

United States Domestic Mails

1776 - 1869

This exhibit has several goals; first to illustrate public and private existing routes, rates as well as postal methods in place during the latter part of the 18th century; second, to trace their development and expansion. Finally, to postally emphasize those historical events which altered the nature of routes, rates and markings, and those events which caused the postal system to appropriately adjust. The exhibit concludes with the completion of the transcontinental railroad.

Routing maps are employed where the writer considers helpful. As space limitations preclude the showing of every possible route, rate and marking, the intent is to convey the full flavor of events, including our political and historical relationship with Canada, Hawaii and the Confederate States.

A reasonably chronological order of featured categories,
in addition to "normal" mail of the various periods, is presented below.

<p>Section 1 The Thirteen Original States Continental Congress Post 1776 - 1782 The Confederation Post 1782 - 1791</p> <p>Section 2 Federal Post 1792 Rates 1794 Rates, 1799 Rates Early Territorial Mail</p> <p>Section 3 The War of 1812 1816 Rates 1825 Rates into the early 1830's Independent Mails 1820's</p> <p>Section 4 Express Mail 1836 - 1839 Indian Relationships 1820's and 1830's Railroad and Steamboat Mail Cross Border / New Territories Independent Intercity Mails</p>	<p>Section 5 The Postal Act of 1845 Postmaster Provisionals The 1847 Issue Telegraph, Railroad and Steamboat Mail</p> <p>Section 6 Postal Changes 1851 Rates, 1855 Rates Express Mail Steamboat Mail, Telegraph</p> <p>Section 7 The Santa Fe Trail The California Trail Ocean Mail</p> <p>Section 8 The Jackass Route The Butterfield Overland Route Overland Mail The Pony Express</p> <p>Section 9 The Civil War Western Mails 1860's The Transcontinental Railroad</p>
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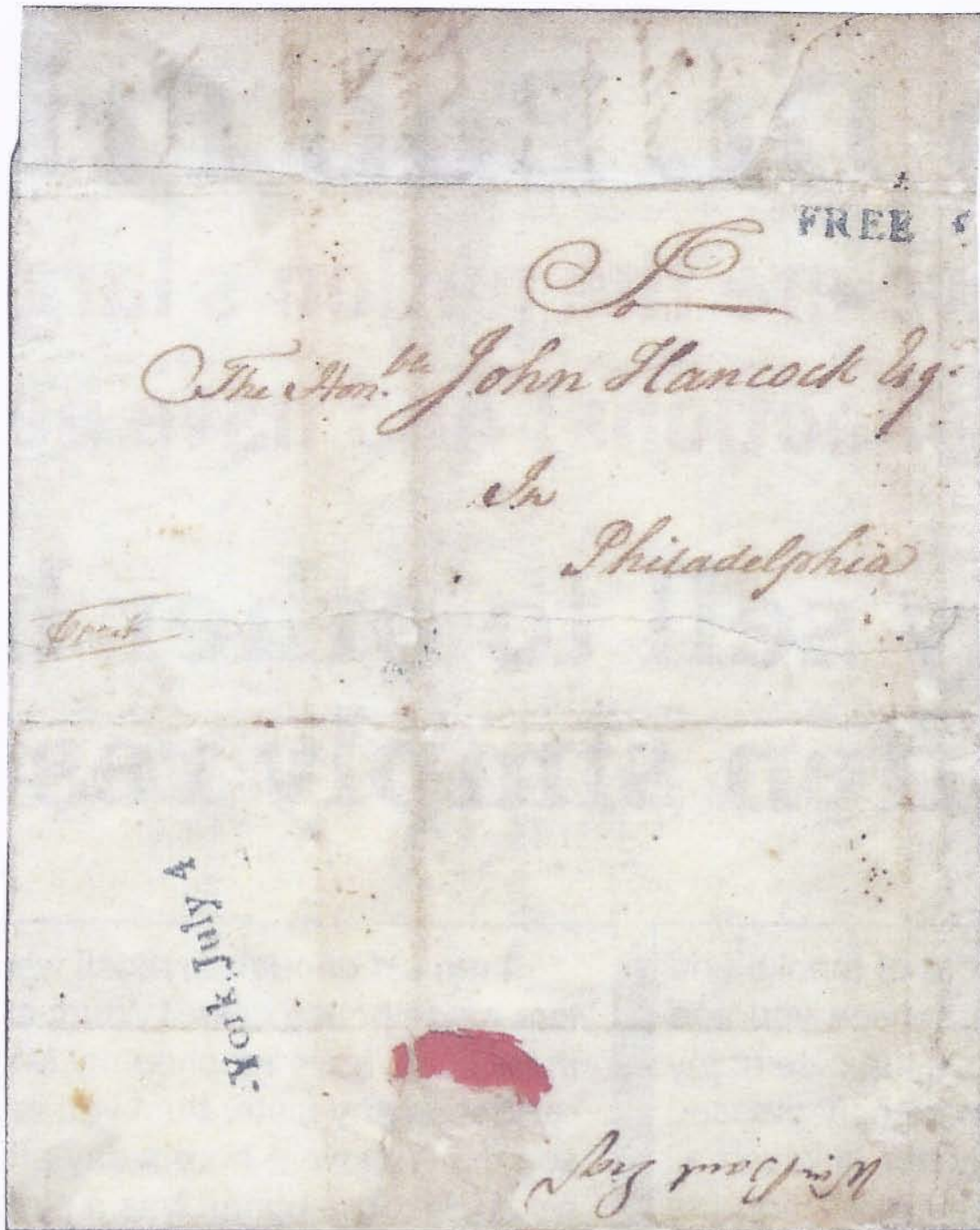
c = Philatelic Foundation certificate

In colonial times, all mails were under the control of the General Post Office in London which, in turn, appointed a Postmaster General and his deputies, who directed the flow of mail through the colonies.

With the commencement of the War of Independence in April, 1775, the disruption of the British-controlled "Parliamentary Post" mail delivery increased. On July 26th, the Continental Congress appointed Benjamin Franklin as Postmaster General of the United Colonies, with headquarters in Philadelphia; there, he directed the opposition "American Continental Congress Post" (sometimes referred to as the "Constitution Post").

On Christmas Day, 1775, the Secretary of the British New York Post Office gave notice that its inland service would cease, and the Royal Post Office was removed to a warship in New York Harbor. However, for some time, the two posts did operate simultaneously, primarily in areas of strong British sentiment.

July 4, 1776



**Dated Fairfield (Conn.) carried privately to New York
Posted FREE to John Hancock, a delegate of the Continental Congress while in session.**

Dear sir,

Fairfield July 2, 1776

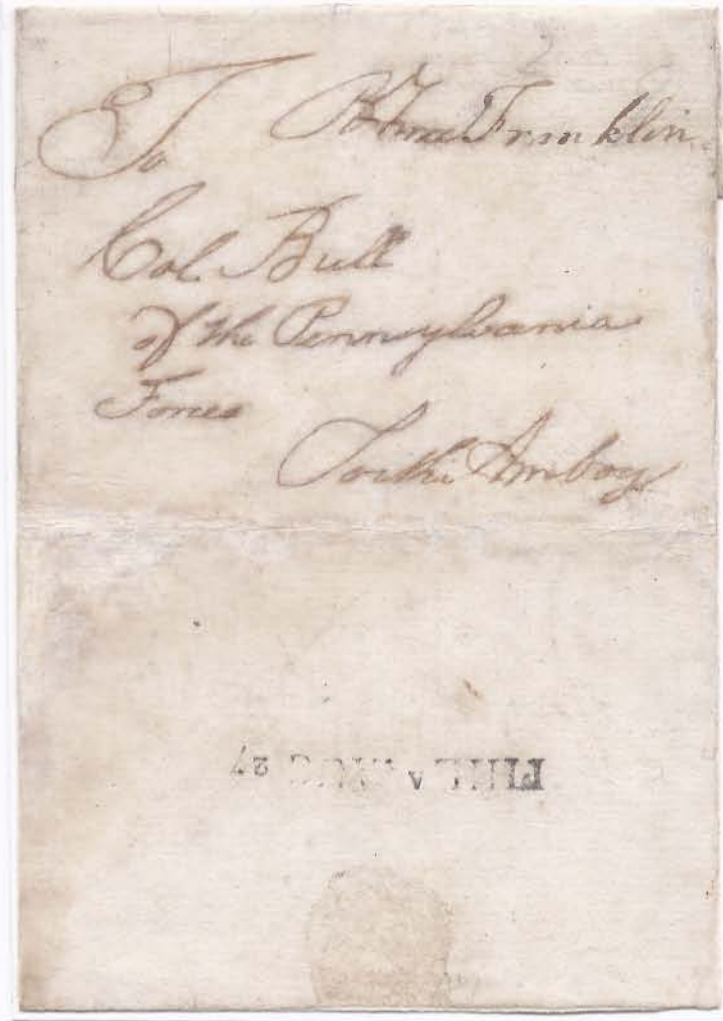
"I wrote to you from Horseneck, where I was detained a day and a half, and at last was obliged to buy another horse. I informed you that I had the horse Harry bought for me taken from me at Rye, and indorsed to you the proceedings of the justice, you will doubtless observe sir that the authority is the name of His Majesty. I was in the Town of Rye, and had I refused to take the justice under that sanction I might go without it, but the horse I should not have. I have now enclosed my deposition that the horse taken from me is the same that Harry purchased for me in Philadelphia. I beg you to excuse the trouble I give you sir in desiring you to give the deposition to M Winton or to W Banell, which of them is kind enough to look into this matter for me. I shall make all possible despatch for Boston and shall immediately attend to your commands. . . ."

The Hon John Hancock, Esq.

William Bant Esq.

“B Free Franklin”

August 27, 1776



Philadelphia - South Amboy, New Jersey
“To Col Burt of the Pennsylvania Forces”

This is the only known usage of the famous patriotic Free Frank by Benjamin Franklin as Postmaster of the United Colonies in the two month period between the signing of the Declaration of Independence and his leaving on his historic mission to France.

“I have the pleasure to acquaint you, that upon the reading of your letter which I said before the Convention, the leave which you desired was granted.” I am, Sir,
Your most obed hum Servant”,

(his normal signature was used)

Existing Postal Rates July 4, 1776

In terms of pennyweight (dwt) and grains (gr) of coined silver.
1 dwt = 24 gr

60 miles or under	1 dwt, 8 gr
60 to 100 miles	2 dwt
For up to each additional 100 miles	16 gr
For each incoming ship letter, to inland rate, add	16 gr

Section 1

Representation of all thirteen
original States

To present significant diversities
of postal and historical usages

Continental Congress Post 1776 - 1782
The Confederation Post 1782 - 1791

Free to the Military

American Continental Congress Post

Most provincial Congresses resolved that within their colony, all letters to
or from any person in the Continental Army be delivered free of charge.

"In Gen Washingtons Camp"

November 5, 1776



Docketed New Haven from a father to his son.

"... recommend you to the Eternal Care of Divine Providence as here we must look on him only."
Assuming that the delivery took about a week, General Washington left Northcastle, N.Y. on
the 10th and proceeded to Peekskill, where he remained for several days, and determined to
place a fort at West Point.

How to Pay for the War ?

"To the Managers of the United States Lottery"

July 18, 1777



Edenton, North Carolina - Philadelphia (The first recorded example of correspondence.)

Sent Free; "... we have advertised as you requested and have sold some few tickets ..."

Inflationary Rates

American Continental Congress Post

Beginning October 17, 1777, fiscal pressures of the war forced the Congress to enact a series of rate increases. First, by 50%, effective in early December; then, on April 18, 1779, by an additional 100 %. Several additional changes would follow.

To Col. Jeremiah Wadsworth, Commissary-General

August 23, 1779



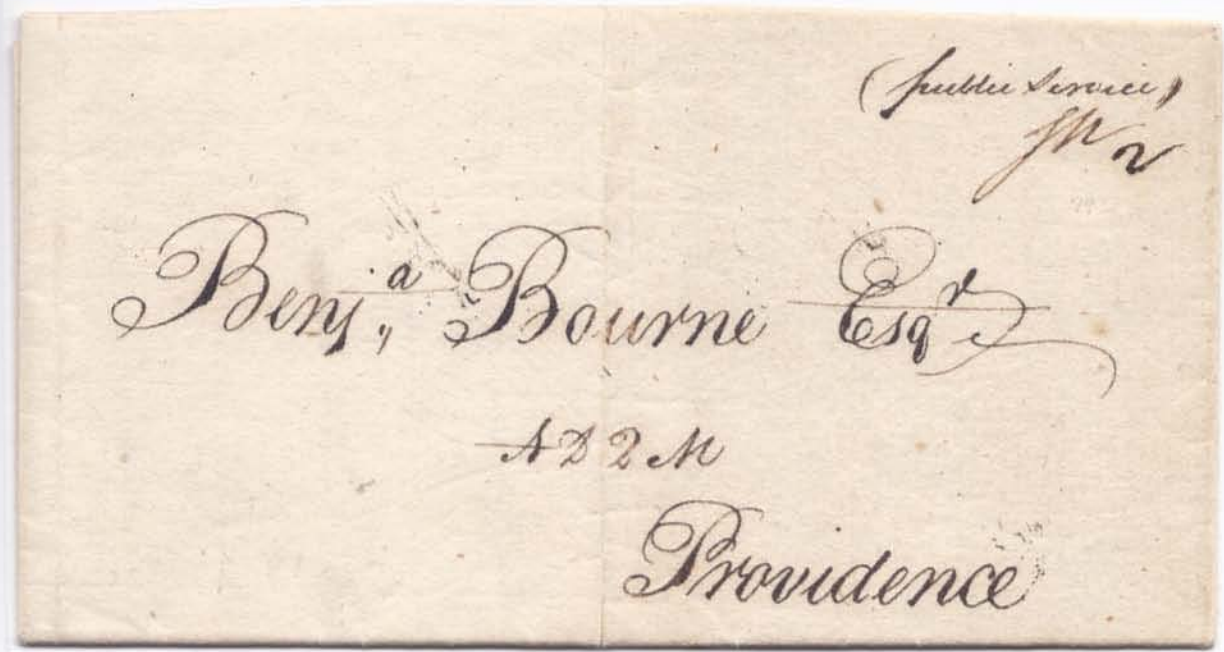
Middletown, Connecticut to Headquarters at New Windsor, N.Y.

rated 100 - 200 miles 1775 rate: 2 dwt, 16 gr x 50% = 4 dwt x 2 = 8 dwt x 2 sheets = 16 dwt
As a result of the policies of Congress in trying to curb inflation by making paper money legal tender, by early 1780, the outstanding Col. Wadsworth could not keep competent agents, and he resigned.

The final inflationary period of this era began February 24, 1781; it called for "double the sums paid at the commencement of the present war".

Urgent Military Blockade Runner (on "Public Service")

June 25, 1781



Boston - Providence
to the "A D Q M" (Assistant Deputy Quartermaster)
Rated "Sh 2"

Either: 1) This came in at a place other than Providence (Newport?), and was charged 1 dwt, 8 gr (60 - 100 miles) plus 16 gr incoming ship, and then doubled by a cash charge or 2) it came in at Providence, and was rated double 1 dwt incoming ship local delivery.

"Colonel Pickering mentions there are at Providence 2396 pickaxes fit for service, also 561 spades and shovels. . . 170 yoke of cattle. . . immediately transport to the main Army."

John Hatch, deputy quartermaster

As the British had blockaded the entire coast, War period "Ship Letters" are virtually non-existent.

In mid-February, 1781, Quartermaster General Timothy Pickering was instructed to establish a "Chain of Expresses" between Washington's headquarters and Philadelphia to the south, as well as Providence to the east. Colonel Elisha Sheldon and Major Benjamin Talmadge were critical to this scheme.

"Headquarters, New Windsor", New York

May 31, 1781

Dear Sir

Head Quarter New Windsor
May 31st 1781

I have duly received
your favor of the 29th. - The
enclosed Letter for Colonel Sheldon,
I entreat, you will forward, by the
first safe conveyance.

With great esteem & regard
I am

Dear Sir

Your very Obedt Servant

G. Washington

"I have duly received your favor of the 29th. -
The enclosed letter for Colonel Sheldon,
I entreat you will forward by the first safe conveyance.

Major Talmadge.

Wm. Lloyd Garrison

To Brigadier General "Mad" Anthony Wayne
"at camp near Morrystown"

docketed December 28, 1780

public service

The Hon^{ble}
 Brig^{er} Gen^l Wayne
 at Camp near
 A. Skinner } Morris Town.
 Com. Gen. Pri. }

Sent by Major General Abraham Skinner, Commissary General of Prisoners during the long cold winter of retreat and rest

"commanding in Georgia"

June 7, 1782

public service

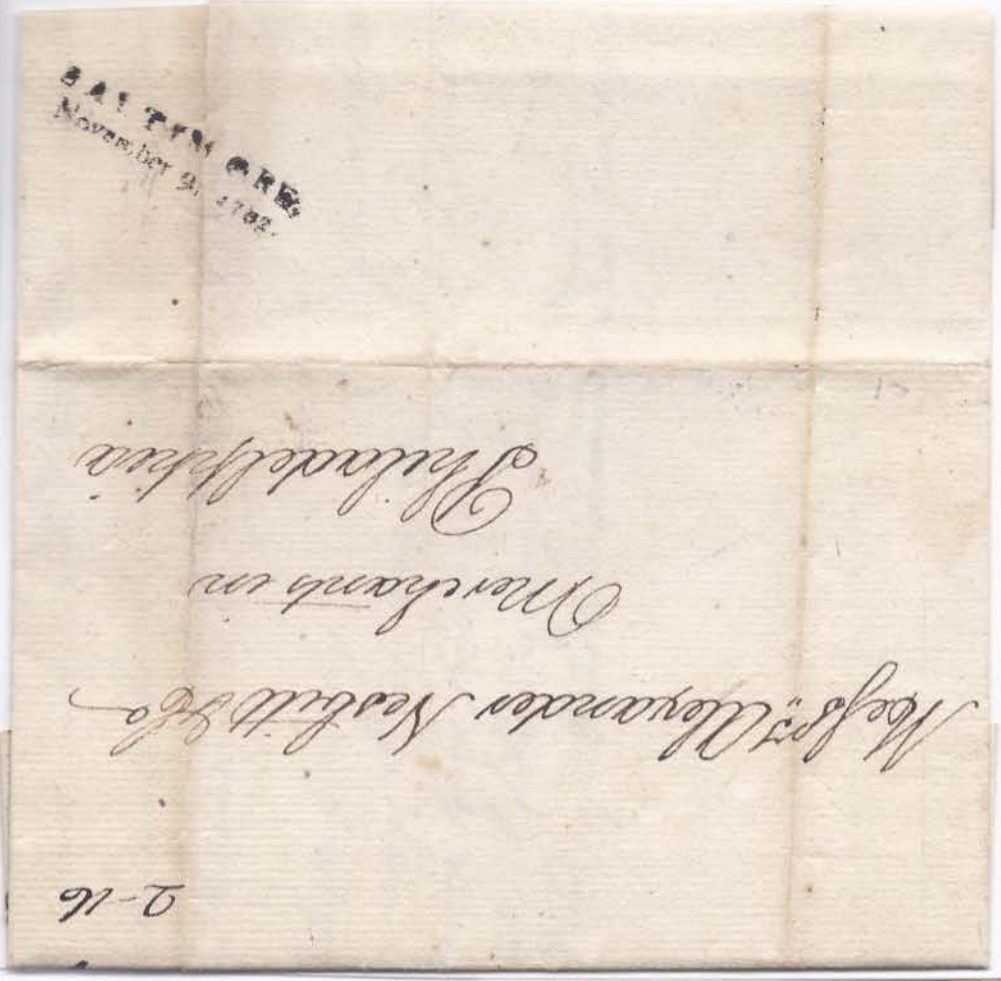
The hon^{ble}
 Brigadier General Wayne
 Commanding in
 Georgia
 Nat. Greene }

From Nathaniel Greene, Commander, Army of the South regarding appropriation of horses "taken from the enemy"

"Headquarters of So. Carolina" - overland through the swamps > "General Wayne's camp somewhere in Georgia"

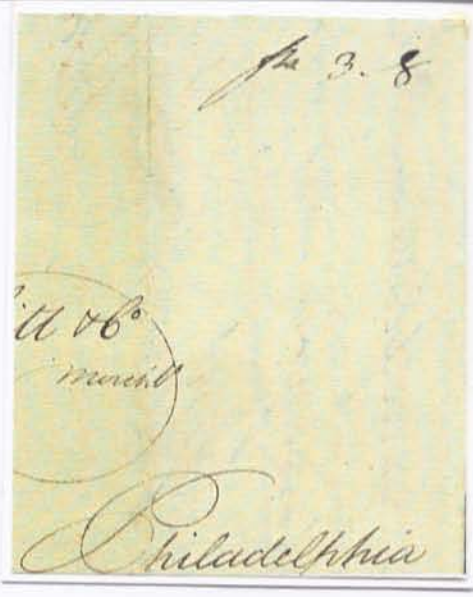
The Articles of Confederation having recently been ratified by all thirteen States, and coincidentally with the surrender of General Cornwallis at Yorktown, October 19, 1781, the Congress resolved to reestablish the 1775 rates, effective January 1, 1782.

Baltimore was our first city to use year-dated postmarks; they are known in black and red between August 15 and December 16 (below).

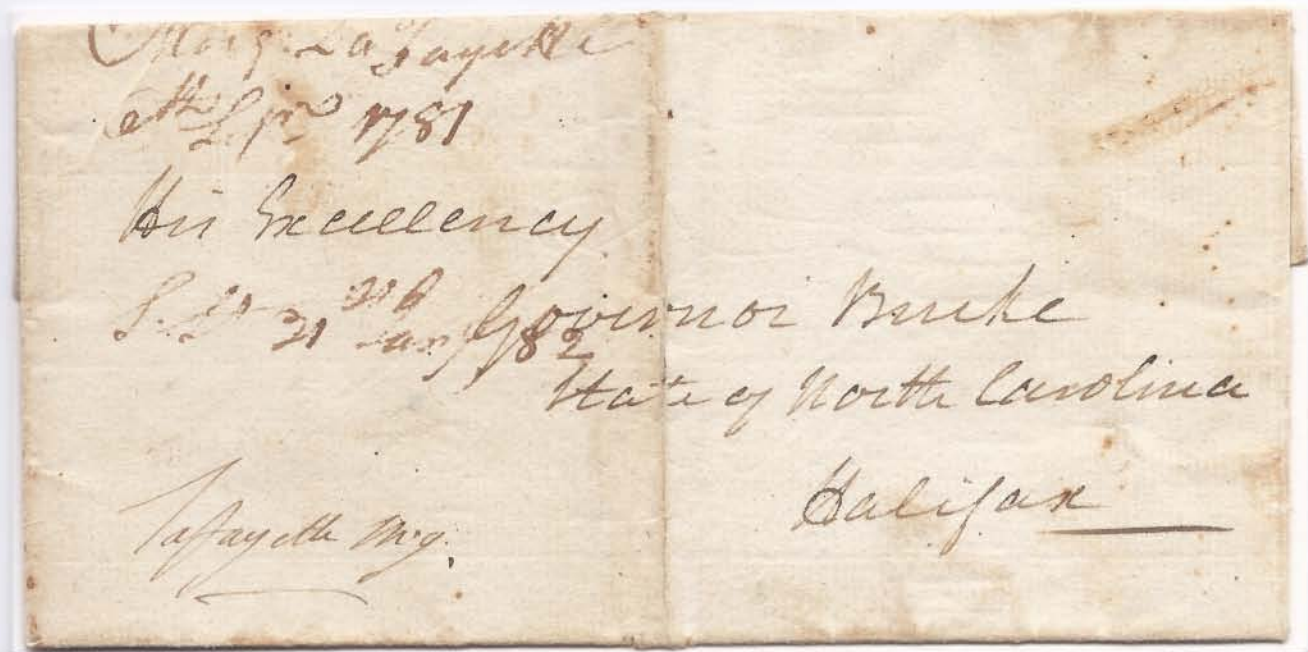


Restored Rates:
100 - 200 miles 2 dwt, 16 gr

"... I shall forward the whole (goods) this day by Wertogs Stage via Back Creek."



The same route, but 3 dwt, 8 gr:
Add 16 gr for incoming ship fee from Cuba.



