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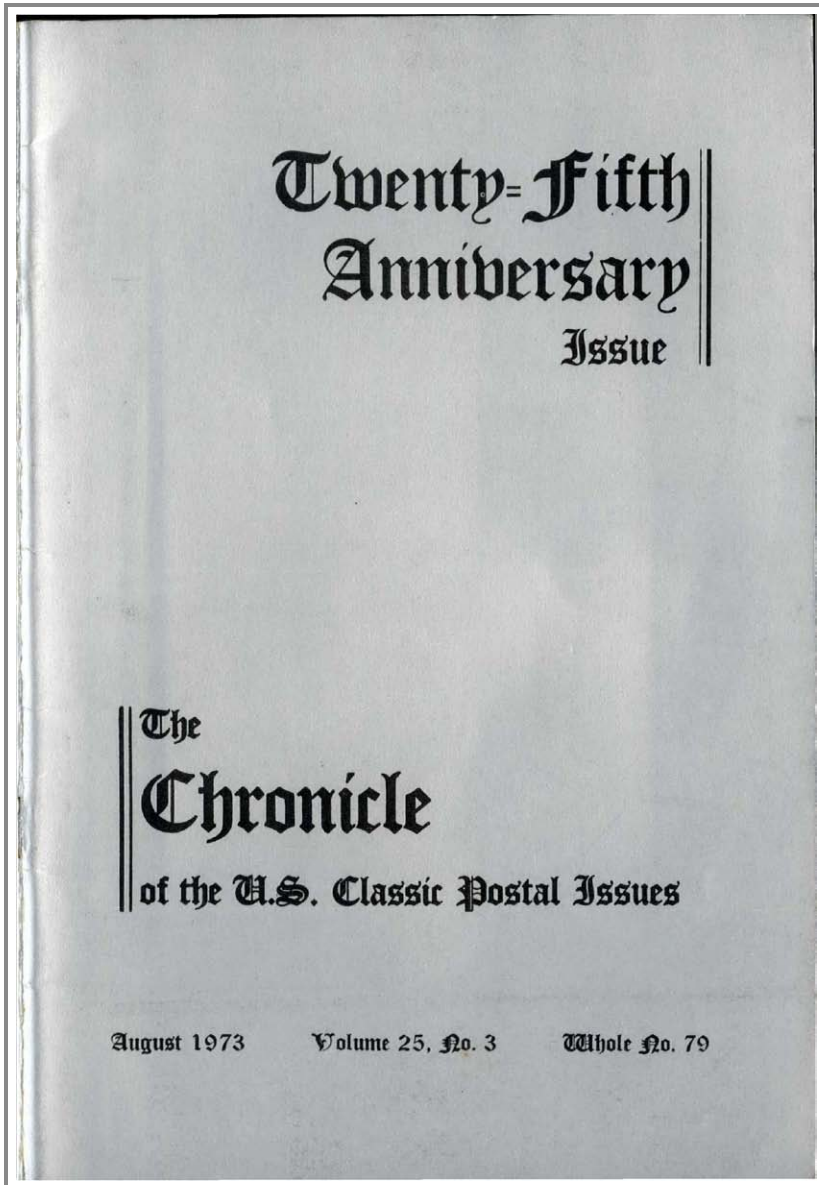


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THE 1847-51 PERIOD
CREIGHTON C. HART, Editor

