[8]Calvet M. Hahn, "A Provisional Ferrarity of Saratoga Springs, NY," *Opinions VI*.

[9]Letter of November 15, 1850 stating "this is the 4th week I have been working as a printer. The first work that I did was to set up 'pic'. I distribute and set up type sometimes for the *Polynesian*."

[10]William reported his illness to his mother September 17, 1851 and mentioned going home because of illness. His mother had earlier on April 19, 1851 written from Waialua to his brothers (including Samuel who was still apparently in Massachusetts) about his illness and desire to come home.

[11]In the archival correspondence it would appear that the family rode back and forth between the two towns.

CDS with him when he went home. The used stamps would have to have been added from New England sources after the book was returned, as there would be no time for William to get back canceled stamps.[12]

Basic Conflicts

As anyone is aware who has served on a jury in which competing expert witnesses were involved, it is necessary to examine the testimony to see which expert makes the most common sense. This is definitely the case with the expert testimony concerning the genuineness of the Grinnells and their characteristics.

There is also a question of conflicting testimony or statements on a number of points such as to: 1) just what was the agreement between Klemann and Grinnell—*all* the Grinnell stamps he had, or just the 43 originally offered on December 1, 1919.

2) By late December it turned out that two additional stamps had been given to one of the intermediaries and by 1922 the total number of recorded Grinnells was 71 stamps. In a *Linn's* article of April 29, 1996, Varro Tyler proposed that even more might exist. citing those seen by Twigg-Smith in 1972.

3) There is a conflict in the statements between Twigg-Smith and the heirs over how many stamps were shown him and Ostrander in 1972 (six—three each from the Arrigos and three from Elizabeth Kaak, or 15-20).

4) There is also a dispute over whether the stamp Twigg-Smith acquired and which was not among the 71 Grinnell photos came from those proffered by Elizabeth Kaak.

5) There is also believed to be a conflict in the description of the stamps examined by Twigg-Smith and the Grinnells understood to be under examination by the Royal.

Ink Analysis

The first point to consider relates to the ink. This means the printing ink used, the cancellation ink and the ink used on the front and back of several Grinnell pieces.

The ink is a different hue on *both* the Grinnell printing and on the handstamps killing them from that seen on accepted missionaries as reported 1) at the trial, 2) by George Linn in 1951, and 3) now by a number of philatelists.

As stated in Roy White's *Color in Philately*, there may be as many as fifteen ingredients in the inks suitable for printing postage and revenue stamps.[13] These are usually broken down into colorant, filler, oil (or carrier) and drying agent. Tests were made for only some of these elements on the Grinnells.

Dr. Gene Hall, Rutgers professor of Chemistry, compared two of the missionaries on cover along with seven Grinnells. He concluded,

> The blue ink on all the stamps was made from the blue pigment, Prussian blue. In addition, the blue ink was mixed with lampblack to darken the color. . . . The red ink circular postmarks on Grinnell stamps and the certified genuine red ink circular postmarks on cover, although of different hues, were [both] made from the red pigment, vermilion (HgS).

This doesn't tell us more than that, if forged, the Grinnells were made with some ingredients that were contemporary in the 1850s and that no obvious anomalies such as aniline, as reported by George Linn, were involved. Unfortunately, various ink ingredients of the 1850s have continued to exist into modern times. I have personally seen both the 1850s blue and red ink cakes in the 1960s in the hand of a well-known modern forger and don't doubt that such were available prior to the Grinnell discovery announcement of 1918.

---

[12]Patrick Culhane on Frajola website date of October 31, 2003; they were reportedly still separate when obtained by Mr. Grinnell in 1918 as noted in the October 1, 1951 *Linn's* article Part I.

[13]R.H. White, *Color in Philately* (New York: Published by The Philatelic Foundation, 1979), pg .36-37.

Mr. Bernard Biales, in a Frajola chat room comment of November 8, 2003, reply to the Arrigos stated,

> Some of the questions that I find to be of interest are the chemical composition, presence of trace elements (which might say something about pigment source), effects of aging, particle size, composition of the oil. The ratio of oil to pigment and particle size spectrum could vary simply as a function of mixing and setting.

Further, *Dr. Hall doesn't state that he tested the handwriting ink that was purportedly that in the hand of Ursula Emerson* found on the back of the pair of 2¢ Grinnells (Grinnell's #1-2) killed by the March 1 red HONOLULU/ HAWAIIAN ISLANDS CDS to see if it was contemporary to the 1850s nor did he examine the age of the handwriting on the 5¢ Grinnell piece (Grinnell #65), which Rev. Oliver Emerson stated resembled that of his father who died in Honolulu in 1867.[14] Grinnell #12 has a manuscript "es" on the face of the piece, but it does not appear to be in the hand of Ursula Emerson. That ink should also be checked for contemporaneousness.

In their *Stamp Specialist* rebuttal to my piece "In Re Grinnell," the Arrigo heirs report that James Green, a forensic document examiner of Eugene, Oregon, in a certified report of May 18, 2001, compared the handwriting with that of certified letters written by Ursula Emerson (born 1806, died 1888) and "[d]etermined that the handwriting on the back of the stamps is most probably that of Ursula Emerson."[15]

The heirs state another document handwriting specialist, Mr. James Blanco, a Sacramento, California forensic scientist, in a report dated 8/18/2000 and 4/9/2001, also reached this conclusion.

Ursula's son, Rev. Oliver P. Emerson, in 1928 also signed an affidavit stating the handwriting, "closely resembled that of his mother" and that that on the other piece closely resembled that of his father.

Presumably these reports are available to the Royal experts. However, *none state the handwriting is identical or contemporary*. All report similarity, not identity, which is a little unusual in light of those certifications that I have seen from handwriting experts. Thus the Royal still lacks expert witnesses who will testify that the handwriting on the back of these two pieces is both identical and contemporary. This is an important point in considering conflicting testimony. There are sufficient examples of the Emerson's handwriting in the Honolulu archives so that a better comparison can be made and it is possible to non-destructively test the ink on the Grinnell pieces for age.

Nevertheless, whether or not the handwriting on the three items discussed is found to be that of the Emerson family *it doesn't resolve the problem of genuineness*. The stamps and cancels have to stand on their own regardless of the stories associated with their discovery or family tradition.

The Running Ink Problem

In a Frajola website posting of November 4, 2003, the Arrigos remarked on allegations that the Grinnell's bled when wetted and that only George Linn would have

---

[14]Reverend John Emerson's 1851 handwriting can be seen on Advertiser lot 2045.

[15]A comparison of this writing and that reported by philatelists to be on letters in the Bishop Museum archives written by Mrs. Emerson does not apparently match. Among the reasons cited is that in her archival writing she normally uses an ampersand for "and" and her "I" has a tighter loop at top and little or no loop at bottom. Her archival "th" has a broad cross and the "h" has more loop at top and a rounder bottom. Her archival "p" is quite different with much less of a loop. The word "have" seems quite different in appearance.

Further, although it does not necessarily affect identification authenticity, Ursula Emerson's archival letters appear to have a flow-back ink appearance, which is characteristic of the newly developed (1848) logwood inks rather than nut-gall ink while also showing the edge marks of imported steel nib pens. If the handwriting on the back of the Grinnell pieces contained nigrosine ink, it could be immediately declared out of period as that ink was not yet invented.

been able to make such tests. This is the standard Henry Meyer test for fakery,[16] but *it is apparently only good within 30-40 years of "new" ink being applied.*

The test was one supposed made by Caspary at the time the Grinnells were presented to him for purchase and was one of the reasons he called them fake. If Caspary did make such a test, as documented in the trial transcript, pages 222-24 and 253-36, then the cancels were relatively recently applied (within 30-40 years of 1918) and not in the 1850s. I have used this test successfully on several occasions to detect 20th century cancel inks applied to mid-l9th century stamps.

From my own experience of having tested thousands of postmarks, I can state that I have never seen the red inks of the 1840-60s run that were contemporaneously applied; I have seen more recently applied versions of those inks run. In a major expertizing discussion with the late Herbert Bloch the only blue ink of the period we found that did run was that of Hartford. There is also brown ink from a Texas town that runs. There are only four towns in the U.S. from which inks of that period have been shown to run. It would be unlikely today that a genuine stampless Honolulu postmark of the disputed red variety would run. This could be readily tested. However, unless it did the result would be meaningless.

As I discussed in my initial article, "In Re Grinnell," the trial allegation related to the bottom edge "cut surface" of the 2¢ pair of Grinnells postmarked March 1st. It was contended that this would not have happened if the paper had been cut from an envelope after the stamps were canceled. The Arrigo contra-argument is that the ink was so deeply infused into the paper that it still showed on the back.

So far no one has given evidence that ink from any cancellations on genuine missionaries or stampless Honolulu postmarks of the period is similarly deeply infused. Thus this original trial contention does present an anomaly that the Grinnell heirs and their experts have not countered.

While it is no longer possible to successfully duplicate the Caspary test due to the time differential between 1918 and today, it might be possible to locate an accepted missionary with a similar deep infusion showing on the back as a counter to this test result condemning the cancellation ink on the Grinnells.

Cancel and Printing Ink Color

In terms of cancel color, we have the following color descriptions given by George Linn at the time Linn listed all the Grinnells. At least four if not five CDS colors are given. These are red, cherry-red, orange-red, orange and a distinct orange.

Among the 2¢ Grinnells the #1-2 killer of March 1st was "deep cherry-red" as was his #49, whereas his #13 2¢ has a "red" January 17 CDS as does #15 (dated January 5th), #45, #46, #47 and #62, a second #5-6 pair, has an orange red CDS.

Among the 5¢ Grinnell CDS, #17 (allegedly of Nov.), #23 (March 15), #27 (February 5th), #40 (March 11) as well as the #55-59 piece of March 5th are just described as "red" and his #63 is described as a distinct orange shade and its color appears in the Mystic monograph as the same as #67, the 13¢ on the cover. The #64 (January 11th) was just described as orange.

Among the 13¢ Grinnell values, #32, #34 (February 17), #35 (March), #43, (January 7th), #66 (January 11th or 15th), #68 (March) and #71 (March) are described as "red," while the #67 (February 16th) and #70 (February 1st) are described as "orange."

When described by George Linn who had them in front of him at the same time, the cancel colors seem to veer back and forth within days of each other as in the case of January 5th (red), January 7th (red), 11th (two of which one is orange and one red), January 17th (red). The February items vary from the 1st (orange), 5th (red), 16th

[16]Henry A. Meyer, "Identifying Fake Postal Markings," *Chronicle* 40, pg. 12-13.

(orange), and 17th (red) items, while the March items run from the 1st (deep cherry red), 5th (red), March 11th (red), and 15th (red). The Grinnell heirs attribute the differences to aging and light exposure. The trial transcript discussed Grinnell having cleaned up some of them (pg. 164-65).

Yet the stamps have been under the supervision of the heirs since 1922 and the uncanceled stamps were supposedly preserved in the *Book of Sermons* according to them, so they should be very fresh in color. Yet they, too, were found by Linn to be in three different shades: dull blue, dark blue and bright blue. This is a greater range of shades than found on the accepted missionaries, which supposedly had greater vicissitudes in their handling. The range of shades particularly should not be found on the unused missionaries.

Scott Trepel, who has handled as many genuine missionaries as any current commentator, reported on the Frajola chat board that the stamps' metallic-blue ink is observationally the same (no forensic analysis has been made) as the Boston 3LB1 penny post items and both are on similar "pelure" paper.

In regard to the Grinnell stamps, we find George Linn reporting that 2¢ printing Grinnell #8 shows greenish under UV, the unused # 9, #14 and #15 are dark blue, and #10, #13 and #16 are dull blue but show greenish under UV.

In the 5¢ printing Grinnell values we have an unused dull blue (greenish under UV) pair #19-20, an unused dull blue (#25), and a used example showing greenish under UV (#27).

In the 13¢ Grinnell printing we find an o.g. example in dull blue that shows greenish under UV (#29), as well as another unused (#69) with the same UV appearance in addition to an unused pair (#30-31) and an unused single (#37) in dull blue and used examples in dull blue (#28, #33, #36, #42 and #68). However, we also find the used 13¢ printing in dark blue (#34, #35 and #71) as well as in bright blue (#66 showing greenish under UV, #67, and #70).

Despite the heirs' explanations, the reported observed differences tend to stretch one's credulity, particularly in regard to the unused stamps or in comparison with observed cancel differences on the accepted missionaries.

Paper Analysis

There are a number of witnesses, some of who were supporters of the Grinnells, who report the paper of the Grinnells is different from the accepted missionaries in a number of ways. These reported differences are in: 1) durability of the paper in response to damage, 2) thickness of the paper, 3) whiter color 4) coarseness and porosity.

In terms of paper, the accepted missionaries are printed on what is called "pelure" paper. It is well known that the vast majority (80-90%) of the accepted missionaries are damaged and repaired to some extent. By comparison, few of the Grinnells show damage in the paper. The difference is something like 80% of the accepted stamps vs. 10% of the Grinnells. This is a major consistent distinction that has been made between the accepted missionaries and the Grinnells, of which until recently there have been no published illustrations showing any damage.

The Lindquist *Collectors Club Philatelist* article of July 1922 showed only undamaged Grinnells.[17] Until a website posting on the Frajola chat board of November 9, 2003, I located no published reference to damage on any of the Grinnells although photos showing damage were apparently made by George Linn and the trial record (Transcript, pg. 16) did discuss eight damaged stamps.

Of the 71 Grinnell photos, 40 examples are on piece[18] and under 10% show the damage described by Patrick Culhane, a Shattuck heir, in that posting, e.g. #15 (right side), #16 (internal hole), #21 (lower right corner), #26 (piece out at l.r. corner), #28 (upper left

---

[17] It is known that Klemann photographed the purchased 43 items in New York.

corner missing), and #41 (right edge). The damage percentage difference seems largely explained by the fact that most used Grinnells are still on piece. Or are they? The trial testimony was that many were on card. *If the pelure paper were identical with that used on the accepted missionaries*, then one might expect a higher ratio of damage than now seen from being put on and taken off card.

Scott Trepel notes his disagreement with the term "brittle pelure" to describe them. Rather, he states, in a Frajola chat room website posting of November 4, 2003, the paper is actually soft and *it is the gum that causes the brittleness of the missionaries* and thus would be a key factor in the damage when the stamps were removed from cover.

Although there is seemingly no evidence that the missionary stamps were sold already gummed, this would suggest that a technical comparison of the gum on the sole o.g. Grinnell should be made with one or more of the numeral o.g. items, which were gummed in Hawaii. They probably should be the same.

The Grinnell heirs cite a letter of July 20, 1954 from Henry Meyer that states the paper is very different, being thin and soft, when it should be thin and brittle and that *it responds very differently to UV* than the paper of the accepted missionaries. The "thin and soft" comment would fit Mr. Trepel's remark and suggest an identity of paper source, but no other comparative UV analysis has been reported in the literature to refute Henry Meyer's contention of a difference. There is also trial testimony (pp. 243-44; 392-94) that the Grinnells were on whiter, coarser and more porous paper.

To date there is also *no report of micrometer studies* of the two printings (Grinnell and accepted) to confirm identity, not that they would necessarily be identical if from different printings as alleged by the heirs. However, on March 6, 1972, Elizabeth Kaak, a supposed great granddaughter of Shattuck (no one apparently has checked the family genealogy[19]) visited Ostheimer and Twigg-Smith in Honolulu with 15-20 alleged Grinnells.[20] On March 16th a 13¢ example was purchased and it became lot 32 in the Advertiser sale where it was acquired by Varro Tyler and returned *as not being among the 71 illustrated by George Linn.*

The sale of this item on behalf of a descendent was allegedly brokered by Justin Bacharach, one of whose activities I discussed on page 343 of the November 1994 *Collectors Club Philatelist.*

---

[18]The studies reported by the heirs indicate that only one of the pieces of paper upon which the Grinnells are now found was analyzed. However, it would seem important to examine more of them as to the presence of wood fibers rather than rag fibers inasmuch as there was a change in paper technology at the time of which most fakers would be unaware and might result in their using an incorrect "envelope" paper.

Wood chip papers were not introduced into the United States until 1854 when the first patent was granted. This would be too late for the alleged period of use of the Grinnells.

The Trial Transcript, pp. 36-40, shows both the damaged stamps and undamaged stamps were *mounted on cards and some stamps were on card with writing on them* when Klemann bought them. There is no point in examining the card items for wood fibers, as the cards are not original to the 1850s. The expertizing problem with the card mounting is that, *to the extent the card-mounted Grinnells are undamaged, there is a question of a discernable paper difference*, as the Grinnells show less damage than found in the apparently more delicate accepted missionaries.

[19]Patrick Culhane admits she is his aunt and has some control over the Shattuck-owned Grinnells

[20]This reported by Varro Tyler. Ashbrook questioned whether the quantity wasn't 90 in his 1957 article when quoting Caspary's testimony from the trial. The Arrigo heirs state a Shattuck descendant (Elizabeth Kaak) showed only three at about the same time in 1972 that they took only three of their stamps to show Twigg-Smith. Thus, the total shown was between 6 as reported by the heirs and the 15-20 reported by Twigg-Smith who has recently affirmed his remarks, all of which were described as different from the ones in the Linn's photos and like the one sold in the Advertiser sale.

Twigg-Smith and Ostrander did examine the Kaak-supplied Grinnells and concluded they were "All too perfect, having the crisp printing characteristics of the example (subsequently sold as lot 32) rather than the irregularities and fuzziness depicted in Linn's photos."

More to the point, however, their investigation reports the blue printing ink is too blue without any tint of green, *the paper is .015 mm vs. .011 for the accepted missionaries* (a rather substantial paper difference),[21] the size does not match and there are many differences seen in magnification. They noted one unused 5¢ was almost the right color; the margins on the 2¢ are too big being 1mm on both sides, and they also noted the rounded tail of the "2" and the hole in the "5."

The detailed commentary means that *the paper measurements were on the items brought by Kaak* and possibly by the Arrigos, and not on the single item subsequently acquired.

A further explanation by the heirs is that it is possible the Grinnells were printed on Rev. Damon's Mission press across the street from the government printing office, which printed the accepted missionaries and which also published the *Polynesian*. However, *no one has yet published illustrations of the type used to publish Damon's Seaman's Friend in 1844-5 that match* that found on the Grinnells or the January-February 1851 editions of that publication.

Dr. Hall stated, "The paper used for the stamps [Grinnells] was sized with paper maker's alum [$AlKSO^4$]. This sizing was typical of paper manufactured and used in 1850. The brown paper envelopes to which [some of the] stamps were affixed, contained lead chromate. This chemical was commonly used in the 1800s as a coloring agent for brown paper. . . . No modern paper fillers, such as TiO^2 and $CaCo^3$ were detected in any of the stamps, cancellations, postmarks or paper."

All this really says is that there are no obvious anomalies in the ingredients used; as expertizers know, old papers are still available that could be used for forgery. Such papers were used in the Mormon murder case example. We also know from Varro Tyler's research that Brewster Cox Kenyon, a well-known forger of Hawaiian material, made a very active search for old Hawaiian papers used for stamp production during the 1890s. *The observed differences in hue and paper between the Grinnells and the accepted missionaries still remain unexplained.* Thus Dr. Hall's final conclusion remains suspect: ". . . The commonality of a rare paper used in the stamps analyzed would not be anticipated if the stamps had been printed at a different time or place. Based upon this comparison and the combination of the above similar features, we conclude that it is likely that the Grinnell Hawaiian Missionary Stamps and the Hawaiian Missionary Stamps of the Tapling Collection came from a single manufacturing source."

This single manufacturing source conclusion is weakened by the fact that the type font styles, paper, and ink were also known in Massachusetts in the 1850s and could have survived into modern times to create fakes, not that I think fakes were necessarily made from that source.

(to be continued)

---

[21]For an as yet unpublished work on the U.S. bank note printings I assembled a great deal of data on the five card proof printings, where the small measurement differences are a significant method of separating the printings now that dealers have shuffled and dealt the proofs. It has just been offered to the *Penny Post* for publication in regard to the study on the Franklin and Eagle carrier card proofs. The differences reported by Twigg-Smith and Ostheimer are greater than that needed to separate the card proofs!

GUEST PRIVILEGE

DUE 6 CENTS

JAMES W. MILGRAM, M.D.

(continued from *Chronicle* 201:32)

A usage with Confederate stamps but none from the United States is shown in Figure 77. The writer was captured about August 1864 and was confined at Richland Jail, Columbia, South Carolina. The letter is headed at this location November 27, 1864. The cover is addressed to his father who was a navy paymaster. The pair of Confederate stamps paid the postage to the exchange point, City Point, Virginia, where the letter entered the northern mails as an unpaid letter. Note the "DUE 6" to the left of the stamps. The addressee had shifted from Erie, Pennsylvania to Cairo, Illinois, and the letter was forwarded. But instead of being forwarded free which was the Confederate rating on forwarded soldiers' letters, the Union charged for forwarded soldiers' letters. So this letter was charged 3¢ more. At Erie a makeshift "DUE 9" was struck using a "DUE 6" with the "6" inverted. Note that the Erie postmaster did not charge a penalty. This overcharging of prisoners' mail seemed to have continued for the duration of the war.

Figure 77. Confederate pair 5¢ blue tied "COLUMBIA S.C. NOV?" [1864] ms. examiner's marking, marked "DUE 6" at Old Point Comfort to Erie, Pennsylvania where cover was forwarded to Cairo, Illinois, marked "DUE 9" (inverted 6) at Erie with oval "FORWARDED"; the Old Point Comfort postmaster charged a penalty rate, the Erie postmaster did not

There are also some flag of truce and prisoner of war letters bearing demonetized 3¢ 1857 stamps. Figure 78 shows one of these on a patriotic envelope marked "via flag of truce." The initials "J H.," which is the "examined" notation of J.M. Higgins, are well-known on covers from Richmond prisons. The examiner also defaced the picture of Liberty. The cover bears a "DUE 6" in a circle, and the stamp is uncanceled. The Due 6

Figure 78. Union patriotic cover design with Liberty defaced by Confederate examiner in Richmond, ms. marking of "JH" [J.M.Higgins]. The cover is directed "via flag of Truce" and is addressed to Alexandria, Virginia. It bears a 3¢ 1857 stamp which had been demonetized and was not canceled at Old Point Comfort where the cover was rated "DUE 6" for unpaid postage. The usage may not be from a prisoner, but because of the penalty rating is probably 1863 or 1864.

Figure 79. Prisoner of war letter from South to North with pair of 5¢ stamps tied "STAUNTON Va. NOV 18" and 3¢ 1857 tied by killer with "OLD POINT COMFORT VA JAN 18." The cover was rated "DUE 6" for unpaid postage on an uncertified soldier's letter. It is important to note the marking is not for the 1857 stamp; the same marking would have been applied even if there were no 1857 stamp.

usage is for an unpaid letter, and is not really related to the stamp which was disregarded. Another cover bearing Higgins' initials is addressed to a paroled prisoner of war at College Green Barracks, Annapolis. The letter of May 25, 1863 was from a Confederate surgeon who was writing the recipient about his comrades. The cover had no postage so it was sent to the Dead Letter Office (oval postmark) and rated with the same type of "DUE 6 cts." handstamp as the covers in Figures 53 and 54. Note that this is before the penalty rate period; it is the earlier Due 6 rate of 1862.

