



Cancellation Club **NEWS**

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Obliterating 1847 Issue Stamps

by Roger D. Curran

When the Post Office Department first issued postage stamps in 1847 it was necessary to provide for their obliteration after use. Departmental regulations that year instructed postmasters as follows:

501. Stamps so affixed are to be immediately canceled in the office in which the letter or packet may be deposited, with an instrument to be furnished to certain of the post offices for that purpose. In post offices not so furnished, the stamps must be canceled by making a cross X on each with a pen. If the canceling has been omitted on the mailing of a letter, the Postmaster delivering it will cancel the stamp in the manner directed, and immediately report the postmaster who may have been delinquent to the Department.

On an estimated 25% of the covers with 1847 stamps, the obliteration is a pen (manuscript) cancel.¹ Some pen cancels on 1847s are in the prescribed form of a cross but most are not. Squiggles and crosshatching (actually multiple crosses) are noted. A few pen cancels are distinctive enough to be identifiable on off-cover stamps. An "M" from Baltimore² and what are thought to be initials (LAM for postal clerk Lester A. Miller) from Woodstock, Vermont³ are in this category. An off-cover five cent 1847 with a penned "Paid By/This" was in the Creighton Hart collection.

The most commonly noted handstamp obliteration on the 1847s is the enclosed circular 7-bar grid (Figure 1) measuring about 18mm. in diameter. This marking was no doubt produced by the "instrument" mentioned in the regulations which I will refer to as the standard grid. As Hart has noted, the 18mm. diameter corresponds to the width of the 1847 stamps. Due to the considerable number of post offices that used the standard grid it seems reasonable to suppose that one or more of the actual handstamps may have survived. I believe it



Figure 1

would be of considerable interest to show in the News a photograph or two of this handstamp which played such an important role in the obliteration of this country's first postage stamps. If any reader can help in this regard, it would be greatly appreciated.

In a 1973 Chronicle article, Susan McDonald presented compelling documentation for her conclusion that the first delivery of 1847 postage stamps to the New York, Boston, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. post offices was made personally by Third Assistant Postmaster General John Marron after pickup from the printer in New York.⁴ I have wondered if Mr. Marron also delivered the standard grid handstamps to the New York, Boston and Philadelphia post offices after perhaps receiving them in Washington before starting out. We know that the standard grid was available at least within five days after receipt of stamps in Philadelphia on July 7 because it was used on Philadelphia's earliest known 1847 cover on July 12. The information available about New York and Boston don't really help in answering this question. A square grid was used by New York to cancel the 1847s on its earliest reported 1847 covers which continued a practice that began in 1846 with the New York Postmaster's Provisional. This grid was the preferred obliterator (although the standard grid was used to a limited extent) throughout the currency of the 1847s. For Boston there is a 24 day period between receipt of the stamps and the earliest reported cover. Beyond what is suggested by the Philadelphia cover, we certainly can assume that Mr. Marron would have wanted to assure that the post offices he visited were ready quickly to cancel the new stamps. Indeed, New York canceled at least one 1847 cover on July 2 after

(continued on p. 53)

Dear Reader,

By the time this reaches you, the winter that wouldn't quit will surely be but a distant memory. We spent the last 10 days of April in Minneapolis and the TV stations there were still reporting snowfalls of as much as a foot in northern Minnesota. Hope everybody has a fine summer and that many will get the chance to attend CAPEX in Toronto. It will be the first international show for me.

Please consider contributing to the NEWS. Whether it is an article, a favorite cancellation, a comment or information about a subject discussed in an earlier issue, etc., please submit it. And if you have a question about a cancellation that has you wondering, please raise it. While I can't guarantee an answer, the accumulated knowledge of our readers is very considerable.

Beginning with the next issue, the award winners column that lists USCC members who have recently won exhibit awards is being reinstituted. Linn's will be the source for much of this information and for those who wish to report directly, please write to Martin Margulis, 4159 Steck Ave., #133-H, Austin, TX 78759-8511. Martin has kindly volunteered to compile this information for the NEWS.

Roger Curran

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DUES REMINDER - FINAL NOTICE

For those who have not yet sent in 1996 dues, please take a moment to do so now. We will work hard at presenting a continuous supply of worthwhile articles and don't want to lose any USCC members. Your interest and support are vital to our undertaking! Members not submitting dues will, of necessity, be dropped before the next issue is mailed. Dues are payable at \$8.00 for domestic members and \$15.00 for overseas and Canada members and should be sent to the address below.

MODERN CANCELLATIONS

by Roger D. Curran

Who can help with identifying the source of the cancellations in Figures 1 and 2? The cancellation used on the Figure 1 cover appears possibly to be from the belt of a canceling machine. The Figure 2 canceler seems to be a partial strike, applied vertically. The wording to the left of the stamp is "...SSED w/ OPER" with the "R" perhaps being a "P". This presumably was produced by a handstamp. The Figure 3 cover obviously caused the post office some initial concern. It may have been taken out of the normal mailstream because of a question about whether a valid postage stamp was affixed. The stamp, a Scott #C121, is a bit unusual and a postal clerk, not familiar with it, might have first thought it to be a foreign stamp. Subsequently, the "POSTAGE DUE ____" marking was crossed out and the "POSTAGE OK" markings added. The stamp was canceled several times by the end, it appears, of the "Postage Due ____" handstamp. An interesting article by Henry J. Berthelot on USPS auxiliary markings that verify postage appears in the May 1996 La Posta. A number of such markings are illustrated.

