

# The Chronicle

of the U.S. Classic Postal Issues



Newly recorded from a collection in Germany, this 10¢ 1847 cover, posted 13 September 1847 at Baltimore and sent to Emden in the Kingdom of Hanover, is now the earliest known 1847 cover sent to any of the old German states. Overseas member Burkhard Krumm reports on this and other new discoveries in our 1847 section.

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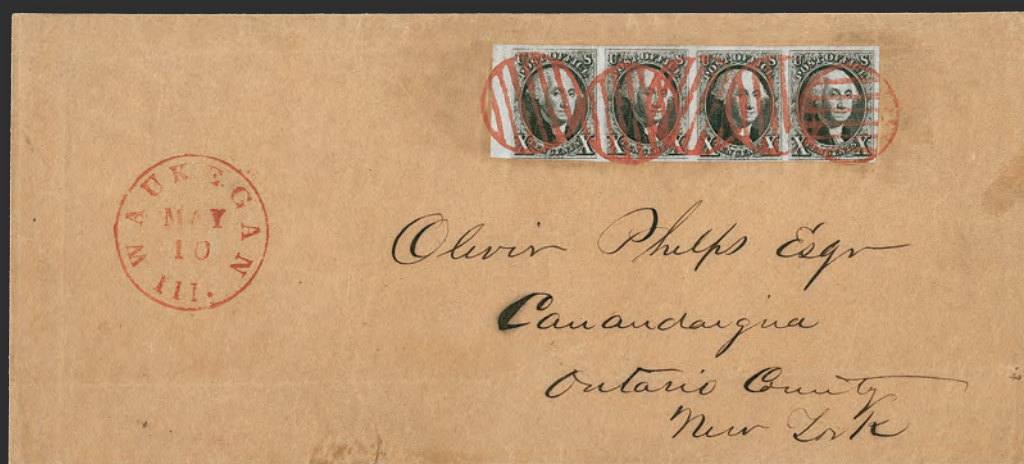
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# The Chronicle

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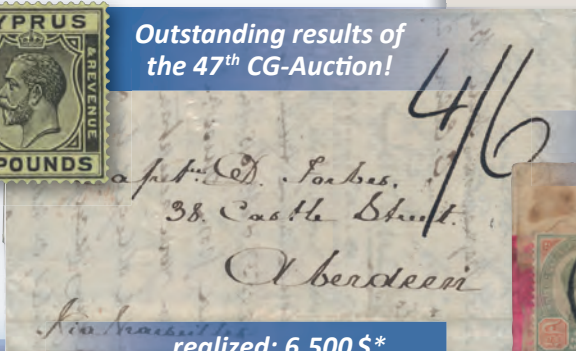
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**C.G.**

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## THE EDITOR'S PAGE

MICHAEL LAURENCE

### IN THIS ISSUE

The role of Howard's Hotel in handling covers has long been a subject of speculation. In our Carriers & Locals section (page 245), Clifford J. Alexander presents a census of all known covers bearing the distinctive oval handstamp of this lower Manhattan hotel, and combines the census data with internet search results to reach some insightful conclusions.

In our Stampless section, page 220, Mark Schwartz continues his exploration of Boston postal history, examining the markings and other activities of the Boston post office between the conclusion of the War of 1812 and the postal reforms of 1845. The article includes rate tables for the war rates of 1815-16, the short-lived restored rates that followed, and the simplified 1816 rates that succeeded them. The Stampless section concludes with a short article from James W. Milgram (page 241) announcing the discovery of a new railroad postmark ("U&S RAIL ROAD") that now becomes the earliest named railroad marking.

In our 1847 section (page 257) overseas member Burkhard Krumm updates the census of 1847 covers sent to the old German states. The most impressive addition to the list, featured on our cover this issue, is a newly recorded letter to Hanover, which takes its place as the earliest known 1847 cover to Germany. The 1847 section concludes with a short article from Labron Harris on a newly discovered 5¢ 1847 cover with a fancy Trenton star cancel. In our 1890s section Harris also contributes an article (page 292) on mixed-franking covers (U.S.-foreign) bearing Trans-Mississippi stamps. There don't seem to be many.

Our February 2019 cover showed the most dramatic foreign entry known on a U.S. postage stamp—Position 94L4 of the 10¢ 1861 Type 1 stamp, which shows unerased traces of an underlying 90¢ 1861 stamp. Author Chip Gliedman then expressed hope that his newly published illustrations would induce collectors to locate additional examples of this very elusive plate variety. This actually happened. Gliedman's article in our 1861 section, page 266, shows a newly discovered stamp (found on eBay) and a previously unillustrated cover.

In our 1851 section (page 264) James W. Milgram shows what he believes to be the earliest Civil War patriotic cover, from Texas of all places. The flag design on this cover was known previously, but the new discovery advances its period of usage by almost two weeks. Completing a trifecta, Milgram is also represented in our Foreign Mails section (page 296), which publishes the conclusion of his four-part exploration of registered mail to foreign destinations. This installment includes striking and colorful covers.

Steven Walske continues his series on covers carried by Civil War blockade-runners. In a timely special feature on page 269, Walske shows how blockade mails were disrupted by a virus: the yellow-fever epidemic that swept through Bermuda in the summer of 1864.

Covers sometimes shed stamps in transit or afterwards. Less frequently, they acquire stamps that don't belong. In our 1869 section (page 278) Stephen Rose tells a cautionary tale of two covers to which stamps were added to deceive collectors. At least for a while, one was good enough to fool the Philatelic Foundation.

In our Officials section (page 283), expert collector William E. Mooz teams up with Robert Mustacich to examine the SPECIMEN overprints on the Departmental Special Printing stamps. Conventional wisdom has long held that just one overprint plate was employed. This article uses very large multiples and very high-resolution scans to show that's not the case. ■

# PRESTAMP & STAMPLESS PERIOD

JAMES W. MILGRAM, EDITOR

## THE BOSTON POST OFFICE FROM 1815 TO 1845

MARK SCHWARTZ

This is the third in a series of articles about Boston postal history. The first article, in *Chronicle* 261, covered the period from the colonial beginnings up to 1776. The second article, in *Chronicle* 264, discussed the period from 1776 through the War of 1812. This article discusses the period from the end of the War to the middle of 1845, when postal rates were substantially reduced and simplified.

### The war rates

The Treaty of Ghent formally ended the War of 1812 on December 24, 1814. Just one day before, in the act of 23 December 1814, Congress had declared that “there shall be added to the rates of postage, as at present established by law, a sum equal to fifty per centum upon the amount of such rates respectively, for the use of the United States.” The effective date was 1 February 1815. Table 1 shows these war rates.<sup>1</sup>

**TABLE 1**  
**WAR RATES**

**EFFECTIVE: 1 FEBRUARY 1815—30 MARCH 1816**

| Distance       | Single sheet | Double sheet | Triple sheet |
|----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| up to 40 miles | 12¢          | 24¢          | 36¢          |
| 40-90 miles    | 15¢          | 30¢          | 45¢          |
| 90-150 miles   | 18¾¢         | 37½¢         | 56¼¢         |
| 150-300 miles  | 25½¢         | 51¢          | 76½¢         |
| 300-500 miles  | 30¢          | 60¢          | 90¢          |
| over 500 miles | 37½¢         | 75¢          | \$1.12½      |

**Note:** Ship letters charged 9¢ if delivered to the port of entry, or 2¢ plus the zone rate for delivery to destinations beyond the port of entry.

Because there were no specifics in the act, one could initially assume it applied to all rates. When the first Post Office circular was issued on December 28, it appeared that the

act was to include all internal domestic zone rates, as well as newspapers and pamphlets. There were no references to ship or drop letter charges, or way fees. It was not until March 21 that a Post Office circular dealt specifically with ship letters, indicating that while a ship letter addressed to the port would now be charged 9¢, rather than 6¢, the additional 2¢ added to the domestic rate for a letter sent beyond the port would remain the same. Finally, on March 23, a further Post Office circular confirmed the 2¢ ship fee, and stated that the drop letter and way fees remained the same as in the Act of 1799.<sup>2</sup>

It is not surprising, then, that there are examples showing charges that should not have been increased having the 50 percent surcharge added to them, but I am not aware of these errors occurring at Boston. Figure 1 shows a drop letter, written by Edwin Smith and dated at Wiscasset, Maine on August 21, 1815. It was carried privately to the Boston post office, where it was rated 1¢ in red manuscript ink and held for pick-up at the post office by the sender's brother, Joseph E. Smith. Despite the quaint specificity of the address—"Court Street, Tudor buildings, N. 12"—this was a drop letter. Local delivery would not be available in Boston for another 25 years.

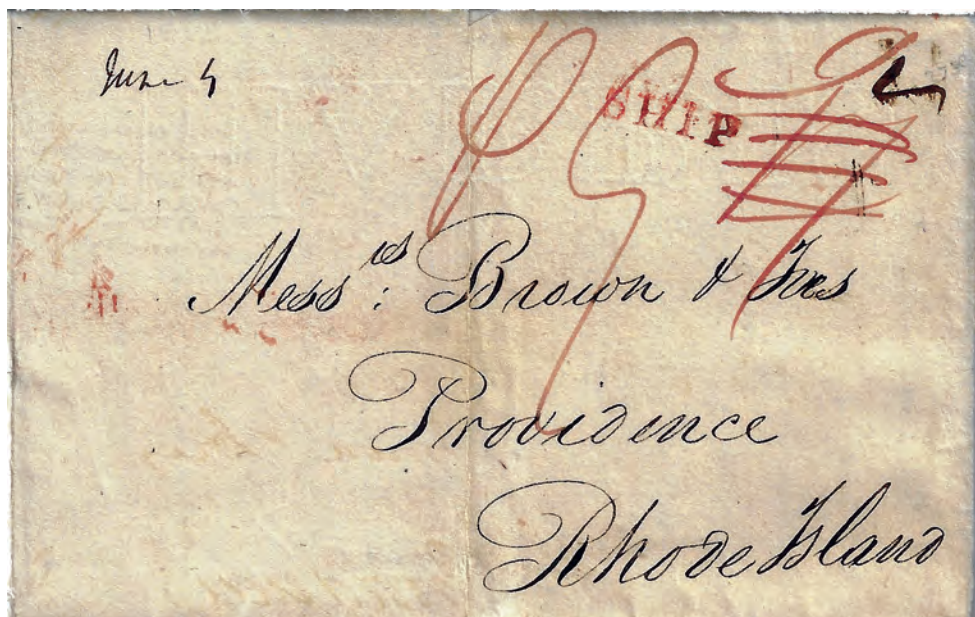


**Figure 1. Dated 21 August 1815, this is one of perhaps five correctly rated drop letters known from the war rate period. An equal number of incorrectly rated covers is recorded, but none from Boston.**

The cover in Figure 1 is one of perhaps five correctly rated drop letters known from the War Rate period, including one additional cover from Boston. A similar number of incorrectly rated drop letters (marked for collection of 1½¢) are known from New York and Albany.

At roughly the same time the United States enacted the war rates, Britain was trying to deal with a loss of revenue on letters sent by private ship instead of by government mail packet. The British act of 17 September 1814 authorized the sending of letters abroad by private ship, but only upon pre-payment of one-third the packet rate. Once that fee was paid at the post office, the letter was marked POST PAID WITHDRAWN SHIP LETTER LIVERPOOL and returned to the sender, who could now place it on board a private ship. This "tax" was rescinded by the British act of 11 July 1815, after British mailers made their disapproval well known.

During the six-plus months this requirement overlapped with the war rates, letters sent to the U.S. were often struck with very interesting combinations of rates and markings. One such cover is shown in Figure 2. On April 19, 1815, the sender paid a fee of 9 pence (P9 in magenta manuscript at top center) and the cover was struck on reverse with the



**Figure 2.** Ship letter sent from Liverpool during the war rate period. On April 19, 1815, the British sender paid a fee of 9 pence (P9 at top center) and the cover was struck on reverse with the red Liverpool double-circle marking (“POST PAID WITHDRAWN SHIP LETTER LIVERPOOL”) shown enlarged and enhanced at left. At Boston the cover was initially rated 17¢ for delivery at Providence, but an agent of the addressee picked up the letter at the Boston post office, causing the re-rating to 9¢—6¢ as a ship letter to the port of entry increased by the 50 percent surcharge to make the war rate.

red double-circle withdrawn ship letter marking of Liverpool (shown enlarged in Figure 2). The cover was then put on the ship *Milo* (discussed in another context below), which arrived at Boston on June 2. There the cover was initially rated 17¢ (15¢ for the 80-150 mile trip to Providence plus a 2¢ ship fee). However, an agent for the addressee, Brown & Ives, picked up the letter at Boston, resulting in a rerating to 9¢ as a ship letter delivered to the port. On letters sent to Boston I have seen POST PAID WITHDRAWN SHIP LETTER markings in red and in black from both London and Liverpool.

One final war rate letter is worth discussing. Very few pre-1820 letters to the U.S. from China have been recorded and even pre-1830 letters from that origin are rare. The letter in Figure 3 arrived at Boston on September 7, 1815 (per the faint red circular datestamp at upper left) on board the ship *Packet*, 164 days from Canton. It was struck with a small, slightly curved red “PAID” handstamp and, as a triple letter arriving by ship and traveling on to Philadelphia (300-500 miles from Boston), it was rated 92¢ (3x30¢, plus the 2¢ ship fee)—a very high rate on a cover that had already traveled a great distance.



**Figure 3. A very early letter from China, arriving Boston 7 September 1815 (during the war rate period) on the ship *Packet* after a 164-day voyage from Canton. This cover entered the mails at Boston rated for a 92¢ collection in Philadelphia (2¢ ship fee plus three times the 30¢ war rate for a letter sent 300-500 miles inland).**

#### **Act of 1 February 1816—restored rates**

On February 1, 1816, Congress repealed all the taxes imposed in December 1814 to help pay for the War, including that on postage rates. The rates reverted to those of the Act of 1799, and were in force only one month (31 March 1816–30 April 1816) before a new postal act took effect. These short-lived restored rates are presented in Table 2.

As scarce as restored rate covers are, even scarcer are those that arrived at U.S. ports by ship. I am aware of only seven such covers—three that arrived at Boston, and one each

**TABLE 2  
RESTORED RATES**

**EFFECTIVE: 31 MARCH 1816—30 APRIL 1816**

| Distance       | Single sheet | Double sheet | Triple sheet |
|----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| up to 40 miles | 8¢           | 16¢          | 24¢          |
| 40-90 miles    | 10¢          | 20¢          | 30¢          |
| 90-150 miles   | 12½¢         | 25¢          | 37½¢         |
| 150-300 miles  | 17¢          | 34¢          | 51¢          |
| 300-500 miles  | 20¢          | 40¢          | 60¢          |
| over 500 miles | 25¢          | 50¢          | 75¢          |

**Note:** Ship letters charged 6¢ if delivered to the port of entry, or 2¢ plus the zone rate for delivery to destinations beyond the port of entry.



**Figure 4. One of only seven known ship letters showing the restored rate, this cover was received at Boston and posted there on 30 April 1816, the last day of this short-lived rate. Rated 10¢ as a single ship letter sent up to 40 miles inland.**

at New York, Baltimore, Salem and Plymouth. The cover in Figure 4 was datelined February 27, 1816 at Newcastle, England and arrived in Boston on the ship *Liverpool Packet* on April 30, the last day of the rate. It was struck with the red Boston circular datestamp and a small slightly curved SHIP marking, and it was rated 10¢ as a single ship letter, sent under 40 miles (8¢ rate), to nearby Dedham, Massachusetts.

### Act of April 1816

On April 16, 1816, Congress passed a postal act setting up a new schedule of rates, presented in Table 3. The number of rate zones was reduced to five. Rates were still dependent on the number of sheets in the letter. The maximum weight for a letter or packet was 48 ounces (calculated at four sheets to an ounce). Ship letter charges remained unchanged: 6¢ for ship letters addressed to the port, and 2¢ plus the domestic distance rate for ship letters traveling beyond the port.

**TABLE 3**  
**RATES OF THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF APRIL 9, 1816**

| <b>EFFECTIVE: 1 MAY 1816—30 JUNE 1845</b> |                     |                     |                     |
|-------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Distance</b>                           | <b>Single sheet</b> | <b>Double sheet</b> | <b>Triple sheet</b> |
| up to 30 miles                            | 6¢                  | 12¢                 | 18¢                 |
| 30-80 miles                               | 10¢                 | 20¢                 | 30¢                 |
| 80-150 miles                              | 12½¢                | 25¢                 | 37½¢                |
| 150-400 miles                             | 18½¢/18¾¢*          | 37¢/37½¢*           | 55½¢/56¼¢*          |
| over 400 miles                            | 25¢                 | 50¢                 | 75¢                 |

**Note:** Ship letters charged 6¢ if delivered to the port of entry, or 2¢ plus the zone rate for delivery beyond the port of entry. \* = Rate adusted in 1825.

While much of the domestic mail from Boston from this period is unremarkable, there are a few interesting markings on domestic mail and some very interesting ship covers.

### Drop letters and pamphlets

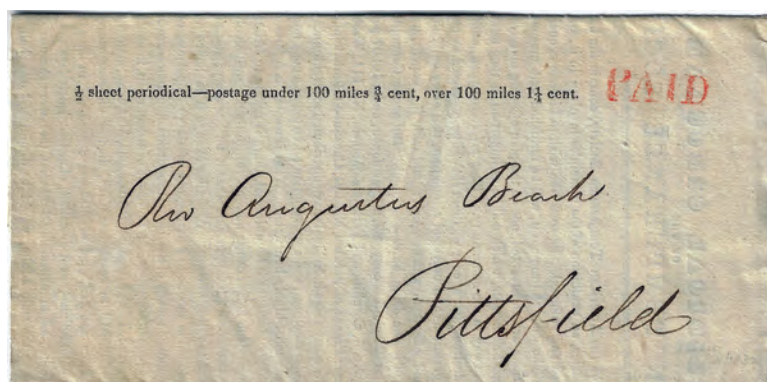
A drop letter was still 1¢ and, at Boston, such letters continued to be marked in red crayon with a manuscript “1”. The sole exception is shown in Figure 5. Dated Jan. 29,



**Figure 5.** Most Boston drop letters were manuscript rated in crayon for 1¢ collection. This cover bears the only known strike of the “BOSTON MS ONE CENT” handstamp.

1839 at Portland by Burbank & Forbish, wholesale grocers, this cover was carried privately (“by Mr. Heaser” as endorsed at bottom left) to Boston, where it was handstamped with the red circular BOSTON ONE CENT MS. This is the only known example of this marking.

The postal act of March 3, 1825 (effective May 1) established rates for magazines and pamphlets sent periodically. The rate was 1½¢ per full sheet for up to 100 miles, and 2½¢ per sheet over 100 miles. Half sheets were to be rated proportionally. The item in Figure 6, dated December 24, 1832 is entitled “Periodical Circular of the American Temperance Society.” It was sent from Boston to Pittsfield as a half-sheet periodical, with the rate conveniently printed on the cover at upper left. Pittsfield, in western Massachusetts, is more than 100 miles from Boston. Thus this half-sheet pamphlet was rated 1¼¢. I know of only two examples of this rate.



**Figure 6.** Half-sheet Temperance Society pamphlet dated 24 December 1832 and sent over 100 miles to Pittsfield, Mass. Per the preprinted endorsement, this pamphlet was rated as prepaid 1¼¢. One of only two known examples of this rate.

### Steamboats and railroads

The act of Congress of 27 February 1815 authorized the Postmaster General to use steamboats to carry mail. Until at least 1838, the mail from New York for Boston was carried either by stage or by steamboat 80 miles to New Haven to meet the stage there. While the first contract for Cornelius Vanderbilt's Connecticut Steamboat Company for which we have specific details was effective in July 1841, it was also recorded that this was a continuation of a previous contract. Thus it appears likely that the two 1836 covers discussed next were carried by Vanderbilt's company along the steamboat route shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7. Portion of a contemporary map showing (in blue) the course of the Vanderbilt mail steamers in Long Island Sound between New York City and New Haven in the late 1830s. Courtesy of Hugh Feldman.

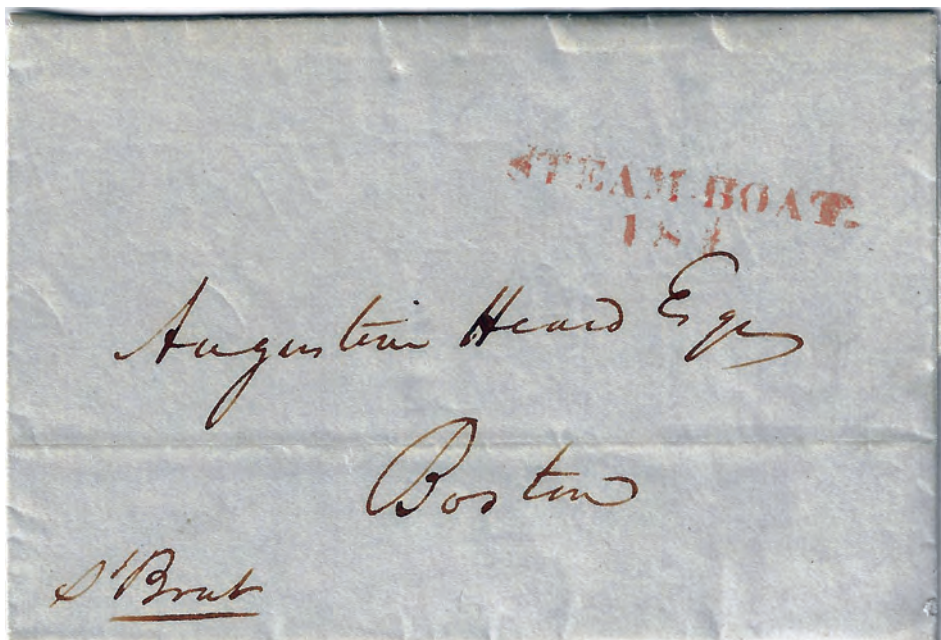


Figure 8 shows a letter that was datelined at New York on November 5, 1836 and sent to Lazell Perkins & Co. in Bridgewater, Massachusetts by Nahum Stetson, who went on to found the famous Bridgewater Iron Works. It was sent by steamboat from New York to New Haven and thence by stagecoach to Boston. It reached Boston on November 6, was struck with the red Boston circular datestamp, and rated 18¾¢ as a single letter sent 150-400 miles. Sometime during its trip it received the red 32½x3 millimeter “STEAM BOAT” handstamp, recorded (in the stampless cover catalog) used from 1829 to 1837. It is difficult to tell, but the steamboat marking appears to be struck on top of the Boston CDS. Many steamboat letters bear no origin marking, so it is sometimes uncertain whether these



Figure 8. Small straightline STEAM BOAT marking (32½x3mm) on an 1836 letter sent by steamboat from New York to New Haven, then by stage to Boston and on to Bridgewater, Massachusetts. Rated 18¾¢ as a single letter sent 150-400 miles.

“Steam” or “Steamboat” markings were applied at origin or destination. But I think the evidence is clear that all the steamboat markings discussed here were applied in Boston. All are listed as Boston markings in the *American Stampless Cover Catalog*.



**Figure 9.** Larger STEAM BOAT 18 $\frac{3}{4}$  straightline marking (44 $\frac{1}{2}$ x4 $\frac{1}{2}$  mm) on an 1836 letter also sent by steamboat from New York to New Haven, then by stage to Boston. The recipient was Augustine Heard of Boston, founder of the U.S.-Chinese trading company whose covers are well known in classic U.S. philately.

The second cover, shown in Figure 9, was datelined at New York three days later, on November 8, 1836. It was sent to Augustine Heard of Boston, founder of the U.S.-Chinese trading company whose covers are well known in classic U.S. philately. The Figure 9 cover was carried over the same route as Figure 8, but it received a very different steamboat handstamp, the 44 $\frac{1}{2}$ x4 $\frac{1}{2}$  mm STEAM BOAT 18 $\frac{3}{4}$  used at Boston between 1836 and 1839. No Boston CDS was applied, perhaps because this cover was not traveling beyond Boston.

On November 17, 1837, a railroad line opened between Stonington, Conn. and South Providence, R.I., there connecting with the Boston & Providence Railroad. The steamboat link between Stonington and New York City, combined with this newly completed railway

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line would allow mail to travel continuously and rapidly the full distance between Boston and New York. Letters traveling this new route continued to be marked in the same manner as before. The maps in Figures 10 and 11, adapted from Hugh Feldman's railroad book, together show the steamboat and rail routes. The numbers on the Figure 11 map designate railroad stops.

This new, faster rail-steam connection was not immediately embraced by the United States Post Office. Despite the railroad line having been opened, the July 9, 1838 cover shown in Figure 12, sent from New York via Boston to Andover, Massachusetts, almost certainly took the same stage-plus-steamboat route as the covers in Figures 8 and 9. Based on Feldman's research, mail was first carried over the steamboat and railroad routes beginning in July 1839 by expressman William Harnden, acting as a mail messenger, not a postal employee. The New York to Stonington steamer did not receive a contract to carry mail until July 1840.<sup>3</sup> The cover in Figure 12 was struck with a 45x3½ mm STEAM-BOAT (known used from July 1837 to July 1838, likely at Boston). At Boston it also received a red July 9 CDS and was rated 18¾¢ as a single sheet traveling 150-400 miles.



**Figure 12.** Letter sent in July 1838 from New York by steamboat (45x3½ mm “STEAM-BOAT”) and either by stage from New Haven or (possibly, but much less likely) by rail from Stonington to Boston before the railroad had a postal contract.

Figure 13 shows our final steamboat marking, on a letter that almost certainly traveled on the complete steamboat-railroad connection from New York to Boston (shown in Figures 10 and 11). Dated on Christmas Day 1843, the Figure 13 cover was sent from Lee Brewster to Messrs. Mason & Lawrence in Boston. Both firms were dry goods merchants. The cover reached Boston in two or three days and there received Boston's red single-circle STEAM BOAT 18¾. Again, we see no Boston CDS because the letter did not go further inland.

Figure 14 shows a great strike of a red RAILROAD CAR straightline marking on a letter from Clappville, Massachusetts (now Rochdale, a village of Leicester). This letter was dated 22 January 1842 and carried on the Boston & Worcester Railroad and (briefly) on the Western Railroad. Along with the Boston & Providence, the Boston & Worcester was one of the earliest major rail lines out of Boston, and this is one of the earlier railroad



Figure 13. Letter datelined December 25, 1843 sent by steamboat (large Boston STEAM BOAT 18<sup>3/4</sup>) from New York to Stonington, then by rail to Boston.