A South to North 1863 cover is shown in Figure 79 to an addressee in prison at Fort McHenry, Baltimore. Here a single envelope was used for the transit from Staunton, Virginia to City Point and Old Point Comfort to Baltimore. The unpaid postage was the basis for rating the cover "DUE 6," the penalty charge. Here the old stamp was canceled, but the cover would have been rated at 6¢ due even without this stamp which was illegal for postage at this time.

I mentioned that most North to South prisoners' covers had U.S. stamps paying the postage. But there were a few exceptions. Galen Harrison, in *Prisoners' Mail from the Civil War*, shows a cover from an officer of a North Carolina regiment who was confined at Johnson's Island. The cover bears the "SANDUSKY O APR 7 '64" postmark with attached target and "DUE 6." At Richmond the "DUE 6" was overstruck with "DUE 10" which is struck a second time too. Thus the United States never got any postage for this letter which was only rated at the ordinary "DUE 10" in the South. It is possible someone paid the 6¢ at the exchange point, but that is not indicated on the cover.

Ship Rate Covers Showing Six Cents Due Rating

The ship rate had been 6¢ to the port of entry and postage plus 2¢ to other post offices from 1799 until the first year of the Civil War. In 1861, whether unpaid or prepaid, the rate was changed to 5¢ to port of entry and 2¢ plus regular postage for further distances. Part of the law effective June 30, 1863 changed the private ship rates to double the letter rates. This eliminated the special fee for port of entry. However, since a ship's letter delivered to the port of entry was a drop letter, the ship letter fee became 4¢ to port of entry. It was also compatible with the other part of this act to charge double postage for any unpaid fees including partially paid fees. Since regular ship letters were commonly from outside the country, the majority were stampless.

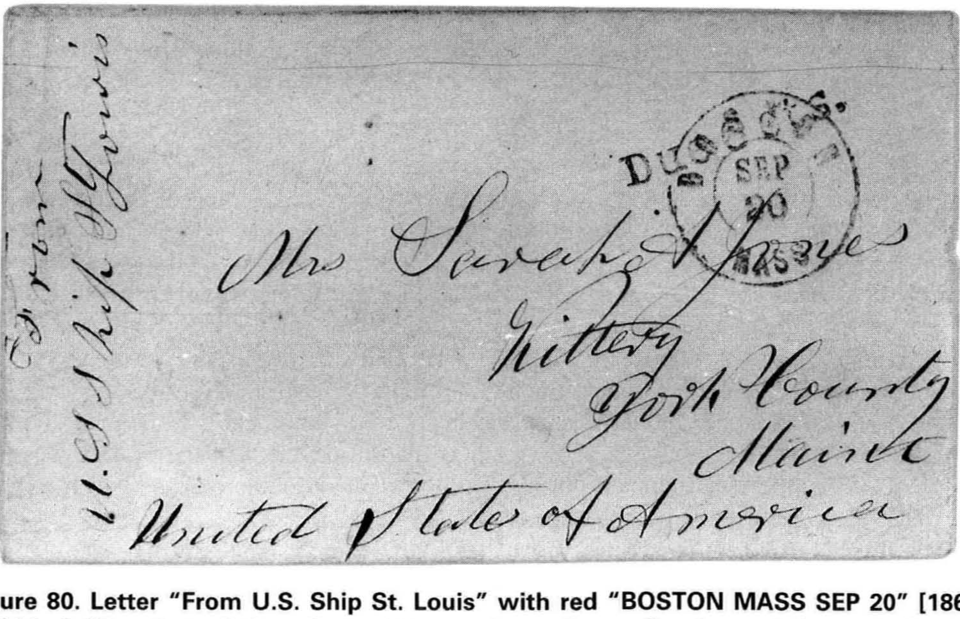

Figure 80. Letter "From U.S. Ship St. Louis" with red "BOSTON MASS SEP 20" [1863] and black "Due 6 cts.," the private ship rate for mail traveling beyond the port of entry; there should have been a "SHIP" handstamp as well

The cover in Figure 80 comes from a correspondence of letters entering the country from Europe through Boston in 1863-64. Several of the covers bear a special Boston "U.S. SHIP" straightline and are rated 3¢ due. However, the cover in Figure 80 with a red Boston postmark is rated "Due 6 cts.," the same marking as shown in Figure 60. The cover bears a manuscript "U.S. Ship St. Louis." This cover was rated at the unpaid private ship rate rather than the U.S. ship fee like the others. There was evidently some confusion in Boston as to how to handle these letters. The American war vessel was stationed in the Mediterranean, so the letters were returned by other vessels.

In Figure 81 is another cover from a different correspondence bearing the same "Due 6 cts" handstamp which is crossed out with crayon. There is a 3¢ stamp tied by "SHIP" that was probably affixed by the writer on the U.S.S. *Wateree*. The due 6¢ marking was struck for double the unpaid 3¢ of the 6¢ ship rate. However, it was decided this was a U.S. ship letter, and the extra fee was waived.

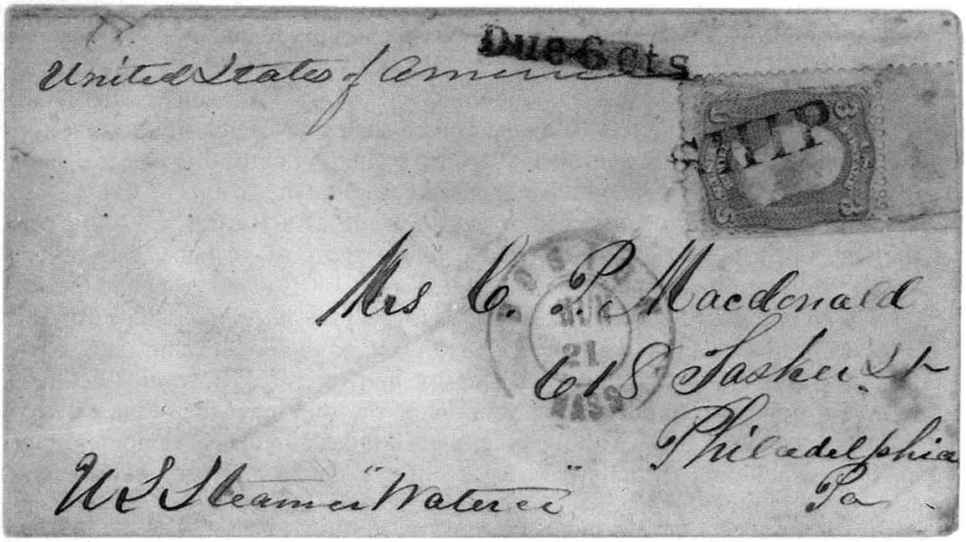

Figure 81. Letter from "U.S. Steamer Wateree" with 3¢ stamp tied "SHIP," "Due 6 cts" crossed out in pen, red "BOSTON MASS JUN 21" (1864), treated at U.S. ship letter

However, two more letters from the same writer were handled differently at New York. Since some of the letters are still present, we know the writer was at Bahia, Brazil in South America for the April 16, 1864 letter and Valparaiso Harbor, Chile for a letter sent July 24, 1864. Thus the letters must have been sent by a different, possibly private, ship. In any event they were treated as ordinary ship letters at New York. The earlier cover (Figure 82) is stampless and bears "NEW YORK SHIP LETTER 6 1864 JUN 1." This is a typical ship marking with 6¢ charge for an unpaid ship letter addressed to a different city than point of entry. But the next cover (Figure 83) bears a 3¢ stamp, but was also marked with the same postmark dated July 11. Here we have partial payment of the 6¢ that was due. That leaves 3¢ unpaid. But unpaid postage had to be rated double postage because of the 1863 law. Thus this letter is rated 6¢ due too.

A different and unlisted (probably later) New York handstamp that reads "NEW YORK 6 SHIP JAN 22" is shown in Figure 84. Figure 85 shows a typical stampless ship cover of the late 1860s (1866, origin Cuba). It bears the blue postmark of the port of entry, Baltimore, a "SHIP," and "DUE 6" for the postage to be collected.

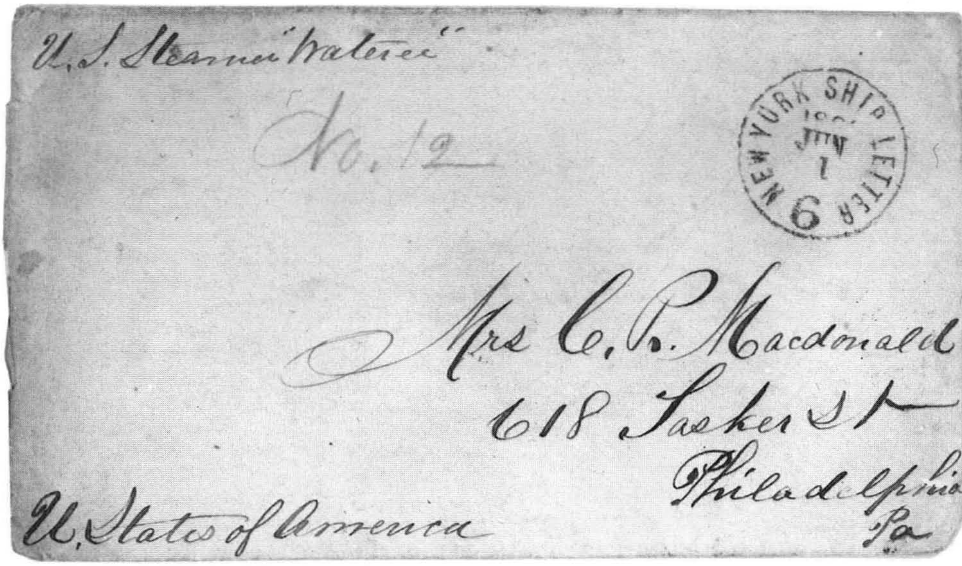

Figure 82. Letter from "U.S. Steamer Wateree" with "NEW YORK SHIP LETTER 6 1864 JUN 1" ship rate postmark on letter to another city

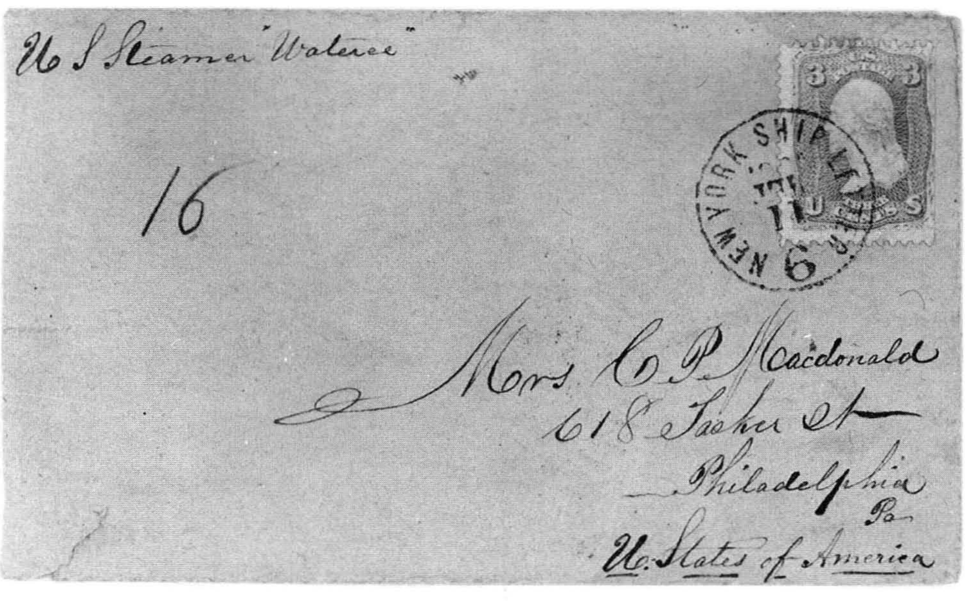

Figure 83. Letter from same correspondence with 3¢ stamp tied by same postal marking; here the postage was underpaid, so the unpaid postage was double rated

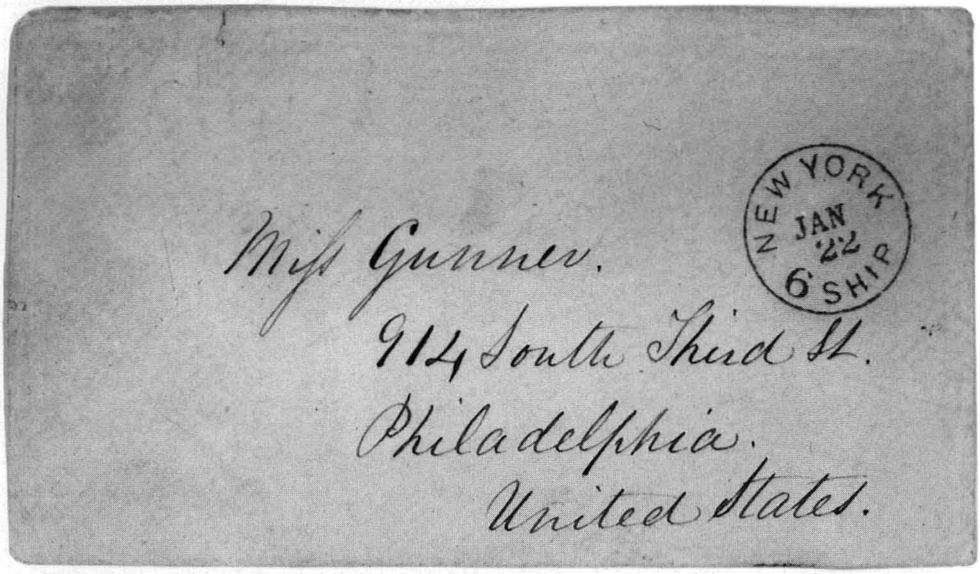

Figure 84. "New York 6 SHIP JAN 22," probably from late 1860s

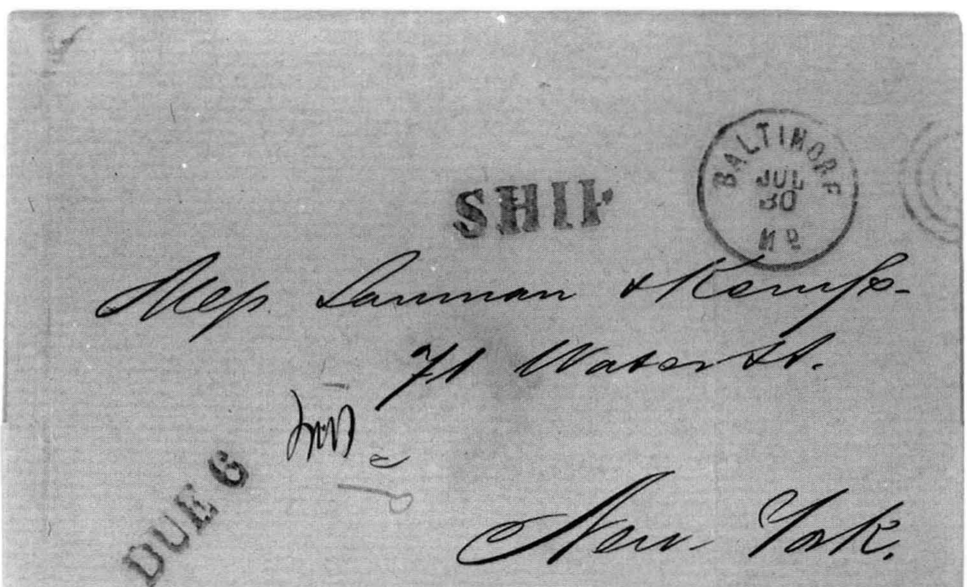

Figure 85. Private ship letter from Cuba in 1866 with "BALTIMORE MD JUL 30," "SHIP" and "DUE 6"

A rare usage of the ship rate at San Francisco is shown in Figure 86. Here the cover has the internal Hawaiian postage paid by a 5¢ stamp, but the U.S. postage is unpaid. In 1864 the cover was rated "SHIP 6," which is the proper rate for a private ship cover going to another location. Two years earlier, this cover would have been rated as "SHIP 12" for the 10¢ postage across the country and 2¢ ship fee. San Francisco used a "Paid 8 Ship" marking for the earlier 6¢ transcontinental rate plus the ship fee of 2¢. But after June 30, 1863 the postage on a ship letter was the same whether paid by stamps or sent stampless. This inequity was not corrected until 1882. The "SHIP 6" on this cover is not a penalty charge for unpaid postage (as it was incorrectly described in an auction catalog). Had the cover been addressed to San Francisco, it would have been marked "SHIP 4," double the drop rate fee.

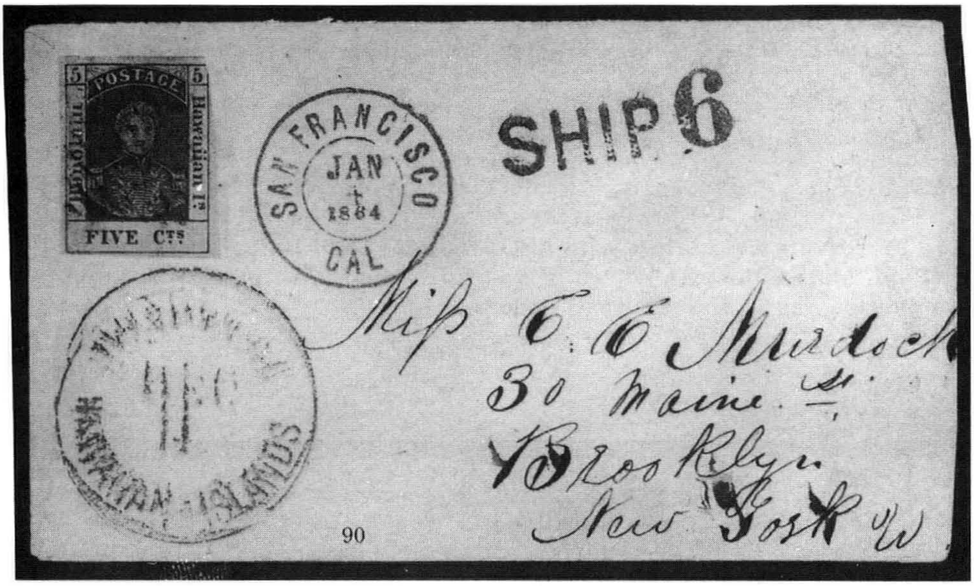

Figure 86. Hawaiian 5¢ with Honolulu cancellation on private ship letter, "SAN FRANCISCO CAL JAN 4 1864," with ship rating "SHIP 6"; the ship fee would still have been 6¢ had U.S. stamps been used

The cover in Figure 87 was marked with "6," "SHIP" and "BOSTON MASS APR 8" postmarks, a typical ship letter for 1867 with unpaid postage. The private ship was the "Schooner Melvina." But this cover was forwarded at Mansfield, Massachusetts where a pair of 3¢ stamps was affixed over the "6." Actually this cover needed 9¢ postage, 6¢ ship letter fee and 3¢ forwarding to Providence. So it was underpaid by 3¢.

Due 6 Markings on Later Steamboat Mail

It has been mentioned that the steamboat fee was changed in 1855 to no extra fee if postage was prepaid or 6¢ to port of entry or 2¢ plus postage if forwarded to another post office. Thus the letter sent to another town would actually be a penny cheaper than if the address were to the town where the steamboat put the letter into the mails. At this time the vast majority of steamboat letters were sent either with postage stamps or in stamped envelopes as required by law for letters by private conveyance. The only legal exception was that bills of lading for steamboat freight were exempt from postage.

Figure 87. Private ship letter with "BOSTON MASS. APR 8," "SHIP" and "6" to Mansfield, Massachusetts where it was forwarded with pair of 3¢ stamps; the forwarding fee was 3¢, so the cover is underpaid 3¢

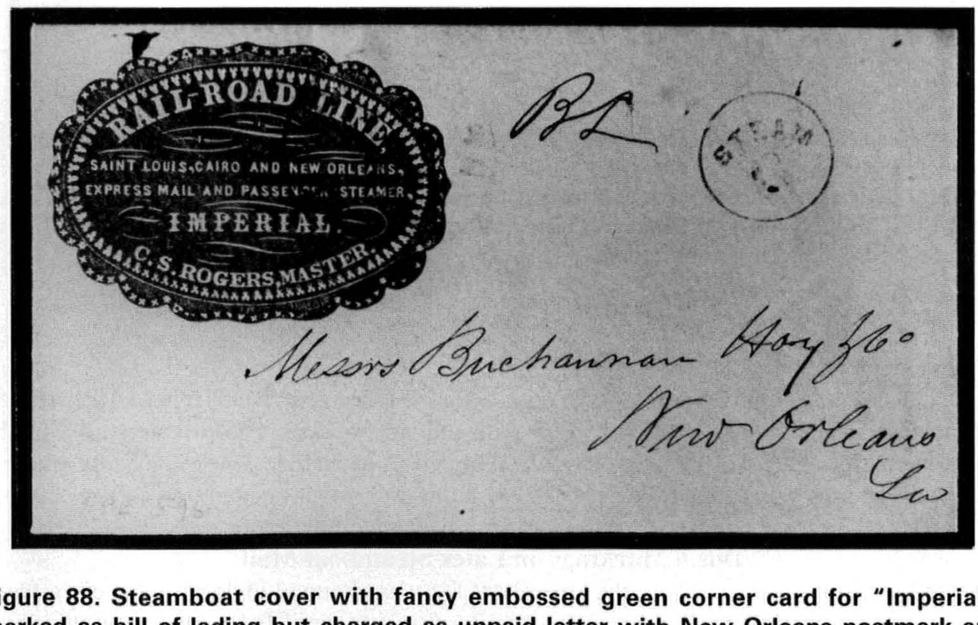

Figure 88. Steamboat cover with fancy embossed green corner card for "Imperial," marked as bill of lading but charged as unpaid letter with New Orleans postmark and "STEAM 6" in circle, usage in late 1850s

Figure 89. Steamboat cover with fancy blue vessel-named marking for "St. Nicholas", black oval "STEAM 6" applied at Mobile in 1857; the rate would have been 5¢ had the address been a different city

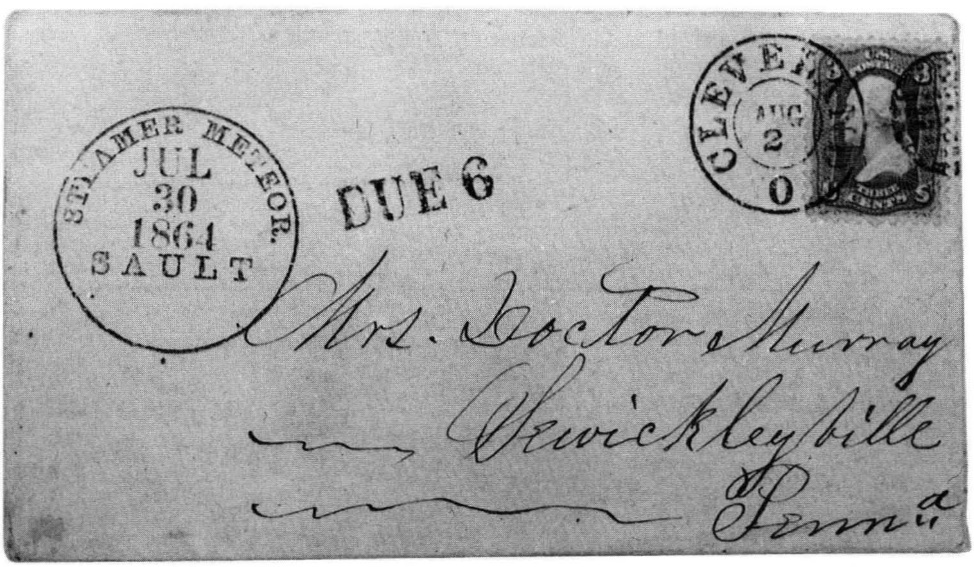

Figure 90. "STEAMER METEOR SAULT JUL 30 1864" vessel-named ship marking on cover carried from Sault to Cleveland where the 3¢ stamp was canceled; however, a ship letter to another town should be rated 6¢ in 1864, so the unpaid 3¢ was charged the penalty rate of double postage

There are two major towns where "STEAM 6" markings were employed, New Orleans and Mobile. At Figure 88 is a cover marked "B/L" (bill of lading), but it was evidently charged as a private letter with New Orleans postmark and black "STEAM 6" in circle. The cover bears an embossed green corner card for the vessel *Imperial.* Another similar usage is postmarked at New Orleans on September 4, 1855 with red "FROM STEAMER OPELOUSAS" and black "STEAM 6."

