

The Chronicle

of the U.S. Classic Postal Issues



Cover sent in 1863 from New York to Nikolaevsk-on-Amur, Russian Siberia, routed via St. Petersburg and Irkutsk. The 37¢ Prussian closed mail rate is paid by 1¢, 5¢ and 30¢ stamps of the 1861 series. One of many fascinating covers illustrated and analyzed in "United States–Russia Mail, 1840-1875," by Richard F. Winter, a two-part article that commences in our Foreign Mails section in this issue.

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Background
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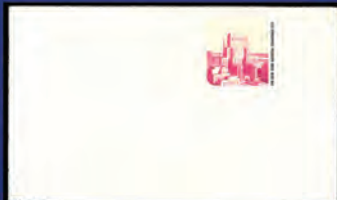
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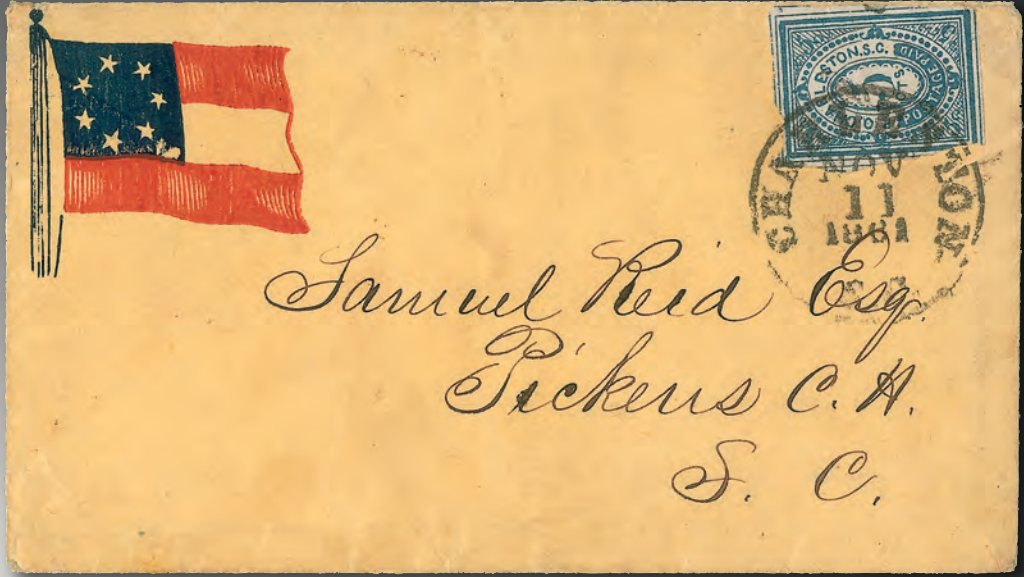
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IN THIS ISSUE

When he retired as our Foreign Mails Editor several years ago, Richard Winter promised he would continue to contribute to our pages. He has not let us down. Our Foreign Mails section this month (page 65) begins a two-part Winter article on U.S.-Russia mail between 1840 and 1875. Classic covers to Russia are scarce and avidly sought by collectors, but this is the first time this subject has been treated comprehensively in print. Winter's article, involving extensive research in European sources that will be new to many collectors on this side of the Atlantic, is adapted from a paper he presented at the International Postal History Fellowship meeting at Emmersdorf, Austria, in September, 2011.

In a review starting on page 88, George G. Sayers takes enthusiastic notice of a new publication from the Smithsonian Institution Scholarly Press. Entitled *Proceedings of the First International Symposium on Analytical Methods in Philately*, this book is currently available—for free—from the website of the Smithsonian Institution Scholarly Press. *Proceedings* is Number 57 in a series of Smithsonian publications called "Contributions to History and Technology." A previous philatelic book in this series (#6) was George Hargest's *History of Letter Post Communication between the United States and Europe*, which retrospectively has proved to be one of the most important postal history publications of the 20th century. When his book came out in 1971, Hargest was the Foreign Mails Editor of the *Chronicle*, so Classics Society members knew about the book. And the price was right: \$3. But still, Hargest's book was extremely difficult to order. Few were sold, and then unaccountably the bulk of the print run went missing. (Those books are probably still languishing in some government warehouse.) As a consequence, Hargest's work was not widely available until a reprint edition was privately published (by Quarterman) in 1975. Let's hope this recent Smithsonian stamp publication fares better. It's easy to order. I did it myself, and received my free copies in less than a week.

Sayers is known to *Chronicle* readers for his meticulous research into the plate varieties of classic Official stamps, but his credentials as a reviewer of the *Proceedings* book range well beyond philately. Educated at M.I.T., Sayers spent several years in engineering jobs in the paper and printing industries. This experience along with his other hobby—buying, selling and studying mineral specimens—has given him a hands-on familiarity with the analytical methods discussed in the book under review.

On page 60, in a short but important article in our Carriers and Independent Mails section, Gordon Stimmell presents a 133-year-old sales letter whose content provides strong evidence that the Whites Dispatch label—a well-known adhesive long thought to be a bogus or fantasy creation—is actually a genuine local stamp. And in our 1847 section (page 21), Mark Schwartz analyzes Boston covers bearing 1847 stamps. Schwartz' article, "America's First Issue from America's First Post Office," benefitted from the searchable database of 1847 covers introduced in the November *Chronicle*.

That's not all. Our 1851 section (page 45) features a wide-ranging article from James A. Allen on the perforated 12¢ Washington stamps of 1857-60. While written to stand by itself, this is a logical follow-up to Allen's previous article (*Chronicle* 240) on the imperforate 12¢ Washington stamps. In our Stampless section (page 10), James W. Milgram takes good advantage of our color capability in a broad survey article, "Yellow-Ink Postmarks on Stampless Covers." And in our 1861 section, Michael McClung provides an interesting update on Union occupation postmarks from Florida. Enjoy! ■

YELLOW-INK POSTMARKS ON STAMPLESS COVERS

JAMES W. MILGRAM, M. D.

Those of us who collect stamps and covers rely on the permanence of inks in every item we add to our collections, whether stamps, letters or handstamped cancellations. Ours is a visual hobby and ink and paper are the main components that meet our eyes.

With this in mind, I have selected stampless covers with yellow postmarks as an interesting subject for discussion. This article takes advantage of the recent capability to provide fairly accurate color reproduction in the pages of the *Chronicle*, an impossible task in the days of black and white printing. Michael McClung led the way in *Chronicle* 235 (August, 2012) with his article “Colors in Print,” about the various shades of the 3¢ 1861 stamp.

The history of ink on paper goes back to early Egyptian or Chinese days, involving scrolls containing writing on various types of paper, parchment and canvas. Inks can be composed of pigments, dyestuffs or chemical precipitation (such as iron gall inks) that are applied to paper by brush, pen, or some method of printing with a plate. The ink can be in fluid or paste form.

The pigment, which is the substance that gives the ink its color, is dissolved or dispersed in a liquid called the vehicle. The pigment consists of particles that reflect and absorb light, creating an appearance that our eyes interpret as color. In early letters, the pigment in ink was typically black. Most of the time, permanence is an important feature in ink, although many “permanent” inks change color with the passage of time.

An ink used for a postmark leaves its mark upon paper by penetrating the material to such a depth that it cannot be erased mechanically without the removal or destruction of the surface it has colored. Ink formulas vary, but commonly involve four components: colorants, vehicles, additives, and carrier substances. In postmark inks, pigments are used more frequently than dyes as colorants, because they are more color fast.

In early days, natural substances were used as components to create many different colors of ink. For yellow the pigment came from plants: mostly saffron, turmeric and weld. For use as a postmarking ink, these components had to be placed in a vehicle that would dry rapidly to avoid smearing. It is likely that some postmasters made their own ink rather than purchasing it commercially. This is particularly true in the pre-stamp era. Once stamps came into use to indicate the prepayment of postage, it was important that the ink defacing the stamp could not be removed without damaging the printed image, thus assuring that the stamp would not be reused. Prevention of such fraud was not a concern during the pre-stamp era, so we see a greater variety of colored postmarks on stampless mail. One of the most striking colors (as well as one of the rarest) is yellow. This article will describe some stampless covers bearing yellow postmarks.

Some yellow postmarks can be difficult to discern when applied to white paper. During the stampless cover era (before 1847) white was widely used, but there was much use of blue paper too. Orange, yellow, and manila papers are mainly from the later period, after envelopes became commonplace. A few towns used yellow postmarks into the 1850s, but yellow postmarks are not found at later dates.

Because yellow postmarks differ in hue as well as intensity, I have devised a color classification system to describe those yellow postmarks for which scans were available to me. The categories are bright yellow, pale yellow, burnt or dark yellow, olive yellow, yel-

low orange and orange yellow. All color names and classifications are inherently arbitrary. This article shows examples of each of the designated colors, so readers can see for themselves. To facilitate close comparison, the townmarks from the covers discussed (mostly circular datestamps) have been grouped onto a separate plate, with the markings arranged according to their color classification. (See Plate 1 on page 15.)

Bright Yellow

The earliest of all yellow postmarks appears on two covers from Boston dating from 1776. The first report of the existence of this yellow marking appeared in *Chronicle* 155, in an article by Dr. Timothy O'Connor, who illustrated one of the covers—in black and white, or course.¹ O'Connor described this marking as “vivid yellow.” For the purposes of this article, I have called this and similarly colored markings “bright yellow”. In his *Chronicle* article O'Connor described a number of colors used by the Boston postmaster in the 1776-1777 period, including orange, red-orange and magenta (in addition to yellow).

Through the courtesy of Route Agent Mark Schwartz we show in Figure 1 the second example of this yellow Boston marking, on a cover postmarked four days earlier than the cover shown in O'Connor's article. A yellow Franklin mark is applied twice to this cover



Figure 1. Bright yellow Revolutionary War postmark “BOSTON” and Franklin mark “16 MA” (1776) on letter to John Langdon at Portsmouth, New Hampshire.



Figure 2. Bright yellow “MADISON Wis. SEP 6” (1843) on a cover sent to the governor of Mississippi at Jackson, with manuscript “25” for the rate over 400 miles.



Figure 3. Bright yellow “HERTFORD N.C. JAN 3” with manuscript “Paid 25” on a cover to Boston, Massachusetts. Illustration from Kelleher auction, October 2012.

and one strike is clearly dated “16 MA”, representing May 16. The contents are year-dated 1776. This cover was sold in a Siegel auction in December, 2010 (sale 1002, lot 3084), where the marking was described as “golden yellow” or just plain “yellow.” The very next lot in the Siegel sale was another Boston cover from the same era, with the same hand-stamps struck in a lovely orange hue (described as red orange in the catalog). This color will be discussed later in this article.

The Figure 1 cover represents the earliest American postmark from Boston after the British evacuation of that town.² It was sent from Boston to Portsmouth, New Hampshire and is rated “2 dwt”. The addressee, John Langdon, was subsequently a signer of the Constitution and one of the first two United States senators from New Hampshire.

Figure 2 shows a postmark from Wisconsin Territory, handstamped “MADISON Wis. SEP 6” (1843). This marking also shows a bright yellow hue. As mentioned above, bright yellow postmarks can border on white, which makes them difficult to discern when they are struck on white paper. This is probably the reason so few post offices ever used them. This cover is addressed to the governor of Mississippi at Jackson, with manuscript “25” indicating a collection of 25¢ for a distance greater than 400 miles.

Another bright yellow postmark is the example shown in Figure 3, here applied at Hertford, North Carolina in the 1840s on a cover to Boston. The manuscript rating mark (“paid 25”) was applied in pen. At this time rates were usually handwritten, and a yellow rate marking would have been very difficult to read.

Pale Yellow

Hardest of all to see is the color I call pale yellow. Figure 4 shows an example, on a cover from Suffield, Connecticut, to nearby Salisbury. The matching “5” rate marking at upper right is almost indiscernible. But the address portion of the cover and its contents show no bleaching of ink, so I assume this cover looked, when it started its journey in 1844, pretty much the way it looks now. The circular datestamp reads “SUFFIELD Ct. NOV 5.”



Figure 4. Pale yellow “SUFFOLK, Ct. NOV 5” and “5” (hardly visible at upper right) on a folded cover to Salisbury, Connecticut. Internal evidence dates this cover from 1844.

Dark Yellow

One of the most attractive yellow postmarks is the rimless circular townmark from Westfield, Massachusetts. Figure 5 shows an example from 1825 (“WESTFIELD MS. Jan 12”) with matching “PAID” in scroll along with a manuscript “12½” (for the 80 to 150 mile rate to New Bedford). Another example of this same postmark from 1828 proves that Westfield used a yellow ink postmark for a number of years. In fact, after the town marking became illegible, the yellow scroll PAID was used for a while with manuscript townmarks.

The hue of this Westfield postmark is much darker than the yellows on the preceding covers. If one wishes to call this shade yellow-brown, I would not argue with that. But I

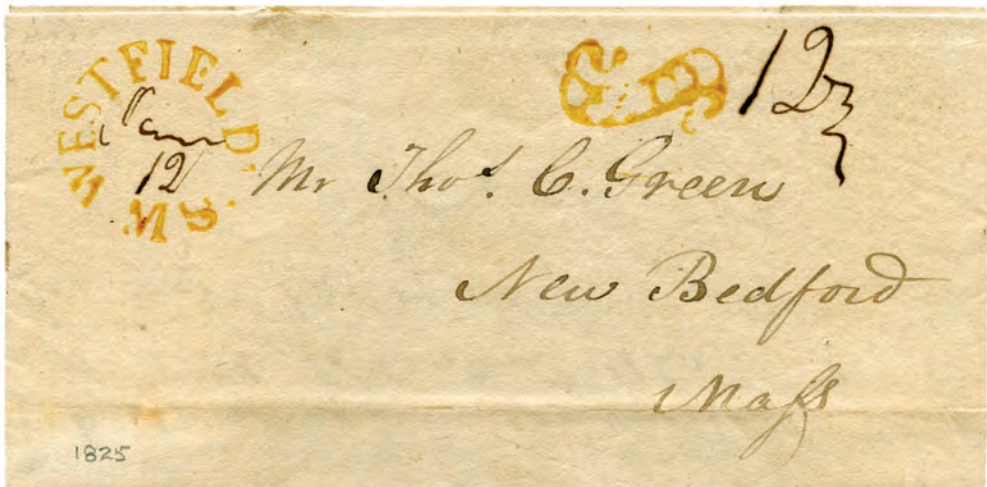


Figure 5. Dark yellow rimless “WESTFIELD MS.” circular townmark and matching “PAID” in scroll, with manuscript “Jany 12” (1825) and “12½” for the 80 to 150 miles from Westfield to New Bedford. Illustration from Kelleher auction, December, 2010.



Figure 6. Dark yellow “LAWRENCEVILLE Ga. FEB 24” (1846) with matching “PAID” and “5” rating mark in a double circle, on a cover to South Carolina.

prefer to call it a dark yellow. This shade shows no hint of red or orange. I do not use the word ochre to describe dark yellows. My dictionary defines ochre as any number of earthy iron oxides—yellow, brown or red—used as pigments. I don’t think ochre is a sufficiently precise term to describe color hues.

Figure 6 illustrates another dark yellow sequence of markings—a circular datestamp, “PAID” and “5” in a double circle—here on a cover sent from Lawrenceville, Georgia, to South Carolina in 1846. Reference to Plate 1 will confirm that the color of the Lawrenceville markings is similar to the color of the Westfield postmark.

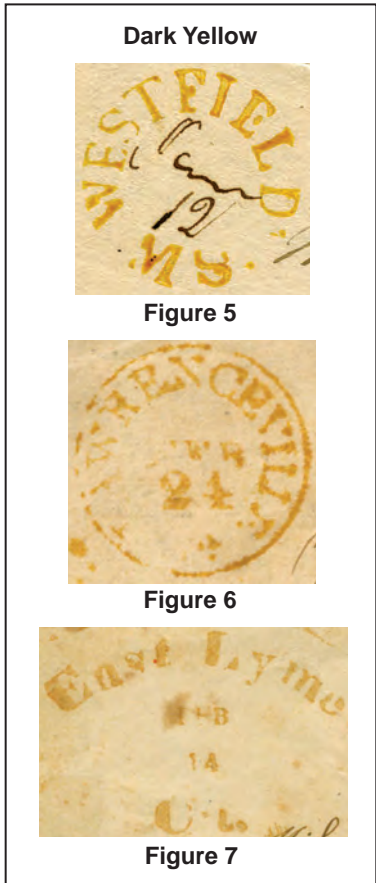
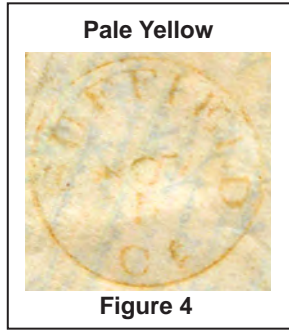
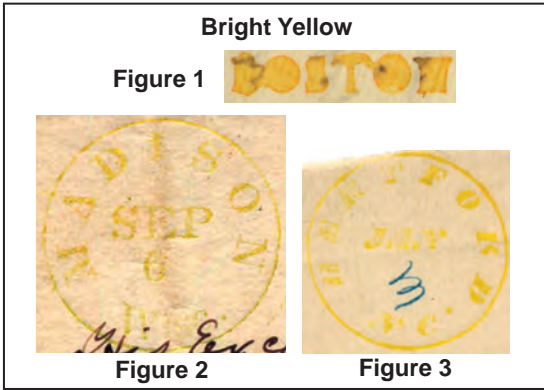


PLATE 1

Town markings from the covers discussed and illustrated in this article.

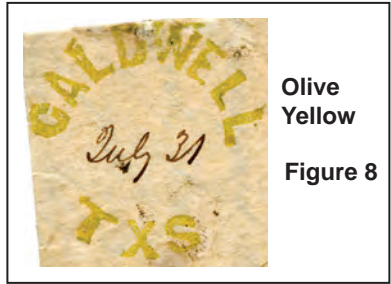




Figure 7. Dark yellow "EAST LYME, Ct. FEB 14" in arch with matching "Paid" and pen "Drop 2" on a small envelope that probably carried a valentine.

Figure 8. Olive yellow rimless "CALDWELL TXS" and matching "5" on an 1850 letter to Huntsville, Texas. Caldwell was the source of several very colorful markings from this era.



Dark yellow postmarks are much more legible than the lighter colors just shown. The postmark on the cover in Figure 7 is a dark yellow "EAST LYME Ct. FEB 14" in arch format (part curved, part straight). The stampless cover catalog illustrates a shell outline for this postmark, but the strike on this cover shows only a few fragments of the outline. The cover bears a "Paid" marking in matching dark yellow and a blue manuscript "Drop 2," which establishes the range of possible year dates as 1846-1850. It's highly likely from the fancy small envelope, the drop use, the address ("Miss Caroline Watrous") and the date, that this cover originally contained a valentine message. If this was a valentine, it led nowhere. A Caroline Watrous, born in 1831, died unmarried in 1916 and is buried in East Lyme Cemetery.

Olive Yellow

In a category all its own is the "CALDWELL TXS" rimless circular townmark shown on the cover in Figure 8. This is a striking yellow hue that has greenish overtones, which is why I call it "olive yellow." The matching olive yellow "5" indicates 5¢ was to be collected from the addressee in Huntsville, Texas, a distance of less than 300 miles. The manuscript "July 31" fills in the townmark and we know from the content that the year was 1850. Caldwell also used the same postmark in green and red inks.

Yellow Orange

Then we come to postmarks with traces of orange in the hue. The example in Figure 9 with “LEXINGTON Va. MAR 3” (1850) and “5” is definitely more yellow than orange so it should be termed an example of a yellow postmark color, in the shade I call yellow orange. The due postage of 5¢ for the under 300 miles rate was charged (“chd”) at the receiving post office, Wilmington, Virginia, to a post office box account. I used this cover in my article on “Charge and Charged Markings” in *Chronicle* 239.

I would say that the postmark in Figure 10 is a true yellow-orange shade. The marking is “CONRAD’S STORE Va. JULY 27” (1853) with matching “PAID 3”, from the transitional period before stamps were required and the 3¢ domestic rate could be prepaid in



Figure 9. Yellow orange “LEXINGTON Va. MAR 3” and matching “5” on cover with a notation (“Chd”) indicating that the postage due on this letter was charged to a box account at receiving post office. Docketing establishes the year date as 1850.



Figure 10. Yellow orange “CONRAD’S STORE Va. JULY 27” (1853) with matching “PAID 3” in circle (indicating 3¢ postage prepaid in cash), on cover to Staunton, Virginia.



Figure 11. Yellow orange “NORFOLK Ct. FEB 12” and manuscript “10” (indicating the rate for a distance of 30-80 miles) on an 1845 cover to Hartford, Connecticut.



Figure 12. Yellow orange “UNION N.Y. JUN 25” with matching “PAID 3” in circle on a small embossed envelope sent in 1854 to Ohio. From the transitional period (1851-55) when the 3¢ rate could be prepaid in cash.

cash. The markings on this cover appear to me to have as much yellow as orange in their hue, thus the designation yellow orange. Note that the cover is addressed “to the Superintendent of the Western Lunatic Asylum, Staunton, Va.” This institution still survives, as Western State Hospital. According to its website, its first patients (in 1828) were two men suffering from “religious excitement and excessive study.”

Figure 11 shows another yellow orange postmark, from Norfolk, Connecticut, on an 1845 cover to Hartford. The circular datestamp reads “NORFOLK, Ct. FEB 12” and the manuscript “10” represents the postal rate for a distance between 30 and 80 miles.

The hue of the “UNION NY JUN 25” with “PAID 3” in circle shown in Figure 12 is also yellow orange. To my eye this has slightly more orange than the others in this category, but it is not a true orange. Addressed to Ohio, this is another transitional-period cover (in this case, from 1854) with the 3¢ letter rate prepaid in cash.



Figure 13. Orange yellow “WEST TOWNSEND Mass. JUNE 25” and matching “PAID 3” in a circle on a cover to New Jersey from the transitional period when 3¢ postage could be prepaid in cash.



Figure 14. Orange “COLUMBIA Va. MAR 24” (1847) with matching handstamped “PAID” and manuscript “paid 5” rating on a cover to Staunton, Virginia, from the same correspondence (“Western L. Asylum”) as the cover shown in Figure 10.

Orange Yellow

The orange hue seems more dominant in the cover in Figure 13, which is why I have designated it orange yellow. Both the “WEST TOWNSEND Mass. JUNE 25” and the “PAID 3” show a strong orange hue. While the year date for this cover is not known, it also dates from the transitional period (1851-55).

The Boston straightline marking mentioned at the outset, offered a Siegel auction in December, 2010 (sale 1002, lot 3085) appears to be an orange yellow hue, but oranges can show varying amounts of yellow. The catalog description called this “red orange” but there’s certainly a yellow component. As noted earlier, all color designations are arbitrary.

Orange

To conclude, Figure 14 shows a marking struck in what I would call a true orange color, here on a cover posted at Columbia, Virginia in 1847. The circular datestamp, “COLUMBIA Va. MAR 24” and “PAID” are both a striking shade of orange. This cover, from the same correspondence as Figure 10, was sent to Staunton, Virginia and rated “paid 5”.

Afterword

After this article was laid out and ready to be printed, an important yellow marking, long underground, came to the surface. Shown as Figure 15 is the cover from Romulus, New York, that was the source Calvet Hahn used in listing this marking in Volume 1 of the *American Stampless Cover Catalog*. The Romulus marking is significant because the yellow hue is unlike any of the examples shown in the plate accompanying this article. It comes closest to the Westfield, Massachusetts, marking on the cover in Figure 5, but it is not as dark. For taxonomical purposes I will categorize it simply as Yellow.



