

# The Chronicle

of the U.S. Classic Postal Issues



Orange-brown 3¢ 1851 stamp and a “Penny Post Paid” Boston carrier stamp, along with a clear, crisp strike of the small Boston PAID marking. From our 1851 section this issue, where Mark Schwartz provides a survey article on Boston PAID markings, large and small, as found on covers bearing imperforate United States stamps.



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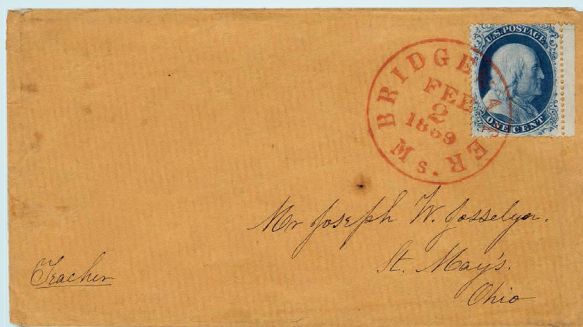


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# The Chronicle

## of the U.S. Classic Postal Issues

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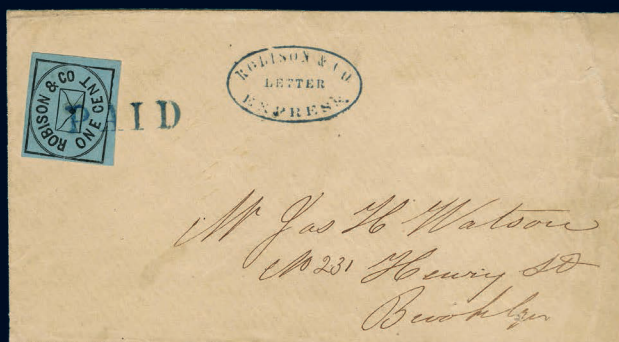


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## CONTENTS

|                                                                                |     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| THE EDITOR’S PAGE                                                              |     |
| In This Issue                                                                  |     |
| <i>by Michael Laurence</i> .....                                               | 218 |
| THE PRE-STAMP AND STAMPLESS PERIOD                                             |     |
| “Misdirected” Postmarks                                                        |     |
| <i>by James W. Milgram, M.D.</i> .....                                         | 221 |
| Held for Postage                                                               |     |
| <i>by James W. Milgram, M.D.</i> .....                                         | 224 |
| THE 1851 PERIOD                                                                |     |
| Early Use of the Boston “PAID in grid” Cancels                                 |     |
| <i>by Mark Schwartz</i> .....                                                  | 230 |
| THE 1861 PERIOD                                                                |     |
| Printed Corner Advertising on Civil War Patriotic Covers                       |     |
| <i>by James W. Milgram, M.D.</i> .....                                         | 253 |
| SPECIAL FEATURE                                                                |     |
| Tales of the Civil War Blockade: The Leaky <i>Will O’ the Wisp</i>             |     |
| <i>by Steven Walske</i> .....                                                  | 264 |
| THE 1869 PERIOD                                                                |     |
| U.S. Mail to British Honduras: 1868-1872                                       |     |
| <i>by Stephen Rose</i> .....                                                   | 272 |
| THE 1890s                                                                      |     |
| The U.S. Orange Special Delivery Stamp of 1893: Uses Abroad                    |     |
| <i>by Stephen Rose</i> .....                                                   | 281 |
| 1893 U.S.-German Sea Post Office: Follow-up                                    |     |
| <i>by Ken Lawrence</i> .....                                                   | 285 |
| THE FOREIGN MAILS                                                              |     |
| Handstamped Vessel-Named Markings on Transatlantic Stampless Covers: 1784-1865 |     |
| <i>by James W. Milgram, M.D.</i> .....                                         | 289 |
| ADVERTISER INDEX .....                                                         |     |
| 307                                                                            |     |
| IN REVIEW                                                                      |     |
| Cameron Blevins’ <i>Paper Trails</i>                                           |     |
| <i>reviewed by Diane DeBlois and Robert Dalton Harris</i> .....                | 308 |
| THE COVER CORNER .....                                                         |     |
| 310                                                                            |     |



## THE EDITOR'S PAGE

MICHAEL LAURENCE

### IN THIS ISSUE

Use of the 1869 stamps in foreign mail service has been thoroughly but far from fully explored. I did a lot of the work myself, in my book on 10¢ 1869 covers, published more than 10 years ago by the Collectors Club of Chicago. One area I overlooked entirely (no covers then being known) was correspondence between New Orleans and Belize under terms of the U.S.-British Honduras postal treaty of 1869. The appearance of two cover fronts at a recent Siegel auction prompted specialist collector Stephen Rose to go digging in this area, and the results of his extensive research are presented in “U.S. Mail to British Honduras: 1868-72” in our 1869 section (page 272). In addition to exploring the background of this short-lived and little-used mail route, Rose dissects the three 1869 covers so far recorded to British Honduras. All are defective in one way or another, and only one of them actually depicts treaty service. From archival sources in New Orleans and elsewhere, Rose presents a first attempt at compiling sailing data for this service. Covers probably exist with Bank Note stamps and he would like to see them.

The prolific James W. Milgram continues to create articles on a wide range of subjects. In our Stampless section (page 221) Milgram provides two short articles on aspects of domestic mail that for various reasons wasn't handled normally. “‘Misdirected’ Postmarks” discusses markings, currently recorded only from New York City and Hartford, applied to letters that were misaddressed. “Held for Postage” discusses (and well illustrates) the complexities of handling unfranked letters in the months after prepayment by stamps was first made mandatory.

In a major article in our Foreign Mails section, Milgram launches a sweeping reprise of handstamped vessel-named markings on stampless transatlantic covers. These are private name-of-boat markings, applied to mail mostly for advertising or publicity purposes. Some of them date back to the years immediately following the American Revolution. The author's objective is to provide a photographic documentation of all known markings. Because of its length, this article will appear in two parts. The first installment begins on page 289; the conclusion is scheduled for publication in November.

In our 1861 section this issue, page 253, Milgram discusses printed advertising that appears on Civil War patriotic covers. Ads for many businesses and institutions have been recorded on more than 135 federal patriotic envelope designs. Milgram explores different advertising categories and presents some fascinating covers.

In another aspect of Civil War postal history, Steven Walske continues his documentation of Civil War blockade runners—the Confederate ships that penetrated the Union blockade, their sailing data, and exemplary covers they carried. The current installment, a Special Feature on page 264, discusses the speedy side-wheeler *Will o' the Wisp*. Expressly built for blockade running, she was leaky and in frequent need of repair—yet she managed to successfully penetrate the Union blockade 16 times.

In our 1851 section, page 230, Mark Schwartz resumes his series of articles on aspects of Boston postal history, here discussing uses of the well-known Boston “PAID in grid” postmark. This marking occurs in two sizes and two colors. Schwartz' discussion, limited to covers bearing imperforate stamps, thoroughly examines a wide range of combinations and uses.

*(IN THIS ISSUE concluded on page 307)*

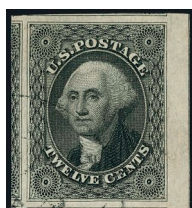
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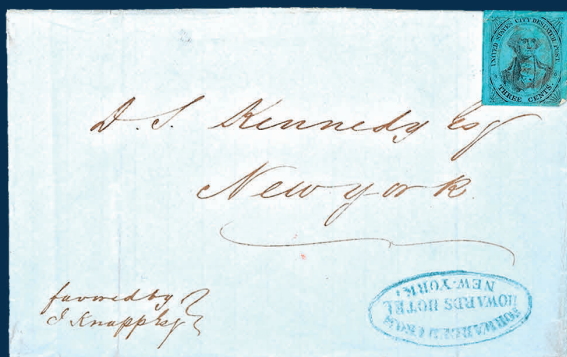
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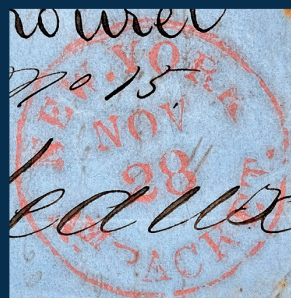
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## PRESTAMP & STAMPLESS PERIOD

JAMES W. MILGRAM, EDITOR

### “MISDIRECTED” POSTMARKS

JAMES W. MILGRAM, M.D.

#### Introduction

Back in *Chronicle* 225 I described the postmarks reading FORWARDED and MISSENT. The FORWARDED marking was most commonly used when the addressee had left information at his local post office to route his mail to a different address. Manuscript versions exist as early as the eighteenth century. There was a postal charge to forward the letter to the new address.

But sometimes employees of the Post Office Department made a mistake and routed a letter to a wrong address. In that instance the letter would be marked MISSENT and forwarded to the correct address with no additional charge. Certain post offices employed a combined handstamp (or used manuscript markings) reading MISSENT AND FORWARDED, but these markings are the same as MISSENT markings, because any missent letter was to be forwarded to the correct address without additional charge.

In addition, there is a third marking that falls into this same broad category, but needs to be distinguished from the others. I refer to the marking that reads MISDIRECTED. As of this date, I record only two offices, New York and Hartford, using such a marking. Surprisingly, the usages extend over a long period of time, more than 10 years.

#### Covers

Figure 1 shows the earliest example I have seen. This marking is struck on an 1851 stampless cover from Albany, New York, addressed to “25 Fulton St., New York.” The handstamped red “5,” applied at Albany, represents the postage due (under the 1845 rating)



Figure 1. “MISDIRECTED” applied in 1851 on a cover addressed to New York but intended for Brooklyn. Readdressed and charged an additional 5¢ forwarding postage.



on a letter sent under 300 miles. New York has its Fulton Street, but so too does Brooklyn, which was then a separate city across the East River from Manhattan. Using blue ink, a New York postal clerk crossed out the “New York,” added “Brooklyn” and assessed another 5¢ postage, extending the total to 10¢ due. Note also the pencil notation “Brooklyn,” in different handwriting, at upper left. The cover received two auxiliary markings “MISDIRECTED” and “FORWARDED.” Because of the improper address, this was considered a forwarded letter and was thus charged additional postage.

### MISDIRECTED from Hartford

The second MISDIRECTED is struck in black at left on the cover in Figure 2. Franked with a 3¢ 1851 stamp tied by a large Boston PAID, this cover bears a red “BOSTON 30 JUL 3 cts” integral rate circular datestamp. A year date is not evident. The cover was



**Figure 2. Black “MISDIRECTED” applied at Hartford, Connecticut, on a 3¢ 1851 cover from Boston, year date not certain. At Hartford the cover was marked “FORWARDED” and “MISDIRECTED” with manuscript new address “Chester, Con.” The black “HARTFORD CT AUG 11 5 cts” is an integral postmark indicating 5¢ was due.**

addressed to Hartford, Connecticut. Evidently the postmaster there knew that addressee Sillman resided in nearby Chester, and so forwarded the cover with the straightline “FORWARDED” marking. But he also applied the black straightline “MISDIRECTED.” The postmark “HARTFORD CT AUG 11 5 cts” in black indicated that 5¢ was due from the addressee, an additional unpaid rate representing the forwarding charge.

Figure 3 shows a third cover, a 3¢ Nesbitt envelope with “ROCHESTER, N.Y. SEP 21 1858” postmark. At New York the address was altered to Brattleboro, Vt.” with the addition of “MISDIRECTED” and “NEW-YORK SEP 23” postmarks. A manuscript “3” indicates the due charge of 3¢. In my opinion, the black “MISDIRECTED” on this cover was struck by the same device that created the red MISDIRECTED marking on the cover Figure 1.

### Used in the 1860s

Figure 4 shows an example of New York’s “MISDIRECTED” handstamp struck in the 1860s, more than a decade after the use presented in Figure 1. Franked with a 3¢ 1861



Figure 3. “ROCHESTER N.Y. SEP 21 1858” on 3¢ Nesbitt envelope addressed to New York City. New York applied its “MISDIRECTED” postmark and readdressed the cover to Brattleboro, Vermont with a manuscript 3¢ due charge.

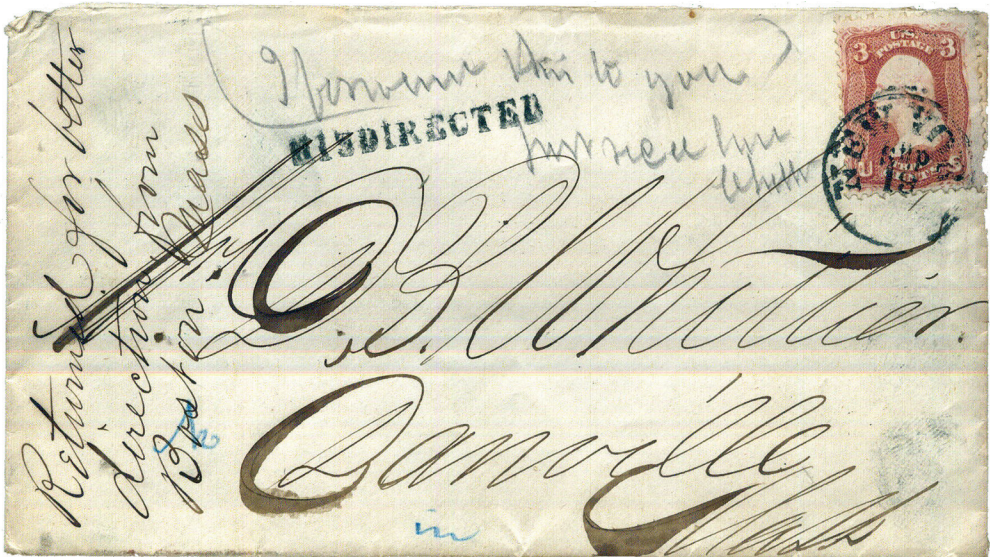


Figure 4. New York’s “MISDIRECTED” handstamp on a 3¢ 1861 cover, postmarked “NEW YORK SEP 19” and addressed to “Danville, Mass.,” a non-existent town. The problem was detected at Boston. The envelope was endorsed (at left) “Returned for better direction from Boston Mass” and sent back to New York. There it was back-stamped “NEW-YORK CITY OCT 8” and marked “MISDIRECTED.” The pencil notations on the cover are extraneous and not related to the postal usage.

stamp, the Figure 4 cover was postmarked “NEW YORK SEP 18” and sent on to Boston for distribution. But Boston encountered a problem: The cover is addressed to “Danville, Mass.” and there was no Danville in Massachusetts. The envelope was slit open at top, presumably to detect the sender’s address. Then it was returned to New York in a differ-



ent envelope. At some point it was inscribed “Returned for better direction from Boston, Mass.” After returning to New York, it was backstamped “NEW YORK CITY OCT 8” and marked “MISDIRECTED.” From New York it was presumably returned to its sender for remailing. Per the 1870 *Post Office Directory*, there were Danvilles in 19 different states, but not in Massachusetts or New York.

I would be interested in seeing additional examples of MISDIRECTED handstamps, especially from cities other than New York and Hartford. ■

## **HELD FOR POSTAGE**

**JAMES W. MILGRAM, M.D.**

### **Introduction**

After postage stamps became available it was the aim of the Post Office Department that prepayment of postage by stamps would become the default method for mailing letters. Before stamps, a person had to go to the post office and stand in line to prepay postage. For this and other reasons, most letters were sent unpaid. Stamps allowed prepayment in advance, and on the other end of the transaction eliminated the necessity of collecting postage from the recipient.

The Act of March 3, 1851 took a large step in this direction. It established a rate of 3¢ for prepaid letters; 5¢ was charged on letters that were sent due. The next step was the Act of March 3, 1855, requiring prepayment on all letters (effective April 1, 1855). While it was still possible to prepay the postage by going to the post office and paying cash there, most people began using stamps, so that a letter could be dropped into some type of box for mailing, thus avoiding the trip to the post office. (This act also required prepayment of U.S. postage even if the letter was carried outside the mails by an express company, steamboat or local carrier between cities.) The Act of March 3, 1855 generated the handstamps “HELD FOR POSTAGE” and similar manuscript notations from different cities. The items in Figures 1-3 well show this usage at New York City.

### **Covers**

Figure 1 shows an envelope addressed to Meriden, Connecticut and marked “Held For Postage” with a black straightline handstamp. The cover is franked with an imperforate 3¢ 1851 stamp, well tied by a New York DEC 30 circular datestamp. Inset is another handstamp struck on the reverse of the envelope: “NEW-YORK DEC 27.” The observant reader might note that the 1851 stamp covers part of the “Held For Postage” straightline.

Figure 2 shows an envelope marked “POST OFFICE BUSINESS FREE” and “NEW-YORK [DEC] 27” sent to the addressee of the unpaid letter, Mr. H.O. Andrews of Meriden. The enclosure, a preprinted form which very fortunately has survived, is shown in Figure 3.

The letter is datelined December 27, 1856 at New York Post Office (date of the backstamp on the Figure 1 cover) and sent by New York postmaster Isaac V. Fowler. Addressed to Mr. Andrews, the text reads: “A Letter bearing your address is detained in this Office for non-payment of postage. By sending to me immediately on receipt of this 1 Three cent Stamp and PRE-PAYING your note of reply, the Letter will be duly forwarded according to its direction.”

Returning to Figure 1, the full story of this cover becomes clear. The cover entered the mails unstamped at New York. The New York post office backstamped the cover, marked it “HELD FOR POSTAGE,” filed it appropriately and sent the Figure 2 form letter in the Figure 3 envelope to Andrews in Meriden. Andrews promptly responded with the requested 3¢ stamp, which was affixed to the cover, partly covering the last letters in “POSTAGE.” The



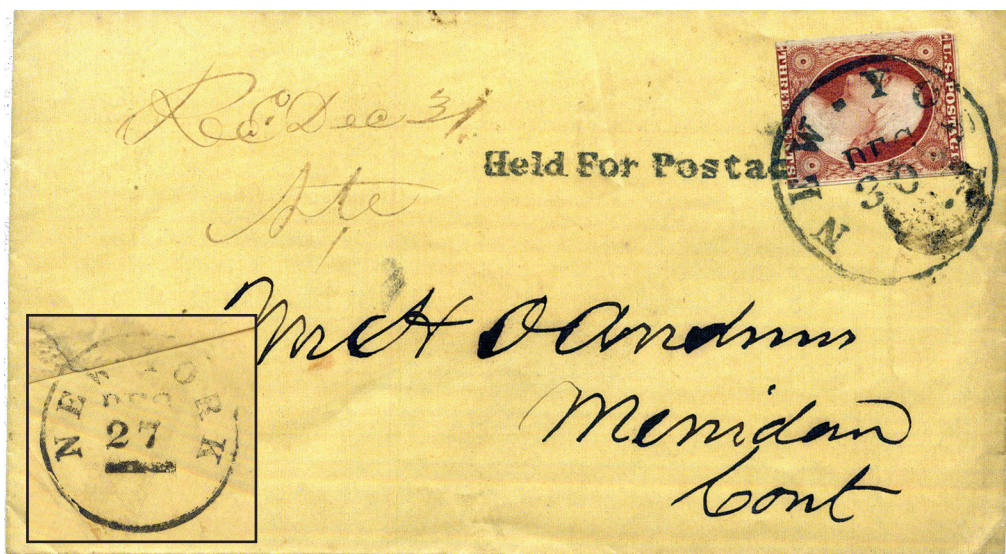


Figure 1. Cover addressed to Meriden, Connecticut, bearing New York's "Held For Postage" straightline, partly covered by a 3¢ 1851 stamp tied by a "NEW-YORK DEC 30" circular datestamp. The inset shows the only postmark on the reverse.

Figure 2. "POST OFFICE BUSINESS FREE" in black arch, "NEW-YORK 27" on the envelope that carried a printed notice (shown in Figure 3) to the addressee of the Figure 1 cover.

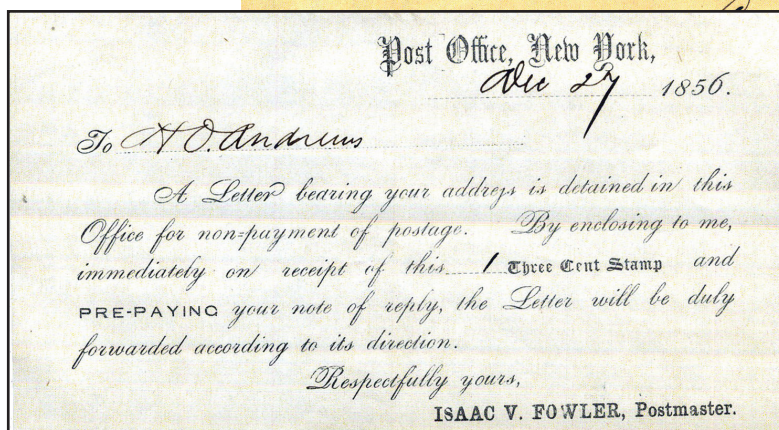


Figure 3. Printed notice, dated Dec. 27, 1856, sent by New York postmaster Isaac Fowler to the addressee of the Figure 1 cover, asking him to send a 3¢ stamp to redeem the captive cover.

stamp was canceled by the New York cds and the letter sent on to the recipient in Meriden, where it was docketed (at upper left) as received on December 31.

It is very unusual that the major components of this story have been preserved. All that's missing is the envelope in which Andrews sent his stamp to New York.



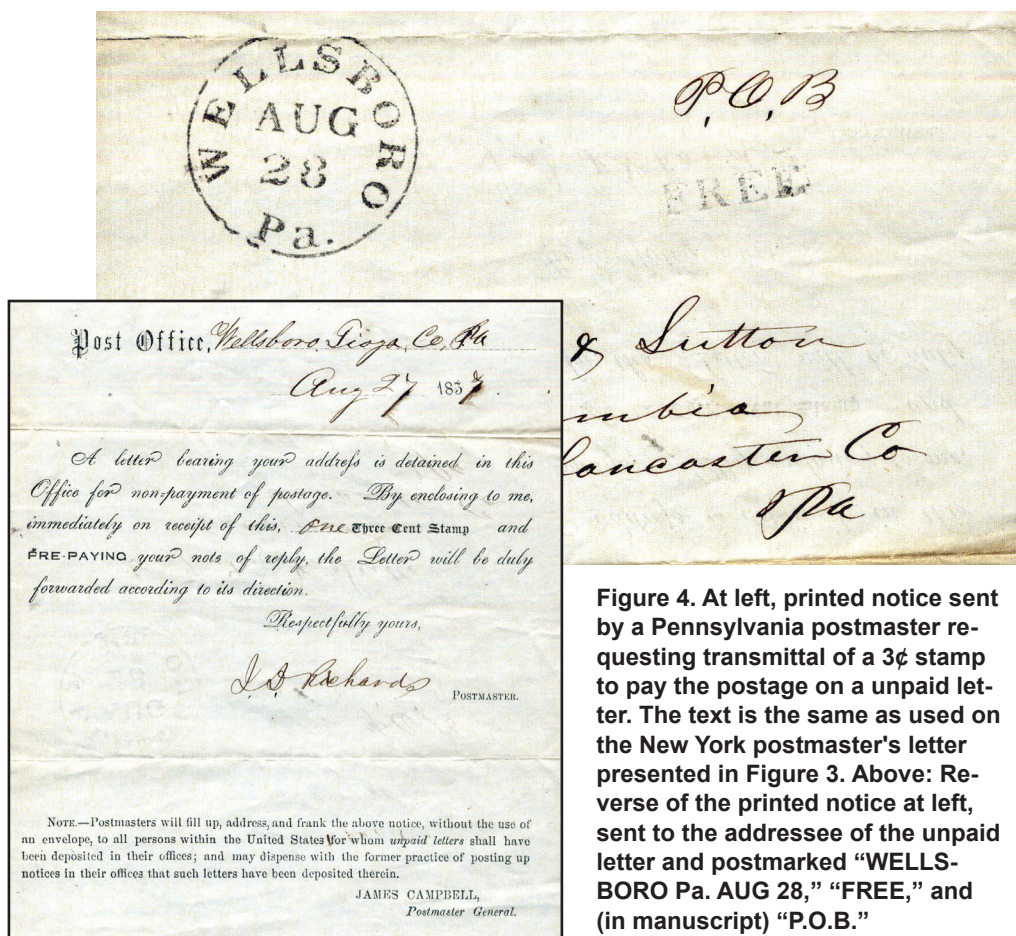


Figure 4. At left, printed notice sent by a Pennsylvania postmaster requesting transmittal of a 3¢ stamp to pay the postage on an unpaid letter. The text is the same as used on the New York postmaster's letter presented in Figure 3. Above: Reverse of the printed notice at left, sent to the addressee of the unpaid letter and postmarked "WELLSBORO Pa. AUG 28," "FREE," and (in manuscript) "P.O.B."

The two images in Figure 4 show a similar pairing, from 1857, from the small town of Wellsboro, Pennsylvania. The content of the enclosed circular contains the same text as used by Postmaster Fowler eight months earlier, with blank spaces for the town name, date and postmaster's signature. So we can deduce that this form was actually generated by the Department per Postmaster General Campbell. Note in Figure 4 the bottom paragraph on the form, which requests that postmasters fold, frank and address the form without using an envelope—an economical procedure followed by the Wellsboro postmaster. The circular was folded twice and addressed on the reverse side with "WELLSBORO Pa. AUG 28", "FREE" and manuscript "P.O.B."

Many other examples exist of course. I have "HELD FOR POSTAGE" in a small straightline on a cover from New Haven to Cambridgeport, Mass. The cover bears a small circular "JUL 22" datestamp, and a 3¢ 1851 stamp tied by "NEW HAVEN Conn. JUL 25 1856." There are no markings on the reverse. This would have been an unpaid letter arriving at the New Haven post office July 22, 1856. Presumably the addressee supplied the stamp after receiving a post office form requesting it. The cover is docketed "Rec July 26/56 Sat a.m." Yet another cover has a two-line "HELD FOR POSTAGE" handstamp which is under a 3¢ 1857 stamp tied "GREAT FALLS N.H. JUN 5 1860". Presumably this was a similar use.

As early as 1856, private individuals in certain cities began to pay the postage on letters sent unfranked or inadequately franked, affixing a label seeking reimbursement. Daniel Knowles provided a definitive summary of such usage in a recent *Chronicle*.<sup>1</sup>



The Civil War added additional complexity. Soldiers were allowed to send their letters unpaid, with the postage to be collected from the addressee. But this rule did not apply to civilian letters. When civilian senders did not stamp their mail, such letters were sent to the Dead Letter Office of the Post Office Department. (Within a few years it became customary to write one's return address on an envelope, but in the early 1860s this was not the case.)

The images in Figure 5 show a patriotic cover, with a Liberty and Eagle design, that was received unfranked at the Cincinnati post office. It bears a blue town marking "CINCINNATI O JUL 22" and also a fancy red oval "Detained FOR POSTAGE." On the reverse



Figure 5. Patriotic envelope received unpaid at Cincinnati, marked "Detained FOR POSTAGE" and "DUE 3." Inset shows the DLO marking on reverse.

