



U. S. Cancellation Club **NEWS**

Vol. 34, No. 6, Whole No. 307, November 2018



This 1887 cover from Connecticut, bound for Germany via the New York post office was underpaid, as evidenced by the 'opera glass' marking at bottom left. Ardy Callender tells us more about it, starting from page 103.

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The United States Cancellation Club NEWS

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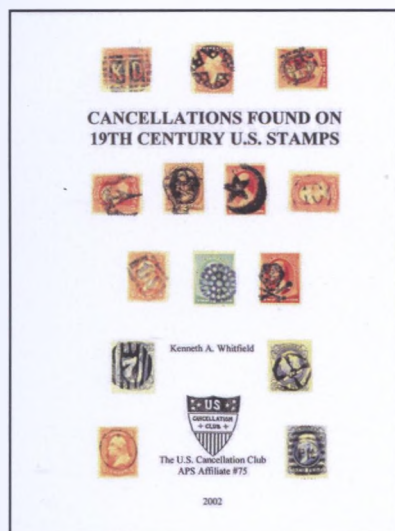
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



In this issue of the *NEWS*, you will find a loose insert which includes a ballot paper for your club's officebearers for the next two year term. On the reverse of the ballot paper, you'll find a brief statement from each of those members running for office. Please cast your vote and send it to reach the Secretary before December 31, 2018.

On the same form as the ballot is a reminder that annual subscriptions are due. Please give this your prompt attention. You can send the renewal and your vote in the same envelope. Do it today and you can put that little job away for another year!

"Out Going Passenger Delivery" Opera Glass Marking

Ardy Callender

Both the domestic and foreign departments of the New York City Post Office employed a large variety of opera glass auxiliary markings on both domestic and foreign mail as early as 1880. Many of these markings were used well into the 20th Century (latest observed by the author is 1931). Named for their resemblance to the lens of an opera glass, they consist of two attached circles ranging in size from 17 to 19mm in diameter. The left circle usually contains the words "New York" and the date or the letter "T" (universal letter designation for postage due) while the right circle contains whatever other information that was needed to be communicated. Both year dates and, sometimes, office or clerk codes appear either above or below the circles. The markings are most commonly found used on mail that either entered or transited the foreign mail department. Many of the foreign department mail markings are illustrated in Walter Hubbard and Richard F. Winter book entitled *North Atlantic Mail Sailings 1840-75* (1988, p. 351) in chapter 32 entitled "New York Exchange Office Markings". Included within this group are credit, due, transit, ship letter and depreciated currency markings. Diagram 1 illustrates examples of Hubbard and Winter's tracings taken from chapter 32. Also discussed and figured are a few examples of these foreign department opera glass markings used on cover.

The most common foreign department opera glass marking found on cover are due markings. Figure 1 illustrates an inbound mourning cover originating in Florence, Italy on January 13, 1904, arriving in New York City. Addressed to a Mr. White, 560 V (5th) Avenue, NYC, the cover was determined to be under paid and the NY opera glass due marking was applied dated 20 January 1904. On the reverse is a 10¢ postage due adhesive cancelled by a New York cancellation dated 21 January 1904. Also interesting are the Italian adhesives which were never cancelled, either in Italy or NYC.

An outbound example of a foreign department opera glass due marking is shown in the front page. Originating in Middletown, Connecticut, the 22 July 1887 cover is addressed to Mr. K. P. Harrington, Leipzig, Germany. The cover reached the NYPO (backstamped 22 July 1887, 7:30PM) the same day and was determined to be double rate and underpaid. The cover required and extra 2¢ as the adhesives

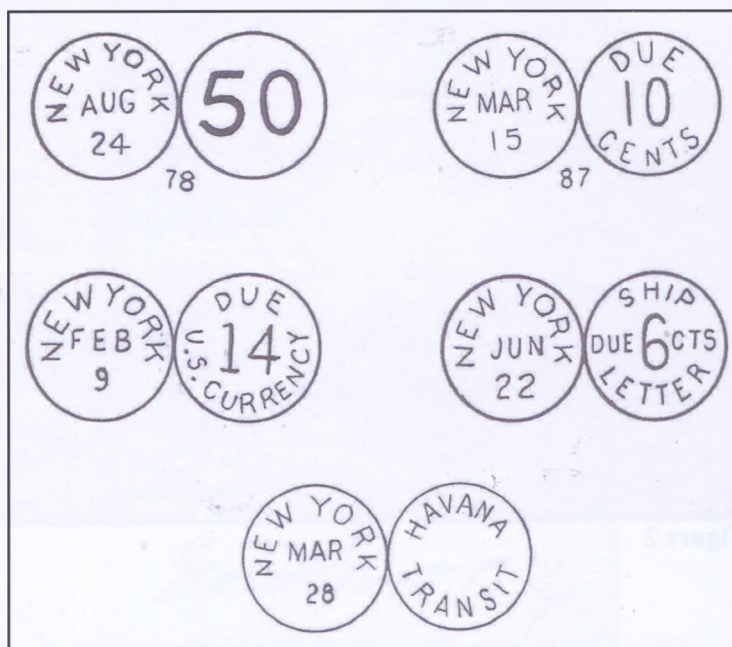


Diagram 1



Figure 1

The only domestic department opera glass marking I have record of, is the truly scarce “Out Going Passenger Delivery” marking. Because of the domestic rate postage applied to these covers, it seems only reasonable that they were handled in the domestic department and delivered by carrier to the pursers at the appropriate steamship. The Tilton machine “Late Arrival Detention” cancels, also applied in the domestic department, at first glance resemble the opera glass marking but the two circles overlap each other and true opera glass markings have circles that adjoin each other. Tilton “Late Arrival Detention” markings were applied as backstamps to the reverse of covers as seen in Figure 3.