Figure 15. A recent rediscovery: Yellow “ROMULUS N.Y, OCT 24” with manuscript “6” on 1842 cover to Waterloo, New York (source of the ASCC listing for this marking).

Conclusion

There are other yellow postmarks from the stampless period. This article is not intended to be a complete coverage. But the subject is interesting, the covers are striking and the hues are various—well worth showing in true-to-life color.

Endnotes

1. Timothy O’Connor, “Report of a New Boston Handstamp,” *Chronicle* 155, August 1992, pp. 164-166.
2. Mark Schwartz, “Now We Have Our Post Office Back—A First-hand Account of the End of the Siege of Boston,” *The Collectors Club Philatelist*, May 2012, pp. 141-147. ■

AMERICA'S FIRST ISSUE FROM AMERICA'S FIRST POST OFFICE

MARK S. SCHWARTZ

On July 2, 1847, Third Assistant Postmaster General John Marron personally delivered to Boston Postmaster Nathaniel Green the first shipment of 5¢ and 10¢ adhesive stamps from Rawdon, Wright, Hatch & Edson in New York. Because there was a statutory requirement that a postmaster had to apply for them rather than receiving stamps from the Post Office Department (POD) as a matter of course, this first delivery was small—40,000 5¢ and 10,000 10¢ stamps.¹ Eventually, the Boston Post Office would receive 401,000 5¢ stamps and 41,000 10¢ stamps, a total only exceeded by New York (930,000 and 295,000) and Philadelphia (462,000 and 77,000).²

The main focus of this article is to review the covers sent from Boston bearing 5¢ and/or 10¢ stamps of the issue of 1847. But this story is best told in the broader context of the postal events that preceded it.

The lead-up to a reduction in postal rates

Throughout most of the first half of the 19th century, postal rates for letters in the United States were relatively high. From 1816 to 1845, sending a letter cost from 6¢ per single sheet sent up to 30 miles, to 25¢ for a similar letter sent beyond 500 miles. A triple-sheet letter sent over 500 miles cost 75¢. But in 1850, a non-farm laborer earned an average of only 90¢ a day; the ordinary person could not afford to send letters very often to people any significant distance away.³

As a result, a movement developed within the United States to promote the cause of cheaper postage. This had its origins in the United Kingdom, where the cause of cheap postage had been officially embraced in 1840, when the basis for postal rates was changed from distance and sheet count to weight alone. The new pre-paid rate was 1d for a letter weighing up to ½ ounce, sent anywhere in the U.K.



Figure 1. Lysander Spooner

One of the leaders of the cheap-postage movement in the United States was Barnabas Bates, who had been born in England. Bates wrote articles and petitions, and held rallies with the goal of making postage accessible to all. Another fervent proponent of cheap postage was Lysander Spooner (1808-1887), who directly challenged the U.S. post office monopoly on intercity mail when he founded the American Letter Mail Company (ALMC). Figure 1 shows an image of Spooner, who was both a lawyer and crusader. He believed that while the Constitution indeed ordered Congress to provide mail delivery, it did not indicate that private citizens were forbidden to do the same. A 22 January 1844 news article in the *Newark Daily Advertiser* reported that “a company has been formed with the object of establishing lines for the transmission of letters at cheap rates of postage throughout all parts of the Union” and that “[t]he persons engaged in this enterprise contend that

the laws of Congress prohibiting private mails are unconstitutional, and they are anxious to have them tested on this point as expeditiously as possible.”

Spooner began operations on January 23, 1844, carrying mail between Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York and Boston to compete with the government postal service. He advertised this fact in several of the New York papers of that date.⁴ He issued postage stamps for prepayment of services, this several years before the POD followed suit. Spooner sold his stamps at “20 for a dollar” and charged letter rates far lower rate than the government was charging.

Regular ALMC service south of Philadelphia seems to have ended in March 1844; the reasons for that are unknown. The government soon sued Spooner and the railroads were threatened with loss of the government mails if they allowed transport of the independent mails. Spooner’s agents were arrested. One of his agents was found guilty and fined for transporting letters in a railroad car over a post road of the United States.

Spooner won a case that said owners of conveyances were not liable under law if, unknown to the owners, a letter carrier brought mail on board a train or a steamboat. The U.S. Circuit Court sustained that verdict and expressed doubt that the government had a right to monopolize the transportation of mail. With additional court reversals, the Postmaster General finally had to plead with Congress for the authority to lower postal rates. Spooner left the ALMC around July 1844. It closed on June 30, 1845, unable to sustain the fight with the Post Office. This was one day before new 5¢ and 10¢ government postage rates went into effect. The same act of Congress that produced the reduced rates prohibited the private carriage of letters between cities where the United States Post Office Department offered city mail service.

Figure 2 shows a typical ALMC letter, sent on May 6, 1844 from Wood, Kimball & Co., a prominent shoe manufacturer in Boston, to the firm of W. A. Ransom, another shoe manufacturer in New York City. The marking at the upper left (“FORWARDED BY/ AMERICAN MAIL CO.”) is the earliest known ALMC forwarding handstamp. The fancy boxed marking at upper right (“COLLECT/6½ CTS./BOSTON/OFFICE”) came into use just two days before this cover was posted. Note the pencil notation “Pearl” at top center,

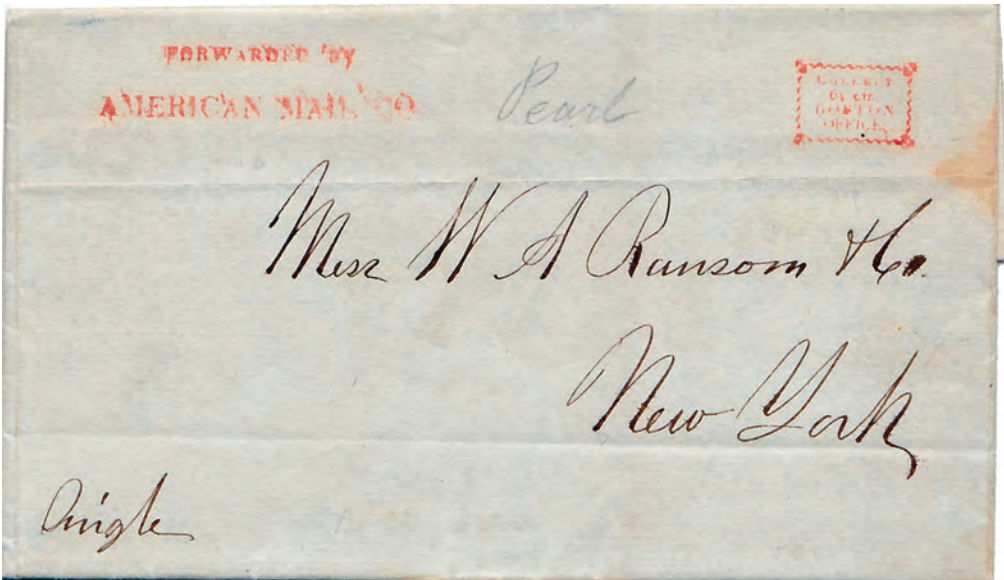


Figure 2. Letter sent May 6, 1844 from Boston to New York by the American Letter Mail Co., which was founded by Spooner to challenge the government mail monopoly.

presumably a reference to Pearl Street in lower Manhattan, suggesting that the letter was locally delivered, despite no evidence of a local charge.

The new reduced rates

Passed on March 2, 1845, the act of Congress that drove ALMC out of business reduced and greatly simplified postal rates. The first section of the act established a 5¢ rate for letters weighing up to one-half ounce and carried up to 300 miles, and a 10¢ rate for letters carried over 300 miles. For each additional half ounce, an additional 5¢ or 10¢ was charged. Letters could be sent paid or unpaid at the same rates. All this was effective July 1.

The March 1845 law did not authorize the printing, distribution or use of adhesive postage stamps, though other countries had used them since 1840 and private mail companies in the United States had been using them for more than three years. Britain had issued the Penny Black—the world’s first postage stamp used in a public postal system—in May 1840, and Brazil followed suit in August 1843. In New York City, Alexander Grieg’s City Despatch Post began issuing stamps for prepayment of local mail delivery in February 1842. Other local companies, such as Robertson & Co. in Philadelphia, quickly followed. The American Letter Mail Company issued its first adhesive stamps in January 1844. Hale & Co., whose service area included New England, New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland and the province of New Brunswick, did so in March 1844.

The postmaster provisionals

Rather than wait for the government to issue postage stamps, several U.S. postmasters began to create their own, for prepayment of letters sent from their individual post offices. Among these were the postmasters of Alexandria, Annapolis, Baltimore, Boscowen, N.H., Brattleboro, Vt., Lockport, N.Y., Millbury, Mass., New Haven, New York, Providence and St. Louis. Some of these stamps are quite rare. The postmaster provisional stamp with the greatest and broadest use was that issued by Robert H. Morris, postmaster of New York City. This stamp was printed on various papers, secured with a variety of control markings, and used both domestically and on foreign mail. The earliest known use of this stamp was on July 15, 1845, on two domestic covers and on 11 sent overseas.

Letters bearing this stamp are also known sent to New York City from cities outside of New York. These covers were generally considered unpaid by the postmaster of the originating city, but they were accepted as prepaid once they arrived in New York. The most common of those cities was Boston, from which probably 25 New York postmaster provisional covers are recorded.⁵ An example is shown in Figure 3. This letter was sent to Howland and Aspinwall, a New York firm specializing in the importation of tea, silk and porcelain from China. It was likely sent by one of their agents who carried a supply of the provisional stamp with him to Boston. The New York provisional stamp is tied by a Boston circular datestamp dated November 2 [1845]. There are several provisional covers from this correspondence. The New York postmaster had informed his counterpart in Boston about these stamps in a letter of July 12, 1845.⁶ He had requested that the Boston postmaster mark letters bearing the stamp as unpaid, and indicated that he would consider them paid when they reached his office. On the cover in Figure 3, the Boston postmaster therefore wrote “5” (as a due marking) in magenta manuscript, over which the New York postmaster applied the distinctive New York red curved “PAID” handstamp.

Congress authorizes postage stamps

On March 3, 1847, the 29th Congress passed a law that authorized the Postmaster General to prepare postage stamps “to facilitate the transportation of letters in the mail” and as “evidence of the prepayment of the postage chargeable on such letters.”



Figure 3. New York postmaster provisional stamp on a letter sent November 8, 1845 from Boston to New York City. Boston treated the cover as unpaid (by applying the manuscript “5”), but New York accepted the stamp and marked the cover “PAID.”

As noted at the outset, Boston received its first shipment of 1847 stamps on July 2 and would eventually receive 401,000 5¢ stamps and 41,000 10¢ stamps. Several attempts have been made to determine how many Boston covers with 1847 stamps have survived.

For a number of years, Thomas Alexander’s census of 1847 covers has been indispensable to collectors of this era in U.S. postal history, including those such as myself who focus on specific cities. Alexander’s monumental work included information on almost 13,000 covers and provided much data on each. Some of the most interesting items were illustrated. More recently, Mark Scheuer has significantly extended the Alexander effort. In collaboration with the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society, 1847 cover census data is now on-line (on the USPCS website), fully searchable, and available to members and non-members alike. As of September 23, 2013, it included 14,661 entries and over 7,000 scans of actual covers.⁷ The data presented below is based on searches of the database on that date.

In the on-line census, 1,518 covers are recorded bearing 1847 stamps and postmarked at Boston. Twenty-three of these are considered to be fakes (all but one of these opinions is from the Philatelic Foundation); for another the PF has declined an opinion. The 1,518 total includes covers bearing either a Boston circular datestamp or a Boston Express Mail cds. I have not included covers struck with route agent markings for other railroads that serviced Boston, including the Boston & Albany, Boston & Maine, Boston & Fitchburg and Eastern Railroads. Analysis presented at the end of this article strongly suggests that the great majority of these railroad covers were not put aboard the trains at Boston, but at some other station along the line.

The pie chart in Figure 4 shows the distribution of various categories of 1847 frankings found on Boston covers. These categories are discussed in detail below.

Boston covers bearing a single 5¢ 1847 stamp

Of the 1,494 genuine covers, 919 bear a single 5¢ 1847 stamp. (Some of these also show the first or second Boston Penny Post stamp in combination.) The vast majority of the

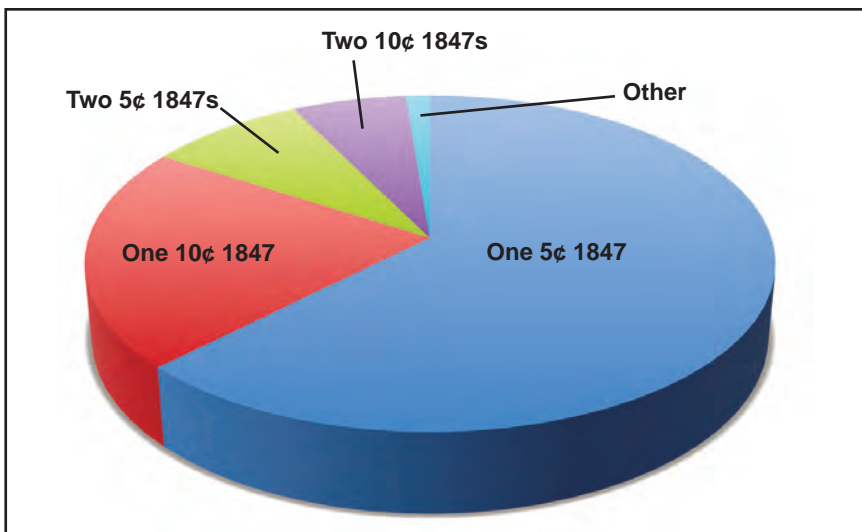


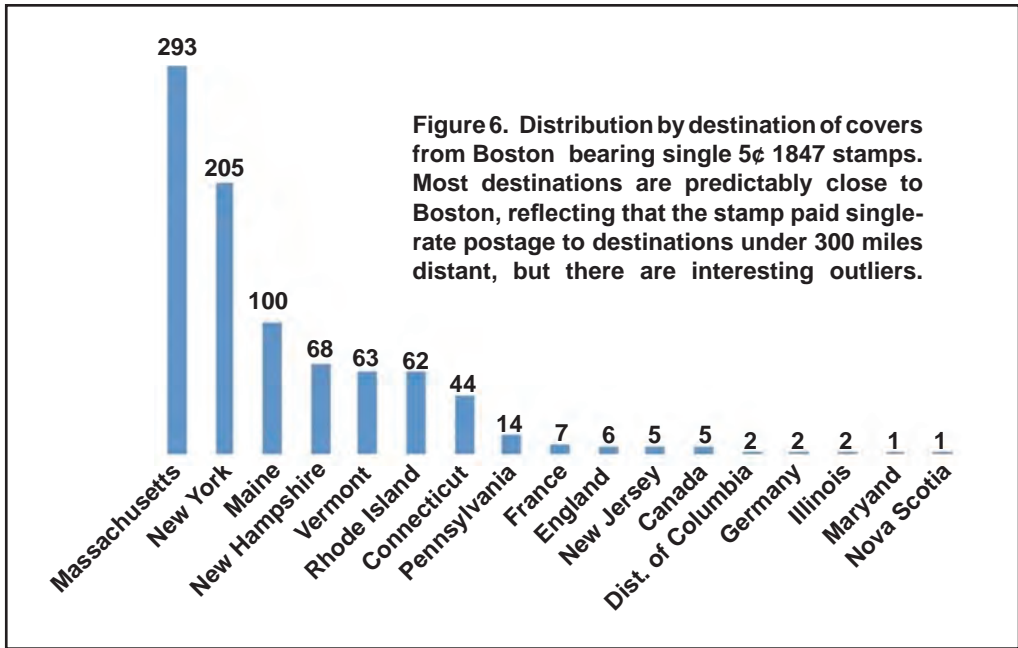
Figure 4. Distribution, according to franking, of covers from Boston with 1847 stamps. As this graphic makes clear, most are franked with single stamps.

919 covers were letters weighing less than one-half ounce, sent to destinations within 300 miles of Boston. A few of these were found to be overweight and then struck with a Boston circular datestamp with integral 10 due marking, with “5 Due” applied in ink or crayon.

The earliest recorded Boston cover bearing an 1847 stamp was posted on July 16, 1847. This letter was sent by rail to New York and shows a “U.S. Express Mail, Boston, Mass.” cds. The 5¢ stamp paid the under-300-mile rate from Boston to New York City. No image of this cover is available, but a typical example of a single rate, under 300-mile cover is shown in Figure 5. Franked with a 5¢ 1847 stamp, this was posted 23 February 1850, sent by Head & Perkins, Boston bankers, to Samuel F. Lyman, register of probate in Northampton, Massachusetts.



Figure 5. Typical example of a single-rate 5¢ 1847 cover, so rated because it travelled a distance of less than 300 miles, in this case from Boston to Northampton, Massachusetts.



Thirty-eight single-rate, under 300-mile covers have no determinable state address. Of the remaining 881, destinations are distributed as shown in the graph in Figure 6. Note that a total of 20 of these covers bearing only one 5¢ stamp were sent to states (District of Columbia, Illinois, Maryland and Pennsylvania) more than 300 miles from Boston. A few were marked noting that 5¢ was due; others were struck with an integral “10” circular datestamp, suggesting that the remaining 5¢ may have been prepaid in cash. But for most, there is no notation on the cover, or photographic evidence is lacking. The rating on letters to some states is determined at the town level. Four covers were sent to towns in New York that are over 300 miles from Boston. Four covers (out of five) to New Jersey traveled over 300 miles.

Combinations of the 5¢ stamp with a Boston carrier stamp

Carrier service in Boston had existed since the earliest days of the Boston post office. On February 18, 1849, the postmaster at Boston, Nathaniel Green, announced that James H. Patterson and his carriers had been appointed to provide letter delivery in Boston beginning on February 8. The Letter Carrier’s Office was established at 123 Sudbury St., moving in 1850 to the Merchant’s Exchange. During the years 1849-57, the first specific penny post markings and adhesives were introduced. The earliest Boston adhesive carrier stamp, printed in blue simply “PENNY POST”, is first known used in March 1849.⁸ According to the on-line census, there are 23 examples of the first Boston Penny Post adhesive (Scott 3LB1) used in combination with a 5¢ 1847; no covers with the 10¢ 1847 have been recorded.

One of the most interesting combination covers is shown in Figure 7—the only such cover sent overseas. It was datelined March 6, 1850, with the Penny Post adhesive paying the carrier rate to the Boston post office. The 5¢ 1847 was added per regulations established by the U.S.-U.K. Postal Convention of 1848, which stated that a letter sent from the U.S. through the U.K. to a country with which the U.K. had a postal treaty (e.g., France) had to be delivered free of U.S. charges. The cover was carried on the Cunard steamer *America*, arriving at Liverpool on March 19. At London, the red boxed “COLONIES/&c. ART. 13” accountancy handstamp was applied, per an amendment made in December 1845 to the 1843 postal agreement between the U.K. and France, which specified the amount due to



Figure 7. The first Boston Penny Post carrier stamp (Scott 3LB1) with a 5¢ 1847 stamp, on a cover sent March 6, 1850 from Boston on to Paris. (Collection of Steven Walske.)

the U.K. for a letter from abroad arriving in France via the U.K. Per the black double circle marking, the cover entered France at Calais and reached Paris on March 20, where it was marked as a double weight letter (the check mark at upper left). A “3” was written and crossed out, then a “30” indicating 30 decimes collected, for a letter weighing 7½-15 grams (20 decimes for the U.K. and 10 decimes to France).

The second Boston carrier stamp (3LB2), inscribed “PENNY POST PAID”, was first used in October 1850. An example used along with a 5¢ 1847 stamp is shown on the cover in Figure 8. This was posted at Boston on 17 June 1851, very close to the end of the 1847 period. It was sent from R.W. Fuller in Boston to his spinster cousin, Mary Flint in Woburn, Massachusetts, with a note to the postmaster to forward it immediately. The overlap of the “PENNY POST PAID” carrier stamp with the use of the 1847 stamps was just nine months; as a consequence, only five examples of this combination have been reported.

Boston covers bearing a single 10¢ 1847 stamp

There are 343 Boston covers in the on-line census franked with a single 10¢ 1847 stamp; seven of these have been declared not genuine by the Philatelic Foundation. On 15 percent of the genuine covers, the 10¢ stamp paid the double rate for a letter weighing ½-1 ounce sent under 300 miles. This includes 19 letters sent within New England; 20 letters to New York City; and four to a few other towns in the state of New York. It also includes four letters to Montreal, two covers sent to Prince Edward Island and one to Nova Scotia, as the border exchange offices were less than 300 miles from Boston. One of the double-rate covers is shown in Figure 9. This is a cover from Boston to Hanover, New Hampshire. The Boston integral “10Cts.” cds is dated 9 March. No year date is evident, but there’s a similar cover in the census from 28 March 1848, suggesting that the Figure 9 cover also dates from that year.

For the great majority of covers in this category, the single 10¢ stamp paid the single rate for a letter weighing less than ½ ounce and sent a distance of more than 300 miles. Subtracting the double-weight covers noted above, and the seven covers for which destina-



Figure 8. Cover bearing a 5¢ 1847 stamp and an example of the second Boston Penny Post carrier stamp (3LB2), sent June 17, 1851 to Woburn, Massachusetts.



Figure 9. A double-rate cover, which must have weighed between $\frac{1}{2}$ and 1 ounce, franked with a single 10¢ 1847 stamp and posted at Boston on March 2 (year not known), addressed to Hanover, New Hampshire, a distance of less than 300 miles.

tions cannot be determined, we have 279 single-rate covers sent over 300 miles. More than half of these (185, representing 66 percent) were sent to Pennsylvania, reflecting the vast Ludlow, Beebe correspondence, which accounts for over two-thirds of the covers to Pennsylvania. The next most frequent destinations in this category were Maryland (26 covers, 9 percent) and Ohio (15 covers, 5 percent). The remaining covers were spread over 14 states, Canada (three covers) and Mexico (one cover).



Figure 10. According to the online census, the most typical use of a single 10¢ 1847 stamp was to pay the single rate for a letter weighing less than ½ ounce and travelling more than 300 miles. This cover was sent June 10, 1851 from Boston to Galena, Illinois.

Figure 10 shows a cover on which a single 10¢ 1847 stamp pays the over-300-mile rate from Boston to Galena, Illinois. Posted 10 June 1851, this cover was sent from the A. W. Conant company, an Boston importer of dry goods, to E.H. & H.P. Corwith, clothiers in Galena. This is one of only four recorded covers from Boston to Illinois. Note the integral “10 Cts” circular datestamp and the Boston straightline PAID, both technically not necessary, since the stamp itself presented adequate evidence of prepayment.

Boston covers bearing two 5¢ 1847 stamps

There are 124 covers listed as being genuine and franked with two copies of the 5¢ 1847 adhesive. Counting covers sent to other New England states (7), to New York City (9), to New Brunswick (1) and four of five to Canada (Sherbrooke, St. Catherine, and Northport), it appears that about 17 percent were double-weight letters sent less than 300 miles. This is the same proportion seen in letters bearing a single 10¢ stamp. The great majority of letters bearing two 5¢ stamps (or one 10¢ stamp) were sent over 300 miles.

Among the 119 whose destination is determinable, the largest number (53 covers, 45 percent) were again sent to Pennsylvania. Interestingly though, unlike covers franked with a single 10¢ stamp and sent to Pennsylvania, relatively few of those with two 5¢ stamps were part of the Ludlow, Beebe correspondence. This firm, officially known as Beebe, Ludlow & Company, operated in New York City and Philadelphia in the mid 1800s, trading in bullion and specie.

