



Cancellation Club NEWS

Vol. No. 24, No. 7, Whole No. 232, Summer 1999

"SAM" Cancel

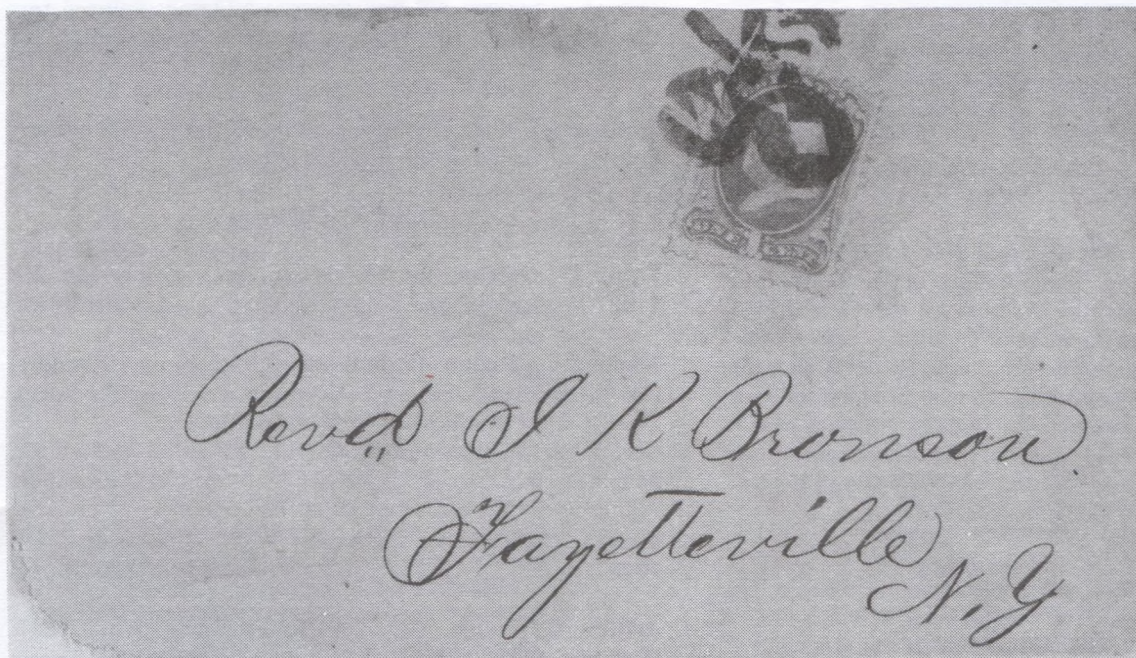


Figure 1

Wendell Triplett sends word of a wonderful cancellation in his collection and requests the assistance of club members who can identify the town of origin, report other examples, or provide any background information. Figure 1 shows the cover and a tracing of the cancellation. The stamp is a Scott #156 first issued in July 1873. The negative letters "SAM" are clearly present along with a negative diamond in the upper leaf of the three-leaf-clover. (Or, with the "diamond," is it really a "club" design rather than a clover, possibly recognizing a local card player?)

The cover is unsealed so we can speculate that it contained a circular sent at the one-cent rate. If so, from where was it mailed? Alternatively, if it was a drop letter deposited at the Fayetteville, N.Y. post office for delivery at that office, then one would think that the identification of Fayetteville postmasters might provide a link to "SAM." Wendell checked this point and submitted the following information for the general period in question:

NAME	TITLE	DATE APPOINTED
Henry Ecker	Postmaster	04/10/1861
Franklin M. Severance	Postmaster	03/03/1878

William Austin	Postmaster	04/23/1880
Howard H. Edwards	Postmaster	05/10/1888

Unless "SAM" was strictly a nickname, no connection with any of the above persons seems likely. Wendell reports that Fayetteville is located outside Syracuse, NY on the road to Manlius, which is called Manlius Street.

Any information will be gratefully received and acknowledged.

USPM 1851-1861 Index

Club member Charles O'Dell has prepared a town and state index for *Simpson's U.S. Postal Markings 1851-1861* (1979 edition) and has graciously sent a copy for inclusion in the U.S.C.C. Library. Charles stated that it is not as complete as he would have liked but a quick review demonstrates that a very considerable amount of work has been done. The index is set up initially by state and then by post office within each state. The post office listings identify pages in *USPM* where markings from that post office are to be found. Readers wishing to borrow the index should write our librarian at the address on the masthead. Thanks to Charles for sharing the fruits of his labors.

Dear Reader,

This issue includes contributions of six club members (in addition to the editor) and a guest writer covering a wide range of cancellation-related subjects. This may be record participation, at least in recent years, and I'd like to remind readers that the *NEWS* is always seeking material and stands ready to assist in preparation if that would help. Whether it is a brief paragraph on an interesting cancel or a detailed postal history research report, or anything in between, the *NEWS* is interested. Club members would undoubtedly enjoy learning about what is of interest to you.

Coming up quickly is the Philadelphia National Stamp Exhibition to be held this year in Fort Washington, Pa., October 1-3. As reported in recent issues, the U.S.C.C. will be holding its annual seminar and meeting Saturday, October 2. We will also be staffing a society table all three days. Mark your calendars and plan to attend this fine show if feasible. Most of the U.S.C.C. officers will be on hand and we look forward to having an opportunity to greet and talk with club members.

Auction #3, which boasted 102 lots, has been successfully concluded and consignments are now solicited for Auction #4. The catalog for Auction #4 will be included with the *NEWS* going out December 1. Please note on the enclosed flyer that consignments are due to Sy Stiss no later than November 1, but he would like to receive them as soon as possible. If you have questions about any aspect of the U.S.C.C. auction program, please write Sy or call him at the telephone number indicated. Thanks to sellers and buyers for your fine participation in the auctions to date.

Roger Curran

Walton Eugene Tinsley

Prominent philatelist and long-time U.S.C.C. member Walton Eugene Tinsley died this past April at 78. He served the APS as society attorney from 1961-65 and on the Board of Vice Presidents from 1965-69. In 1968 he received the Luff Award for outstanding service to the Society. More recently he was president of PACIFIC 97.

Mr. Tinsley's principal philatelic specialty involved the stamps and postal history of Tasmania and he authored a book on the subject. His Tasmania collection won Gold Medals at several international exhibitions in the 1970s and 1980s. Among his other philatelic interests was that of cancellations on U.S. stamps, especially on the two-cent vermilion of 1875 and 1879. He joined the U.S.C.C. in the mid-1950s and authored the article "New York PO Cancels as Found on the 2 Cent Vermilions" in the September 1957 *Cancellation Club NEWS*. The cancels in question were vertical and horizontal bar ellipses with a "PO" in the center that were used basically on local mail. This fine article remains one of the basic sources of information on New York City cancels of the Banknote era.



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For Sale

Cancellations on the 3 cent-1861. Send \$3.00 for Colored Xerox's. A. Boyarsky, Box 570, La Mirada, CA 90637-0570.

All German USA Cancel?

Club member Victor Kuil, who resides in the Netherlands and is an eager student of U.S. fancy cancels, sends word of an intriguing cancellation he found on newspaper stamp Scott #PR79 illustrated as Figure 1. Using computer-scanning technology, he extracted the cancel shown in Figure 2. He reported the following:

"The wording of the cancel seems to be: Lichtdruck, Kohl (Kuhl?) & Co., Frankfurt . . . The product, the name of the company and the name of the city are all of German origin.

It is my assumption that the printing company Kohl was established in one of the Frankfurts in the USA. It is not surprising of course that German immigrants named their city in the USA after the German cities where they came from originally."

In a subsequent letter, Victor reflected on the origin of the cancel and stated:

"My light-footed claim about the cancel being American may be doubtful in retrospect. Let me explain why. I assumed that the name 'Frankfurt' was one of the Frankfort's in the USA, for instance Frankfort, Kentucky. Presumably the printing company that used this killer was established there. When I showed the cancel to one of my friends recently he noticed that the wording in the cancel could have been Frankfurt A.M. which means Frankfurt Am Main (Frankfurt located on the river Main) which of course is the Frankfurt located in Germany, not in the USA. But why would a USA printing company use a cancel presumably used and made in Germany? Only two possibilities come in mind. The first one that the cancel is fake. But why would somebody place a fake cancel? An unused PR 79 stamp has double value over a used one. The other possibility that I can think of is that the German immigrants took the obliterator with them to the USA when they immigrated and used it there."

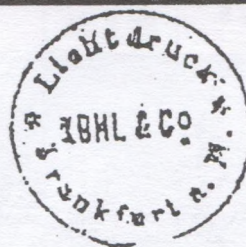
He then commented on the meaning of the word "LICHTDRUCK."

