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# Chronicle

of the U.S. Classic Postal Issues

November, 1968    Volume 20, No. 4    Whole No. 60

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# The Chronicle

## of the U. S. Classic Postal Issues

November, 1968

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## THE 1847-'51 PERIOD

CREIGHTON C. HART, *Editor*

### 1847 Covers From Mississippi

CREIGHTON C. HART

History—political or postal—is not merely an accumulation of dates and statistics. Behind these lie many wonderful stories. The stories that 1847 covers from the various states reveal are sometimes amusing like that of the poor speller in Arkansas, the postmaster who didn't know how to spell the name of his own post office, Holly Point. He put an "e" in Holly. This lonely little village—now a cotton patch—is one of the few 1847 ghost towns because the post office was closed in 1871. Another entertaining example is the cover from Kalamazoo with the homely remark, "Old stamp—good for Nix" written by the only postmaster who refused to recognize a '47 stamp after demonetization. The pair of gem covers found among the very few '47 covers from Delaware provide an intriguing story. Both of these covers are postmarked from the same town, Wilmington, and on the same day, August 13, 1847. Quite a coincidence! And better yet the 5¢ is on domestic letter and its companion, the 10¢, is on a transatlantic cover to England.

The June, 1967 *Chronicle* carries the dramatic account of '47 covers from Georgia which reveals a decided shortage of 5¢ covers due to the devastation wrought by the Civil War. Mississippi was also a Confederate state and once again the Civil War is the cause of a marked shortage of 5¢ covers. Mississippi like Georgia was largely an agricultural state and was also the scene of many Civil War battles. Twice as many fives (10,500) were sent to Mississippi post offices as were tens (5,200). Yet only about half as many five cent covers (4) survive as tens (9). Here, as for Georgia covers, we find that most of the tens went to the uninvaded North. The '47 letter with a single five stamp travelled a short distance (less than 300 miles) and frequently within a state. Many of these five cent covers were destroyed as a direct result of the war in the burned out ruins or suffered gradual deterioration in plantations abandoned after the war.

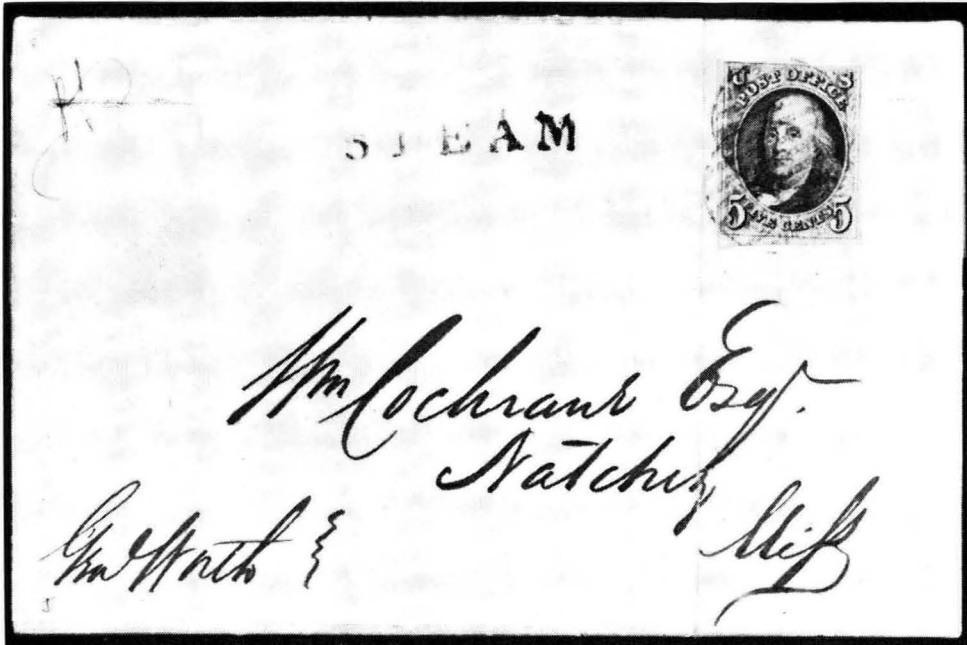
Eleven Mississippi post offices were sent a supply of our first issue. In the following tabulation the name of the post office is given first followed by the date the first supply was *received* according to the *official* "Record Book." The total number of fives is followed by a divider, "/" after which is the total number of tens.

Aberdeen	12- 3-'50	1000/100	Natchez	9-17-'49	4000/2050
Columbus	1-24-'49	300/100	Rodney	2-22-'49	800/550
Jackson	10-24-'47	1400/400	Vicksburg	5-11-'50	1400/900
Lexington	6- 8-'49	300/150	Woodville	1-15-'50	400/100
Marion	4-11-'50	200/50	Yazoo City	8- 5-'50	600/300
Monticello	8-29-'49	200/50			

The four 5¢ covers on my list are:—

1. September 21, 1849 red Columbus to Philadelphia.
2. March 14, 1850 black STEAM (Rodney) to Natchez.
3. December 4, 1850 blue Natchez to Jackson, Miss.
4. January 25, x red Natchez to New Orleans.

Of these four only two known covers are addressed to Mississippi towns which later suffered war damage. One of the other two went to New Orleans which was early and easily occupied by Federal troops. The Columbus cover, the first on the list, has a pair of stamps which may not belong and may have been added later. On this cover to Philadelphia appear the two manuscript notations "Charge box 65" and "Paid," a combination associated with stampless covers only. If the pair of stamps could be carefully lifted, the original gum might be evident if the pair belongs. It may seem an exaggeration but I believe I have had enough experience with



Covers without town postmarks pique the imagination. This 1847 cover with only the word "STEAM" leads us to a curious story of the old South.

original gum on '47 stamps to be able to tell whether or not the stamp still adheres with the original gum. The gum on some of our early issues is very distinctive and the gum on the '47's has unusual characteristics.

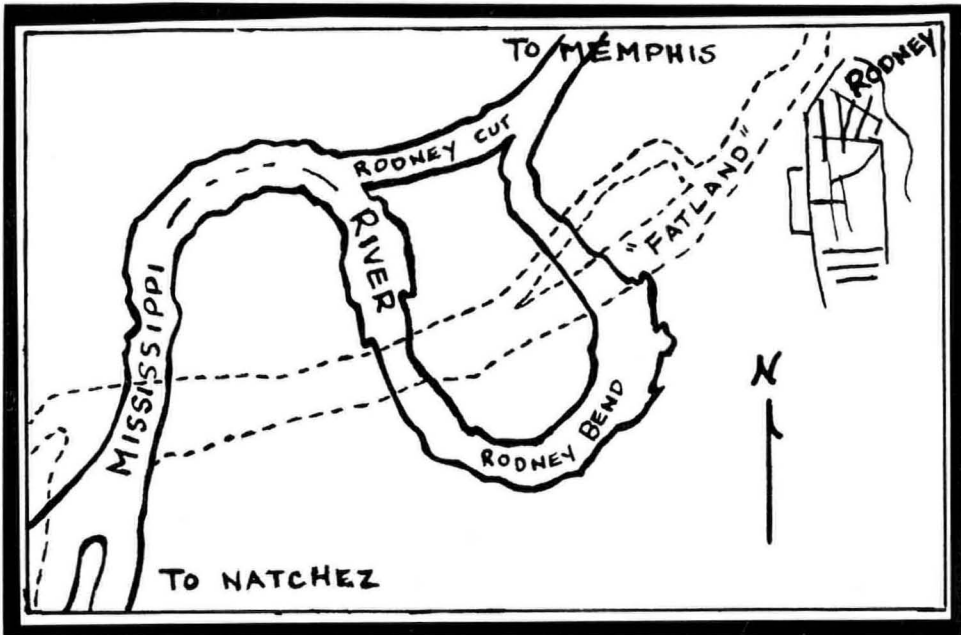
The Mississippi '47 cover with the most interesting postal history background is the 5¢ cover with the black "STEAM." There is no townmark but fortunately the entire folded letter is present. The dateline is Rodney a river town important enough before the Civil War to receive a supply of 1847 stamps but now too small to be shown on a Rand McNally road map. This cover was carried by a Mississippi River packet boat, the "General Worth." Covers of any period carried by a river packet boat are popular and this is a very early one with instruction given by the addressor who wrote "Gen. Worth" at the lower left hand corner.

Ancient and medieval history tells us of cities being swallowed up by the sea; Rodney is a 19th century town that was swallowed up by land. Rodney reached its zenith in the 1840's and '50's which was the golden age of steamboating, of cotton and slavery. There were fine plantations around Rodney with palatial mansions and more bales of cotton were shipped each year from Rodney than any other river town.

A small sand bar began forming in front of Rodney in 1864 and gradually caused the river to change its course. As the drawing shows, after the Mississippi changed, Rodney was left five miles away, high and dry. After losing its importance as a river port, Rodney gradually dwindled and when a railroad passed it by a few years later, Rodney declined into a ghost town. A disastrous fire leveled most of the buildings but left untouched the lovely Presbyterian Church, built in 1829, which remains as a historical monument to what Rodney once was. This old church with its church bell cast of silver dollars is being restored and is well worth visiting even though it is a bit out of the way for modern four lane travelers.<sup>1</sup>

The Mississippi River packet the "General Worth" was named for Major General William Jennings Worth who fought with distinction under Zachary Taylor in the Mexican War. Later he was cited for gallantry when he defeated the

<sup>1</sup> Howard Mitcham, "Old Rodney; A Mississippi Ghost Town," Journal of Mississippi History, XV (1953) page 242.



This drawing shows how the fickle Mississippi River deserted Rodney, changing it from an important commercial river landing to a ghost town five miles inland. The solid lines are the river's present banks and the dotted lines are as it was in the 1840's and '50's.

Seminoles in 1838. General Worth is almost as forgotten as Rodney, Mississippi, but when he died in 1849 he was enough of a national figure to be buried at 25th and Fifth Avenue. On a small triangular tract in New York City, where Broadway angles across Fifth Avenue, is a 20' marble obelisk to General Worth and his military career. In a way it seems like a monument to old Rodney, also.

When we know the stories behind our early covers it makes them and the history of their times come to life.

As would be expected the surviving ten cent covers are addressed to either the uninvaded North or to New Orleans. Elliott Perry in the June, 1932 issue of "Pat Paragraphs" wrote, "The number of Mississippi covers known to exist with 1847 stamps is estimated at less than ten." Since then other covers have come to light and I believe a better estimation now would be less than twenty, probably fifteen to twenty.

The nine ten cent covers are:—

1. November 22, 1849 red Jackson to New Orleans.
2. July 16, 1850 blue Natchez to ?
3. November 9, 1850 blue Natchez to Philadelphia.
4. April 7, 1851 blue Natchez to Massachusetts.
5. June 9, 1851 blue Natchez to Philadelphia.
6. March 27, x red Jackson to New Orleans.
7. February 15, ? Natchez to Centre Belpre, Ohio.
8. August 14, ? blue Vicksburg to ?
9. December 20, ? Jackson to ?

Collectors show little interest in Mississippi postmarks and these scarce postmarks sell at auction for no more than covers with postmarks that are relatively common. If Mississippi postmarks were as popular as are '47 covers postmarked from Texas, Florida and several other states, then Mississippi covers would sell for five to ten times as much as they do. The stamps on Mississippi covers are mostly fine four margined copies.

Mississippi was not settled by individuals who had any strong ties with Europe such as the residents of New England had with Great Britain and as the residents of



New Orleans had with France. There are no '47 covers known addressed to Europe and none are likely to turn up. There are three covers from the capital, Jackson, and others may exist.

Mississippi has a unique and an important place in the postal history of our nation and it is unfortunate that there is no active postal history society in the state. The first Federal highway (the Natchez Trace) goes from Nashville to Natchez, and it is nearly all in Mississippi. Natchez was the western outpost of the United States until the Louisiana Purchase in 1803 and it was over this route that important western mail was carried until the port of New Orleans became part of the United States.

Your editor will appreciate the reporting to him, either now or at the earliest convenient time, of any 1847 Mississippi cover not listed here.

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## THE 1851-'60 PERIOD

TRACY W. SIMPSON, *Editor*

### SYMBOLS USED IN THIS SECTION

To conserve space, the following symbols for the 3¢ stamp of the 1851-'60 issue are used according to the practice of specialists in this stamp for many years. The symbol is at left of hyphen, and its Scott's U.S. Specialized number or other designation is at right of hyphen. Postal markings are in black unless otherwise specified.  
Three cents: S1-10; S2-11 (incl. plate 1 [late]) in orange brown; S3-25; S4-26A; S5-26.

### Guide-Relief Process for Manufacture of 1851-'60 Plates

ELLIOTT PERRY, R.A. No. 237

*Period Editor's Note:* Readers will welcome again hearing from our Philatelic Dean, Mr. Perry, whose articles in Issues 50 and 53 were so interesting. The present article speaks for itself, but particular attention should be paid to that portion dealing with the single-relief roller used for both 12ct plates. Authorities have held that the use of a single-relief on the Plate-3, 12ct stamp suggests that it was made early in the period and not used until many years later.

During Mr. Neinken's incumbency as president he urged me to write something about the background of present-day views as to how the 1851-'60 issue plates were made, in the hope the information would be helpful to members who are not Old Timers.

Fifty years ago no special attention was given to details of plate manufacture because it was assumed the process was identical with that of Perkins-Bacon who produced the British penny-reds, etc. However, about that time it was noticed on certain 1-ct stamps of the 1857-'60 issue that the lower edge of the design on stamps from the 6th horizontal row differed from those on the bottom row, though both were from the same relief on the transfer roll. Similarly, the six reliefs on the second 5-ct plate produced seven varieties because the lower edge of the design was not identical for the 6th row and the bottom row.

The reason for some of these peculiarities became known by and with the discovery of the "guide relief" process twenty years later (1938). Whenever the part of a relief which was more complete, or which contained lines which differed from those on another relief, were rocked into a previous entry in a plate, that part of the original design was changed to agree with the deal on the later entry.

