



U.S. Cancellation Club NEWS

Vol. 36, No. 3, Whole No. 318, August 2021



This 1870 Lockport, New York cover, franked with three single, brown orange, Scott 112s, is twice-cancelled by a duplexed killer not previously reported. It is also the catalyst for a new study into the fancy cancels of this Niagara County city on the Erie Canal. Robert Conley has plenty to share, and is asking for your help, starting on page 63.

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The United States Cancellation Club NEWS

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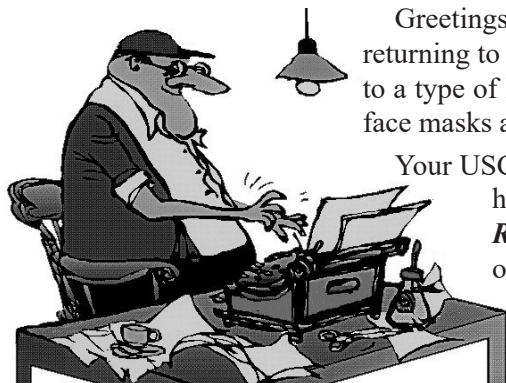
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EDITOR'S NOTES



Greetings! After some 18 months of pandemic-induced turmoil, things seem to be returning to normal, or at least improving – the United States Postal Service is back to a type of First-World standard, most people have dispensed with those atrocious face masks and are getting on with their lives, and stamp shows are back on again!

Your USCC is improving too – a new website is imminent (no, really, it is!), you have two new governors-at-large (welcome to **Merritt Jenkins** and **Larry Rausch**) and your August *NEWS* is again overweight, with 28 pages instead of 24. Only a couple of years ago, the *NEWS* was regularly just 20 pages.

All this extra content is due to the many large, serial-type articles in your editor's inbox – **Bill Duffney** continues his lovely presentation of Putnam, Connecticut fancy cancels, the (thankfully) ubiquitous **Ardy Callender** shares his second installment of solid-centered datestamps used as cancellers, and yours truly hopes to stir up some interest in Lockport, New York.

Smaller articles are also important, and in the middle of those three "pillars", we have **Roger Curran** showing us some pretty "3" rate numeral cancels. Sadly, following that is the first "Closed Album" under this editor's stewardship and, it seems, for a decade or so. Let us hope many more moons wax and wane before another of these appears.

That takes care of the first 21 pages. Roger returns to discuss rubber-faced handstamps on page 74 and Ardy has something more to say about New York City's four-ring target cancels. Closing us out, we have a one-pager from **John Valenti**, who has had a brilliant revelation and suggests that the Mittineague, Massachusetts "7" cancels may be more prolific than may have first been assumed.

As far as one can reasonably predict from here, the last *NEWS* of the year will again be at least 28 pages and continue one or two of the "pillars" and commence one or two others that have been patiently waiting to greet you. There will also be talk of elections and finding a replacement for our priceless, retiring Secretary-Treasurer, **Joe Crosby**. Another thing to look out for is an announcement that the new website is fully operational – one can assure you that a web address exists and is functional, and that the first 300 issues of the *NEWS* have been downloaded and are accessible – our highly-esteemed president, **Matt Kewriga** is just cleaning it all up so it is suitable for members' and public viewing.

Enjoy your USCC *NEWS*. Until next time, may your god go with you. ■

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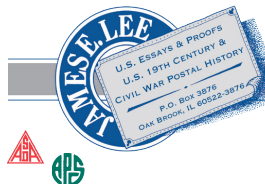


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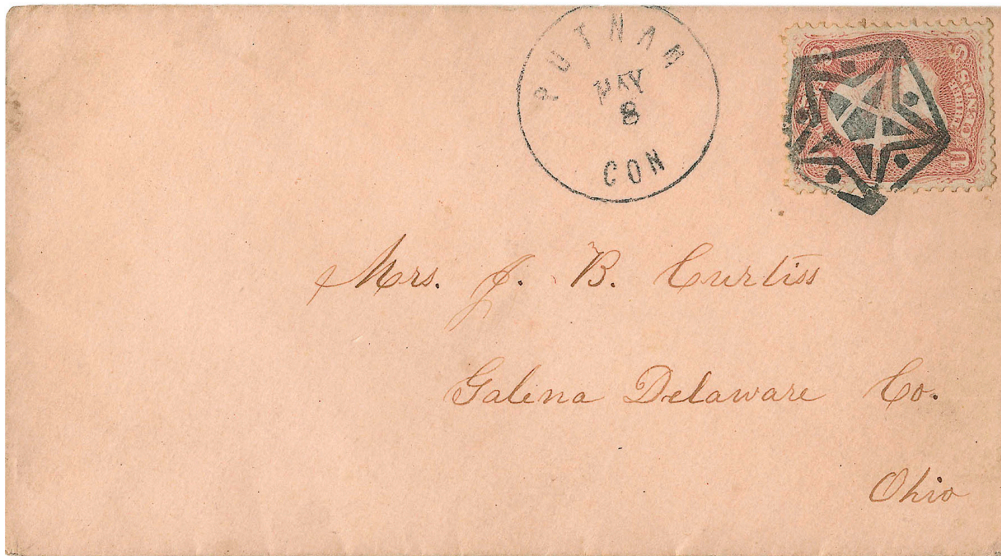
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Putnam Observations Beyond the Stars *A Showcase ~ The Mid to Late 1860s (Part 2)*

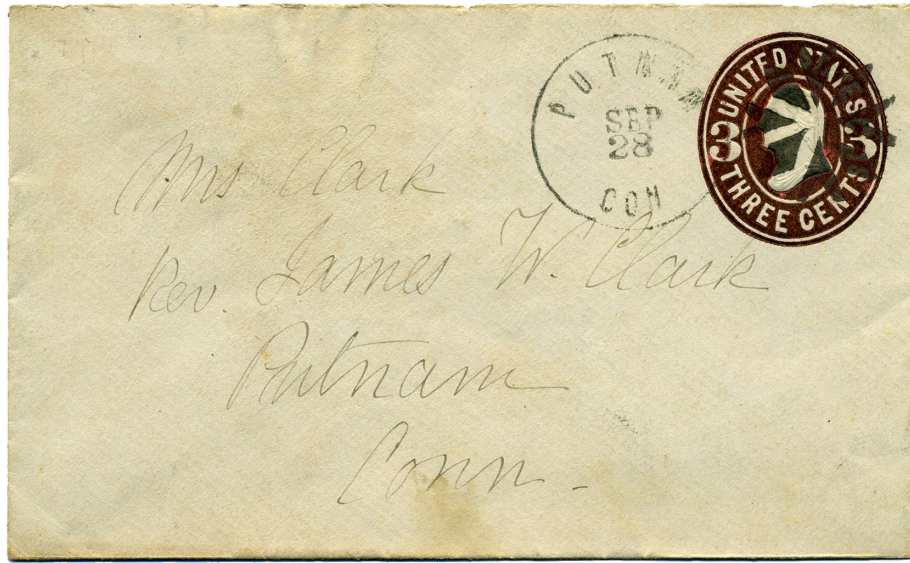
W.J. Duffney

Pentagon
S/E ST-E 23
AUG 23, (KnYrs 1865+66);
(D. Barany Collection)



Using Masonic symbols as fancy cancels was in vogue during the 19th Century. The October 5, 1863, Putnam *Trowel*, featured in Part 1, was a design used by several post offices and is considered Masonic. There is a possibility, though tenuous, that the Putnam *Pentagon* is also of that ilk because the Masonic Order of the Eastern Star, which was being established at that time, eventually choose the pentagon as its logo. Each of the five pentagon points stands for a female characters of the Bible. A biography of Postmaster Brown states that he did not join any secret societies, however, his father David was known as a prominent New London Mason.

