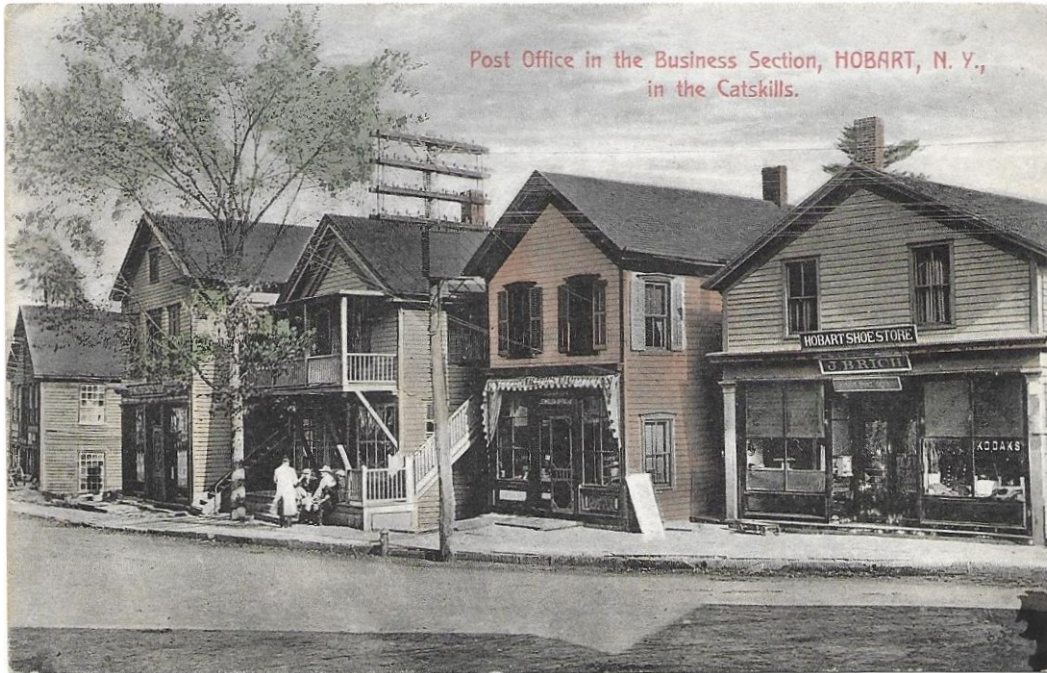


Excelsior!

September 2020

Whole No. 32 New Series



The Hobart Post Office as it appeared c. 1912 when this postcard showing the main district was mailed. The post office is in the building at the right with its sign the lowest one below that of the Hobart Shoe Store. The village had a population of about 550 from 1890 to 1910.

HOWDY FROM HOBART

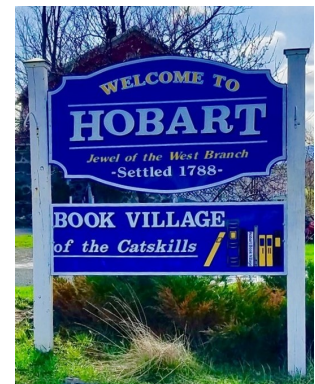
By George DeKornfeld

A little more than two years ago, I moved west from Ancramdale near the borders of Connecticut and Massachusetts to a more manageable -sized dwelling, a log home in the heart of Delaware County's marvelously scenic Catskill Mountains. As a consequence, unless some jaw-dropping cover happens along, stories from my former home – which I dubbed Columbia County Corner – are most likely now a thing of the past.

I suddenly have before me a brand spanking new field of postal history to search out for study, a happy circumstance all fellow collectors should be able to appreciate and relate to: the antici-

tion of a new subject to explore.

I'm now one of the 400-or-so permanent residents of Hobart, in the town of Stamford, a bucolic village incorporated back in 1888, today known for its bookstores, antique dealers, waterfalls and working farms, an altogether delightful confluence of small-town eye-candy. (I take a closer look at Stamford on Page 12.)





Excelsior!

Journal of the Empire State Postal History Society

Contact: ESPHS
P.O. Box 482
E. Schodack, NY 12063-0482
www.esphs.us
www.facebook.com/
EmpireStatePostalHistorySociety

George DeKornfeld: A new home — this one in the Catskills' Delaware County — offers new opportunities and challenges to investigate postal history. **Front cover and inside**

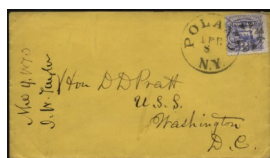


Daniel Knowles: Some Suffolk County post offices (right) posted covers with 1869 pictorials, but some did not. **Page 17**



Glenn A. Estus: The search continues in the survey for elusive, short-lived type of Depression-era handstamps. **Page 3**

Francis Ferguson: An intriguing cover was sent from a rural Herkimer County community to a U.S. senator from Indiana. "Why," remains the question. **Page 7**



Robert Bramwell: How effective for the bottom line was advertising dead letters at small post offices the early 19th century? **Page 20**



David Goodhart: How does this modern U.S. stamp connect to a 19th-century cover sent to an asylum? **Page 26**

Cover Story: Charles J. DiComo dissects a cover that first went by steamship and was then forwarded to a Capital District mill town. **Back cover**

The journal is published March and September by the Empire State Postal History Society. Articles for the Excelsior! are solicited and remain the property of the authors and the ESPHS. Please contact the editor and the author to inquire about reprint rights or for use in another publication.

Excelsior! Contact: nyspostal@gmail.com

Editor: Jeff Stage, 215 Westminster Ave., Syracuse, NY 13210; centerstage98@yahoo.com

Bulletin: Lawrence Laliberte, 15 Sunset Hill Court, (quarterly) Carmel, NY 10512-5027; largin@verizon.net

Webmaster: Charles J. DiComo, PhD
Charlesdicomo@gmail.com

Membership in the ESPHS: Please write to the secretary at the heading address or print and mail the application form on the society website. Dues are \$20 per year (\$25 for non-U.S. addresses), for applications

Society Officers

President: Charles J. DiComo, PhD ('21)
1298 Hammock Way, Lancaster, PA 17601
Charlesdicomo@gmail.com

Vice President: David Przepiora ('21)
1505 Emery Road, E. Aurora, NY 14052
djprez@hotmail.com

Secretary: George McGowan ('22)
Box 482, E. Schodack, NY 12063

Treasurer: Dr. George DeKornfeld ('22)
1014 Clove Road, Hobart, NY 13788

Board of Directors: Brian Levy ('21), Maris Tirums ('21), John Cali ('22), Drew Nicholson ('22), Heather Sweeting ('23), Bob Bramwell ('23)

dated from January to June. For applications dated July to December terms are for 1 ½ years with a fee of \$30 (\$35 for non-U.S. addresses). Advertising is accepted. For ads, please contact the society secretary.

From the Editor: Greetings all. This September issue has some changes in layout and design, but the content — offered by you, the members — remains interesting, scholarly, informative and entertaining. It's also diverse.

Our cover story looks at the history — postal and otherwise — of a small community in the Catskills. We have surveys on handcancels and the use of 1869 pictorial stamps

on Long Island. Plus, dead letters and much more.

I urge all members to take part in the publication. We need short and long articles. The recent edition of the society Bulletin has some guidelines for writing. We will create a more formal guideline and place it on social media. If you're not sure of an idea, feel free to drop me a line. Happy collecting!

Jeff Stage

Wanted: Depression Era 4-Bar Handstamps (Type E)

A short-lived type of handcancel moved the placement of the state name within the circle

By Glenn A. Estus

In August or September 1930, the Post Office Department introduced a drastically new design in 4-bar handstamp postmarks, according to A Catalog of Non-standard US Postmarks, 1900-1971. These handstamps were in use in some places to the mid-1950s, but can be elusive in a philatelic search.

The catalog by Doug DeRoest and Randy Stehle is a good source for postmark information. The catalog, which is more than 300 pages, is only available as an e-book and found online at <http://content.yudu.com/Library/Aleeyk/ACatalogueofNonstand/resources/58.htm>.

Unlike the Type D 4-bars, these new marks – termed herein Type E, which are also known as Depression-era 4 bars – are readily identifiable for several obvious reasons:

On the Type E, dial diameters became somewhat smaller (30-to-31 millimeters vs. 31-to-32 mm), killer bars became shorter and thicker (2-to-2.5 mm) with a vertical span of 18-to-19 mm and have ends that are squared off nearest the postmark dial, according to the catalog.

The most readily identifiable design characteristic, however, is that for the first time both the town and state names are displayed in a full arc across the inside top of the dial [Figure 1]. Prior to this, just the town name was at the top and the state was inside the bottom of the circle.

Five varieties of lettering style are known to exist: two versions of sans serif and three varieties of serif ranging from Roman to Frontier fonts have been reported.

The lettering fonts used in the

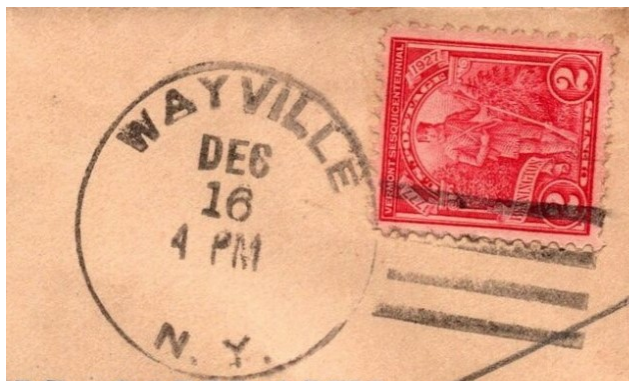
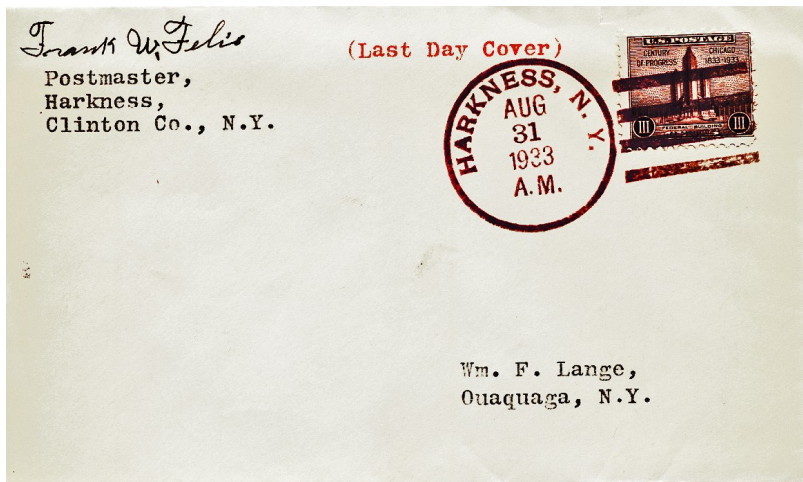


Figure 1: A handcancel from the 1920s (left) in which the killer bars are not squared at the ends and the state abbreviation is at the bottom. Below, is an example of the new handcancel from Harkness in Clinton County. It was discontinued on August 21, 1933.



cancels are Frontier, a large serif font, a small serif font, a small block font and a large block font.

The period of distribution for Type E 4-bars was only about nine months and was concluded in June 1931.

Although I only collect Type 4 E Depression-era hand cancels from New York and Vermont I decided to keep a listing of such cancels, including scans, of any that I found from other states and territories. As of early 2020 I have a database of almost 2,500 such post offices. I assume there are many more and I have contacted state postal historians to help me.

My main sources have been eBay listings and websites, such as those developed by Jim Forte and

See list of New York
Depression-era 4-bar
handstamps,
next two pages.

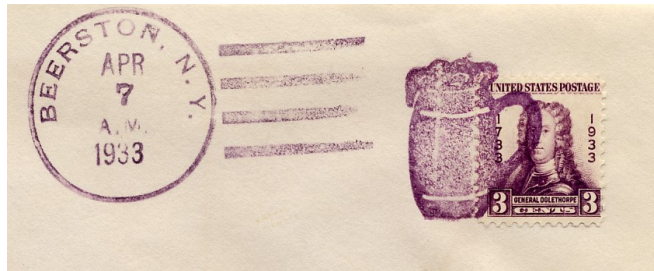
Doubleday Postal History, as well as the compact discs published by the Post Mark Collectors Club (www.postmarks.org). I have obtained screen shots of most of the listed cancels.

Another source of New York Depression-era cancels has been the compact disc that Gerald Wiley, a longtime member of the Empire State Postal History Society, sent to society members many years ago.

Perhaps the best online source

Handstamps, Page 6

New York Depression-Era Handcancels



Beerston in Delaware County seems to have modified its cancel for President Franklin Roosevelt's signing of the act (April 7, 1933) legalizing the sale of 3.2 percent beer.



High Falls in Ulster County used a time signature in its cancel.



Houghton in Allegany County had space for a time signature but didn't use it on this date.



Hubbardville in Madison County has serif letters in the cancel.

