



U.S. Cancellation Club **NEWS**

Vol. 30, No. 2, Whole No. 275, May 2010

Cancels on Sc 65

Abe Boyarsky has specialized in the 3¢ 1861 issue stamp for decades. In this issue he shares some cancels from his collection, all of which involve outstanding strikes.



Figure 2.



Figure 4.

Whitfield #161 is so similar to the Figure 3 cancel that one wonders if the tracing was made from this particular strike. The Saint Johns, MI "Q" in Figure 4 is becoming a popular subject in these pages, having been featured in the November 2009 and



Figure 1.



Figure 3.



Figure 7.

February 2010 *NEWS*. The illustrations in the earlier issues involved a double strike, but here we find a single. Figure 5 is a whimsical and, indeed, comical face cancel from Columbus, WI. Figure 6 illustrates the very distinctive Lansing, MI pointing hand complete with knuckles and also showing tendons on the back of the hand. Finally, Figure 7 shows a particularly clear strike of the reverse of an Indian head penny where the "ONE/CENT" appears to have been covered over with a small wedges design. Curiously, this same penny and wedges combination was used as a canceler by Milford, IN. The May 2007 *NEWS* carried an article on coin cancels.



Figure 5.



Figure 6.

Ellipse Cancels Reprint

Gilbert M. Burr presented the first systematic study of U.S. 19th century ellipse cancels in a series of *American Philatelist* articles appearing in 1935 and 1936. While there has been, of course, a great deal of new information in the literature since then, Mr. Burr's report remains a good basic primer on the subject with a number of excellent tracings. Covered also are concentric circles with a number or letter in the center and double ovals. The Club's original printing sold out and there is now available a new supply, spiral bound, at \$14 each, postpaid. Orders should be sent to U.S.C.C., 20 University Ave., Lewisburg PA 17837.

For Sale: Cancellations, 3 cent 1861. Please send \$3.00 for 3 color and 3 black and white photocopies. Abe Boyarsky, P.O. Box 570, La Mirada, CA 90637-0570

I'd like to call your attention to the website of Bill Duffney, author of the Collinsville axes article in the last NEWS. It is http://web.me.com/ctpostroad1/CtPP/Home_.html and is devoted to Connecticut philately. Among the interesting postings are an excellent article on the West Meriden, CT "devil and pitchfork" cancel and, under the "Gallery" heading, an impressive showing of 19th Century Connecticut covers.

Within our Club I know there are other members who maintain their own postal history websites. I urge readers who have such websites to report them so that they can be publicized in the NEWS. Your postal history interests are undoubtedly shared by others in our community.

Recently, one of the larger auction houses withdrew a number of lots of fancy cancels. One assumes the reason had to do with questions about whether or not they were genuine. It's unfortunate that such a matter has to be considered but this, of course, is the reality. Some fakes are very obvious but others are well executed and can easily escape detection. Indeed it is entirely possible that an occasional fake may appear unnoticed in the pages of the NEWS. Continual vigilance is needed by all of us.

Roger D. Curran

More on Cancellation References

Bill Weiss writes to suggest several additions to the listing of cancellation references presented on pages 10 and 11 of the February 2010 NEWS and we are pleased to add the following:.

The United States One Cent Stamp of 1851-1857, Vol. 2, Stanley B. Ashbrook, 1938

The 3¢ Stamp of the United States 1851-1857 Issue, Carroll Chase, 1975 Quarterman Reprint

The Henry F. Allen Collection of Black Jacks, Maryette B. Lane, 1969

The United States 15¢ Stamp of 1870-1890, William R. Weiss, Jr., 1995

The Tale of the Kicking Mule, Lee H. Cornell, 1949

The primary focus of the USCC is, of course, on handstamp cancellations. However, we delve into machine cancels from time to time and the introduction and early use of these cancels constitute a major and fascinating part of the story of U.S. 19th century cancellations. There is an outstanding body of literature on machine cancels and an energetic Machine Cancel Society that has been responsible for much of that literature. We listed two machine cancel references in February and herewith add a third – a very excellent introduction to early U.S. machine

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cancels: *A Collector's Guide to U.S. Machine Postmarks 1871-1925*, Russell F. Hanmer, 1989. Readers interested in this subject are encouraged to consider membership in the Machine Cancel Society, which studies machine cancels from the earliest to the most recent. The Society secretary, Gary Carlson, can be reached at gcarlson@columbus.rr.com or 3097 Frobisher Ave., Dublin OH 43017.

New York Foreign Mail to Central and South America from 1870 to 1876

by Alex Gundel

Introduction

During research into NYFM printed matter usages [1, 2], I noted some peculiarities of NYFM covers to Central and South America (in the following shortened to "Latin America") while studying relevant sources [4, 5, 6, 7]. The primary feature was the duplex marking combining a NYFM cancel with a NYFM postmark. These duplex markings were applied in black throughout. Furthermore, it seemed to me that some NYFM cancels appeared only on covers sent to Latin America.

My research into printed matter usages was based on entering all covers in a spread sheet. The spread sheet allowed the sorting of covers by different features easily, e.g. by date of mailing, design of cancel or destination. This method brought new insight into the processing of printed matter by the New York Foreign Exchange Office. The present study involved constructing a similar table for letter usages to Latin America. Recently, Nicholas Kirke [3] presented some beautiful covers to Latin America and made general remarks about the use of postmarks in the *USCC News*. Some of these remarks will be questioned by hypotheses put forward with this study. In total, 93 covers from different sources [4, 5, 6, 7] were entered into the table. This number is estimated to present about 25% of the existing covers. Weiss [5] alone lists 187 covers to Latin America, but in this study, only covers were considered which were illustrated in at least one of the sources. To be on the safe side I will only present hypotheses rather than conclusions derived from the 93 covers. The hypotheses may be tested by collectors who have additional material.

Each cover forms a line in the spread sheet. The columns are: NYFM cancel number (Weiss [7]), date, postmark number (Winter [8]), color of postmark, duplex marking, due marking, ship, destination, city, route endorsement, and source of cover illustration. Only smaller parts of the table are shown in this report. The entire table is available by email from the *USCC News* editor.

Weiss [7] shows on page 3 of his book a ground plan of the City Hall Park Post Office found in *Scribner's Magazine* of May 1878. The City Hall Park Post Office had replaced the old Middle Dutch Church Post Office in August 1875 [1]. For the Foreign Department the ground plan designated, on the Park Row side, window 25 for drops for North and South America and window 27 for drops for Europe, Asia, Africa and Oceania. Between these two windows was window 26 for reception of mail from ship-masters

The window "drops for North and South America" always troubled me, and I believe now that it may be an error and should probably read "drops for Central and South America" since the ground plan does not show a drop for mail to Central America but a drop for mail to Canada and Newfoundland far apart from the Foreign Department. The discussion below will show that covers for Central and South America (duplex markings to Chile and Peru) were initially treated in the same way. It is assumed that the processing of foreign mail was organized similarly in the old and new post offices.

