

"PAID" Post Office Markings and Their Use to Cancel Stamps

Roger Curran

"PAID" handstamps were introduced in U.S. post offices to mark stampless mail for which the cost of postage had been paid. When postage stamps were later introduced, "PAID" handstamps were sometimes used to cancel postage stamps even though the stamps themselves were evidence of payment. And this practice began with the appearance of the first postmaster's provisional stamps in the U.S. which were issued by the New York Post Office in July 1845. Uses of "PAID" handstamps as cancelers continued for decades but with decreasing frequency and had largely ended by the late 1880s.

Beginning in 1851 some post offices, starting with Boston, introduced grid handstamps to cancel postage stamps that contained the word "PAID" in the design. Some other post offices, primarily from New England, followed suit. A few post offices created their own canceler designs involving the word "PAID". One of the more creative examples included "PAID" in a five point star. Later on in the 1850s, grids enclosing a "PAID" became less common with the rise of simpler cancels that just enclosed "PAID" in a circle or small frame. The practice of using cancelers with "PAID" in the design was largely confined to the 1850s, with some significant use in the early 1860s.

On the pages that follow, examples of "PAID" cancels on off cover stamps and domestic covers are presented over their period of use. Included also are domestic covers bearing strikes of "PAID" markings used as originally intended on stampless covers. "PAID 3" markings will be shown separately.



Datelined Watertown November 12, 1833

July 27
1845

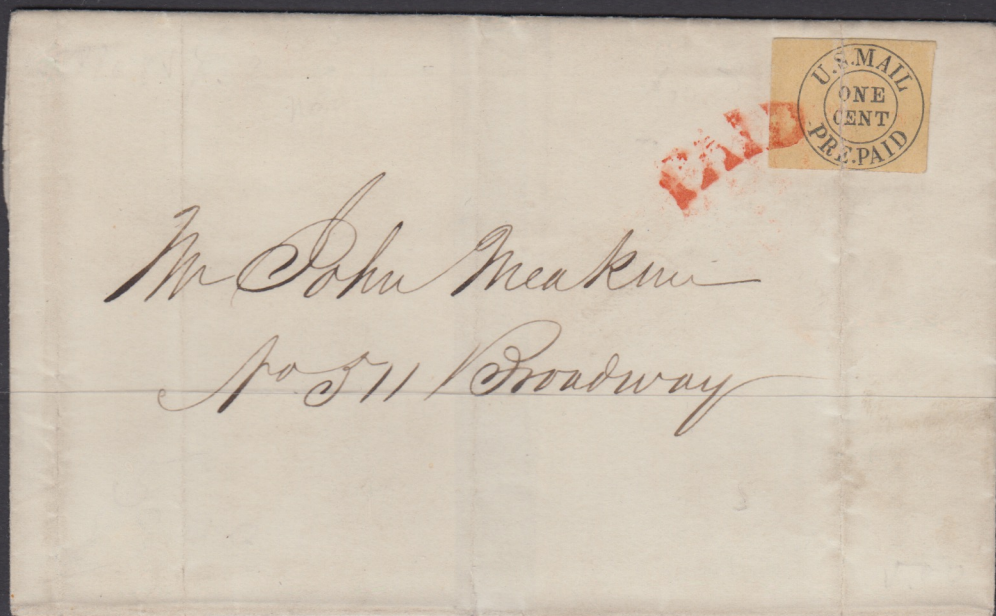
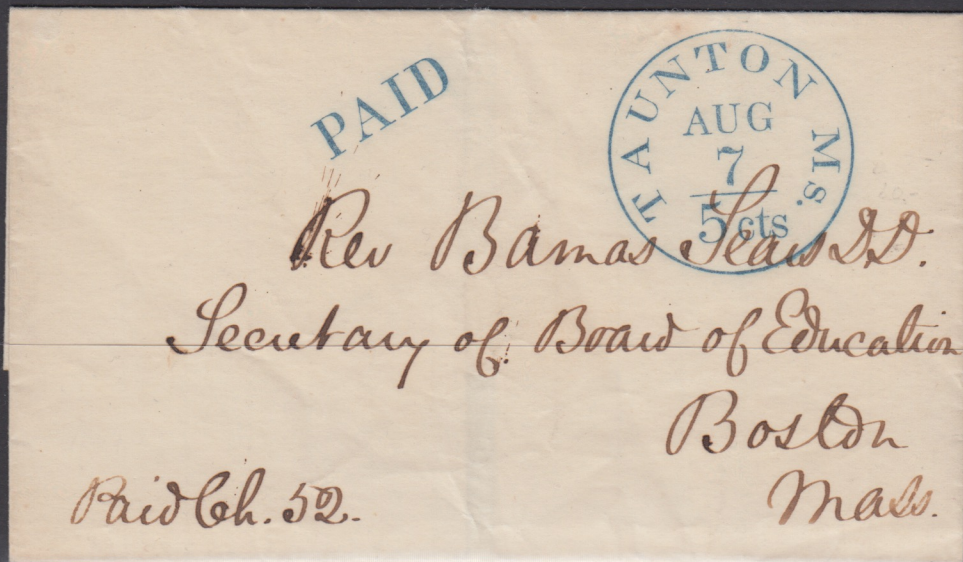


Mr Samuel B Van Dusen
Care Adicks Vandusen & Smith
Market Street
Philadelphia.



Mr Lewis T. Larell.
Worcester. Mass.