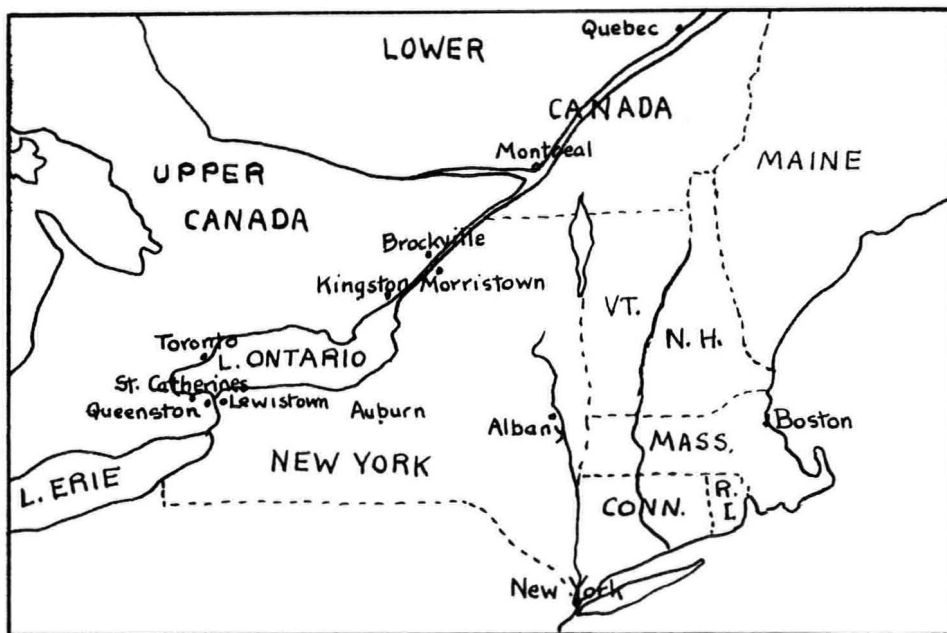
1847 COVERS TO CANADA

CREIGHTON C. HART

This is the fourth consecutive article about 1847 covers to foreign countries and the final one. The basis for these articles is 469 covers to foreign countries, being 173 to Europe, 38 to the Maritime Provinces, 250 to Canada and 8 "to the rest of the world." Although it is customary to think of mail to Upper and Lower Canada as a simple operation of U. S. postage to the border and Canada postage beyond, there is much more to it. Fifteen cross border covers of special postal interest will be illustrated. A longer than average article will be required, which will be divided into three parts. Such a division will permit a second 1847 article of diverse interest in each *Chronicle* as the series on foreign uses is concluded.

Since the first article appeared, three additional covers to Europe have been reported. There will, of course, be other foreign uses reported in the future and the final count may well be around 500. Although some covers may be added to each group, the largest number of additions to previously unlisted covers undoubtedly will be to Canada and to Europe.

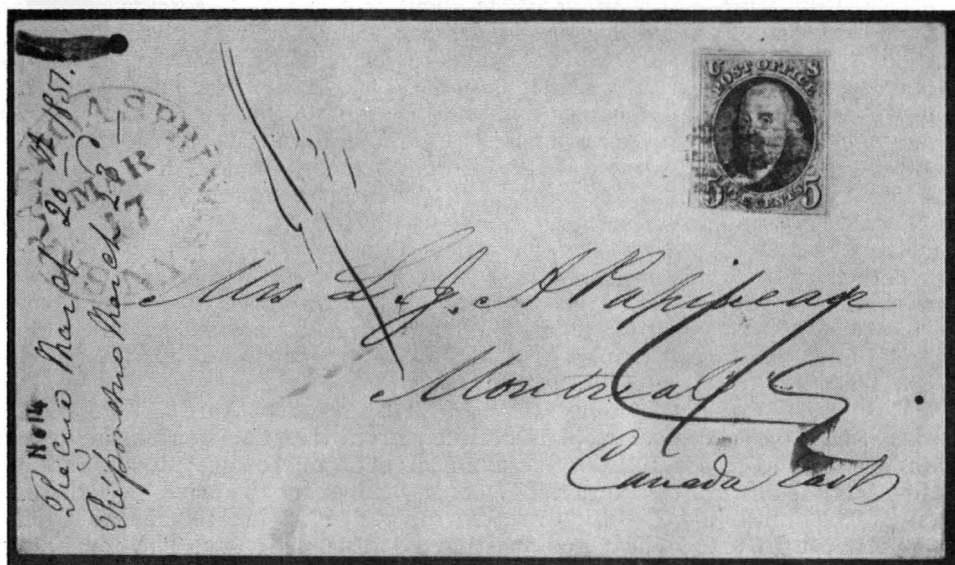
The total to Canada includes 16 covers with uses after April 6, 1851, when the U. S.-Canada agreement went into effect. From that date for the first time it was possible to pay in full postage from origin in one country to destination in the other. The few cross border 1847 covers known for this short period from April 6, 1851, until July 1, 1851, were the subject of Susan McDonald's article in the August 1970 *Chronicle* and will not be discussed now. The remaining 244 covers posted between July 1, 1847 and April 6, 1851, are the basis for this article.



