



Cancellation Club NEWS

Vol. 27, No. 5, Whole No. 254, February 2005

Points of Interest

It's always somewhat of a surprise to see a fancy cancel in the 1900-1910 period. One would not say that they are rare, but to come across a bold example such as in Figure 1 is far from the norm. There is no indication of year date on the cover but the 2¢ carmine stamp has not been reported before January 1903. Among the fancy cancels that are seen from this decade are the negative "SM" from Santa Marta, California, a negative "S" from Soda Springs, Idaho, and a circle of numerous thin wedges from Westminster, Massachusetts.

From the postmark we can tell that the duplex marking is the product of a Sadler Publishing Co. handstamp, a subject we visited in the August 2004 *NEWS*. Readers will note the partial letters to the right of "21" which would read "Ans'd" if fully struck and would be identical to the abbreviation illustrated in Figure 1 on page 38 of the earlier *NEWS*. The Ludlowville postmaster presumably thought he had the handstamp set so that nothing would show in that space, but it didn't quite work out that way.

Readers are encouraged to submit to the *NEWS* copies of fancy cancels in their collections dated in the 1900-1910 period.■

Tracking Down "LV"

A well-known 1860s era "LV" cancel, which is usually boldly struck, is reported by both Skinner-Eno (p. 309) and Whitfield (p. 180) as originating in Lockport, N.Y. The Whitfield tracing is shown as Figure 1. The Skinner-Eno book

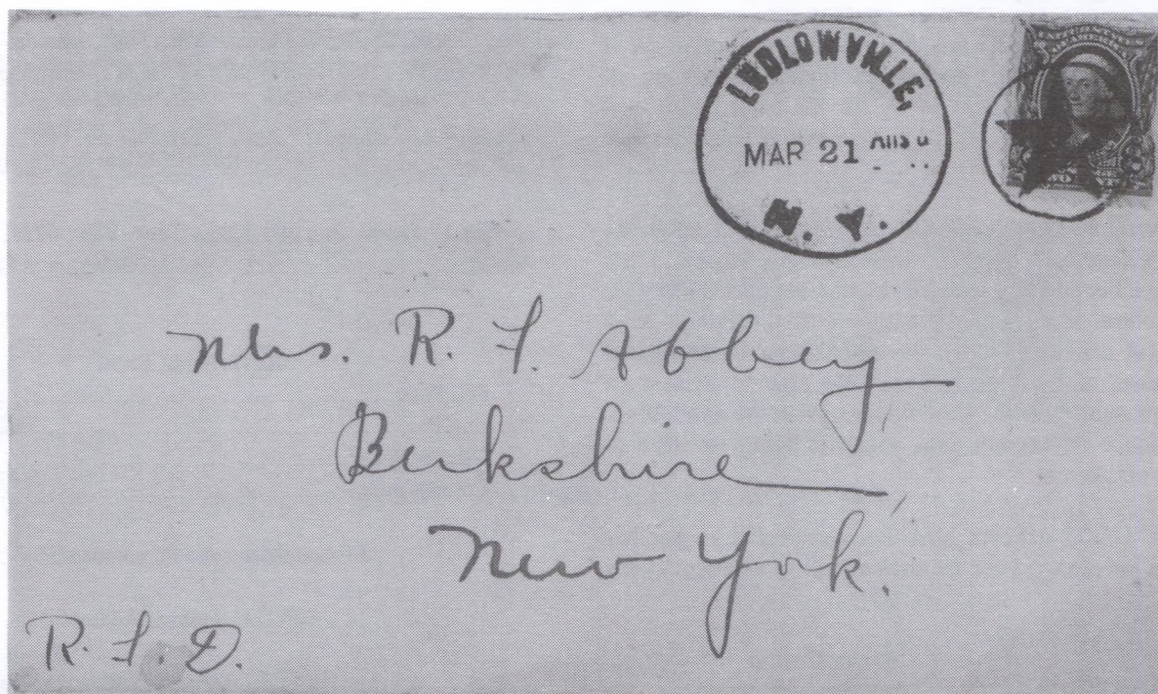
Figure 1 **LV**

attributes the letters to "Leonard Vail, P.M." and Whitfield to "Lewis Vail (P.M.)." Wendell Triplett, who has the cancel in his collection, wanted to get to the bottom of this matter. He searched the USPS online postmaster database for 1853-1899 but found no listing for a postmaster of either name. Wendell then contacted the New York State Library at Albany and a very helpful librarian, Regina Vertone, consulted a Lockport city directory for the 1868-9 period and found the following entry:

"Vail, W. Lewis, post office clerk, 33 Walnut"

The cancel has been reported on 1861 issue stamps through the grills of 1868, so we can assume clerk Vail had probably been working in the Lockport post office for awhile before 1868.■

Figure 1



Dear Reader,

We announced in the last issue of the *NEWS* that the 2005 annual meeting of the USCC will be held at the Philadelphia National Stamp Exhibition (PNSE) taking place September 30 through October 2. The Machine Cancel Society will also be holding its 2005 meeting in Philadelphia. Many of our members have an interest in all 19th century cancellations and the presence of the MCS in Philadelphia will be a real treat. As per usual, the USCC will staff a society table for the entire show, hold a seminar on one of the days and sponsor a one-frame cancellation exhibit competition. We urge USCC members to make plans to attend this fine show and, if feasible, enter a one-frame exhibit. It would be wonderful if we could collectively present to the philatelic community ten or more exhibits devoted to the specialty of our Club. Even if you cannot personally attend the show, submitting an exhibit is an excellent way to support the USCC and help disseminate information about the Club's field of study. If you wish an exhibit prospectus or have any questions about exhibiting at PNSE, please contact Vince Costello at vinman2119@aol.com or 318 Hoffnagle St., Philadelphia, PA 19111-1819. Vince is one of the PNSE show organizers.

In this issue we announce placement in the USCC Library of the photocopy record of covers from the Sy Stiss collection of Illinois cancellations and postmarks. Thinking of this makes one wonder how many specialized collections have been formed that would have added to our accumulated knowledge, only to be dispersed without documentation. All collectors should consider such a step for significant specialized holdings before the time comes for liquidation. Documentation in this way has the potential to make a tremendous contribution to the state of knowledge in fields such as ours and, in turn, would encourage more study. The exhibit photocopy service of the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society makes a great contribution but so many collections are not organized as exhibits. Auction catalogs are very important references but many collections are not sold at auction or, if they are, the catalogs don't necessarily focus attention on all the significant items. Thanks to Sy for his contribution and for his example of what we might individually do to help other collectors and students.

Several recent *NEWS* articles have drawn upon the online USPS database of past postmasters. A couple of Club members have been reviewing it in relation to cancels reported in the literature with multiple letters (and attributed to a particular post office) to see if the initials can be correlated with the names of the postmasters. We plan to present an article on this subject in the near future. With the availability and convenience of internet data, much is being revealed to cancellation collectors!

The USCC officers have been reelected to another term and we encourage your comments and recommendations at any time.

Roger Curran



The U.S. Cancellation Club NEWS

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More on Number "1"

Thirteen additional covers have been reported by Gil Levere and Bob Payne bearing the "1" cancel (Figure 1) discussed in the August 2004 *NEWS*. This cancel was used

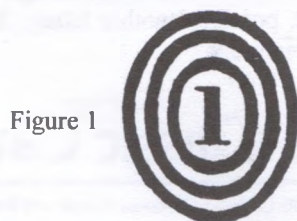


Figure 1

basically on local mail (addressed to parties located within the Boston postal district) during the 1875-78 period. Thus the cancel is normally found on 2¢ stamps. We illustrated a cover with the number "1" on a pair of 1¢ Banknotes and now two additional 1¢ cancels have come to our attention. The first was lot 2761 in the 12/11/04 Nutmeg mail auction. The second, in Bob's collection, involves an early use (June 14, 1875) of a mailing card to Brookline (Figure 2). Incidentally, a postal card in Gil's collection dated November 2, 1876 was addressed to West Stafford, CT. Both examples of the "1" cancel noted to date on mail addressed *outside* the Boston postal district have been on cards.

