

The

# Chronicle

of the U.S. Classic Postal Issues



New Orleans to France, early 1870, transatlantic carriage via *Ocean Queen*, under contract to Ruger's American Line. Of the 7,397 covers known to have been carried on this evanescent steamship line, this is one of 10 survivors so far recorded. In a survey article in our Foreign Mails section, James Baird looks at nine short-lived U.S. transatlantic steamship lines that operated—often very briefly—between 1840 and 1875, and provides the first attempt at a census of the scarce covers they carried.

May 2017

Volume 69, No. 2

Whole No. 254



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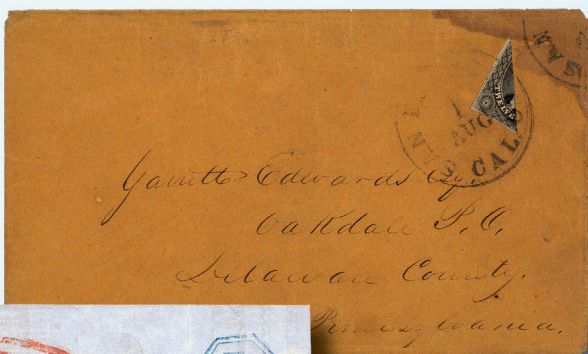


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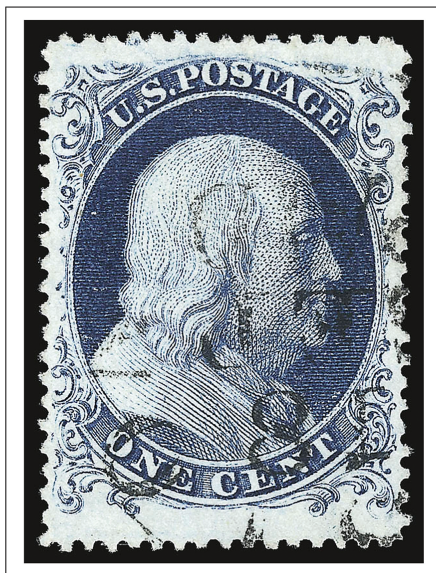


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**THE CHRONICLE of the U.S. Classic Postal Issues** is published quarterly in February, May, August and November by the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society, Inc., at 2855 Willowmere Woods Dr., Vienna, Virginia 22180. Periodicals-class postage paid at Madrid, IA 50156 and additional mailing office. Subscription price \$35.00. Printed in U.S.A. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to 12751 W. Alameda Dr., Lakewood, CO 80288.

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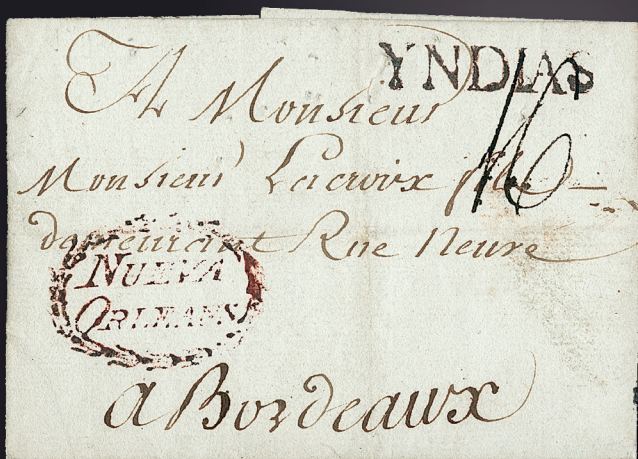
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# The Chronicle

## of the U.S. Classic Postal Issues

May 2017  
Whole No. 254

Published quarterly in  
February, May, August and November

Volume 69  
Number 2

\$8.75 Members  
\$10 Non-Members

Official publication of the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society, Inc.  
(Unit 11, A.P.S.) [www.uspcs.org](http://www.uspcs.org)

Annual Dues  
\$35

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## Ashbrook Files Now on the PF's Website

From the late 1930's until his death in 1958, Stanley B. Ashbrook maintained an extensive correspondence with virtually all of the leading dealers and collectors of those times which he filed in scrap books. He prepared notes on index cards of both stamps and covers that had come to his attention through his correspondence with dealers and collectors, from auction catalogs, and from his own research and studies. Beginning in the 1950's he made color slides of stamps and covers which he had examined in the course of his work. Following Ashbrook's death, the PF acquired all of this massive collection. Carefully maintained over the years, this significant body of research was only available for study at the PF's offices. Pictured below are the scrap books of correspondence and card files, and a close up of a drawer of index cards as they have been preserved by the PF for nearly 60 years.

In 2016, thanks to a generous grant from the David T. Beals III, Charitable Trust, the PF began the process of the digitization of all of these materials. Now completed, this massive collection has been posted on the PF's website in support of its educational mission, and through the benefit of technology, made instantly available to all students of philately. The volume of information contained in this collection is truly staggering: 43 scrap books containing over 10,000 images of letters, articles and other documents, 1,200 color slides, and 34 file drawers containing 35,000 3 x 5 index cards organized and arranged by subject. Enjoy the search!



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## THE EDITOR'S PAGE

MICHAEL LAURENCE

### IN THIS ISSUE

This issue of the *Chronicle* introduces John D. Bowman as the new editor of our Carriers and Locals section, a portfolio that has been vacant for almost two years. As a long-time collector and student of Carrier and Local stamps, with an emphasis on the Boyd posts, Bowman brings impressive writing and research credentials to his new assignment. In his initial section (page 129), Bowman examines a Boyd's cover carried into Manhattan by a pilot-boat captain, and uses the cover as a launchpad for a fascinating discussion of harbor pilots and the role they played in the early history of New York City.

In our 1847 section, Gordon Eubanks continues to make good use of the searchable database of 1847 covers that is now accessible on our Society's website. This time Eubanks has massaged the data to extract a listing of all known 1847 covers that bear three or more stamps. They are surprisingly few—just 98 out of 15,189 known covers. The nine covers Eubanks has chosen to illustrate—some of them never before shown in color—will take your breath away. Eubanks' article, "Covers with Three or More 1847 Stamps," begins on page 119.

The small Boston PAID grid cancel, in red, was used for just a few weeks in early July, 1851. Examples are scarce and desirable. In an article leading off our 1851 section (page 135), Jay Kunstreich shows some nice examples of the small Boston PAID both in red and black, compares the small marking with its larger and much more common cousin, and presents an initial census of the red examples, of which 13 strikes are known on 1¢ 1851 stamps and 55 on 3¢ 1851s.

The always-prolific James Milgram continues to enrich our hobby with his output and his versatility. In this issue, Milgram articles appear in three different *Chronicle* sections, a hat trick that to my knowledge has not previously been achieved. The Stampless section, of which Milgram is editor, contains his short article on quarterly prepayment markings, found on circular mail from the 1860s and 1870s. Milgram explains the regulatory basis of these markings and shows examples from Boston, New York and Philadelphia. Our 1851 section concludes with a Milgram article comparing four 3¢ 1857 covers, all posted in various Confederate states during the opening days of the Confederate postal service, illustrating aspects of the transition from one system to the other. And our 1861 section contains a third Milgram article, on a category of Civil War soldiers' due markings. The article, which begins on page 142, updates the catalog-type listing of handstamped and preprinted certification markings previously presented in Milgram's Civil War book.

Two years ago, in our May 2015 issue, we used the *Chronicle* centerfold to reproduce a cloth bandana on which had been printed an elaborate chart of towns and distances that had apparently been created for postal purposes in the late 18th century. The accompanying article, written by Diane DeBlois, contained a footnoted reference to an archival document that was the apparent source of the bandana information. This citation helped colonial postal history researcher Tim O'Connor find the original document in the archive of the Massachusetts Historical Society. The newly rediscovered document, dating from 1796, is here published (for the first time ever, we believe), again on our centerfold, accompanied by an explanatory article by DeBlois with some useful background on Samuel A. Ruddock,

*(Editor's Page concluded on page 203)*

## PRESTAMP & STAMPLESS PERIOD

JAMES W. MILGRAM, EDITOR

### POSTMARKS ON STAMPLESS COVERS INDICATING QUARTERLY PREPAYMENT OF POSTAGE ON PRINTED MATTER

JAMES W. MILGRAM, M.D.

Figure 1 shows the address portion of a broadside newspaper from the “New England Loyal Publication Society,” a group that was founded in 1863 with the goal of boosting public support for the Union war efforts. As the Figure 1 photo shows, the addressee (designated on the preprinted address label affixed) was the *Jeffersonian* of Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania, a Republican newspaper.

The circular postal marking on this cover reads “PRE PAID/QUARTERLY/BOSTON, MASS.” This marking is listed in the Blake-Davis book on Boston postal markings as #2199, with examples noted from 1865 and 1866.



**Figure 1. Folded broadside newspaper sheet from May 1864 with printed address label and postmark “PRE PAID QUARTERLY BOSTON, MASS.”**

This marking and the similar markings discussed below, served to indicate that the postage had been prepaid by the recipient according to the postal regulations then current. These would be Sections 17 and 18 of the postal laws of 1863. Section 17 states that stamps must be used to pay postage on transient printed matter (newspapers and periodicals remailed by individuals, a frequent occurrence in the 19th century). Section 18 states:

*And be it further enacted, That upon the following mailable matter the postage shall be paid before delivery for not less than one quarter nor more than one year...otherwise the postage shall be collected thereon as on transient matter: Upon regular weekly, tri-weekly, semi-weekly, and daily publications, and all other regular publications, issued from a known office of publication at stated periods and sent to regular subscribers.*

In *The United States Mail and Post Office Assistant*, that invaluable monthly postmaster’s periodical reprinted in 1976 by The Collectors Club of Chicago, pertinent newspaper

regulations are published in most issues beginning in May, 1869, and continuing through the last reprinted issue (September, 1872). Under the heading “Newspaper Postage” there is typically an entry detailing payment schedules for various time periods and publishing frequencies. A paragraph headed “POSTAGE PER QUARTER” explained in detail how the prepaid quarterly postage was calculated:

**POSTAGE PER QUARTER** (to be paid quarterly or yearly in advance) on **NEWSPAPERS** and **PERIODICALS** issued less frequently than once a week, sent to actual subscribers, in any part of the United States:

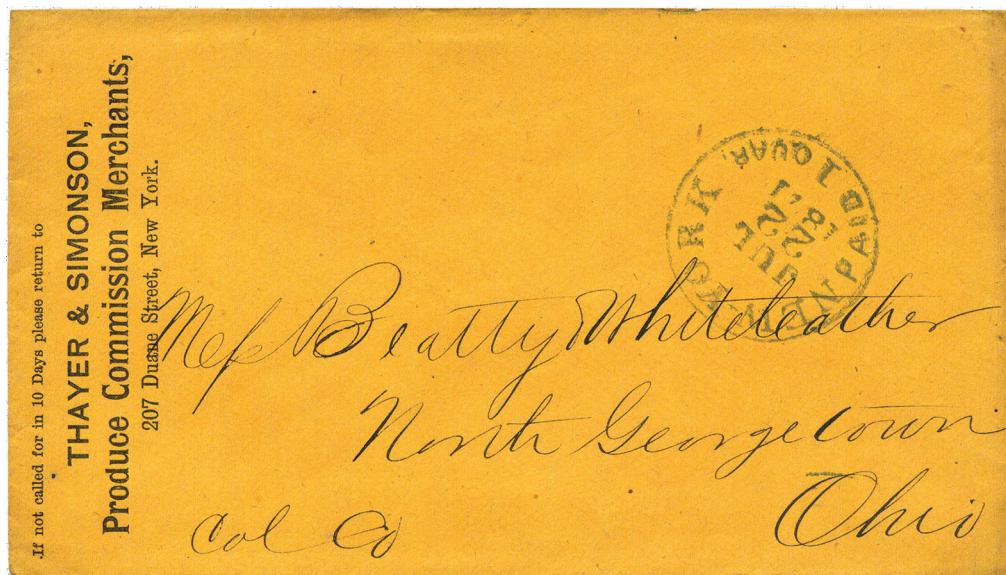
Semi-monthly, not over 4 oz.	6¢
“ over 4 oz. and not over 8 oz.	12¢
“ over 8 oz. and not over 12 oz.	18¢
Monthly, not over 4 oz.	3¢
“ over 4 oz. and not over 8 oz.	6¢
“ over 8 oz. and not over 12 oz.	9¢
Quarterly, not over 4 oz.	1¢
“ over 4 oz. and not over 8 oz.	2¢
“ over 8 oz. and not over 12 oz.	3¢

Quarterly postage cannot be paid for less than *three months*. If a subscription begins at any other time than the commencement of an *official* quarter, [i.e., beginning January 1, April 1, July 1 and October 1] the postage received by the postmaster must still be entered in his account for that quarter. Subscribers for short terms—exceeding three months, say four or five months—can pay quarterly postage for the actual term of their subscriptions, that is for *one quarter* and a third, *one quarter* and two-thirds, etc. The law only requires that *at least one quarter’s* postage shall be prepaid, and not more than one year’s postage. Any term between one quarter and one year can therefore be prepaid at proportionate rates.

From the complexity of this calculation it’s easy to see why postmarks do not show a specific value, but simply indicate that postage has been prepaid on a quarterly basis.

In 1871 New York used two varieties of quarterly postmarks. I have seen them only on envelopes that contained printed lists of prices on commission goods, but it’s possible they were also used on periodicals, comparable to the example shown in Figure 1.

The earlier type of New York marking is struck on the cover shown in Figure 2. The postmark reads “NEW-YORK/PAID 1 QUAR./JUL 22 1871.” This envelope bears the corner cachet of a commission merchant who was sending a printed listing of current prices to a firm in Ohio. Another cover bears a similar postmark dated MAY 6 1871.



**Figure 2. Orange envelope sent to Ohio, bearing the corner imprint of a produce wholesaler and the handstamped marking “NEW-YORK/ PAID 1 QUAR. JUL 22 1871.”**

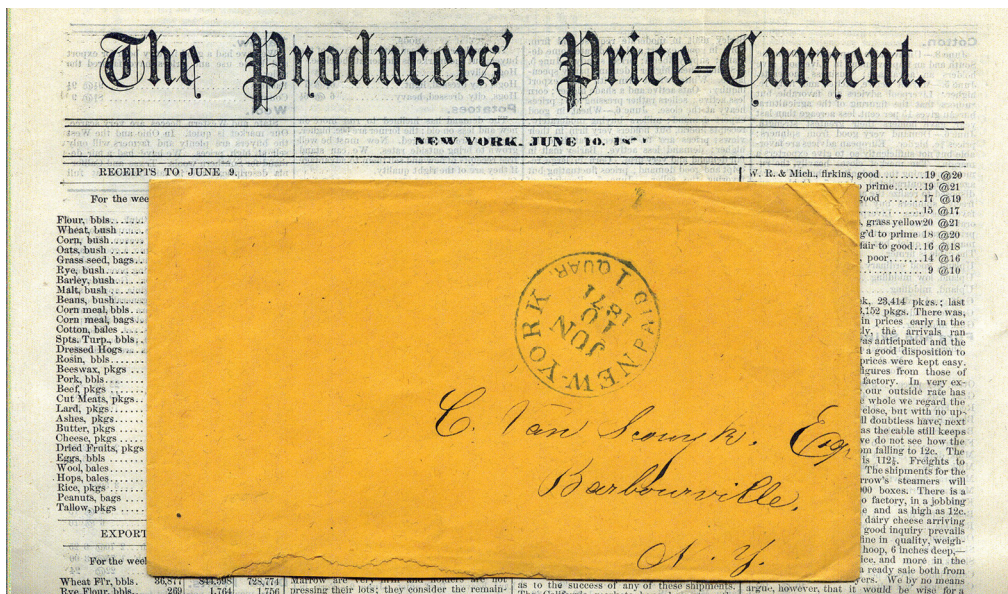


Figure 3. The same marking as on the cover Figure 2, dated a few weeks earlier: “NEW-YORK/ PAID 1 QUAR. JUN 10 1871.” The envelope is shown overlying the printed listing that it carried, a newsletter of wholesale prices called *The Producers' Price-Current*.

Figure 3 shows another cover from the same era with the same postmark. This envelope bears no cornercard but still contains its the original enclosure, a printed pricelist of various agricultural commodities, shown opened up behind the cover. The postmark is dated JUN 10 1871 and was sent to a small New York town. I have seen a very similar enclosure within another cover with the same marking, dated JUN 24 1871.

A different New York postmark is shown on the cover in Figure 4. The text reads “NEW-YORK/PAID QUARTERLY/OCT 7 1871” and the surrounding text is in sans-serif lettering. A different cover shows this postmark with a date of “JUN 17 1871” indicating an overlap in the usage of the two different postmarks. All these covers appear to have held just one thin printed sheet.

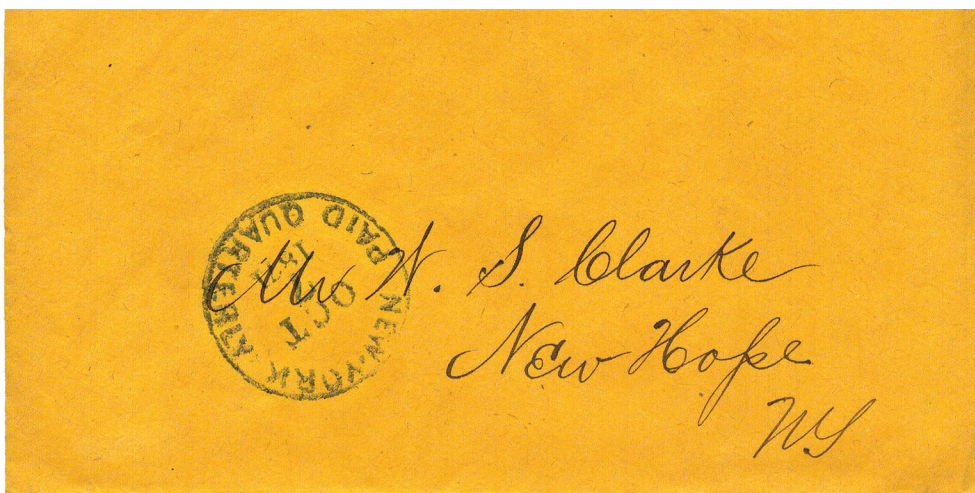


Figure 4. A different New York postmark from the same time period: “NEW-YORK PAID QUARTERLY OCT 7 1871” with the outer lettering all in sans-serif type.



**Figure 5. Undated cover bearing “PRE-PAID QUARTERLY PHILA PA.” addressed to the State Library at Springfield, Massachusetts.**

Figure 5 shows a cover with a marking from Philadelphia that obviously served the same purpose. The cover is addressed to the state library in Springfield, Massachusetts, and the marking reads “PRE-PAID QUARTERLY PHILA PA.” Unfortunately, this cover lacks an enclosure and cannot be year-dated. None of these interesting and unusual postmarks is listed in *The American Stampless Cover Catalog*. I would like to learn of additional examples. ■

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*When you think of United States postal history provenance,  
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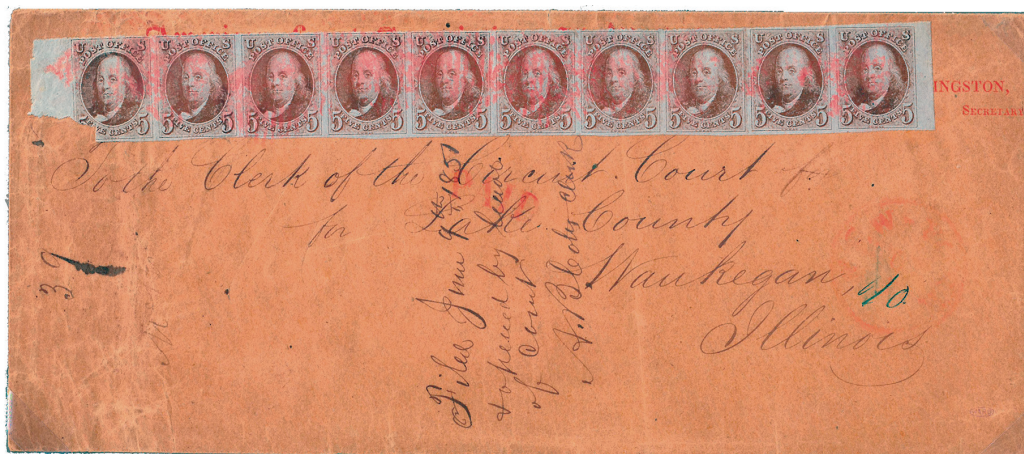


## COVERS WITH THREE OR MORE 1847 STAMPS

GORDON EUBANKS

The vast majority of 1847 covers bear one or sometimes two stamps: usually a 5¢ stamp paying the single rate for a distance under 300 miles, a 10¢ stamp paying the over-300-mile rate, or two stamps paying the double rate (over one-half ounce and under one ounce). This article discusses covers that show three or more 1847 stamps. There aren't many: fewer than 100.

All known covers with three or more copies of either the 5¢ or 10¢ 1847 stamp are listed in the tabular data presented on the following three pages. This information was extracted from the online census of 1847 covers on the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society website.<sup>1</sup> There are currently 15,189 listings in the 1847 cover census, which is updated continuously. Of these, only 98 bear three or more 1847 stamps—less than seven-tenths of one percent of the recorded covers.



**Figure 1. The largest multiple of 1847 stamps known on cover: A strip of 10 5¢ stamps (a full horizontal row) on a cover sent in 1851 from New York to Waukegan, Illinois.**

In the tabular data that follows, the covers are listed chronologically, along with the number and denomination of the stamps, origin and destination information, and the ID number of the cover in the USPCS online census. Excluded from the tabulation are covers that have been determined to be fake or to which stamps have been added or are missing.

### Largest recorded multiples—more than six stamps

The largest recorded on-cover multiple of either 1847 denomination is a horizontal strip of ten of the 5¢ stamp, a complete row from the left pane. This cover, shown in Figure 1, was posted at New York City on June 7, 1851, addressed to Waukegan, Illinois. The  
*(text continued on page 122)*

Date	# of stamps		From/To	Census	Reference
	5¢	10¢		ID#	
11 Aug 1847	3	0	Baltimore/Philadelphia	2065	
16 Aug 1847	3	0	Boston/NYC	2873	
14 Sep 1847	0	3	Philadelphia/Port Gibson, Miss.	11679	
18 Apr 1848	4	0	Phila/Greenville VA	10513	
20 Jun 1848	0	3	USExpMailBoston/Philadelphia	12903	
24 Jun 1848	0	3	Northampton MA/NYC	4259	
7 Aug 1848	3	0	Montreal/Burlington VT	244	
11 Aug 1848	4	0	NYC/Mt Vernon OH	6185	
15 Aug 1848	0	3	USExpMailBoston/Pictou Nova Scotia	12904	
16 Aug 1848	1	3	NYC/Girvan, Scotland	8886	
22 Aug 1848	3	2	NYC/Halifax, Nova Scotia	8887	
27 Sep 1848	0	6	NYC/Paris	8100	Figure 6
2 Oct 1848	4	0	Boston/Baltimore	3046	
23 Oct 1848	4	0	Albany/Baltimore	5178	
28 Oct 1848	1	3	NYC/Belgium	8888	
31 Oct 1848	0	3	USExpMailNYC/Sheffield, England	13244	
XX Oct 1848	0	3	USExpMailNYC/Kingston England	13245	
4 Nov 1848	1	3	Waterford/Rouses Point, NY	9560	
2 Dec 1848	1	3	Mobile/Greenock, Scotland	167	
8 Jan 1849	0	4	Buffalo/South Norwalk, CT	5567	
14 Feb 1849	0	3	Montreal/NYC	267	
19 Feb 1849	5	0	Philadelphia/Warrington, England	10673	
19 Apr 1849	4	0	St. Louis/NYC	4621	
23 May 1849	0	3	Philadelphia/Providence	11790	
31 May 1849	4	0	NYC/St. Catharines, Canada	6472	
8 Jun 1849	4	0	Boston/Baltimore	12850	
26 Jun 1849	4	0	New Haven/NYC	552	
XX Jul 1849	5	0	NYC/Mansfield England	6536	
13 Aug 1849	3	0	Pottsville PA/NYC	12098	
1 Oct 1849	0	4	Philadelphia/San Francisco	11809	
9 Oct 1849	4	0	NYC/Oregon IL	6585	
12 Dec 1849	4	2	Newburyport MA/San Francisco	4229	
17 Jan 1850	6	0	NYC/St Catharines Canada	6691	
28 Jan 1850	0	4	NYC/San Francisco	8329	Figure 9
4 Feb 1850	1	3	Unknown/Canton, China	14628	
7 Feb 1850	0	8	NYC/San Francisco	8339	Figure 3
11 Apr 1850	5	0	Charleston SC/Devonport England	13512	
13 Jul 1850	0	9	Panama City/San Blas, Mexico	10216	Figure 2
13 Aug 1850	0	4	NYC/San Francisco	8448	
14 Aug 1850	4	0	Montreal/San Francisco	257	
13 Sep 1850	0	5	NYC/Detroit	8462	
14 Sep 1850	0	3	Panama City/Lockport IL	10217	

Date	# of stamps		From/To	Census	Reference
	5¢	10¢		ID#	
4 Oct 1850	4	0	NYC/Lockport NY	6916	
10 Oct 1850	0	4	NYC/Stockton, CA	8479	
11 Nov 1850	4	0	St. Louis/S. Boston MA	4660	
11 Nov 1850	0	3	Panama City/Mazatlan Mexico	10218	
27 Nov 1850	0	3	Panama City/San Blas Mexico	10219	
30 Nov 1850	3	1	Augusta GA/Belfast Ireland	1075	
10 Dec 1850	4	0	Boston/NYC	3402	
18 Dec 1850	4	0	New Orleans/Morganfield KY	1707	
1 Jan 1851	0	4	San Francisco/NYC	225	
11 Feb 1851	0	4	NYC/Stockton, CA	8567	
18 Mar 1851	4	0	Boston/Eastport ME	3463	
2 Apr 1851	0	3	Panama City/Orange Court House, VA	10221	
4 Apr 1851	5	1	Michigan Central RR/Germany	12575	Figure 8
XX Apr 1851	0	3	Panama City/NYC	10222	
5 May 1851	5	0	Toronto/London, England	310	Figure 7
1 Jun 1851	0	6	Little Miami RR/Baltimore	12482	Figure 4
7 Jun 1851	0	4	Austin TX/Benicia CA	13695	
7 Jun 1851	10	0	NYC/Waukegan IL	7177	Figure 1
16 Jun 1851	4	0	Rochester NY/NYC	9026	
4 Dec 1851	0	3	Paita, Peru/Tepic Mexico	14301	
4 Dec 1851	0	3	Lima, Peru/Tepic Mexico	14302	
10 Jan 18XX	3	0	Philadelphia/NYC	11239	
10 Jan 18XX	0	4	Newark NJ/Newark OH	5093	
17 Jan 18XX	3	0	NYC/Alexandria VA	7221	
25 Jan 18XX	3	0	Philadelphia/NYC	11254	
16 Feb 18XX	3	0	Wallingford/Middlebury CT	814	
21 Feb 18XX	0	3	USExpMailBoston/Philadelphia	12961	
27 Feb 18XX	3	0	Boston/S Dedham MA	3584	
20 Mar 18XX	4	0	NYC/Delaware OH	7362	
25 Mar 18XX	0	4	Washington DC/San Francisco	959	
3 Apr 18XX	0	3	USExpMailBoston/Philadelphia	12984	
8 Apr 18XX	4	0	NYC/Albany	7401	
18 Apr 18XX	4	0	Philadelphia/Pittsburgh	11341	
18 Apr 18XX	0	4	Philadelphia/Pittsburgh	11906	
21 Apr 18XX	0	3	Philadelphia/Edgefield SC	11907	
27 Apr 18XX	4	0	Fredonia/Albany NY	5706	
10 May 18XX	0	4	Waukegan IL/Canandaigua NY	1335	
17 May 18XX	0	4	Philadelphia/Pittsburg	11917	
13 Jun 18XX	4	0	USExpMailBoston/Philadelphia	12879	
17 Jun 18XX	4	0	New Haven/Huron OH	661	
18 Jun 18XX	4	0	Boston/Philadelphia	3684	
5 July 18XX	0	4	Baltimore/San Francisco	2760	

Date	# of stamps		From/To	Census	Reference
	5¢	10¢		ID#	
8 Jul 18XX	4	0	New Haven/Washington DC	662	
21 Jul 18XX	4	0	NYC/Providence	13223	
8 Sep 18XX	0	3	USExpMailBoston/Philadelphia	13054	
10 Sep 18XX	4	0	Boston/NYC	3742	
15 Sep 18XX	0	3	USExpMailBoston/Philadelphia	13060	
24 Sep 18XX	0	6	Mobile/NYC	164	Figure 5
27 Sep 18XX	4	0	Hudson R Mail/Penn Yan NY	14264	
5 Oct 18XX	0	3	USExpMailBoston/Philadelphia	13073	
14 Oct 18XX	0	3	USExpMailBoston/Philadelphia	13084	
22 Oct 18XX	3	0	Detroit/Albany	4488	
27 Oct 18XX	4	0	NYC/Montreal	7748	
4 Nov 18XX	0	5	Mobile/Washington DC	165	
27 Dec 18XX	3	0	Baltimore/Philadelphia	2605	
XX XX 18XX	0	3	Panama City/Plainfield NH	10224	

(text continued from page 119)

Figure 1 cover was addressed to the circuit court in Waukegan, franked at five times the 10¢ rate for a distance over 300 miles. No doubt the cover contained a wad of legal documents. The left margin stamp in the strip has a piece missing from its lower corner.

The largest recorded franking of the 10¢ 1847 is on the cover in Figure 2. This letter was sent through the U.S. postal agency in Panama to Mexico with nine 10¢ stamps, one of which has been partly peeled off the cover. The franking comprises two strips of three and three singles (one of which is the defective stamp). The cover originated in Lima, Peru, on November 27, 1850. It was carried privately to Panama, where it was delivered to the United States Mail Despatch Agent (and U.S. Consul), Amos B. Corwine. Corwine applied a red “PANAMA” handstamp at the top and then covered the marking with the stamps.

The letter is addressed to the firm of Barron, Forbes and Company in Tepic, Mexico. Barron, Forbes was involved in banking, trade and manufacturing, with interests in cotton mills and textile manufacturing facilities.<sup>2</sup> The firm played a role in the politics of both Mexico and the United States. After Corwine applied the stamps, the letter was carried from Panama to the port city of San Blas, Mexico, then overland to Tepic.

The total of 90¢ postage paid the triple 30¢ rate from Panama to the West Coast. There were two rates from Panama: 30¢ for destinations on the Pacific (West) Coast, and 20¢ for the Atlantic (East) Coast. The United States stamps were required because the letter entered the United States mail in Panama, although it was dropped off at San Blas before actually entering United States territory. A very unusual use.

The Figure 2 cover was illustrated and discussed in the *Chronicle* more than 40 years ago, in an article written by its then owner, Col. James T. DeVoss.<sup>3</sup> When the DeVoss collection was sold by Andrew Levitt and Sotheby Parke Bernet Stamp Company, the cover was acquired by Ryohei Ishikawa, who found the partly missing stamp objectionable and affixed a full mint 10¢ stamp—itsself a great rarity—over the offending original stamp.

Figure 3 shows another famous 1847 cover with multiple franking. This letter, post-marked at New York on February 7, 1850, bears eight 10¢ stamps (a strip of five and a strip of three) paying double the 40¢ rate from New York City to San Francisco. This is the only example known of 1847 stamps paying the double 3,000-mile rate, which was in effect from July 1, 1845, to June 30, 1851. The stamps are all handsomely struck by New York’s

distinctive red arc “PAID” marking. The letter is addressed to Macondray and Company, in San Francisco and most likely included enclosures that triggered the overweight rating. Founded around 1848 by a retired ship captain in San Francisco, Macondray was a trading house and eventually a banking firm. When the U.S. colonized the Philippines in the late 1890s, the company provided supplies to the fleet and developed a thriving business in the Philippines. It survives as Macondray Philippines, a private investment holding group.