The “Out Going Passenger Delivery” marking was applied to domestic mail sent to a passenger on a departing steamship docked at a pier in New York Harbor. The circles are 19mm in diameter and have “New York” and the “date” in the left circle. The right circle has the words “Out Going” and “Delivery” arched above and below along the periphery of the circle. The word “Passenger” is placed horizontally in the center of the circle. The earliest example I have recorded



Figure 2



Figure 3

originated in Rutland, Vermont on August 21, 1883 and is shown in Figure 4 (front) and Figure 5 (partial reverse of cover). The postal entire paid the 2¢ domestic rate to an address as follows: Mrs. D. S. Penfield, Cunard S.S. Servia, sailing 8 30A.M. Wed. Aug. 22, Pier No. 40, North River, New York, N.Y. The cover reached the main NYPO at 11 P.M. on the 21st as indicated by the receiving backstamp shown in Figure 5. The cover was struck with the "Out Going Passenger Delivery" opera glass and presumably delivered to the ship's purser prior to its sailing.

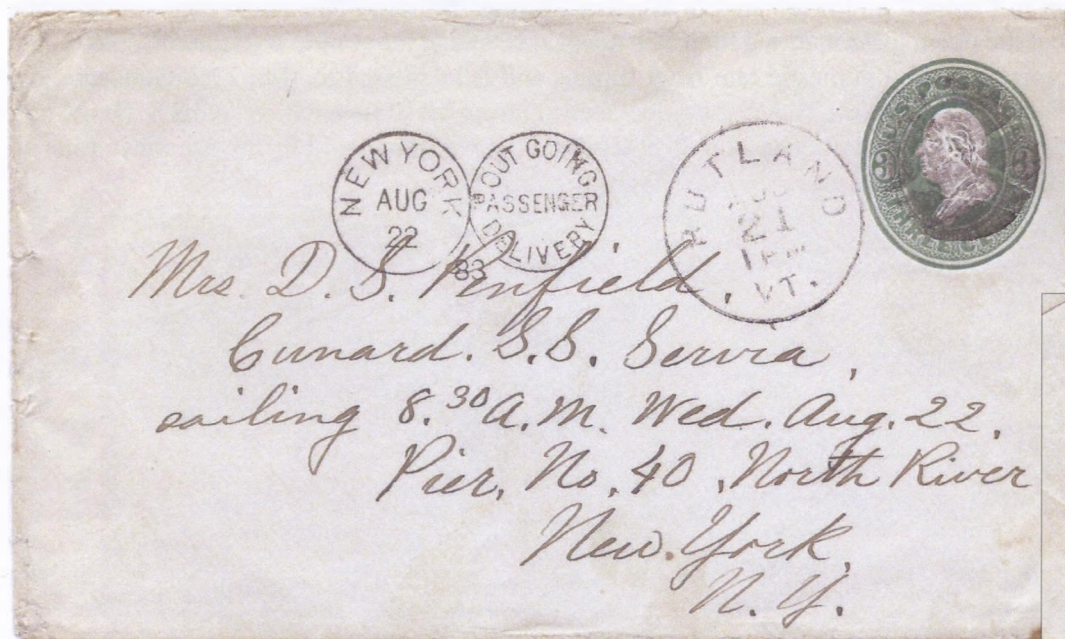


Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6

I have record of two other examples of the "Out Bound Passenger Delivery" opera glass marking. The cover seen in Figure 6, is dated 8 March 1884 and originated in New York City. As in the cover discussed above, this cover was also addressed to the Cunard liner *Servia* moored at Pier 40 in New York Harbor. The letter was posted at 11 AM. from Station G and was sent downtown to the domestic department where is received the "Out Going Passenger Delivery" opera glass marking. The reverse of this cover was not observed but presumably is struck with the main NYPO receiving backstamp.

The final example is shown in Figure 7 and originated in Western Springs, Illinois. The actual date struck in the datestamp is almost illegible but the opera glass marking indicates it was received at the NYPO on September 29, 1893. The two cent Columbian adhesive pays the domestic rate from Illinois and is addressed to "Mr. Fred Goodacre, c/o American Liner "New York" New York City New York". Also docketed at lower left is the notation "c/o S.S. New York. The City of New York was originally part of the Inman Line fleet (British) but was purchased by the American Line on 22 February 1893 and renamed the New York.



Figure 7



Figure 8

The foregoing demonstrates that the "Out Going Passenger Delivery" marking was employed at least for ten years, from 1883 until 1893. The author has been collecting other examples of mail addressed to passengers on board ships docked in New York City Harbor for a number of years. However, all of items dated after 1900 are not struck with the opera glass marking and in fact have no distinguishing mark other than a NYC receiving backstamp. The two earliest covers recorded are shown as Figures 8 and 9. Figure 8 originated in Beverly, Massachusetts on October 7, 1900. It is addressed to a passenger sailing on the Prince Line *Tartan Prince* departing October 9. The sender applied 5¢ in postage by mistake, assuming it required a foreign rate rather than just the domestic postage.

