



Cancellation Club NEWS

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ALEXANDRIA RETROCEDED

By Thomas O. Taylor

Why spend public money just to satisfy political moves? No real reason if the results are not important. That must have been what the Alexandria, Virginia postmaster, Daniel Bryan, thought when the city was retroceded to the state of Virginia on July 9, 1846 and he decided to continue to use the old CDS marking device for a while. The "while" lasted for two years.

Before the formation of Washington, D.C. there were two tobacco ports on the Potomac River near the area chosen to become the capitol of the new nation. Georgetown, Maryland had been established first (below the Falls of the river) and Alexandria, Virginia was laid out in 1743.

Both of these towns became part of the one hundred square mile area set aside for the new Washington with Maryland ceding the area north of the Potomac and Virginia ceding the area south of the river.

During the early part of the nineteenth century, post offices operated in Georgetown and in Alexandria and both included the letters "D.C." or "COL" or "PTK" in the CDS marks used on stampless covers.

However, Alexandria was retroceded to Virginia in 1846 and the reason was financial. Alexandria had incurred a large debt to help build the Alexandria Canal (the Eastern end of the C & O system). When other parts of the canal were not finished per schedule, traffic revenue on the Alexandria portion was

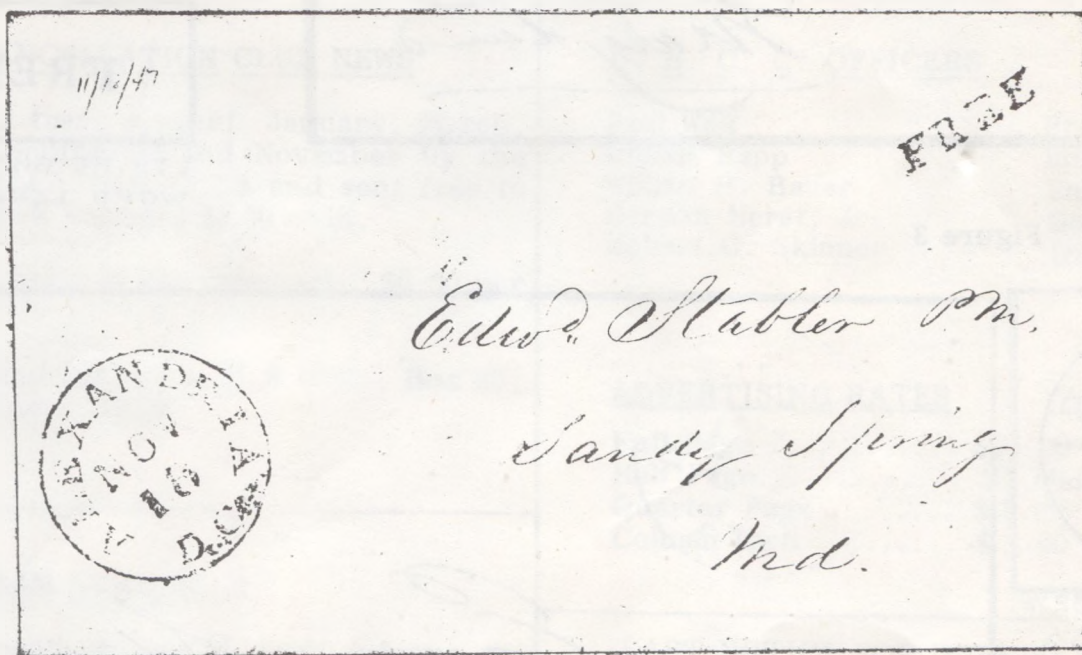


Figure 1

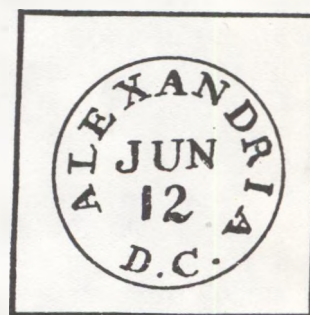
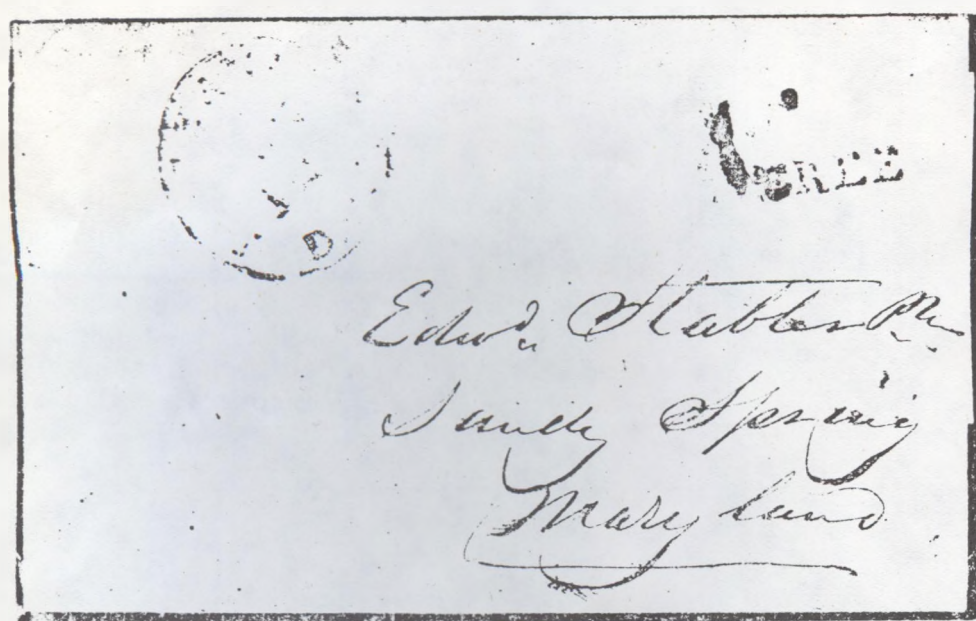
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too small to support the debt. Congress was appealed to for extra funds and they turned down the request. Alexandria then approached the State of Virginia and was warmly welcomed. Alexandria therefore asked Congress for a release from being part of the District of Columbia -- and received it.

Incidentally, Georgetown tried to rejoin Maryland at this same time for both financial and political reasons and was rejected. Perhaps that's why Annapolis may well have looked at Georgetown with a "what-might-have-been" glance ever since.

To get back to the CDS markings, the writer specializes in Washington, D.C. postal markings and some years ago was able to obtain a box of covers from the Hallowell Stabler family in Sandy Spring, Maryland. Edw. Stabler was postmaster in Sandy Spring and his son-in-law James Hallowell was teaching in a small boarding school in Alexandria. There were many letters from the 1840's and 1850's from James to his "father", Edw. Stabler. So it is possible to fairly accurately pinpoint when the Alexandria post office changed their CDS device to indicate the town was part of the State of Virginia again.