Figure 14. Letter carried in January 1842 from Clappville, Mass. to Boston on the Boston & Worcester and Western railroads, bearing a RAILROAD CAR handstamp.

markings. The vast majority of railroad markings were used after 1845.

The Boston & Worcester Railroad Company was chartered in 1831, with construction starting the following year and passenger service beginning in 1835. Similarly, the Western Railroad was chartered in 1833 to run track from the Boston & Worcester to Albany, but service from Worcester to the New York state line was not finished until 1841. The Western

Railroad was awarded postal contracts beginning in early 1840, and the Boston & Worcester in mid-1841.

In 1842, Clappville was the last stop on the Western Railroad route from Albany to Worcester. This letter was carried a very short distance on that line, and the full distance on the Boston & Worcester Railroad to the addressee in Boston, a total of about 52 miles. Ten cents was collected from the recipient, for a single sheet traveling between 30 and 80 miles.

### Express mail

On July 2, 1836, President Andrew Jackson signed a bill that included authorization of a government express mail. Letters were to be marked "Express Mail." They could not weigh more than one half ounce and were charged triple the ordinary mail rate. These letters were carried continuously by stage and horseback, substantially reducing the travel time. The service began on November 15, 1836 between New York and New Orleans. The earliest recorded north-south express letter was sent from Boston to Charleston on December 6. The western extension from Washington to Cincinnati began on July 1, 1837; and from Dayton to St. Louis on January 1, 1838. Express mail sent from Boston is scarce.

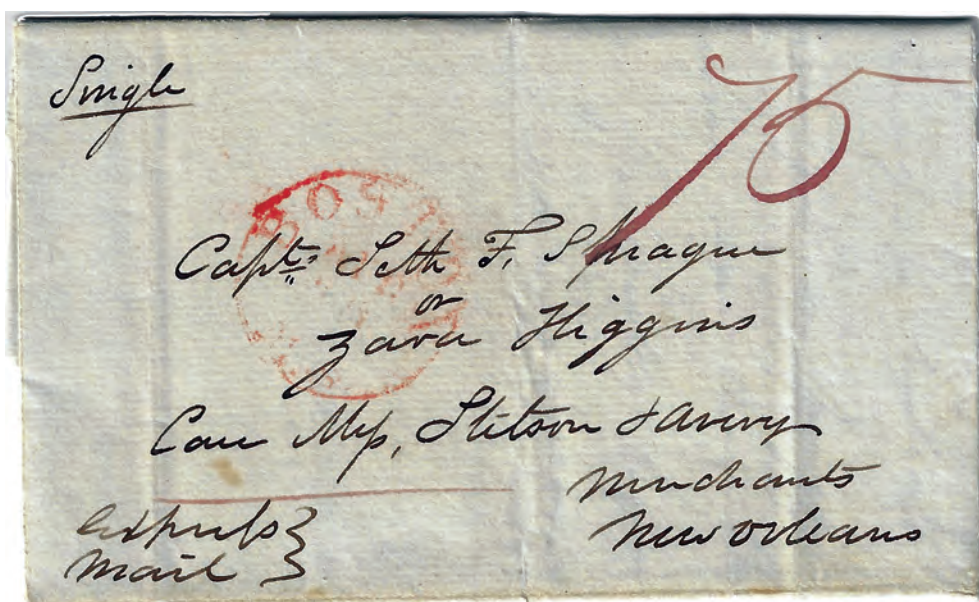


**Figure 15. Letter sent from Boston via Washington to St. Louis in December 1836, partially carried by the newly established government express mail. The trip west from Washington was by regular post; express service was not yet available.**

Figure 15 shows one of the earliest express mail letters, sent from Boston to St. Louis on December 31, 1836. It is endorsed "By the Express Mail," shows a red Boston CDS and was rated 75¢ as a single letter sent over 400 miles. Express service through to St. Louis was not yet available, so the trip from Washington to St. Louis was by the regular post.

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**Figure 16. Another express mail letter sent via the full express route from Boston to New Orleans in April 1837; rated 75¢ for a single-rate distance over 400 miles.**

A second express mail letter is shown in Figure 16, sent from Boston to New Orleans over the full north-south route. Marked “Single” at top left and “Express Mail” at bottom left, it was struck with a red Boston April 29 (1837) CDS and also rated 75¢ as a single letter traveling over 400 miles.

### **A very heavy freight money letter from Boston**

Freight money refers to a fee imposed by shipping companies upon letters carried privately by the early transatlantic steamships and sailing packets from New York to England. A uniform fee of 25¢ for steamships and 12½¢ for sailing packets was established for each single letter rate. To encourage foreign correspondence, PMG Amos Kendall supported an unprecedented plan to have selected post offices collect these private ship fees as well as the U.S. inland postage to New York and send the fees to the Postmaster of New York to pay the agents of the shipping companies their required ship charges. The postmasters were required to mark letters to show the collection of the additional charge.

The first post office approved for this was Philadelphia on August 9, 1838. This was followed in September by Charleston and Baltimore. They were followed by Rochester, N.Y., Savannah, Portsmouth, N.H., Richmond, Auburn, N.Y., New Orleans, Alexandria, Memphis and Norfolk.

It is noticeable that Boston, a major hub for transatlantic mail, was not among these. It appears that the Boston postmaster did not want to have to collect the freight money fee or keep the accounting straight. The result of this is the cover in Figure 17, as well as two similar ones I have seen.

The Figure 17 cover was sent by Sargent Rogers from Boston City Hall on 17 October 1839 to the shipowners Abraham Bell & Co. in New York. A common Boston CDS and paid handstamp were struck on the letter, but the letter’s weight and rate are what makes this cover highly unusual. At 47¾ oz., this letter was only one-fourth ounce below the maximum allowed. Per Section 13 of the Act of Mar. 3, 1825: “No postmaster shall receive, to be conveyed by the mail, any packet which shall weigh more than three pounds.” And the charge expressed on this letter is \$35.81¼!



**Figure 17.** This 1839 cover letter accompanied a 47¾ ounce packet sent from Boston to a shipping agent in New York, for placement on board a ship to Liverpool. The freight money prepayment summed here was an amazing \$35.81¼.

Why did this letter, really the top sheet on a packet of letters, require such a high rating? A clue can be found in the contents, which indicate that this letter accompanied a large packet of letters (plus a few newspapers) to be carried on one of Bell's ships to Liverpool, sailing on October 19. The sender also enclosed the freight money fees.

According to contemporary newspapers, Sargent Rogers had a "Foreign Letter Office" at City Hall as early as 1835. An ad in Boston's *Columbia Centinel* of October 16, 1839—one day before Rogers posted this letter—said "A letter bag by the Steamer Liverpool by New York for Liverpool, will close on Thursday, 17th Inst. at half past 2 o'clock, P.M." An earlier ad from the same newspaper (December 1, 1838) confirmed that Rogers was agent for Abraham Bell's Trans-Atlantic Steamship Co. Evidently, instead of sending individual "freight money" letters, Bostonians who wanted to send money or important papers overseas brought their letters to Rogers who would then send them on to New York.

### The fancy Boston "SHIP 6"

It was early in this rate period that one of the two iconic handstamps in Boston postal history—the fancy red SHIP 6 marking—was introduced. (The other, in my opinion, is the small red or black PAID in grid of 1851-1852.) A tracing of fancy red SHIP 6 is presented in Figure 18.



**Figure 18.** Tracing of Boston's iconic fancy SHIP 6 in ribbon handstamp.

The earliest known example, on the cover shown in Figure 19, dates from May 7, 1816, even though it was struck on that date in error. The Figure 19 letter was sent from Liverpool via Boston to Dedham, Mass. When it arrived on May 7, the postmaster responded to the Boston address at bottom (below the "Dedham near"), and applied a faint strike of the fancy SHIP 6 at top center-right. After realizing his error, he overstruck that handstamp with a small slightly curved red SHIP handstamp and rated the letter at 8¢, for a single-rate ship letter sent up to 30 miles from the port.



Figure 19. The earliest known example of Boston's fancy SHIP 6 in ribbon hand-stamp, struck faintly and in error on a letter from Liverpool to Dedham on May 7, 1816. The error was corrected with the SHIP overstrike and the 8 rating.

Even though it was applied only to ship letters addressed to the port of Boston, several interesting covers with fancy SHIP 6 marking are known. Two of the most interesting are from Oahu, Hawaii and Calcutta, India.

The letter from Hawaii, shown in Figure 20, was carried on the brig *Arab* to Canton, China, and then on the brig *Vancouver* from Canton to Boston, where it arrived on May 5,



Figure 20. A cover sent in May 1823 from Hawaii via Canton (China) to Boston, arriving a year later and describing a new missionary's first impressions of Hawaii. The fancy Boston SHIP 6 can be seen in a faint strike at upper right.

1824. The letter was datelined May 20, 1823, nearly a year earlier, and sent by Levi Chamberlain to his uncle Richard within a month of his arrival in Hawaii. The letter describes his voyage from Cape Verde and his first impressions of Hawaii. It was struck very lightly at the upper right with the fancy “SHIP 6.”



**Figure 21.** Via brig *Barbara* from Calcutta after a voyage of 104 days, this cover arrived Boston on 26 May 1820 and received a clear, full strike of the fancy SHIP 6 handstamp. The sender of this letter, John Palmer, was at this time reputed to be the richest merchant in the East Indies.

The letter in Figure 21 was sent from Palmer & Co. in Calcutta to Captain N.W. Skillings in Boston, where it arrived on May 26, 1820. John Palmer (1767-1836) was considered the richest merchant in the East Indies, and he was politically influential as well. The letter arrived on the brig *Barbara* after a voyage of 104 days and was also struck with the fancy ship marking. This is a very early letter from that faraway land to the U.S. Based on my research, the earliest known letter to the U.S. from India reached Philadelphia in 1804.

### **The ships *Milo* and *Herald***

Once the War of 1812 ended, Boston’s maritime trade increased substantially. The sailing ship *Milo*, with Samuel Glover as master, left Boston on March 12, 1815 and arrived at Liverpool on March 30. She was loaded in two weeks and sailed for Boston on April 16, arriving on June 8 to be the first American ship to make a round-trip voyage to Liverpool after the war. A cover from that initial sailing is illustrated and discussed by Steve Walske in the February 2015 *Chronicle*.

A subsequent letter carried by *Milo* is shown in Figure 22, bearing a crisp strike of one of the best known American ship markings. The cover originated in Stockholm and was sent privately to a Liverpool forwarder by David Erskine, iron merchant and U.S. Consul at Stockholm. How the letter got from Stockholm to Liverpool and whether postage was charged is unclear. The forwarder placed it on the *Milo*, which reached Boston after a 25-day voyage on April 23 [1818], per the red CDS.

At lower left is a blue strike in of the double circle ship marking “SHIP MILO. sail-d mar. 27 S. G. BRONSON.” This marking is known with typographically diverse dates:

Figure 22. The fancy blue double circle of the ship *Milo* and her captain, Samuel G. Bronson, dated Mar. 27 (1818). The letter was datelined at Stockholm on April 23, 1818 and sent to Liverpool, whence the *Milo* carried it to Boston.



“mar. 27”, “June 7” and “AUG:16”.<sup>4</sup> The Figure 22 cover was rated 12¢ as a single-rate ship letter sent the 30-80 miles from Boston to Providence.

A very similar marking was struck on covers carried on another ship plying the route between Boston and Liverpool. How this marking came about is quite interesting. When Captain Bronson next sailed the *Milo* from Boston on May 11, 1818, he had hired a first mate, Philip Fox, a 23-year-old from Cohasset, Massachusetts. When a new ship, the *Herald*, was built that year at Newbury, *Milo*'s owners transferred Bronson to the *Herald* and he took Fox with him. On the first voyage of the *Herald* to Liverpool, Bronson was lost overboard. Fox assumed command and subsequently made several voyages on the *Herald* to Liverpool.

The letter in Figure 23 was carried on the voyage of April 30, 1819. Fox evidently had a similar double-circle dated ship marking made, and it was struck on this letter at lower



Figure 23. The black handstamp used by Bronson's successor, Philip Fox, on the *Herald* in April 1819. This cover was privately carried from Boston to Liverpool and there posted to the Netherlands.

left: SHIP HERALD. SAILD APRIL 30, P. FOX. The letter was datelined at Boston on April 10, 1819 and addressed to Schiedam, Holland.

The absence of a Boston postmark indicates the cover was placed directly onboard the ship. At Liverpool was rated a total of 4sh, 9d (manuscript marking at upper left), made up of 3 times 8d for a triple ship letter to Liverpool (crossed-out boxed LIVERPOOL SHIP LETTER) plus 3 times 11d for the trip from Liverpool to London. The 4 shilling rate was 3 times 1/4 for the trip from London to Holland. Finally, the large manuscript 90 indicated that 90 Dutch cents was due at Schiedam.

### Second delivery marking

The 2D DELIVERY marking on the cover in Figure 24 is not uncommonly seen on mail entering New York, indicating that an arriving ship docked too late for mail to be removed in a timely manner. However, this is the only example seen on ship mail arriving



**Figure 24. The only known 2D DELIVERY handstamp applied at Boston, here on a letter from Danish India that arrived at Boston on February 15, 1842 and was then sent inland to Holliston at a ship rate of 8¢ (2¢ plus 6¢).**

at Boston. The letter was datelined Oct. 4, 1841 at Balasore, Danish India and carried to Boston on the ship *Sophia*. It was struck with a Boston FEB 15 circular datestamp, a large red SHIP handstamp and the 2D DELIVERY marking, and rated 8¢ for the under-30-mile trip to Holliston, southwest of Boston.

### Quarantined letters

In 1736, a quarantine facility was established at Rainsford Island, a small island in Boston Harbor six miles from the town. By 1832 a boat was being used for quarantine dispatch in Boston harbor and permanent buildings had been erected by the City Health Department. Ship passengers and letters had been quarantined on the island for decades, but Boston used various QUARANTINE handstamps only from 1827 to 1835. Some of these markings are shown on the covers discussed below.

The 29x3½ millimeter QUARANTINE on the cover shown in Figure 25 is known used from July 1827 to September 1828. The letter within was datelined at Marseilles on May 15, 1827 and sent by the merchants Fitch Brothers to Messrs. Brown & Ives in Providence. From 1827 to 1829, a major outbreak of smallpox had struck Marseilles. On August

23, the brig *Cecilia*, carrying this letter, arrived at Rainsford Island, and by August 25, at Boston. The letter was marked QUARANTINE, struck with the August 25 CDS, and rated 12¢ for a single ship letter sent 30-80 miles.



Figure 25. QUARANTINE (29x3½ mm) handstamp applied at Boston on a letter sent from Marseilles in May 1827, during the time when smallpox had struck that city. This cover arrived at Boston three months later, on August 25.

A larger handstamp (43x4 mm), used for less than a year (June 1831—April 1832) was struck on the cover shown in Figure 26. The letter was datelined at Matanzas, Cuba on



Figure 26. A larger (43x4 mm) QUARANTINE handstamp on a June 15, 1831 letter from Cuba, which was then enduring a cholera epidemic. Boston arrival on July 4.

June 15, 1831, the time of a cholera pandemic. It was sent on the brig *Betsy*, which arrived at quarantine on July 2. The letter arrived at Boston on July 4, where it was struck with the QUARANTINE and the Boston CDS, and rated 12¢ as a single ship letter sent the 30-80 miles to Mattapoisett, Massachusetts.

A third quarantined letter is shown in Figure 27. It was datelined at Athens on March 8, 1832, sent privately to Smyrna and carried from there to Boston on the brig *Africa*. A cholera epidemic had reached much of Europe the previous year. The *Africa* was quaran-



**Figure 27. A letter sent from Greece on March 8, 1832, bearing a 36x3½ mm QUARANTINE handstamp. A second cholera epidemic had reached Europe the previous year. This letter arrived at Boston on July 9, on its way to Philadelphia.**

tined at Rainsford Island by July 8, and this letter reached the Boston post office the following day. It was struck with the red July 9 Boston CDS, a large red SHIP handstamp, and a 36x3½ mm QUARANTINE, recorded used May 1831 through 1835.

### **The U.S.S. *Peacock* and an early cover from Siam**

The cover shown in Figure 28 was sent from the storied U.S.S. *Peacock* in the Gulf of Siam on March 21, 1836. The sender was William Ruschenberger, newly commissioned surgeon's mate, writing to his mother Ann Ruschenberger in Philadelphia. He subsequently published two books about his voyages. The Figure 28 cover arrived at Boston on December 15, where it was struck with the red Boston CDS, large SHIP and rated 37½¢ as a double letter sent 150-400 miles. Manuscript endorsements indicate "Double" and "U.S.S. *Peacock*."

The first *Peacock* was built in 1813 for service in the War of 1812. After a 15-year career, she was decommissioned, broken up and rebuilt in 1828 for a planned expedition of exploration. After serving in the West Indies, *Peacock* sailed on March 8, 1832 under Commander David Geisinger on a diplomatic mission to Sumatra. By February 1833, *Peacock* had arrived at the Gulf of Siam and on March 20, 1833, Edmund Roberts, a "special confidential agent" of President Jackson, concluded the Siamese-American Treaty of Amity and Commerce with the minister representing King Rama III.



**Figure 28. A very early letter from Siam (1836) sent by the surgeon's mate of the U.S.S. *Peacock* in the Gulf of Siam as the ship was returning from a diplomatic mission. This cover reached Boston December 15 and was posted to Philadelphia.**

*Peacock* left New York on a return mission to Southeast Asia in April 1835 in a failed attempt to establish relations with Cochin-China (southern Vietnam). She was on her way home in the Gulf of Siam when an encounter with the brig *Maria Theresa* allowed letters home (including the cover in Figure 28) to be transferred.

### Conclusion

The next installment of this series, currently planned for the 1847 section in November, will discuss the inauguration of the Cunard line and the revolution in transatlantic mail (and postal practices) that the Cunard service precipitated.

### Endnotes

1. The preceding rate information, presented as Table 4 on page 321 of *Chronicle* 264, contained a regrettable typographical error. The effective dates were labeled "2 March 1799–1 February 1816." That last year date was mistaken. The correct dates are "2 March 1799–1 February 1815."
2. Frajola, Richard C., "1815 War Surcharge Rates," *Chronicle* 119 (1983), pp. 158-167.
3. Hugh V. Feldman, *U.S. Contract Mail Routes by Railroad (1832-1875)*, Collectors Club of Chicago, 2017, pg. 762.
4. James W. Milgram, "Ship *Milo* and *Herald* Handstamped Transatlantic Markings," *Chronicle* 233, pp. 9-13. ■

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## UTICA AND SCHENECTADY RAILROAD POSTMARK: EARLIEST NAMED RAILROAD MARKING

JAMES W. MILGRAM, M.D.

It is not often these days that an entirely new postmark comes to light. This article announces a newly discovered and very early railroad postmark and provides an opportunity to illustrate and discuss other important early railroad markings.

I have written a book and a number of articles on the government Express Mail of 1836-39.<sup>1</sup> This service, run by the United States Post Office department, enabled more rapid mail carriage in the parts of the country that it served. The government express worked for a few years, but it was obsoleted in large part by the extension of the railroads, which by the late 1830s enabled faster, regular, more dependable and cheaper mail transportation and in the 1840s and 1850s became the main means of mail transportation across much of the settled portion of the United States.

### Utica and Schenectady Railroad

Individual railroad routes and contracts are discussed in detail by Hugh Feldman in his book *U.S. Contract Mail Routes by Railroad (1832-1875)*.<sup>2</sup> Route 41a describes the service of the Utica and Schenectady Railroad from July 1837 to June 1841. This was part of the first mail-carrying railroad route in New York state. The full route was between Albany in the east and Utica in the west. Schenectady was an intermediate stop, two stops west of Albany. The town of Fonda was stop nine in the middle of the route, which approximately matched the course of today's Interstate 90. Later this railroad was extended west to Buffalo. Feldman observes that the contract for this route was unique in that the railroad was paid on the basis of the weight of the mail it carried.

Figure 1 depicts the newly discovered marking: a black straightline "U&S. RAIL ROAD," struck on a cover from Utica. The crude typography of the handstamper suggests



**Figure 1. New discovery: the earliest named railroad marking. Black straightline "U&S. RAIL ROAD" with manuscript "10" rating for the 30-80 mile distance between Utica and Fonda, New York. The dateline on the letter within is March 22, 1838.**

it might have been fabricated from newspaper type. Whatever its manufacture, this is the handstamp of a route agent on the Utica and Schenectady Railroad. The letter within is dated March 22, 1838. The manuscript “10” due rating indicates a collection of 10¢ postage for the 30-80 mile distance rate.

The cover is addressed to Col. Peter H. Fonda, Fonda, Montgomery County, New York. Col. Fonda was the grandson of Douw Fonda, after whom the town was named, an early settler who was scalped by Mohawk Indians at age 79 in 1780. The Fonda family of actors are descendants, as noted by Henry Fonda in his 1981 biography.

Manuscript railroad markings have been known from this route for many years. The earliest example I have seen appears on the cover shown in Figure 2: a manuscript “RR



**Figure 2. Early example of a manuscript railroad route agent marking: “R R 12½” on a folded letter from Albany to Rome, New York, dated January 27, 1838. The ornamented red double oval “UTICA N.Y.” postmark is dated “Jan 30.”**

12½,” designating the 80-150 mile rate. The letter within this cover is datelined Albany January 27, 1838 and the distance between Albany and Rome is about 110 miles. The route agent’s manuscript marking suggests the cover was posted on the train and then turned over to the post office at Utica, which is less than 20 miles from Rome. The ornamented red “UTICA N.Y.” double-oval handstamp is dated January 30.

### **Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore R.R.**

Prior to the discovery of the Figure 1 cover, the earliest handstamped route agent marking including the name of the railroad was the red double straightline “BALTIMORE R.R. [with date].” A very early example, dated September 7, 1838, is struck at upper left on the cover to France shown in Figure 3.<sup>3</sup> Markings of this type are also examples of the earliest dated railroad postmark. According to the Remele handbook, these markings were applied on the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore R.R.<sup>4</sup>

The Figure 3 cover was marked “Paid 18¾” when it entered the mails (for the 150-400 mile distance to New York) and prepayment was confirmed at Philadelphia with two strikes of its familiar blue octagon. The cover was endorsed (lower left) “per Havre packet 8th September”) and was marked at New York on that date. The letter was carried by *Duchesse d’Orleans*, which arrived at Le Havre on October 13.<sup>5</sup> This is the date of the



Figure 3. “BALTIMORE MD R.R. SEP 7 1838” double straightline marking with manuscript “Paid 18¾”. The blue octagon “PAID” markings were struck at Philadelphia. A red “NEW-YORK SEP 8” was applied the following day in time for the Havre packet sailing September 8. The recipient paid nine decimes due postage in Paris.

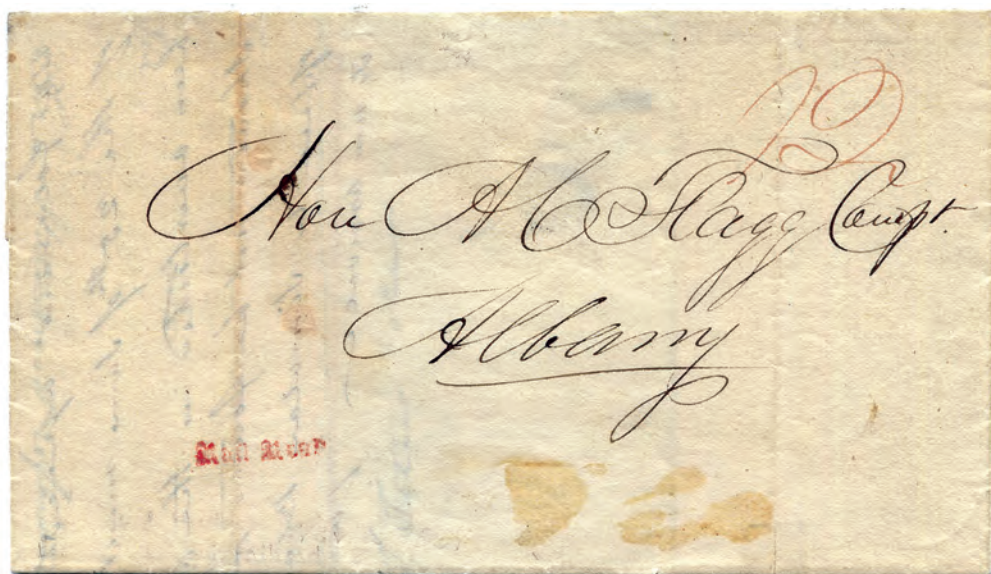


Figure 4. Earliest known use of a railroad marking on a United States cover: “Rail Road” in old English type on a cover addressed to a comptroller in Albany. The cover is docketed November 2, 1837. This is the earliest American railroad postmark.

black “BUREAU MARITIME HAVRE” double circle. The “PAYS D’OUTREMER PAR LE HAVRE” boxed rectangle was also struck at Havre to indicate the cover entered France from overseas. Nine decimes postage was charged in Paris, which was the sum of a 1 decime ship fee and the 8 decimes up to 10 grams rate for up to 220 kilometers.

The “BALTIMORE MD. R.R.” markings, while very early, are not the earliest known

route agent's postmarks applied on a railroad. That honor goes to the marking type on the cover shown in Figure 4, a small straightline "Rail Road" in an old English type font on a cover addressed to Albany, New York. The letter within bears no dateline, but is docketed November 2, 1837. Remele surmised that this marking was "used on the Mohawk and Hudson R.R., running between Albany and Schenectady."<sup>6</sup> The rating on this cover is 12¢, suggesting a double rate, since the distance involved was less than 20 miles.

The strike on the cover in Figure 4 is the earliest known use of a railroad marking. This article has shown examples of the four earliest United States railroad postmark types. Thanks to Dwayne Littauer for assistance in the analysis of the Figure 3 cover.

