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EXCELSIOR!

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COLUMBIA COUNTY CORNER: KING PHARAOH

By: George DeKornfeld

Many readers are well aware of my penchant for collecting the markings that can be found on the covers that swam through our mail stream during the 19th Century, especially those of Columbia County and especially those that are related to the City of Hudson, the county seat. Over the past two years or so, I've developed a particular fondness for the 'Pointing Hand' handstamp, an oftentimes anatomically correct marking used for a variety of related reasons to direct mail back to its original sender. It was with this in mind recently when, as soon as I fell upon the 1889 cover shown in **Figure 1**, there was no hesitation on my part to click the 'Buy it Now' button on the eBay website to make it mine, mine, mine, mine, mine!



Figure 1: An 1889 cover mailed to Hudson, NY. It was evidently not deliverable, stamped with a purple “RETURNED TO/WRITER/FROM/HUDSON,N.Y.P.O” handstamp and returned to Vermont.

Here we're dealing with a rather pedestrian 2-cent green George Washington government envelope issue of 1887 (Scott # U311), an ugly duckling if you will, that has been turned into a philatelic swan by virtue of all the 'extras' printed, stamped, and written upon it. Let us take a brief look at those and in that order.

The printed corner card, and so the originator of our cover, is of the Bread Loaf Stock Farms located in Middlebury, Ripton and Weybridge, Vermont making it what I suppose was a rather huge concern given its presence in three different towns. The farm name is printed in an arc in what is reminiscent of an Algerian-style font making for a visually pleasing presentation.

A Bread Loaf (what a great name), Vermont circular date stamp dated December 18th provides the starting date for this cover's journey and is accompanied by a black simplex target killer that performs its job being struck directly onto the indicia. A look at the back, seen in **Figure 2**, tells us our cover then travelled through Middlebury, Vermont the same day, as indicated by the Transit marking. It finally arriving at Hudson on December 23rd, a transit time of

five days (which seems a tad on the long side but may speak for the rural areas it had to travel through to arrive at its destination).

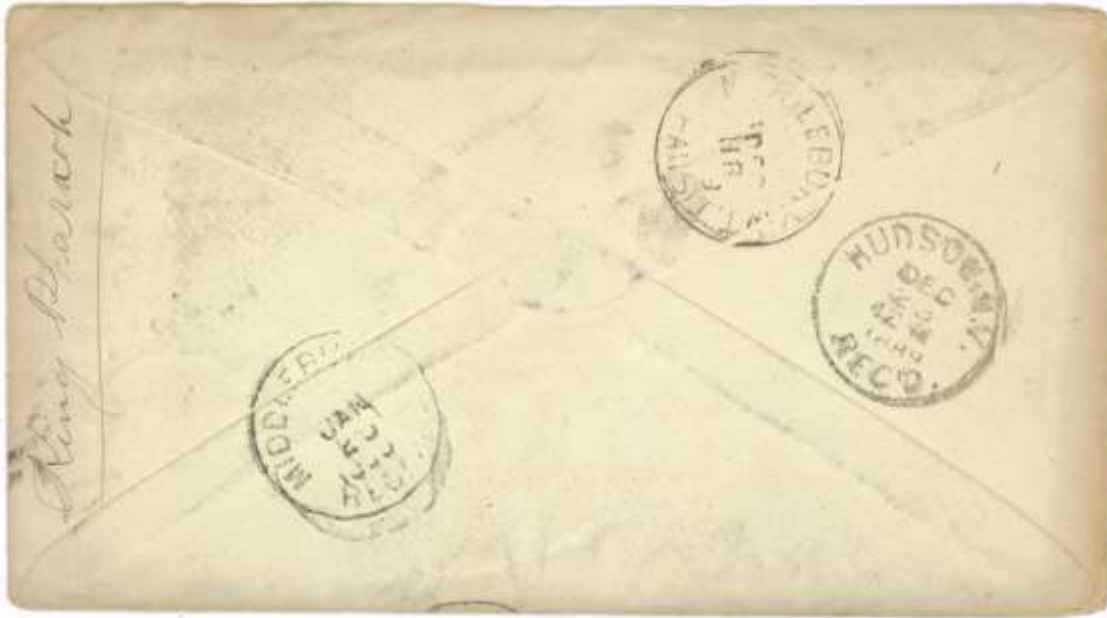


Figure 2: The back of the cover showing transit markings and the received stamp of Hudson, NY.

