



Follow-ups

killer (containing a "2"). This is the only reported cover bearing these markings and is shown here as Figure 2, courtesy of Bob Payne.

(4) Two examples from New York dated March 3 and 10, 1898 with a "2" in the ellipse. Actually, the year of the March 3 cover is not certain. Neither New York cover is clearly year dated by the postmark. The problem is with the second digit of the two digit year date. It is incomplete (apparently) on the left side on both covers. Your editor assumes the Figure 1 cover was dated by a marking on the reverse. Given that every other cover bearing one of these "emergency" postmarks is 1898 and in Philadelphia and Washington they begin showing up in early March, it is exceedingly likely that the March 3 cover is 1898, too. On another point, the New York postmark is smaller than for Washington and Philadelphia, presumably because "NEW YORK" required fewer letters. (The Washington and Philadelphia ovals are essentially the same size, with "PHILADELPHIA" filling up the space more fully.)

(Continued on page 103)

(2) The March 3 cover we reported in the May *NEWS* from Washington involves a smaller postmark and



Dear Reader,

There are two notices appearing herein that I would like to underscore. First is a "last call" for the first phase of the Boston-style negatives project underway since 1999. Readers have over the several years submitted a considerable amount of data for which the Club is most grateful. If you



have dated covers on hand that have not yet been reported, and especially if you can provide information pertinent to what is mentioned in the notice, we urge you to do so. Thanks!

The ad for the Kenneth A. Whitfield book of cancellations reappears in this issue. The book has been well received by collectors and we consider its reduced USCC member cost a significant benefit. Eight copies were sold at the Boxborough show where it was on display at the USCC society table. Please see the ad and also page 54 of the November 2002 NEWS. A copy is available for loan from the USCC Library.

I hope you are having a pleasant summer with at least some opportunity for philatelic pursuits.

Roger Curran

Washington, D.C. "Fishtail" Update

John Donnes writes with a new earliest reported use for a split-barrel "fishtail" – May 15, 1885. John's tracing from the cover is shown here as Figure 1. The Washington fishtails were discussed on pp. 92-96 in the May 2003 NEWS and the earliest date reported for a split-barrel was June 1, 1885. Of at least equal importance was John's observation that his cover and the one illustrated on page 95 were both to local addresses. Three other split-barrel covers were checked and they, too, were to local addresses. (One of these covers was illustrated on page 51 of the Summer 1988 NEWS.) It is certainly beginning to appear that the reason for the split-bar variety for numbers "2" and "3" was to distinguish handstamps intended for local mail from those used on outgoing mail. Additional reports on uses of the split-barrel fishtails are needed and eagerly sought. ■

Figure 1



"running man"

The U.S. Cancellation Club NEWS

Published four times a year by the U.S. CANCELLATION CLUB and included with membership. The U.S.C.C. is APS Affiliate #75.

Annual Dues: \$16.00 per year. Address inquires to: Roger Rhoads at the address below.

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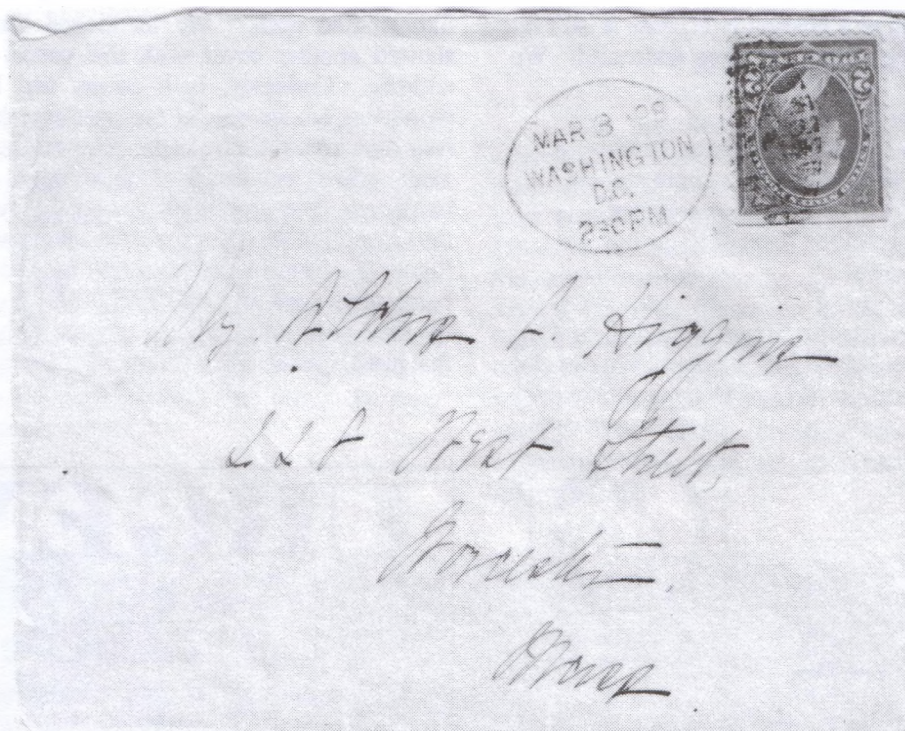
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(Continued from front page)

Figure 2



We stated in May that the ellipse killers "... were apparently not duplexed to the emergency postmark." This was based on the observation that variations exist in the placement of the postmark and ellipse in relation to one another. However, your editor now believes that these markings were, in fact, duplexed. One cover showed by Mr. Clarke, in particular, strongly suggests a duplex handstamp. It is a cover from New York to Washington that was forwarded from Washington to Buffalo, N.Y. The New York postmark reads May 20 and at the top middle of the cover is the "emergency" Washington postmark (May 21, 1898) – presumably indicating the date of forwarding – with the ellipse also present. Nothing is canceled by the ellipse and there is no discernible reason why it would have been applied if it were a separate marking. Of course, if it were part of a duplex, then its presence is understandable. By overlaying transparencies of various of the Washington markings it appears that the ellipse progressively dropped in relation to the horizontal axis of the oval postmark. An April 16 strike is lower than March 5, a May 9 lower than April 16, and a May 21 lower than May 9. Similarly, the Philadelphia April 30 and May 10 ellipses are considerably lower than the March 5. Did something loosen these handstamps with use? It was also noted that in comparing the March 10 and April 13 examples, the "TON" letters of "WASHINGTON" had shifted slightly to the right, giving support to the idea that the postmarker was constructed of moveable type.

On page 57 of the November 2002 *NEWS* we illustrated a hand-carved cancel on an off-cover Sc 65 that is very unusual because it spelled out an entire state name: "OHIO." We can now report that the cancel is from Cleveland. A cover from Cleveland bearing this cancel on a Sc 65 appeared as lot 2025 in Weiss auction #119 of October 1993. The cancel, presumably duplexed to the townmark, was upside down and not tied to the cover. This may raise the question of whether the stamp originated on the cover. Your editor thinks it did for two reasons. First, the cancel on the

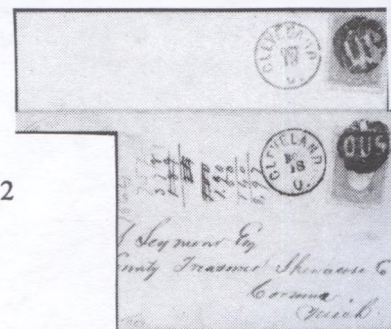
stamp illustrated in November 2002 is also upside down on the stamp, implying that it was placed that way in the ring holder on the duplex handstamp. Second, the killer is similar to two other Cleveland killers of the period. The first and most pertinent is a negative "OUS" which appears as PT-USA8 in Skinner-Eno and is shown here as Figure 1. The

Figure 1



Skinner-Eno book explains the cancel as "O(HIO), U.S." What may be the same killer is listed as 4628 in the Whitfield book. In the 259th public auction of Matthew Bennett on April 22-4, 2003, lot 1856 contained two Cleveland covers, each franked with a Sc 65. One cover had the negative "OUS" and the other a similar appearing killer but with just a negative "US." The lot illustration is shown here as Figure 2. The

Figure 2



"US" cancel may be Whitfield 5053.