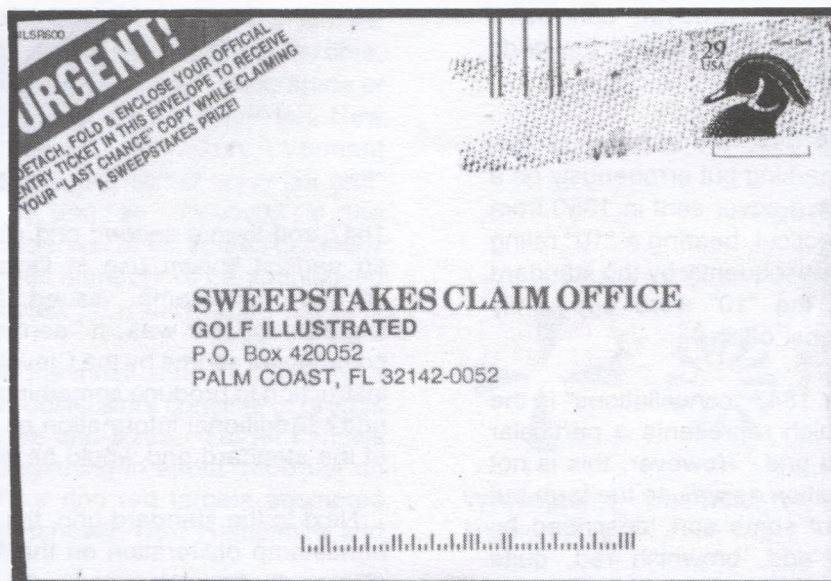


Figure 1

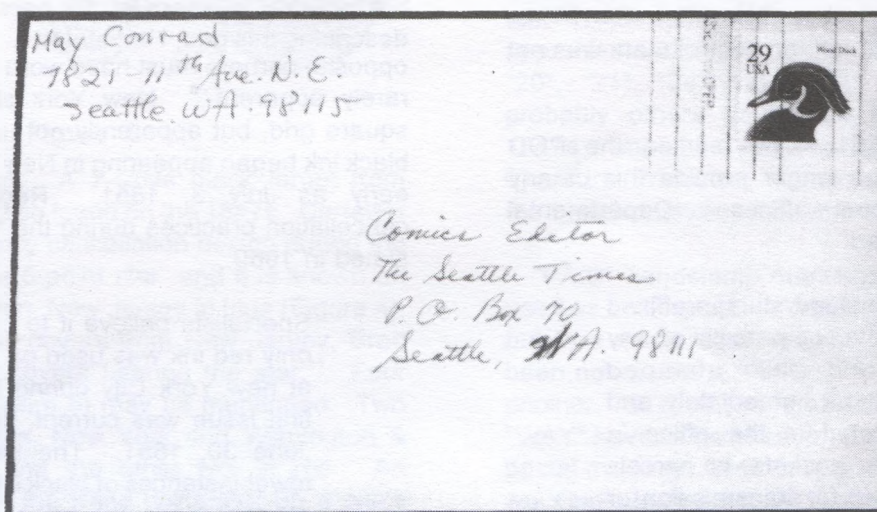


Figure 2

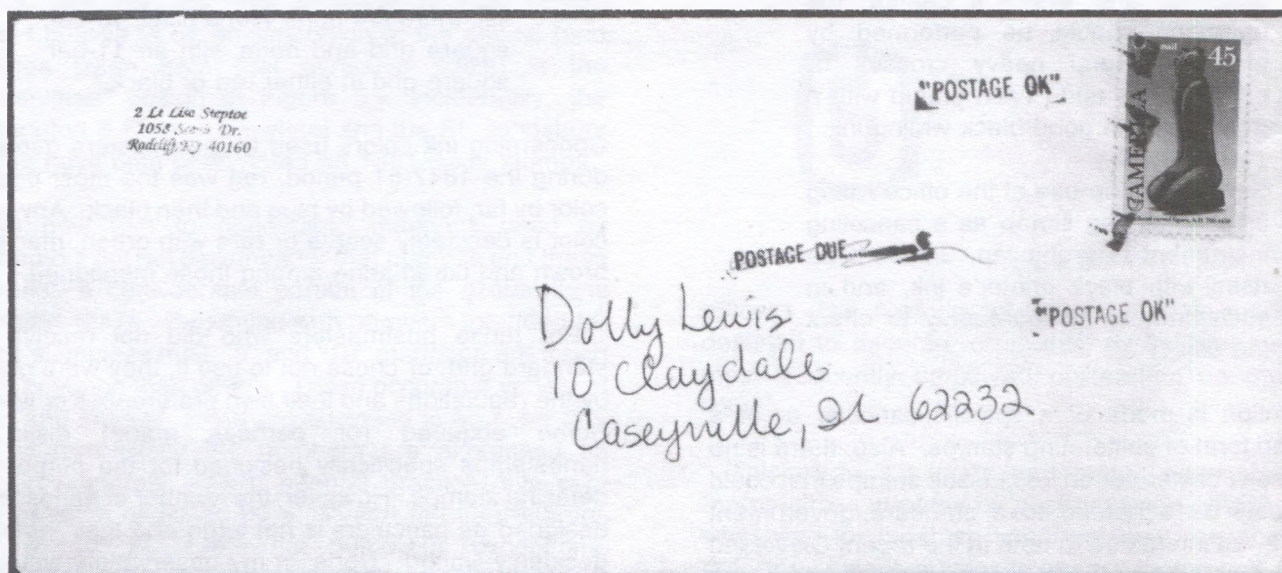


Figure 3

receiving the stamps July 1. However, conclusive evidence on whether Mr. Marron delivered the grids probably will never be found.

The standard grid saw use, on at least a few occasions, to obliterate a marking put erroneously on a cover. Hart illustrated such a cover sent in 1850 from Galveston, Texas to Connecticut, bearing a "10" rating mark that was obliterated subsequently by the standard grid. Both the grid and the "10" were apparently applied by the Galveston post office.⁵

One of the most popular 1847 "cancellations" is the Wheeling, Virginia grid which represents a particular application of the standard grid. However, this is not considered to be an obliteration as we use the term but rather a control marking of some sort, described by Carroll Chase as in an "odd, brownish red, quite characteristic."⁶ It was applied by the Wheeling post office to the adjacent corners of four stamps before separating them and before the stamps were used. Stamps so marked were also obliterated after being placed on mail just as though the control mark was not present.

At some point in 1851, if not earlier, the POD apparently decided to no longer provide this or any other obliterator to post offices. Departmental regulations in 1851 stated:

Sec. 336. All postage stamps affixed to letters, packets, or parcels of any description, and all stamped envelopes, must be immediately and effectually canceled in the office in which the letters, packets, or parcels may be deposited for transmission or delivery. The cancellation should be effected by the use of black printer's ink wherever that material can be obtained; and where it cannot, the operation should be performed by making several heavy crosses or parallel lines upon each stamp with a pen dipped in good black writing ink.

Sec. 338. The use of the office rating or postmarking stamp as a canceling instrument is prohibited, unless it be used with black printer's ink, and in such manner as thoroughly to effect the object.

No mention is made of a specific canceler or of a preferred form of obliterating stamps. Also, there is no widely seen obliterator on 1851 issue stamps that could reasonably be attributed to a standard government issue. I was interested to note in the recent Cleveland book that an 18.5mm. grid (presumably the standard grid) was noted first used in Cleveland in September



Figure 2

1847 and then a second grid of 17mm. appeared with an earliest known use in October 1849.⁷ Was the second handstamp issued by the Post Office Department or was it perhaps obtained from a commercial source by the Cleveland post office with the instruction to produce something similar to the standard grid? Additional information on any aspect of the use of the standard grid would be welcomed.

Next to the standard grid, the most commonly noted handstamp obliteration on the 1847s is a square grid (Figure 2) from New York City. This is because a considerable portion of the 1847s were used from New York City. This grid is often referred to as a 13-bar grid but actually possessed 15 bars at the outset. In describing this grid, Hart stated "...the two small bars at opposite corners must have worn off early, as they are rarely apparent."⁸ New York also used an 11-bar square grid, but apparently not until July 1851. Also, black ink began appearing in New York obliterations as early as July 3, 1851. Regarding New York's cancellation practices during the 1847-51 period, Hart stated in 1969:

Specialists believe it to be a fact that only red ink was used on 1847 covers at new York City during the time our first issue was current, July 1, 1847-June 30, 1851. The half dozen or fewer instances of black ink being used at new York are all of black town postmarks and all were used after demonetization, July 1, 1851. Among the hundreds of New York '47 covers I list, there are none with a black 13-bar square grid and none with an 11-bar square grid in either red or black.⁹

Concerning ink colors used by postmasters generally during the 1847-51 period, red was the most popular color by far, followed by blue and then black. Any other color is decidedly scarce or rare with green, magenta, brown and ultramarine among those mentioned.

For those postmasters who did not receive the standard grid, or chose not to use it, they were guided by the regulations and their own preferences or whims. Some acquired (or perhaps made) distinctive handstamps specifically designed for the purpose of defacing stamps. However, the number of handstamps designed as cancelers is not large and their variety is decidedly limited. None, in my observation, would be regarded as especially interesting if found during the

heyday of fancy cancellations some years later. But we must, of course judge them by the practices of the time. Most of the designs are grids and they include some of the best-known 1847 cancels. The Binghamton, New York "herring-bone", the St. Johnsbury, Vermont "scarab" and the Hudson River Mail "17 wavy bar grid" are classics (Figure 3) and all discussed in the literature.¹⁰ A fair number of other grids, generally circular, containing various numbers of bars, enclosed and open, have been noted.

