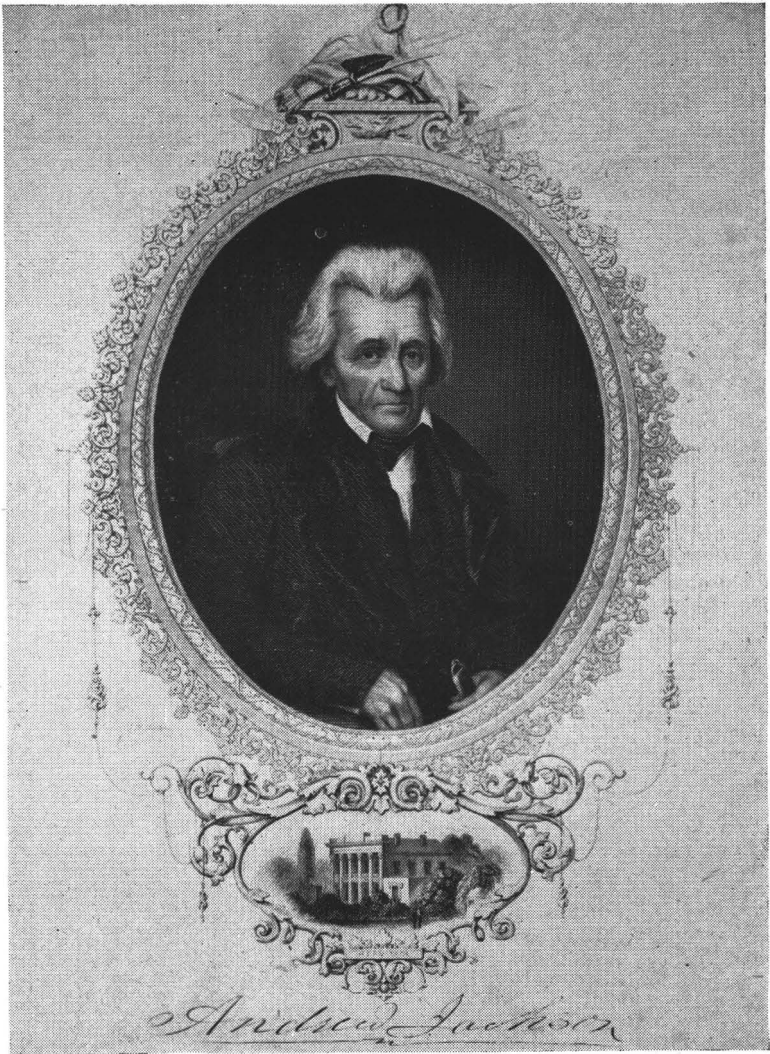


**THE  
BLACK JACKS  
OF  
1863-1867**



**BY MAURICE F. COLE**

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BLACK JACKS  
OF  
1863-1867**



*Andrew Jackson*

THE  
BLACK JACKS  
OF  
1863-1867

BY MAURICE F. COLE

CHAMBERS HANDBOOK  
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## FOREWORD

We presume that anyone who at any time has made a specialty of any of our postage stamps has at one time or another dreamed of putting the accumulated data into print. Unfortunately, many collectors let it remain in the dream stage, with the result that the rest of us are never able to have access to the store of information that almost any specialist would gather in connection with his own particular specialty.

We presume that this hesitancy in some instances is due to the fact that the printed work would not be complete in many details, and that the author would prefer to wait until he feels that he can completely cover the field before publishing any of it. In that way many books and articles never are written, with the result that the hobby is that much the poorer.

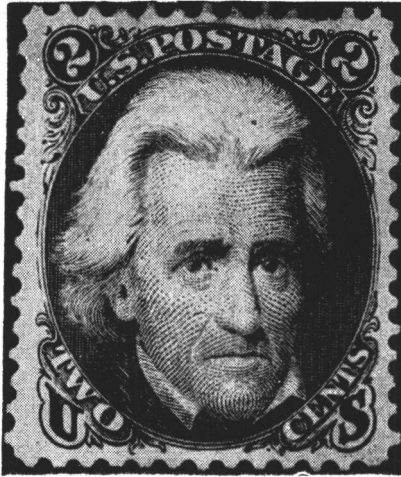
We have prepared this work with much hesitation and trepidation, as we realize that it will not be complete in many respects and for that reason may add very little to philately. We marvelled at the careful work and intense study that have gone into the works of such men as Dr. Carroll Chase, Sterling T. Dow, Stanley B. Ashbrook and Lester G. Brookman, to mention only a few of our American authors. It seems inconceivable that a person could spend as much time as is needed to prepare a work such as each of these men has produced and still carry on his regular vocation or profession.

This book is presented with the full knowledge that it is fragmentary in many details and is not as thorough and complete as a work of this sort should be. As far as we have been able to ascertain, however, no exhaustive work on the Black Jack has ever been published, so this book may be considered as a beginning in a subject as yet not fully explored. As we mentioned at the time we began the series of articles from which this book has been compiled, we welcomed the opinions, suggestions and additional information of other collectors, in order that, together, we might accumulate all of the available information about the Black Jack. We have received several communications and suggestions from philatelists from all parts of the country, and for those suggestions we are very thankful. All of the letters which we have received personally have been most friendly and helpful.

It is our hope that this book will be accepted as it is intended, not as the final word on the subject treated therein, but merely as a beginning, with the hope that many other specialists may continue the study and that eventually the Black Jack will be as thoroughly covered as some of the other classics of our postal history.

MAURICE F. COLE

Ferndale, Michigan  
October 12, 1949.



**Fig. 1. The Black Jack**

## INTRODUCTION

There is probably no other stamp which our government has issued to date with a nickname that has been so universally adopted as the Black Jack. The term derives from the color of the stamp, which is black, together with the further fact that the central figure is the likeness of our seventh president, Andrew Jackson, hence "Jack." (Fig. 1) Another striking feature of the stamp, and one which distinguishes and sets it apart from all other of our postage stamps, is the fact that almost the entire tablet is taken up by the head of Jackson. No other of our stamps even approaches the Black Jack in this particular.

