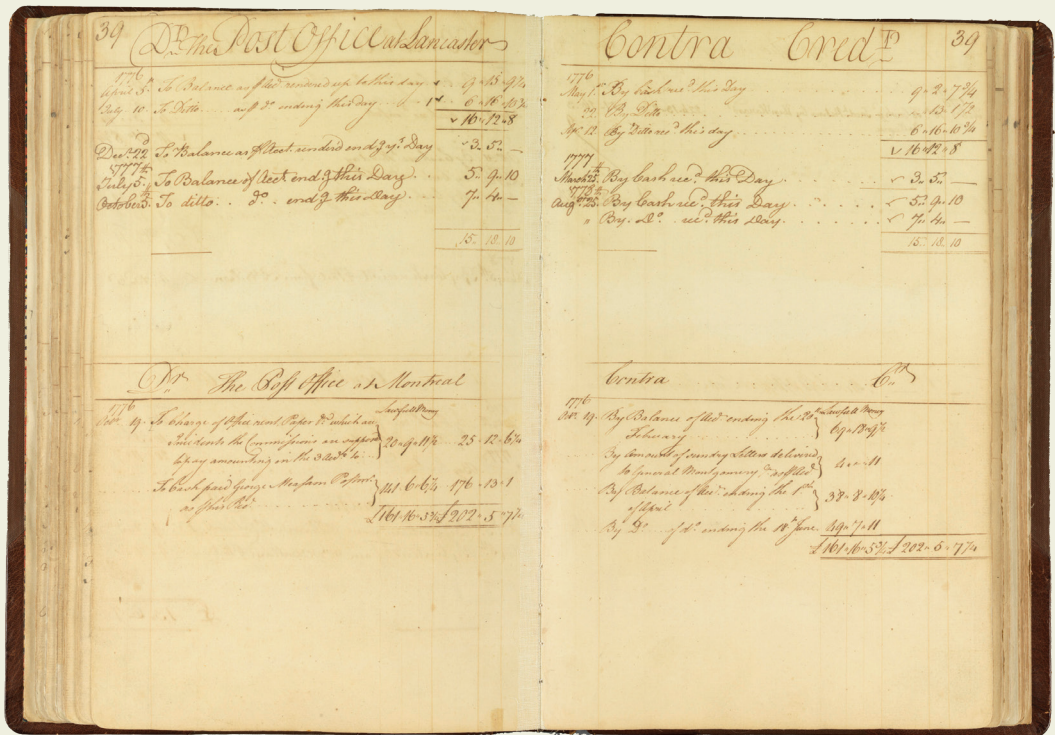


The

# Chronicle

of the U.S. Classic Postal Issues



A ledger book created by Postmaster General Benjamin Franklin, now in the National Archives. The entries across the bottom summarize the finances of the short-lived Congressional post office at Montreal, established by the Continental Congress after Montreal was captured by American revolutionaries in 1775. Timothy P. O'Connor tells this story in a special feature in this issue, supported by some fascinating archival discoveries, including a rate chart and three new covers.

# H.R. HARMER

EST · 1940

FINE STAMP AUCTIONS



Alfred H. Caspary



Franklin D. Roosevelt



Alfred F. Lichtenstein

## Great collectors put their trust in H.R. Harmer...



A century ago, in 1918, Henry Revell Harmer held the first of his famed Bond Street auctions in London. Very quickly the Harmer name became synonymous with **high-quality philatelic sales**. After several decades atop the British market, H.R. Harmer began branching out around the globe: first to New York in 1940, then to Sydney in 1948.

The philatelic marketplace has changed immeasurably in the 100 years since Henry R. Harmer founded his company. **One fact has remained remarkably consistent, however: H.R. Harmer's reputation and reliability.**

Whether **buying or selling** with us, you can be assured that you will receive the same **customer service and philatelic expertise** that philatelists have associated with the Harmer name for a century. To learn more, **please contact a member of our team today.**

*Ex 'Erivan,' Lehman, Haas:  
"San Francisco News Letter"*

**Price realized: \$7,500**

*Lot 240, Auction 3016*



*Background image from H.R. Harmer's 1930-1931 Annual Resume*

**We are currently accepting consignments for our next auction,  
May 10-12, 2018.**

H.R. Harmer · Global Philatelic Network · USA  
2680 Walnut Ave, Suite AB · Tustin · CA 92780-7052  
[www.hrharmer.com](http://www.hrharmer.com) Phone 714.389.9178

**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 100 Match Factory Place, Bellefonte, PA 16823. Editorial office: Michael Laurence, 101 W. 90th St., Apt. 8-H, New York, NY 10024. Business and accounting offices: Michael Plett, 2855 Willowmere Woods Dr., Vienna, VA 22180. Circulation office: U.S. Philatelic Classics Society, 100 Match Factory Place, Bellefonte, PA 16823. Subscription price \$35 payable at our website at [www.uspcs.org](http://www.uspcs.org). Periodicals postage paid at Bellefonte, PA 16823 and additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Address changes to U.S. Philatelic Classics Society, P.O. Box 750368, New Orleans, LA 70175.



*We are Buying!*  
*Waterbury and Other High-Quality Fancy Cancel Covers*  
*What Do You Have?*



*The two covers above were recently purchased by us for one of our clients.  
We are looking to buy more, whether a single piece or an entire collection.  
Of course, immediate payment in full to any amount. Please call us to discuss a sale.*

C O L U M B I A N S T A M P C O M P A N Y

SCARSDALE, NEW YORK      PHONE 914-649-8919      WWW.COLUMBIANSTAMP.COM

EMAIL: [sonnyhagendorf@gmail.com](mailto:sonnyhagendorf@gmail.com)

# The DAVID WINGATE Collection of United States Stamps

*A magnificent collection of singles and multiples,  
to be offered by the Siegel firm in April 2018.*



Scott 7X1



Scott 11X6



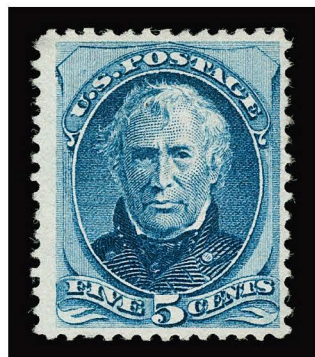
Scott 59



Scott 5



Scott 120b  
One of 3 unused examples  
in private hands



Scott 181



Scott 81



Scott 122a





Scott 119 block of 20



Scott 296a block of 4



Scott PR54

The only recorded example

For buyers or sellers, Siegel Auction Galleries offers unparalleled expertise, a worldwide client base, financial reliability, intelligent marketing, and the best internet resources and search tools.

6 WEST 48TH STREET, 9TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10036  
 Phone (212) 753-6421 • E-mail: stamps@siegelauctions.com

*Robert A. Siegel*  
 AUCTION GALLERIES, INC.  
**siegelauctions.com**



# C.G.

COLLECTORS WORLD

PHILATELY, STAMPS, COINS & BANKNOTES

## UPCOMING GÄRTNER AUCTION

ALL CATALOGS ONLINE!  
[www.auctions-gaertner.de](http://www.auctions-gaertner.de)

February 8 - 9, 2018 / banknotes & coins

February 20 - 23, 2018 / philately & picture postcards

We are pleased to give you a preview of our upcoming Auction in February.

- **BANKNOTES** – scarce banknotes of nearly all countries, especially an outstanding offer of Poland
- **COINS** – many gold coins, valuable offer German Empire and high quality collections
- **MALAYAN STATES** – huge offer stamps & covers
- **INDIA & CHINA** – notable offer postal history
- **ARABIAN STATES** – special offer stamps, proofs & covers
- **TOPICALS** – many varieties and proofs
- **POSTAL STATIONARIES** – specialties & varieties of all areas
- **FRENCH COLONIES** – including unknown essays & proofs
- **GERMAN STATES** – very attractive offer stamps & covers
- **SAAR** – interesting stamps & covers
- **GERMANY 1900-2000** – covers single & multiple frankings
- **PICTURE POSTCARDS** – special offer Judaica
- **GERMANY COLLECTIONS** – German States & German Empire
- **COLLECTIONS & ESTATES** – all countries & topicals



**C.G. COLLECTORS WORLD –**  
*A global brand for collectors*



BOTH UNISSUED



## MORE AUCTIONS IN SPRING

Closing date for consignments 2 months before each auction

**AUCTION GALLERIES Hamburg**  
7<sup>th</sup> Auction | March 2 - 3, 2018

**AUKTIONSHAUS EDGAR MOHRMANN & CO**  
210<sup>th</sup> Auction | May 8, 2018

**GÄRTNER AUCTIONS**  
June 5 - 6, 2018 | banknotes & coins  
June 12 - 15, 2018 | philately & picture postcards

Auktionshaus  
Christoph Gärtner GmbH & Co. KG  
Steinbeisstr. 6+8 | 74321 Bietigheim-Bissingen  
Tel. +49-(0)7142-789400  
[www.auktionen-gaertner.de](http://www.auktionen-gaertner.de)

Auction Galleries Hamburg  
vormals SCHWANKE GmbH  
Kleine Reichenstr. 1 | 20457 Hamburg  
Tel. +49-(0)40-337157  
[www.auction-galleries.de](http://www.auction-galleries.de)

Auktionshaus  
Edgar Mohrmann & Co  
Kleine Reichenstr. 1 | 20457 Hamburg  
Tel. +49-(0)40-6894700  
[www.edgar-mohrmann.de](http://www.edgar-mohrmann.de)

# The Chronicle

## of the U.S. Classic Postal Issues

February 2018  
Whole No. 257

Published quarterly in  
February, May, August and November

Volume 70  
Number 1

*\$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*

### EDITORIAL BOARD

MICHAEL LAURENCE ( <a href="mailto:mmlaurence@icloud.com">mmlaurence@icloud.com</a> ).....	<i>Editor-in-Chief</i>
101 West 90th Street, Apt. 8-H, New York, NY 10024	
JAMES W. MILGRAM, M.D. ( <a href="mailto:j-milgram@northwestern.edu">j-milgram@northwestern.edu</a> ).....	<i>Prestamp &amp; Stampless Period</i>
1352 Estate Lane, Lake Forest, IL 60045	
JOHN D. BOWMAN ( <a href="mailto:jbowman@stx.ir.com">jbowman@stx.ir.com</a> ).....	<i>Carriers &amp; Locals</i>
14409 Pentridge Drive, Corpus Christi, TX 78410	
GORDON EUBANKS ( <a href="mailto:gordoneubanks@gmail.com">gordoneubanks@gmail.com</a> ).....	<i>1847 Period</i>
P.O. Box 278, Pebble Beach, CA 93953	
WADE E. SAADI ( <a href="mailto:wade@pencom.com">wade@pencom.com</a> ).....	<i>1851 Period</i>
93 80th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11209	
DAVID ZLOWE, <i>Assistant</i> ( <a href="mailto:davidzlowe@hotmail.com">davidzlowe@hotmail.com</a> )	
CHIP GLIEDMAN ( <a href="mailto:cgliedman@gmail.com">cgliedman@gmail.com</a> ).....	<i>1861 Period</i>
9 Hermit Lane, Ridgefield, CT 06877	
SCOTT R. TREPPEL ( <a href="mailto:strepel@siegelauctions.com">strepel@siegelauctions.com</a> ).....	<i>1869 Period</i>
Robert A. Siegel Auctions, 6 West 48th Street, New York, NY 10036	
JEFFREY FORSTER, <i>Assistant</i> ( <a href="mailto:jforstr@pacbell.net">jforstr@pacbell.net</a> )	
H. JEFFREY BRAHIN ( <a href="mailto:hjb@brahinlaw.com">hjb@brahinlaw.com</a> ).....	<i>Bank Note Period</i>
37 N. Hamilton Street, Doylestown, PA 18901	
MATTHEW KEWRIGA, <i>Assistant</i> ( <a href="mailto:matt@kewriga.com">matt@kewriga.com</a> )	
ALAN C. CAMPBELL ( <a href="mailto:alancamp@aol.com">alancamp@aol.com</a> ).....	<i>Officials</i>
2746 29th Street, San Diego, CA 92105	
LESTER C. LANPHEAR III, <i>Assistant</i> ( <a href="mailto:llanphear@earthlink.net">llanphear@earthlink.net</a> )	
JAMES E. LEE ( <a href="mailto:jim@jameslee.com">jim@jameslee.com</a> ).....	<i>Essays &amp; Proofs</i>
P.O. Box 3876, Oak Brook, IL 60522	
STEVEN WALSKÉ ( <a href="mailto:swalske@myriadllc.com">swalske@myriadllc.com</a> ).....	<i>The Western Mails</i>
223 Spruce Street, San Francisco, CA 94118	
DWAYNE LITTAUER ( <a href="mailto:dl@kullmanlaw.com">dl@kullmanlaw.com</a> ).....	<i>The Foreign Mails</i>
P.O. Box 750368, New Orleans, LA 70175	
JERRY PALAZOLO ( <a href="mailto:palazolo@bellsouth.net">palazolo@bellsouth.net</a> ).....	<i>The Cover Corner</i>
5010 Raleigh-LaGrange Road, Memphis, TN 38128	
CHARLES J. DICOMO ( <a href="mailto:charlesdicomo@gmail.com">charlesdicomo@gmail.com</a> ).....	<i>Editorial Proofreader</i>
1298 Hammock Way, Lancaster, PA 17601	

### SOCIETY OFFICERS

FRED GREGORY ( <a href="mailto:ffgregory@earthlink.net">ffgregory@earthlink.net</a> ).....	<i>President</i>
P.O. Box 1175, Palos Verdes Estates, CA 90274	
DAVID D'ALESSANDRIS ( <a href="mailto:dalessandris@comcast.net">dalessandris@comcast.net</a> ).....	<i>Vice President</i>
2900 N. Rochester Street, Arlington, VA 22213	
DWAYNE LITTAUER ( <a href="mailto:dl@kullmanlaw.com">dl@kullmanlaw.com</a> ).....	<i>Secretary</i>
P.O. Box 750368, New Orleans, LA 70175	
MICHAEL PLETT ( <a href="mailto:mike.plett1@gmail.com">mike.plett1@gmail.com</a> ).....	<i>Treasurer</i>
2855 Willowmere Woods Drive, Vienna, VA 22180	

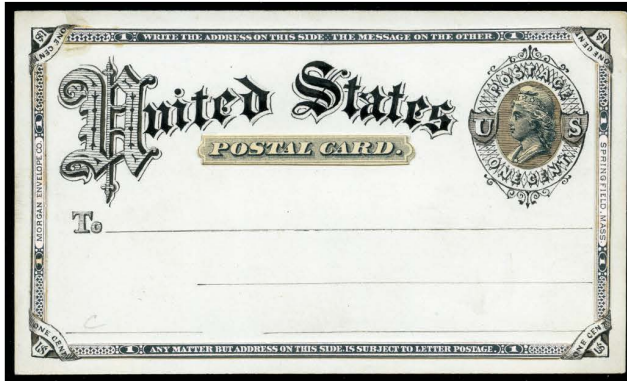
**DIRECTORS:** CLIFFORD ALEXANDER, JAMES ALLEN, DAVID D'ALESSANDRIS, CHARLES EPTING, GORDON EUBANKS, FRED GREGORY, VINCE KING, DWAYNE LITTAUER, ROB LUND, MICHAEL PLETT, SCHUYLER RUMSEY, MARK SCHWARTZ, *EX OFFICIO*: THOMAS J. ALEXANDER, JOHN BARWIS, VAN KOPPERSMITH, WADE E. SAADI, PATRICIA STILWELL WALKER, RICHARD F. WINTER

ROB LUND ( <a href="mailto:robinlund@comcast.net">robinlund@comcast.net</a> ).....	<i>Membership Chairman</i>
2913 Fulton, Everett, WA 98201	
WALTER DEMMERLE ( <a href="mailto:wdemmerle@verizon.net">wdemmerle@verizon.net</a> ).....	<i>Publication Sales Chairman</i>
821 Winthorpe Drive, Virginia Beach, VA 23452	
CAROL A. BOMMARITO ( <a href="mailto:carolab212@aol.com">carolab212@aol.com</a> ).....	<i>Advertising Manager</i>
251 West 102nd Street, New York, NY 10025	

Members may make address changes using "Your Profile" at [www.uspcs.org](http://www.uspcs.org); by using the "Contact Us" page at [www.uspcs.org](http://www.uspcs.org); or by contacting the Secretary. Back-issue requests should be sent to the Publication Sales Chairman, other correspondence to the Editor-in-Chief. Reports of new items or articles should be submitted to the appropriate Section Editor or to the Editor-in-Chief. Do not send stamps or covers unless requested. Items sent will be carefully guarded but no liability attaches to the Society or to any editor. ISSN 0009-6008.

SCHUYLER J. RUMSEY AUCTIONS IN ASSOCIATION WITH  
CHRISTOPH GÄRTNER AUKTIONSHAUS IS PROUD TO OFFER  
THE BRADLEY HORTON COLLECTION OF  
UNITED STATES POSTAL CARDS

To be sold at public auction at the Westpex Exhibition, April 26-29, 2018



Please send \$20 to receive a copy of this important sale by priority mail.

[www.rumseyauctions.com](http://www.rumseyauctions.com)

[srumsey@rumseyauctions.com](mailto:srumsey@rumseyauctions.com)

**C.G.**  
Auctions

*AUKTIONSHAUS Christoph Gärtner  
GmbH & Co. KG*

Steinbeisstraße 6 + 8 | 74321  
Bietigheim-Bissingen | Germany

Schuyler  
Rumsey  
Philatelic  
Auctions

47 Kearny Street  
Suite 500  
San Francisco  
California 94108  
t: 415 781 5127  
f: 415 781 5128



## CONTENTS

THE EDITOR'S PAGE	
In This Issue	
<i>by Michael Laurence</i> .....	7
SPECIAL FEATURE	
The Congressional Post Office at Montreal, 1775-1776	
<i>by Timothy P. O'Connor, M.D.</i> .....	11
THE PRE-STAMP AND STAMPLESS PERIOD	
Drop Letters from 1794 to 1875: Part 1	
<i>by James W. Milgram, M.D.</i> .....	25
THE 1847 PERIOD	
Underpaid?	
<i>by Gordon Eubanks</i> .....	37
THE 1851 PERIOD	
Stencil Postmarks on Stamp-Bearing Covers	
<i>by James W. Milgram, M.D.</i> .....	40
THE 1861 PERIOD	
Not as Easy as 1-2-3	
<i>by Wade E. Saadi</i> .....	54
THE BANK NOTE PERIOD	
United States Transpacific Mail via British Columbia	
<i>by Gray Scrimgeour</i> .....	57
OFFICIALS	
Illustrated Official Corner Cards, 1873-1884	
<i>by Alan C. Campbell</i> .....	67
THE FOREIGN MAILS	
U.S.-Bremen Convention: Markings from the One-Month Period	
<i>by Dwayne O. Littauer</i> .....	78
THE COVER CORNER .....	102
ADVERTISER INDEX .....	104

## IN THIS ISSUE

The cover of this issue presents a ledger book of Postmaster General Benjamin Franklin, opened to show two pages summarizing the finances of the short-lived Congressional post office at Montreal. Early in the Revolution, Americans captured and briefly occupied Montreal. Soon after, the Continental Congress established a post office there. Very few covers are known, most of them in archives. Digitization at the New York Public Library recently helped bring three more covers to light.

No philatelist now alive has explored colonial archives more thoroughly than Timothy P. O'Connor, and his Special Feature this issue (page 11) uses the new covers and other recent discoveries (including a 1765 Colonial rate chart) to flesh out the failed American attempt to induce Canadians to embrace the revolutionary cause. As O'Connor says in his conclusion, postal history is history. This well-told tale is a must read.

This *Chronicle* also features two important articles on the subject of foreign mails. In our Bank Note section, Canadian postal historian Gray Scrimgeour provides details of the transpacific mail service established in the last decade of the 19th century by the Canadian Pacific Railroad. With faster steamers and more favorable geography, this new service provided highly competitive mail carriage across the Pacific. The U.S. post office used it selectively, routing U.S. letters via Vancouver when that was deemed expeditious. Cover examples, which are scarce, are recognizable by backstamp evidence. Scrimgeour, a welcome newcomer to these pages, shows collectors what to look for and cites some fresh references, including an online database of sailing dates.

In our Foreign Mails section, Dwayne O. Littauer takes advantage of the appearance of two new markings to explain the highly complex U.S.-Bremen mail rates and markings that were in effect during June of 1851. Littauer's article includes two plates of markings and a tabular listing of the 22 known eastbound covers.

In our Stampless section, James W. Milgram begins a broad survey article on drop mail. This initial installment, detailing rates and practices up to the mid-1850s, focuses on stampless covers. The concluding installment, planned for our May issue, will feature stamped covers. Additionally, Milgram makes a guest appearance in our 1851 section this issue. His "Stencil Markings on Stamp-Bearing Covers" follows his earlier article (*Chronicle* 255) discussing "Stencil Markings on Stampless Covers." The current article includes a tabular listing of all towns known to have used these very distinctive postmarks, along with three plates of marking illustrations. This is the first comprehensive listing of stencil markings since the revised version of the Simpson book, which appeared almost 40 years ago.

In our 1847 section, Gordon Eubanks discusses an unusual 5¢ 1847 cover on which postmasters disagreed over the proper rate. Not surprisingly, the receiving office had the last word. And in our 1861 section, Wade Saadi tells of some interesting things he learned in his quest to find a cover franked with one each of the 1¢, 2¢ and 3¢ stamps of the 1861 series. The challenge here is neatly summed up on his title, "Not as Easy as 1-2-3."

Officials editor Alan Campbell always writes an entertaining story. This time he introduces us to the illustrated corner-card envelopes that were created by various government offices to accompany the introduction of Official stamps. All the covers are interesting; some are very striking. Enjoy! ■

SCHUYLER J. RUMSEY AUCTIONS IS PROUD TO OFFER:

## The Paul Kruger Collection of Classic New Zealand

To be offered during the Westpex Exhibition in San Francisco at the  
Marriott Hotel (April 26-29, 2018)



S.G. 1



S.G. 3



S.G. 4



S.G. 10



1863 Cover to the United States franked with 2d and 1s Chalons Heads

We are pleased to offer one of the finest collections of New Zealand Chalons Heads ever formed, both in terms of quality and overall completeness. The collection has been built over many years by Mr. Paul Kruger, who has combed the market for many of the finest known examples, which includes a number of the rare and elusive shade and paper varieties. The collection will be offered during the Westpex Exhibition, the West Coast's premier philatelic exhibition. Please visit our website for more information and to view the sale in its entirety at [www.rumseyauctions.com](http://www.rumseyauctions.com).

Schuyler  
Rumsey  
Philatelic  
Auctions

415 781 5127 | [srumsey@rumseyauctions.com](mailto:srumsey@rumseyauctions.com) | visit us at [rumseyauctions.com](http://rumseyauctions.com)



# Canadian Philately at its Best!



Two Cent green on LAID PAPER, the finest of three known examples, Sold for \$247,250 (October 2014)



1851 12p black, a superlative example of this classic, widely regarded as the finest in existence. ex. Duveen, Dale-Lichtenstein Sold for \$224,250 (February 2013)



1869 5c black Harp Seal, rarely seen mint NH example. Sold for \$7,185 (October 2016)



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)

## Canada's Most Trusted Auction House

Always seeking specialized exhibit collections as well as individual high quality stamps & covers for forthcoming auctions. Expertly described, meticulously researched and lavishly illustrated in our award-winning catalogues. Single-owner catalogues are our specialty.

# Eastern Auctions Ltd.

P.O. Box 250 - Bathurst - New Brunswick - E2A 3Z2 - Canada  
 Telephone 1(800) 667-8267 - Fax 1(888) 867-8267  
 email [easternauctions@nb.aibn.com](mailto:easternauctions@nb.aibn.com) - website [www.easternauctions.com](http://www.easternauctions.com)

## THE CONGRESSIONAL POST OFFICE AT MONTREAL, 1775-76

TIMOTHY P. O'CONNOR, M.D.

### Introduction

During the early stages of the American War for Independence, the Continental Congress supported an invasion of Canada, hoping to recruit Canadian citizens to the American cause. As part of the occupation of Montreal, a Congressional post office was created there. Recent archival discoveries have added to the very small number of surviving covers and yielded other items of postal historical interest. This article tells their story.

A long and durable relationship existed between Canadian lands south of the St. Lawrence River and the colonies of New York, New Hampshire and Massachusetts. Both by land and by sea, communications and trade were frequent. Documentation from as early as 1658 records inland letters being transmitted by “Maquas” (Mohawks), employed by the Dutch to go along the natural highway between Fort Orange (Albany) and the French Governor at Trois Rivieres, on the St. Lawrence midway between Montreal and Quebec City.<sup>1</sup> New York Governor Francis Lovelace, in a 1673 letter to “Governor Winthrop of Connecticutt,” mentions “our Albany Post.”<sup>2</sup>

The fur trade was a staple of commerce in this area early on and it expanded as territories west of the Great Lakes were explored. The end of the French and Indian wars stimulated an influx of English-speaking colonists seeking opportunity and wealth. In 1762, Benjamin Franklin, Deputy Postmaster General for North America, devised a plan to facilitate the speedy arrival of transatlantic packet letters at Montreal and Quebec.

After the Treaty of Paris in 1763, the Crown formally requested that Franklin establish regular post from New York to Quebec. Hugh Finlay was to be Postmaster, headquartered in Quebec. Trois Rivieres, Montreal and Quebec are listed on the rate charts for the Northern District for 1763 and 1765 (discussed further below). The avenue connecting New York, Albany, Montreal and Quebec was well travelled.

The political situation in Canada in 1774 was complex. Outnumbered one hundred to one by the French-speaking population, the British party, comprised of wealthy merchants, many of whom came to Canada before the French and Indian wars, expressed alarm at the liberal terms of the Quebec Act, which guaranteed the French “*habitants*,” enemies just two decades earlier, rights to practice Catholicism, speak French and have their own legal system.

On September 6, 1774, Jonas Clarke Minot, a Quebec City merchant who was one of the British Party leaders, sent a donation of wheat to the “oppressed citizens of Boston.” An accompanying letter voiced his wish “that the wheat be distributed to the innocents of Boston” who were vexed by the closure of their port. A reply from the Massachusetts Committee of Correspondence expressed hope for more “brotherly” communication.<sup>3</sup>





**Figure 1. Dated 5 May 1775 and sent to Montreal from Schenectady, this letter was handstamped at Albany May 6 and rated for a collection of 10 pence sterling in Montreal. This must have been one of the last letters to travel this route in the Colonial mails before warfare erupted.**

The outbreak of warfare at Lexington and Concord on April 15, 1775 precipitated widespread alarm and action along the Albany-Montreal axis, as expressed in a newly discovered letter, the address panel of which is shown in Figure 1. Previously unknown to the philatelic community, this letter, sent to Isaac Todd, a Montreal merchant, from the firm of Phyn and Ellice in Schenectady, is clearly rated “10dStg,” indicating ten pence sterling, the currency of account in Canada. The “ALBANY” and “MAY:6” straightline handstamps are similar to many others supplied by the Crown to post offices late in November 1774. These are called “second style” to differentiate from earlier handstamps with larger type.

The letter within the Figure 1 cover reads as follows:

Schenectady 5th May 1775. Our last was the 20th April since which Mr. Phyn writes that he and Mr. Paterson have chartered the Brig *Generous Friends*, Capt. Nairn, to sail for Montreal. Therefore our goods will come in her, probably a larger quantity than we first expected. Skins and furs were exceedingly high at the public sales, some wolves sold as high as 45/6, others @ 22/6, & 17/-. In the present dreadful and disordered state of this part of the country, we may have occasion to send some part of our property down your way, in which case you'll have more trouble on our account. God only knows how the present troubles will be settled, in the meantime property is unsafe and precarious. Believe us ever, Yours Phyn and Ellice

Phyn and Ellice had been reprimanded earlier by the Schenectady Committee of Correspondence for shifting business to Montreal as opposed to New York. This letter alerts Todd, a major Loyalist merchant in Montreal, of Ellice's intention to focus their commer-



cial activities north of the rebellious American rabble. In fact, Ellice left for Ontario, under the guise of a business trip, in the summer of 1775, and then relocated permanently to London. Isaac Todd remained in Canada building a fur-trading empire.<sup>4</sup>

### Fort Ticonderoga

The Figure 1 letter was posted May 6, sent from Albany to Montreal via Skenesborough and Ticonderoga at a time when east-west travel was under interdiction. Using his astute military intuition, Ethan Allen and the Green Mountain Boys had set up pickets on the roads surrounding Fort Ticonderoga, to prevent news reaching the fort about the mid-April events in Massachusetts. It's possible this letter was passed by those pickets or that the post rider was known to have Patriot sympathies. In any event, this was probably one of the last letters to travel unimpeded to Canada over this route before overt warfare erupted in the region.<sup>5</sup> In fact, by sheer happenstance, Hugh Finlay, the Crown's successor to Benjamin Franklin as Deputy Postmaster General, had at this time been in New York to meet John Foxcroft, the other Deputy PMG. When Finlay learned of the battles at Lexington and Concord, he attempted to return to Canada, but was turned back before reaching Albany. The account book of the Postmaster of Montreal, Edward William Gray, notes the last entry for the Skenesborough post office as the first week in May, as the post riders between Montreal and there had been intercepted. Finlay would return to New York and take an armed vessel with the mail to Quebec.<sup>6</sup>

Joined by an enthusiastic Benedict Arnold, Fort Ticonderoga fell on May 10, 1775 with cannons and ammunition an important prize. In June Allen presented his thoughts about a more powerful thrust toward Montreal and Quebec to the New York and Massachusetts Provincial Congresses and the Second Continental Congress. Congress agreed, authorizing the invasion on July 27. General Philip Schuyler had been appointed as Commander of Forces in the Northern Division. He was to assess the practicability of an invasion "if it will not be disagreeable to the Canadians." The honest hope was that the Canadians would join the revolution once their tyrannical British oppressors were removed.

The centrality of this assumption was summed up in a letter dated August 10, 1775 from Samuel Chase of the Second Continental Congress to General Schuyler at Annapolis:<sup>7</sup>

**My Dear Sir, ...The expediency, the prudence of the expedition is trusted to your Judgement, a previous condition, a sine qua non, of marching into Quebec, is the friendship of the Canadians, without their consent and approbation, it is not to be undertaken, so I understand the resolution from Congress....**

In the event, General Schuyler, unhealthy but with overall command, remained at Albany or Ticonderoga and performed the function of overseeing supplies and staffing the mission. Field command was given to the brilliant Irishman, Brigadier General Richard Montgomery. Despite the loss of Ethan Allen in late September (on a "scouting/recruitment mission," he overzealously attempted to penetrate into Montreal and was captured), the Americans took control of the Forts at Chambly (October 17) and St. John (also called St. Jean) on November 3. Fort St. John was the main defensive point south of Montreal. The Americans reached the outskirts of Montreal on November 11 and entered the city unopposed on November 13. Governor Guy Carleton had earlier withdrawn upriver to Quebec, taking with him the few soldiers who had remained at Montreal. The Continental Congress, in letters to Montgomery, applauded the achievement and praised the bloodless manner in which it was accomplished. Here is President John Hancock writing to General Montgomery from Philadelphia on November 30, 1775:<sup>8</sup>

**...the reduction of St. John's and Montreal, they seem of inexpressible advantage to the United Colonies and the most mortifying contravention to the ministerial system of enslaving the extensive territory of Canada...nor are the humanity and politeness with which you have treated your power less illustrious... the Congress, utterly abhorrent from every species of**

**cruelty to prisoners and determined to adhere to this benevolent maxim...will ever applaud their Officers for beautifully blending the Christian with the Conqueror.**

In keeping with the desire to encourage commerce and entice the Canadians to the American cause, Congress felt that a postal service would facilitate trade as well as improve communications with the colonies. Accordingly, one of General Montgomery's first actions was to appoint an individual to organize and run a post office.

### **The Montreal post office**

George Measam was the first and only postmaster of the Congressional post office in Montreal. He was an influential Montreal merchant with a number of trading posts in native lands west of Montreal. He was also an early supporter of the American cause and had crossed British lines on November 10 to reveal the weakened status of the Crown's forces to Montgomery. For his loyalty he was rewarded with the post office position. Three letters from Measam survive in the Schuyler archives at the New York Public Library. Although heavily stained, they are readable with difficulty.

Figure 2 shows the first page of the earliest of these letters, written by Measam at Montreal on November 20, 1775, and sent to General Schuyler at Fort Ticonderoga. The projected post had not yet been established, and (among other things) Measam tells how he has engaged "the old French couriers" to carry this and other mails to Ticonderoga.

**Brigadier General Montgomery having done the honor to place that confidence in me as to appoint me to the care and management of the Post for this Province, and has ordered me to address this mail to your care, therefore you will no doubt hear from him on this subject by this post, he has further been pleased to place that confidence as to say he will recommend to Congress, perhaps through your channels, for an establishment of the same; should you think proper to place equal confidence in me, it remains with me to assure you that strict observance of the rules and measures of integrity shall always be pursued by me in the execution of this office while I have the honor to preside in this Department. Please to order proper instructions to be sent, the rates, forms and the salary for my attendance if any should be thought proper to stipulate. I have engaged the old French couriers by approbation of General Montgomery to go two at a time from this to Ticonderoga, for the first voyage they are to have fourteen dollars, to set off this day, and to continue every Monday during good behavior or until further regulation. The mail to be closed at 12 O'Clock.**

In this letter Measam appears to be affirming what he imagines is an oath for the office of Postmaster. He asks for proper rate tables, especially important as Congress was altering the rates of the Act of George III from 1765.<sup>9</sup> He will be reporting to Dr. Franklin, Postmaster General, and he asks for the proper accounting forms as well. We assume that the "the old French couriers" had ridden the post before and were viewed as potential recruits to the patriot cause. As we have seen, one of the pillars of Congressional thought was that the French *habitant* population might come over to the American cause.

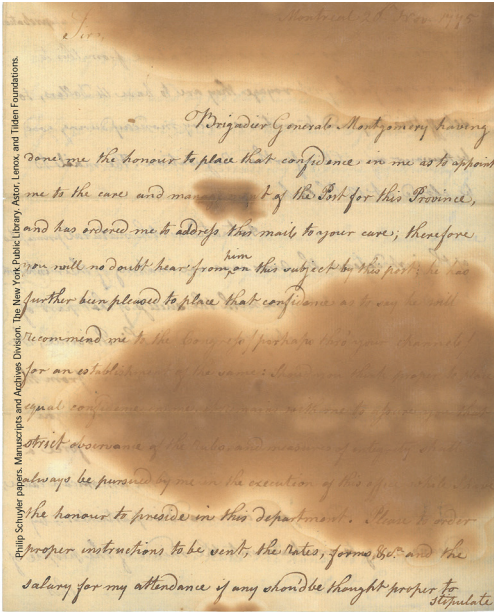
A second letter, sent from Measam to Schuyler a week later, is datelined "Montreal 27th November 1775" and reveals much about the day-to-day working of the Montreal congressional post office. Stains and all, this interesting document is shown as Figure 3.