Post Office	Earliest Seen	Latest Seen
Adams Basin	Jan 16, 1939	
Altona	Dec 6, 1933	
Ancramdale	Nov 9, 1935	
Appleton	Jan 10, 1939	
Aquebogue	Jul 27, 1935	
Atlantic Beach	Sep 2, 1931	
Auriesville	Jul 5, 1940	
Barrytown	Aug 5, 1932	
Bedford	May 10, 1934	
Beerston	Apr 7, 1933	Nov 2, 1933
Bellona	Mar 2, 1936	Apr 21, 1938
Bliss	Sep 8, 1931	Mar 12, 1935
Bloomington	Dec 9, 1933	
Carle Place	Aug 8, 1932	Dec 8, 1932
Caywood	Apr 12, 1932	
Centerport	Aug 3, 1935	
Chadwicks	Apr 17, 1934	
Cheektowaga	Mar 20, 1933	
Chelsea	Aug 19, 1939	
Comstock	Mar 14, 1931	
Coreys	Aug 6, 1931	Dec 28, 1945
Craigsville	May 20, 1932	
Crittenden	Dec 31, 1945	
Darien	Apr 27, 1936	Jan 31, 1940
Davenport Center	Nov 2, 1931	Feb 7, 1935
Deer River	Jun 16, 1932	
Denmark	Mar 24, 1931	Dec 22, 1939
Duane	Aug 10, 1934	
Dunraven	Jun 30, 1945	
Eagle Nest	Sep 22, 1943	Jul 18, 1944
Earlton	Jun 16, 1932	Sep 30, 1932
East Branch	?????	
East Creek	Nov 15, 1935	
East Springfield	?????	
Elma	Apr 7, 1933	
Fabius	?????	
Farmersville Station	Jul 20, 1932	
Fernwood	Feb 22, 1933	Sep 9, 1936
Fine	Mar 20, 1931	Apr 29, 1935
Forest	Jan 28, 1939	Jan 22, 1946
Fort Ticonderoga	Apr 1, 1932	Jan 22, 1934
Galway	Oct 13, 1933	Oct 19, 1942
Goldenbridge	Mar 1, 1934	
Great Bend	Jun 3, 1931	
Green Lake	Jul 15, 1931	
Greenlawn	Aug 24, 1937	

Post Office	Earliest Seen	Latest Seen
Grieg	Apr 25, 1935	
Halcott Center	Jan 29, 1932	Jan 30, 1934
Harkness	Aug 31, 1933	
Harpersfield	Oct 30, 1934	Jun 6, 1936
Helmuth	Apr 21, 1933	
High Falls	Nov 1, 1932	Mar 7, 1934
High Hill Beach	Sep 15, 1939	
Hoosick	Jul 4, 1931	
Houghton	Jun 30, 1931	Jan 11, 1934
Hubbardsville	Apr 18, 1932	Sep 6, 1932
Ionia	Jul 26, 1935	
Irona	Nov 7, 1933	Nov 16, 1937
Jewett	Dec 23, 1931	Mar 20, 1935
Johnson	Apr 8, 1935	Aug 10, 1942
Jordanville	Aug 2, 1934	
Keene	Jan 25, 1932	Jun 17, 1935
King Ferry	May 3, 1934	
Kitchawan	Apr 21, 1938	
LaGrangeville	Feb 25, 1935	
Lawtons	?????	
Leonardsville	Apr 3, 1935	
Lexington	Jul 18, 1933	Mar 5, 1935
Linlithgo	Oct 19, 1932	
Livonia Center	Dec 31, 1940	
Manorville	Jun 20, 1935	Aug 12, 1935
Marcy	Jan 8, 1932	Aug 8, 1933
Masonville	May 9, 1935	
Memphis	Dec 23, 1931	
Mendon	Mar 5, 1936	
Meridan	Nov 25, 1935	
Middle Falls	Sep 21, 1934	
Miller Place	Sep 22, 1934	
Minerva	Feb 7, 1938	
Minoa	Jan 6, 1933	
Moriah Center	Jul 5, 1932	
Mountainville	Aug 18, 1936	
Nelsonville	Mar 27, 1946	
New Hampton	Jun 18, 1932	
New Russia	Feb 25, 1932	Jul 17, 1934
New Russia	Feb 25, 1932	Jul 17, 1934
Niskayuna	Jul 4, 1932	Jul 20, 1940
North Chili	Nov 15, 1932	
Oak Beach	Aug 8, 1945	
Oaks Corners	Jul 11, 1932	Jun 23, 1934
Old Westbury	Dec 23, 1937	

Post Office	Earliest Seen	Latest Seen
Onoville	Jun 20, 1945	
Oramel	Oct 3, 1931	
Panama	Jul 12, 1935	Apr 20, 1938
Parishville	Apr 22, 1932	
Penfield	Jun 29, 1933	
Piercefield	Apr 16, 1932	
Poplar Ridge	Apr 11, 1933	
Preble	Mar 19, 1932	
Quaker Bridge	Feb 19, 1933	
Red House	Aug 26, 1932	
Rexville	Jul 22, 1935	
Richville	Nov 6, 1933	
Saint Regis Falls	Oct 1, 1932	Jun 8, 1937
Saint Remy	Dec 23, 1931	
Saltaire	Sep 4, 1933	Jul 4, 1934
Seaford	Jul 2, 1932	
Sloansville	Mar 13, 1933	Mar 14, 1933
Sloatsburg	Nov 12, 1931	Jul 2, 1934
South Schodack	Aug 13, 1946	
South Westerloo	Aug 22, 1934	
Spragueville	Dec 8, 1933	
Stafford	Jul 7, 1932	
Stamfordville	May 1, 1934	Jul 17, 1937
Sterling Station	?????	
Strykersville	Jun 23, 1932	
Thiells	Feb 3, 1932	
Tompkins Cove	Aug 24, 1946	
Triangle	Aug 24, 1940	Sep 25, 1950
Union Grove	Mar 14, 1935	
Van Etten	Jun 14, 1932	
Vermontville	Dec 19, 1934	
Victory Mills	Aug 2, 1934	Jul 19, 1950
Wayville	Oct 26, 1931	Feb 1, 1932
Weavertown	Dec 17, 1935	
Wells	Dec 23, 1932	Oct 11, 1934
Wellsburg	Jun 26, 1933	Oct 8, 1937
West Falls	Jun 3, 1933	
West Fulton	Feb 22, 1932	
West Kill	Jan 4, 1932	Mar 31, 1937
West Stephantown	Oct 26, 1933	
Whallonsburg	Jun 20, 1932	
Whiteface	Sep 17, 1933	Sep 10, 1938
Williamstown	May 18, 1932	Dec 23, 1936
Youngs	Oct 31, 1940	Jun 19, 1941
Youngsville	Jun 20, 1934	

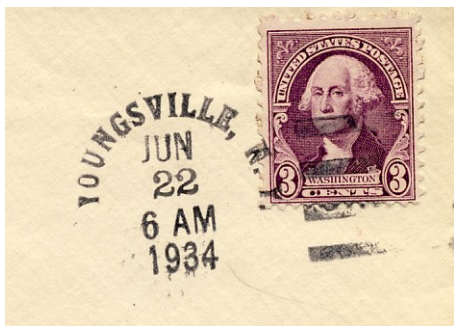


Figure 2: The Youngsville, Sullivan County, cancel is the only rimless Depression-era cancel from any state that the author has seen.

Handstamps, from Page 3

of a state postal history cancellation date is from the North Carolina Postal History Society www.ncpostalhistory.com/resources/north-carolina-postmark-catalog-update. The website is one that other societies would do well to emulate. The postmark catalog section is a wonder to behold.

I hope to create a web presence for this data and am now soliciting from state postal history collectors to make this listing as complete as possible. This is not as easy as it might sound as it seems that many current collectors do not feel that anything after 1900 is worthy of collecting and, therefore, very little information is available.

I have more than 150 New York post offices in my current list and would appreciate more information concerning post offices not on this list. If you have similar items from other states, that information would be most appreciated also. All cancels have the state abbreviation of "N.Y." immediately after the name of the post office.

The earliest use in New York that I have a record of is Comstock, from March 14, 1931, almost a year after the Post Office Department began issuing these cancels to newly established Third and Fourth class post offices, as well as replacement cancels to older post offices needing replacements.

My latest recorded use in New York is from Triangle, on September 5, 1950.

The earliest national example I have seen is from Pine Level, North Carolina (July 2, 1930) while the latest that I have seen is from New Albany, Kansas (April 3, 1956). The Pine Level information may be incorrect since it has been assumed that distribution of the hand cancels began in August and September 1930. The July 2, 1930 date is based on information from the North Carolina Postal History website.

The Youngsville cancel [Figure 2] is the only one that I have seen where the outer edge has become worn or fallen off making the cancel a rimless arc.

It seems that the cancels did not hold up well as evidenced by two examples [Figure 3] — one from Flourtown, Pennsylvania and the other from Layton, Utah. Since both examples are from late 1930, perhaps the "pie crust" effect had an influence on Post Office Department very soon issuing a new type of cancel.

By the middle of 1931 a new type of cancel was being issued that reverted to state name at the bottom of the cancel and the left ends of the cancelling bars being more rounded.

If other collectors of this interesting short-lived period of cancels wish more information, I would like to exchange information about any state but especially about New York and Vermont post offices. I can be reached at P.O. Box 451, Westport, NY 12993 or gestus@westelcom.com.

About the Author: Glenn Estus has been a member of the ESPHS since 1972 and was editor of The Bulletin of the Empire State Postal History Society from September 1994 to March 2009. He is currently the immediate past president of the Vermont Philatelic Society and has been editor and publisher of The Vermont Philatelist since 2009. Estus also is the author of upcoming publications on Vermont Doane cancellations as well as New York state postmaster and county cancels.

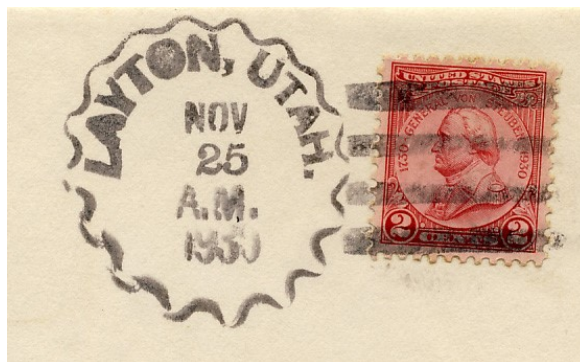
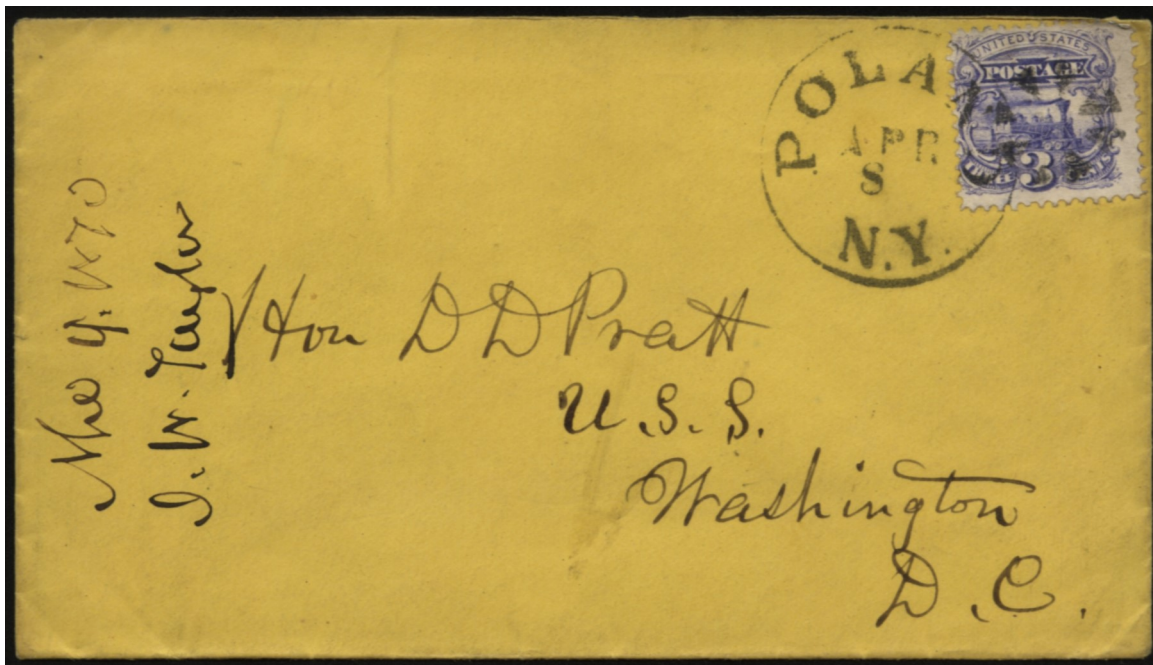


Figure 3. These two cancels show the "pie crust" effect. One is from Flourtown in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania and the other is from Layton, in Davis County, Utah. Both are from 1930.