The other common marking is shown in Figure 89. This is a black oval "STEAM 6" charged as port of entry usage at Mobile. The illustrated cover bears an 1857 fancy blue "ST. NICHOLAS" handstamp with illustrated cotton bale.

The second type of Due 6 usage is steamboat covers sent with partial payment of postage after the 1863 institution of double rates for unpaid postage. In Figure 90 is a Great Lakes steamboat cover marked "STEAMER METEOR SAULT JUL 30 1864." This vessel received the letter at the port of Sault and transported it to Cleveland on Lake Erie. Here it entered the mails destined for Pennsylvania. The steamboat rate was the same as the ship rate, double the regular postage (6¢) whether paid or unpaid. There is 3¢ unpaid so double that totaled 6¢, hence the "DUE 6."

An even rarer usage is shown in Figure 91 with a small "STEAMER REINDEER OCT 14, 1864" and the same usage at Detroit. Because of the underpayment the cover bears an oval "STEAMBOAT DUE 6 CENTS." Note that this marking would also be used in 1864 on a totally unpaid steamboat letter addressed either to port of entry or any other city. Thus the partial payment was superfluous.

This type of usage was not limited to inland ship mail. In Figure 92 is a cover from a coastal vessel, *Steamer Granite State*, with a 3¢ stamp tied by "STEAMBOAT" (?Boston) and rated "Due 6" for double the missing 3¢ postage.

I have arbitrarily limited this article to the period before the Bank Note issues. Are there other different usages?

Acknowledgments

John Eggen, Dale Ferber, Don Garrett, Richard Graham, Labron Harris, Bruce Hazelton, David Jarrett, Eliot Landau, Richard Marek, Zane Stohler. □

Figure 91. "STEAMER REINDEER OCT 14 1864" vessel-named ship marking on letter carried into Detroit, rated "STEAMBOAT DUE 6 CTS" for double the unpaid 3¢ postage; had the letter been addressed to Detroit, the oval marking would have read due 2¢, double the missing 1¢ for the 4¢ ship rate

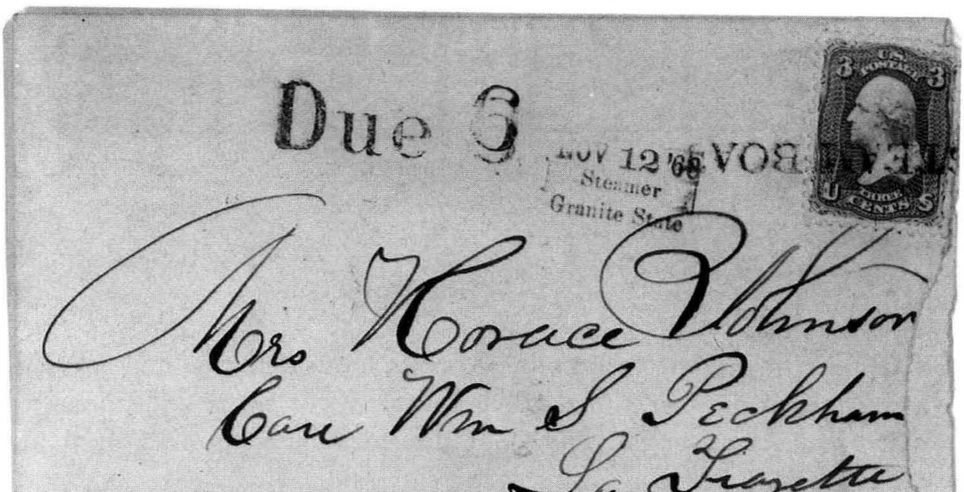

Figure 92. "Steamer Granite State NOV 12 '68" three-line vessel-named ship handstamp on coastal vessel with underpayment of ship fee, 3¢ stamp tied "STEAMBOAT," marked "Due 6" for double the unpaid 3¢

BOSTON TO SAINT JOHN STEAMBOAT MAIL

©2003 DAVID D'ALESSANDRIS

(continued from *Chronicle* 201:20)

Figure 12. Favor's Express "Steamer Admiral" route agent handstamp, Schuyler Rumsey Auction 13, lot #169

The 34mm circular "Favor's Express Steamer Admiral" marking, reported in red and black, between 1856 and 1859, is a curious marking, used while Col. Favor was a U.S. Post Office route agent, perhaps for some free advertisement. (Figure 12) The 24mm red circular "Favor's Express" negative star marking, reported used in 1855 and 1856, during a period when Favor was a steamboat letter agent, is truly scarce, with only two reported copies of the marking.[62] (Figure 13) Favor's Express covers also occasionally show the 22mm straightline "ADMIRAL" marking, reported in 1856 and 1857.

Col. Favor is listed as being appointed as a Steamboat Letter Agent on August 23, 1853;[63] however, a July 23, 1853 announcement in the *New Brunswick Courier* indicates that Favor was already working as a Steamboat Letter Agent on board the *Admiral* as of that date.[64] On January 29, 1855 another announcement indicates that Col. Favor was ordered to the steamer *Admiral*. This duplication of assignment to the *Admiral* is probably due to the fact that the *Admiral* wrecked on July 27, 1854, was repaired and later returned to service. Col. Favor appears to have operated his express business on board the steamer *Governor* during the *Admiral's* repair.

---

[62]R.A. Siegel sale 830, November 13 and 14, 2000, lot 874; Schuyler Rumsey sale 13, April 24 through 26, 2002, lot 167.

[63]Perry, p. 324.

[64]Jephcott, p. 206.

Figure 13. Favor's Express negative star handstamp, Robert A. Siegel Sale 830, lot #874

Favor also held contracts with the governments of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia to transport closed mails to Canada via St. John and Portland. Mail between the Maritimes and Canada (Canada East and Canada West) could take a variety of routes. The primary routes were (1) the overland route between Montreal and Halifax, and (2) by steamer between Quebec and Truro, Nova Scotia. These routes operated entirely within British North America; however, other routes involved transiting the United States. These mail routes included (3) the open mail use of the United States Post Office, with the letter going through an exchange office with Canada and an exchange office with the Maritimes, (4) closed mail via St. John and Portland, (5) closed mail via Cunard Line steamer on the Boston to Liverpool via Halifax route, and, starting November 1866, (6) via Grand Trunk Railway steamer from Halifax to Portland.[65] Portland and Boston both had railway links with Montreal, Canada East, which allowed for faster service, especially during the winter months. Beginning in 1856, and through 1861, Favor received £100 per year from the Nova Scotia Post Office to convey the closed mail from St. John to Portland.[66] Favor provided the closed mail service between March 1 and December 31 each year. Favor also received £100 from the Canadian Post Office beginning in May 1857, until September 30, 1859.[67] Mail from Nova Scotia to Canada and the United States via closed bag was to be so marked and was assembled in Windsor, Nova Scotia.[68] Favor was also paid on an occasional basis by the New Brunswick Post Office to carry some of its mail.[69]

Like the Gunnison's Express advertisements, Favor's Express did not advertise its fees. However, that is where the similarity ends. Favor's Express did not place any rate markings on its covers, therefore it is unknown what fees were charged. Additionally, Favor's Express did not provide local delivery. Instead it provided a "to the mails" service. Letters from St. John to Boston were deposited with the Boston Post Office where they received a "STEAM" handstamp, as letters brought in from a non-contract steamer, during the periods when Col. Favor was not a route agent.

D. Other Express Companies

A number of other express companies operated on the Boston to St. John steamboat run. For the most part, little is known about these companies. It is unclear whether any of the companies operated as independent mail services or if they operated only as package express companies. For example, E. Valentine & Co. Express is known to have operated between St. John and Boston using the steamer *Adelaide*; however, no private markings have been reported.[70] Turner's Express produced both an express label and a handstamp marking. Turner operated within New Brunswick, with connecting express service via Gunnison's Express. Gunnison severed ties with Turner's Express on April 1, 1861, around the time that Gunnison sold his express business to Eastern Express. Gunnison then published an advertisement warning readers not to use Turner's services:

> I would caution the public not to be deceived by J. D. Turner now persisting in running an Express from St. John to Boston in the name of Gunnison & Co. Express, as he ceased to be my agent April 1, 1861, I will not hold myself responsible for any business done after that date in my name. I will here state that he has collected sums of money on notes, drafts, and accounts put into his hands as agent which he refuses to pay over to the parties interested and has converted the money for his own use, all of which I shall substantiate before a legal tribunal in St. John, N.B., where I have commenced proceedings against him.[71]

Thus, it appears that Turner operated an express service between Boston and St. John, at some point in 1861, although possibly under Gunnison's name. Figure 14 is a cover front to Calais, Maine, endorsed "Goodwin & co. Express, Admiral." Presumably, this was carried by William Goodwin, who was a Steamboat Letter Carrier between 1845 and 1853;

---

[65] *Ibid.*, p. 264.
[66] *Ibid.*, p. 210.
[67] *Ibid.*
[68] *Ibid.*, pp. 210-11, quoting *Belcher's farmer's almanac*, 1859, p. 54, and 1863, p.33.
[69] *Ibid.*, p. 210.
[70] *Ibid.*, p. 219.
[71] *Ibid.*, p. 216.

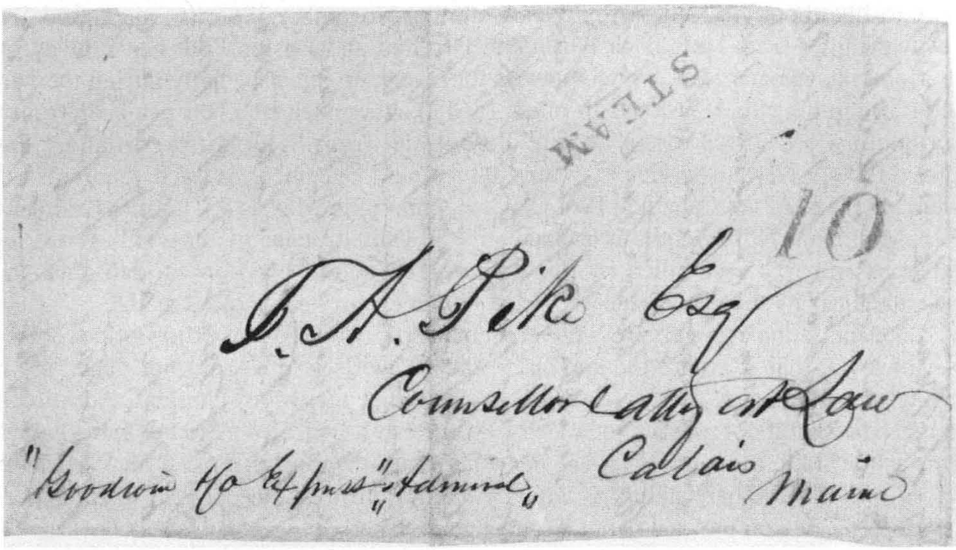

Figure 14. Goodwin Express cover front

however, as it is only cover front it is not possible to determine more about its routing. In addition, a number of other express services might have operated on the Boston - St. John steamboat service, including Payson's Express, Ames Express and Fishwicks Colonial Express.[72]

III. Steamboat Letter Carriers

The United States Post Office Department's steamboat letter carrier system was instituted on the Boston, Portland and Eastport steamboats in September 1845.[73] The Steamboat Letter Carriers were compensated based upon the volume of mail carried. As illustrated in the fragmented information in Table 1 below, the Steamboat Letter Carriers were appointed, sometimes to a particular boat, and were compensated on a per letter basis. The rate per letter appears to have varied between carriers and over time. The highest rate reported, 3¢ per letter, was only reported for J. Judson Ames and Joseph Gunnison, prior to May 12, 1848. Other letter carriers received 3¢ per letter beginning in 1853, but only for cross-border letters where the treaty rate of 10¢ applied. The fee per letter appears to have declined over time, with Steamboat Letter Carriers collecting 2¢ per letter in 1848 and 1849, and later 1¢ per letter and then ½¢ per letter being reported beginning in July 1853. The Steamboat Letter Carriers only operated between United States ports prior to 1853. Figure 15 is an interesting cover. It entered the mails in Boston on July 1, 1850. The Boston steamboat marking indicates that it was delivered into the Post Office by a non-contract steamboat engaged in inland or coastal waters. From Boston, the cover traveled to Eastport by the *Admiral*, likely in care of a Steamboat Letter Carrier. In Eastport, the cover appears to have exited the mails and was put on the *Maid of Erin* for

[72]Payson's Express advertised service from Halifax and St. John to the United States in 1848 (Jephcott, p. 217). Ames & Co.s' Express advertised service to Boston, Portland, Calais, Eastport, St. John N.B., St. Andrews, Robbinston, Perry and Lubec (*Calais Advertiser*, June 10, 1847). A private mail marking is known for Fishwick's Colonial Express, but it has not been reported used on the Boston to St. John run. Fishwick's did advertise offices in New York City, Philadelphia, Boston, St. John, Halifax and Charlottetown PEI (Jephcott, p. 220).

[73]Jephcott, p. 206.

Table 1 - Steamboat Letter Carrier Appointments

Carrier	*Appointed*	*Dismissed*	*Steamboat*	*Fee*
J. Judson Ames	Dec. 29, 1847	May 11, 1848		3¢
"	May 12, 1848	July 19, 1848		2¢
P.H. Clover	June 2, 1849		Eastern City or *Adelaide*	
Hiram S. Favor	April 29, 1853			3¢*
"	Aug. 23, 1853			1¢
"	Jan. 29, 1855		*Admiral*	
Benjamin N. Flint	July 5, 1853			3¢*
"	July 26, 1853			½¢ ?
"	Jan. 29, 1855	late 1858	*Eastern City*	
William Goodwin	Sept. 3, 1845	July 26, 1853		1¢
Joseph Gunnison	Dec. 29, 1847	May 11, 1848		3¢
????? "	May 12, 1848	May 15, 1848		2¢
"	May 15, 1848	June 2, 1849		2¢
"	Aug. 22, 1854	Jan. 29, 1855	*Adelaide*	3¢**
"	Jan. 17, 1861	June 25, 1861	*New Brunswick*	
John P. Hall	June 26, 1861		*New Brunswick*	
F.J. Hodgman	May 15, 1848			2¢
J.J. Jerome	May 15, 1848			2¢
Albert Reed	Jan. 29, 1855		*Adelaide*	
"		March 25, 1861	*Eastern City*	
S.W. Valentine	July 26, 1853			½¢ ?
James N. Winslow	Mar. 25, 1861	Nov. 1862	*Eastern City*	

* 3¢ per letter only for letters between New Brunswick and the United States.
**3¢ per letter between New Brunswick and the United States, 1¢ per letter between U.S. ports.
Sources : Calvet Hahn, "Steamboats Carried the Mail," *Stamp Collector*, February 7, 1983; Elliot Perry, *Pat Paragraphs*, comp. by George Turner and Thomas E. Stanton (Takoma Park, Md.: Bureau Issues Association, Inc., 1981), pp. 323-25.

St. John. Upon arrival in St. John, it reentered the mails as a ship letter, receiving the straight-line St. John Ship Letter marking, and was rated 1s4d.

The Steamboat Letter Carriers were compensated by the postmasters of Portland and Eastport (and presumably Boston) as indicated by an April 17, 1850, announcement:

> Authorize Postmasters of Portland and Eastport, to send and receive mails by this carrier at rate of one cent per letter, and ½ cent per newspaper, which they will respectively pay on the same being delivered into their office: taking receipt therefor to be forwarded with their quarterly returns.[74]

In July 1853, at about the time that the steamboat companies began operating to St. John, without changing steamboats at Eastport, the Steamboat Letter Carrier system was extended from Eastport to St. John. Letters transmitted by the Steamboat Letter Carriers were charged the ordinary treaty rate. Thus, a letter from St. John to the United States (excluding California and Oregon) would be rated 6 pence or 10¢, paid or unpaid, pursuant to the 1851 postal treaty between the countries. The United States Postal Service issued the following order on June 2, 1853: "Place Boston, Mass. and Portland, Me. in official communication with St. John, N.B. by steamboat Letter Carrier."[75] A far more detailed announcement was published in the *New Brunswick Courier* to announce the new service:

> Notice to the Public
>
> Arrangements have been made with the Postmaster General of the United States, under which MAILS will in future be forwarded to and from this City and BOSTON, PORTLAND, and EASTPORT, by the *Steamer Eastern City*, and in charge of Mr. Benjamin M. Flint, who has been appointed Steam Boat Mail Carrier under the United States Post Office Department.
>
> The Regulations will be precisely the same as those under which mails are at present conveyed by Colonel Favor, in the Admiral.
>
> Until further notice therefore; Mails will be closed for one or other of the above-named Steamers on MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, and FRIDAY mornings and Letters to be thus forwarded must be posted at this Office fifteen minutes before the time advertised for the departure of the Boats, after, which time none can be received; but Col. Favor, on board the Admiral, and Mr. Flint, on board the Eastern City, will be prepared to take charge of loose letters, from the time of closing at this Office until the Boats leave.
>
> The Rates of Postage chargeable on Letters thus forwarded are the same as by the land route, viz; Six Pence currency or ten cents the half ounce, to all parts of the United States except California and Oregon; and Nine Pence currency or fifteen cents, to the latter places. The prepayment of this postage will be optional, and may be made by affixing Postage Stamps but not less than the whole postage, or an equivalent amount of postage labels can be taken. It must be borne in mind; however, that loose letters forwarded in charge of Colonel Favor or Mr. Flint, cannot be pre-paid in money— they must either be prepaid by affixing Postage labels, or be forwarded unpaid.
>
> GENERAL POST OFFICE J. HOWE
> St. John 23rd July 1853. PMG[76]

After this date, loose letters deposited with the steamboat letter carriers received the "Express Mail" cancellations which will be discussed in more detail in the following section.

The steamboat letter carrier system came under attack from the New Brunswick Postmaster General in 1865:

> Another serious and growing evil is the loss of Revenue entailed by the transmission of a vast number of Letters by Express and other Carriers: the number of which are annually increasing: thus the Law which only permits a Letter to be sent by a

---

[74]Perry, p. 324.

[75]*Ibid.*

[76]Jephcott, pp. 206-07.

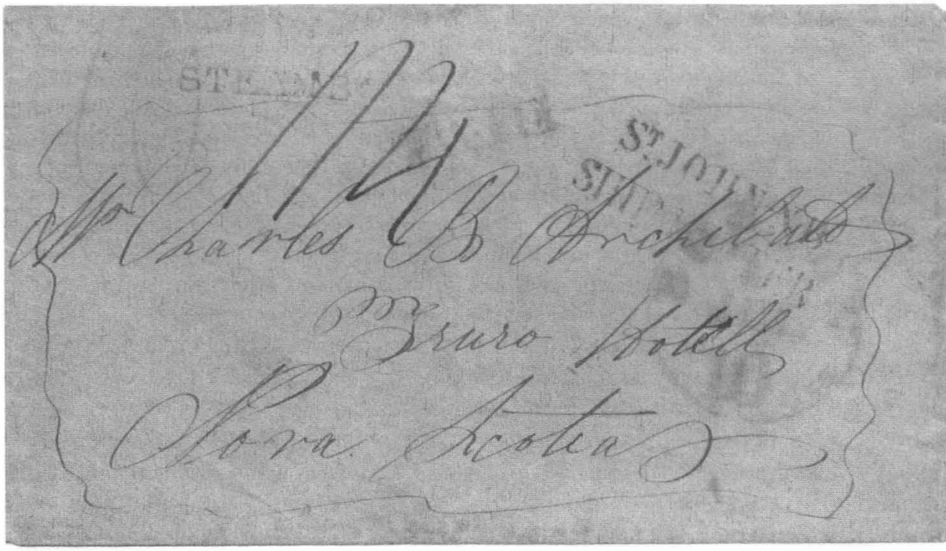

Figure 15. St. John ship letter—steamboat letter carrier on *Admiral*

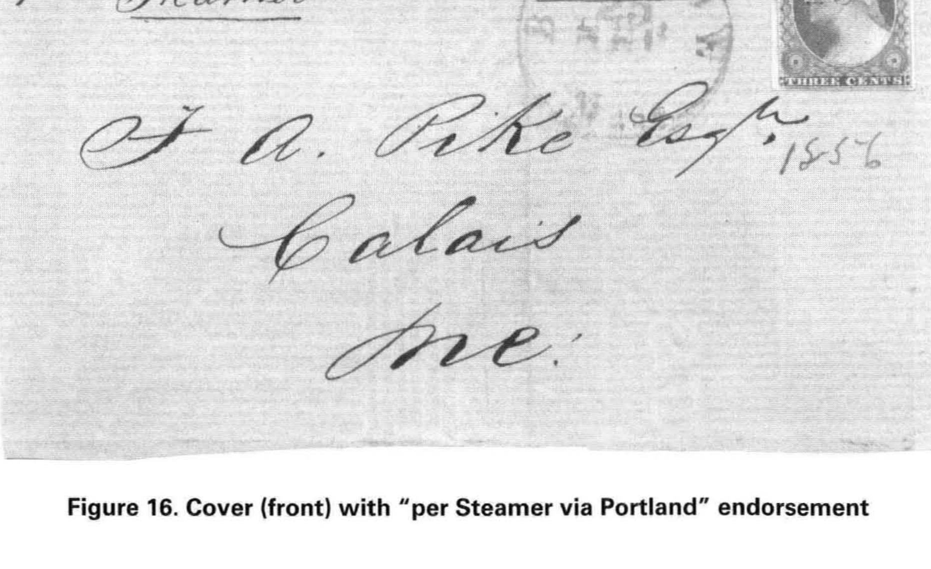

Figure 16. Cover (front) with "per Steamer via Portland" endorsement

> Carrier when accompanying goods is daily evaded. But while this evil exists to a very great degree, there is another, homogenous in character, which prevails to a still greater extent. I allude to the illicit forwarding of Letters by the Steamers plying between St. John, Portland and Boston, which ought to pass through the Post Office at St. John. True the pre-payment of these Letters is optional, but either the Department here or that in the United States is entitled to a rate of ten cents on each Letter not exceeding half an ounce. I am however informed, that the parties collecting these Letters receive thereon a fee of eight or ten cents, and on arriving within the boundary of the United States, Mail the same affixing a three cent United States Postage Stamp, the inland rate there, and thus pocket the difference. While I entertain a hope, that with the assistance of the United States authorities, with whom it is my intention to communicate, I may be enabled to subvert this systemic peculation, I, at the same time, think that the existing law by which "Letters, respecting goods, sent by Common Carriers, to be delivered with the goods without reward," are exempted from tax, requires amendment.[77]

The last reported date of appointment or termination of a Steamboat Letter Carrier was November 1862; however, it is unclear whether the system ended with the 1862 navigation season, or not. It is also important to note that the expresses often operated on steamboats even if the expressman was not the Steamboat Letter Carrier for that steamboat. Thus, the fact that Favor advertised his services on the *Admiral* in 1854 does not mean that Favor was the Steamboat Letter Carrier on the *Admiral* at that time. In fact, when the *Admiral* wrecked in 1854, both Gunnison and Favor were listed as having suffered losses of freight and other valuables in the wreck.[78]

IV. Steamboat Mail Markings

For the most part, letters carried on the Boston to St. John steamboats do not have distinctive postal markings because they went by closed bag. Loose letters deposited with the steamboat letter carriers received the distinctive "Express Mail" markings. Additionally, domestic covers carried by the Boston to St. John steamboats can occasionally be identified by endorsements such as "per Steamer via Portland" on the cover in Figure 16. The remaining covers can only be recognized by analysis of exchange office markings and comparison of the origin postmark and transit markings to steamboat schedules. In addition, the "express mail" service was provided at the ordinary rate of postage–10¢ (except to California or Oregon), so the covers cannot be identified by the postal rate

(to be continued)

---

[77] *Ibid.*, pp. 211-12, quoting New Brunswick, House of Assembly, *Journals*, 1865, app. Post Office Dept., p. viii.