Circle of Diamonds & Arrows
SEP 28, (ca. 1865); Whitfield #2400



Daisy
JAN 21, (ca. 1866); Unlisted



Autumn Months 1866

OCT 24; S/E-ND-M 12

NOV 28; S/E ND-M 15; (Courtesy of RAS)

DEC 21; S/E ND-M 16





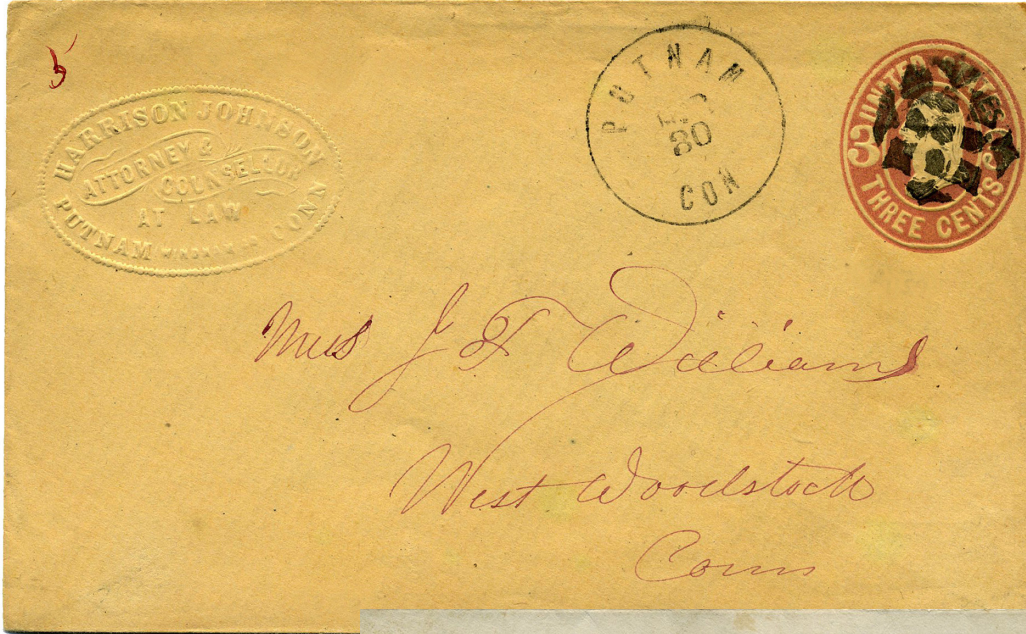
October Triple Strike
S/E-ND-M 12
OCT 10, (KnYr 1866)
(courtesy of RAS)

Double Anchor
S/E PO-An 14
MAR 28 (KnYr 1867);



Quartered Tracing

As previously mentioned, the maker of the classic Putnam fancy cancels had a penchant for symmetrical figures. The artist here seems to be attempting to make a design wherein, if halved or quartered, each part would be a mirror image of other parts, as found with most other geometric fancy cancels. Referring to this marking as a *Double Anchor* is a matter of conjecture.



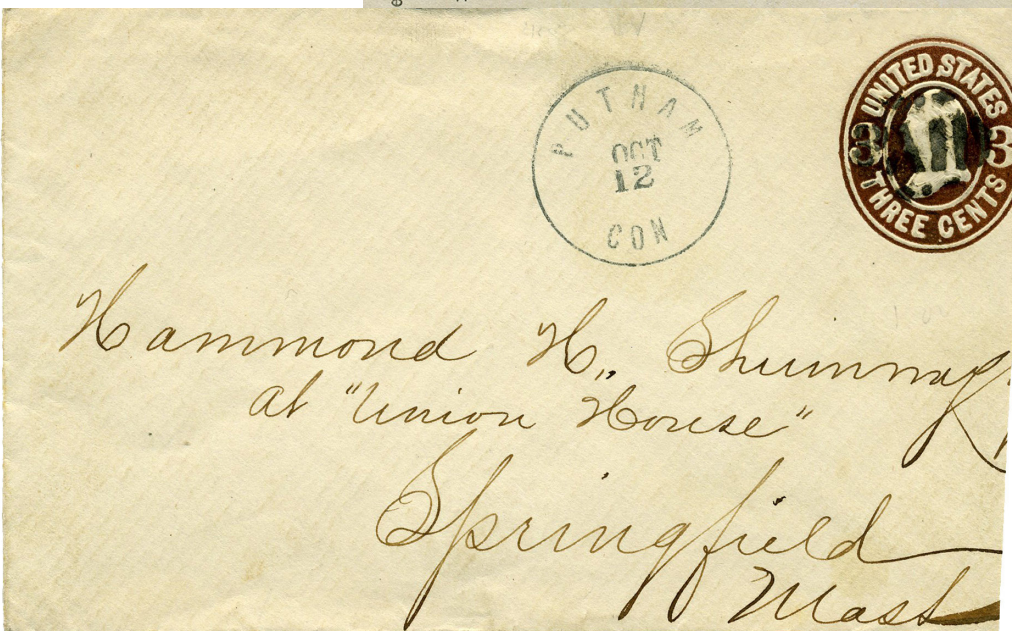
Pillows with Dots
(Concave Rectangles)
S/E- GE-E1
MAR 30 (KnYr 1868)



X-In-A-Box
Similar to Cole GEN-65
SEP 9, (ca. 1865);
ex-Beane

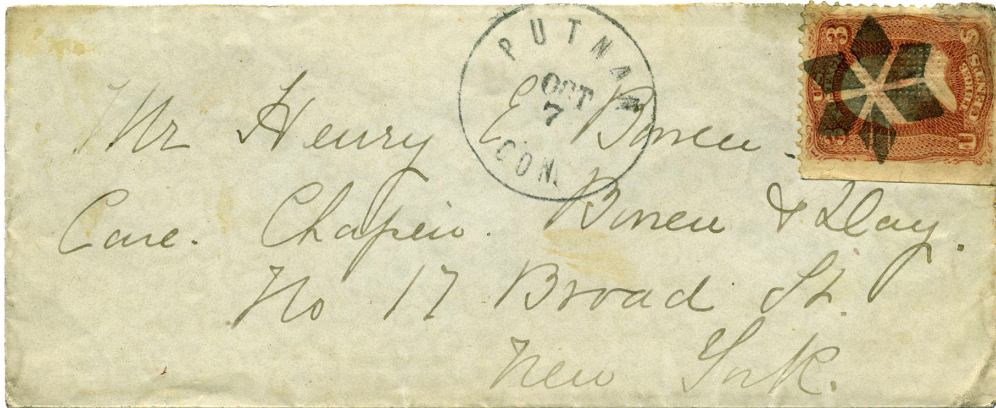


**'PAID' with
Printers Ornaments**
S/E PM-PD 27
OCT 12, (ca. 1865);



Circle of Six Diamonds

OCT 7, (ca. 1868) on 3¢ #88 Grilled Issue; Unlisted



Hiram Brown was replaced as postmaster by John O. Fox in August of 1867, which coincided with the introduction of the grilled issues, such as the above example. After that point there is a decided decline in cancel design creativity. Perry P. Wilson, in turn, took over the job on April 19, 1869.



19th Century Windham County Map, D.H. Hurd publisher.

End of Part II.

The Early Fancy Cancels of Lockport, New York (Part I)

Robert L. Conley

When it comes to additions to his collection, your author ordinarily tries very hard to restrict himself to the Granite or Pine Tree States. However, when he spotted the lovely cover seen on the front page of this issue in a recent auction catalogue, he simply could not let it pass to another collector. And so, a new-found interest in Lockport, New York was born – an interest that includes a thorough look at all the fancy cancels of Lockport used in the 19th century.

Many readers will be familiar with the bold "L" fancy cancels from Lockport, a few of which are shown in Figures 1, 2 & 3 below. Skinner & Eno¹ identified three different bold "L" cancels from Lockport (see Figure 4) and Whitfield² offers a fourth version, as seen in Figure 5. A little research reveals that these Lockport bold "L"s were, perhaps surprisingly, in use for at least 4½ years – from as early as May 1863 up until at least November 1867. The four reported bold "L"s are surely not the full story.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

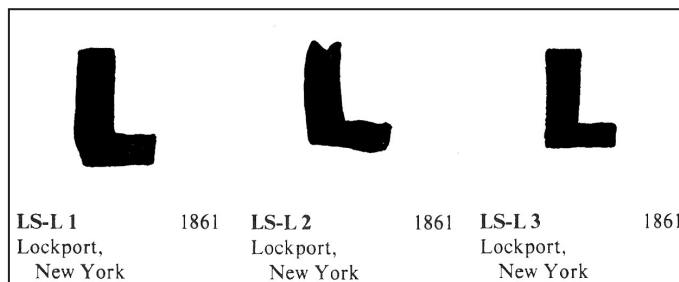


Figure 4

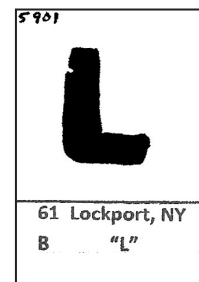


Figure 5

Another reported cancel (Whitfield 5346)³ is the bold "LV" which was presumably the creation of Lewis Vail, a postal clerk at Lockport from early 1867 to late 1870. Figure 6 illustrates a cover with a Scott 94, 3-cent grilled stamp cancelled by a duplexed "LV", most probably from 1868.

