



Cancellation Club NEWS

Vol. 25, No. 6, Whole No. 239, May 2001

How and When did Kirksville, Missouri become so Patriotic – Philatelically, that is?

by John Donnes

One of the more popular areas in fancy cancel collecting is that of the patriotic cancel. Over the years, post offices have produced a wide variety of different hand-carved designs, from the basic “shield” cancel to elaborate “flag” and “eagle” designs. Of particular popularity are those comprising the letters “US” in the cancel. In the Skinner/Eno cancellation book there are listed no less than 100 of this design¹ while the Cole book adds another 160.² Most of these “US” cancels are fairly plain in design, though every now and then a truly fancy “US” is discovered. Shown in Figure 1 is what I believe to be a previously unreported fancy “US” design. I will write about this cancel and a few other Kirksville cancels in the following paragraphs.

Amongst a large group of newly acquired postal cards were approximately 40 to 50 cards, mailed in the 1873 to 1875 time period, from the Kirksville Savings Bank of Kirksville, Missouri, to a Mr. Ricker in Quincy, Illinois. These Kirksville cards had the bank’s name and also the president’s, vice-president’s, and cashier’s names pre-printed on the card. These pre-printed names, along with a few other factors, helped in determining the dates of usage, as none of these cards had printed or handwritten year dates on them.

The first Kirksville card (Scott UX1) had a crossroads killer and a 25mm Kirksville cds with a July date. (See Figure 2.) This card also bears a Quincy, Ill. receiving mark. It appears that the Quincy receiving mark was used until December 7, 1873 and then was replaced by the Quincy “Carrier” mark on December 8, 1873. (The Quincy receiving and carrier mark usages were determined from a large group of year dated, New York to Quincy, postal cards.) Kirksville continued to use this basic cross-roads cancel for quite some time, though by July 25 (1874), the Kirksville cds is now slightly larger at 26 millimeters, the cards have the Quincy “Carrier” mark and the pre-printed bank president’s name is A.J. Knight.

The October (1874) cards show an apparent change in bank presidents. From October to December (1874) the A.J. Knight name has been scratched out and a T.C. Campbell name has been penned in. In January (1875) the T.C. Campbell name is now being pre-printed on the cards.

This leads us to the cards mailed in July, with the pre-printed Campbell name, and the first use of the Kirksville

“US” cancels that I have seen. These two cards, furnished by Ed Jatho, a fellow U.S. Cancellation Club member, are from the same Kirksville to Quincy correspondence. After tracing both of these cancels, and comparing the two overlays, it appears that they were produced from the same canceling device. (See Figures 3 and 4.) Another example of this same July cancel was seen in Brad Horton’s postal card collection. I would like to think that the 1875 Independence Day activities might have been the inspiration for the creation of this cancel. The August strike of this “US” cancel, though slightly different, due possibly to wear, may have come from

Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



(Continued on page 84)

Dear Reader,

NAPEX, the Washington, D.C. area show scheduled for June 1-3, 2001, has almost arrived. As reported earlier, the U.S.C.C. will be holding its annual meeting/seminar there. Although the show schedule hasn't been announced at the time this is written, we expect it will take place Saturday afternoon, June 2. The U.S.C.C. will also staff a society table for the duration of the show and is sponsoring a special award for the best one-frame cancellations exhibit. It is a very attractive and interesting replica of a set of postal scales used years ago by British post offices. Members are urged to attend this fine show, if feasible. A large turnout of Club members would be nice, indeed.

In the Summer 2000 *NEWS* (page 37) we announced a project of developing a roster of resource persons representing different subject matter areas in the broad field of cancellations who would serve as contacts for Club members who have questions about specific cancellations or their related postal history. We asked people willing to be consulted in their area or areas of study to come forward. The roster will be published as an insert in the next issue of the *NEWS* and we want to cover as many bases as possible. If you have one or more specialties about which you are willing to consult and haven't already agreed to help out, please contact me so that you will be included. We anticipate this to be a fine way to lend a hand to fellow collectors.

Despite special incentives to increase seller consignments (including a provision permitting sellers to establish reserves on lots valued at \$25 or more), we did not receive enough lots to hold what was to be a March 2001 auction. We hope to run an auction in the near future and appeal once again to Club members to submit material to our auction manager, Sy Stiss, at 436 N. Park Drive, Arlington, VA 22203 or call him with any questions at (703) 525-9193. Good material brings good prices at U.S.C.C. auctions and consigning material is an excellent way to support the U.S.C.C.

Work has begun on producing a special 50th anniversary issue of the *NEWS* to include selected articles from the first 25 years. These will be supplemented by color images of stamps and covers pertinent to the articles. We expect to have it "on the streets" by the end of the summer.

Hope to see you at NAPEX!

Roger Curran

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



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More on Indian Head Cancels

In response to the article in the February 2001 *NEWS* featuring Indian head cancels in the collection of Russ Whitmore, Bill Stearns reports from his retail stock the very nice Larkin's Fork, Alabama example dated March 10, 1884 illustrated in Figure 1. Larkin's Fork doesn't appear on a 1960s Alabama map and is assumed to be a DPO. Larkinsville, population 275, is shown in north central Alabama, perhaps 40 miles east of Huntsville.

Rollin Huggins, Jr. writes with word that in his collection are several off-cover examples of the Indian head cancel on official stamps. He also reports a 3¢ green cover bearing the Fort Keogh Indian head and states:

"The interesting thing is the enclosure from a cavalryman complaining about long hours in the saddle. Fort Keogh was used as base of operations against the Sioux after the battle of the Little Big Horn." ■

Seeing Stars

Most collectors would probably agree that the five point star is the most common "fancy" cancel design found on 19th Century U.S. stamps. When considering the CDS as well as the killer in Figure 1, the Bayside, Wisconsin postmaster carried this popular design to unusual lengths. Not only are there two stars in the CDS, but the large star killer itself contains a sharp negative star in the center. One supposes it might have been a patriotic expression or perhaps just an appreciation of the aesthetics involved.

Please note the differing sizes of the two CDS stars. Your editor believes this to have resulted from uneven pressure applied to a rubber handstamp. There was apparently more pressure on the right side, especially around the 4:00 position, that flattened out the raised portions of the CDS and killer design in that general area. ■

