



The Journal of the Empire State Postal History Society

March 2017

Whole No. 25 New Series

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EXCELSIOR!

The Journal of New York State Postal History
Published March and September by the
EMPIRE STATE POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY



P.O. Box 482
East Schodack, NY 12063-0482
Web site: <<http://www.esphs.us>>

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NOTICE!

If members desire a September 2017 issue of *Excelsior!* then I need articles, and lots of them. Deadline is August 1st, but I can begin compiling them anytime. Without a decent flow of contributions from members, *Excelsior!* cannot and **will not be printed**. Therefore, to entice you to participate here's an offer you can't refuse:

As an incentive, submitting a one to four-page article will get you a one year extension on your membership and a five-page article will get you a two year extension. Just think – if you write regularly for *Excelsior!* you'll have the potential of earning free membership for life!...And think about how you will enrich yourself and others.

WIDENING ONE'S PERSPECTIVE

By: Douglas Penwell

The article that follows contains several lessons, some of which are:

- 1. New York State postal history can involve many other states.**
- 2. You can find great covers in unexpected places.**
- 3. Philately / postal history can bring diverse and wonderful opportunities.**

This writer, when in the military (USAF) developed further the predilection for wide-spread travel. On several occasions while on Active Duty, the entire annual leave balance would be consumed on a single trip. This resulted in several cross-country trips by car, both from Las Vegas and Phoenix. After completing two Associates Degrees in the Information Technology field, looking for suitable employment and maintaining appropriate skills took precedence over any lengthy "road trips." Upon request, a number of tales can be told about previous travels (from military days and during time spent at Glendale Community College).

This summer another postal history dealer provided the opportunity to travel to Portland, Oregon for the annual APS Stampshow. Since the author had not been to Lassen Volcanic and Crater Lake National Parks, it was decided to drive and enjoy another long journey by automobile. On two previous trips to the Pacific Northwest, the weather was not conducive to a stop at Crater Lake National Park. The stops at Lassen and at Crater Lake took place over four days, between July 30 and August 2. While the details of those stops could fill several pages, the only portion written here will be to mention that over 25 miles of hiking was enjoyed along with the beautiful sights and other experiences made possible at National Parks in the United States.

Once at Portland, the show was busy as usual and did not afford the chance to "shop" for covers as much as would have been preferred. When working for another dealer, you must be available when circumstances require. The purchase of a collection by that dealer and the evaluation at the table further restricted my movements on the last day of the show. As many readers may know, the summer APS show lasts for four instead of the typical three days. On the third day of the show, a stampless cover was purchased that is noteworthy from the perspectives of New York State manuscripts, other markings applied and also for scarcity.

The cover in **Figure 1** was originally mailed from Milo, NY (Yates County) sometime after 1850. The Dec 14th postmark date could be as early as 1851 (letter rates had been reduced to three cents that July) and as late as 1857 when the post office name dropped the Fort prefix (further analysis of the envelope could probably narrow this estimate). The letter's destination was Fort Des Moines in Iowa. Once it had arrived there, sometime in January, it was forwarded to Fort Dodge. The marking at top left, **ford 5**, was applied to represent the collect rate for forwarding not due to an error on the part of the Post Office Department. The **Paid 3 cts** marking applied at Milo was sufficient for the postage to Iowa.

Once at Fort Dodge (or possibly at Fort Des Moines), the letter was advertised, thus incurring a fee of an additional cent. The writing of Ft. Dodge, **ford 5** and the total due of **6** (cents) all appear to be in the same ink. It is possible, though not likely, that the cover was advertised at Ft. Dodge. It is more likely that it was advertised at Fort Des Moines and perhaps someone there knew the addressee, Eber Stone Esqr. That person may have also known that Mr. Stone had moved to, or may have been temporarily located at, Ft. Dodge.

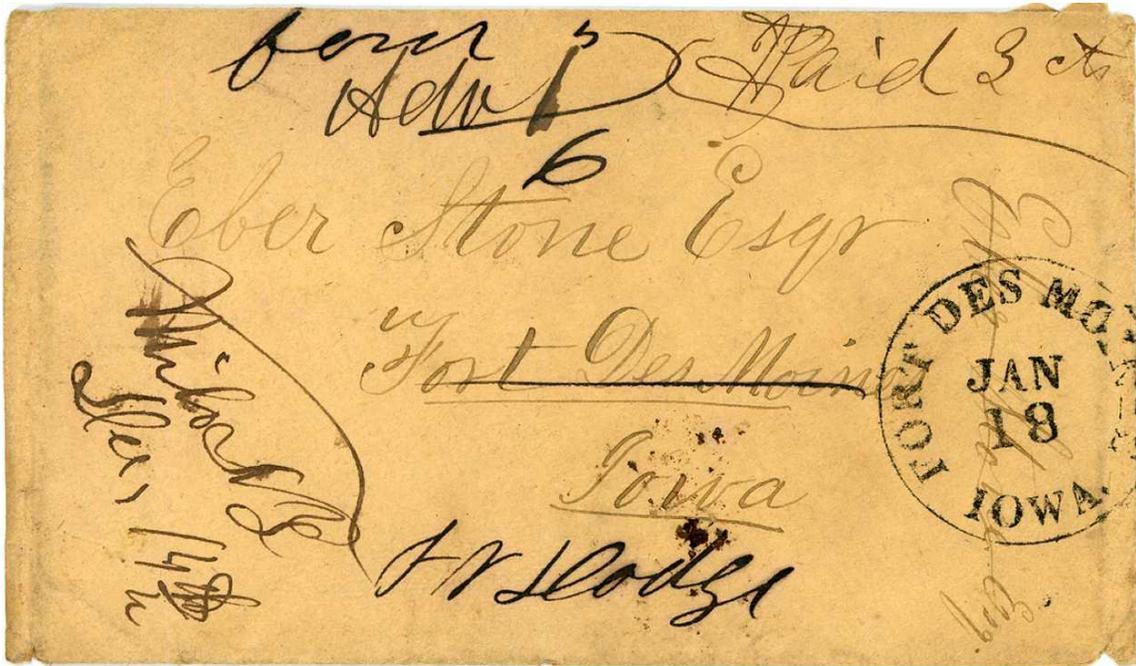


Figure 1. Cover mailed from Milo (YAT), New York on December 14 to Fort Des Moines, Iowa which was advertised and forwarded to Fort Dodge, Iowa. The year of mailing is unknown.

This cover demonstrates that one should view New York State postal history from a wider perspective. Who knows what gems may exist behind the divider for another state? Perhaps that elusive marking you have been seeking may be there, or a cover like this one, that could be used to liven up a postal history exhibit (or state PH Journal).

Editor's Note:

While not necessarily definitive, a narrowing of the year of mailing may be possible when one examines the American Stampless Cover Catalog (ASCC) listings for Fort Des Moines, Iowa. There are two circular date stamps (CDS) illustrated. Let's look at each one individually.



According to the ASCC, this 34 mm CDS has been reported in use from 1849 to 1852 in both red and black.



The ASCC lists this 33mm CDS in black as being seen in use from 1853 until 1855.

From this it may be possible to infer that the above cover was mailed sometime between 1853 and 1855.

Douglas Penwell may be contacted at dougenwell@mail.com.

POLLING IN THE 1918 NEW YORK GUBERNATORIAL PRIMARIES

By: Larry Laliberte

Today, we watch TV news or go on the Internet to check the polls of political candidates. That wasn't the case a century ago. I was given a bag of over 700 polling cards for the 1918 gubernatorial primaries that were sent statewide. The card is a Scott UY7 reply card issued in 1915 that has a 1 cent Washington Scott 498 issued in 1917 added to pay the war rate that was in effect from November 2, 1917 to July 1, 1919. One question lingers, who applied the one cent stamps to all these card? As it is the postal patron's responsibility to provide appropriate postage, the Survey Bureau probably did.