Next to grids probably the most common category of obliterators designed as obliterators consists of groups of dots of various shapes and sizes. Target cancels became very popular beginning in about 1860 but on the 1847s are rare. Four ring red targets are noted obliterating 1847s from Hanover, New Hampshire and



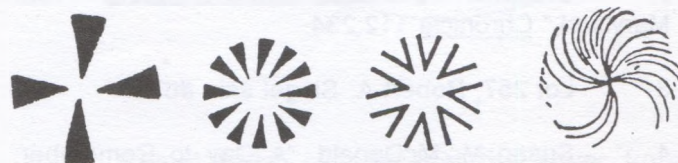
Figure 3

Greenwich, New York. A 7-circle black target from Montreal, Canada is also found on the 1847s. Certainly the most common fancy cancellation design during the handstamp era is the 5-point star and it is known on the 1847s from Trenton, New Jersey in blue (Figure 4). In his survey of 1847 covers from New Jersey, Brad Arch reported three covers bearing the star.¹¹ Four pinwheel designs (Figure 5) may be mentioned. Two are in blue - Keesville, New York and Wilmington & Raleigh Railroad - and the other two in red. An attractive example of the Paris obliterator on a piece with the townmark sold as lot 28 in the 1993 Ishikawa sale. Lot 70 in the Siegel sale #680 was an off-cover five cent 1847 obliterated by a graceful and delicate design described as "Red Pinwheel of Fine Lines." What I believe to be an illustration of the cancel (and perhaps taken from that particular strike) is the "unidentified" design in Figure 5. Incidentally, the Wilmington & Raleigh pinwheel and the St. Johnsbury scarab have both been noted on 1851 issue stamps.

We now turn to handstamp markings used as obliterators but not designed for that purpose and these comprise a considerable portion of the obliterations found on 1847s. Beginning with numbers intended for rating stampless mail, "5" and "10" markings are much more common than others. These occur in a variety of sizes and shapes, some are enclosed in an outer rim, and in rare cases the numbers are expressed as Roman numerals. As a general practice, five cent stamps were canceled by a "5" and ten cent stamps with a "10" but there are numerous exceptions. Sometimes, when two five cent 1847s paid the ten cent rate, they were canceled by "10" rate marks.



Figure 4



Wilmington & Raleigh R.R. Keesville, NY Paris, KY Unidentified

Figure 5

Baltimore and Philadelphia were two of the larger cities that used rating numbers as obliterators to an appreciable extent. Numbers "2", "6", "7", "12", "19", "20", "21", "24", "29", "34", "38", "40", "80", and probably others have also been seen obliterating 1847s. Among the more remarkable examples (Figure 6) are the Princeton, New Jersey green boxed "5" and the blue Huntsville, Alabama "5" in a star.

"PAID" handstamp markings are relatively common used as obliterators. "FREE" markings are also known but to a much lesser extent. An off-cover 1847 has been noted with a "PAID" and a "FREE" crossing one another. "STEAM", "STEAMBOAT", "STEAMSHIP" and "WAY" have all been seen. Concluding the category of postal markings used but not designed as obliterators, we come to townmarks and the similar but far less common route markings. While they are not common on 1847s, they do comprise a significant portion of 1847 obliterations and come from quite a few post



Figure 6

offices. The category of town and route marks was destined to become, of course, by far and away the most frequently employed obliteration on the 1851 issue.

This article is a modest attempt to survey in outline the practices adopted by post offices in grappling with what was for most an important new responsibility - defacing postage stamps to prevent their reuse - during the first four years. It is hoped that readers will

contribute their observations and insights for a future article on this subject.

Footnotes

1. Jon Rose, Classic United States Imperforate Stamps, 1990, p. 7, referring to an estimate made by Duane B. Garrett.
2. Creighton D. Hart, "1847 Covers From Maryland," Chronicle 112:234.
3. Lot 257, Robert A. Siegel sale #670.
4. Susan M. McDonald, "A Day to Remember: July 1, 1847," Chronicle 74:59-67. See also Creighton C. Hart, "A 2nd Day 1847 Cover," Chronicle 74:57-59.
5. Creighton C. Hart, "1847 Covers From Texas," Chronicle 48:pp. 3-4.
6. Dr. Carroll Chase, Classic United States Stamps, 1845-69, 1962, p. 4.
7. Thomas F. Allen, 19th Century Cleveland, Ohio Postal Markings, Garfield-Perry Stamp Club, 1991, p. 73.
8. Creighton C. Hart, "1847 Covers From New York City," Chronicle 97:24.
9. Creighton C. Hart, "Dot in U" - U.S. Express Mail - N.Y. Grid," Chronicle 63:99.
10. For example, "herringbone": Creighton C. Hart, "1847 Covers From New York - Binghamton," Chronicle 95:156-60; "scarab": George C. Slawson et al., The Postal History of Vermont, Collectors Club, NY, 1969, pp. 168-9; 17-wavy bar grid: Ashbrook Special Service, pp. 630-3.
11. Brad Arch, editor, New Jersey 1847 Issue Covers, NJPHS, 1987, p. 7.

Illustrations

-- Figure 1, Figure 2, Figure 3 (herringbone), Figure 4, Figure 5 (Keesville and Paris), and Figure 6 (Huntsville) are reproduced from Pat Paragraphs by Elliott Perry as published by the Bureau Issues Association, 1981, pp. 29-30.

-- Figure 3 (scarab), Figure 5 (Wilmington & Raleigh RR and "unidentified") and Figure 6 (Princeton 5) are reproduced from Skinner and Eno, United States Cancellations 1845-1869, 1980 pp. 30, 58, 81, and 265.

-- Figure 3 (17-wavy bar grid) is reproduced from Ashbrook Special Service, photo #310.

COMMENTS ON WINTER 1996 ARTICLES

Wendell Triplett reports a bottle stopper cancellation with a "4 1/2." The list of reported numbers is now as follows:

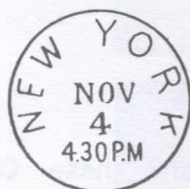
2	2 1/2
3	3 1/2
4	4 1/2
	5 1/2
6	

Paul Berg pointed out that his book, Chicago Blue Postal Markings 1870-1877, presents a chapter on the "negative 'A' with 3" cancels and stated that he has been able to document at least 21 different varieties of this killer.



And now for the New York "12" and "2" combination which contains an enigma worthy of Hercule Poirot or Inspector Morse, for those who watch *Mystery!* on PBS. I managed to overlook the point altogether and it concerns the orientation of the reverse "2" in relation to the carved "12." One would, of course, expect the orientations of the two numbers to remain constant relative to one another if the stopper rotates, for whatever reason, in the ring on the handstamp. However, that is not what we see in the two examples illustrated on page 42 in the Winter 1996 NEWS. In both illustrations, the "12" is essentially right side up while the "2" is right side up in one and upside down in the other! It certainly seems probable that these two impressions were made by the same handstamp, about a half an hour apart, but how to explain the difference? If any reader can shed light on the matter, please do so. Many thanks to John Donnes for bringing out this important point.

Incidentally, bottle stopper numbers can be misread because they are reversed as well as for the same reasons that lead to distortions in other markings. Wendell mentioned an auction lot

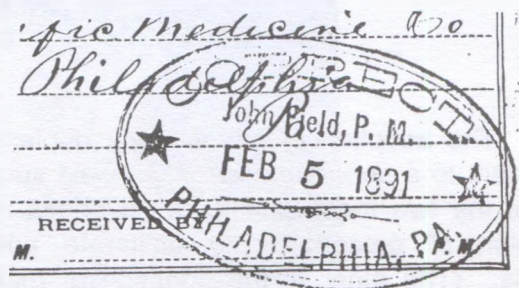


description of a "4 1/2" that was erroneously described as a "1 1/4." Also, for example, an overinked "3" can appear to be an "8." Caution is indicated.