**Sir, Inclosed I have the honor to send the Post Bill of this day. Some gentlemen have hinted their doubts of the European letters being regularly forwarded from [New] York to Europe. I think it my duty to acquaint you therewith that you may give such orders to the Postmaster at [New] York as you judge proper. At foot, you have an advertisement which I have stuck in my office by the order of General Montgomery. I have the honor to be with all respect...George Measam**

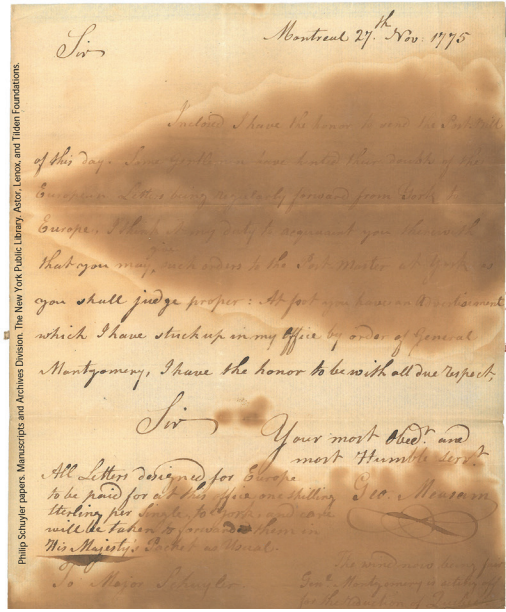
The "advertisement" respecting foreign mail reads as follows: "All letters designed for Europe to be paid for at this office, one shilling Sterling per single to [New] York, and care will be taken to forward them in His Majesty's Packet as usual."

Docketing at foot of the Figure 3 letter, in Measam's handwriting, of reads: "(PS) The wind now being good, Gen'l Montgomery is off for the reduction of Quebec."

This letter reveals useful details of the postal operation. Both incoming and outgo-



**Figure 2. Earliest Measam letter to Schuyler, 20 November 1775. From the Philip Schuyler Archives of the New York Public Library, shown here with their permission.**



**Figure 3. Measam's second letter, one week later, provides operational details of the Montreal post office, including the letter bill shown at right in Figure 4 (NYPL).**

ing letters are tracked according to monies received and owed. The “Post Bill” included (discussed further below) is shown in Figure 4. Measam and Montgomery are busy countering anti-American propaganda regarding the transatlantic mails. It’s clear that Measam, as Montreal postmaster, believes that the Congressional postal system is still linked with the Crown Post in New York, and the Falmouth Packet service delivering mail to and from England. Subversive citizens in Canada would certainly want to prevent mails going south through Albany to New York, spreading rumors of unreliability or worse, opening and reading the mails. When Measam mentions “the Postmaster at York,” this refers to Ebenezer Hazard, New York postmaster under the Continental Congress. Measam is hoping that Schuyler will compel Hazard to assure that the Canadian letters are well cared for.

20<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1775

Letter from the Post-office at Montreal.  
To the care of General Schuyler at Concord.

No.	Paid				Unpaid			
	S	D	T	P	S	D	T	P
1					6			
2					3			6
3								8
5								1
10								1
1								10
2								20
3								3
4								3
				Total				31

31 Shill. Ster.

PHILIP SCHUYLER ARCHIVES

27<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1775

From the Post Office at Montreal.  
To the Post Office at Concord.

No.	Paid				Unpaid			
	S	D	T	P	S	D	T	P
16					1	1	1	16
11					11			
14					14			
11					25			1
				Total				51

Letter Billings  
being Received

Geo. Measam

**Figure 4. Letter bills (called "post bills") that accompanied the covers shown in Figures 2 and 3. Letters are listed by weight (S=single, D=double, T=triple and P=Packet) and designated paid or unpaid. The November 20 bill is docketed “31 Shill. Ster.” (NYPL).**



A third letter to Schuyler from Measam, datelined “Montreal 11 December 1775” is so badly stained that it cannot be reproduced. The text reads:

Your favor of the 30th ult. I had the honor to receive on the 4th instant in the evening with the bag of letters. I now take the first opportunity to return to you grateful for your approbation of me as Postmaster for this Province and moreover for your recommendation of me to the Congress with a proper establishment for the same.

Enclosed you have the Post Bill with the male (sic) of this day, as usual I have the honor....

Clearly, Measam is thrilled to have formal recognition and a salary. There is no further discussion of the packet letter issue.

The three Measam letters show no postal markings on the address panels, but the letters of November 20 and 27 included handwritten “Post Bills,” accounting for the accompanying mail in a manner that closely copies the official postal form used by other Congressional post offices during this era. The two handwritten Montreal letter bills are shown in Figure 4. By way of comparison, Figure 5 shows a printed “postmaster’s bill” from 1773 that accompanied a mail from New York to Newport, Rhode Island. Inspection will reveal that Measam, apparently a seasoned bureaucrat, copied the printed form very carefully. He probably had an example in front of him.

The November 20 Post Bill, shown at left in Figure 4, is addressed “to the care of General Schuyler at Ticonderoga.” The November 27 Post Bill, at right in Figure 4, is addressed to “the Post Office at Ticonderoga.” Letters are listed by weight (S = single, D= double, T= triple and P = Packet) and designated whether paid or unpaid. The November 20 Post Bill is docketed “31 Shill. Ster.” A remittance in that amount probably accompanied the accounting form. The November 27 Post Bill is docketed “16 shillings.”

Detailed review of the Bills show that the Montreal post office took in a high percentage of prepaid letters, perhaps reflecting the unsettled times. Peacetime post offices usually settled accounts quarterly. Also interesting, but not too surprising, is that Measam is collecting shillings and pence in Sterling, reflecting the money circulating in Montreal at that time. The two weeks’ receipts of 47 shillings Sterling is significant money in 1775, indicating that the Congressional post office at Montreal was no small operation. It is to be noted that none of the receipts involved mail from the Army, which at that time was going free. In the papers of Benjamin Franklin, Ebenezer Hazard writes to Franklin: “New York May 3rd,

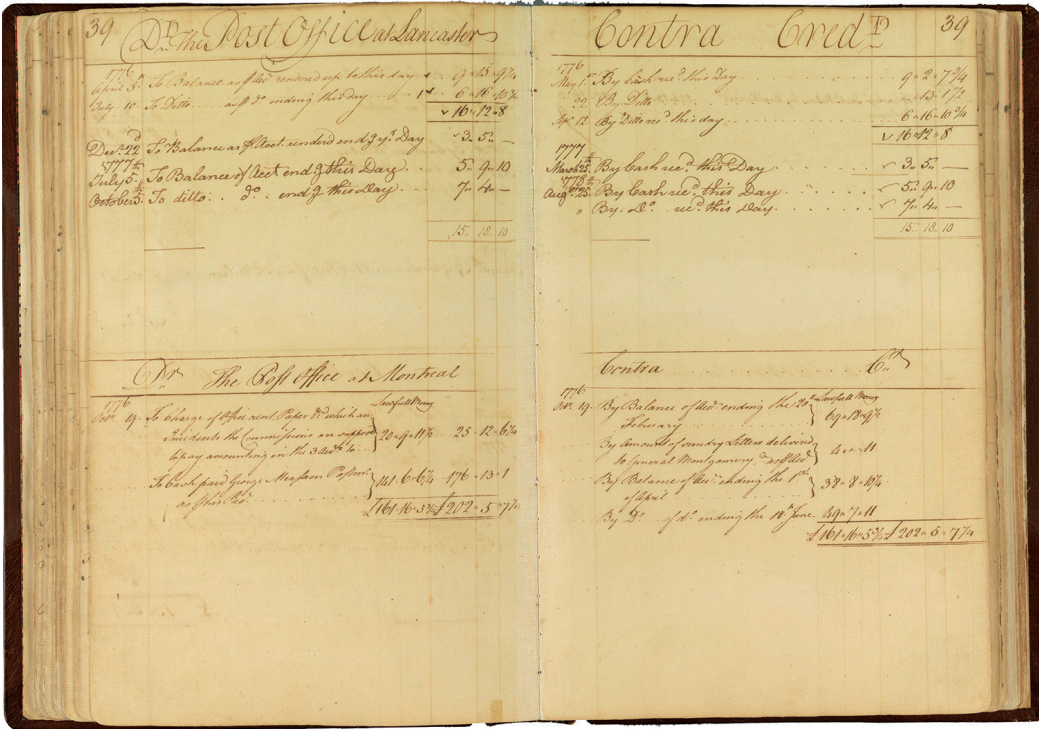
From the POST-OFFICE at NEW-YORK, to the POST-OFFICE at *Newport*

	Rates.		Unpaid Letters.				Sums due.		Paid Letters.				Sums paid.		Free Letters.				POST-MASTER'S BILL.	
	Dwt.	Gr.	S.	D.	T.	P.	Dwt.	Gr.	S.	D.	T.	P.	Dwt.	Gr.	S.	D.	T.	P.		
AT	30		5				16	16												
AT	4		2				8													
AT	16	16					6	16												
AT	7	8					7	8												
AT							30	16												
AT																				

*June 28 1773*  
*Arrales and the others*  
*Edm. Curran*

Figure 5. A printed “postmaster’s bill” from 1773 that accompanied a mail from New York to Newport, Rhode Island. Comparison with the documents in Figure 4 will reveal that Measam copied the elements of this printed form very carefully.





**Figure 6. The 1776 ledger book of Postmaster General Benjamin Franklin, showing account totals (more than 161 pounds sterling) for the Montreal Congressional post office. Scan from the Reference Research Section of the National Archives.**

1776....Mr. Measam writes me that the Genl. has ordered him to frank Soldiers Letters.”<sup>10</sup>

The 1776 ledger of Postmaster General Benjamin Franklin provides evidence that the Post Bills of the Congressional post office at Montreal reached headquarters in Philadelphia. Page 39, shown in Figure 6, includes one entry for debits and credits. It is dated October 19, 1776, and probably reflects the totality of business conducted by Measam during three quarters of accounting. In fact, the total of 161 pounds, 16 shillings 5 1/2 pence “Lawful Money” is the largest quantity in the entire ledger for a similar time frame, which includes returns from many larger post offices. It’s possible that the balance was skewed by an inordinate number of express missives sent out to General Montgomery from Congress.<sup>11</sup> As an aside, certainty with regard to payments in this period is difficult. The ledger specifically lists eight separate currencies as credits and expenditures through 1777.

The American Post Office in Montreal functioned for about seven months, from November 1775 until mid-June 1776, when the Army retreated to New York. Postal markings are rare, and prior to this report only one poor quality, black and white image was recorded. This is shown as illustration CA-6 in Part 2 of Alex L. ter Braake’s book, *The Posted Letter in Colonial and Revolutionary America, 1628-1790*. The great postal historian, Susan McDonald, recognized it as a marking of the Congressional post office in Montreal. It bears a “Montreal” in script and the rate “6 dwt 16” (6 pennyweight 16 grains). This is a double-weight letter sent to General Schuyler’s headquarters in Albany, and correctly rated as per Congress’s Resolution of September 30, 1775, which copied the Act of George III rates but expressed the rates in specie.

Exhaustive and unrevealing search of microfilm records was recently made easier by a digitization project at the New York Public Library. This has yielded three more letters

that bear manuscript markings of the Montreal Post Office. The address panel of one of these letters is shown as Figure 7. This is addressed to General Schuyler at Saratoga from Captain John Fischer. The dateline within indicates the letter was written on January 15, 1776. The clear and distinctive red manuscript postmark reads “Montreal 3 dwt 8 grs” indicating 3 pennyweights and 8 grains, the specie equivalent of 10 pence Sterling, which was the rate for the distance (approximately 222 miles) from Montreal to the Albany post office. Schuyler received a great deal of correspondence, from Congress in Philadelphia and many other locations. His mail was probably bagged up at Albany and sent via courier to wherever he happened to be—Saratoga in this instance.



**Figure 7. Letter from John Fischer at Montreal to Schuyler at Saratoga, datelined 15 January 1776. The red manuscript Montreal postmark at upper right reads “3 dwt 8 grs,” the specie equivalent of 10 pence sterling (NYPL).**

The full dateline of the letter within the Figure 7 cover reads “Camp near Queechback [Quebec rendered phonetically] January 15, 1776” and the letter was written by Captain John Fischer of the Tryon (New York) County Militia, who seeks a promotion from Schuyler.

Sir, Undoubtedly you have heard before this comes to your hand of the loss of our Most Noble General Montgomery, but spirits does not fail us yet, but must beg of the General to solicitate for a promotion for me as the Army is (convened) by none of our field officers ever being at the Head of our Regiment, and we have the slavery (sic) of Regiment all last summer and winter. I hope the General will recommend to have a Post as a Field Officer or better the Command of the Regiment, I am Sir, your most Obedient Humble Servant John Fischer

General Richard Montgomery and many officers were killed advancing on Quebec during a snowstorm on the night of December 30. The troops in the field were missing much of the command structure, so Fischer was not alone in seeking promotion.

### 1765 rate chart

The “3 dwt 8 grs” rate depicted on the Figure 7 cover was established by the Congressional Resolution of September 30, 1775, which enacted a scheme of rates identical to those established under the Act of George III, effective October 10, 1765. The 1765 rates are shown in the rate chart presented in Figure 8. Created by Franklin and Foxcroft, this document resides in the National Archives and was previously published almost illegibly in the ter Braake book (page D-50). Rates on the New York-Albany-Montreal-Three Rivers-Quebec route are detailed in the small triangle at top center, an enlargement of which is shown below the Figure 8 chart.<sup>12</sup> Measam probably didn’t have a copy of the new rates and was relying on the George III table from 1765.

Dating back to late 1753, all North American postal rates were expressed in specie, per the Instructions of the Co-Deputy Postmasters General, Benjamin Franklin and William



**T ABLES of the Port of all Single Letters carried by Post in the Northern District of North-America, as established by Act of Parliament, pass'd in the fifth Year of the Reign of his Majesty King GEORGE the Third, entitled, An Act to alter certain Rates of Postage, and to amend, explain, and enlarge several Provisions in an Act made in the Ninth Year of the Reign of Queen Anne, and in other Acts relating to the Revenue of the Post-Office.**

Rated in Penny-Weights and Grains of Silver, at Three Pence Sterling for each Penny-weight.

<p><i>Falouts, in Cash-By.</i></p> <p>2 <i>Parsons, in New-Hampshire.</i></p> <p>2 1:8 <i>Newbury.</i></p> <p>2 1:8 1:8 <i>Ipswich.</i></p> <p>2:16 1:8 1:8 1:8 <i>Salem.</i></p> <p>2:16 1:8 1:8 1:8 1:8 <i>Marblehead.</i></p> <p>2:16 2 1:8 1:8 1:8 1:8 <i>BOSTON.</i></p>										<p><i>New-York.</i></p> <p>2:16 <i>Albany.</i></p> <p>4 3:8 <i>Montreal.</i></p> <p>4:16 4 2 <i>Three Rivers.</i></p> <p>5:8 1:16 1:16 2 <i>Quebec.</i></p>										<p><i>New-York.</i></p> <p>2 <i>New-Haven.</i></p> <p>2:16 2:16 <i>Madison.</i></p> <p>2:16 1:16 1:8 <i>Hartford.</i></p> <p>2:16 2 1:8 2:8 <i>Springfield.</i></p> <p>2:8 2:16 2 2 1:8 <i>Yerbury.</i></p> <p>2:8 2:16 2:16 2 1:8 <i>BOSTON.</i></p>										<p><i>PHILADELPHIA.</i></p> <p>1:8 <i>Chester.</i></p> <p>1:8 3:8 <i>Philadelphia.</i></p> <p>1:8 1:8 1:8 <i>Wilmington.</i></p> <p>2 2:8 2:8 1:8 <i>York.</i></p> <p>2 2:8 2:8 1:8 <i>Georgetown.</i></p> <p>2:16 2 2 2 1:8 1:8 <i>New-Castle.</i></p> <p>2:16 2:16 2 2 2 1:8 1:8 <i>Queen-Town.</i></p>									
<p><i>Providence.</i></p> <p>2:16 2:16 1:8 1:8 1:8 1:8 1:8 1:8 1:8 1:8</p> <p>2:16 2:16 1:8 1:8 1:8 1:8 1:8 1:8 1:8 1:8</p> <p>2:16 2:16 1:8 1:8 1:8 1:8 1:8 1:8 1:8 1:8</p> <p>2:16 2:16 1:8 1:8 1:8 1:8 1:8 1:8 1:8 1:8</p> <p>2:16 2:16 1:8 1:8 1:8 1:8 1:8 1:8 1:8 1:8</p>										<p><i>New-LONDON.</i></p> <p>2 2 1:8 2:8 1:8 1:8</p> <p>1:8 <i>Guilford.</i></p> <p>1:8 1:8 <i>New-Haven.</i></p> <p>2 1:8 1:8 <i>Stratford.</i></p> <p>2 1:8 1:8 1:8 <i>New-Castle.</i></p> <p>2:16 2:16 1:8 1:8 1:8 1:8 <i>Stamford.</i></p>										<p><i>PHILADELPHIA.</i></p> <p>1 <i>Lancaster.</i></p> <p>1 1:8 <i>York.</i></p> <p>1:16 4 2 <i>Fredrick-Town.</i></p> <p>1:8 2:16 2 1:8 <i>Windsor.</i></p>										<p><i>WILLIAMSBURG.</i></p> <p>1:8 <i>York.</i></p> <p>1:8 1:8 <i>Hampton.</i></p> <p>1:8 1:8 1:8 <i>Norfolk.</i></p>									
<p><i>NEW-YORK.</i></p> <p>1:8 <i>Albany-Town.</i></p> <p>1:8 1:8 <i>Windsor &amp; Paris-Analy.</i></p> <p>1:8 1:8 1:8 <i>New-Brunswick.</i></p> <p>1:8 1:8 1:8 <i>Princeton.</i></p> <p>1:8 1:8 1:8 <i>Trenton.</i></p> <p>1:8 1:8 1:8 <i>Bridge &amp; Burlington.</i></p>										<p><i>PHILADELPHIA.</i></p> <p>2 2 2 1:8 1:8 1:8 1:8 1:8</p> <p>1:8 <i>Chester.</i></p> <p>1:8 1:8 1:8 <i>Philadelphia.</i></p> <p>1:8 1:8 1:8 <i>Wilmington.</i></p> <p>1:8 1:8 1:8 <i>York.</i></p> <p>1:8 1:8 1:8 <i>Georgetown.</i></p> <p>1:8 1:8 1:8 <i>New-Castle.</i></p> <p>1:8 1:8 1:8 <i>Queen-Town.</i></p>										<p><i>ANNAPOLIS.</i></p> <p>2 1:8 1:8 <i>Marysburg.</i></p> <p>2 1:8 1:8 <i>Baltimore.</i></p> <p>2 1:8 1:8 <i>Alexandria.</i></p> <p>2 1:8 1:8 <i>Dumfries.</i></p> <p>2 1:8 1:8 <i>Port-Royal.</i></p> <p>2 1:8 1:8 <i>Hals's-Hole.</i></p> <p>2 1:8 <i>Orkanna.</i></p> <p>2 1:8 <i>WILLIAMSBURG.</i></p> <p>2 1:8 <i>Smithfield.</i></p> <p>2 1:8 <i>Suffield.</i></p>																			

**EXPLANATION**

These Tables show the Rate of a Single Letter, from any one Post-Office to another, viz. by the Figure, or Figures, set down at the Angle of Meeting, or in the Square which points to both Places.

**EXAMPLE**

To know the Postage of a Letter from New-York, to Williamsburg. Look in the Table for New-York, and thence carry your Eye frait down till it comes opposite to Williamsburg, and in that Point of Meeting you'll find [4:16] which is Four Penny-weight Sixteen Grains of Silver, for the Post of a Single Letter between those two Places.

- I. The Rates set down in these Tables must be doubled for all Double Letters, and trebled for all Treble Letters, and for every Ounce Weight Four times as much must be charged, as is here set down.
- II. All Ship-Letters and Packets must be charged, over and above the Rates set down in these Tables, with sixteen Grains Weight of Silver, for such as are received from on Board; and with eight Grains Weight, for such as are directed on Board any Ship or Vessel; And the whole Postage of these last Sort, must be paid at the Post-Office where such Letters and Packets are delivered in.
- III. For all extraordinary Posts and Expresses sent along the Post Road, and for all Expresses sent from any Stage to any Place out of the Post Road, there must be charged and paid One Penny-weight of Silver for every Mile such Express shall be sent.

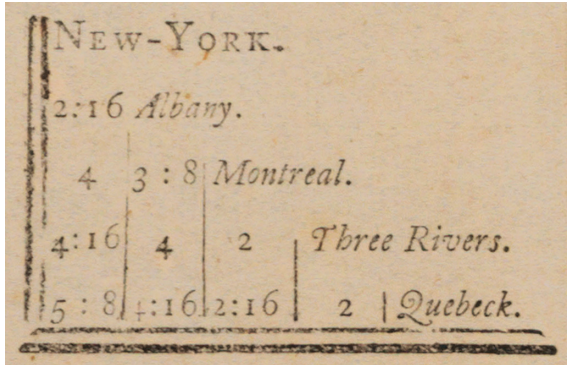
**B. FRANKLIN.  
J. FOXCROFT.**

Note, In the above Tables, the several Places are ranged as they lie in the Course or present Route of the Post.

Williamsburg Printed by James Talbot, 5, O. of the D. Post Office Ground.

Note, 2:16 Shallos are to be printed on a Board, and hung up in two Places, in the most convenient Place in each respective Post-Office.

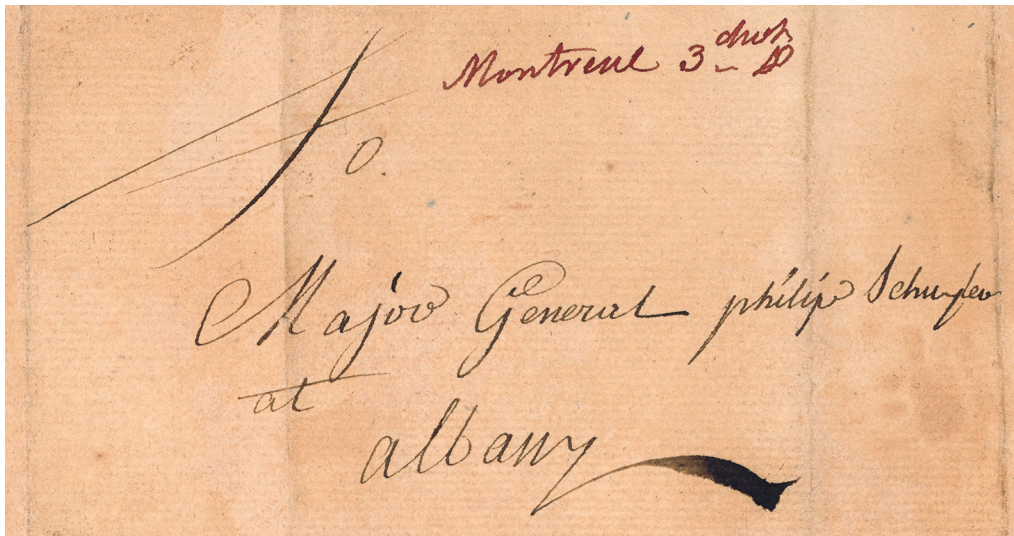
Figure 8. Recently rediscovered in the National Archives, the 1765 rate chart above, created by Franklin, displays the rates that were used by the Montreal post office during 1775-76, the era discussed here. Rates for the New York to Quebec route (including Montreal), appear in the triangle at upper center and are shown enlarged at right. Rate chart shown here through the courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution's National Postal Museum.





Hunter. These instructions were meant to improve and standardize accounting procedures in the American post offices. They ended the very confusing practice of rating letters in the money of the individual local colonies, which had made bookkeeping virtually impossible. Sterling and specie were stable currencies, suitable for accounting and for rate-setting. One shilling sterling was 12 pence. One pennyweight of silver (abbreviated dwt) contained 24 grains (grs), and one pence sterling equaled 8 grains. Thus, 1 dwt = 3 pence and 1 shilling = 4 dwt.

The second newly surfaced Montreal cover is from a woman, LaCorne Campbell, wife of Major John Campbell, a prisoner of war. The address panel of this letter is shown as Figure 9. It bears the same rating—"Montreal 3 dwt 8 grs"—as on the cover in Figure 7, because it travelled the same route (and in the same mail), from Montreal to Albany. It was also sent to Schuyler.



**Figure 9.** Letter to Schuyler from the wife of a British prisoner, who pleads on behalf of her husband. The letter is datelined Montreal, 15 January 1776. The cover bears the same manuscript rating ("Montreal 3dwt8g") as seen on the cover in Figure 7 (NYPL).

In her letter, written in French and datelined "Montreal, 15 Janvier 1776," LaCorne Campbell pleads for better treatment for her husband, who was imprisoned at Fort Chambly, on the Richelieu River in Quebec. The fort had been captured by the Americans in October:<sup>13</sup>

Dear Sir, As it is quite natural for a woman to be quite concerned about the unfortunate fate of her husband and knowing your good heart and kindness toward your prisoners, I am moved to take the liberty of turning to you, Sir, to inform you of the bad treatment that is being given Major Campbell, who is in Fort Chambly; the commander there using very harsh measures, being so cruel as to prohibit him from seeing any other person, which is very sad and disturbing for me and for an honorable man like the Major. Knowing he is so badly treated, I am appealing to your goodness and allowing myself to believe that you will hear the prayers of the most unhappy woman in the world by allowing him to return home, as General Montgomery had promised him on his word of honor.

I am obliged to you as one who has the honor of being your very humble and obedient servant, LaCorne Campbell.

Although touching, this wife's lament did not stir General Schuyler. Congress, as well as the Army, knew that Ethan Allen and 40 American "rebels" had been transported to England in chains, kept in the hold during the entire voyage. As reported in the *Kentish Gazette* for January 6, 1776, the intention was that they were to be tried and hanged. But it

didn't take long before the Crown realized that British prisoners could be similarly treated. From the *Kentish Gazette* again: "There is not a doubt that Congress will return the compliment on Noblemen's nephews, Colonels, Captains and other subaltern officers, taken at St. John's, as soon as they learn of the treatment of their countrymen."

Additionally, the name LaCorne roused primal memories in any American soldier who had fought in the French and Indian wars. St. Luc De LaCorne, father of the letter writer, was the military liaison to the Indian combatants who aided the French at the Battle of Fort William Henry. After the Fort negotiated a surrender, the British forces with their Colonial militias and families were massacred on their march back towards Albany. Contemporary accounts listed 1,500 dead, scalped or otherwise abused. French intervention was minimal. Thereafter anything associated with the name LaCorne was incendiary. An additional irritant was that the imprisoned Major Campbell held the same position as his father-in-law, that of military liaison to the local Indian tribes.

Unusually for this era, the third new letter was also written by a woman, Lorimer Gamelin, to her husband, Pierre Gamelin, at Bristol, Pennsylvania. The address panel of this letter is shown as Figure 10. The red manuscript postmark reads "Montreal 6 Dwt," the correct rate of 6 pennyweight, derived from the rate of 4 dwt Montreal to New York and 2 dwt from New York to Bristol. The 1765 rate chart in Figure 8 and the well-known 1775 chart seen in ter Braake, both list "Bristol and Burlington" in the 2 dwt zone from New York. The address ("Monsieur Pierre Gamelin a Bristol") is difficult to read, as is the letter enclosed, but as we will see momentarily, it is definitely Bristol, Pennsylvania.

Even in translation from phonetic vernacular French, the content, datelined May 12, 1776, is somewhat obscure, but this is probably a realistic 1776 letter from a French-Canadian housewife:<sup>14</sup>

**My Dear Gamelin, I am in Montreal since almost 3 hours, upon Mademoiselle's prayers, that sent for me regarding your pesculation for the papers. Your Monsieur Guides, they are charged not to arrive and no one wants them on the road. He agrees with Mademoiselle Manon**



**Figure 10. From Montreal, same mail as Figure 9, sent by Lorimer Gamelin to her husband, Pierre, at Bristol, Pennsylvania. The Montreal rating is six pennyweight ("6 Dwt")—4 Dwt Montreal-New York and 2 Dwt New York-Bristol (NYPL).**

not to have them reach you too late and not to know whom to confide them to. Everything is in such a confusion, that you will know upon Monsieur Bastonet's return. It is assured that packages will be made for your departure. You will see Madame Presley, Madame Vauker and many others. I am starting to breathe. I feel better, I shouted for the required remedy but he does not serve it to the cured. Your voice does not have your reasoning. You must think of my joy, but it is for sure. I got your letter from Mr. D'Auby and all the previous ones. I am quite sad that mine did not reach you. I have written you many times, but always to Philadelphia and one at Mr. Tivson's address. The prisoners of Chambly are back in their homes. They tried to have them give their word, apparently, but they did not want to give it and were released. The Chevalier is still at La Galette, who will not stay there long without laziness. Your little girls are well and my dear Cati that I kiss for her dad. I hope to see you soon. I am getting ready to treat you like a Lord and to have you make a good meal. Like a good citizen I cannot cut the cockade. Come however you like. You will always be well received in my castle in Boucherville. Bring me some curiosity from your city. I believe the paper will be worth little things. Take them Farewell my dear and beloved. Love me always and write me. The happiest of women who kisses you a thousand times. Lorimer Gamelin

This letter touches on many issues from an interesting time, as the Canadian expedition was winding down. "Captured" *habitants* from Chambly and St. John's were housed at an "internment Camp" (my words) at Bristol, Pennsylvania. Congress had desperately wanted their assistance ("wanted them to give their word", i.e.: swear allegiance) but no such words were forthcoming. Satisfied that they appeared to be remaining neutral, they were being repatriated, and compensated, albeit in Congressional dollars. The archaic French word "pesculation" refers to this: *pecule* is a small remuneration paid to a prisoner at the time of his release, for work performed.

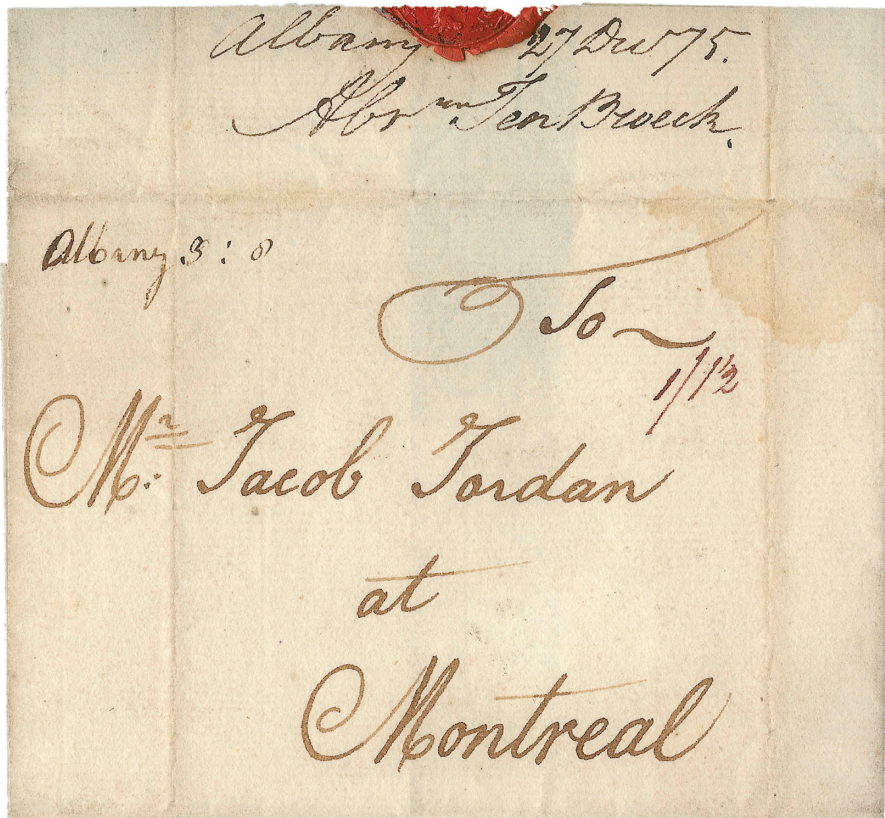
As Gamelin would be travelling across combatant lines, Lorimer is warning him that he must be careful with his release documents and with his money. The cockade is a badge of ribbons worn on the hat to signify party affiliation, in this case loyalty. In the French vernacular, the Americans were asking the *habitants* to "cut the cockade"—to switch allegiance or at least become neutral by removing the red Crown cockade. The Chevalier referred to might be the local French noble of Boucherville, sitting out the conflict at the old French Fort de La Presentation at La Gallette on the Oswegatchie River (present-day Ogdensburg, New York). Last, it's not surprising that prior letters failed to reach Pierre Gamelin. This letter resides in the Schuyler archive, and also probably never got to Bristol. Impounded letters would have been scoured for intelligence, and subsequent effort to deliver them may have been lacking.

One cover is known, with postal markings, that travelled inbound to the American post office at Montreal. Ex-Steinhart and Robertson, this is now in the collection of Vernon Morris, who has kindly allowed it to be shown here as Figure 11. Docketed December 27, 1775, it has no contents. The rate from Albany to Montreal is correctly marked ("3:8") at upper left: 3 pennyweight 8 grains specie. As marked at upper right, recipient Jacob Jordan paid 1 shilling 1 and a half pence in Sterling, the circulating Canadian currency, to redeem the letter from Montreal postmaster George Measam. The sender of the letter, General Abraham ten Broeck of the Albany County Militia, was involved in supply procurement for the Army. The recipient, Jordan, held pre-war positions in the British government. He was the Montreal agent under the Stamp Act and the primary supplier of wood to British Governor Carleton before Carleton was forced to flee Montreal.<sup>15</sup> Too bad the letter doesn't survive. It would be interesting to see if or how General ten Broeck was attempting to sway this influential French merchant, a staunch Crown supporter, to the American cause.