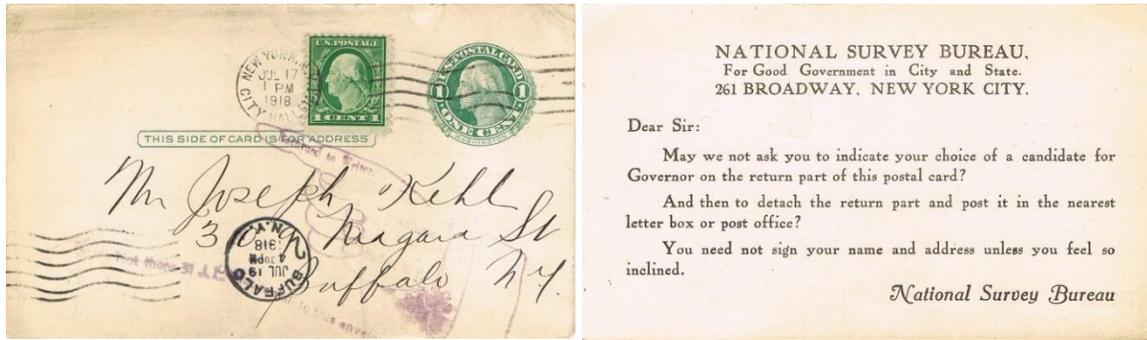


Figure 1. The card as sent to New York residents by the National Survey Bureau. It was sent to Buffalo, and was returned as undeliverable. The reverse side, at right, contained the instructions for the survey.

A breakdown of the areas represented by these cards are: Albany 75; Auburn 34; Buffalo 107; Cohoes 78; Cortland 16; Elmira 54; New York City 13; Oswego 6; Rome 46; Schenectady 97; Troy 53; Utica 19; Watertown 18; Yonkers 17; White Plains 9; Ossining 9; Mt. Vernon 5; Kingston 22; and Misc. 148. Seventeen could be listed as spoiled or returned.

The reply portion of the card, (**Figure 2**) shows the organization conducting the survey. I haven't been able to find any information on this business other than 261 Broadway is currently occupied by The Bank of America. Could this have been a Hearst sponsored company run by one of his newspapers? The reverse contained the survey.

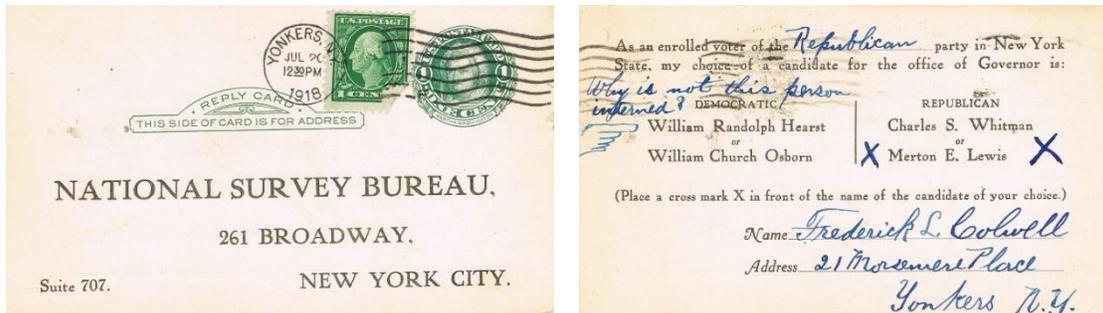


Figure 2. Obverse of the reply card with the address of the National Survey Bureau, and reverse which had the survey.

The first blank on the survey requests party affiliation. The majority left this portion blank. There were 199 Republican, 125 Democratic and 1 Socialist. Several people entered their election

districts or cities and one wrote-in William Randolph Hearst. The second portion requested that you mark an “X” next to the candidate of your choice.

**The Candidates on the Democratic side:
William Randolph Hearst (1863-1951)**

Hearst is probably the best known person on the poll. He commenced his rise when he took control of *The San Francisco Examiner* from his father in 1887. He later moved to New York City and acquired *The New York Journal*. His battle with Joseph Pulitzer’s *New York World* led to the style of reporting that became known as yellow journalism after the comic strip “The Yellow Kid,” that ran in the *Journal*. Hearst continued his expansion in the publishing business by acquiring nearly 30 newspapers in major cities. He also published many magazines that are still on the newsstands today.

Politically, he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives twice (1903-1907). He unsuccessfully ran for Mayor of New York City in 1905 and again in 1909, for Governor of New York in 1906 and Lt. Gov. in 1910.

William Church Osborn (1852-1951)

William was the son William Henry Osborn. He was trained as a lawyer but didn’t practice. He spent most of his time in philanthropic positions including serving as president of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Children’s Aid Society and the New York Society for the Relief of the Raptured and Orphaned. From 1914 to 1916, he served at the N.Y.S. Democratic Committee Chairman.

**The Candidates on the Republican side:
Charles S. Whitman (1869-1947)**

Whitman was born in Hanover, Conn., and attended Amherst College, graduating in 1890. He studied law at New York University and was admitted to the bar in 1894. Between 1901 and 1915 he held many appointed and elected positions in New York City including Assistant Corp. Counsel and City Magistrate, where he founded the Night Court. In 1907, he was appointed judge of the Court of Sessions by Gov. Charles Evans Hughes. The following year, as Deputy Attorney General he investigated election frauds in northern New York. As District Attorney of New York County, he gained national fame for cases involving police and political corruption which included taking on Tammany Hall.

He was elected Governor in 1915. During his term, he reorganized the state’s finances. After the country entered the First World War, he created a new state guard to replace the National Guard on service in France. He urged the nomination of former N.Y. Governor Charles Evans Hughes for President of the United States. A temporary military encampment in Stormville, N.Y. was named after him.

Merton E. Lewis (1861-1937)

Merton was born in Webster, Monroe County. He studied law with James B. Perkins at Rochester and was admitted to the Bar in 1887. He was a delegate to the 1894 New York State Constitutional Convention. He was elected to the N.Y. State Assembly in 1897, 1899, 1900, and 1901 after which he served in the Senate from 1902 to 1906. In 1906, he ran for N.Y.S. Comptroller but was narrowly defeated along with the rest of the Republican ticket except for Charles Evans Hughes, who was elected Governor.

During the 1918 Republican primary for governor, he urged the party to repudiate his opponent, the Governor Charles S. Whitman, because Whitman was backed by William Randolph Hearst whom he accused of having undermined the U.S. war effort against Germany.

Write in candidates:

There were only two write in candidates of note.

Alfred Emanuel “Al” Smith (1873-1944)

A Democrat, Smith was a member of the New York State Assembly 1904 to 1915 and the 8th President of the New York City Board of Alderman 1917 to 1918. He was linked to the Tammany Hall organization.

Theodore Roosevelt (1858-1919)

Roosevelt is well known as the 33rd Governor of New York and 25th President of the United States. His history is too extensive to list here.

