



Cancellation Club NEWS

Vol. 28, No. 3, Whole No. 262, February 2007

Chicago Blues Update

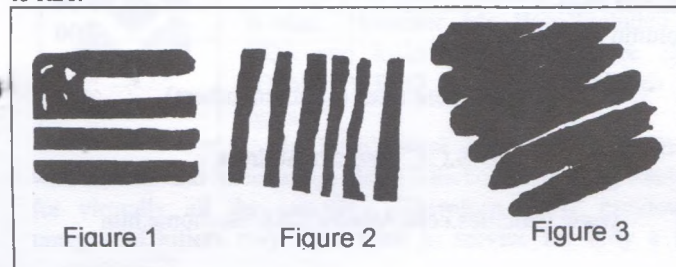
by Roger Rhoads

Paul Berg did us all a great favor with his 1992 book *Chicago Blue Postal Markings, 1870-1877* including a 1996 supplement. In leafing through the book, I note that the blues period for virtually all markings actually started in January 1873 with very few prior to that time. With few exceptions, the blue markings were not used after December 1876. During that period virtually every CDS, cancel and office marking was in various shades of blue. As I collect exclusively UX1/3 postal cards that were printed from May 1873 to September 1875, my interests almost exactly overlap.

After a successful one frame exhibit on this subject, I realized that I had only scratched the surface with 40+ cards. There are more than 150 distinct varieties, not counting variations on a particular design. So I've got a long ways to go. I began the search for more examples to put together a multi-frame collection. From that continuing work I have come up with some totally new cancellations.

First of all an update. Back in the February 2001 *NEWS* (whole no. 238) I wrote about the discovery by John Donnes of a flag cancel dated November 15, 1873 (Figure 1). Since that article, I have discovered that this cancel is far more rare than originally thought. Paul Berg did not realize that his GEO-80 cancel was a flag as it was a "not verified" cancel with the tracing showing a numeral 8 in the star field (p. 99). Jim Cole in his *Cancellations and Killers of the Banknote Era, 1870-1894* has an example noted as FL-18 with five "islands" in the star field, not four small islands as shown by John Donnes in his extremely accurate tracing. Also, Leonard Piszkeiwicz on page 36 in his book *Chicago Postal Markings and Postal History* has a photo of a cover with this killer with the same date of use.

Through conversations with other collectors I found that the cancel is missing from many specialized collections of Chicago blues. Apparently it was used only a very short time, perhaps less than a week. So add this cancel to the other key items from that city including the pool table, K ♦ K coffin, gin barrel, three leaf clover and anchor in diamond, all of which are scarce to rare.



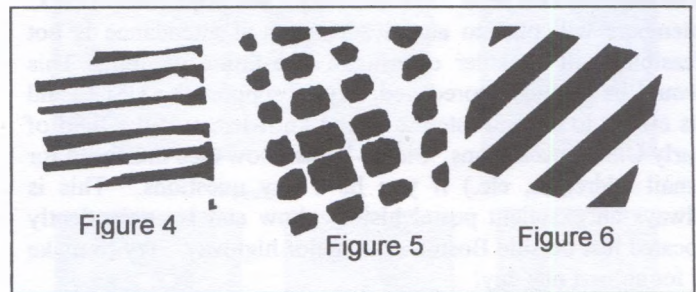
Now for some cancels that have not been previously reported starting with some rather uninteresting bar cancels. Mr. Berg lists 100+ varieties of 3, 4, 5 and 6 bar killers. Figure 2 dated January 29, 1874 is that of a 6 bar killer that has not been previously reported (the top of the killer is off the cover). Based on its use date it would fit between 6B-2 and 3.

Figure 3 is another 6 bar cancel not reported by Berg from the Western Div. Station (W. D. STA.), dated June 28, 1876. The latest 6 bar killer use listed by Berg was December 16, 1875, so this one being used seven months later is a new one that would be identified as 6B-10.

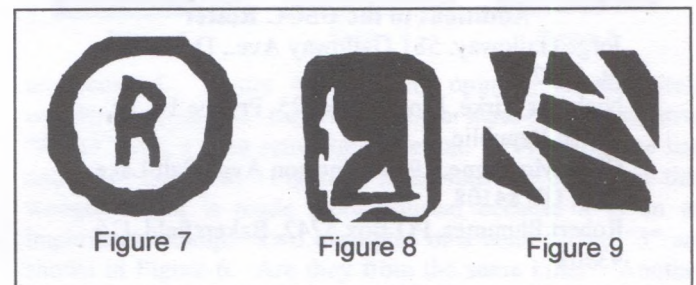
Paul did not find a 7 bar cancel, so Figure 4 used on December 22, 1874 is entirely new. Or is it? Upon close inspection, it appears to be exactly the same as the 6 bar 6B-4 tracing used on the same date. Apparently early in its life the top or left bar splintered or broke off. So though quite mundane, this cancel probably is quite scarce.

Another rather uninteresting cancel is a checkerboard variety with rectangles carved in 6 rows by 4 columns (Figure 5). This tracing is not quite complete as the upper right corner is off the cover. Mr. Berg lists over 60 of these types of killers and notes they are very common.

Yet another new one shown in Figure 6 has 5 diagonal stripes in a square that fits into Berg's Square of Lines description and is dated February 23, 1876.. It is similar to his SOL-30 but larger. Therefore, using his numbering system, it would fit between SOL-29 and SOL-30.



Finding covers with carved letter cancels is rather difficult, but here are a couple R's (Figure 7 and 8). One is a positive R inside a rim dated July 6, 1874 while the other is a reverse



(Continued on page 71)

Dear Reader,

Your USCC officers were reelected to additional terms with the exception of Tuck Taylor who retires after a long period of service. Tuck has been a wonderful supporter of our Club – not only as an officer, but as a *NEWS* advertiser for years while he operated the Taylor Made Co., a maker and supplier of Mylar pouches for covers and pages, an exhibitor at USCC competitions, a contributor of information and articles for the *NEWS*, a financial backer for special projects, and a Club representative at various shows. As many members know, Tuck was a serious collector of Washington, D.C. postal history for many years and has been regularly sought out by leading postal history students for consultation and data in this area. His exhibit, *Washington, D.C. Postal Markings/ Killers for 25 Years 1860-1885* was shown at numerous national shows and copies have been available since 1988 through the exhibit photocopy service of the Classics Society. I know that I speak not only for the USCC Board but the membership as a whole when I say: “Tuck, a hearty thank you for the many contributions to the Club and to our field of interest.”

We are pleased to welcome Vince Costello to the Board as our new First Vice President. Vince has been a Club volunteer and supporter in various areas: back issues coordinator for the *NEWS*, exhibitor at USCC competitions, Club representative at various shows, and author of *NEWS* articles. Vince and all Club officers encourage your comments on present Club activities and recommendations for future projects. Let us hear from you.

The 2007 USCC annual meeting will be held at the Philatelic Show, Boston which runs May 4-6. Our 2003 annual meeting was held there and it proved to be very successful. The Machine Cancel Society will also be holding its annual meeting at the Show, which is a decided plus for many of our members. As usual, we will hold a one-frame cancellations exhibit competition, staff a society table for three days, and hold a meeting/seminar on U.S. 19th century cancels. The meeting will be at 1PM Saturday. We hope many USCC members will plan to attend and, even if attendance is not feasible, will consider entering a one-frame exhibit. This would be a much-appreciated way to support the USCC and its efforts to expand interest in and knowledge of the field of early U.S. cancellations. Please let us know (see masthead for email addresses, etc.) if you have any questions. This is always an excellent postal history show and is conveniently located just outside Boston on a major highway. Try to make it for at least one day!

Roger Curran

Additions to the USCC Roster

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Address library inquiries to: U.S. Cancellation Club Library, Box 2219, Sunnyvale, CA 94087. (See the August 2003 *NEWS* for details or write the editor.)

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(Continued from front page)

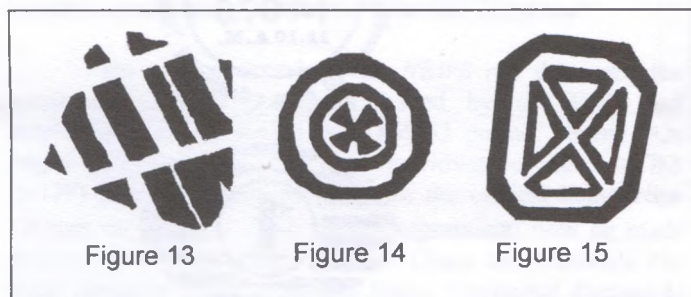
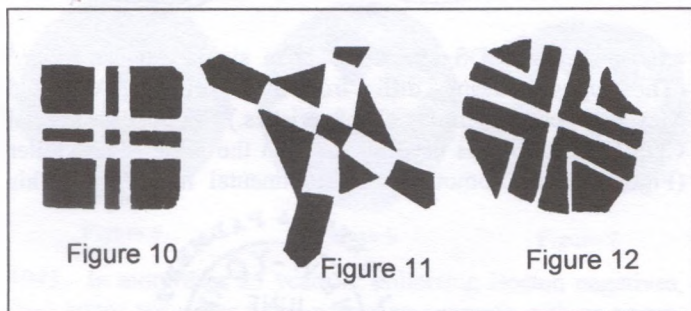
positive R surrounded by a rectangle with rounded corners dated March 30, 1875.