On page 112 of the Summer 1999 *NEWS* a tracing was shown of an intriguing killer that John Barwis found on a 3¢ green cover. We illustrate it here as Figure 3. The "U," "H" and "L" were thought to be quite clear with the top letter probably an "R." The townmark could not be fully read but

John suggested Kinderhook as a possibility because it isn't far from New Paltz, N.Y. where the cover was addressed. We also stated the following

John advised 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.

The Whitfield book illustrates the Figure 3 cancel as 4721 (shown here as Figure 4) and identifies its origin. We can also report lot 1992 in Weiss auction #115 of October 1991 which



Figure 3



Figure 4

is shown here as Figure 5. In the lot description, Bill Weiss identified the letters as "RULKY." We're making progress on understanding this cancel but unanswered questions remain. Who can help?



Figure 5

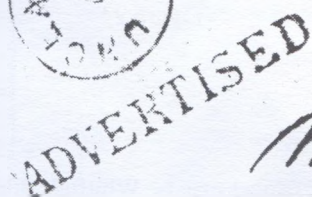
There was a remarkable cover illustrated on page 83 of the February 2003 NEWS bearing three strikes of the cancel shown here as Figure 1. The cancel is listed as ST-C 13 in the



Figure 1



Figure 2



Mrs. Amanda Priest

MAY 1

Kurt

K. H.

Skinner-Eno book. We mentioned that Skinner and Eno showed another cover with this cancel that had the same address. Curiously, both covers had been struck with a month/day handstamp, in one case two days and in the other four days after the date in the Washoe City, Nevada postmark. Your editor wondered if they might be early received markings. We now think a more likely explanation is that they identified the dates the covers were advertised. While the Figure 2 cover (in the collection of Abe Boyarsky) has also been struck with an "ADVERTISED" handstamp, we believe we have seen a few covers, thought to have been advertised, that just show the date. Comment is invited. ■

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More on Roller Cancels

More on "Ayeir" Mass.

The February 2003 *NEWS* illustrated a third class mail marking that appears to read "AYEIR/MASS." notwithstanding the fact that no such post office existed. There was, however, an "AYER" post office and we speculated that a very firm strike of a rubber handstamp stretched the serifs in the "E" to join together and form an apparent "I" to the right of the "E." A cover in the collection of Arthur Beane can now be illustrated that shows the Ayer marking as it was intended to be. ■

In the August 2002 *NEWS* we discussed roller cancels from New York City that have been found on circular mail. For three covers that could be dated (or at least given a close approximation), their use was in early May 1875. Ken Pitt informed the *NEWS* that all examples he has seen show the cancel extending to the top of the cover. (Please note the several examples illustrated in the earlier article as well as Figure 1 here.) Ken concluded that the reason for this was that the envelopes were placed on a table in overlapping fashion so that one sweep of the roller would cancel at least several covers. Your editor considers this to be a very plausible explanation and would welcome reader comments and further information. ■

Figure 1

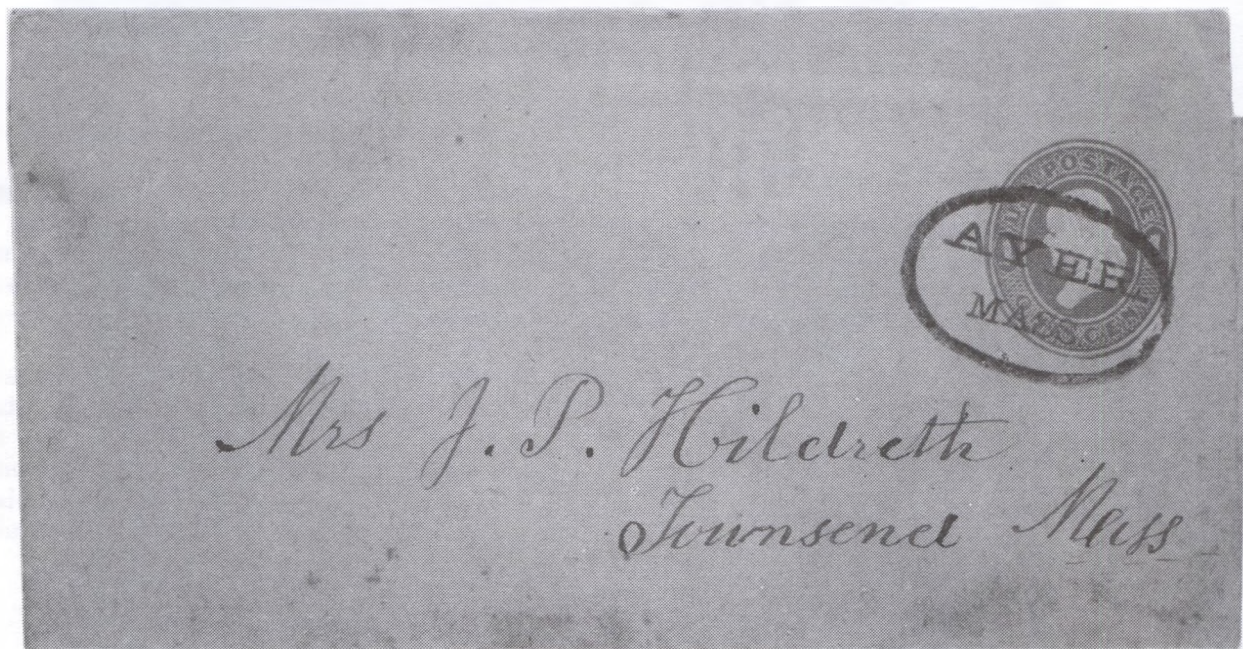
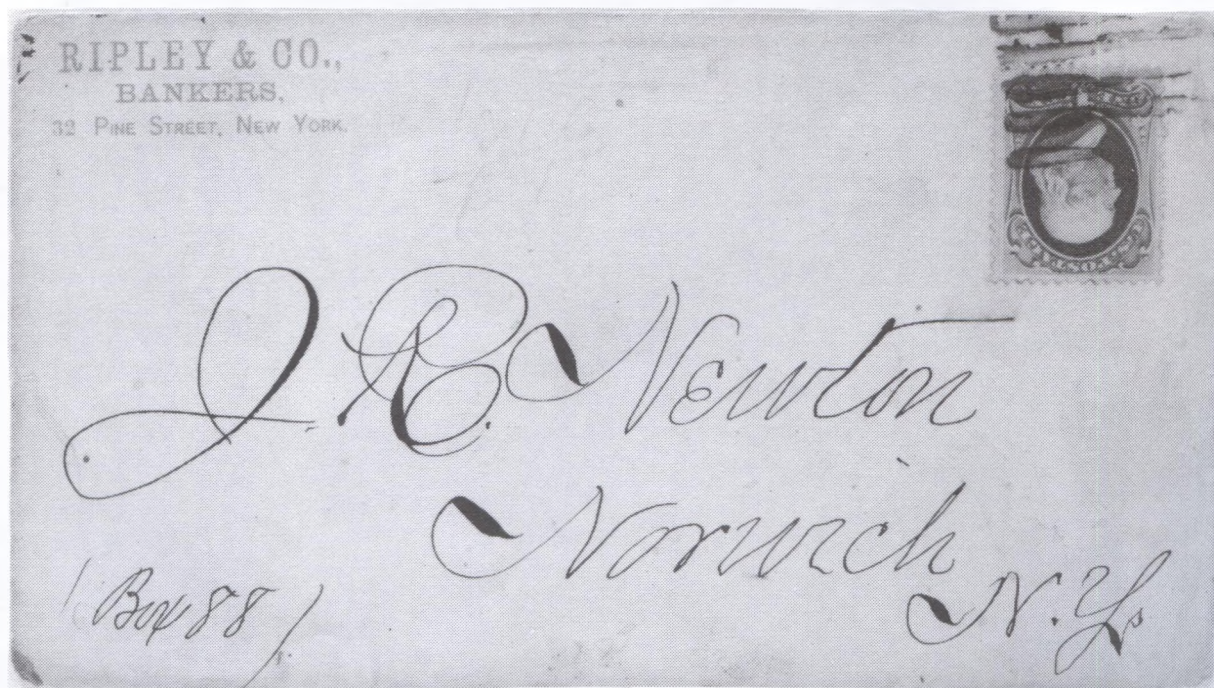


Figure 1



The Handstamps that Replaced NYFM Cancels

Among the most celebrated and immediately recognizable U.S. cancellations of the 19th Century are the New York Foreign Mail (NYFM) cancels used on outgoing foreign mail, primarily during the 1870-1876 period. They constitute a large number of individual designs, many of which are elaborate geometrics. The most recent of two major books on the subject, *The Foreign Mail Cancellations of New York City 1870-1878*, authored by Club member Bill Weiss, was published in 1990.

