

First Federally Issued Postage Stamps

This traditional exhibit presents a comprehensive study of the first two postage stamps issued by the United States including archival material, production varieties, availability and a diverse range of usages showing how the stamps were handled by the post office and used by patrons.

Background

The issuing of postage stamps by the U.S. Federal Government in 1847 was a step on the long path of postal reform that addressed both the pressing social issues of equal access to the mail system and the post office's concerns of significant abuse, and thus loss of revenue, in the practice of payment by the recipient. Substantial reduction in postal rates occurred in 1845, setting the letter rate by weight for a half ounce letter to 5 cents for distances up to 300 miles, 10 cents over 300 miles and 40 cents to the west coast. Rates were also provided for drop letters, printed matter, and newspapers. In addition, a number of rates were in effect for mail addressed outside the United States.

By 1847, prepaid, adhesive postage stamps were already being issued by some postmasters, such as those in New York and Baltimore. The Federal Government 'took over' the business of issuing stamps in July of 1847. While the issue of 1847 changed forever the postal system, well over 90% of the mail was not prepaid with stamps. In addition, it was still common for mail to be sent collect. The government was a decade away from mandatory prepayment with stamps, but the die was cast.

Production

The stamps were engraved and printed by the Rawdon, Wright, Hatch & Edson firm. The sheets were printed from one steel plate of 200 stamps consisting of 2 panes of 100. The paper was a woven rag stock and a dextrin gum was applied to each sheet. After printing, the sheets were cut into sheets of 100 stamps. The first delivery started in New York on 1 July. There were a total of five deliveries.

The stamps were valid for postage from 1 July 1847 until 30 June 1851, at which time they were demonetized.

Condition and Rarity

The items in the exhibit have been selected for quality and condition. Items have been selected for 'eye appeal' and to reflect the best quality available.

Many of the items in this exhibit are rare or unique, coming from some of the great collections of the past.

History and Research

The issue of 1847 has been extensively researched and documented by many great philatelists, providing a basis for the descriptions in this exhibit. The exhibitor has published a number of articles on the issue of 1847. Original research presented in the exhibit involves the Dead Letter Office cover, the five cent plate scratches and the Turner correspondence.

Organization



The exhibit is organized in eight sections. The beginning of each section is marked with the icon shown at the left, followed by a section introduction.

- Section 1. Archival and Production**
- Section 2. Postal Markings**
- Section 3. Domestic Uses**
- Section 4. Carriers and Local Posts**
- Section 5. Railroads and Steamboats**
- Section 6. British North America**
- Section 7. Overseas**
- Section 8. Concluding Usages**

The left header of each page shows the section number. The header also has general information about the material. Text repeated on subsequent pages is gray.

Items accompanied by certificates from expert committees are indicated with a lower case 'e'.
Items of exceptional importance are framed in red. Blue text is used for population data.

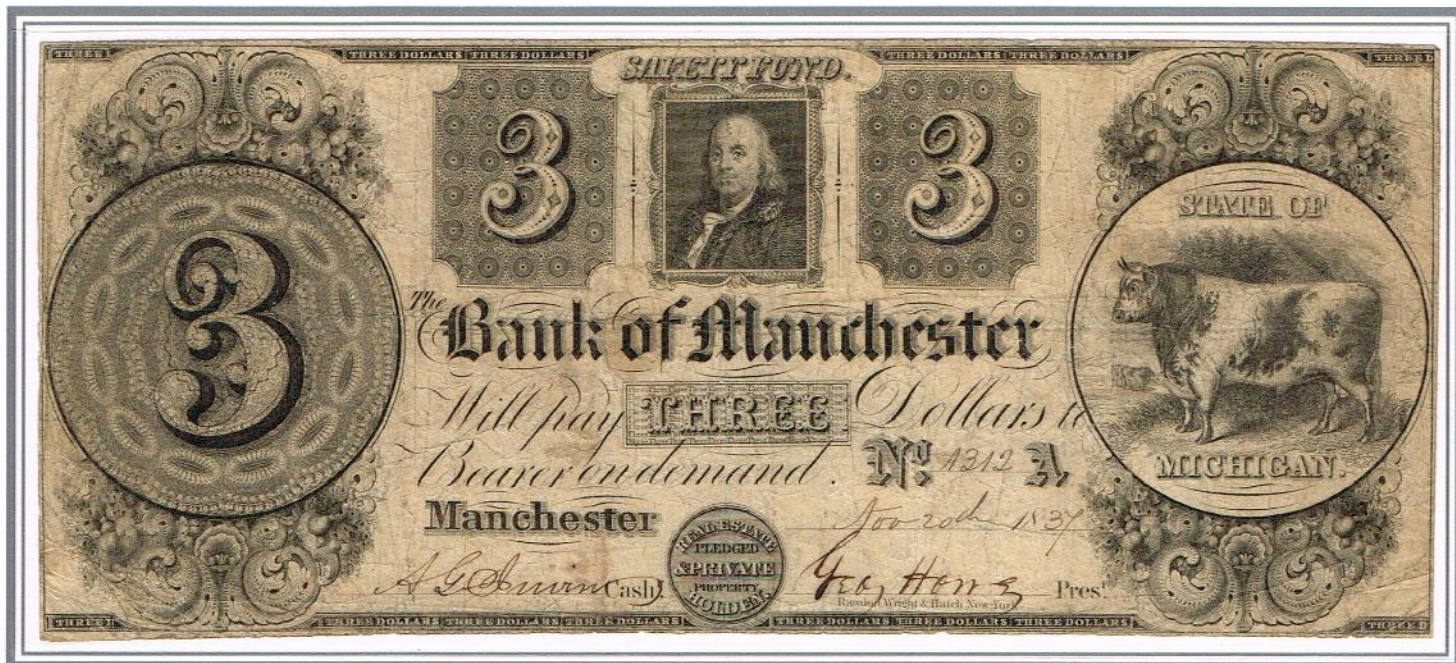
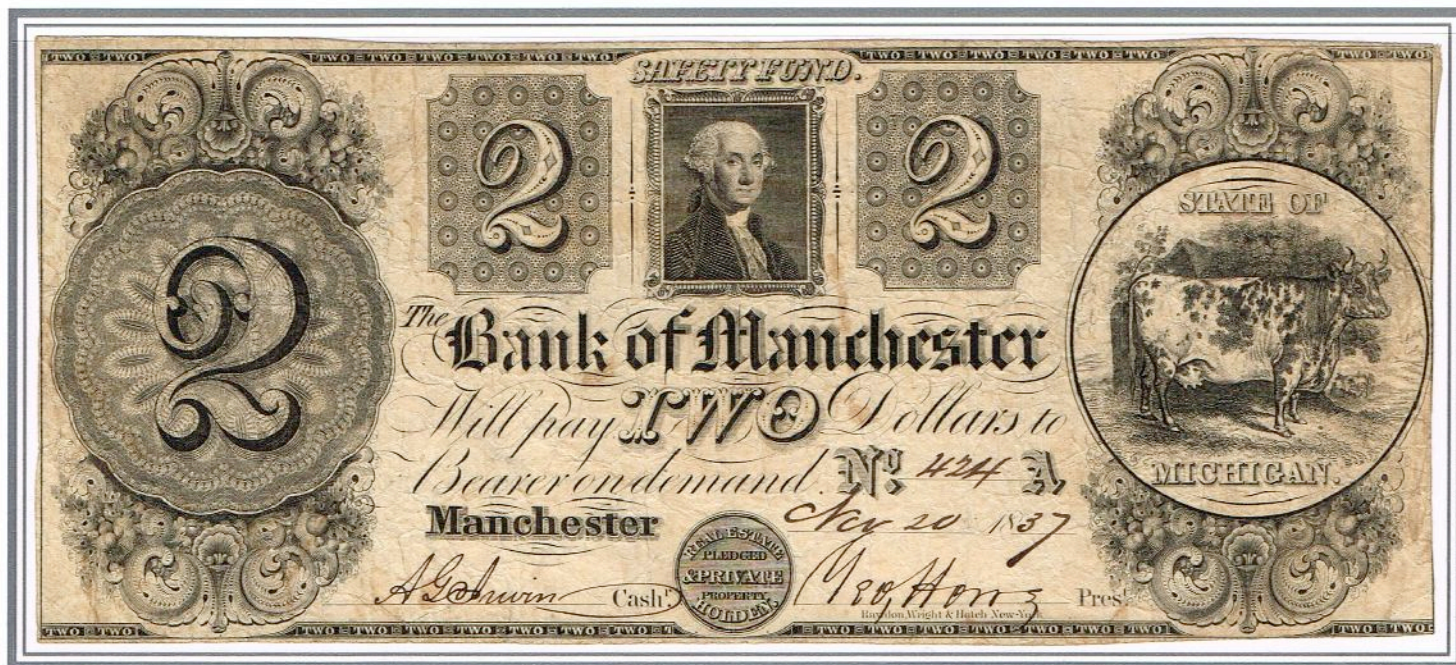


Section One - Archival and Production



Proofs, multiples, shades, plate and production varieties are shown. Unused blocks of six and eight and two used blocks of four of the 5 cent stamp as well as an unused strip of four and used strip of five of the 10 cent are included. A detailed shade study and all the major plate varieties of both stamps are presented.

Rawdon, Wright, Hatch & Edson produced bank notes for numerous banks. The bank notes below used the stock dies of Washington and Franklin, later used for both the 1847 stamps. These images were used on over 25 different notes including a few that used both on the same note. The portraits were engraved by Asher Durand. Durand moved from engraving to oil paintings and was one of the founders of the Hudson River school of artists.



Bank of Manchester Michigan 1837



The 1847 stamps were line engraved by Rawdon, Wright, Hatch & Edson. Intricate designs were created in order to make forgery difficult. Proofs were made on very thin paper and show sharp impressions and great detail.

Die Proofs

The die proofs printed in 1847 have specific characteristics that identify them. The 5 cent die proofs have a short diagonal dash across the left frame line opposite the lower left of the 'U'. On the 10 cent die proof the line which cuts across the bottom of the neck stock, above and inside the inner oval frame shows strong engraving.

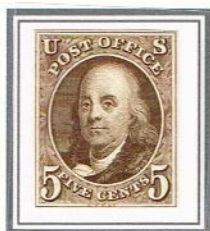


Plate Proofs

Six plate proof sheets were printed two each in black, brown and orange. One sheet of each color was printed with a diagonal 'SPECIMEN' overprint the other without.



Orange



Dark brown



Red brown



Only recorded copy
with manuscript 'X'



Black



Black without specimen



Orange



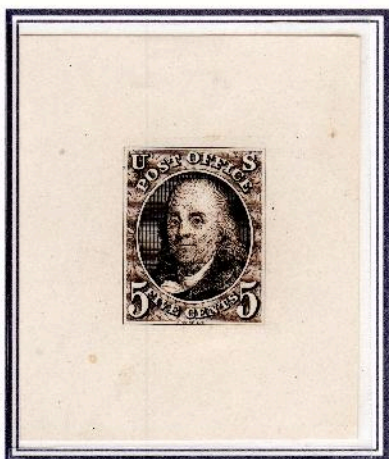
Brown



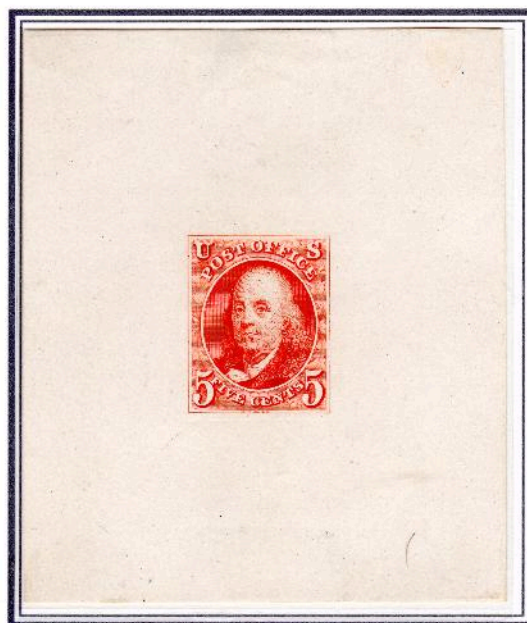
Black

A number of the non-contemporary proofs were printed for various uses. The trial color proofs below were made in 1892 for a album of proof specimens presented to the American Bank Note Company directors.

All proofs below are printed on glazed paper.



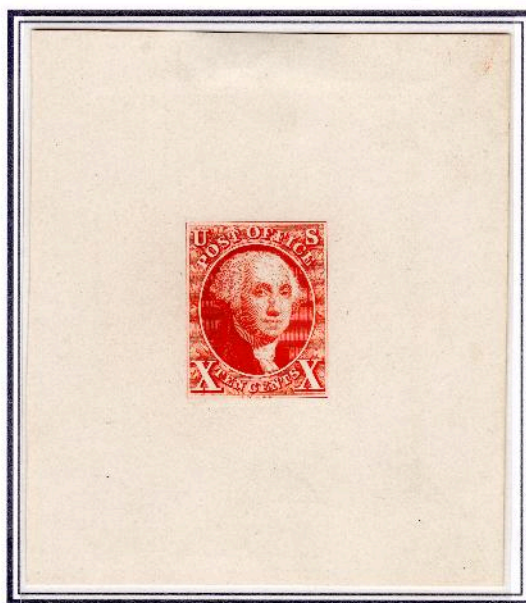
Black brown



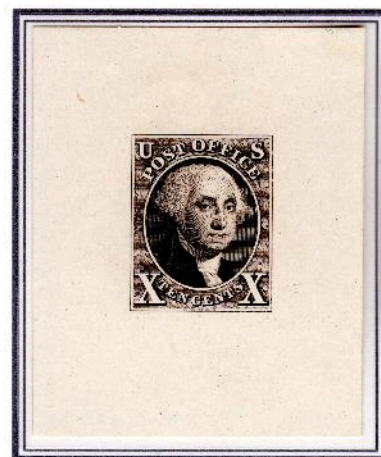
Scarlet vermillion



Deep blue



Scarlet vermillion



Brown black

The dies used to print the issue of 1847 were destroyed when the issue was demonetized. The transfer rolls survived and were used to make duplicate dies from which subsequent proofs were printed.

Printed around 1895. On white handmade proof paper.



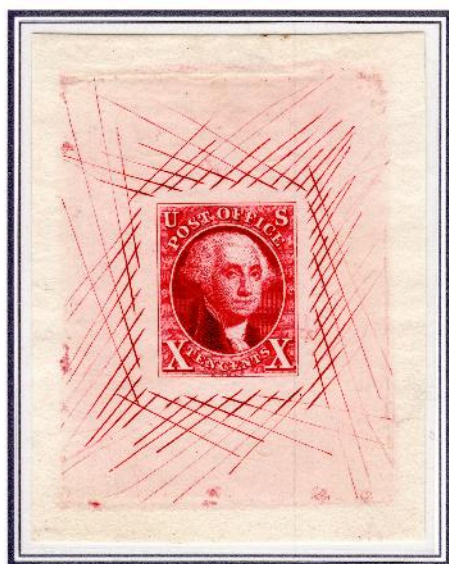
Black



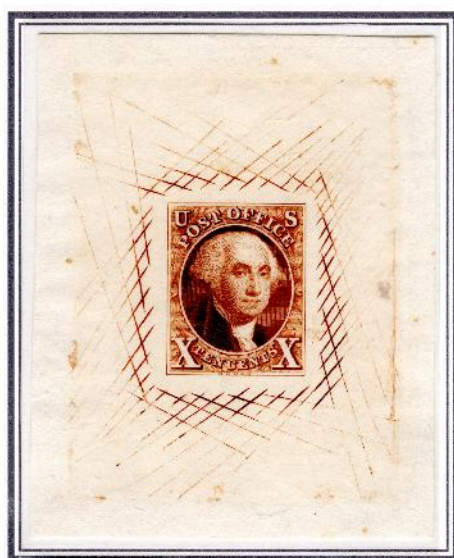
1895 hybrid die essay



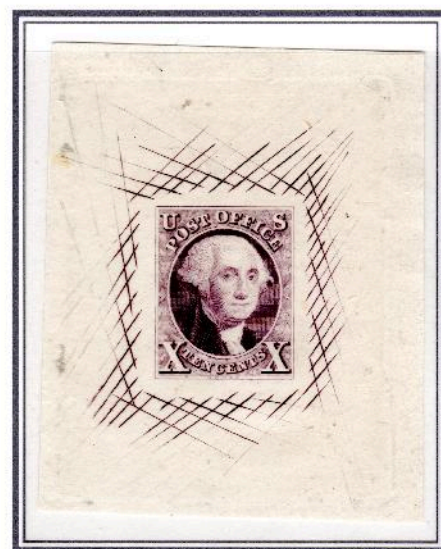
Dull blue



Rose lake



Light brown



Violet



Dark brown
Full original gum



Dark brown
Full original gum



Position 99L
showing guideline
Full original gum



5 cent dark brown reconstructed left margin block of six with original gum. Top row single and pair, bottom row strip of three.



5 cent deep red brown left pane right margin block of 8 with original gum. 3rd and 7th stamps dot in 'S'. Positions 7-10, 17-20L.



10 cent strip of four with full original gum.



Dark brown stamps
Large Saint Louis MO town postmark



Red brown stamps



Left margin strip of five with Mobile AL red paint grid cancels.
Positions 41-45L.



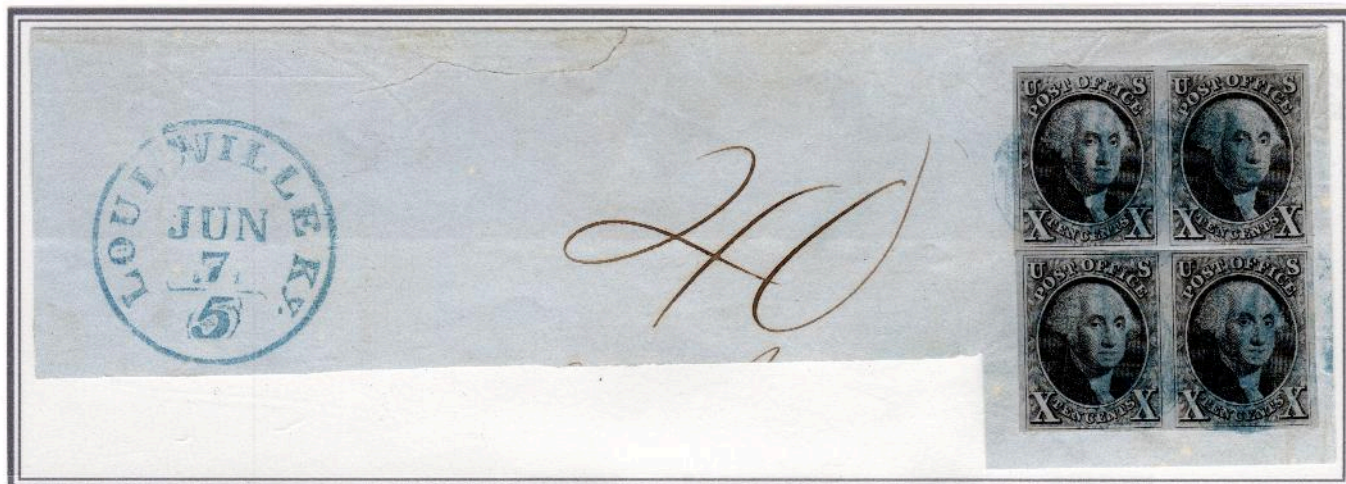
Orange red cork cancels.
Positions 41-43R, left stamp Double Transfer D.



Philadelphia Railroad cancel.
Positions 63-65L



Right margin strip of three with Panama red grid cancels.
Positions 68-70R, left stamp line through 'F' of 'OFFICE'.



Two horizontal pairs on piece of a folded letter most likely paying the cross country rate. From a strip of four, the top pair positions 85-86L, bottom pair 87-88L. Bottom pair moved slightly to align pairs.



Top margin
horizontal and
vertical pairs.
Two covers from
Albany to Buffalo NY.

E. G. Spaulding, a lawyer,
was a longtime resident
of Buffalo and did much
to improve navigation
on the Erie Canal. He
also served in Congress
and was a successful
businessman.

These letters were sent
to his second wife.



April 1849 folded
letter.

Bottom margin copy
Philadelphia PA to
Princeton NJ.

Addressed to
the President of
Princeton University.

While most letters used one or the other of the issue, there were a few uses that required both stamps on the same letter.



Two 10 cent stamps and one 5 cent stamp on piece with partial address panel, tied by red New York Exchange Office marking.
Most likely a one cent overpayment of the 24 cent Treaty Rate to England.
A partial strike of red numeral '19' showing credit to the British.



Vertical pair of 10 cent stamps and a single 10 cent stamp on piece of a folded letter with one 5 cent stamp.

Large plate bruise



Red orange



Black brown

unused



Brown orange



Dark brown



There were five printings of the 1847 5 cent stamp. The ink formula was changed and the plate cleaned after the third printing. While the color itself is not a guarantee of which printing the stamp came from, it is a good indicator.

'Brown' shades on the right tend to be from the first 3 printings. Shades on left with more orange tend to be from the last two printings or early in the first printing. These are guidelines, not definitive.



Orange brown

Gray brown

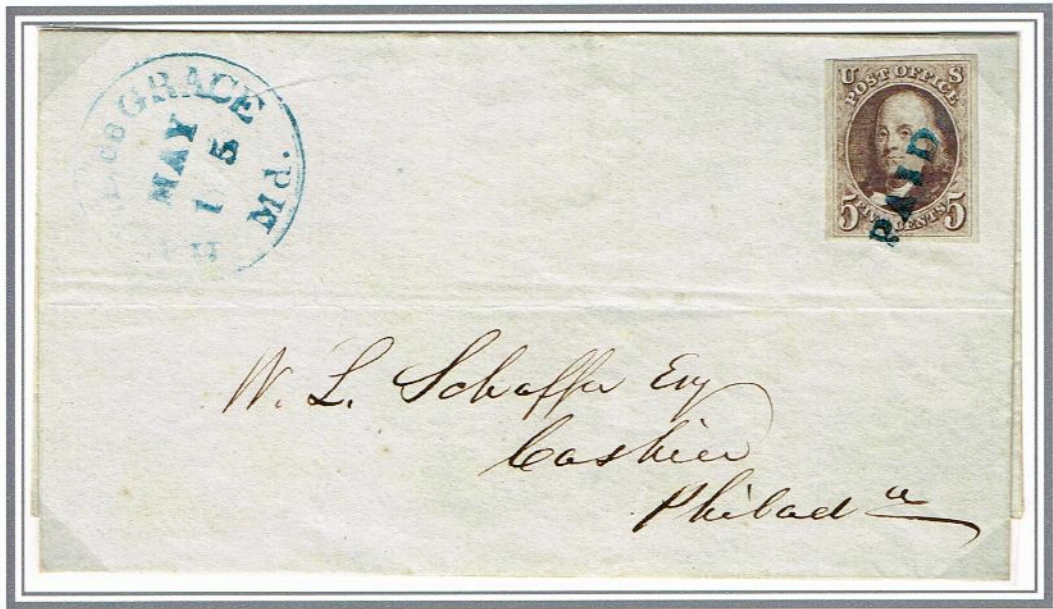


Red brown

Brown



Brown



May 1851 folded letter from Havre de Grace Md to Philadelphia PA.

e



Reddish dark brown



Pecan brown

e



Bright dark brown

e

Grayish brown
Crisscrossed 'PAID'

e



Van Dyke brown

e



e

Paler red brown shades



e

Russet



e

Darker red brown shades



e



e

Dark brown orange



e

Bright brown orange



e

True auburn



e

Dark auburn



Orange brown

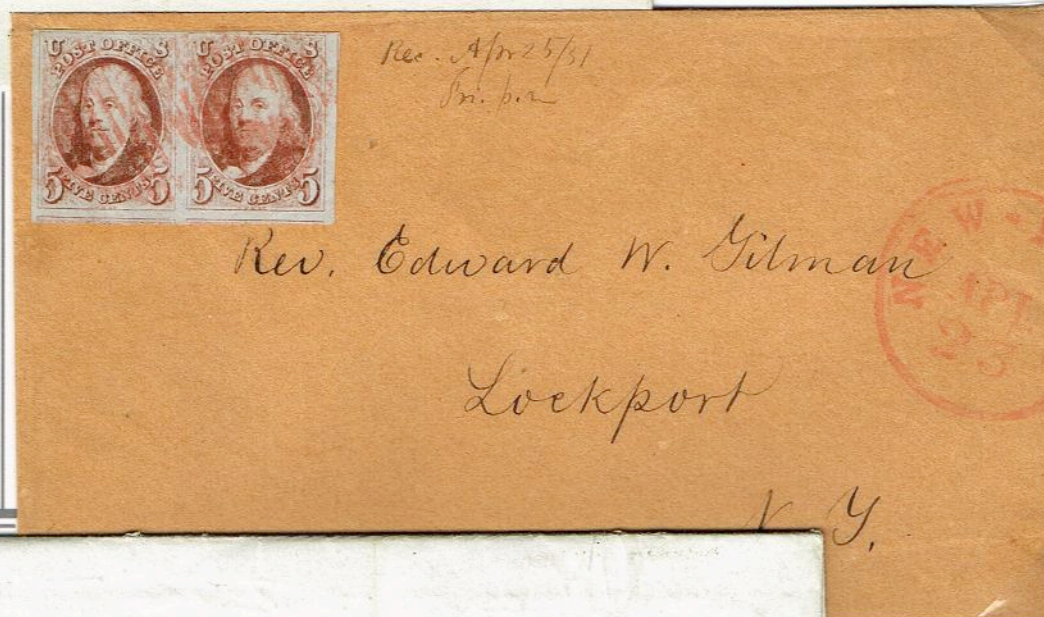
Walnut



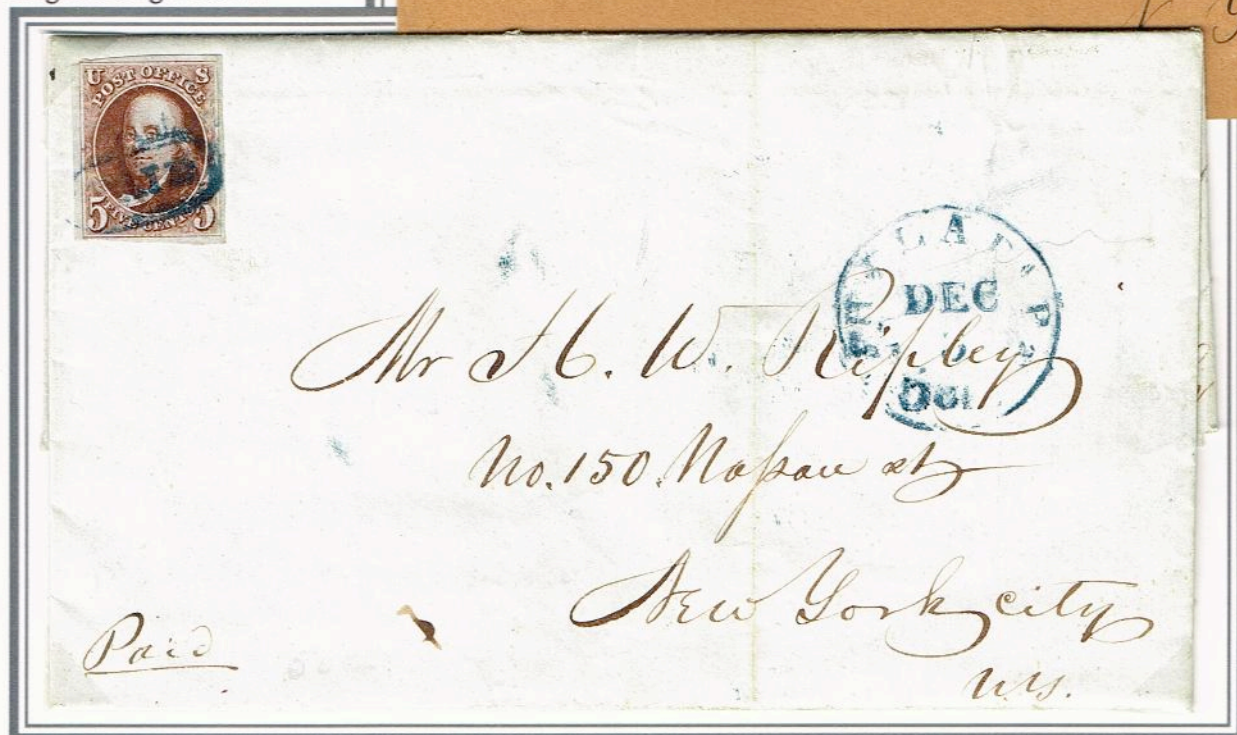
September 1848 folded letter
from Alexandria VA to New
York City.

Brown orange

April 1851 cover from
New York City to
Lockport NY.



Bright orange brown



December 1847
folded letter from
Philadelphia PA to
New York City.

Dark pecan brown

October 1847 folded letter from
Baltimore to Frederick MD.



Dark brown



'ADJUTANT'S/MASS/OFFICE'
marking used at the Statehouse in
Boston, MA.

Envelope reduced at right.

Seal Brown

November 1848 folded
address sheet from Boston
MA to Woodstock VT.



Ridgeway's dusty drab



December 1849
folded letter from
Sandusky OH to
Buffalo NY.

Gray brown

November 1849
folded letter from
New Bedford MA to
New London CT.



Black brown



Manuscript note to
postmaster: "will please
deliver this as soon as
convenient".

September 1850 folded
letter from Chillicothe to
Tradersville OH.

Early printings of both the 5 cent and 10 cent stamps show lines that are sharp and clear. Background shading is strong and intense.

Over time the 5 cent plate wore, producing significantly degraded images while the 10 cent plate continued to produce good impressions. The 10 cent plate was not reworked, while the 5 cent plate was cleaned and some rework occurred.



Orange brown



Medium brown

Red grids.
Positions 10, 20R

Used In July 1847 - First Month of Issue



26 July 1847 folded letter
from New York City to
Washington City DC

Red New York City 13 bar
square grid canceling the
stamp. Red town postmark.

16 July 1847 folded address
sheet from New York City to
New Orleans LA



Worn Plate and Cleaned Plate Printings



Worn plate
Green town postmark.



Worn plate

'Bootleg' from England

The 5 cent plates wore to the point that the third printing produced very poor impressions with light lines and, in some examples, with uneven ink. Prior to the fourth printing the plate was cleaned, producing better images but with fuzzy lines.

Worn plate.
Folded address
sheet from
Boston to
Monson MA.



Worn and dirty plate.

June 1851 folded letter. Privately carried from Liverpool England to Boston MA where it was placed in the mail.

W. M. Bailey Lang forwarding stamp.

Cleaned plate.

Cover from Philadelphia PA to Paris France. 5 cent stamps paid double rate to Boston.



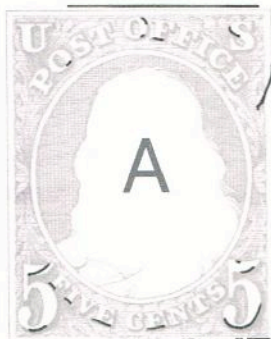
Types 'A' and 'B'

Double Transfers

Plate varieties are differences in particular plate positions that are consistent with each printing from a single state of that position. Double transfers result from a position on the plate being incompletely erased and then re-entered. Positions are often erased and re-entered to get a quality entry.



e



Position 80R



e

'A' top stamp
'B' bottom stamp.

Position 90R



e



e

'B' double transfer in right stamp.

'A' double transfer
bottom stamp part red
French accountancy
marking.

Two singles with 'A' double
transfer on left stamp.



e



Vertical pair with 'B' double
transfer on top stamp.
Positions 90 and 100.

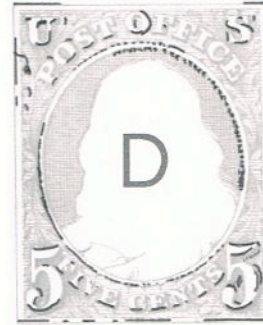
e

It is conjectured that double transfers 'C' and 'D' occurred late in the life of the plates after reworking and are less common than types 'A' and 'B'. The plate positions, 'C' and 'D', have not been determined.

Thus all type 'C' and 'D' doubles transfers are from printings four and five after January 1850.



Horizontal lines
doubled in background



The left stamp shows 'C' double transfer.



The left stamp, the [discovery copy](#), shows 'D' double transfer. Approximately a dozen copies recorded.



'Hart' copy

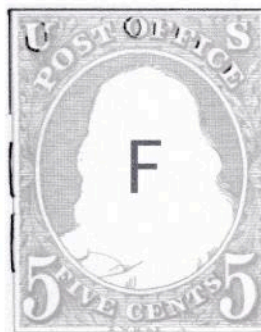
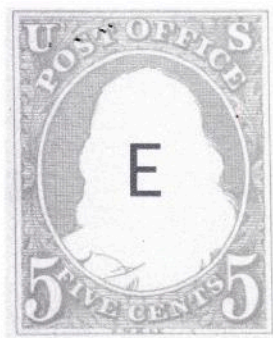


4th printing showing
clear but fuzzy lines.
Stitch watermark



Additional copies of the 'D' double
transfer, both late printings.

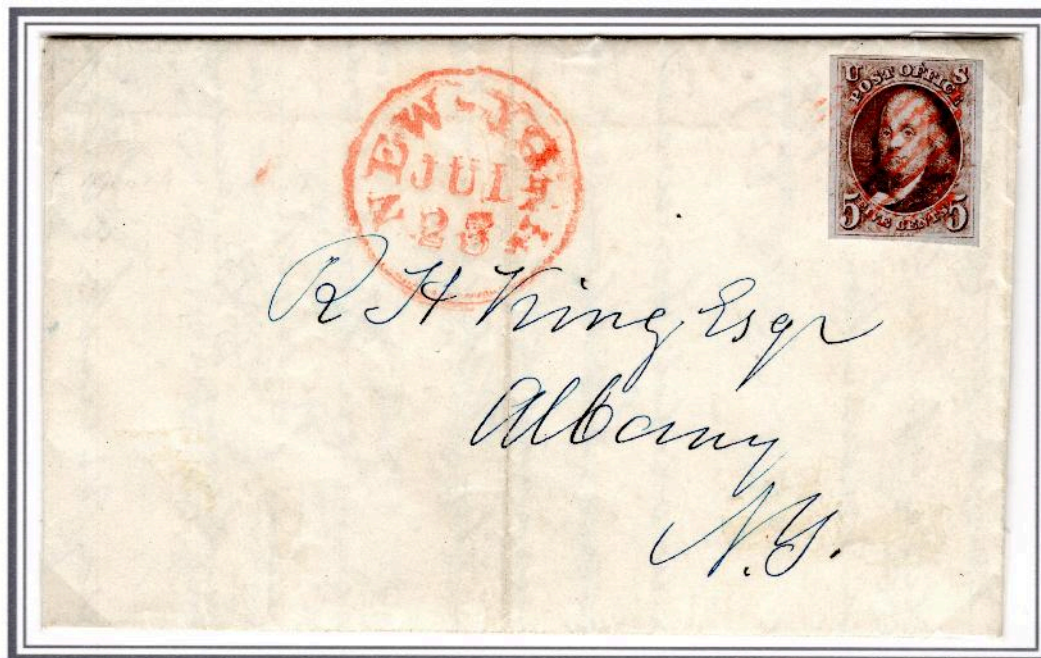




Left stamp type Mower shift 'E'
double transfer. Saint Louis integral
rate town postmark.