Along those same lines here is what appears to be a stylized "A" carved in a square dated April 23, 1875 (Figure 9). The cancel is probably square, but the upper part was off the cover.

Figure 10 is listed as a "not verified" Geometric in Berg's book (p. 99). This one is dated July 17, 1875.

The next illustration, dated April 15, 1874 is a very stylized "bow tie" (Figure 11), probably the largest cancel in the book with a diagonal measurement of 1½ inches. Mr. Berg also shows this one in his Geometric category as "not verified". The upper and lower right corners are off the cover, so it is not quite complete.

Paul would put the cancel dated April 22, 1874 (Figure 12) in the category of Double Wedges. There are 24 listed varieties in

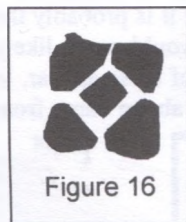


the book but this one doesn't seem to fit anyone of them. It appears to have been carved from a round or oval stock while the other varieties are approximately square.

Figure 13 is a rectangle with diagonal lines, five going from upper left to lower right and two going from lower left to upper right with a date of April 23, 1875. Again, the right side of the cancel is not quite complete as it extended beyond the edge of the cover

The next one seems to be in a category all of its own with nothing similar to it in Paul's book. Figure 14 dated July 7, 1874 has a small 4-lobe propeller inside concentric circles.

The killer in figure 15 is a rectangle of hollow triangles inside an elongated octagon dated September 25, 1875. As with the previous design, no similar one appears in the book, but it appears as GEO-13 in his supplement without a year date



The last one (Figure 16), with an RPO CDS dated June 3, 1873, is not exactly a Chicago post office marking even though it is blue. However, Mr. Berg included the CDS and killers for Chicago & Dun. (Dunlieth) RPO as having Chicago origins.

Mr. Berg's book is extremely complete with earliest and latest usage along with corresponding tracings for virtually all the cancels. Therefore, these previously unreported killers may have been in service for only a few

days. I'm sure there are more out there. Take a look through your Chicago Banknote covers and compare them to Paul Berg's book. If you don't have the book, buy one and start your own collection. I've seen quite a few attractive covers in various dealers' boxes. They are not hard to find, and in general, with the exception of the key items noted above, they are not particularly expensive. ■

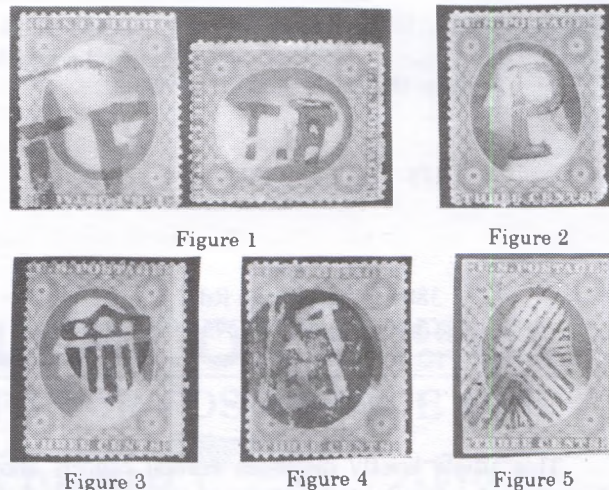
Unlisted Cancels, 1851-57 Issue Stamps

by Roger D. Curran

Progress is being made in identifying the post offices of origin for cancels found on off-cover 19th century U.S. stamps. But a great deal, of course, is yet to be done. One of the great attractions of collecting early U.S. cancels, however, is the fact that there are so many opportunities for discovering new information and we celebrate each step along the way.

Your editor was recently reminded of how little he can sometimes contribute to answering questions about particular cancels. Club member John Kellerman has been a collector of fancy or unusual cancellations on 3¢ 1851 and 1857 issue stamps, off cover or on piece, for about 35 years. He submitted a number of examples, the origins of which were unknown to him, and in only a few cases could identifying information be provided. The collective knowledge of the readership is very extensive and we are hopeful that information will be forthcoming on at least some of the interesting cancels featured herewith.

The two stamps in Figure 1 bear "TF" cancels, one with a dot after the "T." They appear to be in the same shade of grey black ink and are likely from the same post office. The Figure 2 "P" is in blue ink. Figure 3 is a distinctive and very well struck shield. It looks like a cancel about which we should be able to locate a report, but the search was



unsuccessful. Figure 4 is, in my opinion, an absolutely wonderful primitive cancel. It is a hand-carved negative "PAID" with a most remarkable format. "PA" is on one line and "ID" below it! Figure 5 is an intricate design of thin wedges which is made more unusual because it is on an imperforate stamp. Two examples of a hand-carved "3" are shown in Figure 6. Are they from the same killer? Another hand-carved "3," but this in blue ink, appears as Figure 7. A



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8

Figure 9

distinctive star with hollow center appears as Figure 8. This is by no means a rare design. Indeed there are some quite similar reports, particularly in the Alexander book, *U.S. Postal Markings 1851-1861*, but none that are convincing matches. And finally, Figure 9 illustrates two "PAID"-in-grid cancels reminiscent of those pioneered by Boston but these are not from there.

If readers can provide information on any of the above cancels, please do so. Even if it is just to report additional strikes, that would be helpful. More of John's cancels will be presented in future *NEWS* issues. ■

COLLEGE

Illustrated covers
and
College stamps, on and off cover

BUY SELL TRADE

Jim Kesterson
3881 Fulton Grove Rd
Cincinnati, OH 45245

Short Takes

This article briefly discusses several cancels about which some new information has come to the attention of the *NEWS*.

Among the earliest U.S. machine cancels are those attributed to Frederick Myers. These markings, each of which is considered very rare, were applied by the NYPO in 1876. Examples of the basic CDS and killer combination have been noted in April and May (Figure 1) with what is probably



Figure 1

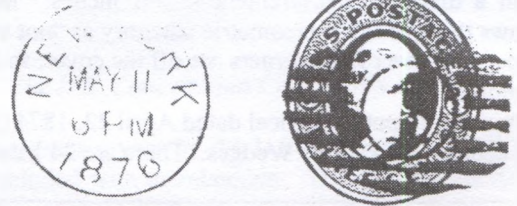


Figure 2



Figure 3



another Myers CDS and killer on a single August cover.' (The August markings differ from those struck in April and May but possess similar characteristics.) In June, a special CDS (Figure 2) was used, along with the basic Myers killer (Figure 3) to promote a transcontinental train trip. This

particular trip took about 3 ½ days as opposed to the normal seven days and, at that time, constituted a transcontinental speed record. Henry C. Jarrett and Henry D. Palmer were lessees of the Booth Theatre in New York. The trip was arranged by them to take a company of actors, after its closing performance in New York May 31, to San Francisco for an opening performance on June 5.

The above is by way of introduction of the report by John Donnes (Figure 4) of the distinctive Myers killer on an off-cover 6¢ Banknote. To your editor's knowledge, this is the first report of the cancel not on a 3¢ Banknote or 3¢ PSE indicium. It may be unique. Whether it was applied by the basic CDS and killer combination or the promotional CDS and killer is unknown. One might speculate that it is probably the former as covers from the fast train trip would more likely have been saved. However, virtually none of these appear, in fact, to have survived. Information for the above came from



Figure 4

an article by Bob Payne entitled "Palmer Machine Marking" in the March 1966 NEWS, and from his 1995 exhibit (see footnote #1). Forty years ago, Bob thought the fast train markings to be the product of a Palmer machine, but later revised that opinion.

The August 2006 NEWS discussed a most interesting "Boston negative" cancel involving an arrow cut into the design. A more complete treatment of the subject would have included three literature references to similar Boston cancels. Figure 5 is from the "U.S. Cancellations" column by Wm. R. Reynolds in the 2/18/39 issue of Stamps magazine. It was reported on a "1¢ postal of 1875, dated February 12, 1881." Figure 6 is listing BOS-26 from page 294 of the Jim Cole Banknote era cancels book. Figure 7 is Whitfield book tracing



Figure 5

Figure 6

Figure 7

1043. In more than 25 years of collecting Boston negatives, your editor has never come across an example with an arrow, but they are obviously out there. Who can report one?

