

DROP LETTER USAGES AND HANDSTAMPS

[James W. Milgram, M. D., 2016]

If a letter was sent by one person to another within the same town, it did not leave the post office for another town. Such a letter was dropped off at the post office and was termed a drop letter, a local delivery letter. For most of the period shown in this exhibit, stampless to mid-1860s, the receiver of such a letter had to pick it up at the same post office. City delivery of letters, carrier service, did not begin until the late 1850s and then only in certain large cities.

During the stampless period a letter was often sent unpaid with postage due. The prepayment of the drop letter fee was definitely unusual until one cent stamps were introduced in 1851. Prepayment by stamps was required after Feb. 27, 1861. If prepayment was not made after June 30, 1863, a double rate was applied as a penalty.

DROP LETTER RATES

June 1, 1794 to June 30, 1845	One Cent	Weight not a factor
July 1, 1845 to June 29, 1851	Two Cents	
June 30, 1851 to June 29, 1863	One Cent	At certain cities One Cent fee for carrier delivery
June 30, 1863 to end of 1860s	Two Cents per ½oz.	No extra postage for delivery
May 1, 1865	1¢ per ½oz	if posted at office without free delivery, otherwise 2¢ when office had carrier delivery

During the stampless period at most towns only a rating marking indicates drop letter usage. When stamps appeared, the usage of an isolated one cent or later a two cent stamp shows the usage. But beginning in 1843, a few towns employed special handstamps with the word **DROP** as part of the handstamp. This exhibit will show most of the varieties of these markings known.

This exhibit will be divided into four sections.

- I. Manuscript rating of stampless drop covers - pages 2 to 4
- II. Handstamped rating of stampless drop covers – pages 5 to 23
- III. Postage stamps for one cent and later two cents drop rates - pages 24 to 36
- IV. Specific handstamps with **DROP** and similar notations - pages 37 to 48

I. Manuscript rating of stampless drop covers



For most of the period until 1845, manuscript "1" markings were used on typical drop letters. The upper cover is a typical ms. "1" on 1838 New York drop letter. The lower cover is a cover carried by ship from Savannah to Providence, R.I. where it was mailed at "1" drop rate in 1836.



In 1815 (effective February 1, 1815) all postage rates applied for distance were increased by 50%. This increase did not apply to special rates such as the ship fee of 2¢. However, Albany, N.Y. is known to have increased the rate on drop covers to 1 1/2¢. Such usages are quite rare. This example is dated Jan. 9, 1816.

I. Manuscript rating of stampless drop covers



The drop letter rate of one cent (prior to 1845) applied to any letter, regardless of weight. Therefore, this 1838 letter from Marietta, Ohio was marked "double" because of enclosure, but the postage was still one cent "1".



The upper letter with tiny envelope from Easton, Maryland shows a "PAID" with "1" for 1850s usage. The lower letter is very unusual manuscript "Drop 1" marking from Quincy, Mass. also 1850s.

I. Manuscript rating of stampless drop covers

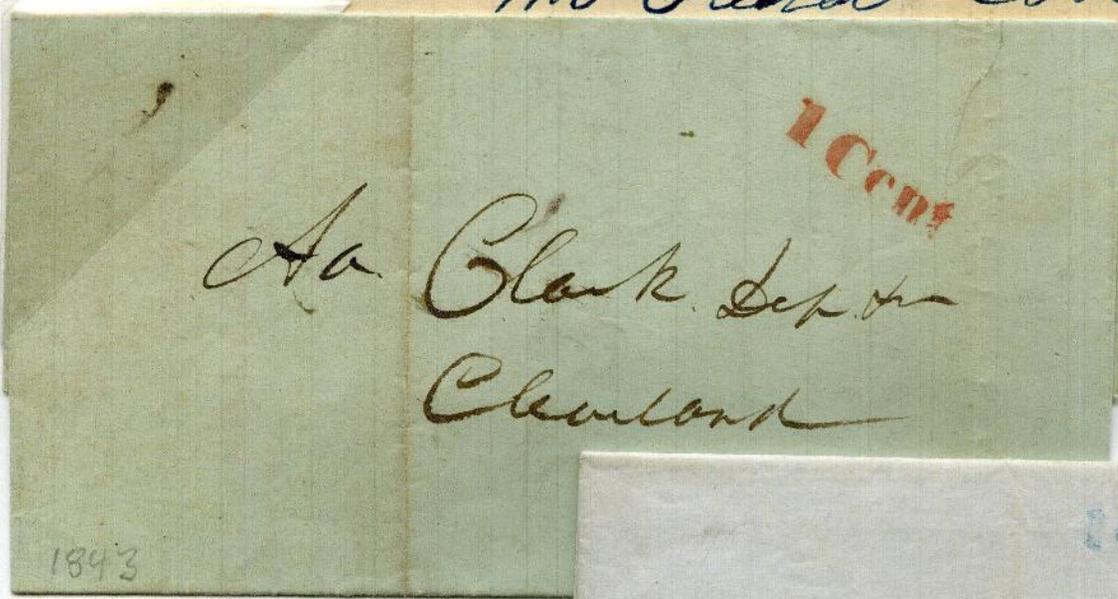
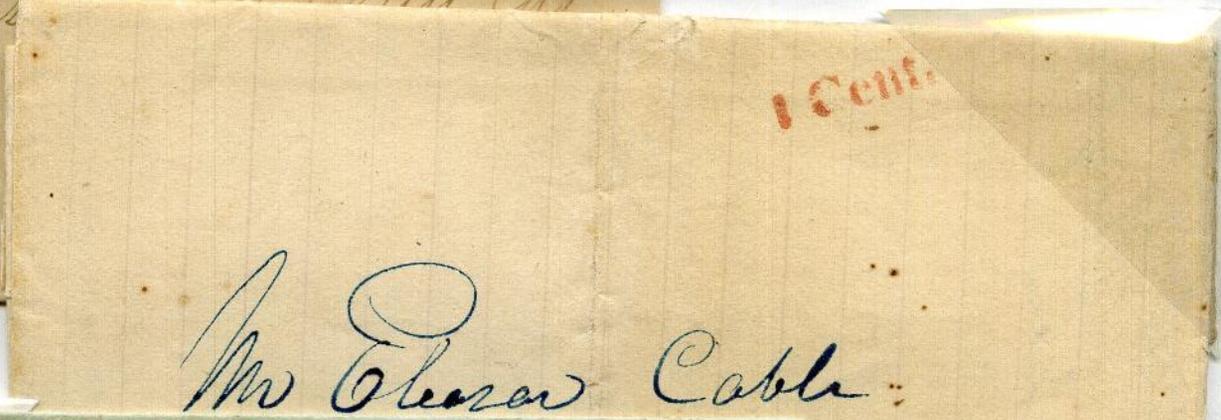
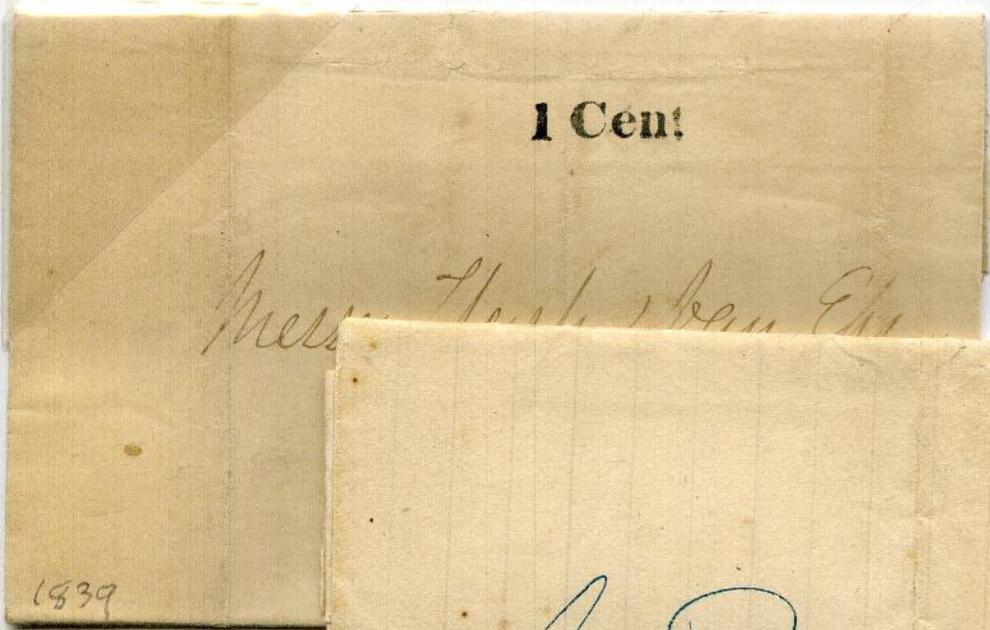


These two covers are examples of the manuscript "2" rating on drop letters. The upper cover from 1849 contains a partly printed COUNTY TAX assessment of \$616.90. It is postmarked "FARMINGTON Me JUN 6" with ms "2". The lower cover bears red "MANCHESTER N.H. MAR 24" (1846) with ms "2" on personal letter.

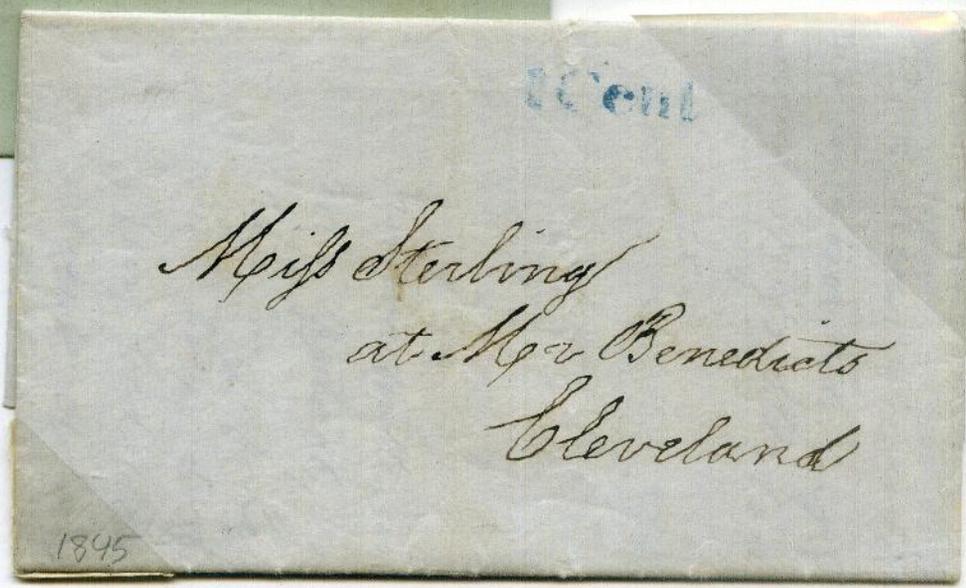


This very rare yellow postmark with fancy "East Lyme Feb 14 Ct." in arch format shows a matching "Paid" with manuscript "Drop 2". No doubt because of the date it had contained a valentine and the sender wished to prepay the postage although he did not have to do this in the 1845-1851 period.

II. Handstamped rating of stampless drop covers



Cleveland
Cuyahoga County
Ohio



These four covers are "1 Cent" drop letter handstamps from and to Cleveland, Ohio. From top to bottom they are dated 1839, 1841, 1843, 1845 (Feb. 14), all in the pre-1845 period when the rate changed to two cents. The upper two covers appear to be the same handstamp and the lower two covers a different handstamp with larger lettering. Handstamped drop rates before 1845 are quite rare.

II. Handstamped rating of stampless drop covers



The two tiny envelopes are "2" handstamped drop letters from Cambridge, Mass.(1849) and New Bedford (1850). Note lack of town postmark on the New Bedford cover. The third cover is a printed circular dated in 1849. The "2" rating is the same for a drop letter or a printed circular. This cover is both so the rate was two cents. Had it been addressed to a different town, it would still have been a 2 cent rate.



These two covers illustrate special 2 cent handstamps from Philadelphia. The earlier 1847 cover shows an attached rate, a no logo circular handstamp with 2 outside the circle. The other cover shows the fancy "2" in double circle used earlier. This marking was also used for circulars before July 1, 1847 when circular rate raised to 3 cents.

II. Handstamped rating of stampless drop covers



Four other handstamped "2" markings on unpaid drop covers from [top to bottom] New Orleans, Harrisburgh, Providence and San Francisco all dated 1850-1851 (prior to July 1).