[78] *Eastport Sentinel*, Vol. 36, No. 42, August 2, 1854. Joseph Gunnison is reported as suffering a loss of $400.00, while Col. Favor reported a loss of $1,000.00.

CHATTANOOGA CANCELS ON THE 10¢ 1847

JAMES C. CATE

An Act of Congress authorized the first general issue of U.S. postage stamps on March 3, 1847, to take effect July 1, 1847. Scott U.S. #1 was a 5¢ Franklin issued to pay the postal rate of ½ ounce up to 300 miles distance. Scott U.S. #2 was a 10¢ Washington issued to pay the postal rate of ½ ounce over 300 miles distance. The initial deliveries went to larger post offices only and in reality were somewhat limited in the quantity shipped.

Elliott Perry (1884-1972), a noted philatelist and author of *Pat Paragraphs*, published many articles relating to these 5¢ and 10¢ stamps. These articles were detailed, with much information for the student of these stamps. In listing the quantities of these stamps received by the various states and cities, the following information pertaining to Tennessee is offered by Perry:

Table 1. Distribution of Scott U.S. #1 and #2 to Tennessee

	5¢	10¢
Brownsville	200	50
Clarksville	2,200	400
Jackson	1,200	350
Jasper	200	100
Lebanon	400	100
Macon	200	50
Nashville	8,200	3,900
Total (7 offices)	**12,600**	**4,950**

It is interesting to note that Chattanooga and several other Tennessee cities did not receive any initial postal issues. Therefore, cancellations from these non-issue cities on these first issue stamps are rare, unreported or non-existent.

Over the years, the writer actively sought Chattanooga cancels on covers bearing these stamps. On occasion, inquiry was made to noted philatelists and postal historians. There was little success. Finally, in mid 1997, Joel Rind, a Chattanooga stamp dealer, obtained a cover with a 10¢ stamp and a red CDS "CHATTANOOGA - Te." cancel addressed to Charleston, S.C. With the knowledge of this cover, some exploratory searches for other covers bearing similar cancels were initiated.

At the APS StampShow in Milwaukee, in late August 1997, the writer discussed this cover with Thomas J. Alexander. Alexander, a noted author and philatelist, maintained an extensive list of U.S. first issue stamps as reported on cover. At the time Alexander had not yet formally published this work. Alexander was furnished a color copy of the Chattanooga cover (Figure #1). Alexander's survey list did not indicate any reported Chattanooga covers bearing the 5¢ stamp. However, three 10¢ covers were recorded in the

Figure 1. May 19 Chattanooga cover with 10¢ 1847 stamp

survey showing Chattanooga cancels. The cover illustrated in Figure #1 was not previously reported and represented a "new find." Further, it appeared to be a part of the Ehney family correspondence, reported in the list with Chattanooga cancels. The information is contained in the following table:

Table 2. Chattanooga Cancels on Scott U.S. #2 Reported to Date

Date	Cancel	City/Address	Recipient
12/07/XX	S* - Red	Beaufort, S.C.	Miss **E.G. Ehney
1/16/XX	S* - Red	Charleston, S.C	Miss **E.G. Ehney
4/05/XX	S* - Red	unrecorded	unrecorded
5/19/XX	S* - Red	Charleston, S.C	Miss A.G. Ehney (NF)

XX = Year unknown; S* = Single 10¢ stamp; NF = New Find; ** = Comment below

The Chattanooga cover shown in Figure 1 is addressed to Miss A.G. Ehney, Charleston, S.C. It was previously unrecorded by Alexander and is obviously a part of the Ehney correspondence. It is easy to distinguish between the "A" (first initial) and the "E" of "Ehney." Since the "G." is common to this cover and those recorded by Alexander, the writer is of the opinion that the "E" of "E.G." might have been misread and should have been reported as an "A" (of "A.G.") instead. It is sometimes difficult to determine specific letters of the script of those times. The red CDS and May 19 date would also fall into the pattern of the Ehney correspondence. Since there is a gap between the January and April covers of three months, the possibility is raised of more unreported covers. Did the writer return to Charleston in the intervening months? Since the Chattanooga cover (Figure 1) was sent in care of Mr. P.M. Ehney, Custom House, he presumably had some official capacity at that facility.

With luck and assistance from Rind, an Ehney family bible was located in a Charleston, S.C. library. Under the family listings in the Ehney bible, an entry indicates that Peter M. Ehney and Susannah H. Gabeau were married on September 12, 1816. Under entries of the children born to this marriage, it is noted that Amanda Georgianna Ehney was born on October 24, 1826. This would indicate that she was in her early twenties at the time the letters were addressed to her in care of her father, P.M. Ehney. The family bible also contains an entry that indicates Miss Amanda Georgiana married Charles M. Hurst on June 17, 1851. It is not known if Hurst was the writer of the letters to Ehney.

Since no 10¢ 1847 stamps were issued to Chattanooga, one can deduct that the stamps were either carried to Chattanooga or possibly sent from Charleston for use. Since the correspondence point is Charleston, South Carolina, the person in Chattanooga most likely obtained them from there for use. The records by Perry indicate that Charleston received 16,400 of the 10¢ stamp. This is more than three times the amount received by the entire State of Tennessee. Although the year date is unknown for all of these Chattanooga covers, some conclusions can be extracted. First, the 10¢ was not issued until July 1, 1847 and the first day of use determined as July 2, 1847. The Chattanooga cancel shown in Figure #1 is listed in the *American Stampless Cover Catalog* as being used between 1841 and 1849. Therefore, it is logical to assume the Chattanooga covers were used in 1847-49. Thus far, these covers represent the earliest recorded "stamped" covers from Chattanooga, Tennessee. The Figure #1 cover has since been included in the *United States 1847 Issue: A Cover Census*, by Thomas Alexander.

References

1. *Scott Specialized Catalogue of U.S. Stamps and Covers*
2. Elliott Perry, *Pat Paragraphs*, compiled and edited by George T. Turner and Thomas E. Stanton (Takoma Park, Md.: Bureau Issues Association., Inc., c1981)
3. David G. Phillips, Editor in Chief, 5th ed., Volume 1, *American Stampless Cover Catalog* (North Miami, Fl.: David G. Phillips, Co., Inc., 1997)
4. Thomas J. Alexander, private correspondence and survey
5. Thomas J. Alexander, *The United States 1847 Issue: A Cover Census* (Austin, TX: U.S. Philatelic Classics Society, Inc., c2001)

THE PLATES OF THE 1851-57 3¢ STAMPS OF THE UNITED STATES

© 2003 GARY W. GRANZOW

Introduction

This paper is a study of the plates of the second regular issue of the United States, focusing on the 3¢ stamp of 1851-57. It will correct published misconceptions of the process used in the mid-Nineteenth Century to manufacture postage stamp plates and show that the first four 3¢ plates made in 1851 were initially not hardened. It will also demonstrate that once a stamp plate was hardened, it was not re-softened and hardened again. To support this conclusion, the evolution of steel making, the softening of steel for use in engraving and the application of casehardening to postage stamp dies and plates will be reviewed. The numbers of impressions per plate of the first nine plates are revised to correct an error in Dr. Carroll Chase's original estimates.

In addition, one of the enduring mysteries of the 1851-57 3¢ stamp is addressed: the reasons why a brand-new plate (Plate 3) was made at the end of 1851 instead of reentering either of two plates already in use (the unnumbered plate later named by philatelists "Plate 0," and a second unnumbered plate which would reappear four years later bearing "No. 5"). Evidence is presented which suggests that Plate 0 failed in the soft state in 1851 and that the plate which would become Plate 5 was withdrawn and not reworked until 1855 because of flaws in the steel from which it was made.

Revisions to Dr. Chase's estimates of impressions from the perforated stamp plates will be presented based upon progress in plating these stamps along with updated census and earliest known use data. These revisions indicate that nearly double the Type I Group (Scott No. 25) impressions and over double the impressions from Plates 9, 10 and 11 were needed to overcome the short life of the 12-19 Group of plates. In addition, it will be demonstrated that the 9-11 Group and 12-19 Group of plates were never hardened. It will also be shown that Plate 15 and the 20-28 Group (excluding plate 21) were hardened.

An attempt has been made to avoid technical detail. To assist the reader a glossary of terms is included.

Part I: Evolution of Engraving on Steel

The Perkins Process

When Toppan, Carpenter, Casilear & Co. (TCC) of Philadelphia was chosen to print the 1851-57 United States issue, they agreed to use the printing technique of line engraving on steel. This steel plate making process has been referred to over the years as the "Perkins Process" because of major contributions to line engraving and printing made by Jacob Perkins. Much has been written about this famous American inventor. He is remembered by philatelists first and foremost as the founder of the bank note engraving firm of Perkins, Bacon and Petch[1] which printed the world's first postage stamps in 1840, the Penny Black and the Two Penny Blue of the United Kingdom.

Jacob Perkins' major contribution was to recognize in the first decade of the Nineteenth Century that the casehardening of steel could be applied to engraved banknote plates. [*NB*: In this article "casehardening," "surface hardening" and "hardening" will be used interchangeably. Some references also use the term "pack hardening."] Perkins also recognized that even the highest quality mild (soft) steel available at that time to engravers

---

[1]Following is a summary of the evolution of Jacob Perkins' English engraving firm: Perkins, Fairman & Health (1819); Perkins, Bacon & Petch (1834); Perkins, Bacon & Co. (1852) and Perkins, Bacon Ltd. (1877). These firms will be collectively be referred to as "Perkins, Bacon."

still contained residual levels of carbon and that decarbonization (further softening) was needed before fine engraving was possible. Prior to his invention, dies and plates were made of copper which is much softer and wears rapidly.

Perkins' technique started with the engraving of the desired design in reverse on a softened die which was then casehardened and placed in a press where the design was transferred under several tons pressure to a soft flat steel plate. The resulting image was now in "relief." This plate, called a transfer plate, was then surface hardened and used in a similar fashion in the same press to make copper bank note plates. This master die and hardened transfer plate contained blank spaces for insertion of the bank note issuer's name and thus could be used multiple times to produce copper plates sold to bank note printers.[2]

A significant improvement was made in 1810 when Joseph Chesseborough Dyer patented the use of a transfer cylinder or roll upon which the engraved image on the die was pressed.[3] The advantage of using a transfer roll instead of a flat plate as the transferring medium when creating the printing plates was that the engraving could be transferred under much less pressure. This is because the contact area between the roller and the plate is so much smaller than the contact area between two flat plates. In addition, the transfer roll was easier to caseharden uniformly and without warping due to its compact profile and cylindrical shape. By 1813, Perkins and Murray had improved their hardening technique to allow steel printing plates (in place of copper) to be made from the steel transfer plate.[4] Figure 1 illustrates a Perkins transfer press of about 1815.

Nineteenth Century Steel Making

The melting of iron ore to remove impurities has been known for centuries. If such "refined" iron is left to cool, it becomes very hard but brittle because of its high carbon content. With the advent of coke fuel, brick ovens and bellows for air, molten iron could be raised to temperatures needed to drive carbon from it (in excess of 3,000° F). This equipment, known as a blast furnace, was found in varying scales and at a number of locations in Britain and a few places in Colonial America. By 1800, the blast furnace process was being practiced on a very large scale.

The strength and brittleness of the steel produced from these early blast furnaces varied according to the source of the iron ore used, the impurities in the ore, the configuration of the furnaces, the consistency of practices and the skill (art) of the maker. The average carbon content in iron ore in the United Kingdom was about 5%. Burning all of this out was difficult. Incomplete decarbonization, traces of impurities and poor

---

[2]Perkins called the master and transfer plates "stereotype" plates and the process of engraving on steel came to be known as "siderography."

[3]Joseph C. Dyer, United Kingdom Patent Number 3385, "Copper Plate Printing," October 1, 1810. This patent describes the "Perkins Stereographic Plates" and the steps to make them and then claims the transfer roll as an improvement. It also covers the improvement of using an inking cylinder covered by an absorbent material and mounted onto the printing press to reduce the time to apply ink. Joseph Dyer, an American, met Jacob Perkins in Boston in 1809. In addition to being an inventor (he would eventually hold twelve UK patents), he was a man of means who became a financial backer and partner with Jacob Perkins, though the firm name did not include his name. He moved to England in 1810 and took a Perkins transfer press with him, where he improved it. He was instrumental in persuading Perkins to move to England in 1819 to start the bank note engraving firm which eventually became known as Perkins, Bacon. In addition to contributing financial support, he assigned his transfer roll patent to the firm. G. Bathe and D. Bathe. *Jacob Perkins, His Inventions, His Times, & His Contemporaries* (Philadelphia: Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1943, pp. 77-83).

[4]Another important contribution was made in 1824 by Edmund Turrrell, who developed a wash medium having just the correct corrosivity to deepen and sharpen the lines of the engraved steel dies and plates before hardening, without being destructive to the design. G. Bathe and D. Bathe, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

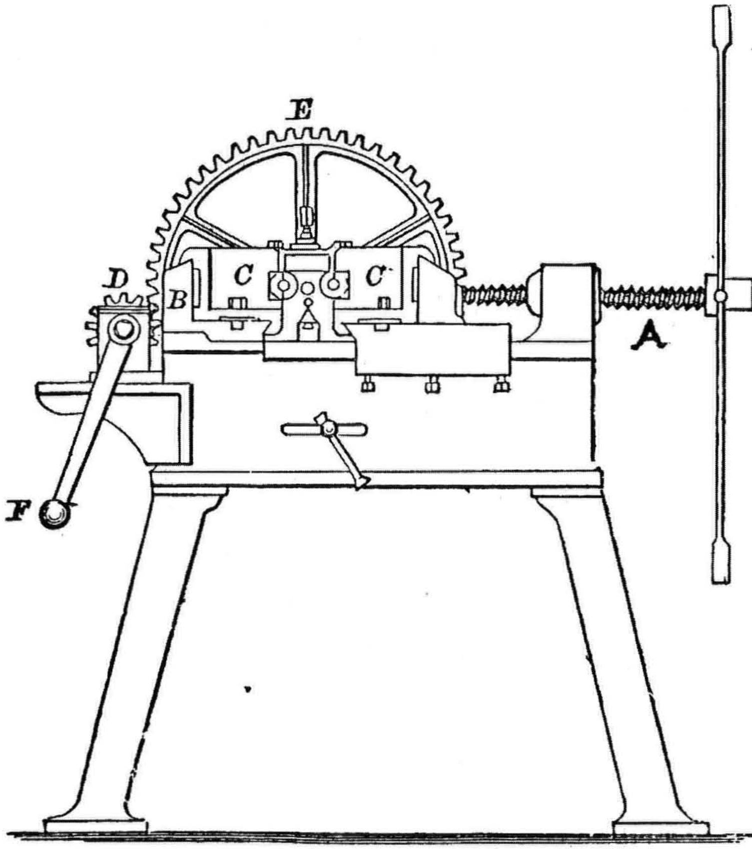

Figure 1. Transfer press of Jacob Perkins, circa 1815

handling afterwards, etc., could all affect the workability of the steel. Steel quality and malleability gradually improved in the first half of the Nineteenth Century. However, it was not until the Bessemer Process came into wide spread use in the late 1850s and early 1860s that a truly uniform high quality soft steel became widely available.[5]

The steel available to engravers of bank notes in the first thirty years of the Nineteenth Century often still contained enough residual carbon to make engraving difficult. Hence Perkins' first step was to soften the steel for his dies and plates by burning residual carbon from it. This was done by prolonged heating at white hot temperatures and then allowing the steel to cool slowly rather than quenching it (cooling quickly). He immersed the steel item to be treated in a bed of fine steel filings (thereby intimately entrapping oxygen around it) contained in a cast iron box free of all sources of carbon and heated it white hot (2,700° to 2,900° F).

In patents dated 1810, this heating step was described as taking three days. By 1819,

[5]Henry Bessemer, UK Patent No. 356 issued Feb. 12, 1856 entitled "Manufacture of Malleable Steel." *See also* Henry Bessemer, dissertation before the Royal Society at Chatham, England, 1856, www.history.rochester.edu. Erich Hutton, 1996.

it could be reduced to four to six hours due to improved steel quality.[6] Although steel producers in 1840 were advertising "double refined" extra mild steel for engraving, Perkins, Bacon still found this decarbonizing step necessary when making the Penny Black plates. By the 1850s improved steel may have permitted engravers to eliminate or greatly reduce the length of this step. Certainly by the 1870s it was no longer needed due to availability of very low carbon soft steel.[7]

As will be explained more fully below, some authors have confused this high temperature burning of carbon with the lower temperature practice of annealing. Annealing is the process of heat treating low carbon steel to relieve stress after it has been worked and/or to improve its malleability by re-ordering its carbon/iron microstructure. With respect to low carbon steel used in engraving, annealing temperatures below 1200° F are recommended to avoid embrittlement.[8] It is not used to decarbonize casehardened engraved steel. Temperatures at least 1,000° F higher are needed to burn carbon from the hardened surface. This was rarely practiced because of the high risk of distortion and embrittlement due to the more extreme conditions required.

After engraving, Perkins hardened just the surface of his dies and plates. The hardening of a thin layer at the surface of soft steel by raising the carbon level just at the surface had been known for at least 100 years prior to Perkins' contributions and was in widespread use in the manufacture of firearm parts by 1800.[9] Called "casehardening," the process in the mid-1900s consisted of placing the item to be surface hardened in a closed container packed with a high carbon charcoal made by roasting leather strips and/or ground bone.[10] The container filled with the steel item and bone charcoal was then heated to red hot and held there for several hours. As the bone or hide charcoal roasted a carbon-rich gas would form. Over time this would penetrate several thousandths of an inch, producing a thin, high carbon surface on the low carbon steel core of the part.

Hardening at the surface of low carbon steel begins at temperatures of about 1,300° F, with temperatures as high as 1,500° F being used depending on its starting carbon content, the size of the part and the depth of hardness desired.[11] [*NB*: Some authors use the more imprecise general term, "tempering," when intending to refer to casehardening.] After several hours, the container was removed from the furnace and the contents quenched by quickly dumping it into a bath of cold water.

---

[6]Joseph C. Dyer, "Copper Printing," United Kingdom Patent No. 3385, 1810, p. 2 and Jacob Perkins, "Engine Lathe for Engraving Surfaces, Printing and Coining Presses, etc.," United Kingdom Patent No. 4400, 1819, p. 12.

[7]For example, J.H. Baxter, in Chapters 3 and 4 of *Printing Postage Stamps by Line Engraving* (Federalsburg, Md,: American Philatelic Society, 1939), describes die and plate making of this period as beginning with "soft (decarbonized) steel," p. 18.

[8]*Annealing, a Seminar on Heat Treatment, Wire World*, 2003, www.wireworld.com. *See also Ameritherm Data Sheets* 2003, Ameritherm Inc. 39 Main St., Scottsville, NY 14546.

[9]A pair of French flintlock dueling pistols with casehardened lock plates has been dated to 1730. *See* John Bevins, "Metal Finishing for the Gunsmith," *Rifle Magazine*, No. 50 (March-April 1973).

[10]Some authors have stated that prussiate of potassium (potassium hydrocyanide) or potassium ferro-cyanide was also used in the bed. *See* for example, Seymour, J.B., *The Stamps of Great Britain*, Part One (London: Royal Philatelic Society, London, 1934), p. 58 and J.N. Williams, *Fundamentals of Philately* (State College, Pa.: American Philatelic Society, 1990), p. 213. However, the addition of chemical agents to accelerate and deepen the absorption of carbon was not discovered until about 1860. E.D. Bacon, *The Line Engraved Postage Stamps of Great Britain* (London: Charles Nissen & Co., 1920), Volume I, p. 60.

[11]*Chemical Heat Treatment Data Sheet*, Contract Heat Treatment Association, Aston University, Birmingham, UK, 1996., p. 1.

A key to surface hardening is to minimize the amount of oxygen (air) in the container so that the form of carbon surrounding the item being hardened is carbon monoxide which penetrates the surface. Upon quenching, the absorbed carbon becomes locked into a carbon/iron matrix[12] at the restructured surface layer of the steel, and the high carbon surface skin becomes glass hard. These structural changes make engraving on the hardened surface layer impossible. The hardened stamp image is now composed of a thin layer of high carbon, hardened steel. To burn this carbon out to re-soften the image sufficiently for reentry of the design would require heating well above 2,000° F in the presence of oxygen for an extended period. Numerous references indicate that this can lead to embrittlement and cracking along with distortion.[13] For example, James H. Baxter states in his comprehensive work, *Printing Postage Stamps by Line Engraving*:

> Since softening and re-hardening is injurious to dies, causing them to crack or become warped or distorted, a design on a hardened steel die is often transferred to a new soft steel die (laydown) when an alteration is to be made.[14]

The "laydown" procedure described by Baxter was the technique used by Perkins, Bacon when the first die for the Penny Black and Red required re-working in 1854 due to wear. The die was *not* softened by decarbonizing. Instead a new die was made by pressing the first die image from one of the transfer rolls onto a softened flat plate, recutting the design and then hardening the new die.[15]

The risk was even greater with hardened stamp plates due to their larger size. Baxter writes at p. 85:

> It was formerly the custom . . . to reenter worn plates *if they had been used in the softened state* [emphasis added] and the entire engraved surface was worn evenly, and to retouch the designs if the plate was tempered [*i.e.*, hardened]. Hand tooling was employed in this latter case because annealing [*i.e.*, decarbonizing] would . . . distort the designs . . .