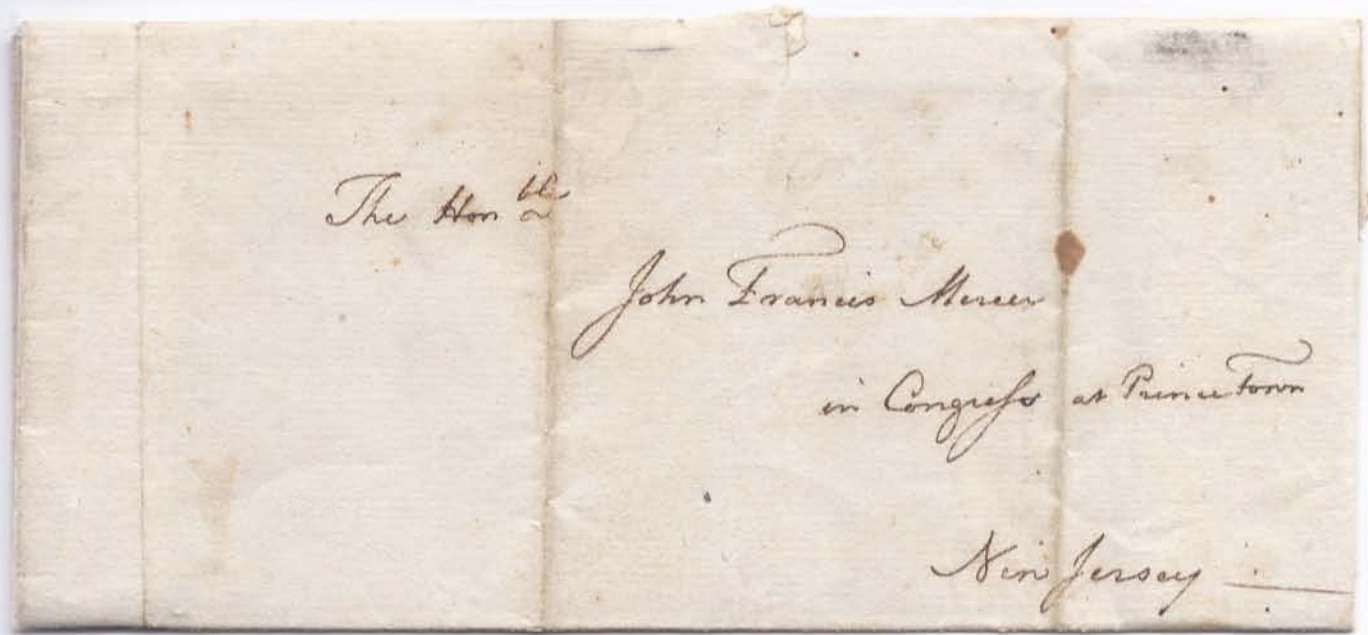
Unofficially, he was granted the Free Frank; a few are known.



In June, 1783, vigorous demonstrations were held by Army veterans who were seeking promised, but unpaid back pay. So fierce was the problem that Congress left Philadelphia.

Congress Flees to Princeton

July 8, 1783



datelined "Virginia" - Princeton, N.J.

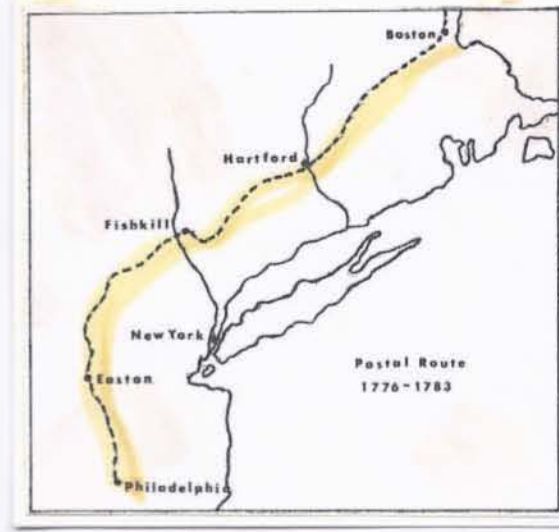
Sent free from the brother of John Mercer, Member of Congress 1782 - 1785. This letter probably travelled through the post. Use of markings were often minimal during this period; moreover, since it went "free", none were required.

Congress remained in Princeton for four months.

"I am really glad Congress has at last had virtue enough to leave Philadelphia. They never could prosper there for a city comprised of 7000 militia to permit a mob of 250 to insult the Supreme Executive of America is a disgrace".

Because the British controlled New York City and Harbor from September 15, 1776 until October 25, 1783, Philadelphia to Boston mail had to be sent by the circuitous route depicted below.

January 21, 1783



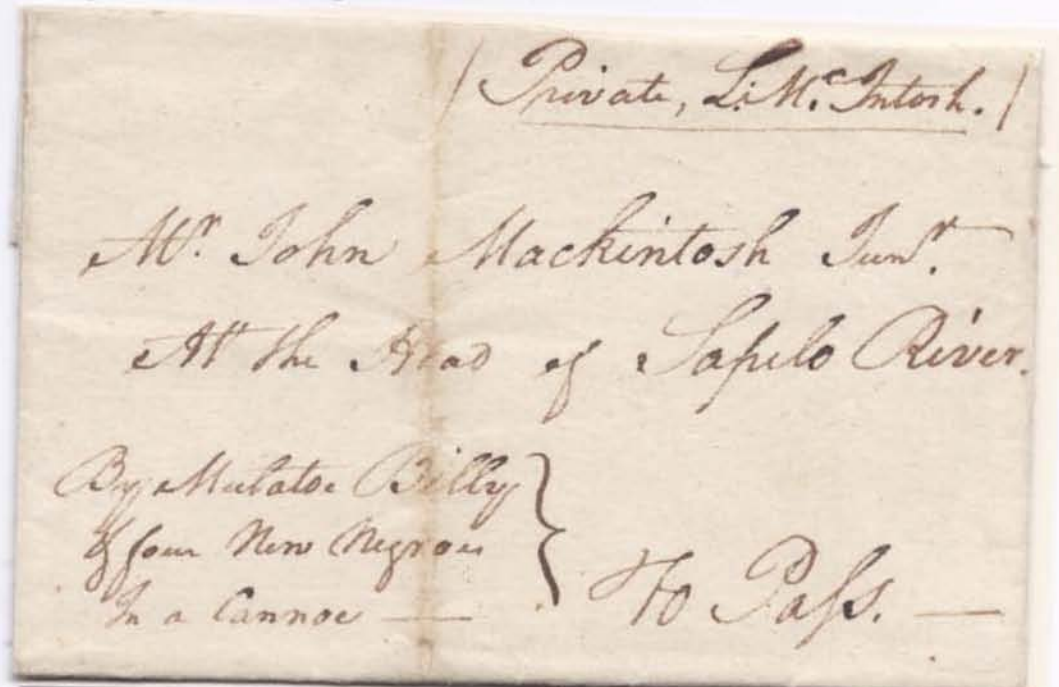
300 - 400 miles rate 4 dwt.

The British-style "Bishop's Mark" was used in Philadelphia; "IA" was the symbol which denoted January.

Use of Slaves by the Military as Mail Carriers

"Nov 2, 1784"

"By Mulatto Billy & Four New Negroes in a Canoe" "To Pass"



Directed to "the head of the Sapelo River (Georgia)"

Addressed to John Macintosh by his brother Private L.M. Mackintosh. "father's letter" inside. Father was General Lachlan Macintosh, who killed Governor Burton Gwinnett in a duel.

"Local Accounting Currency"

Confederation Post

Occasionally, one sees secondary rate markings on confederation mail. These reflect the receiving postmaster's internal accounting of how much the addressee owes in local state currency.

Portsmouth, N. H.

December 13, 1783



Portsmouth - Boston - via Boston Post Road - New York
 300 - 400 miles rate 4 dwt plus incoming ship rate 16 gr
 New York local accounting: 2 shillings, 4 pence
 This letter originated in Bordeaux, France October 1, 1783.

The war is over! The Americans reoccupied New York November 25, 1783; these letters are early examples of mail into and out of the city.

New York, N.Y.

March "5", 1784



60 - 100 miles rate 2 dwt
 Pennsylvania local accounting: 1 shilling

The letter is datelined March 7, a Sunday; apparently the postal clerk forgot to change the striker date on Monday to March 8 from Friday, March 5. This is a very early use of the first type of the New York postwar handstamp



Charleston, S.C. - by ship - Philadelphia (March 10) - Wilmington, De.

"Sh(ip) 2" rates: 16 gr Incoming Ship plus 1 dwt, 8 gr (60 - 100 miles) to Wilmington
"1/0 Delivered" Wilmington local accounting marking: 10 pence for "Ship 2", 2 pence for carrier delivery

"No (Delaware) postmarks are known during the Colonial or Confederation Post period." - ASCC vol 1
Carrier Delivery fees are seldom seen recognized on cover.

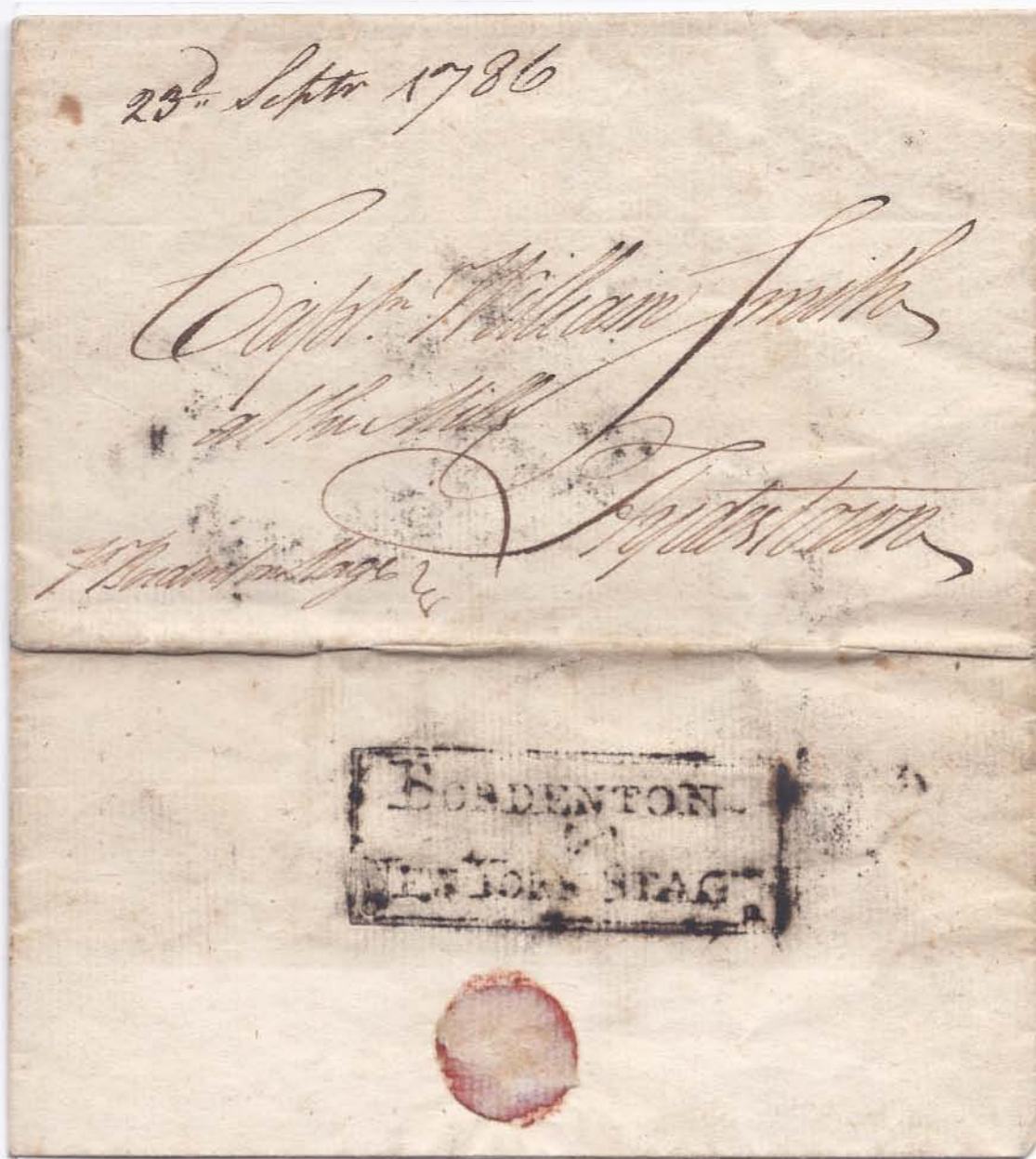
"With a Negroe named George"

1790



to Wilmington, N.C.

This cover was deaccessioned from the
University of North Carolina Library.



Philadelphia - Bordenton, N.J. by stageboat
 Bordenton - Hytestown by stagecoach

This, the first American private handstamped marking, is known used from August 28 - October 28, 1786; it is also the only one used during the colonial period. There are no postal markings because this was a private carrier.

Effective April 5, 1788, Congress reduced the rates of 1782 "as nearly twenty five percentum as will consist with the mode of calculating pennyweight and grains of silver, in order to reduce them to the currencies of the several states".

up to 60 miles: 1 dwt	60 - 100 miles: 1 dwt, 8 gr
100 - 200 miles: 2 dwt	200 - 300 miles: 2 dwt, 16 gr
300 - 400 miles: 3 dwt	400 - 500 miles: 3 dwt, 8 gr

Williamsburg, Va.

July 5, 1788

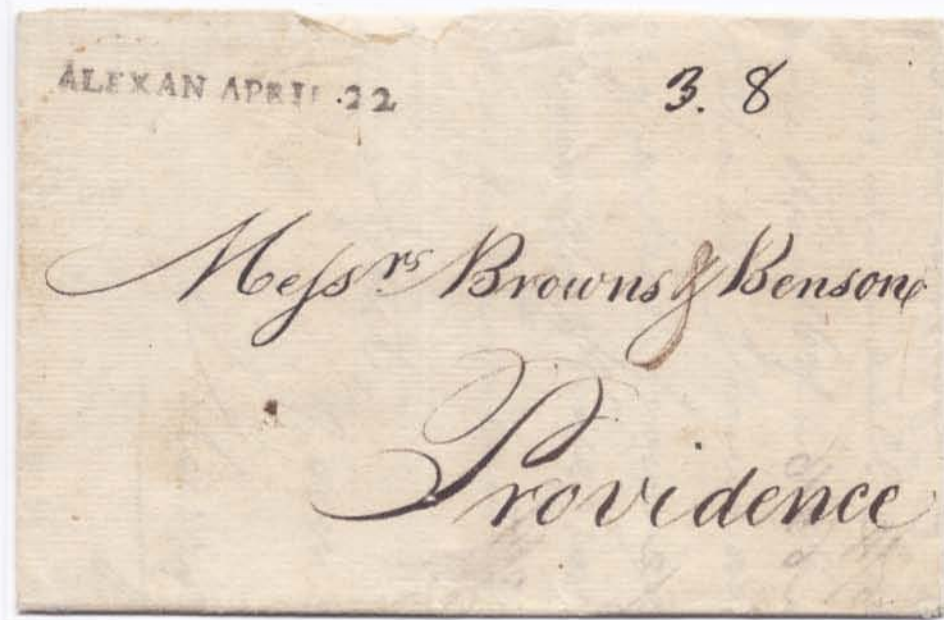


200 - 300 miles rate 2 dwt, 16 gr

Apparently, the New York PM, William Bedlow, continued to utilize local tenor.

Alexandria, Va.

April 22, 1791



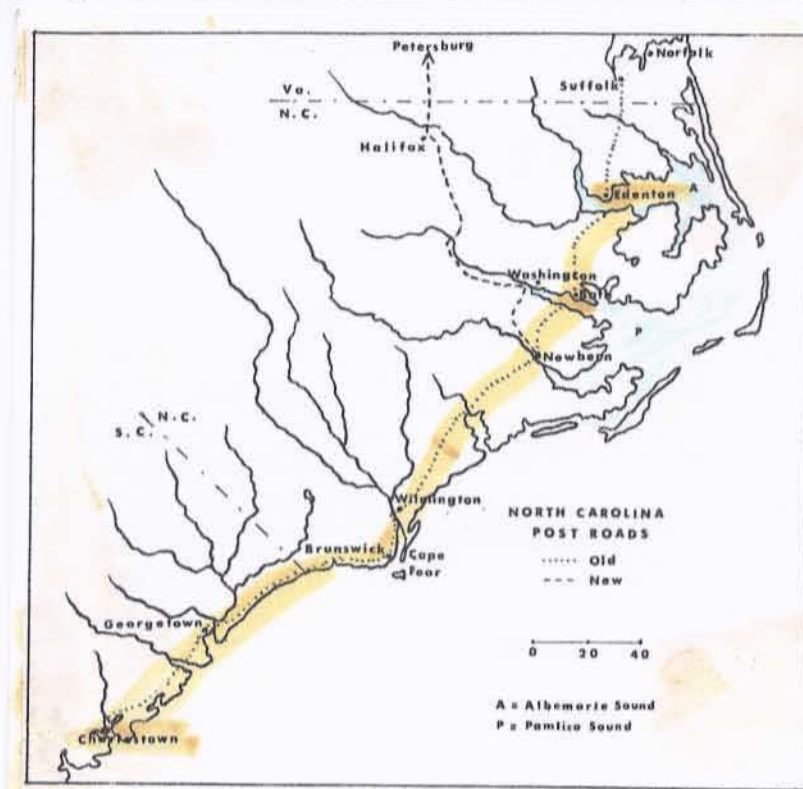
400 - 500 miles rate 3 dwt, 8 gr



Charlestown, S.C. - "Hayes near Edenton", N.C.
400 - 500 miles rate 4 dwt, 16 gr

Although this outer sheet reveals no month or day markings, the "Cha^ston" marking is known used in 1787 and 1788; the rate for this distance was reduced to 3 dwt, 8 gr on April 5, 1788.

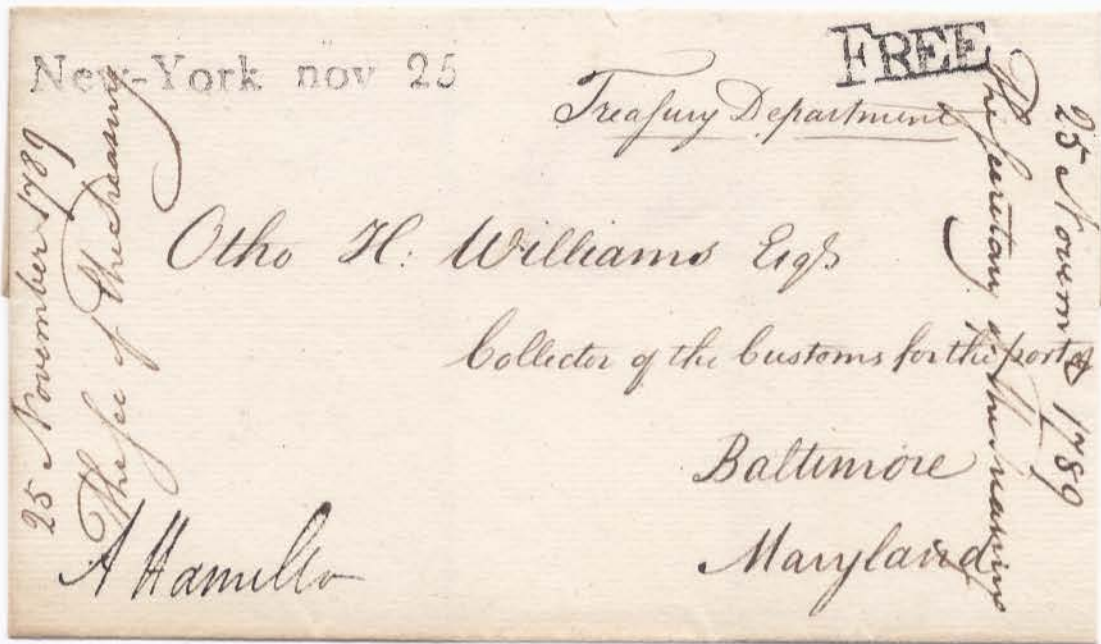
This was an extremely difficult road to traverse. One needed to cross the Albemarle and Pamlico estuaries in the northern portion. Moreover, "the coastal road between Charlestown and Wilmington, often called the King's Highway, was almost impractical during a major part of the year. It led through a sparsely inhabited area, where a traveler had to wade through deep sands and stinking swamps." The Posted Letter in Colonial and Revolutionary America, p C-29.



Although the first Congress of the United States convened on March 4, 1789, the rates and regulations of the existing Confederation of Colonies, now States, remained in effect until a new postal act took effect June 1, 1792.

Alexander Hamilton Free Frank

November 25, 1789



New York - Baltimore
docketed "The Secretary of the Treasury"

As to Free Franks, an Act of Congress September 22, 1789 reaffirmed the resolution of February 28, 1783: "All letters to and from the heads of Departments of War, Finance and Foreign Affairs to be free, regardless whether or not marked 'on public service'".

“Territory Northwest of the Ohio River”

The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 was the single most important piece of legislation accomplished by the Articles of Confederation. It provided the means by which new states would be created out of the western lands and then admitted into the Union. Governors and judges appointed by Congress would rule a territory until it contained 5,000 free male inhabitants of voting age; then the inhabitants would elect a territorial legislature, which would send a non-voting delegate to Congress. When the population reached 60,000, the legislature would submit a state constitution to Congress and, upon its approval, the state would enter the Union.

The earliest cover from The Northwest Territory

Marietta Dec 14th 1788



“Per favour of Col. Sprout”

For a short while starting July, 1788, Colonel Ebenezer Sprout provided the only courier service to and from Northwest Territory. This was his second trip.

Marietta had the first Post office which was established in 1794.

The Post Office Act of 1792, effective June 1st, was the first comprehensive statute to be enacted after the adoption of the Constitution. For the first time, rates were expressed in terms of U.S. cents. 195 post offices were in operation by the end of the year.

up to 30 miles: 6 cents	200 - 250 miles: 17 cents
31 - 60 miles: 8 cents	250 - 350 miles: 20 cents
60 - 100 miles: 10 cents	350 - 450 miles: 22 cents
100 - 150 miles: 12 1/2 cents	over 450 miles: 25 cents
150 - 200 miles: 15 cents	incoming ship: 4 cents

Section 2

Federal Post:
1792 Rates
1794 Rates
1799 Rates

With new States
and Territories

First Federal Rates



To Dr. Abraham Lincoln

August 5, 1792

datelined Colombia, S.C. - inland to
Richmond - Philadelphia - Boston

over 450 miles: 25 cents

About the last of local currency:

1 shilling, 6 pence

"paid by A. Lincoln" (and not a bad signature!)

"p Fav Capt Gardner / Q DC"

"Who God preserves"

November 6, 1792

from Copenhagen - Newport - Providence

incoming ship: 4 cents

up to 30 miles: 6 cents

Because the route became more direct:
(45 miles to 29 miles), the rating was reduced.

This handstamp was used 1790 - 1792.
The word "Cents" spelled out is unusual.



"Way Fees": 1 cent effective June 1, 1794

"NW Territory"

May 8, 1800



Hebron, Connecticut - carried privately across the Ohio River and taken on the "Way" probably posted at Marietta - Bellpree, NW Territory "Recd June 27"

40 - 100 miles rate: 10 cents plus 1 cent "Way" (added in cash)

The Territory Northwest of the River Ohio (Northwest Territory) existed until March 1, 1803 when Ohio became a State. Writer requests addressee to sell his land. "This letter shall be a deed from me and my heirs".

"Drop Fees": 1 cent effective June 1, 1794.

The Earliest Recorded "Drop Fee" Noted on a U.S. Cover

November 7, 1799



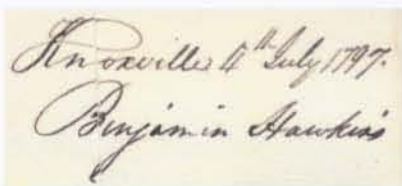
New York - New York



Knoxville (capital of Southwest Territory) - "via Hawkins court post" actually taken by Roulston's semi-official post 65 miles to Hawkins U.S.P.O. "Hawkins June 8" - 165 miles on the Wilderness Road - Danville - Frankfurt 200 - 250 miles: 34 cents, double weight 17 cents

"Hawkins" is the earliest United States Territorial postmark. The Southwest Territory was formed in 1790, and became Tennessee in 1796.

"Dragoon Express"



"Dragoon" by Webster's definition: "heavily armed mounted troops"

These troops fought on foot, but travelled on horseback. As such, they were ideally suited to the military for "Express Service". Thus, there was no company called "Dragoon Express".

This is the only recorded cover of the era.



Colonel Benjamin Hawkins, for whom the town was named, had been a delegate to the Continental Congress, a senator from North Carolina, and at this time was the General Superintendent of Indian Affairs dealing with all tribes south of the Ohio River.

On March 4, 1791, Vermont was admitted as the fourteenth State. Although carriage of mail from Albany, N.Y. to Bennington in the southwest corner of Vermont was authorized that same month, arrangements took time, and the route did not become effective until June 1, 1792, concurrent with the new postal act.

The Earliest Cover Carried through the State of Vermont

June 14, 1792

"Albany Way"



docked Kinderhook, N.Y. - privately carried to Caldwell & Pearson, Albany merchants
 "Albany Way" written at Albany PO - carried across Lake Champlain - Burlington
 by favor of Zackary Peaslee - Champlain, N.Y.

150 - 200 miles rate: 15 cents (plus 1 cent "way" fee collected in cash)

This is also the only cover with "Vermont" printed.

"Received of W. Rouse the
 postage on that of this letter
 Z. Peaslee"

Zachary Peaslee, a Burlington merchant, operated a private post.

Pliny Moore had moved from Kinderhook to Champlain in 1788. As no north - south mail service existed on the NY side of Lake Champlain, this primitive routing was utilized.

In March, 1792, Canada concluded its first postal convention with the United States. It provided "British letters, packets and newspapers to be carried between New York and Burlington, Vermont by United States mail service."