What can be learned from this cover from the rural Herkimer County community of Poland?

Poland Cover Tells Tale But Questions Remain

By Francis Ferguson

The cover shown from rural Herkimer County has had my interest for some time now. There seems to be a lot of history attached to this one envelope. Attempts to determine the nature of the cover and the connection between the sender and receiver has only been partially successful – even with the vast amount of information online.

In 2000, a longtime friend contacted me to sell her grandfather's accumulation of philatelic "stuff." Besides serving as postmaster of his small town in Ohio, he also had a successful insurance business. The trunk of material was mostly United States material, spread across the spectrum from the 1850s to the late 1940s, with most of the material from the early decades of the 1900s. Sheets, singles, covers and a lot of other material of all kinds came to light as the discovery process began; condition was mixed.

A gem of a surprise came to light while sorting through a rather large bundle of miscellaneous covers, some from the stampless era. In my hand was a lovely cover (without an enclosure) franked with a 3-cent Locomotive stamp from the 1869 pictorial series. It is postmarked from Poland, New York on April 8, with no year shown.

My interest was in serious overdrive, somewhat I am sure, from my roots.

I was born in 1959 in Utica. Much of my moth-

er's family came from the surrounding area that includes Clark Mills, Whitesboro and Clinton. A close family friend was born in 1909 on a farm in the Poland area, probably when it looked much like the vintage postcard shown.

The cover had my interest when I realized the population of Poland in 1869 had to be a small number. For reference the population of the village of Poland in 1880 was 282 and 130 years later the number had risen to 508. A decrease may be expected after the ongoing Census is completed.

The addressee of the cover – "Hon. D.D. Pratt, U.S.S. Washington DC" – immediately caught my attention. Docketing markings on the envelope read "May 4 1870 / J.W. Taylor." It only took a couple of minutes to figure out that the letter was addressed to a United States senator. This was intriguing.

After spending many hours on the worldwide web, some of the gaps have been filled in, but many more questions remain.

The sender of the letter, J.W. Taylor also known as J. Washington Taylor, was born in 1807 and was a native of Lenox. Evidence seems to point toward the "J." being short for John. In 1841, he received an advanced degree from Union College in Schenectady. The regents of the university appointed him curator of the State Cabinet of Natural History, a position he held

Poland, Page 8

Poland

Poland, from Page 7

for five years. As a direct result of this position for several years he presented lectures on geology and natural history throughout the state. The national Census records of 1870 list Taylor's profession as naturalist / geology. His marriage in 1865 at the rather advanced age of 58 to Mary Benchly, of Russia Township, produced Gerrie B., an only son. J.W. Taylor passed away at the age of 84 in 1891. Scant other details have emerged regarding Taylor and his life.

The receiver of the letter, D.D. Pratt was born Daniel Darwin Pratt in Palermo, Maine on October 26, 1813. He moved to Fenner in Madison County and graduated from Hamilton College in Clinton in 1831 as the valedictorian in the class of nine graduates. He settled in Indiana in 1832. He studied law and was admitted to the bar in 1836. Pratt went on to hold a number of elected posts in the Indiana state government until he was elected in 1868 as a Republican to the U.S. Senate. He served from March 1869 to March 1875. Pratt died at the age of 64 in June 1877.

The Hamilton Literary Monthly of February 1869 states: "The newest honor to this Class is the election of Hon. Daniel D. Pratt, of Logansport, Ia, to the Senate of the United States. Senator Pratt is a man of commanding personal appearance, being six foot three or four inches high, and weighing over three hundred pounds. He has a remarkably strong voice, though not in the least harsh or unpleasant."

The Senatorial papers [50 boxes of material with no inventory, but arranged by date] of D.D. Pratt, which could contain the missing correspondence from the envelope in this article, are in the Indiana State Library. A three-hour in-person attempt to find the enclosure that would have been in this



A postcard c. 1880 shows an aerial view of Poland, N.Y.

Poland, NY: Historic Population

Year	Population	Percent Change (+)
1880	202	Unavailable
1900	370	Unavailable
1910	332	-10.3
1920	349	5.1
1930	462	32.4
1940	478	3.5
1950	511	6.9
1960	564	10.4
1970	629	11.5
1980	553	-12.1
1990	444	-19.7
2000	451	-1.6
2010	508	12.6
Est. 2018	480	-5.5
Source: U.S. Census		

cover resulted in no success. Additionally, a visit to the Hamilton College Library only turned up the record of D.D. Pratt attending and nothing more.

The question as to the nature of

the communications is what is still undetermined. Numerous hours of research have so far failed to shed any light on the nature of the communications in the envelope. Did the two men know each other on a personal or professional level? I have many questions that will remain unanswered until more facts can be unearthed.

References

- Poland, Herkimer County, N.Y. on Wikipedia.
- Perspective map of Poland with list of landmarks from 1890 by L.R Burleigh, Library of Congress.
- The Hamilton Literary Monthly, February 1869.

About the Author: Francis Ferguson was born in 1959 in Utica, with family ties to Clark Mills and Cortland. He collected as a youth and returned to the philatelic world in 1998. He has been involved as the Florex general chairman since 2001. He is 20-year member of the Central Florida Stamp Club. He has worked in information technology and has been an employee of the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences for most of his career. He lives in Apopka Florida just north of Orlando with his husband of nearly 25 years. He can be contacted at fergapk@gmail.com.

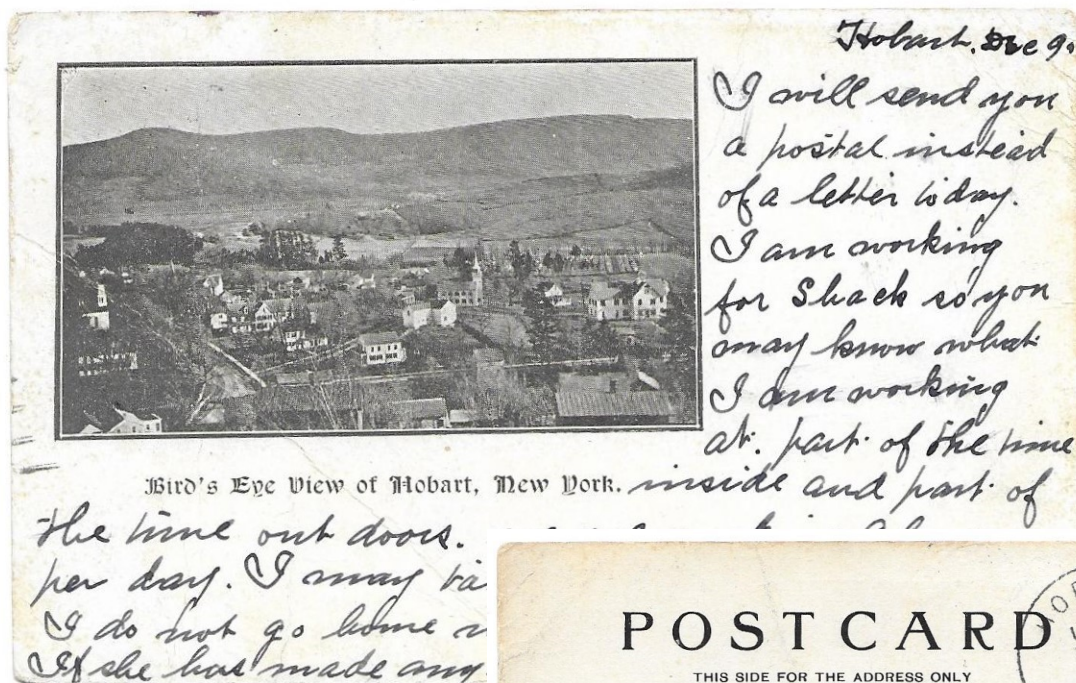


Figure 1. A postcard mailed in 1906 offers a bird's-eye view of the village of Hobart at the turn of the last century. The card arrived at its destination the same day it was mailed.

Hobart, from Page 1

A postcard mailed in 1906 offers a bird's-eye view of the village from the turn of the last century [Figure 1]. The card was sent from Hobart to South Gilboa in Schoharie County. Franked by a common 1-cent Benjamin Franklin issue of 1903, this card was delivered on the same December day it was mailed as witnessed by the Type-2 Doane cancel applied as an arrival marking. So, with this brief introduction and as we embark upon this new adventure, a little background would seem to be in order.

In the years just prior to the American War for Independence, a small group of hardy and hopeful folks, primarily from the Scottish Highlands, moved into this area. When hostilities broke out most of these loyalists found themselves either arrested, driven from their lands, or both. Many ultimately escaped north into British Canada to start over yet again.

Filling this void, the latter 1770s found some New Englanders, largely from Connecticut, heading



westward seeking new homesteads and larger parcels of land to own and farm. Attracted in part by our waterfalls (think "power source") on the West Branch Delaware River, by 1788 five families had built dwellings here, eventually naming the village that they helped start, appropriately enough, as "Waterville." (A little later, the village also was named "Tinkertown" because of, as one story goes, all the little shops that began to pop up on the main street).

It was, of course, a mere matter of time before postal authorities had had their fill of the confusion created by the existence of two Watervilles in the state. Justifiably, one village needed to relinquish its name. Of the two, the inhabitants of the Waterville in Oneida County, having had the foresight to officially lay claim to the name in 1808, got to keep theirs. But what to change the name here to?

One name considered at the time, but rejected, was "Roslyn." It took 20 years for the change, but finally, on June 23, 1828, at the urging of the Rev. Philander Chase, of the local Episcopal Church, Delaware County's Waterville was officially renamed after New York state's third Episcopal bishop. It was finally Hobart.

John Henry Hobart (1775-1830) was born in Philadelphia and

Hobart, Page 10

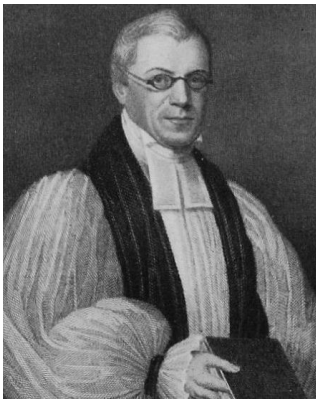


Figure 2. The Rev. John H. Hobart from an engraving by J.W. Paradise, based on an 1844 painting by the engraver.

Hobart, from Page 9

began his studies there at an early age, first attending the Episcopal Academy and next, the University of Pennsylvania, ultimately graduating from Princeton University in New Jersey where he earned both his bachelor's and master's degrees, both in theology [Figure 2]. During his tenure, the bishop had quite the positive impact on

New York state. In 1801, he founded St. Peter's Episcopal Church in the pre-Hobart village of Waterville [Figure 3], reason enough for Minister Chase's support. He also founded the Theological Seminary in Manhattan in 1817, and in the Finger Lakes region, in 1822, Geneva College, later named Hobart College.

The post office in Hobart (technically, as Waterville) opened its doors in January 1815 with George Sherwood appointed as the first postmaster. At the time of the name change to Hobart in 1828, we were already on our third one, Calvin Howard.

Not surprisingly, and just as elsewhere, the railroad became commercially indispensable to the area. By the time the line found its way to Hobart, farms were producing, especially livestock, and the Sheffield Farms Creamery was in full swing. This resulted in railroad freight traffic easily outperforming its passenger

counterpart, this despite the fact that this region was considered to offer one of America's most scenic train rides. Chartered in 1866 as the Roundout & Oswego Railroad, the name was changed to the Ulster & Delaware in 1875 [Figure 4] and remained unchanged until a merger with the New York Central in 1932. The line extended into Hobart in 1884, with passenger service continuing through 1954,

while freight continued into the 1970s. A view of the station as it appeared in 1911 can be seen on a post-card [Figure 5].

Now that we have a touch of background, let's take a look at a few covers.

An attractive all-over advertising cover was sent in 1888 from The Commercial Hotel in Hobart to New York City [Figure 6]. Without contents and franked by a 2-cent George Washington large Bank Note issue tied by an indistinct circular date stamp, the Manhattan receiving marking on the back providentially supplies us with the year of mailing.

Starting life as a stone tavern constructed in 1785

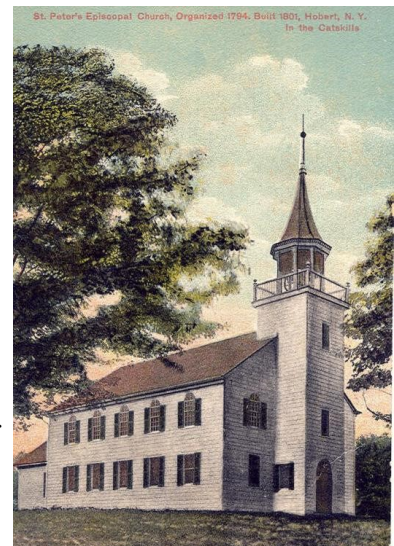


Figure 3. A detail of a postcard shows St. Peter's Episcopal Church, built 1801.

