



Cancellation Club NEWS

Vol. 25, No. 5, Whole No. 238, February 2001

Island Mail

Figure 1 presents an interesting cover. It was postmarked at Mormon Island, California on June 14. The backstamp is shown as Figure 2. It, too, is dated June 14, but adds the time "12P.M." Obviously, this letter entered the mails in the morning of June 14 and was promptly dispatched and received in Sacramento. Your editor assumes that Mormon Island is located in the Sacramento River near Sacramento, but didn't find a map that showed it at the local public library.

The cover encloses a letter that reads, as closely as your editor can determine, as follows:

*New York Ravine
June 13, 1884
Mr. Jackson Wilcoxin,*

Dear Sir,

I have had some stock on my place for three weeks but the feed is fine and the grass is as green as it was last March I heard that your cattle were suffering for the want of feed on the other side of the river so I thought I would write a few lines and let

you know that I have feed, and if you let me milk the cows the same as Mrs. Murray does, I won't ask no money for the feed.

Yours,

Mrs. Powell

The cover was on an album page that contained the following notation about the "MI" cancel: "Some think this a precancel." The stamp is, of course, a Scott #210 since the date is 1884. Willard's outstanding book on Scott #210 does not report this marking but *California Town Postmarks 1849-1935* by John H. Williams does list both the postmark and the killer with dates of use reported as August 2, 1883-June 11, 1886. The book further reports that the Mormon Island post office was established before August 7, 1851 and discontinued on October 31, 1890.

One supposes the idea that the "MI" might be a precancel stems from the fact that it is a small, centrally placed cancel. I did not find it listed in *Postal History and Usage of 1907 and Earlier Precancels* by Charles C. Souder.

Additional information pertinent to this cover would be very much welcomed.■

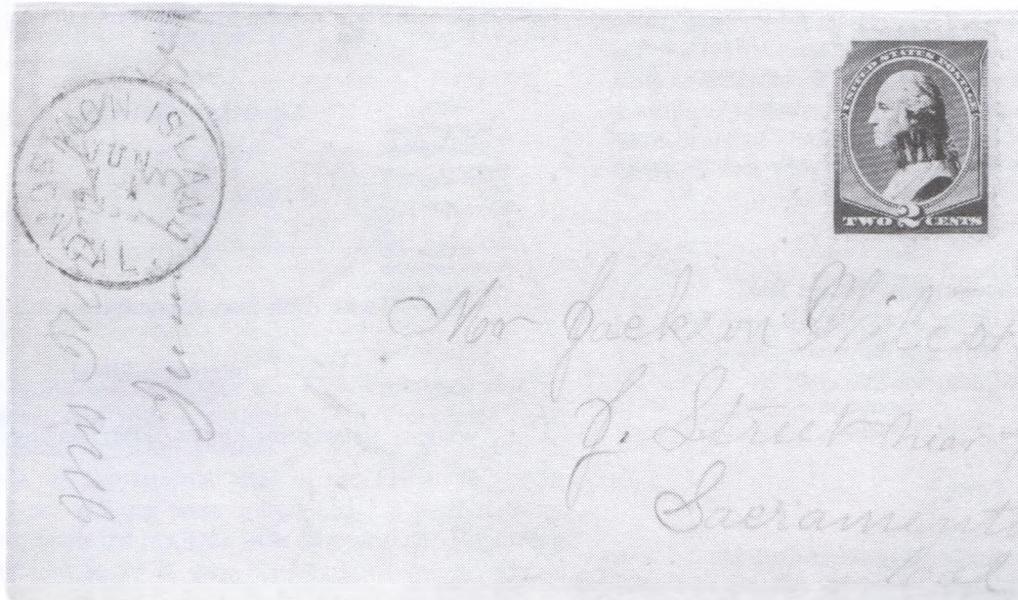


Figure 1



Figure 2

Dear Reader,

With February already here, our Club's annual meeting in early June this year at NAPEX 2001 in McLean, Va., just outside Washington, D.C., fast approaches. We will again offer a U.S.C.C. award for the best single-frame exhibit devoted to U.S. cancellations and urge members to consider submitting an entry. Please contact me at the address on the masthead or call (570-523-0783) if interested and we'll immediately send you an exhibit prospectus.

It has been mentioned before but the single-frame exhibit format, consisting of 16 pages, is a great way for the never-before exhibitor to be introduced to exhibiting. And, of course, it is a very user-friendly way for experienced exhibitors to show specialized areas of a collection. If you are new to exhibiting and would like to have some direct advisory assistance on putting together a one-frame exhibit, let us know and a USCC officer would be pleased to help out.

We will be staffing a society table for the duration of the show, June 1-3, and if you plan to attend and would have time available to help out at the table for a one or two hour block of time, please write Sy Stiss, our NAPEX show liaison, at 436 N. Park Drive, Arlington, Va. 22203 or call him on (703) 525-9133.

As in previous years, the U.S.C.C. will sponsor a seminar devoted to one or more aspects of U.S. 19th Century cancellations. We expect this seminar to be held Saturday, June 2. The Board of Directors is in the process of identifying the subject and speaker. Watch for details in NAPEX publicity.

We hope to see many members at NAPEX, which has long been regarded as one of the nation's very good shows. Beyond the show itself, the weather should be nice and the Washington, D.C. area, of course, offers many fine attractions.

Roger Curran

Wanted To Trade. I have unused copies of La Posta Pocket Guides (Helbock 1989) for Alaska, Arizona, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, and Wyoming to trade individually for Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Ohio, Michigan and Pennsylvania which need not be unused. Or all six of mine preferably for a copy of the Helbock Midwest, but would accept Eastern States guide. Trade desired but would sell. Bob Benjamin, 1801 Patton Dr., Modesto, CA 95356.■

For Sale: Cancellations, 3 cent 1861. Please send \$3.00 for 3 color and 3 black and white Xeroxes. Abe Boyarsky, PO Box 570, La Mirada, CA 90637-0570



The U.S. Cancellation Club NEWS

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Address all other communications to the NEWS editor: Roger D. Curran at the address below.

U.S.C.C. Officers

Roger D. Curran, 20 University Ave., Lewisburg, PA 17837.....President

Thomas O. Taylor, 19 Ingleton Circle, Kennett Square, PA 19348.....1st Vice President

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Update on Early Ellipse

by Roger D. Curran

In the Summer 1985 *NEWS*, the front page article was devoted to a scarce New York City ellipse containing eleven bars with a shaded numeral "5" in the center. An example on a postal card submitted by Joe McDonough was illustrated. It was postmarked "DEC/2_." The second digit of the day indicator was too incomplete to read. From docketing on the front and the message dateline on the back, we were able to determine that it was posted in 1874. Joe also submitted a March 11 (1875) example.

The reason the December 1874 ellipse was featured was that uses of the 11-bar shaded "5" involve the *earliest reported* uses in the U.S. of a manufactured metal ellipse canceller. The December 1874 example, of course, is the earliest of the two strikes. Arthur Bond briefly discussed this ellipse years before in the Winter 1968 *NEWS* and mentioned a February 17 usage but had seen no examples that could be year-dated.

In the Winter 1987 *NEWS* a well-struck November 25 example, in the collection Gil Levere, was illustrated. The dateline on the back of the postal card was ambiguous. The last digit of 187_ was poorly written. It could be read as a "4" or "6" but didn't clearly appear to be either. Of course, if a "4," it would have been a new earliest reported use. In the following issue of the *NEWS*, Roger Rhoads, a student of the first U.S. postal card, advised that the card was printed in 1875 because of the presence of plate flaws that progressed over a known period of time. So much, then, for a new ERU!

Since 1987 several additional examples of this particular "5" have been reported. One is especially worthy of mention. John Donnes submitted a November 16 example on a postal card with a printed 1874 dateline on the back. John's tracing of the CDS and killer is shown as Figure 1. This card bears the new earliest reported use of the pioneering, 11-bar, shaded "5" ellipse. Since examples of this killer are scarce, occur over a period of time, and thus far have only been found *before* the set of 9-bar block numeral ellipses was introduced by the NYPO in May 1876, the handstamp that produced it must have been used experimentally. Obviously it was a successful experiment.

