

# VERMONT'S STAMPLESS ERA

From the establishment of its initial postal system in 1784 throughout the entire Stampless Era, Vermont was a rural and thinly populated state. It contained less than 80,000 persons at the start of the Era and still had only 314,000 at its close. Its people were scattered among many small villages, for at the peak of population a mid-sized Vermont post office still had just 320 patrons (and many of those were children or illiterates who sent and received little or no mail). Even at the Era's end, only eight Vermont towns held over 3,000 people; Burlington alone among them surpassed the 4,000 mark.

While Vermont thus lacked both the population and the commercial activity found in major urbanized centers, its many small Stampless Era offices still created much to interest and challenge students of postal history. This exhibit illustrates the unfolding and developments of Vermont's Stampless Era through an examination of its most elusive and unusual postal markings and usages, as well as several relevant original documents.

That story of Vermont's Stampless Era is shown here as follows:

- I. The Republic of Vermont
- II. Earliest U.S. Mails
- III. A Typical Office's Activity
- IV. Townmarks
  - Straightline
  - Oval
  - Fancy
  - Circular
  - Attached and Enclosed Rates
- V. Paid and Rate Markings
- VI. Free Mail Privileges
- VII. Special Rates and Usages
- VIII. Foreign Mail
- IX. Transition to the Stamp Era

The markings and research in this exhibit have furnished many articles for The Vermont Philatelist. Discoveries shown here also have been reported through numerous new and modified listings in The American Stampless Cover Catalogue (ASCC). Much of the subject matter in this exhibit also is covered in detail in the Postal History of Vermont (VPH), to which interested viewers are referred.

## THE REPUBLIC OF VERMONT

After first having been fought over between France and Britain, today's Vermont then was claimed by both the Colonies of New York and New Hampshire up to (and in New York's case throughout) the American Revolution. Led by the Green Mountain Boys, Vermont effectively resolved matters for itself by declaring an Independent Republic in 1777. It defended that independence for 14 years before becoming a state in 1791.

Until the Republic of Vermont established its own postal system in 1784, it had no organized mails at all, for it lay outside the sphere of both the British and the later Confederation posts. Thus the only letters sent or received by its scattered settlers in its earliest years were those carried by private favor.



Mount Independence 1777

**Vermont's Earliest Letter**

This is the earliest known letter sent within what now is Vermont as well as the only one pre-dating establishment of Vermont's Republic mails in 1784. It went by private favor to his wife in New Hampshire from the adjutant of a commanding general at this key fortification on Lake Champlain. The letter left Mount Independence just weeks before General Burgoyne's invasion from Canada forced an American retreat.

## THE REPUBLIC OF VERMONT

The Republic of Vermont's independent mail system operated continuously from 1784 until statehood in 1791. It had only five offices and no covers bearing its postal markings are known. Possibly it simply conveyed its limited mails without any. Only about five Vermont covers from this period are reported.



Brattleborough 1787

### Earliest Republic Period Letter

Brattleborough had one of the five Republic post offices. Dated April 11, 1787, this cover is Vermont's earliest known mail during its Republic period. Absence of any Confederation postal markings despite a Boston destination indicates that it was carried "by favor" - still a common practice even in places enjoying postal service.



Bennington 1787

**Second Earliest Republic Letter**

Dated Sept. 11, 1787, this is the second reported piece of Republic period mail. It also is the earliest known item from Bennington, which had the first post office established by Vermont. This letter could not have been carried by Vermont's postal system - it operated only internally and had no route running to Williamstown, Massachusetts.



To Salisbury 1790

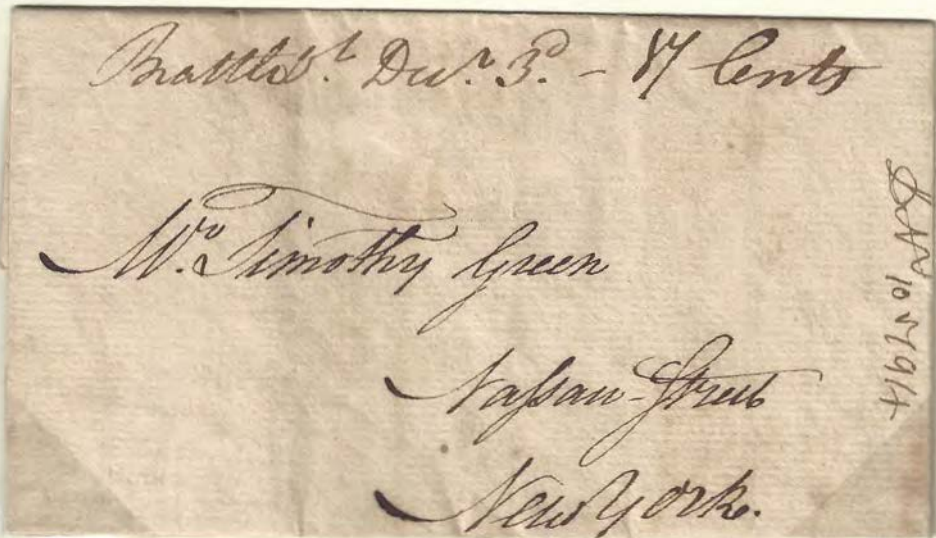
**Last Known Republic Period Mail**

Sent in the last full year of Vermont's independence, this the latest known cover from the Republic period. Although it is docketed in 1790, the letter portion is missing, so it is unclear whether it originated in the Republic of Vermont or in some other state. Because Salisbury had no Republic post office, it must have been carried outside the mails.

## EARLIEST U.S. MAILS

Vermont's admission as the 14th State, effective March 4, 1791, resulted in extension of the U.S. mails from Albany to Bennington. Apparently little else was done until mid-1792, when four routes were created serving seven new Vermont U.S. post offices. The record is silent as to whether Vermont informally continued operating its own system during the interim period.

There are only about 12 reported 1700's U.S. postmarks from Vermont, six of which are shown here.



Brattleborough 1794

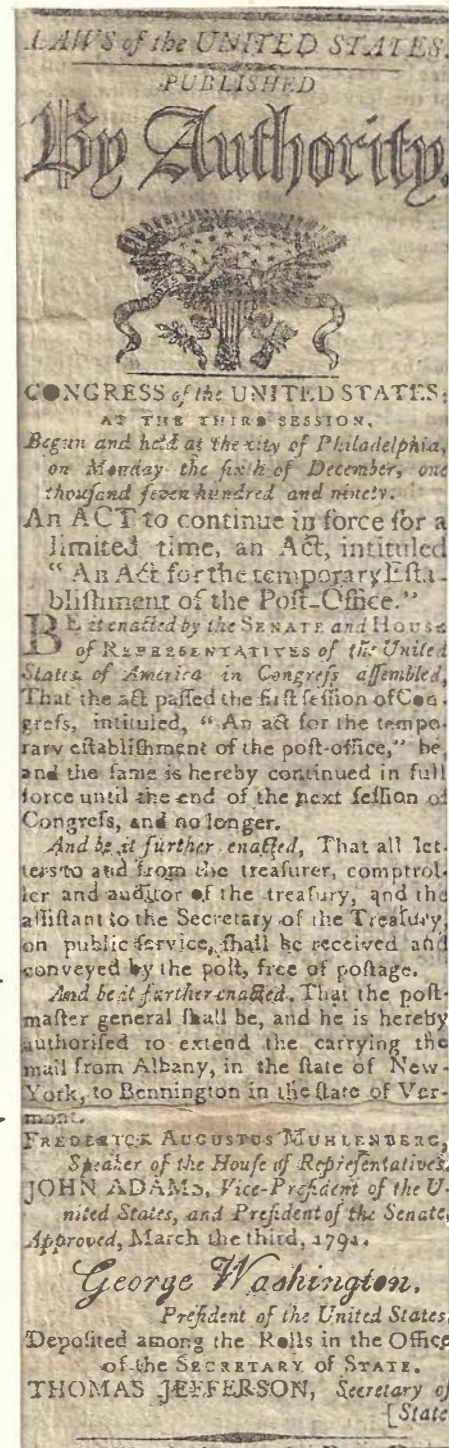
### Earliest Brattleborough Cover

The earliest reported cover from this office and Vermont's second U.S. manuscript postmark aside from an archival item.

Columbian Centinel Apr. 20, 1791

### First Public Notice Of U.S. Mails Serving Vermont

Publication in this Boston newspaper of a new statute extending the mails from Albany into Vermont informed the public for the first time of postal service to the new 14th State.





WEDNESDAYS and SATURDAYS, by BENJAMIN RUSSELL, in State-Street, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 20, 1791.

[No. II, of VOL. XV.]

MISCELLANY.

Philadelphia, April 6, 1791.

MR. RUSSELL,

I herewith send you a valuable Essay, written by an official Character in this city— Your publishing it in your useful paper, will oblige  
A CONSTANT READER.

FROM THE AMERICAN MUSEUM.

A BRIEF EXAMINATION OF

LORD SHEFFIELD'S OBSERVATIONS

ON THE COMMERCE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

FIRST NUMBER.

THE facts and observations of this writer have, in the opinion of his countrymen, so firmly endured the touchstone of experience, that an attempt to demonstrate errors in both may appear to them to deserve little attention. The brevity, however, which is intended to be observed, will obviate all objections, in the parties concerned, to give this paper an attentive perusal.

It is remarked, in the last edition of the publication referred to, "that a knowledge and consideration of the American trade should dictate to Great-Britain the measures she ought to pursue." The fitness of that admonition, in relation to the time when it was written, is admitted, without hesitation—and it is considered as equally proper in regard to the present. It is believed, indeed, to comport most perfectly with the dignity and true interests of nations, not to induce into injurious grants, those foreign powers with whom they may find occasion to treat. No observations are offered, but of the respectability, which is acquired by negotiations conducted with a liberal and magnanimous policy. It will be sufficient to remark, that arrangements, solidly founded in the mutual interests of the contracting parties, will always be satisfactory to the intelligent part of their respective citizens, and consequently most permanent; but that injudicious grants of unreasonable advantages, especially if obtained by deceptive means, dishonour the character of the over-reaching party, lead to murmurs among the people of the mistaken nation, often to expensive and bloody wars, and give immense hazard to the commercial enterprizes, which are usually instituted in consequence of new treaties. It may be considered, therefore, as wisdom in negotiating nations, diligently to search for their common interests, as the fittest ground of treaty. In order to discover these with ease, and to view them with just impressions, it is a measure not only of primary importance, but of

Newfoundland, Canada, Nova Scotia, the two Floridas, the Bahamas, and Bermuda, being 33,458, tons, which leaves the entries in those provinces that are now the United States, at 331,642 tons. We are also to deduct the ships owned by British subjects, not resident in those thirteen provinces, CHAMPION erroneously considers these to be nearly the whole of the vessels in the European trade. They must have been very considerable; yet the return of entries of American vessels for the last year, rendered by our Treasury to the House of Representatives, amounts to above 353,000 tons, exclusive of fishing vessels.

It is manifest, then, that the carrying trade, which results almost unaided from an agriculture that fully lades 650,000 tons of vessels to foreign ports, is considerably greater than what we enjoyed as British provinces. A very beneficial coasting trade (employing above 100,000 actual tons) has moreover grown up, partly from the variety of our productions and mutual wants, and partly from the introduction of manufactures, which it was believed we could never attain, and with which Great-Britain alone used to supply us. The building of ships has also increased, as we undertake to shew.

BEEF AND PORK,

in the opinion of our author, are not likely to become considerable articles of export, so as to interfere with Ireland, for some time. The medium annual quantity exported from the United States, before the revolution, he states at 23,035 barrels. Our treasury returns, for the last year, exhibits 66,000 barrels, besides 2,500 barrels of bacon, 5,200 head of horned cattle, and an equal number of hogs. The medium price of the pork was thirty-seven shillings sterling, or 84 eight shillings sterling, or about 64 dollars per barrel. Besides this exportation, 203,000 tons of foreign vessels, in a great degree, and all our own were victualled from our markets. But a moment's reflection will convince any man who knows this country, that it will, in the course of a few years, pour into all foreign ports such quantities of salt provisions, especially of beef, as must seriously affect Ireland, where that article is sold at eight dollars per barrel.

TEAS.

It is known to persons acquainted with American commerce, that teas of various kinds form a very considerable proportion of our importations. The rich and the poor consume them freely. Their value, as they were actually entered in our custom houses, was 2,784,000 dollars for the year preceding the first of October, 1790, which is about a seventh of our imports. On this very capital article of commerce of consumption, lord SHEFF-

tion of the relation of those markets to each other. The article of tea will therefore be passed over, after the following statement of the current prices on a given day in American and Great-Britain.

In PHILADELPHIA, on the 5th day of November, 1790, after paying the duty inward.

Bohea was worth 1/3 1/2 or 80 cents,  
Souchong, 2/4 or 76 cents.  
Hyson, 4/6 or 100 cents.

In LONDON, on the 5th day of November, 1790, after deducting the drawbacks of 12l. 10s. per cent.

Bohea, 1/5 1/2 or 82 cents.  
Souchong, 4/6 or 100 cents.  
Hyson, 6/ or 132 1/2 cents.

The same circumstances, which facilitate and ensure the requisite quantity of teas, not only by means other than British, but indeed by American means, certify to us the acquisition of the necessary supplies of porcelain, nankeens, silks, and all other China commodities; and upon the whole, we dare venture to appeal to the books of the inspector-general of the British commerce, when we affirm that Great-Britain does not supply us with a fortieth shilling of the various kinds of China merchandize, though they probably fall a little short of a sixth of our importations.

SALT from EUROPE.

This article, the writer of the observations says, will be taken indiscriminately from Europe: thereby misleading the government and people of England into a belief, that they will have a chance of supplying a considerable proportion. The quantity imported into the United States in the last year, was 2,337,920 bushels.

The British salt is what is called *fine* in the market, from the small size of the crystals than that of the coarse, and not a twentieth bushel was imported before the present year, it being little used but at the table, and inconvenient to transport to the interior country; but the new duty, near the eight of a Mexican dollar, will render its importations very unprofitable in future. A bushel of rock or allum salt, as it is termed, from the size of the crystals, will go as far in use, as a bushel and an half, or two bushels of the finer kind; and the duty is equal. The price, as before observed, is less. Besides, our grain and lumber ships to Portugal, our tobacco ships to France, our corn, flour and lumber ships to Spain, our vessels to the Cape de Verd and West India islands are accommodated by ballasts of salt, which is cheap and abundant in those places. It never fails to yield some profit to the owner of the ship, (though it will very seldom pay a freight) and it is exceeding beneficial to the timbers of a

EARLIEST U.S. MAILS



Middlebury 1796

First WAY Cover

Vermont's earliest reported WAY usage and its first cover from Middlebury. The WAY fee is not noted, perhaps inadvertently. The letter is datelined Vergennes on the same day it entered the mails at Middlebury. Vergennes already had a post office, but the sender probably lived on the route between it and Middlebury.

EARLIEST U.S. MAILS



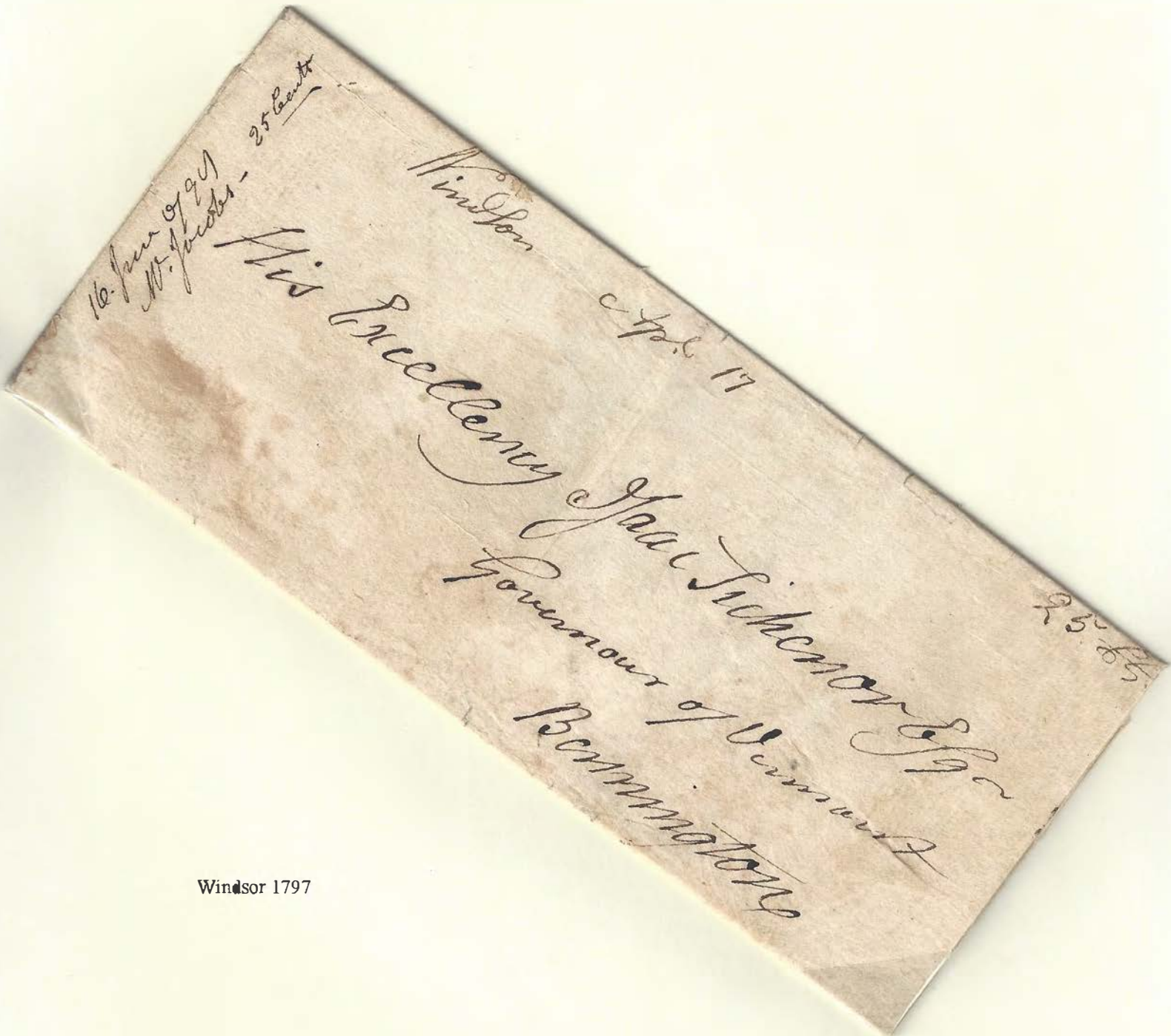
Brattleborough 1799

First FORWARDED Letter

Vermont's only known 1700's FORWARDED cover presents an odd puzzle. It is datelined June 1st at Hartford, Conn. but bears no markings at all from that office. Instead, all of its abbreviated postal markings are from Vermont, indicating that it was "Missent to Brattleborough 17 June and Forwarded - 10/Cents". No explanation survives for this or for how it spent 17 days being mis-routed just 80 miles to Brattleborough.



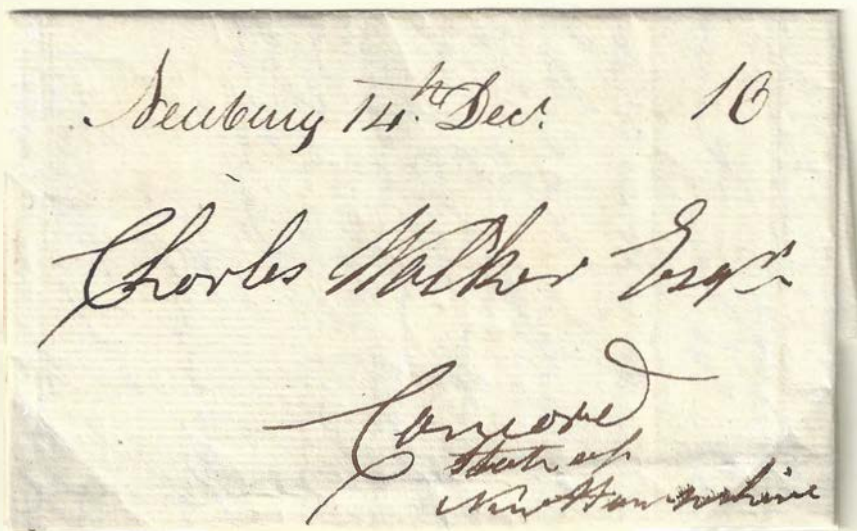
EARLIEST U.S. MAILS



Windsor 1797

Earliest known non-archival manuscript postmark of Windsor - one of Vermont's five original offices. Sent to its current Governor and later U.S. Senator, Isaac Tichenor.

**EARLIEST U.S. MAILS**



Newbury 1797

**First Discontinued Office**

After serving as one of just five Republic offices, Newbury became Vermont's first discontinued post office in 1792. The office later was re-opened in 1795. This is Newbury's earliest known postmark.



Royalton 1799

Earliest reported postmark from Royalton, which opened in the fourth quarter of 1797.

A TYPICAL OFFICE'S ACTIVITY

**T H I S C O N T R A C T** made the  
thirty first \_\_\_\_\_ Day of July \_\_\_\_\_ in the Year One  
Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety Seven between Simeon Lester & Cleazer Wheelock  
of Rutland in the State of Vermont

of one Part, and Joseph Habersham \_\_\_\_\_ Postmaster General of the  
United States of America, of the other Part, Witnesseth, That the said Parties have mutually  
covenanted as follows; that is to say: The said Lester & Wheelock  
covenant with the said Postmaster General

1. To carry the Mail of the United States, or cause it to be carried from Rutland to  
Windsor and from Windsor to Rutland once a week

Rutland 1797

**Earliest Original Postal Document**

This July 31, 1797 contract for carrying the weekly mails between Rutland and Windsor is Vermont's first surviving postal document. Vermont's isolated offices depended upon these private contractors for both their incoming and outgoing mail. For that reason, many penalties are listed for any short-comings, including \$1 per hour for unexcused late arrivals and another \$5 if a connecting mail was missed. By contrast, a diligent contractor received \$1.73 for each 45 mile one way trip!

at the Rate of **Forty Five Dollars** \_\_\_\_\_  
for every Quarter of a Year, during the Continuance of this Contract.

2. That the Mail shall be delivered at each Post-Office in the said Route, at the Times specified in  
the Schedule hereto annexed, on Penalty of **One** Dollar for each \_\_\_\_\_ Hour  
which shall elapse between any Time so fixed, and the Time of the Mail's actual Arrival, to be deducted  
from the Pay of the said Lester and Wheelock \_\_\_\_\_  
unless they shall make it appear to the Satisfaction of the said Postmaster General that the Delay  
was unavoidable.

3. If the Delay of Arrival of the said Mail continue until the Hour of Departure of any depending  
Mail, whereby the Mails destined for such depending Mail lose a Trip, the said Lester & Wheelock  
shall forfeit **five** Dollars, for  
every such Failure, to be deducted from their Pay, unless they shall make it appear to  
the Satisfaction of the Postmaster General that such Delay was unavoidable.

4. That the said Lester & Wheelock  
shall be answerable for the Persons to whom they shall commit the Care and

A TYPICAL OFFICE'S ACTIVITY

Dr. The POST-OFFICE at *Corinth Vt* in account current with the C

	DOLLARS.	CTS.
1 To postage of letters which remained in the office last quarter,	6	08 <sup>1/2</sup>
2 To postage of unpaid letters received from other offices this quarter,	17	12 <sup>1/2</sup>
3 To postage of way letters received at this office ditto,		34
4 To postage of letters undercharged from other offices ditto,		12 <sup>1/2</sup>
5 To postage of ship letters at 6 cents each, originally rec'd at this office for this delivery,	1	50 <sup>1/2</sup>
6 To postage of paid letters sent from this office, ditto,		
	25	12 <sup>1/2</sup>
11 To balance as above, being the amount of postage collected on letters this quarter, <i>18 06 1/2</i>		
12 To amount of postage on newspapers and pamphlets this quarter, <i>15 1/2</i>		
13 Deduct postage of dead newspapers and pamphlets,		
	<u>18</u>	<u>22</u>
	<u>18</u>	<u>22</u>

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

Corinth 1818

Earliest Quarterly Office Account

Corinth's Post Office Department report for the third quarter in 1818 is the earliest known account from any Vermont office. It provides many insights into the typical daily activity of an early Vermont post office. Assuming that incoming and outgoing mail were approximately the same in type and volume and that an "average" letter might have cost 10 cents under the five level rate structure then in effect, we discover that:

- \* The office received about 13 unpaid incoming letters weekly and it sent out the same number (Line 2).
- \* It sent out only about one pre-paid letter weekly and it received the same number (Line 6).
- \* It received only three WAY letters in the quarter (Line 3) and paid out no WAY fees itself (Line 18).
- \* It received only about one newspaper a week (Line 12).

GENERAL POST-OFFICE from *1 July 1818* to *1 Oct 1818* Cr.

		DOLLARS.	CTS.
7	By postage of letters overcharged and mis-sent this quarter,		12 1/2
8	By postage of dead letters sent to the General Post Office ditto,	2	38
9	By postage of letters now remaining in this office,	4	55
10	Balance carried down,	18	6 1/2
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		25	12
14	By commission on <i>1/8</i> D. <i>6 1/2</i> C. Letter Postage at 30 per cent.	<i>5</i>	<i>41</i>
	By ditto on D. C. Letter Postage at 25 per cent.		
15	By ditto on D. <i>15 1/2</i> C. Newspaper Postage at 50 per cent.	<i>7</i>	
		<i>6</i>	
16	By <i>3</i> free letters delivered out of this office this quarter, at two cents each,	<hr/>	
17	By ship letters paid for this quarter, as by receipts herewith, at two cents each,	<i>5</i>	<i>54</i>
18	By cash paid the mail carrier for way letters, at one cent each,		
19	By contingent expenses, as by receipts herewith,	<i>12</i>	<i>68</i>
20	Balance due to the General Post-Office	<i>18</i>	<i>22</i>

*Wm Spencer*

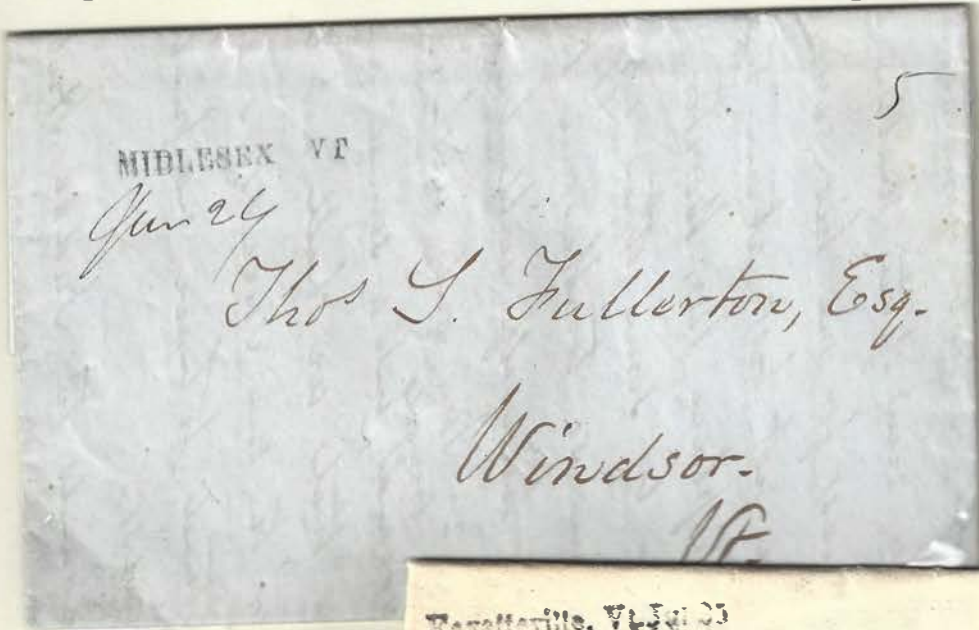
Post-Master.

- \* It delivered only three free letters, apart from the postmaster's own, in the entire quarter (Line 16).
- \* It processed very few undercharged items (Line 4), or overcharged or missent letters (Line 7).
- \* It handled no ship letters at all (Lines 5 and 17).
- \* The postmaster had difficulties with unclaimed mail (Lines 1, 8 and 9).
- \* His mail arrived some time between 5 A.M. and 9 P.M., so he was paid 30%, not 50% (Line 14; text below Line 13).
- \* Postmaster Jacob Brown's total pay was 42 1/2 cents a week (Lines 14 -17).
- \* He may have had a clerk (perhaps in a store), for William Spencer signed this account, but he became postmaster in 1827.