As noted in the August *NEWS*, the postmarks duplexed to number "1" typically show the curious arrangement of a number appearing above the month slugs indicating, one assumes, the hour of the day but without "AM" or "PM." We showed a "1," "2," and "12" in the earlier article and can now add "3," "4," "5," "8," and "10." Presumably the Boston postmaster used the hour indicators for internal quality control purposes. Any post office worker reviewing the date stamps would have known the hours during which the postmarking would be done and one assumes such hours didn't overlap; that is, postmarking wasn't done, for example, both at 8AM and 8PM. Reader comments are particularly invited on this assumption.

Finally, we call attention to three items in Gil's collection. The first (Figure 3) appears normal enough except when comparing the postmark date with the message dateline on the back, which is July 2, 1875. The message, from one law office to another, states the following:

"I think we might as well try McMahon case Thursday next as any time. If anything should occur so that I cannot try it, I will let you know. I don't know that there is much of a defense."

Was the card with this message mailed on July 10, eight days after being written? (I don't *think* so!) Or did the postal clerk, as suggested by Gil, put the day slug in the time slot and vice versa? Figure 4, which cannot be year-dated, shows the only example noted thus far of a half-hour indication in the time slot. Figure 5 shows an August 26, 1876 card where the time numerals have serifs and the day slugs are in the form of the normally seen block numerals.

We continue to seek additional information about this interesting Boston duplex. ■

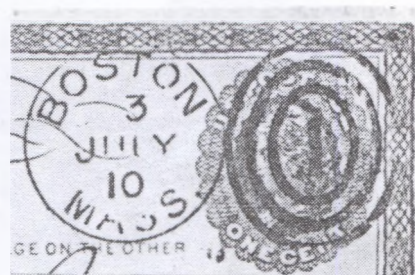


Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5

Figure 2

AUGUSTINE SHURTLEFF, M.D.,

Brookline.

Covers of Note

Featured below are several covers from the collection of Arthur Beane. The first is from Essex, Vermont where the Sc 63 and Sc 73 stamps are each canceled by the manuscript letters "SX." What a delightful phonetic abbreviation! This cancel is reported in *The Postal History of Vermont* by George C. Slawson et al, an excellent state postal history work.

Figure 2 illustrates what is apparently a double weight cover from New Orleans bearing three strikes of a cancel consisting of "1880" with half-moon sections above and below. This cancel is listed but not attributed in Whitfield as 4736 and in Cole as YD-137. A cancel from Macomb, Illinois with a similar design concept, but showing "6PM" in the center, appears as Figure 3. Why 6PM? Was the postmaster paying homage to his end-of-the-day quitting time? This cancel is not listed in Whitfield or Cole nor is it found in *Illinois 19th Century Cancellations* by Richard Russell.

Moving on to the far west we illustrate in Figure 4 a most unusual cancel from Centerville, Oregon in magenta ink.

It is a small double-lined "O" embellished by fine horizontal shading lines and a shadow in the center. The duplexed postmark and cancel are no doubt the product of a rubber-faced handstamp and it appears there was some error in creating the first letter of Centerville, as though there was something underneath it, possibly another letter. This cancel is also unlisted in the literature.■

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Figure 1

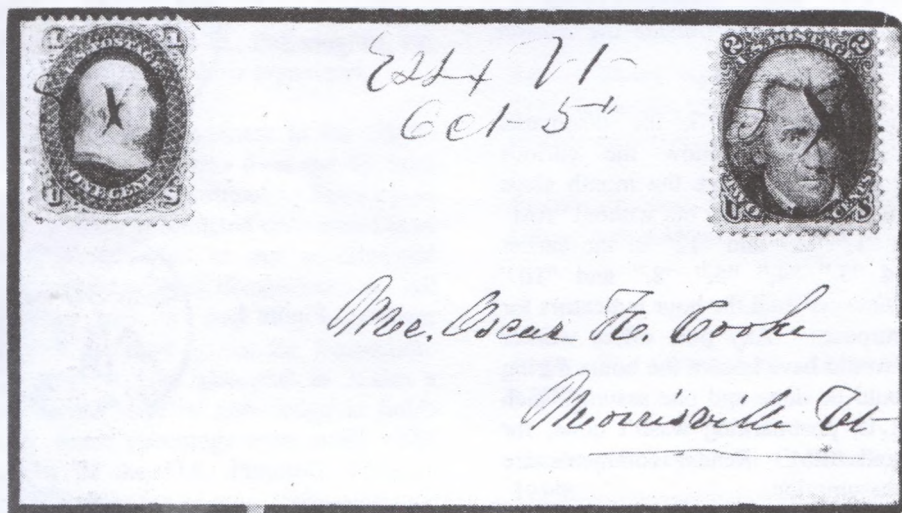


Figure 2

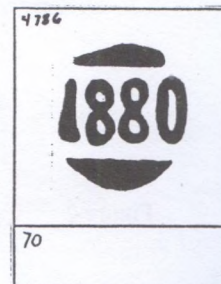


Figure 3

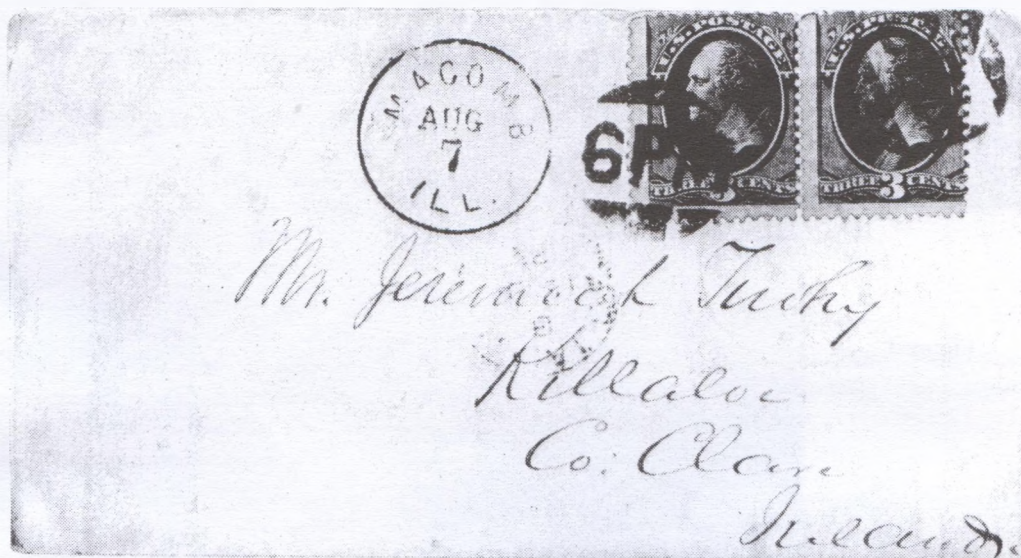
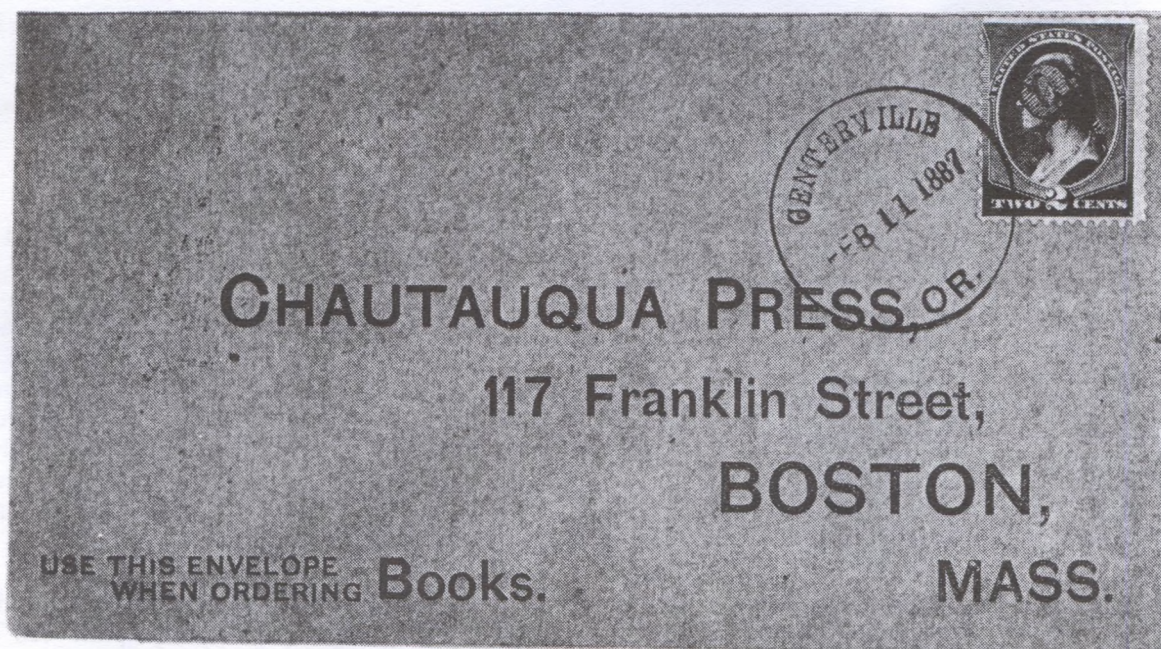