The Earliest Cross Border Cover

March 14, 1793



Quebec - Montreal - Burlington
Bennington - Albany - New York

rates: Quebec to Burlington: 11 pence
Burlington to New York: 20 cents

For 1793, Anthony Haswell carried the mail between Burlington, Rutland, Bennington and Albany. Although information is unclear, apparently the first weekly mail service between Montreal and Bennington was experimentally tried between January 11 and May 1, 1793.

-- The Strand Stamp Journal, Feb 1958, "18th century Postal Relations between Canada and U.S.A." by Arthur Hecht.

Canadian postal accounts show that 426 US-bound letters were taken at Montreal on March 16th.

The Post Office Act of 1799, effective March 2nd, simplified the per sheet zone rate structure from nine categories to six.

not over 40 miles: 8 cents
 40 - 90 miles: 10 cents
 90 - 150 miles: 12 1/2 cents
 150 - 300 miles: 17 cents
 300 - 500 miles: 20 cents
 over 500 miles: 25 cents

Diplomatic Intrigue

November 5, 1803

Citizen Colleague

J'ai reçu vos lettres des 24 & 26 Vendémiaire, contenant chacune un affidavit relatif au naufrage de la Goëlette Cornelia de No... partie du bord de paix ayant bord des effets appartenant au commandant...
 L'officier Thomas qui la commandait, n'étant pas encore arrivé; les

BOSTON NOV 5 1803

Citizen Sir,

Commissaire de la République française
 Philadelphia.

France and England were at war from 1793 - 1815. It was unclear to the French as to where official American sympathies would finally rest; as they suspected that our Post was opening certain important mails, they sometimes would write a secret message in lemon juice, which was invisible to the eye. When these letters were received, a small chunk would be removed and soaked to bring out a trace of a message; if none appeared, so be it. But if there was a message, the entire letter would be soaked.

300 - 500 miles rated double 20 cents

Shortly after the passing of George Washington on December 14, 1799, Congress passed a special Act on April 3, 1800: "All letters and packages to and from Martha Washington, widow of the late General George Washington, shall be received and conveyed by post free of postage for and during her life."

Martha Washington

M Washington

November 6, 1801



Mount Vernon, Va. - Fredricksburg

This letter, address and word "Free" are in the hand of her granddaughter, Eleanor "Nellie" Parke Custis Lewis; she was the daughter of Martha's son by martha's previous marriage, he was killed in the Revolutionary War. Eleanor and her brother, George, were adopted by General Washington and lived at Mt. Vernon until Martha's death in May, 1802. The addressee is Eleanor's brother, Robert.

Although she had the privilege for about two years, there are arguably only three or four recorded franks.

With the number of post offices increasing from 195 in 1792 to 677 in 1799, and the post road mileage served increasing from 5642 to 16,180, the federal government issued circular date strikers to 21 of the most active post offices. These were metal "stock style" strikers, varying slightly in dimension.



George Washington

Free Frank as President
Alexandria, Virginia



John Adams

Free Frank as President
Boston, Massachusetts



Thomas Jefferson

Free Frank as Vice - President
Washington City. D.C.

“The Great Mail”

1799 Rates

With the 1803 Louisiana Purchase, Orleans Territory including New Orleans formally was accepted October 1, 1804. Congress wanted “The Great Mail” - connect the limits of the country. In 1805, a sometimes rough post road was completed between New Orleans and Washington; it ran north through Natchez, Columbus, Mississippi Territory, Nashville and Knoxville, Tennessee, Fairfield, Virginia to Washington. It was almost 1500 miles, much through thinly settled areas including 500 miles of Indian lands.

“The Natchez Trace”

August 6, 1805



New Orleans, Orleans, Territory - per “Natchez Trace” route - Washington - Wilmington, Del.
(see map next page)

35 days delivery

June 24, 1808

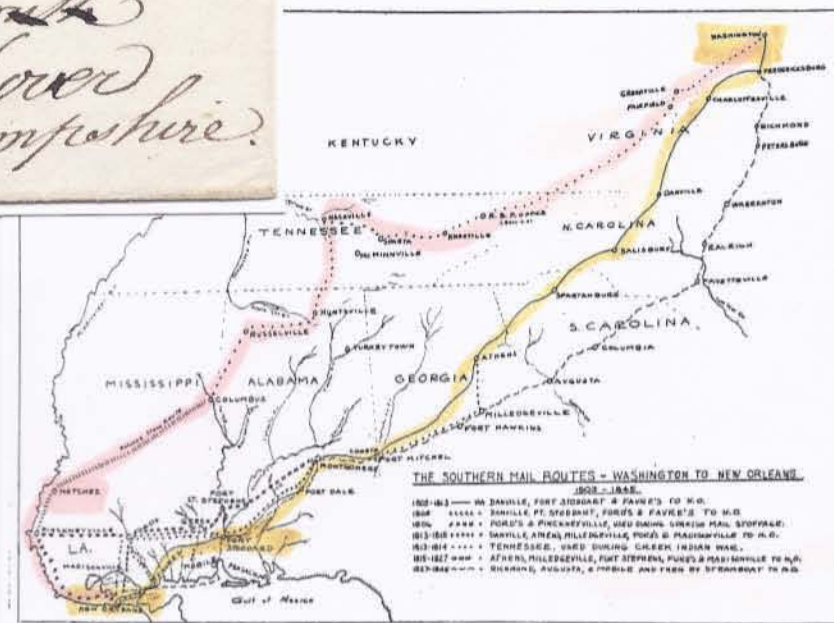


Natchez, Mississippi Territory - per “Natchez Trace” route - Washington - Providence
The meaning of “Postage 8/1” is unclear; it appears to be in the recipients hand, as is “July 29”.

Congress wanted a more direct, dependable land route between Washington and New Orleans; a route via Fort Stoddert, Athens, Ga. was selected which saved 500 miles. But disputes with Spain over West Florida, The Creek Indians, heavy rains and swamps were among the difficulties which plagued this route. After April 1, 1807, a government-run Express was directed by PMG Granger.



Map showing Natchez Trace and Fort Stoddert routes.



both covers over 500 miles rate: 25 cents collect

Black and red CDS markings are known.

Docketed “1808”



“Ft S Mail”

Docketed
“recd 12 Nov 1808”
(33 days)

other spellings:
“Stoddard”
“Stoddart”
“Stodder”

Fort Wilkinson, Georgia

Fort Wilkinson Ga

April 22, 1800



Fort Wilkinson - Savannah - by ship - Charleston
 overland - Ipswich, Mass.
 over 500 miles rate: 25 cents

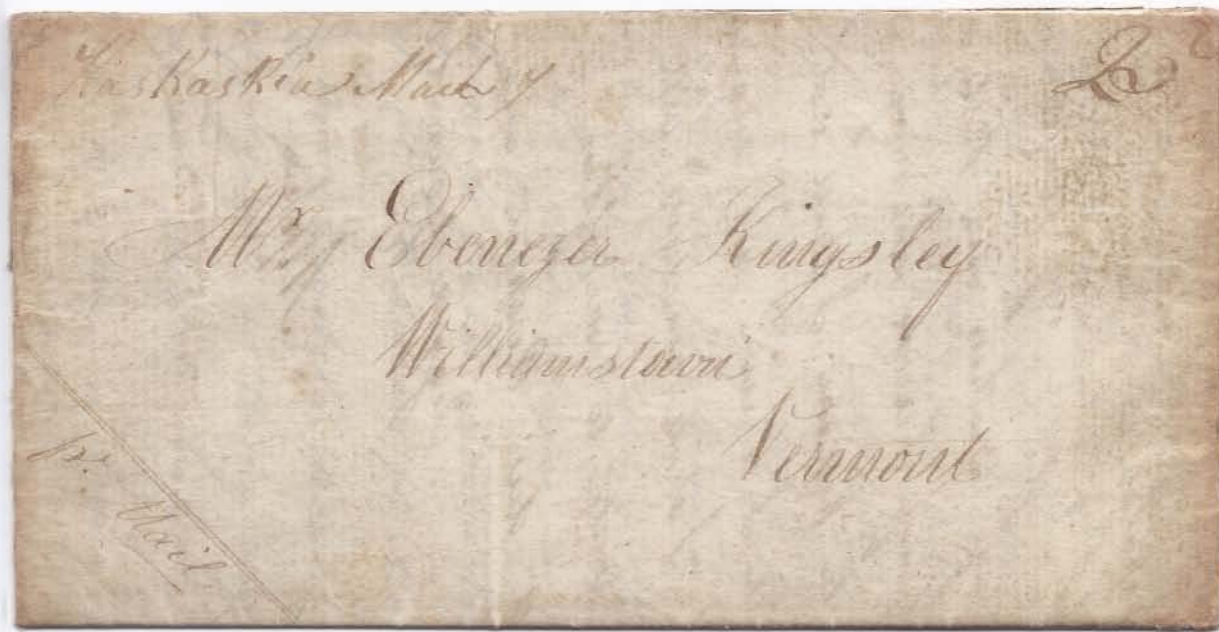
This letter is datelined "Montpeiller", a village which had no post office; Fort Wilkinson, which was the frontier, was located about 150 miles north-east of Savannah, and had a post office 1798 - 1806.

"The postage is as much from Savannah here as it is from Ipswich, - a double letter being no more than 25 cents pr post. Your last letter came to hand dated Nov 1797. (2 1/2 years!) You still have a brother, Tom (the writer). Fat and saucy, poor but not ragged. He lives in the 35^o north latitude and about the 16^o west longitude. . . have plenty of grog, cabbage and bacon. . . When he left the Army, his lady returned to the Cherokees. . ."

"Fort Wilkinson" is considered the most important Georgia manuscript marking of this era.



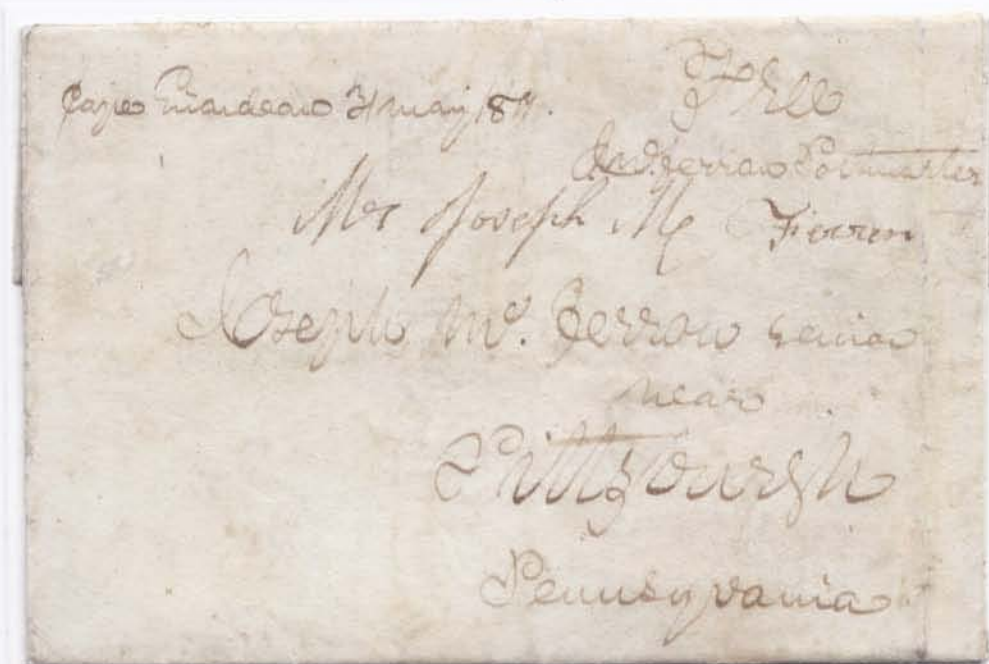
Kaskaskia



Kaskaskia - Vincennes - Louisville - Danville - Pittsburgh - Philadelphia
 New York - Albany - Bennington - Brattleboro - Newbury
 over 500 miles rate: 25 cents

"Doubtless, you are informed of the (purchase of) Louisiana's being ceded to the United States . . . possession is taken without any resistance by the Spanish, but uniformly are highly pleased to be citizens -- by this new acquired Territory we have gained . . . a number of mines whose value are incalculable to the western world and a free and unintercepted navigation of the Mississippi River without which the western people cannot become popular."

Cape Girardeau



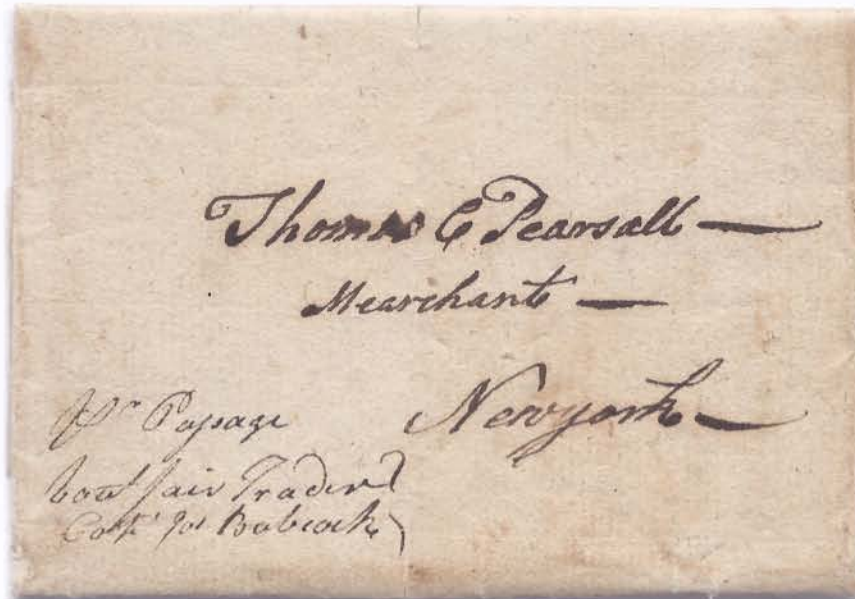
Cape Girardeau - probably thru Kaskaskia, Indiana Territory - "near Pittsburgh"
 Free Frank of J.M. Ferron, PM

Sailing Vessels

These early 19th century letters demonstrate the importance of the independent mails; the post office could not keep up with the demand for good service to more and more places.

“pr Passage Boat Fair Trader,
Capt. Jos Babcock”.

June 27, 1810



Shrewsbury (N.J.) June 27, 1810 - New York

This is the earliest recorded letter by sail on the Navasink River to New York. This sloop carried produce.

“per Sloop B.(enjamin) Stevens”

“With a Yellow Basket”



Red Bank (N.J.) - New York

“sent the basket with the hat and flannel - the eggs I could not get, nor have but about one doz - are very scarce”.

Postmaster General Gideon Granger entered into the first arrangement to transport U.S. mail aboard a steamboat. On August 14, 1810, he authorized Robert Fulton to carry mail between New York and Albany on the Hudson River for three cents per letter.

"Fulton's Folly"

The "Clermont"

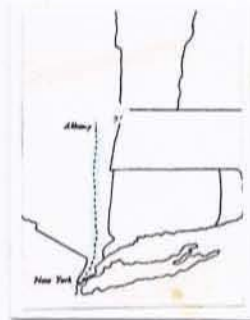
November 10, 1810



New York - Albany

rate: 6 cents due at port of arrival

Although no ship name is noted on the cover, the only steamboat to travel north on the Hudson river during this period was the "Clermont".



The War of 1812

December 6, 1812

Background: Near the end of 1811, it appeared obvious that the hostile Indian Tribes on the southern and northwestern frontiers were well-equipped with offensive weapons of British manufacture, despite official denials. British warships hovered around our ports and harassed entering and departing commerce; American vessels were plundered on the high seas.

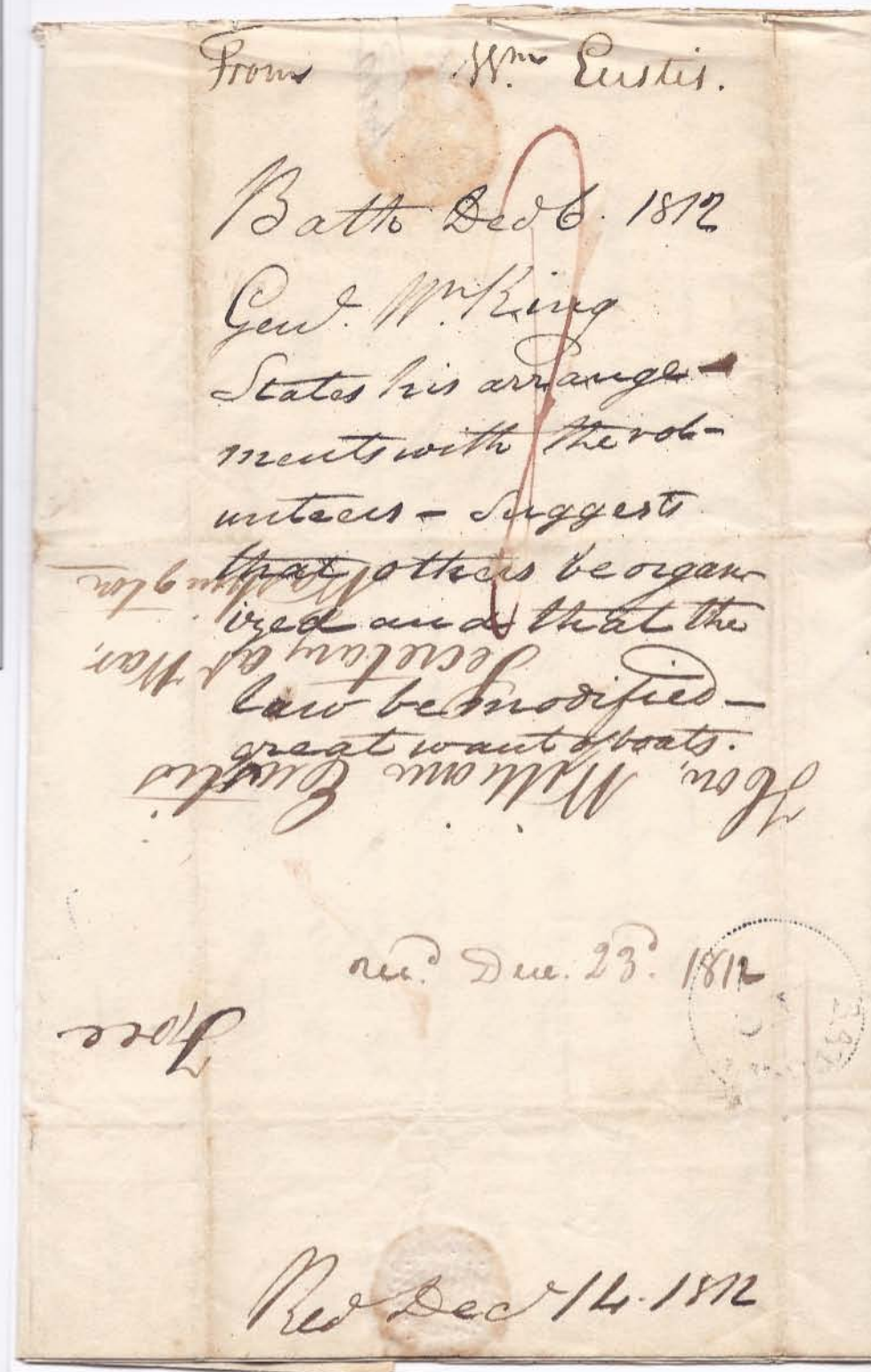
Documents came into the Congress which proved beyond a doubt that "on the side of Great Britain, there was a state of war against the United States". On June 18, 1812, Congress declared war on "Great Britain, Ireland, and the dependencies thereof".

For purposes of this exhibit, what was not stated was that the U.S. was hoping for a chance to invade and capture Canada. Most important, it would be a further fulfillment of "Manifest Destiny", - Moreover, it would rid the country of the British influence from coast to coast.

To the Secretary of War
 Bath, District of Maine - Washington
 sent "Free" - "recd Dec 14, 1812"
 from General William King
 to Sec. of War, William Eustis

Four page detailed report of conditions on the "Eastern Frontier": "The British are getting short of provisions, and . . . they would probably attempt taking by force that which they cannot purchase - particularly at Eastport".

Reports: 25 - 30 companies getting drill, . . . need boats, recommends altering Volunteer Laws so that elderly men who are exempted from Military duty can do Garrison Duty.



The Post Office Act of 1825,
effective May 1st, the per sheet zone
rate for 150 - 400 miles increased
from 18 1/2 cents to 18 3/4 cents.

Rate 18 3/4 cents

“Mail Route”

New Orleans, November 25, 1829



Not later than 1827, inbound ship letters originating in New Orleans coming through New York with destinations beyond were noted to have “collect” postal ratings applied in New Orleans, which were higher than they should have been. To use this letter as an example, the proper fee should have been 14 1/2 cents: 2 cents “Ship” plus 12 1/2 cents 80 - 150 miles to Philadelphia.

When a “Ship Letter” is not a “Ship Letter”

What happened? The PMG determined that the Mississippi River was a post road; therefore, the 93 miles from New Orleans to Balize, the post office at the mouth of the river, would be added to the forwarding distance from New York, and the total (over 200 miles) now put this letter in the 150 - 400 mile classification (18 3/4 cents).

Thus, “Mail Route” markings were placed upon private “ship” letters which were NOT really “ship” letters by ruling that these ships were “impliedly under contract” and so rated. This abuse was ended in February, 1830.

These two letters to Lieutenant Samuel Hairston illustrate the progress of the U.S. Army into Canada.

July 24, 1813



Alexandria, Va. - "Fort Buffalo", N.Y. (an encampment)
forwarded - Fort Niagara (U.S. side)
over 500 miles rate: 25 cents
under 40 miles forwarding fee rate: 8 cents

Capture of Ft. George, Canada

August 6, 1813



Patrick Court House, Va. - Niagara, Upper Canada
"Inf Cap. at Ft George"
over 500 miles rate: 25 cents

It is important to understand that Ft. George, Canada was considered U.S. territory by the U.S. Post Office Department.

As a result of the cost of conducting war, effective February 1, 1815, existing postage rates were surcharged by 50 %.



Natchez, Mississippi Territory - Va
rate: 25 cents + 12 1/2 cents



Chillicothe, Ohio -
"near Middletown", Kentucky
rate: 17 cents + 8 1/2 cents

Request for his due of military land:
"You will please withdraw 6 1/4 acres
as part of military land warrant No.
2019 on the North fork of paint creek".

The 1 1/2 cent drop rate



Albany, NY - Albany rate: 1 cent + 1/2 cent
Four of these are recorded for the entire country.

Pre-Regulation Steamboat Mail

A special Congressional Act of February 13, 1813 provided the first official authorization for carrying U.S. mails via steamboat. The first contract was awarded to North River Steamboat Company, the "Fulton Line", and service commenced April 15, 1815.

The above paragraph is taken from the description in the John Eggen collection.

Hudson River Mail

October 15, 1815



New York - Albany
triple rate: 76 1/2 cents

17 cents x 3 = 51 cents plus 50% War Surcharge of 25 1/2 cents

Prior to 1825, the Postal Laws and Regulations made no specific reference to "Steamboat" letters; thus, the notation "per Steam Boat" was a sender's directive, and was carried in a regular mail bag.

Effective March 31, 1816, the war rate surcharge of 50 % was repealed, with postage returning to the 1799 rates. This, however, lasted only one month.

Restored Rates

April 20, 1816

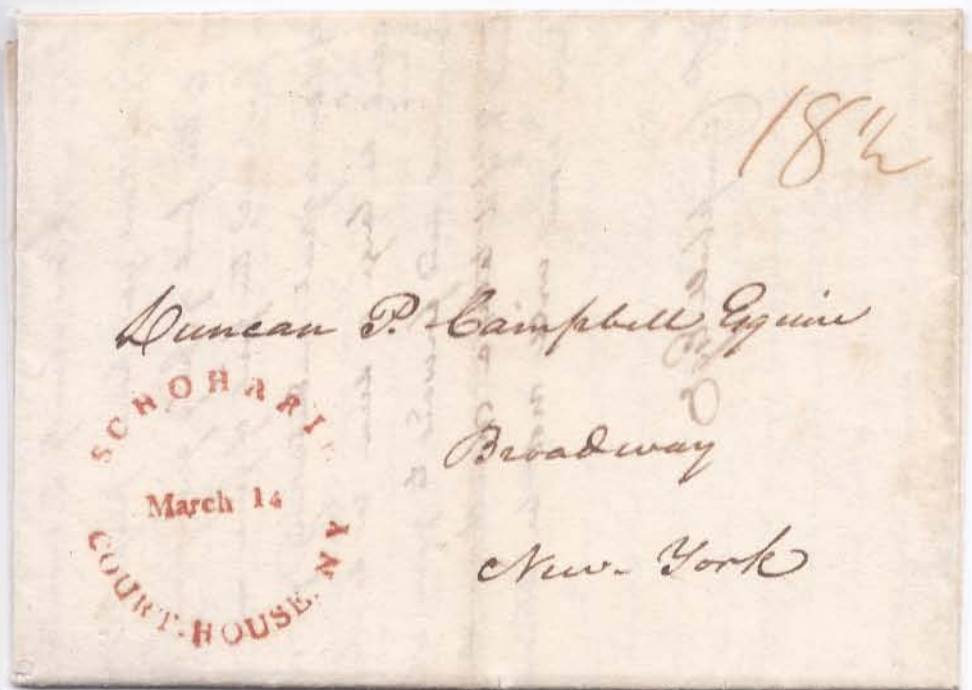
Philadelphia - New Germantown, N.J.
40 - 90 miles rate: 10 cents

It appears that the postmaster first rated this cover "8" (under 40 miles). New Germantown is about 40 miles from Philadelphia.