**TOWNMARKS  
STRAIGHTLINE**

Townmarks showed where an item entered the mails, accompanied by the date. In Vermont, townmarks throughout the entire stampless era ranged from simple manuscripts to many styles of handstamps.

Straightlines saw their greatest use in Vermont from the 1830's through the 1840's. No Vermont straightline is common, since no one format has more than eight surviving examples at most.



Middlesex 1846

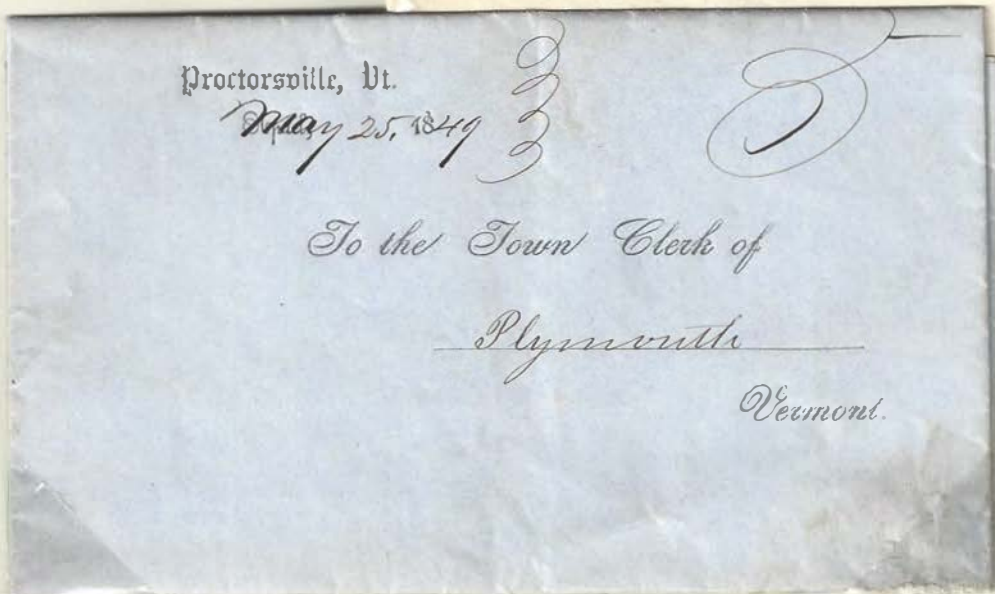
**One Known**

Possibly this device was quickly discarded because it had a spelling error.



Fayetteville 1831

**Three Known**



Proctorsville 1849

**Pre-Printed Straightline**

The Bank of Black River prepared shareholder notices in 1849-50 bearing Vermonts only pre-printed straightline. Some authorities term it a pre-cancel.

TOWNMARKS  
STRAIGHTLINE

Straightlines usually were prepared locally, often using type from a newspaper or print shop. They thus could be modified rather easily, here just by upgrading the size of the "E" in "ENOSBURGH".



Enosburgh 1845



Enosburgh 1846

**TOWNMARKS  
STRAIGHTLINE**

Some townmarks which appear to incorporate errors simply reflect an earlier spelling of that office's names. Shelburn first adopted its modern spelling of "Shelburne" around 1840, five years after this cover was mailed.



Shelburn 1835

One Known

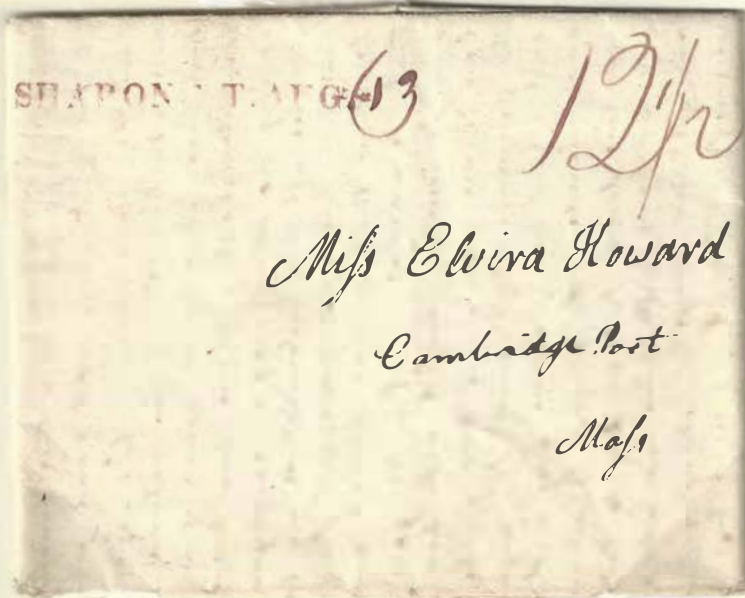


TOWNMARKS  
STRAIGHTLINE

Sharon used an unusual variety of settings and ink colors for its straightlines over just a several year span.

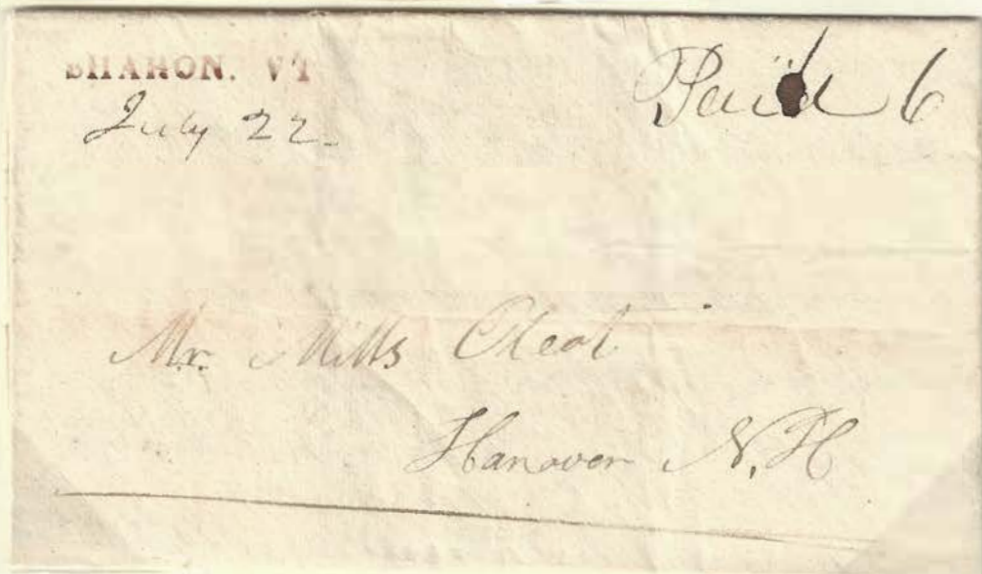


Sharon 1830



Sharon 1832

One Known



Sharon 1833

TOWNMARKS  
STRAIGHTLINE



Irassburgh 1845

Two Known

Chimney Point 1840

Two Known

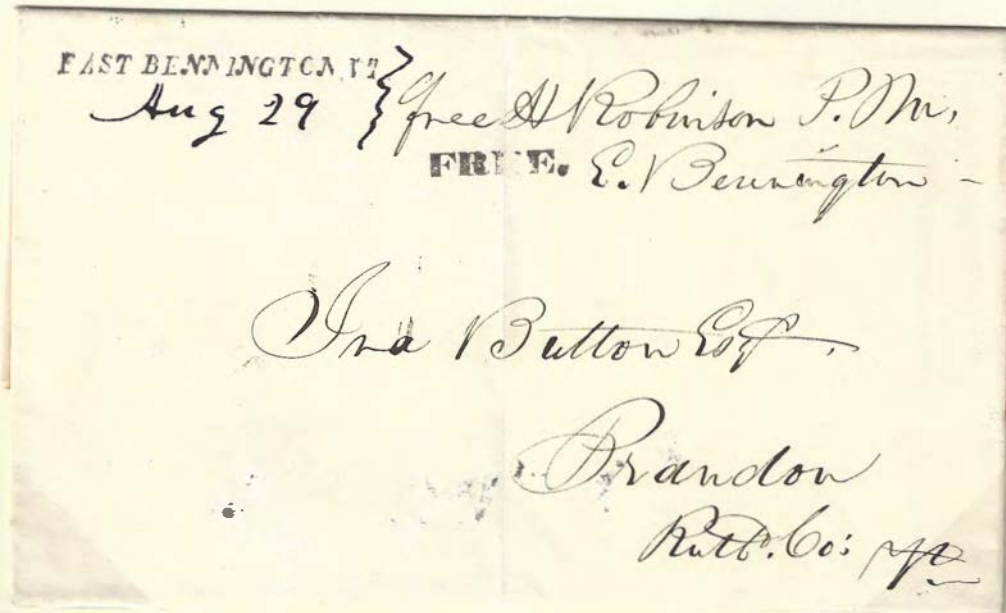


Vergennes 1831

One of three offices  
using a "boxed"  
straightline.

**TOWNMARKS  
STRAIGHTLINE**

East Bennington's straightline with slanting italic letters is known used in only two years, two colors, and with one ancillary marking - a "FREE". All of those are shown here.



East Bennington 1844

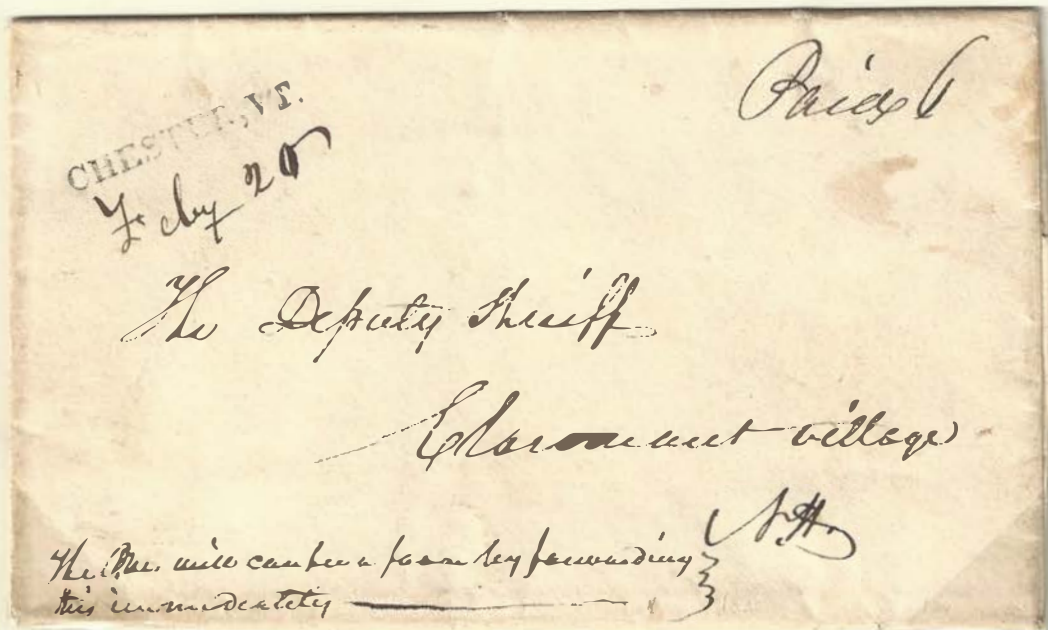
Only Known Free Use



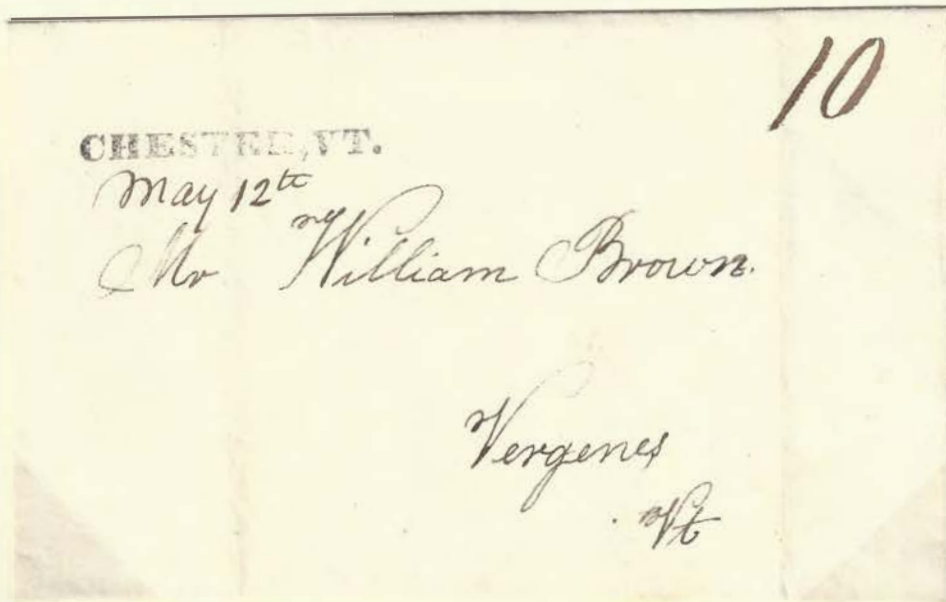
East Bennington 1845

TOWNMARKS  
STRAIGHTLINE

As seen here, at some point between February and May of 1830 Chester replaced its scarcer small type straightline with the slightly commoner version set in larger type.



Chester 1830



Chester 1830

TOWNMARKS  
STRAIGHTLINE



Dorset 1849

One Known



Berlin 1846

One Known

A later larger version  
has only been seen on  
covers with stamps.



Essex 1846

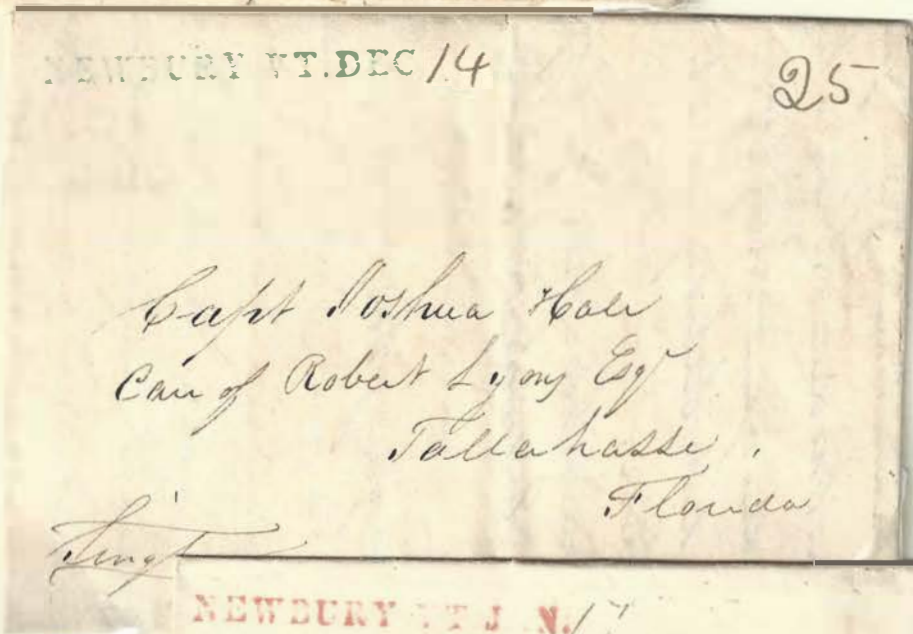
One Known

**TOWNMARKS  
STRAIGHTLINE**

Newbury had Vermont's only straightline struck in green ink. It was unusual in using straightlines for many years, with the later markings dropping a comma but adding a month date to the handstamp.

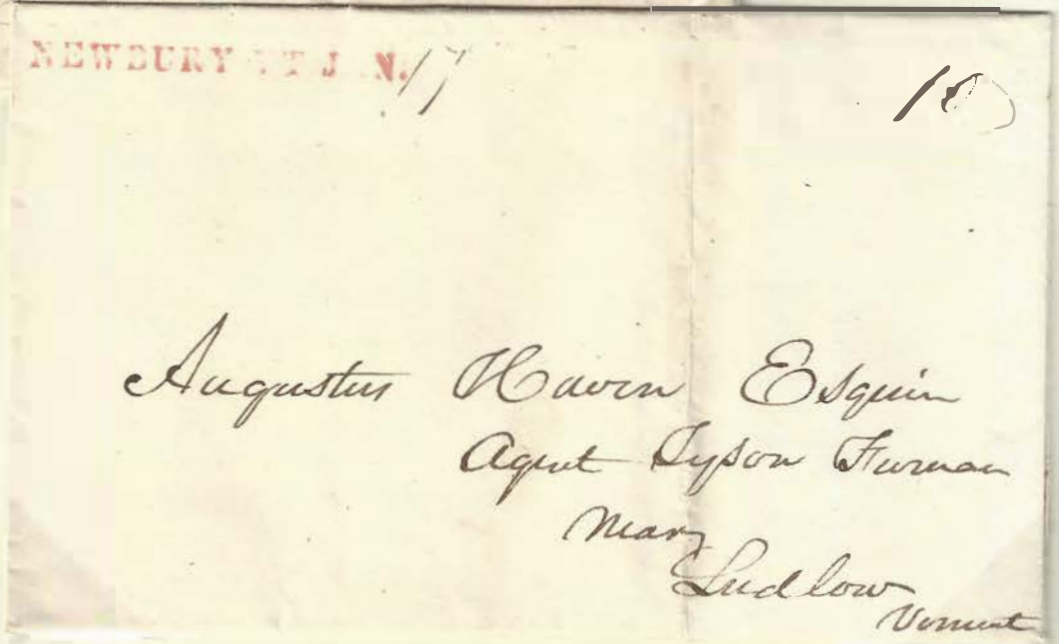


Newbury 1828



Newbury 1838

To Florida Territory



Newbury 1839

TOWNMARKS  
STRAIGHTLINE



Wells 1846

**One Known**

One of three towns with a "boxed" straightline.



Wells 1848

**Both Handstamps - One Known**

Only three or four Vermont postmasters ever applied any type of "name" handstamp. Letter to future President Fillmore.

TOWNMARKS  
STRAIGHTLINE



Pawlet 1840

One Known

Concord 1834

One Known



Concord

One Known



Castleton

One Known



TOWNMARKS  
STRAIGHTLINE



Weathersfield 1833

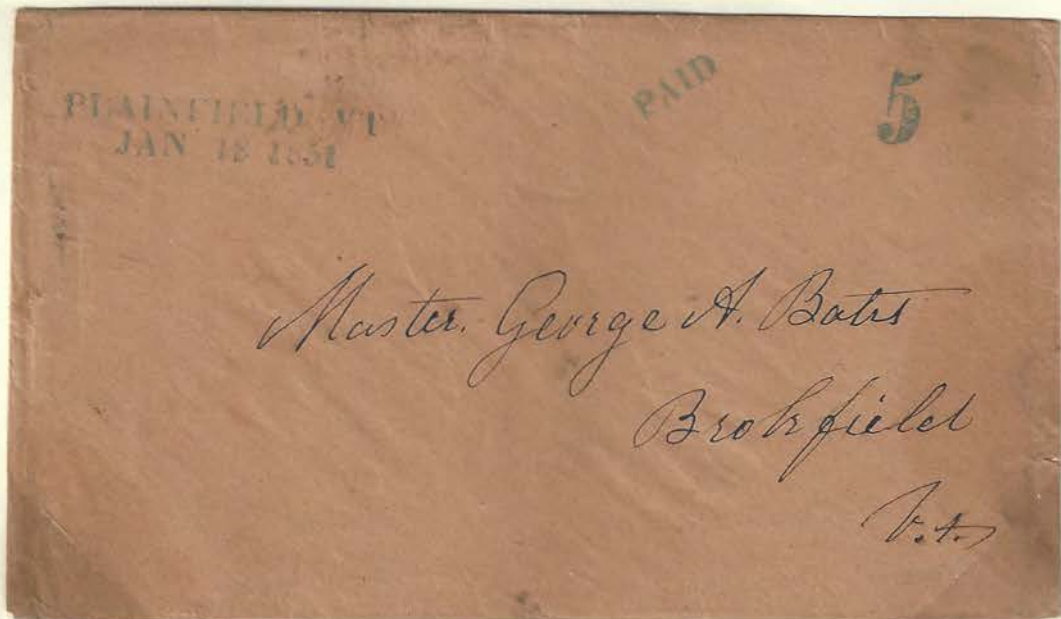
Vermont's Longest Straightline

Waitsfield 1840



Plainfield 1851

Only three offices had  
year-dated straightlines.

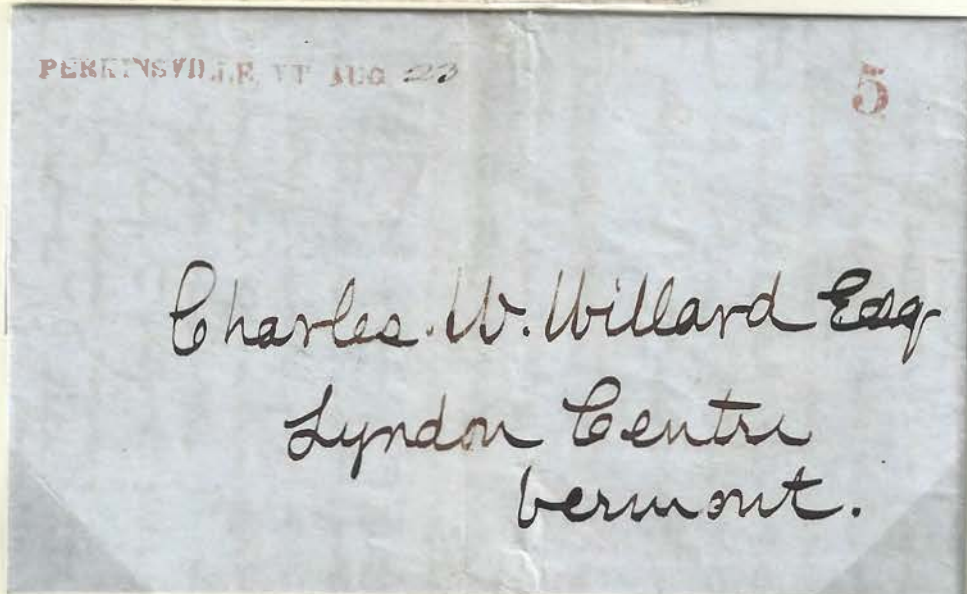


TOWNMARKS  
STRAIGHTLINE



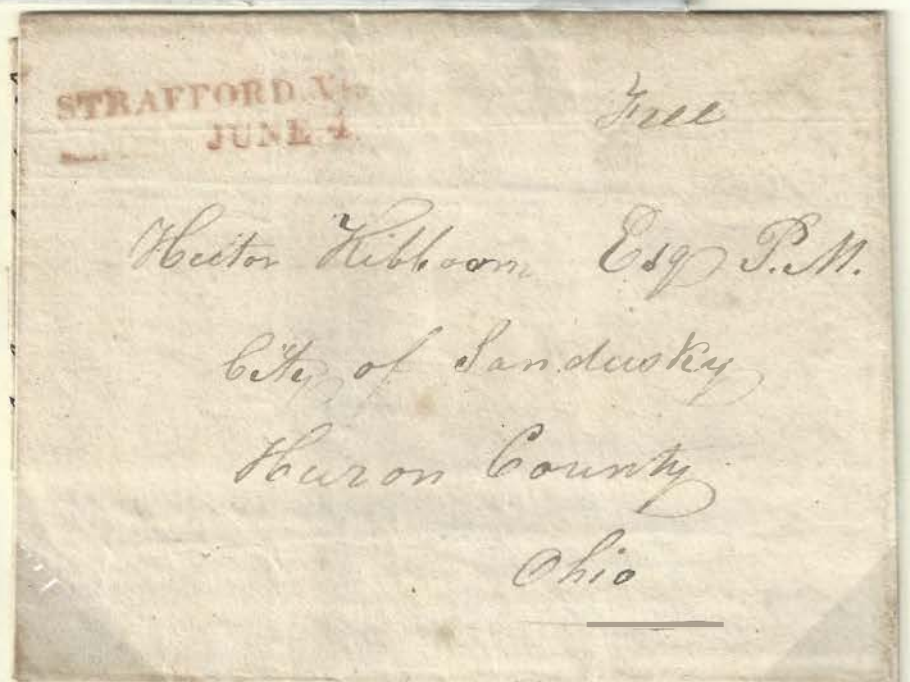
Mechanicsville 1840

One Known



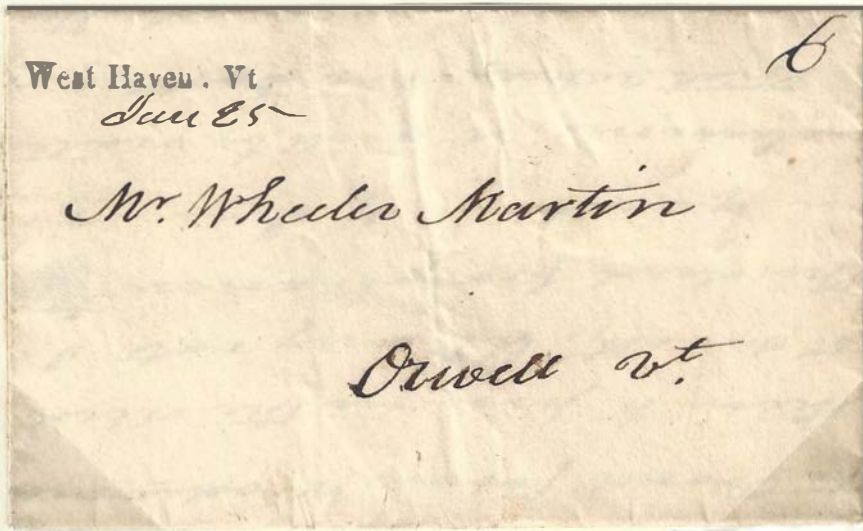
Perkinsville 1850

Two Known



Strafford 1828

TOWNMARKS  
STRAIGHTLINE



West Haven 1840

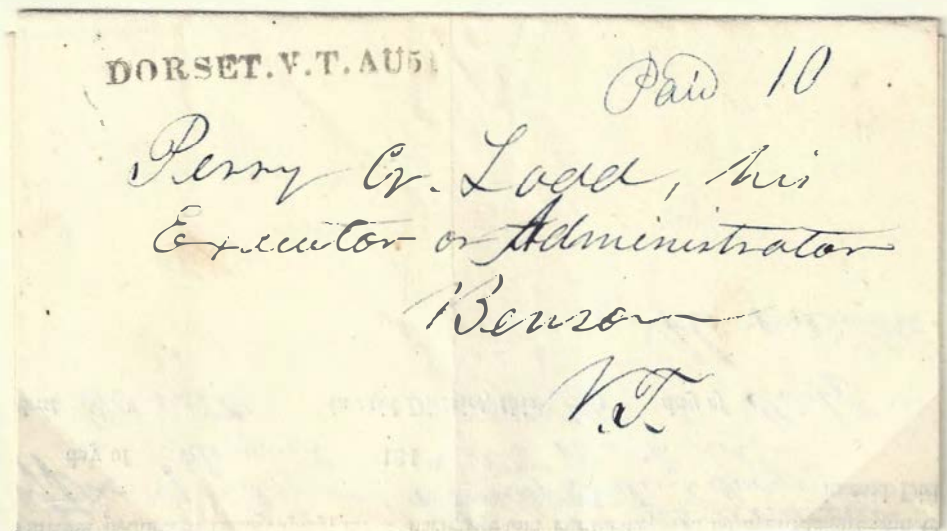
One Known

West Brattleboro 1837

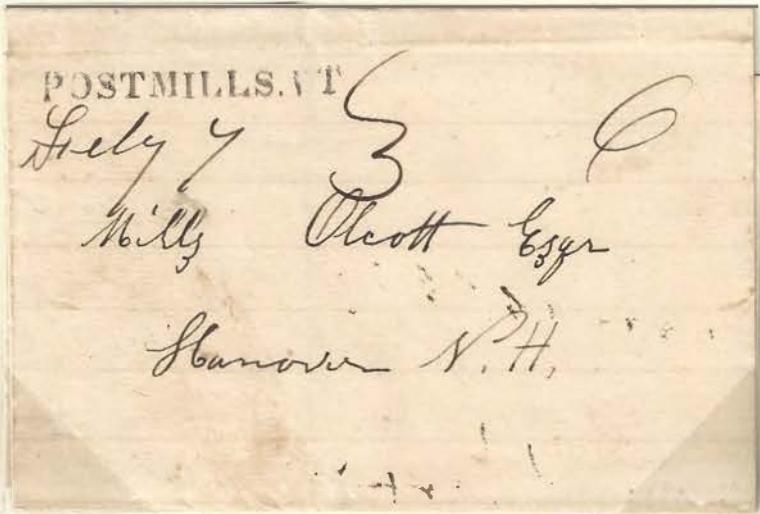


Dorset 1842

Two Known



**TOWNMARKS  
STRAIGHTLINE**



Post Mills 1843

Fair Haven 1842

Three Known

Wilmington 1831

One Known

Three offices used  
"boxed" straightlines.  
Re-rated for the  
corrected distance.



