



U.S. Cancellation Club **NEWS**

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New Star in Waterbury Firmament

Paul Rohloff wrote the book, published in 1979, that is still today the standard reference for Waterbury, Connecticut cancellations.¹ In it he presented eight 5-point star cancels, one with five accompanying hearts and another with a crescent moon.² The February 2004 *NEWS* illustrated two additional 5-point stars from covers that were in an exhibit of the late Clyde Jennings.³

Recently, Abe Boyarsky submitted to the *NEWS* another unlisted Waterbury 5-point star – see Figure 1. Rohloff reported two rather similar Waterbury stars shown here as Figure 2.⁴ However, it is quickly apparent that the five sections of Abe's star are thicker than those in Rohloff. It is of interest to note that the star on the right of Figure 2 is reported by Rohloff from "Aug. 15 (186?) to Sep. 9, 1865."⁵ Thus there appears to be at least a slight overlap with the Figure 1 star dated September 8, 1865. Rohloff reports a single date for the star on the left of Figure 2 – August 15, 1871.⁶

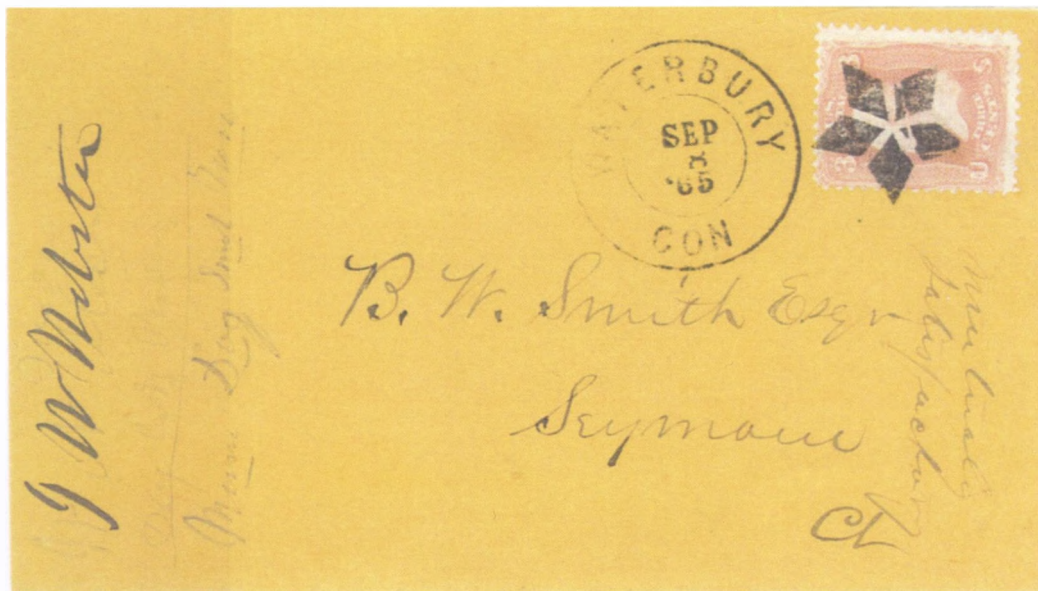


Figure 1



Figure 2

¹ Rohloff, Paul *The Waterbury Cancellations 1865-1890* Collectors Club of Chicago (1979).

² *ibid.*, pg 222, 223.

³ Jennings, Clyde *U.S. Mail, Cancels and Postal Markings* (April 1990), offered by the USPS exhibit photocopy service.

⁴ Rohloff, *op. cit.* pg. 223.

⁵ *ibid.*, pg. 222.

⁶ *ibid.*

The U.S. Cancellation Club NEWS

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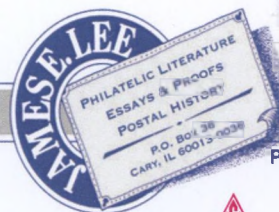
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Editor's Note

For two years, as a volunteer service, Matt Kewriga has designed the electronic page layouts for the *NEWS* and coordinated with the printer the printing and distribution of the *NEWS*. He has brought a new, higher level of quality to our journal which has been widely praised. With new work responsibilities and a move from the east coast to the west, Matt is relinquishing the layout job but will continue to serve as 2nd vice president of the USCC. I know all Club members join with me in extending a hearty "thank you" to Matt for the major contributions he has made.

Beginning with this issue, the page layouts will be handled by Carol Henderson of Milton, Pennsylvania. While she is not a philatelist, she has considerable experience in doing page layouts for sizable publications and is well versed in the technical details of such work. I look forward to working with Carol.

Roger Curran

President's Message

I would like to begin this message by extending to everyone belated best wishes for a happy and prosperous new year and to also apologize for the unexpected delay in the November 2012 issue of the *NEWS*. Our Club is dedicated to issuing four on-time journals a year and we will do our best to avoid any future production problems.

The election ballots are in and I'd like to announce that the Club's membership has selected the Officers as posted on the USCC *NEWS* masthead. It should be noted that Roger Rhoads, after having served our Club admirably for more the 15 years as Secretary/Treasurer, has stepped down and has been replaced by Club member Arden Callender.

Arden (or "Ardy", as he is affectionately known) has been a Club member for many years and resides in the Houston, Texas area. His collecting interests lean mainly towards the postal history of New York City. He is known internationally for his study and collection of New York City's Supplementary Mail to foreign destinations.

May we all wish Ardy a successful transition to the Board and extend our thanks to Roger Rhoads for his many years as a Board member and the outstanding service he's given as Secy./Treasurer.

Our Club's Board has elected to hold a general membership meeting this year and has chosen NAPEX (2013) as the meeting site. The NAPEX show is scheduled for May 31st though June 2nd and will be held at the Hilton McLean Tysons Corner, McLean, Virginia, location (their usual meeting place). Our USCC general membership meeting will be held on Saturday afternoon from 2:00 to 3:00 PM. We will also staff a society table for the full three days.