Paul Berg reported an August 11 (1874) postal card bearing the profile I had noted used on August 10 (1874). What a fine item!



Gil Levere showed a fancy Philadelphia "CORRECT" marking complete with stars and remarked that Volume II of Tom Clarke's A Catalog of Philadelphia Postmarks, 18th Century to the Present illustrates this and other Philadelphia "CORRECT" markings.



Calvet Hahn reports that the cover from Burlington, Vermont was lot 201 in the Siegel sale of 12/5/67 where it was described as having a faint manuscript cancel in addition to being tied by the red grid. He also cited various other 5 cent 1847 covers bearing a Burlington CDS with a "5." Such covers are clearly not rare. And he mentioned a Burlington cover to Miss Sylvia Clark bearing an 1847 canceled by a 5-bar grid which was lot 160 in the 3/11/61 Pollitz sale, lot 410 in the 4/23/73 Paige sale and lot 324 in the 3/26/76 Kelleher sale. It would be interesting to examine this cover.

Regarding the N. York and N. Haven R.R. cover, Calvet noted that the round grid was often used on this line and that from July 1, 1849 through May 31, 1853, the same two route agents were assigned. On June 1, 1853 one was replaced and on June 7, the other. This suggests that the date of the November cover might not be 1852 since it would be reasonable to speculate that the grid showed up when brought by a new route agent. But if so, how then do we explain the February 7 cover, docketed 1853, apparently struck with a square grid, in the Towle collection, unless it is fraudulent. (To my knowledge, Towle had no such concern about it.) Calvet mentioned that his viewing of the lot illustration of the November cover in the Wyer sale catalog leads him to believe that there are more than 11 bars in the cancel. (If it were 13 bars, that would be the same as the first New York square grid that basically showed 13 bars.) Upon re-examining the lot illustration, I think there may well be 12 bars that show. I wish the photo and the strike were clearer. If the owner is a reader of these pages, a report would be appreciated.

EARLY CINCINNATI DUPLEX

by Roger D. Curran

The adoption of handstamps duplexing a townmark to a separate killer is, I would suggest, one of the two most significant advances in the evolution of procedures to obliterate postage stamps. (The other is the adoption of machine cancels.) Arthur Bond wrote in 1963 a brief but extremely important article on the introduction of these duplexes in this country, basically through a report of actions by the New York Post Office in 1860.¹ The NYPO is generally regarded as the first U.S. post office to introduce these handstamps for regular and continuous use, although this innovation was soon employed elsewhere. The motivation for New York and other post offices was a July 23, 1860 postal regulation that forbade use of the townmark as a canceler of postage stamps. To continue the time-saving practice of making one strike that both postmarked the cover and obliterated the adhesive, duplex handstamps designed for the purpose were introduced.

The earliest New York duplex reported by Bond was August 8, 1860 and to my knowledge no earlier example has surfaced. In a 1991 book on Cleveland, Ohio postal markings, Richard Graham and Thomas Allen report a Cleveland duplex of a townmark and a killer dated August 17, 1860 and two other examples dated later that month.² Bond illustrated an August 28 Cincinnati duplex (see Figure 1) that he deduced to be 1860. The purpose of this article is to add some information pertaining to the early Cincinnati duplexes.

As was common, Cincinnati used the townmark largely as the canceler of postage stamps during the era of the 1851 and 1857 issues. Indeed, Chase estimated that, for the U.S. as a whole, omitting manuscript cancellations, roughly two-thirds of 1851 and 1857 issue stamps were canceled by townmarks.³ Figure 2 is a cover bearing a Cincinnati duplex dated August 20 (1860) and Figure 3 is a cover front bearing an August 24 Cincinnati duplex which I assume to be 1860. Interestingly, the Figures 2 and 3 covers may involve different handstamps as the grid on the August 24 cover is higher in relation to "CINCINNATI" in the CDS. Figure 4 shows a cover postmarked August 7 which, from the enclosure, can be dated 1860. I strongly suspect that use of the separate grid in this case results from the above-mentioned regulation that had been

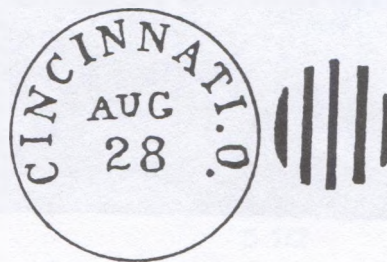


Figure 1

issued just two weeks before.

I wonder how early these Cincinnati duplexes were employed. If the NYPO can be used as a guide, we should not necessarily expect a precise switch from non-duplex to duplex postmarks. Figure 5 shows a New York cover bearing a non-duplexed townmark and a separate killer dated August 13, 1860 even though New York duplexes began showing up as early as August 8. There was probably a period of experimentation initially on some but not all mail. Also, perhaps time was needed to obtain a supply and put into service duplexes for all the non-duplexed handstamps that were being replaced.

I assume that the Cincinnati handstamps duplexing the 33mm townmarks to a killer were not used for a lengthy period because a smaller townmark in a duplex began appearing in less than three months. Figure 6 shows a smaller, double circle duplex dated November 1 (1860).

I urge readers to supply additional information about the introduction of duplexes in Cincinnati or elsewhere during 1860. Reports of individual covers bearing early duplexes, even if the year date cannot be specified, would be welcomed.

Appreciation is extended to David G. Phillips for permission to illustrate the covers in Figures 4 and 6 from his collection and for providing other information. Any factual errors or misinterpretations of data are the responsibility of the author.

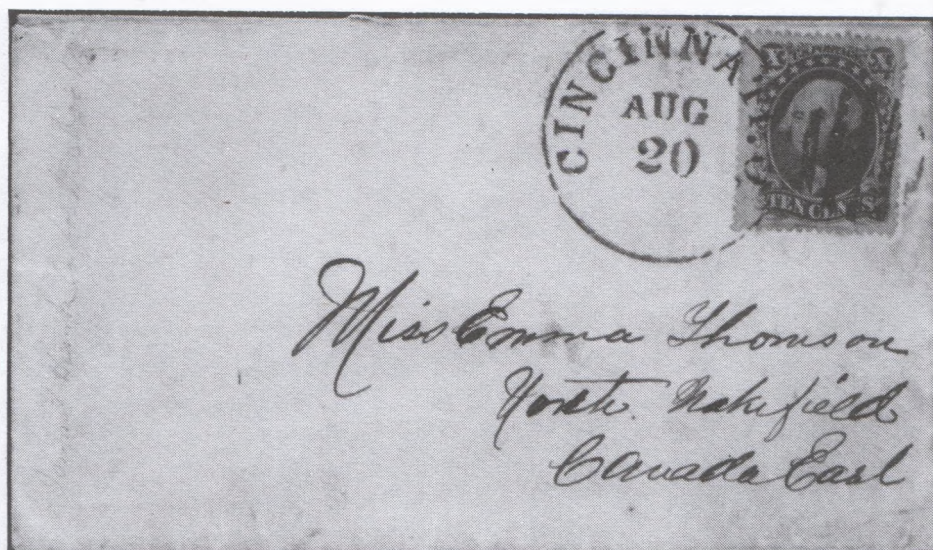
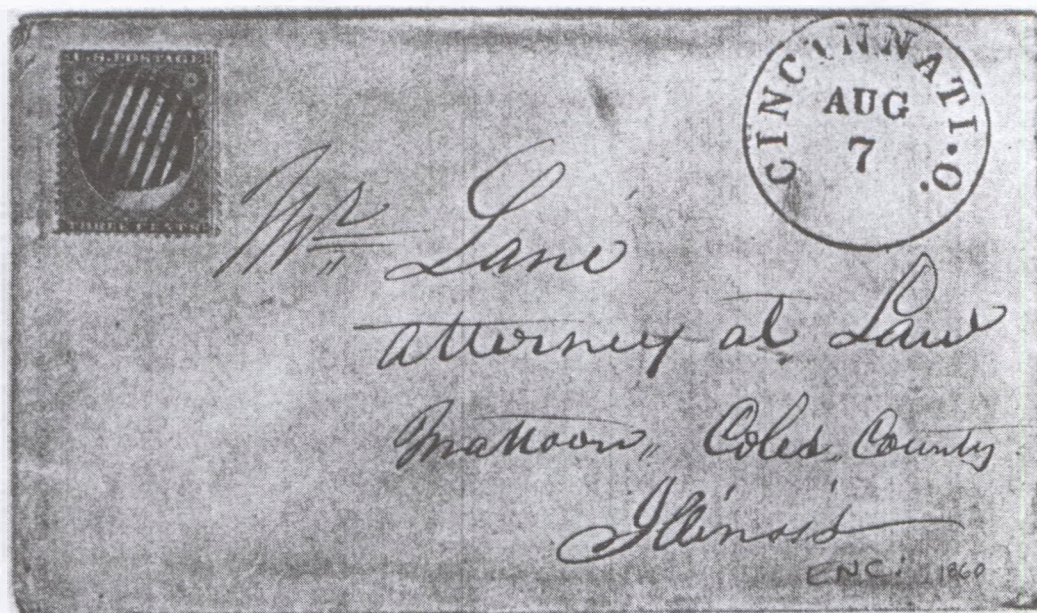