Figure 1

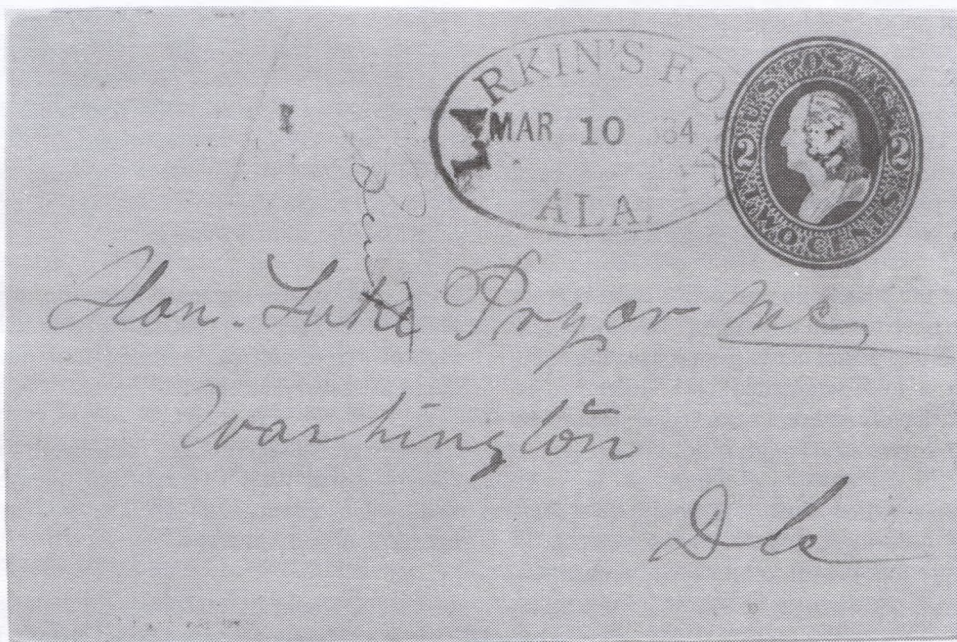
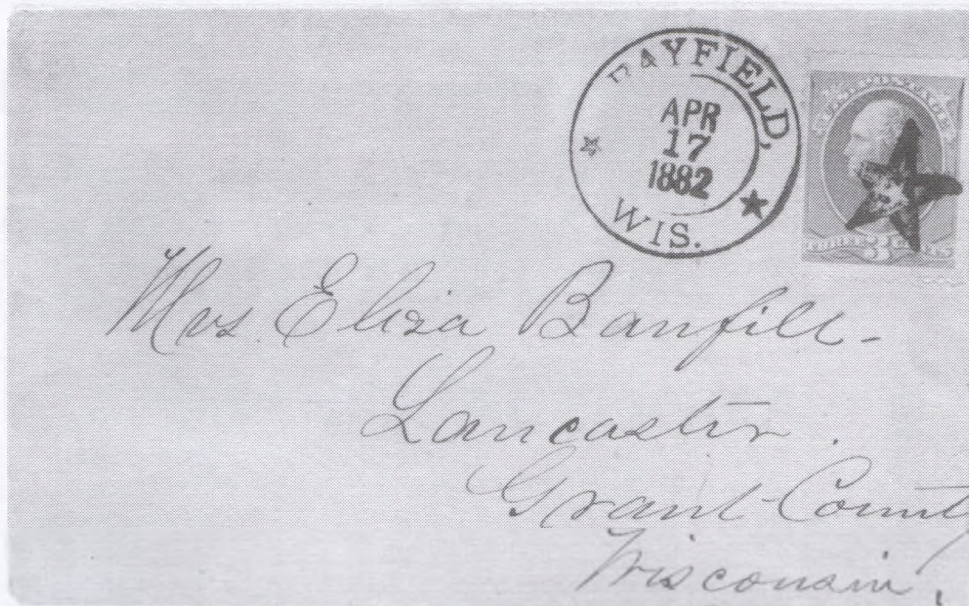


Figure 2



(Continued from front page)

Figure 5



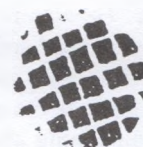
the same July canceling device. (See Figure 5.) But there is no doubt in my mind that, by September, the maker of this "US" cancel was no longer satisfied with its worn state, and with knife in hand, produced a new "US" cancel.

This new "US" cancel (shown previously as Figure 1) was used on September 15, and shows what appear to be olive branches surrounding the letters "US." The postal card, along with its lightly struck September 16, Quincy "Carrier" mark is also shown. (See Figure 6.) The October 1st strike of this cancel was almost overlooked, due to it's being either in a deteriorated state or, possibly, just poorly struck. (See Figure 7.) Since both of these cards had the pre-printed T.C. Campbell name, I believe their dates of usage to be 1875 or later. Taking a closer look at the July and August strikes, there are small breaks in the outer areas surrounding the "US." I guess it's possible that these earlier cancels may have been produced with similar olive branches but the branches, being so delicate and fragile, wore away rapidly.

It appears that the Kirksville post office went back to using a rather plain cancel for the months of November and December, as the remaining postal cards from Kirksville show a new canceller with a multisegmented cork killer. (See Figure 8.) All the Kirksville cancels reported appear to be from duplex devices and were struck with black ink.

The above information does not imply that these were the only cancels used in Kirksville for the years 1873 through 1875. I am sure that the 40 to 50 cancellations seen, used over a two and a half year period, even if from a rather small town as Kirksville, by no means make this report definitive. In fact, the Cole book on page 243 shows a "US" cancel from Kirksville, item US-120, which differs from all of

Figure 7



US-120

II-



Kirksville, Mo.

1873 Issues

Figure 8

Figure 9

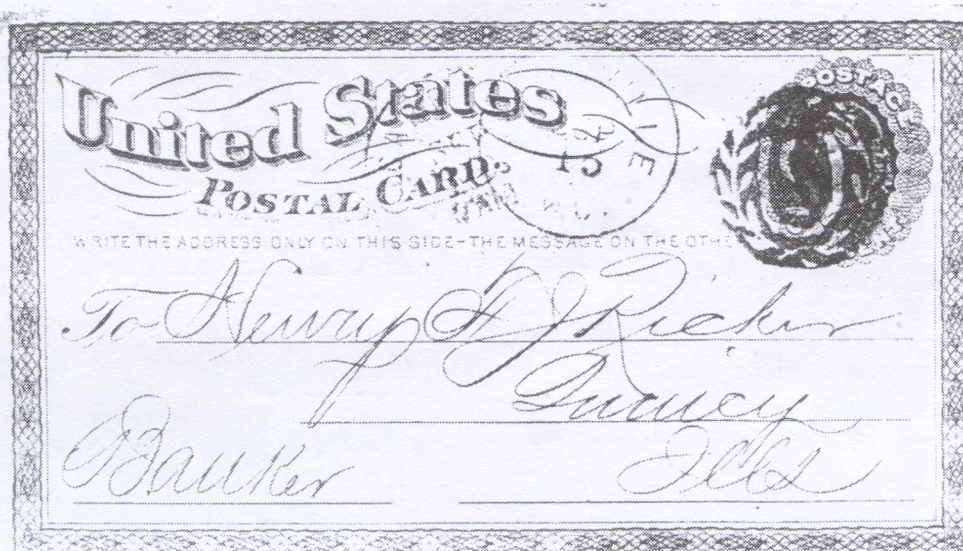
the previously reported "US" Kirksville cancels. (See Figure 9.) If item US-120 is drawn accurately, then this item, and possibly others, need further research. Just a note that in a three-part report by Alyce Evans on "U.S." cancels, there were no Kirksville cancels reported.³

It seems apparent from the array of different and fancy "US" cancels produced in Kirksville, that there was a high degree of patriotic enthusiasm, indeed, coming from this small Missouri post office.

If anyone has additional information and/or corrections to what I've reported, please contact me at 202 Willow Dr., Gretna, La. 70053. All correspondence would be appreciated and answered.

I would like to thank Ed Jatho and Brad Horton for their contributions and a special thanks to our editor, Roger Curran, for his encouragement and support in persuading me to write this article.

Figure 6



¹ Skinner, Hubert C. and Eno, Amos. *United States Cancellations 1845-1869*; American Philatelic Society and Louisiana Heritage Press of New Orleans (1980), pp. 193-200.

² Cole, James M. *Cancellations and Killers of the Banknote Era 1870-1894*, U.S. Philatelic Classics Society, Inc. (1995), pp. 228-236.

³ Evans, Alyce "U.S." Cancels Used During the Banknote Era, Parts 1, 2 and 3, *US Cancellation Club News*, Summer 1989, Fall 1989, and Winter 1990.

"M" is for Millheim

by Roger Curran

At least once a month I make the 55-mile drive down to State College to visit the APS headquarters. There are two routes to take heading west out of Lewisburg and I always look forward to the trip. They both offer panoramas of the central Pennsylvania countryside as well as passage through a heavily wooded mountainous area. The two routes differ primarily in the number of small towns along the way. Route 45 has the greater number and one of the larger is Millheim. It actually has a traffic light. What appears to be an interesting old hotel is located there and the thought has occurred that stopping for lunch one day is a must.

I have not been aware of any cancels from Millheim though it is obviously an old town. The impression is given that the town was probably of reasonable size 100 years ago with not much growth since. It was a pleasant surprise to encounter in a dealer's stock the cover illustrated as Figure 1, bearing two strikes of a nice hand-carved negative "M" killer. 1893 is rather late, too, to find such a cancel. Makes one wonder what *other* interesting killers may have been produced by Millheim. Readers are encouraged to report examples.

