



U.S. Philatelic Classics Society

Volume: 57 Number: 1 Year: 2005 Chronicle: 205

Article: Ornamented Mortised Handstamp s

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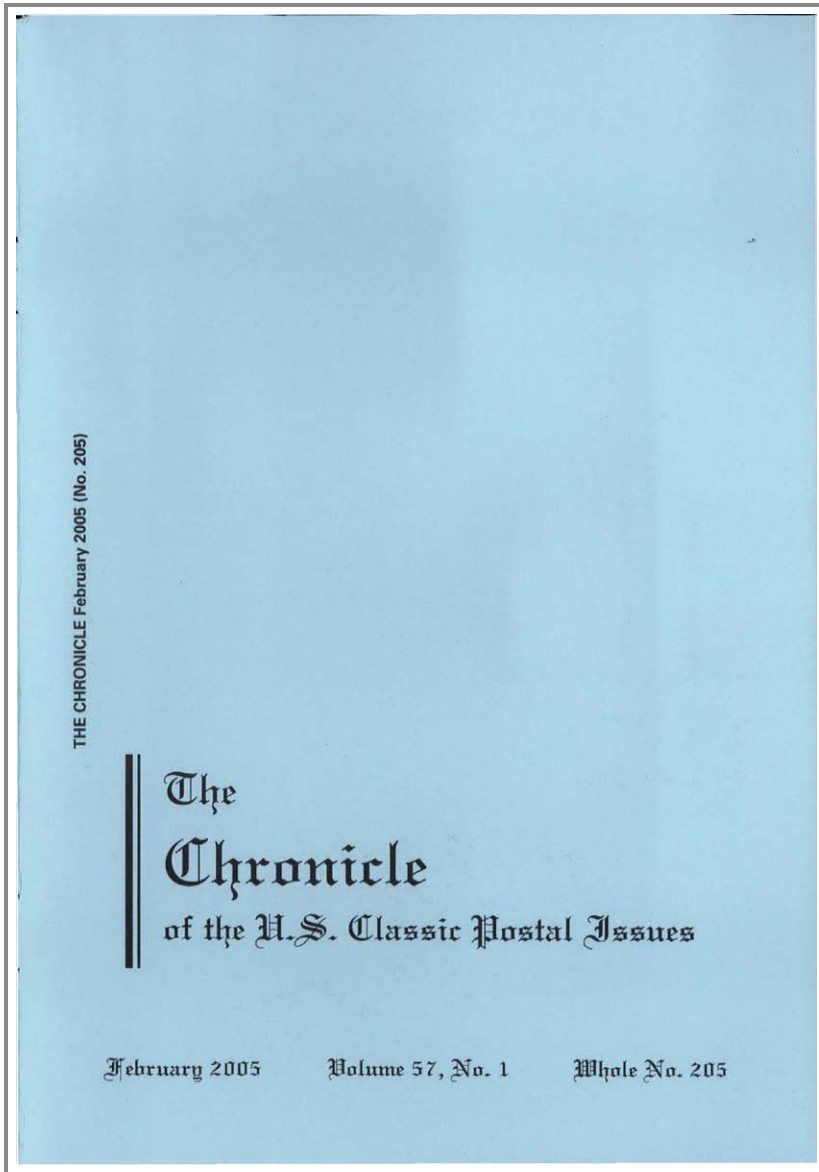


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ORNAMENTED MORTISED HANDSTAMPS

JAMES W. MILGRAM, M.D.

(continued from *Chronicle* 204:237)

Type D. Two birds facing a fountain which squirts to their mouths at top, floral with central flower at bottom.

D1. CHICKASAW IOWA "W" missing and date "May 7" written separately (Figure 13). Note the variation in type size and position which suggests that the line of type was composed from separate loose letters of type.

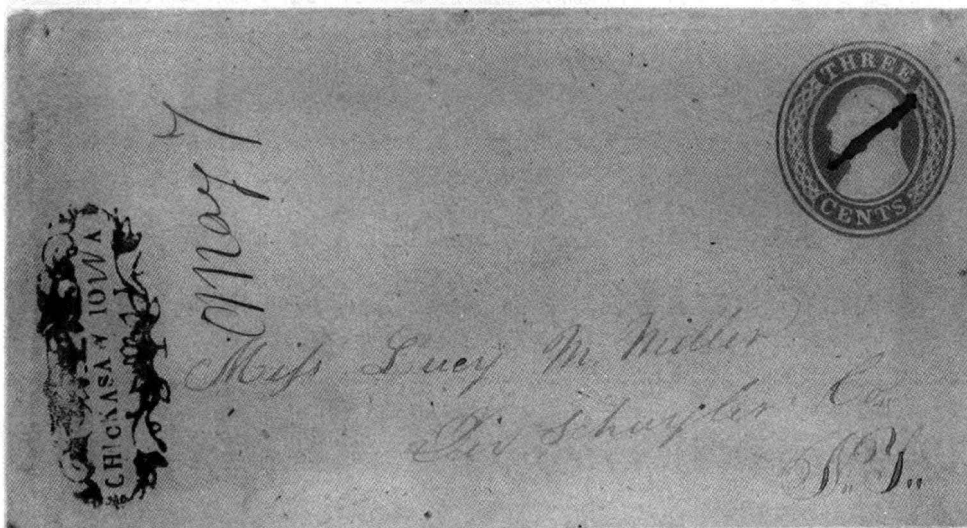


Figure 13. CHICKASAW IOWA (Listing No. D1)

D2. STEAMER DALLAS. Milgram No. 326 and 327 (inverted frame). An example with inverted frame (or actually inverted line of type) is shown in Figure 14 because it is a clearer strike of the red frame showing details of the birds and fountain. The usage is 1847 from the Ouachita River.

Type E. Two birds on leafy boughs facing an enclosed fountain with several spouts at top, bow in center with pair of anchors and leafy boughs at bottom.

E1. LITTLE GUNPOWDER This newly discovered 1844 Maryland cover (Figure 15) has a manuscript date and was sent locally at the 6¢ rate for under 30 miles.

E2. McLEANSBORO. ILL. This 1846 example of the same frame (Figure 16), and with a manuscript date "Oct 24," was sent at the new 5¢ rate for up to 300 miles. Each of these postmarked examples of Type E is known only from a single example.

Type F. Single bird facing right catching insect, with floral boughs at top, open flowers and leaves at bottom.

F1. GREEN VALLEY DEPO This blue Virginia postmark is struck on an 1843 franked letter to Baltimore. It can be traced back to the Edwin Mayer collection, but the photograph shown (Figure 17) is from the Daniel F. Kelleher auction of March 5, 1991. It is the only known strike of this type frame as a postmark.

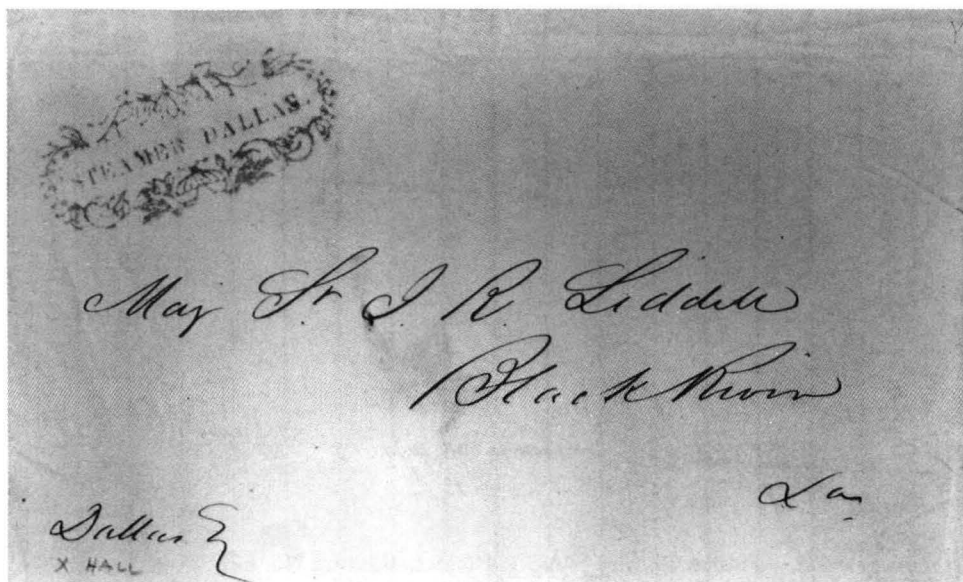


Figure 14. STEAMER DALLAS. (Listing No. D2)

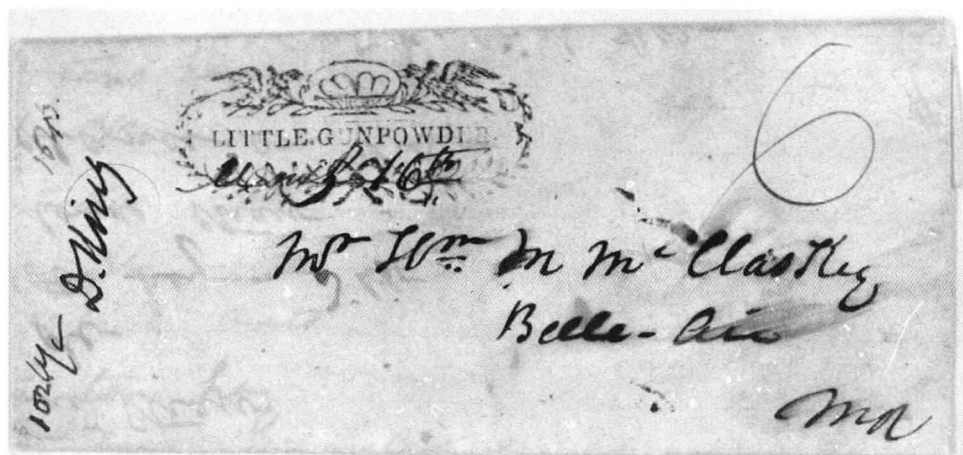


Figure 15. LITTLE GUNPOWDER. (Listing No. E1)

