



Cancellation Club NEWS

Vol. 28, No. 3, Whole No. 260, August 2006

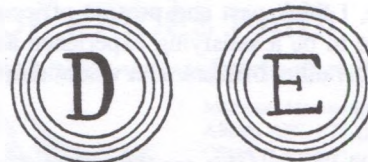
Mysterious Circles

by Roger D. Curran

By the late 1870s, "standardized" cancels made of metal had come into use in large U.S. post offices. They were the result of a manufacturing process and replaced cork or soft wood killers, the designs of which were typically carved by hand. By far and away the most popular "standardized" design was an ellipse with horizontal or vertical bars that contained a number or letter in the center. Another "standardized" design, used to a much lesser extent, was a series of concentric circles, also with a number or letter in the center. They are quite easy to find because three large city post offices used them for a while – Philadelphia, Cincinnati, and Washington, D.C. The subject of the present article concerns two concentric circles cancels that are decidedly scarce.

Figure 1 reproduces the cancels as they appear in Jim Cole's book as Ld-21 and Le-47. Cole reports both on 1887 issue stamps but does not identify the post office of origin.

Figure 1



Whitfield listed the "E" and noted it used during the 3¢ green era but without attribution. I suspect he was in error about the time period as Willard did not report it on Sc 210 which was current from October 1883 to September 1887.

Figure 2 illustrates two covers from the collection of Gilbert Levere that show the cancels to be from Cincinnati. Both stamps are Sc 213, which is an 1887 issue stamp. There is no indication of year date on the "E" cover.

Questions abound. What do the letters "D" and "E" mean? Why were they used on such a limited basis? Are there more letters that are part of this "set"? Are the cancels duplexed to the postmark? Regarding the last question, the

(Continued on page 35)

Figure 2



Dear Reader,

This Fall we will hold elections for Club officers for the 2007-8 term. The current officers have served for lengthy periods and it is, of course, important for any organization to have a regular intake of new perspectives to meet the interests of a varied and evolving membership. The duties are not extensive and primarily involve attendance at conference telephone calls to decide on major activities and to review Club operations. Participation in one or more Club projects might also be included. (The Secretary/ Treasurer, of course, also performs the Club's financial administration.) If you would be willing to consider serving in any of the positions listed on the masthead on this page, please let us know. As noted before, I think past and present officers have basically found service to be a satisfying experience and have enjoyed getting to know other officers with whom they weren't already acquainted.

I'd like to take this opportunity to mention three other volunteer opportunities. First, there is a great need for an **index of articles in the NEWS**. One was prepared in 1973 but nothing since. The work could well be divided up among several Club members with each taking NEWS issues for a particular number of years. Information would be collected using a specific data entry template prepared for the purpose.

A second need is for an **awards coordinator**. We make available an award for the best cancellations exhibit at 15 national shows. There is a need for liaison with the various show committees and with the supplier of our plaques as well as for mailing out the plaques.

The third area involves the development of an **update to the Whitfield cancellations book**. We have received very considerable information from Club members since 2002 identifying post offices for Whitfield cancellations that are now listed without attribution.

Each of the above – serving as an officer or in one of the specific coordinator roles – presents a way to make an important contribution to achieving the Club's mission of helping its members learn about and enjoy collecting U.S. 19th century U.S. cancellations. If you are interested in assisting and it is feasible for you to do so, or if you just want to hear more about what is involved, please contact me or one of the other officers. Thanks very much!

Roger Curran

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

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(Continued from front page)

"E" cancel is about 4 mm away from the postmark while the "D" is about 5mm away. Just looking at the relative positions of postmark and killer – the postmark associated with the "D" cancel tilted down to the right and the "E" postmark tilted slightly up to the right – I would guess they are duplexed. However, the "D," of course, is askew in relation to the postmark, which is suggestive of a simplex cancel. We obviously need more examples to examine.

Readers who can report further examples of these cancels (on or off cover) or provide additional information on their use or meaning are urged to do so.■

Closed Album – Clyde Jennings

Clyde Jennings died earlier this year. He was a dedicated philatelist who contributed much to the hobby through his work with various organizations, his engaging personality, and the enthusiasm he displayed as an avid collector.

For a considerable period of time, Clyde pursued a major interest in U.S. cancellations and he developed an outstanding exhibit of fancy cancels entitled "U.S. 1847-1900 Mail, Cancels and Postal Markings." Before that, he assembled a first-rate collection of color cancels which he exhibited under the title of "Color Cancellations on the First 78 years, 1847-1925, of U.S. Stamps." Copies of these exhibits are available through the exhibit photocopy service of the Classics Society. Your editor well remembers the \$5 Columbian in the latter exhibit. It was a dark, rather intense printing and set off by a red cancel – just a beautiful stamp, as were many in Clyde's collection.

He was a USCC member for a number of years and contributed reports of various noteworthy cancels to the *NEWS*, often with very interesting information or questions.

Clyde displayed a jovial, fun-loving nature. He had a slide program on cancellations some years ago and slipped, into the sequence, one slide of a Playboy Playmate. When that image appeared on the screen he would feign great shock and embarrassment, much to the delight of the audience.

It can fairly be said that Clyde was "one of a kind." He will be missed and long remembered.■

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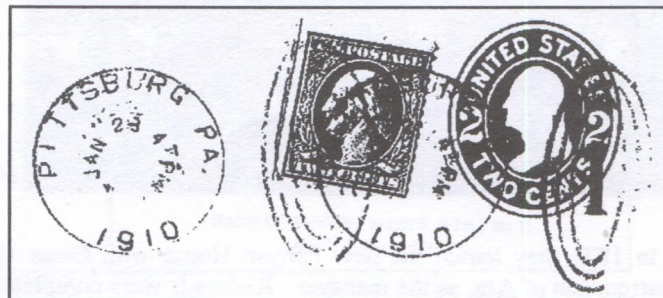
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Unusual Pittsburg PA Cancel

by Roger Rhoads

Bob McKain, a former Club member, sent along an unusual cancel dated Jan. 23, 1910 from Pittsburg, PA. No, that's not a typo as Pittsburg lost its "h" in 1893 and got it back in 1911, all part of a USPOD's simplification program that never quite worked well.

With more than 25 years of collecting Pittsburgh, he has not seen one of these. Dan Telep, also a Pittsburgh collector, is of the opinion that this is a railroad ticket cancellation. Has anyone seen such before or can someone substantiate Dan's suggestion?■



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The Grand Hotels of Coos Co., NH

by Roger Rhoads

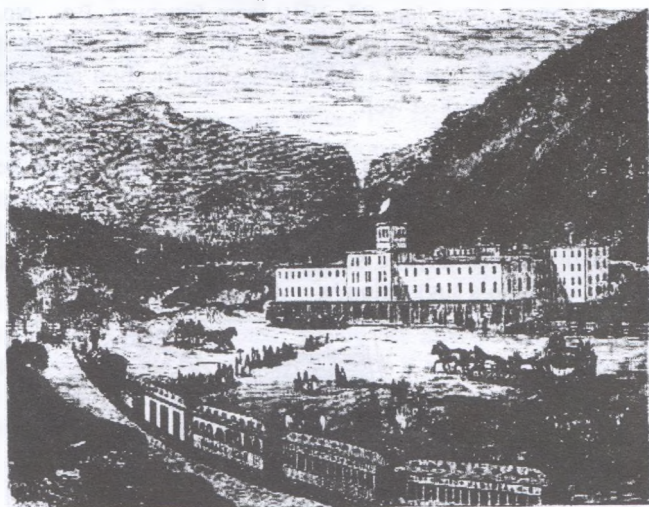
Shortly after the two recent articles on UX3s with Summit House and Crawford House, NH, cancels appeared in the *NEWS*, Don Garrett sent me a stack of over 20 covers with the corner cards of four of the grand hotels of the late 19th century including Fabyan House, Crawford House, Mt. Pleasant House and Twin Mountain House dating from 1881 to 1901. They were so attractive that I decided to put together a history of these wonderful vacation venues illustrated with the covers supplied by Don. The cancels were a bit ordinary being crossroads, targets and blobs with but two exceptions, so I've emphasized the delightful corner cards as a way of documenting the histories of the hotels.

Apparently the first big vacation hotel in the White Mountains was built by Horace Fabyan in 1837 when he opened the Mt. Washington House. Shortly after, in 1850, the Crawford House was opened. It was destroyed by fire and was re-built in 1859. The Mt. Washington burned in 1853 and was rebuilt as the Fabyan House in 1872 located at the foot of the cog railway. Both the railway and Fabyan House were built by Sylvester Marsh.

The railway up Mt. Washington was built in 1869 with the Summit House at its terminus as previously noted. Prior to that, in 1868 Asa T. and Oscar F. Barron, recognizing the economics of tourism in the area, joined together to build Twin Mountain House. By 1870 they had bought Crawford House, installing as its manager Sylvester Marsh.

FABYAN HOUSE, WHITE MOUNTAINS, N. H.

LINDSEY & FRENCH. Managers.



In 1873 they leased the new Fabyan House with Oscar G. Barron, son of Asa, as the manager. Railroads were completed in 1875 through the Crawford Notch, opening the hotels to even more vacationers.