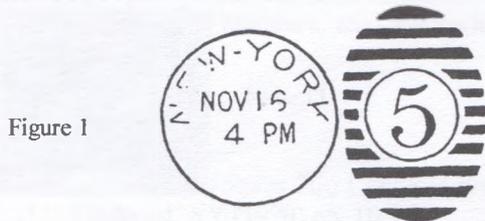


Figure 1

It is worthwhile to note that New York used another 11-bar ellipse, one with a shaded "6" in the center. An example traced by John Donnes is shown as Figure 2. Interestingly, all the reported uses of the 11-bar "6" occur *after* the 9-bar ellipses were introduced. The first 9-bar ellipses were duplexed to CDSs with no year date. Beginning in the latter part of 1878, new handstamps were introduced

Figure 2



that duplexed the ellipses to a CDS with a 2-digit year date at the bottom. No examples of the shaded "6" have been reported after the year-dated CDS came into use. It thus appears that, at some point during the two plus years when the handstamps with no year date were used, one 9-bar "6" handstamp was broken or lost and the 11-bar "6," which was probably acquired at the same time as the "5," was pressed into service as a replacement. Strikes of the block numeral "6" are also seen during this period.

It is clear that two handstamps with the same ellipse number were used simultaneously in the N.Y.P.O. The NYPO postmarking/canceling procedure was described in an 1878 magazine article. (One presumes that the procedure had been in use for a period of time before that.) The article stated the following:

"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 upon it, and proceeds again. The greatest care is exercised to have the stamp legible."¹

The article is in error with regard to how often the clerk changed his handstamp. It was every half hour rather than every hour. I can't now put my hand on it but seem to recall reading another account of this procedure that said it was the job of one clerk to change the time indicators for *all* the handstamps.

Physical evidence of using more than one handstamp with the same block numeral was reported by John Donnes as a result of his careful examination of two examples of the "2" ellipse, each struck in May 1876. His fine tracings are shown in Figure 3. He noted a slight difference in shapes of the "2" numerals and a marked difference in the size and shape of the letters in "NEW-YORK," especially in the "N" and "Y."

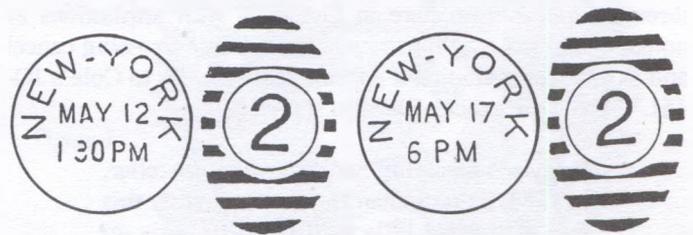


Figure 3

At the time these handstamps were manufactured, the letters in the face of the CDS and the numeral in the ellipse

were, I believe, cut by hand. Assuming this to be true, small variations would be expected.

Comment and additional information pertaining to any aspect of the above will be welcomed. ■

¹ The New York Post-Office," *Scribner's Monthly Magazine*, Vol. XVI, No. 1, May 1878, p. 63.

Indian Head Cancel

by Roger D. Curran

A very popular and elusive cancel is an Indian head of the type generally associated with Head Tide, Maine. A nice example in the collection of Russ Whitmore is shown in Figure 1. The postmark date appears to be March 1887. Russ is a student of postal history related to American Indians and his collection includes a number of examples of this type of cancellation. I say "type" because it appears there are some design variations.

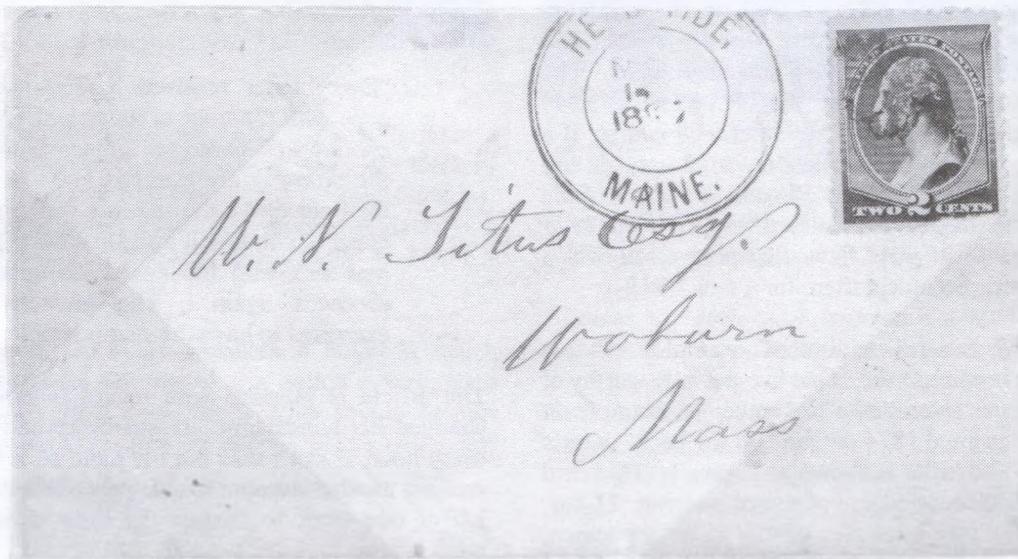


Figure 1

The *Herst-Sampson Postmark Catalog* (Billig's Handbook #33) shows three representations illustrated here as Figure 2. They are attributed to Head Tide, Chester, N.Y. and Troutville, Pa., respectively. Willard provided four illustrations including one from Head Tide, which he reported in both black and magenta.¹ He also mentioned an example from Lunenburg, Mass. in magenta ink that he said is difficult to distinguish from the Head Tide killer.² Cole illustrates three designs (shown here in Figure 3) with attributions as noted.³ Slawson et al illustrated the Damon's Crossing cancel and in this representation it appears quite similar to Cole's JO-161.⁴ About the cancel, Slawson stated:

Damon's Crossing had as its first canceller, in 1884, a fine Indian Head. Apparently this tiny office had little mail and with only an occasional application of ink on a dust covered handstamp the fine lines of the device rapidly clogged up, causing it to be discarded after but a short span of use.



Figure 2

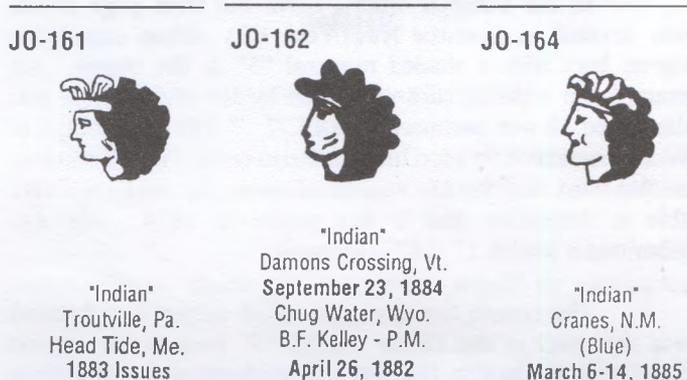


Figure 3

The delicate design, no doubt produced by rubber-faced handstamps, was subject, I believe, to wide variations in appearance due to such factors as amount of ink on the handstamp, whether the strike is light or hard, whether the

strike is straight down or a glancing blow that slid a bit, etc. How many actual designs were used is a very interesting question. A truly superb strike on an off-cover Scott #210 in Russ' collection is shown as Figure 4.



Figure 4

Russ has made a study of these cancellations and has noted the same essential design on a Westervelt Post local stamp (Scott #144L9). Two dies were used, he points out, in the production of these stamps. One shows the complete feathers (Figure 5) and the other shows three trimmed feathers (Figure 6). The blunted ends of the sixth and seventh feathers at the back of the head show the trimming most clearly. What is the relation, if any, between the dies and plate for the Westervelt stamp and the Indian head cancels?



Figure 5



Figure 6

Russ has found off-cover Indian-head cancels that appear to match both the complete feathers and trimmed feathers designs. He also owns a Head Tide cover with a light strike of the cancel showing a slightly rounded forehead that matches, he reports, a forgery of the Westervelt stamp. Off-cover stamps in his collection bearing this general type of Indian head cancel range from 11.5-13 mm. in width and from 14-16.5 mm. in height.

