

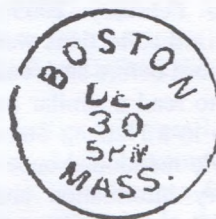


Cancellation Club NEWS

Vol. 27, No. 7, Whole No. 256, August 2005

Late "Boston Negative" Cancel

The USCC issued in November 2003 its Phase 1 progress report on a study of "Boston negative" cancels, a style of cancel used primarily but not exclusively by Boston. Phase 1 was devoted only to Boston markings and the latest noted example was December 30, 1883. No later date has come to our attention since 2003. The cancel in question resides in the collection of John Donnes and since it is a noteworthy item, the *NEWS* is pleased to present an illustration, which is shown here as Figure 1. Examples of this



(Continued on page 106)

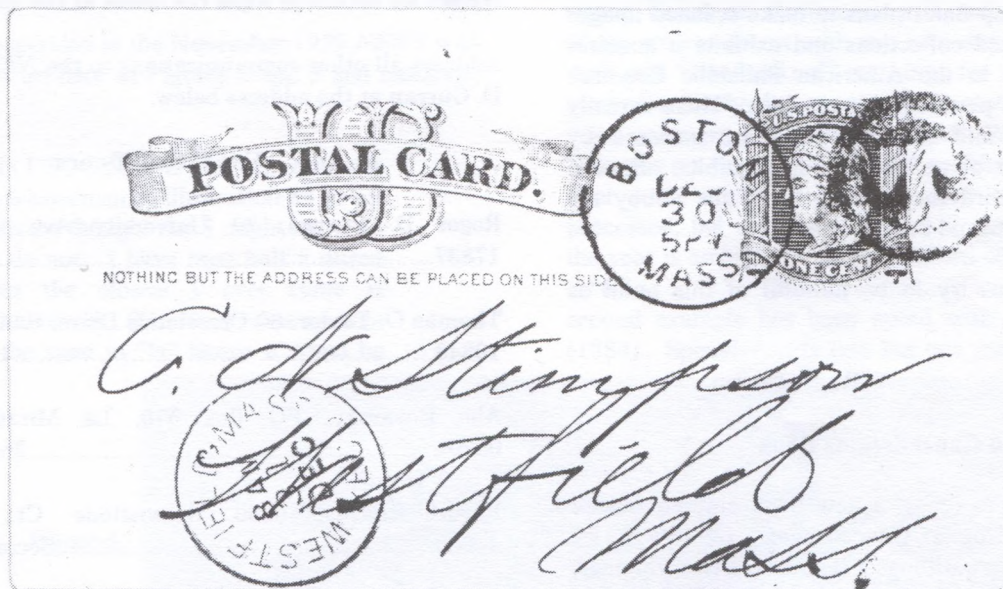
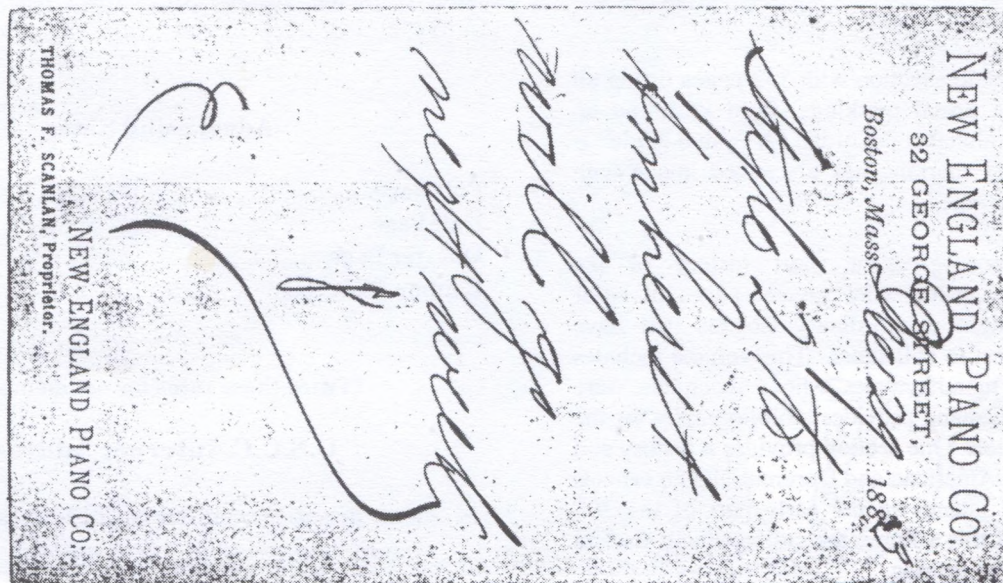


Figure 1



Dear Reader,

The Philadelphia National Stamp Exhibition, to be held September 30 – October 2, 2005 in King of Prussia, Pa., is drawing near. As we have discussed earlier, the USCC will hold its annual meeting there as well as sponsor a one-frame cancellations exhibit. We will also have a society table that will be staffed throughout the show. The meeting will feature presentations on cancellation exhibits by several of the exhibitors. Plan to attend this fine show, if feasible, as there will be lots of good cancellation talk and interesting items to see!

In this column for the February 2005 *NEWS*, collectors who put together specialized collections were urged to consider making a photocopy record before such collections are liquidated. It was a pleasure to read a similar sentiment expressed in Randy Neil's column in a Nutmeg Stamp Sales ad in the April 11, 2005 *Linn's*. He mentioned once seeking out some particular postal history information and being referred to a gold medal exhibit on the subject. Upon checking he learned that it had long since been sold and the current owner had apparently not kept the exhibit pages. He said that Nutmeg Stamp Sales plans to make scanned images of important specialized collections and exhibits it acquires and send the images to the American Philatelic Research Library along with the pertinent sale catalogs. There is really so much good data and research out there amassed by collectors in the form of collections and exhibits. Special efforts to make a record for the benefit of the hobby are certainly justified and would be appreciated.

Let's all of us try to be mindful of this point as circumstances warrant.

Roger Curran

Slogan Cancellations Book

The *NEWS* is pleased to report a new book entitled *United States Promotional Slogan Cancellations 1899-1940* by Robert J. Payne and Bart Billings. It involves two volumes, each bound with a card stock cover, with a combined total of 394 pages.

The first volume is a catalog section with 352 pages listing all known slogan machine postal markings, from inception up until 1940, arranged in alphabetical order. A "value guide" is included. Almost every marking has a scanned image with 1,000 + illustrations presented.

The companion volume gives a short history of the introduction of slogan cancels with several pages of color illustrations that highlight extraordinary slogans that have been of particular interest to collectors. This volume includes a list of the various manufacturers whose machines were equipped with slogan dies and provides a bibliography for the research minded collector. One section provides a history and illustrated listing of the American and Doremus slogan cancels used in the Philippine Islands in the early part of the 20th Century. At the end of this volume the collector will find an index to the listings in the catalog.

Orders may be placed with Bart Billings at 3722 Vidalia Ave, North Las Vegas, NV 89031. The retail price is \$44.00. However, until September 15, a pre-publication price has been set at \$41.00 postpaid for the set.■

The U.S. Cancellation Club NEWS

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Scarce Version of a Common Cancel

by Roger D. Curran

In the March 1959 *NEWS*, Dr. Robert deWasserman, as a part of a lengthy updating of Gilbert Burr's articles on ellipses and other "standardized" cancels of the Banknote era, reported the cancel shown here as Figure 1 and made this comment about it:

83 is on a 210. This cancel is rather bigger than those from Cincinnati, and has only 8 bars instead of 9 in the former. Mr. Willard could surely tell us the town of origin.