### Endnotes

1. James W. Milgram, *The Express Mail of 1836-1839*, Collectors Club of Chicago, 1977.
2. Hugh V. Feldman, *U.S. Contract Mail Routes by Railroad (1832-1875)*, Collectors Club of Chicago, 2017.
3. James W. Milgram, "Early American Railroad Markings," *American Stamp Dealer & Collector*, June 2014, pp. 20-27.
4. C.W. Remele, *United States Railroad Postmarks 1837 to 1861*, U.S. 1851-60 Unit, State College, Pa., 1958, pg. 12.
5. *Lloyd's List* (October 16, 1838), pg. 2 (available at [www.USPCS.org](http://www.USPCS.org)). The "Maritime Report" in the September 7, 1838 edition of *The Evening Post* reported *Duchesse d'Orleans* cleared that day.
6. Remele, *op. cit.*, pp. 135-136. ■

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**HOWARD'S HOTEL MARKINGS ON HUDSON RIVER MAIL:  
USES OF THE MARKING AND A CENSUS OF THE COVERS**

**CLIFFORD J. ALEXANDER**

**Introduction**

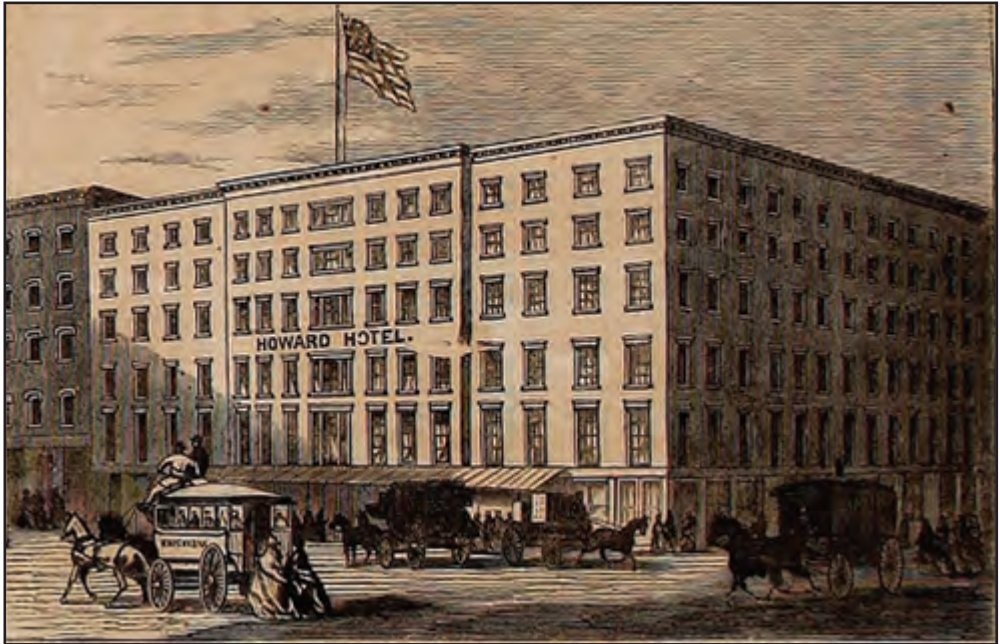
Howard's Hotel in New York City was one of more than 70 United States hotels that, from 1840 throughout the rest of the 19th century, applied their own handstamps to mail that customers handed over to them. The handstamp is an oval with the words "FORWARDED FROM HOWARDS HOTEL NEW-YORK." A much-enlarged strike of this marking is shown in the photo in Figure 1.



**Figure 1. Howard's Hotel handstamp, enlarged photo.**

An examination of covers with this handstamp affirms that the role of Howard's Hotel seems to have been different from that of other hotels. This article attempts to answer some questions about Howard's Hotel. Did their hotel handstamp, like most, simply represent an advertisement, or did Howard's Hotel function as a forwarding agent? Did the hotel work in conjunction with the city post office, or operate as an independent mail service?

Howard's Hotel was built and owned by brothers Daniel and John Howard, sons of a hotel owner in Burlington, Vermont. Shown in Figure 2, the six-story hotel opened in March 1840. It was an imposing structure, located at the corner of Broadway and Maiden Lane, in what is today Manhattan's Financial District.



**Figure 2. Wood engraving of Howard's Hotel, at the corner of Broadway and Maiden Lane in lower Manhattan, as it appeared in the 1840s.**

In the early 1840s, many major hotels began a practice of applying their own handstamps to letters left with them by customers and guests. Although the hotels presumably charged for mail and messenger services, no covers that survive show any indication that a fee was paid or assessed. The handstamps were used to advertise the hotels, analogous to the printed corner advertisements found on hotel envelopes in later years.

In the mid-19th century, as they still do today, hotels assisted guests with the delivery and mailing of letters. The *American Stampless Cover Catalog* (ASCC) lists 78 hotel mail handstamps seen on covers from 71 hotels, including Howard's. ASCC notes that employees of many hotels took letters to and from post offices.<sup>1</sup> Philatelic articles assume a fee was charged, but the ASCC notes "there is no proof that such was the case." The ASCC also states:

...[A] great many letters were carried outside of the mails by guests who were leaving the hotels for another city and who evidently were asked to carry some of this mail and drop it in the post office on their arrival at their destination—in fact there is definite evidence that some merchants in New York City used this means of having their monthly statement delivered to customers in different cities.

Before the railroads, the Hudson River was a very important commercial route, served by steamboats starting around 1810. In the early decades of the 19th century, due in part to high government postal rates, a good deal of correspondence was privately carried, outside the mail, on Hudson River steamboats.<sup>2</sup> For example, a cover to a New York City address, carried privately down the river and deposited at the New York post office, would result in a 1¢ drop charge due from the addressee—versus 18½¢ or more if the letter had traveled the whole trip in the government mail.

Howard's Hotel was well located in lower Manhattan to facilitate both mail transportation on the Hudson River and delivery of letters addressed to New York City. It was eight blocks southwest of the city post office, located in the Rotunda Building on the northeast corner of City Hall Park. And it was only five blocks from the West Side piers where the Hudson River steamboats docked.

In 1845, an Englishman in New York City estimated that "Probably 200 would be the average number to be attended to in Howard's Hotel" each day.<sup>3</sup> This expansive number probably included long-term boarders and possibly diners as well.

### **Census of covers bearing the Howard's Hotel handstamp**

To support this article, I created a census of covers bearing the Howard's Hotel handstamp. Data about these or any hotel covers is not easy to assemble because such covers generally have not been considered important enough (or valuable enough) or to be offered at auction as individual illustrated lots.

A summary of my Howard's Hotel handstamp census is presented in Table 1 (next page). For the 32 covers in the census, the table presents the date, marking color, origin, destination, delivery mode and a reference that might lead the curious reader to an image of the cover. Twenty-eight of the covers are stampless, one shows a City Despatch Post stamp, and three bear the successor United States City Despatch Post stamps. The stamps are designated by their Scott number in the "Delivered by" column.

### **City Despatch Post and United States City Despatch Post**

In 1839, the New York Penny Post was established as the first private local post in the western hemisphere. Englishman Henry Thomas Windsor acquired the business of the New York Penny Post in January 1842. He renamed it the City Despatch Post and hired Alexander Greig as manager. At the start of its operations, the City Despatch Post placed 101 letter boxes at hotels, stores, and other establishments, from 14th Street to the southern tip of Manhattan. Fourteen of the boxes were in hotels—including Howard's.<sup>4</sup>

Concerned that its New York City carriers were losing revenue, the New York Post Office (NYPO) acquired the City Despatch Post in August 1842 and renamed it the United States City Despatch Post. When the NYPO acquired the City Despatch business, it also obtained the post's employees and its boxes. The NYPO carrier department operated it until November 28, 1846, when Abraham B. Mead acquired the business. Both City Despatch and U.S. City Despatch employees collected and delivered letters in lower Manhattan and both brought letters to the NYPO.

The census data suggests that Howard's Hotel may have had a special relationship with the City Despatch Post and the successor U.S. City Despatch Post, which delivered a preponderance of the letters struck with the Howard's Hotel handstamp that were addressed to New York City. Of the 21 covers bearing the Howard's Hotel handstamp that were delivered in New York City, the City Despatch Post collected and delivered ten. The cities of origin can be determined for seven of these. Five originated in Troy, and one each in Chicago and Detroit. Nine of the ten were delivered locally in New York City, and one was brought to the NYPO. Another seven covers in the census were collected by the United States City Despatch Post.

### **Hudson River mails**

In addition to having an apparent special relationship with the City Despatch Post, Howard's Hotel seems certainly to have played a role in handling commercial letters traveling outside the mails on the Hudson River. Of the 32 covers in the census, all but one likely were carried to or from New York City on Hudson River steamboats outside the U.S. mails. Based on contents and addresses, at least 28 were commercial correspondence.

**TABLE 1. CENSUS OF HOWARD'S HOTEL COVERS**

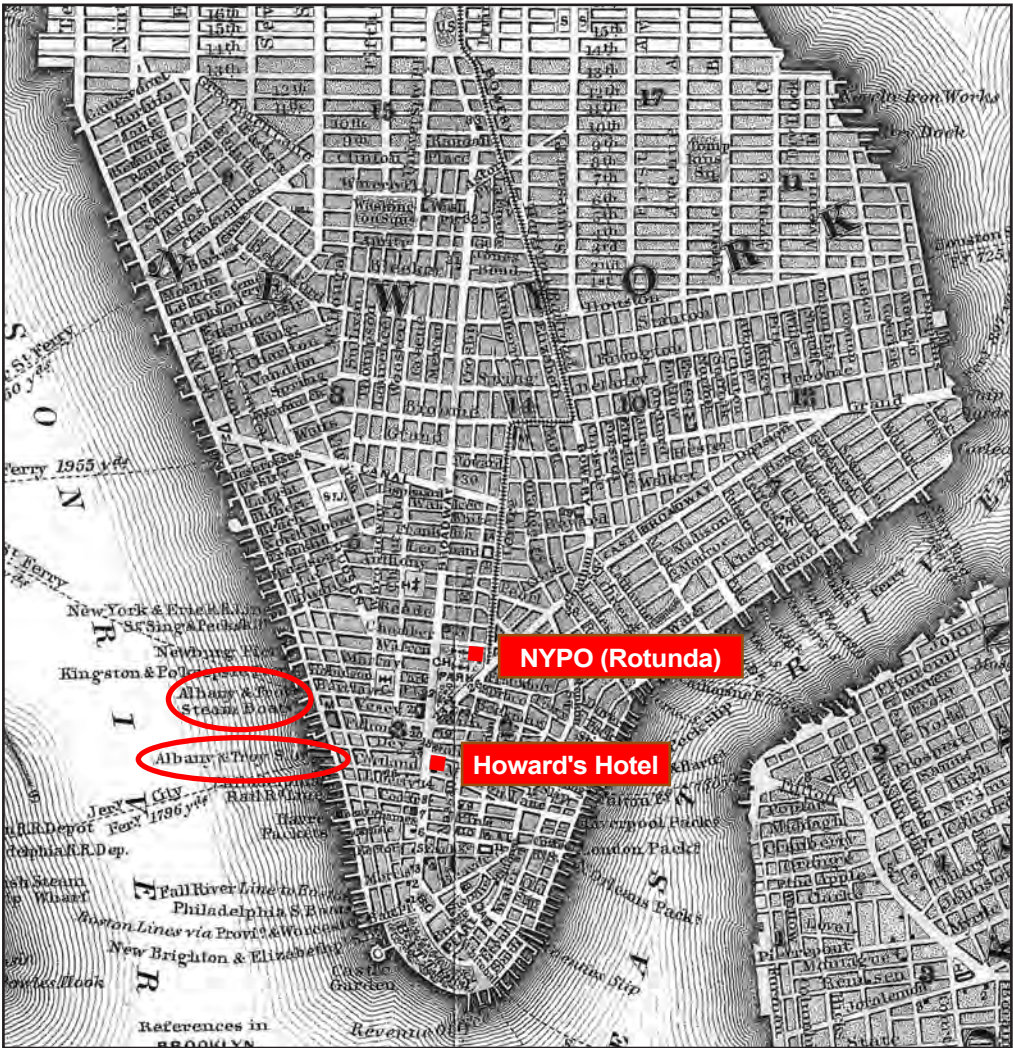
| Date       | HHhs  | Origin/destination | Delivered by | Reference                     |
|------------|-------|--------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|
| 4/29/1842  | Blue  | ?/NYC              | NY           | Figure 5                      |
| 5/16/1842  | Blue  | Detroit/NYC        | NY           | Author's collection           |
| 5/18/1842  | Blue  | ?/NYC              | NY           | Levi auction records          |
| 5/28/1842  | Blue  | Troy/NYC           | NY           | Author's collection           |
| 5/31/1842  | Blue  | Troy/NYC           | NY           | RF sale 1 lot 436             |
| 6/5/1842   | Blue  | Troy/NYC           | NY           | Private collection            |
| 6/14/1842  | Blue  | ?/NYC              | NY           | Siegel sale 773 lot 229       |
| 6/23/1842  | Blue  | Troy/NYC           | NY (40L1)    | Private collection            |
| 7/8/1842   | Blue  | Troy?/S. Lee, MA   | N            | Author's record               |
| 7/29/1842  | Blue  | Chicago/NYC        | NY           | Snow collection               |
| 8/19/1842  | Blue  | Troy/NYC           | NY           | Private collection            |
| 8/29/1842  | Blue  | Troy/NYC           | US           | Author's collection           |
| 9/27/1842  | Blue  | Troy/NYC           | US           | Snow collection               |
| 10/1/1842  | Blue  | Troy/NYC           | US           | Bowman files                  |
| 10/22/1842 | Blue  | Troy/NYC           | US           | Author's collection           |
| 10/27/1842 | Blue  | Toronto/NYC        | US           | <i>Chronicle</i> 134, pg. 100 |
| ?/?/1842   | Blue  | ?/NYC              | N            | RF auction lot 437            |
| 3/29/1843  | Blue  | Hartford/NYC       | US (6LB5)    | Siegel sale 745 lot 232       |
| 7/29/1843  | Blue  | ?/Troy             | N            | Author's collection           |
| 7/31/1843  | Blue  | NYC/Troy           | N            | Author's collection           |
| 8/16/1843  | Blue  | NYC/Troy           | N            | Private collection            |
| 9/1/1843   | Blue  | See text           | N            | RF sale 1 lot 439             |
| ?/?/1843   | Blue  | NYC?/Troy          | N            | RF sale 1 lot 440             |
| ?/?/1843   | Blue  | NYC/Syracuse       | N            | RF sale 1 lot 438             |
| 3/23/1844  | Blue  | Troy/NYC           | US           | RF sale 1 lot 441             |
| 3/25/1844  | Blue  | Montreal/NYC       | US (6LB5)    | Figure 4                      |
| 3/30/1844  | Blue  | Troy/NYC           | N            | Author's collection           |
| 5/1/1844   | Black | NYC/Troy           | N            | Bowman collection             |
| 5/9/1844   | Black | NYC/Troy           | N            | Author's collection           |
| ?/?/1844   | Black | ?/NYC              | US (6LB5)    | Author's record               |
| 7/29/1844  | Black | NYC/Troy           | N            | Figure 6                      |
| 2/29/1848  | Red   | NYC/Mohawk, NY     | N            | Figure 7                      |

"Date" shows the date the cover was mailed, from the postmark or dateline. "HHhs" shows ink color of the Howard's Hotel handstamp. "Delivered by" indicates whether the cover was delivered by the N.Y. City Despatch Post ("NY"), the U.S. City Despatch Post ("US"), or neither ("N"). "Reference" indicates the source of the listing. "RF sale 1" refers to Richard Frajola's first auction sale, 13 February 1981.

It is not surprising that a prominent hotel located only a few blocks from the piers where the Troy and Albany steamboats docked would be involved in the transportation of Hudson River commercial mail. The contemporary map in Figure 3 shows the location of the two Hudson River steamboat piers that served New York City. One was at the foot of Courtland Street, five blocks from the hotel, and the other at the foot of Barclay Street, nine blocks from the hotel. The central location of Howard's Hotel and its possession of City Despatch Post letter boxes made it convenient as a drop-off point for letters addressed to New York City.

In creating the Table 1 census I was able to determine the cities of origin for 27 of the 32 covers. Thirteen originated in Troy; seven originated in New York City; two came from Hartford, Connecticut; and one each from Bloomington, N.Y., Chicago, Detroit, Montreal and Toronto. Contents of covers as well as docketing and other evidence suggest that all 27 at some point were carried outside the U.S. mails on the Hudson River route.

Eleven of the 27 covers traveled north on the Hudson River: eight to Troy, one to Albany, one to Syracuse, and one to Mohawk, New York. Most were carried outside the



**Figure 3. Contemporary map of lower Manhattan (below 14th Street) showing location of Howard's Hotel, the New York post office and the Hudson River steamboat docks.**

mails and deposited at the Troy Post Office for local delivery—or at the NYPO for postal delivery to other cities.

Ten of the covers have a N.Y. City Despatch Post circular datestamp or stamp and nine have a U.S. City Despatch Post CDS or adhesive. Five covers have neither a New York nor a U.S. City Despatch Post CDS. These were brought to the NYPO where they received a regular New York CDS. Two of the five were drop letters marked “1” at the NYPO and the other three were dispatched by the NYPO to other cities. The absence of a U.S. City Despatch Post CDS on these five covers suggests a Howard’s Hotel messenger might have carried them directly to the NYPO.

Some of the covers show unusual combinations of private carriage. The cover dated 9/1/1843 originated in Bloomingdale, New York and must have been privately carried into Manhattan, where it received the Howard’s Hotel handstamp. Then it was carried privately to the Troy post office, where it received a Troy CDS and was sent via U.S. mail to Amsterdam, New York. The New York City to Syracuse cover dated ?/?/1843 was privately carried to Troy, where it entered the mails and was rated for a collection of 18¾¢ at Syracuse.

The 32 census covers represent different categories of mail services: Ten covers were delivered to local addresses by the N.Y. City Despatch Post and nine were delivered to local addresses by the successor U.S. City Despatch Post. Eight are drop letters, of which six were dropped at the Troy post office and two at the NYPO. And five were brought to the New York or Troy post offices for transportation via the U.S. mails to destinations beyond.

We can assume that 26 of the 27 covers for which we know the origins and destinations were carried on a Hudson River steamboat because they have dates from March 30 to October 27 during 1842 to 1844. In those periods, the Hudson River was open for steamboat navigation to and from Albany.<sup>5</sup> The river typically closed due to ice from mid-December to mid-March.

At least 16 covers traveled south on the Hudson River to New York City and were handed over to Howard’s Hotel. Two of these were then taken to the NYPO, which placed them in the mails for Hartford, Connecticut, and South Lee, Massachusetts. The covers to Syracuse, Hartford and South Lee are the only ones with rate markings.

Two of the southbound covers originated in Canada. Figure 4 shows one of these, franked with a United States City Despatch Post stamp. This cover was once owned by Robert Meyersburg, who wrote a short article describing it in *Chronicle* 134.<sup>6</sup> It has a Montreal, Canada, dateline and a note on the front “favored by J. Knapp Esq.,” indicating it was privately carried outside the mails. The other Canada cover originated in Toronto.

### Handstamp colors

The ASCC lists Howard’s handstamp in blue and black from 1842 to 1844 and in red during 1848. I have recorded 27 blue handstamps, four black and just one red. Color information is recorded in the “HHhs” column (for Howard’s Hotel handstamp) in Table 1.

Figure 5 shows the earliest cover in the census, a folded letter dated 29 April 1842 addressed to Seth Low & Co., a drug merchant in Brooklyn. The oval handstamp, source of the Figure 1 enlargement, is well struck in blue. The N.Y. City Despatch Post collected this cover from Howard’s Hotel, postmarked it in red and likely delivered it to a Low agent or messenger in Manhattan. The cover’s contents are missing and the origin is unknown, but it’s probable the cover originated somewhere up the Hudson, most likely Troy. The Table 1 data indicates that latest example of a blue Howard’s Hotel handstamp is on a cover is dated 30 March 1844.

The black handstamp is recorded on just four covers from three months in 1844. The earliest is dated 1 May 1844; the latest, datelined 29 July 1844, is shown in Figure 6. Three of the black-handstamp covers, like this one, were carried privately from New York City to Troy where they were dropped at the Troy post office for local delivery.

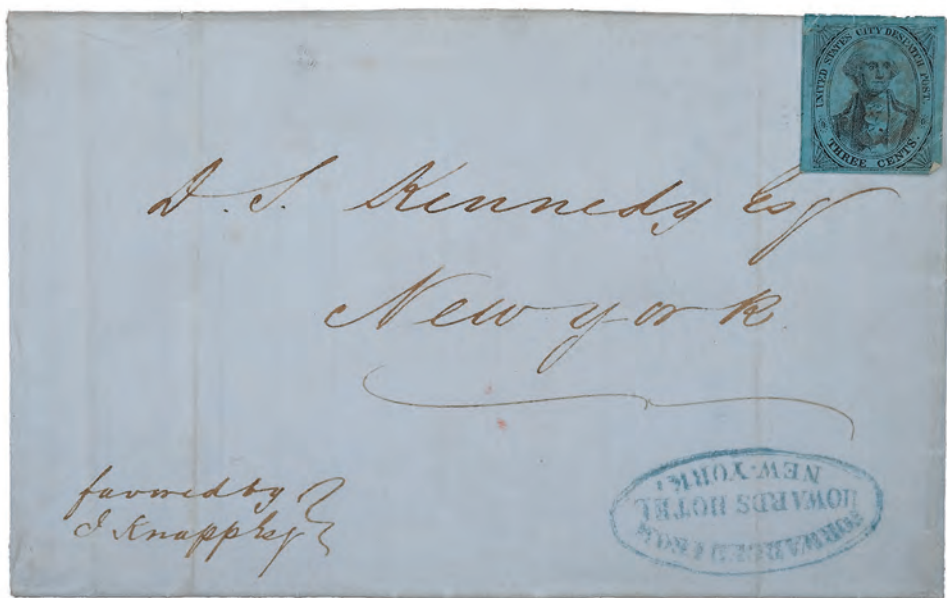


Figure 4. Folded letter datelined Montreal (25 March 1844), privately carried into New York "favored by J. Knapp, Esq") and marked at Howard's Hotel. Image courtesy of Angelo Ismirnioglou, Americana Stamps, Laguna Hills, California.



Figure 5. This is the earliest recorded cover with a Howard's Hotel handstamp. The New York City Despatch Post circular datestamp shows 29 April [1842]. Image courtesy of Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries (sale 745, lot 209).

Four covers have stamps. The stamp on the lone N.Y. City Despatch Post cover must be Scott 40L1 because the date is 23 June 1842, within the period of the stamp's use (February-August 1842). Three covers bear a U.S. Despatch Post stamp. Two of these show a black on blue-green Scott 6LB5 carrier stamp and one has a black on blue Scott 6LB6 carrier stamp. None of the four stamps is tied by a handstamp, but two of the covers have Philatelic Foundation certificates stating the uses are genuine.<sup>7</sup>



**Figure 6.** This is the latest of four covers recorded (all from 1844) showing the Howard's Hotel handstamp struck in black ink. See Table 1. Dated 29 July 1844, this cover was privately carried up the Hudson from New York City and dropped at the Troy post office for local delivery.



**Figure 7.** By four years this is the latest recorded cover with a Howard's Hotel handstamp and the only strike known in red. This cover was brought from Howard's Hotel to the New York City post office and mailed to Mohawk, N.Y. in 1848.

I have not been able to determine the date of the cover with a black handstamp and a black on blue stamp 6LB5. However, the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society online census of covers bearing City Despatch Post stamps indicates the stamp was used primarily in 1844 and 1845. Because no covers in the census have 1845 or 1846 dates, I have assumed this cover was mailed in 1844. It is so listed in Table 1.

The latest cover in the census, and the one cover in the census that likely was not carried on a steamboat, is the 29 February 1848 cover with a red handstamp. This is shown in Figure 7. This leap-year cover was brought from Howard's Hotel to the NYPO and carried in the U.S. mails to Mohawk, New York, northwest of Albany. The blue manuscript "5" rating mark confirms that this cover was posted after the USPO rate reductions of mid-1845 diminished the incentive to avoid the government post. The cover is very much an outlier: it has the only recorded red handstamp and is dated more than three and one-half years after the previous recorded cover. Although the handstamp appears genuine based on the scan I have examined, there is the possibility, because of the unique color and the unusual year date, that this strike is a fake.

A question to be asked is why, except for this one 1848 cover, no Howard's handstamps are recorded after July, 1844. A possible explanation is the government actions against independent mail companies, prohibiting the use of post roads for carriage of private letter mail. It is also possible that Howard's Hotel discontinued use of the handstamp because of the brothers' sale of the hotel, which took place in September 1844.

### **"Branch office" question**

Howard's Hotel sometimes has been referred to as a branch office or postal station of the City Despatch posts.<sup>8</sup> As noted, Howard's Hotel was one of many locations in lower Manhattan where the City Despatch posts maintained boxes for the receipt of letter mail. Advertisements and circulars for both posts stated that letters placed in the boxes would be "punctually delivered" three times a day.<sup>9</sup>

A N.Y. City Despatch Post February 1842 circular states that it had placed boxes in "BRANCH OFFICES"; and a U.S. City Despatch Post August 1842 circular refers to "Stations." Advertising circulars for both posts make it clear that they had placed collection boxes for depositing letters only in the establishments named. There is no evidence that either post employed agents at the 14 hotels or any of the other private establishments where boxes were located.

### **Postmaster General's report**

Discussions of Howard's Hotel sometimes assert that Howard's operated a letter mail service on the Hudson River. One reason is a statement by the New York City postmaster, published in the 1841 Postmaster General's Report, that Howard's Hotel had a box for letters addressed to places on the Hudson River. Supporting this is the commercial nature of the covers in Table 1. At least 28 of the 32 covers have commercial contents or a merchant addressee.

Howard's Hotel opened at a time when the U.S. postal system faced major challenges from private competitors. In 1839, William Harnden established a private express between Boston and New York City. In the early 1840s, private express companies began carrying substantial amounts of letters—in addition to packages, money and documents—on steamboats and railroads operating between large eastern cities. The role of New York City hotels in transportation of letters outside the U.S. mails was described in an 1843 article:<sup>10</sup>

**All our respectable hotels receive letters from boarders and acquaintances and forward them to their address; and we were informed by a gentleman, that there were sent from his house every day upon an average of \$15 worth of postage. If this is done at one hotel, the amount of postage lost in this city, through the hotels alone, to say nothing of the other modes of conveyances, must be at least \$200 daily.**

Charles Wickliffe, who became Postmaster General in 1841, was concerned about competition from private companies. One of his first actions was to direct the postmasters of several large cities to investigate the "nature and extent of the express arrangements, by individuals and companies, for the transportation of letters and papers out of the mail" including their "points of operations."<sup>11</sup>

Howard's Hotel had a significant enough role in the transportation of mail on the Hudson River to catch the attention of the New York City postmaster. He reported the following: "I understand that a box is kept at Howard's, for the reception of letters for places on the Hudson; also, one in a store in Pine-street, for letters going east; but I have not been able to learn which store it is."<sup>12</sup>

The 1841 PMG Report clearly referred to a special Hudson River mail letter box maintained at Howard's Hotel. The N.Y. City Despatch Post did not begin operations and place a collection box at the Hotel until February 1842. The 1841 PMG Report did not indicate how letters placed in the box at Howard's Hotel made their way to places on the Hudson River.