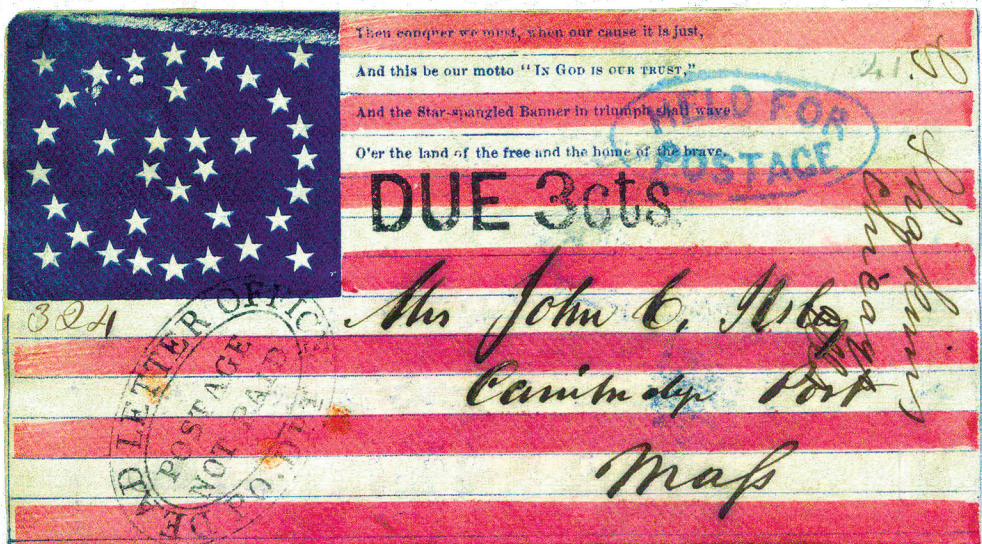


Figure 6. Overall patriotic flag envelope received at Chicago with no postage and marked with Chicago's blue oval "HELD FOR POSTAGE." Subsequently sent to the DLO in Washington and ultimately delivered to addressee.



is a red “CINCINNATI O AUG 3” which would be the date the letter was sent to the Dead Letter Office. Also on the reverse is double oval “DEAD LETTER OFFICE P.O. DEPT. POSTAGE NOT PAID,” shown inset in Figure 5. From the DLO the letter was marked on the front with a black “DUE 3” and sent to the original address. Although the cover shows no year date, it is most likely 1861 or 1862 because in the following year the penalty rate would have required a DUE 6 rather than DUE 3.

Another example, shown in Figure 6, is an overall flag design with Chicago’s blue oval “HELD FOR POSTAGE.” In this case the oval DLO marking is struck on the front. The “DUE 3 cts” is a well-known handstamp from the Dead Letter Office in 1861. Labron Harris recently wrote about these covers sent to the Post Office DLO and tells me he has seen six examples of this usage, all with the same DUE 3 and the double oval on reverse.<sup>2</sup> As a basis for this treatment he cites a February 27, 1861 regulation that completely unpaid letters were to be marked “held for postage” and then after a few days sent to the Dead Letter Office in Washington.

### Endnotes

1. Daniel M. Knowles, M.D., “Good Samaritan (Charity) Labels: Their History, Use and a Comprehensive Census,” *Chronicle* 270 (May 2021), pp. 165-183.
2. Labron Harris, “1861 Unpaid Letters,” *American Stamp Collector & Dealer*, January 2021, pp. 44-46. ■

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## **EARLY USE OF THE BOSTON “PAID IN GRID” CANCELS**

**MARK SCHWARTZ**

### **Introduction and background**

This continues a series of articles on various aspects of the postal history of Boston. 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. The third, in *Chronicle* 266, discussed the years between the War of 1812 and the middle of 1845, when postal rates were substantially reduced and simplified. The fourth, in *Chronicle* 267, discussed the beginning of the Cunard steamship era, from 1840 when the first Cunard ship crossed the Atlantic to 1851, after the first U.S.-U.K. postal agreement went into effect. This fifth article will discuss Boston’s small and large PAID in grid canceling devices, as used (in red and black ink) on covers bearing imperforate United States stamps.

The Act of Congress of March 3, 1847, which first authorized the production of postage stamps, made no reference to canceling them. Chapter 68, Section 501 of the 1847 PL&R required that the postmaster cancel stamps “with an instrument to be furnished to certain of the post offices for that purpose.”<sup>1</sup> Otherwise, stamps were to be marked in pen with an “X.” Examination of the 1847 covers in the Classics Society’s highly comprehensive online census suggests that the device provided was a circular seven-bar grid. Such a device was used in red and black in Boston and in blue in Philadelphia. New Orleans and Albany used it primarily in red. Baltimore used that grid initially, but later canceled stamps with a rate handstamp or even a PAID handstamp. New York had used a red 13-bar square grid since November 1846 on its Postmaster Provisional stamp; this was used subsequently on the 1847 stamps.

The Act of Congress of March 3, 1851 (effective July 1) again changed postal rates in a major way. The cost for an intercity letter went from 5¢ per half ounce to 3¢ if prepaid and 5¢ if unpaid. The distance it could travel under these rates increased from 300 to 3,000 miles. The cost for a drop letter went from 2¢ to 1¢, and for an unsealed printed circular from 3¢ (no distance limit) to a complex rating system that depended on weight, distance and whether the circular was prepaid. A prepaid printed circular sent up to 500 miles was now only 1¢. In addition to requiring postmasters to deface postage stamps, Section 4 of the act established a penalty of \$50 for the reuse of stamps. Commencing July 1, new stamps were issued to accommodate the new rates and the predecessor 1847 stamps were demonetized.



### Boston's small "PAID in Grid" handstamps, initially in red

For the first six days of the 1851 issue, Boston continued to use the seven-bar circular grid. However, on July 7, 1851, the Boston post office introduced a new obliterating marking. The circular seven-bar grid gave way to a similarly-sized red or magenta grid containing the word "PAID".

This small (17½ millimeters) Boston PAID handstamp was struck in red through August 1 only. The likely reason for the early discontinuance was that the cancel showed poorly on the new 3¢ orange-brown stamps. An example of this is shown below. Some clerks began applying the small Boston PAID in black as early as July 12, only five days after the first red examples appeared. Figure 1 shows (at left) a lifesized drawing of the small Boston PAID marking. For comparison, the large Boston PAID marking (24 mm) is included at right. Discussed extensively below, this larger marking supplanted its smaller cousin in early 1852.



Figure 1. Drawings of the small (left) and large Boston "PAID" in grid markings, shown here approximately lifesized. The small marking is 17.5 mm in diameter; the large is 22 mm. The strokes in the small marking are generally thick; those in the large marking vary in thickness. The outer circle is continuous in the large.



**1¢ 1851:** I know of only three covers on which the small Boston PAID marking in red was used on a 1¢ 1851 stamp (there are also a few off-cover examples). Two are shown here and interestingly, both are dated July 14. The third cover, which hasn't been seen in many years, is postmarked July 17 and franked with a strip of three, with a piece missing from the middle stamp. I don't know if this cover and strip is still intact.



Figure 2. One of three known 1¢ 1851 covers showing the small red Boston PAID.

The cover in Figure 2 bears a single 1¢ stamp on an unsealed printed circular sent to Beverly, a Boston suburb. Per Section 2 of the 1851 act, a rate of 1¢ was charged on circulars (less than one-half ounce) sent up to 500 miles. The 29½ mm Boston circular datestamp on this cover is reported used in red from February 29, 1844 to May 6, 1852.



**Figure 3.** One of possibly two examples of the small red PAID canceling three 1¢ 1851 stamps on an intercity letter, here on a cover from Boston to Hartford.

On the cover in Figure 3, three single 1¢ stamps pay the single rate for a letter (under one half ounce) sent up to 3,000 miles. The 32 mm cds with a small integral “3 cts” at right is reported used from July 1, 1851 to January 18, 1854. This folded letter was sent to Hartford, Connecticut, from the Boston firm of Little, Brown and Co., founded in 1837 and now one of the country’s oldest book publishers.

**3¢ 1851:** The small red Boston “PAID” is more frequently seen on the 3¢ 1851, but it would be wrong to call it common. Jay Kunstreich published an article in *Chronicle* 254 which sought to list examples of this cancel on or off cover.<sup>2</sup> For the 1¢ 1851, he came up with one cover (presumed to be the cover shown in Figure 3), one off-cover strip of three and seven off-cover singles. For the 3¢ 1851, he was able to identify 23 covers, one stamp on piece, and 31 off-cover singles. As with all such attempts, this is a picture in time and Kunstreich asked readers to send in details of other examples they knew of. I have not seen an update, but this article discusses (above) two additional covers bearing the 1¢ 1851 stamp, and I have 3¢ 1851 examples not listed by Kunstreich. While his preliminary listing is certainly not complete, the rarity of this cancel on the 1¢ 1851, and the scarcity of it on the 3¢ 1851, is not in doubt.

On the 3¢ 1851, the small cancel is known struck in both red and magenta. The magenta shade appears to be the result of a small amount of black ink contaminating the red, although how this happened is unknown. At one point, it was thought that the magenta cancel was only used on one or two days, but it now is known sprinkled more evenly over the 26 days from July 7 to August 1.

The cover in Figure 4 shows how poorly this red cancel shows up on the 3¢ orange-brown 1851 stamp. This cover was postmarked July 23 and sent to New York City. The CDS on this cover is reported used in red from July 16, 1849 to August 25, 1851.

The Blake-Davis book records that the last day of use of the small red PAID in grid was July 28.<sup>3</sup> The cover in Figure 5 proves it was used at least once after that, on August 1. While the distinction is difficult to make, it appears that this example was struck in magenta. Like the previous example, this cover was sent to New York City.

This red or magenta cancel is not known used on any other denominations.





Figure 4. Small PAID in red on a 3¢ 1851 cover. The red does not show well on the orange-brown stamp, which may be why the marking color was soon switched to black.

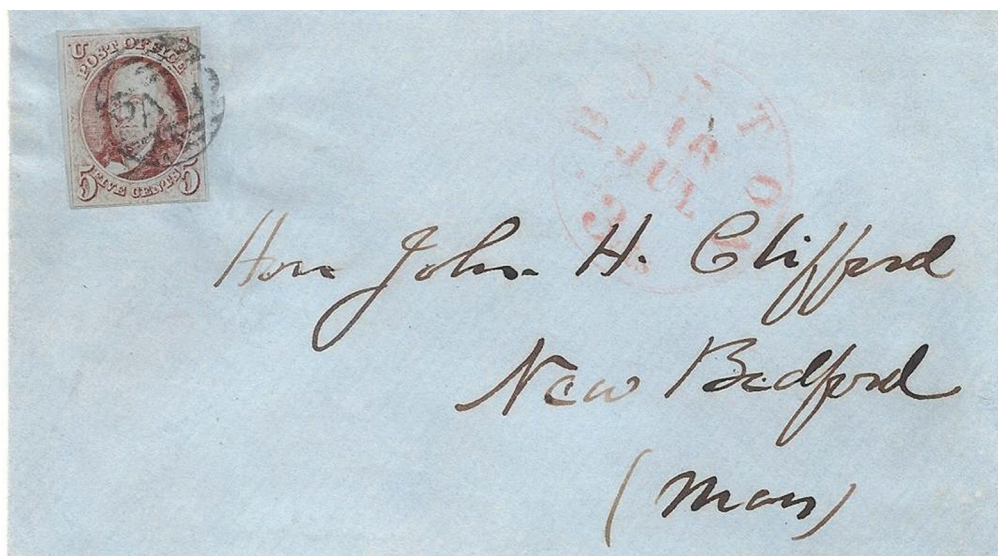


Figure 5. Small PAID in magenta canceling a 3¢ 1851 stamp, on a cover postmarked August 1 (1851). This is the latest known use of the small red Boston PAID marking.

#### The small Boston “PAID” in black

Less than a week after the small red cancel was introduced, examples from the same device began to appear struck in black ink. The small PAID in black is known used from July 12, 1851 to January 22, 1852. It appears on demonetized examples of the 5¢ and 10¢ 1847 stamps, and on the 1¢, 3¢ and 12¢ 1851 stamps. The cancel is not known on the 5¢ and 10¢ stamps of the 1851-56 series because those denominations were not introduced until long after the small PAID had been discontinued.





**Figure 6.** Five covers are recorded from Boston bearing demonetized 5¢ 1847 stamps. Three of them, of which this is the earliest, show the small black Boston PAID.

**5¢ 1847:** The on-line USPCS census of 1847 covers lists three 5¢ 1847 covers bearing the small black Boston PAID marking. Necessarily, all three are uses after the 1847 stamps had been officially demonetized. The earliest and arguably the finest of the three is shown here as Figure 6, through the courtesy of Richard Frajola. Addressed to New Bedford, this cover was posted at Boston on July 16, 1851, just two weeks after demonetization. The integral “3 Cts” CDS was described earlier.

**10¢ 1847:** Just one strike of this cancel is known on a 10¢ 1847 cover, and it is a wonderful cover, shown as Figure 7. This was sent on December 20, 1851 via Buffalo to



**Figure 7.** This is the only demonetized 10¢ 1847 stamp known on a cover from Boston, and it is struck by the small black PAID. To Hamilton, Ontario, Dec. 20, 1851.



Figure 8. A drop letter, posted December 27, 1851, on which the 1¢ Franklin stamp is well tied by a small black Boston PAID. The circular datestamp with integral "1," used for only a few months, is uncommon.

Hamilton, Canada West (now Ontario). Per the April 6, 1851 agreement between the U.S. and Canada, the 10¢ rate was for a through letter up to ½ oz. sent up to 3,000 miles to the U.S. border, and from there to any destination in Canada. While the cancel is not as clear as one would like, the Philatelic Foundation has confirmed that it is, in fact, the small black PAID in grid. The 30 mm Boston integral "10 Cts" CDS is known used in red from April 14, 1849 to February 19, 1856, and the curved blue "Ud STATES." was struck in Buffalo in 1851-52. A "Hamilton C.W. DE 28" split circle is struck on the reverse. This is an unusual example of an illegal stamp used to pay a legal rate.

**1¢ 1851:** The small black Boston PAID is known obliterating the 1¢ 1851 stamp on drop letters, circulars and letter mail. Figure 8 shows a drop letter posted on December 27, 1851, with an uncommon integral rate "1" CDS. This marking is known used in red only from October 9 to December 28, 1851, the day after this drop letter was mailed.



Figure 9. Circular, datestamped Aug. 21, 1851; stamp tied by small black PAID.

A lovely crisp strike of the marking graces the unsealed printed circular shown in Figure 9. Per Section 2 of the Act of July 1, 1851, 1¢ was charged for each circular of less than ½ ounce, sent up to 500 miles. The circular in Figure 9 was postmarked on August 21, 1851 and sent to Newbury, Vermont. The red PAID CDS used on this letter was created specifically for circular mail and was used in red only between August 2 and 21, 1851.





Figure 10. Strip of three 1¢ 1851 stamps tied by three bold strikes of the small black-Boston PAID on a folded lettersheet to Providence, posted September 26, 1851.



Figure 11. Double rate letter, underpaid and thus rated for 5¢ postage due. This July 12, 1851 cover represents the earliest known use of the small Boston PAID in black.

We frequently see strips of three 1¢ 1851s used to pay the 3¢ letter rate. An example is shown in Figure 10, here with each of the three stamps canceled by a clear strike of the small black PAID in grid. Addressed to Providence, this was posted on September 26, 1851. The red 32½ mm integral “3cts” CDS was used from July 29, 1851 to November 20, 1856.

**3¢ 1851:** The very interesting 3¢ cover shown in Figure 11 was posted on July 12, the first day of use of the small black Boston PAID, and sent to Hartford, Connecticut. It is a double-rate letter, weighing between ½ and 1 ounce, but only one stamp was affixed. The letter was marked “5 Due” in red (for the unpaid rate) and struck with the black 29 mm CDS (black indicating the underpaid nature of the letter). That CDS is recorded used in red between July 5, 1841 to June 5, 1852, but it is not recorded in Blake-Davis in black.

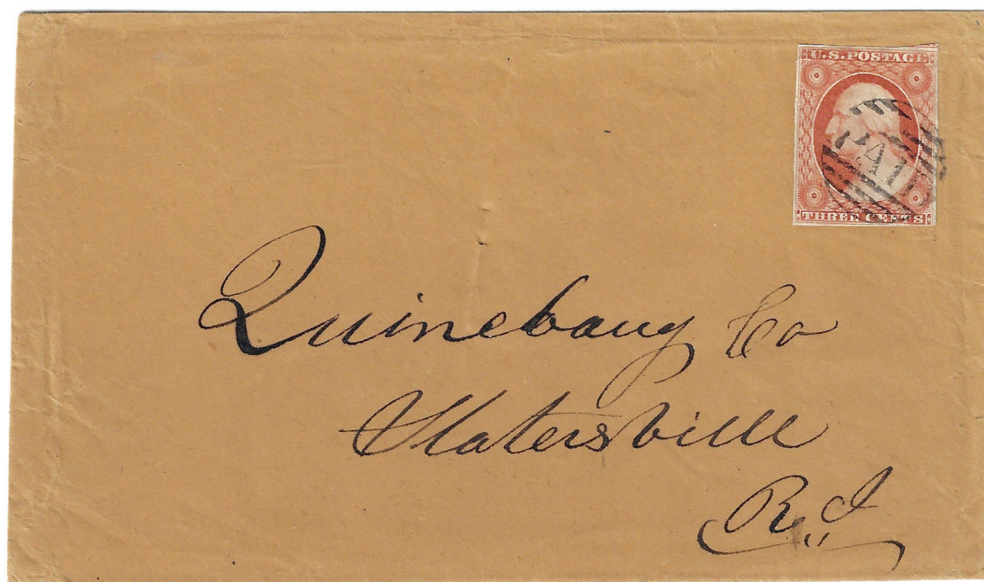




**Figure 12. January 23, 1852, 6¢ rate to California, latest known use of the small PAID.**

A cover with a new latest known use date for the small Boston PAID is shown in Figure 12. Blake-Davis reported the last day of use as January 15, 1852. After years of looking for covers with this cancel, I found this one, with two clear strikes of the cancel, postmarked a full week later, on January 23. The cover was sent to Sacramento City, California and franked with a pair of 3¢ stamps, paying the 6¢ rate (for over 3000 miles) that was effective until April 1, 1855. At Boston the cover was struck with the red integral “6 cts” CDS. This CDS variety (there were three) is known used from September 29, 1851 to September 24, 1855.

The unusual cover in Figure 13 bears a 3¢ 1851 stamp canceled by the small Boston PAID—and no other postmarks. Sent to Slatersville, Rhode Island, this is one of only two such examples I have seen.



**Figure 13. One of two known small PAID covers that do not show a datestamp.**

A final example of the small black Boston PAID in grid cancel is crisply struck on the colorful cover shown in Figure 14. This cover bears not only a 3¢ 1851 stamp, but also an example of the second Boston Penny Post carrier stamp, canceled by a black “diamond of diamonds” killer.

The Boston post office had been delivering mail locally since early colonial times. Richard Fairbanks, the first Boston postmaster, was authorized to deliver letters in 1639. This tradition continued, although there is no evidence that it was continuous into the mid-1800s. The first indications that a new department would be set up to handle city delivery were in the *Boston Daily Bee* of January 29, 1849 and the *Boston Evening Transcript* of February 26, 1849. On February 28, postmaster Nathaniel Greene announced that James H. Patterson had been appointed to operate the semi-official Boston Penny Post. Letters delivered to the post office would be charged 1¢, with newspapers and pamphlets charged ½¢. Letters from one part of the city to another, if passing through the post office, would cost 2¢, but if handed directly to the carrier, just 1¢.



**Figure 14. Boston "PENNY POST PAID" carrier stamp (3LB2) with 3¢ 1851 stamp and small black PAID cancel on a cover to New Hampshire posted August 27, 1851.**

The first adhesive stamp, in blue on whitish paper with the words “PENNY POST”, was issued on March 20, 1849. The second, with “PENNY POST PAID”, has an earliest known use of October 1850. The example on the cover in Figure 14 was posted on August 27, 1851 and sent to Mont Vernon, New Hampshire. It is postmarked with the same CDS as in Figure 4, which is recorded in Blake-Davis as used between July 16, 1849 and August 25, 1851. The cover in Figure 14, dated August 27, is a new latest known use.

**12¢ 1851:** I know of only two examples of the 12¢ 1851 canceled by the small black Boston PAID. One is a cover with a pair of 12¢ stamps posted on the first weekend of December 1851 to Wurttemberg, Germany. Sent by British open mail on an American Packet, the pair of 12¢ 1851s on this cover (which is pictured in Lester Brookman’s book) overpaid the 21¢ rate by 3¢.<sup>4</sup>

The second example is shown in Figure 15. Like the cover to Germany just noted, it bears a pair of 12¢ stamps. But in this case, they paid the correct U.S.-U.K. treaty rate of 24¢ for a letter under ½ ounce sent to London. The “19” at center right (known in red from June 22, 1850 to November 16, 1859) indicated a credit to the U.K. for transatlantic





**Figure 15.** One of two 12¢ 1851 covers known with the small black PAID: Pair of 12¢ 1851 stamps paying the 24¢ treaty rate from the U.S. to the United Kingdom. The "19" is the credit to England for Cunard carriage and British internal postage.

postage and internal British transit. The letter was put on board the Cunard steamer *America* on October 29, 1851 (note the manuscript notation at bottom left) which left on that day and arrived at Liverpool on November 9. It reached London the following day, where it received the red circular marking "PAID 1851 10 NOV 10 EC" struck upside down over the address. It was then forwarded privately to Florence, Italy, where it was received (per the manuscript docketing) on November 24.

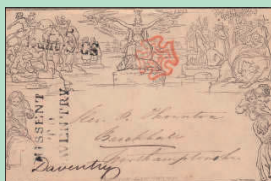
### The large black Boston "PAID"

The large version of the Boston PAID in grid cancel (shown lifesized at right in Figure 1) was introduced on January 16, 1852, possibly to ensure that the stamps it struck were tied to their covers. In addition to the larger size, the outer circle is continuous on the larger marking. All on-cover examples (save one, discussed below) were struck in black ink. The large Boston PAID in grid is known on the 5¢ 1847 and on all stamps of the 1851-56 issue. It also appears on the perforated stamps of 1857 and on 1861 covers, but they are not part of this discussion.

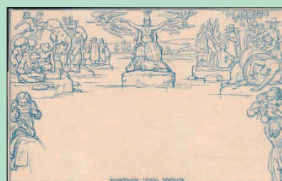
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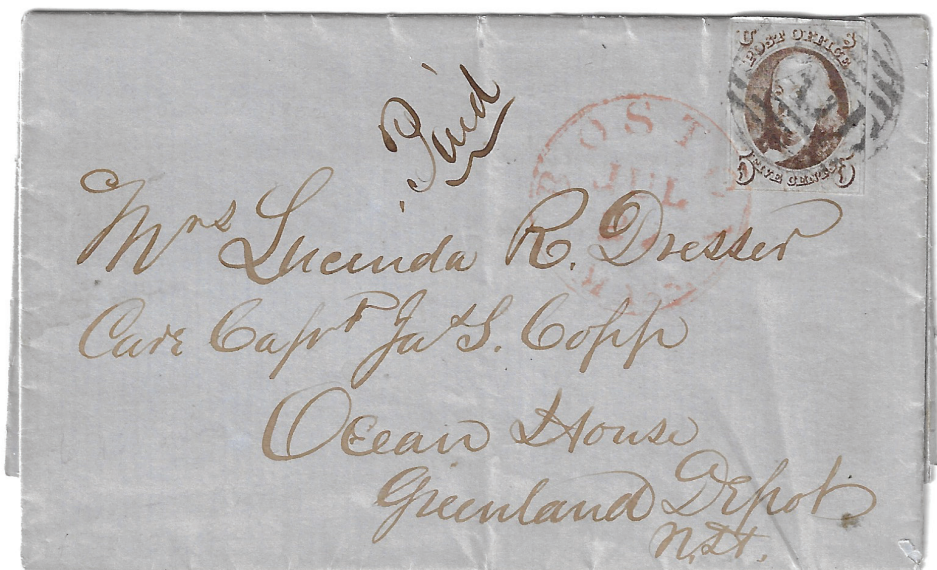


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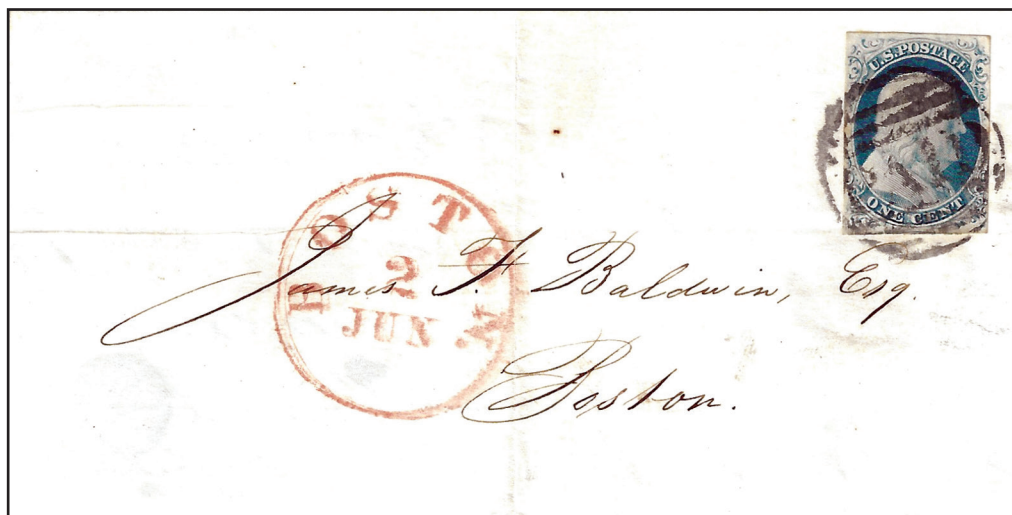


**Figure 16. The later of two known 5¢ 1847 covers with the large Boston PAID.**

**5¢ 1847:** Two on-cover examples of the large black Boston PAID are recorded canceling a (demonetized) 5¢ 1847 stamp. One was posted June 10, 1852 and sent to Springfield, Massachusetts. The other, shown in Figure 16, was sent on July 27, 1852 to Greenland Depot, New Hampshire. Even though officially demonetized and thus worthless, the stamp on this cover was accepted as prepaying the 3¢ letter rate.

**1¢ 1851:** During this time, one would expect to see the large Boston PAID on drop letters and circulars franked with a single 1¢ 1851 stamp, as well as on regular mail franked with with three 1¢ stamps. However, unsealed printed circulars canceled with the large Boston PAID are rare, because the Boston post office usually marked such covers with postmarks designed specifically for circulars.

Figure 17 shows a drop letter, sent on June 2, 1853, with the 1¢ 1851 stamp canceled by the large black Boston PAID. The red 32 mm circular datestamp, with neither integral rate nor state abbreviation, was used from December 14, 1851 to January 23, 1858.



**Figure 17. June 2, 1853 drop letter with a 1¢ 1851 stamp tied by the large black PAID.**



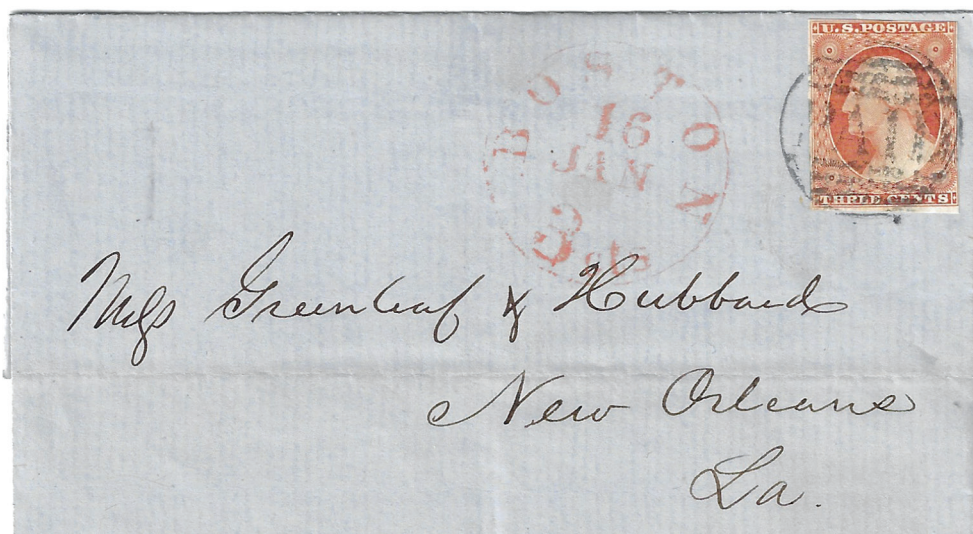


**Figure 18. L-shaped block of three 1¢ 1851 stamps, nicely tied by the large PAID, on a cover posted September 23 (probably 1853) to Duxbury, Mass.**

The sender of the cover in Figure 18 used in an L-shaped block of three 1¢ 1851 stamps to pay the letter rate to Duxbury, on September 23, probably 1853. The three stamps are neatly tied by a single strike of the large black Boston PAID. The red 30 mm CDS on this cover was used for more than a decade, from January 23, 1844 to July 13, 1856.