The January 1963 *NEWS* carried the tracing illustrated here as Figure 2 submitted by Charles A. Mekeel. He reported it on an off-cover 2¢ Columbian and asked if any reader could identify the origin. Given its similarity to the Figure 1 killer and the fact that both are on Columbian issue stamps, I initially thought it plausible that it was also from Millheim, although not likely the same killer. The Figure 1

Figure 2



killer has two negative horizontal lines below the "M" but none above. It has a rectangular negative section on the right side and what appears to be a slightly rounded negative crack radiating down through the middle of the "M" and becoming progressively thinner. I subsequently realized that the Figure 2 killer does generally match Jim Cole's illustration (see Figure 3) of a negative "M" from Mystic, Connecticut in his banknote era cancels book. Incidentally, Jim also shows what clearly appears to be the Millheim killer (see Figure 4).

Lm-60

I-



Mystic, Conn.

Apr. 1, 1893

Figure 3

Lm-59

I-



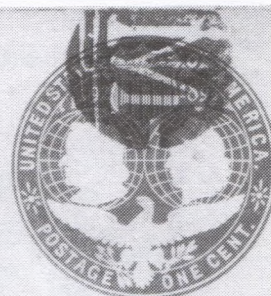
Millheim, Pa.

1890 Issues

Figure 4

It would be interesting to see exactly where in Millheim the post office was located in 1893. Now there are at least two good reasons to stop in Millheim the next time through. ■

CONEMAUGH
SOFT
COAL.



MUNSTER COAL CO.,

ALTOONA,

P. O. Box 6.

PENNA.

Figure 1

Early Pittsburgh Duplex

by Roger D. Curran

Since the brief article appeared in the Summer 2000 *NEWS* about the possible 1860 Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania duplex markings, photocopies of a number of additional Pittsburgh covers bearing on the matter have been received. A summary of these covers, including the two covers discussed earlier, is presented in Tables 1 and 2. Additional covers are needed to tell a more complete story and provide confirmation for the conclusions stated here. However, the general progression of the Pittsburgh post office's response to the July 23, 1860 postal regulation, forbidding use of the town postmark as a canceler, seems reasonably clear from the data on hand.

Pittsburgh, like many other post offices, was using the town postmark in 1860 as the basic canceler of adhesive stamps and postal stationery indicia. At some point shortly after the July regulation was received, the Pittsburgh post office began using a separate grid as a canceler. This enclosed circular grid, measuring about 18mm. in diameter, is

probably one of the grids distributed by the Post Office Department, over a period of several years, to larger post offices beginning at the time the 1847 stamps were issued. Thus it would have been a grid that was conveniently on hand.

A September 2, 1860 cover shows use of the town postmark as the canceler (Figure 1). A September 4, 1860 cover is the earliest use thus far seen of a separate grid. (A September 7, 1860 example is illustrated as Figure 2. What may appear to be a "1" to the left of the "7" is actually the edge of the slug.) Did this changeover occur on September 3 or 4 or was there an overlap period where both separate grids and Pittsburgh postmarks were serving as cancellers?

Our earliest recorded example of what is believed to be a duplex impression is dated October 26, 1860. This was illustrated as Figure 2 on page 43 of the Summer 2000 *NEWS*. We note the grid is sharply defined on this example and on the November 2, 1860 cover illustrated here as Figure 3. (Note also the curious mis-alignment of the date slugs in relation to the "PITTSBURGH, Pa.")

A portion of a cover dated November 15, 1860,

Pittsburgh, Pa. Covers, 1860/61

<u>date</u>	<u>description</u>	<u>source</u>
2/9/60	CDS as killer, no grid	(1)
8/10/60	double circle CDS as killer, no grid	(2)
9/2/60	CDS as killer, no grid	(2)
9/4/60	separate grid as killer	(2)
9/7/60	separate grid as killer	(1)
9/7/60	Separate grid as killer	(4)
9/24/60	separate grid as killer	(2)
10/4/60	separate grid as killer	(2)
10/9/60	separate grid as killer	(2)
10/26/60	CDS and grid duplex	
11/2/60	CDS and grid duplex	(2)
11/10/60	CDS and grid duplex	
11/15/60	CDS and grid duplex	(2)
11/20/60	CDS and grid duplex	(2)
11/22/60	CDS and grid duplex	(2)
11/29/60	CDS and grid duplex	(3)
3/26/(61)	CDS and grid duplex	(2)

(1) Daniel M. Telep (2) Edward Kazmierczak (3) Bob McKain (4) Tom Mazza

Table 1

"1860" (?) Pittsburgh, Pa. Covers

<u>date</u>	<u>description</u>	<u>notes</u>
1/10/60	CDS and grid duplex (Figure 6)	The EKU for U26 is not until 8/25/60
1/12/60	CDS and grid duplex	
2/6/60	CDS and grid duplex	
2/8/60	CDS and grid duplex	
2/24/60	CDS and grid duplex	
2/25/60	CDS and grid duplex	
2/28/60	CDS and grid duplex	1861 verified by British handstamp
3/10/60	CDS and grid duplex	
3/12/60	CDS and grid duplex	Enclosure dated 3/11/61

All covers reported by Edward Kazmierczak except for the 1/10/60 cover reported by Tom Mazza and the 2/25/60 cover reported by Bob McKain.