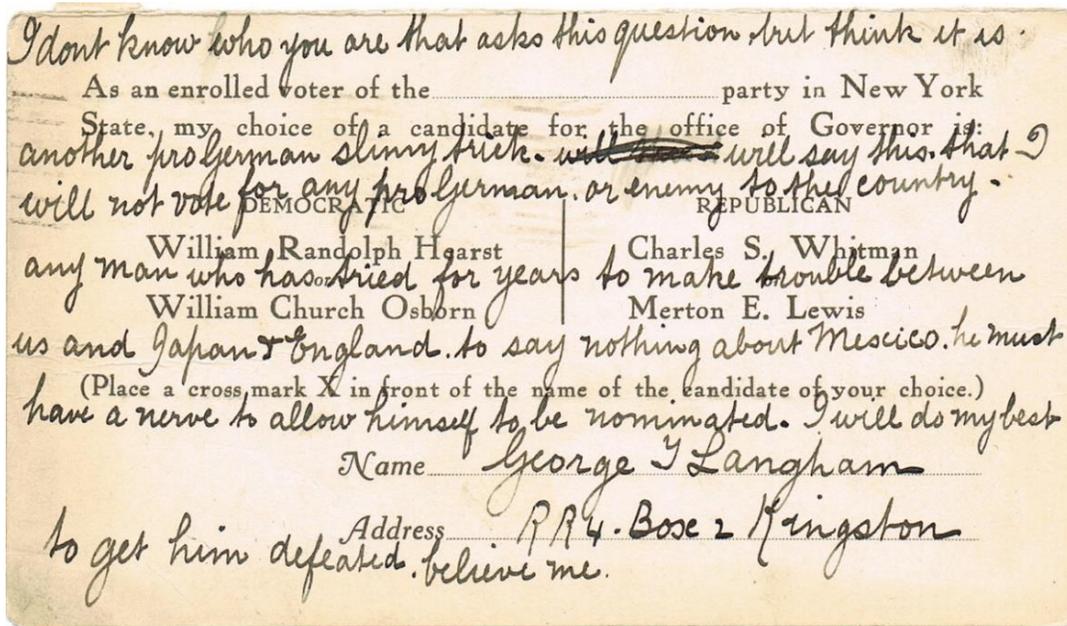


Figure 3. Strong sentiments were expressed by this respondent.

Comments placed on some of the return cards:

“Why is not this person interned” with a pointing hand indicating Whitman. See the right image in **Figure 2**.

This particular one is seen in **Figure 3**.

“I don’t know who you are that asks this question but think it is another pro German slimy trick. Will say this that I will not vote for any pro German or enemy so this country. Any man who has tried for years to make trouble between us and Japan and England to say nothing about Mexico he must have a nerve to allow himself to be nominated. I will do my best to get him defeated. Believe me.”

Some others:

“Under no circumstance would I vote for a man of the type of Mr. Hearst.”

“If Mr. Lewis does not get nominated, I am for Osborn.”

“George R Lewis – A sure Winner.”

“What right have you to assume that any of the four named will come through as a candidate.” With write-ins for “Wm. H. Edward” and “George R. Lunn” on the Democratic side.

“Will vote Republican if Hearst is nominated.” From a Democrat.

“Because I don’t think during the present crisis there should be any change in the national or State heads throughout the country. If they are fulfilling the office competently, which I think this man is.” With a check next to Whitman.

“Anyone but this think”. With “William Randolph Hearst” boxed.

“None of the below at all – It’s a matter of choice the least evil.”

“Osborn was fired for failing to make good as a Warden of a prison. How in the name of common sense does anyone expect him to make a good governor?” He picked Hearst.

“A. Smith of New York, Kindly state through the press who the National Survey Bureau might be. & why such interest is taken in the candidate ____ My choice is the written one. A Democrat.”

A little on the lighter side, one respondent had a return address of Wiltwyck Cemetery in Kingston, N.Y. A vote from the grave?

The Outcome:

In the end, Al Smith was the Democratic candidate and he defeated the incumbent, Charles S. Whitman. Smith was re-elected as Governor in 1923. He served until 1928 when Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected. He was the Democratic candidate for President in 1928.

References:

All biographical information obtained from Wikipedia.org.

Author’sNotes:

If anyone is interested in receiving one of these cards from one of the cities listed, send an SASE with a note of which city you want to me a 15 Sunset Hill Ct., Carmel, NY 10512-5027. If you can provide information on the National Survey Bureau or other, Larry Laliberte can be reached at largin1@verizon.net.

A BLOOMFIELD SURPRISE
By: Greg Stone and Bob Bramwell

There are times when old letters can fool even those postal history collectors that are known for their diligence and expertise. This is the story of one such cover as related by Greg Stone, a noted student of Michigan postal history.

The cover shown in Figure 1 bears the manuscript postmark *E Bloomfield/June 30* with a squiggle intended as nothing more than a separator. Rated $18\frac{3}{4}$ in the same ink and hand, this unpaid stampless folded letter has lengthy contents datelined *Farmington June 17th 1830*.

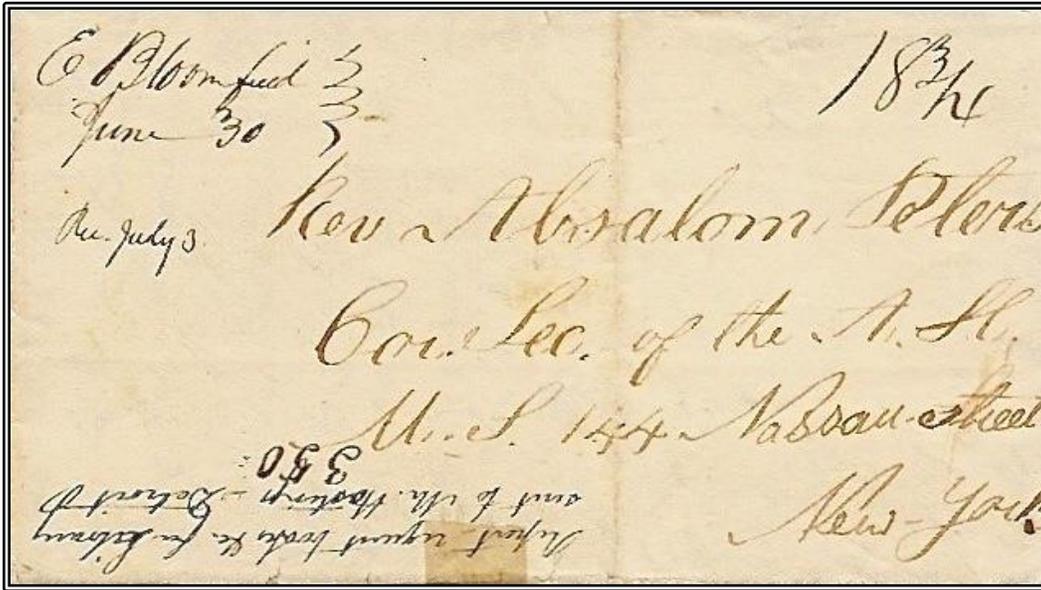
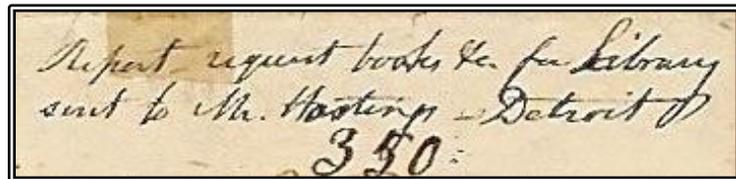


Figure 1. Folded letter postmarked E Bloomfield, June 30, directed to Rev. Absalom Peters as the Corresponding Secretary of the American Home Missionary Society by Rev. Erie Prince, assigned as pastor to a church in Farmington, Michigan.