Addressee Barnas Sears was a Baptist clergyman who began working as president of Newton Theological Seminary in 1835. He became the Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education in 1848 and was subsequently the president of Brown University from 1855 – 1867.



March
1850

So. Deerfield N.H.
Aug. 15



Miss Helen M. Tenney
East Chester -
New Hampshire -

South
Deerfield
NH
1854

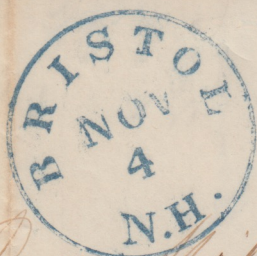


Miss Harriet McCallum

Boston

No 40 Essex St.

Mass

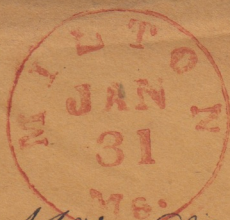


PAID

10

Rev. Milton Badger D.D.
Sec. of the A. F. M. S.
New York.

11/4/47



Mrs. Elizabeth H. Noyes
Care of Dr Noyes
Needham
Mass.



H.B. Johnson Esq
Tup.

pd

Albany



Mr

Phelps Esq Dept Comp

Albany

N. Y.



PAID

PM-PD 25 1845-52
 New York,
 New York
 red

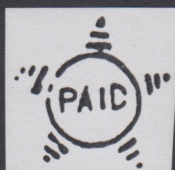


Powhattan C.H.
 VA
 11/17/56

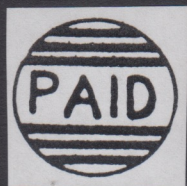
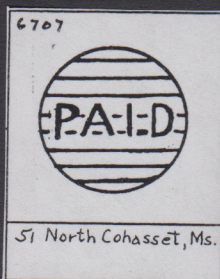
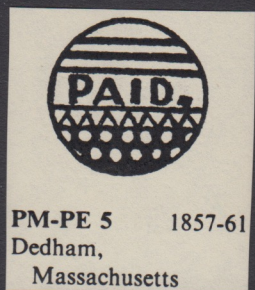




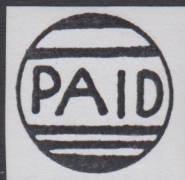
Yantic
CT



Glendale
MA

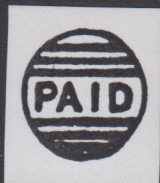


Bradford
NH

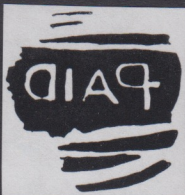
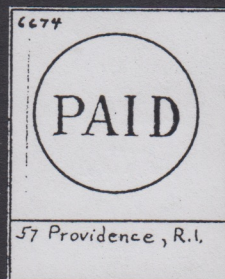


listed but
unattributed

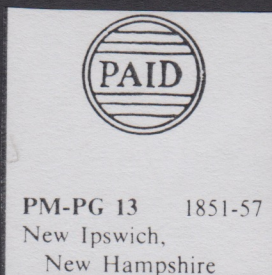
unlisted



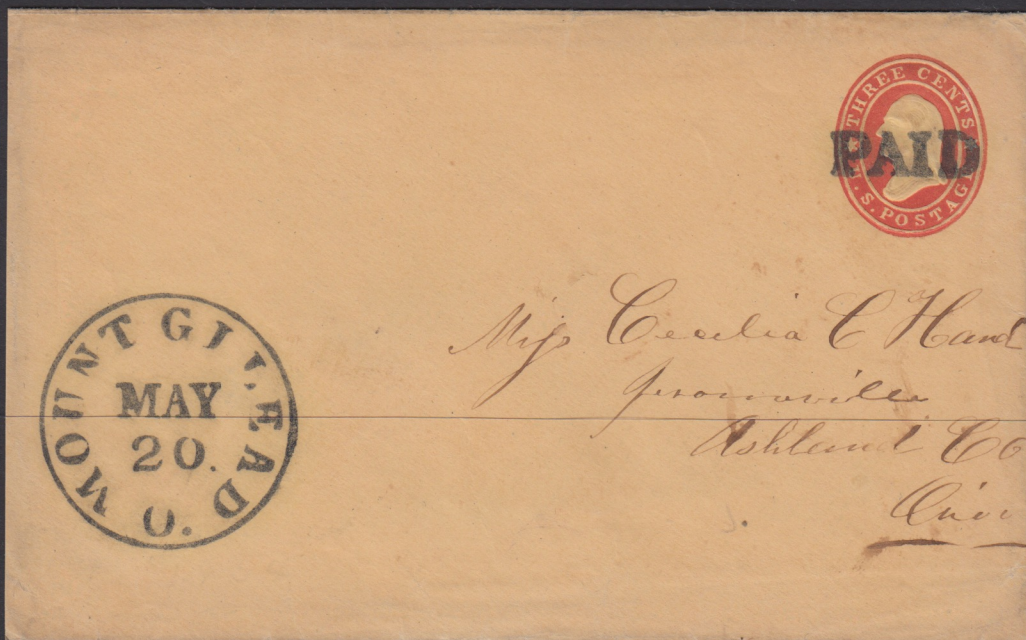
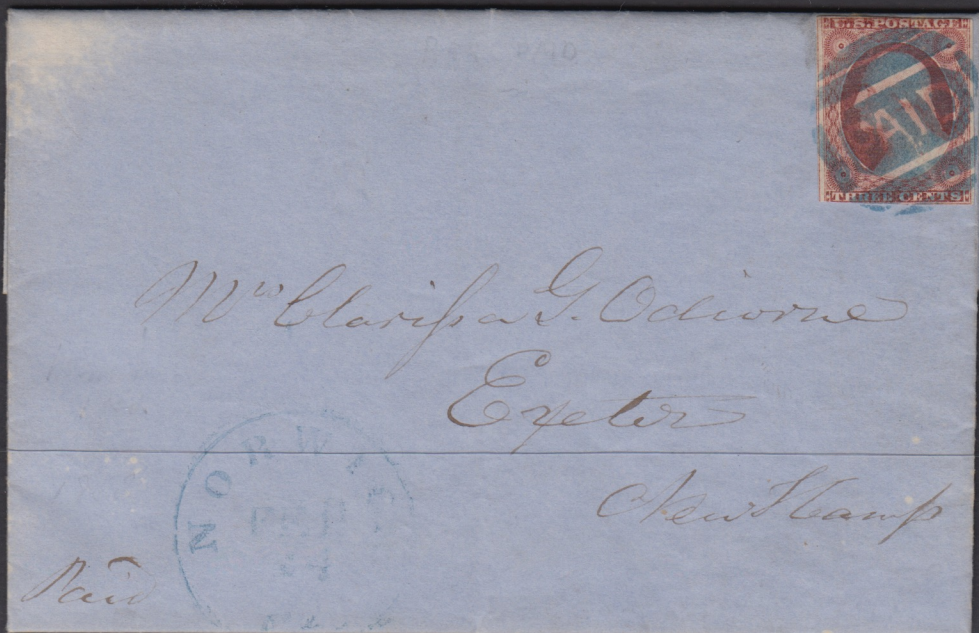
Norwich
CT