It appears that the hand-carved NYFMs were largely replaced in January 1877 with the introduction of manufactured metal (undoubtedly steel), duplexed vertical bar ellipses containing numbers "1" through "6" in the center. A

tracing of one of these cancels by John Donnes is shown in Figure 1. The earliest reported use we have so far recorded is the card illustrated in Figure 2 which resides in John's collection. It is dated January 10 (1877). A January 11 (1877) example is shown in Figure 3.

The hand-carved NYFMs are noted used after January 1877 but in quite limited numbers – on circulars to foreign countries, on outgoing letters originating at Branch stations, on incoming foreign mail where the stamps were not canceled, and they are probably also to be found on one or more other types of mail. By 1879 they were essentially gone.

If readers can report other early usages (January 1877 or earlier) of the vertical bar ellipses or additional information pertinent to the transition from hand-carved NYFMs, they are encouraged to do so. ■

Figure 1

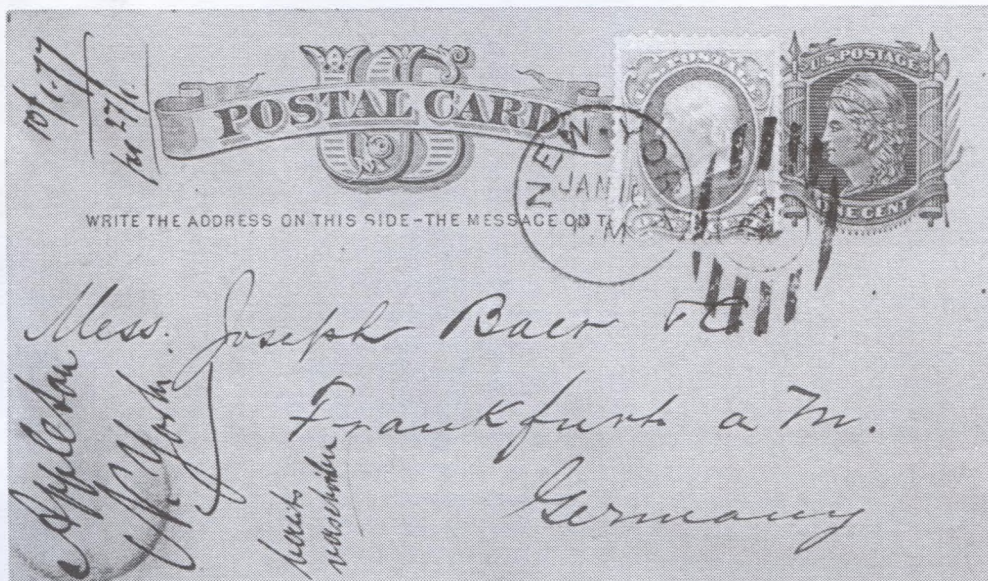
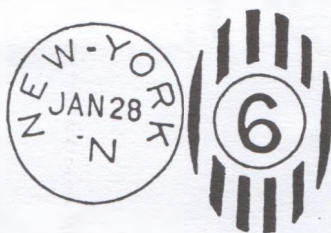


Figure 2

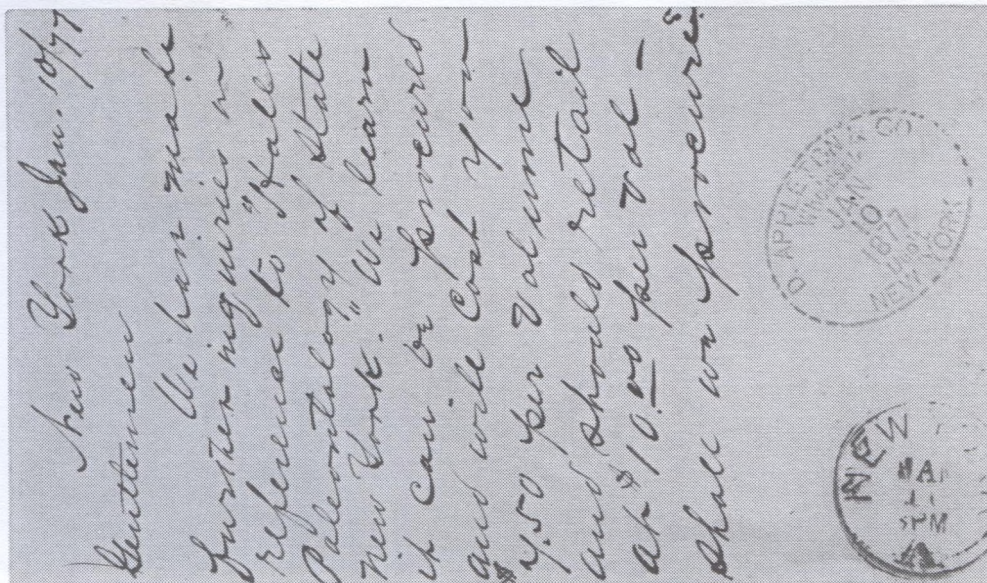
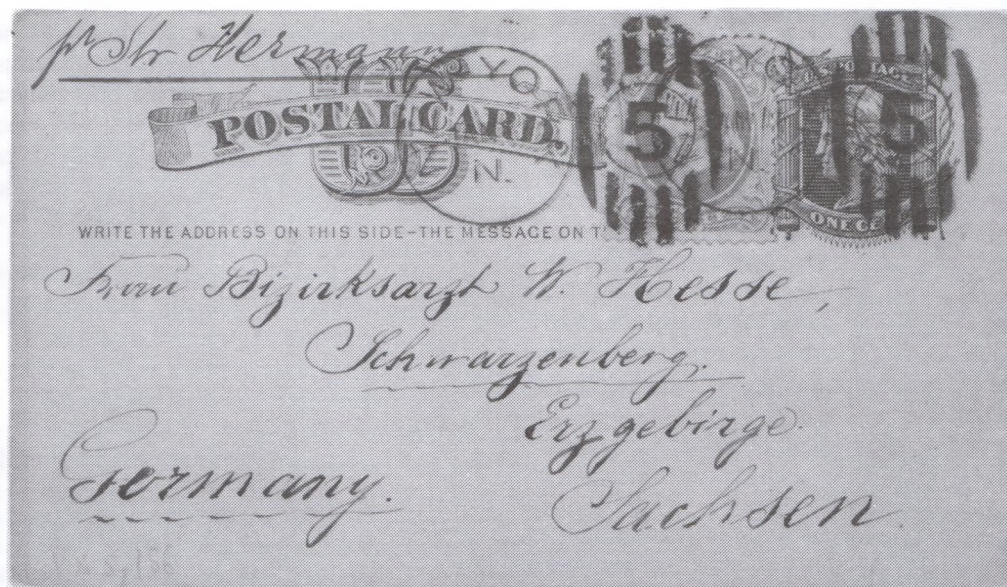


Figure 3



Farmers, Pennsylvania Again

In the Fiftieth Anniversary Issue of the *NEWS* we illustrated a color copy of the "F" in wreath cancel from Farmers, Pennsylvania. This cancel, which has the "F" on its side inside the wreath, must be very scarce. It was discussed briefly also on page 12 of the February 2002 issue.