At Perkins, Bacon, when the casehardened surface of the plate became worn exposing the softened steel beneath, it was placed in a specially designed small transfer press and the design reentered from the original transfer roll *without* softening the plate first.[16] In searching the literature only one reference to decarbonizing a hardened plate was found. In a letter dated January 31, 1861 to the Agents for Crown Colonies, Mr. Mills of Perkins, Bacon describes repairing five Western Australia stamp plates. Four were re-worked in the usual way – without softening them. He then explained why their charges for one plate was about $288 (28 times higher than the other four). This plate had "suffered palpable injuries . . . the removal of which had been unsuccessfully attempted." Furthermore, it "needed to be put into printing condition in the shortest possible time." The only choice was to decarbonize it, burnish the damaged areas, reenter it and then re-harden it. Since the plate was otherwise beyond repair, they believed it worth the risk.[17]

---

[12]In metallurgy this is known as a phase change to the Martensite phase of steel. *See* Glossary. (For an excellent overview of steel making and the heat treatment of steel *see* "Heat Treatment of Steel," *Encyclopedia of Science and Technology*, 9th Edition, Volume 17(New York: McGraw Hill, 2002).

[13]See *Annealing, a Seminar on Heat Treatment, op. cit.*, p. 1 and "Heat Treatment of Steel," *Machinery Handbook* (New York: Industrial Press, 1924), Part 5, p. 2. This reference states that heating and quenching during hardening brings about changes in the surface "grain" structure which prevents further softening.

[14]Baxter, *Printing Postage Stamps by Line Engraving*, pp. 28 and 85.

[15]Bacon, p. 138.

[16]*Ibid*, p. 60. *See also* Appendix A.

[17]Percy DeWorms, *Perkins, Bacon Records* (London: Royal Philatelic Society, London, 1953), Volume I, p. 395.

Casehardening of stamp plates, again because of their larger size, was much more difficult than hardening dies and transfer rolls. The first stamp plates measured about ½ inch by 12 inches by 20 inches,[18] and were therefore about 75 times larger than the typical die of the period. Conditions had to be carefully controlled so that the surface was as uniformly hard as possible across the plate. If held at hardening conditions too long, the plate became brittle. If not long enough, the plate would wear rapidly. Because of the high pressures dies and plates had to withstand in the transfer press, attempts were made to limit the depth of hardening to a very thin surface layer so the core would remain soft and flexible.

Unfortunately, data in modern metals handbooks concerning casehardening is not applicable to plate making in the 1850s because all the modern tests use metal samples prepared by chemically augmented hardening techniques. However, the mid-Nineteenth Century craft of surface hardening mild steel has been kept alive by the makers of replica firearms (which use casehardened parts). Mid-Nineteenth Century hardening conditions used by Perkins, Bacon and TCC have been duplicated in the laboratory by gunsmiths.[19] Controlled experiments using only bone charcoal at temperatures and hardening times as described in the Perkins plate-making patents[20] were conducted using mild steel blanks measuring 0.125 inches thick, 1.5 inches wide and 2.25 inches high. These blanks are very similar in size to stamp dies of the period. For example, the die of the 1851 essay (Scott No. 11-E2) recently donated to the Smithsonian Museum measures .08 inches thick, 1.6 inches wide and 2.08 inches high (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. 1851 3¢ Die, Scott Essay No. 11-E2

After casehardening, state-of the-art analyses performed on cross-sections of the resulting hardened blanks indicate that the surface hardened layer was .002 inches thick and that the layer had undergone a true transformation to the Martensite phase of steel. While stamp plates of the 1850s, being larger, may have been heated for up to four hours, leading to somewhat thicker hardened layers, the thickness would have been in the same order of magnitude. Once this very thin layer of hardened steel was worn off during printing, the rest of the engraved design would wear rapidly.[21] It is readily apparent why the very high temperatures needed to burn the carbon out of a hardened plate could disrupt this thin surface structure and distort the engraving.[22]

---

[18]Though the thickness of the TCC plates is not known, the plates used by Perkins, Bacon were about ½ inch thick. Bacon, p. 56.

[19]Oscar L. Gaddy, "The Color Case-hardening of Firearms, Part I," *Double Gun Journal* [David Phillips Cote, Michigan], Vol. 7, No. 4 (Winter 1996), pp. 5-10.

[20]The blanks were made of cold rolled, low carbon mild steel packed in 100% bone charcoal and held for two hours at 1,320° F, followed by rapid quenching in cold water.

[21]Interviews with staff at Perkins, Bacon by Edward Denny Bacon indicate that considerable difficulties in obtaining uniformly hardened plates was the principal reason for having to reenter the Penny Black and Penny Red plates. Bacon, Vol. I, pp. 56-57.

[22]Thicker hardened layers and greater uniformity only became possible with the introduction of chemical hardening techniques in the 1860s and 70s.

Perkins Process - Misconceptions

Descriptions of the contributions of Jacob Perkins have unfortunately been simplified over the years to a single concept: the discovery of how to harden and soften steel at will. Thus the published explanations in the philatelic literature have led stamp collectors to misunderstand the way in which plates were made and how many plate varieties occurred. As early as 1874 a journal article about the contributions of Jacob Perkins described soft steel rollers receiving impressions from a hardened die and the roller then being used to create images on a steel plate which is then hardened. And it summarized his invention as: "he made steel dies . . . and invented improvements in the hardening and softening of steel at will."[23]

This concept, "hardening and softening at will," has been repeated in the philatelic press many times with reference to the adaptation of his bank note process to the printing of postage stamps. For example: ". . . it is necessary for any student of the Perkins Process to understand the main principle . . . .The invention to which we particularly refer is the treatment of steel, which enabled him to soften and harden it at will."[24]

Dr. Chase, in describing recutting varieties and wear of Plates 10 E and 11 E, states "and the softening, recutting and re-hardening [of these plates] account[s] for Plates 10i and 11i . . ." And with respect to plates 10i and 11i he concluded: "they were a second time left too soft when they were rehardened."[25] And J.N. Williams, in his major work, *Fundamentals of Philately*,[26] states on page 209 that Jacob Perkins' invention: "Depend[ed] upon the discovery that the same piece of steel can be hardened and softened at will, this process when reduced to its elements involves the following steps . . ." As shown above, the softening of a plate of engraved stamp images, once it has been hardened, is not possible without great risk of embrittlement and distortion.

Jacob Perkins' last patent concerning printing (again for bank notes) was granted in 1819 some twenty years before the first postage stamp plates were made. This patent does not claim as its invention concepts of softening by decarbonizing, transferring by transfer roll and casehardening because these steps were all previously known. Instead it claims the combination of these steps and discloses certain improvements in the conditions for accomplishing them.[27]

In teaching these improvements, he suggests that hardening is an art which is best learned by listening to the sound made when quenching and observing color changes as steel is quenched after carbonizing. He then urges the novice to practice by heating a piece of steel to red hot and quenching it to a temperature that just melts tallow and repeat this several times until he learns to recognize the sound and color changes of the quench Perkins describes (see p. 14 of the patent).[28] This practice of heating and quenching is not "softening and hardening" because to soften steel, it is essential to heat it to much higher temperatures and allow it to cool slowly, rather than quenching it. And to harden it is necessary to heat it in a closed chamber in the presence of a source of carbon. It is the

---

[23]"The Merits of Jacob Perkins," *The Manufacturer and Builder*, Vol. 6, No. 5, May 1874.

[24]Fred J. Melville, *Postage Stamps in the Making*, Volume 1 (London: Stanley Gibbons, 1916), p. 84.

[25]Carroll Chase, *The 3 Cent Stamp of the United States 1851-1857 Issue*, rev. ed. (Lawrence, Mass.: Quarterman Publications, 1942), pp. 127-28. See also similar statements with respect to Plate 1i (p. 88) and Plate 1L (p. 90).

[26]Williams, pp. 209, 210.

[27]It also claims specific designs for a rose engine engraving lathe (used for engraving repetitive geometric background and lattice work), a transfer press and a "D" cylinder printing press with inking roller.

[28]Jacob Perkins, United Kingdom Patent 4400, October 11, 1819, pp. 13-14.

opinion of this author that an incorrect reading of this "teaching" section of the patent is the source of the "hardening and softening at will" misconceptions. The actual steps claimed as the invention did not involve repeated hardening and softening (pp. 11-13 of the patent).

By 1822 Jacob Perkins was fully absorbed in steam engine technology and by 1833 he is not known to have taken any further interest in the printing firm which bore his name.[29] The patent record in relation to plate making and printing after 1819 falls silent. Searches under the leading names Joshua Butters Bacon, Samuel H. Carpenter, J. C. Dyer, Jacob Perkins and Charles Toppan show nothing in the area of engraving and printing.[30] Yet transfer roll and transfer press designs underwent many changes and improvements between 1805 (the date of Perkins first bank note printing invention) and 1851 when the dies, transfer rolls and plates for the 1851 stamps were being made by TCC. Figure 3 illustrates an improved transfer press of 1860s.

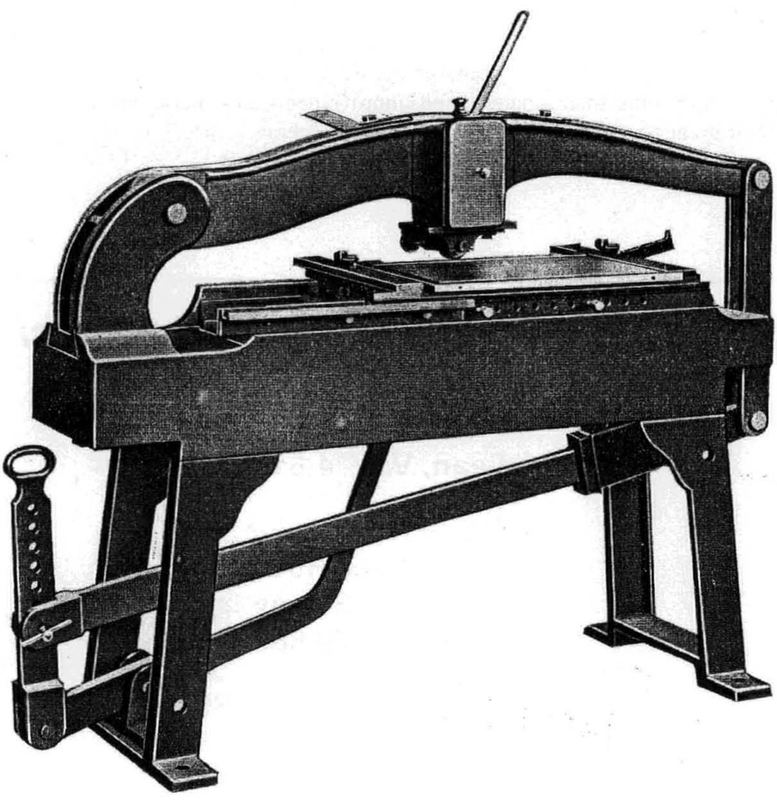

Figure 3 - A Transfer Press of the 1860s

[29]Bathe and Bathe, p. 95 In 1825, the engraving firm of Perkins, Bacon (then known as Perkins, Fairman & Health) sued the engineering firm of Perkins & Co. for using assets of the engraving firm to pursue steam engine research. The engraving firm won and Jacob Perkins paid a settlement for the years 11/1822 to 11/1825. Bathe and D. Bathe, pp. 105-06.

[30]The only two patents (1836) found in Bacon's name relate to steam engines. The later patents of Jacob Perkins relate to steam engines and screw propellers. Dyer's patents span a broad range from machines for cutting leather to steam engines to the winding of bobbins and spools.

Many of the later improvements were in the "craft" of plate making and in transfer press design. Transfer press designs were deliberately kept as trade secrets because of the difficulty in patenting only "improvements."[31] There are, however, conclusions about plate making and press design which can be drawn from the printed record of the stamps themselves.

Part I Conclusions

Although the procedure to produce soft steel includes burning carbon from iron, and the procedure for hardening mild steel plates comprises forcing carbon back into a thin layer at its surface, these processes cannot be simplistically reversed backwards and forwards "at will." The very thin hardened layer of the TCC plates of the time with their delicately engraved images would be catastrophically distorted at the temperatures required to burn carbon from the surface (well above 2,000° F). A simple annealing at lower temperatures would not accomplish softening of the surface to permit reentry.

---

[31]*See* for example "The Modes for Engraving Bank Notes," *The New York Evening Post*, September 21, 1861, p. 2: "These [transfer presses] are never patented as the secret of their construction is worth more than a patent, and improvements and alterations are made from time to time, while their great cost prohibits their coming into general . . . use."

Appendix A
Perkins, Bacon and TCC Printing Processes Compared

While the general steps of engraving on a softened die, hardening the die, transferring to an intermediary and hardening the intermediary were followed by both stamp printers, important differences in transfer press design and in re-entry techniques were used by Perkins, Bacon in producing stamps for the United Kingdom compared to TCC's production of the U.S. 1851-57 Issue.

A single transfer roll was used by TCC for all of the first nine 3¢ plates. It carried three reliefs closely space on its circumference. The three reliefs were laid down vertically in sequence as the plate moved under the roll during the rocking in of the designs. The transfer roll for the twenty perforated 3¢ stamp plates carried six reliefs. The spacing between rows on the stamp plate was predetermined by the spacing between reliefs on the transfer roll. A single image could not be rocked in without affecting adjacent images.

To aid in positioning, guide dots were pressed into the blank steel plate. A collar on the roller mandrel having a pointed arm (called a "side point") was used to find the guide dot and thereby position the plate under the relief about to be entered.[1] There were 100 guide dots needed when the three relief roll was used, and 40 guide dots when the six relief roll came into use.

Perkins Bacon used a transfer roll carrying from four to as many as eight images widely spaced around its circumference. Except for several plates made during the first year, as a rule only <u>one</u> transfer roll relief was used per plate and once used was not used again to make another plate. The single use meant the roll was in very good condition for purposes of making re-entries to repair worn plates, although occasionally a different roll was used for re-entering some impressions. Perkins, Bacon therefore made many more transfer rolls than did TCC, which used only one three relief roll for making the nine imperforate 3¢ stamp plates and one (or perhaps two) six relief roll(s) for the perforated stamp plates.

At Perkins, Bacon very fine vertical and horizontal guide lines were hand scribed onto the first few plates which were used to aid in positioning the plate under the transfer roll. The use of guide lines ceased after the first year when improvements were made in the transfer press which permitted much more accurate mechanical spacing. Unfortunately no description of these mechanical improvements survive. Beginning in late 1848, dots were added to the plates in the margin at the top and between the sixth and seventh row and a vertical line was added at the middle bottom to indicate the point for division into half sheets. However, these were not "guide dots" used for positioning the transfer roll.[2]

Wider spacing between stamp images allowed Perkins, Bacon to burnish away the slight mounding between images caused by metal being displaced by the pressing in of the relief. Occasionally, the roll would not align perfectly and the design would be too close to the preceding impression. When this happened the entire impression was burnished off and a fresh entry made.

After approximately 200 transfer rolls had been made with the original U.K. One Penny Die (Die I), it experienced enough wear that Perkins, Bacon made a second die in 1854. This was done by pressing the Die I image from one of the transfer rolls onto a softened flat plate and then re-cutting the design, deepening it considerably (the 1854 die is known as Die II and was used to make 225 rolls). Significantly, Die II was *not* made by softening (or annealing) Die I and recutting it.

---

[1]Richard Celler and Elliot Omiya, "The Toppan Carpenter Plates and the Guide Reliefing Method," 2001, awaiting publication by the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society.

[2]E.D. Bacon, p. 118.

Re-entry procedures at TCC differed from Perkins, Bacon. At TCC, re-entry was done only on plates which had not yet been hardened and the entire plate was addressed, rather than just a portion of it. Once hardened, there is no reported evidence that any of the TCC plates were re-entered or retouched again. Because of the close spacing between stamps, an attempt to address only a single worn image or group of images would have brought the hardened roll into contact with a portion of the unworn, hardened surface of the plate. This was not attempted. Instead, when hardened plates became too worn, they were set aside.

Re-entry procedures at Perkins, Bacon were completely different. It is useful to quote at length from E. D. Bacon:[3]

> Sometimes one or more specimens on the plate, which were showing signs of wear would be "re-entered," that is the roller would be applied a second time in order to repair the plate. Any "re-entry" . . . was done on another press and not the large [transfer] press that was used for making "postage" plates. The reason for this was that the workman was able to see better on the smaller press how to get the roller impression exactly over the impression to be "re-entered" on the plate, a piece of work which required the utmost . . . precision.

At Perkins, Bacon, the hardened layer would wear off in patches and the stamp image affected would then show rapid wear.[4] The above described re-entry technique used a specially designed small transfer press (which at some point was fitted with a key locking system to permit exact positioning of the roll over the image). This allowed precise rocking in of one image only leaving adjacent images untouched. As explained above, at TCC rocking in of a single image or group of images was not done and the re-entry process always showed on adjacent images.

On some Perkins, Bacon plates, re-entries were done more than once on worn patches in different places on the plate,[5] leading to several states of the plate. As Mr. Bacon further states: " . . . the worn impressions would be re-entered **without softening the plate** [emphasis added], and after this had been done the plate would often be left as it was: at other times it would be hardened a second time."[6] The uneven wear on selected areas of the plate suggests that the hardening practices at Perkins, Bacon differed from TCC, because the TCC plates would wear fairly evenly and then the whole plate was re-entered.

Only three letters between Perkins, Bacon, and TCC from 1847 to 1857 could be found in my search of the Perkins, Bacon company correspondence now in the archives of the Royal Philatelic Society, London. They dealt with perforating machines and indelible inks. None mentioned transfer press design or hardening issues. One must conclude therefore that by the 1850s there was very little sharing of engraving technology between the firms. If there had been, their practices would have been more similar and their correspondence more frequent.

---

[3]*Ibid*, p. 60.

[4]The first few Penny Black plates were not hardened and wore quickly. Re-entries were done on all 240 images. With respect to hardened One Penny plates, only positions which were worn were re-entered, rather than the entire plate.

[5]Many of the plates of both Die I and Die II show instances of single and multiple re-entry for the Penny Black and Penny Red printings. *See* Dr. H. Osborn, *British Line Engraved Stamps, Repaired Impressions* (London: H.F. Johnson, 1949), and also W.R.D. Wiggins, *British Line Engraved Stamps, Repaired Impressions, 1855-1879 Die II* (London: Pall Mall Stamp Co. for Robson Lowe, Ltd, 1982).

[6]Bacon, p. 60.

GLOSSARY

Annealing the process of inducing micro-structural changes in steel to re-order its carbon/iron matrix by heating for several hours and allowing it to cool slowly. For low carbon, mild steel such as used in engraving, temperatures in the region of 1200° F are used. The purpose of annealing is to relieve stress and/or to improve malleability. It does not result in decarbonizing.

Bessemer Process the process of continuously passing molten iron at temperatures in excess of 3,000° F through a chamber in which air is blown. A more uniform soft steel results.

Bone Charcoal a low heating fuel made by partially burning bone (and sometimes leather) and compressing the residue to produce a high carbon content charcoal. Relatively low temperatures are achieved on burning.

Carbonizing process of forcing the absorption of carbon into the surface of soft or mild steel to caseharden it. Also known as "carburizing."

Casehardening the process of surface hardening mild steel by raising its temperature in an oxygen poor environment using a fuel high in carbon such as bone charcoal. The hardening takes place in the region of 1,300° - 1,500° F. A thin surface layer becomes hard while the core remains soft. Sometimes called "surface hardening" or "pack hardening."

Coke a high heating fuel made by partially burning coal and compressing the residue into pellets.

Decarbonizing process to produce mild (*i.e*,. low carbon) steel by burning the naturally occurring carbon in iron at high temperatures (3,000° F) in the presence of oxygen.

Martensite Phase a microstructure of iron and carbon which can be formed by heating steel containing .25% to .70% carbon above about 1,300° up to 1,500° F (depending on the percent carbon) and then quenching. The resulting steel is very hard and strong, but brittle. In casehardening the critical carbon level for the Martensite phase exists only in a thin surface layer, with the core remaining low carbon mild steel in the austenite phase.

Mild (Soft) Steel a workable processed iron made soft by burning naturally occurring carbon out of the iron at high temperatures (3,000° F) in the presence of oxygen. The modern specification is .25% carbon or less. The resulting steel is ductile and malleable, but wears quickly.

Quenching the rapid lowering of the temperature of an item that has been taken directly from casehardening. A number of different liquids can be used in the quench bath. The length of time in the quench bath and the starting temperature of the bath may vary. This is all part of the "art."

Reentering returning a printing plate to the transfer press and re-applying the transfer roll containing the design to the plate.

Recutting cutting changes into individual stamp images using a hand engraving tool.

Retouching either reentering or recutting. □

GENERAL BANKS' DIVISION MANUSCRIPT CANCELS

JAMES C. CATE

On May 16, 1861, Nathaniel P. Banks, former Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives and Governor of Massachusetts, was appointed a Major General of the Union Army. This was a political appointment by President Abraham Lincoln. At the time of his appointment, only three people outranked Banks: Winfield Scott, John C. Fremont and George McClellan. Major General Banks remained one of the highest-ranking generals in the U.S. Army; even outranking Ulysses S. Grant until 1864. Banks had no prior military experience. At this time major military commands were termed "Departments." Two days prior to the first Battle of Bull Run, July 21, 1861, Banks was appointed to command the Department of the Shenandoah (Virginia). The Union defeat at Bull Run resulted in organizational realignments. In reorganization, Banks' unit was transformed into a Division of the Army of the Potomac by an order of August 17, 1861.

Banks anticipated a move from his position at the head of the Shenandoah Valley to possibly capture Richmond, Virginia in a flank movement. The opportunity never materialized. It has been speculated and offered that Banks, either with the intent to gain political popularity intent or in the genuine interest of his troops, desired that his command would have the best possible mail service. Banks initiated actions through political connections for Roscoe E. Houghton to be appointed as postmaster of his military unit. According to Post Office Department (POD) records, Roscoe E. Houghton was appointed on October 10, 1861 as a Special Agent of the POD at the Headquarters of General Banks Division of the U.S. Army. Actually, Houghton was probably functioning as a postmaster before his appointment, judging from the existence of manuscript and handstamped "G.B.D." markings with September 1861 dates.

Elliot Perry had some interesting observations regarding Banks' Division mail. He wrote,

> It is understood that the soldiers of Banks Division were not permitted to mention a town or other address in their letters and the postmarks do not indicate where they were used. The supposed reason was to prevent the Confederates from learning the whereabouts of an important division of the Union army which shuffled around in Maryland and kept an eye on Harper's Ferry and another on other crossings of the Potomac River.[1]

Early Banks' Division mails, whether manuscript or handstamp canceled, contained only the initials "GBD" and a date, nothing else. The later circular cancels contained the words, "BANKS' DIVISION" and dates only.