Figure 2



CIRCLE DIAM. - 30
LTR. HEIGHT - 3½

FREE

LTR. HEIGHT - 3½
WORD LENGTH - 18

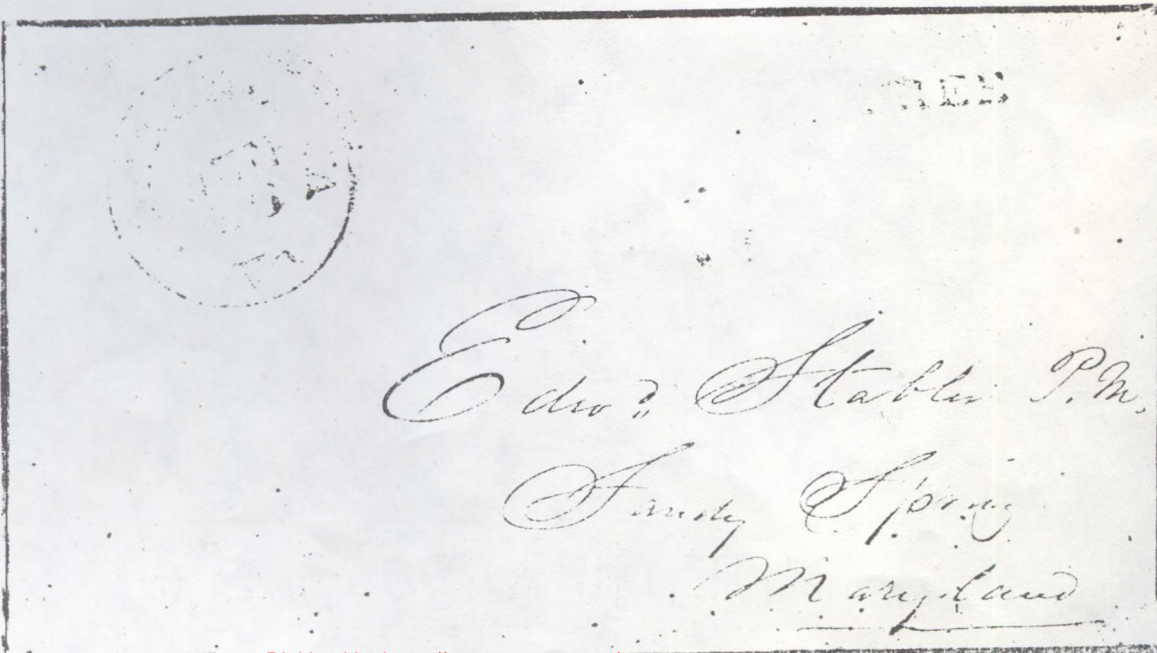
Figure 3



CIRCLE DIAM. - 32½
LTR. HEIGHT - 3½

FREE

LTR. HEIGHT - 3½
WORD LENGTH - 18



The illustrations show:

- 1) A November 18, 1847 cover to show a fairly good "strike".
- 2) A June 12, 1848 cover with "D.C." in postmark.
- 3) A June 26, 1848 cover with "Va." in postmark.
- 4) An October 4, 1848 cover to show a fairly good "strike".

So sometime between June 12 and 26, 1848, two years after Alexandria was retroceded to Virginia, the postal markings began to acknowledge the fact. Why spend the money for a new device? Perhaps more government agencies ought to show more restraint like this in spending public money.

