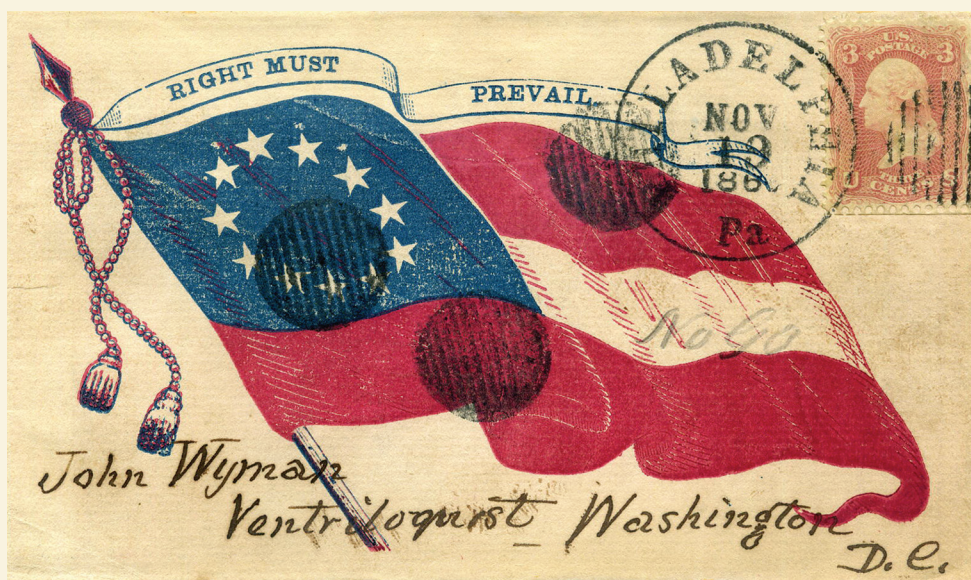


The Chronicle

of the U.S. Classic Postal Issues



Union use of a Confederate Patriotic envelope: All-over design of an 11-star Confederate flag, sent from Philadelphia in 1862, addressed to Wyman the Ventriloquist in Washington, D.C. Dutiful but offended, the Philadelphia postal clerk struck three extra killers onto the main elements of the flag design and pencilled "No Go" within the central stripe. From an article by James W. Milgram in our 1861 section, page 275.



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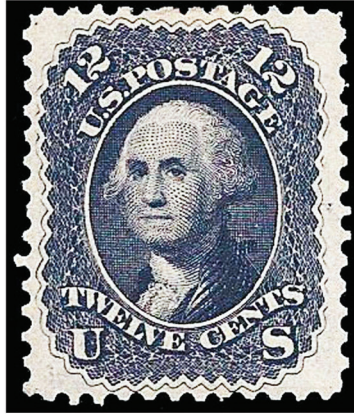
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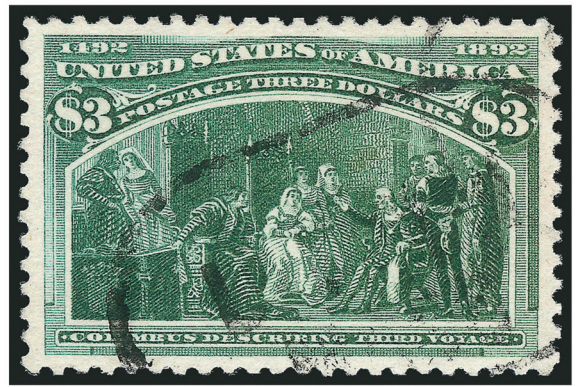
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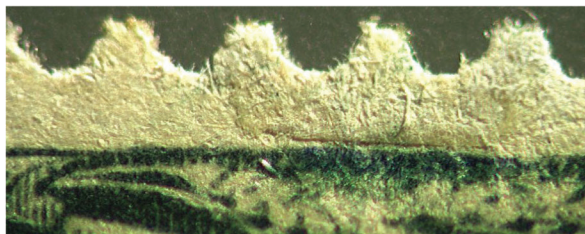
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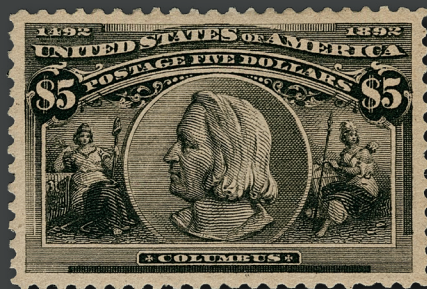
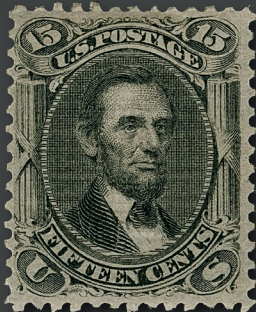
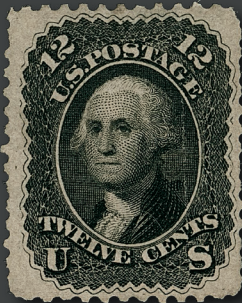
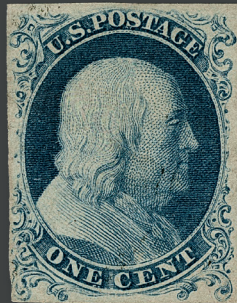
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IN THIS ISSUE

The recent New York international stamp show was a great success for our Society. We signed up almost 50 new members. At the close of the show, our membership total was 1,168. I believe that's an all-time high. In an era when many stamp groups are experiencing diminishing membership, we are prospering. That's a credit to our well-crafted publications, our vibrant and ever-expanding website, the member volunteers who contribute so much to our group—and increasing collector interest in classic United States stamps and covers. Please do what you can to help us continue to grow.

In our Stampless section this issue (page 214), editor James W. Milgram returns to the subject of free franking to explore covers (some of them quite unusual) involving non-postmaster frankers. Milgram's article sweeps over a broad panoply of free franking, from the 18th century up to the 20th. And in a separate short article (page 235) concluding his section, Milgram shows two railroad covers and makes a provocative suggestion about the classification of what have traditionally been called station agent markings.

Milgram also makes a guest appearance in our 1861 section (page 275), with an article about Confederate patriotic envelopes that were printed and used in the north. Milgram's essay was sparked in part by the appearance of a pair of U.S. patriotic envelopes (one Union and one Confederate) used in the United Kingdom, but it ranges more widely than that. One of the items discussed is the striking "Wyman the Ventriloquist" envelope that provides our cover image for this issue.

In our 1851 section, beginning on page 238, we publish the final installment of David Zlowe's three-part research study on relief bruises on the perforated 1¢ Franklin stamps of 1857-61. Here Zlowe presents some remarkable conclusions involving the ink pigment used to print the stamps, and suggests avenues for additional study.

Specialist collectors of the 1869 pictorial stamps have long remarked an anomaly involving the distinctive double-circle cancellation used at the U.S. consular post office at Hiogo, Japan. Strikes of the marking on loose, single stamps are frequently encountered, but examples on cover are scarce. Just how scarce is now revealed in an article in our 1869 section by Jeffrey Forster. After an exhaustive search of the auction literature and other sources, Forster unearthed just nine 1869 covers bearing the Hiogo double circle. The covers are listed and described in his article, which begins on page 281.

In our Essays and Proofs section, Jan Hofmeyr and James E. Lee join forces in a substantial research effort that combines common-sense experimentation with internet search, exploring the linkage between the "patent essays" of the 3¢ 1861 stamps and the actual letters patent that underlie them. The entire archive of the U.S. Patent Office is fully searchable via the internet, and the endnotes supporting the Hofmeyr-Lee article will lead the interested reader directly to the relevant patent data.

The line-office rate is a 2¢ cross-border rate that prevailed in 1851-75 between certain paired towns along the U.S.-Canada frontier. In our Foreign Mails section this issue (page 288) David D'Alessandris examines the history of this challenging rate and debunks some of the speculation that has evolved about it over the years. His article, "The Line-Office Rate: Fact and Fiction" includes interesting covers from both sides of the border—along with the first published census of line-office covers.

This issue concludes with reviews, from three different reviewers, of recent books likely to interest collectors of classic U.S. stamps and covers. Enjoy! ■

UNUSUAL COVERS SHOWING FREE FRANKING

JAMES W. MILGRAM, M. D.

Introduction

In *Chronicle 245* I wrote an article on free franking by postmasters.¹ This article continues the exploration of free franking, discussing unusual covers involving other individuals (not postmasters) who held offices that gave them the ability to frank mail. As was established in the prior article, individuals who could frank mail could also receive mail free. This was an important consideration in an era when most mail was sent collect. Congress intended that the franking privilege would apply to official business mail only, but personal letters were frequently sent free too.

Registration and free franking

Registration began in the United States as an informal system between postmasters to identify letters with valuable contents so as to call special attention to them. This period of unofficial registration lasted almost 10 years, from November 1, 1845 to June 30, 1855.²

As many readers are probably aware, registration began at Philadelphia. Incoming valuable mail was handstamped on receipt at Philadelphia with the letter “R” (for “registered”). Philadelphia used a series of different R markings for nine years. Outgoing registered letters from Philadelphia did not receive any special markings, other than manuscript markings.

Beginning 1 July 1855, for a cash fee of 5¢ per letter, mailers could register letters. Such letters were segregated from the regular mails and recorded on special waybills with a return waybill receipt transmitted back to the sending postmaster. Thus registered letters received special attention, but no indemnification was provided if a letter was lost.

Most early registered covers did not involve free franking, but examples can be found. Figure 1 shows a cover from the unofficial period, before the 5¢ fee was required. Addressed to Philadelphia and postmarked with a rimless “CANAL WINCHESTER OHIO OCT 31” (1850) circular datestamp, this cover also shows a manuscript “free J.B. Potter P.M.” endorsement. Presumably because the accompanying waybill indicated this was a valuable letter, it was handstamped with the small blue “R” at Philadelphia. Another 1850 folded letter to Philadelphia (not illustrated) bears two manuscript postmarks (“Clapps N.C. Dec 16th” and “Free Abm Clapp P.M.”), also with Philadelphia’s small blue “R.”

During the unofficial registration era, a few offices of origin applied registration postmarks. Figure 2 shows a cover with an “ODGENSBURGH N.Y.” circular datestamp and matching “FREE” with manuscript “P.O.B., L. Baldwin P.M.” Addressed to a former postmaster at Chaumont, New York, the cover also bears two underlined manuscript postmarks: “Registered” and “Money.” The year is not known, but this clearly dates from the unofficial period.



Figure 1. A free-franked cover sent via registered mail during the period of unofficial registration. This cover originated at Canal Winchester, Ohio, with the manuscript franking "free, J.B. Potter, P.M." At Philadelphia, the small blue "R" was applied, indicating registration. The "61" below the address is a registration number.

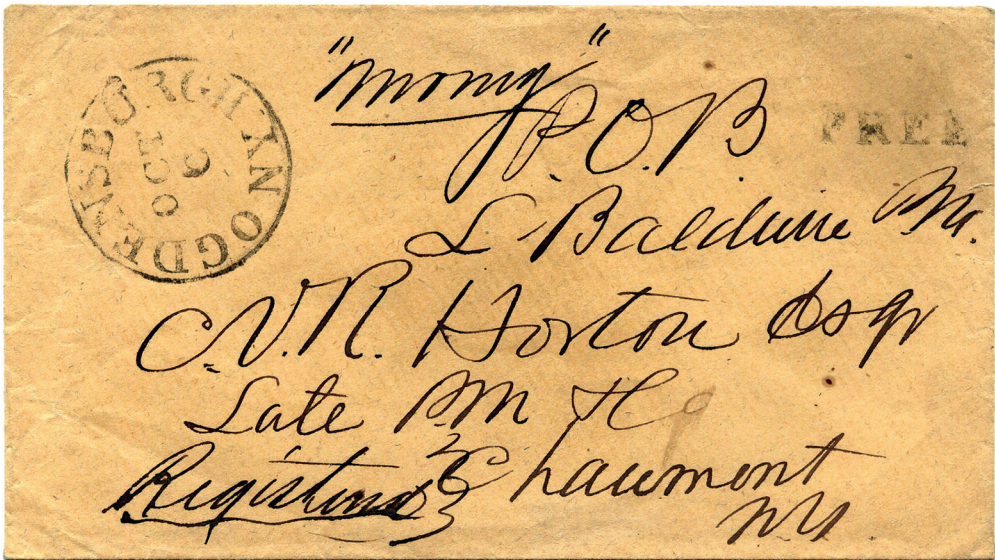


Figure 2. A cover registered at the place of origin during the unofficial registration period. Handstamped "OGDENSBURGH, N.Y. OCT 6" and "FREE" with franking endorsement "P.O.B., L. Baldwin P.M." and manuscript markings "Registered" and "Money."

The free franking privilege did not include fees for additional postal services. The registration fee, initially 5¢ in cash, was one of these. So after July 1, 1855, the registration fee on a free-franked cover required prepayment. Figure 3 shows a cover that is postmarked "FREE" because it was sent to the Commissioner of Pensions at Washington, a branch of the Interior Department, which had the franking privilege. This cover bears a circular

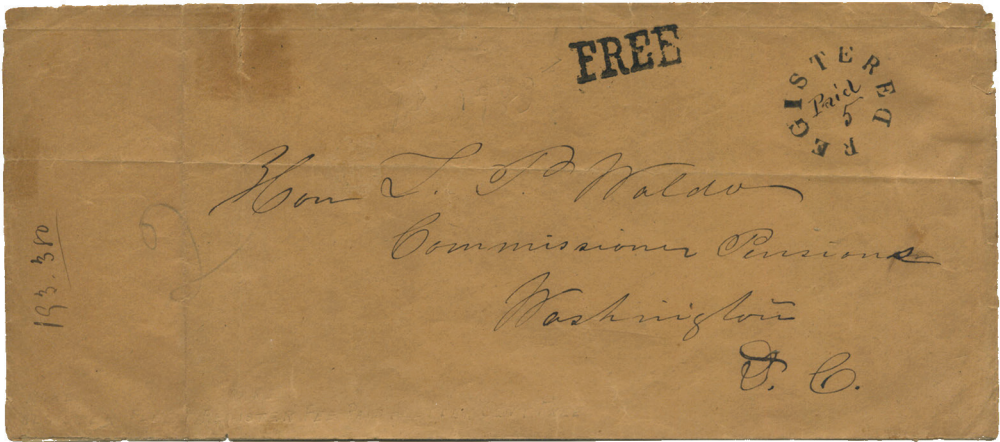


Figure 3. Mailed “FREE” to the Commissioner of Pensions, a branch of the Interior Department that possessed the franking privilege, this cover shows the earliest registered postmark in a circular format and the only handstamped registered postmark declaring a rate. The “Paid 5” in the center of the circular “REGISTERED” handstamp shows payment of the 5¢ registration fee and dates the cover after July 1, 1855.

“REGISTERED” handstamp in the center of which is written “Paid 5.” The year is probably 1855-57. In addition to being a notable free frank, this is the earliest registered postmark in a circular format and the only handstamped registered postmark that shows a rate. Too bad we don’t know the town of origin.

The 1860 cover in Figure 4, posted at Fitchburg, Mass., bears the printed corner imprint of the U.S. Coast Survey with the franking signature of its superintendent, Alexander Dallas Bache, an esteemed scientist who was great-grandson of Benjamin Franklin. The cover is marked “Free” but it also shows (in the same handwriting) “No. 24,” a registration number. Affirming registration is a handstamped “PAID 5,” indicating the registration fee had been prepaid by the sender. The regulations clearly stated that the registration fee had to be paid in advance.

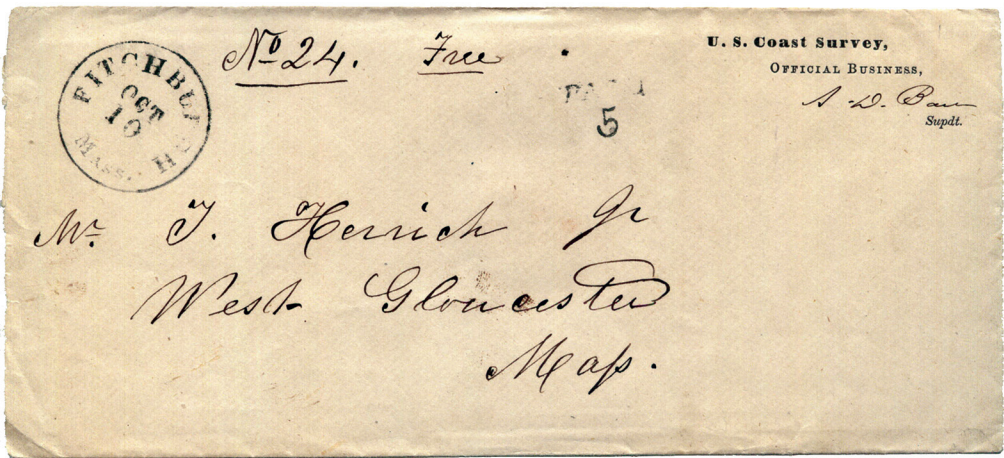


Figure 4. “FITCHBURG MASS. OCT 10” (1860) with printed frank of the U.S. Coast Survey, signed by its superintendent. The postmaster has written “Free” and “No. 24” and handstamped “PAID 5” to show payment of the registration fee. According to regulations, he was supposed to write “registered” on the cover as well.



Figure 5. Cover sent from New York City in 1869 to William Seward in Washington. As Secretary of State, Seward could receive mail free of postage, but the registry fee, by this time 15¢, had to be prepaid by the sender. Image shown here through the courtesy of Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries.

Commencing 1867, the registry fee had to be prepaid in stamps, and this applied to free-franked covers or later covers sent with a penalty inscription. Figure 5 shows a very striking cover sent in 1869 to William Seward in Washington. As Secretary of State, Seward could receive mail free of postage, but the sender had to prepay the registration fee (then 15¢) in stamps. This cover was part of the Raymond Vogel collection of 15¢ Lincoln covers; when that collection was auctioned by the Siegel firm in 2010, this cover was hammered down for \$6,000.

Ship letter fee

Another fee that was not covered by free franking was the 2¢ ship fee paid to captains of vessels not under contract with the Post Office Department. The folded cover in Figure 6 is addressed to Jeremiah Nelson, who was a Member of Congress from Massachusetts in 1815-25 and again in 1831-33. The letter within is headed “Havana Jan. 10th 1823” and the notation on the lower left of the cover front reads “S.S. R. Fulton, Capt. P. Chase.” As with

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Figure 6. “CHALSN S.C. JAN 20” (1823) with handstamped “SHIP,” “free” in red ink and manuscript “2” on a cover addressed to a Congressman at Washington, D.C. The endorsement is “S.S. R. Fulton, Capt. P. Chase.” The *Robert Fulton* was the first steamer to sail on the New York to Charleston route.

the previous cover, postage was free but the ship fee still had to be paid. This cover entered the U.S. mails at Charleston, South Carolina, where all the postal markings were applied. The circular datestamp and “SHIP” were handstamped in red, and the “free” and “2” were noted in manuscript.

This letter travelled on the steamship *Robert Fulton* of the first New York and Charleston line, which ran between 1820 and 1824. Both the ship and the line were described in detail in a broad survey article (including sailing data) by James Baird in *Chronicle* 248.³ In his article Baird said he knew of only six covers carried by this vessel on this route, so this is a seventh. This *Robert Fulton* is not to be confused with the Navy steamship of the same name, which was destroyed in a famous explosion in 1829 while moored at Brooklyn Navy Yard.

A third fee not covered by franking was the 1¢ Carrier fee. Several covers are known, posted in New York City and franked by ex-President Martin Van Buren, bearing 1¢ 1861 stamps to carry them to the post office. A colorful free-franked cover showing the carrier fee paid with a stamp is shown in Figure 7. This is a patriotic cover depicting the “Volunteer Refreshment Saloon, foot of Washington Avenue, Phila.” which was one of the refreshment centers set up by civilian volunteers to benefit soldiers passing through Philadelphia. This cover was franked by William D. Kelley of Philadelphia, who served in 15 Congresses from 1861 until his death in 1890. The 1¢ 1861 stamp is tied by a target and the cover bears a circular “FREE” with matching “PHILADELPHIA Pa. JAN 15, 1862.”

Recipient with franking privilege

One of the more interesting categories of franked covers are those addressed to someone with the franking privilege. Examples involving the complexity of registration were shown in Figures 3 and 5. A more straightforward example, and a very early one, is shown in Figure 8. This is a cover sent in 1789 to a Massachusetts congressman when Congress was convened in New York. The postmark is just a “BOSTON” straight line with no rate



Figure 7. “PHILADELPHIA Pa. JAN 15, 1862” on an illustrated cover free franked by Congressman William D. Kelley. The carrier fee, which was not covered by the franking privilege, was prepaid with a 1¢ 1861 stamp, here canceled by a target killer. The “FREE” in circle affirms the franked postage. Illustration courtesy Siegel Auctions.

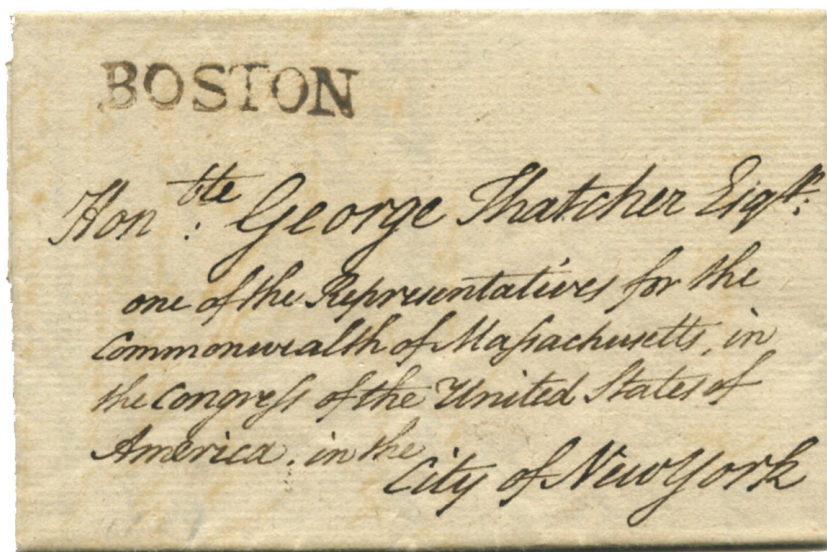


Figure 8. “BOSTON” straightline postmark on 1789 cover with address to a Member of Congress from Massachusetts showing no other postmarks. While there is no postal evidence of free franking, the address strongly suggests that the correspondence is government related.

notation and no free marking. It’s not clear that a franking privilege legally existed at this point in time, but there’s no indication of any postage prepaid or collected, and the address makes very clear that the recipient is engaged in official business: “Honorable George Thatcher Esq., one of the Representatives for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, in the Congress of the United States of America, in the City of New York.”



Figure 9. Sent “free” in 1814 to a government official who had the franking privilege.

Figure 9 is a typical example of free franking to a congressman; I showed other similar examples addressed to postmasters in my article in *Chronicle* 245. Some of these covers are interesting because of their postmarks as well as the usage. The Figure 9 cover shows a large oval from “GREAT CROSSING, KENTUCKY” with manuscript dating “June 5th” (1814) together with a distinctive “FREE” in a small circle, affirming the manuscript “Free” applied by the sender. The addressee was a member of the War Department who had the franking privilege.

Figure 10 shows a cover sent in 1823 to a Member of Congress, who of course had the franking privilege. The Newport, Rhode Island, oval town marking and matching old English “Free” are both struck in the deep green that is characteristic of this town from this era. Inset at upper left is another Newport “Free,” in the same color, set in a different fancy typeface, electronically clipped from a similar cover sent in 1825 to the Quartermaster General of the United States.

A later example of a special free postmark on a cover addressed to a congressman is the undated envelope (from some year in the 1860s) shown in Figure 11. The creator of this



Figure 10. Green “Free” postmarks of Newport, R.I. An 1823 cover is shown in full, with a similar Newport marking (from an 1825 cover) shown inset.



Figure 11. "CINCINNATI O. FREE./JAN 4" in double blue circle used on cover with advertising cornercard addressed to Hon. John F. Driggs, M.C. Washington City, D.C."

striking illustrated envelope, Edgar Conkling, was a Cincinnati real-estate promoter who for several decades tried to convince investors that Mackinaw City, at the top of Michigan's lower peninsula, was going to be the next Chicago. Today it's a resort community with a year-round population of around 900.

While mail to holders of the franking privilege was typically sent to them free, this was not a requirement. The cover in Figure 12, sent to the Secretary of War during the Mexican War, contains a letter seeking an appointment. William L. Marcy, Secretary of War during the Polk administration, had the privilege and could receive mail without postal charge. But this letter, from Woonsocket, Rhode Island to Washington, was clearly prepaid (at twice the 10¢ rate for a distance over 300 miles). Evidently the petitioner felt it was prudent to prepay his communication since he was writing to seek a favor.



Figure 12. This cover to Secretary of War William L. Marcy at Washington could have been sent free, but the favor-seeking sender prudently prepaid.

Rerated from paid to free

In another unusual category of usage are covers that started out rated as ordinary collect mail but, because they were addressed to someone with the free frank, were rerated enroute as free. Figure 13 shows an example, a folded letter franked at "SCHUYLERSVILLE N.Y. MAY 22" (1846) in red, with a fancy negative "10" rate marking indicating the postage to be collected. The letter is addressed to "The Honbl. Hugh White, In Congress, Washington." When the letter reached Washington, the postmaster just drew a pen line through the 10 rating to void it. Hugh White was a representative from New York who served in Congress from 1845 to 1851.

Figure 13. "SCHUYLERSVILLE N.Y. MAY 22" (1846) and fancy negative "10" in red on letter addressed to a Congressman. The rating was crossed out by the receiving postmaster in Washington.



A lovely example of a revalued rate cover is shown in Figure 14. This folded letter was sent from Knoxville in the late 1840s; the sender sought an appointment to the Quartermaster corps. The addressee is James K. Polk, "P.U.S." in Washington. This is a neat abbreviation for "President, United States." Knoxville originally rated the cover for a 10¢ collection, but noting the addressee, rerated it as "FREE."

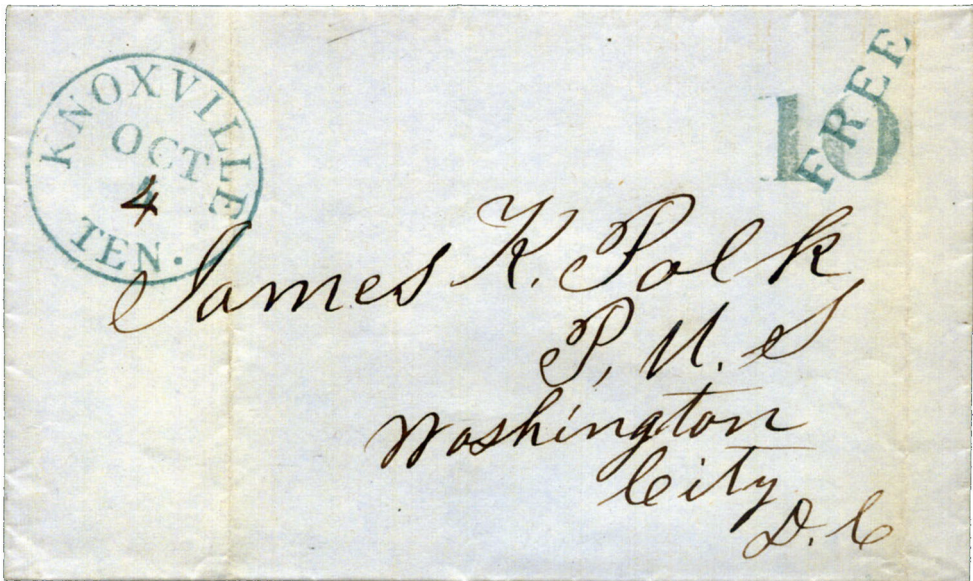


Figure 14. From Knoxville to President James K. Polk, originally rated for 10¢ postage due but then revalued to "FREE" in recognition of the President's franking privilege.

Figure 15 shows a montage of three items that document the handling of a free-franked message that became a dead letter. At the top is a portion of the original cover, sent free by Tristram Burges, who from 1825 to 1835 was a Member of Congress from Rhode Island.

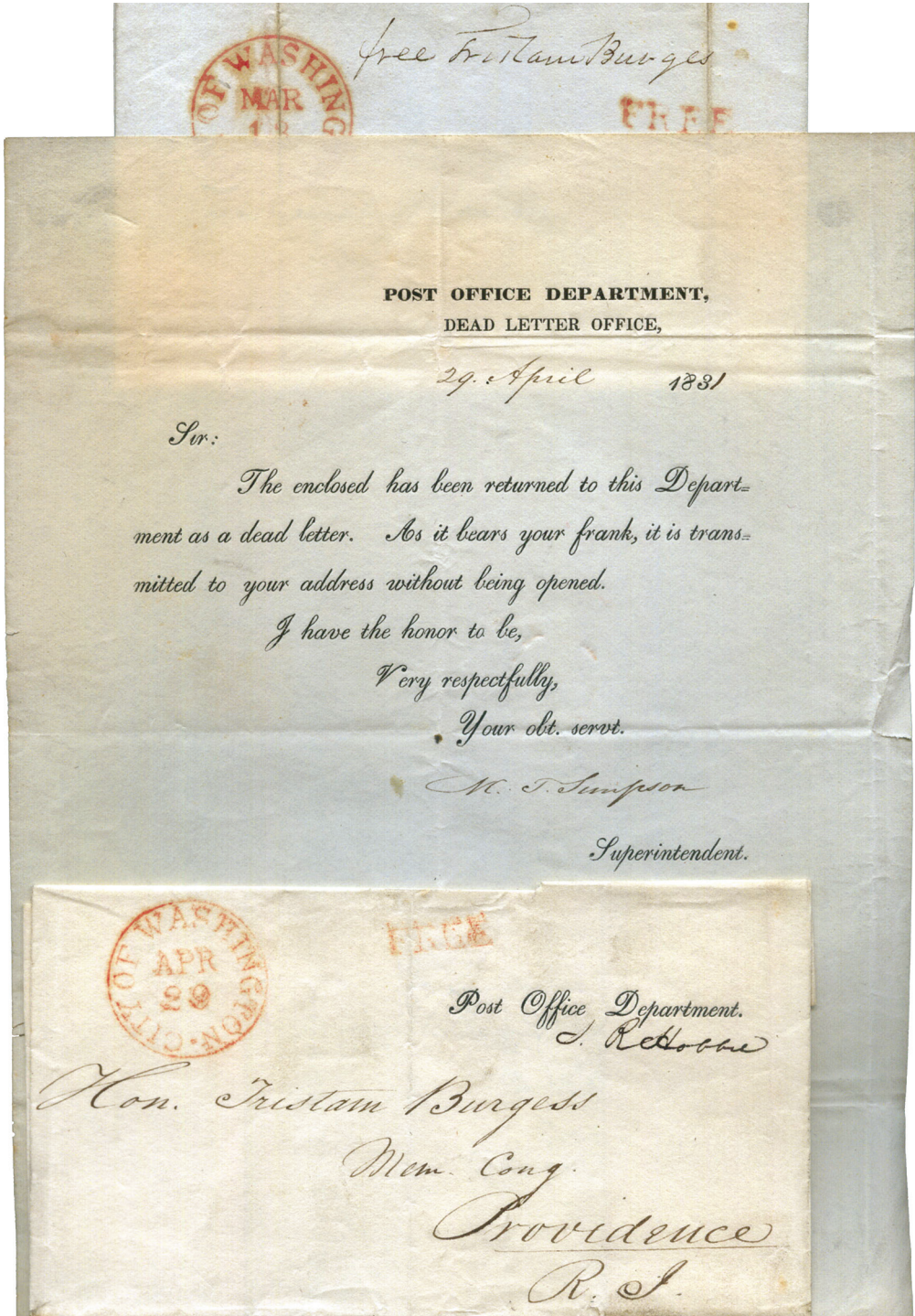


Figure 15. Covers and correspondence relating to the return of a free-franked letter to its sender, a Rhode Island congressman, after a year in the Dead Letter Office.