**TOWNMARKS**  
**OVAL**

Oval townmarks are reported for Vermont from 1804 throughout the stampless era, primarily in the mid-1820's and the 1830's. Nearly all were handstamped and only a few of them are relatively common.



Barnet 1812

Two Known



Bridport 1820

Two Known

These are the only two reported Vermont offices thrifty enough to create manuscript ovals without a handstamp! Existence of a confirming copy of each of the above markings demonstrates an intentional usage rather than simply a one-time whim.

**TOWNMARKS  
OVAL**

Burlington was by far Vermont's largest and longest lasting user of oval handstamps.



Burlington 1806

Red ink was used from 1804 to 1811.

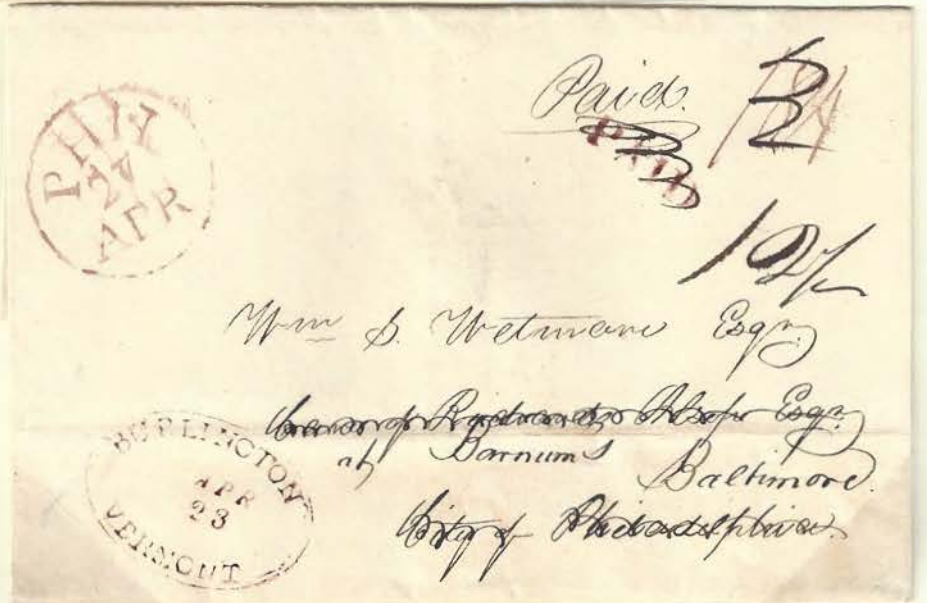


Burlington 1815

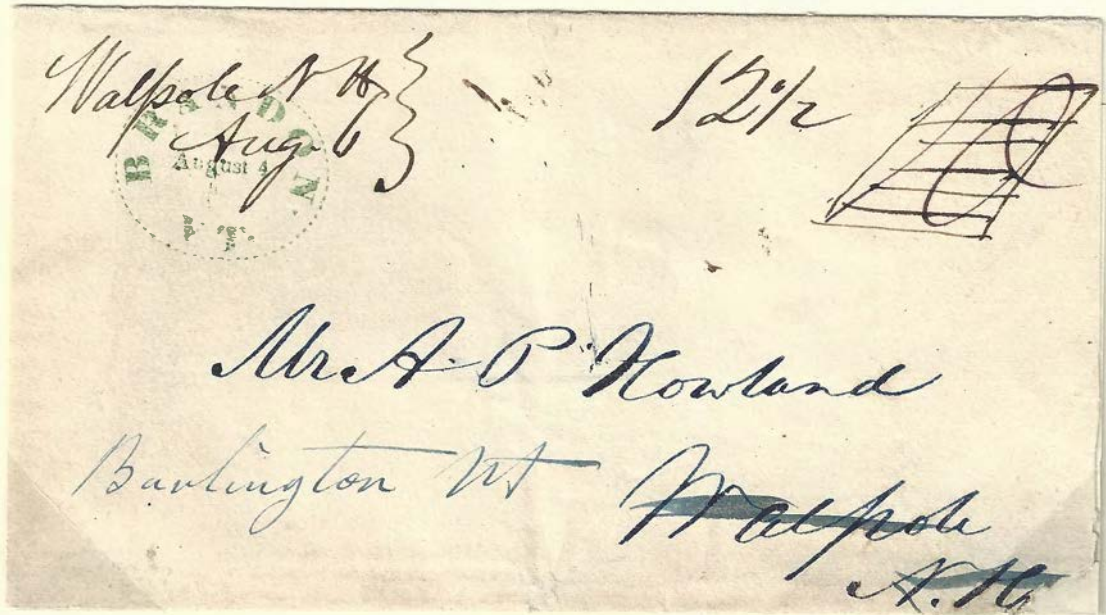
Black ink long was thought used only from 1812 to 1813, but this "War Rate" use can only be from 1815.

Burlington 1832

Maroon ink is the commonest and was in use from 1813 through 1834.



TOWNMARKS  
OVAL



Brandon

Two Known

Only two offices applied oval townmarks in green.



Brandon

Recycled Oval Townmark

When it eventually replaced its oval with a circle handstamp, Brandon apparently converted it into this neat rate marking.

TOWNMARKS  
OVAL



Vergennes 1825

Two Known



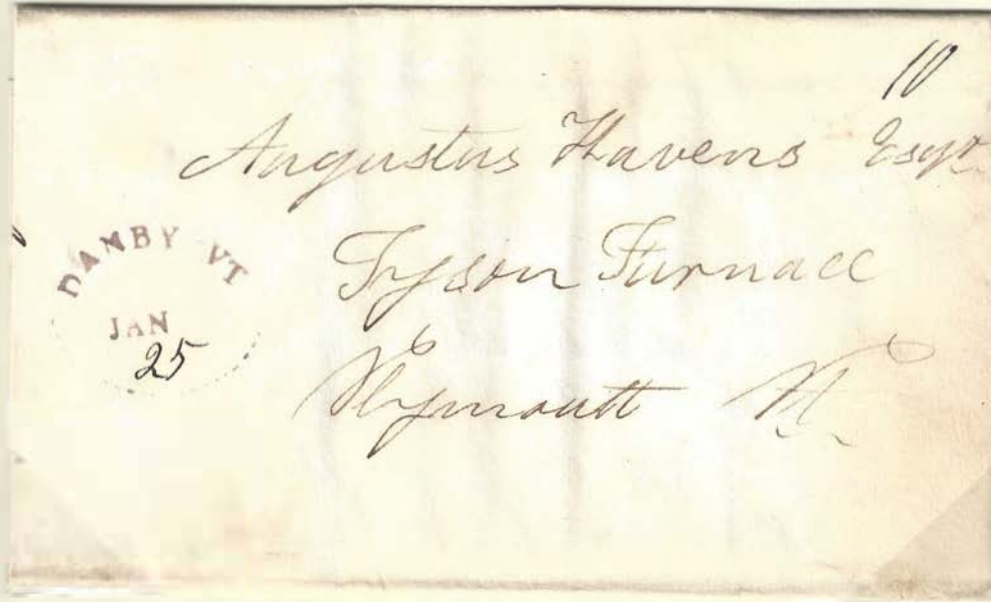
Wilmington 1836

One Known



**TOWNMARKS  
OVAL**

The small Danby office used three different types of oval handstamps in just eight years. All known examples are poorly struck and only infrequently seen in any condition.

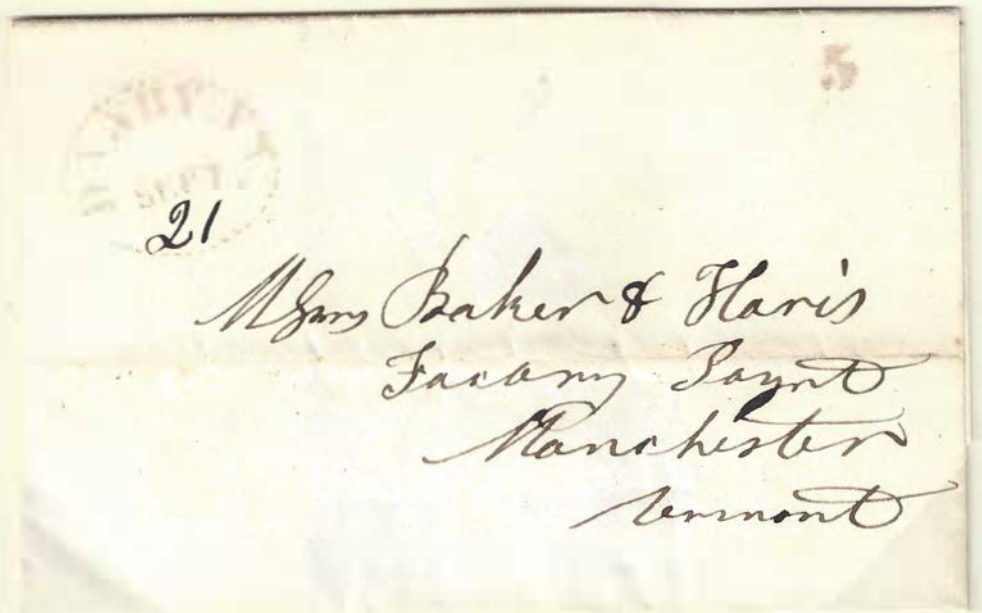


Danby 1841



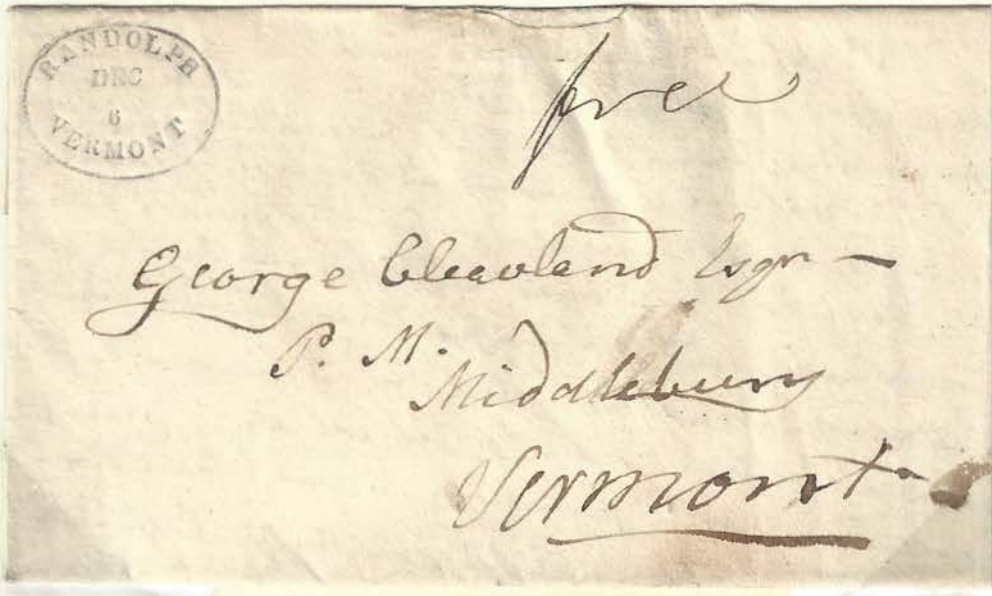
Danby 1847

One of two offices with a green oval - here on an unusual green cover.



Danby 1848

TOWNMARKS  
OVAL



Randolph 1823



East Poultney 1824

Possibly the only copy.



Thetford 1827

The only oval from this office to use commercial type. The others all were home-made fancy ovals.

**TOWNMARKS  
OVAL**

Peacham 1828

**The Double Oval**

This is the clearest known strike of less than five homemade double ovals still thought to exist.



Rutland 1835

Seldom seen with a manuscript date.



Rutland 1831

Few of Rutland's dashed ovals are clearly struck.



**TOWNMARKS  
OVAL**

These two offices had some of Vermonts more distinctive and familiar ovals. Derby Line always used the same format, while Woodstock had many varieties of its cogged ovals, some of which are classified as fancy townmarks.



Derby Line 1838



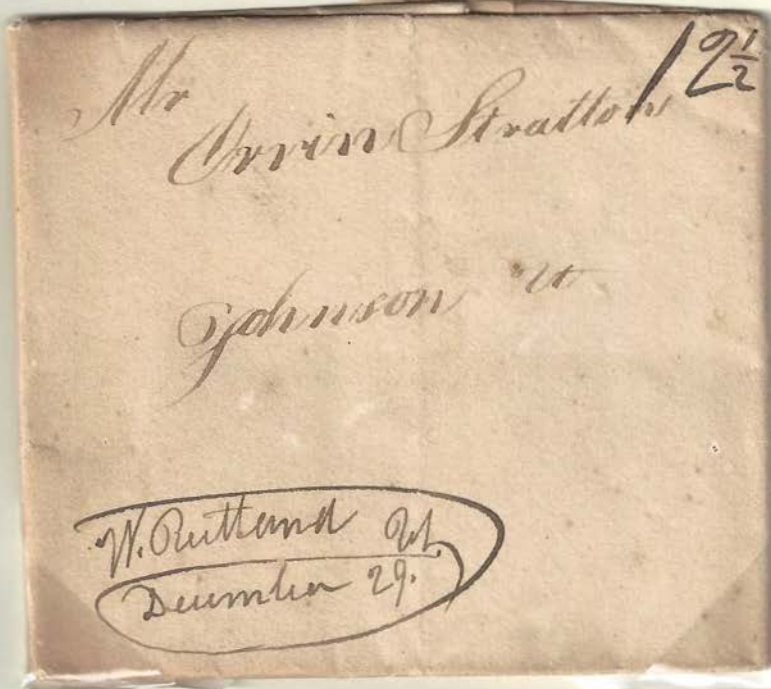
Derby Line 1836

Woodstock 1831



TOWNMARKS  
FANCY

Certain Vermont townmarks are so striking in their shape or detail that they properly are classified as "fancy". Virtually none of these are entirely in manuscript. Almost all were created with handstamps, some of them commercial. A few of the most interesting ones, though, were entirely local in origin.



West Rutland 1830

One Known



Castleton 1813

One Known

TOWNMARKS  
FANCY



South Strafford 1832

The fancy italic lettering of this CDS probably was reset to create the later oval seen below.



South Strafford

Two Known

The fancy oval created from the reset type.

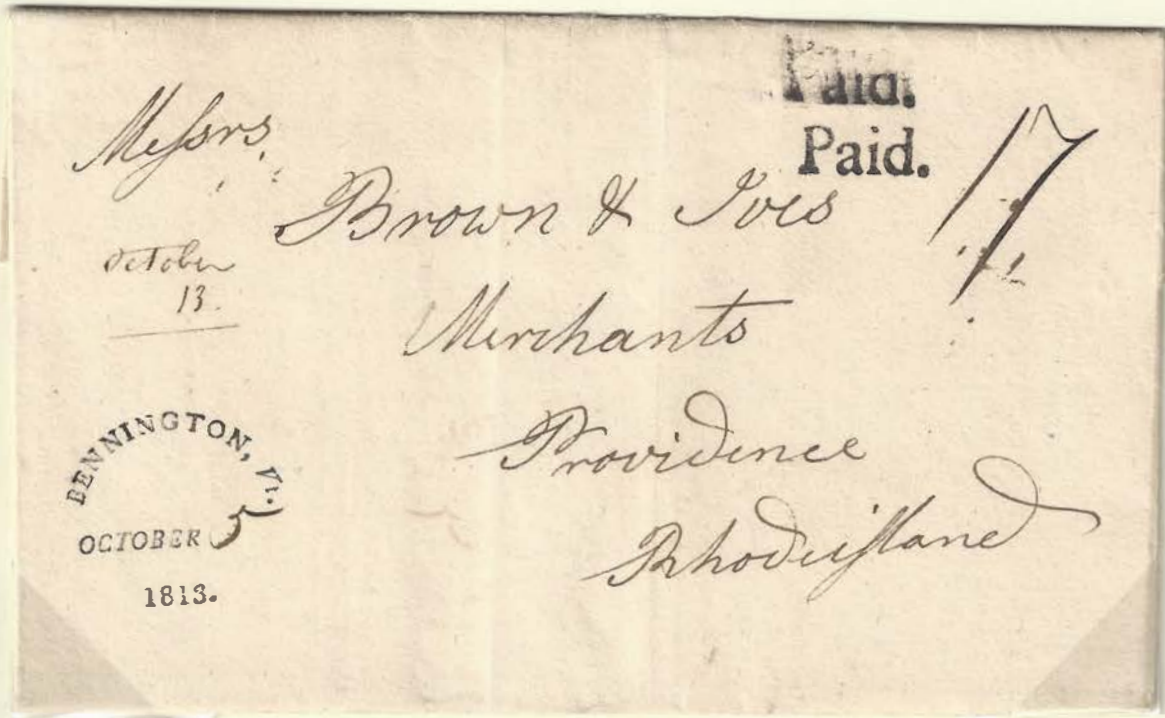


Jamaica 1829

**Vermont's Only Curved Straightline**

**One Known**

No explanation exists for the odd shape of this rather crude marking.

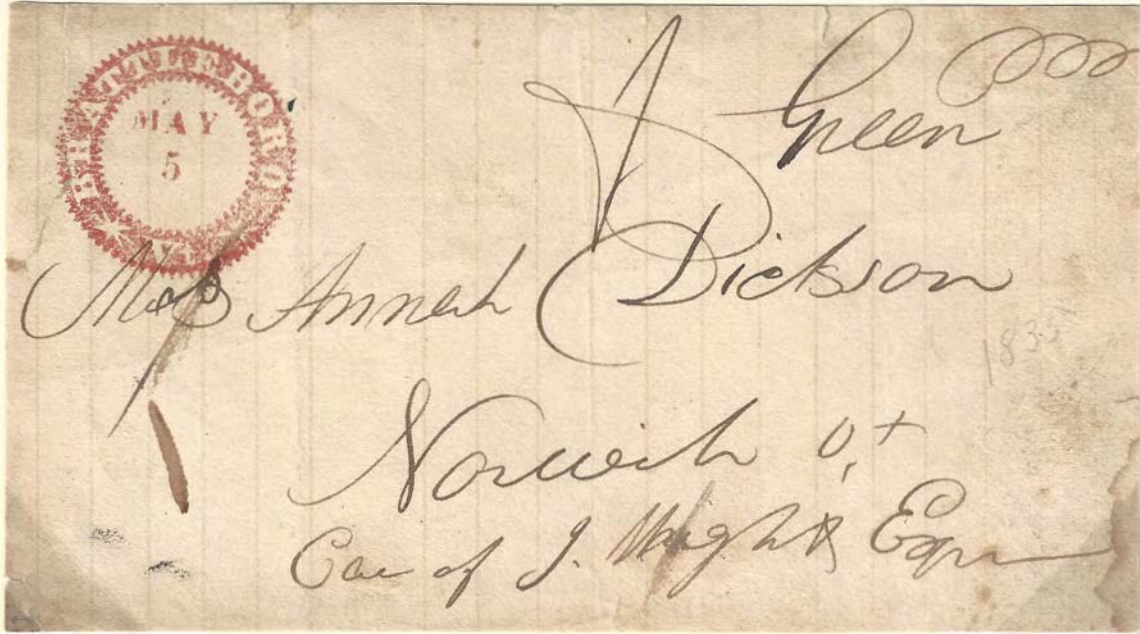


Bennington 1813

**Vermont's First Year-Dated Postmark**

**One Known**

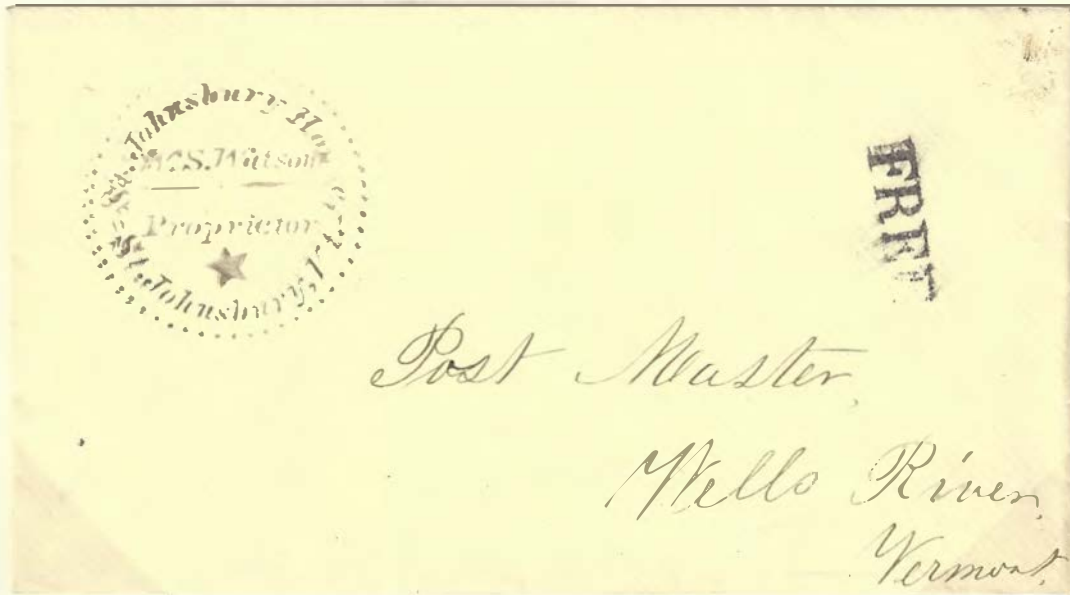
**TOWNMARKS  
FANCY**



**Brattleboro 1835**

**One Known**

A purported strike in black ink has not been verified.



**Saint Johnsbury 1859**

**Hotel Name Townmark**

**One Known**

St. Johnsbury House's handstamp accepted as a St. Johnsbury townmark. It is especially unusual because the hotel's proprietor was not even the local postmaster. Only two or three Vermont 19th century "commercial postmarks" are known.



TOWNMARKS  
FANCY



Saint Johnsbury Plain 1829

Three Known

All strikes of this open arc, of which this is the finest, are in this same shade of true brown.



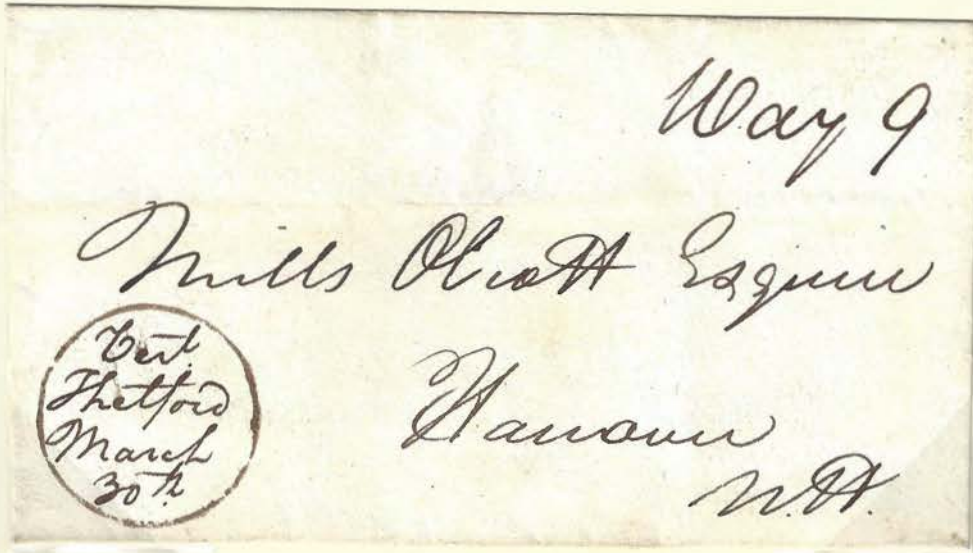
Wells River 1834

Two Known

The "Baker's Hat" was used only here and, rather more commonly, at one Connecticut office.

TOWNMARKS  
FANCY

Thetford created some of Vermont's most unusual fancy markings by using different sized box-lids to create an outer rim and then neatly completing it in manuscript.



Thetford 1808  
The Box-Lid Circle  
Two Known  
An early WAY usage.



Thetford 1815  
Small Box-Lid Oval  
War of 1812 rate.



Thetford 1824  
Large Box-Lid Oval

TOWNMARKS  
FANCY



Randolph 1804

First Fancy Marking

Postmaster Sereno Wright created Vermont's first fancy townmark and used it only in 1802 to 1804. This is his only free frank with his creation. Prior to discovery of an 1801 Rutland CDS seen later in this exhibit, this also was Vermont's earliest known circle handstamp.



Randolph 1815

Four Known

The finest known example of this marking, and one of only two copies which show its outer ring. War of 1812 rate.

**TOWNMARKS  
FANCY**

Montpelier used five styles of fancy ovals between 1809 and 1817. None of them has more than two or three copies known.



Montpelier 1809

The Capital's First Townmark

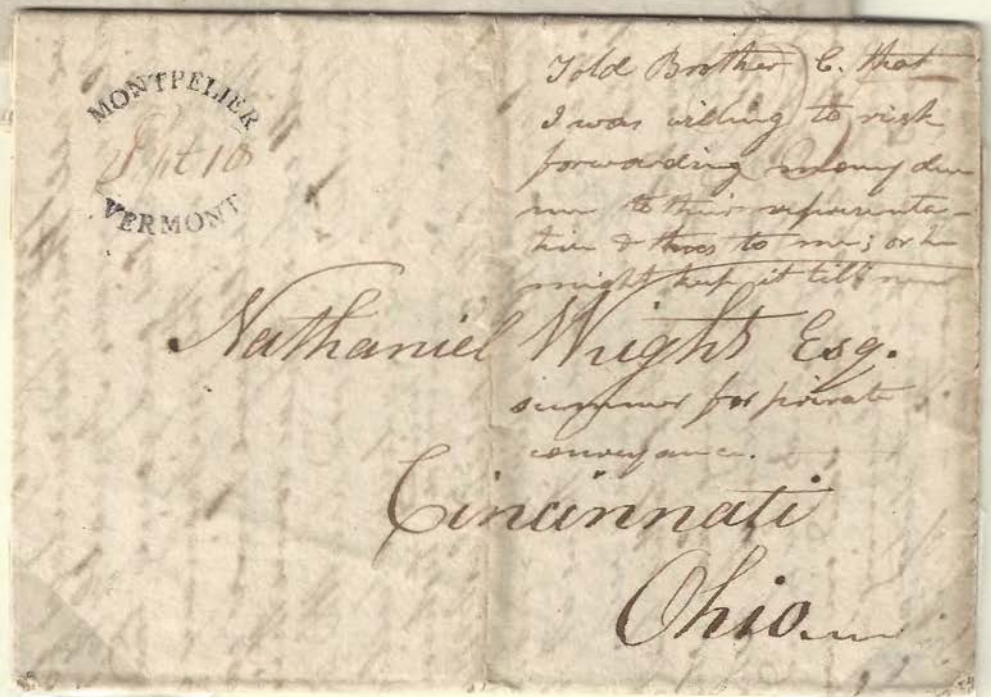
One Known



Montpelier 1815

Two Known

The other copy was used in 1817.



Montpelier 1817

One Known

Possibly a modified version of the 1815 oval seen above.

TOWNMARKS  
FANCY

Woodstock's fancy ovals were used for many years and had numerous variations in typeface, size and colors.



Woodstock 1815

Previously known only in 1827-28. War rate surcharge inexplicably is omitted.



Woodstock



Woodstock 1825

Only known copy in this format with non-italic type or in red ink.

TOWNMARKS  
FANCY



Danville 1825

One Known

The only Vermont fancy marking which used a “milled rim” resembling a coin’s edge.



Danville 1829

The ASCC refers to this as a “broken oval”, but it actually is an “omega” which lost its upper rim and lower curves early in its brief use. Few examples show the traces of that upper rim which still are visible here.