Russ also adds the following information about post offices using this Indian head cancel: (1) Fort Keogh, Montana (with rectangular townmark) in blue ink dated February 24, 1881, (2) double circle postmark of Anclote, Fla. dated December 29, 1882 and (3) an off-cover Scott #184 with enough of a single-circle postmark to show "LA.," presumably for Louisiana. After some space in this partial CDS there is a word that begins with "I" with, curiously, what appears to be a "." Just to the top left of "I." Presumably it is just a bit of stray ink.



A wonderful cover in Russ' collection is a one-cent circular from New York to Rhode Island with forwarding on to Head Tide. A one cent due stamp (J15) is affixed to the front of the cover and canceled by the Head Tide Indian head cancel duplexed to a double circle CDS dated November 25, 1886. Is there another due stamp out there with this cancel?

We urge readers to report additional information about this cancellation: post offices that used it, details about the design, other citations in the literature, etc. All such will be welcomed and appreciated. ■

¹ Willard, Edward L. *The United States Two Cent Red Brown of 1883-1887*, H.L. Lindquist, NY (1970) pp. 10, 14.

² *Ibid.*, p. 10.

³ Cole, James M. *Cancellations and Killers of the Banknote Era 1870-1894*, USPS (1995), p. 169.

⁴ Slawson, et al. *The Postal History of Vermont*, Collectors Club, NY (1969), pp. 127, 129.

New York Double Oval

by Roger D. Curran

Figure 1 illustrates an example of the familiar New York double oval killer used on non-first class mail. Actually, this statement is not completely true. New York double oval cancels, especially with "CR" in the center, are very commonly noted. A tracing of such a cancel is shown as Figure 2. "CR" is thought to stand for "Circular Room" and is found overwhelmingly on one-cent large Banknotes.

The Figure 1 cancel on this Scott #183 stamp does, however, have an uncommon aspect and that is the "MB" in the center. I have seen no other example or any reports of it in the literature and have no idea what "MB" stands for. Perhaps Figure 1 involves a late use of the stamp bearing a cancel that wasn't introduced until after the large Banknote era came to an end in 1890. Or, of course, it could be a cancel, contemporary with the stamp's period of issue, that for some reason was only used sparingly.

Readers who can report other examples on any stamp issues or the meaning of "MB" are urged to do so.



Figure 1



Figure 2

Anchor Sighting

In the August 2000 issue of *The American Philatelist*, Joe Crosby discussed an elaborate negative anchor cancel from Providence, R.I. It is listed in Cole as RN-36. Word comes now that a Providence anchor has washed up on the other side of the Atlantic. Netherlands collector Victor Kuil reports finding the item illustrated here as Figure 1 while going through an unsorted mixture of one-cent Banknotes. He noted that a negative cancel like this is easily overlooked. The stamp is a Scott #182. ■

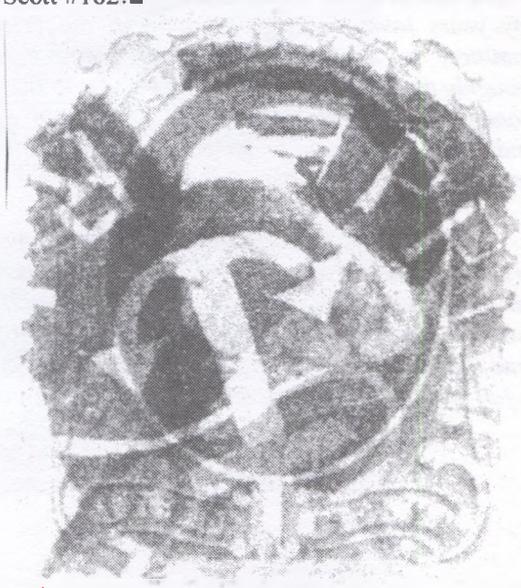


Figure 1

"Kid" Cancel Cover – Another Aspect

The Summer 2000 NEWS carried an article about a cover bearing three strikes of a killer with a negative "Kid" in the center. "Kid" is assumed to refer to Billy the Kid, the infamous Old West outlaw. *Linn's Stamp News* subsequently illustrated the cover, prompting Robert J. Hoyle, Jr. to contact the NEWS with information about the addressee. The cover was addressed as follows:

Mr. T.M. Osborne
Care D.M. Osborne Esq.
Auburn
N.Y.

Mr. Hoyle's note stated in large part the following:

"The item in *Linn's* for Nov. 27 interested me because the addressee was probably Thomas Mott Osborne, who was the "Father of Prison Reform." He was the son of D. M. Osborne early and prominent citizen of Auburn, N.Y. I was born and raised in Auburn. There was a statue of T.M. Osborne on the grounds of the high school I attended in Auburn, from which I graduated in 1937 . . . He introduced education programs for prisoners. In 1913 he was NY State Commissioner of Prison Reform. . ."

The following information that was taken from Mr. Hoyle's 1937 class Yearbook of Auburn Senior High School.

Thomas Mott Osborne

Born in Auburn in 1859, Thomas Mott Osborne was the son of a wealthy manufacturer. He spent his early childhood in Auburn and was graduated from Harvard University in 1884.

When still a child, Mr. Osborne visited the prison. The seriousness of the conditions there impressed him deeply. Many years later, as the Chairman of the Prison Reform Committee, he decided that the only way to understand thoroughly the conditions of the prisons was to live in one as a prisoner. Against the advice and protests of many of his friends, and with the aid and encouragement of others, he was entered at Auburn Prison as Tom Brown, prisoner 33,333x.

During the following week, a week that seemed like years to him, he remained there, living and working with the other men, and with the so-called "toughest bunch of the lot." In order to know what the majority of them had to go through at one time or another, he spent fourteen hours in the "jail." The jail was in reality a medieval dungeon. Situated between

the death house and the dynamo, it was pitch black, damp, and poorly ventilated. Mr. Osborne's anger knew no bounds when he found out that the men were allowed only three gills of water a day. No wonder that men confined there went mad and committed suicide.

Upon leaving the prison, Mr. Osborne gave his fellow prisoners a farewell address. He impressed upon them the fact that only through their help and cooperation he would be able to carry out his plans for prison reform. From that day until his death in 1926, Mr. Osborne devoted all his time and effort to this work.

Dorothy Stearns

A Reminder

People of prominence in national and state affairs, residents of places far and near, gathered with Auburnians at the Auburn Senior High School campus on the afternoon of June 11, 1936 for the dedication of a statue of Thomas Mott Osborne.

The memorial is a beautiful one. It is a bronze figure set on a pedestal in front of a semi-circular stone seat. Forming a picturesque background are evergreens, which, together with oak trees, placed here and there, give the memorial the aspect of a small park. The statue of Mr. Osborne symbolizes his ideals. In his right hand he holds the now useless shackles; while in his left hand he extends the book and uniform, symbols of the Mutual Welfare League.

The statute is cold, hard. But the greatest memorial of Mr. Osborne still stands, the memorial of his work, always the greatest and most lasting of all memorials. To the many Tom Browns, Mr. Osborne is not a figure in metal, but a living light of hope, the friend of the friendless.

Perhaps one of the most significant facts connected with this memorial, will explain how Thomas Mott Osborne stood in the hearts of the convicts. It is the story of how the money for the statute was raised. One former convict gave one thousand dollars to the fund, and thus necessitated the postponement of his marriage for a year. The inmates of Auburn Prison contributed about nine hundred dollars. Thus it can be said truly that a substantial amount was raised from among the men whom Mr. Osborne helped.

The memorial is a tribute to a great man. Placed as it is, on the campus of Auburn Senior High School, it serves as a model, as a reminder, to the youth of Auburn.

Paul Egan

Another Unusual Triplex

Gil Levere has presented considerable data in two recent issues of the *NEWS* on the postmarks of several post offices where time-of-day slugs were placed in handstamps between the CDS and killer. Normally, in such triplex markings, it was a two digit year date that was placed between the CDS and killer. New York City was the principal user of two digit "outside" year dates – primarily at (1) the main post office on local mail and (2) branch stations. A cover bearing two such New York branch station postmarks is shown as Figure 1. Willard reported two digit "outside" year dates used in conjunction with the two cent red brown of 1883-1887, at New Haven, Connecticut, E. Liberty Station of Pittsburgh, Pa.,

Poughkeepsie, New York, Washington, D.C. and East Capitol Station, D.C.