I wish to give a special thanks to Club member and dealer James (Jim) Lee for his support to our organization by presenting information about our Club and including a USCC membership application form in the last newsletter sent to his customers. So far, through his efforts, we've received eight new member applications. Thank you Jim.

In closing, and taking the liberty of speaking for the Board, we look forward to meeting new Club members and renewing old friendships at NAPEX 2013. Here's hoping many Club members will be able to attend.

John Donnes

Albany Lincoln and Stars Cancel

by Ernie Webb

Part of what we enjoy about collecting philatelic material is researching the people, places and events that caused items in our collections to be produced. We want to know how they tie into historical events or time periods. Many stories have been written about Abraham Lincoln over the years with a few tying him with Albany, New York and its postal history.

Let's turn back the clock about 153 years to get a feeling of the turbulent times that faced the nation, especially New York and the post office of Albany. November 6th 1860 Abraham Lincoln was elected President, a Republican victory, but before the new administration took office on March 4th 1861, seven slave states declared their secession and joined to form the Confederate States of America. Both the outgoing administration of President Buchanan and the incoming administration rejected the

legality of the secession, considering it only a rebellion. In addition, no foreign governments recognized the Confederacy.

Now imagine if you will, it is January 1861, southern states have begun to secede from the union and you read in the *Albany Evening Post*: "President elect Abraham Lincoln is to speak at the Delavan House at Broadway & Steuben Streets in Albany, New York on February 18th. Mr. Lincoln will reflect on his election and the turbulence of the country which has since followed." The Delavan House is the largest and most famous hotel in Albany at the time and the president and his entourage will be staying there. Years later it was found that actor John Wilkes Booth was staying at the Stanwix Hotel, which was a small

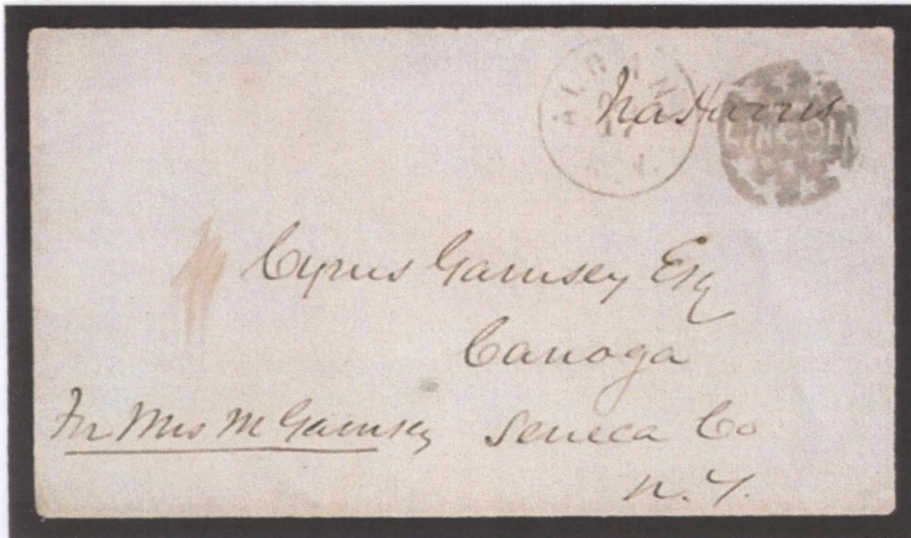


Figure 1

hotel two blocks away, overlooking the presidential parade. This has given rise to speculation that he may have been stalking the president while he was in Albany even at this early date. You too might have been seized with anticipation and flock to Albany as did thousands.

Many researchers have found that Mr. Lincoln understood that a very close relationship with the press would allow him to determine how his messages were presented and understood by the public. It was the internet and television of the times. Mr. Lincoln used the press and became close to many editors and reporters around the country, and many of these contacts were key players in his presidential nomination and election process. One of the most powerful personalities in this circle of influence was Thurlow Weed, editor of the *Albany Evening News*. Now it is important to note that George Dawson gets appointed postmaster of Albany, March 3rd 1861 and had been a partner and long time friend of Thurlow Weed. Their ties go back to the 1840's and they were very close over the years and known as ardent pro-Union Republicans. Albany, the capitol city of New York, was one of the 10 most populated cities beginning in 1810 through the 1860's. As mentioned in my November article, George Dawson was the postmaster of Albany and most probably the individual in charge of the Lincoln and stars cancellation.

Thurlow Weed was a genius for his organizational ability (which even an enemy had to admit), for his usual sure judgment in regard to men and measures, and for his mystery and secretiveness that neither wine nor passion ever betrayed, all of which contributed to make him the greatest political strategist of the day. Thurlow Weed had supported Seward, a Lincoln opponent for the 1860 Republican party nomination. Mr. Lincoln's nomination had a profound effect on Weed's behavior at this time. He was heading east after the nomination and received and accepted a cordial invitation to meet and visit Mr. Lincoln in Springfield, IL. Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Weed took naturally to each other, from the very day they met, and their relations grew gradually more agreeable and friendly over time. Often, when knotty questions arose, Mr. Lincoln would send for Thurlow Weed for consultation, stating a case, sometimes asking him to arrange or suggest a way in which he wanted it to be done or could be done more easily. Mr. Weed did not approve of or support secession but was in favor of compromise with the South. He believed the North was nearest right, though not wholly blameless. He stated, "too many of us forgot that when our country was formed, slavery was the rule, freedom was the exception." Mr. Weed surely influenced the president on many appointments and surely the Albany postmaster position with his partner and friend, George Dawson.

The state of New York during the American Civil War had a major influence in National politics, the Union war effort, and the media coverage of the war. New York was also the most populous state in the Union during the Civil War, and provided more troops to the Union Army than any other state, as well as several significant military commanders and leaders of the time.