The issuance of the Black Jack resulted from the abolition of the one-cent carrier rate, effective as of July 1, 1863. Previous to that date, by the Act of March 3, 1855, the drop letter rate was fixed at one-cent. The Act of March 3, 1863 raised the drop letter rate from one-cent to two-cents for letters not exceeding one-half ounce, but further provided that "no extra postage or carriers' fee shall hereafter be charged or collected upon letters delivered by carriers, nor upon letters collected by them for mailing or delivery." Until that time the letter carrier was allowed to charge a "carrier fee" of one cent for every letter which he picked up on his route and later deposited in the post office, and also one cent for every letter which he delivered to the addressee.

Because of the large number of drop letters which would therefore require the new rate of two cents postage, the government ordered the issuance of a new denomination not heretofore used in our postal history, and the Black Jack was the new stamp resulting therefrom. It was produced by The National Bank Note Company, which at the time was furnishing other of our stamps. The printing was from steel plates, and at least seven plates are known to have been used. The plates contained 200 stamps each, arranged in two panes of 100 subjects each, 10x10.

The design was from the painting of Jackson, in his later years, by John W. Dodge, of New York. The painting was done at Jackson's home, The Hermitage, at Nashville, Tennessee in 1842 and was originally a miniature painting. While the original painting was a three quarter length painting of the subject, while seated, (frontispiece), only the bushy maned head of the hero of the Battle of New Orleans is used on the Black Jack.

In his recent very excellent work on the stamps of the nineteenth century, L. G. Brookman suggests that the painting from which the Jackson head for the Black Jack was taken was not done by Dodge at all, but by Miner Kilbourne Kellogg, who went to The Hermitage under commission from the State of Tennessee, and spent six weeks in the painting of the picture which was used later as the basis of the Black Jack. Brookman relies for this statement upon an article written by the New York student of early American stamps, George B. Sloane. Because Dodge has

for years been credited with the authorship of this painting and because the statement in Brookman's work contradicted much earlier investigation of this matter, we have been in touch with Mr. Sloan since Brookman's work appeared, and Mr. Sloan is now of the opinion that the source of the Jackson head actually goes back to the Dodge miniature painting. This belief is shared by F. S. Ellis, an authority on source material for the United States stamp designs, and Anthony Russo, the Chicago specialist in the Black Jack.

Though scheduled for July 1, 1863, the effective date of the Act making advisable the issuance of a two cent stamp, the Black Jack did not actually appear until July 6, 1863, three days after the close of the Battle of Gettysburg. It continued in use until the appearance of the pictorial issue of 1869. It was still valid for postage after this new issue appeared, but usage after 1869 is very rare.

Scott gives six numbers in his catalogue to the Black Jack, four of which are grilled variations, and the last of which is the re-issue of 1875, at which time the entire '61-'66 issue was re-issued, though none of this re-issue is catalogued in used condition.

The Black Jack appears in shades ranging from light gray to intense black. It is perforated 12. While the paper on which the Black Jack was printed is described generally as gray, we also find many copies on a very thin, almost white, paper, particularly in the latter part of the Black Jack period.



## Chapter I

### THE BLACK JACK NOT A MEMORIAL STAMP

Although some collectors advance the idea that the Black Jack was our first mourning or memorial stamp, there is little to support that position. Probably the reason advanced by those who claim this to be a memorial issue is the fact that the stamp itself is black, the usual color for mourning stamps, such as the Harding memorial, although previous to that time, in each of the issues of 1847, 1851, 1857 and 1861, we had a stamp that was black in color.

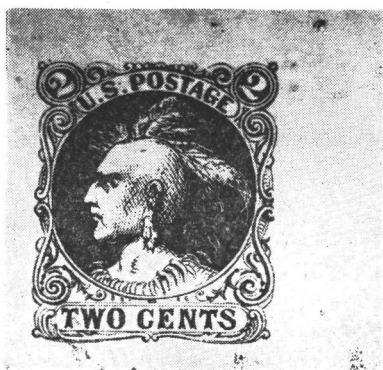


Fig. 2. Essay.

There are several reasons arguing against the Black Jack being a memorial stamp. In the first place, there was nothing in Jackson's history which should be commemorated at that particular time. He had been dead for eighteen years and neither the date of his birth nor of his death coincided with the date of issuance of this particular stamp. Further, in connection with the issuance of this stamp, there were several trial color proofs. These color proofs were on soft India paper and included the following colors: light blue, chalky blue, green, olive green, dull yellow, vermilion, scarlet, dull red, dull rose-brown, and gray-black. Had this been intended as a mourning stamp it is doubtful if proofs in colors would have been submitted.

Another argument against the claim that this was a memorial issue is the fact that at the time bids were requested for the new two cent stamp there was at least one other design submitted. That design, which is described in Brazer's work on Essays for U. S. Adhesive Postage Stamps, and is here illustrated (Fig. 2), depicts an Indian head with full headdress. Surely, had it been intended that the new two cent stamp should be in memory of

Andrew Jackson, this Essay of an entirely different subject would not have been submitted.

Just why Andrew Jackson was selected as the subject for this new two cent stamp is not at all certain. Prior to the issuance of the Black Jack only three other persons had been depicted on our stamps. The first was, of course, Benjamin Franklin, the recognized founder of our postal system, who was honored by being the subject of our first postage stamp. In addition to Franklin, who appears on subsequent issues also, we find that Washington and Jefferson are the only two thus honored. Why Jackson, therefore, should have been picked for the new two cent stamp, rather than some of the intervening presidents (the two Adams', Madison and Monroe) is difficult to determine.

We do know that the Black Jack appeared about the middle of the Civil War period. In fact, it first appeared three days after the close of the Battle of Gettysburg, on July 6, 1863. It is rather significant that at the height of the War Between the States a subject should be picked for a new stamp from one of the southern states, Tennessee. That fact itself may be the answer to the selection of Jackson for this new issue, as it would surely indicate that our government still hoped to re-unite the states and was willing to honor one of the southern heroes on its postage stamps. Not only was Jackson a native of Tennessee, but he was also a great favorite in the south as the Hero of the Battle of New Orleans.

Another explanation for the use of Jackson's picture is that such picture was readily available. It is known that the National Bank Note Company, which produced the Black Jack for our government, had in its files the picture of Andrew Jackson from which the stamp was issued. There are several bank notes issued by the National Bank Note Company prior to 1863 upon which appeared this exact likeness of Jackson as is shown on the Black Jack. These will be described and illustrated in a subsequent. (Chapter III).