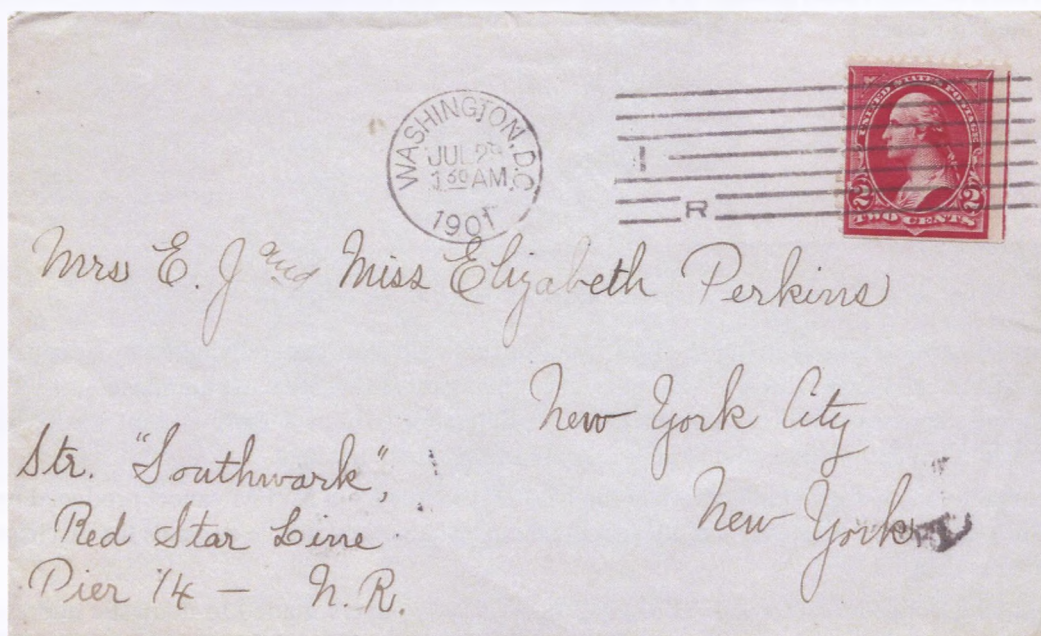


Figure 9

The cover illustrated as Figure 9 originated in Washington D.C. Dated 2 July 1901, it arrived the same day in domestic department of the NYPO as noted by a receiving backstamp of the same date. The docket at lower left indicates the two addressees were passengers on board the Red Star Steamer *Southwark* moored at Pier 14 on the North River. The cover was sent at the 2¢ domestic rate.

The "Out Going Passenger Delivery" marking was in use for at least 10 years until 1893 but its use had ceased by 1900. Who can provide other examples or any information to extend the range of this most interesting marking? ■

References

Graham, Richard E., "Opera-glass markings applied at New York", *Linn's Stamp News*, January, 1990.

Hubbard, Walter, and Winter, Richard F., *North Atlantic Mail Sailings 1840-75*, U.S. Philatelic Classics Society, Inc. 1988.


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"running man"

New York Foreign Mail: A Roller Cancel Revisited

Roger D. Curran

For collectors of U.S. cancellations, the term “New York Foreign Mail”, commonly abbreviated “NYFM”, has for many decades referred to a group of New York Post Office cancels struck on outgoing foreign mail (except to Canada). They primarily consist of large round geometrics that are distinctive and possess considerable aesthetic appeal. A typical example is illustrated in Figure 1.



Figure 1

These geometrics were used largely in the 1874-1875 period, but collectors generally take a broader perspective of the NYFM term to begin with all NYPO foreign mail cancels, including those that are quite mundane, in 1870 and extending up the introduction of standardized ellipse cancels in 1877. Selecting 1870 as a starting point was probably arbitrary, likely to coincide with the year in which the large Banknote stamps first appeared.

This article returns to a subject first addressed in the May 2013 *NEWS* – a NYFM cancel produced by a handstamp that rolled the cancel on covers rather than simply striking them. The present article expands the discussion somewhat. A bit of background is in order.

Collectors have long noticed that some NYFM cancels appear on covers mailed to domestic addresses. However, such covers almost exclusively involve circulars. See Figure 2 for a typical example. Many thanks to John Donnes for the tracing. Did the section of the NYPO that handled circulars at this time do so for both domestic and foreign mail? I don't know the answer to that question.



Figure 2

The NYPO is known to have used roller cancels on domestic circular mail to a limited extent. Such covers, while not common, are not particularly scarce. Examples are shown in Figures 3-6. The only dated domestic NYPO roller cancels I am aware of are dated in April or May 1875. It is interesting to note that, most often, roller cancels extend to the top of the cover. Kenneth Pitt has speculated that this results from the practice of clerks laying out on work tables covers to be canceled in an overlapping fashion so that one run of the roller would cancel multiple items. Very plausible, I believe.