Figure 2. The largest multiple of 10¢ 1847 stamps on cover. Nine 10¢ stamps on a letter sent from Peru via Panama to Mexico. The stamps were applied at Panama.



Figure 3. Double-rate letter sent in 1850 from New York City to San Francisco with eight 10¢ 1847 stamps paying twice the 40¢ coast-to-coast rate (over 3,000 miles). The stamps are strips of five and three, all canceled by the red arc New York “PAID.”

### Covers with six 10¢ stamps

There are three covers with six 10¢ 1847 stamps. The first of these, dated June 1, 1851, is known as the Little Miami Railroad Cover. This is shown in Figure 4. It is franked with a left-margin strip of five from positions 41-45L and a single stamp. The second stamp in the strip has been repaired. The stamps paid six times the 10¢ rate to Baltimore (over 300 miles), and the large envelope addressed to “William Geo. Krebs Esqr, Attorney at Law,” most likely contained legal documents. Krebs was elected a judge in the Superior Court for Baltimore in 1853. The postmark on the Figure 4, which is struck faintly and may not show well in the illustration, reads “Little Miami Railroad, Jun 1.” Completed in 1846, this railroad ran from Cincinnati to Springfield, Ohio.



**Figure 4. Six 10¢ 1847 stamps on a cover addressed to Baltimore and bearing the postmark of a route agent of the Little Miami Railroad, dated June 1 (1851). The stamps (a strip of five plus a single) paid six times the 10¢ rate for over 300 miles.**

The second cover with six 10¢ stamps, shown in Figure 5, originated in New Orleans and entered the mails in Mobile, Alabama. The cover is addressed to the firm of Howland and Aspinwall in New York. The strip of six stamps plates from Positions 25-30L and is canceled by strikes of a circular grid applied in Mobile’s distinctive “red paint” ink. The stamps paid six times the rate for a distance over 300 miles. Howland and Aspinwall was a trading firm based in New York City. Originally engaged in China trade, the firm changed its focus with the California Gold Rush and helped organize the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, which played an important role in mail transportation to and from the West Coast. President Franklin D. Roosevelt was related to the Aspinwall family and inherited part of the Aspinwall fortune.

The third cover with six 10¢ 1847 stamps is shown in Figure 6. This is the famous Rush cover, which bears a strip of six from positions 55-60L. This envelope was mailed on 27 September 1848, addressed to Richard Rush in Paris, where he was serving as the American minister to France. It was addressed in the hand of Rush’s son and contained several letters. The cover entered the mails in Philadelphia and was carried by rail to New York City. The “PHILADA RAILROAD” straightline was applied by the post office in New York City on such arriving mail. The 60¢ postage overpaid the double 29¢ retaliatory rate, effective during the brief postal feud between the United States and Great Britain in 1848. The British post office treated the letter as unpaid, assessing postage due that was ultimately paid by the addressee in France. For much more information about the rating, marking and history of this famous cover, see the extensive catalog that the Robert A. Siegel firm created for this cover when it last sold.<sup>4</sup>



Figure 5. This striking cover from New Orleans to New York entered the mails in Mobile on “SEP 24”, year not known. The strip is from Positions 25-30L, canceled by strikes of a circular grid applied in Mobile’s distinctive “red paint” ink.



Figure 6. The famous Rush cover, a strip of six 10¢ 1847 stamps sent to the American minister in France in 1848. The stamps overpay two times the 29¢ retaliatory rate.

There are three reported covers with six 5¢ stamps, but no useable images exist. One has no photographic record at all and received a “decline opinion” certificate from The Philatelic Foundation. Another lacks both images and certification. The third cover was sent from New York City to St. Catharines, Canada West, and has two strips of three stamps, originally forming a block of six from the right pane (Positions 78-80 and 88-90) including double transfer types A and B. The letter within is dated January 17, 1850. It is not clear why the letter was franked with 30¢ postage. Either 20¢ or 40¢ would have been correct. At this time, there was no triple rate for U.S. postage, so a letter between one and two ounces should have quadruple-rate postage. The Canadian due marking indicates 1 shilling 6 pence for the quadruple rate from the exchange office on the Canadian side to St. Catharines.

### Covers with five, four or three stamps

One cover is recorded with five 10¢ 1847 stamps, dated November 4 (year unknown). The stamps pay the quintuple over-300-mile rate from Mobile to Washington, D.C. The letter is addressed to Joseph H. Bradley, for decades a successful Washington-area lawyer. Bradley was the attorney who defended John Surratt against charges that he was part of the conspiracy to murder President Lincoln. During the trial, Bradley assaulted the presiding judge. After the trial he was disbarred, though he was subsequently reinstated.

Five covers are recorded with five 5¢ stamps. The most famous of these is a mixed-franking letter to London, dated May 5, 1851, with a Canadian 3d Beaver stamp and strip of five 5¢ 1847 stamps. This striking cover is shown in Figure 7. It originated in Toronto, Canada, and the 3d Beaver stamp paid postage to the U.S. frontier. The 24¢ treaty rate to Great Britain was overpaid by the strip of five 5¢ 1847 stamps. The letter is addressed to Reverend Egerton Ryerson, a well-regarded Canadian educator and a strong early advocate for universal free education who was a key architect of the Indian residential school system in Canada.



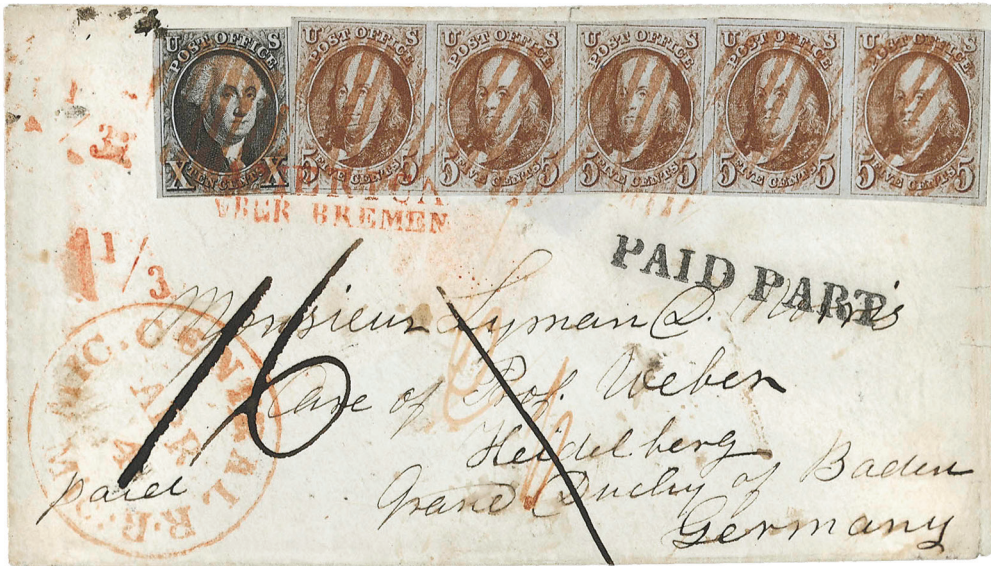
**Figure 7. Mixed franking from Toronto to London. The 3d Beaver stamp paid the postage to the U.S. and the five 5¢ stamps overpaid the 24¢ treaty rate to England.**

The second cover, dated July 1849, also bears a strip of five 5¢ stamps overpaying the 24¢ U.S.-G.B. treaty rate. It was sent from New Jersey to Mansfield, England, via New York City.

The third cover shows the same rate in a different configuration. Here a block of five 5¢ stamps, sent from Philadelphia to Warrington, England, on February 19, 1849, overpays the 24¢ U.S.-G.B. treaty rate to England. The fifth stamp was partly torn away, and a stamp has been added underneath the torn one.

The fourth cover, shown in Figure 8, is known as the Heidelberg Cover. This has a wonderful and unique stamp combination: A strip of five 5¢ 1847 orange brown and a single 10¢ stamp, which overpaid by 1¢ the 34¢ rate to Bremen under the U.S.-Bremen postal convention (10¢ over 300 miles U.S. internal postage plus 24¢ sea postage). A New York clerk struck "PAID PART" in black to indicate the letter was paid only to Bremen. There was no U.S. debit to Bremen because the U.S. had been paid all amounts it was due. The transatlantic journey was on board the Ocean Line steamship *Washington*, which departed





**Figure 8. On this famous cover from Michigan to Heidelberg, a strip of five 5¢ 1847 stamps plus a 10¢ stamp overpay the 34¢ rate to Bremen under the U.S.-Bremen postal convention. The cover was paid only to Bremen and sent collect from there.**

New York on April 19, 1851, and arrived at Bremerhaven on May 5. The Hanover post office in Bremen struck “AMERICA/ÜBER BREMEN” and “1 $\frac{1}{3}$ ” above the Michigan Central Railroad date stamp (there is a second faint strike to the left of the 10¢ stamp). This indicated a 1 $\frac{1}{3}$  gutegroschen debit to Thurn and Taxis for Hanover’s transit fee. This was equated to 6 kreuzer to which another 6 kreuzer transit to Baden was added, as shown by the red manuscript fraction 6/6 in the center. This fraction was crossed out in black and 4 kreuzer Baden internal postage was added to the 12 kreuzer sum of the prior debits, for a total postage due of 16 kreuzer, which is marked in black manuscript over the Michigan Central date stamp. The recipient of this cover, Lyman D. Norris, left his mark on history in two ways. In youth he was the first student to enroll at the University of Michigan; and in maturity he was Dred Scott’s attorney (for a 50¢ retainer) when the Supreme Court ruled that Scott could not sue for his freedom because he was property, not a person.

The fifth and final cover with five 5¢ stamps has five individual stamps. The enclosed letter, dated April 11, 1850, was sent from Charleston, South Carolina, to Devonport, England. The stamps paid the 24¢ treaty rate with 1¢ overpayment.

The record shows 15 covers with four 10¢ 1847 stamps. Ten of these covers are franked for the over 3,000-mile rate to California, and five for the quadruple over 300-mile rate. Figure 9 shows a cover from New York to San Francisco prepaid at the 40¢ over-3,000-mile rate. Like Figure 3, this cover comes from the archives of the firm of Macondray and Company. Note that on this cover the strip of four 10¢ stamps is canceled with multiple strikes of New York’s encircled “80” marking. This marking was ordinarily used on unpaid double-rate covers at the over-3,000-mile rate.

The online database lists 30 covers with four 5¢ stamps with available images. Of these covers, 21 are prepaid for double the over-300-mile rate. Six pay the quadruple rate for under 300 miles. Two covers pay the double rate to the Canadian border. One cover pays the 40¢ over-3,000-mile rate with two additional 10¢ stamps, and one letter originates in Canada, but was underpaid for the 40¢ rate to California, either because stamps are missing or 20¢ was paid in cash.

There are 38 covers with three 10¢ stamps. Eight of these are letters originating in



**Figure 9.** From the same correspondence as the cover in Figure 3, this cover from New York City to San Francisco pays the single over-3,000-mile rate (40¢).

Panama City. Two more passed through Panama from South America. Six covers pay the retaliatory rate to England. One cover pays the seven-times under-300-mile domestic rate and two pay the six-times under-300-mile rate. Eight covers pay the three-times over-300-mile rate (one to Canada). One cover is addressed to China. The remaining covers either have bad certificates or lack images to determine the exact use of the stamps.

### Conclusion and acknowledgements

The USPCS online database of 1847 covers is a very powerful tool in determining the relative scarcity of different cover features. As more images are added, its usefulness will grow. Please contribute if you can. Thanks to Scott Trepel and the Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries for images and other assistance; and to Dwayne Littauer for interpretation of the Heidelberg cover.

### Endnotes

1. The website of the United States Philatelic Classic Society is accessible at [www.uspcs.org](http://www.uspcs.org). For information about the on-line census of 1847 covers and how to search the cover database, see Mark Scheuer's "1847 Cover Census now Online" at *Chronicle* 240, pp. 329-335.
2. John Mayo, *Commerce and Contraband on Mexico's West Coast in the Era of Barron, Forbes & Co., 1821-1859*, Peter Lang, New York, 2006.
3. "A Remarkable Cover: Largest Multiple of 10¢ 1847 Stamp Known on Cover," *Chronicle* 91, August 1976.
4. Robert A. Siegel auction catalog, sale 912, 13 May 2006. The cover was hammered down for \$1,200,000. ■



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**CROSSING THE BAR:  
A LETTER CARRIED BY PILOT BOAT CAPTAIN  
TO BOYD'S CITY EXPRESS**

JOHN D. BOWMAN

Sunset and evening star,  
And one clear call for me!  
And may there be no moaning of the bar,  
When I put out to sea.

—From *Crossing the Bar*, Alfred Lord Tennyson

In the 1840s and earlier, after vessels had been cleared for sailing from a port, they might leave right away—or wait for the tide, wind or weather to become favorable. The “moaning of the bar” was the sound of waves breaking over a shallow sand bar, warning of impending grounding of ships during low tide. On occasion while waiting for departure, a boarded passenger wrote a letter that was apparently entrusted to the pilot boat captain for transmission on his return to port. Figures 1 and 2 illustrate such a letter, sent from the “New York Bar.”

After guiding the sailing vessel safely across the bar, the pilot captain returned to the dock and gave this folded letter to an agent of Boyd’s City Express. Prepayment with 2¢ is indicated by Boyd’s stamp of 1848 (Scott 20L7). The letter writer, Stephen Coulter, likely paid this sum in cash, as there is no indication of payment to the pilot for his services. It



**Figure 1.** Letter written from “New York Bar” on April 24, 1849, addressed to Philadelphia. It was taken to shore by the pilot boat captain and given to an agent of Boyd’s City Express, who applied the stamp and delivered the letter to the railroad terminal agent.

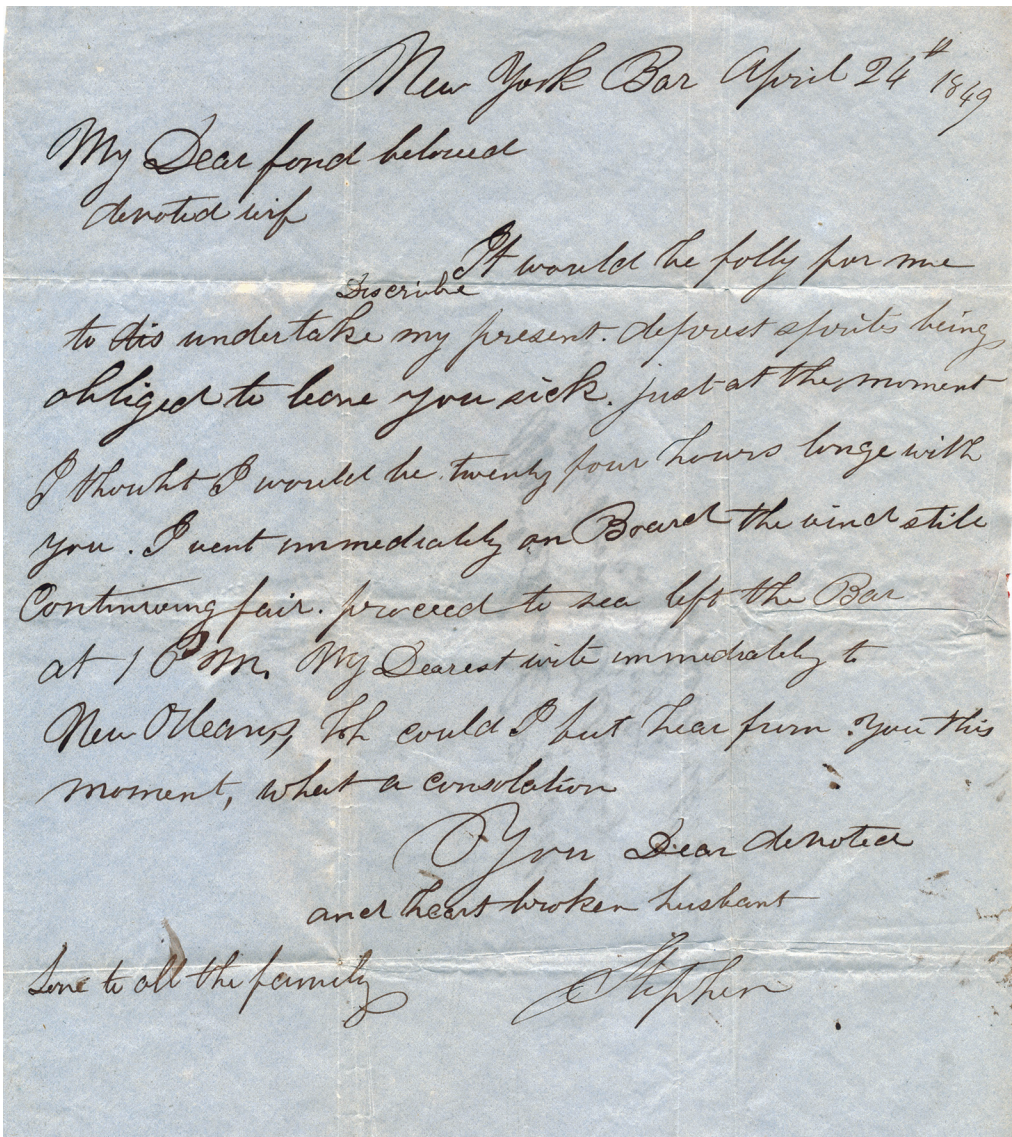
must have been too late to make the evening train to Philadelphia (the *Report of the Postmaster General* for 1850 notes on page 424 that there were 14 trips per week from New York to Philadelphia; these were the daily morning and evening trains), so the letter was sent the next day as indicated by the April 25 datestamp. Boyd's may have brought it to the railroad station in the morning or left it in a nearby collection box. In either case, the route agent applied the red datestamp for the "New York & Phila. R.R." and the red handstamped "5" (faintly struck over "Coulter") designating the amount due.

The contents of the letter (Figure 2) are transcribed as follows:

New York Bar April 24th 1849

My Dear fond beloved devoted wife,

It would be folly for me to undertake [to] describe my present deprest spirits being obliged to leave you sick just at the moment I thought I would be twenty four hours longer with you. I went immediately on Board the wind still continuing fair, proceed to sea left the Bar at 1 PM.



New York Bar April 24<sup>th</sup> 1849

My Dear fond beloved  
devoted wife

<sup>Describe</sup> It would be folly for me  
to ~~do~~ undertake my present deprest spirits being  
obliged to leave you sick just at the moment  
I thought I would be twenty four hours longer with  
you. I went immediately on Board the wind still  
continuing fair. proceed to sea left the Bar  
at 1 PM. My Dearest wife immediately to  
New Orleans, Oh could I but hear from you this  
moment, what a consolation

O you Dear devoted  
and heart broken husband  
Love to all the family

Stephen

Figure 2. Contents of the Figure 1 cover, clearly headed "New York Bar, April 26, 1849."

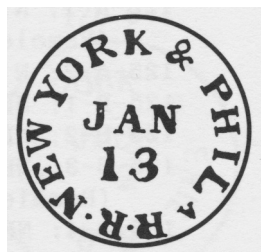
**My Dearest write immediately to New Orleans, loh could I but hear from you this moment, what a consolation.**

**Your Dear devoted and heart broken husband**

**Love to all the family, Stephen**

Husband and wife evidently had traveled to New York whereupon she became ill. As he had to leave for New Orleans, he planned for her to travel to Philadelphia, and wrote this letter to be delivered in care of her physician. One might speculate that the wife had contracted cholera, which was epidemic across the country in 1849. His wife would have had ample time to write to him before his ship arrived in New Orleans on May 21 after 26 days at sea. Stephen Coulter was captain of the *Caledonia Brander* (Captain Coulter) which departed New York on 24 April 1849 for New Orleans per the *New-York Commercial Advertiser* of that date.<sup>1</sup> Further evidence that the letter writer was the ship captain is the 25 May 1849 *Times-Picayune* notice of the “fast sailing packet ship *Caledonia Brander*, Stephen Coulter, master” seeking additional passengers and cargo to leave New Orleans for Baltimore.

Examples of Boyd’s service to the New York and Philadelphia Railroad are known, including at least two covers with 5¢ 1847 stamps prepaying the letter postage. In fact, there was no railroad known as the New York and Philadelphia, but the name was used for the postmark (shown in Figure 3) employed by the terminal mail agent for the route, which at this time consisted of the Camden and Amboy Railroad, New Jersey R.R. and Transportation Co., and Philadelphia and Trenton R.R.<sup>2</sup>



**Figure 3. Tracing of the “NEW YORK & PHILA R.R.” postmark, from Charles L. Towle’s *U.S. Route and Station Agent Postmarks* (Mobile Post Office Society, 1986), marking 240-A-1.**

Another letter given to a pilot boat captain and postmarked at the New York post office on 2 March 1824 is shown in Figure 4. The letter is datelined “off Sandy Hook, Monday noon” and begins “I take the opportunity offered by the pilot who is leaving us to address you a few lines.” The writer ends with “the desk on which I am writing has become terribly unsteady. The rattling of cordage and hoarse voice of the pilot tells me that his boat has come on board.” Letters carried to shore by pilot captains are unusual. The two examples noted here are recognizable by their datelines and contents.

### **History of the New York pilot boats**

While exploring the Atlantic coast of North America in 1524, Giovanni da Verrazano anchored in the strait between present-day Brooklyn on western Long Island and Staten Island. He met the natives and observed what he believed to be a large lake. In fact, he had anchored in what was later known as the Narrows, and the “lake” was Upper New York Bay, the mouth of the Hudson River.<sup>3</sup> In 1609 Henry Hudson and his ship, the 80-foot *Half Moon*, found the strait, passed through it to the natural harbor (New York Harbor), and ascended the Hudson River as far as where Albany is now located.<sup>4</sup>

The wind-powered sailing vessels of the 17th century were constructed with wooden hulls. Their relatively light weight and shallow draft permitted the discovery and use of the world’s important harbors.<sup>5</sup> Harbor waters are difficult to navigate because the depth

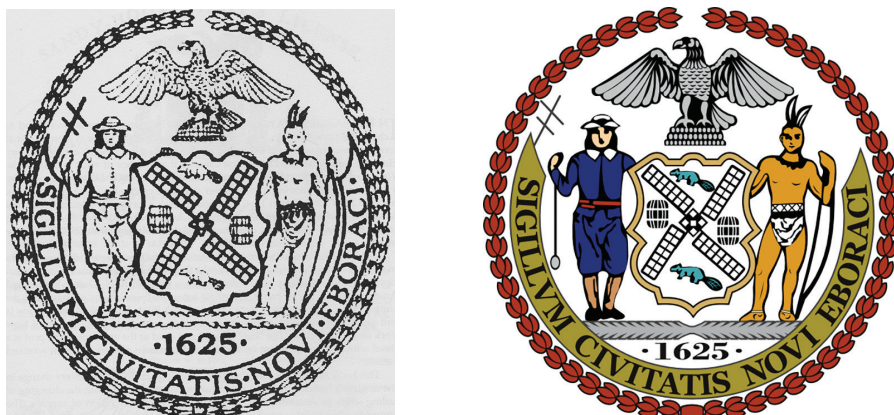


**Figure 4. Folded letter written “off Sandy Hook” postmarked New York 2 March (1824). The contents indicate the letter was to be given to the pilot, who then dropped it off at the New York post office. Illustration courtesy Clifford Alexander.**

is constantly changing due to ocean tides, the winds and currents, the time of the year, the phases of the moon, and the passage of the years. Many ships have run aground because of these factors, and bad weather poses additional hazards.

The very early Dutch vessels used straight poles to check the water’s depth, and the sailors who performed this task became known as *pijl loods* (pilots).<sup>6</sup> The first word means pole and the second means lead. The pilots later used a sounding line with a lead weight, or plummet.

The passage from the Atlantic Ocean to the Narrows contained a huge sandbar that forced incoming vessels to wait until high tide to avoid foundering. Because passage was so difficult, New York beginning in 1694 required all ships to be guided into the harbor by an experienced pilot.<sup>7</sup> So important was the pilot boat to the commercial development of the Port of New York, that the official city seal, largely unchanged since 1686, bears an image of a sailor with a sounding line or plummet used by pilots. Figure 5 shows examples old and new.



**Figure 5. Ancient and modern versions of the seal of the City of New York, showing a sailor holding the sounding line (or plummet) used by harbor pilots.**

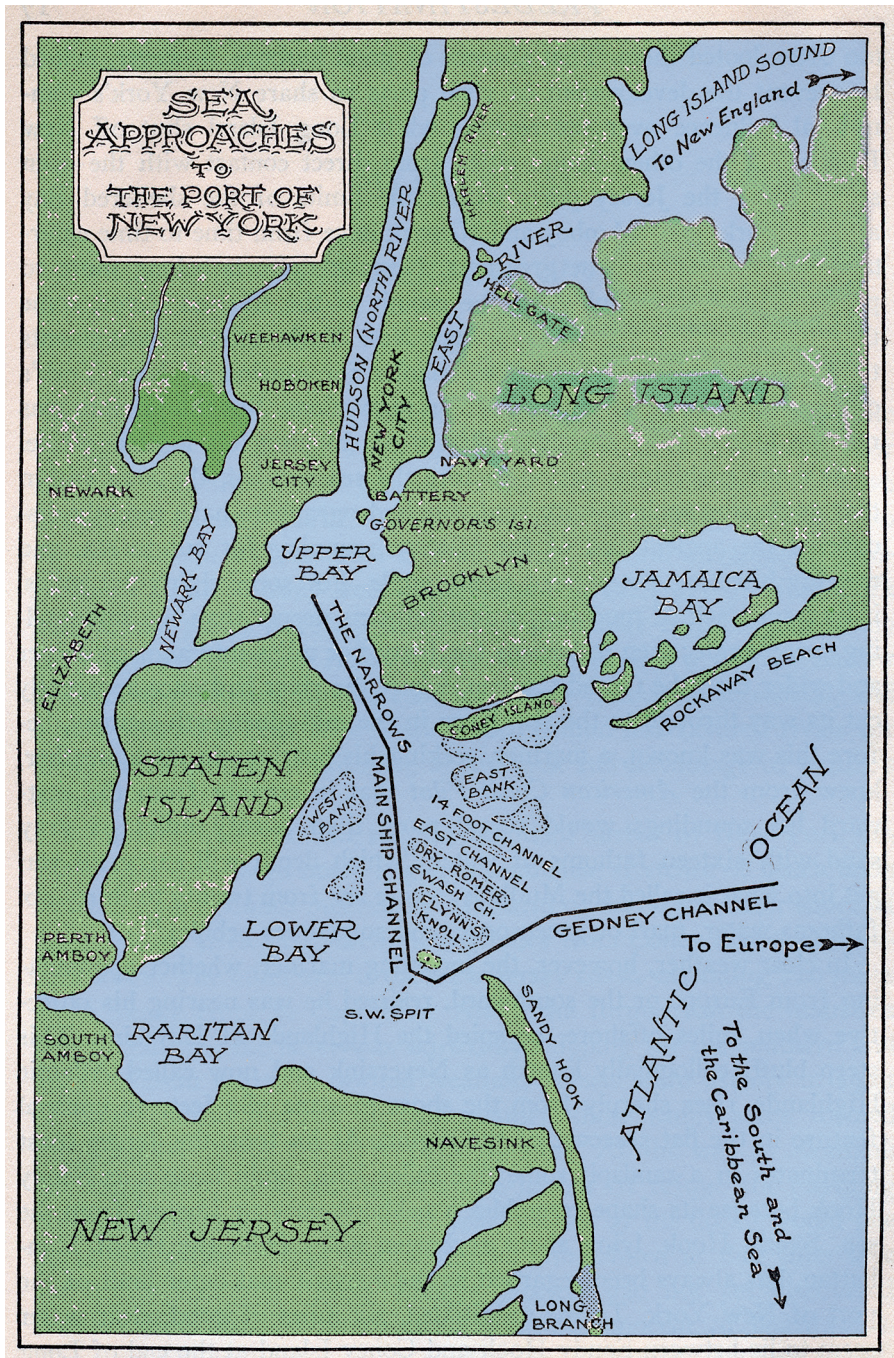


Figure 6. Approaches to New York from the Atlantic Ocean. Adapted from Robert G. Albion, *The Rise of New York Port*, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1939.

Pilot boats handled commercial goods and brought news of arriving goods to local merchants. Famously, news of the ending of the War of 1812 was brought by a pilot to a New York newspaper office on the night of February 11, 1815.<sup>8</sup>

The map in Figure 6 illustrates the approaches to New York from the Atlantic Ocean.<sup>9</sup> New York Harbor lies between two arms: the outer shore of Long Island extending over

100 miles from Coney Island to Montauk Point, and the coast of New Jersey extending a similar distance from Sandy Hook to Cape May. The shipping lanes from Europe and from points south converged along these sandy beaches at the Bar. The lanes along these shores were hazardous during bad weather, as no port of refuge existed from Montauk or Cape May for any vessel larger than a two-masted sailing schooner. Sandy Hook itself was aptly named for its shape like a fishhook and its five miles of sand. From here it was 17 miles to the tip of Manhattan, and seemingly there were six miles of clear water between Sandy Hook and Coney Island. However, a broad and shallow sandbar very close to the surface at many points posed such a hazard to shipping that experienced harbor pilots were required to guide the incoming vessels through the Bar and up the Narrows into the Upper Bay.

The passage over the Bar known as the Main Ship Channel had a depth of 21 feet at low tide, rising four or five feet higher with the tide.<sup>10</sup> The Gedney Channel was about two feet deeper. The smaller channels in Figure 6 were dangerous because they were very narrow, and the bordering sandbanks might be only two feet deep. For commercial vessels, no place in the Lower Bay was safe from storms. Thus, pilot boats were in constant demand for commercial vessels bound to and from New York.

Most vessels of this time had a draft of less than 23 feet, which could vary with the load of cargo carried. “Draft” refers to the vertical distance between the water surface and the bottom of the ship’s hull, and represents the minimum depth of water that a ship can safely navigate. Pilots’ rates were based on feet of draft of the vessels they guided, because smaller vessels were much easier to guide past the Bar.<sup>11</sup> Competition for incoming ships was keen and pilot boats, two-masted schooners, were designed for speed.<sup>12</sup> They might sail hundreds of miles from port to offer pilot services for incoming ships. Given the fierce competition among the pilot boats, it is not surprising that a pilot captain would take a letter, such as Figure 1, from a ship captain back to shore.

### Endnotes

1. Richard F. Winter, personal communication, October 29, 2016.
2. C.W. Remele, *United States Railroad Postmarks, 1837 to 1861*, American Philatelic Society, 1958, pg. 111.
3. Wikipedia, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giovanni\\_da\\_Verrazzano](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giovanni_da_Verrazzano), last viewed Aug. 28, 2016.
4. John G. Bunker, *An Illustrated History of the Port of New York—Harbor & Haven* (Windsor Publications, Woodland Hills, Cal., 1979), pg. 1.
5. Francis J. Duffy, *“Always on Station”—The Story of the Sandy Hook Ship Pilots* (Purple Mountain Press, Fleischmanns, N.Y., 2008), pg. 9.
6. Edward L. Allen, *Pilot Lore—From Sail to Steam* (The United New York and New Jersey Sandy Hook Pilots Benevolent Association, N.Y., 1922), pg. 1.
7. Charles Edward Russell, *From Sandy Hook to 62°* (The Century Co., New York, 1929), pp. 49-50.
8. Robert G. Albion, *Square-Riggers on Schedule* (Princeton University Press, 1938), pg. 1.
9. Robert G. Albion, *The Rise of New York Port* (Charles Scribner’s Sons, New York, 1939), pp. 16-27.
10. *Ibid.*
11. Russell, *op cit.*, pg. 157.
12. Duffy, *op cit.*, pg. 13. ■

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## THE SMALL RED BOSTON “PAID” GRID CANCEL

JAY KUNSTREICH

One of the more popular and sought-after cancels on the 1851 stamps is the small Boston PAID in grid. This cancellation measures 17.5 millimeters in diameter and was used (according to Chase) for just six months, between 7 July 1851 and 15 January 1852.<sup>1</sup> A similar cancel, the large Boston PAID in grid (24 mm diameter) followed and was used for an entire decade, from 1852 until around 1862.<sup>2</sup> Lifesized tracings of both markings are shown in Figure 1. Both show three grid lines above and below the PAID but in addition to

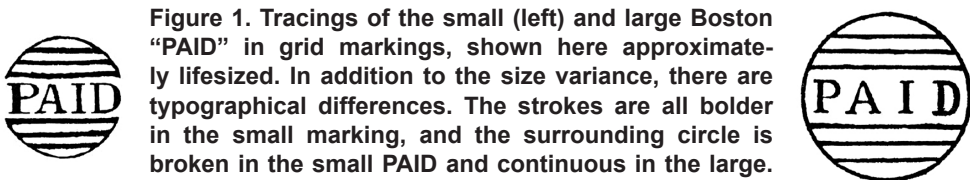


Figure 1. Tracings of the small (left) and large Boston “PAID” in grid markings, shown here approximately lifesized. In addition to the size variance, there are typographical differences. The strokes are all bolder in the small marking, and the surrounding circle is broken in the small PAID and continuous in the large.

the size differences there are differences in typography and most notably, the surrounding circle is continuous in the large version and discontinuous in the small. Figure 2 shows two strips of three 1¢ 1851 stamps. The top strip shows strikes of the small marking and the bottom strip shows strikes of the large (which exists in at least two varieties).