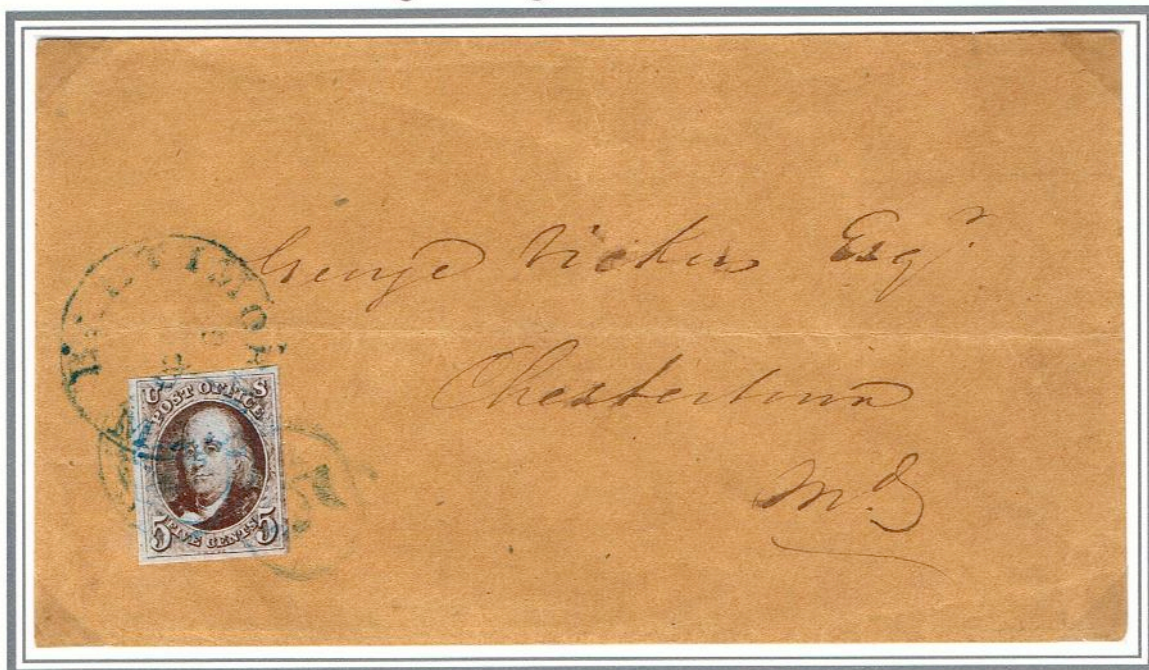


Wagshal 'F' shift.
Discovery copy
Approximately 6 recorded



23 July 1847 folded letter from New York City to Albany NY. **First month of use.** Red New York City 13 bar square grid canceling the stamp. Stamp shows double transfer 'E', the Mower shift. This early use of an 'E' double transfer proves that it, along with the 'A' and 'B' double transfers, were on the plate from the beginning.

Plate Bruising in Margin



Cover from Baltimore MD. Stamp canceled with two strikes of '5' in circle and town postmark. Stamp shows plate bruising in the right margin. Bruising was caused by "over-rocking" the image into the plate causing a depression where ink could gather.

Mourning Cover

Dot in 'S'

The dot in 'S' occurred in all stamps in the 9th vertical column of the left pane.



October 1849 folded letter from New York City to New Orleans LA. Left stamp dot in 'S' variety.



Cover from Syracuse to Elbridge NY.



'T' Crack



Plate crack: 'T' with
broken left arm.
Position 69R.
Red brown shade.

e

Plate Scratches



Undocumented plate
scratch.
Orange brown stamp.

e

Broken and Recut Frame lines



Portion of folded address sheet. Stamp shows break in left frame line.



Recut left frame line right stamp.

Misaligned Plate Entries

Difficulty aligning the entries for
individual stamps lead to frame
lines not lining up.



Right stamp higher than left stamp.

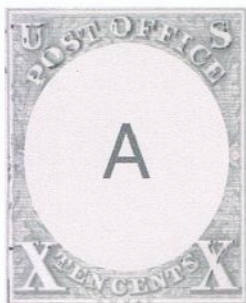
e



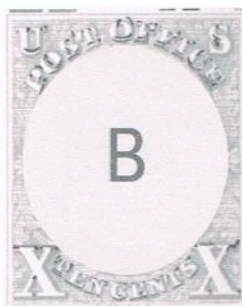
Top stamp to right
of bottom stamp.

e

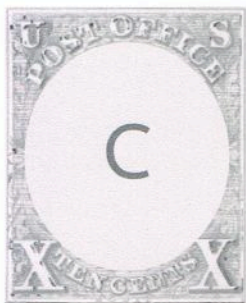
There are four named 10 cent stamp double transfers designated by letters 'A' thru 'D'.



Type 'A'
Position 1R



Type 'B'
Position 31R



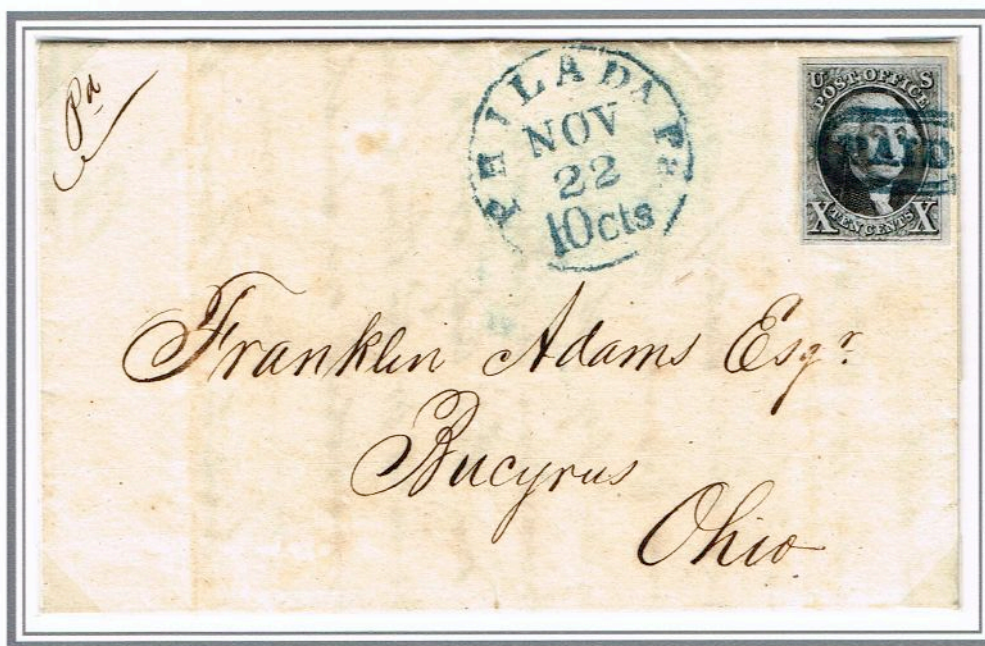
Type 'C'
Position 2R



Type 'D'
Position 41R



Top stamp type 'B',
bottom stamp type 'D'.
Positions 31, 41R.



November 1847 folded letter from Philadelphia PA to Bucyrus OH.
Double transfer type 'D'. Position 41R.

'Unnamed' Double Transfers



February 1850 folded letter from Louisville KY to Philadelphia PA.

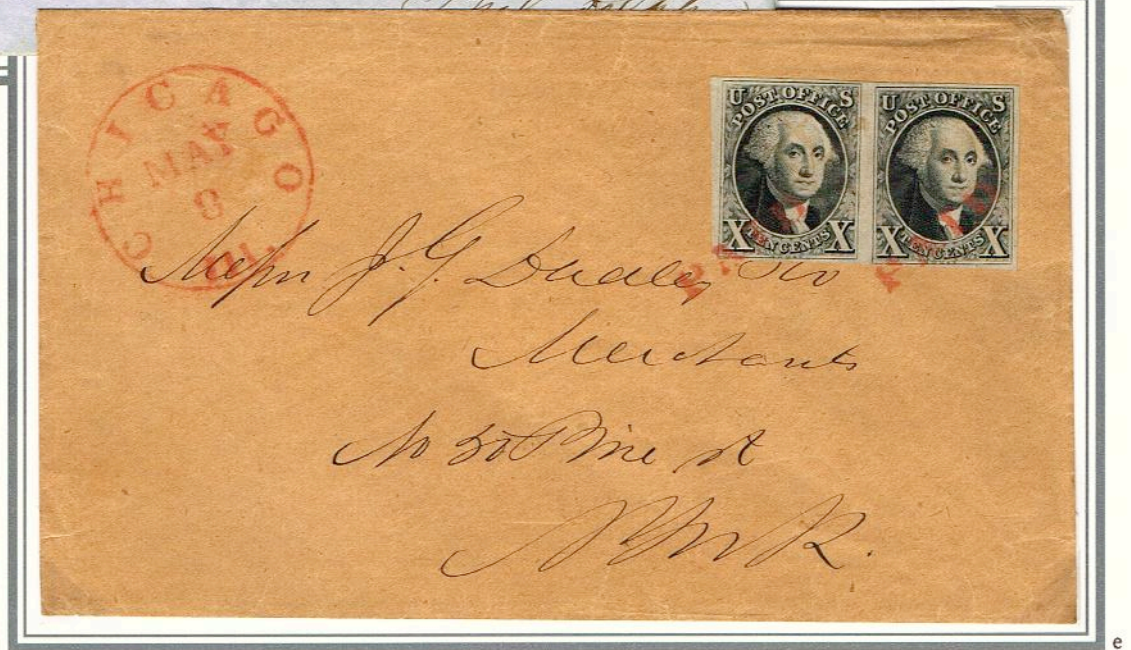
Position 2L double transfer in top frame line and at the top of stamp.

Cover from Chicago IL to New York City. Pair of ten cent stamps pay the double rate over 300 miles. Lightened manuscript cancels.

Positions 5-6R. The right stamp has a double transfer in 'POST OFFICE'.



Double frame line at left. Position 94L.



Misaligned Plate Entries

Difficulty aligning the entries for individual stamps lead to frame lines not lining up.

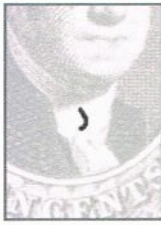


Left stamp higher than right stamp.



Bottom stamp to right of top stamp.

Stick Pin



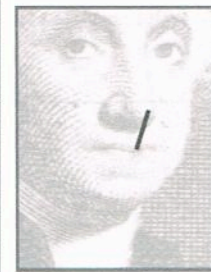
Position 52L
Part of English shilling
marking

Harelip

Dot Over 'O' in 'Office'

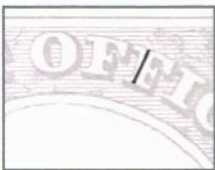


Position 39R



August 1849 double weight
letter from Washington City
DC to New Orleans LA.
Right stamp is 'Harelip'
variety. Position 57L. Left
stamp position 35L..

Vertical Line in 'F'



April 1851 folded letter
from Saint Louis MO
to Philadelphia PA.
Position 68R.

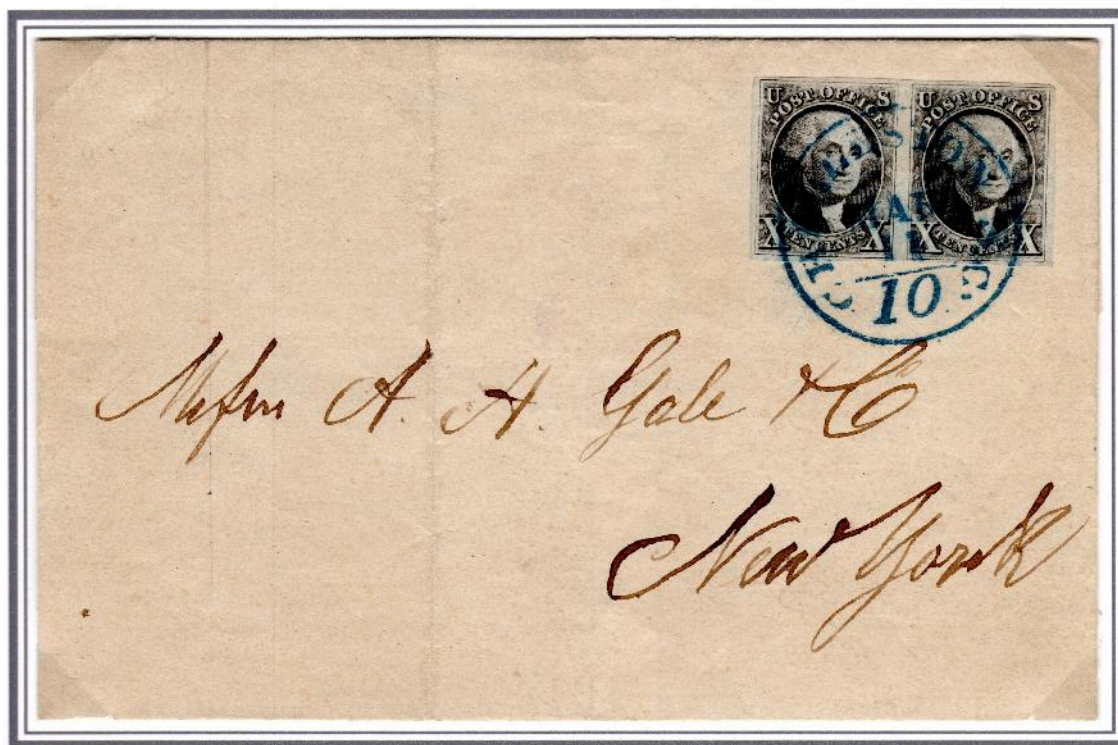


Plate Scratches



Double rate letter to Philadelphia. Entered the mail on the Express Mail train from Boston to New York City.
Stamps positions 44-45R showing plate scratches between stamps.

Short Transfer



Double rate folded letter sheet from Chicago IL to New York City.
Positions 21, 22L. The left stamp of pair has short transfer at top.

Production varieties result from errors in printing a specific sheet or particular stamps on a sheet.

A pre-printing fold is created when the paper used for printing has a hidden fold or crease. After printing, when opened up, the areas hidden by the fold or crease appear as blank areas.



August 1847 folded letter from New York City to Liverpool England. The letter entered the mail in New York City and traveled by train to Boston. Left Boston 16 August on Cunard ship Hibernia arriving in Liverpool 27 August, 5 cent stamp, double transfer type 'B', paying under 300 mile rate.

Occasionally the printing process results in either over or under inking or stray ink left on the paper from the process of removing the paper.

Inking anomaly

Excessive Inking



Dry Printing



Blue 'FREE' cancels stamp



September 1850 folded letter from Lockport NY to New York City. The upper left corner of the right stamp shows extraneous ink that at one time was believed to be a double impression. There is clearly extra printing ink present.



Section Two - Postal Markings



The official grid, manuscript and New York City grid cancels are shown as well as 'PAID' and numerical rate markings and a large selection of fancy and unusual cancels. Town postmarks used to cancel stamps and straight line town postmarks are included. The Wheeling control grid is shown.

First Official Canceling Device - 7 Bar Circled Grid

Postal regulations required that stamps were canceled or 'killed' either with a device to apply ink or by making a large 'X' to kill the stamp. The post office department provided post offices that generated over \$300 in annual revenue with an 'official' killer to cancel stamps. This consisted of a 7 bar grid in a circle. Most postmasters that used a canceling device used the 7 bar circled grid.



Gray brown stamps
Red grids



Part strike French
entry mark



Blue grid



Blue grid



Brown grid



June 1851 folded address sheet
from Natchez MS to Philadelphia
PA. Pair of 10 cent stamps pay the
double rate over 300 miles.

Black grids



Only Two Recorded Covers From Annapolis MD With 5 Cent Stamp



Letter from Annapolis MD to Belmont VA.

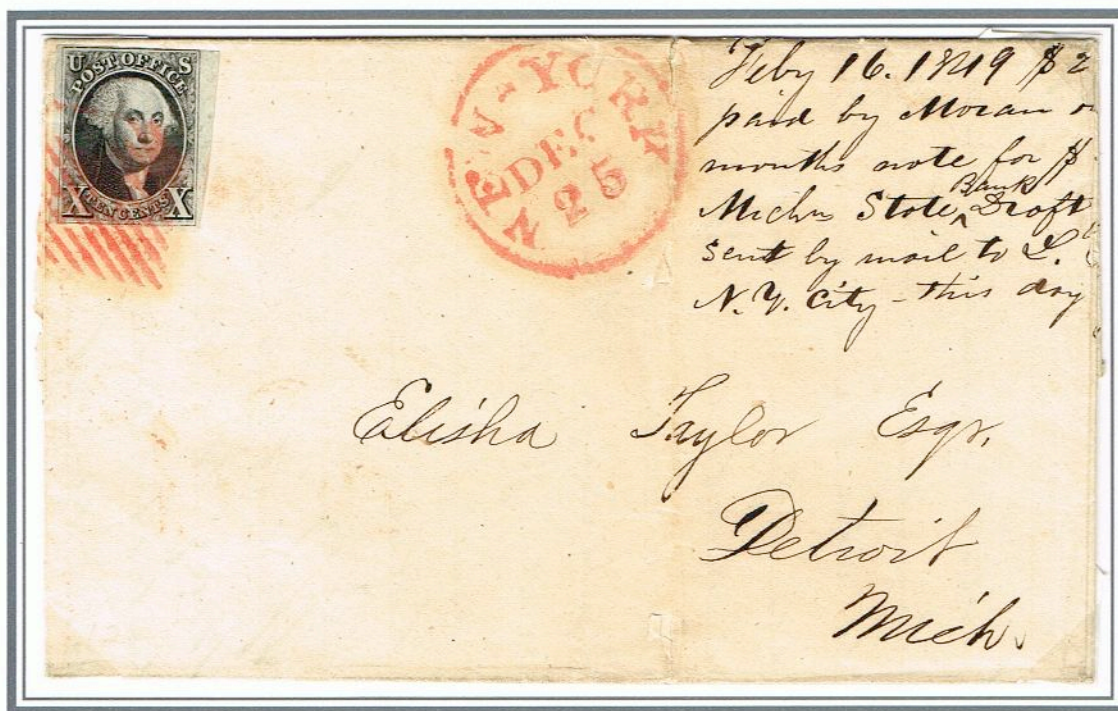


October 1848 letter from Annapolis to Baltimore MD.
Dark brown right margin stamp.

New York City did not adopt the 'official' 7 bar grid but continued to use the 13 bar square grid that was in use prior to the issuing of stamps by the federal government.

The two letters below were postmarked on Christmas Day. During the 1847 period, mail was the lifeblood of commerce and the only practical way for individuals to communicate. In support of this, many post offices worked even on Christmas Day to expedite the mail.

Christmas Day 1848 folded address sheet from New York City to Troy NY.



Christmas Day 1848 folded letter from New York City to Detroit MI.

Small post offices, that were not issued stamps and/or the standard 7 bar grid, typically used ink and a pen to cancel stamps. By regulation this was to be done by making a cross or 'X' on each stamp, although there were many variations used. Tying the stamp to the letter with the cancel was not required.

Typically considered less desirable by collectors, manuscript cancellations were a proper treatment.



Manuscript initials 'LAM'
Woodstock VT



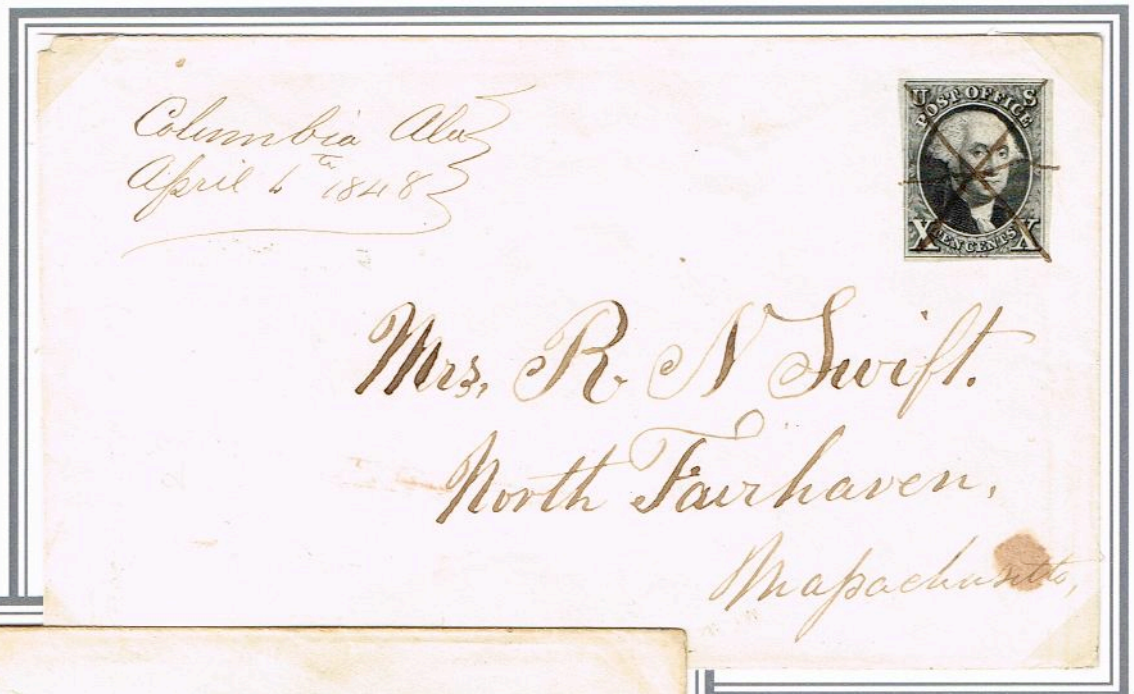
Red Queenston
exchange mark



Short transfer at top
Magenta pen cancel

April 1848 cover from
Columbia AL to North
Fairhaven MA.

Only recorded cover from
Columbia.



Cover from Princeton NJ to
Savannah GA.

Green town postmark.
Brown stamps.



Cover from Key West
FL to Essex CT.

Key West was served
by steamer Isabel on
the Charleston and
Havana Route.

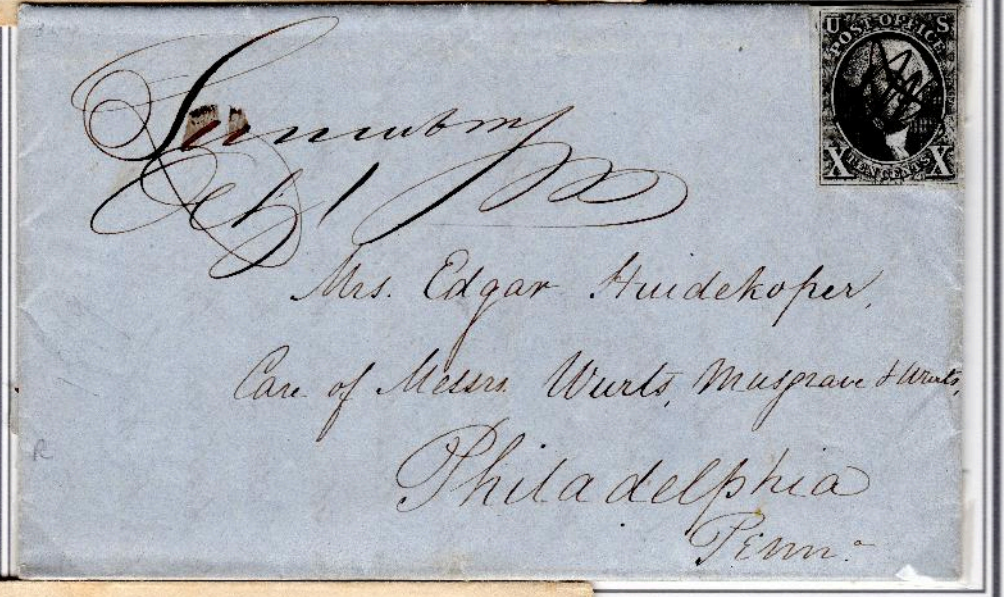
One of four recorded
10 cent 1847 covers
from Key West.

e

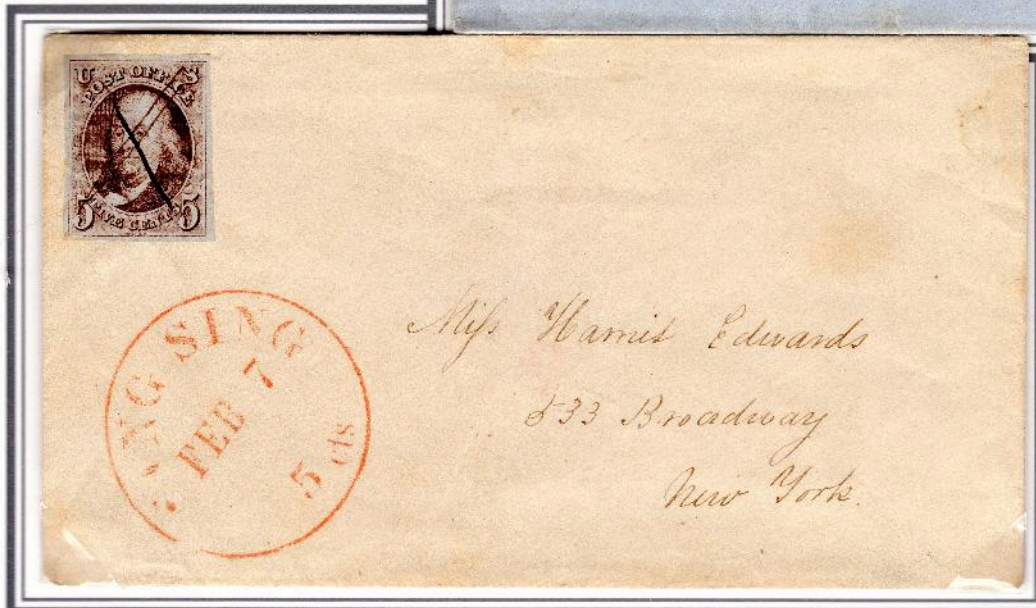
September 1849 folded letter
from Lunenburg MA to
Philadelphia PA.

Manuscript town postmark.

One of two recorded 1847
covers from Lunenburg.



e



Cover from Sing Sing
NY to New York City.

Only recorded 1847
cover from Sing Sing.

e

March 1849 folded letter from Silver Creek NY to Albany NY.

Blue 8 bar grid cancels stamp.
Blue Silver Creek town postmark with manuscript date; blue 'PAID' and manuscript 'Chg' and initials directing the postage to be charged to the sender's account.

Only recorded 1847 cover from Silver Creek. It is unusual to see a town that did not receive stamps using a canceling device. The postmaster probably acquired stamps from a nearby town such as Buffalo.



Letter from Fincastle to Lexington VA.

Blue town postmark and blue hollow '5'.

Only recorded 1847 cover from Fincastle.

April 1848 cover from Fort Gaines GA to North Fairhaven MA.

Black Fort Gaines town postmark. Black pen cancel. Homemade envelope.

Only recorded 1847 cover from Fort Gaines.



Most large towns used handstamps, usually circular, to show the town of origin and the date (day and month). Manuscript postmarks were used by small towns that, due to low mail volume, did not obtain handstamps. It is very unusual to see a manuscript town postmark from a large city such as Baltimore.



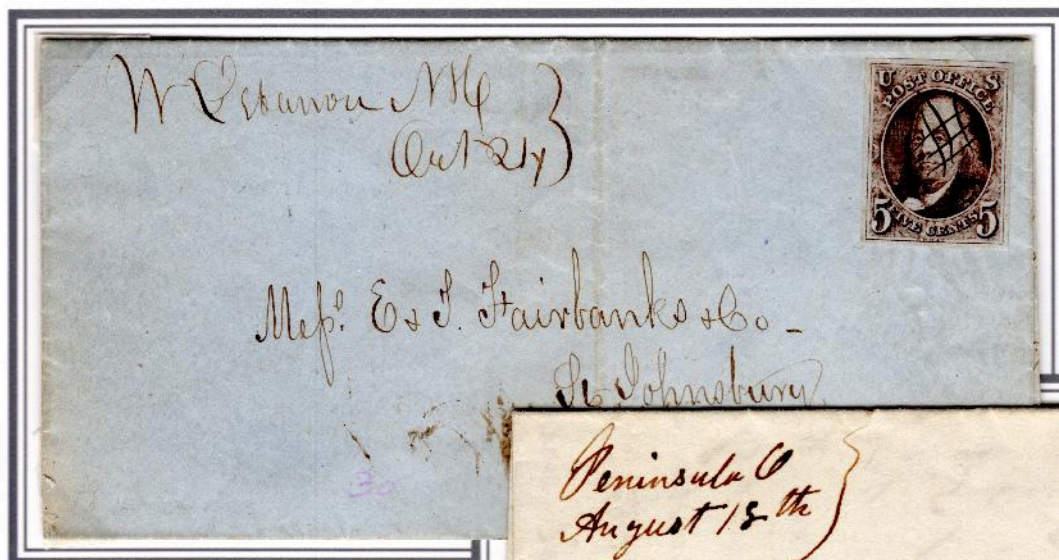
Cover from Baltimore MD to Littlestown PA.

Double strike of blue '5' in oval cancels stamp. The envelope is homemade.

Only recorded manuscript postmark from Baltimore.

During this period only a post office in a large town, mostly along the Atlantic Coast, received stamps. Use at other post offices depended on either buying them from other postmasters, ordering them from Washington, the occasional traveler having stamps or a resident buying them during a visit to a larger town. Even though these postmasters rarely saw stamps they processed them successfully.

Two social issues also led to use from towns that did not receive stamps. First, when ordered to serve papers on someone who had moved, marshals often included a stamp to expedite returning the paperwork; and second, men courting women wanted to insure delivery without a charge and were big consumers of stamps, showing they were both thoughtful and progressive.



October 1848 folded letter from West Lebanon NH to St. Johnsbury VT.

Chocolate brown stamp with black pen cancel.

One of two 1847 period covers recorded from West Lebanon.

e



August 1848 folded letter from Peninsula OH to Lansing MI.

Dark brown stamp.

Only recorded cover from Peninsula.



April 1849 folded letter from Woodstock VT to Hanover NH.

Brown stamp.

e

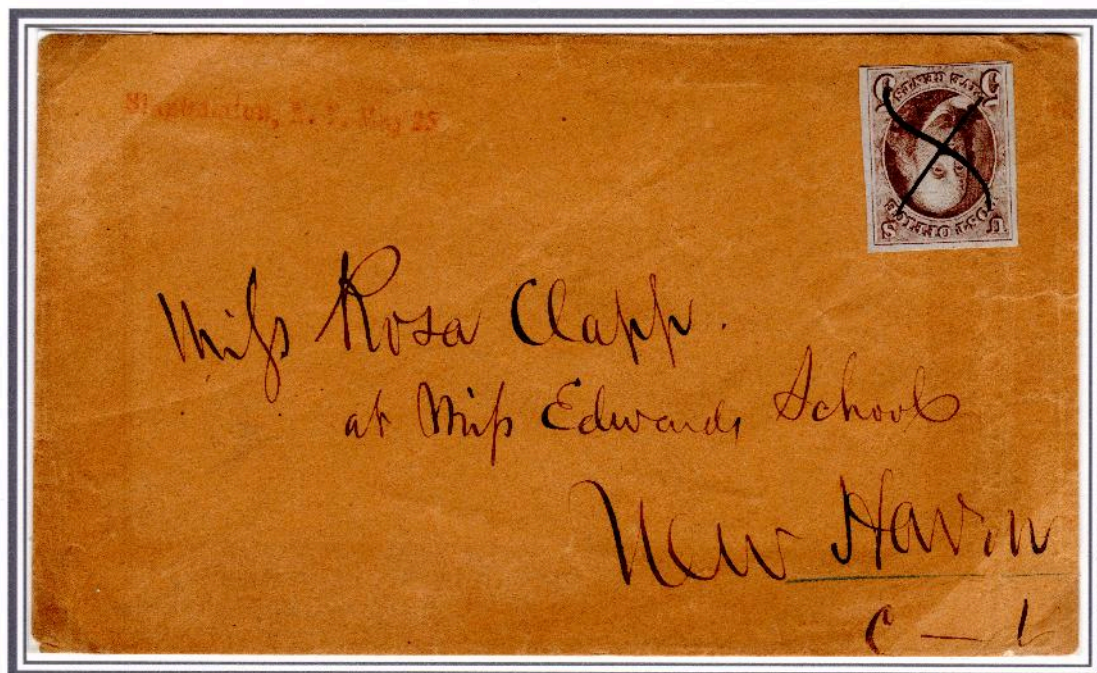


Woodstock CT black straight-line town postmark and crossed bars.



June 1849 folded letter from Watertown to Albany NY.

Blue straight-line town postmark and two strikes of a blue '5' cancel stamp. Manuscript 'A' also cancels stamp. Only recorded use of straight-line Watertown postmark on 1847 cover.



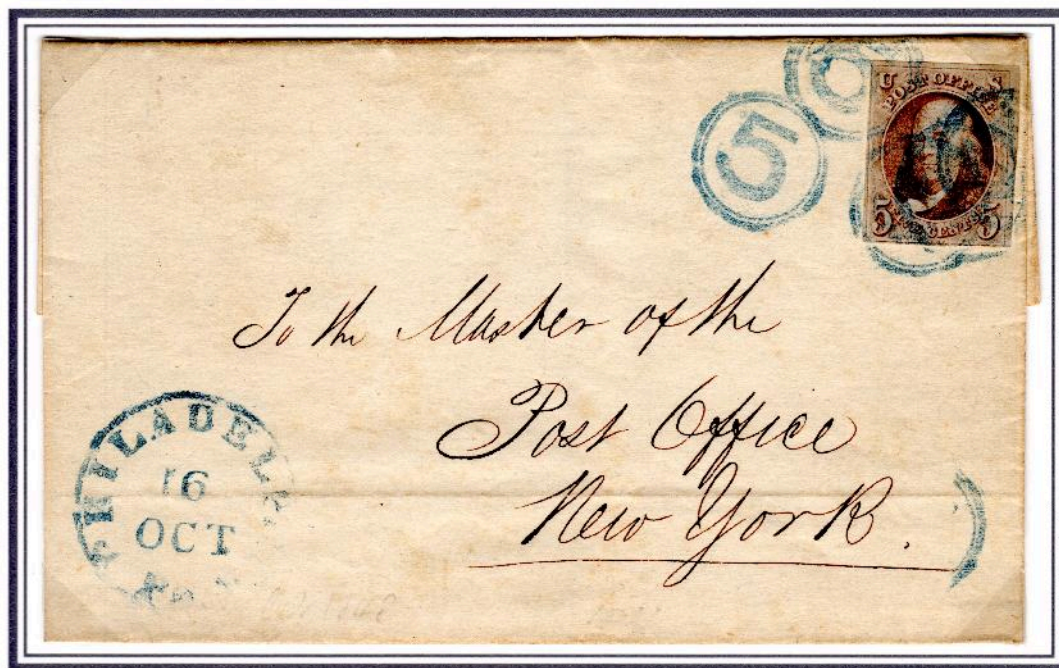
Binghamton NY to New Haven CT.