Through the courtesy of Arthur Beane, we show in Figure 1 another remarkable "F" cancel from Farmers struck in a magenta ink. It would be hard to imagine a more fancy "F." Please note the error in the postmark. The comma after "York" should, of course, have been placed after "Co." Thanks to John Donnes for his excellent tracings. ■

Farmers,
OCT 15 1889
York, Co. Pa



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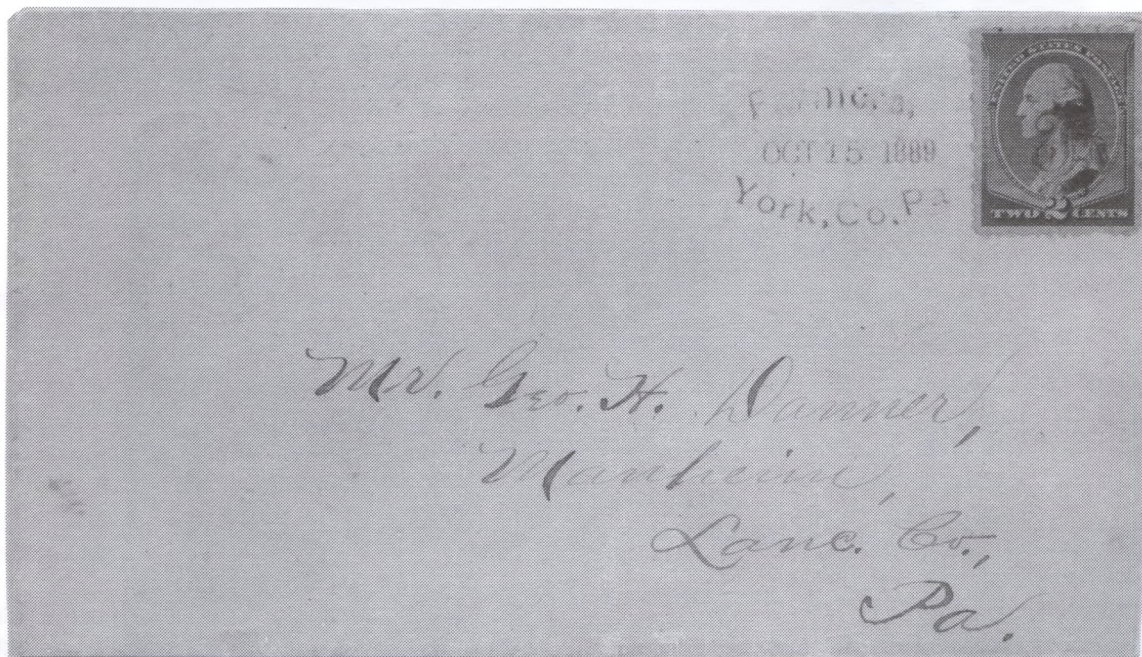
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See announcement on page 54
of November 2002 *NEWS*

Figure 1



Boston Postmarking and Canceling Procedures

by Roger D. Curran

The cover in Figure 1 is quite unusual from a cancellation standpoint. It doesn't look so because using the town postmark as a cancellation was very common in the 1850s. Indeed, the great student of 3¢ 1851 and 1857 issue stamps, Carroll Chase, estimated that, apart from manuscript cancels, two thirds of these stamps are canceled by the townmark.¹ And why not? It cut in half the postmarking and canceling workload by requiring only one strike to do two jobs. Only thing is, Boston didn't adopt this approach, notwithstanding the fact that it was a very large post office that would have saved a great deal of time and effort. Apparently the Boston philosophy was to follow a very specific procedure that from 1851 into the early 1860s involved an obliteration containing the word "PAID" in black and a postmark typically in red ink. Separate cork obliterations replaced the PAIDs and then, in the mid-1860s, duplex handstamps were introduced. Of course, earlier adoption of duplex handstamps (say, 1860 or 1861) would have been another great time saver, but again, despite its size, the Boston post office demurred in favor of its long-standing approach of employing a separate canceler.

Your editor has not studied Boston cancel practices

in the 1860s to attempt to determine when handstamps duplexing a townmark to a separate canceler were introduced and would very much welcome information from readers on the subject. I am confident that it was much later than most (possibly all?) of the other big city post offices. An interesting cover is illustrated in Figure 2. The postmark is red and the killer black. The date in the postmark is December but the day is unclear. If I had to guess, it would be a "7." This raises a question when looking at the dateline on the enclosure which is shown in Figure 3. I assume it is "Dec 4th 1864, but could it

Figure 3

Boston Dec 4th 1864

be "Dec 7th 1867"? As I read the Blake and Davis book, cross-roads killers of the Figure 2 type are not reported beyond 1865 with a two circle postmark. How remarkable it seems that a really large post office would still be using separate obliterations virtually at the end of 1864. Duplex handstamps may have come into use in Boston with the single circle postmark of the general type illustrated in Figure 4. Blake and Davis report such postmarks beginning in early 1865.²

Figure 1

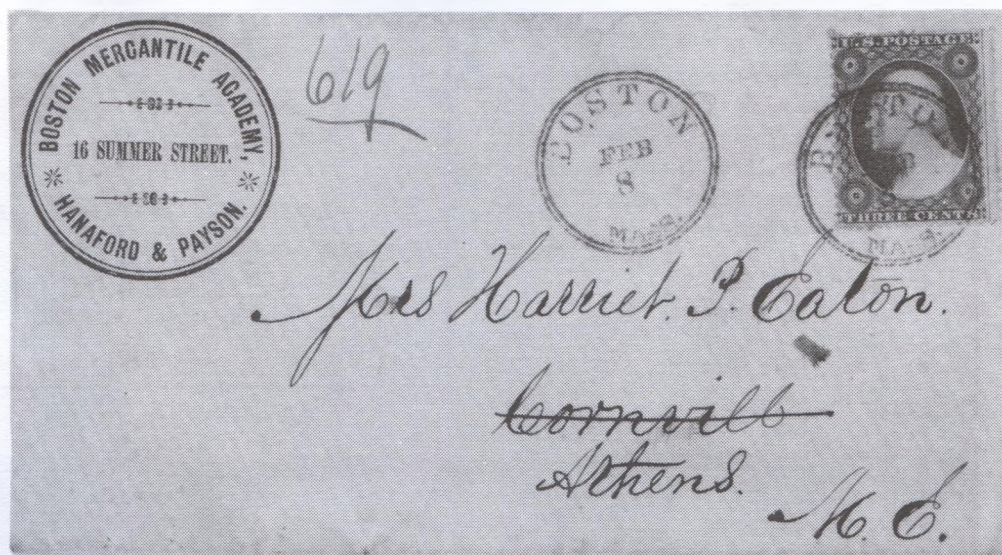
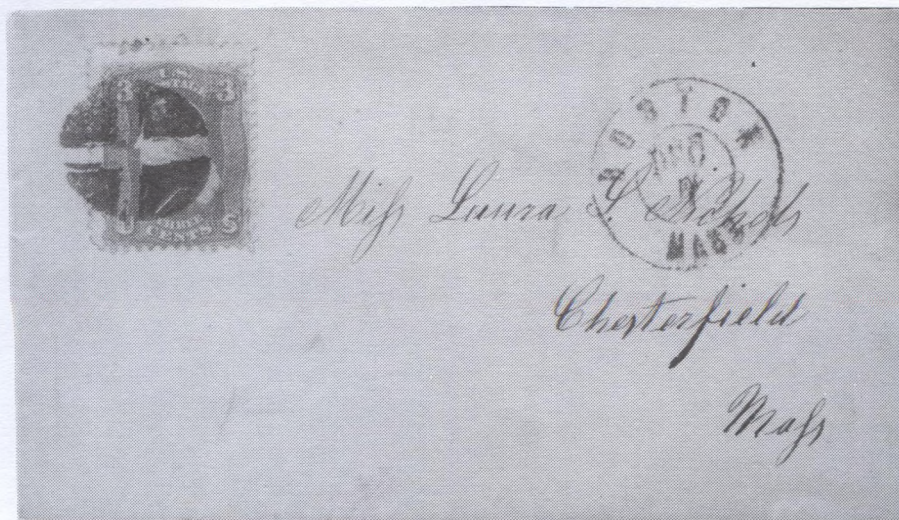