Figure 4



Variations on a Theme

A number of factors can affect how a particular cancel appears. When the canceling device is made out of cork or soft wood, deterioration is the principal reason for major variations. But even when deterioration is not a factor, there are quite a few other variables that can be important. Let's begin with the ink. If it is watery or viscous, this will be a factor. If the killer is underinked or overinked, this will have an impact. If the handstamp is applied with a glancing blow, if the surface on which the letter is lying is uneven, or if the edge of an enclosure runs along the area to be canceled, any of these can cause distortion. All of which brings us to an aspect that is likely to vary as much or more than any of the above and this is how much pressure is applied by the clerk or postmaster in canceling the stamp.

Figure 1 presents a strip of Sc 65 where each stamp is canceled by what must be the same hand-carved circle-of-wedges killer. But the cancels don't look the same. From left to right, the strikes are light, medium and heavy. The wedges

are particularly sharp in the medium strike, and still quite sharp on the heavy. Indeed, several of the wedges are sharply defined on the light strike. The differences in the cancel impressions seem to be basically a matter of how much pressure was applied in flattening out the pliable cork or wood surface. On the left stamp, the strike was light enough so that what was presumably a slight striking angle resulted in the upper parts of the design hardly being struck.

Comments and additional information will be welcomed.■



Figure 1

Figure 1



"O.J"

A couple of present-day associations quickly come to mind when thinking of "OJ," but what did "OJ" mean in the cancel shown in Figure 1? The cover was submitted by Wendell Triplett and the tracing made by John Donnes. The Sc 206 paid the one cent drop rate for a local letter but we see a part of the rim of the postmark to the left of the stamp. This indicates that the killer was duplexed to a postmark and would have also been used on intercity mail.

We find no reference to the cancel in the literature and ask readers to report any information or other examples to the *NEWS*.■

Noteworthy Chicago Precancel

by Roger D. Curran

By far and away the most widely recognized precancel found on large numeral postage due stamps is the one referred to as the "New York pearls" precancel. It was used by the NYPO from 1879 to 1887. Figure 1 is Whitfield tracing #4326. The *NEWS* briefly discussed this cancel on

Figure 1



page 42 of the August 2004 issue.

We now go back in time to an article that appeared in the May 1946 *New York Journal of Precancels* entitled "New York's 'Ring of Pearls'" by "J.R.B., Jr.," the initials of the late precancel expert, John R. Boker, Jr. In it, Mr. Boker made the following interesting comments about the inks employed for

these cancels.

"Three colors of ink were used for precanceling:

1. Grayish black. This is the scarcest color if the legibility of the precancellation is also considered.
2. Blue ink. The most common color.
3. Bright blue ink. Used mostly on the later issues, but much scarcer than the regular blue, which is rather 'flat.'

I have in my collection a 5¢ Brown with the precancellation in a purplish red ink. However, only the pearls show clearly, and the centre is too smudged to distinguish the 'N' and the 'Y.' Therefore I hesitate to add this to the color of ink used. A clearer impression may turn up later. This color should be very rare, since while the G.P.O. in New York (where the precancellation was used) employed both blue and black ink extensively for canceling during this period, red was rare."

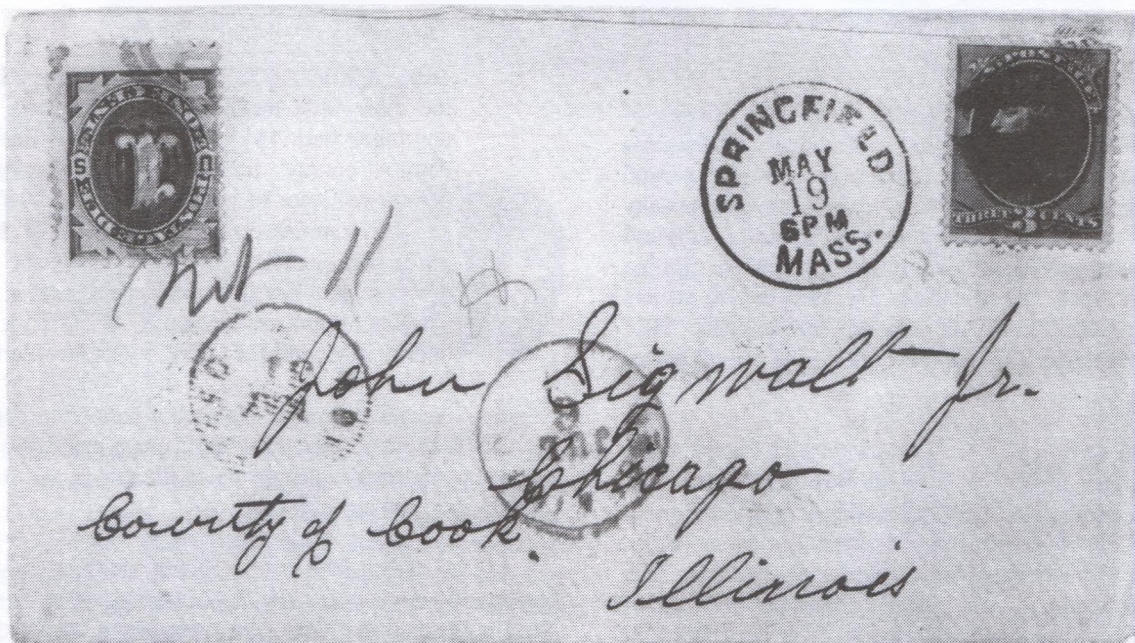
Collectors today have the benefit of much more accumulated knowledge than was available in 1946, and the identification of Mr. Boker's "purplish red" cancel can now be made. There is known to be a magenta (using present day terminology) ring of pearls precancel employed by Chicago, only on postage due stamps, for a limited period in 1880. An illustration from Arfken, photoreduced to approximate actual size, appears as Figure 2.¹ Magenta was a poor choice of ink color as the stamps themselves are of a somewhat similar color. This and the fact that strikes are typically rather faint have usually made it difficult for collectors to see the cancel design clearly. Hence, Mr. Boker's problem.