This is a missionary letter sent to Reverend Absalom Peters in his role as Corresponding Secretary of the American Home Missionary Society in New York City. On the sealing flap of the letter there is a notation, obviously added in New York at the A.H.M.S., *Rev Erie Prince – Farmington Mich June 17 1830*. In the same hand and ink, but on the front and shown in detail below, is the notation:

*Report request books &c. for Library
sent to Mr. Hastings - Detroit
350 [file number]*



Young Reverend Prince, who had arrived in Michigan Territory in 1826, was an itinerant Presbyterian preacher. The letter reported on his competition for souls with Methodists and his success gaining financial support within his congregation for a library to “*promote good morals, useful learning & true religion.*”

Farmington was settled by a Quaker named Arthur Powell in 1824; Powell and a few co-religionists immigrated from Farmington, New York. Bloomfield was settled about 10 miles distant in 1827. Both towns are now suburbs of Detroit in Oakland County.

But what of post offices? Relying on the 1950 Territorial Postmark Catalog compiled first by Harry Konwiser and later by Edward Norton (E.N.) Sampson, both renowned early students of postmarks on stampless letters, the earliest postmark known from Farmington was the Quaker date 7 Mo 26 of 1827; remarkably, the only E. Bloomfield postmark in that catalog was the manuscript date of this folded letter, June 30, 1830! The Bloomfield post office was represented by an early date of Sept. 16, 1826, but barely survived into the statehood period while Farmington still has its post office today.

It is now time for Greg Stone to tell his story:

This cover was a nice example of a Michigan territorial/missionary letter. I purchased the cover from a still-active Pennsylvania cover dealer in 1995. I paid a hefty price for the cover, but it fit my specialty of Michigan stampless, as well as my particular interest – Oakland County. It appeared to me that somehow (by a post rider, perhaps) the Rev. Prince's letter entered the mails at Bloomfield, and that the postmaster had for some reason written the postmark as if the office were on the east side of Bloomfield.

When it came time to update information for the 1997 American Stampless Cover Catalog, after much discussion between myself, Cary Johnson (who handled the Michigan territorial portion of the catalog), and overall editor David Phillips, it was decided to not include this cover in the catalog since by then it was agreed that there had been no Michigan post office of East Bloomfield. Although disappointed with the decision, it was accepted as I still had a very nice Michigan territorial – OR SO I THOUGHT!

Not long ago I got the cover out of the vault for further review. I wanted to help an individual who had created a data base of Michigan covers and was attempting to identify those that were missionary-related. In studying this cover, I noticed something that I had ignored in the past – the postage rate. 18¾¢ in 1830 was the rate for single letters carried a distance of 150 to 400 miles. The proper rate for this cover, if carried from Bloomfield, Michigan, to New York City was 25 cents for a distance greater than 400 miles. So, was there an error made in rating this single letter? I doubt it, and there are two clues that I might have noticed but did not.

In the stampless era – and particularly at a post office applying postmarks in manuscript – if both the office of origin and destination were in the same state the postmaster or postal clerk would usually omit the state abbreviation from his town mark and from the direction. So I went, and found, the New York State post office of East Bloomfield, which was in that distance band of 150 to 400 miles from New York City. I consoled myself for missing this because like most of you New York State postal history collectors I understood that New York is both the name of a city and its state.

The second clue was also on the front of the cover. Written in the dark blue of A.H.M.S. is the notation *Rec July 3*. A letter postmarked June 30, 1830 at East Bloomfield, N.Y., about 330 post road miles from New York City, could be expected to make that distance in a four-horse coach of the day in 50 hours. The transit time from Bloomfield, Michigan to New York City would have been considerably longer.

So how did this letter get to East Bloomfield, N.Y.? Probably by Rev. Erie Prince or a trusted friend traveling to “the old homestead” by steamer to Buffalo and Erie Canal packet to East Bloomfield. Because canal packets did not have route agents to accept letters into the mails, it was dropped off there.

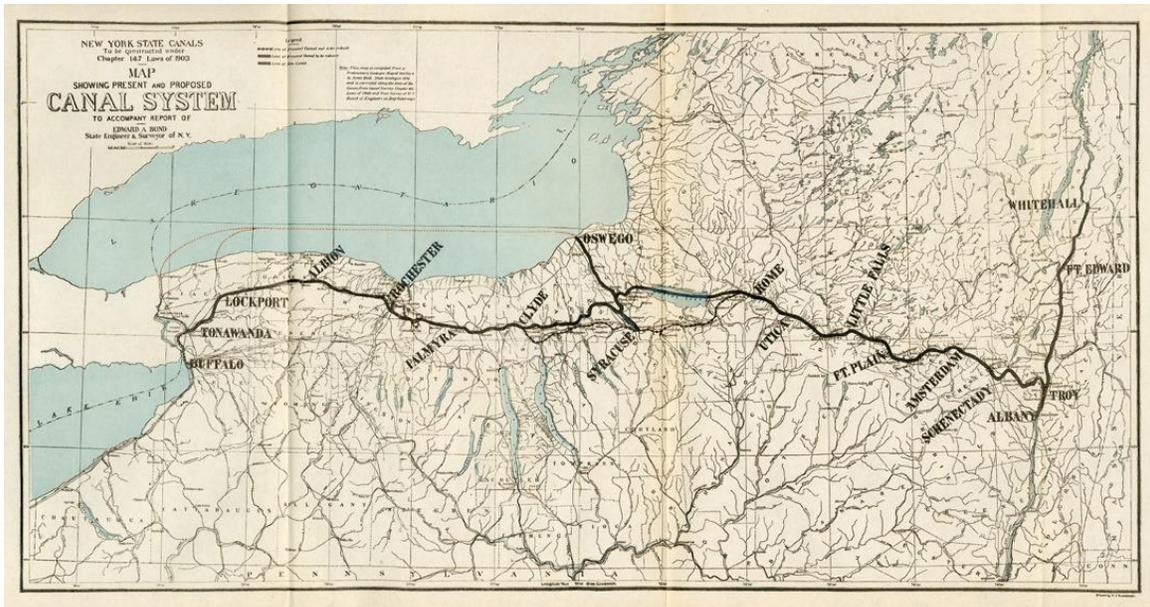


Figure 2. Map showing the canal system of New York State via which the letter most likely travelled once reaching Buffalo by steamer, then canal packet to East Bloomfield (ONT).

So the bottom line is that town postmarks can present challenges. Every postal marking – and sometimes more than markings – have to be taken into account to validate your understanding of the cover at hand. I don’t feel so bad when I notice the pencil notation on the reverse of this cover: “E.N. Sampson, Oct 1946”. From this I assume Mr. Sampson acquired the cover at that time, and only after 60+ years did the postmark identity get deciphered, and a Michigan territorial cover become a New York statehood cover.

Addendum on the American Home Missionary Society, Revs. Peters and Prince:

The Amistad Research Center of Tulane University publishes the following historical note: “The American Home Missionary Society was formed in 1826 by the Congregational, Presbyterian, Dutch Reformed, and Associate Reformed Churches with the purpose of financially assisting congregations of the American frontier until they could become self-sufficient”

Reverend Absalom Peters (1793-1869) joined AHMS upon its formation and served as Corresponding Secretary for many years. Reverend Erie Prince (dates unknown) was almost certainly one of six members of the 1825 graduating class of Andover Theological Seminary hired in that year by a missionary society that merged into the AHMS the following year, bringing Prince into contact with Peters.

Prince served as an AHMS missionary in Oakland County, Michigan, for a number of years and is well represented in the collections of Stone and several other collectors of Michigan territorial postal history.

Contact Greg Stone at MichCovers@ec.rr.com and Bob Bramwell at rbramwell@nc.rr.com

**FROM THE GRAIN FIELDS OF VIRGINIA
TO A GIN DISTILLERY IN HOLLAND**

By Charles J. DiComo, Ph.D.