Figure 2. Strips of imperforate 1¢ 1851 stamps, showing the small Boston PAID (in black at top) and the large Boston PAID marking that followed.



**Figure 3.** The small Boston PAID marking in red is by far the scarcest of the Boston PAID markings. The author's census located 13 1¢ 1851 stamps with the red cancel and 55 3¢ 1851 stamps. Two representative examples are shown here.

Because of its much shorter period of use, the small Boston PAID is considerably scarcer than the large. As an additional complexity, it was struck in two colors, red and black. The red ink was used initially, but only for a few weeks in July of 1851. Examples of the cancel in red are very scarce and highly desirable.

Since it appeared very early in the lifetime of the 1851 stamps, this cancel was used on 1¢ stamps from Plate 1 Early and on 3¢ 1851 orange brown stamps. Chase recorded ex-



**Figure 4.** The small Boston PAID marking was struck in red ink for just a few weeks during July, 1851. The strike on this handsome cover clearly dates from July 22.

amples of the small red Boston PAID on 3¢ covers dated between July 7, 1851 and July 26, 1851. For the black handstamp, the range of dates he noted was from July 19, 1851 through January 15, 1852.<sup>3</sup>

Red examples of small Boston PAID marking on 1¢ 1851 stamps of course are much scarcer. There are too few datable examples to provide usage data for the small red marking on the 1¢ 1851 stamps, but it's safe to assume more or less the same July 1851 bracketing dates as found on the 3¢. Only one 1¢ cover with the red marking is known, that being dated July 14, 1851 (see census information below).

### **Census of 1¢ and 3¢ 1851 stamps with small red Boston PAID**

The remaining thrust of this article is to present a preliminary census of 1¢ and 3¢ 1851 stamps bearing the small Boston PAID in grid struck in red. To accomplish this, I searched the websites of the Philatelic Foundation and Robert Siegel Auction Galleries, other auction catalogs and websites, Dr. Carroll Chase's 3¢ book, as well as seeking scans from private collectors.

I found 13 examples of the 1¢ 1851 stamp bearing the small Boston PAID struck in red. For the record, 11 of the stamps are Type II and two are Type IIIa. There's one cover with three single stamps, and one off-cover strip of three (shown at top in Figure 2). Each of these two objects I have counted as three stamps. Along with reference information (where available), the 13 stamps are as follows:

1. PF Certificate 254897 (provenance: Saadi).
2. PF Certificate 254259 (provenance: Grunin, Cipolla, Sheriff).
3. Siegel sale 1144, lot 31 (provenance: Ishikawa, Cipolla, Eubanks).
- 4-6. Three singles on July 14 cover (provenance: Cipolla, Rieger sale 13, lot 50).
- 7-9. Strip of three, Siegel sale 994 lot 637 (provenance: Wagshal).
10. Siegel sale 1014, lot 1042.
- 11-13. Private collectors.

After winnowing out duplicates, I found 55 examples of the 3¢ 1851 stamp struck with red examples of the small Boston PAID in grid. Reference information is presented in the listing below. To save space, auction references have been condensed; lot 2055 in Siegel sale 756 is presented as 756 RAS 2055.

240 RAS 169 (single); 748 RAS 465 (July 10 cover); 756 RAS 2055 (July cover, no date); 765 RAS 233, 234 and 239 (three singles); 783 RAS 138 (July 26 cover); 783 RAS 225 (two singles); 783 RAS 283 (July 11 and July 14 covers); 793 RAS 77 and 78 (two singles); 810 RAS 1150 (July 25 cover); 964 RAS 112 (July 20 cover); 996 RAS 3004 (July 17 on piece); 1062 RAS 87 and 88 (two singles); 23 Rumsey 110 (single); 55 Rumsey 1482 (cover-unknown date); 638 Kelleher 728 (single). Philatelic Foundation certificate numbers: 159101; 203941; 203942; 216169 (July 17 cover); 223335; 232738; 254899; 364657 (July 23 cover); 401355 (July 23 cover); 409983 (July 21 cover); 425321; 441919; 472533 (July 20 cover); 497942 (July 10 cover); 506182 (July 18 cover). Private Collectors: 11 singles and seven covers as follows: July 20, 22(2), 23(2), 24 and 25. In addition, Chase prominently notes a July 7 cover, not seen by me but included in this listing.

### **Conclusion**

Small Boston PAID in grid cancels, struck in red on 1¢ and 3¢ 1851 stamps, have been known to be quite scarce. This initial census has illuminated just how scarce they actually are. Surely there are other examples in collector hands, and I would appreciate learning about them. Send a note and a scan to jay1851@aol.com. Special thanks to Richard Celler, Charles J. DiComo, Mark Friedman, Ralph Lott and Wade Saadi for providing examples for this census.

### **Endnotes**

1. Carroll Chase, *The 3¢ Stamp of the United States 1851-1857 Issue*, (revised edition, Quarterman Publications, Lawrence, Massachusetts, 1975), pg. 348.
2. Hubert Skinner and Amos Eno, *United States Cancellations 1845-1869* (American Philatelic Society, 1980), pg. 325.
3. Chase, *op. cit.*, pg. 348. ■

## USES OF 3¢ 1857 STAMPS EARLY IN THE CONFEDERATE POSTAL SYSTEM

JAMES W. MILGRAM, M.D.

The states that formed the Confederate States of America seceded from the United States one by one, beginning with South Carolina on December 20, 1860. After secession, United States stamps continued to be used, at least for a while. For each new Confederate state there was a period of independent state usage of U.S. postage, followed by a second period of Confederate usage, after the state joined the C.S.A. but prior to the establishment of the Confederate postal system. This article concerns uses (or attempted uses) subsequent to that, in the days just after the Confederate States of America began their own postal service.

The earliest cover we can describe is from the earliest possible day, June 1, 1861, the day the Confederate postal system began to operate. Figure 1 shows a cover franked with a 3¢ 1857 stamp canceled “MEMPHIS Ten. JUN 1.” The post office in Memphis obviously accepted and canceled the stamp. The cover also bears a “Stamp no good” notation, applied at New Orleans, and is handstamped “due 5” representing the 5¢ Confederate postage. This “due 5” marking is Type C within the New Orleans listings in the recent Confederate catalog (2012), so this rating was applied at the receiving post office, not at Memphis.

It should be noted that while this cover was postmarked at Memphis on the first day of the Confederate postal service, Memphis did not yet have a Confederate post office on June 1, 1861. U.S.P.O. records show that federal mails from the Memphis office were not suspended until June 10, 1861.

On May 27, 1861, U.S. Postmaster General, Montgomery Blair ordered the suspension of mail in the seceded states after May 31. This order listed the affected states and it did not include Tennessee, because that state had not yet seceded from the Union. The

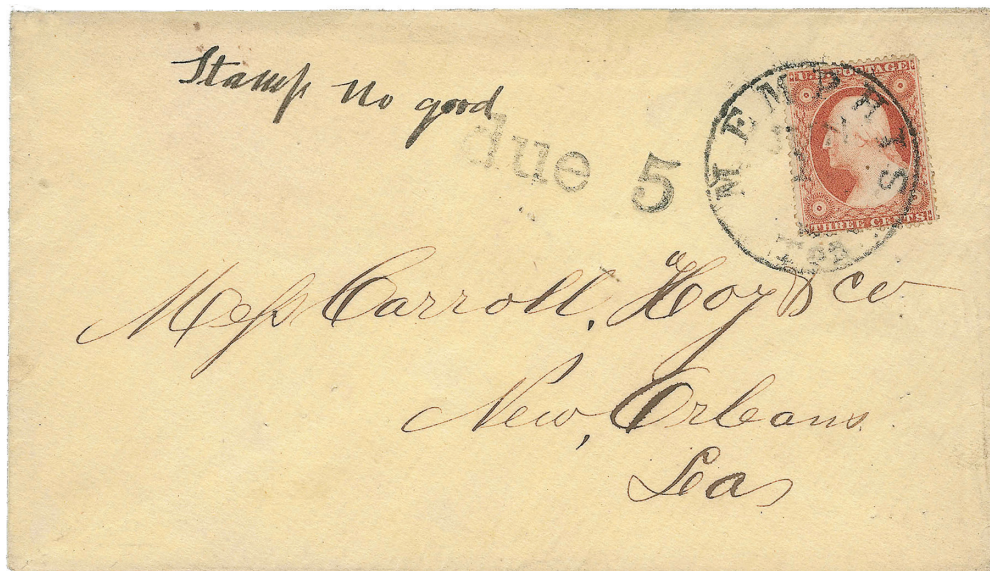
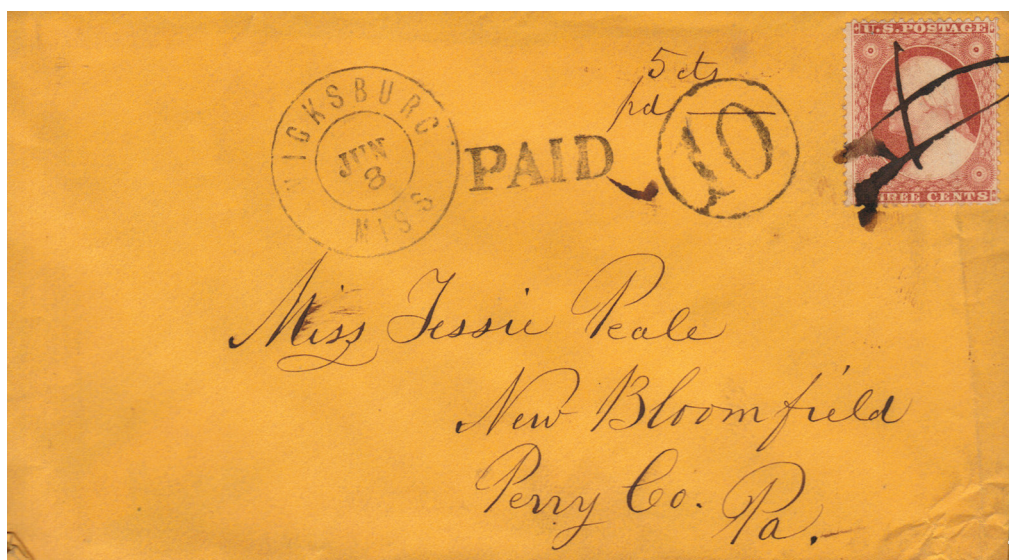


Figure 1. Postmarked on the first day of the Confederate postal service: 3¢ 1857 stamp tied “MEMPHIS Ten. JUN 1” [1860] on a cover from the famous Carroll, Hoy correspondence. At New Orleans, this cover was marked in manuscript “Stamp no good” and rated “due 5” by handstamp. Illustration from Siegel sale 940, September 2007.



**Figure 2. Third day of Confederate postal service: 3¢ 1857 stamp on cover with “VICKSBURG MISS JUN 3”, “PAID” and “10” in circle. This cover is addressed to a town in Pennsylvania and thus entered the U.S. postal system for delivery. The pen markings that tie the stamp were probably applied at the U.S. post office of entry.**

Tennessee ordinance of secession was passed by referendum on June 8 and ratified by the General Assembly on June 24. Tennessee was admitted to the Confederacy on July 2, 1861.

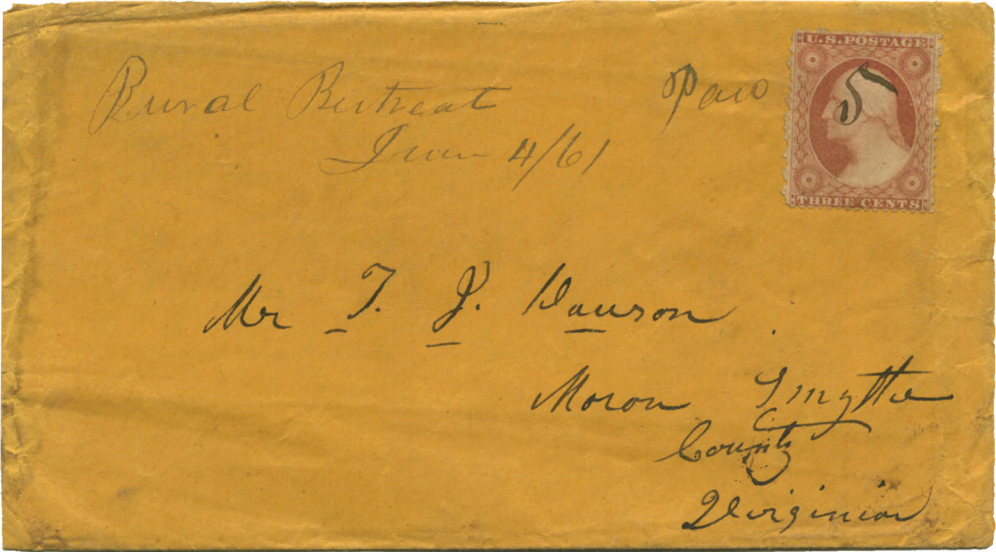
So the Figure 1 cover was mailed at a U.S. post office at the correct 3¢ rate, then sent into the Confederacy, where the Confederate rate was assessed at the destination post office. The total of 8¢ was necessary for this letter to be delivered—3¢ U.S. postage paid by the sender’s stamp, plus 5¢ Confederate postage paid in cash by the recipient. During the early days of transition of postal authority, the rules were unclear. It took several months for all the specific cross-border regulations and restrictions to be implemented.

The cover in Figure 2, mailed on the third day of the transition, also shows confusion about procedures. The handstamped postmarks are “VICKSBURG MISS JUN 3” with matching “PAID” and “10” in circle. The “PAID” with “10” combination is Type C from Vicksburg in the Confederate catalog. The postmaster at Vicksburg changed the rate from 5¢ to 10¢, most likely because the cover turned out to be double weight. The cover would have been taken upriver to Cairo, Illinois, possibly via Memphis. It was accepted into the U.S. postal system because it bore a valid postage stamp, which may have been uncanceled until it reached a Union post office.

The fascinating feature of Figure 2 is that this Confederate-rated cover was addressed to New Bloomfield, Pennsylvania, a town well within the Union. Thus this cover is actually a South to North use after the establishment of the Confederate postal service. I think the sender put the stamp on the letter because of its Pennsylvania address, and the Vicksburg office, where the letter was posted, charged Confederate postage in cash.

The cover in Figure 3, from four days into the transition, is more straightforward. The sender tried to mail a letter with a U.S. stamp on it, and the postmaster stopped him and charged him 5¢ for Confederate postage. Here the post office of origin, Rural Retreat, Virginia, used a manuscript postal marking on June 4, 1861, which included “Paid 5” written over the stamp. Thus the stamp was disregarded for postal payment.

Our final cover, shown in Figure 4, is a very interesting item and unique in a fashion. This is a cover sent from Kingston, Tennessee to Chattanooga. A 3¢ 1857 stamp is placed



**Figure 3. Fourth day of Confederate postal service: the 3¢ 1857 stamp on this cover was disregarded for postage with manuscript “Rural Retreat [Virginia] June 4/61” and “Paid 5” overwriting the stamp.**

horizontally at left, and a manuscript “Paid 5,” expressing the Confederate rate, appears at the top right. The handstamped marking “KINGSTON TEN JUL 26” is dated nearly two months after the beginning of Confederate service. The most remarkable aspect of this cover stems from the way the sender altered the design of the 3¢ 1857 stamp, which is shown rotated, enlarged and with contrast enhanced in Figure 5. The sender drew a pen line through the word “THREE” and carefully modified the “U.S. POSTAGE” tablet to read “C.S.A. POSTAGE.” So the stamp was not affixed in attempt to pay postage. Instead, the sender took a stamp he knew to be worthless and transformed it into a Confederate patriotic



**Figure 4. 3¢ 1857 stamp with manuscript cancel, manuscript “Paid 5,” on a cover to Chattanooga handstamped “KINGSTON TEN JUL 26” [1860]. The stamp, which counted for nothing, had been carefully altered by the sender.**

**Figure 5. Stamp from the Figure 4 cover, rotated and enlarged, with contrast enhanced.**

The sender drew a line through the “THREE” in “THREE CENTS” and meticulously altered the “U.S. POSTAGE” tablet to read “C.S.A. POSTAGE”—transforming an obsolete stamp into a Confederate patriotic label.



label, making a statement in support of the Confederate cause.

Confederate postmarks on U.S. government entire envelopes of the 1853 and 1860 series are fairly common. Such uses typically reflect the shortage of paper and especially envelopes within the Confederacy. Other Confederate covers exist, from later in the war, with 3¢ 1857 stamps applied, but on these the obsolete stamp was usually just disregarded—and not canceled. ■

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## HANDSTAMPED AND PRINTED CERTIFICATION OF FEDERAL SOLDIERS' LETTERS DURING THE CIVIL WAR

JAMES W. MILGRAM, M.D.

### Introduction

When the Civil War commenced, there were no arrangements in place regarding mail sent from camps by soldiers. Throughout the war, soldiers could use postage stamps on envelopes to send mail home. This topic is discussed in Chapter 6 of my book, *Federal Civil War Postal History*.<sup>1</sup> But soldiers in the field had no access to post offices where they could purchase stamps and they frequently had little or no money. Responding to this need, Congress passed a law on July 22, 1861 to permit ordinary soldiers to send letters postage due. These letters had to be certified, as coming from a soldier, by the Major or acting Major of the soldier's regiment. Surviving examples are the common soldiers' due covers, and my book contains a listing of originating towns that used soldier's due postmarks—typically "Due 3" but sometimes "Due 6"—on certified soldiers' covers.

Such a listing, including additional markings that have come to light since my book was written, will be a new section in the forthcoming revision of *The American Stampless Cover Catalog*, now being prepared by members of this society. It was also the subject of an article in *Chronicle* 215.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to the common handwritten certification that a letter is a soldier's letter, a few of the men who were certifying such mail caused handstamps to be prepared which contained the necessary information to indicate that the letter was a soldier's letter. Pre-printed or handstamped, all of these markings are scarce and many are rare. Because they were individually created, they show great variation in design. Chapter 7 of my book described all the then-known handstamped and printed varieties of certifying markings.

Due to a 2016 sale at Siegel Auctions of a large hoard of material including covers bearing these markings,<sup>3</sup> I have prepared this article to describe new listings and add new information, as well as to show previously described markings for which good images were not available when I wrote my book. The listings below follow the cataloguing nomenclature used in my book, where the individual markings were listed alphabetically by state, with each marking type designated by a "CERT" prefix. In order to preserve the integrity of the original listing, new listings have been numbered according to the established sequence, with alphabetical suffixes added, usually "A" or "B." The updated listings follow.

### Listings

**CERT-1.** The bicolored patriotic cover shown in Figure 1, addressed to Meriden, Connecticut, bears a black three-line handstamp that was devised by a chaplain of the 12th Connecticut Volunteer Infantry. This marking was used at New Orleans in 1862 after that city had been recaptured from Confederate rule. By this time the regulations allowed chaplains to certify soldier mail. New Orleans was one of the few towns that used a stand-alone numeral handstamp, without other explanation, to indicate the amount to be collected. Most other originating towns used "Due" notations, either handstamped or written, along with the usual 3¢ amount. The New Orleans postmarks on these covers are typically in blue ink





Figure 1. Patriotic cover handstamped “SOLDIER’S LETTER, J.H. BRADFORD, CHAPLAIN, 12TH C.V.” (CERT-1). “NEW ORLEANS LA. OCT 24 1862” and “3” to Connecticut.

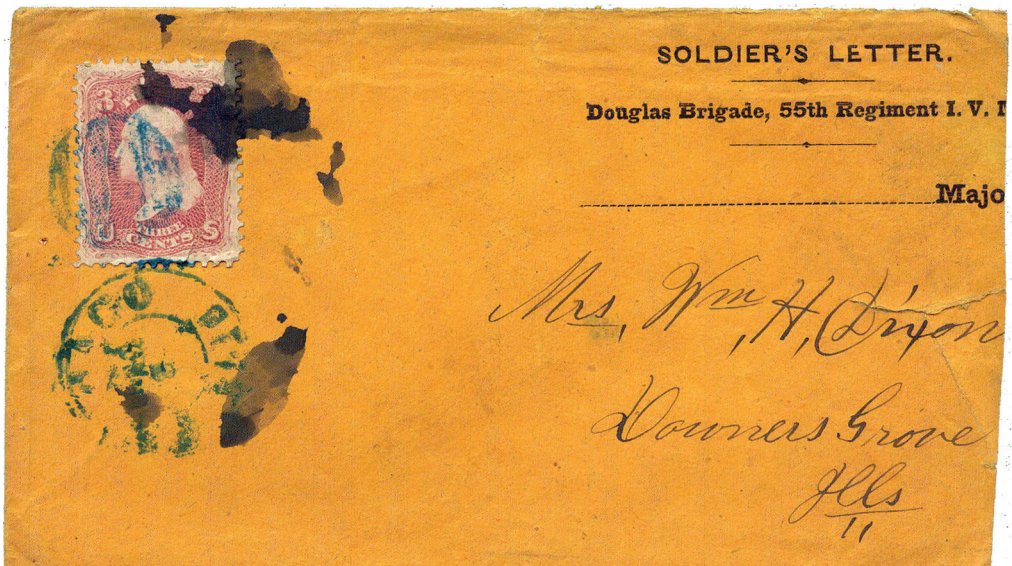


Figure 2. Printed certification “SOLDIER’S LETTER, Douglas Brigade, 55th I.V.I....Major” (CERT-6A) here not used for certification. The 3¢ 1861 stamp is tied by a blue “CHICAGO Ills. JAN 6” double circle on this cover sent to Downers Grove, Illinois.

(as in Figure 1) although black ink was also used.

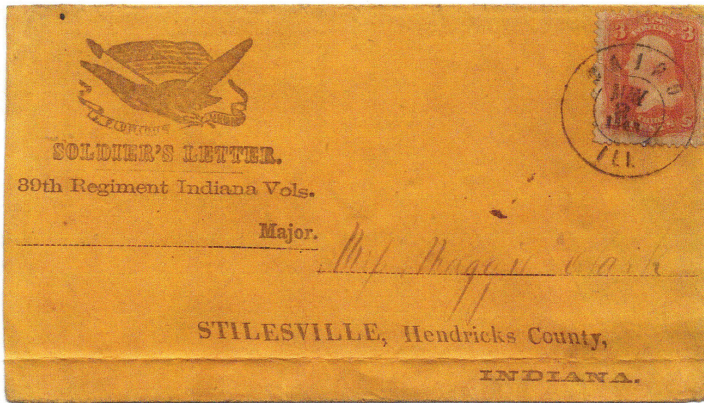
Not illustrated is a plain envelope with the **CERT-4** circular handstamp “SOLDIER’S LETTER 1ST Regt. Douglas Brigade,” with the written signature of “J. Hollensteen, Major” posted in December, 1862 from Nashville with “Due 3.” A number of different signatures can be found with this marking. This is a new one, not previously recorded.

**CERT-6A.** As noted above, in order to retain the established numbering of the markings, I have made new listings A and B numbers. Figure 2 shows a previously unlisted printed certification endorsement, on a cover created for members of the 55th Illinois Volunteer Regiment, also known as the Douglas Brigade. The cover in Figure 2 bears a 3¢ 1861 stamp

canceled in blue at Chicago, so this is not a certified soldier's letter, but the envelope was obviously prepared for unpaid use, in which case a major would have signed on the dotted line.

**CERT-7A.** The patriotic cover shown in Figure 3 was preprinted for use by the 39th Indiana Infantry Regiment. As with Figure 2, it includes a line for the certification signature, which was not filled in here, since the cover was franked with a 3¢ 1861 stamp. An unusual feature is the partially printed address, including the name of the town, county and state to which the envelope was to be sent. The sender needed only to fill in the name of the addressee, in this case Miss Maggie Clark. The Cairo, Illinois double circle cancel is dated May 3, 1863.

**CERT-8A.** The red printed patriotic cover presented in Figure 4 shows a flag design and a preprinted box for the signature of a major of the 36th Indiana Volunteers. In this case, the envelope was endorsed and properly used as a certified soldier's letter. It was postmarked "NEW HAVEN, KY. JAN 22" [1862] and sent "Due 3" (in manuscript at top left) to Spiceland, Indiana. This is a new soldier's due listing too.



**Figure 3. Printed cornercard "SOLDIER'S LETTER/30th Regiment Indiana Vols., ...Major" (CERT-7A) with printed address and patriotic image of eagle and flag. Sent with 3¢ 1861 stamp (thus not a soldier's due letter) from "CAIRO ILL MAY 3 1863" to Stilesville, Indiana.**



**Figure 4. Red patriotic flag image with certification box reading "SOLDIER'S LETTER, 36th Regiment Indiana Volunteers, ...Major" (CERT-8A) signed by an officer. Sent to Spiceland, Indiana from "NEW HAVEN KY JAN 22" with manuscript "Due 3."**

**CERT-8B.** The patriotic design on the cover in Figure 5 is usually seen in colors; here it is black. The preprinted cornercard for certification, a type not previously seen, has been filled out to designate the 35th Regiment of Iowa volunteers, but this envelope too was used with a stamp, here postmarked with a double circle “NEWBERN N.C. SEP 17 1863” postmark and sent to Muscatine, Iowa. Actually this is a type of generic endorsement box, since neither the regiment nor the state is printed. I showed another example in my book as **CERT-55**; on this the origin was not stated and there was no indication of a regiment.

**CERT-8C.** Figure 6 shows a cover with a previously unrecorded certification label. The paper is yellowish and the printed legend reads “Soldier’s Letter. Arthur O. Brickman, Chaplain 1st Md. Cav., U.S.A.”



Figure 5. Patriotic cover with shield, star and certification box with fancy chain frame. The preprinted certification box reads “SOLDIER’S LETTER, Regiment/Volunteers,....Major” (CERT-8B). “From the 35th Iowa” has been added in manuscript.



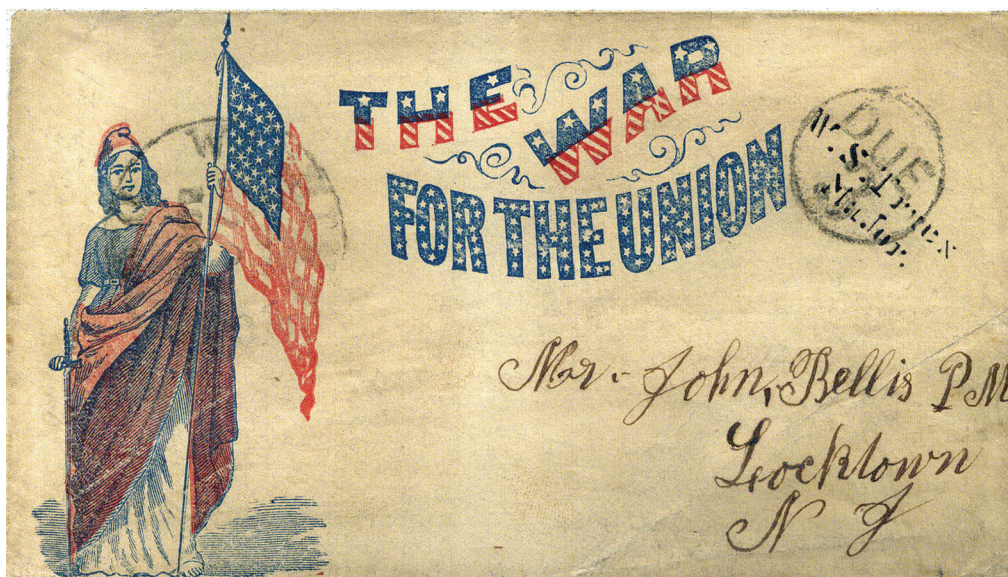
Figure 6. Adhesive label: “Soldier’s Letter, Arthur O. Brickman, Chaplain 1st Md. Cav. U.S.A.” (CERT-8C). “WASHINGTON D.C. DEC 8 1864” and “DUE 6” (for double rate).

Chaplain 1st Md. Cav. U.S.A.” (for “United States Army”). The year date in the Washington, double circle marking is unclear, but Maryland records indicate Brickman served between March 1864 and July 1865, so this letter must have been posted in December, 1864. Since this is definitely a certified soldier’s letter, the Washington “DUE 6” marking designates a double rate, indicating this was an overweight letter.

### Stencil markings

The following two listings are both stencil markings, unusual and very rare.

**CERT-14A.** The patriotic envelope shown in Figure 7 bears at upper right the stencil marking (not a handstamp) of William S. Truex, Major of the 5th New Jersey Regiment in 1862. He was later promoted and became an esteemed officer in other regiments. The marking reads “W.S. Truex/Major” in two lines, with no regiment named. Addressed to the postmaster at Locktown, New Jersey, the cover bears a Washington, D.C. circular datestamp, with Washington’s encircled “Due 3” struck over the stencil endorsement.



**Figure 7.** This patriotic cover to New Jersey bears the stencil endorsement (overstruck by the encircled “DUE 3”) of “W.S. Truex Major” (CERT-14A) with no regiment named. The Washington, D.C. circular datestamp reads “DEC 19,” with the year illegible.

**CERT-16.** The overall patriotic envelope shown in Figure 8 was also postmarked at Washington and also bears a stencilled endorsement, quite different from the marking shown in Figure 7. On the Figure 8 cover, the stencilling reads “SOLDIER’S LETTER/ 1ST L.I. VOLS.” the popular name for Company K of the 67th New York Volunteer Infantry. Washington applied its “Due 3” and its circular datestamp, which reads “DEC 19” with the year date illegible. The cover is addressed to Green Point, Long Island, today the northernmost neighborhood in Brooklyn.

**CERT-16A.** The printed imprint on the cover in Figure 9 reads “Soldiers’ Letter. Van Alen Cavalry,....Major” with the manuscript signature “Geo. W. Lewis” filling the blank. The cover is addressed to Cornwall, New York and bears a circular datestamp (and black “3” due marking) of Poolesville, Maryland, date unclear. James Henry Van Alen recruited and equipped the 3rd New York Cavalry Regiment, whose imprint appears on this cover. He became the unit’s colonel on August 28, 1861, when the unit participated in the defense of Washington. The 3rd New York Cavalry was involved in many actions during the war.



Figure 8. Addressed to Green Point, Long Island, this attractive overall patriotic cover with eagle and flags bears a bold stencil certification (at left) reading “SOLDIER’S LETTER, 1st L.I. VOLS” (CERT-16). The Washington D.C. circular datestamp reads December 19, with the year date illegible. The “DUE 3” was applied at Washington.