Table 2

Figure 1

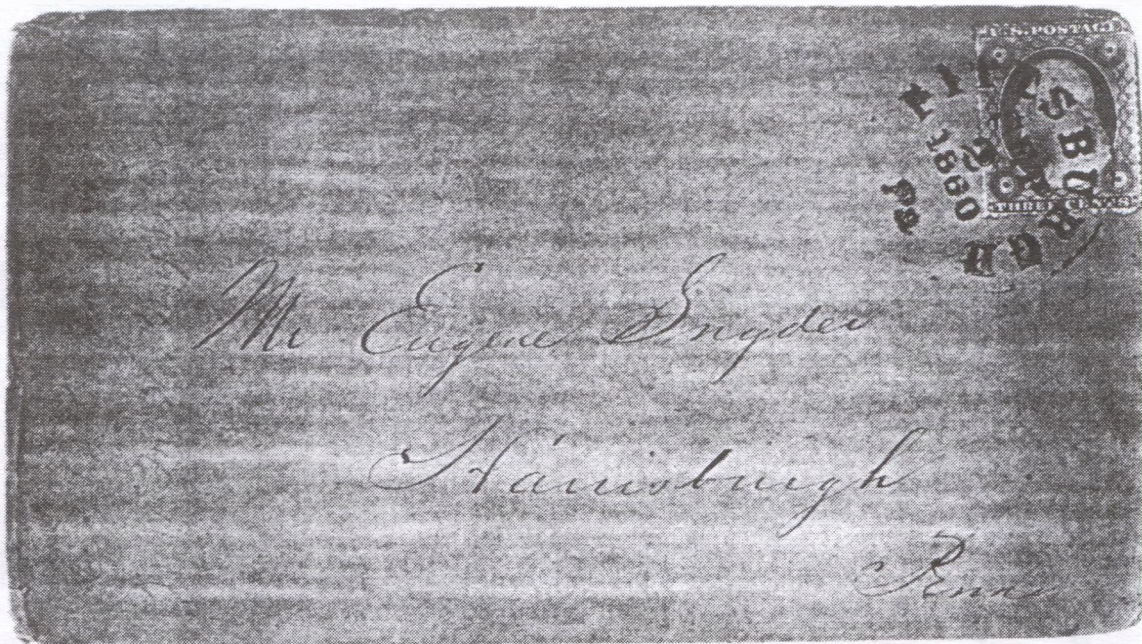


Figure 2

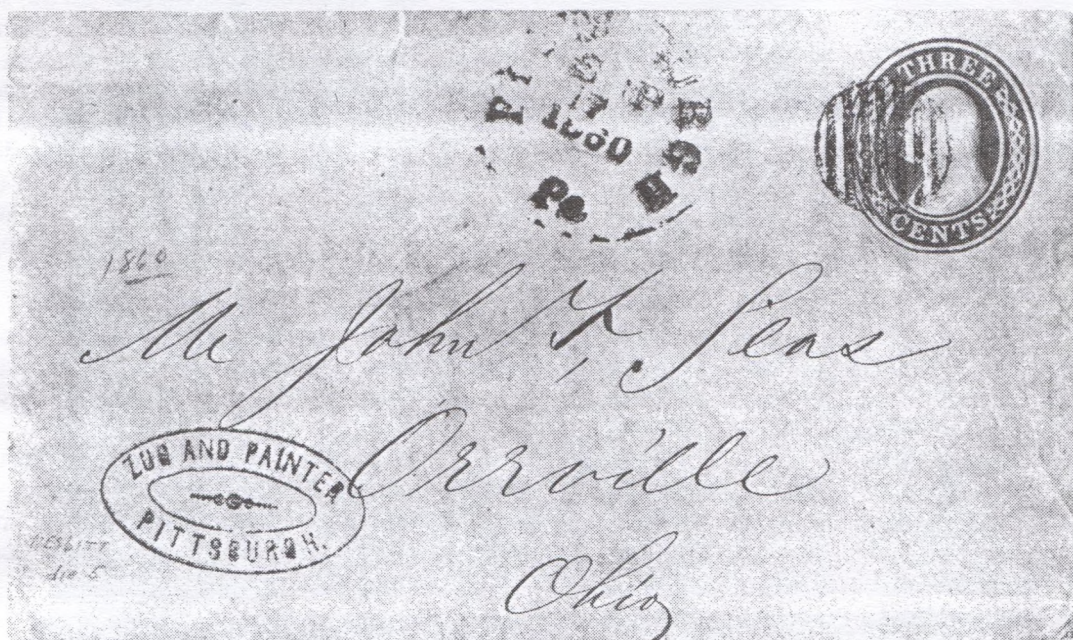
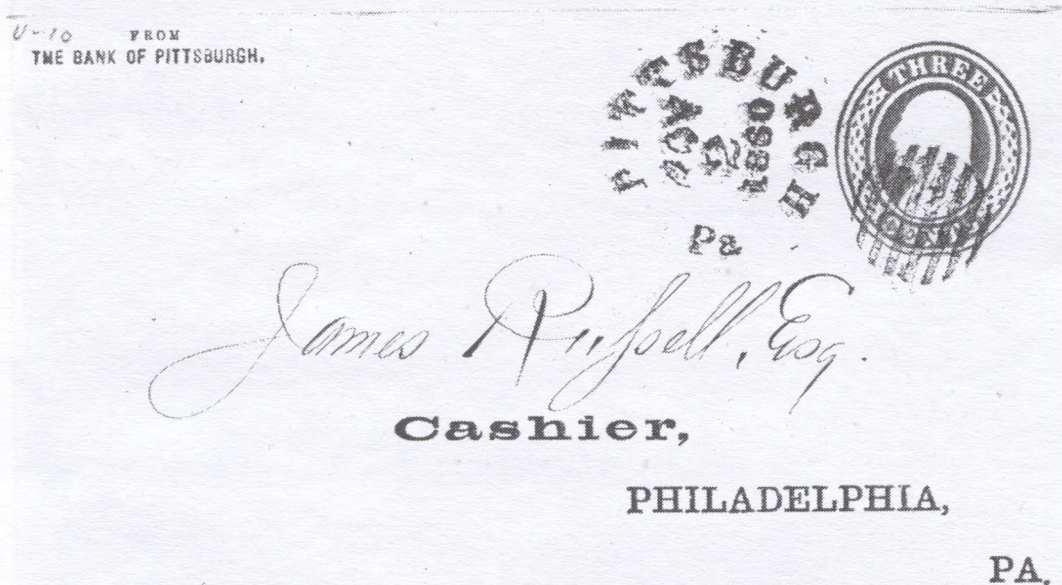


Figure 3



where the stamp was affixed in the upper left hand corner, is illustrated as Figure 4. It reflects clearly that the postmark and 8-bar grid were duplexed together.

Seven covers showing a duplexed "1860" postmark and grid are listed in Table 2. An example is shown in Figure 5. The reason for a separate listing is the apparent erroneous use of the "1860" year date. It would be, insofar as I know, totally without precedent if these actually were January-March 1860 duplexes, employed before the regulation change. Why

Figure 4

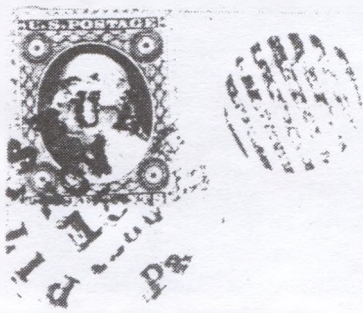


Figure 5



would Pittsburgh do this? No other post office in the U.S. is known to have adopted handstamps that duplexed a townmark to a killer prior to the July 1860 regulation. Could it be that the post office forgot to change the "0" slug to a "1" or didn't have a "1" slug of the right size? Indeed, it is quite hard to understand why something as important as this occurred over the considerable period of time involved. There is in Table 1 a March 26 cover that can be dated 1861 where the year date in the postmark has been replaced with a blank slug or slugs.

Was that how the Pittsburgh post office ultimately dealt with the "1860" problem in 1861 or are there Pittsburgh covers at the time with postmarks that include an "1861" year date?

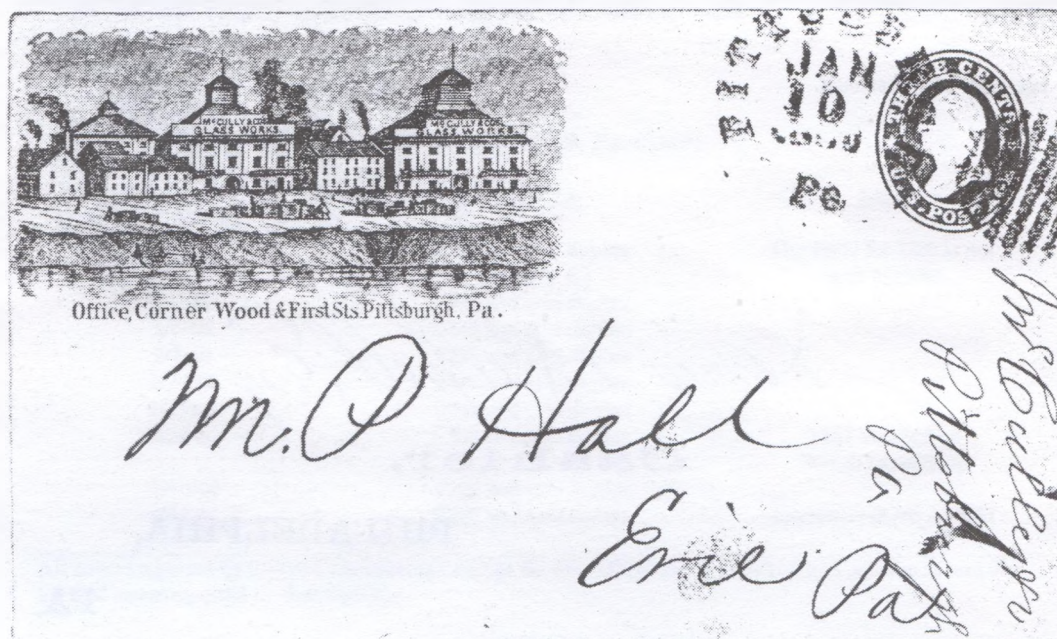
Transparencies were made of the photocopies of the following covers: November 2, 1860; November 13, 1860; November 22, 1860; February 6, 1860; March 10, 1860; and March 12, 1860 and placed over the actual November 10, 1860 cover. (See Figure 1 on page 43 of the Summer 2000 NEWS). The postmarks all matched well with that on the actual cover, as did the grids, the distances between the postmarks and grids, and the orientation of the duplexed grids to the postmarks. This supports the idea that the townmark and grid were duplexed. It also implies that there was just one duplexed handstamp in use at that time. Assuming townmark and grid handstamps of the period were cut by hand, if there had been more than one handstamp, one would expect some deviations to be noticeable, but I did not see them in the comparisons made.