In 1968, Richard B. Graham wrote an extensive article on "G.B.D. and Banks' Division Markings"; Table 1 of that article established the dates of use of the markings, which have remained unchanged through the years.[2]

Figure 1 is a precursor Banks' Division cover from a Wisconsin soldier. It is postmarked "Sandy Hook, Md" (Maryland) and "paid" in manuscript. The date is August 6 [1861]. Early mail from Banks' Division was postmarked at the village of Sandy Hook. Sandy Hook was located across the Potomac River from Harpers Ferry. Graham reported a similar manuscript cover from Sandy Hook with an August 13 [1861] date in *The*

---

[1]Elliot Perry, "General Banks Division,"*Pat Paragraphs* (Bureau Issues Association, Inc., 1981), pp. 503-504.

[2]Richard B. Graham, "G.B.D and Banks' Division Markings," *Chronicle*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (Whole No. 59)(August 1968), pp. 99-106.

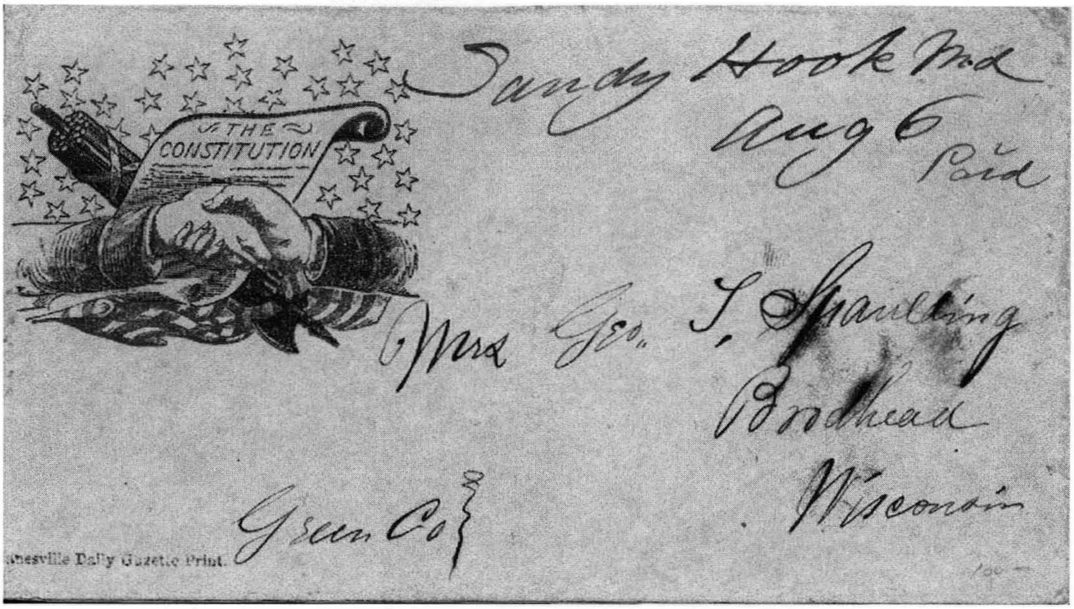

Figure 1. Precursor Banks' Division cover from a Wisconsin soldier, Sandy Hook, Md., August 6, [1861]

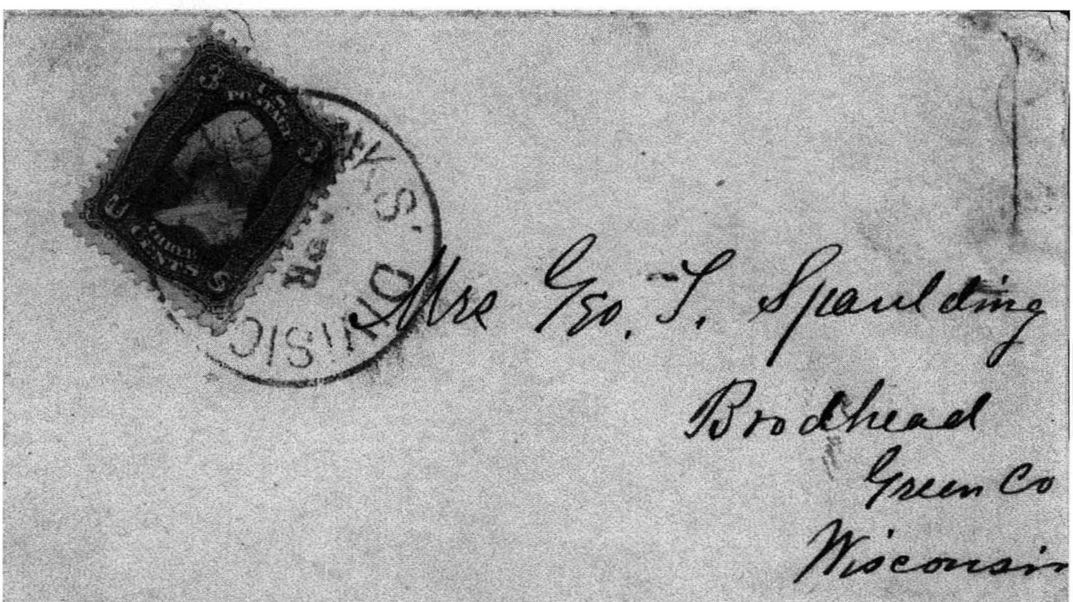

Figure 2. April 1862 cover from same correspondence as Fig. 1, postmarked Banks' Division in blue

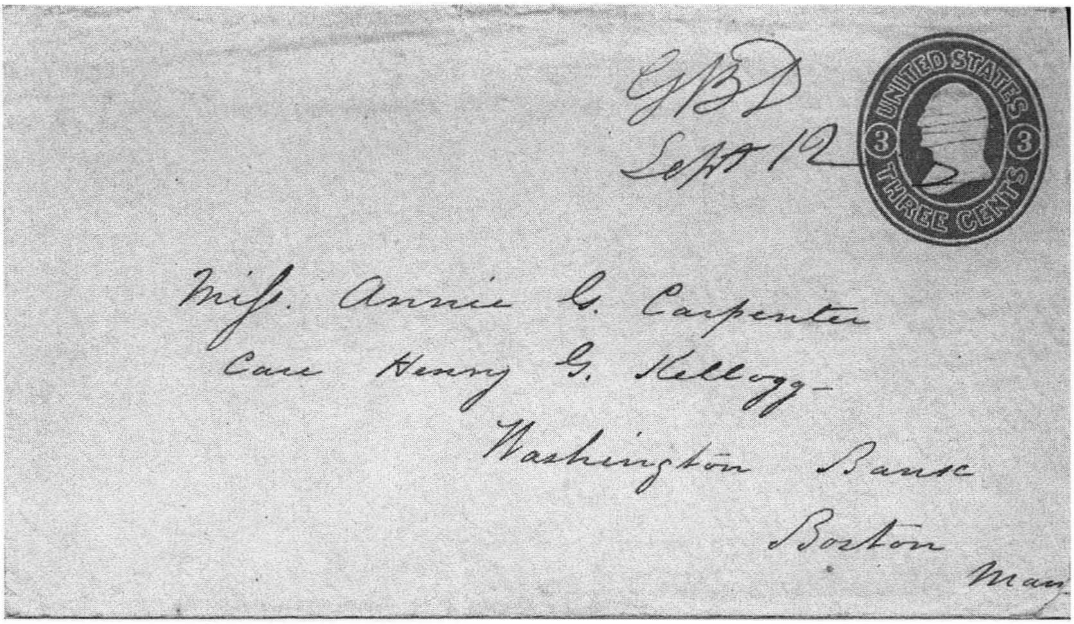

Figure 3. September 12 [1861] "GBD" manuscript cover of Banks' Division, earliest known day of use

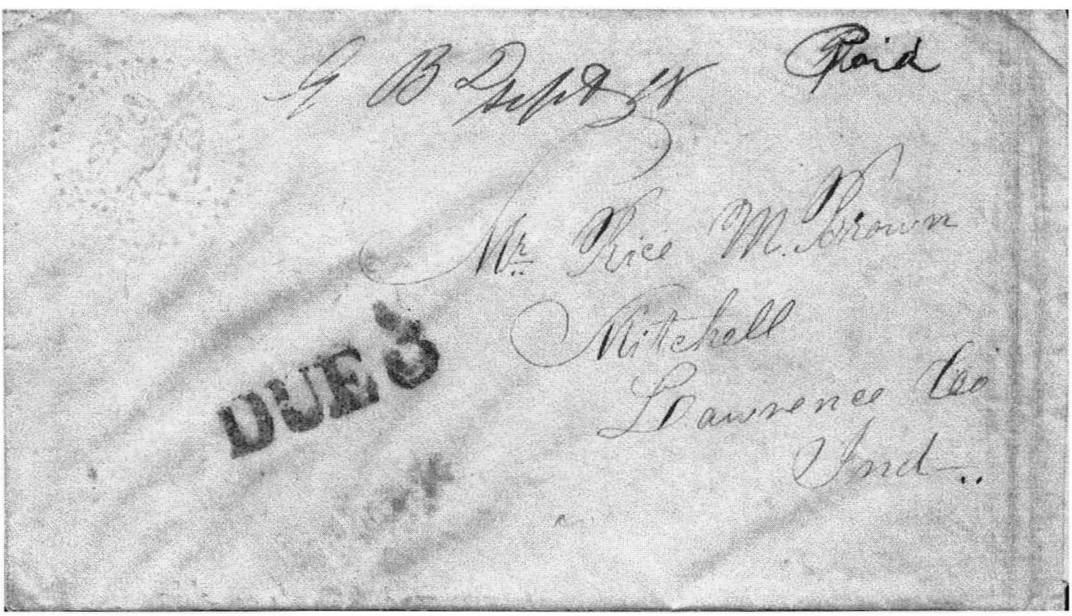

Figure 4. September 18 [1861] "GBD" manuscript cover of Banks' Division, previously unreported, latest known day of use

Chronicle, May 1970.[3] The cover does not include any information other than the address. Figure 2, a later cover [1862] from the same correspondence, is offered to confirm the Banks' Division origin. Both covers were addressed in the same handwriting to "Mrs. Geo. T. Spaulding – Brodhead – Greene Co.– Wisconsin". George Spaulding was originally a musical band member of a Wisconsin Volunteer unit.

In the same article by Graham, it was mentioned that the later handstamp cancels of Sandy Hook in 1862 were the same shade of bright blue ink that was used in the 1862 strikes of Banks' Division, as shown on the cover of Figure 2. The same shade of blue ink was also noted from Frederick, Maryland in 1862 where Banks maintained his headquarters in the winter of 1862.

According to Graham's Table 1, the "GBD" manuscript dates of use were September 12 to September 16 [1861]. These were the first "GBD" uses. Figure 3 is a cover of September 12 [1861] date, the *first day* of known use. Docketed notes by a previous owner on the reverse side describe this cover as a Scott U35 [U13] - Size 2 – Knife 7 – Die 15 - #90 envelope.

Figure 4 is a cover of September 18 [1861], *extending the previously reported last day of known use* by two days. The cover has an embossed albino eagle within a ring of stars in the upper left corner. There is a manuscript "paid" and handstamp "DUE 3" marking. It is observed that the cover originally contained a rather thick letter, possibly exceeding single rate postage. This can be seen by the vertical marks on the right edge of the cover. The Figure 4 cover had been in a private collection for several decades and gone *unreported* until now. The collector died approximately two years ago and the writer obtained the cover in a private acquisition. September 18 was a Wednesday [1861]. There now remains only one day of unknown use [September 19, 1861] between this manuscript "GBD" marking and the first day of known use of the parallel small letter "G.B.D." handstamp marking of September 20, 1861. Graham and other knowledgeable postal historians estimate that only 7 to 8 manuscript "GBD" cancel covers are known. Two of that total are presented here, the *first* and what is now the *last day* of known use. □

---

[3]Richard B. Graham, "The Markings Shown on Plate 'A'," *Chronicle*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (Whole No. 66)(May 1970), pp, 70-73.

BOOK REVIEW: *THE TWO CENT STAMP OF THE SMALL BANK NOTE ISSUES OF 1890, EXPLORING RELIEF BREAKS, PAPERS, AND SHADES*

The Two Cent Stamp of the Small Bank Note Issues of 1890, Exploring Relief Breaks, Papers, and Shades, by Richard M. Morris, published 2003 by Pittsboro Philatelics, Norfolk, MA, 40 pages, plus sleeve appendix with two color guides, 6 x 9 inch format. Spiral bound, $26.50 from the publisher, 7 Malcolm Street, Norfolk, MA 02056-1411.

There is probably less written about the Small Bank Note Issues of 1890 than any other issue of 19th Century United States philately. For that reason alone it would be nice to welcome a fine new addition to this limited and under-researched period. Richard M. Morris has brought us a superb example of what can be done, even today, with a very inexpensive stamp to bring enjoyment to our hobby. In *The Two Cent Stamp of the Small Bank Note Issues of 1890, Exploring Relief Breaks, Papers and Shades*, Morris has taken Frank E. Stanton, Jr.'s monograph on these relief breaks–published back in 1935–and has expanded the subject with a 10 year intensive study, thoroughly discussing Breaks B through P. To give some idea of the detail of this work, Morris increases from 39 to 48 the number of progressive breaks and transitions in Relief C alone.

This reviewer was surprised to see his own name in the introduction as having made suggestions for the manuscript, which I can assure you were so minor that I can not now recall even having done so. I only recall being excited that we are able to add to the scholarship of this area.

After giving good coverage to the contracts and preparations for the Issue of 1890, his study covers the actual printing of the stamps and provides excellent illustrations to follow the use of the otherwise complex terminology utilized in such a detailed breakdown of the relief breaks. If you think that all there is to know is "Cap on Left 2" and "Cap on both 2's" on Scott #220, you will soon learn there is a whole lot more to discover.

Morris brings new scholarship to the subject of the papers used in printing the 2¢ stamp and explains how they reveal the two areas most susceptible to transfer relief breaks.

Morris has already demonstrated his expertise in the area of color in his *Color Guide System for Stamps of Canada 1868-1897*, and in his *Specialized Color Guides for United States Stamps*, both also published by Pittsboro Publications in 1999 and 2000, respectively. He applies that skill to produce a set of two actual color guides for Scott #219D and #220 in a sleeve appendix. These can be removed from the sleeve and used directly with stamps since they are not spiral bound into the publication. So, it turns out, there is also more to know than "Lake" and "Carmine" as well. There are seven varieties of both.

I would recommend this 40 page work to anyone wanting to see how an inexpensive stamp can be studied in detail to provide great opportunities to learn about the printing of postage stamps in general in the 19th Century. It is a welcome addition to the hopefully ever-growing body of philatelic literature on the Small Bank Note Issues.

-Reviewed by Joe H. Crosby □

THE ROBERT L. MARKOVITS COLLECTION OF UNITED STATES OFFICIAL STAMPS, 1873-1884: AN INSIDER'S REPORT ON THE PUBLIC AUCTION

ALAN C. CAMPBELL

Introduction

The greatest collection of United States official stamps ever formed was sold at public auction by Matthew Bennett International on February 7, 2004. Mr. Markovits, an attorney in Middletown, New York has been a passionate collector since early childhood, forming many specialized collections of neglected areas of U.S. philately. His first love was special delivery, and he wrote the definitive articles on the special delivery stamps of 1894, 1895 and 1908, the registration stamp (Scott Fl) and the 5¢ Taylor stamps (Scott 179 and 185). As the head of Quality Investors, Ltd., he was for many years a preeminent dealer in high quality U.S. stamps, rare plate blocks, first day covers and earliest known usages. In the 1970s, he became intrigued with the official stamps and started collecting them, but subsequently sold this first effort—with strength in plate number and imprint pieces—to Lester C. Lanphear III. Then he was presented with an opportunity to buy the officials section of the Lilly proof material. In 1981, when Rae Ehrenberg's comprehensive collection (The Crystal Sale) came to auction, Mr. Markovits reentered the field and bought heavily. He and Mr. Lanphear were the dominant buyers of the exceptional proofs and covers in that sale. In 1982, he was offered a private treaty sale of the Morrison Waud collection, which had languished for twenty years in the vaults of the Robert A. Siegel firm. Here was a chance to add more proofs, a solid run of unused blocks, and a massive hoard of covers, many of them ex-Ackerman, Knapp and Hughes, including the celebrated $2 State parcel front. At the same time, he had a chance to buy official essays and proofs from the estate of Thomas F. Morris, Jr., including the unique artist's mockups for the stamps.

These large purchases formed the nucleus of the Markovits collection of official stamps, and coming as they did in rapid succession left him an indentured servant, struggling to pay off his philatelic debts. However, by 1989, when the Weill brothers stock was was auctioned by Christie's, Mr. Markovits' reserves were replenished, and he was able to buy from the Philip Ward holding the unique blocks of the 1¢ Executive, $2 State, and $5 State. He had thus assembled the most complete collection of official blocks ever, lacking only the 15¢ and 30¢ Justice blocks held by Theodore Lockyear since 1972. Over the years he continued adding to the collection, buying rare "Sepcimen" errors, the $5 State proof invert sheet (ex-Korf), Fort cancellations, foreign destination covers, and the famed set of matched State dollar value proof invert strips, which had eluded him back at the time of the Ehrenberg sale.

Encouraged by his wife Ruth Lebovitz Markovits and fellow specialists to exhibit his wonderful material, Mr. Markovits burst on the show scene in 1993 by winning the grand award at the first single-frame competition at AmeriStampExpo with his Department of State dollar values. At NOJEX in 1994, he captured the grand award in his first multi-frame competition, showing ten frames: one for the Executive Office and one each of the eight subordinate departments, and a tenth devoted solely to the State dollar values. Mr. Markovits helped bring forth a renaissance of interest in this long-neglected and under-appreciated field, as Ted Lockyear, Alan Campbell and Lester C. Lanphear III all later captured grand awards in national competition. The crowning achievement for this exhibit was winning the champion of champions competition at Stampshow in Cleveland, 1999. Thereafter, he could only exhibit in the court of honor nationally or in international competition. He won four large golds in international competition and was then elevated to the elite Championship level, where he showed at Thailand in 2003. But he found it difficult to overcome the prejudice that these stamps were not truly classic in the narrowest definition (*i.e.*, they are perforated) and that they were of limited "importance" because they were never sold to the general public. Frustrated that he could no longer significantly improve his collection, Mr. Markovits came to the decision in early December 2003 to sell.

When he called to tell me, his justifications for taking this action sounded reasonable and well-thought-out, but his voice was trembling with emotion. As the main person responsible for goading him to exhibit, and knowing well the sacrifices he had made in putting the collection together, my heart went out to him. I was shaken too. As often as I had drooled over my color photocopy of his collection and coveted individual pieces, I was not prepared for a such a drastic change in the world order of official collecting. Over the years, only Lester C. Lanphear has mounted a valiant challenge to Bob's dominance in this area, while the rest of the serious collectors had retreated into narrower specialities—official stationery, official special printings, cancellations, a single department, etc.

Preparing for the Sale

Mr. Markovits had consigned all his official material—the exhibit collection, the reference back-up material, the unmounted postal stationery and the officials stock of Quality Investors. For the impending name sale with an all-color catalogue, Harvey Bennett elected to include most of the important material from the exhibit collection. Mr. Lanphear and I served as consultants in the preparation of the catalogue, but our input was limited chiefly to matters of provenance and scarcity, since the exhibit write-up already contained most of the relevant information. Mr. Bennett graciously illustrated three of the intact exhibit pages prepared by Fran Adams of San Diego, to a give a taste of how the collection looked before it was broken down. The material was presented not alphabetically per the Scott catalogue, but in the order of precedence of the departments. This sequence, based on a page autographed by President Grant's cabinet, was how the Markovits collection had always been exhibited, deviating slightly from the order of departments in the original announcement followed by Lester Lanphear. Dr. David Lobdell, the War Department specialist, was vexed, since in the past he had always been able to count on the general collectors running out of funds before his material came up. But Harvey Bennett foresaw a distinct advantage in this order, because it put the powerful Executive and State material up front, so that potential buyers would not be sitting on their hands waiting for it to come up later in the auction.

The final catalogue is a handsome document, marred only by a few typographical errors. I bought lot #3356, not because it was "ONE OF ONLY 3 KNOWN NAVY COVERS," but because it was one of only three recorded 7¢ Navy covers. The item selected to grace the cover, Figure 1, the enigmatic block of the $2 State frame with vignette only in position 1, was brilliantly explained in the catalogue by Harvey Bennett, who had noticed that certain lines on this piece matched up perfectly with the edges of the vignette plate apparent on an untrimmed corner margin stamp (position 10) also included in the sale (lot #3077). That stamp is illustrated in Figure 2. Therefore, this arresting "peek-a-boo" effect was produced not by masking off positions on the vignette plate, but simply by shifting it relative to the frame plate.

In the weeks leading up to the sale, there was considerable speculation and jockeying for position. It was a foregone conclusion that the usual cast of suspects with narrow specialities would be bidding on certain items. How much poaching would occur from outside the field—by the Lincoln collectors, by the postal historians intrigued by covers to China, Japan and Hawaii, by proof and essay collectors, by the collectors of inverted centers, first day covers, and EKUs—was hard to estimate. Since the collecting of blocks of four is so out of fashion, would the well-centered unused blocks be captured by dealers

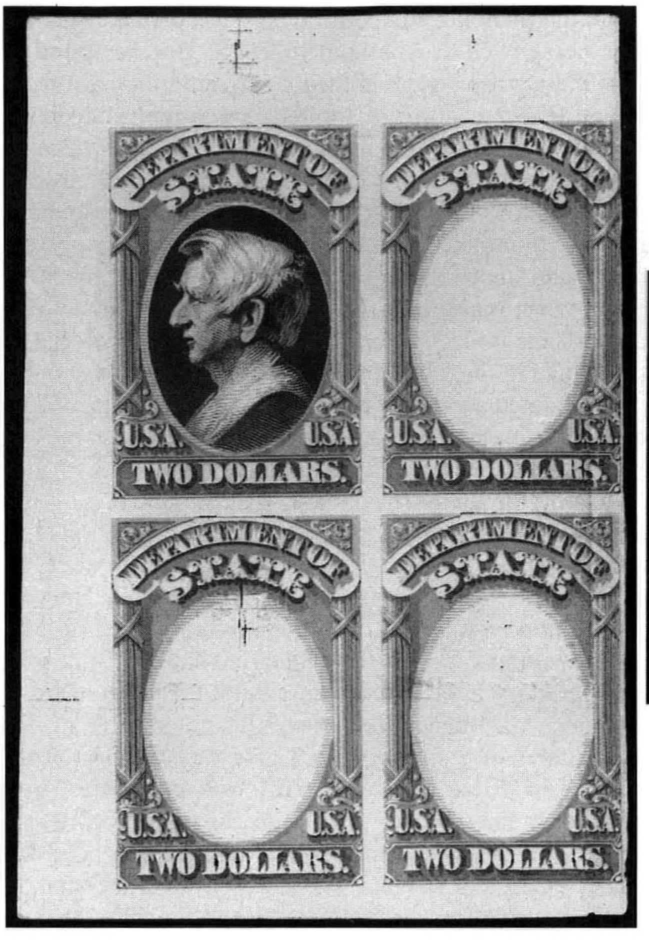

Figure 1. Unique "peek-a-boo" essay block of the $2 State, Lot #3046, sold for $9,500

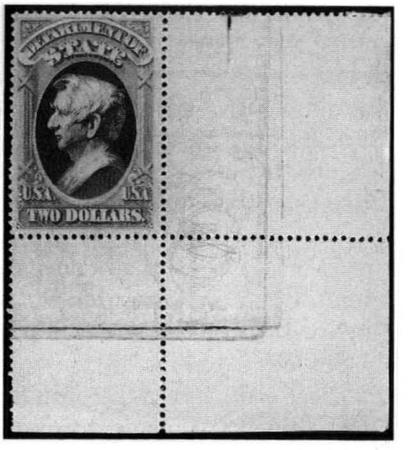

Figure 2. $2 State corner margin single from an untrimmed sheet, Lot #3077, sold for $3,500

and broken up? Would a buyer be found for the rare but off-center blocks? As had been long-rumored, was there a well-heeled collector waiting in the wings, who would see this as an ideal opportunity to enter the field and buy up all the best material? And finally, would the $2 State parcel front—the *ne plus ultra* of the sale—capture the fancy of some rich outsider and be bid into the stratosphere, beyond the reach of the dedicated specialists? This item, lot #3147, was estimated in the catalogue to bring $50,000-$75,000, but expert valuations prior to the sale varied widely, from its being denigrated as a front only ($35,000 tops) to an eerily accurate prediction from Scott Trepel that it would sell for $160,000.