Figure 4. A railroad map shows routes of the Roundout & Oswego Railroad in Otsego and Delaware counties.



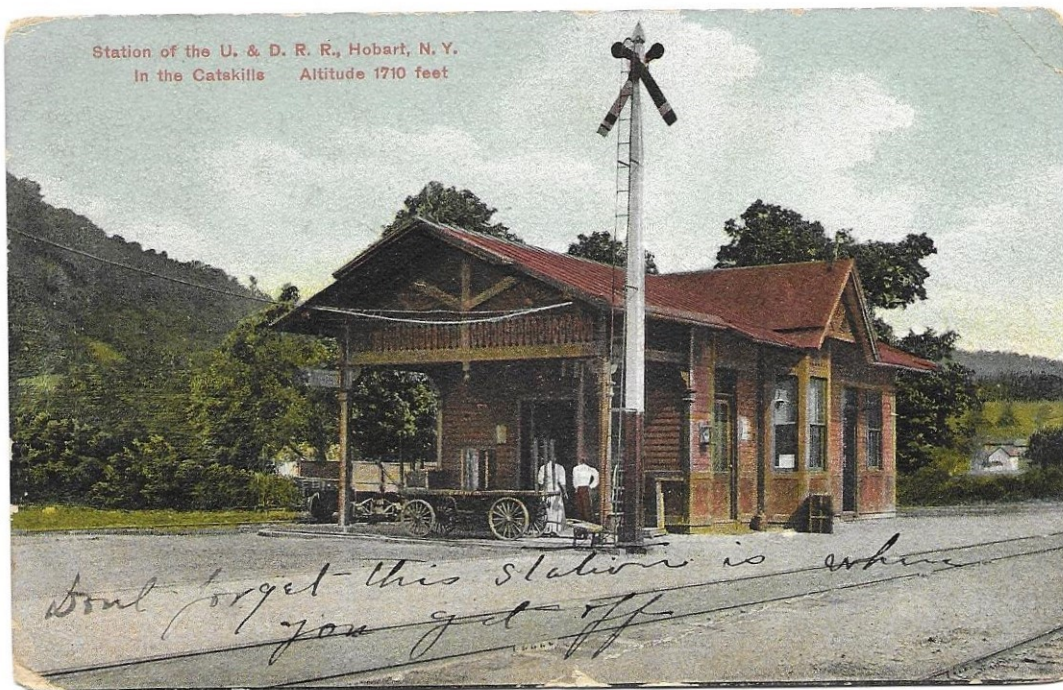


Figure 5. A postcard from 1911 shows the railroad station in Hobart. The village was first served by the Roundout & Oswego Railroad, which in 1875 became the Ulster & Delaware.

(a different source suggests 1780), the Commercial Hotel proper seems to have been erected, incorporating a part if not all of the tavern, in the 1820s, with an addition, a south wing, added in 1884. Small hotels like this were popping up all over the area during this time as the Catskills were the go-to destination for those seeking a mountain or country getaway.

A short column in the local newspaper, the Hobart Independent, had this to say on January 12, 1888:

"The Commercial Hotel in this village has lately put in water from the Water Works. Guests are now furnished with hot and cold water, by turning a faucet.
Hobart, Page 12

Figure 6. All-over advertising cover sent in 1888 from The Commercial Hotel in Hobart. A Manhattan receiving mark is on the reverse.



Figure 7. A blurry photo (below) shows the Commercial Hotel's original construction while an early 20th-century postcard shows the full addition constructed in 1884.



17—Commercial House, Hobart, N. Y.



Figure 8. A dining room in the modern Commercial Hotel.

This is the only hotel in the county that has this convenience, with possibly one exception.”

A blurry contemporary photograph shows the hotel as it appeared prior to its 1884 construction while an early 1900s postcard shows the spruced-up version, post-addition. [Figure 7].

Today, the Commercial Hotel

still sits on our Main Street, but it is now known as The Historic Hobart Inn.

The structure, as is typical for older wooden buildings such as this, again going through some needed renovation and modernization.

Fortunately, the new owners appear to be keeping as much of the original charm intact as possible, and as the photograph of one of their restaurant areas shows [Figure 8], they haven't forgotten their roots (note the two, original “Commercial Hotel, Tourists

Stamford: Queen of the Catskills

By George DeKornfeld

The town of Stamford was established in 1792 in what was at the time Ulster County, ending up in Delaware as that county was carved out of Ulster in 1797. The town consists of the village of Hobart in its entirety, the hamlet of South Kortright and the village of Stamford, part of which belongs to the town of Harpersfield. The village of Stamford was incorporated in 1870.

Known as the Queen of the Catskills, Stamford enjoyed its heydays during the early 20th century as the railroad from Kingston opened the area up to city folk desperate for a



Figure 1. A postcard shows the magnificent New Grant House, built 1889-90.

respite in the country. Hotels and resorts sprang up throughout the area to accommodate these travelers, one of which, the New Grant House, was built during 1889 and 1890 [Figure 1].

A July 1903 edition of the New

York Tribune reports that the hotel is “located on the heights overlooking a picturesque stretch of creek, orchard and river valley.”

The proprietor, John P. Grant
Stamford, Page 15



Figure 9. This cover was mailed in September 1905 from Hobart to Poland, N.Y. The reverse shows a flag machine cancellation transit marking and a Poland duplex receiver. At left is the first page of five, all written on both sides.

Accommodated” signs).

As mentioned earlier, farming was, and remains, a popular pursuit here. Almost from its inception and certainly by necessity, farms became common to the area. What isn’t common is the availability of Hobart postal history for a collection, so imagine my immense delight when I came across a correspondence of three items, all from the same farm, written one week apart, each offered on a separate occasion on eBay. I almost broke my index finger hitting the buy button as soon as I saw each one!

The first one [Figure 9] was mailed in September 1905 from Hobart to Poland, N.Y. Franked by a 2-cent George Washington issue of 1903, this beautifully illustrated cover depicting a trio of cows, came from the O.B. Foote & Son Farm. The reverse side shows a Stamford American Flag machine cancellation transit marking and a Poland duplex receiver. Also shown is the first page of five, all written on both sides, with

the same illustration used for its letterhead. (Each of the three letters in the correspondence are of this rather hefty length). I will review just one branch of this family tree but suffice it to say that the surname of Foote looms large in the history and development of Hobart and the surrounding area.

Orlando Bailey Foote (1846-1926) was born in Harpersfield, just a few miles north of Hobart, also in Delaware County. He met his future wife, Ella Eudora Stevens (1854-1913) while living in Blue Stores in Columbia County

Columbia County connection). One year after they were wed, they moved up to Hobart. The Foote homestead consisted of a farm of 250 acres with the main house set upon West Main Street [Figure 10].

Orlando was active locally. He was a charter member and served on the board of directors of the Delaware-Ulster Mutual Milk Producers, was an officer of St. Peter’s Church, and served as vice president of the Agricultural Society’s annual fair. His farm-related activities also included

Hobart, Page14



Figure 10. The Foote homestead in Hobart included this beautiful house on West Main Street.



Figure 11. Edward L. Foote continued in the family business and stayed active in civic affairs.

Hobart, from Page 13

the buying and selling of cattle and horses.

One of his advertisements in the Sept. 19, 1901 edition of *The New York Farmer* reads, "I have seventy-five Extra Fine Holstein Cows For Sale, due in September and October."

An ad in the April 25, 1908 edition of *The Hobart Independent* from reads, "Fine Work Horses. I have just returned from New York with a carload of well seasoned horses that are ready for work. No need of paying exorbitant prices for stall fed stock when you can buy good workers for half the money, that will increase in value while doing your work. Horses are going to be cheaper in the near future. Don't pay long prior and get left when the drop comes."

Orlando and Ella had nine children, including Edward L. Foote (1877-1952). Edward stayed in the family business [Figure 11] and like his father was active in local doings. He sat on the Hobart school board, spent two terms as the Stamford town supervisor, was a communicant and vestryman for St. Peter's Church and was a 30-year member of the Delaware County Farm Bureau. Ed eventually met and married Ethel Irwin (1877-1960), a Hobart High School teacher originally from Poland in Herkimer County.

The *Ilion Citizen* of Oct. 2, 1903 offered the following on the nuptials: "A very pretty wedding took place Wednesday afternoon at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. N.W. Irwin when their only daughter, Miss Ethel, was united in marriage to E.L. Foote of Hobart, N.Y. ... After an extended wedding journey, Mr. and Mrs.

Foote will make their home in Hobart where Mr. Foote is established in business."

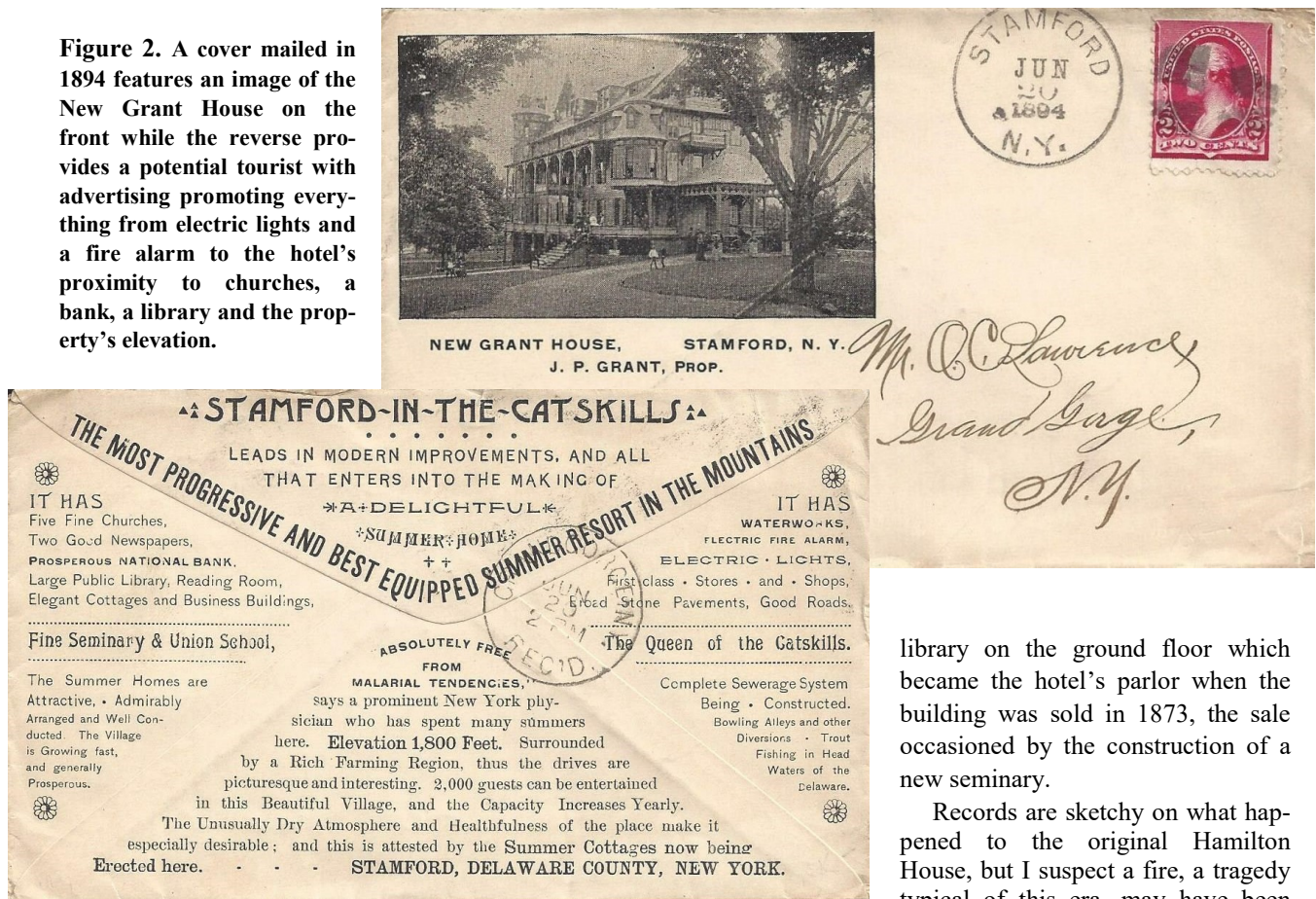
It was Ethel that so dutifully wrote her mother back in Poland every week in the correspondence that was within the handsome cow cover shown earlier. The couple moved into a newly constructed house (a wedding present), also on West Main Street while Ed expanded the business into selling farm equipment. They moved into the homestead house in 1914 when Ed's father, Orlando, moved out and into a large house called Maple Bank on Maple Avenue, where he lived until he died. Ethel meanwhile acted as secretary and treasurer of E.L. Foote & Sons.