With that in mind, the Barrons along with Cordeano H. Merrill in 1882 leased the Summit House and Mt. Pleasant House that had been built in 1876. Together they eventually owned or leased Summit House, Crawford House, Fabyan House, Twin Mountain House and Mt. Pleasant House, virtually all of the grand hotels of the area. All had railroad stations located at their front doors and post offices in their

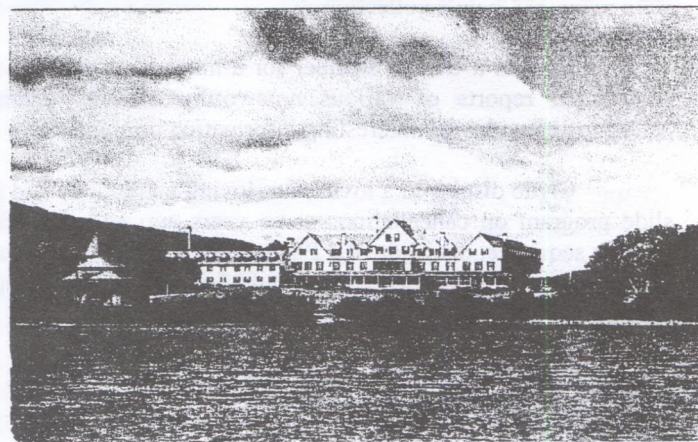
lobbies as evidenced by their listings in the *Postal Guide* issues of the era.

The following illustrations show the progression of these ownership changes. Figure 1 is the upper portion of a cover dated 1881 with a double circle date stamp and a target killer showing that the Barron brothers now leased Fabyan House. By 1883, as shown in Figure 2, Merrill had joined the Barrons, and they now owned or leased all five of the hotels.

A medallion to the left is in the shape of a belted area and is printed with light brown ink. The same cachet was also used for Crawford House, Twin Mountain House and Mt. Pleasant House stationery with the hotel name in a Gothic font during the years up to 1894. Black ink was also used for Fabyan House with light olive ink for Crawford House, blue-black for Mt. Pleasant House and a darker brown for Twin Mountain House.

Progressively, the medallions also note the addition of Summit House in Figure 3 and, stepping out of the New England area, the purchase or lease of the Putnam House in Palatka, FL, in Figure 4 with Oscar G. Barron, son of Oscar F., being the proprietor.

The partnership apparently dropped the use of the belted medallion by 1894 and no longer owned Twin Mountain House. Asa Barron had died in 1888, so "Baron, Merrill & Barron" was not appropriate as reflected in "Barron & Merrill" within the corner card of the 1894 Fabyan House cover in Figure 5. By 1897 the corner card had diminished to simply "Fabyan House" (Figure 6). A new cachet for Fabyan House began to be used by 1899 as shown in Figure 7 with a very nicely engraved scene from the White Mountains.



Crawford House. 1953

The earliest Crawford House cover in the stack was from 1883 in Figure 8. As this cover did not use the belted medallion, apparently it came into use between the dates of August 16 and September 18 as shown in Figure 2, but Barron, Merrill and Barron still were the proprietors. A cover with the light olive medallion previously noted was dated "Sept." but with no year date. A 3¢ green Banknote was used for franking, so we can assume it was used prior to Oct. 1883 when the postage rate change was made.

By August 1891 the corner card again had changed with no medallion being used (Figure 9). "Barron & Merrill" is again noted, acknowledging the death of Asa Barron in 1888. Figures 10 and 11 show the same corner card with changes to the font used in "Crawford House" to 1897.

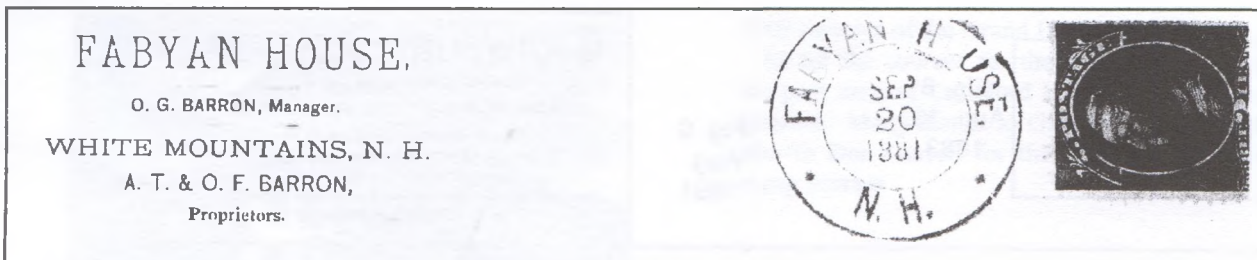


Fig. 1
Sept. 20,
1881

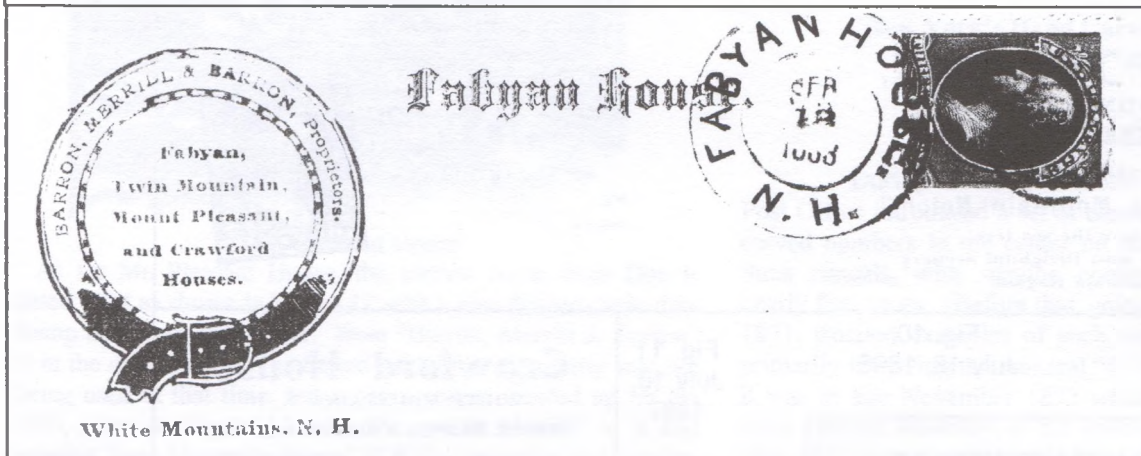


Fig. 2
Sept. 18,
1883

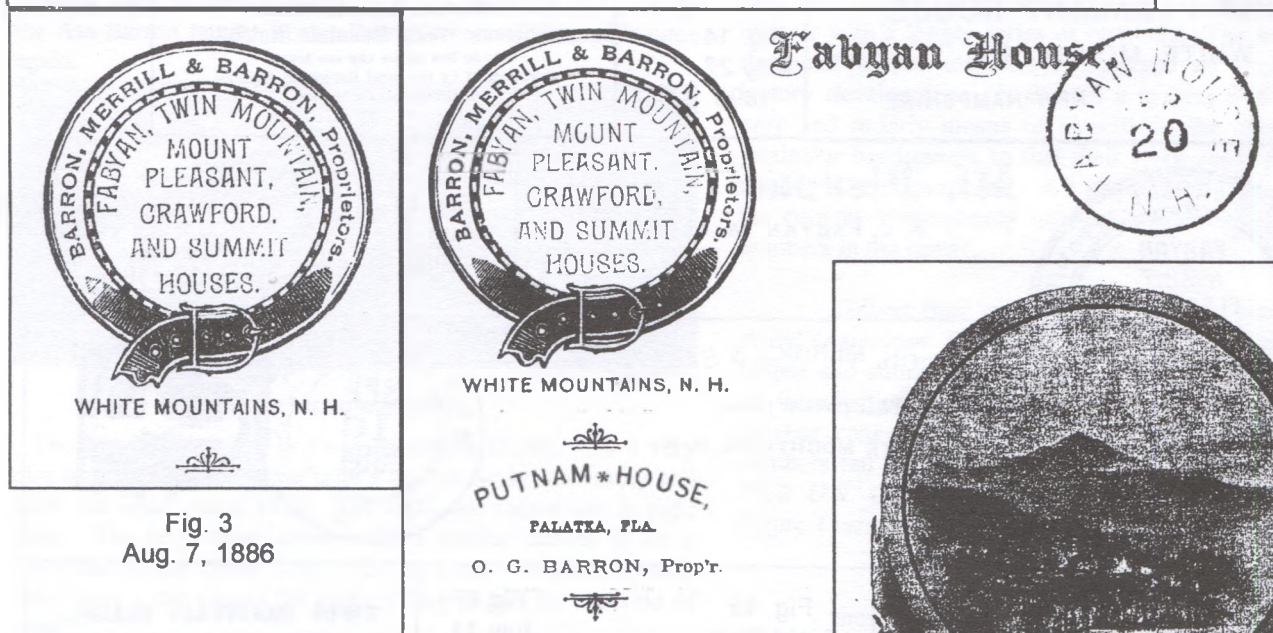


Fig. 3
Aug. 7, 1886

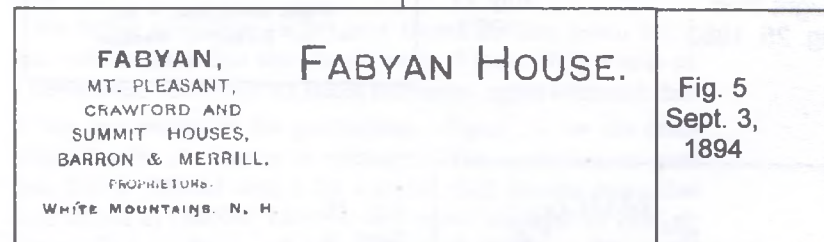


Fig. 5
Sept. 3,
1894



Fig. 7
1899

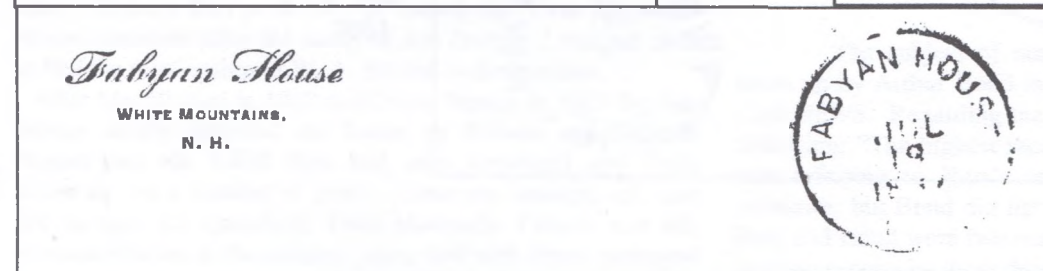


Fig. 6
July 18, 1897

(Some postmarks strengthened to bring out detail.)