Figure 1



83

Edward Willard responded in the November 1959 *NEWS* with the illustrations shown here as Figures 2 and 3 and remarked as follows:

In USCC NEWS #39 is a reference by Dr. deWasserman to illustration 83 of his article with the thought that I might know its origin. I do not. I have seen half a dozen copies but the closest I ever came is illustrated herewith. The town name ends in "et" and the state in "N" hence it could be

Figure 2



Figure 3

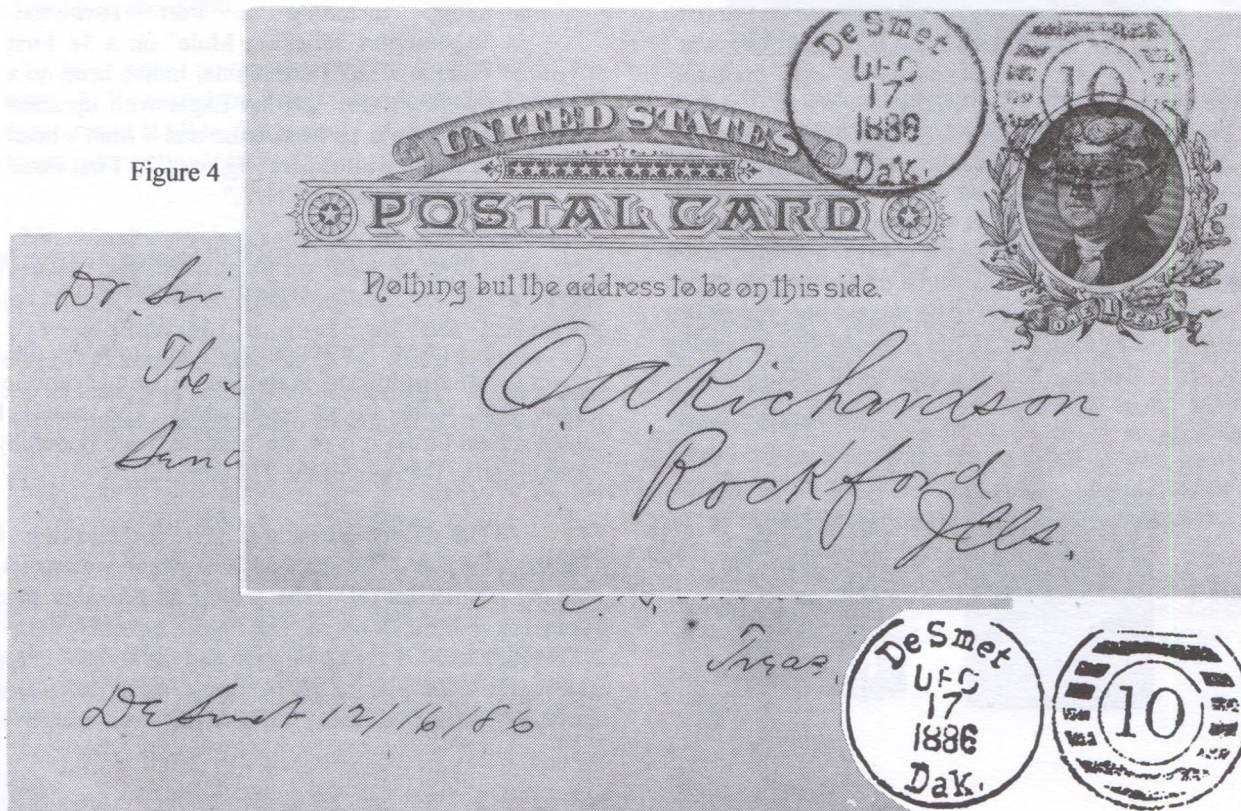


Minn., Tenn. or Conn. Because of the origin of the lot my wild guess is Conn.

A partial strike of the CDS and cancel was pictured by Willard on page 162 of his 1970 book *The United States Two Cent Red Brown of 1883-1887*. In the accompanying text, however, he was able to report a cover showing the cancel to be a Dakota territorial from DeSmet dated December 6, 1883.

Earlier this year I came across the card in Figure 4 and it was the first example on or off cover that I had seen. (Thanks to John Donnes for the fine tracing.) Readers will note some ambiguity in the last digit of the CDS year date. However, we can determine positively that it is "1886" from the dateline on the back of the card. The cancel is definitely scarce based on deWasserman's and Willard's comments. These are consistent with my own experience in seeking out such odd "standardized" markings for a number of years. It seemed unlikely that a cancel this scarce was used for three years or longer, thus I questioned Mr. Willard's "1883" report. This was not to say that DeSmet couldn't have used the cancel over such a period in a situation with little mail being processed, but my guess, however, was that the last digit of the year is ambiguous on the Willard cover and he interpreted a "6" as a "3." That apparently is wrong. Very recently, a second example has been noted with a date of October 22 (1884). Speculation is fine but one should be cautious about

Figure 4



putting much faith in an idea that is based on very limited data. Reader comments and additional information will be welcomed.■

Updates

The *NEWS* has discussed a distinctive concentric circles cancel in the May 2002, February 2003 and November 2003 issues. There are several styles but the identifying feature is that at least some of the rings vary in width as they go around. These have been referred to as "cam" cancels. An example is shown in Figure 1, which is Whitfield #4115. We

Figure 1



now have two additional reports from the collection of John Donnes. First is an example in blue ink from Memphis, TN dated October 15 but with no indication of year date. Four Memphis "cams" in black ink were reported earlier involving two different CDSs. The present report is of a "Type 1" CDS. The one Type 1 example noted earlier was dated October 7 (1865). The second new report is an October 2, 1862 usage from McGregor, Iowa, a newly listed post office. A portion of the cover is shown here as Figure 2.

Figure 2



Bob Trachimowicz reported in the last *NEWS* four "heavy" cancels used by Worcester, Mass. during the large Banknote era on non-first class mail. We now have two additions to list. First is a variation of the "semi-circle or half dome" reported earlier. It involves a higher dome as shown in Figure 3. These were hand carved, of course, and the person who did them apparently liked the dome design and produced a second canceler that reflected it. The second new report is a new design (Figure 4) found in an old clipping file of catalog illustrations. John Donnes made the tracings in both Figures 2 and 3. What other Worcester heavies are out there to be reported?■

Figure 3



Figure 4



More on Postage Due Cancellations

by Roger D. Curran

The 1976 *Congress Book* included an interesting article by Morrison Waud on the large numeral U.S. postage due stamps.¹ Mr. Waud's name is well known to U.S. cancellation students because he was a co-author, along with Arthur Van Vliissingen, of *New York Foreign Mail Cancellations*. This 1968 book was the standard reference on NYFM cancels until the appearance in 1990 of *The Foreign Mail Cancellations of New York City 1870-1878* by Bill Weiss. Waud's philatelic interests were broad including classic U.S. stamps to 1888, U.S. postage due stamps, and 19th century fancy cancellations.

In the *Congress Book* article, Mr. Waud stated the following:

"Very few of the fancy cancellations of the period are found on postage due stamps, as such cancellations were designed for postal use and not to cancel the receipts for collection of postage due by the addressee's post office. However, a number have been noted, including a Port Townsend, Washington, 'Kicking Mule' on a 3¢ First Issue, a Head Tide, Maine, Indian head on a 1¢ First Issue, a Blue Eagle with upraised wings on a 1¢ First Issue and a Man's head in relief with a peri wig on a 2¢ First Issue from Binghamton, N.Y."

The May 2004 *NEWS* illustrated a cover bearing a pair of dues canceled by the Port Townsend mule.

Figure 1 illustrates what is probably the specific cover mentioned by Mr. Waud with a 1¢ due canceled by the Head Tide, Maine Indian head cancel. The strike is light but the feathers at the top of the headdress are hopefully visible across and to the right of the "1" numeral.