Figure 2 shows an "outside" year date. However, in this case, it consists of four digits rather than two. Another Pittsfield cover dated March 20, 1883 has been noted and Willard illustrates a tracing dated July 18, 1884.¹ How long was this marking used by Pittsfield? What other post offices used a four digit year date? Readers are encouraged to report information pertinent to these questions.■

¹ Willard, Edward L. *The United States Two Cent Red Brown of 1883-1887*, Volume Two, Lindquist Publications, Inc. New York, NY (1970).

Figure 1

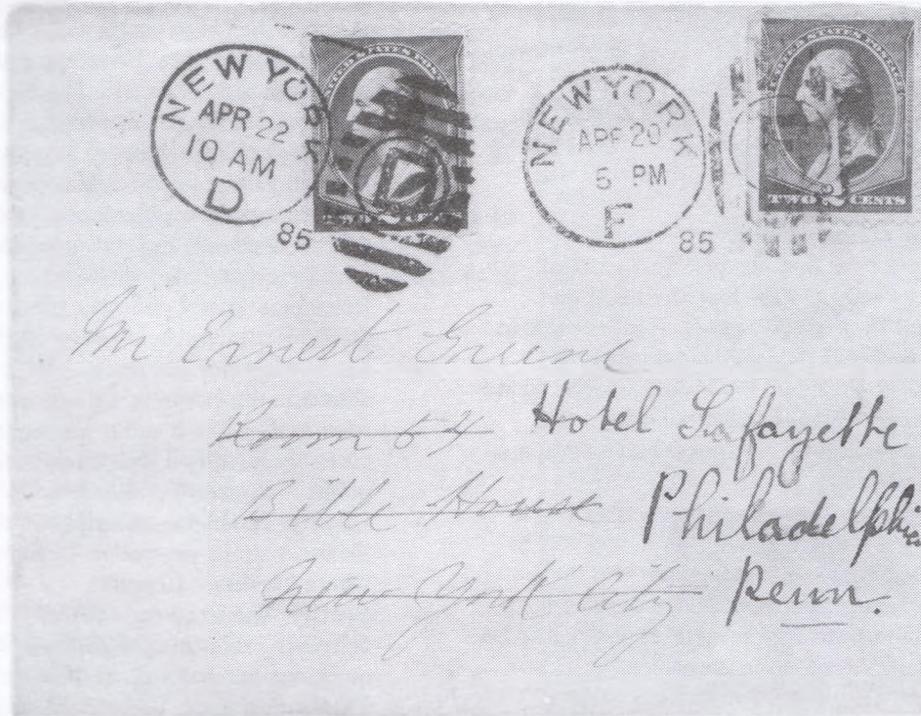
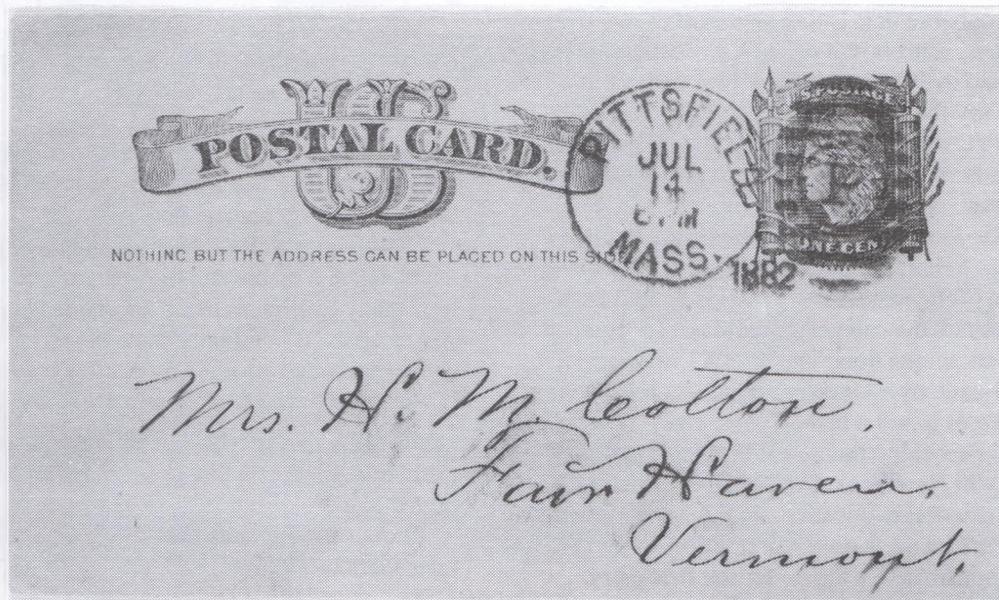


Figure 2



One-Frame Exhibiting: Give It a Try*by Roger R. Rhoads*

Three years ago, club officers began to encourage the membership to put together one-frame exhibits for the show where we hold our annual meeting. Prior to this I had never exhibited, always using the following as excuses:

- a. I don't have the time.
- b. I don't have high priced, unique items to show.
- c. I'd just make a fool of myself.

Finally, with a bit of arm twisting, I agreed to do my best. After a lot of thought, looking for exhibit examples in my collection and several hours at the computer, I put together my first venture three years ago. I was only competing with our own club members, and no show prizes were awarded. What a surprise to find that mine had been chosen the top one! In addition, the efforts of all of us won the best club exhibit award at the Philadelphia National Exhibition.

This past year we agreed to meet at the APS Stampshow in late August in Providence, RI. We could no longer hide behind the club banner as we would be required to enter the open competition. By now sixteen pages didn't seem to be so very much, but I knew that there would be some very stiff competition facing us.

I arrived on Saturday to find some very big names exhibiting against us, and I felt that just getting a vermeil would be more than satisfactory. Late that afternoon the awards were posted, and I was simply knocked off my feet to find that I had won platinum! I didn't attend the awards banquet, so your president picked up my award, which I found out the following morning at breakfast included the grand award – Best Single Frame Exhibit. A rookie had hit a home run his first time at bat!

Now I would like to persuade more of our membership to give it a try, particularly if you are looking for a new way to enjoy your collection and enable others to enjoy it as well. Allow me to walk you through the steps of putting together a one-framer, and then join us this coming year at NAPEX to be held June 1-3 in McLean, VA (Tysons Corner).

First you need to find a topic that can be fully covered using examples from your collection in only 16 pages. Most of us have somewhat general collections with many subdivisions. I collect only the first U.S. postal card (Scott UX1 and 3) with its usages, cancels and postal history. At one time I calculated that I had over 25 min-collections with some categories having very few examples (e.g. NYFM cancels) while others like NYC number cancels with over a hundred.

Use your knowledge of your collection to pick a topic that you can well illustrate. The value of individual items should not be used to decide the theme. I'm not saying keep them out, but it's far more important that the subject be well developed than the value of the items shown. Items picked from penny boxes to illustrate the category should not be frowned upon. If you have an unique item with high \$\$ value and it fits well in your scheme, by all means use it. But leave it at home if it doesn't seem to tell a part of your "story".

Don't tackle a far-reaching theme either. Telling the story of the postal history of New York State is hard enough with 15 frames; one frame can not do it justice. In my case I decided that I could treat NYC cancels on the first postal card (1873-76) rather easily and chose that theme for my first entry.

Pick a subject that not only can you well cover from your collection, but one that you know a lot about. Each of us is a

first-level expert in certain areas. Some of us are absolutely brilliant in a wide spectrum of subjects, but every one of us has at least one collecting area in which we excel. Don't go into areas on which you don't have a good understanding and grasp. Dale Carnegie argued that only if you fully understand your subject do you have the right to speak. The same is true in philatelic exhibiting.

The APS has rather rigid rules for judging conventional multi-framed exhibits that encourage expenditure and a thick billfold. One-frame rules are a bit different with more emphasis on telling a short story well. This is supposed to be fun, not expensive!