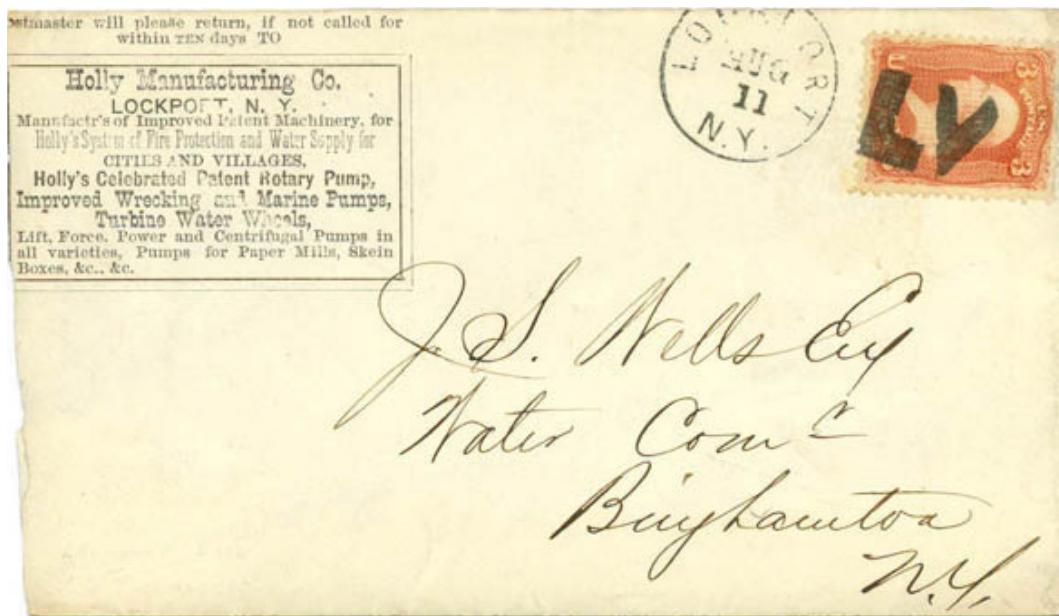


Figure 6

Only two other cancels are reported in the usual references – the curious reverse "Z" with a crossbar (Skinner & Eno LS-Z 4)⁴ shown in Figure 7, and a "leaf" design identified by Whitfield (#1614)⁵, a tracing of which can be seen in Figure 8.



Figure 7

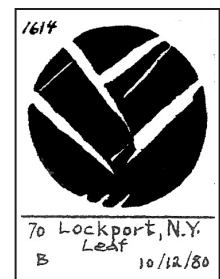


Figure 8

The USCC NEWS has also made occasional mention of Lockport over the years. Tracings (only) of a quadriseded rectangle inside a circle cancel and a four-leaf clover (noted on a Scott 65 stamp) were seen in the NEWS in 1988^{6,7}. These are both shown in Figure 9. An actual example of the former has been located – see Figure 10.

Other than those, only manufactured ellipses have been reported from about 1881, including the unusual triplex “time-out” cancels – these are outside the scope of this article (but will be discussed in the near future).

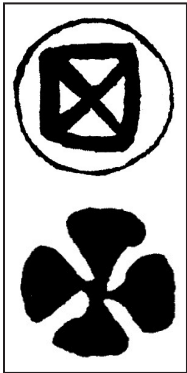


Figure 9

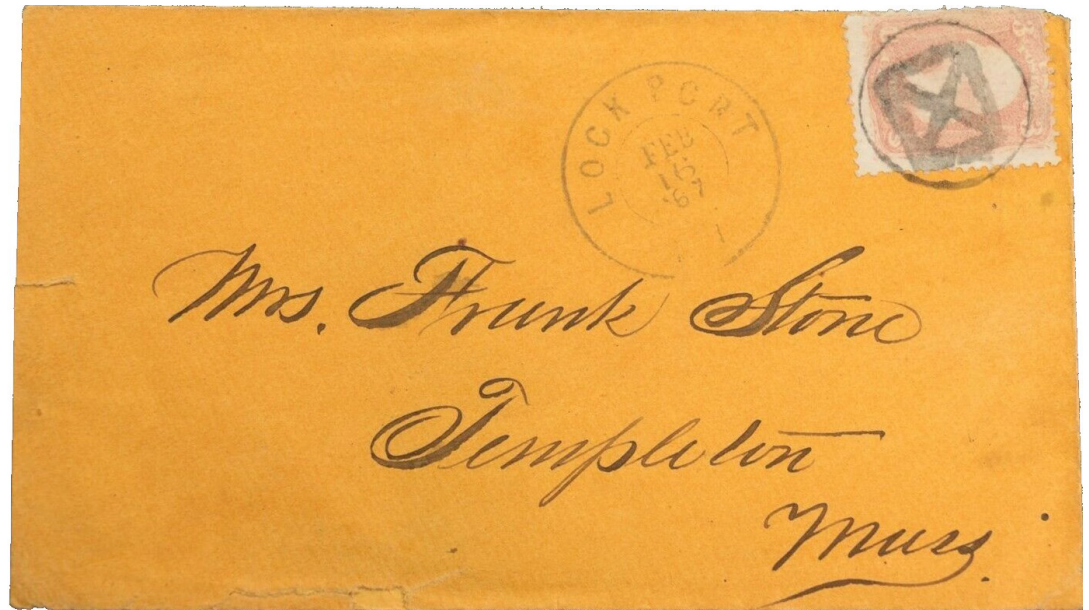


Figure 10

The Lockport Post Office used many other killers in the late 1860s – all hitherto unreported. Figure 11 suggests that the bold "LV" seen in Figure 6 was soon retired in favor of a simple bold "V" in mid-August 1868. One other employee at the post office, Charles Van Dusen, is the only likely possible creator of the bold "V" – but this is improbable given that it appears to have come into being immediately following the "LV" cancel. Of some interest, this particular CDS starts to show its wear by the summer of 1868 – for example, note the gap in the ring just below and right of the second period.

Although not terribly original or creative, a solid star was used in early October 1868, followed a week or two later by an eight-wedge cork. These duplexed October 1868 strikes are shown in Figures 12, 13 & 14. Note the relative freshness of the October 19 eight-wedge cork compared to its condition just four days later. The CDS also seems to have had a hard time of it, looking even more worn by the end of autumn 1868.



Figure 11



Figure 12



Figure 13



Figure 14

Figures 15 and 16 show two different killers, both cancelling a 3-cent, 1869 National Bank Note Co. issue – and the October 1868 CDS has since been retired. These 1869 (or later) strikes are with cancels less innovative than some previous examples.

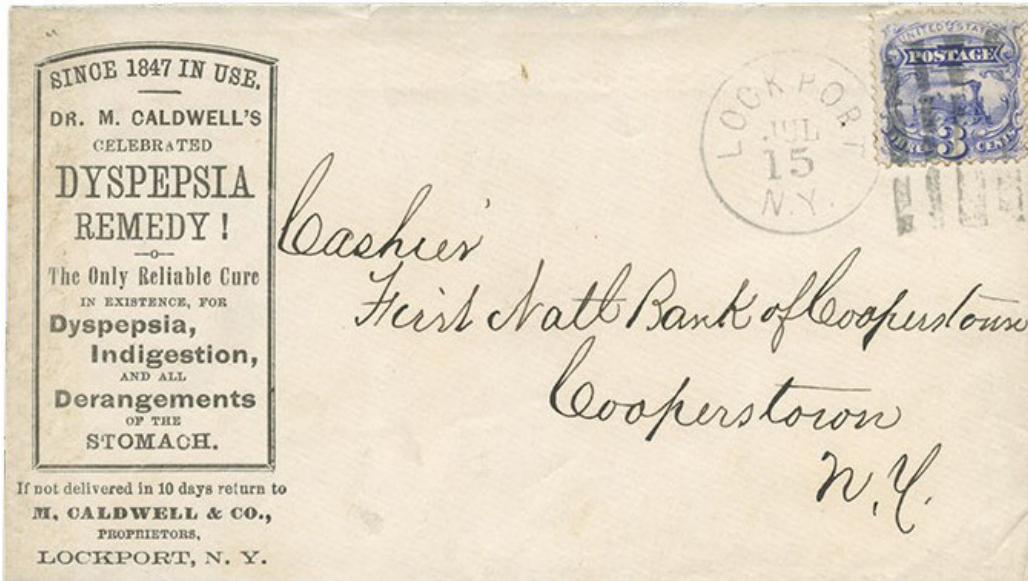


Figure 15



Figure 16

Going back some five or six years, Figure 17 shows a pair of bisected 1861 3-cent issues cancelled with a fancy crossroads, looking very much like Skinner & Eno's⁸ unattributed CR-X 19.

A different, unreported, leaf arrangement can be seen cancelling an 1870 National Bank Note Co. 1-cent Franklin in Figure 18, with tracing in Figure 19.

Figure 17



Figure 19

Figure 18

It is too early to be certain, but after about 1871 it seems the regular use of fancy cancels ceased. It is noteworthy that, apart from a manufactured ellipse found from 1882, no Lockport cancels are reported in Cole's book⁹ which focuses on the "Bank Note Period" beginning in 1870 – the Lockport Post Office staff of the 1870's seem to have lost their appetite for carving out fancy cancels.

Part II of this article hopes to provide further examples of unreported cancels, tracings and more-accurate information as to the usage of the cancels shown here. Readers are urged to review their collections and send scans to the author at uscceditor@news.com or post them to the address on page 54. All emails and letters are gratefully acknowledged.