The 1841 PMG Report also published a list of 18 companies believed to be carrying letters. The list did not include Howard's Hotel. The fact that Howard's Hotel was not included in the 1841 list is significant. If the hotel had its own independent mail service or express service, the 1841 PMG Report most likely would have included Howard's on the list.

It is possible that Howard's Hotel had an arrangement with an express or independent mail company. However, there are no indications that any cover with a Howard's Hotel handstamp was carried by an express or independent mail company. None of the Howard's Hotel covers in Table 1 shows any marking or notation like those found on express and independent mail covers.

Twenty-five of the covers in the census are from 1842-43, before the independent mail companies were established. During those two years, at least three express companies operated on the Hudson River and could have had an arrangement with Howard's Hotel: Harnden, Pomeroy and Pullen & Copp.

Pomeroy and Harnden were listed in the 1841 PMG Report, but John Pullen was a messenger for Harnden in 1841 and had not yet established an express company with Amasa Copp. Pomeroy's office was located at 2 Wall Street and Harnden at 3 Wall Street, about ten blocks south of Howard's Hotel. Pullen & Copp opened their Hudson River express company at the same New York City address as Harnden in late 1842 when Harnden relinquished that route.

It is not likely that Howard's Hotel had an arrangement with an independent mail company. At least seven independent mail companies operated on the Hudson River. However, the earliest record of an independent mail company office in Troy or Albany was not until 15 May 1844. Five covers in the census have 1844 dates, but only one of these is after May 15.

I conducted an extensive internet search for contemporary information on Howard's Hotel in newspapers, city directories, New York state registers and travel guides. I found no advertisements or reports that suggest Howard's Hotel either operated or had a formal arrangement with an express or independent mail company.

Harnden, Pomeroy and Pullen & Copp, as well as the independent mail companies serving the Hudson River route, regularly advertised their services. These companies were listed in New York directories and were often mentioned in newspaper articles. It is highly unlikely that Howard's Hotel would offer its own Hudson River letter mail service, or have an arrangement with an express or independent mail company, without giving notice to the public or otherwise promoting the service.

A third express company is a possible candidate for an arrangement with Howard's Hotel because the last name of one of its founders was "Howard." A.L. Stimson wrote that in 1842, N.G. Howard became an agent of William Harnden in Albany.<sup>13</sup> The following year, he joined with E.G. Bailey to establish Bailey and Howard's Express, with its principal office in Albany.

However, there is no evidence that N.G. Howard, originally from Boston, was related to the owners of Howard's Hotel. Moreover, Bailey and Howard's Express did not have a

New York City office. Harnden & Co. was their initial agent in New York City and Pullen & Copp's Express after 1842. Bailey and Howard's Express advertisements contain no reference to Howard's Hotel.<sup>14</sup>

I did find one connection with a Hudson River stagecoach line. In January and February 1842, the Red Bird Stage Line advertised an office at Howard's Hotel. This stage line ran to Albany on the east side of the Hudson River and was particularly busy in winter months when the river was partially or entirely closed to steamboat navigation. The last time this advertisement was published was in the 15 February 1842 issue of the *New York Herald*. The next Red Bird advertisement appeared in a January 1843 *New York Herald* and listed its office in the Railroad Hotel. So the relationship between Red Bird and Howard's Hotel was brief, and ended before the earliest cover in this study entered the mails.

### **Use of "Forwarded" in hotel handstamps**

Five of the 77 hotel mail markings listed in the ASCC include the word "forwarded." Handstamps of Howard's Hotel and American Hotel in Columbus, Ohio, used the phrase "FORWARDED FROM." Franklin House in New York City and Troy House in Troy used handstamps with "FORWARDED BY." I do not place any importance on the use of "from" versus "by."

It is interesting that one of the four hotels with a forwarder marking was the Troy Hotel in Troy, New York. As noted above, many of the covers in Table 1 originated in Troy, and six of those that originated in New York City were addressed to Troy. However, none of the 32 census covers was addressed to the Troy Hotel and none shows any indication of originating there.

I would not attribute any significance to the use of the word "forwarded" in the Howard's Hotel marking, notwithstanding that many independent mail companies used handstamps with that word. Kenneth Rowe, who wrote the principal work on forwarding agents, defined a forwarder as "A person, or firm, who undertakes to see that the goods or correspondence of another are transported without himself acting as the carrier."<sup>15</sup> Based on Rowe's definition, the use of the word "forwarded" on the Howard's Hotel handstamp would not be a basis for concluding that the Hotel operated an independent mail service.

### **Conclusions**

I have recorded 32 covers with Howard's Hotel handstamps used over a seven-year period. Virtually all were carried on the Hudson River, and most of these were carried entirely outside the U.S. mails. It is clear Howard's Hotel had a role facilitating private transportation of letters on the river outside the government mail. However, I believe its role has sometimes been overstated.

Other than the reports on Howard's Hotel letter boxes for Hudson River and New York City mail, I have found no information on specific mail services provided by the hotel. In particular, I have found no covers, no contemporary newspaper articles and no advertisements that suggest Howard's Hotel employees or agents carried letters on the Hudson River or that Howard's had an arrangement with an express or independent mail service company operating on the Hudson River.

Howard's Hotel appears to have had a role like coffee houses in the transportation of mail in the 17th and 18th centuries. Abe Schoenfeld wrote that, during the 17th and 18th centuries, "ship captains hung bags in coffee houses to receive letters for which they expected a penny, unless it be a double letter, when 2 pence was the rate."<sup>16</sup> And Henry Konwiser wrote that "At New York, as in other sea ports...letters arriving by the ships were delivered to a coffee house near the wharf, where they lay exposed on a table until called for..."<sup>17</sup>

Steamboat captains did not hang bags at Howard's Hotel, but in 1851 the hotel did have a box "for the reception of letters for places on the Hudson...." Beginning in early 1842, the Hotel also had a box in which guests could deposit letters that were collected by the New York and then the U.S. City Despatch Posts and delivered locally.

Howard's likely had its own messengers who were paid for their services by the hotel, its guests or both. We can assume Howard's messengers delivered some letters in the city as well as letters and packages of letters to Hudson River steamboats docked at nearby wharfs. Howard's might have collected ship captain fees from guests, but there is no evidence that was done.

Howard's Hotel also might have given some letters to travelers bound for Albany and Troy. In 1840, more than 100 steamboats operated on the Hudson River.<sup>18</sup> It was not unusual for travelers to carry letters as a favor for family, friends and even strangers. The 1843 *New World* article stated that "Hundreds, and probably thousands of letters are sent from this city every day by private hands, because the writers will not submit to the present heavy tax."<sup>19</sup> Mailers might indeed have been reluctant to send important correspondence with a stranger. Of the covers in this survey whose contents are known, only one contained a valuable document.

### Acknowledgements

My thanks for valuable assistance go out to John D. Bowman, Richard C. Frajola, Dr. James W. Milgram and Steven M. Roth. The conclusions in this article are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of those who assisted me.

I would like to continue adding covers to the census and hope to report important new information that comes to my attention. Readers who have covers that would add to the database would oblige me by sending scans to [clifford.alexander@klgates.com](mailto:clifford.alexander@klgates.com).

### Endnotes

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UPDATING THE CENSUS OF 1847 COVERS TO THE GERMAN STATES:  
A NEW EARLIEST KNOWN, AND A FIRST TO BAVARIA

BURKHARD KRUMM

In 2017 I published in the *Chronicle* a survey of the 35 covers then known bearing United States 1847 stamps to destinations in the various German States.<sup>1</sup> A German-language version was subsequently published in order to make this information available to the membership of the Bund Deutscher Philatelisten (BDPh) and to solicit information on unlisted covers.<sup>2</sup> This effort was successful, generating reports of two additional covers.

This article will update the original survey by discussing these two newly discovered covers and two others (one hitherto unrecorded and the other previously described incompletely) that appeared in recent auctions. All four are important—indeed, spectacular—additions to the record of 1847 covers to the German States.

**Earliest 1847 cover to the German States**

Figure 1 shows what now becomes the earliest recorded 1847 cover to the German States. This folded letter sheet was written from Johann Georg Lange to his father, Georg Lange, a doctor of medicine. It was posted September 13, 1847 at Baltimore and sent via Boston to Emden, Kingdom of Hanover. Emden is located in the northwestern corner of Germany, just east of the Netherlands on a bay of the North Sea.



Figure 1. Newly recorded from a collection in Germany, this 10¢ 1847 cover, posted at Baltimore on 13 September 1847 and sent to Emden in the Kingdom of Hanover, is now the earliest known 1847 cover sent to a German State.

The 10¢ Washington stamp on the Figure 1 cover prepaid the over-300-mile distance from Baltimore to Boston. The cover left Boston as an unpaid letter September 16 on the Cunard *Caledonia*, arriving Liverpool September 29, 1847 (per backstamp).<sup>3</sup> In London a manuscript 1/- was written in error and then crossed out. It was corrected by the 1/6 written below the stamp. This was Britain's debit to Hanover of 1 shilling 6 pence: 1 shilling transatlantic packet postage plus 6 pence British postage. This was equated to 12 gutegroschen, which the Hanover clerk in Bremen wrote in red crayon to the left of Hanover's handstamp, ENGLAND ÜBER BREMEN. An additional 2 gutegroschen was added for German internal postage, creating a total due of 14 gutegroschen, which was written in red crayon below the Baltimore datestamp. Backstamps indicate the cover reached Emden on October 6.

### Newly discovered cover to Bavaria

The second new cover, shown in Figure 2 is the only 1847 cover so far recorded to the Kingdom of Bavaria. This folded letter sheet entered the mails at New York on November 12, 1850, prepaid by two vertically arranged 5¢ Franklins representing double the under-300-mile domestic postage rate. The letter sheet left Boston the next day aboard the Cunard *Canada* and arrived at Liverpool November 24, as confirmed by a smudgy backstamp.<sup>4</sup> The London office sent it to Paris under the 1843 Anglo-French Convention after striking the red boxed COLONIES &c. ART.13 handstamp. This referred to Article 13 of the letter bill and served as a debit to France of 40 pence per 30 grams (bulk weight) for sea postage and British transit. The Paris office struck the bright orange ANGL. 2 CALAIS 2 double circle on November 26 to indicate the letter entered France at Calais.

The cover was then sent to Germany under the 1847 French-Bavarian convention. The rate to the U.S. via England was 45 kreuzer for a single letter of ½ Bavarian loth. This letter weighed between ½ and 1 Bavarian loth, therefore the due postage was 90 kreuzer or 1 gulden 30 kreuzer, which was written in black and then underlined in red.<sup>5</sup> Backstamps show Munich arrival on 29 November 1850 and arrival at Murnau, about 25 kilometers from Oberammergau, the final destination, on December 2.



**Figure 2.** Franked with two 5¢ 1847 stamps and posted at New York City on November 12, 1850, this is the only recorded 1847 cover sent to the Kingdom of Bavaria.

What about the addressee here? The “Georg Lang S. Erben” to whom this cover is addressed should not be confused with Georg Lange on the Emden cover in Figure 1. The addressee of Figure 2 is a company founded by Georg Lang, whose business was the manufacture of all kinds of wood carvings. Since Georg Lang died in 1821, the company was named after him and at the time of this cover (1850) was in the hands of his descendants.<sup>6</sup> (“S. Erben” abbreviates “Selig Erben” which roughly translates as “heirs of.”) The company is still active under this name today and still located in Oberammergau, in the Bavarian Alps near Garmisch-Partenkirchen. The contents of the long letter in Figure 2 deal with an order for wooden crucifixes and other carved-wood products.

### Another cover to Bremen

The third new cover, shown in Figure 3, came to light in a recent Cherrystone sale. It was mailed from Baltimore to Bremen on March 5, 1849. Reference to Table 1 toward the conclusion of this article will show that Bremen is the predominant destination for 1847 covers sent to the German States—now ten 1847 covers, but this is a new addressee, J.G. Hagemeyer. The handwritten “Baltimore 4th Martz 48” at upper left, probably by the sender, is erroneous. The sender’s information on the outer sheet, the dateline within and a British transit mark on the reverse all clearly show the year as 1849.



**Figure 3.** From a recent Cherrystone auction, this previously unrecorded cover to Bremen was franked with a 5¢ 1847 stamp and posted at Baltimore on 5 March 1849.

This cover was prepaid by a 5¢ Franklin, pen canceled and with Baltimore’s blue circular datestamp and encircled 5. This paid the 5¢ per half ounce open mail rate by British packet under Article XI of the 1848 United States-United Kingdom postal convention. The letter was carried on the Cunard *Europa* leaving New York on March 7, 1849 and arriving March 20 at Liverpool. It reached London the next day, as indicated by a red circular backstamp dated March 21, 1849.

The London office sent the letter under the Anglo-Prussian convention via Belgium. Since the letter weighed between  $\frac{1}{4}$  and  $\frac{1}{2}$  ounce, the London clerk wrote a black  $\frac{1}{6}$  debit to Prussia (1 shilling 6 pence). This was the sum of 8 pence packet postage from the U.S.

to England, 6 pence British, and 4 pence double Belgian transit. The Belgian portion was computed in  $\frac{1}{4}$  ounce increments. This was converted to 15 silbergroschen to which  $3\frac{1}{2}$  silbergroschen Prussian internal postage was added. This total of  $18\frac{1}{2}$  silbergroschen was equated to 44 Bremen grote, the amount due from the recipient.

### Previously under-documented cover to Baden

Our last newcomer is actually a clarification of a cover to Kippenheim, Baden, that was previously inadequately described and not represented by an image. Shown in Figure 4, this cover reappeared as part of the collection, currently being sold by the H.R. Harmer firm, of the late German industrialist Erivan Haub. This cover originated in New Orleans (indicated by a merchant's backstamp) and was carried privately to Mobile, Alabama, where it entered the mails on June 24, 1849. It then traveled via Boston, Liverpool, Boulogne and Paris to the small town in Baden near Lahr and north of Freiburg/Breisgau.



**Figure 4.** Previously recorded, but with sparse detail and no image, this attractive cover from New Orleans entered the mails at Mobile on 24 June 1849, then traveled via Boston, Liverpool and Paris to its destination in Baden.

This letter sheet was also prepaid by a 5¢ Franklin. As with the prior cover, this paid the open mail rate by British packet under the 1848 United States-United Kingdom postal convention. Even though 5¢ would have been insufficient to pay a domestic letter from Mobile to Boston, under the postal convention, 5¢ fully paid the under- $\frac{1}{2}$ -ounce open-mail rate by British packet from anywhere in the United States (other than the west coast). Thus, even though Mobile was more than 300 miles from either Boston or New York, the 5¢ stamp carried the letter to the Cunard *America*, which left Boston on July 4 (consistent with the “4 Juillet” endorsement at lower left) and arrived at Liverpool July 15. A backstamp confirms the letter reached London the next day. The London office sent it to France under the 1843 Anglo-French Convention after striking in red COLONIES &c. ART.13. The Paris office struck the red double-circle ANGL. 17 JUIL 49 2 BOULOGNE 2 to show where the letter entered France. The magenta diagonal line stretching across the address is part of the

**TABLE 1: 1847 COVERS TO THE GERMAN STATES**

| Date     | Stamps | From/To                              | Steamer/Port             | Addressee    | Reference |
|----------|--------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| 09/13/47 | 2      | Baltimore, MD/Emden, Hanover         | <i>Caledonia</i> /Boston | Lange        | Figure 1  |
| 09/28/47 | 1      | Brattleboro, VT/Fürstenau, Hanover   | <i>Britannia</i> /Boston | Schnedermann | Chron 256 |
| 02/01/48 | 1(2)   | Mobile, AL/Bremen, Bremen            | <i>Acadia</i> /Boston    | Lange        | Chron 256 |
| 02/25/48 | 1      | Philadelphia, PA/Elberfeldt, Prussia | <i>Hibernia</i> /NY      | name cut out | Chron 256 |
| 03/05/49 | 1      | Baltimore, MD/Bremen, Bremen         | <i>Europa</i> /NY        | Hagemeyer    | Figure 3  |
| 03/19/49 | 1(2)   | Philadelphia, PA/Cologne, Prussia    | <i>America</i> /Boston   | Godel        | Chron 221 |
| 06/24/49 | 1      | Mobile, AL/Kippenheim, Baden         | <i>America</i> /Boston   | Friedrich    | Figure 4  |
| 09/24/49 | 2      | Naples, IL/Stuttgart, Württemberg    | <i>Hibernia</i> /NY      | Reihlen      | Chron 256 |
| 11/xx/49 | 2      | New York, NY/Wiesbaden, Nassau       | insufficient info        | ?            | 8301      |
| 12/03/49 | 1(2)   | NY US Express RR/Cologne, Prussia    | <i>Caledonia</i> /NY     | Farina       | Chron 246 |
| 03/19/50 | 1      | New York, NY/Bremen, Bremen          | insufficient info        | ?            | 6745      |
| 07/16/50 | 1      | Baltimore, MD/Freiwaldau, Austria    | <i>Europa</i> /NY        | Glenn        | Chron 256 |
| 07/31/50 | 1      | Baltimore, MD/Bremen, Bremen         | <i>America</i> /NY       | Behr         | 2325      |
| 09/10/50 | 1      | Baltimore RR/Bremen, Bremen          | <i>America</i> /NY       | Behr         | Chron 256 |
| 09/23/50 | 1      | Baltimore, MD/Freiwaldau, Austria    | <i>Asia</i> /NY          | Glenn        | 2348      |
| 10/07/50 | 1      | Baltimore, MD/Freiwaldau, Austria    | <i>Niagara</i> /NY       | Glenn        | 2353      |
| 10/09/50 | 1(2)   | Baltimore, MD/Bremen, Bremen         | <i>Niagara</i> /NY       | Behr         | Chron 256 |
| 11/11/50 | 1      | Baltimore, MD/Freiwaldau, Austria    | <i>Canada</i> /Boston    | Glenn        | 2373      |
| 11/12/50 | 1(2)   | NYC/Oberammergau, Bavaria            | <i>Canada</i> /Boston    | Lang         | Figure 2  |
| 12/08/50 | 1      | Baltimore, MD/Freiwaldau, Austria    | <i>Europa</i> /Boston    | Glenn        | 2385      |
| 12/09/50 | 1      | Baltimore, MD/Bremen, Bremen         | <i>Europa</i> /Boston    | Behr         | 2387      |
| 12/30/50 | 1      | Baltimore, MD/Freiwaldau, Austria    | <i>Africa</i> /NY        | Glenn        | 2395      |
| 01/02/51 | 1      | Cincinnati, OH/Bremen, Bremen        | <i>Asia</i> /NY          | Schwartz     | 9708      |
| 01/28/51 | 1      | Boston, MA/Neuwied-on-Rhine, Pru.    | <i>Asia</i> /NY          | Wahl         | 3427      |
| 02/24/51 | 1      | Boston, MA/Neuwied-on-Rhine, Pru.    | <i>Africa</i> /NY        | Wahl         | 3441      |
| 03/10/51 | 1      | Baltimore, MD/Freiwaldau, Austria    | <i>Europa</i> /Boston    | Glenn        | 2406      |
| 03/18/51 | 1      | New York, NY/Bremen, Bremen          | <i>Asia</i> /NY          | Behr         | 7076      |
| 04/04/51 | 1(5)+2 | Mich Central RR/Heidelberg, Baden    | <i>Washington</i> /NY    | Norris       | Chron 256 |
| 04/14/51 | 2      | Schenectady, NY/Steinenstadt, Baden  | <i>Washington</i> /NY    | Sartori      | Chron 256 |
| 04/29/51 | 1(2)   | Trenton, NJ/Ahldorf, Württemberg     | insufficient info        | Schmidt      | 5153      |
| 05/01/51 | 1      | New Orleans, LA/Coblenz, Prussia     | <i>Niagara</i> /Boston   | Salomon      | 1734      |
| 05/13/51 | 1      | Baltimore, MD/Freiwaldau, Austria    | <i>Niagara</i> /Boston   | Glenn        | 2415      |
| 05/28/51 | 1      | Baltimore, MD/Freiwaldau, Austria    | <i>Cambria</i> /Boston   | Glenn        | 2420      |
| 06/08/51 | 1      | N.O., LA/Rostock, Meck-Schwerin      | <i>Asia</i> /NY          | Prehn        | Chron 256 |
| 06/10/51 | 1      | New York, NY/Berlin, Prussia         | <i>Canada</i> /Boston    | Bresch       | 7157      |
| 09/19/51 | 1      | New Haven, CT/Berlin, Prussia        | <i>Franklin</i> /NY      | Whitney      | Chron 256 |
| xx/xx/xx | 1      | Unknown/Bremen                       | insufficient info        | Behr         | 14542     |
| xx/xx/xx | 1      | Unknown/Unknown                      | insufficient info        | ?            | 21643     |

**Table 1. Chronological listing of the 38 1847 covers so far recorded to the German States. Stamps are designated by Scott number: "1(2)" Indicates two 5¢ 1847 stamps. "Reference" is to this or previous *Chronicle* articles, or to the ID number in the USPCS online census of 1847 covers. Steamer and U.S. departure port are provided where known. New (or revised) listings discussed in this article are highlighted in gold.**

“fraction” 34/4. This shows 34 kreuzer was due to France and 4 kreuzer was retained by the Germans. Both values were crossed out and the 38 kreuzer total was written at upper right, indicating the total postage that was due from the recipient. A Baden railroad backstamp was applied on 19 July 1849.

An updated listing of 1847 covers to the German States is presented in Table 1, with the new additions highlighted in gold. The tabular data shows the date the cover entered the mails; the stamps; origin and destination; the transatlantic steamer that carried the cover and the port of debarkation; the surname of the addressee; and a reference citation that will lead the curious reader to an image of the cover. “Chron” references are to images published in recent *Chronicles*. The four and five digit reference numbers are the cover ID numbers in the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society’s searchable database of 1847 covers, accessible online at USPCS.org.

### Conclusion and acknowledgement

When Creighton Hart published his first cover survey in 1972, the listing of 1847 covers to the German States totaled 27. Now, almost 50 years later, the record has expanded to 38 covers. Please continue to inform me (dr.bkrumm@web.de) about newly discovered covers that are not represented in Table 1. The Emden cover is shown with kind permission of the owner.

### Endnotes

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2. Burkhard Krumm, “USA-Briefe der 1847er-Ausgabe in die Deutschen Staaten,” *Philatelie* 494 (2018), pp. 45-49.
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## A NEW TRENTON STAR COVER

LABRON HARRIS

I seem to buy covers in less than perfect condition. I saw a cover at a stamp show under a dealer’s glass. It was Sunday and it had been there all weekend. Numerous dealers and collectors had seen it and passed it by. When I saw it I was intrigued by the fancy cancel, a blue outlined star tying a 5¢ 1847 stamp. I went to my booth and did a little research and found that the cancel was a scarce and desirable marking. So I purchased the cover.

I had it a month or two and wondered what I should do with it: submit it for a certificate or repair it first? After talking to a good friend and a very knowledgeable dealer about what course of action I should take, I decided to have a professional restoration job done on the cover and then get a certificate if necessary. The restorer was not to touch the stamp or the cancel. The right side of the cover and the top were repaired and a back flap was added. The result was Figure 1, still not a gem, but a much more attractive cover.

I then talked to another friend who helped me understand the scarcity of the cover. This is only the fourth cover known with a Trenton Star cancel. Any fancy cancel on a 5¢ 1847 is uncommon. Stamps of our first postal issue sometimes show fancy handstamps that were used on stampless covers, but this Trenton star is the first fancy handstamp made



**Figure 1. Blue Trenton star killer on a newly discovered 5¢ 1847 cover, postmarked August 4 (1849) and sent to Philadelphia. This becomes the fourth 1847 cover known bearing this attractive fancy cancellation.**

specifically for canceling stamps. It is not recorded on stampless covers. The stamp on the Figure 1 cover is four-margined with a couple of minor tears at the top (because of its positioning on the cover) and is nicely tied by the blue star.

The cover was addressed to Mrs. X.J. Maynard and contained a letter that adds more interest to it. It is dated August 4, 1849, the same date as the cancel, and it talks about a train wreck near Princeton, New Jersey. It is sent to Mrs. Maynard, a “very dear friend,” by a man who signed the letter “Milton.” In the letter he shows his concern for her possibly being in the train wreck which he describes as “the awful accident to the cars.” He adds: “all say that the scene was dreadful beyond description.” Some of his friends were in the wreck and had to crawl out of the car windows. We do not know if she was on the train, but if she was, hopefully she survived.

This letter completes the story of this new Trenton Star. There are some who might argue that covers should not be repaired. In this case I felt the repairs were needed to help insure that no more damage would be done to an important piece of postal history. ■

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## EARLIEST CIVIL WAR PATRIOTIC COVER

JAMES W. MILGRAM, M.D.

The Civil War officially began on April 12, 1861—when Ft. Sumter surrendered to the soldiers of Charleston. Patriotic stationery for the Union or federal supporters in the North can only be dated from then. Southern patriotic stationery, for the most part, began with the organization of the Confederate States of America on February 4, 1861. The most common design was the seven-star Confederate flag. All types are shown in my recent book with John L. Kimbrough on the subject of Confederate patriotic stationery.<sup>1</sup>

Patriotic sentiment in the South did not begin with the organization of an independent Confederate government. Historically it was South Carolina's secession on December 20, 1860 that triggered the many other actions that led to war. Patriotic stationery with the South Carolina flag is first seen in early March, 1861, some of it printed in New York. Several designs for Mississippi can also be dated from March.

But patriotic sentiments expressed on stationery for postal use go back months earlier. A printer in Texas gets the honor for creating the earliest patriotic design associated with the Civil War. Last year a new example of that design surfaced which shows an earlier dated postmark than what was previously known.

This newly discovered cover is shown in Figure 1. It bears a red and blue image of the lone star flag of Texas printed undoubtedly to express patriotic sentiment involving states rights. The cover is franked with a 3¢ 1857 stamp, nicely tied by a large circular datestamp



Figure 1. Earliest Civil War patriotic cover recorded to date: Rebacked envelope with Texas flag and 3¢ 1857 stamp postmarked "COLUMBIA Tex" NOV 30 (1860), sent to the governor of Georgia about a Texas meeting scheduled for the next month.

reading "COLUMBIA Tex. NOV 30." The envelope is addressed to the governor of Georgia ("Hon Joseph E. Brown, Milledgeville Ga.") and bears a docketing notation "Texas meeting Dec 1860" which probably refers to the contents of the letter, no longer present.