II. Handstamped rating of stampless drop covers



These three covers demonstrate prepayment of two cent rate drop letters in the 1845-1851 period. The "PAID" handstamps were separate from the "2" handstamps. From top to bottom the towns are Pittsburgh, Franklin, and New Bedford. Note the absence of a town postmark on the New Bedford cover, a common usage on drop letters.

II. Handstamped rating of stampless drop covers



*When thou art near,
The sweetest joys still sweeter seem,
The brightest hope more bright appear,
And life is all one happy dream,
When thou art near!*

*The heart
Thy lips
When thou
Shide*

HUDSON N.Y. FEB 14 1851

PAID 2

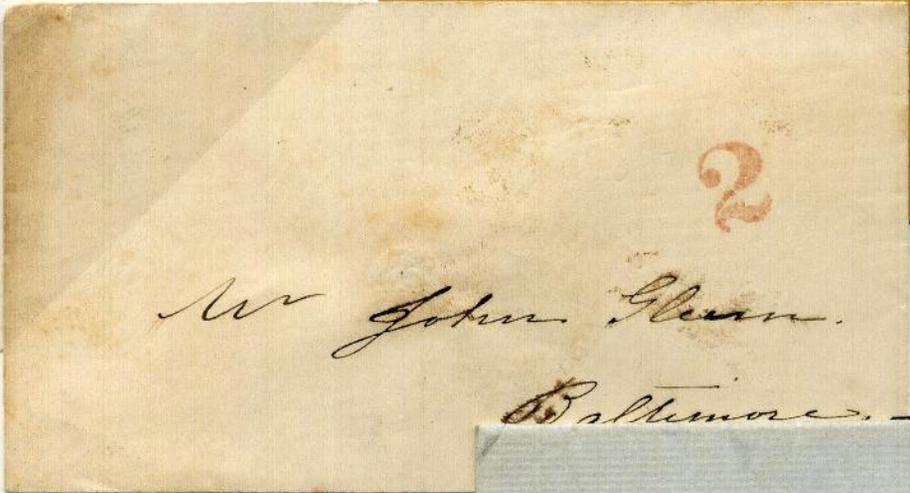
Miss Ruth N. Hastings
Hudson

Valentine mailed during the 1845-1851 period with ornate envelope postmarked "HUDSON N.Y. FEB 14", "PAID" and "2" sent as a drop letter to Hudson. There are many valentines with drop letter usage. This is a very handsome example.

II. Handstamped rating of stampless drop covers



Randall Moore Esq.
Baltimore



Mr John Green.
Baltimore.



Aug. J. Albert Esq
Baltimore
Md

1852

Four different drop letters from Baltimore, three during the 2 cent period and one from 1852 demonstrating the one cent drop rate. There is quite a variety of rate markings.

II. Handstamped rating of stampless drop covers

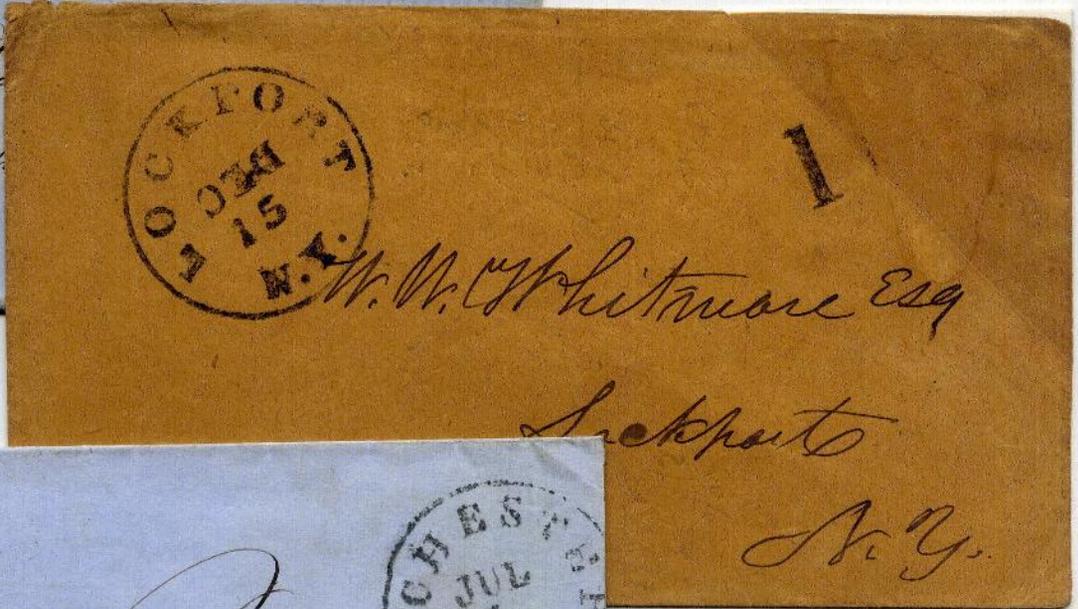


A cover with "UTICA N.Y. 2" handstamp, a special marking dated March 6, 1851 from docket. This unlisted handstamp could only be for drop letters at that date.



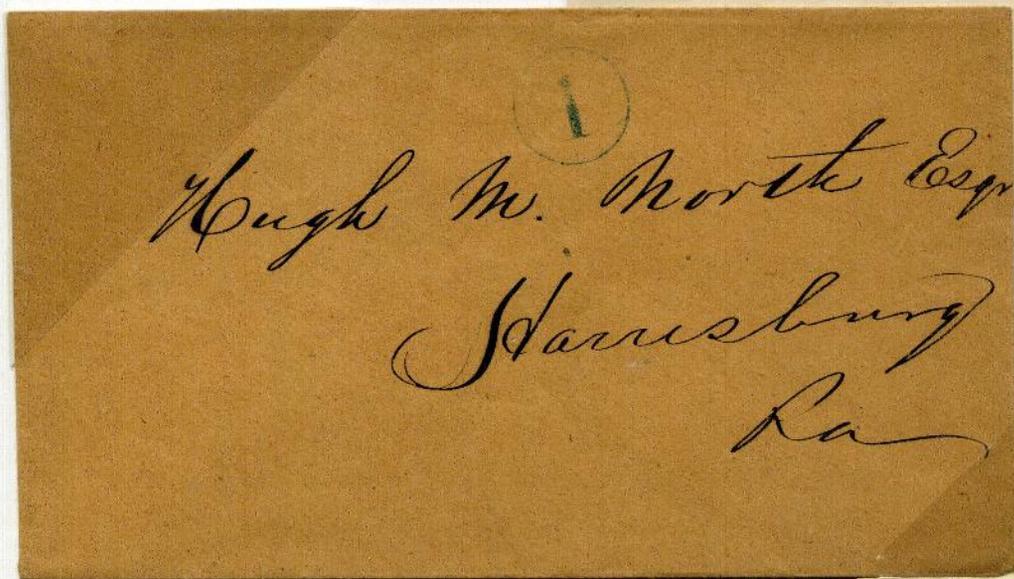
Similar type of marking "SYRACUSE N.Y. 2" with personal letter dated April 16, 1850, unlisted handstamp meant to be used on drop letters. Note address: "Present at Syracuse".

II. Handstamped rating of stampless drop covers



The drop letter rate was changed to one cent on July 1, 1851. This was also when the one cent stamps were first issued. However, most drop letters were still sent as stampless covers. Shown are four "1" covers with Providence, Lockport, Rochester and Philadelphia postmarks. The Philadelphia drop letter was carried to the post office by a private carrier, Bloods Penny Post which charged an extra penny fee (stamp).

II. Handstamped rating of stampless drop covers



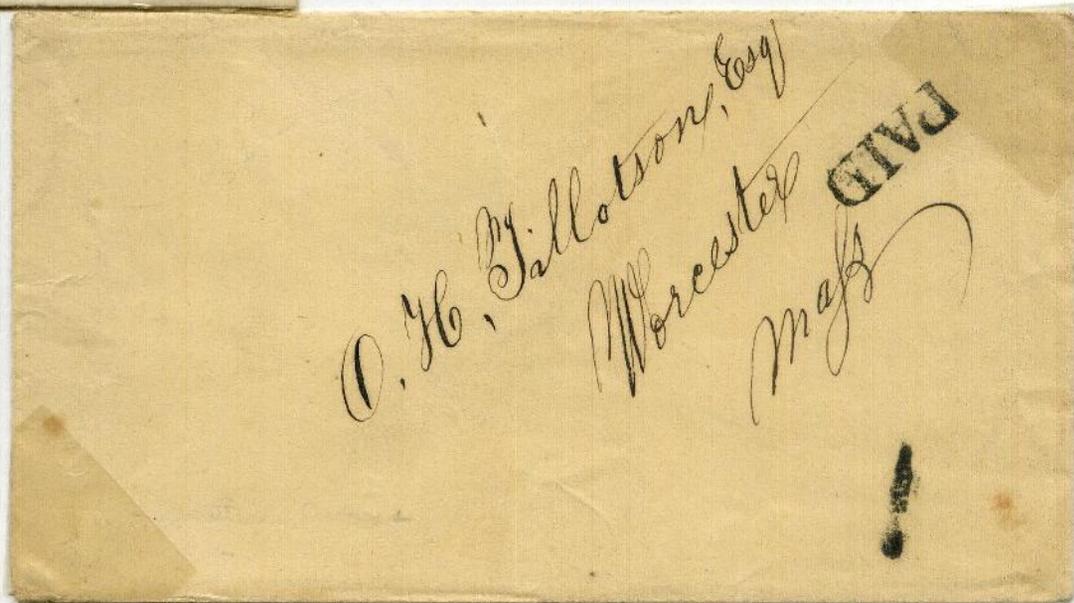
These are four other covers showing different types of "1" handstamped usage. The covers top to bottom are from Cambridge, Derby, Harrisburgh, and St. Louis. It will be noted that the bottom two covers lack town postmarks; they bear only the rate marking. Note also the address of the St. Louis cover "Present" with no town indicated.

II. Handstamped rating of stampless drop covers



These four covers show prepayment of the drop letter fee of 1 cent. The top two covers are from Canandaigua, N.Y. showing "PAID 1 CENT" markings in black and red. The third cover from Utica has only a ribbon "PAID" in red with blue "1c" without town mark. The Syracuse cover bears only fancy "PAID" but no rate, the one cent being understood.

II. Handstamped rating of stampless drop covers



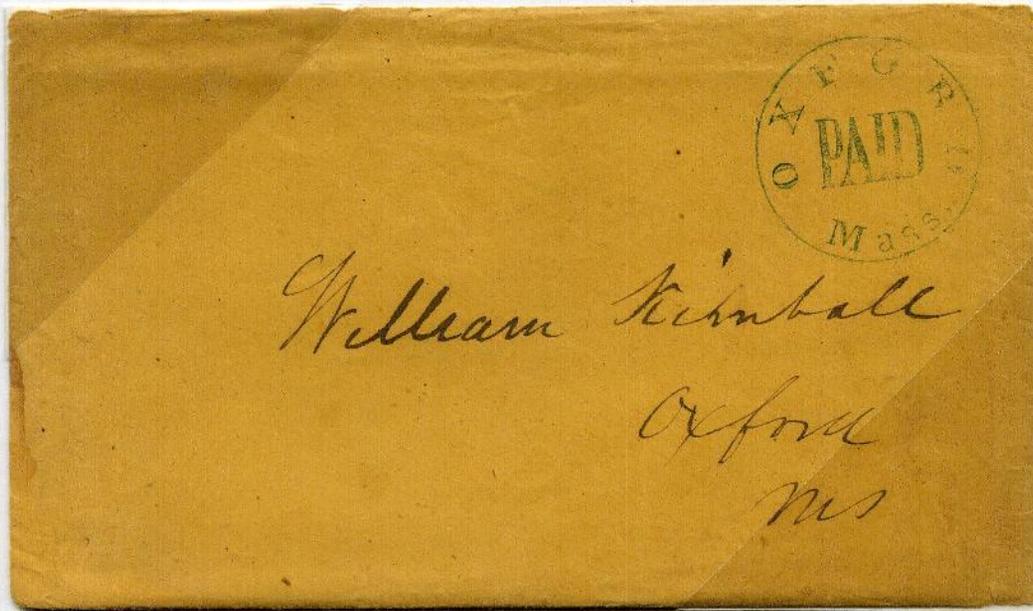
These are four covers with separate "PAID" and "1" handstamps from Dedham, Manchester, New Haven, and Worcester. The bottom cover bears only the rating mark and the "PAID" without a town marking. This was a fairly common practice, omitting a town postmark on a drop letter.

II. Handstamped rating of stampless drop covers



These three covers demonstrate unusual one cent rate examples of Integral Rate handstamps. The top cover has a postmark "BOSTON 1 20 DEC" with unknown year date in 1850s. The middle cover is bears a "NEW YORK PAID 1 CT. APR 7" containing a letter without year date. It shows a red postmark indicating paid postage. The black "NEW-YORK 1 ct. OCT 10" has an 1854 letter during the same rate period.