The reference to a blue eagle is interesting. Figure 2 illustrates a pair of 1¢ dues each of which was struck in blue ink by such a cancel. The tracing is provided through the courtesy of John Donnes. The Figure 2 pair was submitted to the APES in 2001 for an opinion and the following report was received – "a pair of fake fancy cancellations added to previously used stamps." Within the past couple of years,

Figure 1

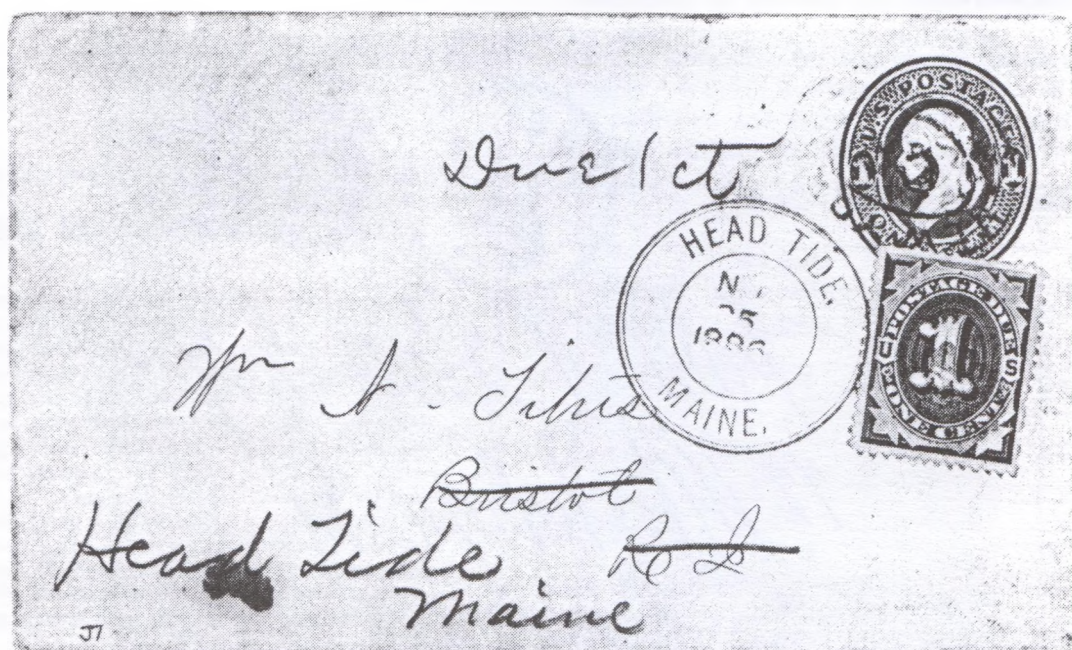


Figure 2



Figure 4



another pair of 1¢ dues with what appeared to be the same cancels, was offered on Ebay. At the time it was noted, the bidding was up to about \$90.

I have seen no reports of a cover with the Binghamton, N.Y. cancel on a due stamp. Indeed, I have found no reference at all to that cancel. If readers can supply any pertinent information, please do so.

Mr. Waud's article also briefly discussed precancels on due stamps. He described a particular Boston cancel as a "bow and arrow," a term used by other collectors of the period. Waud illustrated a cover with this cancel but unfortunately the printing came out rather dark. However I'm convinced the cancel is actually an incomplete "X" in a box. See an approximate representation in Figure 3. Boston used

Figure 3



two different versions of the "X" in a box cancel, which are illustrated here as Figure 4.² Incidentally, a long-time student of postage due stamps, Warren Bower, studied a number of due covers coming into Boston and concluded that these

cancels, as well as several others used by Boston on due stamps, were carefully struck post-cancels rather than precancels as had been commonly thought.

One last cancel to mention. St. Louis used a "Short Paid" cancel in purple ink to cancel some large numeral due stamps. I would say that if readers have off-cover large numeral dues so canceled, they are St. Louis cancels as a virtual certainty. Arfken illustrates the marking, which we show here as Figure 5.³ The letters are actually somewhat thicker than in the illustration. This is, of course a long

Figure 5 Short Paid

marking and I recall seeing in a dealer's stock a strip of three due stamps bearing virtually a full strike. What a nice item! The Waud article illustrates on page 30 an attractive cover with this cancel.■

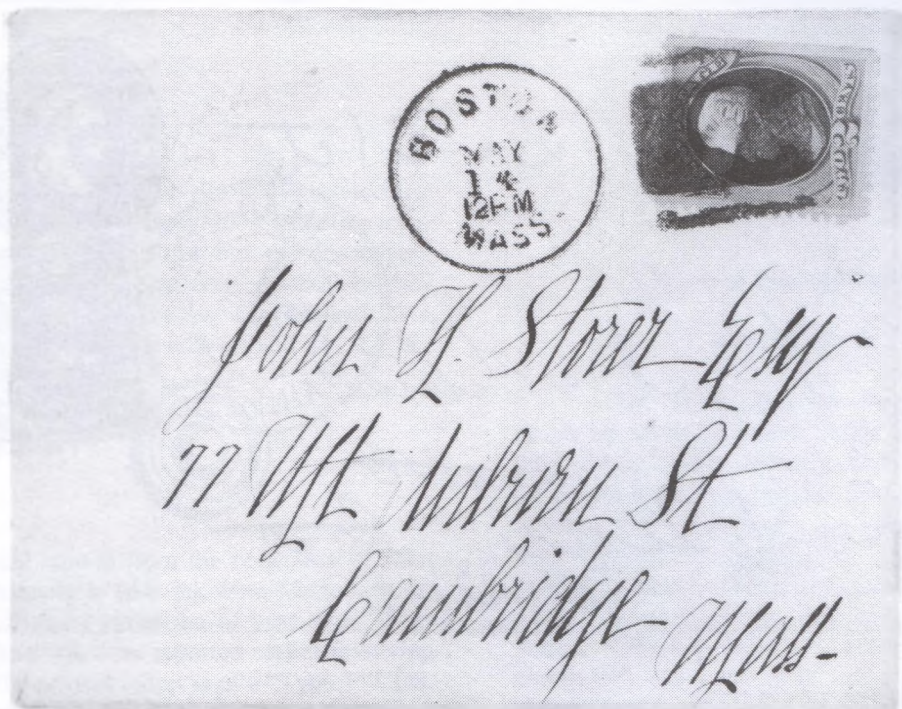
¹ Waud, Morrison "Postage Due in the United States to 1894" in *The Congress Book* 1976, American Philatelic Congress, pp. 13-36.

² Arfken, George B. *Postage Due The Large Numeral Postage Stamps 1879-1894*, The Collector's Club of Chicago (1991), p. 194.

³ Ibid., p. 202.

(Continued from front page)

Figure 2



style of cancel from Boston are decidedly scarce after June 1883 since they were replaced, beginning at least as early as February 1883, by Wesson handstamps that duplexed time-on-bottom CDSs to ellipse killers.¹ Note how worn the Figure 1 killer appears to be. Perhaps the old killers were individually retired after they wore out and the supply of killers on hand that could be used with them was depleted. Figure 2 shows a worn killer with a "7" in the center – this with a date of May 14, 1883.

Readers are encouraged to check their collections for Boston uses later than December 30, 1883. This example is more than a month after the next latest use reported – a "10" in a square dated November 27, 1883.■

¹ Bozarth, Theodore W. *Walter D. Wesson's Time-on Bottom Duplex Hand Cancelers*, La Posta Monograph Series, Volume 5 (1990), p. 22.



Your editor recently had occasion to look through an old *Scott's Standard Postage Stamp Catalogue*. I was inclined to refer to it as "early," since it was 1903, but the title page prominently stated that it was the sixty-second edition. Cost was 50¢ cents and the volume was reported to be "thoroughly revised and corrected, and fully brought up to the day of going

to press." While containing a lot of information helpful to the collector, this is really a sales catalog with the next two pages devoted to such matters as terms of sale, guarantee, and remittances. It says something about the depth and breadth of philately in 1903 to note the dimensions of this worldwide catalog – 4 ½ x 6 ½ inches with the pages aggregating one inch in thickness. The overall written presentation is quite sophisticated, in my view, and accompanied by high quality renderings of stamps, parts of stamps showing identifying marks, overprints, etc.

All the above is by way of introduction to a small sheet of paper containing a notice to sellers (reproduced here as Figure 1) that may originally have been an insert. In the case of the catalog I examined, the notice was pasted on the front cover. I was struck by how modern the comments of the notice seemed to be with the emphasis on stamp condition and on postal history by the reference to the value of "very rare" stamps on cover. (Incidentally, in terms of rare stamps being sold by the Scott Company at the prices listed, the catalog states elsewhere that they will be in "fine" condition but does not define the term.)

