



# *Cancellation Club* NEWS

VOL. 17, NO. 2

WHOLE NO. 180

SPRING 1984

WALTER D. WESSON'S TIME-ON-BOTTOM (TOB) DUPLEX HAND-CANCELERS, PART 10

## CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY

by Theodore W. Bozarth

The same facts, presented in different arrangements, may illuminate different aspects of the same problem. Willard originally listed all the cities using Wesson postmarks in alphabetical order, limited to his years of interest: 1883 to 1887. This list, as in part 3, is convenient for quickly locating pertinent data, but tells little about overall use of the devices. Here, in Parts 4 through 9, expanded information is presented for the entire known use period of the cancellers, arranged by states to give some idea of the geographical dispersion. In this final part we will make a chronological review of Wesson's efforts.

On June 17, 1881, Walter Wesson, then a 25-year old clerk in the Providence post office, applied for a patent on a sturdier duplex postmarking device that he had invented. As part of the specifications required by the Patent Office, he submitted a drawing of the device, part of which (Figure 4 in his drawing, which was reproduced as Figure X in Part 2 of this study) shows the characteristic Wesson date stamp design: city and state name in an

arc in top half of the circle; month, day & year in a straight line just below the diameter; and time in a second straight line at the bottom of the circle. By the following month, even before his patent was approved (it would be granted on Nov. 22, 1881), one of his devices was in use in the Worcester, MA, post office, in the style which is identified as Type I, with the month expressed as a numeral to save space and reduce requirement for twelve lettered slugs, "Jan" through "Dec".

Two or more of these Type I devices were in use at Worcester for 18 months, after which they were replaced by Type II markers, which had the state abbreviation in a straight line rather than a concentric arc as in the first design, and with conventional abbreviations for the months. However, a year earlier the first Type II design had been introduced at Wesson's hometown post office, Providence, RI. No companion killer had been made for either of the first postmarkers and it was apparently expected that the using clerk would affix his own cut-cork killer to the metal duplex hand stamp. In Feb 1882,

just a month after the appearance of the Providence marker, a Wesson device was introduced in Chicago with a companion killer, the number "1" in a circle formed by 8 horizontal bars. It may have been a prototype sample furnished for testing.

By the following month, Philadelphia was also using a prototype marker, but with the numeral "2" within a triple circle, quite similar in appearance to duplex killers advertised by John Goldsborough, of Philadelphia, at that time. About the same time a second unique "sample" appears in Chicago with the letter "A" inside a 9-bar elliptical killer which would soon become the standard for Wesson. But before standardization occurred, Charleston, SC, would have two markers with "A" and "C" in the killer circles formed by 8-bars, like Chicago's first. This seems to be the first Wesson killer to use a designator ("C" for Carrier, or Collected, mail) to distinguish mail origin, an accounting distinction that postmasters were then required to make.

(Cont'd on page 32)



Dear Reader:

THE CALIFORNIA MULES

## A Review

A few words about the News. While it has the clear purpose to present new or newly organized information, there is also, I believe, an important educational function to inform about things that are indeed known but perhaps not widely. Just as an example, information on early (perhaps earliest) precancels would no doubt be of interest. I urge members with specialized knowledge on any relevant subject to share it. It need not be a broad report or survey. It might be on one particular postmark, period in time, cover, post office, etc. It could be a paragraph. And there is nothing wrong, either, with a piece that simply entertains!

Roger Curran

An interesting article on the usage of the "Kicking Mule" cancellation in California post offices appeared in the April 1984 issue of "La Posta: A Journal of American Postal History." In the article Henry Dierck discusses and illustrates the use of the cancellation at Goleta, Susanville and Forbestown. Information is also given about their manufacturer, C. A. Klinker. Inquiries should be directed to La Posta, P. O. Box 135, Lake Oswego, OR 97034

Illinois Cancels

The Illinois Postal History Society (IPHS) has recently published an attractive 84 page, 8 1/2 X 11 format, spiral bound booklet entitled Illinois 19th Century Cancels

compiled by Richard Russell. Most of the 1093 markings (almost all are tracings) are in the general area of fancy cancels but some are town markings picked for interesting characteristics. The markings appeared in the News over a period of time in the 1960s. The USCC has ordered 20 copies which will be available at \$6.00 each postpaid, the same price charged by the IPHS to non-IPHS members. However the USCC will realize a profit of \$1.75 for each sale it makes. Those wishing to purchase through USCC should send order to Editor, CCN at 8803 Mead St., Bethesda, MD 20817. A copy of the booklet is available for loan from the USCC Library.

Note: Markings appeared in News also in 1970's.

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## THE MAIL BAG

Editor, CCN:

In the comments on the Rate Marker As A Cancelling Device (News, Summer 1983, page 95), a theory advanced by the Simpson book on Postal Markings, 1851-61, was reprinted. This concerned the probability that the Leominster 3 was a precancel, a thought echoed by your author.

The theorizing succeeded in bringing forth a few covers sufficient to dispel the precancel theory, in part if not in total.

Arthur Beane, Jr. shows us (Figure 1) a fine strike of the 3 on a stamp of the 1857 Issue, undeniably tied, and states he once owned a similar usage, also tied.

C. W. Bert Christian ED. See also The Mail Bag (News, Fall 1983, page 125).

Editor, CCN:

The Skinner-Eno book on U.S. cancellations shows a cover from Brooklyn, New York with a most exceptional shield. The illustration clearly shows that the cover was postmarked November 14 1861.

It is a very scarce marking, and not too many have been reported. But a

Now we know that the marking was in use in Brooklyn for at least three days.

Herman Herst, Jr.

ANOTHER RATE MARKER  
AS A CANCELLING  
DEVICE

Figure 1 illustrates the Harrisburgh, Pa. "1" in a 14.5 mm circle rate mark

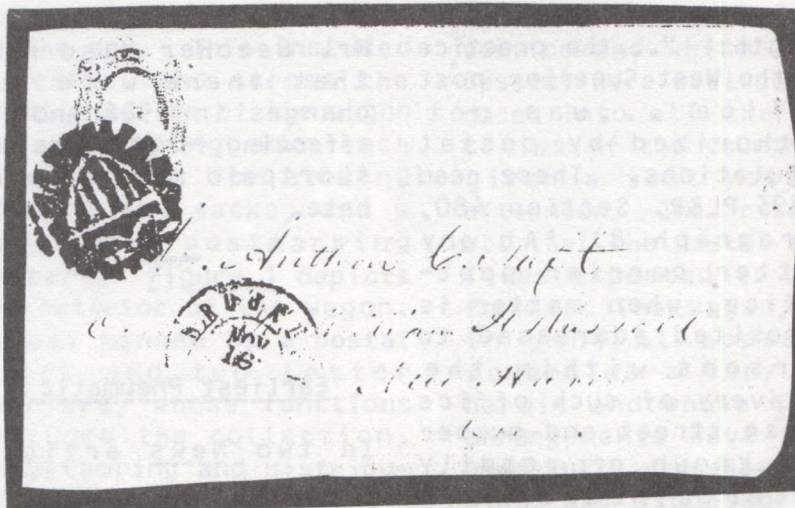


Figure 1

further example (Figure 1) has just turned up by me in a virgin lot, and it is clearly dated November 16, 1861.

used as a canceller. The accompanying Harrisburgh double circle (not illustrated) is difficult to read, but it appears to be Dec 6, 1862. If this year date is correct, then this could be the current marking used for drop letters or circulars. Both the postmark and the canceller are black.