It is also rather significant that the same likeness of Jackson as is used on the Black Jack appeared the month previous on a new two cent stamp which was issued by the Confederate States. This stamp appears as Scott's No. 207 and was produced by Archer and Daly of Richmond, Virginia. This also will be illustrated later. (See Fig. 6).

It would therefore seem that the claim made by some collectors that the Black Jack is our first memorial stamp is without much foundation. It might rather be regarded as the first departure in our postal history from the original three, Franklin, Washington and Jefferson, and the beginning of a new era in which eventually all except the living presidents of the United States have been honored on our postage stamps.

## THE RE-USE OF POSTAGE STAMPS

It is a well recognized fact among philatelists that particularly in the early days of our postal history it was not uncommon that people would clean postage stamps that had already been used and use them a second time. Whether they thought there was anything immoral or illegal in this practice is not certain. We do know, however, that our government officials became very much concerned about such practice and sought by various methods to prevent the re-use of our postage stamps.

By the Act of July 16, 1862, the re-use of our postage stamps was made an offense punishable by imprisonment in the penitentiary. Paragraph No. 27 of the Postal Regulations of the Post Office Directory of 1863 provides as follows:

"The removal of a cancelling mark from a postage stamp once used, with intent to use the same again, or the buying or selling or using of such stamps, is a high offence, punishable by imprisonment in the penitentiary."

There were several specific methods of treating stamps by which it was hoped it would be impossible to re-use them. Two of these methods were government-sponsored, and the others were more or less left to the individual postmaster.

Probably the most effective way devised for preventing the re-use of our postage stamps occurred during the Black Jack period. This was the method of "grilling" our postage stamps. This consisted of an embossing that was applied to the stamps, while still in full sheets, by a steel roller which was made up of a series of points or "bosses." After the printing of the stamps, but before issuance to the postmaster, these sheets would be passed under the grill roller, which would make indentations or embossings on the stamp itself. Then, when the stamp was affixed to a letter and cancelled, the cancelling ink would work its way into these depressions caused by the grill, and anyone later attempting to remove the ink would tear and thus destroy the stamp itself. Therefore its re-use would be prevented. Although the exact date of issue is not known, the first grilled stamp appeared in 1867, about the middle of the period in which the Black Jack was in use.

Ordinarily the grills did not cover the entire stamp. They were in the form of rectangles and consisted of various sizes, depending upon the issue of the stamp. On the Black Jack we find four sizes of grills and they are listed by Scott as the D, Z, E and F grills. They are all given a separate listing in the Standard Catalogue and vary in value according to the type grill. While it is a rather simple matter to determine the type of grill on an off-cover stamp, which can be examined on its reverse

side, it is not so easy to determine the type grill when the stamp is affixed to a cover.

The grilling of stamps passed out with the issue of 1875, and thereafter the government sought to prevent the re-use of stamps by enforcing the law making it a Federal offense to use a postage stamp a second time.

A second type or method used to prevent or discourage the re-use of stamps was by means of "patent" cancellations. There were various types of patent cancellations, the distinguishing detail of which was a sharp cutting edge which was a part of the cancelling device and which would cut the surface of the stamp and permit the cancelling ink to penetrate. It would then be practically impossible to remove the cancelling ink without tearing or damaging the stamp and thus preventing its re-use.

Fred Schmalzriedt of Detroit, the nationally recognized authority on patent cancellations, reports only three cities using the patent cancellation during the Black Jack period. These all happened to be in the State of New York and each of the three cities used the same type of patent cancellation. The cities are Buffalo, Albany and Troy.

The particular part of the patent cancellation which cut the surface of the stamp could be any shape or size. In the Buffalo patent cancellation the cutting device was a small circle, contained in a larger circle and it is illustrated in Fig. 3.

Generally it can be said that the patent cancellation was an effective method of preventing the use of stamps a second time.

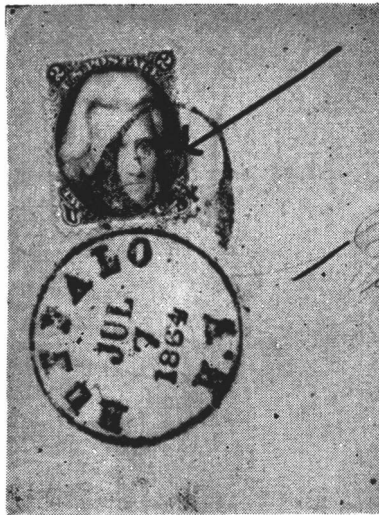


Fig. 3. Arrow Points to Buffalo Patent Cancellation.

A third method designed to prevent the re-use of stamps, and by far the most intriguing, was what is known as the Francis Patent. Dr. S. W. Francis, a New York City chemist, conceived the idea of soaking the stamps before issuance in an alkaline solution, which treatment turned the paper brown. To cancel the stamp after it had been affixed to the cover all that was necessary was to touch the stamp with a sponge or rag saturated with acid. This would turn the stamp blue immediately. This was substantially the principle used in cancelling the Blood local stamps.

Ten thousand copies of the Black Jack were treated in this manner and sent by the National Bank Note Company early in 1865 to the postmaster in Newport, Rhode Island. As far as the Newport postmaster was concerned he thought the idea was excellent and he sent a glowing report of the experiment to the Postmaster General. Nothing more seems to have come of this experiment, however, and although there are several known copies of this Francis patented paper in unused condition, including one block of four, which the author has in his collection, covers bearing the stamp in a cancelled condition are very rare. Although Luff reports having seen some, it has not been my privilege ever to have seen an authenticated cancelled copy of the Black Jack on the patented Francis paper.

Still another device which was patented to prevent the re-use of postage stamps was what is known as the Loewenberg Patent, which the inventor called a "self-cancelling" method. Letters Patent #45057 were issued on November 15, 1864 to Henry Loewenberg of 400 Fourth Street, New York City, covering this idea. The principle involved in the Loewenberg patent is what we now generally know as the decalomania or the transfer principle. The impression of the stamp desired was applied to an adhesive substance on transparent paper, so that the design would be "distinctly visible through the paper." If the stamp were then affixed to an envelope it could not be removed without destroying the entire design.