The original cover was posted in 1830, datestamped “FREE” and “CITY OF WASHINGTON MAR 13.” The addressee was Zachariah Allen of Providence, who for some reason did not pick up this letter, which in due course was sent to the Dead Letter Office.

About a year later, the letter was returned to its sender, accompanied by the printed form shown at center in Figure 15, dated 29 April, 1831 and headed POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT, DEAD LETTER OFFICE: “The enclosed has been returned to this Department as a dead letter. As it bears your frank, it is transmitted to your address without being opened....” The printed form is signed by the superintendent of the Dead Letter Office.

The envelope that carried the undeliverable cover and the printed message is shown at bottom, datestamped “FREE” and “CITY OF WASHINGTON APR 29.” The envelope is addressed to Burges (misspelled) back in Providence with printed “Post Office Department” legend and the franking signature of J.R. Hobbie, a career postal bureaucrat. This therefore is a dead letter that originated as a free frank. Apparently this was a common enough occurrence to justify a printed form; nevertheless, this is the only example I have ever encountered.

Postmaster also a station agent

The cover in Figure 16 could have been shown in the *Chronicle* 245 article on postmaster free franking, but I didn’t know of it then (it is a new find) and it fits into this article as well. The Figure 16 illustration shows both the top of the enclosed letter and the cover

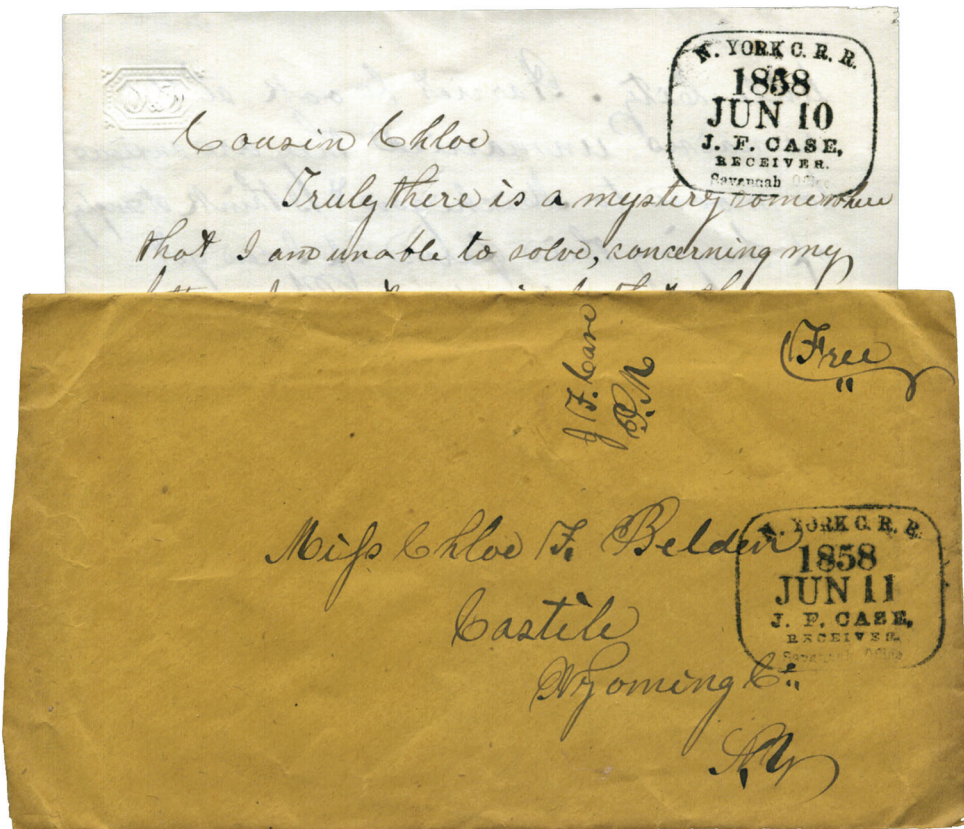


Figure 16. A railroad station agent’s receiving marking used as postal datestamping device. The agent was also a postmaster. The cover is franked in manuscript by “J.F. Case P.M.,” who then used his railroad handstamp as a postmark on this 1858 cover, which carried a clearly personal letter addressed to “Cousin Chloe.”

that carried it, written by an individual who was both the postmaster and a railroad station agent at Savannah, New York. He employed his station agent handstamp ("N. YORK C. R.R./1858 JUN 11/J. F. CASE, RECEIVED/Savannah N.Y.") as the postmark on the cover, which he franked in manuscript "J. F. Case P.M." and "Free" as postmaster. One other similar postmark has been recorded. Savannah was a station on the New York Central Railroad in the upper portion of the state. Case used the same handstamp on the heading of this clearly personal letter to a cousin. Note that the date on the cover is a day later than the date on the letter.

Printed franks

One variety of the written free frank is represented by envelopes on which the frank or marking is preprinted. Only a small number of these exist. Figure 17 shows an unusual envelope from Montague, Massachusetts, with a generic printed address to "POSTMASTER," and a preprinted "POST OFFICE BUSINESS/FREE" instead of a frank. With all this preprinting, only the town of address needed be added by hand. Since the postmark ("MONTAGUE, MASS.") was also preprinted, only a date had to be inserted, in this instance Oct. 6, 1857. The same imprinting has been seen on yellow paper as opposed to the buff paper shown here. Such envelopes were prepared for frequent mailing to postmasters. In this case I suspect the envelope was designed to transmit to a sending postmaster the return waybill for a registered letter. Return receipts designated for senders of registered mail did not appear until mid 1863.

Printed franks could also mimic actual signatures. Politicians who made frequent use of the mails might compose a facsimile signature to be used for franking. Figure 18 shows the heading of a printed transcription of a speech, regarding the impeachment of Andrew Johnson, made by Benjamin F. Butler, the Civil War general who entered Congress after the war. Butler was one of the managers of the impeachment process. This speech was sent to a constituent, along with this orange envelope (shown only in part) bearing Butler's facsimile

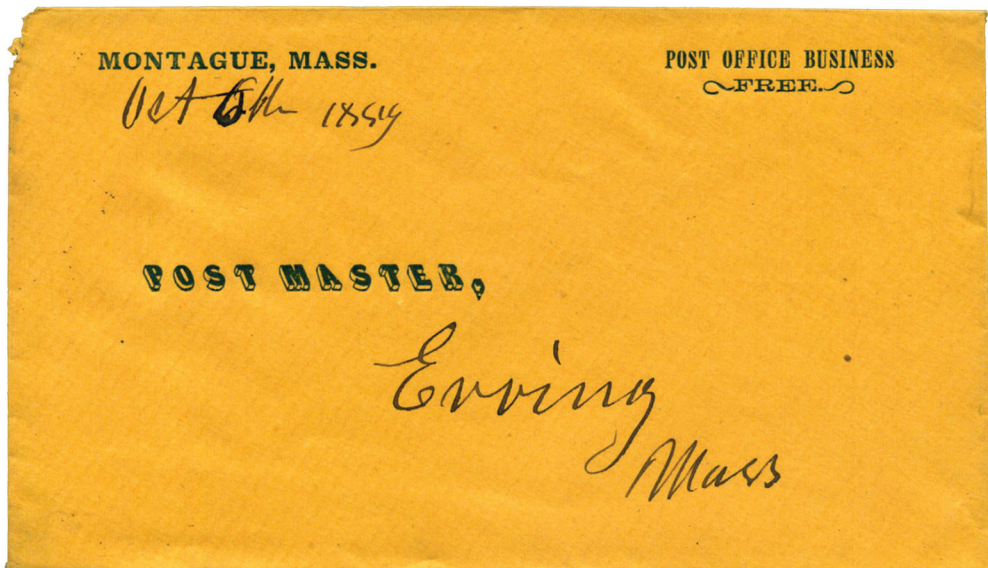


Figure 17. "Post Office Business, Free." Since postmasters could receive mail post-free, a franking signature was not required on letters addressed to them. This cover was part of a printed batch, probably prepared by the postmaster of Montague, Massachusetts, to facilitate frequent correspondence with other postmasters, most likely involving return waybills and other correspondence concerning registered mail.

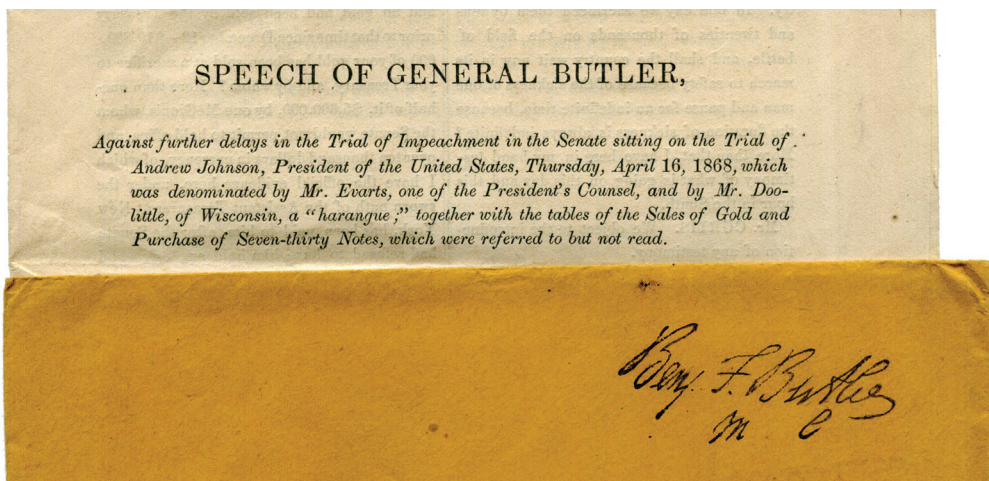


Figure 18. Printed political speech with an unused return envelope bearing a facsimile signature of Benjamin F. Butler, a prominent figure during the Civil War. Butler's staff could mail these in large numbers without Butler having to frank each one.

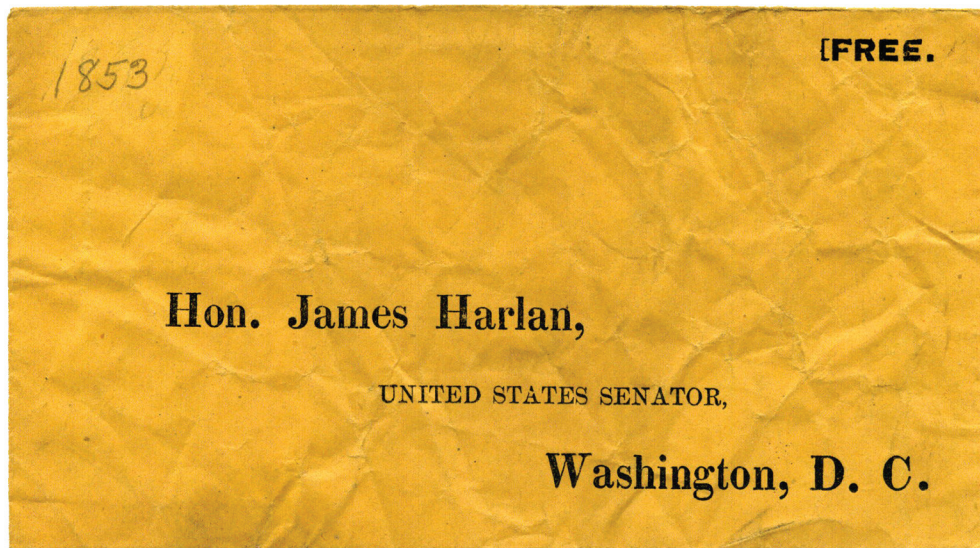


Figure 19. Unused envelope with printed address to James Harlan, who held the frank while he was Senator from Iowa. Note that the "FREE" was printed at the same time.

signature and inviting a return reply. But the constituent stayed mum and preserved these artifacts for subsequent collectors.

A comparable but more unusual use is represented by the printed envelope shown in Figure 19, which bears the preprinted address of Senator James Harlan of Iowa, who was a member of the Senate from 1857 to 1865. Such an envelope would have been free of postage because the recipient had the frank. The purpose of these envelopes was surely political; and as with Figure 18, this envelope was never used.

Pre-prepared franks and their abuse

All of the laws dealing with free franking prohibited third-party use of franked envelopes. But despite such regulations, it was common for a number of reasons for frankers to

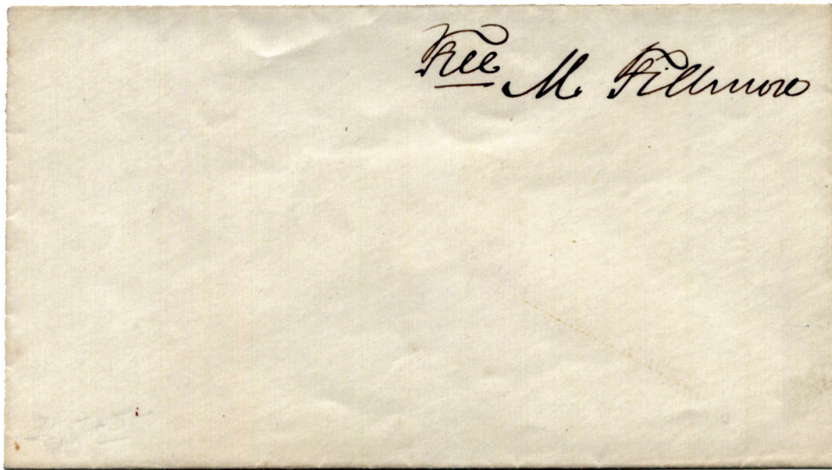


Figure 20. Unused envelope bearing a free frank of Millard Fillmore.



Figure 21. Unused Civil War patriotic envelope which had been franked in advance by Robert Mallory of Kentucky for the use of a soldier.

prepare signed envelopes that could be mailed in the franker's absence. Figure 20 shows an envelope bearing the signature of Millard Fillmore and nothing else. Fillmore was a member of various congresses during the 1830s and 1840s and had the franking privilege then, but that was before envelopes were generally available. He was Vice-President in 1849-50 when this envelope was probably prepared. It is unlikely that it was created after he became President in 1850. The addition of the word "Free" to the signature clearly indicates this envelope was prepared to help someone avoid payment of postage.

When the Civil War began, it was common for members of Congress to visit the military encampments around Washington, at which time they frequently franked mail for the convenience of the soldiers. The cover shown in Figure 21 was prepared in advance for such use by "Robert Mallory M.C.," a congressman from Kentucky. The envelope shows the Kentucky state seal ("United we stand, divided we fall") and includes a nasty typographical error: "Fisrt Born of the Union."

Of the many surviving Civil War patriotic envelopes bearing congressional franks, it is difficult to know, at this distant day, how many (like Figure 21) were prepared in advance. A few years ago in *The Confederate Philatelist*, I wrote about Alfred Ely, a congressman who was taken prisoner at the Battle of Bull Run.⁴ When Ely was exchanged from Libby Prison, he left behind a number of envelopes that he had franked for the benefit of other prisoners.

Unused franked envelopes survive to this day; in their time they must have been fairly abundant. Figure 22 shows a montage of three blank envelopes that bear franking signatures and were never mailed. The signatures are of James C. Robinson (Congress 36-38, 1859-65), James H. Platt (41-43, 1870-75) and Francis E. Spinner (35-36, 1855-61). Spinner also served as Treasurer of the United States from 1861 to 1875; his distinctive signature is well-known to collectors.

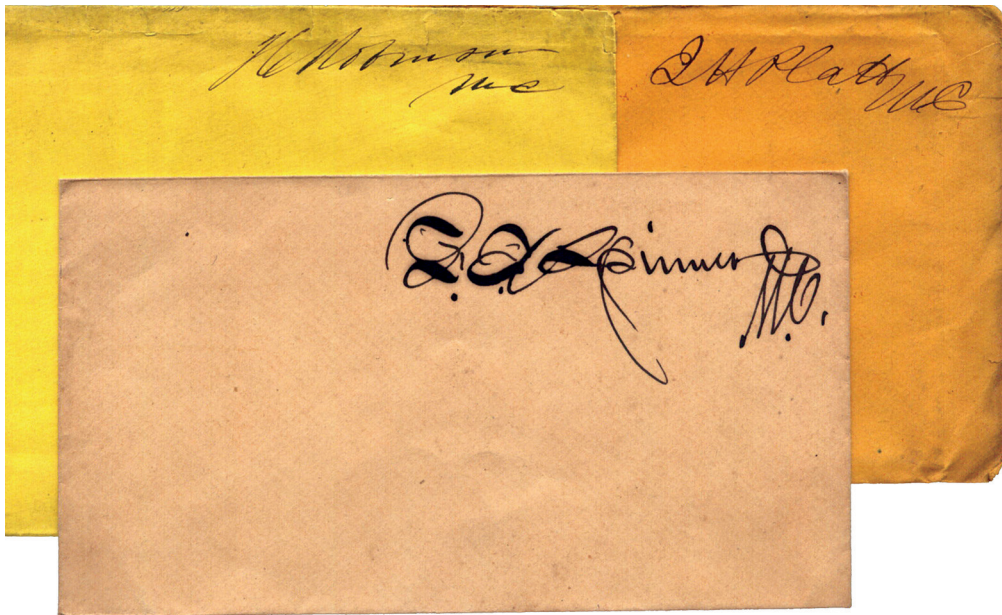


Figure 22. A montage of never-used envelopes each with the frank of a Congressman.

An egregious artifact of franking abuse is the 1865 letter shown in Figure 23, sent by Newton Bateman of Springfield, Illinois, who was then Illinois Superintendent of Public Instruction and subsequently was president of Knox College. Bateman here writes to James C. Conkling: “Can you spare me some more franked envelopes? I have used the last one and should like 1,000 more for immediate use.” In return, he encloses “copies of my most recent circular.”

Both Bateman and Conkling were Republican politicians and friends of Abraham Lincoln, who had been assassinated just weeks earlier. Conkling was a lawyer and in 1865 held no office giving him franking privileges, so whose frank would appear on the requested envelopes (if in fact the request was granted) is not known.

Free franks not recognized

Members held the free frank for 60 days before and after the session of Congress to which they were elected. Figure 24 shows a complicated cover that was featured in the Cover Corner section of *Chronicle* 82 and then extensively analyzed in *Chronicle* 83.

Mordecai Bartley of Richland County, Ohio, was a member of the House of Representatives during 1823-31. The Figure 24 cover contains a letter from him headed Man-

Office Supt. Public Instruction, Illinois.

Springfield, May 26 1865.

Am J. C. Conkling,

Dear Sir:

Can you spare me
some more franked envelopes? I
have used the last one, & should
like 1000 more for immediate use.

I enclose copies of my last circular.
Please send by express.

Very truly yours,

N. Bateman.

Figure 23. Letter from Illinois educator Newton Bateman to Republican politician James Conkling seeking 1000 franked envelopes to replace those he had used up.



Figure 24. Attempted free frank by Mordecai Bartley M.C. sent after Congress had adjourned. Marked "60 days expired July 26" and 12½¢ postage due at Cleveland.

sfield, Ohio, July 29, 1828, which he franked "Free M. Bartley." The addressee, Alfred Kelly, was a Commissioner of the Ohio-Erie Canal. Kelly was evidently moving from place to place, so Bartley did not designate a city in his address. In *Chronicle* 83, Susan MacDonald speculated that the letter was originally given to a traveller who went by canal

boat to Cleveland and then took the letter to the post office there. Thus the “Way” notation. The Massilon address was apparently added in Cleveland.

By August 6, when the letter entered the mails at Cleveland, Bartley’s franking privilege had expired. In addition to applying the red boxed “CLEAVELAND O. AUG 6” Type 1 handstamp, the Cleveland postmaster wrote, in magenta ink, “Ford from Cd” as well as “60 Days expired July 26” along with the 12½¢ due rating, representing the single rate for an unpaid letter travelling a distance of 80-150 miles.

A later example of an invalid frank from a Member of Congress is the cover in Figure 25, franked by Thaddeus Stevens. Stevens is best known as a radical member of Congress during the Civil War, but he was earlier elected as a Whig to the 31st and 32nd Congresses (March 4, 1849–March 3, 1853). It was not until the 36th Congress that he returned, this time as a Republican representative from Pennsylvania. The cover in Figure 25 shows his frank, obliterated by a blue Philadelphia due postmark “PHILADELPHIA PA. SEP 3–5 cts” (1853) in blue. The 32nd Congress adjourned March 3, 1853, so Stevens’ congressional franking privilege had expired in May.



Figure 25. Free-franked by Thaddeus Stevens in September, 1853. The Philadelphia post office rejected the franking by applying its “PHILADELPHIA PA. 5 CTS SEP 3” due marking right over the signature. Congress had adjourned more than 60 days before and the sharp-eyed Philadelphia postmaster seems to have known this.

Free franks wrongly rejected

The patriotic cover in Figure 26 was franked by Albert Gallatin Riddle, a Representative from Ohio who was elected as Republican to the 37th Congress (March 4, 1861—March 3, 1863) and was not a candidate in 1862, since he wished to return to the practice of law. On the Figure 26 cover the “free” notation in Riddle’s frank has been obliterated by the killer portion of a Cleveland duplex marking (“CLEVELAND O. MAY 6 1861”) and a “HELD FOR POSTAGE” lozenge has been applied. Here the rejection of the frank seems to be in error, because Riddle was at that time a bona fide member of Congress.

A much later example of improper rejection involved a presidential widow’s frank. Shown greatly reduced in Figures 27A and 27B are both sides of a mourning cover bearing the free frank of Lucretia Garfield, widow of President James Garfield, who was assassi-



Figure 26. Patriotic cover with franking signature of A.G. Riddell M.C. The cover was marked “HELD FOR POSTAGE” at Cleveland with the grid killer obliterating the word “free.” This rejection was incorrect; Riddell possessed the frank at the time.

nated in 1881. This mourning cover was mailed almost 20 years later, postmarked “WEST MENTOR OHIO JUNE 25 1900”. At some point on its journey, most likely upon arrival in Philadelphia, the cover was marked with two strikes of a “DUE 4” handstamp and two stamps (presumably 2¢ postage due stamps) were affixed.

The recipient apparently protested this treatment, with success. The reverse of the cover, Figure 27B, shows the notation: “Upon my complaint the charge for due postage was cancelled and the stamps removed. D.M.” (initials of the addressee). This was a legitimate presidential widow’s free frank, not immediately recognized because by 1900 almost all forms of free franking had long been abolished. But the presidential widows’ franking privilege endured, and the rejection of this cover was in error.



Figure 27A and 27B. Black-banded mourning cover with free frank of Lucretia Garfield. It was marked “Due 4” and originally bore two postage due stamps now torn off. It is postmarked “WEST MENTOR OHIO JUNE 25 1900”. The reverse of the cover, at right, shows a notation “Upon my complaint the charge for due postage was cancelled and the stamps removed D.M.” This was a legitimate Presidential widow’s free frank.

Limiting the franking privilege

The first action limiting the use of free franking came fairly early, contained in the regulations governing the Express Mail of 1836-39. From the beginning of the government Express Mail service, free-franked letters were prohibited from being carried over the express routes. Initially, all express letters had to be paid either on entering the mails or upon receipt. Then, commencing 1 November 1837, all express mail had to be prepaid.



Figure 28. “WASHINGTON CITY D.C. SEP 27” (1837) , “Free L. F. Linn” and “By express mail” in manuscript. The cover was rated “75” and “PAID” for triple postage to St. Genevieve, Missouri. This is rare example of free-franking on cover carried by the government Express Mail of 1836-39. It was carried over the midwestern express route to Dayton and then over the far western route to St. Louis. Free franks were prohibited in the express service.

A small number of covers show free-franked letters sent through the express system with the express charges prepaid. Figure 28 shows the most interesting of these, a free franked letter from Senator Lewis F. Linn of Missouri written at Washington, signed by Linn and addressed to his wife. The postmarks are a red handstamped “WASHINGTON CITY D.C. SEP 27” (1837) and matching “PAID,” a manuscript “75” and “By express mail” notation at lower left. The address is particularly interesting because it shows that the cover was sent over the midwestern express route to Dayton and then over the far western route to St. Louis. Very few covers exist showing far western carriage.

Shown in Figure 29 is a circular notice from Edwin Stanton, dated July 14, 1863, informing members of the War Department of a new postal law that went into effect July 1, 1863:

....all correspondence addressed to any Executive Department, or any officer in it, must now be prepaid, except official communications written by some officer of the Department, or an officer under its control or responsible to it; and in such cases, under the words ‘Official Business,’ on the envelope, *the officer must sign his name, with his official designation.* All other persons, and all officers writing to Departments with which they are not connected, must prepay their postage.

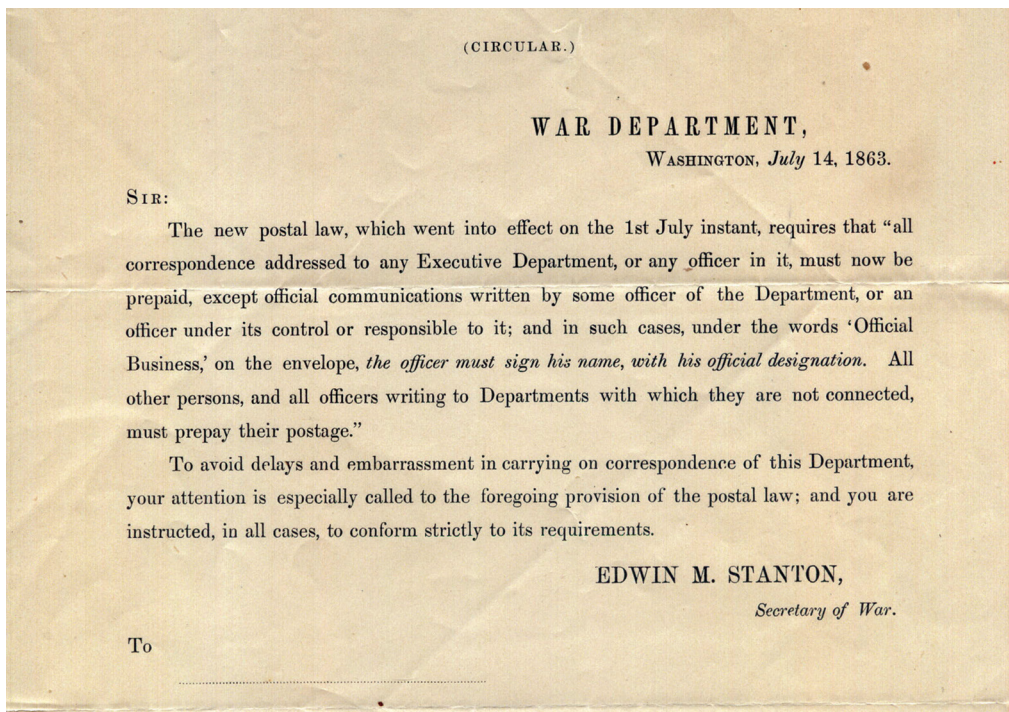


Figure 29. Printed portion of a War Department circular of July 14, 1863 stating that letters could no longer be sent with free franking to members of the Executive Department.

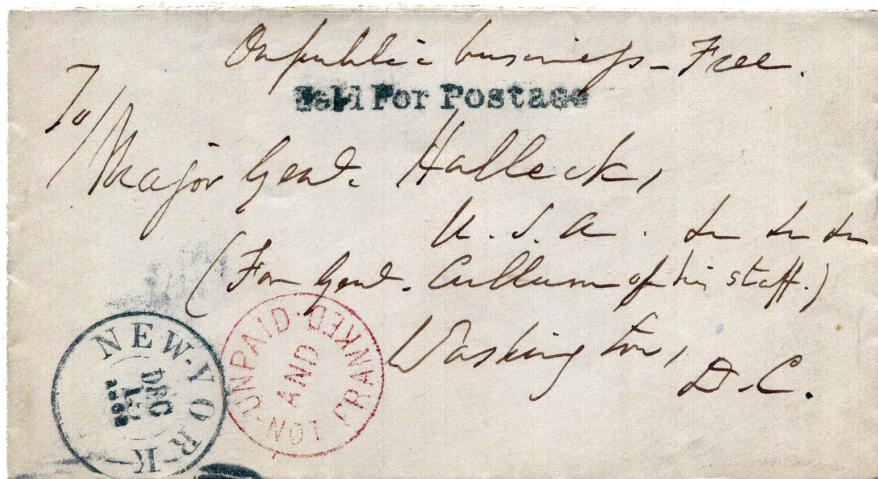


Figure 30. Manuscript "On public business, Free" endorsement rejected. Marked "Held for Postage" and "UNPAID/ AND/ NOT FRANKED" with black "NEW-YORK DEC 16 1863." Illustration courtesy Schuyler Rumsey Auctions.

This regulation led New York City to create a postmark reinforcing the new rules. The only example known is shown in Figure 30, on a cover addressed to Major General Halleck at Washington, D.C. endorsed "On public business—Free." The red marking reads "UNPAID AND NOT FRANKED." "Held For Postage" was handstamped beneath the endorsement and a "NEW-YORK DEC 15 1863" circular datestamp was applied. Halleck had the frank from 1862 to 1864.

ABOLITION OF THE FRANKING PRIVILEGE.

NOTE TO POSTMASTER.

The inclosed blank petition to Congress is forwarded to you in response to the very generally expressed wish of the people of the United States that the "FRANKING PRIVILEGE" be abolished.

The President and the Postmaster General, in their official communications to Congress at the present session, have strongly and earnestly recommended this reform; and, without intending to influence your own views, you are respectfully requested to give the citizens within the delivery of your office early opportunity to sign the petition. For this purpose several blanks will be supplied to the larger post offices; and it is suggested that they be placed at the prominent business centres, or circulated personally by gentlemen who feel an interest in the reform, so that all who desire to add the weight of their names in behalf of this important measure may have every reasonable facility for so doing.

It is further suggested that each Postmaster will personally see that the petition, or petitions (so circulated and signed within the delivery of his office), be forwarded to the U. S. Senator, Representative, or Delegate in Congress, representing his State, District, or Territory, as early as the 1st day of February, 1870, to the end that the question may receive early and due consideration at the *present* session of the National Legislature.

W. H. H. TERRELL,
Third Assistant Postmaster General.

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT,
Washington, December 20, 1869.

Figure 31. December 29, 1869 circular from Post Office Department suggesting that postmasters promote petitions to help reform postal laws and abolish free franking.

This troublesome legislation was reversed by the Act of 1 June 1864, but over the next years, increased criticism of free franking ultimately led to its abolition. Figure 31 shows a circular from the Post Office Department urging local postmasters to lend their weight to a petition drive designed to enlist popular support in a campaign to abolish the franking privilege. It's interesting to observe that by the 1870s, the cost of abuses of the franking system were so evident that the Postmaster General and his staff could confidently expect local postmasters, who for generations had been major beneficiaries of the franking privilege, to sign up for a campaign to eliminate the frank. And apparently they did. Effective 1 July 1873, all franking privileges were abolished and Official stamps were introduced.