From Revolutionary times the U. S. domestic rate to the border only, according to distance involved, had applied on letters to Canada. The Canadian postage from the border to destination was collected from the addressee. On

July 1, 1845, the complicated U. S. rates by distance were reduced to 5c for distances up to 300 miles and 10c for distances from 300 to 1500 miles.

For collectors of classic covers who do not specialize in the 1847 issue, a cover to Canada with a 5c stamp (Cover A) and a second cover with a 10c stamp (Cover B) make an attractive album page or two. Two such covers almost tell the entire postal history story of our first issue—not all, just almost all. The two covers show the 5c and 10c *domestic* rates by distance and in addition the prevailing practice of *foreign* postage due from the addressee.



Cover A. The 5c cover is postmarked Saratoga Springs, March 17 (1851) at the domestic single rate to the border, less than 300 miles distant. Canadian postage due from the addressee is shown by the "4½" in manuscript.

Little difficulty should be encountered in obtaining an 1847 cover to Canada but covers with a *single* 5c stamp are in short supply. Of the 84 5c covers only 44 have a single stamp; the other 40 have multiples to pay the 10c rate. With patience you may be able to get a 5c cover addressed to an individual (Cover A). Few 1847 letters have contents that are strictly personal.

The 5c cover to Canada that is illustrated is typical of personal letters of the period. At one end Mrs. Papineau has noted the date received, March 20th 1851. She must have been of French descent because she noted "Répondue March 23rd."

On my list are seven 5c covers to Mrs. Papineau with the earliest November 13, 1848 and the latest the one illustrated March 17, 1851. Of the seven covers, I have color slides of the four dated November 13, 1848, December 9, 1850, February 3, 1851 and the one illustrated. If any reader owns any of the other three used March 5, 1849, December 24, 1849 and January 25, 1851, I'd appreciate hearing from him.

In another hand at the end of the envelope, there is a "No. 14" which may represent a chronological sequence by years. If so, a great many are missing, since a "No. 34" has been noted. There may be Papineau covers besides the ones I list. If so, I'd like to know about them, especially if the original letters are enclosed. It may be possible to recreate another mid-19th century human interest story.

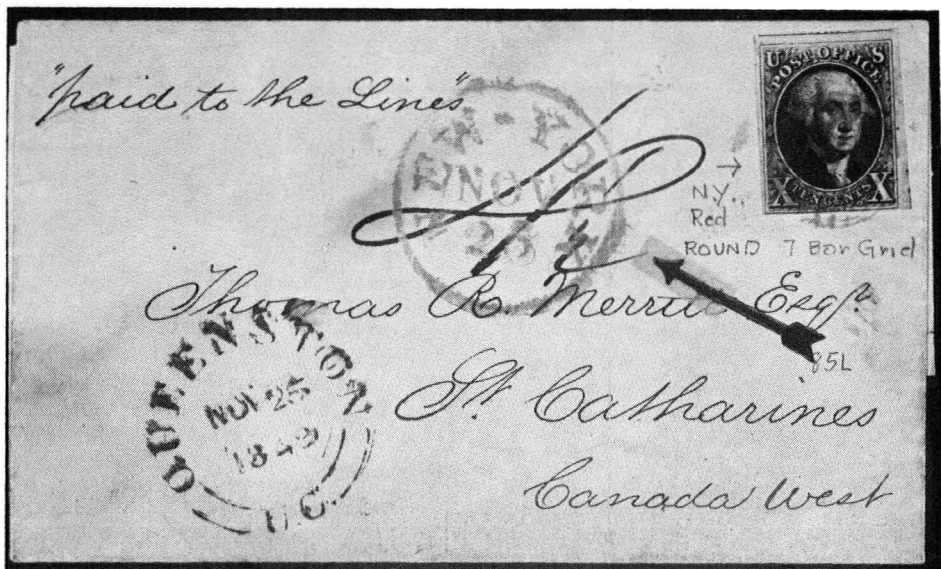
Many names that were prominent during the 1847 period are now forgotten or remembered by only a few. Louis-Joseph Amédée Papineau, to whose wife the letters were addressed, was an early writer of romantic French-Canadian fiction. Much more notable was his father, Louis-Joseph Papineau (1786-1871). The elder Papineau was prominent in French-Canadian politics and is best remembered as a leader of the Rebellion of 1837 in Lower Canada. In 1823, while

Papineau was speaker of the Assembly, another faction headed by Lord Dalhousie was working surreptitiously to bring about the union of Upper and Lower Canada. Papineau realized this would make a single British province predominately English and this he opposed.