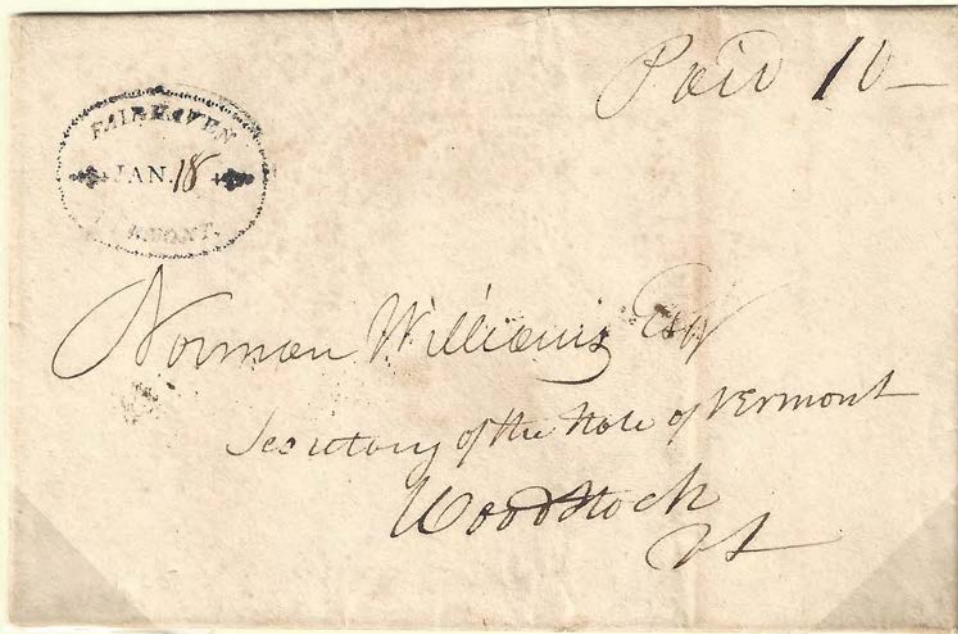
TOWNMARKS  
FANCY



Middlebury 1810

Vermont's First Arc

Four Known



Fair Haven 1825

Used for only part of this single year. This is one of the finest of the few known strikes of Fair Haven's first handstamp.

TOWNMARKS  
FANCY

Some of Vermont's fancy townmarks are characterized by their unusual typefaces and small decorative embellishments.



East Poultney 1824



Essex 1848

Few copies are known of this tiny "pointing hand".



Swanton 1839



TOWNMARKS  
FANCY



Derby 1850

Handstamp used for  
only three years.



Hardwick 1843

First recorded year of use.

Hardwick 1862

Last recorded year of use.



**TOWNSMARKS  
CIRCULAR**

Even though all the types of townmarks were used throughout Vermont's stampless era, circular handstamps slowly became prevalent following their first known use at Rutland in 1801. Their very profusion and the extremely limited use of many CDS's makes their study rewarding.



Rutland 1801

**Vermont's First Circular Postmark**

**One Known**

This CDS predates Randolph's fancy rimless circle by a year. It also is the earliest Rutland CDS by a full 10 years.

TOWNMARKS  
CIRCULAR

Circles varied widely in size, depending on whims of the local postmaster, who might have obtained it from many sources.



Derby 1835



Thetford 1849

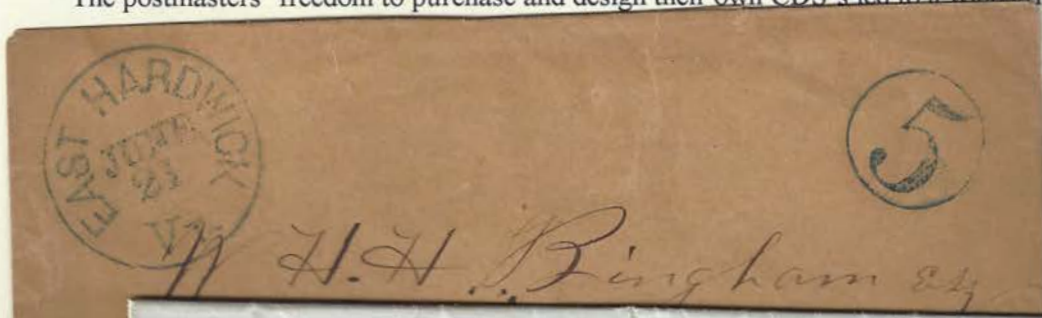


Tunbridge

Two cent extra fee for  
advertising to locate  
addressee.

TOWNMARKS  
CIRCULAR

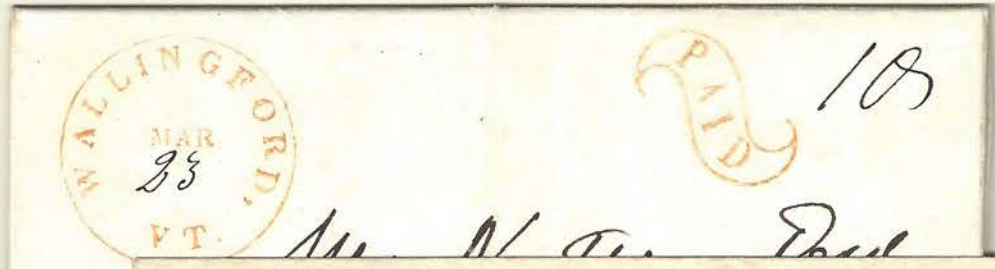
The postmasters' freedom to purchase and design their own CDS's led to a wide array of styles and sizes of typefaces.



East Hardwick  
Centre Rutland 1850  
McIndoes Falls  
Cuttingsville 1851  
Westminster 1846



TOWNMARKS  
CIRCULAR

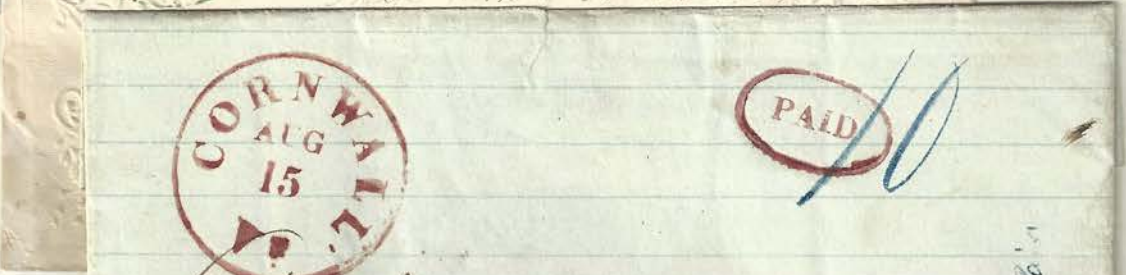


Wallingford 1842  
East Corinth  
East Burke  
Cornwall 1842  
Rochester  
Castleton 1846



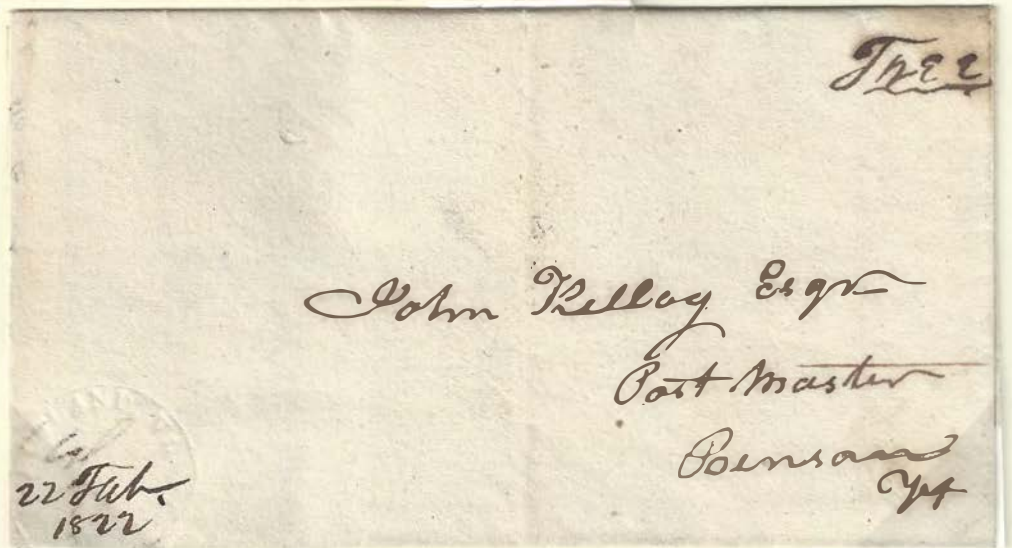
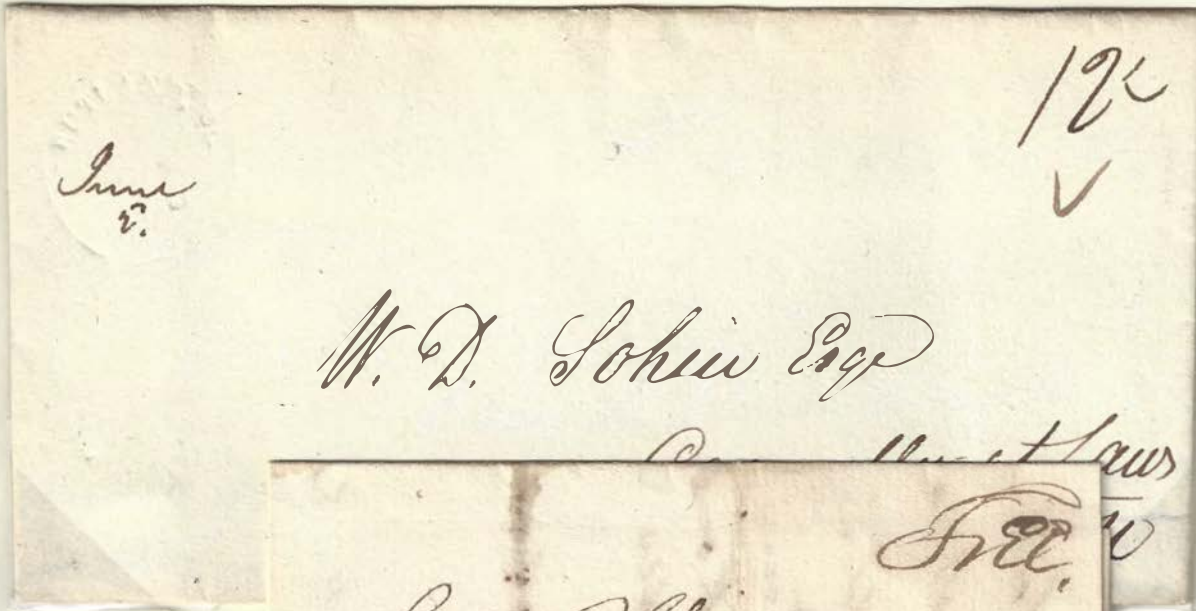
Unusual Ink Colors

These more exotic colors were used only briefly by a handful of stampless offices.



**TOWNMARKS  
CIRCULAR**

U.S. embossed albino circular postmarks are known from just two offices - both in Vermont. Rutland's was discovered first. An 1819 strike initially was believed a fluke created by a powerful postmaster who lost his ink pad. Discovery of the other covers shown here now proves it was intentional and consistent over at least six years. The consistent placement of the markings and absence of any "Female" impression on the reverse suggests it was a lever operated single faced device.



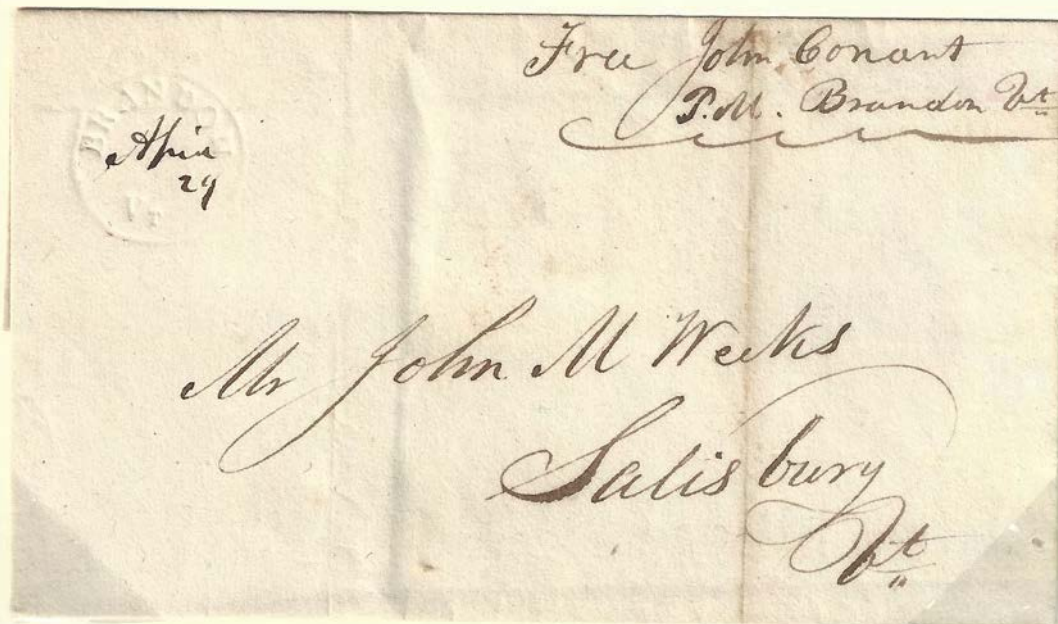
**Embossed Albino Circles**

Rutland 1817

Rutland 1819

Rutland 1822

TOWNMARKS  
CIRCULAR



Brandon 1822

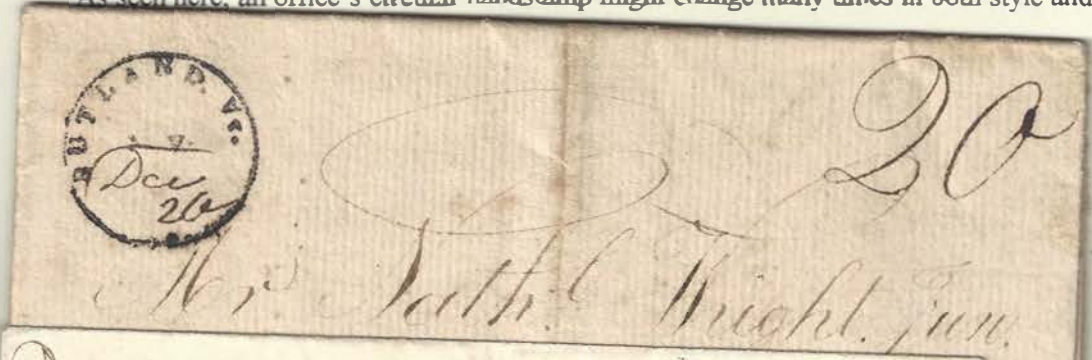
Embossed Albino Circle

One Known

Discovery of this first reported use of this embossed albino postmark from Brandon eliminated any question that several early Vermont postmasters had developed a totally unique type of townmark. Brandon is only 17 miles from Rutland and the resemblance of its marking to Rutland's in size, typeface and placement on the cover is obvious.

TOWNMARKS  
CIRCULAR

As seen here, an office's circular handstamp might change many times in both style and color within just a few years.



Rutland 1811



Rutland 1824



Rutland 1825



Rutland 1827



**TOWNMARKS  
CIRCULAR**

Only about ten Vermont offices in the stampless era used rimless circular markings. Most of these markings were short-lived and from small offices, so there are few well-struck examples.



Hinesburgh 1829



Norwich 1839

Healdville

Two Known

Both the townmark and the rate/paid markings clearly were homemade.



TOWNMARKS  
CIRCULAR



Brookfield 1845



Brookfield 1845

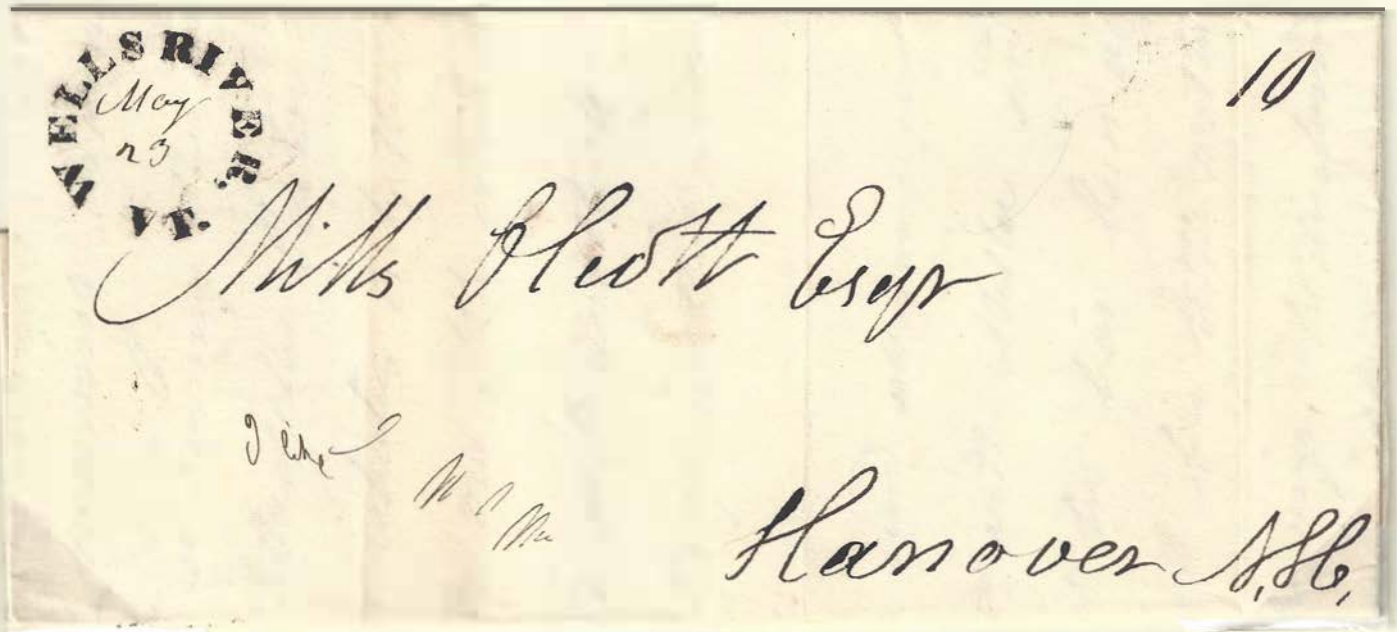
Subsequently turned and sent back to Brookfield.

TOWNMARKS  
CIRCULAR

Wells River had several different rimless circles. The 1834 version, used the same year as its famous "baker's hat", differs from the 1842 variety in a number of respects including its size and type size.



Wells River 1842



Wells River 1834

**TOWNMARKS  
CIRCULAR**

The strong similarities among the three rimless circles of these adjacent offices suggests that they may have been made by the same source over a span of many years.



Brattleboro

**One Known**

Probably the result of damage to an otherwise identical marking which had a rim and was used here during much of the 1820's.



Brattleboro 1842



West Brattleboro 1851

**TOWNMARKS  
CIRCULAR**

Double outer line circles saw almost no use in Vermont until the final few years of the stampless era, so few offices employed them without stamps.



Cady's Falls

One Known

The only handstamp of an office with only five reported covers in all.



East Berkshire

Forwarded.

East Berkshire



TOWNMARKS  
CIRCULAR

The changing spellings of a town's name often are reflected in its townmarks. Stowe's first CDS did not use an "e", while its manuscript markings through the 1840's sometimes are "Stow" and other times are "Stowe". Eventually the latter spelling won out, as the later CDS reflects.



Stow 1849



Stowe 1852

**TOWNMARKS  
CIRCULAR**

When population or political tides shifted, a town's newly dominant office might wrest away use of a "better" name. So the former "East Bennington" took over the name "Bennington", scraping the old "East" from its CDS until it could order a new one. Old "Bennington" salvaged some honor by becoming "Bennington Centre", but it had to add its honorific by pen!



East Bennington 1848

Bennington 1850

Bennington Centre 1849

TOWNMARKS  
CIRCULAR

Inclusion of printed year dates was uncommon in Vermont before the mid-1850's, so it seldom is seen on stampless covers. Chelsea was one of the few Vermont offices to use them on anything but the unusual attached-rate devices. It did so in only these three years and two colors of ink.



Chelsea 1837



Chelsea 1838



Chelsea 1839

New Year's Day



TOWNMARKS

ATTACHED AND ENCLOSED RATES

Only the New England states and New York employed attached rate CDS's, first patented in 1830. These were clumsy and tended to break, so attached rates saw use in just eight Vermont offices. Later, when rates were simplified in 1845 and 1851, 11 Vermont offices had a CDS enclosing a rate within its rim.



Bradford

Three Known

The only copy in red.

Thetford 1833

The earliest of the several copies known.



Bellows Falls 1831

One Known

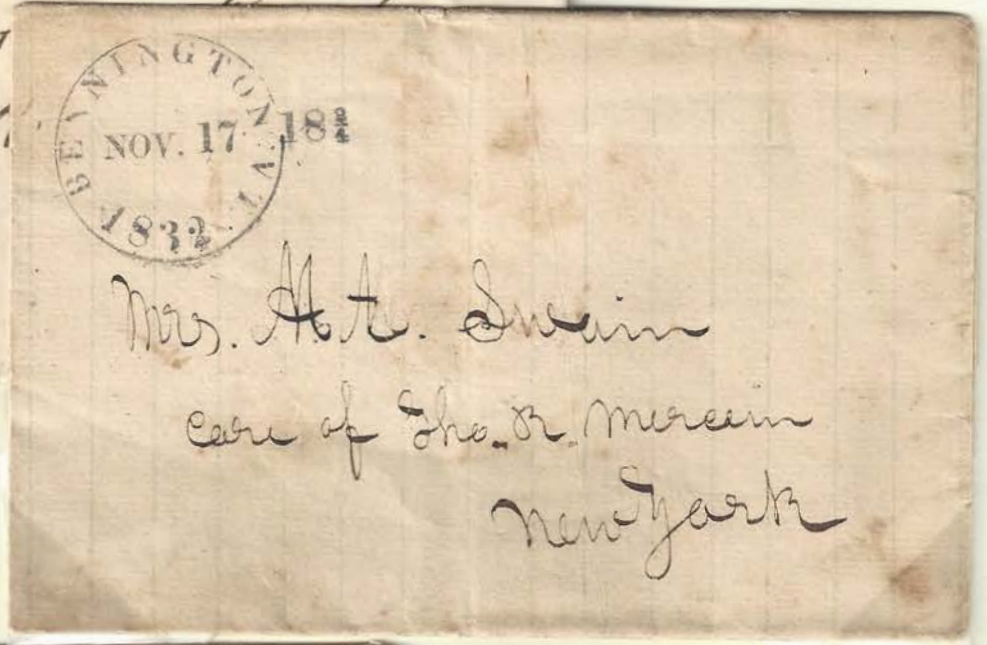
**TOWNMARKS**

**ATTACHED AND ENCLOSED RATES**

Several offices' attached rate devices included year dates, which few other Vermont markings did until the late 1850's.



Bennington 1832



Bennington 1833



**TOWNMARKS  
ATTACHED AND ENCLOSED RATES**

Even when an attached rate device broke down, its rate wheel might continue in use, but now as a "detached attached rate"!



Newbury 1833

Newbury 1835

Only U.S. Office With  
Green Attached Rate



Newbury 1841

**Detached Attached Rate**

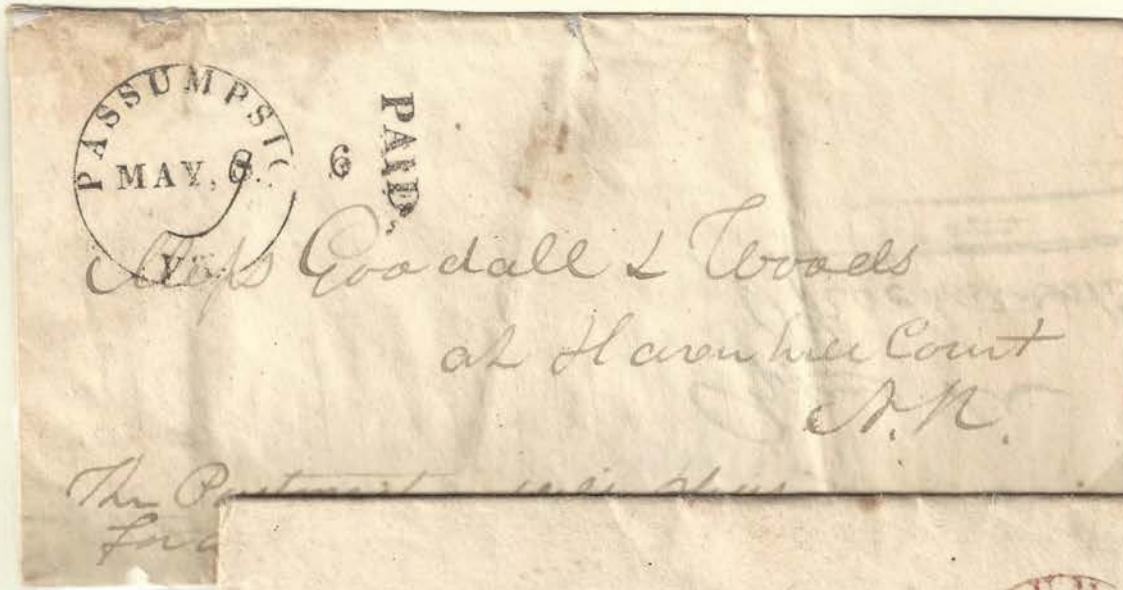
The CDS is replaced,  
but its attached rate  
wheel remains in use.



**TOWNMARKS**

**ATTACHED AND ENCLOSED RATES**

Beyond simply showing the rate, an additional outer wheel could indicate pre-payment, or even that it was a "FREE" letter.



**The Only Three Attached Rate Covers From This Office**

Passumpsic

Passumpsic 1831

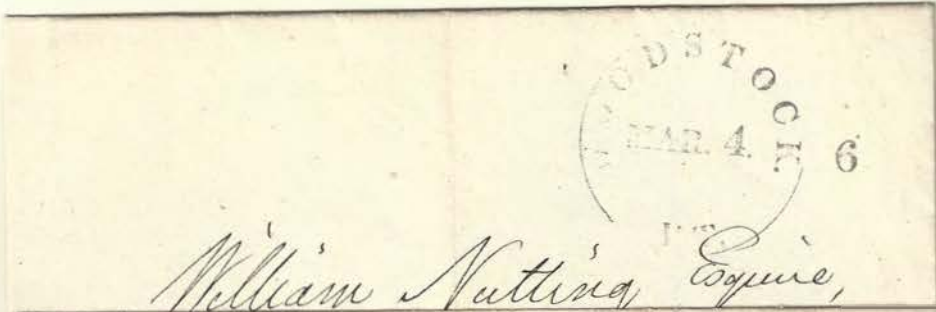


Passumpsic 1831



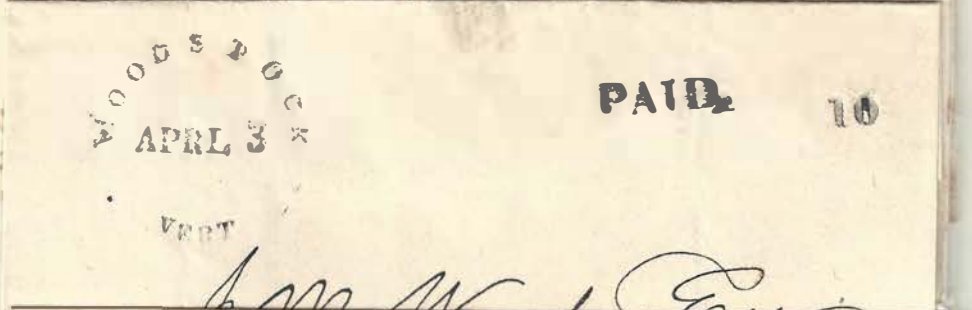
**TOWNMARKS  
ATTACHED AND ENCLOSED RATES**

Woodstock's attached rates provide a fine example of how a device might undergo repeated modifications and deterioration.



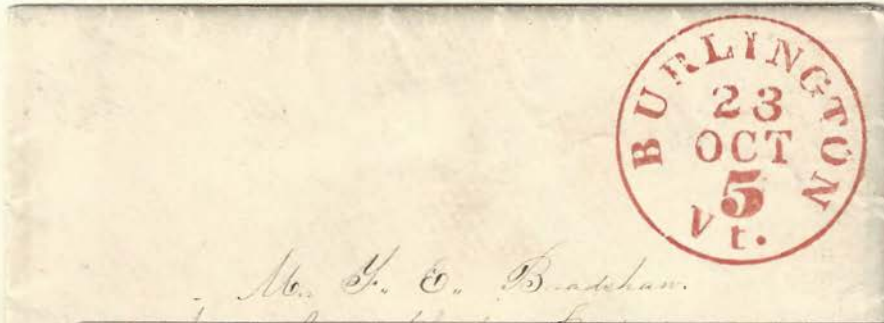
Woodstock

- 1832
- 1832
- 1832
- 1837(?)
- 1837



**TOWNMARKS  
ATTACHED AND ENCLOSED RATES**

Burlington was Vermont's most prolific user of enclosed rate handstamps, although it never used attached rate markings. Three distinct styles of "5" were applied in different colors for overlapping periods from 1850-55, probably in this order.