Endnotes

1. James W. Milgram, "Postmaster Free Franking," *Chronicle* 245, pp. 9-31 (2015).
2. —, "Unofficial Registration of Mail in the U.S.:1845-1855," *Chronicle* 221, pp. 9-24 (2009).
3. James Baird, "Steamships on the New York and Charleston Route: the Robert Fulton," *Chronicle* 248, pp. 372-79.
4. James W. Milgram, "Alfred Ely Prison Franks," *Confederate Philatelist* 52, pp. 20-21 (2007). ■

RAILROAD STATION POSTMARKS (ALSO TERMED STATION AGENT MARKINGS)

JAMES W. MILGRAM, M. D.

In the literature about railroad mail, including the stampless cover catalog, postmarks that mention the name of a railway station are designated as station agent postmarks or station markings, thus distinguishing them from other route agent postmarks.

In my opinion, this is a distinction without a difference.

The historical evidence makes it very clear that the Post Office Department paid only route agents to handle railroad way mail (steamboat way mail as well). The U.S.P.O.D. never paid station agents of railroad companies to sort or handle mail. In fact, such civilians were not allowed to handle mail; that was reserved to P.O.D. employees exclusively.

What are we talking about?

Figure 1 shows a Civil War patriotic envelope with an oval railroad postmark that reads "B. & O. R.R. HOOD'S MILL. JUN 8 1861." The cover is rated "FREE" because it was addressed to a postmaster (in this instance, Edward Stabler of Sandy Spring, Maryland, well known for his Quaker-dated postmarks). Because of the "HOOD'S MILL" wording, this marking has traditionally been designated as a station agent's handstamp, rather than a route agent's handstamp for the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad.

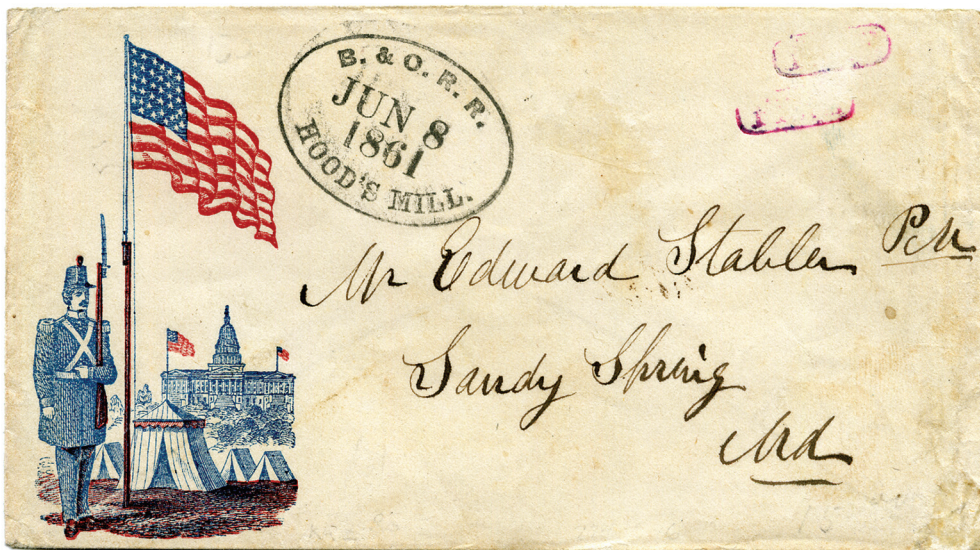


Figure 1. Stampless Civil War patriotic envelope with oval postmark "B. & O. R.R. HOOD'S MILL. JUN 8, 1861" in black and red "FREE" in oval, addressed to Edward Stabler, Postmaster, Sandy Spring, Maryland. The author contends this is not a station agent's handstamp, but a route agent's marking designed to be applied to mail originating at a specific station on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad.

Figure 2 is a more ornate example, here on a patriotic cover with a Howells poem. The 3¢ 1861 stamp is folded over the back of the envelope and tied by a marking in shield format that reads "C. & N.W. R'WAY 2 Nov 1863 Minnesota Junction." This is clearly a marking used at a specific train stop on the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad.

It is my opinion that all such markings, containing the name of a railroad company and the name of a station, are just variations of route agents' postmarks and have nothing to do with railroad station agents. I believe certain route agents had sets of such markings and

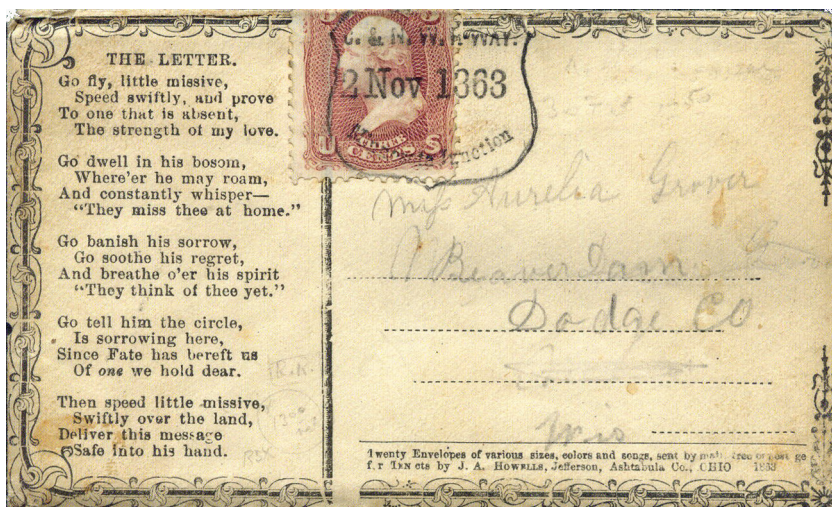


Figure 2. Civil War patriotic envelope with Howells poem, “The Letter,” sent to Beaver Dam, Wisconsin, and franked with a 3¢ 1861 stamp tied by a route agent’s marking in shield format. The marking reads “C. & N.W. R’WAY. 2 NOV 1863 Minnesota Junction.” The author contends this is a route agent’s marking used at a specific train stop.

used them at the specific locations, rather than using a single handstamp bearing the name of the railroad alone.

As an example, there are many B. & O. Railroad station handstamps in oval format similar to the marking on the cover in Figure 1. It seems obvious they were all manufactured by a single company; just the station names are different. This suggests it was the B. & O. Railroad route agent who caused their manufacture, not a collective of civilian non-postal railway employees. To my mind, the many laws regarding the secure handling of the mails prove these markings are just one of many types of route agent handstamps. It is misleading to separate them from other route agent markings because that implicitly assumes the markings were applied by non-postal employees. ■

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**RELIEF BRUISES:
A REMARKABLE FEATURE OF THE 1857-61 1¢ STAMP
PART 3**

DAVID ZLOWE

Introduction

The first two installments of this introduction to relief bruises demonstrated that unintended blurs of ink color, with regular patterns by relief entry, exist on all the 1¢ plates (numbered 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12) produced after the introduction of perforations in 1857. These marks span at least three transfer rollers and the patterns on each transfer roll are unique. A significant number of impressions of stamps contain such marks, often on the medallion, and sometimes on the ornamentation of the relief. Relief bruises also appear on the horizontal spaces between stamps, and their intensity and extent appear correlated with the intensity and extent of the medallion bruises.

The intensity and extent of relief bruises vary across the printed panes, and may vary greatly from position to position and impression to impression. They are unlike more typical marks and scratches both in the areas they encompass and the irregularity of their expression, but their shape on a particular relief (for the medallion relief bruises) and between reliefs (for the interstitial relief bruises) does tend to reflect a central tendency.

This concluding installment introduces something more about the appearance of a very few relief-bruised stamps, which serves to reconcile some of Ashbrook's information, and then provides a review of the evidence and presents conclusions and possibilities consistent with the present facts.

A closer look at relief bruises

One of the mysteries of the story of "mottles" (from Ashbrook, and repeated in Neinken) is what to make of Ashbrook's use of the words "blisters" or "blister mottling."³¹ There are no references to "blisters" in the Ashbrook archive of thousands of photos, and the only mention of a specific pattern of "mottles" is on one position (65R8) in the standard texts, and one photo from the Ashbrook archive. Also, only a solitary position on Ashbrook's own plate reconstruction alludes to "blisters," but that stamp no longer accompanies the assemblage.

The exceptional block of eight stamps which began this presentation (illustrated as Figures 2 and 25 in the previous installments) again provides answers. Several of the stamps in this block show smaller-scale features within the relief bruising. These are shown in the enlarged photos presented in Figure 41. At first glance the appearance is precisely that of blisters. In fact, within the relief bruise patterning these stamps show unmistakable, tiny lighter features which look like multiple connected blisters.

At upper left in Figure 41, an enlargement of a portion of Position 54R7 shows these lighter areas along the "baseball cap" F relief bruise line and throughout the upper part of the head where the coloring is denser. At upper right, an even greater blow-up from Position 55R7 shows similar blisters (but not the same) along the typical F relief feature. At lower

left, a close-up of the head and back shoulder area of Position 64R7 displays blisters in the lines and dot in the head, as well as on the shoulder. (These three stamps are part of the block of eight illustrated as Figures 2 and 25 in the previous installments.) At lower right in Figure 41, an enlargement of a portion of the Position 50R7 stamp also displays blisters in the shoulder and along the hair.

Curiously, Neinken did not explain this appearance or show it in his update of Ashbrook. In fairness to Ashbrook, macrophotography with the lenses extant over half a century ago was an uncertain endeavor, especially considering the powerful lighting and precise angles and distances required to illuminate and capture small-scale images from a tiny part



Figure 41. Relief bruises containing lighter, blister-like areas. At upper left, Position 54R7 shows these lighter areas along the “baseball cap” F relief bruise line and throughout the upper portion of the head where the coloring is denser. The bigger enlargement at upper right, from Position 55R7, shows similar blisters (but not the same) within the typical F relief feature. At lower left, a close-up of the head and back shoulder of Position 64R7 displays blisters in the lines and dot in the head, as well as on the shoulder. The enlargement at lower right, from Position 50R7, displays blisters in the shoulder and along the hair.

of a stamp. Undoubtedly, Ashbrook observed blistering using a double-digit magnification lens or loupe (which makes them visible). He described what he saw as blisters and left it at that. There are no close-ups of blisters shown in Ashbrook. Neinken, decades later, was focused on plating the stamps. Relief bruises, much less blisters which varied from position to position and impression to impression, did not aid him in that endeavor. As we shall note a bit later, when Neinken had the opportunity to specifically show the effect on some bottom row stamps from Plate 5, he chose not to. Fortunately, a simple desktop scanner today can blow up (clearly) any portion of a postage stamp, and therefore blisters on stamps can be seen, shared and understood.

This author has seen dozens of stamps with strong blisters. Many more suggest blistering but may be the result of vagaries of printing specific impressions or positions. Figure



Figure 42. Greatly enlarged lower left portion of Position 99L7, a bottom-row, F relief stamp. Neinken noted on this position that the shoulder is heavily blurred. There is also the appearance of blistering, on the shoulder, in the margins, and through the letters of ONE, particularly in the O.

42 is a substantial enlargement of a portion of Position 99L7, a bottom-row, F relief stamp. Neinken's plating note (his page 383) on this position is "shoulder heavily blurred" and we certainly see that. But there is also the appearance of blistering, or some related effect, on the shoulder, in the margins, and through the letters of ONE, particularly in the O.

The appearance of blisters is not mistakable for other effects, and is striking when observed. While the details of the patterning differ, the scale and basic appearance on separate stamps is similar. Despite Ashbrook's lack of clear evidence, blistering exists, whatever it may actually be. It is always associated with very intensely colored stamps, and usually on stamps showing extensive relief bruises. Most of the examples show that blistering tends to be located on or within intense relief bruises.

One of the more surprising aspects of the blisters is that their presence does not indicate a faulty or disturbed appearance of the rest of the stamp (except, of course, for the relief bruise itself). Within those blisters, the engraved lines usually appear almost undisturbed, whatever force acted to cause such an irregular appearance. This should not be possible if the blisters are truly that—blistering of the metal structure on the printing plate. In that case, the blistering should be associated with profound disturbance of the steel structure, and so give a peculiar appearance to the engraved lines. However, the blistering appears almost to be a layer on top of the otherwise undisturbed appearance of the stamp. Certainly the ink is disturbed, but how can that be possible when so much of it, including that on the "unbruised" parts of the stamp, is not?

The blistering phenomenon is not isolated to Plate 7. Plates 5 and 8 demonstrate the same effect, though the author has yet to see it on Plates 9 or 10. Blistering might be difficult to detect on the ink-filmed Plates 11 and 12, and there is not convincing evidence of it on stamps from those plates. Readers may recall the "donut hole" C relief dot on the Plate 12 stamp in Figure 40. This is the only example that suggests blistering on the late plates.

The top image in Figure 43 shows a portion of Position 63R8. This stamp is part of a block of nine shown in Figure 16 in the first installment of this article, and is an example of an intense and extensive C relief bruise. The large dark dot near the top of Franklin's head shows light spots in its midst, and the two dark lines beneath show suggestions of white arrays of blisters. Plate 8 stamps do not express the blisters as well as those from Plate 7, but it seems more accurate to say that they exist on Plate 8 than to assert they do not.

Figure 43 also presents a horizontal pair electronically cropped from a centerline strip of three stamps, Positions 91-93R5. The illustrated images are the right pair, Positions 92-93R5. Both positions show the "baseball cap" line at the back of Franklin's bust, typical of the F relief bruise. They clearly show excess color throughout the bottom portions, including the vertical spaces (not the horizontal interstices discussed earlier, since these are bottom-row stamps), with a blistered appearance most obvious on the back of the shoulder.

Greatly enlarged at the bottom of Figure 43 is a portion of the right stamp in the pair, highlighting the blisters (as well as a black thread apparently of some age). Neinken's plate illustrations for Positions 91 through 96R5 are annotated with "heavily mottled"—referring to the lettering, bottom, head, sides or shoulders. However, the illustrations do not include drawings of the effect on the head or shoulders, and it is not clear that Neinken differentiated between Ashbrook's "mottles," which we know now to be relief bruises with regular aspects to them, and Ashbrook's "blisters." Recall that Ashbrook stated the "mottles" or relief bruises were distinct by relief, but he never described in detail any of the blisters, and he never asserted they were in any way regular. Neinken's handling of the marks on these positions, therefore, seems incomplete and somewhat vague.

Some portions of the markings on the shoulders and elsewhere of these bottom-row Plate 5 positions appear to be repeated on other impressions of the same positions. It may be that they are caused by processes distinct from those that led to blistering, or it may be



Figure 43. At top, an enlargement from Position 63R8, showing light blistering in the dot and lines of the distinctive C relief bruise. The pair at center, Position 92-93R5, shows the F relief “baseball cap” relief bruise on Franklin’s back and blistering across the shoulder. Blistering from the right stamp in the pair is shown in the enlargement at bottom.

that this portion of the first perforate plate was affected by the same cause that impacted the transfer roll used on Plates 5 through 10 and resulted in relief bruises. If the bottom of Plate 5 suffered the same issues that befell the transfer roll, that might not be very surprising. Further evidence of the rare blistering effect would enable more certain conclusions.

While explaining blisters might seem like another mountain range to surmount after scaling the peaks of the relief bruises, the blisters may provide evidence to help explain the origin of the relief bruise features themselves. To do that requires a careful review of the evidence marshalled so far.

Origins

The presence and characteristics of relief bruises provide a number of points of evidence that have been demonstrated in this study. Explanations of the origins of those relief bruises is less certain. Part of the reason for the uncertainty is that relief bruises are not a simple phenomenon—there is not a mark on a position, or series of limited and related positions, obviously caused by a curl of thread or a crack in the printing plate. Instead, relief bruises are a complex phenomenon which seem to have their origin in the steps of the creation of multiple printing plates as well as in the taking of specific impressions from those plates.

In order to make progress from the facts established so far, it is desirable to state the main points derived from the evidence presented. An advantage to this approach is that should specific aspects of the evidence (or the conclusions derived from them) come into question later, then it will be easier to identify the mistakes of interpretation and correct them so as to establish better conclusions. Also, should the chain of evidence seem to be incomplete or unconvincing, then the gaps may lend themselves to resolution through a program of research to obtain more and better evidence. While this scientific approach is sometimes less entertaining than mere assertions of learned conclusions from a position of authority, it often has the benefit of being more convincing and longer lived. It is the difference between opinion and knowledge.

Main points of evidence

1. Patterns of color distinct by relief exist on the entries as shown on stamps (medallion relief bruises), but not as part of their planned design.
2. Patterns of color distinct by relief exist between the entries as shown on the interstices of stamps (interstitial relief bruises) where no ink was planned to appear. The appearance of medallion relief bruises is often but not always an indication that interstitial relief bruises appear on the adjacent stamp(s).
3. Relief bruises vary in extent, from not present at all to covering most of the stamp. There is a central tendency of the patterns: The typical appearance of relief bruises can be given useful names like “crown” or “baseball cap,” and these metaphorical descriptions are useful because what they describe frequently appears.
4. Relief bruises vary in intensity. The variation appears to correlate the degree of color darkness (lighter to stronger) with the appearance of relief bruises (subtle to intense).
5. Relief bruises appear on all the perforate plates (5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12), at least to some degree.
6. Relief bruises have the potential to be present throughout the life of the plate.
7. Relief bruise intensity and extent is not fixed from position to position.
8. Relief bruise intensity and extent can vary from impression to impression (for stamps and multiples).
9. Relief bruise intensity and extent can vary across the span of a particular multiple.
10. Relief bruise intensity and extent can vary significantly between a printed stamp and its neighboring stamp.

11. Blisters in relief bruises suggest a reaction of metal or ink.

12. Relief bruises do not seem to appear on later issues of U.S. postage stamps, other denominations of the Toppan Carpenter (TC) stamps, or earlier 1¢ plates (numbers 1E, 1L, 2, 3 or 4) or the Eagle or Franklin carrier stamps.

Now we may combine these main points of evidence to draw conclusions.

For example, points 1, 2 and 5 about the medallion and interstitial relief bruise patterns suggest that relief bruising is not a position-specific or plate-specific phenomenon, but rather is more general in scope and originated no later than the transfer rolls. Since the last step in the creation of the printing plates is to rock in the 200 entries from a transfer roll, the cause of relief bruises has to be earlier than this step, otherwise relief bruises on Plates 5, 7, 8, 9 and 10 would be different or non-existent. Instead, they are the same. Relief bruises are caused earlier in the process than the final entry of positions on plates.

Likewise, the master die of the single stamp design could not have originated the bruises because each of the entries on the six-relief transfer roll (and, later, both three-relief transfer rolls) displays different and regularly repeated relief bruise patterns. Therefore, the origin of relief bruises came later than the production of the master die, and from something that expressed the distinct reliefs used to comprise the plates' rows.

The only intermediate steps known for intaglio stamp production are the creation of the intermediate laydown of multiple reliefs or the creation of the transfer roll of multiple reliefs from that intermediate laydown. Therefore, we may assert with confidence that relief bruises originated on the intermediate laydown, the multi-subject transfer roll, or both.

It may never be possible with high confidence to determine on which piece of steel relief bruises originated, or whether, for example, interstitial relief bruises originated on the laydown and medallion bruises originated on the transfer roll. In such an example, the effects would be combined on the transfer roll and we might not be able to know which blurs came from which step in the process. We can say that if they began on the flat laydown, then they were slight depressions, and there had to be raised areas at those spots on the transfer roll made from it. That would have created depressions on the finished plates which could hold color. But here an issue presents itself: If TC had "bruised" laydowns or rolls, and they were visible in the production process by simply making an inked trial proof, why would they not correct the problem?

There are three possibilities: (1) bruises were visible in the production process via trial proofs but there was no attempt to fix them; (2) the bruises were visible and TC attempted to fix them but failed; or (3) the bruises were not visible during the production checks.

The first possibility seems far-fetched unless one believes that TC just did not care about quality. While discussions of the side scratches on the Type V stamps often end up with observers throwing up their rhetorical hands and declaring that the plate makers were incompetent and/or uncaring, such would be inconsistent with decades of evidence from TC's high quality, careful work for many delighted clients. More significantly, why did TC not resolve the problem as they developed Plates 9 and 10 over the next several years? Perhaps they did try, as the second possibility suggests.

The second possibility also raises the question that if TC tried to fix the laydown and/or roll, why would they have given up? The argument that they lacked the time to create new plates is seriously weakened by the fact that this problem persisted over the span of four years and seven working plates. The logic devolves to their not caring. And there is no evidence that several laydowns or rolls were created; this was not a casual effort or expense.

The third possibility becomes interesting when it is recalled that the standard in printing is to take a trial proof using the finest (i.e., smallest) particulate pigment size possible to reveal the tiniest imperfections: black ink, like that used on the 12¢ stamp. Could it be possible that relief bruises do not appear, even with fine particulate ink, unless it is the blue ink used on the 1¢ stamps, such as the Plate 9 proofs? Could there be something special

about the blue ink? The only other difference between stamp production and the “pulling of proofs” is the paper. That, too, might be worth considering. More on non-metallurgical explanations in due course.

Points 3 and 11 suggest that relief bruises and blisters could be caused by the nature of the metal during its production into transfer rolls. As with the bottom margin plate cracks on Plate 2, which apparently faded quickly with use of the plate, it could be that the blisters wore quickly, explaining their rarity. However, if they did so they wore uniformly and stabilized into the typical appearance of relief bruises as homogenous blurs of color. This would mean that blisters represent a failure of the steel on the intermediate laydowns or transfer rolls which somehow “got better,” or at least did not get worse due to plate wear. This avenue seems unlikely—it suggests that the specific phenomenon of blistering entirely disappeared while sometimes-extensive relief bruising persisted with no further discernable change in pattern or relative expression. And if the blistering phenomenon is not due at least in part to something on the laydown or roll, then why would it appear on several plates?

We make the obvious assumption that relief bruises and blisters are closely related phenomena because their appearance is correlated—they seem to overlap, and blisters appear when relief bruises are intense. However, point 6, that the relief bruises were present throughout much if not all of the useful lives of the plates, must lead us to doubt that relationship in the case of the fleeting blisters. They appear most prominently on Plate 7 (and also on Plates 5 and 8), but only in a handful of instances. Therefore, while there seems to be a relationship between blisters and relief bruises, there is something else going on beyond plate wear to explain the blisters’ appearance and disappearance.

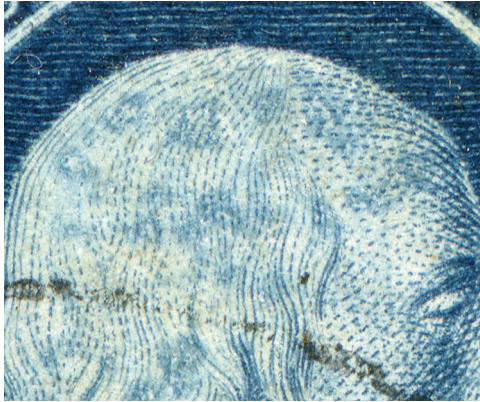
The appearance of the blisters tends to cause observers to immediately associate it with metal. However, as we have established, the engraving under the blistered areas is often undisturbed. Figure 44 shows another example of the effect, and this example is different. Here the engraved lines *are* disturbed. The phenomenon does not appear as a separate layer on top of the printed stamp. Rather, the blistering seems to have disrupted the finished appearance. This used single, from Position 84R7, shows intense and extensive E relief bruises and presents the most pronounced blistering seen by the author on any stamp. The two enlargements from this stamp, shown at bottom in Figure 44, illustrate these effects in detail. The lower left image shows blistering all over Franklin’s head. In the lower right image, the shoulder shows large areas of blistering, very much like the blistering presented in Figure 42. However, the effect at the upper edge of the shoulder, near the background lines, seems to have washed away some of the expected ink in the engraved lines of the shoulder.

There is a similar effect around the portion of the centerline by Position 100L7 in Figure 33 (illustrated in the previous installment). To the author, the term that comes to mind is not “blisters,” so much as “bubbles.” The word “bubbles” suggests an origin not in the metal but in the ink.

Point 4 certainly supports the idea that the phenomena of bubbling/blistering and relief bruises are closely related to inking, since we have already seen a variety of expressions of inking, both from impression to impression, position to position, and across multiples (see points 7, 8 and 9). It is worth noting that the ink itself was carefully controlled by TC. They sought an ink color and density that was consistent, and ink batches were checked. While those who collect any of the TC stamps can provide extensive examples of variation in colors and ink composition, the Prussian blue pigment in the blue ink used for the 1¢ stamps was well-established and stable, at least by the standards then in place. While there may have been some variation from batch to batch (and the “blue” certainly changed over the decade of its use on 1¢ stamps), it would have been under the close scrutiny of the quality checkers. And even for a single batch of ink, one is hard pressed to explain the variety of



Figure 44. Extreme blistering: The used single at left, from Position 84R7, shows intense and extensive E relief bruises and presents the most extensive blistering seen by the author on any stamp. The top of Franklin's head, enlarged below at left, shows blistering throughout, displayed as small white areas surrounded by dark areas. The shoulder area, shown enlarged below at right, also shows large areas of blistering, very much like that seen in Figure 42. However, the effect at the upper edge of the shoulder, near the background lines, seems to have washed away some of the expected ink in the engraved lines of the shoulder. The phenomenon suggested here is closer to bubbles than blisters.



relief bruise expression from impression to impression, much less across a single block of eight columns by three rows (as illustrated in Figure 14 in the first installment).

Thus, we are led not so much to ink as to the inking, or use of the ink. Given the hundreds of thousands of impressions taken across the denominations, TC's inking process not only had to be, but almost certainly was, highly regular and routinized. The need for consistent quality drove the printers to this condition, and the required production rates required a swift, repeatable and reliable process. It would not do to have the quality checker, located right by the press, discarding sheet after sheet. As Perkins related, even the mechanisms of the presses were designed so that a turn of the crank returned the apparatus to the initial operating position, ready for another sheet of wetted paper. Speed was essential.³²

Again, the variation in inking and the appearance of the relief bruises, and possibly the bubbles, could be the result of carelessness, but that seems far-fetched. There was a process, and equipment, that was designed to be reliably repeatable, but (as per point 9) the finished result appears with variation. The fact that the appearance of relief bruises varied just over the span of a stamp's width (point 10) suggests that the inking of the plate does not suffice to explain the small-scale variation. And the tinting of the ink—how dark it was—also does not explain the small-scale variation. Certainly point 11 (the existence of bubbles/blisters) suggests that TC was dealing with something outside normal expectations. For us

today, after all, having had more than a century-and-a-half of looking at these stamps, the bubbles are a newly-(re)discovered wonder.

The problem persists: What could cause bubbles correlated with very intense inking, much less the variation of relief bruises?

The typical patterns of relief bruises, both on the medallions and the interstices of the stamps, suggest that something was on the metal. The bubbles and the variation of the relief bruises across both small-scale (stamp to neighboring stamp, or impression to impression of a particular position) and larger scale (across multiples of stamps), suggest that something happened with respect to the ink. Neither cause on its own explains the evidence. Therefore, we may assert with confidence that both ink and metal contributed to the appearance of relief bruises, with blisters/bubbles as an extreme expression of the phenomenon.

No single cause can explain the frequency and regularity of relief bruises and the exceptional appearance of bubbles.

Points 5 and 6, regarding the common nature of this remarkable feature and its persistence over time as impressions were made, mean that our explanation of cause must span both the six-relief laydown and/or roll, both three-relief laydowns/rolls, both the medallions (and elsewhere) and the stamp interstices, and a great number of impressions from all the plates. A broad-reaching phenomenon, therefore, will require a broad-reaching explanation.

Certainly the metal used to create the stamps is broad-reaching. The metal of the plates, and presumably the intermediate laydowns and rolls, is imagined to be monolithic, uniform and consistent. At least, that is assumed when describing steel. The Plate 2 big crack, margin cracks at bottom of that plate, the Plate 3 arrays of cracking, and the presumed failure of Plate 6 suggest that this assumption is not wholly reliable. According to Bacon, the metal components, prior to use (i.e., to transfer images from metal to metal, or from metal to paper) were hardened.³³ As further specified by Moss, a multi-step carburization-tempering-quenching (CTQ) process was used involving packing the unhardened metal with carbonaceous material under great heat to add a small amount of carbon to the iron to make steel, enabling the heat to temper the metal so that the carbon could be distributed, and then quenching in water (or, possibly, oil) to quickly cool the steel, and allowing a final air cooling, as needed, thereby causing a very thin layer of hard steel to sandwich the bulk of the object (laydown, roll, or plate) which would remain softer. Thus, the hard steel would form a case around the unhardened steel—case hardening. The cracks just mentioned are believed to be caused by the quenching step. Moss earlier assessed that impurities in the steel that had not been worked out during its production cycle combined with the CTQ process to crack the body of Plate 2.³⁴

The whole issue of wear on plates involves how quickly, or slowly, the hardened steel was worn away by ink, polishing and paper. Anyone who has contemplated the child's game of "rock, paper, scissors" can imagine that it takes quite a bit of ink, polishing and paper to wear steel. Of course, given the many impressions made, such thoughts may be reasonably entertained. Even mighty steel can wear. The newly-discovered crack on the bottom of Plate 9, discussed in the first installment and illustrated there on the plate proof in Figure 22, is evidence that these TC plates could wear and even begin to fail.

However, while that crack, and the others just mentioned, are certainly evidence that the steel plates are not monolithic, uniform and consistent indefinitely, these conclusions cannot necessarily be attached to the intermediate laydowns and transfer rolls because the discussed cracks appear due to CTQ or use of the plate. Recall that laydowns and especially transfer rolls are made specifically to impress (or be impressed by) steel, not paper. The assumption has been (without anyone since the 19th century seeing any of TC's laydowns or rolls) that they are thicker than the plates (and it is obvious that the roll is at least a little

wider at its narrowest dimension than the stamp), and we know that relief bruises existed from the beginning of the use of the first transfer roll (on Plate 5). The roll did not acquire relief bruises from use; it must have acquired them either from its own quenching or from the intermediate laydown as a result of its own quenching. Thus we may assert with confidence that the relief bruises persisted both on the metal and in the inking process. It is worth noting that the appearance of relief bruises as blurs of color suggests that plate finishing did not eliminate the lack of smoothness which abetted the marks. The steel plate may have started as fully flat, but the less-than-perfect roll transferred its bumpiness to the plate.

We cannot assume that both the medallion relief bruises and the interstitial bruises had the same cause in the CTQ process. The medallion relief bruises, but not the interstitial bruises, display blisters. This indicates there may be a difference in their nature or origin. The interstitials might have been caused by other forces acting on that area, such as plastic flow resulting from the (imperfect) taking up of the image onto the roll from the intermediate laydown (or the creation of the laydown), which also might help explain why the interstitial bruises very frequently are angled rather than vertical in appearance.

But the medallion relief bruises, especially when they are considered across the extent of their possible appearance from limited to widespread, are clearly not the result of plastic flow. They seem more likely to have been the result of impurities propagated to the surface of the steel during the CTQ process. Perhaps they developed in the laydown as impurities within the still-soft interior of the metal which became voids under the stresses of the CTQ process and so made very shallow depressions on its surface. That conclusion is suggested by the most typical appearance of the relief bruises, and that they vary as the inking and overall condition of the plate varies. The creation of the laydown could have generated one form of the relief bruises, and the creation of the transfer roll could have added the other.

The problem with this explanation for the steel is highlighted in point 12. How can every one of the transfer rolls, and possibly their laydowns, used for the perforate 1¢ plates have metal impurities that cause blisters, bubbles and relief bruises, but no other stamps, or laydowns, or rolls, or plates of the 1¢ stamp? If it was a single 1¢ transfer roll that was affected and which happened to be used to make several plates, that is one thing. But it is quite another when three out of three rolls (some would suggest that Plate 5 was created from two transfer rolls, which would add another to the mix) have relief bruises but none other of the dozen or more rolls created by TC. And it is more far-fetched to suppose that for all these transfer rolls and only these, both the laydown and roll each contributed their own, completely different bruises.