A series of radical events led to the Rebellion of 1837 and when Papineau's name was included in warrants for arrests he fled to the United States. From the United States he went to Paris and while there he "imbibed the republican and anti-clerical opinions of advanced liberals." Papineau returned to Canada in 1844 following the Amnesty Act. In 1848 he was re-elected to the Assembly but "he found his influence was gone and he retired from politics in 1854."¹

The first 1847 cover is dated in 1848 and the last in 1851, an important period in Papineau's career. While in exile in the United States he tried to secure the intervention of the United States for the invasion of Lower Canada. He failed in this but are some of these letters to Mrs. Papineau really intended for her father-in-law? Perhaps they are from family or friends left behind at Saratoga Springs. The mystery is increased because none of the '47 envelopes have contents. Are the contents missing because they were personal or contained political intrigue?

Our members will recall the Mrs. George Evans 10c bisect covers from her husband Senator George Evans at Gardiner, Maine. That story was put together by Susan McDonald with the help of Ezra Cole who vividly remembered a profitable summer in Vermont when the bisects were discovered. Lester Downing's article describing the Julia Fuller—Samuel Damon tender but sad romance was recalled from an original find of 60 old 5c 1847 covers. The Papineau covers begin in late 1848 with the last one in early 1851. There may be another story here that can be brought to life 125 years after it happened because of the surviving 1847 envelopes if the missing contents can be located.



This cover (B) was mailed in New York City more than 300 miles from the border so 10c domestic postage was required. Carried in the open mail to the Lewistown P. O. which exchanged with the Queenston, P. O. Rated "4½" pence Canadian postage due to St. Catharines, less than 60 miles from the border. Mailed at New York November 23rd and arrived the 25th at Queenston.

Most of the 1847 covers are business letters and the Thomas R. Merritt (Cover B) correspondence is the most numerous of all the cross border covers. Thirty of the 234 are to this addressee and invariably are neatly written and attractive. The one illustrated is typical of cross border covers requiring the 10c rate for distances over 300 miles. Most Canada receiving marks are on the front

¹ Norah Story, *The Oxford Companion to Canadian History and Literature*, pp. 623-624.

as is this one. The artistic appearance is increased when the two postmarks are in different colors: the New York is red and Queenston is black. This Merritt letter made average time to the border, having been mailed in New York November 23rd and reaching Queenston, Upper Canada, the 25th.

The routing of cross border mail and the problems it sometimes created for the public is clearly illustrated by three covers (Covers C, D & E), all to a law firm in Brockville, U. C. First, you will notice the postal difference between the covers and then by referring to the *Laws and Regulations of the Post Office Department* for 1847, we will find the reasons for these differences.



Cover C required only the 10c U. S. postage from New York City to Brockville, U. C. because Mr. Richards' correspondent routed the letter via Morristown, N. Y. Brockville is just across the border from Morristown on the Upper St. Lawrence River. (See map). Because of the proximity of the two towns no Canada postage is due from the addressee. 1849 use. (J. King Horner Collection).

Cover C is from New York to Brockville, Canada "via Morristown, St. Laurence [sic] Co. N. Y." The addressor wrote "via Morristown" because the Brockville and Morristown post offices exchanged cross border mail. Just the narrow upper St. Lawrence river divides the two towns. (See map). The only postage required is a 10c U. S. stamp, because the two towns are so close to each other that no Canada postage is due from the border. If there were, it would be shown in manuscript as on Cover D. Cover D is also from New York to Brockville but it has a Queenston, U. C., receiving mark and "11½" in manuscript. The 11½d represents Canadian postage due from the border to Brockville. Even though both covers are from New York to Brockville, on one there is no Canadian postage due while on the other there is 11½d due, about 19c. The third cover (Cover E) is also from New York addressed to the same "Messrs. Richards & Buell, Atty's at Law" but to Morristown, N. Y. instead of to Brockville, Canada.