Burlington 1850

Burlington

Burlington

Burlington



**TOWNMARKS  
ATTACHED AND ENCLOSED RATES**



**Brandon**

Even though enclosed rates were supposed to save time by letting letters be marked in one step, postmasters like this one undercut their own efficiency.



**Bridgewater 1850**



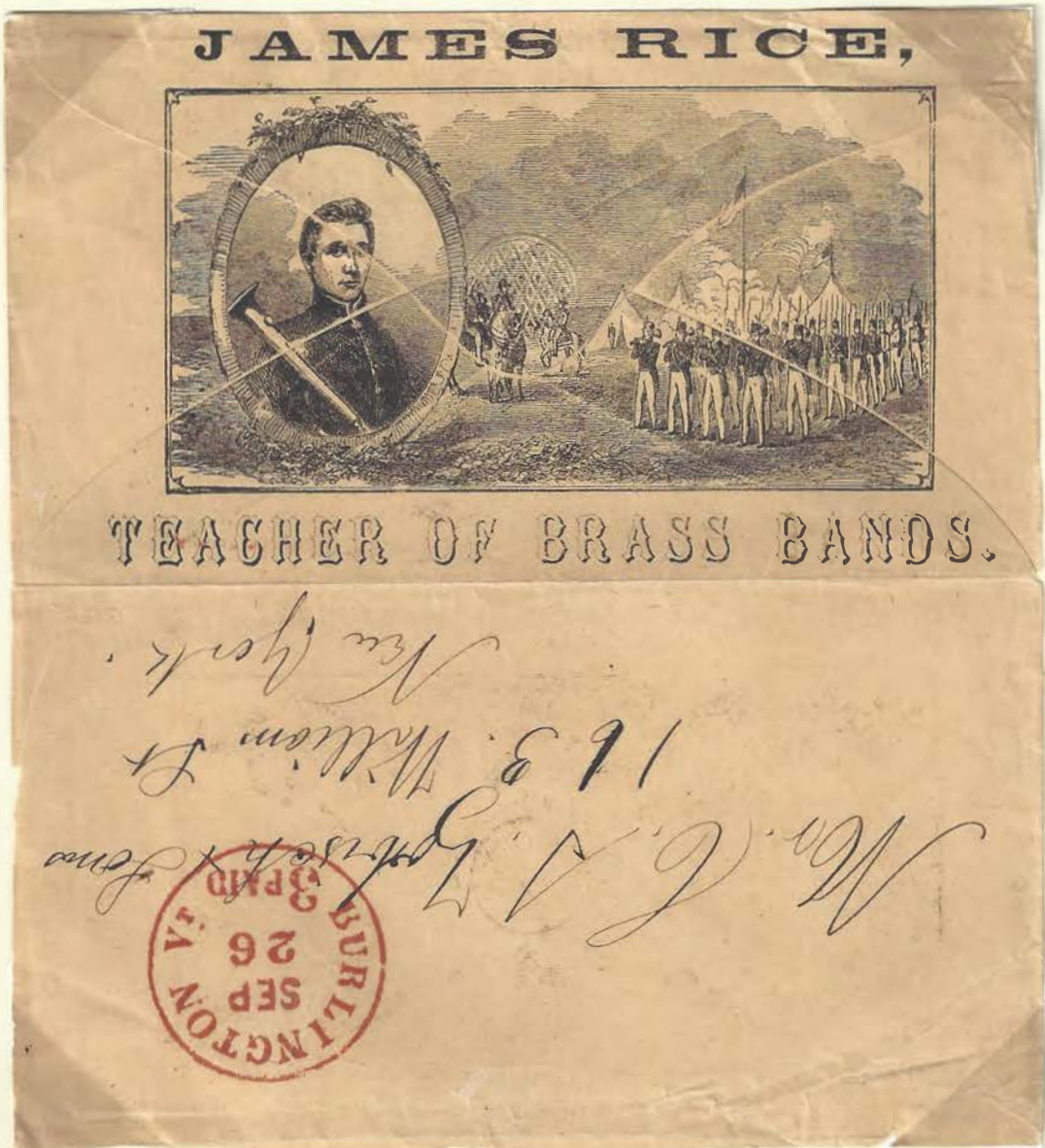
**Danville**

**One Known**

TOWNMARKS

ATTACHED AND ENCLOSED RATES

Burlington used several types of "enclosed 3" rate handstamps, both unpaid and pre-paid.



Burlington

Burlington

Absence of a "paid" marking within this CDS resulted in striking it again with the "PAID 3" in a circle.





**TOWNMARKS  
ATTACHED AND ENCLOSED RATES**



Passumpsic

One Known



West Randolph 1849

West Randolph 1848

One Known

Also the only reported use of an enclosed "10" rate from Vermont.



**TOWNMARKS**

**ATTACHED AND ENCLOSED RATES**

These markings are identical apart from their rate lines. Apparently they saw only brief use. This probably results from their introduction in mid-1855 for new "paid/unpaid" rates just before stamps were required for all first class mail in 1856.



Woodstock



Woodstock

**TOWNMARKS**

**ATTACHED AND ENCLOSED RATES**

Only a few Vermont offices posted enough circulars to bother with creating an enclosed handstamp for them. Absence of a specific rate and of any dating is fairly typical of the handling of this class of mail.



Middlebury 1855

**Enclosed PAID For Circulars**



Burlington 1857

**Converted CDS**

By 1857, Burlington no longer needed its stampless first class "3 Paid" marking because using postage stamps was required. It simply scraped off the "3", creating this enclosed "PAID" handstamp, since circulars still could be sent without stamps.

**TOWNMARKS**

**ATTACHED AND ENCLOSED RATES**

Although an enclosed "5" marking served for a "single rate" letter, "double rates" needed a corrective re-rating showing the 10 cent rate since only one Vermont office had an enclosed "10" handstamp.



Thetford 1851



Thetford 1851

**Re-Rated For Double Rate**



Woodstock 1848



Woodstock 1849

**Re-Rated For Double Rate**

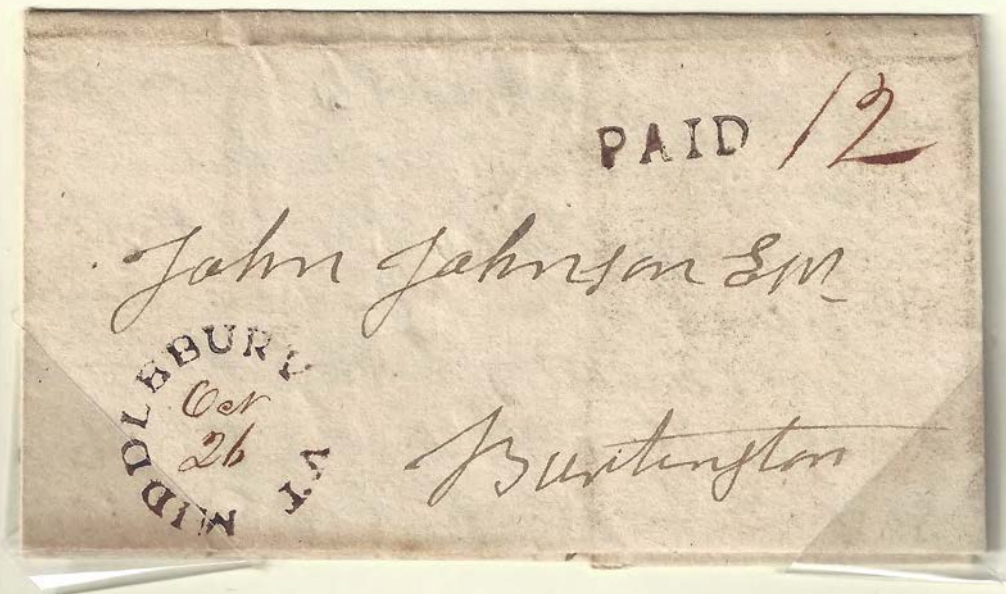
## THE WAR OF 1812

The War of 1812 was quite unpopular in Vermont not only because of its Federalist leanings but because it interrupted the postal and commercial ties with Canada which were so important to a border state. As these covers illustrate, the War also eventually caused postal rates to be increased by 50% to help pay costs of the conflict.



Middlebury/Burlington 1814

Pre-War Rate



Burlington/Middlebury 1815

War Rate

PAID AND RATE MARKINGS  
PAID HANDSTAMPS

Most Vermont PAID bandstamps were simple straightlines of various sizes, but a few had neat or even ornate borders.



Milton 1842

Re-rated from double to triple rate - thus unpaid for the final 10 cents.

Cornwall 1843



Wallingford 1849



**PAID AND RATE MARKINGS  
PAID HANDSTAMPS**

The shape of a PAID straightline lent itself to enclosure within a neat lozenge or rectangle.



Weston 1851

Barton 1850



Peacham 1830

Probably the finest known example of this small hill town's homemade PAID marking.

PAID AND RATE MARKINGS  
RATE HANDSTAMPS

The 1845 rate simplification led many more offices to buy commercial handstamps such as these 5's in circles, since far fewer rate markings now were needed to handle most mail.



Bennington 1851

South Hardwick 1852

St. Albans Bay 1852

Wallingford 1850





**PAID AND RATE MARKINGS  
RATE HANDSTAMPS**

Virtually all Vermont stampless offices bought their own handstamps, leading to a wide range of styles for rate markings.



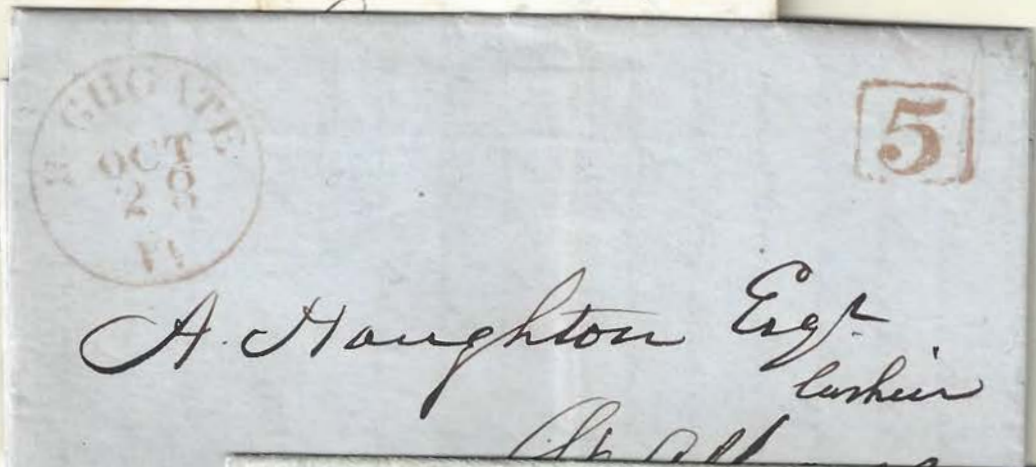
Brattleboro 1848



Rutland 1845

**Only Known Pointing Hand**

Absence of any other reported copies may stem from brief use to highlight the reduced rates of 1845. This strike is in the first week for those new rates.



Highgate 1848



Chester 1846

**PAID AND RATE MARKINGS  
NEGATIVE RATES**

Only a few Vermont offices utilized negative rate handstamps.



Bradford 1855

This was the fanciest and the shortest-lived of Vermont's negative rate handstamps.



Middlebury 1851

Middlebury

Although much plainer, these two handstamps usually are very poorly struck.

As of July 1, 1851, a pre-paid letter was only 3 cents, while an unpaid one cost 5 cents.



PAID AND RATE MARKINGS  
ROMAN NUMERALS

Far fewer Vermont offices used Roman numeral rates than did those with Arabic numerals.



Windsor 1850

Wilmington 1848

Whiting 1847

Rutland 1847



PAID AND RATE MARKINGS  
ROMAN NUMERALS



Wallingford 1846

Mr. William C. Sodge,  
Wilmington,  
Delaware.

St. Johnsbury 1846



Geo H. Aborn Esq  
Eng - P. & O. R. R.  
Pottstown  
Pennsylvania



Centre Rutland

As this re-rated cover shows by its Roman numeral over-strike of the Arabic rate, both styles of handstamps might be in simultaneous use at the same office.

PAID AND RATE MARKINGS  
UNUSUAL STYLES

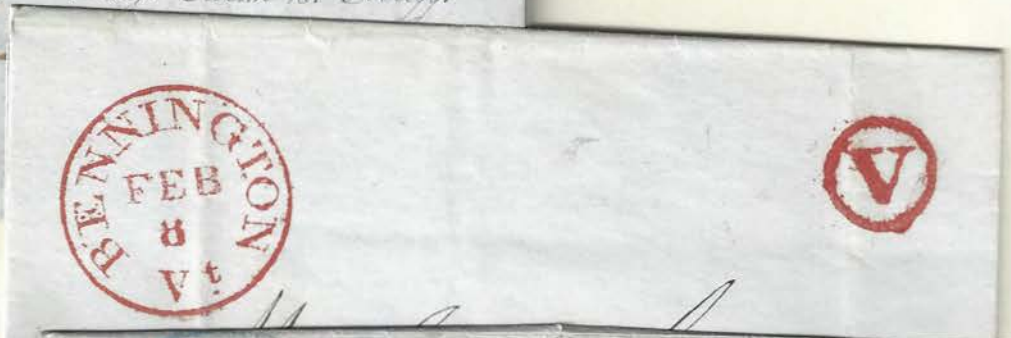
Some Vermont rate and paid markings also are worthy of note because of their unusual sizes, shapes, or other features.



Springfield 1846



Pomfret 1849



Bennington 1848



Middlebury 1850



Rutland 1846

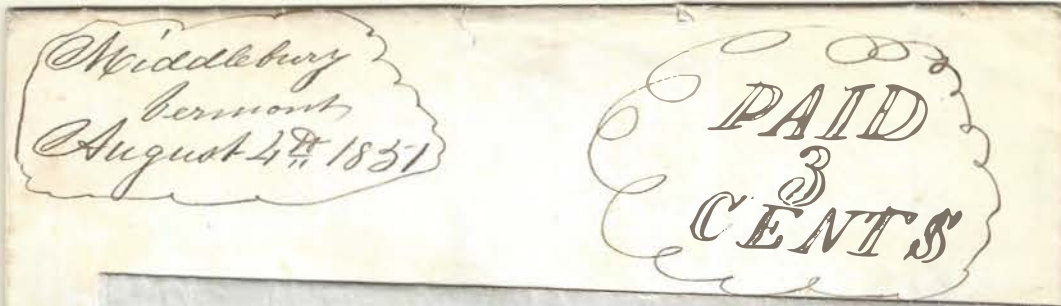


Woodstock 1853

*Miss Sarah W. Bragg  
Cutland Center  
Vermont*

**PAID AND RATE MARKINGS  
UNUSUAL STYLES**

Along with these other examples of unusual sizes or shapes, any numeral "6" from Vermont also is remarkable.



Middlebury 1851

St. Johnsbury 1847

Woodstock

Bennington Centre 1851

Springfield

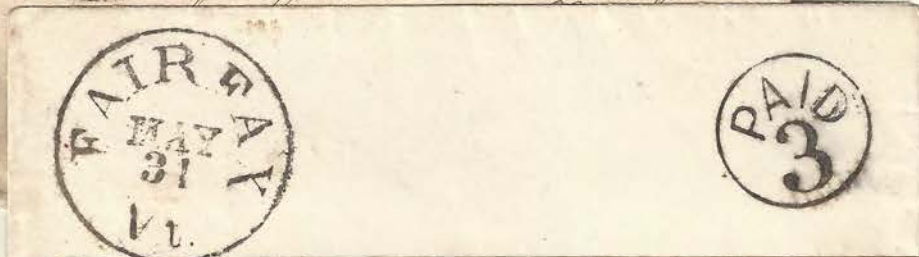


**PAID AND RATE MARKINGS  
COMBINED HANDSTAMPS**

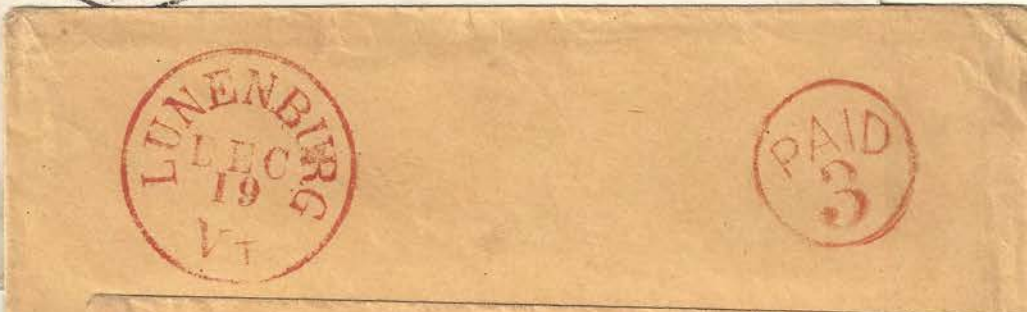
After 1851's rate reductions came incentives and then mandates for pre-payment. Many Vermont offices then bought handstamps combining the rate and paid markings, trying to speed and simplify mail processing. They come in many subtle varieties.



Westminster



Fairfax



Lunenburg 1854



Quechee Village



Barton 1855

Copperas Hill



One Known

**PAID AND RATE MARKINGS  
COMBINED HANDSTAMPS**

Although most combined rate and paid handstamps were circles, both arcs and plain and boxed straightlines also were used.



Thetford



Vergennes



East Berkshire

Woodstock

Two Known





**PAID AND RATE MARKINGS  
TRIME HANDSTAMPS**

Several Vermont offices used "trime" rate handstamps. Their design was modeled on that of the silver three cent coin which was in current use. All of Vermont's trimes designs are infrequently seen.



South Craftsbury 1852

**One Known**



Hardwick

**PAID AND RATE MARKINGS  
NEGATIVE PAID S**

A handful of Vermont offices briefly used distinctive handstamps featuring the word "PAID" in vertical negative lettering set within a "3" rate marking. Brattleboro probably was the first place in Vermont to use these.



Brattleboro

Brattleboro 1851

**Earliest Known Use**

First week of the new 3 cent rate for which it was created.



Brattleboro

**One Known**

Previously unreported with the addition of this outer circle. It also is quite unusual to see an office using two colors of ink on the same cover.



**PAID AND RATE MARKINGS  
NEGATIVE PAIDS**

Johnson had Vermont's most striking example of the negative "PAID in 3" markings, perhaps in part because of its distinctive red ink which was found on all known copies prior to this exhibit.



Johnson 1851

The finest known strike in the handstamp's normal ink color.

Johnson Aug. 19, 1861

**Illegal Demonetization Use**

**One Known**

The only known blue-green strike resulted from re-use of the old stampless handstamp by Johnson's postmaster when he ran out of stamps during Civil War demonetization of old issue stamps.

A stampless use now was illegal, but he had no alternative other than to stop processing his mail.



Danby

Probably One Known

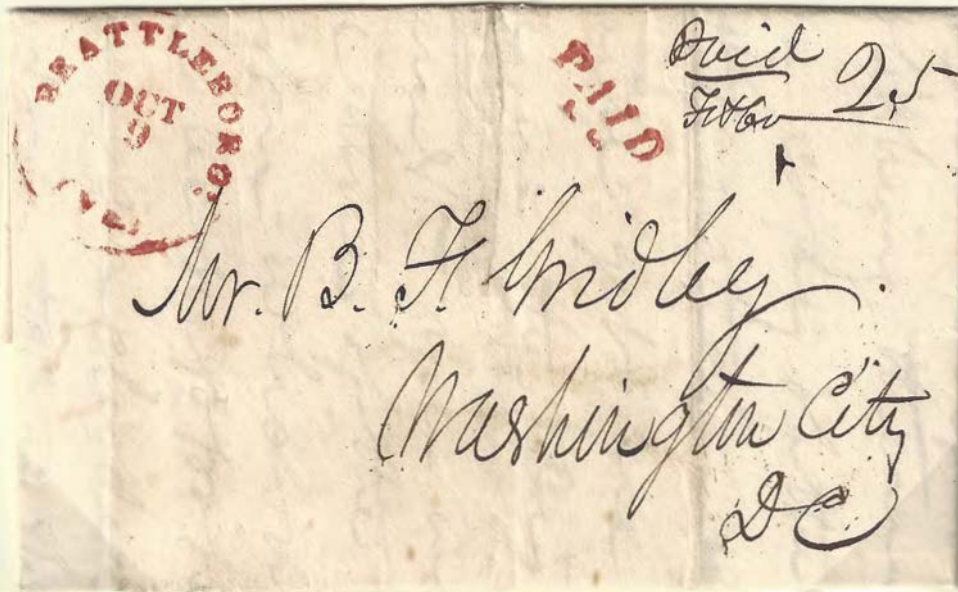
**PAID AND RATE MARKINGS  
POSTMASTER'S INITIALS**

Brattleboro's "PAID A.G." marking generally is viewed as the first U.S. "name of postmaster" handstamp. Asa Green (not an Andrew Oliver, as the ASCC long indicated) created the marking. Because of their tiny size, the letters invariably are blurred. These covers are among the best known examples.



Brattleboro 1836

The "PAID A.G." marking almost always is found along with this rimless circle.



Brattleboro 1834

Two Known

The discovery copy of a "PAID A.G." with Brattleboro's earlier CDS, explaining why the initials are slightly clearer.

## FREE MAIL PRIVILEGES

Postmasters, Senators and Representatives, and certain other federal officials could send and receive mail free of postage under certain conditions. Vermont free usages have many subtle and interesting aspects.



East Poultney 1847

### Postmaster's Sending Privilege

In 1847, only postmasters paid under \$200 a year could send personal mail for free. Most Vermont postmasters qualified.

To use that privilege, they had to frank the letter with their name and title.

Burlington 1821

### Postmaster's Receiving Privilege

Postmasters also could receive their own mail free of postage even if the sender enjoyed no personal franking privilege. To gain such free treatment, the sender had to indicate the basis for the recipient's privilege on the letter.

Here, Mr. Kellogg's name and title are not his free frank; rather, they are part of the address.



Burlington 1869

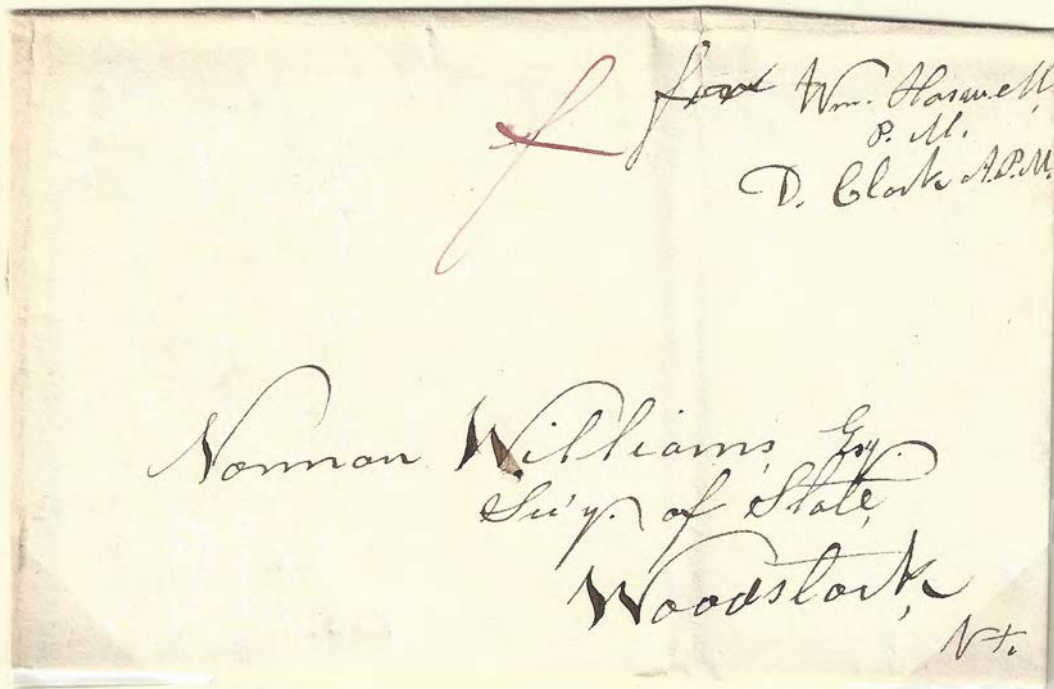
### Senatorial Sending and Receiving Privileges

An unusual demonstration on a single cover of each of the free mail privileges held by U.S. Senators.

The letter is franked by George Edmunds, one of Vermont's Senators, and is addressed to Justin Morrill, its other Senator. Thus, it is both a sending and a receiving free letter!



**FREE MAIL PRIVILEGES**

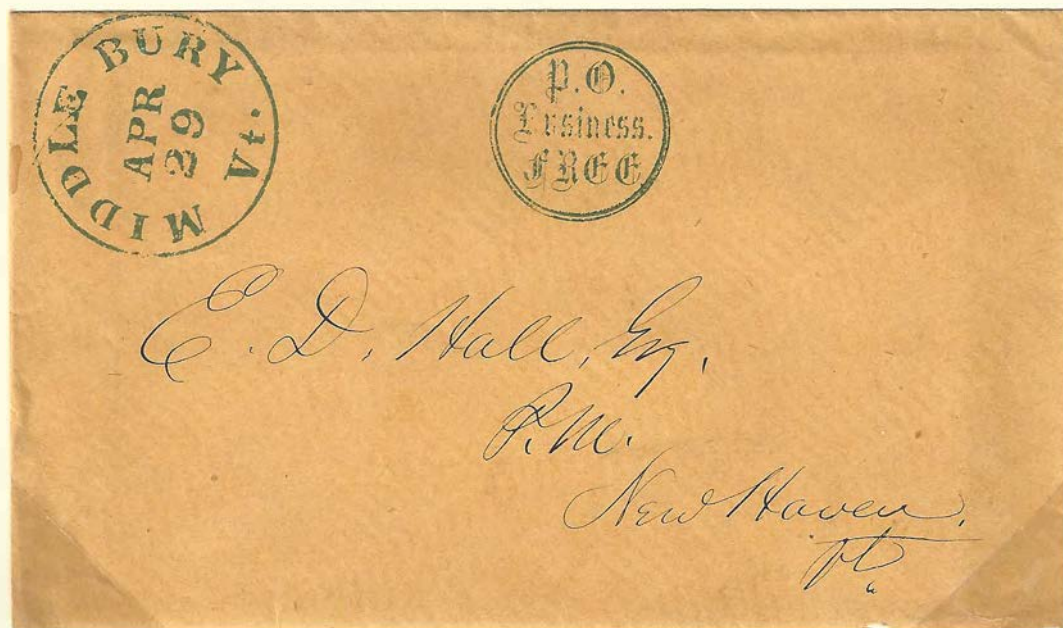


Bennington 1824

**Assistant Postmaster's Frank**

**One Known**

David Clark, in his role as Bennington's Assistant Postmaster, invoked the free privilege for Postmaster William Harwell. This is the only such usage reported from Vermont, partially because it was of dubious legality and, more importantly, because almost no Vermont offices ever had need of an Assistant Postmaster.



Middlebury 1856

Although many Vermont offices used small straightline "FREE" markings, very few bought special fancy handstamps.

**FREE MAIL PRIVILEGES**

Vermont has virtually no recorded stampless free mail apart from that of her postmasters and Members of Congress. The various Executive Departments, which also had free franking privileges, had almost no contact with this small rural state.

**Only Known Executive Department Free Mail**



Woodstock 1827

War Department

Springfield

Treasury Department

Fair Haven 1837

Patent Office



*2*

*Wm*

POST OFFICE BUSINESS.  
FREE.



Publisher of

*Home, Millbury,  
10th House Astor Place,  
New York city.*

*0776 80*

*Wm Buell Castleton VT  
June 27, 1855*

POST OFFICE  
CASTLETON, VT., June

To the Publisher of the

*Home, Millbury*

SIR:

Agreeably to the order of the  
General, you are hereby informed that  
dressed to

*A. M. Starkin*

is not taken out of this office.