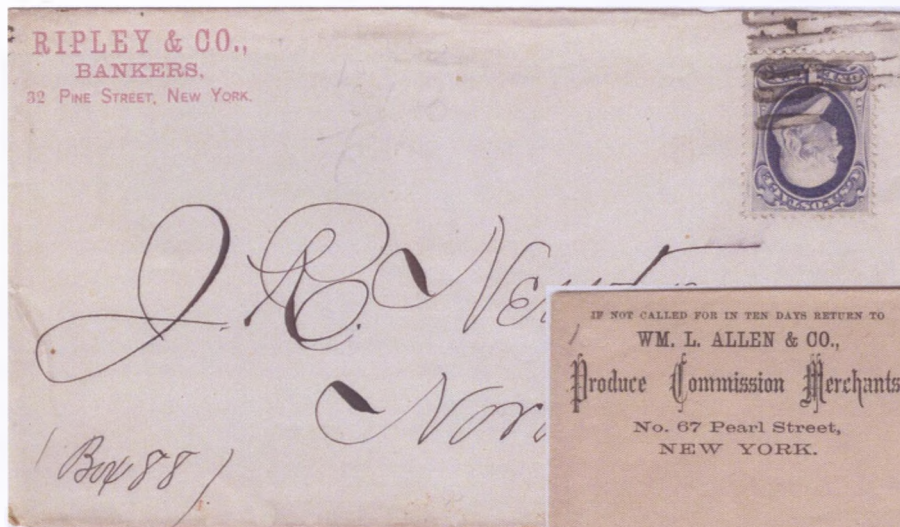


Figure 3

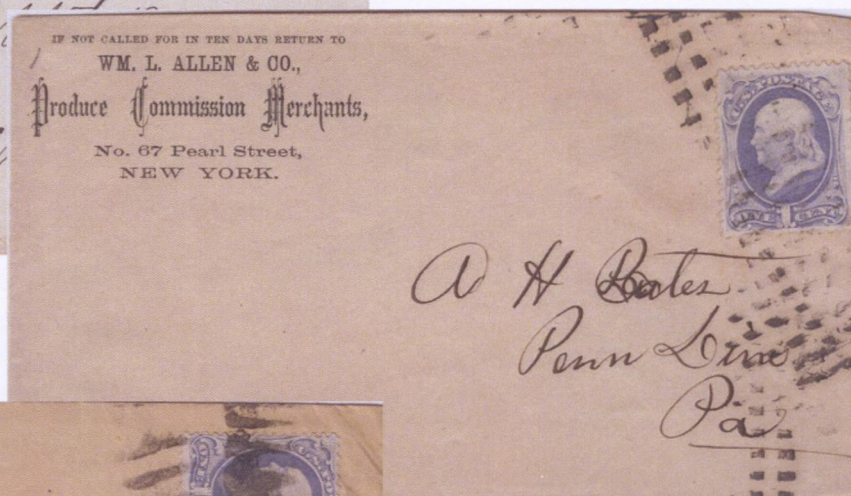


Figure 4

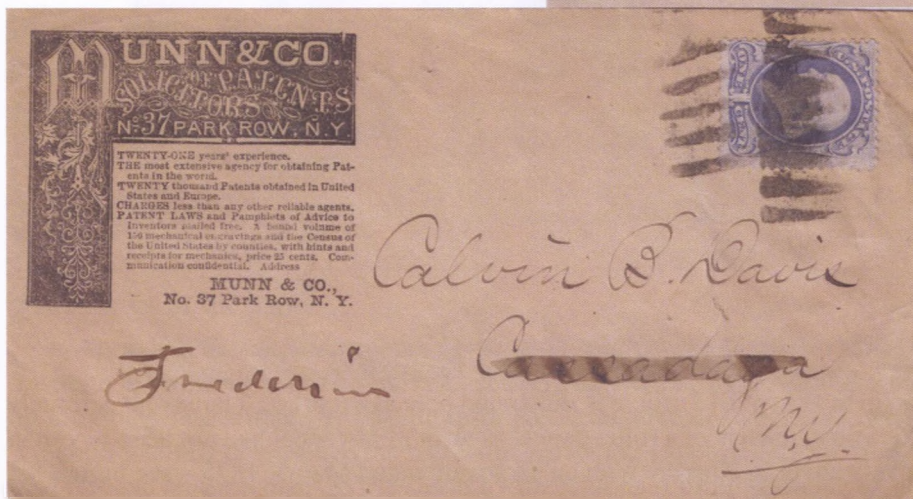


Figure 5

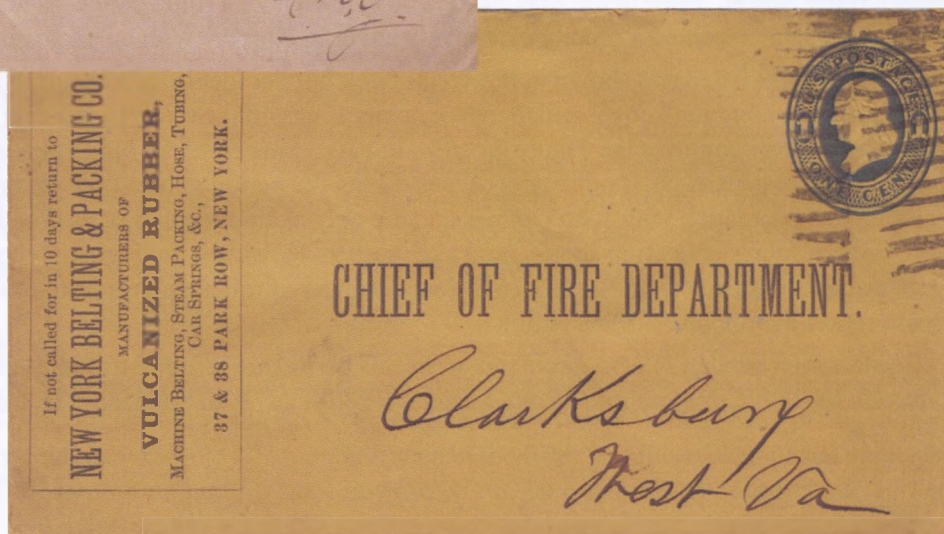


Figure 6

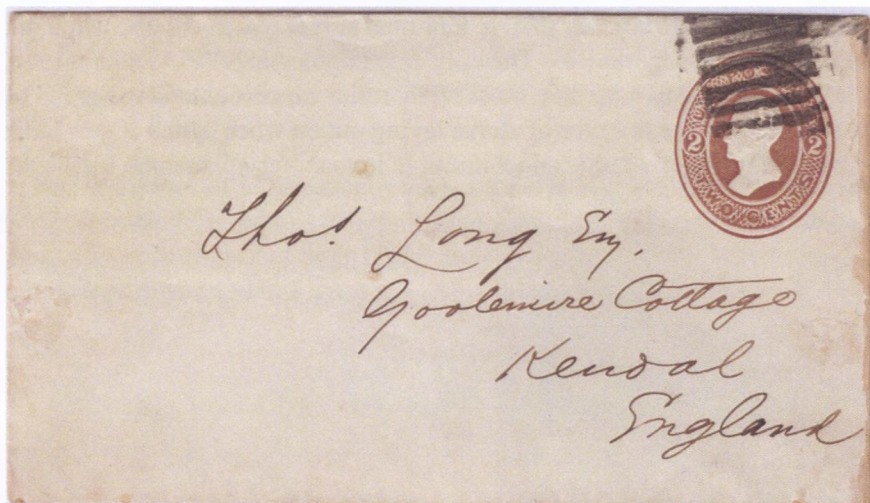


Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9

The cover that was the center of attention in the May 2013 article is illustrated here as Figure 7. I believe it definitely bears a roller cancel. Prior to the May 2013 article, the use of a roller cancel as an NYFM cancel had not been reported. This article also presented a second example, a cover to Norway with an enclosure dated May 5, 1875 – see Figure 8.¹

The cover was listed and shown in the Weiss book but not identified as bearing a roller cancel. There is no remaining enclosure for the Figure 7 cover and there are no markings on the cover to indicate post office of origin or date. I believe the Norway cover confirms the Figure 7 cancel to have come from the NYPO because the cancels are decidedly similar. One might nonetheless ask if other post offices during the period in question used rollers at all similar to that in Figure 7. I discussed the situation with John Donnes and the only example either of us could identify was a cover from Rochester, New York in John's collection shown here as Figure 9. However, the Figure 7 cancel is much closer to the roller on the Norway cover than that from Rochester. If readers know of roller cancels from other post offices during this time period, please report them to the NEWS editor.