Many covers were endorsed by the name of a steamer. Mail to Central America was mainly conveyed by steamers of the F. Alexandre & Sons Line (*City of Havana*, *City of Merida*, *City of Mexico*, *City of New York*, and *City of Vera Cruz*). Mail to Chile, Guatemala and Peru was conveyed by the Pacific Mail Steamship Company along the Pacific coast, at least some of them via Panama. The Pacific Mail steamers were *Acapulco*,

NYFM Cancel Weiss Number	Date	Postmark Winter Number	Color of Postmark	Duplex Marking	Destination
TR-G36	720212	252c	black	yes	Mexico
TR-G36	720212	252c	black	yes	Mexico
TR-G25A	720222	230	black	no	British West Indies
TR-G36	720315	248 + 194	black + red	yes	Chile
TR-G36	720412	248	black	yes	Mexico
TR-G35	720430	248	black	yes	Mexico
TR-G36	720430	248 + 194	black + red	yes	Peru
TR-G35	720504	248	black	yes	Mexico
TR-G36	720522	248	black	yes	Mexico
RE-LF3	720530	231	black	no	Colombia
TR-G36	720530	248 + 194	black + red	yes	Peru
TR-G25A	720611	252c	black	yes	Mexico
RE-LF3	720615	248	red	no	Colombia
TR-G36	720830	248	black	yes	Guatemala
TR-G29	721012	248	black	yes	Mexico
TR-G32	721118	no postmark			Mexico
TR-G36	721118	248	black	yes	Mexico

Table 1: Extract from the spread sheet for the period from February to November 1872.

The Postmarks

The list of covers shows that 64 of the 93 covers bear a duplex marking. It is incidentally remarked that the cancel in the duplex marking does not always show the same orientation. The use of duplex markings saves time and is more economical than applying cancel and postmark separately. Since most of the mail to Latin America was only paid to the arrival port and not to the destination, there was little need to apply a red postmark that indicates full payment or a credit. This is possibly the reason for the introduction of black duplex postmarks. I have seen only two covers with a duplex marking not mailed to Latin America. One of them is illustrated on page 52 of the van Vlissingen and Waud book [6]. It was mailed to Egypt and shows an additional red "paid all" postmark (Winter #236). The other one is from the collection of Roger Curran. It was mailed to France and shows an additional postmark crediting 6 cents to France (Winter #207). A possible explanation for these covers is that they were dropped at the wrong window, received the duplex marking to cancel the stamps and were then forwarded to join the other transatlantic mail.

Duplex postmarks have been found on covers to Mexico, Cuba, Chile, Guatemala and Peru. Two incoming covers from Peru and Puerto Rico show a duplex marking, too; none of the duplex markings has been found in red.

As part of a duplex marking, postmark #252c (Figure 1) was found on 8 covers from November 29, 1870 to February 12, 1872; postmark # 248 was found on 54 covers from March 15, 1872 to October 18, 1876. Each of the postmarks formed a duplex marking with several different cancels. Except for one cover with #252c of June 11, 1872 there was no overlap in the use of these postmarks.



#252c



#248

Figure 1: Scans of postmarks used in duplex markings (numbers according to Winter [8]).

Postmark #252c has been found only as part of a duplex marking. Winter's postmark #248 exists in several varieties distinguishable by the distance between the two stars. The duplex variety has distinctly the shortest distance between the two stars; it has been found as a black simplex postmark on only one cover to Mexico. On two of the covers with duplex markings, a different variety of #248 has been found that show a wider distance between the two stars.

The remainder of 29 covers presents a larger variety of postmarks. Five of the covers do not show a postmark at all. On all covers to Chile and Peru, the red postmark (Winter #194) has been found which marks a credit of 12c to the receiving country. On six covers, #194 presents the only NY postmark and on the other five covers it was applied in addition to a duplex marking with #248. The other 18 covers show other postmarks either in red or in black with no clear structural picture to me. Some of the red postmarks have been found on covers to Brazil and to the Mexican ports Acapulco and Vera Cruz. According to the applicable postal regulations these covers were not charged additional domestic postage at their destination.

The Cancels

Sorting the covers by their mailing date led to some observations of a system in the usage of cancels. Table 1 presents an extract of the entire table from February until November 1872. The usages are dominated by grid cancel TR-G36 as part of a duplex marking (9 out of 17). There are two other cancels used for duplex markings during this period, namely TR-G35 and TR-G29. Both are also grid cancels (Figure 2). It is not obvious why grid cancels other than TR-G36 would have been used. The possibility has to be explored whether the two TR-G35 strikes are actually TR-G36, since the illustrated difference is not very large (Weiss [7]), and whether TR-G29 is actually a partially struck TR-G36. The table shows, among other things, the transition between the duplex postmarks #252c and #248.

Table 2 presents the four covers that were mailed during September 1873. All of them show the cancel RE-L2 (Figure 3). RE-L2 is always part of a duplex marking with postmark #248; it is struck in black. RE-L2 is one of the NYFM cancels that is found on letters to Latin America only. Other candidates for a group of "NY Latin America Mail" cancels are ST-MP2A (star), RE-L1 (negative H), RE-E4 (fouled anchor) used as duplex canceller before it was used on general foreign mail, and GE-EP5 (star).

The occurrence of some NYFM cancels on a specific group of mail only is a phenomenon that has been observed also with NY foreign printed matter mail which shows some cancels that have not been found on letter mail.

NYFM Cancel Weiss Number	Date	Destination
RE-L2	730905	Peru
RE-L2	730905	Mexico
RE-L2	730906	Mexico
RE-L2	730927	Mexico

Table 2: Extract from the spread sheet for September 1873.

Table 3 presents a 2-month period in 1875, when three simplex geometric NYFM cancels were used subsequently as duplex cancellers with postmark #248. These three cancels may be candidates for NYLAM cancels.

NYFM Cancel Weiss Number	Date	Postmark Winter Number	Color of Postmark	Duplex Marking	Destination
ST-MP2A	750308	248	black	yes	Mexico
ST-MP2A	750309	248	black	yes	Cuba
ST-MP2A	750318	248	black	yes	Cuba
RE-E4	750330	248	black	yes	Mexico
RE-E4	750401	248	black	yes	Cuba
GE-EP5	750408	248	black	yes	Cuba
GE-EP5	750413	248	black	yes	USA
GE-EP5	750415	248	black	yes	Cuba
GE-EP5	750420	248	black	yes	Mexico
GE-EP9	750430	none			Cuba
GE-EP5	750511	248	black	yes	Cuba
GE-EP9	750518	none			Cuba
GE-EP5	750520	248	black	yes	Cuba

Table 3: Extract from the spread sheet for the period from March to May 1875.

NYFM Cancel Weiss Number	Date	Postmark Winter Number	Color of Postmark	Duplex Marking	Destination
TR-W1E	740627	248	black	yes	Mexico
TR-W1F	740715	248	black	yes	Mexico
GE-C7	740717	194	black	no	Chile
TR-C5	740829	248	black	yes	Mexico
TR-W1E	740829	248	black	yes	Mexico

Table 4: Extract from the spread sheet for the period from June to August 1874.

same for all of the four covers.

