



# *Cancellation Club* **NEWS**

Vol. 23, No. 6, Whole No. 221, Fall 1996

## **Cancelers With Numbers in NYC Handstamps - First Class Mail**

by Roger D. Curran

In 1872, the main NYPO did something interesting and important insofar as postal history is concerned. It began using, on out-of-town domestic mail, cancelers that contained a number in the center. Commenting on this development, Gilbert M. Burr, an early and leading student of cancellations on Banknote era stamps, stated:

"With the use of stamps, of course, it became necessary to use some marking that would so obliterate the stamp to prevent its re-use. . . . New York City seems to have been the first of any city to attempt any plan (or) . . . system to these cancellations and while they were simply a crude hand cut numeral, they were still the beginning of a great system that has since spread to almost every post office in the United States."

By "system," Mr. Burr was undoubtedly referring to internal-to-the-post office procedures whereby the handstamp cancelers were designated in such a way that instances of their usage could be easily tabulated. And this approach surely spread to almost every large post office. Just what the numbers meant in NYC will be considered later.

These hand carved numbers were used until 1876 and there were three principal types. The most common by far was that comprised of negative Arabic numerals in an otherwise positive killer. Several examples are illustrated in Figure 1. Numbers "1" through "16" have been reported with

"15" and "16" apparently being quite rare. I recall that upon showing a fellow collector a "15" in my collection, he pointed out that it was really a "13" and indeed it was. Since some of the hand-carved numerals are thin and vary greatly from one another in terms of shape and since their appearance can be so much influenced by strike, inking and wear variations, confusion can and does occur. The only "15" known to me is tracing NYC-

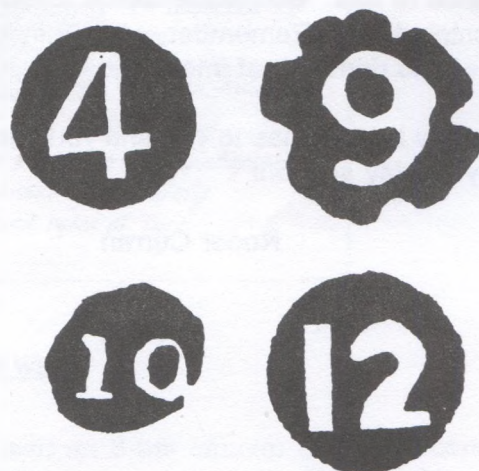


Figure 1

38 appearing on page 300 of Jim Cole's Banknote era cancellation book. I have never seen a "16." If any reader has a clear strike of either a New York "15" or "16," I would very much appreciate receiving a photocopy.

(continued on p. 85)



Dear Reader,

The main article in this issue concerns numbers in handstamp killers used by the New York Post Office from 1872 through the mid-1890s. This article first appeared in the Fall/Winter 1992 issue of the Journal of the Empire State Postal History Society. Additional information has now been included and a correction made. The article largely seeks to bring together data presented over the years by students in various publications. Virtually all, if not all, of these collectors are or were members of the U.S. Cancellation Club.

I want to take this opportunity to earnestly ask your support of the NEWS. You can help by submitting articles, photocopies of covers or stamps with interesting markings that readers can comment on or explain, data to supplement or correct what is presented in NEWS articles, questions and issues that can generate a dialogue in these pages, etc. A number of club members do write and contribute and this is, I know, greatly appreciated by readers. However, more is surely needed to make the NEWS reflect adequately the range of interests and expertise of the USCC membership. It would be hard to overstate the importance of this. So please, come forward with your contributions. Remember, what is interesting to you will no doubt be of interest to others.

Very best wishes to you and your family for a happy holiday season!

Roger Curran

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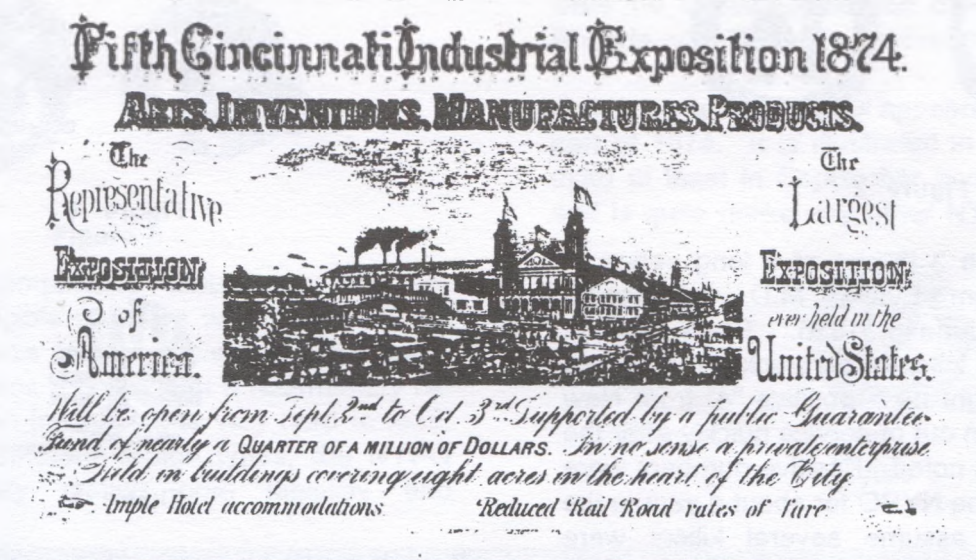
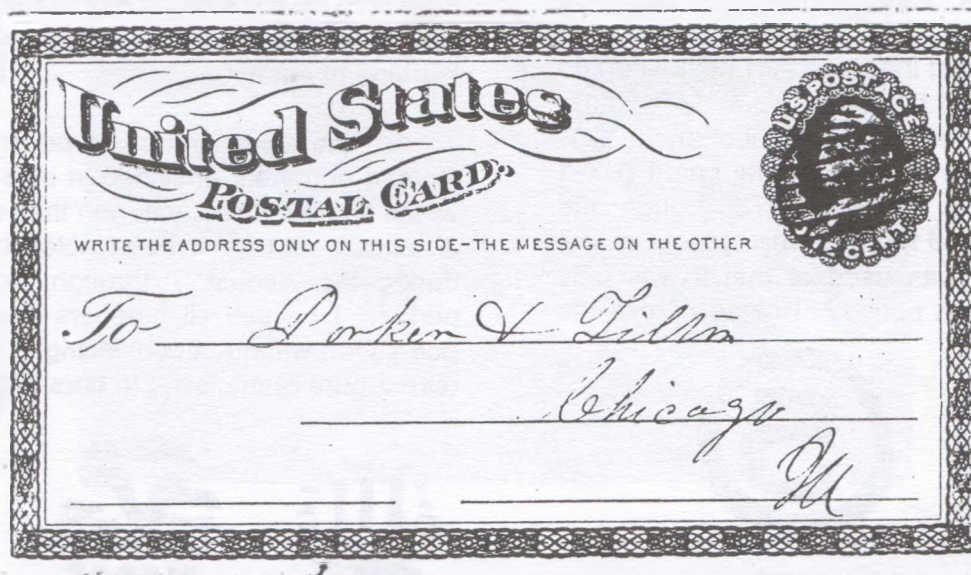


Figure 1

George Aschenbrenner sends information about a postal card that was postmarked in an unusual way. The front and back are illustrated as Figure 1. The circular grid is at least similar to the "standard" grid used on 1847 issue stamps. According to the 1995 U.S. postal card catalog, copies of this card are only known used, and without a CDS, and the cancel is assumed to be a precancel.

