

Excelsior!

March 2021

Whole No. 33 New Series



A cover postmarked July 26, 1819 in Buffalo, partway on its trip from Detroit to Albany. The fee of 20 ½ cents pays the 18 ½-cent rate for mail traveling 151 to 400 miles, plus an extra 2 cents for being carried by a ship's officer. The cover was written aboard the Walk-in-the-Water steamboat.

STEAMSHIP HAD SPECIAL RATES

By David Przepiora

During the period from 1830 to 1845, the nation's postal system adopted transportation by steamboat and railroad. Steamboat transportation was used on Lake Erie during navigation season.

Between 1829 and 1851 the Buffalo Post Office used four different steamboat markings on mail.

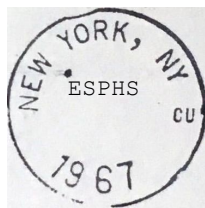
Steamboat markings were applied to letters that were transported by a steamboat outside of closed mail sacks.

When a letter was handed to a steamboat employee for transport, the receiving person was re-

quired to hand the letter in at the first post office on his route. The letter was then marked to show how it was received. The steamboat employee was paid 2 cents per letter, or 1 cent per letter while on Lake Erie.

Steamboat markings mean that the letter bearing it was picked up somewhere along an inland lake, river, bay or sound by the captain or clerk of a steamboat having no mail-carrying status with the Post Office Department.

These letters were carried as a favor to the sender. The captain or clerk was required to carry it to the post office at the end of his run. The receiving post office then marked them "steam" or "steamboat" to show they had been received in



Excelsior!

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From the Editor: I hope you have all been safe and healthy. Hopefully, 2021 will see a return to the normality of stamp shows and get-togethers.

Our spring edition begins with a Page 1 article about steamship mail by David Przepiora and is followed by a look at the first foreign airmail flight, tips to spot fake Civil War-

era covers, the early use of Parcel Post stamps, how a railroad ensured a quick delivery, a scarce use of a Prexie and how a cover can spark memories. Oh, and did I mention the murder?

Hope you enjoy the read and feel free to send articles – short or long; we'd love to have them.



A postal card sent in 1880 from Thousand Island Park to Detroit, Michigan.

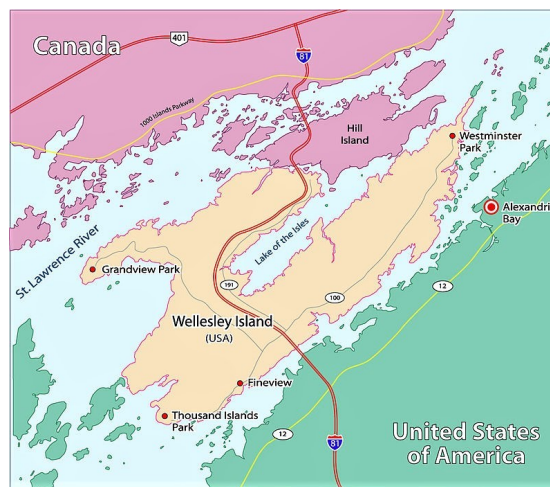
1000's of Memories Triggered By 1880 Postal Card

By George DeKornfeld

Way back during my college days, my friend Bob had a pilot's license and access to a Cessna Turbo-prop, a happy combination that allowed a group of three of us to go on road trips (via air) whenever time allowed. We'd fly to West Virginia or Maine to go camping and white-water rafting, or out to Wyoming for some antelope hunting; anything outdoorsy attracted us and because we were able to fly, we saved hours of time that otherwise would have been spent cramped up in an automobile.

Bob was even IFR-certified so we could go day or night, and that turboprop could really zip along, saving us even more time. Once, when we had a good, solid tailwind, a control tower en route even accused us of flying in a jet!

One summer we decided to take a short hop up to the Thousand Islands. We could park the plane at Watertown Airport, rent a car to drive into the park, and then rent a boat to motor out to one of the smaller islands in the river to camp, fish, barbeque and, of course, drink beer. We shared visions of cooking our catch on an open campfire while sitting on tree



A modern map of Wellesley Island.

stumps, drinking suds and telling stories way into the wee hours. So, we packed up our equipment and off we went. We even stopped for groceries for our four-day trip, a move which, on retrospect, proved to be invaluable.

I think it was about two hours after setting up camp on our island that the heavens opened up and it started to pour. It rained and rained ... and rained some more ... for two days straight. All we could do was sit in our tents and attack the groceries and beers; a camp-

ISLANDS, Page 4

An undated older photo of the Thousand Island Park Post Office and a similar view (below) after a fire in 2014. The hamlet's firehouse, several businesses and the post office were heavily damaged.



ISLANDS, From Page 3

fire stood no chance. If I hadn't brought along a copy of *Field & Stream* to read, I very easily could have lost my mind.

On day three we awoke to sunlight. Hallelujah! We threw our tackle and a couple of six-packs into the boat and a-fishing we did go. We caught nothing. Well, that's not entirely true. More like, we came back with nothing.

Late in the afternoon I had a hog of a smallmouth bass inhale a spinner bait in about 10 feet of water right after I started reeling in, the largest I had ever caught. As I hauled it into the boat, back came those mental images of fish fillets crackling on the campfire.

After the obligatory photograph, since we were about done fishing for the day, I foolishly decided that the best way to dispatch our dinner into fish heaven was to whack his noggin on the boat's gunwale, the beer possibly helping me forget exactly how slippery our finned friends tend to be.

As I swung Mr. Bass toward his demise on the edge of our craft, out of my hands he sailed, bouncing lightly off of the boat before landing back in the river and freedom, albeit possibly with a mild headache. We had groceries again for dinner and the next day we headed home.

The point to this story? Although we all have and enjoy building our main postal history collections, I suspect I'm not alone in occasionally collecting an item that has no relationship to our main pursuit, but in some shape or form reminds us of a happy time or place from our past. It is with this in mind that I present the 1-cent Liberty postal card issue of 1875, shown front and back.

I recently came across the postal card shown on Page 3 that immediately brought the story here back to mind. Mailed from Thousand Island Park to Detroit, Michigan in 1880, this card has been blessed by a well struck, purple, double circle Thousand Island Park – Jefferson County datestamp in duplex with a Star-in-Circle fancy killer.

Thousand Island Park is a hamlet in the town of Orleans at the far southwest end of Wellesley Island, adjacent to Thousand Island State Park. Some may be familiar with the iconic Boldt Castle, which is at the far northeast end of the island. Thousand Island Park was founded in 1875 as a Methodist Campground-Colony by the Rev. John Ferdinand Dayan of Jefferson County.

The Thousand Island Park Post Office was established on January 11, 1876 and was enlarged in 1890 to accommodate the ever-growing population of tourists and vacationers.

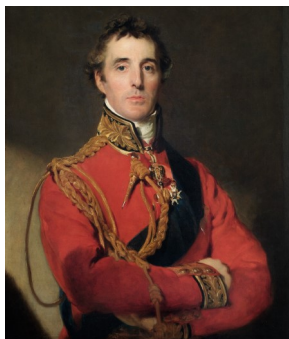
The park's prosperity as a vacation destination suffered a startling jolt on July 9, 1912 when a devastating fire, fed by dry weather and wooden sidewalks that served as sparks, destroyed the Columbian Hotel, seven business buildings,

three schools, a chapel, 98 cottages and the post office.

Undeterred, citizens rebuilt, beginning in 1913 with a cement-block “fireproof” building at St. Lawrence Avenue and Rainbow Street. At some point, the post office moved into this new structure, known as the Commercial Block Building.

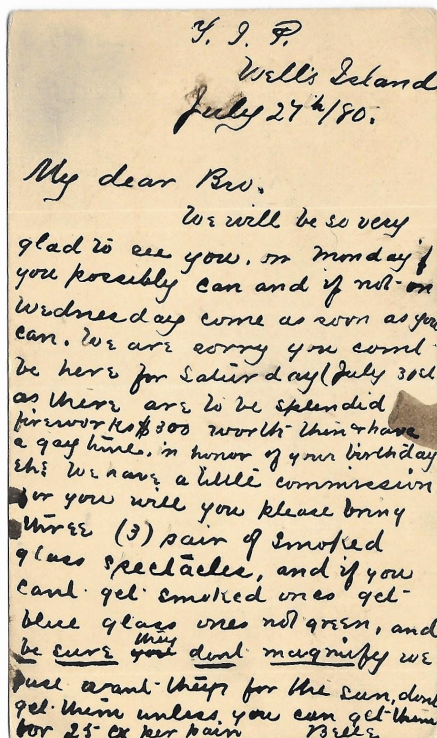
Sadly, 101 years later, on August 13, 2014, another fire tragedy struck. Note that the basic appearance of the building is pretty much unchanged between the two photographs, which must have been taken at least 50 years apart. However, the modern fire proved to be the death-knell for the business-area post office, which did not reopen. The closest post office is three miles away at Fine View, still on Wellesley Island.

Kay and Smith’s “Postmasters and Post Offices of New York State” lists an Emerson E. Hall as Thousand Island Park’s first postmaster. However, the U.S. Postal Service’s Postmaster Finder states: “The Postmaster appointed on that date (01.11.1876) failed to qualify and did not serve.”



Arthur Wellesley.

Undoubtedly referring to Hall, no amount of internet searching could come up with a reason for why he did not qualify. Apparently, Hall was also a Methodist minister, originally from West Branch, Michigan.



Back of 1880 postal card in which the sender, Belle, shortens the name of Wellesley Island to “Well’s,” the island’s original name.

On March 17, 1876, George H. Stubbs was elected to the position and served until September 30, 1878. In turn, he was replaced by Job Eddy, who served during the time of this postal card’s mailing, and until July 18, 1881.

Information is also scant on the early official postmasters, but the Watertown Times issue of June 18, 1879, on Page 3, simply states: “Job Eddy answers more questions than any man on the St. Lawrence River.” Such is the travail of many a postmaster, I suspect. A different issue of the same newspaper mentions Eddy as a trustee of the Thousand Island Camp Meeting Association during 1878.

Note that the message side of our postal card is docketed “Well’s Island.” This, the original name, was changed in 1815 to Wellesley Island to honor Arthur Wellesley, First Duke of Wellington, a good

65 years before our card was mailed. It seems old habits, or names, die hard. The Wellesley Island Post Office wasn’t opened until April 21, 1899, well after our card was mailed, leaving our sender, Belle, the only option of using the Thousand Island Park Post Office. The Wellesley Island Post Office didn’t last long, closing on February 28, 1902.

