



The Journal of the Empire State Postal History Society

March 2012

Whole No. 18 New Series

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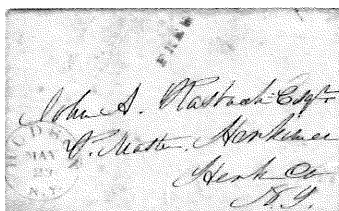
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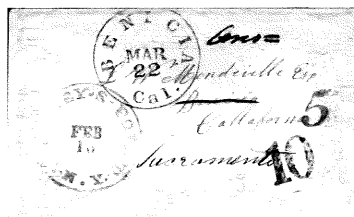
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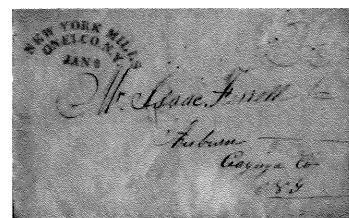
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EXCELSIOR!

The Journal of New York State Postal History

Published March and September by the

EMPIRE STATE POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

P.O. Box 482

East Schodack, NY 12063-0482

Web site: <<http://www.esphs.us>>



Articles for **EXCELSIOR!** are solicited.

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ADVERTISEMENTS are gladly accepted. Please contact the Secretary at the above address.

Editor's Box

Readers will find this issue of *Excelsior!* a little leaner than usual. However, the articles in this issue cover a variety of topics and illustrate some of the research that our members have taken upon themselves to enhance our knowledge of the vast areas of New York State postal history. Every cover tells a story, some not so obvious at first. With a little digging, or help from fellow postal historians, these stories help us capture life in the early years of New York, but also illustrate the importance of keeping records of modern postal history that is right in front of us. I would hope that other members of ESPHS would take the time to go back and take a fresh look at a favorite cover or set of covers, do research, take notes, and then share your findings with fellow members in the pages of *Excelsior!* We need your articles; even a single page can make a difference by encouraging someone else to contribute their knowledge.

NOT YOUR GRANDFATHER'S POST CARD

By: Bob Bramwell

Just as the Kodak "Brownie" box camera revolutionized family life in 1900 by capturing visible memories of daily activities, the local production of custom images on post cards provided a way of sharing those images widely.

Here is a fascinating use of the real picture post card created by Schenectady's Chief of Police: a Missing Person notice printed in appropriate volume to send to his equivalent at every town for miles around.

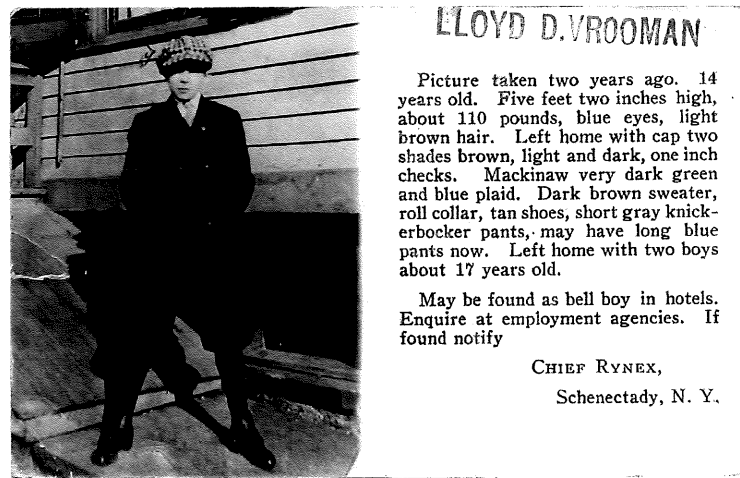


Figure 1. A casual photograph of run-away Lloyd Vrooman together with a type set description of his possible appearance is printed on the image side of post card stock. No publisher is identified but the technology for doing this kind of printing economically had existed for at least five years.

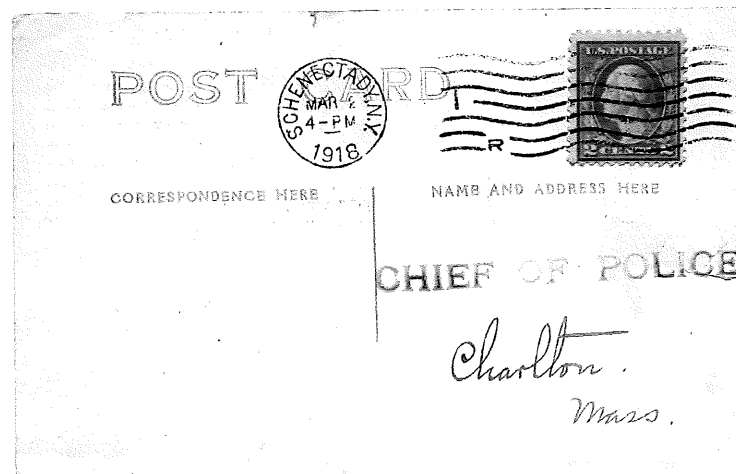


Figure 2. Missing Person post card addressed with a rubber hand stamp to CHIEF OF POLICE and in manuscript to Charlton, Mass. The post card was sent March 2, 1918, during the War Surcharge period (November 2, 1917 to June 30, 1919).

Bob Bramwell may be contacted at rbramwell@nc.rr.com

COLUMBIA COUNTY CORNER: THE HUDSON LUNATIC ASYLUM

By: George De Kornfeld

As so often happens, a stampless folded letter is added to one's collection merely because something about it catches the eye, be it the name of the addressee, the meticulously penned and ornate handwriting so common to these times or, in this particular case, the postal markings applied by the sending Post Office, Hudson, New York.

In **Figure 1** we see an 1841 stampless letter mailed to Herkimer, New York which illustrates the fairly common 30mm circular date stamp (CDS). What's not so common is that this marking was applied using **green** ink which, aside from (somewhat surprisingly) black ink, is the least seen color used during the 30mm CDS era in Hudson (1837 – 1851), red being by far the most common. Accompanying the CDS is a 21 x 4mm 'FREE' handstamp in the same green ink.