II. Handstamped rating of stampless drop covers



This marking "OXFORD Mass. PAID" was used on a circular drop letter dated in 1855 (the circular is present). This postmark could have been used for both one cent circulars and the one cent drop rate. However, certain items like this are both.

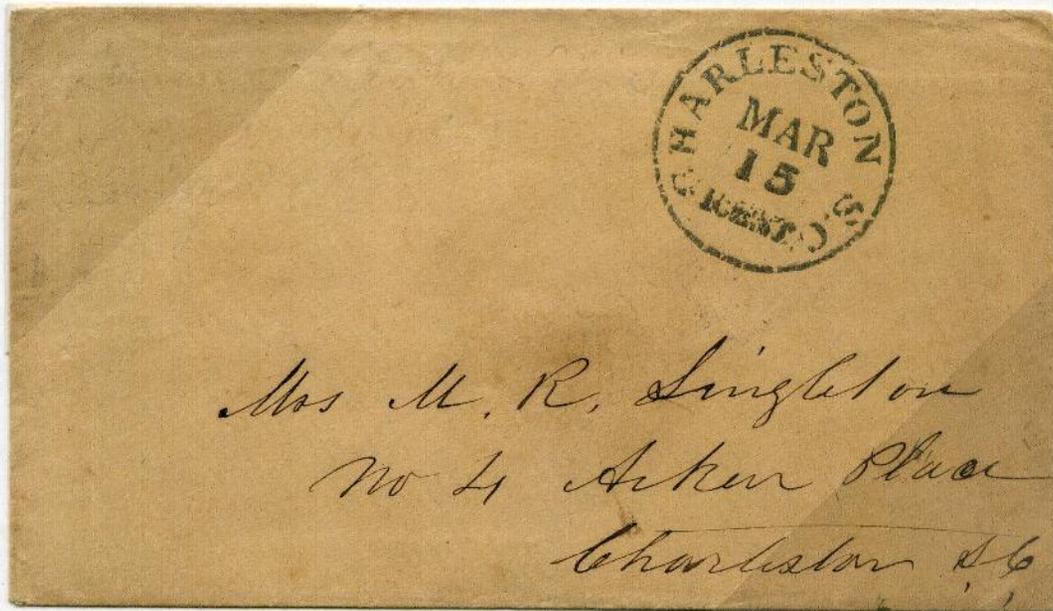


Integral markings with a large numeral in the center also exist during the one cent rate period of the 1850s. This blue handstamp from Charleston, S.C. was used both for circulars and drop letters. This example shows a drop usage in 1855. The "GEORGETOWN S.C. 1" marking contains a large numeral "1" in the center. It was mailed as a drop letter in Georgetown, but the letter was written at Wachesaw January 20th, 1833, so this appears to be a bootleg usage.

II. Handstamped rating of stampless drop covers

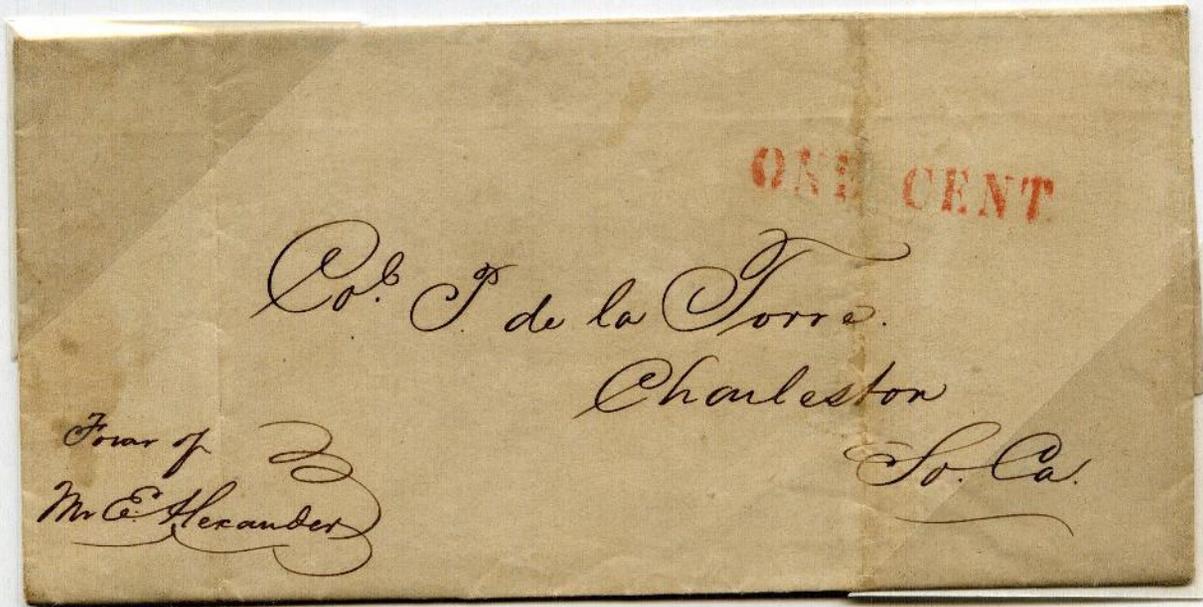


One of the most unusual drop letter postmarks is a blue "CINCINNATI O. 1 UN.PD. JAN 14" integral type handstamp. The present cover shows no town in the address, only the word "present".



This undated integral type postmark "CHARLESTON S.C. 1 CENT MAR 15" is also a unique type of drop letter handstamp. But it could have been used on circulars as well.

II. Handstamped rating of stampless drop covers

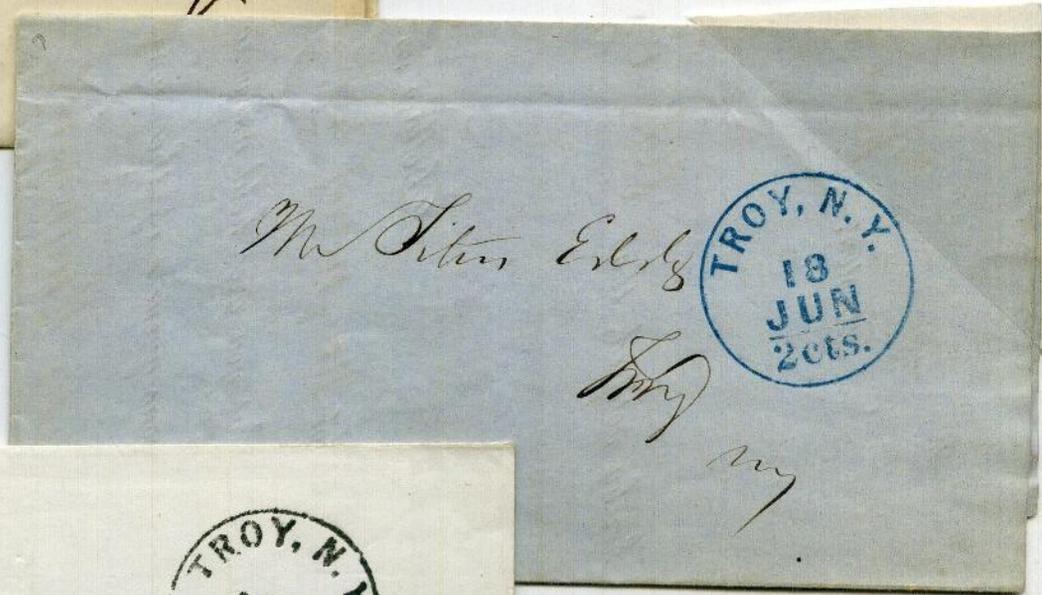


This "ONE CENT" marking is from Charleston, S.C. with usage from May 28, 1845. Thus this is from the first period of one cent drop rates, prior to July 1, 1845.



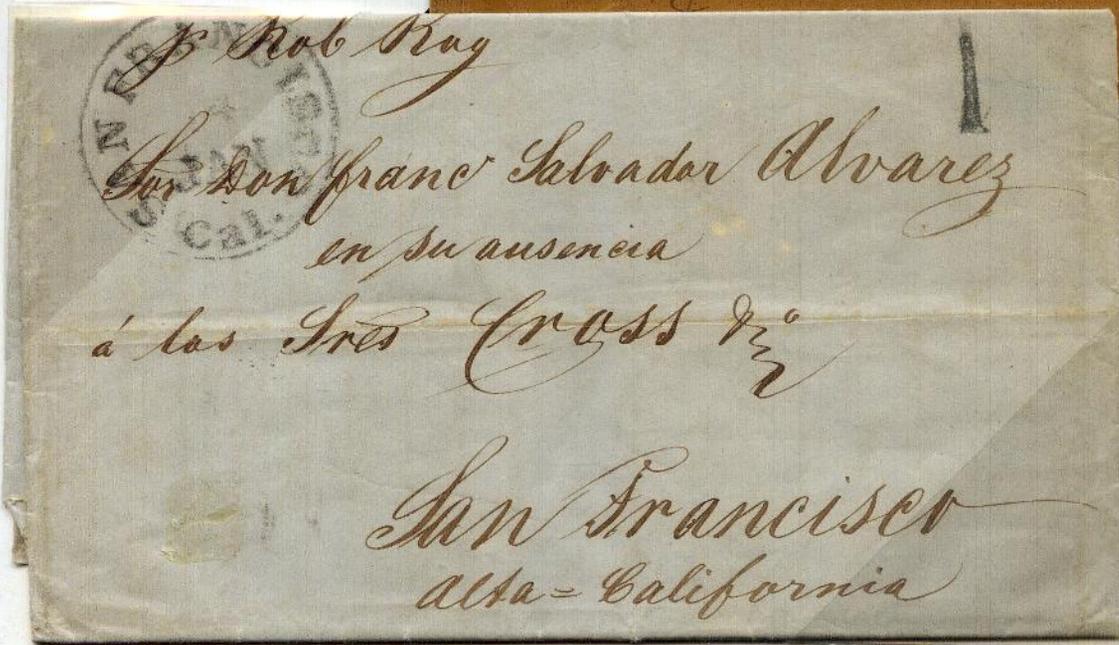
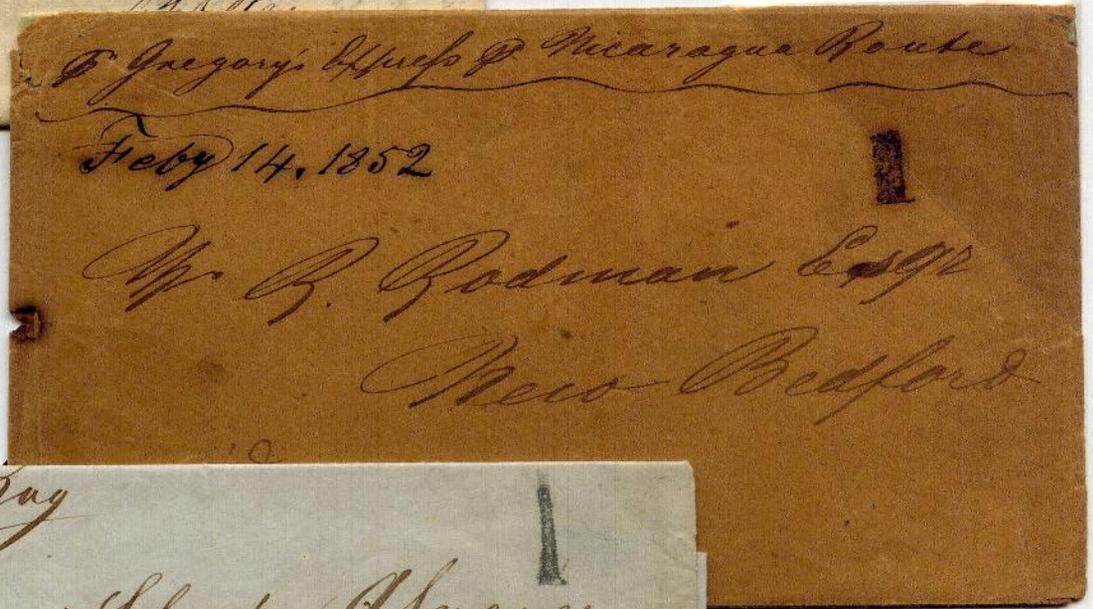
Both of these covers are from Brooklyn, N.Y. and both show "1 CENT" handstamps indicating the drop letter rate. However, the top cover is from 1844 and thus is in the first period of the one cent drop rate, while the lower cover with the black markings dates from 1852 during the second rate period of the one cent rate, 1851-1863. This cover is also unusual because it bears a red "PAID".