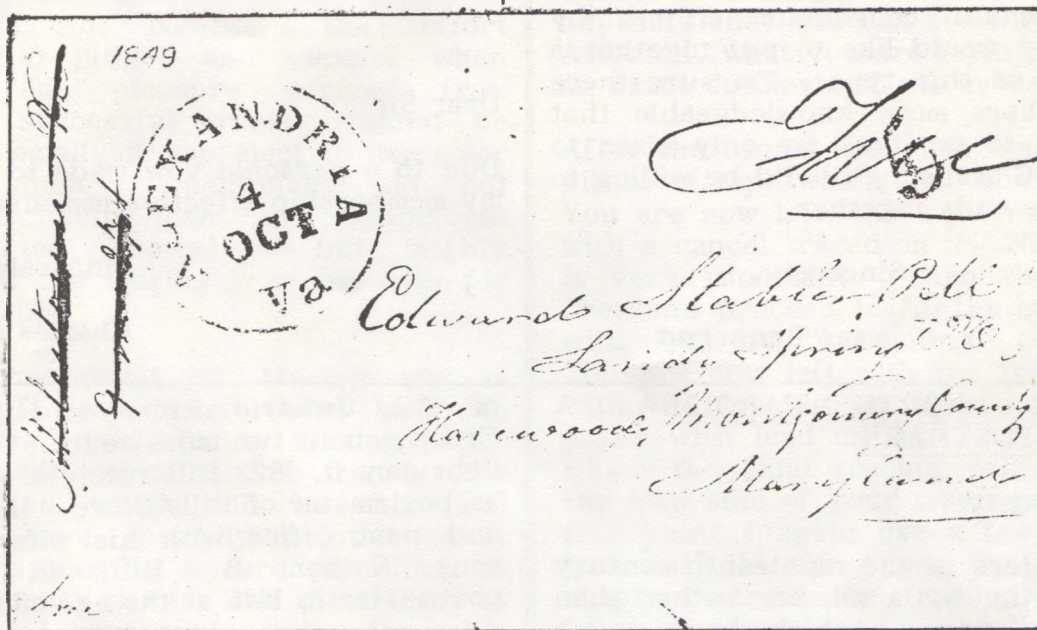


Figure 4

THE U.S. CANCELLATION CLUB NEWS

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SLIDE PROGRAM AVAILABLE

U.S.C.C. President Paul J. Wolf informs us that he has prepared a slide program, "Auxiliary Postal Markings in the Black Jack Era" which is complete with assette. The program, which runs under thirty minutes, is available to use it for his club ("no charge, of course"). Contact Mr. Wolf for further information.

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LAST NOTICE FOR DUES PAYMENT

This notice is the last reminder for all members to pay their 1979 dues. If we do not receive your payment you will not receive future issues of the U.S.C.C. NEWS. All members who have not yet taken care of this matter are urged to do so immediately.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir:

It's time that members of U.S.C.C. put together a book about cancellation devices and types. It need not be an in depth study but comprehensive so individuals like myself need not flounder around looking for material. For in depth material a bibliography could be included. I could coordinate efforts by members if they would like to put together a reference book of this type. I'm sure there are other members more knowledgeable that could be found to do it as my only claim to fame is 1396 FDC issue. Still I'd be willing to pull all the loose ends together.

Sincerely,

James Ronnerud

Dear Sir:

I enjoy the Cancellation club News. Keep up the good work.

Sincerely,

G. W. Aschenbrenner

Dear Sir:

Due to a personal vow made to God, I resign my membership effective immediately.

Sincerely,

Charles H. Lang

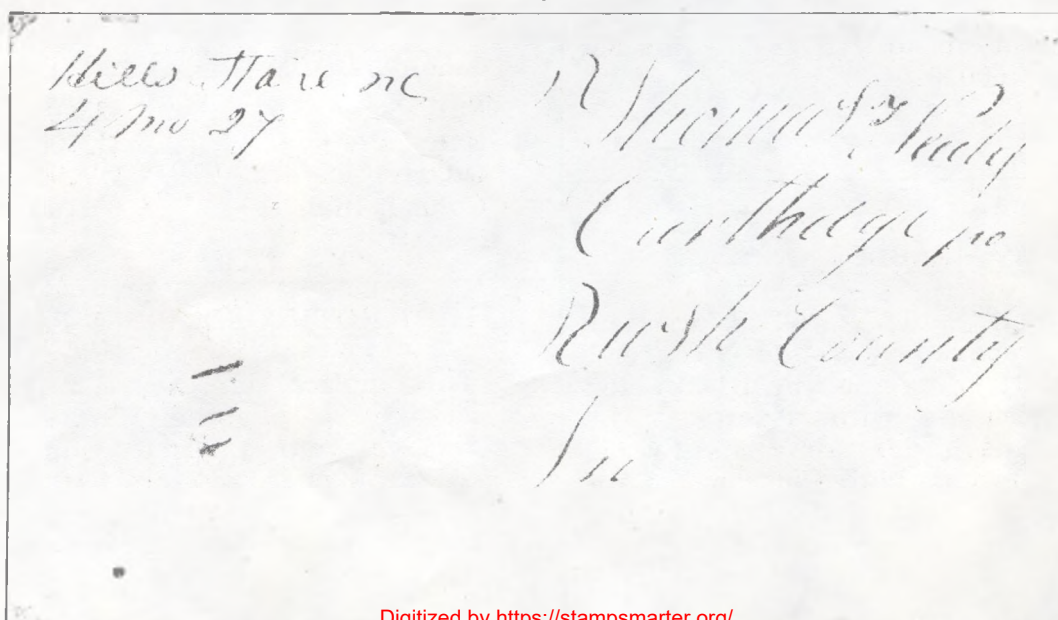
HILLS STORE, NORTH CAROLINA: A
QUAKER DATE POSTMARK