For instance: the second 5ct plate, and many other plates of 1851-'60, were entered from transfer rolls containing six reliefs, entered 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 3, 4, 5, 6 in each vertical row on each plate. The second 5-ct relief was more complete at the lower edge than was the 6th relief. Consequently, when the second relief was used as a guide for entering reliefs 3, 4, 5 and 6 by dropping it into the 6th row entry successively in each vertical row, the lower edge of the 6th entry was changed to that of the 2nd relief.

Similarly, the "C" (1st) relief on the three-relief 3-ct roll (C, A, B), was used as a guide to enter reliefs A and B by setting it successively in B entries which had been made on the plate. Several years later further study showed that whenever the roll was rocked backward far enough the "gash on the shoulder" on the "C" relief was entered in the "B" entry, causing many miscalled "misplaced transfers," although on plates made late in the period the "C" relief apparently was used for original entry of the top row.

The "guide relief" was a competent mechanic's solution to a mechanical problem. It assured both perfect alignment of the entries in the vertical rows and perfect agreement with the spacing of the reliefs on the transfer roll. Use of the guide reliefs proved that the position dots could not be the sole or primary control for making the entries, because too frequently the position dots were not in the exact position where they had to be if they controlled the entries.

The "guide relief" solved a puzzle. Two reliefs on a roll entered five times would complete a vertical row of ten entries. Or five reliefs entered twice would complete a similar row of entries. The use of an extra relief which was not needed if entries were controlled by position dots had never been explained. This fundamental fact of there being an extra guide relief is believed to have been first noted by the writer when he was working with Harry Jefferys in the study of plate 3 of the 1-ct stamp.

When a side-point is locked onto a transfer roll it must remain in the same relative position to the reliefs on that roll. When correctly set it should remain in agreement successively with each position on the plate. Otherwise it is useless. But instead of being used to control the entries *as they were made on the plate*, apparently the side-point was used merely to indicate the proper end of the swing of the transfer roll as it was rocked to and fro. Before 1938 nobody compared the entries with the position dots to see that they did agree, as it was supposed they did. The writer and other students believed this assumption without determining that it was true.

When Ashbrook, Chase, Good, Stevenson and others were studying the 1-ct and 3-ct stamps of 1851-60 in the half-dozen years prior to 1920, the writer suggested that the (first) 12-ct plate was the first plate of that series to be made—probably because it was entered from a single relief on a transfer roll. The 12-ct were the only such plates so entered. During the time that the 12-ct plate was being transferred the idea of putting several reliefs of the same design on the same roll may have occurred to someone. The multiple-relief rolls apparently were the result. The guide-relief idea and process probably was developed at about the same time.

The writer had the good fortune to be instrumental in inducing Major (later Colonel) J. K. Tracy of the Marine Corps to take up the study of the 12-ct stamps of 1851-60. His fine book about the 12-ct stamp was the result and it was the basis of the later Neinken revision.\* Through the writer's close association with Ackerman the latter's 12-ct items—including the pane from Plate No. 3—were made available to Col. Tracy. When the Ackerman Collection was broken up (1928-29) the 12-ct pane went to Jefferys, who bequeathed it in his collection to the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia.

The writer's study of the 1857-60 issue was published in Mekeel's Weekly in 1918 and reprinted in Mekeel Handbook No. 39. Of the pioneer students half a century ago of the Philadelphia-made stamps the writer is the only one now living. His interest in the 12-ct has continued and he has welcomed Neinken's book\* as only a properly appreciative student can.

Until after Neinken's most excellent work on the 12-ct stamps was published no question was raised about the 12-ct plates having been entered from a single-relief transfer roll; that is, from a roll on which there was only one 12-ct design in relief. For each of the 200 positions on the 12-ct plate there was a position dot, and it was assumed that each dot controlled an entry. For a time it was supposed that a two-relief roller was used for entries in the 12-ct plate; the first relief for entry of the top row and used thereafter as a guide-relief, so that the second relief did the actual entering of the remainder of the positions, with the position guide dots serving as supplementary position checks. However, further study disclosed that many position dots were found not to agree with the entries they were supposed to control! Consequently it was an inescapable conclusion that the entries on the plate had to be controlled by other methods than obtainable from a two-relief roller with the first relief used as a guide relief.

At this writing the facts support the belief that a single-relief roller was used for both the 12-ct plates (without a guide relief), and also that the position dots were not the sole nor the primary control for making the entries. There are irregularities of spacing and/or alignment which could not occur with proper use of a guide relief. Also position dots vary widely in relation to the design: higher or lower, or to left or right.

---

\* *The 1851-57 Twelve Cent Stamp*, by M. L. Neinken, published by The Collectors Club, Inc., 22 East 35th St., New York, N.Y. 10016.



A philatelic acquaintance, who is also an engineer, suggests that the actual control of position of the transfers in the plate could well have been obtained by use of a horizontal toothed rack alongside of the roller frame into which a toothed gear on the roller shaft engaged. The position dot on the plate served as a rough guide as to which tooth on the gear should engage a guide tooth on the rack, thereby assuring equal vertical spacing of the transfers regardless of inequalities of guide-dot position. All of these hypotheses would resolve quickly if only a Toppan Carpenter roller-transfer press could be found, with a 12-ct transfer roll intact.

In further support of the idea that the position dot was not the sole control of entry, it is known that plates made as late as the 1880's and considered to be from single-relief entries, because there is a position dot for each entry, also show many incorrectly placed position dots, which raises serious doubt that the dots were the sole or primary control for making the entries.

*Editor's Note.* Mr. M. L. Neinken commenting on the manuscript copy of Mr. Perry's article writes: "To a large extent Mr. Perry's analysis confirms my theory that the 12-ct plate 3 which first produced stamps in 1860 probably was made at the same time as the first plate; that is, early in 1851. In the ten-year interval between production of the stamps from the first plate of the 12-ct and the printing of stamps from plate 3, Toppan, Carpenter & Co. certainly developed methods of plate production so they would not have made such a botch as plate 3 as late as 1960."

## That Old Record Book—and Stamps to Michigan

THERON WIERENGA, R.A. # 840

*Period Editor's Note:* Aside from the valuable information for Michigan collectors, Mr. Wierenga's article solves a mystery that has long plagued collectors; that is, how it happens that first-day covers are known from towns that had not received stamps according to "The Record." In some towns, the newspapers reported even late in June that "new stamps are now on hand," yet no such early date appears in the record book.

Unknown to many U.S. Classics members is the existence of an old record book in Washington that lists shipments and receipts of stamps between July 1, 1847, and June 30, 1853. The first mention of this book seems to have been in the *Philatelic Gazette* of December 15, 1910, which reported that the book was found in the archives, had been rebound, and placed in the ante-room of the Third Assistant's office.

While in Washington recently I checked to see whether this book was still available, and if I could examine it. It was found in the downstairs exhibition room, and for several hours I copied information I sought. I listed all shipments into Michigan, my home state, from July 1, 1851, to December 31, 1851. I list below only those for the month of July, but will supply later dates to any interested collector. These July dates are as follows:

<i>Date Sent</i>	<i>Date of Receipt</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>12ct</i>	<i>3ct</i>	<i>1ct</i>
July 5	July 9	Detroit		5000	1000
July 10	July 13	Detroit		10000	
July 22	July 30	Lapeer		2000	
July 22	Aug. 7	Ypsilanti		3000	1000
July 22	July 21	Coldwater		3000	1000
July 23	July 28	Kalamazoo		7000	
July 22	July 30	Cassopolis		3000	1000
July 23	July 30	Constantine		2000	
July 23	July 28	Hillsdale		3000	
July 25	July 30	Detroit		30000	10000
July 30	Aug. 5	Medina		2000	200

I then totaled the shipments until the end of the year, and found that Detroit was sent 124,900 3ct, 11,000 1ct, and 500 12ct, and that only 15 towns received over 3000 3ct stamps in the 6-month period (\$90 worth). Also only 750 12ct stamps were sent into Michigan during the period.

The record makes clear that the "date of receipt" is not the actual date that

the stamps arrived, but the date at which the stamp clerk at destination made his report. This is of the utmost significance, because it indicates what most probably happened in reporting dates of shipment; that is, the date shown is the date upon which *the entry was made* into the original record, and knowing how long it takes some people to make a report, it is not surprising that there was a considerable delay between actual shipment and the date reported as shipped.

The record also provides means of comparing relative rarity of Michigan covers; thus, an 1851 cover from Grand Haven is rarer than one from Ann Arbor because the shipments to the latter town were fifteen times more than to the former. Also it is apparent that an 1851 Michigan cover bearing a 12ct stamp is a top rarity. Of course, it is to be remembered that in those days small-town postmasters were instructed to secure stamps from larger offices when necessary. But it is odd that Jackson, Kalamazoo, and Monroe received no 1ct stamps during the year. Also Niles received 12ct stamps a month before Detroit. Why?

Most heartily, I recommend browsing through the Old Record Book. Doing so will disclose many interesting facts regarding your collecting field, if it has to do with postal history of a particular area.

### **The Bergen, N.Y. Unofficial Perforation**

Supplementing the report in Issue 59, Mr. E. D. Cole sends a number of copies of singles bearing the Bergen saw-tooth "perforation." He says that Bergen is near his old home town, and he has been interested for years in these odd stamps. All stamps he sent are S2's, one from plate 8, and the others from plates 6 or 7.

### **Cunard Mail from Boston to Nova Scotia**

The question in Issue 59 as to an "8d" marking on a letter to an inland Nova Scotia point, whereas nearly all covers seen show a large "5" for pence or "10" for cents, is well answered by both Messrs. C. O. Smith and R. H. Lounsbury. There was an *inland* charge of 3 pence currency per half ounce, or a total of 8 pence currency from an inland point (not Halifax) to the U.S. port of arrival, so consequently the return rate was the same. Mr. Smith also reports that the evidence is clear that the 8d marking was applied at Halifax.

### **The Dr. Carroll Chase Sale of May, 1925**

Most of us remember our esteemed late member, Dr. Carroll Chase, as the leading specialist in 3ct 1851-'57 stamps, losing sight of the fact that before 1925 he had one of the top collections of the other stamps of the issue. His 1c, 5c, 12c, 24c, 30c, and 90c items were sold in May, 1925. They brought over \$43,000, quite an amount for those days, considering that the stamps mostly were plate positions and so-called minor varieties. Few spectacular blocks or covers were there, and though there was a fair showing of transatlantic mails, they were mostly for showing use of high-value stamps rather than to indicate postal uses.

Starting with the big ones, the 90ct was represented by several genuinely cancelled stamps (singles) one with black New York townmark, another on piece of cover with red grid, several blocks of the 90ct unused, and also proof blocks of twelve with imprints from the Crawford collection. The 30ct stamp was similarly represented, including a repaired used imperf, and also proof blocks. The 24ct group comprised a red lilac, unused, and a block of four, normal shade, with imprint at left; also a superb copy to England with Br. Pkt. markings.

In the 12ct group was a plate 3 carried by Pony Express. Many plate-1 bisects, and a combination of 12ct bisect with 3ct and 1ct were included, as well as a 12ct used block of four with the red Philadelphia exchange marking. A block of eight, one of six, and one of four also were features.

The 5ct group was equally strong; among them a 5ct plus 1ct used cover from Louisville to New York, with "Adams Express" for passing through the lines, and blocks of four, imprints, etc., in profusion.

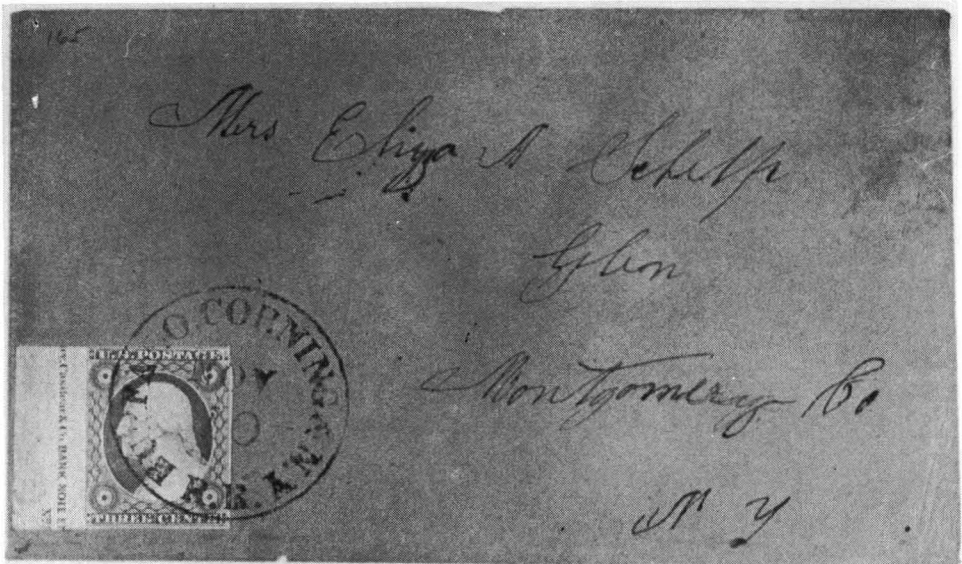
The 1ct group occupied an entire session. In reporting this session our late member H. P. Atherton wrote:

"You have probably heard of our old friends '7R1(e)' and '99R2' (they being the par excellence of the whole outfit). To this latter stamp goes the solid gold medal for being the most popular stamp at the sale.

"From the numerous manifestations of 'I'll raise the bid,' you would opine that no one there had a copy of this stamp on cover, or ever expected to see another one as good as that one, and maybe rightly so. Then there were the 'stunt' stamps—those perforated 1ct '57's with curl on shoulder. It so happens that there are six copies of this 'curl' on the one plate; just a nice little curl wrapped up into a figure-8 formation. Of these 'Herpicide' varieties, only three of them are in a horizontal row. And do you know that there was a cover in that sale bearing all three of those stamps!"

### Double-Feature Items

A 3ct 1851 stamp showing full margin, imprint, and plate number is hard to find, but when it is tied to a cover by an extra scarce postal marking, you really have something!



Just such a cover is reported by Mr. H. L. Fine, pictured. The stamp is 41L3 and it shows most of the plate number "3." The postal marking is a good strike of the BUFFALO, CORNING & N.Y. R.R. route-agent marking. The C. W. Remele book gives the history of this railroad which ran from Buffalo to Corning, now part of the Erie-Lackawana System, the marking is classified as "rare, perhaps very rare."