The Hudson Post Office tried to find the addressee right into the new year (1890) finally giving up on January 2nd (duplex on the front) and applying the nicely struck, purple Pointing Hand aimed directly at the corner card. A second Middlebury circular date stamp appears on the back, this one a receiving marking, dated January 25th, making for an even longer return transit time. Presumably, the cover was returned to the Bread Loaf Stock Farm division located at Middlebury.

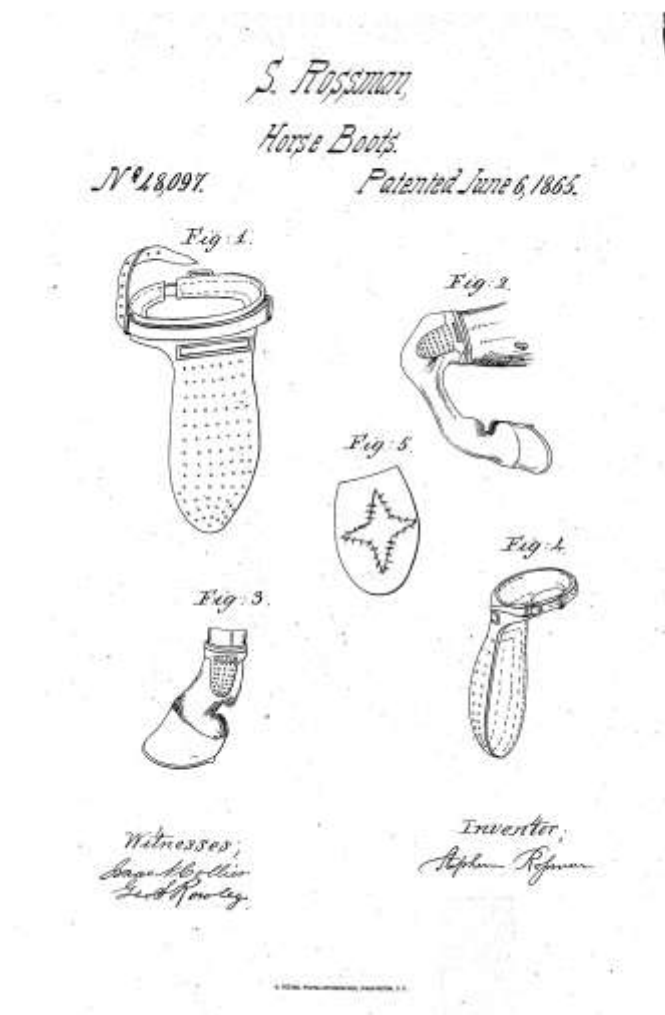
The final marking type, in manuscript and in an ink and style that would make it in-period, can be seen in **Figure 3**.



Figure 3: A manuscript notation of “*King Pharaoh*” in pencil is written on the back of the envelope.

My first impulse was to ignore it thinking someone had perhaps read a book on ancient Egypt and for whatever reason had written *King Pharaoh* on the back of the cover, perhaps as a reminder of some sort. However, two syllables kept repeating in my mind: 'Goo-gle...Goo-gle,' so just for fun I entered 'King Pharaoh' into the text box and ran a search. Most of the hits resulted in what one would expect with such an undertaking, essentially all-things-Egypt, but there, buried in one of the pages, was a listing for The American Morgan Register, and then the light bulb came on!

Morgans are one of the oldest breeds of American horses, all ancestors of a foundation sire, a stallion called 'Figure,' that was born in West Springfield, Massachusetts in 1789. Versatile animals, these horses make for good riding stock, excel at harness racing, and were used throughout the Civil War by the cavalries of both the North and the South. A young Morgan can be seen in **Figure 4** to the right. Sure enough, King Pharoah is mentioned not only in the Morgan Register, but also in a newspaper article published in the January 28, 1887 issue of the *Middlebury Register* entitled *Can the Morgans Stay?* Better yet, Bread Loaf Stock Farms are repeatedly mentioned both by the newspaper and the Morgan Registry, so there's the connection. Oh how I wish the envelope's contents were still enclosed, but this is not the case.