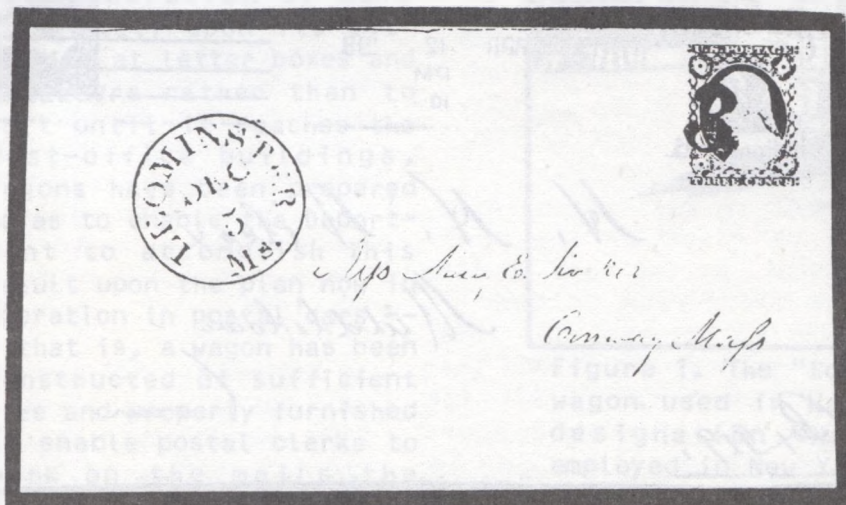


Figure 1

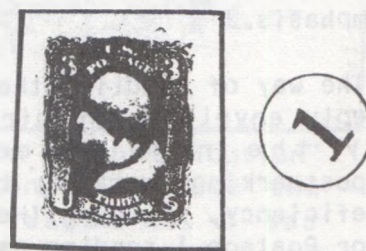


Figure 1



More on Superior  
Water, Light, and  
Power Co. Envelopes

Additional comment has been received on the early business reply envelopes by the Superior Co. (News, Fall 1983, page 122 and Winter 1984, page 3). Henry W. Beecher identifies further reasons for the POD to order discontinuance of delivering these postage due envelopes. We quote Mr. Beecher at some length: "...the practice of the West Superior post office ...was not authorized by postal regulations. These read (1893 PL&R, Section 480, paragraph 8) 'At any letter carrier post-office, when matter is deposited addressed to persons within the delivery of such office whose street and number are known or readily ascertained by the postmaster, and upon which the postage is inadvertently wholly unpaid or paid less than the amount required by law, the sender being unknown, the notice of detention (Form 1543) shall not be sent, but such matter shall be presented to the addressee by the carrier, and the deficient postage collected on delivery by means of postage-due stamps affixed to the letter or parcel.' [My emphasis.]

"The way of handling these reply envelopes required by the regulations (postmarking, marking the deficiency, stamping 'Held for Postage,' sending card to power company, and, upon receipt of postage, affixing and cancelling

postage stamps) would have been burdensome to both post office and power company.

"A further reason for enjoining use of the envelopes might have been based on the fact that the notice printed on them counseled people to violate U. S. law; namely, the statute requiring prepayment of postage, and thus made them unmailable."

Mr. Beecher also notes that there were rule changes in 1928 and 1958 affecting first-class mail shortpaid more than one rate.

Earliest Pneumatic

In two News articles (November 1971 and January 1972), Arthur H. Bond described the cancels of the Pneumatic Cancelling Machine Company reported on covers from 1898 to early 1904. His study led him to conclude that "...

the Pneumatic Company never had more than twenty machines in service. Most of these were auxiliary machines where the bulk of the mail was handled by American or Barry machines." He discussed an experimental cancel, used briefly and only in the hometown of the manufacturer, which he classified as Type E. This was the earliest Pneumatic marking known to Mr. Bond and the earliest cover bearing this postmark was dated April 20, 1898. Several earlier Type E covers were subsequently reported by John W. Koontz in the News (July 1981 and November 1981) with April 14, 1898 being the earliest.

Comes now Joe McDonough with a Type E cover (Figure 1) dated April 12, 1898. A recent check with John revealed that no covers earlier than April 14 have come to his attention since the 1981 articles. Therefore, it appears that Joe now has the earliest reported usage of any Pneumatic cancel!

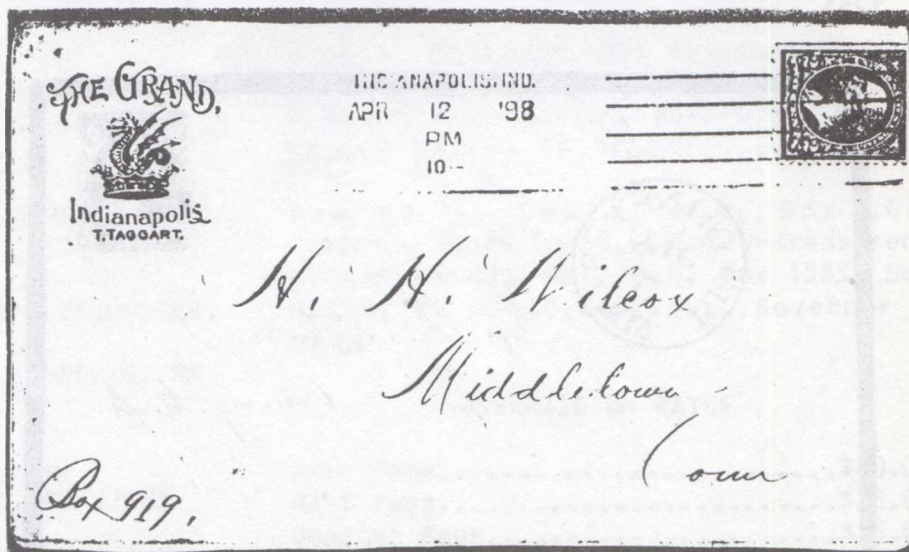


Figure 1



## COLLECTION AND DISTRIBUTION WAGONS --- WASHINGTON, D.C.

by T.E. Stanton

In the 1890's the Post Office Department experimented with methods for increasing the efficiency of urban distribution of the mails. Of particular interest was the internal presorting of letters for carrier routes and the bypass of the main post-office for correspondence destined for railroad transportation to out-of-town locales. Two similar schemes attempted were the street-car RPO's and the Collection and Distribution Wagons. This article concerns the latter and represents a segment of the District of Columbia postal history study being conducted by the Washington Philatelic Society.