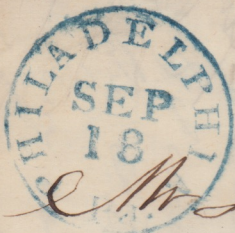


Norwich
CT



Norwich
CT





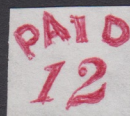
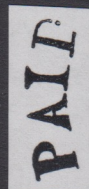
James Webster
Sept 18 1842

Mr Luther Gale
Lenox
Berkshire County
Massachusetts

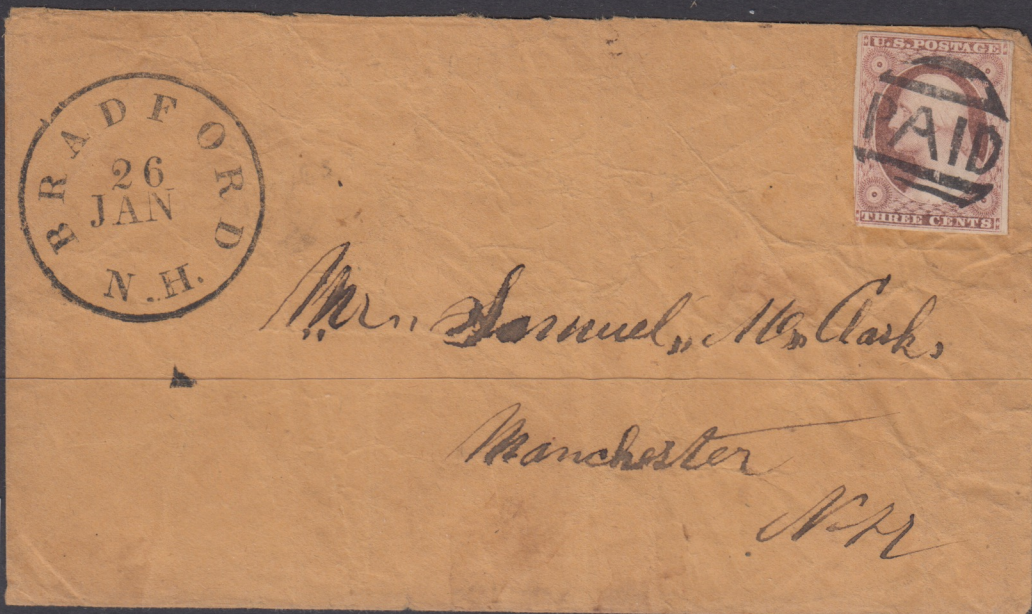


Mrs. Buchanan Carroll & Co
New Orleans
Louisiana

Mail



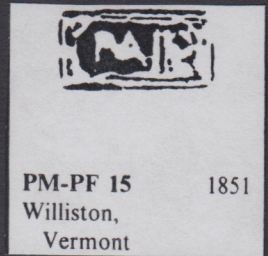
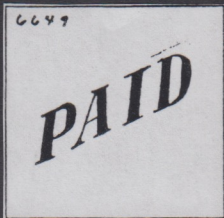
use of a
hand carved
canceler



PAID



This cover entered the mails at East Boston, Massachusetts on January 29, 1858. The East Boston post office was established on May 5, 1850 and discontinued as a separate post office on April 30, 1860 whereupon it became a Station of the Boston Post Office.



Brookline
MA

Any
connection
?