**3¢ 1851:** The 3¢ 1851 stamp was the workhorse domestic postage stamp for many years, and examples canceled by the large black Boston PAID are plentiful. Discussed and shown below are some of the more interesting examples I have found.

The earliest known use of this marking, January 16, 1851, is presented in Figure 19. There are several covers from this date. This one was sent from E.C. Hutchins, a railroad executive, to the firm of Greenleaf & Hubbard, a cotton commission house in New Orleans.



**Figure 19. 3¢ 1851 stamp on cover from Boston to New Orleans, January 16, 1852. This is the earliest known use of the large black Boston PAID.**



Figure 20. Unpaid letter datelined Canton, China, March 25, 1852, sent by John Heard of the famed China-based Augustine Heard trading firm. The 75¢ postage for British mail carriage via Marseilles was paid by the receiving firm in Boston, which then affixed the top-margin 3¢ 1851 stamp and readdressed the letter to nearby Ipswich.

The cover in Figure 20 was datelined in Canton, China on March 24, 1852 and sent via Marseilles from John Heard to his parents in Boston. John was the nephew of Augustine Heard, founder of Augustine Heard & Co. in China, a firm whose correspondence is well known to collectors of classic U.S. covers. The elder Heard led the company in China until late in 1852, when management was turned over to another nephew, Augustine Heard II.



Figure 21. Lovely engraved cover promoting ocean penny postage, with 3¢ 1851 canceled by the large black Boston PAID. This notable propaganda envelope was printed in England by an activist group founded by postal reformer Elihu Burritt.



The “2/11” manuscript notation on the Figure 20 cover represented British charges of 2 shillings, 11d (equivalent to 70¢) to U.S. port of entry. The large black “75” at top center, struck at Boston, was the full rate for a ¼-½ oz. letter sent via Marseilles from July 1848 to October 1854, including the additional 5¢ for U.S. transit. The Figure 20 cover traveled via several P&O steamers from Canton to Marseilles, overland through France and then from Liverpool to New York via the Cunard steamer *Asia*. When it arrived at Boston, the forwarder addressee added the top-margin 3¢ 1851 stamp and readdressed the letter to nearby Ipswich, home of the extended Heard family. The stamp was very nicely struck by the large Boston PAID marking.

Figure 21 shows an example of the 3¢ 1851 stamp canceled by the large Boston PAID on a lovely illustrated cover promoting the cause of ocean penny postage. As a means of facilitating international communications and unity, Elihu Burritt, an American lecturer and reform activist living in England, proposed that a fixed rate of one British penny be established for all mail throughout the entire British Empire. A survey article by David L. Jarrett in *Chronicle* 220, on the subject of U.S. propaganda covers, showed the Figure 21 cover and discussed Burritt and the League of Universal Brotherhood, which he founded, printers of this envelope. While used in the U.S., the Figure 21 envelope was printed in England. It was posted on September 2, probably 1854, and sent a short distance from Boston to Roxbury. In 1868, the Roxbury post office became a Boston sub-station.

The cover in Figure 22, franked with a block of four 3¢ 1851 stamps, was sent to Salem, Oregon Territory on April 2, 1855, only the second day of the new 10¢ rate to the west coast (per the Act of Congress, March 3). The 12¢ in stamps overpays the rate by 2¢, and if you look carefully, beneath the two neatly placed Boston PAID cancels, you will see written on the stamps “Can’t make the change.” The block, the extremely early showing of the rate, and the charming manuscript addition on the stamps, combine to make this a most unusual cover.



**Figure 22.** April 2, 1855 letter to Oregon Territory franked by block of four 3¢ 1851 stamps canceled by Boston’s large black PAID. As of April 1 the rate to the west coast was 10¢. The sender apparently was aware of the new rate but didn’t have the right stamps. Note his handwritten notation on the block: “Can’t make the change.”



Figure 23. Folded letter with 3¢ 1851 stamp postmarked November 10 (1852). This is the only cover known on which the large PAID marking is struck in red.

Finally, there is a single record in the Blake-Davis book of an example of the large Boston PAID struck in red or magenta ink. Figure 23 shows the cover from which that reference is derived. Marked with the integral “3cts” circular datestamp on November 10, 1852, the cover was sent to nearby Wareham, Mass.

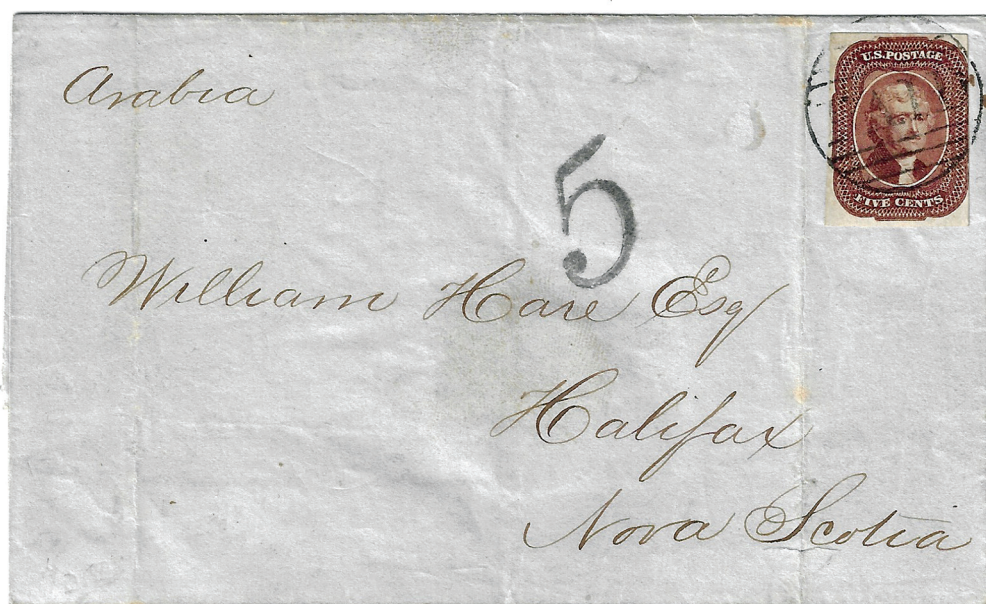
**1¢ and 3¢ combinations on foreign mail:** As you might expect, the 1¢ and 3¢ covers shown and described above were domestic mail. While not common, the large Boston



Figure 24. December 13, 1854 letter to Canada with three 3¢ 1851 and one 1¢ 1851 stamp, all canceled with the large black PAID, paying the 10¢ through rate.







**Figure 26. Single 5¢ imperforate stamp, canceled by Boston's large black PAID, on an August 23, 1859 letter to Halifax, Nova Scotia postage was due on arrival.**

The cover in Figure 26 shows a single 5¢ 1856 stamp nicely tied by a crisp strike of the marking. Addressed to Halifax, Nova Scotia, this cover received no Boston CDS. The 5¢ Jefferson paid the rate to the Cunard steamer *Arabia* (note the manuscript notation at upper left) which left Boston on August 24, 1859 and reached Halifax the following day, per a Halifax receiving mark on the reverse. There it was struck with the bold “5” hand-stamp indicating 5d Nova Scotia postage due on arrival and, on the reverse, a “U. STATES HALIFAX AU26 1859” marking.

An even less common example from Boston is shown in Figure 27. Most letters sent to France bearing three imperforate 5¢ Jefferson stamps originated in New Orleans. Here, the lovely strip of three is canceled by two clear strikes of the large Boston PAID. The 15¢ rate was intended to pay the under- $\frac{1}{4}$ -ounce rate for a letter sent according to the U.S.–French postal convention of 1857. However, the letter was found to be overweight (a common enough occurrence given the odd French weight progression), and instead of being sent by French Mail as completely unpaid, it was sent by British open mail with the franking paying only for transit to the U.S. port. It traveled to the U.K. on the Cunard steamer *Europa*, which left New York on December 23, 1857 and arrived at Liverpool on January 4. It was marked on the reverse in red at London the same day and sent to France at the 1F60c bulk rate per 30g (per the black rectangular accountancy marking at lower right). The letter entered France at Calais on January 4 (black double circle at center), reached Paris the next day and La Rochelle on January 7 (black double circles on the reverse). At Paris it was marked 16 decimes due (on top of the double circle). The G.B. 1F60c accountancy rectangle was originally used during what is called the Three-Month Period and continued to be applied (until 1875) to unpaid letters sent to France via England from British colonies and certain other overseas nations, although such later uses are scarce.<sup>5</sup>

**10¢ 1855:** The 10¢ denomination of this issue is recorded first used in May 1855. Three major purposes for this stamp were for mail to the West Coast, per the Act of March 3, 1855 (effective April 1); for the through rate to Canada, adopted by the Maritimes in July 1851; and for letters sent by U.S. Packet up to 2,500 miles, as of July 1851.



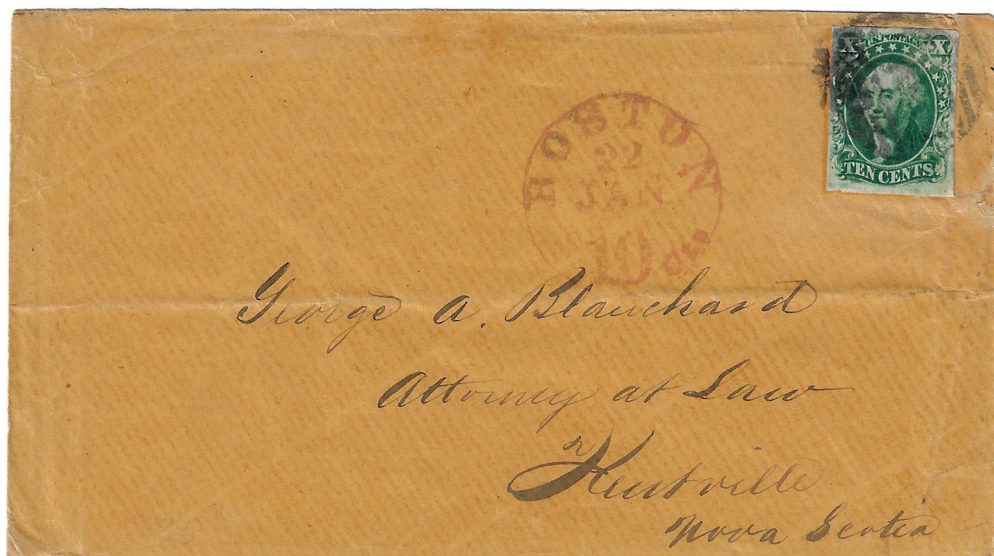


**Figure 27. December 22, 1859 letter franked with a strip of three 5¢ imperforate Jefferson stamps, canceled with two crisp strikes of the large black PAID, sent from Boston to La Rochelle, France. The cover was franked to pay the 15¢ (per quarter ounce) French treaty rate but was found to be overweight and sent instead via British open mail.**

The cover in Figure 28, franked with a 10¢ stamp tied by a large Boston PAID, was sent by post on June 4, 1857 via the steamship *Illinois* to Aspinwall in Panama on June 17, then overland to Panama City and from there by P.M.S.S. steamer *John L. Stephens* to San Francisco. Note the manuscript “Per California Steamer June 5th” at upper left. From San Francisco the cover was then carried by the bark *Fanny Major* to Honolulu. The addressee, Mary Hartford Hunt Allen, was the wife of Elisha Hunt Allen (1804-83), having married him in Philadelphia in March, shortly before this letter was sent. Her husband was Minister Plenipotentiary from the Kingdom of Hawaii to the United States from 1856 until his death.



**Figure 28. Letter sent via San Francisco from Boston to Honolulu on June 4, 1857, with a single 10¢ 1855 canceled with the large black Boston PAID.**



**Figure 29. January 22, 1857 letter sent from Boston to Nova Scotia, with a single 10¢ 1855 stamp canceled with the large black PAID.**

By the time this letter reached her, her husband had also become Chief Justice of the Hawaii Supreme Court. He had been U.S. Consul and, after he became a Hawaiian citizen, Minister of Finance for King Kamehameha III, and had served in the House of Nobles.

Figure 29 shows a 10¢ cover on which the PAID marking is smudged, but still evident. This was posted at Boston on January 22, 1857, addressed to Kentville, Nova Scotia. On the reverse are two split circles. One was applied in St. John's, New Brunswick on January 28, the other at Kentville on February 4. The integral "10 cts" marking, with the circle very close to the lettering, is recorded used in red from July 13, 1853 to May 6, 1860.



**Figure 30. December 25, 1855 letter sent from Boston to Santiago de Cuba, with a single 10¢ 1855 canceled with the large black Boston PAID.**



The final cover in this group, Figure 30, with a 10¢ stamp tied by a full strike of the Boston PAID marking, was posted at Boston on Christmas Eve 1855, sent via New York (Dec 26 CDS at lower right) on the steamship *Cahawba* to Havana (confirmed by the manuscript notation at upper left “Cahawba, New York for Havana.” From Havana it was sent on to Santiago de Cuba with 1 real postage due (blue NA 1 marking in center). The NA designates a cover originating in North America.



**Figure 31. Double weight letter to San Francisco posted at Boston on April 4, 1854 with a 12¢ 1851 stamp canceled by Boston's large black PAID.**

**12¢ 1851:** Like the other higher value stamps in this issue, the 12¢ value is hard to find canceled by the large black Boston PAID marking, despite the fact that the cancel and the stamp coexisted for a long time. The 12¢ stamp was issued at the same time as the 1¢ and 3¢, and the large PAID was in use throughout its life.

A cover posted at the 12¢ rate for a double rate ( $\frac{1}{2}$ -1 ounce) letter sent over 3,000 miles is shown in Figure 31. This was posted on April 4, 1854 and sent to Macondray and Co. in San Francisco. Frederick W. Macondray was a successful merchant trader from Massachusetts who arrived in California in 1848. Settling in San Francisco, he founded the business of Macondray & Co., a commission house and one of the city's earliest bankers.

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Figure 32 shows a pair of 12¢ 1851 stamps, tied by the large Boston PAID, representing the 24¢ treaty rate to England per the U.S.-U.K. agreement of 1848. This is the most common on-cover destination for this stamp but uses canceled with the large Boston PAID are decidedly uncommon. This cover, datelined Feb. 27, 1855, was sent on the Cunard steamer *Canada* which sailed three days late on March 17 and reached Liverpool on March 29. The cover was struck in Boston with a red “19” indicating a credit to the U.K. of 19¢. The red “PAID IN AMERICA” tombstone marking was applied at Liverpool, before the cover was sent on to Warrington, England. On the reverse are a black “Boston Mar 17 Br. Pkt.” exchange office marking and a Warrington split circle receiver.



Figure 32. Pair of 12¢ 1851 stamps paying the 24¢ treaty rate to England, canceled by the large black PAID and sent via Liverpool on February 27, 1855.



Figure 33. A combination of the 3¢ and 12¢ 1851 stamps, canceled by the large black PAID, paying the treaty rate to France and sent from Boston to Paris on May 20, 1857.



Our final 12¢ 1851 cover, shown in Figure 33, is also to a foreign country, in this case France. The 12¢ and 3¢ 1851 stamps, both tied by the Boston PAID, pay the 15¢ (per ¼ ounce) rate by French Mail, per the U.S.-French agreement of April 1, 1857. The cover was posted on May 20, 1857, with the red Boston exchange office CDS indicating a 12¢ credit to France. Upon entering France, the cover was struck with the black double circle June 1 handstamp, indicating that it was carried from the U.S. by British packet service. On the reverse are a black Boston 20 May Br. Pkt. exchange marking and a black double circle indicating arrival in Paris on June 2.

The perforated issues were introduced in the latter part of 1857, though the imperforate stamps continued on mail through at least 1859. Varieties of the large Boston PAID are found on the perforated 1857 stamps and on the 1861 issue that followed, but these are not part of this discussion. The marking was used to cancel stamps into 1863.

### Endnotes

1. Postal Laws and Regulations of the United States of America 1847, Wieringa reprint, Holland, Michigan, 1980.
2. Jay Kunstreich, "The Small Red Boston PAID Grid Cancel," *Chronicle* 254 (May 2017) pp. 135-37.
3. Maurice C. Blake and Wilbur W. Davis, *Boston Postmarks to 1890*, Quarterman Publications reprint, Lawrence, Mass., 1974.
4. Lester G. Brookman, *The United States Postage Stamps of the 19th Century, Volume I*, H.L. Lindquist Publications, 1966, pg. 175.
5. This is the period from Jan. 1–March 30, 1857. A new convention between the U.K. and France effective Jan. 1, substantially reduced rates between the two countries. On April 1, a new agreement between the U.S. and France meant that the great bulk of letters now went by French mail, rather than by British open mail. ■

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**PRINTED CORNER ADVERTISING  
ON CIVIL WAR PATRIOTIC COVERS**

**JAMES W. MILGRAM, M.D.**

Civil War patriotic covers were created to express the patriotic sentiments of the person using the envelope. The earliest patriotic cover was Confederate. Confederate patriotic stationery began to be used after the formation of a Confederate government on February 4, 1861, although Texas and Mississippi designs are known from even earlier dates. Federal patriotic designs were not printed until after April 12, 1861, the day the war commenced.

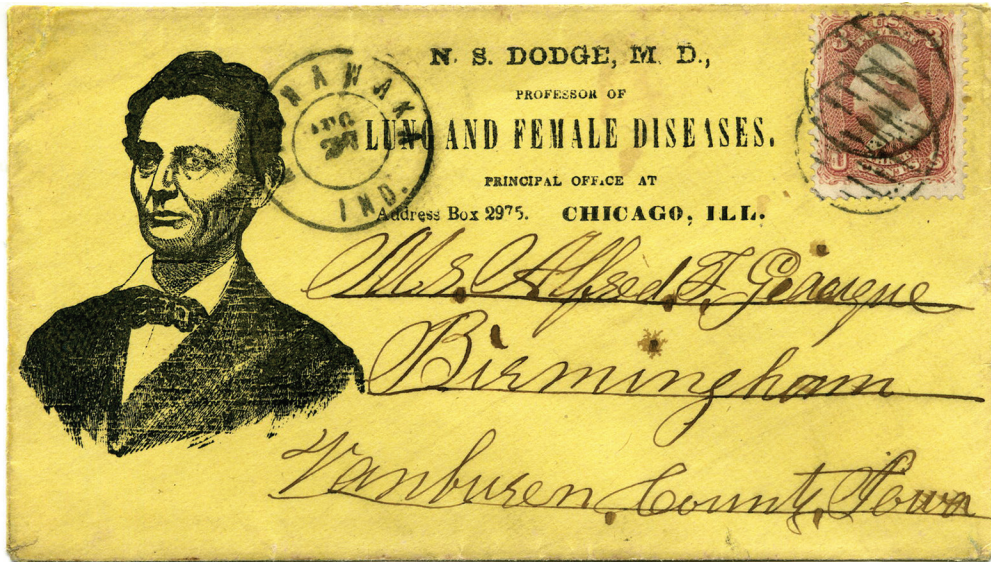
A small number of patriotic covers exist from both South and North with printed text promoting individuals, businesses or institutions. These are patriotic covers with advertising. There are two basic types. The more common are envelopes with a printed patriotic design to which promotional text was added. The other much rarer type incorporates the patriotic image as part of an illustrated advertising corner cachet.

Altogether, patriotic advertising envelopes are uncommon. In *Chronicle* 265 I showed envelope designs that were used by firms that printed and sold patriotic stationery.<sup>1</sup> In a 2016 article in *American Stamp Dealer and Collector*, I showed covers from Civil War refreshment salons, three of which represented the type of patriotic cover being discussed here.<sup>2</sup>

The collection of Jon Bischel was the largest collection of used patriotic covers ever formed. It consisted of over 6,000 different designs, all of which were illustrated in the June 21-23, 2000 catalog created by Nutmeg Stamp Auctions. In this huge holding, only 59 covers were identified as bearing some form of advertising. Adding to these are ten covers in the John Schaefer collection (Schaefer sent me images) and 45 designs in my record or in my collection (a few which came from the Bischel collection). So just over 115 designs, plus the designs shown in the two articles just cited, yields a total of about 135 federal designs showing advertisements. This is a tiny fraction of the whole number of patriotic cover designs. Add to these the small number of Confederate patriotic covers with printed cornercards, and there are about 150 cover designs considered in preparing this article. Of course, there must be other designs that this informal survey missed, but the point is, these covers are unusual.

The most logical way to categorize these envelopes is not by the patriotic design but by the subject of the advertising. I have grouped the covers into the following 12 categories: professional individuals (mostly doctors and lawyers); insurance companies; institutions of learning; hotels; banks; mercantile firms; manufacturing firms; newspapers; telegraph and railroad; printers (including patriotic stationers); government agencies; and others. These groupings are arbitrary of course. But they provide a useful basis for examination. I will discuss each category in turn, illustrating interesting or representative examples.

**Professional individuals.** Total of 10 designs. This group includes persons who are selling their services, mostly physicians and lawyers. Figure 1 shows a beardless Abraham Lincoln campaign design to which has been added printed text promoting a physician. This design is known on both yellow and orange envelopes. The doctor's office was located



**Figure 1.** Beardless Lincoln campaign portrait on an envelope to which was added advertising information promoting N.S. Dodge, a publicity-savvy Chicago doctor.

within the Sherman House, a famous Chicago hotel. The same black text advertising “N.S Dodge M.D., professor of lung and female diseases” is known on a patriotic cover with standing Liberty in black. The cover in Figure 1, postmarked “MISHAWAKA IND. AUG 27,” is addressed to a publicist who gave talks promoting Dr. Dodge.

Figure 2 shows an unused envelope with overall printed advertising (in green) created for a Philadelphia patent attorney. The most striking feature is a lovely hand-drawn eagle and shield image, very finely executed in pen and colored inks. While this envelope was never mailed, it represents the only hand-drawn patriotic advertising cover that has been recorded. Perhaps it was an experiment to see what a patriotic imprint would look like on these printed envelopes.

**Figure 2.** Overall printed advertising envelope for a Philadelphia patent lawyer to which has been added a hand-drawn patriotic grouping of eagle, shield and flags, perhaps created as a test.





**Insurance companies** (four designs). Insurance companies are not commonly associated with patriotic advertising covers. Figure 3 is an unusual engraved eagle and shield design incorporating the name and address of a fire insurance company in the banner below. This same generic design is known with “Superintendent’s Office” and a New York address



**Figure 3.** Finely engraved advertisement of a New York fire insurance company, with eagle and shield, “E PLURIBUS UNUM” and address information in a scroll below.

in the banner. Both are found on domestic covers sent from New York City. These covers are examples of the scarcer design type, where the patriotic image and the advertising text are an integral part of the design, as opposed to advertising information added to a preexisting patriotic cover.

**Institutions of learning** (three designs). These are among the more interesting patriotic advertising covers. Very likely more designs exist than were captured in the record assembled for this article. Institutions range from private secondary schools to universities, but all are quite rare. Figure 4 is a Confederate flag design within an oval frame designating Atlanta Medical College, a predecessor of what is today Emory University. This flag design is also known without accompanying information.<sup>3</sup> The Figure 4 cover is dated August 27, 1861 and is franked with a handstamped postmaster’s provisional marking “ATLANTA



**Figure 4.** Confederate 10 star flag with text promoting Atlanta Medical College, predecessor of today’s Emory University. Handstamped postmaster’s provisional marking “ATLANTA GEO. PAID 10” with Atlanta cds dated Aug 27 1861.

GEO PAID 10". A striking Union design (not shown) is an eagle and shield with large text for Baldwin University, Berea, Ohio.

**Hotels** (nine designs). Patriotic corner cards for hotels are known in many different styles and formats. Certainly the most interesting of these is the Confederate cover shown in Figure 5. This incorporates an illustrated hotel advertisement ("Commercial [House], Aberdeen, Mississippi, J.D. McAlister, Proprietor") into the design of the blue eight-star canton of a C.S.A. flag. Addressed to Columbus, Mississippi, this cover is franked with a U.S. 3¢ 1857 stamp. It was postmarked April 29 (1861) during the period after secession but prior to the formation of the Confederate postal service.



**Figure 5. Confederate state use (April 29, 1861) of a 3¢ 1857 stamp: CSA patriotic design with blue 8-star canton overprinted with image and text for a Mississippi hotel.**

A typical Union design (not shown) bears the ubiquitous eagle and shield below which is imprinted text promoting a hotel in Allentown, Pennsylvania. Another federal cover shows a large eagle and shield to the left of which is text for the Webster House in Gloucester, Massachusetts.

**Banks** (five designs). A number of these printed corner cards are found on flag design covers. One of these is the cover in Figure 6 with black overprint at top and black obliteration of a credit line under the verse. Since the black ink overlies the flag and overprints the line at bottom, the advertising must have been a later printing onto an envelope already available. The lines quoted are from the concluding verse of the Francis Scott Key poem, written during the War of 1812, that when set to music became our national anthem. Why the credit line is obliterated is not clear.

**Merchant firms** (43 designs, not including the printers of patriotic covers). This is the largest group of covers, which makes sense because the category embraces many different types of businesses.

Figure 7 shows a 3¢ Nesbitt envelope on which is printed a pair of crossed flags along with a lovely blue cameo-type shield corner card for a commission merchant, a rare appearance of a patriotic design on a government stamped envelope. The placement of the two designs suggests the cameo may have been printed first with the flags subsequently added, an unusual sequence. The red Providence circular datestamp reads JAN 21, probably 1862.





Figure 6. Flag with four lines from the *Star Spangled Banner*, overprinted with the corner card of a Michigan bank. The Detroit circular datestamp reads "MAR 18 1862."



Figure 7. Crossed flags with cameo-like corner card for a Providence grain dealer. A patriotic design on a government-printed envelope is most unusual.

The spectacular cover in Figure 8 bears a huge patriotic shield with the name and address of a New York firm ("Lewis & Co., 280 Pearl St., N.Y.") incorporated into the canton alongside a badge with Washington's image at the center and "union" and "constitution" and stars emblazoned on red, white and blue ribbons trailing below. The muted colors suggest that both the ribbon and the shield were printed simultaneously. The New York postmark on this cover is dated "APR 30" and the 1857 stamp would suggest 1861 usage, but that would be very early for such a striking patriotic envelope. The stamp was demonetized in the summer of 1861. Perhaps the use is from a later year, with the demonetized stamp accepted for postage.





Figure 8. Spectacular overall design with large shield and fancy ribbon with image of Washington at center, made for Lewis & Co. at 280 Pearl St. in New York City.

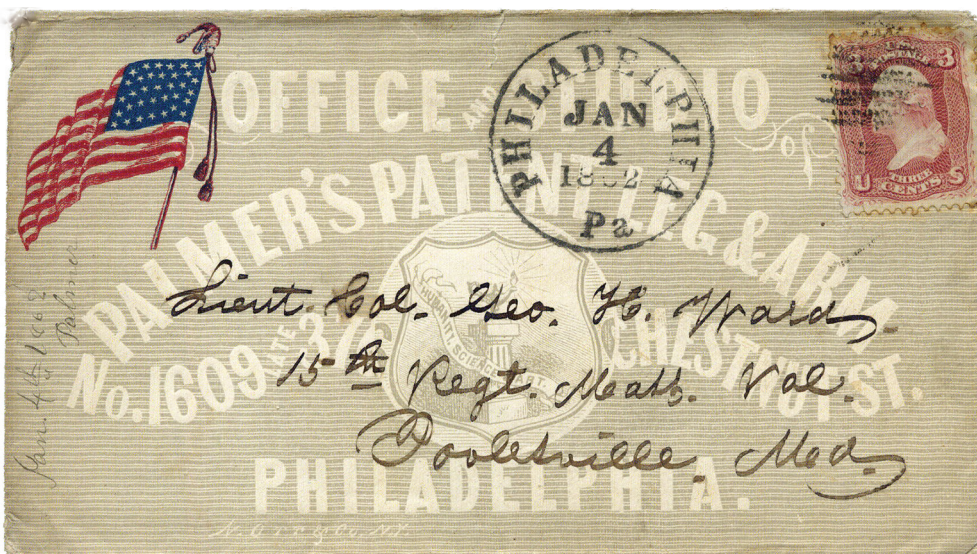


Figure 9. Flag design overprinted on overall gray advertising cover for "PALMER'S PATENT LEG & ARM" with 3¢ 1861 postmarked "PHILADELPHIA Pa JAN 4 1862."