After Pennsylvania and New York (12 covers, nine to New York City), the distribution becomes quite spread out, and includes 17 other states, Canada and the Maritime Provinces of New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.

The cover in Figure 11 is a typical example of two 5¢ stamps used to pay the under ½-oz. rate on a letter sent over 300 miles. This folded letter was sent from John W. Graves, a physician based in Lowell, to C. Guillon, an attorney in Philadelphia. The content concerns financial matters.



Figure 11. Horizontal pair of 5¢ 1847 stamps, paying the under ½ ounce rate for a distance over 300 miles, on a cover from Boston to Philadelphia sent March 20, 1850.

The census includes eight Boston covers showing vertical pairs of the 5¢ 1847 stamp. Vertical pairs are much less common than horizontal pairs. But since half the listed covers with two 5¢ stamps are not supported by images, the actual number of vertical pairs may be higher. An example of a vertical pair of the 5¢ stamp on a Boston cover is shown in Figure 12. It paid the under-half-ounce rate for a letter sent over 300 miles, in this case from Boston to Messrs. David S. Brown & Co., textile merchants in Philadelphia. Note that it was sent by express mail and bears the “U.S. Express Mail, Boston, Mass.” handstamp. First recorded used in 1843, this marking indicated that, rather than being brought to the Boston



Figure 12. Only eight covers are recorded showing vertical pairs of the 5¢ 1847 stamp used from Boston. The pair on this cover, which bears the “U.S. Express Mail, Boston, Mass.” handstamp, paid the under-half-ounce rate to a destination over 300 miles.

post office, the letter was taken directly to the railroad that went from Boston via Providence to Stonington, Connecticut, and then by steamboat to New York City. It is believed that the term “express” was initially used to suggest that the U.S. mails were as fast as mail sent by the independent express mails, which were abolished on July 1, 1845. In fact, no special “express” service was ever provided.

Boston covers bearing two 10¢ 1847 stamps

Analysis of the Boston covers bearing two 10¢ 1847 stamps (all ½-1 oz. and sent over 300 miles) yields an astounding conclusion: of the 91 genuine covers in the census (two were considered not genuine), 86 are from the Ludlow and Beebee correspondence to Philadelphia. (Another was sent to Philadelphia but the addressee is not determinable.) And nearly all of these bear a Boston Express Mail marking. Two other covers in this category were addressed to Baltimore with one to Alabama and another to Michigan.

Doubtless because of their scarcity, the great majority of covers in the online census bearing two 10¢ 1847 stamps have associated images. For the entire country, there are images of only seven covers with vertical pairs. The cover in Figure 13 shows the only vertical pair of 10¢ 1847 stamps used from Boston, and is one of the few 10¢ pairs sent to a destination other than Philadelphia. This cover was sent from Kendrick, Claflin & Co. to Joy and Porter, attorneys in Detroit.



Figure 13. The only Boston cover with a vertical pair of 10¢ 1847 stamps, here on a letter sent September 25, 1847 to Detroit, Michigan (½-1 oz weight, more than 300 miles).

Covers bearing larger multiples of 5¢ and 10¢ 1847 stamps

An examination of the entire on-line census finds only 14 covers franked with three copies of the 5¢ 1847 stamp; of these, two are vertical strips of three, and four are horizontal strips of three. Two of the 14 covers are from Boston and both are franked with horizontal strips of three. One of these, shown in Figure 14, was sent on August 16, 1847 from Boston merchant and horticulturalist Elisha T. Loring to the firm of Goodhue and Co., commission merchants in New York.

This cover was sent before the triple rate was abolished on March 15, 1849. This came about because the British had no triple rate, progressing from 0-½ oz., to ½-1 oz., to 1-2 oz. (requiring four times the single rate). When the U.S.–U.K. postal agreement was signed on January 3, 1849, it explicitly noted that the U.S. and U.K. had a difference in



Figure 14. One of two covers from Boston franked with a horizontal strip of three of the 5¢ 1847 stamp, this cover to New York, paid at three times the 5¢ rate, was sent on 16 August 1847, before the rate progression was modified so as to eliminate the triple rate.



Figure 15. Of the nine Boston covers bearing strips of three of the 10¢ 1847 stamp, eight are from the Ludlow, Beebe correspondence. This representative example was posted June 20, 1848. All the Ludlow, Beebe covers from Boston bear the “Express Mail” circular datestamp. (Image courtesy Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries, Inc.)

their rate progressions. Per a notice dated March 15, 1849, the U.S. Postmaster General eliminated potential confusion by embracing the British progression. Thus, the use of the 1847 stamps to prepay the triple rate was permitted for only about 20 months.

In the on-line census, there are a surprising 34 covers bearing three copies of the 10¢ 1847 stamp, and almost all are horizontal strips of three. Several were sent from Panama City, where the U.S. postal agent, Amos Corwine, had been sent a supply of 10¢ stamps. The first shipment became available on July 16, 1850. Eight covers are known from Pan-



Figure 16. Two vertical pairs of the 5¢ 1847 stamp (originally a block of four) paying the quadruple rate for a 1-2 ounce letter sent less than 300 miles. Only two covers are recorded paying this rate from Boston. This cover, from the Howland and Aspinwall find (see also Figure 3) is datestamped December 10; the year is not known.

ama with strips of three 10¢ 1847 stamps. A few others are on covers to Mexico or to the United Kingdom. Nine covers with strips of three are recorded from Boston, and eight of these were sent to the Ludlow, Beebe firm in Philadelphia. A representative example is shown in Figure 15. This was posted June 20, 1848. All eight Ludlow, Beebe covers bear the Boston “Express Mail” circular datestamp.

As scarce as covers bearing three copies of the 10¢ stamp are covers bearing multiples of four 5¢ stamps. There are 33 of these recorded in the on-line census. Six covers are from Boston, including one with two vertical pairs paying the quadruple 5¢ rate and two with horizontal strips of four 5¢ stamps paying the ½-1 oz. rate for letters sent over 300 miles. One of these went to Baltimore and the other to Philadelphia.

The cover in Figure 16 shows two vertical pairs of the 5¢ 1847 (originally a block of four) used to pay the quadruple rate for a 1-2 ounce letter sent less than 300 miles. Surprisingly, only two covers are recorded paying this rate from Boston. The Figure 16 cover was posted December 10 (year not known) and is addressed to the New York firm of Howland and Aspinwall. This large find was also the source of the cover shown in Figure 3.

The cover shown in Figure 17 is one of the two covers known from Boston bearing a strip of four of the 5¢ 1847 stamp. It was posted June 13 (year not known) and like the cover in Figure 15 was sent on the express mail train to Philadelphia, to the Ludlow, Beebe firm.

There are 16 covers in the on-line census bearing four copies of the 10¢ 1847 stamp and seven of these are horizontal strips of four. None of these originated in Boston.

There are five covers bearing five copies of the 5¢ 1847 stamp. While none are from Boston, all are very special covers. One bears only a horizontal strip of five; it was sent from New York to England, overpaying the 24¢ rate by 1¢. A similarly overpaid cover from Charleston to England is franked with five single 5¢ 1847 stamps, and a cover from Philadelphia to England bears a block of four plus a single. A fourth cover, from Michigan to Germany, is franked by a horizontal strip of five plus a single 10¢ stamp. The fifth



Figure 17. One of two covers known from Boston bearing a strip of four 5¢ 1847s, this cover, also from the Ludlow, Beebe find, was posted June 13, year not known.

cover bears a strip of five 5¢ 1847 stamps and a 3d Canada Beaver stamp, a mixed-country franking paying both the inland Canadian rate and the 24¢ rate from the United States to England.

While none are from Boston, there are seven covers reported bearing five or more copies of the 10¢ 1847 stamp. These include a cover with nine copies (including a torn stamp) from Panama City to Mexico; another with eight copies on a double-weight letter from New York to San Francisco; a strip of six on a cover sent from Mobile to New York; a second strip of six on a cover sent from New York to Paris; a strip of five plus a single on a cover struck with a Little Miami Railroad cancel and sent to Baltimore; a strip of five on a cover sent from New York to Detroit; and a strip of five on a cover from Mobile to Washington, D.C.

Bisects

The on-line census lists a total of 124 examples of a bisected 10¢ 1847 stamp on cover or on piece. Forty of these are considered not genuine, and for three others the Philatelic Foundation has declined to render an opinion. The database lists only one bisect from Boston, and this item has neither a certificate noted nor an image. It is listed as sent from Boston to a "Let. P. Ward & Co.," city unknown. With such sparse information, the existence of a genuine bisected 10¢ 1847 stamp having been accepted at the Boston Post Office is at least subject to doubt.

Combination covers

Although 12 of them are considered not genuine, the on-line census lists 60 covers bearing combinations of the 5¢ and 10¢ 1847 stamps. A number of these are quite interesting, including a cover franked with a pair of each stamp and sent from Charleston to New York City; a cover franked with 35¢ (three 10¢ stamps and one 5¢) and sent to China in 1850; and a retaliatory-rate cover with the same franking sent from New York to Belgium in October 1848. There are only two genuine 5¢/10¢ combination covers recorded from Boston. One was sent from Boston to New Bedford with one copy of each stamp. The other, shown in Figure 18, was sent from Boston to one of the leading China and Japan trading



Figure 18. Only two genuine 5¢/10¢ 1847 combination covers are recorded from Boston. This one was sent to New York on May 31, probably 1849. This may have been a 1–1½ oz. cover rerated due to the elimination of the triple rate on March 15, 1849.

companies, A.A. Low and Brother in New York.

The cover is further endorsed “letters for the S. Russell.” The *Samuel Russell* was a clipper ship engaged in the China trade, so the cover presumably contained letters addressed to the crew members on board the *Samuel Russell*. The cover also has red crayon markings “15” at lower right and “unpaid 5” at upper left. While this cover is not year dated (the Boston circular datestamp reads May 31), the markings suggest that this was a 1–1½ oz. cover which was rerated from 15¢ to 20¢ due to the elimination of the triple rate on March 15, 1849. Harvey Mirsky wrote about this cover in *Chronicle* 209. He interpreted the rating markings differently, but provided much interesting background information on the *Samuel Russell* and the Low firm, whose counting-house still survives, at 167-171 John Street in lower Manhattan.

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Leonard H. Hartmann



Uses to and from Canada, the maritimes and Mexico

There are 17 covers franked with 1847 stamps and sent from Boston to Canada. Five bear single 5¢ stamps; five bear two 5¢ stamps; and seven are franked with single 10¢ stamps.

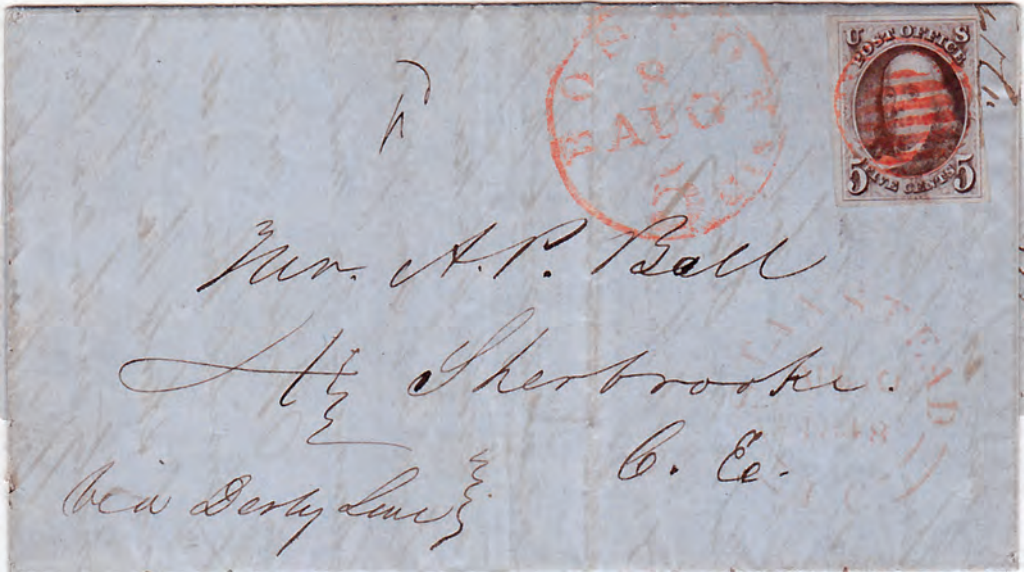


Figure 19. A typical Boston 5¢ letter to Canada, posted 8 August 1848 and sent to Sherbrooke, "Canada East." The 5¢ postage paid the under-half-ounce rate to the border exchange office at Derby Line, Vermont (less than 300 miles from Boston). At Stanstead, across the border from Derby Line, the cover was rated for a collection of 4½ Canadian pence, the rate (30-40 miles) from Stanstead to Sherbrooke.



Figure 20. Cover from Boston to Canada on which a 10¢ 1847 stamp pays the double rate (½-1 oz.) for a letter traveling a distance under 300 miles. Sent June 10, 1850, this cover traveled via Burlington, Vermont, the exchange office with Montreal. The 4½d Canadian collection noted in manuscript paid the rate on the Canadian side.



Figure 21. Two 5¢ singles on a December 3, 1847 cover to St. John, one of two Boston covers recorded to New Brunswick. The stamps paid the postage for the over-300-mile trip to Eastport, Maine. The letter crossed the border to St. Andrews, New Brunswick, and traveled onward to St. John, where 7d Canadian was due from the recipient. (Image courtesy Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries, Inc.)

A typical Boston 5¢ letter to Canada is shown in Figure 19. This was posted in Boston on August 8, 1848, sent from D. Paige and Co., a Boston wholesale dry goods firm, to A.P. Ball in Sherbrooke, “Canada East.” The 5¢ postage paid the under-half-ounce rate to the border at Derby Line, Vermont (less than 300 miles from Boston). At Stanstead, across the border from Derby Line, the cover was rated for a collection of 4½ Canadian pence, the rate (30-40 miles) from Stanstead to Sherbrooke.

Figure 20 shows a cover from Boston to Canada on which a 10¢ 1847 stamp pays the double rate (½-1 oz.) for a letter traveling up to 300 miles. It was sent from Naylor Veckers, a Sheffield, England, manufacturer of steel bells with an office in Boston, addressed to Montreal, for Frothingham and Markman, the largest hardware and iron wholesaler in British North America. The cover traveled via Burlington, Vermont, the exchange office with Montreal. Both are about 50 miles from the border. The 4½d Canadian collection paid the rate on the Canadian side.

Eight covers in the on-line census were sent from Boston to the maritime provinces of British North America—Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. Among these are several very interesting covers.

One of the two covers to New Brunswick is shown in Figure 21. The pair of 5¢ 1847 stamps on this cover paid the postage for the over-300-mile trip to Eastport, Maine. The letter then crossed the border to St. Andrews, New Brunswick, and made the trip onward to St. John, with 7d Canadian due from the recipient.

Of the three covers sent from Boston to Nova Scotia, two went by Cunard steamer via Halifax—one directly to Halifax and the other to Pictou. One of these, dated April 10, 1849, went directly from Boston, with a single 5¢ 1847 stamp paying the rate to the port of departure, with one shilling postage due at Halifax. The cover to Pictou is shown in Figure 22. This was sent during the retaliatory-rate period (the Boston express mail cancel



Figure 22. Cover from Boston to Pictou, Nova Scotia, posted 15 August 1848. The strip of three 10¢ 1847 stamps overpaid (by 1¢) the 29¢ postage required to carry this retaliatory-rate cover sent on a Cunard vessel to Canada. The recipient in Pictou paid 1/8 postage due. (Image courtesy Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries, Inc.)

reads August 15, [1848]) and is franked with a strip of three 10¢ 1847 stamps, representing 5¢ postage from Boston to New York, 24¢ for the retaliatory rate for mail sent by British steamer from the United States, with a 1¢ overpayment. From Halifax the cover was sent on to Pictou, where the addressee, J. D. B. Frazer, paid 1/8 postage due (manuscript marking across the address): 1/ for the Cunard voyage and 8d for the trip from Halifax to Pictou. The third cover, addressed to Halifax, is neither pictured nor further described in the on-line census.

Three covers were sent from Boston to Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. One of these, a winter-mail cover with a horizontal pair of 5¢ 1847 stamps that took a very interesting voyage, was illustrated and described in an article by David D'Allesandris in *Chronicle* 238.⁹

Covers to foreign destinations

The on-line census shows 250 letters franked with 1847 stamps and sent to countries other than Canada and the maritime provinces. The most frequent destinations are the United Kingdom (109 covers), France (79) and Germany (34). Eight covers each were sent to Belgium and Mexico, and three apiece to Cuba and Switzerland. Unique destinations are Brazil, Bohemia, China, Hungary, Italy, Norway and Sweden.

From Boston, covers are known only to England, France, Germany and Mexico. Of the 109 covers to the United Kingdom, just six originated from Boston. All six show a single 5¢ 1847 stamp paying the postage to the port for a letter weighing under ½ ounce sent a distance under 300 miles. Four of these covers were posted before the U.S.-U.K. treaty went into effect. The cover shown in Figure 23 is one of these. It was written in Montreal on June 9, 1848 and then carried privately to Boston, where the 5¢ 1847 stamp was applied for



Figure 23. 1847 covers from Boston to foreign destinations are not common. This letter originated at Montreal on June 9, 1848. It was carried privately to Boston, where the 5¢ 1847 stamp was added for carriage to New York. From New York the cover travelled by steamer to Liverpool, where 1 shilling was collected from the recipient upon delivery.

the Express Mail trip to New York, thence by steamer to Henry Jump Sons, corn merchants, in Liverpool, from whom 1 shilling was collected.

The other two covers were sent to the United Kingdom after the treaty went into effect. The treaty required that letters be sent either fully prepaid or fully unpaid. The cover in Figure 24 was sent on September 25, 1850, fully prepaid from Boston to Liverpool, with the 24¢ prepayment made partly in stamps (5¢) and partly in cash (19¢). Only two Boston covers are known sent to foreign destinations with prepayment made with a combination of stamp and cash. The other, sent to France, is discussed below.



Figure 24. This 5¢ 1847 cover to Liverpool was posted at Boston on 25 September 1850, after the U.S.-U.K. postal treaty went into effect. Unusually, the required 24¢ prepayment made partly in stamps (5¢) and partly in cash (19¢).



Figure 25. One of seven 5¢ 1847 covers sent from Boston to France. This cover was datelined 14 December 1850 and sent via England after the U.S.-U.K. postal treaty went into effect. The recipient paid 15 decimes due at Paris.

Of the 79 covers recorded in the on-line census as bearing 1847 stamps to France, seven originated at Boston. All seven are franked with single 5¢ 1847 stamps paying postage to the port of departure. Two were sent before the U.S.-U.K. treaty, and five after. The post-treaty cover shown in Figure 25 was datelined at Boston on December 14, 1850, and sent to Henry W. Abbot, care of Greene and Co. in Paris. The recipient at Paris paid 15 decimes postage due.

As noted, one of the post-treaty covers to France is the other of the two Boston covers sent to a foreign destination with postage paid partly in cash and partly in stamps. This cover, which crossed the Atlantic on the ill-fated Collins-line steamer *Arctic*, is the only 1847 cover to France sent on an American packet. It was illustrated and written up by Steven Walske in a broad survey of 1847 covers to France in *Chronicle* 234.¹⁰

Of the 34 1847 covers in the on-line census sent from the United States to Germany, only two are from Boston. Both are from the same correspondence, sent from oil merchants Mixer & Pitman to Frederick Wahl in Neuweid-on-the-Rhine. One of these is shown in

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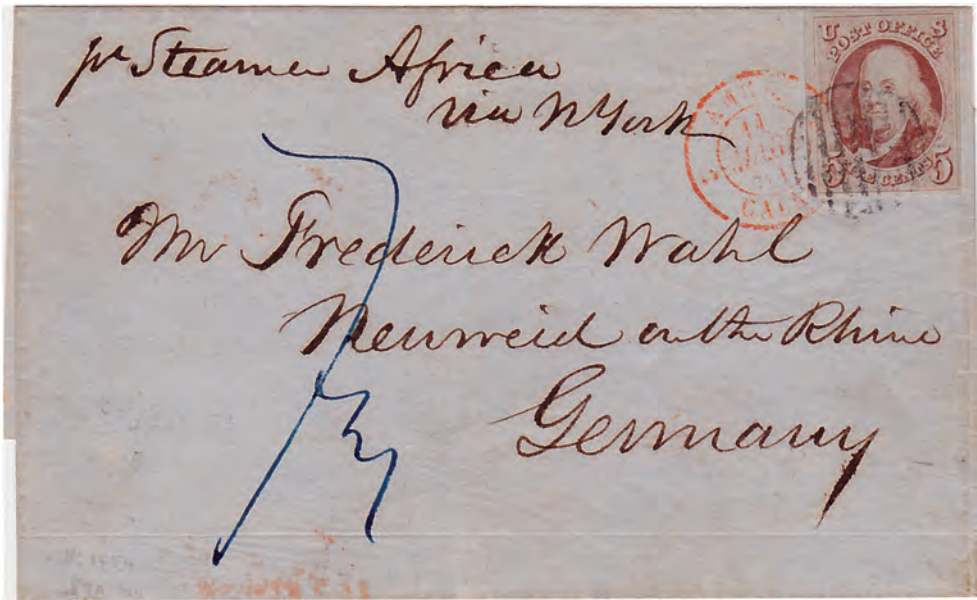


Figure 26. Of the 34 1847 covers recorded in the on-line census sent from the United States to Germany, only two are from Boston. On this cover, sent on 24 February 1851, the 5¢ 1847 stamp paid the postage to New York, for carriage to England by the Cunard steamer *Africa*. The cover entered France at Calais (red double-circle marking) and crossed the French border into Germany at Aachen. It was rated 7 1/3 silbergroschen (in blue ink) due from the recipient in Neuwied-on-the-Rhine, Germany.

Figure 26. Docketing indicates this cover was sent from Boston on February 24, 1851. The 5¢ 1847 stamp paid the postage to the port (New York), a requirement (discussed above with the cover in Figure 7) for a letter sent from the U.S. through the U.K. to a country with which the U.K. had a postal treaty. It was carried by the Cunard steamer *Africa*, which left New York on February 26 and arrived at Liverpool March 9. The letter reached London the following day (per a 10 March 1851 red handstamp on the reverse). The red double circle marking tying the stamp indicates the cover entered France at Calais and reached Paris March 11. The letter crossed the French border into Germany at Aachen on March 12, per a black circle handstamp on the reverse. It was rated 7 1/3 silbergroschen in blue ink for the postage from London to Neuwied-on-the-Rhine, Germany, but with no indication of payment to the U.K. for the sea postage from New York.

Demonetized covers

The act of Congress of 3 March 1851 established new domestic postage rates of 3¢ per ½ ounce for paid letters sent up to 3,000 miles (5¢ unpaid), with double rates for letters sent beyond 3,000 miles. In expectation of these new rates, Postmaster General Nathan K. Hall on 10 June 1851 issued a regulation that the 5¢ and 10¢ postage stamps of 1847 would no longer be accepted as legal postage as of July 1, 1851. But except for a few small towns, local postmasters continued to accept them.

The on-line census of 1847 covers records 67 post-demonetization covers on which the stamps appear to have been genuinely used, plus several which certifying organizations considered not genuine or for which they declined opinion. Forty-five covers have one 5¢ stamp and 13 have a single 10¢ stamp. An additional three have two 5¢ stamps, and two have three 5¢ stamps (covers sent to Mexico). Two covers show bisected 10¢ stamps, and two are 5¢+10¢ combination covers (including one with two 10¢ stamps sent to Liverpool).