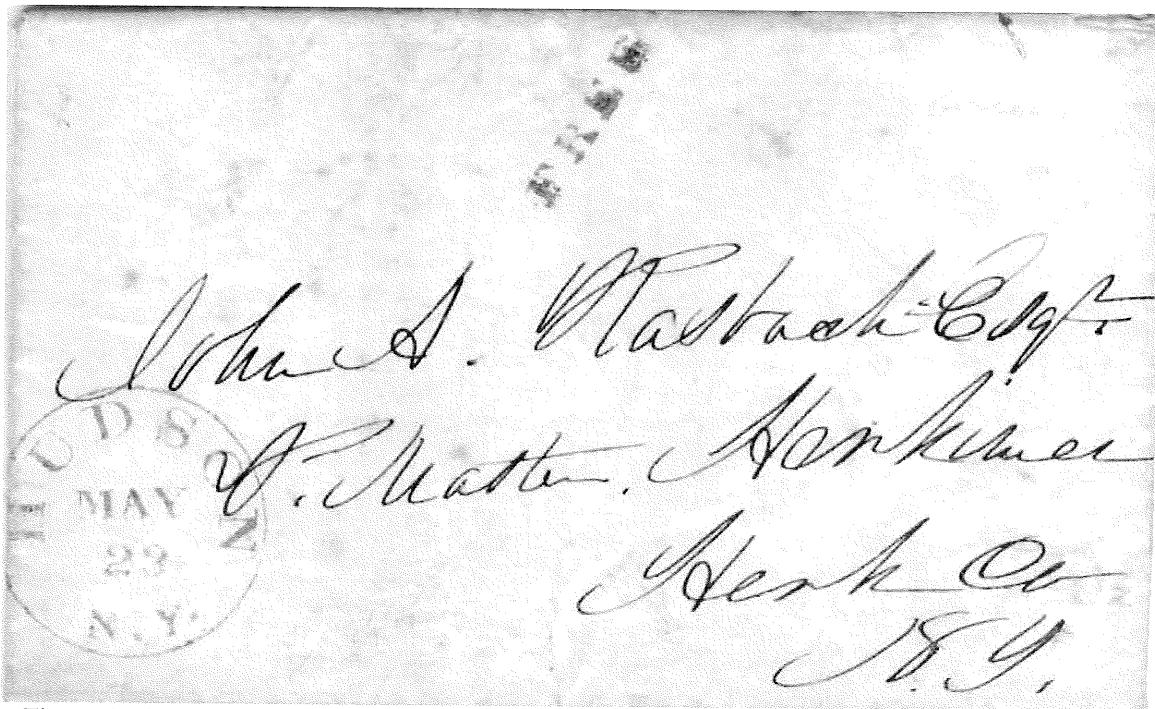
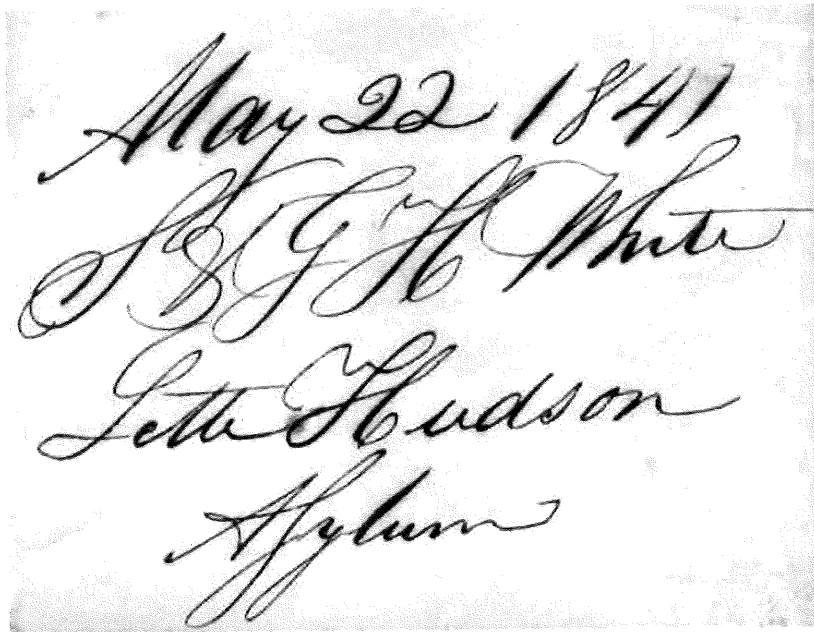


Figure 1. A stampless letter mailed from Hudson in 1841 to John A. Rasbach, Postmaster at Herkimer.

So why is this cover afforded the free frank privilege? The name of the addressee along with his title provides the easy answer: John A. Rasbach (aka Rasback) served as Herkimer's Postmaster from 1836 – 1841 and again from 1844 – 49; Postmasters were allowed, within limits, to send and receive mail for free.

OK, good enough, all we need now are a couple of mounting corners and into the ole exhibit this baby goes. Well, maybe not. This is after all a folded stampless *letter*, so before mounting and relegating this snapshot of history to an exhibit page, possibly for many years, it may be smart to check for any content even though the likelihood of discovering something no more engaging than 'Aunt Ethel discussing the family chickens' is fairly high.

Opening the first fold (**Figure 2**) made it clear that this cover wasn't quite ready for the mounting corners just yet, as the docketing now exposed reads: *May 22, 1841, S. & G.H. White, Letter Hudson Asylum*. An asylum in Hudson? As it turns out, yes indeed, and we now finally arrive at the topic of this issue's CCC, the so-called Hudson Lunatic Asylum.

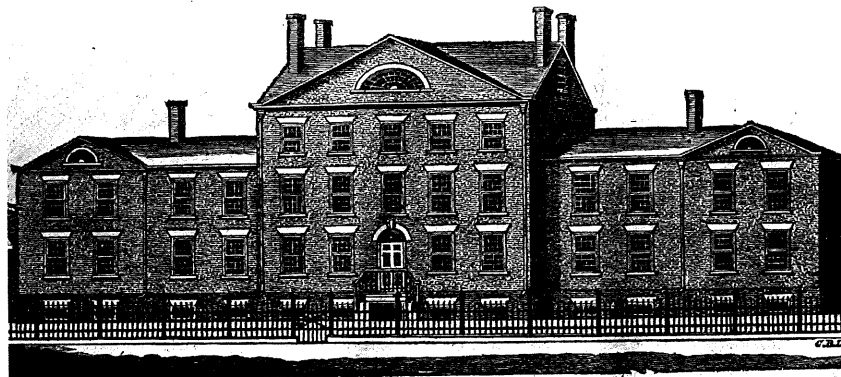


May 22 1841
S. & G.H. White
Letter Hudson
Asylum

Figure 2. The inside docketing reveals the sender to be doctors from the Hudson Asylum.

Hudson, being the Columbia County seat, was the logical locale for any institution geared towards helping its own less fortunate citizenry, so back in 1818 the city built and established what became to be known as a 'Poor Farm' on land purchased from John C. Hogeboom (a Republican politician who chartered the Bank of Hudson). This stone, Federal-style structure, also known as 'The Almshouse,' satisfying the New York State laws of 1778 making towns and cities responsible for their own poor, was erected at the cost of \$5100.¹ Here is where, the destitute from Hudson as well as those from the rest of the county were housed and cared for.

In May of 1830, a Doctor Samuel White who had been practicing medicine and surgery in Hudson since 1795 and aided by his son Dr. George H. White, opened an insane asylum in the same building then just vacated by the city, an early drawing of which can be seen at the right.



HUDSON LUNATIC ASYLUM.