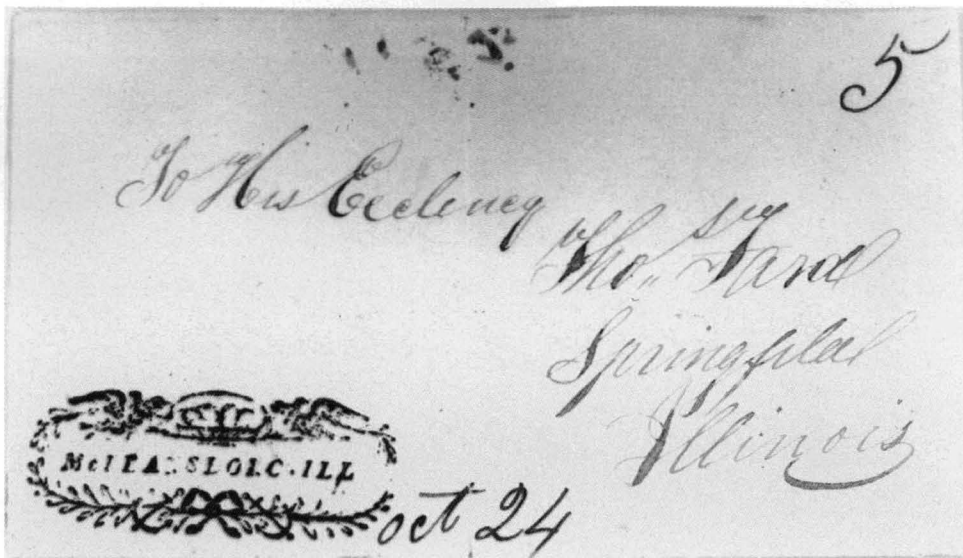


Figure 16. McLEANSBORO. ILL. (Listing No. E2)

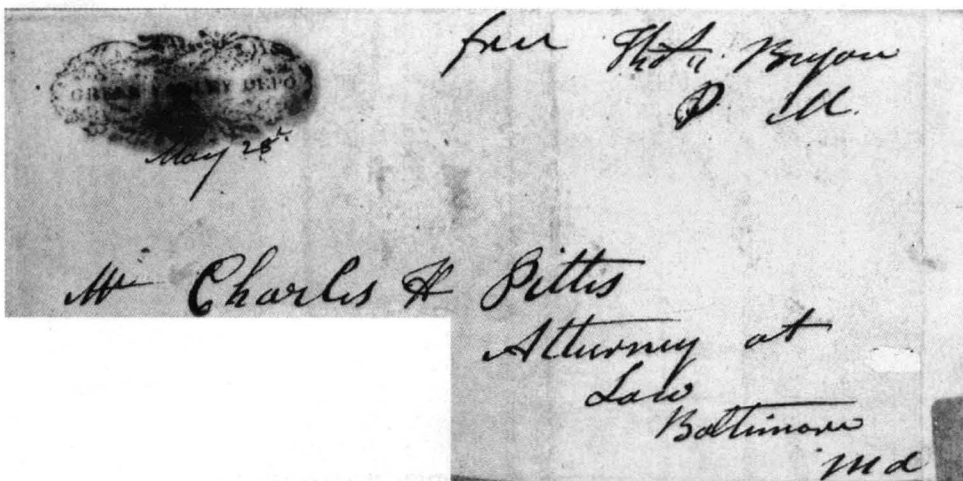


Figure 17. GREEN VALLEY DEPO (Listing No. F1)

A better strike of the frame is shown in *Vessel-named Markings on United States Inland and Ocean Waterways 1810-1890*, in the section on fakes. Item **F-53** in that book has this frame with the words "PACKET HELEN" inserted to the right side of the struck marking. The shown usage from Buffalo to Toledo is an attempt to pass off the marking as a Great Lakes marking. I own another copy in blue with a letter dated January 24, 1865 from the Headquarters 108th U.S.C.T. (U.S. Colored Troops) at Rock Island Barracks in Illinois. The 3¢ 1861 cover was postmarked at Rock Island the following day and went to New York City. No ship usage is possible with these postmarks, and of course this cover has nothing to do with the Great Lakes. The presence of the letter shows the origin of the cover was Rock Island and not another site on the Mississippi River. However, this is a genuine old frame which was used at a later date to produce this fantasy marking.

Type G. Eagle with spread wings holding two arrows in talons at top, field of stars, crossed leafy boughs and paired boughs at sides complete the bottom (handstamp shown in Figures 1 and 2).

G1. Ft. KEARNEY O.R. This 1852 blue marking is lightly struck on blue paper and reproduces poorly (Figure 18) (Matthew Bennett, November 1, 2003). Here it cancels a stamp with June 5, 1852 dating. It is also shown in color as a stampless usage in the David Jarrett sale (Christies, October 9-10, 1990). The O.R. indicates Oregon Route and Ft. Kearny was one of the first outposts reached by overland Californian emigrants. There are at least four examples known.



Figure 18. Ft. KEARNEY O.R. (Listing No. G1)

G2. *Jordans Valley* This Tennessee marking is shown as a drawing in Simpson's *U.S. Postal Markings 1851-61*. However, a 3¢ red on buff entire bearing this marking with manuscript dating, ?July 4, is shown as lot 1529 of Robert A. Siegel's auction, February 13, 1973. Another cover (Figure 19) shows an August 20th dating. In *Postal Markings*, November 1938 there is a drawing of this marking with manuscript April 15 dating. The name of the town is in script typeface.

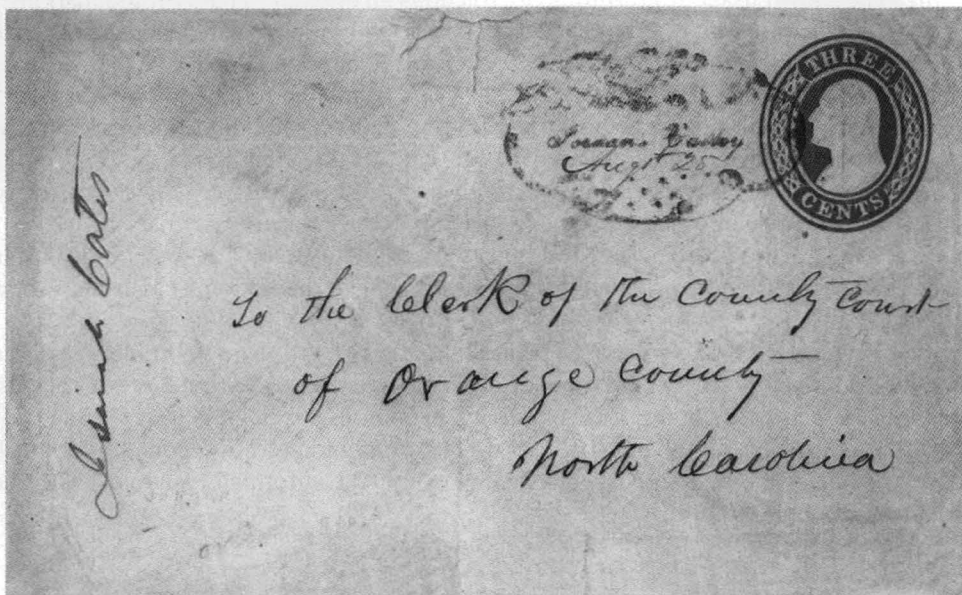


Figure 19. Jordans Valley (Listing No. G2)

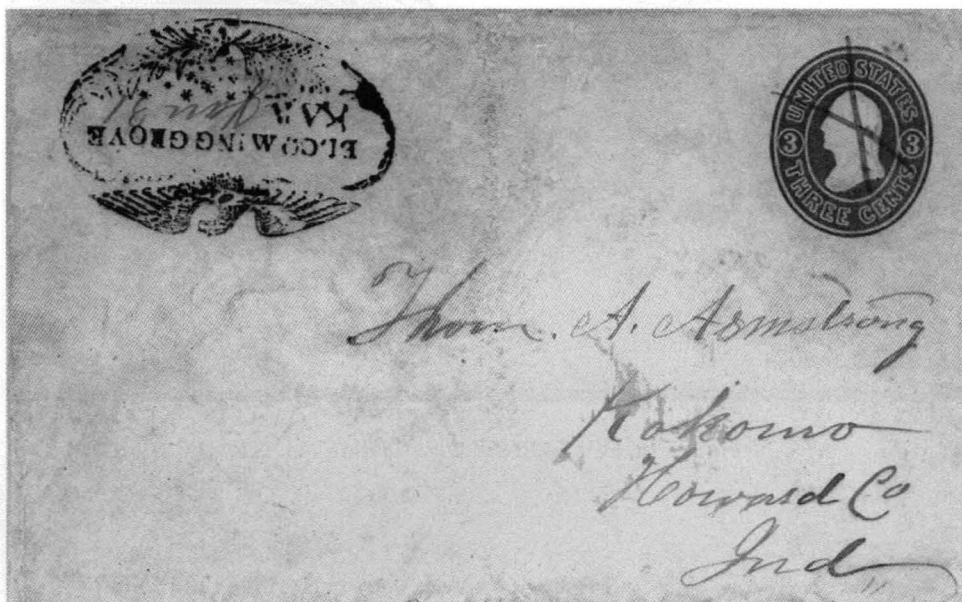


Figure 20. ELCOMING GROVE KAN (Listing No. G3)

G3. ELCOMING GROVE KAN (with E and L reversed) This is the latest known postmark with this type of handstamp (Figure 20) and is in true brown ink. Besides the misspelling of the town's name (Lecoming Grove), the state name has been added in primitive lettering as a second line of type. The date was added also in pen. The year date is unknown.