II. Handstamped rating of stampless drop covers



These four covers are examples of special type markings used at Troy, N.Y. on drop letters. The upper 1847 cover bears a blue "2cts." in circle which was also used on circulars 1845-47, steamboat letters and even advertised covers. An integral 2 cts. marking dates from 2 weeks before the change in rates in 1851. Different color inks were used on the third cover in black with 1 ct. integral rate in 1854 and the bottom blue marking in 1852. Note that this last cover was also a circular so the 1 ct. was the same charge as on a written drop letter. Both of these covers bear a fancy "PAID" stamp.

II. Handstamped rating of stampless drop covers



The word bootleg is usually used to indicate a smuggled product. When applied to mail it means a letter which has been carried outside the normal mail to escape postal charges. These three covers are bootlegged drop letters. The upper 1826 cover with Boston "PAID" (one cent understood) was carried from Victoria, Australia and is a printed circular. The middle cover bears "pr Gregorys Express per Nicaragua Route" and so was carried to New Bedford and mailed there as drop letter "1" rate in 1852. The San Francisco "1" cover was written in Valparaiso, Chile in August, 1851 but did not get mailed until the following year."per Rob Roy".

II. Handstamped rating of stampless drop covers



The upper letter with matching cover showing Albany, N.Y. drop usage with "1" handstamp demonstrates that the letter was written at Springfield, Mass. so this is a bootleg usage. The other cover contains a letter written at New Orleans in November 1850. It was intended to be carried by ship "Ossipee" where it was mailed as drop letter with integral "BOSTON 2 cts 2 JAN" handstamp. This is considered a bootleg usage to save 9 cents (10 cent rate in 1850).

II. Handstamped rating of stampless drop covers



Revalued rate covers. The top cover with "CONCORD N.H. FEB 26" (1850) was rated "PAID 3", the circular rate (the contents are a printed circular). However, as a drop letter it could qualify for a 2 cent rate, large "2". The middle cover was rated "5" due from "THREE RIVERS Mich DEC 9", but it was a drop letter and was re-rated to "2c" in ms. The bottom cover bears integral "AUGUSTA ME 3 PAID 12 MAY" for partially printed 1853 Justice of Peace document, but handstamp "1" was placed over the "3" paying the drop one cent rate

III. Postage Stamps for One Cent Drop Rate

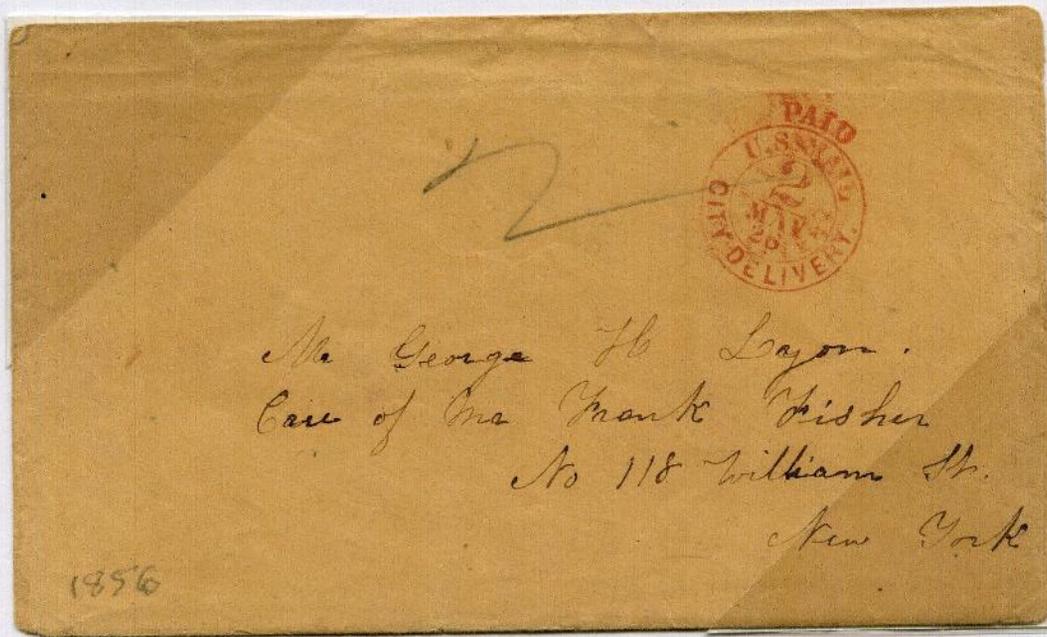


This drop letter with 1 cent Type 11 1851 stamp bears a handstamp reading "Valentine's Day FEBRUARY 14 FREMONT OHIO. in red. This spectacular usage is the only known slogan cancel on this stamp.



Valentine envelope with 1 cent Type IV tied black "CANANDAIGUA, N.Y. FEB 14" on back flap, postmark repeated on front. Placement of stamp is unusual drop letter usage.

III. Postage Stamps for One Cent Drop Rate – Carrier Service

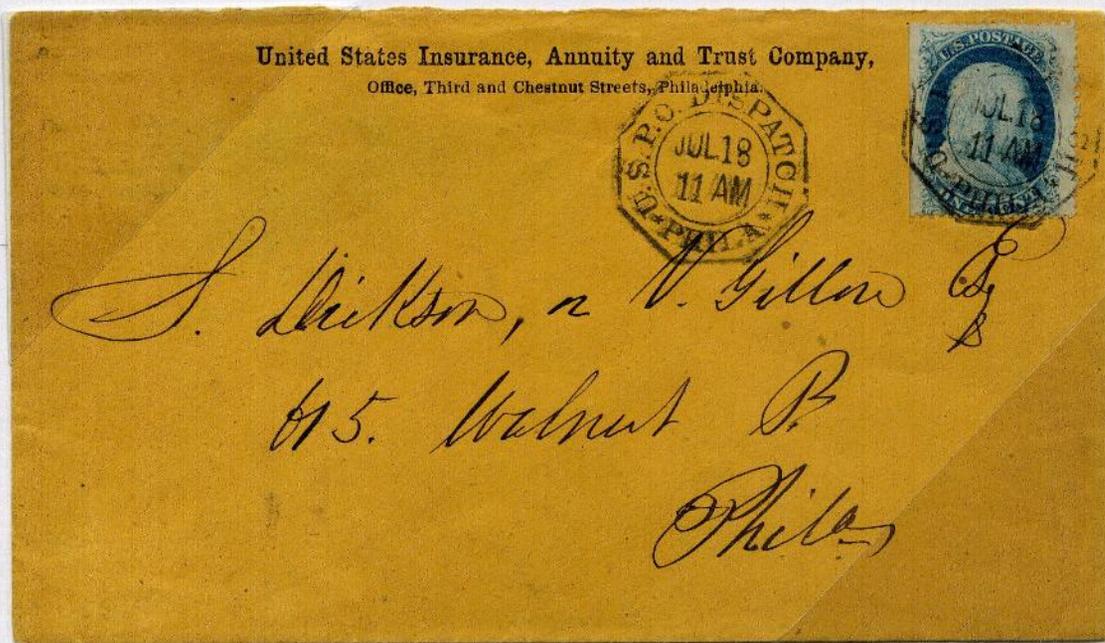
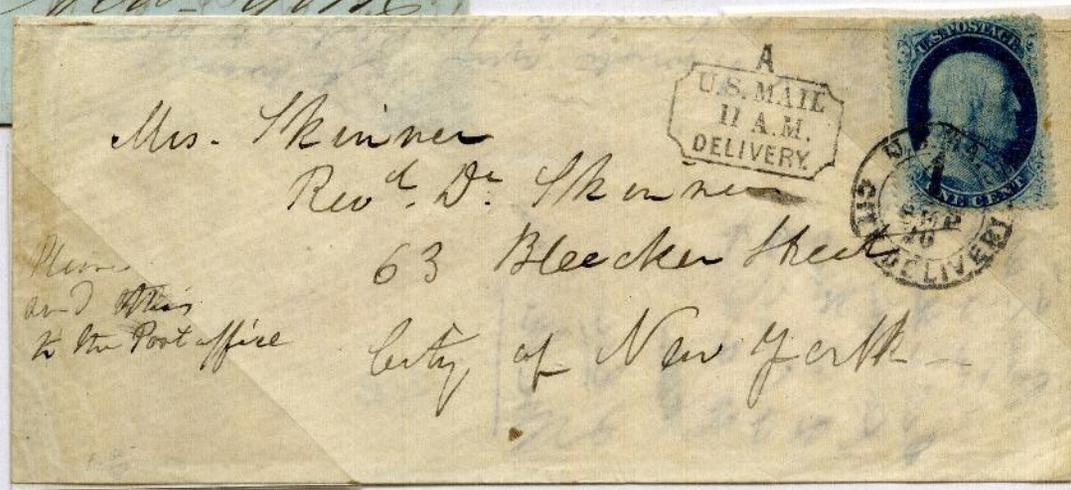


The drop letter usage was combined with the carrier usages in the later 1850s. In New York City independent mail carriers performed services of mail collection and mail delivery under the supervision of the postmaster. These individuals were paid from the fees they generated. This 1856 cover shows a red "PAID/ U.S. MAIL CITY DELIVERY/ 2 MAY 25" with a letter dated May 24, 1856 and addressed to a street in New York. The two cents included collection and delivery.



This 1859 cover bears two copies of the 1 cent 1857 Type V canceled by a similar marking to that above but with a black postmark with the same text. The letter is dated January 24. There is also a black octagon "U.S. MAIL DELIVERY" with time and an "T" showing both collection and delivery by a carrier of Station F, one of six substations for mail carriers.

III. Postage Stamps for One Cent Drop Rate – Carrier Service

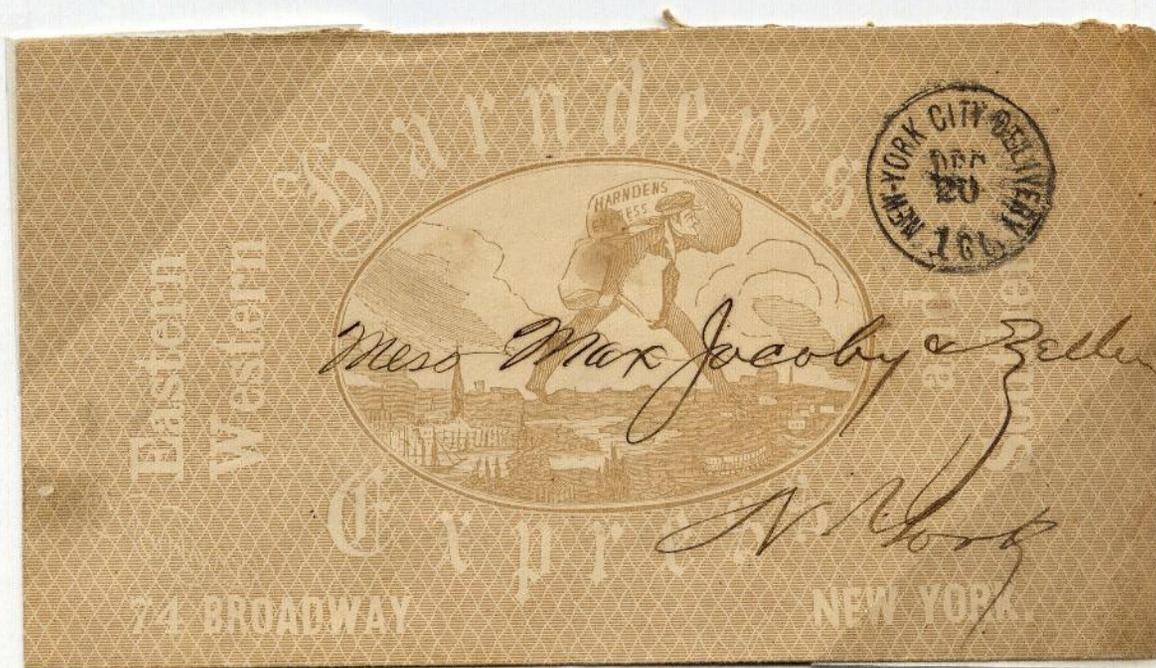


The top cover was written at Mexico City on July 19, 1856. It was privately carried to New York and dropped into the mail as a bootleg usage with a one cent 1851 Type IV canceled with the red carrier marking "PAID/ U.S. MAIL CITY DELIVERY 1 AUG 3" in red. Here there was only mail delivery by the carrier service. The middle cover shows the same marking in black on a 1 cent 1857 Type V stamp combined with the delivery handstamp from Station A. There is no letter here. The lower cover shows the Type V stamp with the Philadelphia carrier postmark "U.S. P.O. DISPATCH PHILA/ JUL 19 11 AM". The carrier service provided delivery. This insurance company may have had a charge account at the post office to apply stamps.