The concept of the construction of the wagons and their utilization is aptly portrayed in the 1896 Report of the Postmaster General (p210). To quote in part:

"Believing that a considerable amount of time and, in all probability, expense could be saved by beginning the separation of mail immediately upon its collection at letter boxes and elsewhere rather than to wait until it reaches the post-office buildings, wagons have been prepared so as to enable the Department to accomplish this result upon the plan now in operation in postal cars -- that is, a wagon has been constructed of sufficient size and properly furnished to enable postal clerks to work on the mails the moment they are collected, making such separations as

are necessary to prevent rehandling and to insure direct movement in the line for which they are intended, giving to post-offices, subpost-offices, railway lines, and other points only such mail as is intended for their particular service." The "properly furnished" statement in the above paragraph refers to equipment similar to that in street-car RPO's of the day. This included a letter case across the front interior of the wagon and extending down each side, a rack for stowing pouches and sacks, and a table for postmarking letters. Figure 1 depicts the exterior of the wagon. It was manned by a postal clerk and two letter carriers, whose functions included the collection, handstamping and distribution of the mails.

The service commenced in Washington and New York on October 1, 1896. It was reported in the Evening Star of the same date, to wit:

"The new collection and delivery wagon, the use of which it is expected by Second Assistant Postmaster General Neilson will greatly improve those branches of the postal service and which if successful here will be introduced into all the larger cities of the country, was given a test yesterday afternoon. The result was all that the postal authorities expected to be performed. The wagon, which in general appearance resembles a very large herdic and whose interior arrangements have already been fully described in The Star, was occupied by Mr. Neilson, Mr. Mastin of the

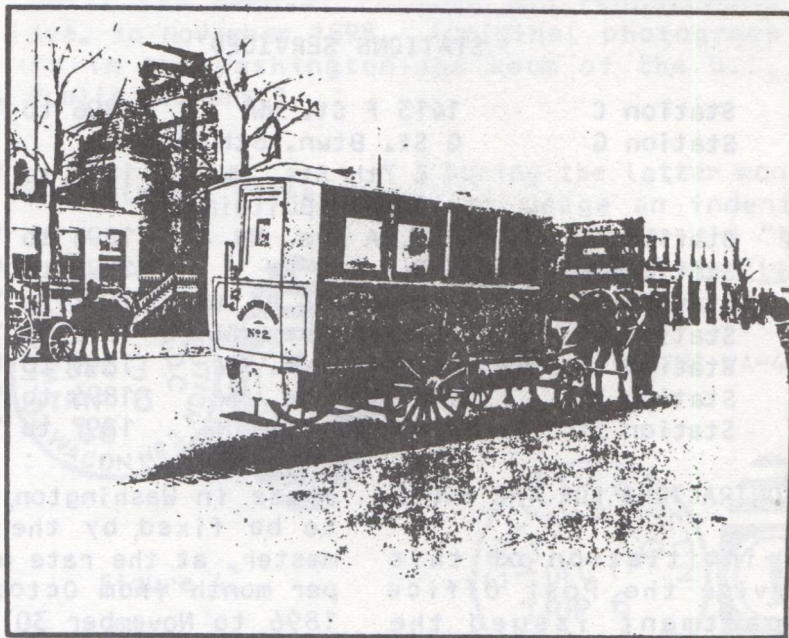


Figure 1. The "Collection and Distribution" wagon used in Washington, DC. Note the designation "No. 2"--Wagon No. 1 was employed in New York City. Following the termination of the service in Washington on June 15, 1900, this wagon was transferred to St. Louis. (Original photographs are in the Smithsonian Institution.)



free delivery division and the two clerks detailed from the city post office to sort the mail after its collection. The test route followed was from 6th and F streets out F to 15th, down the latter to Pennsylvania Avenue, thence to 6th and down the latter to the Baltimore and Potomac depot, thence back to the corner of F, which is the same as that to be observed after the wagon is placed in service, from and after tomorrow morning at 7 o'clock.

"No effort was made to do speedy work, the main objects of yesterday's test being to enable General Neilson to form an opinion as to the probable results of the experiment and to familiarize the clerks with the location of the boxes on the route."

Figure 2 illustrates a map of the route and the stations serviced.

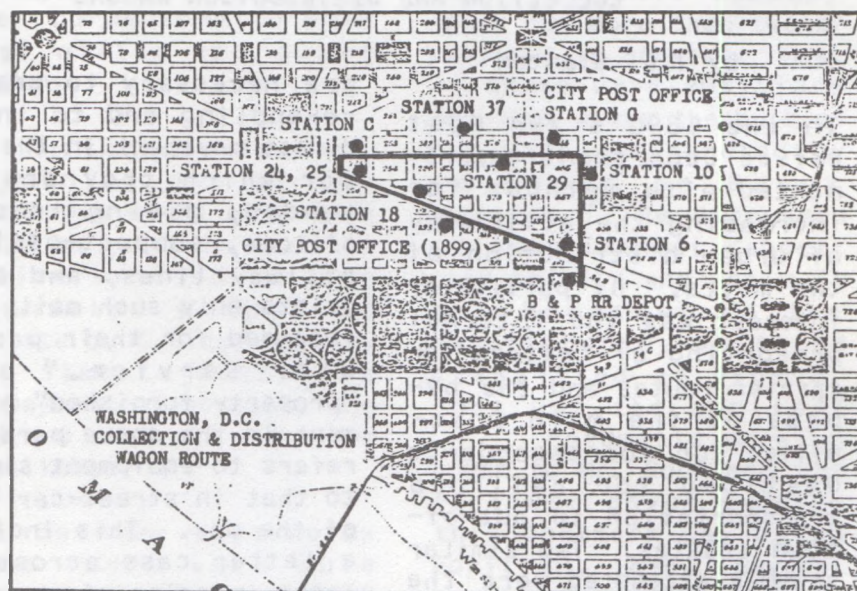


Figure 2. Map of the "Collection and Distribution" route. The boundaries of the route include 6th St. on the east, 15th St. on the west, F st. on the north and Pennsylvania Ave. on the south, with an extension in the southeast corner of the route to the Baltimore and Potomac RR Depot.

#### STATIONS SERVICED

Station C	1413 F St. NW	1896 to 1900
Station G	G St. Btwn. 6th & 7th Sts. NW (Union Building)	1899 to 1900
Station 6	629 PA Ave. NW	1896 to 1900
Station 10	509 E St. NW	1896 to 1900
Station 18	13th St. & PA Ave.	1897 to 1900
Station 24	1429 PA Ave. NW	1896 to 1899
Station 25	1429 PA Ave. NW	1899 to 1900
Station 29	9th & F Sts. NW	1896 to 1900
Station 37	11th & G Sts. NW	1897 to 1900

#### CONTRACTORS FOR THE ROUTE

On intitiation of this service the Post Office Department issued the following order:

"Designate D.L. Coon & Co., 625 G St. NW to furnish two teams, with necessary harness and drivers to operate the new Collection and Distribution wagon on a

route in Washington, D.C., to be fixed by the post-master, at the rate of \$160 per month from October 1, 1896 to November 30, 1896. The agreement provided that the schedule of service shall not exceed 18 hours each day, including Sundays, that the horses and wagon shall be stabled and that the wagon shall be

greased and the entire outfit kept in a presentable condition. The drivers must be neatly dressed and wear a uniform cap. The amount paid under this order to be charged to the appropriation for Regulation, Screen or other wagon service."