Red straight-line postmark from Binghamton. Only recorded use of straight-line Binghamton postmark on 1847 cover.

Binghamton, N. Y. May 25

2X

Rate markings were intended for use with stampless mail, either prepaid or unpaid. However, on occasion postmasters used these markings to cancel stamps.



October 1848 folded address sheet from Philadelphia to New York City.
Four strikes of blue '5' in double circle cancel stamp.



April 1849 folded letter from Philadelphia PA to Albion IL.
Two strikes of blue '10' in double circle cancel stamp.

Stamp canceled with red numeral '6' in circle.

This rate marking was used for unpaid incoming ship mail delivered to New York City and is unusual used to cancel an 1847 stamp.

Cover from New York City to Albany NY.



Two blue 'V's in double circles cancel stamp. Blue Utica NY fancy oval town postmark.

Folded address sheet from Utica to New York City.

Stamp canceled by two red '10's. Blue town postmark.

May 1850 folded letter from Baltimore MD to Philadelphia PA.



December 1848 folded letter from Southport WI to Westport CT. Although the Wisconsin Territory postmark was used, this letter was sent after statehood. '10' in octagon cancels stamp. Black 'PAID'.

Only recorded Southport cover used with issue of 1847.



Folded letter from Princeton Springfield NJ. Green numeric five in frame cancels stamp. Green postmark.

Turned cover

September 1849 stampless folded letter from Bath to Elmira NY where it was answered on the original letter, refolded, a stamp applied, and sent back to Bath. 5 cent stamp canceled with two strikes of red '5'.



Scan of above letter opened to show both the original and return fronts.





Blue '1' in octagon
Philadelphia PA



Blue '2' in circle
Philadelphia PA



Blue '5' in circle
Baltimore MD



Fancy blue '5'



Green '5' in box
Princeton NJ



Red '5'



Double strike red '5'



Black '5' in box
Alexandria VA



Red '5' in cogged
circle Chicago IL



Four strikes of
fancy green '5'



Blue fancy '5'



Blue '6' in octagon
Philadelphia PA



Black '7'



Blue '10'



Red '10' in circle



Roman numeral 'X'



Two red 'X's



Two blue '10's



Blue '12'



Red '19'



Red '20' in circle



Red '24' in circle



Red '40' in circle

Chicago IL



September 1847 folded letter
from Chicago to Joliet IL.

Red '5' in oval cogwheel and grid
cancels right margin stamp.

October 1847 folded letter
from Chicago IL to Buffalo NY.

Red '10' in oval cogwheel
marking. Harelip variety of 10
cent stamp.



Peoria IL



Cover from Peoria IL to
Albany NY. Slightly reduced
at right.

Red '10' in oval cogwheel
marking.

Orange brown stamps.

Only recorded 1847 cover
from Peoria IL which received
no 1847 issue stamps.

The 'PAID' markings were used on stampless letters to indicate that the required postage, if any, had been paid. Letters with stamps did not require a 'PAID' marking since the stamp was proof of payment. Some postmasters would mark the letter as 'PAID' and sometimes use the marking to cancel or kill the stamp. 'FREE' markings were used to indicate that no postage was required and are rarely found on stamped mail.



Fancy blue scroll 'PAID' cancel from Rome NY



Blue Philadelphia
'PAID' in oval



Red crisscrossed
'PAID' with octagon



Red 'FREE' cancels on piece



Two strikes
blue 'PAID'



Two strikes
black 'PAID'



New York City red arced
'PAID' on piece



November 1847 folded
letter from Baltimore to
Annapolis MD.



Three strikes of red 'PAID'
in arc used to cancel stamp.

April 1850 folded address
sheet from New York City
to Baltimore MD.



January 1850
folded letter sheet
from Boston MA to
New York City.



November 1848 folded letter from Hartford CT to New York City.
Large '5' rate marking.



March 1849 cover from Hartford CT to Cleveland OH.

Postmasters used a number of colors of ink to cancel stamps. Excluding pen cancellations, about three-fourths of all letters were canceled in red because this color proved to be distinct on both the 5 and 10 cent stamps. Of the remaining, about fifteen percent of the cancels are blue and eight percent black.

While significantly less common, orange, magenta, ultramarine, green and violet were also used.



New York City red square grid.

Cover from New York City to Massey Crossroads MD.

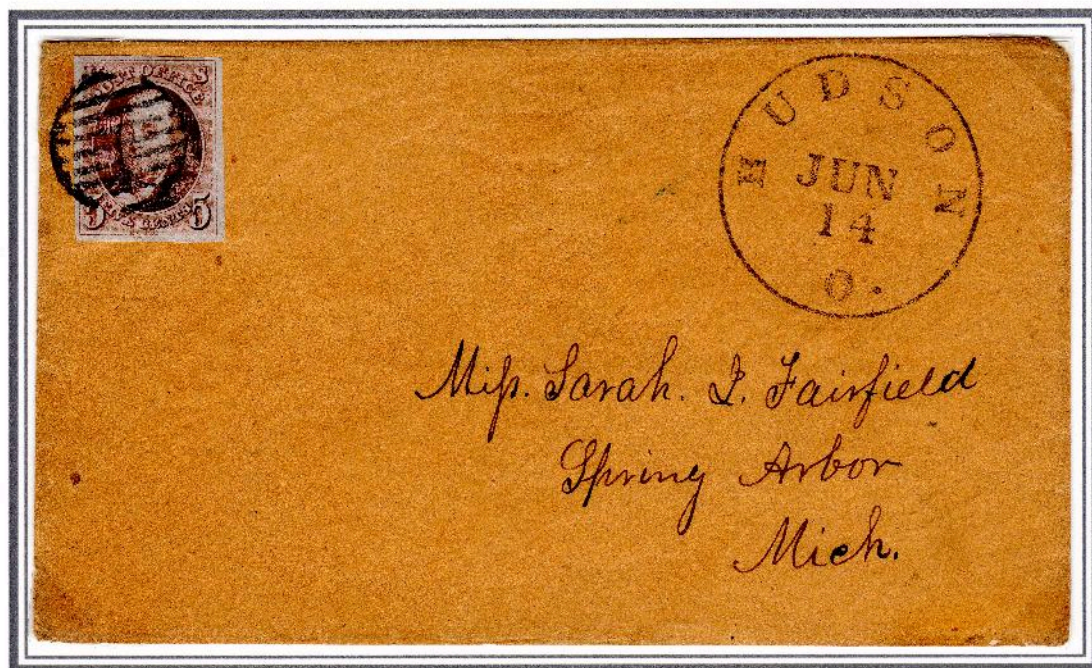
Embossed envelope sent in February to a single woman. Perhaps containing a valentine.

Red Paint

April 1850 folded letter from New Orleans LA to Philadelphia PA.

The letter was carried by steamboat on Star Route 5612 to Mobile AL where it was canceled with the Mobile red paint grid and sent to Philadelphia.





Cover from Hudson OH to Spring Arbor MI.



September 1850 folded letter from Louisville KY to Philadelphia PA.



December 1847 folded address sheet from Baltimore MD to Philadelphia PA.



July 1848 folded letter from Geneva NY to Boston MA



Cover from Newark NJ to New York City.
Orange Newark integral rate town postmark.



May 1848 folded letter from Mobile AL. 10 cent stamp paid postage to Boston. Orange town postmark. Orange grid cancels the stamp. The Caledonia sailed from Boston on 31 May, arriving in Liverpool on 14 June where the 1 shilling handstamp due marking was applied. The letter then traveled to Manchester, arriving on the 14th of June. Liverpool and Manchester datestamps on the back.

Ultramarine and Violet



August 1850 cover
from Newport to
Kingston RI.

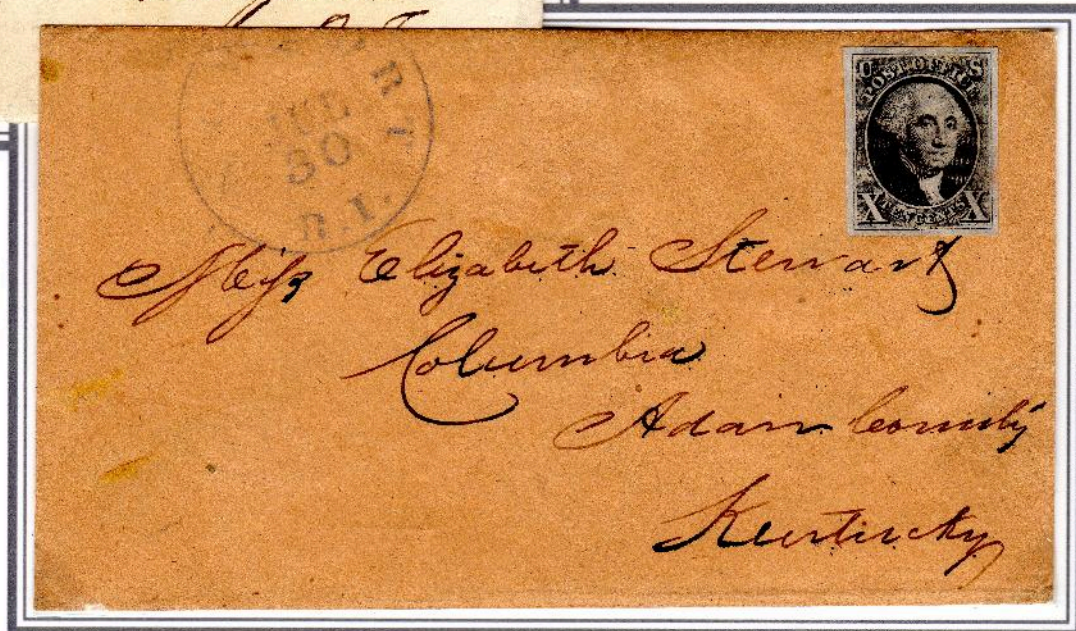
Ultramarine grid
and town postmark
canceling stamp.



Ultramarine grid

Cover from Newport
RI to Columbia KY.

Ultramarine grid
and town postmark.



Folded address sheet
from Windsor to
Woodstock VT.

Two violet crossed
'PAID's cancel stamp.

Violet town postmark.

New Years Day 1851 folded
letter from Tallahassee FL to
New York City.
Stamp position 96L.



November 1849 folded
letter from Bridgeport to
Hartford CT.

Letter datelined
Housatonic RR office
Bridgeport.

March 1851 folded letter from
Oxford to New York Mills NY.
Green six bar grid.



The Post Office Regulations required that, in addition to killing the stamp, all letters needed to be marked with the town name and state as well as the month and day that the letter was processed. This was often accomplished using a postmark and ink pad. Occasionally the postmaster did not use a killer but canceled the stamp with the town postmark.



January 1850 folded letter from Chicago IL to New York City.



Burlington VT to Mulone NY.

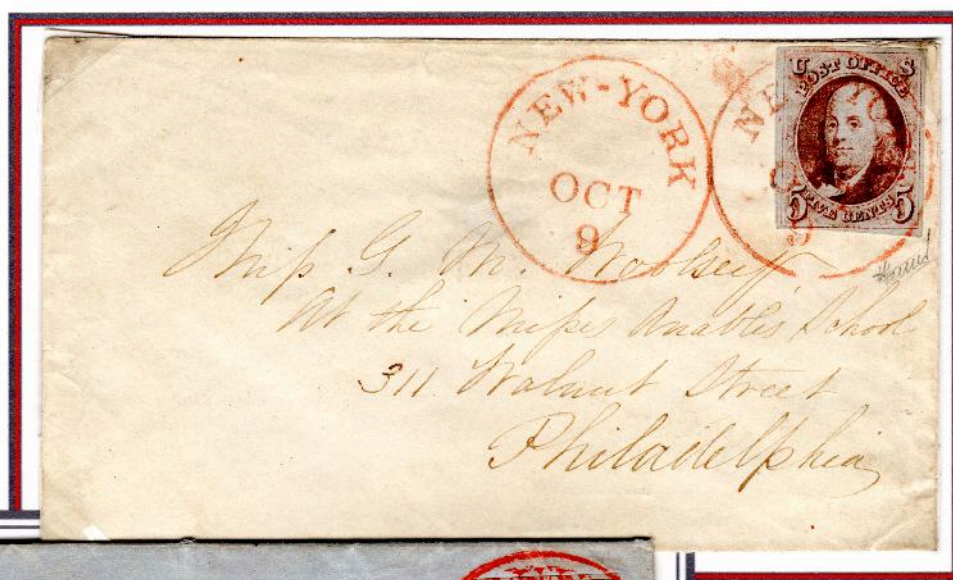


May 1849 cover from Troy to Champlain NY. Orange brown stamp.

Early use of type I
New York Ocean Mail
cancel before it was
used exclusively on
the Panama route to
California.

October 1850 cover
from New York City to
Philadelphia PA.

Unusual for New York
City to cancel a stamp
with the town postmark.

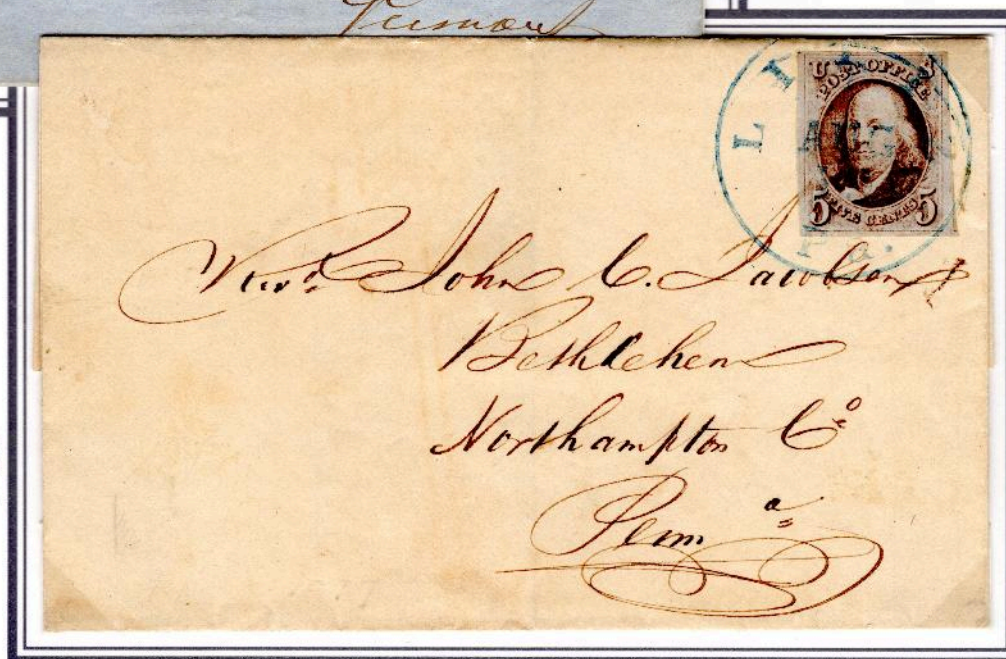


June 1849 folded letter
from East Bennington to
Manchester VT.

Grayish brown stamp.

In July 1849 East
Bennington became the
2nd Bennington post office
and 'East' was removed
from the town postmark.

Folded address
sheet from Litiz to
Bethlehem PA.



May 1848 folded letter from
Albany NY to Pontiac MI.
Stamp is dark brown.



Rochester to Clifton Springs NY.
Orange red town postmark
cancels stamp.

Manuscript 'No. 24' applied by
sender to number the letters and
alert recipient if one was lost.

Cover from Pheonixville to
Downingtown PA.
Stamps is 'Dot in S' variety.





The Wheeling VA postmaster used a circular seven bar grid to 'mark' each stamp by applying the grid in the center of each block of four stamps before the stamps were separated with scissors. Since the stamps were also killed or canceled, it does not appear that this was a precancel although there has been much debate about the purpose of the marking.

The control mark was in use for about six months beginning in September of 1847. During this period, no other town is known to have used a control mark in this manner. It is not known why this was done, perhaps to prevent theft.



Single stamps can be identified as Wheeling control markings from the shade of red and the uniform placement of the grid.



September 1847 letter from Wheeling VA to Philadelphia PA.

One of about seven recorded covers with this control marking - four 10 cent and three 5 cent.

Earliest recorded use of the Wheeling control marking.

During this period fancy cancels were unusual. The regulations were clear on how to cancel stamps.

Quoting from the Regulations for the Government of the Post Office Department:

"Stamps so affixed are to be immediately canceled with an instrument furnished to certain of the post offices

In post offices not so furnished, the stamps **must** be canceled by making a cross 'X' on each with a pen."

Most postmasters did not get the official device used pen and ink followed the rules. A few postmasters strayed from the regulations, using non-standard canceling devices and rate markings. Most of these devices were variations on the round grid but some were both creative and attractive. In some cases pre-adhesive rate markings were used.



Huntsville AL negative '10' in circle of stars pre-adhesive period marking.



Trenton NJ
Hollow blue star



Blue circle of rays



Ottawa IL
Blue waffle

'Whittled cork' cancels were uncommon during this period and did not find common use until the mid 1850's. It is speculated that as the Post Office department stopped providing the 7-bar grid canceling instrument, devices crafted by postmasters became more common.



Two strikes of
quartered cork



Quartered cork
with three dots in circle



The red scarab from St. Johnsbury VT is typically a very light strike and generally is completely contained on the stamp. Few strikes are recorded tying the stamp to the cover; unfortunately the postmaster of St. Johnsbury was usually careful in his work.



April 1849 folded letter from St. Johnsbury VT to Franklin NH.



April 1849 folded letter from St. Johnsbury VT to Rochester NY.
Strong strike for scarab.



All recorded colors shown

Blue

Green

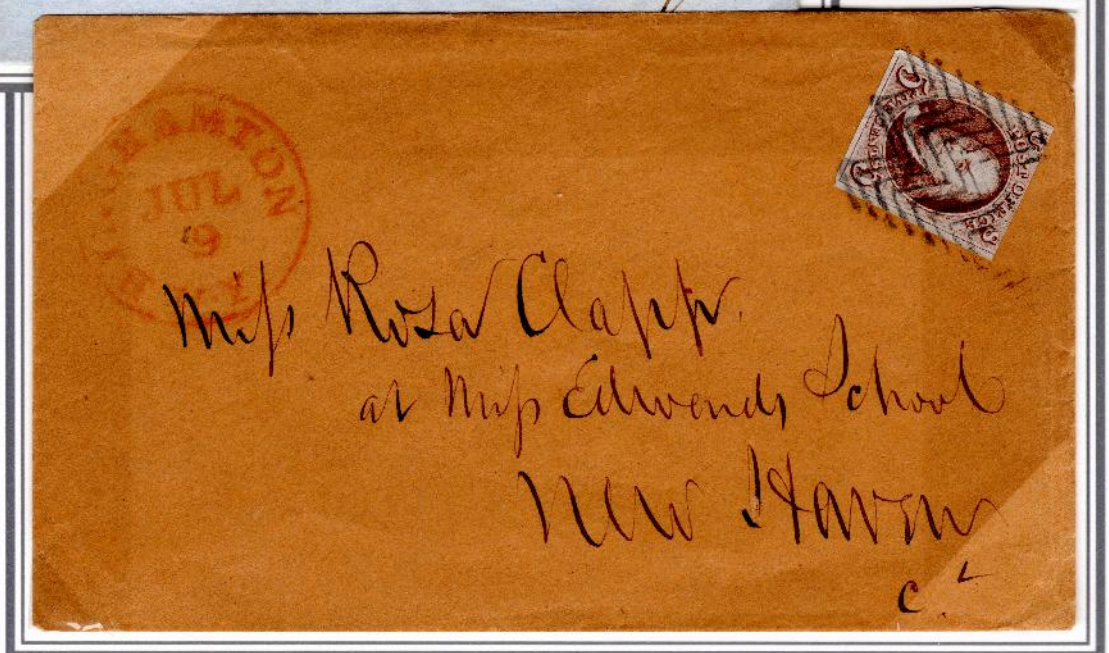


Red



Addressed to a future
President of the US in
Albany NY.

Black





November 1850 folded address sheet from Greenwich NY to New York City.

One of five recorded examples of this cancel.

October 1849 folded address sheet from Hanover NH to New Haven CT. Stamp is brown shade.

The letter is addressed to T. D. Woolsey, President of Yale from 1848 to 1865.

One of three recorded examples of this cancel.



Louisville KY to New York City.

Only recorded cover with this cancel.



Dots and Diamonds



Very early and strong strike of the green grid of dots cancel clearly showing the dots.

5 cent covers are less common than 10 cent covers from Tallahassee.

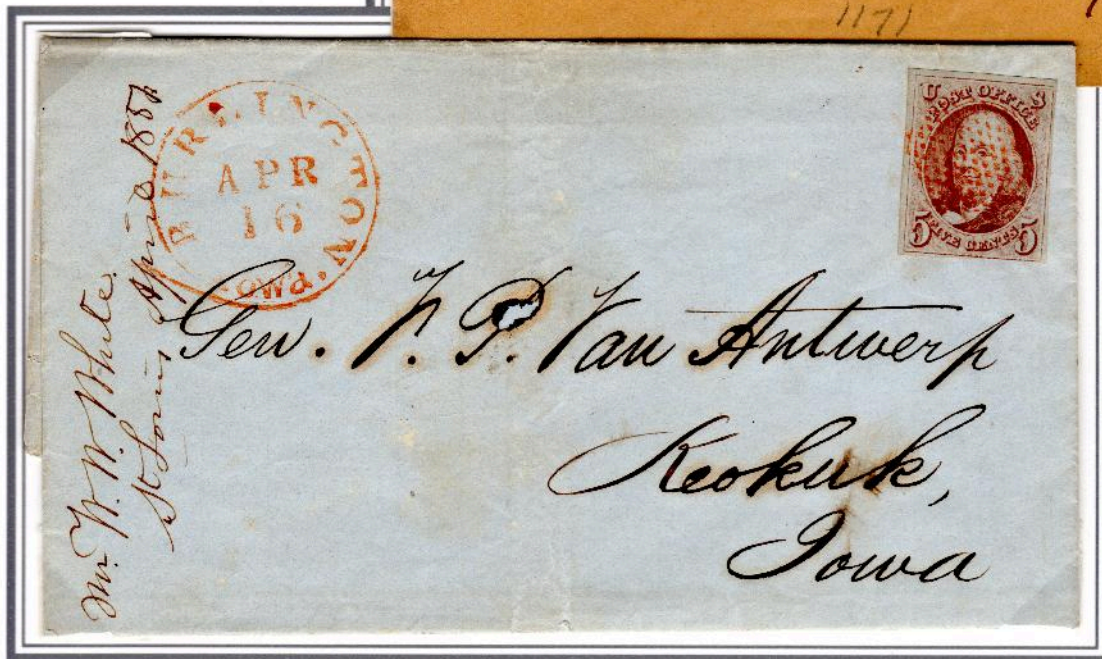
September 1848 folded address sheet from Tallahassee FL to New York City.

Red grid of diamonds.



February 1848 cover from East Hampton to Conway MA.

Less than ten 1847 issue covers recorded from East Hampton which received no 1847 issue stamps.



Red grid of diamonds.

April 1851 folded letter from Burlington IA to Keokuk IA.

One of four recorded 5 cent stamps used from Burlington.

Rate markings used but not required



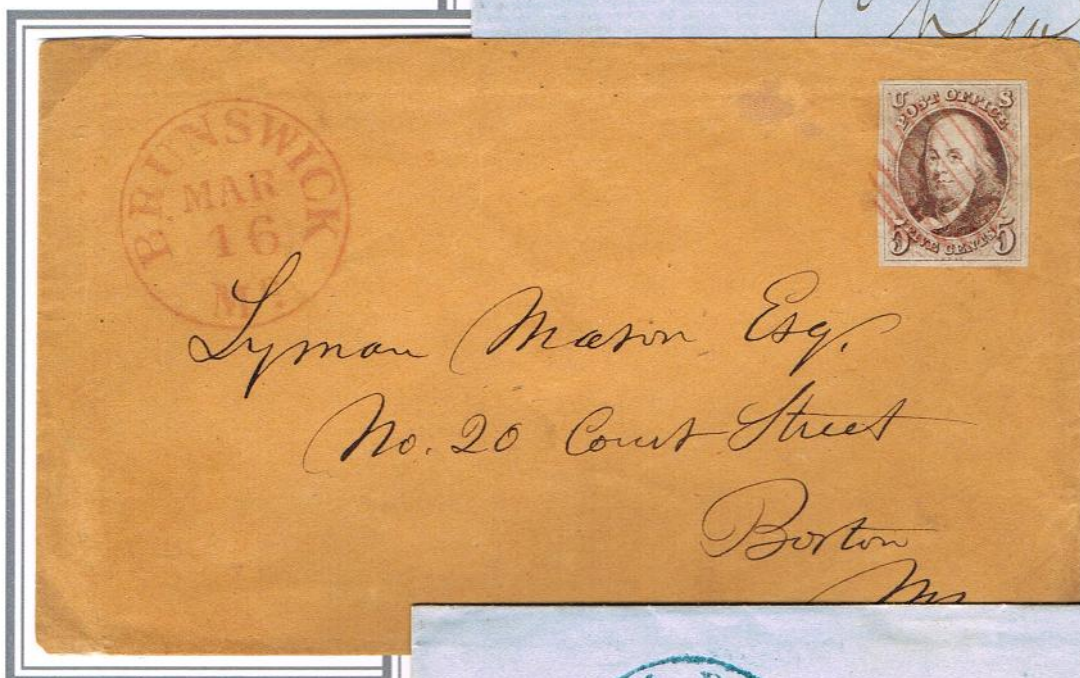
Cover from Middletown CT to Carthage NY. Blue grid of diamonds.



New Years Day 1848 folded letter sheet from Middletown CT to Philadelphia PA. Blue grid of diamonds.

Eight bar rimless grid
with three crisscross
strikes on a dark russet
stamp.

December 1850 folded
letter from Taunton to
New Bedford MA.



Eleven bar rimless grid.
Cover from Brunswick
ME to Boston MA.
Brunswick received no
1847 stamps.

Two strikes of blue
thirteen bar open grid
cancel the stamp.
June 1851 folded letter
from Minden to New
Orleans LA.

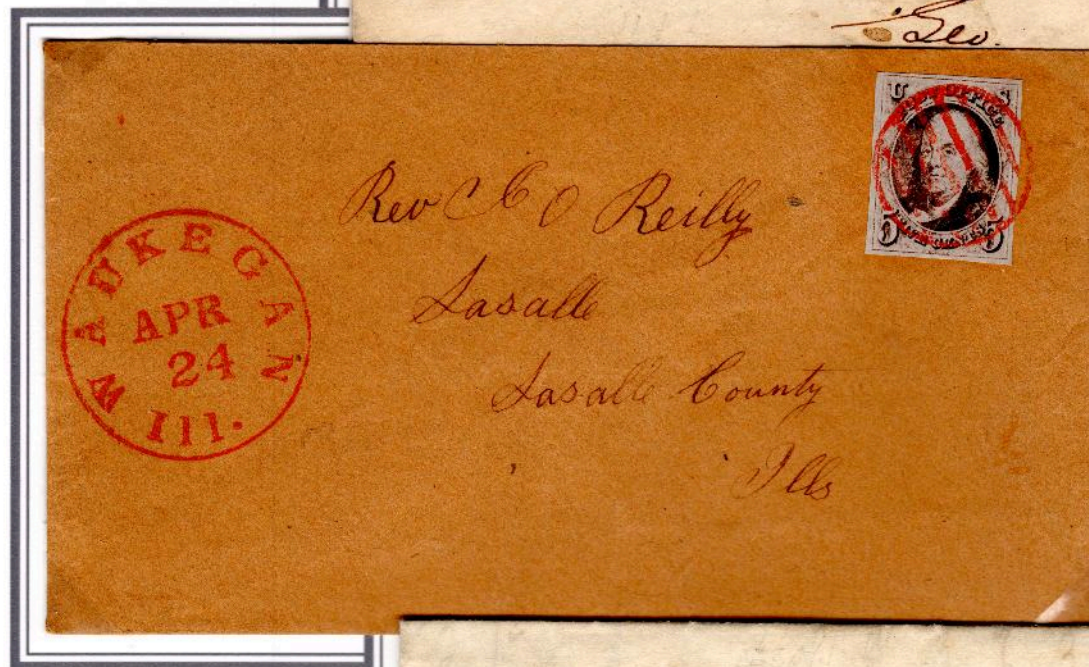
One of three covers
recorded from Minden
and the only one with this
grid cancel.



Blue nine bar rimless grid.

December 1847 folded
letter from Sparta to
Warrenton GA.

Only recorded 1847 issue
cover from Sparta.



Red six bar grid.

Cover from Waukegan to La
Salle IL.

One of three recorded 5 cent
1847 covers from Waukegan.

Red unframed nine bar
grid struck twice to create
crisscross canceling right
margin 10 cent stamp.

February 1848 folded letter
from West Stockbridge MA
to Ravenna OH.

One of two recorded 10
cent 1847 covers from West
Stockbridge.





Stamp canceled by 16 bar rimless grid.

Cover from Hallowell ME to Providence RI.



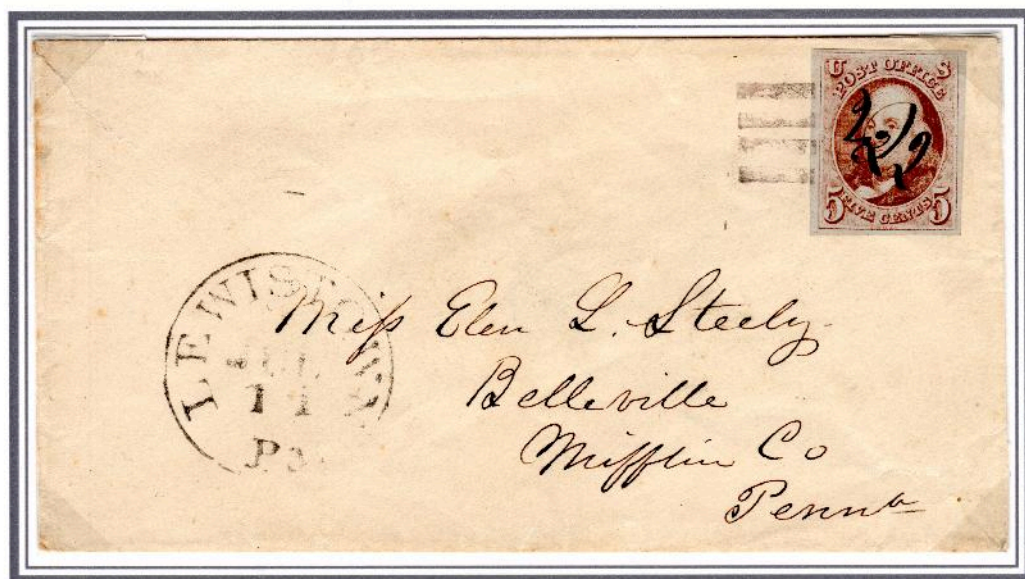
Walnut brown stamp canceled with eight bar square grid.

August 1848 folded letter from Maysville KY to Cincinnati OH.

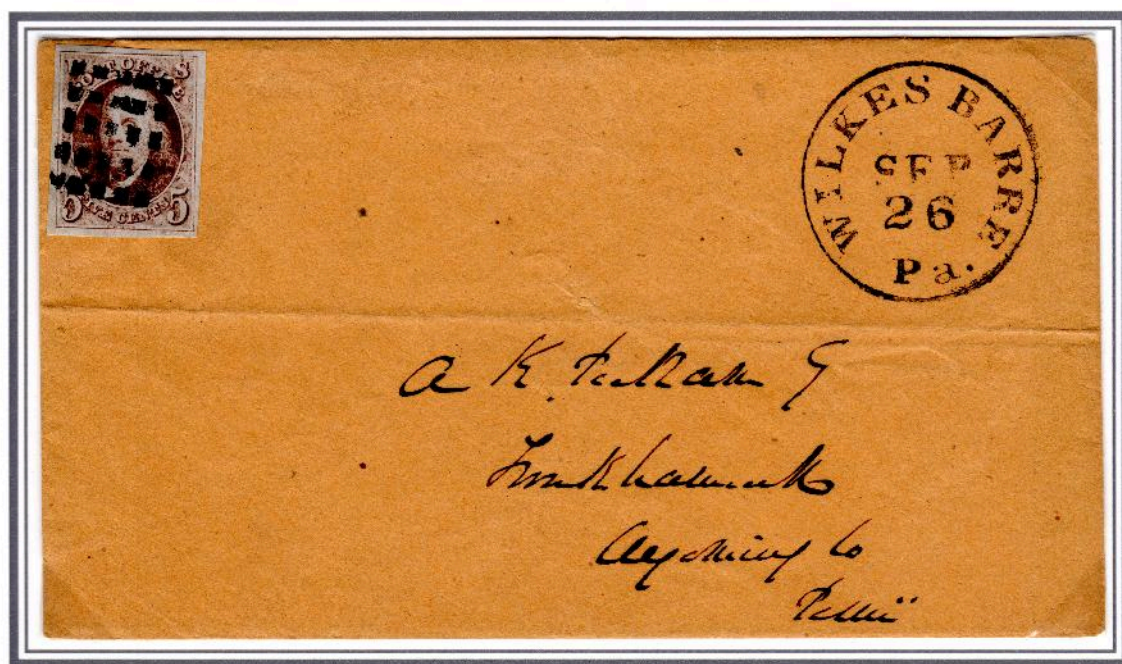


Red eleven bar rimless grid struck twice to create a crisscross grid.

March 1848 folded letter from Brunswick ME to Boston MA.



Four bar grid and elaborate pen cancel. Cover from Lewistown to Belleville PA.



Black rectangular grid of 25 small squares cancel the stamp. Cover from Wilkes Barre to Tunkhannock PA.
One of two recorded 1847 issue covers with this grid of squares cancel.



e

Three bar blue grid.

Black five bar grid
Housatonic R.R.

e

Two strikes of rim-less
red six bar grid.Five bar segmented
blue grid.Six bar blue rim-less
rectangular grid.

e

Red grid of squares.



e

Blue grid of small
squares.
Orange brown.Rim-less blue seven
bar grid.

e

Seven bar grid with
bars not reaching rim.

Eight bar red grid.



e

Eleven bar blue
rim-less grid.

e

12 bar blue rectangular
rim-less grid.13 bar grid
Brattleboro VT.17 bar grid
Hudson River Mail
Type A double transfer.

Section Three - Domestic Uses, Practices and Markings



This section shows rates, auxiliary markings and practices of the post office. The earliest known use of the 5 cent stamp is shown, as well as single, double, triple, quadruple and west coast rates. Bisected uses, overpaid drop letters, printed matter and propaganda covers are included. Auxiliary markings and uses are shown including registered, forwarded and hotel markings.