CRAWFORD HOUSE,
WHITE MOUNTAINS,
New Hampshire.
BARRON, MERRILL & BARRON,
Proprietors.

Fig. 8
Aug. 16,
1883

Fig. 9
Aug.
1891

CRAWFORD HOUSE,

WHITE MOUNTAINS, N. H.
BARRON & MERRILL, Proprietors.

Located near the entrance to the
"Famous White Mountain Notch."
1920 feet above the sea level.
Surrounded by the most Delightful Scenery
in the Mountain Region.

CRAWFORD * HOUSE,

WHITE MOUNTAINS, N. H.
BARRON & MERRILL, Proprietors.

Located near the entrance to the
"Famous White Mountain Notch."
1920 feet above the sea level.
Surrounded by the most Delightful Scenery
in the Mountain Region.

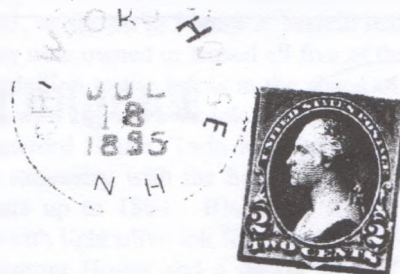


Fig. 10
July 18, 1895

Fig. 11
July 16,
1897

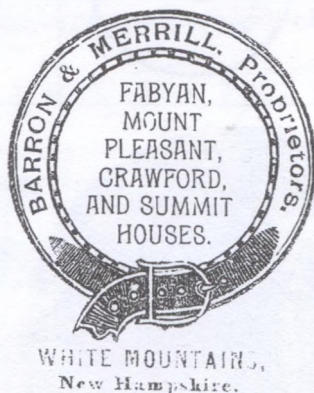
Crawford House,

WHITE MOUNTAINS, N. H.
BARRON, MERRILL & BARRON, Proprietors.

Located near the entrance to the
"Famous White Mountain Notch,"
1920 feet above the sea level,
Surrounded by the most Delightful Scenery
in the Mountain Region.

MOUNT PLEASANT HOUSE,
WHITE MOUNTAINS,
NEW HAMPSHIRE.

Fig. 14
May 27,
1899



Mt. Pleasant House,

A. L. FABYAN, Manager.

Fig. 13
Aug. 8,
1892

Fig. 12
Sept. 10, 1884

BARRON, MERRILL & BARRON,
Mount Pleasant House,
WHITE MOUNTAINS, N. H.

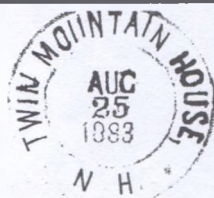
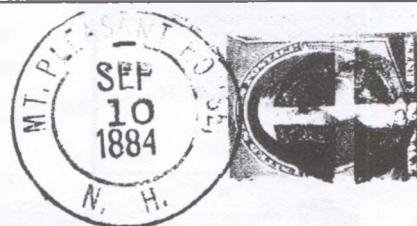


Fig. 15
Light Blue
Aug. 25, 1883

Fig. 17
July 11,
1897

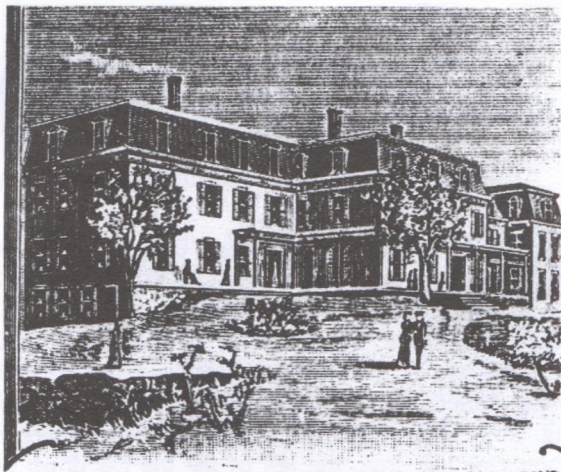
TWIN MOUNTAIN HOUSE,
White Mountains, N. H.,
W. A. BARRON, Manager.

TWIN MOUNTAIN HOUSE,
White Mountains, N. H.
FRANK A. COFRAN, Proprietor.



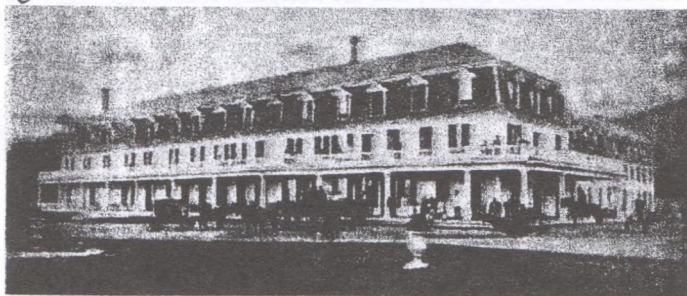
Fig. 16
Sept. 9,
1889

(Some postmarks strengthened to bring out detail.)



Mt. Pleasant House

As for Mt. Pleasant House, the earliest cover from Don is dated 1884 as shown in Figure 12 with a nice double circle date stamp and crossroads killer. Note "Barron, Merrill & Barron" is in the corner card. The belted medallion apparently was not being used at that time, but a new version showed up on the 1892 cover in Figure 13 with "Barron & Merrill" in it and missing Twin Mountain House, as it was owned at that time by the Asa Barron family. Later Barron & Merrill leased it once again.



Twin Mountain House

The last hotel visited is Twin Mountain House with a very nice belted medallion cover with a double circle date stamp and solid star killer dated 1883. The CDS and cancel are in light blue. The only other cover with a similar cancel is on a Crawford House cover from 1884 in black. Did the BM&B folks have a star cancel for each of their hotels for a period of time?

No belted medallion cachet was found for this hotel, but I feel rather certain that one should exist. Figure 16 is a strip of a cover from 1889 with no B&M reference, again evidence that it was not owned by the partnership. Figure 17, on the other hand, has W. A. Barron as manager. The cover has no year date but is franked with a 2¢ carmine first Bureau issue that was issued in October 1894, so the cover was sent in 1895 or later. Though Barron & Merrill leased the Twin Mountain House sometime after the death of Asa Barron, I was not able to find the relationship of W. A. Barron to the families.

After Merrill died in 1908 and Oscar Barron in 1913 the Asa Barron family canceled the leases on Fabyan and Summit Houses and the B&M then had only Crawford and Twin Mountain for a number of years. Time was running out, and fire ravaged the Crawford, Twin Mountain, Fabyan and Mt. Pleasant Houses in the ensuing years, and with fewer moneyed vacationers they were not rebuilt. The rail lines into the notch were torn up, and today only Mt. Washington House built in

1902 remains of the Grand Dames.

As for the sources for the illustrations, Gil Levere supplied the post card of Crawford House. The others came from the Internet. Many thanks to Gil for sharing the card with us, and also to Don Garrett for the hotel covers he put aside for so many years.■

New York's Hand Carved Numbers – Reports of "15" and "16"

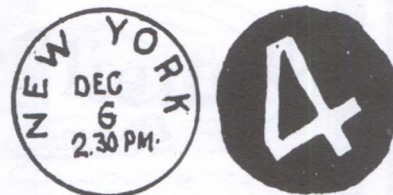
by Roger D. Curran

During the last two months of 1872, the New York Post Office introduced a set of cancelers with a series of hand carved numbers in the center on out-of-town domestic mail. Such cancels, with varying configurations, were used for nearly four years. (Before that, going back at least to February 1871, isolated examples of such numeral cancels are noted, primarily involving the numeral "4" but also others. However, it was in late November 1872 when the NYPO began using these cancels, basically, to the exclusion of other designs.) In May 1876 they were replaced by a set of manufactured ellipse cancels with a longer series of numbers. The introduction of the hand carved numbers represented an important postal history development. It created a system that permitted an easy and orderly means of identifying the clerks who used particular handstamps so that their work could be audited for quality control purposes. All major post offices throughout the country subsequently adopted cancelers with a series of numbers in the center.

Gilbert Burr was the first person to present a serious study (*American Philatelist*, January 1935-April 1936) of ellipse and similar cancels used during the Banknote era. In an introduction he gave a nod to New York's forerunner number cancels and reported that the set of hand carved numbers ran from "1" to "14." Later, however, in the April 1952 *U.S. Cancellation Club Quarterly*, he illustrated the Figure 1 cancel and said this about it:

"The drawing shown was one of these first cancels, and was a series of numerals to include 16 although my own collection lacks the 15."

Figure 1



The subject of numbers in NYPO handstamps was taken up by Arthur Bond in the April 1969 *U.S. Cancellation Club NEWS*. Regarding the hand carved numbers, he said the following: "The highest recorded number is 16." Whether he was referring to Burr's report or to his own research is unknown, but Bond did list Burr's article in his bibliography. Burr and Bond were two outstanding students of cancellations and any reports by them deserve great respect.