Figure 27. The latest of seven post-demonetization 5¢ 1847 covers that originated in Boston, posted 27 July 1852 and addressed to Greenland Depot, New Hampshire.

Seven covers were sent to the United States from Canada (two with a 5¢ stamp, four with a 10¢ stamp and one with two 5¢ stamps) and one was sent to Canada (with a 10¢ stamp). A single post-demonetization cover was sent to France. The latest demonetized cover bears a 10¢ 1847 stamp and was sent by Dr. Carroll Chase to himself in December, 1914. I would call this a philatelic use.

Eight post-demonetization covers are recorded from Boston, seven of which bear single 5¢ 1847 stamps. The latest of these, shown in Figure 27, is dated July 27, 1852, and was sent from Boston merchant Jacob A. Dresser to his wife in Greenland Depot, New Hampshire, a coastal town in Rockingham County.

Figure 28 shows the only post-demonetization cover from Boston franked with a 10¢ 1847 stamp. This is also the only recorded demonetized cover sent to Canada. It was sent December 20, 1851, from J. M. Forbes in Boston to John Young in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada West. While the 10¢ stamp paid the correct rate to Canada and the stamp was accepted by post offices in both countries, the use of the stamp was illegal.

Railroad covers: Eastern Railroad

The question of whether to include railroad covers in this study was complicated. While covers bearing the Boston, Mass. Express Mail marking (see Figures 12, 15, 17, 22 and 23) are generally considered to have originated in Boston, this is not true for covers struck with other route-agent markings of railroads serving Boston at this time. A letter could be put on board the train at any of the stations along the route, and it would receive the same route-agent marking.

The Eastern Railroad (part of the roll-up that became the Boston and Maine Railroad) opened in 1840 and ran from Boston north along the coast to Portsmouth, ending at the Maine Railroad, which went on to Portland. Branch lines connected to a few nearby towns. The first route agent for the Eastern Railroad was appointed on July 7, 1848.

The on-line census of 1847 covers records 64 covers struck with the “Eastern RR” circular datestamp, two of which are certified as not genuine. Ten of the covers were ad-



Figure 28. Sent 20 December 1851, this is the only post-demonetization cover from Boston franked with a 10¢ 1847 stamp and the only demonetized cover sent to Canada.

dressed to Boston. Of the 54 not sent to Boston, indication of origin (usually a dateline) is recorded for 15. Origins include Portland (9), Portsmouth (5) and Byfield, Massachusetts (1). None of the 15 originated in Boston and there is no evidence that any covers bearing an Eastern RR route agent marking were sent from Boston. For this reason, none have been included in this analysis.

Railroad covers: Boston and Albany Railroad

Within Massachusetts, the Boston and Albany Railroad was an amalgamation of the Boston and Worcester Railroad (finished on July 4, 1835) and the Western Railroad (which ran from the B&W to the New York state line). On 4 October 1841 the first train ran along the full route. On September 12, 1842, the Albany and West Stockbridge Railroad (the New York part of the Western Railroad) extended the route from Boston to Albany. The first route agent, Sam C. Chisholm, was appointed on July 1, 1840.¹¹ But the merger of these three railroads was not complete until 1870, so the Boston and Albany circular datestamps reflected the termini, rather than the name of the railroad.

There are 57 covers in the on-line cover census (two not genuine) for which the Boston and Albany Railroad is listed as the city of origin (“From City”). Almost all the covers (52) bear a single 5¢ 1847 stamp, even though one was sent as far away as Wisconsin. One addressed to Massachusetts bears two 5¢ 1847 stamps (datelined Hinsdale, Massachusetts). Two covers, addressed to Massachusetts and Michigan, bear single 10¢ 1847 stamps.

Only two of the 57 covers are recorded as being addressed to Boston. Of the 14 with datelines noted, only four (29 percent) originated at Boston. Applying this percentage to the overall population of 55 genuine covers, we can estimate that 16 covers bearing a Boston and Albany RR cds were posted at Boston, likely all with single 5¢ 1847 stamps.

Railroad covers: Boston and Fitchburg Railroad

The Boston and Fitchburg railroad ran across the northern part of Massachusetts, ending at Saratoga and Troy, New York. It had branches to Worcester, Massachusetts, Bellows

Falls, Vermont, and a few other towns. By 1847, it was essentially complete, although it ended at Charlestown, Mass., until 1848, when a new bridge carried the railroad into downtown Boston. The first route agent, Mark Gillis, was appointed on December 10, 1847.¹²

There are 15 entries in the on-line census for the Boston and Fitchburg Railroad circular datestamp, with one cover considered not genuine. All the genuine covers bear single 5¢ 1847 stamps. None are addressed to Boston. Only six are supported by images and details; of these, only one of the three with datelines originated in Boston.

Railroad covers: Boston and Maine Railroad

By the time the 1847 stamps were issued, the Boston and Maine railroad ran from Boston to Portland. The first route agent, John Winslow, was appointed on August 11, 1848.¹³

There are 18 1847 covers listed in the on-line cover census as bearing the Boston and Maine railroad circular datestamp. All but four bear single 5¢ stamps; two have two 5¢ stamps, one to Philadelphia and the other to an unknown destination. One cover (to the District of Columbia) has a single 10¢ stamp and another has a bisected 10¢ stamp to Bangor (datelined Bradford). One cover (no image) is addressed to Boston. Listings for 12 of the 18 B&M covers are supported by images and details. Of the six with datelines, none are from Boston.

Conclusion

The primary purpose of this article has been to showcase the broad variety of uses of the 5¢ and 10¢ 1847 stamps from one of the country's larger cities. Boston's geography and commercial prominence during the 1847-1851 era assured that our nation's first regular postage stamps are found on many covers from Boston to Canada and to Europe. Boston's size assured extensive use of the 1847 stamps, leading to interesting multiples on cover as well as combinations with carriers and even 5¢+10¢ combination covers.

But a major secondary purpose has been to highlight the new, enlarged and easily searchable 1847 cover census that originated with Tom Alexander's book and has been enlarged and made more usable by Mark Scheuer. Without this new, searchable census data, understanding how these stamps were (and were not) used at Boston would have been much more difficult.

Endnotes

1. Susan M. McDonald, "A Day to Remember, July 1, 1847," *Chronicle* 74, pp. 59-67.
2. Thomas J. Alexander, *United States 1847 Cover Census*, The U.S. Philatelic Classics Society, 2001.
3. Stanley Lebergott, *Wage Trends, 1800-1900*, National Bureau of Economic Research, 1960.
4. See, as an example, the [New York] *Evening Post* for January 23, 1844.
5. In late 2013, the United States Philatelic Classics Society added to its website a searchable database of United States postmaster provisional covers, based on data assembled by Mark Scheuer. Census data about New York postmaster provisional covers has been taken from this database, located in the "Resource Center" at *USPCS.org*.
6. Stanley M. Piller, *The New York Postmaster's Provisional*, Robert F. Kaufmann Publishing Co., 1991, pp. 79.
7. Mark Scheuer, "Updating the Census of 1847 Stamps on Cover," *Chronicle* 236, pp. 317-328; and "1847 Cover Census Now On Line," *Chronicle* 240, pp. 329-335.
8. Robert B. Meyersburg, "A Brief History of Boston Carrier Operations," *Chronicle* 165, pp. 7-15.
9. David D'Allesandris, "1847 Covers to the Maritime Provinces: An Update," *Chronicle* 238, pp. 135-151.
10. Steven Walske, "U.S. 1847 Stamps on Covers to France: Rate/Route Periods, July 1847-July 1851," *Chronicle* 234, pp. 107-119.
11. Charles L Towle, *U.S. Route and Station Agent Postmarks*, Mobile Post Office Society, 1986, pg. 323.
12. *Ibid.*, pg. 322.
13. *Ibid.*, pg. 320. ■

THE 1851-61 PERIOD

WADE E. SAADI, EDITOR

Note from the section editor: Our November issue featured James Allen's update on the 12¢ imperforate stamp of 1851. We follow this with his similar update on the perforated 12¢ stamps. To best understand the plates used to produce both the imperforate and the perforated stamps, reading Allen's initial article would be helpful.—W.E.S.

THE 12¢ PERFORATED STAMPS OF 1857 AND 1860

JAMES A. ALLEN

The perforated 12¢ stamps are known to have been produced from the plates we call Plate 1 (Scott 36) and Plate 3 (Scott 36B). Famed philatelist John Luff hypothesized the existence of a Plate 2¹ and a famed collector/dealer, Philip Ward, produced government documentation, a receipt to the printer from the U.S. Mint,² confirming the existence of Plate 2 among other plates for the 1851 series.³ There is a possibility that Plate 2 produced stamps, but none has ever been identified.

While it is relatively easy to distinguish Scott 36 from 36B as they are currently described in the Scott U.S. specialized catalog (and below), there are few plating standards or assists for Plate 3, and none for Plate 2—if it ever produced any stamps or proofs. Stamps from the right pane of Plate 3 can all be plated with suitable references. Several large multiples exist for the right pane of Plate 3, including a full pane currently in the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia, which I have used to successfully plate many stamps.

Current plating work is focused on the left pane of Plate 3. After more than 20 years of collecting and plating, the largest multiples I have recorded for the left pane of Plate 3 are a block of six, several blocks of four and a few strips. A complete plating of this pane will be necessary to establish definitively, by exception, if any stamps exist from Plate 2.

Perforated stamps from Plate 1

Plate 1, which produced the imperforate 12¢ 1851 stamps of the 1851 issue, also produced a great percentage of the perforated 12¢ stamps of the 1857 issue. The plate varieties found on the 1851 imperforates are therefore repeated on the perforated stamps printed from Plate 1. Frame lines and engraving are relatively sharp and complete, and the printing is very good overall.

An uncommon perforation variety is the imperforate between pair. An example is shown in Figure 1. Two confirmed examples of this variety come from the right pane of Plate 1 with the imperforation between the same two columns of stamps, suggesting both examples might have come from the same pane. An unconfirmed example has also been reported from the left pane. No “printed on both sides” examples have been recorded for the perforated stamps. Contrary to previous reporting, centerline

Figure 1.
Imperforate
between
pair from
Plate 1
(Scott 36c).



edges may be perforated or imperforate for the Plate 1 perforated stamps.⁴ Figure 2 shows horizontal pairs that illustrate both varieties. Both pairs plate to positions 21-22R1. On the top pair, the left (centerline) edge is perforated. On the bottom pair, the centerline edge is imperforate. Double and triple perforation varieties exist.

Imprint copies exist on and off cover, but no plate blocks are known. The largest recorded unused multiple is a block of four. Fewer than ten of these can be confirmed.

There has been a lot of discussion concerning the intended use of the 12¢ stamp when it was introduced in 1851.⁵ But by the time of the appearance of the perforated 12¢ stamps in 1857, the usefulness of a 12¢ denomination had become evident. Expansion of international correspondence created myriad new foreign rates for which the 12¢ stamp could be used. The combination of ten 12¢ stamps with a pair of 3¢ on the cover from Providence to Hong Kong in Figure 3 pays six times the 21¢ transatlantic rate (via American packet) for British open mail carriage via Marseilles under the U.S.-U.K. Postal Convention of 1848. An additional 5 shillings sixpence was collected from the recipient for carriage from London to Hong Kong.

All such 12¢ artifacts, even if scarce or rare, highlight the importance of the 12¢ stamp to the decade of the 1850s. Surviving covers franked with 12¢ stamps depict a large spectrum of rates, routes, and other aspects of the postal system that are not readily obtainable on covers franked with lower-denominated stamps.

The perforated 12¢ stamp could still pay the quadruple domestic rate (for a distance less than 3,000 miles) but recorded examples are few.⁶ Figure 4 shows a perforated 12¢ stamp from Plate 1 used on an inland waterway cover transported from New Orleans up the Mississippi to Beillers (sic) Landing, Louisiana. The perforated 12¢ stamp would no longer



Figure 2. Plate 1 perforated stamps can show centerline edges that are perforated or imperforate. These horizontal pairs (with centerlines at left) show both varieties. Both pairs come from the same plate position: 21-22R1.



Figure 3. Cover from Providence to Hong Kong with six times the 21¢ transatlantic rate (via American packet) paid by 10 12¢ perforated Plate 1 stamps and a pair of perforated 3¢ stamps. An additional 5 shillings sixpence was collected from the recipient for carriage in the British open mail from London (via Marseilles) to Hong Kong.



Figure 4. Examples of the perforated 12¢ stamp paying the quadruple domestic rate are few. On this inland waterway cover, a perforated 12¢ stamp from Plate 1 paid the quadruple rate from New Orleans up the Mississippi to Beillers (sic) Landing, La.



Figure 5. A perforated 12¢ stamp from Plate 1, along with a 3¢ stamp, used to pay the 15¢ treaty rate to France. This cover was mailed 21 October 1858 from Auburn, New York (magenta manuscript) and crossed the Atlantic on the Inman *City of Baltimore*.

pay the double transcontinental rate (2 x 6¢), because the 10¢ stamp and the 10¢ transcontinental rate were introduced in 1855.

The use of the 12¢ stamp along with a 3¢ to make up the 15¢ rate to France increased dramatically during the 1850s. Figure 5 shows an example. This cover was mailed from Auburn, New York on October 21, 1858. It departed New York on October 23, 1858 on the Inman Line's *City of Baltimore*. The red New York exchange-office marking indicates a 6¢ U.S. credit to France for British service under the U.S.-France postal convention of 1857. The French receiving mark indicates the cover was received at Paris November 8, after having entered France at Calais. An unusual feature of the cover is the use of magenta ink for



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Figure 6. As with the imperforate predecessor, the most common use of the perforated 12¢ stamps was on covers to Great Britain franked to pay the 24¢ treaty rate. This cover from Cleveland to England bears a left-margin pair showing part of the printer’s imprint.

the manuscript cancel and town marking. Auburn did this for at least a several months, at a time when nearly every other town this size was using black ink-stamping devices.

As with the imperforate 12¢ stamps, the record of surviving covers indicates that paying the 24¢ rate to Great Britain was by far the most common use of the perforated 12¢ stamps. The 1860 cover from Cleveland in Figure 6 is representative, and noteworthy because it is franked with the finest known imprint pair. This cover must have travelled via American packet; the U.S. retained 21¢ and credited the U.K. with 3¢. In an exchange about stamp usage with the U.S. Senate on February 11, 1859, John Marron, then Third Assistant Postmaster General, confirmed contemporary analysis when he observed: “The 12¢ stamps are chiefly used on letters to England, two of them prepaying the English rate.”⁷

Cancellations during this period for Plate 1 perforated stamps are similar to those we saw in the imperforate period, 1851-1857, as described and illustrated in my article in *Chronicle* 240.

Plate 3

Plate 3 produced the other perforated 12¢ stamps used during this period. The earliest confirmed use is on a 22 times 3¢ domestic cover, dated June 1, 1860.⁸ Plate 1 and Plate 3 stamps have a very different appearance. The primary reason for the new plate is hypothesized to be improved perforation quality, which was sought by increasing the horizontal spacing between the stamps. Plate 1 perforations often cut into one or more frame lines. Because of this, many perforated Plate 1 stamps were scissor separated. The pairs in Figure 7 and Figure 8 provide a useful comparison of the spacing differences between Plate 1 and Plate 3. The Figure 8 pair shows much wider inter-stamp spacing on the plate as well as double frame lines (discussed below).

The outstanding characteristics of Plate 3 are that the outside frame lines are very uneven and often broken. In a few cases a frame line may be 95 percent missing. There are a very few positions that show almost complete frame lines, including closed corners. This is in contrast to Plate 1, where recutting of frame lines and relatively sharp corners were common throughout the plate.



Figure 7 (top) and Figure 8 (bottom). Partial images of horizontal pairs from Plate 1 (top, Scott 36) and Plate 3 (bottom, Scott 36B), enlarged and superimposed with the left stamps precisely aligned, showing how the distance between stamps was increased on Plate 3 to accommodate perforation. The Plate 3 pair at bottom plates from Positions 13-14L3 and shows the “double frame line” variety. Extra vertical lines are clearly evident on both sides of the perforations in the space between the stamps.

There are no obvious recuts to the basic design on Plate 3, though this is still under research. Paper and ink variation contributed to an overall appearance of shoddy printing. But this is mainly the result of the poorly manufactured production plate, rather than sloppy printing or inking practices. Fine plate scratches and broken lines often provide definitive plating indicators.

Much of the paper used to print Plate 3 stamps is similar to that used for the Plate 1 stamps, but considerably softer overall. This is consistent with the papers transitioning from mostly linen to nearly all cotton during the decade of the 1850s. Plate 3 produced a lot of stamps that have a dry printing appearance—rough, smudgy, and blotchy in places. Some of the paper used for Plate 3 stamps is thin and porous with ink showing through on the back. Such paper would be difficult to dampen uniformly or consistently (sheet to sheet) prior to inking the plate.

Like most of the plates produced late in this stamp series, Plate 3 is unusual in many ways. The 2009 edition of Scott’s *Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps & Cov-*

ers finally recognized Plate 3 stamps as a major stamp type (36B) and no longer a sub-type (36b). All this is fitting given all the differences in the stamps and their production, compared to Plate 1. The evidence shows that the entries on Plate 3 were rocked in from the bottom to the top, as opposed to Plate 1, which was rocked in from top to the bottom.⁹ Additional evidence of a newly discovered “phantom” or 11th row supports this analysis.¹⁰ The guide dots seen on the 1851 Plate 1 are also present in Plate 3. They are often smaller, in different positions, and with different arrangement patterns than Plate 1. They too are unique for defining plate positions, but they do not occur on all positions in a predictable fashion.

The left pane of Plate 3 possesses anomalies and oddities that are highly collectible. Between columns 3 and 4 of the left pane, two fine lines are inscribed near the frame lines. See the enlarged image in Figure 8. Scott lists these as “double frame line” varieties. The space between these extra lines and the frame line is not uniform going from top to bottom for all pairs, a distinction that is obvious in some cases, less so in others. Historically, these have been described as ruled lines (or a similar description) running from top to bottom, probably serving as a layout assist. There are clean, substantial vertical line breaks between rows of stamps, suggesting these lines were intentionally engraved stamp by stamp, often not extending the length of the stamp.

Between columns 7 and 8, there is another line drawn. It, too, is engraved stamp by stamp.¹¹ This line is located from one-half to three quarters of a millimeter to the right of the right frame line of the stamps in the 7th column, and about one and a half millimeters from the stamps in the 8th column. It is a bit heavier than the side frame lines of the stamps and not consistently spaced. See the enlargement in Figure 9, which shows the spurious line running right through the perforation holes.

Figure 9. A pair of 12¢ stamps from Plate 3 showing a spurious line that in this example runs right through the perforation holes.



The placement of this line would not be consistent with any lines used for layout purposes. Instead, it suggests an attempt to minimize the visual spacing anomalies that occur between these stamps. Most important, the guide dots fundamental to the plate production¹² have been removed, or were never present (for the most part) in these scribed areas, indicating the lines were added after rocking in rather than before. There was earlier precedence for such modifications, occurring on “the Three Rows” of the 3¢ Plate 3, and later (at about the same time as production of 12¢ Plate 3) on the bottom three rows of the 3¢ Plate 11 perforated stamp.¹³ The right pane of Plate 3 of the 12¢ stamp does not show these lines and is much more uniform in spacing.

Between the left and right panes, a continuous centerline is incised from top to bottom. It is significantly heavier than any of the other extra lines, and obviously not near the

Figure 10. The centerline incised from top to bottom on Plate 3 is significantly heavier than the other extra lines. This example is from Position 1R3.



Figure 11. Plate 3 imperforate plate proof on India paper, from Positions 26-27R3.

frame lines. Figure 10 shows a stamp from the right pane of Plate 3 on which the centerline shows clearly in the left (straight-edge) margin. All centerline copies from Plate 3 show one and only one straight edge. Unlike Plate 1, there are no recorded Plate 3 stamps with the centerline margin legitimately perforated.

Other major Plate 3 varieties include shifted transfers in positions 8R3, 28R3, 38R3, 92R3, 95R3 (line thru rosette), 98R3 and 92L3. The shifted transfer at 92R3 is the most pronounced on the plate. There is no confirmed reconstruction of Plate 3, so a lot of discoveries remain to be made.

Imperforate plate proofs of Plate 3 exist on India paper; Figure 11 shows a pair. Although from Plate 3, plate proof copies are very sharp in appearance, the printing quality being excellent. Plate proofs of the later reprints are often mistaken for these.

Imperforate copies of Plate 3 exist on stamp paper. Enlarged examples are shown in Figures 12 and 13. These are considered to be from a half-sheet sample, best described as a trial printing, that was submitted to the Post Office related to a competing black color essay of the 30¢ Franklin stamp of 1860.¹⁴ I have recorded only left-pane positions for these imperforates. The reader should examine Figures 12 and 13 carefully. Figure 12 is from the top row (3L3), and Figure 13 from the bottom row (93L3), both from column 3. Both have added sidelines to the right. Most all the variations in Plate 3 stamps can be seen in these two examples: closed and open corners, complete frame lines and missing or broken

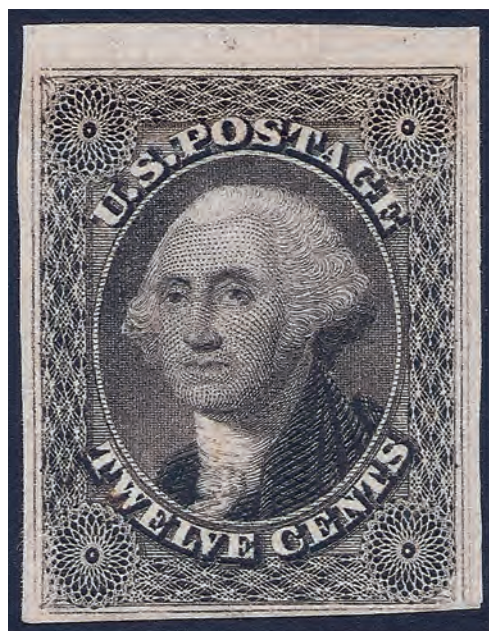


Figure 12. Plate 3, trial printing on stamp paper, from the top row, Position 3L3, with double side-line variety at right.

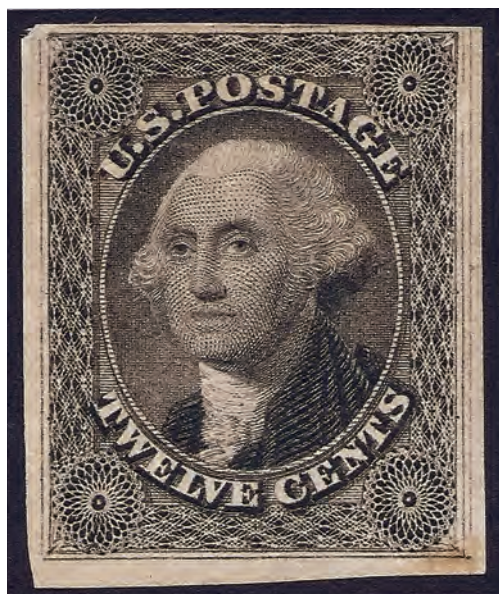


Figure 13. Plate 3, trial printing on stamp paper, bottom row, 93L3, also showing the double side-line variety at right.

Figure 14. Plate 3 pair with magenta pen cancels. These stamps were from remainder stock, cancelled so as to invalidate them. They were never postally used.



ones, guide dot or guide dot “erased” or never present, and double side-lines with different spacing and treatment between stamps. No examples of imperforate Plate 3 artifacts are recorded to have been postally used.