"It translates literally to 'Light Printing' (is printing with the aid of light radiation). I consulted a friend who retired after working in the printing business for all his life. He assured me that this printing technique was around in the 1880's. The word, for which I cannot come up with an adequate English translation (for my lack of knowledge of English terminology), is used for two printing

Figure 1



Figure 2



techniques. One can be described as using light sensitive paper on which the paper to be copied is placed above. After exposure to a strong light source, the dark parts of the original document block the light, while the light parts of this original document let the light pass. This passing light interacts with the light sensitive coating of the underlying paper. This paper can be developed, much similar to the development of a photo roll in a photo camera. The result is a crude copy of the original.

Another technique can be named 'Light Printing'. The printing plate is a plate from glass or celluloid, covered with a gel that has been dried carefully. During the drying process, this layer has been wrinkled. The gel layer is photosensitive and contains the image to be copied in mirror image. This layer is inked and the soft part of the dried gel layer takes more ink than the harder parts. The result of the print comes very close to photography. It goes without saying that newspapers were certainly not printed this way. It was a highly elaborate reproduction method in the 1880's. Perhaps the cancel was used to signal that the printing company had this technology in house."

Who will provide additional information about this cancel or about the canceling practices, in general, concerning newspaper stamps? If you can help, please let us hear from you.

A "Time-Out" Run Down

by Gilbert J. Levere

Every once in a while there appears an article in the *U.S. Cancellation Club NEWS* about an interesting variation of a triplex hand cancel which, due to its unusual configuration, has been aptly and expressively referred to as a "time-out" cancellation. As implied, the variable time element in the postmark (circular date stamp) is involved and, however prompted originally, it ended up positioned outside of the postmark dial at approximately the 5 o'clock position as illustrated in Figure 1.

A listing of the 23 "time-out" cancellations known to this writer suggests that their usage was not only limited but sporadic as well and such handstamps apparently saw service in just a few towns. The applications of the cancellations known are listed chronologically in the accompanying table. The earliest listed example is illustrated in Figure 2.

It is to be noted that from the nine examples reported from Lockport, N.Y., two distinct handstamps were used. The dials as well as the ellipses are different. The handstamp with the "L" ellipse was replaced by the handstamp with the "US" ellipse (see Figure 3) some time between February 22, 1882 and July 17 of the same year. The "US" ellipse illustrated in Figure 3 has been reported by Willard on Scott #210, so was used at least as late as October 1883.¹ Two other "US" ellipses are known from Lockport but they both contain nine bars and no examples have been seen with a time designation outside the CDS. Also, the two uprights of the "U" are even in height in the other "US" ellipses as opposed to the uneven uprights in Figure 3.

In Figure 4 a drawing – not a copy – of a Racine,

Figure 1

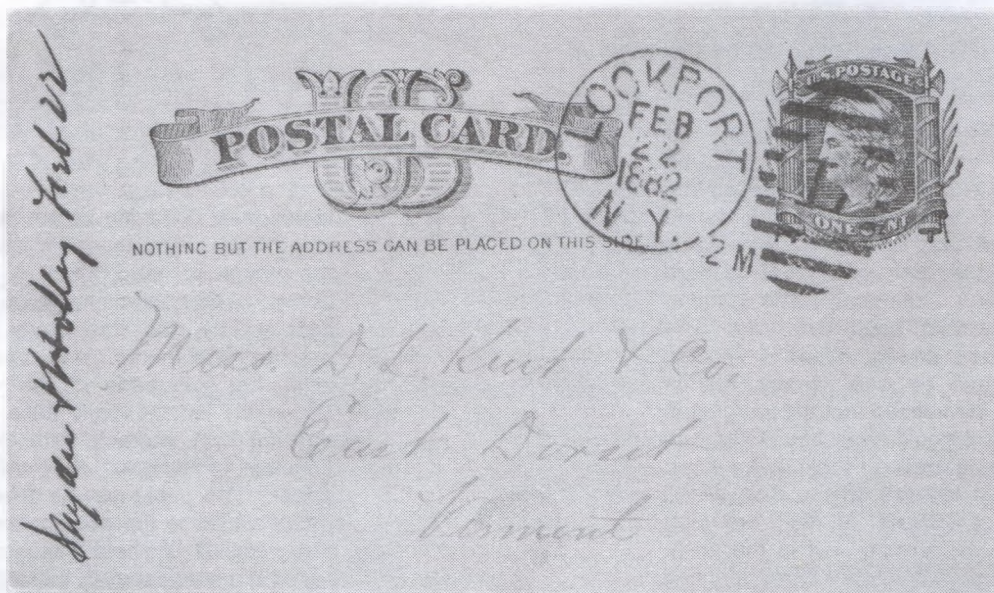
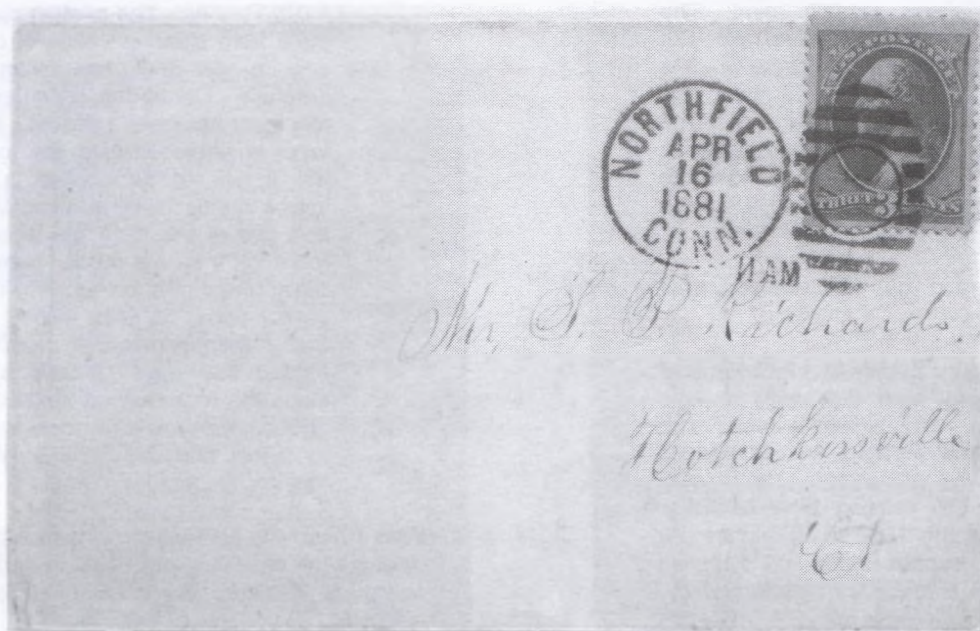


Figure 2



CIRCLE DATE STAMP				ELLIPSE			
TOWN	DIAL	DATE	TIME	NO. OF BARS	INNER CIRCLE	INNER CIRCLE DIAMETER	CIRCLE INSCRIPTION
Northfield, Conn.	24 mm	4-16-81	11AM	9	YES	11 ½ mm	None
	24 mm	5-18-81	4PM	9	YES	11 ½ mm	None
	24 mm	6-25-83	5PM	9	YES	11 ½ mm	None
	24 mm	8-10-83	5PM	9	YES	11 ½ mm	None
	24 mm	1-30-85	10AM	?	YES	?	?
	24 mm	3-6-85	10AM	9	YES	11 ½ mm	None
	24 mm	4-14-85	10AM	9	YES	11 ½ mm	None
	24 mm	4-16-85	5PM	9	YES	11 ½ mm	None
	24 mm	8-10-89	5PM	9	YES	11 ½ mm	None
	24 mm	2-12-90	5PM	9	YES	11 ½ mm	None
	24 mm	2-13-90	5PM	9	YES	11 ½ mm	None
Williamstown, Mass.	23 ½ mm	9-19-92	12M	7	YES	11 ½ mm	Star
	23 ½ mm	6-8-98	9AM	7	YES	11 ½ mm	Star
	23 ½ mm	11-20-98	5PM	7	YES	11 ½ mm	Star
Lockport, NY	26 mm	5-20-81	2PM	9	NO	-	L
	26 mm	6-17-81	5PM	9	NO	-	L
	26 mm	2-22-82	12M	9	NO	-	L
	25 mm	7-17-82	12M	11	YES	12 ½ mm	US
	25 mm	8-12-82	7PM	11	YES	12 ½ mm	US
	25 mm	8-18-82	12M	11	YES	12 ½ mm	US
	25 mm	9-1-82	12M	11	YES	12 ½ mm	US
	25 mm	10-9-82	7PM	11	YES	12 ½ mm	US
	25 mm	11-3-82	5PM	11	YES	12 ½ mm	US
	25 mm						