The following are the APS suggested scoring criteria for evaluating one-frame exhibits. Note that the same points are awarded for Challenge Factor as for Presentation. Take a look at the points awarded for Coverage and Development as well as Knowledge and Accuracy. The APS is also interested in how the story is told, its Clarity, Brevity and Creativity.

- Clarity: A sharply-defined easy to follow subject with a title reflective of the exhibit – 10 points
- Coverage and Development: The major aspects of the subject are developed, balanced and presented using philatelic materials – 30 points
- Relevance: Every philatelic piece presented is essential to the subject/theme being developed – 10 points
- Knowledge and Accuracy: A high level of knowledge shown in the exhibitor's development, in the material used to illustrate it and/or the write-up. The material is correctly identified and the information is correct – 25 points
- Quality: The highest possible level of quality that exists for the material presented. Commercial usage is preferred where it exists – 10 points
- Brevity: The write-up is the minimum essential to conveying relevance of philatelic material and answering questions the material, itself, raises – 5 points
- Challenge Factor: The material goes beyond that which is most easily available for the subject – 5 points
- Presentation: The philatelic material stands out. Exhibit encourages the viewer's attention – 5 points
- Research: New conclusions on the subject or individual items included are reached and properly stated – 1 bonus point
- Creativity: Development of the subject (unusual or not) is from unusual perspective and/or using unusual philatelic material – 1 bonus point

Now let me go back to the beginning again. So now you have picked a theme and the next question to be answered is how many exhibition items are needed? Well, what items will you exhibit? Since I only show postal cards, which can be considered covers for the moment, I only need 40-50 pieces. If you will be showing off-cover stamps, then many more will be needed. This means that before you start selecting, you need an outline, and you need to design your story for each of the 15 pages.

Here is an example from the first page of my color cancellations exhibit:

"A is for Akron ..." - Alphabet Cancellations on the First Postal Card

During the later half of the 19th century the government did not furnish the smaller post offices with any of the needed devices for marking and canceling mail. The local postmaster had to purchase his own tools from such sources as shown in this advertisement. Generally, the cancel itself was a very simple, utilitarian design which today we might call a target or a cork (i.e. the familiar "blob" cancel). As an alternative, many postal workers carved whimsical devices whose markings today we call "fancy" cancels. A favorite was the alphabet with the chosen letter representing that city/town, a compass point, a patriotic symbol or even the initial of the worker. At times even old office rating marks were put into service, and in certain situations, the letters had official meanings such as station designations by New York and Philadelphia. This exhibit shows a sampling of these cancels on the first postal card during its years of use, the mid-1870s.

Certain of the markings shown are very scarce or rare on postal cards and are marked ★ as being very scarce (10-20 possibly in extant) and ★★ for rare (<10 in extant).

<u>Index</u>	<u>Page</u>
Large Cities	
Boston	2
Chicago	3
New York City	4
NYC/Philadelphia/Brooklyn	5
Single Carved Letters	
Towns/Cities	6-8
RPOs	9
Clerks Initials	10-12
Post Office Markings	13
Multiple Letters	
Patriotics	14
Others	15-16

Will set up any Name and can be Changed a thousand times.

A complete set of Rubber Movable Type, with a pair of Pads, complete for 30 cents. (This composition works nicely with wood or metal stamps.)

RUBBER POSTOFFICE STAMPS.
Rubber Marking, Dating and Printing Stamps are the only stamps yet made that will give a clear, beautiful impression equal to the FINEST LETTER PRESS PRINT. They are made of Pure Elastic Rubber and require but the lightest touch to produce a perfect impression. I will furnish the following stamps in Rubber for only 50 cents each, postpaid.

Forwarded. Advertised.
and in the same style of type as above, Registered No. ... Refused, Correct, Due 3 Cents, Steamboat, Unclaimed, Received, Held for Postage, or anything of no more than three words, only 50 cents, postpaid. **Postmasters' Name in Script or Plain Type, only 50 cents, postpaid.**

Postoffice Dating Stamp as shown on the other side; Postmaster's name on a separate stamp; Composition; Pads, and Movable dates for 10 years, mailed postpaid for \$1.50; Rubber Cancelling Stamps as shown opposite, 50 cents each, postpaid.

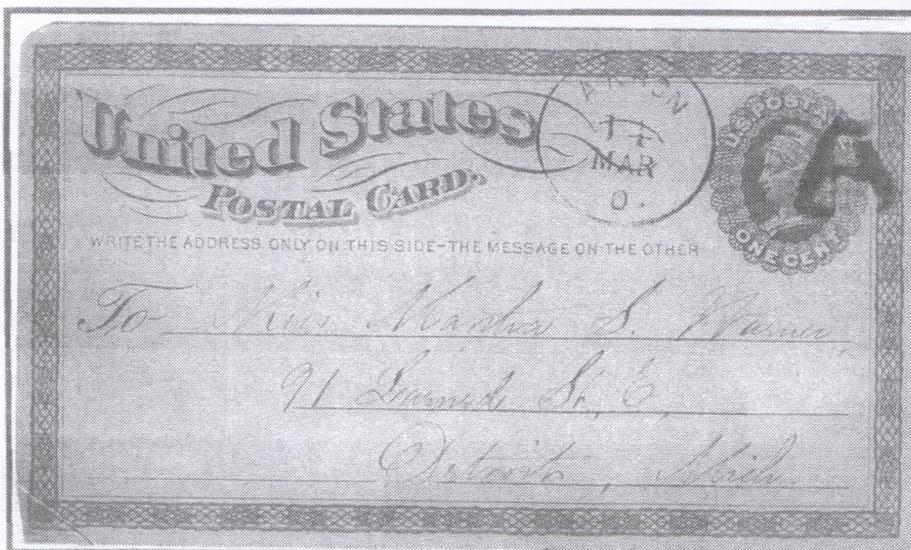
RETURN TO WRITER MALLETT CREEK, OHIO. **CORRECT.** J. R. HOLCOMB, P. M.

Price 50 Cents postpaid. Price 75 Cents postpaid.

"OUR BEST" INKING COMPOSITION.
No Gumming or Clogging the Stamp with Ink and dirt. Impression always sharp and clear.

Sample box, Red, Blue or Purple, with a pair of INKING PADS sent postpaid for 40 cents. **CANCELLING COMPOSITION** (black) the most effective known, with a pair of pads, complete for 30 cents. (This composition works nicely with wood or metal stamps.)

Send Stamp for Illustrated Circular. Address, J. R. HOLCOMB, P. M., Mallet Creek, Medina Co., Ohio.

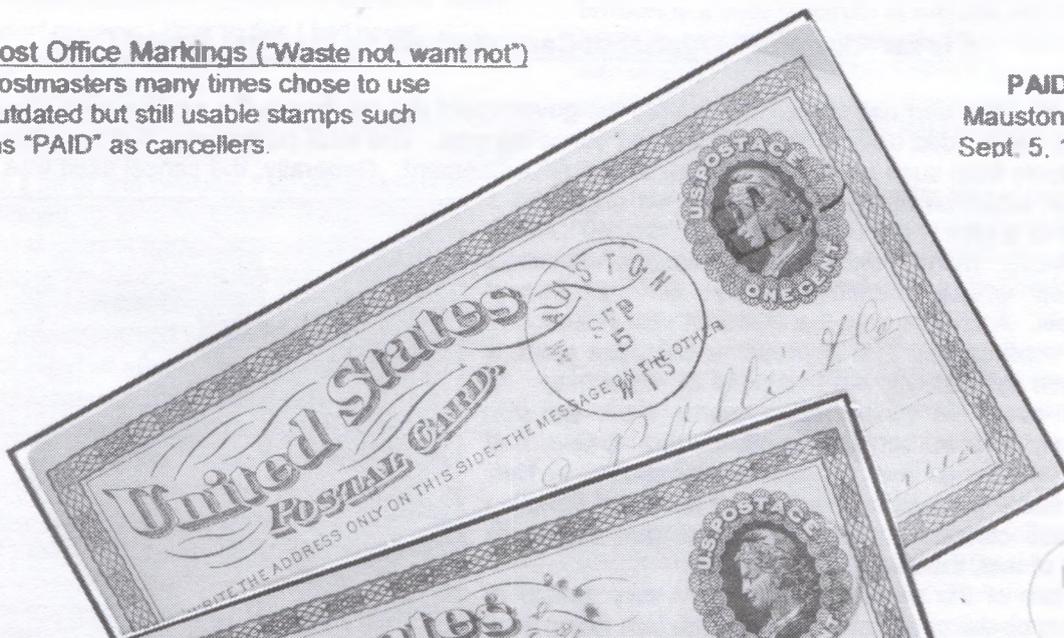


**A is for Akron, OH
March 3, 1874**

Post Office Markings ("Waste not, want not")

Postmasters many times chose to use outdated but still usable stamps such as "PAID" as cancellers.