## Epilogue

General Montgomery's death in battle, a Canadian winter, smallpox and poor coordination with General Benedict Arnold led to the American defeat at Quebec, ending the threat to British control of Canada. A fraction of British Canadians joined the American cause, and the French, *les habitants*, remained nonsupportive as encouraged by their Cath-





**Figure 11. The only cover known with postal markings that travelled inbound to the American post office at Montreal. Sent by Abraham ten Broeck at Albany and docketed December 27, 1775, it has no contents. The rate from Albany to Montreal is correctly marked (“3:8”) at upper left: 3 penny-weight 8 grains specie. Recipient Jacob Jordan in Montreal paid 1 shilling 1½ pence in sterling. From the collection of Vernon Morris.**

olic hierarchy, many of whom were receiving stipends from the Crown. Success would have been short lived anyway as General Burgoyne and 8,000 British regulars were on the sea sailing for the mouth of the St. Lawrence, intent on a spring offensive. The American retreat was fairly orderly, and soldiers and munitions were saved, a salve to Congress who lamented “an opportunity lost.” The American Post Office closed June 15, 1776. when the Americans withdrew from Montreal. Congress rewarded George Measam with a position, “a memorial in the Quartermaster Corps,” as all his holdings in Canada were seized. Ethan Allen, viewed by some in England as a larger-than-life hero, was repatriated in a prisoner exchange on Staten Island in May, 1778.

### **Conclusion and acknowledgements**

This article presents to the philatelic world new postal documents from George Measam and the Congressional post office at Montreal, as well as a much more legible version of the 1765 rate chart. The true nature of the Montreal markings is revealed. This brief episode chronicles a time when major historical figures, the war for Independence and the Post Office are all interwoven. Postal history is history.

Acknowledgements: Liz Cozart tipped me off to the Montreal post office post bills in the Schuyler archive at the New York Public Library. She enjoys archive diving, colo-

nial research and maintains an entertaining blog, *Ben Franklin's World*. Susan McDonald's work, specifically her chapter about Canadian Posts to 1776 in the ter Braake book mentioned earlier, and her article in *Chronicle* 134, provided useful background. I enjoyed Mark R. Anderson's *The Battle for the Fourteenth Colony*, (University Press of New England, 2013) and David Bennett's *A Few Lawless Vagabonds*, the story of Ethan Allen and the Green Mountain Boys (Casemate Publishers, 2014). Both are scholarly with many postally connected insights. The papers of Benjamin Franklin continue to surprise with their detail and relevance to matters postal.

### Endnotes

1. New York State Documents Relative to the Colonial Period, Vol. 13, Albany City Records, pp. 89, 113; as quoted by Calvet Hahn, "The Great North Post," *The American Philatelist*, October 1973.
2. Timothy P. O'Connor, "The Lovelace Post of 1672," *Chronicle* 240 (2013).
3. Mark R. Anderson, *The Battle for the Fourteenth Colony: America's War of Liberation in Canada, 1774-1776*, University Press of New England, Lebanon, N.H., 2013, pp. 45-46.
4. James M. Colthart, "Ellice, Alexander," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Volume 5, University of Toronto/Universite Laval, 2003.
5. David Bennett, *A Few Lawless Vagabonds: Ethan Allen, the Republic of Vermont and the American Revolution*, Casemate Publishers, Philadelphia, 2014, pp. 56-59. This is a well-written account of the movements of the Green Mountain Boys and Capt. Benedict Arnold leading the Connecticut Foot Guards. It documents that patriot forces had enveloped a sleeping Fort Ticonderoga which had not heard of the events at Lexington and Concord.
6. Susan McDonald in Alex L. ter Braake's book, *The Posted Letter in Colonial and Revolutionary America, 1628-1790*, quoting Gray's account book from the Library and Archives of Canada.
7. *Papers of the Continental Congress*, No. 263, pg. 189.
8. *Papers of the Continental Congress*, No. 375, pg. 264.
9. It's unclear if Measam was aware of the Congressional Resolutions of July 26, 1775 and of September 30, 1775, but he may have known that Congress was looking at changes in the rate structure.
10. *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, Yale University Press, Volume 22, pg. 416.
11. *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, Volume 22, pg. 205, letter in the American Philosophical Society collection, sent to Ebenezer Hazard, Sept. 25, 1775: "Sir, It seems necessary to establish speedily a Post to Albany, as we have an Army on your Frontiers. I hope you found a rider to go on more reasonable terms than those mentioned on yours of the 6th [a previous letter] appear to be, compared with what is given the New London riders. But if there are reasons why he should have more, of which you can be the best judge, agree with him and let him proceed as soon as possible."
12. While it does not pertain to the Montreal-Albany axis, it's interesting to note the "pasteover" of post offices south of Alexandria in the lower right of the Figure 8 rate data. In comparison to the rate chart of 1763, which is reproduced in ter Braake's text on page D-9, the main line includes Smithfield and Suffolk, whereas York, Hampton and Norfolk are another route shown above and to the right of the main line.
13. Translated from the Olde French by the APS Translation Service, Bobby Liao, Bellefonte Pennsylvania.
14. Translated from the phonetic, grammatically incorrect Olde French by Laurence B-Violette, Linguistics Ph.D candidate at Harvard University (and a French Canadian).
15. A.J.H. Richardson, "Jordan, Jacob," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Volume 4, University of Toronto/Universite Laval, 2003. ■

## BILL BARRELL LTD OFFERS BRITISH BLUES.



1841 2d pl.3. Fine  
mint large part  
og. light bend but  
fine colour.  
£975.00



1867 2d pl.9 Paris  
exhibition proof.  
Four close  
margins. (DP49)  
£1500.00



1869 2d pl.15.  
Broken perf pin,  
fine o.g, light gum  
bends, very fine  
colour. £200.00



1840 2d pl.2. Very  
fine used, Scottish  
style Maltese  
cross  
£475.00



1841 superb proof  
for the second  
issue. 2d blue.  
(DP43)  
£1250.00

website:  
[www.barrell.co.uk](http://www.barrell.co.uk)

PO Box 10494, Grantham, Lincolnshire,  
NG31 0HS, United Kingdom. (+44) 01476 594698

e-mail:  
[bill@barrell.co.uk](mailto:bill@barrell.co.uk)

## PRESTAMP & STAMPLESS PERIOD

JAMES W. MILGRAM, EDITOR

### DROP LETTERS FROM 1794 TO 1875

JAMES W. MILGRAM, M.D.

#### Introduction to Part 1

This survey article on drop letters is divided into two parts. This initial installment takes the subject up into the 1850s and focuses on stampless covers. The concluding installment, planned for the May *Chronicle*, takes the subject up into the 1870s and presents mostly stamp-bearing covers.

In the days when postal correspondence was the primary or even the sole means of communication, drop letters were a common method through which businesses or individuals in the same town would send messages to one another. As stated by Stanley B. Ashbrook in Volume 2 of *The United States One Cent Stamp of 1851-1857*, the term “drop letter” was applied to local mail, “that is, a letter ‘dropped’ in any local post office, not for onward transmission by mail, but for delivery to the addressee at the office of mailing.” If the addressee had a box account, the letter would be placed in his box. Otherwise the letter could be picked up at the general delivery window.

Table 1 shows the postage for drop letters from 1794 through the 1860s. Since less labor was involved, drop charges were always cheaper than regular letter mail.

**TABLE 1: Drop charges up to 1875**

Begin	End	Charge	Notes
June 1, 1794	Jan. 30, 1815	1¢	Weight not a factor, prepayment optional
Feb. 1, 1815	March 31, 1816	1½¢	War surcharge (at least at Albany); see Figure 2
April 1, 1816	June 30, 1845	1¢	War surcharge repealed
July 1, 1845	June 30, 1851	2¢	
July 1, 1851	June 30, 1863	1¢	At certain cities, additional 1¢ fee for carrier delivery
May 1, 1861			Prepayment by stamps required
July 1, 1863	April 30, 1865	2¢/½ oz	Weight basis beginning 7-1-1863
May 1, 1865	beyond 1875	2¢ or 1¢	2¢ when office had carrier delivery, 1¢ without

#### Manuscript rating of stampless drop covers

The earliest drop letters were rated at 1¢. Until the late 1830s, handstamped rate markings were not used on drop letters. Figure 1 shows a handsome early example of a drop letter. The New York fancy shell postmark is dated November 9. The letter within is datelined London, September 15, 1802. Thus, this is a bootlegged drop letter, originating in a different town and privately carried to be put into the local mail at New York City. The incoming ship rate on this letter would have been 6¢, so bootlegging in this instance saved the sender 5¢. The endorsement at lower left (“per favor Mr. Seaman”) provides us the name of the person who did the bootlegging. This practice was legal and commonplace during this era.





**Figure 1. Letter from 1802, written in London and privately carried to New York where it was put into the mails to a commercial firm as a bootlegged drop letter. The postmarks are the shell oval “NEW-YORK NOV 9” and the manuscript “1”.**

Other early drop letters, dating up into the 1840s, resemble this cover. They bear just a postmark and a “1” rate marking and they were usually sent collect.

Between 1 February 1815 and 31 March 1816, all postage rates were increased 50 percent, supposedly to help pay expenses of the War of 1812. At least the postmaster of Albany, New York, applied this increase to the drop charge. An example is shown in Figure 2. Addressed to the comptroller of the state of New York, this shows a circular datestamp “ALBANY N.Y. JAN 9” (1816) in red with a manuscript “1½” due marking at upper right.



**Figure 2. Drop cover from Albany showing the 50 percent War of 1812 surcharge: “JAN 9” (1816) circular datestamp and the manuscript rating “1½” at upper right.**



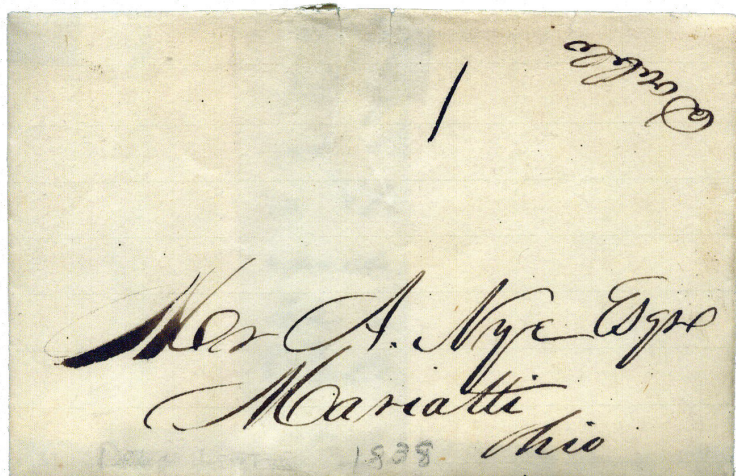


Figure 3. Drop letter posted at Marietta, Ohio in 1838. The sender wrote "double" at upper right to indicate that the cover contained an enclosure, but the drop fee at this time was universally 1¢, regardless of weight or number of sheets. Thus, despite the notation, the cover was rated "1" as a drop letter.

I have not seen a drop letter from another city during this time period showing the increased war rate, but such covers probably exist.

#### No weight surcharge

On the 1838 drop letter from Marietta, Ohio, shown in Figure 3, the sender endorsed the letter "Double" (at upper right) to indicate the sending consisted of two sheets. Had this letter been addressed to a post office beyond Marietta, it would have required double-rate postage. But at this time there was no weight or sheet limitation for drop letters. The drop charge was universally 1¢ and so this cover was assessed. Not being weight based, the drop charge on these early letters is properly described as a fee rather than a rate. Only after 30 June 1863 were drop charges based on weight. Thus, to be technically correct, the drop charge was a fee until July 1, 1863 and a rate thereafter.

With the rate changes in mid-1845, the drop fee increased to 2¢. Pinned "2" markings are found on some covers although most drop covers from the 2¢ era show handstamped rating. The cover in Figure 4 is unusual because the rating is specifically designated: "Drop 2 cents." That is the only postal marking on this cover from Annapolis Junction, Maryland. The pencil notation "left by LDH" is in a very different handwriting from the address. This, plus the odd inclusion of the county name in the address (unusual for a drop cover) suggests that this too was a bootlegged letter.

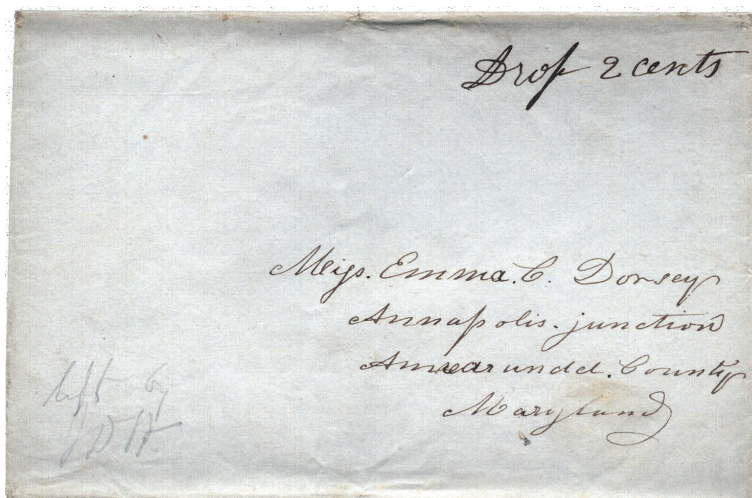


Figure 4. Drop letter with manuscript "Drop 2 cents," addressed to Annapolis Junction, Maryland. An unusual example from the era of the 2¢ drop fee with the word "drop" included in the manuscript marking. The county name in the address and pencil notation at lower left suggest this (like Figure 1) is a bootlegged cover.

Figure 5. Small embossed lady's envelope with blue "EASTON Md. AUG 23" circular datestamp, matching "PAID" and manuscript "1" on a drop cover from the early 1850s.



Then in the early 1850s the drop charge reverted to 1¢. Figure 5 shows a tiny embossed envelope with blue "EASTON Md. AUG 23" and "PAID" with the drop rate indicated by a manuscript "1". This is a scarce prepaid drop letter with manuscript rating.

#### Handstamped rating of stampless drop covers

Handstamped rate markings during the first 1¢ period (prior to July 1845) exist from only a few cities. Cleveland was a pioneer in drop handstamps, using a number of different "1 Cent" markings in various colors. The cover in Figure 6, from 1839, is the earliest known cover bearing a handstamped drop rating marking. This shows "1 Cent" in black. Shown inset on the left of this cover are other similar Cleveland handstamps from this era: red markings from 1841 and 1843, and a blue marking from 1845.



Figure 6. The "1 Cent" marking on this 1839 Cleveland cover represents the earliest known example of a handstamped drop marking. Inset are other Cleveland drop markings from this era, in red from 1841 (top) and 1843, and in blue from 1845.



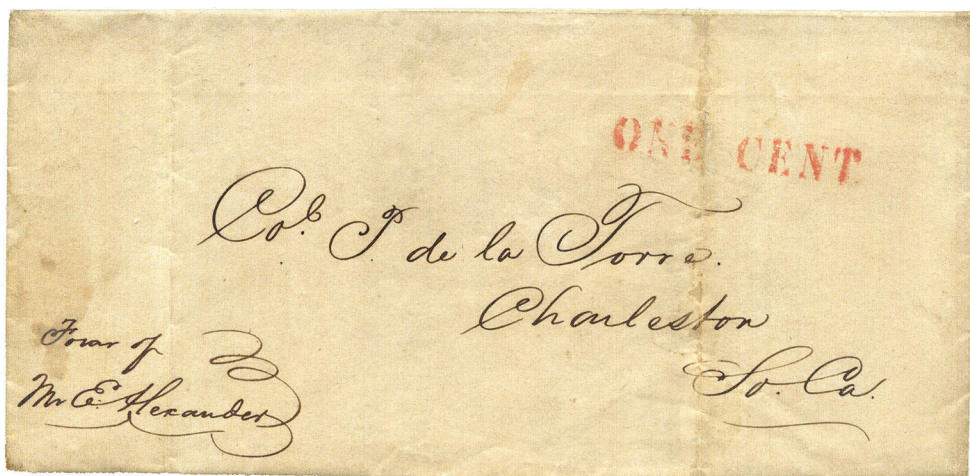


Figure 7. Drop letter from Charleston, South Carolina, showing handstamped rating prior to the 1845 rate changes: “ONE CENT” straightline, letter dated May, 1845.



Figure 8. A similar “ONE CENT” straightline on a drop letter with “SAVANNAH GEO DEC 23” circular datestamp, year date not evident, but likely the mid 1840s.

Figure 7 shows a cover from Charleston, South Carolina with the “ONE CENT” drop letter fee indicated by a red handstamp. This letter was mailed in May, 1845, just weeks before the July 1 rate changes.

The similar and very attractive cover shown in Figure 8 shows the town marking of Savannah, Georgia, with “ONE CENT” in a red straightline. This cover is not dated but the town postmark is consistent with the 1840s.

#### Letter rates down, drop charge increased

It’s ironic that when postal reform ushered in lower rates for regular mail, the drop charge actually increased. Along with “5” and “10” handstamps for the new letter rates, “2” handstamps for the 2¢ drop rate were common at many towns. Usually the “2” was struck from a separate handstamp that could be used on both prepaid and due mail.



**Figure 9.** “ALBANY, N.Y. JUL 7” (1845) with “2”, seventh day of the higher 2¢ drop fee.

The cover in Figure 9 shows an “ALBANY N.Y. JUL 7” (1845) circular datestamp and a separate “2.” This cover was posted on the seventh day of the new higher charge for drop letters.

Certainly one of the most spectacular drop covers known is the embossed lady’s envelope shown in Figure 10, from Annapolis, Maryland, with the negative blue eagle town postmark and matching “2” indicating the drop fee to be collected. Note that this was sent to a midshipman at the United States Naval Academy. The year is not evident, but this is almost certainly from 1845 or 1846.

In addition to separate “2” handstamps, the rating was sometimes incorporated into the town postmark. These are called integral rate markings. Figure 11 shows a nice example with “BOSTON 2 JAN 2 cts” from 1851. As can be seen from the manuscript notations, this was a ship letter (from New Orleans) posted at Boston, another bootlegged drop letter.



**Figure 10.** Handstamped “2” on lady’s envelope addressed to midshipman at the Naval Academy with bold “POST OFFICE AN-NAPOLIS MD” in negative lettering with large eagle in the center. Illustration from Matthew Bennett auction of December 1998.





**Figure 11.** Bootlegged drop letter from New Orleans with red “BOSTON 2 JAN 2 cts” from 1851, an uncommon example of an integral rate drop letter postmark.

In addition, there are a few specific 2¢ rating markings with the town’s name but no date. Two unlisted types are shown in Figure 12: a full cover from Utica (year uncertain, but it must be 1845-51) and the inset handstamp from a similar cover from Syracuse.

During 1845-47 the printed circular rate was the same as the drop rate. So same-city circulars, dropped at the local post office, were also drop letters. An example (not illustrated) would be from Troy, New York, with integral “2cts” in the circular datestamp. But in 1847 the circular rate was increased, so the drop rate saved the sender 1¢ on a printed circu-



**Figure 12.** Drop letter from Utica, New York, from the era of the 2¢ fee (1845-51) with the “2” rating numeral placed within the circular town marking. A similar integral “2” marking from Syracuse is shown inset at upper left.





Figure 13. This 1849 stampless cover contains a printed circular and was mailed at Concord, N.H. with a "3" in oval with "PAID" handstamp. However, the sender or the postmaster realized that it was also a drop letter, mailable at the 2¢ drop letter rate. So the cover was rerated with a "2" struck over the previous "3" rate marking.



Figure 14. Handstamped drop rating markings at the restored 1¢ rate. At top, handstamped "1 ct" in rectangular frame on an unpaid drop letter from St. Louis. Below it, blue "1" with fancy red "PAID" on a prepaid drop letter from Utica, New York.

lar that was also a drop letter. Examples of this exist, showing rerating from 3¢ to 2¢. Figure 13 shows a printed circular that originated in Concord, New Hampshire in 1849. The initial markings were “CONCORD N.H. FEB 26,” “PAID” and “3” in an oval, representing the circular rate. But when the postmaster realized this circular was intended for local delivery, he overstruck the “3,” rerating the cover at “2” to designate the drop charge.

Then, with the July 1851 rate changes, the drop fee reverted to the previous 1¢ charge. At this time many towns began using “1” handstamps to indicate the drop letter rate, with a separate “PAID” for those drop letters that were prepaid by the sender. There was no penalty for unpaid drop letters. This lasted until 1855 when all postage had to be prepaid by postage stamps, although this requirement was not enforced on drop letters. It was not until mid-1861 that prepayment of drop letters by stamps was finally required.

The overlapped covers in Figure 14 show unpaid and prepaid uses from the early 1850s. The cover at top is an unpaid drop cover from St. Louis posted in the fall of 1851. It is marked with a framed “1ct” marking applied at St. Louis. The lower cover was prepaid. The sender noted “Paid” in manuscript at upper right, and the Utica post office applied handstamps in two different colors: the fancy “PAID” in red and the numeral “1” in blue.

A similar array of markings appears on the cover in Figure 15. This is a drop cover from Brooklyn with a circular datestamp reading “BROOKLYN. N-Y. MAR 26” (1852). This cover also has a separate “PAID” in red (which is unusual) and “1 CENT” in black. Brooklyn was also one of the few towns using a handstamp for the 1¢ drop fee in the years prior to 1845.



**Figure 15. An example of a handstamped 1¢ rate: Black “BROOKLYN. N-Y. MAR 26” circular datestamp from 1852 and straightline “1 CENT” on a drop letter. The separate red straightline “PAID” clearly indicates this was a prepaid drop letter.**

Only a few cities employed integral 1¢-rated postmarks for drop mail during this period. Two of them were in South Carolina. Figure 16 shows two drop covers, modestly overlapped. The upper cover, from Charleston, South Carolina, is docketed January 1, 1855. This bears a large “1” in the center of a town marking struck in pale blue. A similar marking from Georgetown, South Carolina, is shown in Figure 16. Cincinnati had a marking with integral “1 UNPD” for unpaid drop letters.

Another Charleston drop marking showing the integral drop rate in a full circular datestamp is struck on the cover in Figure 17. The marking reads “CHARLESTON S.C. MAR





Figure 16. Integral 1¢ drop rating markings from two South Carolina cities, Charleston and Georgetown, both from the 1¢ drop era after July, 1851.

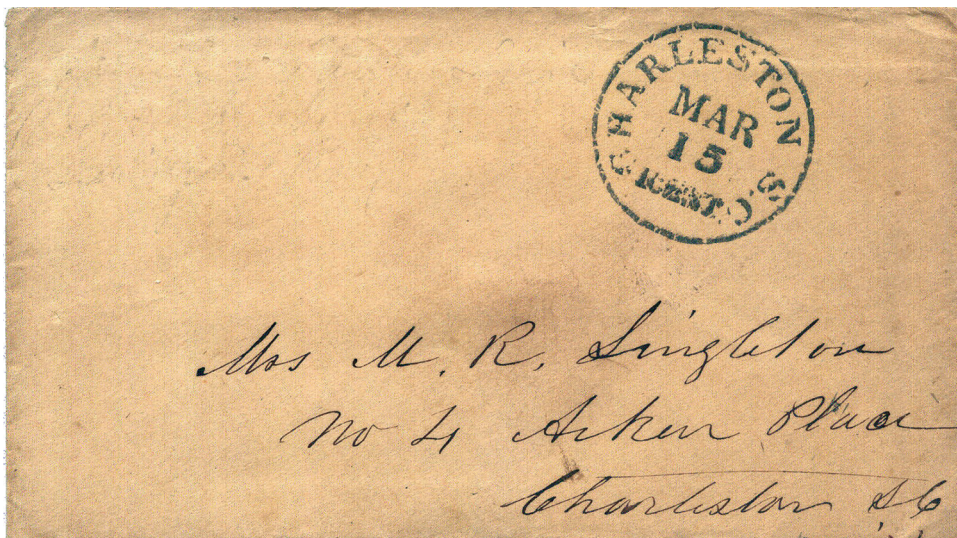


Figure 17. Drop cover with another integral rate Charleston drop marking ("CHARLESTON S.C. MAR 15 1 CENT") from the early 1850s.





**Figure 18. Integral rated postmark “AUGUSTA. ME 12 MAY 3 PAID” (1854) on partly printed form addressed to Augusta, Maine. A handstamped “1” was struck over the “3” in the town marking to change the rate to the 1¢ drop rate.**

15 1 CENT.” A year date is not evident, but again this is from the early 1850s.

Figure 18 shows a very rare example of a rerated integral rate postal marking. This is a preprinted form, probably part of a mass mailing, sent from Augusta, Maine. On this cover, a “1” handstamp was struck over the “3” in the “AUGUSTA. ME 12 MAY 3 PAID” integral rate circular datestamp to indicate the 1¢ prepaid drop letter charge.

The concluding installment of this article, planned for the next *Chronicle* (May 2018), will discuss mostly stamp-bearing drop covers, from the mid-1850s up to 1875. ■

Simply Stated, We Build, Buy and Sell ...

Great Collections





STANLEY M. PILLER & ASSOCIATES

Office: 800 S. Broadway, Suite 201 • Walnut Creek, CA 94596 Mailing Address: P.O. Box 559 • Alamo, CA 94507  
Phone: 925-938-8290 • Fax: 925-938-8812 Email: [stmpdlr@aol.com](mailto:stmpdlr@aol.com) • Web: [www.smpiller.com](http://www.smpiller.com)

# Coming February 20-23 at Kelleher's Auctions

The Flagship Sale • At Our Danbury Galleries



Images also  
appear online  
at our  
website

## The Important "Josephine" Collection of United States Singles, Multiples, Plate Blocks & Postal History

[Note: Lots from this collection contain many items from the storied collections including (but not limited to): Ex - Eno, Wampler, Ishikawa, Worthington, Klein, Sinkler, Ward, Gibson, Zoellner, Forster, Lafayette, Chapin, Howard, Rose, Wunderlich, Weiss, to name just a few!]

Clarke Underwood Quality United States Singles  
"Regents" Collection of Canada and BNA including Strong  
Semi-Official Airmail Stamps & Covers *and* major "OHMS" items  
Stanley J. Richmond Holding Part VII  
Selections from the Jack Ott Stock (Balances & Collections in March)  
The "Rochester" Collection of Proofs



*Daniel F. Kelleher Auctions*

America's Oldest Philatelic Auction House • Established 1885

22 Shelter Rock Lane • Unit 53 • Danbury, CT 06810

Phone: 203.830-2500 • Toll Free: 877.212-2830 • Fax: 203.297.6059

Email: [info@kelleherauctions.com](mailto:info@kelleherauctions.com)

[www.kelleherauctions.com](http://www.kelleherauctions.com)





UNDERPAID?  
GORDON EUBANKS

Figure 1 shows a 4 September 1849 folded letter from Bennett Martin and Co. in Philadelphia to Samuel Slater and Sons in Webster, Massachusetts, with a 5¢ blackish-brown 1847 stamp applied. The letter was postmarked at Philadelphia with a blue 5¢ integral rate postmark. The handstamped “5” rate in the postmark was overwritten “10” in manuscript to indicate a 10¢ rate. The stamp is tied with a faint second strike of the Philadelphia postmark. “Paid,” “Due 5¢” and “over chg 5” are written on the cover in manuscript.

The distance between Philadelphia and Webster is a little less than 300 miles. The text of the letter does not indicate that any enclosures were included and the letter weighs about one-tenth of an ounce, well under the half-ounce single rate. The letter traveled from Philadelphia to New York City on the Philadelphia and Trenton Railroad, Route 1334. At New York City it connected with the New York and New Haven Railroad, Route 710, and then by road to Webster. In total the mail route was approximately 274 miles.

The letter offered “... a good assortment of wool which we think we can sell to you as low as can be had....” A note at the bottom of the letter indicates it was answered. The letter appears to be a simple offer to provide wool to the leading mill operator in Massachusetts. In this situation, it would be normal for the sender to prepay the postage.



Figure 1. Postmasters disagree and the receiving office wins the debate. Cover franked with a single 5¢ 1847 stamp and posted at Philadelphia on 4 September 1849. The Philadelphia postmaster initially accepted the cover as fully prepaid, then changed his mind and rerated it as 5¢ due. But the receiving postmaster at Webster, Massachusetts, had the last word, rerating the cover as overcharged 5¢.



Addressee Samuel Slater is known as the father of American manufacturing and a pioneering entrepreneur in the American textile industry. He had six children who survived infancy and formed Samuel Slater and Sons in 1829. They built mills in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Connecticut and New Hampshire, developing one of the largest manufacturing companies in the United States. His wife, Hannah Wilkinson, invented two-ply thread and was the first American woman to be granted a patent.

So what happened to generate the conflicting postmaster notes on the letter? The sender applied one 5¢ stamp and endorsed the letter as “Paid.” It appears that the Philadelphia postmaster, after initially accepting the cover as fully prepaid, reconsidered and determined that the distance was over 300 miles, thus requiring the 10¢ rate. He overwrote the internal rate in the postmark to “10” and added in manuscript the “due 5¢” notation.

When the cover reached its destination, the Webster postmaster had a different view. He believed the under-300-mile rate applied and the stamp was adequate payment. He did not cross out the “due 5¢” but instead added the manuscript “over chg 5.” Normal practice would be to cross out the due marking if it was judged incorrect.

An earlier cover from Philadelphia to Webster, dated 28 April 1849, is shown in the Classics Society online census (ID 10,721). This bears two 5¢ stamps. It is not known if this cover was over one-half ounce. But in April 1849, the New York and New Haven Railroad was not in use, so the letter would have traveled by road.

A search of the entire 1847 cover census on the USPCS website found no other use of the wording “over chg.” As of 1 November 2017 there are 1,791 covers in the database from Philadelphia to other locations. A few are marked “5¢ due” or the equivalent.

It is possible that opening the New Haven Railroad reduced the distance to under 300 miles, but there are other possibilities as well. It could be that the local postmaster was giving a powerful company in Webster a break since the distance was close to 300 miles. It is also possible, but unlikely, that “over chg 5” was meant to indicate that the letter weighed over one-half ounce and was thus a directive to the Webster postmaster to collect a nickel. As noted, if the “due 5” was not to be collected it would normally be crossed out.

It is rare to see a situation where two postmasters disagree on the rate for a letter. Sometimes letters pass through the mails underpaid, but I have never seen another cover like this, where postmasters disagree on a charge and the underpayment is detected and assessed. Thanks to John Barwis for help with the routing of the letter and thanks too to Mark Schwartz and Scott Trepel for feedback while this article was being written. I would be interested in other thoughts about the meaning of the markings on this cover. My contact information is in the masthead on page 5. ■



**Chinese Stamp Buyer**  
Pay top \$ for Asian Stamps  
**Jonathan Fenn**  
President, JSF Holdings, Inc.  
[jon@chinesestampbuyer.com](mailto:jon@chinesestampbuyer.com)  
[www.chinesestampbuyer.com](http://www.chinesestampbuyer.com)  
307/690-0925  
**email images for a cash offer**

*Pay finder's fee to collectors/dealers who make me aware of estate auction collections.*

# SPINK

FOUNDED 1666

USA

## TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE SPINK'S GLOBAL PHILATELIC NETWORK

LONDON | NEW YORK | HONG KONG | LUGANO | SINGAPORE

With offices in the most important locations for the philatelic market and an outstanding reputation in producing exceptional results in auction, Spink is the best choice to consign material for immediate sale or for inclusion in Specialist Auctions.

A GLOBAL NETWORK IN THREE CONTINENTS

## MEET THE TEAM



**GEORGE EVELETH**  
Head of Philatelic Department USA  
Tel: +1 410 852 8375  
Email: [geveleth@spink.com](mailto:geveleth@spink.com)



**FERNANDO MARTÍNEZ**  
Director of Philately  
Tel: +1 347 967 7169  
Email: [fmartinez@spink.com](mailto:fmartinez@spink.com)



**NEILL GRANGER**  
Philatelic Specialist: China, Hong Kong  
Tel: +44 (0)20 7563 4077  
Email: [ngranger@spink.com](mailto:ngranger@spink.com)



**GUY CROTON**  
Head of Philatelic Division London  
Tel: +44 (0)20 7563 4074  
Email: [geroton@spink.com](mailto:geroton@spink.com)

CONSIGN U.S., BRITISH AND WORLDWIDE MATERIAL  
FOR THE BEST RESULTS TODAY

For more information, contact George Eveleth:  
Tel: +1 (212) 262-8400 | Fax: +1 (212) 262-8484 | Email: [geveleth@spink.com](mailto:geveleth@spink.com)  
SPINK USA | 145 W. 57th St. | 18th Floor | New York | NY 10019



[WWW.SPINK.COM](http://WWW.SPINK.COM)



## STENCIL POSTMARKS ON STAMP-BEARING COVERS

JAMES W. MILGRAM, M.D.

### Introduction

The use of the stencil technique to apply lettered images to covers began with postmarking in several small towns in the late 1820s. I discussed these and other stencil markings on stampless covers in *Chronicle 255*. That article described at length the unique characteristics of stencil postmarks, including the distinctive “islands” and “bridges” required to hold the typographical elements of the stencil template.

Later in the 19th century, certain towns used stencils to create undated postmarks canceling stamps or entire envelopes. Almost all such usage occurred in the 1850s and 1860s although examples from later dates are known, going all the way up into the era of the Bank Note stamps. In the interest of completeness, these have been included in this discussion.

This article constitutes the first comprehensive listing of stencil postmarks to appear in print since the data for the 1850s presented in *Simpson's U.S. Postal Markings*. A few other examples were presented in *United States Cancellations 1845-1869*.<sup>3</sup>

Very few towns used stencil postmarks on stamped covers. All those that I know of are listed in Table 1 (opposite) and illustrated in the three plates of markings that immediately follow. The tabular data, presented alphabetically by town name, includes town and state, estimated period of usage, descriptive information about the stencil marking (format, dimensions and color), reference to the cover illustrations included in this article, and reference to the numbered marking illustrations in the accompanying plates.

The marking illustrations in Plates 1-3 are for the most part digital scans taken from actual covers and presented lifesized. In some cases, the scans have been manipulated electronically to bring out details in the markings, which were often applied weakly or incompletely. In a few cases, when actual covers were not available, the marking plates include tracings from other sources.

I do not claim that this listing includes all possible examples of stencil markings on stamp-bearing covers, but it is the result of diligent searching over many years. Additions to the listing will be welcome.

The cover illustrations that accompany this article should make clear that stencil postmarks almost always required dating in manuscript. It is not possible to change a stencil once it has been created—usually from a thin plate of copper or brass with negative lettering punched into it. For this reason, stencil postmarks were used by only a few towns, none with substantial mail volume. Reference to Table 1 (and to the stampless data presented in *Chronicle 255*) will confirm that all the post offices known to have used stencil postmarks were small towns or villages. Of the towns listed in Table 1, I believe the largest was Collinsville, Connecticut, which when it briefly used stencil postmarking in the 1850s, had a population of around 2,400.