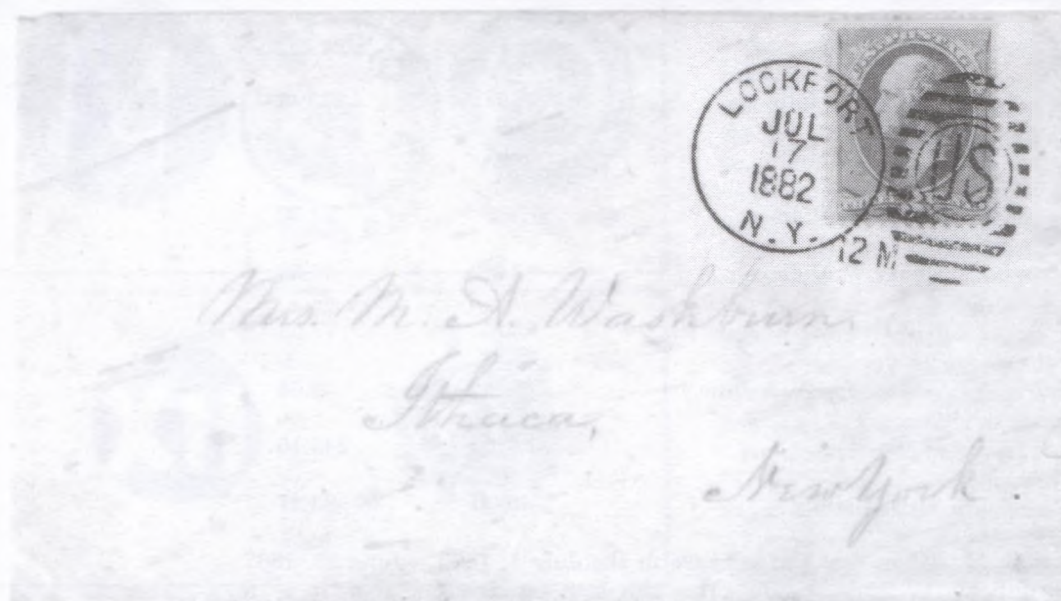


Figure 3

Wisconsin, "time-out" example is illustrated from Willard.² It was discussed briefly in the Spring 1980 *NEWS*. Racine resolved the matter of space for the four elements (numerals and letters) in the "time-out" insertion by cutting a notch in the lower left portion of the ellipse to provide for the required spacing. Willard's illustration in Figure 4 leaves no doubt about the existence of the "time-out" cancellation but no true example, actual or photographic, has been seen by this writer, thus precluding full study of same.

In the Fall 1986 issue of the *NEWS*, mention is made of a report of a "time-out" cancellation dated August

23, 1887 at Saranac, N.Y. with an "S" in the circle of the ellipse, but no corresponding photocopy accompanied the report to allow for a detailed study of its characteristics.

The foregoing summarizes information now at hand. Previous mentions of "time-out" cancellations are found in the following *NEWS* issues: Vol. 18, Nos. 2, 3 and 4; Vol. 20, No. 1; and Vol. 23, Nos. 7 and 8.

Reports and illustrations of any additional examples of "time-out" cancellations from the towns listed are requested for expansion and a future update of this



Figure 4

interesting area of cancellation varieties. Also, reports of examples from Racine, Saranac and any unreported town are also eagerly sought. Please submit photocopies with reports if feasible. All reports will be appreciated and acknowledged. My address is 26 Ellsworth Rd., West Hartford, CT 01607.

Addition to Membership

Dale E. Smith 1212 N.E. 96th Terrace, Kansas City, MO 64155-0000

¹ Willard, Edward L. *The United States Two Cent Red Brown of 1883-1887*, Vol. Two, 1970, pp. 136-7.

² Ibid., pp. 148-50.

About the Hockanum Fox Article

Tom Mazza writes to clarify and add to information contained in Mr. Hahn's fine article in the Spring 1999 *NEWS*. He notes references in the article to *Federal Register* and mentions that the standard shorthand reference to the publication in question has become the *Official Register of the United States*. The first issue was for 1816 and the second for 1817. Thereafter, it has been published for odd-numbered years.

Tom also supplies information from the 1865 *Official Register* that was not available to Mr. Hahn and presents detail in the Hockanum post office receipts for several years "to help identify the portion of the report which may have been anomalous and therefore more likely to have been in error." We quote a portion of his letter herewith:

... even though the general listing is as of September 30 of the year of the publication, the postmaster listings for these years cover the period from July 1 of the prior year through June 30 of the years in question. The office "receipts" can be approximated by adding the two columns shown for the compensation to the postmaster and the amount due to the U.S. These were, for instance, for the following publication years:

<u>Year</u>	<u>P.M.</u>	<u>Comp.</u>	<u>Due to U.S.</u>
1857	George A. Hall	\$ 48.21	\$27.05
1859	George A. Hall	46.02	25.84
1861	Henry W. Holmes	57.69	24.50
1863	Henry W. Holmes	83.06	37.52
1865	H.W. Holmes to June 1	83.87	77.53
	Dudley Fox from June 1	7.17	0.64
1867	Dudley Fox	67.00	246.15
1869	H.W. Holmes	48.00	83.87

I agree with Mr. Hahn that the increase in the July 1, 1866 – June 30, 1867 year is difficult to understand. The simplest explanation, that it is a typographical error, could be validated by comparing the numbers to the regulations for compensation. I have not done that. (There are typographical errors in the publication, the initial of Mr. Holmes, for instance, is incorrectly printed as "U" in 1869.) The period covered by the report, however, I did check, and it is a single year.

... The *Official Register* information clearly has Dudley Fox's reports beginning on June 1, 1865. This raises some question about the Doyle report of a fox cancel on an 1864 cover. Postmaster Fox was replaced some time between July 1, 1867 and June 30, 1868. The exact date of the appointment of (but probably not the date of turnover of operations to) his successor is available in the appointment records, maintained at the National Archives.

New York City Number Cancellations, 1872-99
by Roger R. Rhoads

There have been quite a few *NEWS* pieces over the years on the subject of number cancels used in New York City during the latter portion of the 19th century including those written by Arthur Bond, Gilbert Burr, Roger Curran and this author. Recently, while discussing aspects of the hand carved numbers used by the NYPO with your editor, we agreed that an update would be appropriate using solicited input from various dedicated NYC collectors. A number responded by opening up their collections and reporting examples that filled in many gaps.

Of the articles previously published on this subject, please refer to Roger Curran's "*Cancelers With Numbers in NYC Handstamps - First Class Mail*" in the Fall 1996 (whole no. 221) of the *NEWS* for a rather extensive bibliography which I will not repeat.

In particular, we had noted an unusual usage pattern in 1874 when the NYPO was experimenting with various killers that eventually resulted in the adoption of the metal 9-barred ellipses. Hand-carved negative and positive Arabic numbers (Figure 1) and negative and positive Roman numerals made of wood (Figure 2), carved rubber corks or bottle stopper numbers of various types (Figure 3), a 20-bar "12" probably of metal (Figure 4) and a metal (brass, zinc or steel) 11-bar "5" ellipse (Figure 5) were all used in that year. In addition to consolidating these details, some collectors possessed data that had not yet been published, so it is time to present all this information in one place.