On several occasions the NEWS has discussed the small double-circle postmarks issued by the POD and employed primarily during the 1860-63 period. Some POs began using them in 1859 and the November 2005 NEWS (p.129) listed five such offices with the earliest being New Orleans on 9/16/59. Two further reports can now be made from a seemingly unlikely source – Chase and Cabeen's *The First Hundred Years of United States Territorial Postmarks 1787/1887*. Figure 8 illustrates the postmarks at issue. How the distribution schedule was determined for these handstamps is an interesting question. Were postmasters just offered the

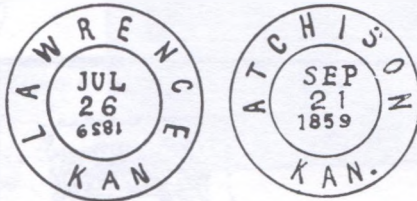


Figure 8

opportunity to order these handstamps with no fixed determination of what post offices would receive them and when?

The *La Posta* monograph *Walter D. Wesson's "Time on Bottom" Duplex Hand Cancels* by Ted Bozarth and edited by Russell Hanmer reports Philadelphia Station "F" CDS and killer markings from 8/14/84 – 10/1/89. (The ellipse killers for Wesson Philadelphia stations, incidentally, all had a "PA" in the center.) Figure 9 illustrates a 3¢ War Department stamp with an 11/3/83 Station F strike, more than nine months earlier than the monograph report. Is this the result of very limited



Figure 9

early usage of the Station F handstamp? Station B usages are noted from 11/1/83 but the several other stations are all from mid-1884 or later. We'll note here that Club members Gil Levere and Ralph Edson are in the process of producing an extensive update to the Bozarth/Hanmer work and the NEWS will provide ordering details when they become available.

Finally, in the November 2005 and February 2006 issues of the NEWS, attention was given to a most unusual cancel reading "BEACH HOUSE/SEA GIRT, NJ" shown here as Figure 10. It is usually seen in a magenta ink and is assumed to have been produced by a rubber-faced handstamp. It is interesting to note a similar design concept in an ad for "rubber stamps" that appeared, albeit more than ten years later, in the 1893 *Postal Guide*. Could the Sadler Co. be the source of the Beach House canceler?■

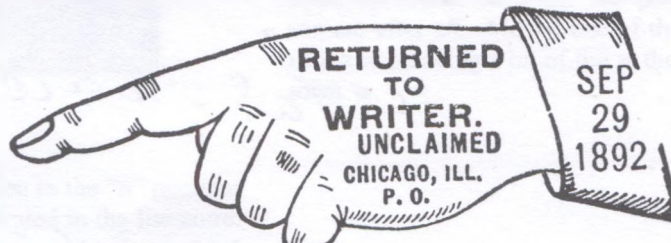
¹ Robert Payne, *U.S. Classic Machine Cancels 1871-1991*, Machine Cancel Society (1995), pp. 33-6.



Figure 10

THE SADLER CO. BALTIMORE, MD. KANSAS CITY, MO.

RUBBER STAMPS FOR POST OFFICE USE.



No. 1, price with name of P. O. inserted, 50c. (with box of dates \$1.25.)

No. 2, price 20c.

Rate Numeral "6"

One of the very interesting categories of U.S. 19th century cancels is that of markings intended for use basically on stampless mail. There is, for openers, the small irony that such markings would find their way at all to being used as cancelers of stamps. But, of course, they do and in considerable numbers. The most common type of "stampless" marking found on stamps is the rate marker, and those with "5" or "10" are seen more frequently than other numbers. In the Spring 1998 *NEWS*, an article reported examples of the "3" numeral used as a canceler over a 40+ year period during and long after the stampless era largely ended in January 1856. Other than "5," "10" and "3," usages of rate markers as cancelers are scarce. This article presents several "6" cancels.

A "6" rate numeral was most likely to be used for a double weight letter prepaid in cash (under 3,000 miles) or a prepaid single weight letter traveling over 3,000 miles. These rates came into existence in July 1851, with the latter discontinued March 31, 1855. The "6" is also found to some extent on way and ship mail of the period.

The first "6" is from Vernon, Vermont and is shown

on a pair of covers. The April 8 cover has an enclosure dated April 7, 1869 and the stamp is a grilled issue. Figure 2 is from St. Albans, Maine. The "6" on this cover was double struck (perhaps a bounce) and each strike was individually traced. Thanks for John Donnes for the Figure 1 and 2 tracings. Figure 3 shows a bold "6" of unknown origin. Figure 4 is a bit off the point, being a circular date stamp, but reflects a "6" rate. This marking has a "10" rarity rating in Alexander, so apparently saw very little use. Figure 5 is a tracing from the Chase 3¢ 1851-57 book, attributed by him to Manchester, New Hampshire. This cancel is interesting because, with the multiple rings, it is quite similar to standardized cancels used by several big-city post offices in the late 1870s and early 1880s. Your editor had never seen an example, on or off cover, until very recently with the publication of *The 1851 Issue of United States Stamps: a Sesquicentennial Retrospective*, published by the Classics Society. A Frank Mandel article entitled "The 1851 Issue Used During a Period of Significant Transition" illustrates a lovely Manchester cover (appears to be 1853) to California bearing a pair of 3¢ 1851 stamps, with each stamp canceled by this "6." The Figure 6 "6" kills two Sc 11 singles on small piece. Unfortunately, the portion of the CDS to the left only shows the letter "L." Finally, we'll add two "DUE 6" cancels on a Sc