Shortly after George Dawson was appointed postmaster of Albany, hostilities began on April 12th 1861, when Confederate forces fired on the U.S. military installation at Fort Sumter in South Carolina. President Lincoln responded by calling for a volunteer army from each state, totaling only 75,000, to recapture Federal property, which led to declarations of secession by four more slave states, bringing the total to 11. This call to arms did not happen until June 8th. It should be noted, that New York ultimately provided a total of 400,000 to 460,000 men during the war, nearly 21% of all the men in the state and more than half of those under the age of 30.

Not only were events turbulent locally but on November 8th 1861 an international diplomatic incident occurred with the steamer USS San Jacinto commanded by Union captain Charles Wilkes, when he intercepted the British mail packet, RMS Trent and removed, as contraband of war, two Confederate diplomats, James Mason and John Slidell. The envoys were bound for Great Britain and France to press the Confederacy's case for diplomatic recognition in Europe and the incident became known as the Trent Affair. The initial reaction in the United States was to rally against Great Britain, threatening war, but President Lincoln and his top officials and advisors did not want to risk war with Great Britain or France. After several weeks of tension and loose talk of war, the crisis was resolved when the Lincoln Administration released the envoys and disavowed Captains Wilkes' actions. No formal apology was issued and Mason and Slidell resumed their voyage to Britain but failed in their goal of achieving diplomatic recognition.

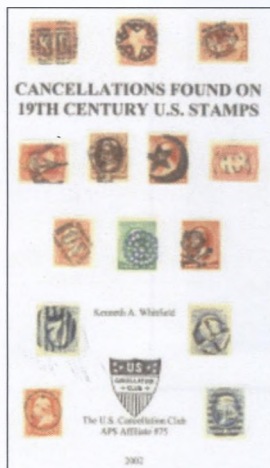
One of President Lincoln's advisors that helped determine this policy was a New York Senator, Ira Harris. Now it is important to understand that not only did Thurlow Weed help appoint George Dawson, his partner at the *Albany Evening News*, but he also used his political machine to elect Ira Harris, a former law professor, serving for 13 years as a State Supreme Court judge from Albany. New York Senator Ira Harris became one of President Lincoln's most frequent evening visitors and his presence made him privy to the President's patronage, so much so that the President once claimed that he looked underneath his bed each night to check if Senator Harris was there. Both Senator Harris and his wife became quite close to Mary and President Lincoln. Senator Harris continued to be close to the Lincoln family throughout the war and up to the President's death at Ford's Theater and beyond. It should be noted that Ira Harris's daughter was Clara Harris and she and her fiancé, Major Henry Rathbone, were guests of the Lincolns for the theater on the night of April 14th, 1865. They were in the box when John Wilkes Booth entered the box and assassinated the President, and were the fill-in couple, instead of the General Grant and his wife, who at the last minute had been unable to join the Lincolns on that fateful day.

Senator Harris is associated with the cover noted in my list of Lincoln and stars covers dated October 17th, the only free frank cover known with this cancel. See Figure 1.

I also want to update my list of known covers to 22 total, with earliest date September 30th, Saturday, addressee B Claff, with Sc 65. Also October 13th, Friday, with Sc 65, and October 15th, Sunday, addressee Pierce with enclosure dated 1865, confirming the year of use, and a new late use of November 15th, to Butterworth Esq. with Sc 65.

I believe I have discovered the possible reason why the cancellation was produced and would like to share that in the future. If any members have any additional listings or comments I would be interested to learn of them at ewebb02@aol.com.

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U.S. Cancellation Club NEWS, Cross Reference Index for all issues: 1951-2009. Presented in three separate sections: Cancellations, Post Offices, and Article Titles, \$18 postpaid to U.S. addresses.

Wesson "Time-On-Bottom" Markings Revisited, Compiled by Ralph A. Edson and Gilbert L. Levere, update of 1990 Laposta monograph, 190p., see p. 70 of November 2010 NEWS, \$25 postpaid to U.S. addresses.

Cancellations found on 19th Century U.S. Stamps, by Kenneth A. Whitfield, is now available again. 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. \$50 postpaid to U.S. addresses.

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Answers to the Question

The November 2012 *NEWS* asked the question: were handstamps used in the U.S. that duplexed a canceler to another postal marking before August 8, 1860? On that date the New York Post Office introduced such a handstamp in response to the July 23, 1860 supplementary postal regulation that forbade the use of the postmarker as a canceler. See a tracing of one of the three reported August 8 examples at Figure 1.¹



Figure 1

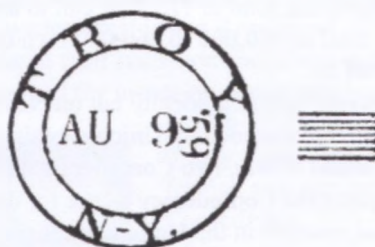


Figure 2

The answer to the above question is "yes." In 1859, a Marcus Norton patented a post office handstamp that had a couple of novel features, one of which was the duplexing of the postmarker to the canceler. A Norton handstamp incorporating this feature was placed in service briefly in the Troy, New York post office in 1859. See the tracing in Figure 2 which is an impression from the original working model of the handstamp submitted to the Patent Office.² Three covers bearing this marking are reported. Dates are May 24, June 2 and August 9, 1859.³ Interestingly, they show an 8-bar canceler as opposed to the seven bars in Figure 2 impression. One supposes there are off-cover stamps "out there" bearing the 8-bar cancel that have been unrecognized for what they are. Can any reader show an example?

But considerably before 1859 – in 1852 – there was a handstamp employed by the Salem, Massachusetts post office that duplexed a dotted spiral canceler to a separate "PAID" marking. See Figure 3 for a tracing⁴ and a typical strike on cover dated March 15, with "1852" docketing on the back.