Cancellations on the Plate 3 stamps are similar to those found on the Plate 1 imperforates, with a relative increase in black and red grids, green towns and “pays,” and a relative diminishment of black or red circular datestamps.

Magenta ink “presentation cancels,” used on remainder stocks, are recorded for perforated Plate 3 stamps. A pair is shown in Figure 14. These are not known to be postal uses; the pen lines are not cancellations in the traditional postal sense.

Stamps overprinted or marked “Specimen” exist but are rarely encountered. I have seen only five examples for the entire 1851-1860 12¢ group, including the reprints.

The largest recorded used multiple from Plate 3 is a pen-cancelled irregular block of 20 originally in the Neinken collection.¹⁵ Unused multiples are more common than used multiples. One complete unused right pane, mentioned above, resides in the Jefferies Collection at the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia. An unused multiple of 42, sold in a Siegel sale on February 24, 1965, now resides in the Museum of Communication, Berne, Switzerland, part of the Charles A. Hirzel collection. Only one complete imprint block is recorded in private hands. This is the irregular block of five shown in Figure 15. Used imprint copies are very scarce. I have recorded only six Plate 3 imprints in any form, captured or attached, on or off cover. A few more intact, large unused multiples have been recorded. These are presumed to have survived, but they are subject to diminishment over time.

Because the 1851-57 stamps were demonetized about 14 months after Plate 3 came into use, all covers bearing the 36B stamp are relatively uncommon. Uses to France continued to increase after 1860, but the double-stamp 24¢ rate to Great Britain continued to be the most important source of covers in the Plate 3 era, even though a 24¢ stamp had been issued in 1860.

A pair of Plate 3 stamps, on a cover from Chicago to England, is shown in Figure 16. This pair happens to be franked with a pair from columns 7 and 8, with a single scribed line between the stamps. As with the 12¢ stamps from Plate 1, uses to paying four times the 3¢ domestic rate are very scarce. The example in Figure 17 has the ad-



Figure 15. Imprint copies in any form are scarce. This margin block of five, from Plate 3 right, is the only complete imprint block in private hands.



Figure 16. Cover from Chicago to England, with the 24¢ rate paid by a pair of Plate 3 stamps from columns 7 and 8, showing the “extra line” variety (Positions 87-88L3).



Figure 17. A 12¢ stamp from Plate 3 on a scarce quadruple-domestic-rate cover, sent out of Louisville on 26 July 1861, as postal relations between north and south were breaking down. Note two strikes of the Adams Express Louisville marking.

ditional embellishment of two strikes of the Adams Express Louisville marking, applied on July 26, 1861, as postal relations between north and south were breaking down.

Conclusion

Much study remains to be done on the Plate 3 stamps, created during this major transition period of plate making and bank note printing. I hope to publish more research in

this area. The majority of uses of the 12¢ perforated stamps are on covers to Great Britain and France, and on heavy domestic envelopes. But when analyzed thoroughly, the variety of 12¢ franked artifacts (perforate and imperforate) is very great, the most varied of all the available denominations, including the popular 3¢ stamp. The 10¢ stamp competes for this importance, but wasn't around for the first four years of the 1851-1861 decade. The 12¢ artifacts chronicle more postal routes, rates (domestic and foreign), conventions, special situations, and carrier changes than any of the other denominations of this decade.

Like the 12¢ postal history, off-cover stamps show the predictable common cancellations and markings; varieties at first appear to be very limited. But, as with the postal history, they do exist, in large variety. But that's a subject for another article.

Endnotes

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4. Winthrop Boggs, *Early American Perforating Machines 1857-1867*, (New York: Collector's Club, 1954), pg. 14.
5. *Sesquicentennial Retrospective*, *op. cit.* See my article, "Early Uses of the United States 1851 12¢ Imperforate Stamp," pp. 180-181.
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8. Lester Brookman, *The United States Postage Stamps of the 19th Century, Vol. 1*, (North Miami, Florida: David G. Phillips Publishing Co., Inc., 1989), pg. 246.
9. Elliot Perry, *United States 1857-1860 Issue*, Booklet Number 39, (Beverly, Mass.: Severn-Wylie-Jewett Co., 1922), pp. 40-45.
10. Unpublished results by author; a future *Chronicle* article is planned.
11. Brookman, *op. cit.*, pg. 250.
12. *Sesquicentennial Retrospective*, *op. cit.*, pp. 11, 21.
13. Carroll Chase, *The 3¢ Stamp of the United States 1851-1857 Issue*, Revised, Lawrence, Mass., Quarterman Publications, 1975, pg. 132. (This is a reprint of the revised version published in 1942 by Tatham Stamp & Coin Company.)
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15. Author's collection. ■

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UNION OCCUPATION MAIL UPDATE—FLORIDA

MICHAEL C. McCLUNG

In *Chronicle* 237 (February 2013), in an article in the 1861 section, we presented a tabular list of occupation post offices that had been opened by Union troops during the Civil War. The listing was a record of the various postmarks employed (including colors) and their periods of use. In the article I asked readers to provide information that would add to the data in the tables, and I'm pleased to report a good number of responses that either confirmed the published data or added new information on postmarks from various states.

This update contains reports of additional postmarks from occupation post offices in Florida. These reports and images were provided by Deane Briggs, a well-known student, writer and editor in the area of Florida postal history.

Figure 1 shows a cover addressed to North Yarmouth, Maine, on which the 3¢ 1861 stamp is tied by a manuscript postmark from Fernandina, Florida, dated July 21, 1863. This marking is rare (possibly unique), and comes from the early days of operation of the Fernandina occupation post office. This manuscript marking was followed by a government-issue 30-millimeter double circle datestamp that appeared in the fall of 1863.

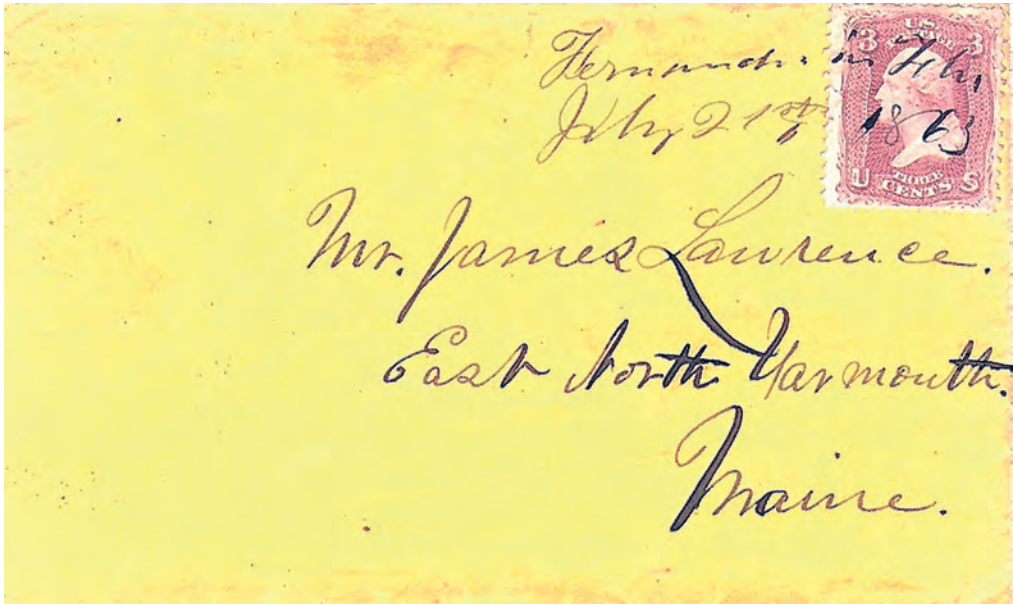


Figure 1. 3¢ 1861 cover sent to Maine from Union-occupied Fernandina, Florida, with a manuscript postmark dated July 21, 1863. This is a rare marking, possibly unique.



Figure 2. 3¢ 1861 cover from Union-occupied Fort Jefferson, Florida, showing the ovate date stamp. This postmark, dated Sept. 27 (1864), is struck in an unfamiliar grey-blue color.

Figure 2 shows a cover from occupied Fort Jefferson, Florida, in the Dry Tortugas, which had a post office during the war to serve the troops garrisoned there. The postmark is the familiar 32x35 mm “upright oval,” possibly a circular datestamp that got squeezed out of shape. But the color of the marking on the Figure 2 cover is gray-blue instead of the more common bold black or the rare red. The cover is addressed to Pulaski, a village in Oswego County, New York, the county in which the 110th New York Infantry was organized. The 110th was at Fort Jefferson in the fall of 1864, and most Fort Jefferson covers from late 1864 and early 1865 (including the few with red postmarks) are addressed to towns in Oswego County.

In addition to supplying examples of the new Fernandina manuscript marking and the new color for the Fort Jefferson marking, Briggs also extended the period of usage of the red Fort Jefferson postmark into January, 1865. I had listed it as a December, 1864 use only.

Many thanks to Briggs for sharing his knowledge of Civil War postal history in Florida. The information he sent provides a significant step toward completion of our occupation post office listing. In future editions of *The Chronicle*, updates from other states will be added. If readers have information about occupation post offices or postmarks that were not noted in the article in *Chronicle* 237, please get in touch with me. Contact information appears on our masthead page in each issue. ■



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DISCOVERY: JUSTIFICATION FOR WHITES DISPATCH

GORDON STIMMELL

In the realm of carriers and locals stamps, sometimes fantasy can become reality. After 133 years, what has long been branded a bogus stamp is stepping forward as authentic.

The Whites Dispatch stamp, a crude green adhesive long thought to have been created to deceive collectors, now has some cachet as a genuine local stamp, based on the recent discovery (on eBay of course) of an 1880 sales letter from its proprietor that describes in detail the business that the stamp was apparently created to support.

An enlarged example of the stamp is shown in Figure 1. The dreadful portrait is perhaps remotely inspired by George Washington, but it could be Martha. Or maybe it was White's mother, no one knows.

The man behind the creation is George W. White, whose signature appears at the bottom of the letter shown in Figure 2, which locates his post at 285 Fulton Street in New York City.

The letter promotes White's circular delivery service: "Circulars enclosed, sealed, addressed, stamped and delivered to any street in New York or Brooklyn with Post Office precision and care, at one half the cost of U.S. Postage Stamps."



Figure 1. An example of the Whites Dispatch stamp, greatly enlarged. This crude adhesive, long thought to be bogus, recently gained greater credibility through a discovery on eBay.

The delivery of circulars was a fiercely competitive business in 1880. The two major New York local posts, Hussey and Boyd, were duking it out in this space, having transitioned from pure local letter-delivery to carrying mail, bills, and circulars under contract to mailers such as insurance companies, banks, city departments and so on. Each had vast lists of customers, mostly businesses, and were busy sewing up new contracts. Boyd's business in this realm endured until well into the 20th century.

Hence, White in his sales letter brags about his extensive contacts: "5000 more names than are in the Elite directory of this city." He also mocks the Post Office, as he says "my men" found Post Office carried circulars littering the sidewalks where they had

Feeling sure that Advertisers will gladly patronize a RESPONSIBLE Man who can satisfy them that their work is PROMPTLY and HONESTLY done, I respectfully refer you to my patrons.



Circulars enclosed, sealed, addressed, stamped and delivered in any street in New York or Brooklyn with Post Office precision and care, at one half the cost of U. S. Postage Stamps.

283 FULTON STREET,

Brooklyn, Dec 18th 1880

*filed
Dec 20*
Messrs G & C. Merriam
Springfield Mass
Gents.



I have in my manuscript directory about 5000 more names than are in the Elite directory of this city

I will enclose seal address and deliver (better than the U.S. did it for you, as my men brought in a handful of your circulars which were thrown at the houses addressed & were a litter on the sidewalk) 5 or 10 M of your "Webster Advs" at the rate of 1 cent each & refer you to some of our largest advertisers here & in U.S. who know my responsibility

Yours truly
G. W. White

Figure 2. Handwritten letter dated December 18, 1880, in which local-post entrepreneur George White describes his firm's services to a prospective client, dictionary publishers George and Charles Merriam. The example of the Whites Dispatch stamp, firmly glued to this letter, may or may not be a subsequent embellishment.

been thrown at houses. His rate for delivery, according to the letter, was 1 cent each.

At the top of his letterhead, White provides an example of his stamp, along with a self-endorsement and a mission statement:

Feeling sure that advertisers will gladly patronize a RESPONSIBLE Man who can satisfy them that their work is PROMPTLY and HONESTLY done, I respectfully refer you to my patrons.

Circulars enclosed, sealed, addressed, stamped and delivered in any street in New York or Brooklyn with Post Office precision and care, at one half the cost of U.S. Postage Stamps.

On first glance, this letter appears to be part of a large mailing. But upon closer inspection, it's clearly a personal message, specifically targeted to the recipient's business needs. The full text of this sales message, which is dated December 18, 1880, reads as follows:

Messrs. G. & C. Merriam
Springfield, Mass.

Gents:

I have in my manuscript directory about 5,000 more names than are in the Elite directory of this city.

I will enclose, *seal*, address and deliver (better than the U.S. did for you, as my men brought in a handful of your circulars which were thrown at the houses addressed and were a litter on the sidewalk) 5 or 10 M of your "Webster Adv." at the rate of 1 cent each and refer you to some of our largest advertisers here and in N.Y. who know my responsibility.

Yours truly, Geo. W. White

Note that White emphasized that his envelopes would be sealed. Per regulations, circulars sent through the United States Post Office had to be mailed unsealed.

The "Webster" advertisements referred to in White's letter relate to the main product line of the addressee, the firm of G. & C. Merriam in Springfield, Massachusetts.

George and Charles Merriam were brothers, from a Springfield family of printers, publishers and booksellers dating back to the 18th century. In 1843, upon the death of Noah Webster, the brothers acquired the rights to Webster's dictionary. They expanded it into the reference work with which we are all familiar.

The firm they founded, Merriam-Webster, still survives as a division of the Encyclopedia Britannica. In the 1960s, after the Britannica acquisition, the firm's early business papers were disbursed. Some of the Merriam-Webster archive wound up at the American Antiquarian Society. But bits of ephemera, no doubt including the letter in Figure 2, found their way into collector hands.

To the best of my knowledge, not a single example of the White's Dispatch stamp survives on a cover or on a circular. In fact, the stamps off cover are rare enough that I doubt the business survived very long. As for the wrinkled stamp glued to the letter (shown in Figure 3) I don't know whether this was part of the original mailing or a subsequent addition.

The White's Dispatch stamp exists off cover as a black and white (probably cut from White's letterhead, which is obviously the same cut from which the stamps were created), the standard green on buff stamp as presented here, a reversed (mirror) image stamp in green, and a faint albino impression. ■



Figure 3. Wrinkled Whites Dispatch stamp attached to the Figure 2 letter.

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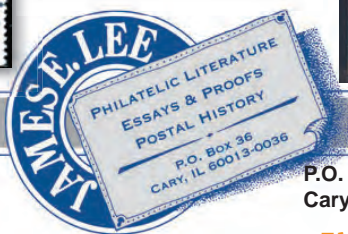
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UNITED STATES–RUSSIA MAIL: 1840-1875
PART 1: BREMEN MAIL, BRITISH MAIL, PRUSSIAN CLOSED MAIL

RICHARD F. WINTER

Introduction

Because the United States and Russia never had a postal convention, existing postal conventions with other nations had to be used to convey mail between the two countries. This article will examine mail sent between the United States and Russia under the postal conventions with Bremen, the United Kingdom, Prussia, Hamburg, France, and the North German Union. The period covered will be 1840 to 1875. The later year was selected since both the United States and Russia were among the 21 original members of the General Postal Union, whose postal rates went into effect on 1 July 1875, establishing uniform rates among the member countries.

Covers between the United States and Russia (including Finland, which was under Russian control during this period) are difficult to find, so my discussion will be quite limited in some areas. In *Chronicle* 87 (August, 1975) Charles J. Starnes introduced the collecting community to the rates on mail from the United States to Russia. His rate tables were later incorporated into his book *United States Letter Rates to Foreign Destinations 1847 to GPU–UPU*, which was published in 1982 (green cover). A more comprehensive revised edition was published in 1989 (maroon cover), but the rate tables for Russia remained unchanged. Starnes’ rate table, taken directly from his book, is shown in Figure 1. His format shows a dash (–) where a rate continues from the previous column and an asterisk (*) when prepayment was optional. I have corrected a typographical error under the North German Union closed-mail rates starting in January 1868 (1/68 column), with 23¢ (unpaid rate) instead of 25¢ as printed in both editions of his book.

RUSSIA										
	<u>3/48</u>	<u>7/49</u>	<u>7/51</u>	<u>10/52</u>	<u>8/53</u>	<u>4/57</u>	<u>7/57</u>	<u>5/63</u>	<u>2/67</u>	<u>1/68</u>
B	24 (a)	–	20 (a)	–	*29	–	omit	–	–	omit
Br., oA–oB		21–5	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	omit
PCM				*37	–	–	–	35	–	omit
Fr.						*30/*60	–	–	–	omit
B–H							*29	–	*20	omit
NGU, d.										15(18u)
NGU, cm.										20(25u) 73
	<u>7/70</u>	<u>8/70</u>	<u>11/70</u>	<u>10/71</u>	<u>8/72</u>	<u>10/74</u>	<u>7/75</u>			
NGU, d.	*12	omit	*12	*11	10	*10	omit			
NGU, cm.	*15	–	–	*12	11	*11	omit			
UPU							*5			

(a) to St. Petersburg or Kronstadt, U.S. postage paid only.

Figure 1. U.S. letter rates to Russia as published by Charles J. Starnes in *United States Letter Rates to Foreign Destinations, 1847 to GPU–UPU*. A typo has been corrected in the “1/68” column; the unpaid letter rate for closed mail via NGU was 23¢, not 25¢.

In his 1975 *Chronicle* article, Starnes provided a statistical summary of the 43 covers he had recorded over a 20-year period from the United States to Russia, which undoubtedly included covers to Finland. By postal convention they were: Prussian closed mail, 30 covers; North German Union mail, four covers; British open mail, four covers; Bremen mail, two covers; French mail, two covers; and Hamburg mail, one cover.

To date I have been able to record 78 covers to Russia and Finland. The frequency of postal convention use is similar to Starnes' records: 50 percent by Prussian closed mail; 14 percent by French mail; 13 percent by North German Union mail; 12 percent by Bremen mail; 9 percent by British open mail; and 2 percent by Hamburg mail. So it will be quite easy to illustrate covers by some conventions, but not by others. Details of the 78 covers will be provided as an appendix at the conclusion of the second installment of this article.

I will discuss the United States postal conventions under which the letters were sent to and from Russia in the chronological order in which the conventions were created. A few covers to and from Finland will be described separately at the conclusion of this article, even though they are similar to covers to and from Russia during this period.

Figure 2 is a map of the principal Prussian rail lines over which mail between Russia and western Europe traveled during the 1860-70 era. This map appeared in the February 1987 issue of the *Postal History Journal* in an article by Werner Elias, "Prussia as Postal Intermediary Between Russia and the West in the 19th Century." Mail from or to the United States usually passed through the Prussian mail system, since Prussia had extensive railway routes through eastern Prussia to Russia and through the Prussian Silesian region to Poland (under Russian control). Mail from Odessa and the Balkans entered the Prussian rail system from Cracow at Myslowitz (Prussian railway completed on 30 October 1846) on Eisenbahnpost No. V. To the north, mail from Moscow and St. Petersburg entered the Prussian mail system at Eydtkuhnen (Chernyshevskoye, Russia, today) in East Prussia. This Prus-

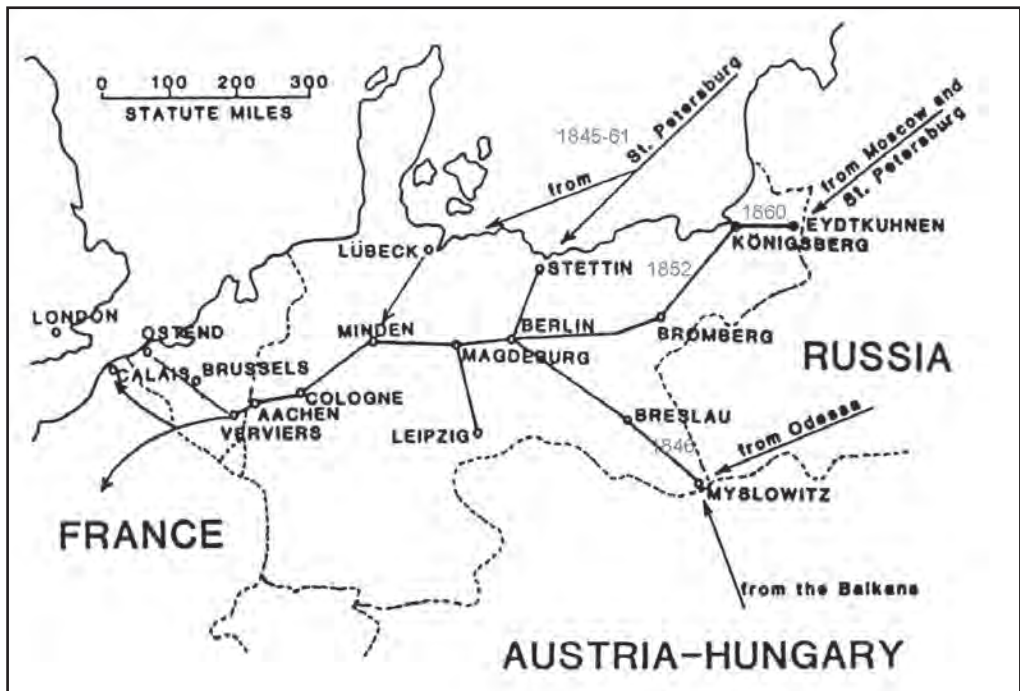


Figure 2. The Prussian railroad system, with various completion dates noted, from an article by Werner Elias published in the February 1987 *Postal History Journal*. Principal entry points from Russia were Eydtkuhnen in the north and Myslowitz in the south.

sian rail line was completed on 15 August 1860 as a part of Eisenbahnpost No. XI. Prior to the completion of this line mail went to Memel and then to Königsberg, where it met the Prussian rail system. An alternate mail route by the Kronstadt (St. Petersburg)–Stettin steamships ended in 1861 with the completion of the East Prussia rail lines to Eydtkuhnen. Many of the postal markings on the covers from Russia were applied on the Prussian railroads.

During the period under discussion, Russia used the Julian calendar, which was 12 days earlier than the Gregorian calendar used in the West. Therefore, 12 days have to be added to the Russian dates so they will correspond to the calendar used in Prussia and further west. In the descriptions of the covers in this article I will use the convention that shows Russian date/Western date.

When the General Postal Union, created by the Berne convention of 1874, went into effect on 1 July 1875, Russia agreed to a letter rate of 8 kopecks (equivalent to 32 centimes) per 15 grams for mail to other Union members. In 1878 as a result of the Paris Congress that formed the Universal Postal Union, the Russians agreed to reduce their letter rate to 7 kop. per 15 grams for mail to other Union members, which was more in line with the 25 centimes standard rate within the Union.

Bremen mail

The first time Americans could send mail to Russia by a postal agreement with a European government was under the U.S.–Bremen Postal Arrangement of 1847. Russia was listed as “St. Petersburg and Kronstadt” in the rate tables published by the U.S. Postmaster General; the rate was 24¢ per ½ ounce. Actually, this was the rate from New York to Bremen only, leaving the transit fees beyond Bremen unpaid. Letters from places other than New York required an extra 5¢ or 10¢ depending on whether the distance to New York was less than or greater than 300 miles. I have never seen a cover to Russia paid at the 24¢/29¢/34¢ rate to Bremen under this postal arrangement.