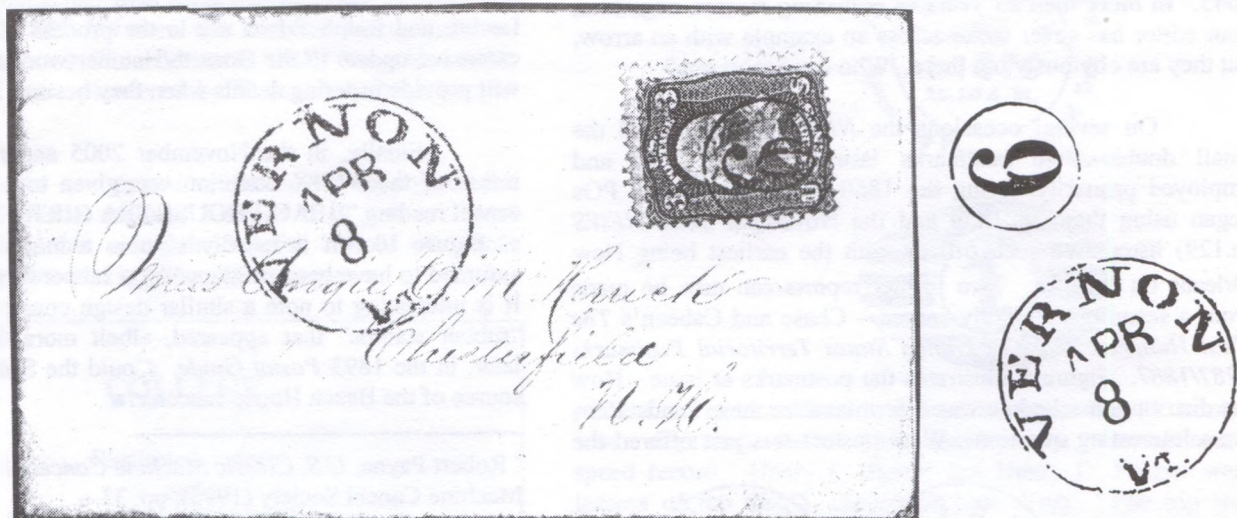


Figure 1

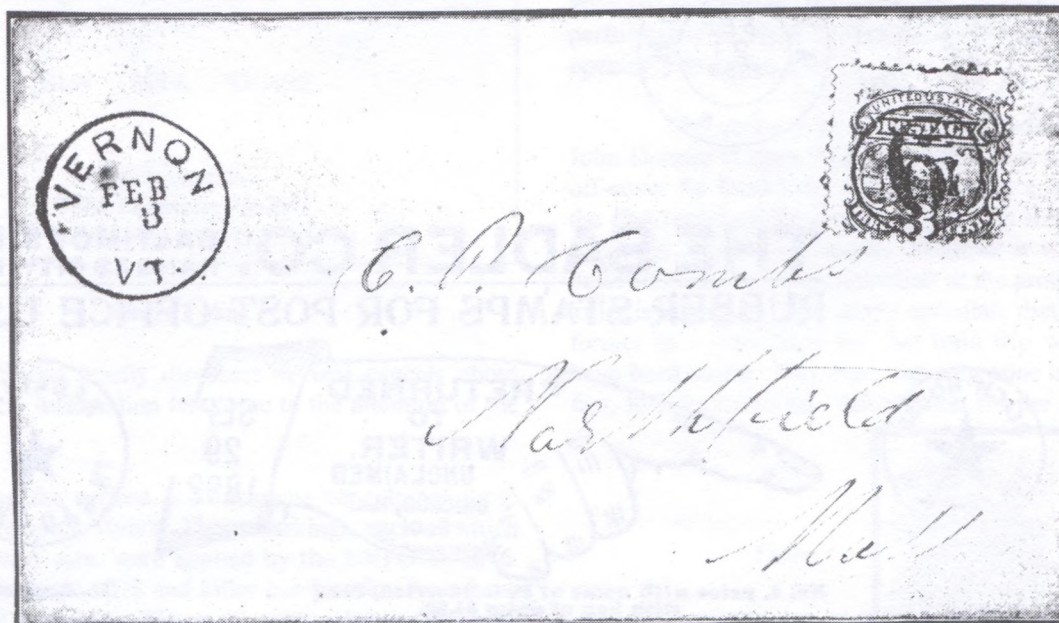


Figure 2

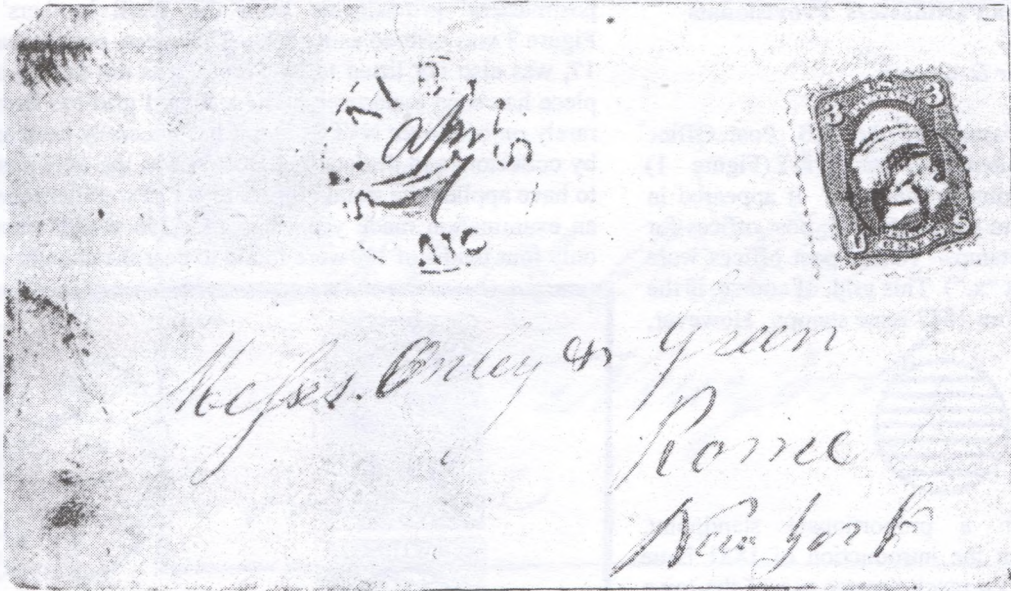


Figure 3



Lake Serpent?

by Roger Rhoads

We all have cancels in our collections that fit the category of "could be" or "might be". This cancel on a UX3 from Warsaw, NY, is dated April 8, 1874 and seems to fit this description as well. Under magnification this cancel looks as though it has teeth. Is it meant to be a snake or serpent?

I also happen to have a man's head cancel from this same town on a UX3 that is definitely not a blob. It has been my experience that towns that use fancy cancellers (e.g. Syracuse, NY) do so most of the time while others predominantly use simple corks. Thus I concluded the Warsaw postmaster had something in mind when he carved this killer.



Then I got to thinking about what it might represent and went to the Internet to use Google, searching for serpent and Finger Lakes as Warsaw is a few miles west of those beautiful bodies of water.

Lo and behold, I chanced upon a story from the history of the town of Silver Lake, NY, which is less than ten miles east of Warsaw located on the lake of the same name. It seems that in 1855 residents of Silver Lake saw what they claimed to be a serpent in the waters off shore. For several years thereafter there was a serpent float in the Fourth of July boat parade on the lake to commemorate the sightings.

In 1857 there was a fire in a hotel in town. Firemen found in the attic a rope and canvas "serpent". It was apparently a hoax perpetrated by the hotel owner and local newspaper editor to drum up tourist business. So perhaps this cancel is really a serpent after all. Maybe one of the clerks in the Warsaw post office was having a bit of fun at the expense of the neighboring town. ■

Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7



65 and a Sc J3.

The above is only an introduction to the "6" numeral as canceler. Others are, of course, illustrated in the literature. The NEWS would welcome reports of examples in readers' collections, both on and off cover. ■

1847 Era Cancellation on Postmasters' Provisionals

by Roger D. Curran

The first canceler issued by the U.S. Post Office Department produced a circular 7-bar grid (Figure 1) measuring approximately 18mm in diameter. It appeared in July 1847 and was provided to the larger U.S. post offices for use on the new 1847 issue stamps. (Other post offices were advised to apply a manuscript "x.") This grid, of course, is the most commonly noted cancel on 1847 issue stamps. However,

Figure 1

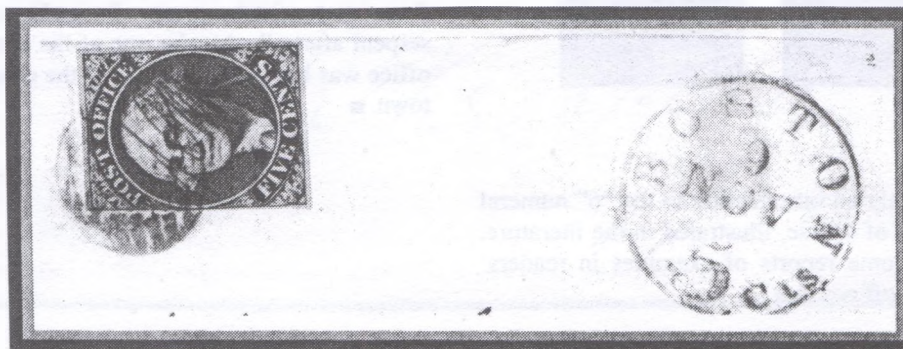


its use, particularly from a proportionate standpoint, diminished dramatically after the introduction of 1851 issue stamps. This was due to (1) a much greater use of the town postmark as a canceler and (2) the large increase in smaller post offices (that hadn't been issued the standard grid) that were now canceling stamps. Just when the POD stopped distributing the standard grid is unclear but I have found no reference to it in POD guidelines later than 1851. I assume the handstamp was made of metal because, while apparent wear can be seen, it is not the more dramatic type of breakup and distortion that is noted with wood.

Given its "first" status, this cancellation has been of considerable interest to me and I look for unusual uses. One of the more fascinating situations involves postmasters' provisionals from two cities – New York and St. Louis. Let's begin with New York. It should be noted initially that there are no reported examples of a New York Postmaster's Provisional (NYPP) canceled with the standard grid *by the NYPO*. But there are a number of NYPP covers that entered the mails at other post offices. Boston had the most. Stanley Piller listed 19 covers or parts of covers from Boston, although one of them was opined by the Philatelic Foundation to have a horizontal pair of NYPPs fraudulently added.¹ In not all cases was the obliterator reported but those that were noted included Boston postmarks, the New York curved "PAID" and various manuscript cancels. At least one cover bore stamps with no cancel. In one case, based on an auction lot clipping, a horizontal pair was reported as "... apparently tied by a circular grid..." There was no reference to a circular grid in any of the other listings.