III. Postage Stamps for One Cent Drop Rate - Carrier Service

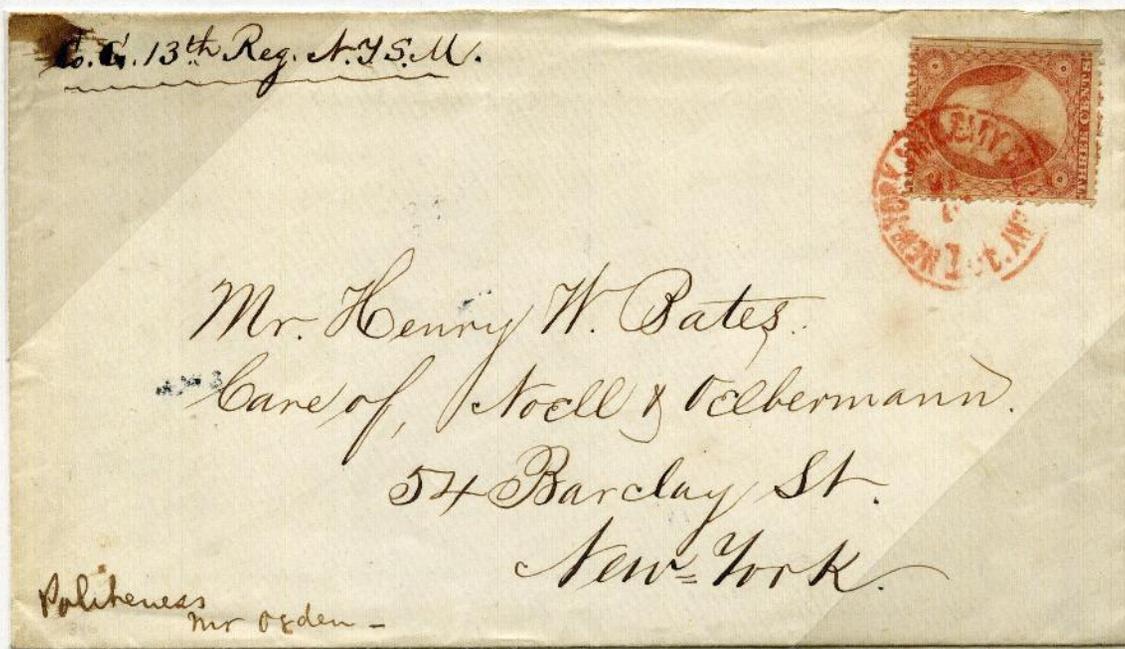


This cover is a drop letter dated "New York Jan'y 25, 1860" It bears a 1 cent 1857 Type V stamp tied "NEW-YORK JAN 26". But it is also canceled with one of the New York carrier handstamps. This marking reads "NEW-YORK CITY DELIVERY 1 Ct. JAN 25". The marking meant that one cent was due in cash for the carrier service in addition to the stamp paying the postage.

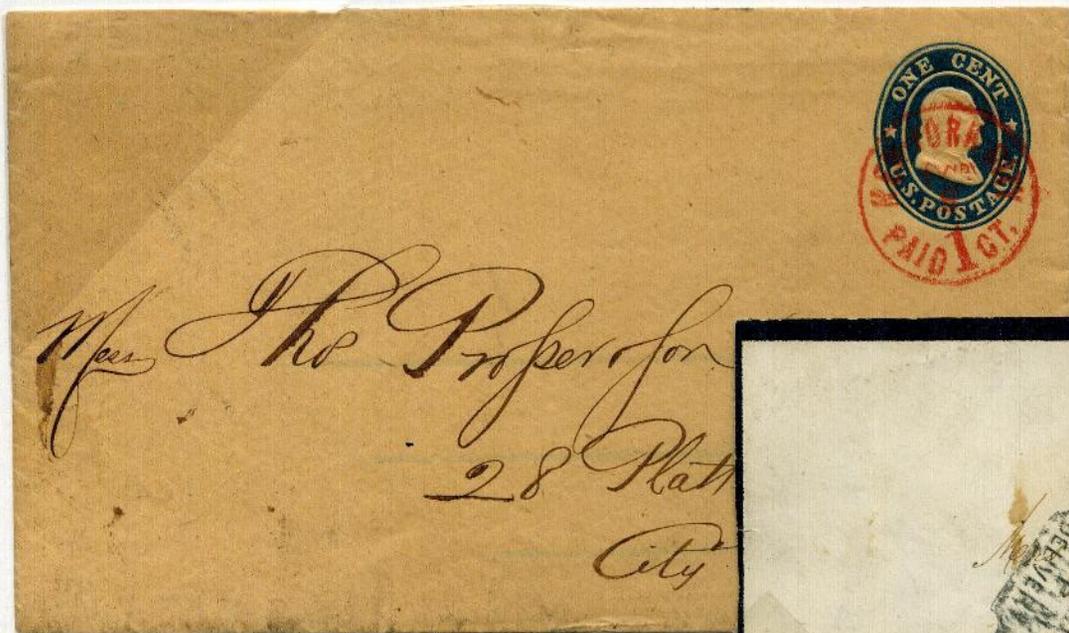


The carrier rate was reduced to one cent in 1860 at New York. This business cover for Harnden's Express was postmarked "NEW-YORK CITY DELIVERY 1 CT. DEC 20". This charge was due from the addressee. It seems likely that this cover was only handled by the carrier service. There was no additional charge for drop letter usage.

III. Postage Stamps for One Cent Drop Rate – Carrier Service



This unusual cover bears a 3 cent 1857 stamp that is canceled by a red postmark "NEW-YORK PAID CITY DELIVERY 1 Ct. MAY 15". This marking was used in 1860 and 1861. Because of the military notation, it is likely that this was an 1861 usage. But the cover only needed a one cent stamp.



A different red carrier postmark is found on these two covers "NEW YORK CITY PAID 1 CT." with date. The upper cover is a 1 cent star die envelope and is probably OCT 8, 1861 use. The other black bordered envelope may be a December usage either 1861 or 1862. It also bears a delivery handstamp for Station E. One cent paid both collection and delivery in either year.

III. Postage Stamps for One Cent Drop Rate



This cover originally was a drop letter usage with one cent 1857 Type V with black cancel to Madison, Georgia. However, the cover was used a second time. A three cent 1857 stamp was used over the previous stamp and canceled "MADISON Ga. JUL 22". The cover was sent to the same person but at Greensboro, Georgia.



This is a drop letter usage of the 1 cent 1857 stamp from Nashville, Tenn. However, the postmark is dated "NASHVILLE TEN. JAN 27 '64", a Civil War reoccupation postmark. So this is a very late usage of a demonetized stamp in 1864. Note that it is addressed to Governor Andrew Johnson Nashville Tennessee, Lincoln's Vice Presidential running mate later in the same year.

III. Postage Stamps for Two Cents Drop Rate



This Civil War steamboat cover for "The Hero of New Jersey" which was a hospital steamer bears a single 2c stamp tied with killer and "OLD POINT COMFORT VA. SEP 26" postmark. It is addressed to a person at the Chesapeake Hospital at Fort Monroe. Someone marked it "DUE 2" which can be explained as a penalty rate double the unpaid one cent for a three cent domestic rate. But then it was reclassified as a drop letter and the "DUE 2" was obliterated.



These are two covers that were mailed at a time when prepayment of postage by stamps was the law. They are both drop rate covers with 2 cents the proper rate. But since it was not prepaid in each case, a 4 cents penalty rate of double unpaid postage was charged on both covers at Boston and Washington

III. Postage Stamps for One Cent Drop Rate

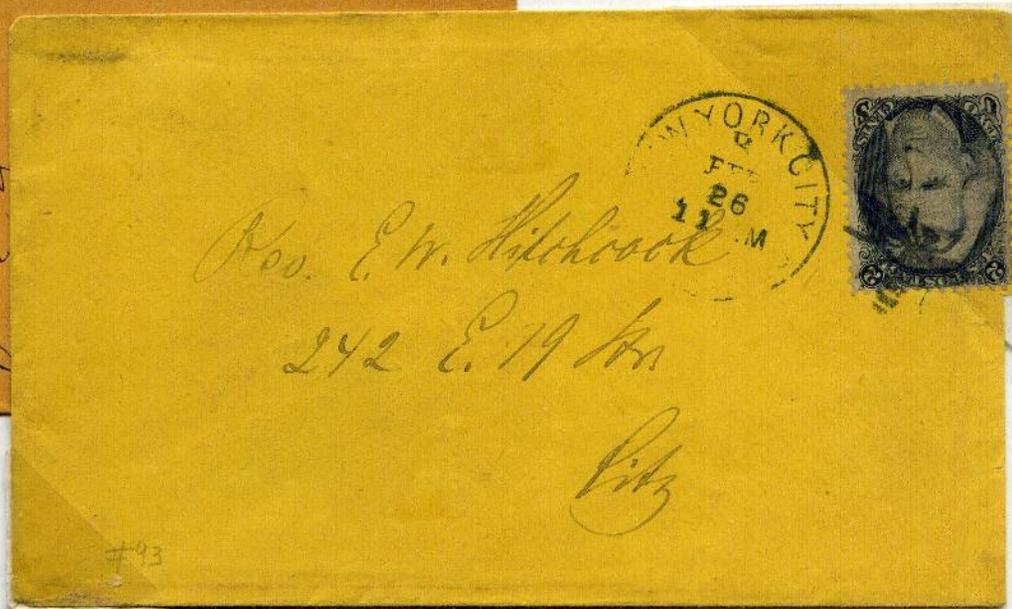
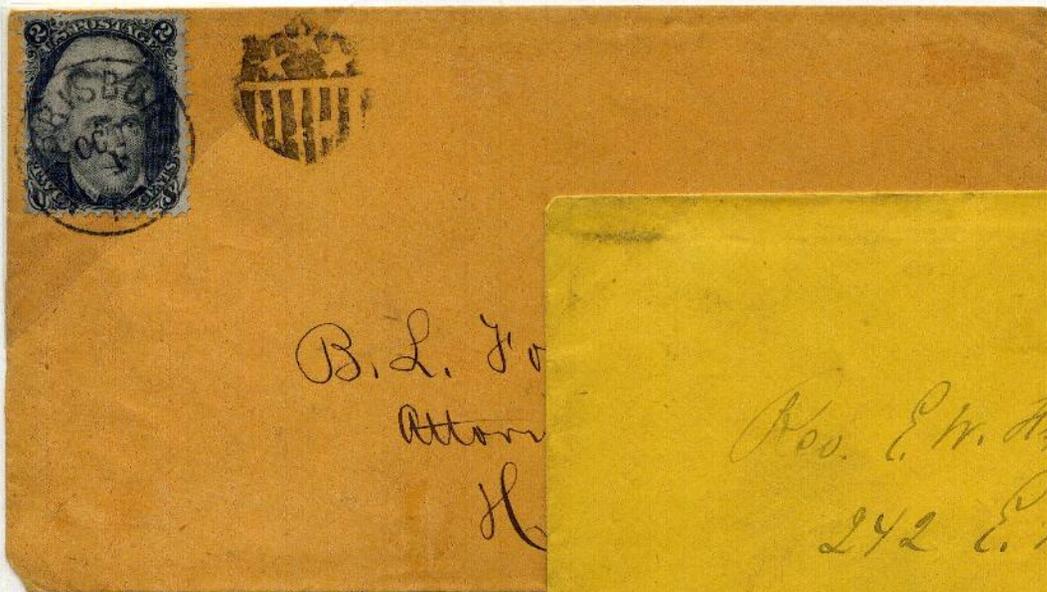


This is a very interesting drop letter in that it is a printed circular that was evidently placed into many different boxes at the Elizabeth, N.J. post office. The only address is "Sir". It is also an example of a fancy cancel used on a 1 cent 1861 as drop letter.



This drop letter with 1 cent 1861 stamp has the famous bluebird cancel from Rockford, Illinois. This is the only known example of this on cover (on one cent stamp).