The above is all by way of introduction to the

situation that has confronted collectors of these cancels: those with a "15" or "16" seem to be virtually, if not totally, unobtainable. There are three basic formats of the hand carved numbers. The most common format consists of negative numbers such as that in Figure 1, the next involves positive numbers within a positive outer rim, and the least common, used only for a period of about two months in 1874, involves positive numbers (consisting of Roman numerals) within horizontal bars or a combination of vertical and horizontal bars. In the latter two formats, no numbers above "14" have been illustrated in the literature, and I think most present students would say they likely don't exist. In the negative number format, two cancels have been presented as examples of a New York "15." They are shown here as Figure 2 with the cancel on the left being Cole NYC-38 and the one on the right taken from a cover in the collection of Martin Margulis. No New York hand carved "16," to my knowledge, has been illustrated in the literature.

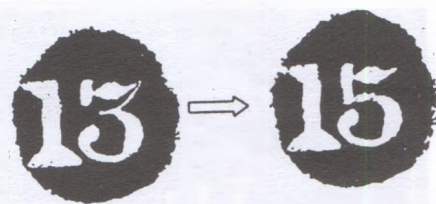
The matter of New York hand carved "15" and "16" cancels, particularly the two cancels shown in Figure 2, was discussed by Roger Rhoads in his excellent article "New York Number Cancellations, 1872-99" in the Summer 1999 *NEWS*.

Figure 2



Roger presented a "13" cancel that has a distinctive type of serif at the bottom of the "1" numeral. For the lack of a better term, I'll call it a partial triangle. This version of a "1," which also has a rather sharply pointed serif at the top, is seen in other New York cancels employed through 1873, but not much, if at all, beyond 1873. The "3" in the "13" has an aspect that makes it very prone to misinterpretation as Roger pointed out – the very thin connector line from the top of the "3" down to the lower loop. Unless it is a good strike, the thin line will break up or disappear entirely. And if you combine that with some strategically located areas of underinking, what results may look like a "15." Reproduced here as Figure 3 is Roger's illustration of what can occur. A particularly

Figure 3



dramatic example of this phenomenon came to my attention recently in the form of the card shown in Figure 4 dated June 6, 1873. Unfortunately, the image will not convey effectively the overall appearance. John Donnes supplied a very accurate tracing of the cancel. However, the light and dark areas of the underlying indicium contribute to the "5" appearance by the creating, along with a little underinking, a definite impression of a connector line from the left of the top bar down to the loop. This cancel looks like a "15" and I would have not explored it as a potential "13" without knowledge of Roger's article.

The two cancels in Figure 2 are both, I believe, of the "partial triangle" style and while I would withhold a final opinion until a direct comparison is made with a "13" cancels of the "partial triangle" style, I suspect these cancels to be distorted "13"s. It should be mentioned, however, that Roger concluded, in his article, that the Margulis cancel is a "15." At the time, that was my opinion as well.

For the record, mention should be made of one other hand-carved "15" cancel from New York. The cover was illustrated in the Fall 1997 *NEWS* and the cancel is of a style unlike any other New York cancels of the period. Roger illustrated the cancel (shown here as Figure 5) and said this about it:

"... I see it as an inverted mirror image of a "12" ... and therefore may have been mistakenly carved without thinking of the eventual print reversal. Perhaps this would explain why other examples of this cancel have not been found as it would have been taken out of service when this was noticed."

Figure 4

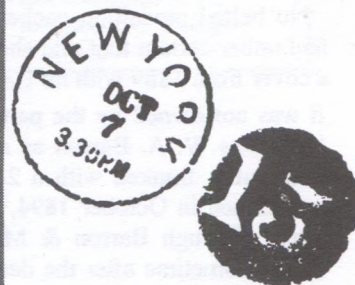
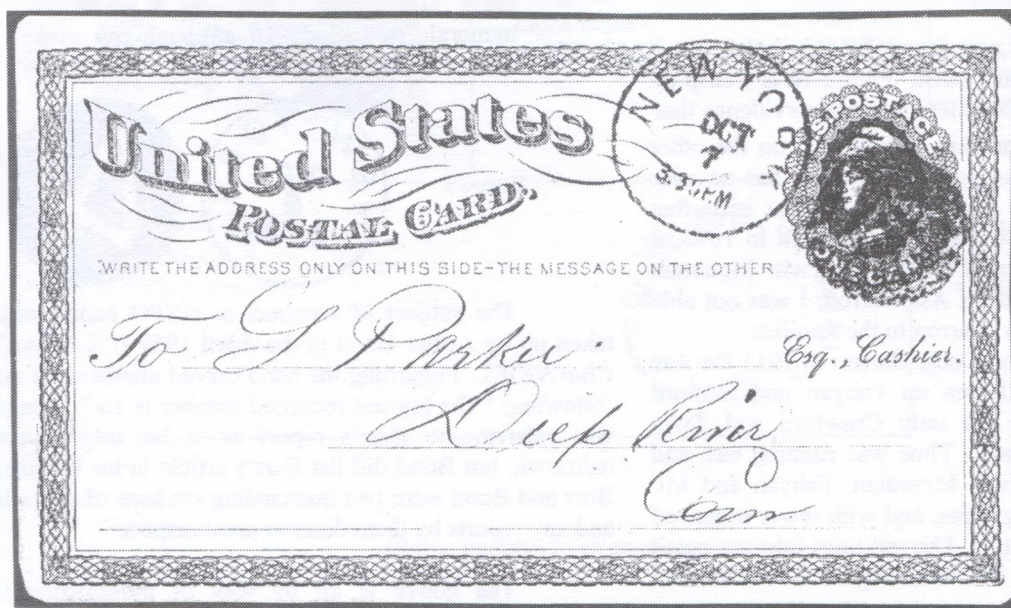


Figure 5

15 → 12

I agree that a "12" was likely to have been intended."

But even if the Figure 2 cancels are "13s", what about the "16" reports? John Donnes provided what I believe to be a plausible and, indeed, likely explanation of the origin of these reports. For some years, John has been carefully documenting New York hand carved number cancels as well as other New York cancels of the era. Of interest here is a particular "6." John has traced what he considers to be several strikes of this cancel as it deteriorated with use over time. These are presented as Figure 6. All are confirmed 1875 strikes. It appears that some additional carving of the canceler occurred between August 31 and September 3, perhaps to make the numeral more legible and to round off the outer perimeter. Note that the first strike in Figure 6 – July 19 – is very sharp, both in terms of the CDS and canceler and must represent a very early use. During the Figure 6 timeline there is a period – late August to mid-September – where the "6" cancel could very well be interpreted as a "16." John submits that it is this "6" cancel that may well have led to the "16" reports. If so, it is very understandable that such an interpretation would be made by Burr (and perhaps Bond)

without the benefit of a chronological study of this "6" cancel during the period in question.

We need to add a concluding note in the tradition of famed radio broadcaster Paul Harvey's "the rest of the story" segments. Mr. Burr's reference collection of cancellations is now owned by Club member Joe Crosby who has been generous in sharing information about its contents. After the above paragraphs were written, it was noticed that in Mr. Burr's collection there is a page illustrating a boxed "6" New York cancellation like the "6" cancel discussed above, along with two off-cover stamps. These stamps bear strikes of what must surely be New York cancels where a "colorless" vertical line lies close to the left side of a bold negative "6." Burr's typed commentary makes the very point that these "6" cancels can be mistaken for "16" cancels. Was his "16" report in 1952 based on a deteriorated "6" in a box cancel which he recognized for what it really was *after* the article appeared? Or was it based on a different and presumably true "16" cancel? If the former, perhaps he just didn't have occasion to correct the record before he died in December 1957 after several years of ill health. Since his reference collection did not contain any New York hand carved number cancels above "14" and since his work appears to have been largely based on his own material, I believe Burr's 1952 report of a "16" was based on the boxed "6" cancel.

Additional data pertinent to the above as well as reader comment will be welcomed.■