With the review of additional covers, some differing conclusions may possibly emerge. But, regardless of that, more precision in the transition from townmark cancellers to duplexed grid cancellers will surely result. In addition to what we have touched on above, it would also be interesting to learn (1) how long the duplex handstamp discussed here remained in service, (2) what replaced it, and (3) whether it was used exclusively during its time or whether other handstamps were also employed to cancel stamps during the same period.

Readers are urged to check their collections and report pertinent covers to the NEWS. All correspondence will be acknowledged and full credit given in any further update.

Many thanks to Ed Kazmirczak, Dan Telep, Tom Mazza, and Bob McKain for their support in supplying examples from their collections and a special tip of the hat to Mike O'Reilly for connecting this writer with Dan and Ed.

Figure 6

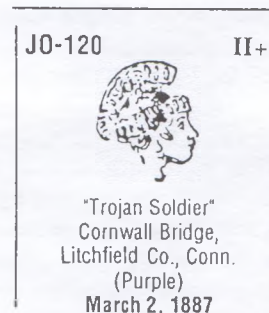


Noteworthy Cancellations

Club member Joe McDonough submits two distinctive and very unusual cancellations. Figure 1 illustrates a "Trojan soldier" killer duplexed to a Pulaski, Iowa CDS dated August 14, 1882. The cover was addressed to Pulaski and its marking was struck to record, of course, the date received by the Pulaski post office. In his Banknote era cancellations book, Jim Cole illustrates a "Trojan Soldier" killer (see Figure 2) from Cornwall Bridge, Ct. The Cornwall Bridge CDS also apparently includes the county name and it is conceivable that the killers are the same. However, they seem to be quite different. Readers are encouraged to report examples of the Cornwall Bridge, Pulaski or other "Trojan soldiers" cancellations in their collections.

The unusual aspect of the Quincy, Michigan oval killer is the fancy ornamentation in the center that must have been produced by a rubber-faced handstamp. Regrettably, the illustration in Figure 3 will not show it to full effect. On the

Figure 2



left and right sides, there are three pairs of progressively larger circles. Each circle contains one inner circle plus a half moon. Between the two groups of circles, there is a larger central geometric design with shading lines in certain areas. Oval killers of this generic type were intended for use on non-first class mail. Normally, they are strictly functional and rather bland in appearance. Not so with this Quincy example that displays quite fine detailing. ■

Figure 1

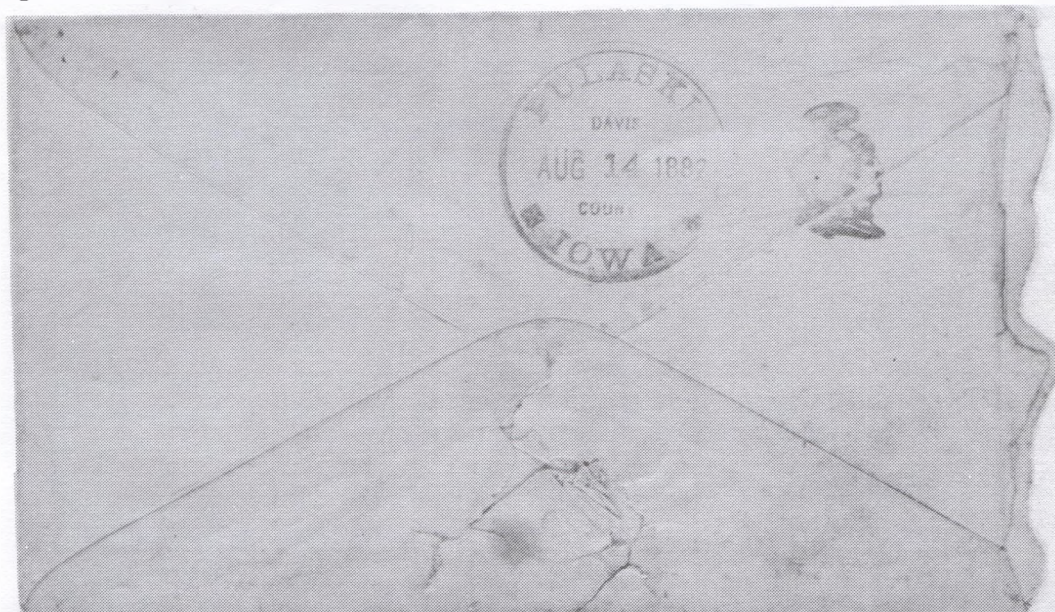
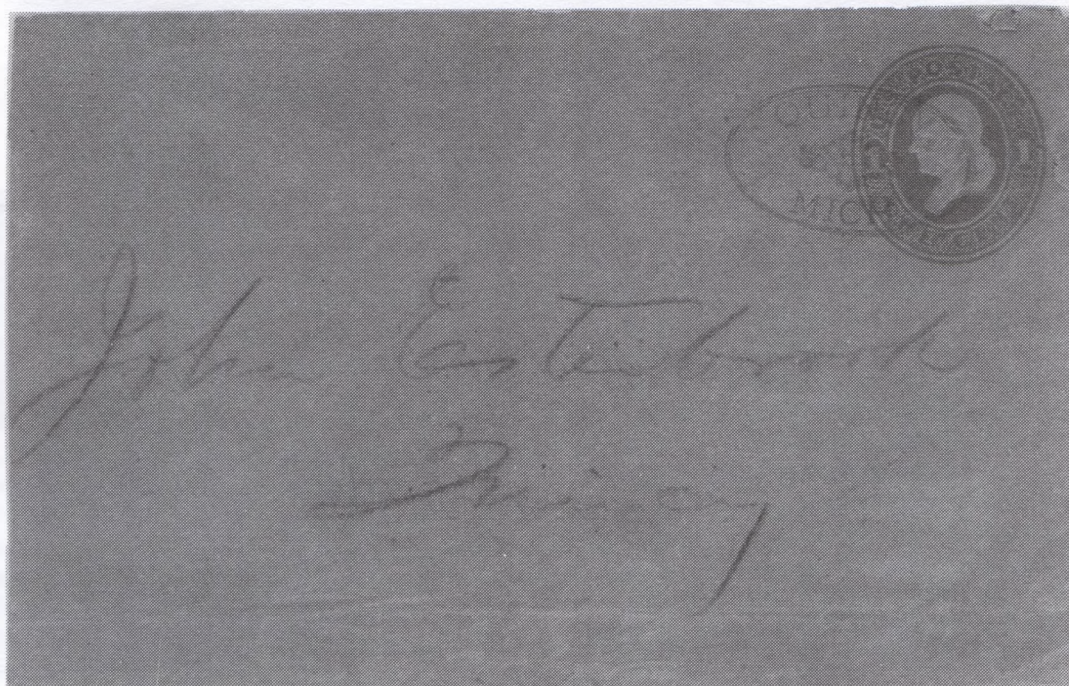


Figure 3



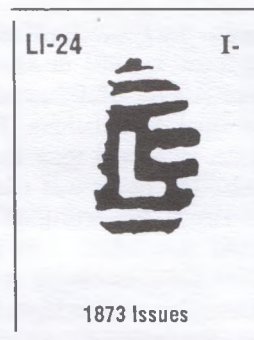
Hand-Carved Ellipse Cancels

by Roger D. Curran

In the Fall 1999 *NEWS* we discussed a hand-carved ellipse with an "8" in the center used by the Cortland, N.Y. post office in 1882. A number of small post offices did the same thing; that is, made their own versions of cancel designs that were popular in big-city post offices. The big-city cancellers at this time were manufactured in metal. The hand-carved ellipses were produced, of course, in wood or cork (or conceivably in rubber) and were often quite primitive.