According to David W. Smith's 1995 book *Silent Precancels*, published by the Precancel Stamp Society, Cincinnati used a 7-bar circular grid on 1 cent 1867 and 3 cent 1879 (postage due)

issues and an 8-bar circular grid on 1 cent and 2 cent 1870 issues and on the 3 cent 1879 postage due.

Regarding the Cincinnati exposition card, possibly the Cincinnati postmaster thought no Cincinnati CDS was needed because he figured it would be obvious from where it came. But even if that were so, the date of mailing would be important and required. Possible circular rate?

Comment is invited.



(continued from front page)

Quite a bit less common is the type comprised of positive Arabic numerals enclosed in an outer rim illustrated in Figure 2. I have seen no reports of numbers of this type above "14." Roger Rhoads, who has made an excellent study of NYC cancels as found on the first postal cards (UX-1 and 3 issued during the May 1873 through late 1875 period), reported no "4" of this type. Could it be no positive "4" was used or that it was only used for a very short period? I came across the

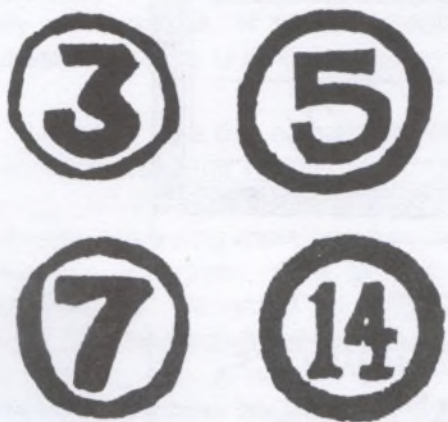


Figure 2

illustration in Figure 3 in one of a long series of articles by William Evans, M.D. in Stamps magazine, dated June 6, 1936. There was no narrative about the killer in the article. It occurred to me that this might be a positive "4" from New York that was taken out of service quickly after the reverse image was noted. Positive numbers were used regularly by the NYPO for about a year in the aggregate and I assume several killers were prepared for each number because such cancels wore out quickly. If they were all made at the same time, then assuming that each would have a reverse "4" would be reasonable. Otherwise, one would still expect to see correct "4" examples, based on the presumption that the initial error was corrected in killers made subsequently. The diameter of the Figure 3 example is 2-3 mm. smaller than the diameter of any of the limited number of other New York positive number killers I examined. This tends to argue against the "4"



Figure 3

being a New York Killer. And I should mention that the other killers illustrated in Dr. Evans' article appear to be full size. If any reader has a positive New York "4" on cover, I would greatly appreciate learning about it.

The third primary type is comprised of Roman numerals enclosed in bars (see Figure 4) which are quite less common than even the Figure 2 cancels and have been noted by Rhoads only during the August 7 through October 2, 1874 period. I believe all numbers through "14" have been seen without a convincing "1." An Arabic "1" (see Figure 5) enclosed in bars has been noted by



Figure 4



Figure 5

Rhoads dated August 9, 1874.

In addition to the three primary types, other designs were used by the NYPO but none in a long sequence of numbers or what we might loosely term as "sets." Several are illustrated in Figure 6.

It should be pointed out that, especially in the case of negative numbers, many distinct designs exist. These killers were frequently replaced and the hand carved numbers, in the aggregate, as mentioned above, showed wide variation. Figure 7 illustrates this point. Also, as can be noted in Figure 1, there was considerable variation in the size and shape of the overall killers themselves. Considering the "system" concept again, a "5" is a "5" and design variations do not complicate tabulations of use. However, what



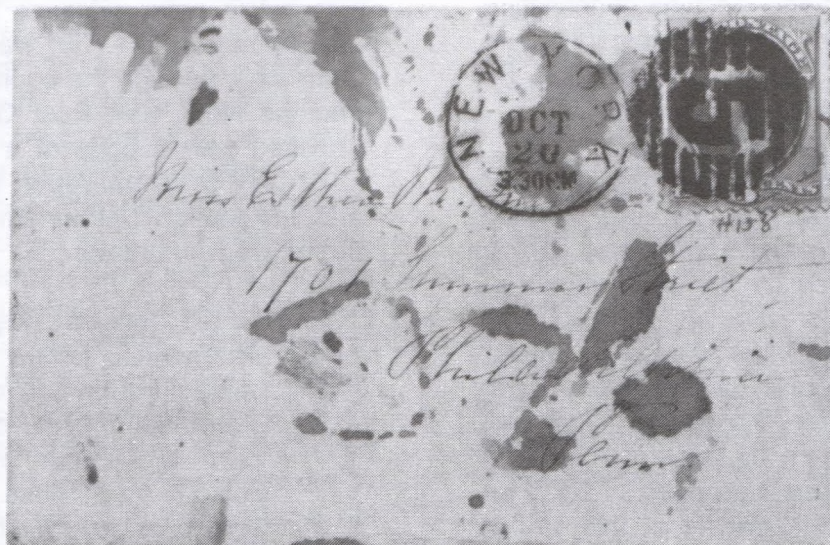


Figure 6



Figure 7

durability. The positive numbers, for example, were no doubt considered more legible but, as Rhoads noted, wore out more quickly.

A very interesting cancel appeared during the latter part of 1874. It is illustrated in Figure 9. It was used at least in September and October in 1874 and is quite unlike any other NYC cancel. There

would have complicated tabulations was the presence of illegible numbers which did occur at this time but was largely solved in later years. Figure 8 illustrates a cover with a rudimentary "4" cancel which, on the stamp, is very hard to read. By employing different design types, the NYPO was presumably testing both legibility and