So while I was on a roll, the next search was for the intended recipient of the cover, a Stephen Rossman. Little specific information was available although I did discover that the Rossman family was actually quite large, came originally from nearby Claverack, and operated Kimball & Rossman, a stove store on Hudson's Warren Street. That is, little specific information except for one beautiful tidbit: a patent applied for and granted to Stephen by the US Patent Office in 1865 for 'Horse Boots,' or, as he described them in his application: "Improved Horse Leg Fenders; prevents horses from cutting and bruising their legs; leather knee and ankle pads." **Figure 5** at left shows the diagram accompanying Patent #48,097. One can't help but wonder if this envelope contained an order for his horse boots...for King Pharaoh...from Bread Loaf Stock Farms in Vermont. Alas, we'll never know!

George DeKornfeld may be reached at Gdekornfel@fairpoint.net

THE ALBANY LINCOLN AND STARS CANCEL

By: George McGowan

In the February 2012 issue of the US Cancellation Club's *US Cancellation Club News*, member Ernie Webb, in a one paragraph plea, stated that he was undertaking a survey and study of the "Lincoln" and stars cancel used by the Albany NY post office in the 1860's. An example of the cancel in question is seen to the right.



Since I had an example of this cancel on piece dated Oct. 11th, I contacted Mr. Webb. The example in my possession is seen in **Figure 2** below.



Figure 2: Scott #65 on piece in the author's possession, tied with the Albany, NY Lincoln and stars cancel.

In the November 2012 issue, Mr. Webb published the results of that study which is paraphrased here. Eighteen covers or pieces were recorded with two documenting the year of use (1865). He mentions that George Dawson was Albany's postmaster from March 27th 1861 to August 3rd 1866 and was an ardent Republican and he presumed was the postmaster using the Lincoln cancel. The cancel has only been found on Scott # 65 and Scott #78, (with an off cover example on a Scott 73). It has 13 stars which probably represent the original 13 states. The cancellation began its use just 5 1/2 months after the Lincoln assassination and appears to have been only used for about one month, October 1st through October 22nd, perhaps making it rarer than the famous Devil and Pitchfork cancellation of West Meriden, CT in use April 16th through August 31st 1886. Mr. Webb went on to speculate on some unanswered questions and to thank those who responded. He then listed in graph form the 18 examples recorded by, postmark date, day of the week, name of addressee, and notes.

By the February 2014 issue, Mr. Webb had considerably more information and had twenty three examples recorded, with September 30th being the new earliest date, and November 15 being the latest known date. In his report, Mr. Webb re-traces the historical events following Lee's surrender of the Confederate Army on April 9th, 1865. In the days and weeks after the April 15th assassination of President Lincoln, Secretary Stanton began planning the events and the funeral train that would take Lincoln's remains to Springfield, IL. The train stopped nine times with Albany being the 5th stop. Albany's postmaster, George Dawson rode on the train through New York and on to the Ohio border. After the president's burial, Albany began planning a grand flag presentation ceremony in conjunction with the 4th of July public celebration. General Ulysses Grant would attend and lead the ceremony. Flags from dozens of units were presented. Mr. Webb believes that as more regimental banners came into Albany between July 4th and the fall of 1865, George Dawson, feeling the patriotic spirit, and a huge supporter of Lincoln, would create the Lincoln and Stars cancellation.

Recently I was able to purchase a Lincoln and Stars cover with an October 9th date. It is shown below in **Figure 3**.



Figure 3: This recently acquired cover of the author represents only the 24th example reported.

On the next page, is a current list of all 23 known examples compiled by Mr. Webb of the Albany, NY Lincoln and stars cancel. The cover illustrated in **Figure 3** brings the total to 24. Mr Webb would like to hear from anyone who has an example of this cancel and would like to add to this information. He can be reached through me, geolotus2003@nycap.rr.com or directly at ewebb02@aol.com.