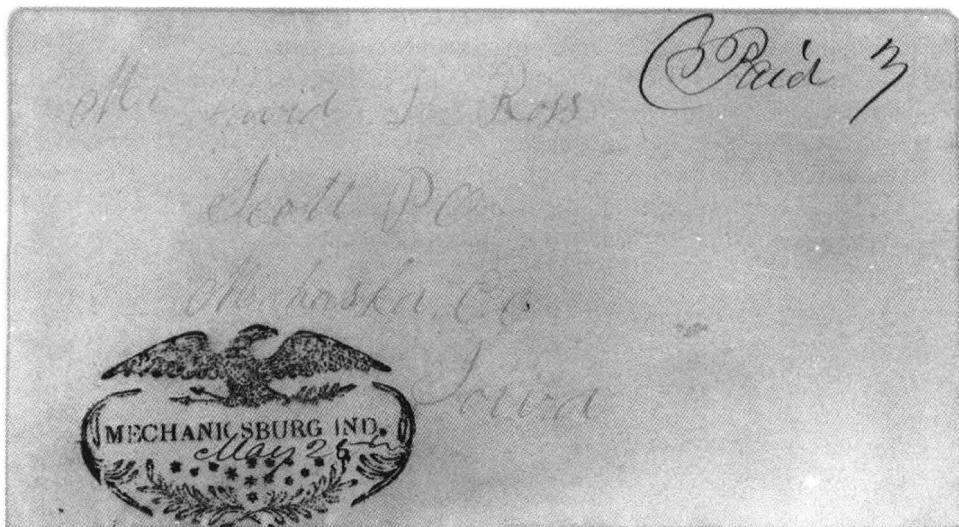


Figure 21. MECHANICSBURG IND. (Listing No. G4)

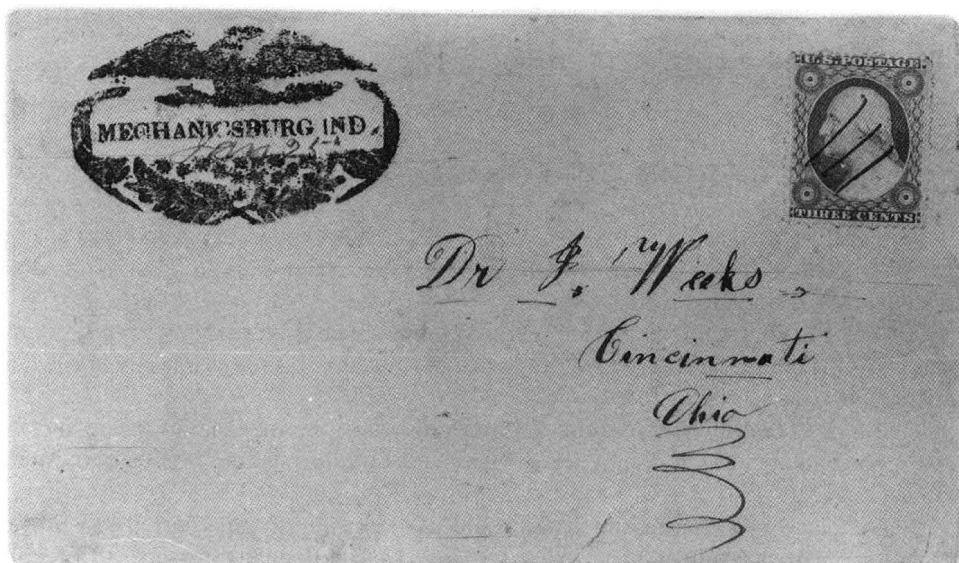


Figure 22. MECHANICSBURG IND. (Listing No. G4)

G4. MECHANICSBURG IND. This well-struck example (Figure 21) of this blue postmark was sent as a stampless usage at a time when stamps could have been used. It probably was 1859. Most examples of this marking are found on covers bearing the 1857 or even the 1861 3¢ stamp and are not very clear (Figure 22). This is the most common ornamented mortised frame postmark, with probably close to 24 copies in existence. A patriotic usage on a Lincoln campaign cover (AL-56) is shown with February 15, 1861 usage in *Abraham Lincoln Illustrated Envelopes and Letter Paper 1860-1865*. Another example from the same correspondence on a patriotic cover dated April 16, 1862 is shown as lot 234 in Robert G. Kaufmann's 10th Sale. A series of eight covers from one correspondence was sold in the Robert A. Siegel auction of December 13, 1995, with photographs of all covers. The auctioneers represented the last cover in the series as a different handstamp, but the features they describe are just due to wear. The series did include a different handstamp which is described below as **Listing No. J2**. Also, two 1858 examples in this series, lots 1043 and 1044, are struck in black ink.

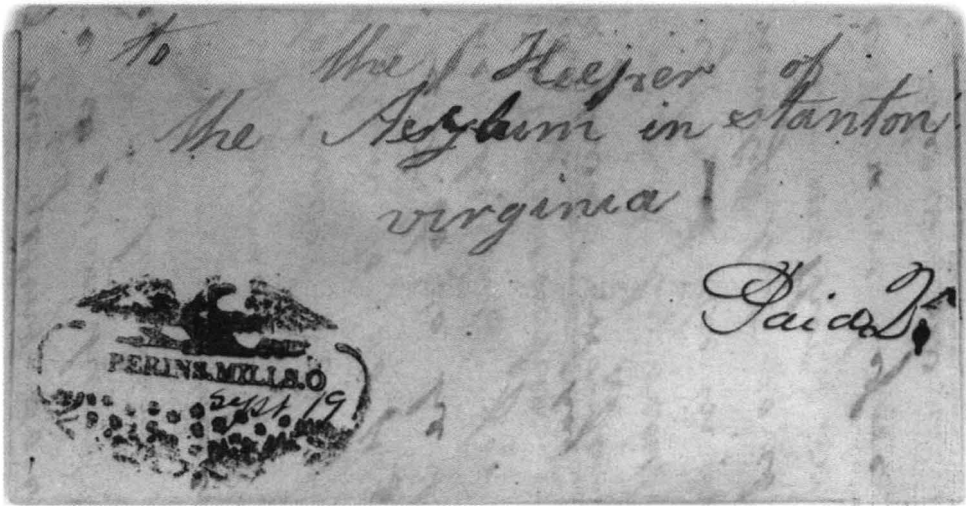


Figure 23. PERINS. MILLS. O (Listing No. G5)

G5. PERINS. MILLS. O This 1843 stampless cover (Figure 23) is an early usage of the eagle handstamp (only known example). It has manuscript dating and contains a very interesting letter about a lost son.

G6. UPPER.DUBLIN. This 1852 Pennsylvania cover (Figure 24) with ms. "August 12" dating holds the record for the highest price bid for an example of these markings as a postmark. It is a fairly good strike.

G7. REGISTERED This marking is upside down in the handstamp frame and is an auxiliary handstamp used at Chickopee, Massachusetts during the 1850s. The cover is illustrated as Figure 151, **R-CK-1**, in *United States Registered Mail 1845-1870*. Since the cover is an undated 1853 entire, the usage could have been during the period of Unofficial Registration, or if after July 1, 1855 (it is dated March 30), it could be an officially registered cover paying the 5¢ registration fee in cash. I lean towards the earlier usage since the cover bears no registration number, which was required during Official Registration.

The Type G handstamp was used by a number of different steamboats and certainly qualifies as among the most fancy handstamps on steamboat covers. Since the existing examples are quite rare, one can only surmise that it was used on other vessels from which no examples of such handstamped markings have survived.

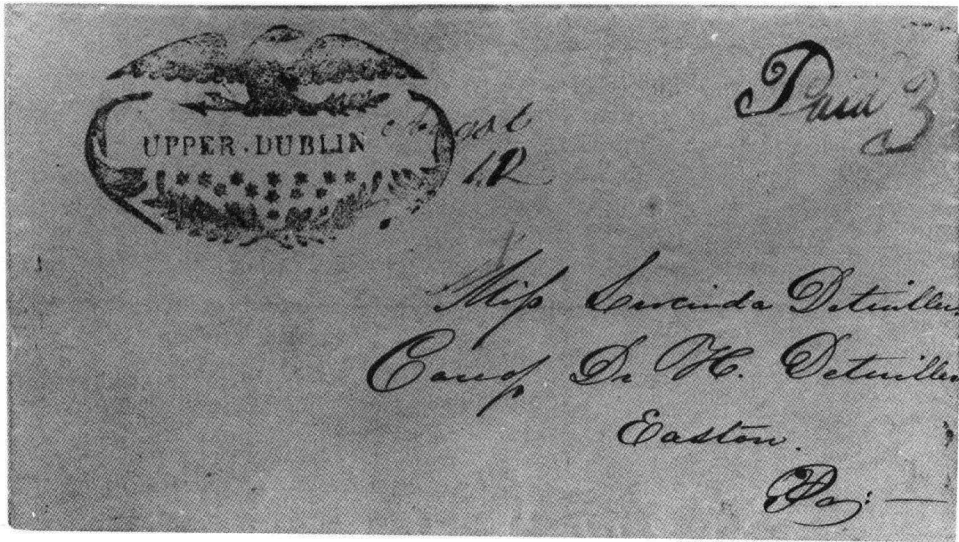


Figure 24. UPPER. DUBLIN (Listing No. G6)

G8. BEESWING Milgram No. 99. 1845 usage in black.

G9. *Steamer Cote Joyeuse* Milgram No. 296. This marking (Figure 25), only seen in blue ink, dates from the early period of steamboat handstamps, 1845. A shield can be seen on the chest of the eagle.

G10. *STEAMER DUBUQUE* Milgram No. 368. 1850 usage in red. The italic lettering is unusual.

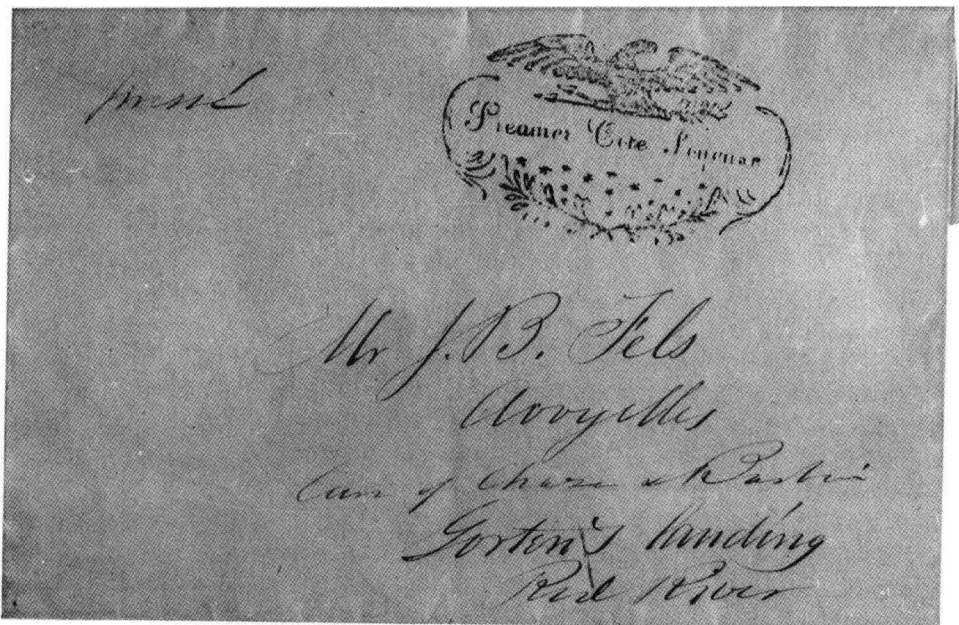


Figure 25. *Steamer Cote Joyeuse* (Listing No. G9)

- G11. S.B. EMPIRE Milgram No. 414. 1847 in black.
- G12. S.B. EMPIRE Milgram No. 415. 1847 in red.
- G13. GREY EAGLE Milgram No. 563. 1849 in red.
- G14. Per St. Bt. MARIA Milgram No. 847. 1846 in red.
- G15. Per St. Bt. MARIA Milgram No. 847A. 1846 in brown.
- G16. OLD HICKORY Milgram No. 1023. 1847 in red.