Sadly, after Ed passed away in 1952, his son, Edward L. Jr., wasn't capable of profitably operating the farm which slowly declined until it was forced onto the auction block in 1960 to pay off accrued debts. The homestead on West Main Street still stands.

Acknowledgement: Thanks to Jim Meagley, of the Hobart Historical Society, for his help in providing some of the history of the Foote family. Jim has authored a terrific book on the history of Hobart.

About the Author: George DeKornfeld, a former New York City paramedic and retired dentist, started collecting stamps while growing up in London, England in the 1970s. Over the decades since, he has developed multiple collections, finally breaking into postal history at the urging of fellow-ESPHS member Drew Nicholson, whom he met at his dental office in Pawling. George is a gold level exhibitor and a member of the APS, American Topical Association and American Association of Philatelic Exhibitors.

Figure 2. A cover mailed in 1894 features an image of the New Grant House on the front while the reverse provides a potential tourist with advertising promoting everything from electric lights and a fire alarm to the hotel's proximity to churches, a bank, a library and the property's elevation.



library on the ground floor which became the hotel's parlor when the building was sold in 1873, the sale occasioned by the construction of a new seminary.

Records are sketchy on what happened to the original Hamilton House, but I suspect a fire, a tragedy typical of this era, may have been involved, based on this note in the March 6, 1890 edition of the Hobart Independent: "The frame for the new Hamilton House is being raised this week."

A photo [Figure 3] from about 1902 shows the finished, new structure.

Stamford, Page 16

Stamford, from Page 12

(1853-1902), a graduate of Albany Law School, opened his law office at Hobart in 1880. At one time, Grant served as the Delaware County District Attorney (1890-1893) and was appointed in 1899 a county judge and surrogate by Governor Theodore Roosevelt in 1899. Because he had to move to Delhi to perform these duties, Grant leased out the New Grant House, eventually selling it outright in 1918.

A nice image of the hotel graces a handsome cover mailed in 1894 from Stamford to Grand Gorge [Figure 2]. It is franked by a 2-cent George Washington small American Bank Note issue of 1890.

The reverse provides a potential tourist with pretty much everything they would want or need to know about this resort as well as the surrounding area. The receiving date stamp shows the cover's arrival at

Grand Gorge on the same day it was mailed, after having travelled a little more than six miles.

Not too far away and near the train depot was the Hamilton House, built in 1853 to be used as a boarding house for the adjacent Stamford Seminary. The boarding house included a



Figure 3. A photo from about 1902 shows the Hamilton House hotel.



Figure 4. Adelbert E. Tallmadge is named as the proprietor on this 1898 cover from the Hamilton House in Stamford.

Stamford, from Page 15

The owner and the hotel's namesake, Johnson Hamilton, had a nifty postal connection in addition to being the resort's proprietor as noted in the July 31, 1881 edition of the Delaware Gazette:

"Johnson Hamilton, the popular proprietor of the Hamilton House of Stamford, now runs the stage line from Delhi to Stamford. Hamilton is stocking the road in good shape and will run it in a first class manner. He received the contract for carrying the mail, and runs the regular line."

Hamilton sold the hotel to Adelbert E. Tallmadge (1840-1907), who is named as the proprietor in the corner card of the 1898 cover shown [Figure 4]. Franked by a 2-cent George Washington First Bureau issue of 1895, the cover was mailed to Kingston with a same-day transit time as per

the receiving mark on the back.

Having gotten my taste of deer hunting in Delaware County long ago, the 8-pointer illustrated on this cover really got my tail wagging, undoubtedly having the same effect on hunters of that era, the likely target audience of that huge buck and a clever ad for the cold weather of the off-season.

Adelbert sold the hotel the following year, according to the July 1, 1899 Hobart Independent, which reported the following:

"Dr. S.E. Churchill of Stamford certainly believes in expansion, so far as his business interests are concerned. On Saturday the doctor purchased the Hamilton House property in that village, together with a lot adjoining Churchill Hall grounds owned by Johnson Hamilton. The price paid is said to be \$18,500. The Hamilton House will become part of the Churchill summer hotel system."

**The Empire State Postal History Society invites you to share your New York
philatelic stories through Excelsior! Contact the editor at nsypostal@gmail.com.**



The three low values in the U.S. 10-stamp pictorial series of 1869.

1869 Pictorial Stamp Use in Suffolk County

By Daniel M. Knowles, MD

The March 1, 1869 Post Office Department announcement of a new pictorial issue stated that “special requests for the new style of Stamps will be disregarded until the stock of the present issue in possession of the Department is exhausted.”

The set of 10 1869 pictorials, range in value from 1 cent to 90 cents. The set includes the 3-cent Locomotive stamp, which was placed on sale sometime between March 20 and 23, 1869, with sources differing. The earliest known use appears to be March 27, 1869, according to the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society.

It is likely that many small Suffolk County post offices that handled very little mail had adequate supplies of 1861 and 1868 issued stamps on hand during these series' heyday. These post offices might not have acquired the 1869 stamps for quite some time after they were released, or perhaps never acquired them.

The 1869 stamps were not well received by the public because of their pictorial designs, small size, squarish form and inferior gum. New York City newspapers announced only a few months later, on September 6, 1869, that the 1869 stamps were to be replaced by a new set of stamps.

The 1870 Banknote Series featuring portraits of deceased distinguished Americans replaced the 1869 pictorial stamps in March and April 1870, only a year after the 1869 stamps were issued. Given their failure to be released until existing stamp supplies were exhausted and their short life span, the 1869 stamps likely saw limited use at many small Suffolk County post offices. That is supported by the census compiled and reported here. Indeed, numerous 1861, 1868 and Banknote 3-cent stamps are known used from nearly every Suffolk County post office.

Frank Braithwaite provided an updated census of

Suffolk County, Page 18



A newly reported use of the 1869 3-cent stamp postmarked Bay Shore to pay the first-class letter rate. The stamp was released about three weeks earlier.

A newly reported use of the 1869 Locomotive stamp postmarked Sag Harbor to pay the first-class letter rate.



Suffolk County, from Page 17

Long Island post offices that used 1869 3-cent Locomotive stamps in the March 2015 bulletin of the Empire State Postal History Society. That census included the addition of several Suffolk County post offices that had not been previously reported by the late Brad Arch.

I tabulated all the Suffolk County post offices reported by

Suffolk County Post Offices Associated With the 1869 3-Cent Stamp

* Amagansett	Jamesport
Atlantic	Lakeland
*Babylon	* Mattituck
*Bayshore	Millers Place
Bellport	New Village
Bridgehampton	Patchogue
Cold Spring Harbor	Peconic
Commack	Port Jefferson
Cutchogue	Riverhead
Dix Hills	* Sag Harbor
East Hampton	Sayville
Greenport	Shelter Island
Hauppague	Southampton
Holbrook	South Haven
Huntington	Stony Brook
Long Island Railroad	Suffolk

* Indicates newly reported towns from the Knowles collection.

Arch and Braithwaite and added from my personal collection five additional post offices that used 1869 Locomotive stamps. This provides us with an updated census of 30 Suffolk County post offices, out of 75 operating during 1869 and 1870 (in addition to the Long Island Railroad), that used the 1869 3-cent stamp.

In most instances only one or two examples of 1869 3-cent stamps used at each of these post offices are known. In addition, five previously unreported uses of 1869 stamps of other denominations at four Suffolk County post offices – Greenport, Islip, Riverhead and Stony Brook – are reported and illustrated here.

References

"The 1869 Issue." Post Office Department Announcement, March 1, 1869.

1869 Pictorial Issue at www.siegelauctiongalleries.com.

"NY Metro Census of Postmarks Known with the 3 ct. 1869 Issue," by Frank Braithwaite, Empire State Postal History Society Bulletin, March 2015.

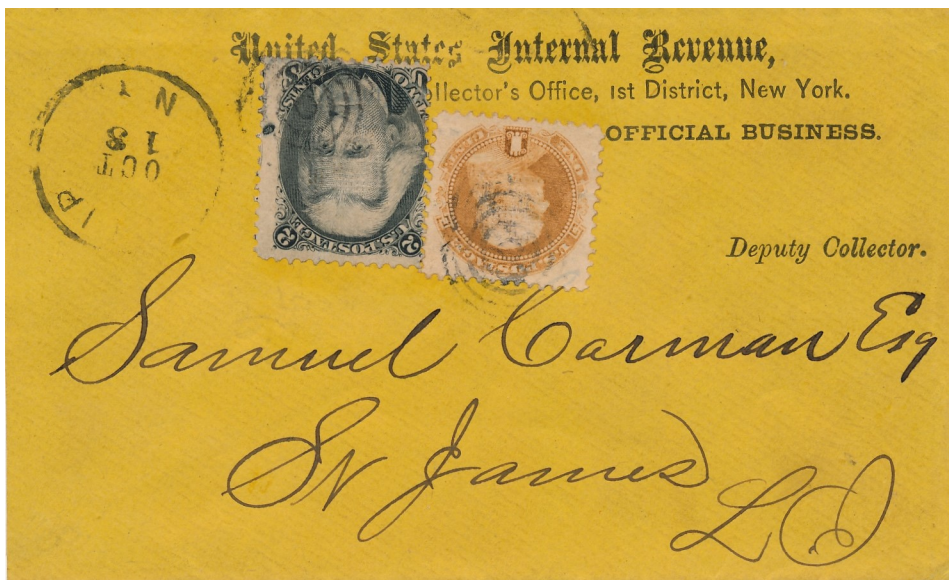
"New York State Post Offices Extant by County and Year, 1792-1969" (2008), by C.E. Wilcox, Empire Postal History Society.

About the Author: Dr. Daniel Knowles is an internationally renowned pathologist listed in Best Doctors in America. He served as chair of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine at Weill Cornell Medical College and pathologist-in-chief, New York-Presbyterian Hospital for 25 years.

He is a 50-years-long life member of the APS and a life member of the United States Philatelic Classics Society. His collections include the postal history of Suffolk County and the American Civil War. His Civil War exhibits won two Grand Awards and two Reserve Grands in 2018 and 2019.



A pair of 1869 2-cent stamps cancelled "Steamboat" and posted August 1869 in Greenport to pay the steamboat rate to New York City via the Long Island Sound.



At left, An 1869 1-cent Franklin stamp used in conjunction with the 2-cent Andrew Jackson "Black Jack" stamp postmarked October 18, 1869 in Islip to pay the 3-cent first-class letter rate.

Below, an 1869 6-cent George Washington stamp used in conjunction with a 3-cent Washington Banknote (issued March 1870) postmarked Riverhead to pay the triple-weight first-class letter rate.



Above, the 1869 1- and 2-cent stamps postmarked in Riverhead to pay the 3-cent first-class letter rate.



An 1869 2-cent Post Horse and Rider stamp used in conjunction with a 1-cent ultramarine Franklin banknote stamp postmarked Stony Brook to pay the 3-cent first class letter rate.

Dead Letters at Small Post Offices

Attempt to deal with problem of early 1800s was financial bust

Dr. The Post-Office at *Schenectady* in account current with the GENERAL POST-OFFICE from *April 1st* to *June 30th 1819* Cr.

1 To postage of letters which remained in the office last quarter,	DOLLARS. CTS.	37 43 1/2	7 By postage of letters overcharged and mis-sent this quarter,	DOLLARS. CTS.	9 15
2 To postage of unpaid letters received from other offices this quarter,		3 63 75	8 By postage of dead letters sent to the General Post-Office ditto,		16 27 1/2
3 To postage of way letters received at this office ditto,			9 By postage of letters now remaining in this office,		34 13 1/2
4 To postage of letters undercharged from other offices ditto,			10 Balance carried down,		401 90
5 To postage of — ship letters at 6 cents each, originally received at this office for this delivery,					
6 To postage of paid letters sent from this office ditto,		55 85 1/2			
		462 02			462 02
11 To balance as above, being the amount of postage collected on letters this quarter,		401 90	14 By commission on 100 D. . . C. Letter Postage, at thirty per cent.		50 00
12 To amount of postage on newspapers and pamphlets this quarter,		24 24	By ditto on 301 D. 40 C. Letter Postage, at twenty-five per cent.		75 49
13 Deduct postage of dead newspapers and pamphlets,		23 50	15 By ditto on 15 D. 74 C. News-paper Postage, at fifty per cent.		7 50
		15 79	16 By 30 free letters delivered out of this office this quarter, at two cents each,		2 80
			17 By — ship letters paid for this qr. as by receipts herewith at two cents each,		135 95
			18 By cash paid the mail carrier for 40 way letters, at one cent each,		40
			19 By contingent expenses as by receipts herewith,		40
			20 Balance due to the General Post-Office,		276 17
					417 12

Note. Commission on letter postages is to be charged at the following rates, viz:
At thirty per cent. on the first 100 dollars collected in one quarter,
At twenty-five per cent. on what is over 100 and not exceeding 300 dollars,
At twenty per cent. on what is over 300 and not exceeding 500 dollars,
At eight per cent. on what is over 500 and not exceeding 2000 dollars,
Two Cents are allowed for each free letter delivered, where the commission on letters does not exceed five hundred dollars in one quarter year.