Figure 2



Figure 3

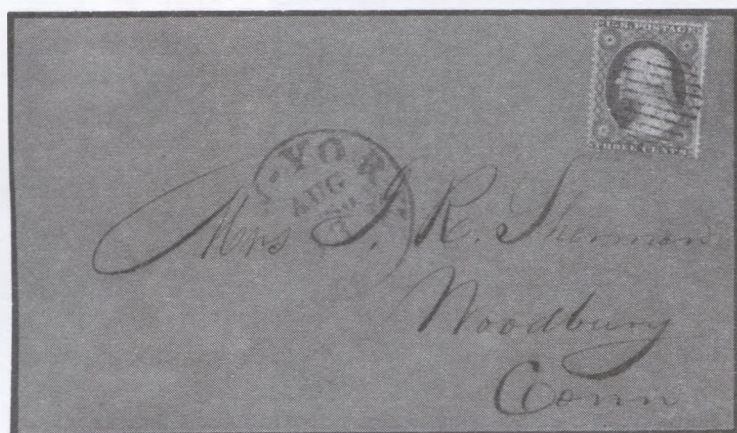
Figure 4



Footnotes

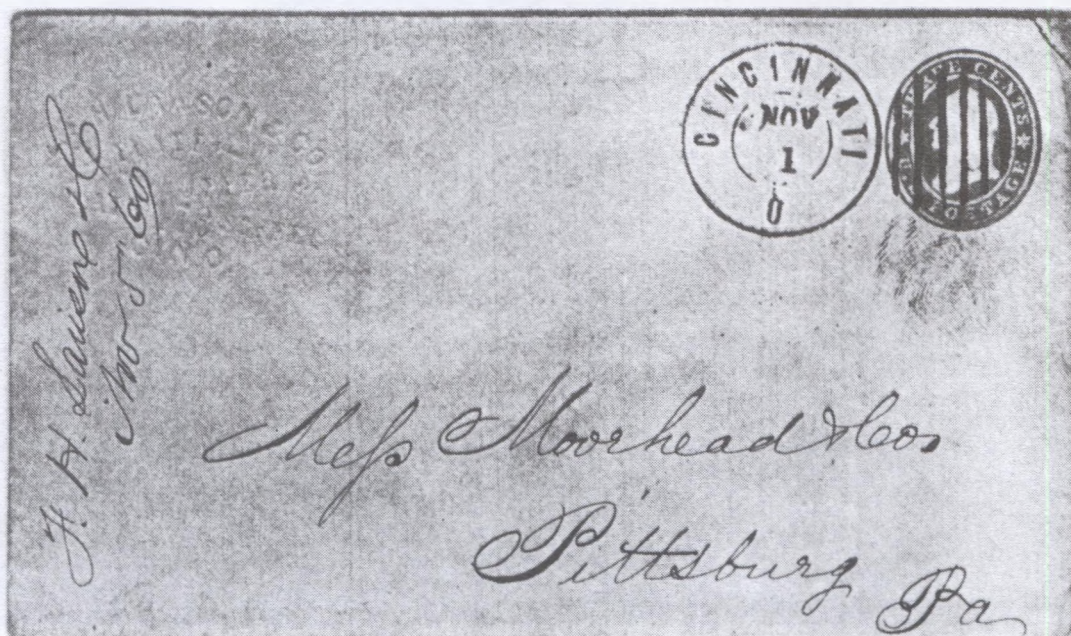
1. Bond, Arthur H. "Time-Saving, Duplex Handstamps, Its Invention, Use and Manufacture.", Postal History Journal, Vol. 3, No. 1, July 1963, pp. 59-63.
2. Graham, Richard B. and Allen, Thomas F. "Cleveland Circular Townmarks and the Post Office Department Government Issue; Early Duplex," 19th Century Cleveland, Ohio Postal Markings, Thomas F. Allen, The Garfield-Parry Stamp Club, Inc., 1991, pp. 30-1.

Figure 5



3. Chase, Carroll The 3 Cent Stamp of the United States 1851-1857 Issue, Quarterman Publications, Inc., 1975, p. 334.

Figure 6



"STAMPLESS" TOWNMARKS

by Roger D. Curran

In his book, The PAID Markings on the Three Cent U.S. Stamp of 1861, George W. Linn included a category of markings that we probably wouldn't think of, at least initially. These are townmarks that include the word "PAID" within the design. Mr. Linn included as "PAID" cancels only those townmarks actually used to obliterate 3 cent 1861s. Uses of a "PAID" townmark with a separate killer to obliterate the stamp were not recorded. He reported the following qualifying items: "PITTSFIELD Mass" with "PAID," NORFOLK Va. with "3PAID," "PASSUMPSIC" (MA) with "PAID/3 cts." and "WILKINS Pa." with two vertical "PAID" markings. Mr. Linn raised a question about whether the two Wilkins "PAID" markings were impressed separately.

For first-class domestic mail, strictly speaking, references in a townmark to "PAID," a rating number or both became superfluous as of April 1, 1855 when prepayment became mandatory. However, the "PAID" marking would have no doubt minimized confusion during the April-December 1855 period when the mandatory prepayment did not require use of adhesive stamps. On January 1, 1856 prepayment by adhesive stamps was, of course, required.

In Simpson's U.S. Postal Markings, 1851-1861, edited by Alexander, under the section headed "Townmarks," 181 townmarks are listed that include "PAID," rate numbers "3", "6", or "10" or a combination of "PAID" and one of these rate numbers. Coverage was explained as follows:

"This listing is limited to town marks found on domestic mail (and to British North America) at the letter rate prepaid by stamps; that is, mail that would normally carry a 3 cent stamp for less than 3,000 miles, 6 cents and 10 cents beyond that distance and 10 cents to Canada (less than 3,000 miles)."

As with uses of "PAID" and rate number handstamps to obliterate adhesives after the stampless era, it is interesting to note how late "stampless" townmarks are used whether or not they also served as obliterations. Several examples are shown herewith. Figure 1 illustrates two different townmarks from Pittsfield, Mass.