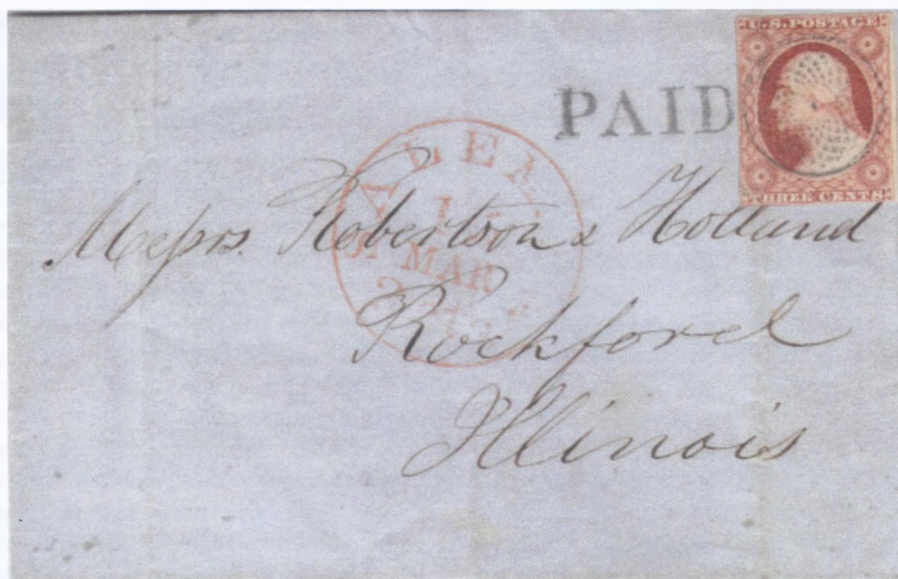


Figure 3

¹ Bond, Arthur "Time-saving, Duplex Handstamps; Its Invention Use and Manufacture" *Postal History Journal*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (June 1963) p. 59.

² Skinner, Hubert C. "Patents and Philately During the 1860s", *Chronicle* 163, August 1994, p. 177.

³ *ibid.*, p. 175.

⁴ Alexander, Thomas J. *U.S. Postal Markings 1851-61*, USPCS (1979), p. 138.

A remarkably complete tracing of the cancel is shown in Whitfield as #2311 – see Figure 4. That the “PAID” marker was duplexed to the canceler is made abundantly clear by the strikes on the two Figure 5 covers. Both of the covers are datelined 1852.

The *NEWS* would very much welcome learning of other examples of duplex markings used before August 8, 1860 involving a canceler as one of the markings.



Figure 4



Figure 5

Cancellation Reports

Don Haskett submits a number of cancellations from his collection, several of which relate to earlier articles in the *NEWS*. Figure 1 shows a portion of a cover that provides a new earliest reported usage for the Figure 20 ellipse in the May 2012 article on Washington, D.C. cancels. The previous ERU was February 23, 1887.



Figure 1

The February 2012 *NEWS* discussed a Boston “HELD FOR POSTAGE” marking that was occasionally used as a canceler. Figure 2 shows an attractive example.

Commercially manufactured concentric circles cancels, with a number or letter in the center, were very commonly used in the latter 1870s and first half of the 1880s. The Washington, D.C. Philadelphia and Cincinnati post offices were the biggest users. Occasionally, collectors come across examples that are highly unusual. Figure 3 shows such a cancel. There are four concentric circles with a large “N” in the center which breaks the two interior circles at the top but apparently only one at the bottom. As far as your editor knows, this cancel has not appeared before in the literature. Can any reader show another example or report the originating post office?



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4

Figure 4 shows a cover from Dan's collection postmarked Chicago. This cancel is illustrated as #6221 in Whitfield but Whitfield didn't know the origin. Years ago, Richard Russell illustrated a negative “T” cancel from Chicago – see Figure 5¹. Dan submitted an off-cover cancel (Figure 6) that is similar but with what appears to be more of an octagonal shape and also a negative area to the right of the “T.” If they are the same cancel, perhaps Russell assumed the negative area (to the extent it existed in the strike he saw) was due to lack of inking and was not intended to be present, and thus ignored it in his tracing.



Figure 5



Figure 6

¹ Russell, Richard *Illinois 19th Century Cancels* Illinois Postal History Society (1984), tracing #25.

I am fairly confident that Whitfield #6222 (see Figure 7) is the Figure 6 cancel. Given all of the above, I suspect that #6222 is also from Chicago.

Dan reported several Worcester, Massachusetts cancels. Figure 8 shows a very nice strike of Whitfield #2265. Figure 9 shows a geometric that we believe matches Whitfield #3904 and an examination of the lightly struck CDS that is also present reveals the origin to be Worcester.



Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10



Wendell Triplett's update No. 2 attributes Whitfield #1559 to Worcester. Even though there were many leaf cancels used by post offices in the Banknote era, I believe Dan is correct in identifying the socked on the nose strike in Figure 10 as an example of #1559.

Chicago Blue Cancel

Don Barany submits a recent acquisition (Figure 1) involving a bold strike of a Chicago blue cancel not listed in the standard reference book on the Chicago blues authored by Paul Berg.¹ The card was postmarked May 9 (1874). As Don points out, Chicago did use, both in 1873 and 1874, some cancels with the outer perimeter being in the shape of a pentagram. They all involved a negative star in the center — see two examples in Figure 2.² The Figure 1 cancel has two thin lines in the center section similar to those in the cancel (Berg No. NSP-12) on the left in Figure 2. Berg reports this cancel used on April 17, 1874.³ The cancel on the right (Berg No. NSP-9) is reported used on February 2, 1874.⁴ If one were to connect the triangles in the Figure 1 cancel to the outer bars, thereby forming larger triangles, the resulting cancel would be quite similar to Berg No. NSP-9.

In 1996, Mr. Berg issued an eight page supplement to his book that updated dates of usage, and added new varieties

of listed killers and also newly listed killers. Figure 3 illustrates one of the newly listed killers, Berg No. GED-32x, with dates of use of May 10 and 11, 1874, one and two days later than Figure 1. Surely these are strikes of the same killer. Did the distortion in the May 10/11 strikes result from quick wear of a soft killer or is it more attributable to a poor strike resulting from too much pressure or some other factor? Don's cancel shows about as clear a strike as could be made of this cancel.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

¹ Berg, Paul K. *Chicago Blue Postal Markings 1870-1877*, published by the author (1992).