Finally, Table 5 presents four covers that follow one another in the list. They show traditional wedge cancels duplexed with postmark #248 (black). From this listing and an inspection of the covers, it may be suggested that TR-W1D is a worn or under inked TR-W1C (Figure 5).

NYFM Cancel Weiss Number	Date	Destination
TR-W1C	760831	British West Indies
TR-W1C	760902	Mexico
TR-W1C	760919	Mexico
TR-W1D	761018	Guatemala

Table 5: Extract from the spread sheet for the period from August to October 1874.

Concluding Remarks

I would like to present three principal hypotheses in brief sentences with repetition of the most important supportive facts.

1) Mail to Central and South America was processed separately from mail to other geographical regions. The same duplex markings are found on covers to Central and South America but not on covers to other countries.



TR-G29



TR-G35



TR-G36

Figure 2: Three hand-drawn grid cancels with 5 rows each.

Table 4 is presents a short period of usage between June and August 1874. According to the listing three different traditional NYFM cancels have been used in a duplex marking. They are illustrated in Figure 4 from Weiss [7]).

The Figure 4 illustration presents hand-drawn, idealized cancels which were used in duplex markings together with postmark #248. Looking at the illustrations of the corresponding covers may lead to thoughts about wear and over or under inking. My hypothesis is that the cancelling device was the



RE-L2

Figure 3: The cancel RE-L2 found on mail sent to Latin America only.



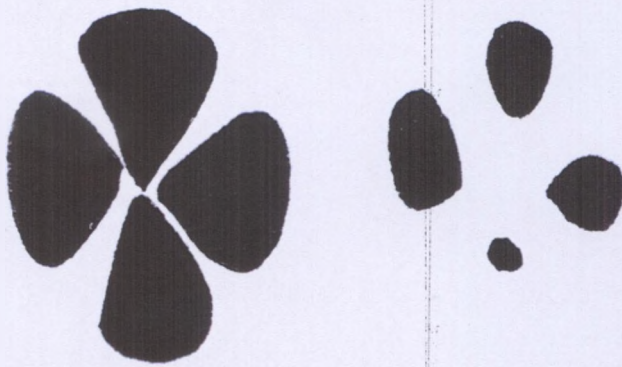
TR-W1E

TR-W1F

TR-C5

Figure 4: Hand-drawn traditional cancels TR-W1E, TR-W1F and TR-C5 (from Weiss [7]).

2) The main handstamp device for mail to Latin America was a duplex device with postmarks #252c or #248 (narrow distance between stars). The majority of covers show duplex markings. The postal regulations applicable to mail sent to several Central and South American countries made this more economical processing of mail possible.



TR-W1C

TR-W1D

Figure 5: Hand-drawn cancels TR-W1C and TR-W1D (from Weiss [7]).

3) There are NYFM cancels that were used for mail to Central and South America exclusively.

References

- [1] Gundel A (2007) "Some Observations about NYFM Cancels on Printed Matter". *U.S. Cancellation Club News* 28: 60-67
- [2] Gundel (2008) "Addendum: Some Observations about NYFM Cancels on Printed Matter". *U.S. Cancellation Club News* 29: 8-11
- [3] Kirke N (2009) "Exceptions Prove the Rule". *U.S. Cancellation Club News* 29: 97-100
- [4] Collection of Nicholas Kirke, also in the internet (EXPONET)
- [5] *Nutmeg Mail Auctions* (1999) Sale No. 19, Danbury, Connecticut
- [6] Van Vlissingen A, Waud M (1968) *New York Foreign Mail Cancellations 1870-1876*. Chicago, Illinois
- [7] Weiss W R (1996) *The Foreign Mail Cancellations of New York City 1870-1878*. Published by the author
- [8] Winter R F (1996) "New York Exchange Office Markings – Update". *Chronicle* 170:126-138, *Chronicle* 171:196-205, *Chronicle* 172:266-278

Canceled With Emphasis

by Roger D. Curran

A few postmasters used handstamp killers containing words that emphasize the point that the stamp being canceled was no longer valid for postage.



Figure 1.

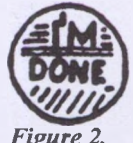


Figure 2.



Figure 3.

The most celebrated example is the "Used and Done For" cancel (Figure 1) used at Fair Haven, CT. Two other cancels of the same period are shown in Figures 2 and 3. Figure 2 is unattributed and Figure 3 is from Niagara Falls, NY. These three cancels have only been seen on 1851 issue stamps and are considered to be extremely rare.

Banknote collectors occasionally see the word "canceled" (or "cancelled") used as a killer or enclosed in killers and there is one such example reported in Skinner-Eno on 1861 issue stamps. The cancel of this type seen most often on Banknotes – and it is by no means common – is from Stockbridge, MA. Figure 4 illustrates it. The Figure 5 image will not show clearly but the



Figure 4.



Figure 5.

it is a lozenge) is the word "CANCELLED." The large CDS reads "Towlesville./APR/14/1880/ Steuben County, New York." Towlesville is a DPO that operated from 1833-1905. The image came from an old auction catalog for which I have no identifying information.

combination of CDS and killer is so unusual that it is worth presenting as is. I believe it is struck in blue ink and within the two horizontal bars (possibly

Figure 6 is a wonderful negative OVER cancel illustrated as lot 750 in a 12/8/61 Samuel Paige sale. The size should be



regarded as approximate. This is a cover where the 3¢ green stamp was affixed in the upper left corner of the cover and was canceled by the killer without the CDS also being struck. Hence there was a need for a second strike of the duplex to produce the Pleasant Hill, MO CDS. Canceled stamps are, of course, “over and done with”, generally speaking, in terms of having any postage value. But one might quickly add that, in another sense, stamps struck with this killer are not “over” if they find their way to cancel collectors where nice examples would be treasured indefinitely.

Can readers report additional examples of the Figures 4 and 5 cancels or show other cancels of this general type?

Early Leavitt Cancel

Leavitt machine cancels are cancels are considered to be the first “successful” machine cancels in the U.S. “Successful” is placed in quotes because while the machines worked well on postal cards, they were never satisfactory, despite much experimentation, in processing letter mail, due to the varying size and thickness of individual pieces. Leavitt cancels are avidly collected and have been well researched over a period of decades. The current standard reference on the subject is the outstanding book by the late Bob Payne entitled *Thomas Leavitt His History and Postal Markings 1875-1892*.