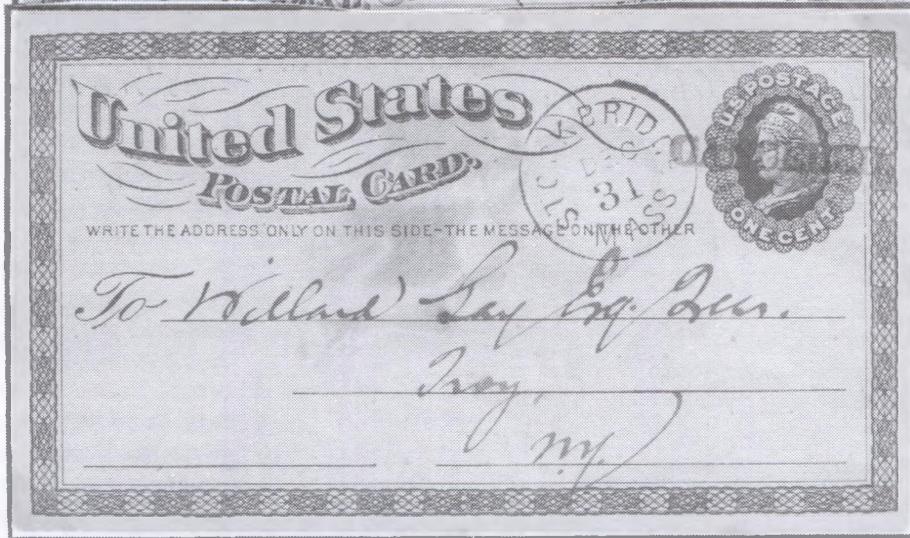
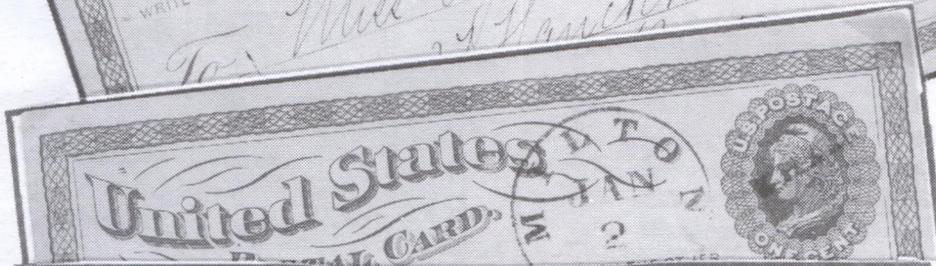
PAID
Mauston, WI
Sept. 5, 1873



PAID 3
In Circle
East Walpole, MA
Nov. 15, 1875



PAID
Milton, MA
Jan. 2, 1875



"CANCELED"
Stockbridge, MA
Dec. 31, 1875

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Now sit down to write up the rest of your first page, starting with a title. What do you want to tell viewers about that which they are about to see? Make it brief and to the point. Then in the first paragraph spell out precisely the scope of your subject. My color cancellation exhibit said "This exhibit is a survey of color cancels on the first postal card during its years of use." Note it didn't say all the color cancels, just a selection. Clarity is important. Don't mislead the judges.

A bit of stage setting is also in order on your title page. Tell the judges about the circumstances surrounding the items being shown, but don't be too wordy. Err on the side of brevity. An example from my color cancellation exhibit was "...rigid guidelines requiring that clerks use a good grade of black printers' ink for canceling postage. Postmasters were not to use any other ink color. Over the next few years, although this rule was not modified, a few large cities and small towns began to use other colors." And, "One author searched over 10,000 Banknote stamps and found 8% cancelled in blue and less than 1% in other colors such as red, purple, etc. with the rest in mandated black." Both statements tell the judge and the public that only a few towns and cities used colored ink.

I generally like to use a particularly flashy example of the theme at the bottom of the first page to help illustrate the subject and grab the viewer's attention. That brings up the question of how to show off your best stuff. You want to be descriptive without undue puffery. Please don't say that a particular item is unique unless you are absolutely sure it is the only possible example. Otherwise most assuredly someone at the show will tell the judge, "I've got two just like that at home." I am partial to using small colored stars (☆) and key them to phrases on the title page like "possibly unique" or "perhaps 5-10 reported".

Next it's time to design the rest of the pages. I use MSWord on my computer. I realize there is probably much better software, but I'm frugal (some say cheap) and don't wish to buy something that I will only use on rare occasion. Along the bottom of the screen is the Draw menu that allows perfect rectangles (Text Boxes) to be drawn that can be reshaped, rotated and dragged to wherever you want. It takes a bit of practice, but it's surely worth the time saved by not having to get out the engineering drawing equipment.

The rectangles can be made any size and copied time after time so that perfect duplicates can be made. This same Text Box option can be used for the descriptive text, and then the box outline can be made to disappear, giving a very professional look to your page.

I mentioned the rotate option as I find it quite useful when mounting covers. I usually want to highlight only the upper right corner of the card where the cancel is normally located.

Therefore I chose to use various overlapping schemes to show as many as five items.

Certainly if you plan to include covers, don't simply center them. Several years ago I looked carefully though an exhibit of 72 postal cards mounted two each on 36 pages. Yawn, big time. That's why the Presentation points are awarded. We want to PULL people out of the aisles to look at that which is of interest to you and has taken so much of your valuable time.

When it comes to off-cover stamps, we all have seen entire pages plastered with 50 to 100 stamps. Did you stop to look at every one of them? Probably not. They were usually there to illustrate a technical point, not interest the casual observer. We collect cancels, and each stamp can be quite unique. Yes, I understand that certain categories (e.g. stars) can easily be mounted *en masse*, but the story can be told as well with 20 stamps on the page as with 50. You are not required to show your entire collection or category, just enough to well illustrate your theme.

Also not everything needs to be mounted in rectangular patterns. There are no rules that require page centering. Put them on diamond patterns, rectangles, stagger the lines, maybe even use spirals. Create "eye candy". Make the aisle walker interested enough to be drawn to your frame. Show them why cancel collecting can be more than just "interesting".

Now that the design work is done, it's time to go to press. I choose to use a lightweight white cardboard available at most stationery stores. It's stiff enough to keep the unsupported page from readily losing specimens, and yet light enough to go through my printer.

Commercial stamp mounts have a much more uniform appearance than just plain hinges. As for covers, there are several varieties of transparent corner mounts available. Though I'm not particularly a fanatic as to the use of archival materials, be very careful if you choose to use adhesive tape to create unusual mounting effects. In some cases, one inadvertent touch of the tape and the value of the philatelic item virtually disappears.

Finally after mounting your treasures, put the pages into transparent plastic protectors. Don't forget these pages are going to be handled several times during the exhibit set-up and break down. And just before you slide the pages into the sleeves, mark the backside with 1 through 16. In that way, if you are not the person mounting the display, then that person will know exactly how the pages are to go.

See you at NAPEX ■

Another Early Duplex?

We can probably add another post office to the list of early users of handstamps that duplexed a CDS and killer. New York, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago, Pittsburgh (under consideration) and Savannah are joined by Louisville, Ky.

Just up the Ohio River from Louisville, the Cincinnati post office introduced a duplex handstamp at least as early as August 17, 1860. By November 1, 1860 Cincinnati switched to a smaller, double circle CDS duplexed to a grid killer. Page 59 of the Spring 1996 NEWS illustrates a November 1 cover.