Readers interested in NYPO circular mail of this period are referred to John Valenti's excellent article, *New York City Cancellations on Circulars and Printed Matter 1870 – 1878* that appeared in the January and Fall 1995 issues of the NEWS. ■

1. Weiss, Jr. William R., *The Foreign Mail Cancels of New York City 1870 – 1878*, 1995, p. 344.

A Star is Born: The Smithsonian's McKinney, Texas 'Southern Letter Unpaid'

Vince King

Being a native of McKinney, Texas, I am always interested in obtaining special postal history items from that north Texas community. During a February 2009 discussion with Texas Postal History Society member and auctioneer Charles Shreve, he alerted me to a McKinney cover he had seen in a collection that the Smithsonian National Postal Museum had recently obtained. My interest instantly peaked when Charles told me it was a Confederate cover that had been struck with the rare "SOUTHN LETTER UNPAID." handstamp. Within a few weeks of contacting Cheryl Ganz, curator for the museum, I was sent a scan of the cover as shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1

Provenance of the Cover

In April of 2008, the Smithsonian's National Postal Museum received a well-known stamp collection from the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia. The Harry L. Jefferys collection, which includes numerous philatelic rarities, was bequeathed to the Franklin Institute in 1948 by insurance executive H.L. Jefferys, where it was stored for decades. In 2008 the Franklin Institute determined the collection no longer supported its mission of science and technology-based education and reached an agreement to transfer it to the National Postal Museum.

The Harry L. Jefferys collection consists of U.S. stamps, proofs and essays and is particularly strong in the 1851-1857 issue. The collection includes full panes of the 1-cent and 3-cent 1851 issue and the 12-cent 1857 issue, as well as scarce positions of the 1-cent 1851 issue, including positions 7R1E and 99R2. The collection includes a 3-cent 1851 issue with double impression and a 4-cent Schermack Type III coil single. Also included are several printing errors, including plate position No. 2 of the 1918 inverted Jenny airmail stamp. However, most important to Texas postal history enthusiasts, the collection contained a small bundle of covers . . . which included the McKinney Southern Letter Unpaid example.

The Southern Letter Unpaid Marking

On June 1, 1861, the United States Postal Service ceased all operations in the seceded states and the Confederate Postal Service took over all the existing US post offices within the CSA. Of course, many letters were already in transit when operations ceased. These letters were franked with 'old US stamps' either in the form of adhesives or postal stationery entires. In Louisville, KY, a major PO distribution hub for mail into the North, letters from the Southern States were held for a period of time.

In a dispatch dated June 24, 1861, J.J. Speed, the postmaster at Louisville, was advised to treat "letters from the South for the loyal states [i.e. to the North] as unpaid . . ." He was also directed to remove all old stamps found on the envelopes!!! Of course the latter was an impractical request considering some 4,000 to 5,000 letters had been held. As a result, Mr. Speed decided to 'cancel' the letters rather than remove the stamps and created a special handstamp for the task which was designed to notify destination postmasters that postage was to be collected.

A distinctive handstamp reading "SOUTHN LETTER UNPAID." (SLUP) in two straight-lines resulted. It was used in conjunction with a companion "DUE 3" device to accomplish the task at hand and both were struck in the characteristic greenish-blue ink used at the Louisville post office.¹ The matching Louisville, KY double-circle datestamp was also usually struck with the SLUP handstamp; however, Siegel Auction Galleries censuses note there is a pattern suggesting that the earliest mail processed out of Louisville was not marked with the datestamp.²

The McKinney, Texas SLUP Cover

The SLUP originated on an 1860 3¢ Red star-die entire cover addressed to Bryantsville, Garrod Co. [sic], KY and posted at McKinney, Texas on May 31, 1861. It was obviously in-transit when postal operations were severed between North and South and impounded when received at Louisville, KY. Sometime in late June or early July 1861 it was struck with the SLUP handstamp and released for delivery to Bryantsville due 3 cents.

After arrival at Bryantsville, it appears the recipient was no longer at that location and the letter was forwarded to Frankfort, KY. The forwarding was paid with a 3¢ 1857 issue tied by a Bryantsville, KY cds dated Jul 25 (1861). While these stamps had been demonetized, they were valid for postage in the 'US' until new issues became available in August of 1861.

This cover is not only a rare and desirable example of US and CSA postal history, but is certainly one of the most striking and important Texas items extant. It is also one of only two covers recorded from Texas which contain the scarce SLUP marking.

Confirming the McKinney Star Killer

My interest in the Smithsonian cover stems from another direction. Several years ago, I acquired a McKinney, TX 3c Red star-die entire cover from Gordon Bleuler's CSA collection; it had been posted Feb. 20, 1861 after Texas seceded from the Union. Pictured in Figure 2, it was struck with a single "star killer" on the indicia. In addition, as seen in Figure 3, the postmaster had also struck the reverse 13 times with the same device creating a visibly stunning cover. Gordon had always "waxed poetically" on how this cover was perhaps a handstamped Independent State patriotic cover, created by the postmaster at McKinney. He surmised the 13 stars represented the 13 potential 'Southern states' that would soon comprise the Confederacy (Kentucky and Missouri included).³

However, when I obtained the cover, my focus was on the star killer. I wanted to make sure that all of the strikes on the reverse identically matched the strike on the front and had not been fraudulently added. Digital scans of the cover and markings convinced me that all 14 strikes were indeed authentic and placed from the same device.