REASON,

*Reason*

Yours, Respectful  
G. BUE

Castleton 1855

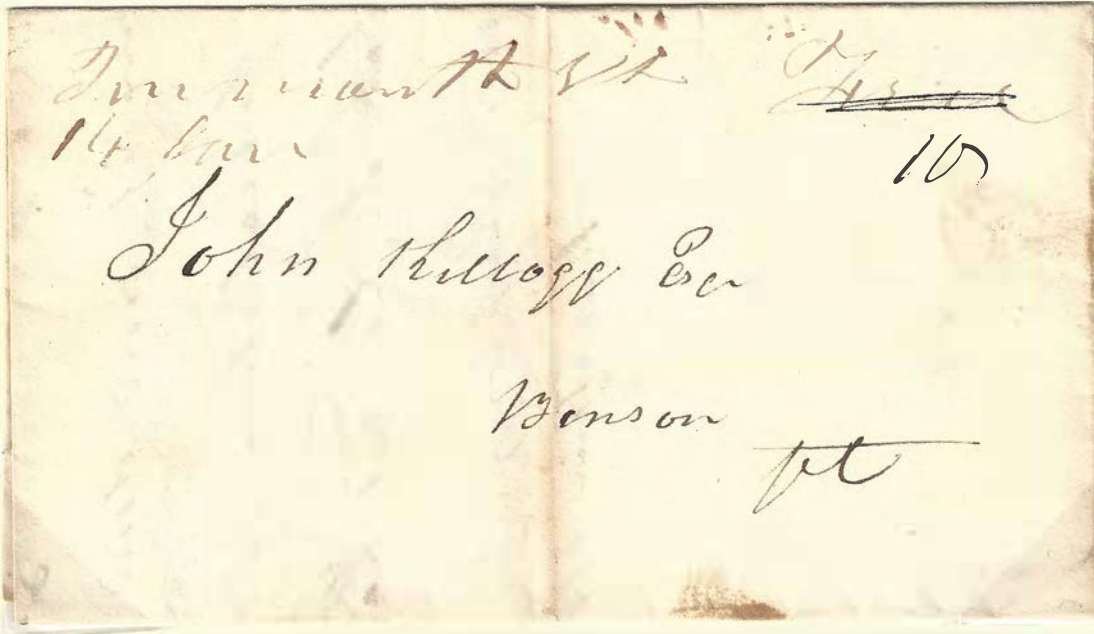
One Known

This is the only Vermont stampless office known to have prepared any printed "Free" form. Given the tiny expected usage for such an item, perhaps Postmaster Buell also was a country printer with time on his hands!



## FREE MAIL PRIVILEGES

Failure to properly document a free franking privilege or using it for an impermissible purpose required payment of postage.



Tinmouth 1829

### Rejected For Omitting Name

Tinmouth's postmaster failed to include his name and title, so Benson rejected it as "Frce" and charged it full postage.



Windsor 1853

### Rejected For Omitting "POB"

The Windsor postmaster wrote asking a publisher to cease mailings to a moved subscriber. Because he failed to mark the letter as "POB" or "Post Office Business", it was charged normal postage. Windsor's postmaster was among the few in Vermont earning over \$200 a year, so he had no personal franking privilege.

FREE MAIL PRIVILEGES

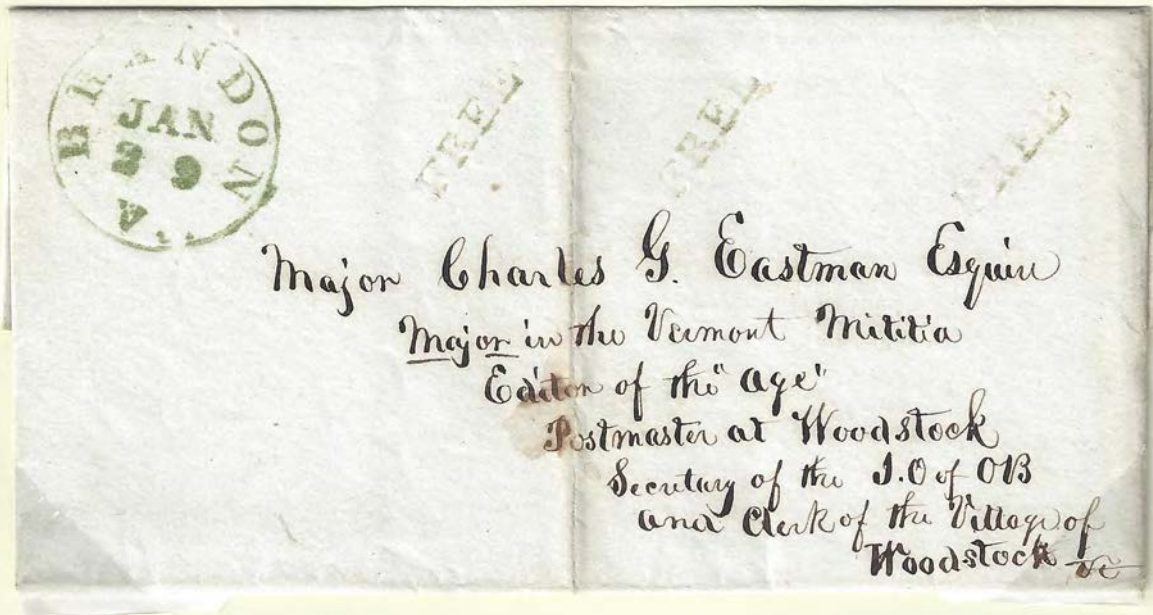


Montpelier 1845

Traveling Free Frank

Postmaster Kidder's personal free frank could be used anywhere in the country. Montpelier's postmaster, irked at handling a letter for which he earned nothing, added the sardonic note "Free, I suppose, at Braintree".

Apparently neither man was aware that Congress had decided to revoke personal free franking for postmasters 11 days before this letter was sent. The many resulting postmaster resignations at smaller offices forced enactment of a new "1/2 ounce free" privilege several years later, but this was limited to postmasters earning under \$200 a year.



Brandon

Despite Major Eastman's many titles, only that of "Postmaster" permitted him to receive this letter for free!

**FREE MAIL PRIVILEGES**

Some highly unusual "FREE" covers were created because a postmaster could frank only the first 1/2 ounce of a personal letter. Very few of these "partially free" excess weight letters survive; these are the only two known from Vermont.



Woodstock 1834

**Septuple Rate With First 1/2 Ounce Free**

The first 1/2 ounce is free at Woodstock under the traveling free frank privilege of South Reading, Vt.'s postmaster. The 62 1/2 cents for the five remaining rates remained due from the recipient.



Brandon

**Quintuple Rate With Four Rates Paid By Stamps**

Because it was addressed to a postmaster, this letter is stampless as to its first "FREE PM Rate". The sender then prepaid its four additional rate increments using stamps. The extremely unusual result is a hybrid stampless stamped free letter!

**FREE MAIL PRIVILEGES**

Few examples exist of free franks on Vermont Civil War patriotic envelopes.



Lunenburg Dec 7<sup>th</sup> 1861

Dear Sister

I thought I would just write you @ word about the times and perhaps I might get @ letter from you. About Petersons Magazine I just cut all the subs cr... will make... if you get... will not ill... this year... and find... money and... me when you... will send...



Charles Magnus 12 Frankfurt St. N.Y.

H.A. Cutting  
Free  
Lunenburg  
Dec 7<sup>th</sup> 1861

Mrs. Adeline E. Cutting  
West Concord  
Vermont.

Lunenburg 1861

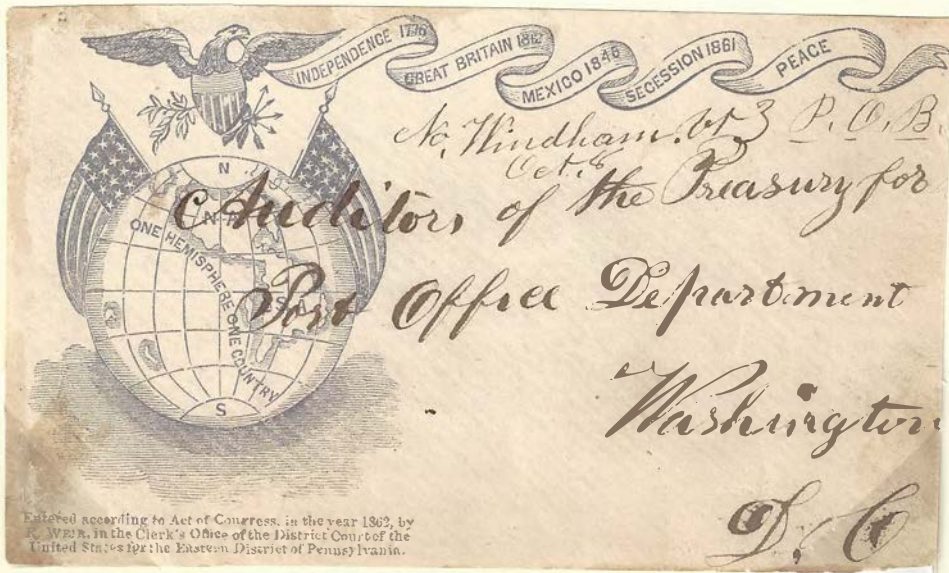
The postmaster of this tiny office could barely fit his "H.A. Cutting P.M. Free" frank around the "Burlington View" on this, which is one of only two known Vermont Magnus multi-color patriotics. In light of the envelope's multitude of Vermont themes it is ironic that the "View" actually is a stock Magnus design having nothing whatsoever to do with Burlington!

**FREE MAIL PRIVILEGES**



Bennington 1861

The free mail privilege for postmasters earning under \$200 a year lasted until 1863.



North Windham

From 1845 to 1863 all postmasters were allowed to send free mail relating to their office or the Post Office Department by marking it either "P.O.B." or "Post Office Business".

**SPECIAL RATES AND USAGES  
LAKE CHAMPLAIN**

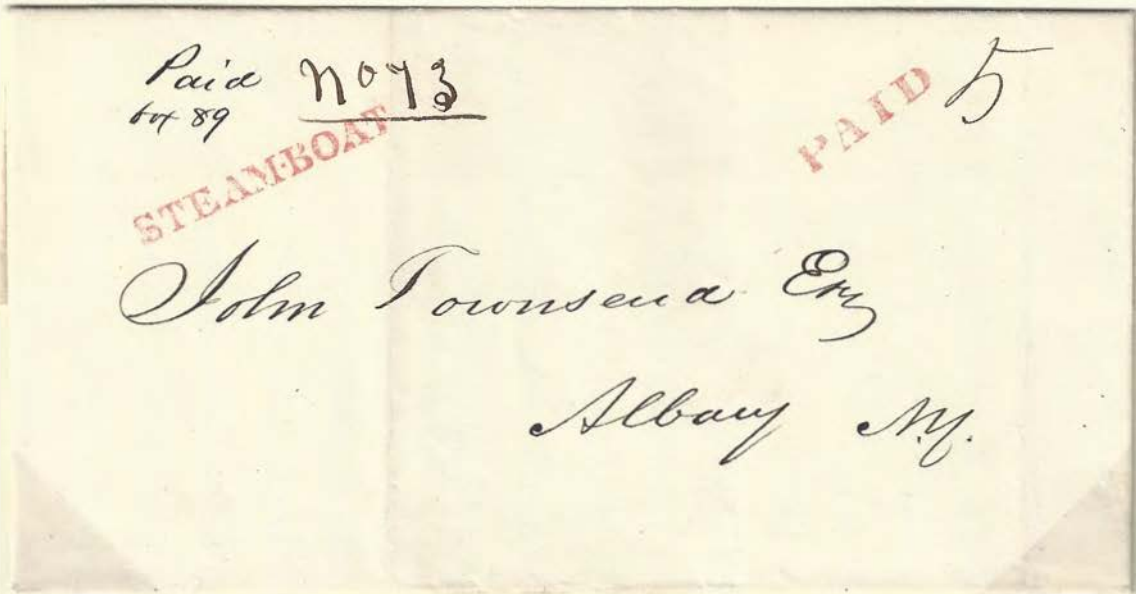
Because of the many types of mail being carried, the ways it was moved and serviced, and even quirks of senders and recipients, Vermont's stampless era produced many special rates and usages. The first ones shown here are those from carrying the mail on Lake Champlain, Vermont's largest body of water.



Burlington 1840

**Only Known "Across The Ice" Cover**

This letter's postage was reduced because a freeze permitted it to be carried over the ice to New York. This avoided needing to utilize the longer land route in a season when the Lake was not open for navigation.



Burlington 1847

**Non-Contract Steamboat**

Carried by non-contract Lake Champlain steamboat from Burlington to Whitehall, N.Y. There, the "STEAM-BOAT" straight line handstamp and "PAID" (re-confirming the "Paid box 89" notation of Burlington) were applied.

**SPECIAL RATES AND USAGES  
LAKE CHAMPLAIN**



Burlington 1842

**Ship Marking**

Dated at Quebec, then bootlegged into the mails at Rouse's Point, N.Y. Carried by steamboat to Burlington, where it was rated "Ship 8" plus 6 cents for forwarding it to Waterbury.

Addison 1835

**Routing By Steamboat**

Routed from Addison via Burlington, where its direction "To be forwarded by the Steam-boat" could be honored.

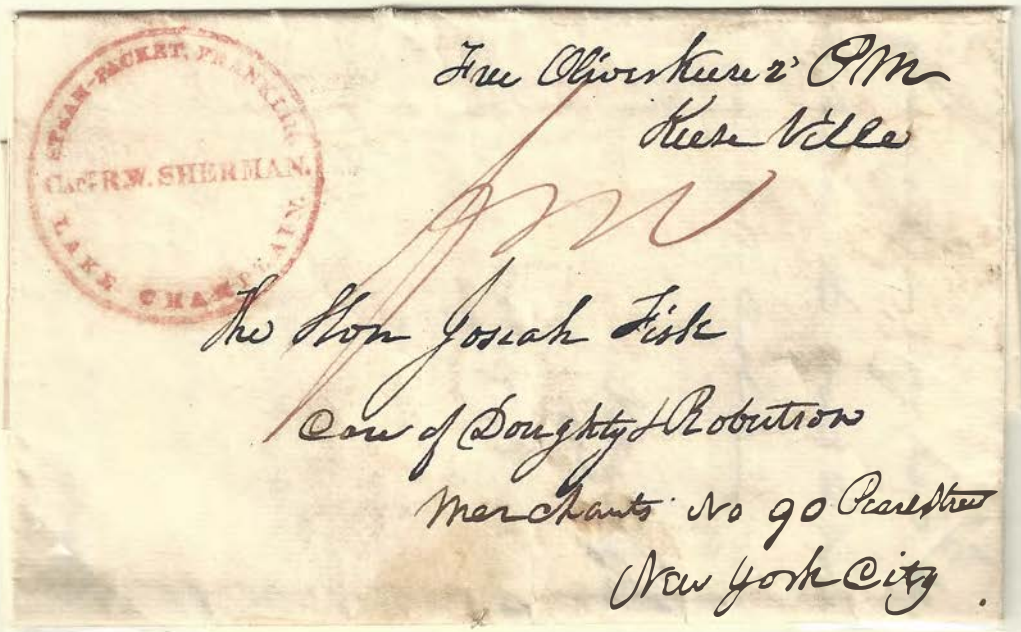


Burlington 1831

**Steam-Packet Franklin**

This private marking advertising Capt. R.W. Sherman's Steam-Packet Franklin is among the earliest U.S. "Name of Vessel" handstamps. Postmasters treated it as a steamboat marking.

The cover also has the Keeseville, N.Y. postmaster's traveling free frank applied in Burlington.



SPECIAL RATES AND USAGES  
LAKE CHAMPLAIN

Original payment receipts for operation of the Lake Champlain Steamboat mails to and from Burlington.

Burlington 1849

Only Known Lake Champlain Mails Postal Documents

Sam<sup>e</sup> Ames Esq To the Champlain Transport Co  
1849  
July 10. To transp daily <sup>each way</sup> (Sundays excepted)  
the mail between Burlington & Port Kent  
from 11 April to 1 July @ 11<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>  
Weeks at \$2 per week — \$23.00  
Rec<sup>d</sup> pay<sup>ce</sup> P. Doolittle Esq  
Ch Transport Co

"... To transporting daily each way, Sundays excepted, the mails between Burlington and Port Kent from 11 April to 1 July ... \$23.00 ... Received payment ... Lake Champlain Transportation Company"

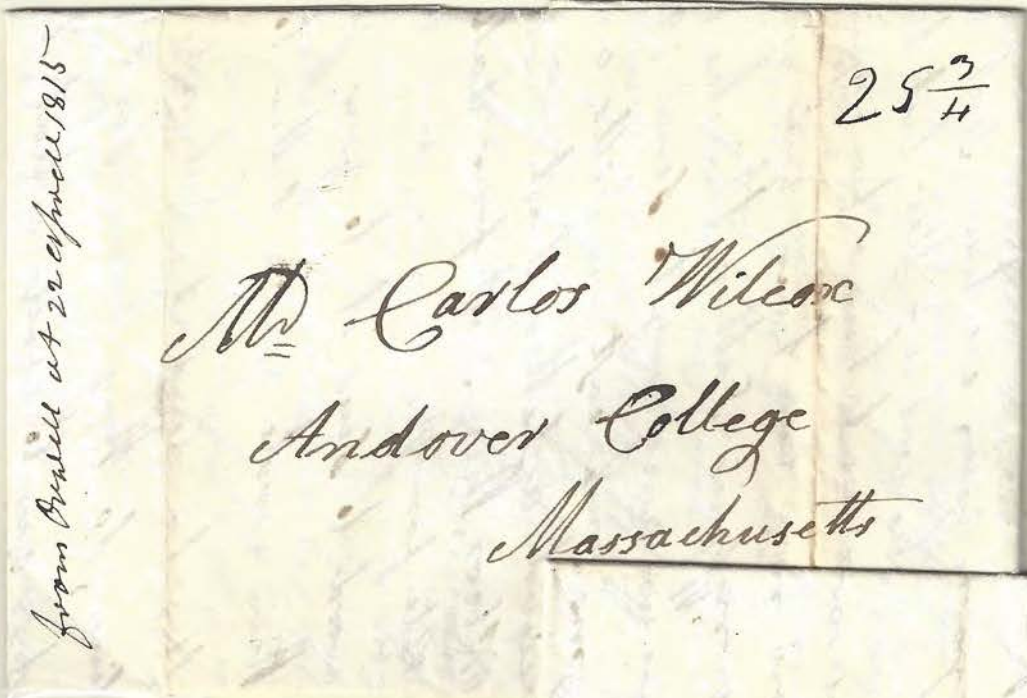
Rec<sup>d</sup> of Samuel Ames \$10 — for carrying  
mail to & from Wharf & Post office in  
Burlington Vt. from commencement  
of season to July 1, 1849  
Dated July 11, 1849  
W. J. Odell

"Received of Samuel Ames \$10 for carrying mail to and from Wharf and Post Office in Burlington, Vt. from commencement of season to July 1, 1849 - W.J. Odell"



**SPECIAL RATES AND USAGES  
RE-RATING INCORRECT POSTAGE**

Complexities and changes in stampless postage rates caused confusion which required re-rating covers to correct errors.



Orwell Apr. 22, 1815

Orwell Nov. 18, 1815

**War of 1812 Surcharges**

Orwell's postmaster found it hard to compute the 50% rate increase helping pay for the War of 1812.

Both covers had a base rate of 17 cents, but he over-charged the April letter by 1/4 cent. By November, he at least is able to correct his own error!



Proctorsville

**Paid Vs. Unpaid Rates**

From 1851 to 1855, a pre-paid letter cost 3 cents, while an unpaid one was 5 cents.

This postmaster neatly used the same 3 cent handstamp he initially had applied in error to correct his mistake. Then, he applied the proper rating handstamp.



**SPECIAL RATES AND USAGES  
FORWARDING**

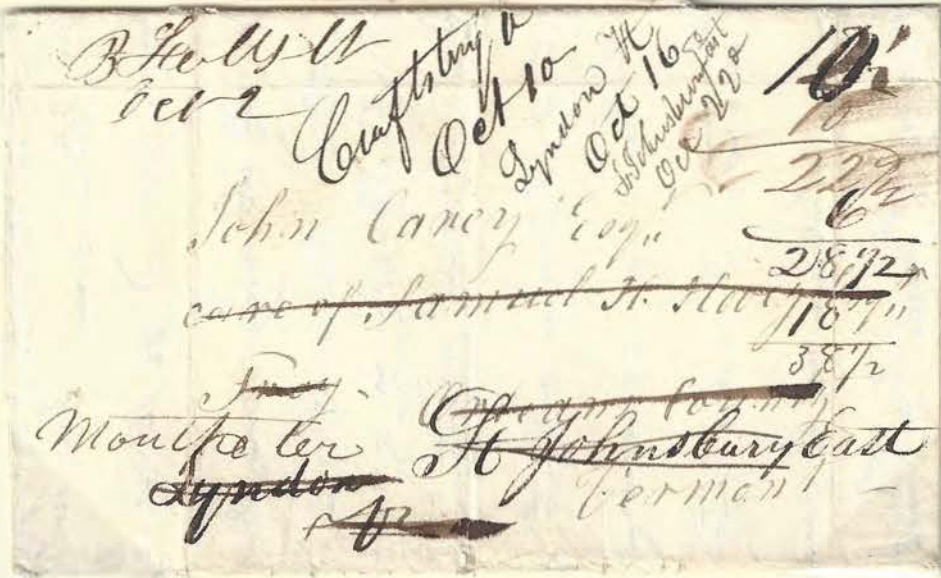
Additional postage was required each time a letter was forwarded for a reason other than a post office error. This could produce unusual rates and multiple townmarks, especially if the recipient stayed one jump ahead of a letter.



Castleton 1836

**Single Forwarding In Vermont**

28 3/4 cents for Norwich, Conn. to Castleton to Middlebury.



Bellows Falls 1832

**Triple Forwarding In Vermont**

38 1/2 cents for Bellows Falls to Craftsbury to Lyndon to Saint Johnsbury East to Montpelier.

Brandon 1834

**Single Forwarding Beyond Vermont**

37 1/2 cents for Brandon to Covington, Ky. to Hanging Rock, Ohio.



**SPECIAL RATES AND USAGES  
FORWARDING**

Burlington 1845

**Triple Forwarding In  
And Beyond Vermont**

20 cents for Norway, Mc. to  
Burlington to Shady Hill, N.Y.  
to Troy, N.Y. to Warwick, N.Y.



Brattleboro 1846

**Forwarding To Dual Address**

10 cents for Brattleboro, Vt. to Norwich,  
Vt. to Norwich, Conn. The sender knew  
his recipient's town, but was unsure of  
the state, so he addressed it to two! The  
"Vt." being put first cost the innocent  
addressee an extra 5 cents.



Brattleboro 1849

**Forwarding For Postal Error**

**Only Known "MISSENT"**

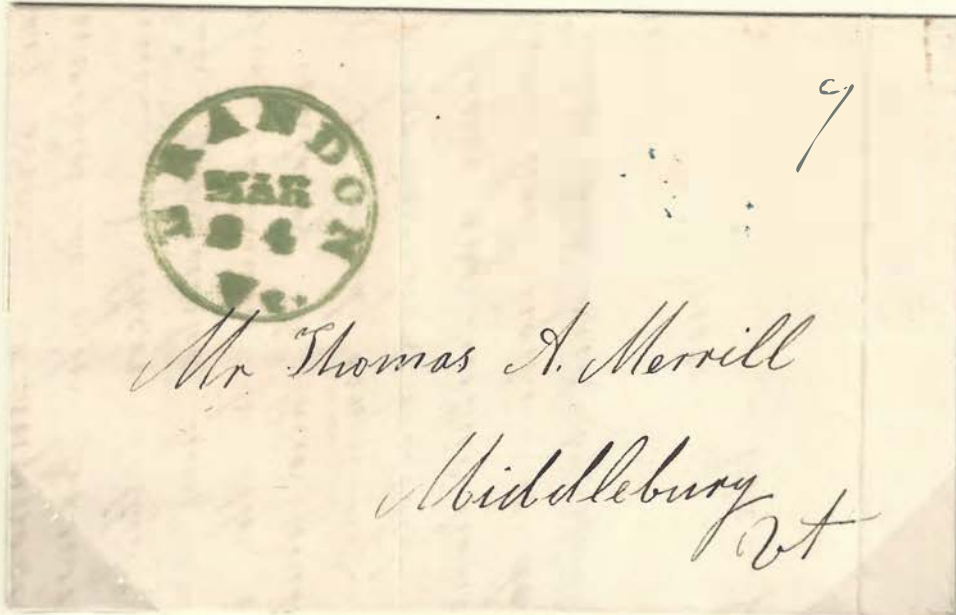
Forwarding was necessary only  
because it was sent from East  
Smithfield, Pa. to Brattleboro  
instead of West Brattleboro,  
so it was without a charge.

There is no other reported copy  
of this "MISSENT" marking.



**SPECIAL RATES AND USAGES  
WAY COVERS**

Post riders accepted letters handed to them by patrons more than two miles from the nearest office. They put these "WAY" letters into the mails at the next office. Riders received one cent for this service, which was added to the normal postage.



Brandon 1845

WAY 7; datelined Pittsford, Vt.

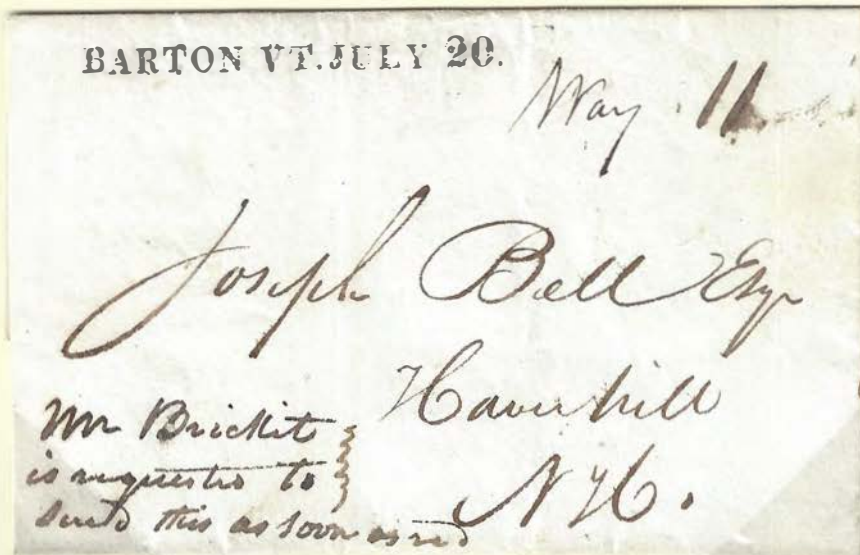
Green postmarks seldom were used; this is the only reported green CDS on a Vermont WAY cover. "WAY" was omitted, but the rate of one cent above the usual six cents indicates the service performed.

Barton 1830

Only WAY With Straightline

WAY 11; no origin shown.

No other Vermont WAY cover is known with a straightline townmark.



Guildhall 1822

Out-Of-State Origin

Way 13 1/2; datelined Northumberland, New Hampshire.

WAY covers handed over in one state but then not posted until reaching another are exceedingly unusual. This is one of only two such usages known from Vermont.



**SPECIAL RATES AND USAGES  
OMITTED RATES**

Regulations required mailing offices to mark the proper postage on the face of each letter, although that rule sometimes was violated for circulars and local "Drop" letters. Omission of any rate on these three covers is most unusual, however, since each was being sent to another town and ladies covers would not have contained circulars.



Gassetts Station 1859

**One CDS Known**

1859 docketing also reveals that this is an illegal late stampless cover. Stamps were mandatory for first class beginning in 1856.