Earliest Recorded Use of the 5 Cent Stamp

The issue of 1847 was delivered to the Post Office Department Washington City in late June 1847 by Rawdon, Wright, Hatch & Edson. The stamps were put on sale on Thursday 1 July in New York City followed by Boston on 2 July, Philadelphia 7 July and Washington 9 July.

By the end of July less than ten post offices had the 5 and 10 cent stamps.



7 July 1847 folded letter mailed in New York City to Poultney VT. Letter date-lined 'New York July 6th 1847'.
'Slipped' printing on left '5'.

Not to exceed one half ounce

5 cents up to 300 miles, 10 cents over 300 miles



Portion of folded address sheet from Chicago to Oregon City IL.
Under 300 miles and under one half ounce (single rate).



November 1850 cover from Apalachicola FL to North Fairhaven MA. Stamp postion 64R.
Although Florida had been a state since 1845, the postmaster continued to use the territorial
town postmark. This letter is #10 in the series of letters from R. N. Swift to his wife.

Not to exceed one half ounce

10 cents over 300 miles



October 1849 folded letter from Chicago IL to Buffalo NY.
Vertical pair of 5 cent stamps paying the over 300 mile rate.



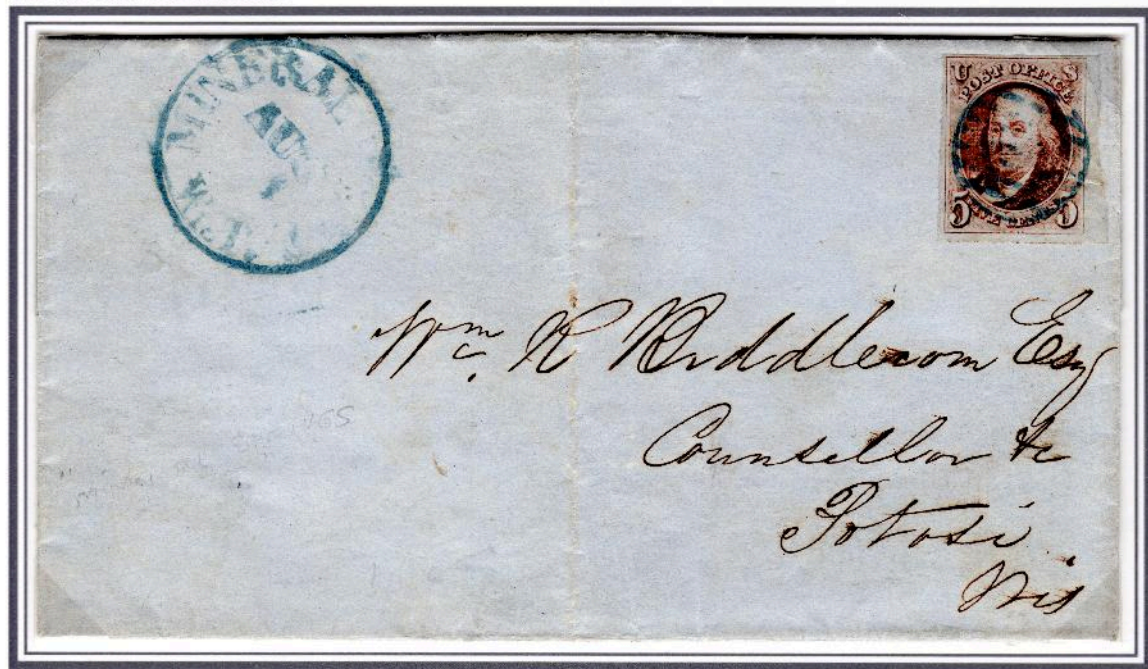
March 1851 cover from Olive Grove GA to North Fairhaven MA. Manuscript town postmark .
The 'No 32' represents the 32nd letter written as Mrs. Swift's husband traveled in the south. Numbering letters was common practice during the period to allow the recipient to detect lost letters.

Used during territorial period



January 1848 folded letter from Mineral Point WI to Galena IL. This letter was sent before the statehood date of May 29, 1848.

Used after statehood



August 1850 folded letter from Mineral Point to Potosi WI. Town postmark 'W.T.' but this letter mailed after statehood.

Between one half and one ounce

10 cents up to 300 miles, 20 cents over 300 miles



August 1849 double rate folded letter from Boston MA to Collinsville CT. Manuscript 'under 1 oz paid'. Addressed to Collins & Co. the largest axe manufacturer in the nineteenth century.

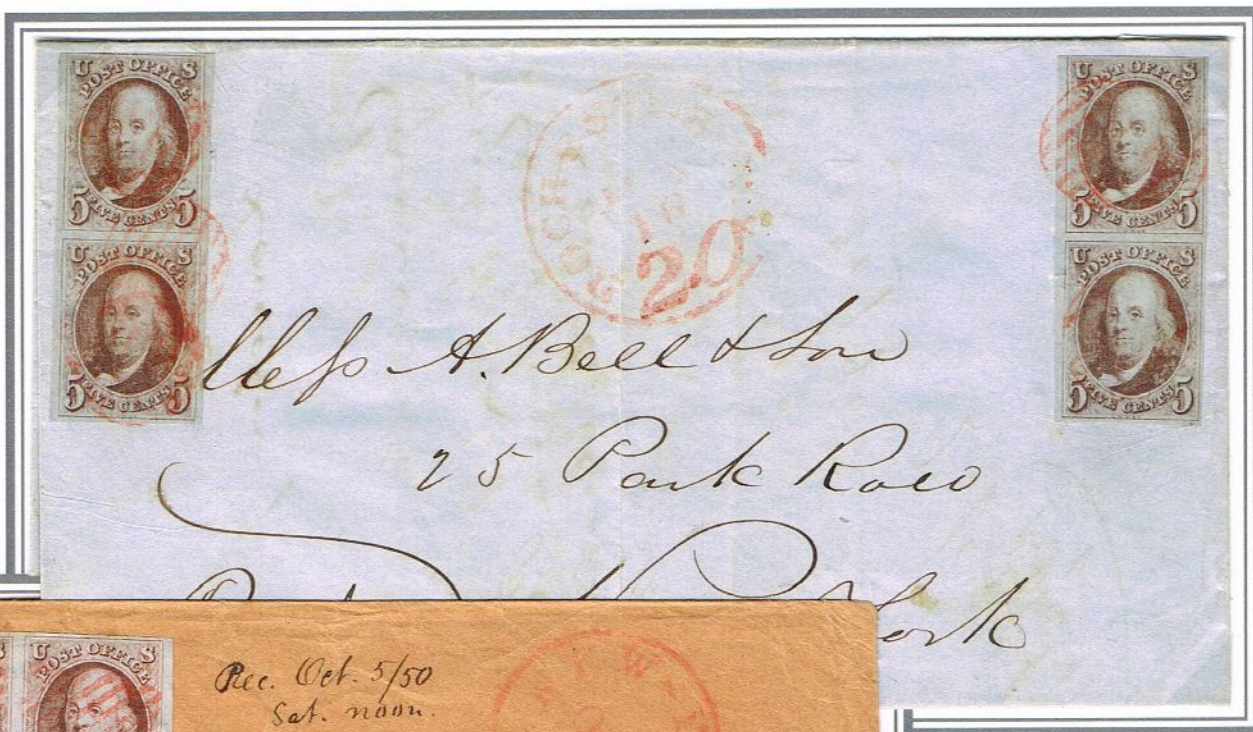


Double rate September 1849 folded letter from Montgomery AL to New Orleans LA. Positions 95, 96L. Traveling along the Great Southern Mail Route the letter went by stage and steamboat from Montgomery to Mobile on Star Route 5581 and then to New Orleans by steamboat on Star Route 5612.

Between one half and one ounce

20 cents over 300 miles

June 1851 folded
letter from
Rochester to New
York City NY.
The bottom stamp
in both pairs with
stitch watermarks.



October 1850 cover
from New York City to
Lockport NY.

e

October 1849 folded
letter from New
York to Oregon IL.



The postmasters in Boston and Enfield identified the underpayment and indicated that ten cents was due. The partial payment of ten cents was accepted. This was normal treatment of a stamp inadequately paying all the postage due.



November 1847 letter from Boston MA to Philadelphia PA. The Boston postmaster added the large '20' in circle and the manuscript 'unpaid 10' indicating that ten cents was to be collected from the addressee.

One of three recorded examples of the large '20' in circle from Boston.

Postmarked 29 February '48 a leap year



February 1848 folded letter from Enfield MA to Philadelphia PA. Postmaster indicated underpayment and that ten cents to be collected and 20 cents was the total postage. The year, 1848, was the only leap year when the issue of 1847 was valid to pay postage.

Between one and one and a half ounce

15 cents up to 300 miles

The triple rate was in effect from 1 July 1847 until 3 March 1849.



August 1847 folded letter from Baltimore MD to Philadelphia PA.
Seal brown stamps. Blue seven bar grid cancels stamps.



Cover from New York City to Alexandria VA. Vertical strip of three 5 cent stamps.
One of two 5 cent vertical strips of three on cover. Only recorded domestic use of a vertical strip of three.



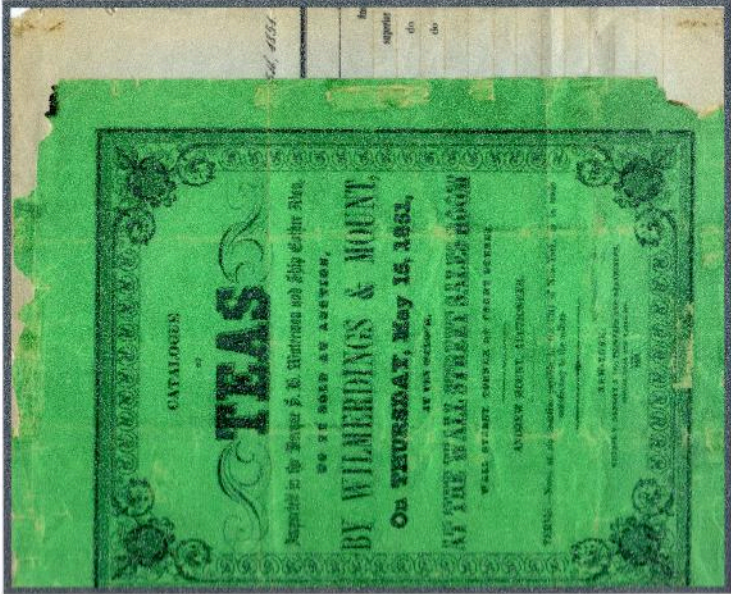
August 1849 folded address sheet from New Haven CT to New York City.
Lower right corner margin positions 90 and 100R. The lower stamp has a strongly recut top frame line.



This pamphlet is a printed auction catalog for teas conducted by *Wilmerdings & Mount, On Thursday, May 15, 1851*. The catalog measures 9.8" by 8.1" and weighs 1.56 ounces. For mailing, the catalog was rolled into a tube shape measuring a little over 1.5" in diameter and was secured with three spots of sealing wax. Remnants of the sealing wax are clearly evident on the address side of the catalog to the left. Though open at the end, it was difficult to inspect and see the prices that had been filled in.

The catalog to the left went through the mail for only 5 cents. Had it gone at the letter rate, the postage would have been 20 cents and there would have been markings indicating postage due of 15 cents, which there are not. Therefore this was not treated, by the post office, as a letter rate. The other option is the catalog went through the mails as printed matter. In this case, the postage was 2 1/2 cents for the first ounce and 1 cent additional for the portion of the second ounce, for a total of 3 1/2 cents. The 5 cent stamp was used and was an overpayment of 1 1/2 cents.

Several examples of printed circulars, all under a half ounce, and bearing a 5¢ stamp, exist. While these are in fact circulars, they were posted at, and went through the mails at, the simple letter rate and not as a printed matter rate.



50% actual size

The image above shows where sealing wax was applied to seal the "roll" for mailing.

May 1851 catalog from New York City New York to Newport RI. Traveled from New York City on the Express Mail train from New York to Boston.

During the 1847 period postage paid for delivery from one post office to another. When sending a letter addressed to the same post office as it was deposited at, the rate was 2 cents.

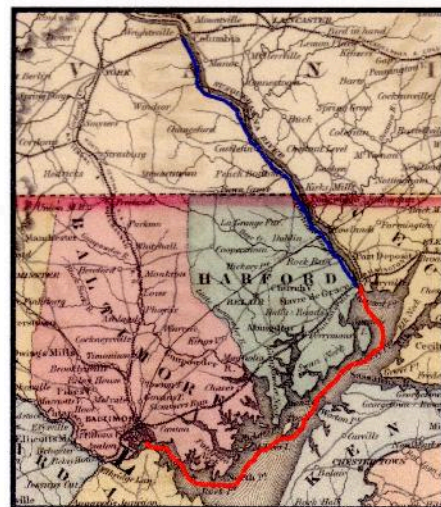
This was called the 'drop rate' as the letter was mailed at the final destination post office.



November 1849 Baltimore drop letter. Stamp canceled with oval '2' handstamp normally used for drop mail.

The letter is date-lined Wrightsville PA a small town north of Baltimore along the Susquehanna River. Wrightsville is the northern terminus of the Susquehanna and Tidewater Canal. This canal helped move coal from the interior of Pennsylvania to eastern markets. The letter discusses two loads of coal being delivered. The coal would be transported down the canal and then by barge to Baltimore. The writer asks for \$100 to be sent for payment by "tomorrow or by Thursday."

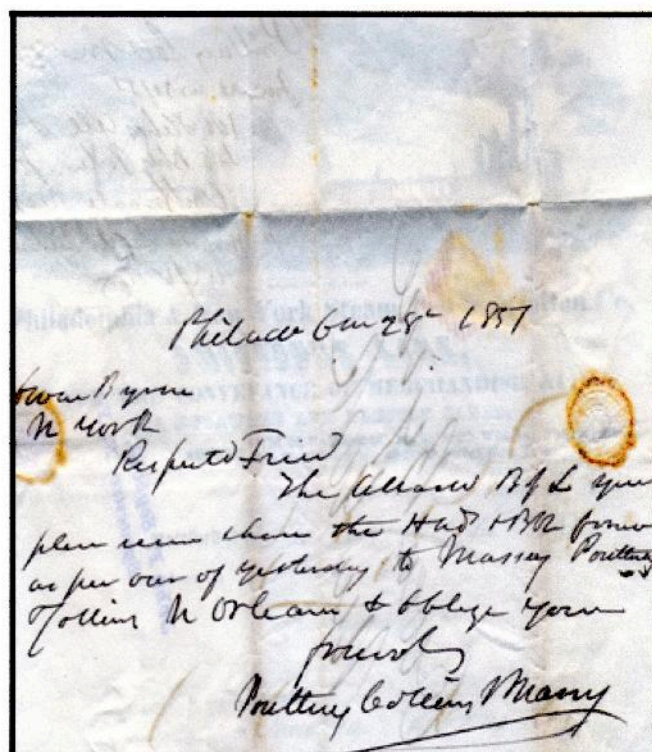
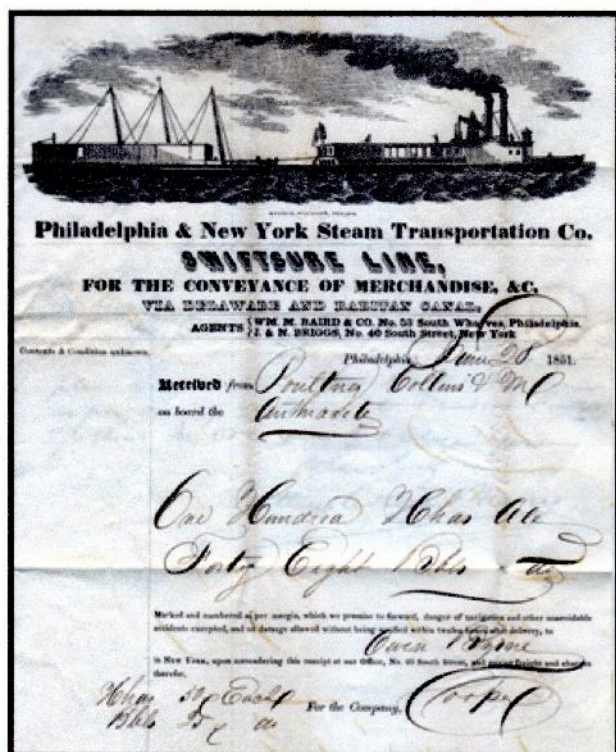
This letter was most likely carried on a barge privately to Baltimore where it entered the mail at the Baltimore Post Office as a drop letter. Wrightsville was George Washington's original choice for the Capital of the United States. On the map to the right, the canal is shown in blue and the barge route to Baltimore in red.





28 June 1851 folded letter written in Philadelphia and addressed to NYC. Carried outside the mail from Philadelphia on a barge, along the Delaware and Raritan Canal, with a load of ale and porter (dark beer) headed to New Orleans.

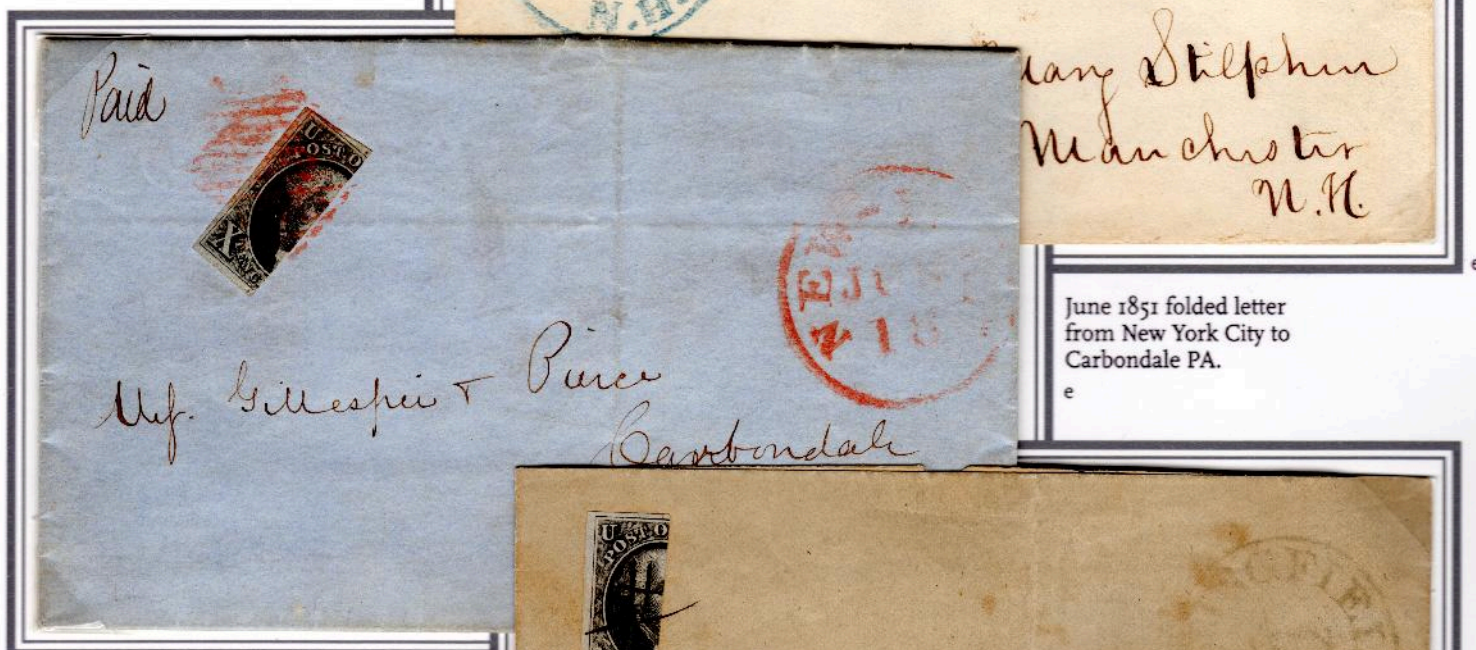
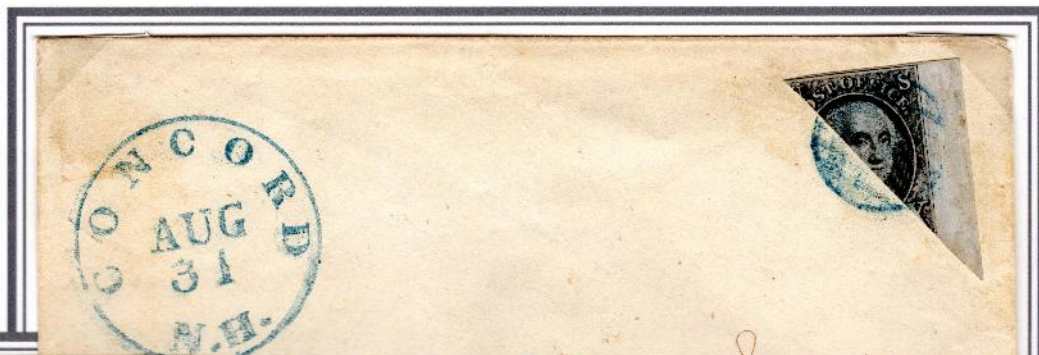
It was posted in New York City, probably on 30 June 1851, with the 10 cent bisect overpaying the drop rate. The short note is date-lined 28 June in Philadelphia.



42% actual size

The Post Office Department never authorized the use of bisected stamps for postage. Some postmasters accepted this practice while others did not. The postmaster of New York actually advertised that he would accept half a 5 cent stamp for picking up a newspaper that was not prepaid. No five cent bisects are recorded.

August 1850 cover from Concord to Manchester NH. Blue grid cancel and Concord town postmark.



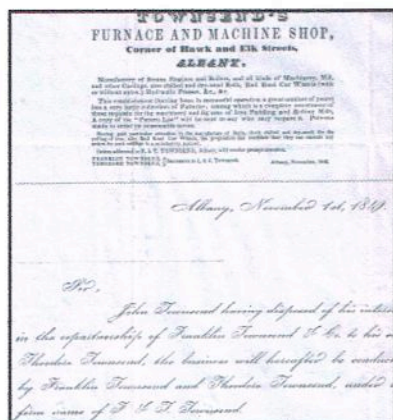
June 1851 folded letter from New York City to Carbondale PA.



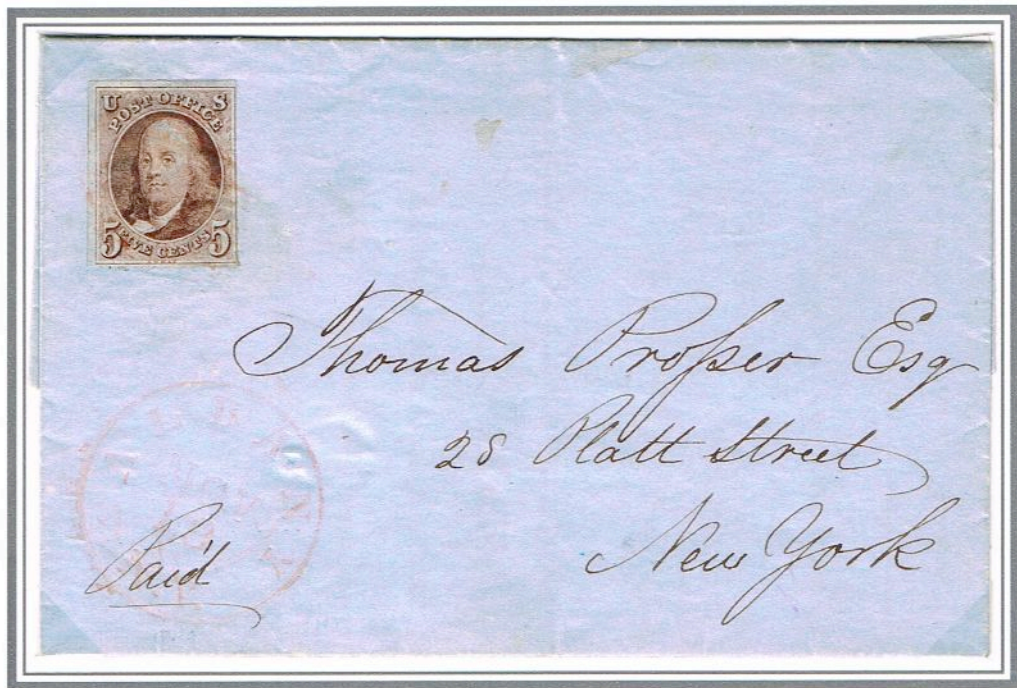
Folded address sheet from Springfield MA to Hartford CT.

August 1850 cover from Portland ME to New Haven CT.

The circular rate was 3 cents for one sheet sent any distance. The circular had to be both prepaid and unsealed. The regulations also stated that letter postage is to be charged on all circulars which contain any manuscript writing.

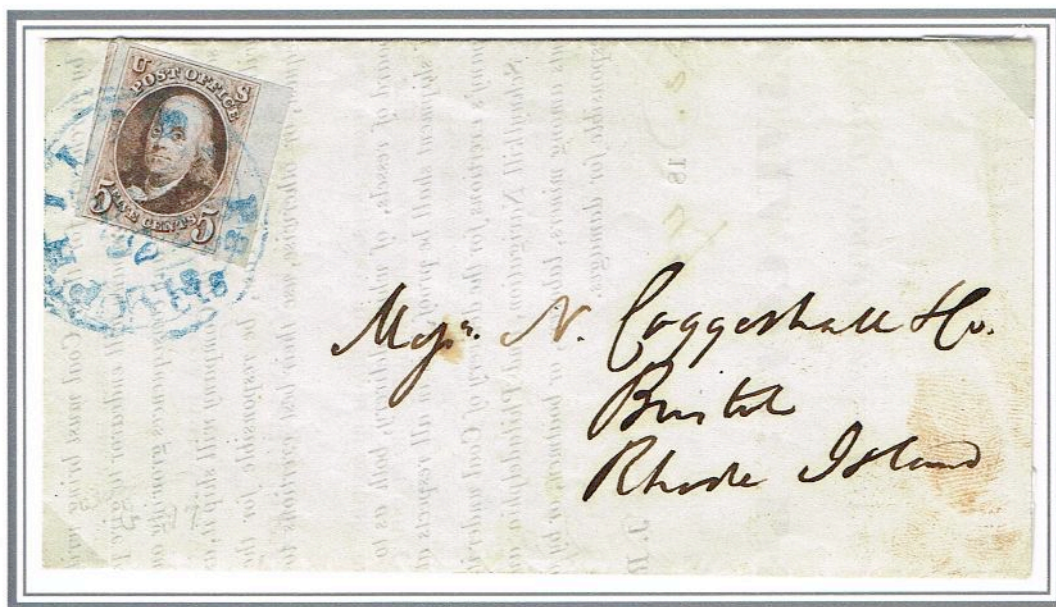


25% actual size

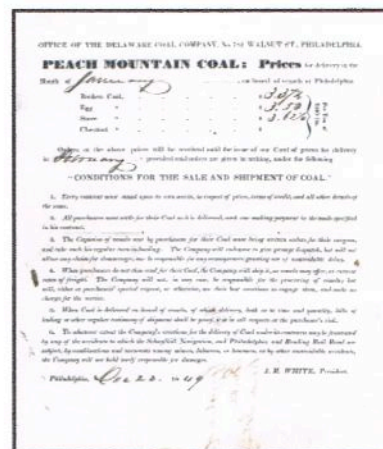


November 1849 unsealed circular from Albany to New York City NY.
Only recorded use of a 5 cent stamp paying the 3 cent circular rate.

This example has pro forma data, in this case the date and prices current filled in, and therefore, following the regulations, even though unsealed, required the sender to pay the letter rate.



December 1849 unsealed circular from Philadelphia PA to Bristol RI.



33% actual size

The postal convention of 1848 with Great Britain provided a 2 cent rate in the US and 2 pence due on delivery for printed matter. Had the circular contained any writing or an enclosed letter the rate would have been 24 cents. Given that fact that the US accepted the 5 cent stamp as payment and 2 pence was requested from the recipient provides solid proof that both post offices handled the circular as printed matter.

The only recorded circular to Europe paid with a 5 cent 1847 stamp.



November 1850 unsealed circular from Charleston SC to Greenock Scotland. The five cent stamp overpaid the 2 cent printed matter rate to Great Britain under the treaty of December 1848. Manuscript '2' applied in Liverpool represents 2 pence due for British circular rate.

The circular was sent from Charleston to New York City where it was carried on the Cunard Line ship Niagara to Liverpool arriving 17 December. It arrived in Greenock 18 December.

COURIER LETTER-SHEET REVIEW OF THE MARKET AND PRICES CURRENT.	
By A. S. Withington & Co. PUBLISHERS OF THE CHARLESTON COURIER.	
CHARLESTON, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 1850.	
Latest dates from Liverpool..... Nov. 8	
Latest dates from HAVRE..... Nov. 7	
Latest dates from LONDON..... Nov. 30	
CHARLESTON MARKET.	
COTTON.—The Cotton market on Friday last, the first day of the week under review, opened under very unfavorable circumstances. The accounts by the steamer Niagara, showing a decline of $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{8}$ in prices on the other side had just reached us, which depressed the market, and we may add brought it to a stand, the sales during the day having been limited to a few hundred bales. Several buyers were in attendance on Saturday, demanding a further concession at least equal to the decline brought over by the steamer, but sellers generally were unwilling to yield to the extent of the demands, and the operations were consequently restricted to about 600 bales; the former, however, had a decided advantage in their purchases, the business of the day showing us its regular decline of $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{8}$ on the prices current at the close of the previous week. The partial selling of bales soon paved the way to a more general reduction, and on Monday near 1700 bales changed hands at a full $\frac{1}{8}$ c. off. The market exhibited no new feature on Tuesday, except a slight increase in the demand for the article, the sales having found up 1200 bales, for prices corresponding with those paid on the preceding day. A good demand prevailed on Wednesday, which was freely met by several of our factors. Prices were further depressed, without, however, exhibiting any unusual change in favor of purchasers. Thursday was this day, and the business was suspended. The trade were partly possessed of the Europe's accounts, at the opening of the market yesterday. It will be seen that our telegraphic services by New York a slight improvement in some quality of Cotton, and we learn that the private dispatches are even more favorable. The market under these circumstances, we think, is well prepared to meet the demand.	
SUGAR.—We have no transactions to report this week. The market is quiet. New-Orleans may be quoted from 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 7c.	
COFFEES.—The only transaction this week was an auction sale from the wharf, of 2000 bags new crop Rio, prices ranging from 11 to 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ c., averaging 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ c.	
MOLASSES.—The transaction this week have been 30 bbls. Cuba, sold to arrive, at prices not transpired. Also a cargo of 100 do., arrived first part of the week, brought about 30c., and 94 bbls. Cuba sold from second hands at 22c.; also about 120 bbls. New-Orleans exchanged hands from 24 to 35c.	
DOMESTIC LIQUORS.—The only sale we have heard of is 50 bbls. Northern Whiskey, at 20c. We quote American Gin 22c.; Rum 21; Whiskey, North—20 a 23.	
STOCKS.—The market continues quiet. We hear of no transactions to report this week.	
EXCHANGE.—We have no change to notice. See table.	
FREIGHTS.—No change having taken place in Freight, we continue last week's quotations, viz: Cotton in square bags to Liverpool 5-15; and to Havre 3-c. The rates continue as the same as previously reported, viz: to N. York 20 cents per 100 lbs. Cotton, and 50 cts. per ton for the Rice; and to Boston 45 cts. for the former and 55c. for the latter.	
Exports of Cotton and Rice. FROM THE 24th NOV., TO THE 29th NOV., 1850.	
	S. I. C. & Co., Rice.
Liverpool.....	3655 118
Bombay.....	412 509
Calcutta.....	296 509
West Indies.....	528
Total Foreign.....	8754 1435
Total Domestic.....	628 635
Boston.....	344
Providence.....	144 458
New York.....	100 510

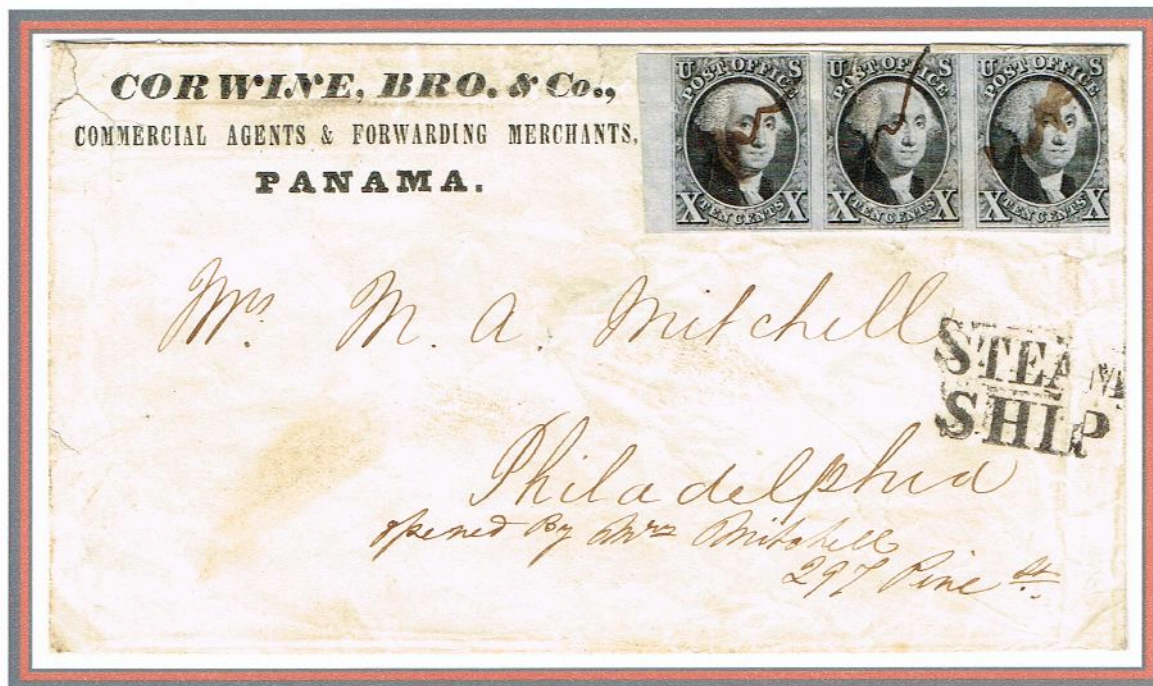
Top portion shown. There is no writing at all within the entire circular.

60% actual size

Not to exceed one half ounce

30 and 40 cents

As of March 3, 1847 the postal rate to or from the Pacific Coast became 40 cents per half ounce. When California was ceded to the U.S. this rate applied to letters to or from California. The 40 cent rate was based on the 10 cent rate over 300 miles and the 30 cent rate via Panama.