Belle wrote to her brother expressing sorrow that he won’t arrive until after a fireworks display, “\$300 worth,” no small sum back then, and asks him to bring along “three pair of smoked glass spectacles, and if you can’t get smoked ones get blue glass ones not green, and be sure they don’t magnify we just want them for the sun, don’t get Wire unless you can get them for 25 ex per pair.”

Such interesting postal and social history topped off by a terrific county cancellation with a fancy obliterator, all compliments of a small card mailed almost a century and a half ago! Is this a terrific hobby, or what?

About the Author: George DeKornfeld, a former New York City paramedic and retired dentist, started collecting stamps while growing up in London in the 1970s. He is a gold level exhibitor nationally. He is treasurer and awards chair for the Empire State Postal History Society. George has authored articles for The American Philatelist, Linn’s Stamp News, and writes a regular column for the ATA’s bimonthly Topical Time.

References

Map by Lucas Slominski, via Wikipedia; <https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?curid=17195581>

Thousand Island Park Landmark Society webpage, thousandislandparklandmarksociety.org/ti-park-history.html

Real or Counterfeit?

Determining the Truth About Civil War Patriotics

By Doug Penwell

Several members of the Empire State Postal History Society have a general interest in Civil War patriotic material. There are several ways to collect these artifacts, such as by period of use, stamp, design, rate, mint, used, soldier's mail, chaplain mail, by geography, or to-and-from military camps and locations and non-military destinations.

One of the first considerations that must be made is whether to collect mint or used?

There were probably hundreds of thousands of envelopes printed to promote the cause in both the North and the South. It is surprising to see the number of unused examples that have survived. Some of the scarcest designs are only recorded in mint or unused condition.

While mint covers may be physically attractive, we will presume that many society members have a primary interest in collecting by town or county. Then there is the question of price. Generally, unused or mint covers are cheaper than used ones.

We will not consider here whether unused Civil War patriotic envelopes can legitimately be considered postal history. When anyone providing advice

has a fiduciary interest in your decision, take extra time and give the question extra thought.

The non-collector might legitimately ask, "why collect these envelopes used?" They are certainly more presentable in unused condition. Several of the ways to collect Civil War material are eliminated when only considering unused or mint examples (leaving design type as the major criterion). While the genuineness of Civil War patriotics can certainly be questioned when unused, that will also not be considered here.

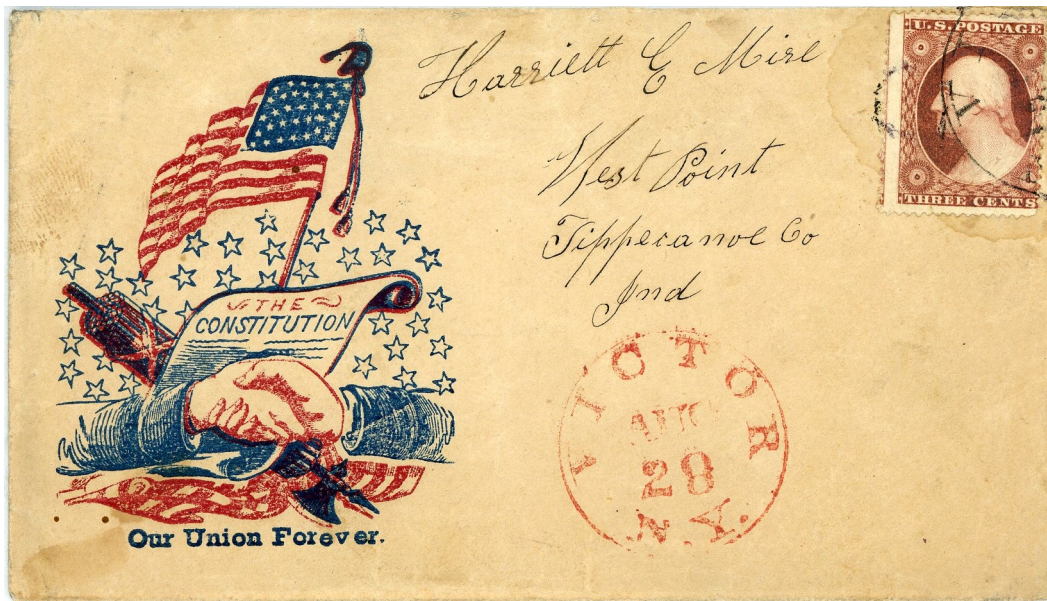
Anyone familiar with the name John Fox (1911-1988) knows that he faked much Civil War material. There also was an individual from Buffalo that applied fake blue markings to such envelopes. This also is not the focus of this article and much has been written elsewhere on fakes and various types of alterations.

Those collecting on a geographic basis may have a passion for their area of specialty. The basic warning here is not to let your passion compromise your judgment. I have purchased many items later found to be altered, or some aspect of the purchase should have received greater scrutiny prior to writing the check.

Have any of you ever looked at an item and wondered, "why did I buy this cover?"



An unused Civil War patriotic cover promoting a Union point of view.



A used Civil Patriotic cover carrying postal cancellations from Victor. Certain aspects of the cover, however, raise some suspicions about its authenticity.

If the item is fraudulent or altered in any way, recovering all or part of the initial investment may be complicated.

Of course, you could donate the item to a collection meant to provide reference examples of various fakes or forgeries. In some cases, some aspect of the cover may make it useful to you despite the problems encountered when considering questions of authenticity. It may have a legitimate marking or may be a design that you cannot replace easily.

Take a look at the used Civil War patriotic cover shown.

This cover originated in Victor, a small town in Ontario County adjacent to the town of Pittsford (Monroe County). After collecting Ontario County material for many years, I had not encountered a Civil War patriotic cover from this town.

Problems with this cover were immediately apparent at the time of purchase.

The main problem is that the stamp did not originate on this cover and we'll get to that point in a minute.

Let's start with the datestamps.

The cancel on the stamp looks like it also came from Victor, but the circular datestamp at the bottom is in red, while the cancel on the stamp is black. There is no reason why the town cancel would be applied in two different colors. Why didn't the postmaster use the red circular datestamp or a black grid to cancel the stamp?

What was immediately attractive about this item was the color of the town cancel. Victor used a red or orange marking from the first recorded handstamps in the late 1830s through the 1840s.

There currently are no recorded manuscripts after the 1830s and no black town markings from this post office before the 1850s. 1850s are harder to find than earlier or later examples.

Once the change to black took place, red or orange markings are not encountered. Examples from the 1850s are harder to find than earlier or later examples.

Victor used a grid cancel on stamps from at least the mid-1850s into the 1870s (though this circular datestamp has been seen used that late, which is not uncommon for post offices that operated for a long time). People then were not like us today; they did not consider something new to automatically be superior. If a cancel was serviceable, there was no reason to replace it. Sometimes a postmaster could use an older device just because it was handy and go back to a newer one just as easily without any reason.

It could easily be concluded that this cover was used in 1861. The fact that the 1857 stamp was added later could make determining exact date of use problematic.

The August date is another sign of trouble.

The 3-cent 1861 stamp was issued in late August, with an earliest documented use of August 19. Victor was a large post office even in that period with postmaster compensation of \$374.79 for the fiscal year ending June 1855. With the amount returned to the Post Office Department, the Victor Post Office took in more than \$500 for that year. Even larger amounts, between \$500 and \$900 can be found in the Federal Registers for the 1860s.

From these facts, it can easily be concluded that it is unlikely that there were any 1857 issue stamps left at the Victor Post Office by August 1861. Consumption of the stamp paying the domestic letter rate would

have been very high at any post office of moderate to large size.

Let's look more closely at the stamp and the area around it. The water stain and the way the cancels appear to tie the stamp are obvious to those looking for such details. If the original stamp fell off or was badly damaged, a replacement stamp would be the only way to have the cover retain a value near that for an example with a clearly tied stamp. The small cancel at left and the rim of the circular date-stamp all have less than crisp continued lines where they transition from the stamp to the cover. It is very likely that these junctions were added by drawing or by adding ink to make the cancel appear more legitimate.

The person who added the stamp may have had access to other covers or items from the same correspondence or may have been fortunate enough to find a stamp that might not be obviously faked at first glance. It is very difficult to add a stamp without leaving signs that this has been done.

This cover would be worth a small fraction compared to a used patriotic with a clearly and unambiguously tied stamp. There is always a financial incentive to add a stamp where the value is diminished without it. I have no interest in commenting on the reasons why anyone would represent an item to be genuine or as it was originally when first introduced to the mails.

Anyone looking at philatelic descriptions for any length of time is certain to encounter the acronym "DNO" for "did not originate." Anyone sorting a sizeable quantity of covers could easily make an error; sometimes it pays to have a questioning attitude. This is especially true when seeing something that has great appeal. It is unfortunate to ask the question, "what is wrong with this cover?" Such a question may change the way you look at an item and consider other aspects or perspectives. Once the thrill of discovery wears off, a closer examination becomes more possible (and beneficial).



Magnifying areas in question such as the cancellation, can help you determine philatelic authenticity.

When examining a suspicious cover, there are several questions to ask, beginning with "is this the correct rate?" Then, "Have I seen similar markings from this town before?"

After researching the addressee, it could be learned who the likely sender was, even without letter contents. This cover has a cancel on the stamp that even at first glance looks suspicious. Many people will not purchase a Civil War patriotic item unless the stamp is properly tied to the cover (we will not consider here manuscript usages where it is unreasonable to expect a tied stamp).

There are other things to consider when examining patriotics. Does the address ink look contemporary? There are many examples of Civil War patriotics where an unused example has an address and stamp added. Many fakers may not understand what iron gall ink was, or the format of the addresses in the period.