In ye period editor's collection is something similar: S5 on cover with plate number 22R, tied by the oval MOUNT AIRY/B & O. R.R. station-agent's marking. Also, sometimes the letter enclosed has a philatelic slant; thus, an 1855 letter found inside a Nesbitt envelope tied by a CHICAGO & MISS. R.R. marking had this to say about the mail service on the railroad: "Perhaps you did not get my letter. They often delay on the Chicago & Mississippi R.R. They have the worst conductors and hands of any road I ever saw, and I think the mail carrier is no better."

### Newly Reported Markings Associated with U.S. Mails

References to USPM in *Chronicle* refer to the Society-sponsored book, *U.S. Postal Markings and Related Mail Services* by Tracy W. Simpson.

*Addendum: Issue # 57: The BERLIN Vt. marking "B" is 16mm high; not 20mm.*

Reported by Mr. D. L. Jarrett, who says the same marking is known without the year date as 13mm high. Mr. Jarrett also suggests that this marking was made from a set-up of printer's type, as often were straight-line markings.

Illustration No.	USPM Schedule	Description (Dimensions in Inches)	Used With	Reported by
1	A-2	POINT OF ROCKS/D/Md C-30	S2	E. Oakley
2	A-3	BARTONSVILLE/HERTFORD CO./1857 N.C. (C-39, probably). The only county postmark reported for the period in N.C. Pmc \$16	S2	E. D. Cole
3	A-22	Double-lined star 8mm; a carrier cancellation of Boston	1 ct. Ty. V	E. Oakley
4	A-2	BELLEVALE/D/N.Y. C-28 K-1	S2	H. M. Spelman III
5	A-13	Concentric circles C-17 of Conshohocken, Pa.	S3	E. Oakley
6	A-13	5-star flag 21 × 14, Tomkinsville, Ky.	S2	D. T. Beals III
7	A-13	5-star flag on shaft 17 × 20, Penn Haven, Pa.	S5	D. T. Beals III
8	A-13	Lyre and wreath in circle C-18, Canton, Miss.	S2	D. T. Beals III
9	A-13	Tree 20 × 18, Canton, Miss.	S2	D. T. Beals III
10	A-13	Man's head 16 × 12, Profile House, N.H. Same outline as Old-Man-of-Mountain used on Profile House advertising	S5	D. T. Beals III
11	A-13	Star within star 18mm, Brasher Falls, N.Y.	S5	D. T. Beals III
12	A-1	Haymarket (mss Va.) s-1 22 × 2; pmc \$33	S5	D. T. Beals III
13	A-13	Encircled Odd Fellow's links C-19, Westford, N.Y.	S5	D. T. Beals III
14	A-1	STINSON/N.Y./D s-1 19 × 9. Perhaps not N.Y. Information requested	S5	D. T. Beals III
15	A-1	HINCKLEY, O.-D s-1 48 × 17	S2	D. T. Beals III
16	A-2	INDEPEDECE/D/MO. dc-26 (Town name misspelled)	1 ct. Ty V	D. T. Beals III
17	A-1 and A-4	TONICA (mss Ill) s-1 28 × 8 s-1 year date (1855)	S2	D. L. Jarrett



## THE 1861-'69 PERIOD

RICHARD B. GRAHAM, *Editor*

### The Three Cent Scarlet, Scott's No. 74

JEROME S. WAGSHAL

#### Author's Preface

The first section of this article appeared in the November 1967 issue of the *Chronicle*. The main point in the first section was that the Scarlet, Scott No. 74, had enjoyed a phenomenal popularity in the philatelic market.

Thus, a table presented in the opening section showed that, of twenty-seven widely varied philatelic items among the classic issues which were listed for \$250 in the 1953 Scott Specialized Catalogue, the Scarlet had risen higher than all but one of these items by 1967. As of last year, the Scarlet was listed for \$575, exceeded only by the \$1,000 listing for No. 35 on Pony Express cover. Twenty-one of the remaining twenty-five items were still at \$400 or below, and five were still at \$250.

By the index of prices, the popularity of the Scarlet is accelerating. In the 1968 Scott Catalogue, No. 35 on Pony Express cover remains at \$1,000, while the Scarlet was raised from \$575 to \$700. The next highest item in the list of twenty-seven is far below—No. 85C unused at \$550. Auction realizations continue to confirm the Catalogue's assessment. In a sale in March 1968, an extremely fine copy of the Scarlet was sold for \$1,050, probably a new high for this item.

This article, which will be completed in successive issues of the *Chronicle*, is directed to the question of what the Scarlet is, and why it has become so popular.

#### I. HOW THE SCARLET WAS BROUGHT TO THE PHILATELIC MARKET —THE MYTH AND THE MYSTERY

So far as can presently be determined, the Scarlet was first brought to philately by J. Walter Scott. Scott was the foremost of the old time stamp dealers, the originator of the Scott Catalogues, and the author or editor of many other philatelic articles and publications. At one time, he served as president of the American Philatelic Society. Scott has long been referred to as the "Father of American Philately."<sup>1</sup> However in the case of the Scarlet, it appears that Scott may have to assume the responsibility for an illegitimate philatelic offspring.

Examination of Scott's putative parentage of the Scarlet requires first the retelling of his story of the discovery of the Scarlet, and then a detailed account of the known facts about what really happened.

##### A. *The Story in Luff's Book—Scott's Myth*

The myth that the Scarlet was a regularly issued postage stamp was created by Scott. Scott's story regarding the origin of the Scarlet was given to the philatelic world by the second of the great philatelic treatise writers, John N. Luff (the first being Tiffany). Luff's work on U.S. stamps was first published as a series of articles in the *American Journal of Philately*, beginning in 1897,<sup>2</sup> and was issued in book form in 1902. It was the definitive work of its day, and any representation appearing in Luff's work would have been given great credence at that time.

Luff gave this report regarding the origin of the Scarlet:

Many philatelists have claimed that the three cents scarlet is only a finished proof. But the fact remains that it was on sale in at least one post office. Mr. J. W. Scott kindly supplies the following information concerning the stamp. The first copy which he saw was on a letter coming from New Orleans. As the shade was unusual he desired some of the stamps for his stock. Finding they were not on sale at the New York Post Office, he sent a dollar to the postmaster at New Orleans and received its equivalent in stamps of the desired shade. These he sold to his customers at about twenty-five cents each. Subsequently, he sent three dollars to New Orleans and received in return an entire



sheet of one hundred of the stamps. On sending the third time his order was filled with the three cents rose. This would certainly appear to be conclusive evidence of the issue of the stamp in the regular way.<sup>3</sup>

It was this report which has over the years given the Scarlet a false legitimacy as a regularly issued postage stamp. After Luff published his book, Scott continued to repeat his New Orleans story. Writing in 1908 in *Gibbons Stamp Weekly*, Eustace B. Power, who was then the Gibbons' U.S. representative, stated:

. . . There have been many articles and controversies about the three cents Scarlet, as to whether it was really issued or is only a finished proof, but Mr. Scott assures me that he received some from the New Orleans Post Office during the time they were in issue, so that I think the stamp is quite right, although I have never seen a used copy. I should like to qualify this by saying, *used with the cancellation of the time*, as I have seen several three cents Scarlet, with cancellations that came into use twenty years afterwards.<sup>4</sup>

Whatever the effect of Power's opinion that the Scarlet was "quite right," it was undoubtedly Luff's book which exercised the greatest influence in this direction.

There are a number of obviously suspicious circumstances about Scott's story. Perhaps the most suspicious is the fact that no used copy of the Scarlet is known cancelled in the period when Scott claimed it was issued. The copy on Scott's alleged New Orleans letter is unknown. No other used New Orleans copy is known. No validly used copy whatsoever is known with a cancellation of the 1860's decade. In short, there is no evidence of any kind to support Scott's claim that the Scarlet was used for the prepayment of postage before 1870.

Still another suspicious aspect of Scott's story is that the story itself seems to have been unknown before it was published by Luff in 1897. If Scott had in fact acquired the Scarlets from New Orleans sometime around 1866 or 1868, it would be reasonable to expect that he would not wait thirty years to tell the story of this acquisition. Scott was too voluminous a writer and publisher to leave such a story unreported for so long, if it were true.

Nine years earlier, in 1887, John K. Tiffany published his *History of the Postage Stamps of the United States*, and he, too, said nothing about the New Orleans story. Tiffany would undoubtedly have reported the New Orleans story had he known of it, since he did report the claim that "a sheet or part of a sheet, unused, was picked up at the New York Post Office by a collector."<sup>5</sup> Tiffany never identified the source of his New York report or gave any other details, and no other reference to this story can be found. Tiffany himself rejected it, for he stated that "the better opinion would seem to be that all of this shade [the Scarlet] are proofs."<sup>6</sup> However, the fact that Tiffany would mention the New York story even if he did not believe it demonstrates that he would have printed Scott's New Orleans story had he known of it.

Since the questionable character of Scott's story would have been as apparent in 1897 as it is today, why did Luff accept it so uncritically? Apparently one of Luff's shortcomings was an uncritical faith in the integrity of his advisors, for there are a number of inaccuracies in his book that clearly stem from Luff's being supplied by his philatelic friends with information which they almost certainly knew to be false. Scott's report of the Scarlet is one of these. In the case of the Scarlet one cannot be too hard on Luff. If Luff was justified in relying on anyone, it would have been the "father of American Philately." A very close reading of Luff's statement suggests the possibility that he may have had some private doubts about Scott's story, and although not willing to challenge Scott overtly, he may have tried to express his doubts by the use of the cautious phraseology that Scott's story "would certainly appear to be conclusive evidence" of the Scarlet's regular issuance.

As for Scott, it might seem at first that he had insufficient motive to tell a false story about the origin of the Scarlet, but this is not necessarily so. It is true that his financial gain from selling the Scarlet was relatively small if we judge by the alleged price of 25 cents reported by Luff, or even by Scott's catalogue quotations up to 1897. However, when Luff was writing his treatise, probably in 1897,

Scott had already been selling the Scarlets for at least seventeen years, all the time representing them as genuine stamps. If Luff had asked Scott about the Scarlet in the late 1890's, Scott must have been deeply committed by then to his claim that they were genuine stamps and may have had no choice but to stick to the story he had been telling to explain their origin.

Whatever Scott's reasons, the fact remains that his New Orleans story was a myth. Moreover, Scott's alleged purchases from the New Orleans Post Office are inherently not incidents about which an innocent mistake is possible. Simply stated, it is obvious that Scott lied. To speak this bluntly about a respected personage in philatelic history may generate some disagreement, but there can be no reasonable disagreement about the conclusion that his story was untrue.

It can be said in Scott's defense that although his story would be a gross ethical violation of present day philatelic standards, early standards were probably not as strict. The distinction between regularly issued postage stamps and stamp-like items such as proofs and reprints had not been fully developed when Scott began selling the Scarlet. Otherwise, the Government, for example, would not have undertaken to issue imitations of the 1847 issue in 1875. Scott's actions reflected the attitudes of his times. For example, beginning in the 45th edition of his catalogue, issued in 1884, and for a number of issues thereafter, Scott made the following statement about the local stamps he was offering:

. . . In these stamps, there is no difference in the value between a used or unused stamp (many preferring the latter), which has allowed us to utilize the columns in giving the value of those local stamps which have been reprinted from the original plates, thus enabling collectors to get genuine stamps at a nominal price. *It should be understood that any stamp printed from a genuine plate is genuine, and it is of comparatively little importance as to the particular date at which the impression was made.* Every stamp which has been in use a few years has been many times reprinted, and all prints are equally genuine . . . (emphasis added).

A trial color proof is by definition produced from a "genuine plate." If Scott felt that any local stamp reprinted from a "genuine plate" was "equally genuine" with the originally issued stamp, he would see no harm in passing the Scarlet off as a genuine stamp. By these standards the New Orleans story becomes merely a little bit of romantic and harmless window dressing.

There is, however, evidence that Scott came to recognize the importance of distinguishing between stamps and stamp-like objects well before Luff wrote his book. In an address to the Brooklyn Philatelic Club on February 14, 1889, Scott stated (with a curious coincidence in referring to color):

No reputable dealer would sell a reprint as an original, any more than he would sell a vermilion for an orange Newfoundland . . . or in a word practice any deception. Personally I only collect cancelled stamps.<sup>7</sup>

It may not be inappropriate at this point to quote from a recent letter from Mr. Elliott Perry:

. . . A man who was closely associated with Scott, and knew him very well told me in the presence of several others that he had "never known Scott to make a single accurate statement about anything."<sup>8</sup>

#### *B. The Mystery of the Scarlet's Introduction to Philately*

After we dismiss Scott's New Orleans myth, we are faced with the mystery of how the Scarlet actually came to philately. This is indeed one of the deepest and darkest of philatelic mysteries. Yet there is more evidence upon which to base a solution than has been generally realized.

All the evidence presently known indicates that Scott was the party responsible for introducing the Scarlet to philately. However, it appears that this happened, not in the 1860's as Scott claimed, but in the 1870's, probably in the latter part of the decade, in 1877 or 1878.

This conclusion is of the greatest importance in establishing what the Scarlet really is, and where it came from. If the Scarlet were a genuine stamp, it would have appeared in 1866 as Scott indicated, or earlier. On the other hand, if the Scarlet

## CATALOGUE

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GEORGE A. LEAVITT &amp; CO.,

ON MONDAY EVENING, MARCH 11th, 1878.

COMMENCING AT HALF PAST SEVEN O'CLOCK.

CATALOGUED BY SCOTT &amp; Co., 146 FULTON STREET.

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## CATALOGUE.

NOTE.—Every stamp in this collection is warranted genuine. The adhesives, are all used, unless otherwise stated.