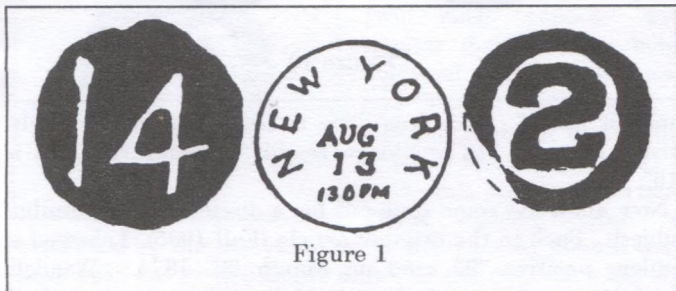


Figure 1

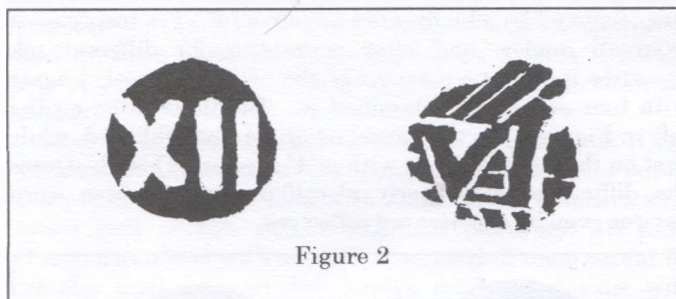


Figure 2

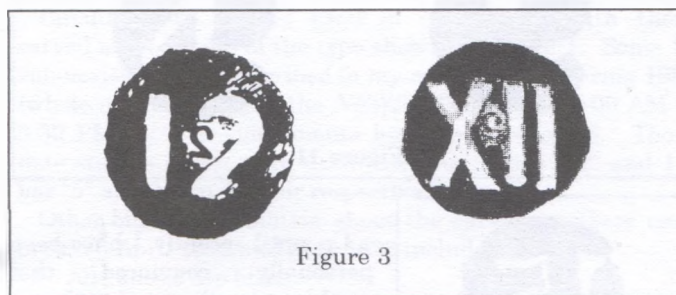


Figure 3

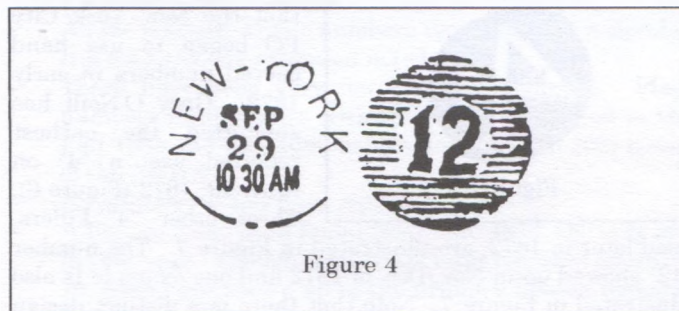


Figure 4

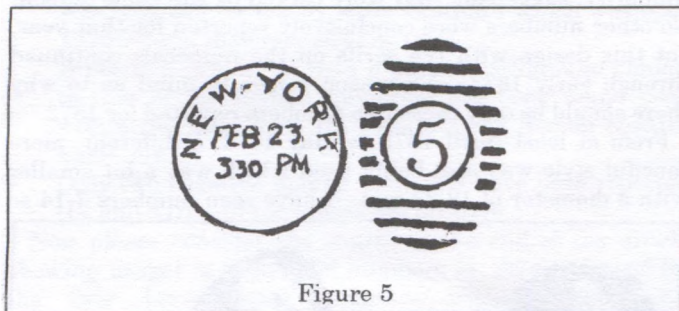


Figure 5

The reason for using numbers, as described in the NYPO annual report of 1877, was to identify individual clerks and also determine whether the letter was dropped at the main post office or deposited into a street lamp-post collection box. This information was published in the Fall 1986 (whole no. 190) issue of the *NEWS* through the courtesy of Martin Margulis.

The report reads, in part, "*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 as will be seen in the illustration on page 49. 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.*"

Numbers 1-14 were used throughout the time span of the carved killers which was 1872-76. In later years this was expanded to include numbers as high as 52.

For years I assumed that there were 14 clerks during the hand carved era who were individually assigned one of 14 drop or lamp-post boxes which were similarly numbered. Now that I have read the above more carefully, I come to the same conclusion as your editor. That is, there were up to 14 clerks, each with his own number. However, there were not necessarily 14 boxes. Gilbert Burr in the April 1952 *NEWS* cited a business correspondence of March-October 1880 where all letters had the same number killer ("9") that to him indicated that they all came from the same "area". However another firm's mail between April and Oct. 1877 had numbers between 5 and 24. Roger Curran speculated in the Fall 1986 *NEWS* that the first firm took its mail to a convenient lamp-post box while the second went to the main office where it was processed by a number of clerks. This infers that in 1877 numbers "1" through "4" may have been

designated lamp-post collections while the others handled the PO drop box mail.

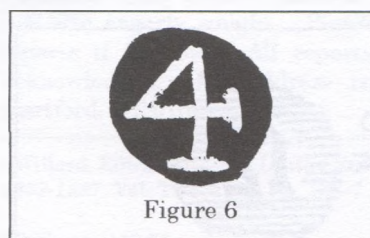


Figure 6

We can now confirm that the New York City PO began to use hand carved numbers in early 1872. Gary O'Neill has submitted the earliest reported use: a "4" on April 19, 1872 (Figure 6). Three other "4" killers,

used later in 1872, are illustrated in Figure 7. The number "12" showed up in Nov./Dec. of 1872 and one example is also illustrated in Figure 7. Note that there is a distinct design similarity, suggesting they were carved by the same person. No other numbers were conclusively reported for that year, but this design with the serifs on the numerals continued through early 1873. No reason comes to mind as to why there should be only these two numbers reported for 1872.

From at least April 1873 to May 1874, a different, more fanciful style was also being used which was a bit smaller with a diameter of 19-23 mm. I have seen numbers 7-14 so

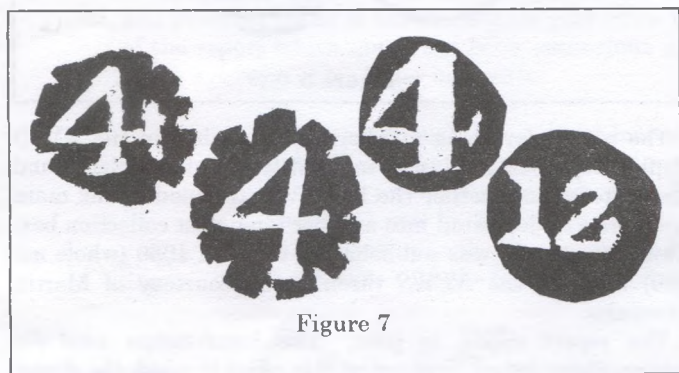


Figure 7

far, and they are so precise that they may not have been carved (Figure 8). Though other numbers are shown used during this time period in the following charts, I have not personally seen all of them. Perhaps all numbers were of this style or there were several primary designs.

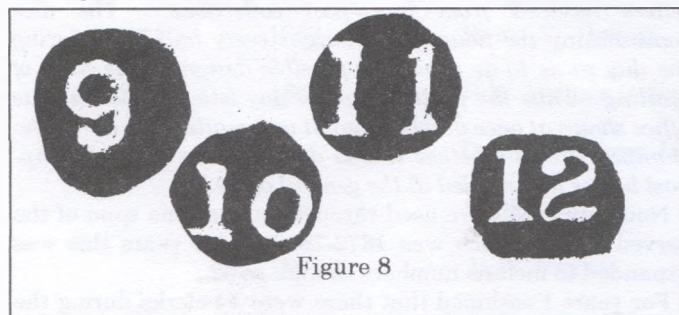


Figure 8

As evidence that they may not have been individually carved, nine "13" examples dating from April 15 to Dec. 3, 1873 have been examined. After careful measurements, all cancels appear as though they were made with the same device. Very sharp images are followed by those that appear to be blinded by ink and then cleaned for the next good strike in this series. No really poor strikes appear until very late in the run. How could it be that the same device could be in service nearly 8 months while the killers of 1874-5 lasted approximately 5 weeks?

I suggest that perhaps this number series may have not been hand carved. Two alternatives come to mind: a metal die could have been sunk into a soft metal such as lead or the same die could have been heated and burned into a piece of harder, more durable wood that could not be so easily carved. It's possible that new killers could easily be made in

this way so that the device does not seem to wear out. Either way, this series definitely differs from the rest used in this time period of about three years. After May 1874 hand carved numbers were a bit larger and of different individual styles as though carved by different persons, perhaps the individual handstamp users.

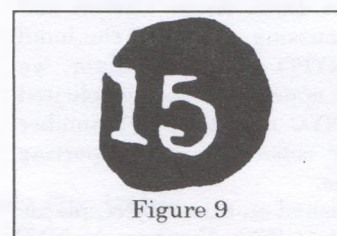


Figure 9

As for numbers other than 1-14, numbers 15 and 16 have been reported in the past. A "16" was reported by both Burr and Bond, but no tracing has ever been published. As for the "15", I had believed that the one published by Cole may be

that from a poorly struck "13" which, on the original cover, was misinterpreted as a "15" (Figure 9). The Hoffers auction catalog of March 27, 1985, lot 2018, described a "15" which turned out to be a "13" as I was the winning bidder. I am aware of at least one other similar erroneous auction description.

Note the illustration in Figure 10. The first is a "13" dated April 15, 1873 while the second is an alteration of the first with a line erased, another added and a third extended to

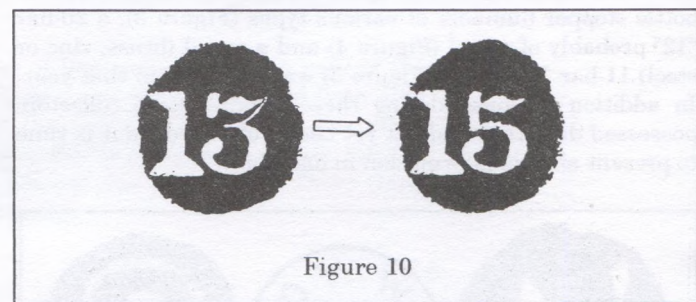


Figure 10

make it a "15". This was done to illustrate how a poorly struck or worn "13" could be readily misinterpreted as a "15".

Now allow me some time out for a discussion of a similar subject. Back in the original article (Fall 1985), I showed a rimless positive "9" used on March 26, 1874. Wendell Triplett gently pointed out that this cancel looked suspiciously like a badly worn negative "4". I've inspected it from all angles, and after accounting for different ink densities in various portions of the original cancel, I agree with him and have reclassified it. The illustration on the left in Figure 11 is the cancel as originally published, while that on the right shows it with a "4" overlay. This illustrates the difficulties of properly identifying cancels from worn devices even by experienced collectors.