G17. PAUL JONES Milgram No. 1063. Shown in Figure 26, this 1844 example is one of the eagle handstamps on a steamboat. Also the illustrated example is a very clear strike of the handstamp. If the reader compares it to the MECHANICSBURG IND postmark in Figure 21, it is apparent that this is actually a slightly different handstamp design (compare the bottom boughs). But the differences are minimal, so they are grouped here as one type.

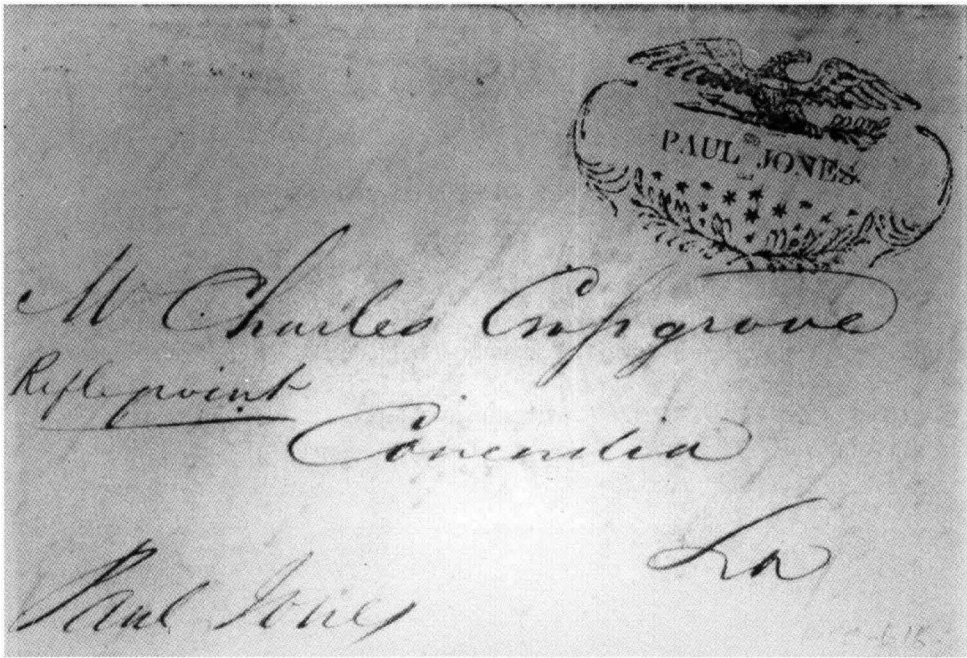


Figure 26. PAUL JONES Listing (No. G17)

G18. PIKE NO 9 TUCKER MASTER (2 lines) Milgram No. 1108. This 1851 black marking contains the name of the captain of the vessel.

G19. TUSCUMBIA Milgram No. 1391. 1849 in red, shown usage is to California with 40¢ rate marking.

G20. STEAMER TUSCUMBIA Milgram No. 1391A. 1849 in red. This cover from the William Semsrott collection is illustrated in the supplement, *Postal History Journal* No. 98 (June 1994).

G21. STEAMER TUSCUMBIA Milgram No. 1391B. 1849 in bronze ink. This cover, which was also illustrated in *Postal History Journal* No. 98, was sold at auction as being in gold ink because of the gold rush. The cover has nothing to do with a western usage and the ink is bronze, not gold. It is just a coincidence that **No. G19** shows a western postal usage. The vessel was simply a New Orleans to St. Louis steamboat on the Mississippi River.

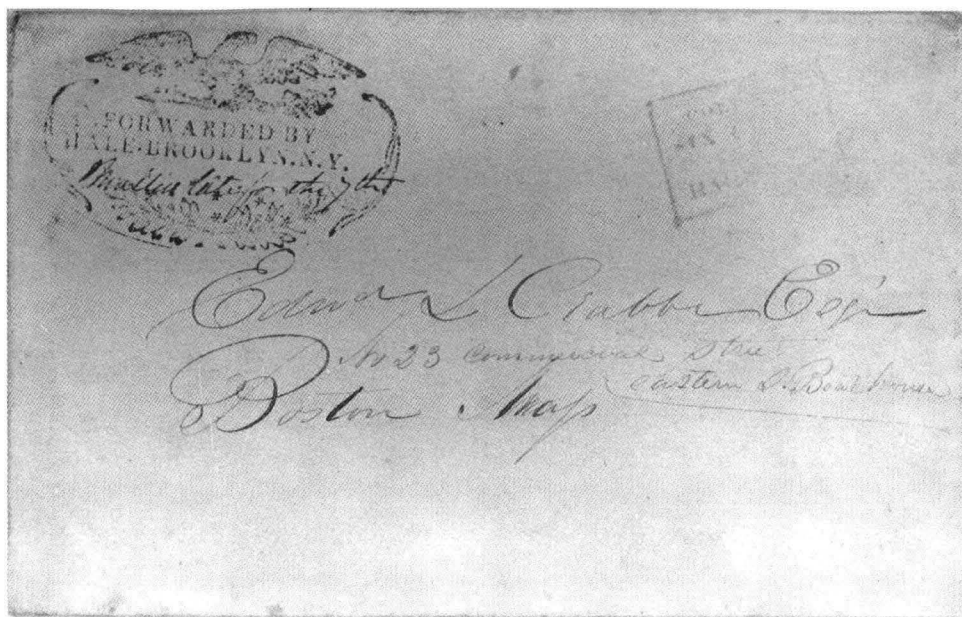


Figure 27. FORWARDED BY HALE. BROOKLYN. N.Y. (Listing No. G24)

G22. BRANCH POST OFFICE. This 1847 red marking is from Swart's Post Office Co.; it is illustrated in the ASCC, Vol. 2, with two examples recorded. A cover with the marking is illustrated as lot A1523 in the Robert A. Siegel auction of November 16, 1999.

G23. CUMMING'S CITY POST This red handstamp is found on an undated cover from the collection of Frank Hollowbush. It is illustrated as lot 265 in John A. Fox auction, August 15, 1966. The strike is quite clear. The marking is listed with a date of 1846 in ASCC, Vol. 2. A poorer strike in black ink is lot 533, Richard C. Frajola sale of the Middendorf collection.

G24. FORWARDED BY HALE. BROOKLYN. N.Y. (2 lines) There is additional ms. "mailed late for the 7th" and a red Hale's COLLECT SIX CENTS marking (Figure 27). This is an 1845 usage of the fancy frame by an independent mail company, a very choice usage. At least one other example is known.

G25. Cherry Henderson & Co. This red example (Figure 28) is found on the reverse of an 1850 stampless steamboat cover with a different red handstamp "FROM STEAMER OSCEOLA" on the face. The marking was used on a letter from this firm, and thus it is a type of handstamped corner card. It is from an original correspondence found by the writer and has not been illustrated before. It could have been used to indicate forwarding as so many other similar oval handstamps were used for that purpose.

G26. W A J FINNEY *Pittsylvania Co. Va.* (two lines) This (Figure 29) is a second personal handstamp and is unusual in that there are two lines of type held by the screw. Also the second line is in italic letters.

G27. J. N. THOMPSON. This marking is struck four times on a folded letter datelined Flat Lick, La. February, 1855. It is lot 328 in Robert G. Kaufmann auction, April 28, 1981.

G28. W H P UST This marking is on a star die entire with a nearly unreadable Sherman, Texas postmark addressed to a Missouri town. There is a sender's notation "via the overland mail," and the March 10, 1861 letter refers to the overland mail through

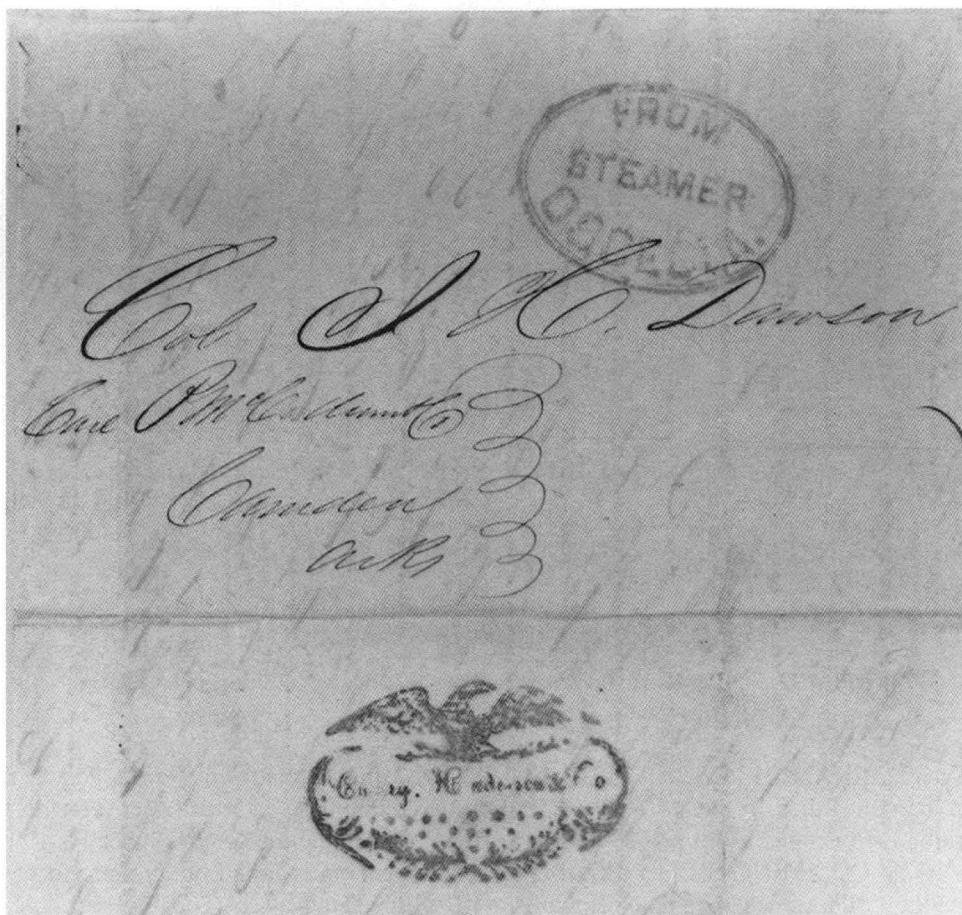


Figure 28. Cherry Henderson & Co. (Listing No. G25)