Figure 9

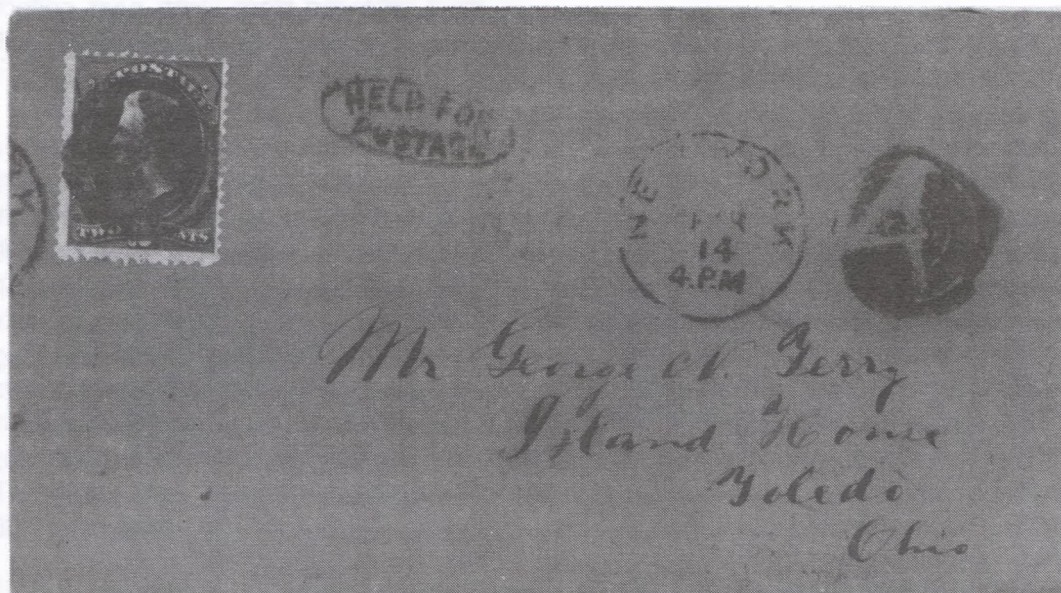


Figure 8



has been speculation among machine cancellation specialists that it was likely produced by a mechanical handstamp but, to my knowledge, no definite conclusions have been reached.

The manufactured metal ellipse canceler became the most popular canceler just prior to widespread adoption of machine cancelers. Ellipse cancelers were employed by the post offices of virtually all (if not all) major cities and a great many others as well. They were first used on a regular basis in NYC in 1876 and displaced the hand carved numbers thus far discussed. But well before that, at least as early as December 1874, a manufactured metal ellipse was used in NYC on an experimental basis. A tracing of this 11-bar



Figure 10

ellipse appears as Figure 10. It is a scarce cancel so was apparently used only sparingly.

The ellipse cancelers employed by NYC in 1876 are of the type illustrated by Figure 11. The earliest report I have seen is from Gilbert Levere on a postal card dated May 3, 1876. This is very interesting because Rhoads reports a hand carved numeral dated May 1, 1876. Did the switch come on May 2 or 3 or was there a period of overlap?

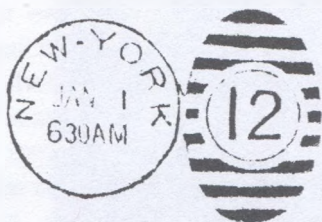


Figure 11

Burr reported the NYC 9-bar ellipse on 3c greens running from "1" through "32" and a single example of a "33" dated 1879. Of the "33" he said:

"This number must have been discontinued because of the many thousands I have gone over, it is the only one ever found."

We have evidence that, at least in 1877, only numbers "1" - "30" were employed. Several years ago, through the courtesy of Martin Margulis and the New York Post Office, the NEWS was provided with a copy of a portion of an internal 1877 NYPO annual report devoted to the Mailing and Distribution Department. We herewith quote the relevant paragraph:

"The handstamps used for postmarking letters received at this office through the drops, and from street lamp-post collections have each a number in the canceling portion . . . These numbers range from 1 to 30. Each stamping clerk also has a number corresponding to the number on the particular hand stamp which he uses, and certain numbers are also assigned for the letters received from lamp-post collections. The dies representing the hours are changed every half-hour during the day so as to as nearly as possible designate the hour of mailing. Thus the postmark upon any letter mailed at this office shows at once at what time it was mailed, the clerk who stamped it, and whether it was dropped into a street lamp-post box or was mailed at the general office."

Thus each postmarking clerk was assigned a number. Also, some portion of the clerks (and hence their numbers) were assigned to postmark mail received from lamp post collections and the other clerks handled mail deposited at the main NYPO.

Arthur Bond reported that the early NYC ellipses were combined in duplex handstamps with a CDS bearing no year date. The numbers were "1" through "30" found from May 1876 to August 1878 except for a "6." However, a "6" in the Figure 10 style (11 bars and shaded numeral) was noted during the May 22, 1877 - August 31, 1877 period. (John Donnes has reported a June 20, 1878 usage.) Bond noted ellipses duplexed to a CDS bearing a year date beginning in October 1878 and continuing until 1899. The numbers were "1" through "30" and, after "30," only even numbers through "52."

On the two cent red browns (issued during



the October 1883 - September 1887 period), Burr noted numbers "1" through "24" and then only even numbers through "52." Willard confirmed Burr's report about the NYC ellipse numbers found on the two-cent red brown and went on to state that there are at least two sets of numbers. First there were even numbers from "2" to "52" which he believed were used at the main post office and a second set with "different style numerals" running from "1" to "23" for substations of which 23 were listed in the Postal Guide in 1893. Willard stated he didn't know what the distinction was between these substations and the stations which were identified by letters and which used ellipses with a letter in the center. However, I am informed by Tom Stanton that substations at that time did not process and postmark any mail other than registered letters. Their activity was limited to selling postal supplies (stamps, postal cards and postal stationery) and processing money orders and registered mail.

Just here it may be appropriate to mention that the horizontal bar New York handstamp ellipses all had nine bars except for the 11-bar ellipses mentioned above containing "5" or "6" in the center. However, the NYPO did some experimenting with one or more Leavitt canceling machines that produced ellipse killers with eight horizontal bars enclosing a "31," "32," or "33." A drawing by Frank Stratton is shown in Figure 12 as well as an actual example. He reported that the "31" is scarce, only one strike of the "32" is known, and two copies of the "33." All are dated 1878 except one strike of the "33" in 1882.

Considering now the "31" and "33" nine-bar killers, Bond reported neither. Surely the "33" duplexed to a CDS must be a rare, perhaps extremely rare item. Burr made no reference to the "31" as to scarcity. My own estimate of the situation is that the "31" and "32" are both scarce on three cent greens but not rare. We know that in 1877 only numbers "1" through "30" were used. Numbers "31" and "32" must have been added later (they are seen on both the 1879 and re-engraved issues) but by the time of the two cent red brown, the "31" as well as odd numbers "25" through "29" had been discontinued, at least on first-class mail. Three examples of the "31" on off-cover stamps, showing enough of the CDS to the left to confirm NYC origin, are illustrated in Figure 13.



Figure 13

Meanwhile in the foreign section of the NYPO numbers were not used in cancelers during the 1872-6 period. (The few examples of hand carved numbers I have seen on foreign mail are, I believe, the result of accidental initial processing in the domestic mail section.) Presumably this was because it was a much smaller operation than the unit handling domestic mail for out-of-town addressees. The foreign section did use during

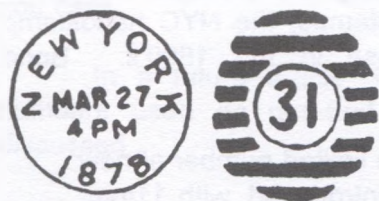


Figure 12



this time, of course, the very interesting "New York Foreign Mail" cancels that included a number of attractive and readily identifiable geometric patterns. However, ellipses comprised of six vertical bars with a number ("1" through "6") were introduced in 1876. See Figure 14. My records are very limited in this area but the earliest use I have seen reported is July 13, 1876.