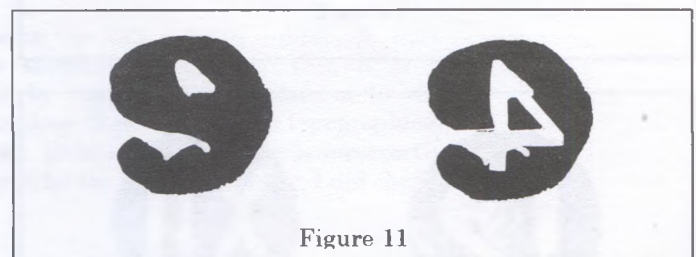


Figure 11

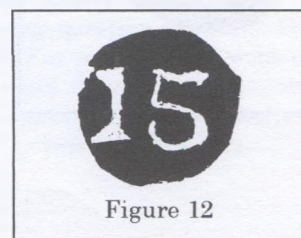


Figure 12

Up until recently I have been personally convinced that neither a hand carved "15" or a "16" existed as I had never seen an unequivocal example of either. With all that said, now a clear, unambiguous "15" comes

out of the woodwork. Martin Margulis supplied the killer shown in Figure 12 on a 3¢ Banknote cover dated Nov. 17 (NYD). Note the similarity in design to that of the "13" in Figure 10, especially the first digit. Based on the series discussed above, I believe the year is 1873. In any event, this is truly a rare cancel and a very important find.

Roger Curran published another "15" (rimless) used as a simplex cancel on a circular which was submitted by John Valenti in the Fall 1997 (whole no. 225) issue of the *NEWS*. However, I see it as an inverted mirror image of a "12" (Figure 13), and therefore may have been mistakenly carved without thinking of the eventual print reversal. Perhaps this would explain why other examples of this cancel have not been found as it would have been taken out of service when this was noticed.

I've also seen a catalog description for an "18" dated March 31, 1875 which, when I bought it, turned out to be a

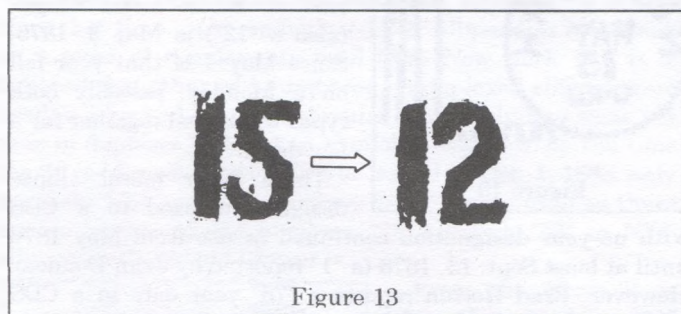


Figure 13

"10" with "holes" left in the second digit of the figure (Figure

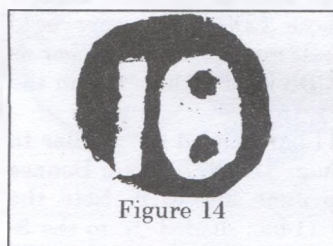


Figure 14

14). Brad Horton reports two such cancels with similar dates. It is being reported for completeness, but I will consider it a carver's flight of fancy until other designs are reported.

Though there were more clerks added later as evidenced by the use of higher numbers, why should there have been one or two clerks added to the staff for what was apparently a very short time? Considering the very ordered structure of the NYPO, if there were clerks numbered 15 and 16, there should be more confirming cancels. Should any of you have such cancels, please share them with the author.

Number killers duplexed to circular date stamps (CDS) were used exclusively on first class mail intended for out-of-town delivery. CDSs used with hand carved numbers were either 24½ or 25½ mm in diameter (accuracy: ±½ mm). Simplex numbers with no CDS were used to some extent for circular mail. A very few foreign mail covers exist with number killers, though their use was probably inadvertent.

Circular date stamps used in conjunction with these carved numbers are of the type shown in Figure 1. Some 10 sub-varieties were described in my article in the Spring 1986 (whole no. 188) issue of the *NEWS*. Times from 6:00 AM to 6:30 PM in ½ hr. increments have been reported. Those date stamps which were used with the 20-bar "12" and 11-bar "5" are shown in their respective figures.

Other bits of information about the carved numbers used between April 1872 and May 1876 include:

- All cancels are black.
- Approximately 70% of the carved numbers were negative Arabic, 20% positive Arabic and only 10% were Roman numerals of either type.
- Negative Arabic killers probably lasted about 5 weeks

while the positive Arabics wore more rapidly and were replaced in about 2 weeks. Thus there are hundreds of varieties of these designs.

- All the positive Arabic numbers reported have a circular rim with the one exception noted.
- There have been very few "fancies" reported. Plain numbers predominate with the exceptions noted in the Fall 1985 and Fall 1990 (whole nos. 186 and 206) issues of the *NEWS*.
- No positive "4" has been reported.
- A Roman I has been found from Feb. 1874, the only one in that year. Though its use has been reported for 1875-76, none have shown up in the primary Roman numeral time span of Aug./Sept. 1874. It is assumed that this was reserved for use by letter Station I which was open 1875-77 and then reopened in 1897.
- A positive Arabic "1" with a barred background similar to that of the Roman numerals has been found used within the Aug./Sept. 1874 span of the Roman positive numerals.
- Only two negative Roman numerals have been reported (IX and XII). All the others are positive.

Now please consider the charts at the end of the article showing usages of individual numbers in 1874 arranged by the four basic types (negative/positive Arabic and negative/positive Roman). This work depended very heavily on the records of Wendell Triplett who is a student of these cancellations and has been keeping records for many years. Some of the observations about 1874 usages that can be drawn are:

- Carved rubber stoppers have been only reported for the negative Arabic "11" and "12" in Nov. and Dec. and for "XII" in Sept. 1874
- Positive Arabic numbers have been seen used only in 1874 except for outliers "2" from July 23 and Dec. 30, 1873 and "8" from June 11, 1875. (As a side note, there were positive "2"s (see Figure 1) examined from July and Dec. 1873 and April and Dec. 1874. Though not identical, all were obviously carved by the same man.)
- The only positive "12" cancel noted in 1874 is the 20-bar variety used in Sept.-Nov.
- Positive Roman numerals were noted almost exclusively in Aug. and Sept. with the earliest reported being a IX from June 27, 1874.
- Negative Roman numeral usage for "IX" and "XII" were reported in slightly different time spans with "IX" used

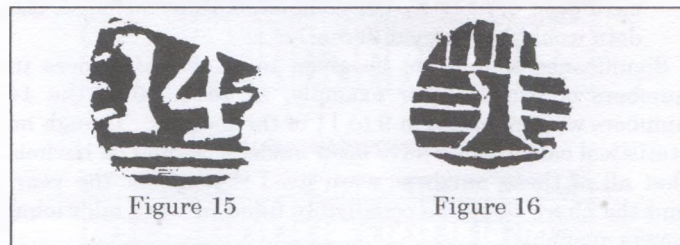


Figure 15

Figure 16

in June and again in Sept.-Oct. and the "XII" in Aug.-Nov.

- Only two negative Arabic "2"s have been seen used in 1874, but several examples have been found for 1873 and 1875.
- Negative Arabic "14"s with broad bars cut into the background (Figure 15) were reported for the months of Oct. and Dec.
- Positive Arabic numbers with similar bars cut in the background (Figure 16) have been reported for "1" in Aug./Dec., "5" in Aug./Oct. (Figure 17), "6" in Oct. and

"14" in Sept./Oct. A 16 thin bar "6" (Figure 18) used on Oct. 9, 1874 is also shown. This data corresponds well to the same use span as the Roman numerals. This suggests that purposes of killer durability along with legibility were being evaluated which culminated in the adoption of the metal ellipses.

It was obvious that some numbers were reported much more often than others were. Therefore, Mr. Triplett drew up the usage charts for the years 1873-75 shown at the end

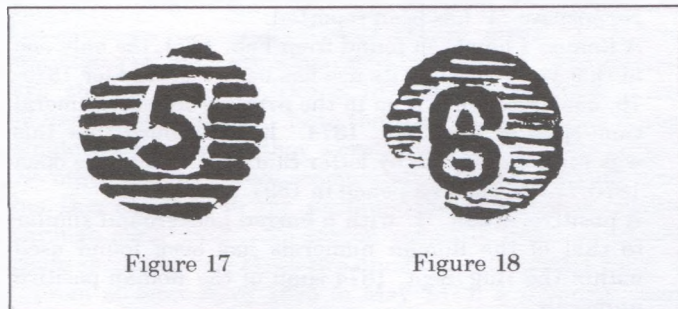


Figure 17

Figure 18

which were filled in by our contributors. Most of these records came from searching several hundred NYC postal cards (Sc. UX 1 and 3) as the year of use can generally be readily determined from the message, docketing or plating. Therefore, the 1873 chart has very little data prior to May when the postal card was first issued. Also this card was supplanted with the next in Oct. 1875, so data for the shaded months is significantly more limited.