This order was later extended for one month and undoubtedly further, but latter orders were not found. However, the 1897 Official Register indicates that Coon was paid \$160 a month at least through June 30, 1897.

In September 1897 the route was again advertised and Coon was underbid, but this led to a period of turmoil. Initially the contract was awarded to Thomas J. Sweeney. He was to com-



mence operation on October 18 at the rate of \$975 per annum. However, prior to his commencement, he was replaced by David G. Mount at the same compensation. Then Mount was replaced by Bennet A. Fowler on November 4th. Fowler lasted until April 1, 1898, when James F. Bundy assumed the contract. Evidently the POD was slightly perturbed by the failures of the contractors for in May 1898 they readvertised the route and awarded the contract to D.L. Coon at \$1476 per annum. Coon retained the contract until the termination of the route on June 15, 1900.

Incidentally, Coon was the only livery stable operator among the various contractors. His stables were conveniently located on G Street between 6th and 7th (Figure 3). This was next door to the city post office, which was located in the Union Building until November 1898.

#### THE POSTMARKS

The two different postmarks utilized by this service are illustrated. Both are duplex devices. Figure 4 was employed from the commencement of the service and continued in use for approximately one year, whence it was replaced by the second and larger marking. Figure 5 is a flange postmark, as is illustrated by many covers showing the outline of the flange.

In both types only Wagon No. 1 has been observed, even though as shown in figure 1, the Washington wagon is designated as No. 2.



Figure 3. The livery stable of D.L. Coon, who was the contractor for the "Collection and Distribution" route. The Union Building is at the right. It housed the city post office until its removal to 12th and Pennsylvania Ave. in November 1898. (Original photograph is in the Washingtoniana Room of the D.C. Public Library.)

TYPE 1 (USTMC WA-4a)

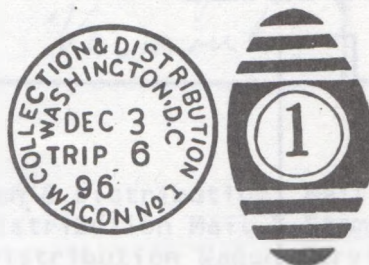


Figure 4.

26.5 mm CDS, 2 mm Letters  
Earliest---Oct 8, 1896

Latest ---Oct 4, 1897  
Oval Cancellor 18.5 by 32

mm  
Trip Numbers 1 through 9

During the latter months of its usage an indentation developed over the "LL" of "COLLECTION", see Figure 8.

TYPE 2 (USTMC WA-4b)

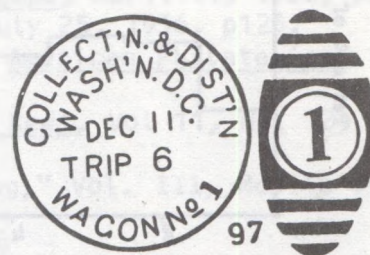


Figure 5.

30 mm CDS, 2.5 mm Letters



Earliest---Nov 10, 1897  
 Latest ---Jun 7, 1900  
 Oval Cancellor 15 by 32 mm  
 Flange: 46mm. diameter  
 Trip Numbers 1 through 7

Pre-1900 markings have a 2 digit year logo, while the latter ones possess a 4 digit logo.

#### DISTRIBUTION OF TRIP NUMBERS

From the survey conducted by John Koontz (1974) plus covers from the collection of Robert A. Truax and the late George Turner, the following graph (Figure 6) has been constructed. In all, over 250 entries are tabulated. Considering the 1.5 hour trip time hypothesized by Farquhar (1938), this would place the maximum shown by trips 5 and 6 in the early afternoon. Also, the few backstamps of the city post office show 6PM and 7PM strikes for trip 5 and 8PM to 9PM strikes for trip 6. The lack of higher numbers indicates the likelihood of an excessive volume of mail late in the day as the

commercial houses closed, thus precluding the postmarking of letters.

Along the latter thought, only trip numbers up to 9 have been reported and the latter only for the first month of operation. Reference to the Postmaster General Reports of 1897 through 1899 indicates an annual transportation of 6592.83 miles for each of the above years. These reports also give the length of the route as 1.78 miles. Considering these values and allowing for a round-off error in the length of route, a simple computation yields between 3694 and 3714 trips per year. During the same period of time the annual mileage on street-car routes was computed on the basis of 306 weekdays, 52 Sundays and 7 holidays. Thus if one considers only 9 trips on weekdays, this would mean about 16 trips per day on Sundays and holidays. An untenable hypothesis, I believe. More reasonable figures are obtained with a frequency of 11 trips per day, leav-

#### Cancellation Club News

ing a possibility of 5 trips on Sundays and 10 on holidays. A configuration somewhat similar to that for the street-car routes. The upshot of these mathematical gyrations is that two additional trip numbers, i.e., numbers 10 and 11 may be available for the Washington Collection and Distribution wagons. However, they must be extremely rare, if they do exist.

#### TRIP NUMBER vs TIME OF LOCAL BACKSTAMP

As previously stated, the study of local city post office backstamps yields valuable information as to the frequency of service by the Collection and Distribution wagons. However, local backstamps are relatively uncommon on these missives and in this regard the author would like to enlist the reader's assistance in completing the table.

TRIP NUMBER	TIME of BACKSTAMP
1	11 AM
2	12:30 PM to 2 PM
3	None
4	4 PM
5	6 PM to 7 PM
6	8 PM to 9 PM
7	9 PM
8 to 11	None

With your cooperation we can possibly tie down a tentative schedule for the wagons.

Note: all covers illustrated are from the collection of the late George Turner.