Lot		Varieties.
1.12-1	1842, New York, 3c. blue, unused, rare.	
74-2	1842, " " 3c. buff, " extremely rare.	
80-3	1845, " " 5c. black, scarce.	
81-4	1845, " " 5c. black on blue, unused, scarce.	
3.11-5	1847, New Haven, 5c. red. This is one of the few reprints made by Mr. Mitchell before his death, and will eventually become as rare as the originals.	
10.25-6	Carrier's stamp, blue on pink. This stamp is warranted a used original and is of the very highest degree of rarity. One of these stamps has been sold at auction, for \$77.50.	
1.50-7	Carrier's stamp 1c. black, horseman, rare.	
5.37-8	" 1 c. red, " unused but slightly torn, very rare, especially unused.	
75-9	Set 1847, U. S. and blue, Carrier's stamp, scarce,	3 "
80-10	Set 1851, U. S. The 90c. in poor condition,	8 "
48-11	Set 1861, U. S.	8 "
2.00-12	Set 1863-75, U. S. Some of the low values unused. The 24, 30 and 90c. of the 1869 issue, have now become quite rare,	25 "
1.20-13	4 splendid varieties of the 3c. 1861 issue, pink, red, scarlet, and large embossing on back, very rare and desirable,	4 "
84-14	Set 1865, U. S. Newspaper stamps unused,	3 "
1.00-15	Lot 1875, " " " six unused,	8 "
1.50-16	Set 1853, U. S. Envelope stamps on white paper, including one of the excessively rare 3c. value in wide labels with square ends,	5 "
1.50-17	Set 1853, U. S. Envelope stamps, on buff paper, including the 3c. with square ends, and both varieties of the 10c.	6 "

Figure 1

Title page and first page of listings of J. W. Scott's 15th Auction Sale, held March 11, 1878. Note lot 13 (designated by arrow), which is the first mention of a 3c 1861 Scarlet found in philatelic literature.

was introduced in the late 1870's it must have come from some other source than a Post Office stamp window. Accordingly, the evidence placing the Scarlet's arrival on the philatelic market in the late 1870's merits careful examination.

(1) *The Earliest Reference to the Scarlet in Philatelic Literature.* The earliest printed reference to the Scarlet which I have found after an extensive search of philatelic literature of the 1860-80 period, is contained in the description of Lot 13 in the catalogue of J. W. Scott's auction sale of March 11, 1878. *Figure 1* shows portions of the catalogue, including the description of this lot. We cannot be absolutely sure that the "scarlet" in this lot description was what is now Scott No. 74 since there was no system of catalogue numbers in general use at that time. Yet, what else could this "scarlet" be?

The importance of this reference to the Scarlet in Scott's 1878 auction is that Scott's auction sales had been going on for some time without mentioning the Scarlet. Scott introduced the auction method to philately eight years previously, holding his first auction on May 21, 1870. The 1878 auction, in which the Scarlet was first mentioned, was his fifteenth. This points to the conclusion that Scott did not have the Scarlet much before 1878.

(2) *The Listing of the Scarlet in the Scott Catalogues.* Scott's first catalogue listing of the Scarlet—that is, in his price lists which evolved into the modern day standard catalogues, as distinguished from his auction catalogues—appeared in the thirty-eighth edition, published in 1880. Scott began publication of his price list-catalogues in 1867, and for approximately the first fifty editions they were generally

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UNITED STATES, N. A.	St. Louis.	New Used																																				
<p>100 CENTS = 1 DOLLAR. PROVISIONAL ISSUES.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">New Used</p> <p><b>Baltimore.</b> 5 c. 1846, (t 1) black</p> <p><b>Brattleboro.</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 5px auto;"> <p style="text-align: center;">BRATTLEBORO, VT.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">P. <i>Feb 2</i> D.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">5 CENTS</p> </div> <p>5 c. 1846, buff 10 (Photograph of above.)</p>	<p><b>St. Louis.</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 5px auto;"> <p style="text-align: center;">SAINT LOUIS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">POST OFFICE</p> </div> <p>5 c. 1845, black 10 c. " " " 20 c. " " "</p> <p style="text-align: center;">New Used</p> <p>NOTE.—There are three varieties of each of these.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">GENERAL ISSUE.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 5px auto;"> <p style="text-align: center;">ST. LOUIS</p> </div>	<p><i>Head Franklin.</i></p> <p>1 c. 1851, blue on pink Rept. (t 14) 10</p> <p><i>Eagle in Oval.</i></p> <p>1 c. 1851, (t 15) blue 10</p> <p style="text-align: center;">GENERAL ISSUE.</p> <p><i>U. S. and value in corners. With and without rectangular embossing on back.</i></p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td>1 c. 1861, (t 16) blue</td><td style="text-align: right;">5</td><td style="text-align: right;">1</td></tr> <tr><td>3 c. " (t 17) pink</td><td style="text-align: right;">5</td><td style="text-align: right;">1</td></tr> <tr><td>3 c. 1868, (t 17) vermilion</td><td style="text-align: right;">1 00</td><td style="text-align: right;">1 00</td></tr> <tr><td>5 c. 1861, (t 18) yellow</td><td style="text-align: right;">2 50</td><td style="text-align: right;">1 00</td></tr> <tr><td>5 c. 1862, (t 18) brown</td><td style="text-align: right;">10</td><td style="text-align: right;">5</td></tr> <tr><td>10 c. 1861, (t 19) green</td><td style="text-align: right;">15</td><td style="text-align: right;">1</td></tr> <tr><td>12 c. " (t 20) black</td><td style="text-align: right;">25</td><td style="text-align: right;">3</td></tr> <tr><td>24 c. 1861, (t 21) lilac</td><td style="text-align: right;">60</td><td style="text-align: right;">5</td></tr> <tr><td>30 c. " (t 22) orange</td><td style="text-align: right;">60</td><td style="text-align: right;">10</td></tr> <tr><td>90 c. " (t 23) blue</td><td style="text-align: right;">2 00</td><td style="text-align: right;">50</td></tr> <tr><td>2 c. 1863, (t 24) black</td><td style="text-align: right;">3</td><td style="text-align: right;">1</td></tr> <tr><td>15 c. 1866, (t 25) "</td><td style="text-align: right;">25</td><td style="text-align: right;">5</td></tr> </table>	1 c. 1861, (t 16) blue	5	1	3 c. " (t 17) pink	5	1	3 c. 1868, (t 17) vermilion	1 00	1 00	5 c. 1861, (t 18) yellow	2 50	1 00	5 c. 1862, (t 18) brown	10	5	10 c. 1861, (t 19) green	15	1	12 c. " (t 20) black	25	3	24 c. 1861, (t 21) lilac	60	5	30 c. " (t 22) orange	60	10	90 c. " (t 23) blue	2 00	50	2 c. 1863, (t 24) black	3	1	15 c. 1866, (t 25) "	25	5
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3 c. 1868, (t 17) vermilion	1 00	1 00																																				
5 c. 1861, (t 18) yellow	2 50	1 00																																				
5 c. 1862, (t 18) brown	10	5																																				
10 c. 1861, (t 19) green	15	1																																				
12 c. " (t 20) black	25	3																																				
24 c. 1861, (t 21) lilac	60	5																																				
30 c. " (t 22) orange	60	10																																				
90 c. " (t 23) blue	2 00	50																																				
2 c. 1863, (t 24) black	3	1																																				
15 c. 1866, (t 25) "	25	5																																				

Figure 2

Portion of page of Scott's 38th Postage Stamp Catalogue, published in 1880. This is the first catalogue listing of the Scarlet (note arrow)—then called a "vermillion."

issued more frequently than the present annual rate. None of the first thirty-seven editions mentioned the Scarlet. *Figure 2* is an illustration of the first listing of the Scarlet. It appeared in the thirty-eighth edition of the Scott Catalogue.

During the next decade following this initial listing, there were several significant changes made in the catalogue description of the Scarlet. As can be seen from *Figure 2*, the initial listing described the Scarlet as "vermillion" and listed it as having been issued in 1868, that is, during the period of the grilled issues. The Scarlet is, of course, not grilled. The "1868" listing continued for four years. It was finally changed to "1866" in the forty-fifth edition of the Scott catalogue, published in 1884.

The "vermillion" description continued for an additional two years. In the forty-seventh edition, published in 1886, the color description in the catalogue was changed from "vermillion" to "scarlet," the reference clearly being to the same item.<sup>9</sup>

Table II shows the progression of catalogue changes in the first ten years the Scarlet was listed by Scott.

TABLE II  
THE FIRST TEN YEARS OF THE LISTINGS  
OF THE SCARLET IN THE SCOTT CATALOGUES

Edition	Year	Cat. No.	Description	Price	
				UNUSED	USED
38th*	1880		3¢ 1868 Vermillion	1.00	1.00
39th	1881		3¢ 1868 Vermillion	1.00	1.00
40th	1882		3¢ 1868 Vermillion	1.00	1.00
41st	1882		3¢ 1868 Vermillion	1.00	1.00
42nd	1882		3¢ 1868 Vermillion	1.00	1.00
43rd	1883		3¢ 1868 Vermillion	1.50	1.00
44th	1883		3¢ 1868 Vermillion	2.50	2.00
45th	1884		3¢ 1866 **Vermillion	5.00	—
46th	1885		3¢ 1866 Vermillion	—	—
47th	1886		3¢ 1866 Scarlet	5.00	—
48th	1886	43	3¢ 1866 Scarlet	10.00	—
49th	1887	43	3¢ 1866 Scarlett	10.00	—
50th	1889	47	3¢ 1866 Scarlet	—	—

\* First listing. \*\* Changed year date of issue.

These catalogue listings tend to further disprove Scott's New Orleans story. If Scott personally acquired the Scarlets from New Orleans when the 1861 issue was current, why did he wait approximately 14 years to list them in his catalogues? And when he finally did list them, Scott's use of the "1868" date for seven editions before switching to the "1866" date is not the action of a man who really knew when the Scarlets originated. This change of year dates would seem to be more the action of a man who arbitrarily picked a date for a myth, and then, realizing that the date he picked was a little off because it impinged on the period of the grilled issues, arbitrarily shifted it back.

(3) *Scott's Other Writings*. The dates of Scott's 1878 auction catalogue and the 1880 price list-catalogue both point to the conclusion that Scott began offering the Scarlet in the late 1870's. This same conclusion is indicated by Scott's other writings in the *American Journal of Philately*.

Scott began this leading philatelic periodical in March, 1868, and continued to publish it uninterrupted for eighteen years, until 1886. I have carefully examined these issues and found no mention of the Scarlet in any of them. Of particular interest is the fact that, beginning in the January, 1877 issue of the Journal, Scott published a series of articles entitled *A Revised List of the Postage Stamps and Stamped Envelopes of All Nations*, and there was no mention of the Scarlet in this series although this would have been a logical place to list it. The listing of the 3¢ 1861 in this Revised List described it as "Red," and indicated that it had two shades, in all probability a reference to the pink and rose.<sup>10</sup> When the Revised List was published in book form in 1879, it still omitted any reference to the Scarlet.<sup>11</sup>

However, in 1888 the *American Journal of Philately* was reestablished after a lapse of two years, and in the first volume of the new series, published in January, 1888, Scott began to present a new revision of the "Revised List." This time Scott was named as the author of the list rather than merely the editor. Under his description of the three cent stamp of 1861, Scott listed the "vermillion" and described it as having been issued in 1866.<sup>12</sup> In short, Scott's other writings are consistent with the conclusion to be drawn from his catalogues—that he obtained the Scarlets and began offering them for sale sometime in the late 1870's.

(4) *Other Dealers*. No reference to the Scarlet by any other dealer has been found which is earlier than Scott's 1878-1880 catalogue listings. The lists of many prominent dealers of that period have been searched—Seebeck, Bechtel, Boothby, William Brown, Durbin and Hanes, Trifet, Calman, Walton, Andrus, Fountain and Winterburn—and none mention the Scarlet as early as 1880.<sup>13</sup> The earliest reference to the Scarlet which I have discovered in a source other than a Scott publication is in an 1882 price list of N. F. Seebeck. Seebeck was one of the most prominent New York dealers of that time and maintained a close business relationship



with Scott. (See the cover of Scott's auction catalogue shown in *Figure 1*.) Seebeck's 1882 list carries the "vermillion" under the 1861 issue, pricing it at \$1 used or unused, the same as the then current Scott list. Obviously, it cannot be said with absolute certainty that Seebeck's 1882 listing was the earliest non-Scott reference to the Scarlet, any more than it can be said with absolute certainty that Scott's 1878 auction catalog was the earliest of all references to the Scarlet. To say that there are no earlier references than these is to assert that something does not exist, an inherently difficult kind of fact to prove. However, I have researched this point in what is probably the country's finest philatelic library and the absence of any earlier references to the Scarlet in the extensive philatelic literature of the 1870's and 1880's which I have examined is in itself significant.

(5) *Mr. Elliott Perry's Opinion.* Mr. Elliott Perry believes that Scott was selling the Scarlet as early as 1867. In a letter to the author dated July 25, 1967, he states:

"J. Walter Scott certainly had the 3¢ scarlet as early as 1867, when he offered them at 25¢ each and called them vermillion. . . ."

The opinions of no living philatelist are entitled to greater respect than those of Mr. Perry. Nevertheless all available data negate Scott's having the Scarlet as early as 1867. If he had the Scarlet that early he probably had more opportunity than any other philatelist of his day to chronicle this fact in one of his many publications. Yet the dates of his published references to the Scarlet all point to the conclusion that Scott did not have the Scarlet until the late 1870's. Furthermore, if Scott had the Scarlet in 1867 it is anomalous that in his first catalogue listing he listed the year of its issue as 1868 and repeated this incorrect date no less than six times. Finally, if the Scarlet was introduced to the philatelic market as early as 1867 why is there no discoverable reference to this item in a non-Scott publication until 1882, fifteen years later? I am hesitant flatly to contradict Mr. Perry, but the above constitutes the known evidence on the subject.

### *C. Where Did Scott Get His Scarlets?*

If Scott did not obtain his Scarlets from New Orleans, where did they come from? In all probability, they came to him from the files of trial color proofs in the Bank Note Company. But who gave them to him?

The one name that always comes up when the question is raised of how proofs got out of the Bank Note Company is that of Henry G. Mandel.