It seems that Louisville was soon to follow Cincinnati's lead as evidenced by the cover illustrated in

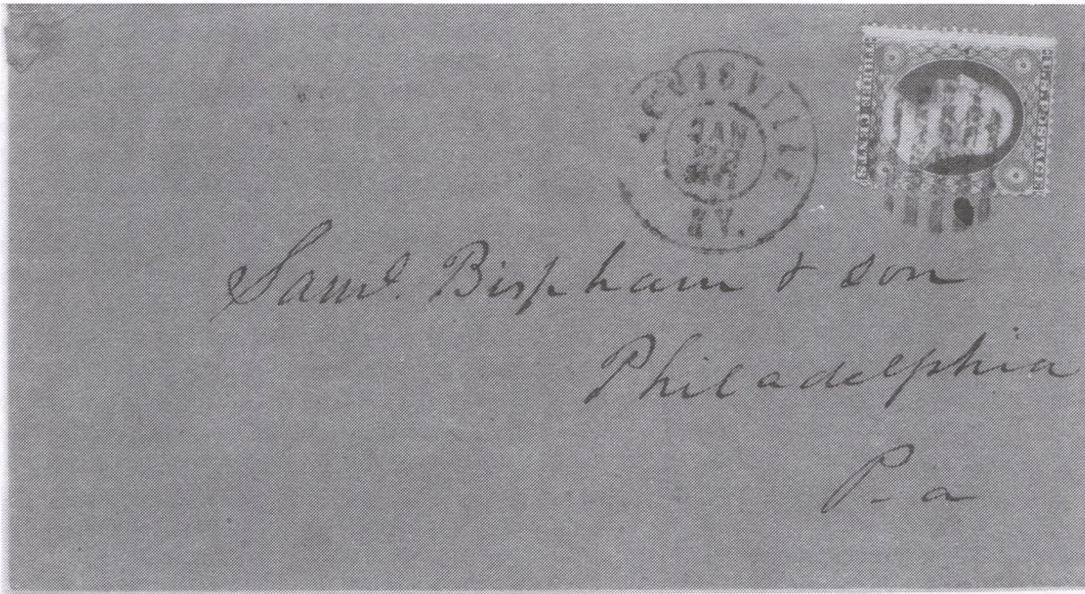


Figure 1

Figure 1. While the year date is smudged, the last digit is clearly a "1" yielding a postmark date of January 29, 1861. Correspondence with Louis Cohen, author of *Postal History of Louisville, Kentucky* (LaPosta Monograph Series, Vol. 1) led to a report of another Louisville cover bearing a 3¢ 1857 issue stamp postmarked with the same or very similar duplex handstamp. The month is "JAN." The day indicator is unclear but it does consist of only one slug, perhaps a "7." The year date is unreadable but likely 1861 because of the 1857 issue stamp.

Reports of additional covers bearing January 1861 or earlier Louisville duplexes are eagerly sought. ■

Northampton "N"

Figure 2 illustrates an "N" in a circle killer, apparently unduplexed, from Northampton, Mass. The dateline is January 11, 1884. Since the circle is so well rounded and the crossbar of the "N" so straight, it may be manufactured rather than hand carved. What sets this killer apart and makes it fancy, of course, is the ornamentation

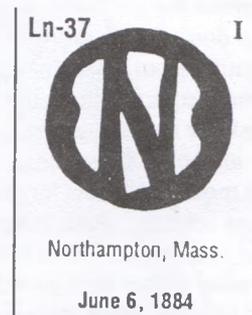


Figure 2

found in the circle at the sides of the "N." It is a relatively simple addition but one with a very pleasing effect.

Jim Cole's Banknote era cancels book illustrates on page 269 an example of this killer dated June 6, 1884. It is shown here as Figure 2. Strikes apparently weren't so crisp by this date and the negative "diamond" spaces in the handstamp may have filled with dry ink. ■

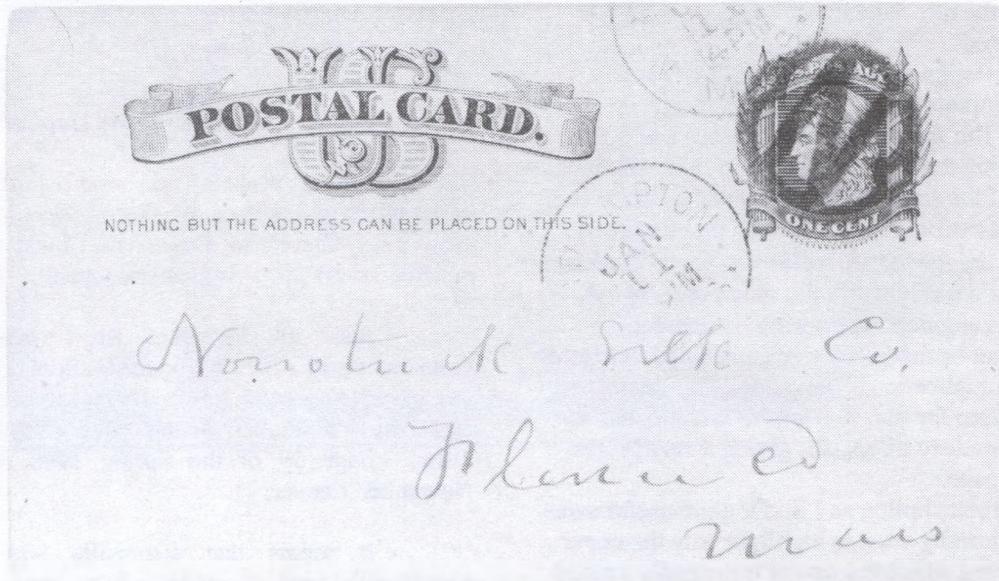


Figure 1

Club Origin Described

Reproduced below is an article by William W. Reynolds from *Stamps* magazine dated November 19, 1938. It is probably the first reference to the U.S. Cancellation Club in the philatelic press. Mr. Reynolds authored a regular column in *Stamps* entitled "U.S. Cancellations."

Coincidentally, on the same page as the Reynolds article was the following advertisement.

BELIEVE IT OR NOT

We have just purchased 20,000 more fancy cancellations on early U. S. You'll see stars, numerals, shields, anchors, colors, all kinds of geometric designs, paid and even a skull and crossbones on these stamps. If you like 3c greens we have thousands of them, if you want other numbers we have those also.

THE STAMP SHOP
78 Weybosset St. Providence, R. I.

Wouldn't it have been nice to be an early viewer of this stock!

CANCELLATIONS
U.S.

by Wm. W. Reynolds



Material loaned for illustration in this column will be greatly appreciated. Due credit will be given and material returned postpaid. Send to Wm. W. Reynolds, 365 Quail St., Albany, N. Y.

Club Formed for Cancellation Collectors

It has long been evident to this department that the collecting of cancellations on 19th Century U. S. is fast becoming one of the most popular side lines of philately. Cancellations are not only fascinating in themselves, but teach the collector much in our early postal history. It has been the experience of many that a fairly representative collection of cancellations can be made, if some means can be arranged through exchange and sales of these items.

Your editor has been requested by a number of readers of this magazine that a group of serious cancellation collectors be united in a club for the purpose of sales and exchange of 19th Century United States stamps with cancellations suitable for a collection of this nature; also for the dissemination of information for the benefit of the members and this column as well.

The main purpose of this club is to bring serious philatelists from dif-

ferent sections of this country into closer unity for—

1. Exchange and sale of stamps through a central exchange and sale department.

2. Dissemination of information for the benefit of all.

Membership is strictly limited both as to quality and quantity. Only serious adult philatelists are admitted and membership is granted only by invitation or through application passed upon by a membership committee member or an officer. The organization is at present limited to 100 members.

Since the primary purpose of the club is for exchange of stamps only members with material to offer are desired.

Exchange Material

Only 19th Century United States is to be included. This includes regular issues of all denominations; cut squares; postcards and departmental stamps. Stamps both on and off cover.

The common 3c greens are as desirable as the classics as long as each stamp submitted has an interesting or desirable cancellation or each cover an unusual postmark. All stamps should be undamaged unless otherwise noted by pencilled arrow showing defect.