Setting the Stage

This sale was the last of four conducted by Matthew Bennett International at the I.M. Pei-designed Four Seasons Hotel on 57th Street in Manhattan. Your correspondent scaled two imposing flights of stairs to a vast marble hall and waited as a maid in black bombazine filled an urn at the reception desk with a carefully-balanced pyramid of polished apples. I resisted the urge to help himself, fearing a cascade of fruit tumbling across the lobby, and was directed to an elevator for the meeting rooms in the basement. In attendance were my friends Dr. Lobdell, Dr. Dennis Schmidt, Rollin C. Huggins Jr., Matthew Kewriga, Lester C. Lanphear III and a collector of consular mail who wishes to remain anonymous. Several other collectors were on the floor and a handful of dealers, most of whom left after the intermission when it became apparent that they would not be able to buy much for stock. Theodore Lockyear and Albert Chang bid on the telephone, while Al Staubus and the Lincoln collector Bill Ainsworth bid through agents. Two collectors on the floor bid chiefly through agents, either to conceal their identities or to restrain themselves from getting carried away, but in the heat of the action both had to throw aside the cloak of secrecy and hold up their hands when the bidding exceeded the maximum limits their agents were authorized. Another bit of gamesmanship was a floor bidder who had a dealer buy certain lots for his account over the telephone. The identities of various serious buyers who bid on the telephone, or by using an agent or on eBay are impossible to unravel. One of Jeff Purser's clients seemed to be a sophisticated student, buying covers, blocks and cancels, and I hope that one day he will join our collegial fraternity. When I first saw the lots posted on eBay, I was interested to see that the opening bid was typically set at 60% of the low estimate. Because eBay buyers are charged a 15% buyer's commission to cover the cost of the eBay commission, instead of the usual 10%, I had assumed that these listings were chiefly a marketing promotion. During the sale, though, the scales fell from my eyes as eBay participants were determined underbidders (every sale needs underbidders!) and in fact captured some very rare items, including the 12¢ Agriculture cover for $8,500. Apparently, some eBay devotees place more trust in their cable modems than they do in telephone lines, since bidding over the telephone would have saved them the 5% extra commission. I should mention here that in reporting the prices realized, I will consistently use only the hammer price, exclusive of any buyer's premium.

On a personal note, it was imperative for me to be at the auction in person in order to win anything. I had invested hours in poring over the catalogue, making lists of first, second and third priorities. But as the sale approached, I realized that in some cases I had been seduced by the estimates into believing that I might actually win these items at one bid increment over the high estimate. On the eve of the sale, I gave young Matthew Kewriga (who no longer collects officials) the catalogue and asked him to evaluate the key items for me with a dispassionate understanding of the market. This exercise helped me immensely. As soon as the sale started, and lot #1—a choice collateral item, the printed announcement for the official stamps, which many collectors already have a copy of—sold for $2,500, against a presale estimate of $1,000-$1,500—I realized we were in for a long afternoon. I was thrown off-balance and had to quickly adapt, like a gymnast with a long-practiced routine who finds himself in the spotlight on an apparatus set up slightly out of kilter. The sale was called by Harvey Bennett, running on fumes. His good humor and wit, supplemented by cracks from the veteran agents Jeff Purser and Frank Mandel, helped paper over the frustration of certain floor bidders who were being consistently outbid.

As previously reported, the catalogue was organized department by department, but this analysis of the sale results will be presented by category instead: essays and proofs, mint stamps, major varieties, special printings, used stamps and cancellations and postal history.

Essays and Proofs

This was a great area of strength in the Markovits collection. The unique artist's models sold for about $5,000 apiece except when a single department collector was compelled to outbid the proof and essay collectors. Apparently there are now two Justice specialists, because the Justice mock-up essay was easily the most costly at $9,500.[1] Most of the Goodalls, Atlantas and large die trial color proofs sold at close to full catalogue value. The mounted pages of the 1¢ and 90¢ Justice Goodalls had been misplaced, but incredibly the rest of the set (2¢-30¢) sold for $9,500, vs. a catalogue value of $5,680. One

[1]This set of models, all ex-Thomas F. Morris, Jr., never included a Treasury mock-up, which must have been lost in the distant past.

would have expected a steep discount, because broken sets are almost impossible to complete, but these Goodalls were all good! The collection contained a dazzling display of the 2¢ Navy green and black on wove stamp paper, but most of these lots sold at bargain prices except for the plate number and imprint strip (Lot #3301, $2,700). The Markovits holding of State dollar value proof inverts was staggering, comprising 35 of the 50 copies printed, including 17 of the 20 $5 inverts. The catalogue prices for these sexy items are utterly absurd ($6,000 per set), and will soon be revised. We list below the impressive realizations for some of the State dollar value proof material:

3045	$2 State frame essay, with other value tablets	$8,000
3046	$2 State frame essay, block of 4 with vignette head in Position 1	$9,500
3050	$2-$20 State Panama-Pacific small die proofs	$9,500
3051	$2-$20 State plate proofs on card, complete sheets	$19,500
3053	$2, $5, $20 State plate proofs with inverted centers	$30,000
3056	$2, $5, $20 State inverts, bottom half sheets of 5	$85,000
3057	$5 State plate proof invert, complete sheet	$37,500
3058	$20 State plate proof invert, block of 4	$19,000
3067	$2-$20 State, Atlanta trial color plate proofs complete	$23,000

Unused Stamps

The Markovits collection of course contained a complete set of VF-XF unused singles, but there were few "jumbos" that would elicit prices at high multiples of catalogue value. An NH $2 State bottom right corner margin single from an untrimmed sheet (Lot #3077) brought $3,500, *vs.* $1,250 catalogue. An upper right corner margin single of the $20 State (Lot #3080) brought $10,500, *vs.* $3,500 catalogue. An XF 304 Treasury on soft paper (Lot #3168) brought $4,500, *vs.* $1,600 catalogue. A superb lower right corner margin single of the 1¢ Agriculture on soft paper (Lot #3458) brought $7250, *vs.* $4,250 catalogue.

Our fears that the well-centered unused blocks would be sold to dealers and broken proved unfounded, as most were sold to collectors. Pricing depended heavily on centering. An XF block of the 6¢ Navy with partial imprint (Lot #3310) realized an astonishing $2,700, *vs.* $325 catalogue. But the unique block of six of the 1¢ Executive (Lot #3014), off centered and lightly creased, brought only $2,100, *vs.* $5,750 catalogue, dispelling any lingering doubts that this was truly an unreserved auction, since Mr. Markovits had paid $4,750 for this block back in 1989. Of the three other unique blocks in the sale, the $2 State (Lot 3,090) brought $15,000 *vs.* $14,000 catalogue, the $5 State irregular block of six (Lot #3091) brought $29,000 *vs.* $42,000 catalogue, and the 24¢ Interior on soft paper (Lot #3370) brought $21,000 *vs.* $20,000 catalogue. There was a handful of plate number and imprint strips in the sale, but in general this was not an area that Mr. Markovits had actively pursued.

Varieties

The Markovits collection was strong in this area, although many of the minor plate varieties were withheld for the follow-up sale. The major varieties—double impressions, imperforate and printed on both sides—all brought strong prices, as listed below:

3179	3¢ Treasury double impression (O74a) used	$4,250[2]
3220	3¢ War imperforate (O116a) unused block of four	$5,250
3221	3¢ War double impression unused	$4,000
3337	90¢ Navy double impression (O45a) used	$18,000[3]
3527	3¢ Post Office printed on both sides (O49a) used	$4,000
3529	6¢ Post Office double impression (O50a) used	$2,600

---

[2]Illustrated in *Chronicle* 197, Figure 1, p. 62.
[3]Illustrated in *Chronicle* 171, Figure 5, p. 189.

The 90¢ Navy double impression, a unique and very sexy stamp, ex-Colonel Green, came close to being featured on the catalogue's cover. At $18,000 plus 10%, this is believed to be, by a substantial margin, the highest price ever paid for a Bank Note major variety.

Special Printings

In his foreword to the catalogue, Harvey Bennett made a point of emphasizing how woefully undercatalogued the official special printings and "SEPCIMEN" varieties are, given their extreme rarity. But considering how strong realizations had been in certain recent auctions (*e.g.*, the 2003 Siegel auction of the Burrows Jackson collection), there was never much doubt that these would do well. At one time, Markovits had a complete set of the official special printings, but the key piece ($20 State, catalogue value $35,000, only 7 sold) was stolen from the frames some years back. His copies of the other three dollar values, O68S-071S, Lots #3107-3109, sold for $11,500, $16,000 and $37,500 respectively, the latter being the most expensive single stamp in the entire auction. As for the "SEPCIMEN" errors, this is a collecting subspeciality that demands great reserves of both cash and patience. For the first time ever, Mr. Markovits had managed to assemble complete sets of the State and Agriculture "SEPCIMEN" errors, chiefly through purchases at the Stone and Sherrif sales. Realizations such as those listed below will force major revisions in the catalogue pricing.

3102	10¢ State "SEPCIMEN," only recorded copy	$11,000
3105	30¢ State "SEPCIMEN," two copies recorded	$14,000
3226	3¢ War "SEPCIMEN," two copies recorded	$7,000
3227	6¢ War "SEPCIMEN," possibly the only recorded copy	$32,500
3373	2¢ Interior "SEPCIMEN," two copies recorded	$8,500
3467	6¢ Agriculture "SEPCIMEN," the only recorded copy	$16,000
3468	10¢ Agriculture "SEPCIMEN," the only recorded copy	$10,500
3472	30¢ Agriculture "SEPCIMEN," three copies recorded	$8,500

Dr. David Lobdell, self-termed "simple country pathologist," was the underbidder on the 6¢ War "SEPCIMEN" error.[4] This was the only lot he failed to capture, and he is now committed to preparing his War Department collection for exhibition. Such are the natural cycles of philately: one great collection is broken down, and another is born. In honor of the sale, Dr. Lobdell brought out a special commemorative edition of his Internet magazine *Official Collector*, featuring the 6¢ War "SEPCIMEN" error on the cover with the caption "$32,500 - WHAT WAS HE THINKING?" A few years back, the headline had screamed, "FEDS TO MARKOVITS - DIVEST!"

Used Stamps and Cancellations

Postally used examples of the $5, $10 and $20 State are quite rare, and most of the few known $5 copies are disfigured by very heavy blob cancels. So it came as no great surprise when a VF used copy of the $5 State (Lot #3121) sold for $9,000, *vs.* $4,250 catalogue. The Markovits exhibit collection contained a nice representation of fancy and colored cancellations, but only the best made it into this sale. A $2 State with a beautiful red NYFM geometric cancellation (Lot #3117) brought $2,500. At one point, a baby's wail from the anteroom interrupted the auction, which Jeff Purser attributed to another frustrated underbidder. Harvey Bennett, not skipping a beat, introduced the next lot as a "Crybaby" cancel. In fact, it was a nice strike of the famous Los Angeles "Tar Baby" killer on a 15¢ Interior (Lot #3378), believed unique on an official stamp, which brought $1,200.

---

[4]Some days later, Dr. Lobdell was contacted by the successful buyer's agent, asking if he had any "Sepcimen" errors he would like to sell. Dr. Lobdell replied that yes, he had the 7¢, 10¢, 12¢, 15¢, 24¢, 30¢ and 90¢ War "Sepcimen" errors, and would consider selling all of them—at $32,500 apiece!

Also unique on an official stamp was a strike of the Chicago blue "Gin Barrel" on a 12¢ Justice (Lot #3418), which sold for $1,600. Most of the War Department Fort cancels derived from a single lot in the Stone Sale, plucked from the Judge Emerson albums. Many of these were pairs and strips, showing both the CDS quite legibly and the duplexed killer. I had thought the catalogue estimates were on the high side but was proven wrong. A block of the 3¢ War with a socked-on-the-nose Fort Benton, Montana Territory circular datestamp (Lot #3256), one of the most spectacular used official blocks known, sold for $900. The Markovits collection was not particularly strong in used blocks, but it did include one exceptionally rare item, a 3¢ Navy used block (Lot #3330), which brought $950. It was bought by a collector of official used blocks who sometimes has to wait, like the Maytag repairman, years between calls. Some official stamps on piece brought astonishing prices. A four value State franking (EKU for the 1¢ and 24¢ values), Lot #3114, brought $1,800.[5] An enigmatic usage—three 24¢ Justice stamps on the left side of an Interior Pension Office registered cover (Lot #3422)—brought $4,750. And a 10¢ Agriculture used on a bit of an Agriculture Public Document label signed by Commissioner Isaac Watts (Lot #3477) sold for $5,000.

Postal History

The greatest challenge in collecting United States official stamps has always been how to acquire covers. Except for ratty common ones, they are rarely available in dealers' stocks. The surplus from the great Waud hoard was quickly absorbed in the early 1980s, and since then advanced collectors have for the most part had to wait for offerings at public auction or have incestuously traded among themselves. The Markovits sale presented a unique opportunity to obtain some of the best official covers, and it even brought the dean of officials scholars, Rollin C. Huggins, out of a long hibernation. Except for Albert Chang, who has long made this field one of his specialities, no dealers were buying for stock. There were very few bargains to be had, and the rarest covers elicited such spirited bidding that Jeff Purser, from his vantage point in the front of the room, remarked that it was a good thing wooden paddles were no longer being issued to the floor bidders. I had predicted that some of the rare but ugly covers might sell cheaply, and a few did: Lot #3132, a rare small 15¢ State cover, restorable, brought only $550, and Lot #3134, a water-stained 1¢, 2¢ State diplomatic pouch mail cover from Brazil, was a bargain at $650. Yet other homely covers sold astonishingly well. Mr. Markovits is philosophically opposed to cover restoration, and so the covers he had acquired were offered in the same condition as they had come to him. This did not prove to be a hindrance. For example, a four value Treasury franking from Boston—2¢, 6¢, 10¢, 30¢—with a corner lopped off and a terminal fungal pox (Lot #3205) sold for $4,500.[6] This cover had been bought in a well-publicized auction in 2001 for $2,600, so clearly there was a premium being paid for the cachet of provenance. A 1¢, 3¢ State combination from the Legation in Peking (Lot #3135) brought $4,750 despite a big gouge at the top which is probably not restorable because it tore away a third of the postmark.

As always, the highest prices resulted when two collectors locked up in a struggle to obtain a key rare piece, whereas certain other rare covers—in the absence of a fight to the death—sold reasonably. A clean cover addressed to Frederick Douglass (Lot #3432)—the best of three 10¢ Justice covers available to collectors—brought $3,500, a bargain compared to a 6¢, 15¢ Justice cover (Lot #3431)—the EKU for both stamps but still one of eight 15¢ Justice covers—which was bid up to $8,500. A 7¢ Navy cover (Lot #3356), clearly described in the catalogue as one of only three recorded, sold for $2,700, while the

[5]Illustrated in *Chronicle* 192, Figure 1, p. 279.

[6]Illustrated in *Chronicle* 188, Figure 7, p. 295.

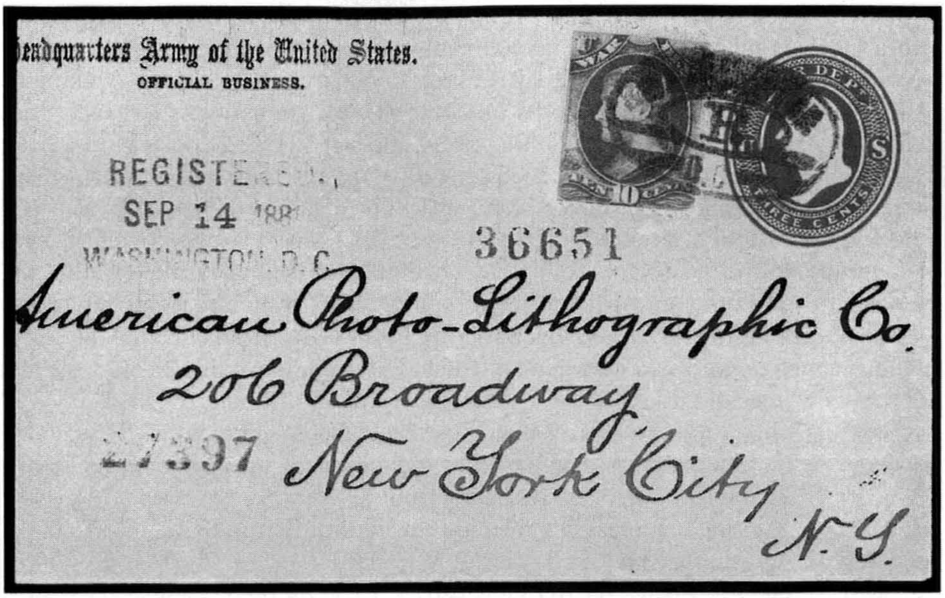

Figure 3. 10¢ War soft paper paying registry fee on small official stamped envelope, 1881, Lot #3290, sold for $1,700

impressive label bearing the 24¢ Navy (Lot #3357), also one of only three recorded, shot up to $18,000. In Figure 3, we illustrate what may have been the best bargain among the official covers, an exquisite 10¢ War soft paper on a small registered U052 entire (Lot #3290), which was hammered down to Dr. Dennis Schmidt for only $1,700, despite being again one of only three recorded usages of this stamp. I will leave speculation as to the worst buys in the sale to the muck-raking tabloids.

Foreign destination official covers have always been scarce and desirable, and Mr. Markovits had sought these out, most especially after he began exhibiting internationally. All sold well. Mixed frankings with regular Bank Note or foreign stamps are even scarcer, and these also did well. The sale included seven covers with supplemental forwarding postage added by the Navy Department in Washington, D.C., and five of these sold in the range of $3,250-$4,750, actually a bit less than might have been expected after a similar cover was sold last fall in the Burrows sale.[7] The sale also included four mixed frankings with regular Bank Note stamps, covers without corner cards that gave no evidence of being official business usages. As a purist, I tend to look askance at such usages, but the sheer beauty of Lot #3186, a wrapper from Vera Cruz, Mexico franked with a 3¢ Treasury and 6¢ Bank Note in New Orleans, seduced me into abandoning my scruples. It was the most expensive of the unofficial mixed frankings, all of which sold well above the high estimate.

---

[7]Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries, Sale 867, Lot 1363, sold for $7,500 plus 10%. A 3¢ green cover addressed to a sailor on the U.S.S. *Kearsage* at the Navy Yard in New York was sent on to Washington, D.C. where the Navy Department added a 2¢ stamp to make up the UPU rate to London, where the despatch agent B.F. Stevens forwarded it care of the United States consul in Cadiz, Spain. We have racked our brains trying to figure out who bought this fascinating cover, and this early sign of a very strong market may have factored into Mr. Markovits' decision to sell.

It was a foregone conclusion that covers from the more popular and prestigious departments—Executive, State, and Navy—would do well, and that the specialized collectors for War and Justice would be going after their material aggressively. In the past, Agriculture covers have been notoriously difficult to obtain, with collectors waiting ten or even fifteen years for the chance to buy one. Here, then, were twelve for sale, approximately one third of the known supply, and yet the demand was equal to the challenge. Yet even for the humblest departments—Treasury and Post Office—where the common values on nondescript covers can be readily obtained, and which have not yet excited anyone to begin a serious specialized study, prices were strong. Small covers with unusual corner cards or postmarks sold well above the high estimate. There were four War covers posted from Forts, an avidly collected subspeciality, which realized between $900 and $2,300. Never before have there been four 6¢ Post Office bisects in single auction, yet they were snapped up at prices between $3,000 and $5,500. I have listed below the sixteen official covers which sold in excess of $5,000 apiece.

1. 3147	10¢, 30¢ (17), and $2 State on parcel label to Germany	$160,000[8]
2. 3146	6¢, 30¢, 90¢ State on parcel front to Mexico	$57,500
3. 3357	2¢, 6¢ (3), 24¢ Navy on parcel front	$18,000
4. 3143	24¢ State on legal cover from Consulate at Beirut, Syria	$16,000
5. 3185	3¢ Treasury on first day cover to Canada	$10,000
6. 3431	6¢, 15¢ Justice on 1873 legal cover, EKU for both stamps	$8,500
7. 3492	12¢ Agriculture on legal cover	$8,500[9]
8. 3400	3¢, 6¢ Interior on first day cover	$8,000
9. 3144	6¢ State on small Post Office penalty envelope to Norway	$8,000
10. 3196	2¢ (2), 10¢ (2) Treasury on legal NYFM cover to London	$7,000
11. 3042	6¢ (2) Executive on small cover to London	$6,750
12. 3488	3¢ Agriculture on exquisite 1882 cover	$6,500[10]
13. 3491	6¢ Agriculture on small 1874 cover	$6,000
14. 3145	10¢ State, 5¢ Garfield on small cover to South Africa	$5,750
15. 3536	3¢ Post Office bisect on penalty envelope from Galveston	$5,500[11]
16. 3288	24¢ (4), 90¢ War on parcel label	$5,500

For your delectation, we illustrate in Figure 4 the parcel wrapper front to Matamoros, Mexico (Lot #3146), described in the catalogue as "the only recorded combination of these values, one of only two 90¢ State covers, one of only eight 30¢ State covers and one of only two official covers from any department to Mexico." The next lot, the $2 State parcel front (Lot #3147), was of course the highlight of the sale, and the luncheon intermission that immediately followed gave us all a chance to regroup from this moment of high drama. The winning bidder, who was forced to reveal his identity when the floor bidding exceeded the maximum authorized to his agent, is an intensely private friend of mine who was chagrined to find himself in the limelight, having to accept everyone's congratulations. Conversely, the underbidder, also a friend of mine, looked stunned. I suspect, but have not been able to confirm, that the buyer of the $2 State front also bought most of the other important State covers, including the 90¢ front to Mexico. These two lots, by a very wide margin, are the most expensive official covers ever sold publicly.