Unfortunately at the time this was the only recorded example of the device, and I had no way to confirm the existence of the star killer . . . until 2009. With the appearance of the McKinney SLUP cover at the Smithsonian, I can now confirm that this killer did exist and was used during early 1861. It is amazing that the only two recorded examples adorn such gems of Texas postal history.

The Smithsonian's National Postal Museum

The National Postal Museum is devoted to presenting the colorful and engaging history of the nation's mail service and showcasing the largest and most comprehensive collection of stamps and philatelic material in the world. It is located at 2 Massachusetts Ave. N.E., across from Union Station. The museum is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., except Christmas Day. For more information, visit the museum's web site at www.postalmuseum.si.edu

I can attest from personal experience that the museum staff is very 'collector friendly.' They have been very cooperative and prompt answering requests for information. They are tremendous assets to our hobby. Special thanks to Chief Curator of Philately Cheryl R. Ganz and Research Chair Thomas Lera for their help in preparation of this article. ■

1. *The New Dietz Confederate States Catalog and Handbook*, 1986; Skinner, Gunter and Sanders, p. 206.

2. Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries Sale 764, Lot 2300, lot description; <http://www.siegelauctions.com>, accessed 30 July 2009

3. *Texas Postal History Society Journal*, Vol. 6, No. 2, June 1981, 'Texas Gems' by Gordon Bleuler, pp. 7-9



Figure 2

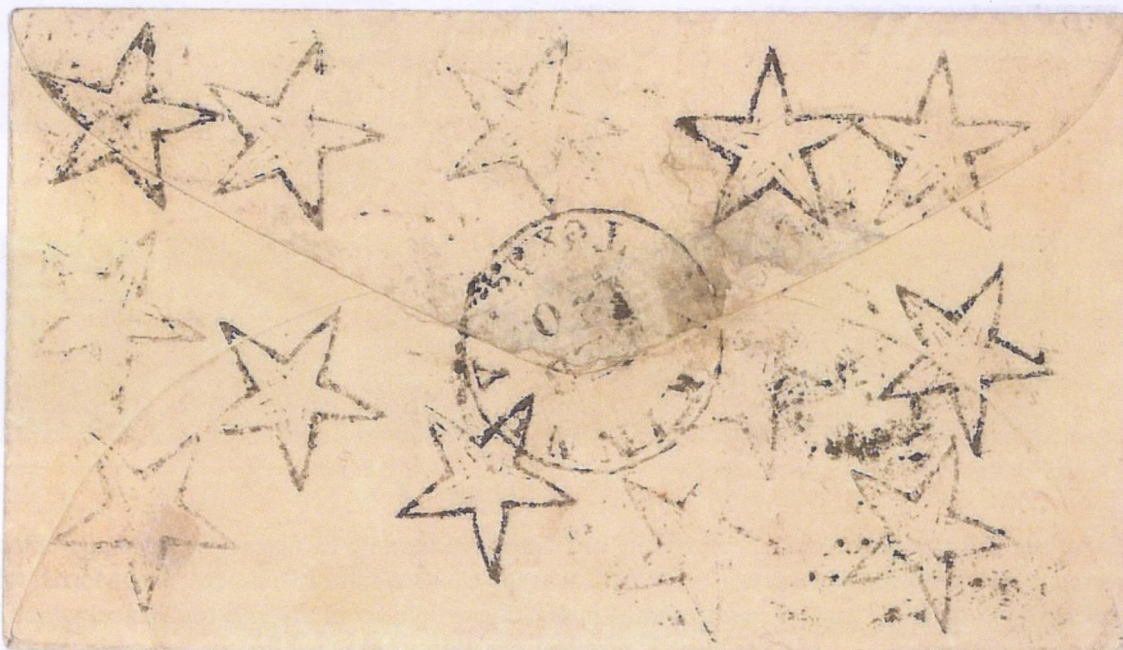


Figure 3

Vince King is a member of the National Postal Museum Council of Philatelists, and is President of the Texas Postal History Society.

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British-Style Ellipses Used in the United States

Roger D. Curran

This article discusses two U. S. ellipse cancels that are similar in design to contemporaneous British ellipses. A British example is illustrated in Figure 1.



Figure 1

Of the two U.S. cancels at issue here, by far and away the most common is that from Chelsea, Massachusetts – see Figure 2. The Chelsea post office was established on July 6, 1832 and it became a station of the Boston postal district on July 1, 1873.



Figure 2

Chelsea was not, however, part of the city of Boston. According to Wilbur W. Davis, co-author of the seminal 1949 reference book, *Boston Postmarks to 1890*, “7” was the Chelsea station number.¹ Reg Morris, who was an outstanding student of US machine cancels, wrote a most interesting article about the Figure 2 cancel which he concluded with the following statement: “... I believe there is a strong possibility that the Chelsea cancel is the product of a mechanical handstamp. Indeed, it could be a British Pearson Hill “Pivot” mechanical handstamp.² In an earlier article he described the handstamp as follows: “...in 1866 Pearson Hill produced... [a] device called the “Pivot” or swinging machine which comprised a pantograph system which could be affixed to the wall behind the stamping and in which could be affixed a conventional handstamp. As the handstamp was brought up from the letter, a die inker, actuated by the upward movement, wiped the die with fresh ink.”³ An illustration of an actual “Pivot” device in operation in London accompanied the article – see Figure 3.⁴ The following dates of use have been reported for the Figure 2 cancel: July 19, 1881 to February 11, 1891.⁵ The cover in Figure 4 extends the period to May 29, 1891.