Listed as
Auburndale
in Alexander

PAID
13



PAID
PM-PD 3 1861
Auburndale,
Massachusetts

Fraudulent
cancel



North
Livermore
Maine



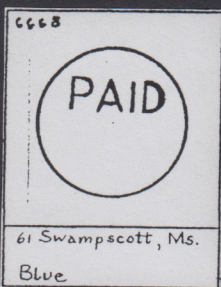
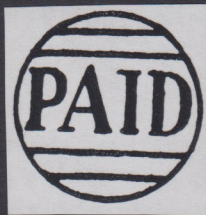
Saco
Maine



Bath
NH



Beverly,
MA



61 Swampscott, Ms.
Blue

Bond's Village
MA

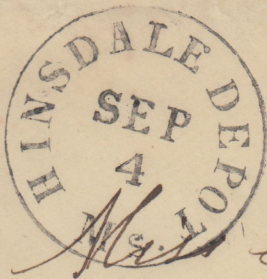


PM-PF 11 1861
Hanover,
New Hampshire
blue, brown, black



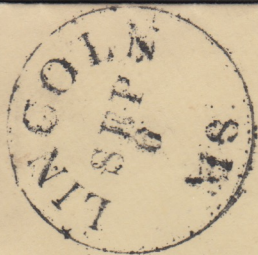
Assumed
West Cambridge
MA
some could be
Boston





Ms Susan L. Briggs
Lawrence

(Care of N. W. Housman Esq.) *Mass*



Ms Mrs James P. Rice
Corner Malden & Washington Sts.
Care Lewis Sanderson Esq.
Boston

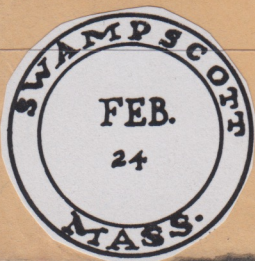


Miss Martha & Lizzie

South Reading

NH

Claremont
NH



Miss Susan, Peabody
Barnington
Maine

Providence
RI

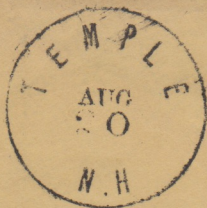


Cuttingsville
VT





Walter Hollenden Esq
Dawnesend
Mass.



John G Kimball Esq
Nashua N. H.

Beyond cancelers containing "PAID", the covers below show additional unnecessary uses of the word "PAID". Old practices die hard.





“PAID ALL”

Uncommon on the 1857 issue
Found on foreign mail wrappers



It was not uncommon for postmasters in the 1850s to employ postmarks such as this, designed for stampless mail, on mail with postage stamps affixed. However, only a handful of post offices were doing so by the time of the 1861 issue stamps.



Mr. J. G. Stantley,
Lenox,
Mass.



Samuel B. Tobey M.D.
Providence

For Sarah F. Tobey

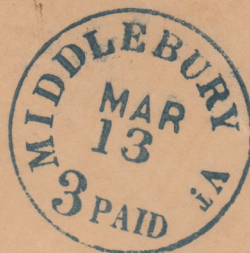
R.I.



Frederic L. Thomas Esq.

Bingo
New York.

(2421)



Dr. G. Hooker -
Castleton -
Vermont -



Mr William

Care of J. H. Jones & Co

No 57 Walker St

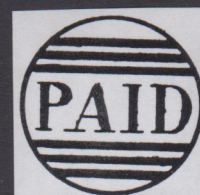
New York City

On this page and the next four, cancels are shown from Boston, MA. The handstamps that produced them were all designed to cancel postage stamps and Boston produced more such cancels by far than any other post office in the U.S. First it was the "PAID in grids, then "PAID" in circles and then "PAID" in small frames. It is curious that the circles are all broken, with several variations having been noted. Four are listed in the Blake and Davis book *Boston Postmarks to 1890*. Also, two distinct frame cancels are listed.





The ERU of the small Boston "PAID" is July 7, 1851, first appearing in red and then black ink with an LRU of January 23, 1852. The ERU for the large Boston "PAID" is January 16, 1852. The cover below shows an example of that date. The large "PAID" grids were used as late as 1862. Over the years there were several variations of the basic design.

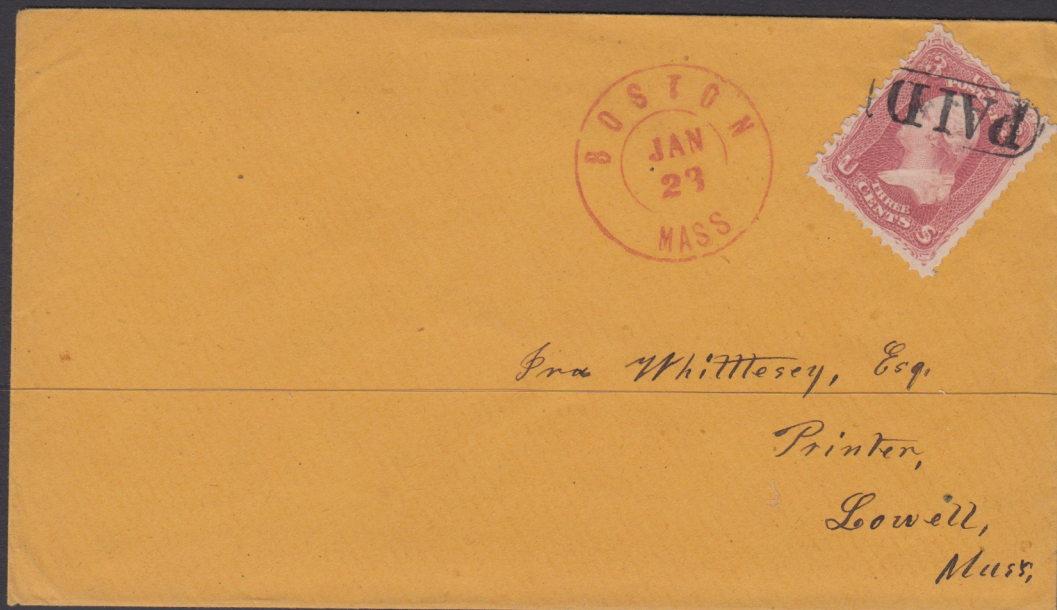




Mrs. Maria C. Welch
Care Dyer & Sons Esq
Watbury
Conn.