Figure 2



Within the past 25 years or so, several on-cover usages have been discovered that confirm origination in Chicago and provide information on dates of usage. One is a local Chicago cover dated July 30 with no year date indication. Second is an unpaid letter to Chicago from Russia with October 10, 1880 delivery. A third is the cover illustrated here as Figure 3 with the 1¢ due paying the advertising fee. The cover went unclaimed and was subsequently sent to the Dead Letter Office in Washington, D.C. whereupon a DLO triangle postmark dated July 17, 1880

Figure 3



was applied to the back. A fourth cover, addressed to Chicago, is pictured in Arfken.² It is a domestic letter mailed August 9 from a post office that is unclear from the postmark. It is assumed to be 1880 but the year apparently cannot be confirmed from the information available. No doubt there are other covers. From the above one would surmise use from at least late Spring to early Fall 1880.

Figure 4 is a pair bearing the Chicago pearls precancel and may be the only reported pair. Examples of the cancel are known running vertically up the stamp and also vertically down from the top of the stamp. They may exist running from right to left; i.e., upside down with the "C" opening to the left. Just for the record, we should note that the cancel is known in gray ink, but is very rare.

The New York pearls precancels made their appearance in August 1879 and it seems reasonable to speculate that the Chicago post office noticed New York's approach and decided to follow suit; i.e., use a precancel consisting of a monogram design pertinent to the post office name, enclosed by a ring of pearls, and applied to sheets of stamps by a multi-subject device.

Comments and additional information are eagerly

Figure 4



sought.■

¹ Arfken, *Postage Due The United States Large Numeral Postage Due Stamps 1874-1894*, The Collectors Club of Chicago (1991), page 209.

² Ibid.

Letters, Letters and More Letters

by Roger D. Curran

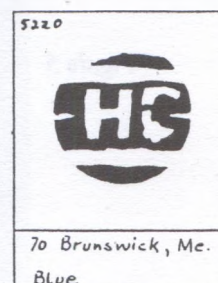
Wendell Triplett brought several interesting cancels to our attention and provided new information about them.

We'll begin with the Sc 210 stamp in his collection shown as Figure 1 bearing a negative "HC" cancel in black ink. Whitfield shows what appears to be the cancel (Figure 2) with attribution. Note that Whitfield reports it on a "70" stamp, by which he meant any stamp from the 1870 through 1881 issue. Wendell pointed out that Cole also lists what

Figure 1



Figure 2



seems to be the cancel (Figure 3), but with a different attribution. Just to round out the record, Willard reported such

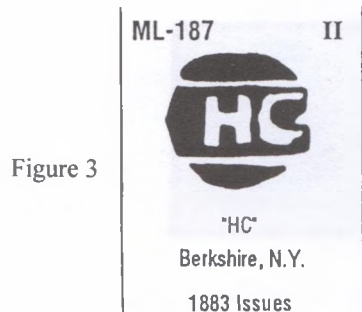


Figure 3

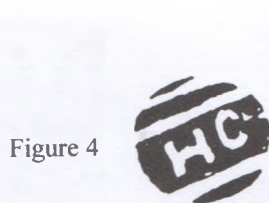


Figure 4

an "HC" as #425 (Figure 4) but did not know where it originated. Willard would not have listed the cancel unless he found it on a Sc 210.

Readers will note that all the above tracings (and Figure 1) show a notch on the right side. Both the Triplett stamp and Whitfield tracing also show a line of ink across the middle of the "C."

Wendell checked a USPS website listing of postmasters by city and learned that a Horatio Clark became postmaster of Berkshire, N.Y. on August 5, 1884 and served until December 1, 1885 which no doubt explains any Berkshire "HC" cancels of the period. But Wendell also noted that a George A. Crawford was the Brunswick, Maine postmaster from April 1867-October 23, 1878 which covers quite a bit of the Whitfield "70" period. A Brunswick "HC" could, one supposes, be a Crawford relative, possibly a postal clerk.

To sum up the above, all tracings and Figure 1 are very similar. All are in black ink except Whitfield's blue. All are on the 1883 issue except Whitfield which was noted on an earlier issue. Cole reports his cancel from Berkshire, N.Y., Whitfield from Brunswick, Maine. After considering this information, there came to your editor's attention the image of Arthur Beane's cover shown in Figure 5. The postmark and "HC" cancel are in blue ink and the stamp is from the "70" era. What a remarkable coincidence, and I believe it to be such, that there would be two similar negative "HC" cancels, even down to a similarly located notch! If readers can report additional covers from Berkshire or Brunswick with "HC" cancels, please do so.

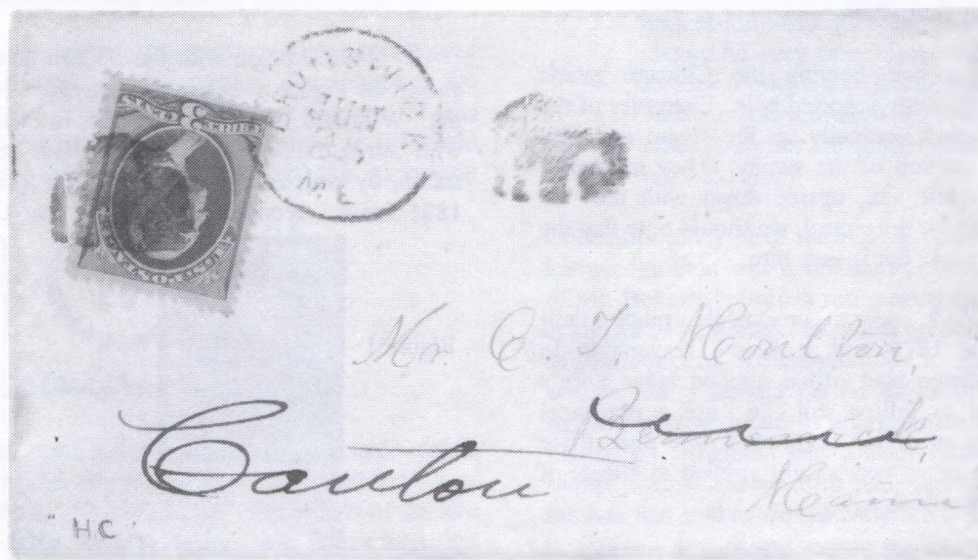


Figure 5

We turn now to two cancels from Sioux City, Iowa. Figure 6 is from Cole, page 220. Wendell researched Mr. Kirk and reports that he was appointed Sioux City postmaster July 1, 1876. He also uncovered this short biography:

E.R. Kirk, postmaster, was born in Ottawa county, O., in 1834; came to Sioux City in



Figure 6

1856, and in the following year engaged in the mercantile business, which business he continued until 1873; then held the office of deputy county treasurer; was appointed deputy collector of internal revenue in 1876, and was appointed postmaster in 1878. Mr. Kirk was married in 1859 to Mary P. Sawyers, and has five children - W.A., E.L., Charles, Frank and Mamie. W.A. Kirk is deputy P.M. and E.L. Kirk is delivery clerk.

Figure 7 shows a card in Wendell's collection dated October 31, 1878 and he notes that "WK" must stand for W.A. Kirk, deputy postmaster. This cancel is illustrated as ML-96 in Cole and #5363 in Whitfield.