The *Laws and Regulations* for 1847 give in detail the exchange offices for mail to Canada and how the mail was to be charged and routed. Mail was exchanged at these frontier points, listed in geographical order from east to west in Chapter 65, Section 476:

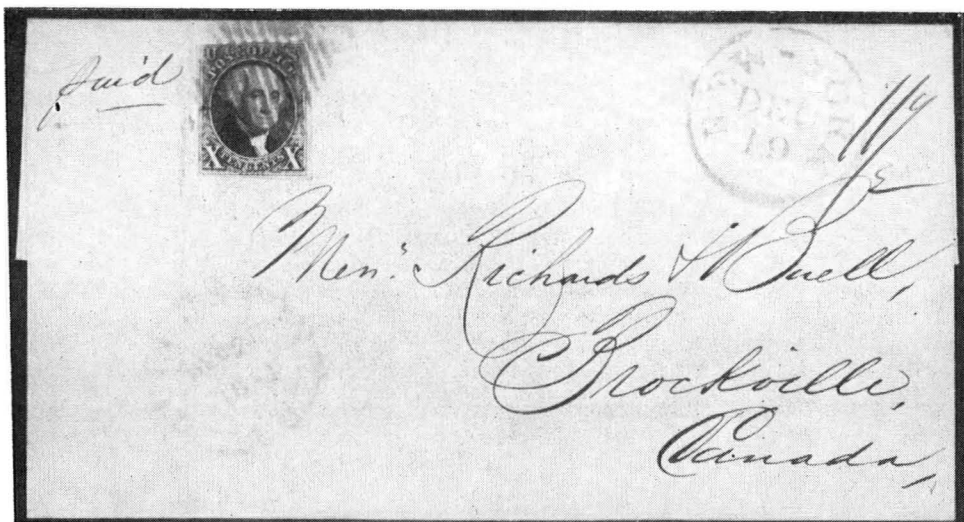
Maine	New York	Cape Vincent
Houlton	White Hall	Rochester
Robbinstown	Plattsburgh	Lewistown
	Rouse's Point	
Vermont		Michigan
Derby Line	Fort Covington	Detroit
Highgate	Ogdensburg	
Burlington	Morristown	

Other offices were "also, New York City and Albany, by special arrangement, with Toronto, Kingston, and Montreal." The "special arrangement" refers to bags of through mail that were made up at New York City and Albany to go unopened until exchanged at Toronto, Kingston, and Montreal.

Chapter 65, Section 478, states that "Letters placed in any office in the United States, addressed to offices in New Brunswick and Canada, are to be rated with the proper postage to the United States line."

Chapter 15, Section 120, provides: "The distance according to which postage is chargeable, is that on *the post road from one office to another*, upon which the mail is conveyed." Section 121 continues: "Letters should in all cases be sent by the most *expeditious* routes, unless otherwise *ordered* by the person sending the same." (Italics added.)

Each of the three letters to Richards & Buell is a business letter and from a different client. Because each client used a different form in addressing his letter, these three covers demonstrate how the cross border regulations were followed. Cover C is from J. J. Nicoll & Co. who thoughtfully "ordered" the letter routed via Morristown which is just across from Brockville as you see on the map. Because of the proximity of the two towns no Canada postage was due from the Richards firm.