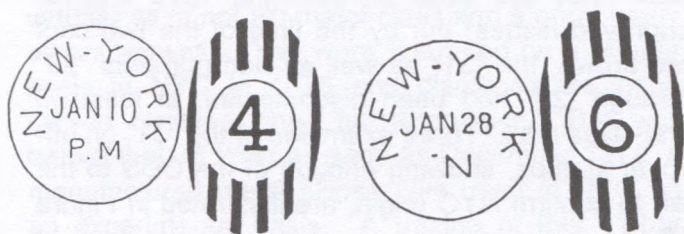


Figure 14

Two other NYC "sets" of vertical bar ellipses, containing a number in the center, are known and they too are associated with foreign mails. One set was duplexed to a Supplementary Mail CDS which denoted a special service provided for processing outgoing foreign mail that was received after the regular mail was closed and dispatched but before the ship departed. In New York, double the regular postage was charged for this service. The New York Supplementary Mail CDS was duplexed to killers containing a "1" or "2" and employed, according to an article by Henry Stollnitz, from 1878 to 1898. (See Figure 15.) The second set is more elusive (at least on U.S. Stamps) and its use somewhat mysterious. They have been referred to in the literature as "Incoming Foreign Mail (IFM)" cancels and were used beginning in the late 1870's. Commonly reported numbers are "1" through "6" and "12." Please see Figure 16. These cancels were applied to stamps on incoming foreign mail, primarily from the Caribbean and South and Central America, where the stamps had not already been canceled. These cancels are occasionally found on U.S. stamps. It appears from a substantial holding of Haiti stamps bearing these cancels that numbers "1" through "5" were used initially and then "6" and "12." The "12" has been noted at least as late as 1914.



Figure 15

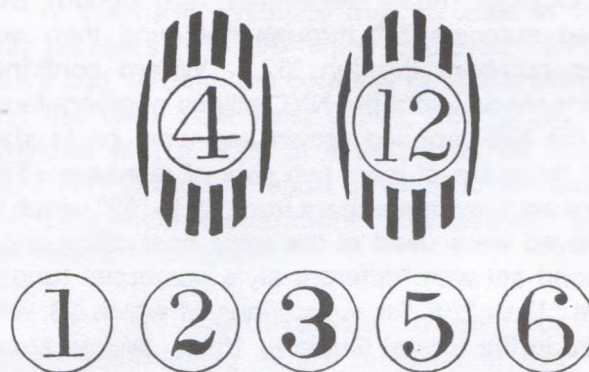


Figure 16

It seems reasonable to suppose that ellipses with numbers "7" through "11" were produced at the same time as the others but, if so, why they weren't used much, if at all in some cases, is quite a mystery. Figure 17, in my collection, is a circular to Mexico with a handstamp marking on the reverse dated July 27, 1878 bearing the name of the New York company, H. Marquardt, that issued the circular. The stamp (Scott #178) is canceled by an unduplexed ellipse with a "13" in the center. The ellipse that produced this cancel is clearly part of the "IFM" set but, of course, applied in this case on a piece of outgoing foreign mail. John Valenti reports that he has a similar cover in his collection and has seen a couple of others. All are circulars addressed to Mexico. Other outgoing foreign mail covers, originating at NYC branch stations, are known bearing "IFM" ellipses canceling U.S. stamps. In these cases, the branch station postmarked the mail but did not cancel the stamp. A "7" thought to be from this set has been noted on off-cover U.S. stamps by several collectors. (See Figure 18.) Collectors have also noted a "10" and a "11" on off-cover U.S. stamps. Thus all numbers have been seen from "1" to "13" except for "8" and "9."

Insofar as being the principal means of canceling adhesive stamps, the NYC handstamp era draw to a close in the 1890's. Bond commented:

"About 1895 a limited number of new stamps were introduced, with 11mm. circles and smaller numerals some carrying serifs. By this time automatic canceling machines were in general use and handstamps were only used for special applications."



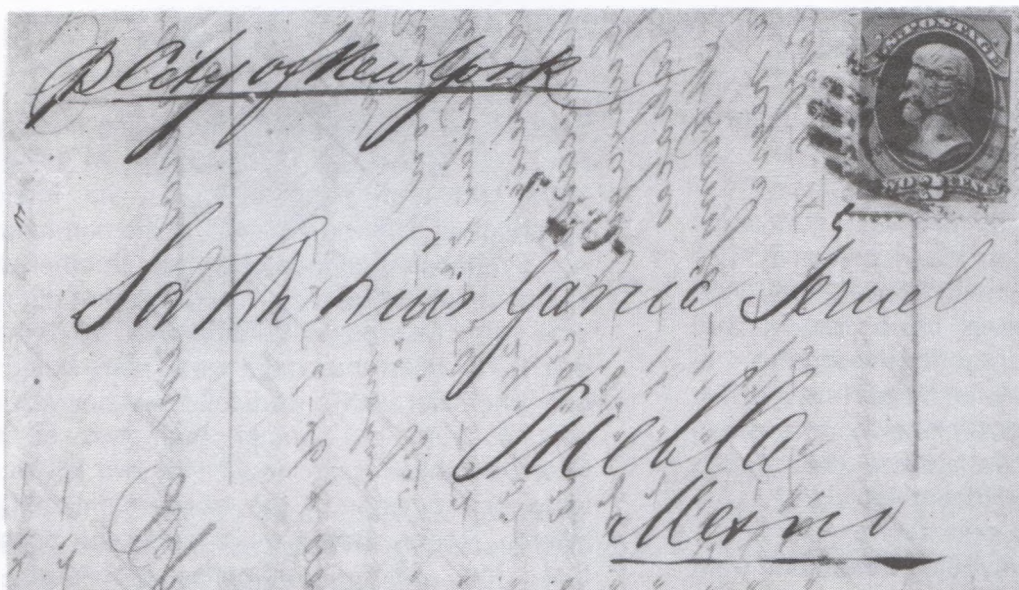


Figure 17



Figure 18

So ends our brief survey of numbers in NYC handstamp cancelers. I believe it to be a most interesting collecting area and one in which a number of discoveries are surely yet to be made and much new information learned. Now I'm just sure that in the collections and records of club members there are examples of NYC number cancels that would greatly add to the above. Comments and additional reports are eagerly sought. As always, contributions used in follow-up reports will be gratefully acknowledged unless the submitter prefers anonymity. Please help out if you can!

In a future article, NYC cancelers with numbers used on non-first class mail will be discussed.