If it can be said that the notice to some extent states modern day collecting norms, the same is not true for sale prices. We'll mention a few for classic U.S. stamps: 5¢ 1847 issue - .70, 12¢ 1851 issue - \$2, 90¢ 1861 issue - \$3.50, 10¢ 1869 issue - .75, 90¢ National with grill - \$6, 30¢ Continental - .50, and 15¢ American - .15. Now, let's see, where does one send in an order!

Roger Curran

Important Notice

TO THOSE HAVING STAMPS FOR SALE

The prices quoted in this catalogue are the stamp dealers' selling prices. What they pay for stamps depends entirely on their rarity and condition. As a general rule any stamp catalogued at less than \$1.00 is not a rare stamp, and of little value to a dealer. Stamps catalogued at more than \$1.00 in cancelled condition, should bring at least one-fifth of catalogued prices, and the rarer the stamp is, the larger percentage dealers will pay for it. Very rare stamps, if on the original envelope, will bring a much higher price than off the envelope. Some stamps bring more in cancelled, others more in uncanceled condition. Envelope stamps bring more with the envelope entire. If they are cut to the shape of the stamps they are practically valueless.



Condition of Stamps.

In order to be valuable, stamps must be perfect. If torn, soiled, imperfect, or in any way damaged, they are practically valueless. They should also be well centered, so that there remains *a good margin all around the design.*

Figure 1

Rubber Bottle Stopper Cancels

Club member Wendell Triplett submits data on his study of bottle stopper cancels. There have been a number of earlier NEWS articles in recent years that have at least touched on the subject.¹ Rubber bottle stoppers were used by a fair number of post offices and these cancels can be identified by a number, ranging from 1 to 6 including ½ sizes such as "2 ½," and are always in reverse. The manufacturers added these numbers to identify the size of the stoppers and when the end of the stopper with this number was pressed down as a canceler, the number necessarily came out backwards. Figure 1 (Whitfield #6419) shows an example. Please note that these

Figure 1



numbers are always positive (that is, the numeral is inked) and never negative. The number "3," when struck upside down, comes out as a normal, not backward, "3." Typically, these stoppers were placed in a ring attached to a postmarking handstamp creating a duplex handstamp that separately

postmarked the letter and canceled the stamp.

Basically, the smaller the number the larger the stopper. Wendell measured the diameter of the examples in his collection and summarized the information in Table 1. Readers will note the relationship of size to stopper number

Rubber Bottle Stopper Sizes			
Stopper Number	Stopper Size of Top (Inches)	Stopper Size of Top (mm)	Stopper Size Development (Inches)
1	1 1/8	28.58	1 1/8
1 1/2	1	25.40	16/16
2	15/16	23.81	15/16
2 1/2	7/8	22.23	14/16
3	13/16	20.64	13/16
3 1/2	3/4	19.05	12/16
4	23/32	18.26	23 / 32
4 1/2	11/16	17.46	22 / 32
5	21/32	16.67	21 / 32
5 1/2	5/8	15.88	20 / 32
6	19/32	15.08	19 / 32
Due to the cancel striking force & the stopper manufacturing tolerances, the stopper cancels could vary + or - 1/16th inch.			

Table 1

Figure 2



follows an orderly regression with #6 stoppers just a little more than half the size of #1.

It would be very interesting to see a comprehensive listing of post offices that used rubber bottle stopper cancels and toward that end Wendell submits Table 2. It includes on-cover examples known to him and reports noted in the literature. The table is divided into two sections, one for carved bottle stoppers and one for uncarved. "Carved" stoppers are those into which some design has been hand-carved, much like the cancels we see in cork and wood. An example (Whitfield #6429) is shown as Figure 2. The Table 2 list is very preliminary and readers are urged to check their collections and report additional covers to Wendell at 3606 New Colony Drive, Wilmington, NC 28412-2075. Please report the information needed for the columns in the table and include cover photocopies if feasible. We have no doubt but what a greatly expanded list can be developed with your help. Thanks in advance!■

¹ Winter 1996 – pp 41-2, Spring 1996 - pp. 55-6, Summer 1996 – p. 69, Winter 1997, pp. 110-1, Winter 2000-p.7, February 2001 – pp. 78-9, May 2001 – p. 96, and November 2001 – p. 123.

Identified Users of Numbered Rubber Bottle Stopper Cancellers				
Users, Town & State	Stopper Number	Size Inches	Canceler Information <u>Hand-Carved Bottle Stoppers</u>	Source
Berwick, PA	3		Geometric, Nov. 7, 1889.	Whitfield #6423.
Chicago, IL	3	13/16	Carved "A" in blue. 2 items, one dated 3/9/1874.	W. Triplett
Chicago, IL	3		Carved "A", on an 1870 issue.	Whitfield #6425.
Chicago, IL	3		Geometric in blue on 1873 issue.	Cole NU-21, p. 185.
Hatfield, MA	3		Star.	Cole STU-49, p. 110.
Hopkinsville, KY	3		Carved ellipse dated Aug. 6, 1892.	R. Curran
Irwins Station, PA	3		6 vertical bars, dated Apr. 3, 1884.	R. Curran
New York, NY	1		"11", 2 items, dated 3/15/1875 & 6/21/1875.	USCCN, 2/2001 & 5/2001.
New York, NY	1	1 1/8	"11", dated Dec. 1, 1875.	W. Triplett
New York, NY	2	15/16	"11" on 4 items, 8/1/1874 to 11/12/1874.	W. Triplett
New York, NY	2	15/16	"12", Nov. 9, 1874, postal card.	W. Triplett
New York, NY	2		"XII", Sept. 8, 1874.	USCCN, Fall 1998
New York, NY	2		Maltese cross, Oct. 5, 1874.	USCCN, May 2001
Norwich, NY	3		Carved geometric. 1870 issue.	Ebay, 8/24/99 cover.
Petersburg, VA	3		Carved cross. 1870 issue.	Weiss Sale 133, #1386
Petersburg, VA	3	13/16	Carved star. Sept. 4, 1883 postal card.	W. Triplett
Petersburg, VA	3		Carved star. Sept. 28, 1883.	R. Curran
Petersburg, VA	4 1/2		3 vert. cuts & 2 horz. cuts, Jun. 9, 1878.	R. Curran
Portville, NY	2		13 horizontal lines on 1879 issue.	R. Curran
Springfield, MA	3		Negative Maltese cross, 1870 issue.	Whitfield #6421.
Springfield, MA	3		Positive Maltese cross, 1870 issue.	Whitfield #6422.
Springfield, MA	3		Small positive cross, 1870 issue, Aug. 2.	R. Curran
Topeka, KS	3	13/16	Carved geometric. Sept. 26, 1875.	W. Triplett
Troy, NH	3		Geometric on an 1861 issue.	S&E NS-C 21, p.263.
Vallejo, CA	3		3 in a heart, 1861 issue.	Whitfield #1798.
Worcester, MA	1	1 1/8	Geometric dated Mar. 27, 1879.	W. Triplett
Worcester, MA	2	15/16	Carved star on Mar. 27, 1880 postal card.	W. Triplett
<u>Uncarved Bottle Stoppers</u>				
Adrian, MI	3	13/16	One dated Feb. 23, 1874. Two items.	Triplett & Cole NU-86, p.188.
Ann Arbor, MI	3		On 1890 issues.	Cole NU-85, p. 188.
Bellevue, IA	3		On 1873 issues.	Weiss Sale 132, #2307
Caneadea, NY	3		Dated Jan. 17, 1899.	R. Curran
Chicago, IL	3		On 1883 issues. Blue ink used.	Cole NU-90, p. 188.
Coatesville, PA	3		On an 1870 issue.	Whitfield #6419.
Cohoes, NY	2 1/2		On an 1883 issue.	Whitfield #6394.
Cortland, NY	3		Two dated Dec. 27, 1872 & on 1873 issues.	Curran/Whitfield 6420 & Cole
Ft. Leavenworth, KS	3		On an 1879 cover.	Chronicle #189, 02/01
Gardiner, ME	3		1883 to 1886 era.	Nutmeg Sale 47, #5811.
La Fayette, IN	2 1/2	7/8	Aug. 25 (1879 issue stamp).	W. Triplett
Lewisburgh, PA	2 1/2		On an 1870 issue.	Whitfield #6389.
Mystic, CT	3		Dated Aug. 7, 1890.	R. Curran
New Boston, CT	3		Postmarked May 18, 1889.	www.edhines.com
New York, NY	2		Postmarked Nov. 4, 1877.	Weiss Sale 119, #2108.
North Adams, MA	3	13/16	Letter dated Nov. 24, 1875.	W. Triplett
Norwalk, OH	3		On an 1870 issue.	Whitfield #6420.
Plainfield, NJ	2 1/2		On an 1883 issue envelope.	Cole NU-89, p. 188.
Syracuse, NY	3		On an 1873 issue postal card, Aug. 28.	R. Rhoads