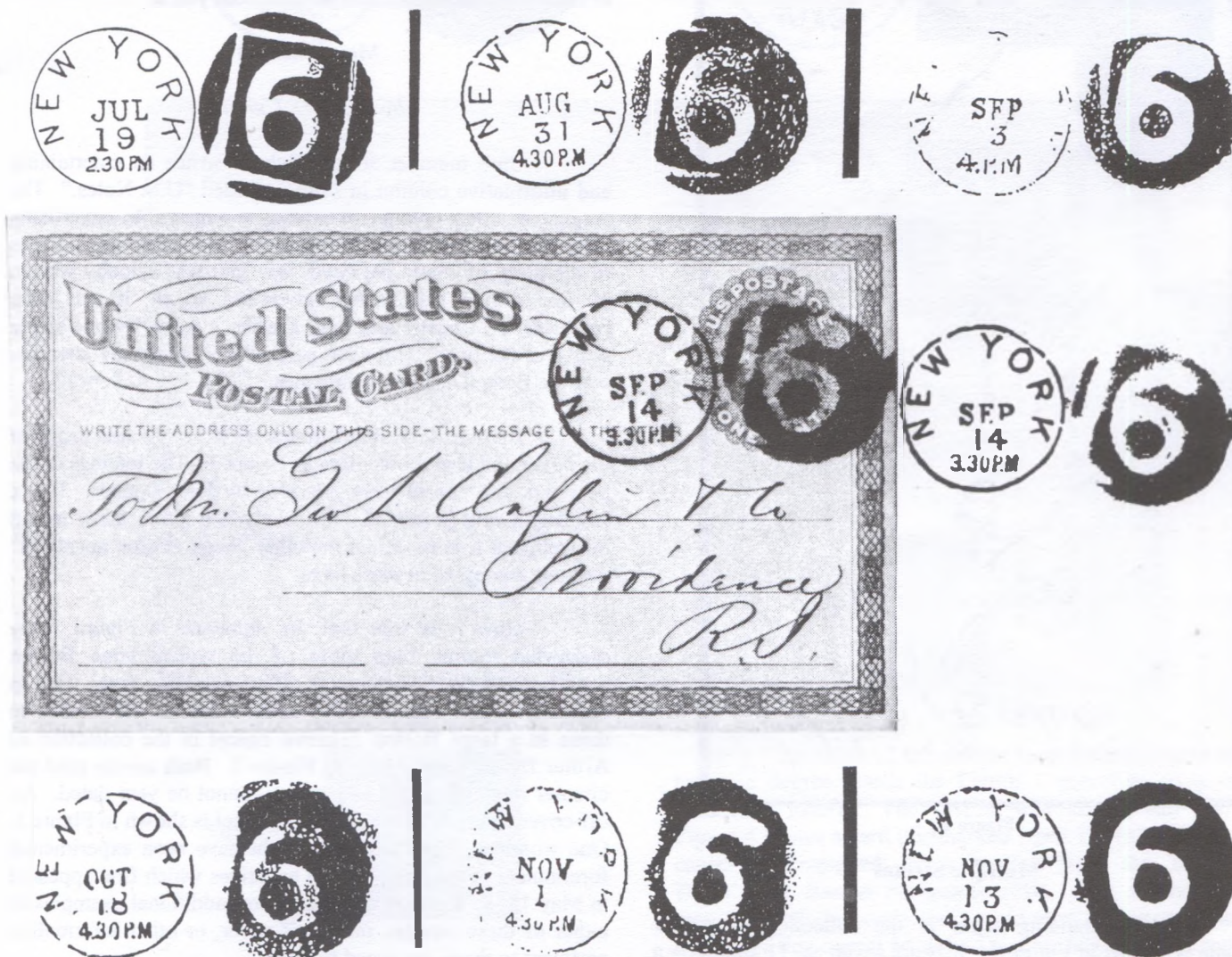


Figure 6

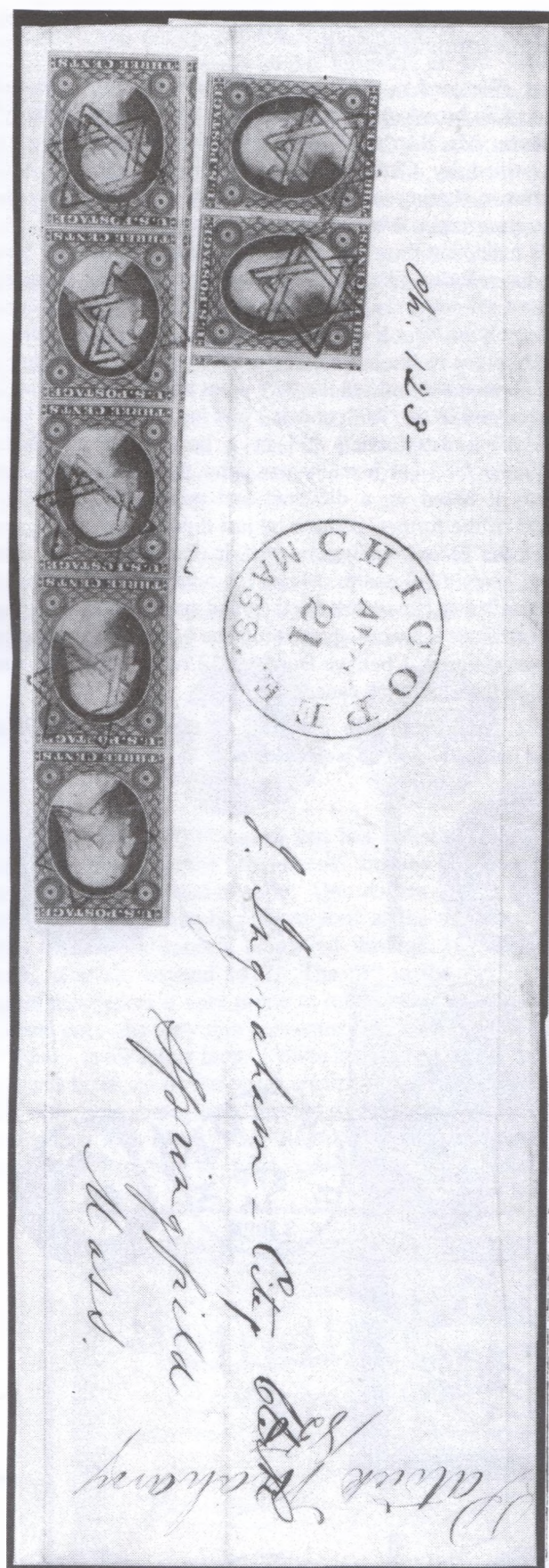


Figure 1

Multiple Strikes

An outstanding cover in the collection of Arthur Beane is shown in Figure 1. It bears seven Sc 11 stamps – a

strip of five and a pair – with each stamp canceled by a well-known six point star of Chicopee, Mass. The Skinner-Eno book illustrates two versions of this cancel. The first is ST-6P 23 which is reported in black on 1851 and 1857 issue stamps with the notation: “crosses over to right.” The cancels in Figure 1 are examples of this type. The second version, ST-6P 24, is smaller. It has been seen in black and blue inks, and is noted: “crosses over to left” and reported on 1851-61 issue stamps.

The Figure 1 cover, paying a seven-times rate, was mailed in 1856. It is said to have contained a bundle of marriage certificates sent to the Springfield City Clerk. Readers will see a “ch. 123” notation. This is undoubtedly an instruction to the post office to charge the postage to the holder of PO Box 23. Presumably, the letter was brought to the post office with no stamps affixed and a postal clerk added the required postage and recorded the charge to Box 23. As of January 1, 1856, of course, prepayment of postage with adhesive stamps was required on out-of-town first class domestic mail.

The *NEWS* is always eager to feature unusual and noteworthy cancellation covers. Please consider such covers in your collection and send copies to the editor at the address on the masthead or by email at rdcnrc@evenlink.com. Covers that are of particular interest to you will no doubt be of interest to other Club members. Let us hear from you.■

Most Unusual

by Roger D. Curran

Club member John Hotchner writes an entertaining and informative column in *Linn's* entitled “U.S. Notes.” The August 8, 2005 column illustrated a remarkable advertising cover for an “automatic shading pen.” The name and address of the party to whom the cover was sent was actually written by one of the pens being advertised which, it was said, produces “. . . heavy and light shades . . . made by one single stroke of the pen.” But what particularly caught my attention was the Boston cancel on the cover.

John made available to the *NEWS* a full size image of the cover and it is shown here as Figure 1. The tracings of the postmark and cancel were provided by John Donnes. It is a wonderful cancel, indeed. Not only is it a true fancy in and of itself, but it is so unlike the other “large Boston negatives” we have discussed in these pages.

Now it is true that the numerals in Figure 1 are somewhat thinner than those of the typical large Boston negative and the “3” numeral differs in shape from what is normally seen. Interestingly, these numerals are similar to those in a large Boston negative cancel in the collection of Arthur Beane, shown here as Figure 2. Both covers paid the circular rate and, as far as I know, cannot be year dated. An off-cover example of the Figure 2 cancel is shown in Figure 3. One wonders if these cancels might have been experimental forerunners of the large Boston negatives which first appeared in May 1878. Readers who can report additional examples of either of these cancels, on or off cover, or other information pertinent to them, are urged to do so.

