



Cancellation Club NEWS

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New York City Cancellations On Circulars and Printed Matter, 1870-1878

By John Valenti

Part I

NYFM Cancellations on Domestic Circulars

The cover illustrated in Figure 1 is intriguing. It bears two grilled 2-cent National Bank Note Company stamps tied by a clear strike of a familiar New York foreign mail (NYFM) cancellation, Van Vlissingen and Waud¹ (V-W) Type A1 and Weiss² Type ST-8P11. Yet the sender posted this cover to New Jersey, not a foreign destination. As discussed below, this fact is consistent with the treatment of this cover as mail sent at less than the domestic letter rate, perhaps as a circular.

Much has been written about the cancellations of New York City. It offers a great wealth of study material for the cancellation collector. Skinner-Eno³ list many NYC cancellations on the 1861-67 and 1869 issues. V-W and Weiss, in their respective works, provide details on the beautiful and varied NYFM cancellations of the 1870s. The topic of cancellations on circulars, newspapers, printed matter and merchandise, however,

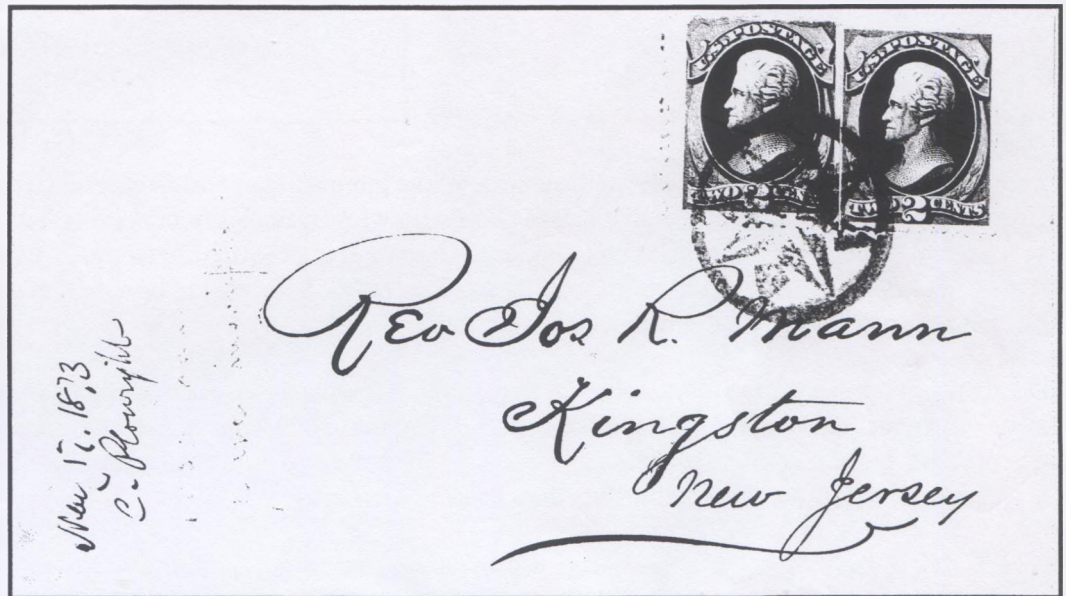


Figure 1. Domestic mail bearing NYFM-type cancellation.

is an area of study little previously explored. In a recent monograph for The Philatelic Foundation Seminar Series, Hubert Skinner⁴ discusses cancellations and postmarks of NYC through 1876, with illustrations through 1869. He identifies a few New York circular mail (NYCM) cancellations in addition to numerous ones used on first class domestic and foreign mails. In this article I will focus more narrowly on cancellations used on NYCM during the years 1870-78. (The term NYCM as used here broadly refers to non-letter rate mail, such as circulars, periodicals and merchandise, handled in the circular division of the NYC post office.) I selected this period of study based in part on the issue dates of the large National and Continental Bank Note stamp printings. Some consider this the "classic period" of fancy cancellations. This study ends approximately with the replacement of hand-carved wood and cork cancellation devices

with standard metal ovals and ellipses.

In the post-Civil War 1870s, NYC was the nation's principal commercial center. Large quantities of circular mail and periodicals from such companies as produce commission merchants and publishers found their way from NYC across the country, particular in the East. Due to its mail volume, the NYC post office by the 1870s had separated the processing of circular mail from other classes of mail. This separation is apparent in a floor layout diagram of the NYC main post office, built in 1875 and illustrated in Weiss.⁵ This would explain why the cancellations found on NYCM are generally unknown on first class mail.

Envelopes that contained circulars have the distinguishing feature of being unsealed, as required by postal regulations. These covers normally bear 1-cent and 2-cent stamps. (See the table for rate information for the period of study.) An additional feature of NYCM is the lack of any date stamp. Identification of NYCM is normally possible either by corner card address or advertisements on the cover. Occasionally the original circular remains with the cover. This is especially important for dating the use of a particular cancellation. Some covers without markings or contents can have their NYC origination verified by the cancellation, as in the case with the cover in Figure 1.

Also notable about NYCM covers is their scarcity. Circulars were the junk mail of their day; they were rarely saved. Many of those that remain bear some of the more attractive and collectible cancellations, as in Figure 1.

However, the combination of a scarce cancellation with a low probability of survival has resulted in several covers bearing unique examples of NYCM cancellations. Therefore, scarcity of different NYCM cancellations on a cover is relative. If I have seen half a dozen covers with the same cancellation, I rate it to be common on cover. The Type A1/ST-8P11 cancellation in Figure 1 is just such a cancellation.

Date of use is the second factor contributing to scarcity. As the table shows, the applicable rates for circulars, printed matter and merchandise dropped from 2 cents to 1 cent in mid-1872. This halving of mail rates apparently resulted in a veritable explosion of circular mailings. Covers mailed before the rate change and bearing 2 cents postage (stamps and entires) are considerably scarcer than their later counterparts.

A NYC cancellation, the lack of a date stamp, and an unsealed envelope verify that the cover in Figure 1 is NYCM. The cover is docketed, in two separate handwritings, "May 17, 1873" and "Woodlawn grave inscriptions." It is likely the date approximates the cover's mailing date. I have verified NYCM covers bearing this cancellation as early as May 3, 1873, and as late as November 11, 1873. This compares to April 18, 1873, and May 18, 1874, as the earliest and latest NYFM usages reported by Weiss⁶ for this cancellation. These dates make the correctness of the postage on the cover questionable, since it would represent a quadruple rate for the cover, and I can detect no evidence of excessive stuffing on this envelope.

The cover in Figure 2 illustrates another aspect about the use of the A1/ST-8P11 cancellation. This attractive cancellation design enjoyed a long period of use, more than a year on NYFM and at least half a year on NYCM. No canceling device actively used that long would likely have lasted without either recarving or replacement. The latter appears to have been the case here. Comparing the cancellations on the two covers, they are apparently not identical. The short points of the star cancellation on the latter cover are distinctly broader than those on the former. However,

Circular and Printed Matter Mail Rates in the 1870s

<u>Effective Dates</u>	<u>Merchandise & Circulars</u>	<u>Printed Matter</u>
Prior	2c./2oz.	2c./2oz.
June 8, '72	1c./2oz.	1c./2oz.
Mar. 20, '75	1c./1oz.	1c./1oz.
July 12, '76	1c./1oz.	1c./2oz.
May 1, '79	1c./2oz.	1c./2oz.

without a series of covers establishing the dates of use of separately carved cancellations, this sequential use and replacement scenario remains speculative.

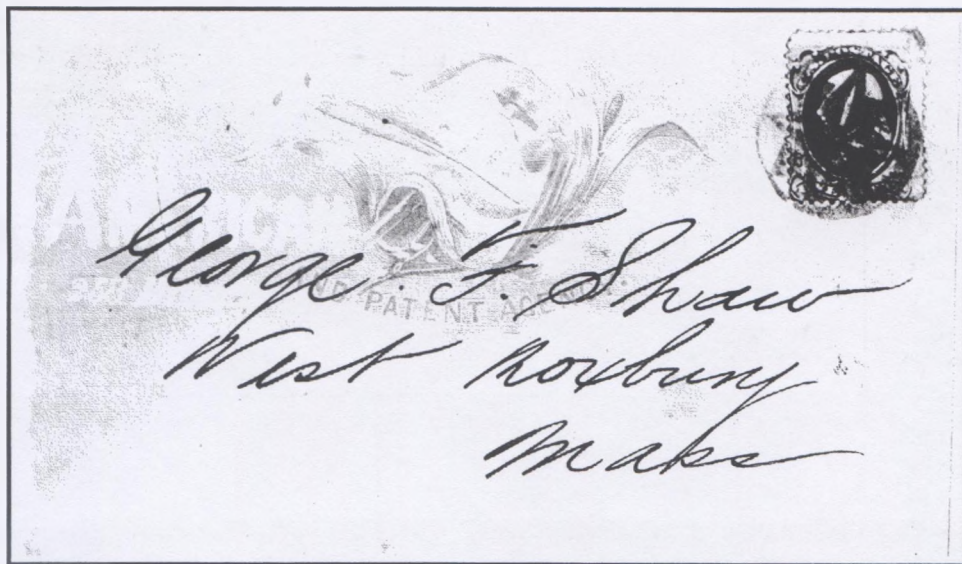


Figure 2. All-over illustrated NYCM cover bearing NYFM-type cancellation.