I recently acquired a stampless 1839 dated folded letter (FL) for my decade's old research study of the New York City (NYC) postal marking whereby the month of April is abbreviated with an "APL" as opposed to the more common "APR" (Figure 1). This circular date stamp (CDS) has been classified by Hubert C. Skinner as NYDM 52-3.¹ As an aside, my years of research have shown that the uncommon use of "APL" on domestic mail was utilized for a period of nearly 20 years, not only in NYC (1834-1855), but in a number of other cities in N.Y. State (e.g., Albany, Brooklyn, Hudson, Johnstown, Rochester, Utica), and States beyond (e.g., CT, MA, PA).² But this story is for another article.



Figure 1. Skinner Type NYDM 52-3 CDS.



Figure 2. Folded Letter obverse, Richmond VA to Schiedam, Holland, 1839.

Soon after receiving this beauty, I quickly learned from the contents and numerous postal markings that this letter had undertaken a grand journey all in the pursuit of one of my favorite elixirs, Gin. Figure 2 illustrates the obverse of the letter that was written by J.B. Brengeri on March 25th, 1839 in Richmond, Virginia. Due to the lack of a Richmond, VA CDS, the letter did not enter

the mails in that city, but was placed in another letter or pouch and sent to an agent in New York, who paid the 25¢ U.S. internal fee (note the light pencil “25” notation at upper left). The letter was received at New York on April 14th where the clerk added the red “**NEW-YORK/APL/14**” circular date stamp. He also crossed out “*Great Western*” at lower left written by Mr. Brengeri (who had been hoping to make that sailing) and placed the letter in a mailbag to be carried by the New York & Havre Line sailing packet *Duchesse d’Orleans* (Figure 3). That vessel departed New York harbor on 16 April 1839, a full 7 days earlier than the “*Great Western*” was scheduled to depart (April 23rd). The postal clerk did Mr. Bengeri a favor realizing the *Duchesse d’Orleans* was making the transit a week earlier.

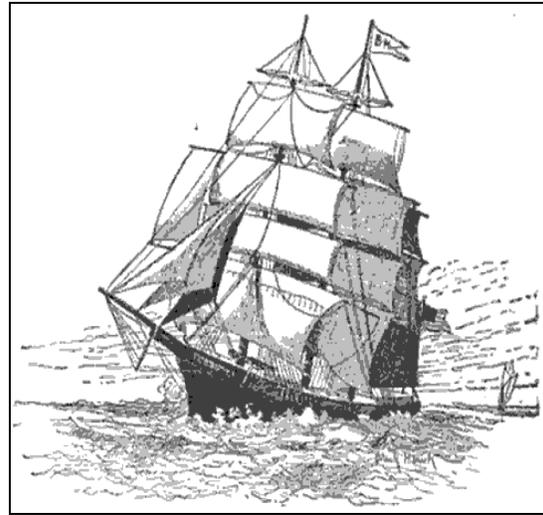


Figure 3. Sailing packet *Duchesse d’Orleans*³.

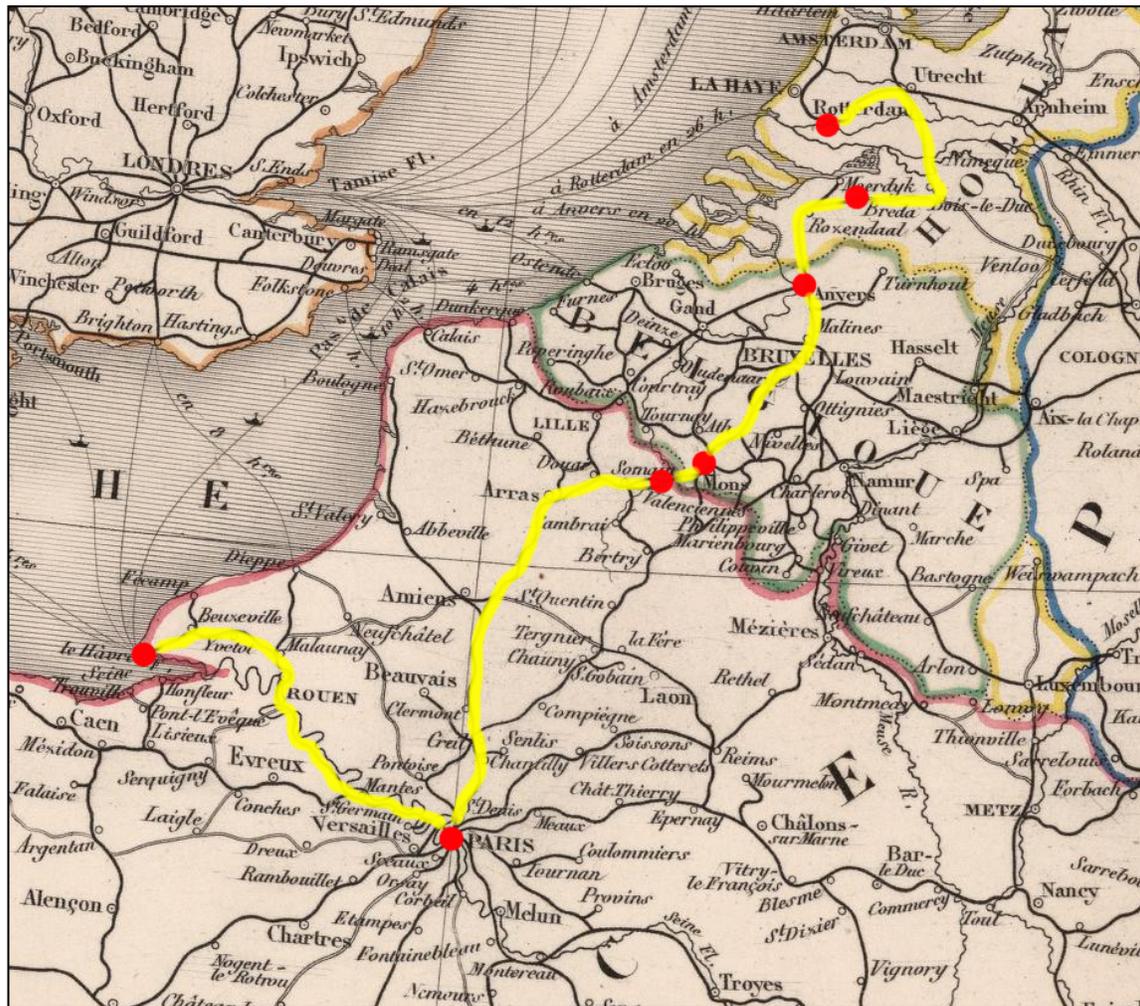


Figure 4. Route letter took from Le Havre to Schiedam, Holland⁵

The *Duchesse d'Orleans* sailed the Atlantic for nearly three weeks and arrived at the port of Le Havre, France where the double-circled red-orange “**OUTRE-MER LE HAVRE 8 MAI 39**” handstamp⁴ was applied at the upper right (**Figure 2**). The letter then traveled across Western Europe by rail passing through five cities and three countries before arriving at its final destination in Holland. The cropped map of France, Belgium and Holland in **Figure 4** highlights the route (in yellow) the letter took once arriving in France, as well as the major cities where postal markings/rates/weights were applied or where the letter crossed a border (red dots).