This method did not prove to be very practical. A certain number of copies of the Black Jack on the Loewenberg patented paper were made, although I have been unable to ascertain the exact number which were thus produced. Although I have such a copy in my collection an illustration of it here would not be particularly helpful. Some of the fine detail of the actual stamp is missing and one gets the impression upon examining such a copy that it is the result of an attempt to forge the Black Jack itself.

Another term sometimes used in referring to paper treated in this manner is "gold beaters skin." Mr. Loewenberg was not successful in selling this patent to the United States Government, but he was able to interest the Prussian Government in

his patent and sold them the idea. The 1866 set of Prussian stamps was issued under this patent.

One of the more ingenious methods which was invented to prevent the re-use of stamps was what is known as the Morison Patent envelope, sometimes referred to as the Leeds-Franklin envelope. This envelope was manufactured by William P. Lyon of New York City and the principle feature consisted of a "window" in the envelope. The stamp was affixed to the insert and was visible through this window in the envelope, which window had a perpendicular and horizontal bar, which was also adhesive in nature and which stuck to the face of the stamp. On opening the envelope and removing the insert the adhesive bars of the window would adhere to and thus destroy the face of the stamp and thereby prevent its re-use.

There were undoubtedly several other devices and methods used to prevent the common practice of cleaning and re-using stamps during this entire period, but the methods and devices mentioned above seem to be the best known.

### Chapter III

## COLLATERAL SOURCES AND AUTOGRAPH MATERIAL

In any specialized stamp collection the collateral or secondary items form a most interesting part, and are often more intriguing to the non-collector than the stamps themselves. These collateral items would include material showing the same likeness of the subject as that which appears on the stamp or the issue being specialized, together with any other data or information which bears upon the specialty itself. If a single stamp is the subject of the specialization, as in this case, not only would items bearing the picture of the subject be pertinent but also specimens of the signature of the person honored, as shown on his actual letters or on official documents.

In a study of the Black Jack we find that this collateral material is quite plentiful, and it adds much to the interest in the specialization of this particular stamp.

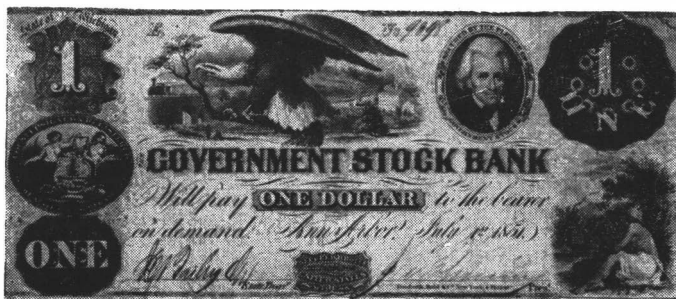


Fig. 4. \$1.00 Bank Note Showing Jackson.

The first use of which I can find any record of the same picture of Andrew Jackson as appears on the Black Jack was an even dozen years prior to its appearance on our first two cent stamp. The well-known firm of Danforth, Bald & Company prepared for the Government Stock Bank of Ann Arbor, Michigan a one dollar bank note which contains the same likeness of Andrew Jackson as appears on the stamp (Fig. 4), and notes of this issue bear as early a date as July 1, 1851, some nine years after Dodge painted the portrait, and six years after Jackson's death.

One of the most attractive of the bank notes bearing Jackson's likeness is the beautifully engraved three dollar bank note of the American Bank of Baltimore, Maryland, which was engraved in 1863, the year the stamp first appeared, by the National Bank Note Company, also the engravers of the Black Jack. This note



is illustrated herewith (Fig. 5), and an examination of it will disclose many other interesting details characteristic of the period: the old style locomotive, the church steeple in the distance, the carriage with horses waiting at the station, and other occupational scenes.



**Fig. 5. A \$3.00 Bank Note With Same Portrait As on Stamp.**

The other bank notes which bear the same likeness of Jackson as appears on the Black Jack are as follows:

\$5.00. Farmers Merchants Bank of Cecil County, Elkton, Maryland. (National Bank Note Co.) 1864.

\$5.00. The Mechanics Bank of Memphis, Tennessee. (Danforth, Wright & Co.) 1854.

\$3.00. Central Bank of Alabama, Montgomery. (Baldwin, Bald & Cousland.) 1853.

\$5.00. The Bank of America of Clarksville, Tennessee. (American Bank Note Co.)

\$1.00. The Mechanics Bank of Memphis, Tennessee. (Danforth, Wright & Co.) 1854.

\$5.00. Bank of the Ohio Savings Institute, of Tiffin, Ohio. (Danforth, Wright & Co.) 1855.

\$1,000.00. Confederate States of America, Montgomery, Alabama. (National Bank Note Co.) 1861.

\$1.00. Bank of East Tennessee, Knoxville. (Danforth, Wright & Co.) January 1, 1854.

\$5.00. The Southern Bank of Tennessee, Memphis, Tennessee (Danforth, Wright and Company) 1854.

\$10.00. The Cincinnati and Little Rock Slate Company, Little Rock, Ark. (Danforth, Wright and Company) 1855.

It will thus be seen that the National Bank Note Company, which produced the Black Jack, was not the only engraving firm having in its files this picture of Andrew Jackson.

Another secondary or collateral item is the two cent Confederate States stamp which was produced by Archer and Daly, of Richmond, Virginia, in May of 1863 (Fig. 6). This stamp has as its main design the same picture of Andrew Jackson as appears on the Black Jack, although it does not fill the entire tablet, as it does on our two cent stamp. This Confederate States stamp was engraved by Frederick Halpin, who was a Northerner and a well-known engraver, but who, early in the War, slipped

through the lines and entered the city of Richmond, where he engraved this stamp for the Confederate government. It was printed in brown-red but is subject to fading, with the result that many of the copies are not of the original brown-red color but are of a faded pale red. The paper is coarse and porous, and is almost buff in color. This stamp is catalogued much higher used than in its unused condition, probably due to its comparatively late appearance in the life of the Confederacy and the limited use of a two cent stamp under the postal regulations of The Confederate States.

Other very interesting collateral items are the memorial badges which were issued in memory of Andrew Jackson. The author has two distinct types of this badge, one of which is illustrated here (Fig. 7). These memorial badges are printed in black on white silk ribbon, but I have not been able to ascertain the exact purpose of their issuance nor the occasion or date upon which they appeared. The badge illustrated herewith shows the full portrait of Andrew Jackson, from which the vignette for the stamp was taken. The badge also pictures his old home, The Hermitage, and contains an appropriate poem.