With that in mind, the usage patterns show certain numbers used at times far less than others. Numbers 2, 5, and 11 were rarely used in 1873 while "2" continued to be scarce in 1874. I spent some time considering why should there be such differences in that other numbers were used more commonly, and came up with the following hypotheses:

- The individuals assigned these numbers had other duties within the PO. As an example, perhaps clerks 2, 5 and 11 used those numbers when canceling lamp-post mail and were assigned other numbers when handling PO drop box mail.
- The boxes (lamp-post?) corresponding to these numbers were not used very much. If each lamp-post box had its own number, then some may have been located in vicinities that were not convenient or attractive to customers, primarily businesses.
- Since almost all this data was from business postal cards, perhaps if all mail including envelopes which may have been used by larger companies were included, the data would look very differently.

Significance should not be given to minor differences in numbers of usages. For example, in 1874, 10 of the 14 numbers were reported in 9 to 11 of the months. Though no statistical calculations have been made, it should be obvious that all of these numbers were used throughout the year, and the chart would be completely filled in were additional covers available.

As for the metal 11-bar "5" ellipse, it was first reported by Joe McDonough in the Summer 1985 (whole no. 185) issue. Five dates have now been noted ranging from Nov. 19, 1874 (both by Arden Callender and Gilbert Levere) to March 11, 1875. It seems to have been used along with a hand carved variety and then put away when hand carved "5"s were used exclusively once again. It must have proven its durability in that the same type of device was put into service when the metal 9-bar ellipses came into use. Note in Figure 5 that in addition to the number of bars, the digit is of a different font as well with a bit more fanciful shape rather than the lines

having a uniform width. Burr called this a "shaded" number while those with a uniform line width were called "block" numbers.

Another experimental killer (Figure 4) used in this time span is the 20-bar "12". Use dates of Sept.-Nov. 1874 have been reported. It appears to be made of metal as all strikes are very sharp, and it is speculated that this came from a mechanical handstamp, though there has been no conclusion concerning this.

A non-number cancel is presented here for completeness as it was used during this time period. Roger Curran called this a "rickrack" design (Figure 19) and was reported by Gilbert Levere in the Winter, 1986 issue of the NEWS with three use dates from May 15 to June 5, 1875.

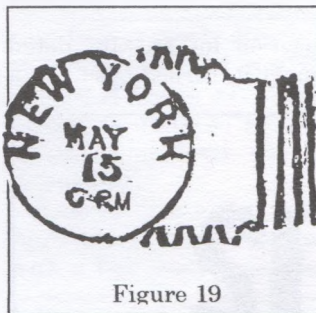


Figure 19

The latest carved number reported is a negative "12" from May 1, 1876. The earliest 9-bar metal ellipse (also a "12") is May 3, 1876. Since May 1 of that year fell on a Monday, possibly both types were used together for a few days.

These 9-bar metal ellipse designs duplexed to a CDS with no year designation continued in use from May 1876 until at least Sept. 13, 1878 (a "1" reported by John Donnes). However, Brad Horton reports a "78" year date in a CDS with a "12" ellipse dated Sept. 6. Brad also reports a non-year CDS with a "5" on the same date as the "12". Sept. 6 fell on Friday that year, so both CDS types were used concurrently for at least a week. It may have been longer as Brad also reports a year-dated CDS used with a "PO" in the center of the ellipse dated Sept. 4, 1878.

Arthur Bond mentioned an 11-bar shaded "6" similar to the "5" used May 22, 1877 to Aug. 31, 1877. John Donnes has extended the use span to June 20, 1878. Note the comparison in Figure 20 of the 11-bar shaded "6" to the 9-bar block "6" which was shown in the Fall, 1986 NEWS. Bond reported seeing no block "6" numerals duplexed to a

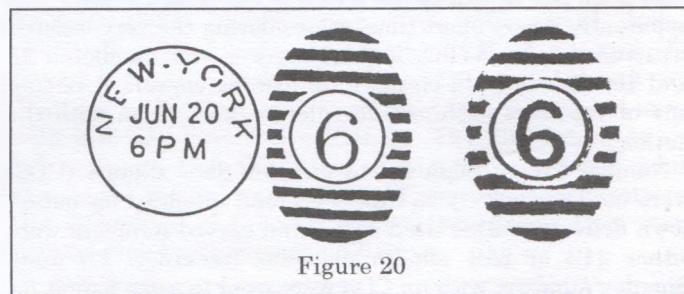


Figure 20

CDS without a year date. Since the shaded "6" has only been seen during the period when this type of CDS was used, the shaded "6" handstamp may have been a replacement at some point for the block "6" since a block "6" was illustrated in the 1877 NYPO report. Can any reader show a block "6" duplexed to a CDS without a year date?

Also it appears that the NYPO changed its canceling procedures a bit. In the 1878 annual report as repeated by Duane Koenig in his article "Looking at the NYPO in 1853 and 1878 - Changes in Mail Management in a Single Generation", published in the 1986 Congress Book, the postmaster states, "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, takes a new one with

the next hour on it, and proceeds again." Thus there were apparently two sets of cancelers, and only the hour is noted in the CDS as opposed to the half hour in earlier years.

The CDSs used with the metal ellipses without the year date were 23 mm diameter, and those with the year date were 22½-24 mm. This and other slight differences in the CDS show that there were evidently two sets of ellipse numbers. One other difference is where the CDS has a hyphen between "NEW" and "YORK". Both the non-year and year dated CDS varieties are known both with and without the hyphen.

The first design (no year date) has only been reported with numbers "1" through "30". This correlates with the 1877 NYPO annual report that states only 1 to 30 were used. Apparently, at or after the time the second design was introduced in 1878, numbers "31" and "32" were added. Burr also reported in 1952 a single example of a duplexed "33" used in 1879 which has not been reported by others since that time. (An unduplexed "33" ellipse has been seen on a piece of circular-rate mail from New York and it is believed that other odd-numbered, unduplexed ellipses were used to a limited extent on circular mail, including some not seen in duplexes.) Based on available evidence, by the time the 2¢ red-brown (Scott 210) was issued on Oct. 1, 1883, only numbers 1-24 and even numbers 26 - 52 were used as there are no reports of odd numbers "25" through "33" in NYC ellipses on the 2¢ red-brown.

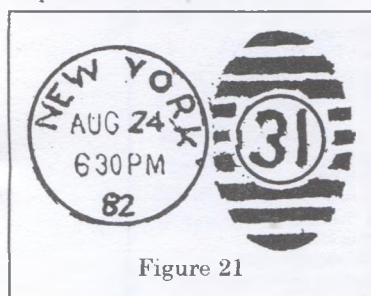


Figure 21

From the above it is clear that numbers "31" and "32" are less common on stamps issued before 1883 with "33" being extremely rare. Also "31" can be expected to be found less often than "32" on stamps issued before 1883 since the "31" was

discontinued before Oct. of that year. How much less often is a function of when the "31" was discontinued. Roger Curran reports a "31" dated Aug. 24, 1882 (Figure 21). What other dates can be reported for this number?

The NYPO used Leavitt canceling machines with an 8-bar metal ellipse incorporating numbers "31" (March 1878 to May 1879), "32" (one example: April 1878) and "33" (two examples: Aug. 1878 and Jan. 1882) which can be confused with the hand stamped ellipse varieties. However, in addition to fewer bars, the year in the CDS (except in the case of the Jan. 1882 usage) has four digits rather than two.

The use of the metal ellipses to some extent continued through the end of the century, although by 1895 machines had taken over most of the canceling load. The large numeral ellipses were used at least as late as July 1893 and probably for some period after that. By the time the Bureau Issue stamps appeared in 1894, the NYPO was using ellipses with smaller numerals. Has anyone accumulated data on NYPO ellipses during the 1890s?

Summarizing the major findings of this study;

- The hand carved numbers were first used as early as April 1872.
- Hand carved number "15" was used, but quite rarely.
- Hand carved numbers "16" or higher have not been verified.
- No positive "4" has been seen.
- Roman numerals were used almost exclusively in Aug.-Sept. 1874.
- The hand carved varieties were replaced by the 9-bar

metal ellipses with no year date in the CDS in early May 1876.

- Both 11-bar "5" and "6" have been reported. The former was first used in late 1874 to early 1875 prior to discontinuance of the hand carved numbers, and the latter only after the 9-bar ellipses were introduced.
- The no-year CDS variety was replaced in Sept. 1878 by one with a two-digit year date in it.

Well, readers, do you take exception to statements I have written, do you have other theories or observations or do you have other data to add to that which is noted in this article? We would really like to hear from you.