First stop **Paris**, where the blue double-circle “**PARIS 15 (60) 15 9 MAI 39**” handstamp was applied to the reverse (**Figure 5**). From there it traveled to the border office of Valenciennes, where the clerk added the “**7½**” for the weight of the letter in grams and the large black “**120**” rate (see **Figure 2**, upper left). At the border of France and Belgium, the letter was exchanged, where it proceeded on to Bergen (Mons) and then Antwerp. At the border of Holland, the letter was exchanged, where the limited-use, orange two-line script “**FRANKRYK OVER BREDA**” handstamp was applied to the reverse (**Figure 5**). This marking (canceller 327) translates to “France over Breda” and was used after 1 January 1837 for mail received from France: mails for France could be forwarded through Belgium; Breda became the border office; connecting with Paris and Valenciennes.⁶



Figure 5. Folded Letter reverse, showing blue **PARIS** handstamp and orange script “**FRANKRYK OVER BREDA**”.

The letter is nearing the end of its 410 mile overland trip – the final leg through southern Holland – to Schiedam on the outskirts of Rotterdam. Upon arrival at Schiedam, the clerk applied the red “**SCHIEDAM 11 MEI**” receiver handstamp seen at right. The recipient was a Loopuyt & Co., founded in 1772, and distillers of Gin. We can confirm that they received this letter as their docketing notation can be seen on reverse flap in **Figure 5**, “1839 J.B. Brengeri 25 Maart, onto. 11 Mei”.



To summarize the transit, the 1839 folded letter written (and mailed) on March 25th followed this course:

Richmond → NYC → *Duchesse d'Orleans* → Le Havre → Paris → Valenciennes → Bergen (Mons) → Antwerp → Breda → Schiedam, Holland.



The contents of the folded letter, written in French which I translated, discuss the export of Virginian grain for spirits production and the import of Loopuyt Gin to the United States. Of note, the **P. Loopuyt & Company** is still in business today in Schiedam and during my travels through Holland over recent years, I have had the pleasure of imbibing of this delicious elixir over fascinating conversation and cuisine. To the left is seen a picture of a bottle of Loopuyt Dry Gin, Schiedam, Holland, 2017. Little did I know, I would also own a piece of Loopuyt history.

In closing, my decades-long studies of the NYC “APL” postal marking have brought me much joy as I search for new varieties, new cities, and new destinations. One never knows where your research will take you. And in this case, my recent acquisition of this letter took me on a three week journey from the fields of Virginia, across the Atlantic Ocean, through Europe via Rail, to a Gin distillery in Holland. And all from the comfort of my recliner!

Acknowledgements

The author wishes to thank Richard F. Winter for sharing his vast knowledge with this fledgling postal historian and his contributions to the analysis of this letter. However, any errors or an omission is the author’s responsibility.

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POST OFFICE BUSINESS

By: David E. Williams

Recently I had the good fortune to add an elusive cover to my Binghamton, New York postal history collection and exhibit. It was included in Lot #1249, a group of nine Binghamton stampless covers offered in the Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries Sale No. 1146 which closed on December 15, 2016. The cover lot was accompanied by a reprint of a portion of Calvet Hahn's article in the November 1999 *Chronicle* which illustrated several of the covers in the lot. The lot included covers with common Binghamton rate markings, two scarcer **PAID/1** in circle markings, as well as two postmaster free franks. One free frank was that of postmaster R. M. Cooke, the second, franked by postmaster John H. H. Park, is seen below in **Figure 1**. Of note, postmaster Park is the one responsible for the famous Binghamton herringbone fancy cancel.

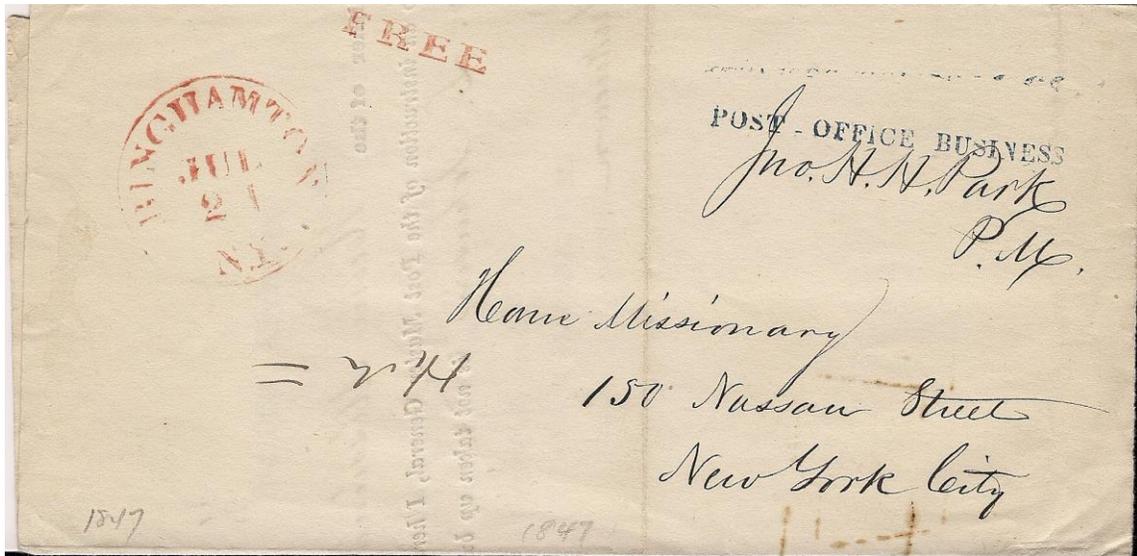


Figure 1. Free frank of John H. H. Park on cover postmarked July 21, 1847.

The cover bears a 30-31mm red **CDS** of the type known as “B” away from “N”, as well as a red 21x 3½ mm straightline **FREE**. As seen above, what makes this cover extra special is the straightline blue **POST OFFICE BUSINESS** marking. Measuring 52x3mm, it is believed to be one of only two in existence; the other used by postmaster Cooke in 1849. This was also noted on the back of the cover in pencil “2 recorded”, possibly by Hahn(?). The cover was also accompanied by Hahn's usual blue bordered note describing characteristics of the cover, including a second partial strike of the blue straightline above the other.

The cover is addressed to the Home Missionary, 150 Nassau Street, in New York City. This was the address of the American Home Missionary Society, publishers of the *Home Missionary* and *American Pastor's Journal*. The back of the cover contains the following notation:

“J. H. H. Park Binghamton/N.Y. July 1847” in pen, then “Rev. L. Johnson” in pencil, and below that, in large pen characters “22 – 886”.

So, just what was the nature of this post office business? The answer becomes apparent when the cover is unfolded and read, as seen in **Figure 2**.