For many years, the first live test of a Leavitt canceling machine was assumed to have begun in Boston on January 6, 1876 and two examples showing that date are illustrated in the Payne book. Figure 1 shows a January 7, 1876 postmark on a restored cover. In the past 15 or so years, two covers have been reported bearing a Boston postmark with long killer bars dated “NOV. 15” which machine cancel specialists have concluded are experimental markings of a prototype Leavitt machine applied in 1875. These two covers are also illustrated in the Payne book. One

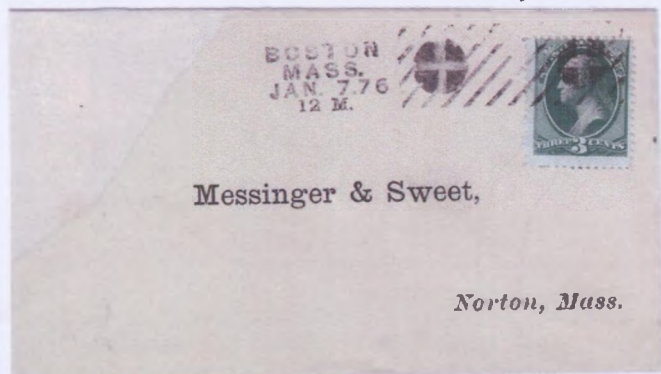


Figure 1.

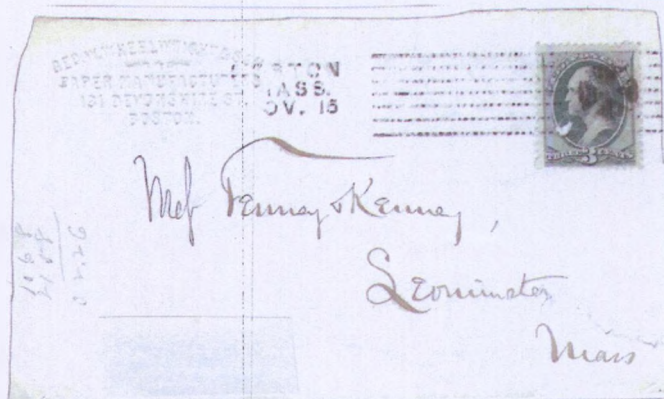


Figure 2.

is a postal card and the other a 3¢ green postal stationery entire. Club member Ralph Edson has now reported a third November 15 example shown here as Figure 2. This is a cover front only and a small area of the stamp has been gouged. Nonetheless, it is a piece of postal history that takes an important place in the story of the early development of machine cancels in this country.

“FREE” on Sc 210



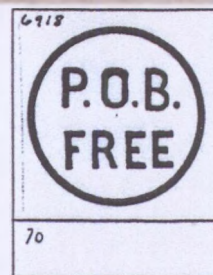
Figure 1.

“FREE” cancels on the Sc 210 stamp were discussed in the November 2009 NEWS.



Figure 2.

One additional example is shown here as Figure 1 along with Whitfield tracing 6918. This Fairview, PA cover was reported in the 2007 Whitfield update and is dated August 27, 1885. A second new report is from the collection of Vince Costello, illustrated here as Figure 2.

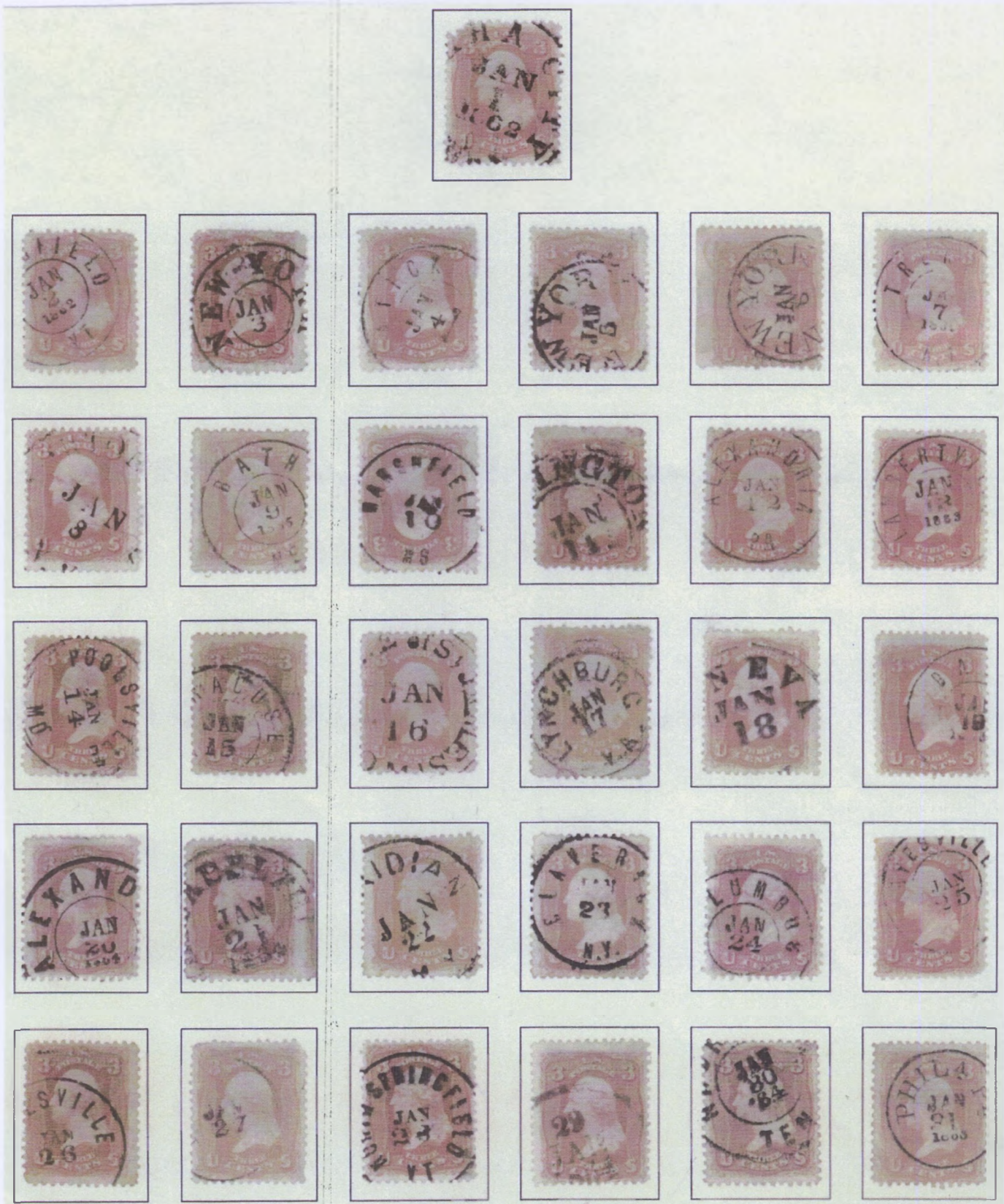


Mounted Grill Collection
U.S. 3 cent 1861
Off cover and covers
Details provided on request
Abe Boyarsky abeboyarsky@yahoo.com
PO Box 570, La Mirada CA 90637

Cancellation Gallery

Over the years, one of the popular cancel collecting specialties is that of assembling "calendars" of dated cancels on the same

issue. As one can imagine, this is not easy to do. The stamps typically chosen are the 3¢ 1851, 3¢ 1857 and 3¢ 1861 issues. Shown below is the month of January, from the collection of Abe Boyarsky, on the Sc 65 stamp.