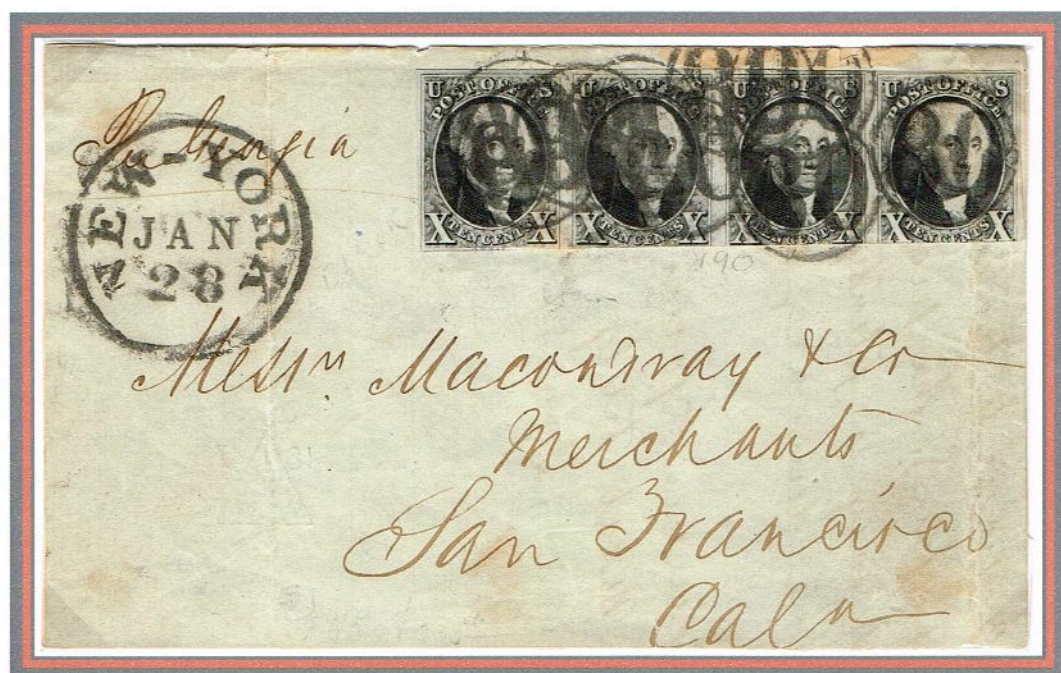


30 cents paying the
Panama from to
Philadelphia.

The stamps were applied
in Panama City by the
Post Office agent stationed
there. The letter crossed
the peninsula and was
placed on a North bound
steam to New York City.
The 'STEAM/SHIP'
marking applied in New
York City.

40 cents paying single rate
from New York to California.
Cover front.

The letter traveled on the
Steamship Georgia leaving New
York City on 28 January 1850,
stopping in Havana and New
Orleans, arriving in Chagres on
18 February. It was then carried
across the Isthmus of Panama
to Panama City where it was
placed on a Pacific steamer to
San Francisco, probably the
California leaving Panama City
on 2 March.



During this period, when a letter required forwarding to locate the addressee, additional postage was paid to cover the cost of forwarding. If the distance forwarded was under 300 miles 5 cents was charged and 10 cents charged for forwarding over 300 miles.

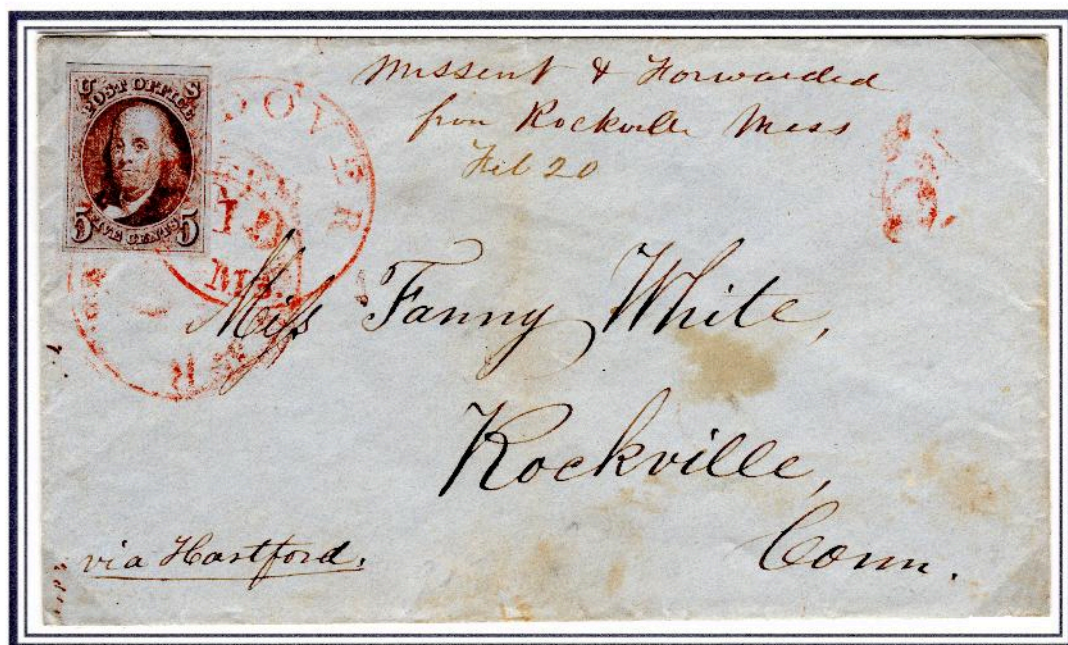


February 1850 folded letter from Buffalo to Albany NY. From Albany the letter was forwarded to Albion NY. The ten cent stamp pays the postage from Buffalo to Albany, a distance over 300 miles and the five cent stamp pays the forwarding postage from Albany to Abbion a distance of under 300 miles. Only recorded use of both the 5 and 10 cent 1847 stamps paying two different letter rates on the same letter.



November 1848 folded letter from Petersburg VA, postmarked Richmond VA to then Controller of New York State, later President Fillmore in New York City. The letter was forwarded from New York City to Albany. Manuscript '5' indicating five cents due for forwarding under 300 miles. Red 'FORWARDED' straight-line handstamp. Red New York City and Richmond postmarks.

If a letter was missent by the post office it was forwarded to the correct address without charging a forwarding fee.



Cover from Andover MA to Rockville CT. Missent to Rockville MA where it was forwarded to the correct address at no cost to the recipient. Manuscript notation 'Missent & Forwarded from Rockville Mass Feb 20'.

Both Andover and Rockville MA town postmarks cancel the stamp.

Quakers did not use names for days of the week or months because they were offended by the naming of months after pagan gods. For example 7th Mo 28th Day in place of 28 July.

Quaker dated covers are known from the beginning of the 1800's into the 1860's. The only recorded Quaker dated cover with the 1847 issue.



Cover from Baltimore MD to Sandy Springs MD where it was forwarded to Washington City DC. Baltimore postmark canceling the 5 cent stamp. Sandy Spring postmark and red '5' indicating five cents due for forwarding to Washington City. The Baltimore postmark used standard dating but Edward Stabler, a Quaker, used Quaker dating.

Stabler, besides being Postmaster of Sandy Springs for 48 years, was an innovative farmer, inventor of a seed drill and corn-husking device, organizer of the Mutual Fire Insurance Company. He taught himself the art of seal-making to supplement his income. Using a superior press of his own invention, he struck seals for the U.S. Senate, House of Representatives, Treasury, Post Office, Supreme Court, and many others. When then Secretary of State Dean Acheson moved into the Stabler home, he discovered the seal Stabler had made for the Department of State!

Periodically local postmasters were required to publish in a newspaper name of the recipients of letters not claimed. Each name was published was published three times. After three months, letters that were not claimed at local post offices were sent to the general post office in Washington as dead letters, where they were opened and inspected. If they contained valuables the letters were logged and an effort was made to find the rightful owner; otherwise, the letters were destroyed.

Dead letters were generally unpaid. Prepaying postage seemed to improve the accuracy of addressing the mail.



April 1849 cover from Saint Louis MO to Cincinnati OH. Following the regulations, the letter was advertised in one newspaper as show below. 'ADV 2' was applied, indicating a person would be charged 2 cents to claim the letter. The letter was not claimed and eventually forwarded to the dead letter office where it arrived May 1850. Since the letter was not destroyed, it most likely contained valuables and was sent to Saint Louis to attempt to find the sender.

DAILY CINCINNATI COMMERCIAL.

DEVOTED TO COMMERCE, NEWS, LITERATURE, AND THE BELLES LETTRES.

**OFFICIAL,
ADVERTISED LETTERS.**

LIST NO. 2, JULY 15, 1849

Officially published in the Paper having the largest circulation. Persons calling for these letters will please say they are advertised, and also give the number of the list. All letters advertised are subject to an extra charge of two cents. Letters to the British Provinces must, in all cases, have the inland postage pre-paid. Newspapers must, in all cases, be pre-paid, unless sent from a publishing office to subscribers.

LADIES' LIST.

Adelmae Jane	Alexander A W	Armer Sarah
Alfreda Harriet	Amey Ella	Armstrong Francis
Alvina Mary A	Armsworth Martha	in
Anderson Ellen	Armsworth Elizabeth	Ayer Mary
Beth S	Atkinson Ann	Armer Sarah R
Alarance Martha	Atkins Lydia B	Aster Caroline
Alvina E M		
Bennett Elizabeth	Bennett Charlotte	Barnes Eliza V
Becher Catherine	Barnes Mary	

O'Brien Margaret	O'Brien Mary	O'Brien Catharine
Ogle Christina	O'Dougherty Fanny	
O'Conner Ellen		
Patterson Maria	Phelan Mary	Paul Ruth
Palmer Sarah E	Peck Ann	Perry Susan G
Penniston Fanny	Perry Julia Ester	Prior Elizabeth P
Powell Rose Anna	Pierce H.riet	Pollock Corcoran 2
Pierce Marvina L	Pierson W M	Pardum Thos Mc-
Pace Sarah A	Polson Miss M	see of Mary

The letter above was advertised in the Daily Cincinnati Commercial on July 16th, 17th and 18th 1849. The excerpt from the paper showing Ann Peck having an unclaimed letter is shown above. On the left is the header for the list. This list took up an entire page of the newspaper and a review of the papers over that year show that the lists were consistently this size.

Original research by the exhibitor correlated the newspaper to the cover.

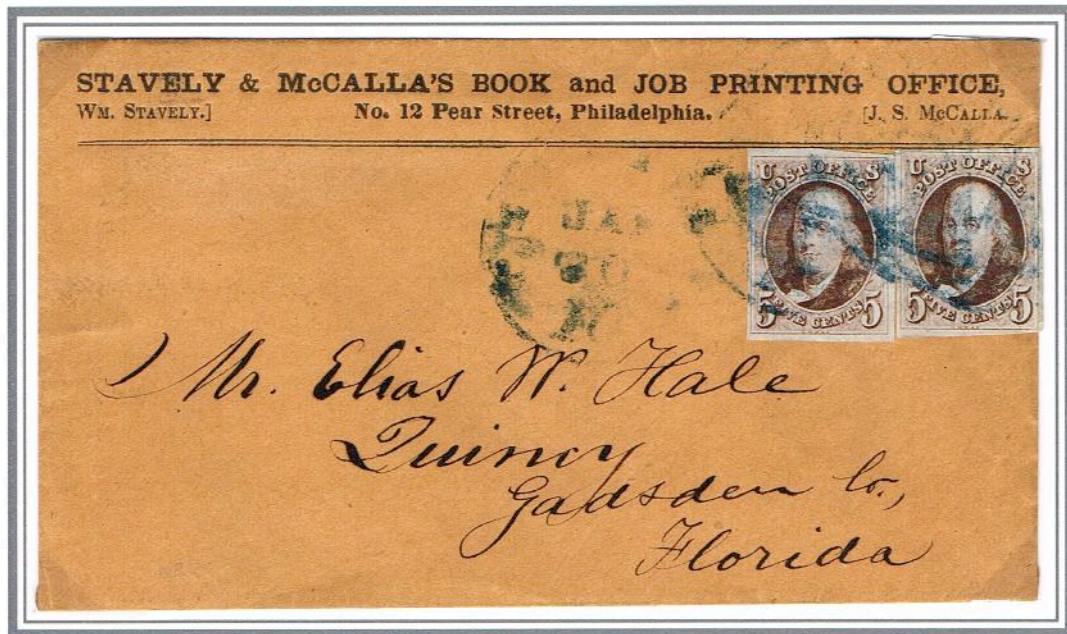
Envelopes were not commonly used until the end of the 1847 period. As envelopes became common, businesses could put their messages or advertisements on the envelopes.

Advertising covers are uncommon used with the 1847 issue.



Cover from Syracuse NY to Detroit MI.

The Syracuse Saleratus Manufacturing Company produced potassium and sodium bicarbonate which were leavening agents or baking soda.



Cover from Philadelphia PA to Quincy FL.

J. S. McCalla was a printer in Philadelphia during the 1850's and 1860's.



Cover from Philadelphia PA to Lexington VA. Bullitt & Fairthorne Attorney's At Law advertisement on back flap.



February 1849 cover from New York City to South Lee MA.

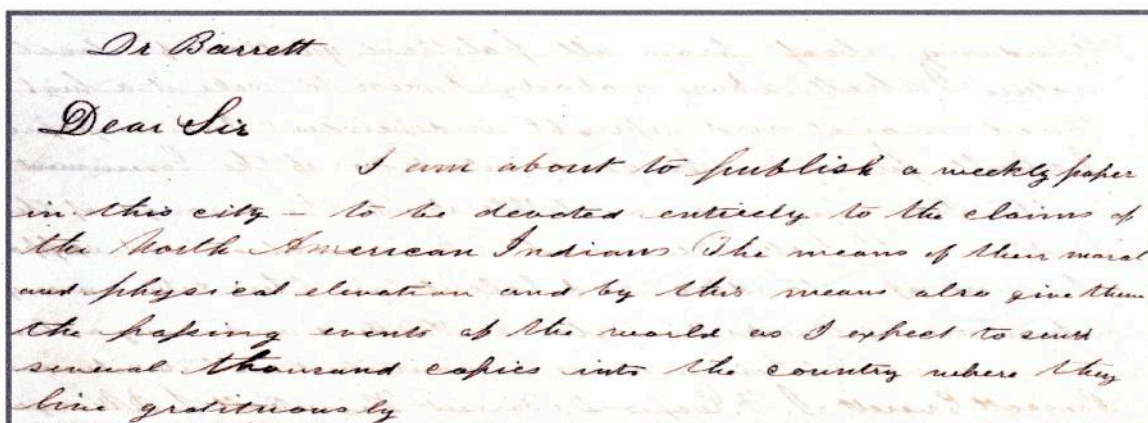
The handstamp may have been used by the Cyrus Field firm to indicate a charge to their account.

The firm used the 'paid' to indicate that the postage was to be charged to their account and the postmaster applied the stamp.

Native American Life and Westward Expansion



June 1851 overall illustrated propaganda cover from New York City to Middletown CT. Stamp is red orange. The illustrated envelope by Valentine & Dundee shows Indian life and westward expansion. There are two known Valentine & Dundee envelopes used with 5 cent 1847 stamps.



The enclosed letter, a portion shown above, was written by George Copway of the Mississaugas Ojibwa Nation. Copway, a Canadian, moved to New York City in the 1840's, where he published a number of books and pamphlets relating to the life of and issues surrounding Native Americans.

The letter discusses his desire to start a newspaper devoted to the claims of Native Americans. He was successful in publishing the newspaper which lasted for three months.

The practice of giving valentines originated in Europe in the early 1800's and gained in popularity in the United States during the 1850's. During the 1847 period it is unusual to have greeting cards of any kind, although a few years later they were in common use.



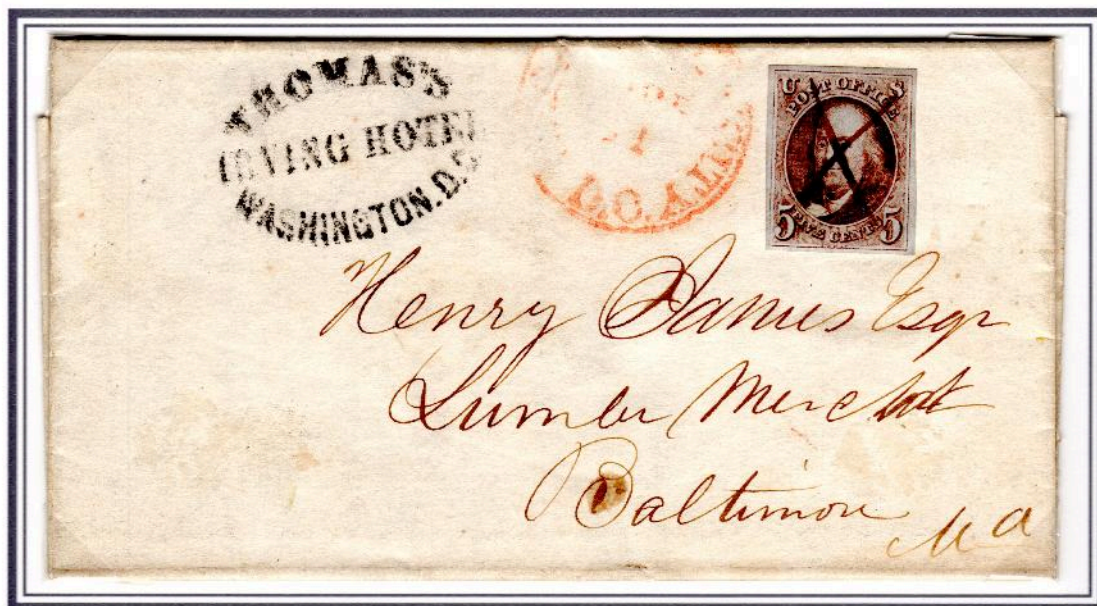
Cover from Wilmington DE to Chester PA dated 15 February. Based on the 15 February postmark, the note on the envelope and the nature of the design, it is reasonable to assume that it contained a valentine.



160% actual size

Manuscript 'If you don't I'll die' in center at bottom.

Many hotels provided guests with mail service, in some cases marking the letters with a hotel marking. The handstamps served as an advertisement for the hotels.



Thomas's Irving Hotel handstamp.
April 1850 folded letter from Washington City DC to Baltimore MD.

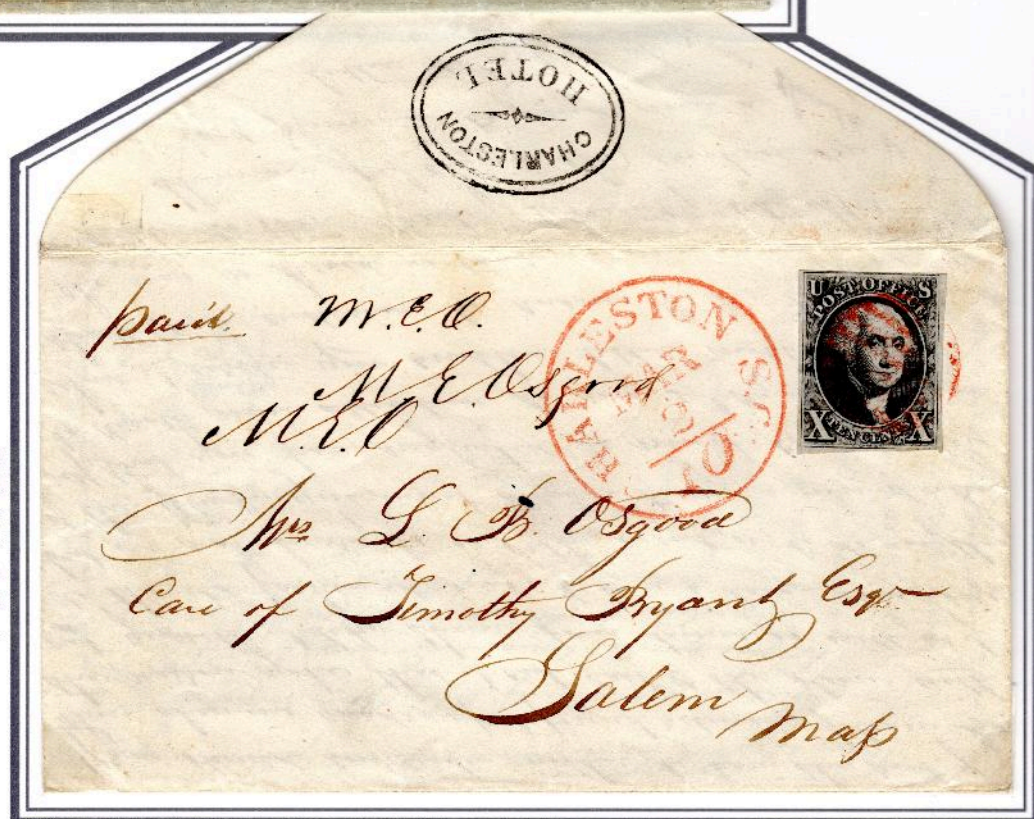


United States Hotel Boston handstamp.
April 1848 folded letter from Boston to South Lee MA . The letter entered the mail on the Boston & Albany R.R. Red route agent postmark. Stamp canceled with red 'PAID'.



Mitchell United States Hotel Philadelphia handstamp on back of letter.

February 1850 folded letter from Philadelphia PA to Columbus OH. Stamp position R1, double transfer type A.



Cover from Charleston SC to Salem MA. Stamp canceled with red grid. Charleston town postmark with integral rate marking.

Charleston Hotel handstamp on back flap of envelope.

The mails, while mostly used for personal letters or other information of little monetary value, were sometimes used for currency (the term Money Letter) and other items of value. The ability to record the movement of letters from point to point with clear accountability or traceability would increase the confidence that the letter would arrive at its destination intact.

Registration was first used in England in the 1600's. In the United States there was no formal government system before 1855, but valuables were being sent through the mail, at the owner's risk, from the late 1700's. Starting around 1845, while it was still the owner's risk, if lost the policy was for the Post Office to "make every effort in its power to discover the cause, ...". This led to efforts to track letters since the post office was actually competing with the express companies for this business and motivated to improve security.

During the 1847 period registered letters addressed to Philadelphia were marked with an 'R' to indicate that the letter was registered. Often a manuscript 'registration' number appears on the letter. Over time the Post Office Department would implement a formal nationwide system to protect valuable letters. Nevertheless these early systems implemented in Philadelphia and other cities provided a tracking or recording system to keep track of such mail.



April 1850 folded letter from Baltimore MD to Philadelphia PA. Stamp canceled with two red 5's and the blue Baltimore town postmark.

On arrival in Philadelphia the recorded letter had a small blue 'R' and a manuscript number '8' applied. The small 'R' was used in Philadelphia from October 1849 until September 1851.

The large 'R' was used until October 1849 and briefly in June and July 1851. Otherwise, a small 'R' was used.

June 1851 folded letter from Providence RI to Philadelphia PA. The letter entered the mail on the Boston Express Mail train. Manuscript registration number '18' applied in Philadelphia. Very late use of the large blue 'R'.

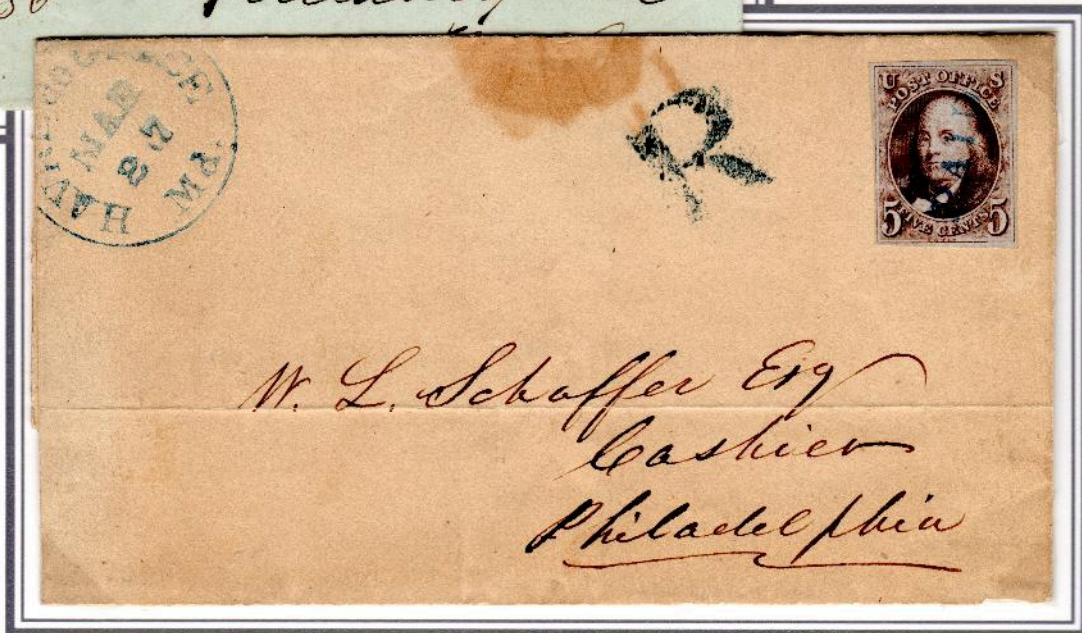


April 1850 folded letter from Baltimore MD to Philadelphia PA. Manuscript registration number '36' applied in Philadelphia. Small 'R'.

Stamp is double transfer type A position 8oRt with red numeral '5' cancel. Blue Baltimore town postmark.

e

Folded address sheet from Havre de Grace MD to Philadelphia PA. 5 cent stamp canceled with blue 'PAID'. This letter does not have a manuscript registration.



To conserve paper, letters were sometimes answered on the original letter, refolded and mailed a second time. These letters are known as turned covers. Since they went through the mail twice and were opened twice it is unusual to find them in pristine condition.



November 1850 folded letter from Greenwich to Argyle NY. The letter was answered, turned and re-mailed back to Greenwich. The return postage was paid by the recipient.

Greenwich canceled the stamp with a four ring red target.

Only five covers are recorded with this cancel on a five cent stamp.

Another example shown in this exhibit (frame 4 page 10)

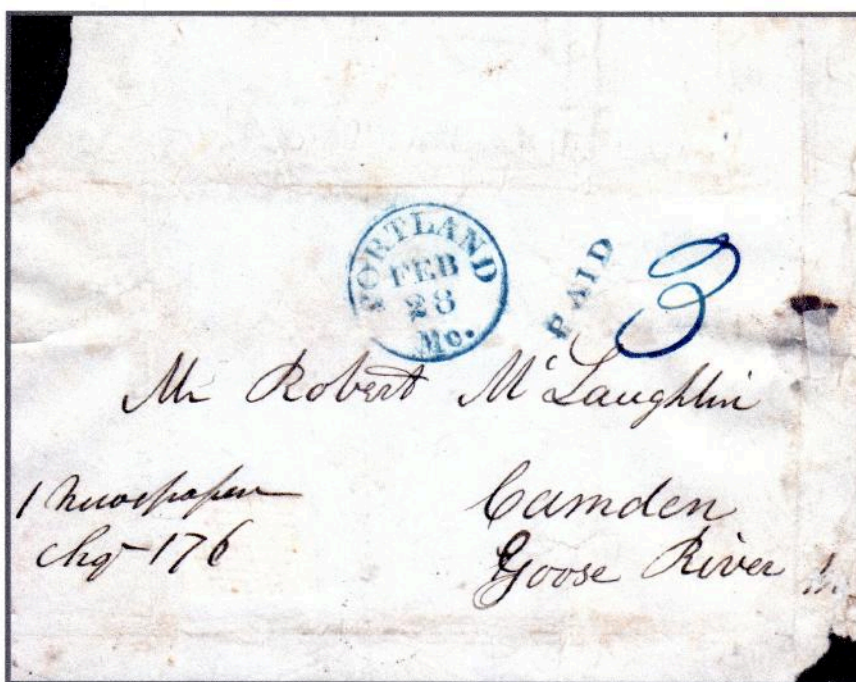
The letter has been opened and refolded to show both the original and return fronts.

Folded Address Sheet Reused as a Newspaper Wrapper



October 1848 double rate folded address sheet from Brunswick to Portland ME.
 Canceled with crossed rimless grids. Brunswick received no 1847 stamps.

Four months after receiving the letter the sheet was turned and used to send a newspaper from Portland to Goose River ME. Manuscript '1 Newspaper chg-176'. Rate marking '3' representing the newspaper rate.



50% actual size

From the famous 'Turner' correspondence where occasionally the stamps were overlapping.

60% of the 52 recorded covers from the correspondence have one 10 cent stamp.



← Saint Louis town postmark canceling stamps on covers with overlapping stamps.
↓

One of two recorded with 10 cent stamps overlapping. Both are canceled on Christmas Eve.

Positions 61, 62L.



← Non-overlapping example from the correspondence. Canceled with grid.

One of two vertical pairs from this correspondence.





Section Four - Carriers and Local Posts



This section presents a selection of Carriers and Locals used in combination with the 1847 stamps as well as examples of the 1847 stamps paying the city carrier fees.

In 1849 post offices in several cities began their own delivery system carrying mail to or from the post office and to or from the addressee's home or business. This was a direct reaction to the competition from local services often called 'posts'.

The Carrier Departments operated as separate units within each post office and issued their own stamps for prepaying fees. These stamps are known as semi-official carrier stamps. City Carrier Department stamps were used in Baltimore, Boston, Charleston, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Louisville, New York City and Philadelphia. Only carrier stamps from Boston, New York City and Philadelphia are recorded used with the 1847 issue.

Boston



Boston carrier tied with postmark. Stamp is dark brown dot in 'S' variety with pre-printing paper fold.

March 1850 folded address sheet from Boston MA to New York City.

Red Boston integral rate town postmark cancels 5 cent stamp.
August 1849 letter from Boston to Bilerica MA.





Cover from New York City to Middletown CT. Rose colored U.S. Mail carrier stamp.



Cover from New York City to Cambridge MA. Buff colored U.S. Mail carrier stamp.
Unusual New York City use of the seven bar round red grid canceling 5 cent stamp. Normally the 13 bar diamond grid was used in New York City.



Cover from New Brunswick NJ to New York City.

Stamp canceled with black grid. Black town postmark and large black '5' that is crossed out with a manuscript 'X'. '2 Cents' in manuscript above date within postmark and faint manuscript '2 c' to the right of stamp. The 5 cent stamp paid the intercity rate and 2 cents was charged to the recipient for carrier delivery to the street address. The postmaster in New York City crossed out the '5' and applied the carrier fee due on delivery.



200% actual size



150% actual size

Fee Paid in Cash

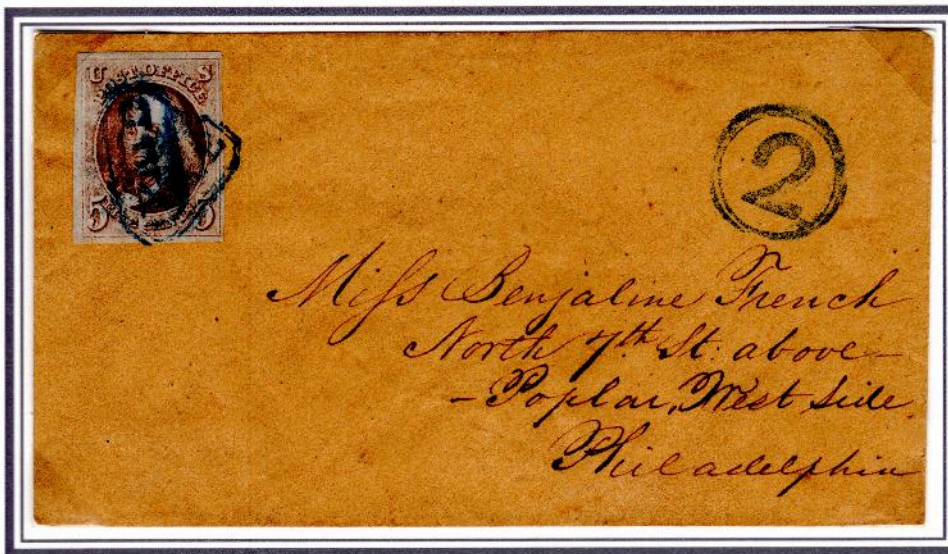
Philadelphia

Two letters from Philadelphia to an address on the 'outskirts' of Philadelphia, outside the area covered by the post office that the letter was mailed from. Thus the 5 cent stamp paid the under 300 mile (inter-city) rate to the post office of the recipient, Ms. French. At this time there were other post offices in Philadelphia County besides the main post office in the city of Philadelphia.

The sender delivered the letters to the Philadelphia post office and paid 2 cents in cash for carrier delivery to Ms. French. The fact that the letters are addressed with delivery instructions favors the view that the letters were intended to be delivered to Ms. French, not delivered to the Philadelphia post office to be picked up by her.



This contemporary map shows the boundary of the city of Philadelphia and above the North boundary Poplar Street.



Stamp canceled by both the Philadelphia 'PAID' and 'FREE' cancels. Numeral '2' in circle rate marking struck at right.

The 'FREE' serves as an 'auxiliary marking' indicating that the carrier fee (shown by the '2' rate marking) had been prepaid in cash. The 'FREE' marking was most likely applied by the postmaster, not a clerk.

Stamp canceled with numeral
'2' in circle rate stamp; second
numeral '2' rate marking at right.
Manuscript 'all pd'.

The 'all pd' is the equivalent of the PAID and FREE used above, 'all' referring to the inter-office 5 cent rate and the 2 cents carrier delivery fee.



During the 1847 period postage was paid to deliver mail to the post office of the addressee, not to their residence or business. Local carriers emerged to meet the need of customers that did not want to travel to the post office each day to post or pick-up mail.

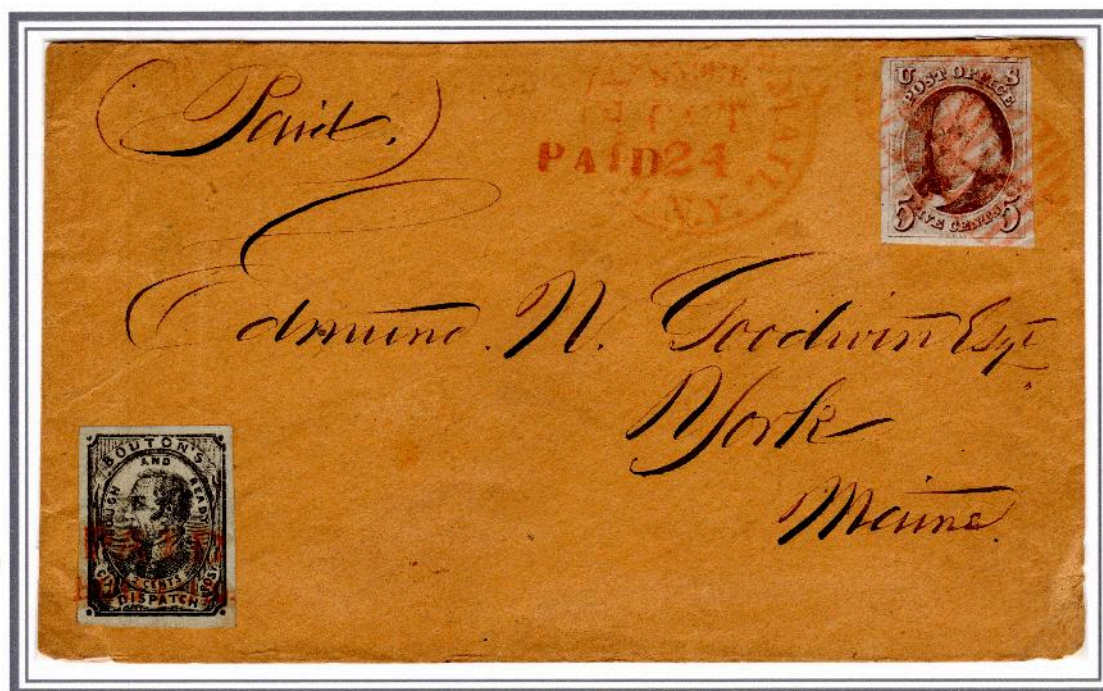
The local carriers would pick-up and carry letters to the post office. They would apply their own adhesive stamps, or a handstamp, to show that their fee for this service – usually one or two cents – had been paid. These companies were not authorized by the government and at times competed with official government services. Local carrier fees usually matched those used by the government.