III. Postage Stamps for Two Cents Drop Rate

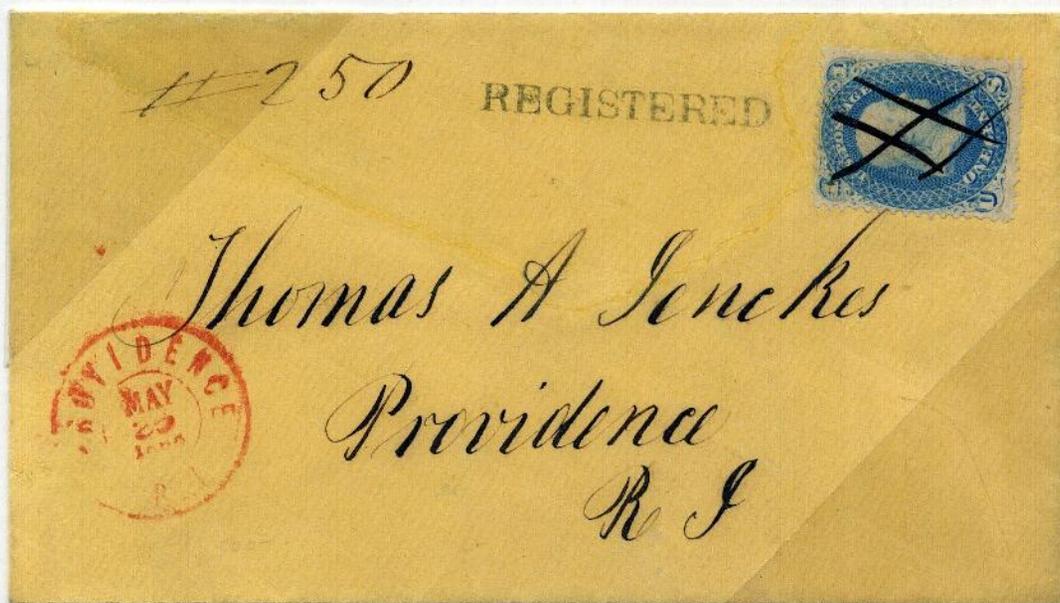


The upper cover shows a 2 cent stamp paying the drop rate at Harrisburg. There is a fancy shield duplex cancel. The lower drop rate cover from New York City has a fancy cancellation of a bee tying the stamp to the envelope. The address incorporates the wording "City", a terminology only seen on drop letters..

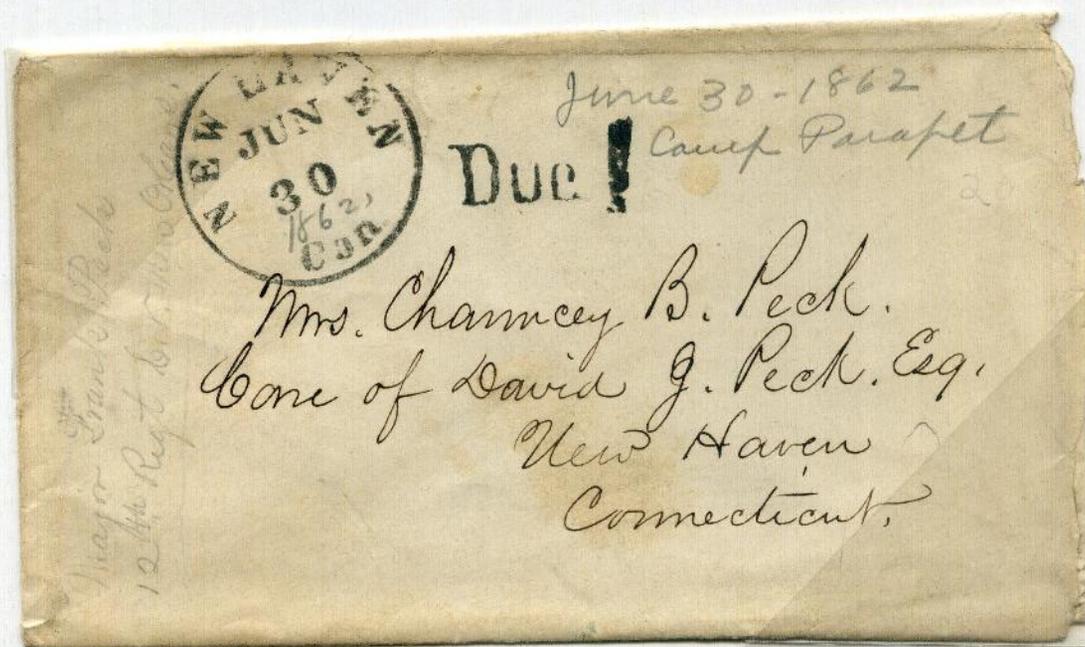


These two covers are both addressed to A.T. Stewart, the richest man in the country at the time, from New York persons wishing for largesse. They are franked with 3 cent stamps and are thus examples of overpaid drop letters. Each has a fancy geometric cancellation.

III. Postage Stamps for One Cent Drop Rate



Drop letter usage with 1 cent 1861 red "PROVIDENCE R.I. MAY 23 1865" with straight line "REGISTERED" and ms "#250", the registration number. This is the only known registered drop letter in this time period.



During the Civil War a soldier could send his letter without prepaying postage. Such letters were supposed to be certified by an officer. This cover has a faint pencil certification at the right edge by a major. However, this letter was mailed to New Haven, Conn. from "NEW HAVEN CON JUN 30" (1862) so the postmaster applied a "Due 1" handstamp. This is the only known drop letter showing Civil War soldiers' due rating known to the exhibitor.

III. Postage Stamps for One and Two Cents Drop Rate

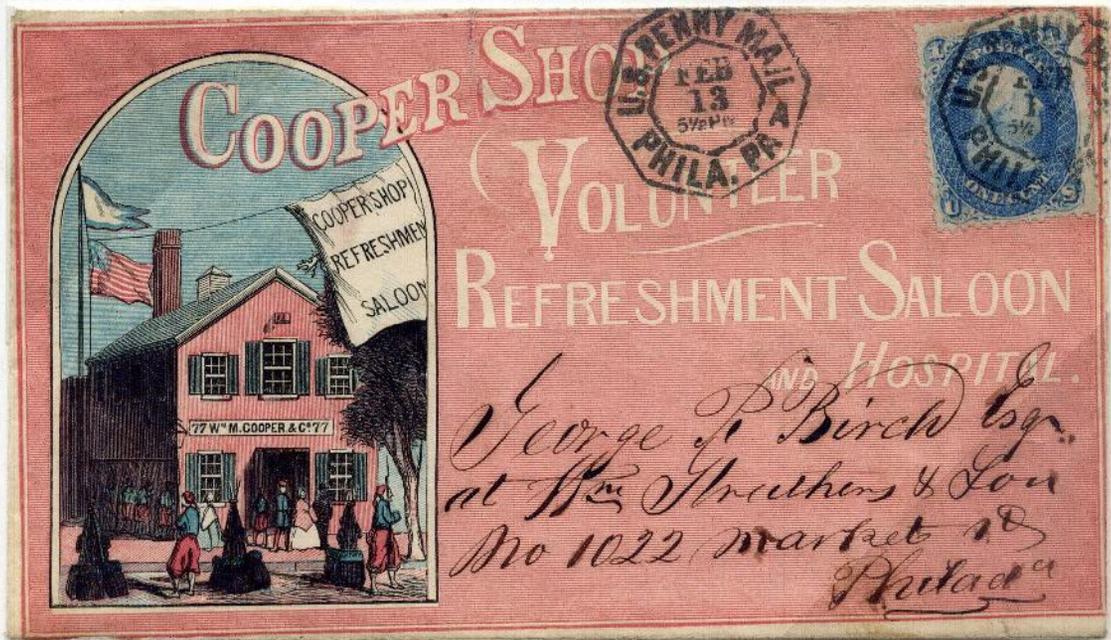


These three covers all show drop covers which could not be delivered. The top cover with "ALBION N.Y. AUG 6" postmark was "ADVERTISED" as the handstamp shows. It was sent to the D.L.O. September 24 (marking usually on reverse of envelope). The middle cover is during the 2 cents rate period from Philadelphia March 16, no year date. It bears markings "REMOVED" and "NOT FOUND" on the front [not advertised] but on reverse is the Philadelphia "DEAD" handstamp dated April 26 when it was sent to D.L.O. The bottom cover from Milwaukee bears a rare city-named "ADVERTISED" postmark and arch "NOT CALLED FOR". There is May 25 handstamp on reverse which was applied on same day as the Not Called For marking when the letter was sent to the D.L.O.

III. Postage Stamps for One Cent Drop Rate



The two covers shown here are examples of Civil War patriotic envelopes. The 1857 stamps were valid for postage only in the first few months of the war. The top cover is a Boston usage with 1 cent Type V stamp and large grid PAID.. The other cover is overall design depicting General McClellan used from Lockport, N.Y. with 1 cent 1861 stamp.



This drop usage with 1 cent 1861 is canceled by "U.S. PENNY MAIL PHILA. PA." marking showing carrier delivery. It is a very attractive cover for the Cooper Shop Volunteer Refreshment Saloon which supplied services and food to soldiers traveling through Philadelphia.

III. Postage Stamps for Two Cents Drop Rate



The illustrated cover (front) with 2 cent stamp depicts the other major refreshment saloon, The Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon and Hospital. It is a Philadelphia drop letter usage probably 1864. This is an example of drop letter usage on illustrated envelope.

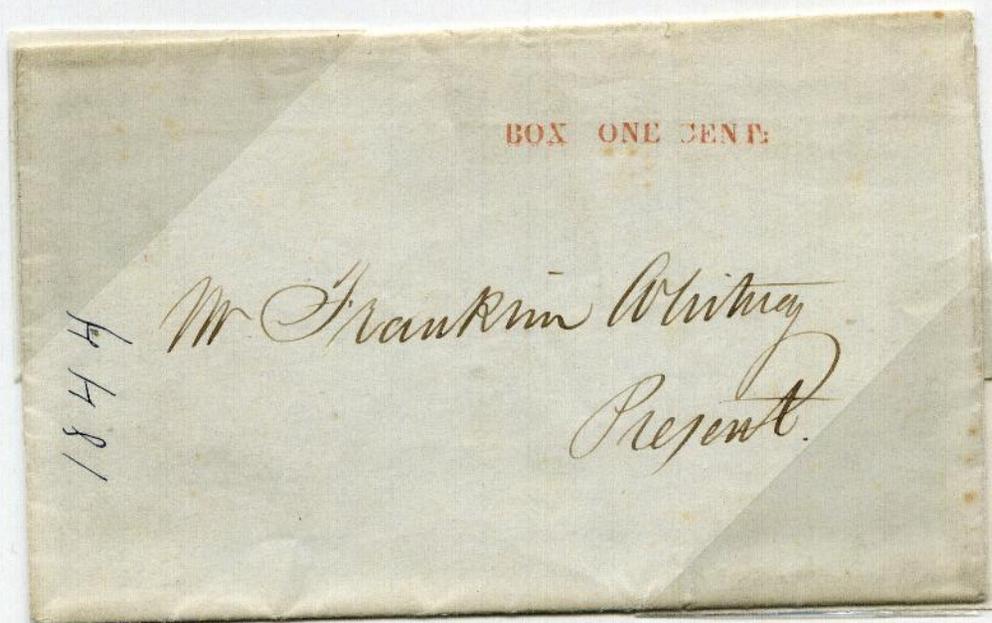


This is the 2 cent entire depicting Andrew Jackson. Most the envelopes with the Great Central Fair for the Sanitary Commission illustration are blank envelopes with stamps added, but in this case intended for circular usage the entire was printed over. However, this particular envelope shows drop letter usage with street address given so the carrier could deliver it. It may have held a printed circular originally. Drop letters are much less common than circular usage.



This is the earliest known drop letter handstamp "Drop Letter—One cent" in red straight line from Syracuse, N.Y. May 8, 1843. This is the only known postal marking with the terminology "drop letter" during the first one cent period, the period of the rate before the two cents rate of 1845. The cover is a turned cover mailed the following day with a Syracuse town postmark and rated "6" to Skaneateles, N.Y.