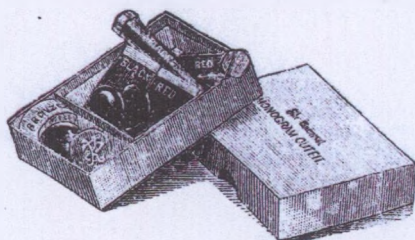
Elaborate Monogram

by Roger D. Curran

The F.P. Hammond & Co. is best known to cancellation collectors as the supplier of handstamps with the famous "wheel of fortune" cancellation so widely used in the 1880s and 1890s. However, the company offered a broad array of handstamps going far beyond just those for post office use. A portion of Hammond advertisement from the September 1886 *Postal Guide* is shown in Figure 1. Offering two-letter monograms,



Price only 50 Cents.



OUTFIT consists of 1 Monogram Stamp in a neat Box, 1 Bottle Bright Red Ink, 1 Bottle Indelible Ink and pair of Pads. Remember the Monogram furnished you will be exactly same size and design as those shown below. We have no three letter designs yet, so do not expect more than we advertise.

Having at great expense engraved and gotten up in Rubber Stamps over 250 two-letter Monograms, we now offer them to the public at prices never before heard of. There has always been a great demand everywhere for Monograms, but the excessive price which it has been necessary to charge has prevented all but a few from indulging in them.

50 per cent. commission allowed on these goods to local agents. Send for a sample. Send 10 cents for our new 80 page Catalogue. Address,

F. P. HAMMOND & CO., AURORA, ILL.

Figure 1.



Figure 2.



it is interesting to note that the "outfit" comes with bottles of both red and indelible (presumably black) ink. This implies that the company recognized that, among the monogram's uses, it might be employed by post offices as a canceler of postage stamps, although not specifically advertised as such. Figure 2 shows what I assume to be an "HB" monogram that is very similar to the monogram that is second from left in the middle row of Figure 1. Notwithstanding the statement in the ad that monograms will be supplied in exactly



Figure 3.

the same size and design, it seems very likely that the canceler used in Figure 1 was a Hammond product. A couple of generally similar cancels were noted in the literature – Figure 3 in Whitfield



Figure 4.

reported on 1890 issue stamps and Figure 4 in Cole on the 1883 issue. Readers who can report further examples are urged to do so.

Thanks to John Donnes for the expert tracing in Figure 1.

Letters on Danbury, CT Hat Cancels

by Wendell Triplett

Danbury, CT was a major producer of hats and hat cancels. The first Danbury hat maker on record was Zadoc Benedict, who founded a hat making business in 1780. At that time he turned out three hats each working day.

By 1800 Danbury was the United States center for the manufacture of hats. By 1809 there were 56 hat shops in operation. In 1849 hat making machines were introduced which led to larger factories that eliminated the small shops. Danbury became known as "Hat City" of the world. By 1887 the city had 30 factories turning out five million hats per year.

Shown in Figure 1 is an unlisted Danbury hat cancel that has a large 'Z' on the hand-carved "high hat". Most likely

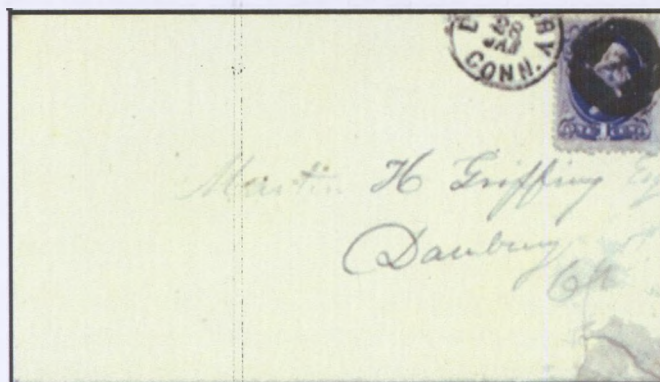


Figure 1.

this 'Z' refers to Zadoc, the person who started Danbury's hat industry. The stamp on this cover is Scott #156.



The following fancy cancel authors have listed hat cancels from Danbury, CT:

Hubert Skinner & Amos Eno¹ - 2 examples, p. 171, PO-Ht 11 & PO-Ht12.

Kenneth Whitfield² - 8 examples, p. 22, numbers 611-616, 622 and 634.

James Cole³ - 13 examples, p. 147, HA-1 to HA-13

Herman Herst & Michael Zareski⁴ - 11 examples, pp. 232-233, numbers 320-329 & 332.



Figure 2.



Figure 3.

A review of the cancels on this list reveals that there is a hat cancel with an "M" on the hat. In Cole, see cancel HA-9 (Figure 2) and the image at the bottom of that same page which appears to show a hat with a partial "M". In addition, Herst/Zareski presents another example (see Figure 3) of this "M" on a hat, which was struck on a Scott #158 (first issued in 1873). As presented, these three cancels appear to represent three separate strikes of the "M". It is not currently known what the "M" on this "high hat" signifies.

If you have any Danbury hat cancels, check them for possible letters on the hats.

(Endnotes)

- 1 *Cancellations Found on 19th Century U.S. Stamps*, by Kenneth A. Whitfield, published by the U.S. Cancellation Club, Lewisburg, PA 2002 & revised 2007.
- 2 *Cancellations and Killers of the Banknote Era 1870-1894*, by James M. Cole, published by the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society, Inc., 1995.
- 3 *19th Century United States Fancy Cancellations*, by Herman Herst, Jr. & Michael Zareski, published by Herman Herst, Jr., 1951.
- 4 *19th Century United States Fancy Cancellations*, by Herman Herst, Jr. & Michael Zareski, published by Herman Herst, Jr., 1951.

More on Small Boston Negatives

by Roger D. Curran

The November 2009 *NEWS* carried a brief article on two small Boston negatives from a set used prior to the introduction of the large Boston negatives that have been the subject of numerous *NEWS* articles as well as an ongoing study.

The first cancel presented appeared to be a small Boston "P" which had not before been reported in the literature. John

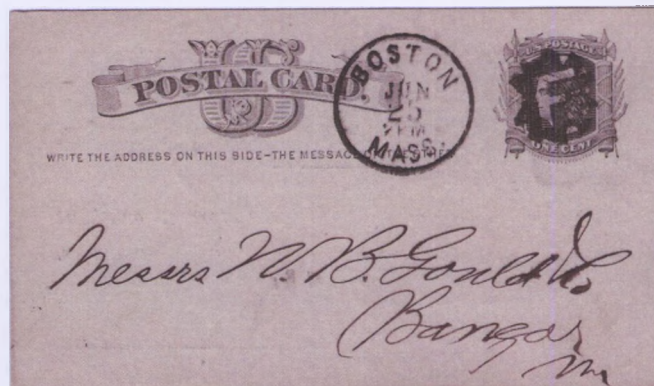


Figure 2.

which has been reported, that resembled a "P" due to poor inking on the right side. Portland, ME also used the Boston style negatives, both small and large, and surely must have acquired the handstamps from the same supplier used by Boston. It is interesting to note that, unlike

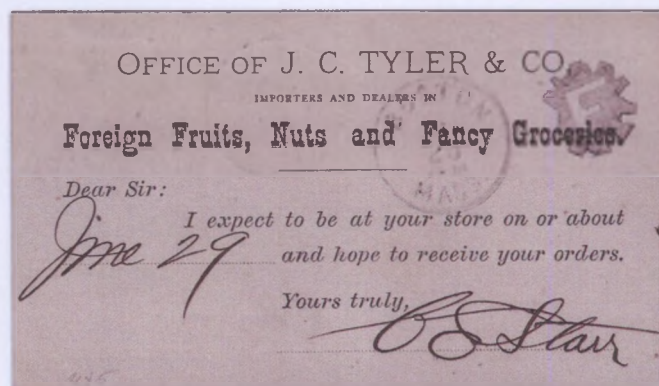


Figure 3.