The second British-style ellipse (see Figure 5) was used prior to the Figure 2 cancel. That cancel has been reported in use between July 12, 1880 and October 31, 1881.⁶ It has only been reported on local mail and overwhelmingly on 2c vermilion stamps. Figure 6 and shows examples on 1c stamps. I have not seen the cancel on values above the 2c. It has been reported that the “C” in this cancel referred to Chelsea Station and that this cancel was used by Chelsea Station.⁷ Wilbur Davis, mentioned above, discussed the cancel briefly in the October 1952 *NEWS* and said that it was used at the main Boston post office. The postmark in Figure 5 is typical of postmarks used by the main post office. Also, from the covers I have seen, I believe that the Chelsea Station consistently used “Chelsea Station” postmarks. Figures 7 – 10 show several covers.



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7

Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10

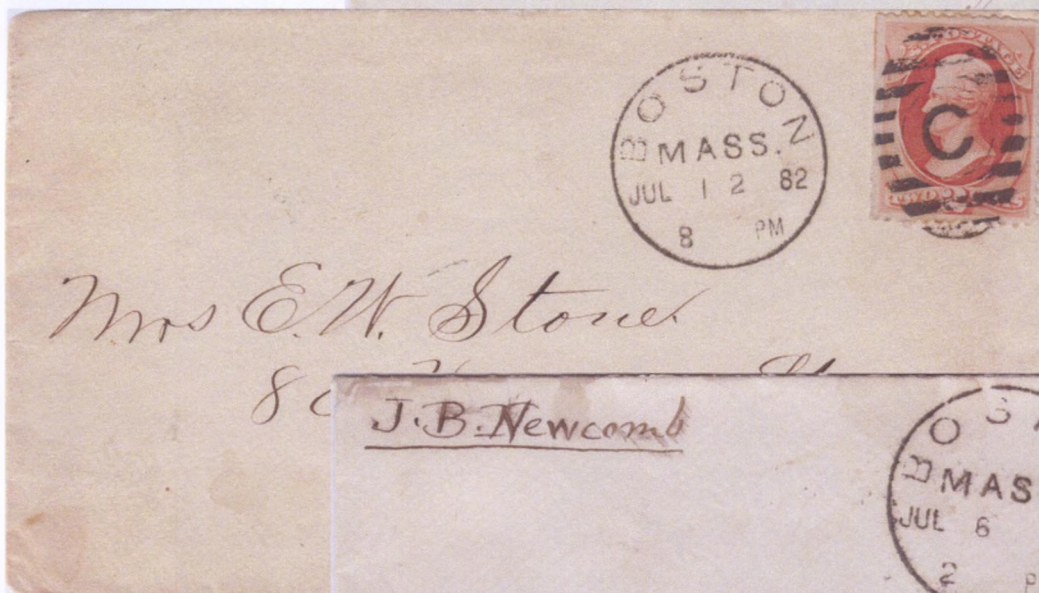


Figure 11



Figure 12

One possible explanation for why there would be a “C” in a main Boston post office cancel is offered: the “C” represented “collected” mail brought from lamp-post boxes. But, if so, one would expect to also see “D” ellipses denoting “deposited” mail from patrons who brought their mail to the main post office and mailed it there. A “D” ellipse in the Figure 5 style has not been reported. However, the earliest Wesson “time on bottom” ellipses used in Boston involved two handstamps, one with a “C” in the ellipse center and the other with a “D”. These were introduced in 1882. See Figures 11 & 12 for a strike from each handstamp. The considerable number of additional Wesson handstamps that were subsequently placed in service appeared in 1883.

Additional information about, or interesting uses of, the “7” or “C” ellipses will be welcomed. ■

1. Davis, Wilbur W., *US Cancellation Club Quarterly*, October 1952, p. 58.
2. Morris, Reg, *Machine Cancel Forum*, #85 “The Chelsea Barred Oval Cancel”, p. 1173.
3. Morris, Reg, *Machine Cancel Forum*, #44 “The Pearson Hill Machines”, p. 352.
4. *ibid.*, p. 347
5. Billings Bart, Payne Bob, & Morris Reg, *A Primer of US Machine Postal Markings* (2005), p. 235.
6. *ibid.*
7. *ibid.*

A Duplex or Not?

Roger D. Curran

The cover in Figure 1 recently caught my attention. It wasn't the cancel per se because this "POD" monogram style cancel is seen with some frequency. And neither the cancel or postmark were well struck. What was noteworthy was seeing a strike of this cancel that was apparently not duplexed to the postmark. This cancel was struck by a rubber-faced handstamp and, as a general statement, the very large majority of cancels from such handstamps are duplexed.