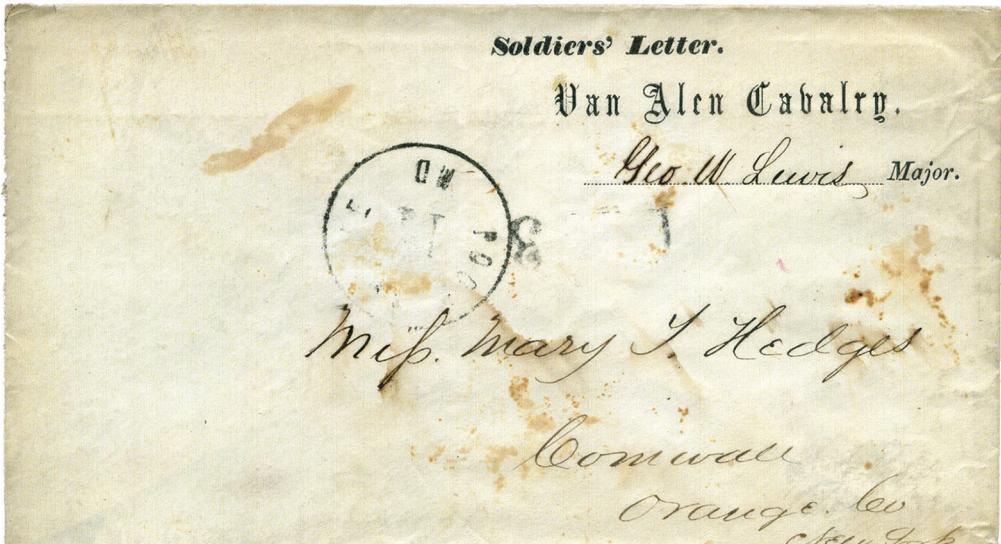


Figure 9. Printed certification designating a soldiers’ letter from the Third New York Cavalry Regiment, popularly known as the Val Alen Cavalry (CERT-16A), after James Henry Van Alen, the man who recruited and equipped it. Sent to Cornwall, New York.

### A remarkable pair

The following two listings, a remarkable pair, are variations of the same imprint, created for the the 45th New York Volunteer Infantry Regiment, also known as the 5th German Rifles, a volunteer unit made up almost entirely of German immigrants. The regiment was organized in New York City by George von Amsberg, a former Austrian cavalry officer who before emigrating had participated in the Hungarian revolution of 1848.

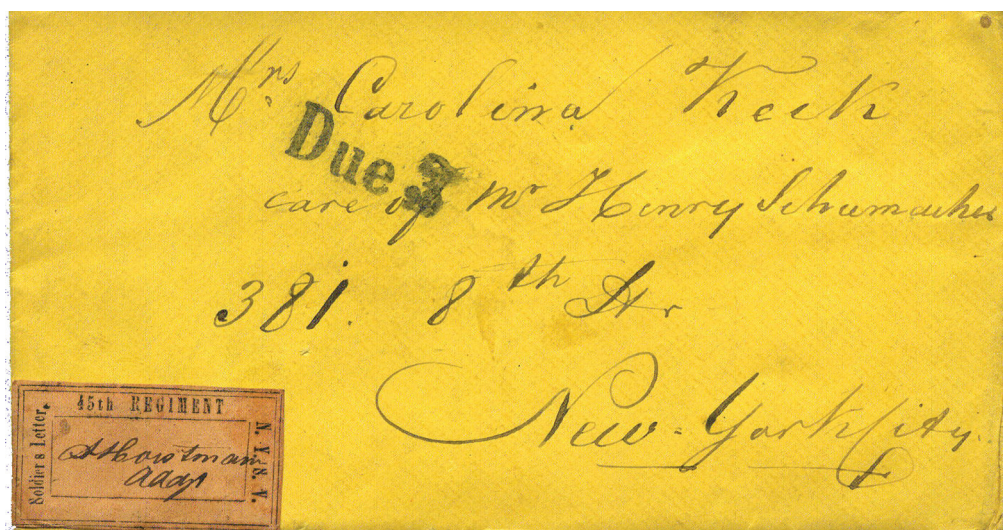


Figure 10. Black-on-salmon adhesive certification label reading “Soldiers Letter, 45th REGIMENT, N.Y.S.V.” (CERT-16B). Origin unknown, sent “Due 3” to New York City.

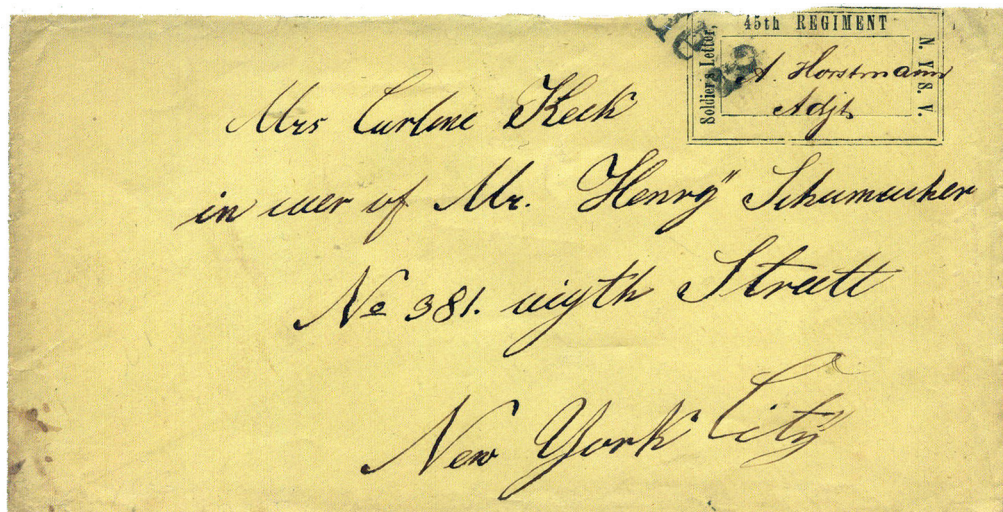
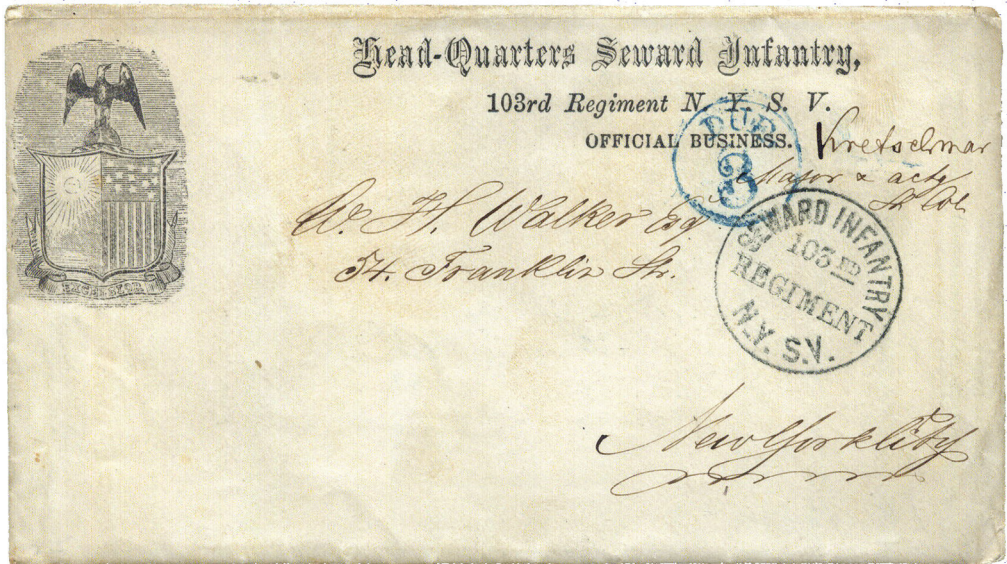


Figure 11. Printed certification (CERT-16C) with same typography, wording and signature as on the label in Figure 10. Date and origin unknown. Sent “Due 3” to New York.

**CERT-16B.** The cover in Figure 10 bears a label printed on salmon-colored paper. Clockwise from left the legend text reads: “Soldier’s Letter/5th REGIMENT/N.Y.S.V. with a signature of “A. Horstmann, Adgt.” Despite the lack of a postal origin marking, this was obviously accepted as a legitimate endorsement, evidenced by the straightline “Due 3,” probably applied at Washington.

**CERT-16C.** The cover in Figure 11 comes from the same correspondence as Figure 10 (“Mrs. Caroline Keck, in care of Mr. Henry Schumacher”), but here the certification design (again signed by Adjutant Horstmann) is printed on a yellow envelope. The postal use is the same: “Due 3” without a town postmark. This pair constitutes the only example I know of showing printed and label certification in the same design. Most unusual.

**CERT-18.** The cover in Figure 12 shows a very fine strike of a circular marking that reads “SEWARD INFANTRY/103RD REGIMENT/N.Y.S.V.” on a regimental patri-



**Figure 12. Regimental patriotic cover from “Head-Quarters Seward Infantry 103rd Regiment N.Y.S.V., OFFICIAL BUSINESS” with handstamped certification “SEWARD INFANTRY 103RD REGIMENT N.Y.S.V.” (CERT-18) and blue “DUE 3.”**

otic cover from the same unit. The signing officer, Major Kretschmar, presents his title as “Major & actg Lt. Col.” The 103rd New York Infantry, also called the Seward Infantry, was organized in New York City in October 1861 and moved to Washington, Virginia and North Carolina in in the spring of 1862. The Figure 12 cover contained a letter written at Newbern, North Carolina on April 27, 1862, but the blue “DUE 3” was applied at Baltimore.

**CERT-20.** The patriotic cover in Figure 13 with eagle and stars in red and blue was shown in a grainy black-and-white image in my book. Here is a much better photograph. At



**Figure 13. Patriotic cover with eagle, flag and stars in red and blue, struck with black arch certification handstamp “SOLDIER’S LETTER, 141 N.Y.” (CERT-20). The cover was sent “DUE 3” from Washington, D.C. to Hornby Forks, New York.**

upper right the cover bears the only known example of an arch marking that reads “SOLDIERS LETTER/141 N.Y.” The cover was sent to Hornby Forks, in Steuben County, New York. The 141st New York Infantry was organized at Elmira in the summer of 1862 and was part of the defense of Washington in early 1863. The postmark is the Washington City duplex “DUE 3” dated “JAN 25” (presumably 1863).

**CERT-20A.** The circular certification marking on the cover in Figure 14 is a new listing. It reads “SOLDIER’S LETTER/93d O.V.I./COL STRONG Comdg.” The 93rd Ohio Volunteer Infantry was organized at Dayton in August, 1862. During 1863-65 it was part of the Army of the Cumberland. The “Col. Strong” named in the marking was Colonel Hiram Strong, who commanded the 93rd Ohio at the battle of Chickamauga. The postmark on the Figure 14 cover is a Nashville double circle dated June 2, 1863; the “DUE 3” was also applied at Nashville.



**Figure 14.** Large black circular handstamped certification marking reading “SOLDIER’S LETTER, COL STRONG Comdg, 93d O.V.I.” (CERT-20A) with “NASHVILLE TEN JUN 2 1863” and “DUE 3” in circle, sent to Hyattsville, Ohio.

**CERT-22.** Figure 15 shows examples on two overlapped covers from the same correspondence, of a certification marking that was originally shown as a crude tracing in *Chronicle* 66 (page 71). In all known examples, this marking is poorly struck and difficult to decipher. The four-line straightline marking reads: “Soldier’s Letter/C.C. M’Cabe/Chaplain 122d Reg’t/O.V.I.”

The 122nd Ohio Infantry was organized at Zanesville, Ohio, in the fall of 1862 and served mostly in Virginia through the end of the war. Chaplain Charles Caldwell McCabe (1836-1906) survived Libby prison to become Chancellor of American University and bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church. After the war he was a successful motivational speaker; Julia Ward Howe credited him for popularizing the sung version of her famous poem, *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*.

There are two additional covers from this same correspondence, all addressed to Zanesville, so I can state that the certification marking is surrounded by a serrated rectangle (traces of which may show faintly in the far-left cover in Figure 15). Contents indicate that all four letters were posted in 1863. The full cover shows part of an unusual Winchester, Virginia, postmark. The other covers bear a smaller double-circle postmark.

**CERT-23A.** There are a number of similar patriotic envelopes with flag designs and certification boxes for various Wisconsin regiments. Figure 16 shows a typical example, on



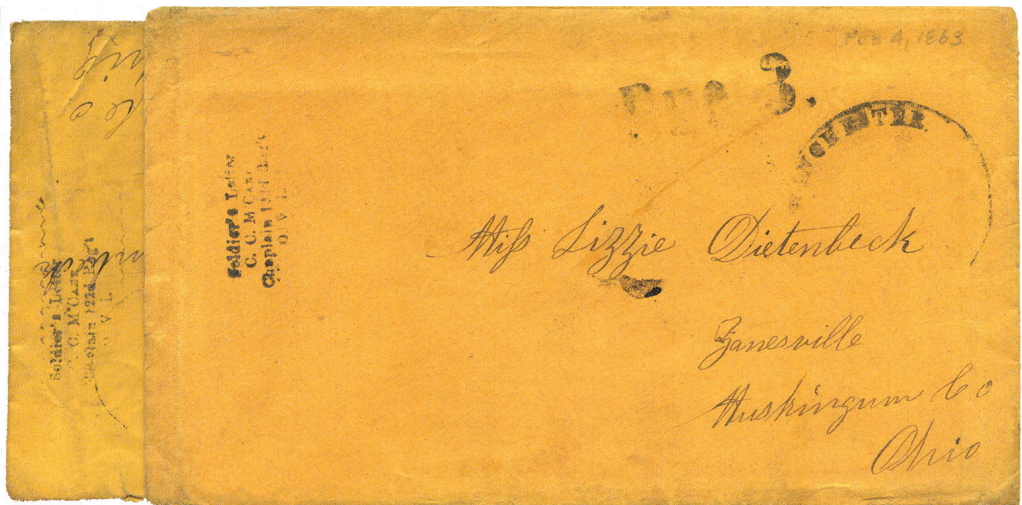


Figure 15. Two overlapping covers to same addressee with a four-line rectangular certification reading “Soldier’s Letter, C.C. M’Cabe, Chaplain 122d Reg’t, O.V.I.” (CERT-22). The full cover shows an unusual Winchester, Virginia, postmark with “Due 3” to Zanesville, Ohio. McCabe went on to achieve distinction in several theological positions.



Figure 16. This is the first of a series of certification boxes on covers from different Wisconsin regiments. This one (CERT-23A) reads “SOLDIER’S LETTER, 1st REGIMENT, WISCONSIN VOLUNTEERS,....Major” with manuscript “G.B. Bingham per Orderly.” Louisville struck the prussian blue “DUE 3” on this cover to Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

a cover to Oshkosh, Wisconsin, imprinted for the 1st Regiment of Wisconsin Volunteers. The 1st Wisconsin was raised at Milwaukee and was mustered into federal service in October, 1861. The signature on this endorsement is “G. B. Bingham, per orderly.” George B. Bingham was an officer in 1st Wisconsin until the unit was disbanded in October, 1864. The large blue “DUE 3” is a postmark known to have been used at Louisville, Kentucky.



Figure 17. This cover bears a printed certification “SOLDIER’S LETTER, 8th Regiment of Wisconsin,....Major” (CERT-23B) properly endorsed, which justified “Due 3” carriage with “PILOT KNOB MO OCT 28” to New York City. The endorsement signer is John Wayles Jefferson, said to be a grandson of Thomas Jefferson.

CERT-23B. The cover shown in Figure 17 bears a previously unrecorded printed certification: “SOLDIER’S LETTER. 8th Regiment of Wisconsin, Major.” Addressed to New York City, this example is properly signed by an officer and was rated (in manuscript) “Due 3” at Pilot Knob, Missouri, site of a Civil War battle in September, 1864. The circular postmark is dated October 28. The cover also bears a large blue crayon “3,” probably

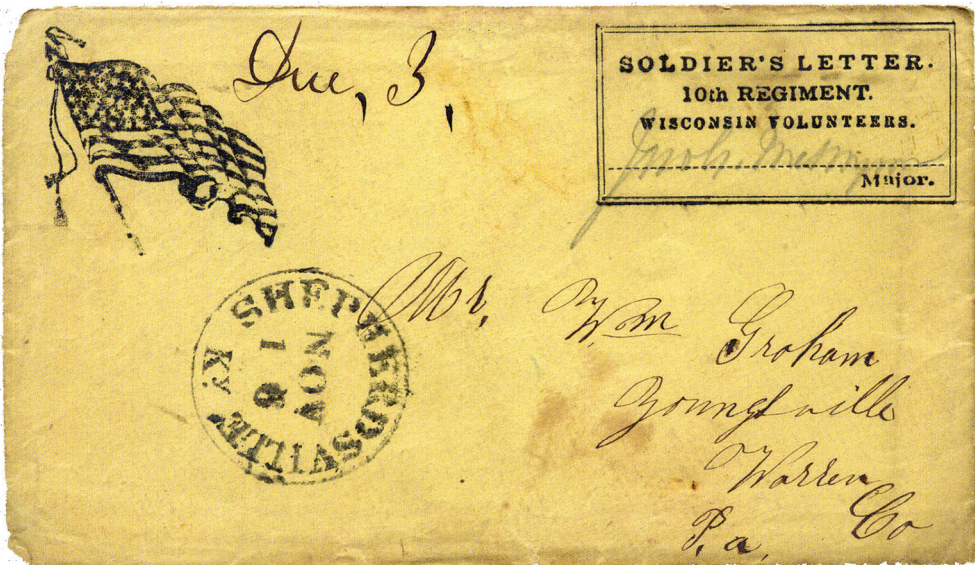


Figure 18. Patriotic cover with flag and certification box “SOLDIER’S LETTER/ 10th REGIMENT, WISCONSIN VOLUNTEERS,....Major” (CERT-24A) signed by an officer. “SHEPHERDSVILLE Ky NOV 16” and “Due 3” sent to Youngville, Penn.

applied at New York. The signature on this endorsement appears to be that of John Wayles Jefferson, a major in the 8th Wisconsin who was said to be a grandson of Thomas Jefferson. J.W. Jefferson's father, Eston Hemmings, born a slave at Monticello, was given his freedom in Jefferson's will.

**CERT-24A.** The cover in Figure 18 depicts a new type of printed certification for the 10th Regiment of Wisconsin Volunteers. A similar cover is depicted in my book, but the cover shown here, addressed to Youngsville, Pennsylvania, has differences in its lettering. In addition, the "SHEPHERDSVILLE KY NOV 16" with manuscript "due 3" is a new due listing. The enclosed patriotic lettersheet is dated November 14, 1861.

**CERT-24Avar.** The printed certification on the cover in Figure 19 is also a new listing, for which I have now seen two examples. The patriotic image depicts the Wisconsin state seal (note the badger above the shield). The certification box, not operative on this pre-paid cover, is partly obscured by a 3¢ 1861 stamp, tied by a Memphis double-circle duplex marking dated January 6, 1863. The full text of the certification box reads "SOLDIER'S LETTER/14TH REGIMENT/WISCONSIN VOLUNTEERS" with a blank line below for a Major's signature. The cover is addressed to Depere, Wisconsin, now a suburb of Green Bay. In the 1670s, Depere was the site of an important French Jesuit mission.



**Figure 19.** Intended for a Soldier's Letter, this patriotic envelope to Depere, Wisconsin, shows the Wisconsin state seal (note the badger) with certification imprint (CERT-24Avar) "SOLDIER'S LETTER, 14th REGIMENT, WISCONSIN VOLUNTEERS." The imprint is partly covered by the 3¢ 1861 stamp, which is struck with a duplex circular datestamp reading "MEMPHIS TEN JAN 6 1863."

**CERT-24B.** The attractive envelope in Figure 20 is printed in blue with the addition of red stripes in the flag. The certification box is for the same regiment designated in the previous cover, the 14th Wisconsin Volunteers. The postmark was struck at Cairo, Illinois in 1862. The month is not clear.

### Certifications from hospitals by surgeons and chaplains

Another category of certification handstamps and printed designs originated from hospitals. The officer in charge was the surgeon of the hospital, but here too the chaplains took responsibility for much of the soldiers' mail. Many of these markings are from hospitals in Washington and Baltimore, but our first example comes from Louisville.



Figure 20. Patriotic cover with red and blue flag, addressed to Lowell, Massachusetts, with printed certification “SOLDIER’S LETTER, 14th REGIMENT, WISCONSIN VOLUNTEERS,....Major” (CERT-24B). The 3¢ 1861 stamp is tied “CAIRO III. ? 24 1862.”

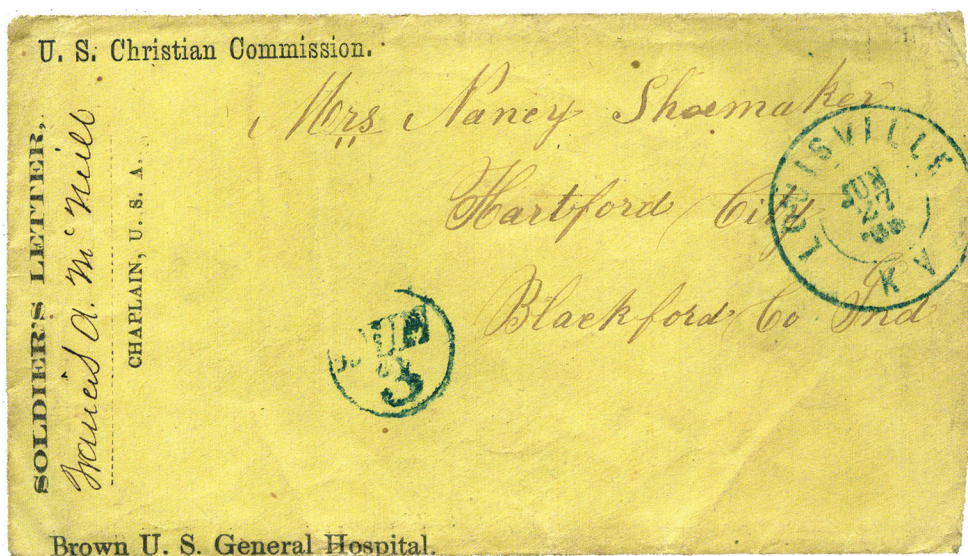


Figure 21. Envelope created by the U.S. Christian Commission for use by wounded soldiers at the Brown Military Hospital in Louisville, Kentucky. The certification imprint reads “SOLDIER’S LETTER, ....., CHAPLAIN, U.S.A.” (CERT-26A).

CERT-26A. Figure 21 shows an envelope printed by the U.S. Christian Commission for use at Brown General Hospital in Louisville, a huge military medical facility established by the Army. Also printed vertically at left on the cover is the Soldier’s Letter certification endorsement, bearing the signature of Francis A. McNeill, Chaplain, U.S.A. The cover is addressed to Hartford City, Indiana, and was postmarked at Louisville on June 27, 1863; the encircled “DUE 3” was also applied there.

(CERTIFICATION continued on page 160)

## ARCHIVAL DISCOVERY: 1796 BROADSIDE CHART OF POSTAL DISTANCES AND RATES

DIANE DEBLOIS

Two years ago, in illustrating an article I wrote, the centerfold of *Chronicle* 246 featured a bandana, created in 1815 in Glasgow, on which was printed an elaborate triangular chart showing distances between United States post offices and providing instructions on how to use the distance information to determine the postal rate between any two offices listed. The rate data presented in the bandana was obsolete by 1815, having been superseded in 1799 by a simpler calculation. For this and other reasons it was clear that the bandana information had been copied from a chart of rates and distances originally published in the mid-1790s. Textile historians had sleuthed out the source of the bandana data—a printed 1796 broadside of which an example survives in the archive of the Massachusetts Historical Society (MHS).

The existence of this document was apparently unknown to the philatelic community. It is not mentioned in the definitive ter Braake book or in other philatelic references dealing with early U.S. postal rates and routes.<sup>1</sup> Based on information from the textile literature, I cited the broadside (including a call number, critical to locating an object in the archive) as a footnote in my *Chronicle* article, and that launched a search for the actual document.<sup>2</sup> Tim O'Connor, whose research in colonial postal history archives is widely appreciated, located the document, obtained a high-resolution scan and secured from MHS the right to reproduce it in the pages of the *Chronicle*.

So behold in Figure 1, the centerfold on the following two pages, the 1796 broadside created by Samuel A. Ruddock and engraved by Benjamin Callender, reproduced here for what appears to be the first time anywhere, after spending more than two centuries in archival darkness. Having done all the preliminary work, O'Connor declined to create an accompanying write-up—on the grounds that the subject was “too modern” for his colonial tastes. At that point *Chronicle* editor Michael Laurence asked me to provide an article to accompany the chart, an assignment I was happy to accept.

The actual size of the original broadsheet is 44 by 55 centimeters, with the printed area 36 by 46 centimeters (about 14½ by 18 inches). We know from our prior experience with the bandana that this fits tightly but legibly on the *Chronicle* centerspread. As is evident from the Figure 1 illustration, the heading of the document is “A Geographical View of all the Post Towns in the United States of America and their distances from each other, According to the establishment of the Postmaster General.” (In other words, these are the official distances that have been established by the PMG for for the purpose of postal rate calculation.) Below “General” in the heading is the creator’s byline: “by Samuel A. Ruddock, accomptant, Boston.” (The engraver’s credit line—“B. Callender Sculpt Boston”—appears in very small type outside the frame at extreme bottom right.) In the top heading, above the Ruddock byline, is the pencilled-in year date 1796 (the “6” appears to overwrite a “5”). The MHS catalog dates this document to 1796, but on what basis other than the pencil notation, we know not.

However, the approximate date of 1796 is confirmed by internal information. The “Rates of Postage” presented in the small box at bottom center are those effective 1 June 1792, which became obsolete on 2 March 1799. In the state-related information at bottom left, Kentucky





(which joined the union in 1792) is listed as a state, but Tennessee (admitted June 1, 1796) is called “Tennessee government.” This bracketing information suggests the chart was based on data current between mid-1792 and mid-1796, so in the absence of more definitive information, the year 1796 seems a reasonable attribution.

From the vantage point of the 21st century, we can’t know just what purpose this document was intended to serve. Postmasters might be users, but presumably they had other similar resources available to them. Businesses and individual mailers might be candidates, but the usefulness of the broadside information was limited because (we must not forget) in the 18th century almost no mail was sent prepaid. In the typical case, a letter was hand-carried to the post office, where it would be rated and marked for collection upon delivery. Perhaps the tabular information was intended to enable recipients of letters to verify the accuracy of their rating.

It can certainly serve that end for collectors today. The box at bottom right explains how the chart information was to be used in calculating the postal distance between any two of the 503 listed offices. This was simply a matter of finding a distance along the main line (the large triangular data cluster at left) and combining it (if necessary) with a distance along one or more of the many cross posts described in the various clusters of information in the triangle at right. Once the distance between the sending and receiving offices was established, the postage could be calculated by reference to the rate chart at bottom, left of the “Explanation” box. As noted, these were rates effective between 1 June 1792 and 2 March 1799. After that the rates were consolidated and simplified—but of course the distances didn’t change.

### Samuel A. Ruddock (1767?-1828)

Who was Samuel Abiel Ruddock? His by-line on the broadside designates him as “Accomptant, Boston”—accomptant being the now-obsolete original form of “accountant.” Apparently, presenting numbers in chart form was a specialty of his. Another researcher has cited his *Valuable Tables for Rendering the Value of Federal Money Easy and Intelligible*, printed by Thomas Collier and published in Worcester, Massachusetts in 1795.<sup>3</sup>

Two Ruddock works were recorded by Joseph Sabin, whose multi-volume *Dictionary of Books Relating to America, from its Discovery to the Present Time*, published in many parts in the 1880s, is an antiquarian’s treasure-map. In addition to the broadside presented here, Sabin listed another quarto broadside under Ruddock’s byline, from roughly the same period: *A View of the Quarterly Diminution of the Present 6 per Cent. Stock of the United States, by the Payment of 8 Dollars upon Every 100 Dollars of the Original Stock, as expressed in the Certificates of Said Stock—commencing on the First Day of Jan. 1796. — Also the Deferred Stock, commencing January 1st, 1802, &c. according to the Law*. This appears to have been a popular explanation of the intricacies of the bonds issued under the Funding Act of 1790, Alexander Hamilton’s *tour de force* that assumed, consolidated and ultimately paid off state debts outstanding since the Revolution. Sabin says this later broadside had no place of printing, but Boston might assumed.<sup>4</sup>

It could also be Charleston, South Carolina. By January 8, 1803, Ruddock had moved there, and circulated a printed prospectus for a *Charleston Price Current*. The prospectus is shown as the upper image in Figure 2. Filling the blank leaf on a copy of his circular, Ruddock wrote an almost incoherent letter to President Jefferson in Washington, claiming that Ruddock had risked his life for Republican principles—in Jamaica where the British military were all set to execute him for having in his possession a Boston receipt for ten tons of gunpowder. A petition had apparently been presented to the U.S. Congress by more than 20 masters of American vessels in Jamaica, seeking to get Ruddock named American Agent for Foreign Affairs— employment he would still welcome “when it calls for the united exertions of the natives of this country to use their efforts to maintain their liberty....”

The address panel of Ruddock’s letter to Jefferson is presented as the lower image in Figure 2, both images also shown through the courtesy of MHS. In his letter to Jefferson, Ruddock emphasized his mathematical abilities, but said that he was also a mapmaker and surveyor. In



(C I R C U L A R.)

CHARLESTON, (S. C.) January 8<sup>th</sup>, 1803.

S I R,

HAVING undertaken to Publish a Mercantile Paper in this City, and feeling anxious for its success, in consequence of its general utility, among all classes of Citizens, impels me to transmit you the Proposals for the same, earnestly soliciting your aid and patronage, under a desire that you will use your influence with those of your friends and acquaintance to obtain their names for this really valuable and useful Publication, the CHARLESTON PRICE CURRENT.—Trusting with confidence upon your veracity, and feeling an innate hope of your kind exertions in my behalf, emboldens me to depend upon your liberal efforts towards encouraging this arduous establishment.

You will please inclose me the names of the Subscribers and the half in advance as soon as possible, at No. 12, Church-street.

With respect and esteem I remain,

Sir,

Your much obliged and very  
humble Servant,

*Sam<sup>l</sup> A. Ruddock*

Figure 2. Above, a prospectus seeking subscribers for a mercantile publication to be launched by Samuel A. Ruddock in Charleston, South Carolina. Ruddock boldly sent this document (“Free”) to President Thomas Jefferson. The address panel is shown below. Both images are from the collection of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

His Excellency (Free)  
 Tho<sup>s</sup>. Jefferson  
 President of the United States  
 at  
 Washington City.

*P. Post*

CHARLESTON  
 JAN  
 14

1797, he had submitted a bid to the Massachusetts legislature for preparing the first maps of Maine and Massachusetts. Apparently he was not chosen for this job.