The explanation could be simple chance, but such believers fund lotteries more than read research articles like this. TC's 1¢ stamps might have been unlucky as they were produced in the midst of other denominations, but one is hard pressed to assert that point with confidence. Since the presses, paper, water and employees are believed to have been (roughly) the same, what else varied other than the actual plates?

The ink.

The ink certainly varied from batch to batch. But the ink also varied from the inks of most of the other denominations in that this ink was blue and based on Prussian blue pigment. Prussian blue pigment is a powder, which is mixed with other ingredients to give it desirable properties such as drying, resistance to abrasion, smooth distribution, and the like. Point 8—that the extent and intensity of relief bruises vary from impression to impression of the same position—strongly suggests that the capacity to express relief bruises comes from the reliefs on the transfer roll (even if they originated a step earlier), but the degree of expression (i.e., intensity and extent) depends on some aspect of inking. After all, as point 3 suggests, there is a distribution of relief bruises for any given relief that varies from none to “bruised all over” (as in the Position 50L7 stamp illustrated in Figure 12 in the first installment and enlarged in Figure 41). So depending solely on either bruised plates or inking

randomness seems unlikely. Somehow, the effect of the less-than-perfect plates interacted with the inking effect to make relief bruises apparent. Something about the ink must have highlighted the issues on the metal. Therefore, we may assert that ink highlighted metal issues.

The third, major component of the production of the 1¢ stamp is the paper. While paper makes a postage stamp possible, we understandably view it as the boring necessity it usually is. Our focus is quite properly on the design of ink which is printed (intentionally or not) on the paper. However, it seems that the paper, or more precisely, the sizing which gives it whiteness and takes away limpness, has a crucial role to play in the creation of relief bruises, as will soon be seen.

Points 3, 4 and 12 suggest that extreme inking variation is correlated with the expression of relief bruises and blisters/bubbles. The chemistry of Prussian blue pigment (based on organic cyanide chemistry) was not understood until decades after the TC stamps were completed. Contemporary accounts of the creation of the pigment are a witches' brew of ingredients leading to the empirical result that a precipitate of deeply blue pigment was created.³⁵ However, why that chemistry worked was not understood by the ink makers of TC's time, nor by TC itself.

Recently, Gary Granzow published a recipe for Prussian blue and analyzed its chemistry with modern understanding of the reactions.³⁶ Granzow's work was a breakthrough on a feature of the British stamps from the 1840's, specifically the Penny Reds and Two-Pence Blues. He discovered that the ink, or more precisely, its precursor chemicals, happened to be present both in the finished ink and in the paper used to produce the postage stamps. In the terms of the day, the Prussian blue ink contained an excess of prussiate of potash (now called potassium ferrocyanide) which combined with the iron in the alum used in the sizing of the paper to create additional Prussian blue pigment. Alum, potassium aluminum sulphate, today contains none of the iron-based version, potassium iron sulphate, which was prevalent at the time of TC, according to Granzow.

The excess prussiate of potash was used to make the ink labile, or more likely to smudge if it was abraded—such as by a faker trying to remove a cancel from a stamp to reuse it. That was important to meet government security requirements aimed at preventing reuse of stamps. The paper had chemical sizing added to it to make it whiter and improve its appearance. When the paper was wetted, Granzow relates, not only was there an opportunity for the iron-based alum to interact with the prussiate of potash that would soon be introduced by the inking, but some of the sizing would dissolve into the water bucket, and (presumably) slowly throughout its use, increase the proportion of alum (and, thus, iron) in the water. The ink on the plate then provided the prussiate of potash precursor; the paper provided the precursor iron; the water served as a medium for the reaction, and the result created more Prussian blue pigment. This pigment was deposited on the moist stamps, causing “bluing” of both red and blue British stamps.

The fact that a printing press plate was heated to keep the ink flowing, and that the press's cylinder caused pressure on the paper to impress it into the engraved lines and thereby take up the ink on its surface, made the postage stamp printing process an ideal mechanism to create excess pigment.

What happened to the British stamps and their “bluing” likely happened to the TC 1¢ stamp, at least in some fashion. TC were not only making new stamps; they were making new pigment as they did so—but they did not know it. Which location was best suited on the stamp plate to support this chemical reaction? Shallow depressions on the plate which were adjacent to inked lines (containing the available prussiate of potash) and which could have tiny puddles of iron-rich (a.k.a., iron-based, alum-rich) water to react with. The relief bruise depressions were reaction vessels in which the precursor chemicals came together (with heat and under pressure) to produce a small amount of additional pigment—in fact, a

slight film of pigment that provided the appearance of a blur or mark of ink. A relief bruise.

Bubbles? Do not many chemical reactions give off excess gas or water? Might the bubbles be the result of the chemical reaction to create Prussian blue pigment? Recall that the bubbles appear on darkly colored stamps—which may be an indication of a chemical reaction that generated more pigment rather than the particular position just being heavily inked. Darkness of color may be the result of either or both the actual inking prior to the impression as well as the unintentional chemistry of Prussian blue pigment creation after the impression. The fossil record of the stamp may not be confounding us, rather it may provide all the evidence required to shed light on the singular processes we can understand today, but which would have mystified the TC printers. The thought that we are seeing both ink and pigment, each created at a different point in the stamp-making process, one with intention and one without, but giving similar appearance, is a curious coincidence to appreciate. While the precise chemistry to explain the bubbles will have to be examined further by suitable experts, we can assert that the excess pigment could have been created inadvertently on the 1¢ stamps due to their unique conditions.

Based on Granzow's discoveries about the British stamp, we know that chemical processes can lead to additional pigment being made *in situ* on the stamps when they were created. The variables involved, however, were numerous, and this would lead to the observation in points 7 and 8 that relief bruises differ from position to position and impression to impression. First, there was the amount of excess iron-based alum, which would be a function both of the manufacture of a particular sheet of paper and the condition of the bucket of water used to wet it and its preceding sheets. Second, there was the amount of excess prussiate of potash used in the particular batch of ink. Third were the conditions for the reaction: the heat of the plate from the warming device used on it, the moisture in the paper and across its panes, and the pressure from the printing press (which was also a function of the thickness of the blankets used between the press cylinder and the paper resting on the plate). Any and all of these conditions varied, both from sheet to sheet and even across particular sheets, and what is not known is precisely how these variables interacted to generate additional pigment, much less to generate bubbles. These are areas for further investigation.

There is an aspect of the bubbles and bruises which is commonly seen, and it may be important in explaining their cause and appearance. Every example of such excess color appears adjacent to engraved lines which held the Prussian blue ink. Even the interstitial relief bruises do not appear apart from the ornaments and labels, but right up against them. The medallion bruises are located amid engraved lines. It is from the ink deposited in the engraved areas of the stamp from which the excess prussiate of potash originated to react with the water's alum which was all over the paper. The result was newly-created pigment which flowed beyond the confines of the engraved lines making it visible to us against the white paper. The transfer roll may have had unintended bumps elsewhere, and they might have resulted in small depressed areas elsewhere on the plates, but if those areas did not have a source of the pigment precursor from the ink, then no relief bruise would have been created. Likewise, if other precursors were not present in the required amounts (from too-dry paper, paper with too little alum, ink without excess prussiate of potash, as examples), then relief bruises might not have appeared even where they could have otherwise.

It appears that a testable hypothesis emerges from the analysis despite there being many possible contributing factors, as well as limits to the location of relief bruises. If relief bruises are the deposition of pigment created from an unintended chemical reaction, then they are not ink. That is, the dark color on the relief bruises is due to the Prussian blue pigment, but, unlike the engraved lines of the stamp, not due to ink. Recall that ink equals pigment plus mucilage. Insofar as ink is chemically distinct from its component pigment, and insofar as present-day testing permits the distinction to be tested (i.e., pigment with or without mucilage, or its present-day remaining successors), relief bruises can be tested to

determine if they are substantially pigment-based rather than ink-based. This distinction depends on observing constituent chemicals in the inked portions of the stamp, including linseed oil, beeswax, soap, etc. (the mucilage). While specific elements may not be identifiable, *per se*, to distinguish ink from pigment, it may be possible to draw distinctions based on molecular make-up or relative amounts of elements.

A further approach may be helpful. Ink manufacturers then and now attempt to control the properties of ink by adjusting methods and approaches to incorporating or dispersing the pigment in the ink. Depending on how much a pigment is mixed, and with whatever degree of impact to break down particulate size, the color or blending (“wetting out”) characteristics of the colorant may change. Therefore, the ink may have a characteristic particulate size for its pigment, while the relief bruises may have a very different particulate or crystal size since their presumed coloring agent was not mixed as aggressively as commercial pigments have to be to consistently disperse in suspension. Various forms of microscopy might render such differences discernable.

It may be possible to evaluate the current composition of stamps, their tinted interstices and the untinted portions, the stamps with bubbles and those without, and establish correlations between the varieties of inking, bubbles/bruises, the chemical content of the stamps, and the particulate size of the pigment. Such an investigation will be made more challenging because of the conditions stamps existing today have experienced since they were made. For example, soaking stamps to remove them from covers, or to remove their gum, may have served to reduce the amount of original sizing. In fact, some stamps (and covers) are soaked with water in which modern sizing has been added to restore or improve their condition. That and other confounding effects would need to be accounted for to draw meaningful conclusions. Also, comparison will need to be made against other blue-inked stamps (such as the British stamps), including earlier TC stamps, and including the blue Eagle and Franklin carrier stamps, none of which display relief bruises.

For the time being, the following conclusion is suggested by the evidence: Unexpected chemical reactions abetted by shallow cavities (from the transfer roll, but possibly originating on the intermediate laydown) on the perforate 1¢ postage stamp plates occurred between a component of wetted paper and Prussian blue ink components generating gas- (or water-) releasing action and more pigment. The additional pigment highlighted the areas where it was spawned, thereby creating what are now called relief bruises. In instances of stronger reactions, the additional pigment was disrupted in its deposition to form what are now called bubbles or blisters.

In what might be one of the most unexpected coincidences in philately, small-scale effects on metal, paper and ink components of stamp-making under special conditions interacted during the printing process to cause an observable unintended phenomenon.

The metal components of other denominations of the TC stamps, specifically the transfer roll (whether from its own disturbance or that of the intermediate laydown, if such a step were used on other denominations) could have been similarly affected, but the slight depressions might not have been evident because there was no localized chemistry on the printed stamp which would have served to highlight it. It may prove fruitful for students to carefully examine the other TC stamps made during the perforate plate years in an effort to determine whether there are indications of relief-differentiated unintended marks. The indications may be areas or diffuse lines or dots of excess ink, but may also be (and may be more evident as) white portions, such as on Plates 11 and 12. Given the large number of 3¢ stamps made, with many large multiples surviving today, researchers may wish to focus their efforts there.

One of the major issues not addressed so far is why are there no relief bruises reported on the imperforate 1¢ stamps (Plates 1, 2, 3 or 4). Students are familiar with the so-called “rust spots” which emerged on Plate 1 when it was converted from its early state to its late

state by re-entries and recuts on many frame lines and labels. Those spots, however, were position-specific, not relief-specific. They occurred only on the outer edges of the plate (the top of the first row and the bottom of the last row) and reportedly faded as the plate was used. Rust spots look familiar, but they are a different animal than relief bruises. Figure 45 shows a nice example of the rust spots that appeared on Plate 1 after it was hardened to its late state. This happens to be Position 91L1L, which shows the triple transfer with one inverted. There is also an overall film of blue ink visible at left, which is less evident adjacent to the rust spot at bottom.

A thorough chemical analysis of the relief bruises will study the imperforate plate stamps to determine what was present or lacking that might explain the emergence of relief bruises on the perforate plates. Logic dictates that either the steel components (such as the transfer rolls) were not bruised, or the ink did not react, or both. Perhaps the siderographers were fortunate, or earlier processes later changed, to obviate the possibility of medallion or interstitial disturbances. Perhaps a student will conclude that such differences led to relief bruises, but that they are expressed very slightly or in different ways on the earlier stamps.

Ink composition might have changed for the perforate plates, and comparative analysis might reveal that circumstance. Perhaps there was less excess of prussiate of potash, or different forms of alum in the paper, or processes might not have allowed excess alum to gather in the water bucket. The carburization-tempering-quenching process surely evolved over the years, as the new steelmaking technology matured. That, too, could have led to a greater likelihood of small-scale damage to the steel. With so many variables, it is possible that the coincidence that both the transfer roll had raised areas, and the printers unknowingly caused a chemical reaction to produce precisely the pigment they were knowingly using, was a never-to-be-repeated stroke of luck (for us).

These new questions will lead to investigations that could not previously have been contemplated. Not only are the relief bruises remarkable in their appearance, but their cause or causes are no less remarkable. Further study may well reveal surprising facts that will better explain the appearance of these stamps.

Another aspect of the 1¢ stamps that has not been addressed in this article is the overall film of ink that sometimes appears on both the imperforate 1¢ stamps and the perforate ones. It is present on a number of the figures above, and the Position 91L1L example in Figure 45 displays it strongly in the left margin. The term “plate wash,” while evocative, was not used by Ashbrook or Neinken. Here, again, the conventional explanation has been that imperfect wiping by the printers caused the widespread ink film to appear on the finished sheets. It may well be that the chemistry described above is closely related to this phenomenon, or that a similar effect was causative. The scope of this investigation does not explicitly cover that overall ink film. Many TC stamps display it on many differently-inked denominations, so the precise, complex causes that led to relief bruises on perforate 1¢ stamps do not necessarily address the overall ink films. The topic is worthy of further study.

The production floor

The reality of relief bruises is indisputable. There is something going on in the medallion (and elsewhere on the stamps) and the stamp interstices. The use of black, instead of blue, ink during the proofing process of the metal laydowns, transfer rolls and plates may have prevented the detection of relief bruises prior to the plates being put into production. In that case, the printers might have been surprised by what they saw come off the press.

On the production floor there must have been consternation, if the relief bruises appeared hot off the press. The Post Office Department orders had to be met, and there was never a great amount of time to fill them. A number of the “pulls” from the plates might have shown relief bruises, and the printers could not have imagined why. After all, they did not know about cyanide-based chemistry, and could not have guessed that a reaction

was being initiated between the alum in the paper, the water, and the excess prussiate of potash in the ink. Perhaps they rubbed harder on the inked plates to be sure to remove what seemed to be excess ink. Perhaps they tried altering the tint of the ink, but noticed that a lighter tinted ink could still produce darker stamps (due to the extra pigment produced by the relief bruise chemistry) with the marks. Perhaps a good, but irrelevant, cleaning was tried at the end or start of the day with kerosene or other solvent. Quicker turns of the press wheel, or slower. Maybe they even noticed that a hotter or colder plate (i.e., morning versus afternoon) seemed to matter, or maybe they did not.



Figure 45. The “rust spots” on stamps from Plate 1 Late are an entirely different phenomenon from relief bruises. This is a nice example of Position 91L1L, the triple transfer with one inverted. In addition to the rust spot at bottom, there is also an overall film of blue ink visible at left.

Perhaps the inspectors—and every sheet was inspected fresh off the press—called the flawed work to the printers’ attention, and various checks of the machinery ensued, but to no avail. Perhaps the engravers were called in, and perhaps they struck additional plate proofs to determine the problem. Again, they would have used the finest ink to reveal flaws—fine particulate black ink (with no excess, or any, prussiate of potash). No marks. They might have descended on the poor pressmen to tell them, “It isn’t our plates, it must be your work on the printing press. Look to your own business, gentlemen!”

There is a fascinating further possibility, suggested by the ancient chemists who described the production of Prussian blue pigment, and confirmed quite recently by modern students. In Hebert (1836) it is suggested that once the critical reactions take place, some time may elapse before the pigment obtains its full color. Granzow recounts a recent experiment in which the chemical reactions took weeks to resolve,

confirmed by his original research in the Perkins, Bacon letter book.³⁷ Could it be that not only did the proofers miss the relief bruises because of their black ink, but the pressmen saw their pristine sheets which, only as they were “exposed to the air to dry,” or to the light, began to exhibit the deeper colors from the newly-created pigment, and, thereby, the relief bruises? Is it possible that thousands or millions of stamps could have been created which actually darkened over weeks and exhibited new, remarkable features without any hint beforehand?

That would be remarkable, indeed. TC quality control, and Post Office Department inspectors, might not have seen relief bruises because they were not yet there, or not as strong as they would develop in time. However, the carefully wrapped packages used to ship the finished stamps may have hidden the slow continuation of their passengers’ chemical process. Essentially the stamps were becoming “more” blue as they awaited delivery, or as they sat in the post offices. It may well be that the first people to see relief bruises were postal clerks selling the stamps days or weeks after they were made. And they were interested in satisfying demand, not complaining about unintended pigment.

The correspondence in the Travers papers between the firm and the Post Office Department does not appear to mention this issue; the focus was on getting sufficient deliv-

eries of stamps. We cannot see the internal TC notes (due to their presumed destruction in the late 19th century) which might well have highlighted the problem, if it had indeed been brought to their attention. But it would have been wonderful for us to watch the stamps slowly materialize the relief bruises, if in fact that is what happened.

This remarkable feature of the 1¢ stamps, which can now be catalogued with its many other fascinating characteristics, make it what Ashbrook described (even though he did not fully appreciate relief bruises or their remarkable origins) as “the most interesting stamp in the whole catalogue, for there is no other stamp among all those issued by the U.S. Post Office Department that offers such a wide field for specialists and philatelic study.”³⁸

This philatelic study depended on evidence in the form of large multiples of the 1¢ stamp. While singles certainly show relief bruises, it is by seeing multiples of the stamp that we can draw conclusions about the circumstances of their emergence and note the variety of their appearance across the panes. While reconstructing the positions of a stamp’s pane depended on, at least at some point in the past, overlapping multiples (or, conveniently, panes) to prove the plating of the positions to certain locations, this investigation would not have derived some important conclusions, such as the notable variability of the appearance of relief bruises across the panes, without large multiples.

The most striking of all the multiples used here is the block of eight stamps that was illustrated as Figures 2 and 25 in the previous installments and was featured on the cover of *Chronicle* 249, in which this study began. The history of that block, for it has a history which links the earliest philatelists to today’s students, is the final remarkable feature presented in this study.

Ashbrook described a block of 80 Plate 7 stamps as “no doubt the finest Type V block in existence.” It was loaned to him by Senator Ernest R. Ackerman of New Jersey, more than 20 years before the 1938 publication of Ashbrook’s book.³⁹ Ashbrook noted that he had been able to make enlarged photographs of “this marvelous block,” and that it was of “great assistance” to him because it was “a very fine ‘engraving’, and [possessed] beautiful color. The block had every plating mark; plate scratches, mottles, etc., plainly recorded.”

Only recently have the Ashbrook archives been made publicly available through the efforts of the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society, and now those nearly-century-old enlargements are available to all. Figure 46 shows Ashbrook’s photo of the current block of eight stamps when it was still part of the marvelous Ackerman block of 80.⁴⁰ The block of 80 was broken up in ensuing years, as perhaps was inevitable for such an item.

The stamps shown in Figures 3, 7, 12, 13, 27, 28 and 29 are other examples from the original Ackerman block from the right pane of Plate 7. They are part of two surviving blocks, one of 12 stamps from the upper right portion of the block, and the other of 16 stamps which includes the full plate number and imprint of the Ackerman block. They all fit together, and with the block of eight on their left they comprise 36 of the 80 stamps in the original Ackerman block.

A final journey

The block of eight has still more history which brings it to the present day. The late Calvin Beegle, a life member of this Society, became a Route Agent soon after acquiring the Neinken book. He was a careful student who sought to obtain examples of each of the Type V/Va positions. Cal owned the block pictured in Figure 2. His plating included singles, but he also acquired lovely multiples, often with original gum. Cal placed these items on quadrille-ruled pages, one for each quarter of a pane. Each example was placed in a cut-to-size Hawid-type mount with a black background and a clear cover. He meticulously placed a small rectangle of white, adhesive label on the open edges of the mounts to close them and keep the stamps from falling out, and then used a black marker to color over the portion of the label that extended onto the black mount so as to be pleasing to the eye.



Figure 46. Ashbrook's enlargement of a portion of the Ackerman block of 80 stamps from the right pane of Plate 7 shows that the block of eight stamps shown in Figures 2 and 25 was once part of it. This photo is from the Ashbrook archive that was recently added to the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society website.

These pages were also filled with small, pencil writing documenting his discussions and interactions with “MLN,” Mortimer L. Neinken, the author of our standard text, about marks or features of mutual interest. On the page which houses what is most appropriately termed the “Beegle block,” a neighboring block has such a note next to it. The Beegle block of eight extraordinary stamps has no note and nothing to call it out especially, except its remarkable features. If it had arrived in a dealer’s hands, it might well have been broken into singles, but it landed in Cal’s hands. Lucky block.

Cal reached out some years ago to dispose of his unique holdings, and the author was able to obtain the Beegle block and many other items.⁴¹ While the author has a number of reconstructions of the 1¢ stamp from names renowned, such as Ashbrook and Ishikawa, as well as the unique panes and most of the large multiples of the plates discussed herein, there is a special affection for Cal’s effort. As one ages, one experiences many declines, and sometimes they are accompanied by appreciation for what one has left and for what one can still do. You see, Cal sought to get his material into the hands of then-young students of the stamp. In a bitter irony, Calvin Beegle was going blind, and would soon not be able to work on his cherished collection, nor even appreciate what he had spent so much time and effort on. Some years after passing along some stamps to the author, our fellow Route Agent and Classics Society life member passed on his membership and route to others.⁴² He will not read these words, but he would have loved them. With deep appreciation, this article is dedicated to his memory. Thanks, Cal.

Acknowledgements

As indicated in endnote 23, the author presented initial findings concerning some aspects of the first installment at an *ad hoc* seminar in March, 1998. Attendees included the following Route Agents: Bernard Biales, E. Fritz, W. Wilson Hulme, Rob Lund, Elliot H. Omiya, Mark D. Rogers and K.G. Tiara. In addition, fellow Route Agents Richard Celler, Robert Hegland, Steven M. Roth and Jerome S. Wagshal provided valuable feedback and encouragement at that time. More recently, Society president John Barwis commended Granzow’s book and related articles to the author. Barwis and several other Route Agents saw a binder exhibit of the medallion relief bruises in 2013 and 2014, and provided helpful



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questions and encouragement. More recently, Route Agents James Allen and Gerald L. Moss reviewed a late draft of this article and provided invaluable advice and comments. It is important to note that the author did not use all the proffered advice, and so is solely responsible for errors and omissions.


Endnotes

31. See Endnotes 1, 12 and 16 and their associated discussions on “mottles” in the text.
32. Bacon, *ibid.*
33. *Ibid.*
34. Gerald L. Moss, “Steel Used to Print the First Two Issues of U.S. Stamps,” *Chronicle* 197 (February 2003), also 198 (May 2003) and 199 (August 2003); and Moss, “New Views of the 1-Cent ‘Big Crack,’” *American Philatelist*, Nov. 1999, pp. 1062-70. Apparently, Moss was the only author since Ashbrook who discussed the “mottles” and “blisters,” but he addressed them as evidence regarding the manufacture and hardening of the plates rather than as to their cause(s). See Moss, *Chronicle* 198, pp. 126-127.
35. Luke Hebert, “Blue (Prussian)” in *The Engineer’s and Mechanic’s Encyclopedia*, London: Thomas Kelly, 1836.
36. Gary W. Granzow, “Chapter 9: The Printing Step: Inks” in *Line Engraved Security Printing: The Methods of Perkins Bacon, 1790-1935, Banknotes and Postage Stamps*, London: Royal Philatelic Society London, 2012, pp. 159-162, 165-166.
37. Hebert states, “. . . a precipitate of Prussian blue is immediately formed, which is washed repeatedly to free it from the sulphate of potash; after which it is put into bags and pressed, and then exposed to the air to dry, during which process it assumes a deeper colour, . . .” Also, Granzow, *op. cit.*, pg. 163.
38. Ashbrook, *op. cit.*, pg. 1.
39. Ashbrook, *op. cit.*, pg. 273.
40. The Ashbrook archive, 2015. Photo labeled: ASH_Black_Binder_1-107.jpg. in U.S. Philatelic Classics Society website. Available from www.uspcs.org/ashbrook-archives/ashbrook-black-binders/.
41. Gerald Moss relates that he, the late Route Agent Eugene Reed, Jr. and Beegle used to gather for coffee after nearby sales in Pennsylvania to share their reactions, ideas, and thoughts, as stamp collecting students often did, and still do today.
42. Calvin Warren Beegle (1923-2004) lived in Pennsylvania. He was Life Member 121 of the USPCS, in which he was a Route Agent for 30 years. ■



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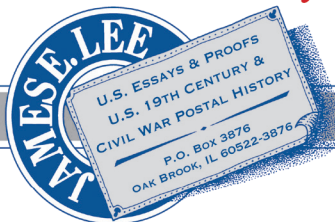
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LINKING 3¢ WASHINGTON ESSAYS TO THEIR PATENTS

JAN HOFMEYR AND JAMES E. LEE

Introduction

The 1860s were a period of great invention, as United States postal authorities looked for a stamp that would be impossible to reuse. From stamps that exploded to the widely used “grills,” nothing was beyond imagining—or patenting.

There are many gaps in philatelists’ knowledge of the links between the patent essays and their patents. The aim of this article is to improve the philatelic understanding of these links. We base our remarks and suggestions on a combination of experiment with a careful reading of the patent documents. Our focus is on the 3¢ Washington stamp of 1861-69 because that stamp was the subject of most of the experiments.

The early Loewenberg essays

Henry Loewenberg immigrated to the United States from Prussia in the early part of the 19th century. As a young man, he worked in the garment industry in New York. He was a prodigious inventor whose early patents mostly involved clothing. Along the way, however, he realized that his ideas could also be used to prevent the reuse of stamps.



Figure 1. Examples of Scott 79-E65P5, commonly known as “Loewenburg decals,” imperforate block in brown red (79-E65P5a) and imprint block in rose pink, perforated 12 (79E65P5b). Both blocks are printed on the reverse side on transparent paper.

We begin with an examination of the first essays that resulted from the use of Loewenberg's ideas. These are listed in Scott's *Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps and Covers* as 79-E65P5 and 79-E66P5. Figure 1 shows an imperforate block of four in brown red (79-E65P5a) and a perforated bottom imprint block in rose pink (79-E65P5b). Both are printed on the reverse side on transparent paper.

Edward Mason, the first serious student of United States stamp essays, described these Loewenberg essays as follows: "... printed types of the 1861 issue on the back of a transparent paper or goldbeaters' skin, gummed on the impression; any attempt to remove leaves the colored design adhering to the envelope and the paper comes off plain."¹

Mason dates these essays to 1863. Some 30 years later, Clarence Brazer repeated this description, but put the date at April, 1864. Brazer called them "decalcomanias,"² a French word that in English is nowadays usually shortened to "decal." The question we posed to ourselves is: to which of Loewenberg's many patents should these essays be attributed?

Loewenberg registered Letters Patent No. 40,489 for a "Process for Transferring Prints &c." on November 3, 1863. This process wasn't specifically for stamps, being a general method to transfer designs from transparent paper to a surface—in other words, a decal. Among potential surfaces, Loewenberg included "...paper, cloth, glass, wood, or other material."³ The patent's defining characteristic is that the design should be printed on the back of transparent paper, under the gum. It must therefore have been the patent that Mason referred to in his description "gummed on the impression."

In 1864, Loewenberg received two additional patents: 42,207 (April 5) for an "Improvement In Postage and Revenue Stamps;" and 45,057 (November 15) for an "Improvement in Adhesive Postage and Revenue Stamps." These are the first of Loewenberg's patents specifically for stamps.

Patent 42,207 involves coating the front of the paper with a substance, printing the design on the coated front; and then gumming the back. This patent was supposed to produce a stamp that could not be cleaned for reuse. The idea was that the coating would both be vulnerable to cleaning and prevent the ink from reaching the paper. Any attempt to clean a cancel off the stamp should result in damage to the coating and therefore, to the design. Loewenberg suggested starch for the coating.

Patent 45,057 revisits the idea of printing the design on the back of transparent paper but this time gumming the paper first and then printing on the gum. Any attempt to lift the stamp off an envelope should cause the gum to dissolve. The design would then dissolve with the gum. No method was specified to make the paper transparent.

Patents 40,489 and 45,057 were supposed to prevent reuse by making it difficult to lift a stamp off an envelope without damaging or destroying the stamp. Patent 42,207 was supposed to make a used stamp impossible to clean. Strictly speaking, only patent 40,489 is for a decal.

Let's now look more closely at the essays in Figure 1. Since Brazer these have been universally described as "Loewenberg decalcomanias." But are they? We'll consider the imperfs first.

While it may not be evident from the Figure 1 images, these stamps are printed on the reverse side of transparent paper. When viewed against a light, the printed sides show a sheen, as if gummed. The problem is that it's hard to tell whether the printing is under the gum or over it. If the former, then we have a decal (patent 40,489); if the latter, then we don't (patent 45,057).

To find out which it is, we designed a simple test: Soak one of the stamps in water for an extended period (four hours). After soaking, test the stamp to see if it can be



Figure 2. A test to determine if the stamp image is printed on top of a layer of gum. At left: the subject stamp. At right, the same stamp, after soaking four hours in water. Conclusion: no discernable differences. The image did not wash off; therefore, it was not printed on top of a layer of gum.



stuck to an envelope. If it can't be, then there is no gum. If the design is still intact, then the essay must be based on patent 40,489 because patent 45,057 makes it impossible to have a stamp that has a design but no gum.

The images in Figure 2 show the result of our experiment. At left is the subject stamp, and at right is the same stamp, dried out after an extended soaking. There are no

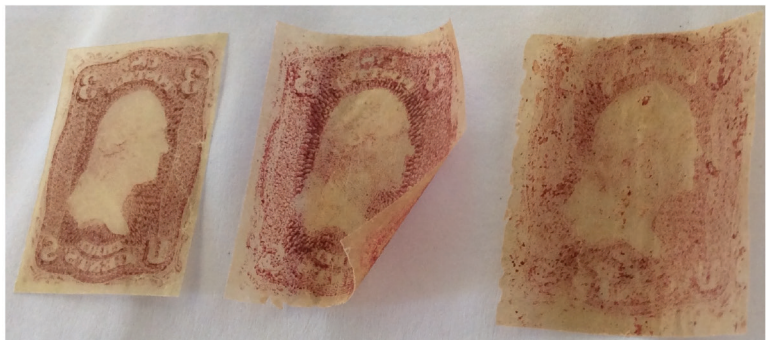
Figure 3A. Testing for the presence of gum on the printed surface. At right: Stamps from three different sheets, before an attempt to stick them onto paper.



Figure 3B. Thoroughly moistened, the stamps are stuck face down to a piece of blank paper. The dampening shows as gray blotches in the scan.



Figure 3C. As they dry, the stamps spontaneously peel away from the paper. This strongly suggests the conclusion that the printed surfaces were never gummed.



discernable differences. The design remained intact and all attempts to stick the stamp to an envelope failed. However, we noticed that the stamp, once dried, still had a sheen on the printed side. This raised the intriguing possibility that the stamp might have had no gum to start with—and that the sheen that looks like gum had been produced by the substances that were used to make the paper transparent.