Mrs. Thos. W. Whittemore
Tulzwilliam, N.Y.





These pages are replete with examples of "PAID" markings, designed for use on stampless mail, but actually used to cancel stamped mail. The reverse also happens albeit much less commonly. The cover below shows a "PAID" in grid designed for stamped mail but used to mark "PAID" on a stampless cover. A similar example is shown in the Blake and Davis book (page 109) mentioned above except that it involves a strike of the small Boston "PAID" with date of July 24, 1851.



6765

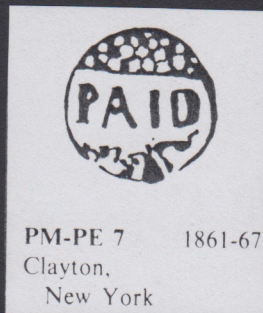
PAID
1

61 Ozaukee, Wis.

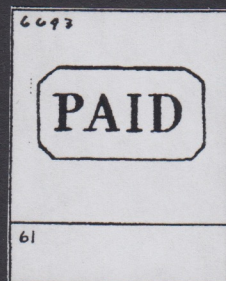


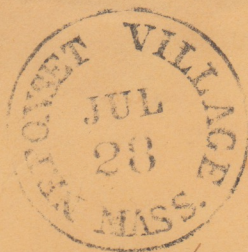


Maumee
City
OH



Blakeville
NH





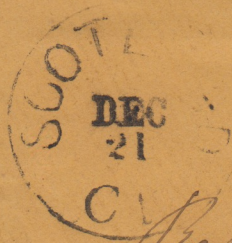
Mrs Charles A Wood.

Gilmor House.

Baltimore.

Ad.

Neponset Village
MA



Rev W. H. Phelps.

Hitchcockville

Conn.

enclosure
datelined
Scotland
December 21,
1861

ANDERSON & DOOLITTLE,
Dealers in
HARDWARE & GROCERIES
ALMOND, N. Y.



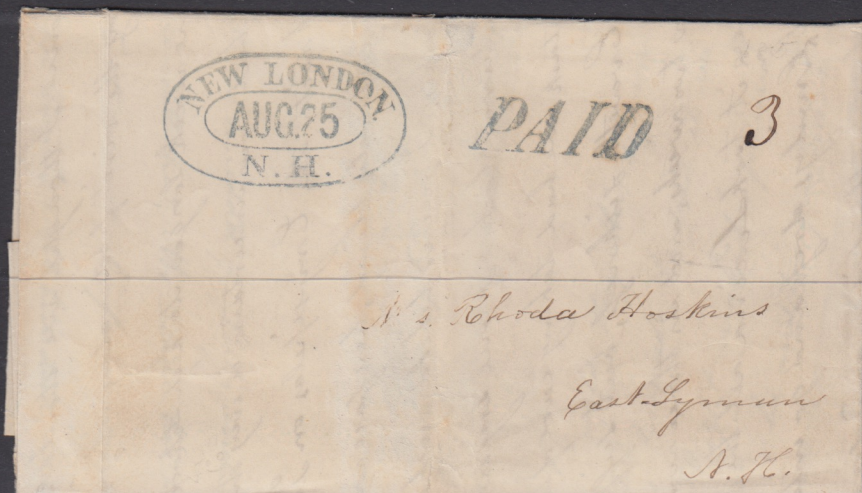
Mrs Amanda
Champlin
Millsville
Allegheny Co
Pa



James M. Nesler
Frankfort
Ind

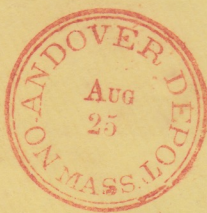
146A

"PAID"
in italics





Robert L. Smiley
Grafton
N. H.



Warren Aldrich Esq.
Lowell
Mass.

East
Pepperell
MA

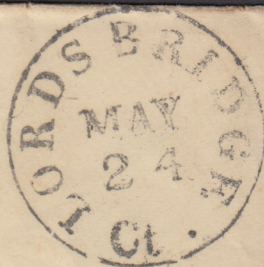


Pigeon
Cove
MA





Print G. F. Howe, Co B.
11th Regt, Vt Vols.
Washington, D.C.



Virginia W. Abelle
Bridgeport.
Conn.

Box 556.



Mr Charles Wheelock.
So Dedham
Mass.



Tracy Corcoran
Claremont
N. H.



postmark
not readable



Alstead N.H.
Sep. 4. 1868



Mr. Wm. M. Morrison
Cellar 21. Y H Market
Boston
Mass.