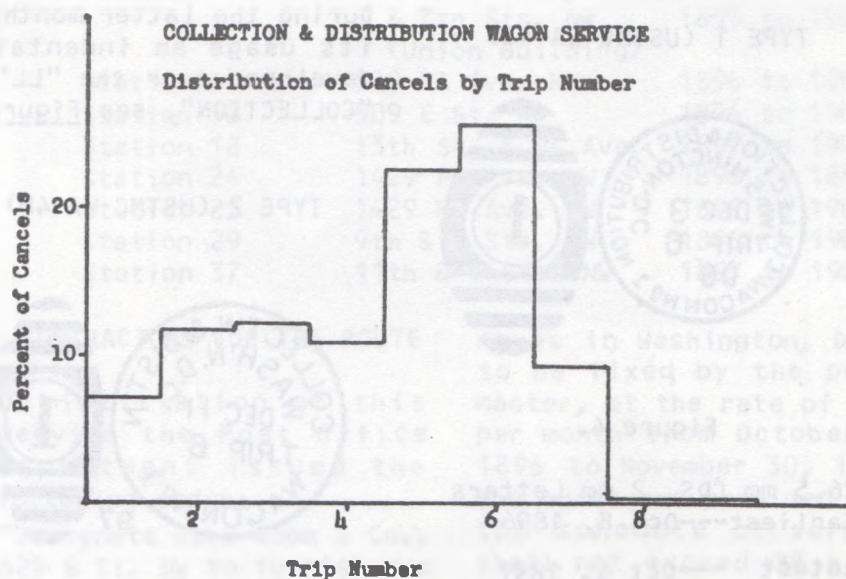


Figure 6. Distribution of Trip numbers derived from the recorded cancels. Note particularly the maximum of occurrences during the late afternoon.



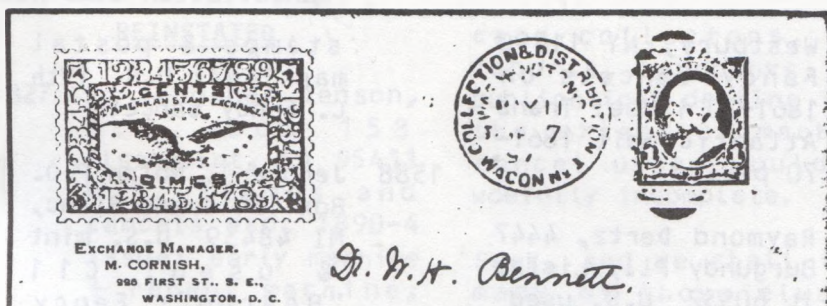


Figure 7. The first style "Collection and Distribution" postmark used in Washington, DC. The May 11, 1897 strike is on a stamp dealer's post card announcing the mailing of a stamp circuit.

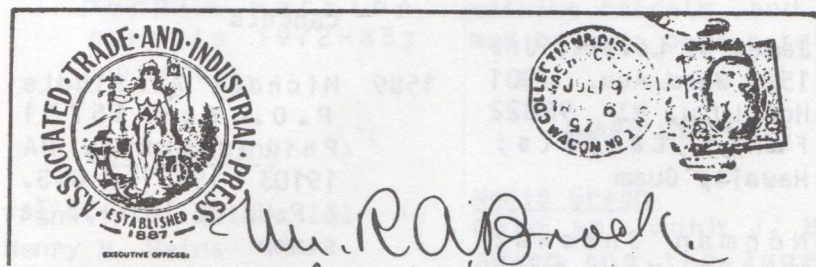


Figure 8. A late strike of the first postmark, it shows the damage which occurred to the rim over the "LL" of "Collection." Although indications of the damage appeared earlier, the indentation became prominent in May of 1897.

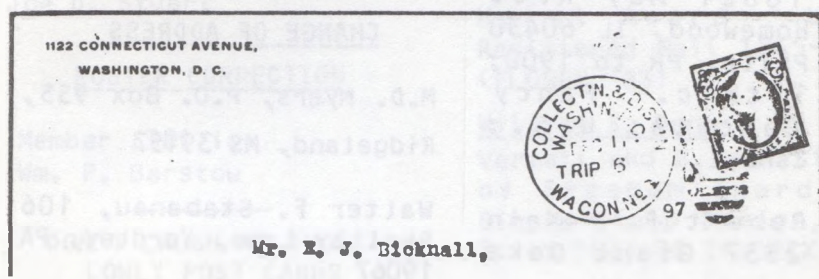


Figure 9. The second style "Collection and Distribution" postmark used in Washington, D.C. Besides the larger date stamp, note the usage of abbreviations as compared to the first postmark.

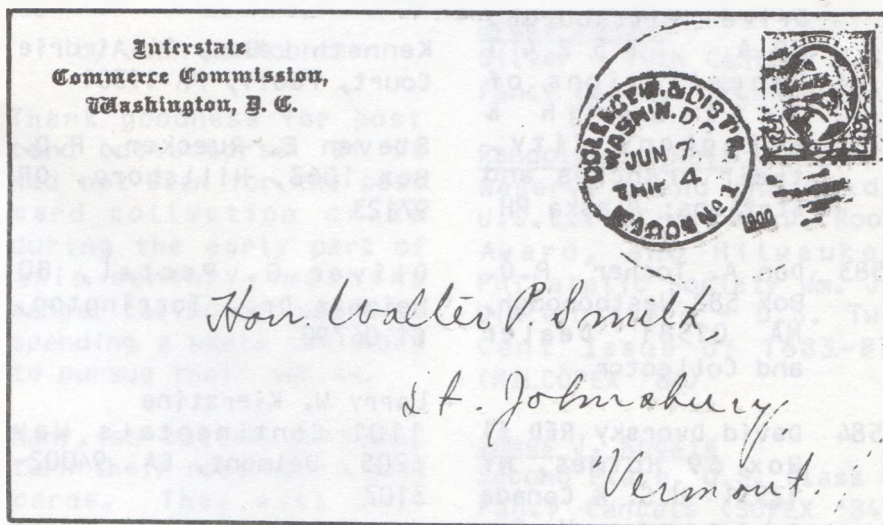


Figure 10. The second postmark used June 7, 1900 and depicting the outer flange. This flange represents the outer diameter of the complete postmarking device.

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 Towle, Charles L., "The United States Transit Markings Catalog," Vol. III, Mobile Post Office Society, Omaha, NE, 1981.  
 --- Annual Reports of the Postmaster General, 1895 through 1899  
 --- Official Register of the United States, 1897, 1899, and 1901  
 --- Daily Bulletin of Orders Affecting the Postal Service, May 26, 1900  
 --- National Archives, Record Group 28, Mail Transportation  
 --- Polk's Washington City Directory, 1897, 1898  
 --- Washington Evening Star, Oct 1, 1896



NEW MEMBERS

- 1569 Earl Moore, 152 Walnut St. Wood Dale, IL 60191 RPO covers.
- 1570 Jackson L. Cope, P.O. Box 87 Emmitsburg, MD 21727
- 1571 Henry Allen Bordwell, P.O. Box 446, Rochester, NY 14602 NY state PH; Flag Cancels
- 1572 David S. Anderson, Jr. 3441 S. Watermill Rd., Montgomery AL 36116 Peninsula Area of VA.; Ala. covers; 1974 UPU Centenary covers
- 1573 James Jay, 6052 Adenmoor, Lakewood, CA 90713 U.S. fancy cancels; Hawaii; Proofs and Essays
- 1574 Patrick (Pat) M. Stewart, P.O. Box 6027, St. Louis, MO. 63139 All U.S. esp. Streetcar and Flag Cancels; slogans
- 1575 Jose (Fred) A. Rodrigues, 62 Shady Lane, Hunting, NY 11743 Long Island PH (Kings, Queens, Nassau and Suffolk Counties)
- 1576 Gerald Cross, 45 Burke St. Plains, PA 18705 U.S.; Fancy cancels; exhibiting U.S. cancels
- 1577 John Koval, 9626 Delaware Pl., Highland, IN 46322 All cancels
- 1578 Allan C. Schefer, 20 Fifth Ave.,