Finally, while researching another multiple letter cancel, Wendell noted the Cole tracing shown here as Figure 8. He checked the Kankakee postmasters list for the 1870 era and found a Daniel S. Parker appointed on April 15, 1869. Mr. Parker served until March 15, 1870 when Mrs. Harriet A. Parker was appointed and she served until January 30, 1874. Consulting an 1876 Kankakee city directory, Wendell noted a listing for a Mrs. Daniel Parker, widow and for a James Parker, P.O. clerk, both living at the same address. Given that

Figure 7

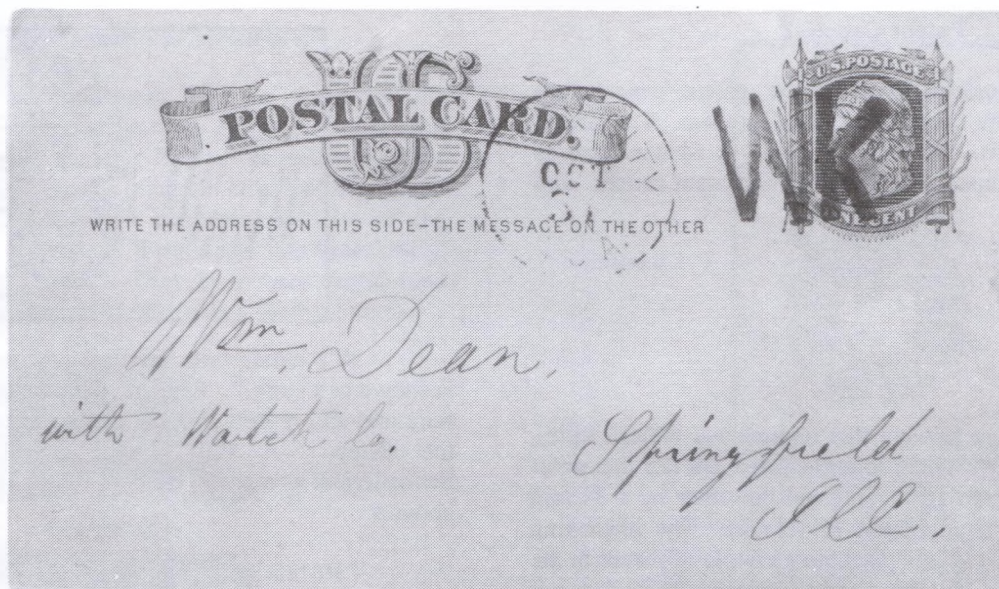


Figure 8



Figure 9



the first letter of the Figure 8 cancel is incomplete and ambiguous, Wendell wondered if it might have actually been a "DP" for Daniel Parker. He connected the lines with some "Wite-Out" correcting fluid and Figure 9 shows the results. A "D" seems plausible but who can really say? If the canceler did read "DP," it was likely carved as a tribute to Daniel by either Mrs. Parker or Clerk James Parker who was presumably Daniel's son. Cole reports the Figure 8 cancel on 1873 issues, which would have been at least three years after he was replaced by Mrs. Parker.

We do know that there definitely was a double letter cancel from Kankakee that begins with a "J" with second

letter likely a "P" as illustrated in Figure 10. The May 14 (1875) card is in the collection of Seymour Stiss. The "J" in this cancel has no serif at the top and thus differs markedly from the first letter of Figure 8. If the cancel was intended to read "JP," surely it was for James Parker. Who can submit additional examples of multiple letter Kankakee cancels?

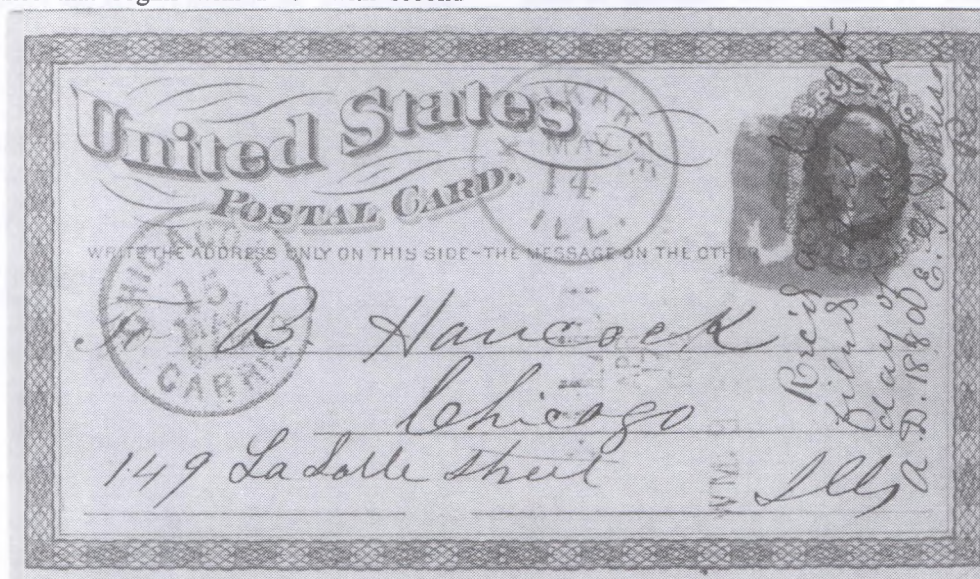
There is a single letter "K" cancel (Figure 11) from Kankakee reported by Whitfield. It was used during the

Figure 11



tenure of postmaster Samuel C. Kenaga who served from January 30, 1874 to February 19, 1882. "K" for Kenaga? Plausible, of course, but as Wendell points out, "K" could also stand for Kankakee. ■

Figure 10

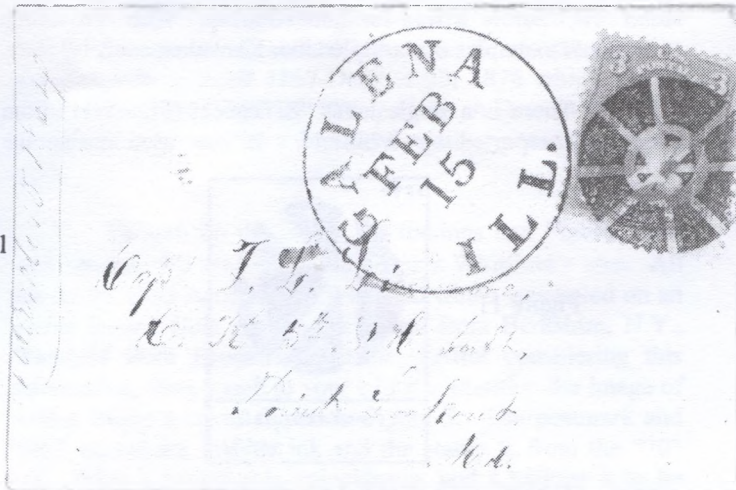


Patent Cancels?

Two interesting cancels that may be patent cancels are presented through the courtesy of Jim Kesterson. The first is from Galena, Illinois. A tracing appears in Skinner-Eno as GE-C 20, page 40, but it is not listed as a patent cancel. Jim



submitted two covers bearing this unduplexed Galena killer, one accompanied by a small double circle CDS (25 mm outer diameter) dated March 10 (NYD) and the other by a 34 mm single circle CDS dated March 15 (NYD). The interesting thing about these two killers is that at a couple of places in the inner circle there are punch-type indentations. They dent but do not break the paper. In the Illinois collection of Sy Stiss, there is a Galena cover bearing this cancel shown here as Figure 1. It is docketed "1864." It shows what may be one or two very small indentations. Two other examples in Sy's



collection were also examined. One shows what may be one such indentation. The other, a lighter strike of the killer, shows very little or no evidence of a punch. More study is needed of this cancel. If readers have examples in their collections, please examine the center sections carefully and report your observations to the *NEWS*.