Figure 1

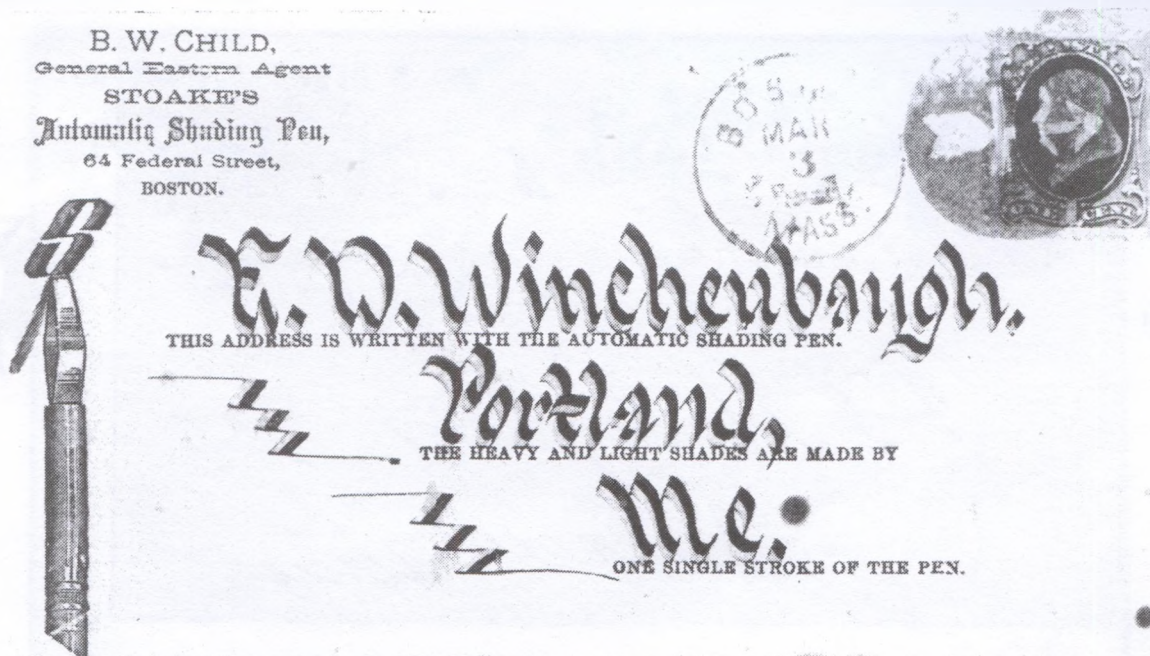


Figure 2

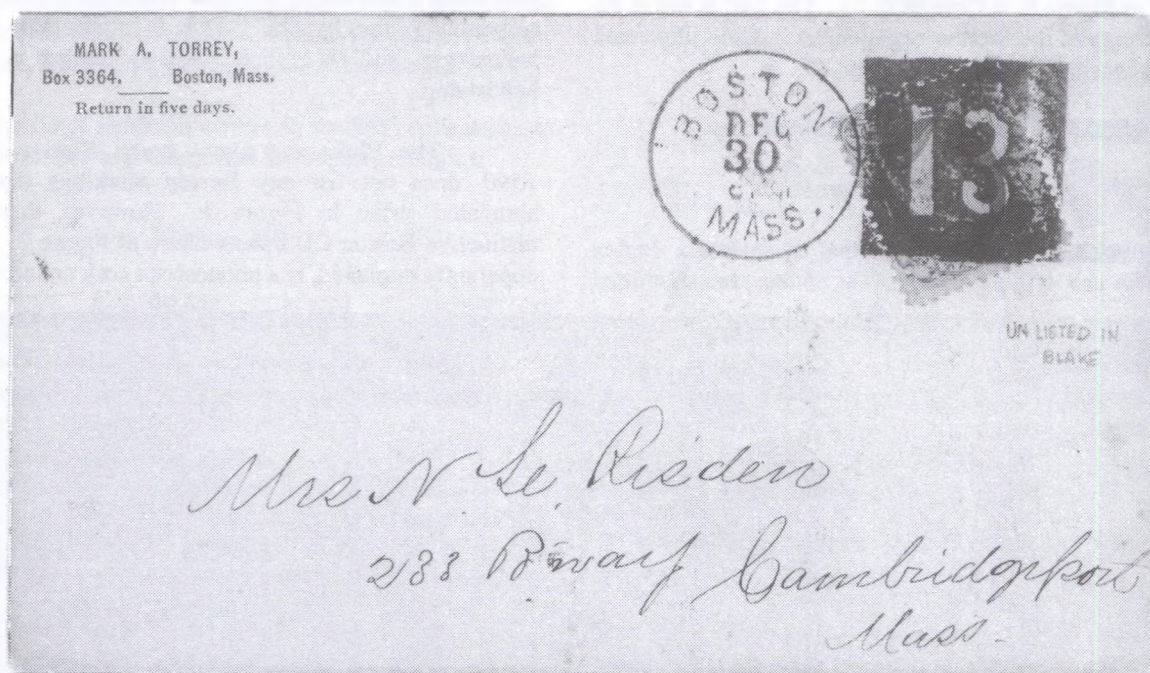


Figure 3



I can think of three other large Boston negatives that to some degree match the Figure 1 cancel in terms of its distinctive nature. The first is well known and not rare. Figure 4 shows a card postmarked April 13, 1881 bearing this cancel accompanied by a tracing from the Blake and Davis book *Boston Postmarks 1890*. The second is what many cancellation collectors would term a Maltese cross. A tracing of this cancel by John Donnes, taken from a cover in

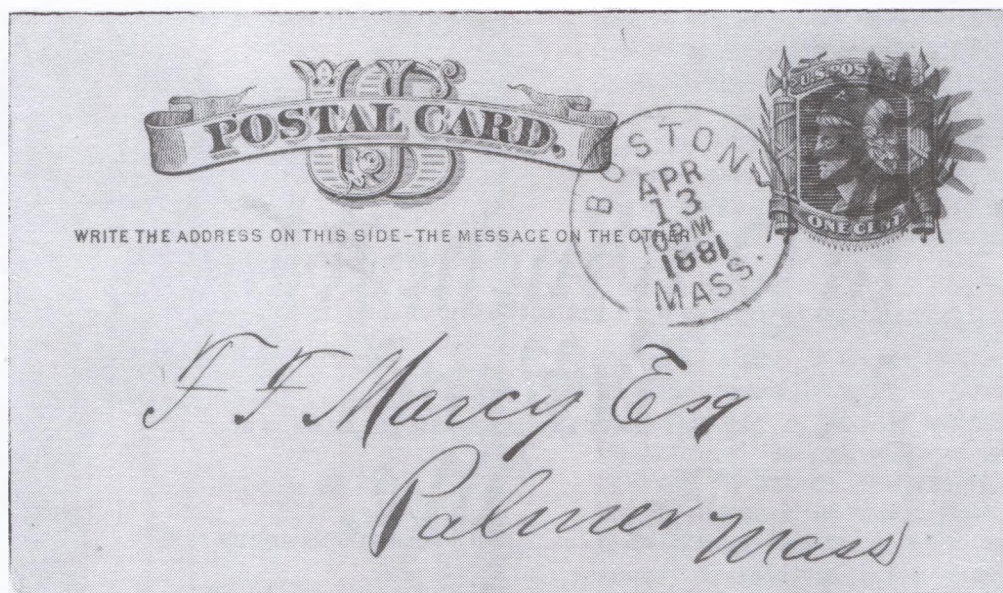


Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6

the collection of Ted Wassam, is illustrated in Figure 5. Only this one strike has thus far been reported. The third example, shown here as Figure 6, is Cole BOS-14. The "A" is not at all the typical shape of the Boston negative "A." Cole illustrates a nice cover bearing this cancel on page 292. ■

Not Your Usual Post Office Handstamp

by Roger D. Curran

Figure 1 illustrates a cover that advertises a duplex handstamp for use by post offices. The image was submitted

by Bob Grosch who noted it on the Internet. Part of the printed advertising design is a simulated Boston postmark (dated April 4, 1878) and a concentric circles cancel. The company sending the circular was H.C Dimond, Manufacturer, located at 22 Milk Street, Boston. The cover undoubtedly originated at Boston but, since it was a circular, no postmark was needed.

The advertised handstamp would be operated, of course, by pressing down on the handle. I believe there would have been a self-inking pad just below the handle with an ink reservoir in the handle. This is more than just a plain handstamp and is more properly called a mechanical handstamp.

The Blake and Davis book, *Boston Postmarks to 1890*, does not list any Boston markings that match the simulated strike in Figure 1. However, there is a very distinctive Boston CDS shown here as Figure 2. (The cancel, apparently duplexed, is a nondescript cork or soft wood killer.)