² *ibid.*, pp. 141-2. ³ *ibid.*, p. 142. ⁴ *ibid.*, p. 141.

Enigmatic Cancel

One of the many illustrations in an 1880s advertising circular sent out by John Goldsborough, postal handstamp maker and seller from Philadelphia, is shown in Figure 1. Cancellations with this design are seen, but they are decidedly scarce. Your editor has never seen one on cover. However, Whitfield reports it from New York City – see Figure 2. New York City cancellations have received careful study over the years but new examples do come to light from time to time. Nonetheless, as far as I know, at least in the last 30 years, no one has reported this cancel from New York or any other post office.

Figure 3 illustrates two strikes on soft paper Banknotes. The January 1980 *NEWS* illustrates an example on a Sc 210 together with a portion of a CDS rim. The ellipse on the Sc 210 is askew in relation to the CDS and may or may not be duplexed to it. There is a faint partial CDS rim on the left side of the 3¢ green in Figure 3. It is clearly not duplexed to the cancel.

Can readers shed light on this interesting cancel by showing additional examples or even reporting it on cover? Perhaps it was used briefly by more than one post office.



Figure 1

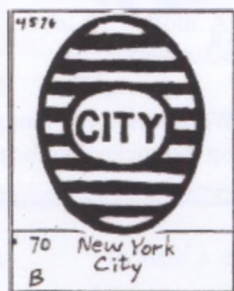


Figure 2



Figure 3

An Early State of the Fanciest Princeton, Ill. Negative “P” Cancel

by Joe H. Crosby

Nearly 50 years ago, in the November 1963 issue of the *US Cancellation Club News*, Richard Russell illustrated 15 different negative “P” cancels from Princeton, Illinois used from 1873-1885. The fanciest of these is reproduced here as Figure 1. Russell found it on a one cent re-engraved Banknote of 1881, Scott #206. Its most distinctive features are that the design in the center of the “P” looks like an acorn and there is a curved tail on the left side, neither of which appear on the other 14 Princeton markings.

I recently acquired a full strike of this marking in what has to be a very early state on the Two Cent Red Brown of 1881, Scott #210. See Figure 2. Surprisingly, it was not listed in Willard’s two volumes on that stamp. In order to bring out all the details, John Donnes has done another outstanding illustration, see Figure 3. The edge of this circular cork leaves a seal-type impression which is badly worn away in Russell’s illustration. But the overall design of the letter “P” is even more distinctive with fancy detail at the top and bottom of the vertical line, a more dramatic curved tail and a prominent negative “period” or “dot”. In fact, if the dot were any larger one might have mistaken it for a letter “O” and interpreted the marking as “PO” for “post office.” When viewed with all the other Princeton cancels, it is clearly a fancy “P.”

This fancy “P” is really not similar to any other 19th century letter cancel, either negative or positive. It is a truly unique design by a very talented postal employee in Princeton. Now, for the challenge – who can send in examples of this distinctive marking on cover? Maybe we can establish a period of use.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

¹ *US Cancellation Club News*, Vol. 6, No. 12, Whole No. 67, pp. 94-96; also included as part of #247a in *Illinois 19th Century Cancels*, by Richard Russell, Illinois Postal History Society, Des Plaines, IL 1984.

² *The United States Two Cent Red Brown of 1887-1887*, by Edward L. Willard, Vol. Two, H.L. Lindquist Publications, Inc. N.Y., 1970.

Unusual on Several Counts



Figure 1

the stamp, there are 18 diagonal strokes, eight going from left to right and ten from right to left. In addition, there are six shorter strokes going horizontally that might possibly have constituted the original cancel with the diagonal strokes added by the Patterson post office or even by the addressee just as doodling. Who can say? If readers have additional Hurley covers of this period in their collections, please let us know.



Figure 2

Figures 1 and 2 present an interesting pair of covers. First there is the unusual design of the mourning covers with black bands rather than black edges. The manuscript postmark on the Figure 1 cover, which doubles as the stamp cancel, reads "Hurley/New York/March 27/1865." More than nine months later, the Hurley postmaster took a different approach. The manuscript postmark in Figure 2 runs vertically up the right side of the cover, reading "Hurley New York/January 8 1866." Judging from the 24 manuscript strokes canceling the stamp, one wonders if the postmaster now had more time on his hands than was the case back in March. Looking closely at

The address is odd - to Paramus New Jersey but with an added notation referring to Patterson Post Office. Even at that time Paramus must have been the name given to a community served by the Patterson post office. There is a Paramus post office today but it wasn't established until 1950. Paramus, of course, is near Patterson.


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"running man"

Color Cancellations on the 1869 Series: Baltimore Foreign Mail

by Ed Field

Throughout the 1869 era Baltimore used a number of red semi-fancy cancels for foreign mail. This article shows examples of such cancels in chronological order. These examples are from a survey that identified forty Baltimore foreign mail (BFM) covers that bear 1869 stamps and have legible dates and cancels. Of those forty covers, eleven are from my own collection; the rest are from auction catalogs, exhibits, and published literature. Additional such covers will surely surface. I seek readers help in that regard

Figure 1 shows an example of the bulls-eye (aka “dot-in-circle”) cancel on a cover to England. This cancel was used only in August/September 1869.

Figure 2 shows an example of the lipstick (aka “split grid”) cancel on a cover to Germany. This cancel was used only in October/November 1869. The italic PAID ALL marking is known on only 13 covers, including covers both pre-dating and post-dating the 1869 era.