Figure 3



A second, quite mysterious cancel submitted by Jim is shown as Figure 2. Readers will note that the inner lines are faint and Jim reports that the upper ends of these lines all cut the stamp. A very similar cancel was reported by Schmalzriedt as a patent cancel (Figure 3).¹ He had this to say about it:

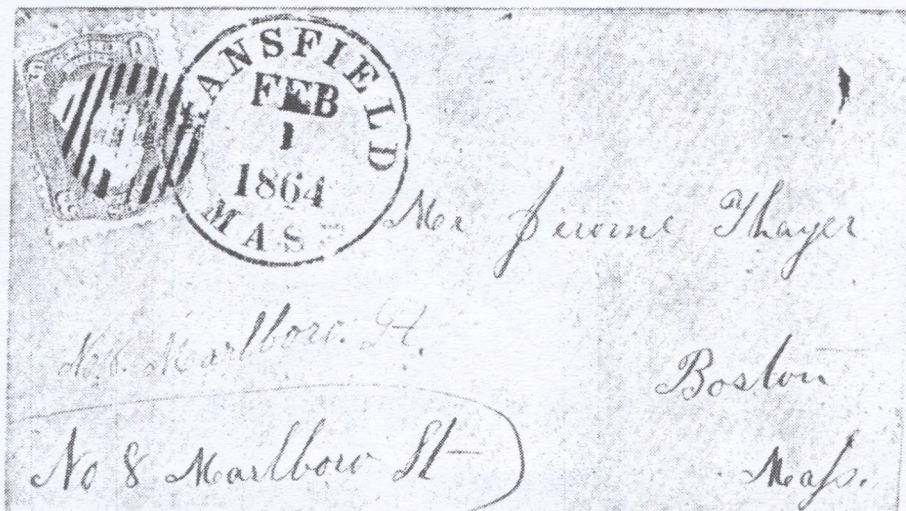
"10 line grid. Not attached. Dec. 5, 1863, and Aug. 26, 1865. Former does not cut into stamp; with latter blades imbedded deep into stamp and face of envelope."²

If the Kesterson and Schmalzriedt cancels are not the same, they do nonetheless share, in your editor's opinion, the same basic design and can be studied as such. One might speculate as follows. A circular section in the middle of the killer was moveable with the intention of cutting into the stamp by being depressed slightly lower (perhaps by some spring action when striking down the handstamp) than the outer ring. The inner circle normally rested a little higher in the handstamp and didn't pick up as much ink (sometimes no ink in places) when it was lightly struck on the ink supply material prior to canceling a stamp. (It would have been lightly struck when receiving ink so as to not activate the lowering of the center section.) This is all, of course, no more than a theory to explain the physical evidence we see. What do readers think? Comments and alternative analyses will be welcome as will reports of additional examples of this intriguing cancel.■

¹ Schmalzriedt, Fred R. "Patent Cancellations (1847 to 1887)," in *Cyclopedia of United States Postmarks and Postal History* edited by Delf Norona, 1933 and 1935, Quartermen Publications, Inc. reprint (1975), pp. 151-2.

² Ibid.

Figure 2



Illinois Cancellations and Postmarks

It is with great pleasure that we announce the addition to the U.S. Cancellation Club Library of a helpful new reference on 19th century Illinois cancellations and postmarks. Included are images (many in color) of nearly 500 covers in the fancy cancel and postmark portions of the Chicago and Illinois collections formed by long-time USCC member Seymour "Sy" Stiss. They have been subdivided under the following headings and placed in a 3-ring binder.

- Alphabet cancels
- Geometric cancels
- "Maltese" cross cancels
- Miscellaneous cancels
- Popular and Unusual cancels
- Star cancels
- Octagonal dated postmarks
- Oval dated postmarks
- Straightline dated postmarks

This collection has been 40 years in the making, covering the 1860s through the 1880s and extending into the 1890s.

We'll comment briefly on some of the covers:

- ❑ A cog wheel cancel listed in Whitfield as #3842, but not attributed, accompanied by a large (unduplexed) Springfield, Illinois year-dated "1863" postmark.
- ❑ An elaborate shield in ornamented frame which is listed (but not attributed) as Skinner-Eno PS-ST 42 (see Figure 1) on cover from El Paso, Illinois.
- ❑ A bold and unlisted "J" on 1860s PSE from Joliet, Illinois.
- ❑ A Lemont, Illinois "VB," with letters joined, which is listed (but not attributed) as Whitfield #5313.
- ❑ An unlisted quartered cork from Hamilton, Illinois containing one or three negative circles in each wedge.
- ❑ A Farmington, Illinois blue star in circle containing a Masonic "rod and dots" symbol in the middle. Listed in black as Skinner-Eno CR-C23 (Figure 2). For this

Figure 1

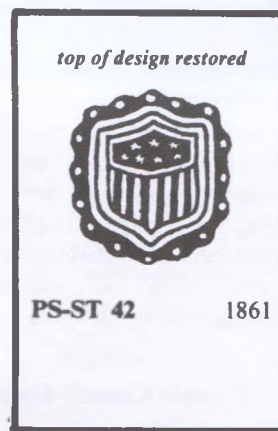


Figure 2

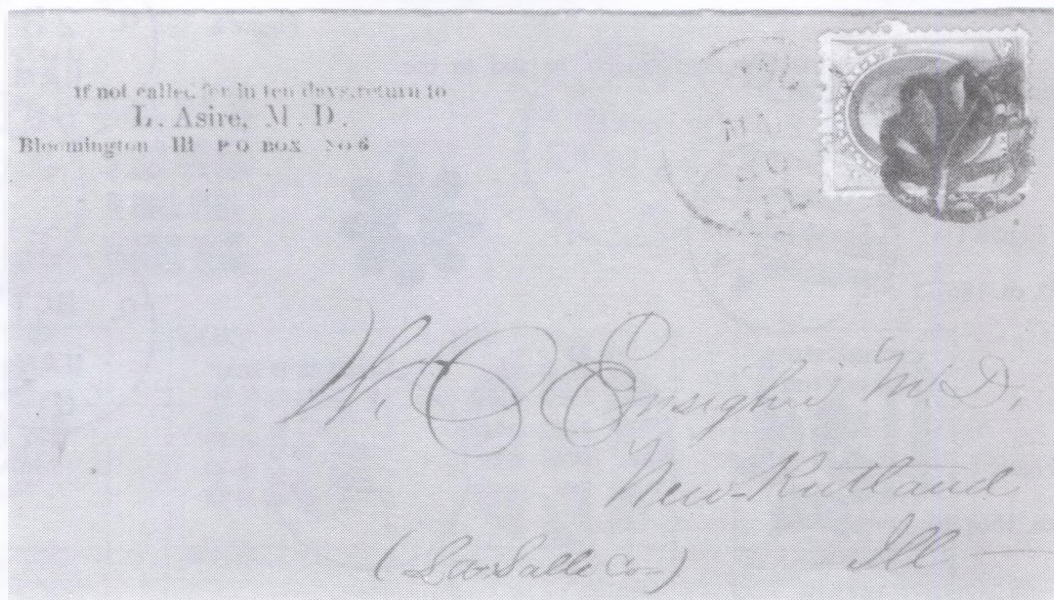


symbol, see also Summer 1998 *NEWS* and Skinner-Eno, p. 242.

- ❑ Lewistown, Illinois 5-point hollow star with circle in the middle on Sc 26, unlisted.
- ❑ A very distinctive style of oval dater that has been found with rare uses of an Indian head cancel (see May and August 2001 *NEWS*), but in the present cases from Damiansville and Grand Ridge with star and crossroads (arrowheads) killers respectively.
- ❑ Metropolis, Illinois - an unusual magenta cross of 5 hollow circles.
- ❑ Beautiful outline heart from Sodus, Illinois listed in Cole as HE-23, but the Stiss strike more graceful and symmetrical.
- ❑ A most intriguing and well-tied cancel from Bloomington, dated 3/26/73 that is remarkably similar in design concept to the very well known Waterbury, Ct. cancel listed in Cole as GL-16 (Figure 3). The Waterbury cancel was used five years *later* than Bloomington with a 3/1/78 date cited in Cole



Figure 3



and Rohloff.

The above gives a sampling of the noteworthy cancels to be found in the Stiss collection which also includes the well-known gin barrel and 3-leaf clover from Chicago, Pekin teapot, Bloomington eagle, etc. All in all an impressive accomplishment by Mr. Stiss and an instructive showing for students of Illinois cancels and, indeed, of U.S. cancels and postmarks in general. A sincere "thank you" to Sy for making this resource available to the USCC and its members!■

Putnam Cancels Update

The February 2002 *NEWS* summarized reports in the literature of fancy cancels from Putnam, Connecticut and added some unreported examples. The assistance of readers was requested to provide further listings. Ralph Edson and Gilbert Levere responded and their cancels are listed below. We extend thanks to Ralph and Gil and also to John Donnes who produced all the excellent tracings. The hand carved killer on the April 12 (1881) cover is truly remarkable for its completeness and clarity. In these respects, a cancel just doesn't get any better than this! Surely the strike was one of the first from a newly inserted killer.