For some years before the turn of the century, Mandel was an employee of the American Bank Note Company, and also a prominent name in philatelic circles. Brazer describes him as "official counterfeit and color expert" for the Company,<sup>14</sup> while the Company itself states merely that from 1894 until his death in 1902 Mandel was employed in the Photo & Process Division of the Engraving Department.<sup>15</sup> Mandel achieved philatelic immortality by his association with Luff and it is generally believed that he supplied Luff with many of the statistics in Luff's treatise.<sup>16</sup> In addition, however, Mandel was undoubtedly the leading collector of proofs and essays of his day, and he is known to have used the advantages of his employment to help in his collecting activities. At his death, his collection was sold in several segments, realizing a total of over \$89,000.00, an amazing figure for those days.<sup>17</sup> Little wonder, then, that Mandel should be suspected of having been the source of Scott's Scarlets. Brookman, for example, states<sup>18</sup> that it is:

. . . likely that they [the Scarlets] came to the market thru Henry G. Mandel who for many years held an important position with the American Bank Note Company and from whose records many unusual philatelic items were obtained and placed on the market at about the turn of the century.

However, it is my conclusion that, whatever his other peccadillos, Mandel was probably not the person who supplied Scott with his Scarlets. The key fact leading to this conclusion is that when Mandel died in 1902 he was 45 years of age.<sup>19</sup> As noted above, Scott's Scarlets can be traced back to about 1877 and about that time Mandel would have been only about 20 years old. As Elliott Perry commented to the author, "Rather young to have been taking proofs etc. from the National Bank Note Co. records, if he ever was employed by the National Bank Note Co."<sup>20</sup> To

resolve this issue I asked the American Bank Note Company when Mandel started with that company. The answer was that “he was one of our employees and not of a predecessor company (i.e., the National Bank Note Company),” but that there was “nothing to show when he started.”<sup>21</sup>

Even if we exonerate Mandel and are left without a suspect, this does not weaken the conclusion that the Scarlets were color proofs taken unofficially from the Bank Note Company’s files. In the days when stamps were manufactured by private companies, and before the Bureau of Printing and Engraving took over this function, there was generally a freer attitude towards the release of essays and proofs. No more proof of this point is needed than to observe the relative present-day availability of Bank Note proofs compared with proofs of more recent times. How did all these Bank Note proofs come to the market? Certainly not all of them thru Mandel. Like all proofs, they were issued in personal transactions sometimes involving friendship or favoritism, and sometimes outright gain. These are generally secret transactions and the persons involved are almost never known. It is not unreasonable that the same should be true of the Scarlets.

Scott, a prominent dealer of his time, perhaps the most prominent, was a logical person to be approached as a buyer (I do not say fence) for such material as the Scarlets. His known activities with respect to the sale of local reprints and facsimiles do not disqualify him from such a role.<sup>22</sup>



Figure 3  
dos Passos



Figure 4  
Sapperstein



Figure 5  
Wagshal

Three copies of the Scarlet, all showing the typical killers of the New York Post Office, 1876-94. The same marking is also on the Scott No. 10, the 2¢ red-brown of 1883 (right) in Fig. 5, as is on the Sapperstein and Wagshal Scarlets.

#### D. The Banknote Cancelled Scarlets.

Although no Scarlets are known used during the 1861-8 period, that is, during the time they were allegedly issued for use, there are Scarlets which are cancelled with a standardized oval killer which was in use during the Banknote period of the 1870's and 1880's. These Scarlets are very rare items and we are fortunate to be able to illustrate three of them. The first, *Figure 3*, is from the dos Passos collection, the second, *Figure 4*, belongs to Mr. Perry Sapperstein, and the third, *Figure 5*, is from the author's collection. *Figure 5* also shows the “D” cancel on a banknote stamp, Scott No. 210.

There is nothing definitely known about the origin of these Banknote cancelled Scarlets, though it has been suspected that they came from Scott.<sup>23</sup> After intensive study, I have concluded that Scott was almost certainly the creator of these items. At first blush, it might seem impossible to arrive at any conclusion at this late date, but here is the evidence, and the reader may judge for himself.

The most significant evidence tying these Banknote cancelled Scarlets to Scott is the cancellations themselves. The “PO” on the dos Passos copy probably indicates the main Post Office in New York City. This type of cancellation also bore the year date, which was shown by two numbers; that is, the last two numbers of the date, located at the bottom of the space between the circular townmark and the oval killer. Because of the placement of the cancellations, only the dos Passos copy shows any trace of the year date. This trace can be seen in the extreme lower left corner of the stamp and is either a “78” or a “79”. See *Figure 6*.



Figure 6

An enlarged view of the lower portion of the dos Passos Scarlet, Fig. 3. A portion of the year date of the canceller may be seen in the margin on the extreme left, and adjacent perforations on the lower edge of the stamp (note arrow). This date, which shows the "7" clearly, is apparently "78" or "79."

These cancellations are just what one would expect to find if Scott had taken some of his Scarlets to the nearest post office during the late 1870's and early 1880's and had them cancelled by mailing letters to himself. From 1876 until May, 1882 Scott maintained his stamp store at 146 Fulton Street, about two blocks from the main Post Office at Broadway and Park Row. In 1882 Scott moved to 721 Broadway. The nearest post office to his new shop was station D, located several blocks away at 217 East 9th Street.<sup>24</sup>

The connection between the Banknote cancelled Scarlets and J. W. Scott is shown by the cover pictured in Figure 7, from the author's collection. One picture is indeed worth a thousand words in this case!

The changes which Scott made in his catalogue listings of the Scarlet about this time support the conclusion that Scott was responsible for the Banknote cancelled Scarlets. It will be recalled that when the Scarlet was first listed by Scott in 1880 it was listed for the same price, used and unused. (See Table II.) This equal pricing continued from 1880 to 1883. In 1883, the unused price of the Scarlet rose above the used price, and it remained above the used price in the second 1883 catalogue. However, after 1883, the used Scarlet was no longer priced, and was indicated only by a dash.

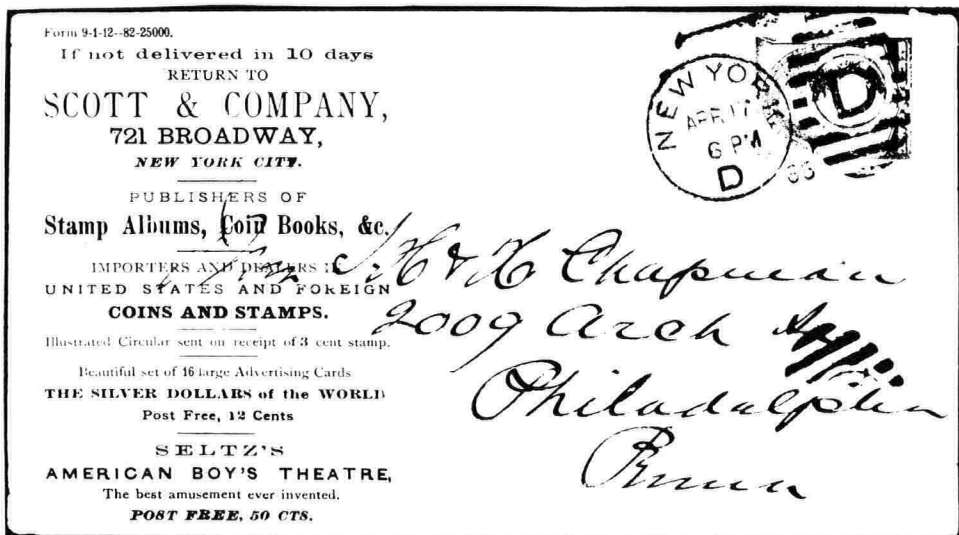


Figure 7

Scott moved to 721 Broadway in 1882, and this cover demonstrates from which station he then normally sent his mail. Compare the killer used by this station, "D," to the killers used on the Sapperstein and Wagshal Scarlets, Figures 4 and 5. Also note that Scott's mail would probably not have been sent through Station "D" before 1882, and note the killer of the dos Passos copy (Figure 3).

Analysis of these catalogue listings indicate that they are irreconcilable with Scott's New Orleans fable, but are entirely consistent with the conclusion that Scott had some of his Scarlets cancelled by mailing letters to himself through the New York Post Office in the late 1870's and early 1880's. For example, it is not logical that the Scarlet should have been listed initially, that is, in 1880, at the same price used and unused, since, according to Scott's story, the used variety was much scarcer. Scott never referred to the existence of more than one used copy, namely, the alleged discovery copy in the letter from New Orleans; all the rest were unused. Accordingly, the used price should have been much higher than the unused, or should have been indicated by a dash. The 1883 changes in the catalogue are even more inconsistent with Scott's fable. The higher prices quoted for unused copies would indicate the used stamp was more plentiful, or at least not significantly rarer than the unused. The only logical explanation for such a market situation is that Scott made used copies as needed.

Eustace B. Power, who was, it will be recalled, a contemporary and acquaintance of both Scott and Luff, published a treatise on United States stamps in 1909 in which he may have given away Scott's secret. He wrote this regarding the Scarlet:

. . . The used copies I have seen have generally had cancellations of the period of 1883 and were probably cancelled "to oblige," although why any collector should desire to cancel so handsome a stamp I cannot see. . . .<sup>25</sup>

The key question raised by this statement is why did Power use the specific year date of 1883? There is nothing inherent in the history of the oval killer which ties it particularly to that year. The use of this killer extended over a period of ten or fifteen years. According to Gilbert M. Burr, who made a study of these cancellations, they were first used in 1876,<sup>26</sup> and Clarence Brazer reported that he found the "D" cancels used as late as 1894.<sup>27</sup>

Putting all of this evidence together, the story that emerges is that after Scott acquired the Scarlets in the late 1870's and began to offer them for sale he must have received requests for used copies. To fill these requests he probably prepared envelopes addressed to himself franked with copies of the Scarlet and mailed them at the nearest post office. By 1883 he probably realized that he could raise the price of the unused copies in relation to the used because he could produce as many used copies as were needed. This would explain the catalogue changes of 1883.

However sometime in 1883 it must have been brought home to Scott that the cancellations of that day were not the same as those of the 1860's, and were therefore not being well received by collectors. Accordingly, Scott must have had to abandon this practice. This would explain the change in the listing of the used Scarlet after 1883, when it began to be shown only with a dash. It is likely that Power knew of Scott's abandonment of his practice of having the Scarlets cancelled in 1883. This would explain Power's use of the "1883" date in his book. Indeed, no other explanation presents itself for Power's "1883" statement.

The Banknote cancelled Scarlets are the most paradoxical of all the Scarlet varieties. Three varieties of the Scarlet, that is, (1) the unused perforated, (2) unused imperforate and (3) the pen marked, are listed in the Specialized Scott Catalogue, but the Banknote cancelled Scarlet is not. Yet it is the Banknote cancelled Scarlet which would appear to have the best credentials to pass as a postage stamp. If these Banknote cancelled Scarlets bear genuine cancellations, as they definitely appear to do,<sup>28</sup> and if they actually served to indicate prepayment of postage on envelopes carried through the mail, and there is no evidence to prove they did not, then they have served duty as postage stamps. This is a claim which can be made for none of the other varieties of the Scarlet.

Nevertheless, the Scott Catalogue is undoubtedly right in ignoring these Banknote cancelled Scarlets. The fact that the Banknote cancelled Scarlets passed through the mail is no proof of their legitimacy as postage stamps. Every collector of U.S. stamps of even moderate experience has seen various kinds of adhesives used on envelopes in place of postage stamps, such as revenue stamps, war savings stamps, etc. No one contends that because these items have slipped through they have become postage stamps, when their origin and officially intended use is far different. By the same reasoning, the fact that the Scarlets may have slipped

through the mails and were cancelled cannot serve to transform what were originally trial color proofs into postage stamps.

However, logic must carry us one step further. If the Banknote cancelled Scarlets do not deserve listing as postage stamps, it necessarily follows that none of the other three varieties of the Scarlet—the unused perforated, the unused imperforate or the penmarked variety—deserve listing, either. In short, the fact that the Banknote cancelled Scarlets are not listed in the Specialized Catalogue underscores the argument that the other three listed varieties should also *not* be listed as postage stamps.



Figure 8  
The pen marked Scarlet.



Figure 9  
Carl F. Rothfuchs

#### E. The Pen Marked Scarlets

There are a number of copies of the Scarlet which bear a distinctive pen marking consisting of four horizontal lines more or less evenly spaced and not running out to either side of the stamp. *Figure 8* illustrates one of these pen marked Scarlets. It is to copies such as this that the Specialized Catalogue refers in listing the Scarlet with pen "cancellation." It should be borne in mind, however, that although the Catalogue lists the Scarlet with "pen cancellation" it nevertheless *does not list the Scarlet in used condition*, thereby indicating it is unknown in the used state. This is an incredible inconsistency, particularly since it is certainly intentional.

The pen marked Scarlets did not come from Scott. Rather, they came, much later, from a Washington, D.C. stamp dealer by the name of Carl F. Rothfuchs. Rothfuchs was one of the prominent dealers of his time.<sup>29</sup> Born in Germany in 1851, he came to the United States in 1859 and lived in Boston until 1874. In 1885 he started in as a professional stamp dealer, giving up his trade as an upholsterer, and moved from Providence, R.I. to open up a stamp shop in Washington. This shop was located at 359½ Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., in an area directly in front of the Capitol Building which is now open park. Rothfuchs served as vice-president of the American Stamp Dealers Association in 1888. Sometime after the turn of the century he moved back to Boston where he completed his career. *Figure 9* is a picture of Rothfuchs.

Rothfuchs obtained the pen marked Scarlets sometime between February, 1892 and January 1893. This approximate date can be deduced from the first listing of the Scarlet in Rothfuchs' price lists. The Scarlet is not listed in his price list



No. 8, dated February, 1892, and it was listed for the first time in his list No. 9 dated January, 1893. It has been said that Rothfuchs arranged the Post Office Department stamp exhibit at the Columbian exhibition held in 1893, and that, lacking any appropriation with which to pay him, the Post Office Department gave him a number of sheets of proofs and remainders.<sup>30</sup> The pen marked Scarlets probably came from this lot.