Several sources show the Asylum to have been reasonably successful in its treatment of its patients and better yet, in a humane way which was hardly the norm for similar institutions during this period. On February 11, 1840, this report of the asylum's work during the previous year appeared in *The Columbia Republican Newspaper*:

*HUDSON LUNATIC ASYLUM--During the year 1839, 84 patients have been under the care of Drs. S. & G. H. White, the proprietors of this institution--to wit:
Recent cases 23
Chronic do 58
Intemperate 3*

Of the recent cases that were removed during the year, 15 recovered, 3 improved, 2 died. Of the chronic cases removed, 9 recovered, 11 much improved, 9 improved, 1 died. Of the intemperate removed, 2 reformed. Remaining under treatment, Jan. 1st, 1840, 32. 451 cases have enjoyed the benefit of this institution since it was opened, a period of nine and a half [years] ago. The quiet patients continue to enjoy family worship, as heretofore.²

An 1841 advertisement for the institution read:

In the first ten years three hundred patients were admitted, most of whom were cured, and all were benefited.³

The body of the doctors' letter to our Herkimer Post Master discusses the care of one of the asylum's clientele:

*Hudson May 22, 1841
J. A. Rasbach Esq.*

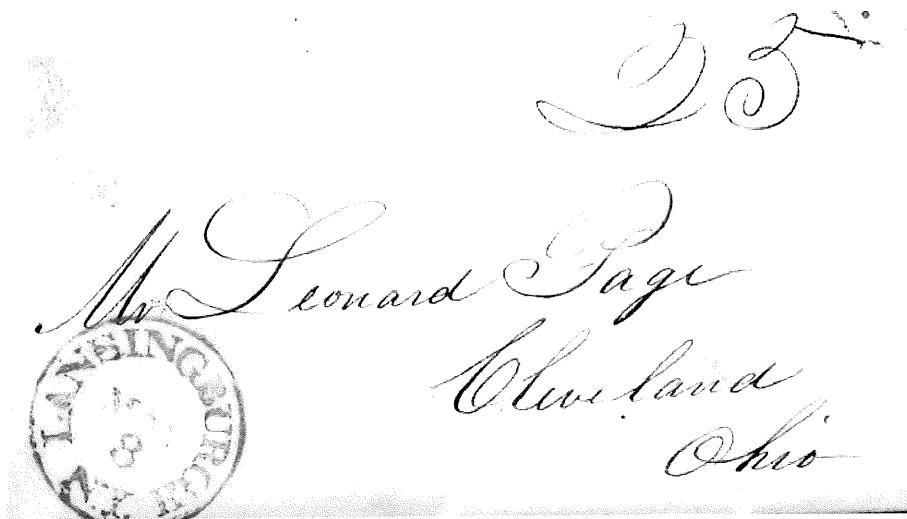
*Dear Sir,
Yours of the 14th in regard to the care of Mr. Shell was duly rcvd.
Mr. S. has been gradually improving since the last note until the present time + no doubt will be able to return home with his mind restored as soon as we calculated.
The ½ quarter will terminate the latter part of next week. Mr. S. is extremely anxious to return home + we think he may safely do so at that time.
Respectfully yours,
S. & G.H. White*

Although we will likely never find out what Mr. Shell was troubled by, it appears as though he was one of the psychiatric success stories to come out of the Hudson Lunatic Asylum.

Another patient with a potentially less happy outcome is mentioned as a part of another stampless folded letter that appears as **Figure 3**. Mailed unpaid and rated twenty-five cents (single rate, over 400 miles, Act of 1816) from Lansingburgh, New York to Cleveland, Ohio in

1835, this letter appears to be between two friends and serves to bring the recipient up to speed with local happenings:

Mrs P. became very much alarmed but could not ascertain what was the matter and at last came and called me up - when I got up I found Mr. P. had gone into the house but from the appearance in the store I knew that all was not right and immediately went to him where I found that he had washed his hand and forehead and one foot in strong Nitric Acid - Physicians were immediately sent for and every thing and any thing done for him that could be. The burn from the Acid was very deep and he had lost three fingers from his left hand yet all our efforts to restore his reason were of no avail for more than six weeks when his wounds eventually healed and during which time I hardly had a good night's rest often being up all night as we had always watched - it was thought best to move him to the insane Asylum at Hudson where he more is with a prospect of recovering.



25
Mr Leonard Page
Cleveland
Ohio

Figure 3. An 1835 letter from Lansingburgh, NY telling of a patient being sent to the Hudson Asylum.

Mr. P. as we find out a paragraph later was the letter writer's employer, leaving him in charge of the business while he was "away." The Lansingburgh post office was located in Rensselaer County immediately north of Columbia County, so it is likely that the writer's business was located in Columbia providing geographical access to the Asylum for poor Mr. P.

A short article in The American Journal of Insanity issue of 1848/49 described a late change at the Hudson Asylum:

We are pleased to learn that Dr. White the well known proprietor of this institution has concluded to devote it exclusively to women. We think well of this arrangement and agree with Jacobi, "that although pecuniary consideration in most cases render it imperative that both sexes should be received into the same establishment, yet I am decidedly of opinion that whenever circumstances will permit, such union ought to be avoided."

A little over one year later, the Hudson Lunatic Asylum closed its doors forever with all remaining patients being transferred to the newly opened state psychiatric facility in Utica.

As for the venerable old building located at 400 State Street, after housing the Asylum it was used as a School for Young Women (1851 – 1865), a private home, an orphanage operated by the Hudson Orphan & Relief Association (1881 – 1958), and today serves as the Hudson Area Library (Figure 5) which it became in 1959. Sadly, the building, especially the masonry, is in disrepair and, due to a lack of funding, the Hudson Library Board finds itself searching for another building into which to move, and at the same time hoping someone will purchase what many believe to be Hudson's most historic building returning it to its former state.



Figure 4. The former Hudson Asylum has served as the Hudson Area Library since 1959.

Now where did I put those mounting corners?

Footnotes:

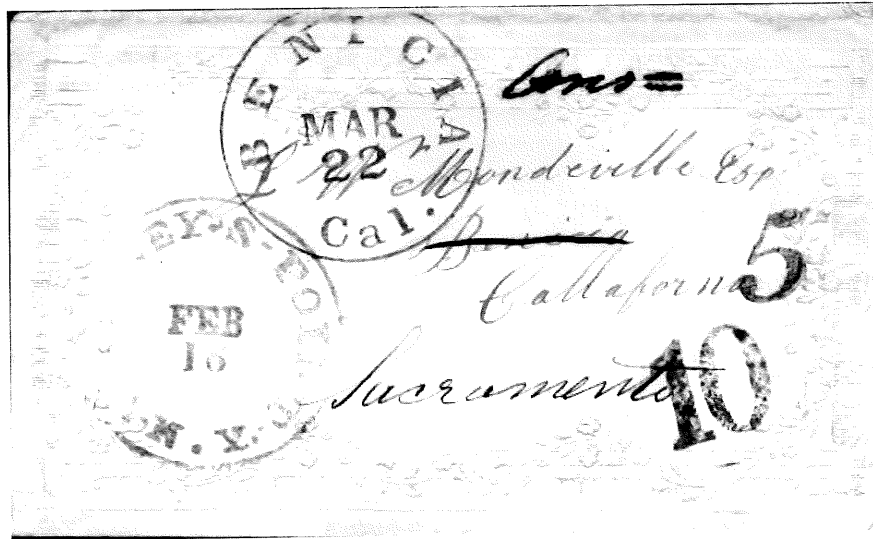
1. hudsonarealibrary.org
2. gossipofrivertown.blogspot.com
3. usgennet.org/usa/ny/county/Columbia/Hudson.com

George DeKornfeld may be contacted at Gdekornfel@fairpoint.net

CLUES IN A COVER: WHY IT PAYS TO SHARE WITH OTHERS

By: David Williams

This is the story of the stampless cover seen below. The cover was mailed on February 16 from Whitney's Point (BRO), NY to Benicia, California. The black '10' handstamp represents the half ounce, non-prepaid rate for a letter sent over 3000 miles. Once received in Benicia, it was forwarded to Sacramento as evidenced by the March 22 Benicia CDS and the black '5' handstamp (the unpaid rate for under 3000 miles). Because of the rates, dates of mailing and the forwarding, I had estimated that the letter was mailed between 1852 and 1854.