The writer wishes to thank John Donnes and Roger Rhoads who permitted their fine tracings to be used in the original article. The vertical bar ellipses shown herein were all produced by Mr. Donnes and many of the others by Mr. Rhoads. The writer accepts full responsibility for any factual or interpretive errors.

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## Concerning Previous NEWS Articles

Two New York cancellations are herewith revisited and a new one added.

You'll remember the enigmatic "2" bottle stopper cancel, into which was carved a "12," discussed on page 41 of the Winter 1996 NEWS. Two strikes were shown, one postmarked November 4 at 4:00 and the other November 4 at 4:30. The 4:00 postmark is dateable as 1874. Odd thing is, the "2" is not in the same position relative to the "12" in the two strikes. (See Spring 1996 NEWS, pp. 55-56.) How to explain it?

Help was on the way, as it turned out, from Wendell Triplett who reported a remarkable trio of one cover and two cards bearing New York "2" bottle stopper cancels into which was carved an "11." They are postmarked November 4, 9 and 12 and each can be dated (through docketing or dateline) as 1874. Until learning of Wendell's "11" examples, your editor was thoroughly confused when confronted by the differing orientations of the "2" to the "12" in the two strikes. Wendell suggested that the two "12" strikes came from different handstamps and, of course, that must be true although your editor couldn't see that earlier. This brought to mind a piece of information contained on page 63 of an article on the NYPO in the May 1878 Scribner's Monthly Magazine (Vol. XVI, No. 1), quoted as follows:

"Every letter received here is stamped at once with the hour of its arrival. All letters coming in between ten and eleven o'clock in the morning are stamped "11 A.M." When the hour turns, the stamper wipes his stamp clean of ink, lays it away in a drawer and takes a new one with the next hour upon it and proceeds again. The greatest care is exercised to have the stamp legible."

Actually, the time stamps were changed on the half-hour. I thought it reasonable to assume that the above practice was used back in 1874 and thus one should expect, since the killer numbers were hand carved, that handstamp impressions found at 4:00 will differ from those found used at 4:30. However, upon mentioning this to Roger

Rhoads, he reminded me of a finding he reported on p. 119 of the Fall 1985 NEWS. In going over 200+ UXI and 3 postal cards, he found no instances of differing versions of the same number with overlapping periods of usage. In other words, based on his experience, it appears that during the time frame he studied, generally mid-1873 through late 1875 when the postal cards were being sold, only one killer with a particular number was used until it wore out, rather than two or more. However, there is no doubt that two killers were used in the case of the above-mentioned "12" killers. Roger offered as a guess the possibility that the 1878 Scribner's procedure was experimented with briefly in 1874 and the handstamps involved happened to include the bottle stopper killers.

Reader comment is invited.

As Wendell pointed out, 1874 was definitely a time of experimentation and his suggestion that using the rubber killers was part of that experimentation is, I think, completely reasonable. Since "11" precedes "12" in sequence, perhaps the rubber experiment was confined to only a subset of the 1-14 numbers and this explains why more numbers haven't been seen.

On page 38 of the Winter 1996 NEWS, a New York "face" cancel appeared as Figure 7. A cut-away of the cover is shown here as Figure 1.



Figure 1

This strike formed the basis of Jim Cole's JO-102 illustration on page 166 of his Banknote era cancellations book. See Figure 2. Roger Rhoads submitted a postal card from his collection postmarked March 26 (1874) bearing a killer



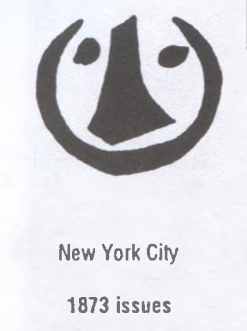


Figure 2

consisting of a "7" enclosed in a circular rim. See Figure 3. Based on his study, Roger found that such cancels (positive number and rim) were used basically in 1874 and primarily during the January through May 1874 period. Roger stated that he believes the Figure 1 cancel to be a "7" cancel carved to include two "eyes." Perhaps, according to Roger, the Figure 1 killer was carved with eyes "... when someone noted that a '7' when rotated (as these killers were prone to do) looked like a human nose."

"After looking through my files, I realize that partial rims are not all that uncommon, and in every case they seem to result from wear during use. Let me hypothesize that my "7" when originally installed in the handle was right side up. During use, the upper right corner wore more rapidly than elsewhere due to the angle of 'attack' used by the clerk (much like the heels of our shoes) and it was then rotated to a new position, either purposely or as a result of usage. (We know that all these killers during this time could be easily rotated.) I believe that also explains the partial strike of ... [Figure 1]. Again, I state these are two different killers, though they probably were carved by the same person."

Incidentally, Roger has noted that positive number killers such as these did not last long (less than six weeks) and thus had to be replaced frequently.

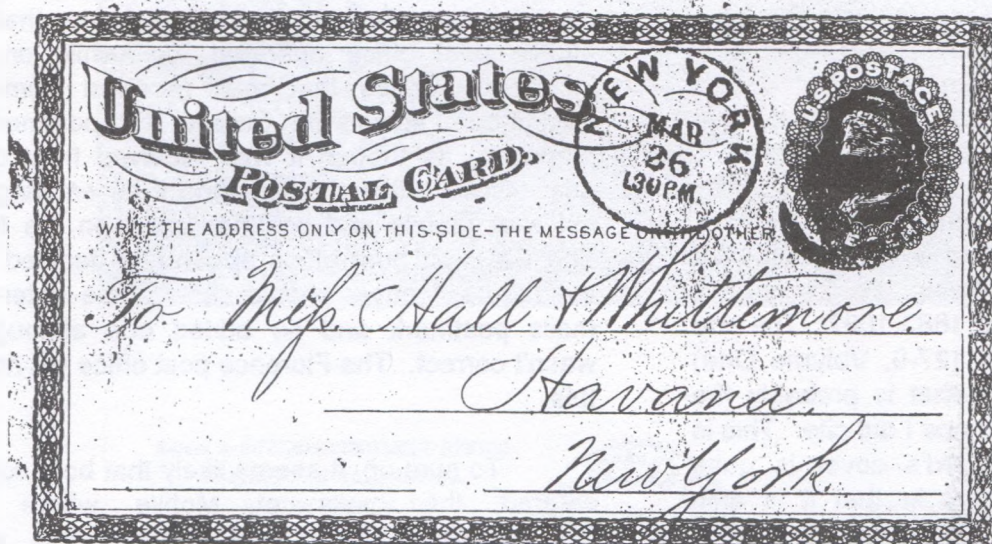


Figure 3

Readers will note that there is only a partial rim in the Figures 1 and 3 examples and the missing part is not the same in the two examples. Obviously these are from two different killers and we do not have a situation here where the "eye" dots were removed at some point after the February 21 strike. Roger comments on this matter as follows:

Finally, on pp. 37-8 of the Winter 1996 NEWS we showed as Figure 8 a "13" killer that appeared to be a "face" cancel when rotated 180 degrees. We'll submit one more (Figure 4), dated October 27 (1875), which, even when nearly right side up rather looks like a comic strip face with a cowlick. Alas, it is, of course, a negative "8"!