Brown was a figure of considerable historical interest. He entered politics as a Whig and was such a strong adherent of states rights that as governor of Georgia during the Confederacy, he resisted a military draft, maintaining that Georgia citizens should fight only to defend Georgia. During the 1880s he served in the United States Senate.

The flag design on the Figure 1 envelope is known printed both on envelopes and on letter stationery. I have owned for many years a lettersheet bearing the same design, a letter dated May 10, 1861 from Houston. This same design is known on another patriotic cover from Brazoria, Texas (about 10 miles from Columbia), with December 12 dating. And a matching pair of lettersheet and envelope are also known from Hempstead, Texas. All of these uses suggest that the Texas flag design was intended to be patriotic in sentiment, just like all other patriotic covers.

Closely aligned to such patriotic stationery are two printed cornercard designs from Georgia with text "A SOUTHERN CONFEDERACY! Free Trade With the World!" An example of one of these designs, on a cover from Savannah to Marion, Alabama franked



**Figure 2.** "A SOUTHERN CONFEDERACY! Free Trade With the World!" corner imprint expressing southern sentiment. Franked with three 1¢ 1857 stamps and sent to Marion, Alabama from Savannah, Georgia, this cover was posted January 21, 1861—two days after Georgia seceded and two weeks before the Confederacy was organized.

with three 1¢ 1857 stamps, is shown in Figure 2. The circular postmark on this cover is dated January 21, 1861, two days after Georgia seceded from the Union but before the organization of the Confederate States of America. These printings were likely produced by someone with very similar sentiments to the printer of the Texas design.

#### Endnote

1. James W. Milgram and John L. Kimbrough, *Confederate Patriotic Stationery*, Northbrook Publishing Co., 2018. ■

## 10¢ 1861 FOREIGN ENTRY— ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS

CHIP GLIEDMAN

Few things can please a philatelic author more than publishing an article that leads to new discoveries. In *Chronicle* 261, I wrote about the foreign entry found in one position of the 10¢ 1861 Type I stamp (Scott 62B). The position is 94R4 and the foreign element is a remnant of an incompletely removed entry of the 90¢ 1861 stamp. The existence of this very unusual variety has been known for almost 100 years, but examples are very scarce. Until an example appeared in a plate block in the October 2018 Gross sale, the stamp had never been available for modern examination.

I closed my article expressing the hope that quality illustrations and a broader awareness of this variety might lead to the discovery of more examples. Not too long afterward, I received an email from route agent Charles Buck that began:

**Having read your interesting *Chronicle* article on the foreign entry in 62B, and being a student of foreign entries in Official stamps, I became laughingly eager to take up your challenge and start trolling eBay for an undiscovered copy of the 10¢ 1861 foreign entry. It took less than a month, and fortunately, no one else recognized it. Although the copy appears to be reperforated on at least two sides, it still seems an adequate example that displays many of the telltale signs of the underlying 90¢ Washington.**

I'm pleased to be able to publish here, as Figure 1, a high-resolution scan of this stamp, which increases the known population by 20-25 percent, to either four or five recorded examples. The ambiguity exists because we do not know if the original discovery copy and the Newbury copy (both discussed extensively in *Chronicle* 261) are the same or different examples.

As can be seen in the enlargement presented in Figure 1, the stamp, though it has been reperforated on multiple sides, does show many of the tell-tale plating marks originally identified by Lester Brookman and illustrated in my *Chronicle* article. The red ellipses in the enlargement of the upper left corner of the stamp designate the plating marks Brookman numbered 10 and 11—flaws in the “10” and in the “S”. Ellipses in the enlargement of the bottom portion of the stamp point to flaws in the “U” and “C” (Brookman's 3 and 2). An arrow also points to the distinctive “V” (beneath the “CE” in CENTS) from the bottom frame of the 90¢ entry. Unfortunately, most of this mark was lost in a perforation hole.

In addition to this new example, I'm pleased to be able to share an image of the only recorded on-cover example of this elite plate variety. I mentioned the existence of a cover in the previous article, but could not then show an illustration. Route Agent Albert Valente



Figure 1. Enlargements of the recently discovered example of the foreign-entry Position 94R4 on the Type 1 10¢ 1861 stamp. This new discovery, found on eBay by Route Agent Charles Buck, has lost some plating characteristics due to reperforation, but still shows many of the distinguishing marks that characterize this scarce variety, of which just four or five examples are now recorded. In the enlargement at upper left, ellipses surround flaws in the "0" of "10" and in the "S" of "U.S. POSTAGE." In the enlargement of the bottom portion of the stamp, ellipses show flaws in the "U" and "C." An arrow also points to a hint of the distinctive "V" (beneath the "CE" in CENTS) from the bottom frame of the 90¢ entry. Unfortunately, most of this mark was knocked out by a perforation hole.

subsequently provided the image presented in Figure 2. Postmarked at Indianapolis on October 23, 1861, this cover is franked with a 10¢ 1861 Type I stamp paying the 10¢ per ½ ounce rate from the U.S. to Canada. The accompanying enlargement of the stamp on this cover confirms that it is indeed an example of the 94R4 foreign entry position.



**Figure 2. The Position 94R4 variety on a cover from Indianapolis to St. Thomas, "Canada West" (now Ontario). On this example the characteristic "V" beneath the "CE" in "CENTS" (encircled in red in the enlargement at left) is modestly more visible, and other distinguishing plating marks are also evident. Scan shown through the courtesy of Route Agent Albert Valente.**

As a side note, this cover is not listed in William S. Weismann's 1983 census of 10¢ 1861 Type I covers (*Chronicle* 118), so its publication here updates two articles.

### Corrections

Two small errors crept into the prior article on this plate variety that I'd like to correct:

The caption on the cover of *Chronicle* 261 refers to the stamp as "Position 94L4." It is generally accepted that this stamp is from Position 94 of the right pane of Plate 4 (94R4). All other references in the article properly refer to Position 94R4.

The first paragraph on page 48 reads: "Most notably, at the top of the design the Type I stamps have a heavier curved line below the stars and an outer line over the ornament." This is simply incorrect. It's the Type II stamps (Scott 68) that are denoted by their heavier curved line below the stars and outer line over the ornament. ■

## TALES OF THE CIVIL WAR BLOCKADE: DISRUPTION FROM A DEADLY VIRUS

STEVEN WALSKE

This is the fifth in a series of articles on Civil War blockade runners and the mail that they carried.<sup>1</sup> This article describes the impact on blockade running of Bermuda's yellow fever epidemic in 1864.

At the time, medical science believed incorrectly that yellow fever originated from unsanitary conditions and was spread from human to human. Only in 1900 was it discovered to be a virus spread by the bite of an infected mosquito. Most yellow fever victims suffer normal flu symptoms, but a small number develop toxic symptoms within 24 hours of seemingly recovering from the initial symptoms. At this stage, the virus attacks the body's organs, resulting in jaundice and extensive internal bleeding. To this day, no cure is known and a vaccine was not developed until the late 1930s. The yellow fever epidemic that struck Bermuda in the summer of 1864 killed nearly 500 of the 13,500 inhabitants.

The first cases were reported in the last week of June, 1864. Charles Allen, U.S. consul at Saint George's, Bermuda, first mentioned yellow fever in a July 1 dispatch sent to Secretary of State William Seward:<sup>2</sup>

**There is sickness among the shipping near this port of Saint George's, supposed to be yellow fever. One person died yesterday on shore undoubtedly of the same disease. The circumstances connected with his sickness lead to the presumption that it will spread here.**

Table 1 (page 273) presents dates of blockade-running voyages from Bermuda to Wilmington, North Carolina, during the summer of 1864. As was developed in the first installment of this series in *Chronicle* 262, Wilmington and Bermuda are less than 700 miles apart, a proximity that facilitated blockade running between the two. The Table 1 data shows that voyages from St. George's to Wilmington continued normally throughout July and the first week of August, except for the expected interruption around the July 19 full moon. Blockade runners avoided moonlight whenever they could.

Figure 1 shows a July 1864 letter sent to the care of Major Norman Walker, agent for the Confederate States of America (CSA) at St. George's. Walker was responsible for the transshipment of military supplies to the CSA, as described in the *Chronicle* 266 article on the blockade runner *Advance*.

This envelope without contents is part of a correspondence from England to Gustavus Myers, acting British consul in Richmond, Virginia.<sup>3</sup> It was sent inside an outer envelope addressed to Major Walker at St. George's and left Liverpool, England on July 9, 1864 aboard the Cunard steamer *Europa*. That ship arrived in Halifax, Nova Scotia on July 19, and its Bermuda mail connected two days later with the Cunard steamer *Alpha*, which reached St. George's on July 27. Walker discarded the outer envelope, endorsed the inner envelope "pr *Advance*" and franked it with 20¢ CSA postage (Scott 12 pair). *Advance* left on July 28 and arrived in Wilmington on August 2. The letter was postmarked that day, and was assessed no postage due since the required 12¢ postage had been overpaid in Bermuda.



**Figure 1. A July 1864 letter to Richmond sent under cover from England via Halifax to Bermuda. The Confederate agent at St. George's endorsed the cover "p Advance" and applied the Confederate stamps. The blockade-runner *Advance* successfully reached Wilmington, North Carolina on August 2, where this letter entered the CSA mails.**

Table 2 (page 274) shows outbound blockade runs from Wilmington to Bermuda during the summer of 1864. The data indicates that after *Mary Celestia* brought news of the epidemic to Wilmington on July 10, there was a cessation in departures for Bermuda until July 23.

Blockade running to Bermuda resumed on July 23, but some ships attempted to avoid the worst of the epidemic by going to Hamilton (Bermuda) instead of St. George's. More ominously, starting in early August ships began transferring their operations from Bermuda to Halifax or Nassau. See the "Notes" column in Table 2. After they left, there was virtually no activity at Bermuda until October.

Figure 2 shows the front and a portion of the reverse of a letter that left Wilmington on July 23 for Hamilton. Docketed July 19, 1864 from Petersburg, Virginia, this unpaid letter was sent under cover to Wilmington and left there on July 23 aboard *City of Petersburg* for a remarkably fast three-day trip to Hamilton. The letter was postmarked in Hamilton on July 28, and rated there as an incoming ship letter, with a charge of one shilling four pence due (4d ship fee plus one shilling packet postage to England) per the blue crayon notations. The rare "Hamilton-Bermuda Ship Letter" marking was added to indicate the reason for the 4d ship fee.

The cover was then transferred to St. George's, which postmarked it on August 4 and corrected the due amount to one shilling. The letter left St. George's on August 5 on the Cunard steamer *Alpha*, which arrived in Halifax four days later. It connected at Halifax with the Cunard steamer *Africa*, which sailed on August 19 and reached Liverpool on August 29. Upon its August 30 arrival in London, it was up-rated to two shillings due to include the one shilling unpaid letter fee. There are only 13 blockade-run letters known with Bermuda transit postmarks. This remarkable letter, which once graced the Maurice Ludington collection, is the only one with three different Bermuda markings.

*City of Petersburg* was launched in 1863 at Greenock, Scotland by Caird and Company. She was initially acquired by the Albion Trading Company, which sent her to Nassau



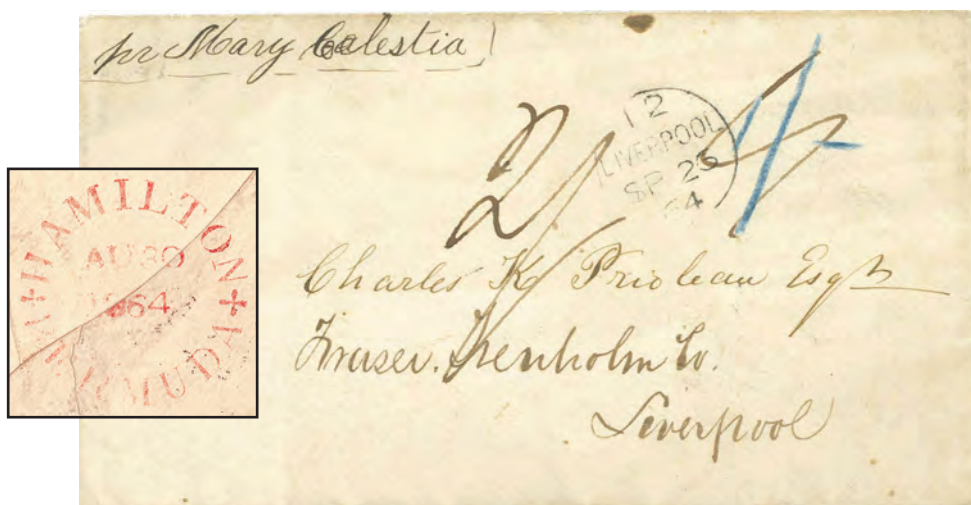
**Figure 2. July 19, 1864 letter from Petersburg, Virginia to London, sent under cover to Wilmington and carried to Hamilton on the blockade-runner *City of Petersburg*. The front of the cover (at top) bears blue Bermuda rating marks and a rare “Hamilton-Bermuda Ship Letter” marking. The reverse of the cover (shown in part above) shows Hamilton July 28 and St. George’s August 4 transit postmarks.**

on November 20, 1863. After three runs through the blockade, she was sold to the Virginia Importing and Exporting Company, and made 17 more blockade runs before returning to Greenock in March 1865.

By the beginning of August, conditions had worsened significantly in Bermuda. On August 5, Allen reported to Seward as follows:<sup>4</sup>

I have the honor to inform you that the yellow fever is prevailing at this port of St. George’s at the present time to an alarming extent. It has undoubtedly existed here for some weeks past in a mild form, but within a few days has assumed a most malignant nature. Many deaths are reported within the past twenty-four hours. From the indications today, I think the business of blockade runners is nearly at an end here for this season. Several cases are also reported in different parts of the islands. This whole colony is undoubtedly infected with this epidemic.

Figure 3 shows a letter that arrived in Bermuda during the height of the epidemic. This unpaid letter was datelined August 3, 1864 at Savannah, Georgia, and addressed to Charles Prioleau, managing partner of Fraser Trenholm & Co. in Liverpool. It was sent under cover to Wilmington, where it was endorsed to be carried by the blockade runner *Mary Celestia*. That steamship sailed on August 25 with a cargo of 550 bales of cotton and arrived



**Figure 3. August 3, 1864 letter from Savannah, Georgia to England, sent under cover to an agent at Wilmington, who endorsed it “pr Mary Celestia,” a blockade-runner that left Wilmington August 25. The cover entered the mails at Hamilton August 30 (backstamp inset) for carriage via Halifax to Liverpool.**

in Hamilton four days later. The letter was postmarked in Hamilton on August 30, and rated there for one shilling due per the blue crayon notation. It then left St. George’s aboard the Cunard steamer *Delta*, which sailed on September 3 and arrived in Halifax on September 7. It connected there with the Cunard steamer *Europa*, which departed on September 16 and reached Liverpool on September 26. At Liverpool, it was up-rated to 2 shillings due to reflect the addition of the one-shilling unpaid letter fee. Table 2 shows that this was the last departure from Wilmington to Bermuda until September 29.

The sidewheel paddle steamship *Mary Celestia* was launched as *Bijou* at Liverpool and arrived in St. George’s on May 17, 1864. She completed eight trips between Bermuda and Wilmington for Crenshaw and Company before sinking just after clearing from St. George’s on September 26, 1864. The letter in Figure 3 was carried on her last successful trip.

Major Walker returned to St. George’s on July 27 (just in time to endorse the letter in Figure 1), after a month-long trip to the CSA. He immediately began the transfer of his military supply operation to Halifax. His wife recorded his traumatic voyage to Halifax in her diary:<sup>5</sup>

My husband arrived at Bermuda on the 27th July in the *Old Dominion*...then went in the *Falcon* [on August 3] to Halifax in order to make arrangements for the removal of Confederate affairs. The Pilot of the *Falcon* died of yellow fever in the second day out, and eight who were on board died of the same after reaching Halifax. All of the others were sick in Halifax, with symptoms of the fever...He remained ten days in Halifax, and then came in the *Africa* to England.

This exposure to the danger posed by the epidemic affected Walker deeply. Upon his August 29 arrival at Liverpool, he announced the transfer of CSA blockade running activities from Bermuda to Halifax. Blockade running firms and CSA purchasing agents had already begun making that change. On August 23, Mortimer Jackson, U.S. consul at Halifax, reported to Seward that:<sup>6</sup>

Owing to the prevalence of the yellow fever at Bermuda and Nassau this port has become the headquarters of those engaged in running the blockade...A Confederate depot has been established here...where blockade runners and privateers can always be supplied with coal and other articles adapted to their purposes.

Tables 1 and 2 show that 14 blockade runners abandoned their bases at Bermuda for other transshipment points in August and September. In addition, the blockade runners *Atalanta* and *Edith* were acquired by the CSA and converted into the armed commerce raiders CSS *Tallahassee* and CSS *Chickamauga*. This left only *Wild Rover* and *Talisman* operating

**TABLE 1: BERMUDA TO WILMINGTON BLOCKADE RUNS  
JULY-SEPTEMBER 1864**

| Ship                                                 | Departure Port | Departure Date | Arrive Wilm | Notes                         |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|-------------------------------|
| First case of yellow fever reported on June 25, 1864 |                |                |             |                               |
| <i>Florie</i>                                        | St George's    | 2 Jul          | 6 Jul       | New moon (dark) on 3 July     |
| <i>Lilian</i>                                        | St George's    | 2 Jul          | 6 Jul       |                               |
| <i>North Heath</i>                                   | St George's    | 3 Jul          | 8 Jul       |                               |
| <i>Mary Celestia</i>                                 | St George's    | 6 Jul          | 10 Jul      | Brought news of epidemic      |
| <i>Falcon</i>                                        | St George's    | 6 Jul          | 10 Jul      |                               |
| <i>Atalanta</i>                                      | St George's    | 11 Jul         | 15 Jul      | Converted to warship at Wilm  |
| <i>Lynx</i>                                          | St George's    | 14 Jul         | 18 Jul      |                               |
| Full moon on July 19                                 |                |                |             |                               |
| <i>Alice</i>                                         | St George's    | 24 Jul         | 29 Jul      |                               |
| <i>Helen</i>                                         | St George's    | 25 Jul         | 29 Jul      |                               |
| <i>Lilian</i>                                        | St George's    | 25 Jul         | 31 Jul      | Captured 24 Aug leaving Wilm  |
| <i>Little Hattie</i>                                 | St George's    | 25 Jul         | 30 Jul      |                               |
| <i>Mary Bowers</i>                                   | St George's    | 26 Jul         | 30 Jul      |                               |
| <i>Advance</i>                                       | St George's    | 28 Jul         | 2 Aug       | Figure 1; last trip           |
| <i>Flamingo</i>                                      | St George's    | 28 Jul         | 1 Aug       |                               |
| <i>Mary Celestia</i>                                 | St George's    | 3 Aug          | 7 Aug       |                               |
| <i>Edith</i>                                         | St George's    | 5 Aug          | 9 Aug       | Converted to warship at Wilm  |
| <i>Old Dominion</i>                                  | Hamilton       | 5 Aug          | 9 Aug       | Left 4 Sep for Halifax        |
| <i>Elsie</i>                                         | St George's    | 6 Aug          | 10 Aug      | Captured 5 Sep leaving Wilm   |
| <i>Chicora</i>                                       | St George's    | 8 Aug          | 12 Aug      | Left 5 Sep for Nassau         |
| <i>City of Petersburg</i>                            | Hamilton       | 9 Aug          | 13 Aug      | Left 22 Aug for Halifax       |
| <i>Ella II</i>                                       | St George's    | 9 Aug          | 13 Aug      | Left 8 Sep for Nassau         |
| Full moon on August 17                               |                |                |             |                               |
| <i>Lynx</i>                                          | St George's    | 30 Aug         | 3 Sep       | Destroyed 25 Sep leaving Wilm |
| <i>Wild Rover</i>                                    | Hamilton       | 2 Sep          | 6 Sep       | First trip                    |
| Full moon on September 15                            |                |                |             |                               |
| <i>Night Hawk</i>                                    | Hamilton       | 25 Sep         | 8 Oct       | Stayed at Wilm until January  |
| <i>Talisman</i>                                      | St George's    | 28 Sep         | 2 Oct       |                               |
| <i>Banshee II</i>                                    | Hamilton       | 30 Sep         | 3 Oct       | Left 5 Oct for Nassau         |

**SOURCES:** The sailing dates in Tables 1-3 are drawn from Stephen Wise's *Lifeline of the Confederacy* and Maurice Ludington's *Postal History of Blockade Running Through Bermuda 1861-1865*, supplemented substantially by the author's personal research.

**TABLE 2: WILMINGTON TO BERMUDA BLOCKADE RUNS  
JULY-SEPTEMBER 1864**

| Ship                        | Depart Wilm | Arrival Port | Arrival Date | Notes                         |
|-----------------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>Alice</i>                | 2 Jul       | St George's  | 8 Jul        | New moon (dark) on 3 July     |
| <i>Atalanta</i>             | 2 Jul       | St George's  | 6 Jul        |                               |
| <i>Helen</i>                | 2 Jul       | St George's  | 6 Jul        |                               |
| <i>Edith</i>                | 4 Jul       | St George's  | 8 Jul        |                               |
| <i>Lilian</i>               | 9 Jul       | St George's  | 13 Jul       |                               |
| Full moon on July 19        |             |              |              |                               |
| <i>City of Petersburg</i>   | 23 Jul      | Hamilton     | 26 Jul       | Figure 2                      |
| <i>Old Dominion</i>         | 23 Jul      | Hamilton     | 27 Jul       |                               |
| <i>Mary Celestia</i>        | 24 Jul      | St George's  | 28 Jul       |                               |
| <i>Wando</i>                | 25 Jul      | St George's  | 30 Jul       | Left 26 Aug for Nassau        |
| <i>North Heath</i>          | 25 Jul      | St George's  | 29 Jul       | Left 5 Aug for Halifax        |
| <i>Falcon</i>               | 25 Jul      | St George's  | 29 Jul       | Left 3 Aug for Halifax        |
| <i>Chicora</i>              | 26 Jul      | St George's  | 30 Jul       |                               |
| <i>Florie</i>               | 30 Jul      | St George's  | 3 Aug        | Left 6 Aug for Nassau         |
| <i>Lynx</i>                 | 30 Jul      | St George's  | 3 Aug        |                               |
| <i>Alice</i>                | 1 Aug       | St George's  | 6 Aug        | Left 16 Aug for repairs in GB |
| New moon (dark) on August 2 |             |              |              |                               |
| <i>Little Hattie</i>        | 6 Aug       | St George's  | 10 Aug       | Left 12 Aug for Halifax       |
| <i>Flamingo</i>             | 7 Aug       | St George's  | 10 Aug       | Left 30 Aug for repairs in GB |
| <i>Helen</i>                | 8 Aug       | St George's  | 12 Aug       | Left 18 Aug for Halifax       |
| <i>Mary Bowers</i>          | 9 Aug       | St George's  | 13 Aug       | Last trip                     |
| Full moon on August 17      |             |              |              |                               |
| <i>Mary Celestia</i>        | 25 Aug      | Hamilton     | 29 Aug       | Figure 3; last trip           |
| <i>Wild Rover</i>           | 29 Sep      | Hamilton     | 3 Oct        |                               |

between Bermuda and Wilmington at the end of September.

Six blockade runners moved their operations to Halifax. In addition, *Annie* left Nassau for Bermuda on August 3-4 but decided to continue to Halifax because of the epidemic. Finally, four new blockade runners—*Owl*, *Condor*, *Lady Sterling* and *Armstrong*—left Europe for St. George's in August-September, but quickly continued on to Halifax before attempting a run through the blockade. Table 3 (page 276) shows the activity of these 11 steamships in and out of Halifax from August through November.

Figure 4 shows one of the three known outgoing blockade-run letters carried from Wilmington to Halifax. This double-weight unpaid letter originated in Greensboro, Alabama and was sent under cover to Wilmington, where it was censored, indicated by the "WC Strong aag" manuscript marking on the reverse. The letter left Wilmington on September 15 aboard the blockade runner *Helen*, which arrived in Halifax five days later. It was postmarked in Halifax on September 20, and marked for a one penny debit to the London GPO per the black "1" at upper right. The letter departed Halifax September 30 aboard the



Figure 4. One of three known outgoing blockade-run letters carried from Wilmington to Halifax, Nova Scotia. This September 1864 letter from Greensboro, Alabama was sent under cover to Wilmington, where it was censored and then placed on board the blockade runner *Helen*, bound for Halifax, arriving five days later. Then sent via England and France to Heidelberg. The reverse, shown in part at left, bears a CSA censor notation (“WC Strong aag”) along with Halifax and French transit markings.

Cunard steamer *Arabia* and reached Liverpool October 10. The British post office debited France for a double-weight one franc (per the “GB 2F” accountancy marking) and routed the letter via Calais, France. It was received in Heidelberg, Germany on October 14 and rated for 33 kreuzer due, of which 30 kreuzer was credited to France.

The sidewheel steamship *Helen* was built by Ash and Stewart on the Thames River near London. After her sale to the Albion Trading Company, she arrived in St. George’s on April 7, 1864. Under the able direction of Captain David Leslie, she completed 12 runs through the blockade before returning to England in January 1865.

Major Walker returned from England to Halifax on October 12 to take personal charge of the military supply operation there. He remained at Halifax until January 12, 1865. Figure 5 shows a letter from one of his assistants that was carried from Halifax to Wilmington.

Addressed to the care of William H. Peters, Navy agent at Wilmington, this letter was sent from CSA agent Washington Reed at Halifax to his wife. The cover was endorsed “S.S. Old Dominion” and placed with the official dispatches on that steamship. *Old Dominion* left Halifax on November 16 and arrived in Wilmington five days later. Peters re-addressed the letter to Charlotte, added 10¢ CSA postage (Scott 7 pair) and mailed the letter on November 22. Since it arrived in the official bag, no ship fee was assessed. This is one of two known blockade-run letters that were carried from Halifax to Wilmington.

*Old Dominion*, sister ship to *City of Petersburg*, was launched as *Alfred* by Greenock’s Caird and Company in 1863. She was acquired by the Virginia Importing and Ex-



Figure 5. One of two known blockade-run letters carried from Halifax to Wilmington: November 1864 cover endorsed per "S.S. Old Dominion."