Local posts were most active in the 1840's through the 1850's but most were forced out of business by the government in 1861.



D. O. Blood's Despatch 1 cent black glazed bronze acid-tied on envelope flap.
March 1850 cover from Philadelphia PA to Delafield WI. 10 cent stamp underpays the double rate letter, thus ten cents due.

'Rough and Ready' stamp inspired by Zachary Taylor's presidential campaign.
Two of five recorded with the 1847 issue.



Cover from New York City to York ME.
U.S. Express Route Agent marking. Red 'PAID' applied by Bouton.
Local with corner dots (18L2), red two line 'PAID BOUTON' cancel.



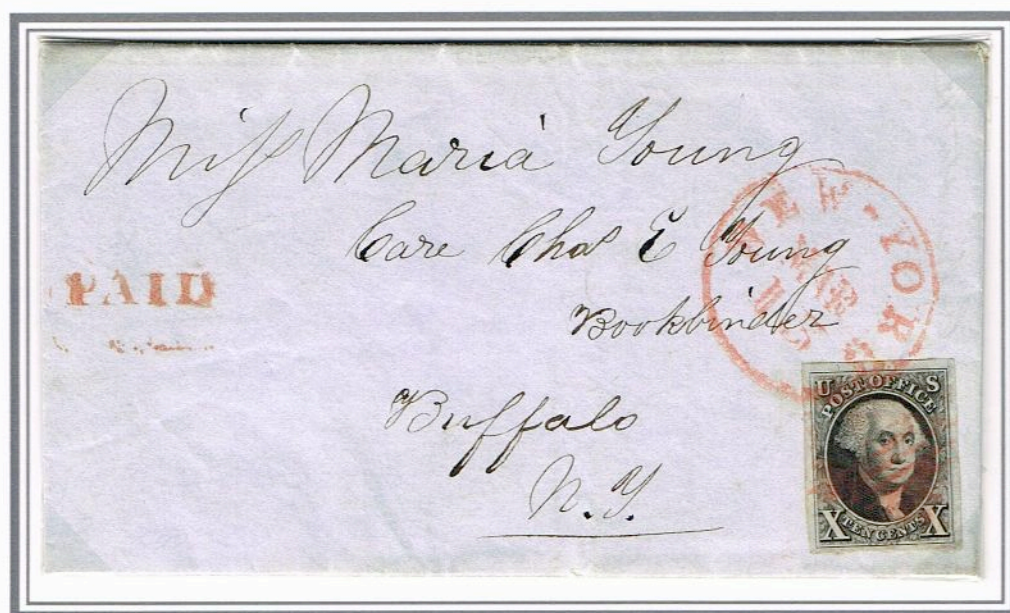
Folded address sheet from New York City to Andover MA.
Local with corner dots (18L2).

Taken to the mails by Bouton. 'PAID BOUTON' two-line handstamp used without Bouton's local stamp.



July 1848 folded letter from New York City to Morristown NJ.

**PAID
BOUTON**



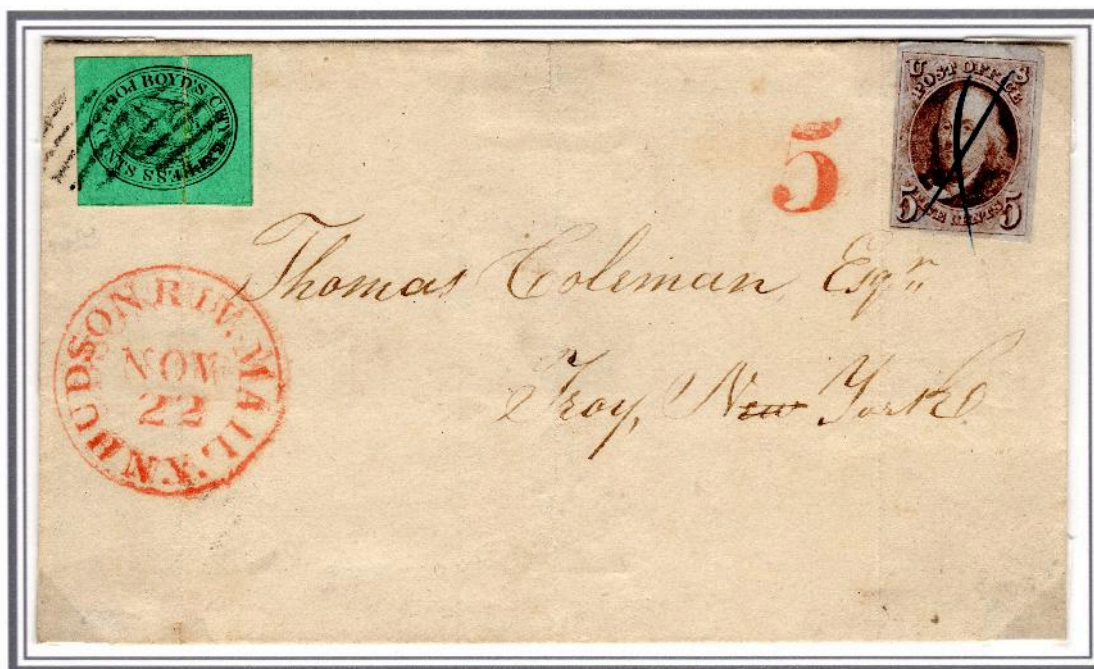
March 1849 folded letter from New York City to Buffalo NY.



Boyd's local stamp (20L4).

March 1849 cover from New York City to Montreal Canada.

Two 5 cent stamps pay postage to the border. 4 ½ d. due for Canadian postage.

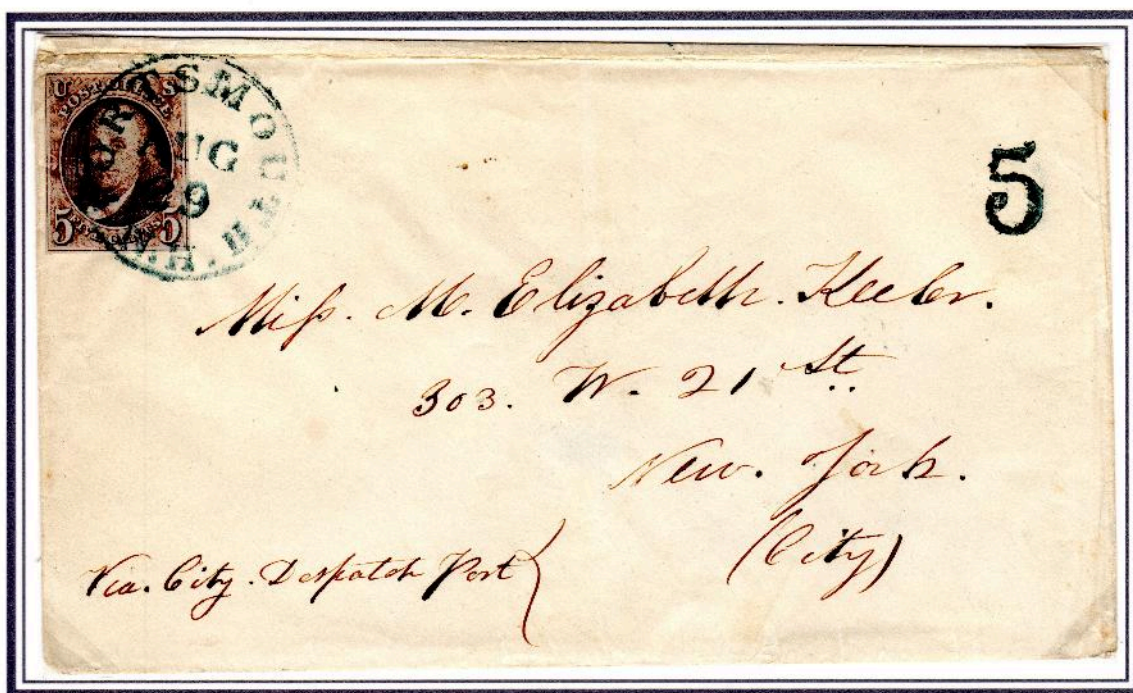


Boyd's local stamp. Glazed paper (20L7).

November 1848 folded address sheet from New York City via Hudson River Mail to Troy NY.

The City Despatch Post was founded in February 1842 as a private local carrier but sold to the US Post Office Department and became a government carrier department in New York City. In November 1846 it was sold to a letter carrier, Abraham Mead, and operated as a private local carrier until 1852. In November 1847 Mead sold the business to two other letter carriers. During the entire time that the issue of 1847 was valid for postage the City Despatch Post was a private carrier.

This cover is from a recent find and shows cooperation between a private carrier and the Post Office in New York City. The post office appears to have turned this over to the City Despatch for delivery.



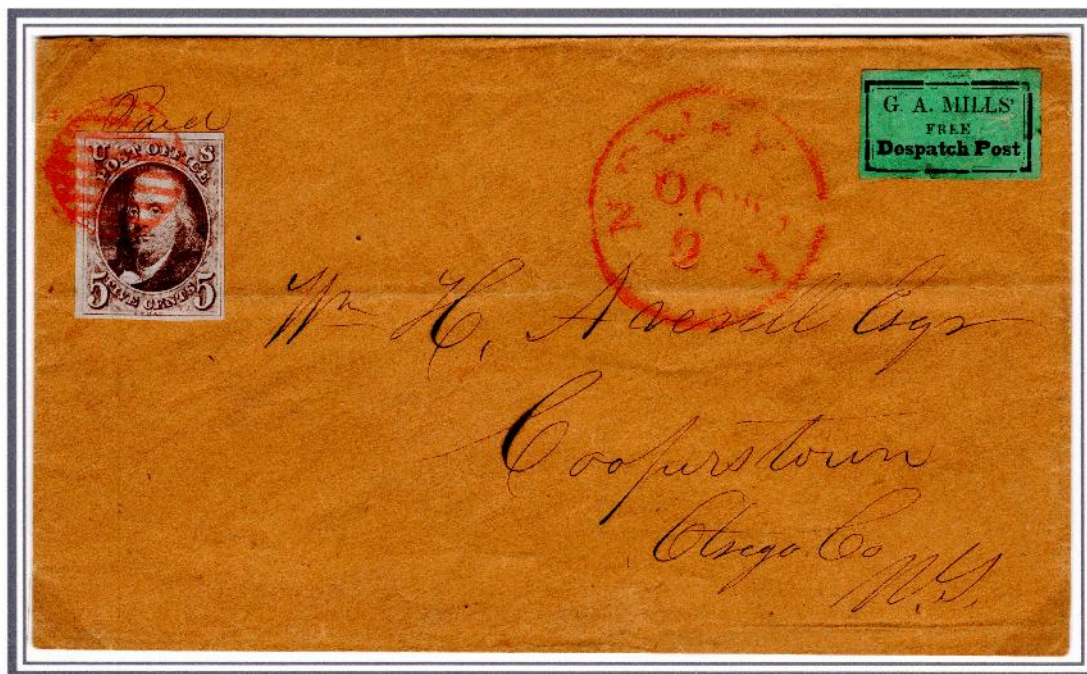
Cover from Portsmouth NH to New York City. Manuscript 'Via City Despatch Post' for carrier delivery.

Messenkope's Union Square P.O. and Mill's Despatch

New York City



Cover from New York City to Chicago. Two 5 cent stamps paying the over 300 mile rate.
Unusual use of seven bar circle grid from New York City.



Cover from New York City to Cooperstown NY. Seven bar circle grid from New York City.



Swarts handstamp 'SWARTS/B/POST OFFICE/N.Y./CHATHAM SQUARE'.

December 1847 folded address sheet from New York City to Kingston on Thames England. 5 cent stamp paid the rate to Boston where it was placed on the Britannia to Liverpool. 1 shilling was collected from the recipient.

Only recorded Trans-Atlantic use of this marking with a 5 cent stamp.



Kenyon's handstamp 'KENYON'S/LETTER OFFICE/NEW YORK'.

August 1849 folded address sheet from New York City to Portland ME.

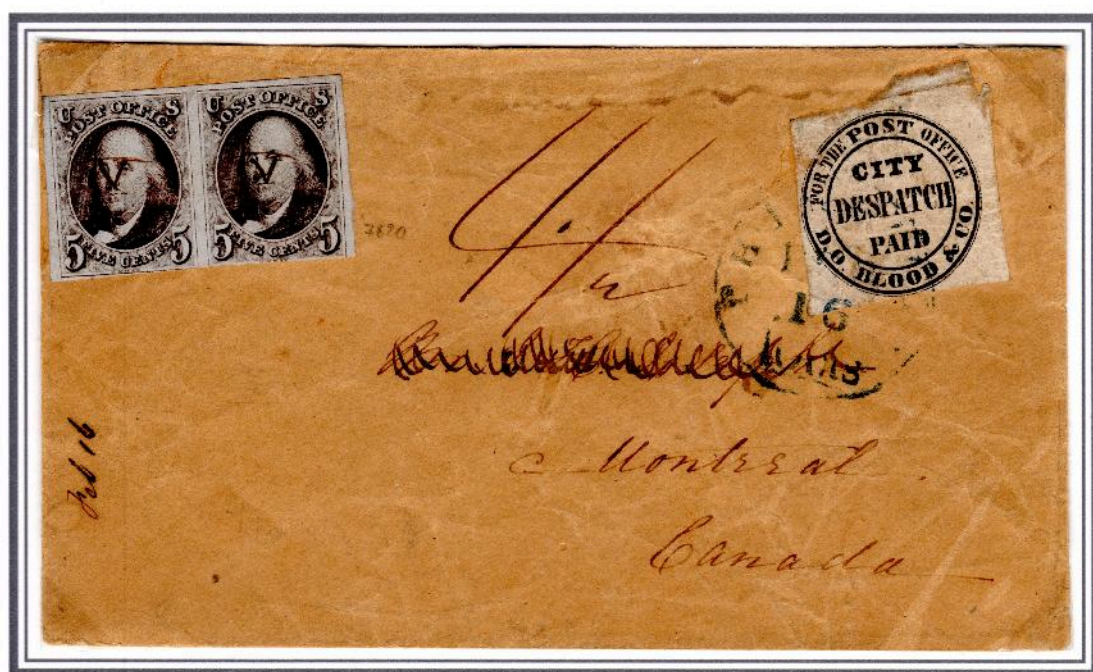
D. O. Blood's City Despatch

Philadelphia

Two Letters from Philadelphia PA to Montreal Canada paid to the border.
 4 ½ d. due for Canadian postage. 10 cents paid to border.



March 1849 cover.



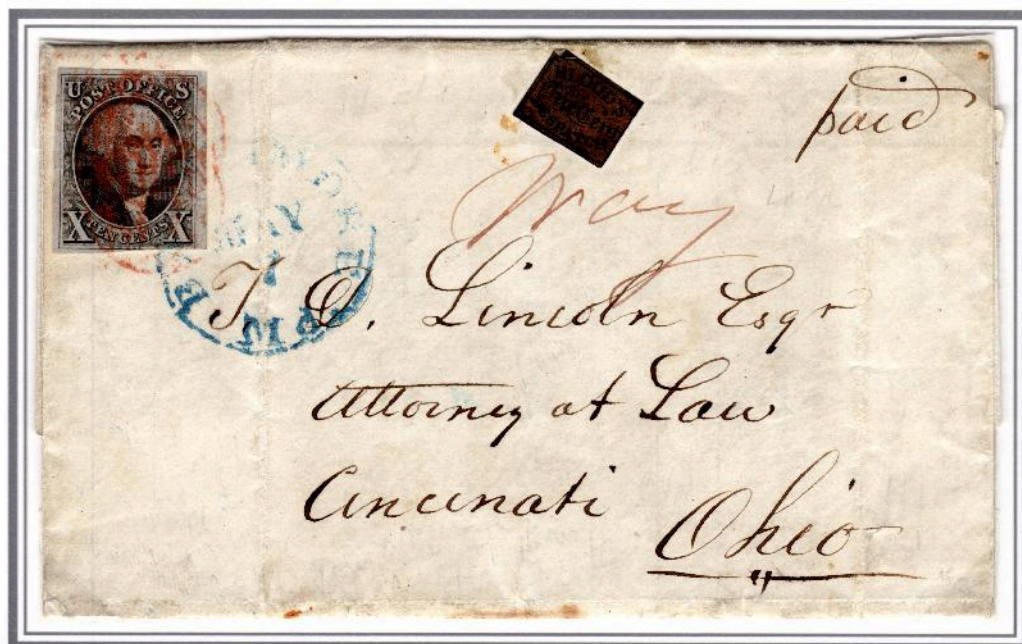
February 1849 cover. Small 'V' canceling each of the 5 cent stamps.

Two 'WAY' letters delivered to the mails by Blood en route to Baltimore.



Folded address sheet from Philadelphia PA to Annapolis MD. Red 'WAY/5' cancels stamp and applied to letter. Blood delivered the letter to the river as a Way letter, entering the mail in Baltimore.

Strikes of the blue Baltimore town postmark on both the 5th and 6th of June. The regulations required that the date reflect the date the letter left the post office. It appears that it was first postmarked on the 5th but did not leave and was postmarked again on the 6th. Addressed to the Naval Academy.



May 1850 folded letter from Philadelphia PA to Cincinnati OH.

The letter arrived in Baltimore from Philadelphia by water, having been delivered to the river by Blood. From Baltimore the cover traveled by the B&O Railroad to Cincinnati OH.



September 1849 folded letter from Philadelphia PA to Littleton NH. Blood delivered the letter to the train. New York town postmark applied on arrival in New York and then sent on to New Hampshire.

'PHILAD' RAILROAD' straight-line marking canceling stamps.

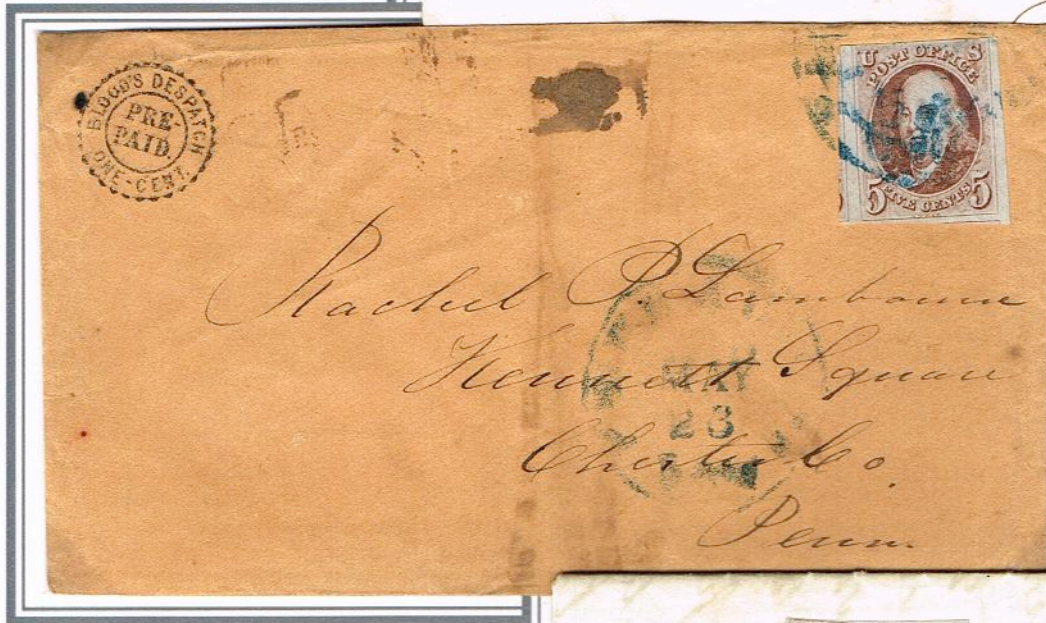


Folded address sheet from Philadelphia PA to Boston MA. The letter was forwarded back to Philadelphia. 'FORWARDED' auxiliary marking applied in Boston. Blue Philadelphia and Red Boston town postmarks.

The 5 cent stamp underpaid the over 300 mile rate. The red crayon manuscript marking of '5' and '26' are possibly charging the 5 cents due for the underpayment on the letter to Boston to the senders account number 26. The '5 due' for forwarding is an underpayment that appears to have been accepted.

Handstamps Showing Prepayment. No adhesives used.

November 1848 folded letter
from Philadelphia to West
Chester PA.



Cover from Philadelphia
to Kennett Square PA.

November 1850 folded letter
from Philadelphia to Elizabeth
Town NJ.



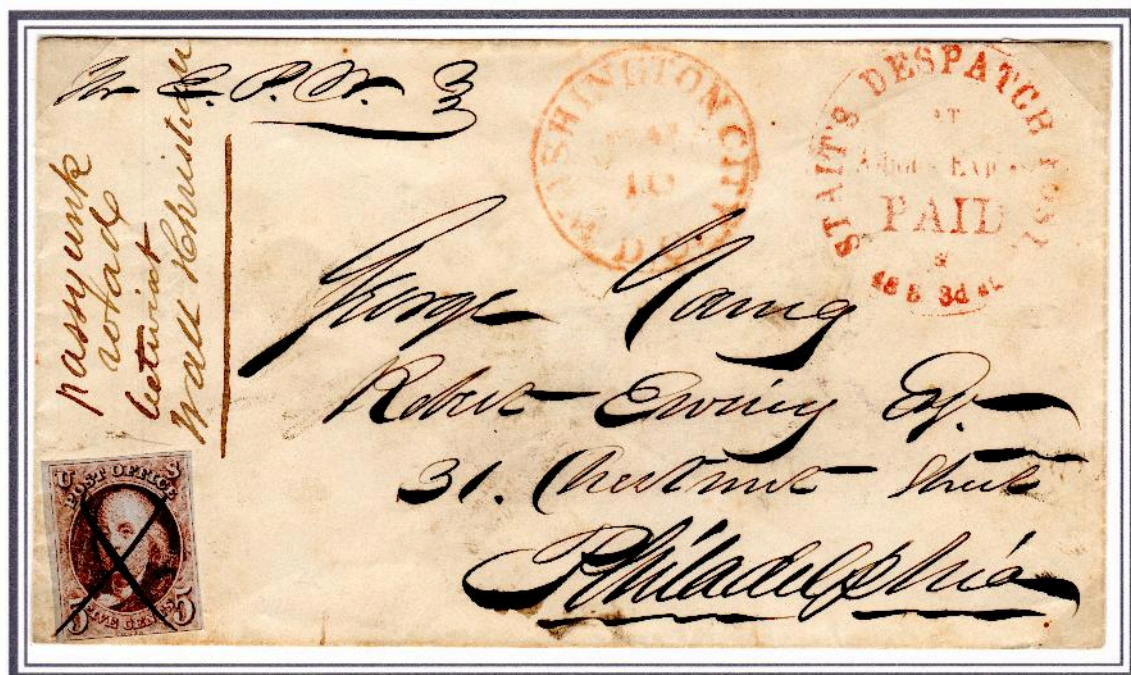


July 1850 folded letter from Philadelphia PA to Providence RI.
Only recorded example of Red Eagle Post local used with an 1847 stamp.



September 1849 folded address sheet from Philadelphia PA to New York City.

Ellipse shaped handstamp used without local.



Cover from Washington City DC to Philadelphia PA.
Delivered by Stait's Despatch in Philadelphia.



Section Five - Railroad and Steamboat Markings



This section presents different railroad, express mail, way and waterway markings, including Hudson River Mail steamboat and Lake Champlain Mails, along with a dozen different agent markings.

'WAY 5' and 'WAY 6' markings are present, as well as Way letters delivered by local carriers.

By 1847 railroad routes were well established across the Eastern states and provided an effective way to move both people and merchandise. In this golden age of rail travel many small railroads linked industrial cities and farming communities. The Post Office Department employed route agents assigned to ride railroads to sell stamps to travelers, collect mail, postmark and deliver it to the appropriate post office. Over 55 different agents worked on dozens of railroad routes during this period.

Housatonic Railroad



Folded address sheet to North Canaan CT carried on the Housatonic Railroad.

During the 1847 period the railroad traveled from Bridgeport CT to West Stockbridge MA. North Canaan is just south of the MA border.

November 1849 cover to Utica NY. Blue straight-line 'RAILROAD' marking and two strikes of seven bar grid. This marking was used on railroads traveling between Buffalo and Albany.

Only recorded usage of 'RAILROAD' marking with a 1847 stamp.



Michigan Central Railroad

March 1851 folded letter to Lansing MI. The letter traveled on the Michigan Central Railroad, probably to Jackson and then overland to Lansing. This mark was used from 1851-57. Manuscript 'charge drawer 56'. Most likely the letter was delivered to the post office where the blue 'PAID' and the stamp was applied and, missing the mail bags, went to the train as a loose letter.



July 1850 letter to Constantine MI. The letter originated at Decatur MI and entered the mail on the Michigan Central Railroad which extended from New Detroit to New Buffalo. The route agent marking in green applied to letter and a homemade cork grid cancels the stamp. The letter most likely left the train in Kalamazoo, traveling overland to Constantine.

Madison & Indianapolis Railroad

Folded letter to Fall River MA traveling on the Madison & Indianapolis Railroad to Indianapolis. From Indianapolis the letter traveled overland to Fall River.

Stamp canceled with two strikes of 'PAID' cancel to form a crisscross pattern. Red route agent postmark. Manuscript 'via Madison' and 'Chr Box 71'.

Most likely delivered to the post office where the stamp was applied and canceled and then taken to the railroad as an individual letter.

One of two recorded covers from this railroad with with a 10 cent stamp.



Boston & Maine Railroad



Nov 1848 folded letter to Washington City DC. The letter entered the mail on the Boston & Maine Railroad. Top margin copy of 10 cent stamp.

The letter discusses the impending election; the author believes the Democrat Lewis Cass (who?) will defeat the Whig Zachary Taylor!

Only recorded example with 10 cent stamp.

e

Wilmington & Raleigh Railroad



August 1849 folded address sheet to New York City. Entered the mail with the route agent on the Wilmington & Raleigh railroad. Stamp canceled with blue Maltese Cross.

Left margin position 31R, with the shift in 'Post Office'.

Concord & Montreal Railroad



July 1850 folded letter from Sanbornton Bridge NH to Boston MA. The letter entered the mail on the Boston, Concord & Montreal Railroad. Corner sheet margin copy of 5 cent stamp.

Long Island Railroad



April 1848 tolded letter from Islip NY to New York City. The letter entered the mail on the Long Island Railroad on the route from Greenport Long Island to New York City.



Western & Atlantic Railroad

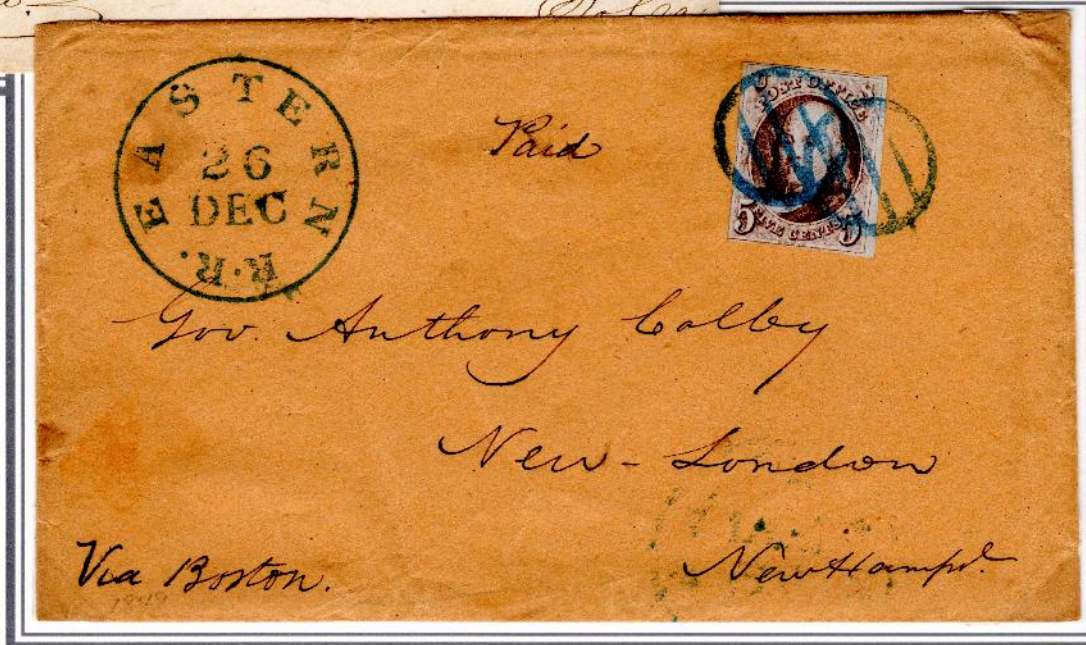


Cover to Charleston SC. The letter entered the mail on the West & Atlantic Railroad on the route from Chattanooga to Atlanta. From Atlanta the letter traveled overland to Charleston..

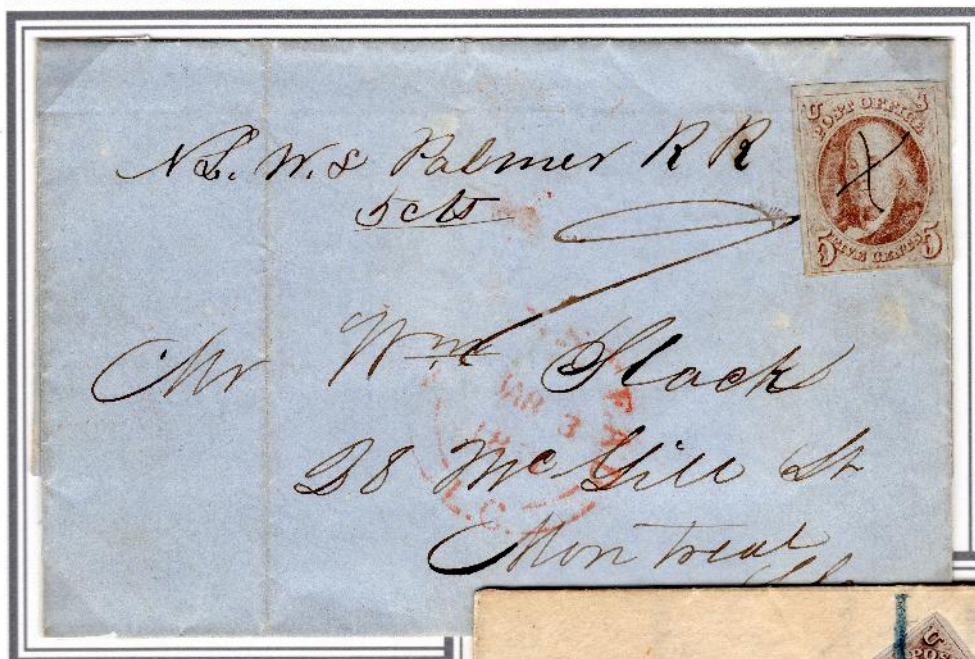
One of two recorded covers with a 10 cent stamp.

Eastern Railroad

December 1848 cover from Portsmouth NH to Governor Colby in New London NH. The letter entered the mail on the Eastern Railroad. Manuscript 'via Boston'. The Eastern Railroad traveled between Portsmouth and Boston.



New London, Willimantic & Palmer Railroad



March 1851 folded address sheet to Montreal Canada. The letter entered the mail on the New London, Willimantic & Palmer Railroad. 5 cent stamp paid U. S. postage to the border.

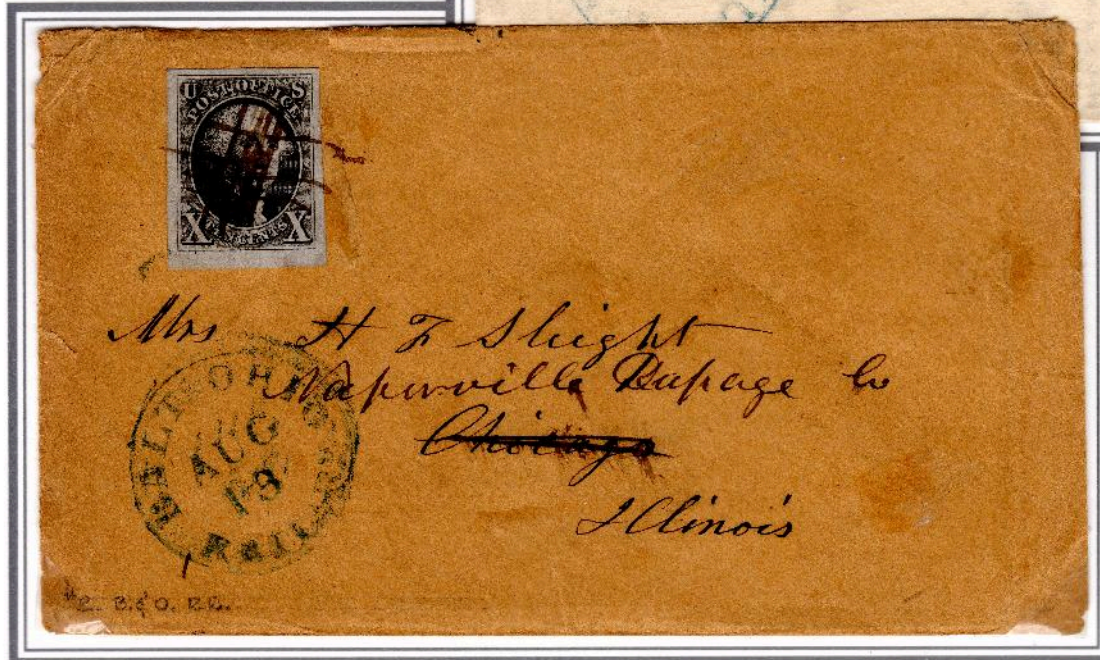
Exchanged at the Derby VT - Stanstead exchange offices. Stanstead exchange marking. In March the letter traveled the longer winter route to Montreal via Sherbrooke and St. Johns. This route was over 100 miles and thus charged 9 d. Canadian postage. St. Johns and Montreal marks on reverse.

New York & Philadelphia Railroad

January 1848 folded letter to New York. Date-lined Philadelphia, the letter entered the mail on the New York and Philadelphia Railroad. Dark brown stamp canceled with blue crossing bars.