A sampling of hand-carved ellipses is provided herewith. A particularly bold example was used at Lancaster, Ohio. The Figure 1 cover is dated May 19, 1885. A negative "L" in an ellipse comes from Athol, Massachusetts. A tracing from Cole of what I'm confident is the same cancel is illustrated as Figure 3.¹ (The tracing undoubtedly comes from an off-cover stamp.) Sidney, Ohio used an interesting ellipse that included a "1" in the center shown here as Figure 4.

Figure 3



Waterbury, Connecticut produced the ellipse illustrated in Figure 5. A tracing of a strike from what, in all probability, is the same handstamp is shown as Figure 6. It is reproduced from Paul Rohloff's excellent book on Waterbury cancels.² He reports usage dates Feb. 9, 187? To Feb. 23, 1877. (The May 1 date of Figure 5 obviously extends the probable 1877 period.) Rohloff makes a statement I found surprising:

"The cancel was not made by Hill, but was a

Figure 1



Figure 2

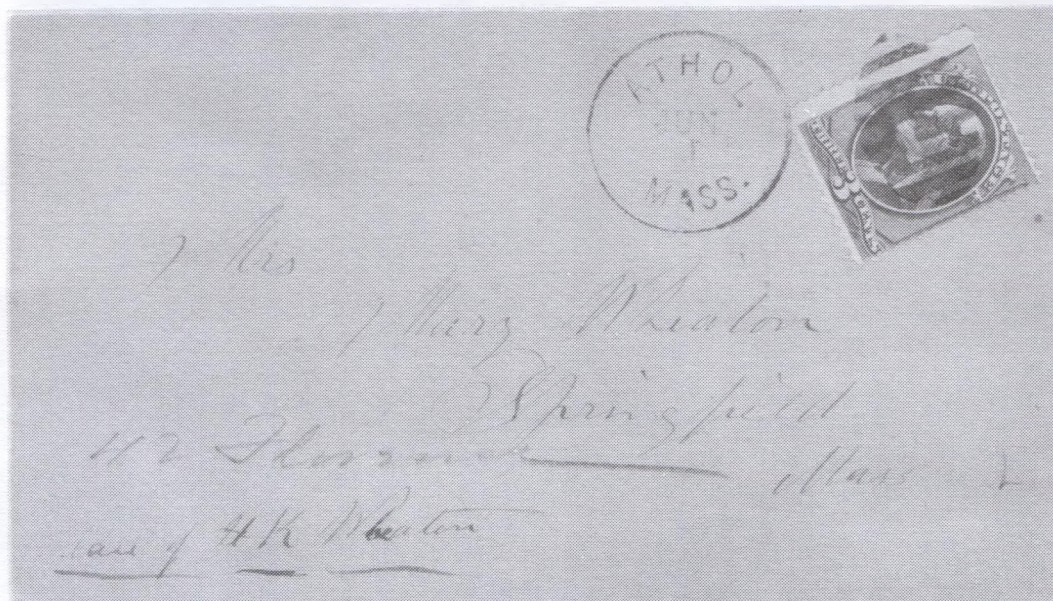


Figure 4



Figure 5

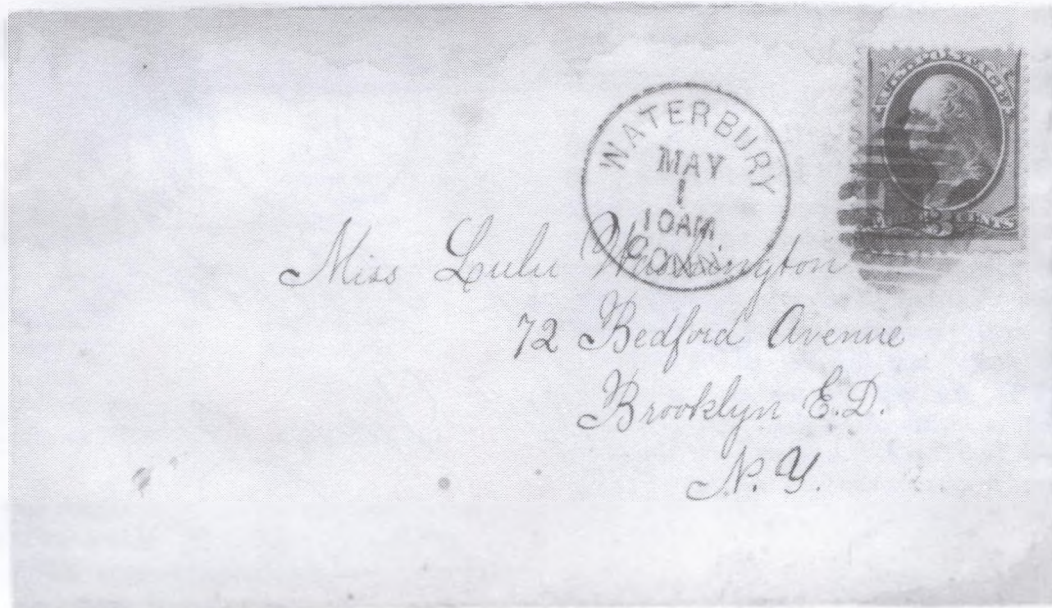


Figure 6



purchased cancel used several times when Hill was absent."³

"Hill" refers to John W. Hill, carver of the famous Waterbury cancellations, who worked in the Waterbury post office for many years. I wish I knew the basis for the above-quoted statement because this killer gives every appearance (at least to this writer) of being hand-carved. Could it be that because its shape is quite similar to manufactured ellipse killers, Mr. Rohloff assumed that it, too, was manufactured and supplied by a company that specialized in handstamps?

The item in Figure 7, reposing in the collection of Ted Wassam, is one of several hand-carved "M" killer designs used in the early 1890s by Mystic, Connecticut. Jim Cole's tracing EL-161 (Figure 8) is from the same or very similar killer.



Mystic, Conn.