The next two illustrated covers also bear a familiar NYFM cancellation used on NYCM. This time it is V-W Type A4 and Weiss Type ST-8P10. The lines of the cancellation on the cover in Figure 3, which bears a 2-cent Continental printing, are distinct but incomplete. The cover in Figure 4 bears a 1-cent Continental printing, and its cancellation shows signs of considerable wear. I believe that, like its NYFM counterpart, this NYCM cancellation had a considerable life span. However, I have been unable to verify any NYCM usage dates. Nevertheless, I

would venture that, like the A1/ST-8P11 NYCM covers, usage dates for this NYCM cancellation parallel its NYFM use. (V-W⁷ records March 26, 1873, and September 4, 1874, as the earliest and latest dates of use.) I rate use of the A4/ST-8P10 cancellation on NYCM as common, although not quite as common as uses of A1/ST-8P11.

The cover in Figure 4 also tells a story of philatelic interest. It is addressed to Messrs. J. J. Cover & Company, Shauck Post Office, Morrow County, Ohio. I have seen many covers to this addressee. All are from produce commission merchants, suggesting that J. J. Cover was probably a food store or distributor. By my estimate these covers make up five to 10 percent of the outstanding domestic NYCM to be collected. This is the major NYCM cover find, fortunately saved from the garbage heap. While it does not rank in importance with the Ludlow-Beebe find of 10-cent 1847 covers, it is very important to my study. Can any reader add information about J. J. Cover & Company or these covers?

The next illustrated cover (Figure 5) resided most recently in the Weiss collection of NYFM items. The cover has a gem strike of V-W Type G5 and Weiss Type GE-EN6. I am aware of only one other NYCM cover bearing this cancellation. That cover, a beautiful illustrated advertising circular, has graced both the

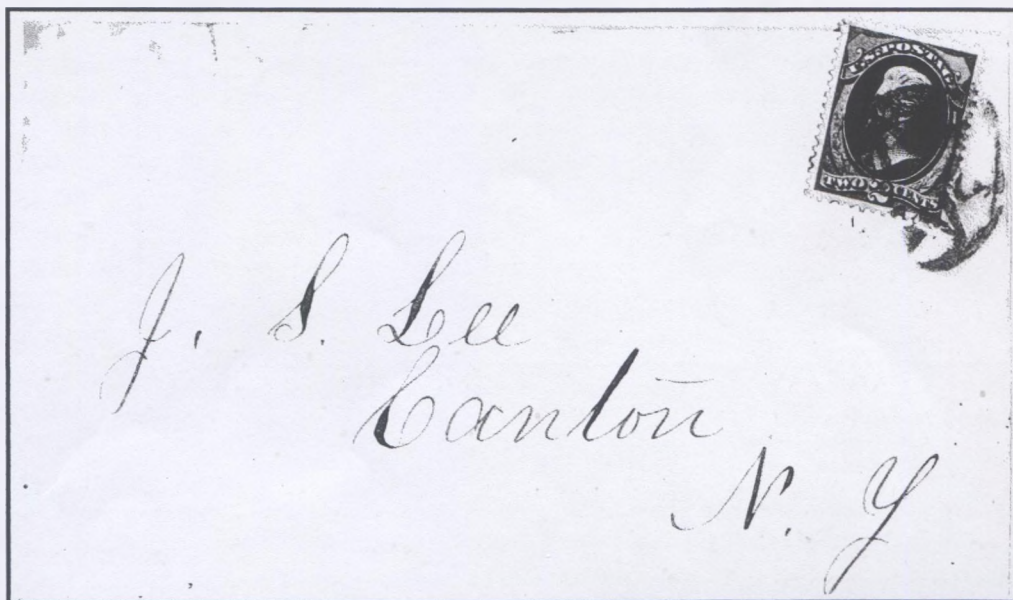


Figure 3. NYCM cover with NYFM-type A4/ST-8P10 cancellation.

V-W and Weiss collections and appears in both of their books. According to Weiss,⁸ this NYCM cover has a December —, 1874, date of use, which is consistent with his recorded NYFM usages of this cancellation from October 20, 1874, to November 24, 1874. Interestingly, both known covers have NYC ("City") destinations, which are very scarce for NYCM. I rate this cancellation on NYCM as rare.

I have selected the first five covers for inclusion in Part I for several reasons. First, NYFM cancellations are very popular. This is a familiar topic for most readers of the *USCC News* and, thus, a convenient lead into more in-depth exploration of cancellations on NYCM in the 1870s. Second, I believe that by demonstrating a clear and consistent pattern of domestic use of NYFM cancellations, I offer the reader a new way of thinking about their use. Indisputably, the three cancellations shown here on NYCM were used principally in the foreign department of the NYC post office. Nevertheless, this pattern of use on domestic NYCM causes me to reject the oft-stated theory that such use was accidental.

Given the limited information that we have about the daily operations of the NYC post office, we can only speculate about how or why apparently identical cancellation devices saw use in two different departments. Three possibilities occur to me, any of which makes sense. First, staff members from the foreign department occasionally were assigned

to work in the circular mail division and brought with them a personal cancellation device. Second, overflows of domestic circulars were processed in the foreign department. Third, the attractive NYFM cancellations were popular enough to be duplicated for use elsewhere in the NYC post office. That is, the cancellations we see on NYCM could be the products of separate cancellation devices essentially identical to their NYFM counterparts. (Indeed, the A1/-ST-8P11 cancellation also saw use, in a duplexed format, canceling NYC delivery mail. Several such covers are pictured in Weiss⁹)

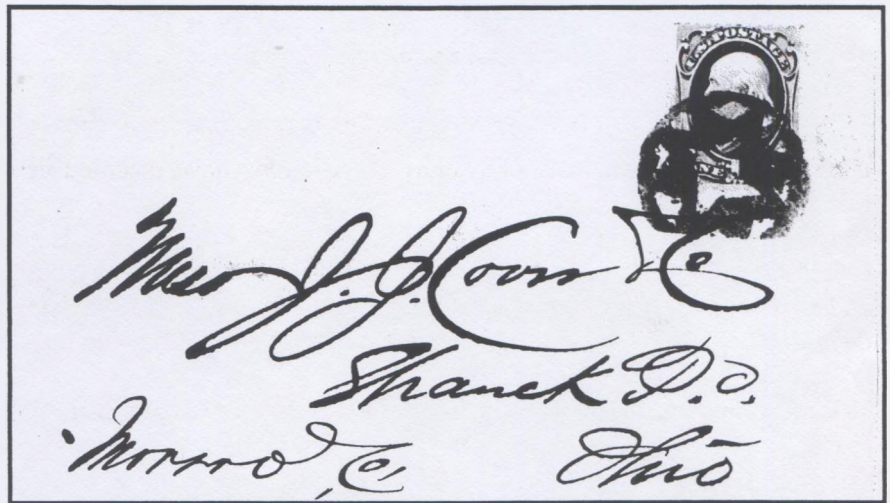


Figure 4. Another NYCM cover with NYFM-type A4/ST-8P10 cancellation from the J. J. Cover & Company find.

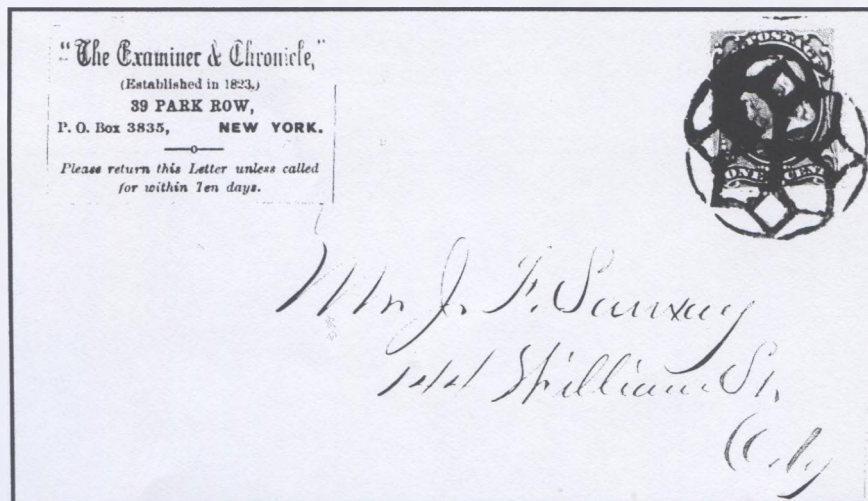


Figure 5. A beautiful NYFM geometric cancellation Type G5/GE-EN6 on a publisher's circular.

The final reason for the selected covers is to add to a debate that visited the *USCC News* a few years ago. Still under discussion is the question what is a NYFM cancellation. In Part I of this article I show domestic usages of NYFM cancellations. The next part will discuss foreign mail uses of what are principally domestic NYCM cancellations.

Part II New York Circular Mail to Foreign Destinations

Next I focus on those NYCM cancellations known used on both domestic and foreign mail. As will become apparent, previous students of NYFM cancellations have included in that classification many of these NYCM cancellations. What I intend to show is that NYCM cancellations are somewhat of a hybrid, intended for use on circulars and newspaper wrappers irrespective of destination. This, in effect, reveals a fact missed by previous students of NYFM cancellations. Not all mail to foreign destinations was processed in the foreign department. Initially, at least, circulars and newspapers going abroad were canceled in the circular mail division. This fact can cause problems with some definitions of NYFM cancellations.

V-W express a narrow view on the uses of NYFM cancellations, excluding essentially anything not passing through the foreign department.

"NYFM cancellations were applied to the stamps on postal matter entering the mails at New York City addressed to all foreign countries except Canada ... All other [non-Canadian] foreign mail was sorted to the Foreign Mail Division of the New York General Post Office for routing, accounting, postal marking, cancellations and dispatch ... Domestic mail did not receive NYFM cancels. A very few exceptions exist showing uses contrary to these rules, but each such exception can be readily understood as either an error or a highly special case."¹⁰

Weiss, on the other hand, takes a more relaxed view when defining which cancellations to include among NYFM.