By James Inverarity

Quaker postmasters in the nineteenth century designated months by a number rather than by conventional names, which have pagan origin. Thus in the example illustrated, 4 Mo 27 denotes the 27th day of the fourth month (April). Morona and Simpson list several offices that used the Quaker style of dating. This example is from Randolph county in the Piedmont region of North Carolina. Quakers emigrated to this area from New England in the 1750's and constituted a fairly substantial community in the nineteenth century. Among the Quakers of Randolph county was Samuel Hill, who operated a store near the confluence

of the Uwharrie River and Betty McGees Creek, about two miles south of Mechanic. On February 5, 1823 Hill received an appointment as postmaster of Hills Store. He ran the store and post office with his wife Mary. Their son, Nathan B. Hill, in turn became postmaster in 1845 at the age of 28.

Hills store was not one of the major post offices in Randolph county when this letter was mailed. In 1857, for example, total business for the fiscal year amounted to only \$7.25. With twenty-five other post offices in the county, Hill probably only postmarked the family mail and occasional letters left by his customers. Despite the small volume of mail, Hills Store post office remained in continuous operation for over a century, finally being discontinued on August 30, 1924.



HOW TO TRACE A CANCELLATION

By W. R. Weiss, Jr.

I am consistently amazed at the number of collectors of cancellations who have little or no idea how to go about drawing a simple tracing of their cancellations and other postal markings. These tracings add tremendously to the beauty and interest of the study of cancels, not to mention the effort demonstrated to judges and viewers when exhibiting. The pleasure derived from completing a successful tracing cannot be measured, especially if you elect to use color tracings -- which I personally do not recommend if you plan to exhibit in competition (too showy) -- but highly recommended if the tracing is merely done for your own pleasure.

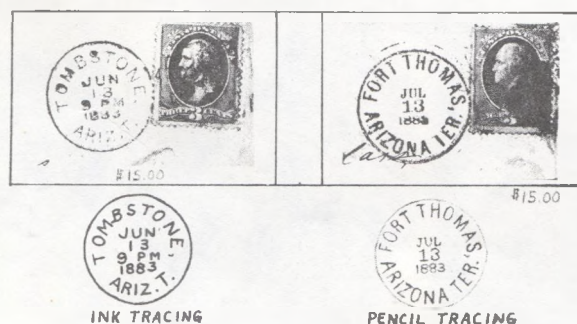
The "tools" necessary for tracing are as follows: a soft lead pencil (hard lead can damage stamps), good quality tracing paper and a good quality white card to transfer the tracing to (and which will be the final product). I have specially printed cards bearing four spaces to a card on which to mount the stamp at the top and the tracing at the bottom. I received many favorable comments from viewers when I was an exhibitor (not to mention additional points from judges). These cards can be easily printed by your local printer at very little cost. In fact, I would venture to guess that you could get thousands of them printed for less than \$75.

The actual job of tracing goes as follows: place the stamp or cover or whatever it is you wish to trace face up on a hard surface. Next place your tracing paper over the stamp. Plenty of strong light is necessary so that you can see the cancel through the paper easily. I then like to tape the paper to the surface I am working on so that it will not move as I am tracing -- which can really throw you off as

well as disturb you greatly. Now you simply begin tracing on the paper (using the lead pencil -- with a fairly sharp point) the cancel exactly as it is struck on the stamp. Do not push too hard with your pencil, or you will leave an impression on the stamp. I recommend the use of No. 2 lead pencil. Trace the cancel completely. Do not omit anything that you can see through the paper. After all, what you are trying to accomplish is an exact duplicate of the cancel.