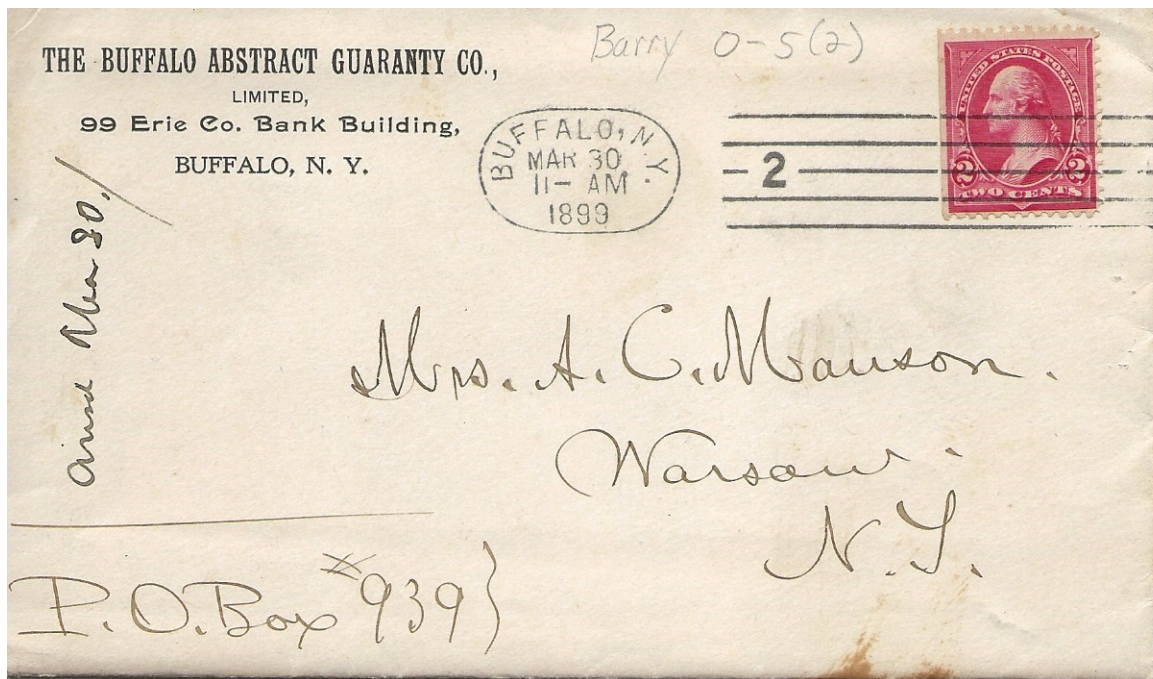
Does the envelope look like it passed through the mails? Anyone who has sought a Civil War patriotic from a specific town likely must look through hundreds to thousands of covers before finding an example used from that desired post office.

After even a cursory search, you will find that the condition of these envelopes varies widely. The majority of them are well worn to badly damaged. If the cover looks pristine, extra care is warranted.

An added stamp, such as that on this Victor cover, along with added addresses (not the case here) are two of the most common methods of turning an unused or unposted Civil War patriotic into a what appears to be a legitimately used cover. Even auction houses and many online sellers are sometimes fooled and have featured such falsified covers in their sales.

When spotting an item you think is bogus, it is very important to bring these altered artifacts to the attention of the seller, even though they may be displeased with you for doing so. The philatelic marketplace has enough challenges and problems without allowing fraudulent material to be traded. Your caution may save you money and the unpleasant experience of finding an item in your collection not to be genuine.

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or contribute to Excelsior! or to the society's newsletter?
Visit the Empire State Postal History's website (<http://www.esphs.us>)
and Facebook page (<https://facebook.com/EmpireStatePostalHistorySociety>)



Slight pin impressions at the right side of the envelope help identify the use of a Barry cancel. The impressions were caused by a feeder mechanism. Below, the cover's back cancel.

Quick Delivery Service Shown By Contents and Cancellation

By Al Carroccia

Before the advent of the telegraph, telephone and, eventually, computer technology, the only means of communication over long distances was by mail.

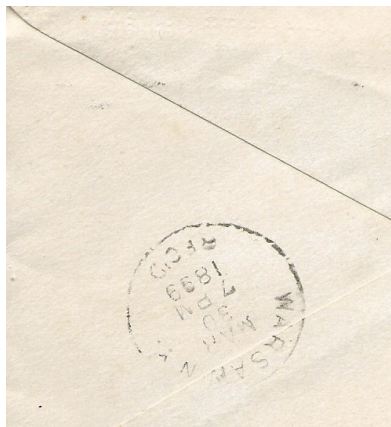
So important was the notion of efficiency of the mail that the Post Office Department was a cabinet level position.

The development of the Pony Express, Railroad Post Office and Rural Free Delivery are milestones capped by the mechanization of postmarking mail.

I picked up this cover with an oval Barry machine cancel classified as Buffalo O-5(2). I glanced at the receiving cancel on the back but dismissed it as ordinary.

The Barry machine cancels were the product of the Barry Postal Supply Company.

The machines evolved out of several patents filed by William Barry (1841-1915), an inventor and mechanical designer from Oswego who held several patents.



The Barry company created a number of different canceling machines and ramped up work in the early 1890s, and by 1895 as it was tasked with filling the void left by the International Postal Supply Company. Four types of cancellers using a new oval postmark were used in Buffalo between 1897 and 1902.

The O-5(2) was in service between February 14, 1899 and July 18, 1899. The Barry machines never lived up to expectations and were slowly

phased out beginning in 1902.

After classifying the cover, I filed it away until I realized that I had never read the contents.

The letter is from a husband to his wife and dated 8:30 a.m. (which he wrote as 8½) on March 30, 1899. The husband is in Buffalo and the wife in Warsaw.

The house the husband is occupying is having work done – much of it wallpapering – which he explains to his wife. He also notes that he's busy and says the weather is cold. The tone of the letter is obvious.

Being separated, the husband misses his wife and laments missing the chance to answer the card pre-

BARRY, Page 10

GEORGE GORHAM, PRESIDENT. CAPITAL STOCK \$50,000. GEORGE F. HAYWOOD, GENERAL MANAGER. JOHN S. ROBERTSON, MANAGER OF TAX DEPARTMENT.

The Buffalo Abstract Guaranty Company,

(LIMITED.)

99 ERIE COUNTY SAVINGS BANK BUILDING.

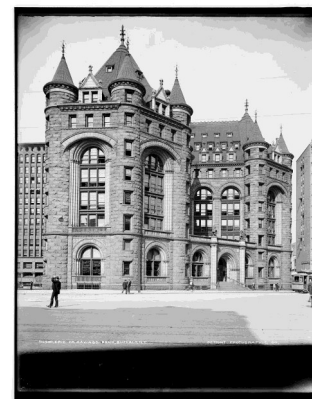
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Telephone, Seneca 905. Buffalo, N.Y., Mch 30 1899 8 1/2 A.M.

Dear Eva

Your card was rec'd also one from Evelyn. I wrote a letter to Lottie I intended to write you yesterday noon, but I had not a minute to spare at noon I knew you could not get any word from me until this A.M. unless I took a letter or card to the General P.O. I am quite well, I hope you are also.

A number of the men in the office are suffering from hard colds just now, but I hope to avoid it if possible.



The top of a letter in which a man writes to his wife at home about the renovations occurring in the home in Buffalo where he is staying. The letter-head notes the Erie County Savings Bank Building. (Photo c. 1900 courtesy Library of Congress)

BARRY, From Page 9

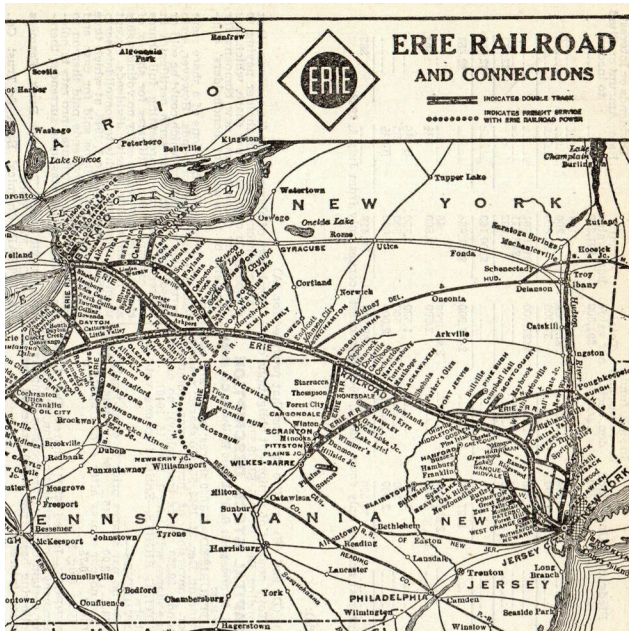
iously sent by the wife. The letter ends with the husband telling his wife that he "will mail this in the Erie Co. Bank Bld'g before 9 o'clock this A.M. Let me know if

you do not get it in time."

The Barry cancel has an 11 a.m. time in its dial. I again examined the receiving mark on the back of the cover with a time of 7 p.m. The distance between Buffalo and

ed Buffalo to Corning. The wife was reading the letter that very evening!

Of course, that same letter today will take three days for delivery after it makes a stop at the Rochester sectional center facility for processing.



Warsaw is 44 miles by rail connected by the Erie Railroad.

True to his word, the letter was mailed before 9 a.m. The Erie County Bank Building, the Old Buffalo Post Office and the Erie Railroad station were within blocks of each other in 1899. The letter made it on the afternoon run on the Erie Limited Express that connect-

About the Author: Al Carrocchia is a member of the Buffalo Stamp Club. He collects the postal history of New York, specifically Erie County.

References

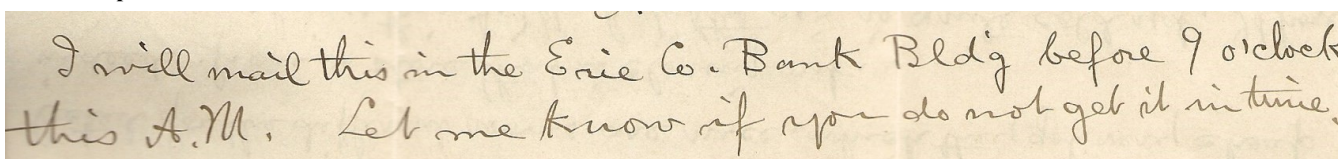
"The Barry Story" (1988), by Reg Morris and Robert J. Payne. Published by the Machine Cancel Society, three volumes.