"Perhaps the most accurate statement we can make and the most meaningful definition we can apply to NYFMs is this: 'a group of cancellations **usually** applied to mail which **usually** originated in New York City, and was **usually** destined for a Foreign Country (other than Canada),' ... The position I advance, but do not necessarily advise anyone else to adopt, is quite simple: since no official records exist which can provide us with an infallible answer, my conclusion is that it is really up to the individual collector to decide, in the cases of duplicate uses, whether or not they care to include the cancels as NYFMs. I personally feel that **any** cancel which was applied to foreign mail, other than Canada, qualifies as an NYFM."¹¹

NYCM cancellations are the ultimate examples of duplicate use. They clearly raise a classification issue for the V-W definition of NYFM. As shown in Part I, certain NYFM cancellations appeared regularly on domestic NYCM. The common use of NYCM cancellations on both domestic and foreign

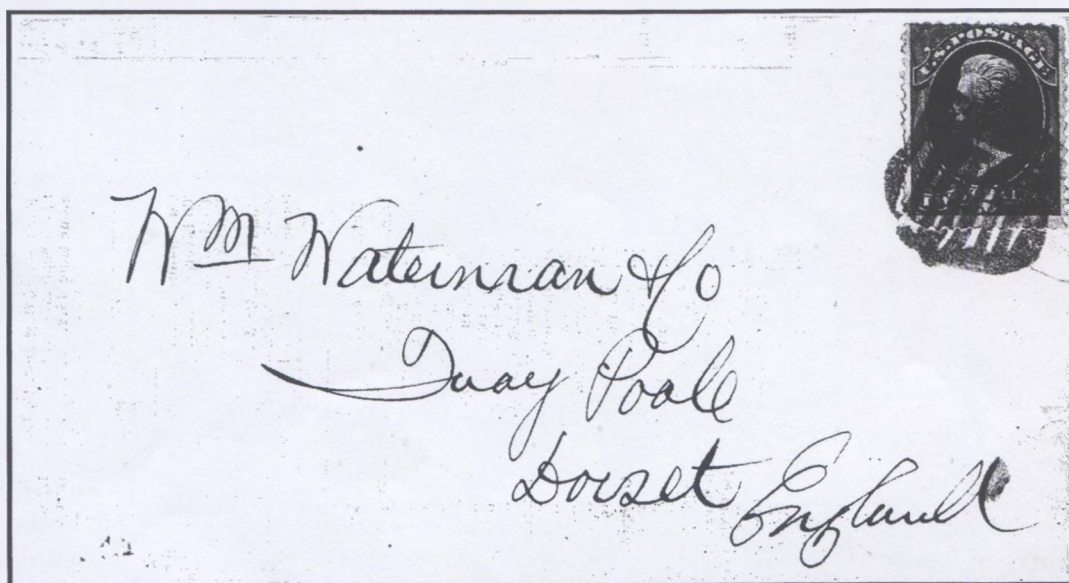


Figure 6. Circular to England bearing V-W Type C11 and Weiss Type RE-E3 NYFM large shield cancellation. (Photo courtesy of W. R. Weiss, Jr.)

circular mail further complicates matters. Perhaps NYCM is the "highly special case" to which V-W refer.

I side with the Weiss approach. I think it is proper to classify an NYCM cancellation found on foreign mail as an NYFM cancellation. However, if every NYCM cancellation had a chance of use on domestic and foreign mail, it may be theoretically proper to classify all NYCM cancellations as NYFM! What makes this conclusion difficult to accept is the absolute scarcity of confirming examples. Nevertheless, only confirmed foreign mail uses of NYCM cancellations can be definitively categorized as NYFM.

As noted in Part I, circular mail is scarce. Circulars were seldom saved by the commercial firms to which they were sent. Wrappers on transient newspapers met a

similar fate. This inherently low chance of survival compounds for circulars sent abroad, making them exceptionally scarce. Many examples of NYCM cancellation usages are unique on foreign mail even when common on their domestic counterparts. That the great majority of covers listed in Weiss bear rates intended for sealed letters is proof of this scarcity.

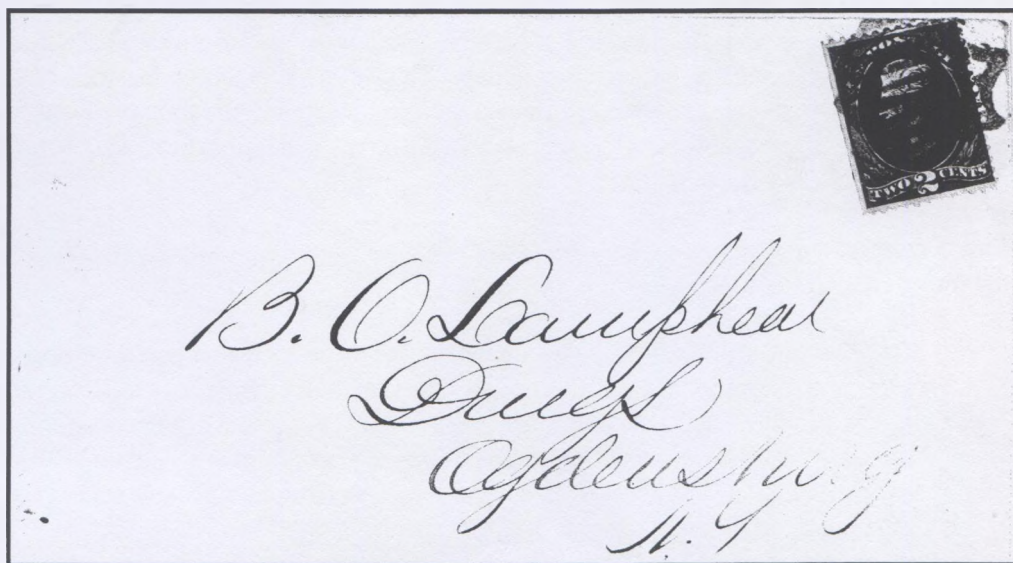


Figure 7. NYCM large shield cancellation used on a domestic circular.

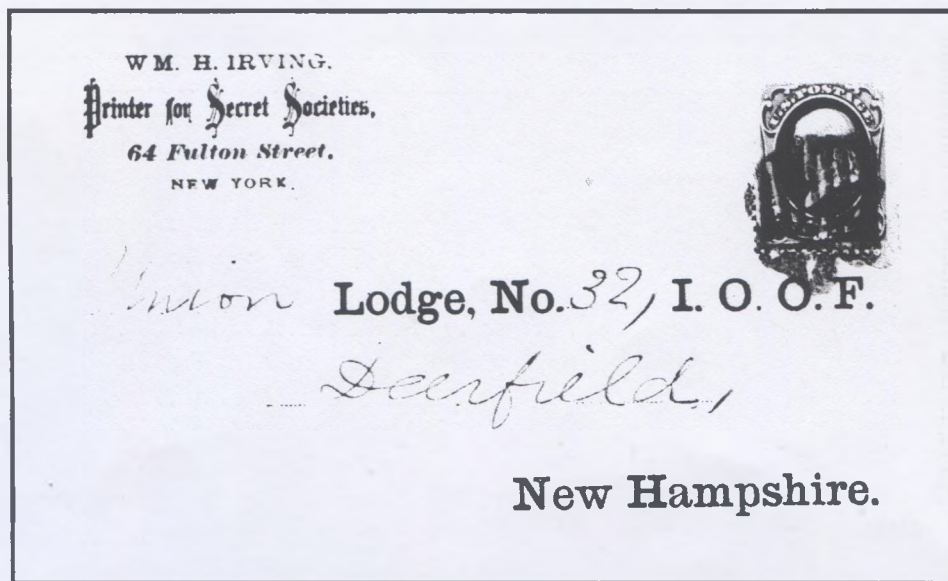


Figure 8. Domestic circular with 1-cent stamp struck by worn strike of NYCM large shield cancellation.

Figure 6 shows a circular to England well struck by the NYFM large shield cancellation, V-W Type C11 and Weiss Type RE-E3. This cover has resided in both the V-W and Weiss collections and is pictured in their books. The circular is dated December 17, 1873. One other circular to a foreign destination (from the same correspondence) bears this large shield cancellation.

The covers in Figures 7 and 8 are examples of the large shield cancellation used on domestic circulars. The covers bear 2-cent and 1-cent Continental issues respectively. Weiss lists

three domestic uses of the large shield cancellation in his book, one dated November 20, 1873. I have verified several

more. This attractive NYCM cancellation is common both on and off cover. I have noted one curious factor of interest about this cancellation. For reasons that are unclear, strikes of this cancellation on 2-cent stamps and on covers bearing them appear sharper than strikes on 1-cent stamps and covers. In particular, the points atop the shield show less edge wear on 2-cent strikes than on most 1-cent strikes. This difference is apparent in Figures 7 and 8.