After the cancel has been traced, remove the pieces of tape which held the paper in place. You are now left with a piece of tracing paper with a cancel traced on it. Now the next step is very important. Turn the tracing paper over and proceed to fill the back of the paper with lead by "scribbling" over the paper. You are now left with the front of the paper with the tracing on it and the back of the paper with lead on it. Now get the card on which the final tracing will be shown. Lay the lead side of your tracing paper down. At this point I again use a few small pieces of tape to hold the paper in place. Now you simply re-trace the tracing which is on the front of your paper. The pressure you are applying as you draw will cause the lead on the back of the paper to transfer off onto the card. When you are finished, removed the tape and there is your tracing. Now the easy part is finished. Your job is now to draw over the lead on the card with a good quality pen. I find that for the final drawing the Bic "ultra-thin Flair" does a very good job, but you may wish to buy a better grade drawing pen at a store which carries such products.

Very carefully redraw all the lines which have been transferred to the card by the lead. When this is finished, the job is done. You may now mount your stamp in the space above. You may elect to add handwritten or typed notations above or below as to the



origin of the cancel or whatever else you feel is pertinent information about the cancel or marking.

Drawing a tracing is, on one hand, quite simple once you get the knack of it, but until you do you must be patient. It is not quite as easy as it seems at first glance. Anyone can do the tracing, but in transferring the tracing to the card and the final drawing of the cancel can be very slow and tedious work. Once you can do it well, it will take about 20 minutes for what I call an "easy" tracing -- one in which the design is basically all straight lines. The more intricate designs

can take over an hour to finish. The final results, if done properly, are most pleasing to view and a strong sense of accomplishment will be felt.

After becoming proficient at tracing, you can trace almost anything you wish. Entire stamp designs can be traced from enlarged photographs, etc.

If members have any questions pertaining to tracings, I will be most happy to reply if you will be kind enough to include a SASE. Send questions or comments to: W. R. Weiss, Jr., 1519 Hausman Ave., Allentown, PA 18103.

QUESTION CORNER

Dear Sir:

Here are two cancels, from Philadelphia that I would like to have some help on.

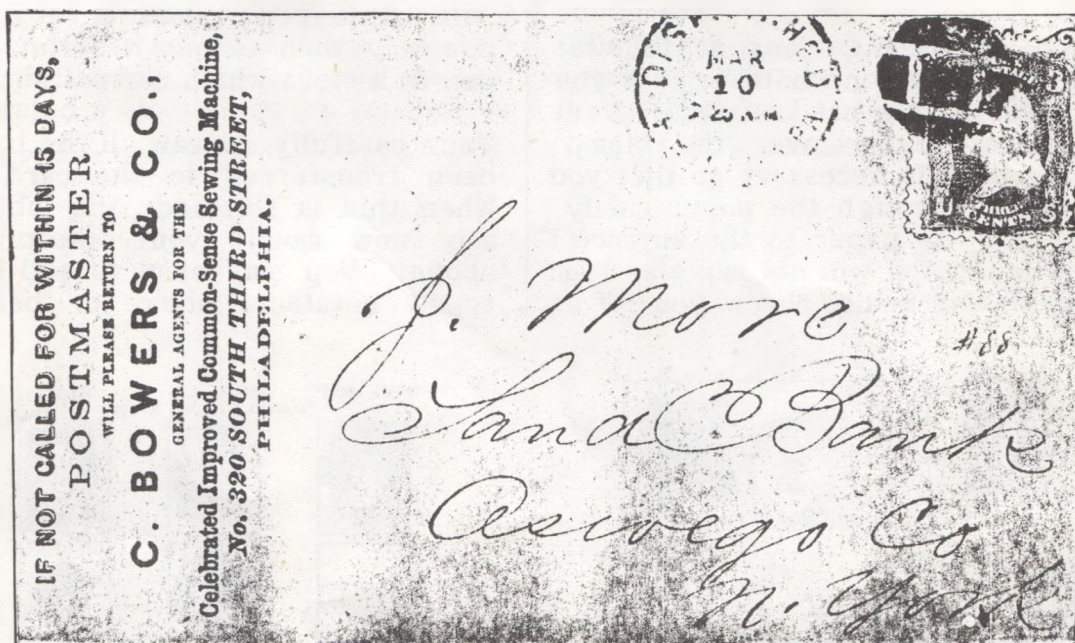
1) Cancellation, with the word "Dispatched". March 10, 2:25 A.M. Phila, Pa. I have two cancels as shown. The other is: Dispatched, February 9, 6:30 P.M., Philada., Pa. I am concerned about the use of this cancel, how it was used, and when it was used.