IV. Specific Handstamps with DROP

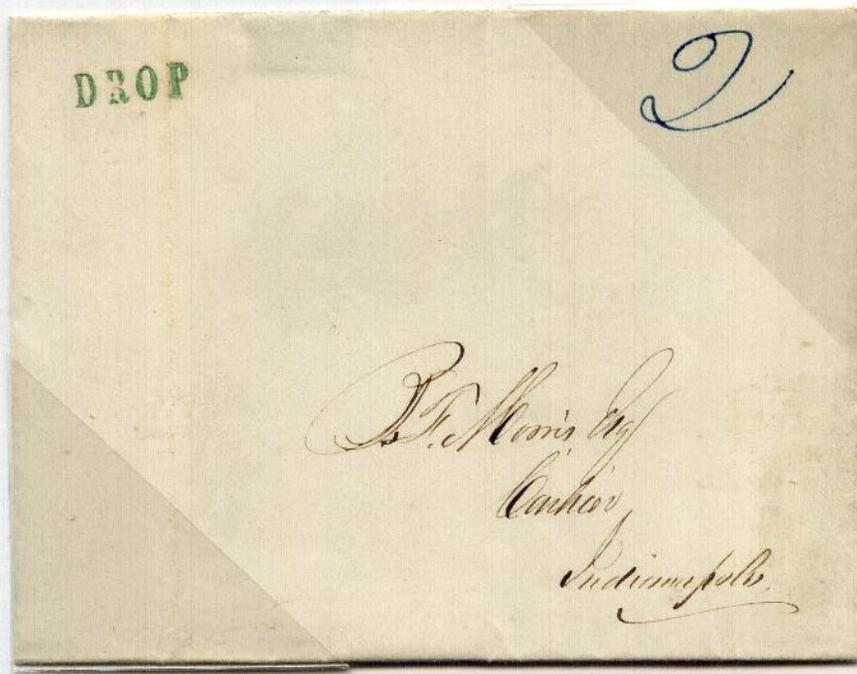


Binghamton, N.Y. postmark "BOX ONE CENT:" for a drop letter docketed 1844. There is a similar marking from Wilmington, Del. The preceding cover from Syracuse and the two Box One Cent markings are the only handstamped specific markings for drop letters before the 1845 two cents rate. The earliest known handstamp has already been shown, the "1 Cent" from Cleveland in 1839.



This valentine cover with Binghamton, N.Y. postmark bears a red "BOX 2" marking with the "BOX" in a scroll overlying the "2". This is a two cents rate drop rate usage. The envelope is a lacy embossed envelope on its reverse side. The valentine found with this cover does not bear any markings. But this is typical for an early valentine.

IV. Specific Handstamps with DROP

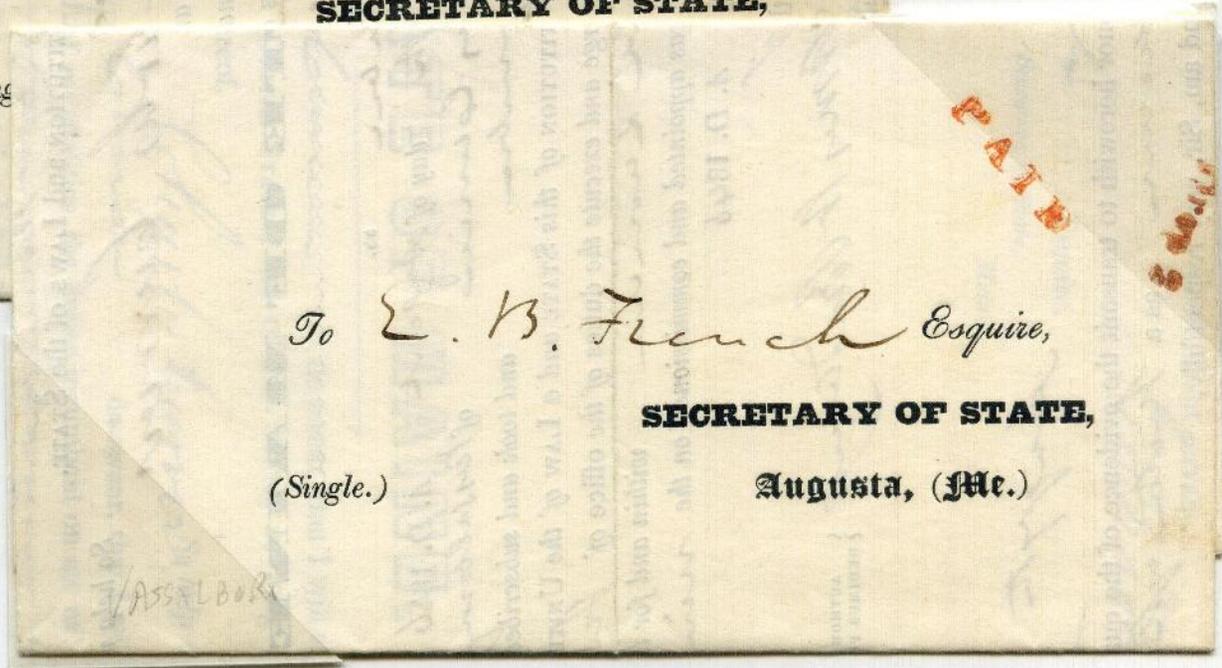
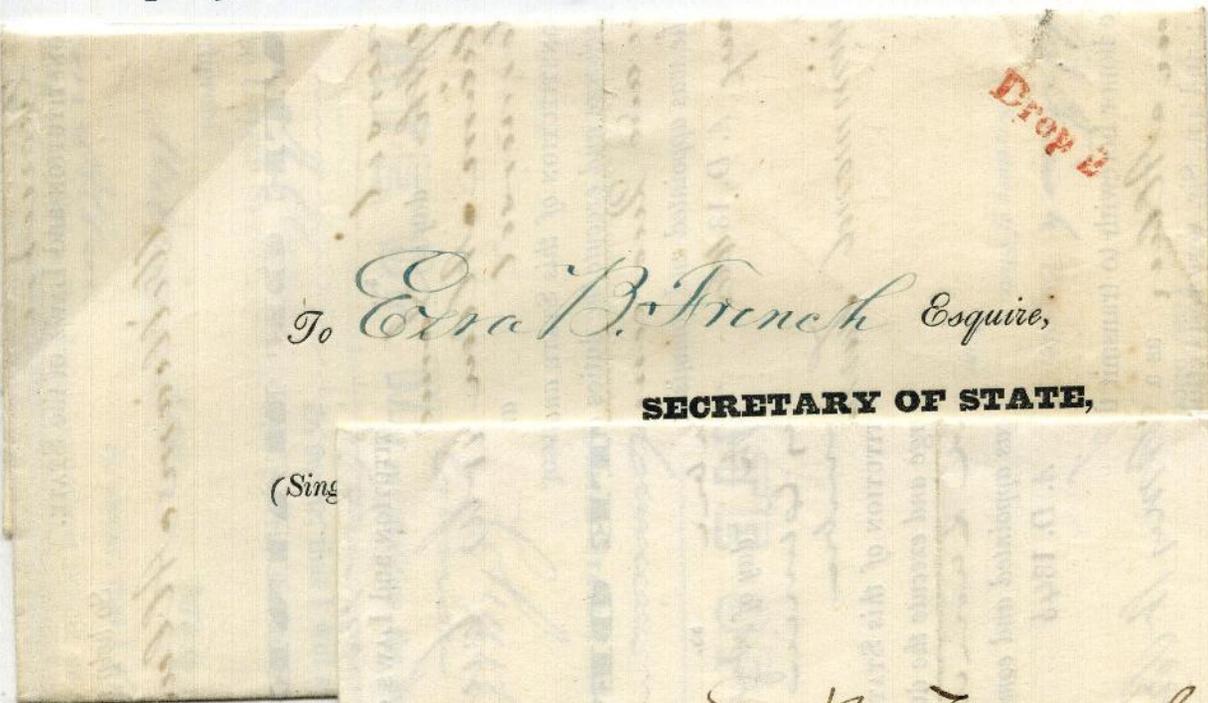


This cover with green "DROP" and manuscript "2" addressed to Indianapolis is the earliest known example of the 1845 two cents drop rate. The enclosed letter was written from Indianapolis on August 22, 1845. The handstamp in green is very rare.



This letter was written at Columbus December 15, 1847. It was carried to Indianapolis and deposited in the post office there with "DROP" and "2" in circle red handstamps for a due 2 rated cover to a bank cashier in Indianapolis. This same red "2" is found on printed circulars in 1845 and 1846. It is also found on drop letters as late as 1850.

IV. Specific Handstamps with DROP



These two covers both show a special "Drop 2" red straight line handstamp used at Augusta, Maine in 1846. The upper cover is the finest known strike and is the earliest example recorded. The other cover shows a "PAID" usage which is very rare with any handstamped drop postmark. The upper cover is dated January 12, 1846 and the other August 7, 1846.



The black straight line postmark which was struck upside down on this tiny envelope, possibly a valentine, reads "DROP, 1 ct.". It is known from other examples to be from Waynesboro, Penn. From the rate this cover would appear to be from the early 1850s.

IV. Specific Handstamps with DROP

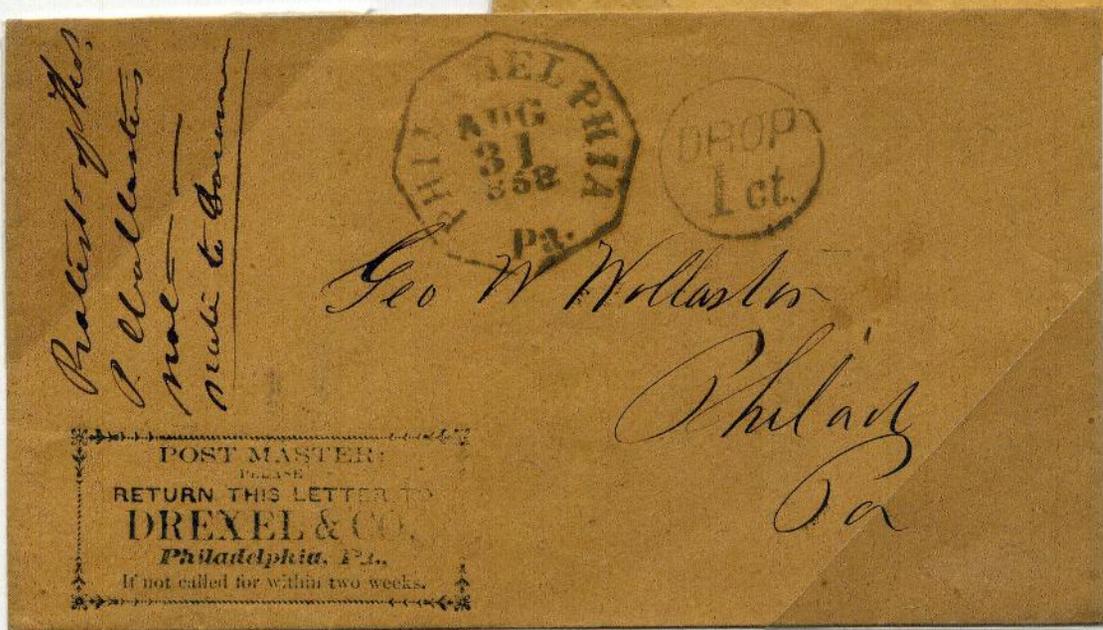
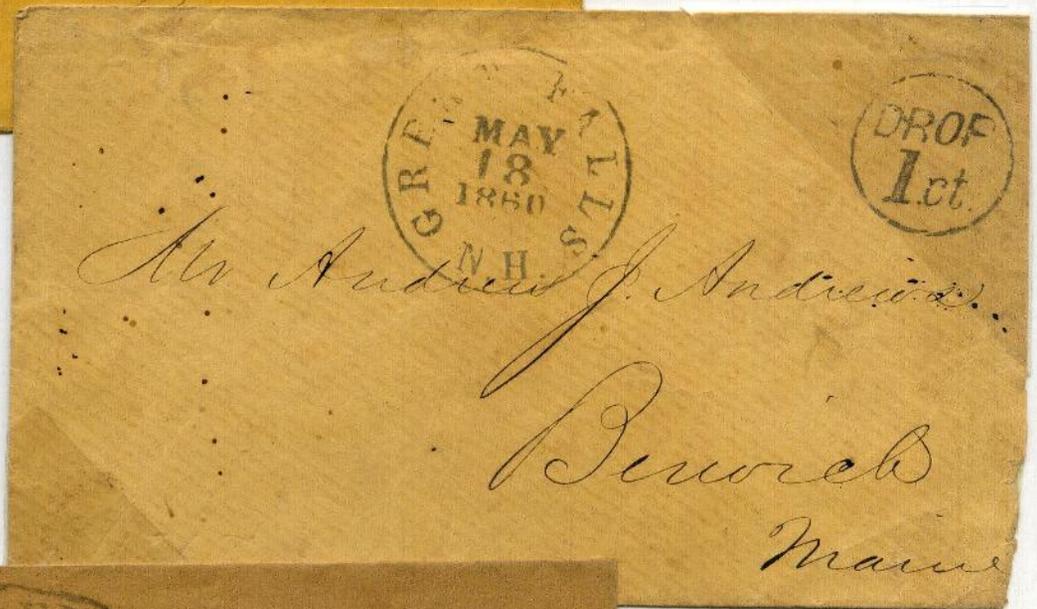


These two covers show a "DROP 1" handstamp in red and black used on New Orleans drop covers. The city later also used a "DROP 1 ct." in circle marking at a later date.