Alstead
NH

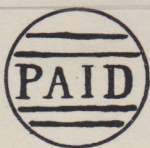
Salisbury
MA



For Mrs Riversmith

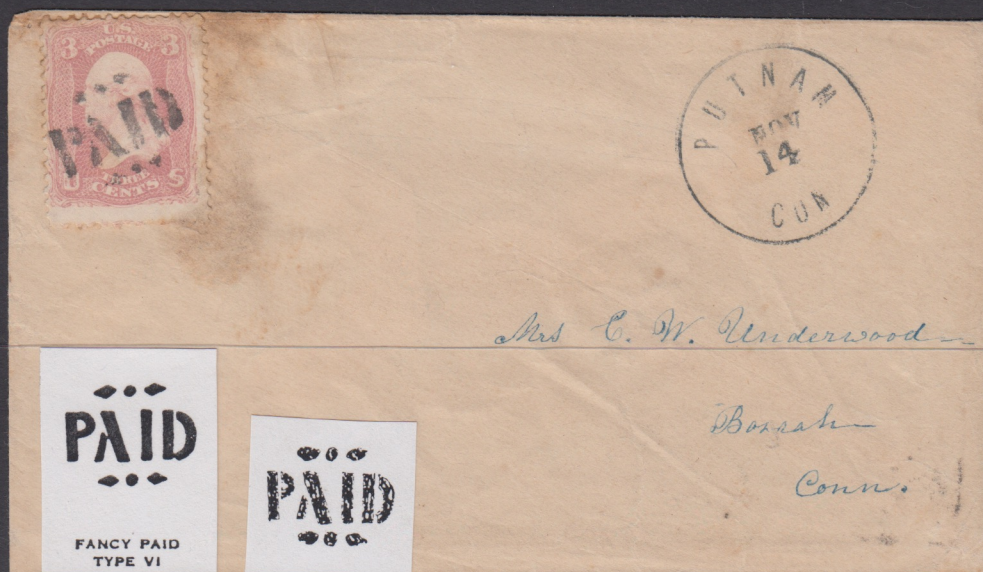
Care of W. H. Riversmith Esq
New York
City -

6765



61 Saco, Me.

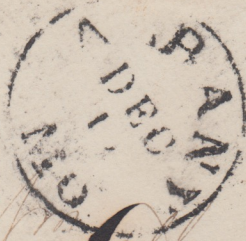
4/29/62



believed
to be
stencil

stencil

Albany
MO



St Joseph

MO

PAID

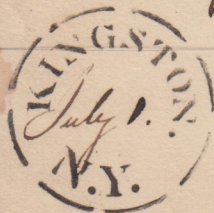
Paid

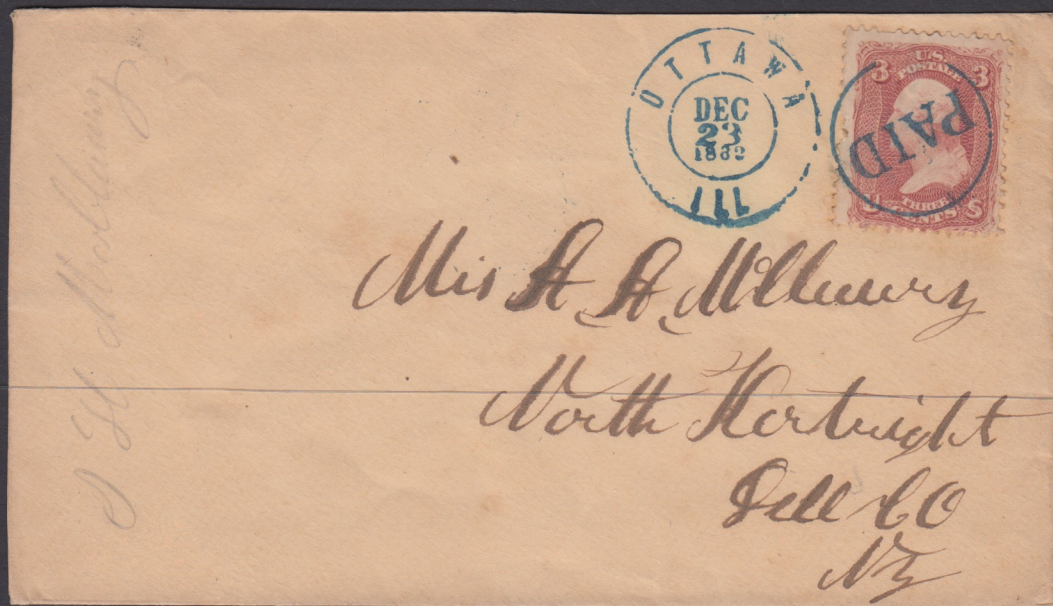
Mr

Miss Bruyn
Nov 11.

at Mr. Skell's, No 43 Bonday Street

New York







Miss Alice Benson
Sawmoss Falls
Me.



Miss Matilda S. Robbins
Abington
Mass

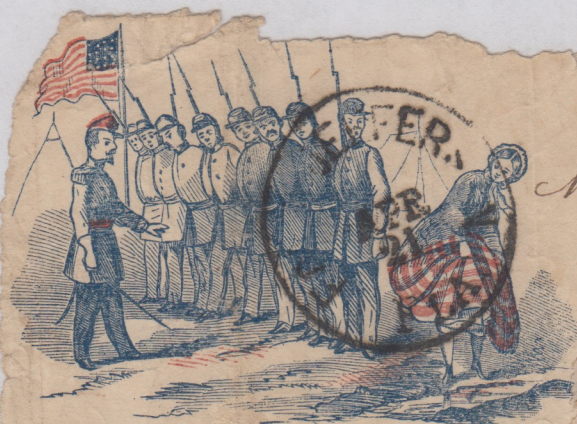
July 27th/63
Aug 1st "

Prother



PAID

Wm H. Tiffany &
Car Wm Tiffany Co.
Broadway
New York



Officer—FRONT FACE!—EYES RIGHT!!!
Why in th—thunder don't you turn your faces to the front?