TABLE 3: HALIFAX-WILMINGTON BLOCKADE RUNS  
AUGUST-NOVEMBER 1864

| Ship                      | Depart<br>Wilmington | Arrive<br>Halifax    | Notes                           |
|---------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>City of Petersburg</i> | 22 Aug               | 27 Aug               |                                 |
| <i>Old Dominion</i>       | 4 Sep                | 10 Sep               |                                 |
| <i>Annie</i>              | 6 Sep                | 13 Sep               |                                 |
| <i>City of Petersburg</i> | 6 Sep                | 11 Sep               |                                 |
| <i>Helen</i>              | 15 Sep               | 20 Sep               | Figure 4                        |
|                           | Depart<br>Halifax    | Arrive<br>Wilmington |                                 |
| <i>Annie</i>              | 21 Aug               | 27 Aug               |                                 |
| <i>City of Petersburg</i> | 29 Aug               | 3 Sep                |                                 |
| <i>Helen</i>              | 31 Aug               | 5 Sep                |                                 |
| <i>Owl</i>                | 31 Aug               | 5 Sep                | Left 2 Oct for Bermuda          |
| <i>Falcon</i>             | 9 Sep                | 14 Sep               | Left 6 Oct for Nassau           |
| <i>Armstrong</i>          | 22 Sep               | 1 Oct                | Left 6 Oct for Nassau           |
| <i>Lady Sterling</i>      | 22 Sep               | 1 Oct                | Captured 28 Oct leaving Wilm    |
| <i>Little Hattie</i>      | 22 Sep               | 1 Oct                | Left 7 Oct for Bermuda          |
| <i>Annie</i>              | 24 Sep               | 30 Sep               | Left 6 Oct for Nassau           |
| <i>Condor</i>             | 24 Sep               | 1 Oct                | Wrecked 1 Oct entering Wilm     |
| <i>Helen</i>              | 24 Sep               | 1 Oct                | Left 6 Oct for Nassau           |
| <i>North Heath</i>        | 24 Oct               | 29 Oct               | Damaged 29 Oct entering Wilm    |
| <i>City of Petersburg</i> | 16 Nov               | 22 Nov               | Left 26 Dec for Bermuda         |
| <i>Old Dominion</i>       | 16 Nov               | 22 Nov               | Figure 5; left HX 12 Jan for GB |

porting Company, and arrived at St. George's on June 16, 1864 from Bristol, England. She completed six runs through the blockade before returning to Greenock from Halifax in March 1865.

By October 1864, the epidemic at Bermuda had died down, so the blockade runners began to shift their operating bases from Halifax back to Nassau or St. George's. Table 3 shows that, of the 11 blockade runners that used Halifax as a base, three were lost, four moved to Nassau, and three returned to Bermuda. The last ship, *Old Dominion*, made the final Wilmington-Halifax blockade run on December 15-20 before continuing on to Scotland.

On November 16, Charles Allen reported from St. George's that:<sup>7</sup>

**Although it has been currently reported and generally believed that most of the blockade running steamers were to leave these islands not to return here, it appears from the large quantities of coal being received here that such is not the fact, as there is now landed and afloat in the harbor of St. George's more than at any previous time.**

As Allen predicted, blockade running through Bermuda resumed, but it never attained its pre-epidemic levels of activity.

### Acknowledgements

John Barwis, Richard Frajola, Mike Perlman and Scott Trepel reviewed this article and provided valuable insights.

### Endnotes

1. The first of these articles, on the steamship *Antonica*, was published in *Chronicle* 262. A second, in *Chronicle* 263, described the career of the steamship *Fannie*. The third, on the *Robert E. Lee*, appeared in *Chronicle* 264, while the fourth, on the *Advance*, was published in *Chronicle* 266.
2. Glen Wiche, editor, *Dispatches from Bermuda, The Civil War Letters of Charles Maxwell Allen, United States Consul at Bermuda, 1861-1888* (Kent State University Press: Kent, OH, 2008), pg. 141.
3. William Parkes, "'Per Walker' Major Norman S. Walker and Bermuda Blockade mail (Continued)" *Confederate Philatelist* Whole No. 208, Vol. 27, No. 4 (July-August 1982), pp. 103-104.
4. Wiche, *op. cit.*, pg. 148.
5. Dwight Henderson, editor, *The Private Journal of Georgiana Gholson Walker, 1862-1865* (Confederate Publishing Company, Inc.: Tuscaloosa, Ala., 1963), pp. 108-109.
6. *Ibid.*, pg. 22.
7. Wiche, *op. cit.*, pp. 159-60. ■

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## A TALE OF TWO EMBELLISHED COVERS

STEPHEN ROSE

### Introduction

Classic collectors know that covers in transit can sometimes lose a stamp that was part of the original franking. The reverse also happens. Sometimes long after their voyage, covers acquire stamps that didn't originate—added by philatelic “doctors” seeking to enhance the cover's visual appeal and market value. This article tracks the history of two 1869 covers that fell victim to such bogus enhancement. One was a fairly crude effort and the other quite sophisticated.

### Stamp added to cover to Italy

I bought the cover in Figure 1 about 15 years ago, mindful that the 6¢ 1869 stamp on the left—not tied, differently centered and lighter in shade than the other two 6¢ stamps—probably did not originate as part of the initial franking. The Philatelic Foundation (PF) confirmed my concern but added a ray of hope when it opined on its certificate that the spurious 6¢ stamp did not originate on “this otherwise genuine cover.”

At the time, I was just beginning my study of the 1869 issue and did not understand the rating and routing of mail from the United States to Italy during this era. I relegated the cover to a “future study” file and resurrected it years later after reading the chapter on U.S.-Italian mails in Michael Laurence's comprehensive study of 10¢ 1869 covers.<sup>1</sup> Then it all made sense.

The Figure 1 cover was originally franked with 14¢ postage—the pair of 6¢ and the 2¢ 1869 stamps—sufficient to send it to Italy via the German international mail system. But it actually traveled via England, under the terms of the 1868 U.S.-Italy postal treaty, which effective 15 February 1870 had been modified to reduce the original 15¢ rate to 10¢. The blue merchant's handstamp dated April 15, 1870 indicates that the letter fell into the time period of the new 10¢ rate. And the red “NEW YORK PAID ALL BR TRANSIT” exchange-office marking confirms that the cover traveled via the treaty route.



**Figure 1.** Cover from New York City to Italy, April 15 1870. In an apparent attempt to create an example of a double 10¢ treaty-rate franking, a faker added the leftmost 6¢ 1869 stamp, which is not canceled and shows a different shade of blue and a very different centering.

But why was the cover sent this way rather than via the German mails? As Laurence explains in his book, for covers on which a routing was not specified, the practice of the New York exchange office was to send them on the first steamer for which adequate postage had been paid, even if the franking suggested the sender intended another route. In this case, the 14¢ franking “suggested” routing via the German mail system, but absent any specific routing endorsement, the N.Y. exchange office exercised its prerogative to send the letter via the 10¢ treaty route, through Britain in a closed bag to the Italian frontier.<sup>2</sup> As Laurence notes, there “appears to [have been] an official preference for the treaty mails over the German mails, which may explain why German-mail covers to Italy are not encountered after the Italian treaty went into effect” (the exception being covers addressed to Rome, which was not part of the newly unified Italian state until late 1870).<sup>3</sup>



**Figure 2.** After the spurious stamp was removed, the Figure 1 cover received a certificate of genuineness from the Philatelic Foundation. It was presumably franked to pay the 14¢ German-mail rate to Italy, though it actually traveled at the 10¢ treaty rate.

With this information in hand, it was a simple matter to remove the spurious 6¢ stamp and resubmit the newly rectified cover to the PF, which issued a good certificate (551574) for this “genuine usage.” The authenticated cover, as it now reposes in my collection, is shown in Figure 2.

### Stamp added to cover to Syria

The black and white image in Figure 3 depicts a catalog illustration from a 1992 Apfelbaum sale.<sup>4</sup> It shows a cover to Beirut, from the famous Dennis correspondence, franked by a horizontal strip of four 10¢ 1869 stamps and three 2¢ 1869 stamps, posted at Newark, New Jersey on April 26 and arriving Beirut June 6. Printed routing instructions at lower left

**Figure 3.** This cover to Beirut, from the famous James S. Dennis correspondence, first came to philatelic attention when it was offered in an Apfelbaum auction in 1992. This is the catalog illustration from the Apfelbaum sale.



designate “Via North German Union Closed Mail” and the red boxed “Bremen Franco 13/5 70” datestamp confirms German mail carriage and a year date of 1870.

Two years later, this cover was submitted to the PF, but by then it had undergone some changes. It had been cleaned and freshened, with edges strengthened and holes filled in both bottom corners. Additionally, it had acquired another 2¢ stamp, in the upper left corner. The image in Figure 4 shows what the cover looked like when it was submitted to the PF in 1994.



**Figure 4.** Two years later the Figure 3 cover had been cleaned up and freshened. Edges were strengthened and voids filled at the bottom corners. A void at top left had been filled too—with another 2¢ 1869 stamp. This was certified genuine by the Philatelic Foundation in 1994.

Note that the spurious 2¢ stamp is a much more plausible addition than the extra 6¢ stamp on the cover in Figure 1. On the Dennis cover, the added stamp is centered north-west, just like its mates. It shows the same shade of brown, and its smudge cancel nicely matches the others. The only discernable difference is in the grilling. As might be evident in the Figure 4 photo, a pronounced grill appears in front of the postrider on the three stamps that originated. The 2¢ stamp that was added shows no hint of such a grill.

When submitted to the PF in 1994, this cover also bore some pencil notations (source unknown) on the backflap: “April 1871, 4x12¢ rate, Newark N.J. ‘skull’ cancel, latest of Dennis covers.” This is a lot of highly compressed information, but unfortunately not a word of it is true. I assume it was added by the faker who attached the spurious stamp, in an attempt justify the postal rate created by the newly manufactured 48¢ franking.

The actual date the cover was mailed was April 1870, not 1871. The rate was not a quadruple 12¢ rate (which went into effect in mid-1870), but rather a triple 15¢ rate, over-franked by 1¢. The cancel is not the Newark “skull ” but just an anonymous blob. And this is by no means the latest of the Dennis covers.

Another factor contributed to the confusion. Even before the Apfelbaum sale, someone tried to erase the crayon credit markings from the front of the cover. This was a fairly common practice in the days before it was recognized that these apparent childish scribbles were actually postal markings. For a triple-rate cover to Syria, the N.Y. exchange office would apply a U.S. credit of “15” cents in red crayon, representing 3x5¢ credit to Germany for their carrying the cover beyond Germany to its destination. Germany would then restate this credit, in red and often in crayon, as “wfr 6”—abbreviating “weiterfranco [paid beyond] 6 silbergroschen.” Fortunately, the attempted obliteration of these important credit markings was not fully successful. The photos in Figures 4 and 5 may show a faint but unmistakable red “15” between the Bremen box and Beirut receiving mark. To the right of the “15” is also a partial trace in red of the expected “wfr” and what is likely a stylized “6.”<sup>25</sup>

In 1994, this concatenation of fakery was sufficient to deceive the PF. Spurious stamp and all, the cover received a good certificate (279,814), with no opinion as to the rate in-

volved. Years passed and ultimately, cover and certificate wound up in the 1869 collection of Gordon Eubanks, which was auctioned by the Siegel firm (sale 1004) in 2011. Based on the erroneous PF certificate, the catalog write-up speculated that the 48¢ postage was apparently intended to prepay a quadruple 12¢ rate, which did not go into effect until weeks later.

Just before the Eubanks sale, Laurence found the Apfelbaum image (Figure 3) tucked away in his extensive historical record of 10¢ 1869 covers. He showed the image to Siegel president Scott Trepel, who immediately withdrew the cover and then reoffered it as having a stamp added.



**Figure 5. After the spurious stamp was removed and the rate properly understood, the Figure 4 cover was reconsidered by the Philatelic Foundation in 2012. The erroneous certificate was rescinded and a new certificate was issued for the cover in this form.**

That's how the cover passed into my hands. Subsequently I removed the spurious 2¢ stamp from the upper left corner and submitted the cover to the PF for reconsideration. In due course the PF issued a new certificate (501,911) expressing the opinion that "it is a genuine usage, representing a 1¢ overpayment of the triple 15¢ NGU direct rate, the cover with lightened red crayon rates at bottom." Figure 5 shows the cover as it now reposes in my collection.

### Conclusion

Both covers share a common feature: an open space between stamps that tempted a faker to fabricate an enhancement. Just as nature abhors a vacuum, voids in a franking array seem to impel stamp doctors to fill them with spurious stamps. Fortunately, the wealth of rate, route, and credit markings on pre-UPU covers—combined with the steady accumulation of postal history knowledge—make such trickery easier to detect.

### Endnotes

1. Michael Laurence, *Ten-Cent 1869 Covers, A Postal Historical Survey* (Collectors Club of Chicago, 2010), pp. 245-49.
2. *Ibid.*, pg. 246. The Cunard *Marathon* departed New York City on April 16, 1870 for the British Isles, which would have conformed to the first leg of such a treaty routing on the earliest available ship bound for Europe. See Walter Hubbard and Richard Winter, *North Atlantic Mail Sailings, 1840-75* (U.S. Philatelic Classics Society, 1988), pg. 62.
3. Laurence, *op. cit.*, pg. 247.
4. Apfelbaum sale 703, 1 September 1992, lot 46.
5. A discussion of this particular cover in the context of U.S.-German mails appears in Laurence, *op. cit.*, pg. 230. ■

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## OFFICIALS

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### DEPARTMENTAL SPECIAL PRINTINGS: MORE THAN ONE OVERPRINT PLATE

WILLIAM E. MOOZ AND ROBERT MUSTACICH

The study and collection of the 1875 special printings of the United States Departmental stamps is rife with interesting questions and possibilities. Just think, there are 92 face-different stamps, of which 27 were sold in quantities less than 100. Despite this, there were four printings, and no less than four errors. The stamps have been intensively studied, but some tantalizing questions remain. This study focuses on one of those questions.

The first printing of these stamps was of 10,000 of each of the denominations lower than \$2. That accounts for 100 sheets of 100 stamps per sheet, or 8,800 sheets. To prevent the use of these stamps by the general public, each stamp was overprinted with the word SPECIMEN. The overprint was accomplished by typesetting a plate with the word SPECIMEN in 100 places, and then using this plate to overprint the previously prepared sheets of stamps. The plate was rather like a common rubber stamp that has 100 words on it.

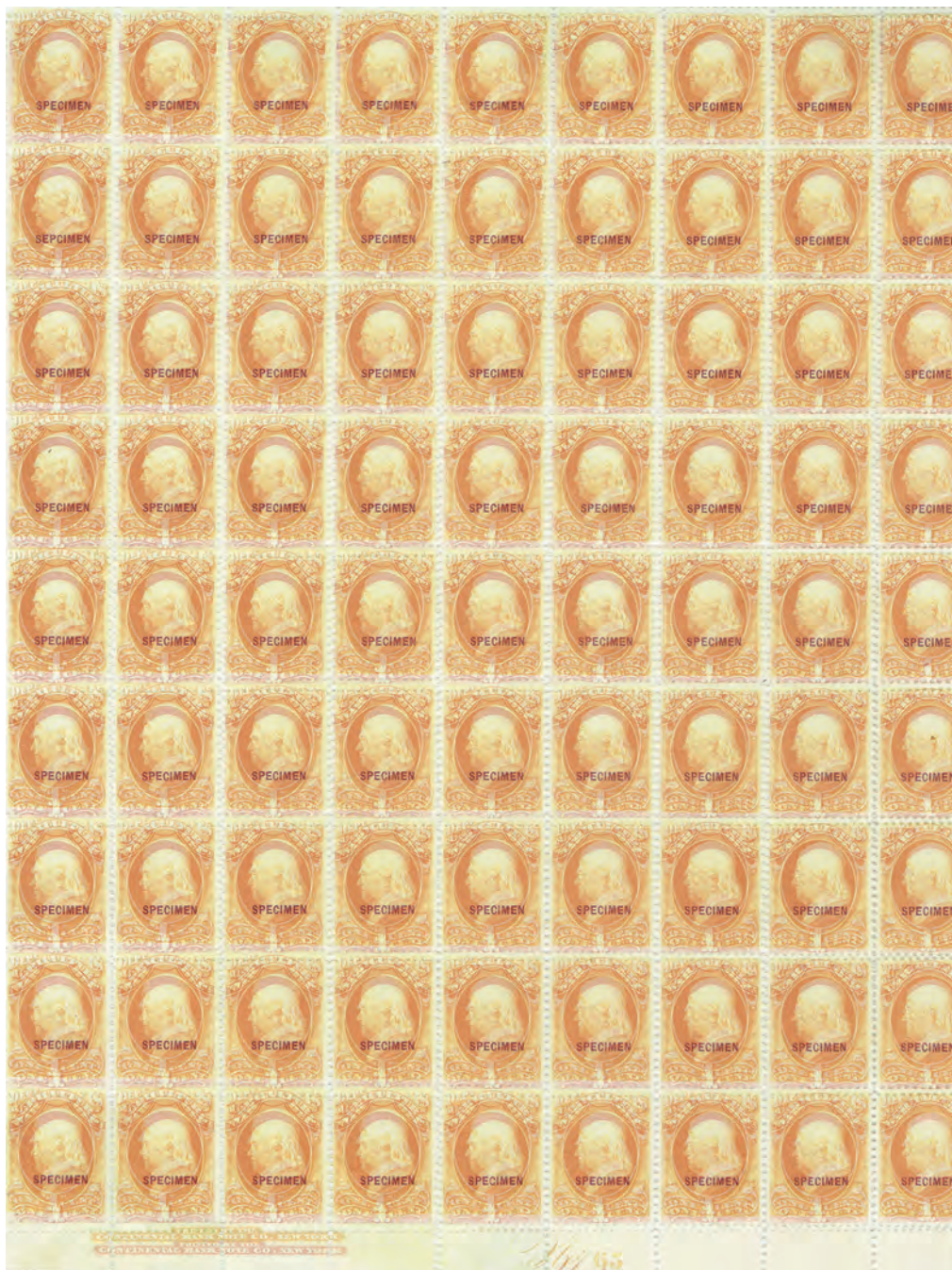
When the overprint plate was typeset, the compositor made an error in Position 21, by setting the type to read SEPCIMEN instead of SPECIMEN. Apparently all sheets of the Agriculture, Justice, Navy, Post Office, State and War Departments were overprinted with this plate, and each of these sheets contained the SEPCIMEN error at Position 21. Sheets of the Executive, Interior and Treasury Departments did not contain the error.

As philatelists began to collect these stamps, at least two 2¢ Interior stamps were discovered that showed the error. This situation has been explained in several ways. Combs states "Inasmuch as at least one full sheet of the 2¢ Interior is known without the SEPCIMEN error, it is generally agreed that the error was discovered and corrected while printing this denomination."<sup>1</sup> Combs goes on to say that "Perry has seen a complete sheet of 100 2¢ Interior with the error, and he possessed a sheet of 100 without the error."<sup>2</sup>

The reasoning in the literature is consistent with the supposition that only one overprint plate was used in overprinting the 8,800 sheets of stamps, and that that plate was corrected during the overprinting process by correcting the spelling error in position 21. Nowhere in the literature is it suggested that more than one overprint plate was prepared and used. This study addresses that assumption.

We have previously used advanced methods for image comparisons to compare individual overprints looking for evidence of plate corrections. These methods remove color and provide automated alignment of individual overprints. However, plate-wide comparisons can be done with the simpler method of aligning digital transparencies. A transparent image of one multiple can then be overlaid onto the image of another multiple so that the overprints are aligned. If the same overprint plate was used on the test multiple as in the transparent image, the overprints should match exactly.

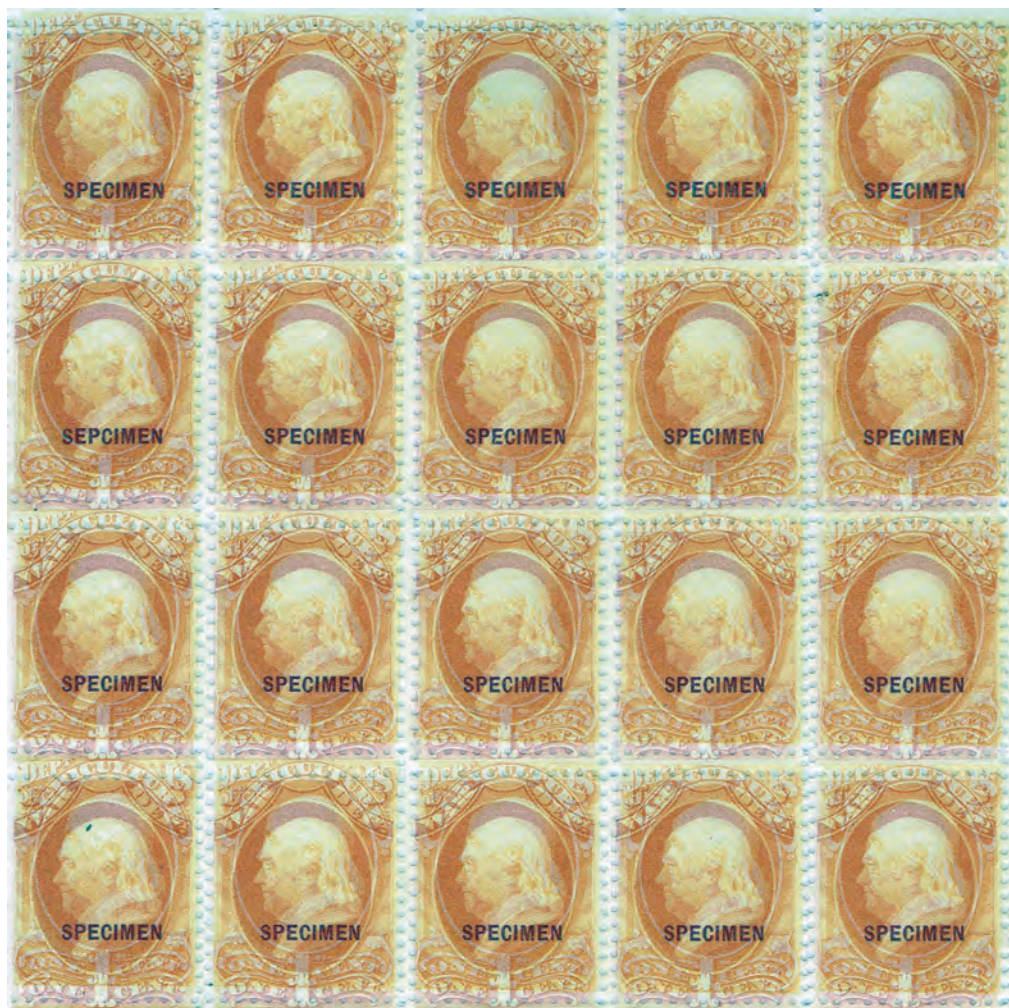
# 1¢ AGRICULTURE/1¢ WAR OVERLAY SHOWS PERFECT ALIGNMENT OF OVERPRINTS



**Figure 1. Overlay of partial sheets of 1¢ Agriculture and 1¢ War Department overprints showing exact matching of the overprints. The same overprint plate was used for both.**

We first tested this idea by making a transparent image of a 1¢ Agriculture sheet containing the SEPCIMEN error. This was then superimposed on a sheet of the 1¢ War Department that also contained the SEPCIMEN error. The overprints matched exactly, showing

**1¢ AGRICULTURE/1¢ WAR OVERLAY:  
ENLARGEMENT OF UPPER LEFT QUADRANT**



**Figure 1a. Enlarged view of the upper left 20 stamps from the Figure 1 overlay, with contrast enhanced, illustrating the very high quality of the overprint matching. In all positions, the black overprints align perfectly, so that the word "SPECIMEN" appears as a single imprint.**

that the overprint plate used on both the 1¢ Agriculture and 1¢ War were identical. This match is shown in Figure 1. The Figure 1 image shows only part of the sheet. It appears to be cropped at top and at right because the full sheets were too wide to fit our scanner; but this in no way diminishes the accuracy of our observations.

Figure 1a shows an enlarged view of the upper left quadrant of the Figure 1 image. It shows in even greater detail the high quality of the match observed over the entire sheet. There can be no question: the SPECIMEN overprints on these two sheets, one Agriculture and one War, were printed from the same plate.

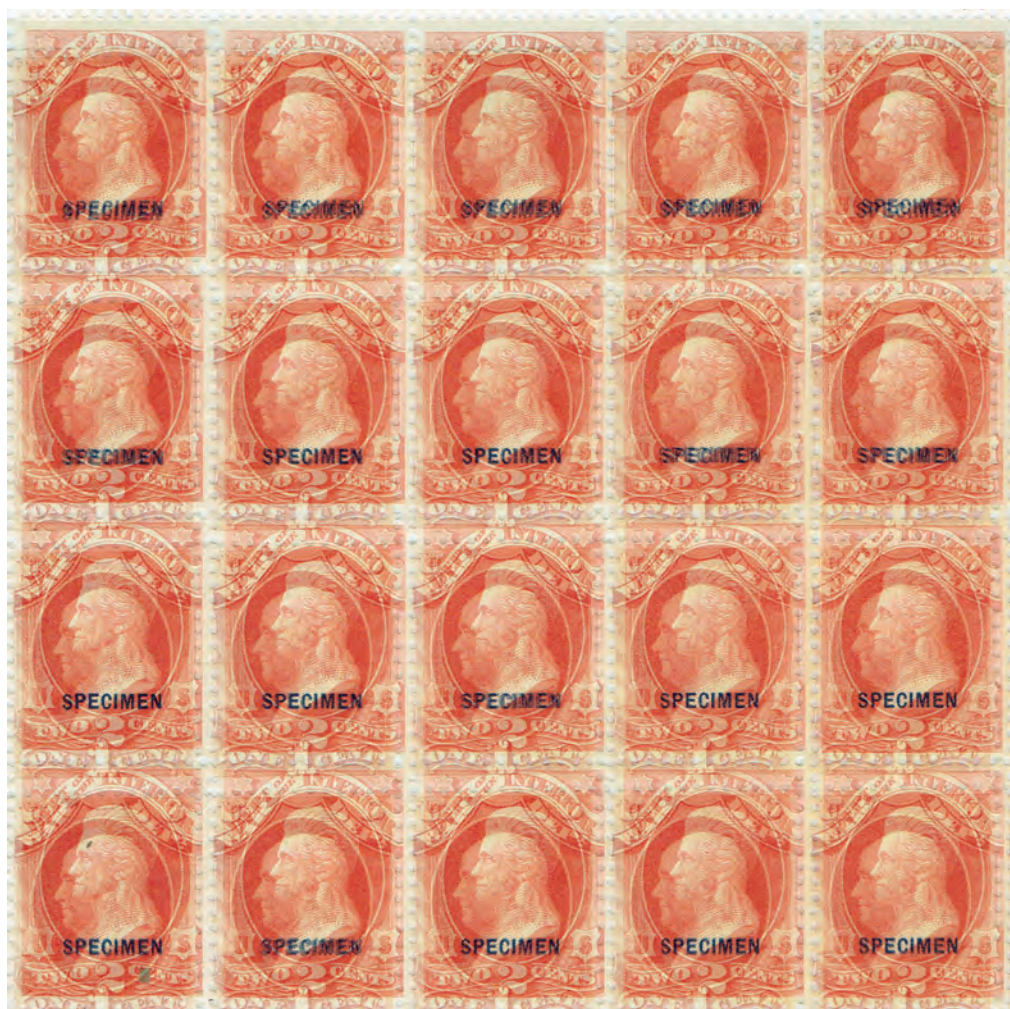
**1¢ INTERIOR/1¢ WAR OVERLAY  
SHOWS IMPERFECT ALIGNMENT OF OVERPRINTS**



**Figure 2. The overlay of the 1¢ War Department and 2¢ Interior with the best overall alignment of the overprints still shows extensive mismatch throughout the two sheets.**

Next a transparent image of a 2¢ Interior sheet (without the SPECIMEN error in Position 21) was superimposed on the 1¢ War sheet (which contains the error), and it was clear that the overprints on the Interior sheet were created from a different plate. Figure 2 illustrates this comparison. Most of positions fail to match, some quite markedly.