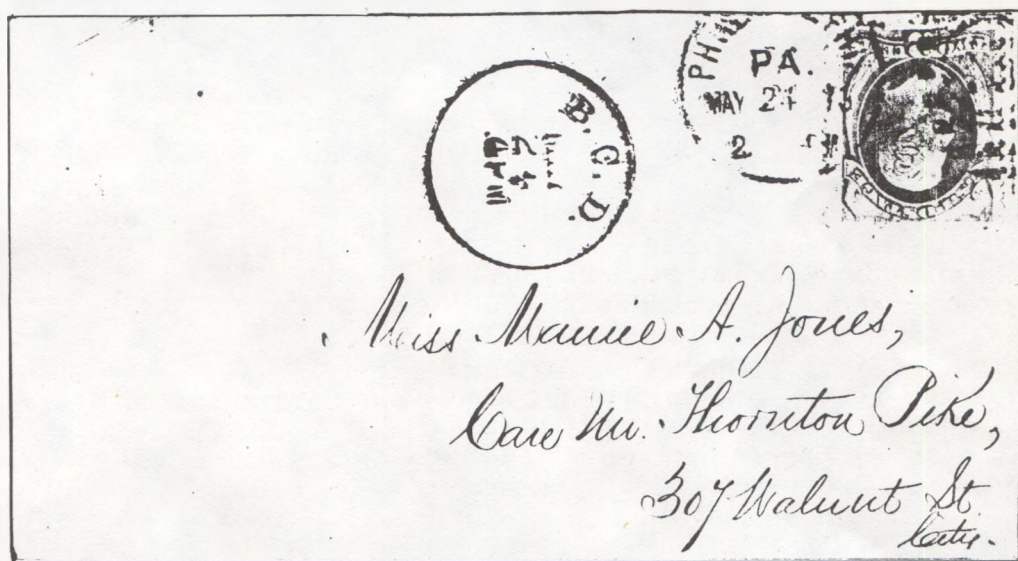
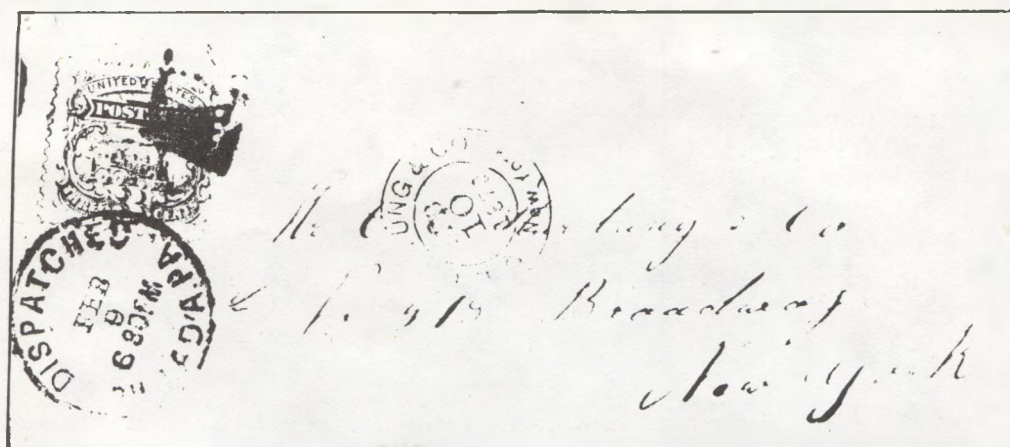
2) The other peculiarity is the cancel in the center of a Philadelphia cover: B.C.D., Mar. 24, 4. P.M.

Maybe someone can help me on an explanation of these cancels.

Yours truly,

Alton Gaumer



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