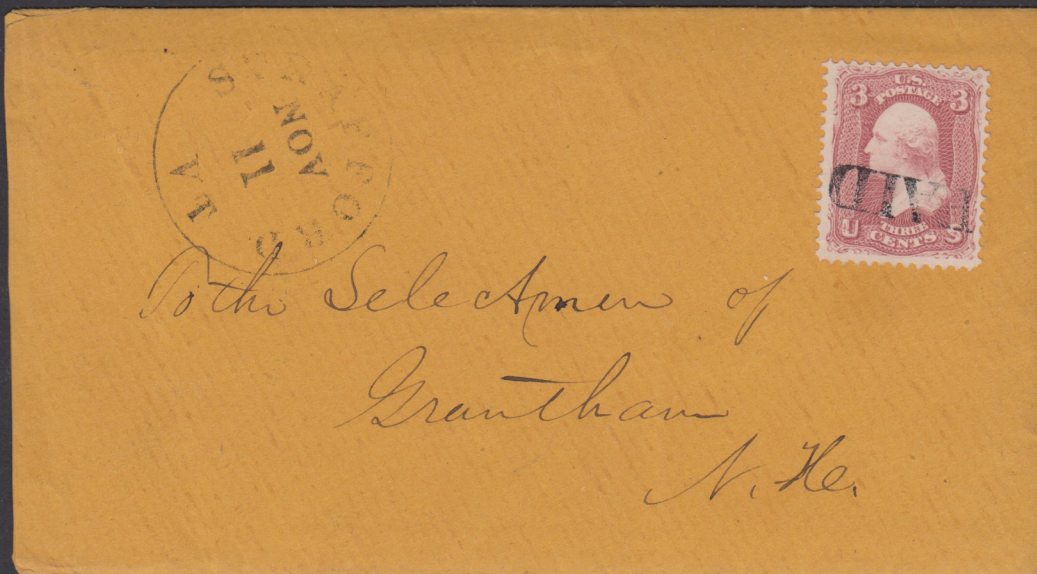
Mrs George Kenney

Boscawen



Beverly
MA





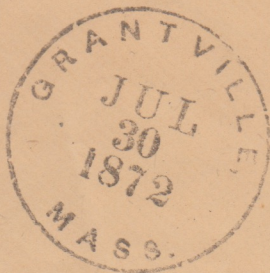
This 1864 cover originated at Strafford, Vermont. Strafford used old rate numerals as cancelers on 1869 and Banknote issues, then a "PAID" again in the early 1890s – see next to last page.



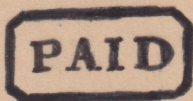
Woodville
MA



Miss Lizzie B. Swan.
(Care Rev. Mr. Swan Esq.
Mr. Edes, ~~Dorchester~~.
Bolton, Mass.



Hon. Henry White
New Haven.
Conn.

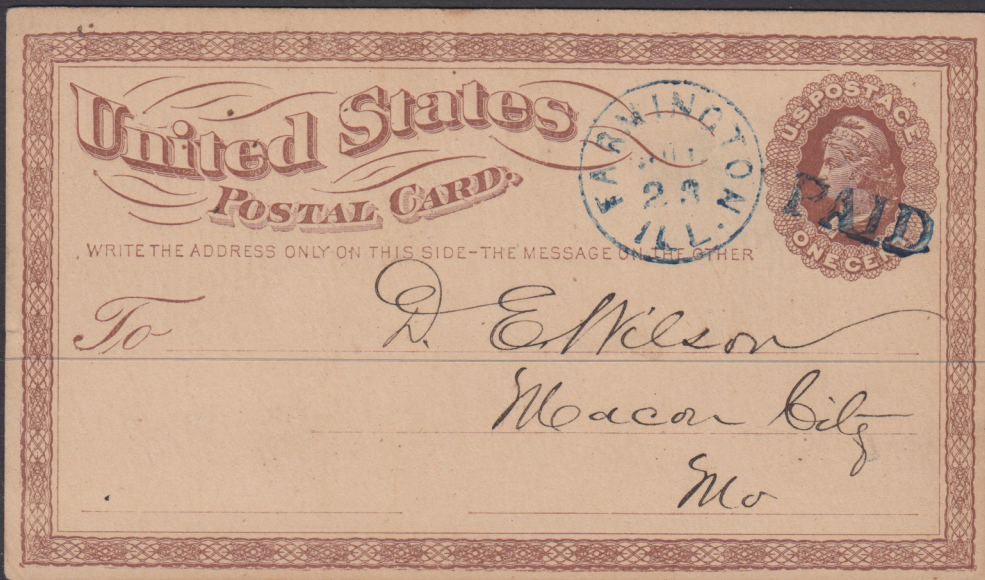








This stamp was struck twice by "PAID". A portion of a red "PAID" shows running down the left side. It is very likely part of a "PAID ALL" marking.