The images in Figure 3 show the results of further attempts to stick three stamps, cut from three different partial sheets of imperforate essays, onto an envelope. In these instances we thoroughly wet the printed surfaces, to try to break the surface of any gum that might be present. Then we pressed the wet surfaces to paper. In the result, none of the stamps stayed stuck. As shown in the in Figure 3C, the stamps peeled off the paper spontaneously as they dried. The evidence suggests that these imperforate Loewenberg essays may never have been gummed.

In summary: the imperforate Loewenberg essays printed from the 1861 plates appear to have been tests of intaglio printing on Loewenberg's transparent paper. Although early experts like Mason and Brazer thought that the stamps were “gummed over the design,” our tests suggest that they may never have been gummed. They are therefore partial tests of patent 40,489. Perhaps the National Bank Note Company (NBNC), which did the printing, was so disappointed with the results of the printing that they never bothered to add the gum.

Let's now consider the perforated essays. Like the imperfs, these are printed on transparent paper and they tend to show substantial cracking. But unlike the imperfs, the paper for these essays is thickly coated on the printed (front) side. The coating shows a degree of flaking that far exceeds anything that can be found on the imperfs. We decided to take advantage of this to separate a flake from the paper. Figure 4 shows the result. At center is the flake that we removed. The image at left shows the stamp before the flake was removed, and the image at right shows the stamp afterwards. The flake has a semi-transparent, milky white appearance. And as Figure 4 shows very clearly, much of the printed design comes away quite cleanly with the flake.

We know of no gum from the period that would look or behave like this. Gum generally turns brown with age and would be difficult, if not impossible, to lift. The removability of the flake suggests that the paper on the perforated essays is coated with a substance like starch and that the design is printed on this coating. Thus it seems that the perforated essays are an early test of intaglio printing on starch-coated, transparent



Figure 4. Exploring the surface of 79-E65P5b, commonly described as a “Loewenberg decal, perf 12.” At left, the stamp before surgery. At center: a flake, carefully removed from the coated surface. At right, the remaining stamp minus the flake. Clearly, the design has been printed on a coating. This must be patent 42,207. It is not a decal.



Figure 5. Examples of the Loewenberg essays that Scott catalogs as 79E-8, one orange brown (at left) and one scarlet. These essays are printed on transparent paper; gum and design both appear on the same side, in reverse. After moistening the design sides, the authors stuck both successfully to paper, proving that they are gummed.

paper. They should therefore be attributed to patent 42,207. Note that this would then be consistent with Brazer's April, 1864 date. But these essays should not be described as decals.

In conclusion: what we appear to have in these essays are incomplete tests based on Loewenberg's patents 40,489 and 42,207, respectively. In the first (imperforate) case, intaglio prints were created on transparent paper, but the resulting stamps appear to be ungummed. It would therefore be correct to describe these as incomplete decals. In the second case, in spite of the fact that the essays were created on transparent paper, the perforated stamps appear to have been printed on a starch coating and should not be described as decals.

The Wycoff patent

Almost two years to the day after Loewenberg registered his patent 42,207, William Wycoff, a native of New York, registered patent 53,722 (April 3, 1866) for printing stamps on a coated paper. In order to receive his patent, he had to explain how his idea differed from Loewenberg's. His explanation gives us an interesting historical insight into the problems that the NBNC experienced with the early Loewenberg essays and is worth quoting: "...it is very difficult to obtain a good impression upon a glazed surface or indeed upon any glutinous surface... Stamps made thereby... are sticky or too brittle. The preparation of the material... is... expensive... the material receives the impression poorly, the sheets... when printed are apt to stick together or break in pieces...."⁴

The later Loewenberg essays

We've seen that the early Loewenberg essays should probably be attributed to his patents 40,489 and 42,207. We've also seen that they suffered from significant problems. It is therefore not surprising that Loewenberg proposed printing on the gum (patent 45,057) just a year after registering his original patent for decals. It would be years, however, before the NBNC returned to Loewenberg's ideas.

The catalyst seems to have been NBNC's experiments with surface printing. Brazer dates the production of the later essays to 1867 though he apparently continues to date the patent to April, 1864.⁵ These are the familiar essays (Figures 5-7) that Scott broadly cate-



Figure 6. Two additional stamps cut from the same sheets as the Figure 5 stamps, before (top) and after soaking them in warm water for about an hour (below). After soaking, the printed side of each stamp was lightly wiped with a swab of absorbent cotton. As these photos indicate, The design slid off the orange brown stamp, but the scarlet design remained intact. This suggests that the scarlet design was printed directly onto the paper. The orange brown stamp, by contrast, appears to have been printed on the gum.

gorizes under the number 79-E8, described as “Washington vignette. Printed in reverse on back of transparent paper, reads correctly from front. Plate essays from sheets of 25.”

Scott lists four variants of the 79-E8 essays. Our focus here is on 79-E8a, the variety described as “plate on onion-skin paper, imperf., gummed,” which Scott recognizes in 24 colors. Like the earlier essays, the paper on these essays appears to be gummed. But after our experience with the earlier essays, we began by testing the 79-E8a essays for gum. Figure 5 shows two stamps from two different sheets, one scarlet (at right) and one orange brown. Note that these items are transparent; gum and design both appear on the same side, in reverse. After moistening the design sides, we stuck both successfully to paper, proving that they are gummed. For purposes of identifying the patent on which they’re based, the critical question then becomes: are they gummed over or under the design?

Figure 6 shows two additional stamps cut from the same sheets before and after soaking them in warm water for about an hour. After soaking, we wiped the printed side of each stamp lightly with a swab of absorbent cotton. As the bottom images in Figure 6 show, the design literally slid off the orange brown stamp, but not the scarlet one. One can wipe the design off the scarlet stamp, but that takes a lot of rubbing. What appears to have happened is that the soaking softened the gum on both stamps sufficiently for it to be wiped away, but in the case of the scarlet stamp, the design stayed fast. This suggests that the scarlet design was printed directly onto the paper. The orange brown stamp, by contrast, appears to have been printed on the gum.

To complete the test, we returned to the two stamps that had been stuck to paper (Figure 5) and steamed them off. The results are shown in Figure 7. Both stamps came away from the paper. But while the scarlet stamp left only the barest trace of itself on the paper, the orange brown stamp was wrecked, leaving much of its design behind.

What distinguishes patents 40,489 and 45,057 is the order of printing and gumming.



Figure 7. At top: the two 79E-8 essays shown in Figure 5, after they were steamed off the papers to which they had earlier been affixed. Both stamps came away from the paper. But while the scarlet stamp left only the barest trace of itself on the paper (beneath), the orange brown stamp was wrecked, and left a fair fraction of its design attached to the paper from which it had been removed.

The scarlet essay behaves as if gummed over the design. It can be stuck down, but the design is color-fast, even after wiping the gum away. Thus the scarlet essay (at left in Figure 7) appears to be a complete example of the patent 40,489 process, but the decal idea hasn't worked. The orange brown stamp, on the other hand, appears to be a complete example of patent 45,057: it is gummed and sticks to paper. But the gum softens when wet; and the design comes away easily when wiped. The problem for collectors is that one can't tell which patent applies without damaging the subject stamp.

The safety network overprints: Abram Gibson and Emanuel Harmon

While Loewenberg's ideas would have resulted in the destruction of used stamps, Abram Gibson of Worcester, Massachusetts and Emanuel Harmon of Washington, D.C. proposed an idea that would have preserved the stamp's original design. Their idea would come to be called a "safety network overprint."

Examples are shown in Figure 8. These are essays of a category classified by Scott as 79-E26d, -e, -f and -g. They consist of 3¢ 1861 stamp images printed in various colors



Figure 8. The most common safety network overprint is Scott 79-E26. The two examples at top show green and rose red stamp designs overprinted with a gray-blue network of lines. The pair below is Scott 79E26e, violet stamp with gray tan overprint. The upper right corner of this pair was lightly wiped with moistened cotton, which removed some of the stamp design (as shown in the enlargement) while the network overprinting remained undisturbed.

using intaglio printing. The stamp images are overprinted by light networks of wavy lines in various colors ranging from gray blue through tan to light brown and pale green. The network lines are surface printed and there are three types. These have been described in an on-line research paper written by the authors in collaboration with 1861 specialist Richard Drews.⁶

Gibson registered his Letters Patent 41,118 for an “Improvement in Postage and Other Stamps” on January 5, 1864. The key idea was that the stamp should consist of a combination of intaglio printing in indelible ink and surface printing in fugitive ink. Gibson suggested that the main design be printed by the intaglio method and then over-printed by light lines using surface printing. This would result in “a light net-work, which will not obliterate or seriously impair” the original design.⁷ Any attempt to clean a cancelled stamp should result in the network being wiped away with the cancellation.

As far as we can tell, this is the first mention of a network overprint in the patent literature.

Just over a month later, Harmon registered patent 41,505 (February 9, 1864) for

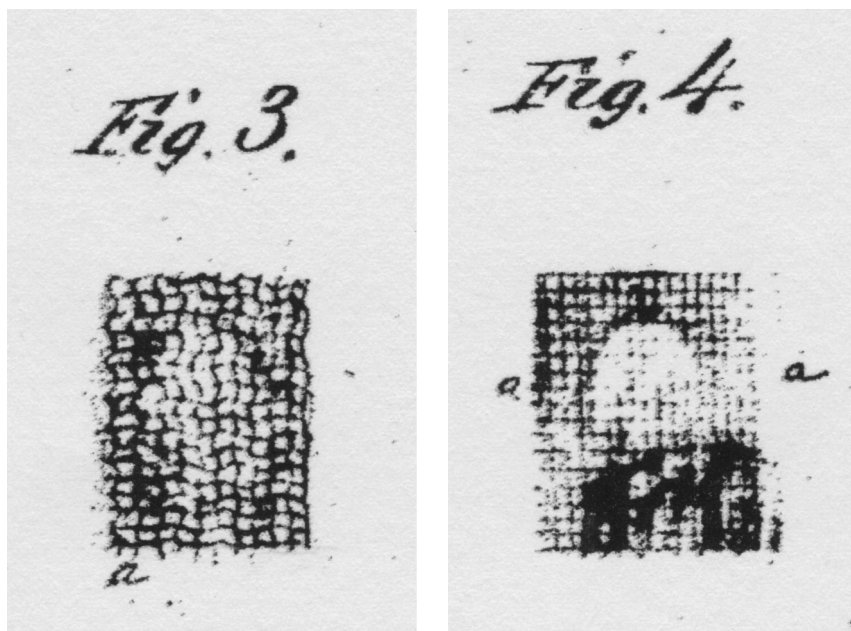


Figure 9. Diagrams of what Emanuel Harmon had in mind, taken from his letters patent (41,505). On the left: “uncancelled” and at right, “cancelled.” The resemblance of these images to the network overprinting characterizing Scott types Scott 79-E26 (see Figure 8) is unmistakable.

“Postage and Revenue Stamps.” It also calls for a network overprint. Harmon knew about Gibson’s patent and he noted that people might think that the two patents were the same. He argued, however, that his idea was superior to Gibson’s because it would result in damage to the overprint no matter what solvent (water, acid, alkali) was used to clean the stamp. Harmon’s idea would achieve this by using an ink for the overprint that was identical to the ink used for cancelling. By contrast, Gibson had merely said that the ink should be fugitive. This is the defining difference between the two patents.

In his patent application, Harmon included images of what he had in mind. Two of these are reproduced in Figure 9. Their resemblance to the essays in Figure 8 is unmistakable. The question then becomes: to which patent should these essays be assigned?

Our observations suggest that the catalogued safety network overprints conform more closely to the Gibson than to the Harmon patent. This is mainly because the overprints are printed in a range of colors that weren’t used for cancelling. Moreover, as shown in Figure 8, we were able to wipe away part of the intaglio-printed stamp design with water, while the network remained intact. While Gibson’s patent is quite vague both about what should be fugitive and what he means by “fugitive,” Harmon is very explicit about the design being indelible and the overprint being a cancelling ink.

To conclude: our analysis supports those who assign these essays to Gibson’s patent, 41,118.

What of Harmon’s patent? It was the first to actually illustrate a safety network overprint, so it would be a pity if it was never tried. Our research suggests that it was tried—in the odd items that have come to be called the “bedspring” essays, examples of which are shown in Figure 10.

Very little is known about these essays. They are found on both the 1¢ Franklin and the 3¢ Washington designs, but few have survived. We know of three of the 3¢ examples

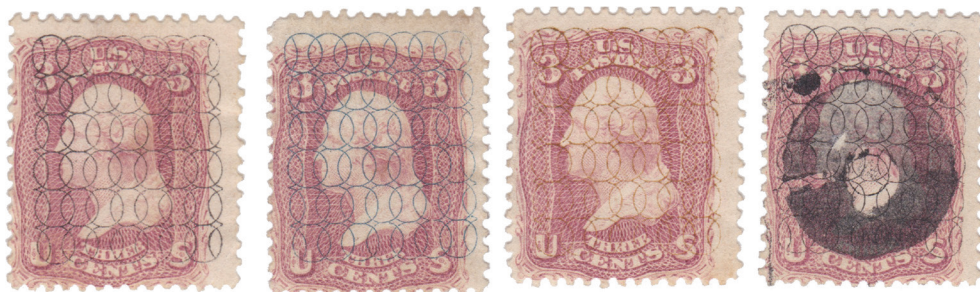


Figure 10. Four examples of “Bedspring” essays from the Hofmeyr collection, unlisted by Scott. The uncanceled stamps at left are gummed and overprinted in black, blue and red, common colors for cancelling inks, suggesting the Harmon patent. The used copy at right, not gummed, is cancelled by a patent killer employed at Buffalo.

that are cancelled. While the uncanceled examples are gummed, the cancelled examples have no gum. One of the cancelled examples is on piece from Washington, D.C. (Harmon’s home town). The other two both bear the mark of a patent canceller that was used in Buffalo, New York, in 1863-65. Examples of these “bedspring” essays, which are not listed in the Scott catalog, are shown in Figure 10. The example at right also shows the Buffalo patent canceller.

These essays conform to the specifications of the Harmon patent in a number of ways. First, they combine intaglio with surface printing, with the design in intaglio and the overprint, surface printed. Second, the overprinting inks match the colors most commonly used to cancel stamps: black, blue, and red. In contrast to the Scott 79-E26, these essays are not known overprinted in any other colors.

A third factor is that the dates of the cancelled essays are broadly consistent with the date of the patent. Although the Washington-cancelled example predates the patent by about a year, we know that experiments sometimes predated the registration and use of patents. The well-known “grills” are an example. Grill experiments are thought to have been conducted from about 1865, yet the patent was only registered in November, 1867. By that time, the A-grill had already been used as postage for some months. The Harmon patent could therefore have been registered after the experiments.

One last point: while the uncanceled copies of the bedspring essays are gummed, the cancelled copies are ungummed or stuck to a piece. Since the date of the patent is broadly consistent with the dates of cancellation, this raises the intriguing possibility that the stamps may have seen limited distribution for postal testing. But no cover has ever been found.

The Thorpe patent for double printing

Although William Thorpe’s patent dates to 1869, we’ve decided to discuss it out of chronological sequence since some of the essays attributed to it involve safety network printing.

Thorpe registered his Letters Patent 95,624 for an “Improved mode of applying Ink of different characters so as to print Safety, Revenue, and other Stamps” on October 5, 1869. The defining characteristics of his patent are: first, the stamp is double-printed in two inks, one of which should be sensitive to acid and the other to alkali. The inks should not be water soluble. Second, it should be described as “under-printed” because Thorpe intended the key design elements (“letters, figures, and vignette”) to be printed “upon and after the ground color.” And third, the Thorpe patent is as much about preventing counterfeits as preventing reuse. Thorpe describes “a commingling of tints and colors” that would make counterfeiting difficult.⁸



Figure 11: Two examples of the classic Thorpe essays (Scott 79-E31 types), with the black-green Liberty Head design printed over simple repetitive background designs. At left is 79-E31h (red “X” underprint). At right is 79-E31b (repeating “ONE” underprint in dull yellow green).

Perhaps the best way to summarize Thorpe’s patent is that it would involve a double-printing that was intended to cause the “commingling” of colors using two inks, one of which dissolved in acid and the other in alkali; and that the detailed design elements should be on top. Figure 11 shows two examples of the best known essays attributed to Thorpe’s patent. These are the familiar Liberty Head essays of the late 1860s, under-printed with a variety of repetitive patterns. Scott lists these as 79-E31a-h, designating eight underprint patterns.

We see no reason to dispute the attribution of these essays to Thorpe’s patent. His patent description, however, leads to the intriguing possibility that some of the other double-printed Liberty head essays should also be attributed to his patent.

The image at left in Figure 12 shows the Liberty Head design in carmine, printed on a white wove paper that has been surface printed in yellow. Scott lists this as 79-E30k. This essay is consistent with Thorpe’s idea that the design be printed on a ground color. Other examples include carmine on green (uncatalogued by Scott) and on deep orange (Scott 79-E30i, j).

The middle image in Figure 12 shows the rare black design printed directly on scarlet (Scott 79-E30u). Again, this is consistent with Thorpe’s intentions. This essay well illustrates Thorpe’s idea that the colors would “comingle,” making it difficult to counterfeit. The combination of black image printed directly over a scarlet image creates a muddy dark brown. The corner enlargement in Figure 12 shows how the two different imprints contribute to this effect.



Scarlet underprint shows beneath the black scrollwork

Figure 12. At left, Liberty Head design in carmine, printed on white wove paper surface printed in yellow. Scott lists this as 79-E30k. This essay is consistent with Thorpe’s proposal that the design be printed on a background color. At center, black stamp image printed directly over the same image in scarlet (79-E30u), creating a muddy dark brown. The corner enlargement shows the two color components. At right, one of the “rainbow” essays (79-E30o), which the authors argue should not be attributed to the Thorpe patent, though it might have been inspired by Thorpe’s ideas.

The case for these as examples of Thorpe's patent could be strengthened by testing the solubility of the inks. But these are rare essays and we were reluctant to put them to the test. At right in Figure 12 is an example of the well-known "rainbow" essays, which Scott lists (as 79-E30o) in an array of transitioning colors. In our view, these essays should not be attributed to the Thorpe patent because Thorpe insisted that the double printing should cover the whole stamp. They are, however, good examples of comingling ink that might make counterfeiting difficult. They could have been inspired by Thorpe's ideas.

Before we leave Thorpe, we should consider whether the overprints that we've attributed to Gibson and Harmon should, instead, be attributed to Thorpe. For a number of reasons, we think not. First, Thorpe's patent involved double printing using one ink that would dissolve in acid and another that would dissolve in alkali. His inks weren't supposed to be water soluble (as, for example, the 79-E26 essays are). Second, Thorpe clearly intended the safety network aspect of the stamps to be an under-print rather than an over-print. He refers repeatedly to what he calls a "ground color" over which the design elements (numbers, letters, vignette) were to be printed. Third, by the time Thorpe registered his patent, NBNC was seldom using the 3¢ 1861 design to test ideas to prevent reuse.

Gibson starch coated paper, Macdonough and Loewenberg ink

Our article ends with a look at a group of essays that have been very poorly described: the so-called "Gibson starch coated paper" essays. Scott lists these in 12 colors as 79-E25c. Examples are shown in Figure 13: pairs in colors Scott describes as pale gray and light blue.

This is one of the most perplexing of patent misattributions. The description in the Scott catalog seems to derive from Brazer, who described these essays (Brazer 83E-Be) as follows: "...on Gibson patent coated opaque white paper generally crinkled. The lathe work design is generally poorly printed."⁹ Brazer in turn refers to Mason (M47f), but it is notable that Mason makes no mention of Gibson or of starch-coated paper.

We can find no patent for starch-coated paper by anyone named Gibson. The only coated paper patents that we can find are those we've already mentioned attributable to Loewenberg and Wyckoff. Close examination under magnification establishes that many of the so-called Gibson essays are, indeed, coated. They must therefore be based on Loewenberg's patent 42,207 or Wyckoff's patent 53,722.

Wyckoff's patent 53,722 for an "Improvement in Postage and Revenue Stamps" came two years after Loewenberg's patent for starch-coated paper. The main difference between his and Loewenberg's patent is that he recommended oxide of zinc (China white) for the coating. As he points out in his patent document, stamps that use oxide of zinc do not suffer from the performance problems encountered with starch.

The essays illustrated in Figure 13 suffer from many of the performance issues noted



Figure 13. So-called "Gibson starch coated paper" essays, which Scott lists in 12 colors as 79-E25c. Shown here are pairs in pale gray and light blue. The design wipes away easily under moistened cotton, as evidenced here on the right stamps in each pair.

by Wyckoff. The paper is crinkled and the printed design is not as clear as high standards would demand. In addition, under magnification the surface shows the fine cracking that one would expect from a starch-coated paper. And the design comes away from the paper when wiped—as if one were wiping away a starch coating. This shows clearly on the right stamps of both pairs in Figure 13, where we easily wiped away large portions of “U.S. POSTAGE.”

For these reasons we suggest that these essays are based on Loewenberg’s patent 42,207. Essays based on this patent are known for the 1¢ Franklin stamp. Our research suggests that it was also tried for the surface-printed 3¢ Washington. What these essays definitely aren’t, is “Gibson starch coated.”

As with the essays in Figure 13, the items we show in Figure 14 are often described as “Gibson starch coated.” Based on a superficial examination, one can understand why: the quality of the printing leaves much to be desired. But unlike what we now know to be the Loewenberg starch-coated paper essays, these papers do not crinkle. The question then arises, what are they? In our view, they are probably examples of the Macdonough or Loewenberg patents for sugar-based inks.

James Macdonough was the general manager of the NBNC and prominently associated with stamp production in this era. He has a number of patents to his name. The relevant patent in this case is Patent 52,869 (February 27, 1866) for an “Improvement in the Manufacture of Ink for Printing Postage Stamps.” The defining characteristic of this patent is the proposal that stamps be printed in an ink based on glycerin. An ink of this kind would dissolve in everything—water, oil, acid or alkali. No solvent would be able to clean such stamps without removing the ink too. Because glycerin-based ink is so soluble, Macdonough suggested decreasing solubility by adding gelatin, fish glue, or similar substances.¹⁰

Loewenberg’s Patent 63,733 for an “Improved Compound for Printer’s Ink” followed just over a year later on April 9, 1867. This was also for a sugar-based ink—Loewenberg suggested molasses, honey, or other saccharine matter. Reading the two patents side by side, it’s hard to understand why Loewenberg was granted a patent at all. He describes its potential use for stamps in terms that are identical to Macdonough’s: “This ink is particularly useful for postage or revenue stamps, because if an attempt is made to remove the cancellation mark by any liquid the stamp is destroyed....”¹¹

The essays in Figure 14 show no evidence of starch-coating. Instead the ink glistens as it would if it contained a sugar-based substance. Under magnification, it looks as



Figure 14. These essays are often described as “Gibson starch coated” but they are probably examples of the Macdonough or Loewenberg patents for sugar-based inks. They show no evidence of starch coating and their ink glistens as it would if it contained a sugar-based substance.

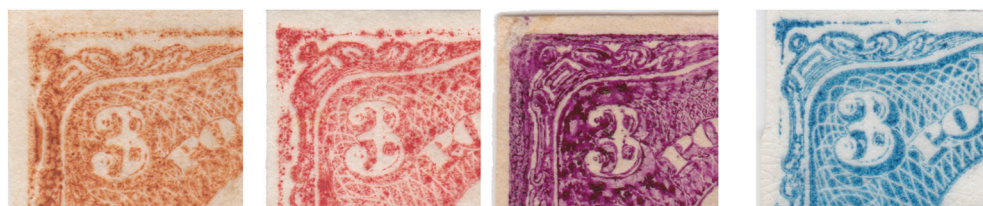


Figure 15. Enlargements of the corners of essays similar to those shown in Figure 14. The printing quality is uneven and smudged when compared with an authentic starch-coated printing, an example of which is shown in the blue enlargement at right.

if it “runs” after printing. Figure 15 shows enlargements of the corners of three such essays. The quality of the printing is uneven and smudged when compared with an authentic starch-coated printing, shown in the enlargement at right.

Also, the two sets of essays in Figures 13 and 14 behave very differently when wiped with damp cotton. In the case of the first, the design comes away cleanly. This is what’s supposed to happen when the stamp is printed on a coating. By contrast, the ink used for the stamps shown in Figure 14 is very sensitive to damp wiping and smudges on the paper when wiped, as shown in the violet example at right.

These considerations suggest that the essays depicted in Figure 14 are based either on the Macdonough or the Loewenberg patent. The fact that Macdonough was the chief executive of the NBNC at that time, and that the Macdonough patent is known to have been tested on the 1¢ Franklin design, would argue for these being examples of the Macdonough patent.

Conclusion

It may be useful to summarize the essays and patents we’ve discussed in this article.

Scott 79-E65P5a: this appears to be an incomplete example of Loewenberg’s decal patent 40,489, printed on transparent paper but left ungummed.

Scott 79-E65P5b: this has been incorrectly described as a Loewenberg decal. It is, instead, an early example of Loewenberg’s patent 42,207, involving intaglio printing on starch-coated paper.

Scott 79-E8a: these are correctly described as decals. Some show characteristics of Loewenberg’s patent 40,489 (printing under gum) while others show characteristics of Loewenberg’s patent 45,057 (printing on the gum). We don’t know how to establish which patent applies without damaging the stamp.

Scott 79-E25c: these aren’t Gibson starch-coated paper. They are Loewenberg starch coated paper. They prove that Loewenberg’s patent for printing on a starch coated paper wasn’t only tested on the 1¢ Franklin but was also tested on the surface-printed 3¢ Washington.

Scott 79-E26: these are examples of Gibson’s patent 41,118 (the safety network overprints). In contrast to Gibson’s suggestion, however, the design appears to have been printed in water-soluble fugitive ink while the overprint is indelible.

The “bedspring” essays: these are uncatalogued. But they conform to the specifications of Harmon’s patent 41,505. They date from a period that is consistent with the Harmon patent; and the overprint has so far been found only in colors commonly used for cancellation.

Scott 79-E31: examples of the Thorpe patent for what Thorpe called “double printing.” There is no reason to question this attribution.

Scott 79-E30i, j, k; and Scott 79-E31u: additional essays that may be examples of Thorpe’s patent. It’s important to note that Thorpe didn’t specifically mention “network”

printing. His patent is for “double printing.” These essays are all examples of double printing. The solubility of their inks by acids or alkalis could be tested to strengthen the case for their attribution.

Incorrectly catalogued as Scott 79-E25c: these appear to be essays printed with sugar-based ink (Macdonough patent 52,869; Loewenberg 63,733). Since the 1¢ Franklin is known with Macdonough ink, we suggest the Macdonough patent for these as well.

Many essays don’t suffer from serious misattribution. Examples include: the Francis’s patent 48,389 for paper that stains when wet (June 27, 1865); Bowlsby’s patent 51,782 for tabbed stamps (December 26, 1865); Loewenberg’s patent 53,081 for paper that stains and binds the print more tightly to the paper when wet (March 6, 1866); Steel’s patent 70,147 for the grilled stamps (October 22, 1867); Sturgeon’s patent 71,157 for the use of invisible ink (June 10, 1868); Steel’s patent 86,952 for stamps printed on what he called “blotting paper” (February 16, 1869); and Spencer’s patent 98,031 for perforated stamps (December 21, 1869).

We hope that this article goes some way to increasing the accuracy of the patent attributions of the essays we’ve discussed. We would welcome additional insights and further testing to confirm, contradict or improve on our work.

Endnotes

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2. Clarence W. Brazer, *Essays for US Adhesive Postage Stamps* (Quarterman Publications, Lawrence, Mass., 1977) pg. 46.
3. Henry Loewenberg, Letters Patent No. 40,489: <http://pdfpiw.uspto.gov/piw?Docid=40489&idkey=NONE&homeurl=http%3A%252F%252Fpatft.uspto.gov%252Fnethtml%252FPPTO%252Fpating.htm>
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8. William Thorpe, Letters Patent No. 95,624: <http://pdfpiw.uspto.gov/piw?Docid=95624&idkey=NONE&homeurl=http%3A%252F%252Fpatft.uspto.gov%252Fnethtml%252FPPTO%252Fpating.htm>
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11. Henry Loewenberg, Letters Patent No. 63,733: <http://pdfpiw.uspto.gov/piw?Docid=63733&idkey=NONE&homeurl=http%3A%252F%252Fpatft.uspto.gov%252Fnethtml%252FPPTO%252Fpating.htm> ■

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CONFEDERATE PATRIOTIC ENVELOPE USED IN ENGLAND AND SOME REMARKS ABOUT CONFEDERATE PATRIOTIC COVERS

JAMES W. MILGRAM, M.D.

I have written a number of articles in *The Confederate Philatelist* about Confederate patriotic designs and where they were printed.¹ The largest number of designs are not known postally used; they were printed in the North for collectors. To these must be added a number of seven-star flag designs that apparently did not get imported into the South in time for postal usage and survive only as unused envelopes.

For years there has been controversy about when the covers for collectors were made. Many students have said they were produced after the war. But I have held that they were made when the patriotic stationery craze was in full bloom and that is 1861.

Figure 1 shows an unused envelope with Confederate flags and shield with the seal of Virginia as a Confederate state. It must have been printed after Virginia joined because the symbols show 11 stars. Virginia was the eighth state to join the Confederacy. Arkansas, North Carolina and Tennessee all followed. Thus, any flag that shows eight stars or more must have been created after Virginia joined the Confederacy.

Because of similarities to many Union patriotic covers, I have been of the opinion that many of these red and blue covers were printed by James Magee in Philadelphia. A large

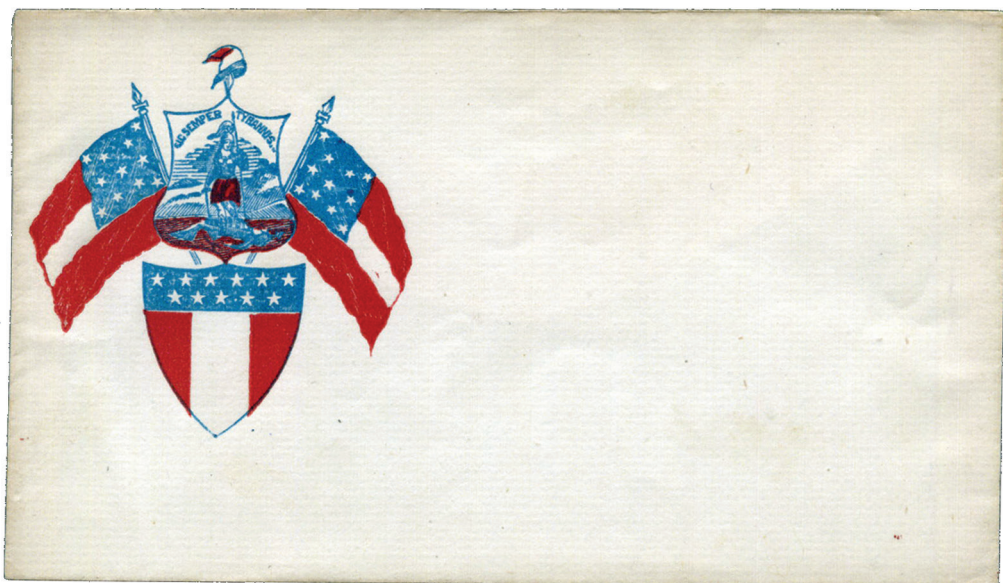


Figure 1. Unused patriotic cover with two flags showing 11 stars, a shield also showing 11 stars, and the seal of the State of Virginia. This design is a northern printing.



Figure 2. Unused patriotic cover depicting Jefferson Davis, crossed cannons and 10-star Confederate flags. Black text refers to Davis and Stephens and there is a blue title over the image. Illustration courtesy The Library Company of Philadelphia.