*(text continued on page 45)*

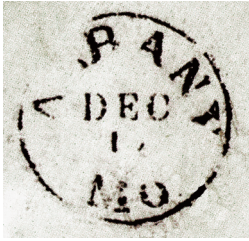
## STENCIL POSTMARKS RECORDED ON STAMPED COVERS

Town/State	Dates	Format	Dimensions	Color	Reference
Albany, Mo.	1860s	c, PAID	35	blk	1
Algodon, Mich.	1870s	c	25	blk	2
Algonquin, Iowa	1860s	2 sl	40x13.5	blk	3
Bailey Springs, Ala.	1850s	c	31	blk	4, Figure 1
Charlotte Center, N.Y.	1850s	arch	42x11	blk	5
Chester, Ohio	1850s	sl	27x3	blk	6
Collinsville, Conn.	1850s	arch	26x16	blk	7
Decherd, Tenn.	1860s	rimless oval	37x20	blk	8
East Groveland, N.Y.	1860s	sl	42x2.5	blk	9, Figure 6
Findley's Lake, N.Y.	1860s	c	26	blk	10
Forkland, Va.	1850s	sl	51x4	blk	11, Figure 10
Friendsville, Tenn.	1860s	c	19	brown	12
Guy's Mills, Pa.	1860s	c	28	blk	13
Holtsville, N.Y.	1860s	c	32	blk	14
Klaasville, Ind.	1883	2 sl	37x7	blk	15
Koch's, Ohio	1860s	sl	37x3	blk	16, Figure 8
Liberty Falls, N.Y.	1864	2 sl	43x8	blk	17
Limerick, N.Y.	1850s	sl	42x3	blk	18
Lisbon, Ark.	1850s	sl	58x6	blk	19
Madison Run Station, Va.	1850s	3 sl	55x13	blk	20
Montpelier, Va.	CSA	sl	54x4	blk	21, Figure 11
New Road, S.C.	1875	2 arcs	49x11	blk	22
Newtown Square, Pa.	1875	3 sl	47x11	blk	23
North Middletown, Ky.	1850s	2 sl	36x8	blk	24
North Mountain, Va.	1850s	sl	41x3	blk	25, Figure 2
Pelham, Mass.	1860s	reverse arc	27x5	blk, blue	26, Figure 5
Prospect Ferry, Maine	1850s	sl	44x3	blk	27
Rock Falls, Ill.	1867	2 sl	52x9	blk	28
Seneca River, N.Y.	1850s	c	29	blk	29, Figure 7
Seneca River, N.Y.	1860s	c, dates	32	blk	30
Somerset, Ind.	1857-60	reverse arc	36x8	blk	31
Somerset, Ind.	1856	sl	35x3	blk	32, Figure 3
Tolands Depot, Miss.	1850s	2 sl	35x6	blk	33
Townsend Station, Ohio	1860s	c	30	blk	34
Tyson Furnace, Vt.	1860s	sl	50x3.5	brown	35
Upper Jay, N.Y.	1860s	c	31	blk	36
Waverly, Ohio	1850s	c	28	blk	37
Waverly, Ohio	1862	dc	30	blk, blue	38, Figure 9
Weeks Mills, Maine	1850s	2 sl	46x10	blk	39
Weeks Mills, Maine	1850s	2 sl	41x11	blk	40
West Day, N.Y.	1862	c	31	blk	41
West Gardiner Ctr, Maine	1850s	c	31	blk	42, Figure 4
Willowdale, Ohio	1860s	c	35	blk	43

**Table 1. Towns known to have used stencil postmarks on stamp-bearing covers. Format code: c=circle, dc=double circle, sl=straightline, 2 sl=double straightline. Dimensions in millimeters. "Reference" numbers refer to marking plates and text.**



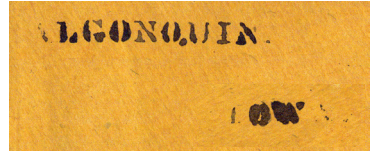
PLATE 1



1. Albany, Mo.



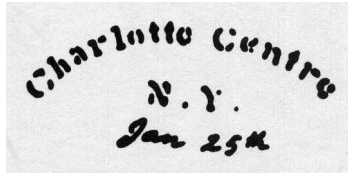
2. Algodan, Mich.



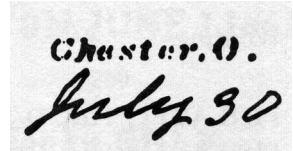
3. Algonquin, Iowa



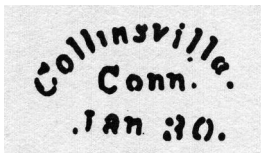
4. Bailey Springs, Ala.



5. Charlotte Centre, New York



6. Chester, Ohio



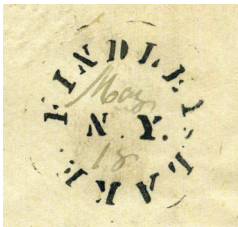
7. Collinsville, Ct.



9. East Groveland, New York



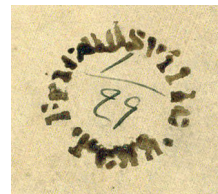
8. Decherd, Tenn.



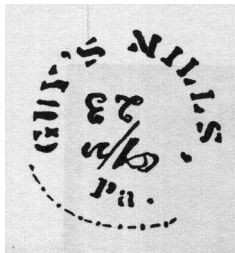
10. Findley's Lake, New York



11. Forkland, Va.



12. Friendsville, Tennessee

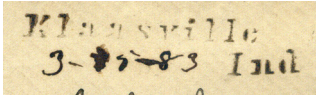


13. Guy's Mills, Pa.

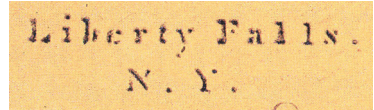


14. Holtsville, N.Y.

PLATE 2



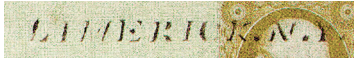
15. Klaasville, Ind.



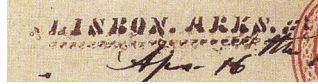
17. Liberty Falls, N.Y.



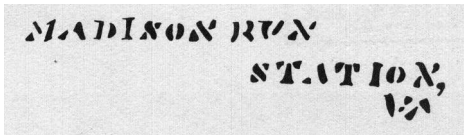
16. Koch's, Ohio.



18. Limerick, N.Y.



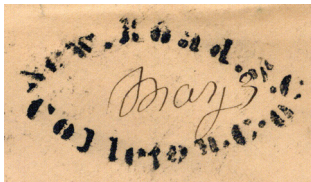
19. Lisbon, Ark.



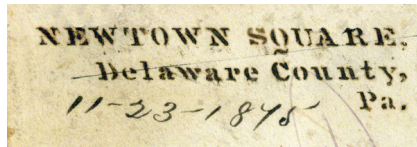
20. Madison Run Station, Va.



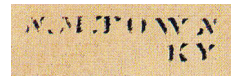
21. Montpelier, Va.



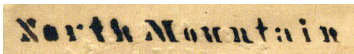
22. New Road, S.C.  
Colleton Co.



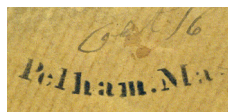
23. Newtown Square, Pa.



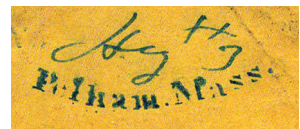
24. North Middle-  
town,  
Kentucky



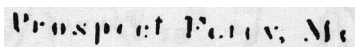
25. North Mountain, Va..



26. Pelham, Mass.



26. Pelham, Mass. (blue)



27. Prospect Ferry, Maine



28. Rock Falls, Ill.



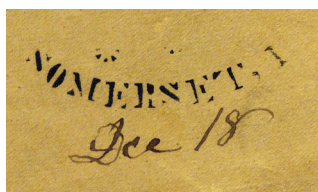
29. Seneca River,  
N.Y. (29 mm)



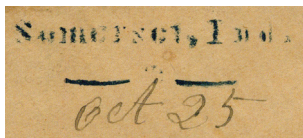
30. Seneca River,  
N.Y. (32 mm)



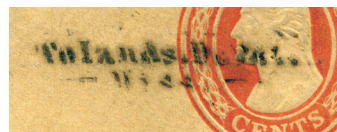
PLATE 3



31. Somerset, Ind.



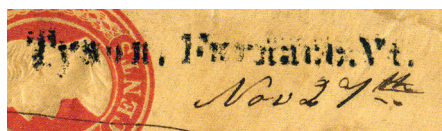
32. Somerset, Ind.



33. Tolands Depot,  
Mississippi



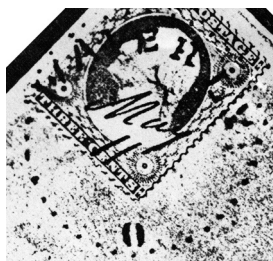
34. Townsend Station, Ohio.



35. Tyson Furnace, Vermont



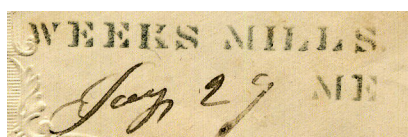
36. Upper Jay, N.Y.



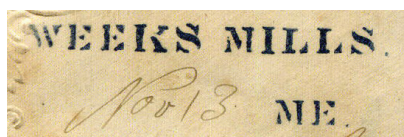
37. Waverly, Ohio



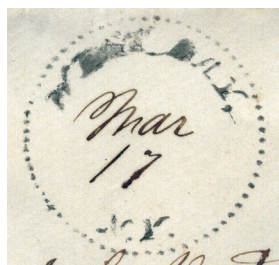
38. Waverly, Ohio  
(border of stars)



39. Weeks Mills, Me.



40. Weeks Mills, Me.



41. West Day, N.Y.



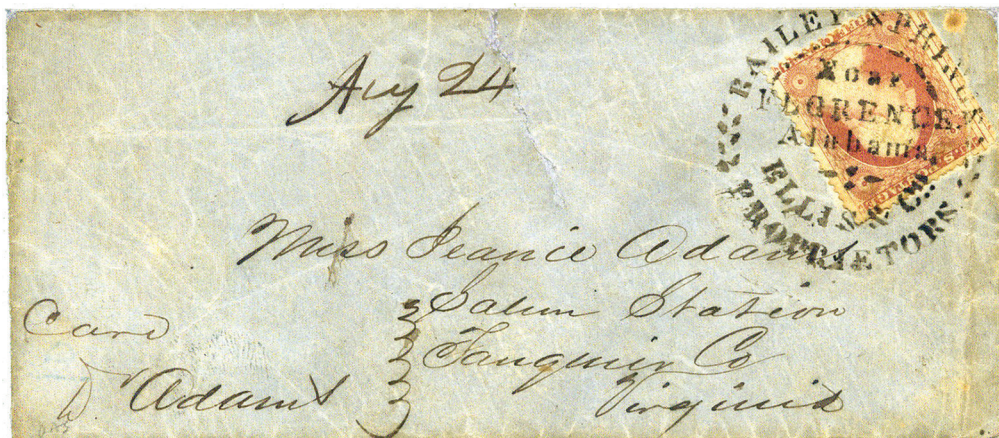
42. West Gardiner Ctr., Me.



43. Willowdale, Ohio

(text continued from page 40)

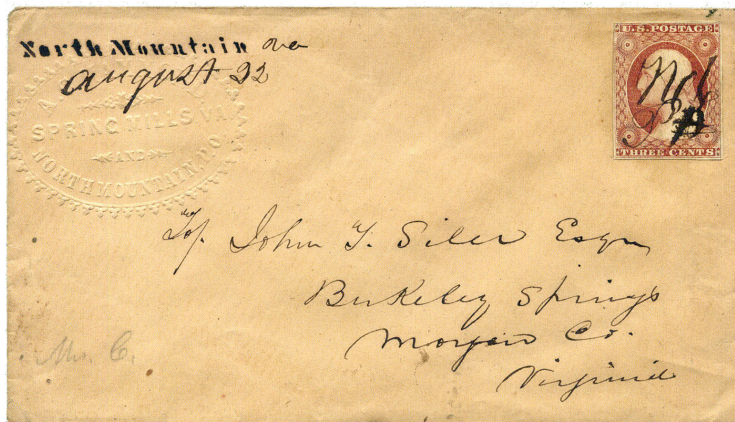
The cover in Figure 1 shows the most ornate stencil cancellation known on any 3¢ 1851 cover. The information in the outer circle indicates the marking was applied at Bailey Springs, Alabama. The three straight lines in the center appear to say “Xoar Florence Alabama,” but close inspection suggests the marking intends to say “Near Florence Alabama.” In addition to canceling the stamp, this marking served to advertise Ellis and Co., proprietors of the Bailey Mineral Springs, a noted watering spot during the Civil War era.



**Figure 1. The most ornate stencil cancellation known on a cover bearing 1851-57 stamps: “BAILEY SPRINGS Near FLORENCE Alabama ELLIS & CO. PROPRIETORS” in stencil lettering tying a 3¢ 1857 stamp to a cover addressed to Salem Station, Va.**

Note that the manuscript dating, “Aug 24,” appears in the center of the cover, quite far from the cancellation. There was no room within the crowded stencil marking to insert date information. A specific year for this cover is not evident, but A.G. Ellis purchased the springs in 1858, so this marking, which names Ellis as the proprietor, must date from that year or afterward. Later in the 19th century Bailey Springs became the site of a flourishing resort hotel. This failed in the 1920s and the dormant springs are today the grounds of a trailer park.

Charles DiComo made available to me the cover image shown in Figure 2. This unusual cover bears a 3¢ 1851 stamp and was sent from North Mountain to Berkeley Springs, Virginia. Both these towns are located in what is now West Virginia. The stencil townmark on this cover shows only the town name—“North Mountain,” in italics. Both the state name



**Figure 2. North Mountain, Virginia, stencil postmark on a 3¢ 1851 cover to Berkeley Springs. This marking is most unusual because it includes only the town name. The postmaster had to write in the date and the state. Both these two towns are now in West Virginia.**



and the date were added in manuscript—"Va. August 22." The manuscript cancel on the 3¢ 1851 stamp appears to represent initials. The cover also bears an embossed cornercard: "A.C. HAMMOND SPRING MILLS VA. AND NORTH MOUNTAIN P.O."

Figure 3 shows the only known example of a stencil postmark on a cover franked with a 10¢ 1851 stamp. The stamp is Type 2. The ornamented black straightline stencil marking reads "Somerset, Ind." with manuscript date "Oct 25" penned below it. The 10¢ stamp paid the transcontinental rate to California. From its first destination this cover was forwarded (with blue "ELDORADO Cal. DEC 5 1856") to Garden Valley, California. As can be seen from Table 1, this is one of two stencil postmarks used at Somerset. The other is a reverse arc, in capital letters, from the late 1850s. A strike of this marking, electronically clipped from a cover franked with a 3¢ 1857 stamp, is shown inset at bottom right in Figure 3. The original Somerset post office, where these markings were applied, is now under water. The town had to be relocated after the Corps of Engineers created the Mississinewa Lake Dam.



**Figure 3. The Indiana village of Somerset used two different stencil postmarks in the 1850s. This 10¢ 1851 cover, sent to California in 1856 and forwarded from El Dorado to Garden Valley, shows Somerset's ornamented straightline marking. Inset at lower right, from a 3¢ 1857 cover, is Somerset's reverse arc marking, also with ornaments.**

The circular marking "WEST GARDINER CTR ME OCT 1?" on the cover in Figure 4 is the only fully dated stencil postmark I have seen. It might have been used on just one mailing. Something appears stenciled below the "Oct 1" but its significance is uncertain. Note the fancy border of ovals that makes up the frame of the marking. This is typical of circular stencil postmarks, as we saw with the stampless markings. The stamp on this cover is Type 1, Scott 25. The shorthand notations at top center and lower left are also unusual; the enclosed letter is entirely in shorthand.

#### **Reverse arc from Pelham, Massachusetts**

One of the more common stencil postmarks, recorded both in blue and black, is the reverse arc stencil cancel from Pelham, Massachusetts. The blue marking has been seen only on 3¢ 1857 covers and is presumed to be the earlier of the two colors. An example in blue is shown in Plate 2. One cover with a 3¢ 1857 stamp was marked "old stamp" (on the stamp) and "Due 3." Figure 5 shows the more common usage in black with a 3¢ 1861





Figure 4. "WEST GARDINER CTR ME OCT 1" dated stencil postmark on a cover franked with a 3¢ 1857 stamp (Type 1) sent to Turner, Maine. The fancy frame of multiple small ovals is characteristic of stencil markings. Note also the shorthand notations. The enclosed letter is written entirely in shorthand.

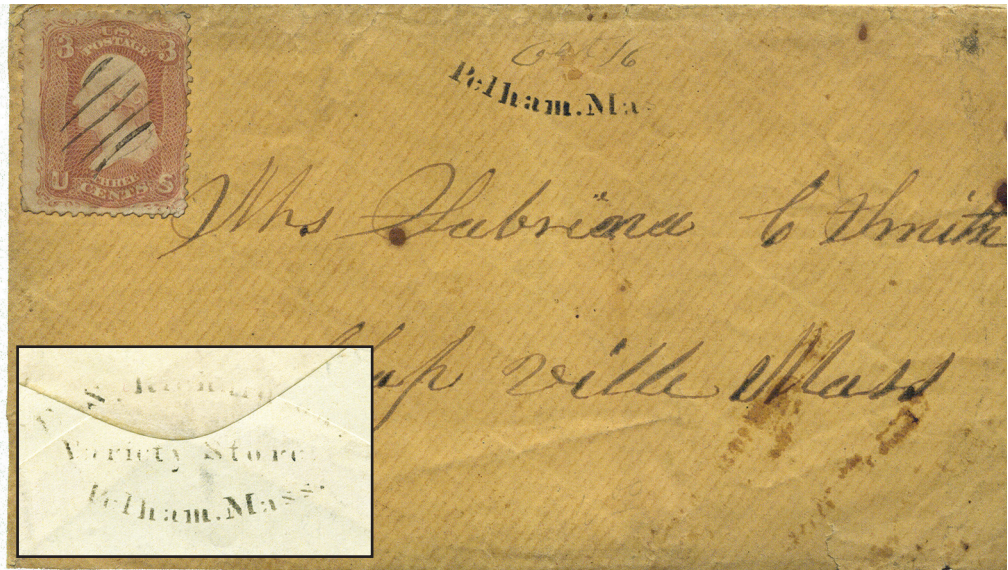


Figure 5. "Pelham, Mass." reverse arc stencil postmark on a cover franked with a 3¢ 1861 stamp. Town and state name were the lower portion of an advertising stencil (inset) used by the Pelham postmaster to promote his store, which housed the post office.

stamp. Shown inset at lower left is a portion of the back of an envelope bearing the stenciled cornercard of Enos R. Richardson, postmaster of Pelham, who also ran a variety store. The inset marking reads "E. S. Richardson Variety Store Pelham Mass." The post office probably occupied a corner of his store. Rather than buy a special postmarking device, Richardson used Yankee ingenuity to make his advertising stencil do double duty, carefully brushing the ink over only the bottom portion of the stencil when he employed it as a postmark.





**Figure 6.** The “East Groveland N.Y.” black stencil postmark applied directly to a horizontal strip of 1¢ 1861 stamps make this a very handsome cover. The postmaster added a manuscript date (“Jan 12”) to the right stamp and an “X” to the left stamp.

Stencil postmarks on stamps other than 3¢ denominations are unusual. The cover in Figure 6 shows a clear strike of a rare stencil postmark (“East Groveland N.Y.”) well centered on a lovely strip of 1¢ 1861 stamps. Usually the postmark would have been struck on the envelope because it is difficult to read on the stamps. The postmaster added his manuscript date (“Jan 12”) in the right stamp and for good measure a manuscript “X” on the left stamp.

#### **Seneca River postmaster was a stencil engraver**

The exploded 3¢ 1857 cover in Figure 7 shows an outstanding example of stencil marking. As the advertisement on the reverse indicates, the postmaster was a stencil maker. In addition to his postmark (from a template he no doubt crafted himself) he applied his

<p><b>Bibliopole</b> Since 1965</p>	<p><b>PHILATELIC BIBLIOPOLE</b> <a href="http://pbbooks.com">http://pbbooks.com</a> Authoritative Philatelic Literature</p>	
<p><b>US, CSA, Maritime, Forgery, GB and the Empire, etc.</b> Purchaser of major and minor philatelic libraries, stocking new titles from over 100 publishers. Our website has 1,000+ pages of listings and references.</p>		
<p><b>PB Blank Pages, Mylar and Page Boxes</b> The state of the art for both archival preservation and appearance, our pages are 100% cotton rag, neutral pH and buffered; blank and quadrille. Custom steel-engraved page heads and paneling available. Will run on most Laser Jet Printers. All made exclusively for us in the US. Page sampler: \$3 to a US address. Foreign by air \$7.</p>		
<p><b>Leonard H. Hartmann</b></p>	<p><b>P.O. Box 36006, Louisville, KY 40233</b> <b>Phone (502) 451-0317, Fax (502) 459-8538</b></p>	



**Figure 7. "SENECA RIVER N.Y. 1861" in stencil frame of multiple dots with manuscript "Feb 22" tying a 3¢ 1857 stamp on a cover to Bowmansville, New York. The highly ornamented stencil cornercard on reverse shows that the postmaster was also a stencil-maker: "J. E. Bryan. Seneca River. N.Y. Stencil Engraver."**

bold advertisement onto the back of the envelope. This is a very decorative stencil indeed, replete with ornamentation. The wording is "J. E. Bryan. Stencil Engraver. Seneca River. N.Y." The stencil postmark reads "SENECA RIVER N.Y. 1861" with manuscript date ("Feb 22") added. This stencil postmark is also remarkable for its inclusion of the 1861 year date, a refinement that a stencil-maker could more easily afford. The regular dotted frame is a nice touch too. Bryan subsequently created a slightly larger circular postmark that was used on covers with 1861 stamps (see Table 1); this marking also included partial dating. A scan from the best example I have seen is presented as marking 30 in Plate 2.



### Stencil postmark on patriotic cover

A stencil postmark that includes partial dating appears on the 3¢ 1861 cover shown in Figure 8. This is a Civil War patriotic envelope—“THE SOLDIER’S DREAM OF HOME”—with doggerel poetry and an elaborate wood engraving. The straightline postmark “Kochs O Dec” is stenciled at bottom, with manuscript date “22” added. Of course, this marking could only have been used for the month of December, probably 1861. No other months have been seen. Koch’s was a small post office in Wayne County, Ohio, during

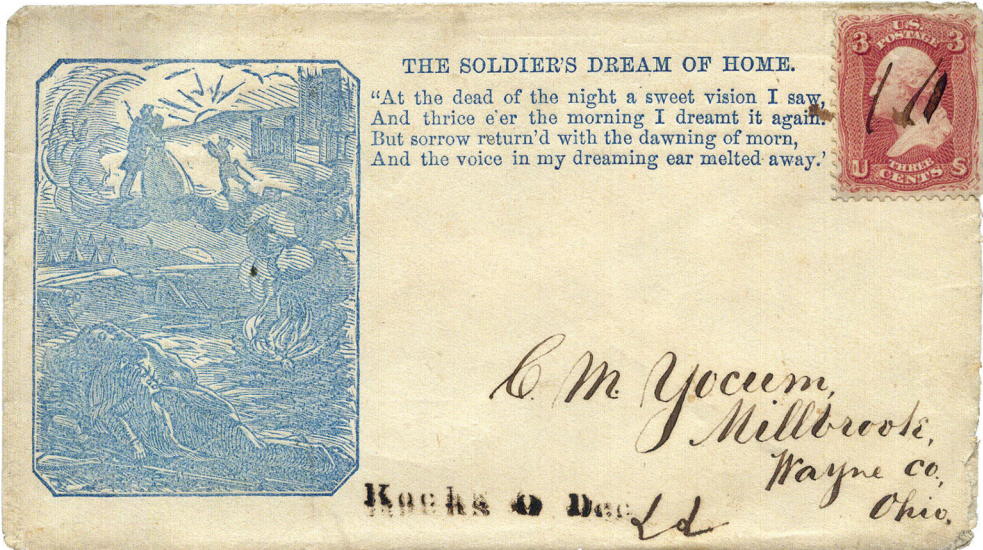


Figure 8. “Kochs O Dec” stencil postmark with manuscript “22” date added, on a “SOLDIER’S DREAM OF HOME” patriotic cover franked with a 3¢ 1861 stamp cancelled in manuscript. No year is present, but this cover probably dates from 1861.

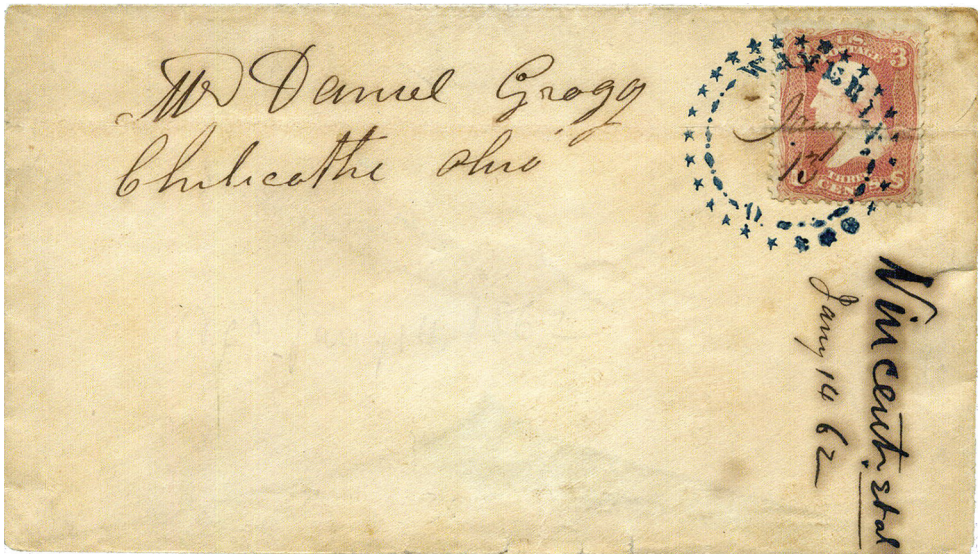


Figure 9. “WAVERLY O” blue stencil postmark with manuscript dating “Jany 13” on a cover to Chillicothe, Ohio, docketed 1862 and franked with a 3¢ 1861 stamp. The very unusual and highly ornate double frame consists of an outer circle of five-pointed stars and an inner circle of interrupted dots and ovals.

the second half of the 19th century. It was subsequently subsumed into Maysville.

Waverly, Ohio, was another village that used more than one stencil marking. In the late 1850s Waverly used a fairly crude 29-millimeter circular marking whose frame was a single circle of dots. I have seen only a grainy black and white photo of this marking, and this is the source of the marking scan shown as 37 in Plate 3. In the era of the 1861 stamps Waverly used a more ornate marking. An example in blue appears on the 3¢ 1861 cover to Chillicothe shown in Figure 9: “WAVERLY O” with manuscript dating “Jany 13.” This is a very fine ornate stencil, framed by an outer circle of five-pointed stars and an inner circle of interrupted dots and ovals. The Figure 9 cover is docketed 1862. In some of the black strikes of this stencil postmark the frame features do not show this clearly, but are probably there.

One other town also appears to have used more than one stencil marking. This is the village of Weeks Mills, Maine. The two markings presented as 39 and 40 in Plate 2 are typographically similar, but the placement of the state abbreviation (ME) is quite different, suggesting two different stencil plates.

### Stencil postmark on 1869 cover

The only example of a stencil postmark known on a cover franked with a stamp of the 1869 series is shown in Figure 10. This rather fancy marking, from Forkland, Virginia, shows an inner circle of dots and an outer circle of dashes. The manuscript date in this cover is “Nov 16,” year not designated but very likely 1869.



**Figure 10. The only 1869 cover known to bear a stencil postmark. The stencil marking reads “FORKLAND VA.” with manuscript “Nov 16” added in the center, on a cover franked with a 3¢ 1869 stamp and sent to Danville, Virginia.**

### Stencil postmark on Confederate cover

In addition to the stencil markings found on classic United States stamps and stamped envelopes, one stencil marking is known from Montpelier, Virginia, from when that town was part of the Confederate States of America. The cover in Figure 11 is the only cover known showing this stencil marking used as an originating postmark. The stencil reads “Montpelier Va.” and the manuscript dating beneath it says “9th Mch 63.” The cover is





Figure 11. "Montpelier, Va." stencil postmark on a Confederate cover.

franked with a 10¢ blue Jefferson Davis stamp and is addressed to Richmond.

The most frequent employment of the stencil technique on postal correspondence was to apply cornercard information to envelopes, both business and personal. A variant of the personal cornercard was to use a stencil to create an address. Examples of such uses from the Civil War will be explored in an article currently planned for the May *Chronicle*. Other such covers will be discussed in one or more future articles. ■

*The Gold Standard in*  
**REVENUES**  
**ERIC JACKSON**

*the hobby's premier dealer of revenue stamps since 1975*

Specializing in revenue stamps of the United States and Possessions,  
 Match and Medicine Stamps, Revenue Stamped Paper, Taxpays, State Revenues,  
 Canada Revenues, AMG Revenues, U.S. and Canada Telegraph Stamps,  
 U.S. Local Post Stamps, Revenue Stamped Paper, philatelic literature  
 pertaining to revenue stamps of the world, and much more.

*We invite you to browse our online inventory with more than 58,000 items,  
 the largest & most comprehensive in the world.*

**ERICJACKSON.COM**



*Buying  
 & Selling*

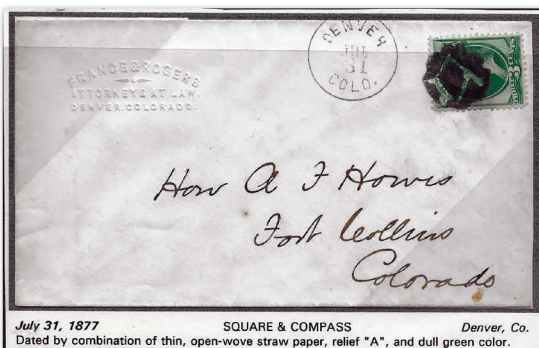
**Eric Jackson**

P.O. Box 728 • Leesport PA 19533-0728  
 Phone: 610-926-6200 • E-mail: eric@revenueer.com



# A Selection from the Collection of the late Raymond Koch— Masonic Cancels both on & off Cover

**73 - Negative**  
"Square & Compass"  
2c Black, Rochester, New York,  
Illuminated ad for Vacuum Oil  
Co. PF certificate mentions  
"small corner crease ending  
in a small tear at bottom left".  
**\$750.00**

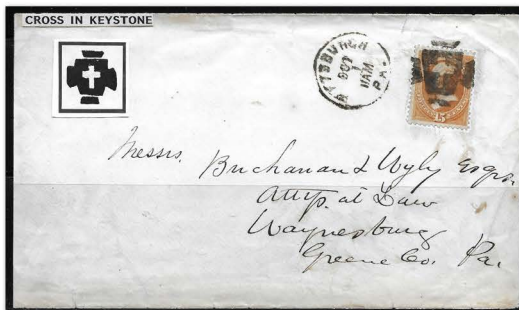


**158 - Negative**  
"Square & Compass"  
3c Green, Denver, Colorado,  
France & Rogers blind  
embossed cc. Ex-Barwis  
**\$395.00**

**184 - Large**  
"Square & Compass"  
3c Green, Douglas,  
Kansas, great strike!  
Slightly reduced at  
right. **\$300.00**



**158 - "Square  
& Compass"**  
3c Green, Marvelous strike  
in Brown ink, very rare.  
**\$200.00**



**152 - "Cross in Keystone"**  
15c Orange, Pittsburgh, Penna. An amazing cover paying five times rate. Reduced 3/4" at left.  
This was the key cover in Bill Weiss's 15c Bank Note exhibit. **\$1,250.00**



**65 - "Square & Compass"**  
3c Rose, Bold strike, PSE  
certificate mentions "minor  
perforation faults at bottom".  
**\$200.00**

Ray's collection was formed over 60 years. Probably the most comprehensive holding  
of masonic material ever formed. Over 500 covers and 750 off cover cancellations.



P.O. Box 3876 • Oak Brook, IL 60522-3876

Phone: (847) 462-9130 • Email: jim@jameslee.com

[www.JamesLee.com](http://www.JamesLee.com)



## **NOT AS EASY AS 1-2-3**

**WADE E. SAADI**

As a collector of fancy and unusual cancellations and postal markings on the 1¢, 2¢ and 3¢ denominations of the 1861 issue, I've had my eye out for covers with those three stamps paying a 6¢ postal rate. Such an item would fit perfectly onto the title page of an exhibit. But in my many years of collecting the 1861 issues, I've noticed a dearth of covers that are franked with one each of these stamps. For the last several years, I have actively searched for such covers. I have found only four and I was able to obtain three of them.

First, a little history. The active life of the 1861 issue spanned the period from August 1861 through April 1869. The 1¢ Franklin and 3¢ Washington stamps were issued in August 1861, but the 2¢ Jackson was not released until July 1863. That leaves just short of six years for 1-2-3 covers to be contemporaneously franked. But that is still a long enough time and cannot be the reason for their paucity.

During the lifetime of the 1861 stamps, the single postal rate was 3¢ per ½ ounce.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, the requirement for two units of 3¢ postage is a prerequisite for any possible domestic 1-2-3 cover—either a double-weight letter requiring 6¢ postage, or a or remailed single-weight letter requiring a second 3¢ rate for the second leg of the journey.

If the sender needed to frank a double-weight letter and had multiple copies of all three values available, would he not use two 3¢ stamps, or three 2¢ stamps, or even six 1¢ stamps? Ergonomics says he would just grab a few of one denomination, rather than selecting one of each. Additionally, the government printed about 2 billion of the 3¢ Washington stamp during this period, vastly outnumbering the totals of 1¢ and 2¢ stamps. With that in mind, let's examine the three covers to which I have access.

The cover shown in Figure 1, addressed to Ireland, Massachusetts, was posted with a 3¢ stamp from New Bern, North Carolina on October 21, 1863. New Bern was occupied by the Union after the Battle of New Bern in March 1862, and remained in Union hands until the end of the war. Ireland, Massachusetts was in Hampden County. The Official Registers of the United States for 1861, 1865, and 1867 list the annual postmaster compensation for Ireland as a meager \$42.06, \$45.94, and \$35.00, respectively. This was a very small post office.

Upon arrival in Ireland, the Figure 1 letter was readdressed to nearby Easthampton, Massachusetts, with 1¢ and 2¢ stamps added to pay the forwarding postage. Quite possibly, there was a limited supply of postage stamps available to the Ireland postmaster on that day. So here we have a 1-2-3 cover created by remailing.