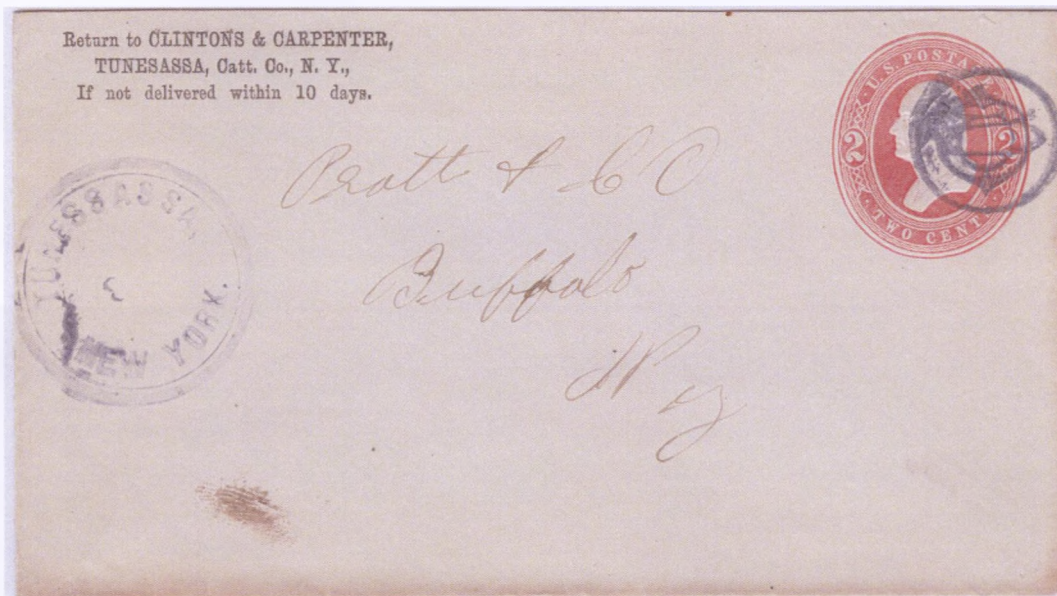


Figure 1

Apart from the ubiquitous 5-point star in myriad configurations and sizes, commonly seen cancels from rubber-faced handstamps include wheels of fortune, scarabs, and Maltese crosses, all of which are found to some extent as simplex cancels. Figures 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 show examples of these cancels. But I had not seen before seen an example involving the cancel in Figure 1.

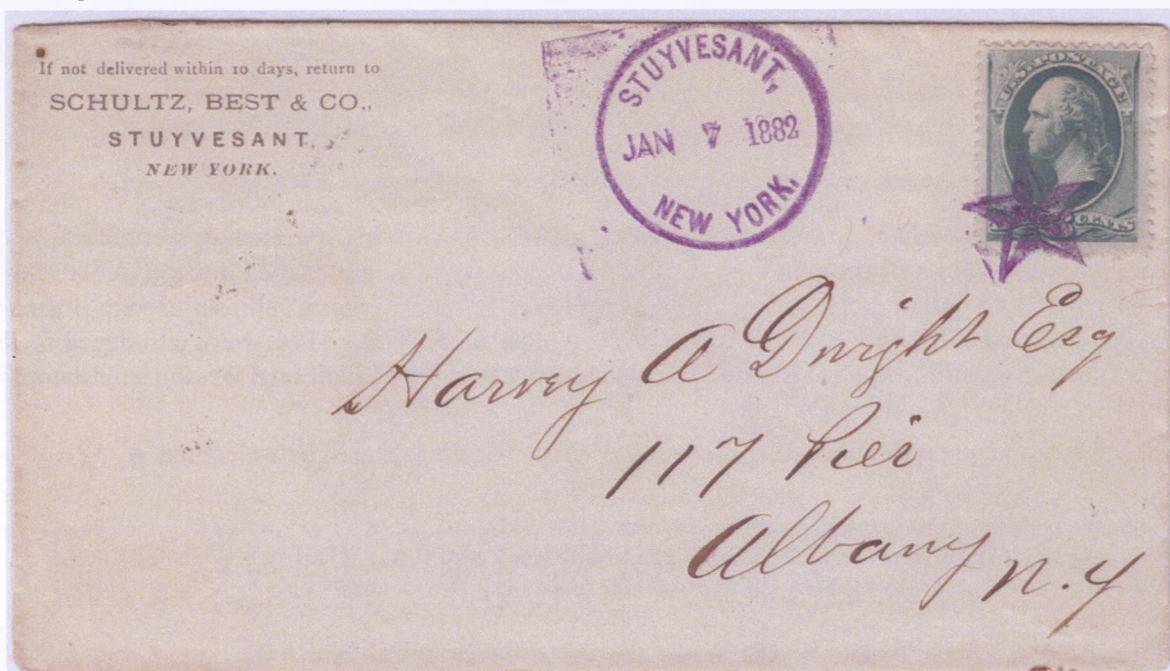


Figure 2



Figure 3

Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6

Looking more closely at the cover in Figure 1, some concern arose. A strike of a duplex handstamp in the normal position (upper right corner of the cover) would have encroached on the address and that could explain why a full strike of a duplex handstamp wasn't used there. Further, one notes that the "POD" cancel was struck vertically which suggests that a duplex handstamp was used and applied in such a manner that the postmark die would not have struck the cover.

Then again, a couple of things do point to simplex markings. There is no indication of even a postmark rim above the cancel at the top of the cover, suggesting that if a duplex handstamp was used there was an unusually large space between postmark and cancel dies. In addition, there is no evidence of a marking to the right of the postmark or any indication that the handstamp was applied more lightly on the right side to avoid the strike of a duplexed cancel.

Figure 7 shows a Whitfield tracing 4994 which illustrates the Figure 1 cancel design. The 2012 Whitfield update lists 19 post offices that used the cancel and the Figure 1 post office Tunesassa makes it 20. Tunesassa is a DPO that operated from 1883-1921 in Cattaraugus County, New York. In fact, since 1965, when the Kinzua dam was built just over the Pennsylvania border, the town has been underneath Allegheny Reservoir! The cover is addressed to Buffalo, New York and a received marking on the back is dated February 2, 1885.

More could be said about whether or not a duplex handstamp was used, but I'd say at this point a confirming example needs to be found before concluding that simplex markings were used. Reader comments and information would be welcomed. ■



Figure 7

Another Look at Large Negative Killers from Portland, Maine- an Update

Robert L. Conley

As you know from the August 2018 *NEWS*, I am seeking to further our understanding of Portland Large Negative Killers. I have since had responses from three members.

None of these members had a large collection and none of them considered they were likely to have anything worth reporting. As it turns out, two had brand new discoveries, and all had more information to help define the dates of usage.

These items are not hard to find and are fairly inexpensive so you may have a few gracing your own collection. And your collection of these may be mundane or superfluous in your eyes. But to someone trying to get a wider picture, you very possibly may have something new, or can confirm or extend an elusive usage date.

Send your Editor an email, or better yet a bunch of scans, and let's nail this thing down!! ■

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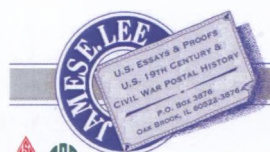


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