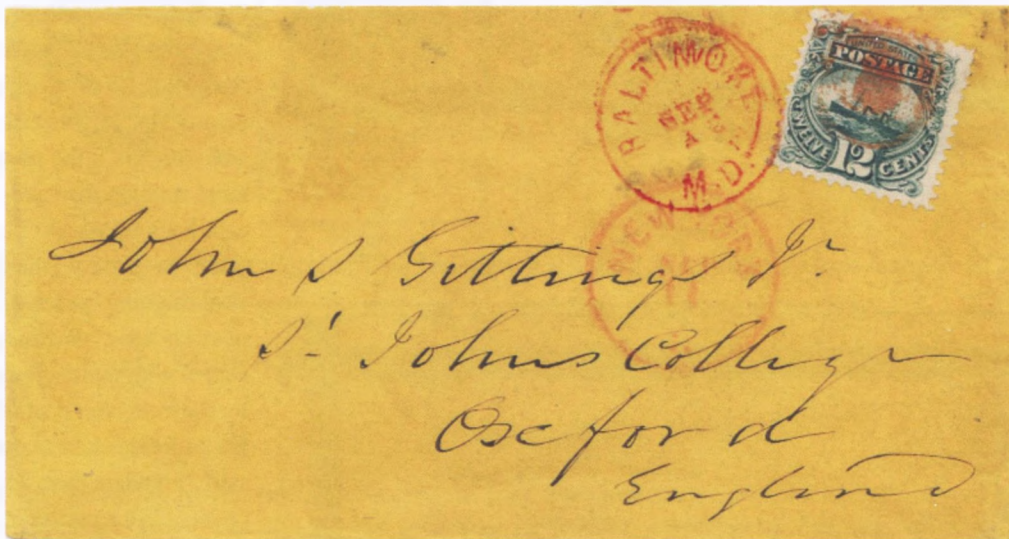


Figure 1



Figure 2

Figure 3 shows an example of the four diamonds cancel on a cover addressed to Rome. This cancel was used only in December 1869 and January 1870.

Figure 4 shows an off-cover example of the 6-segment grid cancel used only in December 1869 and January 1970. Figure 5 shows an off-cover example of the four-bar circular grid cancel used on the 1869 series in March/April 1870. Later uses on Banknote covers probably exist, but are beyond the scope of this article. The incomplete strike in this example shows only three of the four bars evident from on-cover examples.



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5

Figure 6 shows standard target cancels on a March 1870 cover to Palermo, Sicily. This cancel is known on only two BFM covers bearing 1869 stamps, but remained in use years into the Banknote era.

Figure 7 shows a circle of wedges cancel on a cover to England. Dated May 17, 1870, this cover is well into the Banknote era. To my knowledge, it bears the only on-cover example of this cancel on an 1869 stamp.



Figure 6

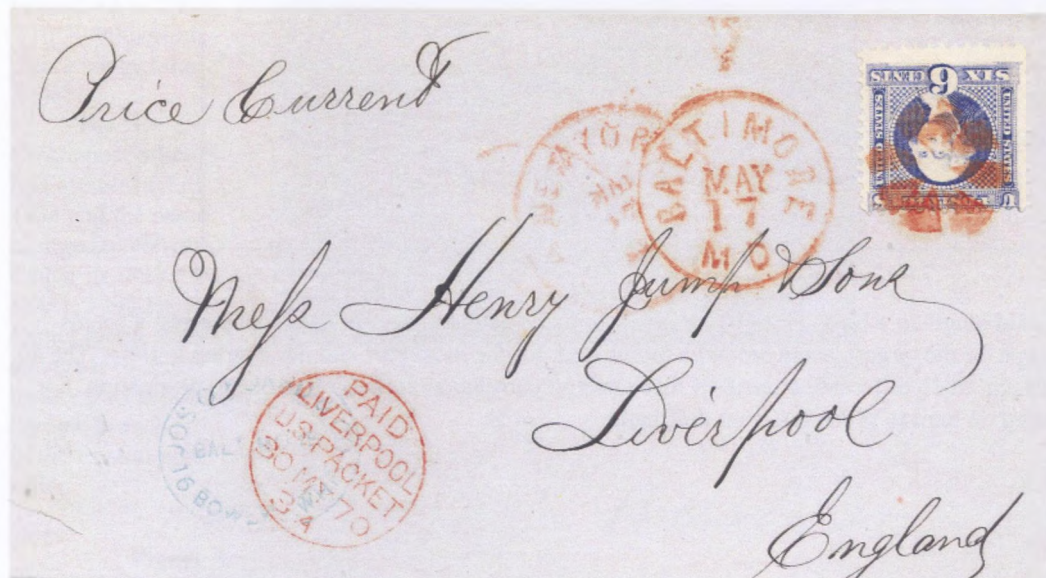


Figure 7

Figure 8 shows a circle of v's cancel on a July 25 1870 cover to England. To my knowledge this is the latest recorded use of a BFM cancel on an 1869 stamp.

Besides the semi-fancy cancels shown above, there are a few BFM covers that bear 1869 stamps with simple red quartered-cork cancels. Noteworthy among those is a cover to Ireland dated June 5, 1869. To my knowledge, that is the earliest recorded use of a BFM cancel on an 1869 stamp.



The following table summarizes the chronology of eight BFM cancel types. The terms ECU and LKU refer to the earliest and latest known (by me) dates of use. The last column gives the duration of each cancel on 1869 stamps, as determined from the above-mentioned survey. The short duration shown for the 4-bar grid is probably truncated, because BFM cancels on Banknote covers are not included.

CANCEL	ECU	LKU	DURATION
Bulls-eye	8/18/1869	9/12/1869	26 days
Lipstick	10/19/1869	11/24/1869	37 days
4-Diamonds	12/20/1869	1/18/1870	30 days
6-Seg grid	12/26/1869	1/28/1870	34 days
4-Bar grid	3/28/1870	4/18/1870	22+ days
Target	5/16/1870	Banknote era	Years
Wedges	5/17/1870	Banknote era	NA
Circle of V's	7/25/1870	Banknote era	NA

The durations in the table could lengthen a bit as more covers are found and added to my survey. Nonetheless, it seems that semi-fancy BFM cancels (except for the target) lasted around a month and, for the most part, did not overlap in time. The 40 covers in the survey represent mail sent to 11 different countries. I discerned no correlation between cancel and destination. For example, the lipstick cancel was used on mail to seven different destinations.