Figure 2 involves what may be termed a redundant redundancy with two "PAID" markings in addition to the stamp on the cover. Figure 4 is interesting in that the townmark is in red ink. (The killer in blue.) All the townmarks mentioned above are reported in Simpson's USPM but the Danvers example is not reported in red. Figure 5 from Nantucket, Mass. shows a space to the left of "PAID" where a rating number was removed. Simpson's USPM reports this townmark, noting "3 removed". A rather spectacular 1856 transatlantic cover from New Bedford, Mass., also showing a rating number removed before "PAID" in the townmark, is illustrated on the cover of the Siegel catalog for Sale #774 of March 27 and 28, 1996.

The covers in Figures 1-5 are undated but all have 3 cent 1861s that are ungrilled. Readers are urged to check their collections or records for late usages of townmarks with "PAID" or a rate number or both, found on domestic mail, and report such examples to the NEWS. Especially significant would be those found on grilled issues or later. I have no doubt that there are some very interesting examples out there. Also, any literature citations on the subject would be helpful.

I'll close with one enigmatic marking illustrated in Figure 6. It involves a cover that entered the mails on December 1, 1885 addressed to Palmyra, New York. There is no back stamp but there is, of course, a Palmyra, NY/PAID townmark on the front. It appears to be another example of a townmark where the rate number was removed from the area to the left of "PAID." The 1985 edition of the American Stampless Cover Catalog reports a 31mm. Palmyra, NY townmark with "3 PAID" used in the 1850s. The Figure 6 townmark, which is in magenta ink, measures 32 mm. but may well be the same marking because of potential inking, strike, measuring, etc. variations among examples. Given the lack of a Palmyra receipt mark on the back, the Palmyra post office may have intended the "PAID" townmark to serve as a receipt mark. However, the marking lacks the essential date information, although the clerk may have simply forgotten to write it in. Another possibility is that the marking was used privately by Miss Garlock Crandall & Co. for some record purposes - perhaps to note paid orders or payments on account. Or, the marking might be fraudulent. I'd like to think that it was used by the

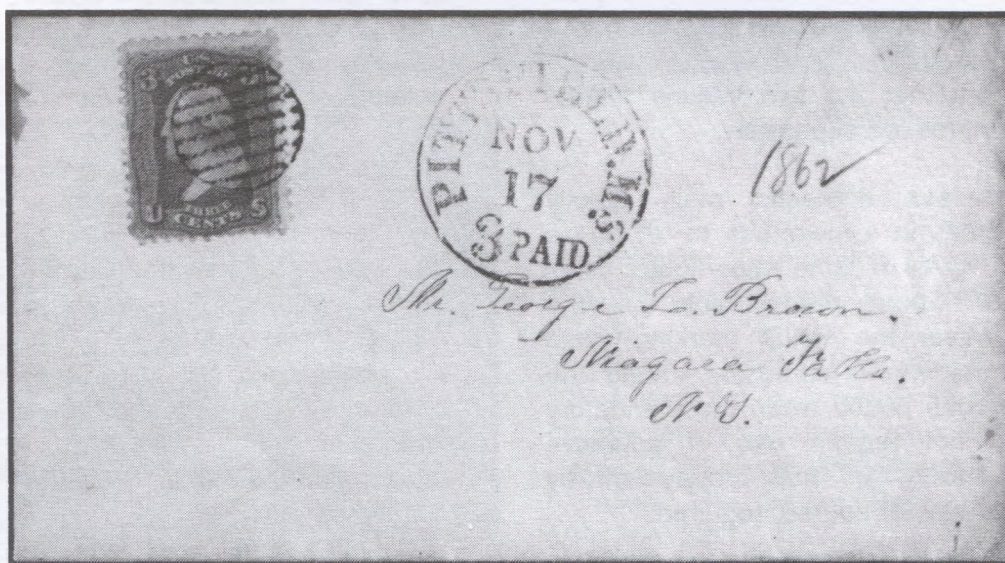
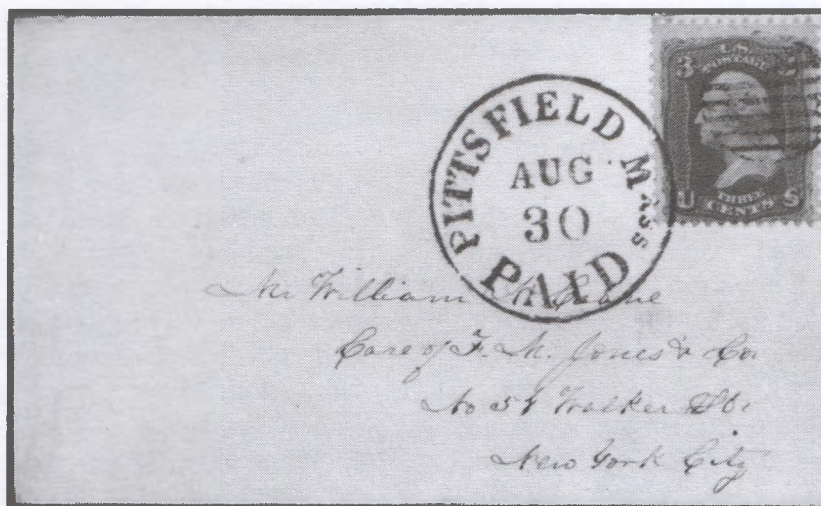