Figure 9 shows a third example of a merchant's patriotic advertising envelope, the overall gray design for "Palmer's Patent Leg and Arm"—a Philadelphia firm dealing in prosthetic limbs. The flag at upper left, printed in three colors, seems clearly a subsequent printing. Suggestively, the cover bears a military address. The Philadelphia postmark is dated January 4, 1862. In the Nutmeg sale mentioned previously, lot 3636 was a cover showing a soldier with an artificial leg standing by a flag over which is printed a black corner advertisement for "Kimball & Lawrence...Artificial Limbs."

There's not space to show all the interesting designs in this category. A New York vendor of photographic albums incorporates an eagle, flags and rifles within the lettering



of his corner advertisement. This design is not known except as part of this corner card. Similar is the patriotic eagle above a toy drum, advertising a merchant in East Granville, Massachusetts, who specialized in toy drums. The only western design (in this category, that is) is the globe, flag and shield corner card of a patriotic San Francisco cigar merchant. This was lot 4956 in the Nutmeg sale, a front franked with a 10¢ Type V stamp postmarked at San Francisco.

**Manufacturing firms** (five designs). In some instances, it is difficult to separate manufacturers from merchants. Figure 10 shows an eagle and flags design with the firm's name above ("NIAGARA FALLS MILLS") and the address inserted into the shield area. The Niagara Falls double circle postmark on this 3¢ 1861 cover is dated "FEB 23, 1863."



**Figure 10.** Flags with eagle design incorporating "NIAGARA FALLS MILLS" with address information within the shield. The 3¢ 1861 stamp is tied by two strikes of a target killer and the double-circle postmark reads "NIAGARA FALLS, N.Y. FEB 23 1863."

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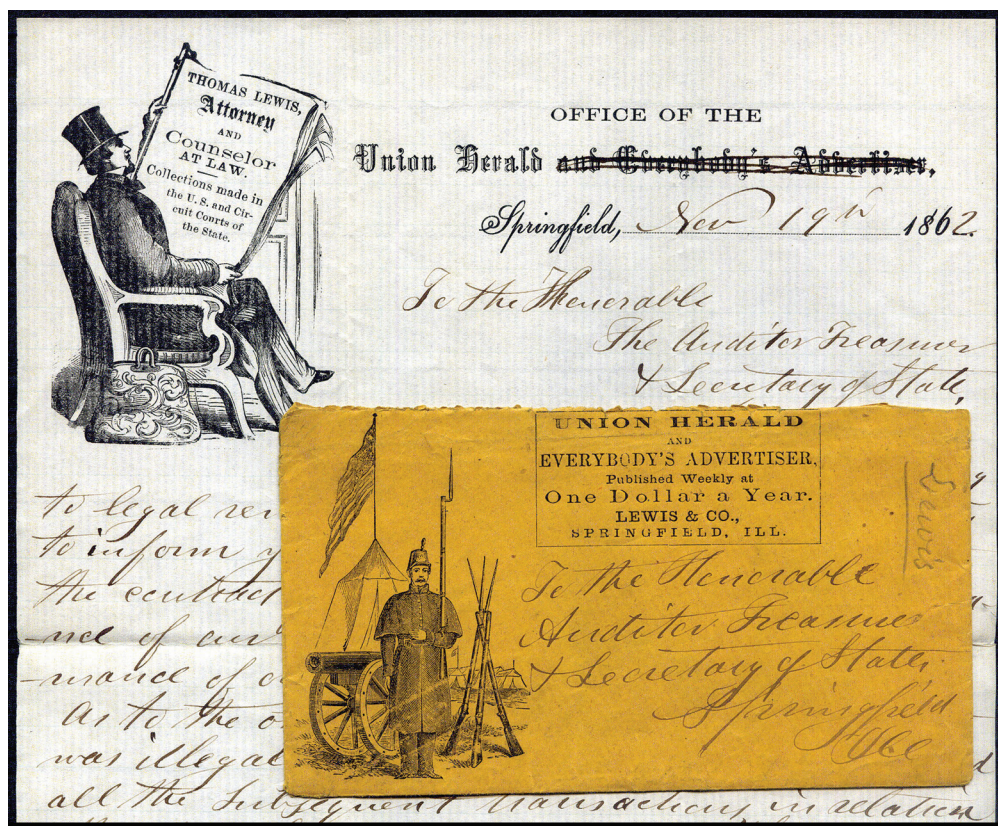


Figure 11. Hand-carried cover with soldier standing guard before a camp, plus a portion of the lettersheet within, dated November 19, 1862. Both are imprinted with the corner card for the *Union Herald*, a newspaper published in Springfield, Illinois.

**Newspapers and magazines** (six designs). The hand-carried envelope in Figure 11 bears an image of a soldier in camp and the advertising cachet of the hopefully-titled *Union Herald and Everybody's Advertiser*. The publisher was an attorney, Thomas Lewis. On the letter within (dated November 1862 and partly shown in Figure 11) a letterhead illustration shows a top-hatted gentleman, perhaps Mr. Lewis himself, with a carpet-bag next to his chair. Another cover in this category, not shown, bears a common patriotic flag design on the front. The reverse is an overall printed advertisement with a map of Dansville, N.Y. (near Buffalo).

**Telegraph and railroad** (five designs). Figure 12 illustrates a fancy corner cachet in red and blue advertising the New York, Albany & Buffalo Telegraph Co. The design includes a large flag and symbolic figures that appear to imitate the New York state seal. This is another example of an integrated design, where the patriotic image is an integral part of the overall advertisement.

Another example from a telegraph company, not shown, is a simple flag surmounted by the heading "ATLANTIC TELEGRAPH." This cover is interesting because the envelope is addressed to John Andrew, the Civil War governor of Massachusetts, and is rated for a collection of 20¢, apparently a telegram charge. An example of a railroad company, also not shown, is a patriotic globe and flag with an corner card "ILLINOIS CENTRAL RAILROAD CO." corner card, in this case used from Rochester, N.Y.

**Printers including patriotic stationers** (17 designs). An unused envelope showing a standing Liberty with shield was not included in my article on stationers in *Chronicle* 265.





Figure 12. Flag with New York state seal figures incorporating advertising elements promoting the “NEW-YORK, ALBANY & BUFFALO TELEGRAPH CO.” The Utica, N.Y. double circle tying the 3¢ 1861 stamp appears to be dated JUN 3, 1862.



Figure 13. “MADISON, Wis. JUN 11 1861” circular datestamp with grid tying 3¢ 1857 stamp, just a few weeks before demonetization. The flag patriotic design and the “STATE OF WISCONSIN” corner card were probably printed simultaneously.

The red corner card reads “From GAY & HOLLINGSHEAD, ELECTROTYPERS, 58 & 60 Fulton Street, New York.”

**Government agencies** (six designs). Figure 13 shows a red and blue flag design with the blue printed corner card for the Quarter-Master General’s Office of the State of Wisconsin. I would guess that these two images were printed simultaneously. The 3¢ 1857 is cancelled with grid and the circular datestamp reads “MADISON, Wis. JUN 11 1861”. This was just weeks before the 1857 stamps were demonetized.



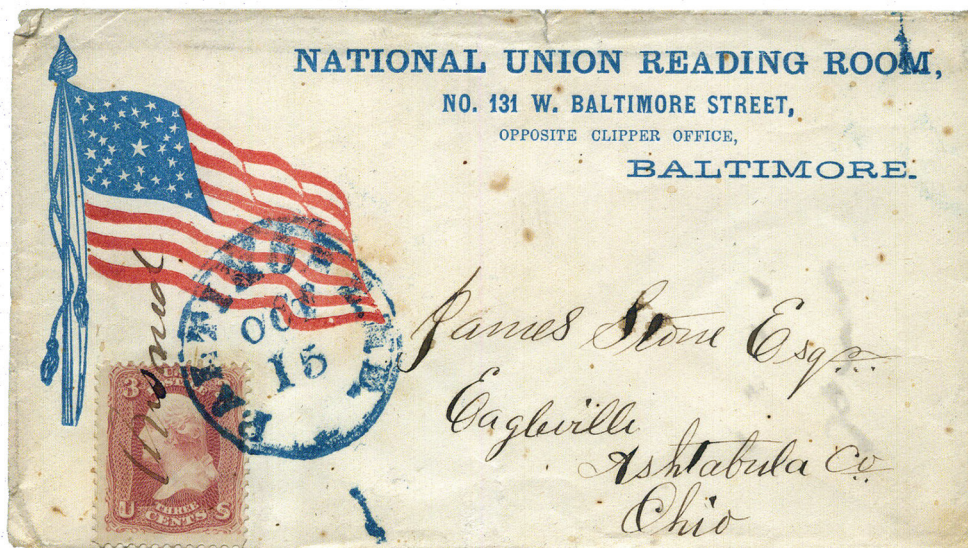


Figure 14. 3¢ 1861 stamp tied by blue “BALTIMORE Md OCT 15” postmark on flag patriotic envelope with text for “NATIONAL UNION READING ROOM” in Baltimore. The colors suggest the address information and the blue flag were printed simultaneously.

**Other** (six designs). Figure 14 shows a 3¢ 1861 cover sent from Baltimore to Eagleville, Ohio. The envelope bears a two-color flag design and a large corner card promoting the “NATIONAL UNION READING ROOM” in Baltimore. This would have been a sort of salon where soldiers could go to read and to rest, a predecessor to some of the functions the United Services Organization (USO) performs for servicemen to this day. This type of flag is unlisted in the Weiss catalog; the colors suggest it was printed simultaneously with the address information. Another envelope in this category (not shown) portrays a seated



Figure 15. Confederate cornercard for the steamer *Genl. Quitman* with 7-star Confederate flag, carried out of the mails on another steamboat, the *Mary E. Keene*. U.S. postage was required; the stamp was pen-canceled by a clerk on board the vessel.



sailor with shield and anchor, from the “U.S. Naval Rendezvous” in Chicago.

At least three Confederate steamboat corner cards were printed with patriotic flag designs, the steamers *C.E. Hillman*, *Genl. Quitman* and *Vicksburg*. Shown in Figure 15 is an example of the *Genl. Quitman* design, a seven-star Confederate flag, on an envelope that was carried on the steamboat *Mary E. Keene*. It sometimes happened that these envelopes were used as corner cards by the owners or other personnel associated with the boats, rather than simply on the vessels themselves. (The only used example from the *C.E. Hillman* was captured by Union troops and taken from the vessel to be used later.) The cover in Figure 15 was carried outside the mails. U.S. postage was required on steamboat covers similar to the handling of covers carried by express companies, and pen cancelling was common in these instances. Origin and date of this cover are not certain, but it must have been carried after strong Confederate sentiment had developed in the south but before mid 1861, when U.S. stamps were no longer valid.

Relative to the many thousands of different patriotic envelope designs that survive today, these envelopes that combine patriotic images with advertising information are far from common. This survey provides just a hint of what is available for collectors.

### Endnotes

1. James W. Milgram, “Patriotic Advertising Envelopes of Publishers and Sellers of Civil War Patriotic Covers,” *Chronicle* 265 (February 2020), pp. 48-63.
2. James W. Milgram, “Civil War Refreshment Saloons & Hospitals in Philadelphia,” *The American Stamp Dealer & Collector*, September 2016, No. 103, pp. 20-27.
- 3 James W. Milgram and John Kimbrough, *Confederate Patriotic Stationery*, Northbrook Publishing Co., Lake Forest, IL, 2019. ■

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## TALES OF THE CIVIL WAR BLOCKADE: THE LEAKY *WILL O' THE WISP*

STEVEN WALSKE

This continues a series of *Chronicle* articles on Civil War blockade runners.<sup>1</sup> This article describes the somewhat checkered career of the steamship *Will o' the Wisp*, which despite frequent repairs managed to run the federal blockade successfully 16 times. Her story is illustrated by the letters that she carried through the blockade.

On October 11, 1863, John Lawrence purchased *Will o' the Wisp* for the Liverpool-based Anglo-Confederate Trading Company, which had been formed in June 1862 by Edward Lawrence & Company to operate a fleet of blockade runners. Thomas Taylor, who had served as supercargo for the firm on the *Banshee* for seven roundtrip voyages (described in *Chronicle* 269), left *Banshee* at Nassau in February 1864 to take charge of *Will o' the Wisp*. He described her as “a much larger and faster boat than the *Banshee*, but shamefully put together, and most fragile.”<sup>2</sup>

*Will o' the Wisp* was built specifically for blockade running by William Simons & Company on the Clyde River near Glasgow. Launched on July 11, 1863, she was an iron-hulled sidewheel paddle steamer of 210 feet, with a beam of 23 feet and a draft of just under 10 feet.<sup>3</sup> Her top speed was an impressive 17 knots. Figure 1 shows a digital reconstruction of her appearance, based on data retrieved from her wreck site.

In November 1863, *Will o' the Wisp* was outfitted at Glasgow's Mavisbank Quay for the Anglo-Confederate Trading Company. She arrived at St. George's, Bermuda on December 24, 1863 in a dangerously leaky condition. On January 18, 1864, Charles Allen, U.S. Consul at St. George's, reported to William Seward, Secretary of State that, “The steamer *Will o' the Wisp* left here for Halifax on the 3rd instant, she came here with the intention of going to Wilmington but proving leaky was sent away for repairs.”<sup>4</sup>

Table 1 details *Will o' the Wisp*'s 16 successful trips through the blockade.

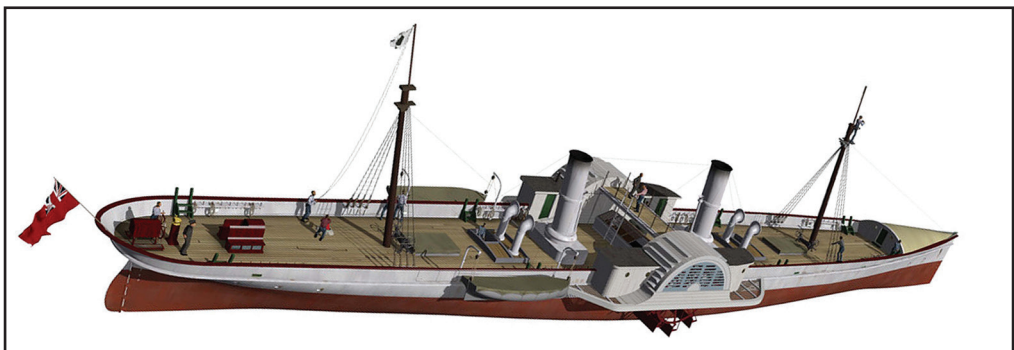


Figure 1. 3D reconstruction of *Will o' the Wisp* by Maritime Texas.



**TABLE 1: WILL O' THE WISP CIVIL WAR SAILINGS, 1864-65**

| Trip #                                                                                  | Departure Port | Departure Date | Arrival Port | Arrival Date | Notes              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------------|
| (Arrived in poor condition at St. George's, Bermuda, on December 24, 1863 from Glasgow) |                |                |              |              |                    |
| <b>1864</b>                                                                             | St. George's   | 3 Jan          | Halifax      | 7 Jan        | Sent for repairs   |
|                                                                                         | Halifax        | 5 Feb          | St. George's | 9 Feb        |                    |
|                                                                                         | St. George's   | 13 Feb         | Nassau       | 17 Feb       | Figure 2           |
| <b>W-1</b>                                                                              | Nassau         | 10 Apr         | Wilmington   | 14 Apr       | Figure 3           |
| <b>E-2</b>                                                                              | Wilmington     | 24 Apr         | Nassau       | 28 Apr       |                    |
| <b>W-3</b>                                                                              | Nassau         | 5 May          | Wilmington   | 9 May        |                    |
| <b>E-4</b>                                                                              | Wilmington     | 15 May         | Nassau       | 19 May       |                    |
| <b>W-5</b>                                                                              | Nassau         | 26 May         | Wilmington   | 30 May       |                    |
| <b>E-6</b>                                                                              | Wilmington     | 1 Jun          | Nassau       | 5 Jun        |                    |
| <b>W-7</b>                                                                              | Nassau         | 8 Jun          | Wilmington   | 12 Jun       |                    |
| <b>E-8</b>                                                                              | Wilmington     | 28 Jun         | Nassau       | 2 Jul        |                    |
| <b>W-9</b>                                                                              | Nassau         | 7 Jul          | Wilmington   | 11 Jul       |                    |
| <b>E-10</b>                                                                             | Wilmington     | 14 Jul         | Nassau       | 19 Jul       |                    |
| <b>W-11</b>                                                                             | Nassau         | 26 Jul         | Wilmington   | 30 Jul       | Figure 4           |
| <b>E-12</b>                                                                             | Wilmington     | 23 Aug         | Nassau       | 27 Aug       | Figure 5           |
| <b>W-13</b>                                                                             | Nassau         | 1 Sep          | Wilmington   | 5 Sep        | Figure 6           |
| <b>E-14</b>                                                                             | Wilmington     | 18 Sep         | Nassau       | 22 Sep       | Sold to Power, Low |
| (Power, Low & Co. transferred <i>Will o' the Wisp</i> to the Havana-Galveston run)      |                |                |              |              |                    |
| <b>W-15</b>                                                                             | Havana         | late Dec       | Galveston    | late Dec     |                    |
| <b>1865</b>                                                                             |                |                |              |              |                    |
| <b>E-16</b>                                                                             | Galveston      | 10 Jan         | Vera Cruz    | 19 Jan       | Diverted by storm  |
|                                                                                         | Vera Cruz      | 30 Jan         |              |              |                    |
| (Destroyed entering Galveston on February 3, 1865)                                      |                |                |              |              |                    |

**SOURCES:** These sailing dates were drawn from Stephen Wise's *Lifeline of the Confederacy*, supplemented substantially by the author's research. Trips are numbered consecutively; "E" indicates eastbound, "W" westbound.

On February 15, 1864, Allen reported to Seward that, "I have the honor to report the arrival here on the 9th instant of the steamer *Will o' the Wisp* from Halifax where she had been for repairs. She took in a cargo of ordnance stores and left on the 13th for Wilmington."<sup>5</sup> Allen was mistaken about her destination; *Will o' the Wisp*, under the command of Peter Capper, was headed to Nassau, Bahamas to meet her owners' representative, Thomas Taylor.

On February 17, 1864, *Will o' the Wisp* arrived at Nassau. Taylor described her arrival thus:<sup>6</sup>

**My first introduction to her was seeing her appear off Nassau, and receiving a message by pilot boat, from Capper, the captain, to say that the vessel was leaking badly and he dare not stop his engines, as they had to be kept going in order to work the pumps. We brought her**

into the harbour, and having beached her and afterwards made all necessary repairs on the slipway, I decided to take a trip in her.

Figure 2 shows a letter carried on her voyage from St. George's to Nassau. Datelined in Liverpool on January 23, 1864, this letter is addressed to Colonel Burton of the CSA Ordnance Department. It left Liverpool that day aboard the Cunard steamer *Arabia*, and arrived in Halifax on February 4. It was transferred there to the Cunard branch steamer *Alpha*, which departed on February 5 and reached St. George's on February 10. A CSA agent in Bermuda endorsed the letter "Will O' the Wisp" at the upper left; she departed on February 13 and arrived in Nassau four days later.



**Figure 2.** January 23, 1864 letter carried from Bermuda via Nassau on *Will o' the Wisp*, then via the blockade-runner *Annie* into Wilmington, North Carolina, then via the Confederate postal system to Macon, Georgia. Siegel sale 1154, lot 2465 (2017).

In Nassau, this letter was transferred to the blockade runner *Annie*, which left on February 28 and arrived in Wilmington on March 3. The Wilmington post office postmarked the letter on the day of her arrival, and rated it for a double-weight 22¢ due, consisting of twice the 10¢ postage to Macon, Georgia plus a 2¢ ship fee. Colonel Burton received the letter four days later.

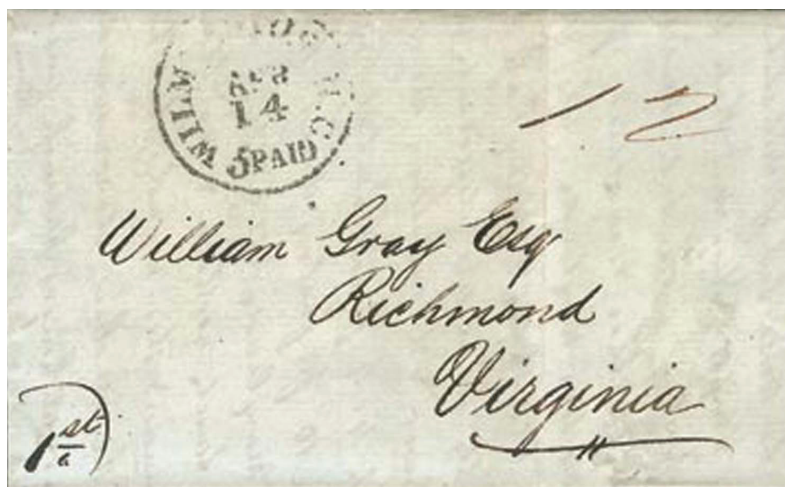
After extensive repairs at Nassau, *Will o' the Wisp* left Nassau on April 10, 1864 for her first trip through the blockade under Captain Peter Capper and with Taylor on board as supercargo. Taylor described this trip:<sup>7</sup>

As soon as the nights were sufficiently dark we made a start for Wilmington, unfortunately meeting very bad weather and strong head winds, which delayed us; the result was that instead of making out the blockading fleet about midnight, as we had intended, when dawn was breaking there were still no signs of them...no land was in sight, but I could make out in the dull morning light the heavy spars of the blockading flagship right ahead of us, and soon after several other masts became visible on either side of her. Picking out what appeared to me to be the widest space between these, I signaled to the deck how to steer...No doubt our very audacity helped us through, as for some time they took no notice...At last, to my great relief, I saw Fort Fisher just appearing above the horizon, although we knew that the perilous passage between these blockaders must be made before we could come under the friendly protection of its guns...we saw two cruisers steaming toward one another from either side of us, so as to intercept us at a given point before we could get on the land side of them...our little vessel quivered again under the tremendous pressure with which she was being driven through the water. An exciting time followed, as we and our two enemies rapidly converged upon one point...We



were now near enough to be within range, and the cruiser on our port side opened fire; his first shot carried away our flagstaff aft on which our ensign had just been hoisted; his second tore through our forehold, bulging out a plate on the opposite side. Beddings and blankets to stop the leak were at once requisitioned, and we steamed on at full speed under a heavy fire from both quarters. Suddenly, puffs of smoke from the fort showed us that Colonel Lamb, the commandant, was aware of what was going on and was firing to protect us; a welcome proof that we were drawing within range of his guns and on the landward side of our pursuers who, after giving us a few more parting shots, hauled off.

As she approached Wilmington, *Will o' the Wisp* ran aground on the bar, but was able to get free by throwing some cargo overboard. She was grounded for repairs upon reaching Wilmington.



**Figure 3. March 12, 1864 letter carried on *Will o' the Wisp*'s first trip (W-1) through the blockade. The Wilmington post office rated the letter for 12¢ postage due at Richmond: a 2¢ ship fee plus 10¢ domestic postage. Robert A. Siegel sale 823, lot 563 (April 13, 2000).**

Figure 3 shows a letter carried on this trip, her first through the blockade. Dated March 12, 1864 at Liverpool, this letter was sent under cover to a forwarder in Nassau, Bahamas. It left Liverpool that day aboard the Cunard steamer *China*, which arrived in New York on March 23. It was transferred there in a closed mail bag to the Cunard branch steamer *Corsica*, which sailed on March 27 and reached Nassau four days later. The Nassau forwarder placed this letter on the *Will o' the Wisp*, which departed on April 10 and arrived in Wilmington April 14. The Wilmington post office marked the letter on the day of her arrival, and rated it for 12¢ due, consisting of 10¢ postage to Richmond plus a 2¢ ship fee.

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Table 1 shows that, after her first trip, *Will o' the Wisp* made ten uneventful runs through the blockade. Figure 4 shows a letter carried on the last of those ten trips. This letter was datelined July 2, 1864 at London and was sent under cover to the forwarder George Chambers & Co. in Nassau. It left Liverpool aboard the Cunard steamer *Australasian*, which arrived in New York on July 13. It was transferred there in a closed mail bag to the Cunard branch steamer *Corsica*, which sailed on July 16 and reached Nassau four



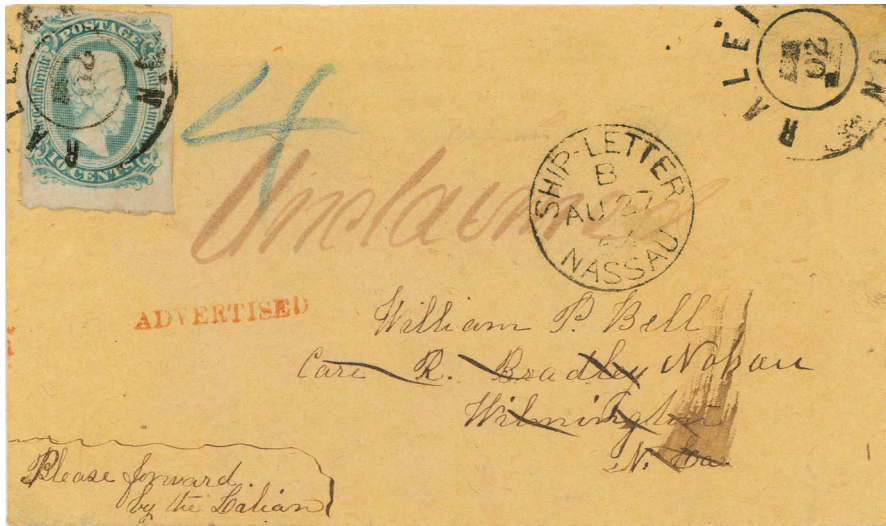
**Figure 4.** Letter from London, internally dated July 2, 1864, carried under cover via Cunard steamships to a Nassau forwarder, then sent on *Will o' the Wisp*'s trip W-11 from Nassau into Wilmington. From there it was mailed to Milledgeville, Georgia, with 12¢ due on delivery. Robert A. Siegel sale 988 (May 27, 2010), lot 330.

days later. Chambers & Co. discarded the outer envelope, and applied their embossed forwarder marking to this inner envelope. They also endorsed it at the upper left to the *Will o' the Wisp*, which departed on July 26 and arrived four days later in Wilmington, where it was postmarked on July 30 and rated for 12¢ due. The letter, directed to Governor Joseph Brown of Georgia, concerns a shipment of cotton on the blockade runner *Index*.

After her 11th run, *Will o' the Wisp* was laid up at Wilmington from July 30 to August 23. This was the last straw for Taylor, who decided to sell her at the earliest opportunity.

Because outgoing blockade-run mail was invariably sent under cover to a West Indies forwarder, it rarely carries Confederate postmarks or frankings. Figure 5 shows a remarkable blockade-run letter with Confederate franking and postmarks. This letter was postmarked in Raleigh, North Carolina on August 20, 1864 and addressed to the care of a Wilmington forwarder. It was franked with 10¢ CSA postage (Scott 11) and endorsed "Please forward by the *Lilian*" at lower left. The blockade-runner *Lilian* was scheduled to depart on August 24 for Bermuda, but the addressee was known to be in Nassau, so the forwarder re-addressed this letter and placed it on the *Will o' the Wisp*, which left Wilmington on August 23 and arrived in Nassau four days later. It was postmarked "Ship-Letter Nassau" on August 27 and rated for 4 pence incoming ship postage, per the blue crayon "4." It was subsequently marked "Advertised" in red, and ultimately sent to the dead letter office per the "Unclaimed" notation.