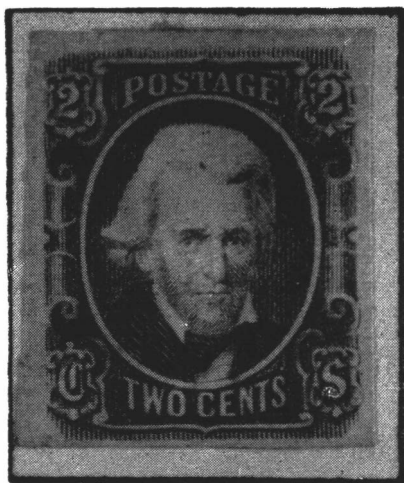


Fig. 6. 2c Confederate Stamp.

One of the most unusual of the collateral items, and the latest use of the Jackson picture that I have been able to find, is a snuff stamp produced in 1875 by the Continental Bank Note Company of New York. (Fig. 8). It is the only one of our revenue stamps to bear this picture of Jackson and is a beautifully engraved item. It is printed in black on green paper and is rich in its fine detail. The illustration here shown is a portion of the copy in the specialized Black Jack collection of Anthony C.

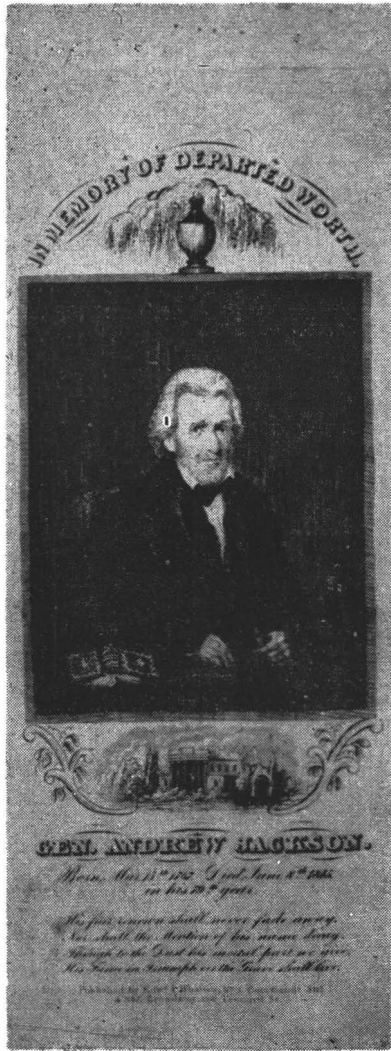
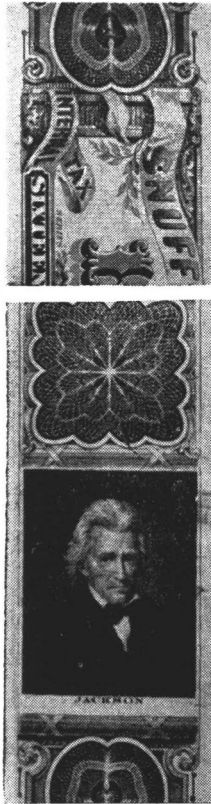


Fig. 7. Memorial Badge.

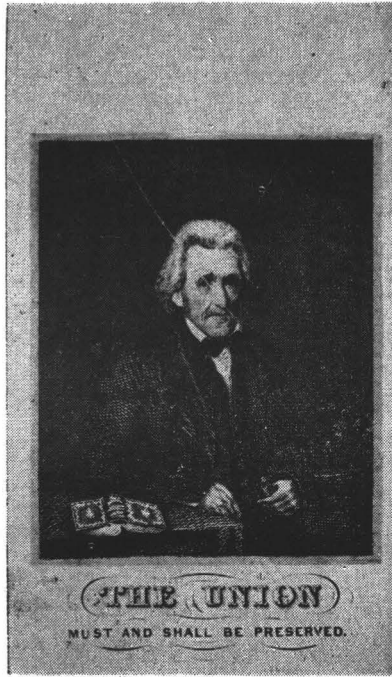
Russo of Chicago, who has kindly permitted me to photograph this most unusual item. I have recently been fortunate enough to secure a fine copy for my own collection.

Almost the entire picture of Jackson as painted in the miniature by Dodge is shown on the reverse side of a patriotic envelope illustrated here (Fig. 9). This unusual cover is also from the Russo collection and includes an adaptation of the famous quo-



**Fig. 8. Portion of Snuff Revenue Stamp.**

tation from Jackson's speech given at the first Jefferson Day dinner, on April 13, 1830, four years after Jefferson's death, at the famous Indian Queen Hotel in Washington. At this Jefferson Day dinner Jackson stunned the Southern Congressmen, many of whom had threatened secession because of the tariff of 1828, (The Tariff of "Abominations") by proposing the following toast: "Our Federal Union: It must be preserved."



**Fig. 9. Reverse Side of Envelope.**

After this chapter appeared as one in a series of articles on the Black Jack there was submitted to me for purchase the very plate used in the printing of the patriotic envelope here illustrated. It is made of a soft white metal, but has been covered by a preservative and appears to be in perfect condition. It seems almost incredulous that some eighty or eighty-five years after use that this plate should be found. You may be sure that I purchased same immediately and I consider it a most valuable collateral item in my collection of Jacksonia.

Other collateral material which is of interest are deeds and other documents signed by Andrew Jackson, some of which are in existence. These were signed by Jackson both while president and in his earlier days while presiding as a judge in some of the courts in the state of Tennessee. An interesting stampless cover, franked by Andrew Jackson in his own handwriting, and written just before he relinquished the Presidency, will be illustrated and discussed later in this chapter.

## AUTOGRAPH MATERIAL

Collateral material, which is always interesting to collectors who specialize in any single stamp, includes letters or documents signed by the person who is honored on the stamp itself. Fortunately there are copies of the handwriting of most of the persons who are depicted on the stamps of the United States. In the case of Andrew Jackson, our seventh president and the subject of the Black Jack, several specimens of his handwriting are in existence. He had been in public life for many years, both through his military exploits, which were numerous, and also as a judge in the courts of Tennessee. This was followed by eight years as president of the United States, and from these several periods in Jackson's life we have specimens of his handwriting.