1890 issues

Figure 7

Figure 8

Figure 9

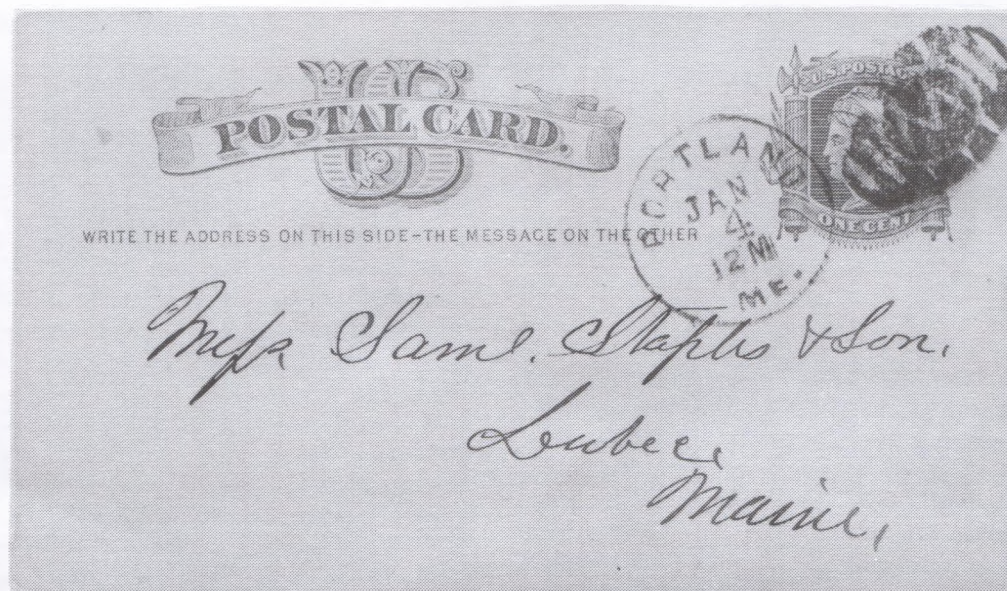
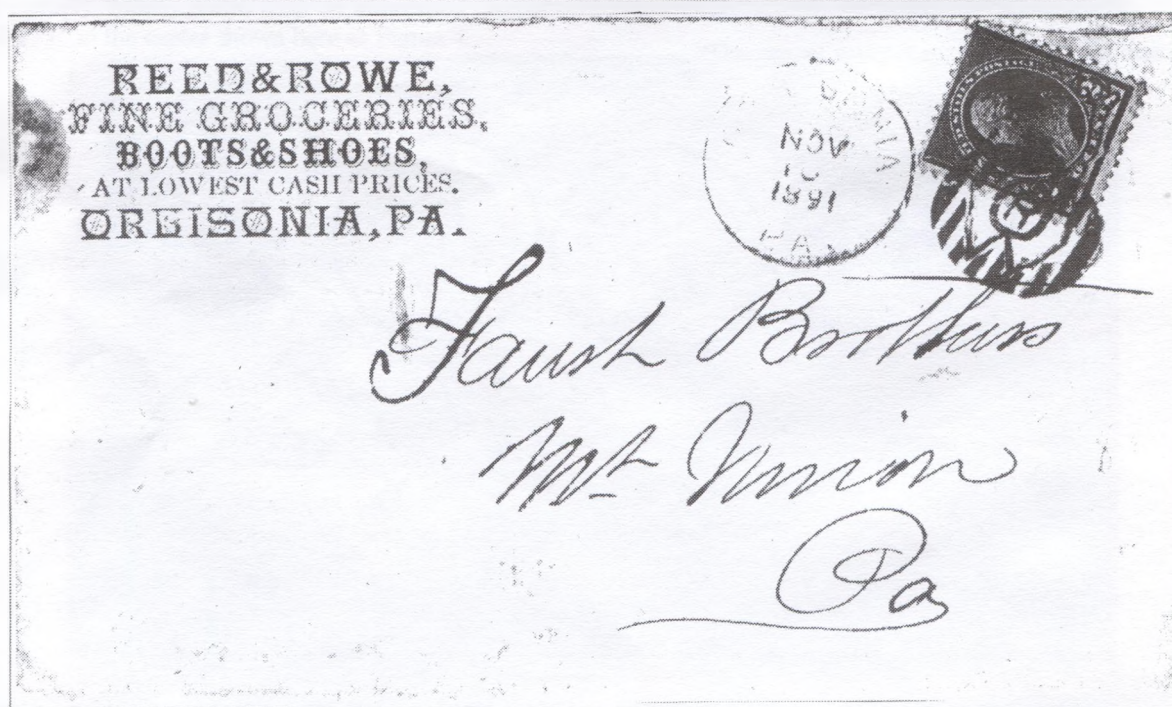


Figure 10



Wendell Triplett submitted the card illustrated as Figure 9. It was postmarked January 4, (1879). The letter in the middle is assumed to be an "M," perhaps for Maine.

Gary Hendren submits a very unusual ellipse that is illustrated as Figure 10. There is what is assumed to be an "R" enclosed by a letter "O" which is likely to stand for Orisonia. However, these letters are above what appears to be a large "W," and what might that mean?

Brooklyn certainly must have been one of the largest post offices using a hand-carved ellipse. A tracing from Cole is shown as Figure 11. Several off-cover stamps bearing the cancel are shown as Figure 12.

A few other hand-carved ellipse cancels, including one with what seems to be a screw head in the middle, are illustrated in Figure 13.

Figure 11



It is interesting to note that there was a hand-carved ellipse used apparently *before* manufactured ellipses even appeared in the U.S. Now think about that for a moment! A tracing of the cancel in question is shown in Figure 14 and was reported in the Summer 1983 *NEWS* as being from Junction City, Kansas in blue ink. "73" is believed to be a year date. The cover from which it was taken apparently

Figure 12

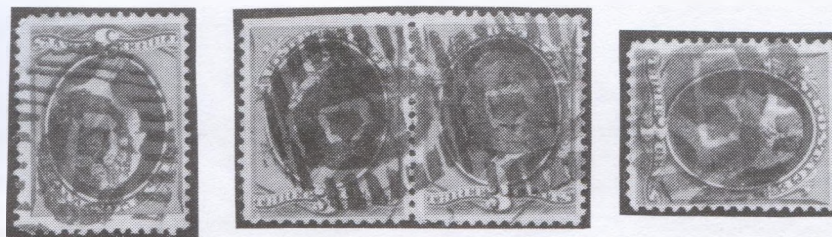


Figure 13



Figure 14

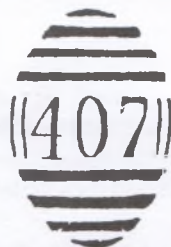


Figure 15

could not be year dated. This ellipse resembles, however, British cancels of the period. An example of a type that saw use as early as 1864 is shown in Figure 15.⁴

Additional examples of hand-carved ellipse cancels are eagerly sought.

¹ Cole, James M. *Cancellations and Killers of the Banknote Era 1870-1894*, U.S. Philatelic Classics Society (1995), p. 264.

² Rohloff, Paul C. *The Waterbury Cancellations 1865-1890*, The Collectors Club of Chicago. (1979), p. 95.

³ Ibid., p. 94.

⁴ Whitney, Dr. J.T. *Collect British Postmarks*, Fourth Edition, published by the author (1987), p. 58.

More on "CORRECT" Cancels

by Roger D. Curran

The Winter 1996 *NEWS* carried an article about killers that contained the word "CORRECT." An off-cover 3¢

Banknote canceled by a marking in the form of a circle, with the word "CORRECT" in an arc inside the circle, was illustrated. Handstamps with "CORRECT" were designed for use on registry bills that accompanied registered letters from post office to post office. The bills enumerated the registered letters transmitted therewith and, after accounting for each letter, the receiving postmaster would write or stamp "CORRECT" on the bill and return it to the sending postmaster. As was the case with so many other postal handstamps not intended to cancel adhesive stamps, these "CORRECT" handstamps were pressed into service as cancellers, but only very occasionally, it seems.

Figure 1



An advertisement for postal handstamps included the illustration shown in Figure 1 among many other examples of handstamp designs that were being offered. A large portion of the ad was reproduced in the May 1968 *NEWS*. An accompanying comment stated:

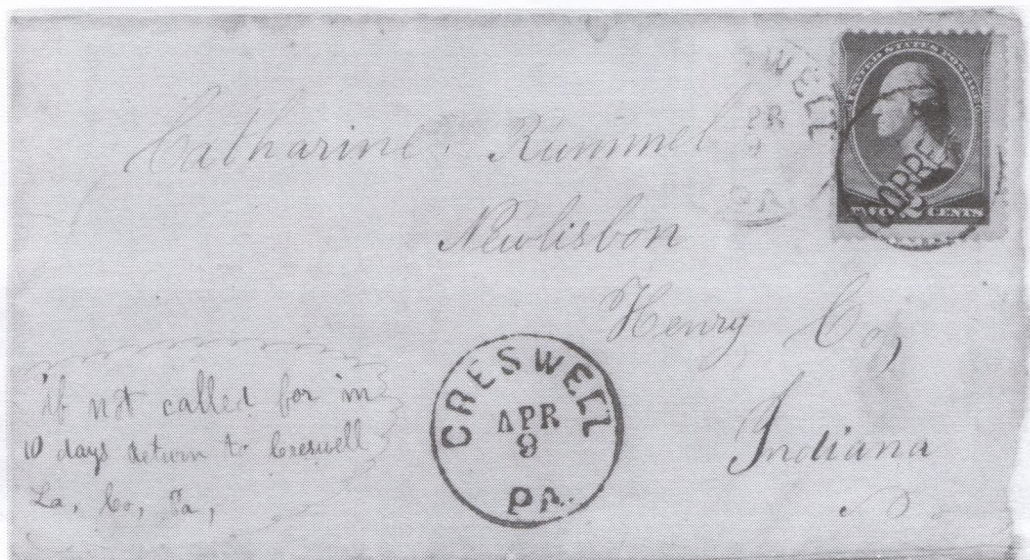
Mr. Z., Postmark Maker

A stamp manufacturer, Mr. Z, claiming to have been in business since 1850, sent out frequent bulletins in the early and mid-1870s, in which postal markings were illustrated . . .