**Figure 5. A blockade-run letter with Confederate franking. Posted at Raleigh, North Carolina on August 20, 1864, this letter was addressed in care of Wilmington forwarder. Endorsed for the *Lilian* but sent to Nassau on *Will o' the Wisp's* trip E-12. Rated 4 pence due at Nassau, marked "Advertised" and ultimately sent to the dead letter office (per the "Unclaimed" notation).**

*Lilian* did depart Wilmington as scheduled on August 24, but encountered multiple obstacles. Her pilot, Jim Craig, described the difficulties:<sup>8</sup>

Trouble began before we got outside. An armed barge from the fleet had come close inside the Western bar and lay in our track in the channel, and immediately upon our approach, sent up a rocket and fired a gun, which was immediately answered by the whole fleet outside, and I remember that we crossed the bar in a bright flash of Drummond lights and rockets which made the night as bright as day. Every one of the blockaders was firing at us or over us as we headed out to sea, and when the next morning, Sunday, dawned, we had just succeeded in dropping the last of the cruisers, which had chased us all night.

We were congratulating ourselves after breakfast that morning that we would have a clear sea toward Bermuda—and, by the way, the sea was as smooth as glass—when the lookout in the crow's nest reported a vessel of war ahead, shortly afterwards another on the starboard bow, and a little later a third on our port bow, and in a few minutes a fourth on our beam. We had unfortunately run into the second line of blockaders....The chase lasted until half-past one in the morning, when a shell from the cruiser on our starboard beam, called the *Gettys-*



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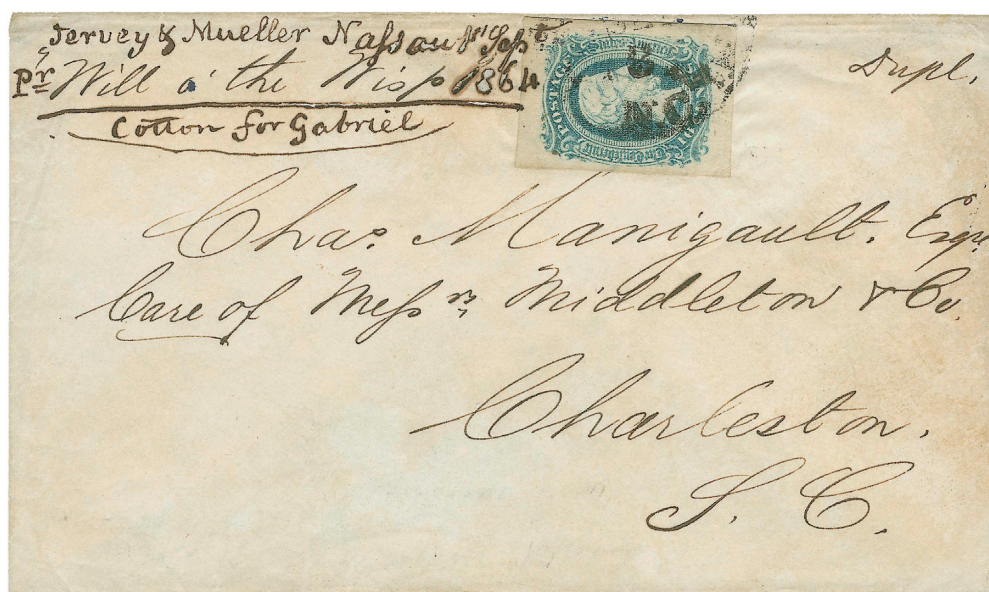


Figure 6. September 1, 1864 letter franked with a 10¢ Confederate stamp and carried from Nassau into Wilmington on *Will o' the Wisp's* trip W-13. Endorsed "Pr Will o' the Wisp" at upper left. Robert A. Siegel sale 1043 (April 18-19, 2013), lot 2608.

*burg*, formerly the blockade runner *Margaret and Jessie*, struck us below the waterline....[I]n a short time the vessel began to steer badly and gradually sank almost to the level of the deck. Finding further efforts to escape utterly fruitless, the captain stopped the ship and surrendered to the boats that immediately surrounded us.

*Will o' the Wisp* fared better than *Lilian*, at least for a while. After arriving in Nassau on August 27, 1864, *Will o' the Wisp* quickly got ready for the return trip to Wilmington. Figure 6 shows a letter carried on that return trip. This letter was docketed from Jervy & Mueller at Nassau on September 1, 1864. Addressed to a forwarder in Charleston, South Carolina, it was franked with 10¢ CSA postage (Scott 11), and endorsed "Pr Will o' the Wisp" at the upper left. This letter left Nassau aboard *Will o' the Wisp* on September 1 and reached Wilmington four days later, where it was postmarked on September 6. No postage due was assessed, since the 10¢ prepayment was more than the required 6¢ in-port ship postage.

In October 1864, *Will o' the Wisp* ran a measured mile at Nassau for Power, Low & Company of Wilmington. Taylor managed to eke out a top speed of 17.5 knots, and was finally able to sell the leaky ship. In view of the increasing difficulty of crossing the federal blockade at Wilmington and Charleston, *Will o' the Wisp's* new owners sent her to Havana in November for the less perilous run into Galveston, Texas.

In late December, *Will o' the Wisp* successfully ran into Galveston, where she took on a load of cotton and some passengers for the return trip to Havana. She left Galveston on January 10, 1865 under the command of Abner Godfrey, but ran into a four-day gale. She was blown off course and was short of coal, so Godfrey made for the nearest port at Sisal, on the Yucatan coast of Mexico. Godfrey left his passengers there and made for Vera Cruz to re-fuel and repair the steamer. Once there, Godfrey turned over command to one of his officers, who left on January 30 for Galveston. Four days later, while running northeastward in a fog bank along Galveston Island toward the Southwest Channel, *Will o' the Wisp* was spotted by one of the blockaders, which opened fire. Unscathed, *Will o' the Wisp* escaped into the fog, but ran aground a few miles south of the city.<sup>9</sup> While she



was stuck fast, some of her cargo was recovered. But a few days later, she was boarded and destroyed by Union sailors in five boats from former blockade-runners USS *Princess Royal* and USS *Antonica*.

### Acknowledgements

John Barwis and Michael Perlman reviewed this article and provided valuable insights.

### Endnotes

1. The first of these articles, on the steamship *Antonica*, appeared in *Chronicle* 262. A second article, in *Chronicle* 263, covered steamship *Fannie*. These were followed by articles on Robert E. Lee (*Chronicle* 265), *Advance* (*Chronicle* 266), *Kate* (*Chronicle* 267), *Cornubia* (*Chronicle* 268) and *Banshee* (*Chronicle* 269).
2. Thomas E. Taylor, *Running the Blockade*, Third Edition (John Murray: London, 1897), pg. 101.
3. Stephen Wise, *Lifeline of the Confederacy, Blockade Running During the Civil War* (University of South Carolina Press, 1988), pg. 327.
4. 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, Ohio, 2008), pg. 111.
5. Wiche, *op. cit.*, pg. 117.
6. Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 101-102.
7. Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-106.
8. Jim McNeil, *Masters of the Shoals* (Da Capo Press, 2003), pp. 82-83.
9. Andrew Hall, *Civil War Blockade Running on the Texas Coast* (The History Press: Charleston, 2014), pp. 86-90. ■

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## **U.S. MAIL TO BRITISH HONDURAS: 1868-1872**

**STEPHEN ROSE**

### **Introduction**

One of the last unexplored areas of U.S.-foreign correspondence during the 1869 era is British Honduras, which had been a settlement under British influence for over a century before it officially became a Crown colony in 1862. Status as a Crown colony meant that political control and direction of the local economy was largely determined in London. British Honduras remained a Crown colony until it became independent (as the nation of Belize) in 1981.

In the last half of the 19th century, the primary exports from British Honduras were various hardwoods, especially mahogany. The forests were exploited, but agriculture on a large scale was not encouraged. Few roads were built, and the population clustered along the coast, largely around the main port of Belize. Most of the necessities of life were imported.

### **The commercial link**

The nearest large American port to Belize is New Orleans, which strengthened its status as a major commercial hub after the end of the Civil War. The accompanying map shows the proximity of the two ports in the context of other locations discussed in this article.

March 1867 saw the inception of monthly voyages between New Orleans and Belize, which continued with occasional interruptions at least until 1872. A typical cargo to Belize consisted of passengers, mail, flour, pork, tobacco, lumber, shingles, potatoes, apples, lard, beans and—when shipments of ice from Boston and Maine were available—chilled firkins of butter. In addition to passengers and mail, the return cargo from Belize would include mahogany, bananas, pineapples, coffee, molasses, gold and cochineal (a natural red dye made from insects).<sup>1</sup>

Most of the voyages between 1867 and September 1869 involved American steamships, with an occasional additional trip by a British schooner, especially during periods of good weather. Steamship voyages normally required six days in either direction, with occasional delays due to weather or required stays at a quarantine station. In 1867, *General Sherman* made two round trips, but the mainstays of this route between 1868 and 1870 were *Trade Wind* and *Perit*. Occasionally, departures to Belize were reported in a local newspaper, such as this bulletin in the May 21, 1868 edition of the *New Orleans Bee*: “The steamship *Trade Wind*, Capt. Murrell, sailed last evening, for Belize (Hon.) with a good freight and the following [20+] passengers....” In October 1869, the monthly service to Belize by American packets was replaced by vessels under British contract, due to a newly agreed postal convention, discussed below.

Table 1 (pages 274-275) presents New Orleans arrival and departure dates for vessels carrying mail to and from Belize during the years of mail service, based on an expanded search I undertook in the archives of two New Orleans newspapers in addition to the



more-accessible English-language editions of the *New Orleans Bee*. In a very few cases, I could not find a reference for a certain voyage in any of the three archival sources, even though it seems certain the voyage occurred. These instances are designated with a “?” in the table. The notes accompanying the table provide information explaining interruptions and changes to the sailing schedule.

### Early postal arrangements

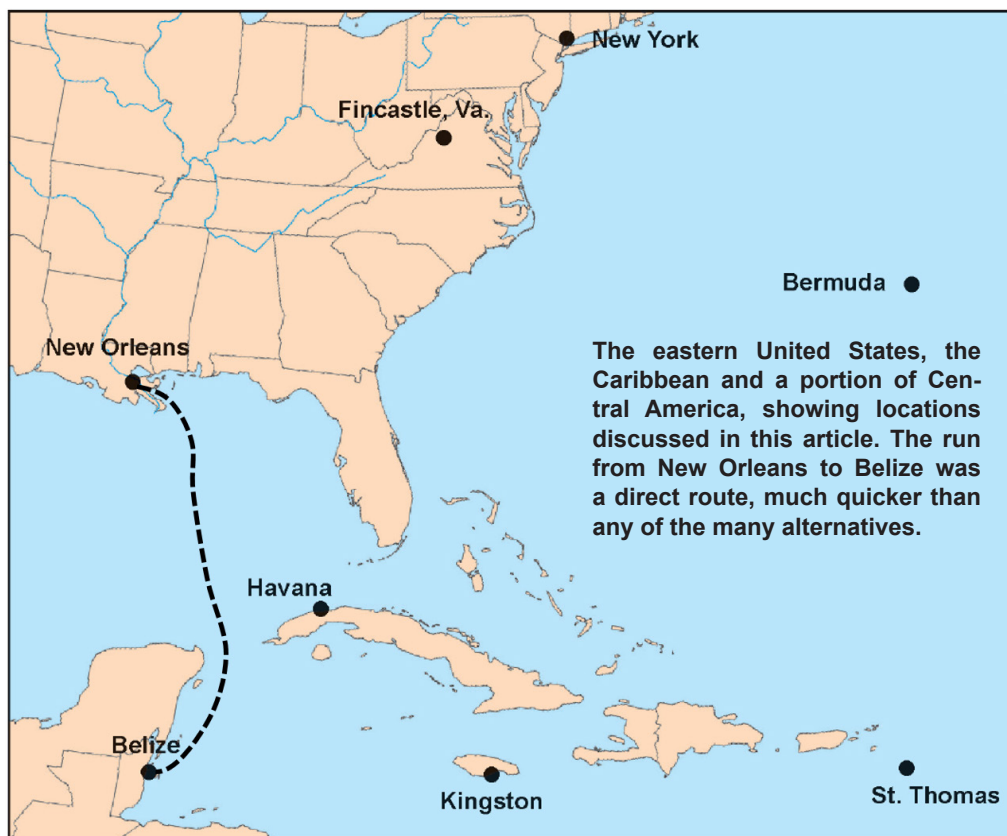
The Royal Mail Steam Packet Company (RMSP) held subsidized mail contracts with all British Caribbean colonies from 1842 until 1917, under which it maintained fortnightly transatlantic and intermittent intercolonial schedules. In 1864, a supplementary contract was made for the conveyance of mails to British Honduras at an annual subsidy of £8,886.<sup>2</sup> From a geographic standpoint, Belize was a remote destination for British mail packets servicing the Caribbean basin. In the official postal tables issued by Britain and the United States, British Honduras invariably had a listing separate from the category of West Indies.

### The 1869 postal convention

In 1869, both nations took advantage of the growing commerce between Belize and New Orleans to create a postal convention that reinforced this link. According to Article 1:3

There shall be a direct exchange of mails between the offices of New Orleans...and the offices of Belize....These mails shall be conveyed by the British mail packets established between New Orleans and Belize, so long as the British government shall deem it expedient to maintain such packets.

Article 2 established the single letter rate at 12¢ U.S. postage or 6 pence (6d) British postage, prepaid. Other articles went on to state that such mail would be treated as fully



**TABLE 1: NEW ORLEANS–BELIZE MAIL STEAMSHIP  
ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES—1867-1872**

| Ship                   | Arrive<br>N.O. | Depart<br>N.O. | Notes | Ship                        | Arrive<br>N.O. | Depart<br>N.O. | Notes |
|------------------------|----------------|----------------|-------|-----------------------------|----------------|----------------|-------|
| <b>1867</b>            |                |                |       | <i>Trade Wind</i>           | 11 Sep         | 23 Sep         | 2     |
| <i>General Sherman</i> |                | 11 Mar         |       | <i>Perit</i>                |                | 24 Nov         |       |
| <i>General Sherman</i> | ?              | 23 Apr         |       | <i>Perit(?)</i>             |                |                | 3     |
| <i>Trade Wind</i>      | 29 Apr         | 7 May          |       | <b>1870</b>                 |                |                |       |
| <i>Trade Wind</i>      | 20 May         | 25 May         |       | <i>Perit</i>                | 7 Jan          | 19 Jan         |       |
| <i>General Sherman</i> | ?              | 2 May          |       | <i>Perit</i>                | 5 Feb          | 23 Feb         |       |
| <i>Trade Wind</i>      | 12 Jun         |                | 1     | <i>Perit</i>                | 13 Mar         |                | 4     |
| <i>General Sherman</i> |                | 29 Jun         |       | <i>Schnr Joe Kelly</i>      |                | 23 Mar         |       |
| <i>General Sherman</i> | 18 Jul         | 27 Jul         |       | <i>Beaufort</i>             |                | 25 Apr         | 5     |
| <i>General Sherman</i> | 15 Aug         | 24 Aug         |       | <i>Agnes</i>                | 17 May         |                |       |
| <i>General Sherman</i> | 13 Sep         | 21 Sep         |       | <i>Zodiac</i>               |                | 28 May         | 6     |
| <i>Trade Wind</i>      |                | 24 Sep         |       | <i>Zodiac</i>               | 13 Jun         | 21 Jun         |       |
| <i>Trade Wind</i>      | 15 Oct         | 26 Oct         |       | <i>Zodiac</i>               | 13 Jul         |                |       |
| <i>Trade Wind</i>      | 16 Nov         | 23 Nov         |       | <i>Grange</i>               |                | 24 Jul         |       |
| <i>Trade Wind</i>      | 14 Dec         | 28 Dec         |       | <i>Grange</i>               | 16 Aug         | 24 Aug         |       |
| <b>1868</b>            |                |                |       | <i>Grange</i>               | 13 Sep         | 21 Sep         |       |
| <i>Trade Wind</i>      | ?              | 25 Jan         |       | <i>Grange</i>               | 13 Oct         | 19 Oct         |       |
| <i>Trade Wind</i>      | 14 Feb         | 22 Feb         |       | <i>Grange</i>               | 4 Nov          | 21 Nov         |       |
| <i>Trade Wind</i>      | 13 Mar         | 28 Mar         |       | <i>Grange</i>               | 9 Dec          | 21 Dec         |       |
| <i>Trade Wind</i>      | 10 Apr         | 25 Apr         |       | <b>1871</b>                 |                |                |       |
| <i>Trade Wind</i>      | 14 May         | 20 May         |       | <i>Grange</i>               | 7 Jan          | 23 Jan         |       |
| <i>Trade Wind</i>      | 5 Jun          | 24 Jun         |       | <i>Grange</i>               | 10 Feb         |                |       |
| <i>Trade Wind</i>      | 11 Jul         | 22 Jul         |       | <i>Clppr David Miller</i>   |                | 22 Feb         | 7     |
| <i>Trade Wind</i>      | 7 Aug          | 19 Aug         |       | <i>Clppr David Miller</i>   | ?              | 26 Mar         |       |
| <i>Trade Wind</i>      | 4 Sep          | ?              |       | <i>Schnr Salvador</i>       |                | 3 Apr          |       |
| <i>Trade Wind</i>      | 14 Oct         | 21 Oct         |       | <i>Schnr Salvador</i>       | 25 May         | 3 May          | 8     |
| <i>Trade Wind</i>      | 8 Nov          | 25 Nov         |       | <i>Schnr Salvador</i>       | 12 Aug         |                |       |
| <i>Trade Wind</i>      | 13 Dec         | 23 Dec         |       | <i>Schnr Salvador</i>       | 5 Oct          |                |       |
| <b>1869</b>            |                |                |       | <i>Lord Lovell</i>          |                | 25 Nov         |       |
| <i>Trade Wind</i>      | 12 Jan         | 20 Jan         |       | <i>Lord Lovell</i>          | 18 Dec         | 27 Dec         |       |
| <i>Trade Wind</i>      | 8 Feb          | 24 Feb         |       | <b>1872</b>                 |                |                |       |
| <i>Trade Wind</i>      | 15 Mar         | 24 Mar         |       | <i>Lord Lovell</i>          | 15 Jan         |                |       |
| <i>Trade Wind</i>      | 12 Apr         | 21 Apr         |       | <i>Schnr Life Boat</i>      |                | 23 Jan         |       |
| <i>Trade Wind</i>      | 9 May          | 19 May         |       | <i>Schnr Lizzie Webster</i> |                | 25 Feb         |       |
| <i>Trade Wind</i>      | 8 Jun          | 23 Jun         |       | <i>Schnr Life Boat</i>      | 2 Mar          |                |       |
| <i>Trade Wind</i>      | 15 Jul         | 21 Jul         |       | <i>Schnr Lizzie Webster</i> | 9 Mar          |                |       |
| <i>Trade Wind</i>      | 11 Aug         | 23 Aug         |       | <i>Schnr Lizzie Webster</i> | 14 Apr         | 27 Apr         | 9     |
|                        |                |                |       | <i>Schnr Lizzie Webster</i> |                | 18 Jun         | 10    |



paid, to be indicated by a stamped “PAID” in red ink. Interestingly, Article 3 specified that “the exchange of correspondence [under this convention] shall not give rise to any accounts between the British and the United States post offices. Each office shall keep the postage which it collects.”

In essence, this convention was a bilateral forerunner on a miniature scale of key innovations that would underpin the Universal Postal Union less than a decade later. In practice, between 1869 and 1872, there was rough parity in the number of letters sent from New Orleans to Belize and vice-versa, validating the core assumption of postal reciprocity that forms the foundation of U.P.U. The amount of mail between New Orleans and Belize during this period was less than 1 percent of the mail circulating through the West Indies, making the new convention a low-risk, controlled experiment.

Table 2 shows letter mail volume for direct correspondence between New Orleans and Belize for the fiscal years 1868-1872, taken from the U.S. Postmaster General Reports. Note that annual outbound correspondence was never more than 4,500 letters. During this time, U.S. mail sent to and received from the “West India islands” (preponderantly on the steamers of the Brazil Line) averaged about 700,000 letters per year. The diminishment in mail volume for 1870 can be attributed to an economic recession resulting from the September 1869 gold crash that devastated the U.S. economy for nearly a year. During this period, West India mails also decreased by about 30 percent.

The new convention became effective on October 1, 1869. A week later, the *New*

#### DATA SOURCES FOR TABLE 1

The data in Table 2 was compiled from digital archives of two New Orleans newspapers, *The Times-Picayune* (1867-72) and the *Commercial Bulletin* (1867, 1871-72). Access to these archives requires a paid subscription via [www.newspapers.com](http://www.newspapers.com). Partial records of these voyages can also be accessed from the public on-line archives of the *New Orleans Bee* ([nabee.jplibrary.net](http://nabee.jplibrary.net)).

All vessels listed in the table were described in various newspaper advertisements as authorized to carry mail in addition to passengers and cargo. During the period under examination, there were occasional other voyages between New Orleans and Belize, usually undertaken by small sailing schooners carrying cargo on a contracted basis at no fixed intervals. These are not listed because it is assumed they carried no mail.

#### NOTES FOR TABLE 1

1. In late June 1867, *Trade Wind* sailed to New York for repairs and refurbishment. *General Sherman* resumed mail ship duties between New Orleans and Belize pending return of *Trade Wind* in September.
2. *Trade Wind* ran over a mud bank exiting the Mississippi River, sprang a leak, and sank on September 24, 1869 with no loss of life. Mail service to Belize was suspended for two months until a replacement vessel, *Perit*, could continue the service.
3. *Perit* was scheduled by advertisement to depart New Orleans on December 22, but there is no record of this voyage.
4. *Perit* left for Pensacola, Florida on March 30, 1870; mail duties to Belize were assumed by the schooner *Joe Kelly* for one trip.
5. There is no conclusive proof that *Beaufort* carried mail during her April 1870 trip to Belize, but this ship was in the care of Captain Tucker Morrill, who had skippered all previous voyages to Belize on *Trade Wind* and *Perit*.
6. The captain of *Zodiac* was also Tucker Morrill.
7. *Grange* was sent to Lisbon, Portugal on February 16, 1870. She was replaced as the mail ship to Belize by the clipper *David Miller*.
8. No voyages from New Orleans to Belize are recorded for June, July and September 1871.
9. The only recorded voyage to Belize in May 1872 was by the schooner *Martha Aurora*, with no indication that this vessel was designated to carry mail.
10. The schooner *Lizzie Webster* developed a serious leak on her return trip from Belize to New Orleans and was beached on June 28 at Cozumel, Mexico, where her cargo was looted by natives.

**TABLE 2**  
**LETTERS BETWEEN NEW ORLEANS AND BELIZE: 1868-1872**

|                              | 1868  | 1869  | 1870  | 1871  | 1872  |
|------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| <b>New Orleans to Belize</b> | 1,280 | 4,449 | 1,588 | 2,326 | 1,409 |
| <b>Belize to New Orleans</b> | 3,855 | 4,005 | 1,699 | 2,487 | 1,278 |

**Source:** U.S. Postmaster General Reports, 1868 (pg. 301); 1869 (pg. 135); 1870 (pg. 192); 1871 (pg. 142); and 1872 (pg. 271).

*Orleans Bee* noted that mail for Belize, Honduras would leave New Orleans on the fourth Wednesday of each month, but erroneously listed the letter rate for Belize at the old 10¢ rate valid since January 1868, instead of the new 12¢ rate.<sup>4</sup> The *U.S. Mail and Post Office Assistant (USMPOA)*, semi-official organ of the U.S. Post Office Department, made the same mistake. After accurately summarizing the new convention in its September 1869 edition, *USMPOA* left a blank space for the rate to Belize in its table of postages to foreign nations, while listing a 10¢ rate to British Honduras.<sup>5</sup> The October edition continued this error, but in November *USMPOA* finally got it right, showing a 12¢ rate for both Belize and British Honduras by “Br. Packet, via New Orleans.”

The March 1871 issue of *USMPOA* contained an official listing of foreign countries with which the United States had direct postal communication. For British Honduras, the stated connection was once a month between “N. Orleans and Balize [sic]...subsidized by Government of G. Britain.” The annual reports of the U.S. Postmaster General for 1868-1870 devote a separate section to mail activity on the “Honduras line” between the United States and Belize.<sup>6</sup> In the 1871 Report, this became the “New Orleans and Honduras line”; and in 1872, mail statistics were reported under the heading of the “New Orleans and Honduras Steamship Company.”<sup>7</sup>

### Britain’s 1872 changes

Britain ended the subsidy after less than three years. Effective March 1872, Kingston, Jamaica became the new hub for most British and American mail headed to British Honduras, at an increased letter rate of 18¢.<sup>8</sup> The June 1872 issue of *USMPOA* explains the change by noting that a shift in the schedule for British mail packets operating in the Caribbean would “prevent close connections at St. Thomas” between the Brazil line steamers from New York and the British mail ships at St. Thomas. U.S. mail destined for British colonies in the Caribbean would henceforth flow through Kingston as the main forwarding depot.<sup>9</sup>

I have been unable to find any document in British or American postal records that officially terminated either the 1869 N.O.-Belize postal convention or the British subsidy that nourished it. Perhaps both sides deemed that the 1872 switch to Kingston as a forwarding hub amounted to a *de facto* revocation of the arrangement. The 1873 U.S. Postmaster General Report has a brief entry for the “New Orleans and Honduras Steamship Company” indicating 299 letters were sent to Belize for the year, but a “no report” entry on the number of letters received.<sup>10</sup> There is no mention of the company, Belize, or British Honduras in the PMG reports for 1874 and 1875. It appears that the company’s role as a postal packet survived briefly after the 1872 change in British arrangements, and then faded into obscurity.

### 1869 covers to Belize

Until recently, only one cover to British Honduras was recorded with an 1869 stamp. A December 2020 Siegel auction, however, offered two more.<sup>11</sup> Both are cover fronts bearing 1869 stamps from New Orleans to the same firm in Belize. By good fortune, one was



sent before enactment of the U.S.-British Honduras postal convention, and one shortly afterwards, making it possible to compare differences in franking and markings.

Figure 1 shows the “before” cover, posted from New Orleans on April 21, 1869 and received at Belize six days later. The single-circle Belize receiving marking on the front is dated “AP 27 69.” Since there was then no postal agreement governing mails between the United States and British Honduras, the 10¢ “blanket” steamship rate applied to the U.S. portion of the voyage. The blue crayon “4” on this cover represents the amount due from the recipient. This designates the standard four pence charged for intercolonial letter service in the Caribbean basin.



**Figure 1. 10¢ 1869 stamp on a cover (front) posted at New Orleans on April 21, 1869 and arriving at Belize, British Honduras, six days later. Direct carriage via steamship *Trade Wind* (see Table 1). The 10¢ blanket rate paid postage only to the foreign frontier. In this case, 4d British postage was due from the recipient.**

At first glance, a 4d fee for local delivery within Belize seems excessive, since the same amount would have been charged if the letter had travelled from New York to the British Post Office in St. Thomas for onward transport by an RMSP mail packet to destination. Normally, the local delivery fee within a British colony was 1d, but postal authorities in Belize chose to treat arriving mail not franked with British stamps worth 4d as deficient and owing that amount. Thus, the net postage required to send a letter from the United States to Belize in April 1869 was 18¢—10¢ U.S. postage and 4d (= 8¢) collected from the recipient.

In October 1869, the U.S.–British Honduras postal convention changed these calculations. Now a letter could be sent fully prepaid from New Orleans to Belize, and vice-versa, at the equivalent of 12¢ either way. While missing a stamp, the cover in Figure 2 shows the only recorded example of this new rate bearing an 1869 stamp (or any others, to my knowledge). This cover was originally docketed for routing through Havana in the same script used for the address. Such a routing would have consumed much more time and would have required an additional delivery charge to the recipient in Belize.