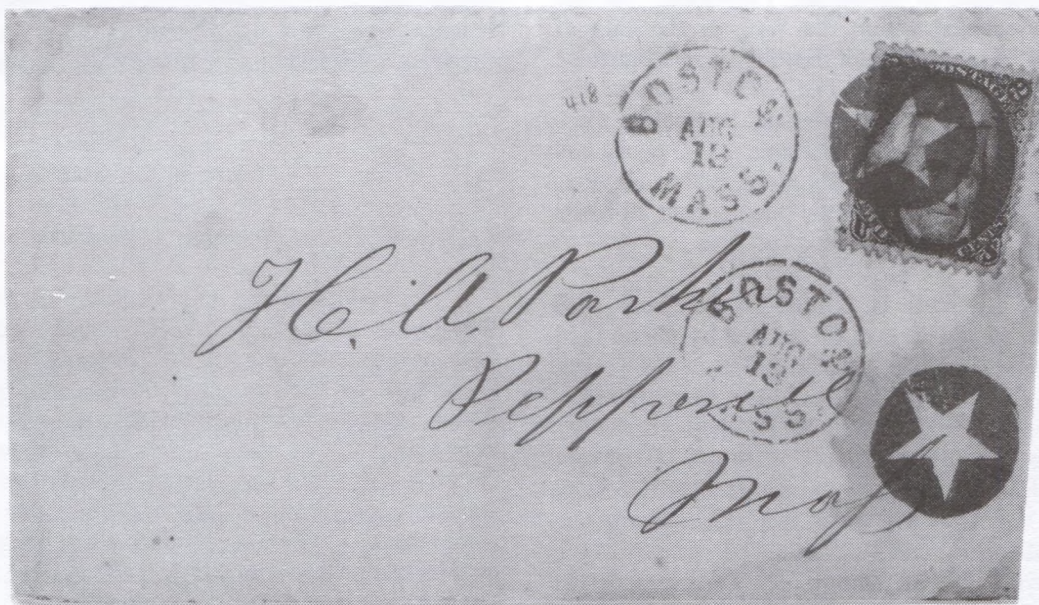
Figure 2



¹ Chase, Carroll. *The 3¢ Stamp of the United States 1851-1857 Issue*. Lawrence, Ma.: Quarterman Publications, Inc., (1975), p. 334.

² Blake, Maurice C. and Davis, Wilbur W. *Boston Postmarks to 1890*. Lawrence, Ma.: Quarterman Publications, Inc. (1974), pp. 206-7.

Figure 4



A Cancel in Two Categories

by Roger D. Curran

There is an unusual cancel from North Vassalboro, Maine found on Sc 65 stamps. A tracing from Skinner-Eno (p. 254) is shown as Figure 1 and a stamp bearing the cancel as Figure 2. In 1933 Fred R. Schmalzriedt reported this cancel

Figure 1

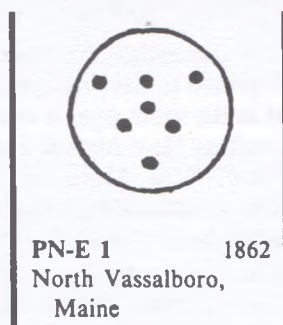


Figure 2



as a patent cancel.¹ There was only one example known to him and he said this about it:

"Some dots cut through stamp. Not attached. May 25."

By saying that it was not attached, he undoubtedly meant that it was not applied by a handstamp duplexing the townmark to

the killer. The Skinner-Eno book also lists this cancel as a patent and illustrates what may be the same May 25 cover noted by Schmalzriedt. I have seen several off-cover examples but not one yet where the dots cut into or really indent the stamp.

In the Robert A. Siegel sale 406 of January 1972 the Milton Greenebaum collection of Masonic cancellations was sold. The sale catalog stated:

"The Greenebaum collection is unquestionably one of the most comprehensive ever formed and presents probably the widest variety ever offered at auction."

The catalog reproduced a chart developed by Mr. Greenebaum to classify the types of Masonic cancels he encountered and the *NEWS* presented this chart in the Summer 1998 issue. In a category termed "other Masonic designs" was the entry "7 dots." Lot 19 of the sale was an off-cover Sc 65 bearing the North Vassalboro cancel. I have attempted to learn what the seven dots design represents but have not been successful. If any reader can clarify the matter, we would be eager to hear from you.

¹ Schmalzriedt, Fred R. "Patent Cancellations (1847-1887)" in *Cyclopedia of United States Postmarks and Postal History* edited by Delf Norona (1933), Quarterman Publications, Inc. reprint (1975), p. 156-7.

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USCC Library Reopens

We are pleased to announce the reopening of the U.S. Cancellation Club Library in cooperation with The Western Philatelic Library located in Sunnyvale, California. All our materials are now located within the WPL at the City of Sunnyvale Raynor Activity Center Facility, 1500 Partridge Avenue, Building 6, Room 6. The WPL is staffed by volunteers (all are stamp collectors) and housed in three classrooms in an unused school. It has some 5,000 books and 10,000 volumes of bound periodicals along with pamphlets and map files. The WPL is open to the public about 20 hours a week. If you plan a visit, we suggest a call first.

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The USCC looks forward to participation with the WPL in providing library services to USCC members. It has been a distinct pleasure dealing with WPL staff on arrangements pertaining to the transfer of our materials and establishing maintenance and borrowing procedures.

Finally, a note of appreciation to our now-retired USCC librarian Bill Bauer for his exceptional service over the past 25 years. He did a wonderful job of maintaining the library and promptly responding to member requests. On behalf of the USCC Board and all the USCC members over the years who used library, Bill, a most sincere "thank you!" ■

More on Red Star

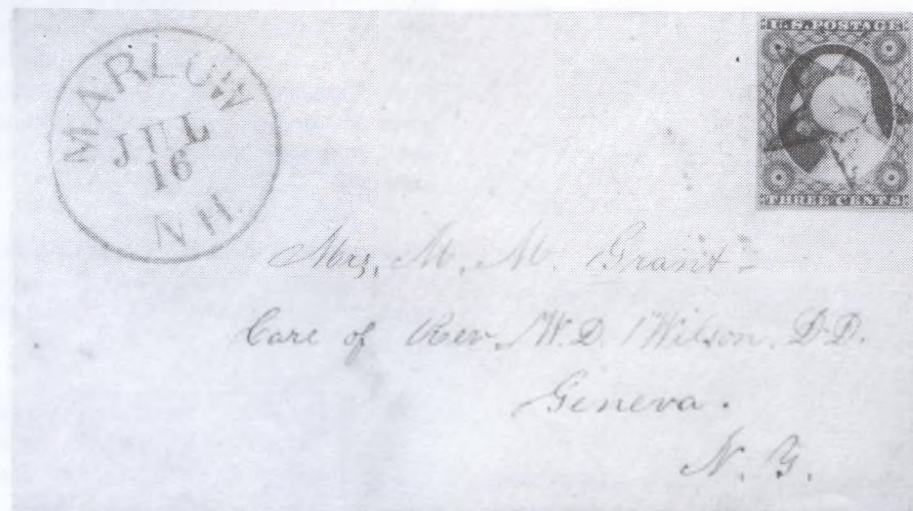
by Roger D. Curran

We discussed a hollow red star on an off-cover Sc11 stamp in the August 2002 *NEWS*. Such cancels are reported from several post offices in the 1850s but not in red ink. Due to the fact that the placement of the cancel on the off-cover stamp is essentially identical to that canceling a 3¢ imperforate issue stamp on a New Alstead, N.H. cover, we speculated that the off-cover strike was also from New Alstead. Additional support came from Volume I of the *American Stampless Cover Catalog* (1997) which lists red as one of the ink colors used by New Alstead during the period in question.