The Machine Cancel Society website, http://machinecancel.org/exhibits/nyc2016/nyc2016_exhibit.pdf

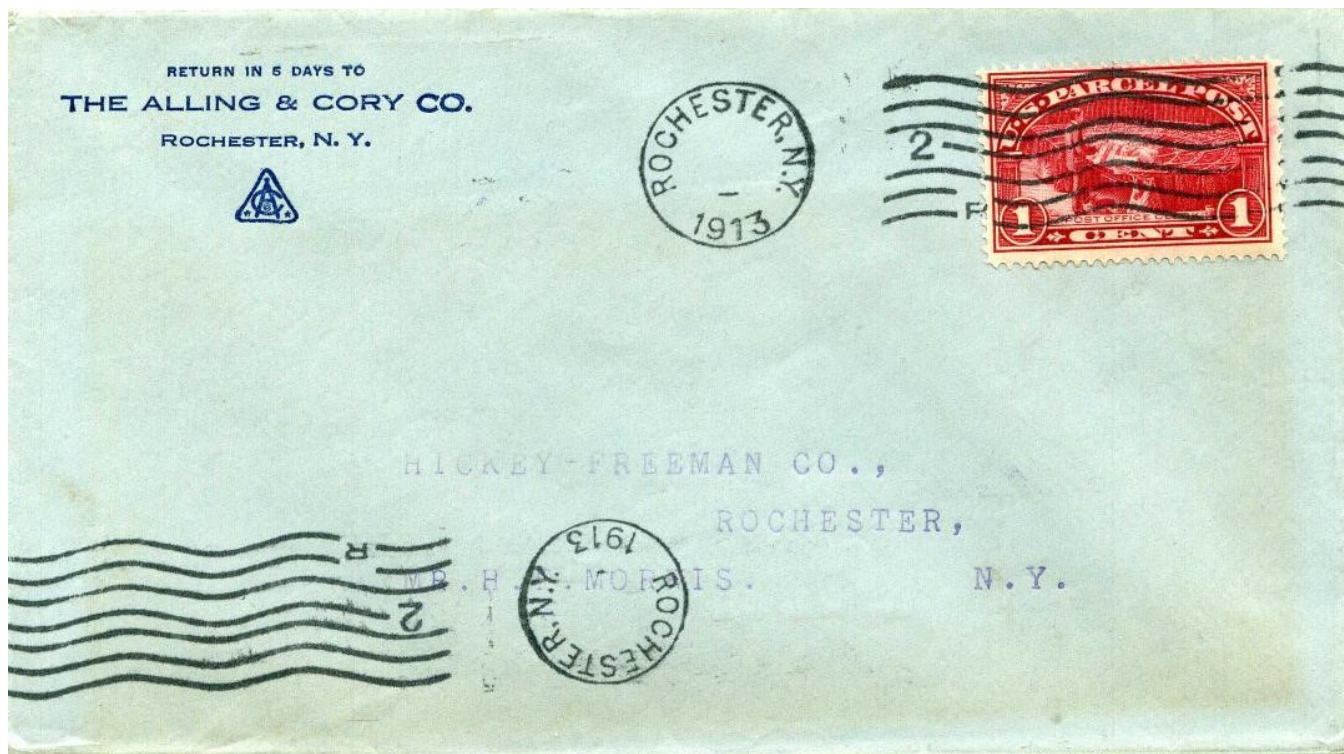
Robert Swanson web page, <http://swansongrp.com/machtest/machine2.html#barry>

Find A Grave, www.findagrave.com/memorial/156085384/william-barry

An old map shows the routes of the Erie Railroad.



The end of the letter in which the man details his mailing procedure.



A cover from 1913 with a double cancellation franked with the 1-cent Post Office Clerk Parcel Post stamp.

Covers to Rochester Clothing Company Show Early Use of Parcel Post Stamps

By Douglas Penwell

Three covers I recently acquired – all addressed to the same clothing manufacturer in my childhood home of Rochester – show examples of early use of Parcel Post stamps, which made their debut in 1913.

Although originally intended for packages, postal regulations permitted their use on regular mail beginning in July of that year. There are letter mail

uses recorded before that date, but they are very scarce and command high prices. Uses after the first official date (July 1, 1913) are not difficult to find and examples on picture postcards can still be found in dollar boxes.

Covers or cards dated July 1, 1913 are highly prized because they represent the first official date these stamps were allowed on letter mail.

Then there are registered uses and

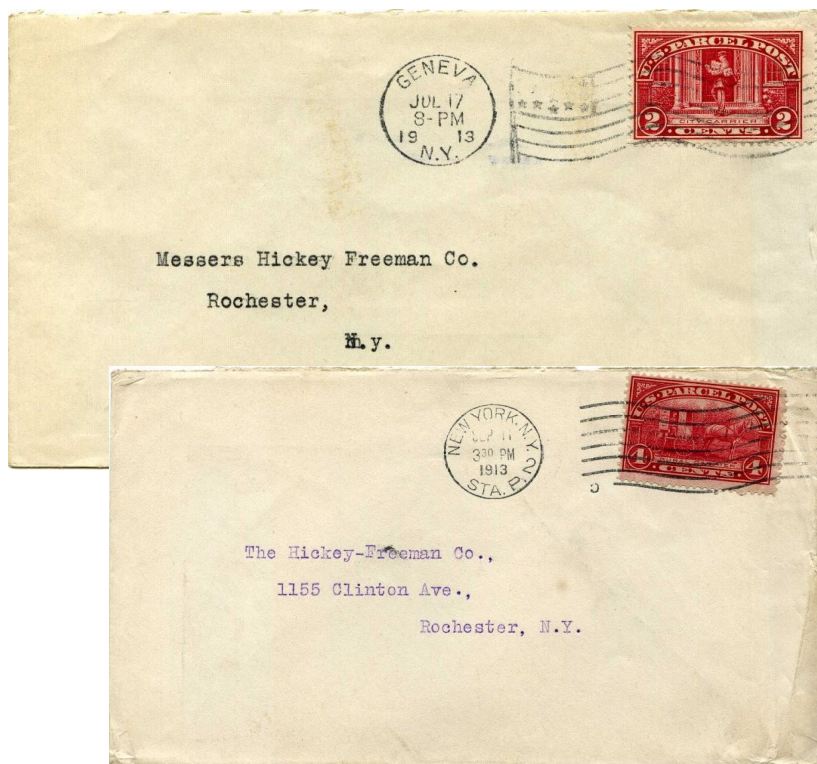
those to foreign destinations. These types of covers usually top out at the stamp denominated at 15 cents as it would require something legal size or larger to require postage more than that amount. The larger denominations are sometimes found on parcel tags.

Unquestionably, the 1- and 2-cent stamps are the most easily found on surviving mail, as they paid the regular

PARCEL POST, Page 12



The first Parcel Post stamps were shipped to post offices starting in late November 1912 with use to begin January 1, 1913. These are the eight low values. The set was designed by Clare Aubrey Huston.



Above, a cover with a July 1913 Flag cancel franked with the 2-cent City Carrier stamp. Below, a cover from September 1913 franked with the 4-cent Rural Carrier stamp.

PARCEL POST, From Page 11

domestic rates for cards and covers, respectively.

Parcel wrappers would also be of great interest, but the supply of used stamps off-cover (or piece) would seem to indicate that these stamps didn't survive in that form and were soaked off to supply collectors.

A search of a few leading auction websites reveals very few stamps on cover or piece higher in value than the 10c stamp.

There are quite a few parcel tags that survive, but the problem with these items is rating them out. Without knowing the exact size or weight of the article they were attached to requires a bit of guesswork.

The other problem is not having both the address of origin in addition to the destination. Some of these tags have third class box cancels that are undated. They can be found used with or without other stamps making the correct rate.

There are philatelic uses, but they are typically seen into the 1920s or later. Many collectors or dealers would use poor quality copies,

previously hinged or those with straight edges as we use so-called "discount postage" today.

All of the covers shown here are different, using the 1-, 2- and 4-cent stamps of the Parcel Post issue.

The first cover is a 1-cent drop, or unsealed, usage from Rochester, addressed locally to the Hickey Freeman Co.

The second cover is from Geneva and features a use of the 2-cent stamp tied by a flag machine cancel. This is an ordinary domestic rate and is the least interesting.

The third cover is a usage from New York, with a 4-cent stamp. The cover was undoubtedly heavy and required postage that paid the double rate. This cover is the only one of the three featuring a street address for the company.

The Hickey Freeman Co. manufactures suits for men and boys and was founded in 1899. The manufacturing facility on North Clinton Avenue, built in 1912, is still in operation today. Undoubtedly, the company used many Parcel Post stamps when sending merchandise to customers. This writer wonders if that practice, whether publicized or not, prompted their clients to send payments and inquiries using this issue.

About the Author: The author is originally from East Rochester and served in the U.S. Air Force into the mid-1990s. He has collected Rochester-area material for more than 30 years, with a focus on Monroe, Livingston and Ontario counties. Some of his perspectives come from being a part-time postal history dealer. He can be reached at douglaspenwell@Mail.com.

The high values of the 1913 Parcel Post stamps. All were printed by the BEP.



Two similar covers dropped at the Troy Post Office in 1861 were date-stamped and marked for advertising on the same day. The covers are written in the same hand. The first is dated Jan. 23.



A Sordid Tale

Investigation Leads to Surprise Ending

By John D. Bowman
and Charles J. DiComo, PhD

Sometimes, rabbit holes are maddening; other times, little clues lead you down an interesting path, even if not to a great treasure. Such is the case with a pair of covers John acquired that offer some postal history and, when checked in detail, are tangentially linked to a 19th-century murder.

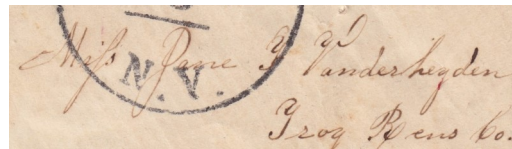
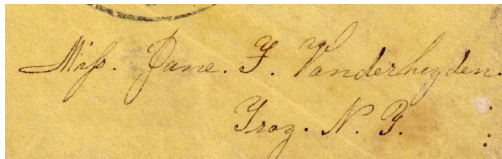
John purchased the pair of covers shown some time ago. Each carries a 1-cent 1861 stamp, a Troy datestamp and an additional date slug with a matching date. Both were addressed in the same hand and to the same addressee but lacked any contents.

With covers dated prior to July 1, 1863, when carrier fees were abolished, it is sometimes difficult to identify the service provided

SORDID, Page 14



The covers are both addressed to Jane F. Vanderheyden in care of someone with the same surname, likely the receiver's father. This one is dated Oct. 21.



The covers are both addressed to Jane F. Vanderheyden in care of someone with the same surname, likely the receiver's father.

SORDID, From Page 13

by the 1-cent stamps used on them.

The date slugs are advertising markings, but why were they applied on the same date as the post office datestamp, and on two similar covers on different dates?

It seemed likely that the sender brought them to the Troy Post Office and paid the drop rate with 1-cent stamps. The postal clerk canceled the stamp and placed the advertising marks the same day. Perhaps he knew that the recipient was out of town or had left instructions to hold and advertise their mail. Our next step was to investigate the names on the covers and the local newspapers.

That is when this investigation became interesting. We used a genealogy website to search newspapers for "Vanderheyden" over several years. The addressee is "Miss" and the letters are directed to the care of N. Vanderheyden.