Kingfield
ME



C. & E. C. Rowe

Bethel
Maine

United States
POSTAL CARD

WRITE THE ADDRESS ONLY ON THIS SIDE—THE MESSAGE ON THE OTHER



To Freeman Butts

Ellen Valley

Lawrence Co

Remo

Dolingville
PA
PO only
operated
1869-1871

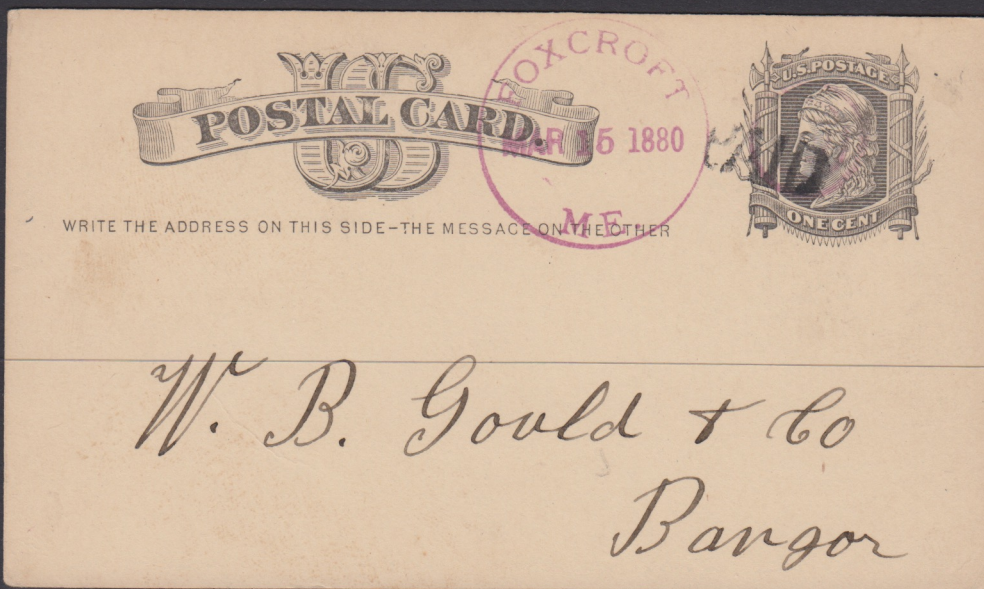


applied with
increased
pressure on
right side





Mill
Village
NH



It is assumed that
a weak strike of the
target cancel led to
the "PAID" being
added in Bangor.

East
Walpole
MA



Isaac W. Lewis
82 Devonshire St.
Boston
Mass.



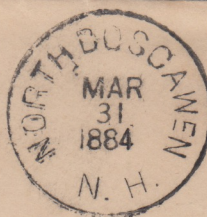
Miss Sarah A. Keyes,
Amoskeag,
N.H.

East
Walpole
MA
1878



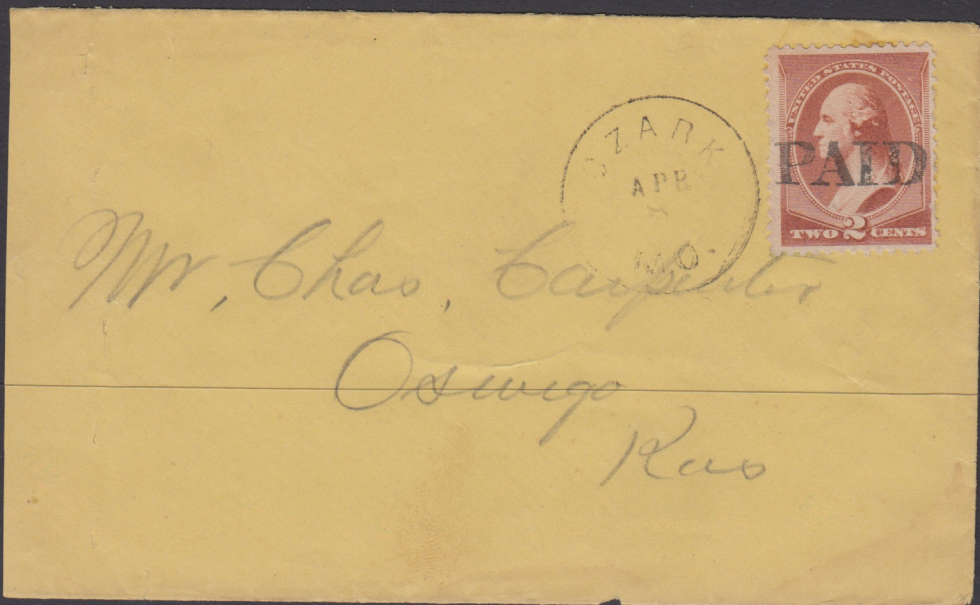
J. V. H. Aonille Esq/
Paris
N. Y.

unknown
origin



Mrs Charles S. Jackson,
New Hartford,
Conn.

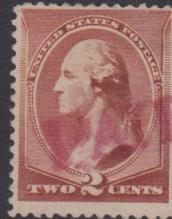
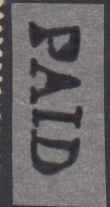
North
Boscawen
NH

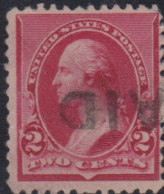


Ozark
MO



East
Troy
WI





Mrs W A Mansfield

Mantpelier Vt

Although used to cancel the stamps below, it is very doubtful that the handstamp employed to strike these markings was intended for use on pieces of mail. Was it designed for business account records? Perhaps a reader can provide an answer.



A decidedly late use of a "PAID" handstamp as a canceler. The earliest known uses of this stamp issue, Scott 252, are in April 1895.



In several decades of collecting, this is the only "PAID" cancel this writer has seen on a 20th century U.S. stamp that is a throwback to the "PAID" cancels of the stampless cover era. Surely other examples exist but they would be very uncommon.