In March of 2010, I posted a scan of this cover on Philamercury, a web site managed by Richard Frajola. Just yesterday, March 22, 2012, I received an email through Philamercury from Clayton Wallace.

In his email Clayton informed me that the recipient of the letter, L. W. Mandeville, was serving in the Assembly of the State of California at the time. He also stated that since the letter was rerouted to Sacramento, it was most likely from 1854, since the state capital was moved to Sacramento from Benicia in 1854. In a follow-up email, Clayton stated that the dates on the cover fit in precisely with the date of the change in the state capital. He states:

The WP postmark is 2/16 (1854), the State Capital changed from Benicia to Sacramento on 2/25/1854 and the cover was forwarded from Benicia on 3/22 (1854). The timelines fit perfectly.

By sharing this cover in a public forum, I have gained much knowledge not only about the cover itself, but of the history of the recipient and the cities to which it was sent. I thank Clayton for taking interest in my cover and for his investigative work which he kindly shared with me.

POSTMARKS OF KATONAH, NY: A PRELIMINARY LISTING

By: Terence Hines

Katonah is a small town in northern Westchester County. According to Duncombe's (1961, p. 122) history of Katonah "The name of the post office, which had been transferred from Whitlockville to the village on the railroad, was changed to 'Katonah' on July 22, 1852. Mail now came daily, except Sunday, by rail, and a mail-stage ran three times weekly between Katonah, Cross River, Boutonville, and South Salem."

Katonah stayed at its original location until early 1897. It had to move because the original location was going to be flooded by the raising waters of the Muscoot / Croton Reservoir, part of the New York City water supply system. The post office at the new location opened April 5, 1897 (Duncombe 1961, p. 203). Katonah is thus unusual in that the same post office not only moved from place to place within the town, the entire town, and the post office with it, moved.

Nothing seems to have been published previously on the postmarks of Katonah. Thus, this article is a first attempt and the author welcomes additional information to make the listing more complete. The first known Katonah postmark is shown in **Figure 1**. This is a 32 mm black handstamp dated September 12 with a black "PAID" handstamp. According to the *American Stampless Cover Catalog* this postmark is known from 1854 to 1856. Since prepayment of postage with stamps became mandatory on April 1, 1855, this cover must be from 1852, 1853 or 1854. An example used to cancel a stamp has not been seen.

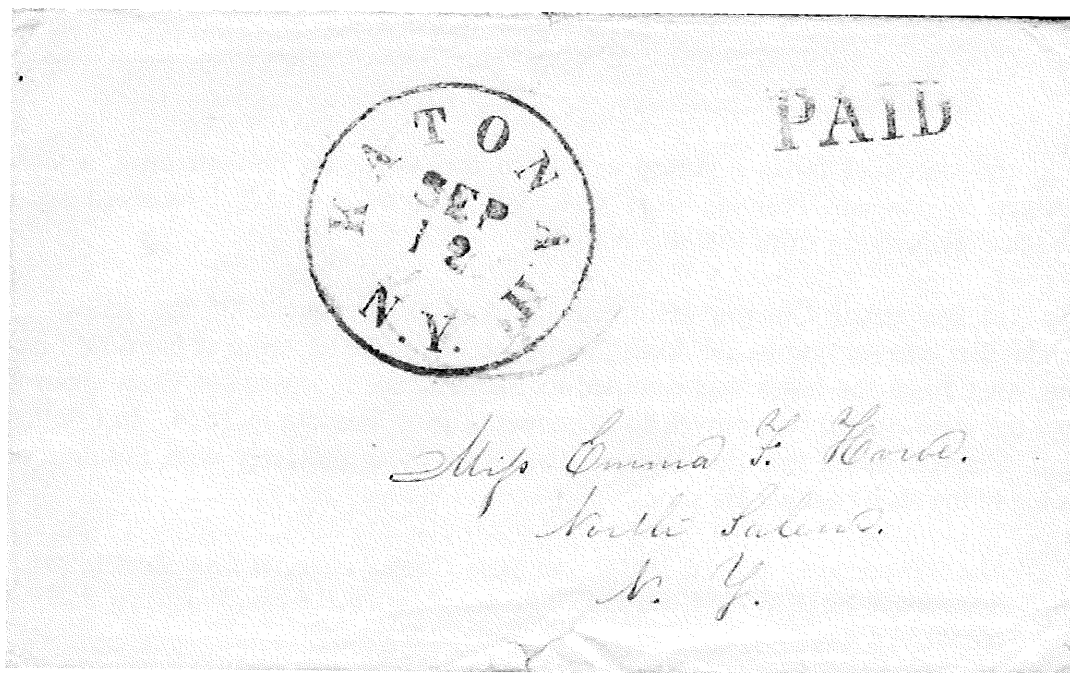


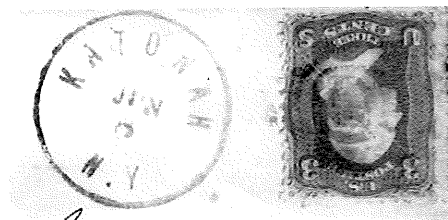
Figure 1. This is an example of the first known Katonah postmark.

The *American Stampless Cover Catalog* (Phillips 1997) lists a 29 mm postmark reading "KATONA" without the final "h". Since there is no evidence that the town name was ever spelled without the final "h" the existence of such a postmark is problematic.

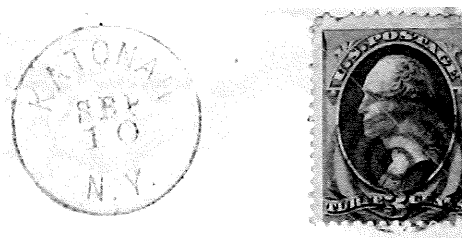
The following listing details the different postmarks and dates of known use that I have seen. Additional information is actively sought from readers. Information can be sent by snail mail to Terence Hines, Box 629, Chappaqua, NY 10514-0629 or by email to terencehines@aol.com.

1. 32 mm black handstamp, 1852 – 185? As seen in **Figure 1**.

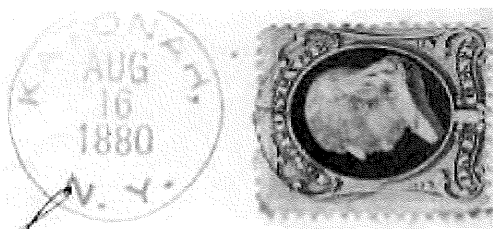
2. 25 mm duplex with bull's eye killer, no year date. KATONAH extends from about 9 o'clock to about 3 o'clock. One example seen on cover cancelling a copy of # 65 of the 1861 issue.



3. Very much like # 2 but KATONAH extends from about 10 o'clock to 2 o'clock. One example seen used to cancel a copy of # 158, the 3 cent of the 1873 issue.



4. 25mm CDS duplexed with a star in circle killer. Proulx's book denotes this as a Type 2 star. He reported a Katonah purple star from 1879 and a red one from 1881. This purple star from is from 1880. I possess a purple one dated May 20, 1881. ECU: February 14, 1879.

