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## APS UNIT 28

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EMPIRE STATE  
POSTAL HISTORY  
SOCIETY

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## A CONFLUENCE OF PHILATELY AND HISTORY

By George DeKornfeld

Occasionally a cover, from a postal history perspective, exhibits a confluence of philately — in this case marcophily — and history. The City of Hudson in Columbia County was the first chartered city in independent America by act of the State Assembly on April 22, 1785. The Hudson post office was established on March 20, 1793.

This stampless folded letter, sent to Manhattan, is docketed November 27, 1794, and is free-franked by Cotton Gelston, Hudson's first postmaster. It has one of five known 25 × 4 mm straight-line cancels. Not well known is the fact that Hudson, at the time this letter was written, had surpassed Nantucket as a whaling community. Gelston, also a merchant, writes:



My Last Covering Invoice & Bill of Loading to Capt Casy (who Sent this yesterday) from 33 Cans of Sperm Oil which to hand in safety. since which have Rec'd Mr John Bloggs Letter informing me shall take the strained Whale Oil mentioned to you in a former Letter the Balance of which being I [sic] he will pay You, which you Pleas Receive, & Credit my Acct. For my own part am sorry it was not in my power to come nearer your wishes in Sperm Oil (but this was done through every exertion that was in my power to make) as I shall be in want of the Property, this Fall, otherways should not wish to have it done it, as it has been done at a Loss — I am sorry Mr Blogge had not releasd the strained Whale Oil, as I wish to Try the Irish Markets with it; being sure it Will answer equal to any — the price being much Lowr will be a benefit to the Shipper. I hope to be able in the Spring to try many markets with it on my own Acct (if others do not incline) from many experiments we find it very Little improves to Sperm. & in Cold Climes much superior as it never will, come to a Lard, or thick substance in the Coldest of the season. As Sperm Oil will, eaven the Strained Sperm Oil unless done, in our method of Preparing.

I before mentioned to you my intention of coming down timely for the note you Gave I Adams endorsed by Mintum for 2100 Dolls, should anything happen to prevent it I wish you endeavor to make provision for it the next Disct, which will bring it to the time of Daniel Cotton Note Left with you for 1750 coming due, the Remainder I should wish to pay out of Oil Sold you, & Receive the Ballance by Draft or other ways as I my Circumstances may require it.

I am Respectfully Yours  
Cotton Gelston