Endnotes:

1. Skinner, Hubert C. and Eno, Amos, *United States Cancellations 1845-1869* (State College, PA: American Philatelic Society, 1980).
2. Whitfield, Kenneth A., *Cancellations Found on 19th Century U.S. Stamps* (Lewisburg, PA: The U.S. Cancellation Club, 2012).
3. Ibid.
4. Skinner, Hubert C. and Eno, Amos, *United States Cancellations 1845-1869* (State College, PA: American Philatelic Society, 1980).
5. Whitfield, Kenneth A., *Cancellations Found on 19th Century U.S. Stamps*, U. S. Cancellation Club, 2010.
6. Unknown Author "Cancellation Information", *U. S. Cancellation Club News*, Spring, 1988, pg.36-7
7. Unknown Author "Cancellation Information", *U. S. Cancellation Club News*, Fall 1988, p70
8. Skinner, Hubert C. and Eno, Amos, *United States Cancellations 1845-1869* (State College, PA: American Philatelic Society, 1980).
9. Cole, James, M. *Cancellations and Killers of the Banknote Era 1870-1894*, The U.S. Classics Society, Inc., 1995.

Acknowledgements for Figures:

All illustrations of covers are from items in the author's collection, except for Figures:

- Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries, Inc: 1
 Daniel F. Kelleher Auctions, LLC: 2, 3, 6, 11
 The Philatelic Foundation: 7, 12, 13, 15
 Larry Rausch: 16
 Schuyler J. Rumsey Philatelic Auctions, Inc: 17

An Unusual “3” Rate Cancel

Roger D. Curran

Rate number handstamps were used to some extent as cancelers of 19th century U.S. stamps. This was particularly true on 1847 and 1851 issued stamps. The practice continued with diminishing frequency through the 1880s with isolated cases noted in the 1890s. In these situations, of course, the rate numbers were not intended to rate the covers but rather simply to obliterate the stamp.

The focus of this brief article is on the “3” rate numeral as found cancelling the 1851 issue stamp which was current from 1851-1857. An 1852 example of a strike of a “3” rate handstamp, used as it was intended – to rate a letter (from Georgetown, South Carolina) – is shown in Figure 1.

The “3” rate numeral probably best known to collectors as a canceler is that from Leominster, Massachusetts – see Figure 2. As an aside, Leominster also used a “3” rate numeral as a canceler on 1857 and 1861 issue stamps. Examples of “3” rate cancels from other unidentified post offices on 1851 issue stamps are shown in Figure 3.



Figure 1

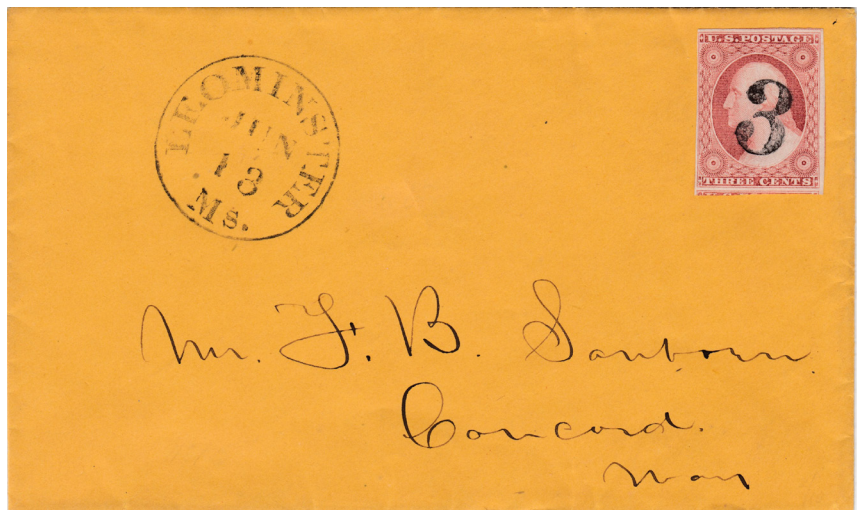


Figure 2



Figure 3

A most interesting “3” rate numeral design includes a negative “PAID” within the numeral. A cover, originating in Walpole, New Hampshire, in the collection of our humble editor, illustrates the design – see Figure 4. At least ten post offices are known to have used handstamps that produced such a marking. But the question for us is how many used them as cancelers? Some did but most, I believe, did not. Two examples are shown in Figure 5, the black from Centre Sandwich, New Hampshire and the red from Brattleboro, Vermont.



Figure 4



Figure 5

Readers who can report additional canceler examples are encouraged to contact our editor. ■

Closed Album – Roger R. Rhoads

The U.S. Cancellation Club lost a great friend and long-time supporter on April 11, 2021 with the passing of Roger Rhoads. He joined the Club in 1985 and in that year authored the first of what would be a lengthy series of articles on the cancels of New York City used during the 1873 - 1875 period.

For 15 years, Roger was a member of the Board of Directors and Club Secretary-Treasurer. On numerous occasions, he was a Club representative at stamp shows where the USCC had a presence. Roger also served for 12 years as co-chairman of the annual Cleveland “March Party” stamp show organized by the Garfield-Perry Stamp Club.

Roger specialized in the U.S. first postal card (Scott #UX1 and UX3) and won awards at national shows for his exhibit entitled “Chicago: House of Blues” which presented Chicago's blue cancels as found on these cards. His exhibit “A for Akron, Alphabet Cancellations on the First Postal Card” received the grand award at the 2000 APS Stampshow single frame competition.

Roger was born in 1940 and grew up on a small farm near Brookville, west of Dayton, Ohio. He graduated from the University of Cincinnati in 1963 with a degree in chemical engineering and worked for 20 years for Owens-Illinois in Toledo in the field of plastics processing research and development. For 5 years he subsequently worked in a similar capacity for Avery-Dennison in Painesville, OH and finally for 15 years as a technical service engineer at Lyondell Bassell in Wilmington, Delaware.

Roger is survived by his wife Patricia, daughter Jill (Bjorn) Rhoads of Stockholm, Sweden, brother Jerry Rhoads, a grandson and two great grandchildren. ■

Roger Curran.



Solid-Centered Datestamp/Postmarks Used as Cancellation Devices - Part II

Ardy Callender

Solid centered datestamps are infrequently encountered during the 1850 - 1870 period but by the 1880s became more commonplace. Figure 15 illustrates a date stamp with a solid square block from Mansfield, Massachusetts. Sent at the unsealed circular rate, the indicia of the 1¢ 1874-86 Plimpton entire is struck "socked on the nose" by a 31mm solid centered date stamp. The large size of many of these devices seems to indicate older, larger diameter date stamps were repurposed by the removal of the month/day slugs for use on circular/printed matter rate mail.

Another large diameter solid central square datestamp cancellation is shown as Figure 16. The example is found on a forwarded, due cover, in which a postage due stamp is cancelled by the solid centered postmark. Dated November 27, 1882 the cover left Philadelphia destined for Vergennes, Vermont and after transiting NYC (transit backstamp), was forwarded on to Plattsburgh, New York, due 3¢. The 3¢ 1879 American Bank Note postage due adhesive is tied by a poorly-struck 30mm Plattsburgh cancellation.

A somewhat smaller diameter solid square datestamp cancellation from Baltimore, Maryland is shown as Figure 17. The attractive advertising cover for Pitt Bros. & Co., Hay and Grain Commission, is franked by a 1¢ 1881-1885 American Bank Note Issue adhesive. The clearly struck datestamp measures 27mm in diameter.

An additional square centered cancellation from Hartford, Connecticut was kindly provided by Roger Curran. The cancel occurs on a nicely centered 2¢ 1887-1888 American Bank Note Company stamp and is shown here as Figure 18. The well-struck cancel measures 27mm in diameter with the central square somewhat elongated.

A datestamp postmark with a rectangular core is shown here as Figure 19. Originating in Bridgeport, Connecticut, the unsealed circular rate cover is addressed to Stephen P. Middleton, Norristown Pa. The 1¢ 1887-1888 American Bank Note adhesive is tied by a partial strike of the rectangular centered datestamp. The incomplete cancellation appears to measure 27mm in diameter. The printed advertising cover for Frederick Keppy, Scientific Book Publisher has a docketed date of December 23, 1899 written to the left of the stamp.