This club is a non-profit-sharing organization and is being formed for the benefit of serious collectors only. One of the important features is a department on cancellation expertizing. This magazine is the official organ of the society and detailed information may be received by addressing the editor of this column, who will serve as head of the U. S. Cancellation Club, or from the Secretary of the club, *H. Parker Johnson*, 1045 South Vine Street, Denver, Colorado.

The above is reprinted through the courtesy of John F. Dunn, Philatelic Communications Corp. ■

New Club Members

- Dennis Bollea, PO Box 460 Fairhaven, MA 02719
- Paul Dargie, 27 Fairhaven Rd., Cumberland, RI 02864
- Robert Garrity, 275 Park Ave., Arlington, MA 02476
- Edward Hines, PO Box 4760, Covina, CA 91723
- Richard Marek, PO Box 476, Newfane, VT 05345
- John Viens, 87 Ruby Rd., #11, Willington, CT 06279
- Thomas Keesling, 4036 E. 62nd St., Indianapolis, IN 46220
- Michael Serdy, 2180 St. Andrews Rd., Half Moon Bay, CA 94109

Banknote Cancellations

Club member Don Barany has shared with the NEWS several nice cancels in his collection. Readers will note that not only are the strikes crisp and clear but the stamps themselves show remarkable centering.

Figure 1 is a negative letter "E" in a wreath or rope border on a Scott #178. Figure 2 is an outline of a heart on a Scott #184 with a Philatelic Foundation certificate (PFC). Figure 3 is a blue shield in a frame on a Scott #158 with PFC. It would appear to be one of the "Chicago blues" but has not been reported from there. Don writes that Jon Rose shows a very similar blue shield cancel on a Scott #116 in his book on 1869 issue stamps but does not identify the origin. Rose's cancel shows five bars as opposed to the six bars in Figure 3.

Figure 4 is an intriguing man's profile on a Scott #184 with PFC. In addition to being intricately carved, this cancel appears to have been very deliberately placed on the stamp. It is situated on George Washington's profile in such a way that what might be considered as the missing top of the head on the cancel is compensated for by the top of GW's head.

If readers know the origin of any of the above cancels, please let us know.



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 7

Don also sent along three cancels where the origin is known. Figure 5 is a "gingerbread man" from Boston on a Scott #158 and the Figure 6 flag is from Schodack Landing, N.Y., also on a Scott #158. It would have been much better to show Figure 7 in color. The cancel is a well-known Glen Allen, Va. precancel but this example presents it in red ink. Against the bright vermilion background of the stamp, it is undoubtedly a very attractive item.■

New York Bottle Stopper

by Roger D. Curran



Figure 3



Figure 4

The NYPO experimented in 1874 with rubber bottle stopper killers into which numbers were carved. Arabic numbers "11" and "12" have been noted. (A Roman numeral "XI" has also been seen but the year of usage could not be determined.) Figure 1 shows an Arabic "11" carved into a size "1" stopper. The size number is evident between the two negative numerals. The printed dateline on the back of the card is 1875. I have not before seen a New York rubber stopper cancel with a confirmed usage outside 1874 nor have I seen an example that didn't involve a size "2" stopper. Information about other examples is eagerly sought.

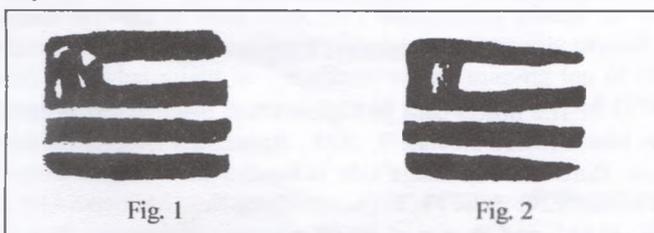
Based on a study of a decidedly limited number of rubber stopper cancels used in the nineteenth century (see Winter 1997 NEWS), it appears that the lower the number, the

A New Chicago Blue?

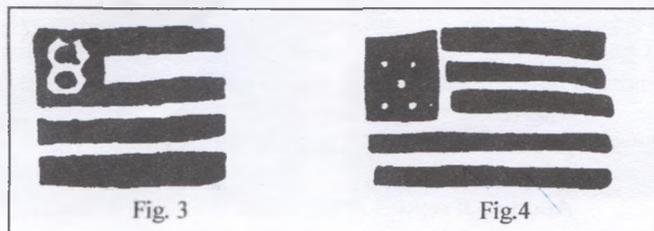
by Roger R. Rhoads

Paul Berg just about exhausted the entire subject of the *Chicago Blue Postal Markings, 1870-1877* in his book of that name published in 1992. Those of us familiar with the book know just how comprehensive it is with not only examples shown of each of the more than 250 cancels but the earliest and latest reported use of each. I can't remember that I've seen any new cancel in nearly the decade since the book was released.

Then along comes John Donnes with a very spectacular American flag (Figure 1) on a UX3 postal card, dated Nov. 13, 1873. I looked carefully through Berg's book, and the closest I have come to it is design GEO-80 dated Nov. 15, NYD (Figure 2). Donnes' cancel has four sharply-cut irregular "islands" in the star field while the star field in the Berg killer is much less distinct though I think it's safe to say they were made from the same device.



In looking further, Paul Berg has a "not verified" killer on the facing page which appears to be the same, but the star field has an "8" in it (Figure 3). Another variation of this cancel is from Jim Cole's *Cancellations and Killers of the Banknote Era, 1879-1894*. FL-18 as used in Chicago during the 1870-73 time span (Figure 4). Note this one has five islands in the star field five stripes rather than the four shown in the others.



So what do we have? The fact that Paul only lists one date is indicative that this is a very scarce killer while the others, in my opinion, are simply inaccurate tracings or strikes from badly worn devices. The Donnes cover, which shows the nature of the killer most accurately, is a very nice addition to any collection.

Though collecting Chicago Blues is quite fun, there are only a few really dramatic cancels from that era as most of them are geometrics. The real fancies include the K♦K coffin, pool table, shamrock, gin barrel, and this American flag cancel. ■

Crossroads Patent Cancel

The Spring and Fall 2000 issues of the *NEWS* discussed briefly a scarce patent cancel of unconfirmed origin. In 1933 Fred Schmalzriedt listed it in an extensive survey of patent cancels, reporting nine off-cover examples on 1¢ 1861 issue stamps and one example on a 3¢ stamp. USCC members



Figure 1

Don Barany and Abe Boyarsky submitted examples on 1¢ stamps, which the *NEWS* illustrated last year. An additional report of two examples has now reached the *NEWS* from club member Dick Nunge. Of special interest is the fact that one of the examples is on a 3¢ issue, which is illustrated here as Figure 1. Dick's other example is on a 1¢ stamp.

We have speculated that this cancel was used basically on one-cent circular mail but Dick's 3¢ example now confirms Schmalzriedt's earlier report (if any confirmation was needed) and gives additional interest to determining the full nature of its use. Any reader who has more information on this cancel is urged to contact the *NEWS*. ■

BOOK REVIEW

Payne, Robert J., *Thomas Leavitt, His History and Postal Markings, 1874-1892*, United Postal Stationery Society, Thousand Oaks, CA, 1999, 323 + xvii pages.

This work by Bob Payne is an expansive updating and enlargement of previous publications on the Leavitt machine cancellations by Frank Stratton.

The book begins with a biography of Thomas Leavitt from his birth in 1827 in Hingham, Massachusetts through his life in Everett, Massachusetts to his death in 1899.

Next is a section on the Leavitt patents written by Reg Morris. He discusses the salient features of the patents and their relationship to the markings produced by the Leavitt machines. Morris then discusses the success or failure of the machines and reproduces testimonials from postal employees in the various cities where the machines were used.

The meat of the volume consists of a description of the various Leavitt cancellations plus illustrations of postal cards and covers from each of the 29 post offices that employed the machines. This is followed by a detailed value guide.

In all an excellent treatise on these cancellations that were the first successful U.S. machines and used from 1875 to 1892.

The book is available for \$40.00 plus \$3.00 postage and handling from:

United Postal Stationery Society
PO Box 1116
Thousand Oaks, CA 91358

Tom Stanton