The name Vanderheyden dates back to America's colonial times. The Vanderheydens came to New Amsterdam from Holland around 1652 and bought a large farm north of Albany bordering the Hudson River, according to a history of the village of Troy published in 1897. The farm had previously belonged to an early fur-trading family that established a ferry across the Hudson. The land remained in the Vanderheyden family for many years and came to include the business section of present-day Troy.

Around 1750, Jacob Vanderheyden maintained the ferry across the Hudson that became a stopping point for schooners traveling on the Hudson to and from New York City. The influx of newcomers caused the area, then known as Vanderheyden, to grow. By 1789 there were enough residents that a public meeting was held to change the settlement's name to Troy.

Jacob D. Vanderheyden inherited the portion of the farm that included the ferry. He declined numerous attempts to purchase portions of this desirable location. As a result, nearby Lansingburgh began to flour-

ish. By 1787 Jacob was finally persuaded that selling some of the land made better business sense than holding onto it. The property was sold as lots. Troy was incorporated as a town in 1794 and its first post office was established two years later, when Troy became a village. In 1816, Troy became a city.

The "care of N. Vanderheyden" notation refers to Nanning Vanderheyden, son of Jacob D. Vanderheyden. Nanning was born June 3, 1818 and died March 23, 1870. He had two daughters, Helen Maria and Jane Frances. Jane was born November 1, 1845 and died in 1923. The genealogical search indicated that if these letters were written as early as October of 1861, Jane would have been 16 years old and an unlikely visitor at the Troy Post Office.

Did Troy have carrier service during this time? Arthur James Weise in his book "Troy's One Hundred Years, 1789-1889" recounts that:

The first letter-carrier in Troy was Charles B. Bishop, who was appointed in January 1836. He began carrying letters in the city on January 29th, that year, receiving two cents for the delivery of a letter and a half cent for a newspaper. The present free delivery system was inaugurated in Troy in 1864, with five carriers.

If Jane were living with her father, Nanning, in the city of Troy, it seems likely that a post office carrier would have delivered the letters to her. Instead, both were advertised the same day as received.

What are the possible year dates for these covers? The Scott Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps and Covers tells us that the 1861 1-cent blue Franklin's earliest known use is August 17, 1861. And the drop letter rate was 1 cent until July 1, 1863 when it was increased to 2 cents. Thus, there are two possible years for each cover: 1861 or 1862 for the cover dated October 21 and 1862 or 1863 for the January 23 cover.

After searching various internet sites, we discovered that the Troy Daily Times was the newspaper with the largest circulation and was obligated to pub-

-lish a list of letters remaining at the Troy Post Office. We could not locate electronic copies of that paper during the possible dates for these covers, except for one dated February 28, 1863. The list was divided into "Ladies" and "Gentlemen." N. Vanderheyden

was listed under the "Gentlemen" section and likely corresponds to the letter of January 23.

The "advertised" date slugs are quite different from that used in the datestamp, as the enlargements illustrate.

While performing the search of newspapers for "Vanderheyden," a murder mystery linked to Jane Vanderheyden turned up unexpectedly.

The Troy Times of April 2, 1870 reported the murder of Nanning Vanderheyden in his own home and the following was pieced together from several newspaper articles of that time:

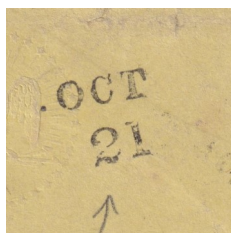
The coroner brought a jury to the murder scene and took the testimony of the only witness, Edward Alexander, son-in-law of the victim. Alexander had married Miss Vanderheyden about three years earlier in a clandestine manner because her father had opposed the marriage.

Alexander had splints on an arm and a bandage on his head. He said he had been attacked. Alexander testified that he and Vanderheyden went to tend to the horses, with himself going to an outside pump while Vanderheyden entered the barn.

As Vanderheyden entered the barn, Alexander said a large man attacked him. Alexander said he threw up his arm and received a blow that fractured both bones of his forearm. Alexander testified that he felt a sharp pain in the back of his head and retreated to the house. He called on everyone to rush upstairs, kicked out a window and cried out, "murder!" A neighbor arrived and accompanied Alexander and his wife to the barn. They found Vanderheyden wounded and lying between two horses.

Vanderheyden was still alive as they brought him to the house but died shortly thereafter without

speaking. Alexander took his horse and alarmed other neighbors before going to the city to report what had happened and to alert the doctor, who set the injured man's broken arm and dressed his head wound.



Datestamps used to cancel letters from the Troy Post Office differ from date slugs marking the covers for advertising.

Police officers found gags, a mask, a drill, gun powder and an iron pump handle in and around the barn. Evidence not disclosed implicated Horace Humiston, a neighbor of Vanderheyden's. Humiston was taken into custody.

Humiston was described as a man of bad reputation, thought to have deserted from the 169th New York Infantry Regiment during the Civil War, and frequently taken to jail for intoxication. Rumors of the day said that Humiston and Vanderheyden knew each other and that Humiston was aware that Vanderheyden had recently received a large sum of money. Humiston swore that he was at his uncle's house all evening on the night of the murder. Sure enough, his alibi stood up. Furthermore, the next morning he showed up at the police station with his former army commander. Both dismissed the rumor that he was a deserter, and Humiston had served his military time as a quartermaster. Regarding intoxication, Humiston said that until five years earlier he had been a "bummer," but had since quit drinking.

Mrs. Alexander offered a \$5,000 reward for detection or apprehension of the murderer or murderers. The governor offered an additional \$500.

Soon, police arrested Calvin Leversee, a 35-year-old man who reportedly was shot in the hip by Vanderheyden two years earlier for trying to steal a horse from the stable. The police announced it was pursuing others as well.

A local farmer visited the police and told them he recognized the pump handle that was the murder weapon. He said it was like one that he owned. The farmer stated that the pump handle was in Vanderheyden's wagon house. Mr. Alexander and his servant both claimed that they had never seen it before.

A jury reconvened and proceedings were closed to the public due to rumors implicating Alexander as the murderer. Leversee was released based on an alibi that was supported by his wife and other witnesses. It was noted that Vanderheyden left no will so that all his estate would pass to his daughter, Mrs. Alexander.

The jury deliberated over the next two days as police continued to search for clues, having heard reports of three persons riding through the city around the time of the murder. Investigators found tracks of some riders near the Vanderheyden home.

Residents were initially concerned that the murderer was still about and took precautions. As the investigation proceeded, rumors began to develop. Why did the burglar only injure Alexander, the only witness, instead of killing him, too? Why did Alexander discharge his firearms to alert his neighbors when that might leave his household defenseless? Why would he leave his wife and critically injured father-in-law to ride into town, when neighbors were already gathering at his house, and any one of them would gladly have gone for help? Why did he seem devoid of emotion about Vanderheyden's death? What about the suspicion that Alexander had very little means and that he was involved in a Texas speculation with his brother?

All these suspicions caused the police captain and detective to swear a warrant for Alexander's arrest. When he saw officers arrive at his house, Alexander rushed into a bedroom, picked up a shotgun, put the muzzle to his forehead and pulled the trigger. Jane Alexander ran out the front door and fainted in the captain's arms. The officers found a complete confession in a note left at this grisly scene. Mrs. Alexander was inconsolable with grief.

In the suicide note, Alexander said he didn't know why he committed the crime. Six weeks earlier he intended to kill Vanderheyden and poisoned his dog in preparation. He said no one else had any knowledge of or assistance with the crime.

Edward B. Alexander was the son of James A. Alexander, former proprietor of a slaughterhouse, who moved to Texas to engage in a cattle speculation. The young Alexander lost \$8,000 in the investment. The money had been given to him by Vanderheyden.

Although his confession does not give the reason for his crime, Alexander likely hoped to gain posses-

sion of his father-in-law's estate. Perhaps this motive haunted him for months before commission of the fatal deed. Once awareness of his impending arrest, he cheated the hangman by killing himself. As for Jane Vanderheyden Alexander, she was left to grieve over her father's murder, and the suicide of her husband.

The covers in this story were mailed between 1861 and 1863, from seven and nine years before the deaths of Nanning Vanderheyden and Edward Alexander and likely had nothing to do with the sordid murder-suicide. Still, knowing that they passed through the hands of Jane Vanderheyden Alexander, daughter and widow in the long-forgotten case, gives one pause about our philatelic discoveries. And some mysteries remain. Who sent these covers? To be determined.

About the Authors

John D. Bowman is past president and currently secretary-treasurer for the Carriers and Locals Society. He is section editor for the *Chronicle of the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society for Carriers and Locals*. Besides U.S. carriers, locals and independent mails, he also collects U.S. revenues and is a governor with the State Revenue Society. He has published extensively in *The Penny Post* and *State Revenue News*. Bowman belongs to a number of organizations. He and his wife, Chi, live in Corpus Christi, Texas and enjoy the sunny Gulf Coast weather. He is a retired clinical pharmacist, and for the last half of his career taught doctor of pharmacy students at Samford University in Birmingham, Ala., and at Texas A&M University in Kingsville, Texas.

Charles J. DiComo, PhD is a lifelong philatelist, postal historian and award-winning author. He enjoys researching, restoring, writing, publishing, and presenting on a broad array of philatelic and postal history topics. He is president of the Empire State Postal History Society; president of the Philatelic Society of Lancaster County; a life member of the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society's and editor-in-chief of its newsletter, *Chairman's Chatter*; and on the board of the Pennsylvania Postal History Society. A native New Yorker, he currently resides in Lancaster, Pa., with his wife of 25 years, Kathleen, and their daughters McKenna and Mia.

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The 'Bear' Facts From the Start of Foreign Airmail Route No. 1

The Post Office Department – not long after domestic airmail began in 1918 – designated any contract airmail route flown by an airline between a foreign country and the United States as a "Foreign Air Mail" route. The foreign airmail routes became widely known by the shorthand acronym "FAM." The first foreign airmail route was awarded to Canadian Colonial Airways and is known as FAM-1.

By Lawrence Laliberte

On March 16, 1923 a small aviation company called the Bee Line was formed in the Naugatuck Valley of Connecticut. In 1925 the Bee Line was reorganized as Colonial Air Transport and on July 1, 1926 inaugurated airmail service between New York and Boston along CAM-1 (Contract Air Mail). The Colonial system was soon expanded with the formation of Canadian Colonial (service to Montreal) and Colonial Western (service to Albany, Utica, Syracuse, Rochester, Buffalo, and eventually, Erie and Cleveland).