With permission from Mr. Webb, listed below is his current list of the Albany NY Lincoln and stars cancels:

	Postmark Date	Day of the Week	Addressee	Notes
1	Sept 30	Sat	B Claff	cover, Sc 65
2	Oct 1	Sun	Libby	cover, Sc 65
3	Oct 2	Mon	?	piece, Sc 78
4	Oct 2	Mon	Dr Webb	cover, Sc 65
5	Oct 3	Tues	Bridgen	enc dated 1865
6	Oct 4	Wed	Capt Flager	free frank
7	Oct 5	Thurs	Morrison	cover, Sc 65
8	Oct 6	Fri	Hiller	cover, Sc 65
9	Oct 6	Fri	Dr Wade	cover, Sc 65
10	Oct 6	Fri	Chappell Dodds	cover, Sc 65
11	Oct 6	Fri	D Williams Jr	cover, Sc 65
12	Oct 6	Fri	Beatte	cover, Sc 65
13	Oct 7	Sat	? Esq	cover, Sc 65 x 3
14	Oct 7	Sat	Plunkett Esq	cover, Sc 65
15	Oct 11	Wed	?	on piece Sc #65
16	Oct 12	Thurs	?	on piece Sc #65
17	Oct 13	Fri	?	on piece Sc #65
18	Oct 15	Sun	Lagrange	piece Sc #65x 2
19	Oct 15	Sun	J Pierce Esq	cover, Sc 65
20	Oct 17	Tue	C Garnsey	free frank
21	Oct 20	Fri	B Cliff	cover, Sc 65
22	Oct 22	Sun	?	cover, Sc 65
23	Nov 15	Wed	F Butterworth	cover, Sc 65

Editor's Note:

The mourning cover shown below is #20 in the above list. It was offered in the Spink Shreves Galleries Sale #121 on January 28, 2010. It was Lot# 759 and sold for \$2300.00 plus commissions against an estimate of \$500 - \$750.



I DID NOT FOLLOW THE “LETTER” OF THE LAW!

By Peter Peloquin

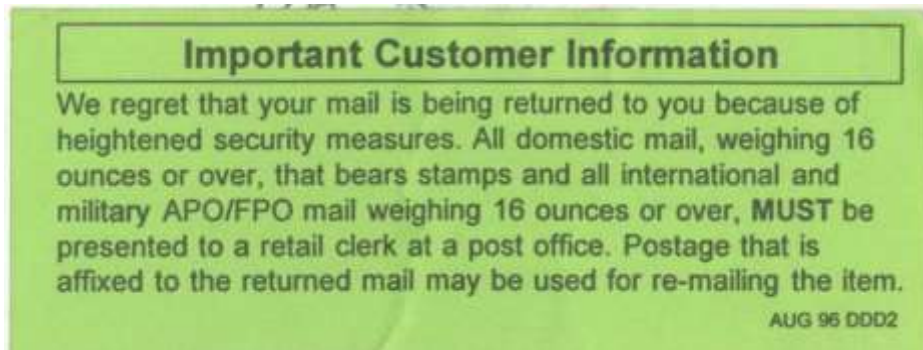
I sent the Priority Mail envelope shown in **Figure 1** from Mahopac, New York to an addressee in Monroe, New York. It was franked with the X-Planes stamp (Scott #4018)¹. In the normal course of business a post office employee delivered mail to my office every day. Therefore without aforethought, I handed this letter directly to the carrier. The envelope contained important tax returns that had to be signed and mailed to various tax departments by the end of that week.



Figure 1: Priority Mail envelope returned for violating postal regulations regarding mailing of same.

The Priority Mail envelope was delivered unopened to my house approximately one week later. The stamp was not cancelled and the package had not been delivered to the address on the envelope.

The green label with black lettering shown on the cover above and in **Figure 2** —Form August 96 DDD2—was affixed to the envelope, obliterating the address.



Because I did not take the envelope to the post office and hand it over the counter directly to the postal clerk, it was deemed that I had not complied with the post office directive that oversize packages must be handed in at the post office. I did not follow the *letter* of the law. It did not matter I had given the package to a post office carrier in the normal course of her duties. No refund was offered for the non-delivery of the package. No notification was given to me that the envelope was not being delivered.

The label stated that I could reuse the stamp “for re-mailing the item.” (By implication, I could not use the stamp for any other purpose). By the time I received the envelope from the post office, I had already faxed a duplicate copy of the contents to the intended recipient. Had I waited for the envelope to be returned and sent again, the contents would have been out of date and the addressee would have been penalized by the governments for late filing and late payment of the respective forms. Prompt filing of the forms is why I had used Priority Mail in the first place. While forwarding the envelope to its destination was a priority to *me*, it certainly was not to the U. S. Postal Service.