Not included in the Boston listing but illustrated elsewhere in the Piller book² was the piece shown here as Figure 2. Also, in the 10/12/89 Christie's sale of the

Figure 2



postmasters' provisionals from the Weill brothers' stock, Figure 3 was offered as lot 590. This piece, postmarked April 17, was also not listed to by Piller. It is not known if either piece has been expertised. The standard grid has been noted rarely on off-cover NYPPs and it has generally been accepted by collectors and dealers that Boston was the only post office to have applied the standard grid to NYPPs. Piller reported on an examination made years ago of 1,356 NYPP stamps and only four tenths of 1% were found to bear the circular grid.³

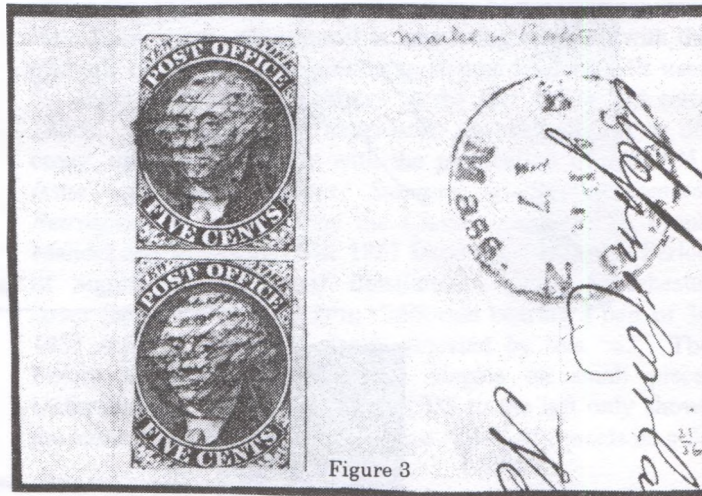


Figure 3

Another Boston grid surfaced recently as lot 478 in the Schuyler Rumsey sale of December 6-8, 2006 and is shown here as Figure 4. The stamp bears two strikes of the standard grid, one of which creates a slight tie to the cover. (The tracings are provided through the courtesy of John Donnes.) The cover has a 1986 PF certificate. As readers will note, the name of the addressee and, unfortunately, part of the Boston August 13 postmark, were cut out and a prior owner of the cover attempted to reconstruct the name of the addressee on a slip of paper in a lighter shade. The reconstruction, however, is quite erroneous as the addressee is unquestionably "Messrs Howland and Aspinwall." Writing on the subject of NYPP uses from Boston, Philip Wall, a student of postmasters' provisionals, stated the following:

"Many of these items are addressed to the shipping firm of Howland and Aspinwall. For some reason, the name of the addressee has been cut out of several of these covers; in some instances it has been replaced. Many of these items are only parts of covers, and, in some cases, should probably more accurately be described as being on piece rather than as covers."⁴

Figure 5 is a more or less typical example of the written

Figure 4

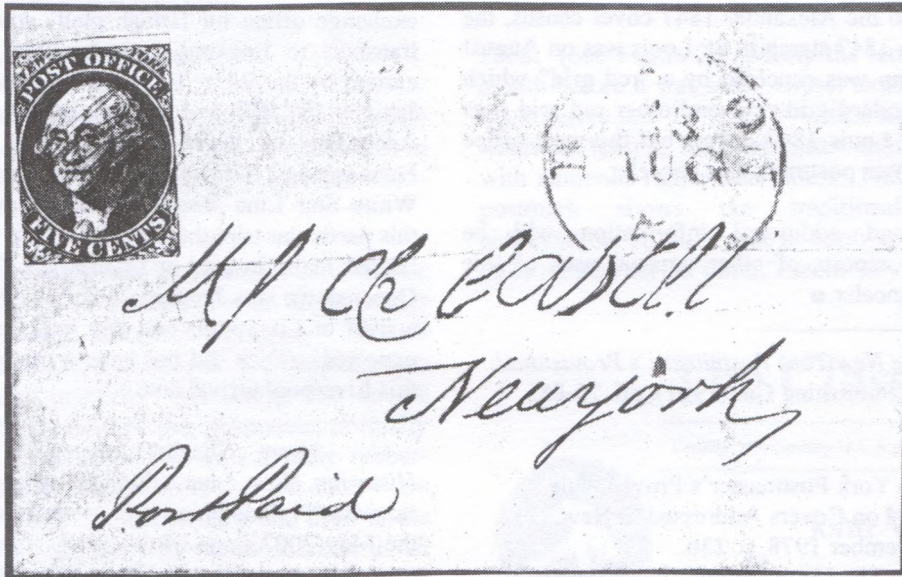
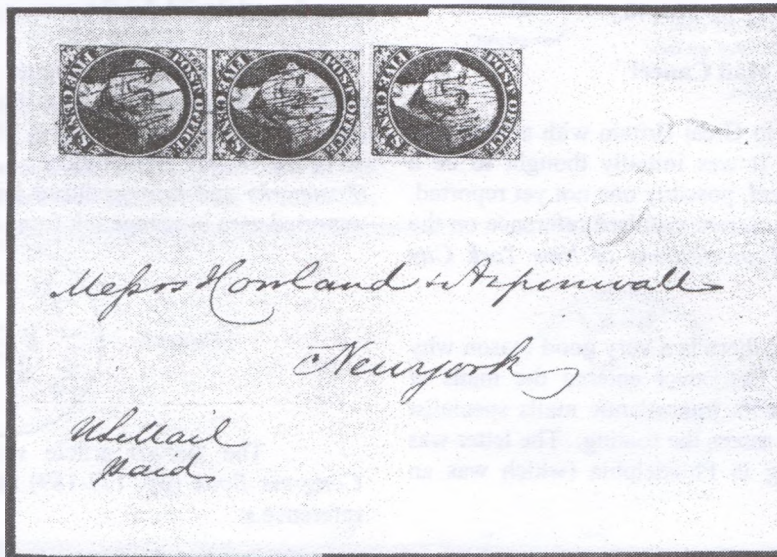


Figure 5



addressee name. The vast majority of the covers in the Piller listing are Howland and Aspinwall items.

As far as I know, all reported examples of the standard grid on NYPPs are in red ink. These uses must have all been after the introduction of 1847 issue stamps because the standard grid only showed up beginning at that time. The first reported use of the standard grid is on a July 12, 1847 cover from Philadelphia. (See August 2001 NEWS, p. 102.) According to the Alexander census of 1847 issue covers, the Boston post office used the standard grid in red ink almost exclusively as the canceler of its 1847 issue stamps, from the beginning in July 1847 through 1849 when strikes in black began to appear.⁵

In the October 31, 2003 Matthew Bennett sale of the Margie Faiman collection of St. Louis postmaster's provisionals, lot 86, shown here as Figure 6, was a Scott 11X7 canceled solely by the standard grid in red. The lot description states that the stamp is one of two known Bears with the grid cancel and has a 1974 PF certificate. (What is presumably the second stamp, also canceled in red ink, is shown as Figure 7.) The Bennett lot description mentions that this grid usage was during the "transitional" period when the

Figure 6

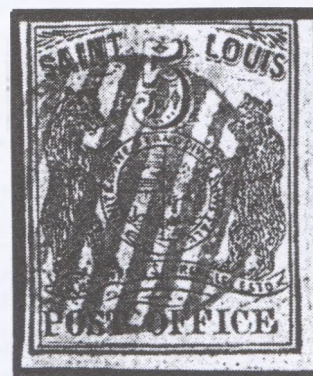


Figure 7

postmasters' provisionals and 1847s were used concurrently. I suppose it is due to the fact that no covers are known showing a Bears stamp canceled by the standard grid that some speculation along a particular line has occurred. The idea here is that perhaps after the 1847 stamps were introduced, a few Bears were given out by the St. Louis post office as favors but first canceled to be sure no one would attempt to use them. According to a Bennett census presented in the Faiman collection catalog, there is one known use of a St. Louis Bears stamp on cover after July 1, 1847 and that is a July 19, 1847 usage with each of the four stamps canceled by a straight-line

“PAID.” According to the Alexander 1847 cover census, the first reported use of an 1847 stamp in St. Louis was on August 19, 1847 and the stamp was canceled by a “red grid” which surely must be the standard grid. Several other red grid uses are noted on early St. Louis 1847 covers but this post office soon switched to the town postmark as a canceler.

Comments and additional information will be welcomed as well as reports of other unusual uses of this pioneering grid as a canceler. ■

¹Piller, Stanley M. *The New York Postmaster’s Provisional*, Robert G. Kaufmann Publishing Co. (1991), pp. 70-88.

²Ibid., p. 101

³Ibid., p. 100

⁴Wall, Philip T. “New York Postmaster’s Provisionals Initialed “ACM” Used on Covers Addressed to New York City” *Chronicle*, November 1978, p. 236.

⁵Alexander, Thomas J. *The United States 1847 Issue: A Cover Census*, USPS (2001), pp 204-40.

Foreign Mail Cancel

Figure 1 is a cover to Great Britain with a large and bold “arrowheads” cancel. It was initially thought to be a New York Foreign Mail cancel, possibly one not yet reported. Indeed, it is not listed in the current standard reference on the subject, the *Foreign Mail Cancellations of New York City 1870-1878* by Bill Weiss.