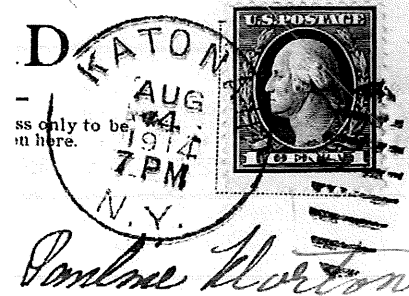


5. Duplex, 29 mm, nine lines in killer but no number. Killer measures 24.5 mm from top to bottom. ECU: May 9, 1902 LKU: June 8, 1912

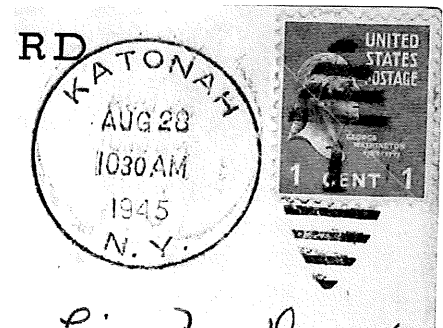
Note: I have seen a post card with a cancel just like this but with no killer dated July 25, 1906. It is unclear whether this is a different device or a case where the killer did not make an impression.



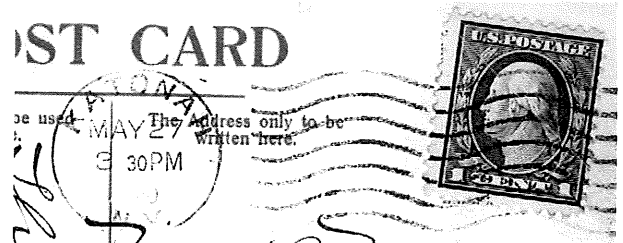
6. Like # 5 but killer has 8 line and measures 26.5 mm.
 EKU: August 24, 1912
 LKU: April 12, 1918
 Note: This cancel is known with the time both above and below the year date.



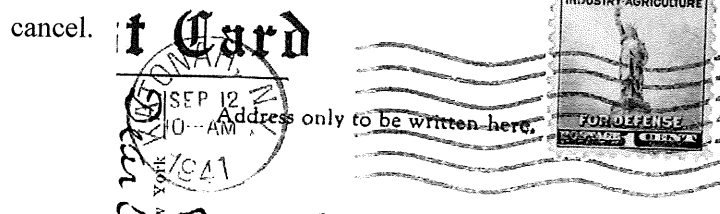
7. Duplex 30 mm with "1" in killer August 20, 1945



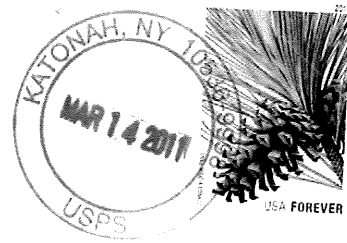
8. Columbia machine cancel.
 "KATONAH" at top, "N.Y." at base.
 EKU: August 29, 1919
 LKU: March 2, 1922



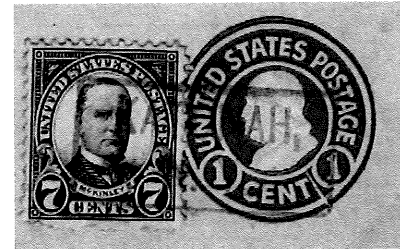
9. International machine
 "KATONAK, N.Y." at top.
 EKU: October 9, 1930
 LKU: November 17, 1955.



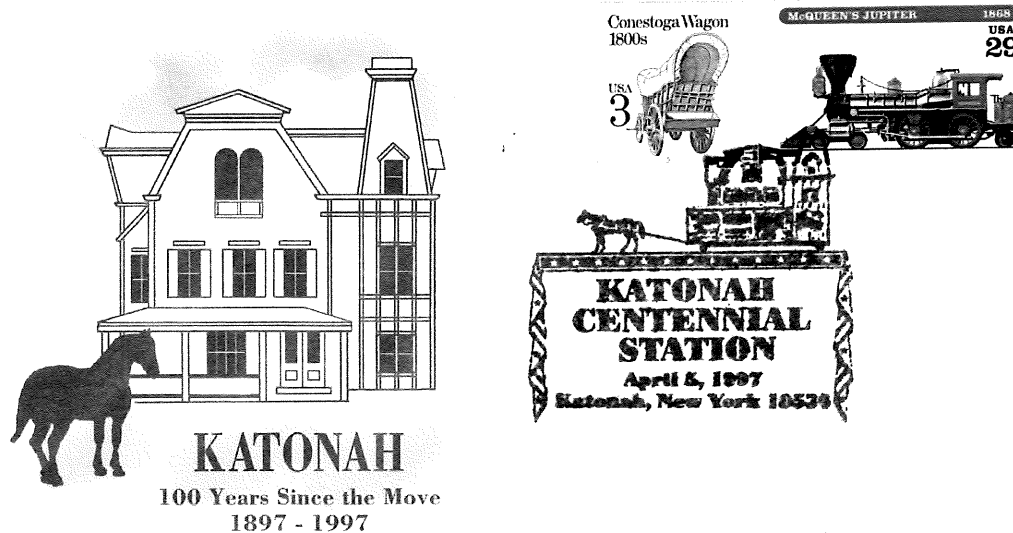
10. Red double circle 30 mm. ZIP code 10536-9998 at top USPS at base.
This was used from mid 2000's to date.



11. Rectangle 34 x 16mm reading KATONAH / N.Y. without a date.
This is seen on wrapper # W425 with # 635 issued in 1927.



12. Seen below is a commemorative postmark from 1997 commemorating the movement of the town to its new location.



References:

Duncombe, F. R., *Katonah: The History of a New York Village and its People*, Katonah, 1961.

Phillips, D. G., *American Stampless Cover Catalog*, Volume 1, Phillips Publishing Co., 1997.

Proulx, Dave, *Star Cancels of New York State*, Empire State Postal History Society, 1987.

NEWLY DISCOVERED NYS COUNTY & POSTMASTER CANCELS

By: Glenn Estus

Twenty-two years have passed since the late postal historian and dealer David Proulx wrote his seminal work "County and Postmaster Cancels of New York State" (Empire State Postal History Society, 1990). In that time I have discovered a number of new items not listed in Proulx's monograph. Proulx does not include the color of the cancel or the killer used to cancel the postage. For most examples, neither have I.

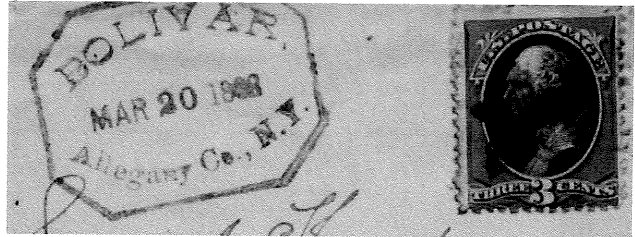
Each new item is listed below with the date(s) of use and the type of cancel using Proulx nomenclature.