The first mention of an airmail route between New York City and Montreal that I have been able to find appeared in the Sept. 6, 1928 issue of the Dunkirk Evening Observer and stated that the proposed airmail service between NYC and Montreal via Albany scheduled to begin Sept. 1, 1928 had been delayed at least until Sept. 15. The reason given was non-delivery of airplanes. It also speculated that the route would call for stops at Poughkeepsie and Albany, as well as Rutland and Burlington in Vermont, before ending in Montreal.

This event was of such great importance that many dignitaries were invited to Montreal to witness its inauguration as indicated by a news release reprinted in the Sept. 13, 1928 edition of the Times-Union (Brooklyn, N.Y.). It read partially as:

Ottawa, Sept. 13 – Lord Wellington, the Governor General; Governor Alfred E. Smith, of New York, and Herbert Hoover, Republican Presidential candidate, are to be invited to a ceremony in Montreal on Oct. 1, when the first regular daily domestic air mail service in Canada will be inaugurated.

One service will be between Montreal and Albany and the other between Montreal and Toronto ..."

WASHINGTON, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 1928

NEW YORK-ALBANY-MONTREAL AIR MAIL ROUTE

SECOND ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL,
Washington, September 14, 1928.

Effective October 1, 1928, air mail service will be established on route FAM 1, New York-Albany-Montreal. The hours of departure and arrival will be announced later.

For the information of philatelists, a special cancellation will be authorized for use by the post offices of New York and Albany.

The domestic rate of 5 cents for the first ounce or fraction and 10 cents for each additional ounce or fraction will apply to articles to be dispatched by this route, which rate will also include dispatch by the domestic air routes of this country and Canada, where available.

W. IRVING GLOVER,
Second Assistant Postmaster General.

Figure 1. The initial announcement from September 1928 for Foreign Air Mail Route 1.

The first announcement of FAM-1 appeared in the Sept. 15, 1928 issue of The Postal Bulletin as shown [Figure 1], advising that service between New York City, Albany and Montreal, Quebec would begin on Oct. 1, 1928. Information also was included for philatelists who wanted to acquire commemorative first flight covers.

The Sept. 17 and 20 issues of The Postal Bulletin gave information on how U.S. collectors could acquire covers commemorating the return flight from Montreal to Albany. Emphasis made that Canadian postage had to be affixed and that a commemorative cachet would also be provided [Figure 2].

Concurrent with the establishment of FAM-1, another route was opening in Texas between San Antonio and Laredo, where it would connect with a recently established route to Mexico City. This made possible an air route between Toronto and Mexico City.

These airlines carried both passengers and freight and adding mail contracts helped them financially. In anticipation of the Montreal to New York airmail

FAM-1, Page 18

AIR MAIL ROUTE FROM MONTREAL TO ALBANY, N. Y.

SECOND ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL,
Washington, September 15, 1928.

The Canadian postal administration has informed this office that articles prepaid Canadian postage stamps affixed, at the rate of 5 cents for the first ounce or fraction and 10 cents for each additional ounce or fraction, may be sent from this country to the postmaster at Montreal (outside covers addressed to the postmaster must be prepaid with United States stamps) for dispatch by the first flight on the Montreal to Albany, N. Y., route.

If Canadian stamps are not available a money order for the proper amount of postage should be sent the postmaster with the articles.

All covers of articles to be dispatched by this first flight should bear in the top left-hand corner the words: "Via first air mail flight Montreal to Albany, N. Y."

W. IRVING GLOVER,
Second Assistant Postmaster General.

Figure 2. The second announcement of the Canadian route.



Figure 3. Postal Bulletin announcement showing the U.S.-Canada flight schedule.

FAM-1, From Page 17

Route, the Sept. 28, 1928 issue of The Gazette newspaper of Montreal ran a lengthy article on festivities. Here are some excerpts:

The first "Passenger" to use the International Air Mail and Express service between Montreal and New York will be a live teddy-bear, which will leave Montreal under the auspices of the Canadian Pacific Express Company and carry the greetings of Mayor Houde, whose gift he is, to Mayor Walker, of New York.

Canadian Colonial Airways, Limited, which operates the Montreal-Albany section and the Canadian Colonial Airways, Inc., which operates the Albany-New York section on the north and southbound route, will carry mail daily, except Sundays, planes leaving Newark airport at 7 a.m. arriving at St. Hubert at 11:15 a.m. calling at Albany en route. On the return trip, planes leave Montreal at 2:30 p.m. arriving New York at 6:30 p.m."

It is interesting to note that Newark Metropolitan Airport's first day of operation also was Oct. 1, 1928. Airmail operations, including night flights, for New York City had been taking place from Hadley Field,

N.J. since December 1924, according to the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle of Sept. 30, 1929.

The Flight North

The Sept. 27 issue of The Postal Bulletin gave the schedule of the new mail flights [Figure 3].

The plane used for the first flight was a brand new



Figure 4. The Fairchild FC-2 aircraft used for the first flight.

Fairchild FC-2 [Figure 4] that received its certificate of registration on August 29, 1928. This was one of four Fairchilds to be used on this route. Two Pitcairn super-Mailwings also were scheduled for service. The Fairchilds had a capacity of four passengers and 800 pounds of mail or freight.

Shown below [Figure 5] is a first flight cover for FAM-1 posted "New York, N.Y., 4:30 AM, GPO, 1928." After overnighting in Montreal, the plane was dispatched at 12:30 p.m. Oct. 2 for its return flight. It arrived in Albany around 6:30 p.m. per its backstamps.

At 11:15 a.m., precisely as scheduled, pilot Paul Reeder set his plane down at St. Hubert aerodrome to be greeted by Premier Trechereau and Postmaster General Venoit.

The Sept. 29, 1928 issue of The Postal Bulletin informed employees of the issuance of Canada's first airmail stamp noting that it may appear on covers arriving on FAM-1. This stamp was issued on Sept. 21, 1928 [Figure 6].

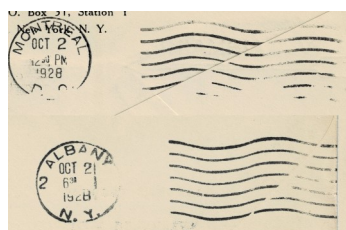


Figure 5. A first flight cover, canceled in the early morning of Oct. 1 in New York, NY. Above, a Montreal dispatching cancel at 12:30 p.m. Oct. 2 and a receiving cancel of 6:30 p.m. Oct. 2 on the back.

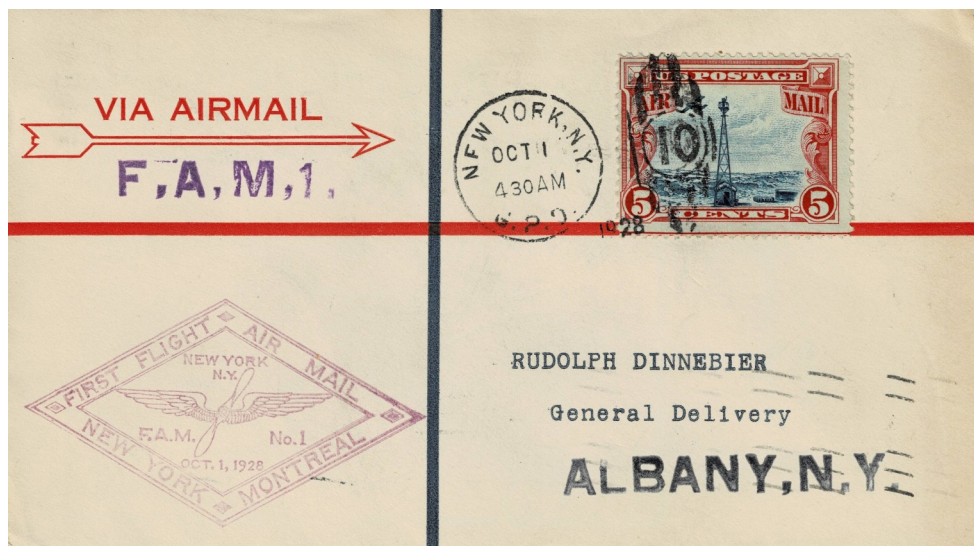
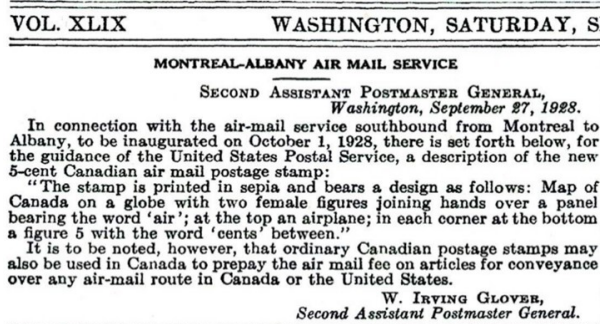




Figure 6. Canada's first airmail stamp, which was issued Sept. 21, 1928, and the Postal Bulletin announcement (below) about the stamp's issuance.



Monday, Oct. 1, saw not only the first flight from Montreal to Albany but also the inauguration of service between Montreal and Toronto. Montreal's St. Hubert aerodrome was buzzing that day.

The Toronto-to-Montreal flight was scheduled to depart at 9:45 a.m. and arrive at Montreal at 1 p.m. in time to connect with the Montreal-to-Albany flight. The cover shown [Figure 7] was intended to be flown

on both routes making it a double first flight cover. However, after leaving on schedule, it apparently was delayed and did not arrive in Montreal until after the Albany flight departed at 2:30 p.m. as is shown by the 3 p.m. Montreal receiving cancel. It was flown to Albany the next day.

Another cover [Figure 8] marks the first flight from Montreal to Albany. It is postmarked "Montreal 1-PM, OC 1, 28 Canada." It is backstamped "Albany OCT 1, 6:30 PM, 1928, N.Y." This is the cover that piqued my interest as it is addressed to Poughkeepsie.

Southbound planes were due to leave Montreal at 2:30 p.m. arriving Albany at 4:50, according to the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle of Sept. 30, 1929:

The contract of the Canadian government, Post Office officials stated, terminates the southbound route at Albany, necessitating transfer of mail at that point to trains. Planes will fly light from Albany to New Brunswick, N.J. (Hadley Field).