I would appreciate hearing from any other member who was similarly affected by (suffered through) any U.S.P.S. interpretation of “the letter of the law.” I can be contacted at petepelo@aol.com. If you wish, you may contact me via snail mail at the address in the 2014 Membership Directory.

Reference:

1. Scott 2014 Standard Postage Stamp Catalogue,
Volume 1, page 123.

Editor's Note:

From the October 4, 2012 Postal Bulletin (PB22347), the author should not have had to wait a week for the item to be returned with the aforementioned label.

*Label DDD2, Important Customer Information, is now available. **Carriers and collection employees** who find anonymous mail at a residential or business customer's mail receptacle should place a Label DDD2 over the destination address, city, state, and ZIP Code™, leaving the addressee's name visible on each mailpiece, to indicate why it was not collected.*

Either the carrier did not do their job as directed, or perhaps they had no such form with them at the time.

THE SHORT LIVED HOESVILLE, NEW YORK POST OFFICE

By: Glenn Estus

Today we are all used to having almost instantaneous communication with family members either via telephone, or email, or even by letter. But before the middle of the 19th Century, people often left their families and immigrated to other countries, knowing full well that they would probably never see their families again. The letter was the only means of keeping touch and the news in the letters could be months or years old.

Figure 1 shows a letter from Hoesville, N.Y. (Fulton County) to Kelso, Scotland. Kelso is in Roxburghshire on the Scotland/England border.



Figure 1: Sent in 1846, this is a very early cover mailed from Hoesville, New York to Scotland

Hoesville was a short named post office from May 28, 1846 to June 13, 1849. Previously it was known as West Galway Church (1838 to 1846) and changed its name again in 1849 to West Galway (1849 to 1919).

Although the post office was officially known as Hoesville, the writer, a niece of the addressee, Mrs. Oliver, used West Galway as her location. The letter is dated July 23, 1846 less than two months after the post office name was established. According to *New York Postal History: The Post Offices and First Postmaster from 1775 to 1980*, the first postmaster was Peter I. Hoes. Obviously the post office was named after him.

According to the 1997 American Stampless Cover Catalog, there are only manuscript postmarks known from Hoesville in 1845 with a value of \$60. Obviously, there is a mistake somewhere since the post office name was not established until 1846. In La Posta's "United States Post Offices Volume IV -- The Northeast", Hoesville has a rating of "5", \$25 - \$50

Information with the cover indicates that the letter was mailed from Hoesville on July 29, 1846 and PAID to New York City where it was then carried privately to Liverpool before being entered into the British postal system. Seen on the reverse in **Figure2** is a “Liverpool Ship Letter” transit marking (21 Aug 1846) and, enhanced in **Figure 3**, a Kelso receiving mark (Aug 23, 1846).



Figure 2: The back of the cover bears a Liverpool Ship Letter transit marking.

The letter sheet is 3 1/2 pages of tightly space writing telling of family gatherings, local deaths, and the weather. All the things that people still tell other family members about today.

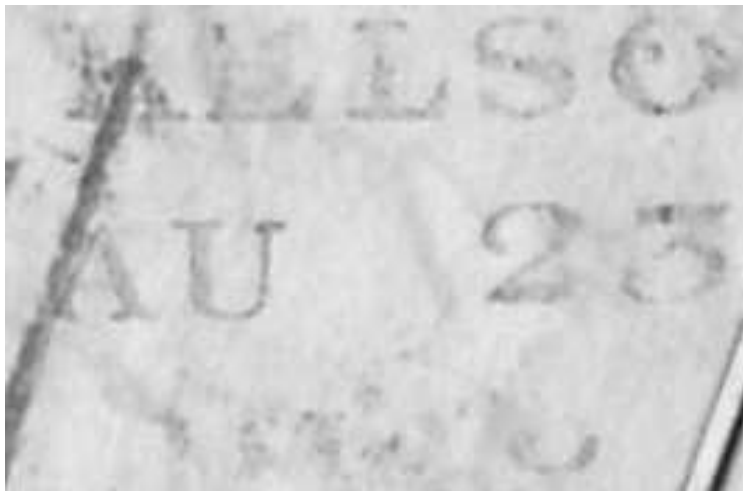


Figure 3: An enlarged and enhanced image of the Kelso receiving mark.