The Post Office Act of 1816, effective May 1st, simplified the per sheet zone rate structure from six categories to five.

- not over 30 miles: 6 cents
- 30 - 80 miles: 10 cents
- 80 - 150 miles: 12 1/2 cents
- 150 - 400 miles: 18 1/2 cents
- over 400 miles: 25 cents



Schoharie Court House, N.Y. - New York
150 - 400 miles rate: 18 1/2 cents

The Mississippi River

Pioneer Steamboat "Volcano"

June 9, 1819



New Orleans - Natchez

Until 1825, when the category of "Steamboat" (or "Steam") letters was established, some postmasters used a "SHIP" marking on incoming non-contract letters from the inland waterways, as no other directive had been given to them. The Natchez postmaster treated this cover as a "SHIP" letter, and rated it 6 cents due.

This is one of the earliest handstamped "SHIP" markings on U.S. western waters.

Narragansett Bay

First Visit of the "Fulton" to Providence

July 30, 1823



By Steamboat: Newport - Providence, R.I. Overland: Providence - Boston
30 - 80 miles rate: 10 cents plus 2 cents for conveyance beyond the receiving post office.

Five post offices used "STEAMBOAT" handstamps beginning in 1823; this was two years before they were officially required.

Great Lakes Ship Letter

Prior to the introduction of steamboats, letters across the Great Lakes were often carried privately by sailing vessels and other types of boats. Usually, these letters would bear no postal markings of any kind.

Lake Ontario

August 14, 1821



Kingston, Upper Canada, August 13 given to the captain of a local Lake ship.
U.S.P.O. Sacketts Harbor, N.Y., August 14 - New York

"Ship 20 1/2"

150 - 400 miles rate: 18 1/2 cents plus 2 cents "Ship Fee" to the captain.

Carried by Pilot

Independent Mails

Pilot Places Drop Letter

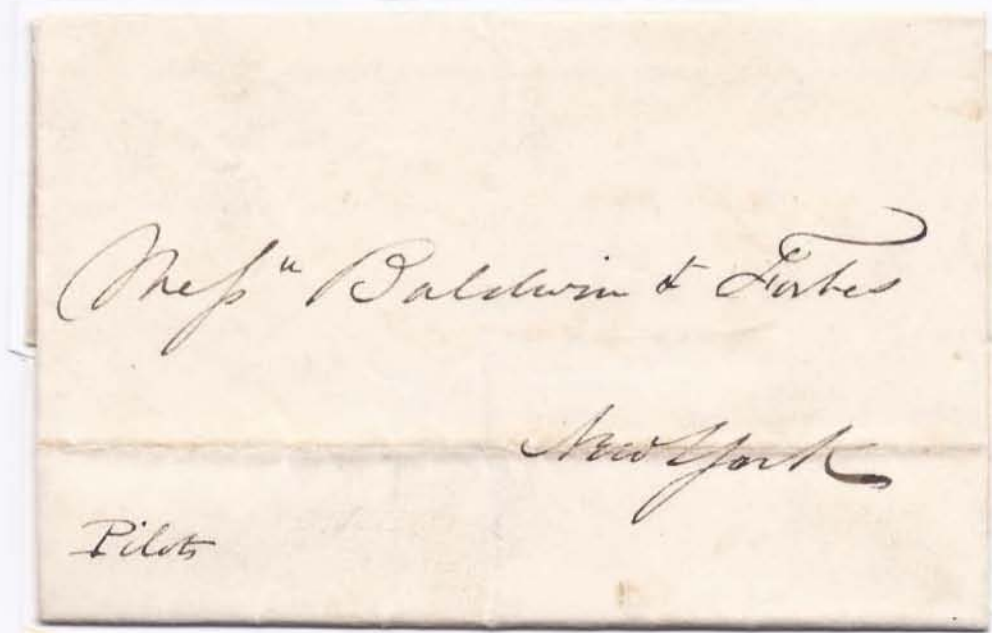
March 24, 1824



Sandy Hook, N.J. - given to the Pilot of a private sailing vessel - New York
 "I take this opportunity offered by the pilot who is leaving us, to address you a few lines".
 The pilot placed the cover in the New York mails as a favor.

"Pilot"

May 27, 1828



Sandy Hook, N.J. - Philadelphia - New York

"Capt. Reily has just settled the Pilotage and as he is about to leave us I have m--- today with a fair wind and fine prospects. It is but little more than one hour since we left the wharf".
 Evidently, the writer was on board bound for Philadelphia, and gave this letter to the pilot who was next bound for New York.

“Mr. Peterson’s Stage”

June 16, 1817

Mr.
Peterson's
Stage



datelined Cape May, N.J. - Philadelphia
placed in the Philadelphia mail as a drop letter - no rate markings.

More expedient than the U.S. Mails

June 10, 1822



Philadelphia “By Stage” Mt. Holly, N.J.

Apparently, the sender had missed the U.S. mails, and opted to send by the stage which was probably leaving promptly.

As canals were opened in the early 19th century, abutting towns thrived and grew along with this new prosperity, it was only natural to have mail also moved on and alongside these routes.

Moscow, N.Y., to the Chief Clerk, Canal Department, Albany



Most famous was the Erie Canal, which was formally completed October 26, 1825. Stretching 350 miles from Albany to Buffalo with 84 locks, it would soon change the way that people and freight would be moved to and from the Great Lakes.

Windsor Locks, Conn.

March 21, 1827



"The last to be built and the longest and most important of the Connecticut River Canals was the six mile long Windsor Locks Canal, twelve miles upriver from Hartford. It was opened for navigation in the mid 1820's, it's purpose being to provide safe passage around the wicked Enfield Falls and rapids." - Canal Days in America, Drago

“Pr Negroe Titus”

Dec 30, 1826

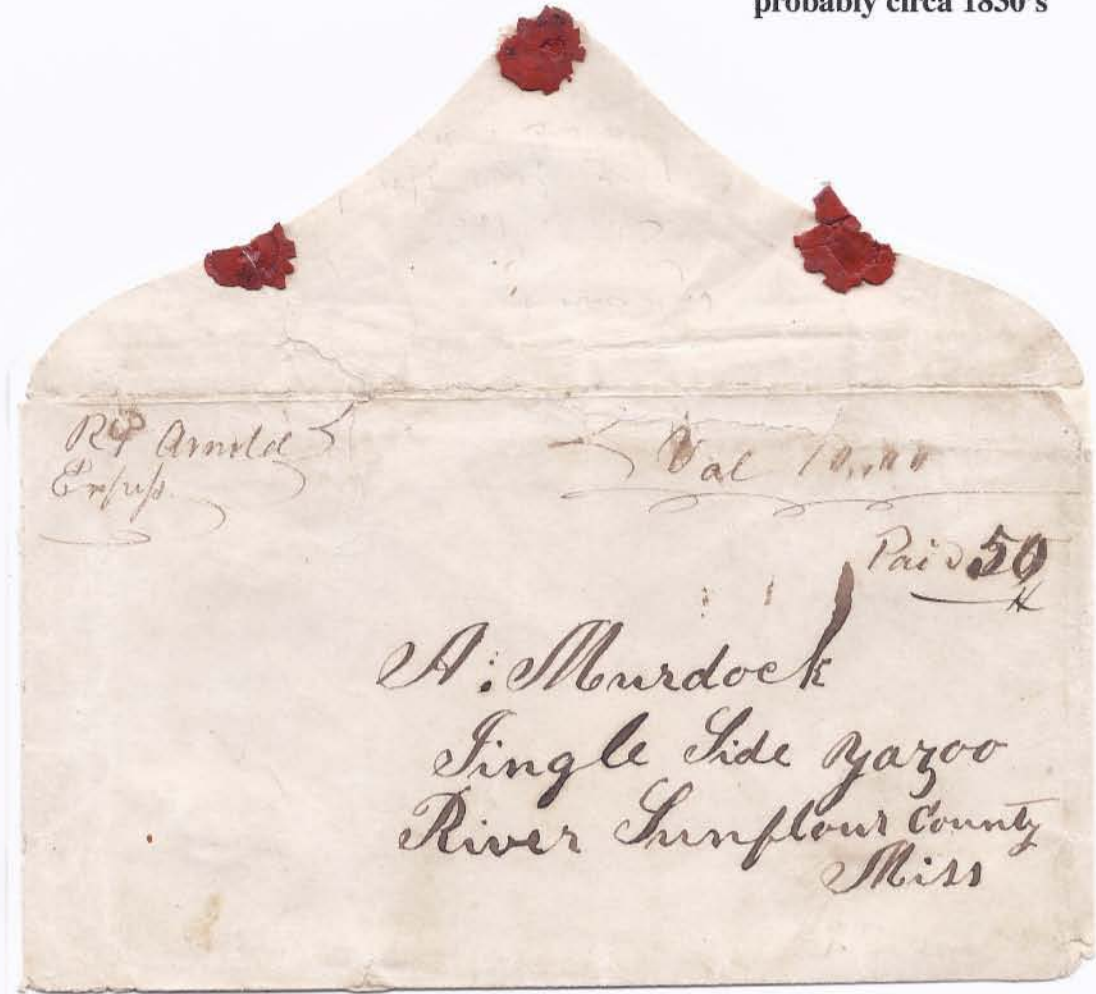


datelined Robeson County - Fayetteville, N.C.

“Not knowing whether you agree about Titus for any further length of time, I deem it proper to send him into town, expecting to be there myself on next Tuesday . . . I shall then wait upon you and settle up for the time the negroe has been with me. In the meantime, I send you under my obligation to pay you for his labor (in my service) during the ensuing year 1827 . . .” N. Moralpin

“RP Arnold Exprefs”

probably circa 1830's



This cover was submitted to the USPCS for commentary by this writer, who could not find the Yazoo river in Sunflour County, or any evidence as to the existence of the above “Express” etc.

Consensus was that it was in Sunflour County until 1871, when the County lines were moved. The Journal of the Mississippi noted that “There were no towns in Sunflour County, only a few landings”; thus, Single Side could have been a plantation landing. Furthermore, a Mr. Arnold operated a steamboat through the sparsely populated counties of Southern Mississippi at that time; the same man?

Money letter (\$10.00) - “Single Side Yazoo River, Sunflour County, Miss” - “Paid 50”

After experiencing numerous changes since the discovering Spaniards in 1521, including partition and transfer to Great Britain, Florida was admitted as a Territory on March 30, 1822.

Pensacola

March 7, 1823

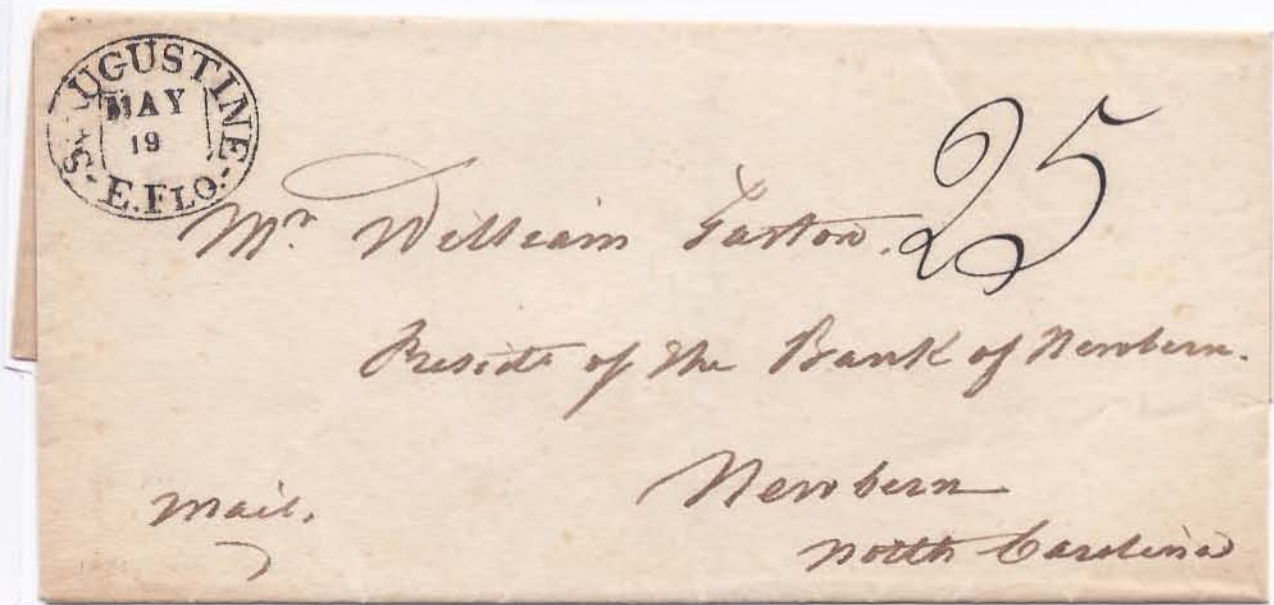


Pensacola (approximately following the old Ft. Stoddert trail) - Richmond, Va.
A few copies of this handstamp are known between August 22, 1822 and this date.

"The mercantile horizon looks squally with no prospect of amelioration. . . the neighboring cities Orleans and Mobile have never before been so dark and destroyed . . . I see nothing except sugar that the planters can produce at present prices . . . As to this place, it is gone . . . it will move to Mobile or keep my eyes on the country east of this & about the Apalachicola which in process of time holds out flattering prospects".

"St Augustine E. Flo"

May 19, 1831



It is curious to note that St. Augustine, which had been the capital of the former East Florida, retained its former glory in the postmark.

Arkansas was admitted as a Territory in July, 1819. In June, 1821, the prosperous trading village of Little Rock became the capital.

The full "Little Rock Shield"

September 9, 1830



rate 18 3/4 cents 150 - 400 miles Above is the unique example of this, the first handstamp marking.

Dated on September 9, 1830, either the results were not pleasing to Dr. John Fulton, the postmaster, or the device broke. After September 9, all recorded usages are missing the upper portion of the rectangle.

The semi - circle "Little Rock Shield"

July 7, 1831



80 - 150 miles double rate: 12 1/2 cents x 2 to Satartia, Mississippi. This postal marking is known between October 6, 1830 and June 21, 1832.

The first significant appearances of an American presence in what is now Texas began in the early 1820's. Cotton and beef were to be the main exports to be taken to New Orleans, while communications beyond were mainly per the Natchez Trace. Names of towns yet had their Spanish names. Important areas were basically near the coast; very significant were Bahia (Goliad) and Bexar (San Antonio).

Bahia to Bexar

Circa 1827



3 Reales Mexican Domestic rate until 1832

The Republic Period existed from December, 1835 until the end of December, 1845. An early example of mail through the Texan postal system was illustrated in the "Express Mail" section.

Houston to Austin

Republic Period



The above type postmark is recorded used between April 6 and April 24, 1845. This is the earliest usage.

Why "directed routing" ?

In foreign countries, a directed routing often required franking other than that needed for the regular route; for example; certain incoming European mails might be alternatively marked "Via Brindisi" or "Via Marsailles" with different ratings to the same destination. In America, however, as required franking was strictly covered by distance and weight, it was only a request to the Postal Department to send by what the sender determined to be the most expedient routing.

"Via Pittsburg"

September 13, 1833



Parkersburg, Virginia (now West Virginia) - along the Ohio River
 "Via Pittsburg" - Harrisburg - Copenhagen, N.Y.

The Parkersburg stencil handstamp was unusual for the period.

Section 4

Express Mail 1836 - 1839
Indian Relationships 1830's
Railroad and Steamboat Mail
Cross Border
Independent Intercity Mails

The "Express Mail" of 1836 - 1839

By 1836, New Orleans had emerged as one of the most prosperous cities in the country due to the cotton trade. But "The Great Mail" from the north, mostly by stagecoach, still took 12 - 15 days; merchants and newspapers called for faster service.

A post office run express service, at triple the 25c regular fee, began in December, 1836: it was advertised to deliver in less than 7 days. In the beginning, except for the New York - Philadelphia spur, which was by railroad, and the Mobile - New Orleans piece, which was by steamboat, the great balance was by horse.



Route Map

From Cuba \$2.27

April 19, 1837



Matanzas, Cuba - Havana - Charlestown, S.C. April 28, - "Express Mail" - New York sent Collect - rates: Incoming "Ship" fee: 2 cents over 400 miles: 25 cents x 3 sheets x triple: \$2.25

Indian Relationships

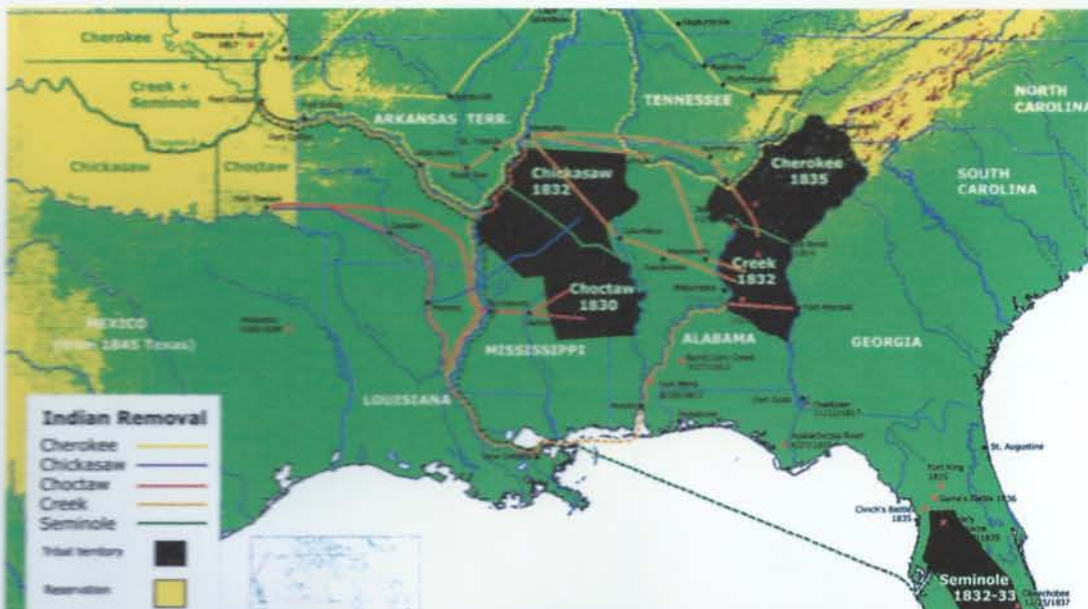
Beginning in 1830, the U.S. Army, aided by contractors, herded the five largest tribes west to "Indian Territory" in the present state of Oklahoma. Many never reached their destination because of lack of proper clothing, food, and exposure crossing the Mississippi River and the Arkansas swamps in the frigid winters. For this reason, the movement earned the cognomen, the "Trail of Tears".

The "Trail of Tears and Death"

- Choctaw Chief Nitikechi to the *Arkansas Gazette*, winter 1831-2

1831 Military Despatch to "Camp Townsen" in Indian Territory.
Postage Free "In service"

*Camp in Choctaw Nation
18th Aug^r 1831*



Map depicting the removal from their lands in the Southeast across the border to "Indian Territory".

Indian Relationships

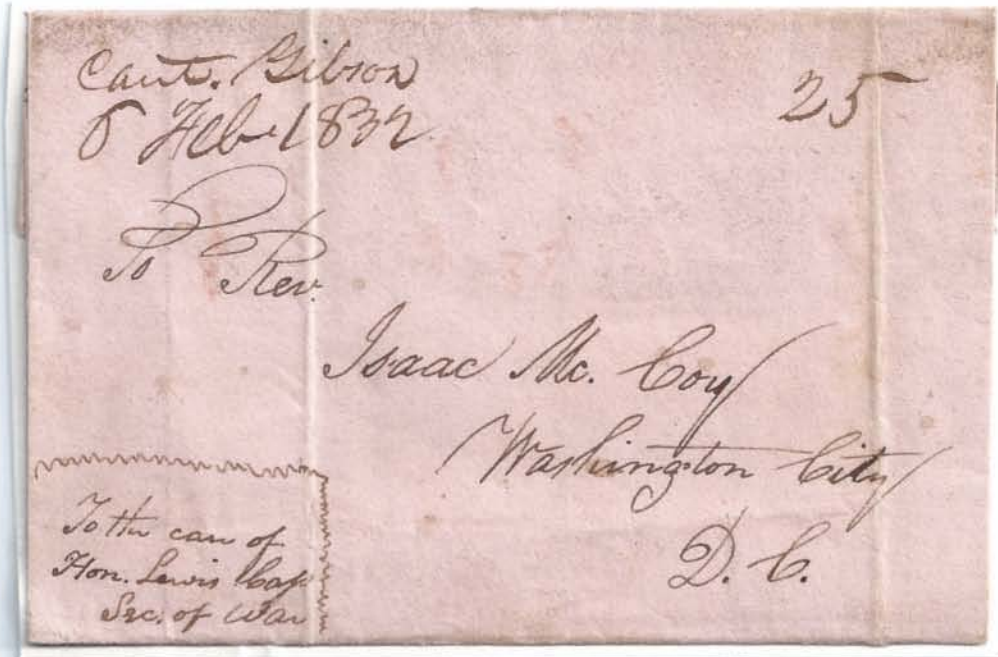
“Trail of Tears”

The five tribes were the Choctaw, Chickasas, Creek, Cherokee and Seminoles. The relocation of the five tribes continued through the 1830’s and much of the 1840’s. Depending upon where one was coming from, the first Indian Territory stop was normally Ft. Gibson in the Cherokee allocation in the north or Ft. Towson in the Choctaw allocation in the south. These five tribes were called the “Civilized Tribes or Nations” because they all had a written language;

Cantonment Gibson (later “Fort Gibson”), Cherokee Nation

February 8, 1832

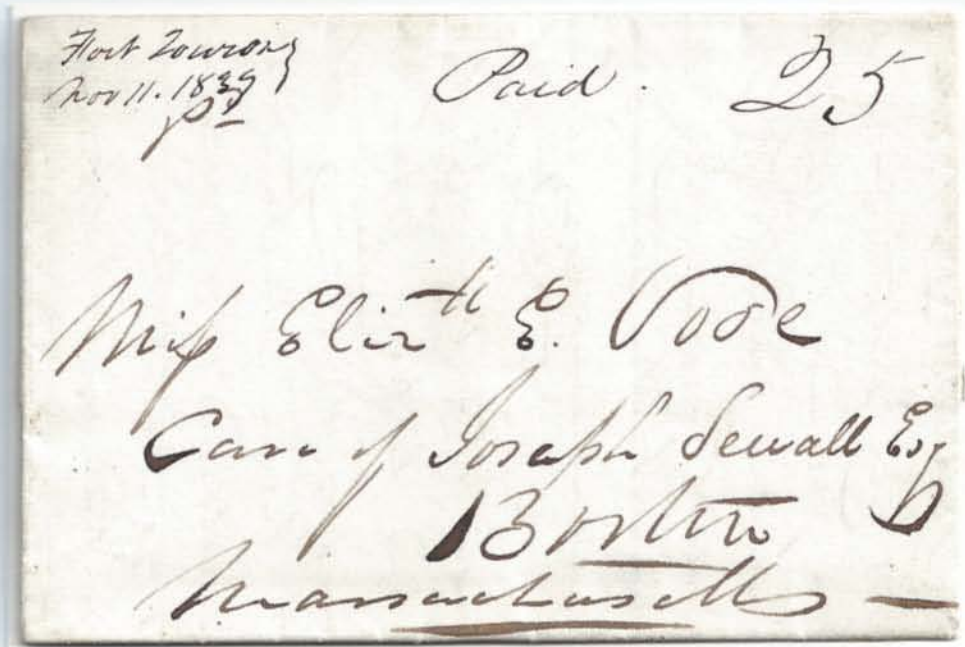
(By Webster’s definition, a Cantonment is “a group of more or less temporary structures.”)



(both covers) over 400 miles rate: 25 cents

Ft. Towson, Choctaw Nation

November 9, 1839



Seminole Agency, Florida Territory
"On Service"

August 13, 1835
datelined Camp Chattahoochee (an arsenal)



Free from Lt. Graham to Adjutant General Jones

"I desire to be furnished with a copy of the laws relating to the intercourse of the military authorities with the Indians. If it is in the province of your department to do so & being detached, I may otherwise be doubtful as to the proper course to pursue relative to the Indians".

Cherokee, Cherokee Nation

April 8, 1844

Checked Enlist paper March 30 1844



rate: 25 cents over 400 miles

This is the only postmark used by this office. Three recorded.

The transition from sailing vessels to steam powered vessels as government contracted mail carriers, began in the 1830's.