Mail destined for points south, including Mexico City, would be transferred at Albany and head west to Chicago before heading south to Laredo, Texas. The Mexican government operated the route from there to

FAM-1, Page 20

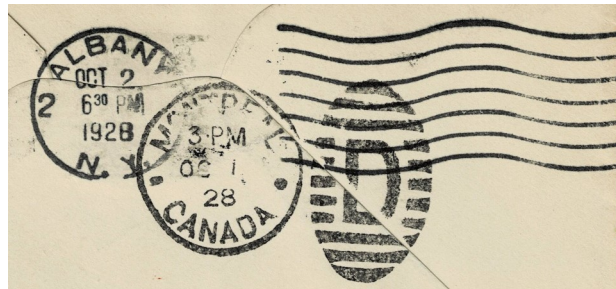


Figure 7. A cover intended to be flown on both flights, indicated by the "Via Air Mail" stamp in red at the bottom. Also, receiving marks from Montreal (Oct. 1) and Albany (Oct. 2).



Figure 8. First flight cover with cachet from Montreal to Albany.

FAM-1, From Page 19

Mexico City, which was later assigned Foreign Air Mail Route 8 (FAM-8). Mail destined for New York City would be sent via railway mail. Planes on FAM-1 would travel light (freight and passengers only) from Albany to New York City (Hadley Field).

So that teddy bear noted earlier has a tale of its own. After being placed on the flight from Montreal and arriving at Albany, it was to be placed on a connecting flight to Rochester, where it was to be presented to NYC Mayor Jimmy Walker, who was attending the Democratic State Convention.

This section of the trip would have been aboard CAM-20 operating between Albany and Cleveland. It was established on Dec. 17, 1927. Colonial Western Airways was the contract holder and was part of the Colonial system.

A Democrat and Chronicle story on Oct. 3, 1929 tells what happened next:

Earle Hooker Eaton, United States press representative of the Canadian Pacific Railroad, came to Rochester from New York purposely to make the speech of presentation, and he was at the Municipal Airport (in Rochester) when Mayor Walker and his party arrived. But the plane came in and departed, and no bear was dropped off.

Later the Mayor learned that the bear, through some confusion was sent on to New York City,

where it will be ... presented to the Mayor ...

The Mayor and his party left Rochester early yesterday afternoon for New York, the Mayor traveling in a private car."

The Democrat and Chronicle continued the story on Oct. 4, 1929:

Mayor Jimmy Walker's black bear cub, which was to have been received in state at Rochester Tuesday and later escorted to special accommodations in New York City, yesterday languished in jail – or, practically the same thing, Central Park Zoo, waiting the pleasure of "Hizonner."

Bruin was to have been the first bear to arrive in Rochester by air mail. Later it was decided to make him the first package to be received over the Montreal-New York airmail and express lines. But he was the victim of fate. He went to Albany by air mail and finished the trip to New York in a baggage car.

The bear, arriving in New York was equally disappointed. Grover Whalen, official receiver; Mayor Walker, Judge Olvany, Joseph V. McKee, president of the Board of Alderman, all were away. Even Charles A. McManus, vice-president of the Board of Aldermen, was not present.

It devolved on lesser city hall celebrities, experienced in the way of other animals – mostly carnivorous, but inexperienced in dealings with bears – to head the parade. They were stumped.

Police Lieutenant Tom O'Connor, Mayor Jimmy's body guard, and Miss. Evelyn Wagner, member of his personal staff, did their best with the aid of a brace of office boys.

As a result, Bruin was given a couple sips from a tin pail, led around at the end of a steel chain and then incarcerated in the zoo.

Even when asked to pose for a portrait, poor Bruin was truculent and refused to "look pleasant." A scowl was the best he could offer – considering jail was his only outlook.

The press coverage wrapped up on Oct. 6 with an article in The Standard Union, of Brooklyn:

Mayor Walker's little bear has a new name to-day.
His name is Bugs Baer.

The Mayor dubbed the bear thus yesterday afternoon in the presence of Arthur "Bugs" Baer. Mrs. Baer, Arthura Baer, the Mayor's godchild, and an interested crowd in City Hall plaza. A representative of the Canadian Pacific Railroad was on hand to inform the Mayor that the bear had been named "Jimmy Walker" before he started from Montreal by air mail. The animal was the gift of the Mayor of Montreal to the Mayor of New York.

Arthura, who is twenty months old, couldn't see why she shouldn't walk right up the funny little animal and pat it. But the cub was in a pugnacious mood and snapped at everything within reach.

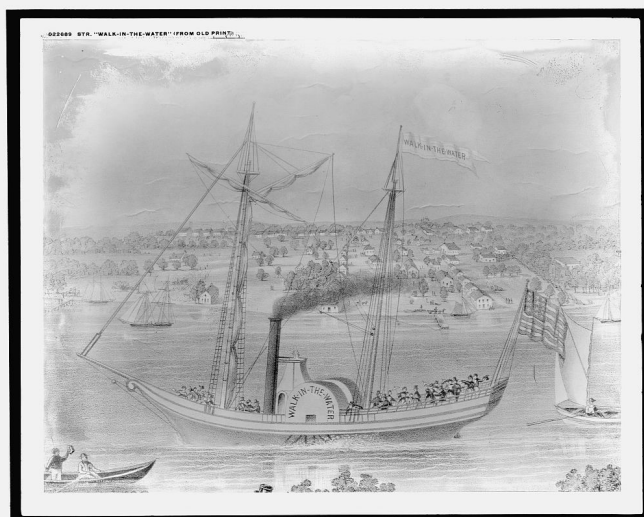
No further mention of the bear could be found and, hopefully, a few discrepancies have been resolved.

About the Author: Larry Laliberte is a retired installation and repair technician from Verizon. He is a past president of the Putnam Philatelic Society and a longtime member of the Empire State Postal History Society. He has been serving as editor of the society's quarterly bulletin for the last five years and worked as production person under Drew Nicholson during his tenure as editor of the Excelsior! Other philatelic memberships include the American Philatelic Society, American Topical Association, United States Classics Society, U.S. Stamp Society and Mobile Post Office Society. He collects Hudson Valley postal history.

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A print shows the Walk-in-the-Water, which was the first steamboat on the upper great lakes. The ship operated from August 25, 1818 to October 31, 1821, when it was wrecked in a storm. (Courtesy of Library of Congress; Detroit Publishing Co. publisher, c. 1910-1920.)

STEAMBOAT, From Page 1

this manner.

Shown on Page 1 is a cover that traveled on the steamboat Walk-in-the-Water, which was the first on the Upper Great Lakes and only operated for a couple of years. At that time the Post Office Department didn't have regulations for steamboats or markings. That's why it is marked "Ship" and is the justification for the extra 2-cent postage, for a total of 20 ½ cents, as written at top right.

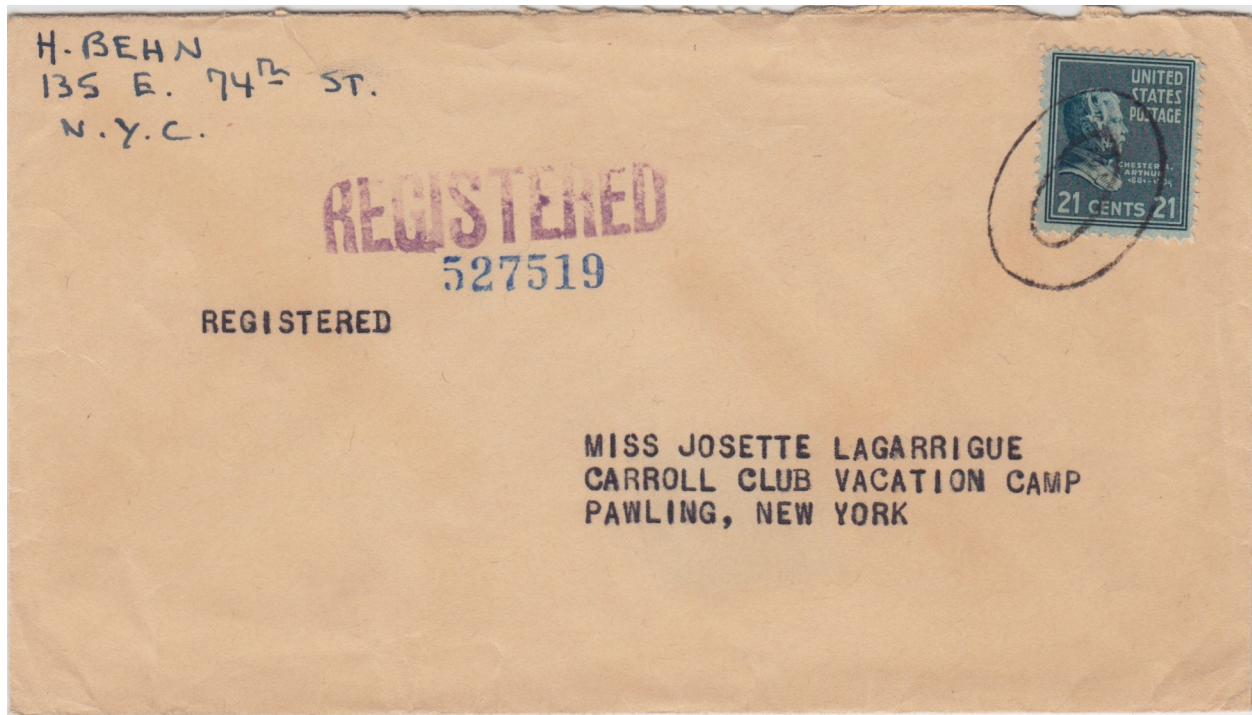
The regulations of 1825 had no provisions for collecting this carrying fee from the letter recipient. The regulations of 1855 provided for no fee if prepaid, 6 cents if unpaid to port and 2 cents if forwarded. Regulations of 1861 provided a fee of prepaid or unpaid 5 cents to port, and 2 cents plus regular postage if forwarded.

Regulations of 1863 provided prepaid or unpaid double regular postage. Regulations of 1882 provided prepaid regular postage plus 2 cents, unpaid double regular postage plus 2 cents.

After 1845, steamboat covers could also be marked with the word "way," if brought to the post office by a boat with a mail contract, which was paid 1 cent.

About the Author: David Przepiora has been a postal history collector for more than 35 years and a member of Empire State Postal History Society for almost as long. The cover on Page 1 is featured in his book "Postal History of Buffalo New York 1805 – 1905." Which is available for \$23 postpaid by sending him an e-mail at djprze@hotmail.com.

Scarce Use of 1938 Prexie Makes Nice Addition to Local Collection



Solo use of the 21-cent Arthur stamp on a cover, shown front and back, sent in 1940 by registered mail.