Figure 9 pictures the only known cover to a foreign destination bearing the NYFM ringed shamrock cancellation, V-W Type C7 and Weiss Type RE-S6. The red "PAID ALL" on the cover indicated to

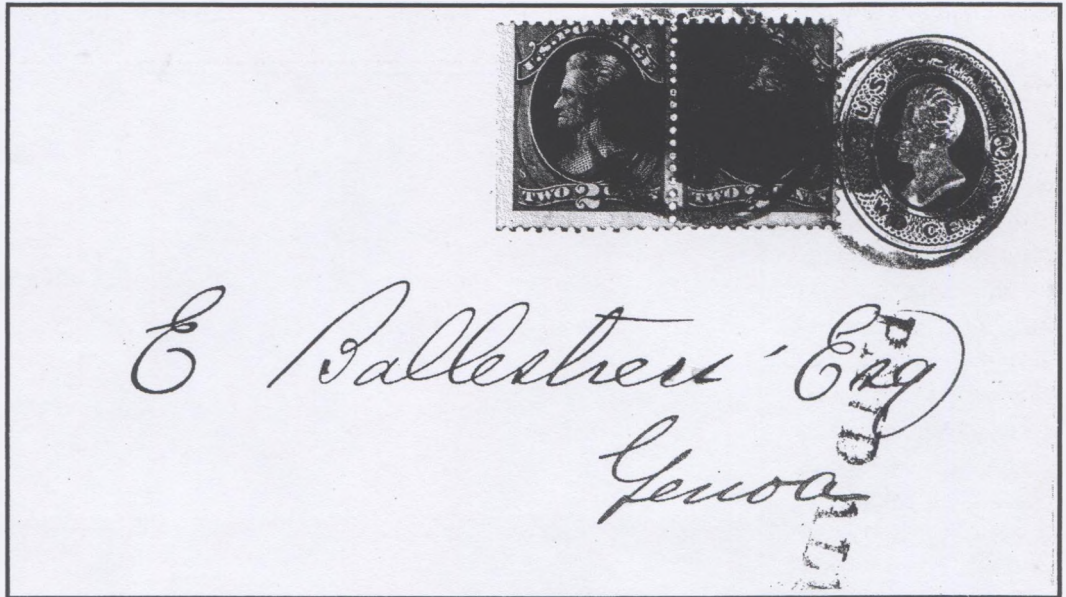


Figure 9. NYCM to Italy bearing NYFM cancellation Type V-W C7 and Weiss Type RE-S6. (Photo courtesy of W. R. Weiss, Jr.)

foreign postal services that the cover contained printed matter and was fully prepaid. The 6 cents postage on this cover would indicate a newspaper rate. In Figure 10 is an immaculate strike of this cancellation used on two 1-cent Continental issues on a domestic NYCM cover. The foreign usage date for this cancellation is unknown. I have noted a domestic usage on March 25, 1874. The ringed shamrock cancellation is common on domestic covers, and it is commonly found off cover on 1-cent stamps.

Weiss was the first to identify the ringed shield cancellation on the cover in Figure 11 as a NYFM cancellation, which he classifies as Type RE-E1. This example is the only one known on a cover to a foreign destination. The cancellation strike is apparently quite worn. Although Weiss's tracing of RE-E1 shows only two vertical negative bars, he notes having seen the cancellation on a domestic circular with four bars.¹² The cover in Figure 12 attests to this fact. It bears a much clearer strike of the ringed shield cancellation, for which I record a December 14, 1874, domestic use. The Weiss NYCM to Germany is dated January 1, 1875. I rate this cancellation as scarce to rare on cover, having seen only four domestic usages. I have seen no off-cover strikes.

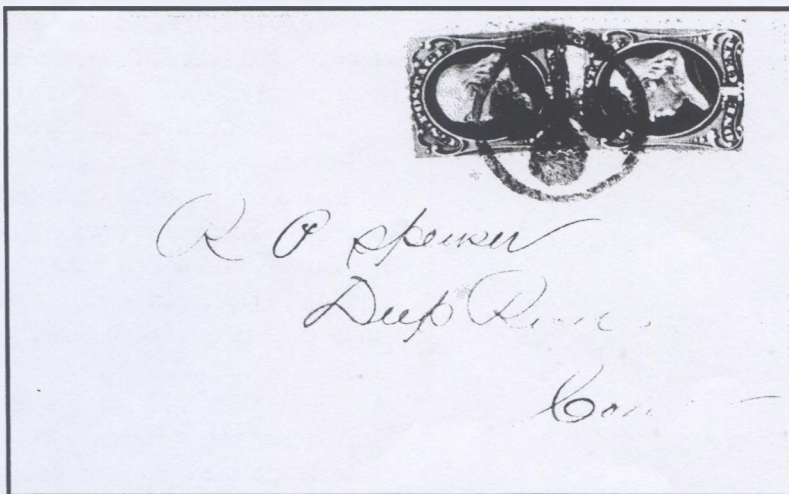


Figure 10. Domestic NYCM bearing ringed shamrock cancellation.

The cover in Figure 13 bears the NYFM cancellation V-W Type A3 and Weiss Type ST-8P12. This NYCM to Italy is from the same correspondence as the Figure 9 cover bearing the ringed shamrock

cancellation. Each cover bears 6 cents postage (two 2-cent Continental issues on a 2-cent entire of the 1870-71 Reay issue) and is struck with a red "PAID ALL." One other cover to a foreign destination with this star cancellation exists. It is a 1-cent wrapper (Scott No. W77) with a 3-cent Continental issue paying the 4-cent newspaper rate to Holland. The wrapper has a March 3, 1874, backstamp.¹³

Figure 14 shows a usage of the A3/ST-8P12 star cancellation on domestic NYCM. The strike is incomplete, which is typical for this cancellation. I have seen several examples on domestic NYCM, all partially struck. Weiss illustrates a well-struck example on a domestic circular (p. 198), possibly the best on-cover strike extant. No domestic dates of use are known. I rate this cancellation as scarce both on and off cover.

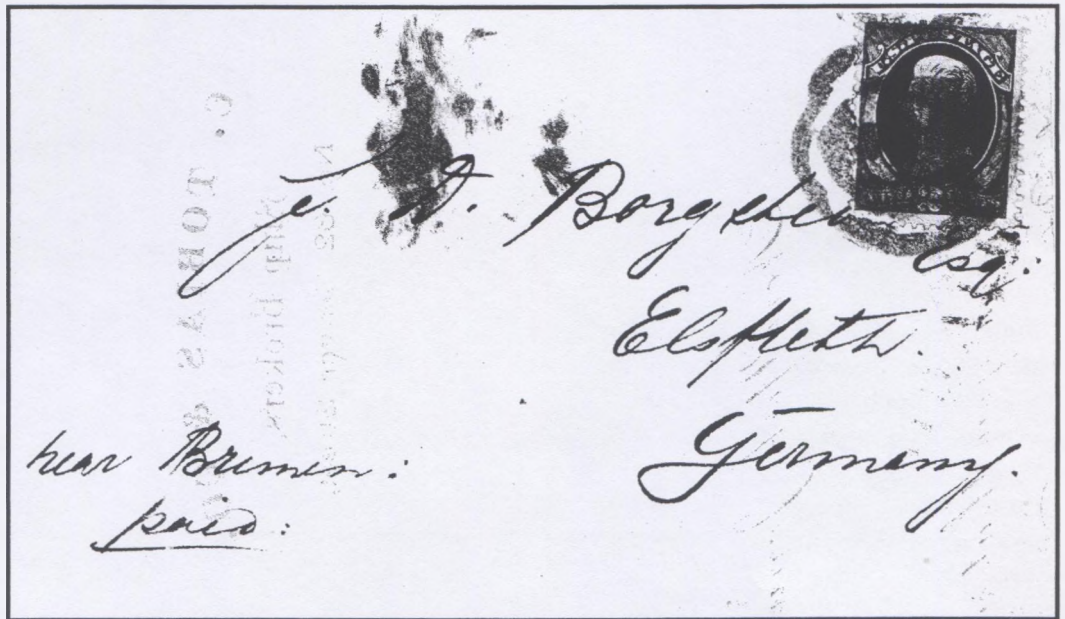


Figure 11. Circular to Germany with NYFM cancellation RE-E1. (Photo courtesy of W. R. Weiss)

The cover in Figure 15 is unique among NYCM to foreign destinations. This circular is the only one that I have discovered bearing a cancellation most typically found on regular NYFM. It bears a light strike of V-W Type G16-17

and Weiss Type GE-EP3 on a 2-cent Continental issue. The circular is date-stamped October 8, 1875 (incorrectly listed as 1876 in Weiss) and was sent to Bale (Basel), Switzerland. This circular potentially demonstrates that an NYFM cancellation used in the circular division to cancel domestic NYCM (as shown in Part I) also could have canceled mail to foreign destinations. Additionally, it indicates that perhaps the G16-17/GE-EP3 cancellation may be discovered used on domestic NYCM.

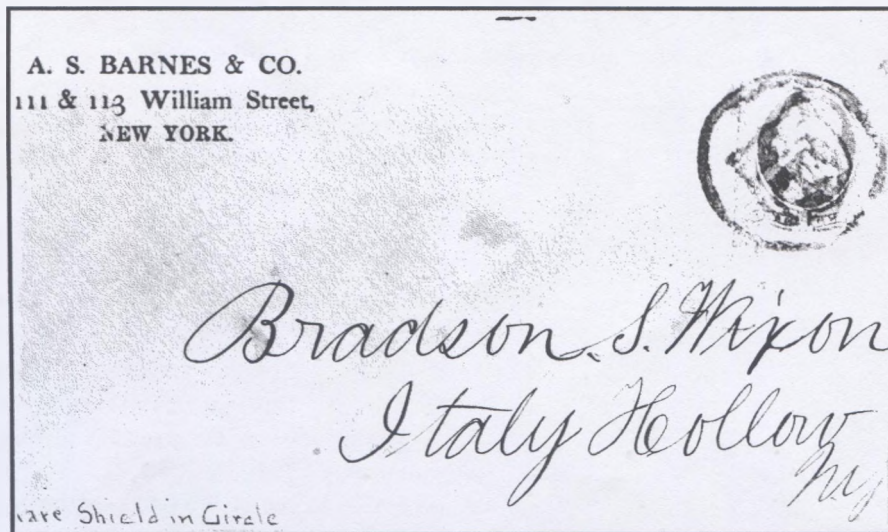


Figure 12. Domestic NYCM with ringed shield cancellation.