Port Henry, Lower Canada - Steam-Packet Franklin - St. Albans
Canadian fees paid in cash U.S. 30 - 80 miles rate: 10 cents
The "Franklin" was the first contract steamboat in the U.S. 1831 - 1834.



Dundas, Upper Canada - Queenston - Ferriage - Lewiston, N.Y. - Albany
4 1/2 pence Canadian postage to the border + 2 pence "Ferriage" = "6 1/2" (paid per pen cancel)
150 - 400 miles U.S. postage 18 3/4 cents due

Mail between American and Canadian post offices, which were separated by the Niagara or St. Lawrence Rivers had to be ferried across because there were no existing bridges at this time. From January, 1829, until their termination in March 1837, the Canadian Deputy PMG levied a 2 pence "Ferriage" fee to be added to the appropriate Canadian postage due.

"British Postage Free"

May 1, 1833



Auburn, N.Y. - Queenston, Upper Canada (above Buffalo, N.Y.) - Kingston, U.C.
Free to the Canadian Postmaster
Few "British Postage Free" examples exist.

Derby Line, Vt. Exchange Point

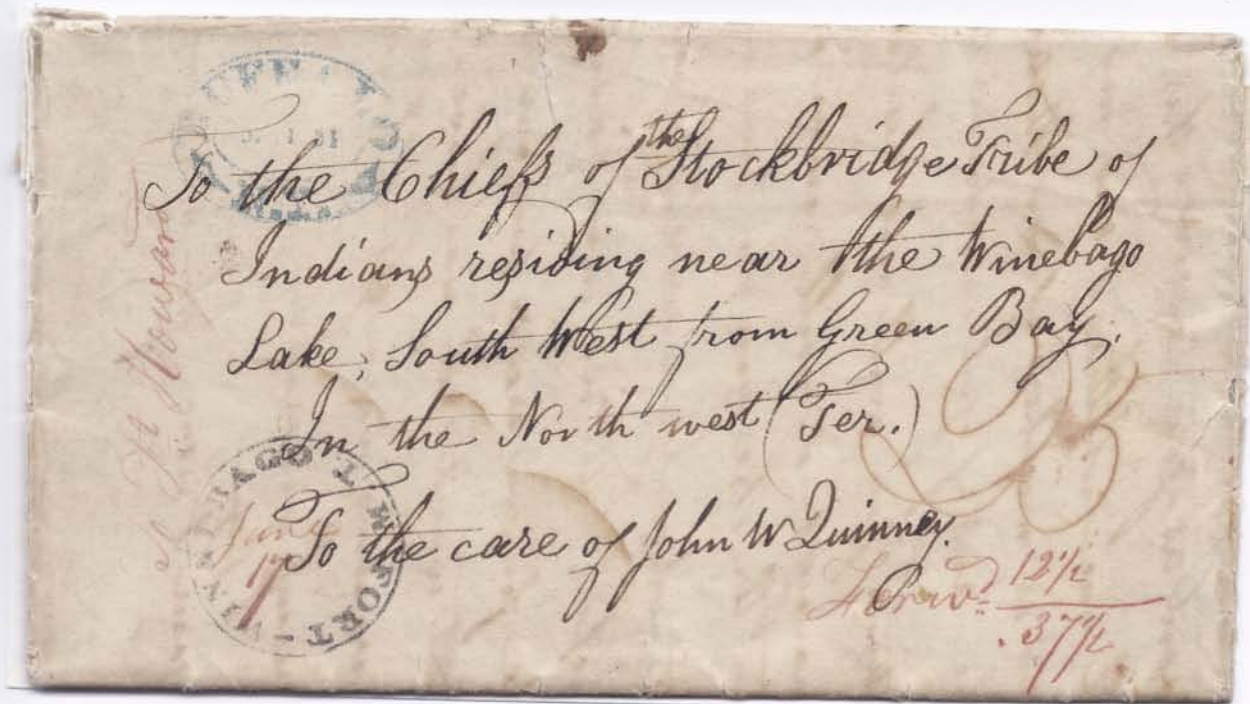
March 2, 1838



Eaton, Lower Canada - Derby Line, March 8 - New York City
rates: Canada 4 1/2 pence paid U.S. 18 3/4 cents collect

“To the Chiefs of the Stockbridge Tribe of
 Indians residing near the Winebago
 Lake, Southwest from Green Bay,
 In the Northwest (Ter.)”

May 28, 1834



datelined Niagara, N.Y. - Buffalo, May 31 - Chicago - Green Bay
 Fort Winnebago, then Michigan, Territory - forwarded to Ft. Howard
 over 400 miles rate: 25 cents plus 150+ miles forwarding fee: 12 1/2 cents

An extremely well articulated request for his share of the monies given to his tribe.

“I never was considered in full to be a member of the nation, nor never had no land granted to, meanwhilst many of the adopted Africans were considered full to be members of our tribe, but because my father was a white man, many of our people were opposed to my having any rights in our nation . . . when you write to me, please direct your letter as follows: John W. Newcom in the town of Niagara & Country of Niagara for the Cherokee Post Office. This is a new post office called by the said name . . .”.



The Railroad as a Post Road: On July 7, 1838, Congress passed an act providing "that each and every railroad within the limits of the United States which now is or hereafter be completed, shall be a post route, and the PMG shall cause the mail to be transported thereon".

Albany & Buffalo Railroad

September 26, 1838



Taken on board Albany, N.Y. - Deansville
90 - 150 miles rate: 12 1/2 cents

"RAILROAD" type markings were struck on mail which did not originate in a post office.

This is the special marking of the Albany & Buffalo Railroad. At the time of this letter, there were fewer than 2000 miles of track in the country. While this railroad possessed about 10%, their tracks were completed just past Syracuse.

Baltimore Railroad "ch"arged

November 15, 1838



Datelimed "Baltimore" and taken on board between
Baltimore - Boston - North Andover, Mass.
over 400 miles rate: 25 cents "ch"arged

This is a very early usage of the "Baltimore Railroad" marking. The small notation "ch" is uncommon; it signified that addressee had an account with the Post Office, and that this letter did not have to be paid upon receipt.

In February, 1842, Henry T. Windsor and Alexander M. Greig established a local mail delivery service called the City Despatch Post; their prepayment stamps were the first issued in the Western Hemisphere. Greig advertised: "Branch Offices Letter boxes are placed throughout every part of (New York) City in conspicuous places; and all letters deposited therein not exceeding two ounces in weight, will be punctually delivered three times a day at three cents each".

City Despatch Post, New York

July 5, 1842



In addition to the date, the CDS showed the time received; the "FREE" handstamp cancellation had no philatelic significance.

So successful was the City Despatch Post that the PMG authorized the purchase of same, and on August 16, began operations as a U.S. government carrier known as United States City Despatch Post under the superintendence of Greig.

United States City Despatch Post

September 1, 1842



The government ordered new, but similar stamps with a new inscription inserted at the top, as well as different paper and a new color; the cancellation was a red "U.S." in an octagon. The 3 cents charge comprised of 2 cents carrier fee plus 1 cent drop fee; however, when drop fees were increased to 2 cents on July 1, 1845, local letters became 4 cents. This was quite unpopular! The PMG ordered the Post shut down on December 1, 1846.

Earliest Recorded Usage of this Stamp.

February 13, 1843



c

In December, 1842, Robertson & Co. purchased a short lived existing post, and advertised their new city post would deliver letters for 3 cents each "if deposited before 9 AM., will be taken out for delivery at 10 A.M. . ."

This cover, which shows "10 A.M." pick up in the handstamp, also illustrates the earliest recorded usage of this stamp. "3 P.M." is struck on the stamp, as well as "R&Co"

This letter was written and signed by Rembrant Peale, in which he discusses "my method of teaching, according to their experience & the practice in European Academies . . ."

The World's First Pictorial Stamp

1843



c

The design shows their messenger striding over the Philadelphia Merchant's Exchange, which housed the USPO; this implied superior service. The stamp is double struck by a red "3", and inscribed "R & Co." Although undated, the cover is considered to be the earliest recorded usage.

To and from the Great Lakes

Independent Intercity Mails

The interworking of independent companies is illustrated by the two covers on this page. The partnership of Crawford Livingston, Henry Wells and George Pomeroy, operated both companies on the same route.

Livingston, Wells & Pomeroy's Express

July 14, 1844



Livingston, Wells & Pomeroy's Express carried commercial mail and packages; as such, they were not in violation of railroad regulations.

Pomeroy's Letter Express

September 3, 1844

Boyd's City Express

September 5, 1844



Pomeroy's Letter Express carried general mail, and was under constant pressure from the P.O. Department not to use the Railroads as that was in direct violation of the "post road" regulations. They issued stamps in February, 1844; the rate was 5 cents prepaid or 6 1/4 cents collect. Under the threat of heavy U.S. fines, the company ceased operation in late September, 1844.

Boyd's was a local New York carrier service. Together, they assured the public of cheaper, reliable door to door service.

Hartford, Conn. Mail Route

March 4, 1845



Hartford, Conn. - New York

Covers are recorded between August, 1844 and June 30, 1845.

The yellow stamp indicated that a 5 cents fee had been paid.

"South" was a directional marking.

The purpose of this company was carry mail to and from Hartford, as well as link with other private express companies such as Hale & Co.

The stamp depicts a "Hartford" messenger striding between two cities across a body of water, - complete with a paddle wheel steamboat. The implication is that the "Hartford" messenger was much faster than the U.S. Mails.

The condition of the above cover is considered exceptional for this company.

An early Precancel

One can observe that the tops of the tall letters in "South" run off the stamp as well as the presence of two markings from an adjacent stamp opposite the left knee.



Section 5

Postmaster Provisionals
The 1847 Issue
Telegraph, Railroad and
Contract Steamboat Mail
Other Rate Changes

The Post Office Act of 1845, effective July 1, was the first significant postal revision since 1792. The catalyst was the enormous amount of business that had been lost to the independent carriers, by some accounts, - almost half by 1845. The result was a drastic simplification of distances, and a responsive reduction of rates; moreover, letters were to be rated by the 1/2 ounce, rather than by the sheet.

under 300 miles: 5 cents
over 300 miles: 10 cents
drop letters and carrier fee: 2 cents

Understanding the time-saving value of the prepaid stamps issued by independent mail companies, New York PM Robert H. Morris soon issued the first "Postmasters' Provisional" stamp. This apparently was authorized by PMG Cave Johnson as an experiment to test the practicality of adhesive postage stamps.

New York City

Postmasters' Provisional



over 300 miles rate: 10 cents prepaid
New York - by "RAIL" - St. Louis - Ann Arbor, Mich.

These stamps were initialed "ACM" by Alonzo Castle Monson as a control before being passed through the mails. Additionally, a red "PAID" was struck on the pair, as well as on the face of the cover.

The stamps are from position 7-8 of the sheet, with the left one being a double transfer at the top, most noticeably on the lower portion of the letter "O" in "Office".

Ten more postmasters, all of whom were responsible for bookkeeping and collecting on burdensome amounts of unpaid mail, issued provisional stamps.

Postmasters' Provisionals

St. Louis, Mo.

The 10 and 20 cents "bears"

April 22, 1846



over 300 miles triple rate: 30 cents prepaid

In November 1845, Postmaster John M. Wimer had a 3 x 2 plate made with 5c values on top and 10c values below, printed on a greenish paper. Later, two of the 5c values were hammered out, and 20c inserted, - printed on a gray lilac paper. Later in 1846, 5c values were reinserted in place of the 20c, printed on a bluish pelure paper. On this cover, the 10c stamp is on greenish paper, and the 20c on gray lilac. A few covers are known with this combination.

Brattleboro, Vt.

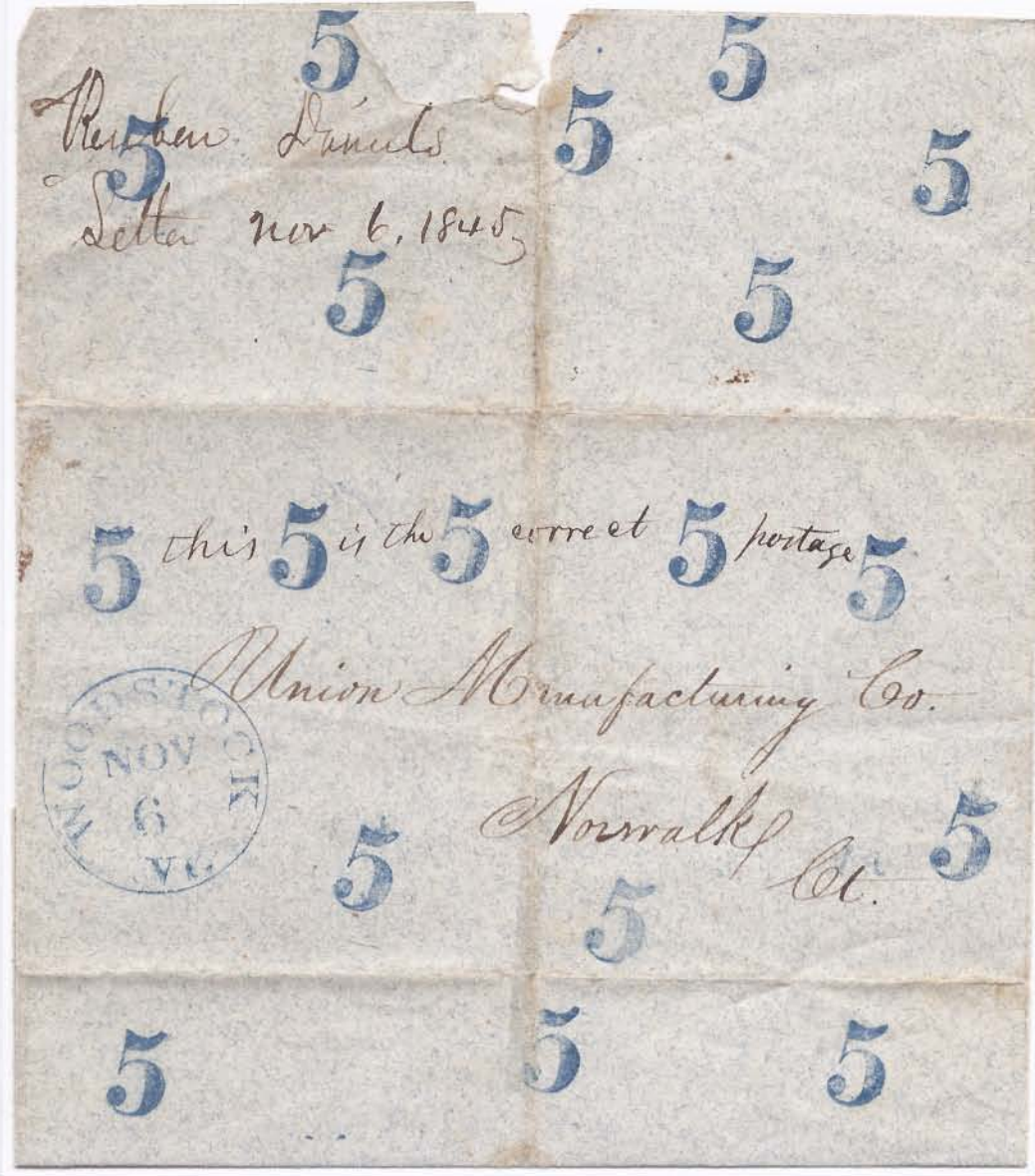
September 3, 1846



under 300 miles rate: 5 cents prepaid

Brattleboro PM Frederick N. Palmer ordered fifty sheets of ten (5 x 2). "Brattleboro", "P", "O", his initials "FNP", and "5 CENTS" were inscribed upon the stamp. The earliest known usage was August 28, 1846, and this example is the second earliest. Position 2. Nineteen such covers have been recorded; however, some may no longer exist.

November 6, 1845



18 strikes of the 5 cents rate
"This is the correct postage"



An early negative marking



A Forwarding "5" marking of the period
(originally prepaid "10" cents - over 300 miles)



Over 300 Miles 10 Cents

The Post Office Act of 1845

January 15, 1846
Huntsville, Ala. - Montgomery
Mobile - New Orleans



April 13, 1846
Yorkville, S.C. - Columbia
Augusta, Ga. - Atlanta
Birmingham, Ala -
"Sumpter County"

August 3, 1845
datelined New Orleans -
taken along the "Way" to
Mobile, Ala - Boston
(1 cent way fee)



The Telegraph and the Post

Invention of the Electro Magnetic Telegraph

U.S. Government Experimental Line

An experimental line between Washington and Baltimore was operated under the supervision of the U.S. Government from April, 1845 until December, 1846.

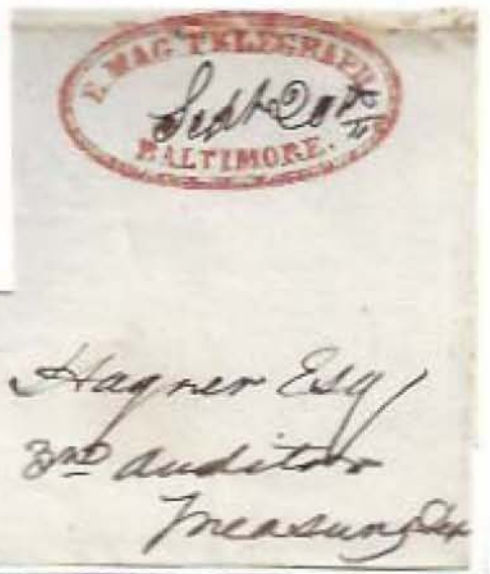
"Upon the reception of a dispatch at either office, it shall be the duty of the officers to have the same translated in a fair handwriting, carefully enveloped and sealed, and the magnetic characters immediately destroyed, and to place the dispatch in the hands of the Penny Post for delivery, who shall be entitled to receive the same compensation therefore as for the delivery of letters transmitted now by mail." Cave Johnson, Postmaster General, March 29, 1846



From Washington
May 5, 1846

2 cents Penny Post delivery

The seal: "TELEGRAPH
(embossed eagle)
OFFICE"



From Baltimore
September 20, 1845 or 1846

The receiving operator struck the copied message and the face with the name of the city of origination.
Post Office Carrier Service was available in both cities.

Thousands came to see the new marvel, which was viewed as present generations first saw television; however, few would use it. In fact, after four days, total receipts were one cent! Orthodox religious groups were against Sunday use. On April 1, 1847, the line was privately leased.

These are two of the five recorded covers.

Non contract "STEAM" and "STEAMBOAT" markings were applied interchangeably by the various receiving postmasters on incoming mail. "The rate properly charged for a Steamboat letter was the regular postage from the point where the letter was picked up (as reported by captain) and its final destination". - AASC vol II

"Star Spangled Banner"

January 25, 1847



over 300 miles 10 cents (2 cents Ship fee included)
New Orleans - Cincinnati - USPO - Lancaster, Ohio

The "Star Spangled Banner" ran between Cincinnati and New Orleans from 1847 until June 29, 1847, when she sank near Baton Rouge. It was one of the first to have a vessel-named fancy cancel.

"Troy and New York Steamboat"

November 25, 1850



Newport, N.Y. - Troy
under 300 miles 5 cents plus 2 cents "Ship" fee

Newport is about 90 miles west of Troy near the Mowhawk River and the Erie Canal; This cover was picked up by a private vessel. The "7" marking was struck on mail in apparent violation of Postal Laws; the Troy Postmaster added the 2 cents "Ship Captain" fee to the regular postage to be paid by the addressee.

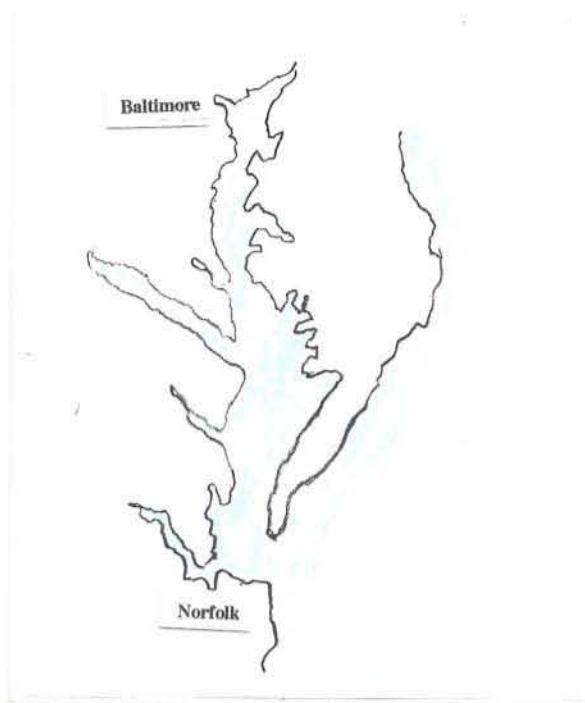
Bay Route



over 300 miles rate 10 cents

Philadelphia - by rail - Baltimore
 ship on Chesapeake Bay Route - Norfolk, Va.
 Petersburg & Roanoke RR - Weldon, N.C.
 Fort Defiance (western North Carolina)

The "Great Mail" north - south mail route utilizing the convenience of the Chesapeake Bay existed between December, 1847 and December, 1848; this is, perhaps, the only Route Agent's marking known until a handstamp was employed in the late spring of 1848.



Spaulding's Penny Post, Buffalo, N.Y.

April 8, 1848



Spaulding's Penny Post 2 cents
USPO Buffalo - Lockport, N.Y. 5 cents

Enos Wilder Spaulding operated a 1 cent penny post beginning in July, 1847, but increased his rate to 2 cents in 1848. This is the only recorded cover with his distinctive "dove" handstamp used during the 2 cents period.

Baker's City Post, Cincinnati, Ohio

May 3, 1849



USPO Cumberland, Md. - Cincinnati 10 cents
forwarded by Bakers City Post 2 cents

Experts suggest that Baker served as a letter carrier in the
Cincinnati Post Office at this time.

Money Packages

Independent Eastern Express Companies of the Late 1840's

As the government reduction in postage rates essentially ended serious letter carrying competition in the east, surviving companies concentrated on letters of value and packages; nonetheless, some mail was conveyed.

Mills' Paterson Bank Package Express

September 7, 1848



Paterson, N.J. - New York

Other examples of this express label are not known to this writer.

Wells & Co's. Buffalo, Albany & New York Express

January 22, 1849

"With Bag of Coin"



Buffalo, N.Y. - New York

"Herewith a bag of coin containing . . . 242 1/2 sov, silver \$1000 in 1/2 dolls, 50 Mex, 240 Francs, 21 Shalers, 13 Guilders, 6 French Crowns . . ."

Section 6
Postal Changes
1851 Rates, 1853 Rates
Express Mail
Steamboat, Telegraph

Because of continued competition from private carriers, as well as public outcry for lower postage, rates were reduced, and three new denominations replaced the former issue.

"To and from June 30, 1851".

Single letter rate per 1/2 ounce:

Not exceeding 3000 miles:	3 cents prepaid
	5 cents unpaid
Greater distances:	6 cents prepaid
	10 cents unpaid

The One Cent Stamp

Plate One Early

A Pretty Valentine

February 11, 1852



double rate: 6 cents

upper left: positions 28-29 R1E upper right: positions 39-40 L1E

Dark Blue shade all type IIIA

"E", - "Early" refers to stamps issued before a plate was recut;
conversely, "L", - "late" refers to stamps issued after a plate was recut.

Effective with the Acts of 1851 and 1852, there were five possible one cent usages.



Drop Letter Rate

Detroit, Michigan
 Circa 1853
 Position 27 L.II.

(The circular Date Stamp indicates 5 cents; the marking had no relevance for this letter)

c

“Way” Letter

“Steamer Sydonia”

When a route agent was not on board a steamboat having a postal contract to carry mail in locked pouches, “Way” letters were those handed to the captain where the boat landed, or given to him in transit.

As he had no key to the pouches, he brought both the pouches and loose mail to the post office. There, the loose letters were marked “Way”, and the captain was offered 1 cent per loose letter.



3 cents prepaid - 1 cent “Way” fee included
 taken on the “Way” - New Orleans
 Received January 25, 1854

Steamboat “Sydonia” ran between New Orleans and Shreveport, and occasionally farther north, 1852 - 1857.

One Cent Usages



Carrier to the Mails

To the Philadelphia PO: 1 cent
Philadelphia - Maine: 3 cents

Newspaper Wrappers
Matagorda, Texas - Delaware



Prepaid Circulars

"To and from June 30, 1851,
1 cent per oz. for 500 miles -
Postage shall be prepaid by
stamps or otherwise, or shall
be charged double rates".

A solicitation for agents from George W. Merchant: "From the many inquiries for my celebrated Gargling Oil, I am induced to make a few agencies for its sale . . ."

PMG Cave Johnson was sufficiently impressed with the performance of Postmasters' Provisional stamps that he ordered 5 and 10 cents stamps be available July 1, 1847 to any post office that applied for them. As correspondents were not required to use postage stamps on their letters, and mail was not required to be prepaid, the late Dr. Carroll Chase observed that only about 2% of the letters bore stamps.

The Vermont and Boston Telegraph Company



under 300 miles rate: 5 cents

The "cross hatch" postmark was achieved by perpendicular strikes of a bar grid. This is one of two 1847 covers from Waterbury, Vermont, the other being of a plain nature.