I would like to thank Wendell Triplett for sharing his detailed records. Ardy Callender, John Donnes, Brad Horton and Gil Levere for opening up their collections for this work. Gary O'Neill and Martin Margulis for reporting key usages and your editor, Roger Curran, who was a guiding light to providing all sorts of information. A particular thanks to John Donnes for many of the illustrations used in this article. Any of those that are not especially well drawn are the fault of the author.

Number Cancels Reported in 1873

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	Total
1						X	X		X	X			5
2								X				X	2
3							X		X		X		3
4						X	X		X	X	X		5
5						X							1
6						X	X	X	X	X			6
7						X				X	X		3
8						X		X	X		X	X	5
9						X				X		X	3
10						X	X		X			X	4
11						X				X			2
12						X			X			X	4
13						X		X	X			X	6
14								X	X	X	X		4

Number Cancels Reported in 1874

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	Total
1	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	10
2					X						X	X	3
3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	11
4	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			9
5	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	10
6	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X		9
7	X		X	X		X		X	X				6
8			X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	9
9			X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	9
10			X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		8
11	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10
12		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		9
13		X		X	X	X		X		X		X	7
14			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10

Number Cancels Reported in 1875

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	Total
1			X			X	X	X					4
2	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X			8
3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				9
4			X		X			X					5
5		X			X	X	X	X	X		X	X	8
6	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	10
7					X	X	X				X	X	5
8	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	9
9	X	X		X				X		X	X	X	7
10	X		X	X			X	X	X	X	X		8
11	X				X		X			X	X	X	5
12		X	X			X	X	X				X	6
13			X	X	X		X	X	X			X	7
14				X	X	X	X		X			X	6

1874 Number Cancel Reports

J F M A M J J A S O N D

Negative Arabic

1						X				X		
2												X
3	X			X		X			X		X	X
4	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		
5			X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X
6	X	X	X	X	X	X						X
7			X	X		X			X			
8					X	X			X	X	X	X
9					X	X	X		X		X	X
10				X			X				X	
11	X	X				X			X	X	X	X
12		X		X	X	X	X			X	X	
13					X	X		X		X		X
14				X	X	X	X			X	X	X

Positive Arabic

1	X	X	X	X					X	X	X	X	X
2					X						X		X
3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						
4													
5	X	X	X							X	X		X
6				X	X	X					X		
7	X			X	X					X			
8			X	X		X							
9			X	X	X					X		X	
10			X	X	X	X							
11	X	X	X								X		
12										X	X	X	
13		X		X					X				
14			X	X						X	X		

Negative Roman

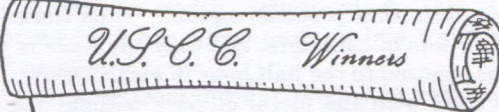
IX						X	X		X	X		
XII								X	X	X	X	

Positive Roman

I		X										
II								X				
III								X	X			
IV								X				
V								X				
VI								X				
VII								X	X			
VIII								X	X			
IX						X	X		X			
X								X				
XI								X				
XII								X				
XIII								X				
XIV								X				

* 11-bar metal oval positive "5" used from Nov. 19 '74 to March 11 '75.

- 1 - Rubber stoppers used for some negative Arabic "11" in Nov./Dec.
- 2 - Rubber stoppers used for some negative Arabic "12" in Nov.
- 3 - Some negative Arabic "14" in Oct. and Dec. had broad background bars
- 4 - Positive Arabic "1" in Aug. thru Dec. had broad background bars
- 5 - Positive Arabic "5" in Aug.-Oct. had broad background bars
- 6 - Some positive Arabic "6" had 16 narrow background bars
- 7 - Positive Arabic "9" in Nov. had broad background bars
- 8 - Positive Arabic "12" in Sept.-Nov. have 20 background bars
- 9 - Positive Arabic "14" in Sept.-Oct. had broad background bars
- 10 - Rubber stoppers used for negative Roman "XII" in Sept.



Bruce Baryl
Gold and USPCS, AAPE, ARA and UNPA Awards:
Spring Mega-Event, New York
Uncle Sam's General Store: Stamp Taxed
Products Since 1862
Also Vermeil at same show:
Civil War Sun Picture Tax
Taped Photographs 1864-66

William H. Bauer
Gold and APS pre-1900 medal: March Party,
Cleveland, OH
Colorado Territory 1858-1876

Clyde (and Jay) Jennings
Gold: Aripex 99, Tucson, AZ
The Half-A Collection

Matthew Kewriga
Grand Prix junior award and Gold
Ilsapex 98, Johannesburg, S. Africa
U.S. Departmental Officials

Van Koppersmith
Gold: March Party, Cleveland, OH
Mobile, Alabama Postal History Outside the Union

Lester C. Lanphear III
Gold: Westpex 99, San Francisco, CA
19th Century Penalty Mail

Martin Margulis
Silver: ROPEX 99, Rochester, NY
Air Mail To, From, and Through
NYS to NYC

Robert L. Markovits
Res. Grand, Gold, USPCS & BIA Awards:
Westpex 99
San Francisco, CA
Also Gold & Lynn Griffiths Award:
Sandical 99, San Diego, CA
U.S. Special Delivery 1885-1917

Richard H. Parker
Vermeil: March Party, Cleveland, OH
Ohio Postal History, 1790-1816

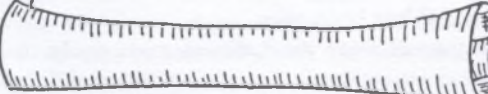
Alan Parsons
Silver: ROPEX 99, Rochester, NY
Corning, NY Postal History

Robert J. Payne
Gold and AAMS gold: Vapex 98,
Virginia Beach, Va.
The Evolution of 19th Century Canceling
Machines in the Washington, D.C.
Post Office Between 1876-1900

Thomas J. Post
Vermeil (one-frame): Plymouth Show 99,
Plymouth Mich.
Railway Postmarks of Luxembourg

Carl L. Stieg
Gold, San Fran. Pacific Phil. Soc. & Friends of
Westpex awards: Westpex 99, San Francisco, CA
Victoria Postal Stationery

Thomas O. Taylor
Vermeil: Vapex 98, Spring City, Pa.
French Cameroon 1900-1960
Gold, APS pre-1900 medal and
USPCS award: Vapex 98,
Virginia Beach, Va.
Washington, D.C. Postal Markings
1791-1900



What the H . . . ?

by Roger D. Curran

Figure 1 illustrates a Boston cover bearing two killer strikes, each enclosing a negative "H." As is evident, the two "Hs" are very different in appearance. Why would a postal clerk use two different killers on the same cover? It seems like extra work to no particular purpose.

But let's ask another question. Are they really strikes from different killers? Observations are as follows:

- (1) There appears to be a faint partial strike of a CDS outer rim most evident on the top of the left stamp which may have come from a strike of a CDS duplexed to the "H" killer on the right where the clerk didn't want the CDS on the left stamp. The distance between the CDS and killer seems to be greater for the left "H" than for the right "H." Perhaps the CDS rim came down after the killer slid a little to the right.
- (2) The ink is grayer around the right "H." Perhaps that is also attributable to a sliding-to-the-right that spread the ink out, making a thinner application. (Of course, it might also result from a second strike of the handstamp without going back to the inkpad.)
- (3) The lower left corners of the two killer strikes are very similar. (This is, I think, an important point.)
- (4) The right killer has more of a top

above the "H," particularly on the right side. This might be due to more pressure on the right side, given the slanting blow to avoid impressing the CDS duplexed to the left.

- (5) The distances between the right sides of the two uprights of each "H" are quite similar: 7 mm. on the top and 6.5 mm. on the bottom.
- (6) The lines of the "H" are sharp on the left "H" and tend to be fuzzy on the right "H," especially on the left sides of the uprights.

I believe that what we have here is just a happenstance sliding strike of the right killer that retained enough of the negative "H" to make it look as though the "H" was cut that way. There are no "H" killers listed in Blake & Davis that are as thin as the right "H" but several that are thicker, more like the left "H." However, one of the examples, 1716A, does look somewhat like the right "H." To me, it defies logic that, in the busy Boston post office, two different killers would have been used, given that there is no evident reason why the cover would have been canceled at two times. It might be speculated, however, that a clerk later noticed that only one stamp was canceled originally, so that the second stamp was then canceled by a second handstamp. Possible, yes, but not at all likely. And then to have the second killer also be an "H," I don't really think so. What are your thoughts?

Thanks to Tom Stanton for his review and comments on this cover.



New Early Date for the Savannah Duplex Cancel

By Frank Crown

The February 1992 issue of *The Chronicle* contains an article on the pre-war Savannah duplex cancel.¹ This article identified two types of the device and provided a census of the covers reported with these markings.