Allegany County:

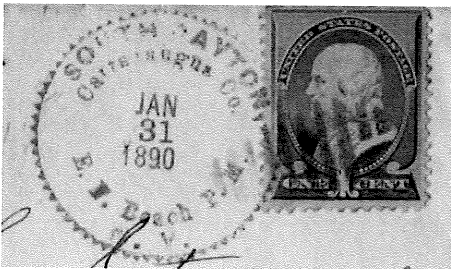
Bolivar: Type E (single octagon rectangle)—1882-1883

Description: "BOLIVAR/ date / Allegany Co., N.Y."

My example (March 20, 1883) also has a separate star killer on the 3c banknote stamp. In my records I have an early date of January 26, 1882 and a late date of March 20, 1883.



Proulx lists a Type J (single oval) from this office with the dates of 1881-1882.



Cattaraugus County:

South Dayton: Type B1 (fancy single circle)

Description: "SOUTH DAYTON / Cattaraugus Co. / (date) / E.F. Beach, P.M. / N.Y."

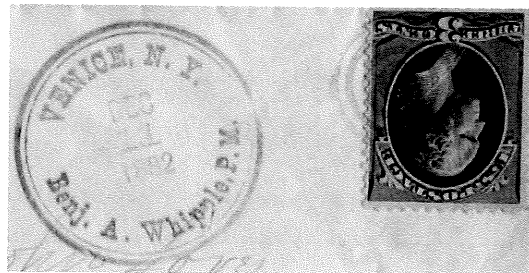
The only copy I have seen is dated January 31, 1890.

Cayuga County:

Venice: Type A1 (small margin double circle)—1882

Description: "VENICE, N.Y. / (date) / Benj. A. Whipple. P.M."

My example is dated December 21, 1882. The listing in Proulx is for a single circle postmark.



Chautauqua County:

Open Meadows: Type A3 (triple circle)—1880

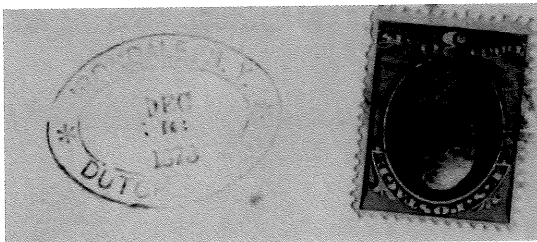
Description: "OPEN MEADOWS, / CHAUT. CO., N.Y." The date is inside the inner circle.

While this was not listed in the Proulx book, it is listed and illustrated in "Early Post Offices of Chautauqua County New York" (C. Malcolm Nichols, 1960) on page 68. My example is in a pink ink, while Nichols says it's also known in red and magenta. My date is December 6, 1880. Nichols reports dates as late as 1885.



Dutchess County

Irondale: Type J2 (double oval, larger margin)—1878



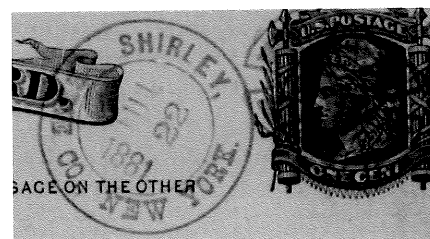
Description: "IRONDALE, N.Y. / DUTCHESS CO." with asterisks on left and right between the double lines; also, date inside of inner oval.

Proulx lists a circular date stamp used in 1887 and 1888. My example (the only one I have ever seen) is blue and dated December 16, 1878.

Erie County:

Shirley: Type A2 (larger margin double circle)—1881

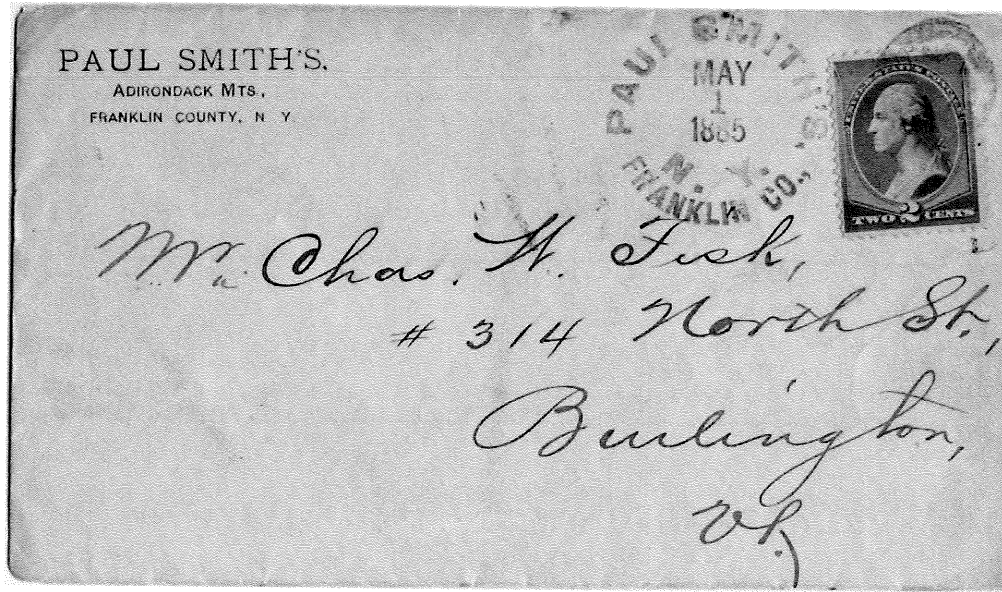
Description: "SHIRLEY, / ERIE CO, NEW YORK" The date is inside the inner circle.



Franklin County:

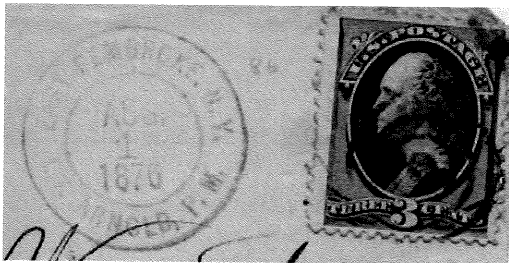
Paul Smith's: Type K (no outer circle)—1882-5

Description: thick block letters: "PAUL SMITH'S / (date) / N.Y. / FRANKLIN CO.," The CDS is rimless. The earliest date in my database is September 8, 1882 and the latest is May 1, 1885, my example. By August 10, 1885 a new and listed cancel was in use.



Genesee County:

East Pembroke: Type A2 (larger margin double circle)—1876



Description: "EAST PEMBROKE, N.Y. / I.T. ARNOLD, P.M. with date inside inner circle.

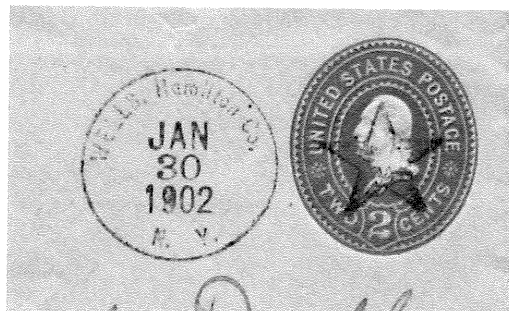
My example (the only one I have ever seen) is magenta and dated August 1, 1876.

Hamilton County:

Wells: Type A (single circle)—1902

Description: "WELLS, Hamilton Co. / date / N.Y".

This is a quite late use of a County Name in the postmark. There seems to be a star killer attached.