Castleton

Chelsca



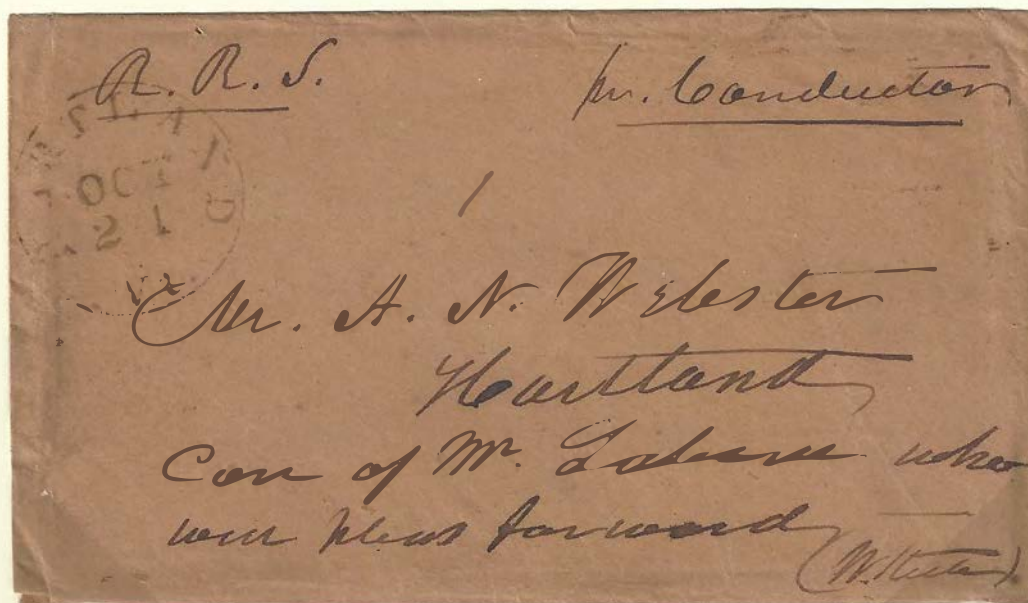
**SPECIAL RATES AND USAGES  
RAILROADS**



Northern Railroad / Vermont Central Railroad 1851

**Vermont's Nearly Non-Existent Railroad**

The Northern Railroad had only 150 yards of Vermont track at the state line, but its route agent used his same handstamp on the Vermont Central. This letter went from Bethel, Vt. to Montpelier, so it never rode on the Northern Railroad at all!



Central Vermont Railroad 1852

**Railroad Drop Letter**

Apparently carried by rail from Sharon, Vt. to Hartland, where it entered the mails as a one cent drop letter. From the other markings, it likely was carried "p(e)r Conductor" on the Vermont Central, with the "R.R.S." possibly standing for "Rail Road Service". The most likely explanation is that it was carried and then posted by the conductor as a favor.

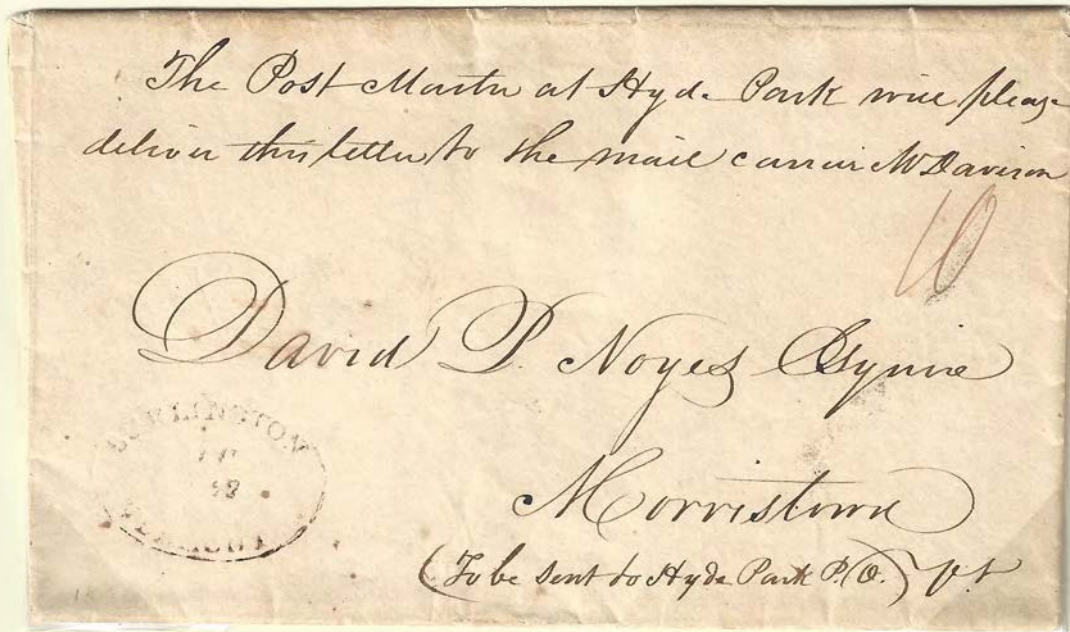
**SPECIAL RATES AND USAGES  
ADVERTISED COVER / "CARRIER" FORERUNNER**



Bethel 1850

**Advertising Fee**

Quarterly newspaper advertisements were placed to try to locate addresses of unclaimed mail. An additional fee, here two cents, was charged to pay for that service.



Burlington 1827

**Forerunner of Carrier Service**

No office in Vermont had an organized carrier service during the stampless era. This cover, however, represents an early and unusual forerunner of "from the mails" carrier service. The postmaster in Hyde Park was directed to hand the letter over to the contract route carrier so that the carrier then could deliver it to its recipient in Morrystown. Apparently no fee was paid for this novel Vermont "carrier" service.

**SPECIAL RATES AND USAGES  
TURNED COVERS**

The re-use of the same envelope or folded letter might result from either necessity or thrift. It produced multiple mailing office townmarks on the same cover.



Springfield / Manchester 1842

First sent from Springfield, Vt. to Manchester, Vt., and then from Manchester to New York City.



West Randolph / Warren

First sent from West Randolph, Vt. to Warren, Vt., and then from Warren to Ripton, Vt.



**SPECIAL RATES AND USAGES  
DROP LETTERS**

“DROP” letters were not carried beyond the office at which they were mailed. They were simply “dropped” there to be picked up by a local recipient, so they had special lower postage rates because of the minimal service this required.



Coventry 1842

**DROP To Another Town**

DROP letters normally do not have addresses beyond the place where they were mailed. However, Orleans was served by Coventry's office until 1850, making this a proper use under the 1 cent 1794 to 1845 rate.



West Poutney 1846

**Missing Rate And Townmark**

Because DROP letters never went beyond their own offices, postmasters sometimes did not bother to townmark such mail, or to note a rate on it if it was pre-paid. The fee was 2 cents from 1845 to 1851.

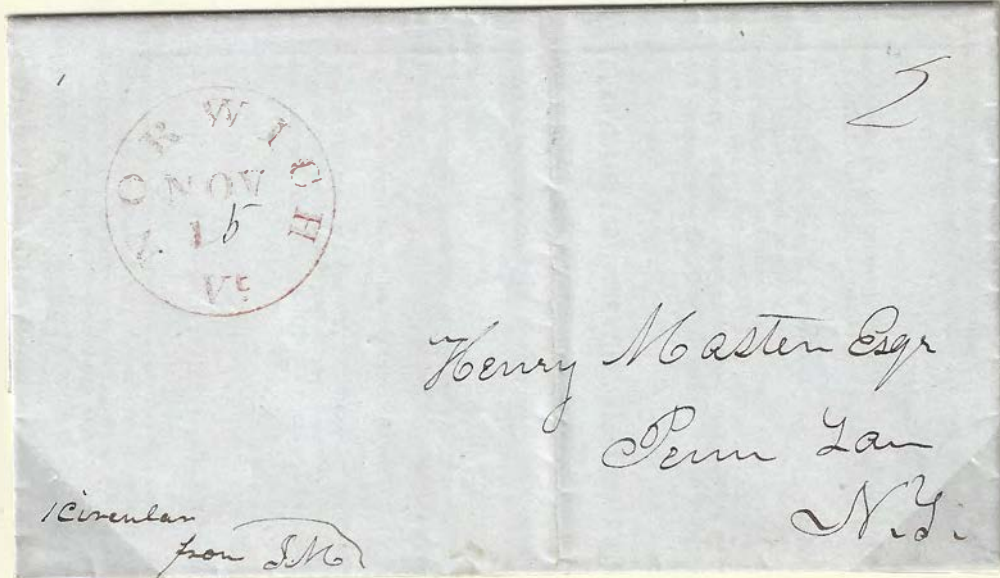
Chester



The collect DROP rate also was 2 cents from 1845 to 1851.

**SPECIAL RATES AND USAGES  
CIRCULARS**

Special lower rates were established for printed circulars beginning in 1845. Circulars initially could be sent pre-paid or collect. So many collect circulars were refused by their addressees, however, that pre-payment was required in 1847.



Norwich 1845

**First Year Of Circular Rate**

Sent collect under the newly established 2 cent rate of 1845 to 1847.

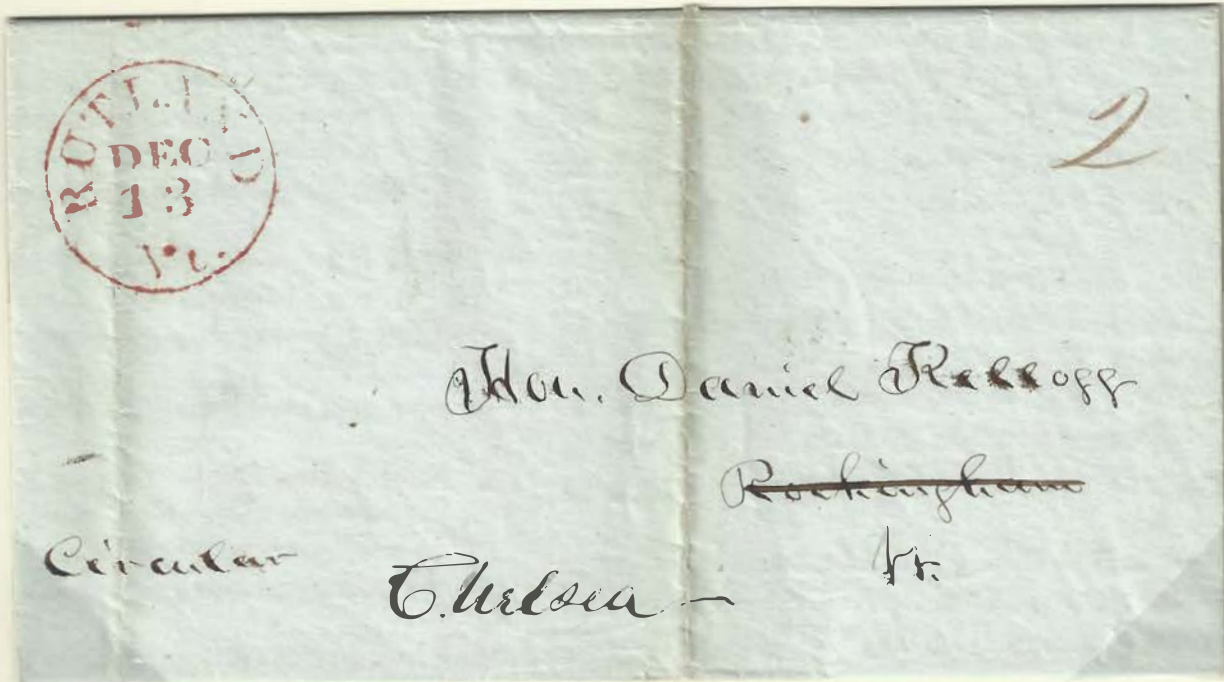


Burlington / Montpelier 1858

**Double Rate Forwarding Penalty**

Initially properly mailed under the 1 cent for under 3 ounces compulsory pre-payment rate of Sept. 30, 1852 - July 1, 1863. Because forwarding it constituted a new service, though, it then was charged a 2 cent double rate penalty for failure to pre-pay that next leg of its journey!

SPECIAL RATES AND USAGES  
CIRCULARS



Rutland 1845

Address Change

Although it initially appears that this cover should have been charged another 2 cents for forwarding it under the 1845-1847 rates, the address was corrected before it was mailed, so it never was forwarded.



Rutland 1851

One Known

Discovery copy of Vermont's only known "CIRCULAR" handstamp. 3 cent pre-paid one sheet rate of 1847-June 30, 1851.



Rutland 1852

1 cent per ounce unsealed under 500 miles rate of July 1, 1851-Sept. 30, 1852.

**SPECIAL RATES AND USAGES  
CALIFORNIA RATES**

Three different rates existed for mail to California from 1848 until 1856, when stamps became compulsory. Few examples of any of those rates are known from Vermont.



Bradford

**40 Cent Rate**

Used only from August of 1848 to June of 1851, this is the most difficult California rate to locate from Vermont.

Wells River

**6 Cent Rate**

Existed from July of 1851 to April, 1855. There was so little mail to California that only a few Vermont offices ever had a handstamp for this rate.



Brownsville 1855

**10 Cent Pre-Paid Rate**

This was the shortest-lived rate. It existed for only nine months, from April of 1855 until the use of postage stamps became mandatory on January 1, 1856. Because of that, this is second only to the 40 cent rate for infrequency of use in Vermont.



**SPECIAL RATES AND USAGES  
ADVERTISING**

Envelopes only came into use after postage rates changed from a per page basis to one based on weight in 1845. Vermont's rate, paid and free stampless markings soon were seen on covers promoting commercial, educational and social causes.



Bartonsville

**Postmaster and Merchant**

Only about two Vermont stencil advertisements are known on stampless covers.



Chester

Vermont's only office using a Roman numeral rate marking in an arc format.

Williston

Vermont was a major hotbed of both the temperance and abolition movements. Only two temperance covers are known.



**SPECIAL RATES AND USAGES  
LADIES ENVELOPES**

These small heavily embossed "ladies" envelopes became popular in the 1850's, adding elegance to the stampless mails.

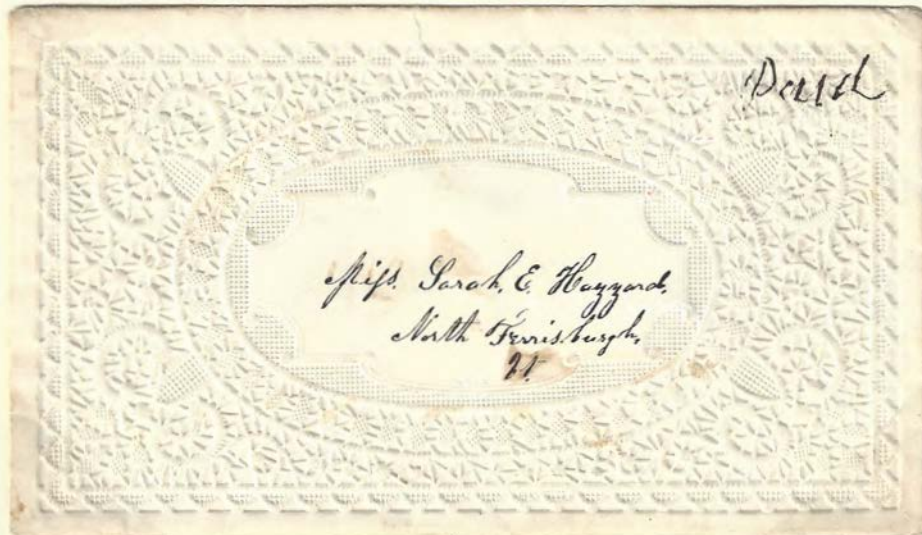


Bakersfield

Message seals tied to this cover to "Miss Betsey Baker - Poetess" tell her to "Be Quiet" and "Beware"!

Charlotte 1852

Other markings were placed on the reverse, presumably so as not to deface the elaborate design.



Franklin



**SPECIAL RATES AND USAGES  
SMALLEST COVER**

The stampless era's postal regulations placed no size minimum on letters. The sender of this love letter took advantage of that to catch his intended's eye by understatement!

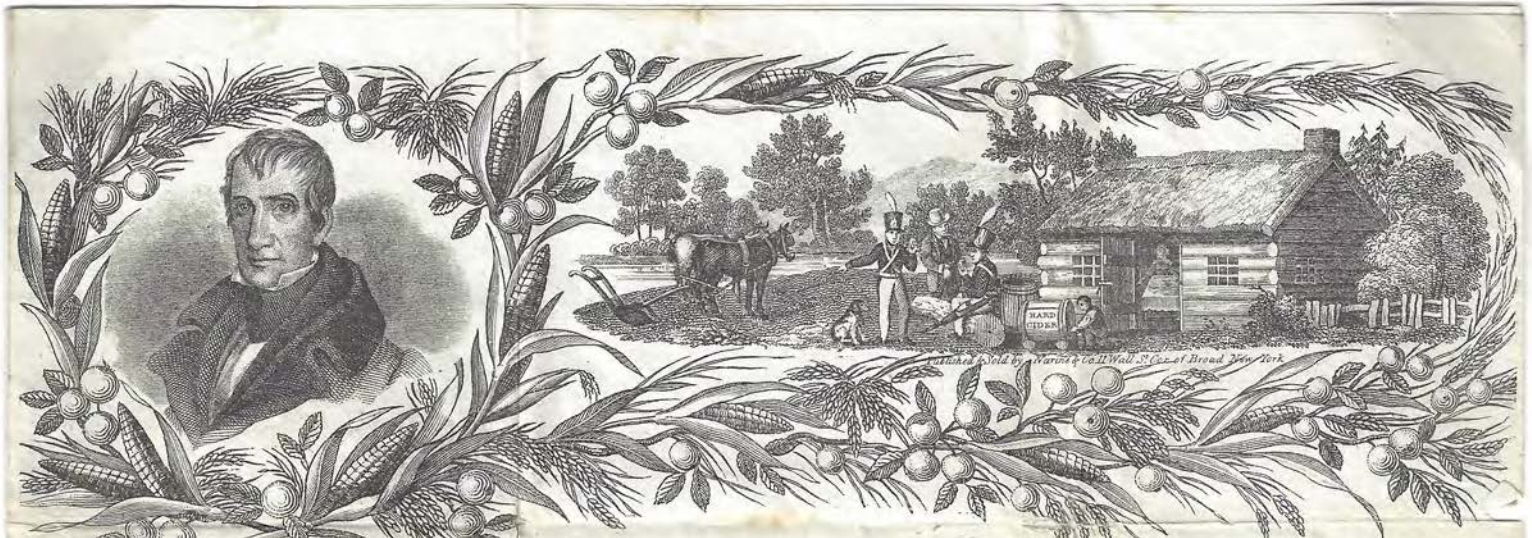


Manchester 1845

**Smallest Known U.S. Stampless Cover**

At just 47 by 58 millimeters, The American Philatelist has noted this as the smallest known U.S. stampless cover.

The most elaborate of the several William Henry Harrison campaign lettersheet designs. It shows every possible campaign theme for a "Log Cabin/War Hero/Hard Cider/Honest Farmer" candidate. Only one other Harrison lettersheet is known from Vermont and it has a simpler design. Whig Harrison carried Vermont with 32,445 votes to Democrat Martin VanBuren's 18,009.



Pittsford June 29 1840

Dear Brother and Sister

I received your letter was glad to hear from you  
 I am very sorry to hear you dont get your health  
 any better my health is good but my eyes are <sup>weak</sup> ~~weak~~  
 now I could not write this letter I no I have  
 ben negligent in writing to you but I have  
 not forgot you and mean to visit you in the





Campaign covers sometimes were printed on a variety of paper stocks. This one is on buff paper while the previous example is on white paper.

Postmasters such as Mr. Sprague could send and receive their mail free of postage. Because letters sent under this privilege represented only a tiny fraction the total mail, such "free" uses are seldom seen on campaign covers. Rather remarkably, though, the only other known Vermont Buchanan cover also was sent "free," that time by Pittsford's postmaster.

## SPECIAL RATES AND USAGES VALENTINES

The stampless mails let Vermont's bashful swains woo from afar with elaborate Valentines. Few of them showed more flair for homespun verse than did this pursuer of the fair Mary Fletcher. (He also had the good sense to pre-pay his missive!)



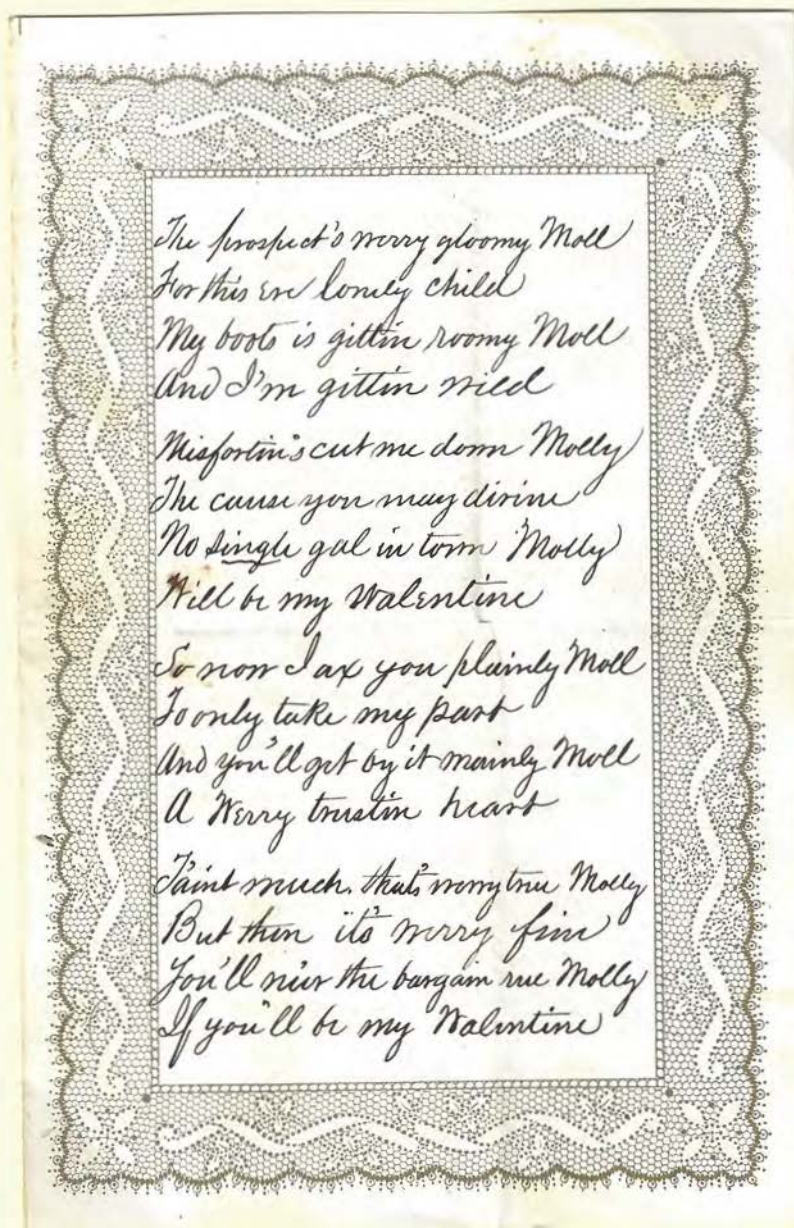
Burlington

The prospect's verry gloomy Moll  
For this in lonely child  
My boots is gittin roomy Moll  
And I'm gittin wild

Misfortin's cut me down Molly  
The cause you may divine  
No single gal in town Molly  
Will be my Valcntine

So now I ax you plainly Moll  
To only take my part  
And you'll get by it mainly Moll  
A verry trustin heart

T'aint much that's verry true Molly  
But then it's verry fine  
You'll ne'er the bargain rue Molly  
If you'll be my Valentine



**SPECIAL RATES AND USAGES  
DEMONETIZATION**

Stampless markings have been found on about six Vermont 1861 and early 1862 covers which should have borne stamps. These uses were illegal, but came about because postmasters ran out of stamps as the old issue was being demonetized and replaced by the 1861 issue. They had no choice but to resurrect their old stampless markings if they were to move the mail.



Saint Johnsbury (August, 1861)

**Early Demonetization Use**

Only six of Vermont's offices received new issue stamps in August. The supplies quickly proved inadequate here, resulting in this revival of the stampless markings.



Danby (Oct., 1861)

Demonetization stampless covers are identifiable either by having dates from August 1861 to early 1862, or because they are patriotic covers (which did not exist until the Civil War).

Monkton (Feb., 1862)

**Late Demonetization Use**

Although almost all demonetization covers are from 1861, shortages of the new issue stamps still troubled some offices into early 1862.



**SPECIAL RATES AND USAGES  
CIVIL WAR SOLDIER'S AND POW'S MAIL**

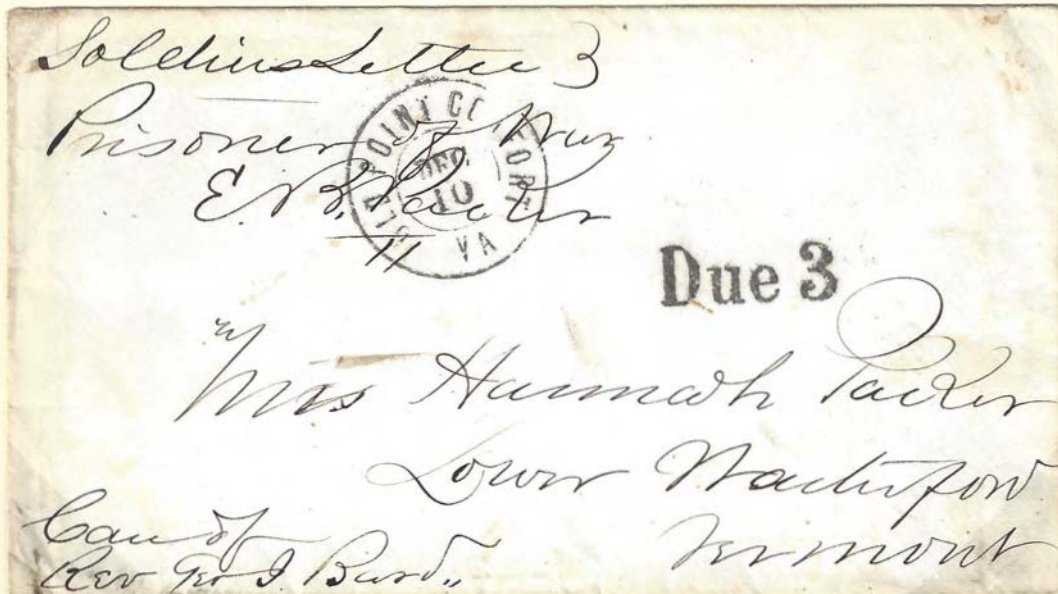
Chronic shortages of postage stamps in the field forced enactment of regulations permitting soldiers to send stampless collect letters while this was illegal for anyone else. Prisoners of War obviously benefited greatly from this privilege.



Washington, D.C. to Peru 1865

**Soldier's Stampless Collect Privilege**

From a soldier in the 7th Vermont Regiment. A counter-signature (here by the Chaplain) also was required.



Old Point Comfort, Va. to Lower Waterford

**Prisoner of War's Stampless Collect Privilege**

No markings indicate just where Mr. Pack was being held a POW.

**SPECIAL RATES AND USAGES  
TELEGRAPH COVERS**

Early telegrams delivered by mail gave their companies a chance to advertise their services.



Middlebury  
American Telegraph  
Company  
Free to Postmaster.

**CHEMICAL TELEGRAPH.**  
**VERMONT AND BOSTON LINE.**  
OFFICE AT DEPOT.

FROM SO. ROYALTON TO		FROM SO. ROYALTON TO		FROM SO. ROYALTON TO	
Boston.....	30-2	Bellows Falls.....	25-2	Essex.....	25-3
Lowell.....	30-2	Brattleboro'.....	30-2	St. Albans.....	40-3
Nashua.....	30-2	Greenfield, Mass.....	30-2	Swanton.....	40-3
Manchester.....	30-2	Northampton, ".....	30-2	Rouse's Point, N. Y.....	50-3
Concord.....	30-2	Springfield, ".....	30-2	Chateaugay.....	50-3
Franklin.....	25-2	Woodstock, Vt.....	25-2	Malone.....	50-3
Rosfield.....	25-2	W. Randolph.....	25-2	Potsdam.....	50-3
W. R. Junction.....	25-2	Montpelier, ".....	25-2	Potsdam Station.....	50-3
Windsor.....	25-2	Waterbury, ".....	25-2	Captow.....	50-3
Claremont.....	25-2	Burlington, ".....	25-2	Ogdensburg.....	60-3
Springfield, Vt.....	25-2				

Connecting with other Lines for North, South, East and West.

New York.....	60-5	Vergennes.....	50-4	Breckville.....	75-5
Middlebury.....	55-4	St. Albans.....	50-4	Prosest.....	60-3
Bennington.....	55-4	St. Johns.....	65-5	Hartford, Ct.....	60-4
Manchester.....	55-4	Montreal.....	65-5	Portsmouth.....	61-4
Rutland.....	50-4	Quebec.....	100-5	Portland, Me.....	60-4
Castleton, Vt.....	50-4	Toronto.....	100-10	Bangor.....	85-5
Whitehall.....	50-4	Kingston.....	100-10	Halifax.....	185-11
Orwell, Vt.....	50-4				

All messages strictly confidential. No abbreviations or figures used in the body of a message. Office hours from 8 A.M. to 5 P.M.

W. F. BLAKE, Operator.

*Sept 16 1854*  
*St. Albans*

**VERMONT AND BOSTON TELEGRAPH LINE,**  
DIRECT TO  
MONTREAL, BOSTON,  
OGDENSBURG, SPRINGFIELD,  
AND INTERMEDIATE PLACES.  
ALSO, CONNECTING WITH LINES FOR EAST, WEST, NORTH AND SOUTH.