Figure 1

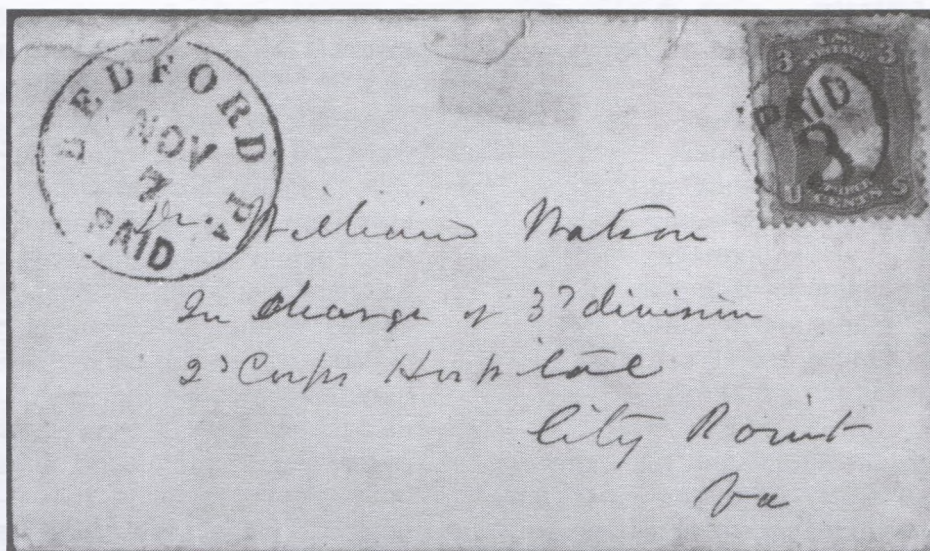


Figure 2

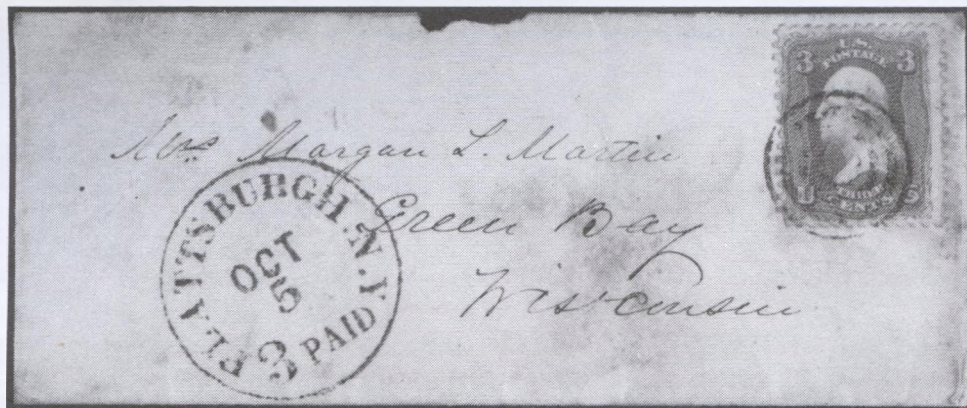


Figure 3

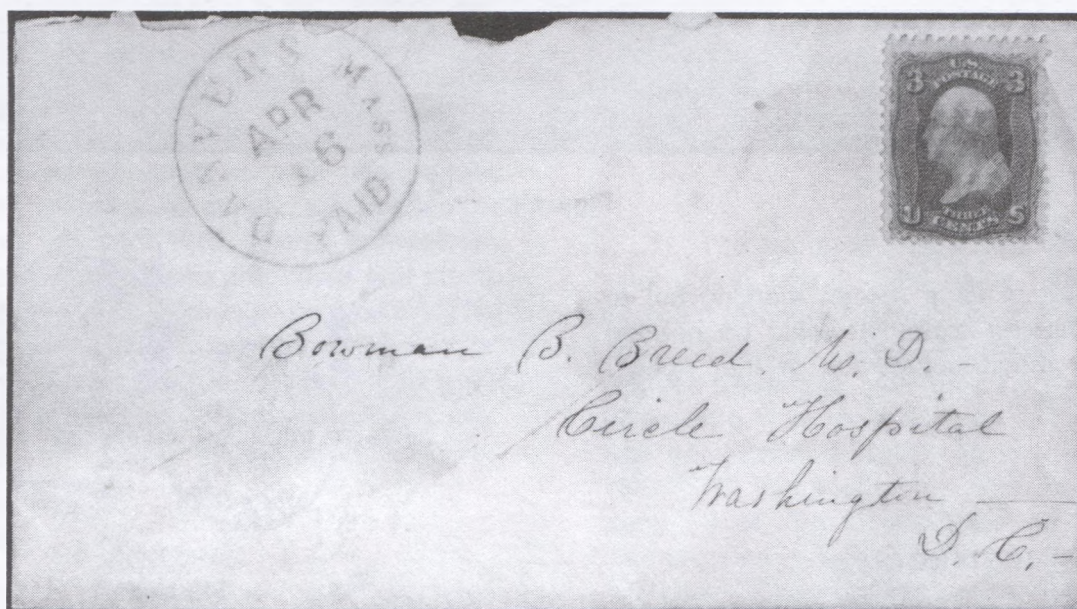


Figure 4

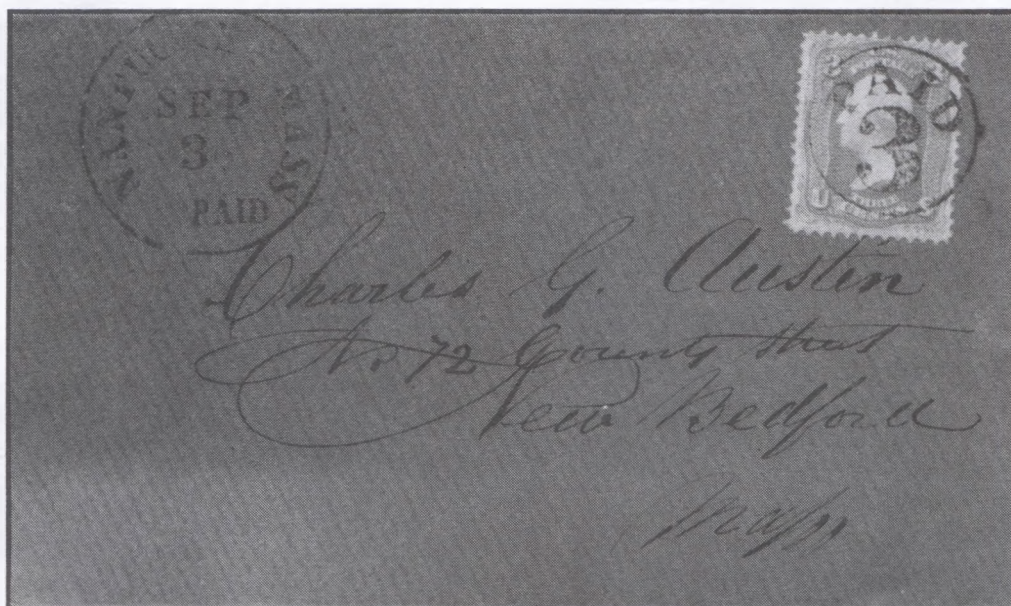


Figure 5

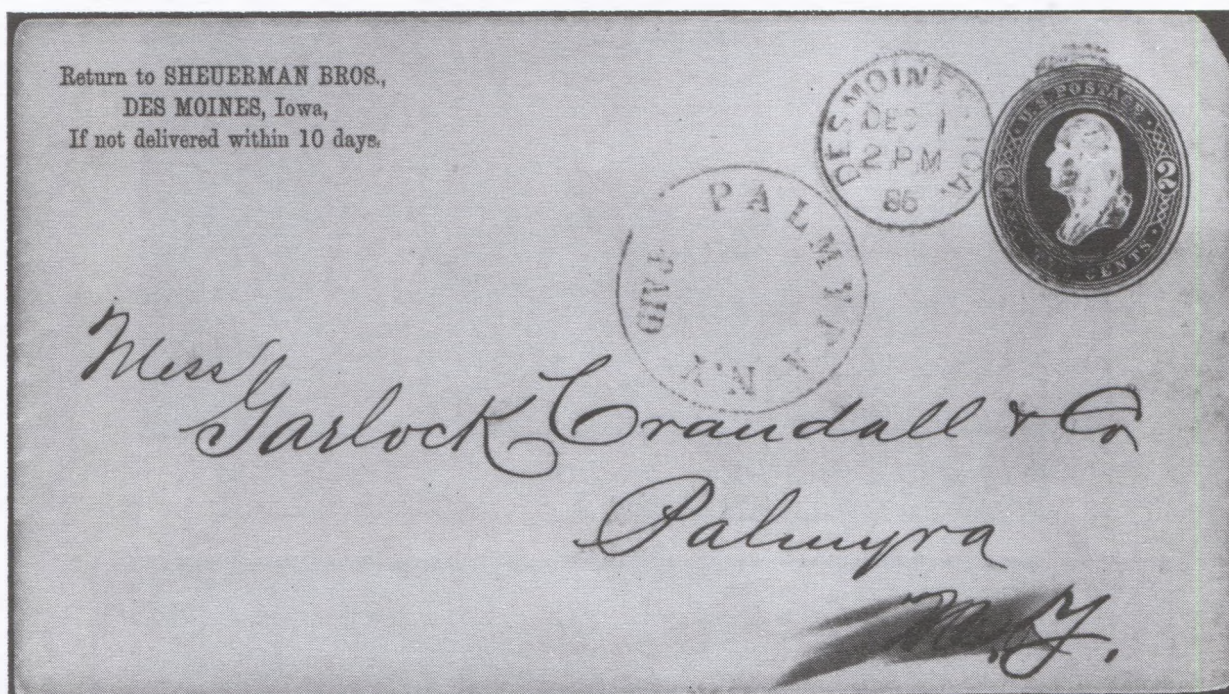


Figure 6

Palmyra post office as a receipt marking but at least one confirming example would be needed before placing much confidence in that notion. Comment is invited.