Table 2

Unusual Double Circle Postmark Usages

Beginning in 1859, the POD issued handstamps that produced double circle postmarks, the outer diameter of which was about 26 mm or a big larger. In 1863 the POD introduced its first duplex handstamp and this involved a larger double circle postmark (at least 28.5 mm.) and a 4-ring target cancel. The contract to produce these duplex handstamps was awarded to the Fairbanks Scale Co. of New York in March 1863. Just how early these duplex markings appeared is an interesting question. What must surely be an *extremely* early example was reported by Richard Graham in the February 1986 *Chronicle* and is reproduced here as Figure 1. Another decidedly early example, courtesy of Mr. Graham, is shown in Figure 2. This cover, dated June 27, 1863, was postmarked

itself wasn't issued until May 1873.) This card was probably mailed in 1873. On the front we find a large crossroads cancel and a strike of the small double circle postmark from Sacramento. Beyond the late use of the postmarking handstamp, the date shown is noteworthy: "AUG/31/1866"! It's one thing to continue to use an old handstamp that is still serviceable (and, indeed, we can laud it as an example of post office economy), but quite another to continue using a year date long after it ceased to be correct.

This Sacramento postmark has been reported used from 1/6/60-4/19/73 (both with and without a year date).¹ Perhaps the Figure 3 strike, which extends the latest reported use, was one of the last from a durable old handstamp.

Figure 1

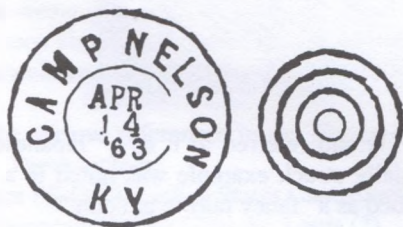
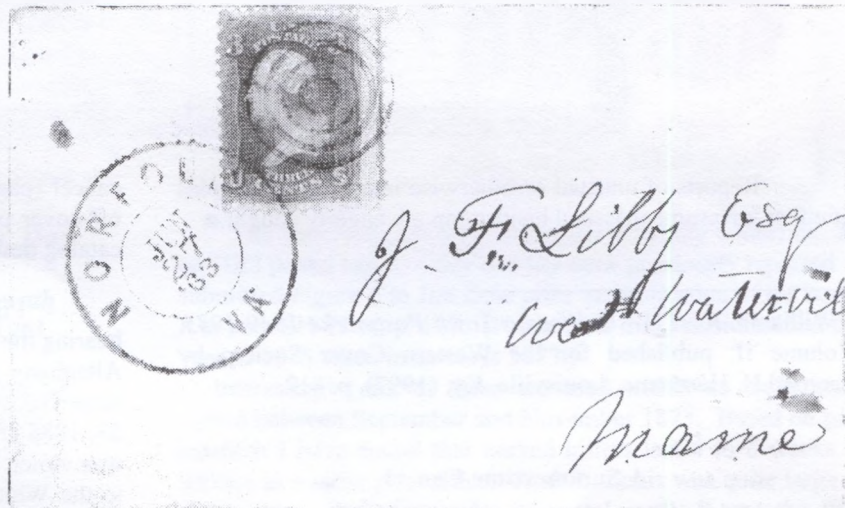


Figure 2



during the federal occupation of the Confederate City of Norfolk, Va. Readers who can report examples of the government-issued duplex markings in June 1863 or earlier are urged to do so.

The above brings us to a couple of interesting postal cards in the collection of Roger Rhoads. On the back of the Figure 3 card there is a notation referring to something being sent August 27, 1873. It apparently refers to "terms of payment" mentioned in the postal card message. (The card

The card in Figure 4 illustrates quite a late use of the large double circle duplex handstamp from Hillsdale, Michigan, dated May 6, 1874. This style of duplex handstamp was produced from 1863 through approximately 1866. It is interesting to note the "1874" year date slugs. In the early years, what is normally found is "'63," "'64," etc. After about 1867, this postmark, in your editor's experience, usually shows no year date indicators, but here in Hillsdale we find careful attention to detail.

Figure 3

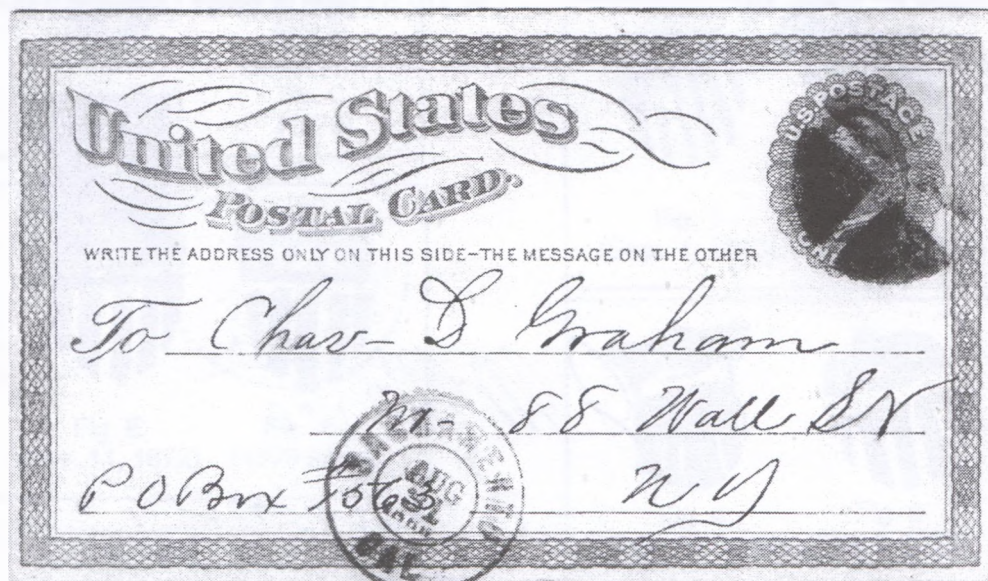
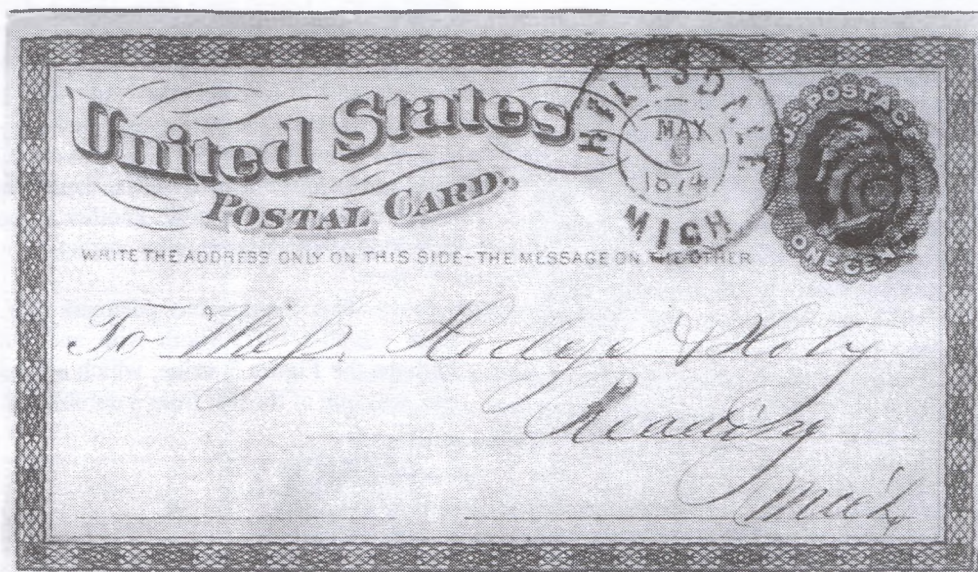


Figure 4



Reports of unusual or otherwise interesting examples of either government-issued handstamp are eagerly sought.■

¹ Williams, John H. *California Town Postmarks 1849-1935*, Volume II, published for the Western Cover Society by Leonard H. Hartmann, Louisville, Ky. (1997), p. 812.