Since the earlier article, the Whitfield book was published and it also provided some new Putnam data which is shown herewith.

In the 1990 La Posta monograph *Walter D. Wesson's "Time-on-Bottom" Duplex Hand Cancelers* by Ted Bozarth, the earliest reported Putnam TOB cancel is dated September 22, 1883. Figure 18 shows a tracing of that cancel. Cole illustrates the same killer with notation of a September 24, 1883 use. It would be interesting to nail down just when the TOBs were introduced in Putnam. The February 2002 *NEWS* illustrated a July 27, 1883 Putnam cover with a pre-TOB CDS. Can readers supply reports of Putnam covers dated between July 27 and September 22, 1883? It is assumed there was no overlapping use of TOB and earlier handstamps but we need covers to determine that, too.

We continue to encourage readers to add to the Putnam fancy cancel record.■

Figure 1
NYD, ca. 1861-7



Figure 2
NYD, ca. 1864-70



Figure 3
magenta



Figure 4



Figure 5
1880



Figure 6
1881



Figure 7



Figure 8
1881

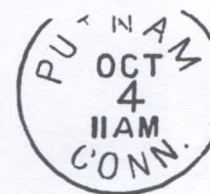


Figure 9

Figure 10



1881
Figure 11



Figure 12



Figure 13



1882
Figure 14



Figure 15



Figure 16

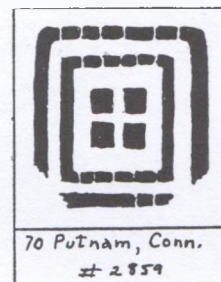
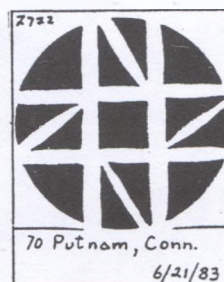
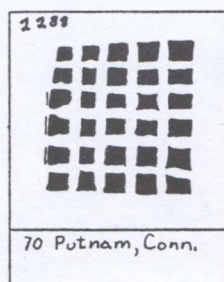
Figure 17



Figure 18



Whitfield cancels



Noteworthy 1890 Issue Covers

Two interesting covers from the collection of Arthur Beane bearing 1890 issue stamps are shown in Figures 1 and 2. It is assumed that both sets of markings are duplexed.

The postmark in Figure 1 is unusual, to say the least. The killer contains a negative star in the center. The postmark and killer are in purple ink. Club member Merritt Jenkins owns a very similar cover – same corner card, both addressed to a person with same last name located at Austinburg, Ohio, and same postal markings (October 5, 1891), but in a grey black ink.

The very large killer in Figure 2 is a 10-point star associated with an ornamented straight-line postmark, both in black ink. Salkind illustrates a photo of a very similar killer which is reproduced here as Figure 3.¹ Note the boxed lines on the left side that overlap the star. Are they a portion of an unduplexed town postmark or a registered marking? Note also

Figure 3



the solid star in the middle of the killer. Figure 4 reproduces Whitfield tracing #3188 which your editor believes to be the Figure 2 killer, albeit a big larger. (Mr. Whitfield sometimes worked from reduced size lot illustrations and had to approximate actual size.) The North Tunbridge killer appears to have the same open star in the middle.

Who can provide more information about either set of markings?■

¹ Salkind, Sol *U.S. Cancels 1890-1900* (1985), page 95.

Figure 1

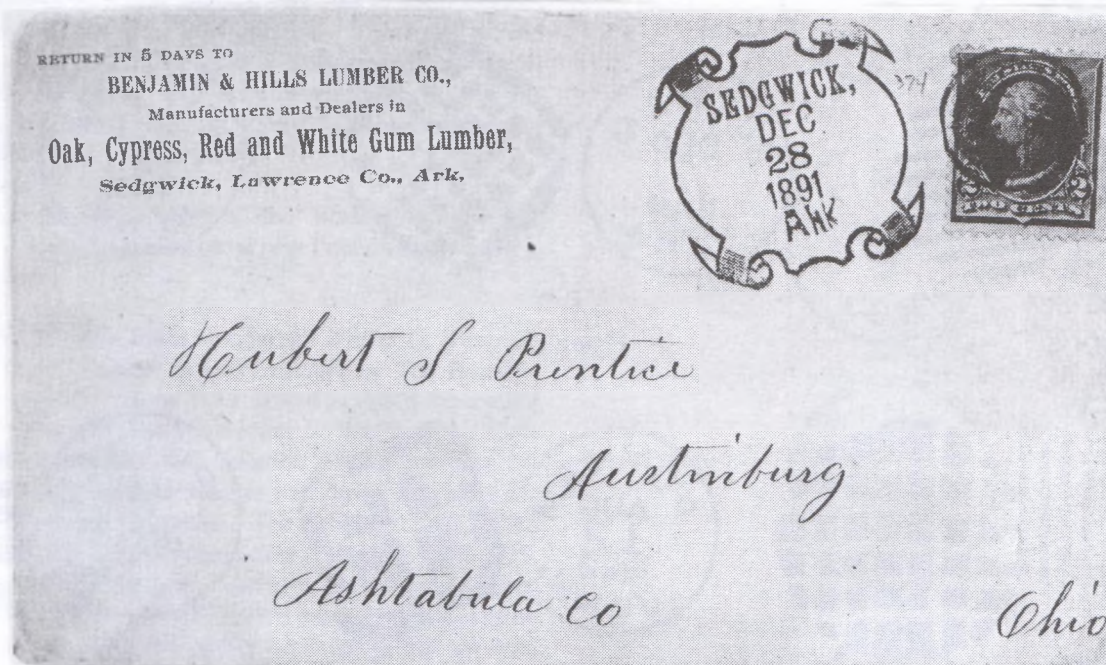


Figure 2

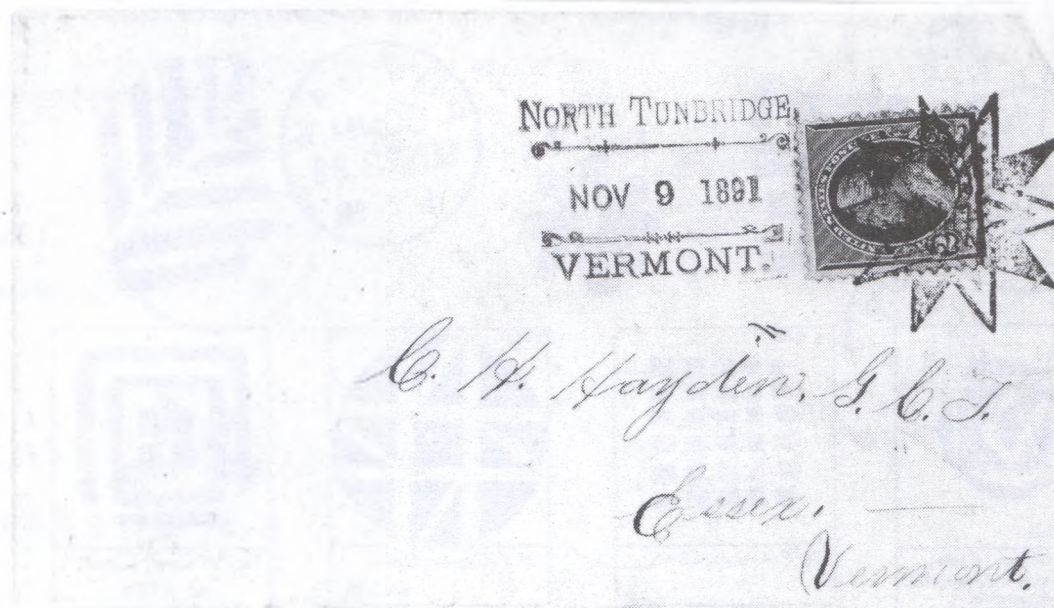


Figure 4

Psst . . . Over Here!