Figure 3. Unused patriotic cover showing a standing soldier next to a camp scene with two Confederate flags. The text is in three colors. This design is a northern printing.

number of unused Magee patriotic covers are in the collection of The Library Company of Philadelphia (the institution founded by Benjamin Franklin) dating from their acquisition of a huge holding in the 1880s.

One of these is shown in Figure 2. This is probably a Magee design and shows the portrait of Jefferson Davis used on most of these covers. I have never seen this particular text on another cover. Note that the two flags contain 10 stars, so this cover, like the cover in Figure 1, was printed after Virginia joined the Confederacy.

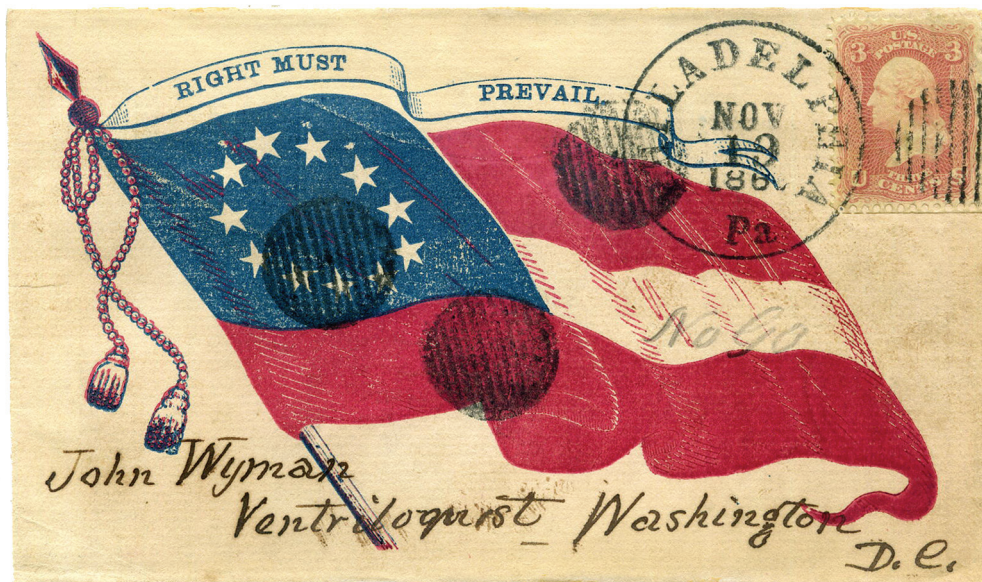


Figure 4. Patriotic all-over design of an 11-star Confederate flag, postmarked “PHILADELPHIA Pa. NOV 19 1862” and addressed to Washington. The Philadelphia postmaster applied three killers on the flag design and wrote “no go” over middle stripe.

Another northern printing is shown in Figure 3. This shows the same camp scene that is commonly seen on pro-Union covers, both used and unused, printed in northern patriotic colors. The Figure 3 cover also has an unusual third color, yellow. Many of the northern-printed Confederate covers show black lettering over red and blue designs. Violet was used on other designs.

Figure 4, another likely Magee creation, shows an 11-star design that exists in violet and, more rarely, the red and blue shown here. Without question, this fabulous cover was postally used in Philadelphia in the fall of 1862. The Philadelphia circular datestamp reads “NOV 19, 1862.” At this point in the war, this bold symbol of southern patriotism did not pass through the mails unnoticed. The Philadelphia postmaster struck three grids over the Confederate flag and wrote “no go” on the white stripe. Postally used covers such as this are unarguable evidence that the so-called northern printings were in existence by late 1862.

The recipient of the Figure 4 cover, “Wyman the Ventriloquist,” was John Wyman Jr. (1816-1881), a well-known 19th century entertainer who was both a magician and a ventriloquist. He entertained several Presidents, including Martin Van Buren, Millard Filmore and (four times) Abraham Lincoln.

Earlier covers also exist, even from 1861. Figure 5 is a cover that was in the collection of Floyd Risvold. Addressed to Boston, this Confederate patriotic cover is franked by a 3¢ 1861 stamp and tied by a “LANCASTER PA. SEP 18 1861” circular datestamp. This is the same design as appears on the unused envelope shown in Figure 1. So it is my contention that most of the northern printings of Confederate patriotic envelopes were made early in the war, probably by 1861.

A remarkable pair of covers has come to light that provides further evidence. The 11-star Virginia design shown in Figures 1 and 5 exists on a cover that was postally used in England. Shown in Figure 6, this envelope, addressed to Halifax, England, bears a one penny red British stamp well tied by a Birmingham duplex marking dated October 28, 1861. It is backstamped “SUTTON-COLDFIELD OC 28 1861” and “HALIFAX OC 29 61”.

When I first saw this cover, I thought that the sender was a southern sympathizer

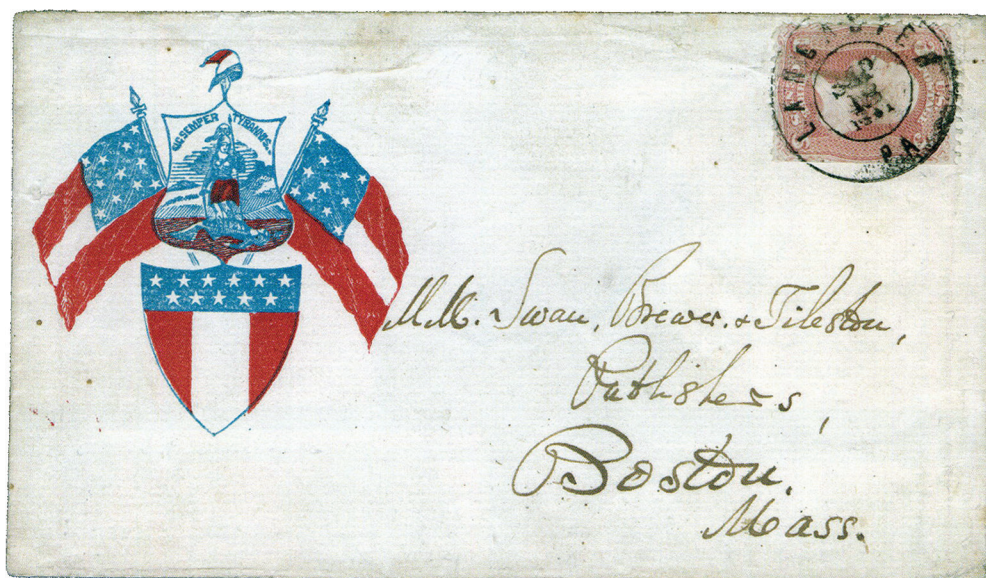


Figure 5. State of Virginia C.S.A. patriotic design of northern origin, postally used with 3¢ 1861 stamp tied “LANCASTER Pa. SEP 18 1861,” and addressed to Boston, Mass.

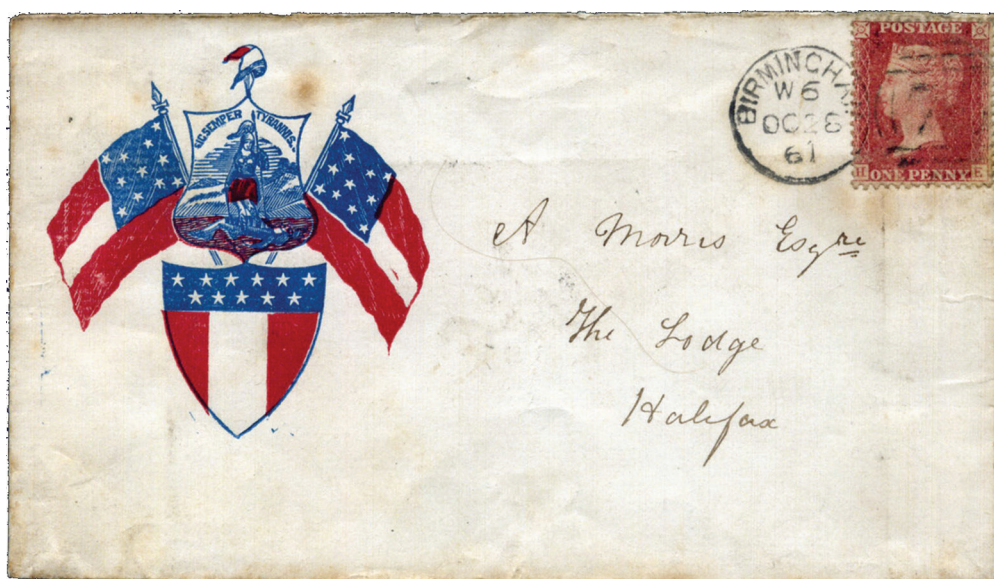


Figure 6. State of Virginia C.S.A. patriotic design used in Great Britain with 1p tied “BIRMINGHAM W6 OC28 61” on cover sent to Halifax, England. This is the only known use of a Confederate patriotic design sent locally within Great Britain.

in England. But later I became aware of a second cover, to the same addressee, shown in Figure 7. This is a Charles Magnus hand-colored Union design, commemorating the death of Col. Elmer Ellsworth. The postal usage is similar to the cover shown in Figure 6, with a one penny British stamp tied “BIRMINGHAM J 10 OC 11 61”. The reverse, shown in Figure 8, depicts the text of “THE STAR SPANGLED BANNER” and Magnus’s imprint in bronze ink, along with a Halifax receiving postmark dated October 12, 1861. So it is likely



Figure 7. “REMEMBER ELLSWORTH” Magnus patriotic design in full color with Great Britain 1p tied “BIRMINGHAM J10 OC11 61” to same addressee in Halifax. Only known domestic use of an American Civil War patriotic cover within England.

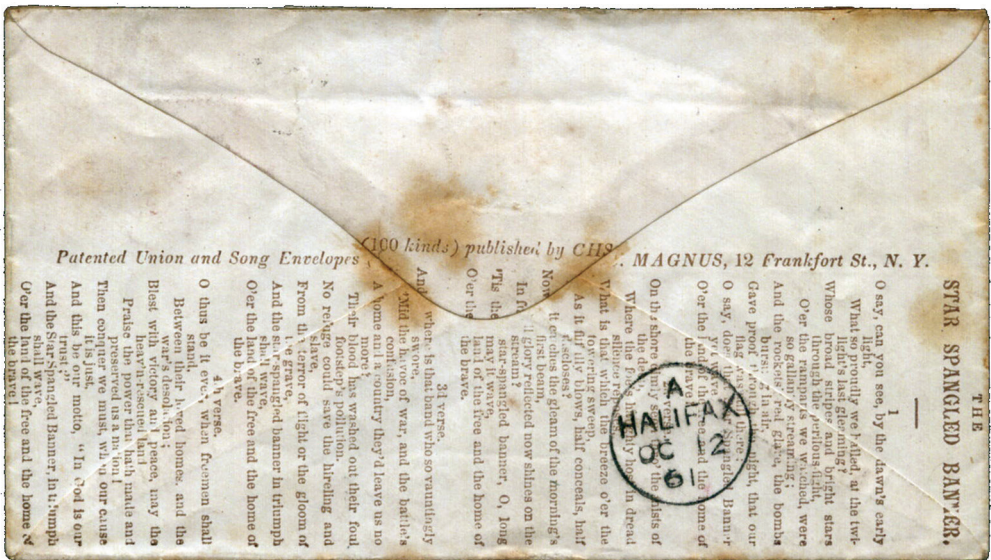


Figure 8. Reverse of the Figure 7 cover, showing the text of *The Star Spangled Banner* printed in bronze ink. The “A HALIFAX OC 12 61” is a receiving postmark. The imprint states that the design was printed by Charles Magnus of 12 Frankfort St., New York.

that a relative mailed both unused patriotic envelopes to the sender in Birmingham, who then used them for postal purposes, without showing favoritism for either of the American warring parties. The Figure 7 address, “Master A. Morris,” suggests that the recipient was a youth, perhaps an early collector.

To round out this story of patriotic covers, I show as Figure 9 a genuine Confederate-printed patriotic cover, here showing a seven-star flag and the imprint of James L. Gow, printer, of Augusta, Georgia. Addressed to Liverpool, this cover was sent collect (with 24¢

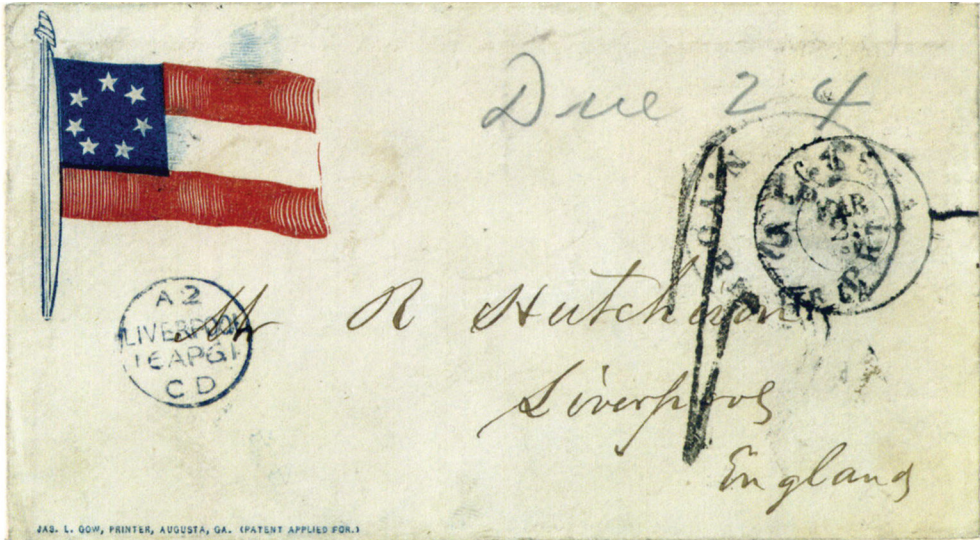


Figure 9. Seven-star C.S.A. envelope printed in Georgia and postally used from there to Great Britain. The circular datestamp reads “AUGUSTA GA. MAR 24 1861” and there is a pencilled “Due 24” in manuscript at upper right. Exchange office markings are a “NEW YORK BR. PACKET 5 APR 2,” British 1/- handstamp due marking, and the circular “A2/ LIVERPOOL/ 16 AP 61/ CD” receiving postmark. When this letter was posted, Georgia was a Confederate state but still within the U.S. postal service.

postage due) and postmarked “AUGUSTA GA MAR 24 1861.” This was just a few weeks before the attack on Ft. Sumter. Georgia had seceded from the Union, but its external mail was still handled by the U.S. postal system. Thus, this is a Confederate usage within the U.S. mails. The cover was marked at New York on April 2, 1861 with a black “5” cents debit to England, which was consistent with carriage by a British steamer. The English postmarks are a one shilling due marking and a Liverpool receiver dated April 16, 1861, just two days after the evacuation of Ft. Sumter.

Endnotes

1. Milgram, James W., “Modified Confederate Patriotic Covers of Union Origin,” *Confederate Philatelist* Volume 31 (1986), pp. 35-39; “Maryland Patriotic Covers,” *Confederate Philatelist* Volume 41 (1996), pp. 45-54; “Confederate Patriotic Cover Designs,” *Confederate Philatelist* Volumes 45-46 (2000-2001), pp. 205-215, 5-19, 41-51. ■

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POSTAL HISTORY

1869 COVERS SHOWING THE HIOGO DOUBLE-CIRCLE MARKING

JEFFREY FORSTER

This article is principally a census and description of covers bearing 1869 stamps and cancelled at Hiogo, Japan, with the well-known black 19-millimeter “HIOGO JAPAN” double-circle marking. While the Hiogo double circle can be found on all the lower-value 1869 stamps and is frequently seen on the 10¢ 1869 stamp, covers bearing the marking are scarce. After an exhaustive search through the *Chronicle*, the *1869 Times* and various books and auction catalogs, I count just nine covers franked with 1869 stamps and postmarked with the Hiogo double-circle.

Hiogo

An ancient port located on Osaka Bay approximately 100 miles south of Tokyo, Hiogo was a cultural center for Honshu Island. The city was later known as Kobe and sometimes as Osaka. During the 1869 era it was an industrial city with (for Japan) a substantial foreign population. From 1868, a United States consulate was located there. The consul sold U.S. stamps that could be used on mail carried on branch steamships of the Pacific Mail Steam



Figure 1. Enlargement of the 19-millimeter double-circle postmark used during 1869-71 at the United States consular post office at Hiogo, Japan.

Ship Company (PMSS). These ships stopped at Hiogo to offload and pick up mail on their regular trips between Shanghai and Yokohama, there connecting with the main-line PMSS steamships that plied regularly between Yokohama and San Francisco. Information about the U.S. consular post office at Hiogo and its markings, along with sailing data for the PMSS main-line and branch steamers, can be found in the Frajola-Perlman-Scamp book, published in 2006.¹ Much background information about the Hiogo double-circle marking appears in Laurence’s book on 10¢ 1869 covers, which was published in 2010.²

Figure 1 shows an enlargement of the marking under discussion, as it was struck in March 1869 on the famous stampless cover from the United States Consulate at Hiogo.³ While this is a monochrome image, so is the marking. The Figure 1 image has the advantages of being a clear, full strike, unobstructed by an underlying stamp, taken from a source that is unquestionably genuine.

The nine covers in this census are listed chronologically in Table 1. The data shows the date the cover entered the mails (because the Hiogo markings were undated, this is sometimes extrapolated from other information); the destination; the Scott numbers of the stamps on the cover; and a reference citation that will lead to an image of the cover. Note

Date	Destination	Stamps	Reference
Dec 25, 1869	London, England	113(3½)	Figure 2
Feb 2X, 1870	Sutton, England	116(2), 93	Figure 6
Jul 15, 1870	Yokohama, Japan	114	Figure 4
Sept 29, 1870	Hartford, Conn.	116(3)	1016 RAS 1050
Oct 11, 1870	Hartford, Conn.	116	1016 RAS 1051
Oct (21), 1870	Quebec, Canada	116, 113(3)	Figure 5
Oct (21), 1870	Siegen, Germany	113(13)	Figure 3
Mar 18, 1871	Kent, England	116(2)	Laurence, Fig. 23-17
Jun 24, 1871	Putney, England	116, 148	AP, Nov., 1945

Table 1. Census of covers bearing 1869 stamps and showing the double-circle marking of Hiogo, Japan. "Reference" column leads to an image of the cover.

the wide range of international destinations. Until a recent find (discussed further below) no 1869 covers addressed to the United States were known with the Hiogo double circle.

Of the 474 westerners recorded living in Hiogo in 1874, more than half were British. There were 83 Americans.⁴ The surviving covers suggest that British members of Hiogo's international community were the main customers of the U.S. consular post. For covers sent from Hiogo to Europe during the 1869 era, the eastbound route (via the Pacific and the U.S. transcontinental railroad) was always much cheaper than the British-mail route via Suez. Depending on the timing of connections, it could be faster as well.

2¢ 1869 covers with Hiogo double circle

The earliest 1869 cover with a Hiogo double circle is shown in Figure 2. Addressed to London, this cover bears 3½ 2¢ 1869 stamps tied by three strikes of the double circle. On the back of the cover (not shown) is gum residue where other stamps once reposed. It's not clear what these stamps might have been. When this cover was posted at Hiogo, apparently



Figure 2. 3½ 2¢ 1869 stamps with four strikes of the double circle, on a cover from Hiogo to London. Additional stamps, originally affixed to the back of the cover, are no longer present. The magenta "2" is a scarce transit credit to England, applied at the San Francisco exchange office.



Figure 3. 13 2¢ 1869 stamps—a block of 10 and a strip of three—and one strike of the double circle, on a cover from Hiogo to “Siegen, Rhenish Prussia,” (Germany).

on Christmas Day of 1869, 22¢ would have been required (10¢ transpacific plus 12¢ transatlantic). But by the time the cover reached the United States, the treaty rate to England had been reduced to 6¢, so 18¢ would have sufficed.

This cover crossed the Pacific on the PMSS steamer *America* on a 23-day voyage from Yokohama to San Francisco. A magenta balloon San Francisco exchange office circular datestamp on the reverse is dated JAN 25. In the same magenta ink, San Francisco applied the handstamped “2” on the front. This very scarce marking is a transit credit to England, applied only at San Francisco. New York, which also acted as an exchange office for transpacific mails, did not apply such credits. Laurence explained this odd practice in some detail in *Chronicle* 247. To complete the delivery picture, the reverse of the Figure 2 cover also bears a red “London PAID” circular datestamp dated “FE 18 70.”

Two other Hiogo double-circle covers are known with 2¢ 1869 stamps. One of them is the well-known cover shown opened up in Figure 3. This has only one strike of the

double circle, but an abundance of 2¢ 1869 stamps, 13 in all, including a very nice vertical block of 10. The cover is addressed to Siegen, Germany, in the North Rhine-Westphalia area. (The address, partly obscured by the stamps, reads, “Siegen, Rhenish Prussia.”) The proper franking for this cover should have been 20¢—10¢ transpacific postage and 10¢ for postage from the U.S. to Germany via closed mail via England. But as with the rates to England, the rates to Germany were diminishing rapidly during this period. The U.S. Consul in remote Hiogo might not have had access to the latest *U.S. Mail* rate charts.

The Figure 3 cover crossed the Pacific on the PMSS *China*, arriving San Francisco November 17, 1870, one day before the date shown in the black 25mm double-circle San Francisco circular datestamp. It reached New York November 26, where it was marked PAID ALL for British transit and reached Germany December 8.

This cover was one of the prized objects in the broad survey collection of classic U.S. covers assembled by J. David Baker. It most recently sold with the Jon Rose 1869 collection and hasn’t been seen since. The Figure 3 image is a download from the Rose catalog as housed on the Robert A. Siegel website. Heartiest thanks to Siegel president (and our 1869 section editor) Scott Trepel for conceiving and supporting this invaluable research tool.

3¢ 1869 cover with Hiogo double circle

Figure 4 shows the only 3¢ 1869 cover known with the Hiogo double-circle marking. On this cover, from the Thorel correspondence and sent from Hiogo to Yokohama on July 15, 1870, the 3¢ stamp pays the undocumented interconsular rate. Apparently the PMSS branch steamers were sometimes used by local businesses; this was before Japan had a public postal system. The cover is a folded lettersheet. The content, written in German, is datelined Osaka 15 July 1870 and discusses the munitions trade, which was ailing.

According to the Frajola-Perlman-Scamp book, from which this image was taken, this is the earliest use of the 3¢ interconsular rate. A number of 3¢ Bank Note covers survive to show this rate, but they don’t have the double-circle marking.

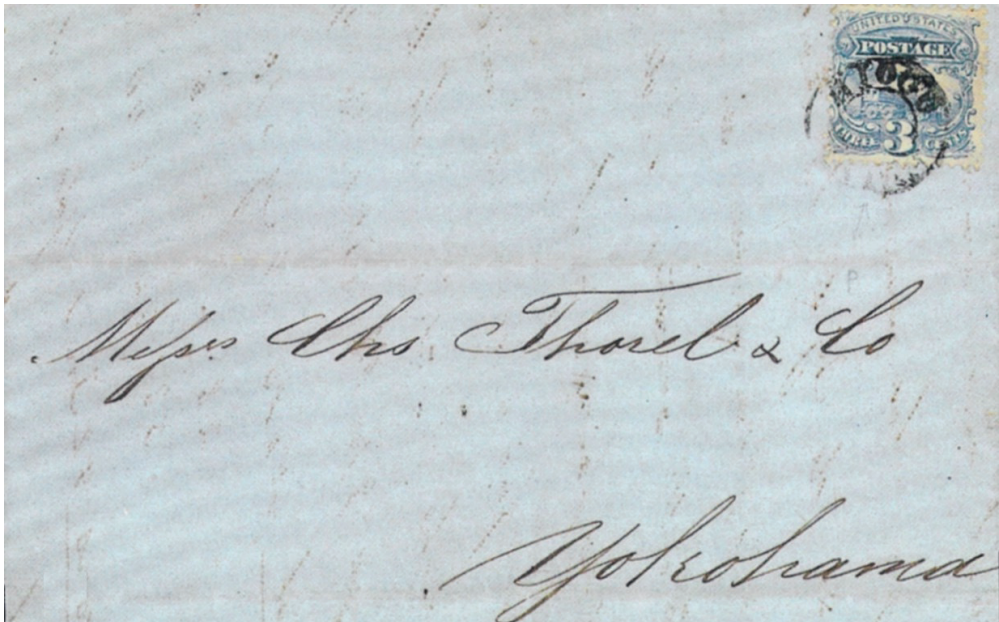


Figure 4. Interconsular cover from Hiogo to Yokohama, from the Thorel correspondence. Surviving covers indicate the U.S. mail rate between Japanese ports was 3¢ (same as the U.S. domestic rate)—but no documentation exists to support this rate.



Figure 5. From Hiogo to Canada in late 1870. The transpacific rate was 10¢ and the U.S.-Canada treaty rate was 6¢. This cover was for many years in the massive John Juhring 1869 collection, always missing the bottom stamp. Unbeknownst to Juhring, the missing stamp reposed elsewhere in his own collection.

This cover has a long and interesting pedigree. It was initially reported in a 1932 issue of *The Collectors Club Philatelist* and discussed later in *Chronicle* 82 and *1869 Times* #20. For a while it was owned by R.J. Mechin, one of the first 1869 specialists, whose 3¢ 1869 collection got a silver medal at the New York international show in 1926. Michael Laurence bought the cover from Mechin in the early 1960s. Laurence told me he sold it to pay the hospital bill for his first child, who is now 46. So that was a while ago. The cover last appeared in the Sotheby's Ishikawa sale (July 1981, lot 75), current whereabouts unknown.

10¢ 1869 covers with Hiogo double circle

One of the most storied of the Hiogo double-circle covers bears both 2¢ and 10¢ 1869 stamps. This is the cover shown in Figure 5. It is franked with three 2¢ 1869 stamps (vertical pair and single), along with a 10¢, all tied by four strikes of the double-circle handstamp on a blue folded cover to Quebec. As the illustration shows, the cover also has a "Kniffler & Co. Hiogo, Japan" blue oval merchant cachet and manuscript routing "via San Francisco." On reverse the cover shows a black double-circle "San Francisco Cal. Oct. 17" circular datestamp (indicating carriage via *Great Republic*), a Montreal transit marking dated OC 25 70 and a Quebec receiving marking dated October 26.

This cover had been known for many years before it finally surfaced in the John Juhring collection, and it had long been missing the bottom 2¢ stamp. The proper rate was 10¢ transpacific and 6¢ U.S.-Canada. As it turned out, the missing stamp was also in Juhring's collection and apparently he never knew it. Both items were sold in the first Juhring sale (Sotheby Parke Bernet sale #20, June 14, 1978) and subsequently reunited by Elliott Coulter. Laurence wrote about the cover before its restoration in *Chronicle* 98 and then told of the reunion in *Chronicle* 109, in an article titled "Frog Turns Prince." This cover sold from the Coulter collection in 2006 (Siegel sale 911, lot 332) and now reposes in the

Figure 6. Horizontal pair of 10¢ 1869s with an F-grill Black Jack, posted at Hiogo in late February, 1870. The cover was franked to pay the combined rate of 10¢ transpacific plus the 12¢ U.S.-U.K. treaty rate, but the U.S.-U.K. rate had been reduced to 6¢ effective Jan. 1.



matchless transpacific collection of retired oil executive Stephen I. Chazen.

Another striking 10¢ combination cover is shown in Figure 6. Addressed to “Sutton, Surrey, England” (now south London), this bears a horizontal pair of 10¢ 1869 stamps along with an F-grill Black Jack, Scott 93. All three stamps are tied by strikes of the Hiogo double circle. The cover is routed “Per PMS Steamer” and shows another example of the San Francisco transit credit 2 mentioned earlier. The San Francisco exchange office marking on reverse indicates carriage via the PMSS *China*, which arrived at San Francisco March 19, 1870. Also on reverse is a Sutton receiving mark dated “AP 12 1870.”

From this information we can extrapolate that the cover originated at Hiogo sometime in late February, 1870, which makes this the earliest known 10¢ 1869 cover showing the double-circle marking. The 22¢ franking is thus an overpayment, because the U.S. rate to England had been reduced from 12¢ to 6¢ on January 1, 1870. This eye-catching cover was lot 220 in the 1987 Robert A. Siegel rarity sale. Estimated at \$5,000-10,000, it sold for \$45,000 and hasn’t been seen since. The image in Figure 6 is taken from the Siegel website. It’s a bit fuzzy, because some of the early images on the site are not as data-intensive as more recent ones.

A third combination cover is something of a mystery. This cover shows a 10¢ 1869 stamp along with a 6¢ Bank Note (Scott 148), sent from Hiogo to Putney, another town in southwest London. This appears to be dated June 24, 1871 and was exchanged through New York. Markings reported are “NEW YORK JULY 25 PAID” and (on the reverse) a red “LIVERPOOL AUG. 2” and “LONDON” and “PUTNEY, AUG. 3, 1871” black circular datestamps. The postage again pays the 10¢ transpacific exchange and 6¢ rate from the U.S. to Great Britain. All this information comes from a brief report by a Major W. H. Tapp, published in the November, 1945 issue of *The American Philatelist*. No useful image is available. If the June 24, 1871 date is correct, this is the latest of the 1869 covers with Hiogo double circles.

A cover with a pair of 10¢ 1869 stamps (overpaying 10¢+6¢), progressively in the Knapp and Gibson collections, was in the early decades of the 20th century the only cover known with the Hiogo double-circle marking. This cover originated at Hiogo on March 18, 1871 and passed through the New York exchange office on its way to Kent, England. A nice color illustration of this cover can be found in the Laurence book as Figure 23-17.

The Keim-Owen find

In 2011, the editor of this 1869 section of the *Chronicle*, in his role as an auctioneer, dispersed a significant find of transpacific covers. Siegel sale 1016 featured transpacific 10¢ 1869 covers from the newly-discovered correspondence of a world-traveling journal-

ist named De Benneville Randolph Keim. He was writing to his future bride, Miss Jennie Owen, in Hartford, Connecticut. The Keim-Owen correspondence was well described by Trepel in *Chronicle* 233, and I will not expand on Trepel's useful remarks there or in his sale catalog. The find included two 10¢ 1869 covers with the Hiogo double-circle, increasing the known population by 50 percent, from four covers to six.

One of the covers (Siegel sale 1016, lot 1051) bore a single 10¢ 1869 stamp, just tied by the Hiogo double circle on a blue cover to Hartford, Connecticut, with the sender's routing "Via Yokohama Japan" at upper left, receipt docketing "Rec'd with 4 others Fri. Nov. 25th 1870" and also pencil "Hiogo-Oct. 11" on reverse, along with a "San Francisco Cal. Nov. 18" double-circle backstamp. This cover was illustrated in Trepel's article in *Chronicle* 233. It was carried on the PMSS branch steamer *Golden Age* and the main-line steamer *China*, which departed Yokohama on Oct. 23 and arrived in San Francisco on Nov. 17. It was delivered to the recipient, Jennie Owen, along with four other pieces of mail from Keim, her future husband.

The *piece de resistance* in the Keim-Owen find was a vertical strip of three 10¢ 1869 stamps, cancelled by three strikes of the Hiogo double circle and also another Japanese killer that may have been applied at Nagasaki. For good measure the cover was additionally struck with a "Yokohama Japan Oct. 23" (1870) circular datestamp. It also shows the sender's routing "Via Yokohama" at upper left, pencil docketing on back "Hiogo Jeddo Yokohama Sept. 29 to Oct. 4," and a San Francisco double-circle backstamp dated November 18. This cover (Siegel sale 1016 lot 1050) travelled on the same sequence of vessels as the other cover just described (lot 1051) and reached its recipient in the same mail.