In response to the "STEAMBOAT" markings



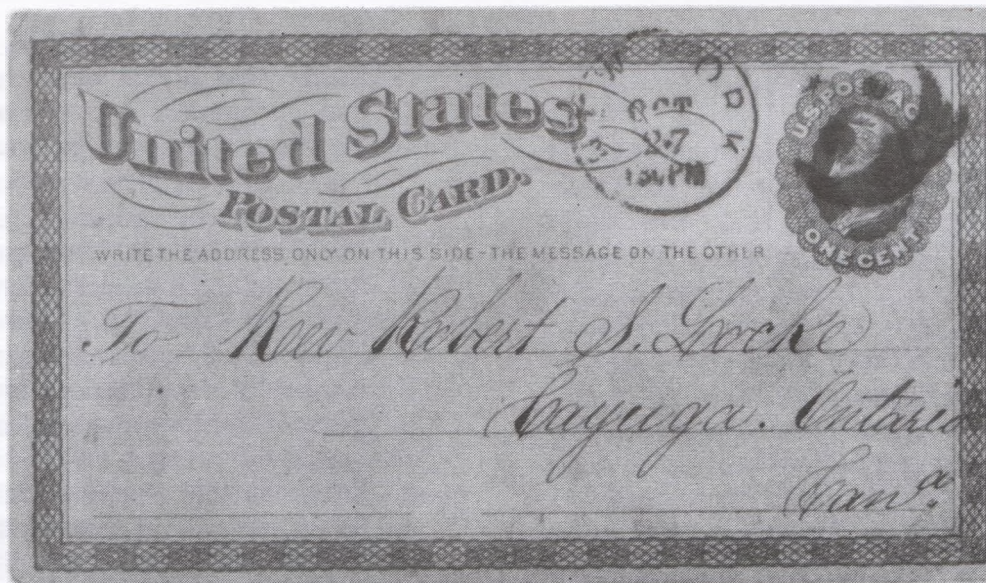


Figure 4

article in the Summer NEWS (pp. 80-1), Van Koppersmith reported the Figure 5 cover as one that has intrigued him for some time. It is a two cent entire addressed to Camden, Alabama postmarked with a "DUE 2," STEAMBOAT," and a Camden CDS. The date in the CDS is not at all clear but there appears to be a "1" for the day indicator which would be consistent with the Nov. 1st 1883" docketing. The cover also bears a 2 cent postage due adhesive canceled by a quartered cork. On the back of the cover is a Mobile received mark dated October 29, 4PM.

Subsequent to the Summer NEWS article, I became aware that Edward Willard discussed "STEAMBOAT" markings in two places in his work on the two cent red brown of 1883-1887. The one that I didn't mention (pages 127-9, Volume One) illustrates and amplifies on what is probably the cover referred to in the reference I did cite. This is all mentioned because Willard's cover is quite similar to the Figure 5 cover in that it is also backstamped with a Mobile received mark (May 4, 6PM) and struck on the front with a "STEAMBOAT" canceling the two cent red brown and a "DUE 2." A two cent postage due stamp is affixed and canceled by what appears to be a target killer. There may be a Florence backstamp because Willard mentions receipt of the cover in Florence March 5, albeit without an indication of what he relied on for that statement. No year date for the cover is evident. The "STEAMBOAT" and "DUE 2" appear to have been applied with the same or very similar handstamps used on the Figure 5 cover.

Willard noted that the January 1887 Postal Guide specified that steamboat letters were subject

to double rates. The double rate charge no doubt reflected a continuing rather than a new practice. Steamboat letters are those that were picked up along the route by steamboat captains not having mail contracts and then handed over to a post office when the steamboat docked.

It appears from these two covers that the Mobile post office operated for awhile on the incorrect premise that mail received from the steamboats should be treated, for postmarking purposes, as though it was received from other post offices rather than treating it as entering the mails at Mobile and postmarking it on the front. The Camden post office apparently decided that the Figure 4 cover should show some enter-the-mails postmark and so added one although it wasn't correct. The Florence post office did not do this.

To sum up, it seems likely that both covers entered the mails at Mobile where the "STEAMBOAT" and "DUE 2" markings were applied as well as the received marking. The postage due stamps were presumably affixed and canceled by the Camden and Florence post offices respectively.

Comment and additional information would be welcomed.

Arthur Beane reports several interesting covers bearing Blairstown, NJ cancellations. One is a three cent entire cover to Germany postmarked April 25, 1879 with a two cent Banknote added to make up the five cent UPU rate. See Figure 6. The cover bears two strikes of