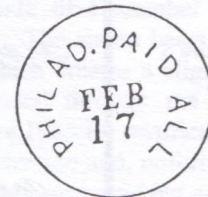
Well, as it turns out, there is a very good reason why it is not listed in Weiss. The cover entered the mails at Philadelphia. Consultation with transatlantic mails specialist Dick Winter was required to assess the routing. The letter was placed in a closed mail bag in Philadelphia (which was an

exchange office for British mail) and sent to New York for transport to England. A plausible scenario has the letter carried by the White Star Line *Oceanic* leaving New York on January 10, 1874 and arriving in Liverpool about January 21. According to *North Atlantic Mail Sailings 1840-75* by Hubbard and Winter, the normal eastbound destination for White Star Line steamers was Queenstown, Ireland but, on this particular trip, the steamer did not stop at Queenstown but landed mails instead at Liverpool. The scheduled arrival in Queenstown was January 20 and the January 21 date of actual arrival in Liverpool, one day later, is what one would have expected. (Dick did not have a newspaper report to confirm this Liverpool arrival date.)

Norm Shachat, editor of *Pennsylvania Postal Historian*, drew your editor’s attention to an article by John Barwis, “Philadelphia Foreign Mail Cancellations to 1882” in the May 2002 issue of the *PPH*. In that article the Figure 1 cancel is reported and Norm stated that Mr. Barwis records uses from 1/16/74-4/3/74.

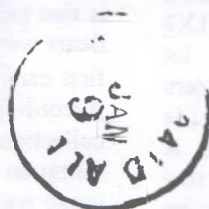
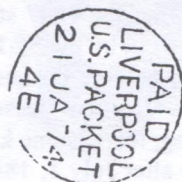
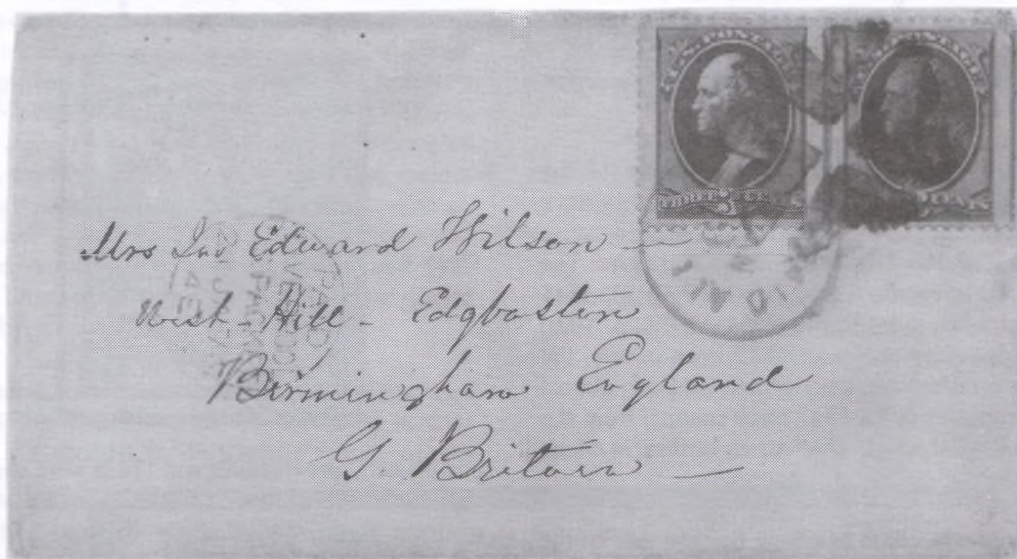
The tracings in Figure 1 are provided through the courtesy of John Donnes. An illustration of a full strike of this particular type of Philadelphia “PAID ALL” marking appears in Part II of Tom Clarke’s *A Catalog of Philadelphia Postmarks* and is reproduced here as Figure 2. Mr. Clarke reported uses in orange ink from 1/19/69-7/18/75.

Figure 2



The Barwis article was republished in the 2003 *Congress Book* (pp. 177-189) and is a valuable cancellation reference. ■

Figure 1



Variations From the Norm

by Roger D. Curran

I have before me two covers postmarked "GLEN IRON/PENNA." Glen Iron is a DPO that was located in Union County in central Pennsylvania. It operated from 1883-1956.

Collectors occasionally see postmarkers used in this way as cancelers – not head-on strikes but at an angle so that only enough ink is deposited to cancel the stamp. When I come across such an example, I assume it is a happenstance occurrence, not a regular practice. But seeing two covers makes one think that it may be how this postmaster normally canceled stamps. The postmarker was undoubtedly rubber-faced and we see distortion creeping in on the left side where the double-line rim is losing its shape. The ink used is the pale grey that collectors often see with rubber markers as an alternative to black printer's ink which was corrosive to the rubber composition. Sometimes these pale inks show a trace or a hint of blue.

An interesting aspect is the month indicator in the 1886 postmark. Looking at it quickly, I thought it might be an incomplete "NOV." But, indeed it is not. On the back of the cover is a notation that the letter was answered on October 25,

1886. (See Figure 2.) Surely the letter wasn't answered the month before it was sent! Closer examination reveals that the mark before the "O" is a "1" with a small serif at the top. For whatever reason, the postmaster chose to denote the month with numerals rather than letters. Note that the January 1887 postmark shows the traditional three-letter month abbreviation, so the intent to apply a Quaker-dated postmark three months earlier doesn't seem very likely. ■

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Figure 1



Figure 2

Slogans Cancellation Book

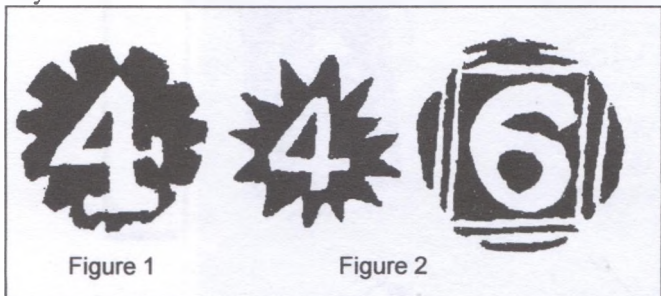
The August 2005 *NEWS* announced a new book produced in two volumes, *U.S. Promotional Slogan Cancellations 1899-1940*, by Robert J. Payne and Bart Billings. We have recently been notified of an upcoming second printing, which will also be a limited edition. The publication contains a total of 398 pages alphabetically listing all known slogan machine postal markings in alphabetical order from inception up to 1940. There is a "value guide" given for each slogan. Almost every marking has a scanned image as indicated by the 1,000+ illustrations presented. The illustrations help the collector to easily identify a particular slogan.

Orders may be placed with Bart Billings at 3722 Vidalia Ave., North Las Vegas, NV 89031. The retail price is \$44. However, for a limited time, a pre-publication price is set at \$41 postpaid for the set of two.■

New York City Hand Carved Numbers Update

by Roger Rhoads

I discussed the Roman numeral cancels used in mid-1874 in the last issue (November 2006, whole no. 261). It's time to review all the hand-carved numbers, give an update on the various killers used in 1874 when many types were being tested and add to that discussed in Roger Curran's article in the August 2006 (whole no. 260) issue. This article goes back to information published in the *NEWS* over the past 20 years starting with my articles in 1985 (Fall 1985, whole no. 186) and 1990 (Fall 1990, whole no. 207) with updates along the way.



The first hand carved numbers were used at least as early as February 1871 when a negative "4" showed up (Figure 1). No other numbers have been reported in that year, and the negative numbers "7" and "12" are the only others reported until late November 1872 when fourteen numbers were in use.

Roger Curran exhaustively discussed the carved numbers "15" and "16", so I can only add that I agree with his conclusions.

The question of why the numbers in the killers were used has been answered by a New York Post Office annual report of 1877 published in the *NEWS* issue for Fall 1986 (whole no. 190). It was explained that the duplex handstamps used to

postmark letters had numbers that were used to identify letters deposited through the general office drops or deposited in lamppost boxes. Each stamping clerk had a number corresponding to the number on the particular handstamp that he used. Thus the postmark showed the time when it was mailed at the office, the clerk who stamped it and whether it was dropped into a lamppost box or mailed at the main post office.

Killers with numbers were used exclusively on domestic out of town mail by clerks in the main P.O. City mail was canceled with other markings.

As noted, negative numbers were used as early as February 1871, quite sometime before positive ones began to show up. In general they were relatively unimaginative, a black circle with a negative Arabic number incised within. Few "fancies" have been noted (see Figure 2). Was that due to official reasons or did the clerks have very little free time on their hands?

The earliest positive Arabic number was a "2" used April 1872 with the next much later in July 1873. Generally they are circumscribed with a rim, though some had background bars as noted in my article in the last issue. As stated in the past, no positive "4" has ever been reported.