Figure 15

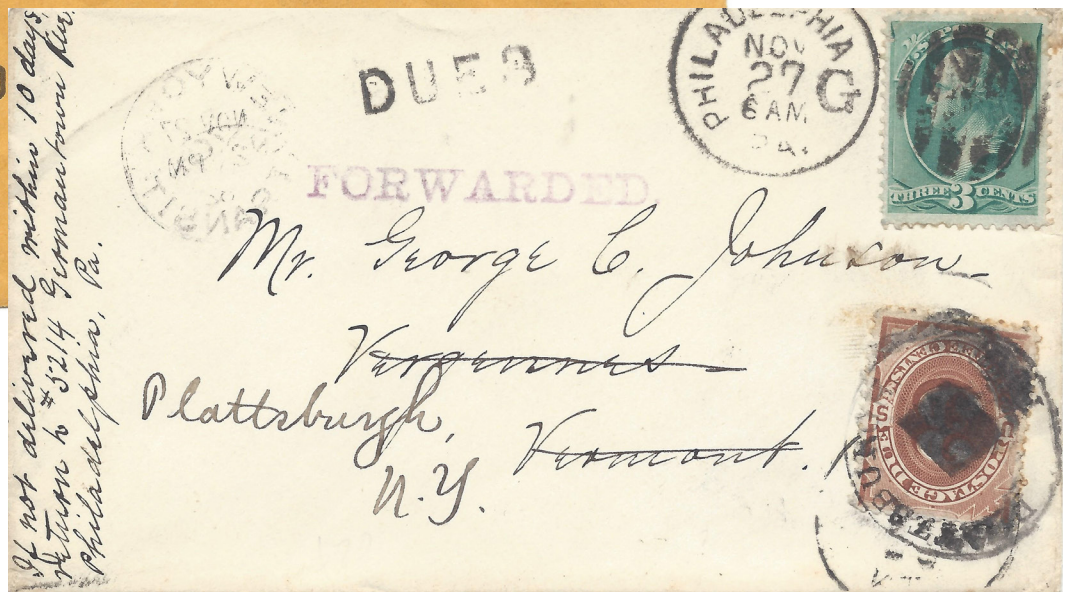


Figure 16



Figure 18

Figure 17

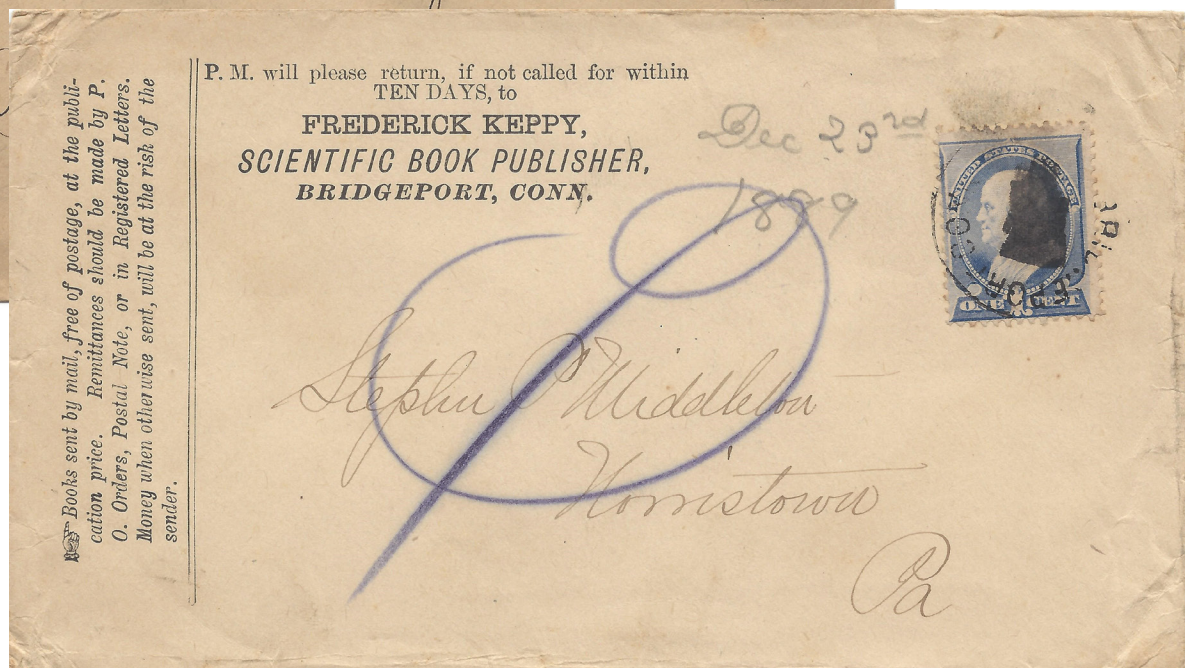


Figure 19

One final rectangular central cork is shown on a cover from Buffalo, New York in Figure 20. The small undated envelope appears to be a drop letter but the unsealed, fully gummed backflap indicates it probably carried a circular and was sent at the circular rate – both the circular and local rate were the same. Additionally, if a drop letter, it would have required a dated postmark. Addressed to Mr. Edward P. Cottle, 187 North St., City, it is franked with a 1¢ 1887-88 American Bank Note Issue stamp. The adhesive is cancelled by, yet another 27mm datestamp, which reads Buffalo, N. Y., Recd. It seems as if the Buffalo Post Office either multi-purposed or re-purposed a “receiving” backstamp for use on circular mail. Also, it appears as if at least one or more “receiving” datestamps were used to cancel circular rate mail.

A different style of obliterator is shown here as Figure 21. The indicia on this 1¢ 1886-1894 American Bank Note Company entire is struck by a solid centered datestamp in which the central block is notched on each side almost resembling a four leaf clover. This device differs from the previous obliterator as the lettering in Buffalo is more closely spaced. The unsealed circular rate entire is addressed by typewriter in purple ink to L. T. Fenn, Hartford, Conn. with a purple hand stamped corner card for Buffalo Upholstering Co., Buffalo, N. Y.

Circular corks were also inserted into the center of datestamps used in cancelling circular/printed matter rate mail. The 1¢ 1874-1886 Plimpton wrapper shown here as Figure 22, originated in Lexington, VA. The old-style 31mm datestamp contains a large 17mm circular cork in the center of the postmarking device. A February 4, 1888 Kerrs Creek receiving datestamp is struck towards the top of the wrapper.

A similar circular central cork postmark from Stoneham, Massachusetts (Figure 23) is by courtesy of Roger Curran. The complete cancellation can be identified as the small piece has been cut to shape around the cancellation and adhesive. The 1¢ 1881-1885 American Bank Note Issue is tied by a particularly strong strike of the cancellation. Stoneham’s cancel is appreciably smaller than Lexington’s – measuring 26mm in diameter with the circular core of 13½mm.

The next solid centered datestamp cancel, seen in Figure 24, was originally reported by Wilbur W. Davis⁴ and later discussed in an article by Roger Curran⁵. The cancel was employed at Royalton, Vermont and has the central block divided into four segments. Curran additionally illustrated a drop rate cover (Figure 25) on which both the solid