With his initial listing of the Scarlet in 1893, Rothfuchs included an explanatory note which merits full quotation:

"The 1866, 3¢ Scarlet is a very scarce stamp. The 3¢ Scarlet which I offer are not used postally but cancelled with four ink lines three quarters across the stamp, otherwise it is in prime condition. It is priced too low in the standard catalogues. My price is \$15.00. Try and buy it elsewhere at as low a figure and if you do not succeed, your order for one will be thankfully received. The stamp is not sent on approval but should they be sold when your order reaches me I will refund the money and pay expenses both ways."

Apparently Rothfuchs had to make no refunds for this same notice appeared in his March 1894 list, No. 10, with the price raised to \$16.50, and in his June, 1895 list, No. 11, with the price raised to \$35.00. By February 1910, Rothfuchs had moved to Boston. His list No. 20, issued from Boston, offered the Scarlet at \$50.00, \$35.00, or \$25.00, depending on condition, and it contained the following statement about the Scarlet:

The 3¢ Scarlet which I offer for sale are *not used*. They have four ink lines three-quarters across each stamp. Otherwise they are in fine condition and have *original* gum. All are guaranteed as genuine original 3¢ Scarlet postage stamps.

And are of the same sheet that I obtained some sixteen years ago while located at Washington.

I have carefully examined some of the 3¢ Scarlet sold elsewhere at private sale and by auction. Some do not compare favorable with the undoubted genuine 3¢ Scarlet.

I consider those that do not compare favorable with the genuine stamp as perforated proofs, and no better than the fake Navy 2¢ green and the faked Periodical set 1¢ to \$60.00 on soft paper.

An undoubted genuine copy of the 3¢ Scarlet with ink lines is much scarcer and more desirable than a doubtful copy without ink lines.

The most important point established by Rothfuchs' statements is that the pen marked Scarlets are "not used postally." The fact that the pen marked Scarlets were "not used postally" fits in with the conclusion that Rothfuchs obtained them from the Post Office Department for arranging the Columbian stamp exhibit. These Scarlets were doubtless marked in order to prevent their improper postal use. Such meticulous defacing of each item in the sheet would be more characteristic of a Post Office official than someone in the Banknote company.

Rothfuchs' statements also establish that the Scott Catalogue listing of the pen marked Scarlet as bearing a "pen cancellation" is incorrect. By its own terms, the Catalogue defines a "cancellation" as a "postal marking which cancels the stamp, making its further use impossible."<sup>31</sup> The word "further" in this definition conveys the clear meaning that the stamp which is cancelled must have been postally used once, that is, must have been used for the prepayment of postage. Rothfuchs' statements show that the pen marked Scarlets were never cancelled because, to use his own words, they were "not used postally," or as he said in 1910, they are "not used." Accordingly, these Scarlets are pen marked, but they are not pen cancelled.

As for the quantities involved, Rothfuchs' 1910 reference to "the same sheet that I obtained . . . at Washington" would indicate that all the pen marked Scarlets came from a single sheet. Although it is not clear whether Rothfuchs was referring to a pane of one hundred stamps or to a sheet in its technical sense, that is, a full sheet of two hundred stamps arranged in two panes of one hundred each, the better guess would be that he was referring to a pane of one hundred. In either case, the pen marked Scarlets would probably be scarcer items than their unmarked counterparts.

Finally, Rothfuchs' comments that some of the Scarlets he had seen offered elsewhere "do not compare favorable" with his pen marked copies raises a question

as to whether there is some discernible difference between the unmarked copies and the pen marked copies. Certainly a trial color sheet which the Bank Note Company would have selected for submission to the Post Office Department as a color sample would have been carefully printed and prepared, but it would seem reasonable that the Bank Note Company would have retained an identical sheet for its files. The author has not discerned any color difference, although some copies seem to show greater plate wear than others of those copies examined. Should any reader be aware of a hitherto unnoticed difference between the unmarked and pen marked Scarlets, his comments would be welcomed.

#### F. *The Third Lot of Scarlets—Another Unsolved Mystery*

Mr. Elliott Perry reports the existence of a third lot of the Scarlets in addition to the Scott copies and the Rothfuchs' copies. Mr. Perry states there was "a sheet which I understand was offered in New York not long before 1912 and was refused because it was imperforate. The story is that it was then perforated and sold. . . ."<sup>32</sup> Mr. Perry states that he has a dim recollection that Eustace Power was somehow involved but was not sure.<sup>33</sup> Mr. Perry also states that some stamps from this third lot can be distinguished from Scott's Scarlets but has declined to disclose the test. In any event, it should be emphasized that this third lot of Scarlets would have no better philatelic standing than the other two lots.

#### G. *The Imperforate Scarlets*

The Scott's Specialized lists the Scarlet in an imperforate pair as well as perforated.

The listing of the imperforate Scarlet among the U.S. General issues is completely indefensible. Scott's New Orleans fable says nothing about the imperforate Scarlets. Neither Luff nor Power, both of whom reported Scott's New Orleans fable, contended that the imperforate Scarlets were stamps. Indeed, Power stated that "The imperforate copies are undoubtedly proofs. . . ."<sup>34</sup> Nothing has been found as to how these imperforate Scarlets were introduced to philately, though, like the perforate variety, suspicion naturally falls on Scott.

The imperforate Scarlet was first listed in the 1900 edition of the Scott catalogue. The fact that the listing began at this late date does nothing to improve the pedigree of the imperforate variety. The imperforates are, incidently, probably rarer in relation to the perforated items than their catalogue value would indicate. However, they are possibly lower priced because their status is more evident than is that of the perforated varieties.

Power notes in his book that the imperforate copies were "sometimes privately and fraudulently perforated. Care should be taken that the size of the stamp is correct when purchasing this variety." This comment may tie in with Elliott Perry's recollection about the third lot of the Scarlets. However, exactly what Power meant by advising that the buyer make sure that "the size of the stamp is correct," is unclear. He could not have meant the design. He may have meant that the perf holes on the private perfs were of a different size, larger or smaller, from those of National Bank Note manufacture, or he may have been referring to the perforating of die proofs so as to leave the Scarlet with too generous margins. The easy answer to this problem is that regardless of who perforated a particular Scarlet it is not a regularly issued stamp.

\* \* \*

This completes the review of the various known varieties of the Scarlet. It will be evident at this point that although many of the facts regarding the origin of the Scarlets are unknown, much more is known than is generally recognized. And of one point we can be sure: There is no known copy of the Scarlet legitimately used for postal purposes during the period when it was allegedly in use. To state the matter even more clearly, there is no evidence than any variety of the Scarlet is a postage stamp.

#### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., the reference to Scott in Stanley B. Ashbrook, *The United States Issue of 1869 Preceded by Some Additional Notes on "The Premieres Gravures of 1861"* (Fort Thomas, Ky.: By the Author, 1943), p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> The series began as John N. Luff, "The Postage Stamps of the United States," *American Journal of Philately, 2d Series* (New York: The Scott Stamp & Coin Co., Ltd., June 1, 1897), p. 246.

<sup>3</sup> Luff, *American Journal of Philately, 2d Series* (January 1, 1898), p. 13. Reprinted in John N. Luff, *The Postage Stamps of the United States* (New York: The Scott Stamp & Coin Co., Ltd., 1902), p. 75.

<sup>4</sup> Eustace B. Power, "Hard U.S. Problems Made Easy," *Gibbons Stamp Weekly* (February 15, 1908), Vol. VII, No. 7, p. 104.

<sup>5</sup> John K. Tiffany, *History of the Postage Stamps of the United States* (St. Louis, Mo.: C. H. Mekeel, 1887), p. 134.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> J. W. Scott, "The Reprint Question," *The Philatelic Journal of America* (St. Louis, Mo.: Philatelic Publishing Co., March, 1889), Vol. V, No. 3, p. 111.

<sup>8</sup> Letter to the author dated September 5, 1967.

<sup>9</sup> A price list published by Henry Collin & Co., in 1885 lists the 3¢ 1861 "Scarlet" (listed unused only at \$10.00) and, separately, the 3¢ 1861 "Vermillion" (listed used only at \$5.00). Collin was apparently confused by color nomenclature into thinking there were two items instead of one. The following year, Collin and Henry Calman bought out Scott, and the Scarlet's listings in subsequent catalogues show this confusion was cleared up.

<sup>10</sup> [Scott?], *American Journal of Philately* (Jan. and Feb., 1877), Vol. XI, whole nos. 133 and 134. The author of these articles was identified only as "a philatelist." Scott was listed as the editor when the articles were published in book form. The list stated that "Excepting the 12 cents [of the 1861 issue] all the stamps of this issue are found in at least two distinct shades, and the 5 and 24 cent in three or four," the inference being that the three cent denomination had but two shades.

<sup>11</sup> *A Revised List of Postage Stamps and Stamped Envelopes of All Nations* (New York: Scott & Co., 1879), pp. 7-8.

<sup>12</sup> This revision was entitled "A history of Postage Stamps Being a Revised List of the Postage Stamps and Stamped Envelopes of All Nations." It was not published in book form.

<sup>13</sup> Lists examined were dated as follows: Bechtel—1876; Boothby—1873; Brown—1868, 1872; Durbin & Hanes—1876 through 1882; Trifet—1868, 1871, 1876, 1877, 1879; Fountain—1867, Winterburn—1865. Seebeck listed the "vermillion" in his 1882 list. As to Calman, see note 9, *supra*.

<sup>14</sup> Clarence W. Brazer, "A Historical Catalog of U.S. Stamp Essays and Proofs," *Collectors Club Philatelist* (Jan., 1944), Vol. XXIII, No. 1, Section I, p. 28.

<sup>15</sup> Letter to the author from the American Bank Note Company, May 2, 1968.

<sup>16</sup> See *American Journal of Philately, 2d Series*, May 29, 1902, reprinted in Ashbrook, *The U.S. Issue of 1869* (1943), p. 16; and Luff's own acknowledgement in "The First Types of the 1861 Issue of the United States," *American Journal of Philately, 2d Series* (June 1, 1896), p. 252.

<sup>17</sup> Brazer, *supra*, note 14.

<sup>18</sup> Lester G. Brookman, *The United States Postage Stamps of the 19th Century* (New York: H. L. Lindquist Publications, Inc., 1966), Vol. II, p. 31.

<sup>19</sup> Brazer, *supra*, note 14. Mandel's obituary appeared in *The New York Times*, May 30, 1902, p. 9, Col. 6.

<sup>20</sup> Letter to the author dated February 16, 1968.

<sup>21</sup> Letter to the author dated May 2, 1968. In response to a second inquiry, the Company stated it did not have time to do more research on the question. (Letter to the author dated May 23, 1968.)

<sup>22</sup> See Donald Scott Patton, *The Private Local Posts of the United States* (London: Robson Lowe Ltd., 1967), pp. xiv, 94, 205, 206, 208, 209, 210, 213, etc., *ad nauseum*.

<sup>23</sup> See, e.g., Elliott Perry, "3¢ SCARLET—Scott #74," *Pat Paragraphs* (Westfield, N.J.: By the Author, April, 1948), Section 51, pp. 1702-3.

<sup>24</sup> New York City Post Office locations taken from *Trow's New York City Directory* (1882), Vol. 96, Supplement entitled "City Register," p. 12.

<sup>25</sup> Eustace B. Power, *The General Issues of United States Stamps* (New York: Stanley Gibbons, Inc., 1909), p. 34.

<sup>26</sup> Gilbert M. Burr, "Standardized Killer Cancellations on Bank Note Issues," *Cyclopedia of United States Postmarks and Postal History*, ed. Delf Norona (Moundsville, W.Va.: By the Editor, 1933), Article 12, p. 1.

<sup>27</sup> [Clarence W. Brazer] "The U.S. 1861 3 Cents Scarlet, Etc.," *The Essay-Proof Journal* (April, 1944), Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 86.

<sup>28</sup> The author's copy is covered by Philatelic Foundation Certificate No. 27,050 which states in pertinent part that "it is genuine, with cancellation of the later Banknote period. . . ."

<sup>29</sup> Biographical data on Rothfuchs taken from John C. Feldwisch, "Men of Stamp, XVI, —C. F. Rothfuchs," *The Stamp* (Denver, Colo.: Dec., 1888), Vol. III, No. 10, p. 183, and biography in *Philatelic Journal of America* (January, 1889), Vol. V, No. 1, p. 15.

<sup>30</sup> [Brazer,] *The Essay-Proof Journal* (April, 1944), p. 85.

<sup>31</sup> "Information for Collectors," *Scott's United States Stamp Catalogue specialized 1968* (46th Ed.; New York: Scott Publications, 1967), p. 13.

<sup>32</sup> Letter to the author dated July 25, 1967. See also Perry, *Pat Paragraphs* (April, 1948), Section 51, p. 1703.

<sup>33</sup> Letter to the author dated July 29, 1967.

<sup>34</sup> Power, *United States Stamps* (1909), p. 34.

# THE TRANSATLANTIC MAILS

GEORGE E. HARGEST, *Editor*

## Depreciated Currency Covers

### PART II

GEORGE E. HARGEST

#### Addenda to Part I

In 1874 the Post Office Department authorized the publication of a "United States Official Postal Guide," which was "revised and published quarterly, by authority of the Post Office Department." The first issue is dated October, 1874. In this first issue, under "General Regulations," the following appears:

"The Postmaster General is by law authorized to collect unpaid postages due on correspondence from foreign countries, in gold or its equivalent in currency, in order to secure the Department from loss on balances due foreign offices. Under this law, unpaid postages on correspondence from Great Britain and Ireland, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland, Sweden and Norway, are calculated at gold rates."

The above supports the contention made in the last paragraph of Part I of this article, which appeared in *Chronicle* No. 59, that the exchange offices, after 1873, began to use the premium on gold instead of the premium on silver subsidiary coin as the basis for determining the amounts due in United States notes on unpaid letters from foreign countries.

#### Earliest Depreciated Currency Covers

While the Post Office order issued by Postmaster General Blair required depreciated currency rating on and after May 1, 1863, the description of the procedure to be used by the exchange offices of editor Holbrook indicates that it came in force during May only at the New York office. It was to become effective at the other offices on June 1, 1863. Since no steamer arrived at New York or Boston on May 1, 1863, the earliest possible rating at the New York office for mail by British packet would have been for the arrival in Boston of the R.M.S. *Europa* on May 2, the mail being rated at New York on May 3, 1863. The first rating at New York for American packet mail would have been on May 4 for the arrival on that day of the *Etna* of the Inman Line.