Z. claimed to have circulated 35,000 of his bulletins, sending them to every state and territory.

At the present time only three have been located, one each in 1873, 74, and '75.

Figure 2



In his book on the two-cent red brown of 1883-1887, Edward Willard illustrated the Figure 1 cancel but stated the origin was unknown. Figure 2 illustrates a cover that has only recently come to our attention, postmarked at Creswell, Pa., bearing this marking used as a killer on a two cent red brown. We wonder if it was just an isolated usage by the Creswell

postmaster or did he, perhaps, use this handstamp as a killer on an appreciable, albeit probably quite limited, number of covers. Can readers report additional examples of this particular "CORRECT" marking used as a killer from Creswell or elsewhere?

"Go Figure"

Philadelphia was a major user of killers comprised of concentric circles with a number in the center. The earliest set regularly used by Philadelphia consisted of killers with four rings. Gilbert Burr discussed these in his series of *American Philatelist* articles in the 1930s and illustrated the tracing we show here as Figure 1. Among his comments was the following:

Figure 1



"This set I have complete including the number '13' with the exception of the numeral 10, but this sure(ly) exists."

Beginning in the late 1950s, Dr. Robert S. deWasserman undertook in the *NEWS* an updating of Burr's articles. He mentioned the above comment in the September 1958 *NEWS* and then added his own conclusion:

"I am sure the 10 never existed and challenge every student of U.S. cancellations to produce one."

Figure 2 illustrates the set on off-cover stamps through "13" without the "10." In his excellent *Philadelphia Postmarks* catalog (Part 1, revised edition), Tom Clarke reports early and late dates for these four-ring killers with numbers 5-9 and 11-13. He also lists numbers 1-4, 10, and 14-15 but with a question mark in the section where the dates are listed for the other numbers. In correspondence after the revised edition appeared, Mr. Clarke clarified that only

Figure 2



numbers 1-9 and 11-13 had been seen. From the dates listed by Mr. Clarke, it appears that numbers 5-9 may well have been introduced in 1880 or late 1879 and numbers 11-13 in late 1881 or 1882. Were numbers 1-4 issued at the same time as numbers 5-9?

The fact that a particular cancel (in this case the "10") has not been reported in the literature doesn't mean, of course, that it wasn't used. Offhand, there appears no logical reason why, in a set from 1-13, the post office would not have intended to use the "10." One supposes that a "10" handstamp was lost or defective or was broken either prior to or after a brief period of use. Readers are encouraged to report any four ring "10" handstamps that appear to be from this set.

While we are at it, another seemingly anomalous Philadelphia practice was the rather lengthy delay in introducing duplex handstamps. A number of post offices began using using handstamps that duplexed a CDS to a killer soon after the Post Office Department forbade in July 1860 the use of a CDS as a killer. One would think that a post office

that processed as much mail as Philadelphia might have seized quickly upon the work-saving benefit of obtaining two essential markings with one strike. But, alas, it appears it wasn't until 1863 that Philadelphia entered the duplexed CDS/killer era. An example dated April 24, 1863 is illustrated as Figure 3. Philadelphia wasn't the only sizeable post office slow to adopt duplex handstamps. The Washington, D.C. post office, for example, didn't do so until late 1862. (See Summer 1997 NEWS.)

Your editor thought that *maybe* the cover in Figure 4 showed use of a duplex handstamp in 1861. However, Philadelphia postal history student Normal Shachat advised that the placement of the two markings in relation to one another to create the appearance of a duplex was just a happenstance occurrence. Mr. Shachat kindly provided copies of covers in his collection bearing what appear to be the same or similar CDS and killer markings, used in same time period, but none showed evidence of duplexing.

Figure 3

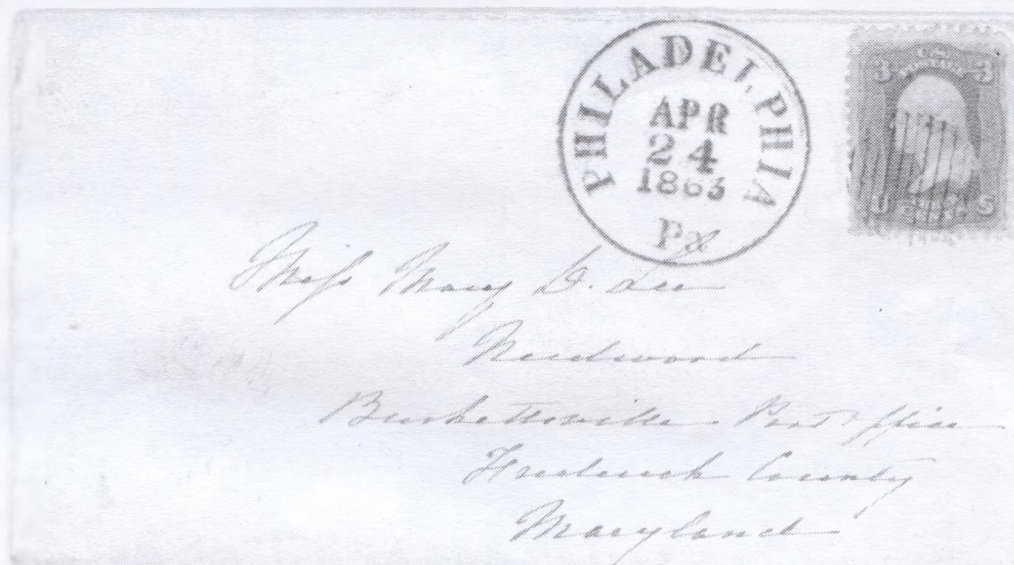


Figure 4



Speculation Required

Donald MacGregor wrote an article entitled "Scarce 'Common' Cancellations" in the March 17, 1945 issue of *Stamps* magazine. The two most frequently seen cancellation types during the 1880s and late 1870s involve ellipse and concentric circle designs, especially when containing a number in the center. Mr. MacGregor's article illustrated particular examples of each that are decidedly hard to find.

Another example of a scarce common cancel would be a manuscript cancel from the New York Post Office on Banknote era stamps. Many small post offices throughout the U.S., of course, used manuscript cancellations during this time, but *not* the NYPO. In this regard, the cover in Figure 1 is offered for consideration. From the corner card it appears to have originated in New York City. The 3¢ postage pays the first class rate to Biddeford, Maine. The cover is sealed and was opened at the top. It bears no markings on the back. Obviously something out of the ordinary happened in the processing of this item. Maybe it was overlooked by the "stamper" in the regular NYPO mailstream whereupon some other NYPO postal clerk finally noticed it and canceled it with the only instrument he had immediately available – a pen. Maybe.

Regrettably, from a cancellation collector's standpoint, I think there is a more likely explanation that doesn't involve a NYPO manuscript cancel. I suspect the cover slipped through NYPO processing with no postmarking whatsoever and was sent on to Biddeford where the stamps were canceled. If it had been noticed in the NYPO, even late in the process, it seems likely that a New York postmark, showing where the letter entered the mails, would have been added. Since the cover presumably didn't enter the mails at Biddeford, it would have been inappropriate for the Biddeford post office to postmark the letter on the front.

Comment is invited.

More on New York Bottle Stoppers

John Donnes reports a second example of the New York size "1" bottle stopper illustrated on page 79 of the February 2000 *NEWS*. It is dated March 15 with an "1875" dateline on the back of the UX-3 postal card. John also submitted a simple but attractive "Maltese Cross" cancel carved in a size "2" stopper from New York. Docketing on the front indicates 1874. John's tracings appear as Figures 1 and 2.

Bill Stearns reports a size "2" stopper canceling a two cent red brown on a piece of NYC local mail.

As described in the *NEWS* over the past several years, we are finding that the NYPO experimented to a significant extent with bottle stoppers as cancelers.

Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 1