Westbury, NY 11590  
Fancy cancels on  
1861-70 issue; Trans  
Atlantic mail 1861-  
70 period

- 1579 Raymond Dertz, 4447 Burgundy Pl., Lisle, IL 60532 U.S. used
- 1580 James W. Lovell, Jr. 1520 Ward Ave. #901 Honolulu, HI 96822 Fancy Cancels; Hawaii; Guam
- 1581 Norman Shachat 18821 May Ave. Homewood, IL 60430 Phila. PH to 1900; 19th c. Fancy Cancels; U.S.; Israel
- 1582 Robert F. McKain 2337 Giant Oaks Drive Pittsburgh, PA 15241 Cancellations of Pittsburgh & Allegheny City, their branches and stations; Alaska PH
- 1583 Don A. Tocher P.O. Box 582 Westborough, MA 01581 Dealer and Collector
- 1584 David Dvorsky RFD #1 Box 69 Holmes, NY 12531 U.S. & Canada slogans; U.S. Machine Cancels
- 1585 William Gersch 4918 Sauquoit Lane Annandale, VA 22003 Postmarks-Worldwide
- 1586 Robert E. Picken 4176 Hancock Drive Holt, MI 48842 U.S. P.H.; Boston postmarks 1851-61
- 1587 Alan Furukawa 1421 Koko Head Ave. Honolulu, Hawaii 96816 Hawaiian

stamps & postal  
markings; U.S. 19th  
C. Fancy Cancels

- 1588 Jerome T. Nolan P.O. Box 134 Grand Blanc, MI 48439 U.S. mint & used; C 11 "Beacon"; Fancy Cancels
- 1589 Michael A. Riddle P.O. Box 15731 Philadelphia, PA 19103 19th C. U.S. & P.H. of 1851-57 3c stamp

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

M.D. Myers, P.O. Box 955,  
Ridgeland, MS 39157

Walter F. Stabenau, 106  
Shelley Lane, Yardley, PA  
19067

Kenneth LeBow, 14 Airdrie  
Court, Paoli, PA 19301

Steven E. Ruecker, P.O.  
Box 1063, Hillsboro, OR  
97123

Oliver G. Pectal, 80  
Heights Dr., Torrington,  
CT 06790

Larry W. Kierstine  
1101 Continentals Way  
#205, Belmont, CA 94002-  
3107

Neil C. Schroeder, 9348  
Appalachian Dr.,  
Sacramento, CA 95827-1105

The Rev. Fred K. Smyithe  
Star Route 2, Box 103,  
Pequot Lakes, MN 56472

CLOSED ALBUM

Edith R. Doane  
(Miss Doane was an  
honorary member about whom  
an article will appear in  
the next issue)



REINSTATED

827 Ed (Eugene) Denson,  
P. O. Box 158  
Alserpoint, CA 95411  
U.S. stamps and  
cancels esp. 1890-4  
issue; early machine  
+ recent machine;  
purple machine  
cancels 1972-83;  
precancels.

RESIGNATION

Franklin P. Holder III  
Henry H. Heins  
Joe D. Stuart

ROSTER CORRECTION

Member £381 is  
Wm. P. Barstow

DON'T LAUGH AT THOSE  
LOWLY POST CARDS

by John W. Koontz

Thank goodness for post  
card collectors! If it  
had not been for the post  
card collection craze  
during the early part of  
this century, machine  
cancel collectors would be  
spending a whole lot more  
to pursue their habits.

Many, so called purists,  
turn their nose up at post  
cards. They will only  
look at post cards if  
there is nothing else  
available and then they  
will only buy a post card  
if it is truly a steal.

Not me; post cards are an  
integral part of my  
collections. I not only  
collect machine cancels on  
post cards but actively  
seek dealers' post card  
boxes when at shows,  
shops, flea markets and  
garage sales.

Without those crazy post

card collectors, the  
reports, handbooks, and  
publications dealing with  
the extent of machine  
cancel usage would be  
woefully incomplete.

Seek, and ye shall find  
many of those elusive  
machine cancels, and they  
may be on a post card!

AWARD WINNERSNonie Green

Gold and John J. Britt  
Award and the Ingeborg  
Herst Award - U.S.  
Registered Mail 1845-1925  
(FLOREX '83)

William S. Dunn

Vermeil and B.I.A. Statue  
of Freedom Award - A  
Single Stamp Design, the  
2c of 1922-26 (FLOREX '83)

Bruce London

Silver - 19th Century U.S.  
Fancy Cancels (FLOREX '83)

Randolph L. Neil

Reserve Grand and Gold,  
U.S.C.C. Charles D. Root  
Award, and Milwaukee  
Philatelic Society Wm. J.  
Uihlein Award - U.S. Two  
Cent Issue of 1883-87  
(MILCOPEX '84)

James J. Kocsis

Second Place, U.S. Class -  
Fancy Cancels (SOPEX '84,  
Medford, OR)

Abe Boyarsky

Vermeil - The Three Cent  
Issue of 1861 (Filatelic  
Fiesta '84)

Brad Arch

Gold-Bergen County, N.J.  
Discontinued Post Offices  
(BEPEX, Elmwood Park,  
N.J.)

Joe McDonough

Silver - 19th Century U.S.  
Postal Cards, Ads, etc  
(BEPEX)

Question Corner

Two Cancels are presented  
for the readership's  
consideration. The stamp  
in Figure 1 is a Scott  
186. Checks in the  
standard reference books  
have failed to identify  
the cancel. The stamp in  
Figure 2 appears to be a  
Scott 159. "T" markings  
were applied to incoming  
foreign mail to indicate  
postage due in accord with  
international agreement.  
And, in the upper left  
corner is what appears to  
be part of a red circular  
NY foreign mail postmark.  
A theory is that the red  
postmark "canceled" the  
stamp, albeit barely, and  
upon arrival of the letter  
at foreign port, the stamp  
was more convincingly  
canceled by the clerk  
there. But what country  
used such a marking? Or  
is this actually a  
domestic cancellation  
applied at some town,  
perhaps with a name  
beginning with a "T."

Information on these items  
is solicited.



Figure 1



Figure 2



**PRUSSIAN CLOSED MAIL**  
**UNITED STATES TO AUSTRIA**  
**VIA OSTENDE, 1856**

by  
 Prof. C.S. Thompson, Jr.

The Prussian agreement, effective October 16, 1852, provided for the exchange of closed mails via England and Belgium with New York, Boston, and Aachen acting as exchange offices. Figure 1 shows a letter carried by means of this Prussian Closed Mail service.