The cover shows a change in routing penned in a different hand, perhaps that of the forwarding agent, directing the cover “Per SS Perit,” scheduled for the direct run from New Orleans to Belize in January 1870. Also important is the faint “PAID” marking in red below the Belize receiving postmark, plus the absence of any due marking. This conforms to the



Figure 2. From the same correspondence as Figure 1, posted January 19, 1870. The 2¢ 1869 (plus a 10¢ stamp missing from upper right) paid the 12¢ treaty rate effective October 1, 1869. The cover was marked PAID and there was no local collection.

terms of the convention. Regrettably, the cover is missing a stamp at the top right to make up the required 12¢ postage. Almost certainly, this was a 10¢ 1869 stamp. We know it was an 1869 stamp because its residual gum defines the square 1869 format and even shows a hint of the distinctive square 1869 grill pattern. If the missing adhesive was a 10¢ stamp, the letter appears to have been accepted at the 12¢ convention rate even though it was carried

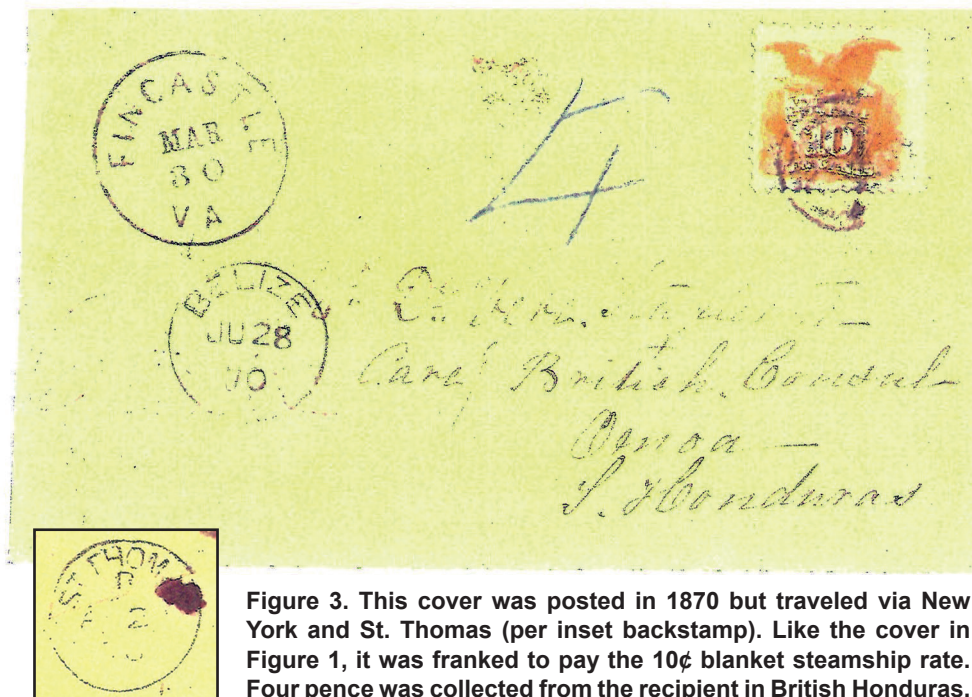


Figure 3. This cover was posted in 1870 but traveled via New York and St. Thomas (per inset backstamp). Like the cover in Figure 1, it was franked to pay the 10¢ blanket steamship rate. Four pence was collected from the recipient in British Honduras.



by an American packet. Also regrettable is the absence of a back to the Figure 2 cover, but since there was no intermediate routing, it probably bore no additional postal markings.

The third U.S. cover to British Honduras franked with an 1869 stamp illustrates treatment of mail from the U.S. to Belize that did not travel via New Orleans. The cover in Figure 3, shown through the courtesy of Jeffrey Forster, was posted at Fincastle, Virginia on March 30, 1870. It was sent to New York, where it was held for the next monthly departure of a Brazil Line steamer. This would have been the *Merrimack*, which left New York April 23 and arrived at St. Thomas, in the Danish West Indies, on April 29. The cover debarked at St. Thomas. A St. Thomas backstamp (shown inset in Figure 3) is not fully struck, but shows “AP 29 70” clearly enough. At St. Thomas the cover was probably transferred to an RMSP mail packet. After one or more subsequent hand-offs, in due course it arrived at Belize, where it was marked “JU 28 70”—indicating a three-month trip.<sup>12</sup> The cover is franked with a 10¢ 1869 stamp paying the blanket steamship rate to St. Thomas. At Belize it was rated 4 pence due (the blue crayon “4”) to pay the intercolonial packet postage. This is similar to the marking on the cover in Figure 1, though on the Figure 3 cover, the 4d paid for a lot more transportation.

### Conclusion

Table 1 should be regarded as just the beginning of a full presentation of sailing data for this service. I leave to future students the task of sleuthing out comparable information for arrivals and departures at Belize.

It would be helpful to find more examples of U.S. mail to Belize during this period. Bank Note covers most likely exist, and these would help confirm and flesh out the applicable rates. As it is, the three covers illustrated in this article show different features that answer some questions while raising others. The brief era of the New Orleans-Belize postal convention is an interesting byway in 1869 postal history, a small but significant marker on the road leading to the milestone of Universal Postal Union.

### Endnotes

1. These items were not carried on every trip, but are rather a compilation of listed cargo found in the “Maritime News” section appearing in each issue of the *New Orleans Bee*.
2. *Bulletin No. 239* (December 2013), British West Indies Study Circle, pg. 8.
3. A full text of the convention appears in the the U.S. Postmaster General Report for 1869, pp. 94-95.
4. *New Orleans Bee*, October 8, 1869.
5. *United States Mail and Post Office Assistant* reprint (Collector’s Club of Chicago, 1975), Vol. 2, pg. 432 (hereinafter cited as USMPOA).
6. Postmaster General Report for 1868, pg. 301; for 1869, pg. 135; for 1870, pg. 192.
7. Postmaster General Report for 1871, pg. 142; for 1872, pg. 271.
8. See Starnes, *United States Letter Rates to Foreign Destinations 1847 to GPU-UPU* (revised edition), pg. 8. Starnes lists this shift to Kingston and the new 18¢ rate as occurring in June 1872, instead of March, likely based on a note in the June 1872 USMPOA (pg. 562). The foreign postages chart in the April and May 1872 issues of USMPOA, however, show a split rate, i.e., Belize at the 12¢ rate via New Orleans, and an 18¢ rate for British Honduras via Kingston. Only in June 1872 does the USMPOA harmonize the two rates at 18¢ for both Belize and British Honduras. An additional piece of evidence that supports an earlier, March 1872 shift to the 18¢ rate is a British “Postal Official Circular No. 8 (Postmasters’ Edition)” dated February 12, 1872, which states: “Mails for British Honduras will, in future, be forwarded via Jamaica; the Colonial Government having entered into a contract with the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company for a service once a month between Kingston and Belize. The first Mail under the new arrangement will be despatched from London on...the 18th of March next....” The full text of this circular is printed in *Bulletin No. 51* (December 1966), British West Indies Study Circle, pg. 130.
9. USMPOA, *op. cit.*, pg. 562.
10. U.S. Postmaster General Report for 1873, pg. 236.
11. Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries, Sale 1230, lots 1278 and 1287.
12. In March 1870, the mail-carrying rail route between New York to New Orleans passed through Washington, D.C. and Lynchburg, taking less than four days from start to finish. Had this cover been routed “Via New Orleans,” it might have been sent on that route and dispatched on the next direct steamer from New Orleans to Belize. In this case it could have arrived in a month. ■

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## THE U.S. ORANGE SPECIAL DELIVERY STAMP OF 1893: USES ABROAD

STEPHEN ROSE

### Introduction

In 1874, Belgium began a special delivery (SD) service using stamps and messengers from its telegraph offices, taking advantage of the co-location of postal and telegraph facilities in many towns. In 1885, the United States began its own SD service, administered wholly by the Post Office Department (POD). This SD service was initially limited to 555 post offices in larger towns but expanded to all post offices in 1886.

There were no reciprocal postal treaties between nations regarding express delivery of mail until 1923. Even so, occasional attempts were made to obtain SD service on letters sent from the United States to foreign destinations, and vice-versa. This article examines how postal authorities treated examples of such mail franked with the U.S. orange SD stamp of 1893 (Scott E3).

### Attempted uses to Europe

Figure 1 shows a cover mailed from New York on February 8, 1894 to an address in London, franked only with an orange SD stamp. As indicated by the crayon “2” at upper left, the required postage on this double-rate cover was 10¢, twice the 5¢ U.P.U. postage rate. But the stamp was invalid for two reasons. First, U.S. SD stamps could not be used as ordinary postage; and second, there was no agreement with Britain about SD service.

As a consequence, this letter was treated as unpaid mail. The encircled “T” marking applied at New York alerted British authorities that postage was due. The cover has a



Figure 1. Attempted use of a 10¢ orange Special Delivery stamp to London. The stamp counted for nothing and this double-rate cover was treated as unpaid mail.

London arrival backstamp dated February 19 and was routed to the International Branch (“I.B.”) for evaluation. This office assessed the postage due as 10 pence, equivalent to U.S. 20¢. This represented the unpaid postage of 10¢, plus a penalty of the same amount for the franking deficiency.

Perhaps the sender of this letter was not seeking expedited delivery but only intended the 10¢ SD stamp to be a substitute for the normal 10¢ franking. Whatever his intention, the ironic effect was the waste of a SD stamp plus a detour to the International Branch for additional processing.

Figure 2 shows another failed use to a foreign destination, here with a 3¢ Columbian stamp on a 2¢ Columbian envelope. This cover originated in San Francisco (August 1, 1894), traveled via rail to New York (August 6 backstamp), and then by steamer to Germany, finally arriving in Neuwied, a small town along the Rhine River, on August 16. The 3¢ + 2¢ franking was appropriate for the 5¢ international U.P.U. rate. The cover also sports an



**Figure 2. Attempted use of a 10¢ orange Special Delivery stamp to Germany. Again the stamp counted for nothing (and was so singled out) but in this instance the 5¢ franking (3¢ Columbian, 2¢ entire envelope) paid the single U.P.U. letter rate.**

orange SD stamp, which was highlighted in New York, marked in blue crayon as a nullity having zero franking value. (Note the similar zero next to the stamp on the cover in Figure 1.) If the Figure 2 cover had been sent to a U.S. domestic address, the SD stamp would have come into play, not to expedite the journey from San Francisco to New York of course, but only in the “last mile” from the receiving post office to the addressee.

Figure 3 is a third example of failed use to Europe, this time to France. This business-size cover was posted from Washington, D.C. on June 22, 1894 at double the 5¢ international rate. Backstamps include the New York and Washington Railway Post Office (June 22), New York arrival (June 23), plus a blue Munroe & Co. oval (July 5), the day after arrival in Paris. French authorities seem to have ignored the orange SD stamp, although delivery service was prompt, including apparent forwarding to addresses within Paris. It is unclear whether these forwarding efforts were undertaken by Paris postal workers or by employees of Munroe & Co., a forwarding agent and predecessor to the American Express





**Figure 3. Another failed attempt to achieve special delivery in Europe. The pair of 5¢ Grant stamps paid the U.P.U. double-rate postage. The 10¢ orange Special Delivery stamp served no purpose, though it may have lent the letter a sense of urgency.**

Company. In any case, the SD stamp had no official status, but it may have subjectively encouraged Munroe to treat the letter as more urgent than most.

### From Canada

Although the United States did not sign a reciprocal SD treaty with Canada until 1923, there was an informal arrangement beginning in the 1890s through which some Canadian post offices stocked U.S. SD stamps as a convenience for their patrons. Figure 4 is the only recorded example of such dual franking from Canada with the 1893 orange SD stamp. Postmarked at St. John, New Brunswick (November 7, 1893), this cover arrived in Boston two days later and received SD status. The serrated-edge, rubber-stamped marking at the left is characteristic of Boston-area SD processing, with separate lines for “Number,”



**Figure 4. A mixed-franking use: the 10¢ orange stamp was applied by the sender in New Brunswick (along with the Canadian 3¢ Small Queen) and postmarked at Boston, where it was accepted in payment for special delivery service.**

“Date,” and “Time.” The separation of SD service from normal franking is echoed in the postmarks, with Canada canceling only its stamp, leaving the orange SD stamp to be canceled at the U.S. receiving post office.

### From Guam

In the aftermath of the Spanish-American War of 1898, the United States expanded its domestic mail service to include new overseas possessions. The U.S. blue SD stamp of 1895 was overprinted for use on mail originating in Cuba, Guam, and the Philippines. Covers with these overprinted stamps are scarce. Also scarce are covers from these locales franked with stamps from previous SD issues. One cover each is recorded with the 1893 orange SD stamp from Guam and Cuba, none from the Philippines.

Figure 5 shows an unusual registered SD cover from Guam to Hecker, Illinois. Total franking is 20¢: 2¢ for domestic postage, 8¢ for registration (value under \$10), and 10¢ for



**Figure 5. 10¢ orange stamp applied at Guam and used for special delivery service in Hecker, Illinois. The additional postage paid the 2¢ letter rate and 8¢ registration fee.**

special delivery. The cover is postmarked from Agaña, Guam’s largest habitation (April 18, 1902). It was backstamped at the San Francisco “Registration Division” (May 27) and arrived at Hecker on June 2. There is no indication of special delivery service anywhere on the cover. According to the 1900 census, Hecker had a population of 200, and it is possible that the postmaster knew the recipient, Reverend Wiegmann, and delivered the letter personally. When this letter was mailed in 1902, the blue SD stamps overprinted for Guam were readily available, especially at the Agaña post office. There is no compelling explanation for use of the orange SD stamp on this cover; it is the equivalent of a philatelic unicorn.

### From Havana

Equally strange is the cover in Figure 6, postmarked at Havana, Cuba during the period when the island was under American military control and U.S. stamps could be used on outgoing mail. The franking is a medley of old and new stamps, considerably more than the 2¢ needed for a single-rate letter to the United States. A further suggestion of philatelic origin is the word “Master” in the address, typically used as an honorific for a boy. Finally, there is no backstamp showing receipt of the letter in New York, nor is there any indication of SD service. These clues collectively suggest that this cover was a philatelic concoction prepared with an interesting array of stamps, favor canceled in Havana, and then handed back to the writer. As such, it is not a genuine use but rather a postal souvenir.





Figure 6. 10¢ orange Special Delivery stamp applied at Havana to a 1¢ entire envelope, along with a long-obsolete 2¢ 1869 stamp and a 4¢ Lincoln. The address ("Master Bail Bailey") and the absence of any backstamps suggest this was a handback envelope, created as a souvenir for a budding young collector.

### Conclusion

Domestic covers with the orange SD stamp of 1893 are plentiful; uses to and from "abroad" are quite scarce, with fewer than 10 examples recorded. The six covers illustrated in this article show a spotty record of SD service beyond the U.S. mainland: three failures to Europe, one documented use (Canada to Boston), one possible success (Guam to Hecker), and one philatelic non-use.

Readers are invited to send scans of other such uses to the author at [rosesa47@outlook.com](mailto:rosesa47@outlook.com). ■

## 1893 U.S.-GERMAN SEA POST OFFICE: FOLLOW-UP

KEN LAWRENCE

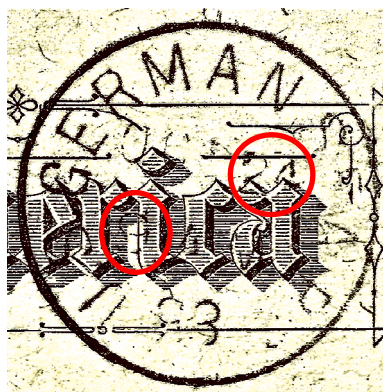
In his interesting article "U.S.-German Sea Post: 1891-93" in *Chronicle* 269, Labron Harris captioned his Figure 6 postal card as "1¢ Grant postal card uprated to overpay the 2¢ international card rate. Perhaps the sender intended to create a philatelic souvenir." In his text, Harris reported the date of the U.S.-GERMAN SEA P.O. duplex postmark as October 31, 1893. He identified the ship as the North German Lloyd steamer *Havel*.

I was skeptical about his interpretation of the date and the rate, but I could not be positive that I was reading them correctly. I arranged to secure the card from Harris so I could examine it carefully at my leisure. My hunches turned out to be right. The card is



Figure 1. Why total postage of 10¢? The card required 5¢ single letter-rate postage because its dimensions exceeded the U.P.U. maximum for a postal card. Double postage was required to pay the supplementary mail charge.

Figure 2. Enhanced enlargement of the dial portion of the postmark on the Figure 1. The information reads "U.S. GERMAN SEA P.O. OCT 24 9 AM 93" (October 24, 1893, 9 a.m.). The "24" and the "9" are encircled in red.



| OUTGOING STEAMERS.   |            |             |              |               |
|----------------------|------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|
| TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24. |            |             |              |               |
| Vessel.              | Line.      | For.        | Mails Close. | Vessel Sails. |
| Havel,               | N G Lloyd, | Bremen..... | 6:00 a m     | 9:00 a m      |

Figure 3. Notice from the October 23, 1893, *New York Herald* showing that mails for Europe on the North German Lloyd steamship *Havel* closed at 6 a.m. and the ship's scheduled departure time was 9 a.m. on October 24.

reproduced here as Figure 1. The date and time in the postmark dial are OCT 24 and 9 AM, easier to read in the enhanced enlargement shown in Figure 2.

But Harris identified the vessel correctly. As the Figure 3 excerpt from the October 23, 1893, *New York Herald* shows, mails for the NGL steamer *Havel* closed at 6 a.m. on



October 24, for her scheduled 9 a.m. departure to Bremen. From that information one can demonstrate that 10¢ was the correct postage, not an overpayment.

The 9 a.m. time in the postmark, three hours after the close of the regular mails, was the hour designated for the liner *Havel* to sail. The postmark verifies that the card was dispatched as supplementary mail, mere moments before her departure. As such it required double postage.

In 1893 the U.S. postal card rate to a foreign destination other than Canada or Mexico was 2¢; when doubled as supplementary mail, 4¢. But 1¢ Ulysses S. Grant postal cards of 1891 were exceptions. The dimensions of the cards as issued were 6⅞ by 3¾ inches, the largest size among the POD's standards. They posed no problem for domestic use, but they exceeded the maximum postal card dimensions authorized by the Universal Postal Union convention—14 by 9 centimeters, equal to about 5½ by 3½ inches. When sent to UPU member countries, oversize cards required 5¢ single letter postage; when doubled as supplementary mail, that was 10¢.

For those reasons I believe the postage on the card paid the required amount exactly.

Nevertheless, the story does not end there. The card is blank on the back; it has no written or printed message. Labron was surely right that it was sent as a souvenir. Besides that, although the card was oversize and was properly rated as a letter, the Post Office Department had not yet acknowledged the requirement.

Until the POD issued this order titled "The Largest United States Postal Cards (Size "C") Mailable to Foreign Countries Only as Letters" on November 17, few American senders would have realized the discrepancy (but a traveler from Europe on a visit to New York might have recognized that the card was larger than normal):

**Article XVI of the Regulations for the execution of the Universal Postal Union Convention of Vienna, provides that post cards in the mails exchanged between countries of the Postal Union shall not exceed 14 centimeters (5 3-5 inches) in length by 9 centimeters (3 3-5 inches) in breadth; and that post cards which do not conform to these conditions shall be treated as letters.**

**The United States domestic postal card of the largest size (size "C") measures 6⅞ inches in length by 3¾ inches in breadth. It therefore exceeds the maximum size permissible for "postal cards" in international mails, and can be dispatched to a foreign country (except to Canada and Mexico to correspondence for which our domestic postal regulations apply) only as a letter, and subject to the rate of postage applicable to letters for the country to which the card is addressed. Consequently, the postal cards in question when addressed to any foreign country embraced in the Postal Union (except Canada and Mexico) are subject to a charge of 5 cents each, and if a less amount is prepaid, are liable on delivery to a charge equal to *double* the amount of the deficiency; that is to say, if prepaid only 2 cents, they are short 3 cents, and a charge equal to that sum, or the equivalent of six cents, will be collectible of the addressee on delivery.**

Take note that the POD followed UPU practice of using the terms *postal card* and *post card* interchangeably. The notice was published in the November 20 *Daily Bulletin of Orders Affecting the Postal Service*. Until now, postal historians who were aware that the 1¢ Grant postal cards were oversize believed that rating them to foreign destinations as letters began on that date. Before November 20, they were typically accepted as though they met the UPU standard for sending as post- or postal cards.

At the present time, this October 24, 1893, 1¢ Grant postal card is the earliest one recorded as having been prepaid with letter-rate postage. Was the franking intentional or serendipitous? Today we cannot know for certain, but I think it was probably deliberate. Thanks to Leonard Piskiewicz for assistance. ■

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**HANDSTAMPED VESSEL-NAMED MARKINGS  
ON TRANSATLANTIC STAMPLESS COVERS, 1784-1865  
PART 1**

**JAMES W. MILGRAM, M.D.**

Most transatlantic covers do not bear the names of the vessels that carried them. Some show a sender's manuscript directive designating a particular ship. Only a very small number of covers, from both sailing vessels and steamers, show handstamped ship names. Many of these have been listed in the *American Stampless Cover Catalog* (Volume II) in a section entitled "Private ocean ship name markings."<sup>1</sup> However, most are not illustrated and many new markings have been discovered since the catalog listing, which was published more than 30 years ago and assembled years before that. I included these covers in my book, *Vessel-Named Markings on Inland and Ocean Waterways, 1810-1890* and the two supplements.<sup>2</sup>

This *Chronicle* article is an updated, illustrated listing of all the vessel-named markings that have been found on stampless transatlantic covers. Each marking includes the number assigned to it in my book or its supplements. Many are new listings, which have A, B, and C suffixes attached to the listing numbers. All the numbers in my book bear a prefix M (for "Milgram").

All these are private markings: they were not applied by a post office, although most of their covers do bear other postal markings. Some are routing directives but most are publicity markings indicating transit on the vessel named in the marking. On inland steamboats similar markings served the same purpose and are quite plentiful.

This article will be published in two parts. This initial installment discusses markings that were prepared by fleet owners or shipping agents and show clear typographical similarities. Seven such groupings suggest themselves, and each is discussed chronologically. For each grouping, the article includes a table describing all known marking types, with each marking in the table keyed to a cover illustration in the text or a marking illustration presented in three accompanying plates (pages 285-287). The objective is to present a photographic image of all known ship-named handstamps used on transatlantic mail.

The marking illustrations in the plates are digital scans, not tracings. This offers the advantage of showing what the markings actually look like, rather than what some collector might have imagined. A disadvantage is that real-life markings are often poorly struck or obscured by handwriting or postmarks. The markings shown in Plates 1 through 3 are the best examples I could find. For the most part they are crisp and clear.

Beyond the markings that lend themselves to grouping, there are many markings about which we know very little, among them some of the most interesting and visually striking. These will be discussed in the concluding installment of this article.

Many vessel-named transatlantic markings are quite early, dating from the decades before postal treaties and scheduled steamships, an era when shipping firms and forwarding

agents helped letters traveling by private sailing ship find the most expeditious routing. Some of these markings, especially those discussed in the second installment, were probably applied by the captain or a crew member while the letter was actually onboard the ship. Unlike steamboats, which usually had a clerk, ocean ships did not carry a clerical crew member. We know much about the clerks who applied steamboat markings, but that position is unique to steamboats. For the markings discussed in this article, we often do not know when they were applied, though a few groups appear to be directional markings and may have been applied before the vessel sailed. The majority are American but a few are British or French on letters to or from the United States.

**French royal packet markings, 1783-88**

The earliest handstamped vessel-named markings are French. They date from the 18th century and appear on some of the covers carried by the French royal packets that began sailing to New York immediately after the conclusion of the American Revolution. A group of these covers, including two bearing vessel-named markings, was offered in the Robert A. Siegel Rarity sale of June 19, 2010. The markings are in French, fabricated for the royal transatlantic packet company, created on June 28, 1783 by a decree of Louis XVI. Beginning in September 1783, these ships sailed to New York from the French port of Lorient, in Brittany. Five ships of war with naval crews were initially assigned to the service, with additional vessels named later.

The covers fall into two groups. Westbound covers, addressed to Philadelphia or New York, bear “PAQ L’ORIENT” markings (in different versions) designating the French port of origin. These markings, which began in 1783, do not contain vessel names, so they are not germane to our discussion here.

The vessel-named markings appear on eastbound covers addressed to Europe, almost always to France. In various arrays, the markings name the ship and include the words “NEW YORK.” These markings were applied by the French consul at New York, acting on

| TABLE 1: FRENCH ROYAL PACKET MARKINGS, 1783-85      |        |      |       |           |
|-----------------------------------------------------|--------|------|-------|-----------|
| MARKING TEXT                                        | NUMBER | DATE | COLOR | REFERENCE |
| Le Courier de l’Amerique<br>NewYork                 | M308A  | 1784 | Red   | Plate 1   |
| Le Courier de l’Amerique<br>NewYork                 | M308B  | 1784 | Black |           |
| Le Courier de l’Amerique<br>*-NewYork.*             | M308C  | 1784 | Black | Figure 1  |
| P. Le Courier de l’Europe.<br>capt:CORnic-New-York. | M308D  | 1784 | Black | Figure 2  |
| Le Courier de l’EUROPE.<br>NewYork*16 juin 1785     | M308DA | 1785 | Black | Plate 1   |
| Le Courier de NewYork                               | M308E  | 1784 | Black | Plate 1   |
| Courier de L’Orient<br>New York                     | M308F  | 1784 | Black | Plate 1   |
| Le Courier La Martinique<br>New-York. 15 Jan.1785   | M308G  | 1785 | Black | Plate 1   |
| Le Warwick. NewYork.                                | M308H  | 1784 | Black | Plate 1   |



behalf of the Première Régie (the first royal agency). Six marking types were shown in my article in *Postal History Journal*, October 1992 (number 93), pages 35-36. More recently, Steven Walske and Robert Abensur wrote a more detailed study of this service showing drawings of all known markings.<sup>3</sup>

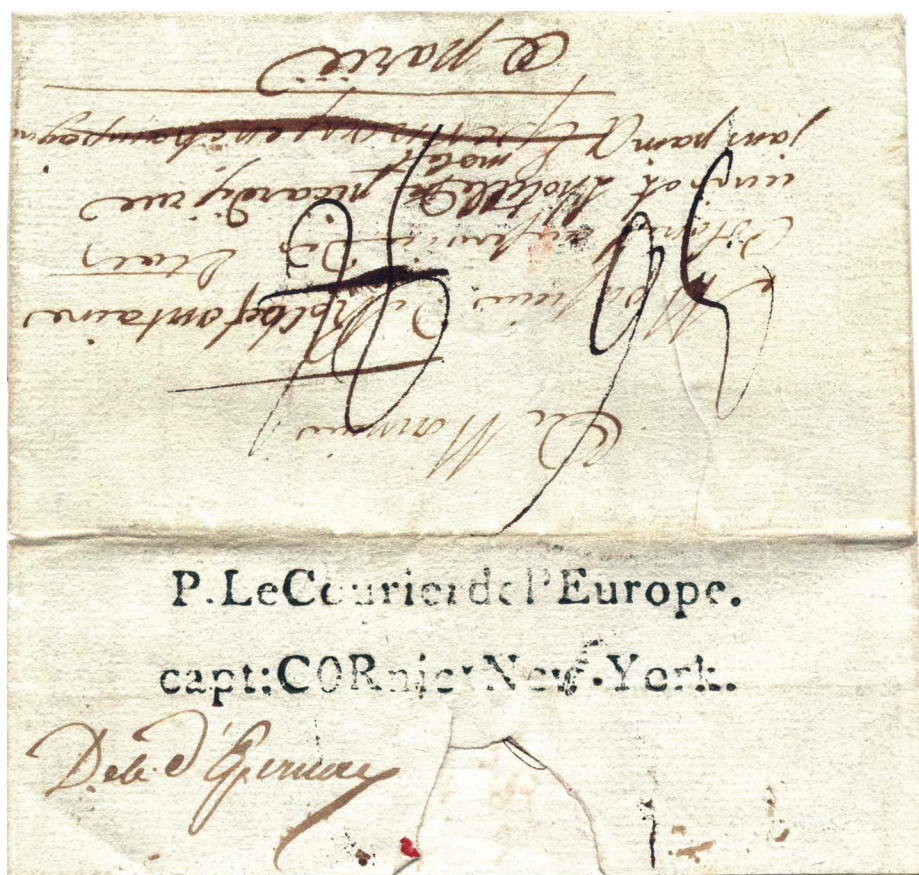
Table 1 lists the ship-named markings found on covers carried by the French royal packet service. All covers from this service are scarce, even rare. For most of the vessel-named markings, only one or two strikes are recorded. Table 1 (and those that follow) shows the text of each marking, its catalog number in my book, the date of use, the color, and a reference notation keyed to a cover illustration in this article or to one of the accompanying marking plates. As noted, the illustrations in the plates are not tracings, but digital scans of actual markings, electronically clipped from cover scans. Thus, in some cases, they show traces of handwriting or other marks. Illustrations for three of the markings in Plate 1 (M308DA, M308E and M308F) are taken from the Walske-Abensur monograph.