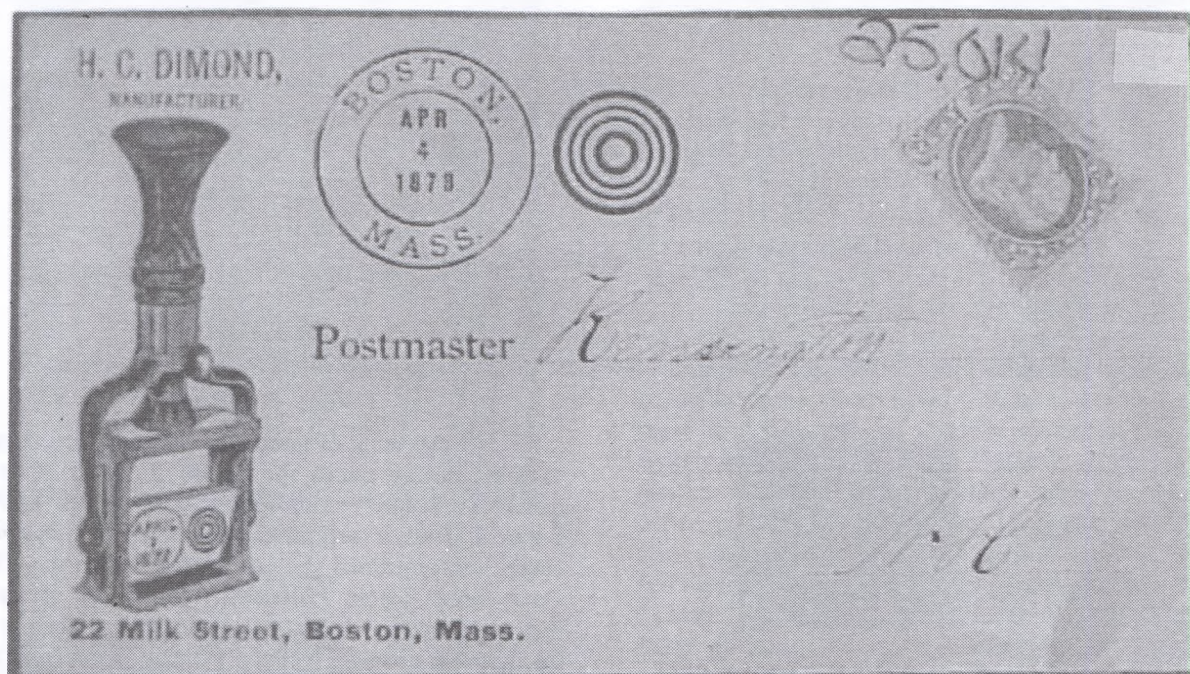


Figure 1

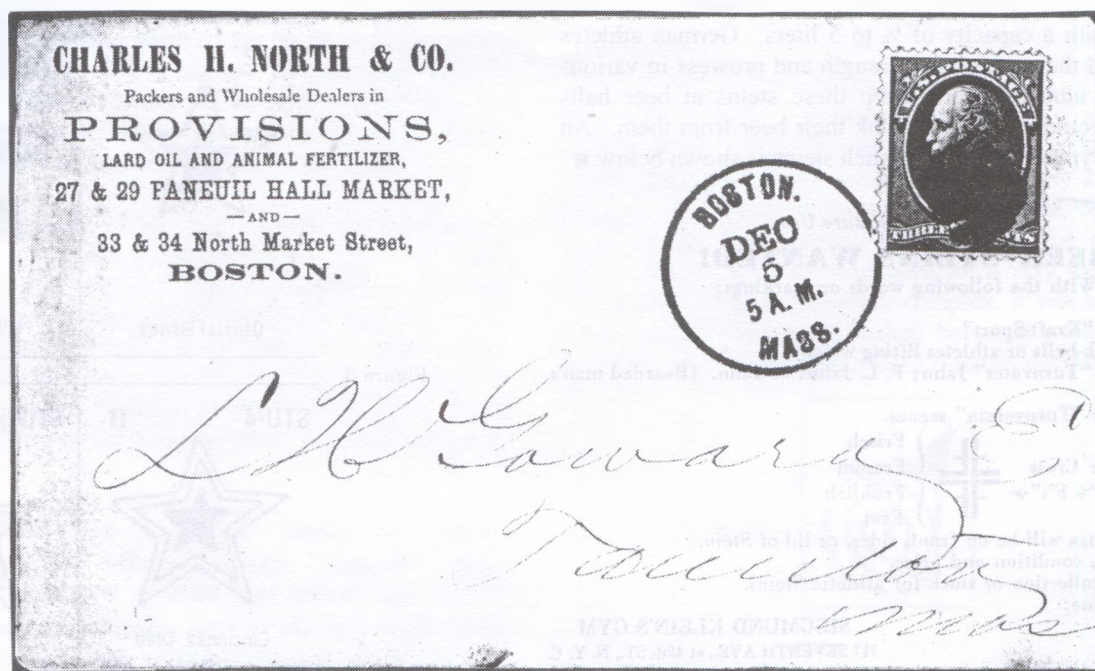


Figure 2

I haven't seen enough examples to comment much about it except to say that it seems always to be very well struck. Blake and Davis illustrate what I believe to be this marking as 1049 along with a similar and probably related postmark as 1049A. 1049 is listed with a range of use from 4/69-1/6/74 and 1049A with the date of 11/25/73. These postmarks are reported used with a variety of small and generally quite mundane killers. It would be interesting to see additional examples of these postmarks. If they are, in fact, found to be evenly struck on a consistent basis, I think we could speculate that they were the product of a mechanical handstamp.

Reports of pertinent covers in readers' collections as well as observations and comments are eagerly sought. ■

Putnam III

Putnam, Connecticut produced a number of interesting and often attractive hand carved cancellations. Examples were featured in the February 2002 and February 2005 issues of the *NEWS*. We return to this post office now for a third visit.

Figure 1 is a tracing from a cover in the collection of John Donnes. Figure 2 is a somewhat similar cancel from the Whitfield book that was overlooked in our earlier reports. Figure 3 is a tracing from an old auction lot illustration that was enlarged to approximate actual size.

Ralph Edson reports finding the Figures 4 and 5 cancels at the Washington 2006 show. The double triangle is dated July 7, 1880.

Finally, we illustrate what can be fairly termed a "crossed dumbbells" cancel (Figure 6) from Putnam on a Sc 65 stamp submitted by Abe Boyarsky. Was the postmaster a Turner society member? (See front page article of last *NEWS*.) Abe writes of his recollections of Klein's Gym in New York in 1945. This gym had a collection of about 50

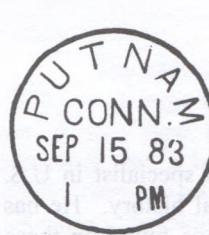


Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

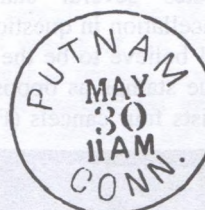


Figure 4



Figure 5

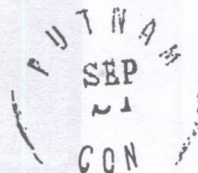


Figure 6



beer steins with a capacity of ½ to 5 liters. German athletes were awarded these steins for strength and prowess in various sports. The athletes would keep these steins at beer halls where they would gather and drink their beer from them. An old Klein's Gym ad to purchase such steins is shown below.■

Please File for Future Use

BEER-STEINS WANTED!

With the following words or markings:

"Gut-Heil".

"Kraft-Heil" "Kraft-Sport"

showing dumb-bells or athletes lifting weights.

A likeness of "Turnvater" Jahn; F. L. Jahn; or Jahn. (Bearded man's head).

Gymnastic or "Turnverein" scenes.

Also look for Cross

made up of "4 F's"→



Frisch
Fromm
Fröhlich
Frei

These markings will be on front, sides, or lid of Stein.

Describe size, condition and price.

Check your collection or stock for athletic Steins.

Write or phone:

SIEGMUND KLEIN'S GYM

717 SEVENTH AVE., at 48th ST., N. Y. C.

L.Ongacre 5-8647

An Official Star?

by Roger D. Curran

Club member Alan Campbell is a specialist in U.S. 19th century official stamps and their postal history. He has made an extensive study of the cancellations found on these stamps. The purpose of this article is to discuss an enigmatic star cancel he has occasionally encountered.

Figure 1 illustrates several stamps in Alan's collection that bear the cancellation in question. Figure 2 is a Whitfield tracing of what I believe to be the cancel although he reports it on 1860s issue stamps as opposed to the 1870s issues in Figure 1. Cole lists four cancels (Figure 3) that we



Figure 1



Figure 2

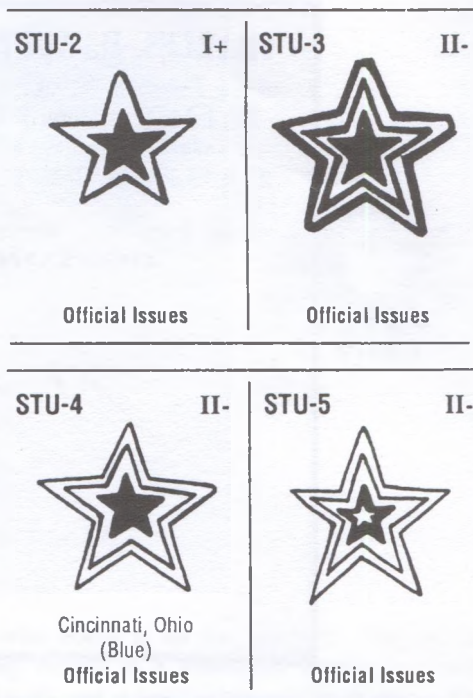


Figure 3



Figure 4

might consider to be of the Figure 1 family. Note that all are reported on "Official Issues." Figure 4 shows an example of the Figure 1 cancel (the only one thus far noted by Alan) on a non-official stamp.

Tracing STU-4 in Figure 3 may well be the Figure 1 cancel, but none of the examples in Alan's collection are in blue ink. Cincinnati did, however, use blue ink for a period during the currency of official stamps. I contacted Jim Cole and he reported having a note in his records citing the Clyde Jennings collection as the source of the Cincinnati attribution. A review of a photocopy of Clyde's cancellation exhibit (distributed by the Classics Society) showed off-cover examples of STU-2 through 4 cancels on official stamps but no covers. His collection, of course, would have been larger than the exhibit. As a point of information, it should be noted that Alan has an example (Figure 5) of a cancel similar to



Figure 5

STU-2 on a 30¢ Navy stamp.

Lester C. Lanphear III has an official stamp struck by the Figure 1 cancel and a small portion of a postmark containing the letter "K." Of the 16 examples of the star

cancel in Alan's collection, thirteen are on 6¢ or higher value stamps and nine are on 12¢ or higher. Excluding the pair in Figure 1, four show evidence of an additional star strike indicating the presence of multiple stamps on the cover. There is no evidence that the star was duplexed to the CDS.

What to make of all this? Given the fact that a relatively large percentage of the stamps are high values, and with evidence in some cases of additional frankings, I suspect usage on heavy packages, perhaps registered in some cases, where the use of unduplexed cancels would be typical. Also, if packages were involved, this would explain the lack of covers thus far found. Package wrappers were almost never saved. The most we could probably hope for is some or all of a package front.

The fact that the star seems to appear overwhelmingly on official stamps suggests some arrangement between one or more post offices and Federal departmental authority whereby mail would be brought to the post office with the stamps already canceled. If this is true, the interesting question arises as to whether the cancels were applied before or after the stamps were affixed to mail. Isolated examples of a non-official stamp canceled by the star, under this scenario, might have resulted from a departmental office not having on hand the requisite official stamp to make up a particular mailing.

It is interesting to note that the star has only been found on the stamps of four departments: War, Treasury, Navy, and Post Office. Were these star handstamps provided separately to the local offices of four departments by a particular city post office for use in an experiment to expedite the processing of departmental mail?