The two types are very similar in appearance as seen in the illustrations at Figure 1. However, there are several distinct differences. The Type A device shows no sign of wear or damage and the distance between the letters and rim of the postmark is relatively uniform. On some examples there is a break in the rim between the "V" and "A" of "Savannah." The Type B device shows signs of damage. The rim from the first to the last "A" of "Savannah" is pushed inward toward the letters. In some examples of the marking the rim in this area is not even visible. The rim above the letter "S" is bulged outward slightly and hooks back almost touching the top of the "A". Both devices have a similar nine bar vertical grid canceler to the right of the postmark. On Type A examples the grid is 1 mm from the rim of the postmark, on the Type B device the distance is 2 mm.

The earliest reported use in *The Chronicle* article is a Type A cancel dated 23 October 1860. Subsequently Roger Curran began study of the Savannah and other pre-war duplex cancels. Recently he sought the assistance of the Georgia Postal History Society to locate other examples of the Savannah cancel. This resulted in the discovery of a new early date for the Type B cancel, 20 October 1860. The cover and cancel are illustrated in Figures 2 and 3.

There has been speculation that the Savannah duplex cancels were prepared from existing postmarks.² Each of the recorded stampless postmarks listed for Savannah were compared to the duplex cancels.³ None matched the arrangement or alignment of the letters of the town name in the duplex cancel. Two pre-war year dated postmarks used at Savannah were also examined. One of these, the Savannah "Paid" postmark illustrated in Figure 4, is a close, but not exact match, if the "Paid" were removed. However, this postmark continued in use in the Confederate period, well beyond the period in which the duplex cancel was introduced. Thus, the available evidence



Figure 1. The two types of the Savannah duplex cancel. The irregularities in the grids are from the embossed stamp.



Figure 2. Savannah duplex cancel dated 20 October 1860 used on postal stationery envelope.



Figure 3. Savannah duplex cancel dated 20 Oct. 1860 with red color filtered out.



Figure 4. Savannah "Paid" postmark. Portions of the embossed stamp are seen at top and right side.

indicates that the Savannah duplex cancel was made specifically for the purpose of canceling stamps as required by the 23 July 1860 regulation of the Post Office Department. This edict prohibited the use of town postmarks as stamp obliterators, requiring instead a distinct canceler.

An interesting observation made while conducting this limited study concerns the relationship between the Savannah duplex and "Paid" devices. A review of old auction catalogs and limited reference files reveals the Savannah "Paid" postmark apparently dropped out of use about the same time the Savannah duplex cancel was introduced. This may provide another means of narrowing in on the date the duplex cancel was introduced. The latest use of the "Paid" postmark found while preparing this article is 1 May 1860.

Strangely the duplex marking appears to have dropped out of use shortly after the takeover of the mail service by the Confederate government. In its place the "Paid" postmark reappears. One could easily draw the conclusion that they were the same device, but they were not as noted above. So why this change? The Savannah post office was one of the largest in the state and handled a relatively large volume of mail. Perhaps the duplex marking was too heavy or a little unwieldy compared to other canceling devices available in the office. The clerks, being human, would favor those canceling devices that were the easiest and less tiring to use.

¹Richard B. Graham, "The Savannah, Georgia, Duplexed Handstamp of 1860-61," *The Chronicle of the US Classic Postal Issues*, Vol. 44, No. 1 (February 1992), pp. 20-22. (The 23 October 1860 cover is illustrated in the November 1991 issue of *The Chronicle* (Vol. 43, No. 4, p. 240).)

² Roger D. Curran, "Early Savannah Duplex," *Georgia Post Roads*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (March-April 1999), pp. 1, 3, 8.

³ Francis J. Crown, Jr., *Georgia Stampless Cover Catalog and Handbook*, Madison, AL: Francis J. Crown, Jr., 1997: 7-73.

Unusual Manuscript Cancels

by Roger D. Curran

One of the things that can be said about cancellations on 19th century U.S. stamps is that they present a very wide range of collecting options. We'll touch here on one fascinating and not-so-commonly traveled byway – that of unusual manuscript cancels. Some of the examples that follow are more unusual than others but all are out of the ordinary. In most cases, these markings are, in and of themselves, the intended obliteration. But they include a few that comprise only part of the design or were perhaps added sometime after the stamp was canceled.

We'll present these cancels chronologically in terms of the stamp issue. Figure 1 is a nice four-margin orange brown (Scott #10) that has been plated as 10L2 early. In addition to the diagonal manuscript lines there is the notation "Write Soon." It's not altogether clear whether the lines and notations are in the same ink. The lines appear to be a little darker but perhaps that is due to pressing down harder to accomplish the cancel and thereby depositing more ink.

Figure 2 is a Scott #11 and the cancel denotes "Way" which is a postal term meaning that the letter was given to a or steamboat, railroad or stage carrying contract mail on the way to a post office destination. Figure 3 illustrates three Scott #65s showing variations on a theme. The left stamp bears a manuscript "7" correcting a handstamped "6" underneath it. The middle stamp shows a manuscript "4" or conceivably an "8" or "9" to the right of the "2." Perhaps the postmaster had only one slug to indicate the day and needed to add the second numeral in manuscript. Both the month and day indicators are in manuscript on the right stamp. This primitive handstamp was presumably designed to show only the town and state.

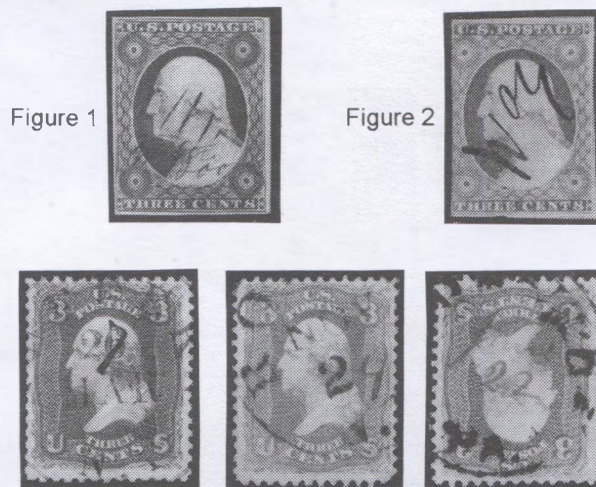


Figure 3

Figure 4



Figure 4 is a Scott #65 with a bold "Nix" in manuscript. Since there is another cancellation present (it appears to be the partial outer rim of a townmark) on the stamp, it may be that the "Nix" as added by the addressee's post office to assure that a poorly canceled stamp wouldn't be reused.

Next we come in Figure 5 to three Scott #147s. The left stamp has "JHB" with flourishes above and below in a reddish violet ink. The middle stamp is canceled by "Paid" and the right stamp by "Maggie" with two underlinings. The ink from the bottom underlining appears to be smeared a bit to the left.

Figure 6 presents two Scott #158s. The one on the left bears a vague grid of dots killer plus a partial "VOTE/FOR/HAYES" manuscript cancel. Who knows what person added that! The right stamp has a very artistically written and evenly applied "E Merrill/PM." I daresay this cancel appears on other stamps and would very much



Figure 5



Figure 6

Figure 7



welcome information on such uses and the town from whence it came.

Figure 7 makes it clear that this Scott #183 has been "Used." In Figure 8 we have a Scott #184 canceled by a bow and arrow. Finally, Figure 9 shows a Scott #207 canceled by a target and the following notation: "I hope

Figure 8



Figure 9



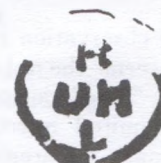
you are well" followed by initials that may be "WMA." Wouldn't it be interesting to know who in the chain of events offered this sentiment.

Numerous other examples surely reside in readers' collections and you are urged to share them with the *NEWS*.

Unusual Initials

John Barwis reports to the *NEWS* a cover addressed to New Paltz, N.Y. bearing a 3 cent green canceled by a circle containing four letters that are probably "R," "U," "H" and "L." (The "U," "H" and "L" seem quite definite.) A very rough representation of the cancel is shown as Figure 1. The accompanying single circle 25.5

Figure 1



mm. townmark has "N.Y." at the bottom but the town name is illegible. John suggests Kinderhook as a possibility, from what little is present in the townmark strike, and points out that Kinderhook is in a county adjacent to the county wherein New Paltz lies. John advises that he has an off-cover stamp with the same wear marks on the circle and the same initials very clearly shown except that an "N" is substituted for a "U" on the left side. Who can identify the town of origin and who can explain the sets of initials?

Club Champions

The August issue of *The American Philatelist* arrived, announcing the APS Stampshow to be in Cleveland, OH this August. The Champion of Champions competitors were listed, each of them having won the Grand Award for best exhibit at one of the 30 qualifying national shows. A tip of the hat to the four who are Club members:

Lester Lanphear, "U.S. Departmentals, 1873 to 1884"

Robert L. Markovits, "U.S. Officials 1873-1884"

Thomas C. Mazza, "New York City Cheap Postage to Demonetization"

Carl Stieg, "Postal Stationery of Victoria"