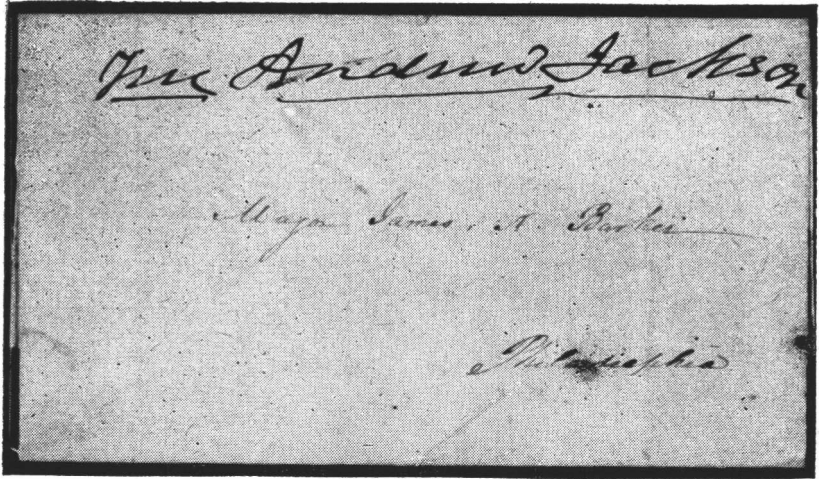
Jackson was elected president over John Quincy Adams in 1828 in what has been termed a "Revolt of the West." He was the first president to be elected from west of the Allegheny Mountains and his victory over Adams was hailed as a victory for "the people," as Jackson liked to term it.

Feeling that the government had for too many years been in the hands of the professional politicians, Jackson set about to return the government and the official positions to "the people." This resulted in such a turnover in public offices that Jackson is charged with starting what is known as the Spoils System, so named from the expression "To the victor belongs the spoils."

While it is true that there was a very large replacement of officialdom at Washington soon after Jackson became president, the real reason was not that he wanted to turn out the opposition but rather that he wanted to put the common people, as he thought, in office. This constant turnover in official positions upon the election of a new president, particularly if from an opposite political party, was finally corrected for the most part by the adoption of the Civil Service System, which is still in effect and which safeguards most government employees in their employment.

Supporting the claim that Jackson founded the Spoils System, and as documentary proof of his desire to reward his friends by good positions, the following letter is exhibited (Fig. 10). One interesting feature about the letter is that it contains the handwriting of two presidents of the United States, being franked by Andrew Jackson as president, and the letter itself having been written and addressed in long hand by James Buchanan, who later became the fifteenth president of the United States. Compared to his earlier signatures the handwriting of Andrew Jackson, as he franked this letter, shows his advancing years.

It is possibly unfair to exhibit this letter as proof of Jackson's desire to make a place for his friends in public office. It is well known that James Buchanan was a clever politician and having himself come from the state of Pennsylvania, and having represented the people of that state in Congress for several terms, it



**Fig. 10. Letter Franked by Andrew Jackson.**

is perfectly possible that the person to be rewarded by appointment to an office in the Custom House was a personal friend of Mr. Buchanan and not of Mr. Jackson, and that Buchanan prevailed upon the president to find a position for his, Buchanan's, friend.

In any event, the following letter has considerable interest from an historical standpoint as well as being a choice philatelic item. The letter reads as follows:

Dear Sir—

I have been requested by the President to say to you that it would give him much pleasure if you could confer upon the bearer, Mr. Bernard Maguire, some suitable situation in the Custom House, Philadelphia. The President has long known and highly esteemed him and he is desirous of having some provision made for him before his term of office expires. Mr. Maguire will carry with him ample testimonials to show that the President's good opinion is well founded.

From your friend,  
Very respectfully,  
James Buchanan.

Major James N. Barker.



## Chapter IV

### USE OF THE 2c JACKSON STAMP WITH THE DEMONETIZED ISSUES

At the outbreak of the Civil War the stamps of the 1851-57 issue were in use throughout the country, both North and South. Fort Sumter was fired upon on April 12, 1861, and the Civil War was on. Thus, property in the form of postage stamps and belonging to the Federal Government was suddenly found to be in the hands of the postmasters throughout the seceded states. Property of all kinds belonging to the Federal Government was taken over by the government of these seceding states or by the Confederacy itself. Such property included munitions, stores, forts, currency and would, of course, include postage stamps in the hands of the many postmasters throughout the southern states.

Seven of the southern states had already seceded before Fort Sumter was fired upon, but they continued to use the United States stamps. According to Luff, beginning in May of 1861 the Federal Government, through Post Office Department directives issued by Postmaster-General Montgomery Blair, demonetized both the adhesive stamps and the stamped paper in use at the time, which was the 1851-57 issue, offering to redeem all such stamps as would be returned immediately to the Department. This privilege of redemption was terminated early in 1863, it appearing that by then sufficient time had been allowed for all postmasters to return any of the demonetized issues that they may have had on hand.

Just how successful the demonetization was, as it affected the stamps in the hands of the postmasters in the seceded states, is not certain. Luff reports that several thousand complete sets were available after the War, and it is supposed that most of these unused stamps came from the stocks of the postmasters in the southern states, who had not surrendered them to the government in compliance with an order issued by the Postmaster-General of the Confederate States, John H. Reagan.

Because it was necessary to get out an entire new set to replace the demonetized issue it was not possible to place the new stamps in the hands of all postmasters immediately. Elliott Perry, who has made a special study of the demonetization of the 1851-57 issue, reports that the first supply of the new stamps was made available on August 16, 1861, in New York City. On the following day the postmaster at Baltimore received his supply. From then on, as the contractors could supply these stamps, the postmasters throughout the northern states received their supplies. At the same time they received the stamps they also received a directive from the Post Office Department which re-

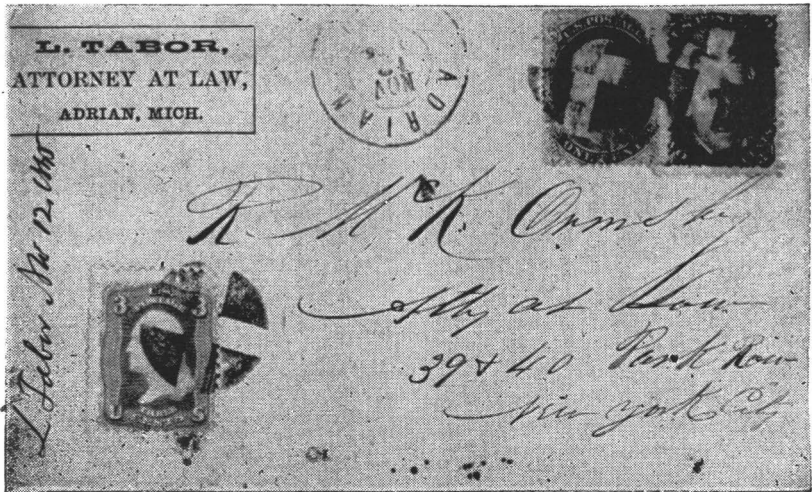


Fig. 11. Cover Showing 1c (Scott's 42F) Used With 2c Black Jack to Make 3c Rate.