The earliest possible British packet rating at the Boston office would have been on June 4 for the arrival in New York on June 3 of the R.M.S. *Persia* of the Cunard Line. The *Edinburgh* of the Inman Line also arrived in New York on June 3, and the earliest American packet rating at the Boston office would have been on the same date. It is assumed that the depreciated currency ratings were actually placed in force at these offices on May 1 and June 1, 1863.

Figure 1 presents the earliest depreciated currency cover rated by the Boston office known to this editor. It was posted in Paris on May 25, 1863 and arrived in New York on June 7, 1863 by the *America* of the North German Lloyd or by the *Hammonia* of the Hamburg-American Line, both of which arrived on that date. As a French mail letter it bears a debit of 6 cents for American packet service through England. Boston did not yet have markings showing collections in coin and in notes, this cover was, therefore, marked for a collection of 20 cents instead of 15 cents if coin were paid. June 7 was a Sunday and on June 8 the lowest and highest price of gold in greenbacks was 143. The product of  $143 \times .967$  is 20.74 cents, which may indicate that the gold value of silver subsidiary coins on that date was slightly less than its annual average of .967.



Figure 1

**Some Interesting Depreciated Currency Covers**

Although there was nothing stated in the Legal Tender Act of 1862 regarding the redemption in specie of the greenbacks, it was always tacitly assumed that they would at some time be redeemed. Their value, therefore, rested upon the public confidence in their ultimate redemption. That they did not become worthless, as so many other inconvertible currencies had become, attests to the faith the public held that the Union would eventually prevail. Every act of the Civil War, military, political and financial, affected their value. Collectors may like to collect these covers in order to demonstrate the effect specific events had upon the premium. In this they may be assisted by Wesley C. Mitchell's *History of the Greenbacks* which details this information.

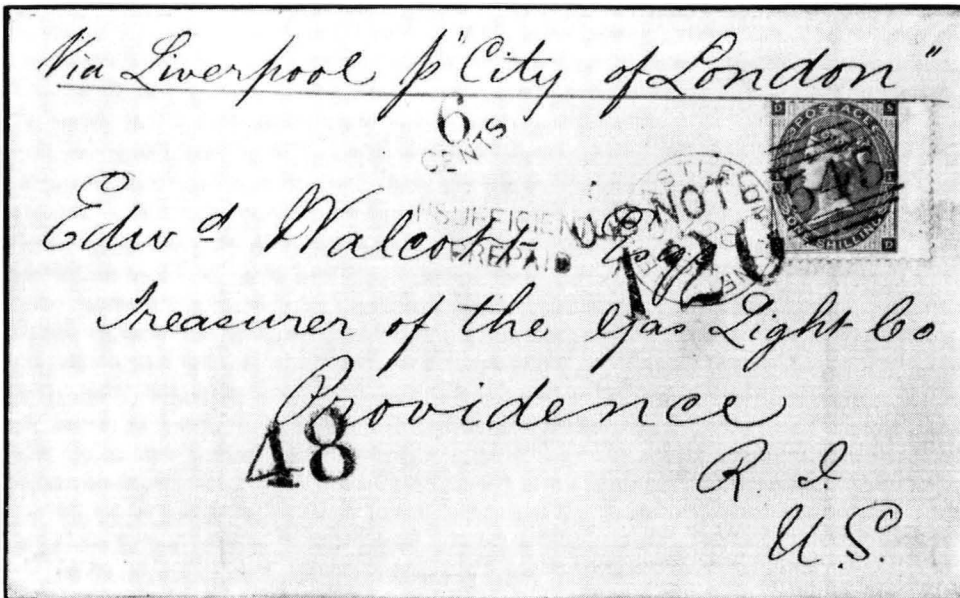


Figure 2



The height of the inflation occurred on July 11, 1864 when the price of gold in greenbacks reached 285. The immediate cause of this rise in premium was General Jubal Early's raid into Maryland and attack on Washington on July 9, 1864. Since no steamer arrived in New York or Boston on July 11, there are no covers that reflect the highest point of the inflation. The *Etna* arrived in New York on the following day when the prices of gold in greenbacks ranged from 271 to 282, and the *Australasian* of the Cunard Line arrived in New York on July 13, but by that time the prices ranged from 268<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> to 273. Throughout most of August the highest daily prices hovered around 255. Covers during this period of high premium are scarce and interesting.

Figure 2 presents a cover posted in Newcastle-on-Tyne on July 28, 1864, addressed to Providence, R.I. It is prepaid one shilling, but weighed over a half ounce, and the prepayment was not recognized. It was forwarded as an unpaid letter by American packet, marked "INSUFFICIENTLY PAID," and given a double rate debit of 6 cents. It is endorsed to the *City of London* of the Inman Line which arrived in New York on August 8, 1864. The New York office marked it for a collection in coin of 48 cents, and with "U.S. NOTES/120." On August 8, 1864, the price of gold in greenbacks ranged from 256<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> to 259<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>. The steamer must have arrived when the highest price prevailed, for 259<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> x 48 x .967 is 120.44, or \$1.20.

Figure 3 illustrates another high rated cover. It was posted in Hamburg on August 7, 1864 addressed to New Bedford, Mass. It arrived in New York by Prussian closed mail on August 22, and was rated for a collection of 30 cents in coin, or 75 cents in United States notes. On August 22 the price of gold in greenbacks ranged from 256<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> to 257<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>. The product of 256<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 30 x .967 is 74.53, or 75 cents.

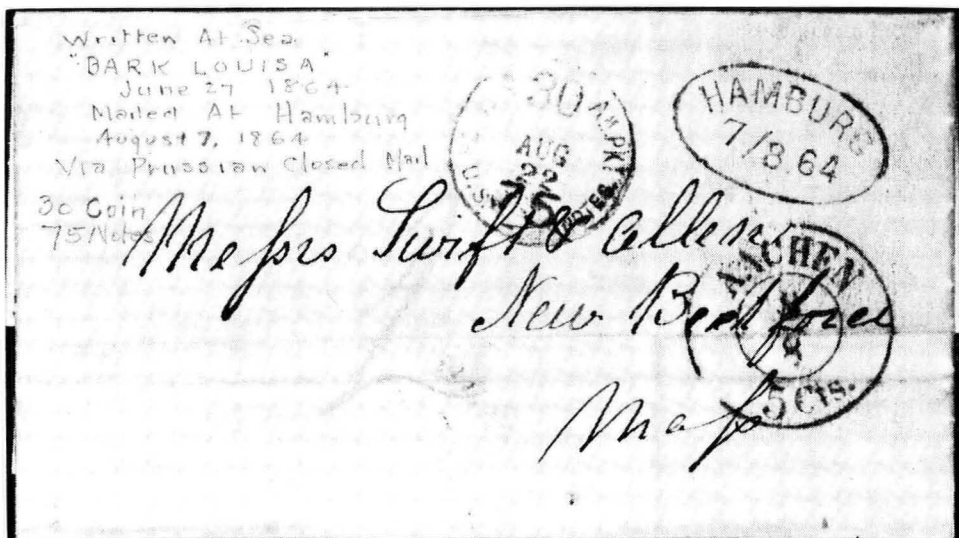


Figure 3

Figure 4<sup>20</sup> illustrates a cover showing the rare triple rate from England. It was prepaid two rates by two shilling stamps, but was found to weigh over one ounce which required three rates. The letter was marked "over 1 oz." and "INSUFFICIENTLY/PREPAID," and was also marked by the British office "57/3." This was a debit for British packet service of 57 cents (3 x 19), the "3" indicating the number of rates. The Boston office marked it "72/.91," i.e., 3 x 24, or 72 cents if paid in coin, or 91 cents in notes. Since the price of gold in greenbacks on June 21, 1866, ranged between 148<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> and 151<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, the lowest possible collection on this letter (148<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> x 72 x .964) should have been 103.17, or \$1.03).

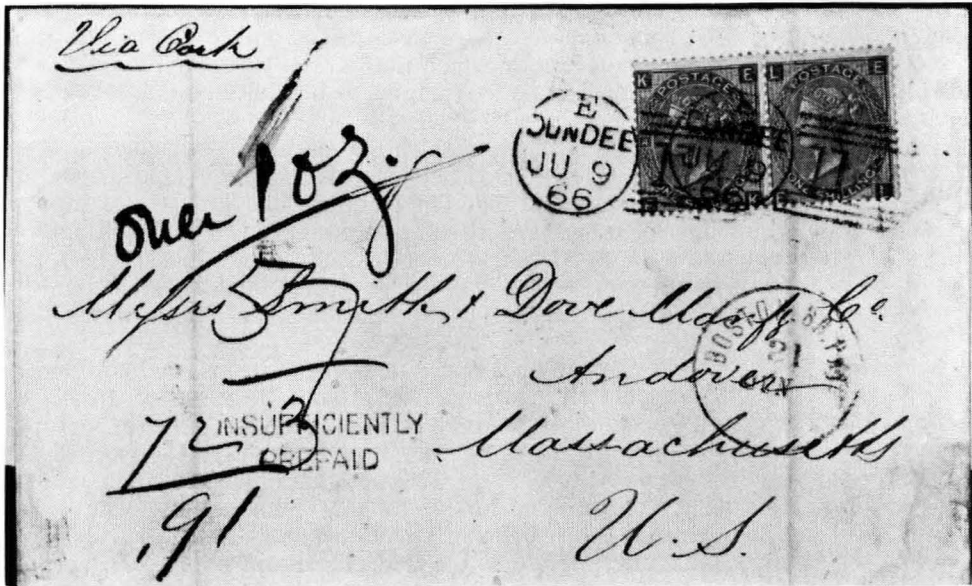


Figure 4

One can only conclude that the clerk made an error in computing the amount to be collected in United States notes.

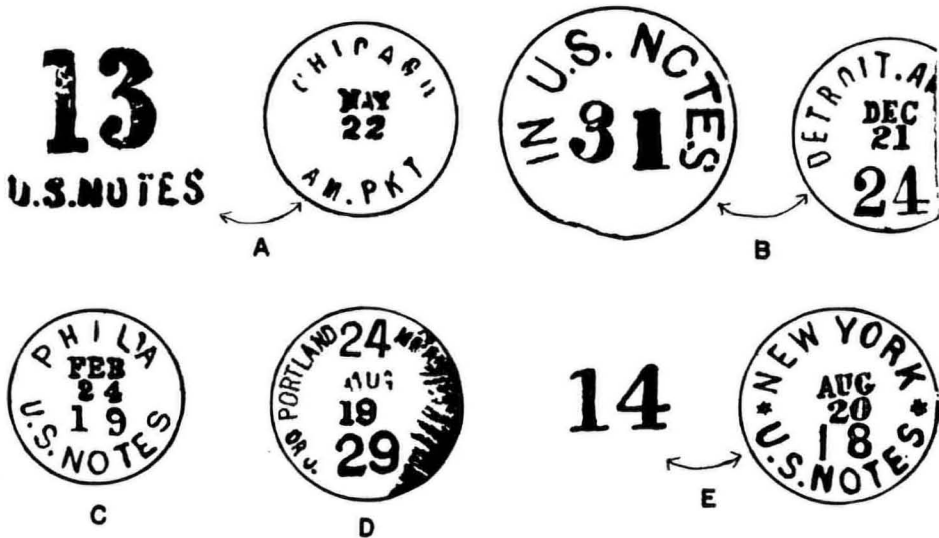


PLATE II

The Exchange Offices

The markings designed as A of Plate II are on a cover reported by Mr. William C. Coles, Jr., RA 418, who has an extensive collection of depreciated currency covers. This letter was posted in England and arrived at the Chicago exchange office on May 22, 1871. On that date, the lowest and highest prices of gold in greenbacks were, respectively, 111% and 112. The international rate between

the United States and England was six cents. Thus,  $6¢ \times 1.12 \times .955$  (the Table I, column 5 figure for 1871) amounts to 6.8, or seven cents, and to this is added an unpaid letter fine of six cents, the sum of which is 13 cents. Evidently, the Chicago office did not have dual rate markings, the amount to be collected in notes being separately applied.

Mr. Coles also reports the cover upon which the markings designated as B of Plate II appear. This letter was posted in London on December 3, and arrived at the Detroit office on December 21, 1867. On that date the lowest and highest prices of gold in greenbacks were, respectively,  $133\frac{1}{4}$  and  $133\frac{5}{8}$ . Thus,  $24¢ \times 1.33\frac{1}{4} \times .956$  is equal to 30.6, or 31 cents. As in the case of the Chicago office, the Detroit office did not use a marking showing dual rates, but applied the amount to be collected in U.S. notes separately by use of a hand-stamp designed for that purpose.

Marking C of Plate II appears on a cover posted in Bremen on February 2, 1868, addressed to Philadelphia and endorsed "Str. Hansa," a vessel of the North German Lloyd. By the "Regulations" for the execution of the U.S.-North German Union convention of October 21, 1867 (effective on January 1, 1868),<sup>21</sup> Philadelphia became an exchange office for North German Union mail. Philadelphia had not previously been an exchange office for any of the German mails. The direct international rate between the North German Union and the United States was 10 cents per half ounce. This letter arrived at the Philadelphia office on February 24, 1868, and on that date the lowest and highest prices of gold in greenbacks were, respectively,  $1.42\frac{1}{4}$  and 1.44. Thus,  $10 \times 1.42\frac{1}{4} \times .955$  (the Table I, column 5 figure for 1868) is 13.6, or 14 cents. To this 14 cents was added an unpaid letter fine of five cents, which resulted in a collection of 19 cents in U.S. notes. This cover is also reported by Mr. Coles.

Marking D of Plate II, also in Mr. Coles's collection, illustrates a dual rate marking of the Portland office. This is of a different type than that illustrated as marking C of Plate I.

Since the greenbacks never circulated on the Pacific coast, it is unlikely that any markings showing depreciated currency ratings from the San Francisco office will be found. Cut off as it was by the mountains, with its own supply of metals and a mint at San Francisco, coin circulated on the Pacific coast during the entire period, 1863 through 1878.