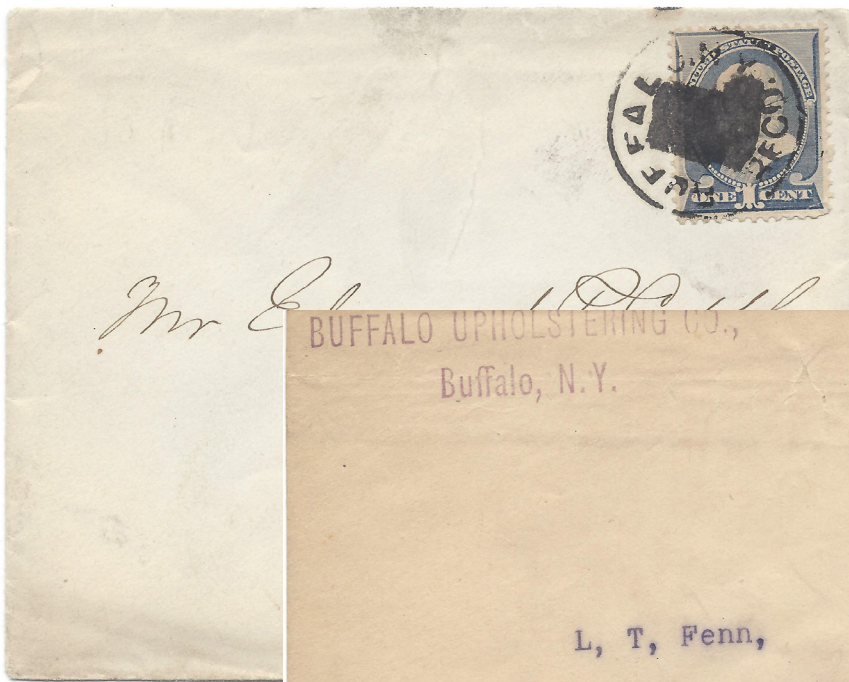


Figure 20

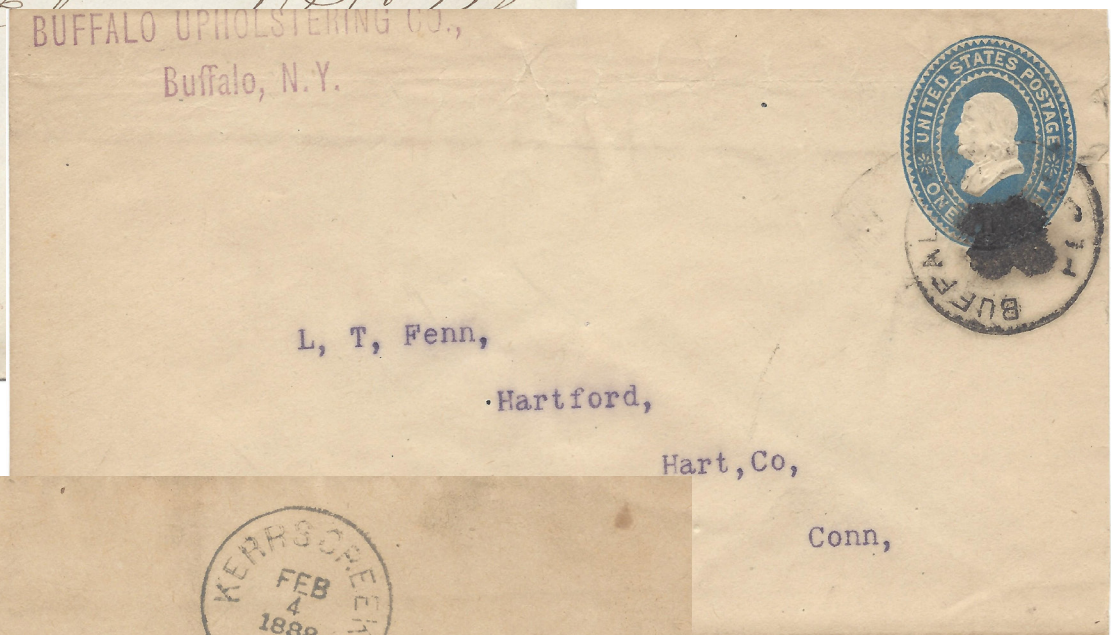


Figure 21



Figure 22

datestamp cancellation and the typical Royalton postmark are struck – postal regulations require first class matter to have the date of deposit struck on each mail piece. Dated April 1, 1884, the small cover is addressed locally to H. W. Taylor, Royalton, Vt. The 1¢ 1881-1885 American Banknote Issue adhesive is struck by a strong strike of the old-style cancellation measuring 31mm in diameter

Another example of the Royalton cancellation is shown as Figure 26. Notice the four central blocks have now merged into a central blob, although the quadrature aspect is still somewhat distinguishable. It seems that during a seven-month period (the cover is dated November 1884), the central segments have become quite worn. As with the cover described above, the 2¢ Plimpton entire was struck by both the datestamp obliterator and postmark.

Two other cancellations with centrally-placed quartered-corks are shown as Figures 27 and 28. Both images were also provided by Roger Curran. Originating in Oskaloosa, Iowa, the postmark shown as Figure 27 is struck on a 1¢ 1887-1888 American Bank Note Issue stamp. The segments are rounded at the perimeter, suggesting it was formerly a circular cork cut into quarters. The cancellation measures 26mm in diameter.



Figure 23



Figure 24



Figure 25



Figure 26

The other quartered-cork cancellation occurs on a 1¢ 1881-1885 American Bank Note Issue (Figure 28) from Glade, Pennsylvania. It is the only example seen by the author struck in any color. The sizes of the central segments are quite diminished and resemble arrowheads. Measuring 22½ mm in diameter, the Glade cancellation has the smallest diameter seen on any of the solid datestamps recognized in the study.



Figure 27



Figure 28

Endnotes

- 4. Davis, Wilbur, W., *U.S. Cancellation Club Quarterly*, July, 1952, pg. 50.
- 5. Curran, Roger D, *U.S. Cancellation Club News*, August, 2001, pg. 112.

More on Rubber-Faced Handstamps

Roger Curran

An article on the 1876 introduction of rubber-faced handstamps for postmarking and canceling appeared in the February 2021 *NEWS*. Some further aspects will be addressed here, beginning with the fact that one category of molded rubber cancelers was used beginning several years prior to 1876. These involved rubber bottle stoppers and they had raised numbers (1-6) on the top surface. Half sizes between 1 and 6, such as “2 1/2”, were also used. The numbers denoted stopper size with “1” being the largest and “6” the smallest. The stoppers were typically placed in the sockets of duplex handstamps just as was done for corks. Examples are shown in Figures 1 and 2. The postal card in Figure 1 is postmarked April 24 at Chicago, Illinois with an April 24, 1874 dateline on the back. The Figure 2 cover was postmarked December 27 at Cortland, New York and the Hartung & Co. receipt mark on that cover is dated December 28, 1872.



Figure 1



Figure 2

Two noteworthy covers have been encountered since the February article that add significantly to the story. They are illustrated in Figures 3 and 4 and both bear postmarks from DPOs that operated in Onondaga County, New York. The postmarks are in colored inks with ornamentation in the form of pairs of birds. Such ornamentation, especially in a colored ink, is a strong indicator of having been produced by a rubber-faced handstamp.

What is interesting about these strikes is how early they are in terms of the introduction of rubber-faced handstamps. The light strike of the date in the Figure 3 CDS is JAN/4/1876. (The concentric circles canceler, incidentally, probably was not duplexed to the postmarker.) The Figure 4 CDS, dated August 5, 1875 is very surprising to this writer. Over several years of looking for early strikes from rubber-faced handstamps, this is months earlier than any previously seen. It would seem to be quite a forerunner! Saying that rubber-faced handstamps were introduced in 1876 now requires a footnote, at least.



Figure 3

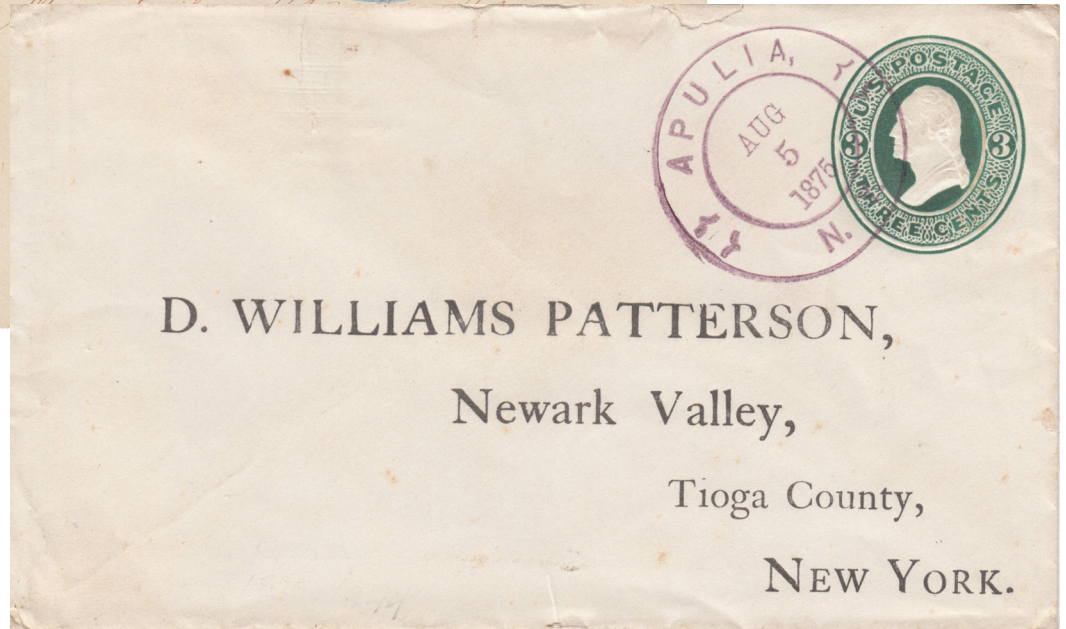


Figure 4

The Figure 5 cover was illustrated in the February 2018 *NEWS* along with a second cover with a virtually identical style CDS and killer from Ellenton, New York, dated May 31, 1878. We return to the Figure 5 cover to report some additional information. The April 1878 issue of the *United States Official Postal Guide* on page 3 carried the advertisement reproduced here in Figure 6. The F.W. McClure name is not present in the ad, but surely this ad and the corner card in Figure 5 involve the same business. Figure 7 illustrates an earlier Warsaw cover dated August 10, 1877. Figures 8 and 9 show 1877 New York covers from Niagara Falls and Clifton Springs with CDS and cancel markings similar to those in Figure 5. It is very likely that McClure supplied the handstamps used by all three post offices thus making him an early supplier of rubber-faced handstamps.