Figure 1 shows a cover bearing an example of the **Le Courier de l'Amerique/\*-New York.\*** (M308C), a two-line marking struck in black. As noted, it was applied by the French consul, who was the agent for the Première Régie in New York. The enclosed letter shows a 1784 year date. The cover was carried on the second return trip of *Courier de l'Amérique*, which departed from New York on August 17, 1784 and arrived at Lorient on September 19. The manuscript 36 rating scribbled across the address indicates the postage due of 36 sols, summing the 20 sols packet fee and 16 sols French internal postage.<sup>4</sup> At this time one French sol was approximately equivalent to a British half penny.

A second marking type for this same ship (M308A) is known in red from 1784. See the illustration in Plate 1. This shows no asterisks flanking "New York". Marking M308B is a similar no-asterisks marking, in black ink.



Figure 1. This black "Le Courier de l'Amerique\*-New York\*" marking was applied by the French consul in New York. The letter within was carried on the second return trip of *Le Courier de l'Amérique* from New York on August 17, 1784, arriving at Lorient September 19. Postage due was 36 sols, the sum of the 20 sols packet fee and 16 sols French internal postage.



**Figure 2. “P. Le Courier de l’Europe. capt: CORNIC: New-York.” on a letter dated December 13, 1784, from Philadelphia to Paris, forwarded to Epernay, France. *Le Courier de l’Europe* left New York on December 21, 1784 arriving at Lorient January 19, 1785. The postage due was rerated from 26 sols to 36 sols.**

The cover in Figure 2 shows one of two types of the markings used on the vessel *Le Courier de l’Europe*, **P. Le Courier de l’Europe. capt: CORNIC: New-York** (M308D). The illustrated cover has been opened out and inverted to show the marking. This is a most interesting marking because it includes an individual’s name, Captain Cornick. The letter within is datelined “Philadelphie le 13 Dece. 1784” and the cover is addressed to Epernay, France. It was sent to the French consul in New York, who dispatched it via *Le Courier de l’Europe*, departing New York on December 21, 1784, and arriving at Lorient on January 19, 1785. The cover was then forwarded to Paris. The postage due was originally marked as 26 sols and subsequently corrected to 36 sols. This represented 20 sols packet fee and 16 sols French internal postage.

The other marking type for this same vessel shows “NewYork\*16 juin 1785” (308DA) in the second line; see the illustration in Plate 1. While it doesn’t bear the captain’s name, this marking is interesting because it shows a specific date of sailing.<sup>5</sup>

A cover showing the “Le Courier de NewYork” marking (M308E, see Plate 1), one line in black, from 1784, is shown in the Postal History Journal first supplement. That cover was from the first return trip from New York. A “Courier de L’Orient/NewYork” marking in the same large block lettering is shown as a drawing for M308E.

*(text continued on page 296)*



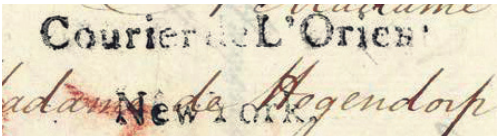
PLATE 1

FRENCH ROYAL PACKET MARKINGS: 1783-88

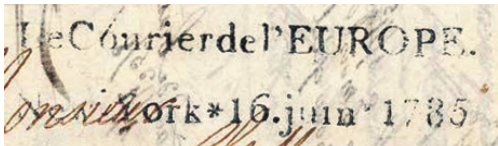
(Reduced to 75% of original size)



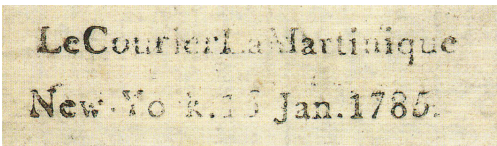
M308A



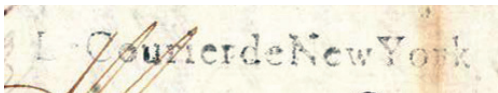
M308F



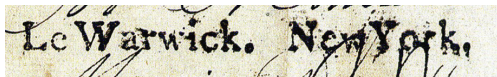
M308DA



M308G



M308E



M308H

HERALD AND MILO MARKINGS: 1818-19



M601



M601A

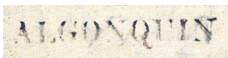


M601B

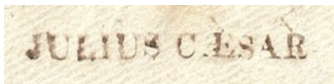


M891

STRAIGHTLINE MARKINGS FROM 1824



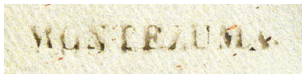
M26



M737C



M844C



M932



M1053



M1390

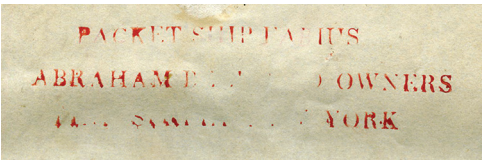
**PLATE 2**

**ABRAHAM BELL MARKINGS: 1828-34**

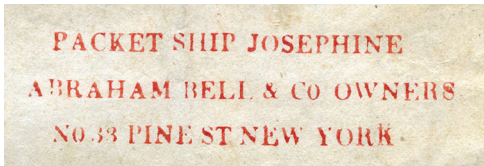
(Reduced to 70% of original size)



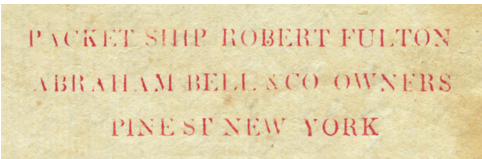
**Atlantic (M73)**



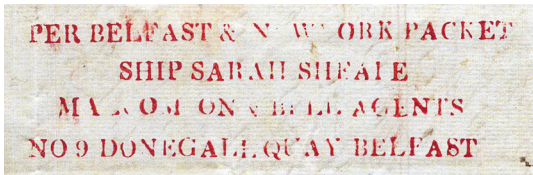
**Fabius (M433A)**



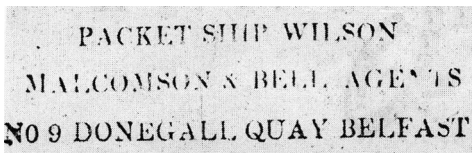
**Josephine (M729)**



**Robert Fulton (M1203)**



**Sarah Sheale (M1249)**



**Wilson (M1458A)**

**T.W. WARD MARKINGS, BOSTON 1841-49**



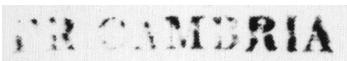
**M1**



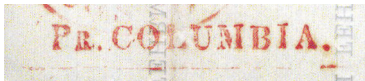
**M2**



**M144**



**M165**



**M268**



**M605**

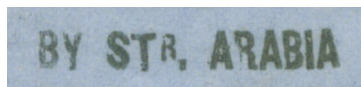


PLATE 3

W. SCHALL & CO. MARKINGS, NEW YORK: 1855-64



M45B



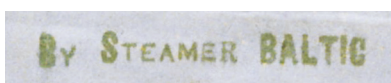
M62C



M68A



M82BA



M85AA



M429B



M488



M601C



M631



M631A



738A



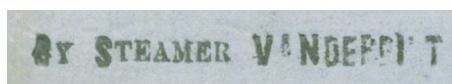
M1005A



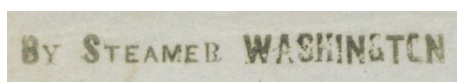
M1090AA



M1257A



M1406A



M1436

(text from page 292)

“Le Courier La Martinique New-York. 15 Jan.1785” (M308G) is another dated marking. The strike shown in Plate 1 appears on the reverse of a cover that bears a Philadelphia “PAID” with manuscript “2” dwt rate to New York (since the letter originated in Philadelphia). The French rating was 50 sols due at Marseilles. The letter weighed between 2 and 4 gros (as indicated by the manuscript “g”) and was carried from Lorient to Marseille via Paris, so it was rated for 30 sols domestic postage (15 sols from Lorient to Paris plus 15 sols from Paris to Marseilles) plus 20 sols packet postage.<sup>6</sup> This cover is from the return first trip of *Le Courier La Martinique* from New York.

The final marking recorded for this group is from one of the other ships of the line, *Le Warwick*. This marking (M308H in Plate 1) is the same type face as the other markings and contains the wording “New York” designating a return trip from there.

**Herald and Milo markings, 1818-19**

In 1818-19 two vessels, *Herald* and *Milo*, sailing between Liverpool and Boston, used strikingly similar double-circle ship-named markings. These markings are found on covers that traveled in both directions, strongly suggesting they were applied on board. I wrote about these markings in *Chronicle* 233, and prior to that Mark Schwartz, in one of the Congress Books, established connections between the vessels and between their captains.<sup>7</sup> While distinctly different, these markings have many common features: their size, the double-circle array, their typography and the information presented, which in addition to the ship name includes the date of sailing and (in most instances) the captain’s name as well. The legend information is crude and sometimes shows odd spelling. It seems likely that each marking was separately assembled (possibly from newspaper type) for each voyage. Six of these markings are listed and described in Table 2. Four are illustrated in Plate 1 and the other two appear on the two covers discussed and illustrated next.

There are four listings for the *Herald* (M600, M601, M601A and M601B) in different colors (blue, red, green and black). The blue example (**SAILD . SHIP . HERALD . FEB-Ry 25.**), not seen for many years, is struck on the cover shown in Figure 3. The letter within is datelined Liverpool February 23, 1818. The cover was endorsed at lower left to be sent on the *Herald*, which sailed February 25, 1818. On arrival, the cover was marked with Boston’s fancy red arch **SHIP 6** to indicate 6¢ due, for a ship letter addressed to the port of arrival. The black marking (M601B in Plate 1) appears on an eastbound cover, that departed Boston for Liverpool on April 30, 1819. This strike shows the marking text very clearly: **SHIP . HERALD . P . FOX SAILD APRIL 30.**

**TABLE 2: HERALD AND MILO MARKINGS, 1818-19**

| MARKING TEXT                          | NUMBER | DATE | COLOR | REF      |
|---------------------------------------|--------|------|-------|----------|
| SAILD . SHIP . HERALD . FEB-Ry 25     | M600   | 1818 | Blue  | Figure 3 |
| SHIP HERALD P. FOX SAILD DEC. 5       | M601   | 1819 | Red   | Plate 1  |
| SHIP HERALD P. FOX SAILD JULY 3       | M601A  | 1819 | Green | Plate 1  |
| SHIP HERALD P. FOX SAILD APRIL 30     | M601B  | 1818 | Black | Plate 1  |
| SHIP MILO. S.G. BRONSON SAILD mar 27  | M891   | 1818 | Blue  | Plate 1  |
| SHIP MILO. S.G. BRONSON SAIL'D AUG:16 | M891A  | 1818 | Green | Figure 4 |





Figure 3. Blue double-circle "SHIP HERALD SAILD FEBRY 25" on a cover from Liverpool (internally dated February 23, 1818) carried to Boston. The blurry red arch "SHIP 6" marking was struck at Boston to indicate the ship fee due.

The *Milo* markings are from the same period. *Milo* was an American vessel whose master applied the markings when he sailed from Liverpool. There are three different dates known for the blue marking and one date for the green marking, which is a different hand-stamp. In the blue marking shown as M891 in Plate 1, the inner and outer circle are made up of small dots. On the green marking (M891A) on the cover in Figure 4, the outer circle is made from an array of small vertical dashes. This cover dates from 1818 and the legend



Figure 4. "SHIP MILO. S.G. BRONSON. SAIL'D AUG:16" in green on a cover from Liverpool via Boston to New York. The cover also shows a red "BOSTON MS SEP 22" and "SHIP" with "20¾" due (2¢ ship fee plus 18¾¢ postage for 150-400 miles).



reads **SHIP MILO. S. G. BRONSON.** and **SAIL'D AUG:16.** Addressed to New York, the cover entered the mails at Boston where it was marked as a ship letter and rated 20¾¢ due—2¢ ship fee plus 18¾¢ for the 150-400 mile distance.

### 1824 straightlines

A series of ship-named straightline markings, all in serified capital letters and struck in varying shades of black, red and brown ink, is found on ship covers from different lines. The covers are from several different U.S. origins, mostly addressed to London and all dating from 1824. An example in red from the *Alexander* appears on the cover shown in Figure 5. This cover originated in Baltimore on August 14 and must have contained multiple enclosures. Handstamped on the reverse are a red circle “F 15 SE 15 1824” and a framed



**Figure 5. Straightline ALEXANDER on an 1824 cover from Baltimore that contained multiple enclosures. Due in London was 4/9d: triple the 8d ship letter and 11d British internal rate. Other straightlines from this grouping are *Algonquin*, *Julius Caesar*, *Manchester*, *Montezuma*, *Paragon* and *Tuscarora*. See Table 3 and Plate 1.**

“LIVERPOOL SHIP LETTER” marking. Because of the enclosures, the collection in London was 4/9d for triple the 8d ship letter and 11d British internal rates. Other straightlines from this grouping are *Algonquin*, *Julius Caesar*, *Manchester*, *Montezuma*, *Paragon* and *Tuscarora*. Given the similarities of the markings and their one-year usage, it’s tempting to speculate they were prepared by a New York agent for convenience in dispatching letters to outbound sailing vessels. But there is no evidence to support this assumption, other than the markings themselves. See Table 3 and Plate 1.

### Brig markings from 1828

Likely similarly explained are a few straightline handstamps from 1828 that include a ship name and the word “Brig”—for “brigantine,” a type of two-masted sailing vessel. Figure 6 shows a folded letter from Gibraltar internally dated April 30, 1828 and handstamped with a straightline **Packet Brig ELIZA\*** (M400). It was carried as a ship letter to New York where it entered the mails and a 6¢ ship fee was due for a letter addressed to the port of



TABLE 3: STRAIGHTLINE MARKINGS FROM 1824

| MARKING TEXT  | NUMBER | DATE | COLOR | REFERENCE |
|---------------|--------|------|-------|-----------|
| Alexander     | M24    | 1824 | Red   | Figure 5  |
| Algonquin     | M26    | 1824 | Black | Plate 1   |
| Julius Caesar | M737C  | 1824 | Brown | Plate 1   |
| Manchester    | M844C  | 1824 | Black | Plate 1   |
| Montezuma     | M932   | 1824 | Brown | Plate 1   |
| Paragon       | M1053  | 1824 | Black | Plate 1   |
| Tuscarora     | M1390  | 1824 | Red   | Plate 1   |

arrival. Two other similar markings—**Packet Brig ORION\*** (M1038) and **Brig Thacher** (M1366)—appear on other 1828 covers from this same correspondence. These markings are also shown in Figure 6, electronically cropped from other covers. Only one example is known for each of these three markings, so we have little basis for generalization. But it seems likely that all three were created and applied by a shipping agent in Gibraltar.

The only other ship-named marking with the word “brig” is M1459 in my book, “Brig Wilson Fuller”. This marking has not been seen since the Eugene Klein catalog a century ago, but the 1823 dating and the style of the lettering makes it quite different from the markings shown in Figure 6.

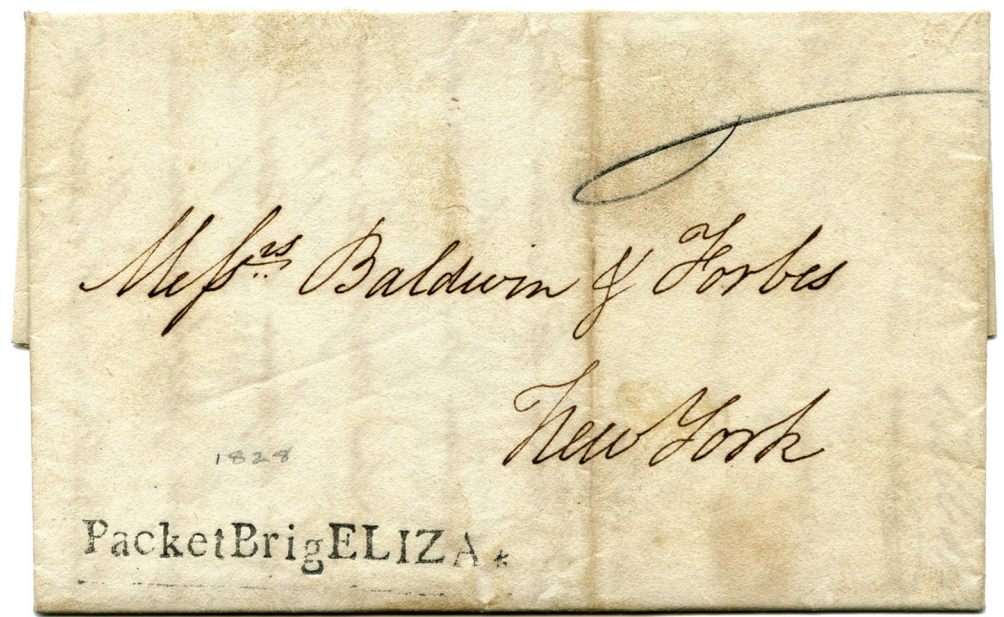
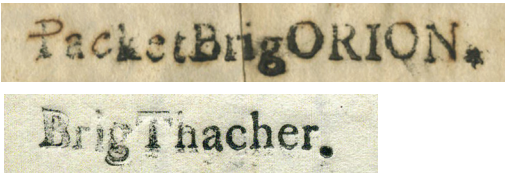


Figure 6. "Packet Brig ELIZA" on an 1828 cover from Gibraltar, rated "6" as an incoming ship letter at New York. Other 1828 covers from this same correspondence bear the "Orion", and "Thacher" straightlines shown at right.



### Abraham Bell markings from New York, 1828-35

From the late 1820s through the mid 1830s, the New York City firm of Abraham Bell and Company used a series of similar markings, including ship names, on letters that passed through the firm. Bell owned or managed a fleet of transatlantic sailing vessels, and acted as a forwarding agent for letters carried on its ships. Toward this end, the firm employed at least seven different vessel-named markings. All are three- or four-line handstamps, usually struck in red on the reverse of stampless covers. My listing of these markings is presented in Table 4. The Abraham Bell correspondence came into collector hands and is an important source for postal historians since it contained thousands of covers, many of which were transatlantic. But most covers with the Bell markings did not originate in the Bell archive.

Figure 7 shows a typical example, **PACKET SHIP COURIER, ABM. BELL & CO. OWNERS, NEW YORK** in three lines in red. This is struck on the reverse of a stampless cover sent in 1828 from Ireland to Brookhaven, Connecticut. Along with most of the other markings listed in Table 4, this marking was applied by the Bell firm in New York, to letters arriving on its ships. The address side of the Figure 7 cover, not shown, bears red “NEW-

**TABLE 4: ABRAHAM BELL MARKINGS, 1828-35**

| SHIP NAME            | NUMBER | DATE | COLOR | REFERENCE |
|----------------------|--------|------|-------|-----------|
| <i>Atlantic</i>      | M73    | 1832 | Red   | Plate 2   |
| <i>Courier</i>       | M304   | 1828 | Red   | Figure 7  |
| <i>Fabius</i>        | M433A  | 1828 | Red   | Plate 2   |
| <i>Josephine</i>     | M729   | 1831 | Red   | Plate 2   |
| <i>Robert Fulton</i> | M1203  | 1828 | Red   | Plate 2   |
| <i>Sarah Sheale</i>  | M1249  | 1835 | Red   | Plate 2   |
| <i>Sarah Sheale</i>  | M1249A | 1834 | Red   | Figure 8  |
| <i>Wilson</i>        | M1458A | ?    | Red   | Plate 2   |



Figure 7. “PACKET SHIP COURIER, ABM. BELL & CO. OWNERS, NEW YORK” in three lines on reverse of 1834 cover from Ireland to Brookhaven, Connecticut. The front, not shown, bears red “NEW-YORK MAR 16” and “SHIP” handstamps. Rated due 14½¢ for 2¢ ship fee plus 12½¢ for distance of 80-150 miles.



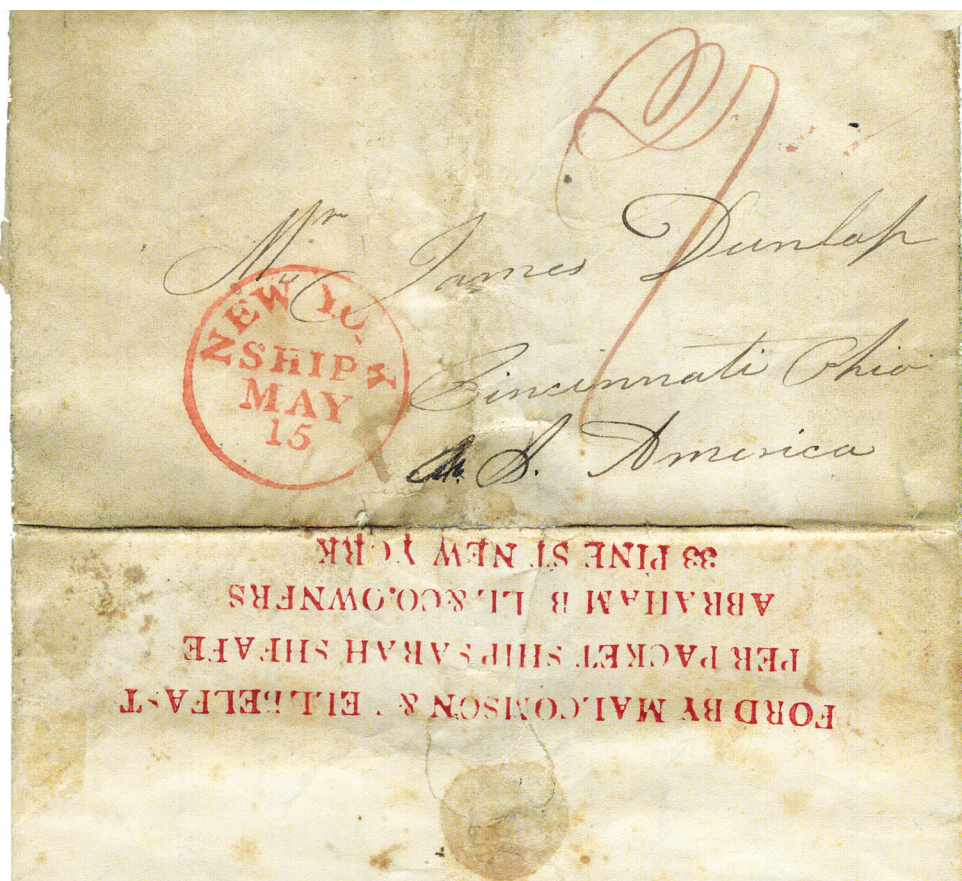


Figure 8. “FORD BY MALCOMSON & BELL BELFAST PER PACKET SHIP SARAH SHEAFE ABRAHAM BELL & CO. OWNERS 33 PINE ST NEW YORK” in four red straightlines on reverse of cover addressed to Cincinnati. 27¢ due for 2¢ ship letter fee plus 25¢ for over 400 miles.

YORK MAR 16” and “SHIP” handstamps and is rated for a collection of “14½”—12½¢ postage (for 80-150 miles) plus the 2¢ ship fee.

Figure 8 shows the address panel and part of the unfolded reverse of an 1834 cover from Belfast to Cincinnati. The firm apparently did business in Ireland under the name of Malcomson & Bell. The marking in Figure 8, heretofore unlisted, reads **FORD BY MALCOMSON & BELL BELFAST PER PACKET SHIP SARAH SHEAFE ABRAHAM BELL & CO. OWNERS 33 PINE ST NEW YORK** in four red straightlines. Sarah Sheafe sailed from Belfast April 3, and arrived in New York May 14.<sup>8</sup> In New York the cover was rated 27¢ due for 2¢ ship letter fee plus 25¢ for carriage over 400 miles. The Bell firm is listed as the owner of the seven vessels for which markings are known. As noted, most of these markings were applied in New York, but two of them—markings M1249 and M1458A in Plate 2)—may have been applied in Belfast.

#### T.W. Ward markings from Boston, 1841-49

Handstamped markings with various ship names are sometimes seen with a matching red oval **FORWD. BY T.W. WARD BOSTON**. Ward appears to have been an agent for the Cunard Line steamers and applied ship markings in red, sometimes with his oval handstamp, almost always in the lower left corner of the cover. Covers are also known with







**Figure 10. “PR. EUROPA” with “FORWD BY T. W. WARD BOSTON” both in red on cover from New Orleans to Amsterdam with two 5¢ 1847 stamps, canceled by red grids, overpaying 5¢ open mail rate. 1/4d British debit to Holland (8d transatlantic packet fee plus 8d rate to Holland). 100 Dutch cents due.**

mail packet) to Ward in Boston. The reverse bears a red oval “FORWARDED BY GOOD-HUE & CO. NEW YORK.” Ward applied at lower left his red oval forwarding marking and the matching **PR. CALEDONIA** straightline with small R. *Caledonia* left Boston September 17 and arrived in Liverpool October 2. The letter reached London the next day as indicated by a red circle “I 3 OC 3 1842” backstamp. A 1/- packet fee was due.

Inset over the Figure 9 cover is a strike of the similar **PR CALEDONIA** with large “R.” This was electronically clipped from a double-rate letter that originated in New York December 14, 1846 and was sent via Ward in Boston to London.

Figure 10 is the only recorded example of a 5¢ 1847 stamp on a cover with a vessel-named transatlantic ship marking. The marking is **PR. EUROPA** (M429A). As usual, it is accompanied by the oval **FORWD BY T.W. WARD BOSTON**. Both markings are in red. This folded letter to Amsterdam is datelined New Orleans September 15, 1849 and was carried outside the mails to T.W. Ward in Boston for the Cunard sailing. The two red brown 5¢ 1847 stamps, tied by red grid cancels, overpaid the 5¢ per half ounce open-mail rate by a British packet under the U.S.-U.K. postal convention. The 5¢ rate applied irrespective of the distance to Boston. The Cunard *Europa* departed Boston September 26 and arrived in Liverpool October 7. The manuscript marking over the address at the right is Britain’s debit to Holland of 1 shilling 4d. This was the sum of the 8d transatlantic packet fee plus the 8d rate to Holland. This was converted to 80 Dutch cents to which 20 cents was added for local delivery, a total due postage of 100 Dutch cents, written boldly in the center.

#### **William Schall & Co. markings from New York, 1855-66**

The firm of W. Schall & Co. handstamped transatlantic covers they sent with the names of the individual vessels. An article by Richard F. Winter in *Chronicle* 217 described the firm as bankers on Exchange Place in New York City.<sup>9</sup> The firm seems to have acted as a forwarding agent; many international bankers did. Schall markings appear most fre-

quently on covers sent to France but also to Germany. Winter listed 18 markings from 15 different vessels. My listing in Table 6 describes 23 markings for 19 ships. The markings are arranged alphabetically by vessel name. See also Plate 3.