Wanna buy a kicking mule cancel cheap? Here's the cover for you in Figure 1.

Now I ask you, gentle reader, when was the last time you saw a kicking mule on an 1857 issue stamp? The cover in Figure 1 bears a "Green Tree Pa Sep 29" manuscript postmark running vertically up the left side. On the back is a notation indicating receipt in 1858. Green Tree is a DPO that operated from 1844-1900. The cancel was traced by John Donnes.

The 3¢ 1857 stamp has a manuscript cancel of four diagonal lines as well as the kicking mule cancel. In Lee Cornell's classic *The Tale of the Kicking Mule*, published in 1949 but still regarded as the standard work on the subject, the earliest reported use of the cancel was June 26, 1880 from Port Townsend, Washington. What a sensation it would be to find an example dated nearly 22 years earlier! And seeing as how the Port Townsend and other genuine mule cancels were obtained through the C.A. Klinkner & Co. "Catalog of Red Rubber Stamps," we would be taking the use of rubber handstamp technology back to more than 15 years earlier than had heretofore been known. Talk about an exhibit item!

Alas, there is, of course, trouble in paradise. Not only are there the two red flags (to put it mildly) mentioned above, we can see, under 10X magnification, that the mule cancel was struck on top of the manuscript lines. We also note that in various places there is a sort of border or outline effect along the edge of the cancel, which is suggestive of fakery. However, let's give the faker his due – the size and shape of the Figure 1 mule is remarkably similar to genuine strikes. Mr. Cornell listed several types of fake mules, the best being what he called the "Pot Bellied" mule which "... is accurate enough to be a menace to philately." He gave three measurements of genuine and "Pot Bellied" mules to help collectors distinguish the two. In your editor's view, the Figure 1 mule is a better match to the genuine than the "Pot Bellied" and it seems likely that the Figure 1 type of fake had not come to Cornell's attention. For each of the seven fake types discussed, he listed the stamps on which they were

found. For none of them was a mule reported on an issue earlier than 1861.

Mr. Cornell quoted an amusing story told years ago by a "prominent and reliable New York dealer" which we present below along with Cornell's interesting comments.

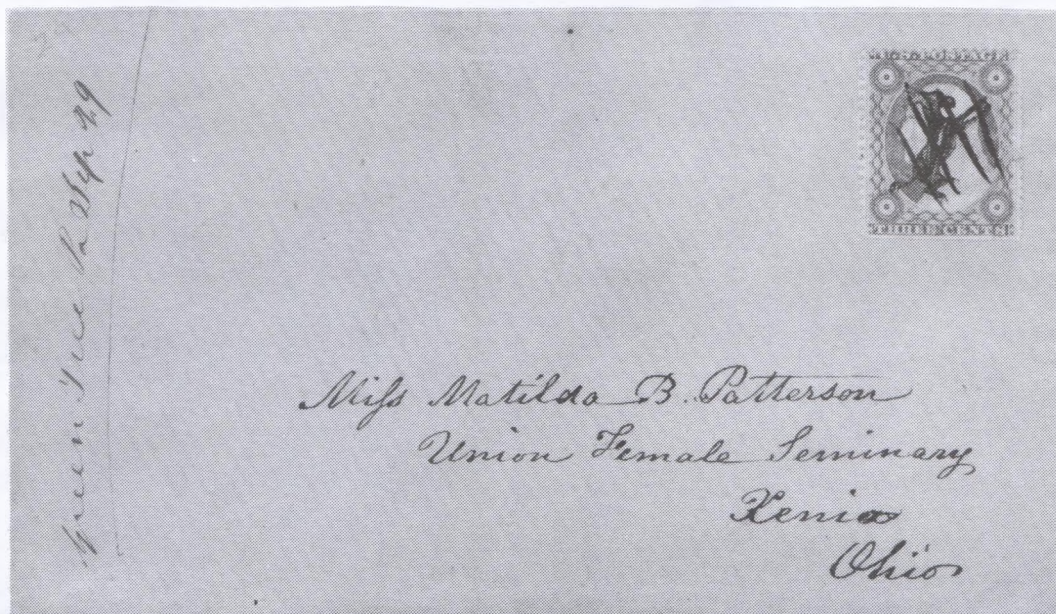
"About 1921, I knew a dealer on Nassau St.-probably the bulkiest dealer in the country—who often asked collectors who came into his little cubby hole office, if they had a Kicking Mule cancel and when the answer was in the negative he would ask the collector if he wanted one and what stamp he preferred with the Mule cancel. If the collector expressed the desire for a Kicking Mule cancellation and stated his preference of the stamp, the dealer would go into his private office and come out a few moments later with the desired stamp cancelled with the Kicking Mule. This dealer claimed his die was the original, though I think it was not. He died two or three years later and the die seems to have vanished and I have never heard of it again, though I know a former partner of his made every effort to locate it.

This no doubt accounts for the many phony Kicking Mules one finds.'

It is not possible that the faker referred to could have been using an original canceller. The Mule was made of rubber which would have deteriorated by 1921 to the point where it would have no longer given an impression clear enough to fool even an amateur. Neither would it have been possible for this dealer to have obtained a new canceller from the manufacturer, since all the firm's equipment, canceling dies, etc., were destroyed in the San Francisco earthquake and fire."

Readers are urged to contact the *NEWS* with any additional information or covers pertinent to the above.■

Figure 1



Identification, Please – No. 2

This is the second in what we hope will be an ongoing series of columns where readers report to the *NEWS* cancels in their collections, the origins of which are unknown, at least to the submitter. We'll present these items with the hope that another Club member will identify the originating post office. Several additional cancels are illustrated at this time.

Dick Nunge reports a pair of Sc 63 bearing two strikes of an unusual crossroads cancel. The first thing about it is that there are negative circles in the individual wedges. While uncommon, a fair number of cancels were designed that way – see, for example Skinner-Eno CR-X9, page 83. The second noteworthy aspect is the existence of a thin cross in the middle that cuts through the paper in places. Jim Kesterson has the same cancel on a Sc 65 (Figure 1). This is, of course,



Figure 1

a patent cancel and, to your editor's knowledge, has not been reported in the literature with or without attribution.

Greg Diblasi submits two cancels from his collection. Figure 2 is on a Sc 65 and Figure 3 on a Sc 184. These have not been noted in the literature.

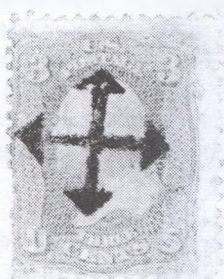


Figure 2



Figure 3

John Donnes reports two cancels, Figure 4 on a 12-cent Banknote and Figure 5 on a Sc 210. Whitfield illustrates Figure 4 without attribution as #6039, page 204. John believes Figure 4 may be from Pittsburgh, Pa. It is rather



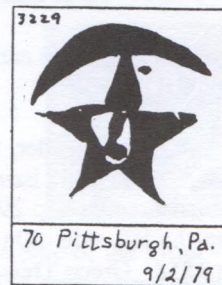
Figure 4



Figure 5

similar to Pittsburgh star and crescent cancels listed by Cole as CR-31 and 32, particularly CR-31. Also consider Whitfield's #3229 shown here as Figure 6. Did a distortion in inking obscure the "P" in Figure 6? Cole lists Figure 5 as YD-147 but without attribution or identification of stamp issue.

Figure 6



Readers who can provide information about any of the above cancels or additional examples are urged to contact the *NEWS*.■



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