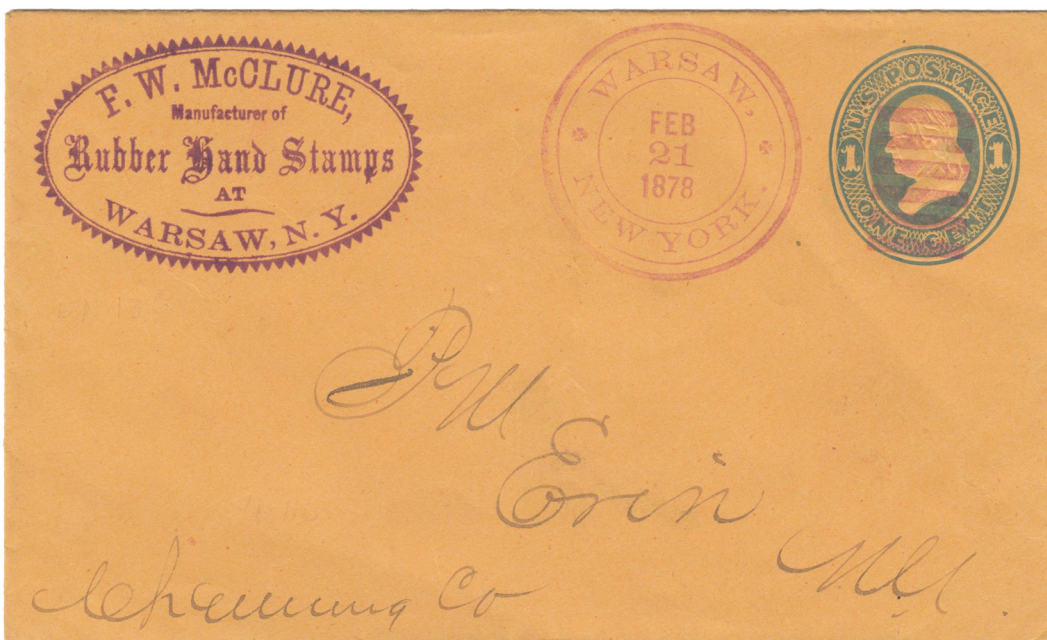


Figure 5

RUBBER POST-OFFICE STAMPS, with Indelible Black Printing Ink, FOR CANCELLING STAMPS.

THE BEST P. O. STAMP IN THE WORLD.

PROOF. — I will send on trial for three days, FREE, one of my new Patent Post-Office Rubber Daters, to any who desire to buy.

ADVANTAGES OVER ANY OTHER STAMP.

Cheapest and best. Makes every impression perfect. Never needs cleaning. No trouble with ink or pads. Noiseless and light. *Kill a stamp sure.* Used with such ease. Warranted to wear five years. Never injure anything. Plain, particularly on Postal Cards. Money-Order and Register Stamp at same time. They add to, instead of disfigure, letters. Not only a pride to yourself, but a satisfaction to all who send and receive mail from your office. Can be made as good as new at a trifling expense any time. Ink black, blue, or red. No trouble to change type. Are coming into general use where government furnish free, and these offices would not use an iron stamp again. Single line stamps to facilitate post-office business, way down low.

ECONOMIZE, BUSINESS MEN! RUBBER STAMPS by a new process. Send 3 cents postage, and any design you wish for Business Stamps, for Envelopes, Tags, Bill-Heads, Note Heads, Dating and Banking Stamps, and I will quote you prices that will surprise. Your name for marking linen, bottle of Indelible Ink, Pads, put up in nice box, delivered by mail, on receipt of 50 cents. Address always with 3-cent stamp for circulars or information, RUBBER STAMP CO., WARSAW, N. Y.

Figure 6



Figure 7

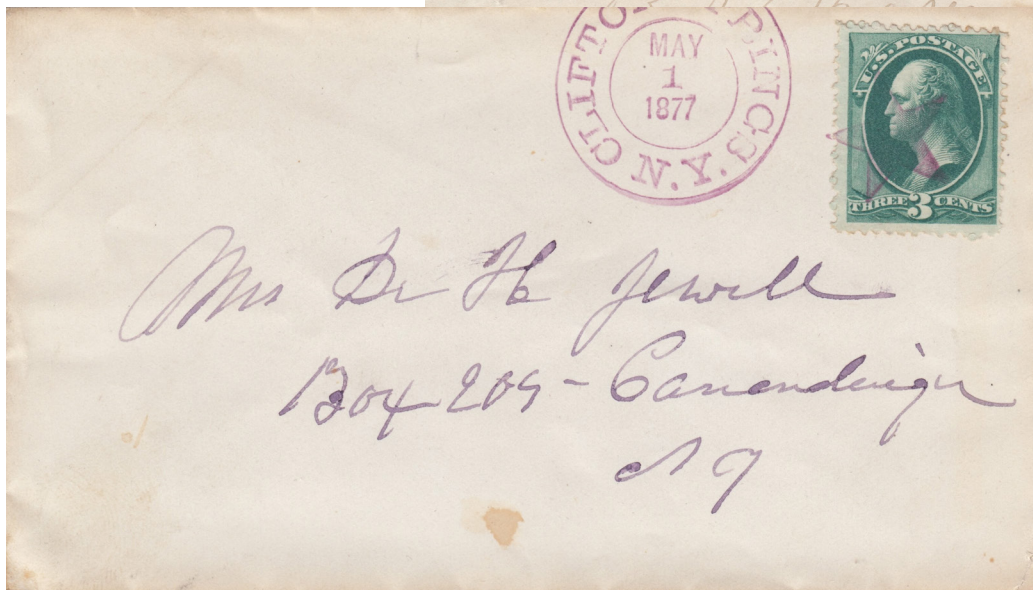


Figure 8

Figure 9

Another early supplier was T.S. Buck & Co. of Davenport, Iowa. - see Figure 10. This cover was illustrated in the excellent article by Frank Mandel entitled "The Development of Hand stamped Markings in the United States to 1900" appearing in the *The Philatelic Foundation Seminar Series Textbook No.3, U.S. Postmarks and Cancellations*, published in 1992. Our editor was able to locate an article about the Buck company that appeared in the August 22, 1879 *Quad-City Times* newspaper, published in Davenport, Iowa. See Figure 11.



Figure 10

Vince Costello submitted the cover front shown in Figure 12 bearing the corner card of another prominent dealer in rubber-faced handstamps. For an illustration of one of Miller's ads, see page 11 of Jim Cole's 1995 book, *Cancellations and Killers of the Banknote Era 1870 - 1894*.

The U.S. Post Office Department statement on the subject of colored inks used with rubber-faced handstamps, which has been referred to several times in the *NEWS*, is reproduced here (Figure 13) as it appeared in the April 1878 *Postal Guide*, page 34.

CHANGE OF BASE.
 In our advertising columns to-day will be seen a "notice of incorporation of the T. S. Buck & Co. Rubber Stamp Manufacturing Company." This old and well established enterprise has been incorporated into a joint stock company, and with the added capital and new vigor that will be given the business, will not only continue to maintain its position as the leading stamp manufactory in the world, but with the addition of improved material and machinery, will be better than ever prepared to meet the increasing demands upon its managers for stamps and daters of either the hand or self-inking pattern. Mr. Henry Vollmer, for years the foreman of Der Demokrat, having become one of the "joint stock," assumes the management of the typographical branch of the concern, and with Mr. T. S. Buck at the helm as general-in-chief of the scientific method of manipulating the vulcanizing and finishing, there will be nothing but the best and most durable work turned out from the establishment. Mr. Buck is fortunate in securing as one of his co-laborers so energetic a man as Mr. Vollmer, and to the concern under its new auspices, we wish that full measure of success and prosperity that it so well deserves.

Figure 11

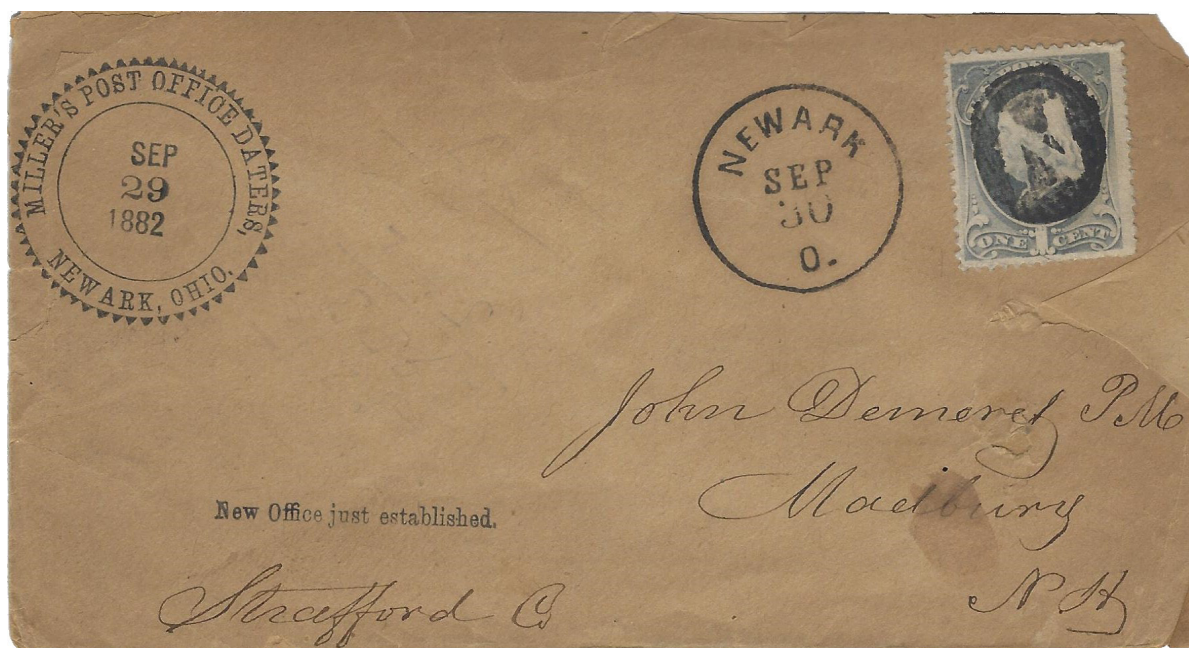


Figure 12

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT,
WASHINGTON, D. C., February 23, 1878.