**TABLE 6: W. SCHALL & CO. MARKINGS, NEW YORK, 1855-66**

| MARKING TEXT                  | NUMBER  | DATE | COLOR | REF       |
|-------------------------------|---------|------|-------|-----------|
| BY STEAMER AFRICA             | M12     | 1857 | Black | Figure 13 |
| BY STR. AFRICA                | M12A    | 1864 | Blue  | Figure 13 |
| BY STR. AMERICA               | M45B    | 1860 | Black | Plate 3   |
| BY STR AMERICA                | M45A    | 1864 | Blue  |           |
| BY STEAMER ARABIA FROM BOSTON | M62B    | 1856 | Black | Figure 12 |
| BY STR. ARABIA                | M62C    | 1860 | Black | Plate 3   |
| BY STR ARAGO                  | M62D    |      | Blue  | Figure 11 |
| BY STR. ASIA                  | M68A    | 1860 | Black | Plate 3   |
| BY STR. AUSTRALASIAN          | M82BA   | 1863 | Blue  | Plate 3   |
| BY STEAMER BALTIC             | M85AA   | 1855 | Black | Plate 3   |
| BY STR. EUROPA                | M429B   | 1860 | Black | Plate 3   |
| BY STR. FULTON                | M488    | 1860 | Black | Plate 3   |
| BY STR HAMONIA                | M575A   | 1861 | Blue  |           |
| BT STR HANSA                  | M578    | 1863 | Blue  |           |
| BY STEAMER HERMANN            | M601C   | 1855 | Black | Plate 3   |
| BY STR. ILLINOIS              | M631    | 1860 | Blue  | Plate 3   |
| BY STR. ILLINOIS              | M631A   | 1860 | Black | Plate 3   |
| BY STR. KANGAROO              | M738A   | 1862 | Blue  | Plate 3   |
| BY STEAMER NIAGARA            | M1005A  | 1858 | Black | Plate 3   |
| BY STR. PERSIA                | M1090AA | 1863 | Blue  | Plate 3   |
| BY STR. SAXONIA               | M1257A  | 1863 | Blue  | Plate 3   |
| BY STEAMER VANDERBILT         | M1406A  | 1859 | Black | Plate 3   |
| BY STEAMER WASHINGTON         | M1436   | 1856 | Black | Plate 3   |

All of these markings appear as block-letter inscriptions at the top left of mostly stampless covers sent between 1855 and 1866. Some of the covers also bear octagon markings “W. SCHALL & CO. NEW-YORK”. Most of the markings are in blue ink, but some are in black. All of the covers except one are stampless.

Figure 11 shows the sole stamp-bearing cover, an 1866 letter from New York to Leipzig, franked with a 3¢, a 5¢ and two gray 24¢ 1861 stamps, to pay double the 28¢ Prussian closed mail rate. The blue Schall handstamp **BY STR ARAGO** is well struck at upper left. *Arago* was a sidewheel steamer built in 1855 for the New York and Havre Steam Navigation Co. Despite the double-rate postage on this cover, the New York clerk considered it a single rate, applying the red **N. YORK AM PKT 7 CTS** to credit Prussia with just 7¢ (2¢ Belgian transit and 5¢ German internal postage). The red **NEW-YORK AM PKT DEC 22** coincides with the date *Arago* departed New York, arriving at Falmouth January 3, 1867. The Prussian exchange office struck **AACHEN 6 1 FRANCO** in blue.

Figure 12 shows a more typical Schall cover, sent stampless to Germany. It bears a





Figure 11. “BY STR ARAGO” in blue, 56¢ in stamps (3¢, 5¢ and two 24¢ gray 1861 stamps) paying double 28¢ Prussian closed mail rate in 1867. The red “N. YORK AM PKT 7 CTS” indicates New York considered the cover a single rate.



Figure 12. “BY STEAMER ARABIA FROM BOSTON”, an early Schall handstamp and the only example including a location. This cover from New York, internally December 16, 1856, bears a large Boston “23” debit to England. The blue manuscript “13” indicates the postage (in neugroschen) due from the recipient in Leipzig.

black BY STEAMER ARABIA FROM BOSTON on an unpaid letter sent December 16, 1856 from New York to Leipzig via Prussian closed mail. It was routed to Boston, which applied its black 23 to debit Prussia for 5¢ U.S. internal postage and 18¢ sea postage and British transit. The British Cunard steamship *Arabia* departed Boston December 17 and

arrived in Liverpool December 28. The postage due from the recipient was 13 neugroschen, expressed in blue over the center of the cover.

Figure 13 shows a Schall cover to France, the most typical destination, mailed in 1864. At upper left it bears a bold blue strike of Schall's **BY STR. AFRICA** marking. The cover also shows a matching octagon "W. SCHALL NEW-YORK" merchant's cachet on reverse. This is a double-rate cover, as confirmed by the manuscript "2" at upper left. Via the May 24 integral debit 6 marking New York debited France 6¢ for double U.S. internal postage. This cover was carried by *Africa's* voyage that departed from Boston May 25 and arrived at Queenstown June 5. The red French Calais receiving marking appears to say "7 MAI 64" but that cannot be correct. Presumably the wrong month was inserted. The hand-stamped "16" indicates double-rate French postage of 16 decimes due from the recipient. Inset at lower left is a different Schall marking marking for *Africa*, from an 1857 cover from this same correspondence.



**Figure 13. "BY STR. AFRICA" in blue, with matching octagon "W. SCHALL & CO. NEW-YORK" on reverse (not shown). From New York to Lyon. Carried by Cunard *Africa* from Boston May 25, 1864, arriving Queenstown June 5. The "6 NEW YORK MAY 24" debits France for double the U.S. 3¢ inland postage; 16 decimes double rate due in Lyon. Inset at lower left is a different Schall marking for the same vessel, from an 1857 cover from the same correspondence.**

The concluding installment of this article will illustrate and discuss transatlantic vessel-named markings that do not lend themselves to any larger grouping. There are quite a number of these, and they include some of the most interesting markings.

### Endnotes

1. David G. Phillips, Editor in Chief, *American Stampless Cover Catalog*, Volume II, Fourth Edition (North Miami, Florida: David G. Phillips Publishing Co., Inc. 1987), pp. 116-119.
2. James W. Milgram, *Vessel-Named Markings on Inland and Ocean Waterways, 1810-1890* (Chicago: Collectors Club of Chicago, 1984). Two Supplements in *Postal History Journal*, multiple issues.
3. Steven Walske and Robert Abensur, "The French Royal Packets of the New York Line Analysis of Letters Carried, 1783-1793," published in: *From Indian trails to the Birth of a Nation*, Douglas N. Clark, editor; Weston Mass., Spellman Museum of Stamps & Postal History 2014).



4. Dr. R. Joany, *Les Tarifs Postaux Français 1627-1969*, 2c Édition (BRUN et Fils, Paris 1989), pp. 17-18; Colin Tabear, *United Kingdom Letter Rates Inland and Overseas, 1635 to 1900*, Second Edition (HH Sales Ltd, Bradford, U.K., 2003), pg. 256; Cornelis Muys and Jan Giphart, "Two Hundred Years of Postal Communication: The Netherlands –United States of America," *Chronicle* 126, pp. 81-84.
5. Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries, sale 1154, lot 2334 (May 10, 2017).
6. Walske and Abensur, *op. cit.*
7. Milgram, James W., "Ship *Milo* and *Herald* Handstamped Transatlantic Markings," *Chronicle* 233, pp. 9-13 (February 2012); Mark Schwartz, "A Tale of Two Ships, the *Milo* and the *Herald*," *Congress Book 2009*, pp. 121-123.
8. *New York Evening Post* (May 15, 1834), pg. 3.
9. Richard F. Winter, "W. Schall & Co. Handstamps on Transatlantic Mail," *Chronicle* 217, pp. 67-74 (Feb. 2008). ■

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*(IN THIS ISSUE continued from page 218)*

Under the capable editorship of Labron Harris, our 1890s section has attracted wide-ranging contributions from a variety of authors. The 1890s section in this issue (page 281) presents a colorful article from Steven Rose on covers to and from foreign destinations bearing the orange 10¢ Special Delivery stamp of 1893. This is followed by an essay from Ken Lawrence, responding to an article by Harris in *Chronicle* 269. The subject is a U.S.-German Sea Post Office cover, which Lawrence shows has very special features that were previously unrecognized.

This issue concludes with a review by Diane DeBlois and Robert Dalton Harris, of Cameron Blevins' new book *Paper Trails*, an academic history that has caused something of a stir within the postal history community. ■

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## ADVERTISER INDEX

|                                                   |                             |
|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Americana Stamps.. . . . .                        | 220                         |
| Bill Barrell Ltd.. . . . .                        | 239                         |
| Columbian Stamp Company . . . . .                 | 209                         |
| Hugo Deshayé (Philatelist) Inc.. . . . .          | 280                         |
| Eastern Auctions Ltd.. . . . .                    | 229                         |
| Golden Oak Online Auctions . . . . .              | 280                         |
| H.R. Harmer, Inc. . . . .                         | Inside Front Cover, 214-215 |
| Harmers International Inc. . . . .                | 271                         |
| Labron Harris, Philatelist.. . . . .              | 251                         |
| Leonard H. Hartmann . . . . .                     | 259                         |
| Eric Jackson. . . . .                             | 228                         |
| Patricia A. Kaufmann.. . . . .                    | 252                         |
| Kelleher Auctions.. . . . .                       | 212                         |
| James E. Lee . . . . .                            | 288                         |
| Mystic Stamp Co. . . . .                          | 288                         |
| Philatelic Foundation . . . . .                   | 219                         |
| Stanley M. Piller & Associates . . . . .          | 267                         |
| Poli Restoration. . . . .                         | 216                         |
| Schuyler Rumsey Philatelic Auctions. . . . .      | Inside Back Cover           |
| Stephen T. Taylor. . . . .                        | 263                         |
| Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries, Inc.. . . . . | Back Cover, 210-211         |
| United States Stamp Society. . . . .              | 269                         |

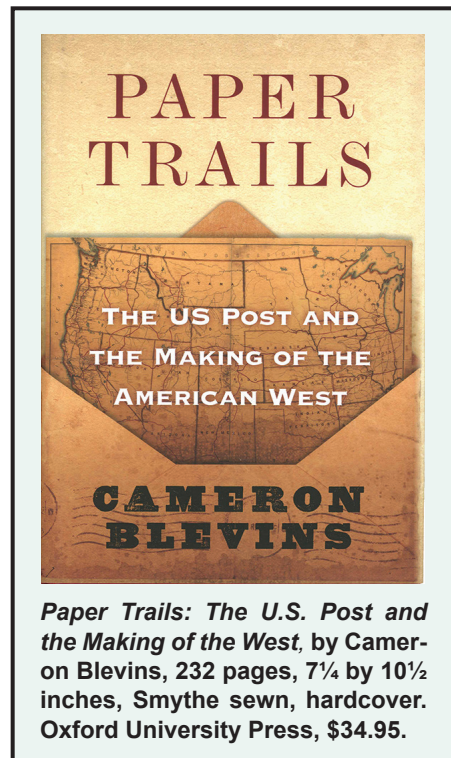
**PAPER TRAILS BY CAMERON BLEVINS**

REVIEWED BY DIANE DEBLOIS AND ROBERT DALTON HARRIS

Cameron Blevins's book comes out of the academic discipline of digital humanities; he describes it as "a work of digital history, a field that revolves around the use of computational methods to understand the past." Postal history through numbers is an approach that has always appealed to us; our paper, "Modeling Postal History with Postal Numbers," was published in the proceedings of the 2015 Second International Symposium on Analytical Methods in Philately. It is also worth noting that the origins of written communication are with numbers not words. Having been introduced to Cameron Blevins's Ph.D. dissertation work at Stanford University, we invited him to speak at a Research Methods workshop at the American Philatelic Society's Summer Seminar in 2014.

Blevins was looking for a population proxy, to fine-tune census figures at decade intervals, and he decided to experiment with post offices. He considered it a great boon to find Richard W. Helbock's data set available for purchase on a CD (philatelists having welcomed all eight of Helbock's volumes of post offices, listed alphabetically by states, county, and dates of operation, as well as with a scarcity index). Blevins then used computerized GIS mapping to record the locations of all 166,000 post offices that existed during the era under study. About a third of these locations were approximate, but at least this technique put them in the correct county. Blevins has made year-by-year digital maps of extant post offices accessible on line (<https://gossamernetwork.com>).

Helbock was a West Point-trained geographer, given to the mapping of strategic lines of communication. His influential journal, *La Posta*, was in 1970 partially supported by financial assistance from the Department of Earth Science, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, where he taught geography. Helbock was a philatelist who didn't like where stamp collecting was heading, and he launched his postal-data collecting projects to signal a new direction. In *La Posta* Volume 2, Number 1, in 1970, he concluded: "In short, our research efforts should serve as guide-posts for those disillusioned phi-





latelists to find a beginning in postal history....” Our path in postal history paralleled his, and we were early correspondents; Blevins, on his own path, seems a new ally.

Although the Helbock data set—and the gossamer net—covers the whole country, Blevins limits his focus in this book to a case study of the West during the Greater Reconstruction period of 1840s through 1870s. Blevins is thereby able to ignore the usual narrative of heroic conquests by railroad and telegraph. He regards each post office where a “legible” person sits performing tasks not only as an agent for the federal government, but also as a locus for all other business in the area. His perspective is, as he describes, a view from a 30,000-foot elevation. From there the flexible and contingent establishment and discontinuance of post offices appears in the West as a “gossamer net.” (Gossamer is an intriguing word traced to an old term “goose summer” for early autumn, when many-layered spider webs appear on the greensward.)

Blevins’s gossamer net implies a network that is ephemeral in time and place, full of instability and churn—apparently part of a narrative of resource extraction and conquest where all agencies of the central government are channeled through the post office. One of the gossamer network’s strongest revelations is the visualization of the carving up of Indian reservations that accompanied the incursion of post offices into native territory.

Blevins observes that digital history has been criticized for being “long on flash and short on substance.” He has responded to the challenge with 60 pages of notes against 164 pages of text. In particular he makes strong use of the printed documents of the Serial Set, including the Official Registers and the Postmaster General Reports. And he provides a substantial academic framing. All of this background, and compelling examples from post office archives, provides an architecture to talk about the relationship between individuals and the state. The pointillist mapping of post offices alternates with narrative footprints upon the postal ground.

From manuscript archives Blevins uses personal correspondence to show particular displacements served by the post. From the money order records for two small post offices, in California and Nevada, he maps the spray of dollars sent to larger post offices throughout the country, warranting the unprofitable expansion of the postal system into the West. Such images are very dramatic.

For us, his best chapter was on Postal Maps, 1860-83. In the Topography’s Office of the Post Office Department he discovered how the gossamer network was recorded day by day with the “women’s work” of drawing in the links between post offices, indicating mode and frequency of service.

Blevins concludes that the small communities of the West enjoyed a lightly governed federal presence. The Post Office Department chose to contract for the carriage of the mail and, in the case of all but the largest post offices, to commission a postmaster, whose agency served the communications of other arms of government as well as his private interests. We philatelic postal historians can add that the Distribution System inaugurated in 1800 was an important strategy to relax central control and accommodate systematic growth. Other strategies to further relax central control with respect to individual agency were the automatic provision for postal service to the seats of new counties; the allowance for Special Post Offices; the creation of Mail Messengers once the railways dominated the largest mail routes; the availability of land or water mails to patch contract routes throughout the year; and even the right to entrust one’s letters to private carriage.

This is not a book of postal history, rather it is a premonition of how postal history may be practiced by a younger generation—questioning the ground of traditional historical narrative with numerical methods. Thanks to the computational methods used to track the spread of the pandemic we, as a nation, have become familiar with digital living, systematic exponential growth—as well as systemic problems associated with our media. ■

## EXPLANATION OF PROBLEM COVER IN CHRONICLE 270

Julian Jones and Anders Olason, both overseas members and frequent contributors to this section, were the first to offer their interpretations of the problem cover from *Chronicle* 270 (Figure 1) followed by a more detailed interpretation from stateside member Jeff Bohn. As one would expect, all three were in general agreement on the routing and rates. They were unanimous in catching the quadruple weight of the letter when it was rated initially



Figure 1. Our Problem cover from *Chronicle* 270 was this abundantly marked folded letter sent in 1851 from Memphis to Wurttemberg. The sole backstamp is shown at right. The challenge was to explain the transit and the markings.

in Memphis. But a quadruple rate on this side of the Atlantic does not always hold up as it passes through Europe—and this cover traveled through Great Britain, France and several German States. This resulted in some confusion as to the exact weight as it crossed borders in the pre-metric, pre-UPU era. Minor differences in weight calculation contributed to different applications of national currencies as well.

Jeff Bohn summed up his interpretation as follows:

The letter appears to have been originally rated prepaid 42¢ for the British Open Mail to Wurttemberg by American packet service. Unfortunately, this was a quadruple weight letter under the U.S.-British Convention, weighing between 1 and 2 ounces. As such, this letter was underpaid for American packet service to England, but was more than sufficiently paid for British packet service, since only the 5¢ per ½ ounce U.S. internal postage had to be prepaid. The Memphis clerk scratched out the “42” rate and applied the “20” prepayment notation and at the same time scratched out “Havre” and applied the “Liverpool” routing.

This letter was sent to New York and then to England aboard the Cunard steamship *Asia*. The London Foreign Office applied the COLONIES/&c. ART.13 handstamp, then exchanged this letter with France at the 3sh 4d per ounce bulk rate.



The French forwarded the letter to Wurttemberg under terms of the current Franco-Thurn & Taxis Convention. Under this Convention, France was entitled to a fee of 4F80c per 30 grams for its portion of transit services provided on unpaid letters delivered to the T&T Post from British Colonies and Possessions, as well as from all undesignated overseas countries when sent via Great Britain.

The Thurn & Taxis Post carried this letter to Wurttemberg, and on arrival in the Oberamt of Oberndorf am Neckar, it was treated as an unpaid, quadruple weight letter, and initially marked for a collection of 2 floren (gulden) 48 kreutzer (red “2f48” in the upper right corner). This amount was a combination of the 2f32kr fee to the Thurn & Taxis Post (4x38kr per ½ loth), plus the 16kr Wurttemberg internal postage (4x4kr per ½ loth). Subsequently, an additional 1kr fee was charged for delivery to a small village in the same Oberamt, so that the total postage due charge was 2f49kr, as shown in pencil on the right-central portion of the address panel.

Fellow section editor Dwayne Littauer was consulted and confirmed the above scenario. Martin Camerer, a member in Germany, provided his perspective as to how the rates were calculated during the letter’s passage across western Europe. Camerer agrees with Bohn, but adds a few wrinkles from the German perspective which includes an overlooked aspect of the timeline of the expansion of the German-Austrian Postal Union. (Approximate U.S. dollar equivalent values have been added where appropriate.)

The letter is addressed to Mr. Alois Hezel in Winzeln, Oberamt, Oberndorf am Neckar, Königreich Württemberg, Deutschland, Europa. Oberamt is the word for district. Oberndorf is the city while Neckar is a river. Because there were more than one Oberndorf in Württemberg an accurate address requires the reference to its location on this river.

It looks as if the sender of the letter had a lengthy consultation in Memphis at the post office about various rates to Germany. Several marks in identical black ink were presumably made by the postmaster in Memphis. The sender wanted the cheapest option for himself which was payment of only the American inland postage under the open mail provision of the UK-US convention, leaving the addressee responsible for all remaining transit fees and postage. The sender thus paid only 20¢ for the quadruple domestic letter rate and the reference to “Havre” and the “42” rate was obliterated.

The letter was sent to New York, where the paid 20¢ was noted again above the lower Memphis postmark. Without receiving a New York postmark, the letter entered the British mail system as an unpaid letter on the Cunard steamer *Asia*, which left New York on May 7 and arrived in Liverpool on May 17. The mailbag was taken by train to London, where the red postmark from May 18 on the back indicates processing. London applied in identical red ink COLONIES &c. ART.13. to indicate a debit to France of 3 shillings 4 pence (80¢ US) per 30 g bulk weight under Article 13 of the letter bill to France from the 1843 Anglo-French Convention. The letter arrived in Calais on 20 May 1851, and from there it traveled in a closed mailbag by train via Paris to Strasbourg at the river Rhine.

On the opposite side of the Rhine is the border post office KEHL in the Grand Duchy of Baden, which applied the rules of the postal convention France-Baden from May 1 1846. At Kehl the letter was individually weighed and charged with 2 florins 32/ 16 Kreuzer in red ink. A florin = 1 Gulden = 60 Kreuzer, so Kehl marked a charge of 168 Kreuzer (\$1.20 US.)

In Britain and France the letter was rated as bulk rate. Britain charged 3 Sh 4 d = 40 pence = 40 French Decimes per 30 g. The postal convention France-Baden from 1846 set the transit through France to 8 Decimes per 30 g, so that in Baden 48 Decimes (96¢ US) per 30 g had to be paid for the ocean passage plus British and French transit. One French Decime corresponded to 2.8 Kreuzer, so 48 Dec x 2.8 = 134.4 Kreuzer (96¢ US) was the corresponding rate for 30 g. Since the French considered 7.5 g per single letter weight, this was divided by 4, which resulted in a rate of 34 Kreuzer (24¢ US) for the single letter of 7.5 g weight from the US port via GB and France to the Baden border. The border office in Kehl added a transit fee for Baden of 4 Kr. for every 34 Kreuzer French charge. This resulted in a fee of 38 Kreuzer (27¢ US) per 7.5 g up to the Baden /Württemberg border and was always written in one figure. The Württemberg rate was also 4 Kreuzer (3¢ US) per 38 Kr. transit rate irrespective of the distance. Because the cover weighed between 2 to 2¼ Kölnisches Loth (29.25-32.90 g) it was charged 152 Kr.(4 x 38 Kr.) due to the French-Baden progression table.

The Württemberg rate was 4 x 4 = 16 Kreuzer, so that 2 f 48 (\$1.20 US) was written in red crayon at the top right at the Oberndorf post office. A rural messenger brought the letter from Oberndorf to the village of Winzeln and received one Kreuzer for it. The total rate of 2 f 49 (\$1.21 US) is written on the right in graphite pencil.

It is worth noting that the date of this letter fell in the short four-month period in which Baden was already a member of the German-Austrian Postal Union (from May 1 1851) but Württemberg was not yet. Until Württemberg joined the GAPU on September 1 1851, the former transit fees for Baden remained in force.

It would seem that all are agreed that the sender paid 20¢ to mail the letter in Memphis and the recipient was obligated to pay the equivalent of \$1.21 upon receipt—for a grand total of \$1.41. To put that into perspective \$1.41 in 1851 equates to roughly \$48 in purchasing power today. While this may appear steep, it closely approximates the current cost of sending an International Priority Mail letter from the United States to Germany.

## PROBLEM COVER FOR THIS ISSUE

Our problem cover for this issue was submitted by Labron Harris, who acquired it from the estate of Harvey Teal, who collected South Carolina postal history for decades. Many items in Mr. Teal's collection were acquired directly from descendants of the addressees. As a result, a number of rare South Carolina postal artifacts entered the philatelic market for the first time when this estate was dispersed. This cover, though listed in the Stampless Cover Catalog, appears never to have been owned by another collector.



**Figure 2. Problem cover for this issue: A folded letter headed Barnwell, S.C., March 11, 1807. Postal markings include “Lower 3 Runs, 13 March,” “Way 12½,” “double letter,” “forw’d 37½” and “50.” In addition the letters “S C” appear above the town marking in a different handwriting and a different shade of ink.**

The letter bears the manuscript postmark of “Lower 3 Runs, 13 March” with the letters “S C” above in a different ink and handwriting. Additional markings include: “Way 12½”, “double letter”, “forw’d 37½” and “50.” It is addressed to Philadelphia (no state designated) and marked “Mail” in the lower left corner in the same handwriting as the address. The letter is datelined Barnwell, S.C., March 11, 1807.

The questions are many. Where did this cover enter the mail system and how did it get to that point? Why was the letter initially rated 12½¢? Where and why was the letter forwarded and rerated? Was there a “WAY” fee and, if so, who paid it? Hint: pay heed to the absence of a state designation. ■



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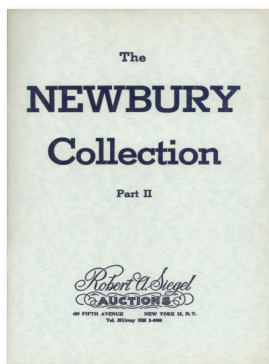


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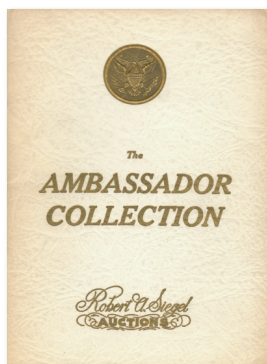
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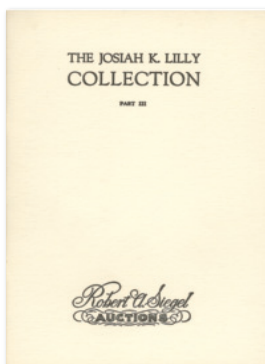
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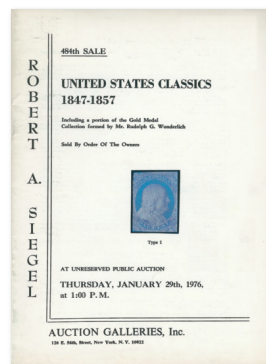
Newbury 1961



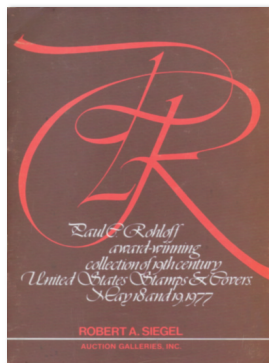
Ambassador 1966



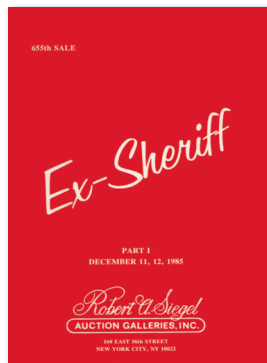
Lilly 1967



Wunderlich 1976



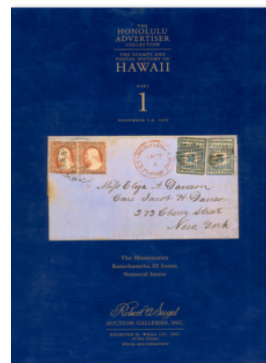
Rohloff 1977



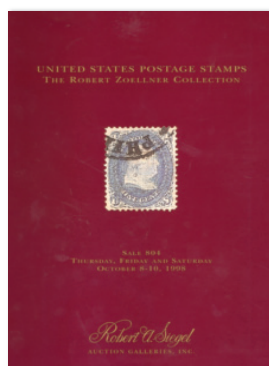
Sheriff 1985



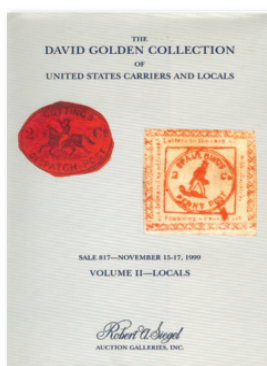
Kapiloff 1992



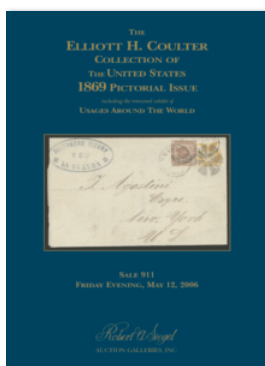
Honolulu Advertiser 1995



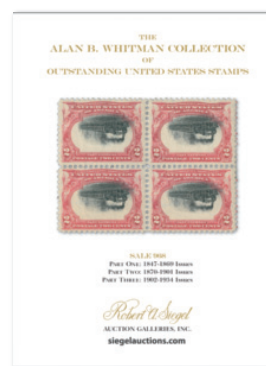
Zoellner 1998



Golden 1999



Coulter 2006



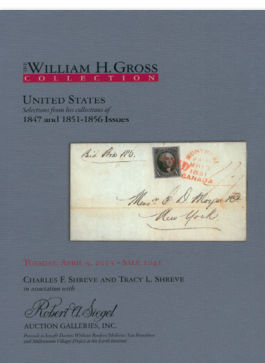
Whitman 2009



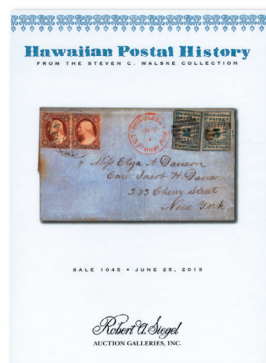
Twigg-Smith 2009



Frelinghuysen 2012



Gross 2013



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