#### Unpaid Letters from France, 1870-74

Markings designated as E of Plate II appear on a cover posted in Bordeaux, France, on August 6, 1873, addressed to New York, and sent as an unpaid letter. The rate represented on this cover was in effect from January 1, 1870 until August 1, 1874. These unpaid letters bear "currency" markings of various types applied in France to indicate that they were forwarded to England charged at the rate of two francs per 30 grammes, bulk weight, of such mail. London markings appear on the reverse of these letters, and all are marked "14" for a single rate letter. Until the daily prices of gold in greenbacks became available, it was thought that the "14" appearing on these letters was applied by the United States and represented the amount to be collected in coin, while the amount shown in the exchange office marking represented the amount to be collected in U.S. notes.<sup>22</sup> It is now known that the "14" appearing on these letters represents a British debit to the United States, and the true rate on these covers was 16, and not 14 cents.

The New York marking on this cover bears the date of August 20 (1873), and on that date the lowest and highest prices of gold in greenbacks were, respectively,  $1.15\frac{3}{8}$  and  $1.15\frac{1}{2}$ . Thus  $16 \times 1.15\frac{3}{8}$  amounts to 18.46, or 18 cents. The application of these gold prices to 14 cents does not produce the indicated collection of 18 cents in U.S. notes. In the case of this cover, it is also evident that the collection was calculated at gold rates. This same situation has been noted on a number of unpaid letters from France during this period.

Reconstruction of the British debit of 14 cents indicates that the British divided

the two francs per 30 grammes rate<sup>23</sup> by four to arrive at a single rate per one-fourth ounce of 50 centimes, or 10 cents. To this 10 cents were added two cents sea and two cents British postages per one-half ounce, for a total British share of 14 cents. The United States collected the British postage of 14 cents plus two cents United States inland postage, for a total of 16 cents in coin. On letters weighing over one-fourth, but not over one half ounce, only the French postage of 10 cents was doubled, and these letters show a British debit of 24 cents, and a collection in the United States of 26 cents in coin. The two francs per 30 grammes rate under the Anglo-French convention was for unpaid letters, and was twice the amount for paid letters. Since the unpaid letter was already penalized, the United States did not collect an unpaid letter fine.

### Revival of American Packet Service to Bremen

After the Vanderbilt European Line stopped running to Bremen in 1858 there was no American packet service to Bremen until 1866. In 1865 the Ruger Brothers of New York organized the North American Lloyd to operate a line of steamships between New York, Southampton, and Bremen. Their fleet was made up of vessels which, for the most part, had seen service as troop carriers during the Civil War. It was composed of the *Atlantic* and *Baltic* (ex-Collins Line), *Ericsson* (ex-Collins Line service), *Mississippi* (subsequently Havre Line service), *Merrimack*, and *Western Metropolis*.<sup>24</sup> The Ruger Brothers also attempted to run from New York to Antwerp with the steamers *Ericsson* and *Circassian*.<sup>25</sup>

Evidently, this line secured a mail contract from the Postmaster General, for the *Shipping and Commercial List and New York Prices Current* from February to October 1866 lists the ships of this line as "U.S.M. steamers." Thirteen voyages from New York were actually made by the line during this period, while five scheduled voyages were not made. The line suspended operations in October 1866, but the Ruger Brothers immediately reorganized as the New York and Bremen Steamship Company, and continued to operate until 1870. A scheduled sailing of the *Western Metropolis* on March 7, 1867, is listed for a line to Bremen in the March 1867 issue of the *U.S. Mail and Post Office Assistant*. Although mails may have been made up for this trip, the *Western Metropolis* failed to sail. There is no further evidence that the Ruger Brothers' ships carried mail.

Mr. Lester L. Downing reports the cover illustrated as Figure 5. This cover was posted in New York addressed to Schwartzburg-Sunderhausen, Thuringia. It is

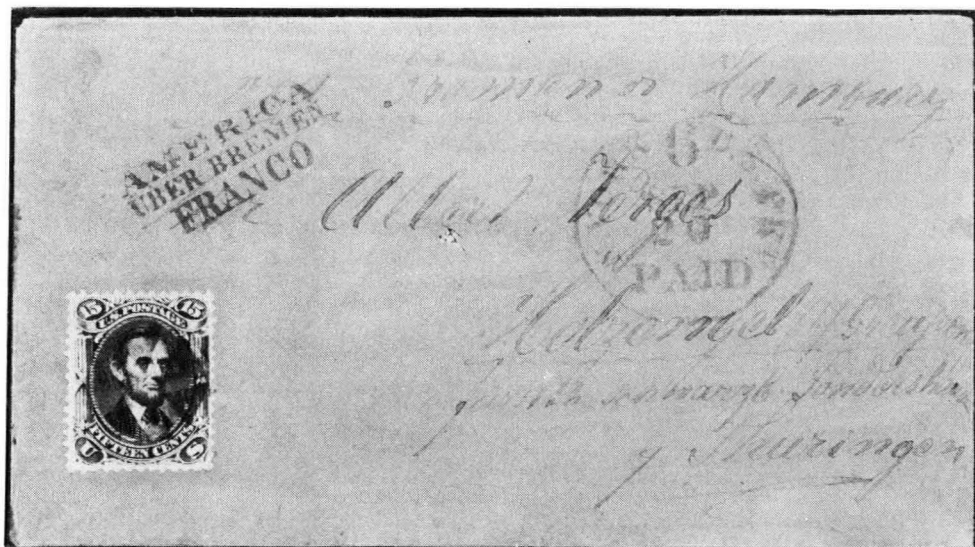


Figure 5

prepaid 15 cents and endorsed "Via Bremen or Hamburg." The New York packet marking of the type of USPM, Plate 19, marking 36A,<sup>26</sup> shows a credit of 6 cents to Bremen. This credit represents one cent Bremen inland and five cents from Bremen to Thuringia. The Bremen office applied in blue the "AMERICA/UBER BREMEN/FRANCO" marking, indicating transit through Bremen. The date in the New York marking is "SEP/20." On September 20, 1866, the *Baltic* of the North American Lloyd sailed from New York for Southampton and Bremen. Covers showing American packet service to Bremen during 1866 are seldom seen.

### Mails to Belgium

In "Mails Between Belgium and the United States, Part IV," which appeared in *Chronicle* No. 58, this editor was unable to illustrate a cover bearing the eight cent rate, via England. Mr. Walter Hubbard of London reports the cover illustrated as Figure 6. This letter was posted in a Minnesota town addressed to Belgium,

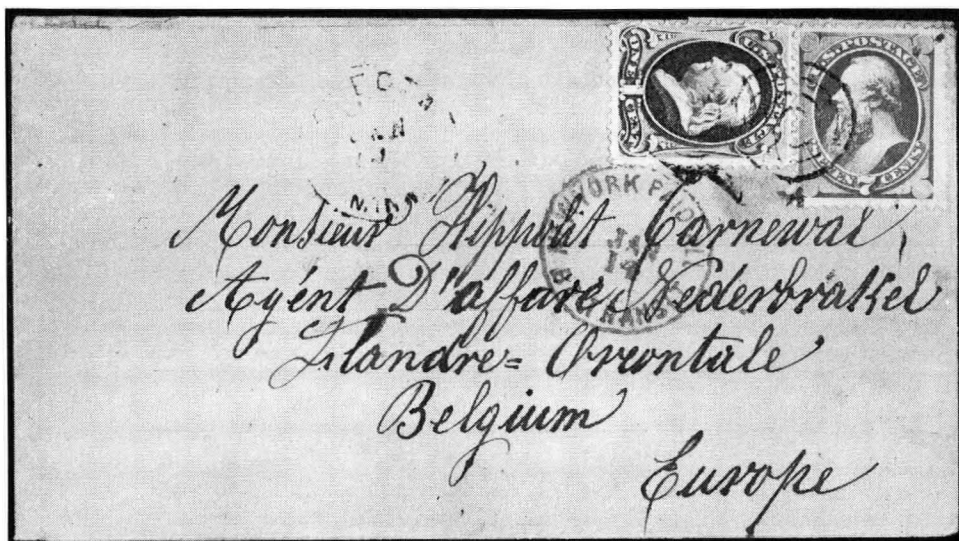


Figure 6

prepaid eight cents by a one cent and a seven cent (Continental) of the 1873 issue. The cover bears a "NEW YORK PAID ALL/BR. TRANSIT" marking showing the date of January 14. Since the Continentals were not issued as early as January 1873, the year of posting must be either 1874 or 1875. About the middle of 1874 the above described British transit marking was replaced by one inscribed "NEW YORK/BR. TRANSIT" which omitted "PAID ALL." Thus, it would appear that the year of use was 1874. January 14, 1874, was a Wednesday, and the *United States Official Postal Guide* for October 1874 indicates that mails were forwarded from New York for Great Britain and Ireland and the Continent, via England, on every Wednesday by vessels of the Cunard Line.

### Bibliography

- <sup>20</sup> Courtesy of Melvin W. Schuh.  
<sup>21</sup> 16 Statutes-at-Large 983.  
<sup>22</sup> Hargest, George E., "Unpaid and Part-Paid Rates Between United States and France, 1870-74," *Postal History Journal*, vol. VII, No. 1, p. 10, June 1963.  
<sup>23</sup> Anglo-French Convention of September 24, 1856, Article XIV, clause 3—*British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. XLVI, p. 203.  
<sup>24</sup> See Bonsor, N. R. P., *North Atlantic Seaway*, pp. 234 and 240-241. Also see Gibbs, C. R. Vernon, *Passenger Liners of the Western Ocean*, pp. 108-109.  
<sup>25</sup> Hargest, George E., "Mails Between Belgium and the United States, Part III," *The Chronicle*, vol. 20, No. 1, Whole No. 57, p. 35.  
<sup>26</sup> Simpson, Tracy W., *United States Postal Markings, 1851 to 1861*, p. 97.



## Up-dating the Neinken Books

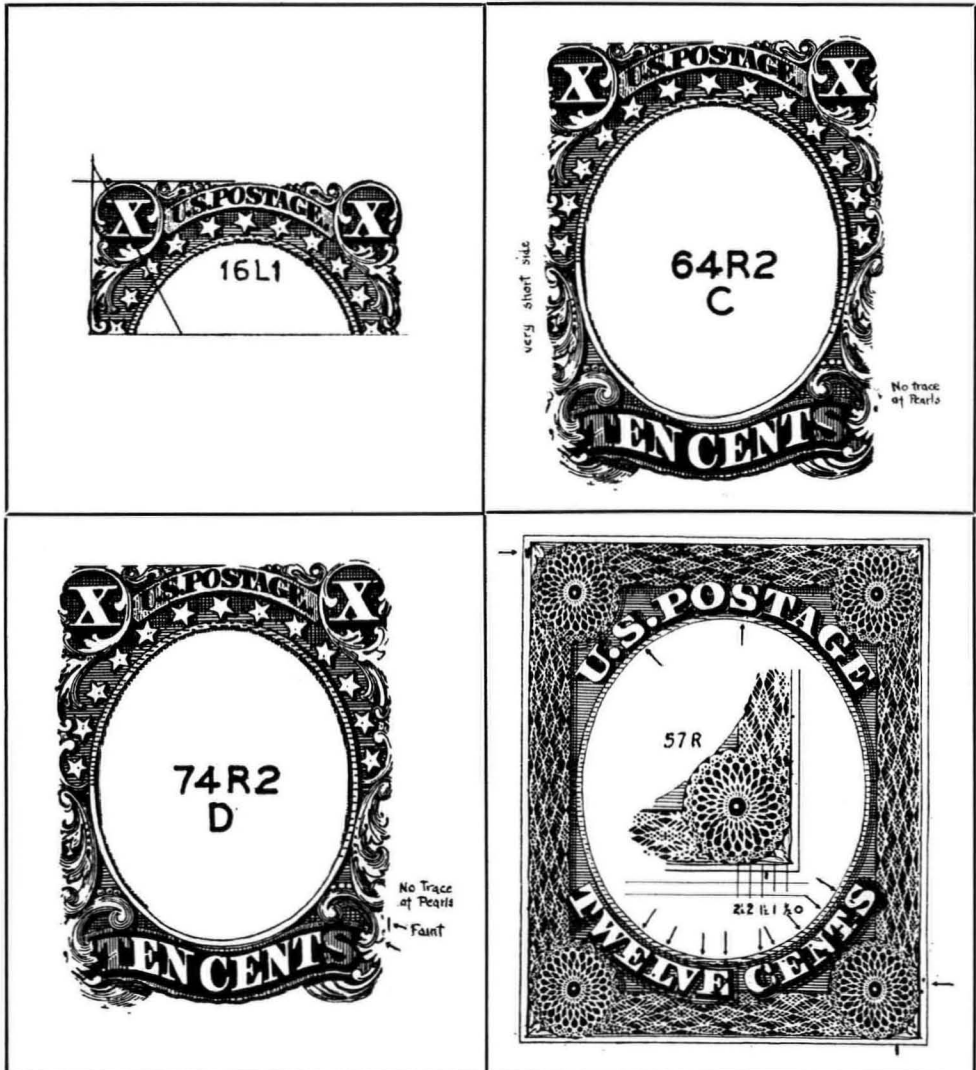
This *Chronicle* endeavors to supply research information as it becomes available, and of utmost importance is keeping our standard reference books up-to-date. In this issue are three illustrations for replacement of the corresponding ones in Mr. M. L. Neinken's book, *The United States Ten Cent Stamp of 1855-1859*, and one illustration for replacement in his book, *The 1851-'57 Twelve Cent Stamp*. Mr. Neinken credits Messrs. F. Levy and M. Tuchinsky for aid in spotting these changes.

The illustrations are located here in *Chronicle* so they may be clipped without injury to the reading matter, and are of size that fits those in the books. More particularly, they are as follows:

For the 10-ct book 16L1 on page 50; 64R2 on page 143, and 74R2 on page 146.

For the 12-ct book: 57R on page 41.

Mr. Neinken also reports that for the 10-ct book, positions 66-76-86-96R have now been tied-in, but 90L and 97R are not yet tied, though he believes them to be correct.—T.W.S.



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