The Postmaster should sign his name to this account and the transcripts accompanying it.

Corrus Exepted Jacob Thurston P.M.

the Southern printing & writing Station kept past four & five o'clock A.M.

Figure 1. The Account Current of the Schenectady Post Office for April to June 1819.

By Robert Bramwell

What was the impact of dead letters – which date to the postal system’s earliest days – on U.S. post offices in the first half of the 19th century?

It’s an important question because the financial impact of dead letters was shown in every quarterly Account Current (A/C) filed by every post office. Unfortunately, retained copies of these Accounts Current from small post offices are the only ones that survived long enough to fall into philatelic hands for further study.

What caused a letter to become dead? Some letters died after being refused on sight by the addressee.

This mattered a lot as most letters that arrived at a post office required the addressee to pay postage. The amount could often equal the good part of a day’s wage.

Many other letters arrived at a proper post office but were not promptly claimed by its addressee, even after they were advertised by the postmaster.

What was advertising about?

Well, when Benjamin Franklin was named postmaster of Philadelphia in 1737, while already publishing the Pennsylvania Gazette, he initiated the practice of publishing a periodic List of Letters Remaining in

the Post Office. This was a way to eliminate the almost useless — but required — practice of returning dead letters in the North American colonies to London’s Dead Letter Office. He also initiated the practice of charging his post office 1 English penny for each unclaimed letter on the list.

The Massachusetts Bay Colonial Post followed suit in 1753, and publishing post office’s Lists of Letters Remaining quickly became standard practice.

Was advertising unclaimed letters successful? The only thing close to a measuring device is to have at least two consecutive Accounts Current from a post office in this period from 1800 to 1850.

To make that device as useful as possible, also find a copy of the newspaper in which that post office’s List of Letters Remaining for the earlier quarter-end was published. I can do this.

I will use the Schenectady Post Office’s second and third calendar quarters of 1819 Accounts Current as a guide, because Postmaster Jacob Thurston had numbers for just about every line on the report, and he had really good handwriting [Figure 1].

Line 1 shows that \$37.43½ of unpaid postage remained uncollected on March 31, 1819. Line 8 shows that \$16.27½ of unpaid postage will be sent to the Dead Letter Office on July 1 for still being uncollected in the Schenectady Post Office. That’s a 43.5 per cent failure rate for advertising.

Dr. The Post-Office at <i>Schenectady N.Y.</i> in account current with the GENERAL POST-OFFICE from <i>June 1st 1819</i> to <i>Oct 1st 1819</i> .			
1 To postage of letters which remained in the office last quarter,	DOLLARS CTS.	34 63 1/2	
2 To postage of unpaid letters received from other offices this quarter,		34 45 1/2	
3 To postage of way letters received at this office ditto,			
4 To postage of letters undercharged from other offices ditto,			
5 To postage of ship letters at 6 cents each, originally received at this office for this delivery,		63 33 1/2	
6 To postage of paid letters sent from this office ditto,		492 48	
11 To balance as above, being the amount of postage collected on letters this quarter,		429 14	
12 To amount of postage on newspapers and pamphlets this quarter,		24 84 1/2	
13 Deduct postage of dead newspapers and pamphlets,		16 50	
		13 39 1/2	
Note. Commission on letter postages is to be charged at the following rates, viz:			
At thirty per cent. on the first 100 dollars collected in one quarter,			
At twenty-five per cent. on what is over 100 and not exceeding 300 dollars,			
At twenty per cent. on what is over 300 and not exceeding 1000 dollars, and			
At eight per cent. on what is over 1000 dollars.			
Two Cents are allowed for each free letter delivered, where the commission on letters does not exceed five hundred dollars in one quarter year.			
The Postmaster should sign his name to this account and the transcripts accompanying it.			
	DOLLARS	442 53 1/2	
		442 53 1/2	
7 By postage of letters overcharged and mis-sent this quarter,		9 33	
8 By postage of dead letters sent to the General Post-Office ditto,		18 01	
9 By postage of letters now remaining in this office,		36 00	
10 Balance carried down,		429 14	
		492 48	
14 By commission on 100 D. --- C. Letter Postage, at <i>50</i> per cent.		50	
By ditto on 329 D. 1/4 C. Letter Postage, at twenty-five per cent.		82 28 1/2	
15 By ditto on 13 D. 1/4 C. News-paper Postage, at fifty per cent.		6 58 1/2	
16 By 10 free letters delivered out of this office this quarter, at two cents each,		2 24	
17 By ship letters paid for this qtr. as by receipts herewith, at two cents each,		141 12 1/2	
18 By cash paid the mail carrier for 55 way letters, at one cent each,		55	
19 By contingent expenses as by receipts herewith,		4 42	
20 Balance due to the General Post-Office,		296 44 1/2	
		442 53 1/2	
No charge for contingent expenses can be passed at the Treasury, without a receipt for the actual payment.			
Errors & Omissions Jacob Thurston Bell			

Figure 2. The Account Current of the Schenectady Post Office for July to September 1819.

In the succeeding quarter of July through September 1819 [Figure 2], Line 1 shows that \$34.63½ of unpaid postage remained uncollected on June 30, 1819, which is confirmed by finding the same amount on line 9 of the April to June A/C. Line 8 shows that \$18.01 of unpaid postage will be sent to the Dead Letter Office on October 1 for still being uncollected in the Schenectady Post Office.

That's a 52 percent failure rate for advertising in the following quarter.

These are the only two consecutive quarters of Accounts Current I have for Schenectady, so the best I can say is that in that period, about half of advertising failed to bring people to the Schenectady Post Office to pay for and collect letters addressed to them or their business. Figures 1 and 2 show that \$34.63½ of unpaid postage remained uncollected on June 30, 1819.

Shown [Figure 3] is the List of Letters Remaining in the Schenectady Post Office for June 30, 1819. (It is electronically cut from archives of The Cabinet newspaper and reassembled here to save space).

Carefully typeset and presented alphabetically, 221 letters are listed

(by my count).

By simple division, the average rate of postage due for all 221 letters is 15.67 cents per letter.

If there were a specific 15½ cents postage rate in 1819, it would have carried a single letter to Schenectady from a distance of

240 miles, which is within a mile-age circle including Philadelphia, suggesting that Schenectady residents had broad circles of family or commerce – or received a lot of double-rate letters.

An additional point of interest is Dead letters, Page 22

THE CABINET.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY I. ROGGE, FIRST DOOR EAST OF THE DUTCH CHURCH, UNION-STREET, SCHENECTADY.

(VOL. X.) WEDNESDAY, JULY 7, 1819. (No. 57.)

A LIST OF LETTERS, Remaining in the Post-Office at Schenectady, June 30, 1819. Persons calling for any of the following letters, will please say they are advertised.

Where the name of the place is not mentioned they are for Schenectady.

A.—Ebenzer Atkins; Robert Abell, Lowrance Aldorf, 4th ward.

B.—Jatus Bell, Daniel Bassett, Nathan Burdock, Sally Burdick, Peter Banker, Mr. Blodgood, Elizabeth Banker, James Ryan, Lewis Macky, Henry S. Bulley, John C. Barby, Peter Brumaghin, Samuel Brewer, Ellis Bullock, Artemus Bishop; Samuel Bond, Princeton; Charles Beaver, Princeton.

C.—Hugh Cox, Frederick P. Clute, Nicolas Clute, Isaac Cody, Jesse T. Conklin, Frederick P. Clute, Sophia Clark, Mr. Clark, Frederick Cox, Elizabeth Condon, William Cory, Calvin Cheesman, Henry S. Crosby, Daniel Case, Silvester Chapman, David Canfield, Henry A. Coster, William P. Case; Silvester Chapman, Aaron Carrill, Gideon Grandel, Sylvester Chapman, Benjamin Chamberlin, Isaac Christensen, Esther Carpenter, John Chamberlin, 4th ward; Nathan Collins, 5th ward; Richard Clute, Wakona; Samuel Cole, Owing; Calvin Cheesman, Alexander Clifton, Princeton; James Canning, Duaneburgh; Conbury Clapp, Glendon.

D.—George Dresser, Nathan Daley, Richard D'Canlon, Richd. DeCantelor, Richard De Cantillor, Messrs. Dox & Co.; Drew Desjardins, Sally Foster; John Dixon, Samuel S. Davis, The W. Master of Duty Lodge No. 265, 2, Princeton.

E.—Ellis S. Freestone; John Elwell, 4th ward.

F.—John M. Froud, Eveline Fisher, John I. Fisher, Martin Freeman, Giles Ford, David Foot; Peter Ferguson, ward; Jacob Falmer, Coffeypark; Eleazer Froben, 4th ward.

G.—Abraham S. Groat, Wilton, Goadly, John Gockson, Richard Gibson, Cordellus A. Groat, Thos Golly, John V. Glen; Robert Gally, Edward I. Guyling, Princeton; Derrick C. Groat, Princeton.

H.—John Hildreth, Eliza Henderson, Edward or Warren How, John Hizer, Jane Hubbell; John W. Hewson, 4th ward.

I.—Thomas Innis.

J.—Saml. W. Jones, S. W. Jones; Thomas Jones, 5th ward.

K.—Isht. Kelly; Nimrod Knight, 4th ward; Solomon Kelley, Princeton.

L.—Isaac LeMay, Nancy Lightholy, Elijah Lake, Isaac Leroy, Mary L'Amoureux; John Louing, Jan. Jacob Lyport, 4th ward; James A. Lightball, Patent; Alexander Lohlin, Duaneburgh.

M.—John Maw, Isaac N. Martelle, Eliza McCredie, Benjamin Mix, Thomas Macaulay, George Maize, John W. McIlmney, Jane Meecl, James Marshall, John McNe William May, 5th ward; John McCollum, Duaneburgh; James or William McConnell, Maria M. Goe, Alexander McIntosh, Princeton.

N.—John Newell, John Nevel, Edward Neuhill.

P.—Moses Patten, Charles Pottman, Jonathan Paron, Sarah Packard, Ann Pense, John Pangburn, Christopher Peck, 5th ward; Francis P. Potter, Benson Potter, 4th ward; John Peck, 6 miles above Sch; John Pascoe, Princeton.

R.—Attmer Radford, Edward Radcliff, James Rogers, Gilbert Reid, Patrick Reynolds; Wellhaim W. Rogge, Princeton.

S.—Leona Scharnhorn, John Still, Cornelius Schermora, Daniel Slettle, S. Simon I. Schermora, Cepus Shaw, William Summers, I. Shaw, Andrew Smith, Clark Smith, Wm. H. Seward, Elizabeth Shannon, Nancy Simpson, Nancy Smith, James Smith, Seymour & Usher, Henry Stephens; John Smith, 5th ward; Doctor Northrup I. Smith, Calvin Schermora or John Van Dick, 4th ward; Winslow Sarah Schuler, up the Mohawk River; Joseph Shovel, Orange; Mr. Spencer, Princeton Bridge; James Smilie, Princeton; Matthias Sherer, Duaneburgh.

T.—Peter Trux, Ch. DeWitt Tappan, James Trench, Rosamth Tawe, Dr. James Trapp; John Turnbull, Princeton; Catherine Trux, Half Way House between Albany and Schenectady.

V.—Nicholas Vadder, Frederick Van Patten, Garrett Veeder & Eveline Fisher, James A. Vessetter, Zagar Vanantwoord, D. Van Veighien, Margaret Van Patten, Harmanus Veeder, Harmanus Vadder, Derick Van Veighien, S. Jacob Van Vranken Jan. Simon A. Vadder, Helms Vander, Samuel Van Derpool, John Van Gasebeck, John Van Gasebeck, Abram A. Van Nylk, Edward Van Nye, Alexander VanNoyen, Messrs. Van Rypse, Harmanus Vadder, John B. Van Voast, Leaser Ferry; John Van Vliet, John N. Van Patten, 4th ward; Deanna Van Vliet, 5th ward; Deborah Ann Van Antwerp, Nickama; Mary Vadder, Nickama.

W.—Thomas Wible, Matthew Walton, Johnbo Weels, Oliver Wilcox, Sally Walker, John Weaver, John Water, John Webber, Abraham Whittier, Burroughs Webber, Wakona Wakeman, George Williams, 4th ward; Samuel Wright, Duaneburgh; William Weller, Princeton.

Y.—John Yates. JACOB THURSTON, P.M.

C.—Hugh Cox, Frederick P. Clute, Nicolas Clute, Isaac Cody, Jesse T. Conklin, Frederick P. Clute, Sophia Clark,

D.—George Dresser, Nathan Daley, Richard D'Canlon, Richd. DeCantelor, Richard De Cantillor, Messrs. Dox &

Figure 3. A Post Office List of Letters Remaining through June 30 published July 7, 1819 in The Cabinet newspaper in Schenectady. Close-ups of the list showed that the Post Office listed spelling varieties of who were likely the same recipients.