The cover in Figure 16 to Guadeloupe bears the only known foreign mail use of the NYFM

cancellation Weiss Type TR-W7. According to Weiss this type was first reported as a NYFM cancellation by Bartels and Milliken in 1933, although later withdrawn from Milliken's listing by 1942.¹⁴ That this cover was handled in the circular division is apparent from several factors. It is unsealed, it lacks either date stamp or routing mark, and the 8

cents postage represents a newspaper rate to Guadeloupe. An additional identifying factor is the cover's particular "P.O. Box" return address. I have found this address on other circulars mailed to foreign destinations.

Tracing 1 is taken from the cover in Figure 17, a domestic use of the TR-W7 cancellation. While it does not exactly match the Weiss tracing from the Figure 16 cover, differences are to be expected. (Weiss notes many factors that can contribute to variations in a cancellation's appearance and tracing.¹⁵ This cancellation is the earliest that I have verified used on both domestic and foreign mail, having noted it used on a circular to Canada (a domestic treatment) on July 15, 1872. I rate this cancellation as scarce both on and off cover.

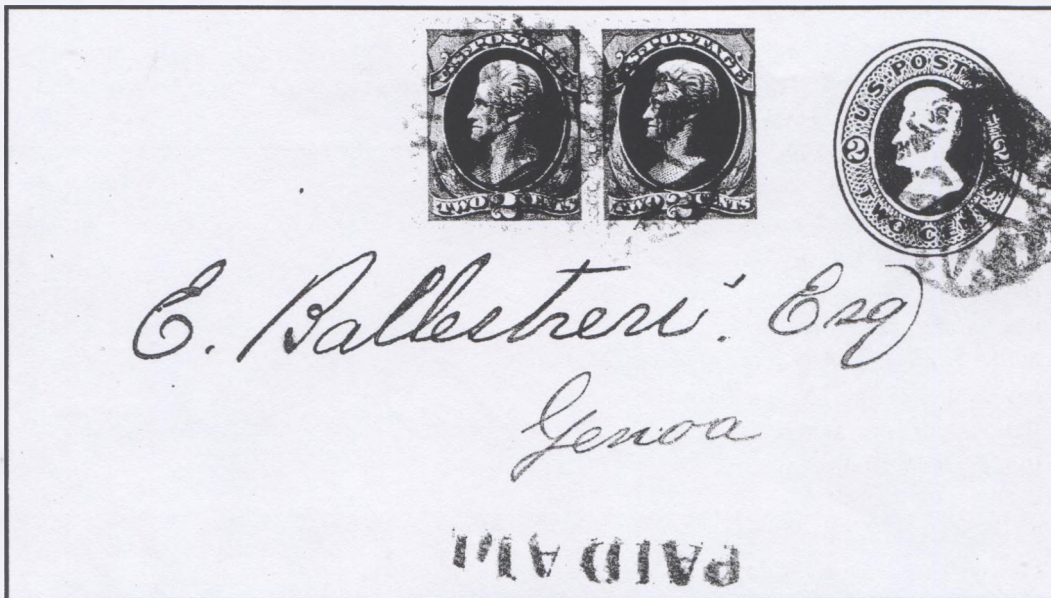


Figure 13. NYFM cancellation on circular to Italy, V-W Type A3 and Weiss Type ST-8P12. (Photo courtesy of W. R. Weiss, Jr.)

The covers in Figures 18 and 19 show foreign and domestic mail usages of the NYFM grill cancellation Weiss Type

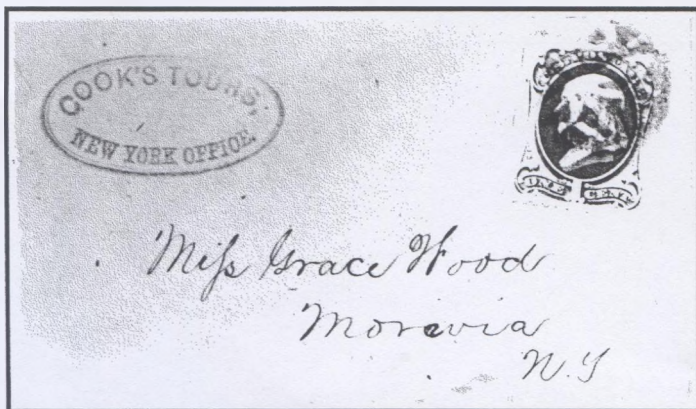


Figure 14. Domestic NYCM bearing NYFM cancellation Type A3/ST-8P12.

The domestic cover contains a circular dated May 1, 1875. I rate this grill cancellation as scarce to rare. It is but one of several grill-type cancellations used on NYCM during this period, which I will discuss in future parts of this article.

TR-G29a on NYCM. The Figure 18 newspaper-rate cover to Norway bears at least two strikes of the cancellation on a pair of 2-cent Continental issues and has a red "PAID ALL" tying the stamps. The cancellation strikes appear to have been made with the cancellation device angled to the right. Tracing 2 from the Weiss book¹⁶ shows a cancellation composed of 10 uneven bars. The Figure 19 domestic NYCM cover, a Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company envelope, also has two overlaid strikes of the cancellation. Tracing 3 was made from this cover. Note that it shows nine relatively even bars instead of 10, and these bars appear thicker and more narrow. Given the incompleteness and overlay of the strikes, these differences in the tracings are not significant. The Norway cover is dated May 7, 1875. The

Part III
Newly Recorded NYFM Cancellations
on New York Circular Mail to Foreign Destinations

Figure 20 shows a wrapper to Westphalia (Germany) bearing a previously unidentified NYFM cancellation. The cancellation is a large circle of eight irregularly cut wedges tying a 3-cent National issue paying the newspaper rate to Germany. A red "PAID ALL" also ties the stamp to the wrapper. Figure 21 shows this cancellation on domestic NYCM from a produce commission merchant. The stamp is a 1-cent Continental issue. Tracing 4 was made from the strike on this domestic circular. Neither cover has contents nor date marking. I rate this cancellation as rare.

The cover in Figure 22 bears a second previously unidentified NYFM geometric cancellation. This wrapper to Holland (Scott No. W77 plus a 3-cent Continental issue paying the 4-cent newspaper rate) bears a ringed cancellation with five wedges attached at the center. (Another wrapper from the same correspondence bears one of two known NYFM examples of A3/ST8P12.) Tracing 5 was taken from this cover.

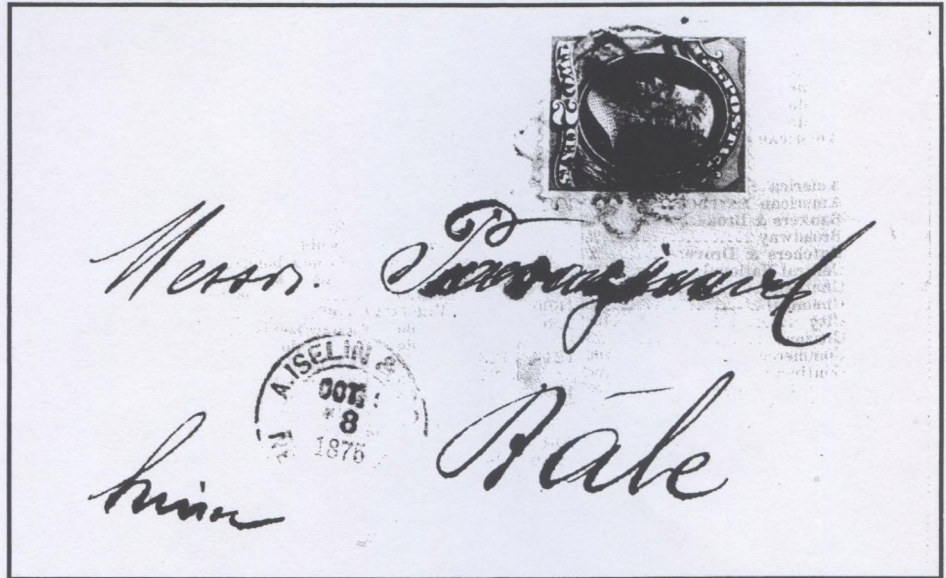


Figure 15. Circular to Switzerland bearing V-W Type G16/17 and Weiss Type GE/EP3 geometric cancellation.