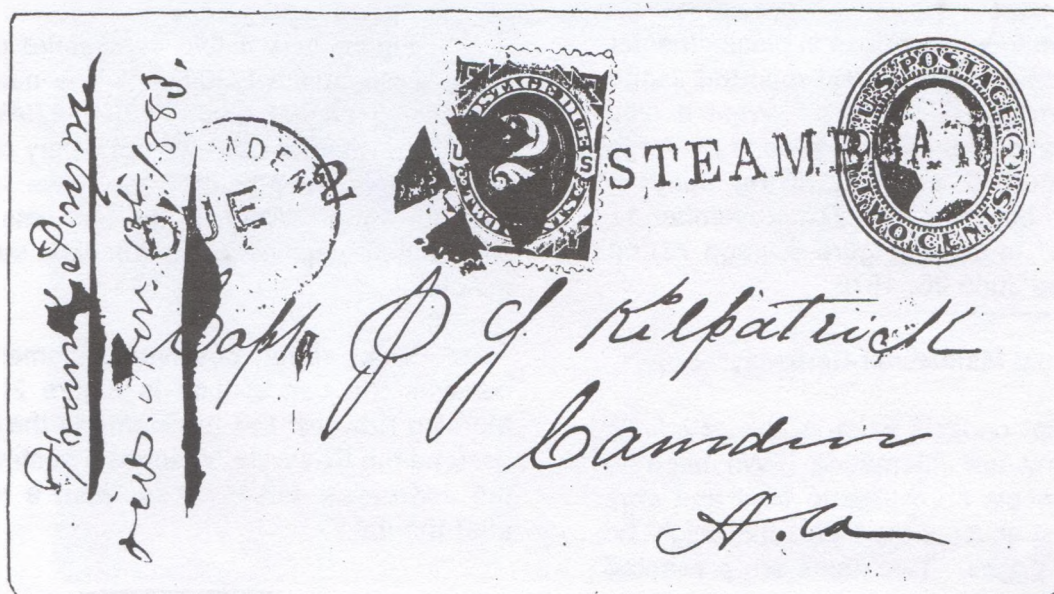


Figure 5

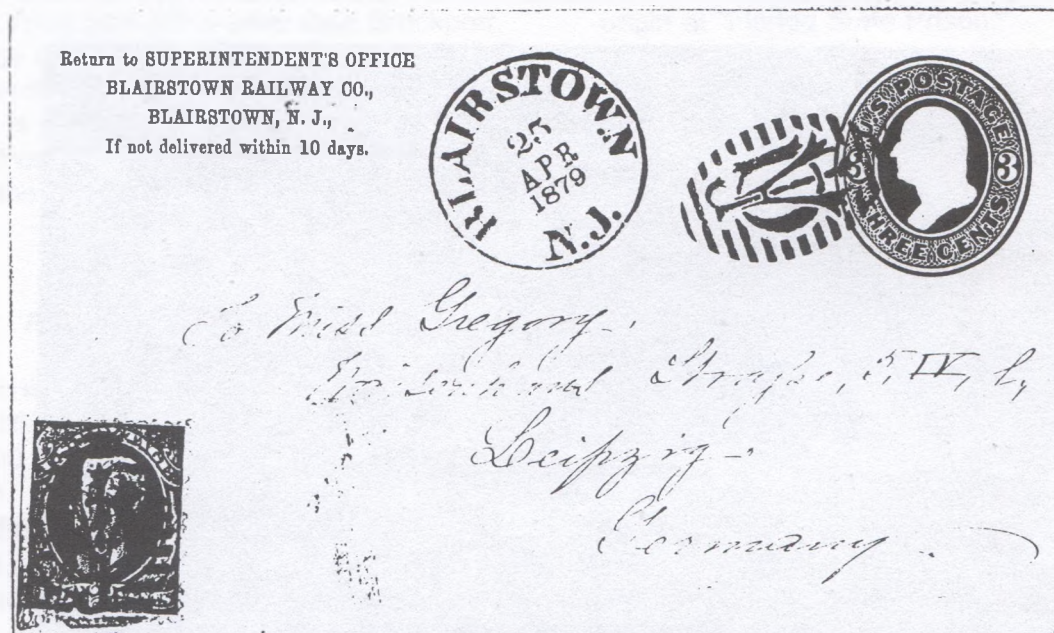
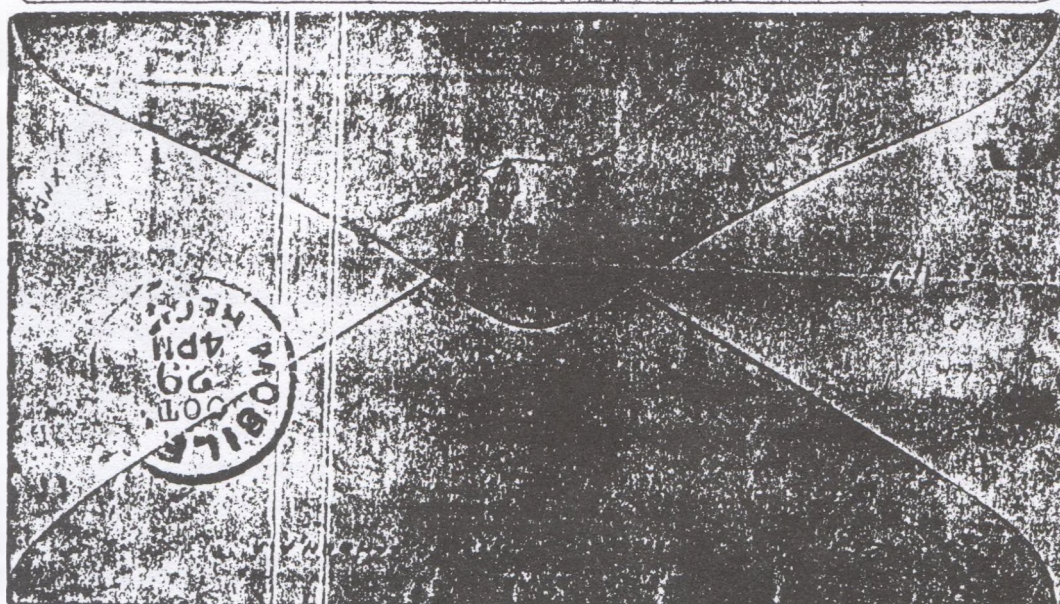


Figure 6



the unduplexed monogram ellipse in black. Insofar as I know, this now is the earliest reported usage of the monogram ellipse in black. What a nice cover - on several counts! Arthur reports the large "V" in circle (Figure 5, page 72 of the Summer 1996 NEWS) on cover postmarked November 17 and the small "V" in circle (Figure 6, page 72) on cover postmarked June 26, 1876.

### Unusual Manuscript Cancels

Manuscript cancels exist in almost infinite variety and many are interesting. We hope to feature such cancels from time to time and urge readers to submit unusual examples that might be shared in these pages. Two items are presented herewith.

Figure 1 is a two cent entire postmarked "Clark's Summit/JUL/30/PA." The neatly applied manuscript cancel reads "1884/927/AM." When combined with the CDS we get a very clear picture of when this letter entered the mails: 9:27 A.M., July 30, 1884. When is the last time any of us saw a non-machine postmark that specified the minute?

Talk about positive customer relations, consider the cancellation in Figure 2! A "Good Morning Edward" ties the stamp to the cover. We assume the Cassville, Wisconsin postmaster knew the addressee, but even so, what a nice way to start the day!