The vignette is perhaps the most distinctive seen franked by an 1847 stamp; it depicts a hand with a quill driven by a stroke of lightning (the Telegraph). This is followed by a turtle, locomotive, steamboat, express rider on horse, messenger and sailing ship (dramatizing the advantage of the telegraph).

As no message form survives this letter, it cannot be proven to have telegraphic significance. The Vermont and Boston was one of the more successful independent companies. Using the Bain patent, its 228 miles of line reached Burlington, Vermont in March, 1850. The company did not have its own office in Waterbury, but rather used the express office of one of its incorporators, Benjamin P. Cheney.

Over 300 Miles

The Issue of 1847

Louisville, Ky. - New York

March 5, 1850

"rec March 14"



New York - Detroit, Mich.

February 7, 1848

double weight
positions 42 and 43 left

Montpelier, Vt. - Cincinnati

This is the only 10 cents cover from Montpelier, as well as the only 10 cents "1847 advertising cover" of Vermont.

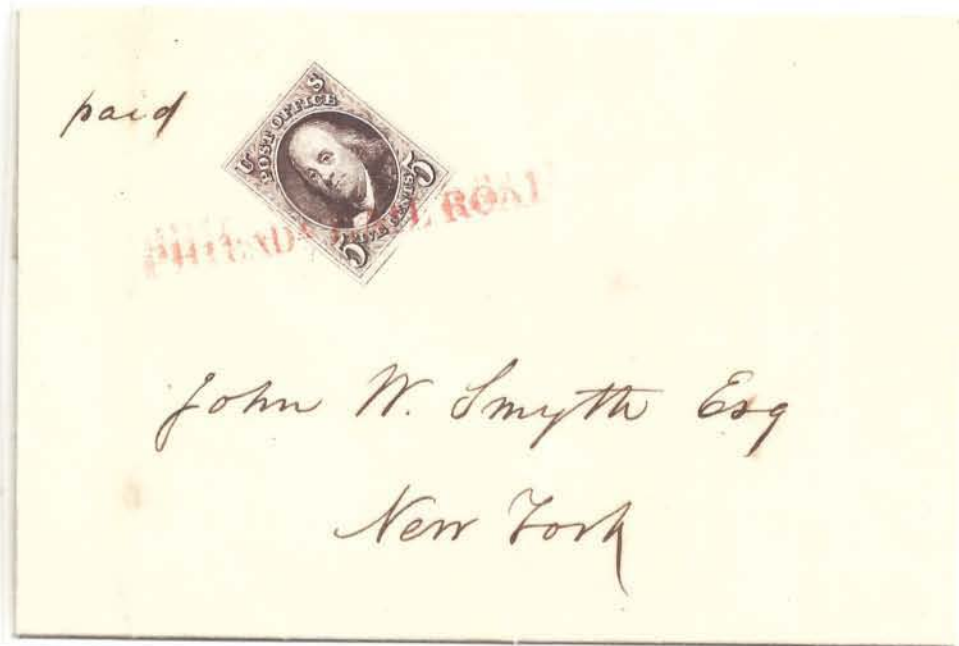


Vt. Mutual Fire Insurance Company.
OFFICE-STATE STREET, MONTPELIER, VT.

The amount of track mileage upon which mail was carried had increased from 974 at the end of 1837 to 4402 at the end of 1847. Although the reduction of rates had effectively ended most privately carried intercity mail, PMG Charles Wickliffe was still much concerned about the loss of revenue along certain primary routes.

New York and Philadelphia Railroad

March 22, 1848



Wickliffe reported in 1846: "It is deeply regretted that the New York & Philadelphia Railroad Company still persist in their refusal to convey mail agents for the Department over their road. . . From this, the most important route . . . the mail agent is excluded, and the service is materially injured, in not having someone on the road to receive letters written after the closing of mail; to assort and deliver mails at intermediate offices; and above all, to watch and expose those plunderers of the public revenue, who are yet engaged in taking letters out of the mail over this great thoroughfare." An agreement was reached January 27, 1847.

Michigan Central RR



Mail Taken on the Railroads

Northern Rail Route "Green"

January 26, 1850



The "Northern Rail Route" marking was applied by agents en route or after the post office had closed. Established in 1846, this railroad operated between Concord, N.H. and White River Junction, Vt.

A few experts believe that this CDS is blue; most firmly believe that it is green.

"Northern R.R. JAN 26 (1850) in GREEN. This marking is Unlisted in GREEN. In my opinion This Cover is GENUINE in every respect."
Aug 31 1957 Stanley B. Ashbrook

Recently, this stampless June 2, 1848 Northern RR strike in green, addressed to Boston, was discovered, thereby confirming the legitimacy of the color. Perhaps, green indicated origination in Vermont.

Housatonic Railroad

Circa 1849



Utilizing working arrangements with other railroads, the Housatonic had over 100 miles of track in parts of Connecticut, Massachusetts, and west to Albany, New York. The above strike is known 1844 - 1851.

Before there was an official American Route, all mail, and then certain mail, between the Pacific and the Atlantic Oceans was given to the captain of a ship which was bound around Cape Horn for one coast or the other.

The rate consisted of two parts: first, The proper postage from the port of entry, and then the "Ship Captain Fee" which was compensation for delivering the letter to the post office.

From the Arctic Ocean

October 9, 1850



Arctic Ocean October 9 - aboard the "Cincinnati" - "Sandwich Island", October 17
 carried privately to USPO Stoningham, Connecticut April 17, 1851 - Mansfield, Connecticut

Under 300 miles: 5 cents
 Ship Captain Fee: 2 cents
 Collect

"They are called Bowheads or Polar Whales. . . As quick as they are struck they will go down and run about a mile and then come up and lay still, but when thou do run you have to ty your heads on. I have struck 8 and saved 7. The first one I struck run under the ice and then we had to cut the line."

It would not be until 1849 that there would be an USPO authorized ocean mail route "via Panama" between the east coast and San Francisco, California.

Effective July 1, 1847, Congress provided for a 40 cents rate from the “East, to or from Astoria, Oregon, or California”. As there was no Overland Mail Contract, all government mail went by ship “via Panama”.

The Issue of 1847

East to West

August 13, 1850



New York, August 13 per U.S. Mail Steamship “Georgia” - Chagres, August 22
overland across Panama

Panama City, September 1 per Pacific Mail Steamship “Panama” - San Francisco “Rec Sept 23”

There are approximately seven covers which bear postage stamps, all westbound.

The 40 Cents Transcontinental Rate Combined with the 2 Cents Incoming Ship Fee

These two covers, which originated in Hawaii, exemplify prepaid and unpaid incoming ship mail.

The "Straight Line" was the first official Hawaiian marking. It signified cash payment of 10 cents per 1/2 ounce to the Honolulu post office for shore to ship service.

The San Francisco CDS strikes were applied upon arrival, and the letters were then sent east via Panama per the Pacific Mail Steamship Company.

"PAID 40"

April 19, 1851



Rate: 52 cents: 10 cents Hawaii paid
2 cents Ship Captain fee paid
40 cents U.S. Transcontinental paid

Unpaid "42"

May 8, 1851



Rate: 52 cents: 10 cents Hawaii paid
2 cents Ship Captain fee unpaid
40 cents U.S. Transcontinental unpaid

Postal Act of 1845 Newspapers

Within 30 miles: free
 31 - 100 miles: 1 cent each
 over 100 miles: 1 1/2 cents each
 Single Newspapers within State: 1 cent

The 1 1/2 Cents Rate Territorial Wrapper

July 13, 1846

*Fitchburg, Vt.
 July 13th 1846
 Mr. A. S. Richardson
 Waterbury
 Washington
 Vt.*

"One newspaper sent over 100 miles"
 Fitchburg, Wisconsin Territory - Waterbury, Vermont

Why an 1847 Issue 5 Cents Wrapper Usage?



The stamp is inscribed with the initials "LBM" of the Woodstock, Vermont postmaster, Lester B. Miller
 Newspapers - 31 - 100 miles: 1 cent The three most likely theories are:

- 1) A "Transitory" rate. The PL&R rates of 1845 stated: "Transient newspapers (those not mailed from location of publication) 3 cents each" (prepaid); an overpayment of 2 cents.
- 2) The contents was not a newspaper(s); The PL&R of March 3, 1847 stated: "On all pamphlets, magazines, periodicals, and every other kind and description of printed or other matter, (except newspapers, and except also, circulars, handbills, and advertisements, as aforesaid,) which shall be unconnected with any manuscript communication what ever, two and one half cents for every copy of no greater weight than one ounce, for any distance". (Two of these)
- 3) If any writing appeared on the printed matter, the "wrapper" would be treated as a first class letter and rated 5 cents.

Contract Mail Steamboats carried Postal Department Route Agents, who took on-board mail, sorted, delivered to, and collected from, postal authorities along the way.

U.S. Mail Packet Natchez (along the Mississippi River)

November 10, 1855



triple rate: 9 cents
New Orleans - Bullers Landing, La.

“U.S. Mail Steamer Telegraph No. 2” (along the Ohio Ruver)

“Lou. & Cin. S.B. Mail Line” was the Route Agent’s strike.

“9 April”, 1852



taken on board - Cincinnati PO - Philadelphia

The Louisville & Cincinnati S.B. Mail Line strike is known only in 1852.

Effective April 1, 1855,
prepayment became compulsory.
Over 3000 miles: 10 cents

Transcontinental 10 Cents Rate

Charles Kimball operated a bookstore for a few years in the mid 1850's. His Noisy Carriers was a private express company located on a wharf near the San Francisco Post Office.

Circa 1855



The strip of three is type IV with the top stamp being the recut state from plate 1E.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

Important.—How beautiful are the feet of those who stand at the Post Office amid a splendid shower of dust—the owners clasping their letters tightly in their hands, and thinking of the beauties of Uncle Sam's Post Office Law while eyeing the little man behind the window. **Be it known to ye,** O ye desolate and forsaken ones! that the NOISY CARRIER'S BOOK AND STATIONERY COMPANY will furnish Stamps at PAR, as they have always done, and WILL TAKE ALL YOUR LETTERS TO THE POST OFFICE free of charge—being just as easy to take one thousand as one letter.

CHAS. P. KIMBALL, President.

All the Steamer Papers at the regular rates. 1857

Noisy Carriers advertisement

May 3, 1857

"will take all your letters to the Post Office free of charge"

Circa 1856



His label is known used to and from river locations.

In February, 1857, the postal department introduced perforations to its regular issues. The last was the rarely used ninety cents stamp of 1860.

**The only Recorded Domestic Usage
of the First Ninety Cents Stamp**

January 6, 1861

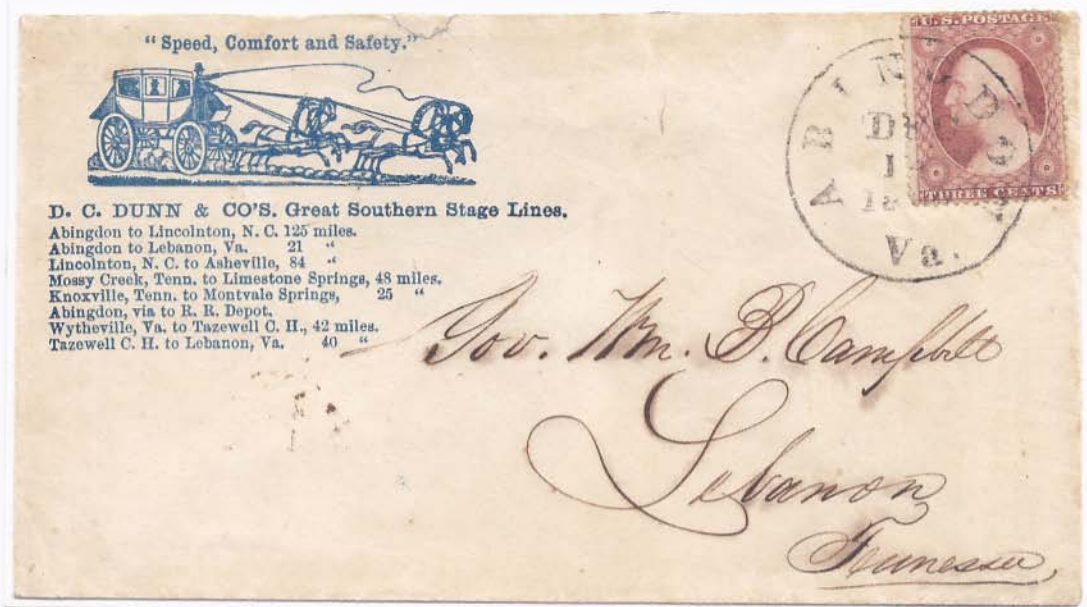


**Documents to a Circuit Court
Cincinnati, Ohio - Peoria, Illinois**

**The ninety cents stamp is known on five
other covers, - all sent to foreign destinations.**

In February, 1857, the postal department introduced perforations to its regular issues. The first was the three cents stamp; the last was the ninety cents stamp.

D.C. Dunn & Co.
Great Southern Stage Lines



The routes of this company were advertised on cover.

The two blocks of eight demonstrate the convenience of utilizing the new perforated stamps which arrived in the west late 1857.



Carried privately by Wells, Fargo & Co. from somewhere on the west coast, perhaps on the "Sonora", which left San Francisco January 20, 1859.

California to Hungary

m/s "Panama & via Liverpool" - placed in the New York mail. February 16 (1859) via Cunard "Asia" arrived Liverpool February 27 per Prussian Closed Mail "Aachen Franco" - arr Pest, Hungary, March 3

The 32 cents of total postage apparently is an overpayment of two cents of the 30 cents "Prussian Closed Mail" rate to Hungary. The sender apparently did not know the proper rate or have ten cents stamps. This "way" letter was never handstamped by a Wells, Fargo office, suggesting that it was taken near or on board ship.

The Santa Fe Trail was the first of the great western trails. Shortly after Mexican independence from Spain in 1821, William Becknell arrived in Santa Fe, Mexico with a modest assortment of goods.

Cantonment Leavenworth was established in 1827. As it contained the westernmost post office, it became the most used early postal facility. Moreover, it would become the most important military post in the west.

The earliest use of the word "Fort" Leavenworth

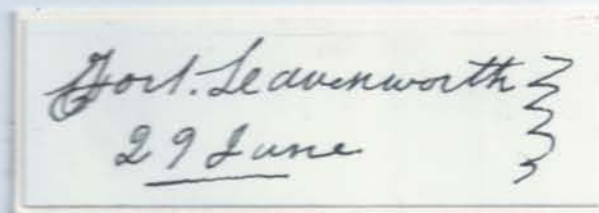
June 29, 1832



Fort Leavenworth, "Missouri Country" - St. Louis, Missouri
 150 - 400 miles rate: 18 3/4 cents

Despite a name change with the designation of Leavenworth as a Fort, the postmaster was instructed by Washington to continue the use of the word "Cantonment". This practice continued until the adoption of the first circular handstamp in 1839. Above is the only recorded exception in the time period.

Note: the postmaster started with "C" for Cantonment before changing to "Fort".

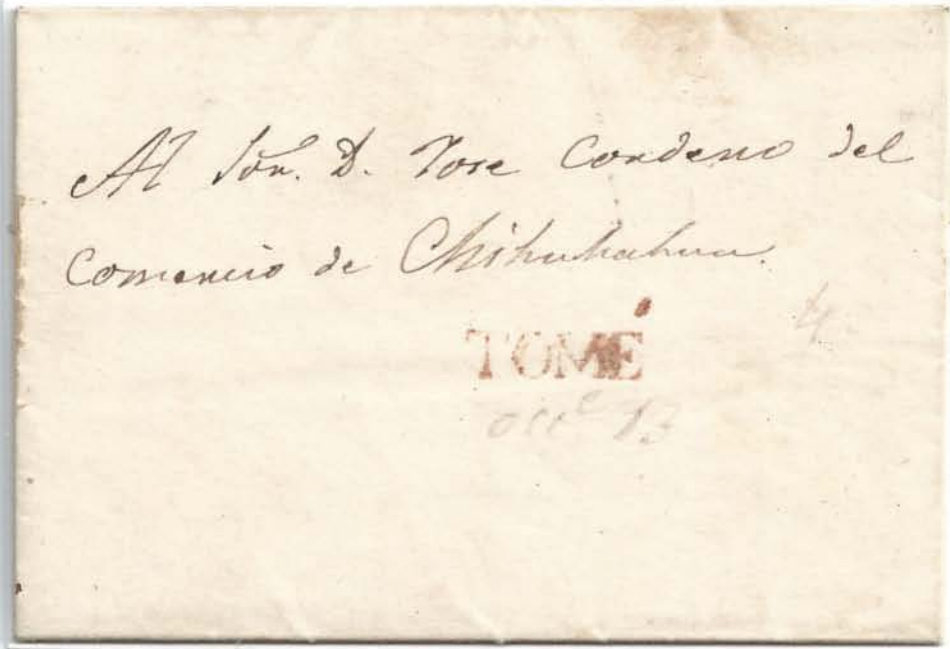


After Texas had begun to be populated by Americans, the natural westward progression was to the area now the State of New Mexico. Dispatched from Fort Levenworth, General Stephen Kearny and Company claimed this area for the United States in August, 1845.

At this time, of several post offices in the area, only two, -TOME' and Santa Fe used postmarks.

TOME' (Albuquerque)

Albuquerque Agosto 3. de 1845.



Sent August 5 - received August 13, 1845
rate: 4 Reales (Mexican Administration)

Apparently, the writer had difficulty with the spelling of the word "Albuquerque". The above cover is the basis for listing in The American Stampless Cover Catalogue.



Mexican postal authorities employed a "cordillera" system. Each municipal unit was responsible for forwarding / circulating mail to the next unit.



New Mexico Camp Calhoun December 12 1846



Camp Calhoun - carried privately on the Santa Fe Trail
Ft. Leavenworth - St. Louis - St. Genevieve, Mo.
double weight under 300 miles rate: 10 cents

These two covers were carried privately or by military courier east and west, respectively, through unorganized territory beyond the then western boundary of the United States.

"Santa Fe Batt"alion

September 8, 1848



Boonville, Mo. - Ft. Leavenworth - Independence, Mo.
Under 300 miles rate: 5 cents plus 5 cents forwarding fee.

Forwarded to a Lieutenant in the "Santa Fe Battalion", it was endorsed "If the troops are discharged at Independence, the P.M. will please forward to that office"

Triple Rate

The U.S. Express Mail

"The U.S. Express Mail" of the Post Office Department was established in 1842 ; it provided on-board route agents to compete with, and discourage private express companies from operating on railroads and steamboats . This department was discontinued in 1857.

Southbound

The Issue of 1847



Boston - Philadelphia
over 300 miles 10 cents x 3

Northbound

The Issue of 1851

May 15, 1852



New York - Providence
prepaid: 3 cents x 3

A 12 cents stamp was bisected to help make the rate.

General Stephen Kearny's Expedition

The First Organized Overland Mail

June, 1847

This trip was organized as result of a dispute between General Steven Kearny, California Military Governor, and Lieutenant John Fremont, Commandant of the California Battalion of the United States.

This would be the only U.S. overland mail until 1850.

*Pueblo de los Angeles
Upper California
May 20 1847*



Los Angeles May 20, 1847 - taken by Military Express May 31 to San Francisco
favor carried to Sacramento - carried free per General Kearny's Expedition
Arrive Ft. Leavenworth August 22 - Mississippi River Steamboat "Amelia"
Arrive St. Louis August 25 - USPO August 26 - Brooklyn, New York

Rates and postal markings:

Los Angeles - Ft. Leavenworth: Free

Ft. Leavenworth - St. Louis: "STEAM !0": (10 cents due)

St. Louis CDS August 26

Brooklyn, NY local delivery service: "1" cent due

The letter was sent to a girl by her brother, who was attached to the New York regiment stationed in Monterey. One of three recorded letters carried by this expedition.

"Gold Mania"

In 1848, gold was discovered in California. Those who could afford passage on a ship, usually took it. Many of the others, - walked !

"I am off for California"

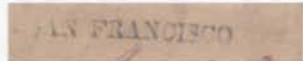
February 14, 1849



under 3000 miles rate: 10 cents collect
Sherman, Texas - overland - Trenton, N.J.

"I will start the first day of April next and take the route through the El Paso. . . . the distance from this point to the southern extremity of the Sierra Nevada or Snow Mountains will be over 859 miles & we will make this in about 40 days."

The First Day of the San Francisco Post Office



June 20, 1849



**This letter was sent by ship as the Overland Mail
Contracts were not yet in effect. 40 cents, collect**

The Woodson Contract, July 1, 1850 - June 30, 1854



Samuel Woodson and James Brown were awarded the first U.S. Mail Contract to establish a monthly service between the Missouri River and Salt Lake City. This letter was picked up at Ft. Kearny (undated).

The Chorpenning Contract, May 3, 1851 - April, 1859

May 5, 1852



Dateline "Society Islands May 5" - arr San Francisco July 16 per schooner "Emily Francis"
(probably hand delivered by a returning missionary)
USPO Sacramento City, August 1 - Salt Lake City, Utah Territory

George Chorpenning and Absal Woodward (who was killed by Indians in November, 1851) were awarded the first U.S. Mail Contract to establish a monthly service between Sacramento City and Salt Lake City.

The Mormon Trail, with some extensions and variations, was part of "The Oregon Trail", "The California Trail", "The Central Overland Route" as well as "The Pony Express Route".

At this time, Salt Lake City was within the boundaries of the California Territorial lands recently ceded by Mexico.

To Great Salt Lake City, California

June 7, 1850



Concordville, Pa. - "by way of Kanesville, Iowa" - "Great Salt Lake City, California"

As no transcontinental mail contracts yet existed, almost all westbound overland mail moved on wagon trains. Some was carried by Mormons via Kanesville, Iowa.

Although the trail had been used for a few years, with the aid of calculations made by Willam Clayton's The Latter-day Saints' Emigrants' Guide, the Mormons were the first to know where they were on the trail.

"To measure their daily travel, Harmon completed a roadometer and attached it to the wheel of a wagon by which we could tell each night the distance traveled through the day."

"The distance was all measured by the Pioneer company, from W.Q. (Winter Quarters: Kanesville, Iowa) to the Salt Lake, and posts set up every 10 miles."

The "State of Deseret"

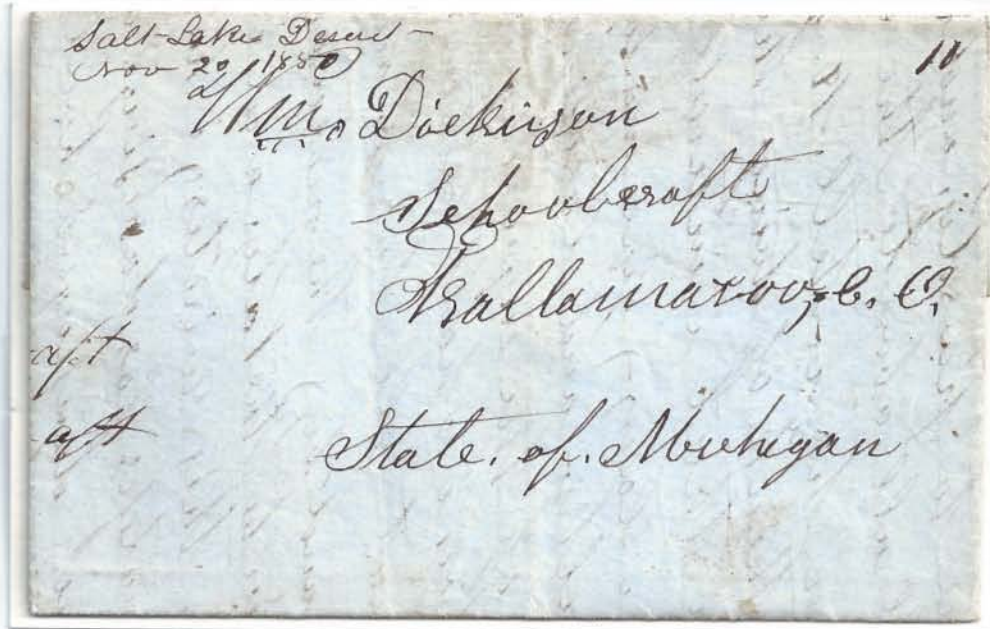
On March 4, 1849, the constitution for the provisional government of The State of Deseret was approved by the Mormons, and soon submitted to Congress for approval. As of September 9, 1850, Congress created portions of the requested area as Utah Territory, and as the State of California.

Salt Lake Deseret -

Thus, the State of Deseret was never recognized by the Federal Government.

First Eastbound Mail: "Salt Lake Deseret"

November 20, 1850



The first mail under the new government contract from Independence to Salt Lake City was received in early November; this received at the post office on November 20, and one or two others, are the only surviving covers of the first eastbound mail.

From France

August 29, 1851



Paris August 29 - "pr Valeur via l'Angleterre" - Liverpool, September 6 per Cunard "Europa"
Boston, September 17 - overland Via Independence, Mo. - Great Salt Lake City, "Deseret"

Prepaid 150 centimes (15 decimes) per British packet to Boston.
per July, 1851 rate change, U.S. inland under 3000 miles: 5 cents collect.

Not long after the establishment of the Panama Route, it became most expedient to have one's mail carried by express.