It is likely that this cancellation is more truly a circle than the tracing indicates, but the contents of the wrapper distorted the strike. The wrapper is back-stamped May 22, 1874. This is the only example of this cancellation that I have seen on or off cover

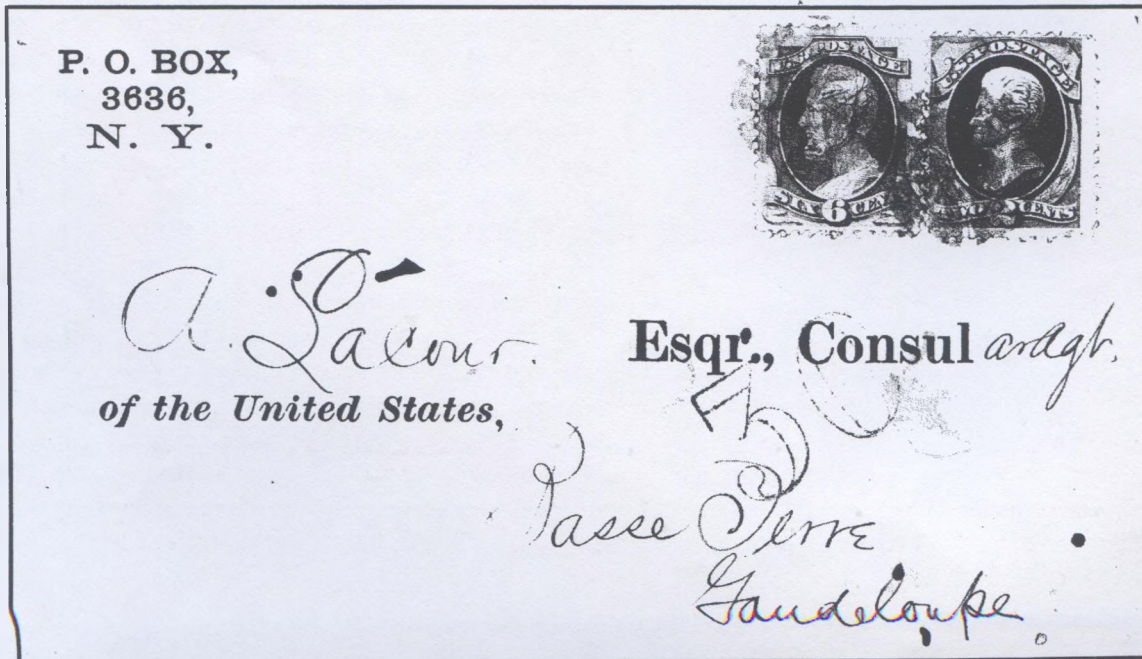


Figure 16. NYCM to Guadeloupe bearing NYFM cancellation Weiss Type TR-W7. (Photo courtesy of Eliot Landau)



Tracing 1

If not called for in ten days, postmaster please return to J. MILHAU'S SONS, 183 BROADWAY,
New York, sole representatives for the **LANOIX** non-humanized **VACCINE**.



Dr. J. A. Blackwell
Bedford

Ind.

Figure 17. Domestic circular bearing the Weiss TR-W7 cancellation.

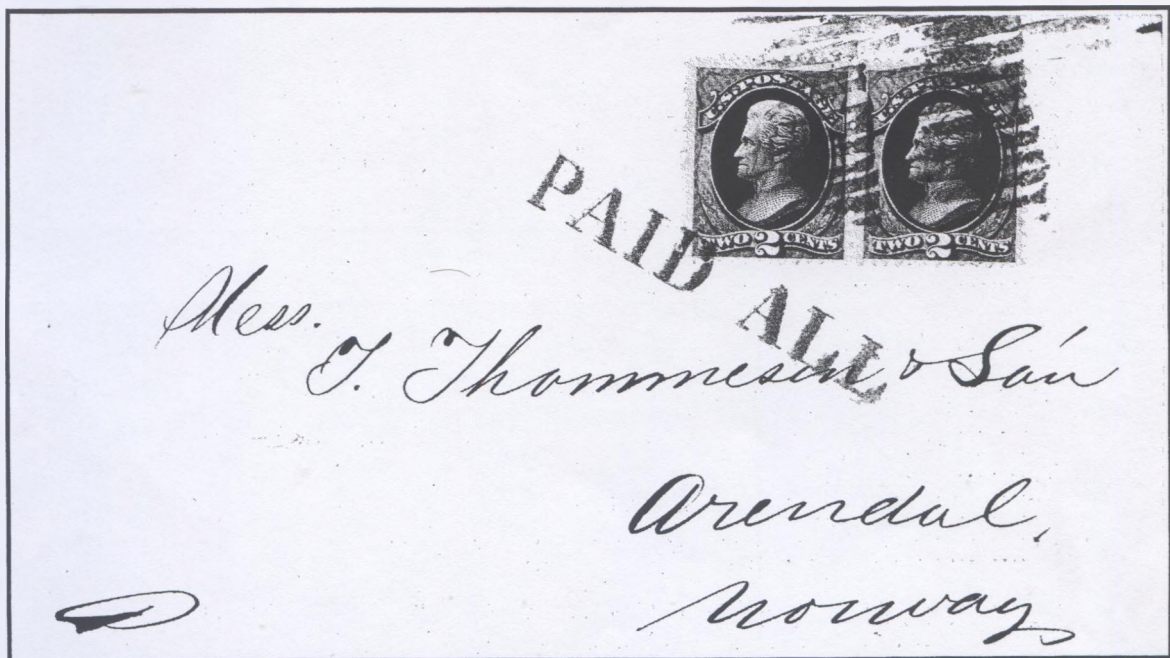


Figure 18. NYCM to Norway bearing Weiss Type TR-G29a NYFM bar cancellation. (Photo courtesy of W. R. Weiss, Jr.)



Figure 19. Domestic NYCM bearing Weiss Type TR-G29a NYFM cancellation.



Tracing 2



Tracing 3

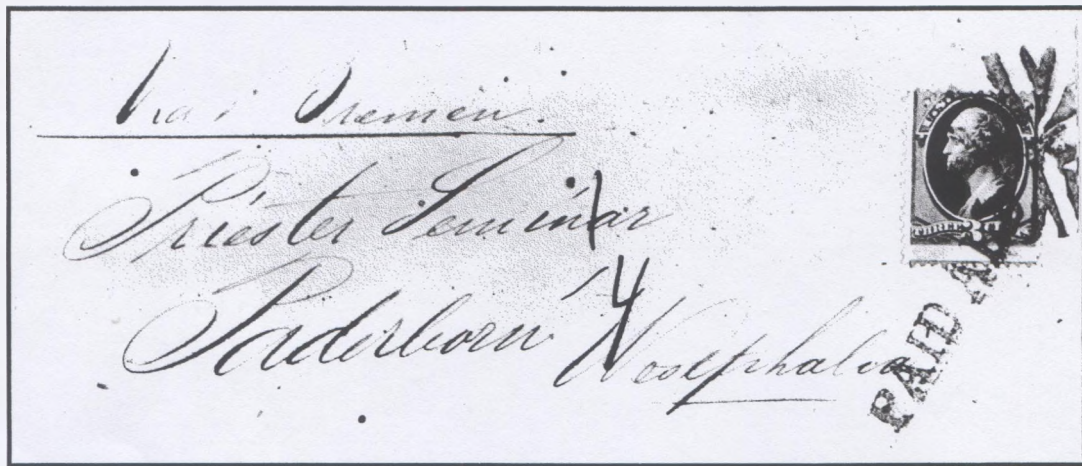


Figure 20. Newly identified NYFM wedge cancellation on wrapper to Germany.



Tracing 4

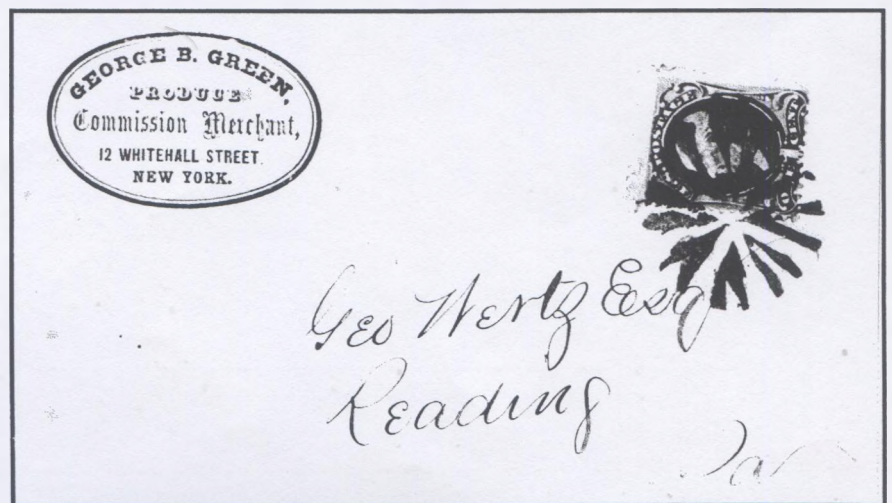


Figure 21. Domestic NYCM bearing same large wedge cancellation as Figure 20.

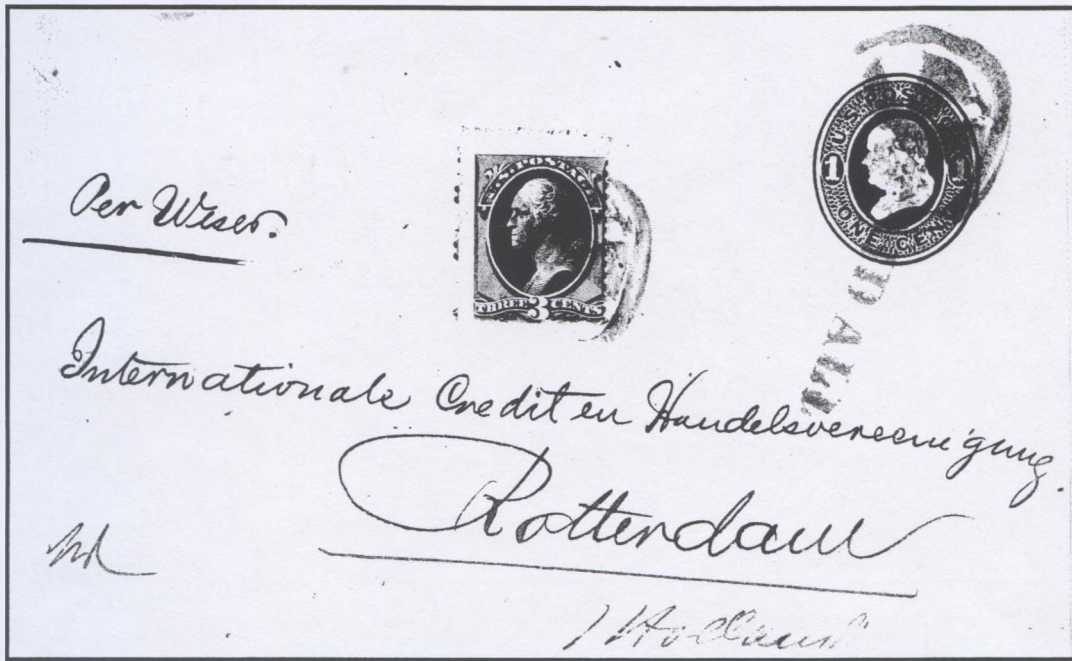


Figure 22. Wrapper to Holland bearing a ringed cancellation with five wedges attached at the center, not previously reported as an NYFM cancellation..