Upon receipt of the letter by the New York Post Office, the clerk noted its trans-atlantic destination with the admonition "pr first steamer" and "via Ostende" which categorized it as an item of Prussian Closed Mail. The clerk then applied the black circular handstamp with the legend, N.YORK. BR PKT 23 and placed it in the mail bag destined for Aachen which was subsequently sealed. The 23c charge included the U.S. 5c Inland rate

plus the 18c Sea and British transit fee.

This sealed bag along with any others, was placed on board a British packet boat and carried to England where they were directed through Belgium to Aachen via Ostende. No markings were applied in England or Belgium since the bags remained sealed. The charge for this part of the journey was 7c which consisted of 5c to the German-Austrian Postal Union and 2c to Belgium transit. This seven cent segment of the 30c International rate was retained from the collection of pre-payment by the the Aachen exchange office. Upon receipt of the bags at Aachen, they were unsealed and the letters postmarked before forwarding them to their final destination in Prussia, all states of the German-Austrian Postal Union and any other foreign countries beyond.



Figure 1

This letter was placed in the mails at New Orleans, La., where it received the circular Feb. 3rd town mark along with the handstamped "30" rate. Both markings are struck in black and indicate that the letter was being sent unpaid. The thirty cent charge represents the international rate required to pay the letter to the border of the German-Austrian Postal Union.

Figure 2 shows the red double circle of the Aachen exchange office

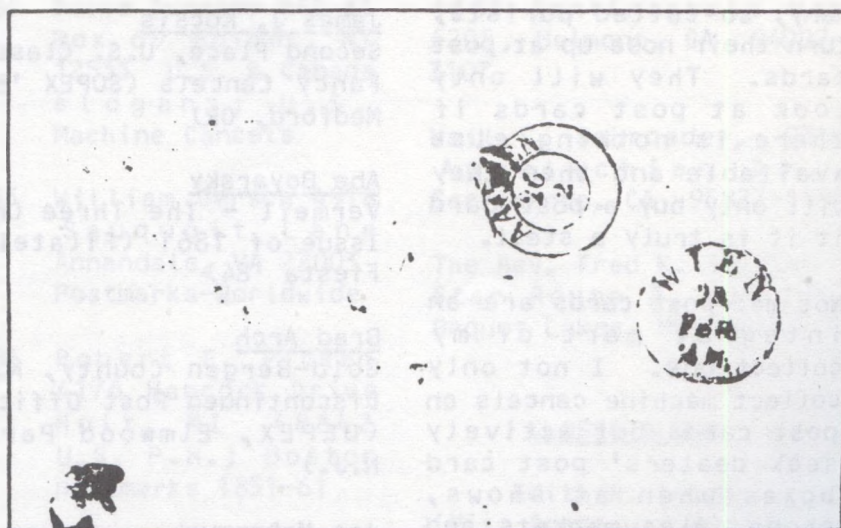


Figure 2



applied to the back of the folded letter, which indicates that it was received on Feb. 26th. The clerk noted the ultimate destination as Wein, Austria and forwarded it on where it arrived two days later. This fact is attested to by the red circular receiving mark containing the legend WIEN/28/FEB/AM.

The remaining manuscript markings shown on the front of the cover in Figure 1 are written with red and blue crayon. The "38" represents the conversion of the 30c International Rate to the Prussian Closed Mail rate in Austria which was thirty-eight kreuzers.

This letter's journey from start to finish required a total of twenty-five days and covered hundreds of miles. Judged on a time and cost basis compared to our contemporary mail, it comes out a winner on both counts.

(ED: Dick Winter has added the following information: The cover was forwarded from New York to Boston on February 12 in time for the sailing of the Cunard liner "Arabia" on February 13. The "Arabia" arrived in Liverpool on February 24, in time for the indicated transit to Aachen.)

#### A POINT OF VIEW

The Point View, Kansas postmark in Figure 1 was applied Oct. 5, 1911 or 1907, depending on one's point of view. Right side up, it reads 1911; upside-down, posting was done in 1907. However, the dated

message side confirms the 1911 year. The "1" enclosed in five bars is a type 1 Doane killer with the town and state dial incorporated in a single, permanent unit. The date/time indicia were removable slugs. The clerk at the Point View office carelessly inserted the inverted year date, rather than the time slugs. C. R. (Dick) Moyer has shared this interesting item with us.

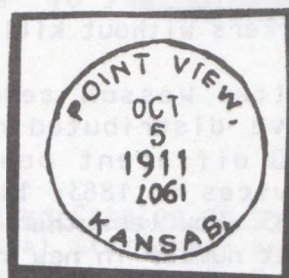


Figure 1

#### "CITY OF WASHINGTON" POSTMARKS

by T. E. Stanton

In 1829 the prevalent "WASHn CITY" postmarks were permanently replaced. The new markings contained the wording "City of Washington" in two similar styles (Figures 1 and 2), the major difference being an upper or lower case "of". These continued in use through 1836 and the

upper case "of" marking is known in 1837 although the subsequent "Washington City/ DC" date stamp is known used in January of that year. They are struck in red only.



Figure 1  
32.5mm CDS, Letters 4mm

Earliest - 9/22/1829  
Latest - 10/9/1837

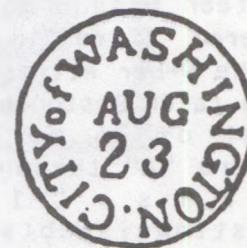


Figure 2  
31.5mm CDS, Letters 4mm

Earliest - 7/18/1829  
Latest - 6/15/1836

Figure 3 illustrates supplemental markings noted with these postmarks. Three different "Free" marks were used, varying in size.

Figure 4 is a March 29, 1835 folded letter from the Beatty correspondence referencing a credit to their account. Of the covers surveyed with these postmarks, only about 4 per cent were prepaid,

(Cont'd on page 33)



*Continued From Front Page*

In July of 1882 a Wesson designed postmarker appears on the Boston, Providence, and New York mail route, again without a metal killer, and with train direction appearing in the bottom line instead of the time. Finally, in December, the first Wesson marker appears at Boston, with "D" within the 9-bar ellipse, the first companion letter noted for Charleston's "C". 1882 was a busy year for Wesson, and his reward would seem to come with the multiple orders that he filled in the following year.

In January 1883, Philadelphia started using eighteen Wesson markers, numbered "1" to "18," all in the 9-bar ellipses. A month later Boston had the first of 24 markers: letters "A" through "N" ( l e s s " I ", indistinguishable from "1", and "G", apparently too similar to "C") with the 9-horizontal bars, and companion numerals "1" through "12" with 6-vertical bars, presumably to distinguish between Collected and Deposited mail by direction of the bars. About the same month the first Type II Wesson appears at Worcester with "C" in the killer, and at Hartford, CT, with numbers "1" and "2", and in March, Chicago started using a standard design with numbers "1" through "16" in the killers. At that time Quincy, IL, obtained a Wesson with "Q" in the killer, the first of several smaller cities that preferred to use the first letter of their name, probably without

Carrier mail that required separate enumeration.