Berford & Co. began a coast to coast express in 1851 between New York and San Francisco, as well as connecting with Wm. Nelson and Co. in Panama City for service to the west coast of South America.

Berford & Company



m/s "Dated Aug 3 1852"
Forwarded by Wm. Nelson & Co. Panama to
'Ship Louisiana', Paipa", (north coast of Peru).
m/s August 28 1852; pencil m/s received Aug 30

Four covers bear their 40 cents rate, all to South America. The other three have four ten cents stamps. This is the only known usage of their 25 cents stamp on cover.

"This 40c prepaid rate was listed in the 'Table of Postage' in Berford's June 17, 1851, *New York Herald* advertisement."

- Siegel Auction Galleries, May 31, 2003.

Express Mail

“Via Panama”

Wells, Fargo & Co.



Wells, Fargo & Co would become the largest express carrier in the world. It operated from July, 1852 until 1895, when they determined that it would be uneconomical to carry the mails.

“The New York Red Shield”

March, 1855



Carried by Agent Greenfield, it was the “Duplicate” of an identical message sent by other means.

This is one of two recorded “New York Red Shield” cancels.

WELLS, FARGO & CO.'S CALIFORNIA EXPRESS.—
 A JOINT STOCK CO., Capital \$300,000.
 Office, No. 19 Wall St., New York.

Directors:
 Henry Wells, William G. Fargo,
 Johnston Livingston, James McKay,
 Hugh P. Williams, Alpheus Reynolds,
 Edwin B. Morgan, Alexander M. O. Smith,
 Henry D. Rice,
 EDWIN B. MORGAN, President,
 JAMES McKay, Secretary.

This Company, having completed its organization, as above, is now ready to undertake a general EXPRESS FORWARDING, AGENCY AND COMMISSION BUSINESS; the purchase and sale of Gold-dust, Bullion and Bills of Exchange; the Payment and Collection of Notes, Bills and Accounts; the Forwarding of Gold-dust, Bullion and Specie; also, Packages, Parcels, and Freights of all descriptions, in and between the city of New York and the city of San Francisco, and the principal cities and towns in California; connecting at New York with HARNDEN'S EXPRESS for Philadelphia and the South.

All FREIGHT for our EXPRESS from Philadelphia, should be left at Harnden's Express Office, Nos. 41 and 43 South THIRD Street.

We have established OFFICES and faithful Agents, in all the principal cities and towns throughout the Eastern, Middle and Western States, and California; energetic and faithful Messengers, furnished with iron chains for the security of treasure, and other valuable packages, accompanying each Express upon all our lines, as well in California as in the Atlantic States. Our Express is sent by every MAIL STEAMER, in charge of one of our own faithful Messengers, through to destination, going and coming with the regularity of the United States Mail.

Shippers will bear in mind the fact, that by a special arrangement with the Pacific Mail Steamship Co., our Express Freight takes precedence of all other, thereby avoiding the risk of detention on the Isthmus.

All Packages must be made Water Proof, and not exceed 125 lbs. weight, or 25 cubic feet measurement.

SAMUEL P. CARTER, for many years connected with the American Express Company, at Albany, and R. W. WASHBURN, late of the Bank of Syracuse, have been appointed principal Agents in California.

WELLS, FARGO & CO.

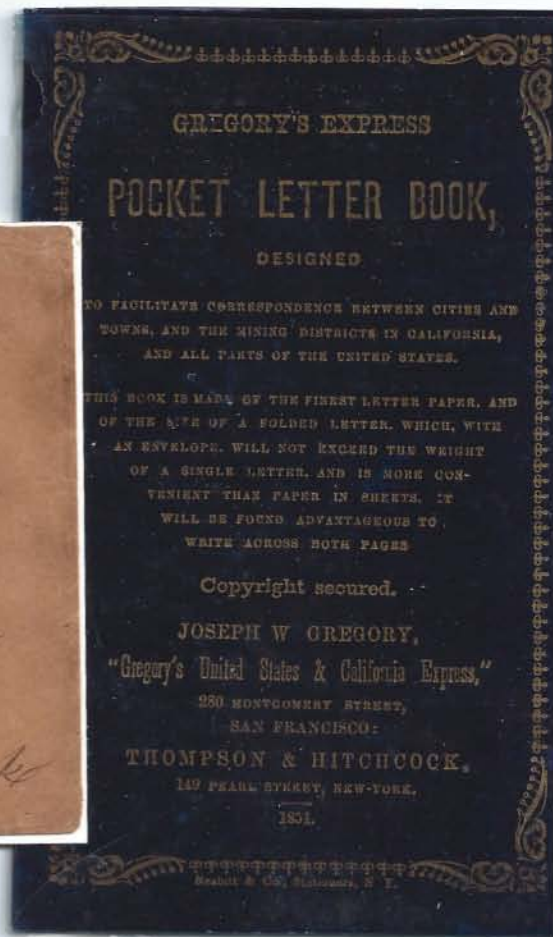
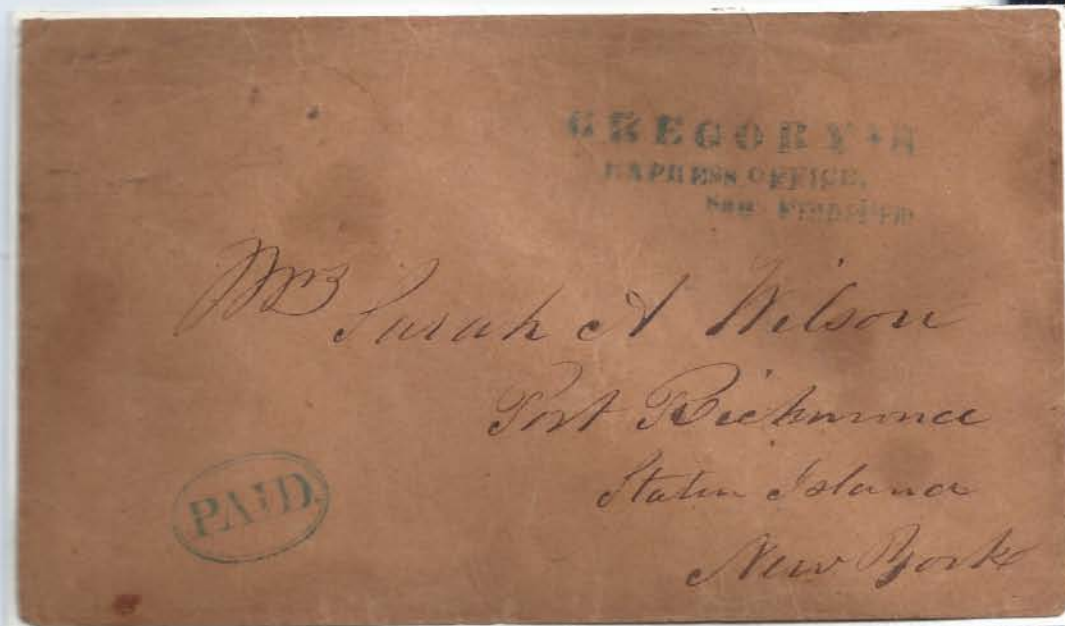
June 30, 1852

A New York City advertisement which heralded the opening of “Wells, Fargo & Co. California Express”

Express Mail

"Via Panama"

Gregory's Express



Gregory's Express operated from 1850 until early 1853.
 "Dispatched messages by every steamer leaving New York and San Francisco (via Panama) ... being invariably ahead of the mails."

The "PAID" oval indicates prepaid postage plus express charges.

1851 letter writing book (with envelope)

The Independent Line per "Uncle Sam"

September 1, 1854

Cornelius Vanderbilt opened routes across Nicaragua in 1851, and then "via Panama" to compete with the U.S. Mail Steamship Company and Pacific Mail Steamship Company which held the U.S. Mail Contract via Panama. His handstamps typically boasted "AHEAD OF THE MAILS".

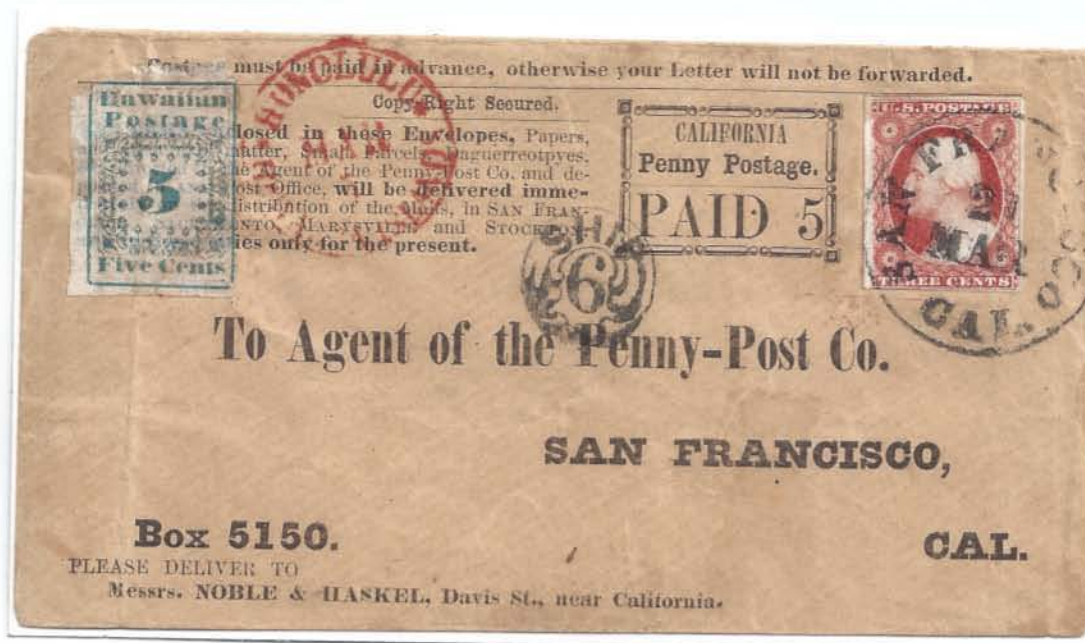


All non contract mails were given to the USPO at port of entry, in this instance, New York. rate: 6 cents as it was deposited in New York.

Although California had had communication with the “states” for several years, the U.S. postal system within the state was not able to adequately service the needs of the people. Consequently, private express companies flourished. As per postal regulations, U.S. postage had to be paid in addition to the private charges.

A Hawaiian “Missionary” Stamp used on Western Express Mail

California Penny Post Company



Honolulu, March 5, 1856 per “Yankee”
 arrived San Francisco March 20
 USPO March 21 - Penny Post box

Rates: The 5 cents “Missionary” stamp prepaid Hawaiian postage
 The “SHIP 6” represents 6 cents due for an unpaid port of entry delivery, including a 2 cents “Ship Captain Fee”.
 The “California Penny Postage / Paid 5” represents the delivery fee from the post office to the client.

The presence of the presence of the 3 cents stamp is unclear. The envelope had been taken to Hawaii by a client of the California Penny Post, who probably affixed the stamp there; yet, it was irrelevant, - the postage having been paid within “SHIP 6”.

This local San Francisco delivery company operated to and from the post office for about one year. In addition to local clients, it had offices in eight other towns for private service.

Section 8 The "Jackass Route"
 The Butterfield Route
 Central Overland Route
 The Pony Express

The "Jackass Route"

So named because some of it was by mule, the "Jackass" route operated from July, 1857 into 1859, and then partially until 1861. The official route went to or from San Antonio, Texas through El Paso, Tucson, Arizona, Fort Yuma and San Diego, California. Letters had to be inscribed "VIA SAN DIEGO" or the equivalent.

The First Eastbound Trip
 left San Diego August 9, 1857.



Philadelphia - via Panama - San Francisco - Benicia, Cal., July 31, 1857
 Forwarded "PAID 3" San Francisco, by ship - San Diego, August 9 - Fort Yuma

The Butterfield Overland Route

The first U.S. overland mail contract to singly connect San Francisco to the Mississippi River cities was awarded to John Butterfield. The traveled way was referred to as "The Butterfield Route", also called "The Southern Route". Because the 600 miles of "Jackass" roads between El Paso and Ft. Yuma were traversed by the Butterfield stages, beginning December 1, 1858, that portion of the "San Antonio - San Diego Contract" was discontinued. The remaining portions were increased to weekly service.



The Butterfield Overland Route

This was a biweekly service in operation from September, 1858 thru March, 1861 when, because of the Civil War, congress determined to move the overland mail route north to the Central Overland Route. "Butterfield" letters had to be inscribed "Overland" or the equivalent.

Overland "STEAM BOAT" to California

December 4, 1858



Originated on board an inland steamboat - Savannah - Memphis - Butterfield Stage

From Washington Territory



This is one of two recorded covers from Washington Territory.

At 2970 miles, it was approximately 900 miles longer than the Central Overland Trail, but the Butterfield route avoided the difficult winter task of crossing the Rocky Mountains.

The Butterfield Overland Route

The straightline "OVERLAND" marking was occasionally utilized. It directed that a letter be sent via the "Butterfield Route" vs. "Via Panama".



Butterfield Overland "Closed Mail"

Great Britain to Vancouver

May 5, 1859

Shortly after the Butterfield Contract began in September, 1858, Great Britain was granted permission to utilize this route by Closed Mail via New York (no New York marking). The Contract ended in April, 1861.



London May 5 - Liverpool May 6 - Lv Liverpool May 7 per Cunard "Canada"
 Arr Boston May 20 - Railroad to St. Louis - Butterfield Route
 Arr San Francisco June 18 - by ship to Victoria, Vancouver's Island

Rate: 29 cents = 1/2 £ = Great Britain did not have half penny stamps at this time; thus all mail of this rate to the North American West Coast was one half penny overpaid.

The Butterfield Overland Route

During the time period of the Butterfield contract, the postal rate was ten cents for delivery "over 3000 miles". One would think that letters such this to Indiana would be rated three cents as the distance from California was substantially less. Not so; the 3000 miles was determined not "as the crow flies", but rather by the actual length of the postal route, - in this case approximately 2970 miles. Therefore, only mail to or from St. Louis or shorter and their environs would be rated three cents.

The Marysville Six Horse Stage

(To Indiana - reated over 3000 miles)



The End of an Era

Hand Painted

February 28, 1861



With the anticipation of the Civil War, the army began to redeploy its troops from the southwest; therefore, in the spring of 1861, Butterfield horses and equipment were transferred north for use on the Central Overland Route.

During the period of the Butterfield Southern Overland Contract, mail was still being delivered under other contracts along the Central Overland Route.

George Chorpening had extended his contract to run between Placerville and Salt Lake City.

Ft. Bridger, Utah Territory

March 1, 1858



Of the few examples of this marking, this is the only one recorded on the 1851 imperforate issue. "Rec'd April 8", "Due 3".

"Via Placerville and Salt Lake"

March 5, 1861



Forbestown (near Placerville) - Washington, D.C.

"P.O.B."

"FREE"

(on Post Office Business as per terms of his contract)

A handful of Illustrated covers per this route are extant.

The "Mormon War"

To the "Army in Utah"

July 13, 1858



Greencastle, Indiana - Independence, Mo. - Route #8911 - Great Salt Lake City, U.T. - Camp Floyd
This letter was written before the sender could know that the addressee would be at Camp Floyd, not Salt Lake City.

it was divulged that Federal troops were on their way to remove Brigham Young as governor, as well as all other Mormon officials. Young threatened to burn Salt Lake City if troops came into the city, and indeed, he removed all the inhabitants. The troops arrived, but stopped east of the city at Camp Scott. A compromise was reached in mid-June, 1858, by which the troops moved straight through to the west on June 28, in order to establish Camp Floyd, which, ironically, was named after the Secretary of War, who had been a vigorous proponent of the strife.

Camp Floyd

February 11, 1859



docketed on back:
"Lieut Jno Edwards, Jr.
3d Reg U.S. Artillery
Camp Floyd U.S."

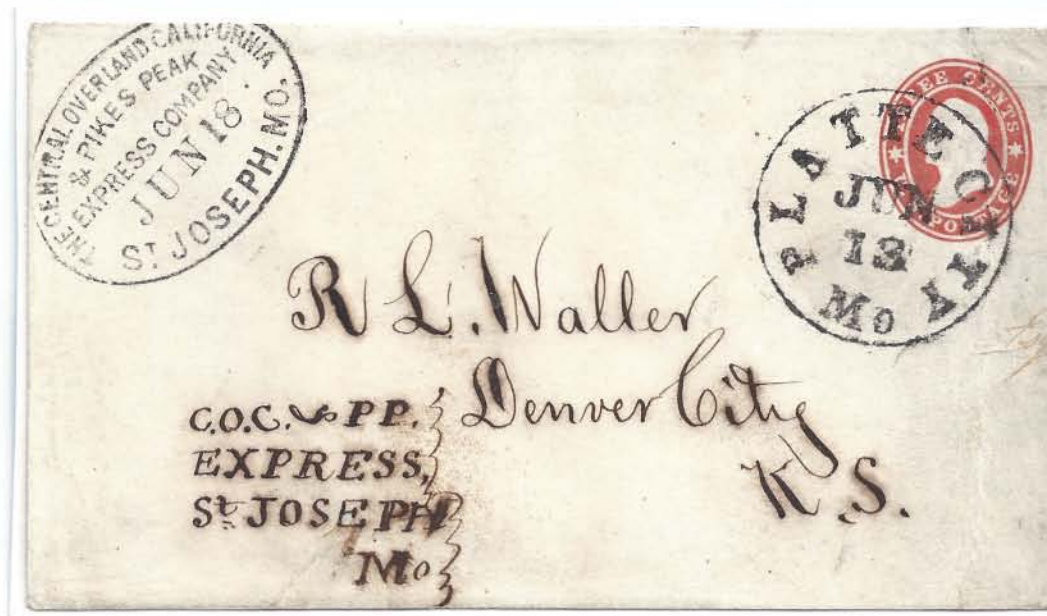
Camp Floyd, U.T. - docketed "via St. Joseph" on back
"rec'd March 21 1859". Portland Maine

In early 1860, Hockaday and Smoot sold their contract to The Central Overland and Pikes Peak Express Co.

The Central Overland Route

Westbound to Denver City, then Kansas Territory

June 13, 1860



USPO Platte City, Missouri June 13 - St. Joseph P.O.
picked up by COC&PP - Denver City, Kansas Territory

The Central Overland California & Pikes Peak Express Company (COC&PP) was the primary contractor on the existing route Central Overland Route 8911, now renumbered 10773 to run from a point on the Missouri River to Placerville, California.

Eastbound to Philadelphia

Circa 1860



Denver City, Kansas Territory November 6 - Leavenworth City, Kansas Territory USPO November 10 - Philadelphia
One of three recorded with this label.

With the onset of the Civil War, a new transcontinental mail contract was awarded. By terms, it was to commence "on or before July 1, 1861"

The First Westbound Trip

The first westbound mail service left St. Joseph on July 1st, and arrived in San Francisco July 18th.



North Gage, New York June 25. - St. Joseph, Missouri July 1
arrived San Francisco July 18 - "Rec'd July 19, 1861"

Peru to New York - Overland by Stagecoach !!!!



Lima, Peru September 29, 1861 - received at Panama, October 7
San Francisco, October 26 - overland - New York, November 18

The one dinero stamp paid internal Peruvian postage. "Franca" (postage paid to Panama)
"SHIP 12" = 2 cents Captain's Fee plus 10 cents U.S. Transcontinental postage

The unanswered question is: Why did this letter which was paid to Panama and should have continued on to New York from there, get rerouted to San Francisco ?

The Transcontinental Pony Express

Beginning in April, 1860, a privately funded "Pony Express" system was conceived and operated by The Central Overland and Pikes Peak Express Company; its goal was to reduce mail delivery time from about one month to approximately ten days.

The first marking:

St. Joseph, Missouri "Running Pony" Strike for sending and receiving

May 20, 1860



The Cuba Pony

September 5, 1860

This is the only "Pony" cover to have originated outside of the USA.

It is an invoice for 137,550 Cuban cigars!



Havana, Cuba September 5	-	privately carried	-	New York
Duncan Sherman & Co., Forwarder	-	Central Overland Express Co.	-	San Francisco
(red "California Pony Express" handstamp applied)	-	railroad	-	St. Joseph
(3 cents stamp applied)	-	Pony Express	-	San Francisco

The San Francisco Daily Herald and Record of Tuesday, April 16, 1861 reported: "Wells, Fargo & Co. have received a transfer of the Pony Express and everything referring thereto from W.H. Russell ... The Pony will leave the office of Wells, Fargo & Co. on Wednesday and Saturday of each week."

Within a week of assuming the operation of the Pony Express, Wells, Fargo & Co. issued \$2 and \$4 prepayment stamps for west > east usage only.

Two and Four Dollars Pony Stamps

June 26, 1861



San Francisco, June 26 - Pony Express - USPO St. Joseph, Mo., July 8 - New York
This triple rate cover is the only one known to bear a four dollars green "Pony" stamp.

Daily Alta California.
SAN FRANCISCO, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26.

PONY EXPRESS NOTICE,
For the Service Commencing July 1 61.
Placerville to St. Joseph.

THE OVERLAND MAIL COMPANY'S "PONY EXPRESS" will be dispatched, regularly, FROM THE OFFICE OF THEIR AGENTS, AT PLACERVILLE, ON TUESDAY, THURSDAY, and SATURDAY, OF EACH WEEK, Commencing on Monday, July 1st.

ALL LETTERS must be enclosed in Ten Cent Government Stamped Envelopes, and Prepaid, at the rate of One Dollar for each half-ounce, or any fraction thereof.

MESSRS. WELLS, FARGO & CO. HAVE BEEN APPOINTED AGENTS, and Letters will be received and delivered at their Offices.
WM. BUCKLEY,
San Francisco, Cal. M. Co.

Westbound and eastbound June 26th advertisements of new service between San Francisco and Placerville, partially by rail, and then between Placerville and St. Joseph by "pony".

note: additional 20 cents special service charge included the 10 cents U.S. stamped envelope.

➡ (see next page)

Pony Express Notice,
FOR SERVICE COMMENCING JULY 1, 1861.
MESSRS. WELLS, FARGO & CO.
WILL RUN A
PONY EXPRESS
BETWEEN
SAN FRANCISCO AND PLACERVILLE,
REGULARLY, ON
MONDAY,
WEDNESDAY,
and FRIDAY,
OF EACH WEEK,
Leaving their Office at 3:45 P. M., on those days, and Connecting with the Overland Mail Company's Pony Express at Placerville.

LETTERS MUST BE ENCLOSED IN OUR TWENTY-CENT GOVERNMENT FRANKED ENVELOPES, and Charges FROM PLACERVILLE PREPAID, AT THE RATE OF ONE DOLLAR FOR EACH HALF-OUNCE, OR ANY FRACTION THEREOF.

All Letters not enclosed as above will be charged at the rate of 25 cents each.

Je26 **WELLS, FARGO & CO.**

The Transcontinental Pony Express

Beginning July 1, 1861, the USPO subsidized the "Pony Express" for \$1 million with the stipulation that the rate be reduced to \$1 per 1/2 ounce. Wells, Fargo & Co. issued three new stamps: \$1 red, \$2 green and \$4 black.

"The Pony that went both ways"

First, westbound, then eastbound



Folsom July 3 - Pony Express - Sacramento July 4 - Pony Express
 Folsom - St. Joseph, Missouri - USPO - Mapena Village, New York

This is one of the two recorded to have been carried on the first run after the rate change.

The Unique One and Two Dollar Pony Stamps Cover

August 3, 1861



At some point during the summer of 1861, the government must have enforced that there be a U.S. stamp for each single rate "Pony" stamp; thus, one ten cent stamp is presumed missing. Repaired tear upper left, free of stamps.

A \$4 black stamp was introduced to pay a little used two ounce rate.

One other cover exists of the same date and correspondence.

FORWARDED BY
McGRUER & MERRILL,
SAN FRANCISCO.

*U. S. Consulate
Honolulu, Hawaii*



To The Hon. J. F. Johnson, Auditor of the Treasury,
Washington D.C.

*"Pony"
Trans. by
regular mail*



Green Seal: "Consulate USA Honolulu, Oahu H.I."

The ship "Yankee" left Honolulu July 17, 1861
It arrived in San Francisco August 7.
Forwarded by McGruer & Merrill to the Pony Express
Left San Francisco August 10, arrived St Joseph August 23
U.S. Mail - Washington, D.C.

c

As this was official correspondence,
no U.S. postage was needed.

The Transcontinental Pony Express

Beginning mid-September, 1861, Atchison, Kansas became the last eastern terminus of the Pony Express. The mail was then taken across the Missouri River by the Steamboat "Denver", and placed aboard the eastbound St. Joseph & Atchison Railroad.

Per Prussian Closed Mail to Schleswig - Holstein

September 14, 1861



San Francisco, September 14 - Pony Express - USPO Atchison, Kansas September 27
Leave New York October 5, per HAPAG "Saxonia" - Arrive Southampton, October 17 - Prussian Closed Mail
Aachen, October 19 - Danish PO Hamburg, October 20 - Holstein, October 22

Postal rates: 30 cents paid all to the outer Prussian border (7 cents credit to Prussia and Belgium).
4 Danish Rigsbank Skilling (red crayon) postage due at Holstein which was then part of Denmark and outside the German-Austrian Postal Union.