Kudos to the Newton Centre, Massachusetts Post Office

by Roger D. Curran

The most common U.S. 19th century "fancy cancel" design is surely the 5-point star. Given necessary resources and time, collectors can put together very extensive holdings of such cancels. Some star cancels are very common, others not. Some are aesthetically very pleasing, others not. Some are very intricate or are included in a larger design, others not. All of these present interesting avenues of exploration. However, the dimension this article touches on has to do with how well the cancels are struck. Here, too, collectors find wide variation. There is a cancel from a particular post office that quickly comes to my mind at the super conscientious end of the continuum – the Newton Centre, Massachusetts star cancel used in the 1889-1890 period.

Figure 1 illustrates three examples, all with nearly picture perfect strikes of both postmark and cancel. (The 1890 strike is not quite at the level of the 1889s and I have wondered if the handstamp face was beginning to reflect some wear.) This star design, incidentally, is generally referred to as a shaded star, sometimes a beveled star.

Figures 2 and 3 show, in an additional way, the care and attention given to canceling. In Figure 2, the postmaster or clerk was not satisfied with the uncharacteristic partial strike of the star on the stamp and corrected the problem by placing a second strike fully on the stamp while not creating a second postmark. This was achieved by holding the handstamp so that the postmarking portion was above the top edge of the envelope although a small portion was struck above the stamp. The Figure 3 cover shows the same approach regarding the cancellation of the Sc 220 stamp. I think this cover was frustrating to our perfectionist handstamper since there was no way of applying the handstamp without covering part of the address or the large corner card. As it turned out, "NEWTON" in the postmark is unreadable. Perhaps some uncertainty and discomfort in dealing with this situation led to the incomplete "MASS" and "AM" portions that do show. Nonetheless, given the attractive corner card and two nice strikes of the star, this is a very appealing cover.

Cole reports the above star but no other cancels from Newton Centre. Whitfield reports no Newton Centre cancels. Was the use of this duplex just a one-time venture into quality canceling or are there other noteworthy Newton Centre cancels out there? If readers can report such or extend the dates of use of the above star beyond 12/11/89 – 10/29/90 period, please contact the *NEWS*.

The Newton Centre post office was established in 1834 and the name changed to Newton Center in 1891. On July 1, 1908 Newton Center along, with a number of other nearby post offices, became branches of the Boston post office.

The Newton Centre post office was established in 1834 and the name changed to Newton Center in 1891. On July 1, 1908 Newton Center along, with a number of other nearby post offices, became branches of the Boston post office.

Figure 3



Figure 1



Figure 2



Newark Valley, New York Flag Cancel

Fancy cancels on 1851 issue stamps are not common. Carroll Chase estimated that, apart from manuscript cancels, about two-thirds of 1851 and 1857 issue stamps were canceled by the postmark. One small group of 1851 era fancies involves “patriotic” cancels; i.e., stars, flags and shields. The red flag of Newark Valley is an example – see Figure 1. Tracings of this cancel have appeared in the literature. Figure 2 is from Alexander (page 147) where the cancel is rated “extremely rare.” Figure 3 is from Skinner-Eno (page 189) and Figure 4 from Whitfield (page 23). The Figure 1 cover allows a more complete tracing (Figure 5, courtesy of John Donnes) than those currently listed and also includes an enclosure that enables us to put a full date with the cancel – June 30, 1854.

The Newark Valley post office was established in 1828 in Tioga County and operates today.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5

¹ Chase, Carroll *The 3¢ Stamp of the United States 1851-1857 Issue*, Revised (Quartermaster Publications) pg. 334.

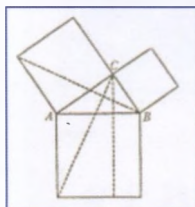


Figure 1



Figure 2

More on Pythagorean Theorem

The May 2011 *NEWS* discussed cancellations that are in the design of a right angle triangle with each side forming one side of a square – see Figure 1. This drawing has been used for many years to demonstrate the proof of the Pythagorean Theorem and it has become a symbol of the Master Mason Degree in Freemasonry. Victor Kuil recently submitted the Sc116 stamp shown here in Figure 2 with what he believes to be a Pythagorean Theorem cancel. Victor comments that the top left “square” doesn’t seem square at first glance, but there appears to be a split in the cancel without which the top left section is nearly square. One can understand how the cancel can be interpreted as an illustration of the Pythagorean Theorem but there is some ambiguity present. It would be helpful to see a full strike. Can readers show the full cancel? Comments are also invited.

Wesson TOB Book Updates

The USCC published in 2010 the book *Wesson "Time on Bottom" Markings Revisited* by Ralph Edson and Gil Levere which provided an extensively updated report of the usage of these distinctive markings. Robert J. Zamen of Austin, Texas has submitted covers showing eight new latest reported usages (LRU). The table below summarizes this information. Our thanks to Mr. Zamen.



Figure 1

	Identification of Marking	Page #	Current LRU	New LRU
1.	Chicago, IL Type B (2.0)	24	6-Apr-82	15-Apr-82
2.	Chicago, IL Type B (12.0)	28	31-Jan-85	7-Mar-85
3.	Burlington, IA Type B (1.0)	32	06-Aug-86	07-Oct-86
4.	Utica, NY Type B (1.0)	72	08-Oct-84	11-Nov-85
5.	Utica, NY Type B (2.0)	72	03-Dec-85	30-Dec-85
6.	Philadelphia, PA Station E Type B-3 (1.1)	116	23-Nov-87	29-Aug-89
7.	Charleston, SC Type B (2.0)	91	21-Mar-83	24-Mar-83
8.	Bos. Prov. & N.Y. R.P.O. Type B-6b (k-4)	163	26-Sep-84	17-Feb-85*

*See Figure 1. It is assumed that this killer is the same as on page 163 with differences attributable to wear and rotation of cork in the handstamp.