By Charles J. DiComo, PhD

Here is an interesting modern piece that combines my interest in Pawling, N.Y. postal history with the multifaceted collectability of the 1938 U.S. Presidential Series.



The 21-cent Chester Arthur stamp of 1938.

and a 4½-cent White House.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt had suggested a design contest, which was won by artist Elaine Rawlinson, of New York City. The stamps, printed by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, were in use for more than 18 years, from 1938 into the mid-1950s. There are specialized

The iconic set of 32 stamps – known also as the Fifth Bureau Issue or the Prexies – features a bust of all 29 presidents who died before 1937, plus three other stamps: a half-cent Benjamin Franklin, a 1½-cent Martha Washington, a

collectors who focus entirely on this important set of U.S. stamps.

The greenish-blue Chester A. Arthur (1829-1886) stamp honors our 21st president, who served from 1881 to 1885. The stamp was issued only in sheets and released on Nov. 22, 1938. The image is based on a bust by sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens.

Shown is a scarce solo use of the

21-cent Arthur stamp on a cover sent in 1940 by registered mail.

The stamp pays two rates; first, the hard-to-find double-weight (2 ounces) for a domestic first-class letter (3 cents per ounce); plus a 15-cent Registry Service fee. The double-weight rate of 6 cents was in effect from July 6 1932 to July 31, 1958. The Registry Service fee, which cover up to \$5 indemnity, was in effect from July 1,



1932 to March 25, 1944.

The stamp is tied by a black 20 millimeter by 27mm double-oval dumb killer. A purple handstamped “REGISTERED” (45mm-by-10mm) is at top center-left with a blue “527519” underneath it. The number, just like a modern tracking number, is the registration number assigned to this piece of mail as it was docketed in a registration book at the post office from which it was mailed. The typewritten “REGISTERED” was no doubt added by the sender.

The back is cancelled on the flap with double-strikes in violet of both a double-circle “New York, N.Y. (Rockefeller Center Sta.) AUG 3 1940 Registered” circular datestamp and a “Pawling, N.Y. AUG 5 1940 Registered” receiving datestamp. The Aug. 3 markings were added at the time of registration and the Aug. 5 at time of delivery to the Pawling Post Office, all showing there was no tampering with the contents.

The cover was mailed from H. Behn in New York City to Miss Josette Lagarrigue, at the Carroll Club Vacation Camp in Pawling.

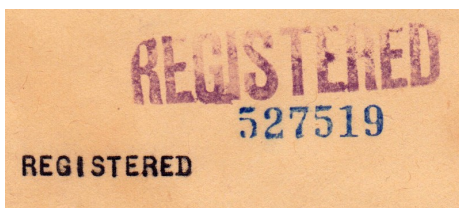
As the cover had no contents we’ll never know for sure, but an online search led to a heritage site that had this intriguing snippet: Hernand (Behn) married Josette Behn (born Langarrigue) in 1940, at New York. Josette was born in 1920, in Beziers, France. The website did include an “n” in Josette’s given name. As almost always with postal history, questions arrive about the individuals noted, such as, did Josette work at the club or was she vacationing?

A couple of 20th century commercial postcards offer a glimpse of Carroll Camp was like.

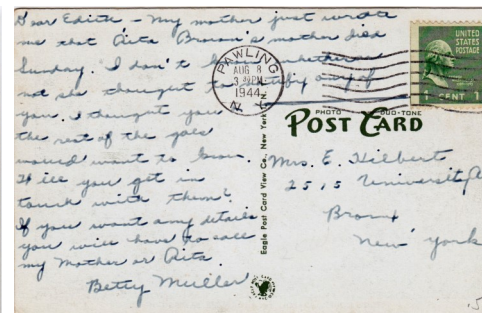
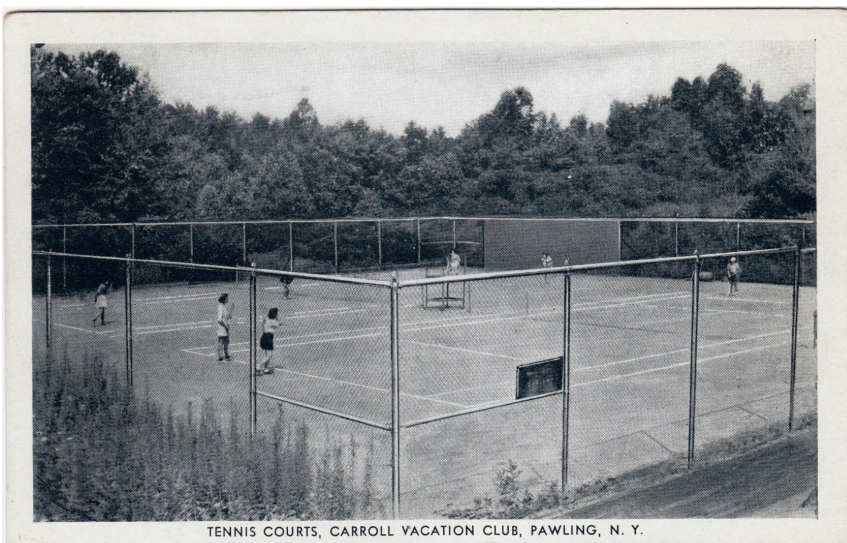
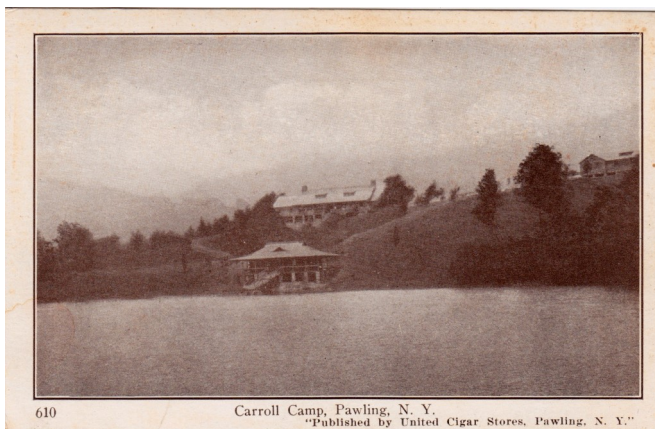
This postal history find is a keeper.

Reference

Smithsonian National Postal Museum website; Chester A. Arthur stamp, by Jeff Shapiro; <https://postalmuseum.si.edu/exhibition/about-us-stamps-bureau-period-1894-1939->



Close-ups of the cover markings. A postcard showing the shoreline of Carroll Camp (below).



The front and message and address side of a picture postcard showing the tennis courts at Carroll Camp. The card is postmarked Aug. 8, 1944. The card sent to a woman in the Bronx talks of the death of an acquaintance.

COVER STORY

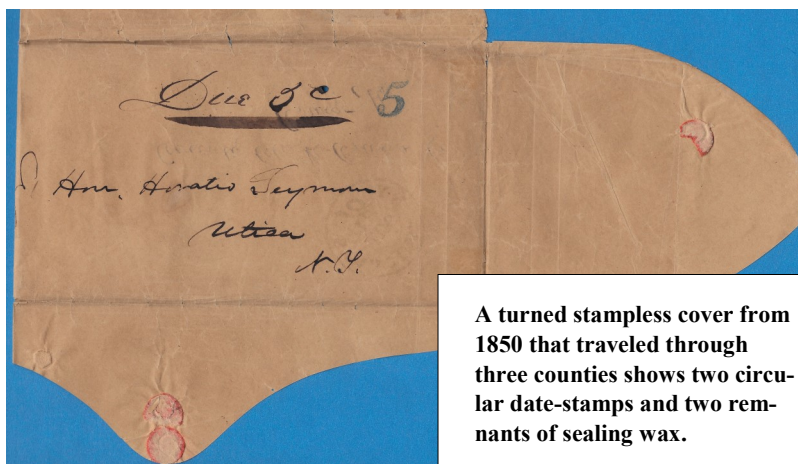
By Jeff Stage

This is a stampless turned cover, which traveled among three counties in 1850. The cover came from the collection of Calvet Hahn, a prolific philatelic researcher and author and a founding member of the Empire State Postal History Society.

The first use is August 13, 1850 – shown via a blue 32mm circular datestamp – from Syracuse to Oswego, Onondaga to Oswego counties. The cover was mailed to the Oswego County clerk. The second use is Aug. 26, 1850 from Fulton, also Oswego County – shown via a 33mm circular datestamp – to Utica, in Oneida County.

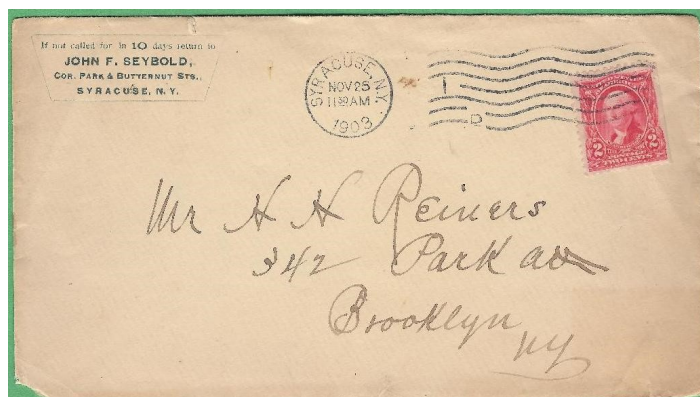
The interior shows two flaps with sealing wax.

The final receiver is Hon. Horatio Seymour (1810-1886), twice a governor of New York state (1853-1854 and 1863-1864) and the Democratic Party's candidate for president of the U.S. in 1868. Born in Pompey and educated as a lawyer, Seymour had a busy political career, also serving as a member and speaker of the state Assembly and mayor of Utica.



A turned stampless cover from 1850 that traveled through three counties shows two circular date-stamps and two remnants of sealing wax.

Personalities in the Post



A cover sent Nov. 25, 1903 from John Seybold to HH Reiners, of Brooklyn. Seybold's collection (which some valued at \$100,000), was sold to Julius C. Morgenthau for just \$26,000. His literature collection went to the Boston Philatelic Society, with much of it landing in the American Philatelic Research Library.

This cover was mailed from a legend of stamp collecting, John Friedrich Seybold, of Syracuse. Seybold (1858-1909) is known as the Father of Postal History.

Seybold was the oldest of six children. His German immigrant parents owned and operated a dry goods store on the city's North Side. Seybold himself eventually opened his own store nearby.

On the night of Aug. 12-13, 1909, while suffering from a nervous breakdown with depression and insomnia, he shot himself in the right temple while at his store.

– Jeff Stage