Boston, Portland did use a small negative "P" as illustrated in Figure 1. The card is datelined December 4, 1876. Wendell Triplett submitted an example dated January 2, 1877. Whitfield listed the



Figure 1.

Donnes examined it under a 10X microscope and determined it to actually be an "F",



Figure 4.

cancel as #6062.

The earlier article also presented an off-cover stamp canceled by

a small negative "F" in a hand-carved variation of what originally was a round or square killer. Ted Wassam submits a very bold and complete strike (Figure 2) of this dramatic cancel on postal card. A second strike of this duplex (Figure 3) was placed on the back. It is unclear why this was done since it is clearly not a received marking.

Ted also submitted the card in Figure 4 with a small negative "B" that has a curious appearance. He describes the anomaly as "negative dots in shaded interior spaces" and reports that he has a couple of off-cover strikes of "B" cancels with dots similar to these. John Donnes made the tracing and thinks that the dots more likely came from a break-up of the material comprising the killer, rather than from an intentional aspect of the design, and points to the very small white dots in the outside surrounding area. An interesting question here – reader comment is invited.



Figure 5.

Figure 5 presents a very primitive appearing negative "C" (upside down) cancel. The shape of the "C" is similar to those of the small Boston

negatives but the cancel is larger than any of the small negatives. Yet it is also unlike the large Boston negatives. I wonder if it could have been a test of some sort prior to adopting the small negative letter cancels. The cover has no received marking or remaining enclosure to determine a year date. However, on the back "1875" is written in pencil, presumably by a previous collector owner. Unfortunately, the basis for that notation is unknown.

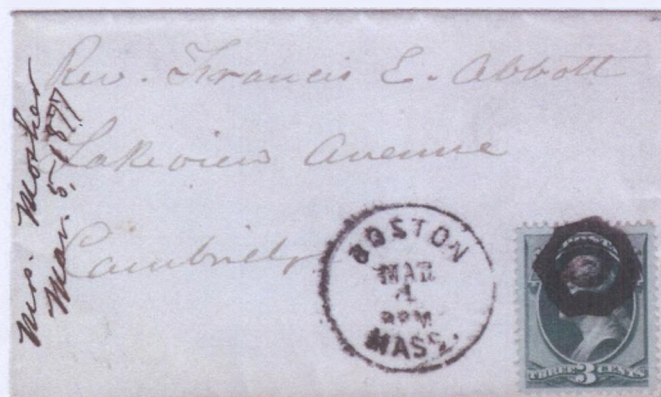


Figure 6.

We'll close with a request. I have long assumed that the small Boston negatives appeared in 1875 but now question whether I have inferred too much from a table (plate 13) in the Blake and Davis Boston postmarks book. In my collection, the earliest date is the March 4, 1877 cover shown in Figure 6. However, I gather from plate 93 in Blake and Davis that they go back at least a year before that. Readers are encouraged to check their collections and report examples that can be dated before March 4, 1877. Thank you!

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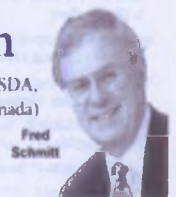
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Northampton Star and Crescent

by Roger D. Curran

Figure 1 illustrates the Whitfield tracing of a large star and crescent cancel from Northampton, MA. Cole illustrates it (Figure 2) with the image rotated 180 degrees. Cole also shows a cover with the cancel, but the cancel is in the Figure 1 position. The postmark on this cover appears to read May 5. I have two auction catalog illustrations of the cancel – one dated May 19 in the Figure 2 position and the other, also dated May (unclear date but probably one digit) in the Figure 1 position. Perhaps the cancel was first used as in Figure 1 and later reinserted into the ring of the duplex handstamp in the Figure 2 position. The 2007 Whitfield update reports the cancel used from April 3, 1885 - June 18, 1885. This undoubtedly includes both Figure 1 and 2 positions.

Figure 3 shows a variation with an "N" below the star dated July 8, 1885. Neither Whitfield nor Cole list it. However, Willard does list it on page 22 of Volume Two, although erroneously attributed to Stoneham, MA. He also lists the cancel with no letter (in the Figure 1 position) and, very interestingly, a variation with "S" below the star. Willard speculates that the cancel with no letter was used first and then the examples with "N" representing northbound mail and "S"



Figure 1.

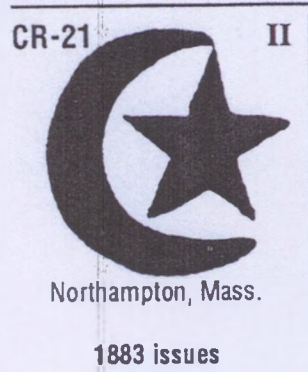


Figure 2.



Figure 3.

30
southbound. Even though not illustrated in Whitfield, the cancel with an "N" is listed in the 2007 update as 3220A used July 7, 1885 to July 18, 1885. This and the above report for the cancel without a letter demonstrate how useful the Whitfield update can be.

Who can report on-cover examples that will expand the date ranges (or establish it in the case of the "S" cancel) identified above? And for the "S" cancel, who can submit even an off-cover example of what must be a rare cancel.

Star Cancel Project

Star cancellations on 19th century United States covers has been my passion for the past several years. I have undertaken a massive research effort to create a comprehensive listing of the various star cancellation designs, their places and dates of use, and the colors in which they can be found. Central to this effort is the development of a new classification system for the star cancellation designs. Please check out my website (http://brookler.dlinkddns.com/star_cancels/index.php). I would be most appreciative of any feedback or other comments.

David Brookler
dbrookler@yahoo.com

Whitfield Book Available Again

Additional copies of the book *Cancellations Found on 19th Century U.S. Stamps* by Kenneth A. Whitfield are now available. The book contains more than 6,000 tracings and is a valuable supplement to the Skinner-Eno and Cole books. This printing incorporates the new Whitfield update that has been offered recently. The cost is \$52 postpaid. Checks should be made payable to U.S.C.C. and orders sent to U.S.C.C., 20 University Avenue, Lewisburg, PA 17837.