The other two 1-2-3 covers appear to have postage paying the double rate for letters weighing ½ to 1 ounce. While lacking its original content, the cover in Figure 2 shows a slight discoloration around the edges, suggesting a thick and possibly overweight enclosure. Since the 1¢ and 2¢ stamps are on the opposite side of the face from the 3¢ stamp on the upper right, I surmise that one postage rate, probably the 1¢ and 2¢, was applied by the



Figure 1. An 1863 cover from New Bern, North Carolina, franked with a 3¢ 1861 stamp and addressed to Ireland, Massachusetts, whence it was forwarded to near Easthampton, with 2¢ and 1¢ stamps affixed to pay the forwarding postage.

mailer prior to mailing. However, the postal clerk determined the letter was double weight, and added the 3¢ stamp, and canceling all three stamps at the same time. This scenario is based on the assumption that if he placed all three stamps on the cover simultaneously, the sender would have affixed the stamps together or nearer each other, and that the clerk in the busy Philadelphia post office would have applied a readily available 3¢ stamp upon payment of the shortfall. So, this 1-2-3 cover appears to be a double-weight cover, on which the 3¢ stamp was applied at a different time.



Figure 2. Cover from Philadelphia to Haddam, Connecticut, franked with one each of the 1¢, 2¢, and 3¢ 1861 denominations. The separation between the two 3¢ groupings suggests they were added to the envelope at different times.





**Figure 3. Cover from Syracuse to Trumansburg, New York, on which the double-rate postage was paid with one each of the 1¢, 2¢, and 3¢ stamps, affixed in value order.**

The cover in Figure 3 is one that defies all the exception rules and proves that a sender with all three values might indeed frank a cover with one of each, in value order no less. Mailed from Syracuse, New York to Trumansburg, New York—a small Finger Lakes town on the west side of Lake Cayuga—Figure 3 is a double-weight letter on which the three different stamp values were applied at the same time.

Other than forwarded or double-weight letters, additional domestic 6¢ rates for that period are not obvious to me. International examples might exist, The rate between the U.S. and Canada and most British North American provinces was reduced to 6¢ per half ounce in April 1868, but I am unaware of any such franking. Nonetheless, my hunt for these elusive 1-2-3 covers continues. ■

### Endnote

1. From April 1, 1855 to July 1, 1863—Not over 3,000 miles, per ½ ounce, 3¢. From July 1, 1863, distance differential eliminated, all parts of United States. *Scott 2012 Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps & Covers*, Scott Publishing Company, 2011, pg. 43A.

## United States Stamp Society

The premier society specializing in the postage and revenue issues of the United States and U.S. administered areas.



*The United States Specialist*

USSS Executive Secretary  
P.O. Box 6634  
Katy, TX 77491-6634  
[www.usstamps.org](http://www.usstamps.org)



*Durland Standard Plate Number Catalog*

## UNITED STATES TRANSPACIFIC MAIL VIA BRITISH COLUMBIA GRAY SCRIMGEOUR

### Introduction

Transpacific mail routes between Canada and Asia and Australasia were established in the late 1800s, providing alternatives for mail carriage to and from the United States.<sup>1</sup> With the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway from eastern Canada to British Columbia in 1886, the CPR initiated shipping service between the east coast of Canada and the Orient. The CPR obtained the government support it needed to pay for its own transpacific steamships in 1889, when the British post office awarded it a 10-year contract to carry mails between the east coast of Canada and Hong Kong. Three specially designed *Empress* steamships, which travelled faster than the contract required, were completed for the route in 1891. The mail contract took effect with the first sailing from Hong Kong, when the *Empress of India* departed on 7 April 1891. That day marked the beginning of fast and reliable passenger, freight, and mail service on the North Pacific, and it completed the CPR's Asiatic "All-Red Route," whereby British ships would operate the steamship route between various ports of the British empire. A CPR ad in the *New York Times* could promise 17 days transit from New York to Japan via the *Empress* liners, which assumed a four-day rail trip to Vancouver. When introduced, the *Empresses* were the fastest ships on the Pacific, and Vancouver is 234 miles closer to Yokohama than San Francisco. These factors favored the CPR as a mail route.

In 1893, James Huddart established with two steamships the Canadian Australian Steamship Company (CA line) between New South Wales and Canada. To maintain once-every-four-weeks service, Huddart added a third ship in 1897. Huddart signed an agreement with the CPR to bring traffic for North America only to the CPR. In return, the CPR would not operate steamships to compete with the CA line. The companies always collaborated, and in 1931 the CPR became a half owner of the CA line. The CPR Asiatic service lasted until 1941 and the CA line continued until 1953. Steamships serving these routes usually called at the port of Victoria, British Columbia. Their North American terminus was Vancouver, British Columbia.

Considerable mail was carried to the United States by the CPR and CA line mail routes. In contrast, very little mail originating in the United States was transported to Asia or Australasia though British Columbia. This article describes this dearth and some of the reasons for it.

### First-packet principle

The first-packet principle was usually applied to transpacific mail. By this policy, postal clerks normally dispatched a letter to the next available sailing if that would expedite its delivery.<sup>2</sup> UPU regulations further stated that "when several routes offer the same advantages of speed, the dispatching office shall have the right of choosing the route to be adopted."



The following clarification of the first-packet principle, which provides a ranking to different shipping lines, was published in the April 1, 1900 issue of the *Victoria Colonist* and in the March 29, 1900 *U.S. Postal Bulletin* (General Order No. 474, Vol. 21, No. 6122):

**According to a dispatch from Washington, in the dispatch of trans-Pacific mails it is ordered that in case of a steamer scheduled to sail on the same day from San Francisco or Vancouver, B.C. and Tacoma or Seattle, preference in dispatch be given to the steamers sailing from San Francisco or Vancouver over those sailing from Tacoma or Seattle; also in case of a steamer scheduled to sail from San Francisco and Vancouver on the same day, preference in dispatch is to be given to steamers to sail from San Francisco over those sailing from Vancouver.**

The San Francisco and Vancouver ships were faster than the Tacoma and Seattle steamers. The ranking of San Francisco ahead of Vancouver could have been either that the United States Post Office was favoring a United States carrier or that mail could more quickly reach San Francisco.

Two records help in analysis of transpacific covers: knowledge of sailing dates and knowledge of mailing advice. I have recorded departure and arrival dates for the CPR ships and the ships of the CA line, and this information is available online at the website of the Postal History Society of Canada.<sup>3</sup> Postal notices in *The New York Times* (available from 1887 to 1904 and from 1907) list closing dates in New York for mail intended for the Canadian transpacific sailings. These mail-closing dates in New York were about a week before the sailing dates from British Columbia.

In the late 19th century, there were choices of mail routes from North America to either Asia or Australasia. As an example, an 1899 publication from the German Post Office listed the main mail steamship lines in the transpacific service as follows:<sup>4</sup>

Asian Routes: Canadian Pacific Line, Vancouver–Hong Kong; Pacific Mail Steamship Co. with Occidental and Oriental Steamship Co. and Toyo Kisen Kaisha, San Francisco–Hong Kong; Northern Pacific Steamship Co., Tacoma–Hong Kong; Northern Pacific Steamship Co., Portland–Hong Kong; and Nippon Yusen Kaisha, Seattle–Yokohama–Hong Kong.

Australasian Routes: Union Steamship Co. of New Zealand and Oceanic Steamship Co., San Francisco–Sydney (via Honolulu, Apia, and Auckland); and Canadian Australian Royal Mail Steamship Co., Vancouver–Sydney (via Victoria, Honolulu, Suva, and Brisbane).

G.P. Molnar has analyzed quantities of mail carried to and from New South Wales between 1881 and 1900.<sup>5</sup> He listed the number of foreign letters between New South Wales and all destinations except the other Australian colonies and New Zealand. His lists show that the amount of mail via the CA line gradually increased until about 1898 or 1899, when it reached the level of mail carried through San Francisco.

### **Cover examples**

United States outbound mail was sent to British Columbia as early as 1892 and 1893 for the CPR and CA line ships respectively. Amounts of U.S. mail sent via Vancouver and Victoria gradually increased. In *The New York Times*, the first mention of the Canadian service appeared on 28 August 1892. At that time, mail routed through Vancouver required a special endorsement: “Mail for China and Japan, via Vancouver (especially addressed only) closes daily at 5 p.m.”

In the summer of 1898, to prepare for more extensive use of the CPR’s *Empress* route, the U.S. and Canadian Post Office Departments discussed expediting U.S. mail to Japan and China.<sup>6</sup> United States mail was sent to Vancouver in time for *Empress* sailings, and sent from Vancouver as open mail. Open mail had previously been made up in a comparable manner in Vancouver for United States correspondence sent to Australasia. The following note in the *Victoria Daily Times* on August 25, 1898 announced the changes in procedure:

R.M.S. *Empress of Japan* when she sailed Monday carried a larger mail than usual as arrangements have just been completed with the Canadian postal authorities whereby articles of mail for and via China and Japan may be forwarded in open mail to Vancouver, for dispatch by steamers sailing from that port, whenever there is reason to suppose the article will be thereby expedited. The postmasters of Boston, New York, St. Louis, Chicago, San Francisco and Tacoma have been instructed by the department in Washington to hereafter prepare mail for the *Empresses* on each sailing, and unless otherwise addressed for any special route, mail passing through those cities will hereafter be sent to Vancouver instead of to Tacoma and San Francisco as heretofore.

This procedure allowed transpacific mail to be sent from United States exchange offices directly to Vancouver, where they required postmarking and sorting. After 1902, the mail was usually sent in closed bags, so there would be no British Columbia transit postmarks. In 1902, United States mail for East Asia to be sent on the *Empresses* was dispatched via Seattle to Victoria instead of to Vancouver. Seattle was not listed as an exchange office until 1902.

### Covers to the Orient via Canadian Pacific Line

I have recorded just over a half dozen 19th century covers sent from the United States to the Orient via British Columbia. These covers bear backstamps that well track their voyages. In the images that follow the salient backstamps are shown adjacent to the covers.

The earliest cover, not shown here, was offered on eBay in October 2005. It was sent on 31 May 1894 from San Francisco to Canton, China, endorsed “Via Vancouver, B.C. per *Empress of India*.” It bears backstamps of Victoria, B.C. (June 3), Hong Kong (June 26), and Canton (June 27). The *Empress of India* left Victoria on June 5 and reached Hong Kong June 26.

Figure 1 shows a cover bearing a 5¢ Columbian stamp, posted at Litchfield, Connecticut on 18 June 1894, addressed to Yokohama. At lower left the cover is endorsed “Via Vancouver/S.S. ‘*Empress of Japan*.’” On the reverse it bears postmarks applied at New York (June 18), Vancouver (June 25), and Tokyo (July 9). The *Empress of Japan* departed



Figure 1. Cover to Yokohama, franked with a 5¢ Columbian stamp and posted at Litchfield, Connecticut, on June 18, 1894. Transpacific carriage via *Empress of Japan* of the Canadian Pacific Steamship Company, departing Vancouver on June 25, 1894. A New York backstamp is partly struck; Vancouver and Yokohama backstamps as shown.



from Vancouver on June 25 and arrived at Yokohama July 8. Her voyage from Vancouver was the next after the *Empress of India* on June 5.

Figure 2 shows another 1894 Columbian cover carried by a ship of the CPR from the port of Vancouver. This cover originated in Marietta, Ohio but its postmark date is unreadable. It is endorsed "Via Vancouver, Steamer sailing Nov. 12" and bears a Vancouver backstamp dated November 12, 1894 with a morning timemark. The CPR's *Empress of Japan* departed from Vancouver later that day with this letter. The cover also shows a brown Japanese receiving marking.



Figure 2. Another 5¢ Columbian cover, addressed to Tokyo and routed "Via Vancouver Steamer sailing Nov. 12." The cover was posted at Marietta, Ohio, and the Vancouver backstamp dated November 12, 1894 with a morning timemark. The CPR's *Empress of Japan* departed from Vancouver later that day with this letter.



The double-weight cover shown in Figure 3, franked with five 2¢ Washington stamps of the First Bureau series and addressed to Tokyo, was posted at New York City on 30 October 1898. The closing dates in the *Times* for mail to Japan via Vancouver were from October 25 to October 31. The cover reached Vancouver on November 4 where it was put on board the *Empress of Japan*, which sailed from Vancouver on November 10 and reached Yokohama on November 24. The date in the receiving postmark at Tokyo is not clear.

The cover shown in Figure 4 is an example of United States mail via Vancouver to China. The cover was posted in Chicago on 29 June 1900 and bears transit marks applied at Vancouver (4 July 1900), Shanghai (July 28), Chefoo (August 3) and Tsingtau on its way to Ichow (now Ichowfu, in Shandong Province). It was carried on the *Empress of China*, leaving Vancouver on July 9, 1900.

Notices in *The New York Times* list the closing time in New York for mails to be carried by the *Doric* from San Francisco through June 25, for the *Victoria* from Tacoma up to June 26, and for the *Empress of China* through July 3. The notice states that "[M]ails for China and Japan, via Vancouver, close here daily at 6:30 P.M. up to July 3, inclusive, for dispatch per steamship *Empress of China* (registered mail must be directed 'via Vancouver')." Closing times in Chicago would probably be one day later than those in New



Figure 3. Double-rate letter to Tokyo from New York City, posted 30 October 1898. No Vancouver endorsement, but the Vancouver backstamp indicates transit by *Empress of Japan*, which left Vancouver November 10 and reached Yokohama November 24.

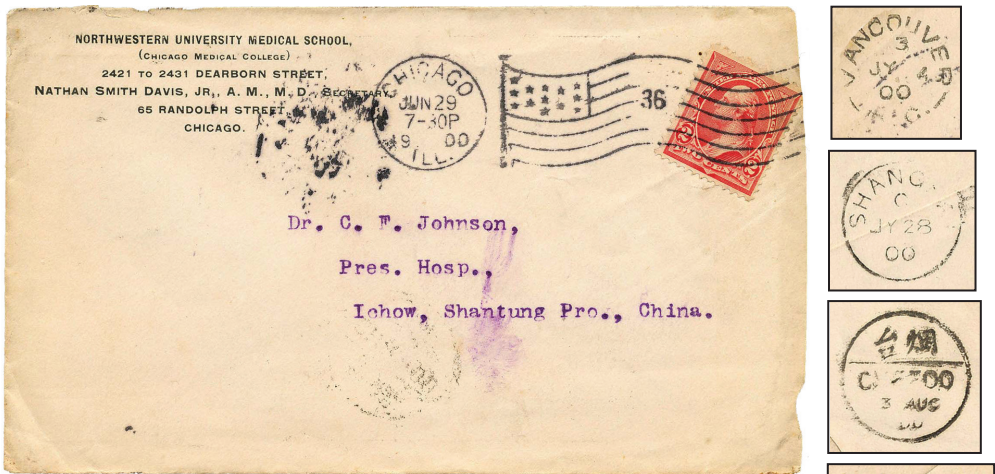


Figure 4. From Chicago to China, via Vancouver and the CPR *Empress of China*, which departed Vancouver July 9, 1900. This cover was underfranked but accepted as paying the 5¢ rate. Transit backstamps show Shanghai (July 28), Chefoo (August 3) and Tsingtau (date unclear) on the route to Ichow (now Ichowfu, in Shandong Province).

York. The closing dates indicate why this unendorsed cover was sent to Vancouver—it was mailed too late for any other route. With just 2¢ postage the cover was underfranked; but it was accepted as prepaid to its destination.

In addition to these covers to Japan and China, I have one cover to Hong Kong and one to Singapore. The Singapore cover, from 1895, is shown in Figure 5. Franked with one 1¢ and two 2¢ First Bureau stamps, it was posted at University Park, Oregon, on 9 August 1895. It bears the endorsement (at lower left) “Via Vancouver B.C.” and postmarks applied at Portland (August 9) and Vancouver (August 11). The cover was backstamped received at Singapore on September 22. The earliest CPR sailing from Vancouver was the *Empress of Japan* on 26 August 1895. She reached Hong Kong on September 17.





Figure 5. Via Vancouver to Singapore: Posted at University Park, Oregon, 9 August 1895. Via *Empress of China*, departing Vancouver 26 August, 1895; 5¢ UPU rate paid by First Bureau stamps.

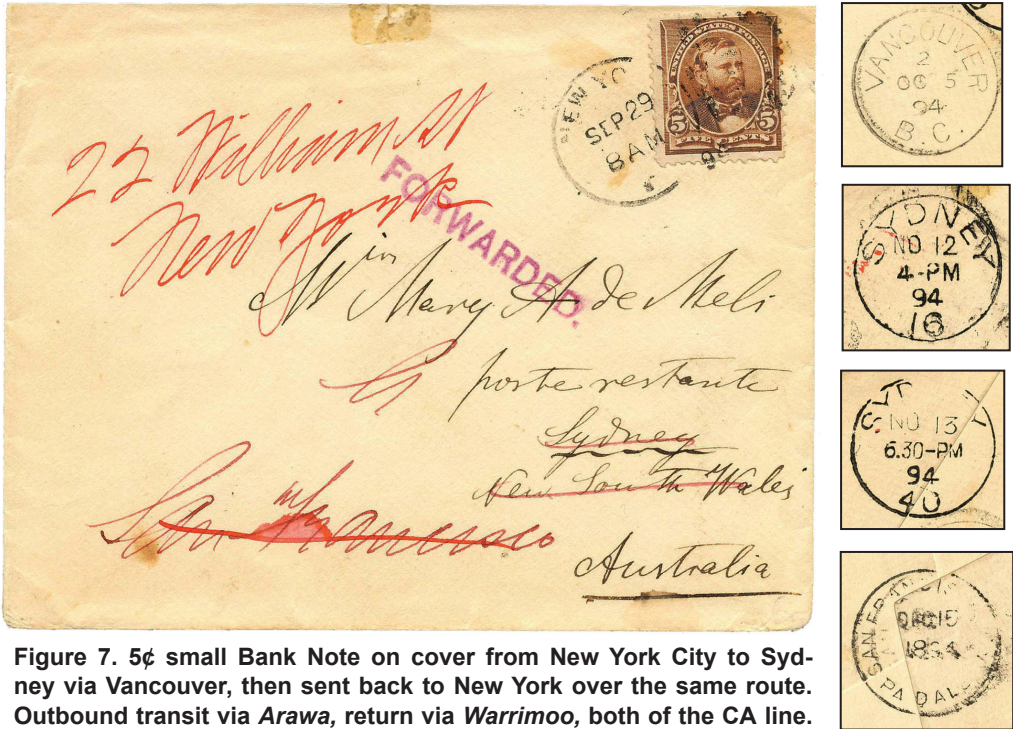
### Covers via Canadian Australian Royal Mail Steamship Co. (CA line)

Nineteenth century covers from the United States to Australasia via British Columbia are uncommon but more numerous than those to the Orient. I have found several dozen. The CA line departure dates were published in *The New York Times* soon after its first sailing on 14 June 1893. The 10 July 1893 issue of the *Times* contains this new “Post Office Notice” for via-Vancouver mail: “Mails for China, Japan, Hawaii, and Australia, via Vancouver (specially addressed only) close at this office daily at 6:30 p.m.” By November 1895, the requirement for special addressing was sometimes omitted.

Figure 6 shows a 2¢ green government entire envelope, uprated with 1¢ and 2¢ small Bank Note stamps, posted at Los Angeles on 5 July 1894 and addressed to Melbourne, Victoria. Backstamps indicate it passed through San Francisco July 8 and Vancouver on July 13. The CA line’s *Warrimoo* carried this letter to Sydney, where it arrived on August 9. It was marked received at Melbourne the next day.



Figure 6. Via Vancouver to Melbourne: 2¢ envelope with small Bank Note stamps, posted at Los Angeles 5 July 1894. Transpacific carriage by *Warrimoo*, Canadian Australian Royal Mail Steamship Co.



**Figure 7. 5¢ small Bank Note on cover from New York City to Sydney via Vancouver, then sent back to New York over the same route. Outbound transit via *Arawa*, return via *Warrimoo*, both of the CA line.**

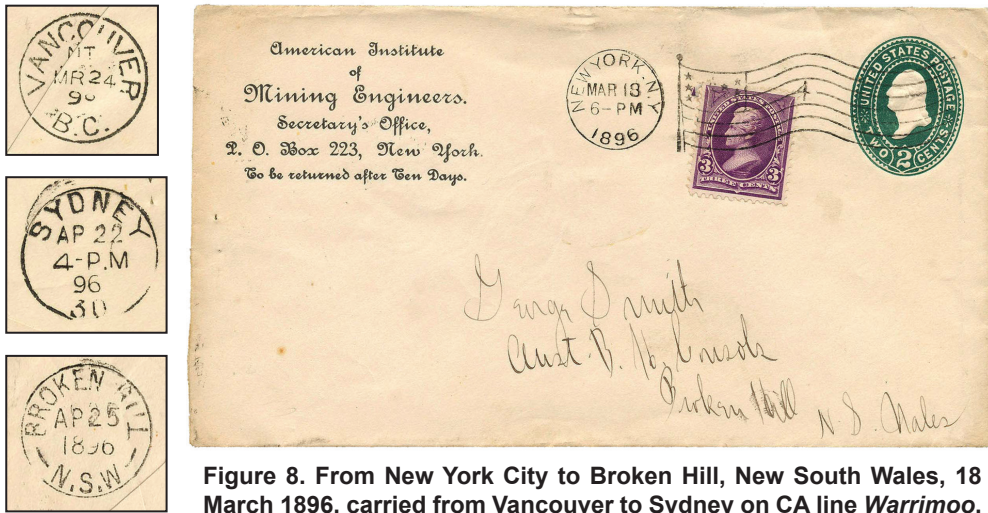
Figure 7 illustrates an unusual cover from New York to Sydney via Vancouver that was then sent back to New York over the same route. Franked with a 5¢ small Bank Note stamp, the cover was mailed on 29 September 1894, reaching Vancouver on October 5. The CA line *Arawa*, which made six round trips for the CA line while the *Miowera* was being repaired, departed Vancouver with this letter on October 16 and reached Sydney on November 12. On November 13, the cover was forwarded from Sydney to San Francisco, and there readdressed to New York. The first postmark after Sydney was applied at San Francisco at 3:30 p.m. on December 15. To reach San Francisco, the cover must have travelled by closed mail bag to Vancouver aboard the *Warrimoo*. This steamer departed Sydney on November 19 and arrived in Vancouver on December 13. Routing back through Vancouver saved the letter almost a week because the next direct ship for San Francisco left Sydney on November 26 and arrived there on December 20.

Figure 8 shows another 2¢ green entire envelope, here uprated to the 5¢ UPU rate by a 3¢ Jackson First Bureau stamp, posted at New York City on 18 March 1896 and sent to Broken Hill, New South Wales. Carried on the *Warrimoo*, it bears transit postmarks of Vancouver (March 24) and Sydney (April 22). During the first several months of 1896, post office notices in the *New York Times* stated that “[M]ails for Australia (except West Australia), Hawaii and Fiji Islands per steamship *Warrimoo* (from Vancouver) close here daily after Feb. 29 and up to March 23 at 6:30 PM.”

A dispatching change appeared in 1899.<sup>7</sup> A report from San Francisco dated March 7 says that new postal orders were starting that week. The *Gaelic*, leaving Thursday, March 9 for China via Honolulu, would carry letters to Australia. These letters would be dropped at Honolulu, and taken south from there by the next CA line ship from Vancouver. The claim was that this new service could save up to 13 days of transit time. I have not yet seen mail carried by this route.

Most mail from the United States to New Zealand was dispatched via San Francisco. Hoping to draw a contract from the New Zealand government, Huddart had the steamships





**Figure 8. From New York City to Broken Hill, New South Wales, 18 March 1896, carried from Vancouver to Sydney on CA line *Warrimoo*.**

of the CA line call at Wellington, New Zealand southbound from October 1897 to April 1899. However, when Queensland offered a subsidy, Brisbane replaced Wellington as a port of call.

In 1894, the United States Post Office excluded New Zealand from Australasian mail that could be dispatched to Vancouver.<sup>8</sup> But in mid 1897, when Wellington became a port of call, New Zealand was included in mails forwarded to Vancouver for carriage by the CA line.<sup>9</sup>

My single 19th century cover from the United States to New Zealand is shown in Figure 9. This is a double-rate registered cover mailed to Dunedin and sent from New York on 24 May 1898. Double UPU postage of 10¢ and the 8¢ registration fee were paid with a 3¢ and three 5¢ First Bureau stamps. Backstamps on this cover are from New York (May 24, 1898), St. Paul (May 26), Winnipeg (May 27), Vancouver (May 30) and Dunedin (June 27). This letter was carried south on the *Aorangi*, which departed from Vancouver on June 2 and arrived at Wellington on June 25.

Because there were frequent sailings between San Francisco and Honolulu, Hawaii is another scarce destination for United States mail via Vancouver. Figure 10 shows the earliest of the covers known to me, a UPU postal card mailed in Anaheim, California on 29 September 1896 and addressed to Laupahoe, Hawaii. Its transit postmarks, both on the address side, are Vancouver (October 3) and Honolulu (October 16). This card was carried to Honolulu on the *Warrimoo*, which sailed from Vancouver on October 8. It was mailed during a period of over two weeks that had no mail steamer from San Francisco to Hawaii. In 1900, a United States order stated that all mails for the Hawaiian Islands not specially addressed shall be forwarded to San Francisco.<sup>10</sup>

### Conclusion

Why were so few letters sent westbound across the Pacific Ocean via Vancouver? The CPR steamships to the Orient were fast. The CA line steamers to Australasia had convenient departure dates which complemented those of the sailings from San Francisco. Despite these advantages and the application of the first-packet principle, little United States mail was dispatched across the Pacific through British Columbia. This was probably because sailings of United States ships from San Francisco and other ports outnumbered the CPR and CA line voyages. It is possible that United States correspondents chose to patronize their national carriers. And U.S. postal clerks may have been advised to favor United States ships if there was a choice of dispatch routes.



Figure 9. Registered cover from New York City to Denedin, New Zealand, via Vancouver. Transpacific carriage via CA line Aorangi, departing Vancouver June 2, 1898. Double-rate UPU postage plus 8¢ registry fee paid by one 3¢ and three 5¢ First Bureau stamps.



Figure 10. UPU postal card, sent 29 September 1896 from Anaheim, California to Hawaii, via Vancouver (via Warimoo, departing October 8), during a period of more than two weeks when there was no steam service from San Francisco to Hawaii.



In 1996, Arthur Leggett showed me a three-volume collection of international covers from China. Many of the covers were sent to Europe via Suez. Most of the covers to North America were sent through San Francisco. Only five of the many transpacific covers had travelled via the *Empress* route. In the intervening years, I have found that this pattern was representative of mail from other Asian ports. As noted above, United States transpacific mail from Asia or Australasia is more common than south or westbound mail. This makes collecting transpacific mail from the United States via British Columbia a pleasant challenge.

### Endnotes

1. "Linking the Atlantic to the Pacific: Canada's Pacific Maritime Mails—The 'ALL-RED' Route Around the World," *The American Philatelist* (June 1996) pp. 522-539; *Canada's Transpacific Maritime Mails*, British North America Philatelic Society (September 1999); Whiteley, D.H. "Steam on the North Pacific to the Orient, 1887-1891," *Postal History Society of Canada Journal*, No. 74 (June 1993), pp. 50-59.
2. Gray Scrimgeour, "U.S. Shipborne Trans-Pacific Mail through B.C. Ports, and the Firstpacket Practice," *PHSC Journal*, No. 109 (March 31, 2002), pp. 5-9.
3. [http://www.postalhistorycanada.net/php/Library/Resarch/ShipTables/int\\_pacific.php](http://www.postalhistorycanada.net/php/Library/Resarch/ShipTables/int_pacific.php). (Last viewed 11-29-2017.)
4. P. Cockrill, *Listing of Mail Carrying Steamship Lines 1899*. Hampstead Norreys, Newbury, Cockrill Press, Booklet No. 59. Official listing of shipping companies by the Imperial German P.O., 1899.
5. G.P. Molnar, *Ship Letters of Australia: 1788-1901, Volume 2, The Orient Line*. Sydney, Australian States Study Circle of the Royal Sydney Philatelic Club (1992), pp. 65-66.
6. Library and Archives Canada, RG3, C-2, Vol. 617, file 5036; *U.S. Postal Bulletin*, General Order No. 437, Vol. 19, No. 5629 (August 15, 1898).
7. *Portland Oregonian*, March 9, 1899.
8. *U.S. Postal Bulletin*, General Order No. 371, Vol. 15, No. 4218 (January 3, 1894).
9. *U.S. Postal Bulletin*, General Order No. 421, Vol. 18, No. 5330 (August 23, 1897).
10. *U.S. Postal Bulletin*, General Order No. 479, Vol. 21, No. 6214 (July 17, 1900). ■

## Get High Market Prices On the Spot with Mystic... without waiting until after an auction to see what you're getting!

One of the biggest benefits of selling your stamps to Mystic, besides getting the best price, is receiving our generous offer immediately.

With Mystic you get high market prices for your stamps while avoiding the hassle of auctions, middlemen, or delays. You get the money you deserve right away for all your stamps, not just the best in your collection. Our offer is for every stamp you want to sell – no cherry-picking.

Contact us today and our expert buyers will give you honest advice on how get more for your stamps without the wait. We'll travel to view your

high-quality collection – just call to arrange a time that's convenient for you at your home, office or bank.

Dealing with Mystic is easy. Best of all, you can be confident you're receiving what your stamps are really worth – maybe more than you think. Take the stress, guesswork and delays out of selling your stamps. Call today!



Don Sundman  
President  
Mystic Stamp Company

### We're looking for the following...

- ★ Rare/High-quality US and foreign stamps
- ★ United States collections of all qualities
- ★ Worldwide new issues
- ★ British and European colonies
- ★ China stamps (all Asia stamps)
- ★ Entire dealer stocks, store inventory, show dealer and mail order dealer stocks
- ★ Stamp and coin accumulations/mixed collections (they don't need to be organized)

## OFFICIALS

ALAN C. CAMPBELL, EDITOR

### ILLUSTRATED OFFICIAL CORNER CARDS, 1873-1884

ALAN C. CAMPBELL

#### Introduction

In the last decades of the free-frank era leading up to the introduction of Official stamps, government envelopes typically had an imprinted corner card in the upper right, with a space allocated for the franking signature. It seems obvious that this location was selected so that postal clerks, expecting to find there a postage stamp that needed canceling, would quickly spot the frank. From an aesthetic point of view, it is regrettable that for the most part, these envelopes printed to government specifications included just the facts, ma'am: the name of the department in a bold Gothic typeface, the name of the subordinate office, and the words "Official Business" in a smaller, sans-serif typeface.

In the remarkable exception of Figure 1, we illustrate an addressed but unsealed legal-size envelope from the late 1860s, with an ornate emblem for the General Land Office. This engraving—a bald eagle with a majestic wingspan perched on a stars-and-stripes shield, with a radiating sunset in the background of an idyllic western landscape, and a transit on a stand in the foreground, all framed within an ornate machine-engraved scrollwork circle—is so spectacular that I've used it as a frontispiece on the title page of my collection for many years. Postally used examples are quite rare, and the few I've seen were of this color combination: red printed on a dull blue lithographed lined field. But unused examples printed in black on yellow, burnt orange, or ochre gray backgrounds also survive.

Around the world, in the evolution of special stamps for the use of government officials, expedience—in the form of overprinting regular-issue stamps—typically won out. In contrast, the Official stamps prepared for use by the subordinate departments of the United States executive branch—90 face-different stamps engraved and ready to go on July 1, 1873 (with two supplemental values, the 24¢ Agriculture and the 24¢ Treasury, added a



Figure 1. Grand seal of the General Land Office on a striking and colorful free-frank envelope from the late 1860s, addressed but unsealed, probably delivered by messenger.



few months later)—were a far more elaborate production. All of the departments were well aware of the upcoming change, and arranged to have their official envelopes reprinted, with the corner card moving to the upper left to make room for the adhesive stamp, and the space for the free frank eliminated. It seems not an unreasonable expectation that these new envelopes would be designed with a pride commensurate to the beauty of the new Official stamps, and printed in shades to compliment the distinctive color assigned to each department. In this article, we will review from surviving evidence the use of engraved illustrated corner cards on envelopes prepared for use with the new Official stamps and postal stationery.

### Illustrated official corner cards

The one department that really stepped up to the plate was Justice, which had begun operations exactly three years before, on July 1, 1870. For legal documents to be mailed out by the staff of the Attorney General, the new departmental seal—a bald eagle on a shield clutching an olive branch, and incorporating the motto “QUI PRO DOMINA JUSTITIA SEQUITUR”—was printed in crimson on the left side of the envelope. According to scholars, the motto is rubbishy Latin, which loosely translates as “Who prosecutes on behalf of Lady Justice” (presumably referring to the Attorney General). The seal over time has had heraldic mistakes corrected, the most noticeable being that on the current seal, the eagle clutches in its left talons 13 arrows, to bring it into accordance with the obverse of the Great Seal of the United States as it appears on the back of the one dollar bill. Also, on the modern panel above the shield’s stripes (the “chief” in heraldic nomenclature), the stars have been eliminated.

In Figure 2, we illustrate one of many covers surviving from the famous Goff correspondence to Clarksburg, West Virginia. This cover, ex-Lockyear and Ainsworth, is the only three-value Justice cover recorded, and one of three recorded uses of the 30¢ Justice stamp.<sup>1</sup> Official envelopes from the Office of the Solicitor of the Treasury do not incorporate this seal (for obvious reasons), even though that office was furnished Justice stamps. Nor do small-sized Justice envelopes display the shield, presumably for space reasons. The official business envelopes used by the far-flung U.S. Attorneys appear to have been printed locally, with no standardized format.

Now, one might have expected certain other departments, with centralized operations in Washington, and no complex system of subordinate offices and bureaus, to print up re-designed envelopes in a more ornate style. The Executive Office itself, the Department of



**Figure 2. The crimson seal of the Department of Justice, on a large cover franked with 3¢, 6¢ and 30¢ Justice stamps. This is the only recorded three-value Justice cover.**

State, and the Department of Agriculture come first to mind. Sadly, this was not the case. Both the Executive Office and the Department of Agriculture whiffed completely. The Department of State had embassies, consulates and legations around the world, and some of the diplomats appear to have taken the initiative to have official envelopes printed up locally for their use. But based on surviving covers, only one—improbably the Consul General at Chemnitz, Saxony, Germany—took the trouble to have an emblem incorporated. This survives on a diplomatic pouch cover addressed to Beatrice, Nebraska, with the 3¢ State stamp having been added in Washington, D.C. before the envelope entered the regular mail stream.<sup>2</sup> The German artist/engraver seems to have taken some liberties, since the eagle’s head is now turned to his left towards the clutch of arrows, instead of right towards the olive branch, indicating an alarming preference for war over peace. To my knowledge, this is the only surviving example of a State illustrated corner card, and one of the highlights of the Lanphear collection. I don’t show it here because Lanphear plans to use it in a forthcoming article on diplomatic pouch covers.