Well, now, as luck would have it, a cover recently came to the attention of the *NEWS* that bears the red star canceling a Sc 11 on cover (see Figure 1) and it is from Marlow, N.H., a post office where the star was reported used in black. This caused a rethinking of earlier speculation. Surprisingly, the *American Stampless Cover Catalog* lists only red ink for Marlow markings of the period. The placement of the Figure 1 star is similar to but not the same as that on the off-cover stamp. Nonetheless, I now believe one has to assume that the off-cover strike is, in all probability, from Marlow.

It is interesting that the three post offices that are presently reported to have used this star on imperforate issues are located in the same general area of the country – Chelsea, Mass. as well as New Alstead and Marlow. Each cancel is reported "scarce" in Alexander. Was there a handstamp supplier who advertised canceling devices, including the star, in the New England in the early 1850s? ■

Figure 1



"ELV"

Two remarkable cancels in the collection of Arthur Beane from East Las Vegas, New Mexico are shown in Figures 1 and 2. The tracings were done by John Donnes. The East Las Vegas in New Mexico had nothing to do, of course, with the Nevada Las Vegas. According to my 1969 encyclopedia, Las Vegas (city), N.M. had a population of 7,790 and the nearby Las Vegas (town), N.M. 6,028. There was no listing for East Las Vegas but the city is located just east of the town. Las Vegas (city) is the seat of San Miguel County. ■



Return to
SAN MIGUEL NATIONAL BANK,
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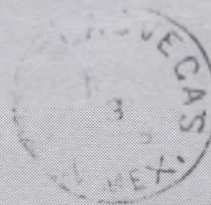


Figure 1

El Paso National Bank,
El Paso
Tex.

Return to
SAN MIGUEL NATIONAL BANK,
EAST LAS VEGAS, New Mexico,
If not delivered within 5 days.



Figure 2

El Paso National Bank
El Paso
Tex.

"Scarab" Cancels

by Roger D. Curran

A rather common cancellation seen in the 1880s and 1890s is illustrated as Figure 1. It has been referred to as a scarab by collectors and is seen from a number of small post offices duplexed to the town postmark. Strikes are often found in colored inks and were undoubtedly produced by rubber-faced handstamps. Scarab cancelers were sold, at least primarily, by the Sadler Publishing Co., a large supplier of post office handstamps during this period. Part of an ad appearing in the July 1891 issue of the *United States Official Postal Guide* appears here as Figure 2.¹ Various styles of postmarks are seen duplexed to the Sadler scarab.

As was the case for metal ellipse handstamp cancels and machine cancels, imitations were made of the popular

scarab design. A quite primitive example (Figure 3), coming from Keyser, West Virginia, is a hand-carved scarab duplexed very closely to the Keyser townmark which became somewhat flattened on the right side. A more artistic variation from Delhi, N.Y. (Figure 4) shows a scarab with pointed ends and eight bars that connect with the rim of the scarab. This appears to be a manufactured cancel, presumably molded rubber. A scarab with six bars connected to the rim is shown in Cole as GE 213 and this also may have been a commercial (as opposed to hand-carved) product.

Figure 5 is from Grafton, Mass. dated May 29, 1886. Note how the cancel bows out at the right. This presumably results from the breaking down of the original firmness of the rubber facing.

For cancellation collectors these scarab cancels are only modestly fancy at best. It is a little amusing, therefore, to

Figure 1

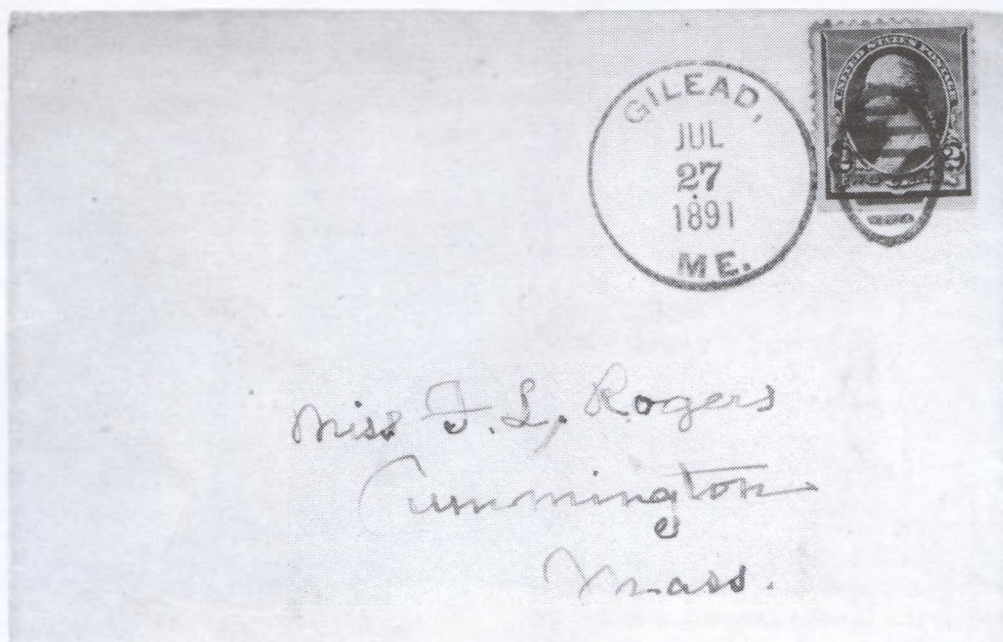
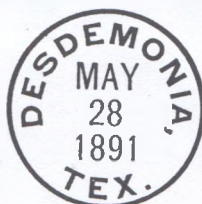
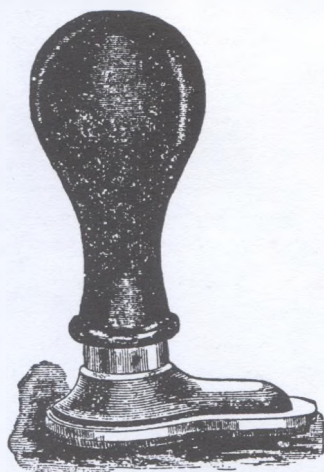
**SADLER PUB. CO., BALTIMORE, MD.**

Figure 2



(With either of these Cancellers).

The Dater and Canceller here shown is the Cheapest ever offered to Postmasters. The base is Nickel-plated and highly finished, with Black Enamelled Handles. Price with set of dates from 1 to 31, names of months (12,) yearly dates from 1891 to 1896 (all neatly arranged in box,) with Ink, Pads, Tweezers, etc., complete, postage paid, only

\$1.08.