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Rubber Bottle Stopper Cancels



Figure 1.



Rubber bottle stoppers were used, at least occasionally, by a fair number of post offices. They can be identified by the presence of a number in the center denoting stopper size, always in reverse. However, the most common number, the "3," will appear as a normal "3" when struck upside down. One envisions the typical users of bottle stopper cancels as small post offices located under the same roof and management as that of a general store/pharmacy. However, even some large post offices employed these stoppers, including New York. Chicago was a major user. It is interesting to note that designs were sometimes carved into these stoppers just as in their cork and wood counterparts.



Canceling Bars in the CDS

After the prepaid postal rate was reduced as of July 1, 1851 there was a major increase in the use of postage stamps and, hence, in canceling workload. A very common response of post offices, especially large ones, was to begin using the CDS handstamp as a postmarker and canceler in one strike. That the CDS was not an ideal canceler became obvious to the New York Post Office almost immediately. It started using the CDS as a canceler as early as August 8, 1851¹ and by August 12 the NYPO was experimenting with a CDS handstamp that had three slots in the center which permitted insertion of month and date elements and a slug – see Figure 1. Alexander reports the Figure 1a arrangement used August 12 through 17, 1851 and 1b from August 18 through 26.² Figure 2 shows an August 14 strike where, while the "New York" is not fully struck, the bar cancel is very bold and centrally placed on the stamp.



Figure 2.

August 26, 1851 may well be the last day for the New York single bar CDS as the cover in Figure 3 shows an August 27, 1851 strike of a New York CDS with four thin bars. New York used four, three and two bar CDSs in 1851 and 1852, but also employed CDS postmarks without bars. By 1853, the basic CDS without bars had taken over completely, with one notable exception, until some further use of a single bar CDS in 1856.



Figure 1a.



Figure 1b.

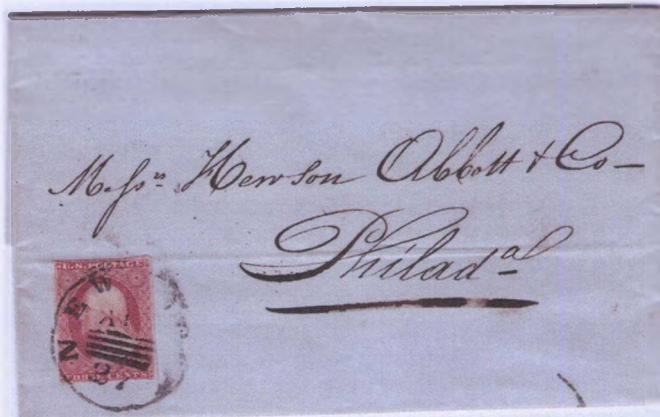


Figure 3.

The one exception is referred to as the New York "ocean mail" postmark (1854-61) and it was used, almost exclusively, on mail to the west coast. An Ashbrook tracing of this marking appears as Figure 4. Figure 5 presents an interesting cover which entered the mails on September 29, 1860, just after the Post Office Department edict in July precluding use of the CDS as a canceler.



Figure 4.

Here we see the "ocean mail" postmark, with its canceling grid, used only to indicate the date of the letter's departure to California.



Figure 5.

Alexander lists five post offices, in addition to New York, that used, at one time or another during the 1851-1861 period, CDS handstamps incorporating one or more canceling bars. They include Mobile, AL, Nashua, NH, Rochester, NY, Darlington, PA, and Lynchburg, VA.³

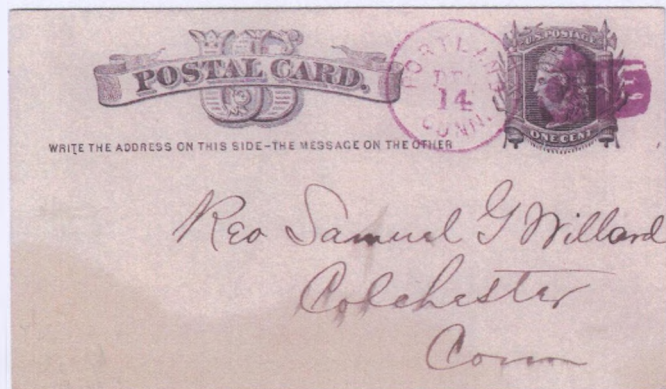
(Endnotes)

- 1 Skinner, Hubert and Taira, Keiji "Early Cancellations of New York City: Part IIa Dated Circular Postmarks 1851-1855" *Chronicle*, May 1996, pp. 85-6.
- 2 Skinner, Hubert "Early Cancellations of New York City: Part I 1842-1852" *Chronicle*, February 1996, p. 28.
- 3 Alexander, Thomas *Simpson's U.S. Postal Markings 1851-1861*, pages 42-75.

Multiple Letter Cancels



Figure 1.



Hand carved cancels in the form of or incorporating a single letter in the design are quite common. Less frequently seen, but not scarce in the aggregate, are the multiple letter cancels that appear to be initials or abbreviations. A number of these cancels can be associated with the initials of the postmaster. Some reflect post office names such as the well known "MB" for Mystic Bridge, CT. All or almost all probably refer to something or someone but the meaning of a considerable percentage has not yet been identified.



"PA" in Ellipse

An interesting variation from the practice of putting a number or letter in the center of an ellipse cancel was used by the Philadelphia post office for its station markings. When Philadelphia introduced Wesson "time on bottom" duplex handstamps, the state identifier was no longer in the CDS but rather in the ellipse. This permitted placement of the Station letter in a prominent position in the CDS. Figure 1 illustrates a typical strike. These markings began appearing in 1883 and involved seven stations: "B", "E", "F", "G", "H", "I" and "Z". Covers with a "PA" ellipse are fairly common and collectors will occasionally note some odd uses. Two are presented below.

According to the backstamp, the cover in Figure 2 entered the mails at 3:45 PM on December 24, 1885. There is an identical strike of this duplex marking on the front of the cover



Figure 1.



Figure 2.



Figure 3.

over the two stamps on the right side. I believe the procedure at this time was for foreign mail received at Philadelphia stations to be backstamped upon receipt and then sent to the main post office for further processing, including postmarking at time of dispatch and canceling the stamps. It appears the Station clerk began to postmark and cancel stamps on the front, immediately recognized the error before completing the job, and then referred the cover to the main post office where a foreign mail duplex was applied. Such duplexes during the period in question had "PAID" or "F.D." at the bottom of the CDS. The example in Figure 2 appears to have "PAID" and is probably the same as postmark #686 (or one very similar to it) in Volume II of Tom Clarke's *A Catalog of Philadelphia Postmarks*.

The cover in Figure 3 was postmarked by a New York and Pittsburgh RPO clerk on September 8 (1886). It was received in the main Philadelphia post office at 7AM on September 9 and sent at 10:15 to Station H for delivery. A clerk in Station H was not satisfied with the RPO cancel, which struck only the left edge of the stamp, and applied his duplex handstamp in such a way that the ellipse killer canceled the stamp without placing the CDS on the cover.