The Department of the Interior was established in 1849 as a miscellaneous aggregation of unrelated offices. For the larger offices with their principal bureaucracies in the nation’s capital—such as the Office of the Secretary, the General Land Office, the Pension Office, and the U.S. Patent Office—the new envelopes printed up for use with Official stamps were fairly uniform, and standardized envelopes were even provided to some field agents. Again, we need to look to the smaller, more independent agencies to find illustrated corner cards. The U.S. Geological and Geographical Survey of the Territories, officially established in 1867, had a nice emblem subtly printed on small official envelopes in bistre and gray. These are mostly seen used in the 1878-79 time period. Figure 3 shows a small 1879 cover addressed to Professor Jules Marcou in Salins, France, with 2¢ and 3¢ Interior stamps paying the 5¢ UPU rate, ex-Starnes.<sup>3</sup> Professor Marcou, an early associate of the famous biologist Louis Agassiz (not a Darwinian), was a paleontologist at the Harvard Museum of Comparative Zoology. The “seal” on the cover incorporates a complex iconography of jumbled elements—a kerosene Aladdin’s lamp, crossed pickaxes, a surveyor’s transit on a stand, a book of botanical drawings, an unfurled chart, some expedient shortening of



**Figure 3. 1879 cover to France, franked with 2¢ and 3¢ Interior stamps and bearing the printed emblem of the U.S. Geological and Geographical Survey of the Territories. From the extensive correspondence of Harvard zoologist Jules Marcou.**



the Survey's name to make it fit, and a garland of shrubbery at the base—and may have been a graphic artist's fantasy rather than a true heraldic seal. A rough guess would be that fewer than ten examples of small covers incorporating this illustrated corner design have survived.

The Smithsonian Institution, under the aegis of the Department of the Interior, sent out its mail with various imprinted and handstamped corner cards and even some unusual labels. At this time, all its operations were centralized at the Castle, a purpose-built structure of red sandstone and brick in the Norman style, designed by James Renwick Jr. and originally completed in 1855 on an isolated parcel that eventually became the anchor for the National Mall. James Smithson, a talented amateur mineralogist, was the illegitimate son of the Duke of Northumberland. His wealth came from his mother's estate, and he died without issue in Genoa in 1829. From a contingent clause in his will, when his nephew also died without issue in 1835, "I then bequeath the whole of my property...to the United States of America to found at Washington, under the name of the Smithsonian Institution, an establishment for the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men." President Andrew Jackson dispatched Richard Rush (Secretary of the Treasury under his predecessor) in 1838 to collect Smithson's effects, which included eleven boxes of gold sovereigns. These were sent on to the mint in Philadelphia, where they were melted down and reminted, creating an endowment for the fledgling museum of over \$500,000.

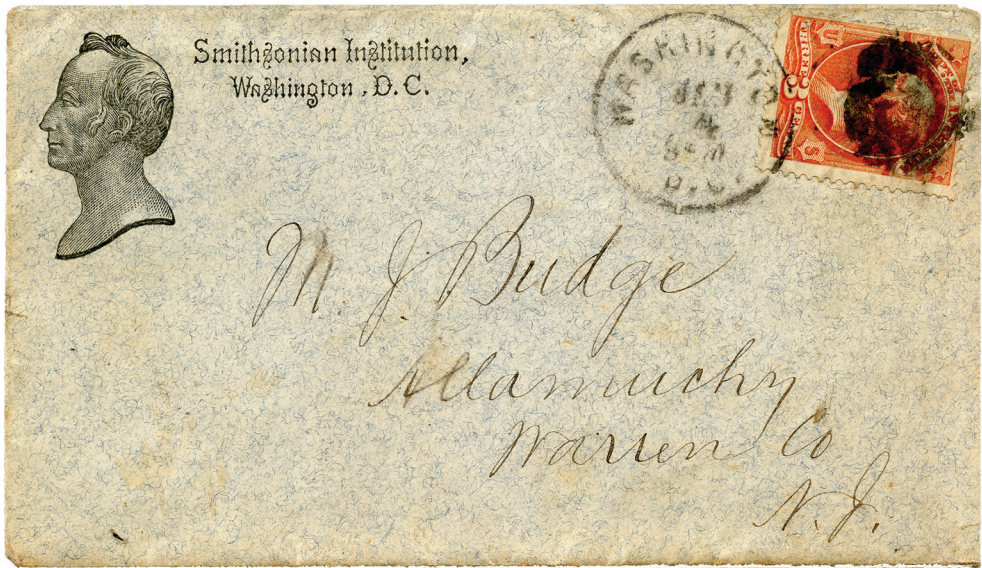
The first seal of the Smithsonian Institution was created in 1846 by engraver Edward Stabler, based on a round bronze portrait medallion attributed to the Engraver General of France, Pierre Joseph Tocher, which had been brought to this country by Rush.<sup>4</sup> This seal was adapted for use as a portrait corner card on some small Smithsonian envelopes. An example of the more common type is shown on the cover in Figure 4, with the round seal having been squashed into an oval. Single-rate domestic uses are typical but there exists an example with two 3¢ stamps, overpaying the 5¢ UPU rate to Leipzig, Germany.<sup>5</sup> The 1876 cover in Figure 4 is docketed as being from Professor Joseph Henry, the first secretary of the Smithsonian and an eminent scientist is his own right, having done seminal work in electromagnets and credited with inventing the electric doorbell.

Figure 5 shows a much rarer type, on which the bust is unadorned. I bought this example from a vest pocket dealer at a local show many years ago, and a second copy (now



Figure 4. 3¢ Interior cover with oval medallion depicting a bust of James Smithson.





**Figure 5. 3¢ Interior cover with an unadorned bust of James Smithson.**

owned by Lanphear) turned up later. All of these covers bearing the image of Smithson appear to have been printed on a grayish recycled paper with prominent blue threads.

While this article is meant to be about official corner cards, it is impossible to resist including one visually arresting mailing label. Official mailing labels were typically used on wrappers and parcels, often with a line for the clerk's signature certifying that no written matter had been enclosed. Also, reply envelopes with printed addresses, often pre-stamped, were used extensively. But in a singular case, presented in Figure 6, enough mail was anticipated from the U.S. Patent Office in Washington, D.C. to the Western Patent Office Agency



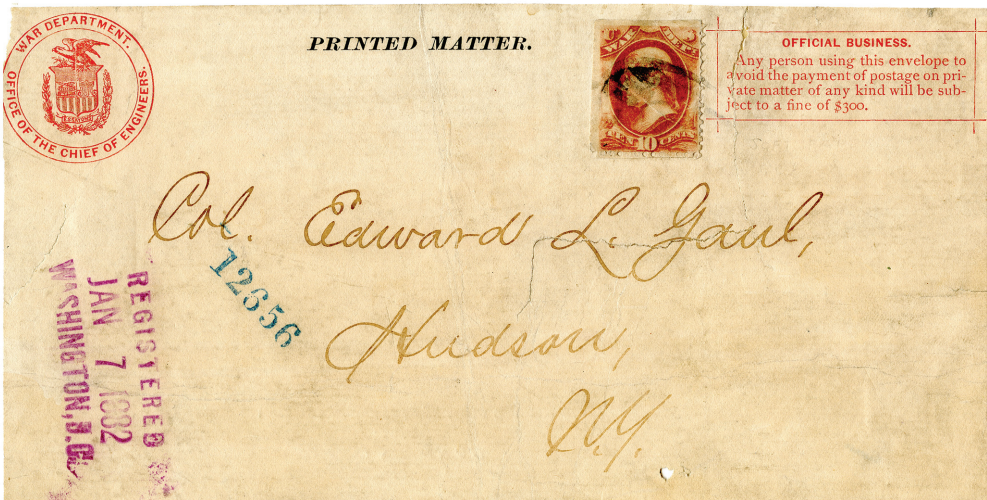
**Figure 6. Striking preprinted address label used by the U.S. Patent Office in Washington on mailings to its western branch office in Galesburg, Illinois. This oversized envelope was franked with 3¢ and 6¢ Interior stamps paying triple-rate postage.**



in Galesburg, Illinois to justify having a grand label designed and printed. The draftsman who created this, while out of his depth when rendering the hand at left, clearly relished the opportunity to show off his mastery of perspective with two vanishing points. In Figure 6, the label is affixed to an oversized triple-weight cover posted in July, 1874. I have seen two other examples of this unforgettable mailing label. One is quite rumped. The other adorns a quintuple-rate cover, franked with a single 15¢ Interior stamp, now in Lanphear’s exhibition collection.<sup>6</sup>

As was the case in the Department of the Interior, the War Department’s principal offices—Quartermaster General’s Office, Adjutant General’s Office, Office of the Chief Signal Officer—did not go in for illustrated corner cards, and we have to seek them out in the smaller agencies. The Office of the Chief Engineer (predecessor of the Army Corps of Engineers) had a very fine emblem printed on some small envelopes. I showed a handsome 1878 example in *Chronicle* 254.<sup>7</sup> This embellished coat-of-arms, with a shield within a shield, aspires to an heraldic design and incorporates elements from the Great Seal of the United States, but is rendered at such a tiny scale that I have not been able to blazon it out, especially the word on the ribbon. It also appears on some 2¢ and 3¢ Official postal stationery envelopes overprinted for the use of the Office of the Chief Engineer (UO48, UO54, UO55), but Dennis W. Schmidt, the acknowledged expert in this field, reports never having seen a used example. Figure 7 shows a rare version of the crest, printed in red, encircled by the wording of the corner card. This is a printed matter penalty label, ex-Starnes and Lobdell, which was originally affixed to a wrapped book that was rather surprisingly sent by registered mail, requiring a supplemental 10¢ War stamp to pay the registry fee.<sup>8</sup>

The War Department’s Ordnance Department had its seal printed on envelopes and included the name of various arsenals. This seal—with crossed cannons, a cannonball, and exploding flames overlaid by a stoutly-buckled circular belt proclaiming “Ordnance Department, U.S.A.”—is quite different from the official seal of the War Department. Figure 8 shows an example from the Watervliet Arsenal, posted in West Troy, New York. Small 6¢ double domestic rate covers like this, from any department, are quite scarce. I have similar covers from the Rock Island Arsenal (Illinois) and the New York Agency, the latter printed in red on a legal-size envelope, and I have also seen penalty envelopes from other arsenals, such as the Watertown Arsenal in Massachusetts. This appears to be a unique phenomenon:



**Figure 7. 10¢ “Printed matter” penalty label with the embellished coat-of-arms of the Office of the Chief Engineer in red. This was originally affixed to a wrapped book sent by registered mail, thus requiring the 10¢ War stamp to prepay the registry fee.**



Figure 8. Cover bearing the crossed-cannons seal of the Ordnance Department, franked with a 6¢ War stamp (for double rate) and sent from the Watervliet Arsenal, West Troy, N.Y. to New York City. Small double-rate Official covers like this are scarce.



Figure 9. Crossed cannons and anchor seal of the Navy Ordnance Department, on a cover franked with 1¢ and 2¢ Navy stamps. One of five covers showing this combination.

Illustrated corner cards printed in Washington but customized and distributed for use outside the nation's capital.

The Navy Department had its own Bureau of Ordnance. This bureau, which seems to have generated very little official mail, nevertheless proudly had its seal imprinted on small-size official envelopes. The seal has a huge anchor uncomfortably wedged between crossed cannons. Figure 9 shows the only recorded example of this corner card franked with Navy stamps, addressed to the commandant of the New York Navy Yard. This cover, with a provenance from Morrison Waud to Robert L. Markovits to Rollin C. Huggins Jr., is one of only five covers recorded on which 1¢ and 2¢ Navy stamps were used to pay the



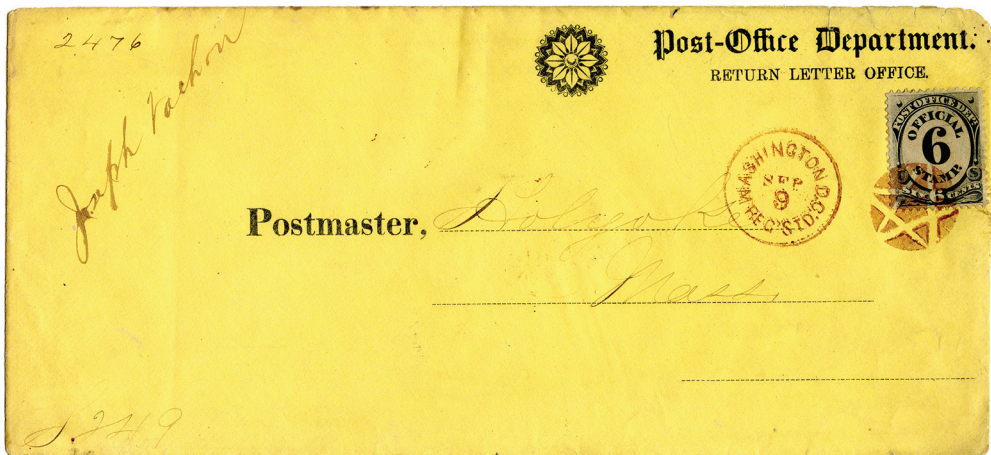


**Figure 10. Back of a 6¢ Navy cover, showing the hand-stamped circular seal of the Navy Hydrographic Office, always struck on the reverse. Courtesy of Alfred E. Staubus.**

3¢ single domestic rate.<sup>9</sup> An early Navy penalty envelope in the Lanphear collection also incorporates the Navy Ordnance seal.

Courtesy of Alfred E. Staubus, Figure 10 shows a hand-stamped circular seal used by the Navy Hydrographic Office, with a bald eagle perched nervously on a listing fouled anchor. The Hydrographic Office, part of the Bureau of Navigation, was established in 1866 to publish maps, charts and nautical books required in navigation. Previously, U.S. navigators were forced to rely almost exclusively on British charts. This is another Navy office from which relatively little official mail has survived. Unfortunately, the few surviving covers incorporating this hand-stamped seal are hard to display, since it was invariably struck on the back flap, just at the juncture where a wax seal (such as those applied by the Department of State) would normally have been placed.

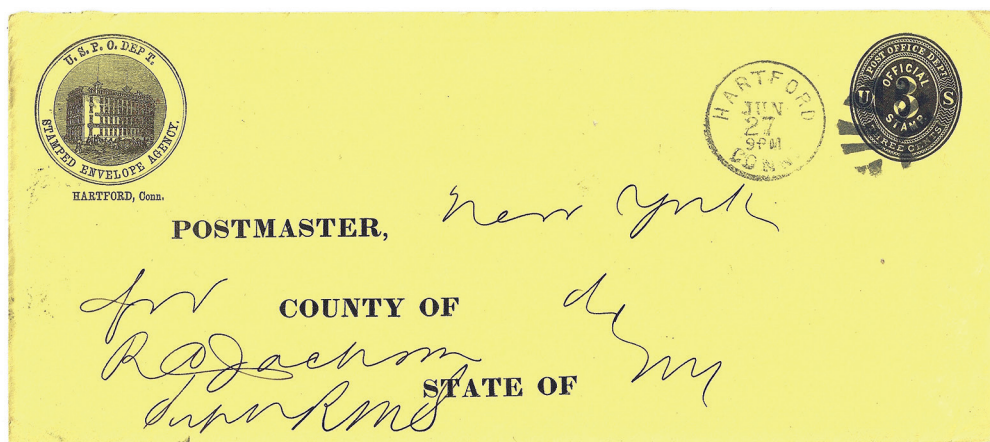
Finally, we come to the Post Office Department itself. Admittedly, it's a bit of a stretch to count as illustrated corner cards the four symbols used by the Dead Letter Office



**Figure 11. 6¢ Post Office stamp on a cover showing free registration, sent from the Return Letter Office to a local postmaster. The printed rosette indicates valuable content.**

on 1877 Postal Service envelopes when returning undeliverable mail. A triangle indicated that the letter had been sent back by the returning division; a circle indicated that the letter was unmailable, either held for postage or short-paid, although the enclosure was of no value; a square indicated that the contents were bulky; a Star of David hexagram or double triangle indicated that the Minor Division had determined that the contents were items of some value. Tony Wawrukiewicz, citing Wegner, states that these symbols were introduced in 1877, but earlier mail from the Return Letter Office incorporated a fancy rosette signifying valuable contents.<sup>10</sup> Figure 11 illustrates perhaps the sexiest of the latter, most of which derive from a post office in Holyoke, Massachusetts. It appears that the Holyoke postmaster retained the outer covers after returning their contents to the original frustrated senders. This double rate cover, ex-Starnes and franked with a 6¢ Post Office stamp, was sent registered free. What makes it exceptional is the duplexed cancellation with an incised pentagram killer struck in red.<sup>11</sup> Evidence that the registry division of the main Washington, D.C. Post Office sometimes used red and blue canceling ink, in addition to the standard black printer's ink, is gradually emerging.

In Figure 12, courtesy of Dennis W. Schmidt, we illustrate a 3¢ Post Office official postal stationery envelope (Scott UO7), probably posted in 1876, from the Stamped Envelope Agency in Hartford, Connecticut, with a circular engraving of the factory there. Schmidt reports that among surviving examples (unused being more common than used), variations in the wording exist: "United States Stamped Envelopes Works" vs. "U.S.P.O. Dep't Stamped Envelope Agency." Charles A. Fricke first wrote about these envelopes, speculating that they must have been printed by the Plimpton Manufacturing Co. as a special favor to H.T. Sperry, the agent at the U.S. Stamped Envelope Agency. Quite an act of hubris, since who other than Sperry would have been more familiar with the strictly approved styles and types for return addresses on Post Office stamped envelopes?<sup>12</sup>



**Figure 12. 3¢ Post Office official envelope (Scott UO7), with a circular engraving of the Stamped Envelope Agency in Hartford, Connecticut. Courtesy Dennis W. Schmidt.**

Bringing up the rear is the Treasury Department, for I have never seen an illustrated corner card from this department, even though it had many field offices and generated a tremendous amount of official mail. But perhaps a very business-like approach to its imprinted envelopes was sound, since what citizen—trembling as he confronts mail from the Assessor's Office or Internal Revenue—would want it packaged like a sweepstakes come-on from Publishers' Clearing House? I can think of one instance where the Treasury Department revealed its pulse could be raised. By special statute, the Redemption Division of the U.S. Treasury was entitled, with the Treasurer's frank, to free registration in sending



new bills in exchange for mutilated currency. Of the surviving covers that actually once contained real paper money, the earliest were printed all in red, and the latest all in black, but in between there were (gasp!) envelopes printed in both red and black. Now, most imprinted official envelopes were printed in black, a very few in red, blue, or violet, and some from the Departments of Agriculture and State had lithographed lined backgrounds. But in my many years of collecting Official covers, these special Treasury envelopes circa 1876 are the only bi-color printings I've ever seen.

### Illustrated corner cards on penalty envelopes

Congress authorized the use of penalty franks from the the departmental headquarters in Washington, D.C., effective July 1, 1877. On March 3, 1879, the use of penalty franks was expanded to include field offices, but an opinion by Attorney General Benjamin Harrison Brewster in 1882 prohibited field office correspondence with private citizens without supplemental postage. Except in the expedient cases where penalty frank hand-stamps were utilized, the conversion to using penalty envelopes obviously required new printings.

Figure 13 shows a dramatic essay for a Post Office Department penalty envelope, which was printed in three colors (red, blue, and brown) on both blue and white paper, in 13 different sizes. Postal stationery essays are not included in Scott's specialized catalog, but they are listed in Thorp-Bartels as #601 in all their mind-numbing variations, even though for some purists, non-denominated franks do not constitute true postal stationery.<sup>13</sup>

This item is included here to demonstrate a potential aesthetic opportunity that was never fully actualized. This is a shame because most penalty envelopes, lacking the flourish of colorful stamps, tend to be bland on first appearance, an important factor in this collecting field having been so long neglected. During the transitional period, 1877-1884, when



**Figure 13. Essay for a Post Office Department penalty envelope, a striking design that was never produced.**

penalty franks and Official stamps were used simultaneously (or in conjunction to pay foreign postage or registry fees), a few illustrated corner cards (such as the cross cannons seals of the War and Navy ordnance departments) continued to be used. But it wasn't until later that certain other agencies took the initiative to have illustrated corner cards printed up. Lanphear has spent many years building up the definitive exhibit collection of early penalty envelopes, and I would be a spoilsport if I were to steal his thunder and include here a few of his rarest and most impressive examples. The topic of illustrated corner cards on official penalty envelopes deserves its own survey article. I am indebted to Lanphear for reviewing this article, and to Schmidt and Staubus for providing additional information. Unless otherwise noted, all the items pictured are from my collection.

### Endnotes

1. Spink Shreves Galleries, April 17, 2009, "The William J. Ainsworth Collection," lot 423.
2. Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries, sale 577, April 10, 1981, "The Crystal Collection," lot 337. This was the collection of Rae Ehrenberg.
3. Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries, sale 945, October 25-26, 2007, "The Charles J. Starnes Collection," lot 3865.
4. Information about the Smithsonian Institution and its founder was cribbed from various sites on the Internet.
5. Matthew Bennett International sale 240, October 2, 2004, Lot 1908, ex-Markovits, now in the collection of Alfred E. Staubus.
6. Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries, sale 577, April 10, 1981, "The Crystal Collection," lot 266.
7. Alan C. Campbell, "Official Covers from the Professor O. C. Marsh Correspondence," *Chronicle* 254 (May, 2017), Figure 2, pg. 177.
8. Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries, sale 945, lot 3861, and sale 1003, Lot 5516.
9. Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries, sale 1123, April 8, 2016, "The Rollin C. Huggins Jr. Collection of United States Official Issues," lot 546.
10. Thomas A. Wegner, "The Washington D.C. Dead Letter Office to 1920: A Monograph of Postal History," 1994.
11. Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries, sale 945, October 25-26, 2007, "The Charles J. Starnes Collection," lot 3817.
12. Charles A. Fricke, "Picture This!," *The American Philatelist*, February 1988, pp. 140-141.
13. Thorp-Bartels, *Catalogue of Stamped Envelopes and Wrappers of the United States*, 6th edition, pp. 363-364. ■

---

**AmeriStamp Expo, Birmingham, AL Feb 23-25**  
**Garfield Perry, Cleveland, OH Mar 22-24**  
**Westpex, Burlingame, CA Apr 27-29**

**US Postal History** Colonial to Prexies:  
Transatlantics, Destinations, Expos, Inland Waterways,  
Railroads, CSA, Express, Possessions, & Military



**STEPHEN T. TAYLOR**

5 Glenbuck Road, Surbiton, Surrey KT6 6BS England  
Phone: 011-4420-83909357

info@stephentaylor.co.uk      www.stephentaylor.co.uk

***Your American Dealer in Britain***



**U.S.-BREMEN CONVENTION:  
MARKINGS FROM THE ONE-MONTH PERIOD**

**DWAYNE O. LITTAUER**

Recently, a German auction offered a cover with two markings that had not previously been documented in the literature concerning the postal convention between the United States and Bremen. They are from the one-month period during June 1851. One is the earliest recorded handstamp related to the convention showing silbergroschen (sgr) values and the other is the only double-rate handstamp known from this one-month period. This article will explain both the kreuzer and the sgr markings during this period as well as manuscript sgr ratings, which indicate additional sgr handstamps that likely were created during this period. These sgr markings have not been documented, and covers bearing them may not have survived.

To understand these markings, it is necessary to explain the rates under the convention and the Hanover markings that were used in Bremen on convention mail during this time.

**Rates under the 1847 U.S.-Bremen convention**

The 1847 U.S.-Bremen convention was different from later postal conventions in that it did not specify a single rate from anywhere in the U.S. to anywhere in Germany. Instead, the rates between the U.S. and the German states varied based on the distance within the U.S. and based on the distance and the destination within Germany. The Act of Congress approved 3 March 1845 specified a rate by American vessels of 24¢ up to ½ ounce, 48¢ up to one ounce, and 15¢ for each additional ½ ounce or fraction of an ounce. To this, U.S. internal postage was to be added.<sup>1</sup> Another act approved the same day reduced U.S. internal rates to 5¢ up to 300 miles and 10¢ over 300 miles.<sup>2</sup>

Since the agreement was only with the Hanseatic republic of Bremen, the convention itself did not establish rates within the German states, which at this time were not unified. Instead, Bremen was made an agent of the U.S. Post Office Department in exchange for a commission of 20 percent of the amount it collected. This was similar to the average paid to postmasters in the U.S. Bremen negotiated reduced rates with a number of German states. For example, rates for Hanover and Brunswick were reduced to 6¢. Rates for Prussia, Saxony, and Thurn and Taxis were reduced to 12¢, which included transit postage through Hanover. No German internal charge was to be levied on mail to Bremen.<sup>3</sup>

Similarly, no U.S. internal postage was charged on letters to and from New York City. When added to the 24¢ sea rate up to ½ ounce, the resulting rates for prepaid or part-paid eastbound letters up to ½ ounce were 24¢ from New York; 29¢ if the origin was under 300 miles from New York; and 34¢ if the origin was over 300 miles from New York. Double letters weighing up to one ounce were twice those rates. Further increments of ½ ounce or a fraction of a ½ ounce were 9¢ less, i.e., an additional 15¢ (for 24¢ rate covers), an additional 20¢ (for 29¢ rate covers), or an additional 25¢ (for 34¢ rate covers).

Since European post offices would not know the distances from New York to destination post offices in the U.S., the regulations specified that on unpaid letters from the U.S. or prepaid letters to the U.S. the 29¢ rate would apply to letters to and from any part of New

York, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, or the District of Columbia. The 34¢ rate applied to such letters to or from any other part of the U.S. or Canada.<sup>4</sup>

Unpaid letters were to be marked in black with the amount owing to the dispatching country. Prepaid letters were to be marked with the portion of the postage owing to the receiving country and stamped “paid all,” both in red. If only the U.S. postage was paid on letters going to Europe or if only the European postage was paid on letters going to the U.S., the letter was to be stamped “paid part” in black and no accounting was to be stated. Separate mail bags were to be made up for mail addressed to New York, Bremen and Hamburg.<sup>5</sup>

The regulations offered several payment options. The whole postage could be paid by the recipient; or the whole postage could be prepaid to the destination. In addition, on eastbound letters, senders could pay the U.S. postage to Bremen and leave the European postage unpaid. And on westbound letters, senders could pay the European postage to Bremen and leave the U.S. postage unpaid.<sup>6</sup> Although not offered as an option in the regulations, mail from the U.S. could also be paid only to New York City, in which case, the New York exchange office would rate it the same as an unpaid letter originating in New York.<sup>7</sup>

### Hanover markings used in Bremen under the convention up to 31 May 1851

Mail arriving on the Ocean Steam Navigation Line (Ocean Line) steamships, *Washington* and *Hermann*, was to be delivered to the Bremen post office at Bremerhaven, and then forwarded to the post office at Bremen. Mail addressed to countries that were not on routes that Bremen operated were passed on to the Hanover post office in Bremen for onward transmission, often through the Thurn and Taxis postal system.<sup>8</sup>

It was Hanover rather than Bremen that applied the distinctive straight-line AMERI-

TABLE 1		
U.S. RATE	BREMEN DEBITS TO HANOVER	HANOVER DEBITS TO THURN AND TAXIS
24¢ (covers originating at or paid to New York)	9 <b>A M E R I C A</b> <b>ÜBER BREMEN</b>	<b>10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> OR 20<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub></b>
29¢ (origin less than 300 miles from New York)	<b>10<sup>4</sup>/<sub>12</sub></b> <b>A M E R I C A</b> <b>ÜBER BREMEN</b>	<b>12<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub></b>
34¢ (origin more than 300 miles from New York)	<b>12<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub></b> <b>A M E R I C A</b> <b>ÜBER BREMEN</b>	<b>14<sup>1</sup>/<sub>12</sub></b>
Paid only to Bremen; marked PAID PART at New York	<b>A M E R I C A</b> <b>ÜBER BREMEN</b>	<b>1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub></b>

Table 1. Debit handstamps used on Bremen Convention mail from the United States prior to June 1, 1851. All these markings were applied at the Hanover post office in Bremen.



CA/ÜBER BREMEN series of markings with a variety of numeral handstamps to indicate accounting on unpaid letters within the 24¢, 29¢, and 34¢ rate categories.<sup>9</sup> See Table 1. The two-line handstamps that included a numeral rate represented the amount in gutegroschen (ggr) Hanover owed to Bremen. Hanover created these only for the single 24¢ (9 ggr) and 34¢ (12¾ ggr) rates. For the 29¢ rate, the 10-11/12 ggr debit was written by hand. Double-rate debits were all written by hand.

To indicate its debit to Thurn and Taxis, Hanover used separate numeral handstamps for all three rates: 10½ ggr and its double 20½ ggr (equated to 45 and 89 kreuzer) for 24¢ and 48¢ rate covers; 12¼ ggr (equated to 53 kreuzer) for 29¢ rate covers; and 14 1/12 ggr (equated to 61 kreuzer) for 34¢ rate covers). A marking indicating 1½ ggr (equated to 6 kreuzer) was used for letters that were paid only to Bremen and marked PAID PART at New York.<sup>10</sup> Table 1 shows the Hanover markings, arrayed according to the U.S. rate they represented. Most of the markings are shown approximately lifesized, but a few have been diminished to fit the narrow *Chronicle* page format.

The following five covers illustrate the Hanover rate markings used during the period before 1 June 1851. A common feature of these covers is that as a letter traveled through the jurisdictions, the progressive debit markings were often written like fractions. The “numerator” generally was the sum of the prior unpaid fees and the “denominator” generally was the additional rate for the next leg. When a new fraction was written, the prior fraction usually was crossed out. In some cases, this results in covers of daunting complexity.

Figure 1 shows an example of the 24¢ rate, on a folded letter posted at Buffalo, New York, on 18 June 1849, addressed to Rottenburg, Württemberg. It was prepaid 10¢ for the over-300-mile rate to New York City. Since the letter was paid only to New York, it was treated as an unpaid letter from New York for purposes of accounting with Bremen. The



**Figure 1. 24¢ rate:** Folded letter from Buffalo, New York, 18 June 1849 to Rottenburg, Württemberg. Prepaid 10¢ for over-300-mile rate to New York, which debited 24¢ (9 ggr) to Bremen for sea postage. Hanover added a 1½ ggr transit fee creating the 10½ ggr (45 kr) debit to Thurn and Taxis, which added 8 kr transit fee for total of 53 kr. Additional 4 kr Württemberg internal postage resulted in total postage due of 57 kr.



**Figure 2. Double 24¢ rate: From Williamsport, Pennsylvania, 17 February 1851 to Württemberg. Prepaid 10¢ for double rate to New York. U.S. debit of 48¢ (18 ggr) to Bremen. Hanover 2½ ggr transit fee added for a 20½ ggr (89 kr) debit to Thurn and Taxis. Total due of 1 gulden 52 kr.**

New York clerk used a pen to cross out the **PAID** and **10** markings at top right and struck **24** in black to indicate the amount Bremen owed the United States for the sea postage. The letter was sent on the Ocean Line steamship *Hermann*, which departed New York 20 June 1849 and arrived at Bremerhaven 6 July 1849.<sup>11</sup> The letter was then sent from Bremerhaven to Bremen. Since it was addressed to Württemberg, the letter was turned over to the Hanover post office in Bremen, which applied **9 AMERICA/ÜBER BREMEN** in red.

This was the first sailing from which this marking is recorded used in red. It indicated Hanover owed to Bremen 9 ggr (about 24¢) for the sea postage. To this, Hanover added its 1½ ggr transit charge and struck its **10½** handstamp (the sum of these two amounts) which was Hanover's debit in ggr to Thurn and Taxis. Thurn and Taxis equated this amount to 45 kreuzer and added 8 kreuzer for transit to Württemberg, as indicated by the 45/8 manuscript fraction in faint greenish ink below the address. This fraction was then crossed out. To the 53 kreuzer total of this amount, 4 kreuzer was added, as indicated by the red manuscript "53/4" fraction. This fraction also was crossed out and the total of 57 kreuzer postage due was written in bold red crayon at the left.

Figure 2 shows a double-rate folded letter from Williamsport, Pennsylvania, post-marked 17 February 1851 and sent to Wahlheim, Württemberg. As indicated by Williamsport's blue markings at the upper right, the letter was prepaid 10¢ for double the 5¢ rate (under 300 miles) to New York. Unlike the prior cover, the New York clerk did not cross out the blue Williamsport **PAID** and **10** markings. But he struck the black **48** indicating a 48¢ debit to Bremen for double the sea rate. The letter traveled on the Ocean Line *Washington*, which departed New York 22 February 1851 and arrived at Bremerhaven March 12. As with the cover in Figure 1, which was also addressed to Württemberg, when the letter reached Bremen, it was passed on to the Hanover post office in Bremen. That office wrote in red crayon "1½ l" at the lower left to indicate that the weight was 1½ loth, thus a dou-





Figure 3. 29¢ rate: Hamburg, Pennsylvania, 12 April 1850 to Württemberg. Sent unpaid to New York. 29¢ (10-11/12 ggr) U.S. debit to Bremen for 5¢ U.S. internal under 300 miles plus 24¢ sea. Hanover 1½ ggr transit fee added for a 12¼ ggr (53 kr) debit to Thurn & Taxis, which added 8 kr transit fee for a total of 1 gulden 1 kr. Additional 4 kr Württemberg internal fee resulted in total due of 1 gulden 5 kr.

ble-weight letter. Hanover struck **AMERICA/ÜBER BREMEN** in red and wrote to the left in red crayon 18 (double the 9 ggr debit, which was part of the handstamp in the Figure 1 cover). This indicated that 18 ggr (about 48¢) was owed to Bremen. Hanover added 2⅔ ggr and applied its 20⅔ handstamp to indicate its debit in ggr to Thurn and Taxis. This is the only double-rate handstamp known during the period ending 31 May 1851.

Thurn and Taxis equated 20⅔ ggr to 89 kreuzer and added 15 kreuzer for transit to Württemberg. Both of these kreuzer amounts are one kreuzer less than double the prior cover's 45 kreuzer rate (which was equated to 10⅓ ggr) and its 8 kreuzer Württemberg transit. The double rate allowed for a more exact currency conversion. Thurn and Taxis added another 8 kreuzer for Württemberg internal postage, as shown by the red manuscript 89/15/8 across the address. This totaled 112 kreuzer or 1 gulden 52 kreuzer. This was the due postage shown by the bold red crayon 1.52 at lower right. Note the use of a period rather than an f after the gulden value.