On 1 July 1851, when a fixed rate to Bremen from anywhere in the United States of 20¢ per half ounce was established under the same postal arrangement, the rate to Russia remained as the 20¢ payment to Bremen only, leaving the transit fees from Bremen to Russia unpaid.

A spectacular cover from Hawaii to Estonia sent in the Bremen mail, but paid only to Bremen, is illustrated in Figure 3. This cover was lot 95 in the Robert A. Siegel auction (#1009) of the David Golden collection of Hawaiian stamps and postal history, held on 24–26 May 2011. This envelope, which lacks letter contents, was posted in Honolulu on 21 May 1853, and was addressed to Addafer (now Adavere, Estonia), about 34 miles northwest of Dorpat, Estonia (now Tartu). A note on the reverse, “23rd March 1853/P.P. Hafen,” presumably written by the recipient, Madame C(onde) von Ditmar, probably identifies that the letter was written in Petropavlovsk harbor on that date by her husband, Carl von Ditmar, who explored and mapped the eastern Siberian region of the Kamchatka peninsula during the early 1850s. His letter was brought by an unknown vessel from Kamchatka into Honolulu around mid-May 1853 to be mailed from there. Hawaiian forwarding agent Henry Hackfeld wrote on the reverse that he handled the letter on 20 May. The letter was paid 33¢, which is not shown. The Hawaiian postage of 5¢ was paid in cash as well as 28¢ which was credited to the United States via the red crayon marking in the top center. A mandatory rate from Hawaii of 5¢ Hawaiian postage and 28¢ for the American fees to any part of Europe beyond Germany had been published in the Honolulu newspaper by the Honolulu postmaster on 20 November 1852. The red circular datestamp applied at Honolulu, **HONOLULU/MAY/21/U.S. Postage Paid**, indicated that all United States fees had been paid. The 28¢ paid in cash consisted of 26¢, the British open mail rate for an American packet carrying



Figure 3. 21 May 1853 envelope from Honolulu to Addafer, Estonia, paid 33¢ (amount not shown) in Hawaii for transit to Europe. Hawaii credited 28¢ to the U.S. Carried by Ocean Line *Washington* from New York to Bremerhaven. Prussia debited Russia 3 sgr.

the letter across the Atlantic (West Coast rate), plus 2¢ incoming ship fee at San Francisco. This amount paid all transit fees to Europe. By paying the 26¢ British open mail rate from California, the letter was paid sufficiently for an American packet from New York to England (21¢), an American packet from New York directly to France (20¢), or an American packet from New York to Bremerhaven (20¢). We shall see that the letter eventually was placed on a mail steamer to Germany.

The letter was sent from Honolulu to San Francisco on the brig *Zoe*, departing on 14 June and arriving on 4 July 1853. Here the black circular datestamp of San Francisco was applied on the left side dated 5 July as well as a black handstamp **PAID**. The San Francisco datestamp ink color had shifted from blue to black in December 1852. At the time of this letter, all mail from San Francisco to the East Coast went by steamship via Panama. With the sailing tables in Theron Wierenga's book, *United States Incoming Steamship Mail, 1847–1875*, the vessels that carried the letter to New York can be determined. On 16 July the Pacific Mail Steamship Company steamer *John L. Stephens* departed San Francisco and arrived at Panama City on 29 July 1853. The mail bags were carried across the Isthmus and placed on board the United States Mail Steamship Company steamer *Illinois*, departing Aspinwall on 1 August and arriving at New York on 10 August 1853. At New York the letter received on the reverse a red orange circular datestamp confirming arrival there on 10 August. A New York exchange-office clerk prepared the letter for the next overseas mail, which was an American steamer carrying mail to Germany. Since the British open mail rate by American packet had been paid (26¢ West Coast rate), this was more than enough for the 20¢ rate to Bremen. At the time, Bremen mail to St. Petersburg could be paid only to Bremen, leaving the transit fees from there unpaid. The clerk marked the letter with a black handstamp, **PAID PART**, to indicate the prepayment was only the international fee to Bremen. The letter was among the mail that departed 13 August on the Ocean Line steamship *Washington* and arrived at Bremerhaven on 29 August 1853. At the Hanover office in Bre-

men the letter was marked with a red orange handstamp, **AMERICA/ÜBER BREMEN**, to show that it had come in the Bremen mail from America, and with a black pencil “3” to show a debit to Russia for the Prussian transit fee under the 1851 Prussian–Russian postal convention (effective 13 April 1852) of 3 silbergroschen (sgr.), which had not been paid.

Later, on the Prussian railroad, the letter was marked again in blue ink that the 3 sgr. transit fee to Russia had not been paid. A three-line handstamp on the reverse, **MINDEN/30 8 III/BERLIN**, was struck on the railroad to Stettin, where the letter presumably went on board a Russian steamer to Kronstadt. There is no arrival marking of St. Petersburg on the cover. Black boxed datestamps on the reverse show the letter arrived at Dorpat on 21 August/2 September 1853 and Riga on 22 August/3 September 1853. The Russians marked on the reverse in black ink that 20 Kop. postage was due. This amount reflects 10 Kop. Russian internal postage plus 10 Kop. owed to Prussia.

On 15 August 1853, additional articles to the U.S.-Bremen Postal Arrangement of 1847 went into effect, essentially a new postal convention. Now a specific Bremen mail rate to Russia was established, which was 29¢ per ½ ounce, made up of a 15¢ international fee to Bremen for mail going beyond the German Austrian Postal Union and 14¢ for the foreign fee to Russia. The 14¢ per ½ ounce foreign fee amounted to 3 sgr. for Russian transit and 3 sgr. for Prussian transit. This 29¢ rate lasted until February 1867, when it was reduced to 20¢ per ½ ounce by a notice in the *United States Mail & Post Office Assistant* based on rate information provided by the Postmaster General. The new rate resulted from a reduction of the transit fees to Russia from a new postal convention between Prussia and Russia that had gone into effect in January 1866. Obviously, the Americans were not notified of the change until many months after the fact.

An unpaid envelope without the letter contents from Moscow to Providence, Rhode Island, is illustrated in Figure 4. The envelope was docketed by the recipient on the reverse to show the enclosed letter was written on 19 September/1 October 1856. It was posted in Moscow on 21 September/3 October 1856, shown by a black double-oval datestamp of Moscow on the reverse. The Moscow clerk lightly struck the black **PORTO** handstamp in the upper right corner to show the letter was sent unpaid. Just above this marking he wrote in magenta ink “3 Sgr” to show the amount debited to Prussia for the 10 Kop. internal Russian fee. A three-line datestamp on the reverse in black ink dated 9 October shows handling on the Prussian railroad from Bromberg to Berlin, part of the Prussian Eisenbahnpost No.



Figure 4. 19 September/1 October 1856 unpaid envelope without letter contents, posted at Moscow and sent via Bremen to Providence, Rhode Island. Bremen marked 14¢ foreign and 15¢ international fees due. This cover was carried on the Ocean Line steamer *Washington* from Bremerhaven to New York, where 29¢ postage due was marked.

XI. The railroad clerk wrote “3” in blue ink on the reverse to show the 3 sgr. Prussian transit fee that was unpaid. On the front he wrote “6” in blue ink to sum the unpaid Russian and Prussian transit fees and applied the red orange boxed handstamp, **AUS/RUSSLAND**, to show the letter came from Russia. The letter arrived at the Bremen on 11 October, shown by a black Bremen circular datestamp on the reverse (the letters **ST.P.A.** at the top of this postmark, stand for Stadt Postamt or stadtpostamt, and mean “city post office”).

Although the letter was endorsed at the top “Prussian closed mail,” the “via Bremen” endorsement to the right indicated the letter was to go in the Bremen mail and not the Prussian mail to the United States. The handwriting at top left looks different from the sender’s; it is not known by whom or where this was written. At Bremen the letter was marked on the left side “14/15” to show the breakdown of the total postage debited to the United States, 14¢ foreign and 15¢ international fees. It was included in the mail departing Bremerhaven 1 November on the Ocean Line steamship *Washington* and arriving at New York on 20 November 1856. The letter was processed in New York the next day, when it received in the lower right corner a black circular datestamp, **NEW.YORK/NOV/ 21/U.S. PKT.** The New York clerk also wrote the total postage due in the lower left corner, 29¢.

Figure 5 shows another unpaid envelope, in this case sent from Moscow to Washington, D.C. This cover is similar to the last one with differences due to mishandling. The envelope was posted in Moscow on 5/17 October 1856, shown by a black double-oval datestamp of Moscow on the reverse. The Moscow clerk struck the black **PORTO** handstamp at the top to show the letter was sent unpaid. Just to the right of this marking he wrote in magenta ink a notation that 3 sgr. was debited to Prussia for the 10 Kop. internal Russian fee. Apparently the letter was placed in the mail going to Aachen, probably at Königsberg. It does not show the railroad datestamp as the previous example, but it does have the blue ink “3” on the left side, which would have been written on the Prussian railroad to show the Prussian transit fee was unpaid. The letter reached Aachen on 23 October 1856 and was processed mistakenly for the Prussian closed mail to the United States. It received the red



Figure 5. 5/17 October 1856 unpaid envelope without letter contents from Moscow to Washington, D.C., mistakenly sent to Aachen for the Prussian closed mail, then to Bremen for the endorsed routing. Bremen marked 14¢ foreign and 15¢ international rates due. Letter carried on Ocean Line *Washington* from Bremerhaven to New York on same voyage as the cover in Figure 4. New York clerk erroneously marked 22¢ postage due.

orange circular datestamp, **AACHEN/23/10/PAID__Cts**, which was applied in error as this was an unpaid letter. To the left was written in black ink the numeral “12” to show that 12¢ was debited to the United States, 5¢ Prussian fee plus 7¢ foreign fee. The blue ink “6” also was written on the letter to show the total unpaid transit fees, Prussian and Russian.

Then someone realized that this letter was endorsed to go by the Bremen mail. The endorsement was underlined in blue ink for emphasis and the letter sent to Bremen. It arrived at the Bremen stadtpostamt on 27 October, shown by a black **ST.P.A.** Bremen circular datestamp on the reverse. At Bremen the letter was marked on the left side “14/15” to show the breakdown of the total postage debited to the United States, 14¢ foreign and 15¢ international fees. It was included in the mail departing Bremerhaven on the same day as the last example, 1 November 1856, by the Ocean Line steamship *Washington*, arriving at New York on 20 November. The letter was processed in New York the next day, 21 November, but it received quite a different circular datestamp than the previous letter, one reading **22/NOV/21/N.YORK U.S. PKT.** From this marking, the recipient was notified that only 22¢ postage was due. Obviously this marking was the wrong one to be struck on this letter, since 29¢ was due. The amount due could have been determined from two different misinterpretations. Either the New York clerk thought the Russian portion of 7¢ had been paid leaving 22¢ due of the 29¢ rate by Bremen mail, or he added the 10¢ international rate to Bremen plus the 12¢ marked by the Prussians as due. For whatever reason, the New York clerk erred in marking the postage due in Washington, D.C. The fact that two letters arrived on the same steamship from Bremen and were marked differently shows that more than one clerk was processing the mail in the exchange-office section of the New York post office. One got it right and one got it wrong.

An unpaid folded letter outer sheet from the United States to Russia is shown in Figure 6. Addressed to St. Petersburg, this letter originated in New York City on 12 April 1861, according to a docketing notation by the recipient on the inside. It was endorsed at the top “p New York” for the North German Lloyd steamship of that name, indicating that



Figure 6. 12 April 1861 unpaid folded letter outer sheet from New York City to St. Petersburg. New York debited Bremen 3¢. This letter was carried by North German Lloyd *New York* to Bremerhaven. The Germans debited Russia 9¼ sgr. and the Russians marked on reverse in magenta ink that 51 Kop. postage was due.



Figure 7. 5 April 1861 letter from Brunswick, Maine, to St. Petersburg, paid with a single and a horizontal pair of 10¢ green type V 1859 stamps, representing a 1¢ overpayment of the 29¢ rate by Bremen mail. The New York exchange office first marked 14¢ credit then corrected this to a 26¢ credit to Bremen. The cover was carried by North German Lloyd *New York* to Bremerhaven. The Germans marked that 6 sgr. Prussian and Russian transit fees had been paid and that 3 sgr. was credited to Russia.

it was intended to travel in the Bremen mail. The New York exchange-office clerk struck the black circular datestamp on the right side, **3/APR/13/N.YORK BREM. PK.**, to show the expected sailing date of the steamer and a U.S. debit to Bremen of 3¢, the United States portion under the postal convention with Bremen. The steamship was delayed one day and sailed on 14 April, arriving at Bremerhaven on 28 April 1861. There is no Bremen datestamp, but blue crayon markings show that Bremen debited the Hanover office in Bremen $6\frac{3}{4}$ sgr. for the fees owed to Bremen (approximately 15¢). The clerk in the Hanover office marked the blue **AMERICA/ÜBER BREMEN**. There are numerous blue crayon markings and one red crayon marking that sum up all the transit fees due the Germans and I can't say where each was written. But the end result was that Prussia marked $6\frac{3}{4}$ sgr. for the international fees and 3 sgr. for Prussian transit under the 1851 Prussian–Russian postal convention, totaling $9\frac{3}{4}$ sgr. (31 Kop. equivalent) as a debit to Russia. Written in magenta ink on the reverse was 51 Kop. postage due from the recipient in St. Petersburg. To the 31 Kop. owed to Prussia, the Russians added $2 \times 10 = 20$ Kop. So, two domestic rates were charged in Russia while only one domestic rate was charged in Prussia. This is another of only six Bremen-mail covers to Russia that I have recorded.

Figure 7 illustrates a letter sent in the Bremen mail and paid with stamps. This envelope without the letter contents was posted in Brunswick, Maine, on 5 April 1861, addressed to Capt. R.W. Simpson of the ship *Carlyle*, care of the American consul in St. Petersburg. The letter was endorsed in the upper left corner, “Bremen or Hamburg/Mail,” routing instructions for either service. The letter was paid 30¢ (1¢ overpayment of the 29¢ rate) with a single and a horizontal pair of 10¢ green type V 1859 stamps. Part of the printer’s imprint (“Toppan”) shows at the upper right corner of the stamp at right.

This cover was sent to New York, where it received on the right side a red orange circular datestamp, **PAID/APR/13/N.YORK BREM. PKT**, to show the expected sailing date of the steamer, that the letter was fully prepaid, and that it would travel by Bremen service.

Since a 30¢ payment usually signified Prussian mail, the New York exchange office clerk first marked in magenta ink on the right side a 14¢ credit, the proper credit for the Prussian mail. Noticing the routing endorsement he crossed through this and marked in magenta ink on the left side that 26¢ was credited to Bremen. In 1861 the United States was entitled only to 3¢ of the rate under the Bremen convention for letters carried by Bremen steamships.

The letter was included in the mail placed on board the North German Lloyd steamship *New York*, which departed one day later on 14 April and arrived at Bremerhaven on 28 April 1861, the same voyage as the cover shown in Figure 6. The clerk in the Hanover office in Bremen marked the blue **AMERICA/ÜBER BREMEN/FRANCO** to show the letter was paid and had arrived from the United States in the Bremen mail. In the lower left corner was written “f6” in orange crayon to show that the 6 sgr. transit fees through Prussia and Russia had been paid. Later this was crossed through and “3” was written to show the credit of 3 sgr. to Russia for transit fees within Russia. The letter was sent by train to Russia. On the reverse, a black double-circle datestamp of the 8th dispatch division of the St. Petersburg post office shows that the letter was received at 4 o’clock on 22 April/4 May 1861. The Russian clerk wrote “f” (“franco”) in magenta ink on the reverse to show that the letter was fully paid.

British mail

When the United States–United Kingdom postal convention went fully into effect on 1 July 1849, there was no rate to Russia since the British did not have a postal convention with Russia. Mail from the United States could be sent in the British mail but it was paid only to the British mail system and no further. That meant the British open-mail rates were effective. A payment of 5¢ per ½ ounce was required to get the letter on board a British steamship in the American harbor, where it entered the British mail system. If the letter was to be carried across the Atlantic to England on an American-contract steamship, 21¢ per ½ ounce prepayment was required. These letters entered the British mail system at the arrival port in the United Kingdom. Since the British had postal conventions with Prussia and Prussia had postal conventions with Russia, there was an organized way to send the mail beyond England. On letters coming from Russia by the British mails, all transit fees had to be paid to the limit of the British mail system. This was the American arrival port if the letter was carried on a British-contract steamship across the Atlantic or the departure port from England if carried on an American-contract steamship.

Figure 8 illustrates a letter from St. Petersburg, Russia, to Philadelphia, that was sent in the British mails. The St. Petersburg boxed datestamp on the reverse is dated 12 May/24 May 1845. The fees that would have been required in St. Petersburg were the Russian internal fee plus the Prussian internal transit fee plus the Prussian fee to get the letter to the United States arrival port. Since there were no American packets in 1845, it would have to cross the Atlantic on a British packet. The prepayment is not shown on the reverse but we can calculate the amount that must have been paid. By 1844 a uniform Russian internal fee was established of 10 Kop. per loth. One loth was approximately one half ounce. This letter is believed to have weighed just over one loth and required 1½ times the rate. The Russian internal fee would have been 15 Kop. The additional postal convention between Prussia and Russia, signed at St. Petersburg on 21 May/2 June 1843, established a transit fee of 9 sgr. per loth due Prussia for letters going to America. This convention also assigned a currency conversion of 1 sgr. equal to 3.25 Kop. for postal accounting. The Prussian portion that had to be paid was $9 \times 1\frac{1}{2} = 13\frac{1}{2}$ sgr. or 44 Kop.

Postgeschichte Kaiserreich Russland by Hans Kupec presents published Russian postal rate data collected from *The St. Petersburg Journal*. In a simplified form, this information will be published as an appendix at the conclusion of the second installment of this article. From Kupec’s rate tables the “foreign” rate to be added to the Russian internal



Figure 8. 12/24 May 1845 folded letter from St. Petersburg to Philadelphia. The sum of 44 Kop. was credited to Prussia and 2s8d credited to United Kingdom paying all transit fees to U.S. arrival port. Letter carried by Cunard *Caledonia* from Liverpool to Boston. Initially, 20¾¢ was marked in Philadelphia for postage due. This was changed to 39¢ (½¢ less than required) because the cover had an enclosure.

and Prussian transit fees for this letter was 37 sgr. x 1½ = 55½ sgr. (180½ Kop.), which would result in a prepayment of 240 Kop. for this letter. The Prussians, however, must have considered the letter weight under ½ ounce. Under the existing arrangement with England, mail from Prussia going to the United States required 1 shilling 8 pence transit fee to England plus 1 shilling transatlantic packet fee or a total of 2 shilling 8 pence for a ½ ounce letter. This was equivalent to 26⅔ sgr. or 87 Kop. I believe the red ink “44” in the upper right corner reflects the prepaid Prussian transit fee, 44 Kop. Alongside this to the right the Prussians credited 2 shilling 8 pence to Great Britain, shown in magenta ink.

A small circular datestamp on the reverse shows the letter arrived at the Hamburg post office on 30 May, from which it was placed in the steamship mails to England. Arrival at London on 2 June is shown by a red tombstone-style datestamp at the top with the word “PAID.” The letter arrived at Liverpool on 3 June (oval datestamp, lower left), and was placed in the mails to depart the next day on the Cunard steamer for Boston. On 4 June the steamship *Caledonia* departed Liverpool and arrived at Boston on 19 June 1845. Since the letter had been separately packaged at Liverpool for Philadelphia, the Boston clerk sent the package on without opening it and marking the postage due on the letter. This practice resulted from an agreement between the Liverpool postmaster and the U.S. Postmaster General to separately package mail for about ten U.S. cities to facilitate quicker handling upon arrival at Boston. These letters were not rated at Boston as incoming ship letters but rated at the destination, a most unusual practice that existed from 1844 to 1848. At Philadelphia the letter was rated as an incoming ship letter with a blue handstamp showing 20¾¢ was due, 2¢ ship fee plus 18¾¢ inland fee from Boston to Philadelphia. When it was realized that this letter had an enclosure and required two rates, the Philadelphia clerk crossed



Figure 9. 8 April/20 April 1850 folded letter outer sheet from St. Petersburg to New York. 101 Kop. (not shown) was paid for all transit fees to the arrival port in the United States. Prussia credited 1s4d to the United Kingdom. This cover was carried from Liverpool to Boston by the *Hibernia* of the Cunard line. New York marked 5¢ postage due.

through the postage due handstamp and wrote above in blue ink that 39¢ postage was due. He mistakenly left the half cent off since the proper postage due was 2¢ incoming ship fee plus 2 x 18³/₄¢ inland fee, or 39¹/₂¢.

Another British open mail letter is shown in Figure 9. This was sent from St. Petersburg to New York after there was a postal convention between the United States and the United Kingdom. The St. Petersburg boxed datestamp on the reverse of this folded letter outer sheet is dated 8 April/20 April 1850. A figure “20” on the reverse might look like a postal accounting figure, but it is a part of the docketing on the letter made by the recipient and actually is a change to the date of origin marked in the docketing. Again, the Russian prepayment is not shown on the letter but would have been the sum of the Russian internal fee, the transit fee owed to Prussia, and the fee the Prussians would have to pay to get the letter to the United States. The amount not shown would have been 80 Kop., explained as follows:

Starting 1 January 1847, a new postal convention between the United Kingdom and Prussia went into effect. Under this convention, the Prussians paid the British 6 pence per ½ ounce for the British portion under the convention plus 2 pence transit through Belgium, which the British had to pay on letters going westward. In addition, the transatlantic portion of 8 pence per ½ ounce in 1850 had to be paid because a British-contract steamship would carry the letter across the Atlantic. The total was 16 pence or 1 shilling 4 pence (13¹/₃ sgr.), which shown in red ink as a manuscript credit on the right side of the cover, “1-4.”

The 1843 postal convention between Prussia and Russia established a Prussian transit fee for mail to America of 9 sgr. per loth. This was reduced to 8 sgr. (26 Kop.) in 1845. Therefore, the payment required was 10 Kop. internal fee plus 26 Kop. Prussian transit plus 43¹/₄ Kop. for British transit fees = 79¹/₄ rounded to 80 Kop. In 1847, the conversion

established by the 1843 convention was still 1 sgr. = 3.25 Kop. The rate tables in Kupec show 101 Kop. was required, so the Prussians again saved on the necessary credit to the United Kingdom.

There are no datestamps showing transit through Europe. The black encircled **P.** was applied at the Aachen exchange office to show the letter was paid. The letter arrived at London on 29 April 1850, shown by two strikes of the red orange PAID circular datestamp. It was sent to Liverpool in a closed mail bag for New York to go on board the next Cunard steamship, which was the *Hibernia*, departing on 4 May and arriving at Boston on 17 May 1850. At New York the mail bag was opened, probably on 18 May, and the letter marked for 5¢ postage due (black 5 in a circle handstamp), the British open mail rate for a letter coming by British packet. All fees up to Boston had been paid, but the American inland share under the U.S.-U.K. postal convention of 5¢ was still due.

Figure 10 illustrates a letter paid with stamps and sent from the United States to St. Petersburg in the British open mail. This folded letter was sold in 2010 by the Robert A. Siegel firm as part of the Jerome S. Wagshal collection (sale 994, lot 907). The letter was posted in Philadelphia on 11 April 1853. The 5¢ British open mail rate by British packet was paid by two copies of the 1¢ blue type IV 1852 stamp and a 3¢ dull red stamp of 1851. This amount paid the letter to the British steamship in the American harbor.