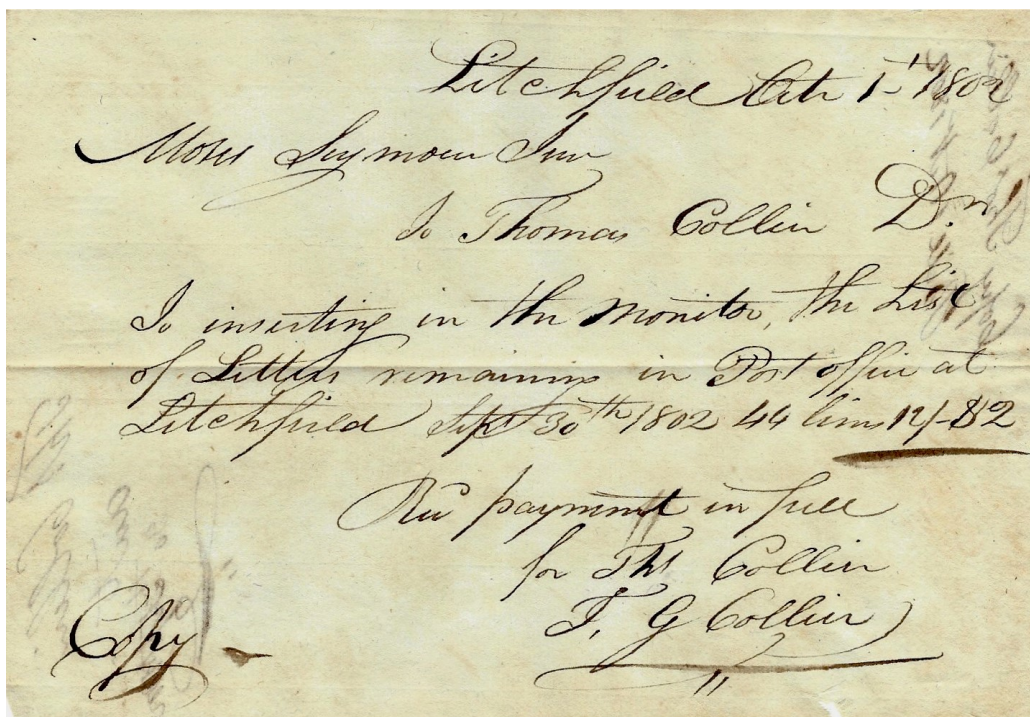


Figure 4. A receipt issued October 1, 1802 by Litchfield Monitor Publisher Thomas Collier.

Dead letters, from Page 21

to notice how punctilious the postmaster was in providing each name exactly as written by the letter writer.

You may have to use your Kaiser 8X loupe to see it, but type was set for letters addressed to Fredereck P. Clute and Frederick P. Clute, highly likely the same person; and Richard D'Cantelon, Richd. De-Cantelor and Richard De Cantilior, rather than attributing all three to one of the spellings known to be closest to correct. This adherence to exact spelling was required but did not result in the publisher getting paid more.

Line 19 on the July to September 1819 Account Current shows that the Schenectady office was submitting its receipt in the amount of \$4.42 for a contingent expense, which paid the usual 2 cents per letter listed for 221 letters. Why is a cash payment recorded as a contingent expense?

According to Post Office Department thinking at that time it meant that if the postmaster didn't send a copy of the published List of Letters Remaining and the receipt stating how many letters had been paid for, as required in postal regulations, the postmaster

**This adherence
to exact spelling was
required but did not
result in the
publisher getting
paid more.**

would not be reimbursed for the expense.

Examples of publishers' receipts may be scarce.

A document from October 1, 1802 [Figure 4] issued to Moses Seymour Jr., postmaster of Litchfield, Connecticut's Post Office is for "inserting in the Monitor the List of Letters remaining in Post office at Litchfield Sept 30 1802 44 lines 12/- \$2" shows the incomplete conversion to U.S. currency as many folks continued to think of prices and values in British shillings and pence.

**Visit the Empire State Postal History Society's website (<http://www.esphs.us>)
and Facebook page ([facebook.com/EmpireStatePostalHistorySociety](https://www.facebook.com/EmpireStatePostalHistorySociety)).**

Dr. The POST-OFFICE at Washington in the County of Washington State of Pennsylvania in account current with the GENERAL POST-OFFICE, from 30 Sept. 1828 to 31 Dec. 1828 Cr.

	DOLLARS	CENTS		DOLLARS	CENTS
1 To postage of letters which remained in the office last quarter,	21	16 1/2	7 By postage of letters overcharged and mis-sent this quarter,	16	8 1/2
2 To postage of unpaid letters received from other offices this quarter,	200	11 1/2	8 By postage of dead letters sent to the General Post Office, ditto,	16	0 1/2
3 To postage of way letters received at this office ditto,			9 By postage of letters now remaining in this office,	26	14
4 To postage of letters undercharged from other offices ditto,	1	16 1/2	10 Balance carried down,	232	26 1/2
5 To postage of ship letters at 6 cents each, originally received at this office for this delivery,	2	3 1/2			
6 To postage of paid letters sent from this office this quarter,	52	23 1/2			
To postage of letters received for this delivery in Distribution Bills,	1	16 1/2			
	289	16 1/2			
11 To balance as above, being the amount of postage collected on letters this quarter,	232	26 1/2	By commission on 289 D. 1/2 C. Letter postage distributed at 5 per cent.	126	12
12 To amount of postage on newspapers and pamphlets this quarter,	27	28 1/2	14 By ditto on 100 D. — C. ditto collected at 30 per cent.	57	00
13 Deduct postage of dead newspapers and pamphlets,			By ditto on 132 D. 2 1/2 C. — ditto at 25 per cent.	33	00
	269	21 1/2	By ditto on D. — C. ditto at 20 per cent.		
			By ditto on D. — C. ditto at 8 per cent.		
			15 By ditto on D. — C. Newspaper postage at 50 per cent.	18	52
			16 By 211 free letters delivered out of this office this quarter, at two cents each,	8	22
			17 By ship letters paid for this quarter, as by receipts herewith, at two cents each,		
			18 By cash paid the mail carrier for way letters, at one cent each,		
			19 By contingent expenses, as by receipts herewith,	34	22 1/2
			20 Balance due to the General Post Office,	2	19 1/2
				269	37 1/2

Where any Mail arrives regularly between the hours of 9 p. m. and 5 a. m. the Post Master may charge 50 per cent. instead of 30 per cent. on the first 100 dollars in each quarter, provided the Post Master notes on the Account current the average time of arrival; if that is not done, no more than 30 per cent. will be allowed.

The Post Master should sign his name to this Account, and the Transcripts accompanying it.

Post Master. *Joseph Henderson* Dec 31. 1828

Figure 5. The Account Current for October to December 1823 for the Washington, Pennsylvania Post Office.

Joseph Henderson was the postmaster.

Post Office was that of Washington, Pennsylvania.

The fourth calendar quarter of the office [Figure 5] is a bit faint at this size so let me pick out the relative comparisons. Line 1 shows that \$31.16½ of unpaid postage remained uncollected on September 30, 1828.

Line 8 shows that \$16.00¼ of unpaid postage will be sent to the Dead Letter Office on January 1, 1829 for still being uncollected in the Washington Post Office.

That's a 51.3 percent failure rate for advertising.

Adverts signed *June 30 1828*

Letters { From Washington, P.

Dates	Unpaid			Paid, distributed			Paid here			Free
	No	dolls	cents	No	dolls	cents	No	dolls	cents	
52	1		52	1		38				23
38 1/2	1		38 1/2	1		56 1/2				
37 1/2	2		45	3		37 1/2				
27 1/2	2		54	2		26				
28	14	3	57	4		34				
18 1/2	6	11	43 1/2			16 3/4				
13 1/2	31	3	93 1/2							
10	31	3	10							
6	26	1	56							
20	1		20							

Joseph Henderson, P. M.

Figure 6. Bill of Letters advertised on June 30, 1828.

This office provides several rarely seen documents which provide insights into advertising unclaimed letters and contingent expenses supported by receipts.

A Bill of Letters Advertised from Washington, Pa. [Figure 6] shows that free, paid and unpaid letters were advertised, 13 paid bearing \$1.62¾ of paid postage to be distributed to addressees, 168 unpaid bearing \$25.93 of postage to be collected, and 35 free to be distributed.

The post office's Bill of Contingent Expenses [Figure 7] offer the details of \$34.22¼ shown on line 19 of the Account Current shown in Figure 5. The final item of \$3.94 is a payment for "advertising letters" in early October. A total of 197 letters would have been advertised.

Dead letters, Page 24

The General Post Office
Dr. To the Post Office at Washington for contingent expenses
for the quarter ending Dec 31. 1828.

		\$	cts
1	By cash paid John Irvine for horse	5	00
2	" " " Alex. Reid	3	00
3	" " " Jas. Wood	2	00
4	" " " Mat. Sweeney for rapping paper	33	
5	" " " Johnson & Stratton	18	00
6	" " " Houston for boxes for use of Office	3	50
7	" " " Jacob Schaffer mending mail bag	1	12 1/2
8	" " " William Fumple for advertising letters	3	94
		34	22 1/4

Figure 7. Bill of Contingent Expenses for December 31, 1828.

Dead Letters { From Washington, P. June 30th 1828
to the General Post Office

Unpaid				Paid, distributed			Paid here			Free
cents	No	dolls	cents	No	dolls	cents	No	dolls	cents	No
32 1/2	1		32 1/2	1		18 3/4				10
3 1/2	1		3 1/2							
20	1		20							
25	15	3	45							
18 3/4	46	8	62 1/2							
13 1/2	21	2	62 1/2							
10	16	1	10							
6	18	1	08							
		18	56 3/4							

Joseph Henderson, P. M.

Figure 8. Dead Letter Bill of Washington, Pennsylvania, Post Office for June 30 Account Current.

Dead letters, from Page 23

A Dead Letter Bill of June 1828 from the Washington Post Office [Figure 8] presents the itemization of the amount that would be shown on line 8 of the Account Current statement for the quarter ending June 30, 1828. That amount is \$18.56 $\frac{3}{4}$ cents.

Unfortunately, that statement is not available, but the bill shown tells us that 130 letters, including one paid and 10 free that could not be distributed gratis, were sent to the Dead Letter Office bundled with the June 30 Account Current.

For the two post offices examined so far, recognizing that the failure to collect postage due upon delivery of unpaid letters reduced the amount of compensation the postmaster would claim for himself.

Were these dead letters a serious issue at the national post office level? I think not, for two reasons.

First, at the rates documented in our examples, the of commission was 3 percent to 4 percent; second, most postmasters had other sources of income for their living expenses.

Is there a good illustration of why dead letters were more of a procedural irritation than an income issue to the postmasters of truly small post offices? Yes, and that postmaster would be Jonathan Cobb, of Sharon, Massachusetts.

Opening the Sharon Post Office in 1819 or 1820 in a bucolic community about 17 miles from downtown Boston, Jonathan was already established as owner of a tavern with a few rooms to rent on an established coach road to interior Massachusetts. In all likelihood, Cobb's Tavern was the place where letters were already picked up and left off, so the post office and Sharon families were satisfied with the arrangement.

Our first look at an Account Current for the Sharon

Dr. The Post-Office at <i>Sharon Mass</i> in account current with		the General Post-Office from <i>April 1st to June 30th 1836</i> Cr.	
1 To postage of letters which remained in the office last quarter,	Dollars. Cts.	7 By postage of letters overcharged and mis-sent this quarter,	Dollars. Cts.
2 To postage of unpaid letters received from other offices this quarter,	16 45	8 By postage of dead letters sent to the General Post-Office do.	1 05
3 To postage of way letters received at this office ditto		9 By postage of letters now remaining in this office,	93
4 To postage of letters undercharged from other offices ditto		10 Balance carried down,	1 32
5 To postage of ship letters at 6 cents each, originally rec'd at this office for this delivery,			15 64
6 To postage of Steam-Boat letters, ditto,			
7 To postage of paid letters sent from this office, ditto	1 22 1/2		
	Dollars. 14 94		Dollars. 14 94
11 To balance as above, being the amount of postage collected on letters this quarter,	15 14	14 By commission on 15 D. <i>54c</i> . Letter postage at 32 per cent.	4 69
12 To amount of postage on newspapers and pamphlets this quarter,	6 81	By ditto on D. C. Letter postage at 25 per cent.	
13 Deduct postage of dead newspapers and pamphlets,	27	By ditto on D. C. Letter postage at 30 per cent.	
	6 54	15 By ditto on <i>6 D. 54c</i> . Newspaper postage at 50 per cent.	3 27
		16 By <i>7</i> free letters delivered out of this office this quarter, at two cents each,	14
		17 By <i>1</i> ship letters paid for this quarter, by receipts herewith, at two cents each,	
		18 By <i>2</i> Steam-Boat letters paid for this quarter, by receipts herewith, at 3 cts. each,	30
		19 By cash paid the mail-carrier for way letters at one cent each,	
		20 By contingent expenses, as by receipts herewith,	
		21 Balance due to the General Post-Office,	13 78
<p>Note.—Commission on letter postage is to be charged at the following rates, viz.</p> <p>At thirty per cent. on the first 100 dollars collected in one quarter,</p> <p>At twenty-five per cent. on what is over 100 and on a sum not exceeding 500 dollars,</p> <p>At thirty per cent. on what is over 400 and on a sum not exceeding 2,000 dollars, and</p> <p>At eight per cent. on what is over 2,400 dollars.</p> <p>Two cents are allowed for each free letter delivered to post-masters, whose compensations do not exceed five hundred dollars in one quarter year.</p> <p>No charge for contingent expenses can be passed at the treasury without a bill of particulars showing the quantity and price of each article, and a receipt for the actual payment.</p>		<p><i>Ernest Eschscholt</i></p> <p><i>July 1st 1836</i></p>	
	Dollars. 22 18		\$ 22 18

Figure 9. The Account Current for April to June 1836, for the Sharon, Massachusetts Post Office; Jonathan Cobb, postmaster.