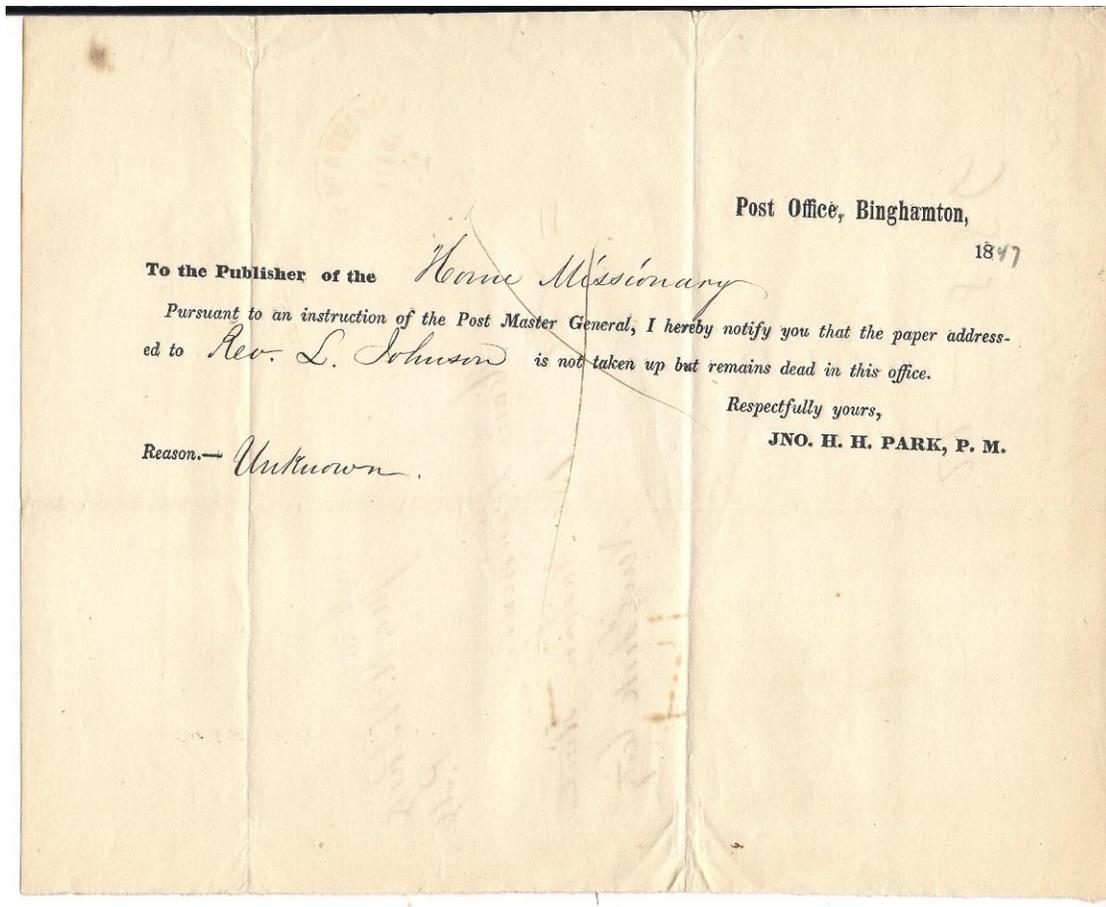


Figure 2. Preprinted document notifying publisher of unclaimed paper at Binghamton post office.

It is apparent that this is one example of how the Binghamton post office handled mailings that were unclaimed and therefore became “dead” letters. Were other methods used in other circumstances? That we do not know for sure. In this case, it was obviously to let the publisher of the *Home Missionary* know for whatever reason the Rev. L. Johnson did not pick up this article of mail and possibly give the publisher a reason to remove Rev. Johnson from their future mailing list.

All that is very interesting for someone studying the handling of dead letters or unclaimed mail. However, in the author’s case, this item added another previously missing link to my exhibit. This was the gem of the nine cover lot, but there were two others that added more content to my exhibit. The Cooke free frank allowed me to expand that section of the exhibit. In addition, the **PAID/1** in circle examples represented a new date range for this particular marking which will entail rewriting and remounting of another exhibit page.

One footnote to this story would be that it really pays to read the auction descriptions. In this case the only cover that was illustrated as an example of the lot was a fairly common one; a Binghamton CDS with an integral “5” rate inside. If one had just glanced in passing at the lot, it might have been dismissed. A second would be if the auction house offers a “watchdog” application which will alert you of upcoming lots that fit your specific interests, take advantage of it. This is how this lot was brought to my attention via an email from Robert A. Siegel Auctions.

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PENNY POST IN NEW YORK, AN UPDATE

By: Tom Mazza

Evert Bancker, Junior, in colonial New York, ran a mercantile business with his cousin, Gerard.¹ Prior to the revolution they supplied a large part of the supplies for the resident British troops, and were Barrack Masters. He became a member of the committee of one hundred (forerunner to the New York Assembly), and later a member of committees of safety, provincial congresses and the New York State Assembly, where he served as the second speaker, from 1779 to 1783. He later was credited with surveying a portion of the “Bowery” of Petrus Stuyvestant.² Fortunately, he or his business also kept business correspondence, some of which has come into collectors’ hands.

Among the Bancker items recently sold by Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries, Inc., as part of the Calvet M. Hahn holdings,³ was one (**Figure 1**) which has been regarded, for at least the last forty-five years, as the earliest recorded penny post letter.⁴

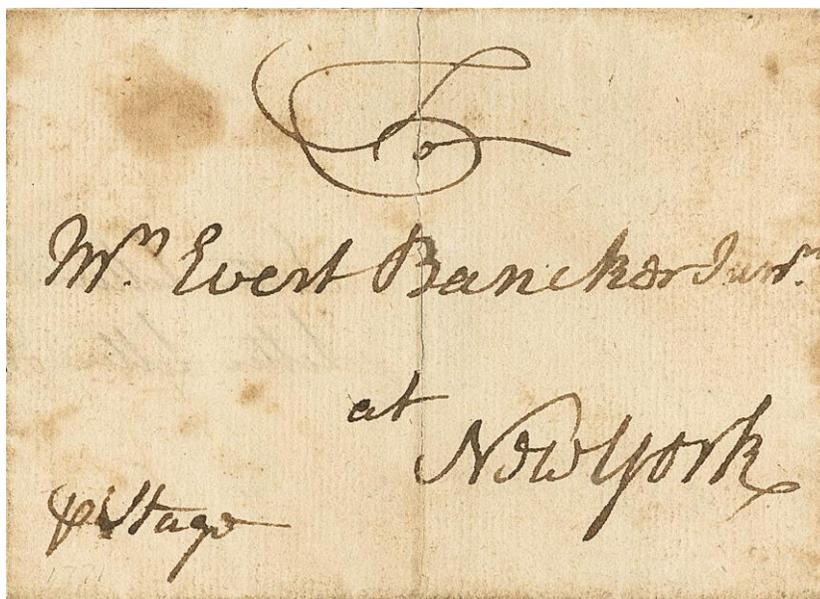


Figure 1: Penny post letter from holdings of Calvet Hahn and sold by Robert A. Siegel.

This letter is datelined Burlington, New Jersey, November 30, 1771, and was directed by stage, rather than post office. As the penny post had no identifying handstamp, and did not note its charge, the sole means of identification of carrier delivery was the docketing by the recipient, which, fortunately for us, was provided by Mr. Bancker as seen in **Figure 2**.

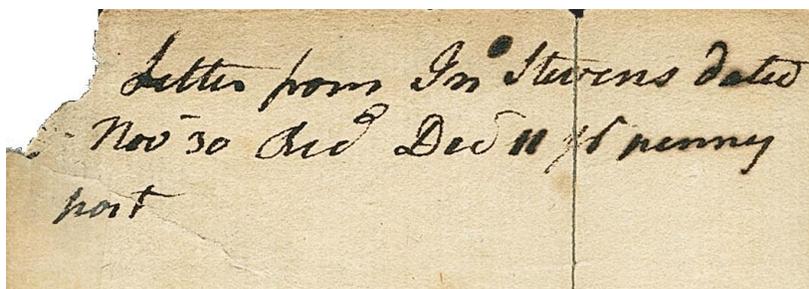


Figure 2. Docketing by Mr. Bancker noting penny post carrier.

It is clear that the penny post was authorized as a carrier (rather than an independent private) operation. The 1765 Act made clear the authority to “establish an Office to be called the Penny Post Office, in any City...within...the British Dominions in North America, where...necessary and convenient...and Sums for the...Conveyance of all Letters...by such Penny Post” to be the same as those for the cities of London and Westminster, under Queen Anne’s act.⁵ Any independent penny post operation was made illegal by the same law.