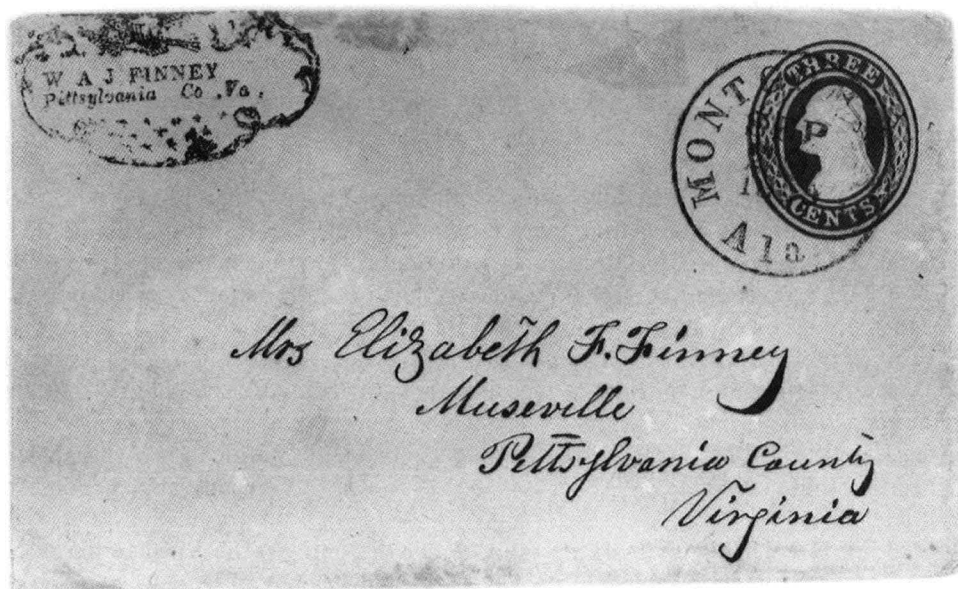


Figure 29. W A J FINNEY Pittsylvania Co. Va. (Listing No. G26)

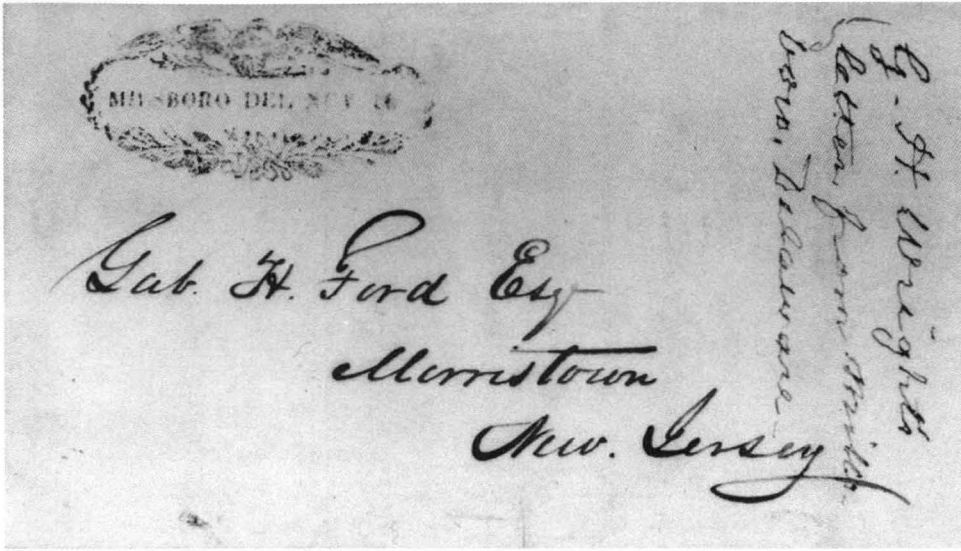


Figure 30. MILSBORO DEL NOV 10 (Listing No. H1)

Texas. I first encountered this cover in John A. Fox's office when I saw it as part of one of Charles Meroni's collections. No one including Meroni himself had any idea of the significance of the marking, whether it was postal or not. I remember that Meroni bought it at another Fox auction years before. It was touted as a Confederate packetboat cover in lot 908 of the Meroni Confederate sale, but there is no good evidence for this. I think it is just a name handstamp that found its way onto this piece of paper. It was also illustrated in catalog of the Robert A. Siegel auction, April 24, 1982, as lot 81 and has appeared in other sales since then.

G29. W.M. EDY This cover was found by the author in his own collection after the first version of this article was written. It is among other letters within a large Civil War complete soldiers' correspondence, that of Henry Edy and his brothers to their parents. This letter was written at Nashville General Hospt No. 14 [the building number] Ward 5 October 2, 1864. The envelope bears a strong clear strike of the handstamp in the center of the envelope. A stamp is tied by a "NASHVILLE TEN OCT 3 1864" postmark. To the side of the handstamp is a manuscript address "East Springfield Erie Co. Pa." I believe that this handstamp was available within the hospital, and different letter writers used it to send letters home. The name of the addressee was entered in moveable type each time it was used. There were no other letters with the handstamp in the correspondence, which included later letters from Henry Edy to his parents.

Type H. Eagle with spread wings at top, floral branch in talons, bottom shows floral design.

H1. MILSBORO DEL NOV 10. This 1841 stampless cover design (Figure 30) is one of two usages of this frame, a very early usage for a frame. Two examples are known, the other, said to be a partial cover, displays the correct spelling "MILLSBORO."

H2. PAID. This marking is on a cover with matching red "ST. FRANCISVILLE La. SEP 15" (no year date) with ms. "12½" to New Orleans (Figure 31). The cover also bears a manuscript notation to charge the postage to a postal box. The illustration is from the Robert A. Siegel auction, September 20, 1974 (lot 127). One might imagine that such a



Figure 31. PAID (Listing No. H2)



Figure 32. KINGSESSING PA NOV 19 1861 (Listing No. 11)

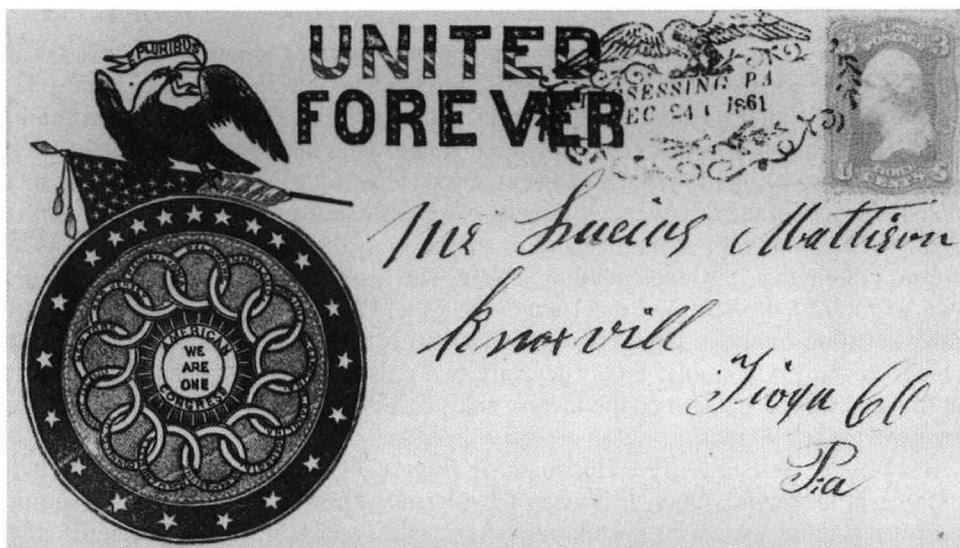


Figure 33. KINGSESSING PA DEC 24 1861 (Listing No. 11)

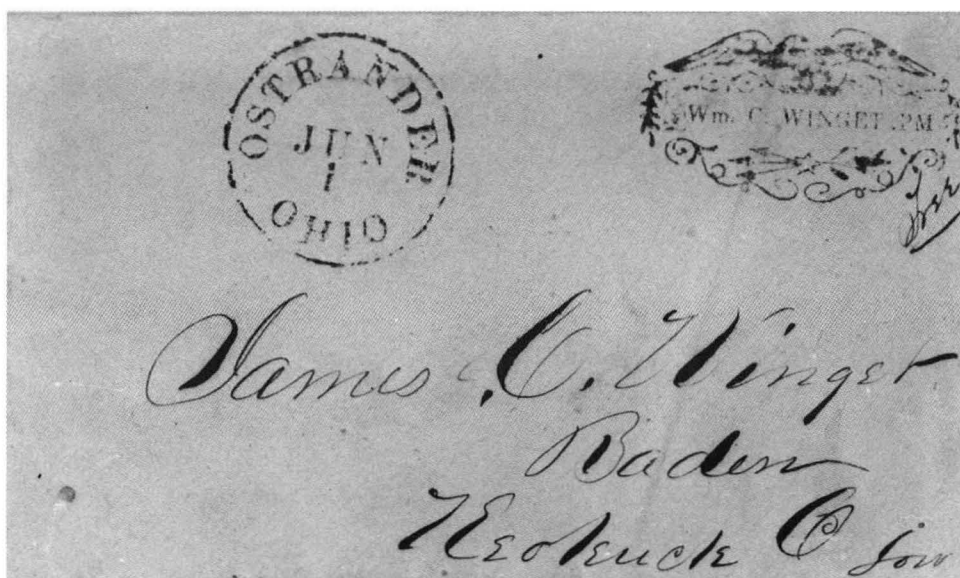


Figure 34. Wm. C. WINGET. PM (Listing No. 13)

fancy handstamp might be employed by a box holder to signify that the postage should be paid. However, we have not seen other examples that would support such a theory. Arguing against such a usage, there is no other "PAID" handstamp and the color matches that of the postmark. So it seems to be a postal marking, pre-July 1, 1845 from the postal rate.

Type I. Eagle with bowed head facing right at top, arrows and geometric design at bottom.

11. KINGSESSING PA NOV 19 1861 (2 lines) This black postmark (Figure 32) is known from 1861 after the country was at war. It may therefore be a patriotic postmark. In fact, the letter enclosed in this cover is from a soldier who had recently enlisted. Another example is known tying the same 3¢ 1861 stamp on a patriotic cover (Figure 33). It should be noted how few of the ornamented framed postmarks date from the 1850s-early 1860s.

12. ARSENAL S.C. This marking is shown by Simpson, but is not in the ASCC. However, I doubt that it is a postmarking device. The listing is apparently based on a cover shown as lot 740, Robert A. Siegel auctions, May 19, 1970. This is an entire with a circular dated postmark in blue, "BENNETTSVILLE S.C. (date illegible)," addressed to Arsenal Academy, Columbia, S.C. There are two strikes of the eagle handstamp on the front of the envelope and two on the reverse side. This is certainly not a postmark but more likely a private school mark.