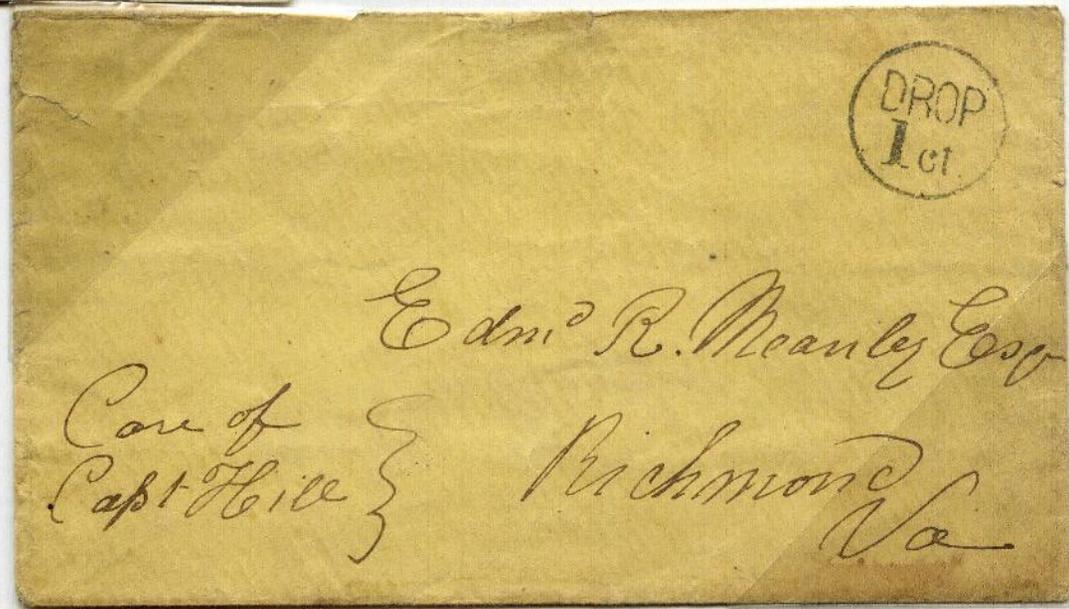
One of the most unusual drop handstamps is this "DROP. 1." in rectangular frame on drop letters at Woodville, Miss. Most examples come from this same correspondence. A similar "DROP.2." handstamp predates this one which shows usage after July 1, 1851. This cover is dated 1852.

IV. Specific Handstamps with DROP



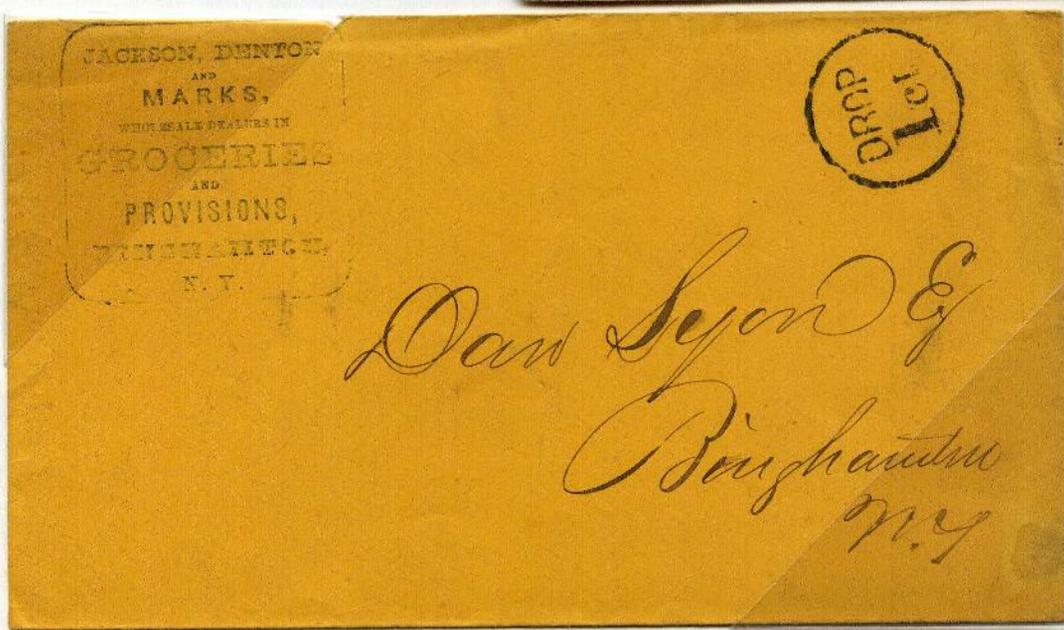
These three covers all show handstamped "DROP 1 ct." postmarks. The upper cover shows a scarce San Francisco, Cal. usage with smaller non-italicized lettering dated 1858. The middle cover is the only example known with Great Falls, N.H. postmark. It is dated 1860. The marking is different from the "DROP 1 Ct." on the lower cover which was postmarked in 1858 from Philadelphia where the letters in the marking show less slanting.

IV. Specific Handstamps with DROP



The three covers here show other handstamped DROP markings. The blue and black covers from Richmond show a "DROP 1 ct." without italics. The very rare Rochester cover shows a similar "DROP 1 ct." which was used in 1860.

IV. Specific Handstamps with DROP



The "DROP 1 ct." of Providence is one of the only circular Drop 1 ct markings. It also shows italicized lettering. The East Boston 1860 cover is the listing copy of this black "DROP 1 ct." handstamp. The bottom cover is addressed to Binghamton and bears a matching corner card from the same town which identifies the "DROP 1 ct." as from here.

IV. Specific Handstamps with DROP



This marking "D 1" in a huge circle is an unlisted handstamp. It was used with a red "NATCHEZ Mi. JUN 12" on a drop letter to Natchez. The date is probably 1852.

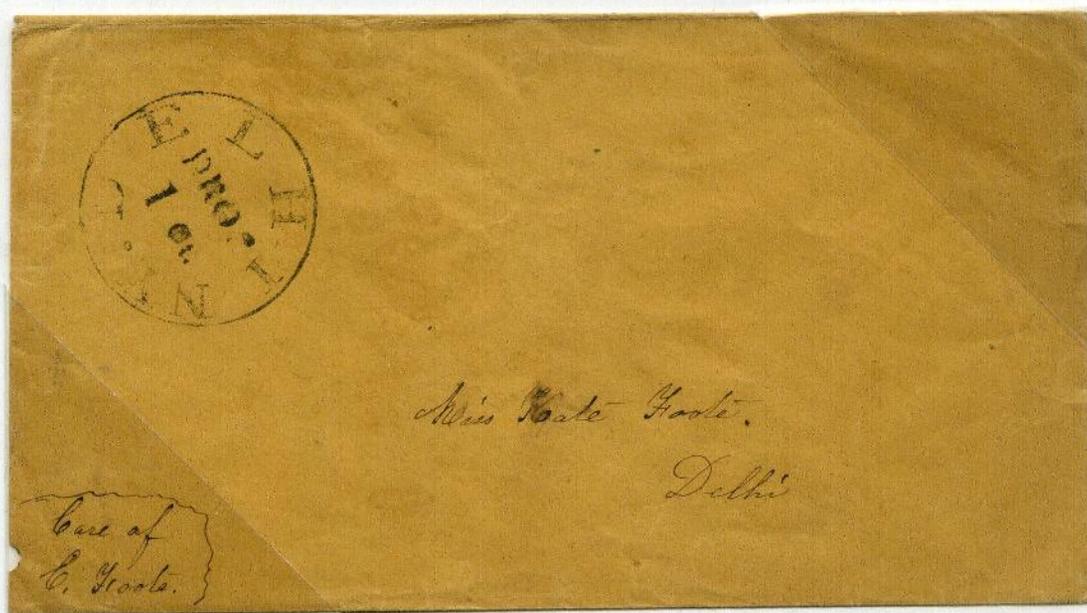


This is a complex cover. The cover bears two Natchez postmarks. The earlier appears to be the one at upper right "NATCHEZ Mi. APR 4" and was used with 3 cent 1851 stamp to a different town. Someone carried the letter back to Natchez where it was remailed "NATCHEZ Mi. APR 20" with "D 1", a drop letter marking. Note the new address "Natchez" below the original address.

IV. Specific Handstamps with DROP



This cover is a rare combination of a straight line "DROP" with a "PAID" with town cancel "BRADFORD N.H. 22 FEB" with unknown yeardate. It is the only cover seen with both handstamps.



This is what would be called an integral rated cover but the marking "DELPHI N.Y. DROP 1 ct." also includes the word "DROP" which is most unusual.

IV. Specific Handstamps with DROP



This cover was mailed at New Orleans with address to New Orleans. Therefore, it is a drop letter. However, it is franked with a 3 cent 1857 stamp canceled "NEW ORLEANS La. JUN 12 1859" and is overpaid. The postmaster added a handstamp "DROP" without a rate. The postage was prepaid so a DROP 1 ct. handstamp would call for collecting 1 cent.

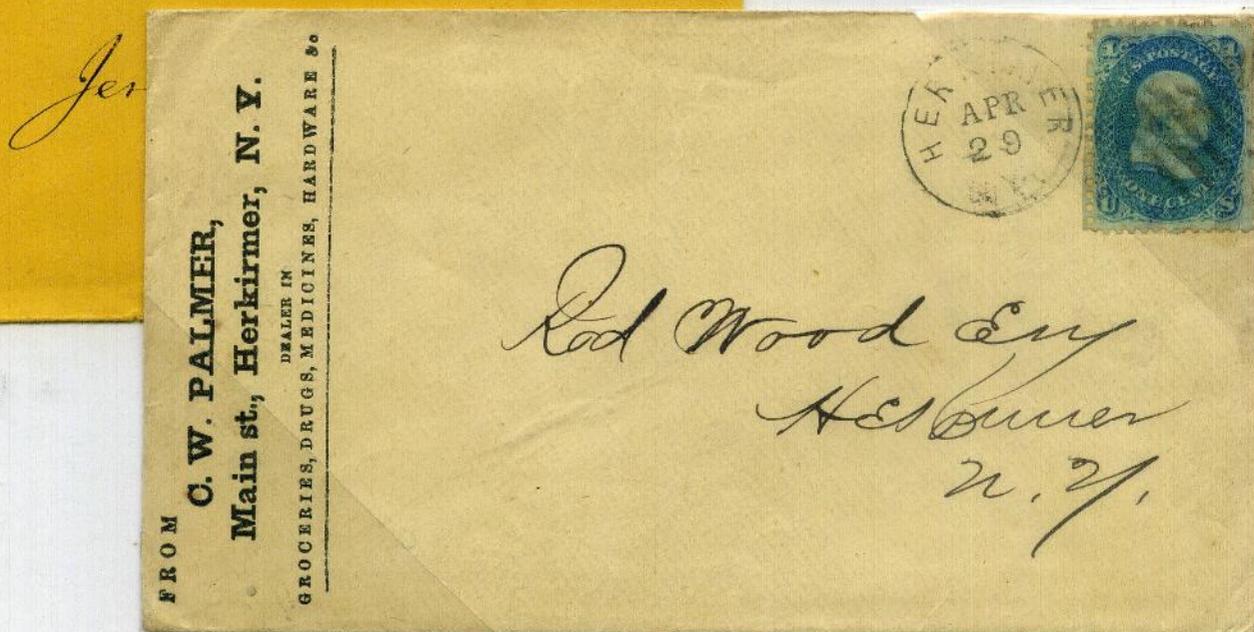


This later cover bears a one cent 1861 stamp to pay the drop rate at Chester, Connecticut. There is a town cancel on the stamp. However, the postmaster added his handstamp "DROP 1 ct." to indicate a drop rate but also one cent due. The best explanation for this is that the letter was mailed after July 1, 1863 when the drop rate was two cents. The year date is unknown.

IV. Specific Handstamps with DROP



This cover was mailed from New Orleans during the Civil War. There is a postmark "NEW ORLEANS LA MAR 30 '64". At this date stamps were required for postage. The postmaster rated it double unpaid postage (2 cents for a drop letter) with "DUE 4" handstamp. He also marked it with "Drop Letter" handstamp to explain the rate. This is a rare marking.



The upper cover is a drop letter from 1866 when a one cent rate applied to a drop letter in a city without carrier service. The postmaster at Stroudsburg, Penn. used a manuscript postmark "Drop Letter Jan 15 12M". The lower cover bears a 1 cent with F grill from Herkimer, N.Y. "HERKIMER N.Y. APR 29" which is also an example of the reduced drop letter rate for a town without carrier service. It bears a printed return address cornercard.