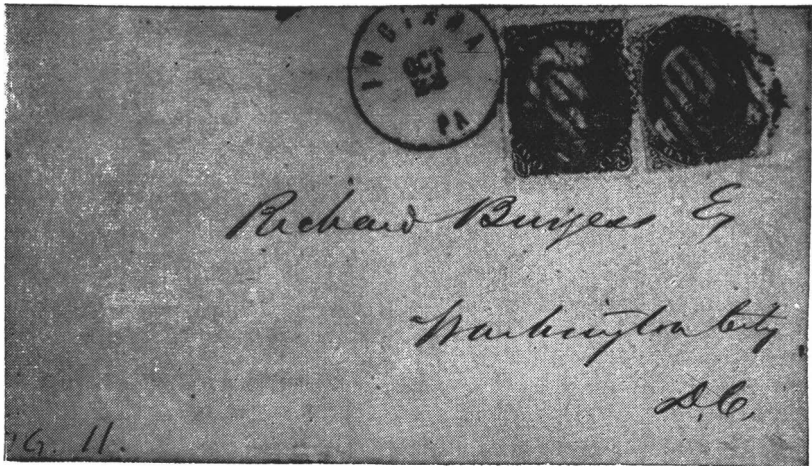


Fig. 12. Another Cover Similar to Fig. 11.

quired them to advertise that the old stamps could be turned in as exchange for the new stamps for a period of six days. Thereafter such stamps could not be used for mailing letters out of that office.

The directive also contained another provision as to incoming mail. The country was divided into three zones and postmasters were directed to accept and deliver mail on which the old stamps were used from these various zones up to a certain date. The last zone consisted of the states west of the Rocky Mountains, from which area the old stamps were acceptable up to January 1, 1862. Stanley Ashbrook, in his excellent work "The United States One-Cent Stamp of 1851-57," has collected much of the material resulting from the research of Elliott Perry, which first appeared in "Pat's Paragraphs." From this it appears that the new stamps were not delivered to postmasters by zones, at all, and in some cases one postmaster would receive the new stamps two months before a neighboring postmaster might receive his. The whole procedure resulted in considerable confusion, but after January 1, 1862 none of the demonetized stamps were acceptable as postage anywhere in the country.

It can thus be seen that by the time the Black Jack appeared, July 6, 1863, none of the 1851-57 stamps were legally acceptable for postage. In fact, postmasters were specifically instructed to regard all mail as unpaid if it was franked by that issue of stamps. Any use of the Black Jack, therefore, must have been some two years after the outbreak of the War, and at least a year and a half after the last order was issued by the Post Office Department rendering these stamps valueless for postage.

The latest use of the Black Jack with a demonetized stamp that I have found is on a cover dated November 13, 1865, (Fig. 11), over four years after the demonetization. It is a first class letter, requiring the ordinary three cents postage. The cover is most interesting. It originated in Adrian, Michigan, and was addressed to New York City. In addition to the Black Jack, it bears a copy of the demonetized Scott's No. 42F to make up the three cent rate, both stamps being tied together and then to the cover by a neat quartered-circle cancellation. Somewhere en-route, either at the point of origin, which would appear more probable, or at the office of delivery, the insufficiency of the postage, because of the use of a demonetized one cent stamp, was discovered, and an acceptable three cent stamp was affixed to the letter. The cancellations upon the original postage and on the added three cent stamp appear to be identical, so it is fair to presume the error was discovered in Adrian and new postage paid and affixed at that point.

In connection with this particular cover it is interesting to note that additional postage of two cents would have been sufficient, as the Black Jack was legal postage at the time. These interesting circumstances, together with the further fact that

the cover contains a nice corner card, make it unusually interesting and rare.

Another attractive cover showing the use of the Black Jack with a demonetized stamp is shown in Fig. 12. The Black Jack is especially well centered, is tied by the clearly struck town mark of Indiana, Pennsylvania, and is tied to the demonetized one cent stamp of 1857 by a neat grid cancellation. Why this underpayment of the three cent rate was not discovered, especially at the office of delivery, the capitol of our nation, is difficult to understand. The use in this particular case was at least two full years after the one cent stamp had been demonetized. Although no year date is shown in the cancellation, it does show October 23, and as the Black Jack did not appear until July of 1863, the letter could not have been mailed earlier than October 23, 1863, so two full years and possibly more elapsed before this cover went through the mails.

At the time of demonetization there was a one cent stamped envelope, designed for drop letters, which had been in use for less than a year, having been issued in October of 1860. Some students refer to this as the one cent "star" envelope. For some reason this stamped envelope was not demonetized but continued in use until it was replaced by the Black Jack stamped envelope in 1863. An example of this one cent star envelope, used with the Black Jack, is here shown (Fig. 13), both struck by a beautiful grid cancellation and carrying the New York town mark with the month-of-issue of the Black Jack cancellation, July, 1863. Any month-of-issue cover of the Black Jack is a rare item and when coupled with the one cent star envelope it makes a very interesting and attractive cover.