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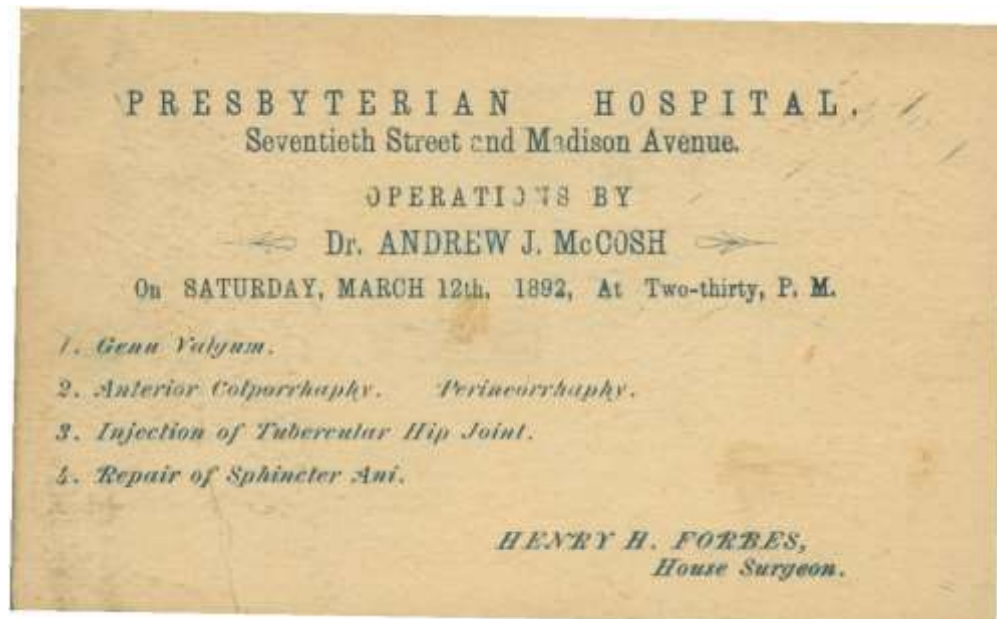
COME WATCH ME CUT SOMEBODY UP!

By Peter Peloquin

I purchased a postal card (Scott UX10) that had been sent by Henry Forbes, "House Surgeon" at Presbyterian Hospital to the German Hospital, postmarked "New York, March 1, 1892/8 PM. There is a secondary postmark, presumably a receiving postmark, "K-New York, March 1, 92; the hour digit (8) of the time code is clear, but not the balance (presumably, it too is PM).



The card has a listing of the upcoming "operations" that will be performed on "March 12, 1892," by "Doctor Andrew J. McCosh."



I first tried to obtain information regarding the New York City hospitals involved. While Presbyterian Hospital was founded in 1868, the Medical College was not established until 1898; the postal card predates this latter date. This card was sent to give doctors at German Hospital the opportunity to observe the operating techniques used by Dr. McCosh at Presbyterian Hospital (a form of forerunner to the teaching hospital that Presbyterian would become). This was a common practice at the time, and German Hospital was sufficiently prominent to be on the invitation mailing list.

Presbyterian Hospital united with “New York Hospital” in 1998 to form “New York-Presbyterian Hospital,” the academic medical center that is one of the most respected hospitals in the world. One of their six major offices is still located between E. 68th Street and E. 70th Street. New York Hospital was founded in 1771 and it is among the oldest hospitals in the United States.(2A)

German Hospital was established in 1857 by a group of German-American physicians but it did not have its own facility on 77th Street until 1868. Although greatly expanded, it still occupies the same facility as the post card address. In 1918 it changed its name to the more familiar “Lenox Hill Hospital.”(2B)