A black Boston exchange-office circular datestamp on the reverse, **BOSTON/APR/13/BR. PKT.**, shows that the letter would leave Boston 13 April on a British-contract mail steamer. On that date the Cunard steamship *Niagara* departed Boston, arriving at Liverpool on 25 April 1853. A red orange London datestamp on the reverse shows arrival there later the same day. The London foreign-office clerk marked a debit to Prussia of 1 shilling and placed the letter in the mails to go to the Aachen exchange office under the United Kingdom–Prussia postal convention of 1852. The British were owed 8 pence for transit across the Atlantic and 4 pence for British and Belgian transit fees. The letter arrived



Figure 10. 11 April 1853 folded letter from Philadelphia to St. Petersburg paid at the 5¢ British open-mail rate by British packet with two copies of the 1¢ blue type IV 1852 stamp and a 3¢ dull red 1851 stamp. This cover was carried from Boston to Liverpool by the *Niagara* of the Cunard line. London debited Prussia 1 shilling and Prussia debited Russia 14 sgr. Postage due, marked on reverse in magenta ink, was 56 Kop.



Figure 11. Cover posted 13 April 1861 from Portland, Maine, to St. Petersburg, showing the 21¢ British open-mail rate by American packet prepaid by a horizontal pair of 10¢ green type V 1859 stamps and a 1¢ blue type V 1857 stamp. This envelope, which now lacks letter contents, was carried from Portland to Londonderry on the by Allan Line steamer *Nova Scotian*. London debited Prussia 4 pence and Prussia debited Russia 7 silbergroschen. Postage due marked on the reverse in magenta ink was 33 Kop.

at the Prussian exchange office on 26 April, shown by a double-circle orange datestamp on the reverse, **SEEBRIEF PER ENGLAND UND AACHEN/26/4 B**, indicating an overseas letter via England and Aachen. While the British debit was equivalent to 10 sgr. the Prussians also had to pay ½ sgr. for their part of the Belgian transit. Apparently they rounded the British and Belgian transit fees up to 11 sgr. for the foreign transit and added 3 sgr. for Prussian transit to Russia under the 1851 Prussian–Russian postal convention. These two figures were written by the Aachen clerk in blue ink on the left side as the debit to Russia, an amount equivalent to about 46 Kop. The Russians added 10 Kop. for internal transit and marked the letter on the reverse in magenta ink for 56 Kop. postage due.

The 21¢ British open mail rate is illustrated by the cover shown in Figure 11. This envelope without the letter contents was sold in 2004 by the Robert A. Siegel auction firm as part of Blake M. Myers collection (sale 882, lot 2123). The cover originated in Portland, Maine, on 13 April 1861 and was addressed to Josiah Pierce in St. Petersburg, one of a number of covers from the Pierce archive, but the only one I have seen that was sent in the British open mail. Other covers to Pierce in St. Petersburg were posted at Boston and Salem, Massachusetts, Hartford, Connecticut, Gorham and Portland, Maine, and one at Washington, D.C.

On the Figure 11 cover, the 21¢ British open mail rate by American packet was paid by with a horizontal pair of 10¢ green type V 1859 stamps and a 1¢ blue type V 1857 stamp. This paid all the transit fees to the British arrival port: the 5¢ American internal portion plus the transatlantic portion of 16¢ under the U.S.-U.K. convention. A black Portland exchange office datestamp struck on the reverse, **PORTLAND ME. AM. PKT./APR/ 13/1861**, showed the date the letter would depart from Portland and indicated that American-contract packet service would be used. On this date the Allan Line steamship *Nova Scotian* left Portland, arriving at Londonderry on 25 April. The London foreign-office clerk marked in black ink a debit to Prussia of 4 pence for fees owed to the United Kingdom under the

United Kingdom–Prussia postal convention of 1852 and placed the letter in the mail to go to Aachen exchange office. The British were owed 3½ pence for British transit fees and ½ penny for the British part of the Belgian transit fee.

The letter arrived at the Prussian exchange office at Aachen on 27 April, shown by a double-circle orange datestamp on the reverse, **SEEBRIEF PER ENGLAND UND AACHEN/27/4 B**, indicating an overseas letter via England and Aachen. While this debit was equivalent to 3⅓ sgr., the Prussians also had to pay ½ sgr. for their part of the Belgian transit. They marked 4 sgr. for foreign transit and added 3 sgr. for Prussian transit to Russia under the 1851 Prussian–Russian postal convention. These two figures were written by the Aachen clerk in blue ink on the left side as the debit to Russia, an amount equivalent to 23 Kop. The Russians added 10 Kop. for internal transit and marked the letter on the reverse in magenta ink for 33 Kop. postage due. Pencil docketing on the reverse shows the letter was received on 19 April/1 May 1861. I have recorded only six covers sent to Russia in the British open mail, so all are scarce.

Prussian closed mail

Most of the mail between the United States and Russia was sent under the United States-Prussia postal convention of 1852. Under this convention, mail between the United States and Prussia passed through England and Belgium in closed mail bags, which were opened at the Aachen, Prussia, exchange office. At the time of the U.S.-Prussia convention, this exchange office was located on Bahnpostamt 10, the traveling post office on the railroad between Verviers, Belgium, and Aachen, Prussia. When the convention went into effect, in October 1852, the rate for a ½ ounce letter from the United States to Prussia was 30¢. On eastbound paid letters the United States retained 23¢ and credited 7¢ to Prussia. On westbound mail the Prussians were entitled to 5¢ and the Americans 25¢ of the basic 30¢ international rate.

The U.S. rate by Prussian closed mail to Russia for a ½ ounce letter was 37¢, with 7¢ foreign transit to Russia added to the basic 30¢ international rate. On paid letters from the United States, a credit of 14¢ was made to Prussia. The Prussians then credited to Russia the foreign amount that was paid. The extensive Prussian railway system was used to carry this mail from the Aachen exchange office to the border of Russian or Poland (under Russian control). The May 1863 *United States Mail and Post Office Assistant* announced a reduction on prepaid mail to Russia by this convention from 37¢ to 35¢. The unpaid rate remained at 37¢. These rates lasted until the end of the U.S.-Prussia convention on 31 December 1867.

The convention with Prussia generally did not allow partial payments. Exceptions were permitted in two cases. One was multi-rate letters. If one full international rate to Prussia was prepaid, the letter was allowed and the extra rate(s) required postage due. The other case was mail going beyond Prussia with only the international rate to Prussia prepaid. Such mail was accepted as paid only to the exit border of Prussia, with the remaining postage due at the Russian destination. I will show a number of different examples of mail to and from Russia sent in the Prussian closed mail.

Figure 12 shows an unpaid letter sent in the Prussian closed mail from the United States to St. Petersburg. According to a docketing notation inside, this folded letter outer sheet originated in New York City on 2 April 1861. It is one of a few covers from the archive of Heinrich Schliemann, a wealthy German businessman who lived in St. Petersburg and who later pursued classical archaeology. He was an advocate of the historical reality of places mentioned in the works of Homer. Although not trained in archaeological techniques and considered a “treasurer-hunter” rather than a scientist, his most important excavation was the site of the four superimposed towns of Troy.



Figure 12. Folded letter outer sheet posted at New York on 2 April 1861 and sent unpaid to St. Petersburg in the Prussian closed mail. New York debited Prussia 23¢. Cover carried by the Cunard *Canada* from Boston to Queenstown. Prussia debited Russia 14 sgr. and Russia marked 56 Kop. postage due on reverse in magenta ink.

The Figure 12 cover was endorsed across the top, “Canada,” the name of the steamship desired to carry the letter across the Atlantic. A New York exchange-office clerk struck in the upper right corner a datestamp, **23/APR/2/NEW-YORK BR. PKT.**, to show the expected departure date of the letter from New York, that it would be carried on a British packet, and that 23¢ was debited to Prussia. The letter was sent to Boston for the next-day sailing of the Cunard steamship *Canada*, leaving on 3 April and arriving at Queenstown on 15 April 1861.

Closed at New York, the mail bag containing this letter continued unopened through England and Belgium to the Aachen exchange office, where it was opened on 18 April, shown by a red Aachen datestamp on the reverse. Here the letter was marked in blue ink “12/2” for the Prussian debit to Russia. An attachment in the mid-1850s to the 1851 postal convention between Prussia and Russia changed the breakdown of the transit fees on mail to and from the United States. On mail sent in the Prussian closed mail the Prussians were now entitled to 12 sgr. for the international transit and 2 sgr. for Prussian transit to Russia. This explains the “12/2” debit markings that the Aachen exchange office now applied to unpaid letters from the United States.

There are no other Prussian markings on the cover, which indicates that the letter was in a closed mail bag passing through Prussia. The postage due in St. Petersburg was marked in Russia on the reverse in magenta ink, 56 Kop. The amount owed to Prussia was equivalent to 46 Kop. to which was added 10 Kop. for standard Russian inland fee.

An unpaid letter from Russia to the United States is shown in Figure 13. This folded letter originated in St. Petersburg on 5 October/17 October 1861, and was addressed to Boston. The letter was posted a week later on 13 October/25 October at the Nikolaevskaya railway station in St. Petersburg, shown by a black circular datestamp on the reverse. The Russians marked in red crayon on the reverse a debit to Prussia of 3 sgr. for the 10 Kop. internal postage. The letter was handed over to the Prussian railway at Eydtkuhnen in East Prussia. A black boxed handstamp, **Aus Russland**, was applied in the upper right corner by

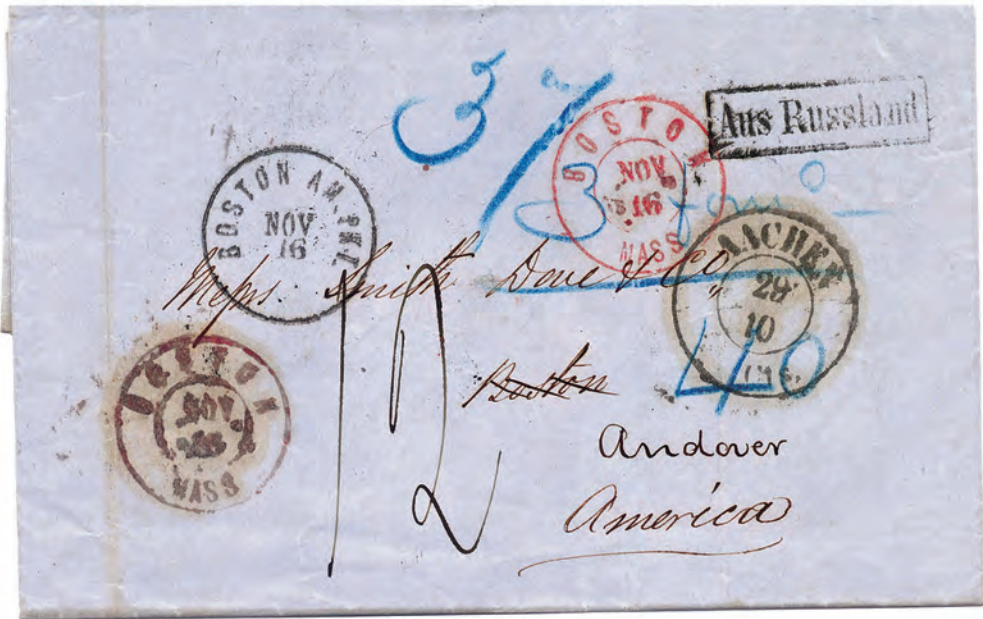


Figure 13. Unpaid folded letter posted on 5/17 October 1861 from St. Petersburg, addressed to Boston and subsequently forwarded to Andover, Massachusetts. Letter handled on Prussian Eisenbahnpost No. XI train from Eydtkuhnen to Bromberg and marked 3 sgr. Prussian transit unpaid (blue ink on reverse). Aachen exchange office debited the U.S. 12¢. Letter carried by Inman Line *Edinburgh* from Queenstown to New York. Boston marked 37¢ + 3¢ forwarding fee due from the recipient at Andover.

a Prussian clerk on the Eisenbahnpost No. XI train, also a three-line black datestamp on the reverse, **EYDKUHNEN/27 10 I/BROMBERG**, showing handling on the railroad on 27 October. The clerk also marked on the reverse in blue ink that 3 sgr. was due for Prussian transit.

The letter reached the Aachen exchange office on 29 October, shown by a black circular datestamp on the right side, **AACHEN/29/10 __ Cts**. The space at the bottom of this datestamp was intended for the debit to the United States, but it was not written here. Instead the amount, 12¢, was written in large black ink numerals much further to the left. This amount consisted of 7¢ for transit from Russia plus 5¢ which the Prussians were allowed on unpaid Prussian closed mail to the United States.

The letter was placed in a closed mail bag and sent to England. It went on board the Inman Line steamship *Edinburgh* when she called at Queenstown for mail on 31 October and arrived at New York on 15 November 1861. The mail for Boston was opened at Boston the next day, 16 November. The letter was marked with a black circular datestamp of the Boston exchange office, **BOSTON AM.PKT./NOV/16**, and a red orange circular datestamp of the Boston office. The exchange-office clerk noted in blue crayon that 37¢ postage was due. Later, the letter was forwarded to the addressee in Andover, Massachusetts. An additional 3¢ domestic postage was marked in blue crayon for forwarding postage, summed to 40¢ to be paid by the recipient.

Figure 14 illustrates an unpaid letter late from the Prussian closed mail period when the paid rate to the United States was 35¢, but the unpaid rate remained at 37¢. Addressed to New York City, this envelope (which lacks the letter content) was posted at the 7th dispatch division of the St. Petersburg post office on 2 May/14 May 1867, shown by a black double-circle datestamp in the upper right corner. On the reverse is a red double-circle datestamp



Figure 14. 2 May/14 May 1867 unpaid envelope without letter contents from St. Petersburg to New York City. Letter handled on Prussian Eisenbahnpost No. XI train from Eydtkuhnen to Bromberg and marked 3 sgr. Prussian transit unpaid (blue crayon marking on reverse). The Aachen exchange office debited the United States 12¢. This cover was carried by the Cunard *Scotia* from Queenstown to New York, where it was marked for 37¢ due if paid by coin or 49¢ if paid in depreciated greenback notes.

of the main office in St. Petersburg with the same date. From 1867, foreign letters were marked with a black boxed handstamp, **НЕ ФРАНКИРОВАНО**, indicating that the letter was “unfranked” or unpaid. This marking appears in the upper left corner. The letter was sent to the East Prussian exchange office at Eydtkuhnen. It was sorted on the Eisenbahnpost No. XI railroad from Eydtkuhnen to Bromberg, receiving on the reverse a red orange double-circle datestamp, **AUS RUSSLAND/PORTO/15 5 II/67/über BUR. XI EDK.BRG.** The word “PORTO” in this datestamp also indicated the letter was unpaid.

A blue crayon “3” marked by the train clerk on the reverse indicated the Prussian transit fee of 3 sgr. was not paid. The letter reached the Aachen exchange office on 17 May, shown by a black circular datestamp on the left side, **AACHEN/17/5/ ___ Cts.** The space at the bottom was intended for the debit to the United States, and this time the debit of 12¢ was written there in black ink. This consisted of 7¢ for transit from Russia plus 5¢ which the Prussians were allowed on unpaid Prussian closed mail to the United States. The letter was placed in a sealed mail bag and sent to England. It went on board the Cunard steamship *Scotia* when she called at Queenstown for mail on 19 May and arrived at New York on 28 May 1867. A New York exchange-office clerk struck the large black circular datestamp in the upper right corner, **N.Y.BR.PKT./37/May/28/49/OR U.S. NOTES**, to show the letter arrived by British packet and the postage due was 37¢ if paid in coin or 49¢ if paid in depreciated greenback notes.

A prepaid stampless letter from Russia by the Prussian closed mail is shown in Figure 15. This folded letter was posted in St. Petersburg on 30 June/12 July 1856 and was addressed to Naugatuck, Connecticut. A black diamond-shaped datestamp of St. Petersburg was struck on the reverse with the date “VI/30.” The letter was endorsed across the top, “pr Prussian Closed Mail via England.” The Russian payment was not shown but would have been 65½ Kop. according to Kupec’s rate tables. The letter was marked “frco” in black ink at upper left, to indicate that it was paid. It was sent to the East Prussian exchange office at



Figure 15. 30 June/12 July 1856 paid folded letter from St. Petersburg to Naugatuck, Connecticut. 65½ Kop. paid (not shown). Aachen exchange office credited 25¢ to U.S. This cover was carried by the Cunard *Arabia* from Liverpool to Boston, where it was marked to show that the 30¢ international rate from Prussia had been prepaid.

Eydtkuhnen. A black three-line datestamp on the reverse, dated 15 July, shows handling on the Prussian railroad from Bromberg to Berlin, part of the Prussian Eisenbahnpost No. XI. On the front a black boxed handstamp, **AUS RUSSLAND/FRANCO**, was struck in the upper right to indicate the letter came from Russia with all fees paid. This is an unrecorded version of the handstamp used on the Bromberg-Berlin line of the railroad. The railway clerk wrote "11/3" in black ink on the reverse to show the breakdown of the paid Prussian transit fees: 11 sgr. for a single-rate Prussian transit fee to the United States and 3 sgr. Prussian transit fee from the Russian border. At some point on the Prussian trains, the letter was marked on the reverse in blue ink "fr 14" to show again the combined transit fees that were prepaid.

The letter reached the Aachen exchange office on 17 July, shown by a red orange circular datestamp on the right side, **AACHEN/17/7/PAID 25 Cts.** This marking credited 25¢ to the United States. The letter was placed in a closed mail bag and sent to England. It went on board the Cunard steamship *Arabia*, which departed from Liverpool on 19 July and arrived at Boston on 30 July 1856. A Boston exchange-office clerk marked the red orange circular datestamp, **BOSTON 30 BR. PKT./JUL/30/PAID**, to show that the letter was brought in by a British packet and that the 30¢ international rate had been paid. On paid mail coming from beyond Prussia the full rate was not shown (in this case 37¢ from Russia), only the international portion, which was 30¢. There is no docketing to show arrival of the letter at Naugatuck, but it would have been about a day later.

Figure 16 shows a letter paid with stamps and sent from the United States to Russia by the Prussian closed mail. This folded letter was posted in Philadelphia on 5 November 1855, and was addressed to William L. Winans. An internet search revealed that William Winans worked for the firm Harrison, Winans and Eastwick in St. Petersburg, Russia, with his older brother Thomas Winans. The Winans brothers' contract was to equip the new Russian railway with locomotives and stock cars, and toward this end they established work-



Figure 16. 5 November 1855 folded letter from Philadelphia to St. Petersburg, with the 37¢ single rate paid by a 1¢ blue type IV 1852 stamp and three 12¢ gray black 1851 stamps. The New York exchange office credited 14¢ to Prussia and Prussia credited 3 sgr. to Russia. This cover was carried by the Cunard *Africa* from Boston to Liverpool.

shops in Alexandrovsky, near St. Petersburg. When the railway was completed in 1850, Thomas Winans returned to Baltimore with his Russian wife, while William Louis Winans stayed on until 1862 to finish existing contracts. At the time of this letter he was American Consul in St. Petersburg.

The letter was endorsed in the upper left corner, “Via Prussian/Closed Mail.” The 37¢ single rate to Russia was paid by a 1¢ blue type IV 1852 and three 12¢ gray black 1851 stamps. The cover was sent to New York, where it was prepared for the British-contract mail leaving Boston. On the reverse the New York exchange-office clerk struck a red orange circular datestamp, **NEW-YORK/NOV/6/BR. PKT.**, to show the date the letter was to leave New York and that a British-contract steamer would carry the letter across the Atlantic. He also marked a magenta ink “14” to the left of the stamps, which was the U.S. credit to Prussia, 7¢ normal credit plus 7¢ for transit beyond Prussia to Russia.

The letter was placed in a closed mail bag at New York, which was not opened until it arrived at the Aachen exchange office on the railroad from Verviers, Belgium, to Cöln, Prussia. The mail bag was sent to Boston and departed 7 November on the Cunard steamship *Africa*, arriving at Liverpool on 18 November 1855. The closed mail bag crossed the United Kingdom and Belgium before being opened at the Aachen exchange office on 20 November. Here an exchange-office clerk marked the red orange boxed datestamp, **AACHEN 20 11/FRANCO**, to show the date the letter was un-bagged and that it was fully paid. In the lower left corner he marked in blue ink “f3” to show that the 3 sgr. Prussian transit postage was paid. On the reverse was marked in blue ink “f6” to show the total transit fees to Russia of 6 sgr. had been paid. This amount included the 3 sgr. Prussian and the 3 sgr. Russian transit fees. There are no other markings on the letter showing arrival at the Russian destination.

A double-rate letter by the Prussian closed mail is shown in Figure 17. This cover was in the award-winning collection of Leonard Kapiloff, a portion of which I believe has yet to be sold. From the Winans company archive, this envelope (which lacks letter contents)



Figure 17. Double 37¢ rate prepaid by a single and a horizontal pair of 24¢ gray 1860 stamps and two 1¢ blue type II 1861 stamps. Addressed to St. Petersburg, this cover was posted at Portland, Maine, on 19 July 1861. Portland credited 28¢ to Prussia and Prussia (manuscript at lower left) showed 6 sgr. foreign transit fee paid. Carried by Allan Line *North Britain* from Rivière du Loup on the St. Lawrence River to Londonderry, Ireland.

was posted on 19 July 1861 in Portland, Maine, and was addressed to St. Petersburg. The letter was paid $2 \times 37¢ = 74¢$ with a single and a horizontal pair of 24¢ gray 1860 stamps and two 1¢ blue type II 1861 stamps, each canceled with a Portland circular datestamp. A Portland exchange-office clerk struck in the lower left corner a red orange circular datestamp **PORTLAND ME AM PKT. JUL/19/Paid**, to show the letter was to cross the Atlantic on an American-contract packet, that it was paid, and that the closed mail bag would leave Portland on 19 July. Also it was marked “28” in red crayon (to the left of the Portland exchange-office datestamp) to show that $2 \times 14¢ = 28¢$ was credited to Prussia for a double-rate letter.

The letter was placed in a closed mail bag for Prussia and sent by train to catch the Allan Line steamship *North Britain*, departing Quebec on 20 July. The letter boarded the steamer at Rivière du Loup, an Allan Line mail stop on the St. Lawrence River 120 miles below Quebec. *North Briton* arrived at Londonderry, Ireland, on 31 July 1861. The closed mail bag went through the United Kingdom and Belgium before being opened at the Aachen exchange office on 3 August, where it received the red orange boxed datestamp, **AACHEN 3 8/FRANCO**, to show the date the letter was un-bagged and that it was fully paid. At the Aachen exchange office it was marked in blue ink (upper left corner) “2 fy” to indicate it was a double-rate letter and in the lower left corner in blue ink, “Wfr 6,” to show that the onward foreign postage of $2 \times 3 \text{ sgr.} = 6 \text{ sgr.}$ had been prepaid. I have not seen the reverse of this cover, but the only marking I would expect is an indication that $2 \times 6 \text{ sgr.} = 12 \text{ sgr.}$, representing all the transit fees to Russia, had been prepaid.