A Summertime Cancel

by Roger D. Curran

August seems a good month to take note of a very finely detailed "fan" cancel that is occasionally seen by collectors. Surely it is the product of a rubber-faced handstamp. Figure 1 shows Whitfield tracing #768. He reported it in violet and used on a stamp of the 3¢ green era, probably on a reengraved issue. Willard also illustrated the

Figure 1



cancel (page 31) and referred to it as a "Japanese fan." An off-cover partially struck example was noted in a recent sale catalog described as a "fancy purple balloon."

Figure 2 is a cover from Arthur Beane's collection bearing the cancel on a Sc 210 in a light blue ink from Belfast, Alleghany Co., N.Y. dated December 13, 1883. I have a record of the cancel on a cover from Belmont, N.Y. dated June 23, 1885 and assume (but am not at all sure) that the ink color was violet, or something similar, since the note is written next to the Whitfield tracing. Upon reading the note recently, my first thought was that it was mistaken and the cover was really from Belfast.

But Helbock's book on Northeast post offices does list a Belmont, N.Y., also in Alleghany Co. The fact that there are examples in two colors is consistent with two post offices. The fan is a very delicate cancel that would, with use, likely clog with ink quickly and also wear out quickly. Yet we have an 18-month period between the two dates noted above with an indication from Whitfield that uses extend back before the Sc 210 era; that is, before October 1, 1883. Would the fan

Figure 2



canceler last that long, even in a smaller post office? And then there is the fact that these fan cancels are decidedly scarce. It seems more likely to me that there were, indeed, two post offices involved, each of which used the fan for a limited, perhaps quite brief, period. We need more data, of course, and readers are encouraged to report to the *NEWS* examples in their collections. ■

St. Louis Shield Cancels

By Roger R. Rhoads

NYC numbers, Chicago blues, Boston numbers/letters, San Francisco cogs and Worcester and Providence leaf cancels all bring to mind various images to the 19th century cancel collector. Each has been well discussed in print, and dealers generally have items for sale in each of these categories. However, I've seen almost nothing written on the subject of St. Louis shield cancels even though I have quite a few varieties in my collection.

I checked the various references in my library and found a few examples. These include:

Figure A – Item PS-O 12, *United States Cancellations, 1845-1869*, 1980, Skinner and Eno, 1869, St. Louis (?)

Figures B, C – #47, 48, *Fancy Cancellations on Nineteenth Century United States Postage Stamps*, 2nd Rev. Ed., 1951, Michael Zareski.

Figures D, E, F, G, H – SH-38, 56, 57, 58, 77, *Cancellations and Killers of the Banknote Era, 1870-1894*, 1995, James Cole. Please note that Figure L does not, in my opinion, resemble the classical form of a shield but is included for completeness. Also note that Figures B and E appear to be the same killer.

Figures I, J, K, L – #1331, 1369, 1449, 1471, *Cancellations Found on 19th Century U.S. Stamps*, 2002, Kenneth Whitfield

The earliest noted was used on an 1869 issue stamp with the latest in 1879, ten years later.



Fig. A
(1869 issue)



Fig. B
(1873)



Fig. C
(1879)



Fig. D
(1870 issue)



Fig. E
(Nov. 11, 1872)



Fig. F
(1870 issue)



Fig. G
(1879 issue)



Fig. H
(1870 issue)



Fig. I
(1870 issue)



Fig. J
(Blue)



Fig. K
(1870 issue)



Fig. L
(1870 issue)

The following are eight examples from my collection, all on UX3 postal cards. Only one has been previously reported. I submitted Figure 6 to Jim Cole prior to publication of his book. It is item SH-77 on p. 127. (Please note that I misidentified the year as 1875 when in fact it is 1873.)

Interestingly, six of these are used within an eight week period between September and November 1873. Based on past research I have found that carved killers last 4 to 6 weeks in service in a large post office. And St. Louis was quite large in those years. Based on sales of postal cards, it was the fifth largest post office. Thus it is apparent that more than one clerk was using a canceller with a shield killer during this short period. If several clerks used this means of personal expression over a long period of time, then there should be many more examples to show. Thus I assume that only one clerk would sporadically carve a new shield, and that for a short period of time in late 1873 several clerks chose to do so.

Figures 1 through 6 and number 8 are on out of town-addressed cards. Only Figure 7 is city addressed.



Fig. 1
(Sept. 1, 1873)



Fig. 2
(Sept. 15, 1873)



Fig. 3
(Sept. 17, 1873)



Fig. 4
(Sept. 22, 1873)



Fig. 5
(Oct. 1, 1873)



Fig. 6
(Nov. 5 and 14, 1873)

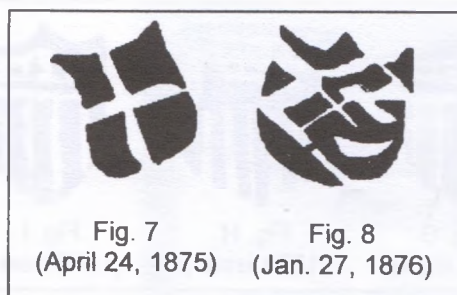


Fig. 7
(April 24, 1875) Fig. 8
(Jan. 27, 1876)

There were a variety of circular date stamps used as well. That shown in Figure 9A with a 26 mm diameter has the largest letters I have ever seen and is reminiscent of the Zeveley devices. It was duplexed with Figures 1 through 5.

Figure 9B was used with the shield in Figure 8 in 1876 and is 28 mm in diameter. The CDS used with Figure 6 in 1873 was too faint to trace, but it is very similar with a diameter of 26½ mm. Note it is being used only a month after that shown in Figure 9A.

The CDS shown in Figure 9C was used with the shield in Figure 7 in April 1875 and is quite large at 30 mm diameter. Note the period after "LOUIS". While 9A and B are duplexed, 9C may not be, based on the distance between the CDS and killer. However, I have only one such example.

Based on these 19 examples there must be a lot more out there if shield killers were used over a 10+ year period. Come on, guys and gals, send them in, and they will be published in a later issue. ■

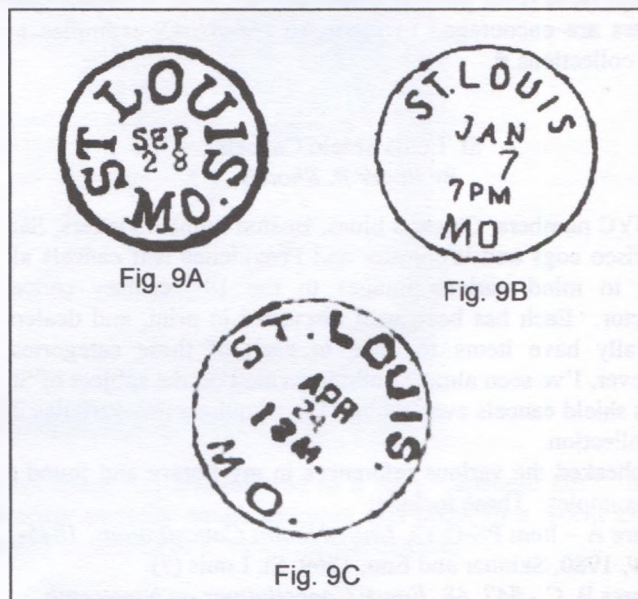


Fig. 9A

Fig. 9B

Fig. 9C

Tracking a Distinctive Ellipse

by Roger D. Curran

There is a well-known ellipse from Bellows Falls, Vermont illustrated here as Figure 1. This tracing is from Cole, page 323. Bellows Falls is a town in southeastern Vermont on the Connecticut River dividing Vermont from New Hampshire. The population was 3,831 in 1969. The post office was established in 1801.