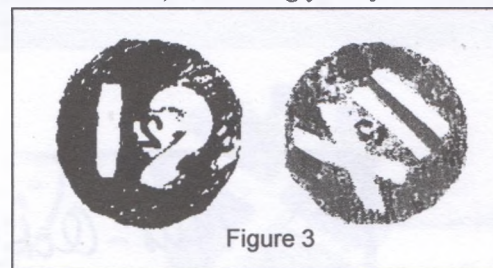
It appears as though the P.O. was attempting to improve the legibility of the numbers as noted in the earlier article. Certainly many of the negative numbers are quite difficult to interpret, and the positive ones are much more distinct. So for a period of time, primarily May and April 1874, virtually all of the cancels were positive. However, the positive cancelers broke up in about two weeks of use versus about five weeks for the negative ones.

Positive numbers still were used sporadically alongside the negative ones through 1874 with the latest reported in January 1875.

Next to be tried were the Roman numerals, both positive with barred backgrounds and negative. Apparently it was felt that the greater area of inked surface being used would result in longer life. However, if the cancel was off the edge of the cover, "XI" could be misinterpreted as an "X", or when the killer rotated, a "XI" could become an "IX". Thus the primary dates of use of these killers was limited to August and September 1874 with the earliest being February 1874 and the latest in November 1874 (both positive).

The Romans were obviously an experiment, and of the batch of postal cards used for my earlier article, only 10% of the total was of that type. Negative Romans are very scarce with only the numbers "IX" and "XII" being reported. The majority of the numbers are Arabic with 70% being negative and 20% positive.

Another tack was to use a material other than wood. In late 1874 rubber stoppers began to be used (Figure 3). (The small reversed number in the center indicated the manufacturer's standard size.) Seemingly they should have worn better.



However, the general experience was that the linseed oil used in the inks attacked the rubber and quickly destroyed it.

1874 Number Cancel Reports

This admonition was mentioned in the 1893 issue of *The Postal Laws and Regulations of the U.S.A.* Only a very few cancels have been reported with small reversed numbers in them, indicating a rubber stopper had been carved for cancellation purposes, including negative "11", negative "12" and negative "XII". Thanks to Wendell Triplett and John Donnes for their continued reports on these killers.

The NYPO was still in a quandary. Nothing so far had provided the legibility and durability that they desired. In

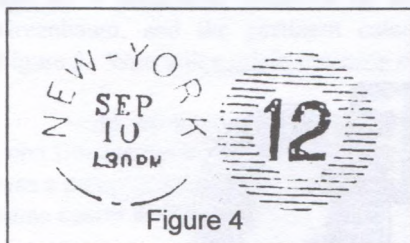


Figure 4

addition to hand-stamps they were looking carefully at mechanical stampers much like today's ticket daters. Here is the product of what is presumed to be a mechanical handstamper of uncertain origin that was used in the September to November 1874 time frame using a twenty-one line "12" (Figure 4). These cancels are very scarce. Apparently it was not adopted due to being too slow to use effectively. It took another year or so until the Leavitt canceling machine became available in 1876, but it was quite limited in its versatility and could only cancel postal cards effectively.

So they finally began to experiment with steel hand cancels. The first to show up was an eleven bar metal ellipse with a "5" first noted in November 1874. This particular cancel (Figure 5) was used to a limited extent through the remainder of 1874 and into 1875. Finally, in May 1876 the office began to use nine-bar ellipses (Figure 6). The eleven bar "5" use was not continued but an eleven bar "6" which may have been prepared at the same time as the "5" was used on a limited basis during the 1876-78 period. The hand carved varieties disappeared at the time the nine bar ellipses appeared.

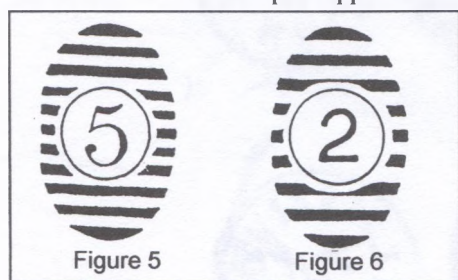


Figure 5



Figure 6

The following is an updated chart along with foot-notes to show all of the various carved cancels being used in 1874.

Note that the "2", either negative or positive, is rather

scarce for no apparently good reason. Did it represent a drop box that was somewhat hidden and rarely used? Another thought is that it may have been used on domestic mail that was inadvertently dropped in a slot meant for international mail. We know that some of the domestic numbers were rarely and erroneously used on international mail. Bill Weiss in his *The Foreign Mail Cancellations of NYC, 1870-1878* book shows negative "1", "2", "8", "9", "10", "12" and positive "1" and "11" cancels. If foreign mail was intermixed with domestic mail and received a number cancel, it would seem possible that domestic mail could have been intermixed with foreign mail and was caught by the box #2 clerk. Any other thoughts?

Many thanks to John Donnes and Ron Lieth for supplying numerous use dates. Anybody have more additions to the chart? Send them along. ■

Negative Arabic

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
1					X	X				X		
2						X					X	X
3	X		X	X		X			X		X	X
4	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		
5			X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X
6	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	
7			X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
8				X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
9		X			X	X	X		X		X	X
10				X			X				X	
11	X	X			X	X			X	X	X	X
12	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	
13					X	X	X	X			X	X
14				X	X	X	X	X			X	X

Positive Arabic

1	X	X	X	X				X	X	X	X	X
2	X			X					X			X
3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					
4												
5	X	X	X						X	X		X
6			X	X	X					X		
7	X	X	X	X					X			
8		X	X	X	X							
9			X	X	X				X		X	
10		X	X	X	X	X	X					
11	X	X	X	X						X		
12									X	X	X	
13		X		X					X			
14		X	X	X					X	X		

Negative Roman

IX						X	X		X	X		
XII									X	X	X	X

Positive Roman

I		X										
II								X				
III								X	X			
IV								X				
V								X				
VI								X				
VII								X	X			
VIII								X	X			
IX						X	X		X			
X								X				
XI								X				
XII								X				
XIII								X				
XIII								X				
XIV								X				

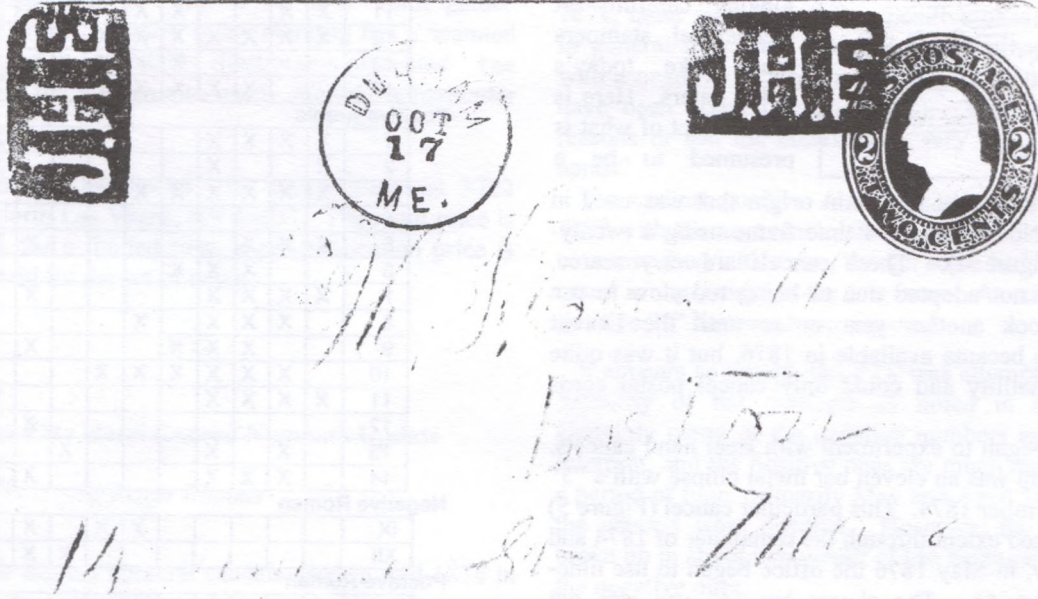
* 11-bar metal oval positive "5" used from Nov. 16, 1874 to March 11, 1875.

- 1 - Rubber stoppers used for some negative Arabic "11" in Nov./Dec.
- 2 - Rubber stoppers used for some negative Arabic "12" in Nov.
- 3 - Some negative Arabic "14" in Oct. and Dec. had broad background bars
- 4 - Positive Arabic "1" in Aug. thru Dec. had broad background bars
- 5 - Positive Arabic "5" in Aug.-Oct. had broad background bars
- 6 - Some positive Arabic "6" had 16 narrow background bars
- 7 - Positive Arabic "9" in Nov. had broad background bars
- 8 - Positive Arabic "12" in Sept.-Nov. had 21 background bars.
- 9 - Positive Arabic "14" in Sept.-Oct. had broad background bars
- 10 - Rubber stoppers used for negative Roman "XII" in Sept.