**1¢ INTERIOR/1¢ WAR OVERLAY:  
ENLARGEMENT OF UPPER LEFT QUADRANT  
SHOWS MISALIGNMENT OF OVERPRINTS**



**Figure 2a. Contrast-enhanced view of the upper left 25 stamps in Figure 2. While certain overprints can be made to match each other over the sheet, others remain far from alignment. The mismatches in the top row are especially pronounced. Instead of single images, the overprints appear fuzzy and out-of-focus, indicating two different overprint plates.**

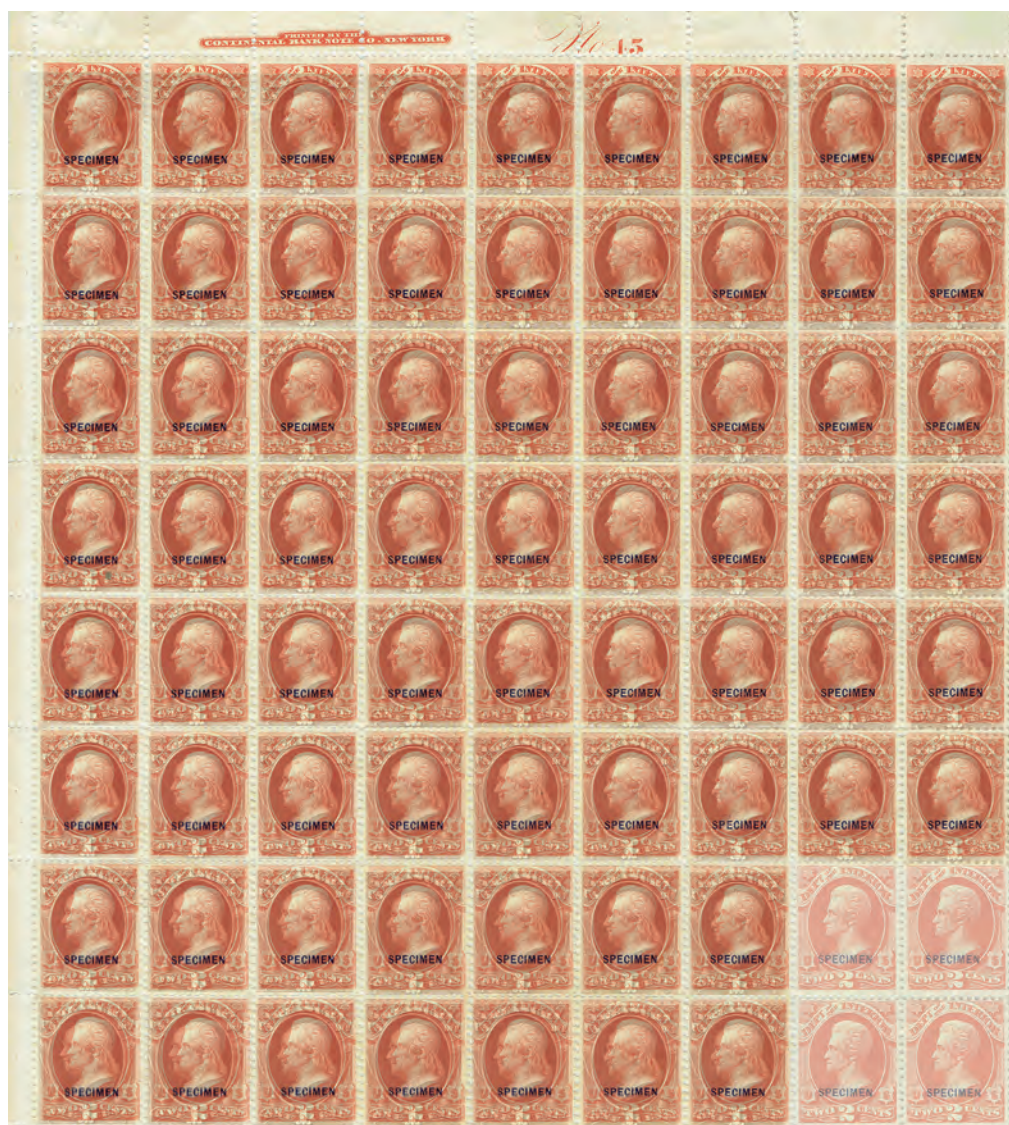
Figure 2a shows the upper 20 stamps from Figure 2. The poor matching is quite profound in the upper row. This failure to match proves that the Position 21 error was not corrected during the printing of the Interior overprints. In fact, a completely different overprint plate was used to create the overprints on the 2¢ Interior stamp sheet that does not show the SEPCIMEN error.



**Figure 3. Overlaying the 2¢ Interior sheet onto a large irregular block of the 1¢ Treasury stamp shows excellent matching of the overprints.**

To continue this analysis, the transparent image of the 2¢ Interior sheet was then laid successively on each of two large 1¢ Treasury multiples, and in each case the match was exact, showing that the same overprint plate was used on both the 2¢ Interior and 1¢ Treasury sheets. These matches are shown in Figures 3 and 4.

The Executive Department also does not show any SEPCIMEN errors, and this was the last test we made. A large 2¢ Executive multiple was located and a transparency of this was superimposed on the 2¢ Interior test image. We expected to find that these overprints would be from the same plate, but this could not be confirmed, as positions 2, 3, 4, 13, 14,



**Figure 4. Overlay the 2¢ Interior sheet on to another large 1¢ Treasury multiple: Again, the result is a very close matching of the overprint placements. No question, the same overprint plate was used to create both the Interior and Treasury stamps.**

15 and 16 did not superimpose perfectly. This overlay shown in Figure 5 (next page), with the margin imprints in proximity, was the best alignment we could find in testing different possible overlay positions. There are mismatches in most positions. Those in Positions 13-16 are especially profound. In Figure 5a we show an extreme enlargement of the overprints from Positions 14-16, from which the underlying color of the stamps has largely been removed. This more clearly shows the extremity of the displacement.

### Conclusion

The tentative conclusion of this study is that Combs' anecdotal explanation of the 2¢ Interior SEPCIMEN is incorrect. A different overprint plate was used than that which con-



**Figure 5.** An overlay of the best alignment achieved with the 2¢ Interior and a 2¢ Executive multiple showing positions 2, 3, 4, 13, 14, 15 and 16 mismatches



**Figure 5a.** An enlargement of three of the overprints (Positions 14-16) from the overlay image in Figure 5, with the underlying stamp colors electronically enhanced to show as clearly as possible the displacement of the superimposed overprint images. The displacement is almost one millimeter both north and east.

tained the SEPCIMEN error. This different overprint plate was also used on the 1¢ Treasury Department stamps. We assumed that this different overprint plate would also have been used on the Executive Department, but the test did not confirm this, showing instead that a third overprint plate was also used. Therefore at least three different overprint plates were prepared and used on this issue.

### Endnotes

1. W.V. Combs, *U. S. Departmental Specimen Stamps* (State College, Pa.: American Philatelic Society, 1965), pg. 37.
2. See Elliot Perry, "Specimen Errors on Department Stamps," *Stamps*, Feb. 11, 1933, pg. 303. ■

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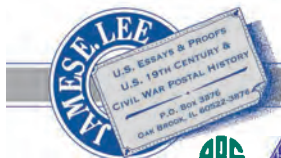
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## TRANS-MISSISSIPPI MIXED FRANKINGS

LABRON HARRIS

When the decision was made to extend the the scope of the *Chronicle* and include a new section for the 1890s, editor Michael Laurence asked me if I could write an article on Trans-Mississippi mixed-franking covers. After looking at my various sources to find material to write about, I was quickly disillusioned.

I was able to find only one cover that showed a mixed franking, defined as Trans-Mississippi stamp(s) plus foreign stamp(s)—and that cover lacked authentication.

So I went back to Michael and suggested I write an article on some other aspect of the 1890s. Then when I attended the SARAPEX show in Florida a dealer told me that a friend of his had a cover with both Hong Kong and Trans-Mississippi stamps on it. Subsequently I was able to acquire this cover at the Garfield-Perry stamp show. Among the people I proudly showed my new acquisition was Fred Gregory, the outgoing president of our Society, who in return showed me a cover from Hawaii to the United States via Canada that had a Hawaiian stamp and a pair of 2¢ Trans-Mississippi stamps. After we emailed back and forth



Figure 1. 8¢ and 4¢ Trans-Mississippi stamps, along with a 10¢ Hong Kong stamp (Scott 44), all tied by a Hong Kong circular postmark dated January 5, 1899. A 1¢ Trans-Mississippi stamp on reverse (see Figure 2) is similarly canceled.



**Figure 2. Reverse of the Figure 1 cover. One explanation is that the sender in Hong Kong applied the Trans-Mississippi stamps thinking they could prepay the registered postage (5¢ UPU postage and 8¢ registration fee). When that was rejected he added the Hong Kong stamp, which paid international postage only.**

about that cover, he showed me another cover with Hawaii and Trans-Mississippi stamps. I decided these three covers were worth an article.

The front of the first cover, shown in Figure 1, bears a 10¢ violet Hong Kong stamp (Scott 44), and 8¢ and 4¢ Trans-Mississippi stamps. All three stamps are tied by a “HONG KONG JAN 5 99” circular datestamp. The Hong Kong stamp is printed on colored paper (Scott calls it “red”) that coincidentally matches the color of the envelope. On the reverse (shown in Figure 2) is a 1¢ Trans-Mississippi stamp, tied by a New York registry handstamp.

Which stamps paid the postage to the addressee in New York City?

During this time of the Spanish American War, American troop ships were sent to the Philippines via Europe, the Suez Canal and various Asian ports. At some of these ports mailers would post letters using U.S. stamps and these covers were accepted by the local postal authorities. I have a 2¢ First Bureau cover sent by a soldier, canceled at Hong Kong and paying postage to the U.S.

But the cover in Figure 1 shows no indication that it is military mail, even though not all such mail was so marked. The most likely explanation for this cover is that the Hong Kong postage was accepted as paying the UPU international rate and the U.S. postage was wasted. At the left bottom of the Figure 1 cover you will see the word REGISTERED marked out. My surmise is that the mailer originally intended to send the cover by registered mail, paying the 5¢ UPU rate and the 8¢ registry fee with 13¢ in Trans-Mississippi stamps. This was not accepted and a Hong Kong stamp was added to pay the UPU rate to the United States. Despite the Trans-Mississippi stamps being canceled at Hong Kong, they counted for nothing. Even though this cover shows a mixed franking I think it could more accurately be called a postal confusion cover.

On August 12, 1898 Hawaii became a possession of the United States. After that, mailers could use either Hawaiian or U.S. stamps to pay UPU postal rates. An exception was that U.S. military personnel in Hawaii could send mail to the U.S. at the U.S. domestic rates. These special “concessionary” rates remained in effect until June 13, 1900. Hawaii became a territory June 14, 1900, whereupon regular U.S. domestic rates applied to all mail.



**Figure 3. Pair of 2¢ Trans-Mississippi stamps and a 2¢ Hawaii 1894 stamp (Scott 75) posted on board a Navy gunboat on Pacific duty in 1899. The stamps are tied by a Vancouver circular marking dated November 3, 1898.**

Figure 3 is the first of the two Hawaii covers. The routing is straightforward. In the upper left corner is a faint purple handstamp of the U.S.S. BENNINGTON, a twin-screw Navy gunboat then on duty in the Pacific. The postmarks indicate the cover originated in Hawaiian waters.

The cover is franked with a 2¢ brown Hawaii stamp of 1894 (Scott 75) and two 2¢ Trans-Mississippi stamps. This cover left Honolulu on the ship *Aorangi* on October 26, 1898 and traveled to Vancouver, British Columbia. It was postmarked there (with three strikes if a Vancouver circular datestamp) on November 3, 1898. From Vancouver it was sent by steamer to Mare Island in San Francisco Bay.

That much is straightforward, but why the 6¢ franking? This is another example of postal confusion. One explanation is the sender did not know which stamp to use to pay the military rate to the U.S., so he used both the Hawaiian stamp and U.S. stamps to make sure the rate was paid. He didn't know the cover would go through Vancouver. The rate from Vancouver to the U.S. was 2¢ and one of the Trans-Mississippi's could have paid the rate if Canada accepted U.S. postage on U.S. military mail. Or perhaps, not knowing about the military rate, but knowing the ship was going to Canada, the sender used the three stamps to overpay the Hawaii-to-Canada 5¢ rate, using up two Trans-Mississippi stamps that he had on hand. Or is this a Paquebot cover posted on the high seas and canceled on arrival at Vancouver? The first explanation is the most plausible, but the use of two Trans-Mississippi stamps remains unexplained.

Figure 4 is a registered cover (note Honolulu's light red "R" handstamp with numeral "2980" in the upper center), sent to Albany, New York from the office of the New York



**Figure 3. Registered legal-sized cover from Honolulu to Albany franked with 1¢, 2¢ and 5¢ Hawaiian stamps, a 2¢ First Bureau stamp and a 4¢ Trans-Mississippi stamp. This envelope carried soldier ballots in the election that made 40-year-old Theodore Roosevelt the Governor of New York.**

Volunteer Infantry in Hawaii. The double-circle Honolulu postmarks may not read clearly; they are dated November 9, 1898.

This large envelope carried soldiers' ballots for the New York state election in which 40-year-old Theodore Roosevelt was elected governor. It was franked by 1¢, 2¢ and 5¢ Hawaiian stamps, a 2¢ First Bureau stamp and a 4¢ Trans-Mississippi stamp. This cover was also sent under the U.S. military rate. Because of this, only 8¢ in Hawaiian stamps was needed to pay the registry fee (instead of 10¢ for the normal Hawaiian registration). The 6¢ in U.S. postage paid triple the 2¢ concession rate. According to Fred Gregory, this is the only registered soldier's-mail cover known from Hawaii.

These three covers are the only mixed-franking Trans-Mississippi I know of. I suspect there are many more out there in private holdings, and would welcome being made aware of them.

I would like to thank Fred Gregory for his invaluable input in this article. Of course, mistakes or invalid assumptions are mine alone. These covers are open to other interpretations. Postal confusion causes analytical frustration. ■

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FOREIGN REGISTERED MAIL 1855-1875  
PART FOUR: OTHER COUNTRIES

JAMES W. MILGRAM, M.D.

Introduction

This is the final article in a four-part series devoted to registered mail between the United States and foreign countries during the years prior to the Universal Postal Union. The first installment, discussing registered mail between the U.S. and Canada, was published in *Chronicle* 260 (November 2018). The second article, in *Chronicle* 262, discussed registered mail to and from Great Britain and via British mails to and from destinations beyond. The third article, in *Chronicle* 265 (February 2020), discussed registered mail to and from Germany. This concluding installment discusses registered mail to the rest of the world.

As was established in the previous three sections, the earliest reciprocal treaties for registered mail were concluded with those countries with which the United States had the highest mail volume. The semi-official monthly *United States Mail and Post Office Assistant* published instructional paragraphs concerning “Registering of Letters.” Respecting international registration, until the end of 1867 each issue contained the same information with the rates discussed in the prior installments of this series.

The January 1868 issue published a new section concerning “Registration of Letters,” with the warning that “Particular attention should be paid by Postmasters to the changes in registration fees on foreign letters, and also to other modifications of the regulations as to registering foreign letters and other mail matter, which we publish in this number...”<sup>1</sup>

These new regulations are worth reproducing here, since they have not been discussed previously in the philatelic literature:<sup>2</sup>

**REGISTERING FOREIGN LETTERS**—Letters can be registered in the United States for Great Britain and Ireland, for the German Postal Union (including all the German states and Austria), also for Belgium and The Netherlands. Letters to Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward’s Island can be registered, but *not* to Newfoundland. Letters can be registered (by British mail, via England) to Cape of Good Hope, Ceylon, Constantinople, East Indies, Egypt (viz.: Alexandria, Cairo and Suez), Falkland Islands, Gambia, Gibraltar, Gold Coast, Hong Kong, Java, Lagos, Labuan, Liberia, Malta, Mauritius, Natal, New South Wales, Queensland, St. Helena, Sierra Leone, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia, on payment of a registration fee (in stamps) of sixteen cents. This is in addition to the postage, which must be fully prepaid by stamps.

The registry fee to be charged on registered letters and other postal packets to Germany, to Austria and its States, or to Belgium and The Netherlands, via North German Union, direct or by closed mail, via England is *eight* cents, and on letters to Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward’s Island, it is *five* cents—on letters and other postal packets to Great Britain and Ireland, *eight* cents. All registered letters and other postal packets must be prepaid in full to destination.

Beginning with the January 1868 issue of *United States Mail*, a new column of registered mail fees was added to the table of postages to foreign countries, which takes up the entire last (fourth) page of each issue.

Before 1868, registered letters to countries other than Canada, the British Isles, and the German states had been sent by routing them through one of the national posts with which the U.S. had a convention that accommodated registration. Covers that show such usage are very rare.

The earliest example I have seen is the cover in Figure 1, a scarce use from the U.S. to Bremen and then to Göteborg (Gothenburg), Sweden. The 33¢ Bremen convention rate is paid by 3¢ and 30¢ 1857 stamps with manuscript cancels. The 5¢ registration fee was paid in cash. The New York registration number “5105” at top center establishes New York City as the origin, rather than some other unnamed town. A red **N. YORK BREM PK. JUN 8 PAID** exchange-office handstamp with manuscript 30 denotes a 30¢ credit to Bremen.



**Figure 1. Registered to Sweden in 1861: Cover from New York via Bremen to Göthenburg.** The 30¢ and 3¢ 1857 stamps pay the 33¢ Bremen convention rate; the 5¢ registration fee was prepaid in cash. New York’s manuscript “5105” confirms registration in the U.S. The magenta 30 credits Bremen. Red crayon 5 sgr (=11¢) credit to Sweden. Red **Recomandirt** applied in transit. Although the U.S. did not have a convention with Sweden, this cover was marked in blue pen “**Rekdr**” (*Rekommenderat*) by Sweden.

This cover was carried on the North German Lloyd *New York* arriving at Bremerhaven June 24, 1861. The red boxed **Recomandirt** shows German registration. Scandinavian mail was sent from Bremen through Hamburg. An oval HAMBURG 25/6.61 backstamp indicates the Hamburg office turned the letter over to the Royal Swedish post office in Hamburg, which applied a black boxed HAMBURG./K.S.P.A(D)/25/6.1861 (also on reverse) and credited Sweden 5 silbergroschen (sgr), equivalent to 11¢ U.S., which is indicated by the black straightline **FRANCO** and the red crayon “5.”<sup>3</sup> It is interesting that Sweden still considered this letter to be registered. The United States had no treaty with Sweden for registration, but Sweden did have reciprocal registration with German states. The blue manuscript “Rekdr” at upper right (abbreviating “*Rekommenderat*”) indicates registration in Sweden.

An 1865 cover from Chicago to Hirsch, Drubach, Canton of St. Gallen, Switzerland, is shown in Figure 2. Two 3¢ and single 1¢ and 12¢ 1861 stamps paid the 19¢ single rate via Bremen-Hamburg; the 5¢ registration fee was prepaid in cash. The cover bears a blue straightline **REGISTERED** (R-CHI-2) with no town marking.<sup>4</sup> The number “108” may be the Chicago registration number. New York struck its red double-circle **NEW-YORK REGISTERED AUG 15** (R-NY-8) and wrote transit number “1678” below the address. Credit of 16¢ (faint crayon marking at dead center) was given to Hamburg; the U.S. retained 3¢ plus the registration fee.



**Figure 2. Registered to Switzerland in 1865:** Blue straightline **REGISTERED** and “108” with blue cancels on 1¢, 12¢, and two 3¢ 1861 stamps paying the 19¢ rate via Hamburg from Chicago to Hirsch, Switzerland. New York transit number and double circle **NEW-YORK REGISTERED AUG 15**. Red crayon “16” credit to Hamburg. Backstamps identify the year as 1865, when 5¢ registration fee under the German conventions was to be prepaid in cash. Hamburg’s “Chargé” handstamp indicates registration.

This cover was carried on the HAPAG *Teutonia*, which sailed from New York April 15 and arrived in Hamburg April 30. The script-like **Chargé** handstamp was applied in Hamburg. Backstamps identify the year date as 1865. Thus, the Hamburg convention fee for registration applied, a 5¢ cash fee, not the 20¢ then required for domestic registration.

The cover shown in Figure 3 was sent from Placerville, California May 9, 1868 to “Valle Maggia, Italy.” It bears two 10¢ 1861 stamps and a 3¢, all struck with Placerville’s letter-P killer. The 3¢ stamp is a replacement. The stamps paid the 15¢ U.S.-Italian convention rate (effective April 1868) plus the 8¢ registration fee.<sup>5</sup> The rare sans-serif Placerville **REGISTERED** straightline (R-PL-1) is struck in red with “No 29” added in manuscript just below it. At New York a brownish red **REGISTERED** with serifs was applied but no transit registration number was added. The brownish-red exchange-office marking reads **NEW YORK PAID ALL BR. TRANSIT MAY 26**. This cover was likely carried by the HAPAG *Saxonia*, which departed New York on May 26 and arrived at Southampton June 7. Locarno and Maggia backstamps are both dated June 11, 1868.

Figure 4 shows another Placerville cover sent to the same region but addressed in a different hand to a town across the Italian border in Switzerland. Here the destination is Moghegno, in the Locarno district of Canton Ticino, Switzerland. This cover bears Placer-



Figure 3. Placerville, California, May 9, 1868, to Valle Maggia, Switzerland, with two 10¢ and 3¢ 1861 stamps bearing “P” cancels (the 3¢ stamp has been replaced), paying 15¢ Italian convention rate and 8¢ registration fee. The red straightline sans-serif REGISTERED and manuscript number were applied at Placerville. Straightline REGISTERED with serifs applied in New York with no other New York registry notation.



Figure 4. Placerville, California, December 29, 1870 to Moghegno, Switzerland, with matching straightline REGISTERED and manuscript “#62.” The 24¢ 1861 stamp overpaid by 1¢ the 15¢ U.S.-Swiss treaty postage and 8¢ registration fee. Red NEW-YORK REGISTERED JAN 15. Three Swiss backstamps show arrival on January 30, 1870.

ville’s sans-serif straightline **REGISTERED** struck in blue (R-PL-2). In 1869, when this cover was posted, the 8¢ registry fee applied. The U.S.-Swiss convention rate via England was 15¢, so this cover is overpaid 1¢ by the 24¢ stamp (Scott 62).<sup>6</sup> The letter crossed the United States by train. It bears a rimless **NEW YORK REGISTERED JAN 15** (R-NY-10). It likely crossed the Atlantic on the Inman Line *City of Paris*, which departed New

York January 15, 1870 and arrived in Queenstown January 25. It was sent through Basel on January 28 to Locarno and has three Swiss backstamps, including one showing its arrival at destination on January 30, 1870.

Another cover from California to the same Italian-speaking canton in Switzerland is shown in Figure 5. This cover was sent October 3, 1872 from Petaluma to Cevio in the district of Vallemaggia, Canton Ticino, Switzerland. The 6¢ and 12¢ 1869 stamps paid the 10¢ U.S.-Swiss convention rate (via England) plus the 8¢ registration fee. The cover bears a Petaluma circular datestamp, a manuscript “Reg #4” notation and a rimless red **NEW-YORK REGISTERED OCT 12**. Three ships that might have carried this letter across the Atlantic: the Inman Line *City of Paris* and the White Star Line *Oceanic*, both of which



**Figure 5.** Petaluma, California, October 3 [1872] with manuscript “Reg #4” to Cevio, Switzerland. The 6¢ and 12¢ 1869 stamps paid the 10¢ Swiss convention rate via England and the 8¢ registration fee. The boxed “CHARGE” is a Basel registry marking.

sailed from New York October 12 and arrived in Queenstown October 21, or the North German Lloyd *Donau*, which sailed from New York the same day and arrived in Southampton October 22. The black boxed **CHARGE** was probably applied at Basel, Switzerland.<sup>7</sup> Backstamp dates are Basel, October 24; Luzern, October 25; Locarno, October 27; and Cevio, October 28. There is also a beautiful handstamp on the back of the envelope for J. & P. Midau, Importers of Meerschaum Pipes, Dupont and Pacific Streets, San Francisco.

The next four covers to Italy are difficult to understand. The explanations of the German ratings are based on research and analysis by German postal history experts Martin Camerer and Heinrich Conzelmann, confirmed by an 1864 Swiss postal regulation requiring a credit to Switzerland of the Italian registration fee on mail passing through Germany.

By way of background, most mail from the U.S. to Italy during the 1860s was sent via France, but the U.S.-French convention had no provision for registration. The U.S. conventions with Prussia and Bremen provided for registration, but not beyond the border of the German-Austrian Postal Union (GAPU).<sup>8</sup> Each country retained the registration fees it collected. There was no provision for crediting any portion of the registration fees collected, as under the U.S.-British convention.