By the Fall of 1883 Charleston had obtained four standard markers: "1", "2", "3", and "D" within 9-bar ellipses, and both Brooklyn and Philadelphia had ordered special "RECEIVED" markers without killers for incoming mail. These last usually appear as backstamps only, and may be easily overlooked. Somerville Station, in the Boston Postal District, also started using regular duplex Wessons on the backs of letters as receiving marks. Eight other smaller cities obtained Wesson hand-cancellers in 1883, and Philadelphia ordered seven with station letters "B", "E", "F", "G", "H", "I", and "Z" in the CDS plus a companion set of "REC'D" markers without killers.

Walter Wesson seems to have distributed nearly 100 different postmark devices in 1883; 1884 and 1885 show less than 10% of that number in new cities. What happened? Was Wesson's health already failing? He would die in 1890 at the early age of 38. In 1887 Providence would start using a new Wesson marker with a black ball in the center of the now-standard 9-bar ellipse, apparently an unfinished killer that had not had a numeral or letter cut into the center. Is this reflective of Wesson's lack of interest, or his inability to continue producing what seem to be very popular duplex devices.

A few scarce markings make

their first appearance later: Clinton, MA, in 1886; Philadelphia "S" in 1888; Revere Station, MA, in 1889; and Ayer, MA, in 1890, but the rush was over. A few smaller cities would use their Wessons into the 1890's, and Central Falls, RI, would obtain special four-digit year dates to extend the use of theirs until 1906, sixteen years after Walter Wesson had passed from the scene. But the larger cities now used high-speed cancelling machines, with hand stamps only used for special packages and those letters that the machines missed. Here is a postal card that was incorrectly faced into a Leavitt machine, then hand stamped by a Wesson before dispatch (Figure 59).

Although Thomas Leavitt was twenty-five years older than Walter Wesson, both were obtaining patents and distributing cancelling devices about the same period, the early 1880's. Leavitt placed one of his Type B machines at the Providence, RI, post office in Nov 1880, where it was used until Mar 1882, while Wesson was a clerk there. It is pleasant to suppose that they may have met and discussed the problems of the inventor and the requirements of the Patent Office. But while Leavitt was trying to invent the automobile, as it were, Wesson was attempting to perfect the buggy.

#### ADDENDUM TO PART 8, PENNSYLVANIA

A most interesting new variety for Philadelphia has been reported by USCC



Member, A. Burns Speer. It is the common 9-bar ellipse format, similar to the numeral series used from Jan 1883 until Sep 1885 ("1" only was used up until 1891), but with the letter "S" in the killer (Figure 60). If this "S" is intended to identify a sub-station, it would have been used at Oxford Church, in northern Philadelphia, but there is no clue to the origin of the cover on the face. The year date, "88", is not clear in the CDS on the front but Mr. Speer states that the Cape May backstamp confirms the "1888" date, roughly three years after nearly all of the numeral killers were discontinued at the main post office. Since the Philadelphia "S" was unknown to Willard and Stets, it seems likely that it may be an elusive item. Any more out there? One with sender's address would be very helpful.

## REFERENCES:

Stratton, Frank B., Descriptive Catalog of the Leavitt Machine Cancellations, (N. P.: United Postal Stationery Society, 1976). (New edition in preparation. Order from UPSS, P. O. Box 48, Redlands, CA 92373.)

Willard, Edward L., United States Two Cent Red Brown of 1883-1887, (New York: Lindquist, 1970).

(Cont'd from page 31)

while one-third were sent due and the remainder "Free" franked.

**PAID**  
**FREE**  
**STEAM**

Figure 3

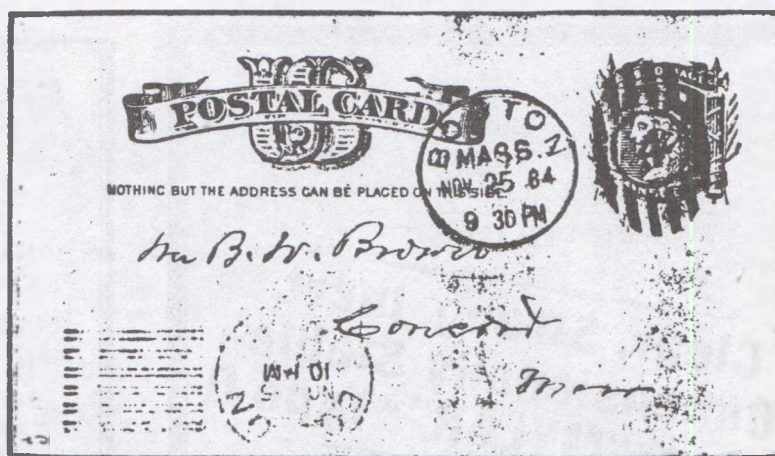


Figure 59

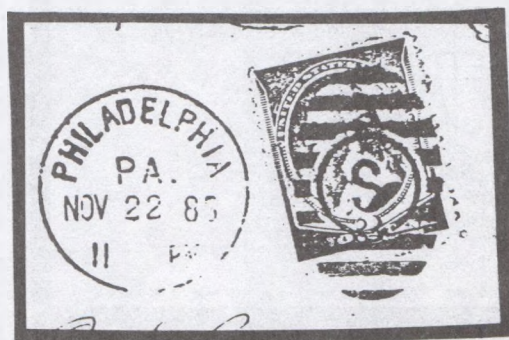


Figure 60

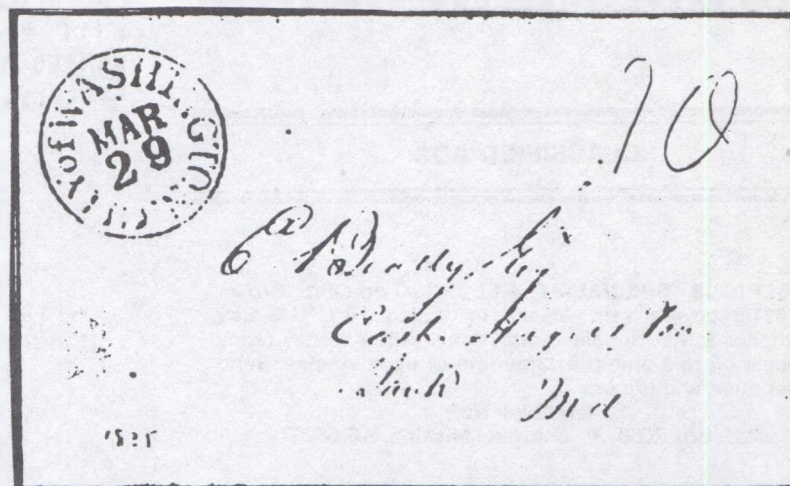


Figure 4



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