Jefferson County:

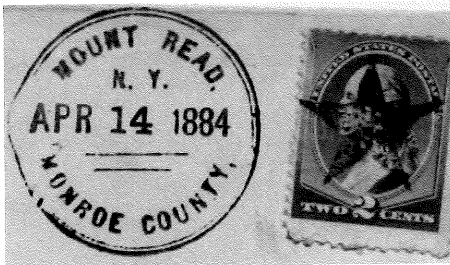
Frontenac: new Type A4? (unlisted small margin triple circle)—1892

Description: my example may be the same as Proulx, however, mine definitely has 3 outer circles, while Proulx reports an A2 (larger margin double circle).



Monroe County:

Mount Read: Type A1 (single circle)—1881-84



Description: "MOUNT READ, / N.Y. / (date) / (2 bars) MONROE COUNTY".

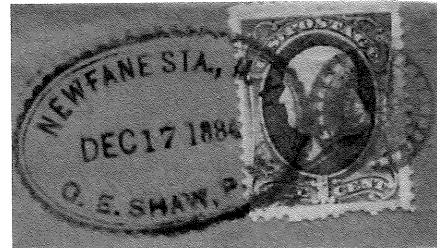
Proulx lists no other such cancel from Mount Read. My copy is dated April 14, 1884 and I have seen an example dated October 1, 1881. My example also has a large solid star as a killer on the stamp.

Niagara County:

Newfane Station: Type I1 (fancy outer margin double oval)—1884

Description: "NEWFANE STA., N.Y. / (date) / G.E. SHAW, PM".

The only date in my database is December 17, 1884



Oneida County:

Oriskany Falls: Type I1 (fancy outer margin double oval)—1893



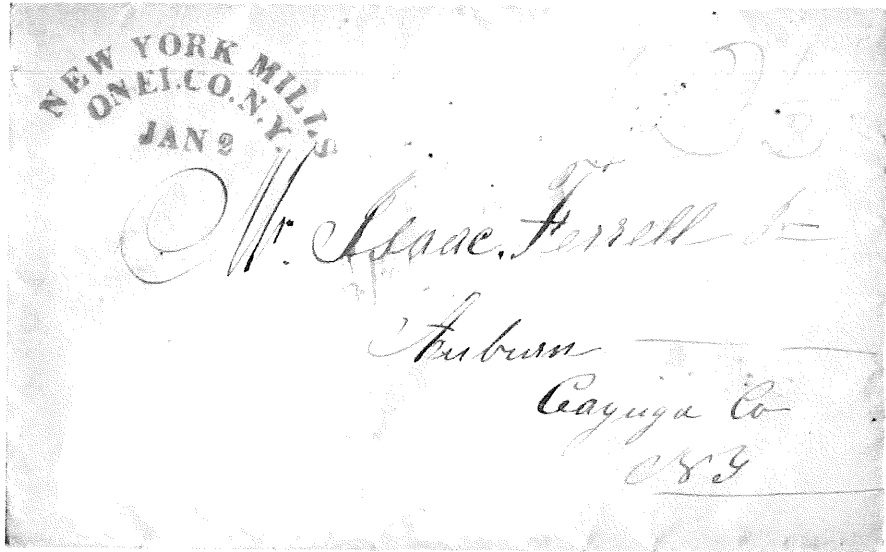
Description: ORISKANY FALLS, / RECEIVED / (date) / C.W. Clark, P.M. / ONEIDA CO., N.Y."

The only difference between the Proulx listing and the example in my collection is that Proulx says the name of the postmaster is printed as "Char. W. Clark". My example is dated August 11, 1893. Proulx lists his example as 1892.

Oneida County:

New York Mills: unlisted type (rimless arc)—1833

Description: “NEW YORK MILLS / ONEI. CO. N.Y.” in red on stampless envelope. This post office was established in December 1832 and the cancel is dated Jan 2 (1833).

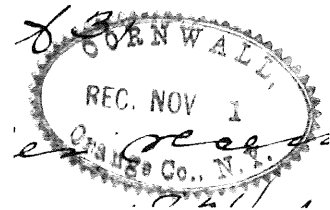


Orange County:

Cornwall: Type II (fancy outer margin double oval)—1887-88

Description: “CORNWALL, / REC. (date) / Orange Co., N.Y.”.

Same as in Proulx with the addition of the abbreviation “REC.” in the date part of the cancel.



Orange County:

Leptondale: Type A (single circle)—1888



Description: “LEPTONDALE / (date) / ORANGE CO. N.Y.”.

My copy is dated May 1888.

Orleans County:

Kendall: Type I1 (fancy outer margin double oval)—1889

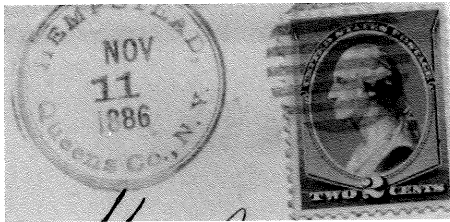
Description: “KENDALL, N.Y. / (date) / S.H. SANFORD, P.M.”

My example is dated April 27, 1889 and is used as a magenta receiving mark on the reverse of the envelope. I have only seen this example.



Queens County:

Hempstead: Type A1 (small margin double circle)—1886



Description: “HEMPSTEAD, / Queens Co., N.Y.”

Proulx lists 4 different types, all having the words “QUEENS CO.” in capital letters. My example (November 11, 1886) has “Queens” written in lower case letters. I also have a similar example dated March 30, 1887.

Rensselaer County:

North Nassau: A1 (small margin double circle)—1887

Description: “NORTH NASSAU, / (date) / RENS. CO., N.Y.”. My example is dated March 24, 1887 and is magenta. My database says the earliest date I have seen is January 11, 1887.



Richmond County:

Castleton Corners: Type A2 (larger margin double circle)—1886



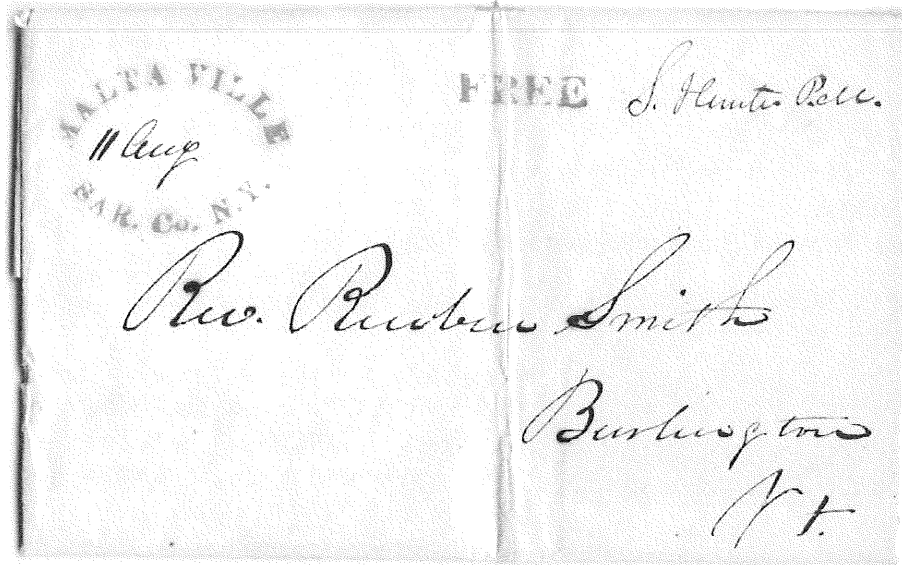
Description: “CASTLETON CORNERS, / RICHMOND CO., N.Y.” with wheel of fortune killer.