This ellipse was apparently introduced during the era of the Sc 210 stamp, which was current from October 1883

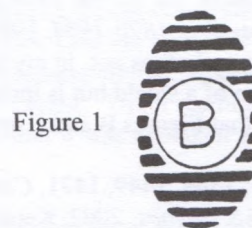


Figure 1

through September 1887. In his book on Sc 210 and its postal history, Edward Willard commented as follows:

Bellows Falls, Vermont . . . had an interesting ellipse in thirteen horizontal bars

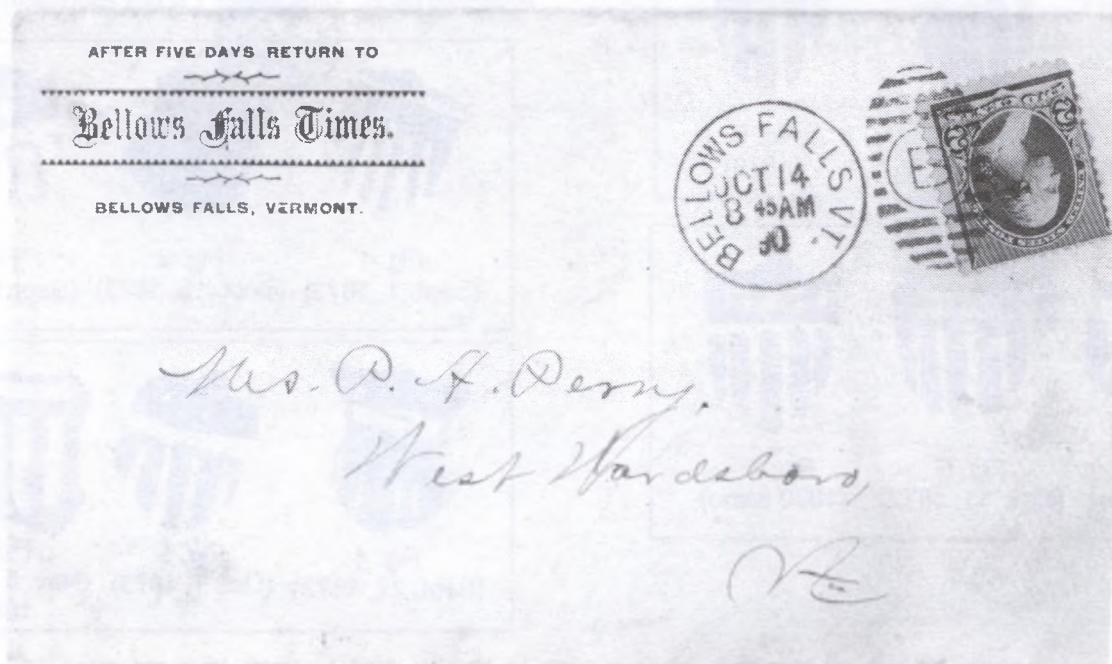


Figure 3

with an inner circle enclosing a very delicate B representing the first letter of the town name. When known, it is easily identified.

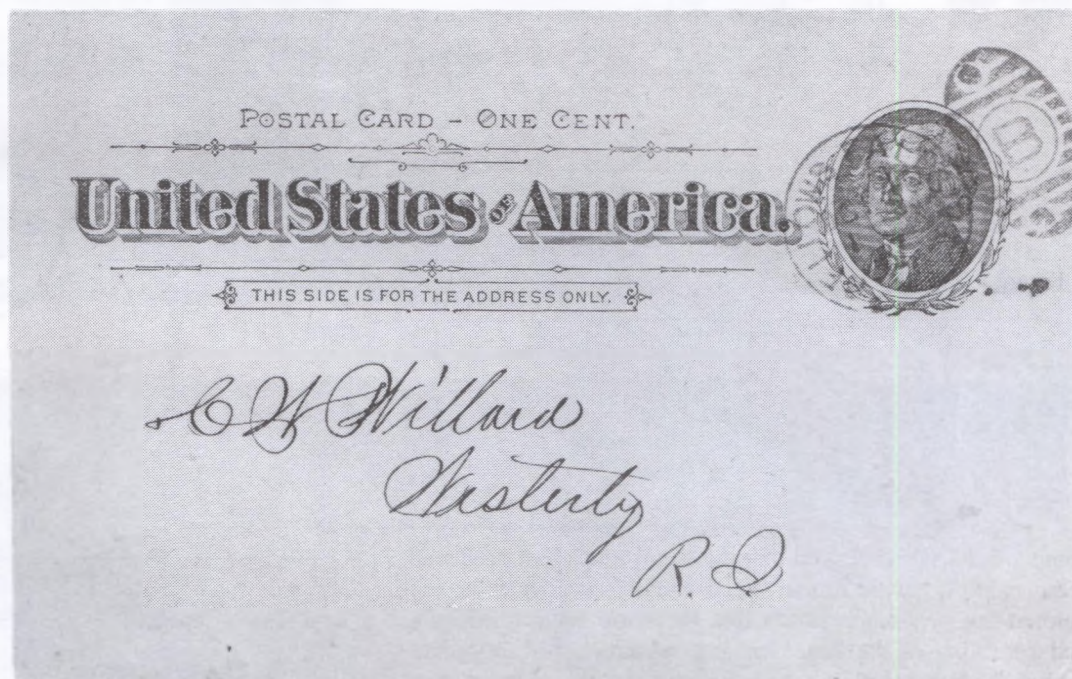
Figure 2 shows the cancel on Sc 213, Sc 215 and Sc 250b (introduced January 1895) stamps. Figure 3 illustrates a typical cover. The use of a quarter hour designator is unusual, especially since it did not emanate from a large post office.



Figure 2



Figure 4



We come now to the cover in Figure 4, postmarked October 4, 1897, which shows a similar ellipse, but with a couple of obvious differences. First, the bars, the "B," and even the circle enclosing the "B" in the Figure 4 cancel are all at least a little wider. Second is the presence of two black dots. When placing a transparency with John Donnes' precise Figure 4 tracing over the Figure 3 CDS and ellipse, the markings match very well. My opinion is that the 1897 strike is from the same handstamp that produced the 1890 strike, but now reflects wear that occurred over the ensuing seven years. Wear eventually exposed the black dots which were presumably nail heads or something similar used in affixing the face of the killer to the handstamp base which was probably made of wood. If this is the case, a progressive development of the wear should be evident from a study of on-cover strikes. (A bit of thickening at the bottom of the ellipse does appear to exist on the Sc 250b stamp in Figure 2.) Readers are encouraged to check their collections for examples and report covers pertinent to this matter. ■



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Washington Colors Revisited

by Roger D. Curran

The Fall 1995 *NEWS* carried an article about the use of colored postmarking and canceling inks by the Washington, D.C. post office during the 1878-1880 period. Beginning in January 1878 and continuing into December, Washington employed a new style of handstamp and with it a new ink that was purple in color. Figure 1 illustrates an example. For



Figure 1

some years I have believed that the handstamps that produced these markings were rubber faced and this accounts for the colored ink. (Black printer's ink, the norm for postmarking and canceling at the time, did not work satisfactorily with rubber.) I cannot prove this belief and can do no more than repeat the justification put forward in 1995: "... the lines of the letters and numbers show, in the aggregate, substantial variation in shape and thickness that are, in my estimation, characteristic of rubber handstamps creating what I would call a 'modern' look." And let's look at the matter another way – why else would the post office switch from the regular and effective black ink *just* at the time these handstamps were introduced?