Figure 6 shows a cover to Palermo, Sicily, franked with 30¢ and 12¢ 1861 stamps tied by a black octagonal **NEW ORLEANS LA. JAN 30 1867**. The 5¢ registration fee was



**Figure 6. Registered to Sicily: New Orleans, January 30, 1867 to Palermo, sent by Prussian closed mail even though the rate was 47¢; 5¢ registration fee paid in cash. Credit of 19¢ to Prussia. The 5½ sgr (=18 kreuzer) credit to Switzerland represents 2 sgr Swiss transit, 1¾ sgr Italian postage and 1¾ sgr Italian registration fee.**

paid in cash and New Orleans struck upside down its black **REGISTERED** straightline and wrote registration number “583” at upper right. New York applied a red double circle **NEW-YORK REGISTERED FEB 6** and transit number “4319.”

The 42¢ franking might have been intended to pay the ¼-to-½-ounce French mail rate to Sicily. Perhaps because registration was not available under the U.S.-French convention, the New York office sent the letter by Prussian closed mail, even though the prepayment was less than the 47¢ rate to Sicily that was then listed for that service.<sup>9</sup> Another possibility is that the New York clerk mistakenly accepted the postage for the 42¢ rate to Sardinia.

The red crayon “19” in the center is a credit to Prussia for 2¢ Belgian transit, 5¢ German internal and 12¢ foreign fees. The letter may have been carried by the Cunard *Cuba*, which sailed from New York on February 6, 1867 and arrived in Queenstown February 15. The Prussian exchange office struck **AACHEN 17 2 FRANCO** and **Recomandirt** both in blue boxes, confirming Prussian closed mail transit.

The magenta “f 5½” at lower left indicates a 5½ sgr credit beyond the GAPU, which is the equivalent of the 12¢ foreign portion of the 19¢ credit. However, it is more than the f 3¾ sgr credit generally seen on non-registered Prussian closed mail letters to Italy with a 19¢ U.S. credit to Prussia.<sup>10</sup> Camerer and Conzelmann believe the 5½ sgr credit included an additional 1¾ sgr for Italian registration. They had not expected Prussia (and Bremen on Figures 8 and 9 below) to credit Switzerland with an additional registration fee for a U.S. letter in transit through Germany to Italy. But the Weiterfranco credit from Prussia on the four registered letters known so far (all shown here) do not lead to any other conclusion. Article 84 of the 1864 Swiss postal regulations required this credit on letters to Italy *via* Germany, but not on letters *from* Germany. Since this extra registration fee was not included in the original U.S. credit to Bremen or Prussia, it was probably balanced in the three-month settlements with the U.S. Post Office. Thus, the 5½ sgr credit is the sum of 2 sgr per zoll loth Swiss transit, 1¾ sgr per 10 grams Italian postage, and 1¾ sgr Italian registration fee. The red “18” at the left is a credit to Switzerland of the kreuzer equivalent of 5½ sgr. The “9/1” at upper left indicates a single-rate letter weighing 9 grams.



**Figure 7. Registered to Italy: cover posted in the mid-1860s from New York to Naples, with 40¢ overpaying the 28¢ Prussian closed mail rate. A 5¢ registration fee was pre-paid in cash. Credit to Prussia of 19¢; 5½ sgr (or 18 kreuzer) credited to Switzerland for 2 sgr Swiss transit, 1¾ sgr Italian postage and 1¾ sgr Italian registration fee. The red “10/1” at upper left indicates 10 grams weight and a single rate.**

A cover from New York to Naples is shown in Figure 7. The Prussian closed mail rate to Naples was listed as 28¢.<sup>11</sup> However, this cover was franked with 40¢ in postage, paid by 30¢ and 10¢ 1861 stamps tied by square grid cancels. I don’t have an image of the back of the cover and the front shows no year date. It must have been October 1865, 1866 or 1867, when the boxed **AACHEN 1 11 FRANCO** with **Recomandirt.** were struck in blue. New York applied the red double-circle **NEW-YORK REGISTERED OCT 20** and the manuscript origin number 2431. The red crayon “19” at center is a 19¢ credit to Prussia for 2¢ Belgian transit, 5¢ German internal and 12¢ foreign fees beyond the GAPU. The U.S. 5¢ registration fee was paid in cash or was included in the 40¢ prepayment. The blue f 5½ in the lower left indicates the 5½ sgr equivalent of the 12¢ foreign fees. This was the sum of 2 sgr Swiss transit, 1¾ sgr Italian postage, and 1¾ sgr Italian registration fee. The red crayon “18” above the Recomandirt handstamp is the kreuzer equivalent of the 5½ sgr foreign fees. The red “10/1” in the upper left indicates a weight of 10 grams and that the letter was to be treated as a single rate.

The Robert A. Siegel sale of the first part of Raymond Vogel’s collection contained the registered letter shown in Figure 8, from New Orleans (January 6, 1867) to Palermo, from the same correspondence as the cover in Figure 6.<sup>12</sup> The 10¢ and 12¢ 1861 stamps are canceled by an octagonal New Orleans datestamp. The stamps paid the 22¢ rate to Sicily by Bremen or Hamburg mail that was listed for January 1867.<sup>13</sup> The 5¢ registration fee was paid in cash. The faint red crayon “20” at center is the U.S. credit to Bremen (6¢ sea, 1¢ Bremen, 5¢ GAPU, and 10¢ foreign fees beyond the GAPU). Since the U.S. retained 3¢ for its domestic postage, the 20¢ credit is 1¢ more than the 19¢ credit that would have been consistent with the 22¢ rate. Perhaps the New York clerk mistakenly thought the letter was to Sardinia for which the Bremen-Hamburg rate was 23¢, so the credit would have been 20¢. There are four registration numbers on the cover. The auction catalog states there are a



Figure 8. New Orleans, January 6, 1867 to Palermo, Sicily. The stamps paid the 22¢ Bremen convention rate to Sicily. Registration fee of 5¢ paid in cash. The 20¢ credit to Bremen may be an error, since it was consistent with 23¢ rate to Sardinia. The purple RECOMMANDIRT was struck in Bremen. The “6/1” at upper left indicates 6 grams weight and single rate letter; “7¼” is the sum of 2 sgr GAPU rate, 2 sgr Swiss transit, and 3¼ sgr Italian transit and Italian registration fee. The blue “wf 3¼” is the Italian portion expressed in sgr, equated to 12 kreuzer, but corrected to 10 kreuzer.

“plethora of backstamps incl. Bremen, Florence, receiving and four others.”

The purple boxed **RECOMMANDIRT.** was struck in Bremen to indicate the letter was registered. The “6/1” written in red crayon at the upper left indicates 6 grams and a single rate. The brownish red “7¼” in the lower left is the sum of 2 sgr per loth GAPU rate, 2 sgr per loth Swiss transit, and 3¼ sgr per 10 grams Italian transit and Italian registration fee. Evidently, Bremen used a slightly lower conversion of the Italian fees to sgr than Prussia (3¼ instead of 3½). The “wf 3¼” written immediately to the right in blue is the Italian portion in sgr. It was equated to 12 kreuzer, which was written to the right in red. It is not clear why this value was subsequently revised to 10 kreuzer.

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Figure 9. New Orleans April 25, 1867 to Palermo, Sicily, with rimless New York registry postmark and manuscript “472.” The pair of 30¢ 1861 stamps overpaid the 48¢ double Bremen-convention rate to Sicily; New York 42¢ credit to Bremen. The “16/2” indicates 16 grams weight and a double rate letter; “14½” is twice the sum of the 2 sgr GAPU rate, 2 sgr Swiss transit and 3¼ sgr Italian transit and Italian registration fee. Red “10½” sums the 4 sgr double Swiss transit and 6½ sgr double Italian transit and Italian registration fees; 10½ sgr equated to 36 kreuzer credit to Switzerland.

Figure 9 shows a double rate cover from New Orleans to Palermo, from a different correspondence, that was sent under the U.S.-Bremen convention. The single Bremen convention rate to Sicily was 24¢, 48¢ for a double rate.<sup>14</sup> So the letter was overpaid by the two 30¢ 1861 stamps, which were canceled by the black octagonal **NEW ORLEANS LA. APR 25 1867**. This prepayment may have been intended to include the 5¢ registration fee, which was ordinarily paid in cash. Although New Orleans did not apply its registration handstamp, it wrote a registration number (“472”) at the top. In the center, the faint red pencil credit of 42¢ to Bremen is consistent with double the 24¢ rate: twice the 6¢ sea, 1¢ Bremen, 5¢ GAPU, and 9¢ foreign fees beyond the GAPU. The rimless **NEW-YORK REGISTERED MAY 2 1867** dates the departure. This cover was carried by the North German Lloyd *Bremen*, which arrived in Bremerhaven May 16, the date shown by a blue Bremen backstamp.

The “16/2” written in black below the stamps indicates the weight was 16 grams and that this was a double rate letter. The brownish red “14½” is double the “7¼” on the prior cover and thus twice the sum of the 2 sgr per loth GAPU rate, 2 sgr per loth Swiss transit, and 3¼ sgr per 10 grams Italian transit and Italian registration fee. The red “10½” is the sum of the 4 sgr double Swiss transit, and 6½ sgr double Italian transit and Italian registration fee. This 10½ sgr credit was equated to 36 kreuzer, which is written in blue ink and then repeated in red manuscript as a credit to Switzerland.

In 1869 the registration to Italy was 8¢ payable in stamps. On the cover from New York to Naples in Figure 10, posted August 21, 1869, this 8¢ fee was paid by 2¢ and 6¢ 1869 stamps and the international postage was paid by a 15¢ 1869 stamp. A similar cover, same franking and same correspondence but posted August 3, 1869, was sold in a Christies sale in December, 1993. A 15¢ closed mail rate via England is listed in the table of rates in *U.S. Mails & Post Office Assistant*.<sup>15</sup> This is the rate under Article IV of the 1867 U.S.-Italy Postal Convention.<sup>16</sup> The Figure 10 cover bears a red rimless **NEW-YORK REGIS-**



Figure 10. New York August 21, 1869: 2¢, 6¢ and 15¢ 1869 stamps on a cover to Naples. The stamps paid the 8¢ registration fee and 15¢ closed mail postage under the U.S.-Italian convention. Illustration from Siegel Auction Galleries sale 895, lot 212 (2005).

**TERED AUG 21** with number “7323” at upper left. It crossed the Atlantic on the Inman Line steamer *City of Boston*, which departed New York August 21 and arrived at Queenstown on September 2.

Figure 11 is a perplexing cover from Hackensack, New Jersey, to Amsterdam, Holland. The originating postmark is **HACKENSACK N.J. NOV 1** with “Registered No 11” in manuscript at top. The cover bears 30¢ and 1¢ 1861 stamps both tied by the red **NEW-**



Figure 11. Registered to Holland: Hackensack, New Jersey, November 1, 1867 to Amsterdam, 1¢ and 30¢ 1861 stamps overpaying the 18¢ Hamburg convention rate and 5¢ registration. Marked “Registered No. 11” in Hackensack and “4485.” The red rimless **NEW-YORK REGISTERED NOV 2 1867** ties both stamps.

**YORK REGISTERED NOV 2 1867.** The rate by British mail was 27¢ plus 20¢ registration, so there is not enough postage for this route. The rate by the Hamburg convention was 18¢ plus 5¢ registration, so the 31¢ in stamps overpaid that postage by 8¢. New York marked a transit number “4485” in lower right corner. The red pencil “15” credit was applied at New York and establishes the use as a single rate to Hamburg. This represented 6¢ sea, 1¢ Hamburg, 5¢ GAPU and 3¢ transit charges beyond the GAPU. The registration fee was retained by the country of origin, in this case the United States.

This cover was carried by the HAPAG *Allemannia*, which sailed from New York November 2 and arrived at Hamburg November 16. The red straight-line **Chargé** is a Hamburg marking and a blue **HAMBURG ST. P. 16 11 67** is struck on the reverse. The crayon “1½” sgr is Hamburg’s credit to Holland. The other number may be the Dutch registration number when it was received at Amsterdam the following day (per a red backstamp).

The only registered cover to Belgium from this era is shown as Figure 7-175 in Richard Winter’s book (Volume 2).<sup>17</sup> This is an 1867 cover to New Orleans. Because that cover went through Great Britain, it includes a half registration fee credit to the U.S. (as discussed in *Chronicle* 262) of 4¢ plus 42¢ postage.

A registered cover posted January 4, 1870 and sent to Odense, Denmark, is shown in Figure 12. The cover bears an irregular block of seven of the 3¢ 1869 stamp canceled with black grids and **CHICAGO ILL REGISTERED JAN 4 (R-CHI-3B)**. The North German Union prepaid direct rate of 13¢ plus the 8¢ registration fee adds up to the 21¢ prepayment. There are red **HAMBURG 23 1 70 FRANCO** and **Recomandirt** boxed markings and a black **FRANCO** straightline. The letter likely was carried by the HAPAG *Silesia*, which sailed from New York January 11 and, based on the Hamburg marking, arrived in Hamburg January 22 or 23. Another registered cover to Denmark from December 1869, not shown here, bears the same 21¢ in postage, but paid by 15¢ and 6¢ 1869 stamps.

**Figure 12. Irregular block of seven 3¢ 1869 stamps (21¢) paying the 13¢ direct rate and 8¢ registration fee (required to be paid in stamps) on January 4, 1870 cover from Chicago to Denmark. Handstamps are a CHICAGO ILL REGISTERED JAN 4, a red HAMBURG 23 1 70 FRANCO and a red boxed “Recomandirt.”**



The United States did not have an agreement with France about handling registered letters. One of the points of disagreement was that France wished to have indemnity for registered mail and the United States did not. However, in the early 1870s one could register a letter to England, and England had a registration agreement with France. But the 1866 registered cover in Figure 13 precedes such usage by years—and it certainly went directly to France. The 5¢, 10¢ and 30¢ 1861 stamps pay a triple 15¢ French treaty rate and no payment for registration, even though the cover is postmarked **NEWPORT R.I. NOV 6** in black and the stamps struck with an unusual Prussian-blue straightline **REGISTERED** handstamp (R-NT-2). There is also a **BOSTON BR. PKT. 7 NOV PAID** and red crayon fraction 36/3 indicate a triple rate and a 36¢ credit to France (three times the sum of 6¢ sea, 2¢ British transit, and 4¢ French internal postage). This cover crossed the Atlantic on the



Figure 13. Apparently registered to France: Newport, Rhode Island, November 6, 1866, cover franked with 5¢, 10¢ and 30¢ 1861 stamps paying 45¢ triple treaty rate to Paris. Even though registration was not available under the French convention, Newport’s Prussian-blue REGISTERED was struck on the stamps to indicate a valuable letter. “36/3” is credit to France for a triple rate (three times sum of 6¢ sea, 2¢ British transit, and 4¢ French internal). A loose 3¢ stamp is inset at the lower left showing a portion of the same “REGISTERED” postmark.

# QUALITY STAMPS AND COVERS FOR THE DISCRIMINATING COLLECTOR

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Cunard *China*, which departed Boston November 7 and arrived at Queenstown November 16. The **ÉT. UNIS 3 SERV. BR. CALAIS 3 18 NOV 66** and **P.D.** markings were struck in Paris. I discussed this cover in my book and opined that it was a genuine use but was not a registered cover and not sent registered abroad.<sup>18</sup> Inset on the Figure 13 illustration is an off-cover 3¢ 1861 stamp that shows the same registered handstamp. This would seem to confirm that on domestic covers Newport also struck this marking directly on the stamps. On the Figure 13 cover, the Newport postmaster may have applied this handstamp to indicate that the letter had value and should be handled with care.

We close this discussion with a registered use just prior to the commencement of the



**Figure 14.** This cover from an unknown New York state town to Buchholterberg, Switzerland, bears two 6¢ and a 2¢ Bank Note stamps, underpaying the 8¢ Swiss closed mail rate and 8¢ registration (pencil “Reg No 9”). The red “2” and the crossed-out “Germani” may indicate 2¢ prepayment in cash. The **NEW YORK REGISTERED JAN 14 (1875)** circular datestamp is the last registry postmark used at that city before U.P.U. rates. The blue “9783” registration number was handstamped at New York.

Universal Postal Union. The cover in Figure 14 originated from a New York town whose postmark is not struck clearly enough to identify it. Addressed to Buchholterberg, Canton Berne, Switzerland, the cover bears two 6¢ Bank Note stamps and a single 2¢, a prepayment of 14¢. The registration fee to Switzerland was 8¢ in the first half of 1875 and the Swiss closed mail rate by Bremen or Hamburg was also 8¢. The 14¢ prepayment was sufficient for the 6¢ direct rate via Hamburg or Bremen to Germany but insufficient for the 8¢ rate to Switzerland. The sender may have paid the additional 2¢ in cash: the word “Germani” at the bottom is crossed out and the numeral “2” is written above it in the same red crayon. The single-circle **NEW YORK REGISTERED JAN 14 (1875)** marking on this cover is the last type of New York registered postmark before the accounting simplifications of the U.P.U. era. This cover likely was carried by the HAPAG *Suevia*, which departed New York January 14 and probably arrived in Hamburg January 27 or 28.

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David Handelman, Julian Jones, Michael Laurence, Sergio Sismundo, Antonio Torres and Richard Winter.

### Endnotes

1. *United States Mail and Post Office Assistant* reprint (Chicago: Collector's Club of Chicago, 1975), Vol. 2, pg. 350.
2. *Ibid.*, pg. 351.
3. Richard F. Winter, "United States–Sweden Letter Mail Prior to the Bilateral Postal Convention of 1873," *Chronicle* 190 (May 2001), pg. 122.
4. All R-xx-xx series numbers refer to entries in the catalog section of James Milgram, *United States Registered Mail 1845-1870*, pp. 89-175, or new listings for that section.
5. 16 U.S. Statutes at Large, pp. 1009-10 (Article V).
6. 16 U.S. Statutes at Large, pg. 1031 (Article V).
7. F.X. Andres and Hans Emmenegger, *Großes Handbuch der Abstemplungen auf Schweizer Marken, 1843-1907*, eight volumes (St. Gallen, [Switzerland]: Verband Schweizerischer Philatelisten-Vereine, mit Unterstützung des Fonds zur Forderung der Philatelie, 1969, 1973), Vol 1, Group 19/B, marking No. 702.
8. 16 U.S. Statutes at Large, pp. 955 (Article I) and 976 (Article I).
9. *United States Mail and Post Office Assistant*, *op. cit.*, pg. 304.
10. See, for example, Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries Sale 995, lot 2208 (Oct. 19, 2010), and Charles J. Starnes, *United States Letter Rates to Foreign Destinations 1847 to GPU-UPU*, Revised Edition (Louisville, Kentucky: Leonard H. Hartmann, 1989), top cover opposite pg. 26.
11. *United States Mail and Post Office Assistant*, *op. cit.*, pg. 304.
12. Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries Sale 995, lot 2209 (Oct. 19, 2010).
13. *United States Mail and Post Office Assistant*, *op. cit.*, pg. 304.
14. *Ibid.*, pg. 316.
15. *United States Mail and Post Office Assistant*, *op. cit.*, pg. 428.
16. 15 U.S. Statutes at Large, pg. 1031.
17. Richard F. Winter, *Understanding Transatlantic Mail, Volume 2* (Bellefonte, Pennsylvania: American Philatelic Society, 2009), pg. 629.
18. Milgram, *op. cit.*, pg. 87 (Figure 119). ■

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**THE COVER CORNER**  
JERRY PALAZOLO, EDITOR

### EXPLANATIONS OF PROBLEM COVER IN CHRONICLE 266

Our problem cover from *Chronicle* 266, shown in Figure 1 (next page), was submitted by John Bowman. It is a folded letter from New York City to Newport, Rhode Island dated September 10, 1848. The circular "New York 5cts" integral-rate postmark is dated the following day. There are two additional postal markings in red (though not necessarily the same shade of red ink found in the CDS) on the front. One is "SEP" and the other is "2". In addition, a manuscript notation at the lower left of the address panel, apparently in the same handwriting as the sender, reads: "The postmaster will please deliver this soon as possible." The questions were several: What is the significance of the "2" and the "SEP" markings and where were they applied? Is the sender's admonition in the lower left relevant?

We received several different proposed explanations for this cover.

Route Agent John Young speculated that the markings indicate that a carrier was used in response to the apparent urgency of the letter. His reasoning is as follows:



Figure 1. Our problem cover from last issue was datelined New York, September 10, 1848 and addressed to Newport, Rhode Island. The address panel is postmarked “NEW YORK 11 SEP 5cts” in red. There are two other red markings “SEP” and “2,” possibly not the same shade of red. At lower left is a manuscript notation: “The postmaster will please deliver this soon as possible.”

Concerning the handwritten inscription in the lower left corner, I think it explains the hand-stamped “2” under the CDS, so it is indeed relevant...When this letter arrived in Newport it would normally have been held at the post office until called for, except for the request to expedite delivery made by the sender. The Newport postmaster noting the written request may have taken steps to have the letter delivered to the addressee. The Congressional Act of July 2, 1836 provided for compensation to be paid for the services of postal carriers in an amount not to exceed 2¢ per letter. So, the receiving postmaster may have applied the handstamped “2” and given the letter to a private carrier for delivery. Since the letter was not prepaid the carrier would have had to collect seven cents from the recipient: five cents letter postage plus the two cents carrier fee.

While Young’s explanation certainly seems logical, Route Agent Bernard Biales offered a completely different analysis. According to Biales this is an example of an unclaimed advertised letter. The “SEP” indicates the month the letter was listed along with other unclaimed letters in an advertisement in a local newspaper. The “2” represents the amount charged to the recipient to offset the cost of advertising (in addition to the 5¢ postage). The absence of a specific “advertised” marking is not unusual, says Biales.

A search of local journals would validate this scenario. But unfortunately, the only Newport newspaper found online for the year 1848 does not publish lists of unclaimed letters. Biales asserts that the sender’s notation at the lower left indicating a sense of urgency is pretty much irrelevant. The postmaster at Newport might have been motivated to pass along word of the potential urgency through a mutual acquaintance of the addressee. Beyond that, however, the sender’s notation was unlikely to merit the engagement of the services of a messenger.

Fellow *Chronicle* section editor Jim Milgram concurs with this interpretation. He says that postmasters were required to advertise letters that were not picked up by the addressees. They were to run these advertisements in a newspaper at or near the location of the post office for three consecutive weeks. The rate for advertising unclaimed letters from 1845 to 1851 was 2¢. He points out that his survey of advertising postmarks on stampless covers in *Chronicle* 228 (November 2010) lists only one “ADVERTISED” marking from Rhode Island and that was at Providence, so this cover might be an example from Newport without the use of an “ADVERTISED” marking.

According to Milgram the presence of the “SEP” reinforces this interpretation. There are a number of similar examples from other towns with and without “ADVERTISED” markings which also used date stamps separately applied. If this letter was eventually claimed, the addressee would have been charged a 2¢ advertising fee plus the original collect domestic postage rate of 5¢. If readers know of other examples of similar markings on covers from this period addressed to Newport, we might be able to shed additional light on this mystery.

## PROBLEM COVER FOR THIS ISSUE

The problem cover for this issue, shown in Figure 2, is an interesting Civil War era relic that turned up at the Garfield-Perry show earlier this year. The Star Die envelope is clearly dated on the front: "CAIRO, Ill MAR 2 1862." However, the reverse (shown in part as Figure 3) bears several strikes of the same circular datestamp, but dated "FEB 24 1862."

In addition there are several pencil notations on the front: "Corinth Feb 62" is seen at the top center, and "Rec'd March 5th" at the bottom center.



Figure 2. 3¢ Star Die envelope with additional 3¢ pink stamp each clearly tied by a circular datestamp reading "CAIRO, Ill MAR 2 1862." Pencil notations (which may or may not be contemporary) include "Corinth Feb 62" at top center and "Rec'd March 5th 62" at bottom center. The envelope is addressed to Springfield, Illinois.



Figure 3. Portion of the reverse of the Figure 2 cover, showing three strikes of the same Cairo circular datestamp, but dated a week earlier: "FEB 24 1862."

The questions are: What is the purpose of the 3¢ postage stamp affixed in addition the 3¢ Star Die? Why are the dates of the Cairo cancels different on the front and the back? What is the significance of the pencil notations on the front? Hint: this puzzle transcends Civil War postal history. Knowledge of Civil War military history is helpful, and for a full explanation, essential. ■

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December 2020

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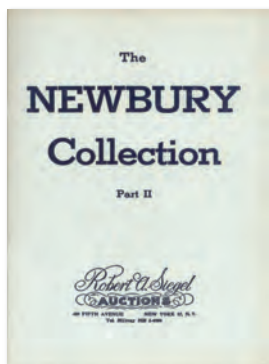
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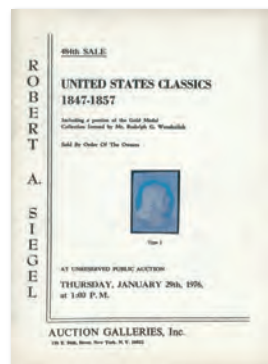
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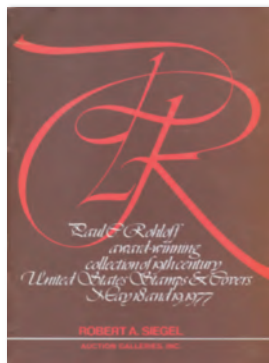
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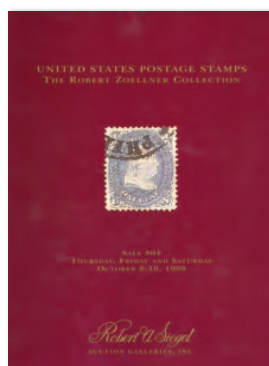
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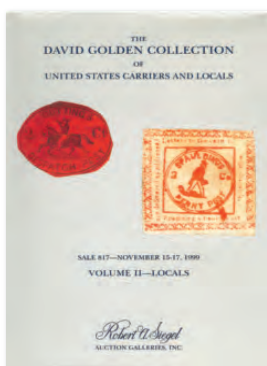
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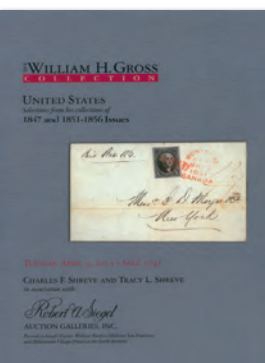
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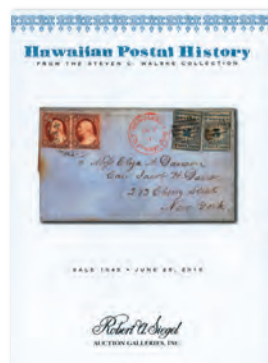
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