To finish this survey, there's one fake cover. The interconsular cover from Hiogo to Nagasaki, lot 78 the Sotheby Ishikawa sale (July, 1981), was subsequently declared no good by the Philatelic Foundation (certificate 101,626). A 10¢ 1869 stamp with a genuine Hiogo double circle marking was added to the cover with a tying cancel painted in.

Conclusion and acknowledgements

Given the large number of off-cover strikes of the Hiogo double-circle that one sees in the auction catalogs on various 1869 denominations—including 1¢, 2¢, 3¢, 6¢ and especially 10¢ stamps—one would expect to find many more covers than the nine listed here. The surviving covers indicate the Hiogo covers were mostly sent to Europe. Stamp collecting was already a great rage in Europe when the covers reached there. Laurence speculated, and I concur, that incoming covers from Hiogo were largely cut up to yield exotic stamps for the albums of nascent collectors. If these early collectors had known how valuable these stamps on cover with their vivid "Hiogo" strikes would become in the 20th and 21st centuries, more of the covers might have been preserved.

Stephen I. Chazen was very helpful in providing descriptions and photos of several Hiogo covers. Tara Murray of the American Philatelic Research Library was equally helpful in locating a copy of the obscure article written by Major Tapp in the 1945 *American Philatelist*. Section editor Scott Trepel deserves the applause of every collector for the invaluable on-line resource that is the Siegel website. And finally, Editor-in-Chief Michael Laurence provided guidance, insights and information during the creation of this article.

Endnotes

1. Richard C. Frajola, Michael O. Perlman and Lee C. Scamp, *The United States Post Offices in China and Japan, 1867 to 1874* (New York, N.Y., The Collectors Club, 2006), pp. 169-183.
2. Michael Laurence, *Ten-Cent 1869 Covers: A Postal Historical Survey* (Chicago, Ill., The Collectors Club of Chicago, 2010), pp. 299-305.
3. Frajola, Perlman and Scamp., *op. cit.*, pg. 172.
4. Laurence, *op. cit.*, pg. 299, citing research done by Robert Spaulding. ■

**THE LINE-OFFICE RATE:
FACT AND FICTION**
DAVID D'ALESSANDRIS

Between 1851 and 1875, a special postage rate of 2¢ existed between adjacent United States and British North America (BNA) exchange offices. This obscure rate, referred to as the line-office rate and sometimes erroneously as a ferriage rate,¹ was not widely known and was little used. In fact, there have probably been more articles written about the rate than there are surviving covers that show it.

Perhaps because of the poor documentation of the line-office rate, over the last 50 years the suggestion has developed that there was a special 1¢ line-office rate for exchange offices separated only by a bridge. This article provides an overview of the line-office rate, provides an alternative explanation for a cover between adjacent exchange offices previously considered to be an example of a special 1¢ line-office rate, and includes a census of covers showing the 2¢ line-office rate.

The line-office rate

The line-office rate was established by agreement of the postmasters of the United States and Canada in June 1851. Effective January 1852 it was extended to cover mail between the U.S. and New Brunswick. Briefly stated, the agreement provided that letters weighing up to four ounces could be exchanged between adjacent exchange offices not more than five miles apart for a fee of 2¢ U.S. or 1d BNA currency. At an unknown date, the line-office rate was extended to cover the exchanges offices of Houlton, Maine and Woodstock, New Brunswick, which are more than five miles apart. Nearly all the surviving covers passed between Houlton and Woodstock. Most are franked with the 2¢ brown 1869 pictorial stamp.

Information from archival and contemporary sources

Most of our knowledge of the line-office rate comes from archival sources in the BNA, rather than the United States. By letter dated April 14, 1851, J. Morris, the Postmaster General of Canada, wrote to the United States PMG N.K. Hall regarding the recently implemented postal treaty between the countries. The letter noted there were some “minor points” that would improve the agreement, including “establishment of a reduced or Ferry rate to be charged in lieu of the 10 cent rate on letters posted in one of our Frontier Towns addressed to the Frontier Town immediately opposite.” Morris then provided a list of ten corresponding exchange offices: Port Sarnia–Port Huron; Windsor–Detroit; Fort Erie–Blackrock; Queenston–Lewiston; Niagara–Youngstown; Kingston–Cape Vincent; Brockville–Morristown; Prescott–Ogdensburg; Dundee–Fort Covington; and Stanstead–Derby Line.

The letter additionally noted that the “above named places being only separated from each other by a Ferry, excepting the two last (which are respectively divided by about a mile of land travel), I beg to suggest a uniform rate of 2 cents, or 1 Penny, be fixed as the full charge on letters originating at the one and addressed to the other and corresponding Frontier Town, instead of the 10 cents = 6d. rate, which for distances so short becomes in fact a prohibitory charge in the intercorrespondence by mail.”² The United States initially rejected the proposal, and instructed the Postmaster at Queenston, Canada West, that letters between Queenston and the corresponding exchange office in Lewiston, New York, were to be rated “six pence per ½ oz. as with other letters for the States.”³

Two months later, in a letter dated June 21, 1851, PMG Morris responded to letters from PMG Hall dated June 10, 1851 and June 12, 1851. Morris wrote to “express my gratification at your having reconsidered, and favorably, the two cent rate between our Frontier Offices, – and I agree with you in thinking that this rate should not increase with the weight of the letters”⁴

Later that year, the United States and New Brunswick began discussions regarding the extension of the line-office rate to that province. By letter dated November 19, 1851, the PMG of New Brunswick, J. Howe, proposed a reduced rate that would be applied to all exchanging offices:⁵

Between the Towns of Calais and St. Stephen, and St. Andrews and Robbinston the distance is so short that unless the rate was fixed very low, the mail would not be greatly used. Between Woodstock and Houlton the case is different, but it would be advisable to establish a uniform rate for all three, and I beg to propose therefore a local rate of 2 cents or 1d. currency on all letters posted at one Frontier Office, prepayment optional; and the postage to be retained by the country collecting it, in the same manner as with the ordinary rates of postage;...

PMG Howe closed the letter by stating that “previous to the change of arrangements of 6th July, last [the effective date of the postal agreement between the United States and New Brunswick], the custom of charging at St. Andrews a penny currency on letters to and from Robbinston had been in existence for some time.”⁶

PMG Howe’s suggestion that there was in effect a 1 penny (1d New Brunswick currency = 2¢ U.S.) rate between Robbinston and St. Andrews is notable because no covers have survived showing such a rate. However, prior to implementation of the agreement between the United States and New Brunswick, the Postmaster of St. Andrews acted as a United States Postmaster and did not charge New Brunswick postage on letters deposited at St. Andrews and addressed to the United States.⁷ Thus, letters originating in St. Andrews were rated as if they had originated in Robbinston, Maine. Given this treatment of covers originating in St. Andrews, it seems plausible that a letter addressed to Robbinston, Maine during the 1845-51 period would be treated as a drop letter and rated 2¢ (1d currency), and that such a cover would not be an example of a special international postage rate. The BNA exchange office postmasters holding dual appointments (both BNA and United States) were forced to terminate their U.S. appointments when the 1851 postal agreements took effect.

By letter dated December 11, 1851, PMG Hall responded that the “proposed 2 cent postage arrangement is sanctioned in respect to letters passing between [Calais and St. Stephen]; but with reference to Robbinston and St. Andrews, and Houlton and Woodstock, I would prefer, as the distance in both cases exceeds five miles that the general rate of 10 cents should stand, at least for the present. Under our arrangement with Canada, the President advised the establishment of the 2¢ rate only in the case of offices not more than five miles apart.”⁸

Despite this explicit agreement by the postmasters general, the line-office rate is not mentioned in the Postal Laws and Regulations during the relevant period. However, it was mentioned in the August 1863 issue of the *U.S. Mail and Post Office Assistant*. That entry stated that:⁹

It is not generally known that two cents covers the entire postage on a letter, without regard to weight, passing in the mails between certain offices in Canada and others in the United States, located at short distances from each other. These exceptions to the usual letter rates between the two governments are embraced in the postal treaty of 1856. And yet many correspondents most interested in this fact seem entirely ignorant of it, and have been in the habit of affixing ten cent stamps to this class of letters.

The notice then listed eleven pairs of exchange offices between the United States and Canada (the ten pairs listed above plus Sault St. Marie, Michigan–Sault St. Marie, Canada), but not the exchange offices between the United States and New Brunswick.

Information about this special rate first came to the attention of the philatelic world when it was included in an appendix to Winthrop Boggs' Canada book in 1945, but the practical information was first made available to students of United States postal history in Stanley Ashbrook's *Special Service* in 1954 and 1956.¹⁰ More recently, Jeffrey M. Forster published a census of the line-office rate covers franked with 1869 stamps in *Chronicle* 180, updated in *Chronicle* 185.

Conjecture regarding the line-office rate

The suggestion that there might be a special 1¢ version of the line-office rate first appeared in print in Theron Wierenga's "U.S. Classics" column in *Stamps* magazine in 1969. After raising the topic of line-office rate covers, and requesting reader comments in an August 9, 1969 column, Wierenga revisited the topic with reader comments in his November 22, 1969 column. There he said that the dealer Herman Herst reported a cover from Ogdensburg, New York to Prescott, Canada dated 1859 or 1860 franked with a 1¢ 1857 type V (Scott 24). Wierenga noted that this 1¢ rate was in effect before and possibly at the same time as the line-office rate, but that the 1¢ rate "was only in effect for exchange offices directly across from each other on the St. Lawrence River."¹¹ Wierenga also noted that he had heard the 1¢ rate referred to as a "St. Lawrence Rate," but added that there were many things that were still unknown about the rate.

In a second follow-up column, dated February 28, 1970, Wierenga noted that he had wondered if the reports of 1¢ line-office covers were actually covers with two 1¢ stamps, but that Bruce Hazelton had shown him two covers "each bearing a single 1¢ of the 1861 issue, used from Calais, Maine, to St. Stephen, New Brunswick. There are no additional markings on the face and no year date is evident. It would seem that this is ample proof that letters did travel across the border for 1¢, but *what rate this represents I cannot say. There is a possibility that this is a circular rate of some sort.*"¹² Figure 1 is one of the ex-Hazelton covers, franked with a single 1¢ blue 1861 stamp, postmarked Calais, Maine, on December 15 (no year date) and addressed to St. Stephen, New Brunswick.

This cover was mentioned again by Susan McDonald in a 1971 Cover Corner column in the *Chronicle*. After explaining the line-office rate regarding a cover illustrated in the prior issue's Cover Corner, McDonald noted that a few 1¢ rate covers had been reported. She repeated the report by Herst from the Wierenga column and then described the cover in Figure 1, noting that "Bruce Hazelton has a cover with a single 1¢ 1861 from Calais to St. Stephen, postmarked DEC 15, no year date. It appears that a rate of 1¢ or ½d must have existed between offices separated only by a bridge, but no corroboration has yet been found."¹³ Note that McDonald, and all subsequent references, referred to a single cover, while Wierenga's column stated that Hazelton had two such covers. The reference to a second cover is likely a reference to the cover in Figure 2, a 1¢ printed-matter cover dated December 24, 1861, from Calais, Maine, to Kingston, New Brunswick. The numeral "1" on the Figure 2 cover indicates that 1d was due from the recipient.¹⁴

Don Evans downplayed the lack of documentation for a 1¢ line-office rate in his book, *The United States 1¢ Franklin 1861-1867*. About the Figure 1 cover Evans wrote: "The franking by a single 1¢ 1861 stamp suggests that this cover was mailed at a special



Figure 1. Cover from Calais, Maine to St. Stephen, New Brunswick, franked with 1¢ blue 1861 stamp tied by fancy shield cancel. This was previously considered to be an example of a special 1¢ line-office rate, but it is likely a drop letter.

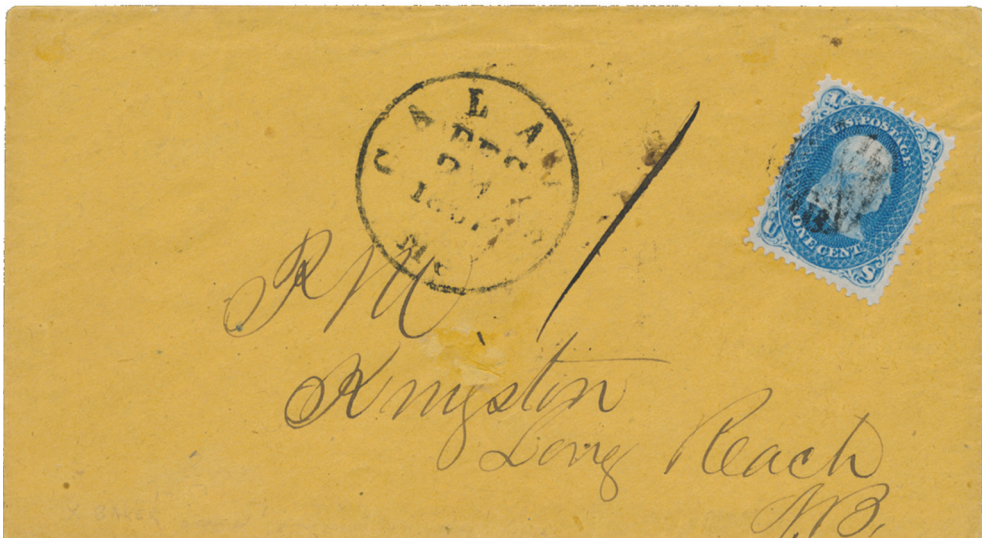


Figure 2. Cover from Calais, Maine to Kingston, New Brunswick, December 24, 1861, franked with 1¢ blue 1861 stamp paying the printed matter rate to the border and rated 1d due at Kingston. Image courtesy of Schuyler Rumsey Philatelic Auctions.

rate, similar to that of the original ferriage rate.”¹⁵ Evans continued that “[a]lthough this cover is paid with only 1¢ in postage, it is likely that this was accepted as the special exchange-office rate. Other similar examples of 1¢ postage paid between exchange offices exist where the offices were separated only by a bridge, as in this case. It appears this is an example of a reduced special rate for these closely located offices; however, no documentation to support this has been found.”¹⁶

Evans’ collection was auctioned by Richard E. Drews Philatelic Auctions in 1998, and the lot description for the cover presented the 1¢ line office rate as fact. “1¢ pays a special reduced exchange office cross-border rate of which only 9 are known...”¹⁷ The cover



Figure 3. Houlton, Maine, February 16, 1861, to Upper Woodstock, New Brunswick. A pair of 1¢ Type V 1857 stamps pays the 2¢ line-office rate between the two towns.

was purchased in the Evans sale by Wilson Born. The Born collection was sold intact in the 2015 Siegel Rarities Sale,¹⁸ and I subsequently acquired the cover through dealer James E. Lee.

Identifying characteristics of a line-office rate cover

In my opinion, for a U.S.-origin cover to qualify as a line-office rate cover, it must have an origin postmark from one of the exchange offices located a short distance from the corresponding BNA exchange office; be addressed to the corresponding exchange office; demonstrate that it contained letter-rate correspondence; show a BNA transit marking; and indicate that it was rated for 2¢ or 1d postage.

Figure 3 is one of three line-office rate covers franked with a pair of 1¢ blue type V 1857 stamps (Scott 24). The cover is postmarked Houlton, Maine, February 16, 1861, and is addressed to the corresponding exchange office, Upper Woodstock, New Brunswick. It is a sealed envelope and bears a Woodstock February 16, 1861 receiver on the back. It is clearly prepaid 2¢, indicated both by the two stamps and by the weakly struck PAID 2 Houlton handstamp. Houlton also applied the red arc U. STATES.

Figure 4 is the only line-office cover franked with 1¢ blue 1861 stamps. Although it's difficult to see in the Figure 4 image, the cover is postmarked Houlton, Maine. It is addressed to the corresponding exchange office, Woodstock, New Brunswick. This is a sealed envelope, and there is no indication that it contained printed matter. A June 13, 1862 Woodstock receiver is struck on the back of the cover, and the rate is clearly 2¢, confirmed by both the franking of two 1¢ stamps and also the crayon "2" rate marking. Houlton applied the black arc U. STATES.

Figure 5 is a striking example of the most commonly seen franking, with the 2¢ brown 1869 pictorial stamp. The cover was sent on April 29, 1870 from Houlton to Woodstock, with a Woodstock receiving handstamp on the back. The cover is clearly franked with 2¢ postage and shows the Houlton PAID 2 handstamp marking. Unlike the cover in Figure 1, each of the covers in Figures 3-5 clearly meets all elements of the five-part test.

As noted above, the cover in Figure 1 is postmarked Calais, Maine December 15, no year date. The stamp is cancelled with the Calais, Maine shield fancy cancel (Skinner-Eno PS-FC 23). The cover in Figure 6 shows a better strike of the same cancel on a domestic



Figure 4. Only line-office cover with 1¢ 1861 stamps: Houlton, Maine (June 13, 1862) to Woodstock, N.B. A vertical pair of 1¢ 1861 Franklins pays the 2¢ line-office rate.



Figure 5. Houlton, Maine, April 29, 1870, to Woodstock, New Brunswick. A 2¢ 1869 stamp pays the 2¢ line-office rate. Image courtesy Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries.

3¢-rate letter from Calais, Maine to East Machias, Maine. The date is indistinct. Comparing the two covers, there is absolutely no doubt that the 1¢ stamp originated on the Figure 1 cover and there is no evidence of a missing stamp, including inspection under ultraviolet light. The cover is sealed at top, and was opened at the left, implying the cover was not sent at a printed matter rate, which required that the envelope be unsealed for inspection. Additionally, there are no rate markings or postage due markings on the face of the cover, and notably, there is no St. Stephen, New Brunswick receiving mark on the back. It was



Figure 6. Calais, Maine, indistinctly dated duplex postmark canceling a 3¢ rose 1861 stamp on an envelope addressed to East Machias, Maine. This cover shows a more distinct example of the fancy shield cancellation (listed in Skinner-Eno as PS-FC23) that also appears on the cover in Figure 1.

normal practice for BNA post offices to apply transit markings to letter mail when received at an exchange office from the United States.

Thus, the cover in Figure 1 satisfies some but not all of the criteria of a line-office rate cover. The origin and destination are correct and the backflap is sealed, implying letter-rate content. But there is no BNA transit marking and the rate is wrong.

No new evidence has come to light in the 45 years since Wierenga's column in *Stamps* magazine to suggest that there was a special 1¢ line-office rate for exchange offices separated only by a bridge. Even if there really was a special 1¢ rate, this does not explain the lack of a New Brunswick receiver on the back of the cover. The BNA post offices were very careful to transit-mark incoming mail. In fact, *every* treaty-period letter-rate cover from the United States to the Maritime Provinces in my collection shows a BNA receiver. Thus, the absence of such a receiver is highly unusual. Transit markings were not required on printed matter, but in my experience, roughly half of printed-matter covers to the Maritime Provinces during the treaty period show BNA transit markings.

Assuming that there was no 1¢ line-office rate, there are several possible explanations for the 1¢ rate paid on Figure 1.

While the short payment of an actual rate is more believable than the existence of a special exception to what is already an exception to the normal treaty rate, this explanation would require not one but three significant errors on the same cover. First the postmaster in Calais would need to let through an underpaid letter; second, the postmaster in St. Stephen would need to miss the rating error in Calais and not re-rate the cover 2¢ due; and third the Postmaster in St. Stephen would need to not apply a transit postmark. The first and second errors, allowing an underpaid cover, were extremely rare occurrences in the early 1860s, and as discussed above, the failure of the St. Stephen postmaster to apply a receiver marking is without precedent.

In his column 45 years ago, Wierenga cautioned that Figure 1 cover might pay a printed-matter rate. While BNA postmasters were fastidious in applying transit postmarks, the use of postage due markings on incoming printed matter was hit-or-miss. However, the cover has a sealed backflap and is cut open on the left edge, consistent with letter-rate mail. For the printed-matter theory to be correct, someone at a later date would have to

have sealed the backflap in order to manipulate the cover to appear to be letter mail. This is possible, but unlikely.

A final possibility, and the most likely explanation, is that the letter was deposited at the Calais post office for pick-up by the addressee. The fee for a drop letter was 1¢ until July 1, 1863, when the cost increased to 2¢.¹⁹ Unlike printed matter, a drop envelope could be sealed. Drop usage would also explain the lack of a St. Stephen receiver, because the cover would not have entered the New Brunswick postal system.

The problem with this explanation is that the letter is addressed to St. Stephen, New Brunswick, rather than Calais, Maine. Drop letters are normally addressed to the city where the letter is posted, or sometimes just “city” or “present.” However, in this instance, the sender may have instructed the post office to hold letters for pick-up, or the addressee may have had a post office box in Calais and requested that his mail be held in Calais.

The Figure 1 cover is addressed to “Mr. Willard B. King, care Messrs. Eaton and King, St. Stephen, New Brunswick.” Willard Bancroft King started out working in his father’s import and wholesaling business, Gilman D. King & Son, in Calais, before founding an importing house in St. Stephen with Clement B. Eaton.²⁰ Willard King was also a director of the National Bank of Calais.²¹ Thus, he clearly had business interests on both sides of the border and it is reasonable to assume that he would call at the Calais post office for correspondence.

Other examples exist of individuals using corresponding United States and New Brunswick border exchange offices for their business correspondence. The Shepard Cary correspondence from Houlton, Maine, shows frequent use of both the Houlton and Woodstock post offices. Shepard Cary and Company in Houlton was involved in multiple business ventures, including lumbering on both sides of the border, as well as operating a sawmill, grist mill, clapboard mill, machine shop, and furniture shop in Houlton.²² Cary also served in the Maine legislature and additionally served a term in the United States House of Representatives. Figure 7 is a February 25, 1839, stampless cover from Woodstock, New Brunswick, addressed to Cary’s partner and brother-in-law, Collins Whitaker in Houlton.



Figure 7. Stampless folder letter postmarked February 25, 1839 at Woodstock, New Brunswick, addressed to Houlton, Maine, with no Houlton transit mark and no rate marking. This cover was probably held as a drop letter at Woodstock.



Figure 8. Madawaska, New Brunswick, January 7, 1846, stampless folded letter addressed to Houlton, Maine, with no Houlton transit mark and no United States postage indicated. Endorsed at bottom left for the Woodstock, New Brunswick, postmaster to “please forward.” Image courtesy of Max Lynds.

While United States transit markings are not common on letters originating in BNA during the treaty period, at the time of this letter (1839), the lack of a Houlton transit marking is unusual. More unusual is the fact that, while there is a Woodstock PAID, there is no rate marking. Thus, it is likely that this cover was held at the Woodstock post office for pick-up by Whitaker or his courier.

Figure 8 is another letter addressed to Collins Whitaker, this one originating in Madawaska, New Brunswick, on January 7, 1846. Although addressed to Houlton, Maine, there is no Houlton postmark, and no United States postage indicated. Significantly, the letter is endorsed at the bottom left “Mr. Grover [Woodstock, New Brunswick, postmaster]—please forward.” The notation that this letter should be forwarded beyond Woodstock to the addressee in Houlton implies that mail addressed to Houlton was being held for pick-up at the Woodstock post office.

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Figure 9. Undated outer letter sheet with no origin postmark and two 1¢ blue 1857 type V stamps. This was previously considered to be a line-office rate cover, but likely shows a printed-matter rate. Image courtesy of Schuyler Rumsey Philatelic Auctions.

One final cover should be mentioned. Figure 9 shows a cover that was sold as a line-office rate cover in the Matthew Bennett sale of the John Robertson collection.²³ The lot was described as two 1¢ blue type V (Scott 24) “on folded cover from Robbinston, Maine to St. Andrews, New Brunswick, paying 2¢ line rate.” However, there is no origin post mark on the cover, and the stamps are cancelled with a simple grid. The cover is a folded outer letter sheet, with no evidence it had been sealed, no contents, no docketing, and no St. Andrews transit marking. Thus, there is no way to demonstrate that the cover originated in Robbinston, Maine, or that the 2¢ postage paid the line rate from Robbinston to St. Andrews. The cover could just as easily have been a 2¢ payment of the printed matter rate, possibly from New York City, which frequently used a grid cancel with no origin postmark on printed matter. According to Article VIII of the U.S.-Canada postal convention, printed matter to Canada was charged the normal domestic printed-matter rate to the U.S. exchange office, 1¢ during the period of use of the 1¢ type V 1857 stamps on the cover. Two cents would pay the rate for printed matter over three ounces, or it could represent an overpayment, perhaps under the assumption that the 2¢ Cunard line rate applied to mail to the Maritime provinces, or an attempt to prepay the New Brunswick printed matter rate to destination.

Census of line-office rate covers

Even though the line-office rate was available in at least 14 exchange office pairs, nearly all recorded examples are letters exchanged between Houlton, Maine, and Woodstock, New Brunswick. Table 1 lists the 24 line-office rate covers known to me; of course, others may exist. The table lists the covers chronologically, shows origin and destination, indicates the franking, and provides reference information that in most cases will lead to an image of the listed cover. I have images of every cover in the listing, and have removed duplicate listings caused by different interpretations of the Houlton datestamps, which are typically weakly struck. The two 2¢ 1869 covers identified as originating on January 28, 1870 are clearly different covers.

Date	From/To	Franking	Reference
May 7, 1851	Prescott, UC/Ogdensburgh, NY	stampless	Firby, 14 June 2007, lot 145
Jan. 15, 1855	Prescott, UC/Ogdensburgh, NY	stampless	275 Bennett, 23 April 2004, lot 127
Aug. 4, 1859	Windsor, UC/Detroit, MI	stampless	Firby, 14 June 2007, lot 146
Apr. 19, 1860	Ogdensburgh, NY/Prescott, UC	two 1¢ #24	275 Bennett, 23 April 2004, lot 127
Dec. 25, 1860	Houlton, ME/Woodstock, NB	pair 1¢ 1857	PFC #426,081
Feb. 16, 1861	Houlton, ME/U. Woodstock, NB	pair 1¢ #24	Figure 3
Apr. 26, 1861	U. Woodstock, NB/Houlton, ME	stampless	Harmer-Bennett (Switz.), 5-28-2005
July 13, 1862	Houlton, ME/Woodstock, NB	pair 1¢ #63	Figure 4
Sep. 8, 1862	Woodstock, NB/Houlton, ME	two 1¢ NB #6	New Brunswick collection
Feb. 21, 1867	Houlton, ME/Woodstock, NB	2¢ #73	275 Bennett, 23 April 2004, lot 130
July 20, 1869	Woodstock, NB/Houlton, ME	2¢ Lg Queen	Sissons, 11 February 1975, lot 372
Aug. 12, 1869	Houlton, ME/Woodstock, NB	2¢ #93	PF #426,082
Oct. 26, 1869	Houlton, ME/Woodstock, NB	2¢ #113	1054 Siegel, 10 Oct. 2013, lot 642
Jan. 28, 1870	Houlton, ME/Woodstock, NB	2¢ #113	275 Bennett, 23 April 2004, lot 131
Jan. 28, 1870	Houlton, ME/Woodstock, NB	2¢ #113	Stephen Rose collection
Feb. 11, 1870	Houlton, ME/Woodstock, NB	pair 1¢ #112	911 Siegel, 12 May 2006, lot 201
Mar. 2, 1870	Houlton, ME/Woodstock, NB	2¢ #113	PF #426,083
Mar. 15, 1870	Houlton, ME/Woodstock, NB	2¢ #113	PF #150,570
Apr. 19, 1870	Houlton, ME/Woodstock, NB	2¢ #113	Sissons, 11 February 1975, lot 372
Apr. 29, 1870	Houlton, ME/Woodstock, NB	2¢ #113	Figure 5
May 16, 1870	Houlton, ME/Woodstock, NB	2¢ #113	PF #118,671
Sep. 17, 1870	Houlton, ME/Woodstock, NB	2¢ #113	Gibbons Merkur, 25 Oct. 1978, lot 116
Unknown	Houlton, ME/Woodstock, NB	2¢ #113	Russ Auctions, 28 Nov 1987, lot 1091
Oct. 10, 187?	Houlton, ME/Woodstock, NB	2¢ #146	PF #426,084

Table 1. Census of line-office rate covers as compiled by the author. Note that 18 of the 24 covers originated in the U.S. and most are franked with 2¢ 1869 stamps.

Note that the first cover in the listing, the May 7, 1851 stampless cover from Prescott, Upper Canada, to Ogdensburgh, New York, dates from *before* the June 10, 1851 and June 12, 1851 letters from the Postmaster General of the United States agreeing to the establishment of the line-office rate. Note also that most of the covers are outbound, originating in the United States. Table 1 lists just four stampless and two stamp-bearing covers originating in BNA and sent to the United States.

Conclusion

The line-office rate is a rare and fascinating example of a special postal rate agreed to by the United States and the governments of Canada and New Brunswick. The covers are quite scarce, with only 24 examples so far recorded. Given how obscure and scarce the covers are, it is no surprise that collectors have attempted to explain other covers, not paying this special rate, as being line-office rate covers. However, upon analysis of all the relevant information, it seems clear that the cover from Calais, Maine, to St. Stephen, New Brunswick, is a drop-rate letter and not an example of a special 1¢ line-office rate.