More on Eveleth

The cover story in the November 2006 issue featured several cancellations from Durham, Maine attributed to postmaster J.H. Eveleth. As it so happened, Joe Crosby had just completed some research on the subject and has kindly shared the results with the NEWS. We can do no better than quote Joe's statements and show the illustrations from the page in his collection.

"This cover features one of the more distinctive post-master's initials cancels of the 1870-80's period – the Negative J.H.E. in a Solid Rectangle from Durham, Maine. It has added appeal of the cancel being used as a corner card in a vertical format."



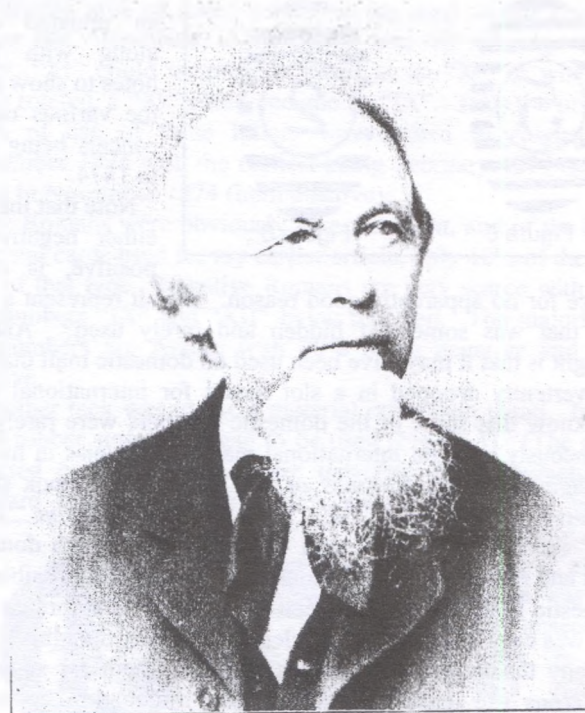
Negative J.H.E. Cancel in Solid Rectangle on U 227 Oct 17 (1883)
Postmaster's Initials of James Henry Eveleth, Durham, Maine

"James Henry Eveleth was born Feb. 6, 1816 in N. Gloucester, Mass. and moved to Durham, Maine in 1831. He served as postmaster there for many years. He is listed as postmaster in 1862 and again in 1877 in the Official Register. He is known to have used this distinctive cancellation from 1875-1884. He died in 1889. A son, Harlan Fremont Eveleth, was born in December 1855 to James Henry Eveleth and his 3rd wife, Martha Long.

This cover is addressed by the Durham, Maine Postmaster James Henry Eveleth to his son H(arlan) F(remont) Eveleth in Boston, Mass. He used his postmaster's initials cancel as a corner card as well, since his son would certainly recognize it upon receipt, even before opening the envelope.

All of the family information and the photo illustration are taken from 'History of Durham, Maine with Genealogical Notes' by Everett S. Stackpole, Lewistown, 1899."

For Sale: Cancellations, 3 cent 1861.
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JAMES H. EVELETH.

Masonics All?

Jim Kesterson submitted several cancellations that may have a common theme – one that would not immediately be apparent. Figure 1 shows a Masonic “square and compass” cancel from Louisville, KY. It was struck in blue ink. Cole listed a somewhat similar cancel from Louisville dated October 14, 1875 but it is very doubtful that it is the same. Figure 2 is assumed to be a Masonic “rod with dots” cancel. The Summer 1998 *NEWS* presented a chart developed years ago by a prominent collector of Masonic cancels, Milton Greenbaum, and the pertinent category is shown here as Figure 3. Who will explain meaning of the “rod with dots?”

As an interesting sidelight to the Figure 2 cancel, John Donnes has a similar cancel (Figure 4) which he assumed was a pumpkinhead. John now thinks that it is likely to be the same cancel as Figure 2.

Figure 5 shows a delightfully primitive yet quite intricate “G” from Ashland, Ohio. John checked the Ashland postmaster names and did not find one in the 1860’s whose first or last name began with “G,” which brings us to another category on Mr. Greenbaum’s chart shown here as Figure 6. Indeed, Jim Kesterson raised the question in transmitting the cancels as to whether the “G” might be Masonic for “Grand Lodge.”

Thanks to John Donnes for all the above tracings. ■

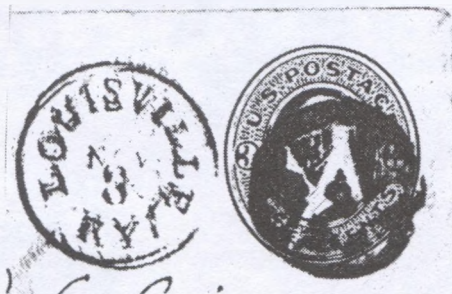


Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



ROD WITH OR WITHOUT
DOTS.
ALL DESIGNS

Figure 4



Figure 6



ALL ^GDESIGNS

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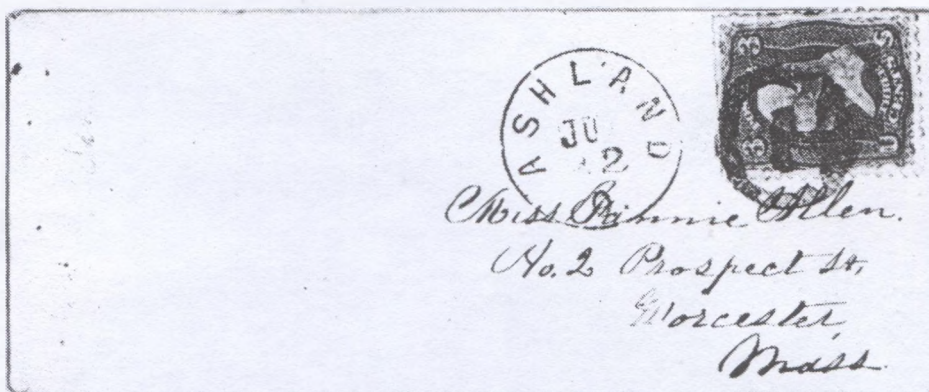
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Figure 5



A Simple Mistake or More?

by Roger D. Curran

Figure 1 is a UX5 card canceled by a "Chicago blue" checkerboard dated "DEC/--/2PM." The day numerals are very poorly struck but are probably "22" or "23." However, as is evident in Figure 2, which illustrates the back of the Figure 1 card, the message dateline is December 21, 1875. Of interest is the cancellation at the bottom left of Figure 2. It is dated "DEC/2-/2PM with the second numeral probably a "2." Underneath the cancellation is a statement in magenta ink, enclosed in an elongated octagon that reads as follows:

Music sent through
The Mails, or goods Pur-
Chased specially for your
Orders, can not be
Exchanged."

Was the cancellation intended to block out the message for some reason? It was struck directly over it. With the reference to "through the mails," I first thought the message might have been applied by the Chicago post office and then it was later decided to cancel it for some reason. But that, of course, isn't plausible – what we have is nothing more than a simple statement to alert customers of the company's exchange policy. I wondered next if the statement was perhaps interpreted as a criticism of the postal service (i.e., items sent through the mails are subject to damage) and an offended postal clerk reacted a bit emotionally. Again, most unlikely.

We do occasionally see, of course, machine cancels that are struck in the lower left of the backs of cards and letters

when they were not properly faced before entering the machine. But this is no machine cancel and the clerk certainly could see what he was doing. Nonetheless, it is your editor's guess that the clerk was working from a stack of faced mail and was simply inattentive as he picked up this card which was improperly faced. He struck it before noticing the problem which he quickly corrected with a strike on the front. Comment is invited.

In his book *Chicago Blue Postal Markings 1870-1877*, Paul Berg lists a number of checkerboard cancels. I suspect this is his CB-35 cancel that he reports from 12/16/75 to 2/28/76, but it is not an altogether clear match.■

Request for Help

Merritt Jenkins, a specialist in the Sc 220 stamp and its postal history, writes with a question about the origin of a skull cancel (Figure 1) on a stamp he acquired at the Washington 2006 show. It has an indentation on the right side that does not appear to be matched on the left. Skull cancels are noted with some frequency during the 1890s but overwhelmingly in the form of pumpkinheads. The Figure 1 cancel is odd and quite distinctive. Can any reader associate it with a post office or show another example on an off-cover stamp?■

Figure 1



Figure 1



Figure 2