But he did sponsor his own mapping career. In January 1824, a Congressional Representative presented Ruddock's petition to the Committee on Ways and Means, to grant him publishing funds for maps of North and South America that he had prepared "from travel and actual observation." By the end of 1824, he was asking that the Secretary of War hire him as a Civil and Topographical Engineer. These petitions lay fallow until May of 1826, when a Joint Assembly did vote funds to employ him "in the capacity of a Civil Engineer" to prepare copies of his maps "on a scale of twenty miles to an inch; to be done on fine drawing paper, secured on canvass, mounted on rollers, handsomely colored and varnished, for the use of the Congress of the United States."<sup>5</sup> Ruddock's quest for backing from Washington was reported in the contemporary press: "He has been many years traveling round the continent for the purpose of making astronomical observations, so as to correct the latitude and longitude of many thousand places on the continent and its coast."<sup>6</sup>

The rest of Ruddock's career, at least according to family lore, was checkered, even wild. After Congress named him as a Topographical Surveyor for the West, for nine years he worked his way from Charleston through Mexico and California—captured by Indians, meeting Kit Carson, finding gold. Having caught gold fever early, he journeyed West again, was left for dead in the desert with a Mountain Fever, found more gold and ended a bankrupt.<sup>7</sup>

### Endnotes

1. Alex L. ter Braake, *The Posted Letter in Colonial and Revolutionary America*, State College, Pa., American Philatelic Research Library, 1975.
2. Diane DeBlois, "Postal History you can Wear," *Chronicle* 246, Endnote 8.
3. Patricia Cline Cohen, *A Calculating People: The Spread of Numeracy in Early America* (New York 1999).
4. Joseph Sabin, *Bibliotheca Americana: A Dictionary of Books relating to America, from its discovery to the present time. Volume XVIII* (New York 1889).
5. *Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States, 1825-27*, Washington D.C.: Gales & Seaton.
6. *American Magazine of Letters and Christianity* (Princeton, N.J., 1826, issue 4, pg. 253).
7. File on USGenWeb "Yolo-Sacramento-El Dorado County CA Archives, biography of Calvin Ruddock, born 1814" – information from letters sent by Ruddock to his brother Edward in Buckland, Massachusetts. ■

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(CERTIFICATION continued from page 154)

**CERT-38var.** Figure 22 shows a cover with a Sanitary Commission shield and a printed cornercard for certification at the McClellan Army Hospital in Philadelphia, named after Civil War General George B. McClellan, who was born in Philadelphia, son of a prominent surgeon there. The Sanitary Commission symbol on this cover is different from the example listed in my book, and the "Soldier's Letter" line in the certification is printed in a bolder typeface. But this has the same printed signature of "J. Shrigley, Chaplain. U.S.A." James Shrigley was chaplain at McClellan hospital from 1863 to mid-1865. As a certified soldier's letter, the cover could be sent "Due 3" from Philadelphia to Arcola, Indiana on June 2, 1865. This cover must have been sent by a wounded soldier still in the hospital after the war ended.

**CERT-39A.** A second type of cornercard from the McClellan Hospital takes the form of a printed certification box within a serrated rectangular border. An example is shown in my book as CERT-39. The cover in Figure 23 shows that this printed certification was repurposed as a handstamp that was applied to other envelopes. The U.S. Christian Commission message on this envelope, illustrated with a pigeon carrying a letter message, ap-



Figure 22. Shield-type U.S. Sanitary Commission patriotic envelope with additional printed certification box: "Soldier's Letter, McClellan U.S.A. Gen. Hospital, PHILADELPHIA, PA., J. Shrigley [script] Chaplain U.S.A." (CERT-38var). This certified soldier's letter was sent with "PHILA PA. JUN 2 1865" duplex postmark and "Due 3" to Arcola, Indiana, probably from a wounded soldier still in the hospital after the war.



Figure 23. The same printed certification marking on the cover in Figure 22 was copied as a handstamped marking (CERT-39A), including the script signature of Chaplain Shrigley. This handstamp was applied to the left side of this envelope which was printed by the U.S. Christian Commission for distribution to soldiers. Marked with "PHILA. PA. AUG 15 1864" and "Due 3." Sent to Crosscreek Village, Pennsylvania.

pears on other covers on which the certification information is preprinted, rather than handstamped. Per the duplex postmark, the Figure 23 cover was mailed at Philadelphia on 15 August 1864, sent "Due 3" to Crosscreek Village, Pennsylvania.



Figure 24. This cover bears the black two-line handstamp of “THOMAS SIM, SURGEON U.S.A. IN CHARGE” (CERT-43A), a certification marking from a Baltimore hospital attesting that this was a soldier’s letter. Addressed to Granby Centre, New York, it was postmarked “BALTIMORE MD. AUG 20 ‘64” and rated “DUE 3,” both in blue.



Figure 25. Cover to to Caribou, Pennsylvania, handstamped “U. S. Army, General Hospital, SUMMIT HOUSE” (CERT-44) in three lines, signed illegibly but apparently by a surgeon, and postmarked “PHILA PA AUG 5 1864” and “Due 3.”

**CERT-43A.** The cover in Figure 24 bears a handstamped “THOMAS SIM/SURGEON U.S.A. IN CHARGE” in two straight lines, applied at Patterson Park Hospital in Baltimore. This marking has not previously been recorded. The sender had endorsed the cover “Soldiers Letter” in blue ink. The surgeon’s handstamp certified it as being a soldier’s letter and it was sent “DUE 3” from Baltimore to Granby Center, New York, on August 20, 1864. As Medical Director of the Third Army Corps, Surgeon Sim was the man who amputated General Daniel Sickles’ leg at the Battle of Gettysburg. The severed legbone

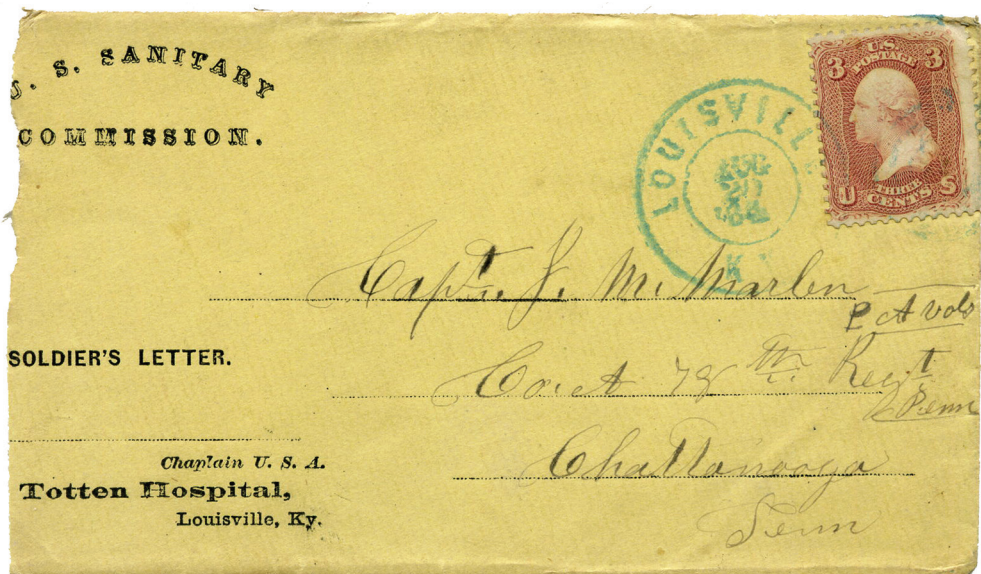


Figure 26. Just one of a number of printed hospital designations intended to certify soldiers' letters. Printed Sanitary Commission cornercard and "SOLDIER'S LETTER,....Chaplain U.S.A., Totten Hospital, Louisville, Ky." (CERT-44A). Here used with a 3¢ 1861 stamp canceled "LOUISVILLE KY AUG 20 '64" in blue, addressed to a captain in the 78th Pennsylvania Regiment.

and the cannonball that shattered it are on display at the National Museum of Health and Medicine in Silver Spring, Maryland. Sim was also involved with caring for the wounded at the Battle of Chancellorsville.

**CERT-44.** Figure 25 is a full photograph of a cover that was only partially illustrated in black and white in my book. The three-line handstamp ("U.S. Army/General Hospital/SUMMIT HOUSE") uses three very different type fonts. No surprise, the doctor's signature above the handstamp is all but illegible. It may be the signature of surgeon L. Leavitt, who was executive officer at the Summit House hospital, followed by the words "Asst. surg. U.S.A." But that's just a guess. Endorsed "Soldier's Letter" in manuscript at left, the cover was postmarked "PHILA PA AUG 5 1864" and sent "Due 3" to Caribou, Maine.

**CERT-44A.** Figure 26 is another example of an envelope prepared by the U.S. Sanitary Commission with preprinted certification information for the convenience of soldiers

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Figure 27. "U.S. General Hospital, Chester Pa., SOLDIER'S LETTER" (CERT-44B) with the signature of a chaplain at the hospital certifying the letter to be a soldier's letter. Postmarked "CHESTER PA. SEP 5" and "DUE 3" in circle, sent to Ossian, New York.

at various individual hospitals, in this case, the Totten Hospital in Louisville. This envelope, sent to a Captain in the 78th Pennsylvania Regiment at Chattanooga, bears a 3¢ 1861 stamp and so was not certified as a soldier's letter and bears no chaplain's signature. The Louisville postmark is dated August 20, 1864. Given the detailed military address, this envelope might have contained affirmation from the hospital that a wounded soldier was in residence and should be kept on the muster roll, thus enabling him to continue to receive his pay.

**CERT-44B.** The cover in Figure 27 bears a corner imprint reading "U.S. General Hospital, Chester Pa./SOLDIER'S LETTER." A chaplain named Hammond signed it, declaring his office so as to enable the letter to be sent postage due as a soldier's letter. This must be a very scarce use. Sent to Ossian, New York, the cover is postmarked "CHESTER PA. SEP 5" and "DUE 3."

**CERT-44C.** Figure 28 shows another printed certification from the U.S. Hospital at Chestnut Hill, Pennsylvania. This cover was mailed as a due letter from Philadelphia. There are probably other examples of such hospital covers that have not been reported.

**CERT-45.** The cover in Figure 29, addressed to Eatonville, New York, is from the same correspondence as a cover that was partly illustrated (in black and white) in my book. The handstamped certification marking is very clearly struck, and shows that it was intend-

Figure 28. This is a different style of printed certification cornercard: "U.S. HOSPITAL/CHESTNUT HILL/PENN,...Chaplain, U.S.A., SOLDIER'S LETTER." (CERT-44C). Certified by Chaplain Sharkman and postmarked "Due 3" with "PHILA PA MAY 14 1864," then sent to North. Ashford, Connecticut.





Figure 29. Handstamped hospital marking: “SOLDIER’S LETTER,....Chaplain U.S.A./ Gen. Hosp., Broad & Cherry, Phila.” (CERT-45). Sent “Due 3” to Eatonville, N.Y.



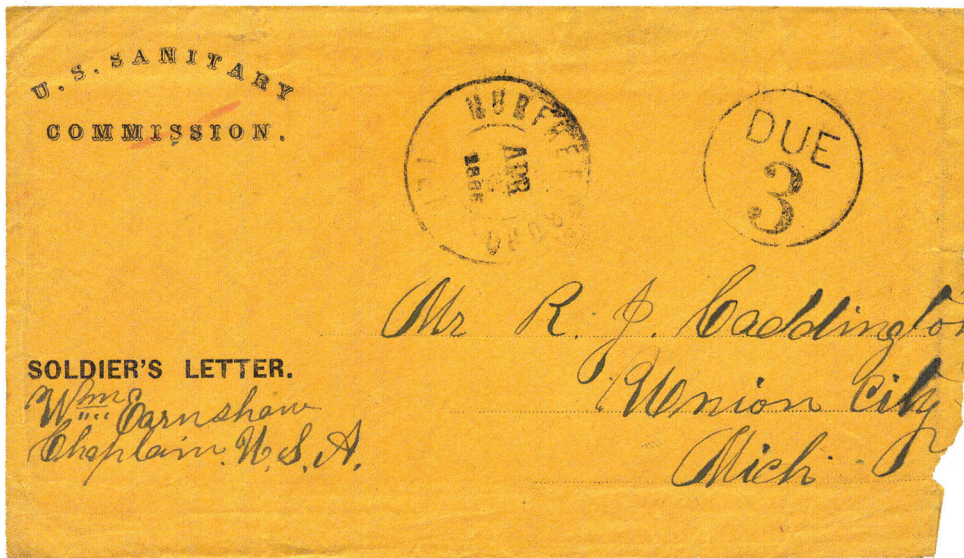
Figure 30. Generic handstamped “SOLDIER’S LETTER,....CHAPLAIN U.S.A.” (CERT-52A) signed “N. West,” presumably a chaplain at one of the hospitals in Philadelphia. “PHILA PA. JUL 5 1862” and “Due 3” to Salladasburg, Penn.

ed to be signed by a chaplain (in this case, J.H. McFarland), not a surgeon. The certification reads “SOLDIER’S LETTER/Chaplain U.S.A./Gen. Hosp., Broad & Cherry, Phila.” This was the Broad Street General Hospital in Philadelphia, which opened in February, 1862. The Philadelphia postmark is dated October 5, 1862, with matching due 3.

#### Certification with no origin or regiment named

A number of soldiers’ letter certification endorsements, usually handstamped but sometimes preprinted, lack information to tie them to a specific regiment or unit.

**CERT-52A.** The handstamped certification marking on the cover in Figure 30 is a previously unlisted marking, which simply reads “SOLDIER’S LETTER” and “CHAPLAIN U.S.A.” in two separate lines, between which any military chaplain could insert his



**Figure 31. U.S. Sanitary Commission envelope with no designation of unit or hospital (CERT-54A). Signed by a chaplain and thus a certified soldier's letter, sent to Union City, Michigan with "DUE 3" and "MURFREESBORO TEN APR 6 1865."**

signature. This cover was posted at Philadelphia, so the marking was probably associated with a hospital. Postal markings are "PHILA PA. JUL 5 1864" and "Due 3." The cover was sent to Salladasburg, Pennsylvania.

**CERT-54A.** Figure 31 shows another example of a Sanitary Commission envelope preprinted for use by soldiers. It bears a printed "SOLDIER'S LETTER" designation but there is no printed signature line. In this case, a chaplain used the area beneath the endorsement to certify that the contents came from a soldier. The accompanying letter is a poignant notification of the death of a member of the 1st Michigan Artillery Regiment, at the U.S. Army Hospital at Murfreesboro, Tennessee. As a soldiers' letter, this cover was sent "DUE 3." The Murfreesboro circular datestamp reads April 6, 1865.

#### **Other handstamps used by individual soldiers and others**

In addition to markings relating to certification of soldiers' letters, a few individual soldiers created special markings for personal use. Some of these were handstamps, but from my experience more were stencils. And collectors of patriotic covers are familiar with those envelopes that were preprinted for the use of an individual soldier

Figure 32 shows the reverse of a patriotic cover that bears a huge blue oval handstamp reading "U.S.A. GEN. HOSP. WEST'S BUILDINGS. BALTO. MD" . On the front (not shown) there is a manuscript "Soldier's Letter Geo. Rex Surg." with the Baltimore "DUE

**Figure 32. Huge "U.S.A. GEN. HOSP., WEST'S BUILDINGS., BALTO. MD" oval in blue ink on reverse of a Patriotic envelope with blue "Due 3" and Baltimore postmark. Although it does not contain the requisite wording, this hard-to-ignore marking apparently served to certify the cover as a soldier's letter.**







Figure 33. The unusual feature of this cover is the blue handstamped double-circle “CAMP SCOTT, 38TH REGT. N.Y.V., 2ND SCOTT LIFE GUARD” which was altered in pen by the sender. The postage was paid by the 3¢ 1861 stamp canceled “OLD POINT COMFORT VA. JUN 9,” year not known. Sent to Norton Hill, New York.

3” in blue circle, so I feel the marking on the reverse of the envelope was used to certify this cover as coming from a soldier. This is certainly a spectacular Civil War handstamp.

The cover in Figure 33 is franked with a nice 3¢ 1861 stamp postmarked at Old Point Comfort, Virginia. At upper left, the sender applied a large double-circle marking “CAMP SCOTT/38th REGT. N.Y.V./2ND SCOTT LIFE GUARD”. This is not a certifying marking, but a very unusual handstamped cornercard designating a military unit.

The caricature patriotic cover in Figure 34, depicting Winfield Scott as an alpha bulldog challenging Jefferson Davis as a frightened pup, bears the finest soldier’s handstamp



Figure 34. This caricature patriotic cover bears a spectacular handstamp “FROM MACOMB CAVALRY. CO. 4” in double enclosed arcs. The 3¢ 1861 stamp is tied “ST. LOUIS MO. JAN 17” and the cover is addressed to Blandford, Massachusetts.

I have seen. The marking consists of two arcs within a fancy frame and reads “FROM MACOMB/CAVALRY. CO. The cover is addressed to Blandford, Massachusetts, and the 3¢ 1861 stamp is tied by a St. Louis postmark dated January 17. The year date is not known, but the patriotic design would suggest 1862.

The cover in Figure 35 shows a striking and heretofore unlisted double-circle marking created for the 16th Regiment of New York Volunteers, formed in May 1861 in the three northernmost New York counties: Clinton, Franklin and St. Lawrence. Packed with type



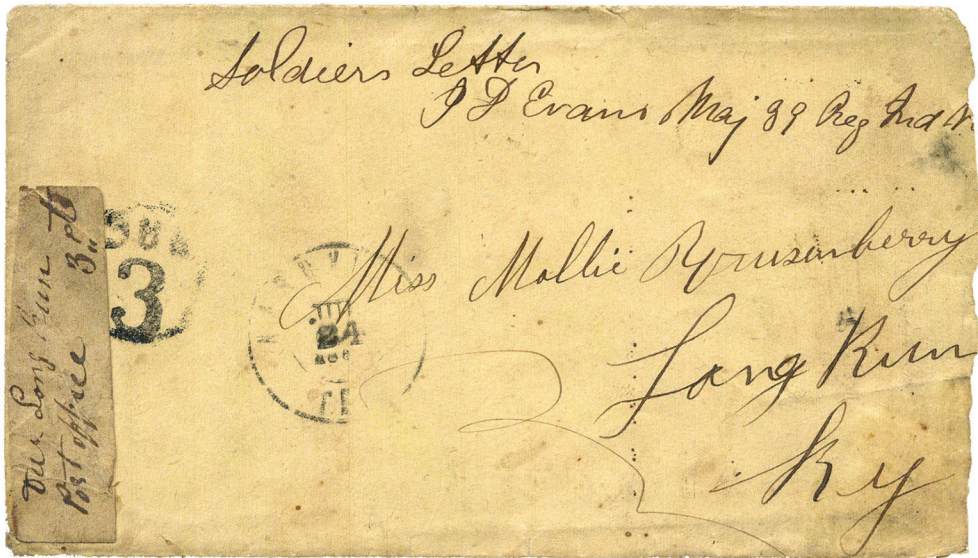
Figure 35. An unusual regimental marking: double circle “NEW YORK/16th VOLRS., ST. LAWRENCE CLINTON FRANKLIN” tying the 3¢ 1861 stamp, which is also struck by the double-circle “OLD POINT COMFORT VA. JUL 17” postmark.



Figure 36. The oval handstamp on this cover is a sutler’s marking: “R.A.BELL & CO. SUTLERS, 157th, N.Y. INFANTRY.” Sutlers were attached to many Civil War units, but markings designating them are rare. This 3¢ 1861 cover was sent from Amelia Island in Florida with “FERNANDINA FLA. 2 MAY ‘64” (a union postmark) to Welchville, Maine.

and ornaments, the bold double-circle marking, which ties the stamp, reads “NEW YORK 16th VOLRS/ST. LAWRENCE/CLINTON/FRANKLIN.” The 3¢ 1861 stamp was subsequently struck with an Old Point Comfort double-circle postmark dated July 17. The cover is addressed to Malone, in Franklin County.

The Figure 36 cover shows a handstamped oval imprint for a Civil War sutler. The marking reads “R.A.BELL & CO./SUTLERS/157th N.Y. INFANTRY.” While this is not technically a soldier’s marking, it certainly represents an unusual military use. It is rare for a sutler’s letter to bear an origin marking like this. The cover was sent to Welchville, Maine from reoccupied Florida. The union postmark tying the 3¢ 1861 stamp reads FERNANDINA FLA. 2 MAY ‘64.”



**Figure 37.** This is a properly certified soldier’s letter signed by the major of the 39th Regiment of Indiana Volunteers. The cover is postmarked “NASHVILLE TEN JUL 24 1862” and “DUE 3,” addressed to Long Run, Kentucky. The postmaster there had prepared an adhesive label for soldier’s letters: “Due Long Run Post office 3 cts.”

Our final illustration, Figure 37, may be the most unusual item of all these new listings. This is a properly certified soldier’s letter, signed by the major of the 39th Indiana Infantry Regiment, sent “Due 3” from Nashville to Long Run, Kentucky. The postmaster there had prepared a special manuscript label which he affixed at the left edge of this cover: “Due Long Run Post Office 3 cts.”

### Endnotes

1. Milgram, James W., *Federal Civil War Postal History*, Northbrook Publishing Co., Lake Forest, Illinois, 2007.
2. —, “Due Mail from Civil War Soldiers,” *Chronicle* 215 (2007), pp. 176-185.
3. Robert A. Siegel sale 1125, lot 925. This was a large lot of Civil War covers from the estate of Calvet Hahn. ■

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1916 2+1c brown, Die I War Tax, choice mint NH example. Sold for \$4,025 (February 2016)



1875 2c, 5c & 8c set of three trial colour die proofs. One of two known sets. Sold for \$54,625 (October 2016)



1963 4c Cameo, coil strip imperforate between centre pair. The finer of the two known examples. Sold for \$24,150 (October 2016)



1856 Red River Settlement Circular Manuscript Postmark one of eight or nine such covers are known to exist. Sold for \$9,775 (June 2016)

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## THE BANK NOTE PERIOD

H. JEFFREY BRAHIN, EDITOR

### A COVER TO ST. PIERRE AND MIQUELON ROUTED THROUGH NEWFOUNDLAND

H. JEFFREY BRAHIN AND DAVID D'ALESSANDRIS

Covers to St. Pierre and Miquelon during the classic stamp era are scarce. St. Pierre and Miquelon (SPM), a French territory now formally known in French as Collectivité d'Outre-mer de Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon, is a group of small islands in the North Atlantic, approximately 16 miles off the coast of Newfoundland and about 200 miles from the port of North Sydney on Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia. The population of SPM during the classic stamp era was about 2,000. Eliot Landau, in his article entitled "The Ultimate Destination," listed SPM, along with Lichtenstein, Sarawak, Turks & Caicos Islands and Bahrain as very rare destinations for outgoing United States mail during the 19th century.<sup>1</sup> Prior to the establishment of the Universal Postal Union, there were no published rates between the United States and SPM.

Mail between the United States and SPM was first discussed in the *Chronicle* in 2009.<sup>2</sup> At the outset of the establishment of the SPM post office in 1854, mail was carried to SPM from Nova Scotia by a French packet. Initially, the Cunard line delivered mail to Nova Scotia, when its Boston-to-Liverpool packet called at Halifax. A feeder route was also operated by Cunard from Halifax with a seasonal stop at North Sydney on Cape Breton Island, and then to St. John's in Newfoundland. The French packet to SPM left from Halifax during the winter months, and from North Sydney the rest of the year. The Cunard transatlantic route was replaced by the Inman line in 1868, and then by the Allan line in July of 1871, both of whose packets stopped at Halifax. The French packet service from North Sydney to SPM was, at some point, subsidized by SPM.

Given the proximity of SPM to Newfoundland, one would think that the mail would be routed through Newfoundland to SPM. But SPM lies closest to the southern coast of Newfoundland, which is sparsely populated and does not boast any significant ports. Mail could have been routed through St. John's, but St. John's was about as close to SPM as North Sydney, as can be seen in the map in Figure 1. When Allan line steamers began to service St. John's en route between Liverpool and Halifax, the need for the feeder route between



**Figure 1. Map showing the probable route of the Figure 2 cover, from Halifax, Nova Scotia to St. John's, in Newfoundland, and then back to St. Pierre and Miquelon.**



**Figure 2. A 10¢ Bank Note stamp on a cover posted at New York January 30, 1873, sent via Newfoundland to St. Pierre and Miquelon. Another stamp is likely missing.**

Halifax and St. Johns was reduced to the winter months, when the Allan line steamers did not service St. Johns. With the introduction of Allan Line service to St. Johns, mail to SPM could be routed via Newfoundland during the summer and via Halifax in the winter. The 2009 *Chronicle* article noted that none of the 19 recorded covers from the United States to SPM (1848-75) were routed through Newfoundland.

Figure 2 shows a 30 January 1873 cover to SPM that was most definitely routed through Newfoundland. The cover is franked with a 10¢ ungrilled National Bank Note stamp (Scott 150), with a black cork cancel. It is postmarked with a black New York time-of-day marking dated “JAN 30” and bears a red “New York Paid All” circular exchange office marking (Hubbard-Winter 235, Laurence NY-7) apparently dated JAN 31. An SPM receiving marking, dated 9 March 1873, is weakly struck at bottom right.

The routing via Newfoundland is demonstrated by the black circular “St. Johns Newfoundland Paid” receiving datestamp on the reverse, dated “FE 8 1873.” This is shown enlarged in the photograph in Figure 3. This postmark indicates that, at least after the commencement of the Allan line service to Newfoundland, mail from the United States to SPM was indeed routed through Newfoundland.

But how did the cover travel from New York in January if the Allan line did not service St. Johns during the winter? The red New York PAID ALL is an exchange office marking, intended for foreign mail. But it appears to have been applied in error, as there were no mail steamers operating from New York to either Halifax or St. Johns during this time period. However the cover got to Halifax, once it arrived there it would have travelled onward to St. Johns by a feeder route operated monthly during the winter in 1873 by the *Tiger* under a temporary contract.<sup>3</sup> A review of sailing information for the port of Halifax reveals that the *Tiger* departed Halifax for St. Johns on 31 January 1873.<sup>4</sup> It strains credulity that the letter could have gone from New York in time to catch a steamer from Halifax the same day. Presumably there is an error in the sailing information or the New York postmark dates.



**Figure 3. Enlargement of the Newfoundland receiving marking that appears on the reverse of the cover in Figure 2.**

From St. Johns the cover was finally transported by SPM packet to St. Pierre. The cover arrived on 9 March, per the SPM datestamp and docketing notes on the upper left corner. The map in Figure 1 shows the route by which the cover traveled from Halifax to SPM.

Prior to December 1872, it was not possible to fully prepay a letter from the United States to a destination in Newfoundland. Instead, a letter could be paid as far as Halifax (Nova Scotia became part of Canada on 1 July 1867). From 1864, the United States postage rate to Newfoundland was 10¢ per half ounce, paid only to the exchange point. In December, 1872, the United States entered into a postal treaty with Newfoundland, establishing a 6¢ rate.

The Figure 2 cover may have originally borne a second stamp, either a 2¢ or a 10¢, to the right of the 10¢ Bank Note. The killer cancellation was struck twice on the stamp, but the right hand strike does not tie to the cover; it may well have fallen on a stamp now missing. There are also some faint brownish areas suggesting traces of gum. Postage of 12¢ would make this a double-weight cover from the United States to Newfoundland. The SPM internal postage rate remained at 25 centimes per 7.5 grams, and the upper left of the Figure 1 cover bears a manuscript 50 (centime) marking applied by the SPM post office in the stylized French manner, indicating a double-rate SPM internal charge. If the cover was originally franked with a single 10¢ stamp, or two 10¢ stamps, such overpayment would not be surprising, given the fact that the rate had been reduced just one month before the letter was mailed, and there were no published rates for mail to SPM. Upon arrival at SPM, the 50 centime marking would denote the cover weighed in excess of 7.5 grams, but less than one half ounce (14.18 grams).

This cover is one of two recorded covers to SPM showing the 6¢ treaty rate, and is the sole example showing that rate paid with a single 10¢ large Bank Note stamp. It is also one of only four covers mailed to SPM franked with a 10¢ Bank Note stamp. These observations reflect the miniscule amount of mail between the United States and SPM. But the true significance of this cover is the Newfoundland postmark on reverse, which demonstrates that United States mail to SPM was routed through Newfoundland during the period when Allan line steamers called in Halifax.

### Acknowledgments

We would like to thank Jeffrey Bohn and William Sammis for their contributions to the analysis of this cover. However, any errors or omissions are the authors' responsibility.

### Endnotes

1. Eliot A. Landau, "The Ultimate Destination," *Chronicle* 180, pp. 290-292.
2. David D'Alessandris, "Mail Between the United States and St. Pierre and Miquelon," *Chronicle* 221, pp. 73-86.
3. Robert H. Pratt, *The Nineteenth Century Postal History of Newfoundland* (New York: The Collectors Club, 1985), pp. 352-353.
4. "Shipping News" *The Citizen* [Halifax, Nova Scotia], February 1, 1873. ■

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## OFFICIALS

ALAN C. CAMPBELL, EDITOR

### OFFICIAL COVERS FROM THE O.C. MARSH CORRESPONDENCE

ALAN C. CAMPBELL

#### Introduction

When I started collecting United States Official stamps in 1982, I was a very unsophisticated philatelist, and my only source of reference was the Scott specialized catalog. After struggling to assemble a complete set of stamps, a few proofs, and some cancellations, my attention turned to covers. By this time, I had met Lester C. Lanphear III, a local collector light years ahead in the field, who recommended that I get a copy of the Crystal Sale auction catalogue.<sup>1</sup> By studying that, I was able to get some sense of what factors made certain Official covers important and expensive. I realized that what was being offered to me at bourses in Southern California were the absolute dregs—stained, roughly opened, heavily docketed legal-size covers from the “easy” departments, with pedestrian corner cards and mundane 3¢ and 6¢ frankings. A few years on, I had a golden opportunity to buy covers from the vast Morrison Waud collection, but was so insecure then I could only pull the trigger on a few inexpensive fronts.<sup>2</sup> Gradually, it dawned on me that even relatively common Official covers—if small, clean, and handsome—were very closely held.

Compared to other fields, even to the parallel large Bank Note regular issues, Official covers are not a sexy area of specialization for a true postal historian. Foreign destination covers are scarce (126 recorded, per the Lanphear census),<sup>3</sup> and most of them postdate the establishment of the Universal Postal Union so the rates and markings are not complex. In addition, few of these covers went to exotic destinations.

Domestic uses predominate, and because of the nature of the government documents frequently enclosed, many are legal or extra-legal in size. The principal challenge for the earlier generation of specialists, such as Knapp, Ackerman, Hughes, Waud, Ehrenberg and Starnes, was simply to track down as many different values of each department on cover as possible. For the next generation of specialists who would take up competitive exhibiting, for both single-department concentrators (Lobdell’s War, Lockyear’s Justice, Lanphear’s Interior, Wada’s Post Office) and all-department collectors (Lanphear, Markovits, Huggins, Plett and myself), Official covers were essentially incorporated into traditional exhibits. To my knowledge, the only true postal history exhibits of Official covers ever displayed were a once-only five-frame exhibit by Robert L. Markovits (so that he could qualify to show eight frames internationally) and Ravi Vora’s study of the State Department, shown in the Court of Honor at the Washington international show in 2006.

Yet within this field, there are challenges worthy of pursuit. To wit, finding examples of the special 10¢ book rate for bound volumes of public documents (the only rate of the time which applied exclusively to government mail); finding examples of Post Office and Treasury mail registered for free; and finding and interpreting examples of Official stamps added to otherwise postage-free penalty envelopes.

Corner cards also bear study: Lockyear assembled as many District Attorney corner cards as he could locate, Lanphear showed all the different bureaus and agencies entitled to use Interior stamps, and Lobdell showed as many different Fort cancellations and covers as he could find. For myself, with my first love being fancy cancellations, I have especially sought out Official covers that show the evolution of postmarking devices used in Washington, D.C., from 1873 to 1884. In this pursuit, over a period of 30 years, I somehow managed to acquire four covers from different departments, all addressed to Professor O.C. Marsh.