13. Wm. C. WINGET. PM This marking (Figure 34) is a handstamped frank by the postmaster at Ostrander, Ohio. It is one of two covers known with ornamented morticed framed handstamps used as a postmaster's frank and is the only known example of this type.

14. SENATOR Milgram No. 1267. This 1858 cover (Figure 35) is later than most of the other eagle handstamps on steamboat covers. It was used on the Alabama River rather than the Mississippi and its tributaries.

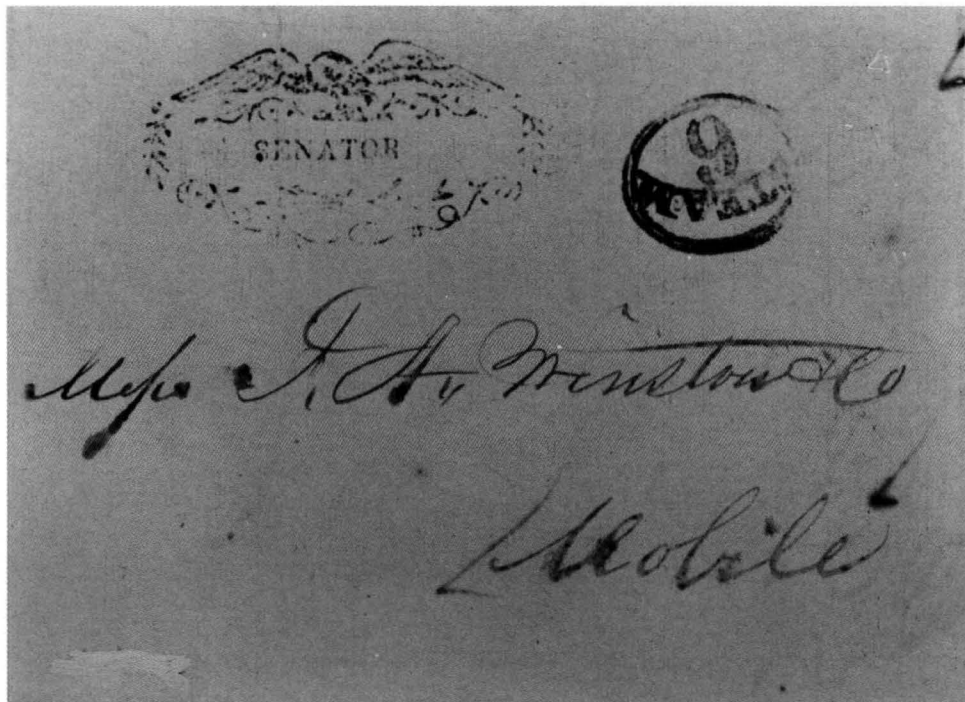


Figure 35. SENATOR (Listing No. 14)

15. CINDERILA. PUTNAM./ STONY. FORK./ TIOGA. CO.PA. This spectacular cover is shown as lot 418 in John A. Fox auction, December 12, 1960. The handstamp, a personal stamp, is struck three times on the front of an envelope, spaced more to the right as well as lower on the envelope with each successive strike. The envelope, a patriotic with colored red and blue trim, has a 3¢ stamp tied “WAYNESBORO PA MAY 2 1861”, and it is almost certainly intended to be a patriotic usage with this dating and the use of an eagle stamp. This item reinforces the possible patriotic purpose for the “KINGSESSING” handstamp as discussed above. Note also the use of a period to provide spacing between each word.

16. DOCTOR B.W. FREEMAN, two line corner card on cover with 3¢ 1861 tied “COLUMBUS O DEC 12”[1864].

17. CAPT. R. E. HINES A.Q.M. This handstamp was used January 15, 1865 on a Confederate stage pass from Albany to Quincy, Georgia. This is a very unusual Confederate usage for a person’s name.

Type J. Flowers and 2 leafed branches with a narrow space at top, central lyre, two anchors and flowering branches across bottom.

J1. LOACHAPOKA A JAN 6 This 1855 dated stampless cover (Figure 36) is the only example and has two strikes of the marking, one inverted. It was dated by someone later “1855 Lee Co. Ala.”. The usage is unpaid postage 10¢ to Washington, D.C.

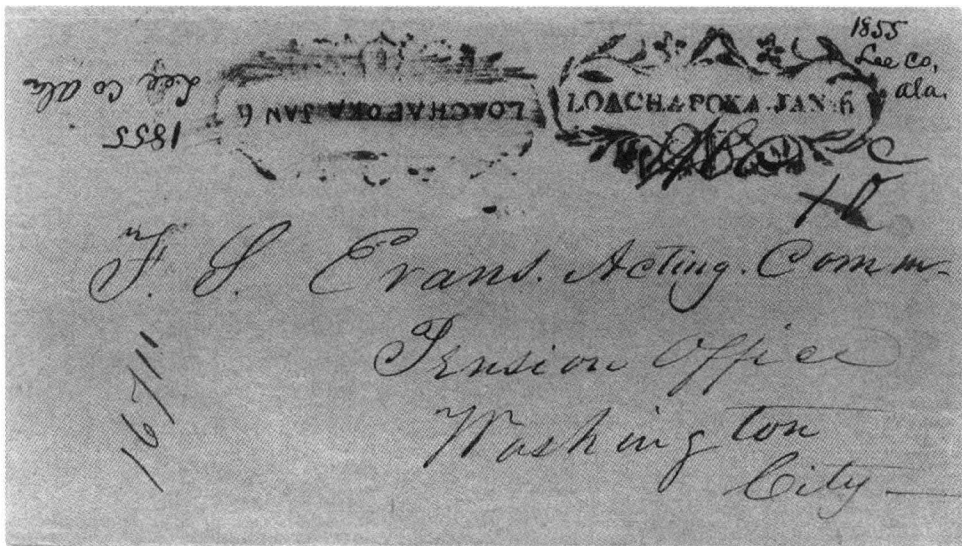


Figure 36. LOACHAPOKA JAN 6 (Listing No. J1)

J2. MECHANICSBURG IND. This listing comes from a cover dated “April 11” in manuscript. The enclosure dates it as 1857 so it predates the better-known Mechanicsburg eagle **Listing No. G1**. It is lightly struck; it is shown in color as lot 1042 in Robert A. Siegel auction of December 13, 1995 (Figure 37).

J3. T P BROWN P M (inverted lettering) The example of this marking (Figure 38) was used at New Prospect, Mississippi; the *ASCC* lists a town marking, 1850-1851. The postmaster used the marking as a frank with a separate “FREE.” Technically this was against postal regulations. This is one of two usages of ornamented handstamps for postmaster’s franks. The other is **Listing No. I3**.

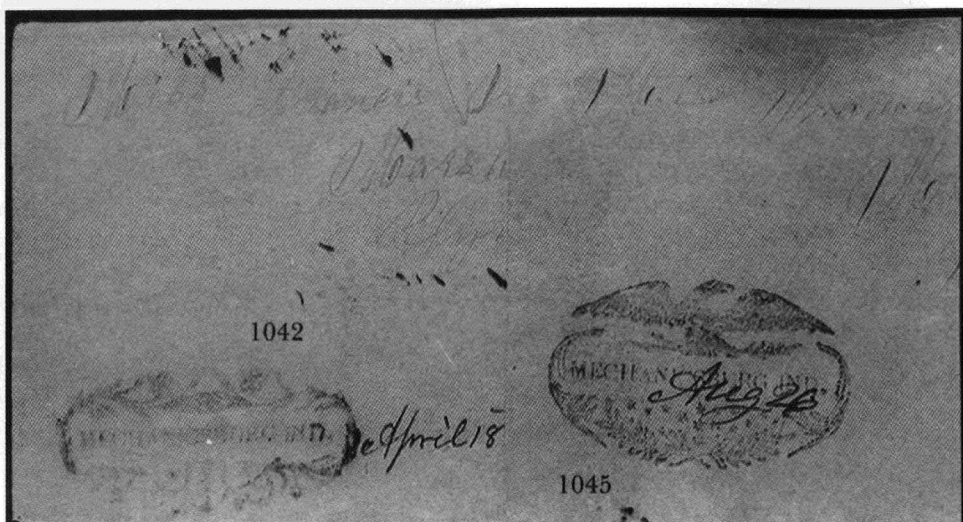


Figure 37. MECHANICSBURG IND. (Listings No. J2 and G1)

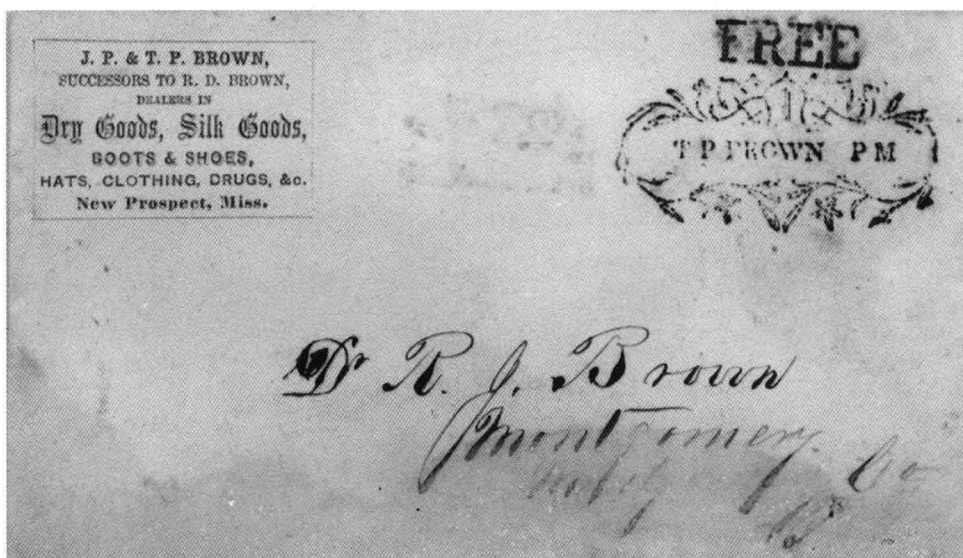


Figure 38. T P BROWN P M (Listing J3)



Figure 39. PAID (Listing No. J4)

J4. PAID This fancy “PAID” was used during the Confederacy at Galveston, Texas, with a separate rating handstamp. The illustrated example (Figure 39) is an early usage (Oct. 20, 1861) with a clear strike. However, the usual strike is very blurry. Because of its usage at a large town, this handstamp is among the most plentiful of the ornamented frames used as postmarks.