Figure 3 shows a folded letter sent at the 29¢ rate. It was posted unpaid in Hamburg, Pennsylvania, on 12 April 1850, sent to Tübingen, Württemberg. Since the 5¢ under-300-miles rate was not paid, the New York clerk marked 29 to indicate a 29¢ debit to Bremen for 5¢ U.S. internal plus 24¢ sea postage. The letter was sent on the Ocean Line *Hermann*, which sailed from New York on 20 April 1850 and arrived in Bremerhaven May 10. The letter was passed to the Hanover post office in Bremen which struck **AMERICA/ÜBER BREMEN** in red and wrote at the top center 10 11/12, which was the ggr equivalent of 29¢ and served as Bremen's debit to Hanover. To this was added Hanover's 1½ ggr transit fee for a total of 12¼ ggr, shown by the red handstamp at the upper left. This was Hanover's debit in ggr to Thurn and Taxis, which equated that amount to 53 kreuzer and added 8 kreuzer transit, as shown by the red pen 53/8 fraction at the right. This fraction was subsequent-



**Figure 4. 34¢ rate, sent unpaid from Ann Arbor, Michigan, to Würtemberg, 29 October 1849. New York 34¢ (12¾ ggr) debit to Bremen for 10¢ U.S. internal plus 24¢ sea postage. 1½ ggr transit fee added for a 14 1/12 ggr (61 kr) debit to Thurn and Taxis, which added 8 kr transit fee for total of 1 gulden 9 kr. Additional 4 kr Würtemberg internal and 2 kr local fee resulted in total due of 1 gulden 15 kr.**

ly crossed out and to the 61 kreuzer (or 1 gulden 1 kreuzer) total, 4 kreuzer Würtemberg internal was added, as shown by the bold red crayon 1f1/4 fraction to the right of the Hamburg circular datestamp. This fraction was then crossed out and the 1f5 red crayon notation at lower right indicated that the postage due from the recipient totaled 1 gulden 5 kreuzer.

Figure 4 shows an unpaid folded letter at the 34¢ rate. It was posted at Ann Arbor, Michigan, on October 29, 1849, addressed to Freudenstadt, Würtemberg. In addition to its circular datestamp, the Ann Arbor post office struck the red 34 to show the postage due to Bremen. The New York office allowed Ann Arbor's 34 marking to serve as the debit to Bremen for the 10¢ (over 300 mile) rate plus the 24¢ sea rate. When this letter reached New York, Ocean Line sailings had been suspended so its ships could be repaired.<sup>12</sup> The U.S. post office sent the Bremen mails in a closed mail bag through Britain. On arrival in Bremen, such letters were rated as if they had been carried by Ocean Line steamships to Bremen. This has been termed "Bremen closed mail."<sup>13</sup> This letter was sent on the Cunard steamship *America*, which was the first Bremen closed mail sailing and one of only six Cunard Line sailings to carry Bremen closed mail. The *America* departed from New York 28 November 1849 and arrived at Liverpool 12 December 1849.

On arrival, the letter was passed to the Hanover post office in Bremen, which struck 12¾ AMERICA/ÜBER BREMEN in red to indicate Bremen's debit to Hanover for the equivalent in ggr of the 34¢ U.S. internal and sea rate. Hanover struck 14 1/12 as its debit in ggr to Thurn and Taxis for the sum of the 12¾ ggr international rate plus its 1½ ggr transit fee. Thurn and Taxis equated that to 61 kreuzer and added 8 kreuzer transit to Würtemberg, as shown by the red pen 61/8 fraction at top center. This fraction was crossed out and the fraction 1f 9/4 was written in red crayon at the lower center to show the total of the prior



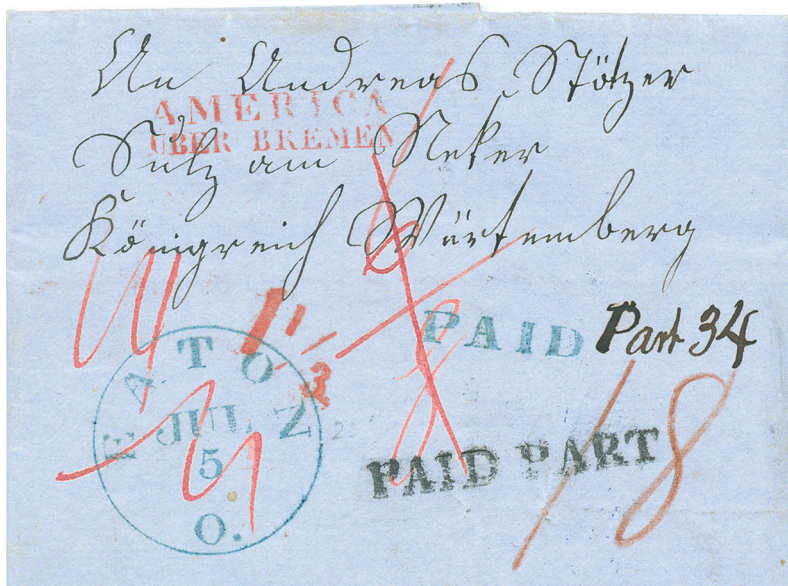


Figure 5. Paid to Bremen from Eaton, Ohio, 5 July 1850 to Württemberg: 34¢ prepaid for 10¢ over-300-mile rate to New York plus 24¢ sea. No U.S. debit to Bremen. Hanover 1½ ggr (6 kr) transit fee debited to Thurn and Taxis, which added 8 kr transit fee. Additional 4 kr Württemberg internal resulted in 18 kr total due.

fraction (69 kreuzer or 1 gulden 9 kreuzer) plus 4 kreuzer Württemberg internal postage. This was then crossed out and the total of the prior fraction (1 gulden 13 kreuzer) was indicated in red crayon at the right as 1f 13. An additional 2 kreuzer local fee brought the total due to 1 gulden 15 kreuzer, which is shown in red crayon as 1f 15 at the lower left.

It is interesting that for the single 24¢ and 34¢ rates (Figures 1 and 4), there were handstamps both for Bremen's debit to Hanover (9 ggr and 12¾ ggr) and for Hanover's debit to Thurn and Taxis (10⅓ ggr and 14-1/12 ggr). However, for the 24¢ double rate and the 29¢ rate (Figures 2 and 3) there were handstamps for Hanover's debit to Thurn and Taxis (20⅔ ggr and 12¼ ggr) but not for Bremen's debit to Hanover (18 ggr and 10-11/12 ggr).

Figure 5 shows a folded letter from Eaton, Ohio, 5 July 1850, addressed to Sulz, Württemberg. It was paid to Bremen, so only German internal postage was due. The Eaton postmaster indicated the 34¢ prepayment by his combined blue handstamp **PAID** and manuscript "Part 34." A New York clerk struck **PAID PART** in black to indicate the letter was paid to Bremen. There was no U.S. debit to Bremen, because the U.S. had been paid all amounts it was due for the 10¢ (over 300 miles) U.S. internal rate and the 24¢ sea postage. The letter was sent on the Ocean Line *Washington*, which sailed from New York 20 November 1848 and arrived in Bremerhaven December 8. Since no amount was due to the U.S. when the Hanover post office in Bremen received the letter, Hanover applied its **AMERICA/ÜBER BREMEN** with no Bremen debit. The red handstamp 1½ ggr marking near the Eaton datestamp debited Thurn and Taxis for Hanover's transit fee. This was equated to 6 kreuzer to which 8 kreuzer carriage to Württemberg was added, represented by the red manuscript 6/8 in the center. This was crossed out and 4 kreuzer Württemberg internal was added to its 14 kreuzer total, as shown by the 14/4 fraction at left. The 18 kreuzer sum of these amounts was the total due, expressed in bold red crayon at the lower right.

### Hanover rate change: 1 June 1851

Figures 1 through 5 have shown that until May 31, 1851, Hanover charged a transit fee of 1½ ggr (6 kreuzer). On June 1, 1851, Hanover entered the German Austrian Postal Union (GAPU). This change had no effect on Bremen's debit to Hanover for the ggr equivalent of the 24¢, 29¢, and 34¢ international rates. However, Hanover ceased charging its 1½ ggr transit fee and instead charged the standard GAPU rate of 9 kreuzer or 3 sgr, which

Hanover retained since it was treated as the originating office on mail to Württemberg.

On letters to destinations in the kreuzer currency areas, the 24¢, 29¢ and 34¢ rates were equated to 40 kreuzer, 48 kreuzer, and 56 kreuzer, respectively. When the 9 kreuzer GAPU rate was added, the total Hanover debit to Thurn and Taxis became 49 kreuzer, 57 kreuzer, and 65 kreuzer, respectively. These debits were indicated by new fractional handstamps in kreuzer currency **40/9** and its double **1.19/18** (24¢ rate covers), **48/9** (29¢ rate covers), and **56/9** (34¢ rate covers) that replaced the 10⅓, 12¼ and 14-1/12 ggr debits. For letters that were paid to Bremen, a new **9.** kreuzer debit handstamp was introduced to replace the 1⅓ ggr marking.

On letters to destinations in the sgr currency areas, the 24¢, 29¢, and 34¢ rates were equated to 11¼ sgr, 13⅔ sgr, and 16 sgr, so the parallel fractions in sgr values to the above kreuzer value fractions were 11¼/3 (24¢ rate covers), 13⅔/3 (29¢ rate covers), and 16/3 (34¢ rate covers). For letters that were paid to Bremen, a 3 sgr debit would be expected to replace the 1⅓ ggr marking. Only the **13⅔/3** handstamp (for 29¢ rate covers) has been reported. Since 24¢ and 34¢ rate covers are more common than 29¢ rate covers, it is logical to assume that handstamp markings were made for the other fractions and also for the 3 sgr debit. So far, these other fractions are known only as manuscript markings. Table 2 summarizes the kreuzer and sgr handstamp and manuscript markings for the one-month period. As with Table 1, all these markings were applied at the Hanover post office in Bremen.

As explained in greater detail below, these markings were in effect for only a little more than one month, because on 1 July 1851, the 24¢, 29¢ and 34¢ rates, which were based on a U.S. distance differential, were replaced by a uniform U.S. internal and sea rate of 20¢, which applied to or from anywhere in the U.S.

There were only five sailings from New York that show the one-month period rates, three by the Ocean Line and two by Bremen closed mails<sup>14</sup> carried by the New York and

<b>TABLE 2</b>		
U.S. RATE	HANOVER DEBITS IN KREUZER	HANOVER DEBITS IN SILBERGROSCHEN
24¢ (covers originating at or paid to New York)	$\frac{40}{9}$ OR $\frac{1.19}{18}$	$\frac{11\frac{1}{4}}{3}$
29¢ (origin less than 300 miles from New York)	$\frac{48}{9}$	$\frac{13\frac{2}{3}}{3}$
34¢ (origin more than 300 miles from New York)	$\frac{56}{9}$	$\frac{16}{3}$
Paid only to Bremen; marked PAID PART at New York	<b>9.</b>	<b>3</b>

**Table 2. Hanover debit handstamps and manuscript markings used on Bremen Convention mail from the United States during the month of June 1851.**



Havre Steam Navigation Company (Havre Line). The five sailings are as follows:

1. *Hermann* (Ocean Line), New York 17 May 1851, Bremerhaven 3 June 1851
2. *Franklin* (Havre Line), New York 31 May 1851, Bremen 16 June 1851
3. *Washington* (Ocean Line), New York 14 June 1851, Bremerhaven 29 June 1851
4. *Humboldt* (Havre Line), New York 28 June 1851, Bremen 14 July 1851
5. *Hermann* (Ocean Line), New York 12 July 1851, Bremerhaven 28 July 1851

The last of these sailings departed after the new 20¢ rate became effective. As we will see, the New York exchange office rated a letter carried on this sailing based on the old 34¢ rate, probably because it was mailed on 28 June 1851, while the old rates were still in effect. A cover sent on this same voyage but mailed after July 1 was marked using the new rates.

#### Kreuzer currency markings during the one-month period

The next six covers show Hanover debit markings to Thurn and Taxis, in kreuzer currency, from the one-month period. Some covers recorded from the first and second sailings during the one-month period show that Thurn and Taxis did not follow Hanover's debit and instead marked the old rates. Covers carried on later sailings generally show that Thurn and Taxis followed the new rate handstamps and passed on Hanover's 9 kreuzer debit.

Figure 6 shows a folded letter that was paid to Bremen. It was written in Baltimore on 10 May 1851, addressed to Cannstatt, Württemberg. The sender paid 29¢ which covered the rate to Bremen: 5¢ U.S. internal for up to 300 miles plus the 24¢ sea. A backstamp shows the letter arrived in New York 16 May 1851. The New York exchange office marked the letter **PAID PART** to indicate it was paid only to Bremen. The letter was sent on the Ocean Line *Hermann*, which sailed from New York 17 May 1851, and arrived in Bremerhaven on June 3. This was the first sailing from New York during the one-month period. As with the Figure 5 cover, the Hanover post office in Bremen applied only **AMERICA/**



Figure 6. One-month period (first sailing): Folded letter paid to Bremen from Baltimore 10 May 1851 to Cannstatt, Württemberg. 29¢ prepaid for 5¢ under-300-mile rate to New York plus 24¢ sea postage. No U.S. debit to Bremen. Hanover debited Thurn and Taxis 9 kr GAPU fee. Thurn and Taxis applied old rates and did not follow 9 kr debit. To the prior period 6 kr (1½ ggr) Hanover transit fee Thurn and Taxis added 8 kr transit fee, for a total of 14 kr. Additional 4 kr Württemberg internal resulted in total due of 18 kr.

**ÜBER BREMEN.** There is no debit from Bremen to Hanover because the 24¢ international rate was prepaid. Hanover marked **9**, to indicate a 9 kreuzer debit to Thurn and Taxis for the standard GAPU rate, which Hanover retained. This and Figure 16 are the only two covers recorded showing this handstamped marking. While this marking was in place of the 1½ ggr debit on the Figure 5 cover, Thurn and Taxis ignored the 9 kreuzer debit and rated the cover the same as in Figure 5, as if the debit had been 1½ ggr. Thurn and Taxis marked only 6 kreuzer for Hanover's debit and added 8 kreuzer transit to Württemberg, as shown by the red manuscript fraction 6/8 in the center. This fraction was crossed out and 4 kreuzer Württemberg internal was added to its 14 kreuzer total, as shown by the red 14/4 fraction at left. The 18 kreuzer sum of these amounts was the total due from the recipient; this is shown in red crayon at the left.

Figure 7 shows a 24¢-rate folded letter also carried on the first sailing during the one-month period. This was posted 13 May 1851 from Holidaysburgh, Pennsylvania, addressed to Künzelsau, Württemberg. The 10¢ prepayment (which Holidaysburgh indicated with its blue PAID and 10) paid only the over-300-mile rate to New York, where the cover arrived 14 May 1851, per a New York backstamp. The New York exchange office applied its **24** marking at the upper right to indicate a 24¢ debit to Bremen for the sea postage. Like the prior cover, this letter was sent on the Ocean Line *Hermann*, sailing from New York 17 May 1851 and arriving Bremerhaven 3 June. The Hanover post office in Bremen struck **9/AMERICA/ÜBER BREMEN** in red to indicate that 9 ggr (the equivalent of 24¢) was due to Bremen from Hanover. This is the same marking as appears on the Figure 1 cover. But instead of the 10½ ggr (equivalent of 45 kreuzer) marking on the Figure 1 cover, a 49 kreuzer



Figure 7. One-month period (first sailing): folded letter at the 24¢ rate, sent from Holidaysburgh, Pennsylvania, 13 May 1851 to Künzelsau, Württemberg. Prepaid 10¢ for over-300-mile rate to New York; 24¢ (9 ggr or 40 kr) U.S. debit to Bremen for sea rate. The 40/9 handstamp was Hanover's debit to Thurn and Taxis for 40 kr sea and 9 kr GAPU fee. Thurn and Taxis did not follow the 49 kr total debit. To the prior period 45 kr (10½ ggr) sea and Hanover transit, Thurn and Taxis added 8 kr transit fee for a total of 53 kr. Adding 4 kr Württemberg internal postage resulted in total due of 57 kr.





Figure 8. One-month period (third sailing): 29¢ rate folded letter from Kensington, Pennsylvania, 7 June 1851 to Margroningen, Württemberg. Sent unpaid to New York. 29¢ (10 11/12 ggr or 48 kr) U.S. debit to Bremen for 5¢ U.S. internal under 300 miles plus 24¢ sea. The 48/9 handstamp was Hanover's debit to Thurn and Taxis for 48 kr sea, U.S. internal and 9 kr GAPU fee. Thurn and Taxis followed 57 kr total debit and added 4 kr transit fee for total of 1 gulden 1 kr. An additional 4 kr Württemberg internal postage and 2 kr local fee resulted in total due of 1 gulden 7 kr.

zer Hanover debit to Thurn and Taxis was indicated by the new fractional marking,  $40/9$ , which represented 40 kreuzer for the sea rate and 9 kreuzer for the standard GAPU rate, which Hanover retained. As with Figure 6, Thurn and Taxis rated the letter at the prior rates. It showed the amount due to Hanover as the old 45 kreuzer rate, not the new 49 kreuzer rate. It added 8 kreuzer for transit to Württemberg, as indicated by the red pen  $45/8$  in the center. This was crossed out and 4 kreuzer Württemberg internal was added to the 53 kreuzer accumulated fees, as shown by the red crayon fraction  $53/4$  at the right. A backstamp shows the letter arrived in Künzelsau 9 June 1851. The total due postage was 57 kreuzer.

Figure 8 is a folded letter sent unpaid at the 29¢ rate from Kensington, Pennsylvania, 7 June 1851 to Margroningen, Württemberg. There is a partially struck red 5 at the right, which the Kensington post office applied to indicate the unpaid under-300-mile rate to New York. A New York clerk wrote 29 in black ink at the lower right to indicate the debit to Bremen for the sum of the 5¢ rate plus the 24¢ sea rate.

This letter was sent on the Ocean Line *Washington*, which sailed from New York June 14 and arrived in Bremenhaven on June 29. This was the third sailing from New York during the one-month period. Similar to the Figure 3 cover, the Hanover post office in Bremen struck **AMERICA/ÜBER BREMEN** in red and wrote to left of it in red crayon 10 11/12, which was the ggr equivalent of 29¢ and represented the debit from Bremen to Hanover. Instead of the handstamped  $12\frac{1}{4}$  ggr (equivalent to 53 kreuzer) Bremen debit to Hanover that had been struck previously, the new  $48/9$  marking was applied, to indicate a 57 kreuzer debit to Thurn and Taxis. This represented 48 kreuzer for the 29¢ due to Bremen plus the 9 kreuzer GAPU rate, which Hanover retained. To this, Thurn and Taxis added a 4 kreuzer transit fee to Württemberg, as shown by the  $57/4$  fraction in the center. This was crossed out and the total of these amounts (61 kreuzer or 1 gulden 1 kreuzer) and an addi-



Figure 9. One-month period (first sailing): 34¢-rate folded letter from Detroit to Switzerland, 22 April 1851. Sent unpaid to New York; 34¢ (12¾ ggr or 56 kr) U.S. debit to Bremen. The 56/9 fraction was Hanover's debit to Thurn and Taxis for 56 kr international rate and 9 kr GAPU fee. Thurn and Taxis added 16 kr transit fee for total of 81 kr or 1 gulden 21 kr. 4 kreuzer transit to Switzerland was added for a total of 85 kreuzer (213 rappen). Total postage due was 2 francs 25 rappen.

tional 4 kreuzer Württemberg internal was shown by the red pen manuscript fraction 1f1/4 (1 gulden 4 kreuzer) at upper right. This fraction was crossed out and its sum 1f5x (1 gulden 5 kreuzer) was written in red crayon in the lower right. A 2 kreuzer local fee was added for a total due of 1 gulden 7 kreuzer, as shown by the red crayon 1f7 at left. So far, this is the only cover recorded showing the 48/9 handstamp.

Figure 9 shows the only recorded example of the 56/9 fractional handstamp marking for the 34¢ rate. This marking appears on a folded letter that was posted at Detroit on 22 April 1851 and sent to Egnach, Canton Thurgau, Switzerland. The Detroit post office struck the blue 34 to indicate the unpaid 10¢ rate (over 300 miles) plus the 24¢ sea rate. The New York exchange office allowed this marking to serve as the U.S. debit to Bremen. The cover was sent on the Ocean Line *Hermann*, which sailed from New York on 17 May 1851 and arrived at Bremerhaven on 3 June. Bremen passed the letter to the Hanover post office in Bremen, which applied 12¾ AMERICA ÜBER BREMEN in red to indicate Bremen's debit to Hanover for the equivalent in ggr of the 34¢ international rate. Hanover struck the 56/9 to indicate a 65 kreuzer debit to Thurn and Taxis. This represented the international rate of 56 kreuzer (34¢) and 9 kreuzer for the standard GAPU rate, which Hanover retained. This marking took the place of the 14-1/12 ggr handstamp that appears on the Figure 4 letter. To the 65 kreuzer total Thurn and Taxis added 16 kreuzer for transit to Switzerland. On arrival in Switzerland, a clerk wrote 1f21 below the 34 to indicate the 81 kreuzer total or 1 gulden 21 kreuzer owed to Thurn and Taxis. The clerk added 4 kreuzer for transit to the second Swiss rayon. While this 85 kreuzer total equated to about 213 rappen or 2 francs 13 rappen, the clerk wrote 2f25 for 2 francs 25 rappen, which was the final postage due from the recipient.<sup>15</sup>

Figure 10 illustrates a manuscript version of the 56/9 debit on a folded letter that was sent on the last Ocean Line sailing that carried mail showing one-month period rates. It is an unpaid letter from Cincinnati, Ohio, 28 June 1851 to "Bali," which may be a misspelling of Bâle (Basel), Switzerland. The black manuscript 34 in the upper right was probably written in Cincinnati to indicate the unpaid rate to Bremen. A backstamp indicates the letter arrived





**Figure 10. One-month period (fifth sailing) 34¢ rate: Folded letter from Cincinnati, Ohio, 28 June 1851 to Basel, Switzerland. Sent unpaid to New York; 34¢ (12¾ ggr or 56 kr) U.S. debit to Bremen for 10¢ U.S. internal over 300 miles plus 24¢ sea. The 56/9 manuscript fraction was Hanover’s debit to Thurn and Taxis for 56 kr international rate and 9 kr GAPU fee. Thurn and Taxis followed the debit but through currency conversion the total was 66 kr, to which it added 8 kr transit fee for total of 78 kr due.**

in New York 1 July 1851, the first day of the new rates. Nevertheless, a New York clerk wrote 34 in red crayon to confirm a 34¢ debit to Bremen for the 10¢ over-300 miles rate plus the 24¢ sea rate. The proper debit under the new rates would have been 20¢. The New York clerk marked the debit under the prior rates because the letter was posted in Cincinnati before 1 July 1851.

The letter was sent on the Ocean Line *Hermann*, which sailed from New York 12 July 1851 and arrived in Bremerhaven July 28. Based on the 34¢ debit, the Hanover post office in Bremen applied **12¾ AMERICA/ÜBER BREMEN** in red to indicate Bremen’s debit to Hanover for the ggr equivalent of the 34¢ international rate. The letter likely was sent on the Prussian railroad to Baden. At the bottom center, over the address, the thick pencil “56/9.” indicates a 65 kreuzer debit to Prussia. This represented the international rate of 56 kreuzer (34¢) and 9 kreuzer for the standard GAPU rate, which Hanover retained. The Baden railroad applied **W.P.** (indicating West Prussia origin) and crossed out this pencil marking. The 56 kreuzer international rate was equated to 15¾ sgr, as indicated by a manuscript marking on the reverse. With the addition of 3 sgr GAPU rate, the 18¾ total was converted to 66 kreuzer (rather than the 65 kreuzer sum of 56 and 9). To this, 8 kreuzer was added as an additional transit fee. This was indicated by the 66/8 fraction written at left over the address, which itself was crossed out and restated by the same fraction at the far left. A backstamp showed the letter arrived in Basel 3 August 1851. On arrival in Switzerland, 4 kreuzer was added for transit to the second Swiss rayon for a total of 78 kreuzer, indicated in red crayon at the right.

### New markings

Until recently, the four markings shown in the covers presented as Figures 6 through 9 (9, 40/9, 48/9 and 56/9) were the only handstamps recorded in the philatelic literature as being used for the Hanover debit to Thurn and Taxis during the one-month period. Now two new handstamped markings can be added: a new single-rate debit marking in sgr for the 29¢ rate of **13½/3** and a double 24¢ rate marking in kreuzer, **1.19/18**.

These new markings both appear on the folded letter illustrated as Figure 11, which is a double 24¢-rate cover sent from the Württemberg consulate in Baltimore on 15 May



**Figure 11. One-month period (first sailing) double 24¢ rate: Folded letter sent from Baltimore 15 May 1851 to Stuttgart, Württemberg. Prepaid 10¢ for double under-300-mile rate to New York; 48¢ (18 ggr or 79 kr) U.S. debit to Bremen for double sea rate. The “1½ l” at lower left indicates the weight was 1½ loth. The 13<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub>/3 debit was struck in error. The 1.19/18 fraction was Hanover’s debit to Thurn and Taxis for 79 kr double sea and 18 kr double GAPU fee. Thurn and Taxis applied old rates. It did not follow 97 kr total debit but charged 89 kr (20<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> ggr) sea and Hanover transit. No further fees were due because the cover was addressed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.**

1851 to the Württemberg Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Stuttgart, Württemberg. In his letter, Württemberg Consul Brauns at Baltimore said he was enclosing a private letter to Freiherr von Linden. This helps explain why Figure 11 was rated as a double letter.

The sender paid 10¢ in Baltimore for double the rate to New York (under 300 miles); Baltimore applied its PAID and 10 in red. A backstamp indicates the letter arrived New York 16 May 1851. The New York exchange office clerk struck 48 in black to debit Bremen double the 24¢ sea rate. The letter was sent on the Ocean Line *Hermann*, which sailed from New York on 17 May 1851 and arrived at Bremerhaven on June 3. Like the Figure 2 double rate cover, Bremen passed the letter to the Hanover post office in Bremen, which wrote in red crayon 1½ l at the lower left to indicate that the weight was 1½ loth, and thus was a double letter. It also struck AMERICA/ÜBER BREMEN in red and wrote to left of it 18, which was the ggr equivalent of 48¢ and which served as a debit from Bremen to Hanover. A clerk first struck 13<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub>/3, a single rate marking, which indicated a 13<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> sgr international rate (equated to 29¢) and 3 sgr for the standard GAPU rate, which Hanover retained. This marking was incorrect for three reasons. First, it was a single rate marking and the letter was a double rate. Second, it was a 29¢ rate marking, but this letter was paid to New York, so it was treated as a double 24¢ letter. Finally, it was in sgr currency and the letter was addressed to Württemberg which used the kreuzer currency.

This erroneous sgr value marking was crossed out. Instead of the 20<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> ggr (equivalent to 89 kreuzer) handstamped Bremen debit to Hanover that had been struck on the Figure 2 cover, 1.19/18 was struck to indicate a 97 kreuzer debit to Thurn and Taxis. The numerator of this fraction represented 1 gulden 19 kreuzer (79 kreuzer), the equivalent of the 48¢



double international rate. The denominator represented 18 kreuzer, double the GAPI rate, which Hanover retained. As with the 89 kreuzer rating in the Figure 2 cover, the 79 kreuzer numerator was 1 kreuzer less than double 40 kreuzer. The double rate allowed a more exact currency conversion. As with the 1.52 manuscript marking on the Figure 2 cover, the handstamp used a period rather than an f after the gulden value.

This letter arrived on the first sailing during the one-month period and, like the Figure 6 and Figure 7 covers, Thurn and Taxis used the old rates, which were similar to those on the Figure 2 cover. Thurn and Taxis equated the accumulated postage due to 89 kreuzer or 1 gulden 29 kreuzer (instead of 97 kreuzer). Since the letter was addressed to the Württemberg Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, no further transit fees were due, as indicated by the zeros in the denominators of the two manuscript fractional markings, 1f29/0 and 89/0. This cover bears the only double-rate handstamp and the only handstamp in sgr currency recorded during the one-month period.

### **Manuscript silbergroschen markings**

As explained in the discussion of Figure 11, the 29¢ rate was equated to  $13\frac{2}{3}$  sgr. The 24¢ and 34¢ rates were equated to  $11\frac{1}{4}$  sgr and 16 sgr, so the parallel fractions in sgr values to kreuzer value fractions,  $40/9$ ,  $48/9$ , and  $56/9$ , were  $11\frac{1}{4}/3$  (24¢ rate covers),  $13\frac{2}{3}/3$  (29¢ rate covers), and  $16/3$  (34¢ rate covers). See Table 2. These fractions would be expected to be marked on letters addressed to countries using the sgr currency. Unfortunately, I know of no such letters from the one-month period. The one recorded letter to Prussia during this period bears a manuscript fraction that reflects the New York office's acceptance of a 21¢ partial payment of the 29¢ rate. The debit was only the 8¢ difference, which was equated to 3.9 sgr, so the manuscript fractional marking was  $3.9/3$ . This cover is discussed more extensively toward the conclusion of this article as Figure 18.

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

**Barkhausen, Burrus, Caspary, Dale-Lichtenstein, Dietz,  
Hessel, Moody, Waterhouse—and the Harmers**

*Contact us to be a part of history*

*Harmers*



*International Inc.*

**Not Affiliated with H.R. Harmer**

1325 Echo Hill Path, Yorktown Heights, NY 10598 USA  
Phone: 212-532-3700 | Fax: 914-962-5885  
Additional offices in London

www.harmersinternational.com  
Email: info@harmersinternational.com

However, letters are known to Württemberg and Switzerland that bear manuscript versions of the sgr fractions for the 24¢ and 34¢ rates. After 1 June 1851 mails to the southern German states conveyed by the Thurn and Taxis post were sent south from Bremen via the Prussian railway system.<sup>16</sup> Each of these letters bears backstamps of the Prussian Deutz-Minden railroad and were carried in the Bremen closed mail by the Havre Line.

Figure 12 is a 24¢-rate folded letter from Cincinnati, Ohio, 27 May 1851 to Ludwigsburg, Württemberg. The red Cincinnati/10 datestamp and the red handstamp PAID indicate 10¢ was paid for the over-300-mile rate to New York. A backstamp indicates the letter ar-



Figure 12. One-month period (second sailing) 24¢ rate: Folded letter from Cincinnati, Ohio, 27 May 1851 to Ludwigsburg, Württemberg. Prepaid 10¢ for over-300-mile rate to New York. 24¢ (9 ggr or 11¼ sgr) U.S. debit to Bremen. 11¼/3 manuscript fraction (total 14¼ sgr or 51 kr) is debit to Thurn and Taxis for 11¼ sgr sea and 3 sgr GAPU fee. Thurn and Taxis in Frankfurt marked AUS AMERIKA/UEBER PREUSSEN, indicating Prussian transit. Thurn and Taxis added 10 kr transit fee for total of 61 kr. An additional 4k Württemberg internal fee resulted in total postage due of 1 gulden 5 kr.

rived in New York May 31. The New York exchange office struck a black 24 directly over the PAID to cancel that marking and indicate a 24¢ debit to Bremen for the sea rate. The letter was sent in the Bremen closed mail on the New York and Havre steamship *Franklin*, which sailed from New York May 31 and arrived at Southampton on June 12. The mailbag arrived in Bremen June 16. The Hanover post office in Bremen marked 9/AMERICA/ÜBER BREMEN in red to indicate that 9 ggr (the equivalent of 24¢) was due to Bremen from Hanover. The letter was sent by the Prussian railroad, as indicated by the BERLIN/MINDEN/16 6 IT (Prussian railway post office No. 1) and DEUTZ-MINDEN R II/17' 6 (Prussian railway post office No. 8) backstamps. Tracings of both are shown in Figure 13.<sup>17</sup>

BERLIN  
MINDEN  
16 6 IT

Figure 13. BERLIN/MINDEN/16 6 IT (Prussian railway post office No. 1) and DEUTZ-MINDEN R II/17' 6 (Prussian railway post office No. 8) backstamps on Figure 12.

DEUTZ-MINDEN  
R II  
17' 6



A  $14\frac{1}{4}$  sgr Hanover debit to Prussia was indicated by large blue manuscript marking across the right half of the cover. This is the sum of the thick pencil fraction  $11\frac{1}{4}/3$  at the bottom middle, which represents  $11\frac{1}{4}$  sgr for the sea rate and 3 sgr for the standard GAPU rate, which Hanover retained. The Thurn and Taxis office in Frankfurt struck in black **AUS AMERIKA/UEBER PREUSSEN** to indicate Prussian transit. The  $14\frac{1}{4}$  sgr debit was equated to 51 kreuzer.<sup>18</sup> Thurn and Taxis added a 10 kreuzer transit fee for a total of 61 kreuzer. This amount and the 4 kreuzer Württemberg internal charge are shown in the red manuscript fraction  $61/4$ . The sum of these two elements, 1 gulden 5 kreuzer, is designated by the magenta manuscript 1f5 in the upper left. This was the final postage due from the recipient.

Figure 14 shows an envelope that was sent unpaid at the 34¢ rate from Wilna, New York, 25 May 1851 to Aarberg, Canton Bern, Switzerland. The Wilna postmaster wrote 55 in the upper right corner to indicate his expectation of the full rate to Switzerland. A backstamp shows the letter reached New York the next day, May 26. The New York exchange-office clerk crossed out the 55¢ rating and wrote 34 toward the top left of the letter to indicate a 34¢ debit to Bremen for the 10¢ over-300-mile rate and the 24¢ sea rate. Like the prior cover, the letter was sent in the Bremen closed mail on the Havre Line steamship *Franklin*. The mailbag arrived in Bremen on June 16. The Hanover post office in Bremen applied  $12\frac{3}{4}$  **AMERICA/ÜBER BREMEN** in red to indicate Bremen's debit to Hanover for the ggr equivalent of the 34¢ international rate. A 17 June Deutz-Minden backstamp indicates the letter was sent on the Prussian railroad to Baden. The thick pencil  $16/3$  over the address is a debit to Prussia, representing the international rate of 16 sgr (34¢) and 3



Figure 14. One-month period (second sailing) 34¢ rate: Cover from Wilna, New York, posted 25 May 1851 and sent to Aarberg, Switzerland. Sent unpaid to New York; 34¢ ( $12\frac{3}{4}$  ggr or 16 sgr) U.S. debit to Bremen for 10¢ U.S. internal (over 300 miles) plus 24¢ sea. The  $16/3$  manuscript fraction is the debit to Thurn and Taxis for 16 sgr sea and U.S. internal postage plus a 3 sgr GAPU fee (total 19 sgr or 67 kr). Thurn and Taxis did not follow this debit and charged 57 kr, to which it added 6 kr transit for total of 63 kr; 6 kr Swiss transit was added for a total due of 69 kr.

sgr for the standard GAPU rate. This was crossed and the 19 sgr total was indicated by the blue manuscript marking in the upper left. Another backstamp shows the Baden railroad transported the letter to Switzerland. While carried on the same sailing as Figure 12, the Figure 14 cover does not bear the Thurn and Taxis AUS AMERIKA/UEBER PREUSSEN marking, indicating Thurn and Taxis may not have handled this letter, possibly because it was addressed to Switzerland. Although 19 sgr was equal to 67 kreuzer, on this letter it was equated to only 57 kreuzer and 6 kreuzer was added for transit to Switzerland, as indicated by the 57/6 blue and black manuscript fraction. To this was added 6 kreuzer Swiss internal postage for a total due of 69 kreuzer, indicated in red manuscript at the lower right.