Baltimore & Ohio Railroad



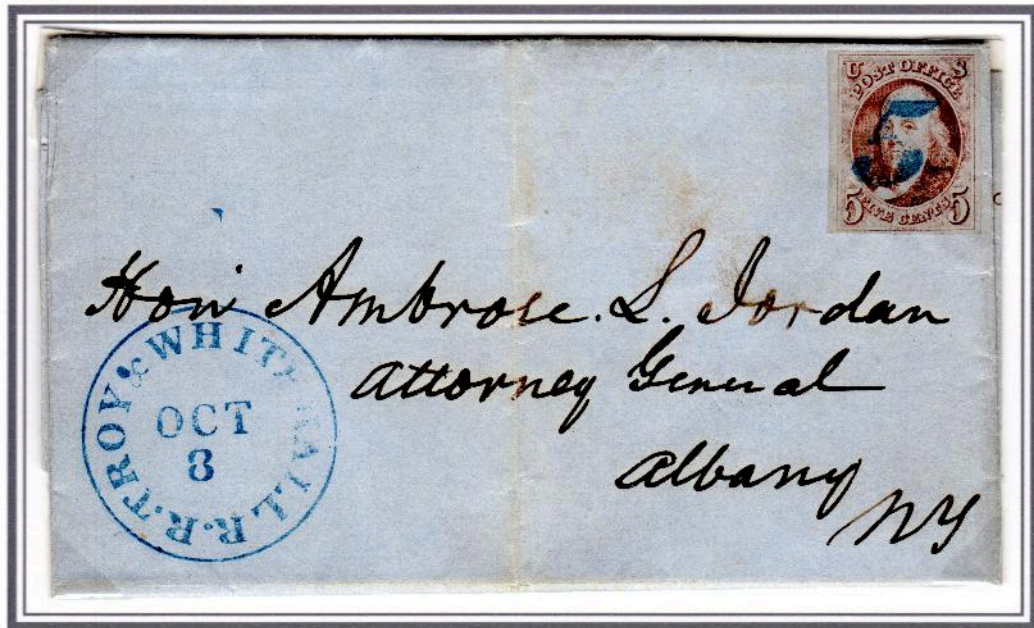
Cover to Naperville IL. Naperville is 35 miles West of Chicago. The letter entered the mail on the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad which traveled between Baltimore and Cumberland.

Bottom sheet margin copy of the stamp.

One of two recorded letters with 10 cent stamps used on this route.

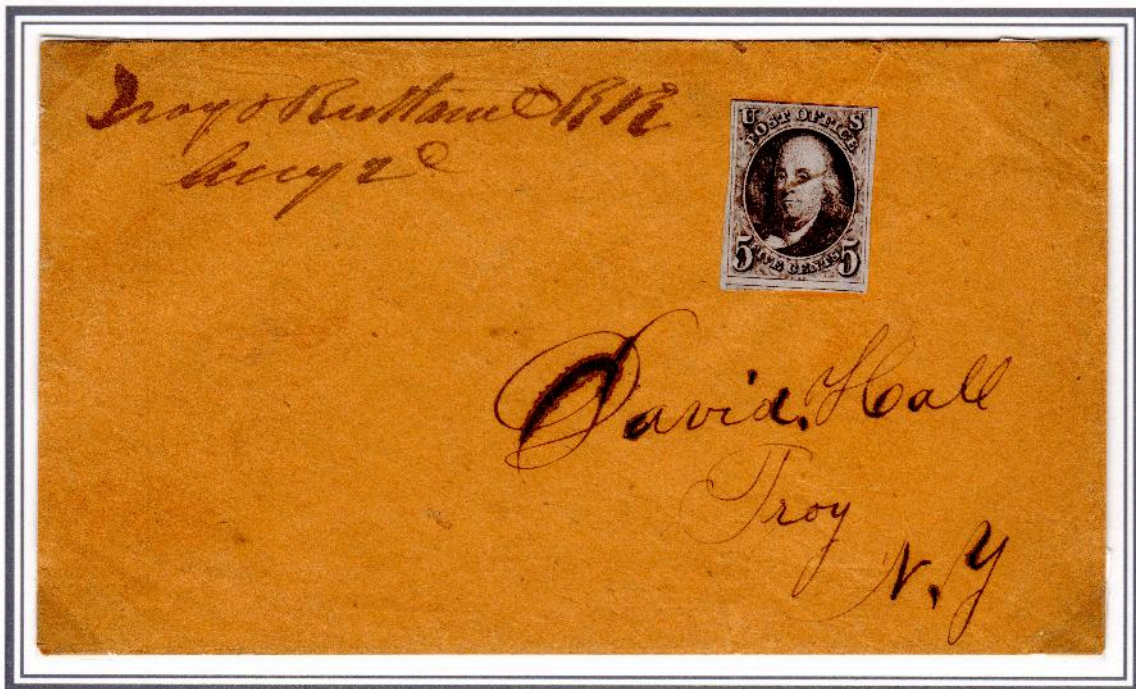
Some railroad postmarks consist of the names of the terminals of a route rather than the name of the railroad itself. In some, but not all, of these cases the route is made up of more than one railroad. This was most likely the name the Post Office Department used to represent the route and a single route agent probably covered the route.

Troy and Whitehall

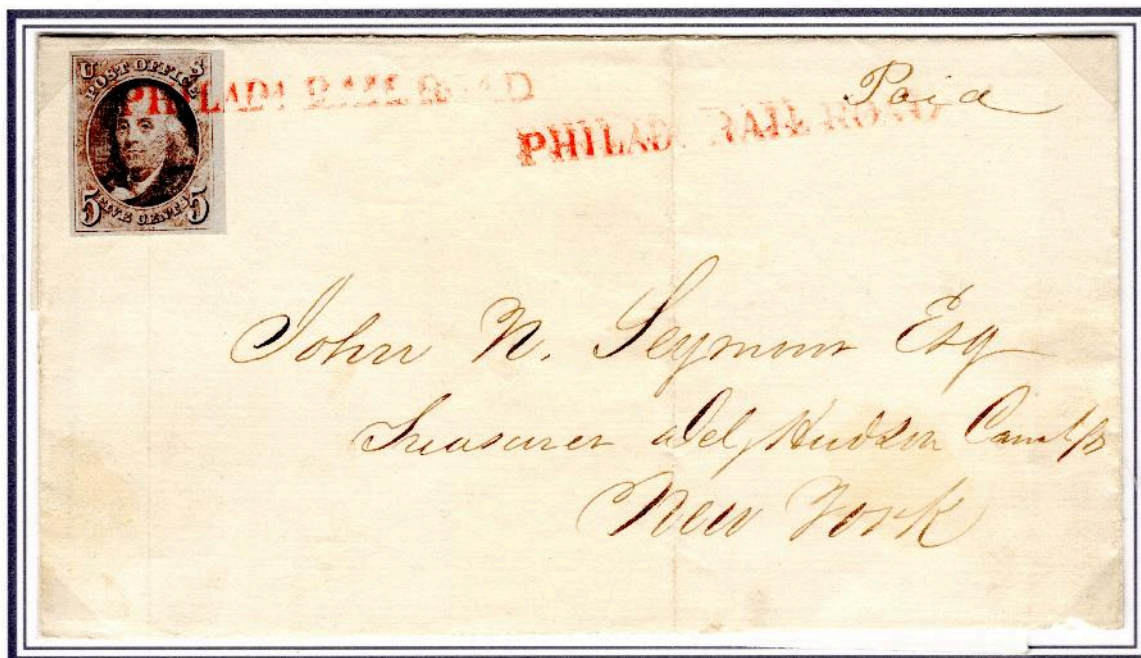


October 1849 folded letter from Fort Edward to Albany NY. Stamp canceled with blue '5'. Troy and Whitehall. The letter was carried on two railroads, the Rensselaer & Saratoga and the Saratoga & Washington.

Troy and Rutland



Cover to Troy NY. Manuscript 'Troy & Rutland RR'. Made up of the Troy & Boston and Western Vermont Railroads.



Folded address sheet to New York City. The letter traveled on the New York & Philadelphia Railroad from Philadelphia to New Brunswick NJ and then to New York City.

Straight-line 'PHILAD^A RAIL ROAD' handstamp canceling right margin copy of 5 cent stamp.



December 1848 folded letter from Harpers Ferry VA to New York City. Traveled on the Philadelphia, Wilmington & Baltimore Railroad. Red '5' in circle canceling stamp. Straight-line 'BALTIMORE R.R.' handstamp.

The letter, addressed to the New York City postmaster, is about a lost letter containing money. No money was found.



Express Mail came about with the Post Office Department's attempt to compete with express companies. Because they were both fast and reliable, the express companies were moving significant amounts of mail, in spite of the government's monopoly.



40% of existing railroad covers are from this express mail service. Boston uses are more common than New York by a factor of 3 to 1. During this period all express mail postmarks were in red.



March 1850 Express Mail cover from New York to New Bedford MA. Entered the mail on the Express Mail train from New York City to Boston.



March 1848 cover from Boston to Philadelphia. Entered the mail on the Express Mail train from Boston to New York City.

Received At Troy

'TROY & NEW YORK/STEAMBOAT' blue marking applied in Troy NY on mail from non-contract boats on the New York to Troy route. This included letters picked up along the way as well as at the pier in New York. A town name and steamboat marking used together is unusual.



Cover from unknown origin to Albany NY via Troy on a non-contract steamboat.

Received At Albany

March 1851 folded letter from New York City to Quebec Canada. Carried on a non-contract Hudson River Steamboat. Red two line 'STEAM/BOAT' marking applied in Albany.

Montreal transit mark on front, Quebec receiving mark on back.

11 1/2 d. due for Canadian postage from 201 to 300 miles.

Letter date-lined New York most likely stamped in New York and given directly to the captain of the boat that delivered it to the post office in Albany where it entered the mail en route to Quebec.



Contract Mail on the Hudson River

Hudson River Mail contract route 809 carried mail between New York City and Albany. Route agents traveling on the boats would pick up mail in mailboxes at the terminus and also along the way applying their postmarks. The route agents frequently used a 17 bar circular grid.

May 1849 folded address sheet to Catskill NY. Letter dropped at the Catskill Landing, one of the route 809 contracted landings.



May 1849 folded letter from New York City to Buffalo NY. At Albany transferred to railroad contract route west to Buffalo.

August 1849 folded address sheet to Port Gibson NY. At Albany transferred to railroad contract route west to Port Gibson.

3 August 1849, the day this letter was postmarked, was set aside by President Taylor as a day of fasting and prayer due to the cholera epidemic. Contents of the letter discuss this.



Ship Letters were loose letters given to the captain of a ship that did not have a contract to carry mail. The captain of the ship was required by law to deliver any letters he held to the post office prior to unloading cargo. If the ship was United States owned the captain was given 2 cents per letter delivered to the post office.

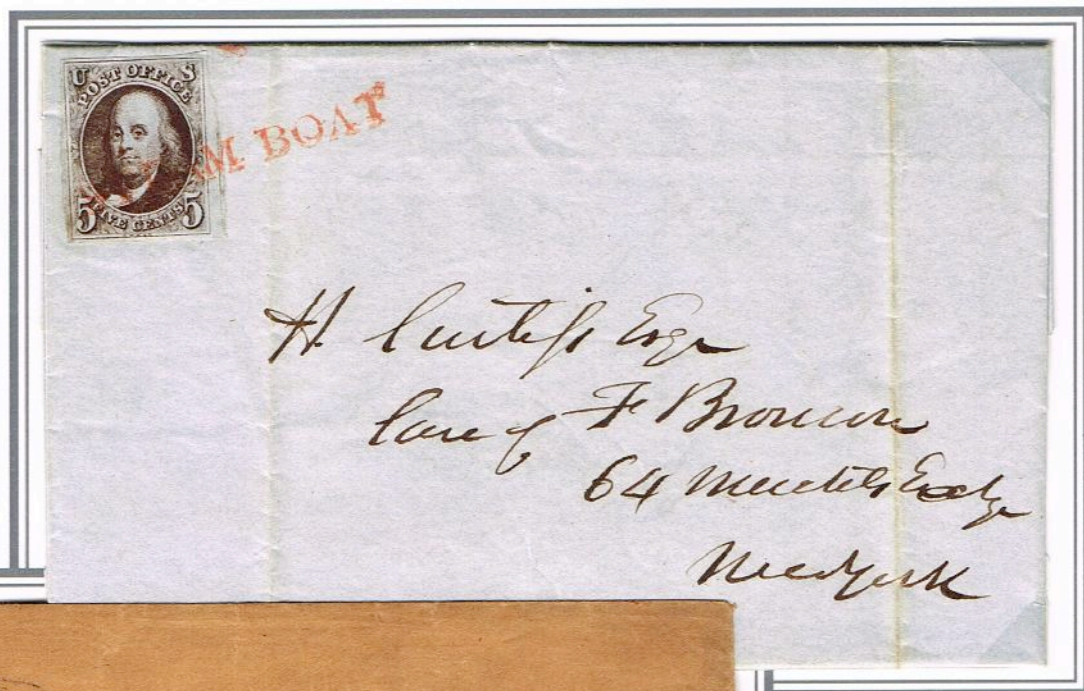
During this period the fee for a letter addressed to the port of arrival was 6 cents.



May 1851 folded address sheet to Philadelphia from an unknown origin. The ten cent stamp over pays the incoming ship fee of six cents.

August 1849 folded letter from Newport RI to New York City. Traveled on a coastal steamboat.

The 'STEAM BOAT' marking applied on arrival in New York. 5 cent stamp dark brown shade.



Cover to Annapolis MD. The letter arrived in Baltimore on a non-contract steamboat where it entered the mail. Baltimore applied 'STEAMBOAT' marking and canceled the stamp with black slanted '5'.

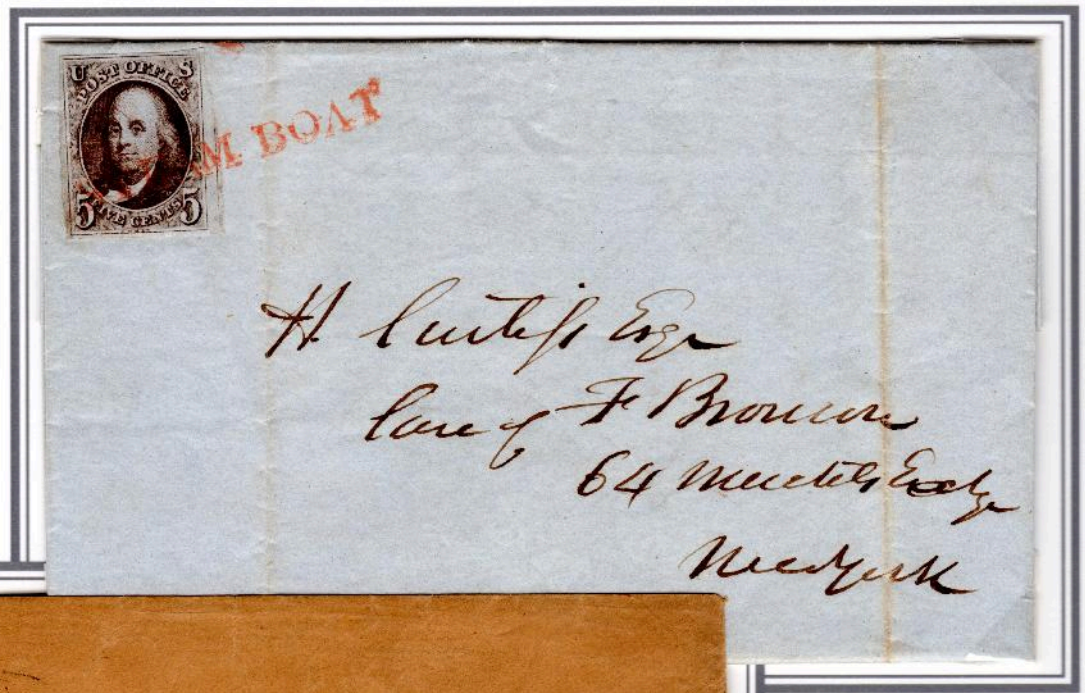
April 1848 folded letter from New York City to New Orleans. It was placed aboard the non-contract steamer Northerner leaving New York 8 April. The letter arrived in Charleston SC 11 April. Manuscript 'per Steamer'. The letter entered the mail in Charleston and received the 'STEAM BOAT' handstamp. From Charleston it traveled to New Orleans.

One of four recorded 1847 covers with the Charleston 'STEAM BOAT' marking.



August 1849 folded letter from Newport RI to New York City. Traveled on a coastal steamboat.

The 'STEAM BOAT' marking applied on arrival in New York. 5 cent stamp dark brown shade.



Cover to Annapolis MD. The letter arrived in Baltimore on a non-contract steamer where it entered the mail. Baltimore applied 'STEAMBOAT' marking and canceled the stamp with black slanted '5'.

April 1848 folded letter from New York City to New Orleans. It was placed aboard the non-contract steamer Northerner leaving New York 8 April. The letter arrived in Charleston SC 11 April. Manuscript 'per Steamer'. The letter entered the mail in Charleston and received the 'STEAM BOAT' handstamp. From Charleston it traveled to New Orleans.

One of four recorded 1847 covers with the Charleston 'STEAM BOAT' marking.





June 1849 folded address sheet entered the mail in Fall River MA arriving aboard a non-contract steamer. Addressed to Norwich CT. Red 'STEAM' and '5' rate marking applied in Fall River.

e

Cover entered the mail in Buffalo arriving aboard a non-contract steamer. Addressed to Poughkeepsie NY. Fancy blue 'STEAM-BOAT' applied in Buffalo.



November 1848 folded address sheet from Saint Louis MO to New Orleans LA.

'STEAM' applied in New Orleans.

e

'STEAMBOAT 5' Marking



Cover from New York City to Boston MA. The letter traveled on a non-contract steamer to Norwich CT where the 'STEAMBOAT/5' was applied and the letter entered the mail. From Norwich the letter then traveled to Boston MA.

Dodd & Wakeman corner card on envelope flap.

Name of Boat Marking



December 1848 folded address sheet from Saint Louis MO to New Orleans carried on Steamer Atlantic. The 'STEAMER/ATLANTIC' handstamp applied by the steamboat as an advertisement.

10 cent stamp position 55R, weak top right frame line.

Contract mail carriers picked up mail between post offices. These letters were called 'Way' letters and were delivered to the next post office reached by the carrier, where a fee was paid in cash to the carrier.



February 1850 folded address sheet to New Orleans. Stamp most likely pays the double rate. The cover was picked up along the way to New Orleans and entered the mail in New Orleans. 1 cent way fee charged to the addressee.



December 1850 folded letter from New York City to Saint Louis MO.

Letter was picked up on a train in route to Baltimore where it entered the postal system. It then traveled down the Ohio River to Cairo and up the Mississippi River to Saint Louis. Stamp position 49L.

Folded address sheet to
Baltimore MD. 'WAY
5' markings, applied at
Baltimore, cancel stamp.

5 cent stamp is a left
margin copy.



Folded address sheet with letter date-
lined Mobile. Addressed to New Orleans
LA. New Orleans 'Way/6' marking.



'Way 6' marking from
Mobile AL on piece.

The folded address sheet entered
the mail as a Way letter on the way
to Baltimore. Baltimore then sent it
to Norfolk where it was forwarded to
the Willard Hotel in Washington DC.

Baltimore to Norfolk is under 300
miles so the original postage was
overpaid by 5 cents. The Norfolk
postmaster did not charge a 5 cent
forwarding fee. Could this be
because the 5 cents overpayment
covered the forwarding?





Section Six - US and BNA Cross-Border Mail



Cross Border encompasses usages both to and from Canada and the Maritime Provinces. Included are examples of the only valid use of the 1847 stamps used from another country, and a combination usage with the first Canadian beaver stamp. Ferriage rates and an example carried by an iceboat are shown.

From revolutionary times mail between the United States and British North America, which included both Canada and the Maritime Provinces, was paid to and from the border. The sender paid the portion in his country and the recipient paying the amount due for the remainder of the journey. Mail from the U.S. paid the prevailing rate to one of about two dozen exchange offices either with stamps or prepaid in cash. The mail was transferred to the postal authorities of the other country at the exchange office and then rated for the remaining distance to the addressee. Letters paying the U.S. under 300 mile rate to the border are less common than those paying the over 300 mile rate. US stamps were occasionally used from British North America.

On 6 April 1851 an agreement between Canada and the U.S. provided a 10 cent through rate between the two countries so all postage could be paid by the sender. This did not apply to the remainder of British North America. No partial payment was allowed, but the letter could be unpaid. Less than two dozen covers from the U.S. paying the through rate are recorded. Canada issued its first stamp on 23 April 1851 so mixed franking was possible for 69 days.



Windsor Ontario CDS.



New Brunswick oval grid.



October 1850 folded address sheet from New York City to Quebec Canada.

Vertical pair of 10 cent stamps, positions 74L and 84L, paid double the over 300 mile rate from New York City to the border. Red postmark and common red 13 bar diamond grid cancel. 1 shilling 11 d. due for Canadian postage paid double the 11 1/2 d. 201 to 300 mile rate to Quebec. Montreal exchange marking on front and Quebec receiving marking on the back. This letter went from New York to Montreal in a closed mail bag.

U.S. Rate Paid to the Line

To Canada Prior to 6 April 1851

April 1850 folded letter from Oswego NY to Toronto Canada West. 5 cent stamp paid the under 300 mile rate to the border. Red grid canceling the stamp and red Oswego town postmark. 4 ½ d. due for Canadian postage up to 60 miles.

The letter traveled across Lake Ontario. The overland distance is more than 60 miles thus Canadian postage would have been 7 d. Black Queenston transit marking on front and black Toronto receiving marking on back.



January 1850 folded address sheet from New York City to Montreal Canada. 10 cent stamp paid the over 300 mile rate to the border. 4 ½ d. due for Canadian postage under 61 miles. Montreal receiving mark on reverse.

10 cent top margin copy canceled with two red postmarks with '5 cts.' rate. It is unusual for New York City to cancel stamps with the town postmark.



November 1848 folded address sheet from New York City to St. Catharines Canada. 10 cent stamp paid the over 300 mile rate to the border. Red postmark and red 13 bar diamond grid. Manuscript 'paid to the Lines.' 4 1/2 d. due for Canadian postage up to 60 miles.

Red Queenston transit marking on front and St. Catharines receiving mark on back.



The truncated grid is less common than the wavy 17 bar grid that was associated with the Hudson River Mail.



November 1849 folded letter date-lined from New York City to Toronto Canada West. 10 cent stamp paid the over 300 mile rate from New York City to the border via Hudson River Mail.

4 1/2 d. due for Canadian postage under 61 miles. Red Hudson River Mail route agent mark and black Queenston transit mark on the front. Black Toronto receiving mark on the back.

Routing instructions overriding standard route. The regulations required the post office to follow routing instructions if given. In this case there was a significant savings.

The normal route for mail from New York City to Upper Canada was by way of Lewiston ME and the Queenston exchange office. The Canadian postage from the border at Lewiston to Brockville would be 11 ½ d. By sending via Morristown the recipient saved almost 20 cents or 11 ½ d.! There would be no postage due if the letter was delivered to Brockville since it was the exchange office.



April 1849 folded letter from New York City to Brockville Upper Canada. From New York the letter traveled in open mail to Morristown NY following routing instructions on the letter.

Unusual and Costly Routing

By using the Ogdensburgh – Prescott exchange offices the Canadian postage was 7 d. If the letter had been sent from New York to the Kingston exchange office there would have been no Canadian postage.

TOO LATE

Faint 'TOO LATE' marking, applied in New York City, probably indicates a delay not the fault of the post office and could explain the unusual routing.



July 1848 folded letter from New York City to Kingston Canada. 10 cent stamp paid the over 300 mile rate from New York City to the border. 7 d. due for Canadian postage over 61 but under 100 miles. Prescott transit marking on front and Prescott and Kingston receiving markings on back, one dated 21 and the other 22 July.

The letter is from Rawdon, Wright, Hatch and Edson, the printers of the 1847 stamps.

Routing instructions overriding standard route. The regulations required the post office to follow routing instructions if given. In this case there was a significant savings.

The normal route for mail from New York City to Upper Canada was by way of Lewiston ME and the Queenston exchange office. The Canadian postage from the border at Lewiston to Brockville would be 11 ½ d. By sending via Morristown the recipient saved almost 20 cents!

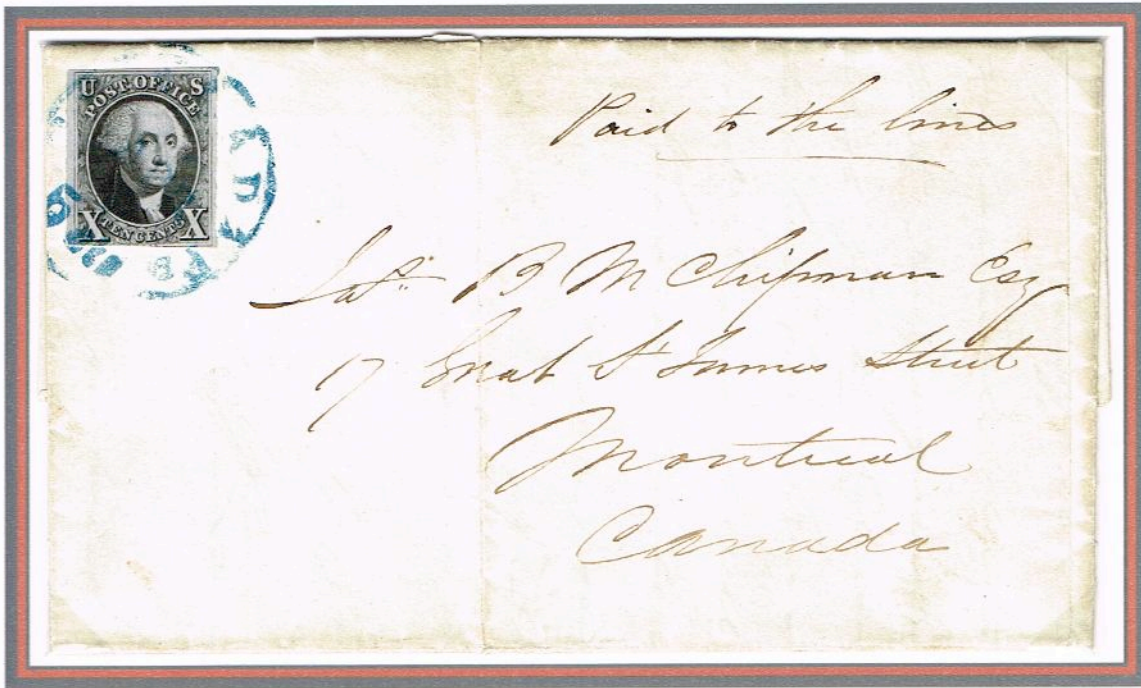


April 1849 folded letter from New York City to Brockville Upper Canada. From New York the letter traveled in open mail to Morristown NY following routing instructions on the letter. There would be no postage due if the letter was delivered to Brockville since it was the exchange office.

Paying Through Rate

To Canada Under the 6 April 1851 Agreement with Canada

After Canada had assumed responsibility for its own postal system, an agreement between the United States and Canada went into effect on 6 April 1851 that provided for a 10 cent rate for ½ ounce letter between Canada and the United States for regular letters traveling a distance of under 3,000 miles. A cover with partial payment was treated as unpaid. The rate was in effect only 86 days before the 1847 stamps were demonetized.



April 4 folded letter from Philadelphia PA to Montreal Canada. This letter was mailed before the 6 April rate was in effect but arrived in Canada after 6 April where it was treated under the new treaty. Paid through not to the lines.

This letter is the earliest recorded use of the 10 cent rate under the new treaty.

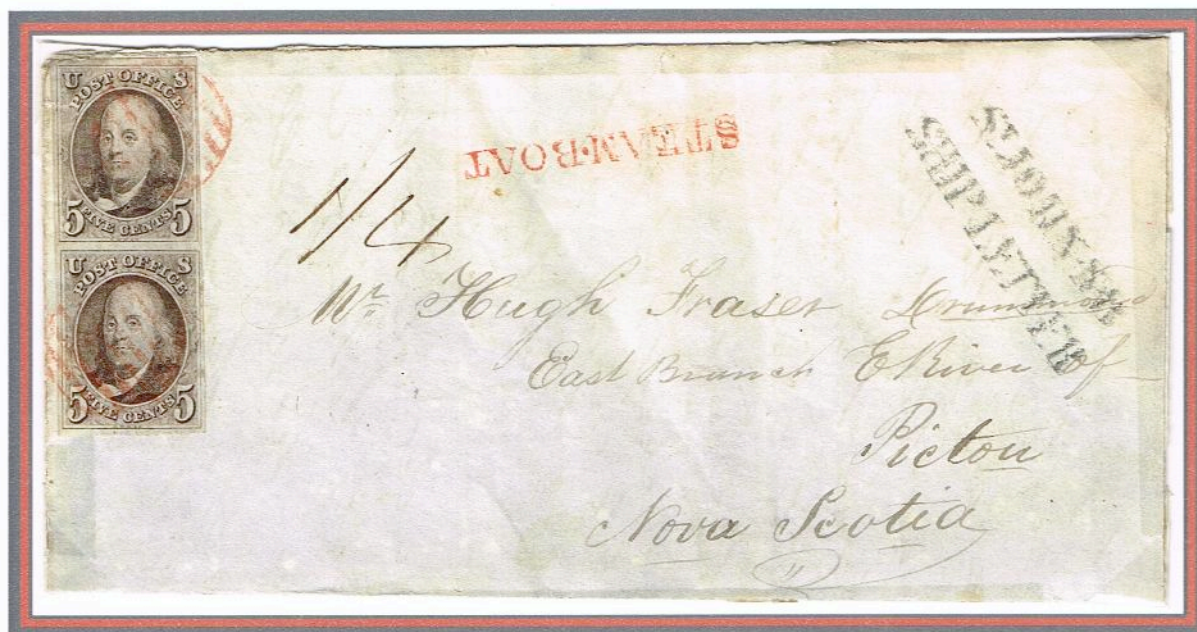


April 9 folded letter from Lockport NY to Cayuga Canada West with two 5 cent stamps paying the 10 cent combined rate between Canada and the United States.

Black Kingston transit marking and fancy red 'U. States' arc exchange marking on front. The 'U. States' marking indicates that the letter originated in the U.S. Hamilton transit marking on back.

This letter is the earliest recorded use of a 5 cent stamp under the 6 April treaty.

St. John Ship Letter



July 1849 folded address sheet f to Pictou, Nova Scotia. Five cent stamps pay 10 cent rate to the border. The straight-line red 'STEAM•BOAT' marking indicates that the letter originated along the Lake Champlain mail route. From Whithall the letter traveled to Boston and then to Eastport, most likely on the steamship Admiral, where it was transferred to the private ship Maid of Erin and sailed to St. John and entered the Canadian mails.

Two line 'ST JOHN NB/SHIP LETTER' handstamp was applied. Transferring ships minimize port taxes. Transit markings on the back from St. John and New Glasgow. Receiving mark from Pictou. 1 shilling 4 d. due comprised of 4 ½ d. ship letter fee and 11 ½ d. inland rate to Pictou.

One of two recorded 1847 covers with the St. John Ship Letter marking.

U.S. Rate Paid to Port of Departure

To Nova Scotia via Cunard Packet

As an alternative to the overland route to Nova Scotia, mail could be sent by the Cunard British packets that traveled between New York or Boston and London. These packets stopped in Halifax Nova Scotia and were faster than overland. Originally the cost to Nova Scotia was 1 shilling, the same charge as a letter going all the way to London. In September 1849, the rate was reduced to 4 ½ d. local currency or 4 d. sterling.

September 1849 folded address sheet from Baltimore MD to Halifax Nova Scotia. Two 10 cent and one 5 cent stamps overpaid rate to the border; 4 ½ d. due for Nova Scotia postage.

The letter, intended for the Niagara, missed the ship and probably went to Halifax on the Europa leaving Boston the 26th and arriving 27th September.

The 25 cents attempted to prepay the 24 cent rate via Cunard line but it could not be prepaid. Black 'UD STATES' and Halifax receiving mark on back.



September 1850 folded letter from Baltimore MD to Halifax, Nova Scotia. Pair of 5 cent stamps paying the 10 cent over 300 miles rate to Boston. From Boston traveled on Cunard packet Hibernia to Halifax departing Boston on 18 September arriving on 20 September. The ship went on to London.

4 ½ d. due from addressee, the British packet rate effective 20 September 1849.

U.S. Rate Paid to the Line

To Prince Edward Island and to New Brunswick via Land Route



During the winter months the mail was carried across the Northumberland Strait on passenger ice boats which could be dragged across the sections of solid ice. Passengers were given a reduced rate if they assisted the crew pulling the boats.

February 1851 folded letter from Boston to Charlotte Town Prince Edward Island (PEI) with a pair of 5 cent stamps paying the rate to the border and 1 shilling ½ d. paying the postage to Prince Edward Island. This letter traveled on the land route from Boston. At Robbinston ME the letter was exchanged with St. Andrews New Brunswick and rated 1 shilling 1 ½ d. due. From St. Andrews the letter was sent to Amherst Nova Scotia and then to Cape Tormentine where it crossed Northumberland Strait to Point Traverse. Then the letter went to Charlotte Town PEI. Amherst transit marking on back.

Only recorded 1847 5 cent cover to Prince Edward Island.

December 1847 folded address sheet from Boston MA to St. Johns New Brunswick. Two 5 cent stamps pay the rate to the border. 7 pence due for Canadian postage.

One of eight recorded letters to New Brunswick with 5 cent stamps.



U.S. Rate Paid from the Line

From Canada Prior to 6 April 1851

While Canadian postage could only be paid at the United States border, the US portion of the postage could be provided by applying US stamps to the letter either when posted in Canada or at the border. In some cases these stamps would be canceled in Canada. Some Canadian postmasters, acting as agents of the US Post Office, had a supply of US stamps and they could be purchased and applied to letters in Canada.

March 1850 cover from Canada to Auburn NY. Canadian postage including 3 d. for the ferry from Kingston to Cape Vincent paid in cash. Stamp paying the under 300 mile rate from the border to Auburn NY. Red Kingston and blue Cape Vincent exchange office markings.

Eight tiny bars within oblong frame cancel the stamp.



Montreal ring target



e Canadian 7 ring target



January 1851 cover to Harrisburg PA. Red Hamilton and Lewiston NY exchange office markings.

Canadian postage paid to the boarder in cash. Pair of 5 cent stamps pay the over 300 mile rate from the border to Harrisburg.

e

October 1849 folded letter from Montreal to New York City. Red ten in circle applied over the Montreal 'PAID'. Canadian postage paid to the boarder in cash.

Pair of 5 cent stamps pay the over 300 mile rate from the border to New York City.



Paying the Through Rate

From Canada After 6 April 1851

The 69 days between 23 April 1851, when Canada issued its first stamp, and 30 June 1851 when the United States issue of 1847 was demonetized, was the only time that stamps from the United States and Canada could be used together on the same letter and comply with postal regulations.

There are three items recorded paying the through rate with the 1847 United States issue and the Canadian first issue during the period of legal use of the stamps; one cover and one piece (shown below) from Canada, and one cover from the United States to Canada.