J5. ALHAMBRA Milgram No. 27. This 1845 marking is usually fairly lightly struck, but it is a good example of this frame being used for a steamboat vessel-named marking.

J6. DUROC Milgram No. 376. This marking from 1849 is rare with only two examples known.

J7. STEAMER. HOMER. Milgram No. 611. This cover (Figure 40) shows a lovely example of the handstamp from 1847, a “B/L” (bill of lading) cover without postmarks.

J8. SHAMROCK Milgram No. 1271. This 1850 marking has only been seen on covers postmarked at New Orleans. It is quite rare. Known examples have not been well struck.

J9. TEXAS Milgram No. 1359. Only one example of this marking has been recorded, a fairly light strike dated 1850.

J10. PRINTED SHEET This usage (Figure 41), which is in blue, was to indicate to the postmaster that the contents were printed and qualified for the circular rate. The 1¢ 1851 stamp is tied by a Mobile, Alabama postmark. Whether the handstamp was applied by the printer or his patron, the firm responsible for the circular, is uncertain, but it probably is not a postal marking applied at the post office.

Type K. This is an all floral marking with a space at the top and an open flower at bottom center.

K1. BROOKFIELD CT This blue marking (Figure 42) can be identified as this type comparing the partial frame to better examples of the frame. The cover from which the illustration was obtained had no year date. No better example is known.

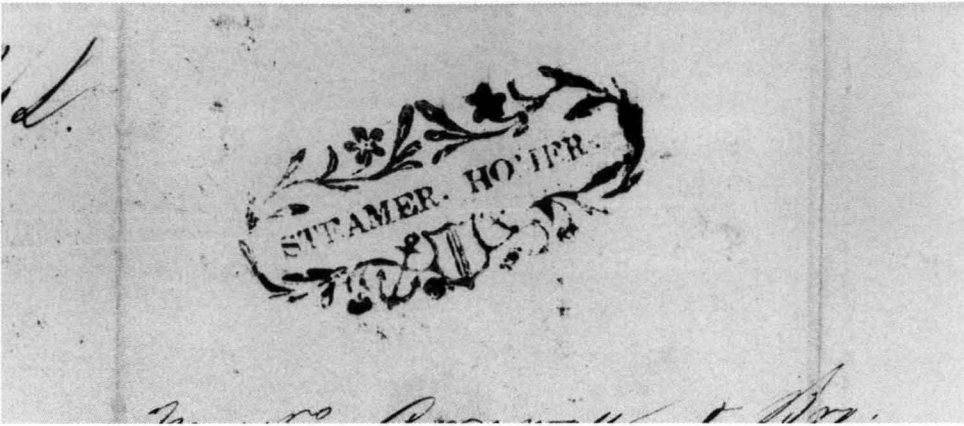


Figure 40. STEAMER. HOMER. (Listing No. J7)

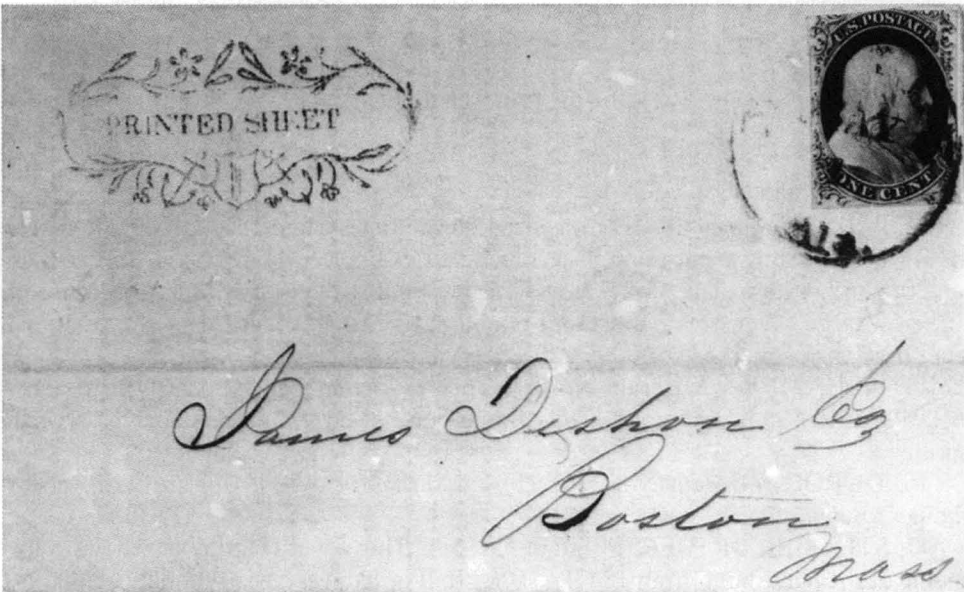


Figure 41. PRINTED SHEET (Listing No. J10)

K2. GILSUM N H [MONTH DAY] This marking (Figure 43) is known from 1842 and 1843 and has been seen in red and brown inks. The illustrated example, dated MAR 9, is different from the one illustrated in the *ASCC*, Volume 1. A better-struck example dated JUNE 10, from the auction catalog of the John Fox December 14, 1954 sale, is shown at Figure 43A. These are early usages for fancy framed postmarks. Probably less than six examples exist.

K3. MT. EATON O. FEB. 8 The "Paid 5" postal marking on this cover (Figure 44) signifies a usage in the 1845-51 period; the date is 1849 and the color is black. The only example known was folded so the bottom of the marking was not shown in the *ASCC*. The present photograph has the cover refolded and shows the full marking. Interestingly, this same town also used a straightline from 1831 which is one of a handful of stampless covers with county designations in a straightline device.

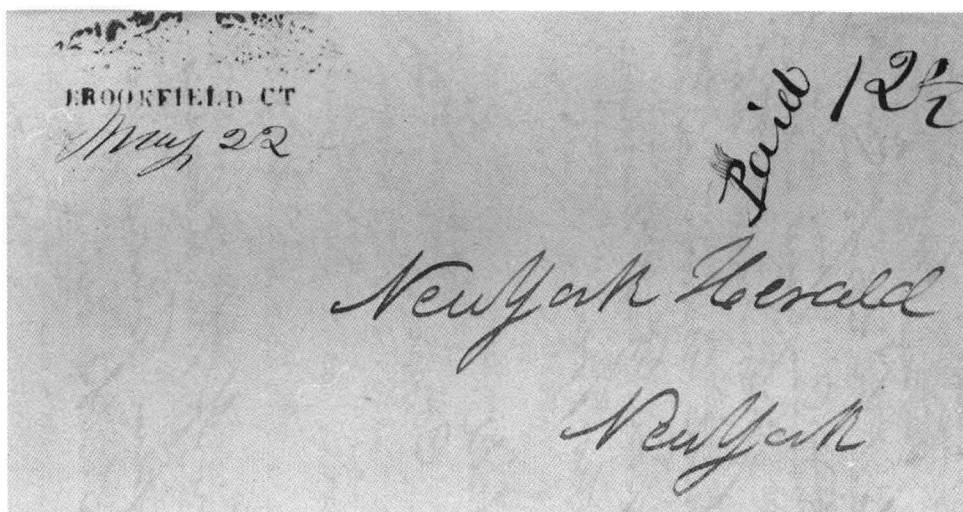


Figure 42. BROOKFIELD CT (Listing No. K1)

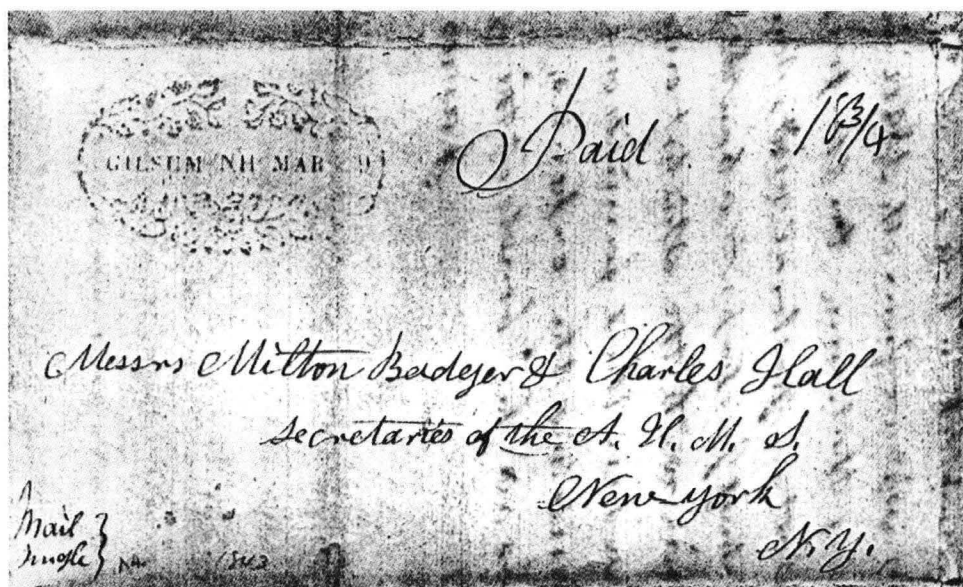


Figure 43. GILSUM N H MAR 29 (Listing No. K2)



Figure 43A. GILSUM N H JUNE 10 (Listing No. K2)

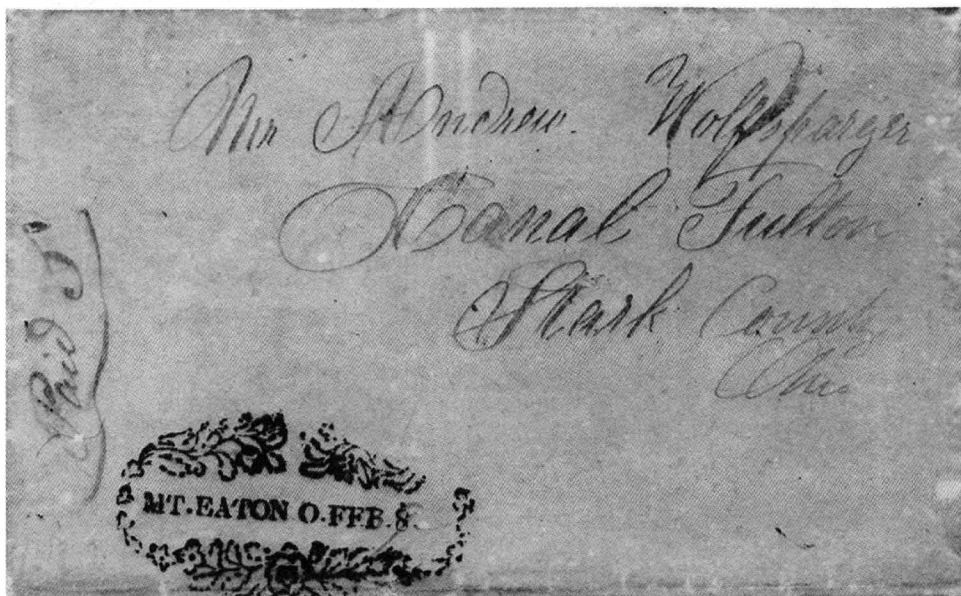


Figure 44. MT. EATON O. FEB. 8 (Listing No. K3)

K4. Houston Oct 9th in manuscript, device struck upside down. This marking (Figure 45) is known from two examples. The other is illustrated as lot 434 in the Samuel C. Paige auction of December 4, 1959 and has the same date and handwriting. As a young collector, I purchased one of them (this cover I think) in the 1960s for \$125 from John A. Fox. It was sent to the Philatelic Foundation which called it a fake, so I returned it for my purchase price. However, the Philatelic Foundation changed their minds, too late for me alas. It is the only one of these frame postmarks with a manuscript postmark.