Endnotes

1. The ferrage rate was a charge imposed by Canadian Post Offices to ferry a letter across the Niagara or St. Lawrence Rivers.
2. Winthrop S. Boggs, *The Postage Stamps and Postal History of Canada* (Kalamazoo, Mich.: Chambers Publishing Company, 1945), Vol. II, pp. 6-D—7-D.
3. *Ibid.*, pg. 8-D.
4. *Ibid.*, pg. 9-D.
5. C.M. Jephcott, V.G. Greene and John H.M. Young, *The Postal History of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, 1754-1867* (Toronto: Sissons Publications Ltd. 1964), pp. 276-77.
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*, pg. 234.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 277-78.
9. *United States Mail and Post Office Assistant* reprint (Chicago: Collectors Club of Chicago, 1975), Vol. 1, pg. 138.
10. Stanley B. Ashbrook, *19th Century U.S. Postal History: A Special Service Prepared by Stanley B. Ashbrook for a Selected Group of Philatelists Who are Especially Interested in U.S. Postal History, Postal Rates, Postal Markings, and the Unusual in U.S. Domestic and Foreign Rate Covers* Issue 7 (October 20, 1951), pp. 37-40, and photo 27; Issue 61 (April 1, 1956), pg. 489 and photograph 249.
11. Theron Wierenga, "U.S. Classics," *Stamps*, Nov. 22, 1969.
12. Theron Wierenga, "U.S. Classics," *Stamps*, Feb. 28, 1970 (emphasis added).
13. Susan M. McDonald, "Answer to Problem Cover in Issue No. 68," *Chronicle* 69, pg. 57.
14. Schuyler Rumsey Philatelic Auctions, Sale 60 (April 23-26, 2015), lot 1716; previously sold in Matthew Bennett, Inc., Sale 275, Dr. John L. Robertson Collection of U.S.-B.N.A. Cross-Border Postal History (April 23, 2004), lot 124.
15. Don L. Evans, *The United States 1¢ Franklin 1861-1867: and an Introduction to the Postal History of the Period* (Sidney, Ohio: Linn's Stamp News, 1997), pg. 363.
16. *Ibid.*
17. Richard E. Drews Philatelic Auctions, Sale 18 (November 6-7, 1998), lot 501.
18. Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries, Sale 1106 (June 25, 2015), lot 3084.
19. In addition to the price increase, the charge for a drop letter became a postage rate (per half ounce) rather than a fee (per mailpiece).
20. *Biographical Review, Volume XXIX, Containing Life Sketches of Leading Citizens of Somerset, Piscataquis, Hancock, Washington, and Aroostook Counties, Maine*, (Boston, MA: Biographical Review, 1898) pg. 179. The biography dates the establishment of King & Eaton (note the reversed order of names) as 1887; however, this is clearly incorrect as other public records show Eaton & King as being well established in 1865 and 1868. See *Journal of the Legislative Council of the Province of New Brunswick From 13th February to 23rd March 1868: The Third Session of the Twenty First General Assembly* (Fredericton, NB: G.E. Fennety, 1868), pg. 111 (reporting collection of export duties for a June 1865 shipment).
21. *Ibid.*
22. Maine Memory Network, Leigh Cummings Jr., "Shepard Cary: Lumberman, Legislator, Leader and Legend" maine-memory.net/sitebuilder/site/1982/page/3236/display?use_mmn=1 (last viewed October 4, 2015).
23. Matthew Bennett, Inc., Sale 275, *op. cit.*, lot 128; *see also* PFC #193684. ■



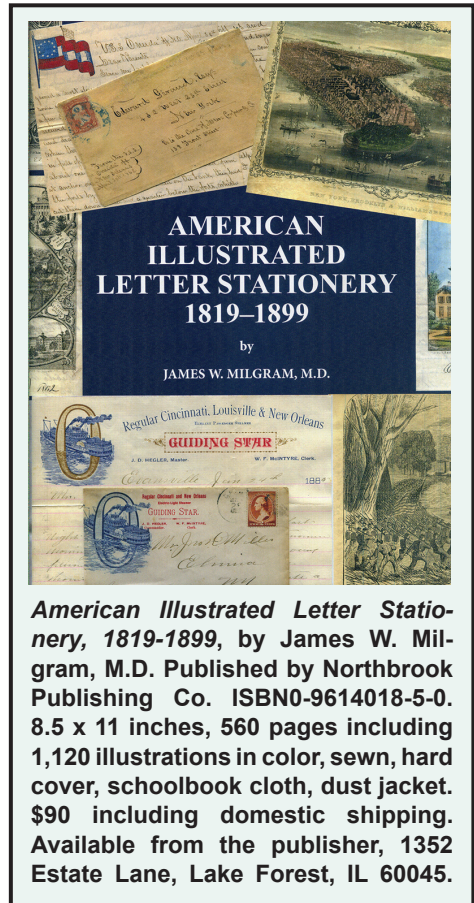
**AMERICAN ILLUSTRATED LETTER STATIONERY, 1819-1899,
BY JAMES W. MILGRAM, M.D.
REVIEWED BY DIANE DEBLOIS**

James Milgram’s latest book—*American Illustrated Letter Stationery, 1819-1899*—is primarily a handsome record of one extraordinary collection, along with a bibliographic listing of 525 books or articles written by Milgram on different aspects of United States postal history.

Certainly, Milgram has prepared readers for the acceptance of illustrated letter sheets as a vital aspect of philatelic postal history (where illustrated envelopes have long been appreciated) by a series of articles grouping items by city (New Orleans, St. Louis, the Capitol in D.C., and Cincinnati in issues of the *American Philatelist*, and New York most recently in the *Postal History Journal*). He is correct that separating illustrated envelopes from their contents was an artificial distinction, but it is one that few collectors make today—see the two excellent articles in the May *Chronicle* (“Lower Manhattan in the 1840s and 1850s, As Seen on Illustrated Mail” by Michael Heller, and “Postal and Related Relics of New York’s Crystal Palace and the 1853 World’s Fair” by Ken Lawrence).

In his introduction Milgram gives credit to the late Philip H. Jones, who discovered illustrated letter paper while collecting autographs; to the collection of the late Fred Faulstich; and to the large holdings at The Library Company of Philadelphia. He might have referenced other personal and institutional collections, but it is likely that this book will provide the illustrative material for future research in the field of 19th century illustration.

The stationery is grouped thematically, with the most exhaustive coverage of varieties and types of illustration under the heading Confederate Civil War Patriotic Letter Paper and Songsheets. This chapter could be viewed as a true catalog, with references. In the chapter on the output of the other side of the conflict, Milgram provides thumbnail listings of designs by printer, and refers the reader to other bibliographic listings both in his previous books and in institutions. The chapter on Presidential



Political Campaigns is very detailed—repeating some of the images from his 1994 book, but in color and with many additions. Temperance and postal reform appear under Other Causes, Historical, Political, and Military. A selection of valentines appears in a chapter that branches out into hand-decorated examples of both envelope and enclosure.

The chapter on Gold Rush Miner Lettersheets includes a listing of the 343 titles in *California's Pictorial Lettersheets: 1849-1869*, the impressive scholarly work by Joseph A. Baird—a boon, for Baird's 1967 book still commands a hefty after-market price—plus 23 additional titles from the Sloan auction of the Henry H. Clifford collection. A nice decision was to include extensive quotes from the letters written on the Milgram examples of the Baird listings.

Given an excuse to revisit the Baird work, I was disappointed in Milgram's inconsistent, incomplete and un-indexed readings of the images themselves. For instance, on a *View of Buffalo* "is a printer's imprint to the left under the picture that is difficult to read"—yet the image shows quite clearly the mark of Buffalo engraver H. Tubesing. A Chicago image is described as bearing "four different signatures of engravers, publishers and perhaps the artist." In fact, the engraver, Childs & Co., was Shubal Davis Childs, who retired in 1860; the job printers were Scott & Fulton of 191 Lake Street; the bookstore that sold the stationery was Keen & Lee at 146 Lake Street (Lee died in 1857 and Joseph Keen continued); and "Barry, del." certainly indicates the artist.

Helmuth Holtz, a German who joined the Union army in 1862, in 1860 drew images of Matagorda, Texas. Milgram's Figure 1-70 shows one of Holtz' designs, understood by the historic print community to have been sent by the artist to be lithographed in Hamburg. Other captions do include both what the eye can see and other information; the inclusion of the watermark on Figure 1-184 is a great detail. I just wished for more.

Except for the repetitiveness of patriotic images, the range and detail of the delineation of 19th century reality is what impresses me the most. City plats and ship rigging, the architecture of buildings, signage and cemetery plots, what people wore and, over all, what they chose to accompany their words to friends, family, clients—it all is compelling and an important record not found anywhere else. Historian David Henkin would add that this proliferation of inducement to write letters (for, as Milgram points out, this stationery was not expensive to purchase at the time) joined lowered postal rates, and population dispersion due to the Gold Rush and the Civil War, in "postalizing" Americans. That is, turning us into letter-writers—and providing the material for postal history. ■

THE "ERIVAN" COLLECTION—POSTMASTERS' PROVISIONALS: UNITED STATES AND CONFEDERATE STATES

REVIEWED BY CHARLES EPTING

"I am a person who is defined by endurance and persistence. I always have tried to successfully finish what I had begun, regardless of whether it was in business or in my private life. When an item caught my eye, I did not stop until the desired object was in my possession."

So begins the introduction to the recent book presenting photos of Erivan Haub's collection of United States and Confederate postmasters' provisional stamps. Open to almost any page of the oversized monograph, and you'll notice that Haub appears to have succeeded in acquiring his desired possessions. Published by the Global Philatelic Network as part of their ongoing "Edition Spéciale" series, this book illustrates dozens of items of the utmost philatelic importance, many of which have not been reproduced in print in decades.

"Edition Spéciale" differs from the GPN's more prolific "Edition D'Or" series in one very significant regard; whereas Edition D'Or reproduces exhibits that have won an inter-

national large gold medal, the Edition Spéciale presents collections that have never been exhibited competitively. Inherently this suggests that the material being shown in a book such as Haub's has remained out of the public spotlight for some time. While Edition D'Or seeks to preserve high-quality exhibits intact for future generations, Edition Spéciale seeks to bring world-class exhibits to light for the very first time.

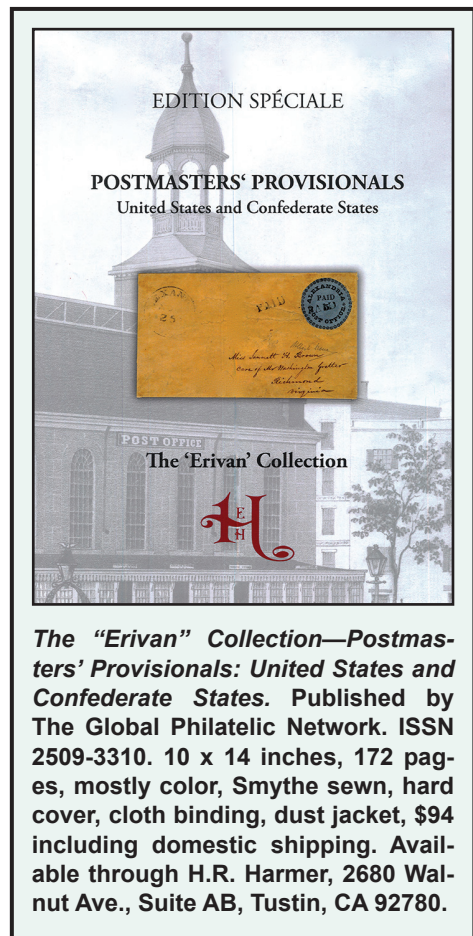
Erivan Haub is a name that may not be familiar to all but the most dedicated collectors of United States classic issues. Having lived in Germany for all but a brief period of his life, he has remained more or less invisible amongst American collecting circles. His name came briefly to U.S. attention in 1979 when the trade group he owns acquired the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company (A&P). Yet despite his anonymity, there are numerous items in his collection that are immediately recognizable to even casual stamp collectors—items that rank among philately's greatest treasures.

The introduction to the book lays out Haub's collecting history and habits for the first time. From his childhood exploits selling cheap stamps to classmates to his first major purchases—including a Bavarian 1-Kreuzer black—Haub's story is simultaneously relatable and disconnected from the reality of most collectors. While the passion and excitement Haub describes have been experienced by every philatelist, the images accompanying the introduction remind the reader that Haub's collecting interests are far beyond the means of the average stamp enthusiast.

The next section of the book provides brief biographies of 10 philatelists who owned many of the pieces presented from Haub's collection. These are names that are familiar to all—Tiffany and Ferrari, Hind and Ashbrook, Caspary and Boker, to name a few. While all of these men owned some of the gems pictured in the book, none of them ever came close to compiling a collection as complete as Haub's. While little will be learned from the brief biographical summaries, their inclusion helps to cement Erivan Haub's place in the pantheon of exceptional philatelists.

The majority of the book contains high-quality scans and very brief descriptions of some of the finest provisional stamps and covers from the Haub collection. Fittingly, United States Postmasters' Provisionals come first—and remarkably, there are examples of 10 of the 11 cities to have issued such stamps (only Annapolis is not included). In some instances, the covers in the Haub collection are unique—Lockport and Boscawen, for example. For more common cities (New York, Baltimore, St. Louis), Haub has managed to acquire some of the finest examples—unique frankings, earliest known uses, and so on.

For each cover the provenance is given as completely as possible, and the names of the men featured at the start of the book can be found on nearly every page. Such information is an important historical record that works to contribute to the reader's appreciation of the collection. The page design mimics the exhibit pages on which Mr. Haub's collection



The "Erivan" Collection—Postmasters' Provisionals: United States and Confederate States. Published by The Global Philatelic Network. ISSN 2509-3310. 10 x 14 inches, 172 pages, mostly color, Smythe sewn, hard cover, cloth binding, dust jacket, \$94 including domestic shipping. Available through H.R. Harmer, 2680 Walnut Ave., Suite AB, Tustin, CA 92780.

was recently displayed in the Court of Honor at New York international stamp show. Many feature a small image of the city in which the provisional was issued and the name of the issuing postmaster, followed by the image of the cover, a note on the number of existing copies, and the provenance.

The same format is followed in the second section of the book, which details Haub's collection of Confederate Postmasters' Provisionals. In all, 44 different cities are represented—and once again, many of these items are unique or known from just a handful of surviving examples. Highlights, of which there are too many to list in full, include the famed "Big Beaumont" (unique on or off cover), the unique Bridgemont pair, the unique Franklin (N.C.) 5¢ press-printed envelope, the only two Grove Hill covers, and the unique Pleasant Shade pair on cover.

Particularly in the Confederate section, the number of unique and "only a handful known" items is almost overwhelming. Any of these items on their own would be philatelic rarities; but after so many pages picturing the "cream of the crop" of provisional covers, it becomes hard to appreciate the true scarcity of the items Haub has acquired over the years.

One of the most striking things about this book is how many of the covers are actually *famous* amongst philatelic circles. The "Alexandria Blue Boy." The "Lockport Cover." The "Big Beaumont." These stamps are true legends—their names have often appeared in print as examples of the rarest and most expensive stamps. To see them all collected together in one place, for me, makes this a truly important piece of philatelic literature.

A few other things are worth noting. Produced in Germany, the book favors "European" English. For example, "provenance" is rendered "provenience"—a little-used form of the word typically favored by the British. While this is not a typo per-se, it may be distracting to American readers. It is also worth noting the book's limited availability; once the current printing sells out, there are no plans for it to be reproduced in the future.

Ultimately, this book serves two distinct purposes. The first is as a pictorial reference for collectors and students of Postmasters' Provisionals both from the 1840s and from the Confederate era. The illustrations are immeasurably better than those in Scott and Dietz, and for the first time, fine detail on some of the most important covers in U.S. philately can be examined. The book's coffee-table size and slick layout suggest another purpose, akin to a catalog from an art exhibition. Many of the Haub covers are attractive and impressive even to the untrained eye. Several people I have shown the book to, who have absolutely no background in philately, have been unable to put it down, even though they may not always grasp the full importance of what they're seeing.

In the interest of full disclosure, I must mention my role in the production of this book. After the writing and design was completed in Germany, I edited the text in order to reduce the number of translation errors and create a consistent tone (particularly in the introduction). But this review and opinions expressed in it are those of a critical reader as much as possible. ■

**THE GRINNELL MISSIONARIES:
GENUINE STAMP RARITIES OR CLEVER FAKES
CREATED TO CHEAT COLLECTORS?
BY KEN LAWRENCE**

REVIEWED BY MICHAEL LAURENCE

During the Washington international stamp show in 2006 there appeared three pamphlet-sized publications devoted to the Grinnell Missionaries, that controversial holding of 80 or so first-issue Hawaii stamps whose discovery almost a century ago launched what Stanley Ashbrook called "America's most fantastic philatelic story."

The three 2006 pamphlets, two hinting the Grinnells might be genuine and one, from the expert committee of the Royal Philatelic Society, supporting the opinion that the stamps are fakes, were briefly noted in reviews by yours truly that appeared in *Chronicle* 212, our November 2006 issue.

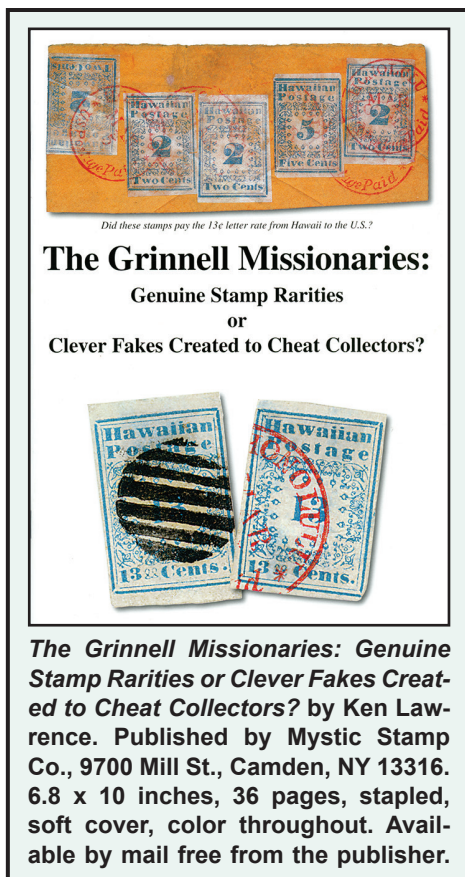
A decade later, during the recent New York international show, another shoe dropped, with the publication (by Mystic Stamp Company, current owner of the Grinnells) of a 36-page pamphlet written by investigative journalist Ken Lawrence and provocatively titled *The Grinnell Missionaries: Genuine Stamp Rarities or Clever Fakes Created to Cheat Collectors?*

Spoiler alert: The answer is (B), “clever fakes created to cheat collectors.”

In marshalling the facts that lead up to this conclusion, author Lawrence, well known for the thoroughness of his research, ploughs through a vast sea of evidence, like a whale sifting plankton. The Grinnells are fake all right, but as the author makes clear, not for the various reasons many experts have advanced over the years. In the instance of the Grinnells, going all the way back to the well-documented Los Angeles court trial in 1922, the expert community has not covered itself with glory.

But in fairness to those experts who went astray, the Grinnells are extraordinarily persuasive. See for example the piece illustrated in Figure 1, which showcases no fewer than five Missionary stamps—four 2¢ and a 5¢, presumably paying the 13¢ rate from Hawaii to the mainland. If genuine, this item would certainly spice up a postal history exhibit.

One of the formidable obstacles to expertising Missionary stamps, in 1922 and to-



Did these stamps pay the 13¢ letter rate from Hawaii to the U.S.?

The Grinnell Missionaries:
Genuine Stamp Rarities
or
Clever Fakes Created to Cheat Collectors?

The Grinnell Missionaries: Genuine Stamp Rarities or Clever Fakes Created to Cheat Collectors? by Ken Lawrence. Published by Mystic Stamp Co., 9700 Mill St., Camden, NY 13316. 6.8 x 10 inches, 36 pages, stapled, soft cover, color throughout. Available by mail free from the publisher.



Figure 1. If genuine, this piece would be worth millions. Four 2¢ Missionaries along with a 5¢, tied to the reverse of an envelope piece, plausibly simulating the 13¢ postage that would be required on a letter from Hawaii to the United States in the early 1850s.

day, is the absence of known genuine reference copies against which to compare a suspect stamp. From the early days of our hobby, the Missionaries have been among the most expensive (and thus the most elusive) of the world's stamp rarities. Because of their popularity, their tropical origin and their fragile paper, almost all of them have been repaired, sometimes extensively. Lawrence documents this amply. One result of all the repair work is that even genuine Missionaries can't necessarily serve as reference copies. Lawrence notes that had George Grinnell not been so greedy, he might have sold his stamps to a patient dealer who could have worked them gradually into the marketplace. Over the years, the fakes (because of their unrepaired condition) might have become the standard references.

Lawrence's research sometimes ranges too widely. Outed as the likely creator of the fake stamps is a Los Angeles schoolteacher named Charles Sidney Thompson, who died in 1960. Thompson was a part-time stamp dealer who worked with Grinnell at a Los Angeles museum and who testified ineffectively as an expert witness at the Grinnell trial. The only evidence Lawrence advances to suggest Thompson had the skills to create these remarkable fakes is the fact that he once applied "WAR STAMP" overprints to Washington-Franklin stamps. On-cover and off-cover examples of these artifacts are illustrated in the pamphlet, but to me they are unpersuasive and irrelevant. Lack of solid information about who made the Grinnell Missionaries (and how) remains one of the big gaps in this fascinating story.

What proved beyond doubt that the Grinnells are fakes was close examination not of the stamps but of the red Honolulu circular datestamp with which many of them are cancelled. Multiple strikes from *nvmbcthis* marking tie the stamps in Figure 1. It differs in key aspects from known genuine strikes, and Grinnell supporters created some wonderfully imaginative scenarios to explain how this might have come to pass. But scientific examination (conducted at Lawrence's recommendation) showed that the red ink of the Grinnell markings contains synthetic compounds that simply did not exist in the 1850s. Case closed.

One poignant note for me personally: In the summer of 1951, editor-publisher George Ward Linn embarked on a wide-ranging, microscopic and seemingly endless investigation into the creation and provenance of the Grinnell Missionaries, with the stated purpose of establishing their authenticity. I never met Linn, but as editor of *Linn's Weekly Stamp News* for more than two decades, I sat at Linn's desk, lived with his legacy, sifted through a lot of his correspondence and grew to be a great admirer of the man. Cranky candor and unshakable independence made him a good role model.

I was well aware of Linn's lengthy investigation into the Grinnell Missionaries. But I always regarded it as a quixotic quest to "set things right" (Linn's own words) undertaken by an obsessive-compulsive reporter who was exempt from traditional editorial restrictions because he owned the newspaper that was publishing his dispatches.

Alas, in the documents that Mystic acquired when it purchased the Grinnell stamps, Lawrence discovered that Linn had a secret contract with the Grinnell heirs and "would have profited handsomely" if his reporting had successfully rehabilitated their stamps.

Philatelic journalism was never to be confused with real journalism, but this is way out of bounds. What a disappointment.

The Grinnell Missionaries is well researched, well written, well illustrated and well printed. Even better than all that, it's free. See ordering information in the nearby box. Address your request to Mystic Stamp Company, Customer Service, Grinnell Pamphlet. For bibliophiles, Mystic has also created a hardbound version, but for this there is a charge.

Ashbrook was correct as well as prescient in his pronouncement that the Grinnell Missionaries constitute America's most fantastic stamp story. For many collectors (including this reviewer), the Grinnells after 100 years have transcended their still-mysterious origins to enter the realm of legend. As with Santa Claus and the Tooth Fairy, the facts just don't matter—we will always want them to be genuine. ■

THE COVER CORNER

EXPLANATION OF PROBLEM COVER IN CHRONICLE 250

John Wright, long-time editor of this section, has taken a leave of absence while he recovers from the effects of a home fire. There were no injuries, but the fire seriously disrupted both his personal and business life, and he needs some time to regroup. In the interim, your editor in chief has picked up the reins, with some substantial assistance this issue from Richard Frajola and Jerry Palazolo.

Our problem cover from *Chronicle 250*, shown here as Figure 1, was selected in part because it fit neatly into our special New York-themed issue, supporting the big international stamp show that opened in Manhattan in late May. This item was originally in the collection of Judge Robert S. Emerson (1876-1937), still remembered today, a century after he flourished, for his fastidious taste in classic U.S. covers. After Emerson, the Figure 1 cover went into the collection of “a European Connoisseur,” where it lay dormant until that collection was auctioned by the Robert A. Siegel firm in late 2015 (Siegel sale 1115, lot 2223).

As the Figure 1 image shows, this is a very attractive Black Jack cover that entered the mails in New York City and is addressed there—though the manuscript endorsement at left calls for the cover to be returned, if undeliverable, to an individual in Manchester, New Hampshire. The cover shows two circular datestamps and a handstamped pointing hand. Without posing any specific questions, our Cover Corner write-up expressed the supposition that there’s a larger story lurking in this cover, and we invited readers to tell it. The Siegel catalog description hinted at a part of the tale: “although prepaid only 2¢ for city delivery, the post office apparently sent it to another place without postage due.”

Unbeknownst to us when we selected it, this cover had provoked considerable discussion, around the time of its sale, on Richard Frajola’s message board. The year-date of the cover is not evident, but the way the cover was handled suggests 1867 or possibly 1868. That’s a large part of the story.



Figure 1. Our problem cover from *Chronicle 250*: a lovely Black Jack cover, posted for local delivery in New York City but bearing a Manchester, N.H., return endorsement.

The cover was dropped into the mail at New York City and addressed locally. The very odd address contains no street name, just a Civil War regimental citation (“Mr. John Kenny, Late Co. ‘E,’ 36 New York Volunteers.”) The cover was first handstamped at New York on December 26. The markings suggest it sat in the General Delivery section for almost a month and then, having not been picked up, was remailed to the sender per the return endorsement, on January 23.

The lack of return postage due provides a clue to year-dating the cover. The endorsement at left reads: “If not delivered in 10 days, return to Isaac Riddle, Manchester, N.H.”

From 1863 until mid-1866, mail so endorsed (under the Postal Act of 1863, Section 28) was to be returned to the sender, with return postage collected. But effective July 1, 1866, Section 2 of the Postal Act of 12 June 1866 repealed this provision and required that “all letters bearing such endorsements shall hereinafter be returned to the writers thereof without additional postage charge.” Thus, the absence of a postage due assessment suggests this cover was mailed after mid-1866.

Frajola subsequently located a strikingly similar cover from the same sender, not quite this nice, with the same return endorsement and addressed to another former member of Company “E” of the 36th New York Volunteers. Sender Isaac Riddle apparently sent the same letter to many members of Company “E,” seeking information about his missing brother, who had been part of that Company. Those letters that never reached their addressees were in due course returned to Riddle per his endorsement. He kept them for posterity and they ultimately found their way into philatelic hands. Thus, it’s likely that more such covers exist.

PROBLEM COVER FOR THIS ISSUE

Our Problem Cover for this issue, shown in Figure 2, is a stampless folded letter from Gray, Maine to N. Edgecomb, Maine. The cover bears a manuscript endorsement “Way 6.” The “Gray, Maine” circular datestamp appears to read “NOV 17” and the cover is additionally handstamped “PAID” and “WAY.” The question is: What’s going on here? Prepayment of a way cover, while not unimaginable, is uncommon or even rare. The honorific “Esqr.” indicates the recipient was a lawyer. Prepayment of any letter to a lawyer is unusual.

This cover was submitted to us by Route Agent Jerry Palazolo (palazolo@bellsouth.net), who thinks he knows the explanation. Please send thoughts to Jerry or to the editor in chief (contact information in the masthead on page 207). ■

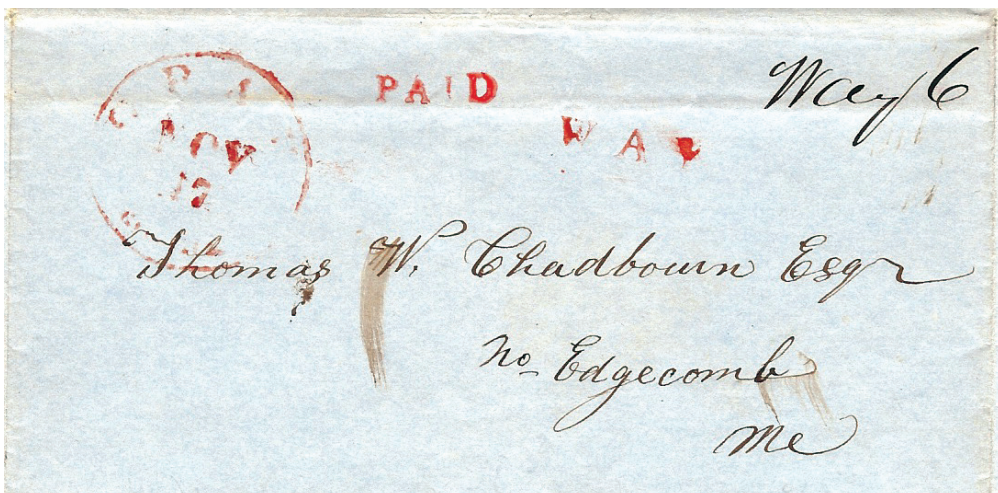


Figure 1. Our problem cover for this issue: Stampless folded letter from Gray to North Edgecomb, Maine, with “Way 6” in manuscript and handstamps “PAID” and “WAY.”

*When you think of United States postal history provenance,
what names should come to mind?*

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Hessel, Moody, Waterhouse—and the Harmers**

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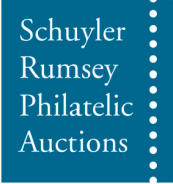
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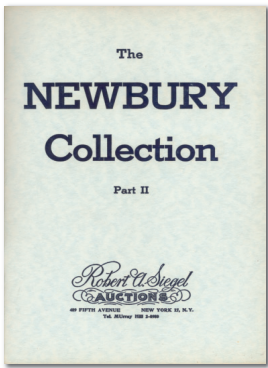
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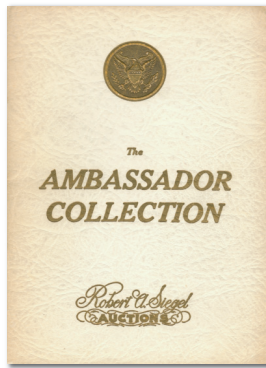
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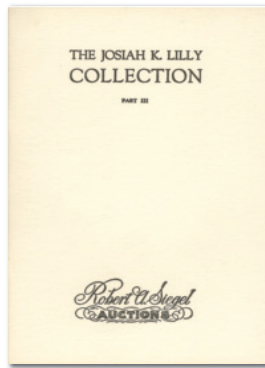
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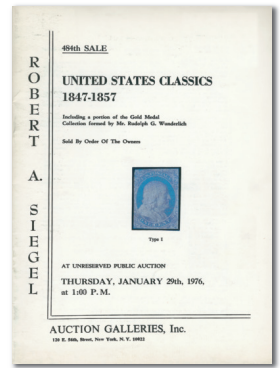
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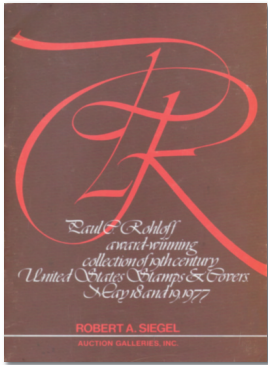
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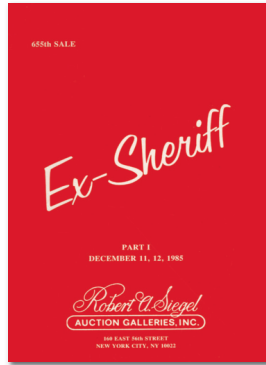
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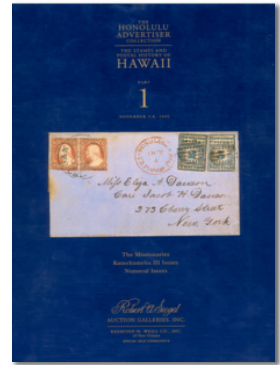
Rohloff 1977



Sheriff 1985



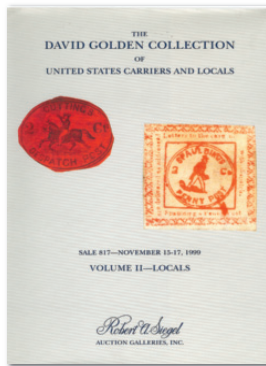
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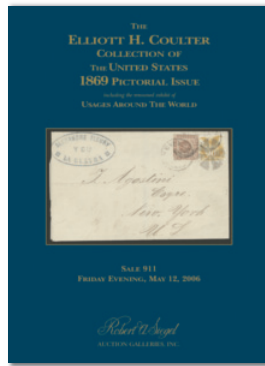
Honolulu Advertiser 1995



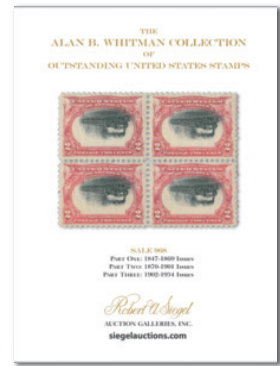
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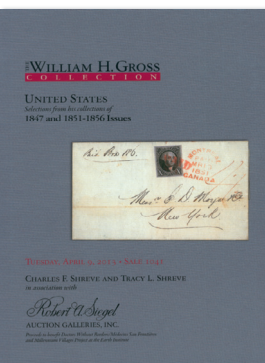
Whitman 2009



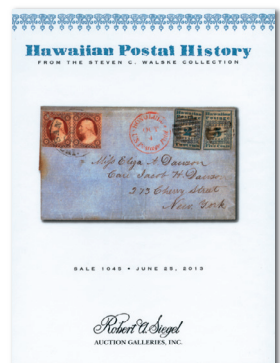
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Gross 2013



Walske 2013

Great collections have ONE NAME in common.