Rubber cancelling stamps having been recently introduced into many of the Post Offices, and the ink provided for these stamps being of such composition and quality that the cancellation marks are easily removed, the attention of Postmasters is directed to the following extract from sec. 404 (page 223), of the Postal Laws and Regulations:—

“The cancellation must be effected by the use of *black printing ink*, wherever that material can be obtained; and where it cannot, the operation should be performed by making several heavy crosses or parallel lines upon each stamp with a pen dipped in *good black writing ink*.”

Hereafter these requirements respecting the kind and quality of ink used for the purpose of cancellation, must be strictly complied with. The section is so far modified that colors other than black may be used, but the quality thereof must not be inferior to that mentioned in the regulations.

D. M. KEY, *Postmaster General*.

Figure 13

The introduction of rubber-faced handstamps was one of the major steps in the evolution of 19th century cancelling practices. As mentioned in the February article, readers are encouraged to submit to the *NEWS* additional information and scans of pertinent covers in their collections or records. ■

New York City’s Four-Ring Target Cancellation – An Update

Ardy Callender

Readers may recall my article in the February 2021 USCC *NEWS* entitled “New York City’s Four-Ring Target Cancellation.”

I have been collecting this cancellation for over 30 years, recording earliest and latest dates of usage. As is sometimes the case, a new date appears not long after an article is published. Recently I made a fortunate purchase of a number of covers bearing this cancellation in a large correspondence of two businesses – all were either docketed or still contained original letters – and a new earliest date for the four-ring target cancel was revealed. Shown here as Figure 1, it is dated October 25, 1861 – the year is known as the double-rate cover contains a dated letter.

In the original article, I reported the latest known use of the previous cancellation (“small grid”) was also dated October 25, 1861 – that cover is illustrated again, here as Figure 2. Both cancellations were in use on the same day! ■



Figure 1

Figure 2

New Information on a Mittineague "7" Killer

John Valenti

Collectors are always looking to enhance their collections with new items that tell a story and add new information about the areas in which they collect. As a dealer specializing in cancellations and postal markings, I am no different. Several years ago I wrote an article for the *NEWS*¹ analyzing the fascinating numeral "7" killers of the town of Mittineague, Massachusetts. So, it was with much excitement that I discovered a number of similar, but apparently different versions of a scarce Mittineague killer while perusing a dealer's stock of 3¢ greens at a recent show (my first in over a year's hiatus due to COVID-19 restrictions!). A selection of the better strikes is illustrated in Figure 1, with some magnification. Figure 2 shows two tracings from Whitfield² relevant to this discussion.



Figure 1

The particular Mittineague killer is Whitfield 6449, a negative "7" within a 13 point starburst.³ Finding so many of these in one place (all on the soft paper ABNC issue, Scott #184) made me quickly realize that I was seeing three different versions of this cancellation. The first notable difference is the height of the numeral "7". From left to right this decreases from 14mm to 12mm. I believe that the Whitfield 6449 tracing is from the 13mm version. The "7"s of the 14mm and 13mm versions are stylistically the same (tailed crossbar), but the larger one is significantly fatter at the bottom and cuts much closer to edge of the starburst. (The large "7" may also be scarcest, since the pictured example was the only one among the several available examples in the dealer's stock.)

The 12mm "7" clearly differs from the Whitfield 6449 tracing in that its crossbar is without tails and is cut significantly deeper in the upstroke. This small "7" might also be the same as that in the 6451 tracing. Perhaps, this particular negative starburst was recut into the outlined negative 6451. If there are confirming on-cover examples of these different 6449 versions, I would love to see them and perhaps date their progression. ■

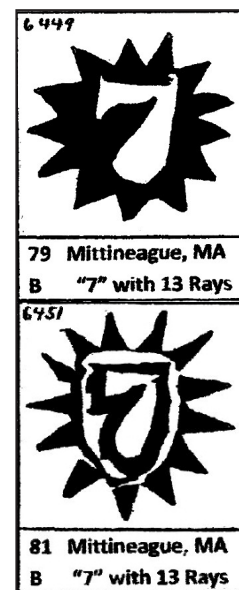


Figure 2

Endnotes:

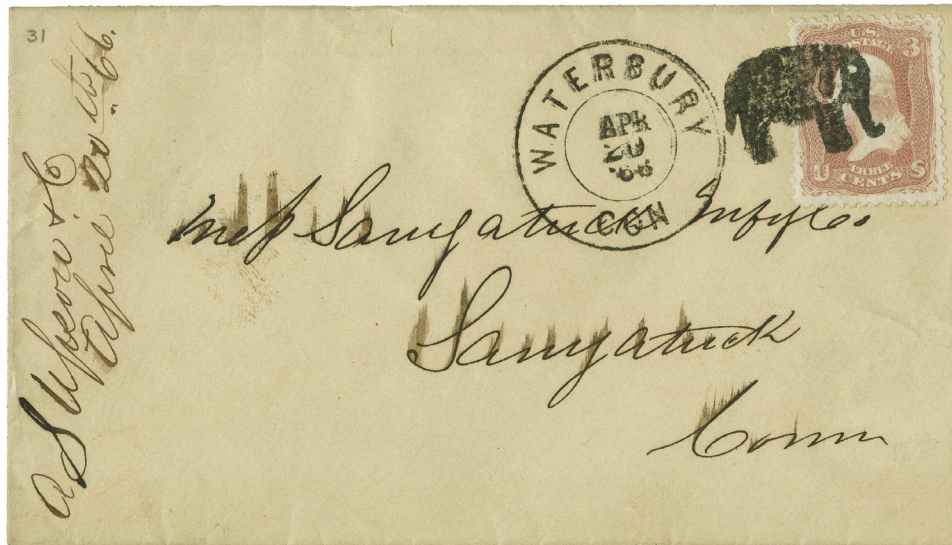
1. Valenti, John, "Exploring the Mystery of the Mittineague 7s", U.S. Cancellation Club *NEWS*, Whole No. 272 (August 2009), pp. 100-101.
2. Whitfield, Kenneth, A., *Cancellations Found on 19th Century U.S. Stamps*, U.S. Cancellation Club, 2002, p. 217.
3. In my 2009 article, I mused that perhaps the Mittineague 7s were symbols of luck. It was later pointed out by another club member that both tracings 6449 and 6451 exhibit 13 points – a strong indication that the carver of these killers realized the import of his design to the element of luck.

Editor's Notes:

1. A little bit of digital enhancement strongly suggests the 13 points in the 14mm and 13mm killers are one in the same. One theory is that the "7" started out at 13mm and was then "supplemented" and recarved to be 14mm long and fatter in the tail. Getting a better sense of the chronological sequence is the only way to firm that theory up. The 12mm killer looks to be a totally different carving.

2. The killers out of Mittineague appear to an area that is ripe for further research. Readers are requested to send in scans of any and all Mittineague items and send them to the editor. Anyone willing to coordinate a possible study into Mittineague's cancels should also let the editor know.

THE GEM



A rare classic from Waterbury, Connecticut – a choice and exceptional example of a highly desirable fancy cancel, with no more than five impressions known. The first of the three known styles of elephant cancels created by Postmaster John W. Hill, all likely inspired by a circus contemporaneously performing in nearby Hartford. Ex-Rohloff, Boker and Eubanks, auctioned by H. R. Harmer in the 1st Erivan Sale (June 22, 2019), hammer price \$50,000. Image courtesy of H. R. Harmer, Fine Stamp Auctions.

H. R. HARMER

EST • 1940

FINE STAMP AUCTIONS



Clockwise from top:

Benedict Arnold's Leg • Brattleboro, VT
Pool Table • Chicago, IL
"BULLY!" • Rutland, VT
"Hayes and Wheeler" • Carmel, NY

Just a few of the highlights from the James E. Challenger Collection, to be offered September 2021

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