An earlier penny post usage can now be reported. This letter, also to Mr. Banker (sic), Junior, was datelined Philadelphia, June 5, 1771 (**Figure 3**). This correspondent mailed the letter, and it was postmarked on the reverse by the distinctive two line PHILA/DELPHIA handstamp in red, and Franklin marks to show both the June 21 mailing and the June 24 receipt in New York of the letter. Postage is shown by the manuscript “2” (pennyweights), the official currency of the post office, corresponding to the statutory rate of sixpence, for inland conveyance of sixty to one hundred miles under King George’s law. The letter also shows the conversion of the rated amount into the local New York currency, 11d, or an inflation factor of 1.833 to 1.

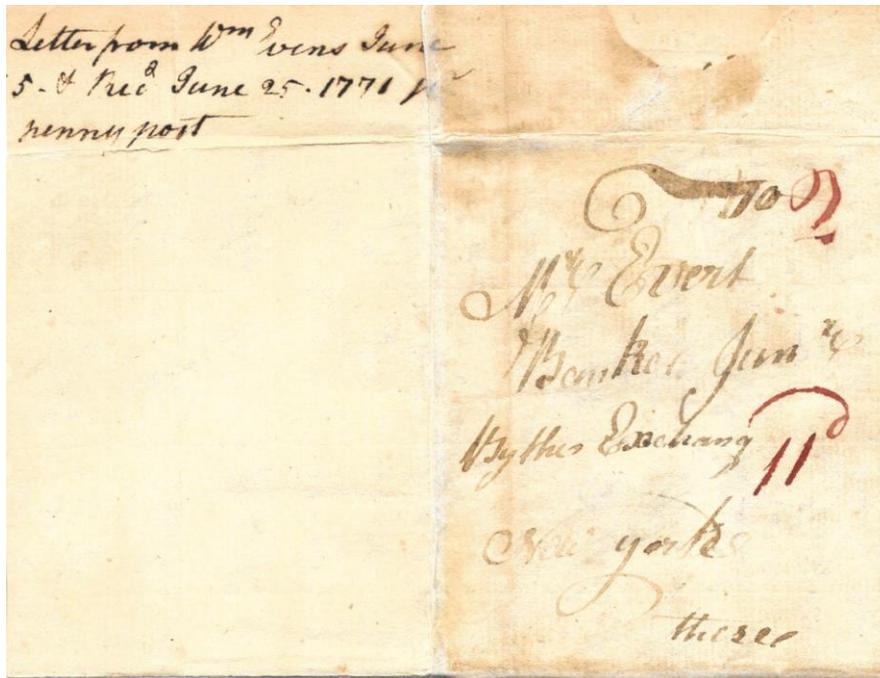


Figure 3: Newly reported earlier penny post usage from June 5, 1771.

Acknowledgement and appreciation are given to Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries, Inc. for the use of the image of the Hahn cover.

¹ Wikipedia entry for Evert Bancker (speaker).

² New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission report, January 14, 1969, LP-0250.

³ Lot 1081, U.S. and Confederate States Postal History, December 15, 2016, Sale #1146, Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries, Inc.

⁴ See, for instance, Hahn, Calvet M., Letter Carrier Service in New York; ter Braake, Alex L., The Posted Letter in Colonial and Revolutionary America 1628-1790, American Philatelic Society, State College, Pa., 1975; Hahn, Calvet M., The Post Office During Confederation (1782-9), Part V, Collectors Club Philatelist, September-October 1991, at p. 335.

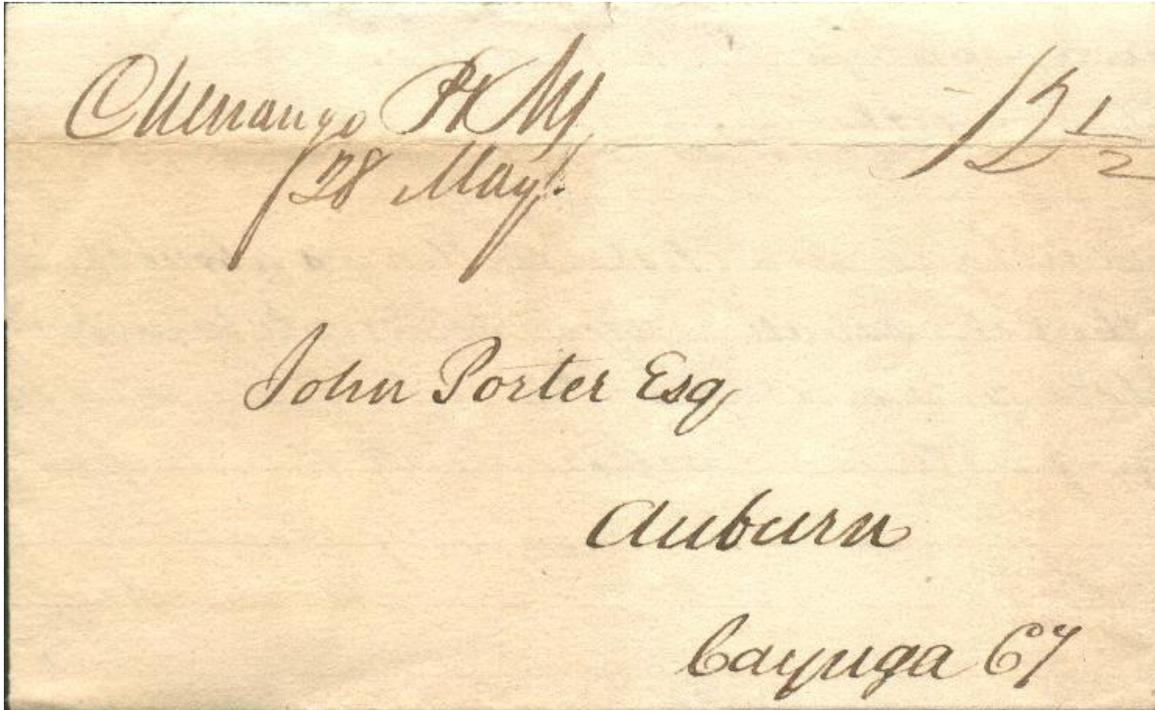
⁵ Act of 5 George III, cap. XXV, sections XI and XII.

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COVER OF THE ISSUE

By: David Williams

May 28, 1830: Chenango Point Last Day Cover



The illustrated cover is one I consider a prize as far as my Binghamton, New York postal history exhibit. You may ask, why would a cover from Chenango Point be part of an exhibit of Binghamton postal history? Well there are two connections.

First, the day after this cover was mailed, the Chenango Point post office officially became the Binghamton post office. That's right; the Binghamton post office was established on May 29, 1830 from Chenango Point. This cover is a last day of service cover from the Chenango Point post office!

Secondly, Virgil Whitney, the last postmaster of Chenango Point, became the first postmaster of the Binghamton post office. Virgil, the son of Joshua Whitney was appointed postmaster of Chenango Point on August 26, 1823 and served until May 28, 1830. After his appointment as Binghamton postmaster, he served in that capacity for a little more than three years. His last day as Binghamton postmaster was October 27, 1833.

Well, it wasn't exactly his last day as postmaster of Binghamton. How so? You see Virgil Whitney again became the Binghamton postmaster many years later. He was reappointed to the office on January 14, 1853, when he succeeded Franklin Whitney. He served until July 31, 1855 when he was succeeded by one Joseph B. Abbott.

But old Virgil wasn't quite done yet! He was reappointed on February 10, 1857, succeeding Joseph Abbott, and served until William Stuart took his place on March 28, 1861.