The use of "PA" ellipses by Philadelphia Stations continued after the Wesson handstamps were replaced and lasted well into the 1890s as illustrated by the 1891 and 1896 covers in Figure 4. However, by the time of the 1896 cover, machine cancels predominated.

Odd Use of Roller Cancel?

by Roger D. Curran

Figure 1 shows two different New York Post Office cancels, one common and the other unusual. The cover entered the mails at Station A on March 4, year unknown, and was struck with the standard Station A CDS/ellipse duplex. It bore only a



Figure 1.

single one cent stamp which constituted a 1¢ underpayment of the 2¢ local rate. The letter was "held for postage" as indicated by the marking with the large "A" in the center which was partially struck on the stamp. A second 1¢ stamp was subsequently affixed

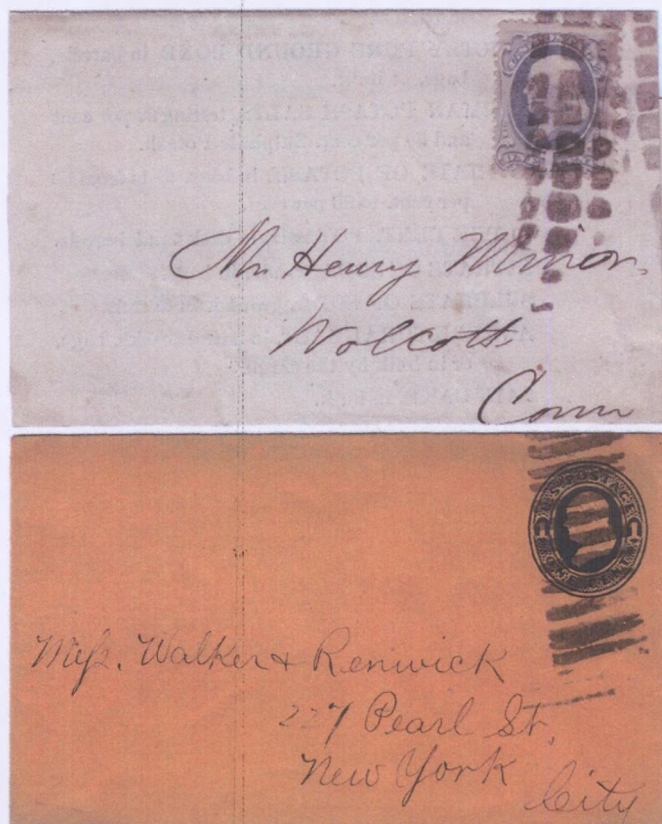


Figure 2.



Figure 4.

An interesting point concerns the cancellation on the stamp added to make up the 2¢ rate. The cancel is odd as is the use of blue ink. Blue ink implies processing by a clerk other than one whose job it was to handstamp covers entering the mails because this was done, with few exceptions, in black ink. The instrument used, I believe, was a roller and this type of cancel appeared for awhile on New York circular mail. Roller cancels are normally found to begin at the top of the cover and extend down some distance. Some years ago Club member Ken Pitt put forth a very plausible explanation for this phenomenon as resulting from the clerk laying out circular covers on the work table in overlapping fashion and then running the roller down the covers, thus canceling a number of them in one motion. Figure 2 shows two such covers. New York roller cancel designs, always primitive, show wide variety.

The Figure 1 cancel in question doesn't begin at the top but this cover, of course, was not a circular cover and surely would not have been placed with a group of such "covers". If it is a roller cancel, it is the only example I have ever seen in blue ink.

A Noteworthy Pair of Ellipses

The most common U.S. handstamp cancel used in the 19th century was the ellipse composed of horizontal or vertical bars, usually with a letter or number in the center. The earliest known use of a commercially prepared ellipse was by the New York Post Office during the November 1874 to March 1875 period. Figure 1 illustrates the marking. Usage was apparently intermittent and probably experimental. Later, the NYPO was the first post office to begin regular use of ellipse cancels which started on or about March 3, 1876 and involved a

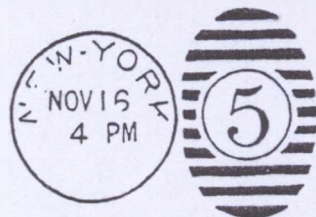


Figure 1.

set of handstamps with ellipse numbers "1" through "30" – see Figure 2. The ellipses in Figures 1 and 2 differ, especially in terms of number of bars: 11 vs 9, and in the shape of the numerals, shaded vs. block.

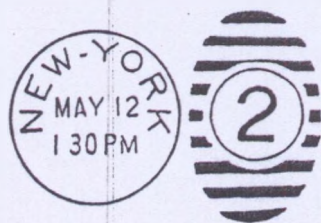


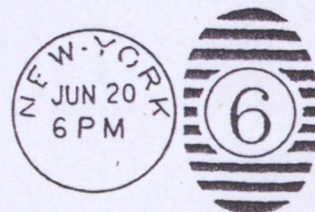
Figure 2.

It is interesting to note that the NYPO also employed an 11-bar "6" ellipse (Figure 3), matching in style the design of Figure 1, but only after the 9-bar ellipses appeared. The 11-bar "5" was apparently only used before the appearance of the 9-bar ellipses. It is speculated that the 11-bar "5" and "6" duplex handstamps were ordered at the same time but only the "5" was put to test, the "6" finding use as an occasional replacement for a 9-bar "6" handstamp.

Dan Richards has been studying New York ellipses and recently submitted the following report.



Figure 3.



New York 11 Barred Ellipse

Circular Date Stamp (CDS) 23mm diameter
Ellipse – 11 Horizontal Bars, 28.5mm high x 19mm wide
Inner Ring – 12mm diameter
Number Style – shaded, 8mm high x 5.5mm wide

The following is a list of all recorded covers dates

Ellipse Number "5"	Ellipse Number "6"
NOV. 16, 1874 4PM	MAY 31, 1877 4PM
NOV. 19, 1874 2:30PM	JUN. 25, 1877 1:30PM
NOV. 19, 1874 3:30PM	JUN. 26, 1877 6PM
NOV. 25, 1874 3:30PM	JULY 18, 1877 6PM
DEC. 26, 1874 1:30PM	AUG. 2, 1877 6PM
FEB. 8, 1875 6PM	SEP. 4, 1877 4PM
MAR. 11, 1875 6PM	SEP. 22, 1877 6PM
	MAY 27, 1878 4:30PM
	JUN. 21, 1878 4PM
	JULY 15, 187() 6PM
	SEP. 13, 187() 3:30PM
	SEP. 14, 187() 11:30PM

Readers are urged to check their collections to see if they can add to Dan's listings. Copies of dated covers should be sent to Dan by email at drichards14@carolina.rr.com or by regular mail at 10012 Hazelview Dr., Charlotte, NC 28277. The February 2006 NEWS illustrates the postal card bearing the November 16 strike of the Figure 1 cancel. It resides in the collection of John Donnes.