OUTFIT No. 1 consists of above Dater and Canceller and the 15 one-line Stamps (shown on next page,) postage paid, **\$1.98**

Figure 3

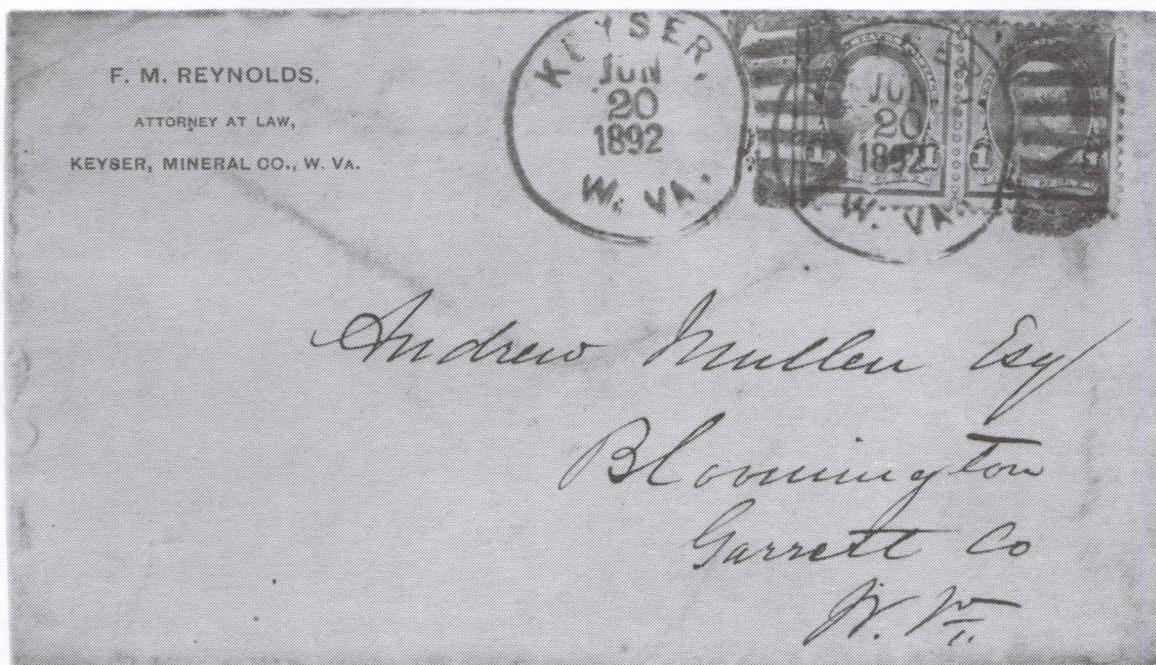
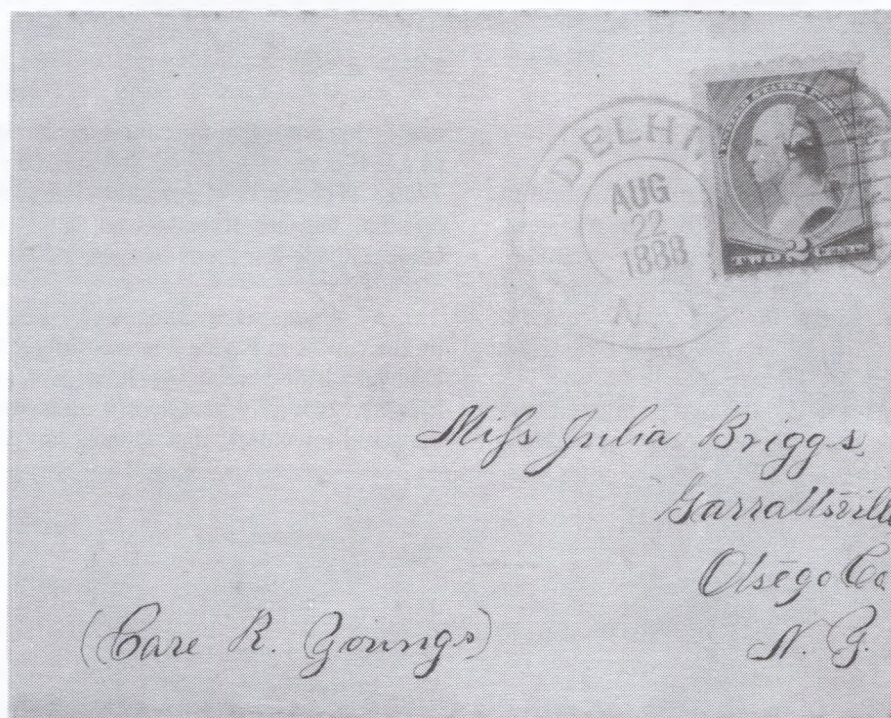


Figure 4



reflect on what a different reaction is generated by a similar cancel (Figure 6)² used forty years earlier from St. Johnsbury, Vermont on 1847 issue stamps. This cancel is considered one of the major fancies found on the 1847 issue and commands a large premium in the philatelic marketplace. The reason for this, of course, is that there are so few cancels on 1847 stamps that can at all be considered fancy or even particularly distinctive.

Readers who collect scarab cancels and can provide additional information or report interesting usages are urged to do so. ■

¹ Bond, Arthur H. "19th Century Development of Postal Markings" in *The Postal History of Indiana*, Volume I, by J. David Baker (1976), pp. 377, 379.

² Skinner, Hubert C. and Eno, Amos, *United States Cancellations 1845-1869* (1980), p. 30.

Figure 5

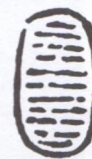
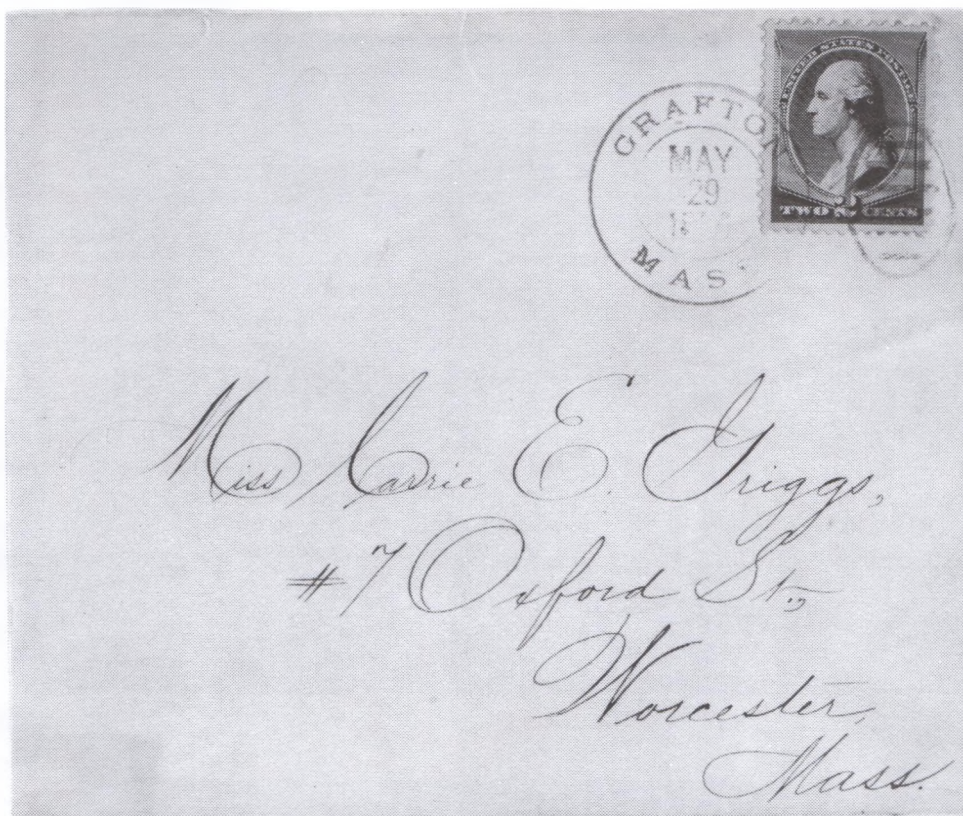


Figure 6

Fancy – to Say the Least – Letter Cancels

Joe Crosby sends word of a wonderful “B” cancel in black ink on cover postmarked July 14, 1899 from McGraw, N.Y. (He has noted two other dates for this cancel – March 6, 1899 and December 7, 1899.) Upon checking the Smith and Kay book *New York Postal History, the Post Offices and First Postmasters from 1775 to 1880*, Joe learned that the McGraw post office was established on January 17, 1898, only 18 months before his cover was sent and the first postmaster was Burdette Burlingham. The “B” must be for the postmaster’s

name. Joe notes that the cancel appears on an off-cover stamp as LE-B-6 on page 56 of Sol Salkind’s *U.S. Cancels 1890-1900*. This cancel is especially noteworthy, in your editor’s opinion, because it occurs so late. By 1899 there were comparatively few fancy cancels, indeed.