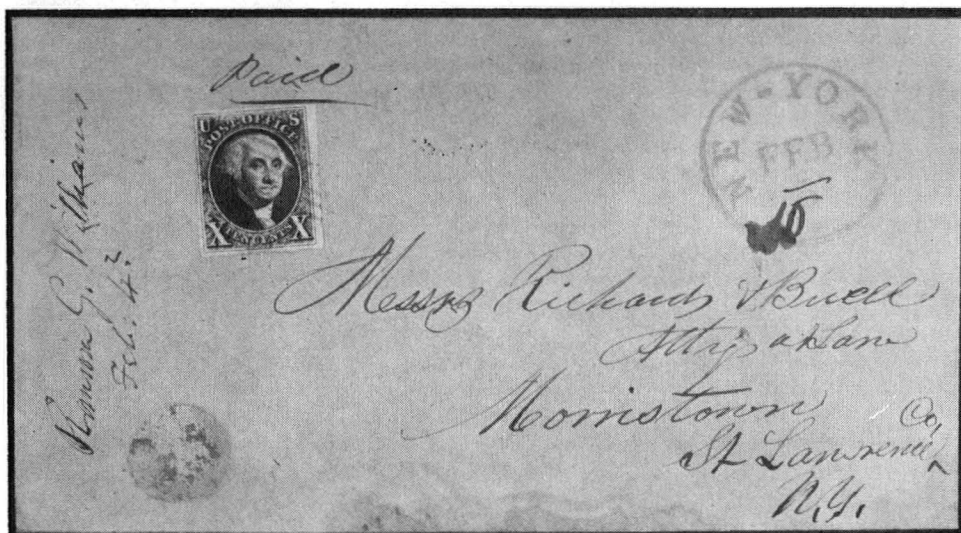


Cover D went from New York City to Brockville in the open mail via Queenston, U. C., which the U. S. P. O. D. considered the most expeditious route to Upper Canada. Brockville is more than 200 miles from the border at Queenston so an additional 11½d (19c) postage was collected from the addressee. 1848 use. (J. King Horner Collection).

Cover D is a letter from Chester M. Connolly who apparently didn't know of the advantage of sending his letter via Morristown. The "most expeditious" route to Upper Canada in the open mail was through the Lewistown, N. Y., post office which exchanged mail with Queenston. The Lewistown-Queenston exchange obviously is not the shortest route to all points in Upper Canada. The U. S. P. O. D. took many factors into account in selecting that route as the most expeditious. Among these were available transportation facilities and frequency of service. Because instructions to postmasters were strict against delay and insistent on prompt despatch of mails, the usual practice was to forward mail by the next available departure, even if the route concerned was not the most direct geographically. Because of the daily frequency of service on the New York-Albany-Lewistown route, this was the normal choice for mail to Upper Canada.

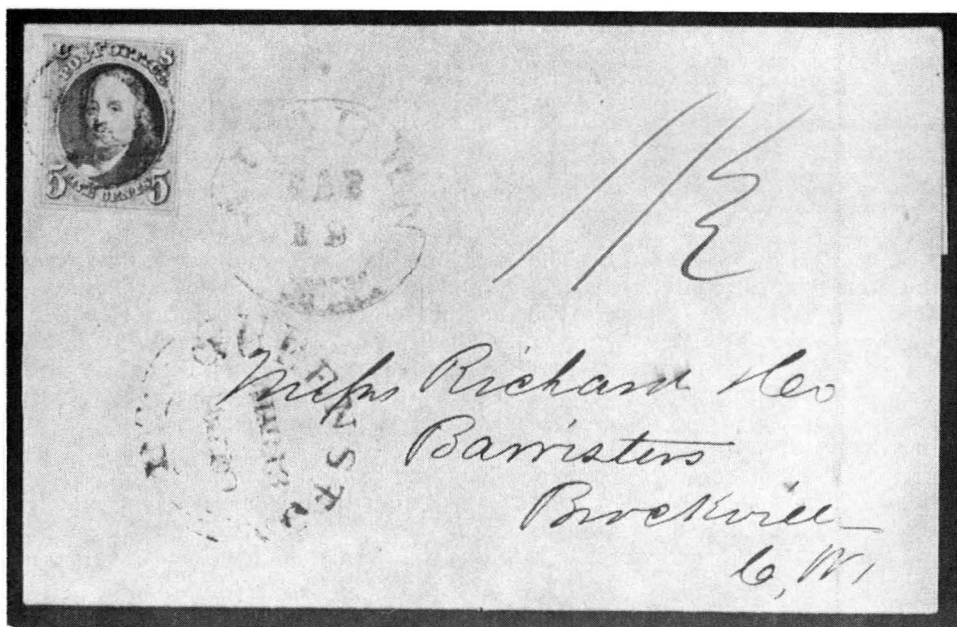
The Lewistown-Queenston exchange was satisfactory for the majority of localities in Upper Canada, but was very circuitous for places east of Lake Ontario, as the map shows. When applied to such destinations as Cover D, this

routing put letters into the Queenston post office which is more than 200 miles from Brockville. The Canadian rate for mail going between 200-300 miles was 11½d. This letter probably took longer in transit than did Cover C and cost 19c more.