### Official covers to Professor O. C. Marsh

The first of these four covers is shown in Figure 1, which I bought from Albert Chang for the princely sum of \$125 *circa* 1985 (an audacious purchase for a novice, at a time when the 3¢ Interior stamp on cover catalogued \$25). Chang, a brilliant specialty philatelist with excellent taste, was for many years the most sophisticated dealer in Official stamps

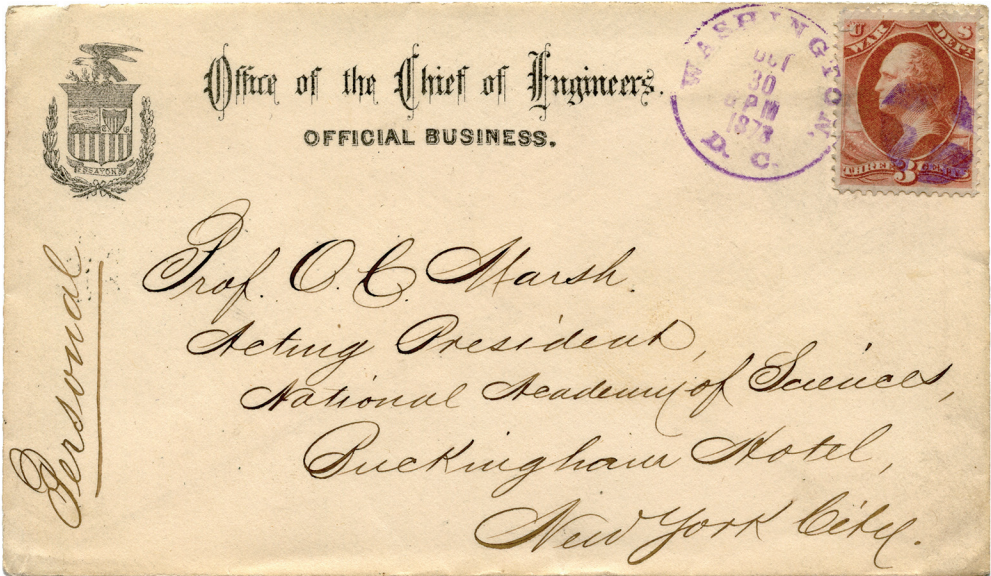


**Figure 1.** 3¢ Interior department stamp on a cover to Othniel C. Marsh bearing the official emblem of the Geologic and Geographic Survey of the Territories, May, 1878.

and covers, and was instrumental in helping Les Lanphear build his great collection. This cover appealed to me because of the violet duplex cancellation, an experimental vulcanized rubber device used throughout 1878 at the main Washington post office. I was also attracted by the ornate emblem of the U.S. Geologic and Geographic Survey. Illustrated corner cards are the exception on Official covers, and this one—along with the crossed cannons emblem used by War's Ordnance Department, and the large Justice crimson eagle on a shield—are the three most commonly seen.

The U.S. Geological and Geographic Survey was founded by an act of Congress in 1867 to survey the territory of Nebraska, which was soon to become a state. It was headed by Ferdinand Vandiveer Hayden, a military surgeon who had been mustered out as a cavalry Colonel in 1865. Before the war, he had not really practiced medicine, but had been out exploring in the Badlands and sending crates of fossils back to his sponsor in Philadelphia, Joseph Leidy, a great anatomist of prehistoric life forms. The scope of the geological survey grew immensely to include all the territories adjacent to the Rocky Mountains, and Hayden struggled to keep up publishing reports on the findings from many competing expeditions.

Figure 2 shows another 1878 cover to Professor Marsh in an immaculate state of preservation. A well-centered 3¢ War stamp tied by the violet duplex cancellation, the mag-



**Figure 2. 3¢ War Department stamp on a cover to Marsh from the Office of the Chief of Engineers, datestamped at Washington, D.C. on October 30, 1878.**

nificent Gothic typeface of the “Office of the Chief of Engineers” corner card along with an elaborate crest, and the florid Spencerian script of the address make this one of the most beautiful Official covers in existence. I acquired this cover in a trade with Bob Markovits around 1995. A lawyer by profession and a veteran stamp dealer (Quality Investors), Markovits was a shrewd negotiator, so I had to bring my A-game to avoid getting my clock cleaned. When I first showed this cover to my local friend Francis Adams,<sup>4</sup> he pointed out that Professor Marsh was a very famous paleontologist. Of all the surviving Marsh covers I know of, this is the only one not addressed to New Haven, but to the Buckingham Hotel in New York City, while Marsh was serving as the Acting Director of the National Academy of Sciences.

Marsh was politically well-connected, in large part because of his role in exposing rampant corruption in the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Having won grudging permission from the great Sioux Chief Red Cloud to explore in the Badlands in 1874, Marsh had reported to the New York press about the rotting subsistence supplies provided by the Bureau. By 1875, President Grant had forced Secretary of the Interior Christopher Delano to resign, and or-

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<b>Leonard H. Hartmann</b>	<b>P.O. Box 36006, Louisville, KY 40233</b> <b>Phone (502) 451-0317, Fax (502) 459-8538</b>	

dered a full house-cleaning of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. In gratitude, Chief Red Cloud sent Marsh a carefully carved peace pipe and declared him “the best white man I ever saw.”<sup>5</sup>

The Academy of Sciences had been tasked by a congressional committee investigating government expenditures to end the duplication of labor and competition among the four ongoing separately authorized geological surveys headed by Hayden, King, Powell, and Wheeler. Obviously, the work of the surveys should be coordinated by the U.S. Geological Survey. Marsh campaigned vigorously for Clarence King to become the director in 1879, in large part because he wanted Hayden out. It was through Hayden that Marsh’s great rival in the “Bone Wars,” Edward Drinker Cope, had been able to publish. In 1880, when the final report of King’s survey was published, it included as a supplement *Odontornithes, a Monograph on the Extinct Toothed Birds of North America*, by none other than Professor Othniel Marsh. Then in 1881, Clarence King resigned as director and was replaced by John Wesley Powell, who quickly appointed as the survey’s official paleontologist—you guessed it!—Othniel Marsh.



**Figure 3. 3¢ Navy on a cover to Marsh from from the Nautical Almanac Office, 1879.**

Figure 3 shows a small cover from the Nautical Almanac Office of the Navy Department, again addressed to Prof. O.C. Marsh in New Haven. I eagerly bought this cover from a bourse dealer in 2005, because I’d only seen a couple of Navy covers with this distinctive duplex cancellation. This was the first steel canceler employed at the main Washington post office, having been introduced in May, 1879. It bears a passing resemblance to the barred ellipse cancelers first used in New York City in 1876. This is the earliest recorded use of this type of cancellation on an Official cover. Despite the lack of a year date in the postmark, we know that this is 1879 because of the style of the obliterator. The year date was incorporated into the postmark in July, rather unconventionally placed above the month and day, and the delicate ellipse outline around the bar formation disappears in the obliterator at the same time. Once again, the cover is very clean, and special mention should be given to Professor Marsh or his secretary for dexterity in wielding a letter opener.

Figure 4 illustrates the last of my four Official covers addressed to Professor Marsh. Apparently, in 1882 he was still serving as the acting President of the National Academy of Sciences. The blue corner card of the Commissioner’s Office is quite scarce. George B. Loring, a former Congressman from Massachusetts, served as Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture from 1881 to 1885. This cover, postmarked on Christmas Day, 1882,

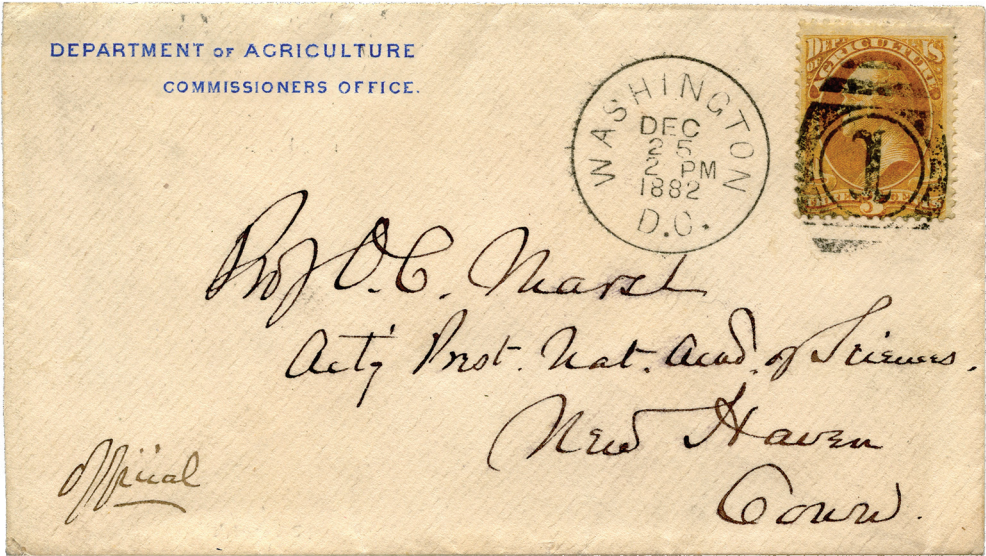


Figure 4. 3¢ Agriculture on cover to Marsh from the Commissioners Office, 1881.

is by a wide margin the latest recorded use of an Agriculture stamp on cover. Two sets of the distinctive “fishtail” numeral ellipse cancelers were put into use at the main Washington post office (solid barrel and barred barrel) in 1882, and were used into 1884, along with the more common numeral in 3-ring circle and the numeral in 2-ring barred circle, which had both been introduced in 1880. I have never seen an off-cover Agriculture stamp with a fishtail numeral cancellation. Because the 3¢ Agriculture was reprinted on soft paper by the Continental Banknote Co. in 1879, prior owners of this cover—failing to carefully examine the stamp—claimed it to be the only recorded use of O95 on cover. It was annotated on the back as such by Knapp, was misrepresented thusly in the Congressman Ackerman sale, Morrison Waud’s album page noted the same, and Bob Markovits stuck to the story. And yes, in 2002 when constructing a census of all the recorded Agriculture covers, I too perpetuated the myth.<sup>6</sup> It wasn’t until 2004 that the error was finally corrected in the auction catalogue for the sale of the Markovits Officials, when the stamp was partially lifted to ascertain the paper type.<sup>7</sup>

Among the 40 or so recorded Agriculture covers, this cover stands head and shoulders above others as the most beautiful in existence. Crown her “Miss Agriculture” for all eternity! I well remember back in the 1980s, when Rollin C. Huggins Jr. and I were both desperate to find at least one ratty Agriculture cover to include in our exhibits. At the Markovits sale, he and I engaged in a grim bidding war, with the cover eventually being hammered down to Rollin for a staggering \$6,500 plus a 10 percent buyer’s commission. After Rollin passed away, his collection was consigned to the Siegel firm for auction, and this trophy cover was a featured illustration on the inside cover.<sup>8</sup> Realizations for the covers in this sale were erratic, and I was quite stunned when I won lot 512 for about 40 percent of my maximum bid. My delight in finally being able to own this item is tempered by the realization that the market for Official covers has been depressed by the deaths of so many of my fellow enthusiasts and friends: Dan Curtis, Rollin Huggins, David Lobdell, Ted Lockyear, Carl Mainberger and Bob Markovits. The last ten years has seen the gradual dissolution of a once tight-knit fraternity.

### Who was Professor Othniel C. Marsh?

As a five-year-old boy in New York, I remember being mesmerized by the dinosaur

illustrations of Rudolf Franz Zallinger on the cover and inside *Life Magazine* (September 7, 1953). And on visits to the New York Museum of Natural History, the scale of the fossilized dinosaur reconstructed skeletons held me in awe. A few years later, now living in Ann Arbor, Michigan, I got so excited reading Roy Chapman Andrews' *All About Dinosaurs* that I immediately ran outside with a hammer and started whacking away at a sandstone embankment, convinced that a magnificent intact *T. rex* skull lay hidden just below the surface. I was also captivated by the dioramas in the Hall of Evolution at the University of Michigan Museum of Natural History. In 1990, my enthusiasm for dinosaurs was rekindled upon reading Michael Crichton's *Jurassic Park*, and the first Spielberg movie made me feel as if I'd awoken inside a magical dream from my childhood. In light of all this, I'm utterly perplexed as to why 20 years elapsed, from the time I first learned that O.C. Marsh was a paleontologist, before I took the trouble to learn more about him.

Othniel Charles Marsh, born in 1831, was the son of a Chestnut Ridge, New York, farmer. His mother died when he was three. When Colonel Ezekial Jewett was fossil-hunting in the Lockport canal gorge excavations, he befriended the chubby ten-year-old Marsh. His gruff father never supported his son's interests, but at 21, an inheritance from his mother's family allowed him to enroll at Phillips Academy, the elite boarding school in Andover, Massachusetts. Since he was eight years older on average than his classmates, it's not surprising that he was always first in his class, captained the football team, and became president of the debating society.

Marsh had a fantastically wealthy uncle whom he'd never met, George Peabody, who after a career in dry-goods, had established a banking firm with J. P. Morgan. Peabody was at this stage of his life engaged in major philanthropic efforts, so Marsh—having been assured that he would be named class valedictorian—astutely invited Uncle George to attend his Andover graduation. The prospect of having a scholar in the family pleased Uncle George, and he agreed to underwrite "Othy's" tuition and living expenses at Yale College in New Haven, Connecticut.

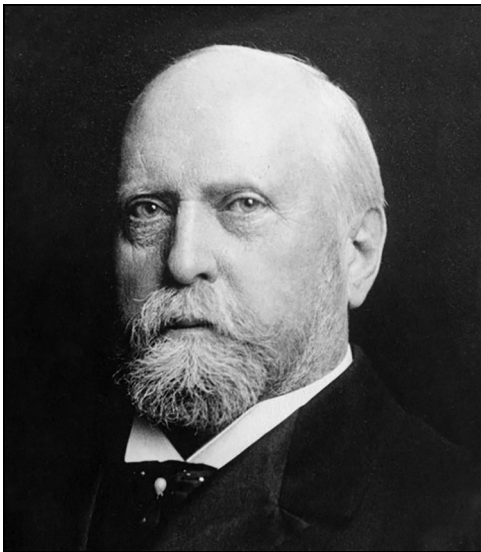
In his freshman year, Othniel Marsh and Uncle George finally met, dining at the home of Professor Benjamin Silliman, who sized up the situation and started dreaming of an eventual Peabody Museum of Natural History at Yale. After a carefully coached undergraduate career, Marsh stayed on for two years at Yale's Sheffield Scientific School. The Civil War broke out, and Marsh, though a strong Unionist and an obvious officer candidate, was disqualified due to his wretched eyesight. He continued his education in Europe, and when Uncle George came to soothe his gout in the spa waters in Weisbaden, they met and the plans for a Museum of Natural History at Yale finally came to fruition. Marsh, in correspondence with his ancient mentor Professor Silliman, negotiated that such a museum would obviously need a professorship in paleontology. Marsh stayed in Europe two more years, traveling between Berlin, Paris, and London, collecting books, interviewing museum curators, and meeting with Charles Darwin, Charles Lyell, and Thomas Huxley.

The nation's first chair of paleontology was established in July, 1866, the professorship going to Othniel Marsh, *with no teaching duties*. "Construction planning for the museum and the death of George Peabody forced Marsh to cancel his plans for a summer-long hunt in the Dakota Badlands. The processing of his uncle's will made Marsh, a bachelor, wealthy enough to afford easily the network of fossil scouts, the digs and digging crews, the elaborate packaging materials, the artists and taxidermists and glassblowers and attorneys who during the next 20 years would establish the Marsh Collection at the Peabody Museum into the world's most awesome array of dawn-era life."<sup>9</sup>

From the geological expeditions in the West, word came of large fossil finds, and the completion of the transcontinental railroad made transporting the rocks with agate and jasper fossils in matrix back East possible. An intense competition developed between Profes-

essor Marsh and Edward Drinker Cope to find and identify new species of early life, a competition that became so bitter and intense it has come to be characterized as “The Bone Wars.” Initially, the two were friends. Cope, nine years younger and more charismatic, had been born into a wealthy Quaker family, and always considered himself Marsh’s social superior. A brilliant and intuitive anatomist, he was not (unlike Marsh) a Darwinian. Their competition involved considerable treachery: poaching each other’s scouts, trespassing and spying on each other’s digs. On one occasion, Marsh’s digging crew became aware that Cope was spying on them from an adjacent hilltop. So they assembled a skull from disparate species, feigned great excitement, and reburied it at dusk. Cope snuck over, re-excavated “old what-you-may-call-it,” and actually wrote a paper about its significance. In his lectures, Marsh never missed an opportunity to recount the time Cope reconstructed a fossilized plesiosaur skeleton and mistakenly mounted the head at the tail end. In the haste of competition, an earlier standard of patient excavation—eager students kneeling with pick hammers and whisk brooms—was abandoned in favor of dynamite charges.

Figure 5 shows, courtesy of the American Museum of Natural History, a photograph of the stout and intimidating Professor Othniel Charles Marsh. He has been characterized as “a pedant, glumly methodical about assembling details, rudely belligerent about scientific errors, and as deft as a Tamany Hall boss



**Figure 5. Professor Othniel Charles Marsh. Photo shown through the courtesy of the American Museum of Natural History.**

in political maneuvering and lobbying.”<sup>10</sup> In the race to identify and name new species of dinosaurs, he ultimately bested Cope, 80 to 56, and his important argument that birds are directly descended from dinosaurs has since been upheld.

Among the dinosaur genera Marsh is credited with discovering are such familiar names as *Allosaurus*, *Brontosaurus*, *Diplodocus*, *Stegosaurus*, and *Triceratops*. At least five new species of dinosaur were subsequently named in his honor, utilizing both his surname and his Christian name (Othniel is a *very* obscure figure in the Old Testament Book of Judges). The feud with Cope made for such good press that it came to the attention of fundamentalists in Congress (birds with teeth, indeed!), who eventually succeeded in getting Marsh’s funding as the paleontologist to the U.S. Geological Survey cut off. Having spent all of Uncle George’s

inheritance on his Western digs, he died virtually penniless in 1899. As stipulated in his will, all his fossils at the Peabody Museum became the property of Yale University. He also donated his imposing brownstone house, Marsh Hall, built in the Jacobean Revival style, to the university, and it was declared a national historic landmark in 1965.

In 1876, Thomas Huxley visited America and spent a week inspecting the Peabody’s collections at Yale. He then gave a lecture in New York City, praising the collection for demonstrating “the evolution of the horse beyond question and for the first time indicating the direct line of descent of an existing animal.”<sup>11</sup> In 1880, Marsh sent a copy of his great work on birds with teeth, *Odontornithes*, to Charles Darwin, and Darwin wrote back: “your work on these old birds and the many fossil animals of North America has afforded the best support to the theory of evolution which has appeared in the last 20 years.”<sup>12</sup> As for the

hallucinatory realism of those illustrations of dinosaurs in *Life Magazine* in 1953, it turns out they derive from “The Age of Reptiles”, a mural of gargantuan dimensions (40 feet by 110 feet), painted in Yale’s Peabody Museum of Natural History by Zallinger, 1943-1947.

### Conclusion

Aside from the four Marsh Official covers illustrated here, others also exist. Les Lanphear has two posted in Washington, D.C., one from the Office of Indian Affairs and another from the U.S. Geographical and Geological Survey of the Rocky Mountain Region, J. W. Powell in charge. More common presumably are covers to Marsh franked with Large Bank Note regular issues. Fran Adams has two posted in Washington, one from the Naval Observatory (1884), and the other from the Smithsonian Institution (1889). He also has a remarkable cover to Marsh with the corner card of J. W. Dear, Indian Trader, Red Cloud Agency, Wyoming Territory. Docketed 1875, it bears a Red Cloud Indian Agency postmark from Nebraska (the reservation having been moved there wholesale).

When the bachelor Marsh left his entire estate to Yale University, this bequest also included his received correspondence, and he apparently saved everything. In 1932, the contents of about 10,400 envelopes were bound into four albums by Charles Schuchert, coauthor of *O.C. Marsh: Pioneer of Paleontology*. Yale has digitized these received letters, which can be accessed at <http://peabody/edu/collections/vertebrate-paleontology/correspondence-o-c-marsh>. The index of this file is organized not chronologically but alphabetically by the correspondent name, so since my four Official covers have only minimalist docketing, it would take more stamina than I possess to pair up my covers with their original enclosures. The covers must have been sold off earlier, because my Agriculture cover bears a notation on the reverse, “Cancelled on Christmas, only copy known on cover, 1925, E. S. Knapp”. When the Congressman Ackerman collection was sold in 1933, this cover was purchased by Philip H. Ward for \$50.<sup>13</sup>

Early on, I absorbed the precept of experienced postal historians, that to whom and by whom a cover is addressed may be of historical interest, but it’s not philatelically important. In the field of 19th century U.S. Official covers, some of the mail is to and from instantly recognizable figures: President Grant, President Hayes, General William Tecumseh Sherman, U.S. Marshal Frederick Douglass. Other prominent figures of the era—Justin Morrill (founder of the land grant colleges), Anthony Comstock (anti-vice crusader), Congressman Alexander Stephens (Vice President of the Confederacy) are now more obscure. In the pre-Wikipedia days, I remember going down to the reference section of the public library and consulting an 1885-87 edition of *Appleton’s Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, so as to demonstrate some minimal historical literacy in writing up my covers. But if truth be told, I was attracted to this area of specialization more by the intrinsic beauty of the objects than by their historical context. By sheer happenstance, I have a Treasury Custom House cover from New York, which a specialist in Presidential autographs identified as being addressed in the distinctive handwriting of future President Chester Alan Arthur.


Other collectors of official covers, Lester C. Lanphear III and Dr. Alfred Staubus in particular, have been far more dogged in their historical research when writing up important Official covers. Now with Wikipedia enabling us all with ease to pose as historically fluent, I no longer have any legitimate excuse for not researching my covers better. Hopefully, I have exhumed Professor Othniel Charles Marsh with the same care he utilized in reconstructing his beloved dinosaurs from their own fossilized past. My thanks to Les Lanphear and Fran Adams for reviewing an earlier draft of this article.

### Endnotes

1. Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries, Inc., sale 577, April 10, 1981. This was the collection of Mrs. Rae Ehrenberg. Both Les Lanphear and Bob Markovits were heavy buyers in this sale.




2. The Morrison Waud collection, focused on covers and unused blocks, had been marinating in the Siegel vaults for many years. After the Crystal Sale, when Robert Siegel saw that Les Lanphear had the census of rare Official covers maintained by Waud and Charles Starnes, he offered to show him the “real” collection. A convenient time for this couldn’t be settled upon, so after Bob Markovits finished paying for his Crystal Sale purchases, he was the first one lucky enough to see it, and thereafter a price was negotiated (thought to be in the range of \$200,000). Markovits winnowed out the key covers to retain (including the famous \$2 State package front), and then began selling off the chaff to recover some of his cost, with Les Lanphear getting first pick. To give an idea of the scope of this hoard, by the time I saw the original albums, there were still 19 3¢ Executive covers left. Quite quickly, the market absorbed the balance of the covers. Regrettably, no photocopies were made of the original collection intact, but I’m confident it was easily the most comprehensive group of Official covers assembled subsequent to the dispersal of the Ackerman collection.
3. Lester C. Lanphear III, “U.S. Official Covers to Foreign Destinations, 1873-1884,” *Chronicle* 239, August 2013, pp. 273-287.
4. Fran Adams is a sophisticated philatelist, having produced many exhibits on the forerunners of the U.N. and various thematic topics, including Native Americans, Neanderthals, and dinosaurs like *T. rex* and the winged reptiles. From his research, he was already well familiar with the importance of Professor O.C. Marsh. Adams also in his spare time does professional exhibit mounting for others, and perhaps his favorite client was Robert L. Markovits, for whom he mounted magnificent collections of both U.S. Officials and U.S. Special Delivery.
5. Robert West Howard, *The Dawnseekers*, Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, Inc., 1975, pg. 228. In this article, much of the historical information about Professor Marsh derives from this book and several sites on Wikipedia.
6. Alan C. Campbell, “Usage of Department of Agriculture Official Stamps,” *Chronicle* 130, May 2002, pg. 145 (see Item #40).
7. Matthew Bennett, Inc., New York City, Public Auction 273, February 7, 2004, lot 3488.
8. Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries, Inc., “The Rollin C. Huggins Jr. Collection of United States Official Issues,” Sale 1123, April 8, 2016.
9. Howard, *op. cit.*, pg. 196.
10. *Ibid*, p. 220.
11. *Ibid*, p. 246.
12. *Ibid*, p. 246.
13. “The Famous Collection of United States Department Covers Formed by the late Congressman Ernest R. Ackerman”, J. C. Morgenthau & Co., Inc., Sale 317, December 5, 1933, lot 3. ■



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## **U.S. TRANSATLANTIC STEAMSHIP LINES THAT FAILED**

**JAMES BAIRD**

My purpose in this article is to provide a brief narrative of historical highlights about failed United States steamship lines and the few recorded covers that they carried. I want to do this for two reasons. First, very little has been written about them beyond what appears in the introductions to the sailing tables in Hubbard and Winter's *North Atlantic Mail Sailings 1840–75*.<sup>1</sup> And second, I hope that by memorializing what is known, new covers will come to light. There certainly should be some (or even many) out there, with their rarity not yet recognized.

The American effort to develop a transatlantic steam marine during the years between 1840 and 1875 failed overall—as did the lines I will discuss. The failure is remarkable given the role played by American inventors and engineers in putting steam to work on our inland and coastal waterways. But in crossing the Atlantic, Americans followed rather than led. The British Cunard Line had been operating for seven years, accounting for 131 round voyages, before America's first transatlantic entry, the *Washington* of the Ocean Steam Navigation Line (Ocean Line), made its first crossing.

Were that not enough, after the lights went out on our four most successful lines—the Ocean Line, the New York and Havre Steam Navigation Company (Havre Line), New York and Liverpool United States Mail Steamship Company (Collins Line), and Vanderbilt European Line (Vanderbilt Line)—our ships had completed 494 round voyages, an average of 35 a year, against the single British line which by then had completed 696 voyages, about one a week.

America's failure in this effort was very much the result of Congressional failure to understand—or care—that the steamships of the day could not operate profitably without government support. Given the inefficiencies of early steam vessels, operating costs could not be met by freight and passenger revenue alone. Government subsidy was essential, and it was most often provided in the form of mail contracts between a governmental office and a shipping line.

From June 1840 to the end of 1879, the British Admiralty had contracts with Cunard and with other lines plying international routes worldwide. The United States government subsidized the four lines named above until 1858, when Congress enacted legislation that limited steamship compensation to the equivalent of the inland and ocean postage on mail actually carried. The response of the Collins and Ocean lines was to close down their operations immediately. The Vanderbilt and Havre Lines would carry on to the beginning of the Civil War. The Havre Line would start up again in 1865 and operate through 1867, but that is not part of my discussion here.

The overall impact of congressional policy is nowhere better expressed than in an editorial that appeared in the *New York Herald* on September 6, 1866, under the heading "THE GREAT STEAMSHIP LINES—FOREIGN AND AMERICAN." While presented as a letter to the editor, it was almost certainly written by editor-publisher James Gordon Bennett.

It is painful and humiliating to me to be obliged to publish daily to our millions of readers throughout the world a fact disgraceful alike to our people and our government. We say we are obliged to proclaim daily this disgrace, for the fact is not published in our editorial columns; but our advertisements, the true record of facts, show that the entire trade in mails, passengers and freight between the United States and Europe is monopolized by foreign steamships.

When the Congress of the United States, in 1858, by the recommendation of Aaron V. Brown, Postmaster General under poor Buchanan, refused to renew any contracts for transporting the mails to Europe, and adopted the policy of sending the mails by every steamer, whether foreign or American, and paying therefor the postage only, the *London Times* advised British capitalists "to grasp at the whole of the mail traffic, and all of the lucrative trade that accompanies it in the North Atlantic." That advice was followed, and what are the results? Our advertising columns show that there are nine lines of foreign steamships engaged in this trade, making four hundred and sixteen round voyages a year, and only two American lines, viz: --The Havre line, making 13 trips a year, and the Continental Mail Steamship Company's line, which has but lately begun.

The following statistics will show how effectively the advice given by the *London Times* has been aided by this unwise policy of the United States Government:

In 1855 there were 13 steamships in the Liverpool trade, nine of which were American, making 60 out of 85 trips during the year, carrying 15,258 passengers of the 21,568 carried by steamers, being 75 per cent; and the postages on the mails carried by American steamers amounted to \$731,673, against \$411,350 by foreign steamers. In 1858 there were 41 steamships in this trade, of which 8 were American, making 32 trips of the 159 trips, carrying 11,791 passengers of the 55,019 carried by steamships, being only 20 per cent, and the postages on the mails carried by them amounted to \$391,565 against \$1,016,789 by foreign steamers; and in 1859 there were only five American steamers of the 46 steamers in the trade, making only 26 trips of the 183 trips, carrying 9,180 passengers of the 61,010 carried by steamers, being 14 per cent, and carrying mails the postages on which amounted to \$199,261, against \$1,139,188 by foreign steamers. In 1865, there were no American steamers engaged in this trade, and consequently all the traffic in mail (which amounted to \$1,449,530), passengers and freight was monopolized by foreign steamships. These are facts which cannot be controverted, and if our people have any national pride this state of things will not be allowed to continue; and our government will not be permitted to continue the policy of fostering foreign steamships to the injury of our own.

With the above as background, in what follows I will offer a brief narrative of operating highlights for nine short-lived American steamship lines, presenting data for each in tabular form on the mails its ships carried as reported in Postmaster General annual reports; and perhaps more important, presenting tabular listings of covers so far recorded to have survived for each line. Finally, I will briefly pick up the story of two American lines that began running in 1873. Were it not for them, the United States would have had no steamships crossing the Atlantic at the end of the reporting period, 1875.

### North Atlantic Steamship Company

The North Atlantic Steamship Company was a partnership capitalized with \$400,000 from the Pacific Mail Steamship Company and \$500,000 from the Panama Railroad Company. The vision was to connect with existing Pacific routes so as to carry mails from New York all the way to San Francisco on a single line. Toward this end, in July 1859 the new company purchased three former Collins ships (*Adriatic*, *Atlantic* and *Baltic*) for a reported \$780,000. *Adriatic* is familiar to collectors of classic U.S. stamps as the sidewheel steamer depicted on the 12¢ 1869 stamp.

But the anticipated mail contract never materialized; after much wheeling and dealing, it ultimately went to Commodore Vanderbilt. Needing to employ *Adriatic*, the North Atlantic Steamship Company put her on the route between New York, Southampton and Le Havre. Her first voyage on this service commenced on April 14, 1860, and she made five round trips ending in early November of the same year. *Atlantic* would then make one round trip on the same route before the parent company was dissolved.

These six crossings were the totality of the transatlantic mail service performed by the North Atlantic Steamship Company. Figure 1 shows a colorful cover front from a letter



**Figure 1. Cover front from St. Louis (April 9, 1860) to Le Havre, carried on the side-wheeler *Adriatic* on its first transatlantic voyage for the short-lived North Atlantic Steamship Company. The 55¢ prepayment overpaid the 45¢ triple rate under the U.S.-France convention; New York credited 9¢ to France for triple French internal postage.**

sent April 9, 1860 from St. Louis to Le Havre, carried on *Adriatic's* first voyage for the line. Prepayment of 55¢ was made by two 1¢ blue type V, a 3¢ dull red type III, and five 10¢ green type V 1857 stamps. The New York exchange office rated the letter as a triple 15¢ rate under the U.S.-France postal convention, so 45¢ postage would have been sufficient. Perhaps one too many 10¢ stamps was applied in error. A New York exchange office clerk marked **NEW PAID YORK/9** to indicate a 9¢ credit to France, for triple French internal postage. The *Adriatic* departed on April 14, 1860, and arrived in Le Havre on April 25, 1860. The octagonal blue French entry marking reads **ET. UNIS SERV. AM. D/HAVRE.**

Sailing data for this transatlantic route are presented in Hubbard-Winter, page 273. It isn't clear why *Adriatic* and *Atlantic* did not continue on this route. They carried a fair amount of mail and there was no American competition. It is possible that with its retreat to the west coast, Pacific Mail had no interest in the route. The Panama Railroad played a passive role. Perhaps for these owners, transatlantic service was outside their comfort zone.