Piece from Canada that was exchanged at Kingston to an unknown address in the United States with the first postage stamp from both the United States and Canada. Both stamps canceled in Canada with black target cancels. 5 cent stamp is a right margin copy. Red '10' applied in Canada indicating payment of 10 cents, the through rate to anywhere in the United States other than to California.

One cover and this piece recorded used from Canada in this period with stamps from both the United States and Canada.



Section Seven - Transatlantic Uses



Uses to England including before, during and after the retaliatory rate period. Usages to France, Belgium, Holland and Switzerland are also included. Covers handled by forwarding agents are shown.

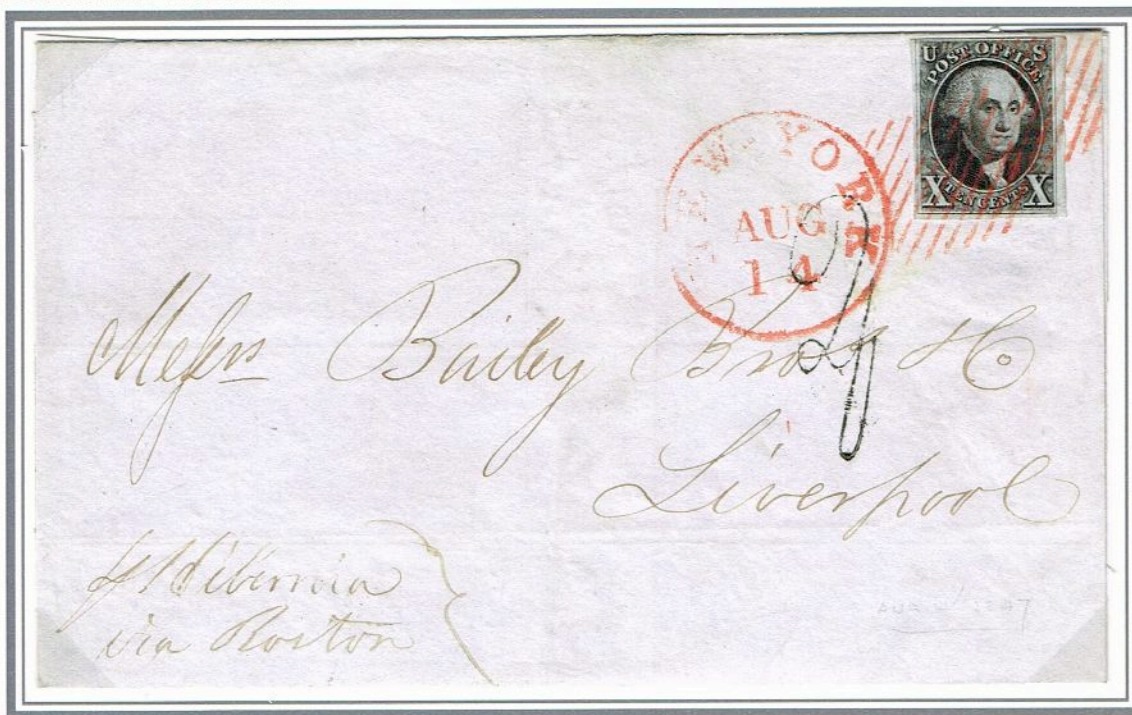
During the 1840's there was significant interest and progress in establishing regular mail to Europe and beyond. The mail traveled by ship from Boston and later New York to ports in Europe.

At the beginning of the period, the 1847 issue was valid for postage. Letters were normally paid to the port of demarcation and the fee for transport to the destination was paid by the recipient. In 1848, a new Postal Convention with England allowed for prepayment of the entire fee. In between was a short-lived period of 'double charging' known as the Retaliatory Rate Period and an even shorter Restored Rate Period.

Both British and American contract steamship packets traveled from the U.S. ports of Boston and New York. In addition, non-contract ships often carried mail to and from Europe. These sailing ships were slower but less expensive than the contract steamships.

To England Prior to the Postal Convention of 1848

Double Rate via Boston



August 1847 folded address sheet from New York to Liverpool England via Boston. 10 cent stamp paid double rate postage to Boston and double rate 2 shilling due for transport on the British packet Hibernia to Liverpool. The Hibernia sailed from Boston 16 August, arriving in Liverpool on 27 August. Liverpool 28 August datestamp on the back.

Early use of a 10 cent 1847 stamp and two clear strikes of the New York square grid.

via Boston



September 1847 folded letter from Washington D.C. to London England. 10 cent stamp paid postage to Boston. Sailed on the Cunard ship Britannia leaving Boston on 1 October and arriving in Liverpool on 16 October where the manuscript 1 shilling due marking was applied. The letter arrived in London on 16 October. London date stamp on the back.

via New York



This letter left on the first Cunard departure from New York City to Liverpool. Prior to this all departures were from Boston. Subsequently Cunard alternated between Boston and New York City.

January 1848 folded address sheet from Philadelphia PA to Sheffield England via New York. 5 cent stamp paid postage to New York. The letter traveled on the Cunard ship Cambria leaving New York on 29 January and arriving in Liverpool on 13 February where the handstamp 1 shilling due marking was applied. The letter arrived in Sheffield on 14 February. Liverpool and Sheffield date stamps on the back.

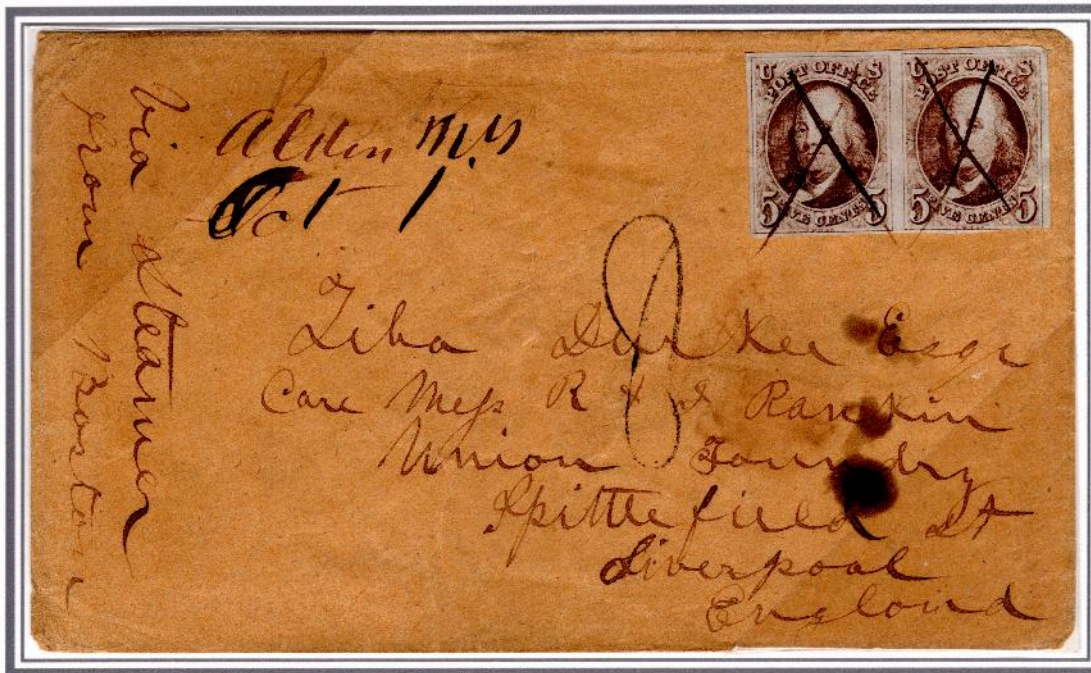
During Retaliatory Period

To England

The retaliator, July 1848 till January 1849, rate applied to contract steamships. However many non-contract ships sailed East from Boston and New York to England. The retaliatory rate did not apply to this mail and it was suppose to be charged the ship letter rate of 8 pence in England thus saving 32 cents.

The two letters below pay the postage to Boston where the postmaster was expected to put it on a non-contract ship to England where the recipient would pay 8 d. In fact the letters were treated differently.

Avoiding the 'Retaliatory Rate'



Black Liverpool backstamp used on non-contract ship letters.

October 1848 cover from Alden NY to Liverpool. 5 cent stamps paid domestic postage to Boston. Right stamp 'dot in S' variety. Traveled on non-contract ship arriving in Liverpool on 28 October.

e



September 1848 cover from Alden NY to Liverpool. 5 cent stamps paid domestic postage to Boston. Since the postage was not paid to England this letter should have been placed on a non-contract ship but actually traveled on the Hibernia arriving in Liverpool 2 October. The recipient was charged 1 shilling.



Under the Postal Convention of 1848, letters to England via American Packet required either prepayment, or all fees were to be collected when the letter was delivered. Partial payment was not allowed.



This cover to Liverpool from an unknown origin was placed on the American packet Hermann leaving New York on 20 August arriving in Southampton 3 September. The 1 shilling due marking was applied indicating that 1 shilling (24 cents) would be collected from the recipient. The letter arrived in Liverpool on 4 September.

The New York Exchange Office debited Britain 21 cents, 5 cents inland postage plus 16 cents ship rate indicated by the black '21'. The two 5 cent stamps were not recognized as payment since partial payment was not allowed.

The 21 debt marking was only used in New York April – December 1849.

US domestic postage paid to the US port of embarkation. Remaining postage collected on delivery.



May 1848 folded address sheet from New York to Bordeaux France. 5 cent stamp paid the postage on the Express Mail train to Boston. Two red 5's and red PAID indicate postage paid to the port of embarkation.

Sailed on the Cunard ship Arcadia leaving Boston 3 May and arriving in Liverpool 16 May where it received the orange 'COLONIES/&c.ART.13'. Handstamp and circular datestamp (on back). Exchanged at Boulogne-S-Mer, then traveled by rail to Paris and then to Bordeaux arriving 20 May. 20 decimes postage under the 1843 British-French postal treaty was collected on delivery of which 10 decimes went to England for sea and transit postage. Weight less than 7 1/2 grams.

Under the United States-British Postal Treaty of 1848

To France via England

Mail to France paid postage to the US border at a 5 cent inland rate, independent of distance. British packet, British transit, and French domestic charges collected on delivery. The British charged 10 decimes for packet and transit charges for a simple letter less than 7 ½ grams.

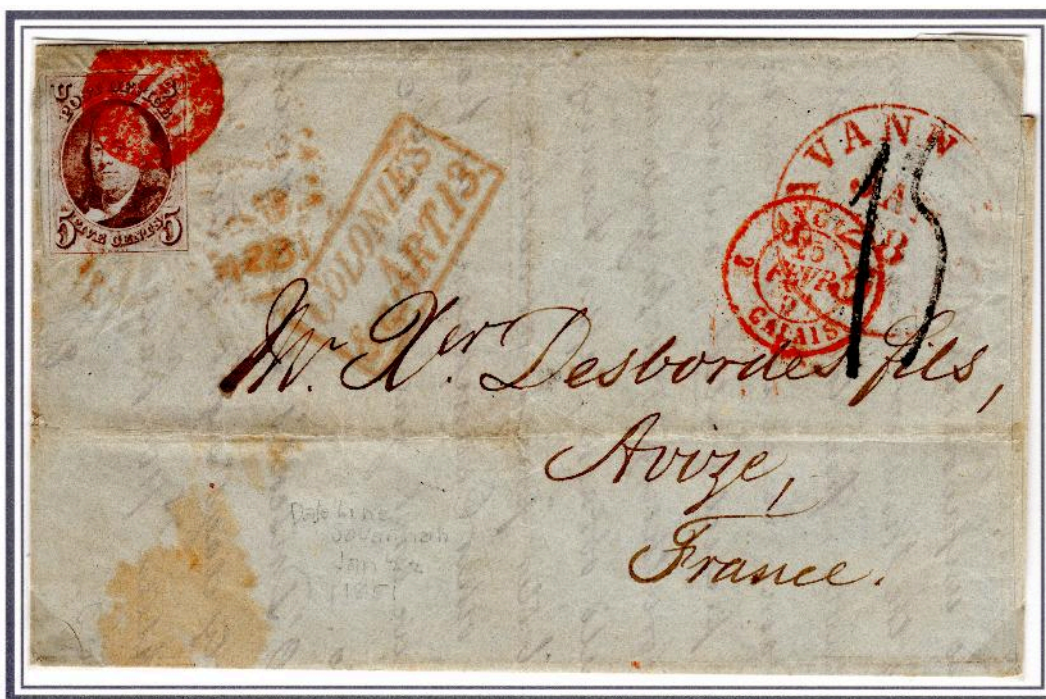
After 1 August 1849 French inland postage was fixed at 5 d. for 7 ½ grams.



August 1850 cover from Philadelphia to Marseille France. 5 cent stamp paid the postage to the port of embarkation. Sailed on the Cunard ship Niagara leaving New York 28 August and arriving in Liverpool 9 September where it received the orange 'COLONIES/&c. ART.13'. handstamp. Exchanged at Calais 11 September, arriving in Marseille 13 September. 15 decimes postage under the British-French postal treaty was collected on delivery of which 10 decimes went to England. Weight less than 7 ½ grams.

January 1851 folded letter from Savannah GA to Avize France. 5 cent stamp paid domestic rate to Boston, the port of embarkation.

Sailed on the Cunard ship Canada leaving Boston on 12 February arriving in Liverpool 23 February where it received the orange 'COLONIES/&c. ART.13'. handstamp. Exchanged at Calais arriving in Avize 25 February. 15 decimes postage under the British-French postal treaty was collected on delivery. 10 decimes to England – under 7 ½ grams.



To Switzerland and to Germany via British Open Mail



July 1850 folded letter from New York to Chaux-De-Fonds Switzerland four miles from the French border. Entered the mail on the Express Train to Boston, 5 cents paid the United States inland postage due under the United States - British treaty.

French due marking of 36 decimes, the rate for 7 1/2 - 15 grams, to be collected from the recipient. This letter transmitted under the United States-British treaty for open mail to European destinations beyond England. It was 'double' weight in France but single weight in the United States.

One of three recorded 1847 covers to Switzerland.

March 1849 double rate folded letter from Philadelphia to Cologne. The stamps pay double the British Open Mail rate. The '6' in octagon cancels is normally used for incoming ship letters.

From Philadelphia the letter was sent to Boston and then to England.

From England the letter went via Ostende Belgium to Aachen Germany under the Anglo-Prussian Convention.

The boxed black 'AMERICA per ENGLAND' handstamp was applied in Aachen. On reverse the black double circle 'RES' handstamp was applied at Cologne.

One of two covers with the 'AMERICA per ENGLAND' handstamp and only one with the 'RES' marking used with 1847 stamps.



via England

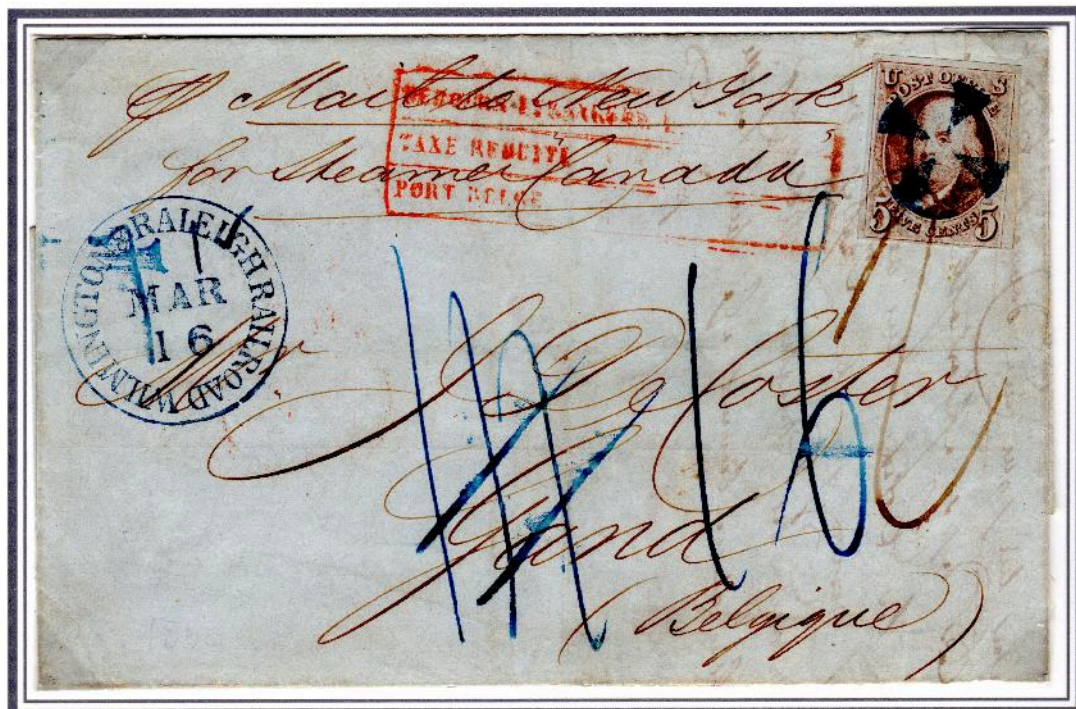
To Belgium and To Holland

March 1850 folded address sheet from Charleston SC to Ghent Belgium, entering the mails on the Wilmington & Raleigh Railroad. The 5 cent stamp paid the inland postage to the port of embarkation. Blue Maltese Cross cancellation and route agent postmark.

Carried on the Cunard ship Canada departing New York on 20 March and arriving in Liverpool 1 April. London 2 April datestamp on the back. The letter was exchanged with Belgium through Ostend where the accountancy handstamp was applied and a 5 April exchange marking, 'ANGLETERRE PAR OSTEND', was applied on the back. Ghent receiving stamp on back indicating arrival on 5 April.

This letter was rated 16 decimes due. 12 decimes for England (8 d. for package postage and 4 d. British transit) and 4 decimes for Belgium inland postage.

The letter was over 7 1/2 grams but less than 1/2 oz. The small check mark indicates more than a simple letter.



July 1850 folded letter from Philadelphia PA to Rotterdam Holland. The 5 cent stamp paid the inland postage to New York, the port of embarkation. The open mail rate to Europe via England.

Carried on the Cunard ship America departing New York on 30 July and arriving in Liverpool 13 August and then on to London. London 13 August datestamp on the back. The letter was sent to Holland via Belgium exchanged at Ostende and then sent to Rotterdam. Very faint 'ENGELAND/OVER OSTENDE' handstamp and Rotterdam receiving mark on back.

110 Dutch cents were collected from the recipient. The British received 80 cents (1 shilling 4d.), Belgium received 10 cents for the transit fee and the Netherlands retained 20 cents for domestic postage.

Handled by Forwarding Agents

Forwarding agents provided a service helping goods or letters to get to their final destination. In most cases forwarding agents were involved in other businesses and provided the forwarding service as a side line much like businesses serve as pick-up points for UPS or FedEx.



September 1849 letter from New Orleans to Amsterdam Holland. Carried outside the mail to Boston and the T. W. Ward company, the forwarding agent. Even though the letter was carried outside the mails, inland postage from New Orleans to Boston was required. The two 5 cent stamps overpay the inland postage for transatlantic mail. Ward handstamp indicating which ship the letter would travel on. Ward delivered the letter to the mails.

Carried on the Cunard ship Europa departing Boston on 26 September and arriving in Liverpool 7 October and then on to London. London 8 October datestamp on the back. The letter was sent directly to Holland from England. Amsterdam 11 October receiving mark on back.

100 cents was collected from the recipient. The British received 80 cents (1 sh 4d), and the Netherlands retained 20 cents for domestic postage.

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March 1848 folded address sheet from New York to Bordeaux France. New York forwarding agent Renauld & Francois handstamp on the front.

Carried on the Cunard ship Hibernia departing New York 26 February arriving in Liverpool 8 October. The letter was charged 20 decimes due, 10 decimes for British packet service and 10 decimes for French mails. carried between 220 and 750 kilometers.

On front 'COLONIES &c. ART.13.' and 'CC/ANGL. 2 BOULOGNE/19 MAR 48' French markings and London transit and Bordeaux arrival markings on reverse.



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The Postal Convention of March 6, 1844 with New Grenada provided that U. S. Navy vessels could drop off mail bags at either Chagres or at Porto-bello, Grenada. The bags were transported across the isthmus and delivered to the United States Consul at Panama City. The Consul would deal with moving the mail to the appropriate destination. In the case of the letter below, British mail on the Pacific Steam Navigation Company carried the letter to Chile.



Cover front from Philadelphia PA to Santiago Chile.

The letter was carried by the USPO to Washington DC where it was put in mail bags and sent by Navy Ship to Chagres New Grenada. Mail bags were off-loaded from Navy ships and carried across the Isthmus of Panama by the New Grenada Post Office and then down the East coast of South America by the British Pacific Steam Navigation Company to Chile.

The red rate marking for Chilean postage was applied in Valparaiso Chile. The rates are: 1 1/2 for incoming sea postage, and 2 for internal postage. Blurred red 'ULTRAMAR' handstamp indicating the letter arrived by sea.

The only recorded use of the 1847 issue, or any other mail, carried under the 1844 postal convention between the United States and the Republic of New Grenada. In addition it is the only use to Chile.



Section Eight - Concluding Uses



The last day of legal usage is shown as well as demonetized uses of the issue. Fraudulent use shows both covers where the fraud is and is not detected. Some unusual situations are shown. The exhibit concludes with examples of the official reprints. Blocks of plate proofs and blocks and corner margin copies of the issued stamps are shown.

Fraudulent Uses - Stamps accepted

People would occasionally remove the cancel from a previously used stamp and attempt to reuse the stamp.

In some cases the stamps were accepted. This is one of the very few situations where postmasters made meaningful errors. Postmasters from small towns saw few stamps, and were less prepared to stop the fraud. However it also occurred in large post offices. Below are examples from both a large and a small post office.



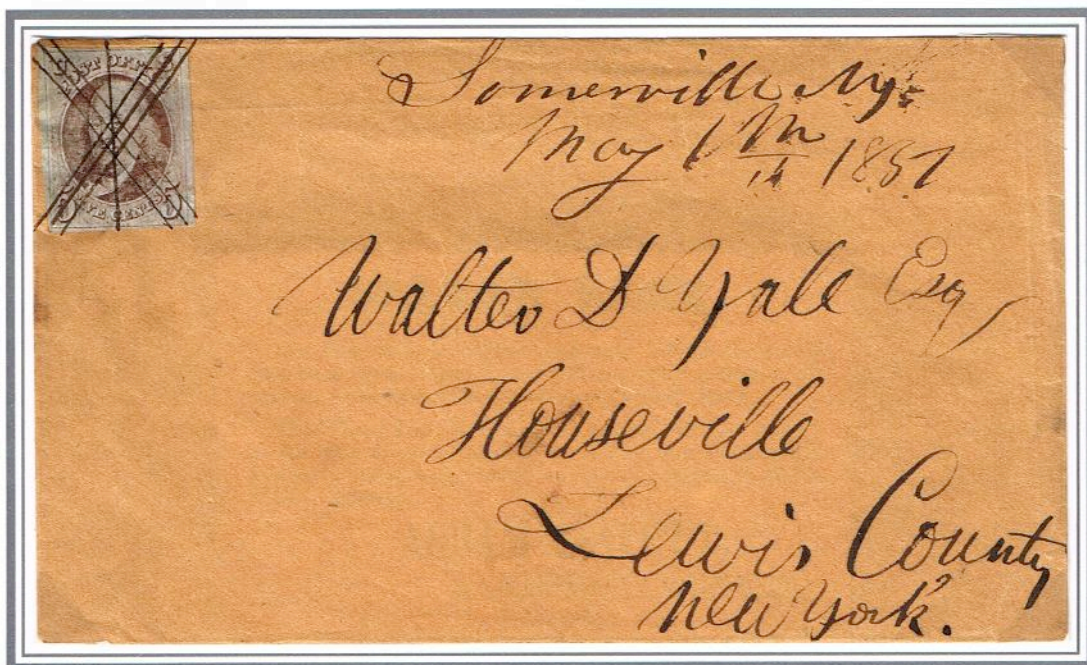
Folded address sheet to New Orleans LA. Blue numeral '10' in double circle cancels stamp.

Manuscript cancellation removed and then fraudulently reused.

May 1851 cover from Somerville to Houseville NY.

Lightened red grid cancellation and fancy pen cancel. Fraudulently used. Manuscript town postmark.

Only recorded 1847 cover from Somerville.

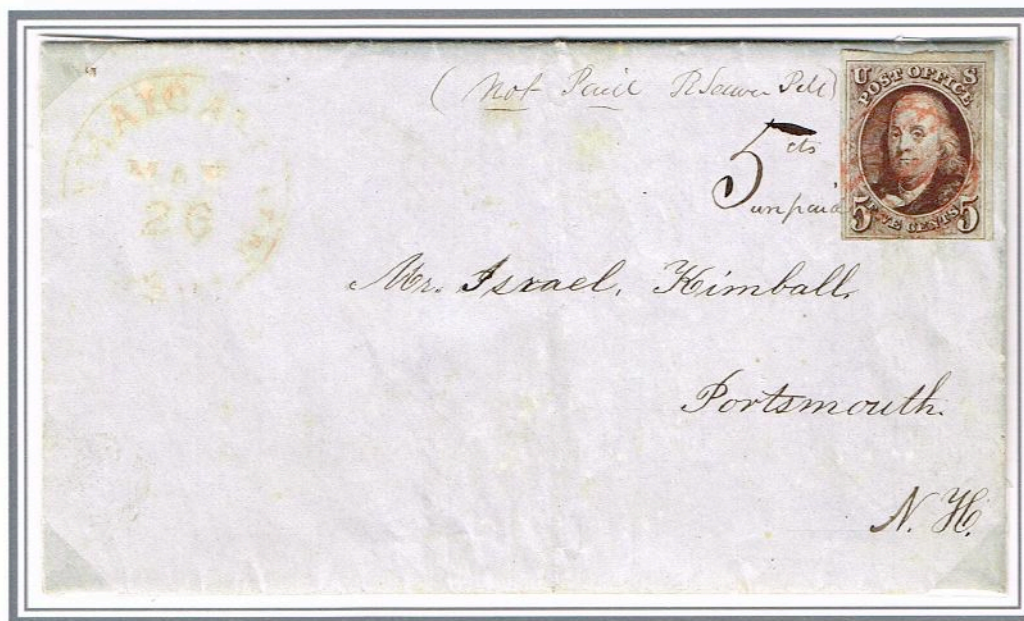
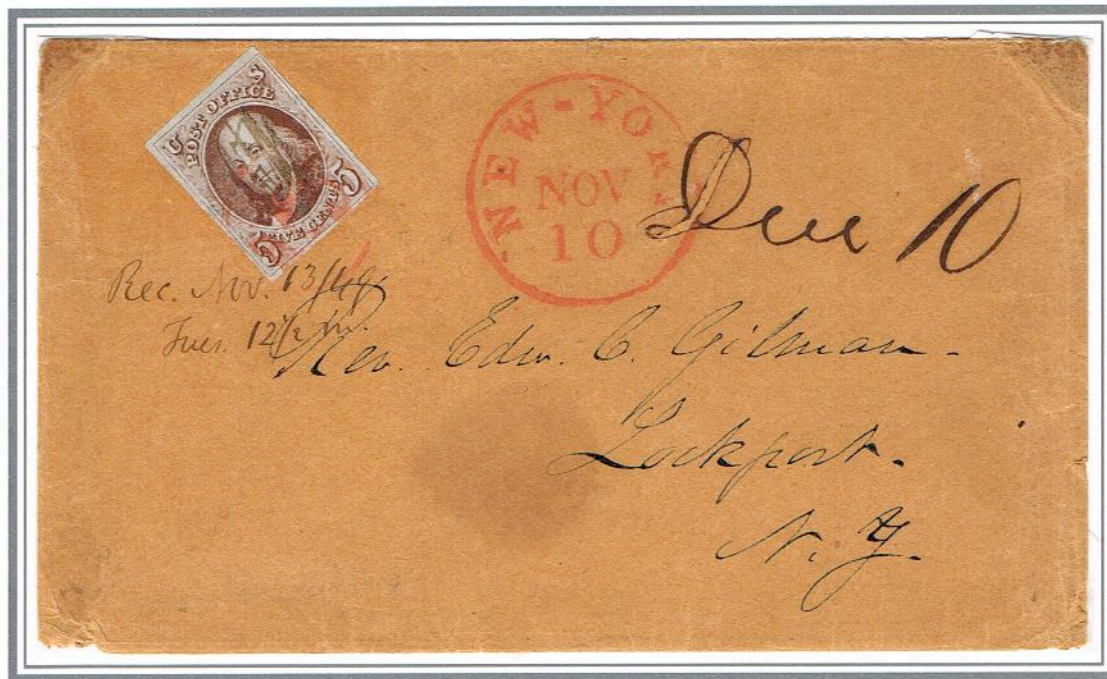


In the examples below the Postmaster correctly detected the fraud and did not accept the stamp for payment.

November 1849 cover from New York City to Lockport NY.

Stamp was not accepted for postage due to prior use where it recieved a manuscript cancel.

The stamp was struck with a red '5' in circle and a manuscript 'Due 10' applied. The distance from New York City to Lockport NY is over 300 miles so the correct postage was 10 cents.



Folded letter from Jamaica Plain MA to Portsmouth NH.

Stamp was not accepted for postage due to prior use where it was canceled with a red grid. Manuscript note on cover: "Not Paid R Seaver PM, 5 cts unpaid". The note ties the stamp and was written and signed by the postmaster of Jamaica Plain MA. Only recorded, albeit fraudulent, use from Jamaica Plain.

The issue of 1847 was demonetized effective 1 July 1851 and could not be used to pre-pay postage after 30 June. Those holding stamps could redeem them for cash before 30 September 1851.

The order to demonetize the stamps was issued on 11 June and required the stamps be redeemed only by the postmaster that sold the stamps or by a postmaster that had been issued stamps by the department. This rigid approach was aimed at making it easier for the department, not their customers. There are many examples of the stamps being used after 30 June, so postmasters clearly overlooked the order.



30 June 1851 folded letter from Rochester to New York City.
Red 7 bar grid cancels stamps.

The issue of 1847 was not valid for postage after 30 June 1851. Stamps could be redeemed for cash but not used as to prepay postage after 30 June. However, the stamps were occasionally used for postage. Over 70 covers with demonetized stamps exist the vast majority of which were accepted to pay postage.



Small Boston PAID in grid.
Stamp is orange brown
Earliest recorded use of this
grid is 12 July 1851.



Large Boston PAID in grid.
Earliest use in late 1852.



June 1852 folded address sheet from Boston MA to New York City.
The 5 cent stamp accepted for 3 cent rate.



November 1851 cover from Petersburg VI to Philadelphia PA. 5 cent stamp accepted for 3 cent under 3,000 mile letter rate and the 1 cent 'Way' fee.

The only recorded demonetized use where the 5 cent stamp pays both the letter rate and the 'Way' fee with a 1 cent overpayment.



October 1852 folded address sheet from Harrisburg PA to Washington DC. Five cent stamp not accepted and the recipient was charged 5 cents.

One of four recorded examples of demonetized uses that were not accepted.

Occasionally there were "disputes" over the correct postage especially for letters that were right at the boundary for a rate or for the distance.



Sept 1847 folded letter from Philadelphia PA to Webster MA. The distance between Webster MA and Philadelphia is about 300 miles and the letter weights $1\frac{1}{5}$ oz. The body of the letter does not indicate any enclosures were included. Manuscript markings 'due 5 c' and 'Over chg 5'.

It appears that the Philadelphia Postmaster initially accepted the distance as under 300 miles and then it was determined that the distance was over 300 miles and the due 5 c was added. In addition the '5' rate in the postmark was changed to '10' to make it clear that 10 cents was the rate. It appears the manuscript 'Over chg 5' was applied in Webster indicating that 5 cents was adequate after all. Blackish brown stamp.

Stamp applied by sealing wax. The purpose for doing this is lost to history. Possibly the gum was removed from the stamp or the sender had previous problems with stamps falling off.

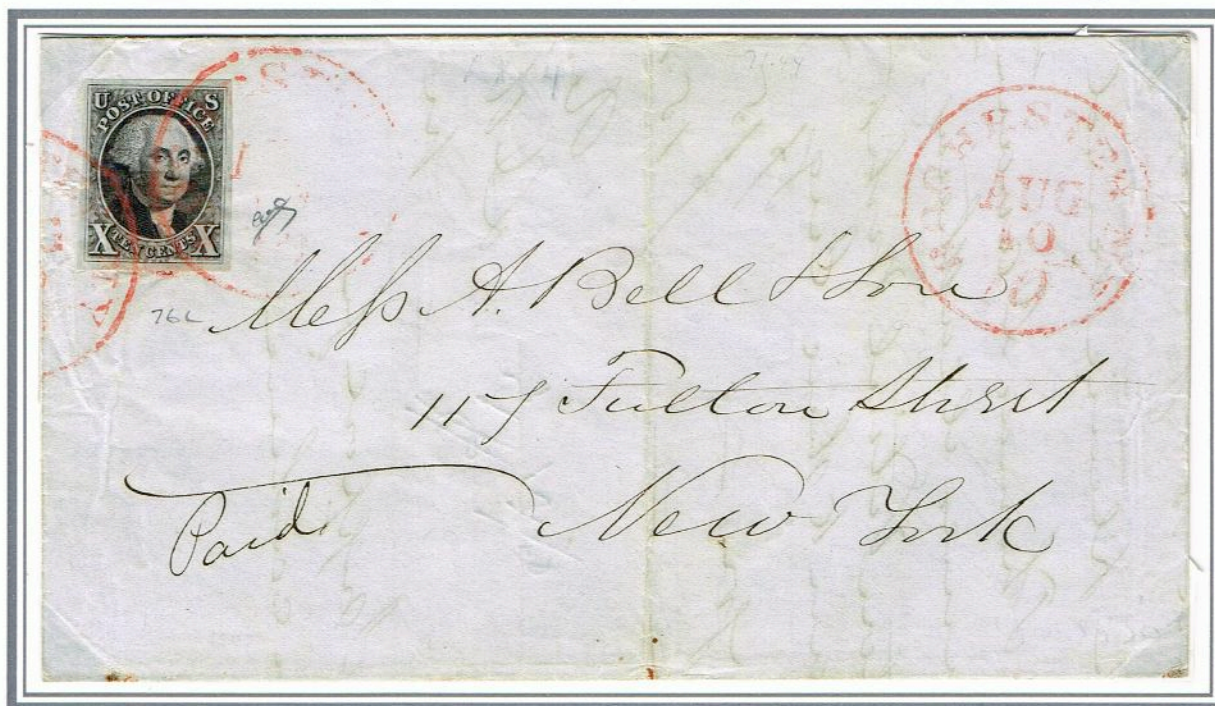


Image from reverse of the folded address sheet showing the impression of the red wax seal holding the stamp to the front of the address sheet.

August 1850 folded address sheet from Rochester NY to New York City

In 1875 reproductions or imitations were made from new plates. They were not valid for postage. Initially the reproductions were made for the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. They were printed in sheets of 50 with no gum.

Plate Proofs



Die Proofs



Printed for Pan Pacific Exposition

Stamps As Issued Without Gum



Positions 39, 40, 49, 50



Positions 5, 6, 25, 26



Position 91



Position 100