Cover E is to Messrs. Richards & Buell at Morristown, N. Y., apparently used as a business address for some of their clients. Letters addressed to Morristown required only U. S. postage. A postal clerk crossed out the "5" in the day date mistaking it for the 5 cent rate which he corrected with a "10" in ink to reflect the 10c rate. 1848 use. (J. King Horner Collection).

Cover E is from client Ramson G. Williams of New York City as the docketing at the left end shows. This letter to Messrs. Richards & Buell is to Morristown, N. Y. instead of to Brockville, U. C. Evidently, Messrs. Richards & Buell were wise in postal ways as well as in law. By giving the Morristown, N. Y., post office address to some of their U. S. clients only U. S. postage was required. This avoided having letters go via Queenston from the clients who were not familiar with the cross border exchange offices. Of course, saving the 19c Canadi-



Cover F is postmarked Auburn, N. Y. March 12, (1850). Queenston, U. C., received it March 13, Kingston backstamped it March 16 and Brockville finally received and backstamped it March 20th.

an postage that ensued on letters via Queenston was also a factor. It took only a short trip across the border to pick up their mail at the Morristown post office.

The public usually—but not always—got 2 day transit to the border (Cover B). Cover F is another letter to the Richards firm, this one from Auburn, N. Y., only about 150 miles from Morristown. Because the sender did not request the Morristown route it went to Queenston. This letter left Auburn March 12, reached Queenston March 13, was backstamped in transit at Kingston March 16 and continued to Brockville where it was backstamped March 18. (See map). It arrived after 6 days in transit with 11½ pence due. If the addressor had written “via Morristown,” it would have gone the shorter route without any Canadian postage due.

Most of the cross border mail, of course, went the expected way as did covers A & B. There are, however, a few cross border covers besides those discussed here that went the long way around because the sender did not specify a shorter route.

(To be continued)

CAVE JOHNSON, THE 1847 POSTMASTER GENERAL

CREIGHTON C. HART AND SUSAN M. McDONALD

The period from 1847 to 1851 when the first general issue of U. S. postage stamps was conceived, executed, and put to use was also a time during which many distinguished Americans in letters, politics, education, and other fields worked and flourished. In literature and the arts such noteworthy talents as Longfellow, Thoreau, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Stephen Foster, and Harriet Beecher Stowe were active. Other newsmakers were scientists and promoters like Samuel B. Morse and Cornelius Vanderbilt. Henry Clay was an important figure on the political scene, and Lincoln's career was beginning to rise.

Any of these individuals could have used the new stamps on their correspondence, but, if they did, few such covers have survived. The handful of known 1847 covers to or from mid-nineteenth century VIP's (Longfellow, Hamilton Fish, and similar figures) have extra interest by reason of the prominence of their writers or recipients, regardless of their strictly philatelic significance.

Other correspondences consisting of large accumulations of 1847 covers received by business firms may acquire recognition because of the variety of material they afford for study. In the case of a series of 1847 covers from one ordinary citizen to another, such a correspondence may have interest and value because it offers postal history insights or reveals a human interest background.

The covers illustrated here are in a special category because of their unique association with the 1847 issue. They are folded letters to and from Cave Johnson, who was Postmaster General when the 1847 stamps were issued.

Johnson was a long-time political associate of James Polk, and was also from Tennessee. He was born in 1793 at Springfield, Tenn., and as a youth served under the command of Andrew Jackson in the Creek campaigns. He was educated at Cumberland College in Nashville, and then studied law and went into practice. He was elected representative to Congress in 1829 and served until 1845, except for the two years from 1837 to 1839. As Polk's close friend and adviser, Johnson was instrumental in securing the Democratic nomination for him in 1844. In recognition of this service, Polk appointed Johnson to his cabinet as Postmaster General. Johnson held this appointment from March 7, 1845, until the end of Polk's single term in March 1849.

After Polk left the presidency, Johnson returned to Clarksville, Tenn. to practice law. In succeeding years he was a circuit judge and held a high banking position. During the Civil War members of his family supported the Confederate cause. Afterwards he received a pardon from President Andrew Johnson, but was nevertheless denied his elected seat in the Tennessee Senate in 1866 because of his Confederate sympathies. He died at Clarksville in November of the same year.