North Atlantic Steamship Company: letters carried					
Country	Number of letters			Postage on letters	
	Sent	Rec'd	Total	Outbound	Inbound
Britain	55,159	27,965	83,124	\$13,498	\$6,784
France	30,295	27,333	57,628	\$4,833	\$4,123
Prussia	21,718	17,891	39,609	\$6,627	\$5,472
Prussian closed mail	6,994	3,576	10,570		
Belgium	751	680	1,431	\$203	\$178
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	114,917	77,445	192,362	\$25,161	\$16,557

**Table 1. Letters carried by the North Atlantic Steamship Company during its brief lifetime (April–November, 1860) as a transatlantic mail carrier under contract to the United States Post Office. Source: 1861 Postmaster General Report.**

North Atlantic Steamship Co.: cover census				
Date	Franking	From/To	Ship	Origin XO pmk
9 Apr 1860	24(2), 26, 35(5)	STL/Le Havre	<i>Adriatic</i>	NY 14 Apr 1860
14 Apr 1860	Stampless	NY/Paris	<i>Adriatic</i>	NY 14 Apr 1860
1 Jun 1860	Stampless	NY/Le Havre	<i>Adriatic</i>	NY 2 Jun 1860
18 Jun 1860	France #20	Paris/NY	<i>Adriatic</i>	Havre 20 Jun 1860
7 Jul 1860	Stampless	NO LA/Paris	<i>Adriatic</i>	NY 14 Jul 1860
10 Jul 1860	Stampless	Homer IL/Sweden	<i>Adriatic</i>	NY 14 Jul 1860
11 Jul 1860	70	Charleston/Nantes	<i>Adriatic</i>	NY 14 Jul 1860
13 Jul 1860	32, 69	Saratoga Spgs/Paris	<i>Adriatic</i>	NY 14 Jul 1860
13 Jul 1860	31(2), 32	Phila/Lyon	<i>Adriatic</i>	NY 14 Jul 1860
27 Jul 1860	Stampless	Geneva /Oxford NY	<i>Adriatic</i>	Havre 31 Jul 1860
28 Jul 1860	France #20	Pau, France/NY	<i>Adriatic</i>	31 Jul 1860
1 Aug 1860	5¢, 10¢ (NA)	SF/Riberac France	<i>Adriatic</i>	NY 25 Aug 1860
25 Aug 1860	Stampless	NY/Sweden	<i>Adriatic</i>	NY 25 Aug 1860
8 Sep 1860	6, 9, 18kr (NA)	Stuttgart/NY	<i>Adriatic</i>	12 Sep 1860
8 Sep 1860	France #20	Bordeaux/NY	<i>Adriatic</i>	Havre 12 Sep 1860
11 Sep 1860	Stampless	London/NY	<i>Adriatic</i>	Shmptn 12 Sep 1860
27 Sep 1860	Stampless	Havana/Geneva	<i>Adriatic</i>	NY 6 Oct 1860
6 Oct 1860	Stampless	NY/Saumur France	<i>Adriatic</i>	NY 6 Oct 1860
6 Oct 1860	Stampless	NY/Sweden	<i>Adriatic</i>	NY 6 Oct 1860
20 Oct 1860	Stampless	SF/La Rochelle	<i>Atlantic</i>	NY 17 Nov 1860
20 Oct 1860	Stampless	SF/La Rochelle	<i>Atlantic</i>	NY 17 Nov 1860
27 Oct 1860	Stampless	Buenos Aires/NY	<i>Atlantic</i>	Shmpton 5 Dec 1860
14 Nov 1860	32, 69	Rochester/Paris	<i>Atlantic</i>	NY 17 Nov 1860
3 Dec 1860	France #20	Paris/Wrentham MA	<i>Atlantic</i>	Havre 5 Dec 1860
4 Dec 1860	GB 1 sh (NA)	London/Phila	<i>Atlantic</i>	Shmptn 5 Dec 1860
4 Dec 1860	Stampless	Lvpool/Florence MA	<i>Atlantic</i>	Shmptn 5 Dec 1860

**Table 2. Transatlantic covers carried by the vessels of the North Atlantic Steamship Company. In the “Franking” column, stamps are designated by Scott number when that is known. When the Scott number is not available (NA) a brief description is provided. This is a highly preliminary listing. Many more covers are presumed to exist.**

Table 1 shows the number of letters carried by vessels of the North Atlantic Steamship Company in both directions (and their total postage) in 1860, derived from data presented in the Postmaster General’s Annual Report of 1861. While only six round voyages were made, almost 200,000 letters (both ways) were transported.

Collectors hold a fair number of covers that were carried by the two ships of this line. It seems highly likely that there are many more covers than those presented in the census listing in Table 2, which should be regarded only as a tentative beginning, based on my research in auction and other literature and information provided to me by other transatlantic collectors. For all the cover tables presented herewith, I hope that readers will advise me of additional covers that are not represented in the census listings.

### **Baltimore and Liverpool Steamship Company**

The Baltimore and Liverpool Steamship line was formed and operated by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. It was the first American steamship company to begin operations

after the Civil War ended. The intent of the railroad's management was to extend passenger and freight operations to Liverpool (by way of Queenstown) providing direct transatlantic carriage for eastbound travelers and shippers who were already customers of the B&O—and hopefully to capture westbound Europeans as well. Before the war, other railroads had some success in acquiring business arriving on transatlantic steamers at Boston, New York and Philadelphia, so there was a precedent.

There is an interesting story to be told about the steamships that would ultimately carry the Baltimore and Liverpool flag. Immediately before the war, an order was placed with the New York shipbuilders J.B. and J.D. Van Dusen to build five wooden, propeller-driven ships for a proposed “Neptune” line. None of the five ships had been completed when, at the outset of hostilities, the Union Navy took control of the vessels, purchasing them for \$160,000 each. The ships were all named after mythical Greek figures connected to the sea: *Neptune*, *Nereus*, *Proteus*, *Glaucus* and *Galatea*. Each vessel was armed with a 100-pound gun and 8 to 10 smooth-bore “rifles” to make them useful in the coming hostilities. *Neptune* and *Galatea* were positioned in the Caribbean to protect the U.S. Mail Line's ships on the Panama route. *Nereus* and *Glaucus* apparently performed routine duty—but *Proteus* completed several very successful campaigns in the capture of blockade runners in the Gulf of Mexico and off the Bahama banks. Her first prize was the steamship *Jupiter*, captured in June, 1864. Another was *Ruby*, captured enroute from Havana to Wilmington, North Carolina, with a cargo of lead intended to make bullets for the Southern forces.

At the end of the war, the Navy sold all of the ships at auction, where four of them were purchased by agents acting on behalf of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. *Neptune* was renamed *Allegany*, *Proteus* became *Carroll*, *Nereus* was *Somerset*, and *Glaucus* became *Worcester*.

The intent of the ships' original owner was to operate them between Boston and New York. In contrast, B&L required strong ships able to handle the North Atlantic. Further, it was the original management's plan to operate the line largely as a freight business with a few passengers. Consequently the ships—designed for short coastal voyages—were not built to carry the loads of coal needed for transatlantic ferriage—or to provide comfortable passenger facilities.

*Somerset* completed the first crossing of the line. Departing Baltimore on October 1, 1865, she reached Liverpool October 17 and laid over approximately two weeks before departing November 8 and returning to Baltimore on November 25. Sixteen days eastbound and an equal number westbound didn't set any records. Nor did the passenger rolls. *Somerset* carried seven passengers to Liverpool and returned to Baltimore with 20. *Worcester* departed four days later on November 29, but was forced to return mid-ocean, arriving back December 11.

The Baltimore and Liverpool line's vessels were a sort of marine gang that couldn't shoot straight. They were bedeviled by engine problems, accidents and casualties suffered in winter storms on the Atlantic. *Somerset* failed to make two scheduled crossings and *Carroll* ran down a schooner in the Mersey at Liverpool. All in all, 1866 was a difficult year. Twelve voyages were completed. In 1867, eight trips were completed, including one crossing completed by *Mexican* which had to fill in for *Somerset* in December 1866. Finally, in 1868, seven voyages were completed before operations ceased.

When they were not out in the Atlantic, the railroad employed some of the ships carrying freight between Baltimore and New York. Mordecai and Company—which had run *Isabel* for years before the hostilities—also chartered two of the ships for varying periods, running them between New York, Charleston and Savannah.

As far as is known, all of the voyages that were completed by the Baltimore and Liverpool line carried U.S. mail for the equivalent of inland and sea postage. As can be

Baltimore and Liverpool Steamship Company: letters carried					
Country	Number of letters			Postage on letters	
	Sent	Rec'd	Total	Outbound	Inbound
Britain	2,525	47,003	49,528	\$558	\$11,299
France	592	2,685	3,277	\$71	\$427
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	3,117	49,688	52,805	\$629	\$11,726

**Table 3. Letters carried by the Baltimore and Liverpool Steamship Company during its 3½-year lifetime (1865-68) as a transatlantic mail carrier. Source: Postmaster General Reports, 1866-1869. Note the great preponderance of inbound covers.**

seen from the numbers in Table 3, what was carried did not amount to much, a total of just over 50,000 letters. Observe the great preponderance of inbound mail, which outnumbers outbound by 16 to 1. I would guess that the outbound mail consisted only of letters gathered up at the Baltimore exchange office, while the inbound mail consisted of all U.S.-bound mail that had accumulated at the Liverpool exchange office when the B&L ship departed.

Figure 2 shows a cover carried by *Worcester* on its westbound voyage departing Liverpool September 12, 1866. This broad-bordered mourning envelope from Alford, England, posted September 10, 1866, and addressed to Ohio, was prepaid one shilling by a green 1865 British stamp (Scott 48) for the single rate under the United States-British convention. The red **21** indicated a 21¢ credit from Britain to the United States (16¢ sea and 5¢ United States internal under the convention). *Worcester* arrived in Baltimore on October 2, 1866, as indicated by the red **BALTIMORE AM PKT/PAID** exchange office marking.

Covers carried by ships of this line are fairly scarce. At present, 15 have been identified; these are listed in Table 4. Note the utter absence of outbound covers. An eastbound cover carried by this line has yet to be recorded. To repeat, as is the case for all of the lines discussed here, collectors are urged to let me know if they have items to expand the listing.



**Figure 2. Mourning envelope from Alford, England, September 10, 1866, to Claridon, Ohio, carried from Liverpool by *Worcester* of the Baltimore and Liverpool Steamship Company. Prepaid one shilling for a single rate under the United States-British convention; 21¢ credit from Britain to the United States.**

Baltimore and Liverpool Steamship Company: cover census					
Date	Franking	From/To	Ship	Origin XO	Arr Balt
5 Jun 66	Stampless	London/Richmond	Carroll	LP 6 Jun 66	21 Jun 66
31 Jul 66	GB 6d(2) (NA)	London/Marietta OH	Carroll		
10 Sep 66	GB #48	Alford Eng/OH	Worcester	LP 12 Sep 66	2 Oct 66
2 Oct 66	GB 1 sh (NA)	Bakewell Eng/IL	Carroll		
? Oct 66	?	India/Chicago	Somerset	LP 14 Nov 66	2 Dec 66
12 Nov 66	GB 6d(2) (NA)	Ballisodare IRE/KY	Somerset	LP 14 Nov 66	2 Dec 66
24 Nov 66	France #20(2)	Paris/Gr Coteau LA	Worcester	[LP Nov 24 66]	10 Dec 66
4 Dec 66	GB #48	London/AL	Mexican	LP 9 Dec 66	5 Jan 66
17 Dec 66	Stampless	London/Baltimore	Carroll	QT 21 Dec 66	5 Jan 67
30 Apr 67	1 sh (NA)	London/Carlisle OH	Somerset	LP 1 May 67	9 May 67
25 Jun 67	France #20(2)	Paris/New Orleans	Worcester	LP 1 May 67	
29 Jun 67	France #20(2)	Le Havre/Baltimore	Carroll	LP 3 Jul 67	18 Jul 67
2 Jul 67	GB 1 sh (NA)	Louth Eng/OH	Carroll	LP 3 Jul 67	18 Jul 67
2 Jul 67	GB 1 sh (NA)	London/Charleston	Carroll	LP 3 Jul 67	18 Jul 67
21 Oct 67	Stampless	Hamilton Eng/IL	Worcester	LP 23 Oct 67	9 Nov 67

**Table 4. Transatlantic covers carried by the Baltimore and Liverpool Steamship Company. LP=Liverpool, QT=Queenstown. Note that all the covers recorded to date are inbound. An outbound cover via this line has yet to be seen.**

### North American Lloyd Line

The North American Lloyd Line was the first (but not the last) attempt of the entrepreneurial Ruger brothers to create a shipping line that could profitably carry the waves of immigrants coming out of Bremen to the United States. Brothers William and Emil were both born in Bremen and maintained family and business ties there.

The line started out with the acquisition of three ships. Two of them, *Atlantic* and *Baltic*, were former Collins vessels, which we have seen previously operated by the North Atlantic Steamship Company. The third was *Western Metropolis*, which served in the Civil War with the other two. She was quite a large ship with no armament but nevertheless carried a boarding crew that took *Rosita* as a prize. Unfortunately, *Western Metropolis* did not account for much for the Rugers. She was unable to make her one scheduled trip and was laid up for the balance of the line's short life.

*Atlantic* made the first sailing for North American Lloyd, departing New York on February 22, 1866. She made the crossing in bad weather, arriving in Southampton on March 8 and then on to Bremen, arriving March 13. Her return was slow, 18 days from Bremen and 14 from Cowes—but it was very successful financially. She carried 900 passengers on the return trip. *Atlantic's* second voyage, completed in mid-May, brought back 1,150 passengers and her two other trips were equally successful with over 4,000 passengers carried.

*Baltic* made two round voyages, one in May and the other in June. In addition to the trips made by *Atlantic* and *Baltic*, the Rugers relied on chartered vessels. *Ericsson* made two chartered trips and *Merrimack* and *Mississippi* one each. In all, ten trips were made by North American Lloyd vessels between February 22 and September 25, 1860. Then the line ceased operations. The three ships were ultimately sold to the New York and Bremen Steamship Company

The question arises: Why did the line close so quickly given what certainly seemed



**This Line Should be Patronized by all Americans**

**T H E**

**NORTH AMERICAN LLOYD'S**

**Only AMERICAN Line of  
First-Class U. S. Mail Steamships.**



**WELL KNOWN FAVORITES OF THE** traveling public, with comfortable accommodations for passengers of all classes, leave **NEW YORK**, from Atlantic Dock, foot of Hamilton Ferry, Brooklyn, for **BREMEN**, calling at Cowes, where passengers to Southampton, London, and Havre are transhipped, on the following **Thursdays** :

<p>From New York.</p> <p><b>BALTIC</b>.....Sept. 20</p> <p><b>ATLANTIC</b>.....Oct. 4</p> <p><b>WESTERN METROPOLIS</b>.....Oct. —</p>	<p>From Bremen.</p> <p><b>BALTIC</b>.....Oct. 17</p> <p><b>ATLANTIC</b>.....Oct. 31</p> <p><b>WESTERN METROPOLIS</b>.....</p>
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FROM NEW YORK TO BREMEN, ETC.

Prices of Passage, payable in Gold :

<b>FIRST CABIN</b> .....	\$105 00
<b>SECOND CABIN</b> .....	62 1/2
<b>STEERAGE</b> .....	37 50

An experienced Surgeon on board.

**RATES OF POSTAGE**:-To Bremen, 10 cents; to any part of Germany, &c, 15 cents.

For freight or passage apply to

**RUGER BROTHERS, Gen'l Agents, 45 Beaver st.**

For subscription to the stock of the Company, offering a safe and dividend-paying investment, apply to **V. BRECHT, Secretary, office of the North American Lloyd, No. 45 Beaver street.**

Figure 3. Sailing schedule for the Ruger Brothers' North American Lloyd steamship line, here taken from the September 27, 1866, issue of the *New York Commercial Advertiser*. The line was woefully undercapitalized, and its ads from this era typically appealed to patriotism ("This Line Should be Patronized by all Americans") while simultaneously seeking capital—"offering a safe and dividend-paying investment."

to be success in its mission to carry immigrants out of Germany? Hubbard and Winter suggested that the Rugers were unable to raise sufficient investment capital to sustain operations. This was likely the case. In newspaper advertisements announcing its scheduled crossings, a solicitation for capital ("a safe and dividend-paying investment") frequently appeared as a postscript. Figure 3 shows a representative example, from the *New York Commercial Advertiser* of September 27, 1866. Note also the appeal to patriotism in the headline, implicitly acknowledging that transatlantic service was dominated by foreigners: "This Line should be Patronized by all Americans."

Then too, the competitive environment was fierce. North German Lloyd, with its similar name, ran ads side-by-side to those of North American Lloyd, announcing *weekly* departures.

As confirmed by the Figure 3 advertisement, North American Lloyd carried mail on all its voyages to Germany and North European destinations. A summary of the amount of mail carried by the line, taken from the Postmaster General's annual report for 1866, is presented in Table 5.

North American Lloyd Line: letters carried					
	Number of letters			Postage on letters	
Country	Sent	Received	Total	Outbound	Inbound
Bremen	79,112	15,669	94,781	\$11,575	\$1,908

Table 5. Letters carried by the North American Lloyd Line during its brief lifetime in 1866. Source: Postmaster General Report, 1866.

North American Lloyd Line: cover census					
Date	Franking	From/To	Ship	Origin XO	Destination XO
22 Mar 66	Stampless	Oldenburg/LA	<i>Atlantic</i>	BR 23 Mar 66	NY 9 Apr 66
10 Apr 66	Stampless	Oldenburg/NY	<i>Ericsson</i>	BR 12 Apr 66	NY 2 May 66
10 May 66	68	NY/Oldenburg	<i>Mississippi</i>	NY 10 May 66	Brem 4 Aug 66
10 May 66	Stampless	NY/Oldenburg	<i>Mississippi</i>	NY 10 May 66	Brem 28 May 66
17 May 66	77	NY/Baden	<i>Merrimac</i>	NY 17 May 66	Brem 2 Jun 66
25 Jun 66	Stampless	Prussia/NY	<i>Atlantic</i>	BR 28 Jun 66	NY 16 Jul 66
26 Jun 66	1¢, 2¢, 3¢, 5¢, 10¢ (NA)	Santa Cruz CA/Sweden	<i>Atlantic</i>	NY 20 Jul 66	Brem 4 Aug 66
17 Jul 66	71	MO/Hanover	<i>Atlantic</i>	NY 20 Jul 66	Brem 4 Aug 66

**Table 6. Transatlantic covers carried by the North American Lloyd Line during its brief lifetime in 1866. BR = Bremen. NA indicates stamp Scott numbers not known.**

I have recorded eight covers carried by the ships of the North American Lloyd Line. These are listed in Table 6. An early example is shown in Figure 4. This unpaid folded letter was carried by *Ericsson* under the United States-Bremen Convention. Note the routing at top: “per Erikson via Bremen.” The cover originated in Elsfleth, Oldenburg, April 10, 1866, and is addressed to Captain Hays in New York, in care of the Ruger Brothers (“*Addr: Gebrüder Rieger*”). Bremen marked 3/10 in blue crayon at the left to indicate the division of the 13¢ total rate, 3¢ German internal (the special lower rate for Oldenburg) and 10¢



**Figure 4. Unpaid folded letter from Elsfleth, Oldenburg, April 10, 1866, to Captain Hays in New York, “*Addr: Gebrüder Rieger*” (Ruger Brothers). Bremen’s manuscript 3/10 indicates division of the 13¢ U.S.-Bremen Convention rate, 3¢ German internal (special lower rate for Oldenburg) and 10¢ international rate (1¢ Bremen, 6¢ sea, and 3¢ U.S. internal). Carried on North American Lloyd *Ericsson* from Bremerhaven to New York. The manuscript 17/13 indicates due postage was 17¢ in U.S. notes or 13¢ in coin.**

# The Continental Mail Steamship Company.

AMERICAN STEAMSHIP LINE.

NEW YORK. ANTWERP.

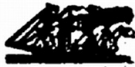
TO TRAVELERS AND SHIPPERS OF CARGO DESIRIOUS OF AVOIDING THE GERMAN PORTS ON ACCOUNT OF THE WAR, AN OPPORTUNITY IS OFFERED OF DOING SO BY THEIR SELECTING THIS LINE.

The Company's 3-3 Cr. 1.1. Veritas Iron Screw Steamship

## CIRCISSIAN,

THOS. S. ELLIS, Commander,

2,000 TONS AND 1,200 HORSE POWER,



WILL LEAVE PIER NO. 20 NORTH RIVER (FOOT OF DEY STREET), FOR ANTWERP DIRECT, ON WEDNESDAY, JULY 18.

RATES OF PASSAGE.

First Cabin, \$90; Second Cabin, \$62 50; Steerage, \$37 50

PAYABLE IN GOLD.

This is the most direct route to Holland, Western Germany, the Rhine, and Switzerland.

The accommodation and fare for passengers are in every respect first-class.

An experienced Surgeon on board.

Through Bills of Lading given to Rotterdam and Amsterdam.

For freight or passage apply to

WM. SALEM & CO., General Agents,

No. 110 Pearl street, (Hanover Square.)

THE CONTINENTAL MAIL STEAMSHIP COMPANY.

—New line of American mail steamers from New York to Antwerp, calling at Havre, will despatch their first steamship, the *Circassian*, on Wednesday, the 18th inst., at three P. M. The Postmaster General has arranged with this Company to transport the Continental mails direct, thus avoiding the extra expense of the transit through Great Britain. This Company has appointed the day of departure of the Cunard steamers from Boston, and will thus enable correspondents to mail their letters one day later than by the Boston Cunarder. The *Circassian* is rated A1 and is very fast.

Figure 6 (above). Announcement in the July 17, 1866 issue of the *New York Commercial Advertiser*, of the Continental Mail Steamship Company's first sailing, *Circassian*, scheduled to depart July 18.

Figure 5 (left). Continental Mail Steamship Company advertisement from July 14, 1866 *New York Commercial Advertiser*, soliciting passengers who wish to avoid German ports "on account of the war" (referring to the Seven Weeks' War, between Prussia and Austria).

international rate (1¢ Bremen, 6¢ sea, and 3¢ United States internal). The letter was put on the *Ericsson*, which sailed from Bremerhaven on April 12, 1866 and arrived in New York on May 2, 1866. A New York clerk marked 17/13 to indicate the due postage was 17¢ in U.S. notes or 13¢ in coin.

### Continental Mail Steamship Company

So little is known about the Continental Mail Steamship Line that the terms "black ops" and "stealth" come to mind. The few facts we know are that it managed to put two ships on voyages to Antwerp via Le Havre. Then it went out of business. The advertisement shown in Figure 5 appeared in the *New York Commercial Advertiser* on July 14, 1866 soliciting passengers who desired to avoid the German ports "on account of the war," which must refer to what is today called the Seven Weeks' War, between Prussia and Austria (14 June–23 August, 1866). Figure 6 shows a notice from the same paper three days later, 17 July 1866, announcing the first sailing of this line—"carrying the Continental mails direct, thus avoiding the extra expense of transit through Great Britain."

*Circassian* made its planned sailing date of July 18. She did fairly well eastbound making Antwerp in 17 days. But her westbound crossing was marred by bad weather and an engine failure that extended the crossing from Antwerp to New York to 31 days. Her 160 passengers no doubt had a bad time of it.

*Ericsson* did somewhat better, departing New York on August 23 and returning to New York on October 16 with 350 passengers. And that was it. As the Figure 6 clipping<sup>02</sup> indicates, both voyages carried U.S. mails. Table 7 shows a summary from the Postmaster General's annual report for 1867 of the amount of mail carried by the line. The total is fewer than 8,000 letters, both ways. So far, in all of the years that collectors have been looking, not one cover carried by the Continental Line has turned up. Very likely such covers do exist, their scarcity unrecognized. Who has one? It would be quite a find.

Continental Mail Steamship Company: letters carried					
Country	Number of letters			Postage on letters	
	Sent	Rec'd	Total	Outbound	Inbound
France	7,014	8	7,022	\$1,109	\$1
Belgium	103	304	407	\$15	\$60

**Table 7. Letters carried between New York, Antwerp and Havre by the Continental Mail Steamship Company during its very brief lifetime (two round trips) in the summer of 1866. Source: Postmaster General Report, 1867.**

### New York and Bremen Steamship Company

In *Chronicle* 60, George Hargest claimed that after the Ruger Brothers shut down the North American Lloyd operation in October 1866, “they immediately reorganized as the New York and Bremen Steamship Company and continued to operate until 1870.” This mistake was easy to make. The new company to which Hargest referred purchased North American Lloyd’s three ships (*Atlantic*, *Baltic*, and *Western Metropolis*) and commenced operating on the same route—but there is no evidence to suggest that the Ruger Brothers were involved. Rather, Isaac Taylor and associates came out of Boston to show the New Yorkers how to do it.

And for a time, they did—capitalizing on better management and better maintenance of their vessels. Recall that North American Lloyd was quite successful in booking large numbers of German immigrants from Bremen. So, too, was the New York and Bremen Steamship Company. Beginning in February 1867, the company established an approximately every-two-week service, employing their three ships and also chartering *Northern Light* from the Pacific Mail Line. Figure 7 shows an advertisement for the New York and Bremen line that appeared in the *Chicago Daily Inter-Ocean* of April 17, 1867.

*Atlantic* was the first ship to sail, returning with 500 passengers. She was followed by *Baltic*, which brought in 408. Then *Western Metropolis*, which had not made her scheduled voyage for North American Lloyd, arrived with 710 passengers. At this point, the company took the three vessels off the line, and chartered *Northern Light* for two round voyages. She carried into port a whopping 944 passengers on one return trip. And so it went, the management maintaining the every two-week schedule. Finally, in May, and after it had carried an estimated 12,000 passengers, Isaac Taylor elected to shut the line down, recognizing that his aging ships could not continue—and winter was coming. *Atlantic* and *Western Metropolis* were auctioned off; *Baltic* was saved for another day. *Atlantic* had made six trips, *Baltic* five, *Western Metropolis* four and *Northern Light* two. The New York and Bremen Steamship Company went out at the top of its game. Table 8 summarizes the Postmaster General’s report of mails carried by the line.

Our cover count for the New York & Bremen Steamship Company is seven, as detailed in Table 9. The majority of these stem from just one crossing, *Baltic*’s departure from New York on 20 April 1867, which carried a full load of mail for Great Britain and points beyond. Most of the line’s eastbound trips carried mail for the city of Bremen only.

**NEW YORK AND BREMEN STEAMSHIP CO.**  
The first-class U. S. Mail Steamship  
**BALTIC**, A. G. JONES, Master,  
will leave pier 46, N. R., on **SATURDAY, April 20,**  
at noon.

**FOR SOUTHAMPTON AND BREMEN,**  
Taking passengers to Southampton, London, Havre  
and Bremen, at the following rates, payable in gold  
or its equivalent in currency:  
First Cabin, \$110; Second Cabin, \$65; Steerage,  
\$35.

From Bremen, Southampton, and Havre to New  
York: First Cabin, \$110; Second Cabin, \$75; Steerage,  
\$45.

**EXCURSION TICKETS OUT AND HOME.**  
First Cabin, \$210; Second Cabin, \$130; Steerage,  
\$70.

**WESTERN METROPOLIS**, Capt. Wm. Weir, May  
4. New steamer May 18.

For freight or passage apply to  
**J. WARRACK**, Agent, Chicago.  
**ISAAC TAYLOR**, President,  
No. 40 Broadway, New York.

56178-351

**Figure 7. Ad for New York and Bremen Steamship Company from April 17, 1867 *Chicago Daily Inter-Ocean*.**

New York and Bremen Steamship Company: letters carried					
Country	Number of letters			Postage on letters	
	Sent	Received	Total	Outbound	Inbound
Bremen	65,669	25,436	91,105	\$11,043	\$3,082
Britain	14,166	10,522	24,688	\$3,448	\$2,502
Prussia	4,021	1,971	5,992	\$1,107	\$584
France	1,479	6,113	7,592	\$237	\$962
Belgium	250	102	352	\$68	\$28
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>85,585</b>	<b>44,144</b>	<b>129,729</b>	<b>\$15,903</b>	<b>\$7,158</b>

**Table 8. Transatlantic mail via New York and Bremen Steamship Company from its brief life in 1867. Source: PMG reports, 1866 and 1867.**

New York and Bremen Steamship Company: cover census					
Date	Franking	From/To	Ship	Origin XO	Dest. XO
8 Feb 67	68	PA/Hamburg	<i>Baltic</i>	NY 21 Feb 67	BR 16 Mar 67
6 Apr 67	65(2), 78	NY/Prussia	<i>Atlantic</i>	NY 6 Apr 67	BR 21 Apr 67
15 Apr 67	33	Nashville/Württ.	<i>Baltic</i>	NY 20 Apr 67	BR 6 May 67
16 Apr 67	none	Cincy OH/Württ.	<i>Baltic</i>	NY 20 Apr 67	BR 6 May 67
17 Apr 67	65(2), 69	MI/Belgium	<i>Baltic</i>	NY 20 Apr 67	BR 6 May 67
18 Apr 67	63, 68(2)	Exeter CT/Spain	<i>Baltic</i>	NY 20 Apr 67	BR 6 May 67
20 Jul 67	Fr 27(2)	Le Havre/MA	<i>Wstn Metropolis</i>	SO 20 Jul 67	NY 14 Aug 67

**Table 9. Transatlantic covers carried by the New York and Bremen Steamship Company during its 11-month existence in 1867. Most of the surviving covers are from the April 20 sailing of *Baltic*, which carried U.S. mails for Great Britain and the Continent.**



**Figure 8. Envelope from Exeter, Connecticut, April 18, 1867, to Malaga, Spain, carried to Southampton by *Baltic* of the New York and Bremen Steamship Company. Pre-paid for the 21¢ open mail rate by American packet under U.S.-British postal treaty.**

One of the *Baltic* covers from the April 20 departure is shown in Figure 8. This cover was posted at Exeter, Connecticut, April 18, 1867, addressed to Malaga, Spain. It was pre-paid 21¢ by a 1¢ blue and a pair of 10¢ green 1861 stamps, under the open mail provisions

of the United States-British convention. Since the letter was to be carried by an American packet, 21¢ was necessary to pay the 5¢ U.S. inland fee plus the 16¢ sea postage. The *Baltic* sailed from New York on April 20 and arrived in Southampton on May 6. Given the 21¢ prepayment, the letter arrived in the United Kingdom free of American charges. The London exchange office marked **PAID-ONLY/TO ENGLAND**. The letter was then sent under the 1858 Anglo-Spanish Convention in a closed mail bag through France to Spain. The letter must have weighed between ¼ and ½ ounce; **8.R** was struck, indicating 8 reales (double rate) was due.

### Ruger's American Line

One needs to have studied the operations of the North American Lloyd and the New York and Bremen Steamship Company to fully understand that by the time 1868 came around, the Rugers had learned a number of things which when put into practice made their American Line the success that it was. With North American Lloyd, they had entered the business severely undercapitalized. They had purchased three ships, one of which they did not have the money to make useable, and had tried to run on a schedule involving a ship departure every two weeks. To pull that off, as the New York and Bremen Steamship Company showed, a line needed to have at least four dependable ships. It is also noteworthy, although not apparent from the short life of the New York and Bremen Steamship Company, that Isaac Taylor had sold his tired ships, preferring to shut down rather than drive them into the North Atlantic winter. Finally, what had been discovered by the Rugers and by Taylor was that there was a virtual river of German passengers. Transporting those eager emigrants, the Rugers would not suffer the failure of so many other American entrepreneurs whose operations died for lack of revenue.

With the American Line, the Rugers would own no ships. They would charter modern and well-maintained vessels that belonged to others. This way they could schedule departures every two weeks without having to worry about the wear and tear from crossing the Atlantic. The Ruger ships were not driven hard, often taking two weeks to cross, thus saving coal. Further, the ships were generally left in their European port for two weeks to maximize return passenger bookings. In all, 18 voyages would be made, employing 11 ships. *Ariel* would make three crossings, *Arago*, *Circassian*, *Fulton*, *Northern Light* and *Ocean Queen* each made two. The balance, *Rising Star*, *Quaker City*, *Guiding Star*, *Santiago de Cuba* and *Western Metropolis* made one round voyage each. With the exception of sending *Arago* across on November 30, 1868, crossings were confined to months with moderate weather. *Arago* was left overseas until early March.



The wisdom of operating in this way is clear. A random sample of eight westbound Ruger voyages for which passenger data is available shows a high count of 1,267 passengers (*Rising Star*, arriving New York 29 May 1870), a low of 480 (*Circassian*, arriving 9 June 1868). The average was 815 passengers per voyage.