A somewhat similar style, used earlier, is represented by the cancel in Figure 2 struck in blue ink. (Thanks to John Donnes for the tracing.) It is so fancy that it is hard to identify. Is it a “W”? Or, is it upside down in relation to the duplexed townmark, and actually an “M”? It is listed as an

Figure 1



Figure 2



"M" in the Whitfield book, 5919 on page 200. He reports it, other side up, in violet on "70" issue stamps. This means the stamp on which it appears was issued somewhere from 1870 to 1881. It is likely to have been used late in this time period since the more elaborate rubber-faced designs are largely found in the 1880s. Willard illustrates the cancel as 643 in his book and presents it, without attribution, as shown in the Figure 2 tracing.¹ About it he said the following:

"Figure 643 is often mistaken for an M while actually it is an old English capital W."²

Who can report additional examples of these cancels or other letter cancels of this same general style?

¹ Willard, Edward L. *The United States Two Cent Red Brown of 1883-1887*, Volume II. New York: H.L. Lindquist Publications, Inc. (1970), p. 778.

² Ibid., p. 74.

USCC Project Needs Your Help

Probably the most immediately recognizable Banknote era cancels are the large Boston-style negatives used from 1878 to 1873. We say "Boston-style" because, while the vast majority do come from Boston, they were used, at least to a limited extent, by a fair number of other post offices.

Since 1999 the USCC has been working on a project to establish the dates of use of these cancels as reported in the Blake and Davis book *Boston Postmarks to 1890* and to add examples the authors didn't report.

We are nearing the end of the first phase of this project and expect to publish the results, killer by killer, with the November 2003 *NEWS*. At that time we will report on each of the four types illustrated in Figure 1. We will not include killers that have been altered in some way such as corner(s) or section(s) cut away or a negative line cut through

the design. Examples are shown in Figure 2. These will be addressed in phase 2. Phase 3 will report Boston-style negatives from post offices other than Boston.

The purpose of this article is to enlist further reader support in adding data for phase 1. In particular, the following is sought:

Type 1 and 2 examples dated before June 1878
 Type 3 and 4 examples dated before November 1881
 Any examples dated June 1883 or later

If at all feasible, please send photocopies of covers reported. When the data is published we will gratefully acknowledge all contributors. Reports should be sent to project coordinator Ted Wassam at 3504 South Court, Palo Alto, CA 94306 as soon as convenient and no later than October 1, 2003 to be included in the November presentation. Please help if you can. ■

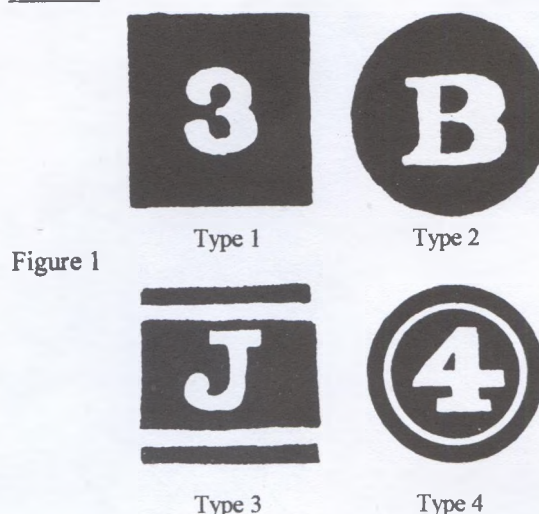


Figure 1

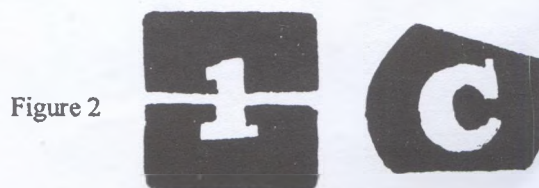


Figure 2

Unduplexed Ellipse

The common ellipse cancels of the 1870s-1890s were overwhelmingly duplexed to town postmarks. This is because they were used basically by post offices of such size that workload was a factor and postmasters wanted to take advantage of the time-saving feature of postmarking the letter and canceling the stamp in one operation. However, some small post offices also used ellipse cancels and occasionally unduplexed ellipses are encountered. An example from Bart, Pennsylvania is illustrated as Figure 1. Another unduplexed ellipse is the popular "JDV" monogram ellipse from Blairstown, N.J. Tracing 4671 from the Whitfield book, shown here as Figure 2, illustrates the cancel. "JDV" referred to the Blairstown postmaster John Davis Vail.

The NEWS would be pleased to receive photocopies of other examples in readers' collections. ■

A Literary Cancel?

In the May 2001 NEWS we illustrated a number of hand-carved ellipse cancels including one that has what could be termed an asterisk in the middle. It is not common. We didn't know the origin at the time but can now report it as Quincy, Illinois. An example on cover in the collection of John Bean is shown as Figure 1. John reports three on-cover examples, one dated January 23 and two dated February 6. One of the February 6 examples is a card datelined "1877" on the back. It is interesting to note that both February 6 examples show "3PM" in the postmark. We can add a January 25th example on piece. On the back someone penciled in "1877." One assumes all four examples were struck in 1877 and that the cancel was used for a fairly short period.

A tracing of the cancel appears as 711 in *Illinois 19th Century Cancels*, a fine publication compiled by Richard Russell and published by the Illinois Postal History Society in 1984. ■

Figure 1

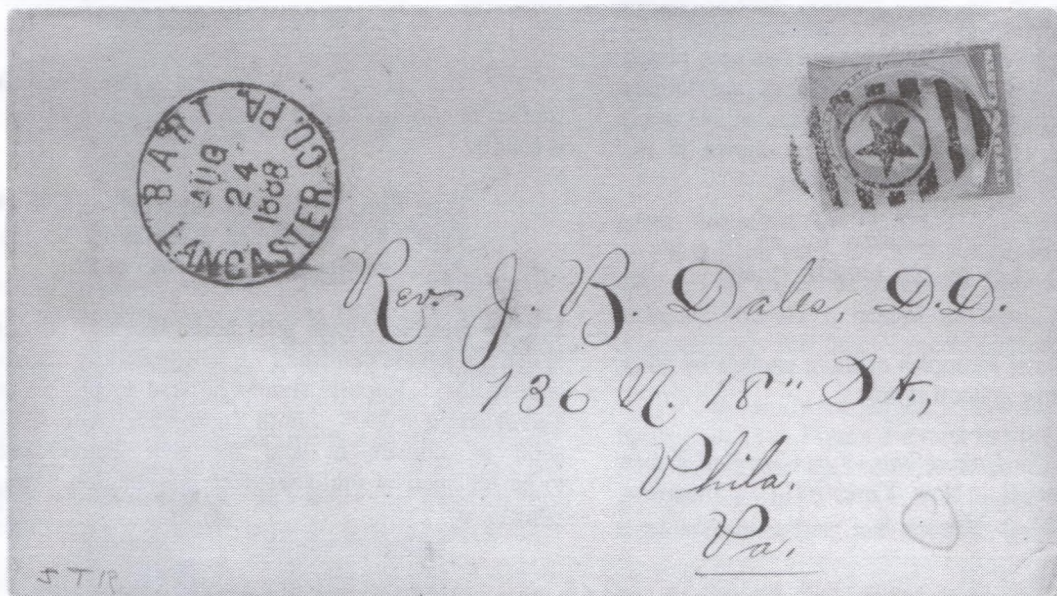


Figure 2

Figure 1