Tracing 5



Tracing 6

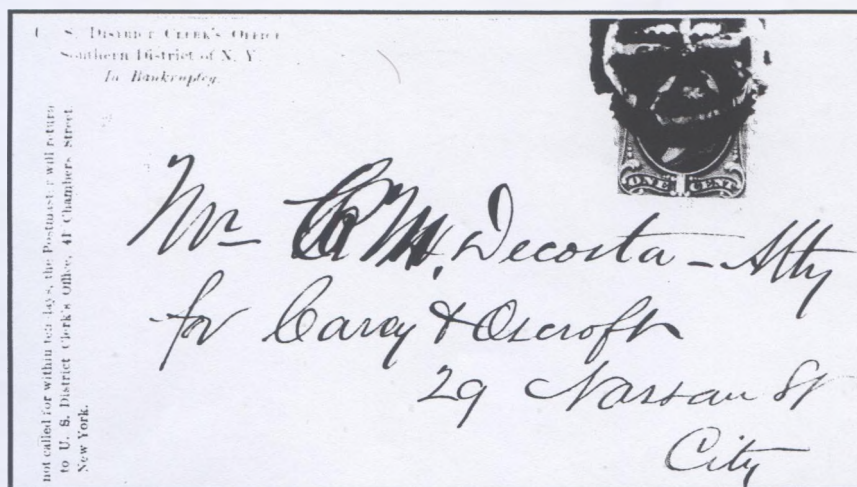


Figure 23. Bankruptcy notice bearing a second NYCM ringed cancellation with five wedges attached at the center.

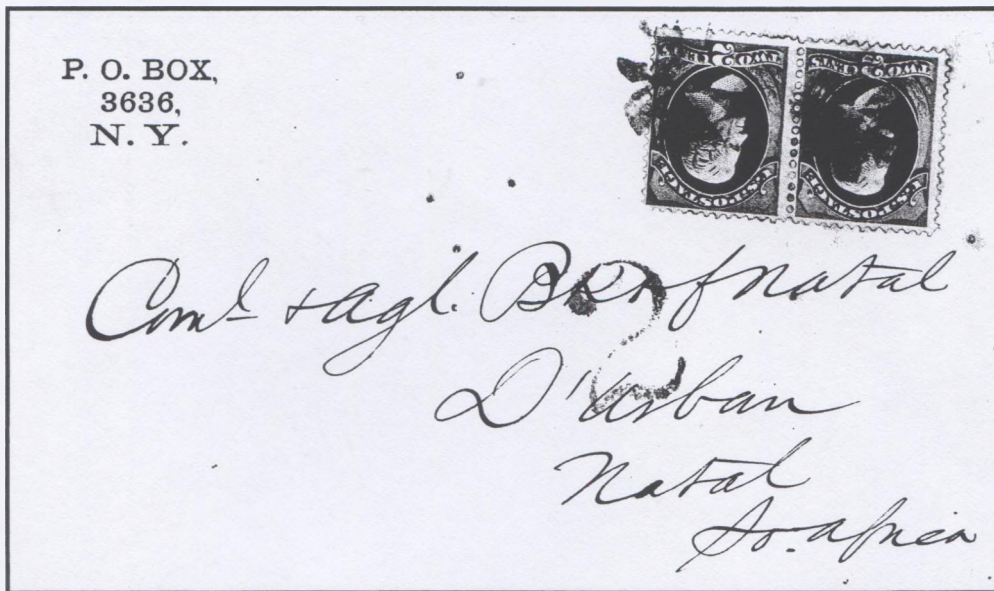


Figure 24. NYCM to South Africa bearing previously unrecorded NYFM cancellation.



Tracing 7

and, therefore, must be considered rare. While no known domestic NYCM bears this cancellation, Figure 23 shows a similar cancellation (Tracing 6) so used. The five wedges in this ringed cancellation are broader and do not meet at the center. Based upon the contents of this bankruptcy court notice, the cancel-

lation was used sometime in March 1875. Again, this is the only on- or off-cover example of this NYCM cancellation that I have recorded.

A third example of a previously unidentified NYFM geometric cancellation appears in Figure 24. This cover to Natal, South Africa, bears two 2-cent National issues, each struck with an eight-segment pointed wedge cancellation (see Tracing 7). This cancellation is similar to V-W Type A28 and Weiss Type TR-W8. (Indeed, this cover is reported in the Weiss cover census to have this cancellation.¹⁷) Since the strikes of the cancellation are neither clear nor complete, I believe it possible that the wedges may lack points as shown. I have no date of use for this cancellation, although the National issue stamps and simple cancellation style would indicate early 1870s. I have seen no other foreign or domestic NYCM examples of this cancellation and thus rate it rare. Note that this cover bears the same post office box return address as on the Figure 16 cover.

The cover shown in Figure 25 is the earliest NYCM to a foreign destination that I have so far discovered for the Bank Note period. The circular, which bears a single 2-cent National issue, is dated June 29, 1870. The cancellation has a simple crossroad design, a style that was very common for the period. What distinguishes this cancellation is the oblique angle of its cross and the imbalanced sizes of its segments. I have seen no other examples of this cancellation, neither foreign nor domestic.

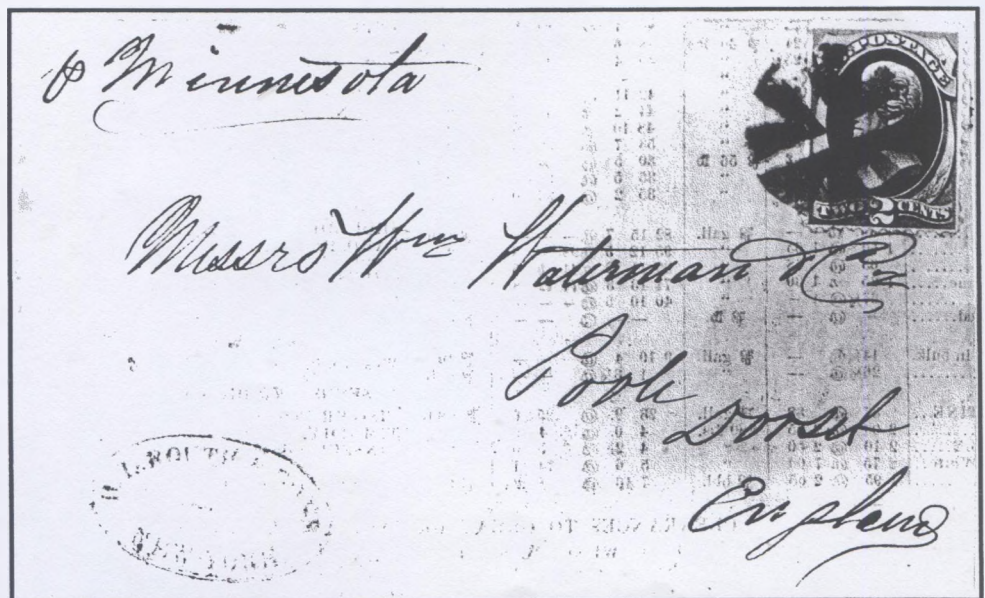


Figure 25. Circular to England with NYCM crossroad design.

The cancellation on the cover in Figure 26, like those in Figures 22, 24 and 25, has been recorded only on NYCM to a foreign destination. This circular to Trinidad dated February 10, 1872, is canceled by a round grid with irregular diagonal cuts. (The tracing appears in the lower left corner.) Weiss records this as an unclassified NYFM Type UNC-7.

This is the last cancellation on NYCM to a foreign destination that I will discuss in the context of Parts II and III of this article. NYCM foreign destinations at later dates, all bearing the 2-cent Continental vermilion issue of 1875 (Scott No. 178), will be the subject of a future article. The next part of this series will continue a discussion of the relationship of NYCM cancellations to identified NYFM cancellations. However, the discussion will venture into the realm of educated speculation about several NYFM cancellations.

I encourage all readers who have information on NYCM in the 1870s (tracings of cancellations, photocopies of covers, dates of usage, foreign destinations) to contact the author at 612 Sycamore Lane, Wheeling, Illinois 60090. I am most interested in verifying dates of use of NYCM cancellations. Contributions will be attributed.