Figure 15 is an unpaid 24¢ rate letter to Nagold, Württemberg, posted at New York on June 18, 1851. The New York exchange office applied the black handstamp 24 at the lower right to indicate a 24¢ debit to Bremen for the sea rate. The letter was sent in the Bremen closed mail through England by the Havre Line steamship *Humboldt*, which sailed from New York 28 June and arrived at Southampton July 10. The mailbag arrived in Bremen on July 14. The Hanover post office in Bremen marked 9/AMERICA/ÜBER BREMEN in red to indicate that 9 ggr (the equivalent of 24¢) was due to Bremen from Hanover. The letter was sent by the Prussian railroad, as indicated by a Deutz-Minden backstamp. A 49 kreuzer Hanover debit to Prussia was indicated by the thick pencil 40/9 at the left. This represented 40 kreuzer for the sea rate and 9 kreuzer for the standard GAPU rate, which Hanover retained. Note the similarity of the thick pencil 56/9 to the thick pencil fractions on Figure 10, Figure 12, and Figure 14 covers, all of which were also carried by the Prussian railway. Prussia crossed out this fraction, converted the 49 kreuzer total to 14¼ sgr, the same total shown on the Figure 12 cover. On the Figure 15 cover, Prussia added an additional ¾ sgr transit fee as indicated by the blue manuscript 14¼/¾ fraction at the left. Although this 17½ sgr total was equal to about 62 kreuzer, Thurn and Taxis crossed out



Figure 15. One-month period (fourth sailing) 24¢ rate: Folded letter sent from New York on 18 June 1851 to Nagold, Württemberg; 24¢ (9 ggr or 40 kr) U.S. debit to Bremen. The 40/9 manuscript fraction is a debit to Prussia for 40 kr sea postage and 9 kr GAPU fee (total 49 kr or 14¼ sgr). Prussia added ¾ kr transit fee (total 17½ sgr or 62 kr). Thurn and Taxis charged 10 kr for total of 1 gulden 12 kr. Adding 4 kr Württemberg internal and a 2 kr local fee resulted in total postage due of 1 gulden 18 kr.



this fraction, added 10 kreuzer transit fee for a total of 72 kreuzer or 1 gulden 12 kreuzer. This was increased by 4 kreuzer Württemberg internal, as indicated by the red manuscript 1f12/4 in the center. This was subsequently crossed out and the 1 gulden 16 kreuzer total was indicated by the red manuscript 1f16x written in red at the right. A 2 kreuzer local fee brought the total to 1 gulden 18 kreuzer as indicated by the 1f18 written in bright red at the lower right.



**Figure 16. One-month period (third sailing) paid to Bremen: Folded letter from Memphis, Tennessee, 27 May 1851 to Oberndorf, Württemberg; 34¢ prepaid for 10¢ over-300-mile rate to New York plus 24¢ sea postage. No U.S. debit to Bremen. Hanover debited Thurn and Taxis 9 kr GAPU fee (or 3 sgr, pencil mark below). Thurn and Taxis followed the debit and added 5 kr transit for total of 14 kr. Additional 4kr Württemberg internal and 1 kr local fee resulted in total due of 19 kr.**

Figure 16 is a folded letter from Memphis, Tennessee, posted 27 May 1851 and addressed to Oberndorf, Württemberg. Per the black manuscript notation at upper right, the sender paid 34¢ for the 10¢ rate (distance over 300 miles) and the 24¢ sea rate. A backstamp indicates the letter arrived in New York June 6. The New York exchange office marked the letter **PAID PART** to indicate the letter was paid only to Bremen. The letter was sent on the Ocean Line *Washington*, which sailed from New York June 14 and arrived at Bremerhaven June 29. This was the third sailing during the one-month period. The Hanover post office in Bremen applied only **AMERICA/ÜBER BREMEN**. There is no debit from Bremen to Hanover because the 34¢ international rate was prepaid. Hanover marked 9. to indicate a 9 kreuzer debit to Thurn and Taxis for the standard GAPU rate. The pencil 3 below the 9 kreuzer marking may show its equivalent in sgr. A tracing of the two intertwined numerals below the handstamped 9, with the 3 shown in red for greater clarity, is presented as Figure 17. The significance of the “2” is not known. These two numerals may not have been written by the by same clerk who wrote the thick pencil rates on the prior covers; the marking device seems thinner. This cover bears no Prussian railroad marking on its reverse.

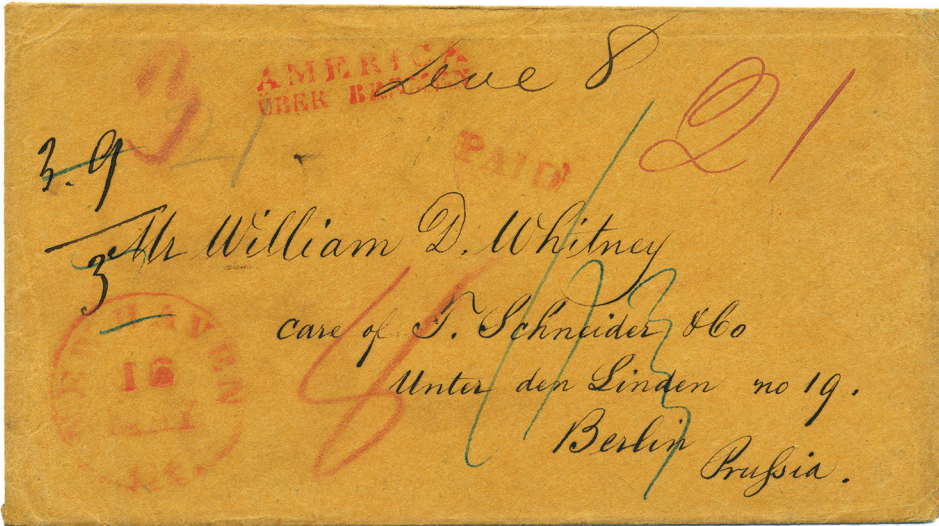


**Figure 17. The pencil 3 marking on Figure 16 may represent the equivalent of 9 kreuzer in sgr.**

Thurn and Taxis added 5 kreuzer for transit to Württemberg, as shown by the red

manuscript fraction  $9/5$  to the left of the PAID PART marking. This was crossed out and 4 kreuzer Württemberg internal postage was added, as shown by the red manuscript fraction  $14/4$  to the right of the Memphis circular datestamp. This fraction was crossed out and the 18 kreuzer total was indicated by the 18x at the bottom center. A 1 kreuzer local fee brought the total due to 19 kreuzer, which is indicated by the blue manuscript 19x below the PAID PART marking.

Figure 18 is the only one-month period cover addressed to a country using the sgr currency. Sent from New Haven to Berlin on 16 May 1851, this cover was prepaid only 21¢, as indicated by the red PAID and the black pencil 21 at upper left. The New York exchange office accepted this as a partial payment of the 29¢ rate (5¢ rate for under 300 miles plus 24¢ sea) and likely wrote the confirming magenta 21 at the upper right. The New York



**Figure 18. One-month period (first sailing) 29¢ rate: Cover from New Haven, Connecticut, sent 16 May 1851 to Berlin, Prussia. New York accepted 21¢ as a partial payment of the 29¢ rate (5¢ rate for under 300 miles plus 24¢ sea) and debited 8¢ debit to Bremen for the difference between the 29¢ rate and the 21¢ payment. Red 3 ggr (8¢) Bremen debit to Hanover. Manuscript fraction  $3.9/3$  debit to Prussia for 3 sgr 9 pfenninge (3 ggr or 8¢) owed to the U.S. and 3 sgr standard GAPU rate. The sum of this fraction was 3 sgr 9 pfenninge or  $6\frac{3}{4}$  sgr, which was due in Berlin. Heinrich Conzelmann Collection.**

office also wrote the red crayon 8 in the center and Due 8 in black at the top center to indicate that the debit to Bremen was only the 8¢ difference between the 29¢ rate and the 21¢ prepayment. The letter was sent on the Ocean Line *Hermann*, which sailed from New York on 17 May 1851 and arrived at Bremerhaven on June 3, the first sailing during the one-month period. The Hanover post office in Bremen applied **AMERICA/ÜBER BREMEN** and wrote a red crayon 3 in the upper left to indicate Bremen's debit to Hanover of 3 ggr, the equivalent of the U.S. 8 debit. Hanover converted this 3 ggr debit to 3.9 sgr, added the 3 sgr standard GAPU transit, and wrote  $3.9/3$  to indicate Hanover's debit to Prussia. The  $6\frac{3}{4}$  sgr sum of these amounts was written in blue in the center of the cover to indicate the postage due in Berlin.

#### **U.S. rate change—1 July 1851**

The one-month period ended when the new U.S. domestic rates were introduced on July 1, 1851. A simple 20¢ per  $\frac{1}{2}$  ounce sea and United States internal rate from anywhere in the United States replaced the prior rates of 24¢, 29¢ or 34¢. To the new 20¢ rate was





**Figure 19. 20¢ rate period, first sailing: Double 20¢ rate cover paid to Bremen from Liverpool, Ohio, 4 July 1851. Sent to Kusel, Rhein-Kreis, Bavaria; 43¢ overpaying 40¢ double rate, which included U.S. internal and sea. No U.S. debit to Bremen. Hanover debited Thurn and Taxis 18 kr double GAPU fee (9 kr debit written in error). Since Bavaria was a GAPU member, no additional transit was charged. Postage due was 18 kr.**

added the internal German postage, which differed depending on the destination within Germany.<sup>19</sup> Part payment of the 20¢ rate was not permitted.<sup>20</sup> This rate structure remained in place until 1853, when the Bremen convention was substantially revised.

The 12 July 1851 voyage of the Ocean Line *Hermann* was the first sailing from New York under these new rates. As Figure 10 shows, covers carried on this sailing mailed before 1 July 1851 were charged the old rates. Although an exhaustive explanation of the new rates is beyond the scope of this article, Figure 19 illustrates a cover that was carried on this first voyage and was actually rated using the new rates. It is from Liverpool, Ohio, posted 4 July 1851 to Kusel, Rhein-Kreis, Bavaria. The sender endorsed the letter “via New York and Havre de Grace” but the Ohio postmaster apparently crossed this out and wrote “Bremen line” below. The 43¢ prepayment overpaid a double 20¢ rate to Bremen. (The 20¢ rate included both U.S. internal and sea postage). A backstamp shows the letter arrived in New York on July 8. The New York exchange office marked the letter **PAID PART** to indicate it was paid only to Bremen. The Ocean Line *Hermann*, which carried this cover, left New York July 12 and arrived in Bremerhaven July 28. The Hanover post office in Bremen applied only **AMERICA/ÜBER BREMEN**. There is no debit from Bremen to Hanover because the 40¢ international rate was prepaid. Hanover initially marked 9x in blue ink on the front and back and 9 in thick black pencil to indicate a 9 kreuzer single-rate due postage. However, the small “1 1/10 l” marking in the upper left corner indicates the letter weighed 1-1/10 loth, making it a double rate. The 9 markings were crossed out and 18x in blue ink was written in the middle and 18 in red crayon was written on the front and back to indicate an 18 kreuzer double rate. The letter was sent by the Prussian railroad, as indicated by a faint Deutz-Minden backstamp dated 30 July. Since Bavaria had been a GAPU member since its inception (1 July 1851), no additional transit postage was charged. A backstamp indicates the letter reached Kusel on 1 August 1851.

One-month period covers are scarce. So far only 22 eastbound covers have been recorded. Table 3 lists the covers of which I am aware, grouped chronologically by the five

sailings that carried such covers. Reports of any other covers during this period, eastbound or westbound, would be appreciated.

Here are some observations about the covers in the Table 3 listing. On the first sailing (*Hermann*), Thurn and Taxis did not follow the Hanover fractional debit in computing subsequent charges on the letters to Württemberg, which joined the GAPU on 1 September

**TABLE 3**

<b>Date posted (1851)</b>	<b>Origin/Destination</b>	<b>Hanover debit to Thurn &amp; Taxis</b>	<b>Followed Hanover debit?</b>	<b>Prussian RR backstamp?</b>
<b><i>Hermann (Ocean Line), New York 17 May 1851, arrived Bremerhaven 3 June</i></b>				
Apr 22	Detroit, MI/Egnach, Switzerland	56/9	Yes	No
May 12	New York, NY/Württemberg	40/9		
May 13	Holidaysburgh, PA/Kunzelsau, Württemberg	40/9	No	No
May 15	Baltimore, MD/Cannstatt, Württemberg	9	No	No
May 15	Baltimore, MD/Stuttgart, Württemberg	13 <sup>2</sup> / <sub>3</sub> , 1.19/18	No	No
May 16	New Haven, CT/Berlin, Prussia	ms 3.9/3	Yes	No
May 17	New York, NY/Schorndorf, Württemberg	40/9	No	No
<b><i>Franklin (Havre Line), New York 31 May 1851, arrived Bremen 16 June</i></b>				
May 15	Palmyra, MO/Marienhagen, Kreis Voehl	ms 11 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> /3	No	Yes
May 22	New Albany, IN/Tübingen, Württemberg	ms 11 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> /3	No	Yes
May 24	Holidaysburgh, PA/Kunzelsau, Württemberg	ms 11 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> /3	No	Yes
May 25	Wilna, NY/Aarberg, Switzerland	ms 16/3	No	Yes
May 27	Cincinnati, OH/Ludwigburg, Württemberg	ms 11 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> /3	No	Yes
May 31	Mt. Pulaski, IL/Tübingen, Württemberg	Prepaid	Prepaid	Yes
<b><i>Washington (Ocean Line), New York 14 June 1851, arrived Bremerhaven 29 June</i></b>				
May 27	Memphis, TN/Oberndorf, Württemberg	9., ms 3	Yes	No
Jun 4	Sulphur Springs, OH/Württemberg	40/9		
Jun 5	Kensington, PA/Margroningen, Württemberg	48/9	Yes	No
Jun 10	New York, NY/Winnenden, Württemberg	40/9	Yes	
Jun 14	New York, NY/Inglfingen, Württemberg	40/9	Yes	No
<b><i>Humboldt (Havre Line), New York 28 June 1851, arrived Bremen 14 July</i></b>				
Jun 10	Fee Fee, MO/Württemberg	ms 56/9	Yes	Yes
Jun 18	New York, NY/Nagold, Württemberg	ms 40/9	Yes	Yes
Jun 28	New York, NY/Backnang, Württemberg	ms 40/9	Yes	Yes
<b><i>Hermann (Ocean Line), New York 12 July 1851, arrived Bremerhaven 28 July</i></b>				
Jun 28	Cincinnati, OH/Basel, Switzerland	ms 56/9	Yes	No

**Table 3. Covers from the U.S. to Europe that traveled under the terms of the U.S.-Bremen convention and show markings characteristic of the special one-month period (June, 1851). The covers are grouped chronologically according by the five sailings that carried such mail. The third column shows the Hanover debit (applied in Bremen) to Thurn and Taxis. The fourth column indicates whether Thurn and Taxis followed Hanover's debit in its subsequent rating markings. The fifth column shows the presence or absence of a Prussian railway backstamp.**



1851. However, Hanover's fractional markings were followed on the letters to Prussia and Switzerland. Prussia joined the GAPU on 1 July 1850. Letters to Switzerland were sent via Baden, which had just joined the GAPU on 1 May 1851.<sup>21</sup> Whether Thurn and Taxis followed Hanover's debit is indicated (yes or no) in the fourth column in Table 3. In a few instances, this information is not available.

No handstamped fractional markings appear on any of the covers carried on second (*Franklin*) and fourth (*Humboldt*) sailings, both of which were sent as Bremen closed mail and carried by Havre Line steamships. Instead, all these letters bear manuscript fractional markings. On none of the covers carried on the second sailing (*Franklin*), including the letter to Switzerland, did Thurn and Taxis follow Hanover's debit.

Covers carried on the third sailing (*Washington*) again bear handstamped fractional markings; these are not seen on later voyages. Beginning with this sailing, Hanover's handstamped and manuscript fractional markings were invariably followed by Thurn and Taxis in computing subsequent charges. As noted, no handstamp fractional markings appear on covers carried on the fourth sailing (*Humboldt*). The three recorded covers all show an additional 3¼ sgr transit charge.

Even though the fifth sailing (*Hermann*) was an Ocean Line voyage (i.e., the mail was not sent through England in the Bremen closed mail), a manuscript rather than a handstamp fractional marking was written on the only recorded cover carried on this sailing to which the one-month-period rate was applied. The only other covers carried on this voyage were rated based on the new 20¢ rates.

Thanks to Heinrich Conzelmann, Georg Mehrtens, Friedrich Meyer and Richard Winter for their research and assistance.

### Endnotes

1. *Postal Laws and Regulations of the United States of America 1847*, Wierenga Reprint (Holland, Michigan: Theron Wierenga, 1980), pp. 55-56 (Laws Section).
2. *Ibid.*, pg. 58.
3. Report of the Postmaster General Communicating the Particulars of the Postal Arrangement with Bremen, U.S. Congress, Senate, *Executive Document 25*, 30th Cong., 2nd Sess, Serial 531 (February 6, 1849), pp. 2, 7 and 8.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.
6. *Ibid.*, pg. 9.
7. Richard, F. Winter, *Understanding Transatlantic Mail, Volume 1* (American Philatelic Society, 2006), pg. 23.
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.*, citing Heinrich Conzelmann and Friedrich A. Meyer, "Die Entwicklung der Schiffspost über Bremen bis in die ersten Jahre nach Abschluß des Postabkommens zwischen Bremen und den USA von 1847," Deutscher Altbriefsammler-Verein e.V., Rundbrief Nos. 452 and 453, December 2001 and March 2002.
10. James Van Der Linden, "Transatlantic Mail: Letter Post to Württemberg via Bremen," *Chronicle* 129, pp. 62-69.
11. All North Atlantic sailing dates are from Walter Hubbard and Richard F. Winter, *North Atlantic Mail Sailings 1840-75* (Canton, Ohio: The U.S. Philatelic Classics Society, Inc., 1988).
12. Hubbard and Winter *op cit.*, page 85, note 8.
13. *Ibid.*, pp. 409-11.
14. See text accompanying note 13.
15. Richard F. Winter, *Understanding Transatlantic Mail, Volume 2* (Bellefonte, Pennsylvania: American Philatelic Society, 2009), pp. 924-26.
16. Winter, *Understanding Transatlantic Mail, Volume 1, op cit.*, pg. 38.
17. Georg D. Mehrtens, "German States: Currency, Weights, and Measurements," *Chronicle* 214, pg. 158.
18. *Ibid.*, pg. 151.
19. George Hargest, *History of Letter Post Communication Between the United States and Europe 1845-1875, 2nd Ed.* (Lawrence, Massachusetts: Quarterman Publications, Inc., 1975), pg. 15 (which also contains a table listing the additional rates to the various destinations in and beyond Germany). Because information about the newly reduced German internal rates was not available, Americans were advised that, to secure the advantage of this reduction, they should prepay only the 20¢ United States internal and sea postage, leaving the balance unpaid.
20. This is consistent with Article 1 of the regulations under the original postal arrangement. U.S., Congress, Senate, *Executive Document 25*, 30th Cong., 2nd Sess., serial 531, p. 9.
21. Mehrtens, *op. cit.*, pg. 154. ■

## The PF Will Accurately Grade Your Stamps

The PF is a leader in the accurate grading of U.S. and British North American stamps. Grading is a cumulative score arrived at by the careful examination of several critical components. A numeric grade is assigned based on centering, soundness, and eye appeal. Application of the PF's uniform standards permits our in-house expert staff to assess your stamps fairly and objectively.



Scott #10, Graded 100J



Scott #7, Graded 98XQ



Scott #233, Graded 98J

Most stamps are eligible for grading except those that have faults, been repaired, reperfored, or otherwise altered, or have natural straight edges. Once a stamp is determined to be sound, our expert staff looks at its "centering." Centering is a measurement of the relationship of the stamp design to its four margins.

After soundness and centering are assessed, our experts add or subtract points for eye appeal. Eye appeal is a measure of the stamp's color, freshness and impression, and if used, its cancellation.

The points are then calculated, and a final numerical grade is given. Final grades can range from 5 (poor) to 100 (gem). A stamp's numerical grade may be enhanced by the addition of a "J" designation for unusually large or jumbo margins, or an "XQ" for a stamp possessing exceptional quality for that grade.

Census figures for PF graded stamps can be found using the PF Search program on our website.

The PF does not attempt to make a market for graded stamps nor attempt to establish their value. Our sole objective is to provide you, the collector or dealer, with the most accurately graded certificates in our hobby today.

***COLLECT WITH CONFIDENCE—WITH A PF CERTIFICATE***

***We've Moved to The Collectors Club—Note Our New Address:***



**The Philatelic Foundation**  
**22 East 35th Street, 4th Floor**  
**New York, NY 10016**

Phone: 212-221-6555

Chronicle 257 / February 2018 / Vol. 70, No.1

Web: [www.philatelicfoundation.org](http://www.philatelicfoundation.org)

801



## EXPLANATION OF PROBLEM COVERS IN CHRONICLE 256

The problem covers from *Chronicle* 256, shown in Figures 1 and 2, were a pair of incoming covers addressed to New Orleans submitted by David Zlowe. Each is addressed in the same handwriting and both were received within four days of each other. The question was why would two covers apparently originating from the same location within days of each other be rated so differently upon arrival in New Orleans?



**Figure 1. Folded letter from Mobile to New Orleans internally dated June 5, 1852. Postmarked at New Orleans June 6 and bearing a manuscript "Way" marking.**

The first reader to respond was frequent *Chronicle* contributor Jim Milgram, who stated that the cover in Figure 1 was rated as a prepaid way cover with the 1¢ stamp paying the way fee and the 3¢ paying the letter postage. In 1852 the postage rate was 3¢ per half ounce if prepaid and 5¢ collect if not prepaid. The cover in Figure 2 was found to be overweight by a fraction of an ounce resulting in an additional letter rate of 5¢ due from the addressee upon delivery. So, in effect, the manuscript "5" has nothing to do with the fact that this was rated as a way letter. The postage stamps served to prepay only the first half ounce of the letter postage plus the New Orleans way charge.

Andrew Burkman reached the same conclusion, but provided more detail with some additional observations:

The cover in Figure 1 is essentially the same as the cover in Figure 11 in James Baird's article in the same issue (*Chronicle* 256, page 337). Both are 1852 uses and the "Way" manuscript was added in New Orleans. As Baird states, Mobile quit marking "way" with the rate change of 1851. The way marking on both covers is identical and done within a six month period. The reason for the way marking and the 1¢ stamp is as Baird explains in his text.

The cover in Figure 2 was found to be overweight. The way marking was applied for the same reasons as the Figure 1 cover. The "5" was a collect charge for an additional unpaid letter rate. This is a somewhat similar usage to Baird's cover in Figure 12 (page 338). But that cover almost certainly dates from 1853, when the New Orleans post office had ceased charging the



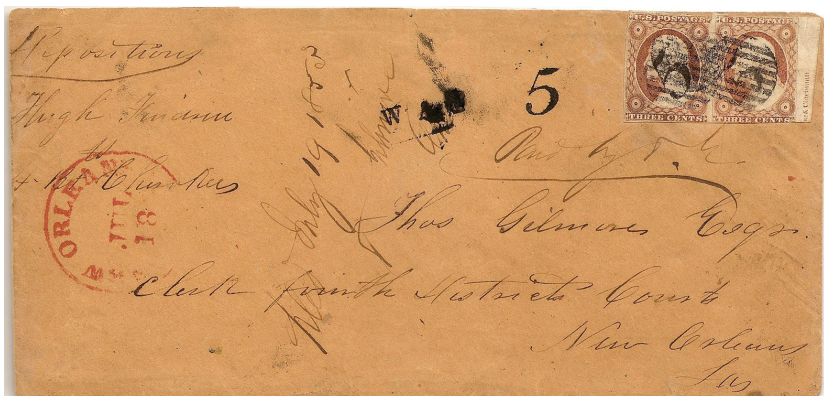
**Figure 2. Same franking, same handwriting, posted four days later, but here showing "Way 5." The challenge posed in *Chronicle 256* was to explain the different ratings.**

1¢ way fee on this mail. The postage stamps prepaid the double letter rate, while the collect "5" resulted from the letter actually weighing slightly more than one ounce, making it a triple-weight cover. As was the case with the cover in Figure 2, the "5" was simply an additional letter rate to be collected from the addressee and had nothing to do with the "Way" marking.

In addition, Burkman provided an illustration of a similar cover from his collection (shown in Figure 3) that demonstrates the same rate structure as Baird's cover in Figure 12 (*Chronicle 256* page 337). The twist with the Figure 3 cover, dated 18 July 1853, is that both the "WAY" and the "5" are handstamped rather than manuscript. Again the "5" was charged to the addressee for an extra fraction of an ounce and had nothing to do with the "way" treatment. Apparently the clerks in the New Orleans post office were relentless in checking the weight of incoming mail.

The solutions provided by Milgram and Burkman, along with Baird's article in *Chronicle 256*, should help resolve questions relating to other deficiently prepaid covers addressed to New Orleans (and perhaps other towns as well) during the period from 1853 to 1 April 1855, when prepayment became mandatory.

**Figure 3. Another New Orleans "WAY 5" marking, here on a triple-rate cover with only two rates prepaid. The "5" designates the unpaid rate; "way" had nothing to do with it.**





## PROBLEM COVER FOR THIS ISSUE

Our problem cover for this issue, shown in Figure 4, was submitted by Labron Harris. This is a folded letter that entered the mails at Chester, England on 14 April 1850. It was originally addressed to Liverpool, but was readdressed to Montreal in Canada. There is a red New York CDS dated 30 May (1850) with a matching SHIP marking. All markings are



**Figure 4. Our problem cover for this issue is a stampless cover from 1850 that entered the mails in Chester, England, originally addressed to Liverpool. It was readdressed to Montreal and sent via New York City. The questions are why and how—and what do the markings mean?**

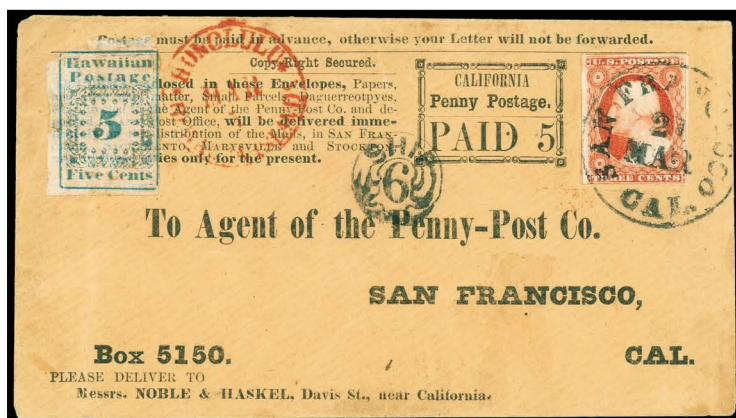
visible on the front, with none on the reverse. The questions here are: How and why did this letter go to New York on its way to Montreal? What are the various rates shown and how were they calculated? ■

### ADVERTISER INDEX

Bill Barrell Ltd. ....	24
Columbian Stamp Company .....	1
Eastern Auctions Ltd.....	10
Jonathan Fenn.....	38
Christoph Gartner Auctions.....	4
H.R. Harmer, Inc. ....	Inside Front Cover
Harmers International Inc. ....	92
Leonard H. Hartmann .....	48
Eric Jackson.....	52
Kelleher Auctions.....	36
James E. Lee .....	53
Mystic Stamp Company .....	66
Philatelic Foundation .....	101
Stanley M. Piller & Associates .....	35
Schuyler Rumsey Philatelic Auctions.....	6, 9, Inside Back Cover
Spink.....	39
Stephen T. Taylor.....	77
Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries, Inc.....	2-3, Back Cover
United States Stamp Society.....	56

SCHUYLER J. RUMSEY AUCTIONS IS PROUD TO ANNOUNCE THE FOLLOWING IMPORTANT AUCTION TO BE HELD AT WESTPEX 2018:

## The George J. Kramer Collection of Western Trails and Routes

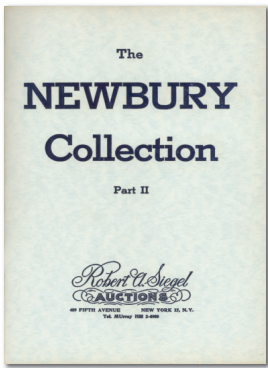


This important auction features the George J. Kramer award-winning collection of Western Trails and Routes. The collection was formed over the last 35 years with many unique and rare Western Express usages. We will hold this sale in conjunction with Westpex 2018, April 27-29. To receive a copy of the catalog for this specialized auction, please send \$20.

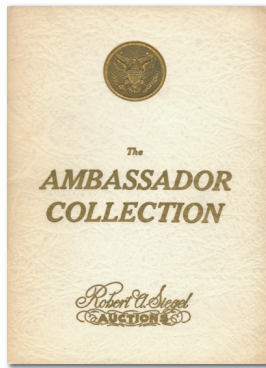
Schuyler  
Rumsey  
Philatelic  
Auctions

415 781 5127 | [srumsey@rumseyauctions.com](mailto:srumsey@rumseyauctions.com) | visit us at [rumseyauctions.com](http://rumseyauctions.com)

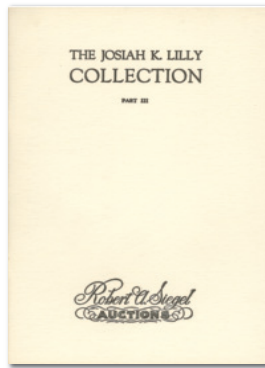




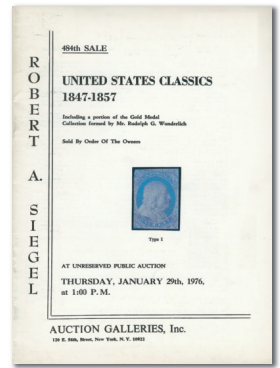
Newbury 1961



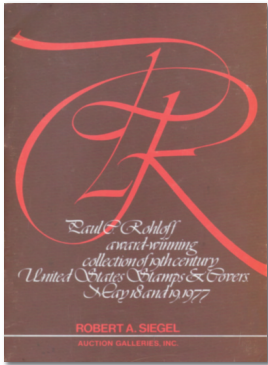
Ambassador 1966



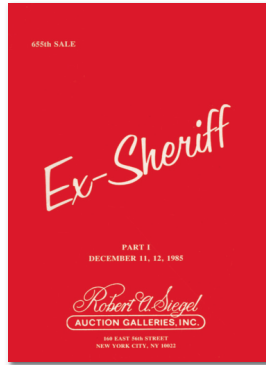
Lilly 1967



Wunderlich 1976



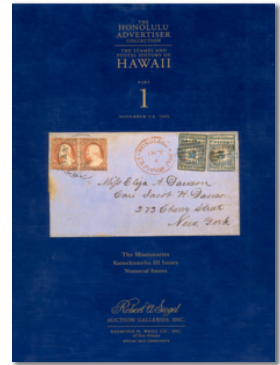
Rohloff 1977



Sheriff 1985



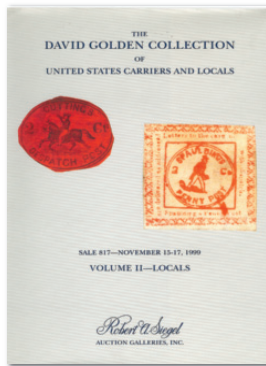
Kapiloff 1992



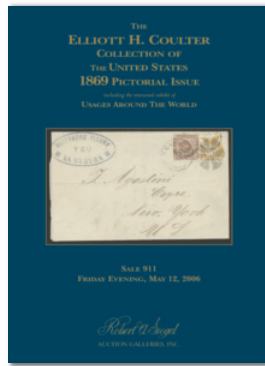
Honolulu Advertiser 1995



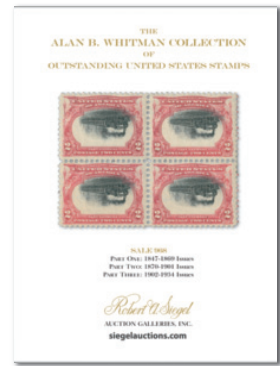
Zoellner 1998



Golden 1999



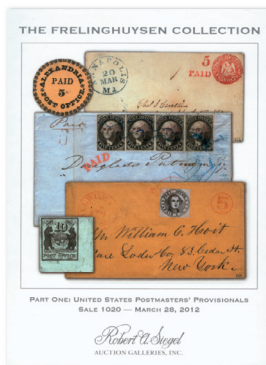
Coulter 2006



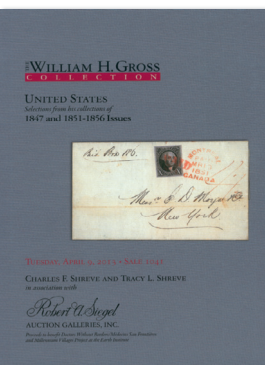
Whitman 2009



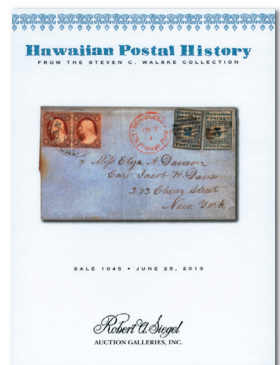
Twigg-Smith 2009



Frelinghuysen 2012



Gross 2013



Walske 2013

Great collections have **ONE NAME** in common.