HIGH NOON

Gil Levere sends information about postmarks in his collection bearing "NOON" in the CDS. Figure 1 illustrates an example from Boston. (In Boston Postmarks to 1890, Blake and Davis show as Figure 2025 a CDS enclosing both "NOON" and a two-digit year date.) Figure 2 is an example from Brattleboro, Vermont and Gil also reports usages in 1882, 1884, 1887 and 1888. He contacted the Brattleboro postmaster who advised that he could provide no background on "NOON" postmarks. Through the Vermont Philatelic Society, Gil learned about the 1884, 1887 and 1888 examples but nothing further. A much later example, from Greenfield, Michigan, was also provided by Gil.

Who can provide more information in terms of further examples or some background on their use? It does seem that "12N" for noon and "12M" for midnight is a simpler approach. "12M" is seen with some frequency. Blake and Davis illustrate as Figure 2027 a "12M" Boston CDS.

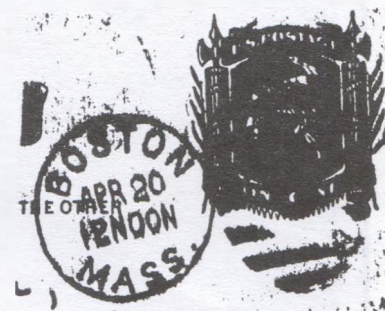


Figure 1

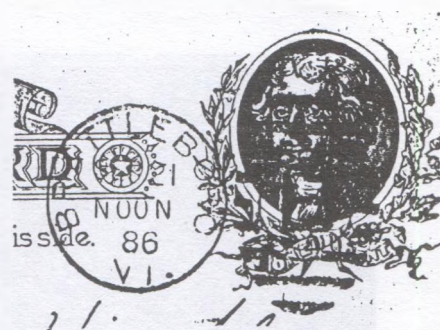


Figure 2



Figure 3

NEW YORK POSTMARKS

by Roger D. Curran

The dealer selling the 3 cent 1851 illustrated in Figure 1 noted "New York cancel" beneath the stamp in his stockbook. True, certainly, as far as it goes. Actually there are two different black New York postmarks on the stamp as approximated in Figure 2. The "Paid 3 Cts" postmark is under the regular townmark. Ashbrook stated that his records showed this marking only in red and unknown on the 3 cent 1851. His earliest reported use was December 18, 1854 and latest December 6, 1855.¹ Chase reported no such New York postmark seen on 3 cent 1851 covers.² The postmark is not reported in Simpson's USPM.³

So what do we have here? Let's speculate. Perhaps at the beginning of a workday a clerk picked up what he thought was the regular townmark, hit the black ink supply, and applied the handstamp to a 3 cent 1851 cover. Immediately realizing the error, he struck the cover and stamp again, this time with the regular postmark. That there is no evidence of any red in the "Paid 3 Cts" marking suggests that the handstamp had been cleaned, perhaps at the end of the preceding day. Comment is invited as well as reports of interesting uses of this postmark.

Footnotes

1. Ashbrook, Stanley A. The United States One Cent Stamp of 1851-1857, Vol. II, H. L. Lindquist, New York, NY (1938), pp. 113,124-5. Also the source of the "Paid 3 Cts" postmark illustrated in Figure 2.

2. Chase, Carroll The 3 Cent Stamp of the United States 1851-1857 Issue, Quarterman Publications Inc., Lawrence, MA (1975), p. 333.

3. Alexander, Thomas J. Simpson's U.S. Postal Markings 1851-1861, USPCS, Columbus, OH (1979). See p. 99.



Figure 1

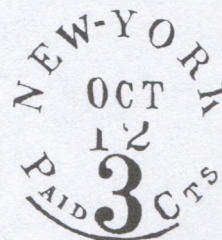
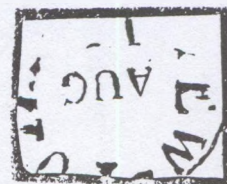


Figure 2

NOTED IN PASSING

by Roger D. Curran

The stamp in Figure 1 caught my attention when I first saw it. The earliest known use of a one cent re-engraved, such as this, is in December 1881. The cancellation appeared to me to be a clogged example of the Leominster, Mass. "Stovepipe." Interesting thing is, this cancellation has only been reported, to my knowledge, on 1861-1870 issue stamps. Tracing GCR-105 on page 50 of Jim Cole's book on Banknote era cancellations is reproduced here as Figure 2. An 1870 issue cover bearing the cancellation is shown as Figure 3. I thought the cancellation might have been used, after a period of retirement, on circular mail as was the case with the Columbus, Ohio "prison bars" killer. This notion continued until comparative measurements with several tracings and a couple of actual examples were undertaken. The theory quickly evaporated as the Figure 1 cancel, although possessing eight segments as does the Leominster design, is significantly smaller both in terms of overall diameter and diameter of the inner blank circle. I'm reminded of the expression of several years ago: "It seemed like a good idea at the time."



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

An interesting cancel found with some frequency, particularly on War Department stamps, is the "US" shown in Figure 4. Three examples on off-cover stamps are shown on Figure 5. What post office used this killer was not widely known.

Several years ago, however, a cover appeared in an auction that provided an answer. Figure 6 illustrates this cover which entered the mails at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri and the stamp is canceled by the Figure 4 killer.

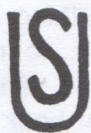


Figure 4



Figure 5

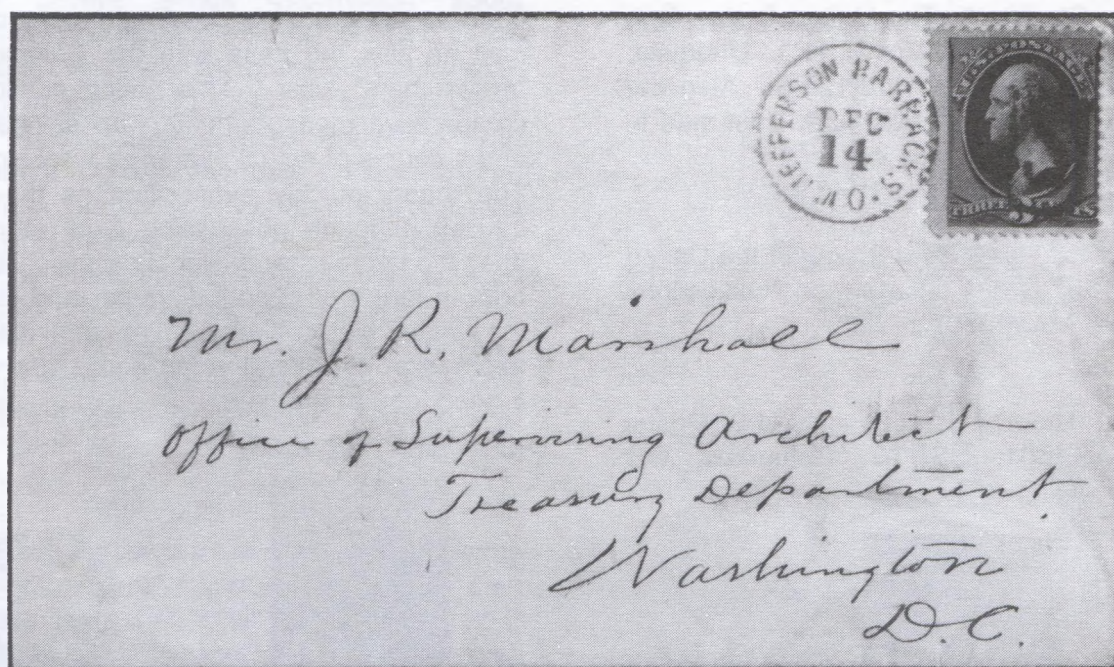


Figure 6