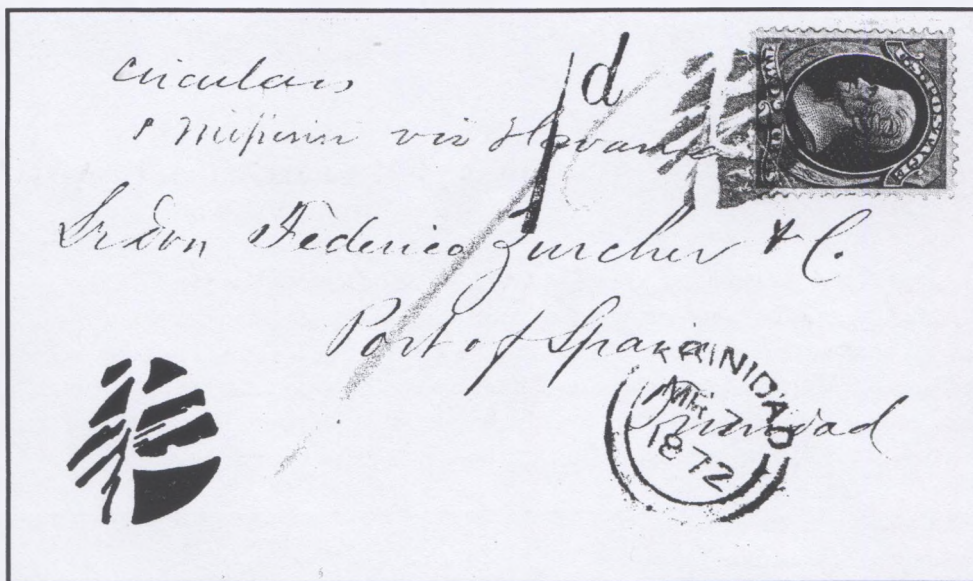


Figure 26. Circular to Trinidad bearing NYFM cancellation Weiss Type UNC-7. (Photo courtesy of W. R. Weiss, Jr.)

End Notes

1. Van Vlissingen, Arthur W., and Waud, Morrison. *New York Foreign Mail Cancellations 1870-1876*. Chicago: Collectors Club of Chicago, 1968, 107 pp., illustrated.
2. Weiss, William R., Jr. *The Foreign Mail Cancellations of New York City 1870-1878*. Published by author, 1990, 504 pp., illustrated.
3. Skinner, Hubert C., and Enos, Amos. *United States Cancellations 1845-1869*. State College, Pennsylvania/New Orleans, Louisiana: American Philatelic Society/Louisiana Heritage Press, 1980, 362 pp., illustrated.
4. Skinner, Hubert C. "The Cancellations and Postmarks of New York City: 1845-1876, Their Usage and Their Postal History," *U.S. Postmarks and Cancellations, The Philatelic Foundation Seminar Series Textbook No. 3*. New York: The Philatelic Foundation, 1992, pp. 79-107, illustrated.
5. Weiss, *ibid.*, p. 3, from *Scribner's Magazine*, May 1878.
6. Weiss, *ibid.*, p. 191.
7. Van Vlissingen and Waud, *ibid.*, p. 32.
8. Weiss, *ibid.*, p. 92.
9. Weiss, *ibid.*, p. 195.
10. Van Vlissingen and Waud, *ibid.*, pp. 14-15.
11. Weiss, *ibid.*, pp. 5-6.
12. Weiss, *ibid.*, p. 252.
13. Weiss, *ibid.*, p. 198.
14. Weiss, *ibid.*, p. 408.

- 15. Weiss, *ibid.*, pp. 11-12.
- 16. Weiss, *ibid.*, p. 344.
- 17. Weiss, *ibid.*, pp. 410-11.

A New NYFM Cancellation Discovery

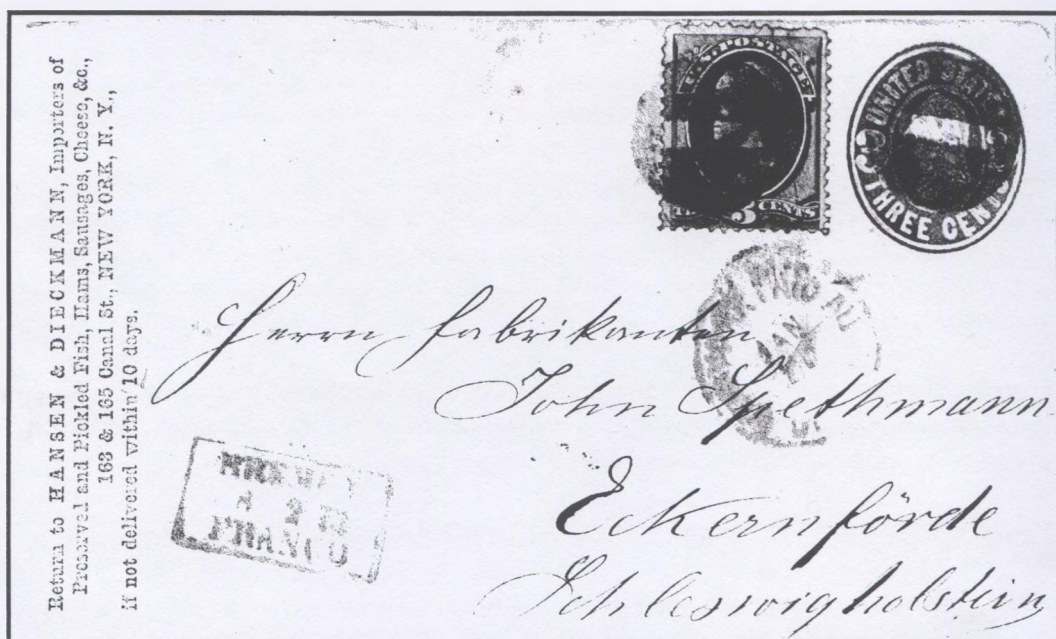
By John Valenti

I suspect that the publication of Bill Weiss's book *The Foreign Mail Cancellations of New York City 1870-1878* opened the eyes of many readers to the possibility of discovering something new in areas previously explored. Weiss added a large number of cancellations to the list of those identified as used from New York City on mail to foreign destinations. This fact has made me ever more alert to the opportunity to discover yet more such cancellations. My hope has been to find ones that are distinctly different from the numerous grids and wedges that make up the majority of identified NYFM cancellations. This article reports just such a discovery.

The illustrated cover bears two strikes of a previously unidentified NYFM cancellation (see tracing). The cancellation is a small solid circle about 20-21 millimeters across. The circle contains a negative of what appears to be a



Tracing



Cover to Schleswig-Holstein bearing previously unidentified NYFM cancellation.

number "1." The circle also has an imperfection to the left of the "1," appearing as a small, round chip out of the edge.

The cover is a 3-cent pink-on-buff entire of the 1864-65 series (Scott No. U59) combined with a 3-cent National issue paying the 6-cent North German Union direct mail rate to Schleswig-Holstein (Germany). The cover has a blurred "New York Paid All Direct" circular date stamp struck in red. The month "JAN[uary]" is discernible, but not the day. The cover bears a boxed "BREMEN FRANCO" receiving mark containing what appears to be a February 8, 1873, date. The February 8 date confirms a late January mailing date from New York. However, the last digit of the year date is blurred. Nevertheless, because of the style of the cancellation, I believe the 1873 year date to be correct. The cancellation looks similar to ones classified by Weiss as Representative (RE) cancellation types, several of which appeared around this time. One could also argue that the cancellation is related to Weiss Type TR-M1, the solid circle with an internal negative square. Indeed, for TR-M1 Weiss records dates of use between February 28, 1873, and March 6, 1873, which closely match the estimated date of use for the new cancellation. When I asked Weiss to examine the cover, he concurred with my initial assessment, giving the new cancellation the classification RE-N9.

Letter to the Editor

In his thorough article on the NYFM killer "NYPO" (Vol. 21, No. 4, Fall 1993), J. H. Barwis suggest that students of cancellations try to establish the time of the 3-cent Bank Note issues to guide more precisely the understanding of the killer dates. To help I should like to suggest the following dates for the six paper varieties:

1. March 1, 1870, is the earliest known use of the 3-cent National stamp, from Charleston, South Carolina, on A. T. Stewart correspondence, lot No. 132 in the Elliott Lindsey sale of February 16-17, 1991. Early covers can be either H-grilled or, less frequently, I-grilled or ungrilled. All are on a hard paper similar to that used for the 1869 3-cent issue.
2. July 9, 1873, is the earliest known use of the 3-cent Continental stamp, from Glens Falls, New York. An EKU may yet surface a month earlier. This stamp is also on hard paper but is distinguished from the National stamp by the secret mark under the tail on the left ribbon.
3. Circa July 1875 Continental shifted from a hard wove, strongly bleached paper to an open wove, medium bleached paper. The bulk of the 5-cent Taylors (Scott No. 179) are on this paper, but about 10 percent of the early printing was still on the hard wove paper.
4. In Fall 1878 Continental shifted to an intermediate type of paper, as noted by canceled examples dated in October 1878. This change may have occurred earlier. Illustrations of the Continental open wove, intermediate and soft wove papers can be seen in the Elliott Landau classics exhibit booklet as reference illustrations.
5. Very shortly thereafter in 1878, Continental moved to a soft wove paper indistinguishable from the initial American soft papers of 1879-80. These are strongly bleached. The 5-cent Taylor (Scott No. 185) is typical of this paper.
6. The July 16, 1880, American special printings are on soft paper. The newsprint variety of this paper is typical of these reengraved issues. The papers contain little bleach and are prone to be brittle. The earliest known use of the 3-cent reengraved stamp is now October 29, 1881.

Readers will note I did not date the American printings in accord with Scott Catalogue because that dating is unbelievable, being no different, except for plate number, from the late Continental printings.

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In Roger R. Rhoads' article on carriers (Vol. 21, No. 4, Fall 1993) he shows Figure 1 as being used in 1864. I don't know Skinner's source for stating it was used in 1864, but from its first listing in the May 1933 *Postal Markings* series, using Mason's collection along with Chambers, Rotnam and others, it has not been ascribed past 1860. The corresponding 1-cent item is known in early 1862. Even the latest *Stampless Cover Catalog*, of which Skinner was an associate editor, stops the use in 1860. It is only tabled in his cited Philatelic Foundation article. I also do not find examples in the Grunin 1861 New York City collection. Thus I feel that specific date substantiation is desirable for the 1864 citation.

Calvet M. Hahn

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