Post Office [Figure 9] is the second quarter of 1836, Cobb having been postmaster for more than 15 years.

Line 1 shows that 97 cents of unpaid postage remained uncollected on March 31, 1836. Line 8 shows that 93 cents of unpaid postage will be sent to the Dead Letter Office on July 1 for still being uncollected in the Sharon Post Office three months after being advertised. That's close to 100 percent – a whopping 95.5 percent – failure rate for advertising.

What kind of advertising would Mr. Cobb have availed himself of in 1836?

By then, the Post Office Department had learned from both newspaper publishers and postmasters that 2 cents per letter would not be accepted by the likes of The Boston Daily Herald or the Daily Atlas, although they circulated in Sharon.

Congress had approved in 1826 that post offices in places where no local newspaper was published, such as Sharon, should post hand-written copies of their Lists of Letters Remaining on the office door and other convenient public places such as taverns. The hand-written list shown [Figure 10] was prepared on October 1, 1834 by Postmaster Ebenezer Carleton, of Bath, New Hampshire.

In the 14 quarters of Sharon's Accounts Current available, each one had some dead letters being returned to the Dead Letter Office, but the total of unpaid postage on those dead letters was not a penny more than \$6.29, on which the postmaster Jonathan Cobb lost 30 percent, or \$1.88. I think that falls into the negligible category.

The purview of data available to us, although it covers more than 50 years, makes dead letters appear to have been a lot of trouble created by an old-fashioned

view that a sealed letter placed the postal system under a sacred custodial obligation. That truly was the fact then and remains so today.

It was the driving concept that brought us mandatory pre-payment of postage in 1854, the adoption of return address corner cards following a federal act of April 6, 1860 and the return of virtually all dead letters in 1862 with its dramatic impact on the Dead Letter Office.

About the Author: When stamps filled all the spaces in his 1957 worldwide album, Bob had to find a new collecting outlet. He saw a dealer offering a Civil War soldier's letter home to Potsdam that had been missent to Schenectady (the city, not the county). Being his birth town, he couldn't pass it up.

Ever since, he has been the Schenectady postal historian, so you shouldn't be surprised to see Schenectady's 1819 Accounts Current leading the way in his article. Bob collects from North Carolina now, and can be reached with comments and questions at rbramwell@nc.rr.com.

Notice			
A list of letters remaining in the Post Office at South Mc Grafton County the 1 day Oct: 1834			
	South	Unpaid	Paid
Mrs	Caroline P. Johnson	"	12 1/2
Mrs	Joseph M. Jackson	"	12 1/2
Mrs	Sarah M. Robinson	"	12 1/2
Mrs	Lyman Johnson	"	25
Mrs	Alexander Johnson	"	25
Mrs	E. W. Bartlett	"	100
Mrs	Oliver Johnson	"	25

Figure 10. A List of Letters from October 1, 1834 from the Bath, New Hampshire Post Office.



A cover purchased via the Internet marketplace solely for the use of the 1869 Locomotive stamp led to an interesting trail of discovery.

Not All Asylums are Created Equal

Writer pulled into cover research after Internet purchase based on a stamp design

By David Goodhart

As I sit here puffing on a cigar, enjoying the March edition of *Excelsior!* and the sunshine in Canton, Ohio, I am in total awe of the knowledge possessed and shared in the Empire State Postal History Society.

I am a new member, and Charles DiComo, the society's president, was kind enough to send me some back issues of both the journals and bulletins.

Before I joined this society I must admit that most of my philatelic interests focused on classic United States singles.

However, now I find myself scouring covers, noticing unique cancellations and wondering where the journeys of these envelopes took them. Much to the dismay of my monthly stamp budget, I am now hooked on covers as well.

With the encouragement of Dr. DiComo, I humbly submit my first article.

Some of you may know me, and even be friends with me on Facebook. I frequent many stamp groups and enjoy the knowledge I get from them.

I am a lifelong paramedic and newly graduated registered nurse. I have been working in my local emergency room for around a year. The annoying part is, I never wanted to be a nurse. In fact, I waited 20 years to finish nursing school, only to enter the profes-

In my experience in health care and studies of history, an "asylum" isn't a very friendly place.

sion during the worst pandemic since the Spanish Flu of 1918. I digress.

This brings me to the subject of the cover shown and that I wish to discuss.

The letter was written in 1869 and sent from New York City to the American Asylum in Hartford, Connecticut. It has a nice circular New York cancel, along with a flower cancel.

You postal history veterans most likely know more about these cancels, as you write in great detail their origins and destinations. The cover is franked with a horribly centered – great shift to the right – 2-cent Locomotive of the beloved 1869 pictorials.

I purchased the cover because my 4-year-old, Harrison, loves "train stamps." I was intrigued when I received the cover from eBay, as I hadn't noticed the addressee – Abel Clark – in the auction posting.

Clark, at the American Asylum, received this letter

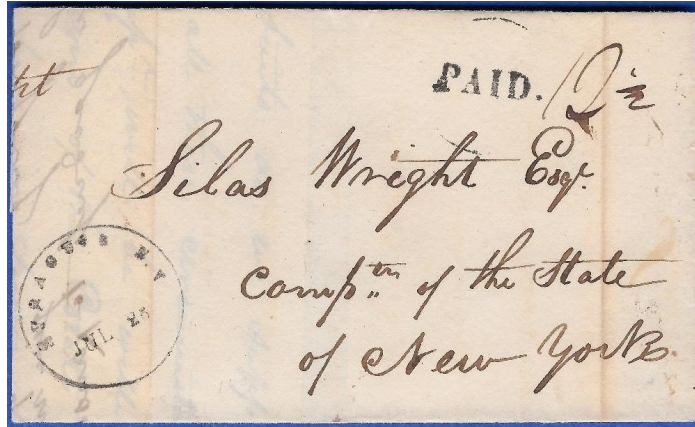
Personalities In the Post

By Jeff Stage

The folded letter sent in July 1831 from Syracuse to Albany presents a couple of notable personalities — Silas Wright (1795-1847) on the cover and Jonas Baldwin (1768-1827) within the contents.

Wright was an attorney who served as state comptroller (1829-1833), two years as state governor (1845-1846) and a member of the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate.

The letter, from John Brown, Esq., concerns Baldwin's estate. Baldwin and his wife, Elizabeth, were from Massachusetts and traveled through Onondaga County in 1798. The Baldwins, captivated by the area's beauty, returned in 1808 and founded the com-



wins, captivated by the area's beauty, returned in 1808 and founded the community 12 miles northwest of Syracuse that became Baldwinsville.

The folded letter sent in July 1831 from Syracuse to State Comptroller Silas Wright doesn't include the name of the receiver's city. The 12 1/2 cents prepaid postage covers the 150-mile rate to Albany.

Share your people-based philately. Send an image and short description to: **Personalities In the Post** at nyspost-al@gmail.com.

roughly four years after America's Civil War.

In my experience in health care and studies of history, an "asylum" isn't a very friendly place. The Oxford Dictionary defines "asylum" as "an institution offering shelter and support to people who are mentally ill."

I couldn't help but wonder if Mr. Clark was a patient, or possibly a health-care worker who treated psychiatric patients. As I'm sure you can imagine, post-Civil War mental health care was fairly barbaric, when it existed at all. People with mental health conditions such as bipolar disorder and schizophrenia were locked away in asylums, usually forgotten about. Did Mr. Clark suffer this fate?

After some research, and much to my surprise, I found out that the American Asylum actually started out as the Connecticut Asylum for the Education and Instruction of Deaf and Dumb Persons. Founded April 15, 1817, actually listed as being in West Hartford, it is the oldest permanent special school for the deaf in the United States.

The founders were Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet and Laurent

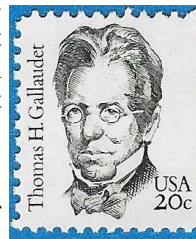
Clerc. It became a state-supported school in 1817. Gallaudet, of course, was honored on a 20-cent stamp issued in 1983 in the Great Americans series.

In May 1819, by special order of Congress, the school's name was changed to the American Asylum at Hartford, for the Education and Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb. This made it the first school for the deaf in the United States to receive federal funding.

Through my research, I found that Abel Clark was an instructor at the school. He published a few articles, including "How to Give Examinations to the Deaf," which is part of the Proceedings of the Meeting of the Convention of American Instructors of The Deaf in 1887.

Clark published a few articles throughout his career on the specialized instruction required for students with special needs.

The school itself is a leader in



Thomas Gallaudet stamp issued June 10, 1983.

education, helping students overcome the obstacles of being hearing impaired.

It was very educational to research the cover and the history of the school. The letter itself was removed, sadly, as I wondered what the correspondence was. Perhaps a parent or former student? I look forward to finding another cover to present. (Oh, and be safe out there!)

References

"A Brief History of The American Asylum, at Hartford, for the Education and Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb" (1893); retrieved from www.disabilitymuseum.org/dhm/lib/detail.html?id=1371&&page=8

"American School for the Deaf," retrieved July 2020 from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_School_for_the_Deaf

"Proceedings of the Meeting of the Convention of American Instructors of The Deaf" (1887), California State Publisher; retrieved from Google Books.

About the Author: Dave Goodhart is an emergency room nurse and paramedic in Canton, Ohio. He lives there with his wife, Kristen, and their two children. Dave started collecting stamps as a child and restarted the hobby a few years ago. He spends his free time reading, going back to school, and immersing himself in the History Channel.

COVER STORY

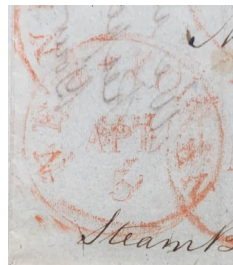
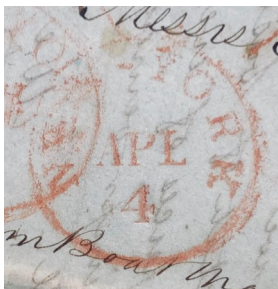


By Charles J. DiComo, PhD

Here is an 1842 folded letter with contents from Boston via steamboat mail to New York City, which was then forwarded to Cohoes in Albany County, resulting in 37.5 cents due.

This cover entered the mail in Boston, where a clerk struck a 30-millimeter “BOSTON APR 2” circular date stamp and added “18 ¾” in manuscript for the inland rate of 150 to 400 miles.

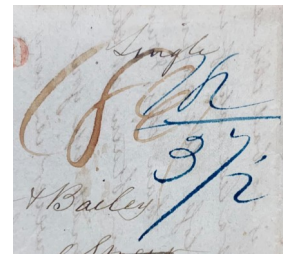
The cover is addressed to Messrs. Egberts & Bailey, 81 Pearl St., NY and there is a manuscript “single” at the upper right and “Steam Boat Mail” at lower left. The letter traveled over water from Boston to New York City via the Long Island Sound.



Upon arrival in NYC, the clerk struck a 30 mm red “NEW YORK APL 4” stamp, with “APL” for April instead of the typical “APR.”

Interestingly, a second 30 mm red “NEW YORK APL 5” was struck the next day, along with a bold, complete strike of 42-by-5.5 mm red “FORWARDED,” with the original address crossed out and “Cohoes Albany Co. N.Y.” added.

Docketing on the reverse in blue ink is “April 2 1842 Whitwill Seaver & Co,” which matches the blue ink on obverse “18 ¾” and total due “37 ½” (due upon receipt). The contents mentions the state of money affairs is bad this season; and offers a summary of accounts.



Whitwell, Seaver & Co were auctioneers, proprietors on Milk Street, Boston in the financial district. It was one of Boston's earliest highways and one of the first post offices in Boston was located on the street in 1711.

Egberts & Bailey erected the first building for the manufacture of knit goods by power in America in 1836. Four years earlier in 1832, they operated the first power knitting machinery factory in Cohoes.