This is the first exhibit to contain all six of the "Pony" stamps on cover.
It is the first time that they have ever been together.

The Last Days of the Pony Express

"The Garter"

October 11, 1861

The "Garter" type stamp is known used between August 29th and October 26th, 1861 for westbound deliveries. Only four covers are verified bearing this stamp and this is the only multiple as well as the only multiple on any Pony Express cover.

A complete analysis entitled "GETTING UP THE GARTER" appeared in Western Express April, 1986 pp 11 -16, by this writer.



Boston October 11 - carried by
Wells, Fargo & Co. - railroad
- Atchison, Kansas -
Pony Express - San Francisco

Rate: \$1.00 per 1/2 ounce
This cover weighed
almost two ounces.

The Transcontinental Telegraph was completed on October 24th. What had taken the "Pony" 10 - 15 days could now be accomplished in a matter of minutes. Within days, the "Pony" was no more.

Section 9
The Civil War
Western Mails 1860's
Transcontinental Railroad

The Civil War had major ramifications upon the postal system. Confederate raiders were a reason why The Butterfield Overland Contract was rescinded and the route switched to the Central Overland. Southern confiscation of postal, express and telegraph facilities caused great strain upon the ability of the country to function.

A representation of what happened from a postal point of view is reasonably sequentially demonstrated by the next 12 covers. Eight of these went to or through Union lines, - the others vital to the storyline.

Confederate Sympathy

April 30, 1861

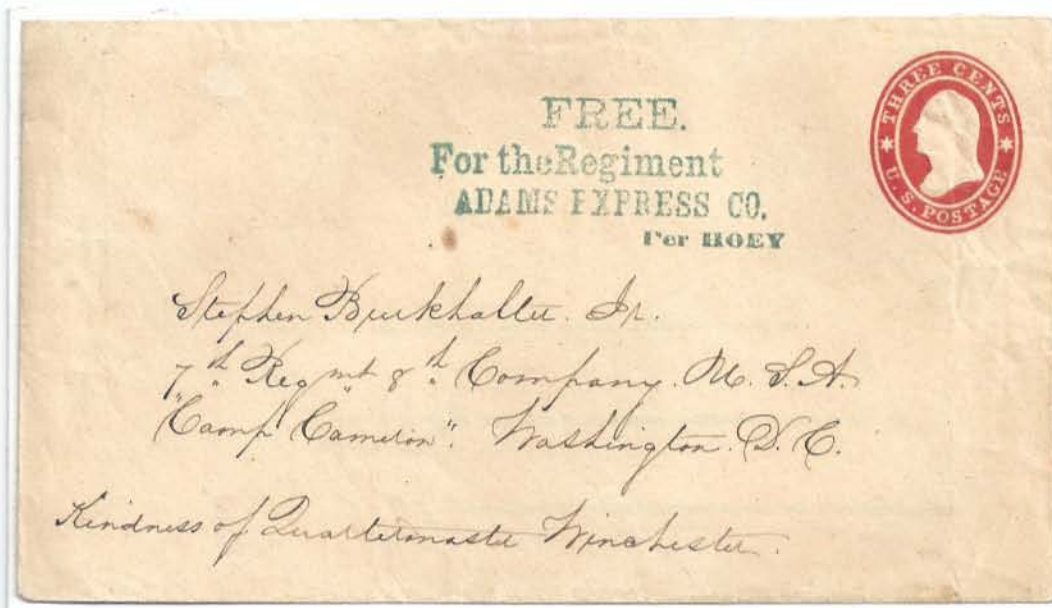


Hot Springs, Arkansas - Central Overland Route - Portland, Oregon

Formal war commenced on April 20th with the shelling of Ft Sumter. as Arkansas did not secede until May 6th, it was still part of the Union. This is the only Confederate "Patriotic" cover to the west coast.

"Adams Express Company
 Free for the Regiment"

Circa, late April. 1861



Early in the war, the New York 7th Regiment was temporarily sent to Washington; southbound mail into Washington was halted because of destruction to Rail facilities. For a few weeks, Adams Express carried Regimental mail gratis to the care of the Regiment Quartermaster. These were specifically authorized by Company manager, John Hoey.

"Mail Suspended"

As of May 31, 1861



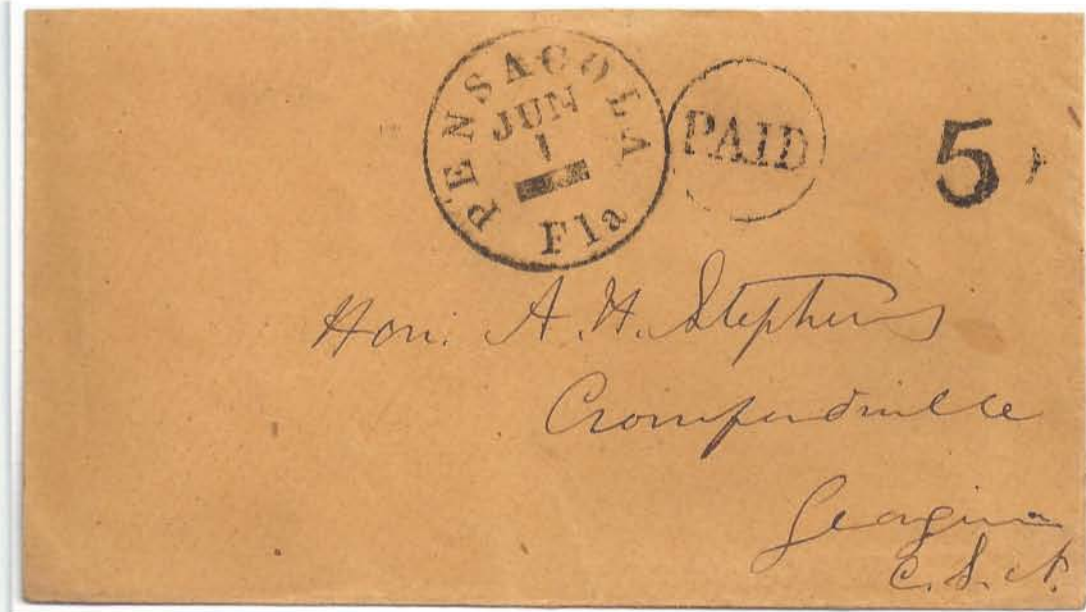
Reading, Pa. - addressed to Minden, La. - U.S. Dead Letter Office, Washington - returned to writer.

As of May 31, 1861, exchange mail had been officially suspended by the U.S. PMG;

Noted on the side: "This is historical, showing the date that the mails suspended before the war. (Not quite correct, teacher!) L. D. (the addressee) had been a pupil of mine and had written to me. But my reply (postmarked June 21, 1862) was returned to me. R.D. Griscom"

First Day of Confederate Mail Service

June 1, 1861



Pensacola, Fla. - to Vice-President Stephens, Crawfordville, Ga. C.S.A.

A few first day covers recorded from Florida.

"Southern Letter Unpaid"

June 11, 1861



Montinas, Ga., C.S.A. "Paid 5" - Louisville, Ky, June 27 - Keene, N.H.

Although U.S. PMG had banned exchange of mail, a large quantity of northbound mail accumulated at Louisville by the latter part of June. On the 24th, Louisville PM Speed was advised to forward the letters after removing the now invalid postage. Instead, he applied a "Southern Letter Unpaid" handstamp. June 27 is considered the earliest legitimate date.

To ensure compliance of invalidating the old stamps, a new issue was ordered. Northern postal patrons were required to use the new issue as soon as supplies arrived at the various post offices; this process lasted from mid-August into early 1862.

Old Stamps Not Recognized

October 14, 1861

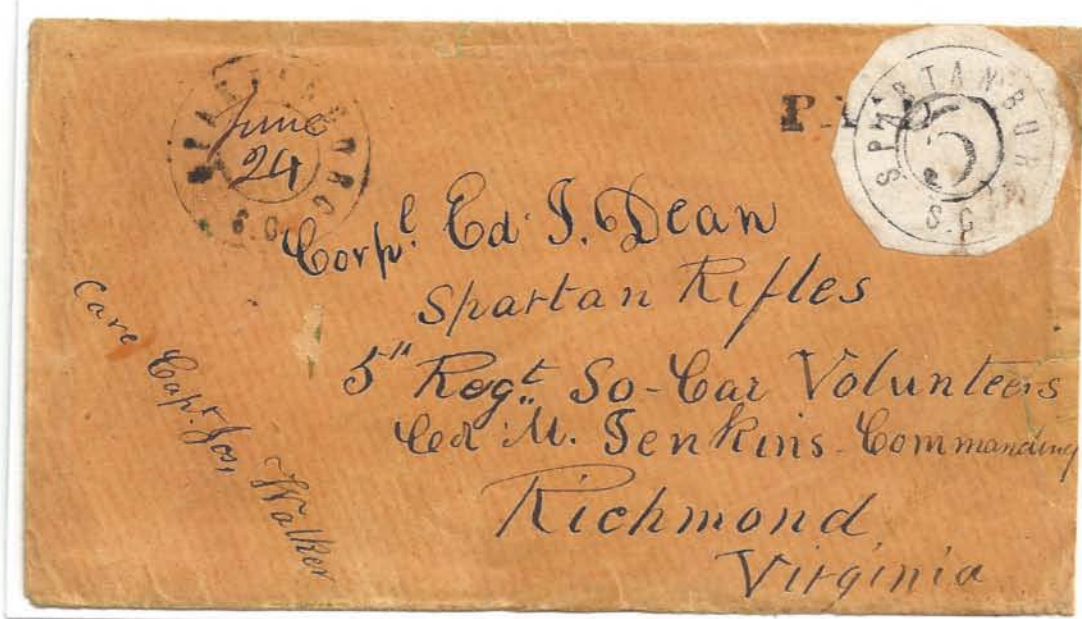


South Manchester, Conn. - Adamsville, N.Y.

The sender was required to purchase new one cent stamps, which were then pasted over the demonetized issue. (type II, plate 12, issued January, 1861 - signed Ashbrook)

Spartanburg, South Carolina Provisional

June 24, 1861



Spartanburg, S.C., C.S.A. - Richmond, Va., C.S.A.

Written on the back: "The honorable Post Master of Richmond, Virginia will win the gratitude of many of the daughters of South Carolina by his kindness in promptly forwarding letters to the volunteers who have left their homes to defend Virginia".

A Conjunctive Usage

Petersburg, Virginia Provisional

February 6, 1862

First Confederate General Issue



Petersburg, Va., C.S.A. - Van Buren, Ark., C.S.A.

The first stamps were distributed beginning October 16, 1861; perhaps, this was the last general issue stamp on hand, so the Postmaster used one of his remaining provisional stamps to fulfill the rate.

This is one of four recorded Confederate conjunctive usages.



Luk Fah Tah, C.N. - Confederate mail route 409 - Eagletown, C.N.

The Department of Indian Territory was formed November 22, 1861. This is a military letter sent by Col. Peter Pitchlynn, the Principal Chief of the Choctaw Nation; it is the only surviving town-named example of the Confederate PO in slave-owning Indian Nations.



Charleston, S.C. - carried across the Mississippi River - "Via Shreveport" - Kingston, La.

"The Mississippi River and inland waterway routes were essential lifelines within the Confederacy. Early in the war, Federal naval strategy focused on control of the Mississippi, and by the spring of 1862, key port cities were captured by Federal forces, giving them control of the river. With the Southern states divided between East and West, the Confederate government was forced to devise special measures to maintain communication . . . By October, 1863, PMG Regan secured a contract to have mail carried across the Mississippi River at the rate of 40 cents per 1/2 ounce." *Auction Catalogue # 823, R.A. Siegel*. Shreveport was one of two western terminal points.

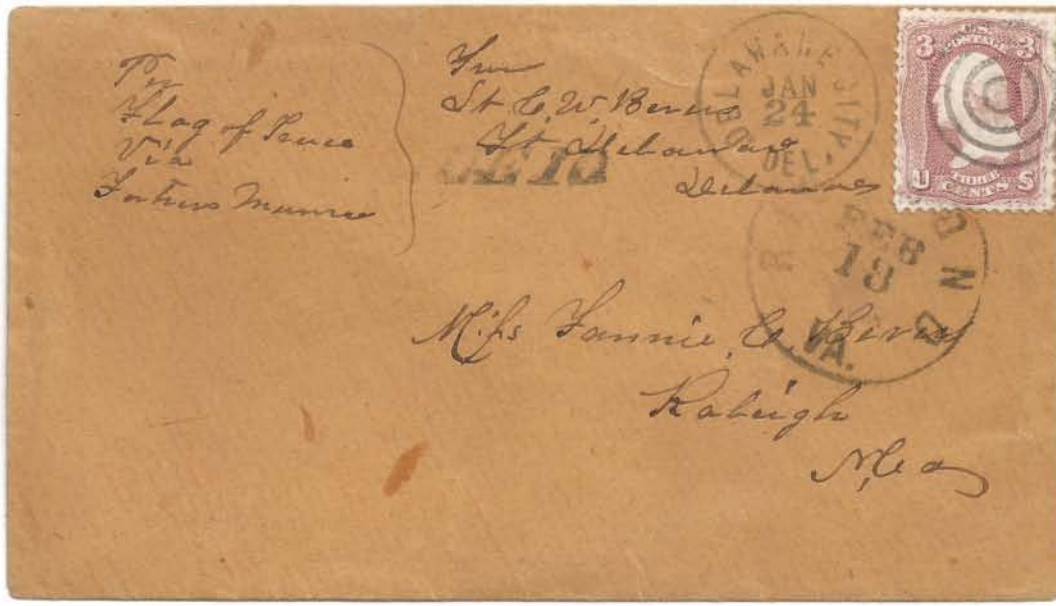
“By Flag of Truce”

Civil War

During the course of the war, certain places were designated as “exchange points” for prisoners and POW mail etc. Mail was to be inscribed “By Flag of Truce” or similar.

From a Confederate POW

January 24, 1865



From Ft. Delaware - "Via Fortress Monroe"
Richmond, Virginia, February 18 - Raleigh, North Carolina

U.S. 3 cents paid; C.S.A. "DUE 10"

To a Confederate POW

December 6, 1864



From Tarboro, N.C. "10th Feby / 65 Exchanged"
i.e. the prisoner had already been exchanged; therefore,
there was no reason to attempt collection of Union postage.

C.S.A. 10 cents paid

The small balance of this exhibit is dedicated to the further development of western mails, The Transcontinental Railroad, and foreign mails facilitated by the Railroad.

Nevada Territory

Circa 1862



Esmeralda, N.T. - either 1862 or 1863 - Mukwonago, Wisconsin
(The stamp was issued in August, 1861; the transcontinental rate was reduced from 10 cents to 3 cents effective June 30, 1863.)

From Saxony per Prussian Closed Mail Overland to Nevada

July 3, 1865



Freiberg, Saxony July 3	-	Aachen July 4	"	"Via England"
Leave Queenstown July 6	per Inman Line	"City of Washington"	-	New York July 17
USPO	-	Central Overland Route	-	Virginia City, Nevada

Rate: 28 cents to or from anywhere in the U.S. to or from most German States

12 Neugroschen in stamps (28.8 cents) paid the rate. 23 cents credit to U.S. because the Inman line had been contracted as an American packet.
"10 (silbergroschen) WF" = "Weiter Franco" or "Further franking" paid.

The "Virginia City Pony Express"

The "Virginia Pony" was in operation from September, 1862 until spring, 1865, when it was discontinued because of improved roads for regular stage coach runs. In addition to the required 3 cents government postage, Wells, Fargo & Co. initially charged 10 cents, but increased to 25 cents in early 1863, changing the stamp color to blue; in 1864, the color was changed to red.

The primary purpose of the "Virginia City Pony Express" was to expedite business correspondence between the gold and silver regions of Western Nevada Territory and San Francisco. Theretofore, mail delivery took approximately forty four hours; this express reduced the time to approximately twenty four hours.



The route :
from Virginia City, N.T.
by pony - Placerville, Cal.
by train - Sacramento
by boat - San Francisco

Winter Express Mail Delivery by Snow-shoe in the High Sierra Nevada Mountains

In the late 1850's and again in the latter 1860's, a few men delivered Express Mail utilizing skis to traverse the trails which were otherwise impassable. The most prominent two were John "Snowshoe" Thompson and Granville Zackariah.



Thompson's Carson Valley Express

operated between Genoa and Placerville 1857-1858.

This cover was carried about 80 miles from Carson Valley (then Utah Territory) to Auburn towards the beginning of winter snows in the High Sierras.

Taken along the way and brought into the Carson Valley (then Utah Territory) Post Office. U.S.P.O. - Auburn, California
The role of Wells, Fargo & Co. is uncertain.

This is the only example of the red handstamp.

c



Zack's Snow - Shoe Express



Granville Zackariah ran his one-man Express 1865 - 66 along the Gibsonville Ridge between Downieville and Laporte.

"Zack" brought this letter into the Downieville Post Office and posted to Howland Flat (near Port Wine).

c

This "Paid" frank is considered to be unique.

Holladay Overland Mail and Express Company

Ben Holladay had loaned COCPM some \$208,000, which they could not repay; on March 2, 1862, Holladay acquired the company at auction. His original route ran between Placerville, California and Atchison, Kansas. Known as "the stagecoach king", he reorganized Salt Lake City mail, and had routes into six Territories.

October 28, 1866



Virginia City, Montana Territory, October 28 - overland
USPO Levenworth, Kansas, November 12 - Independence, Missouri

California to Canada - "OVERLAND"

February 26, 1868



Through March, 1868: the rate between anywhere
in the USA and anywhere in Canada: 10 cents

Building The Transcontinental Railroad

After much congressional bickering, a route was authorized as between Omaha and Sacramento in July, 1862. It would be almost seven years before it was finished. The route did not exactly follow the "Pony" trail, but rather, was more closely to the emigrant trail of the 1850's; noteworthy, it did NOT run through the two largest cities of the western desert, Denver and Salt Lake City.

The Central Pacific Railroad was building track eastwards from Sacramento.



The Pacific Union Express Co. had a close working relationship with the Central Pacific Railroad.



The Union Pacific was building track westwards from Omaha City, Nebraska.



USPO Erie, Pennsylvania October 18, 1868 - railroad to St. Louis - Omaha City
Union Pacific Railroad - Green River, Wyoming Territory - Echo City, Utah Territory
The addressee was a Union Pacific Division Engineer who had probably sent his family a supply of Wells, Fargo & Co. envelopes. Evidently, he had been moved ahead to Echo City.

Early Partial Railroad Usage for the Western Mails

October 30, 1867

SAN LEANDRO



Bamber & Co's Express, San Leandro, California - Wells, Fargo & Co. - San Francisco overland by coach
 Union Pacific Terminus - USPO, Omaha City, Nebraska, November 13 - by train - Middlesex, Connecticut

To Germany through Verviers and Cologne

November 10, 1868



rate: 15 cents
 as of January, 1868

San Francisco, November 10 - Leave New York November 28 per Inman Line "City of Baltimore" arrive
 Queenstown December 8 Liverpool, December 9 - closed mail via Verviers, December 11 Cologne -
 Demnitz December 12 forwarded to Berlin - "Lindenstrasse 81"

Almost Finished

The linking of the Central Pacific and Union Pacific railroads would be May 10, 1869. The agreed place was Promontory, Utah Territory.



The sender was probably with the advance construction team. Because Promontory was in the middle of a desert, there was no post office; the only possible marking would be a docketing as shown, with Wells, Fargo & Co. carrying by stage coach to the Union Pacific railhead.

This March 31st cover is the only one known to have been endorsed from Promontory.

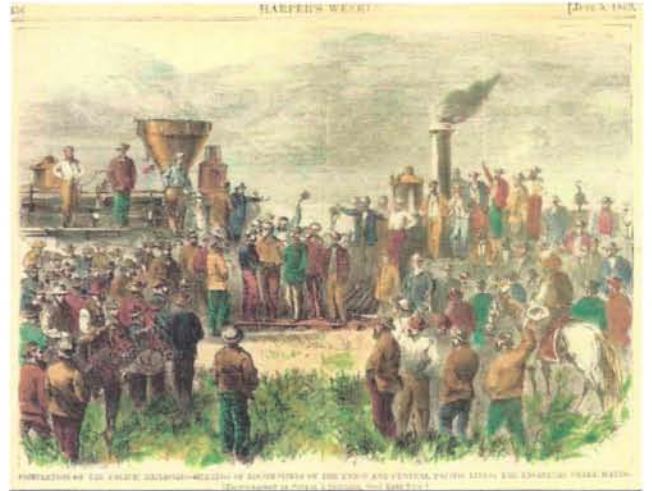
Completion of the Transcontinental Railroad

May 10, 1869

The Photo



Harpers Weekly June 5th

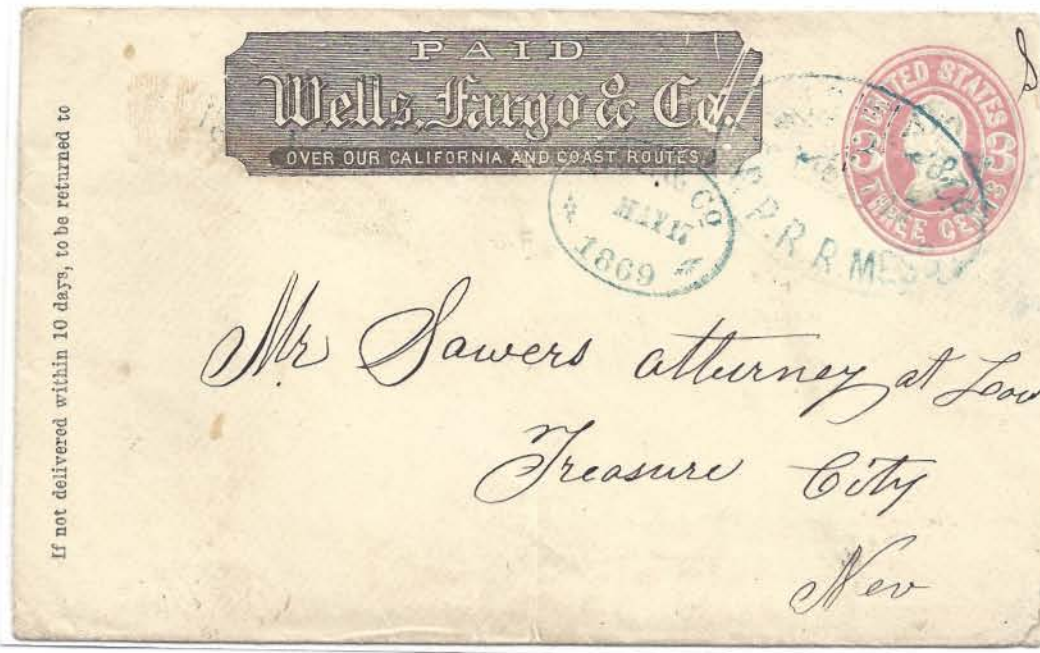


The only known surviving cover to have been posted on the special train of the first day.

When it was all over, The Central Pacific had laid 690 miles of track, and The Union Pacific had laid 1,087 miles.

Inaugural Transcontinental Railroad Mail

Regular Freight and Mail Service



“C.P.R.R. MESS”

Central Pacific Railroad Messenger

Given to Wells, Fargo & Co. messenger aboard the Central Pacific

Just before Elko, Nevada, A Wells, Fargo agent transferred the letter to their office in Treasure City (1869-1873) some miles to the south.

This may have been the first eastbound trip.

Service began on May 15th between Sacramento and Chicago. At first, there was one train daily each way. Westwards, it was called the “Pacific Express”, and eastwards it was called the “Atlantic Express”. Apparently, Wells, Fargo & Co. placed a messenger aboard eastbound Central Pacific Trains which traveled to meet the Union Pacific trains.

United States Contract Mail Service



Contract mail service did not begin until July 4, 1869.

This cover was posted on July 5th at Black Point, California, and probably carried on July 6th. The back stamp in Picton, located in the eastern part of Canada, is July 14, only eight days later.

The last page of this exhibit presents early international mail carried on the Transcontinental Railroad.
 What had taken sixty+ days only two decades earlier was now accomplished in one week.

Eastbound to Luxemburg

September 1, 1869



British Packet rate:
 15 cents per Closed Mail

The circular "PAID ALL" indicated that the balance was paid in cash.

No postal markings are on the back as most paper has been replaced.

*Madame Peil Vettgast
 Luxemburg
 Grand Duché Luxemburg*

San Francisco September 1 - Transcontinental Railroad - Leave New York September 8 per Cunard "China"
 Arrive Queenstown September 17 - Closed mail - "Grand Duché Luttembourg"

Westbound to Hong Kong, then forwarded to Manila

October 23, 1869



Transpacific rate:
 10 cents per half ounce,
 double weight

Boston October 23 per Robert Storer, Forwarding Agent - Transcontinental Railroad - Leave San Francisco per Pacific Mail SS "America" November 4 - Yokahama - Amoy - Swatow - Arrive Hong Kong December 9
 Thomas Hunt & Co. Forwarding Agent - carried privately - Manila, Philippines December 18