Mr. Colby used my **Type F** handstamp to embellish certain covers before I purchased it from him; he applied it around manuscript postmarks. He told me he never sold those covers as being genuine handstamps. But I have seen that same handstamp on a 3¢ 1861 cover purporting to be a postmaster's handstamp with manuscript text, an obvious fake.

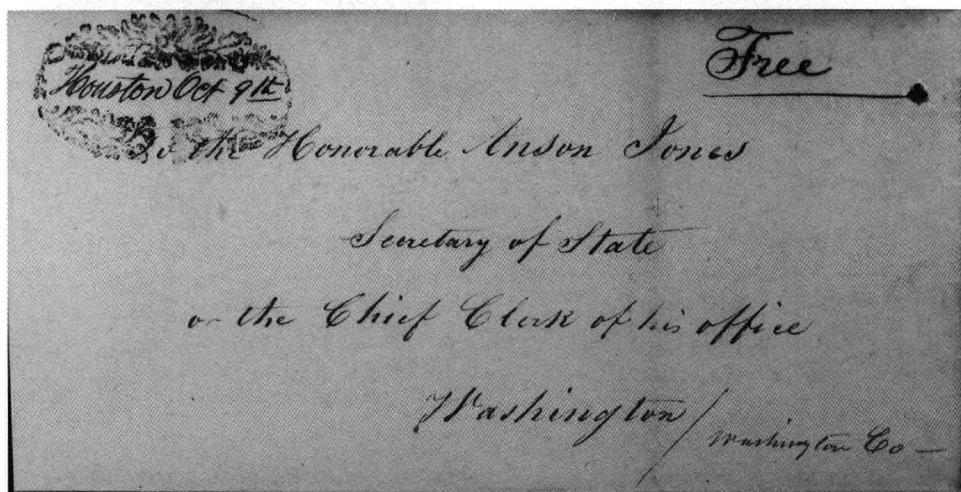


Figure 45. Houston Oct 9th (ms.) (Listing No. K4)

K5. *Presbyterian Fair* This marking in blue contains lettering in script form. It is on an addressed poem without street, city or date. Based on the other usages of this handstamp, the year is probably in the 1840s. It appears to be a private handstamp, not a postal marking. It is illustrated as lot 257 in Richard C. Frajola's auction of May 30, 1993.

K6. *BOOKED*. This marking was mounted with the frame inverted. It is found on a cover with the 3¢ 1861 stamp tied by a "MONTICELLO IND." and "M" initial. The significance of the handstamp is obscure, but it does not seem to be postal. The cover is lot 187 in Robert G. Kaufmann's auction of September 29, 1991.

Type L. This mortised marking consists only of curved lines, top and bottom.

L1. *PINE SWAMP Pa.* This marking is shown as a drawing in Simpson's *U.S. Postal Markings 1851-61*. The frame is inverted in comparison to the next listed marking here.

L2. *Jordans Valley* This Tennessee listing is shown as No. 207 in Alexander's book, but it is not listed in the *ASCC*. I have not seen a photographic example of this Jordan Valley fancy straightline.

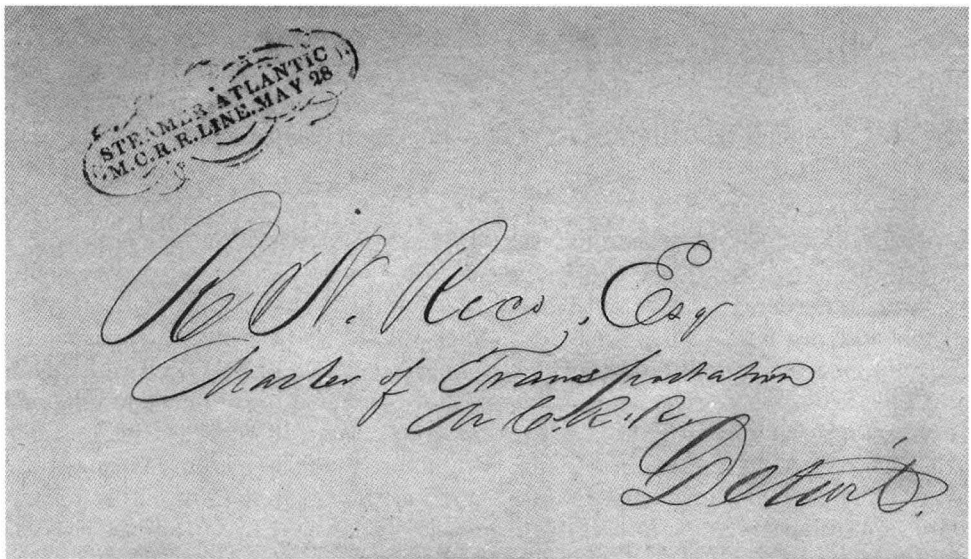


Figure 46. STEAMER ATLANTIC M.C.R.R. LINE. MAY 28 (Listing No. L3)

L3. *STEAMER ATLANTIC M.C.R.R. LINE. MAY 28* Milgram No. 78. In Figure 46 is the only known example of this marking, an 1849 Great Lakes steamboat marking. The initials signify "Michigan Central Railroad Line" which owned both trains and vessels. This cover was an official business letter carried outside of the mails.

L4. *STEAMER NEW ERA*. Milgram No. 987 and 988 (inverted frame). This marking was issued in 1864 and was struck in red ink on 3¢ entires. The illustration (Figure 47) shows the inverted frame type with two strikes of the marking. It is pretty scarce either way.

L5. *FRANKLIN HOUSE*. No. 105, Chestnut St. Phil'a. This is a hotel handstamp, the only one with a fancy mortised frame that I have seen. The cover bears a blue Philadelphia postmark with usage to Washington, D.C. but is undated. A very fine strike is shown in lot 329 of Richard C. Frajola's auction, January 27, 1995.

There are a number of other framed straightline postmarks which seem to have fancy ornamented frames, but the examples known are so poorly struck that one cannot discern enough detail to classify the particular marking by frame. The Robert A. Siegel sale of

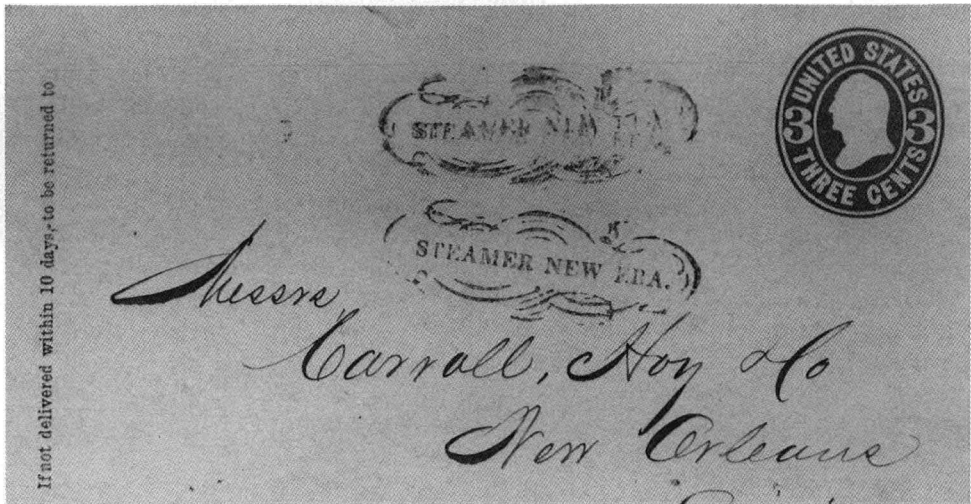


Figure 47. STEAMER NEW ERA. (inverted) (Listing No. L4)

August 17, 1965 illustrated a marking "AUGUSTA MISS. MAR." in two lines with ms. "8" for the date as lot 39. The frame appears to be entirely floral, but I am unable to characterize it further. The letter dates this black marking as 1846. Since the ASCC, Vol. 1, dates this marking as 1847, there may be another example in existence. It appears to be a different frame from those listed. Another cover bears a "DOWNERS GROVE ILLINOIS" in two lines with manuscript dating "May 5." But the frame is so light that one cannot characterize it. A later marking used as a town marking on an 1855 cover with 3¢ stamp is "HINCKLEY O. MAY 25" all in one line tying the stamp. The marking is shown as lot 382 in the catalog of Richard C. Frajola's auction, June 15, 1985. Another example, heavily struck, appears in the Robert A. Siegel sale of January 12, 1961, as lot 1047. This shows the frame to be entirely geometric shapes, perhaps intended to represent vines. Still another difficult to characterize frame is "AUBURN MILLS N.Y." in black on 1860 envelope with 3¢ 1857 tied by separate manuscript dating. It is shown as lot 369, Richard J. Frajola auction of March 19, 1994. There appears to be a sun in the center of the bottom with branches to the sides. The top is not fully struck on the envelope.

The deficiency in these markings is that the rectangular shape does not allow for easy changeable dating as is needed with a postmark. Perhaps that is why they were used more on steamboats and less frequently at post offices. In any event, as a group, they are considered among the most desirable postal markings from the two decades when they were employed in the United States.

I would be very interested in additional listings and more information on listed items.

Acknowledgements

Warren F. Kimball, Jr., Van Koppersmith, Frank Mandel, Donald G. Thompson, and the Smithsonian Institution made illustrations available to me. ☐