Figure 18 shows a cover to Russia on which the Prussian closed mail rate was prepaid only to Prussia. This envelope without letter contents was sold in the Robert A. Siegel auction of the Peter G. Dupuy collection (sale 1000, lot 1056). Another cover from the Josiah Pierce archive, this was posted in Boston about 28 June 1861, addressed to St. Petersburg. While the year is not a part of the information available from the illustration, it had to be 1861 because of the short time the stamp was legally in use and the available steamship



Figure 18. Circa 28 June 1861 cover from Boston to St. Petersburg. The 30¢ orange 1860 stamp prepaid the rate to Prussia only, which was at this time permitted. The New York exchange office credited 7¢ to Prussia. This cover was carried by the Inman Line *City of Baltimore* from New York to Queenstown. Aachen exchange office marked the letter as paid only to the GAPU exit border (lower boxed handstamp); 10 Kop. was due in Russia but not marked on the envelope.

sailing data. The large circular cancel with PAID in the center is a well-known Boston killer. The letter was paid with a 30¢ orange 1860 stamp (earliest known use 8 August 1860, demonetized in 1861), which was the Prussian closed mail rate for a letter going to Prussia and not beyond. This underpayment of the 37¢ rate was allowed in the Prussian mail as long as the 30¢ international rate was paid. The letter was sent to New York for the next-day sailing of the mail steamer to the United Kingdom. A New York exchange-office clerk struck the small red orange circular datestamp tying the stamp, **N.YORK AM.PKT/JUN/29/7 PAID**, to show the date the letter would leave New York, that it was paid, that 7¢ was credited to Prussia, and that it was going across the Atlantic on an American-contract packet. It was included in the mail that departed New York 29 June on the Inman Line steamship *City of Baltimore*, which arrived at Queenstown on 11 July 1861. The closed mail bag continued on through England and Belgium. It was opened at the Aachen exchange office on 13 July, as shown by the red orange boxed datestamp, **AACHEN 13 7/FRANCO**, indicating it was paid. Actually, the letter was paid only to the border of the German-Austrian Postal Union. Another boxed handstamp in red orange ink, applied across the address by the Aachen exchange-office clerk, reads **FRANCO/PREUSS.RESP.VEREINS/AUSGANGS-GRENZE**, meaning that the letter was paid only to the Union border. The Russian postage due was not marked on the reverse, which is blank, but 10 Kop. would have been collected for the Russian internal fee, since it had not been paid.

A cover with the 35¢ Prussian closed mail rate to Russia is shown in Figure 19. This envelope without the letter contents was sold in the Robert A. Siegel auction of the Raymond Vogel collection (sale 995, lot 2231). As mentioned earlier, a 2¢ reduction in the 37¢ rate to Russia was announced in May 1863. This rate applied only to prepaid letters. Posted at Salem, Massachusetts, on 18 January 1867, this is another cover from the Josiah Pierce archive. Although the year doesn't show on the cover, it can be determined by the fact that the 15¢ stamp is not known used earlier than April 1866 and the Prussian closed mail rates were no longer effective after 31 December 1867.



Figure 19. 18 January 1867 envelope without the letter contents from Salem, Massachusetts, to St. Petersburg, prepaid at the reduced rate of 35¢ with a 2¢ 1863, a 3¢ rose 1865, and a vertical pair of 15¢ Lincoln stamps. Boston marked 14¢ credit to Prussia. This cover was carried by Allan Line *Belgian* from Portland to Londonderry. The Aachen exchange office marked 2 sgr. foreign transit fee had been paid (a credit to Russia).

The letter was paid with a 2¢ black 1863, a 3¢ rose 1865, and a vertical pair of 15¢ black 1866 stamps. It was sent to the Boston exchange office to be prepared for the Prussian closed mail. Here the clerk struck the small red orange circular datestamp on the left side, **BOSTON AM.PKT./19/JAN/PAID**, to show when the letter was to leave Boston, that it was fully paid, and that it would be carried across the Atlantic on an American contract steamer. The clerk also marked a 14¢ credit to Prussia in red crayon (below “Winans”). The rate reduction in 1863 did not affect the credit to Prussia. The letter was placed in a closed mail bag for Prussia that was sent to Portland, Maine, for the next American-contract steamer leaving from there. This was the Allan Line steamship *Belgian*, departing Portland on 20 January and arriving at Londonderry, Ireland, on 31 January 1867. The closed mail bag went through the United Kingdom and Belgium before being opened at the Aachen exchange office on 3 February, where it received the blue boxed datestamp, **AACHEN 3 2/FRANCO**, to show the date the letter was un-bagged and that it was fully paid. In early 1865 the Aachen exchange office started using blue ink for their markings. The Aachen exchange office clerk also wrote “12” in red crayon, lower left, to show that the foreign transit postage of 2 sgr. had been paid. The Prussian transit fee to Russia had been reduced in a new postal convention with Russia in August 1865. I have not seen the reverse of this envelope and cannot comment on any markings there.

The last cover that I will illustrate under the Prussian convention is a 37¢ rate cover, a rate I have previously discussed (Figures 16 and 17), but this one sent to a very unusual Russian destination, Siberia. Figure 20 is a folded letter outer sheet that originated in New York City on 22 April 1863. It was written to Mr. Karl Orrizius in the town of Nikolaevsk-on-Amur, 840 miles north northeast of Vladivostok. Nikolaevsk-on-Amur was second only to Vladivostok as an important far eastern post of the Russian empire in the 1860s. The routing instructions in the body of the address, written in Russian, indicated the letter should go via Irkutsk, which is in central Russia just north of Mongolia.

Payment of 37¢ for a single rate of postage was made by a horizontal pair of 1¢



Figure 20. 22 April 1863 cover from New York City to Nikolaevsk-on-Amur, Russian Siberia, with the 37¢ rate paid by with a horizontal pair of 1¢ blue 1861, a 5¢ brown 1863 and a 30¢ orange 1861 stamp. New York marked 14¢ credit to Prussia in magenta ink. Letter carried by Cunard *Africa* from New York to Queenstown. Aachen exchange office marked letter paid and the 3 sgr. foreign postage also paid (a credit to Russia). Docketing on reverse shows letter arrived at Nikolaevsk-on-Amur on 22 July/3 August 1863.

blue 1861, a 5¢ brown 1863 and a 30¢ orange 1861 stamp. A New York exchange-office clerk struck on the left side of the cover a small red orange circular datestamp, **N.YORK BR.PKT./APR/22/PAID**, to show when the letter was to leave New York, that it was fully paid, and that it would be carried across the Atlantic on a British packet. He also wrote in magenta ink “14” to show a 14¢ credit to Prussia. The letter was included in the closed mail placed on board the Cunard steamship *Africa*, departing 22 April and arriving at Queenstown on 3 May 1863. The closed mail bag went through the United Kingdom and Belgium before being opened at the Aachen exchange office on 5 May, where it received the red orange boxed datestamp, **AACHEN 5 5/FRANCO**, to show the date the letter was un-bagged and that it was fully paid. The clerk also marked in blue crayon that the 3 sgr. foreign transit had been paid (a credit to Russia).

The letter was sent first to St. Petersburg. On the reverse is a black receiving circular datestamp used at St. Petersburg, **ПОЛУЧЕНО/28 АПР/1855/ЧТРО**, indicating the letter arrived there in the morning of 28 April/10 May. A notation on the reverse shows that it was forwarded from Irkutsk and arrived at Nikolaevsk-on-Amur on 22 July/3 August 1863, a transit across Russia of almost three months.

In the concluding installment of this article, I will discuss U.S.-Russia correspondence carried via French mail, via Hamburg mail and via North German Union mail, concluding with a discussion of a few covers to and from Finland, which during the classic era was under Russian control. ■

**“HERE THERE BE DRAGONS”:
AN ENTHUSIASTIC REVIEW OF
THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM
ON ANALYTICAL METHODS IN PHILATELY**

GEORGE G. SAYERS

The first four words in the title of this review are meant to evoke the frequently-forged antique maps and historical documents around which the applied science of document authentication has been built—and the fear of the unknown at the beginning of the Age of Exploration, which is sometimes with us even today.

Over the last decade, refinement of non-destructive analytical methods, in particular Raman spectroscopy, has led to sputtering attempts to once again extend analytic science to philatelic authentication. Massive spectrographic information data banks, web access to them for both professionals and hobbyists, and the development of software for rapid comparisons, have greatly reduced the cost of analysis. These developments helped facilitate formation of the Institute for Analytical Philately (IAP), a non-profit organization that was founded in 2010 by the late David L. Herendeen. The stated purpose of the IAP is to enhance the understanding of philatelic materials through the use of scientific technology and the publication of experimental results.

In November 2012, the IAP staged what was grandly called The First International Symposium on Analytical Methods in Philately, hosted by the National Postal Museum (NPM) division of the Smithsonian Institution, which has acquired and deployed state-of-the-art equipment in this area. Many of the papers presented at this symposium were gathered into the publication under review, which is available both in print form (reviewed here) and as a PDF download.

No question, the time is ideal for science to supplement the philatelic expertization model. This issue is presented well in David R. Beech’s paper, “The Place for New Tools in Forensic Philately,” the keynote address and lead essay in the *Proceedings*. Beech is active in the Royal Philatelic Society of London (RPSL) and Curator and Head of the Philatelic Collections at the British Library. The criteria in his essay are useful and relevant to reviewing the papers presented.

Beech notes that examining philatelic evidence to establish genuineness “may not be so easy.” One example he gives is that “visual discrimination of shades of color is insufficient without an analysis of the pigments and their prospects for change.” In my opinion, this challenge remains beyond the scope of quantitative analysis, and requires the experts’ trained and experienced eyes. Beech suggests that the expert certificate of the future should include an opinion, record of provenance, record of conservation treatments, photographic record, and a record of any special scientific analyses. “It must provide the evidence and technical details, if only for such scientific work to be repeated independently.” I concur wholeheartedly. Verifiable repeatability is the core criterion of experimental science. It must be the basis for future analytic methods if they are to be part of the expertization process.

David L. Herendeen's paper, "Documenting Science in Philatelic Literature: A New Perspective," offers additional criteria, including "the need to communicate highly technical information to laypersons." Herendeen states, "The results should be understandable to any motivated philatelist...using plain English in a way that makes the utility of a technique come alive." Reports should include "a moderation in technical complexity and increased use of visualization tools...reduced to the minimum necessary to prove the thesis of the paper." Simplify, simplify, simplify in order to communicate. Herendeen's paper seems a plea for the kind of open free exchange of information ideally typical of scientific endeavors,

which seems contrary to the practice (in the United States) of achieving credibility based on anonymous institutional expertization and the practice (in Europe) of achieving credibility based on individual expertization.

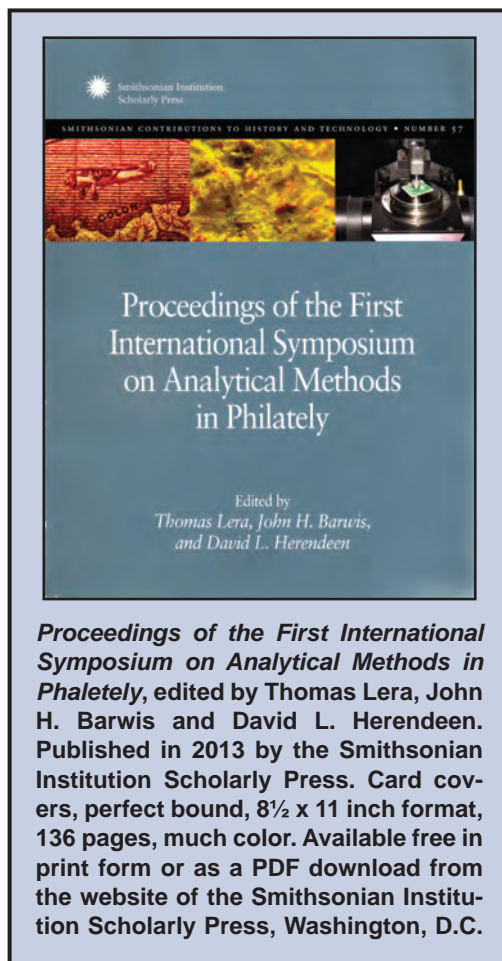
More or less in order of presentation in the *Proceedings*, how did they do?

A Scientific Analysis of the First Issues of Chile 1853-1862, London Printing, by Thomas Lera, Jennifer Giaccai, and Nicole Little. I have long been a student of the Chile First Issues. I read this paper with great anticipation and was not disappointed. The abstract first divides philatelic research into four main areas: color, paper, ink and printing. It then states the analyses undertaken to demonstrate the capabilities of the methods and instrumentation used to answer questions in these four areas. And in the "Chromaticity" (color) section it indicates many of the problems encountered in analyzing 150-year-old used stamps. Noting David Beech's comments above, the analysis was not so easy.

The Chile First Issues are good candidates for this kind of analysis. Unique watermarks and complex engraving have made counterfeiting not a worthwhile endeavor, and the used stamps are readily available. The "London Printing" historical background is well documented in the Per-

kins, Bacon & Co. archive at the RPSL and elsewhere. This paper is a roadmap for philatelic research design, and though crammed full of highly technical details, is an important read for anyone hoping to propose a project.

Infrared Spectroscopic and X-Ray Diffraction Studies of the Typographed Confederate 5¢ Stamps, by Harry G. Brittain. I commend this author for his thorough, step-by-step explanation of the physical processes involved in the analytic methods XRD (X-ray diffraction) and ATR-FTIR (attenuated total reflectance sampling and Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy). That alone is worth reading and citing. The experimental work including the synthetic infrared spectra to match those of the three types of CSA 5¢ stamps is reported with clarity. This paper is a textbook example of implementation of Herendeen's recommendations quoted above for communicating analysis in philately, including the his-



torical setting. And felicitations to the NPM staff who, according to the acknowledgements, supported this approach.

Forensic Analysis of Great Britain 1858-1879 1d Plate 77 Stamps on Cover, by Abed H. Najjar. The most difficult subject in philately to authenticate is the new unique. Expertization is dependent on the experience of the expertizers, and by definition, no one has experience in the unique. This paper shows how forensic analysis can be used to authenticate the unique, and equally important, how difficult it may be to then analyze why the item exists at all. Really, this analysis is a *tour de force* of state-of-the-art forensic document authentication, bringing out every tool, method and technique suitable for authentication of the stamps and cover, including using the British Library archives in depth, with even a proof of the transfer roll! If cost is no problem, this paper (and the author's website) provide a roadmap to the answer. Both are a compelling read.

The U. S. 1851 3¢ Stamp: Color, Chemistry, and Changes, by James A. Allen and Thomas Lera. This paper describes the authors' analyses of the early shades of this common 3¢ stamp by x-ray fluorescence spectrography and visual spectrum reflectance comparison. This appropriately limited-in-scope study meets the previously stated communication goals, demonstrates the appropriate use of the analytic equipment and techniques mentioned, places the results in their proper historical context and has a surprise ending. Couldn't be better. Read it.

Analysis of Postage Stamps by Proton-Induced X-Ray Emission (PIXE) Spectrometry, by Thomas E. Gill. Spectrometry is the quantitative cousin of spectrography. The described PIXE method requires a high-energy proton beam generated by a linear accelerator, a sophisticated device to quantify the major and trace elements detected, and a great amount of care to be non-destructive. This equipment is generally found only in government-supported research facilities. Yet, as the author demonstrates, this technique has been used many times in the past 30 years to quantify the chemical elements of papers and inks. Supplemented with Raman or FTIP spectrography, and the historical information/setting of the subjects, this method is the best available for distinguishing varieties (such as forgeries and reprints) from the original. The author reports in detail on PIXE studies of the Mexican 1888 Large Numeral stamps, the Swedish 1872 6-ore stamp, Taiwan stamps of 1895, P.R.C. stamps from 1950 (compared to official reprints of 1996), Mexico 1895-98 "Multas" stamps, and others from Iran and Czechoslovakia. This paper presents no original research, but it well demonstrates the scope and limitations of the PIXE method. An important resource for anyone interested in forensic philately.

Statistical Estimates of Rare Stamp Populations, by David L. Herendeen and Gary C. White. This paper describes and uses a statistical computer program called MARK to estimate true populations of rare stamps based on auction catalog appearances and similar encounters of photo scans. Four selected examples, including the U.S. Jenny invert (Scott C3a), are analyzed in a well-structured and well-written presentation. I'm very enthusiastic about this application, particularly for analyzing surviving populations of SPECIMEN overprints from the Departmentals Special Printings of 1875 and their several 1¢ SEPCIMEN errors. Additionally, this technique will probably be quite useful in the ongoing plating work on the Post Office registry seals (OXF1). Certainly many philatelists would find a use for this application. But when I went to the IAP website for a test drive as described in Endnote 3 of the paper, neither "Free Software," POPULATION nor MARK could be found, a big disappointment. I'm awaiting an explanation.

Reflectance Spectroscopy of Colored Overprints, by Lyman R. Caswell. This significant paper describes the use of a spectral comparator to measure and analyze colored ink overprints, presumably organic inks, on which x-ray methods wouldn't work. In the examples analyzed—the 1919 Hungary Szeged red overprints—the results permitted differentiation between two printings and two distinct varieties of counterfeit. These results

are consistent with a previously unpublished analysis of the overprint proofs. The method of reporting and illustration communicates well the utility of the “convex hull” mapping of colors using this comparator. Certainly this method can provide consistent and cost-effective answers to the authenticity of overprints. And thanks to the author for the detailed historical setting.

Using this method to analyze the shades of the different values of the U. S. War Department special printing stamps of 1875 (and their overprints) is of immediate interest to me as a researcher. The shades may not be distinguishable by x-ray methods. The late 1875 second special printing of four Official 1¢ values on ribbed paper is another prospective subject for overprint color determination.

The analytical method described in the Caswell paper brings up one question. The earlier paper on the Chile First Issue stamps raises the problem of the effects of soaking and aging on the colors and papers of old stamps. To this I would add the issue of chloramine-t bleach (the t means technical grade, a commercial purity parameter) which has been used to brighten stamp colors and whiten age-yellowed papers. Per David Beech’s suggestion above, a study of the effects of aging on the comparator-measured chromaticity is certainly appropriate, for the Chile First Issue stamps and many others.

Not considered here is **Paper Characteristics of U. S. 3¢ Stamps, 1870-1881, by John H. Barwis**. The editor-in-chief informs me that a modified version of this paper is being prepared for publication in a future issue of the *Chronicle*.

Conclusion

The First International Symposium on Analytical Methods in Philately has the potential to be an historic event—the actual start of the integration of modern science, the internet revolution and our passion and hobby of philately. Every research paper delivered in this symposium illustrates the importance of first determining the historical setting of the items analyzed. In that area at least, we’ve already come a long way.

My one gripe is the ubiquitous use of modern metric-system units on the plentiful graphs and tables in this publication. If the goal is to facilitate communication, it should be easy enough to tweak the supporting software to provide, in addition, some familiar English measuring units on the axes. PSI and cycles-per-second are familiar enough; “newtons/M2” and “cm-1” are meaningless to most. ■



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ANSWER TO PROBLEM COVER IN CHRONICLE 240

Our problem cover from *Chronicle* 240, shown in Figure 1, was a folded letter addressed to Philadelphia, franked by an uncanceled imperforate 1¢ Franklin stamp (Scott 9) and posted November 4 at Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The cover bears a manuscript “Due” auxiliary marking followed by a handstamp “5” in black. The questions posed were: Why is this cover rated “Due 5”? Where was the handstamp 5 applied? Can we approximate the year in which the cover was mailed?



Figure 1. Our problem cover from November was this folded letter, postmarked at Lancaster, Pennsylvania and addressed to Philadelphia, bearing an uncanceled 1¢ Franklin imperforate stamp and marked “Due” in manuscript and “5” in a black handstamp. The questions were: Where were the markings applied and why?

We received several responses, including an in-depth email analysis from Ron Stauber (RA 4025). Simply stated, the explanation is as follows: The folded letter showed up at the Lancaster post office franked only with the 1¢ Franklin stamp. The postal clerk determined that the letter was not printed matter (which might have qualified it for a 1¢ rate). Deliberately avoiding cancelling the stamp, the Lancaster clerk instead marked the cover “Due” in manuscript.

The cover was then sent unpaid to Philadelphia, where it received the handstamped 5 (to the right of the manuscript “Due” marking), the proper rating for an unpaid single-rate domestic letter.

As for an approximation of the year, the Scott specialized catalog lists this 1¢ stamp (Scott #9) as having appeared sometime in 1852, and the 5¢ unpaid letter rate became obsolete on April 1, 1855, at which time prepayment became compulsory. Thus, our cover had to have been mailed sometime between November 1, 1852 and April 1, 1855. Docketing on the reverse shows a mailing date of November 1, 1854.

PROBLEM COVER FOR THIS ISSUE

Our problem cover for this issue, shown in Figure 2, is an 1886 envelope from Adelaide, South Australia, to San Francisco, California. It is franked with 3 two pence orange



Figure 2. Problem cover for this issue: 1886 envelope from Adelaide to San Francisco, franked with three 2d South Australia stamps but marked for 5¢ collection from the recipient. The question is: Why?

South Australia stamps (Scott 65), cancelled “SHIP MAIL ROOM/ADELAIDE/JY 10 86.” The cover also bears a San Francisco receiving marking dated August 8 (1886) as well as a “US CHARGE COLLECT 5 CENTS” marking. The questions are: Why was this cover rated for a 5¢ collection from the addressee? And why would this franking possibly make sense to the sender? ■



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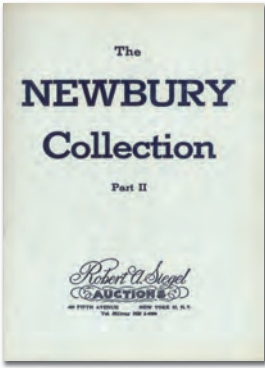
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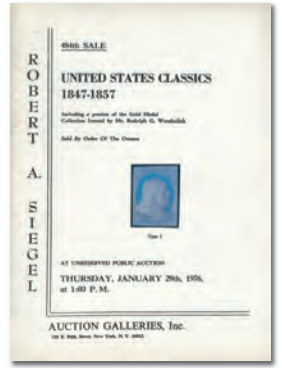
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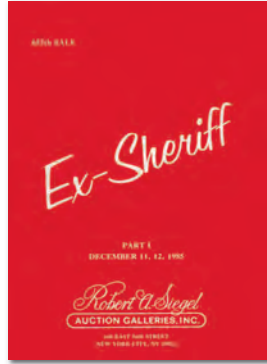
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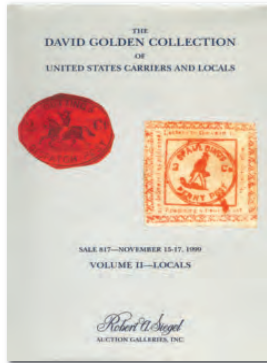
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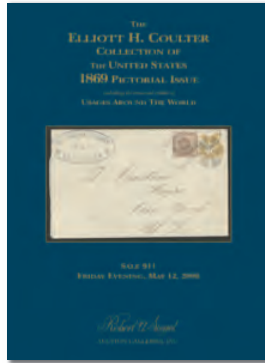
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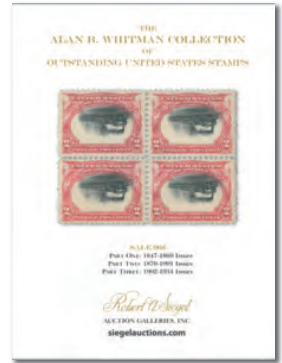
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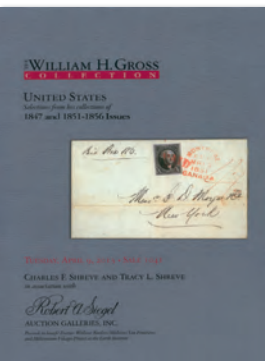
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