My example is in magenta and dated October 1, 1886. I have never seen another example.

Saratoga County:

Maltaville: Unlisted Type (rimless oval)

Description: "MALTA VILLE / (mans. date) / SAR. Co. N.Y.". My example is ex-Hahn and was described in *Postal History Journal* (#89, October 1991) as being one of two examples known. The cancel is red and dated August 11, 1828.



Schuyler County:

Townsend: J1 (double oval)—1880

Description: "TOWNSEND / (date) / Schuyler Co., N.Y."

My example is magenta dated May 17, 1880. I have no record of another example.



Suffolk County:

Huntington: Type A2 (larger margin double circle)—1883



Description: "HUNTINGTON / L.I. N.Y." with an iron cross at the left and right between the circle.

I have only seen my example which is dated April 23, 1883. There is also an Iron Cross killer tying the stamp to the envelope. Obviously, "L.I" stands for "Long Island".

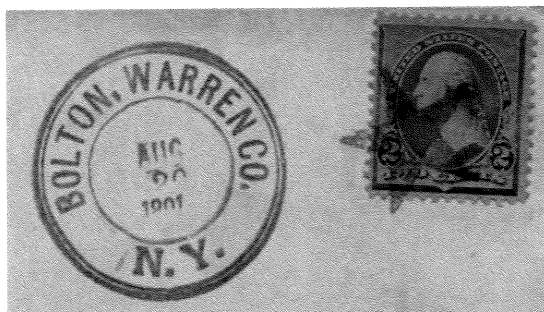
**Ulster County:
Forest Glen: A3 (triple circle)—1883**

Description: “FOREST GLEN, / ULSTER CO., N.Y.” with date inside of inner circle. Also has large segmented star as killer.

My date is July 17, 1883. It's the only copy I have recorded in my database.



**Warren County;
Bolton: A3 (triple circle)—1891**



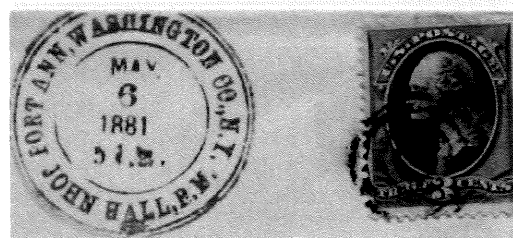
Description: “BOLTON, WARREN CO. / N.Y.” with date inside of inner circle and with a large star killer.

My cover is dated August 20, 1891.

**Washington County:
Fort Ann: Type A3 (triple circle)—1880-81**

Description: “FORT ANN, WASHINGTON CO., N.Y. / JOHN HALL, P.M.” with date inside of inner circle.

My example is dated May 6, 1881 and my records indicate that I have seen other examples as early as July 12, 1880 and as late as May 18, 1881.



**Washington County:
Huletts Landing: Type C2 (double circle inner line fancy)—1888**



Description: “HULETTS LANDING / NEW YORK” (between outer lines) and “WASH. CO. / Date (inside inner circle).

Previously, the cancel had the name of the postmaster “D. W. Phillips” and is listed as such by Proulx

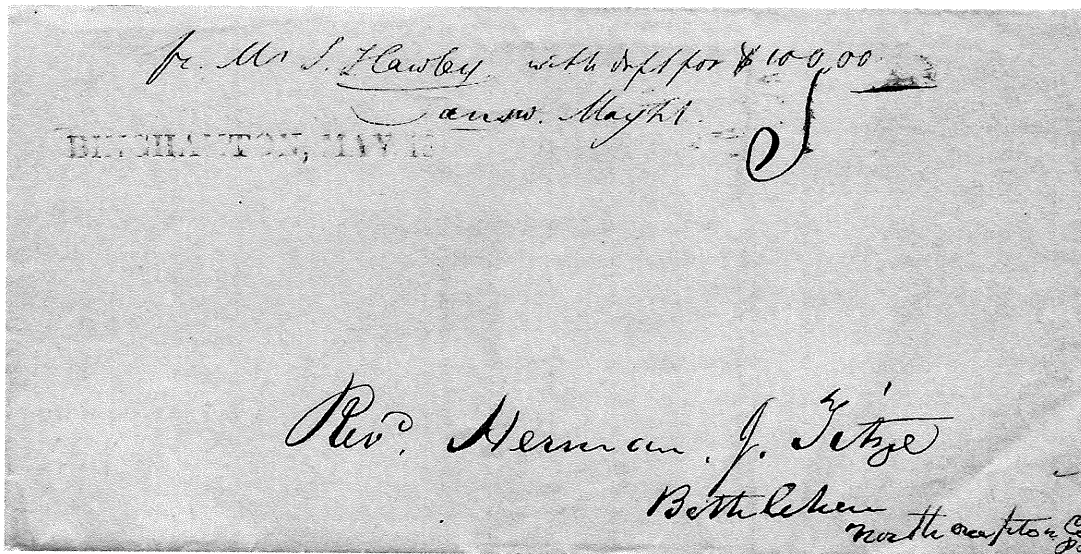
Glenn Estus may be contacted at gestus@westelcom.com

COVER OF THE ISSUE
Submitted by: David E. Williams

Having been collecting Broome County postal history for some 25 years, with special concentration on the postal markings of Binghamton, I am always on the lookout for new varieties missing from my collection. I try to obtain at least one example of a given marking, but by collecting multiple copies, I can narrow down the approximate dates of use for each one. The American Stampless Cover Catalog (ASCC) is a good beginning source for most markings, but only gives limited year of use information for the majority of them.

For Binghamton, I readily rely on a listing put together by Chester Wilcox found in the June 1986 ESPHS Bulletin, aptly entitled "*Binghamton, N. Y. Postal Markings During the Stampless Period.*" Wilcox listed earliest and latest dates for each of the many postal markings known to him from this town. Over the years I have documented either earlier or later dates of use for many of these.

One of the elusive items missing from my collection has always been a straightline cancel from Binghamton. The ASCC lists two straightlines; a 29x3 in red of unknown year, as well as a 31x3 in both blue and black from 1849. Wilcox only lists the 31x3 in black, dated 5/17/1849.



In July 2011, Daniel F. Kelleher Auctions listed the Binghamton straightline cover seen above. It was described as the 31x3 variety. I was the successful bidder on the lot, and when I received it I noticed it had a note included from Calvet Hahn that described it as a 48x3 straightline. The date is May 18; interestingly one day later than Wilcox's earliest for the 31x3.

This begs a question: When I measure and record a straightline cancel, I measure the entire length (town, state, date, etc.), which in this case is 48x3, as Hahn noted. Why was this listed as a 31x3 variety? If one measures just the 'BINGHAMTON,' it measures 31mm. So what criterion does the ASCC listings and Wilcox use? Is this a new variety that warrants listing in the ASCC? Any and all comments are willingly accepted.