Additionally, the Rugers were adventurous enough to alter their routes to explore the potential of new markets. With *Ariel's* crossing beginning the 1869 season, Copenhagen was added to the itinerary. An interesting take on this change was offered in the *New York Commercial Advisor* of February 15, 1869:

We learn that the American line of steamers to Europe will resume operations for the season on March 13, when Ruger Brothers will dispatch *Ariel* from this port for Bremen and Copenhagen via Southampton. Some time since, the North German Lloyd adopted a measure which peremptorily suppressed all competition in the matter of bringing passengers to the United States by steamer from Bremen.

The effect of this monopolizing policy necessarily is to impair the prestige of Bremen as a starting point for German emigrants—a prestige originally won, in considerable degree, by reason of the facilities afforded by the American line for travel at reduced rates. The projected line to Copenhagen appears to be one result of the policy, and we are informed that the agents of the American line have closed contracts for transportation to the United States of several thousand Scandinavian and North German emigrants during the coming season from the ports of Copenhagen, Gothenburg and Hamburg.

I have not been able to confirm that Gothenburg and Hamburg were ever included in a Ruger voyage. It is certainly noteworthy that Copenhagen was added to the itinerary. No American contract mail steamer had ever before made a stop in that port.

Nor was the inclusion of Copenhagen the only successful pioneering effort that the Rugers would make. As a part of the last voyage of the 1869 season, after leaving Copenhagen the *Fulton* went on to Swinemunde, the port of Stettin. After laying over for a couple of weeks, she then returned from Stettin, stopping at Copenhagen and Southampton before reaching New York.

The 1870 season brought further surprises about the ships' itineraries. Outbound, they called at Le Havre (dropping mail), Bremen, and Stettin; returning they called at Christiansand (Norway) and Copenhagen. The first two voyages of the 1870 season were made by *Ocean Queen* and *Rising Star*. Both were chartered from Pacific Mail and both had capacious facilities for passengers. This helps explain the ample passenger numbers cited above.

There is no apparent reason that the Ruger's American line would not have gone on carrying passenger loads into the future. However, on July 15, 1870, eight days after *Western Metropolis* completed her voyage into New York with 954 passengers, France's Corps Legislatif declared war on Prussia. Given the uncertainties of the political turmoil and the potential danger to civilian shipping, the Rugers ceased operating and never resumed. Since they owned no ships, this was not a costly decision.

Unfortunately for Ruger fans, mail was carried by the line only on its three voyages in 1870 with calls at Le Havre, Bremen, and Stettin. According to post office records, it carried letters out, but none into the United States. Details are presented in Table 10. The line carried a grand total of 7,397 covers, all of them to France.

Ruger's American Line: letters carried					
	Number of letters			Postage on letters	
Country	Sent	Received	Total	Outbound	Inbound
France	7,397	-	7,397	\$740	-

**Table 10. Letters carried by vessels of Ruger's American Line on its three mail-carrying transatlantic voyages, which all took place in early 1870. Source: Postmaster General Report, 1870.**

Ruger's American Line: cover census				
Date	Franking	From/To	Ship	NY XO
24 Jan 1870	121	Yokohama/Marseille	<i>Ocean Queen</i>	3 Mar 1870
21 Feb 1870	113, 115(3)	NO, LA/ Bordeaux	<i>Ocean Queen</i>	3 Mar 1870
22 Feb 1870	116	SF/Bordeaux	<i>Ocean Queen</i>	3 Mar 1870
22 Feb 1870	116	Chicago/Lyons	<i>Ocean Queen</i>	3 Mar 1870
23 Feb 1870	116	Louisville/FR	<i>Ocean Queen</i>	3 Mar 1870
24 Feb 1870	116	NO, LA/Paris	<i>Ocean Queen</i>	3 Mar 1870
28 Feb 1870	116	Elizabeth NJ/Paris	<i>Ocean Queen</i>	3 Mar 1870
15 Mar 1870	119	SF/Jarnak,FR	<i>Rising Star</i>	24 Mar 1870
22 Mar 1870	116(2)	Pittsburgh/Paris	<i>Rising Star</i>	24 Mar 1870
14 May 1870	113, 116	Mobile/Corsica	<i>Western Metropolis</i>	18 May 1870

**Table 11. Of the 7,397 covers carried to France by Ruger's American Line on its three eastbound voyages in 1870 (see Table 10), 10 survivors are so far recorded, a remarkable record. All known covers are franked with United States 1869 stamps.**

Our census of covers carried by Ruger's American Line is shown in Table 11. Given the small amount of mail carried, the fact that 10 Ruger covers have been recorded is really quite remarkable. All the recorded covers bear 1869 stamps, for which overseas uses on cover have been very thoroughly studied. Seven of the 10 covers bear 10¢ 1869 stamps; these were written up, discussed and in three cases illustrated by Michael Laurence in his book on 10¢ 1869 covers.<sup>2</sup> If the survival rate for these much-researched Ruger covers is any indication, unreported covers for many of the other lines considered here might exist in more abundance than our preliminary census evidence suggests.

Among the Ruger covers, the item shown as Figure 9, from the Steven Walske collection, is a prize. It was posted February 21, 1870 at New Orleans, addressed to Bordeaux, France, just weeks after the U.S.-French postal convention expired (on December 31, 1869). Since it weighed between ½ and 1 ounce, it was prepaid 20¢ by a 2¢ brown and three 6¢ ultramarine 1869 stamps. This paid double the 10¢ rate per ½ ounce for a letter carried by a steamship to the frontier of a country with which the United States did not have a postal treaty. The blue crayon "2" under the 2¢ stamp indicates the double rate. The letter was sent to New York, where it initially received two red circular date stamps that were subsequently obliterated in red. According to Hubbard-Winter, the regular Tuesday sailing of the Hamburg-American line (which dropped French mails at Cherbourg), scheduled for March 1, never took place. It seems reasonable to guess that the mails intended for this HAPAG sailing were sent out on the next departing steamer. This would have been *Ocean Queen*, which sailed March 3. On the Figure 9 cover, the unobliterated New York exchange office marking is so dated, MAR 3. The cancellation of the HAPAG sailing would also explain why *Ocean Queen* covers are recorded in relative abundance—seven out of the 10 known Ruger covers. The Figure 9 cover arrived at Le Havre on March 19, 1870, the date shown in the Le Havre entry mark. The black manuscript marking in the center is a "24," indicating 24 decimes was due. This was three times the 8 decimes single rate; the letter evidently weighed between 20 and 30 grams.

### North American Steamship Company

The North American Steamship Company had a short and bifurcated corporate life. Its principal, William Webb, had experience operating in the Pacific and originally conceived





Figure 9. February 21, 1870: New Orleans to Bordeaux, France, carried by Rurger's American Line *Ocean Queen* just after the U.S.-French Convention ended. Prepaid 20¢ double rate (for ½-1 ounce) for letter sent by a steamship to a country with which the U.S. had no international convention. The black manuscript marking in the center indicates 24 decimes triple rate was due (for 20-30 grams).

a grandiose plan to operate ships on both the Atlantic and Pacific, carrying passengers and freight across Panama. It isn't clear exactly what happened, but before any of the ships intended for the Pacific side commenced operations, Webb shut down the business there, selling the ships he owned save one, *Santiago de Cuba*, which he moved to the Atlantic. The line operated ships on the New York/Aspinwall route for a time, but as we have seen with some of the other lines described previously, two vessels were insufficient to support regular service over a long-distance route.

The North American Steamship line merits inclusion in this article because in 1869-70 it ran three voyages from New York to Le Havre and back. Two were completed by *Santiago de Cuba*—one in December 1869 and the second in September 1870. Between the two, *Guiding Star*, which Webb also owned, made a round voyage that actually left before the second *Santiago de Cuba* voyage and returned after it. It is probably worth mentioning that *Santiago de Cuba's* first voyage started from New Orleans with a large cargo of cotton. It is pretty likely that the line's other two voyages were also made to complete freight contracts. The last two may well have been carrying military supplies into France for the build-up to the Franco-Prussian War. Interestingly, both vessels' eastbound crossings in 1870 carried contract mails from the U.S., but very little of it, as Table 12 shows. Surviving

North American Steamship Company: letters carried					
Country	Number of letters			Postage on letters	
	Sent	Received	Total	Outbound	Inbound
France	2,633	0	2,633	\$263	--

Table 12. Letters carried by the North American Steamship Company on its three transatlantic voyages in 1869-70. Source: Postmaster General Report for 1871. Four of these covers survive; see Table 13.

North American Steamship Company: cover census					
Date	Franking	From/To	Ship	XO Origin	XO Destination
15 Jan 70	Fra 34(2)	Havre/NY	<i>Santiago de Cuba</i>	Havre 16 Jan 70	NY 2 Feb 70
19 Aug 70	150	NO, LA/FR	<i>Santiago de Cuba</i>	NY 3 Sep 70	Havre 22 Sep 70
22 Aug 70	33, 35, 150	Newark/FR	<i>Guiding Star</i>	NY 25 Aug 70	Havre 9 Sep 70
24 Aug 70	150	NY/FR	<i>Guiding Star</i>	New York	Havre

**Table 13. Of the 2,633 letters carried by the North American Steamship Company on its three transatlantic voyages in 1869-70 (see Table 12), these four covers are recorded.**

covers from this line are very rare. Table 13 shows the census of North American Steamship Company covers. Of the four covers known to me, two were carried by *Santiago de Cuba* and two were carried by *Guiding Star*. Since the line in total carried only 2,633 covers, four recorded survivors is an impressive number.

A spectacular cover carried by *Guiding Star* is shown in Figure 10. It was posted in Newark, New Jersey, on August 22, 1870 to Chazelles-sur-Lyon, France. Since there was no postal convention between the U.S. and France at this time, it was not possible to prepay to the U.S. Post Office the entire postage on letters sent by steamships directly to France. Such letters were charged postage by both countries. However, it was possible to prepay the American portion with U.S. stamps and the French portion with French stamps. On this cover, the 10¢ “blanket” steamship rate (per ½ ounce for a letter carried by a steamship and addressed to or received from countries with which the U.S. did not have a postal treaty) was paid by a 10¢ Bank Note stamp (Scott 150). The 20 centimes blue on bluish paper 1867 and 40 centimes pale orange on yellowish paper French stamps of 1863 (Scott 33 and 35) likely were applied in Newark to pay a special French rate of 60 centimes per 10 grams for mail from the United States if sent to France by direct service. This rate had to be prepaid by stamps.<sup>3</sup> The letter was sent on the *Guiding Star*, which departed New York on August 25, 1870 and arrived at Le Havre on September 9, 1870. On arrival it received the very scarce



**Figure 10. Spectacular small envelope from Newark, New Jersey, August 22, 1870 to Chazelles-sur-Lyon, France, carried by *Guiding Star* of the North American Steamship Company. Prepaid 10¢ rate per ½ ounce for a letter carried by a steamship and addressed to the frontier of a nation with which the United States had no postal treaty. French stamps of 60 centimes were applied in Newark to prepay the French rate (per 10 grams) for mail from the United States sent to France by direct service. Scarce arrival French marking, ÉTATS-UNIS/LE HAVRE, French stamps canceled at Havre.**

ÉTATS-UNIS/LE HAVRE entry marking. Salles recorded this marking (number 1720) only for a single date May 27, 1874.<sup>4</sup> The French stamps were cancelled upon arrival at Le Havre with the distinctive numeral in a diamond of dots. Since the stamp combination fully prepaid the letter, no postage was due in France.

### Two Philadelphia lines

Two additional American steamship lines, both rooted in Philadelphia, were formed and commenced operations in 1873: the International Navigation Company, which became known as the Red Star Line, and the American Steamship Company, known more simply as the American Line.

Red Star was headquartered in Philadelphia. Its initial operations in 1873 were run entirely from that city, serving the ports of Liverpool and Antwerp. Early in 1874 the stop at Liverpool was dropped and New York was added as a port of departure so that the line's ships left New York and Philadelphia alternately. Hubbard-Winter reports that a substantial subsidy from the Belgian government was made with the understanding that the New York to Antwerp route be added. At this time, Liverpool was well served on a weekly basis by transatlantic steamers of the Cunard, White Star, Liverpool and Great Western and National lines. Steerage passage was being advertised by these lines at \$25.

Respecting the American Line, the principal investor was the Pennsylvania Railroad. The line commenced operations in 1873 and ran exclusively from Philadelphia to Queens-town and Liverpool, in the highly competitive environment just described. It almost certainly sustained its operation by being principally a freight carrier.

Both companies continued well into the 20th century. The Postmaster General annual reports for 1874 and 1875 confirm that both lines had U.S. mail contracts. Tables 14 and 15 show that according to the Postmaster General reports, they carried a fairly minimal amount of mail during those start-up years.

### Red Star Line

From the era under discussion, the only cover carried by the Red Star line of which I am aware is illustrated on page 341 of the Hubbard-Winter book. It originated in New York

Red Star Line: letters carried						
	Number of letters			Postage on letters		PMG A/R
Country	Sent	Received	Total	Outbound	Inbound	Year
Belgium	122	49	171	\$12	\$5	1873
Belgium	490	3,701	4,191	\$28	\$228	1874
Belgium	1,503	4,966	6,469	\$91	\$332	1875

**Table 14. Letters carried by the Red Star Line (International Navigation Company), annually, 1873-75. Source: Postmaster General Reports as designated.**

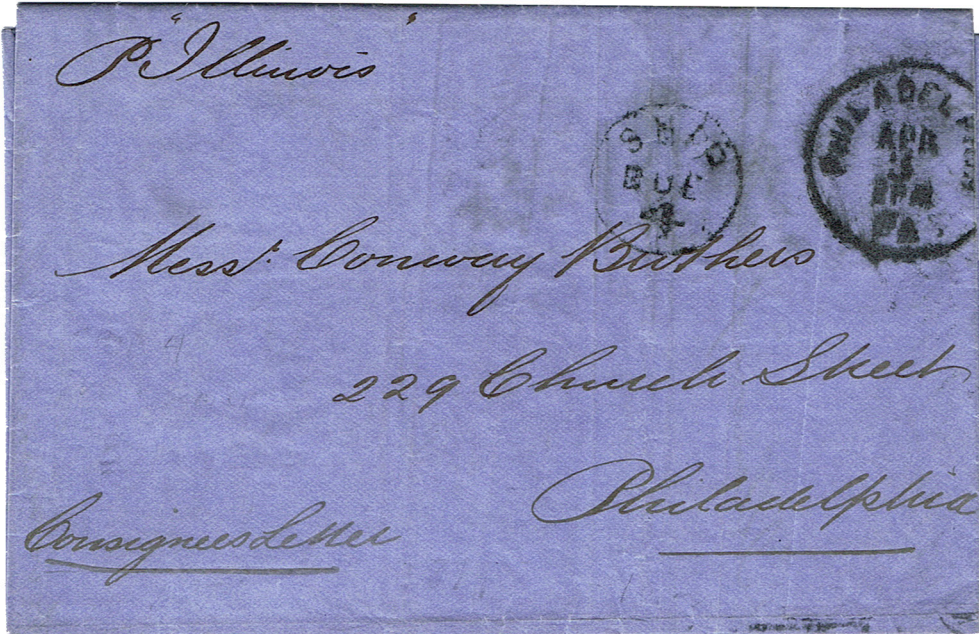
American Line: letters carried						
	Number of letters			Postage on letters		PMG A/R
Country	Sent	Received	Total	Outbound	Inbound	Year
Britain	15,528	330	15,858	\$995	\$26	1874
Britain	55,472	72	55,544	\$3,439	\$5	1875

**Table 15. Letters carried by the American Line (American Steamship Company), annually, 1874-75. Source: Postmaster General Reports as designated.**

on February 27, 1875 and was carried by the Red Star steamship *Switzerland* to Antwerp, arriving March 16, 1875. The direct rate under the U.S.-Belgium Convention was paid by a 6¢ Bank Note stamp, Scott 148, tied by a fancy geometric New York Foreign Mail cancel. The New York exchange office marking reads **NEW YORK/DIRECT SERVICE**.

### American Line

For the American Line, the Hubbard-Winter book shows on page 345 a circular mailed from Philadelphia on March 18, 1875, to Inverkeithing, Scotland, paid with a 2¢ Bank Note stamp, Scott 135. And after many years of looking, I have the cover shown in Figure 11. This is one of the tiny number of letters carried into Philadelphia on the American Line in



**Figure 11. March 19, 1874: Consignee letter from Liverpool to Philadelphia carried by the steamer *Illinois* of the American Line. A 4¢ ship letter fee due in Philadelphia (double the 2¢ drop rate since the letter was addressed to the port of arrival).**

1874. It was probably not included in the American Line PMG statistics, being endorsed as a consignee letter. It was sent from Liverpool on March 19, 1874 and carried by the *Illinois*, which departed from Liverpool on March 20 and arrived in Philadelphia on April 3.

Consignee letters related to cargo on ships. They did not have to be mailed at the post office, but could be given directly to the ship captain. On arrival the captain had to take the consignee letter to the port post office where it was treated as a ship letter.<sup>5</sup> On the Figure 11 cover, Philadelphia applied a black circular **SHIP/DUE/4** to indicate 4¢ ship letter fee was to be collected. Effective July 1, 1863, the U.S. ship letter fee became double the regular inland rate and the drop rate became 2¢. As a result, the ship letter fee was 4¢ per ½ ounce to the port of arrival. Since the letter was addressed to Philadelphia, where the ship arrived, a 4¢ ship letter fee was due.

### Conclusion

So there you have it, the story of nine American lines which, but for the last two discussed, had brief operating histories before disappearing. As a practical matter, American efforts to conquer the Atlantic and carry the American flag with its steamships failed. While the argument is sometimes made that the Civil War had an enormous impact on our ship-

ping because virtually all our long-range steamships were taken by government on one side or the other, the truth is that before the war, Congress closed down our transatlantic lines; and after the war took no action to restore their financial viability. *Plus ça change....* On the philatelic front, a cover carried by a ship of any of these lines is a desirable item.

### Acknowledgements

This article was a long time in preparation and reaching publication—for which I am mostly to blame. It would not have come together had I not had a lot of help in assembling the lists of covers and cover illustrations. Thank-yous are very much in order. At the top of the list is Dick Winter, who generously shared data compilations assembled over his many years as our dean of maritime philately. I thank him for his help on this and many other fronts, and I am honored to have him as a friend. Thanks also to Steve Walske for scans of some rare covers; they brighten up the article immensely. I also received a great deal of help from Jeff Bohn, who supplied information and scans of covers from his collection; and from section editor Dwayne Littauer, whose collection of transatlantic covers, many to Germany, was a big help, and whose fact-checking my data and text was invaluable. Have I forgotten someone? Not David D'Allesandris, who kindly sent a scan of a nice cover. To others, I sincerely apologize.

### Endnotes

1. Walter Hubbard and Richard F. Winter, *North Atlantic Mail Sailings 1840-75* (Canton, Ohio: The U.S. Philatelic Classics Society, Inc., 1988).
2. Michael Laurence, *Ten Cent 1869 Covers: A Postal Historical Survey* (Collectors Club of Chicago, 2010), pp. 175-178.
3. Wolfgang Diesner, "Unusual Mixed Franking from the U.S. to France During the Non-Treaty Period—1870," *Chronicle* 138 (May 1988), pp. 136-138.
4. Raymond Salles, *La Poste Maritime Française, Tome IV: Les paquebots de l'Atlantique Nord, Antilles, Amérique Centrale et Pacifique Sud, Etats-Unis* (Paris: Raymond Salles, 1965), pg. 237.
5. Scott Gallagher, "Cover Corner," *Chronicle* 152 (November 1991), pg. 285. ■

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(Editor's Page continued from page 113)

the man who created it. The distance information in the chart can be used to calculate (or verify) the rating and routing of many covers from the late 18th and early 19th century.

In our Bank Note section, page 171, Jeffrey Brahin and David D'Alessandris join forces to analyze a 10¢ Bank Note cover to a very elusive destination: St. Pierre and Miquelon, the French island territory off the south coast of Newfoundland. While some unanswered questions remain, it's clear that (unlike any others) this cover was routed through Newfoundland.

Our Officials section this issue (page 175) features a well-crafted and wide-ranging essay from section editor Alan Campbell. The subject under discussion is four departmental covers addressed to Othniel C. Marsh, the famous paleontologist who in 1877 was the first person to suggest that birds descended from dinosaurs. In exploring the four items, Campbell provides insights into the history of collecting covers bearing Official stamps, along with some observations about dinosaurs, fossil hunting, and the bone wars of the 19th century. A good read.

Our cover illustration this issue is taken from "U.S. Transatlantic Steamship Lines that Failed," a major survey article in our Foreign Mails section (page 184). Here postal history researcher James Baird looks at nine U.S.-based steamship lines that between 1840 and 1875 attempted, sometimes very briefly, to compete with the big guys and establish themselves as transatlantic mail carriers. Baird provides data on how many covers each of these short-lived steam lines carried and for each line provides a census of surviving covers. I join Baird in expressing the hope that this article will enable readers to discover heretofore unrecognized transatlantic rarities reposing in their albums. Good hunting! ■

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### EXPLANATION OF PROBLEM COVER IN CHRONICLE 253

Our problem cover from *Chronicle 253*, shown here in Figure 1, was submitted by our former section editor John Wright. This is an incoming stampless cover from an overseas origin addressed to Tremont Street in Boston. Pencil docketing at left notes “Monroville, Africa, Rd Aug 11/70.” The questions were: Where did this cover originate? How did it get from there to Boston? And what is the significance of the manuscript and handstamped rate markings?



**Figure 1. Problem Cover from last issue: prepaid incoming stampless cover, which (per docketing) originated in “Monroville, Africa” in 1870. The questions were: Where did this cover originate, how did it get to Boston, and what do the markings mean?**

John Barwis offered a comprehensive solution as follows: The letter was posted in Monrovia, Liberia, on or just before 10 July 1870. The sender paid seven pence, and the postal clerk in Monrovia noted that payment in a magenta manuscript notation at upper left. Six pence paid the British packet rate from Monrovia to Liverpool and one penny paid the sea postage to the United States. The letter was sent on the African Steam Ship Company’s packet *Athenian*, which departed Monrovia around 18-20 July, and arrived in Liverpool on 30 July.

The red “2 CENTS” handstamp was a credit to the United States for American inland postage, required on mail transiting England under terms of the 1868 modification of the United States-Great Britain postal convention. Where it was applied is uncertain. Although *Robertson Revisited* does not list this postmark as having been used at Liverpool, Barwis suspects it was applied there. First, there would not have been time for the mail to leave Liverpool for London, be sorted and postmarked there and returned to Liverpool to catch the Cunard steamer on the same day. Second, the “2” is asymmetrically placed above the

rocker, whereas London's 2/CENTS rating mark is symmetrical. The letter left Liverpool on 30 July aboard the Cunard's *China*, which arrived at New York on 10 August. It was postmarked at Boston the next day.

Another reader who wishes to remain anonymous had a slightly different take on the initial postage, but reached the same conclusion about the transit credit. He theorized that the letter was prepaid 8 pence for all fees to the U.S. This is consistent with the 16¢ charge from the United States to Monrovia via England shown in the Starnes rate book. In the absence of a handstamp, the Monrovia postal clerk applied the manuscript 7 pence credit to the United Kingdom since all but 1 penny of the prepayment was owed to the U.K. At Liverpool the letter was placed on board the Cunard steamer *China*, which departed Liverpool that same day and arrived in New York on 10 August 1870.

The Liverpool office clerk credited the U.S. with 2¢ under the 1868 convention between the U.K. and the U.S., which had taken effect 1 January 1869. Under Article 15 of this arrangement, the U.K. owed the U.S. 2¢ on such transit mail, as compensation for its inland postage expense. The 2/CENTS marking in red had to have been applied at Liverpool even though it is not listed in *Robertson Revisited* as a Liverpool accountancy marking.

So both explanations are similar with the only significant difference being how to interpret the manuscript "7 Pence" applied at Monrovia. It's worth noting that an article by John Sacher in *Chronicles* 166 and 167 (May and August 1995) about mail from Liberia to the United States predicted the ratings expected to be seen on covers in the early 1870s, but stated that no examples were then known. Now this cover validates Sacher's theory.

## TWO PROBLEM COVERS FOR THIS ISSUE

We are feeling expansive this month, and the editor says we have some extra space, so for this May issue we will offer not one but two problem covers. They have some broad similarities; both were sent to New Orleans.

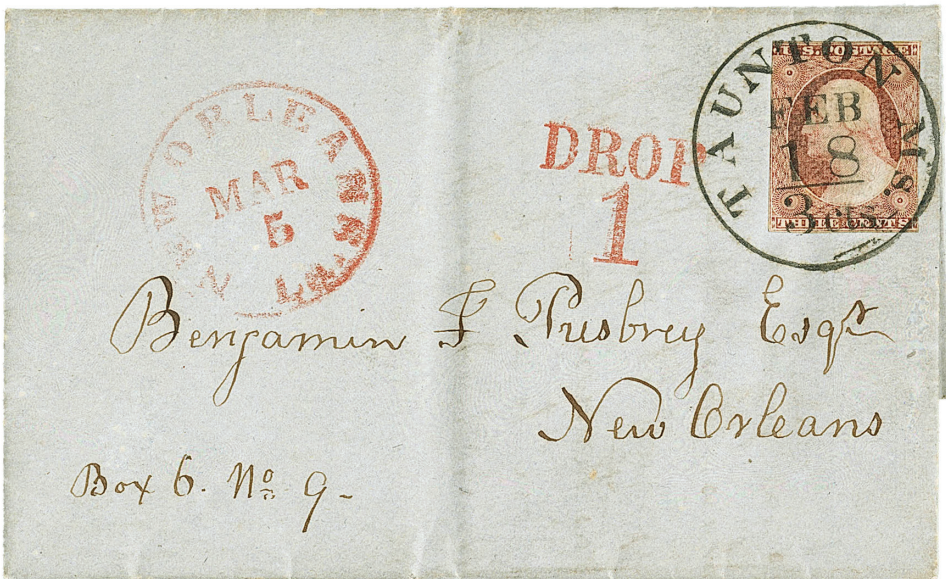


Figure 2. 1852 folded letter to New Orleans, with 3¢ imperforate stamp tied by "Taunton Ms. 3cts. Feb. 18" circular datestamp. The cover also bears a red New Orleans circular datestamp dated March 5 and a red "DROP 1" handstamp. No markings on reverse. The questions are: Why two circular datestamps? And what rates are represented here? Image courtesy of Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries.



Our first Problem Cover, shown Figure 2, was offered by Gordon and Ronda Eubanks for the benefit of The Smithsonian National Postal Museum in a sale conducted by Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries this past December. Here we have a 3¢ dull red stamp (Scott 11A) well tied by a “Taunton Ms. 3cts. Feb. 18” integral-rate circular datestamp. The cover also bears a red New Orleans circular datestamp dated March 5 and a red “DROP 1” handstamp. There are no additional markings on the back. The questions here are why two circular datestamps? And what rates are represented here?



**Figure 3. First-issue Nesbitt envelope with handstamped marking of the New Orleans, Opelousas and Great Western Railroad—along with New Orleans circular datestamp and black “WAY” marking. The questions are: How did this cover get to New Orleans, and what is the significance of the WAY marking?**

Our bonus Problem Cover for this issue, shown in Figure 3, is another arriving New Orleans cover. This first issue Nesbitt envelope bears a handstamp marking of the New Orleans, Opelousas and Great Western Railroad in addition to the New Orleans circular datestamp and WAY marking. Although the cover lacks a year date, the Buchanan, Carroll address suggests usage prior to 1859.

We have two questions: How did this cover get to New Orleans, and what is the significance of the WAY marking? One useful hint: Hugh Feldman’s records do not indicate that this railroad had any route agents assigned to it prior to the Civil War. ■

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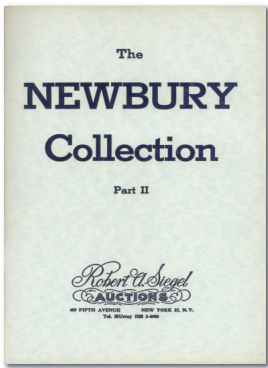


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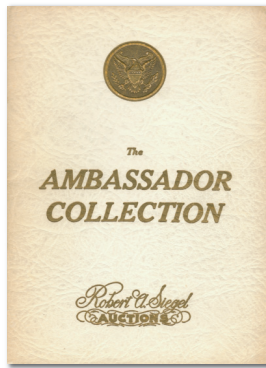
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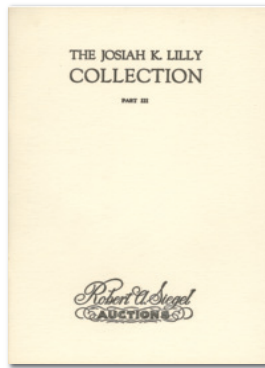
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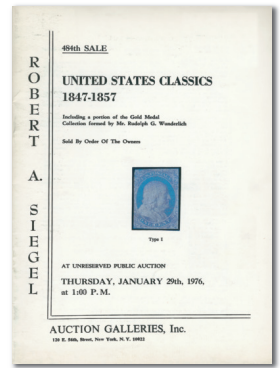
Newbury 1961



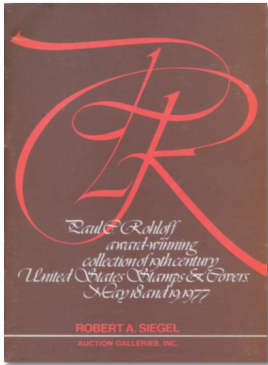
Ambassador 1966



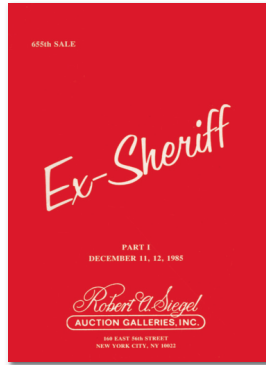
Lilly 1967



Wunderlich 1976



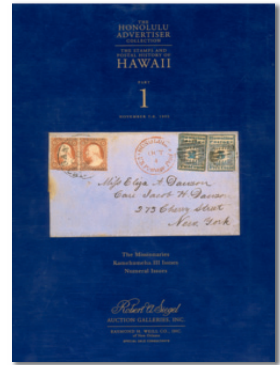
Rohloff 1977



Sheriff 1985



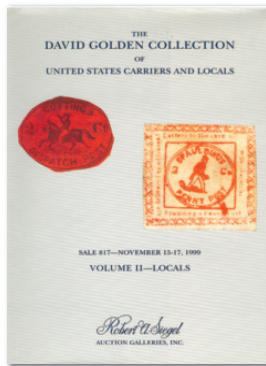
Kapiloff 1992



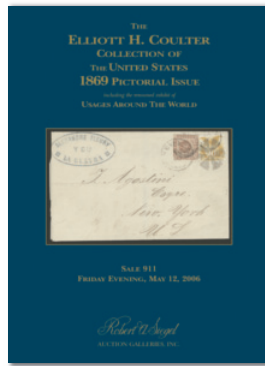
Honolulu Advertiser 1995



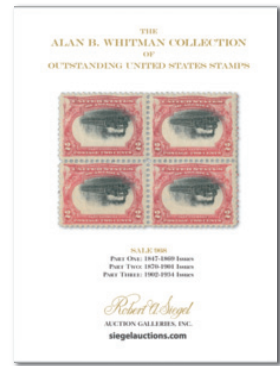
Zoellner 1998



Golden 1999



Coulter 2006



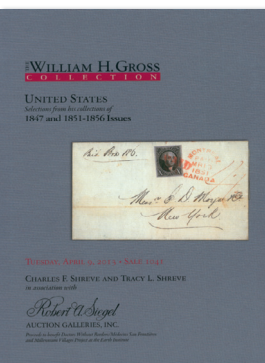
Whitman 2009



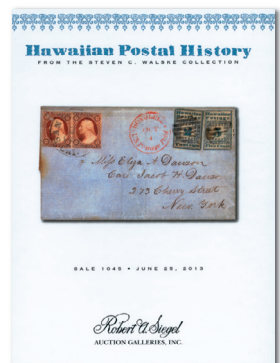
Twigg-Smith 2009



Frelinghuysen 2012



Gross 2013



Walske 2013

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