There has certainly been disagreement as to whether the 1878 handstamps were rubber faced. One point raised in opposition is that the crossroads killer shifts positions; that is, the orientation of the negative cross-lines to the CDS. This led to the conclusion that the markings could not have been applied by a one-piece handstamp face, which might have been expected for a rubber product.

A couple of years ago, John Donnes conducted a detailed study of 18 examples of these markings and made two very interesting findings. First, he identified six different handstamps, based on CDS differences, as presented in Table 1.

Before John's study, two basic CDS types (I and II) were already well known to collectors with II reported as early as September 1878. The most obvious difference was a new style of day, month, time and year slugs introduced with the type II duplex.

John's second finding was that the crossroads cancels showed no rotation of the killer within a subtype. The orientations did differ from one type and subtype to another. Therefore, it appears that individual handstamps had fixed killers.

The Washington post office surely had multiple handstamps in use at the same time – there were perhaps 5 or 6 stamping clerks judging from the identifying numbers used in later cancels. I'll speculate that the Washington post office



Type	Duration	Examples	# of	Ink Color
Ia	1/7/78-4/5/78	4		purple
Ib	4/19/78-5/28/78	3		purple
Ic	8/30/78-9/2/78	2		purple
IIa	10/2/78-10/10/78	2		purple
IIb	10/15/78-12/5/78	6		purple except for Dec. 5 ¹
IIc	9/15/79	1		greenish blue ¹

Table 1

placed separate orders for some number of rubber-faced handstamps on at least six different occasions and all handstamps in a group were identical to one another but differed slightly from order to order. After all, this was an experiment and the post office may have ordered only after decisions were made to proceed. The chronology of the different handstamps may tell us something about the longevity of rubber-faced handstamps in a busy post office. If so, the handstamps didn't last long – not more than a very few months, apparently.

Just in passing, attention is called to a very similar duplex marking (Figure 2) from another post office in bluish grey black ink. The handstamp that produced this must have been made by the same manufacturer who did the Washington handstamps. Can readers report uses from other post offices?

And finally, I opine that the 1878 handstamps

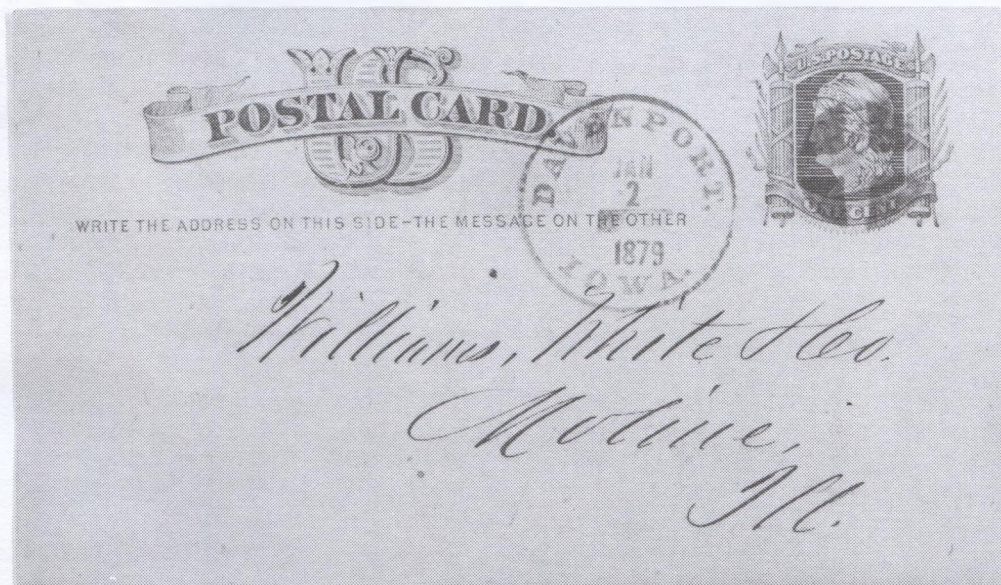


Figure 2



Figure 3

were't the first rubber-faced handstamps used by the Washington post office. Figure 3 illustrates three covers, all struck in a blue ink with some black or grey in it. One is dated November 5, 1877 and the other two November 15, 1877. The CDS lettering is similar in style to the 1878 lettering,

albeit thicker. The CDS strikes are obviously far from optimum, especially the November 15 examples where the inking is very uneven. Possibly the face of the handstamp was too pliable and the ink too watery. I think this was a very brief experiment and not continuous during the period noted. One

can certainly understand why it wouldn't have been a lengthy trial!

Additional information or comments will be welcomed.■

¹Two December 5 examples were examined. I'd describe the ink as a blackish grey with a hint of purple. One supposes these and the 1879 greenish blue were further experiments in ink formulation.

Answers to Small Mysteries

by Roger D. Curran

An intriguing pair of cancels is shown in Figure 1. The stamps are Sc 279B. This piece is illustrated in Salkind with a notation that it involved two different pumpkin heads.¹



Figure 1

After publication of his book in 1985, Mr. Salkind began selling the stamps he illustrated. At some point, I gather, he disposed of remainders to a dealer and it was in a dealer's stock that I saw this item. Having an interest in the odd and unusual, I bought it.

Periodically over the past several years I would come across the Figure 1 pair and wonder anew why the two different cancels. I assumed they were applied by the same post office and not, say, separately by the originating and destination post offices, in the latter case to correct an inadequate job done by the originating post office. One does see such examples, so it is certainly conceivable that two post offices were involved here. However, the cancels look rather similar, except for size, and to have two post offices applying similar cancels to the same pair would be quite a coincidence. If two different cancels were applied by the same post office, it would seem likely that the postmaster was making some sort of artistic statement and would show the two cancels to full advantage. But the two cancels here were not applied with such regard – one overlaps the other. So what gives?

Recently, quite out of the blue, a possible answer came to mind. Perhaps they are not different carvings at all but just two strikes of the same cancel, one applied with greater pressure and thus spreading out the design carved in a cork or soft wood surface. This phenomenon was discussed briefly on page 73 of the February 2005 *NEWS* in the context of a strip of three Sc. 65 bearing three strikes of a circle of wedges cancel. The larger pumpkin head cancel is a bit darker which is consistent with the idea of more pressure applied in the strike. We note that the mouth is thinner on the larger cancel. This, too, is consistent with a spreading out of the cancel surface under pressure. The right eye is smaller in the larger cancel, although the difference is not as great as with

the mouth. This suggests more pressure may have been applied to the bottom of the larger cancel. Verifying this theory is likely to be impossible but I think it provides a logical and likely explanation.

Moving now to a second mystery, let's consider the cancel in Figure 2 on a Sc 279B. A number of years ago, probably close to 20, I bought an accumulation of 2¢ reds of the 1890s, all of which were Bureau issues. The main reason for doing so was the presence of five flag cancels which I thought to be very unusual so late in the fancy cancel era. All were of the Figure 2 design except for one, which is illustrated here as Figure 3. I was, however, a little troubled by seeing from one source four examples of a cancel that had not,



Figure 2



Figure 3

insofar as I knew, been reported before. And when adding in the uncharacteristically late period of use, I wondered if they are genuine.

Again, as with the pumpkin heads, each time I came across these stamps I would puzzle over the cancels, but never did anything about it such as submitting them for expertization. Then, by chance, I encountered the piece shown here as Figure 4. I'm quite sure now the flag in Figure

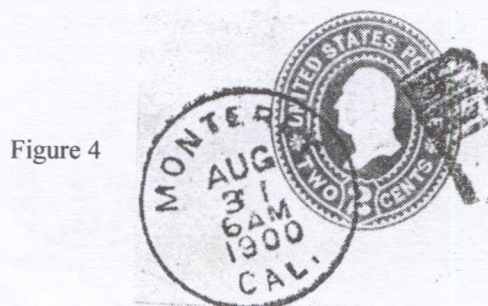


Figure 4

2 is genuine and from Monterey, California. Sc 279B was current in 1900 and the Figures 3 and 4 cancels are very similar. Reader comment is invited. And who can tell us the post office that used the Figure 3 cancel?■

¹ Salkind, *Sol U.S. Cancels 1890-1900*, published by the author (1985), page 44.

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