*Pls. Please forward*

*J. Ruf. Esq.*

*Chelsea W.*

South Royalton 1854

Vermont and Boston  
Telegraph Line

**SPECIAL RATES AND USAGES  
RETURNED LETTER ENVELOPE**

This official envelope, covered with its multitude of rules and directions, was used by Returned Letter Office to return an unclaimed letter to its Vermont sender. This service was available only by prior request and at the sender's expense, as shown by the DUE 3 CENTS imprint. Such envelopes rarely were saved by their recipients.

1. DIRECT: Letters plainly to the Street and Number, as well as the Post Office and State.
  2. HEAD: Letters with the writer's Post Office and State, Street and Number, sign them plainly with Full Name, and request that answers be directed accordingly.
  3. Letters to strangers or transient visitors in a town or city, whose special address may be unknown, should be marked, in the lower left hand corner, with the word "Transient."
  4. Place the Postage Stamp on the upper right-hand corner, and leave space between the Stamp and direction, for post-marking without interfering with the writing.
- N. B.—A REQUEST for the RETURN of a letter to the writer, if unclaimed within 31 days, or less, written or printed with the writer's Name, Post Office and State, across the left-hand end of the envelope, on the face side, will be complied with, at the usual pre-paid rate of postage, payable when the letter is delivered to the writer.  
Sec. 23, Law of 1863.

**A NOTICE TO THE POSTMASTER.**

The enclosed letter is sent to the writer, under an Act of Congress, approved January 21, 1862.

The date of receipt at the Post Office must be marked on the letter, and an entry made in the account of mails received, in the column of unpaid letters. If not delivered and the postage collected within one month, the reason for non-delivery must be endorsed on it, and it must be returned to the Dead Letter Office, at the time and in the manner prescribed for Return Letters, in Instruction No. 8, published with Act of March 3, 1863. If returned, the letter must be post-marked on the sealed side.

**It should not be advertised.**

W.  
Calais  
E. S. Haskell



**Post Office Department,**  
RETURN LETTER OFFICE.  
**DUE 3 CENTS.**

FREE DELIVERY of Letters, by Carriers, at the Residences of Owners, may be SECURED by observing the following **RULES:**

To Calais 1864  
One Known

FOREIGN MAIL  
KINGDOM OF HAWAII

Vermont had minimal foreign mail in the stampless era apart from that with adjacent areas of British North America. Nearly all of the usual causes for foreign mail were non-existent. Vermont's small population almost all were several generations away from immigration. It also had no seacoast for whaling or shipping letters, and little large scale commerce or manufacturing partaking in foreign trade. Despite this, Vermont has not only unusual BNA usages, but also surviving stampless covers for a range of other countries. As to most of those countries, though, only a single Vermont cover is known.



Hawaii to Wilmington 1848-49

The Kingdom of Hawaii was an independent nation throughout the stampless era. Three Vermont covers are known.

Dated Nov. 28, 1848, prior to the Hawaiian mails, at "Woahoo, Sandwich Islands". Carried by private ship to New York, and bootlegged into the mail on Apr. 25, 1849 to avoid the ship fee. It was charged only domestic U.S. postage to Vermont.



Hawaii to Danville (1855 ?)

Postmarked at Honolulu on April 23, and in San Francisco on May 16, where it was rated "SHIP 12" for its unpaid 2 cent ship fee and 10 cents over 3,000 mile domestic rate. Almost surely carried on the *Vaquero*, departing Honolulu on Apr. 23, 1855 and arriving at San Francisco on May 10th.

FOREIGN MAIL  
THE INDEPENDENT REPUBLIC OF TEXAS



Danville to Washington, Texas 1838

**One Texas Cover Known**

Like Vermont, Texas was an Independent Republic which had its own postal system for part of the stampless era.

8 1/2 cents collect postage. 25 cents paid the U.S. rate to New Orleans. U.S. postage on mail to Texas had to be pre-paid, but a manuscript "US Unpaid" indicates it was not. From New Orleans, the letter was carried by Samuel Ricker, Jr. "Agent of the Texian Post Office". He added a 6 1/4 cent ship fee and 50 cents in Texas postage.

Deliveries in Texas apparently were less than reliable, since a Ricker straightline on the reverse shows the letter was "RETURNABLE 15TH JAN. 1839". However, it was successfully delivered on August 6, 1838.



FOREIGN MAIL  
THE CONFEDERATE STATES



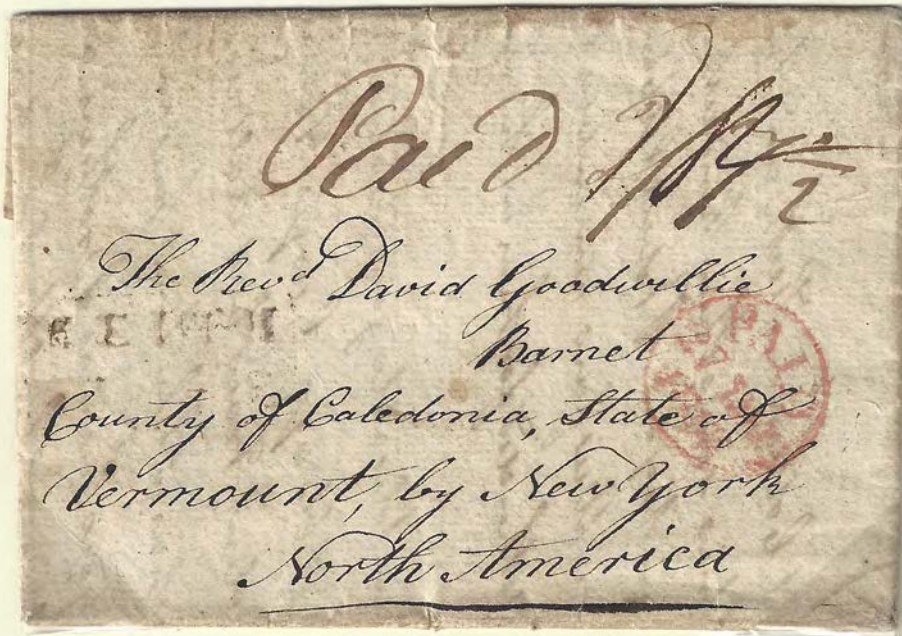
Confederate States to Castleton 1864

**One Confederate Cover Known**

Although its independence never was recognized by the U.S. (and most assuredly not by Vermont!) the Confederacy functioned as a foreign government with its own postal system throughout the Civil War.

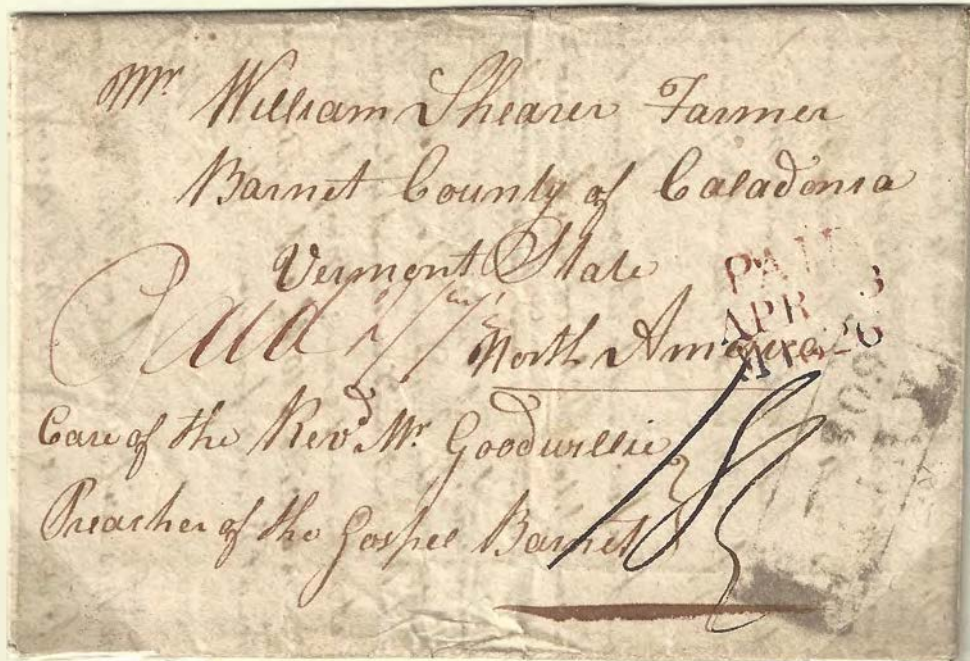
Stampless for its 6 cent U.S. rate, but stamped as to its 10 cents in Confederate postage, this cover went from the Columbia, S.C. prisoner of war camp by flag of truce through Old Point Comfort, Virginia. The 10 cent Confederate stamp carried it "to the lines" from a Vermont prisoner who served in George Custer's cavalry. The U.S. "DUE 6" is a special stampless rate established for soldiers' mail being sent collect at double the stamp rate.

FOREIGN MAIL  
SCOTLAND



Scotland to Barnet 1818-1819

Entered the mails at Keith, Scotland on Dec. 27, 1818 and so not delivered until 1819. Pre-paid U. K. single rate of 2 Sh. 1 1/2 d. to the U.S. Collect 18 1/2 cents U.S. single rate under the Act of 1816.



Scotland to Barnet 1826

British postage remains unchanged. The U.S. Act of 1825 increased the applicable domestic single rate from 18 1/2 cents to 18 3/4 cents. The rate existed for 20 years, even though there never was a U. S. coin which could pay 3/4 of a cent!

FOREIGN MAIL  
ENGLAND



England to Burlington  
1833

2 Sh. 9 P. British  
internal postage pre-  
paid; 20 1/2 cents U.S.  
collect for ship fee and  
internal postage.

North Danville to England 1851

Via British Packet at 24 cent rate of  
1849-1868, paid, with 19 cent credit  
to the U.K.

Only known copy of North Danville's  
CDS. Less than 5 covers are known  
from that office.



England to Fairfax 1852

Ipswich through Liverpool via American  
Packet through Boston. 1 Sh. paid under  
the 1849-1868 rate, with 21 cents credit  
to the U.S. out of the 24 cent conversion.



FOREIGN MAIL  
ENGLAND



BALMORAL CASTLE.  
HER MAJESTY'S HIGHLAND RESIDENCE

London Oct. 10<sup>th</sup> 1852

My friend Emilie

Friday morning I was most

902

Miss Emilie D. Reed  
Montpelier  
Vermont  
United States  
America

PAID  
AMERICAN PACKET  
MONTPELIER  
VERMONT  
21 CENTS

England to Montpelier 1852

London via American Packet. 1 Sh. paid, 21 cents credit to the U.S. under the 1849-1868 rate.

"Friday morning I was most happy to receive a letter from my dear home...."

FOREIGN MAIL  
ENGLAND



England to Centre Rutland 1866

Depreciated Currency Rate

London via British Packet through New York.

24 cents / 33cents (specie vs. deprcciated currency) rate, collect, 19 cents credit to the U.K.



Brattleborough to London 1857

Via British Packet from Boston at 24 cent rate of 1849-1868, paid, with 19 cents credit to the U.K.

**FOREIGN MAIL  
ENGLAND**



England to Brattleboro 1848

**Retaliatory Rate**

Liverpool through Boston. 1 Sh. paid at Liverpool, but charged the collect 29 cent U.S. retaliatory rate.



England to Proctorsville Forwarded to Stowe 1880

**On Her Majesty's Service**

The General Postal Union's requirement for stamps had eliminated nearly all stampless letters between the U.K. and the U.S. five years earlier, but this incoming FREE mail from the London General Post Office remained stampless.

**FOREIGN MAIL  
GIBRALTAR / JAMAICA**



**Burlington to Gibraltar. Then Forwarded Back to the U.S. 1828**

**Quarantined Cover  
One Gibraltar Cover Known**

Posted Feb. 5, 1828 at 18 3/4 cents unpaid domestic rate to Boston for Gibraltar. Forwarded back from Gibraltar to the U.S., passing through Marscilles on June 1st. Carried "per Brig Sabattes" for New York, but arrived in Boston and was quarantined there for yellow fever for 21 days. Arrived at Middletown, Conn. bearing a 12 1/2 cents collect domestic rate on October 3rd, consuming 8 months to end up several hundred miles from its starting point!



**Jamaica to Middlebury 1840**

**One Jamaica Cover Known**

Sent by a missionary from Bramins Chapcl, Jamaica. Charged only the 25 cent collect domestic rate because it was bootlegged into the mails in Baltimore to evade the SHIP fee.

**FOREIGN MAIL**  
**SWITZERLAND / ROMAN STATES**



Switzerland to Poultney 1865

**One Switzerland Cover Known**

**Depreciated Currency Rate**

Frutigen via Bern and Pontarlier, France, by British Packet to New York.  
21 cents/29cents (specie/depreciated currency) collect under French Treaty Rate of 1857-1870.



Brattleboro to Roman States 1855

**One Roman States Cover Known**

**Only Known 38 Bajocchi Due Handstamp**

Dated Brattleboro, Feb. 3, but not postmarked until Boston on Feb. 6. Sailed on American Packet "Pacific" at 21 cent pre-paid rate of 1849-1868 for service to England. Then sent via England and Paris to Rome.

France treated this letter as wholly unpaid, applying a 38 Bajocchi Roman States due marking to it. No other use of this rate marker is known. The Roman States had sent its handstamps to France for use there on incoming mail under the 1853 Franco-Roman Convention. The "38" is repeated in manuscript, presumably because of the light strike of the handstamp.



**FOREIGN MAIL**

**BELGIUM / DENMARK / WURTEMBERG**

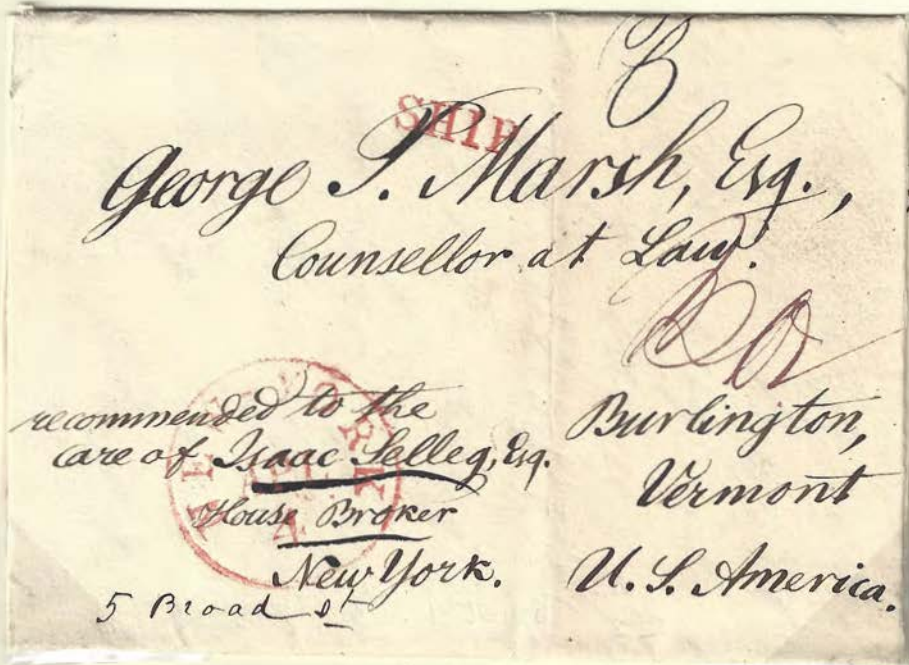


Belgium to Centre Rutland 1869

Depreciated Currency Rate

One Belgium Cover Known

Spa via the U.K., Ireland and N.Y. with 26 cents / 15 ccnts (dcpreciated currency/specie) collect under the rate of 1868-1870.



Denmark to New York and Burlington 1836

One Denmark Cover Known

SHIP letter, entered into the mails at New York with 6 cents Port of Entry fee collect. Then re-posted to Burlington with the 12 1/2 cents domestic rate collect.

Rutland To Wurtemberg 185-

One Wurtemberg Cover Known

Via New York, then by British Packet and Aachen. 23 cents debit to Prussia under 1852 Prussian Closed Mail. 45 Kreuzer (30 cents) and a 2 Kreuzer local rate equal 47 Kreuzer total due.



FOREIGN MAIL  
CHILE / CUBA



Chile to Benson

**One Chile Cover Known**

Valparaiso, with 1 Sh. U.K. "PAID TO PANAMA". 20 cents collect U.S. rate for mail route over 2500 miles.



Brattleboro to Cuba 1851

**Two Cuba Covers Known**

Sent with 10 cents postage pre-paid in fourth month of the 1851-1864 American Packet under 2500 miles rate.

**FOREIGN MAIL  
SINGAPORE / SYRIA**



Singapore to Middlebury or Cornwall 1839-1840

**One Singapore Cover Known**

Singapore, Nov., 1839, carried by "Barque George Endicott", entered the mails at Salem, Mass. in April 1840. 2 cents SHIP letter fee and 18 3/4 cents domestic postage, for 20 3/4 cents collect. It has no forwarding markings, so the recipient was at Middlebury, not Cornwall.



Syria to East Burke 1852

**One Syria Cover Known**

**Fumigated Letter**

Ayntab via Smyrna and Boston. Collect 2 cent SHIP fee and 5 cents domestic rate. Slits were cut in it for fumigation.

FOREIGN MAIL  
INDIA

Two India Covers Known



India to Fayetteville, Forwarded to Royalton 1835

Misrepresented Rate

Madras, entering the mails in New York as a single rate collect SHIP letter, with a 2 cent SHIP fee plus 18 3/4 cents domestic rate. Initial 20 3/4 cents paid at Fayetteville, then forwarded at collect 10 cent single rate to Royalton.

This missionary misrepresented her two page letter as a "Single," so it was charged only half the proper domestic postage!



India to Fayetteville 1837

Correct Rate

Madras, entering the mails at Boston as a single rate collect SHIP letter, with a 2 cent SHIP fee plus 12 1/2 cents domestic rate, for 14 1/2 cents total.

Recent discovery of another letter from the same missionary shows it correctly described this time as a one page "Single".

TRANSITION TO THE STAMP ERA  
CIRCULAR TOWNMARKS

Vermont's stampless era faded away gradually, rather than simply leaping directly into a new era of postage stamps. For example, stamps were made mandatory on all first class mail in 1856. However, free letters remained stampless until 1873, and all foreign mail could be stampless until at least 1875. Markings from the stampless era thus did not all disappear at any single time. Rather, they slowly faded away, sometimes even being adapted to new uses during and after the transition into the stamp era.

Circular townmarks provide a good example of how use of stampless era markings continued right into the stamp era. Just because a previously stampless letter now bore stamps was no reason not to simply continue using the same handstamp.



Burlington 1846



Burlington

**TRANSITION TO THE STAMP ERA  
STRAIGHTLINE TOWNMARKS**

As with circular townmarks, the venerable straightlines continued to be used well into the new stamp era.

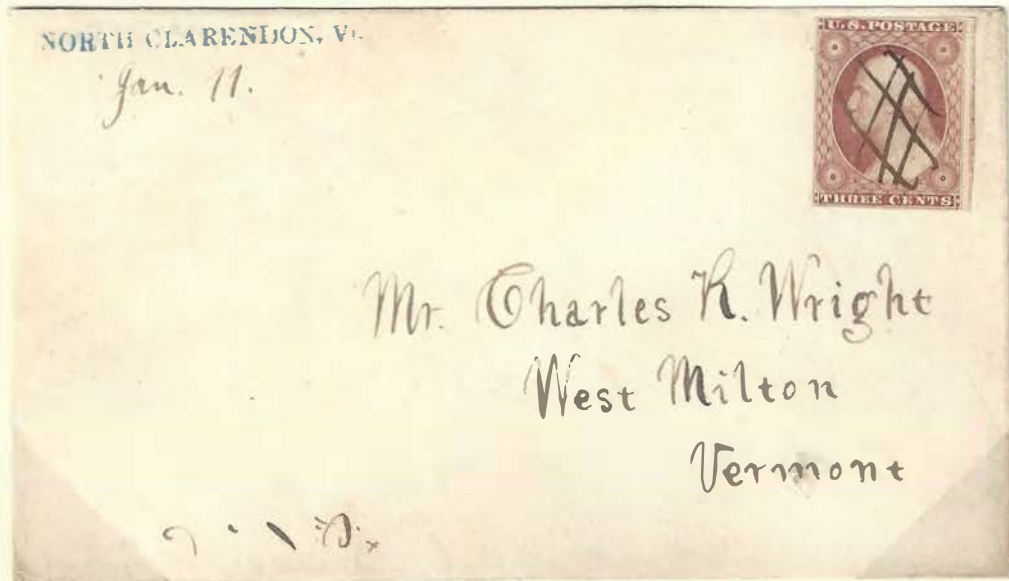


Jericho Center 1852

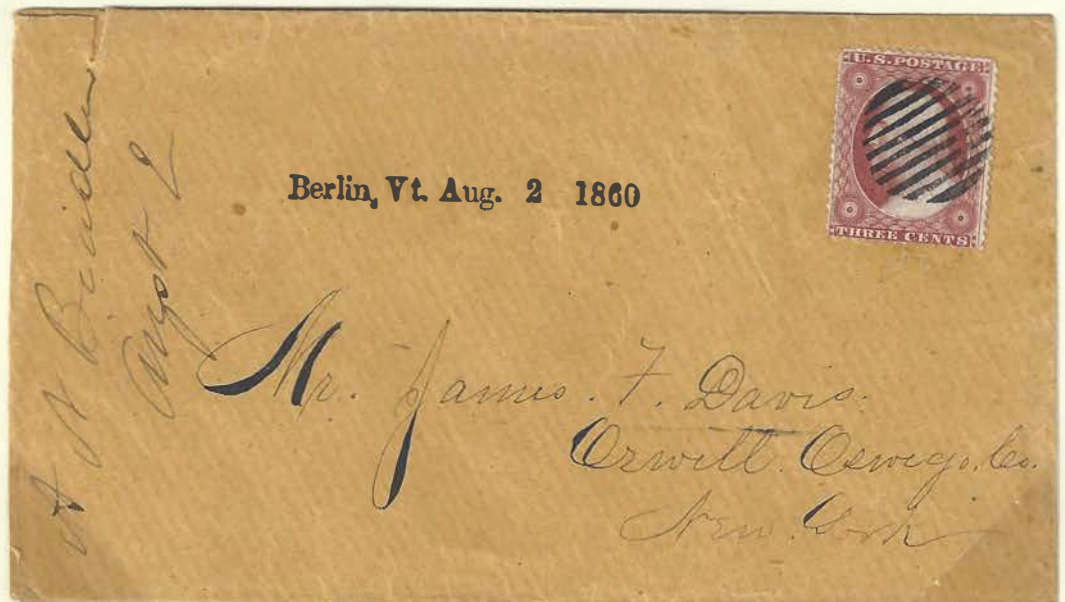
**One Known**

North Clarendon

**One Known**



9-1-70



Berlin 1860

**TRANSITION TO THE STAMP ERA  
ENCLOSED RATE AND PAID TOWNMARKS**

Since a stamp's very function was to indicate pre-payment of its stated value, continuing to use an old enclosed rate/paid townmark on a stamp no longer made any real sense. Still, Middlebury's postmaster was not about to discard a perfectly good handstamp on that account. He did eventually scrape off the rate portion, making it a bit less redundant, but kept right on using it even after his distinctive light blue ink apparently ran out in 1856.

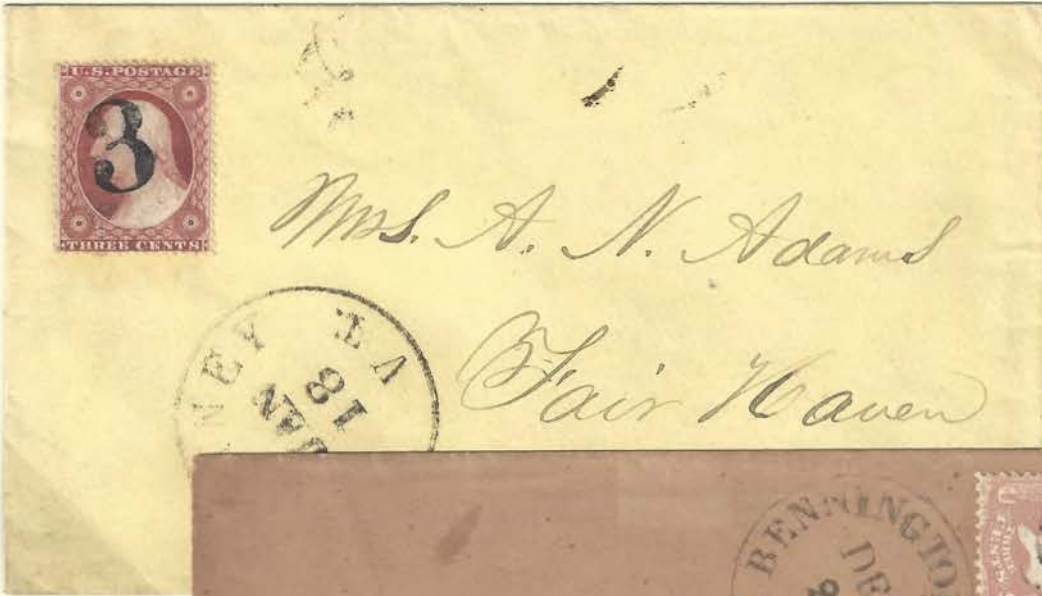


Middlebury



**TRANSITION TO THE STAMP ERA  
RATE HANDSTAMPS AS CANCELS**

Stampless era rate handstamps were irrelevant when used in conjunction with stamps, but they provided a neat and cost-free way to cancel mail. The values of the handstamps sometimes were wildly at odds with those of the stamps they cancelled!



Poultney

Bennington Centre



Royalton 1885

Late Use

This is one of the latest known uses of a stampless rate handstamp as a cancel

Sheldon

One Known

No other use of a "30" as a Vermont cancel has been reported.





TRANSITION TO THE STAMP ERA  
PAID HANDSTAMPS AS CANCELS

Although PAID handstamps at times were recycled for use as cancels, their message was irrelevant on a postage stamp.



Brandon 1862

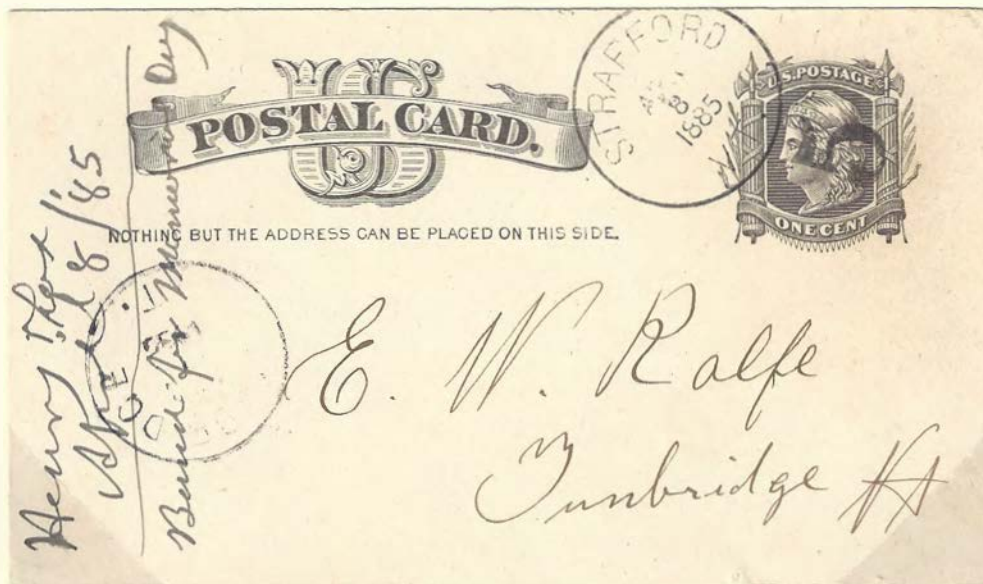
St. Johnsbury Centre

Bethel



**TRANSITION TO THE STAMP ERA  
THE LAST STAMPLESS MARKINGS**

Handstamped reminders of the stamplera era continued to be seen on Vermont mail bearing stamps until the final decade of the nineteenth century. Strafford was the last Vermont office reported using one of its old stamplera markings as a cancel.



Strafford 1885



Strafford 1890

**Last Known Use of a Vermont Stamplera Marking**

This not only is Vermont's final stamplera marking, it also is one of the last few such uses known from any state.