Oddities with an "H"

"Standardized" and "ellipse" are rather closely associated words in the language of cancellation collectors. This began in the first serious study of ellipse cancels, authored by Gilbert Burr, and published in the *American Philatelist* in 1935 and 1936. But not all ellipses, of course, have a similar appearance. Herewith in Figures 1 and 2 are two unusual examples featuring the letter "H" in the design. The tracings are courtesy of John Donnes.

There is a style of ellipse with a negative letter in the center that is occasionally seen – see Figure 3. Various letters are noted and several post offices are involved. However, the Figure 1 ellipse is clearly not of that type and may be rare. One supposes that this cancel comes from a commercially made handstamp and thus further examples, perhaps involving some additional letters, may be out there to be discovered. The Hancock post office was established in 1815 and operates today. It is located in Delaware County in south central New York, which is of special significance to your editor whose mother was born and raised there and whose grandmother was for a time the postmaster of the small Delaware County town of Bovina Center.

Curiously there is a somewhat similar cancel to Figure 1 illustrated by Gilbert Burr on page 194 of the January 1936 *AP*, albeit with a positive "H" – see Figure 4. He knew nothing of its origin and considered it very unusual.

The Huntington ellipse is very distinctive and likely hand-carved. The rather late date for a "fancy cancel" – 1895 – is also of interest. Huntington is an operating post office established in 1855 and located in Hampshire County.

If readers can show additional examples of these cancels, on or off cover, please let us hear from you.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4

Boston Anomaly

Figure 1 shows a card with a "Boston, Dec 9 1882" dateline on the back. A very incomplete Boston December 19 postmark is on the front. But what about the cancel? There is a partial double strike of it and the John Donnes tracing of the more complete of the two strikes appears as Figure 2. In December 1882 the Boston large negatives were still going strong with a few ellipses thrown in. This "T" in a diamond seems quite out of place.

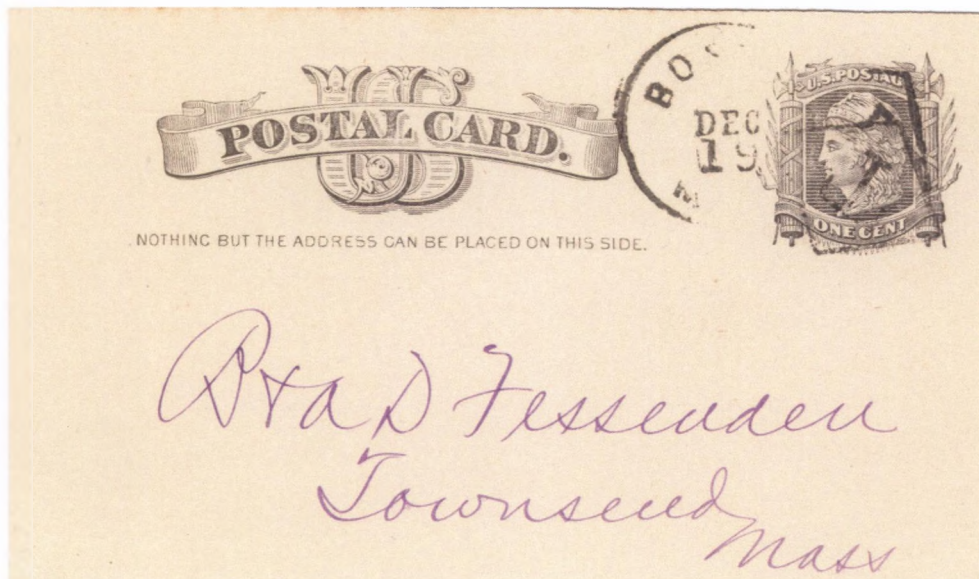


Figure 1



Figure 2

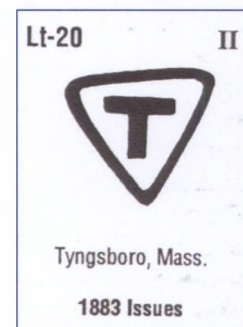


Figure 3

The card is addressed to Townsend, Massachusetts ... Townsend ... wait a minute ... "T" for Townsend ... and now it quickly becomes clear what has occurred. The Boston clerk did a very inadequate job of applying his duplex handstamp and when the card reached Townsend, the post office there canceled the indicium with what we can assume was its canceler, although not one that is listed in either Cole or Whitfield. A somewhat similar cancel (see Figure 3) is listed by Cole on page 281. Tyngsboro is located not far from Townsend.

Townsend was established in 1808 in Middlesex County and operates today. Tyngsboro, also in Middlesex County, was established in 1807 and operates today. Can readers show additional examples of the Townsend "T" cancel?



EXHIBIT AWARDS WON BY USCC MEMBERS

SESCAL October 5-7 2012

Lester Lanphear: George Bennett Memorial Reserve Grand Award; also Gold Medal and USPCS Medal for "U.S. Penalty Clause Mail; the Classic Period"

OKPEX October 19-20 2012

Joe Crosby: Vermeil Medal; also AAPE Creativity Award, Oklahoma Philatelic Soc. Award and Gordon Bleuler Award for Best Oklahoma Postal History for "Selling the Twin Territory Towns"

Brady Hunt: Silver Medal; also AAPE Award of Honor for "The Opening of the Great Southwest-The Story of the Katy Railroad in Indian Territory"

FILATELIC FIESTA November 10 2012

Wm. B. Barlow: Vermeil Medal for "The Boston Post Office and the Development of Machine Cancellations"

Nancy B. Clark: Gold Medal; also USPCS Medal for "The Massachusetts Island Counties"

“PAID” and Rate Handstamps

The need for “PAID” and rate number handstamps was largely eliminated on January 1, 1856 when prepayment of postage by the use of postage stamps became required on domestic letter mail. Some postmasters, of course, continued to use these stampless mail handstamps as cancelers. The Sc 210 stamps, shown below, were issued years later in 1883, and the old handstamps, in at least a few post offices, were still providing useful service.



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