Figure 1

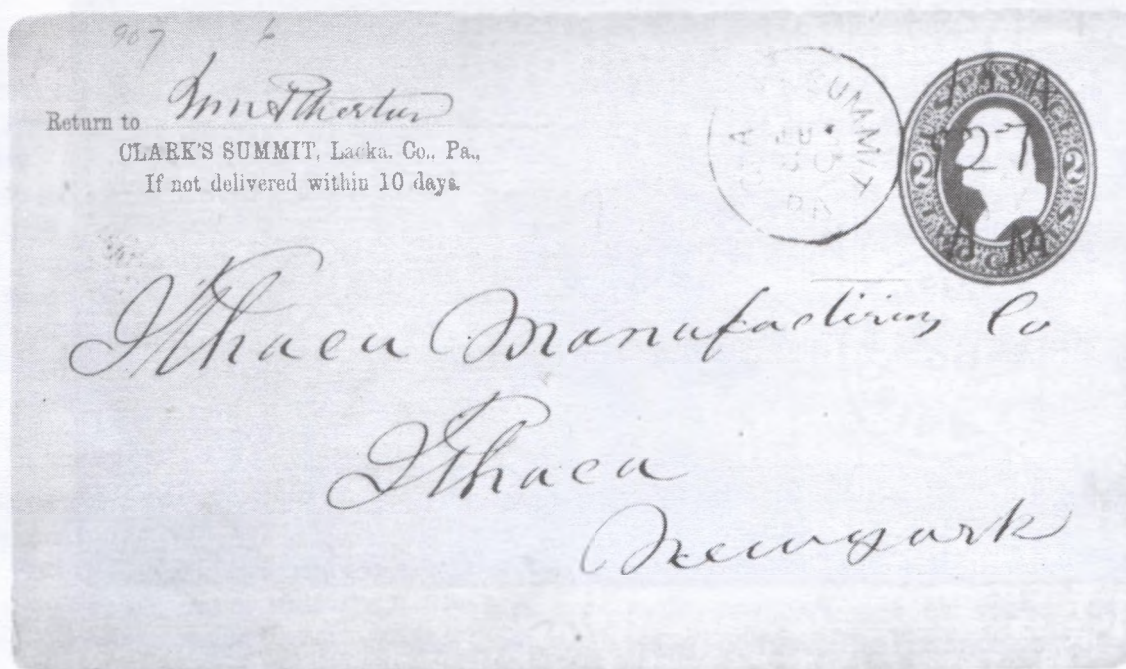
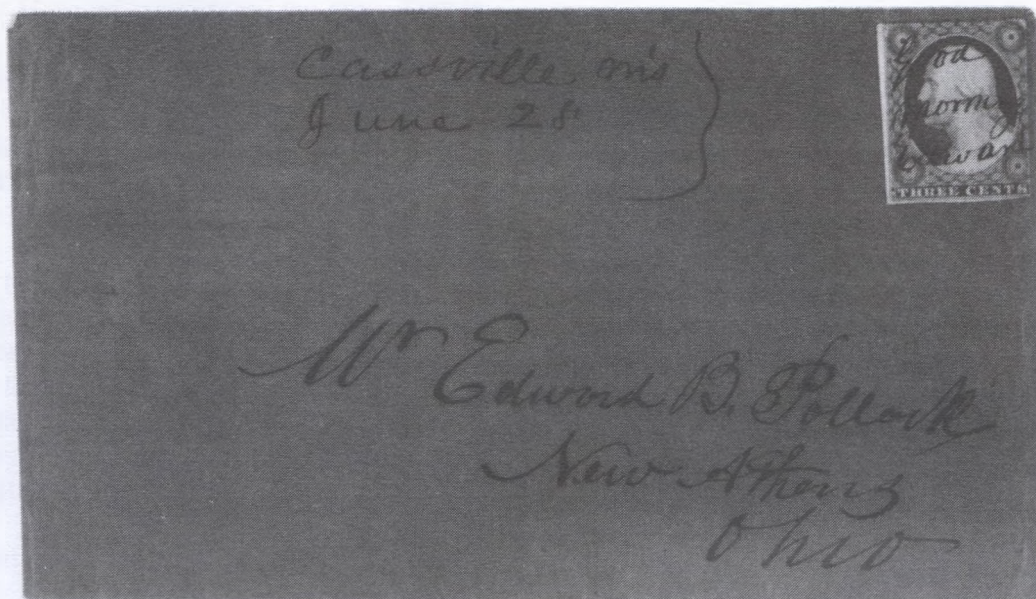


Figure 2





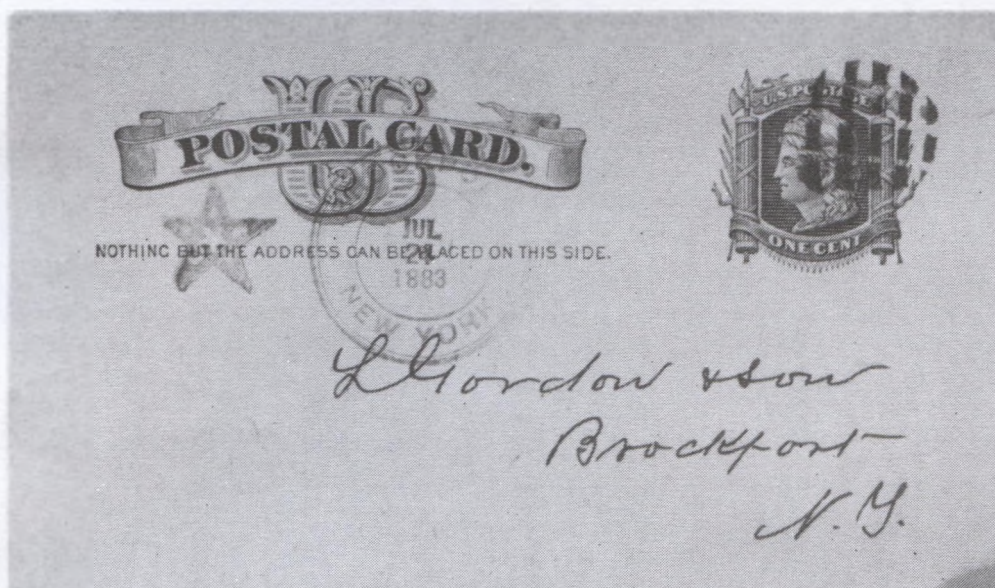


Figure 1

### A Duplex, Yes, But . . .

by Roger D. Curran

Who will explain the configuration of the postmark illustrated in Figure 1. The Brockport, N.Y. CDS, presumably used here as a received marking, is dated July 24, 1883 and is duplexed to a star killer. Only thing is, the killer is to the left rather than the right. Is this just the result of erroneous handstamp construction or is there some intended usage for such a duplex? (Were some duplexes set up specifically to cancel stamps affixed to the left side of covers?)

Incidentally, readers will note that the card was addressed to Brockport. It apparently entered the mails at some post office other than Brockport. The message on the back informs the addressee of various items that were "shipped." Also, the dotted killer is in a blacker ink than the Brockport postmark. It would seem the originating post office overlooked the CDS and just applied the killer.

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### Advertise in the NEWS

Advertisements are welcome in the NEWS. The rate is \$60.00 for a full page, \$30.00 for a half page, \$15.00 for a quarter page, and \$4.00 per column inch. Collectors seeking or selling material as well as dealers are encouraged to consider the NEWS as a good way "to get the word out." In so doing, you will also be supporting the U.S.C.C.

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### Modern Cancellations

by Roger D. Curran

Let's consider the three "modern" cancellations before us for this issue. Figure 1 shows two upside-down magenta strikes of "RECEIVED WITHOUT CONTENTS/HOUSTON, TX" one of which was clearly intended to cancel the stamp. While the sender apparently forgot to add the contents, he or she did carefully seal the flap of the envelope with tape!

The cover in Figure 2 bears a stamp canceled by a red meter registering postage in the amount of "0.00." And an interesting meter it is, too. The inscription to the left of the dial indicates origin at "Florida State Prison."

The Figure 3 cover is baffling. The address of the sender is indicated as Annville, Pennsylvania and the cover is addressed to Winston-Salem, North Carolina. The only CDS postmark, and it appears on the front and the back, is from Winston-Salem. The cover is struck twice with a magenta pointed hand with "RETURNED TO WRITER" and "No Such Number" inscriptions which cancel the stamp. The two strikes of the dial and wavy bars postmark on the front are in reverse and are presumably off-sets. Whether the circumstances of these off-sets are independent of the "no such number" problem is unclear to your editor.

Comment is invited.

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