Andrew J. McCosh was the son of the eleventh president of Princeton University, James McCosh. He graduated Princeton University with honors and became a prominent surgeon. He became president of the Medical Board of Presbyterian Hospital, president of the New York Surgical Association, a professor at Columbia University, and was a major contributor to medical literature. Doctor McCosh was called upon for consultation during the illness of President Grover Cleveland. Andrew J. McCosh died on December 2, 1908 from injuries incurred in a carriage accident. A major scholarship was established at Princeton University in his honor and a hospital ship was purchased and named “Andrew J. McCosh” as a memorial to him. (3)

I performed an internet search to discover what types of surgery were to be performed as per the card. The operations were all listed according to their Latin names. I am not a doctor and I have no medical training, so the following have been generalized; I hope I do not butcher the explanations too much:

- a) Genu valgum: This is a term used to describe knock-knee. This is a common condition in children under six years old and is usually outgrown, but in some cases continues into later years and leads to major difficulty. Various procedures have been used including stapling. Currently, the articles I read seemed to favor treatment using anti-inflammatory drugs and exercise.(4A)
- b) Anterior Colporrhaphy: This is the treatment for stress urinary incontinence.(4B)
- c) Injection of Tubercular Hip Joint: Various types of injections were used including (in recent years) steroids and immuno-suppressives (such as cyclosporine). Currently, replacing the entire hip or capping is sometimes done. (4C)
- d) Repair of Sphincter Ani: The sphincter ani is an internal ring of smooth muscle formed by circular fibers of the rectum. I was unable to locate current information re this. (4D)

Many of the explanations I received from the internet for the above operations did not fully describe the surgical procedure used, either contemporary to the postcard or currently, so I was unable to determine as to how the procedures have changed over the years except to say that the tendency is towards minimally invasive procedures, and an emphasis on trying to use medicine to delay or avoid surgery.

It is amazing what one can discover about aspects of life from a simple postal card mailed a century in the past. I wonder if any of my ancestors suffered through one or more of these procedures?

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2. Scotts Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps, 1995 Edition, p. 339.
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 - C Types of Surgery- Injection of Tubercular Hip Joint- medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/Bone+Tuberculosis
 - D Repair of Sphincter Ani- www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/... National Center for Biotechnology Information

NEW YORK STATE REMOTELY MANAGED POST OFFICES

Glenn Estus has compiled a listing of all known remotely managed post offices in New York State as of October 1, 2013. This listing is included as a special supplement with this issue of *Excelsior!*

As to what distinguishes a remotely managed post office, the following official definition is taken from the United States Postal Service's Handbook *PO-101 Revision: Post Office Organization*:

123 Remotely Managed Post Offices

A Remotely Managed Post Office (RMPO) is a Post Office that offers part-time window service hours, is staffed by a Postal Service employee at the direction of a postmaster, and reports to an Administrative Post Office. Unless otherwise specified, all references to "Post Office" include RMPOs. The classification of a Post Office as an RMPO is not a discontinuance action under this handbook.

I wish to thank Glenn for his research in putting this listing together. Hopefully it will assist New York postal historians when working in their particular areas of interest.

COVER OF THE ISSUE



As promised in the March 2014 *Excelsior!*, where we looked at a Type 19A star cancel from Patchogue (Suffolk County), I mentioned that we would look at another similar, but yet different star discovered by fellow ESPHS member Doug Penwell.

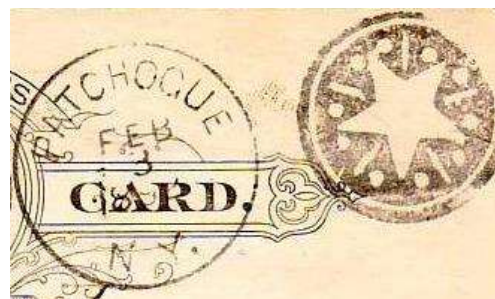
This particular star from 1892, which I have designated as Type 19B, has some similarity to the original Type 19 star listed by Dave Proulx in the 1987 ESPHS publication *Star Cancels of New York State*. His original illustration of the Type 19 star is seen here to the right.



What makes the star on Penwell's cover different is the radiating "spokes" seen protruding from the star toward the circle surrounding the design. The spokes are surrounded on each side by dots. Note there are ten dots instead of the five seen in Types 19 and 19A. Also as in the Type 19A star, the geometry of the star is near perfect, as opposed to the crude design of the original Type 19.



Patchogue Type 19A: 1891



Patchogue Type 19B: 1892