Readers who have in their collections examples of these star cancels are urged to report them to the *NEWS*. Also, any information pertinent to the above as well as comments and theories would be welcomed.■

Cornucopia Cancel

by Roger Rhoads

Here is horn-of-plenty cancel dated Jan. 20, 1874 on a UX3 postal card from Lawrenceville, NJ that to my knowledge has not been previously reported. The simplex cancel is quite clear, though lightly inked. Considering the quality, I can assume that it had only been used for a very few days. With the carving being so relatively complex, it would only require several of the lines to be broken before it would take on the appearance of a blob. Any other examples out there?

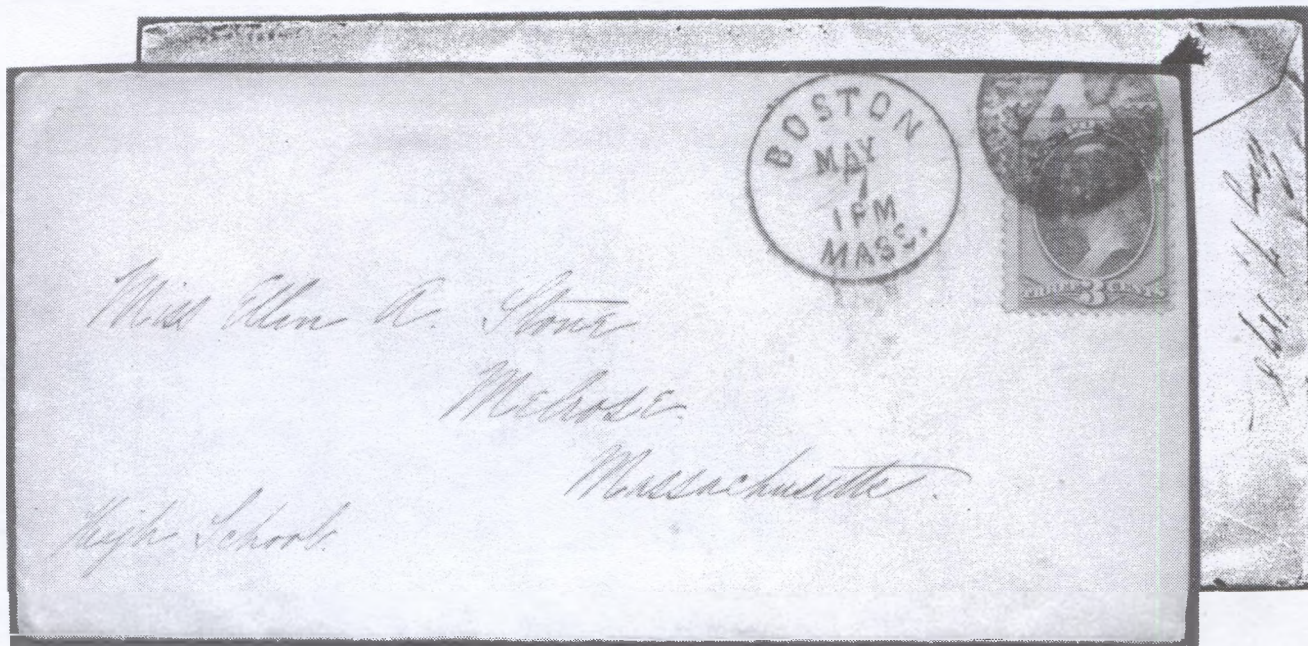


Narrowing the Gap

The May 2006 *NEWS* presented a cover dated May 8, 1878 with a large Boston negative cancel. It was the earliest use of this type of cancel known to your editor. Also presented was a late use (May 4, 1878) of the predecessor small Boston negative cancel. At some point during the May 4-8 period, the switch was apparently made.

We are now able to report a cover in the collection of Club member Bob Grosch dated May 7, 1878, presented here as Figure 1. (Bob, incidentally, is an avid exhibitor of large Boston negative cancels.) We also have several reports of additional May 4 usages of the small negative cancel. The *NEWS* is very eager to receive reports of May 5 and 6, 1878 Boston covers and readers are encouraged to continue the search through their collections for such items.■

Figure 1



Cancel Reports

Club member Wendell Triplett reports two recent acquisitions. The first is a crescent and cross cancel in black ink on a UX5 postal card postmarked Henderson, Kentucky. The date is October 12, 1877. The crescent and Christian cross design is not common. Figure 2 is an example from Morrison, Illinois in black ink noted on a UX12.¹ Figures 3 and 4 are from the Whitfield book. Does this design have a specific meaning?

The second cancel is a "CK" in circle in blue ink from Jacksonville, Illinois. A tracing from the literature is shown as Figure 5.² Wendell's card, dated May 30, 1874 is illustrated as Figure 6 and, when he acquired it, there was an accompanying POD letter of considerable interest. This card was apparently owned many years ago by Heyliger deWindt, an early U.S. Cancellation Club member. In 1939, Mr. deWindt, then associated with the Boyleston Stamp Company in Boston, wrote to the Post Office Department in Washington asking whether anyone in the Jacksonville post office had the initials "CK." The POD Chief Inspector, K.P. Aldrich, wrote back on March 15, 1939 and his letter is quoted, in part:

"The Official Register for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1875, shows that Charles M. Kent was a clerk in the post office at Jacksonville, Illinois for that fiscal



Figure 2

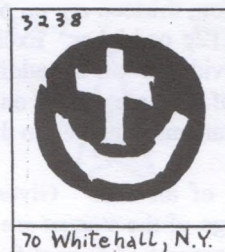


Figure 3



Figure 4

year. The records do not show that any other person with initials 'C.K.' was connected with the Jacksonville post office at that time."

Researching U.S. cancels is by no means a recent phenomenon! Mr. deWindt, incidentally, was the co-author with Foster Loso of *20th Century United States Fancy Cancels*, published in 1952. It was the standard reference on the subject until a revised edition by Hamilton (Dell) Fishback and William Walker appeared in 1987.■

¹ Russell, Richard *Illinois 19th Century Cancels*, Illinois Postal History Society (1984), tracing # 440.

² Ibid, tracing # 132.

Figure 1

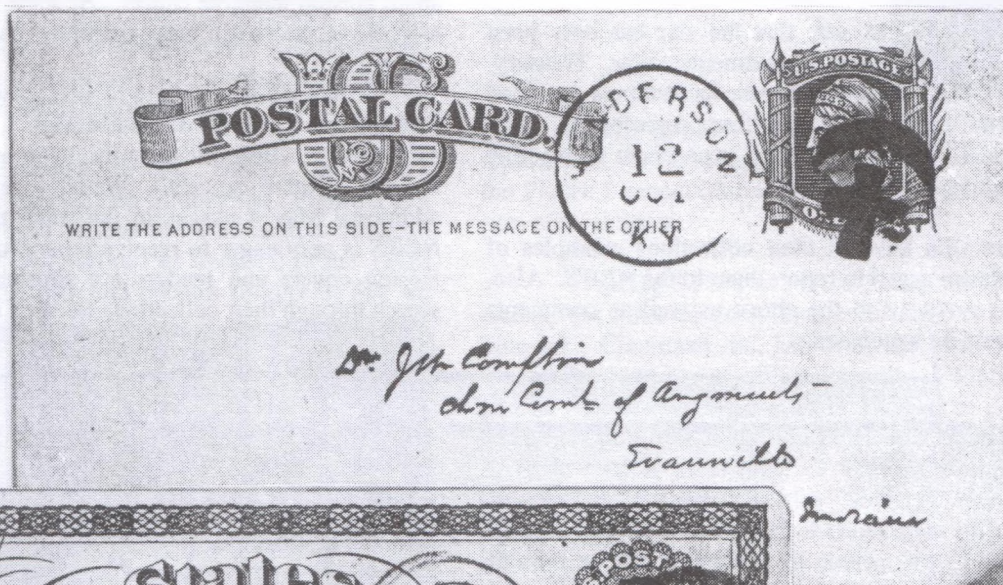


Figure 6

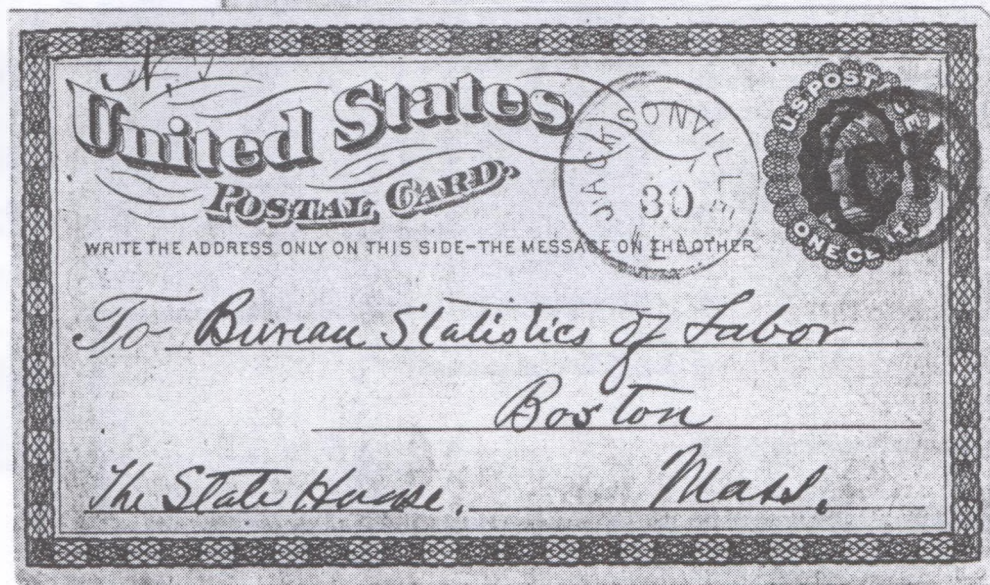


Figure 5