---

[8]Illustrated in *Chronicle* 188, Figure 2, p. 288.

[9]Illustrated in *Chronicle* 194, Figure 10, p. 140.

[10]Illustrated in *Chronicle* 184, Figure 8, p. 287, there misidentified as an American printing (O95).

[11]Discussed in "A History of Post Office Department Official Stamps, 1873-1884," by Warren S. Howard, *Chronicle* 196, page 287.

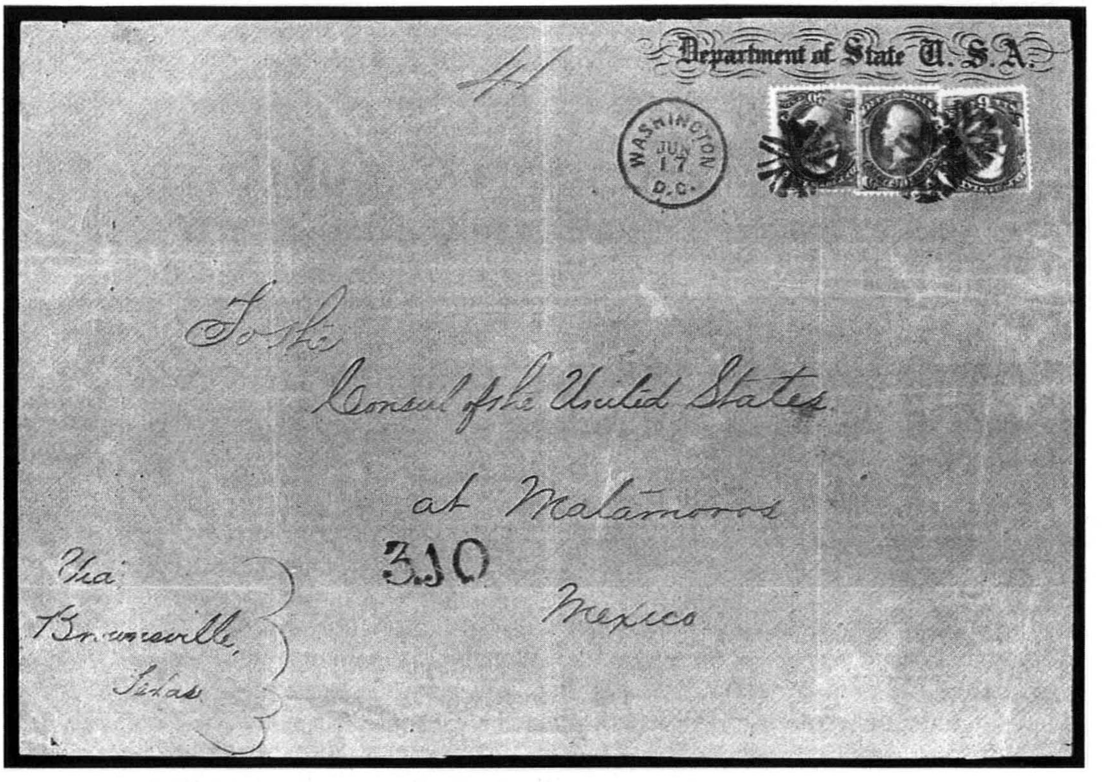

Figure 4. 6¢, 30¢, 90¢ State on parcel wrapper front to Mexico, 1874, Lot #3146, sold for $57,500

While small pretty covers consistently commanded significant premiums, it should be noted that in the listing above, more than half—*including the four most expensive*—were legal size covers, parcel labels or package fronts. A collector complained on the Frajola Internet chatboard that the presale estimates for the covers seemed high considering their condition, but was rebutted by Scott Trepel, who said, basically, this is the way they come, and in his opinion the estimates were conservative. The prices realized prove that Trepel was right, and validate the importance of this material.

Conclusion

The entire Markovits collection of U.S. official stamps had been estimated to bring $1,100,000. The auctioneer had been hoping for a realization in the $1,300,000-$1,400,000 range, and was skeptical when the consigner assured him it would bring $1,750,000. This was an uncanny prediction, because in fact the total sale realized $1,751,960 hammer, exclusive of the buyers 10-15% commission. According to a the amplified prices realized prepared by Jeff Purser, the successful buyers broke down in the following way:

Telephone bidders	$530,100	30%
Floor bidders	$456,420	26%
Bidders through agents	$419,630	24%
Mail bidders (the book)	$292,105	17%
eBay bidders	$53,705	3%

There were 539 lots in the catalogue, but three were withdrawn from sale[12], and the first four lots (two collateral documents and two regressive die proofs, which realized a total of $5,720) cannot be assigned to a particular department. For the remaining 532 lots, I have prepared a matrix, with the number of lots in each category shown in parentheses.

Department	**Essays & Proofs**	**Mint Stamps**	**Special Printings**	**Used Stamps**	**Covers**	**Total (in $)**
Executive(38)	16,425(8)	18,175(10)	7,150(4)	4,925(5)	34,625(11)	81,300
State(105)	288,450(25)	112,290(26)	132,750(16)	31,320(17)	284,750(21)	849,560
Treasury(59)	9,600(4)	36,905(23)	------	5,995(9)	55,500(23)	108,000
War(83)	17,675(6)	18,665(12)	44,000(3)	113,930(46)	25,375(16)	119,645
Navy(66)	20,565(14)	21,395(20)	5,900(2)	21,965(11)	54,650(19)	124,475
Interior(51)	18,500(5)	29,540(9)	13,000(2)	5,070(16)	26,370(19)	92,480
Justice(25)	20,950(25)	------	8,300(2)	9,545(11)	24,150(8)	62,945
Agriculture(58)	21,725(7)	48,510(21)	62,600(11)	7,555(7)	35,850(12)	176,240
Post Off.(47)	80,350(28)	740(3)	1,725(3)	7,425(9)	31,350(9)	131,590
Total (532)	494,240(101)	286,220(124)	285,425(43)	107,730(126)	572,620(138)	1,746,235

This table illustrates how dominant Mr. Markovits' Department of State holdings were, amounting to 48.5% of the total realization. Of course, most of the value—$631,950, or 36% of the total sale—derived from the mystique of the four dollar values, oversized bicolor stamps that in 1873 were the highest denominated postage stamps ever issued. The other departments were fairly well balanced, with surprising strength in the difficult Agriculture and weakness in Justice, where Mr. Markovits had not pursued the great Goff covers sold by Bennett in late 1998. The essay and proof material brought 28% of the total realization, chiefly due to the unique artist's models and the State dollar value inverts. Such a proportion would be most unlikely to occur in a single department speciality. The totals for used stamps may be a bit deceptive, in that the auction catalogue included in that category some very expensive printing varieties, including the 3¢ Post Office printed-on-both sides and three double impressions.

Mr. Purser's amplified prices realized showed the total spent by each bidder, but this is sensitive information that does not bear repeating here, as it might precipitate some divorce proceedings. In general, most of the veteran departmental specialists took advantage of this rare opportunity and bought heavily. Dr. Dennis Schmidt, pursuing the fiendishly difficult speciality of official postal stationery, batted 1.000, not an impossible feat considering that were only two lots he *had* to buy. Dr. David Lobdell, the War Department specialist, did almost as well, losing out only one lot. Ted Lockyear, the Department of Justice specialist, recuperating at home from knee replacements and bidding on the telephone, also did well, losing out only on the 6¢, 15¢ combination cover. He was outbid on this lot by Bill Ainsworth of Georgia, the Lincoln specialist who bought much other important 6¢ material in the sale. Lester C. Lanphear has long been acknowledged to have the only other general collection of U.S. officials that could rival Bob Markovits' holdings, and with the dispersal of the Markovits material, he automatically moves into first place. He consolidated his position there by bidding aggressively and plugging the few holes in his collection. Except for the three high value State covers, he was successful in all the bids he placed, buying exceptional covers, plate pieces and three double impressions, including the extraordinary 90¢ Navy. Rollin

[12]Lot #3241, a 3¢ War with a postmark from Meeker, Colorado, misidentified as Fort Bennett, Dakota Territory; Lot #3352, a Navy mixed franking on a German postcard, where the German stamp did not originate (incredibly, this had obtained a clean PFC in 1981, presumably signed off on by the three blind mice); and Lot #3473, a 1¢ Agriculture with a fake cancellation applied over a partially erased "SPECIMEN" overprint.

Huggins bought several rare blocks and some of the most beautiful covers in the sale, an area in which he has never compromised his standards of quality. Dr. Al Staubus, bidding strictly through an agent, was at a disadvantage, but still managed to capture many important covers and blocks. As for myself, I was able to win only about a third of the lots I bid on, but still came away happy (and relieved that my retirement account was still intact). My proudest purchase was the Treasury New York foreign mail cover, and I felt flattered and vindicated to learn that Bill Weiss, the acknowledged expert and the man who wrote the book, had been the underbidder and considers this the third most important NYFM cover in existence.

All of us now are the successor custodians of this material, and can proudly claim that some of the best items in our collections are ex-Markovits. After the auction, we walked three blocks to a dinner at Bill Hong's Chinese restaurant, hosted by Mr. Markovits. I presented him with a slip of paper from Jeff Purser giving the grand total realization. Bob beamed, and the champagne flowed. A big man at 6'6", with a personality and a heart to match, he was eager to learn what each of us had been able to preserve from the great legacy of his collection. As the lobster rolls circulated, Bob held court, recounting war stories on how the collection had been assembled. I was reminded of the first such gathering at Ameripex in Chicago in 1986, hosted by Rollin Huggins, when we all knew so much less. It was there that I first met the soft-spoken collector of consular mail who now owns the most important official cover in existence. How good it felt to have Rollin Huggins back at the table, the man whose "Official Chatter" column had all first connected us. And even though Bob Markovits will no longer be actively collecting the official stamps, I intend to continue seeking the godfather's advice and counsel in improving my own collection. □

LETTER BY BRITISH MAIL TO PENANG, OR WAS IT PADANG?

RICHARD F. WINTER

The postal rate tables to overseas destinations were very complicated and required the special knowledge of "experts" to fully understand them. The expert role was played by the postal clerks of the exchange offices, who routinely dealt with the difficulties of these tables. Each postal convention established offices to exchange mails under the convention. These were the only offices authorized to account for and mark the appropriate rate markings on letters sent overseas. Local postmasters were permitted only to mark the location and date that they forwarded the mail to one of these international exchange offices. The postal regulations provided to local postmasters and which dealt mainly with the handling of internal mail stated:[1]

> Letters received to be sent by mail, should be carefully marked with the name of the post office at which they are received, and the abbreviated name of the State or Territory, the day of the month on which they are forwarded in the mail, and the rate of postage chargeable on them; or if they be free, with the word *Free*. The name, date, and *Free*, may be either written or stamped.

The requirement to indicate "the rate of postage chargeable" was intended for internal mail and not for letters going overseas. Many local postmasters, however, interpreted these instructions to apply to foreign mail as well. Unpaid letters from these local post offices going overseas often showed rate markings of the total amount of the unpaid rate. For instance, an unpaid letter intended to be sent to Germany in the Prussian closed mail would show a black handstamp **30** or have that amount written in black ink. Some postmasters purchased sets of numeral handstamps devices to mark these unpaid rates and others incorporated the unpaid letter rates in the postmarks of their offices. The practice by local postmasters of meddling in the rating responsibilities of the exchange offices finally became the subject of a note in the April 1867 *United States Mail and Post Office Assistant*, which stated:[2]

> Rating unpaid Letters to Europe
>
> We are requested to state that "the practice at many offices in the interior, of marking in ink, or stamping, the full postage chargeable on UNPAID letters for Europe is wholly unnecessary, and should be *discontinued*." Postmasters will therefore simply *postmark* unpaid letters for Europe, and not mark on them the rate of postage, leaving this to be done at the Exchange office where the mail is made up for Europe.

It was difficult enough for a local postmaster to determine the correct rate to charge on a letter going overseas, as we shall see, without trying to get involved in the exchange office accounting.

Figure 1 illustrates a most interesting letter that demonstrates the difficulties in handling overseas mail. Carelessness may have been involved with the rating errors, or misinterpretation of the rate tables as a result of the semantics of a place name for the letter's destination. Ironically, the initial mistakes were made at the Boston post office,

---

[1] *List of Post Offices and Postal Laws and Regulations of the United States of America, 1857*, Wierenga reprint (Holland, Michigan: Theron Wierenga, 1980), Regulations Section, p. 45.

[2] *United States Mail and Post Office Assistant, 1860-1872*, 2 vols., Collectors Club of Chicago reprint (Chicago: Collectors Club of Chicago, 1975), vol. 2, p. 314. This was a monthly four-page newspaper designed to provide subscribing postmasters with information of general interest to them. The last page of the newspaper was devoted entirely to a "Table of Postages to Foreign Countries." Rate changes resulting from new conventions or mutually agreed upon change criteria were usually described in announcements that appeared on earlier pages.

Figure 1. 28 September 1858, Boston to Padang, Sumatra, Dutch East Indies, improperly paid 5¢ British open mail rate by British packet. Letter carried by Cunard *Persia* to the United Kingdom, where it was returned as being insufficiently paid since mail to Sumatra had to be fully prepaid. Letter paid 33¢ in U.S. for British mail route via Southampton and returned to United Kingdom with credit of 28¢ in magenta ink. British steamships carried letter to Singapore where a Dutch steamship took it to Batavia. Postage due at destination was 30 doits or 25 Dutch Cents.

which was an exchange office for overseas mail, a place that would be expected to have the "experts" on overseas mail rates. This cover is the outer sheet of a folded letter that has had the contents removed. Since we don't have the letter contents or any receipt docketing information that was often written on the inside, some helpful information is missing. Nevertheless, the markings on the cover allow an understanding of how this letter was handled and provide the basis for understanding its itinerary.

The paper of this letter sheet has a watermark reading "UNITED STATES CONGRESS," indicating that the sender was either a congressman or had access to congressional letter-writing paper. The letter was addressed to "Messrs. Purvis & Co., Padang," and was posted at Boston on 28 September 1858, as shown by a 32mm black circular datestamp on the reverse, **BOSTON/(date)/B$^{R.}$ PK$^{T.}$**. This marking indicated the date that the letter was forwarded from Boston, and that the letter was to cross the Atlantic on a British contract mail steamship. Padang was a Dutch settlement on the west coast of Sumatra, Dutch East Indies. The letter was endorsed in the upper left corner, "pr overland/via Marseille." The desired routing of the letter by this endorsement was in the British mail system via France and the overland route to the Far East, that route being overland through Egypt. The letter may have been taken to the Boston post office before the date in the Boston circular datestamp, but the date in the Boston postmark was the date that it was forwarded to New York to go on board the transatlantic steamship.

Figure 2. Map of the Indonesian region showing the principal locations referred to in the article, Penang, Padang, Batavia, and Singapore, where the British steamships called.

The letter was prepaid 5¢, which was marked in pencil in the upper right corner to the right of the red orange handstamp **PAID**. This was the British open mail rate by British packet, a rate that essentially paid just the United States fees to get the letter to the steamship in the New York harbor. All other transit expenses were left unpaid to be collected by the British. The problem was the destination of the letter. Padang was on the island of Sumatra, a Dutch colony. Since the British had no way to get reimbursed from the Dutch for the transit fees to a destination on Sumatra, they would not allow mail to be sent to Sumatra that was not fully prepaid. This was clearly indicated in the American foreign postage rate tables that did not provide an open mail rate to Sumatra.[3] The only rates listed were all fully paid rates; 33¢ per ½ oz. by British mail via Southampton; 39¢ per ¼ oz. or 45¢ per ½ oz. by British mail via Marseille; and 30¢ per ¼ oz. or 60¢ per ½ oz. by French mail. The Boston clerk must have misread the address as Penang, Straits Settlements. This British settlement on an island in the Straits of Malacca was 435 miles to the north of Padang on the west coast of the Malayan Peninsula (see Figure 2). Penang was under the Indian postal system and served by the British mail system; therefore, it was possible to send open mail letters to Penang. The American foreign postage rate tables showed both a 5¢ British open mail rate and a 21¢ American open mail rate to Penang.[4] This letter clearly was paid the 5¢ open mail rate to Penang. It was placed in a closed mail

---

[3]*List of Post Offices and Postal Laws and Regulations of the United States of America, 1857*, Regulations Section, p. 60.

[4]*Ibid.*, p. 59.

bag at Boston for London, a bag that was sent unopened to New York. The Boston mail was placed on board the Cunard steamship *Persia*, which departed New York the next day, 29 September, and arrived at Liverpool on 10 October 1858.[5] The letter arrived at London on 11 October 1858, as shown by a small red orange circular datestamp on the reverse.

At first the British started to rate the letter for transmission to Penang. With only 5¢ having been prepaid, the British debited the colonial office at Penang with 1 shilling 7 pence, written in black ink on the left side. This amount was for the 8 pence transatlantic transit fee and 1 shilling for a 1/2 oz. letter going via Marseille less 1 penny colonial credit. When it was realized that the letter was addressed to Padang and could not be sent unpaid in the open mail, the 1 shilling 7 pence debit was crossed through in black ink. The American pencil "5" in the upper right corner was also crossed through and some initials written to the right, perhaps those of the inspector who caught the mistake. It was decided to return the letter to New York for collection of the proper prepayment. The letter was marked with a boxed red handstamp, ***Returned for/Postage*** (see Figure 3) above the

Figure 3. London boxed handstamp in red ink struck to show letter being returned to U.S. for postage. To the right of this marking is a 16¢ debit of the British to the U.S. for transit back across the Atlantic.

Boston **PAID** handstamp. The United States was debited 16¢ in black ink, upper right corner, for the return transit across the Atlantic by British packet. The letter was placed back on the Cunard steamship *Persia* that departed Liverpool on 16 October and arrived back at New York on 26 October 1858.[6] The letter was marked in the lower right corner with a red orange two-lined handstamp, **INSUFFICIENTLY/PRE-PAID**, a marking I believe was applied at New York although I have not recorded another example of these same dimensions to verify this. The New York office contacted the Boston office and arranged to get the proper payment of 33¢, the 1/2 oz. rate by British mail via the Southampton route to Sumatra. We know this from the credit that was marked on the letter for the United Kingdom. The corrected prepayment was received in time for the letter to make its third voyage on the *Persia* as she returned again to England. A New York exchange office clerk crossed through the British debit of 16¢ in the upper right corner with magenta ink and marked a 28¢ credit to the United Kingdom. Of the 33¢ per 1/2 oz. rate, the United States was entitled only to 5¢ if sent on a British contract steamship. The clerk also marked the letter with a 30mm red orange circular datestamp, **NEW-YORK/(date)/B$^{R.}$ PK$^{T.}$**, showing the date that the letter would be forwarded from New York, 10 November, and that it would go by British packet. The *Persia* arrived back at Liverpool on 21 November 1858, with this letter, the third successive voyage on that steamer.[7]

---

[5]Walter Hubbard and Richard F. Winter, *North Atlantic Mail Sailings 1840-75* (Canton, Ohio: U.S. Philatelic Classics Society, Inc., 1988), p. 42.

[6]*Ibid.*

[7]*Ibid.*

The letter arrived at London the second time on 22 November 1858, and received on the right side over the address label a small red orange circular datestamp showing that the letter was paid. The British were now satisfied that the letter was fully paid to go to Padang by the Southampton route.

The letter was included in the mail bags sent to Southampton for the next steamer carrying mail for the Far East. That was the Peninsula & Orient (P&O) steamship *Ceylon*, departing Southampton on 4 December and arriving at Alexandria on 17 December 1858.[8] The mail was carried overland to Suez and placed on board the P&O steamship *Simla*, departing Suez on 19 December 1858, and arriving at Galle, Ceylon on 2 January 1859. The mail was again transferred, this time to the P&O steamship *Pekin* departing Galle on 6 January and arriving at Singapore on 15 January 1859. At Singapore the mail for Sumatra was transferred to the Dutch steamship *Koningin der Nederlanden* of the steamship line Nederlandsch-Indische Stoomvaart Maatschappij (N.I.S.M.), departing on 16 January and arriving at Batavia on 19 January 1859.[9] This line had been set up to carry mail to and from the British P&O steamships that called at Singapore. The Dutch conveyed the letter overland to Padang in about two days, but the arrival date is not shown on the cover. For their transit services from Singapore to Batavia, the Dutch marked the letter for 30 doits postage due in black ink, which was equivalent to 25 Dutch Cents.

This cover demonstrates the difficulties of rating letters going overseas. It also demonstrates that, with appropriate references and an understanding of the markings on a cover, one can piece together how the letter traveled to its destination and how it was rated, the postal history of the item, even without the contents of a letter. □

---

[8]R. Kirk, *British Maritime Postal History, Volume 2, The P&O Lines to the Far East* ([Heathfield, East Sussex, England]: Proud-Bailey Co. Ltd., [198-]), p. 42. Each leg of sailing data for this transit from Southampton to Singapore comes from this book.

[9]Claude J.P. Delbeke, *De Nederlandse Scheepspost, Nederland-Oost-Indië 1600-1900* (Aalter, Holland: Claude J.P. Delbeke, 1998), p. 152.

ADVERTISER INDEX

CLASSIFIED

CENTENNIAL Albums and Pages wanted, new or used having a page size of 9¼ in. wide x 11¼ in. high, not including hinge portion. Write: John A. Lange, Jr., 373 Root Road, Ballston Spa NY 12020-3227. Tel.: 518-882-6373. (204)

NEED FOR EXHIBITION: Postmaster & County cancels. Sharp strikes, w/fancy killers on clean covers—Postal stationary OK. E. Idoff, 332 Bleecker St. G-20, NY, NY, 10014 (202)

BADLY NEEDED: Leonminster, MA, 1861 usage of 1861 stamps. Covers preferred but will be thrilled with any sort of notice, dated contents, etc. Photocopies OK. Please contact Paul Bourke, PO Box 125, Ashland, MA 01721. PaddyBGood@aol.com (203)

"Mad River & Lake Erie RR" cancel on cover with any of the ff.: Sc#1 (5¢47), #7 or #9 (1¢51). Write or fax: D.F. Shea, 4106 S.R. 269, Bellevue OH 44811; (419) 483-6400. No phone please. (205)

PLATED 3¢ 1851-57s. For net price listings and weekly auctions please visit: www.stamps4collectors.com. Enlarged photos of many plate positions online. (204)

FINE COVERS: want lists gratefully received. Early U.S. including 18th century and ocean mails. PO Box 1150, Jamaica Plains, MA 02130. (617) 522-3572. skywayparkblue@aol.com. (203)

YOUR AD HERE FOR 50¢ A LINE
Send payment to: Richard M. Wrona, P.O. Box 7631, McLean, VA 22106-7631. Next Deadline: July 5, 2004.

Great collections have one name in common.