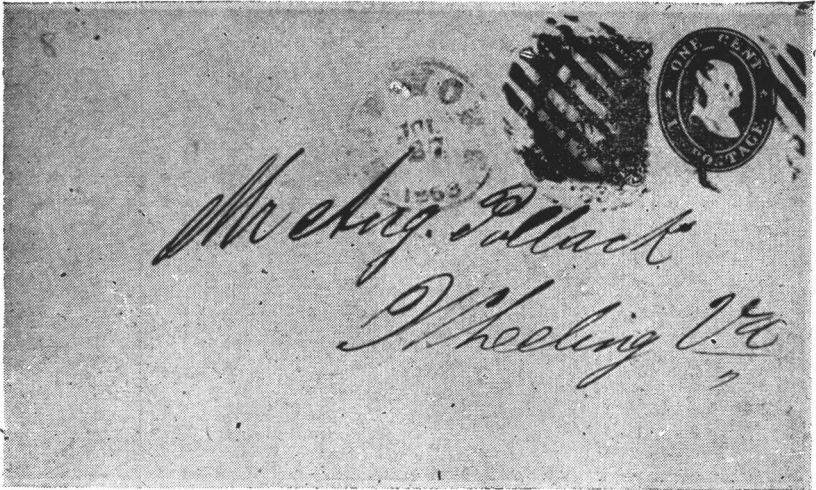


Fig. 13. A 2c Black Jack Used With 1c 1863 Envelope to Make Up 3c Rate.

## Chapter V

### THE NORTH ILESBORO COVER

One of the pleasant and satisfying by-products of philately is the willingness and desire of other collectors to share with you the results of their study and the enjoyment of their choice items. Without this refreshing spirit of cooperation this book would not be possible, nor would most of the books on philately be published. This willingness to cooperate reminds me of the "North Islesboro" cover.

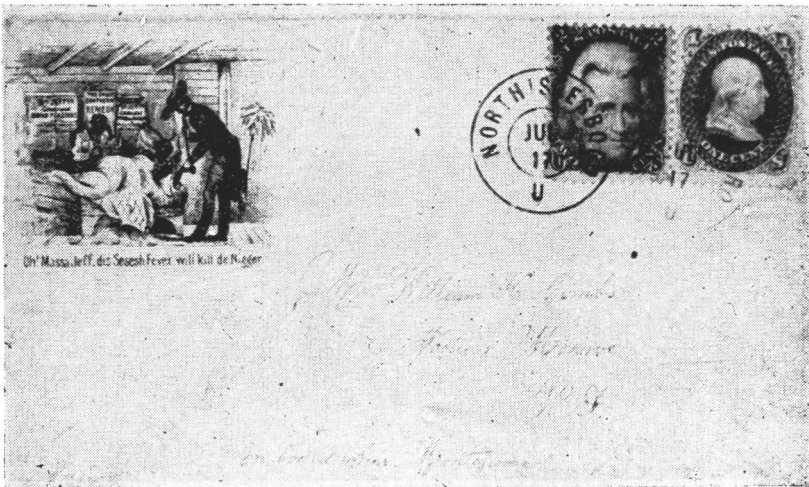


Fig. 14. "North Islesboro" Cover.

A few years ago I added to my collection a most interesting item and one that is probably unique (Fig. 14). It was successively in the collections of William S. White and John W. Thorne. The cover itself is one of the rarest caricature patriotics, Laurence No. 993. The envelope is buff in color and the illustration is in black. It pictures "Jeff" Davis attending a sick negro, and underneath the picture is the comment, "Oh! Massa Jeff, dis Sesesh Fever will kill de Nigger."

The letter is franked by one copy each of the Black Jack and the one cent stamp of the 1861 issue, (Scott's No. 63) to make up the regular three cent rate, always an interesting combination. It is addressed through Fortress Monroe, Virginia, to one Wm. R. Combs "on board Schr. Montezuma."

But it is neither the patriotic design nor the postage combination that makes this so intriguing a cover. Rather it is the town marking that elicits our interest, "North Islesboro, U.," once lightly and once perfectly struck in bright blue, and both tying the stamps to the cover.

Where was "North Islesboro, U."? One would naturally conclude that the "U" of the town marking stood for Utah, which began to be colonized late in the '40's, although it was not admitted to the Union until 1896, as our forty-fifth state.

An examination of the Post Office Directory for 1863, the year of issue of the Black Jack, lists only one post office by the name of North Islesboro, that in Waldo County, Maine. The Directory at the close of the Black Jack period, that of 1868, again lists only this one office of that name, though now come of age as "North Islesborough."

The natural conclusion would therefore be that this was after all a Maine cover and that there was some special significance to the "U" in the marking. At about this same time Sterling T. Dow's splendid "Maine Postal History and Post Marks" appeared, so I immediately contacted Mr. Dow to see if he might have an explanation of this marking, as it seemed quite certain by now that the only North Islesboro was located in Maine.

An interesting correspondence with Mr. Dow and others resulted from my inquiry. Both he and the late Dr. George D. Chase, retired dean of Graduate Study of the University of Maine and a student of Maine postmarks, have personally examined this cover. Mr. Dow is of the opinion that the cover did not originate in Utah. Dr. Chase, on the other hand, had a logical and interesting explanation of the origin of the cover, although he admitted that there is not a great deal in fact to support this position.

Dr. Chase stated that there was a strong group of Mormons in the '60's in North Islesboro, Maine, and that there was much migration to the West at that time. The presumption is that these Maine settlers went to Utah and there named the new settlement after the old Maine home town, as was so common in the settlement of all of the states of the West. One of these Maine settlers in Utah apparently had a male relative in the naval service on the "Montezuma," off Fortress Monroe, and this letter was written under such circumstances.

This explanation seems to be as logical as any, yet there is not a great deal in fact to support it. Why a post office by the name of North Islesboro, in Utah, if one actually was in existence, even though for only a short period, was not listed in the official post office directory is difficult to explain.

It is just such a question as this that makes cover collecting, as compared to the collection of off-cover stamps, so fascinating. The cover, with its various postal marks, tells so much more of the story than does the single stamp, and provokes so much study and research in other fields, that cover collecting has now become one of the most popular phases of philately.

Naturally I am very anxious to have any information which will throw any light upon the source of the cover illustrated herein. Anyone having any information or suggestions will surely confer upon me a service if they communicate such to me.

## Chapter VI

### DIE AND PLATE PROOFS

The general subject of Proofs as it applies to Philately is very definitely a specialty, and should be treated only by an expert. In fact, it is so specialized a study that students of proofs have formed their own organization, known as the Essay Proof Society, and their studies have contributed much to philately.

Because the study of proofs is a speciality I shall make no attempt to do anything except briefly list and describe the proofs related to the Black Jack. These could be grouped as follows: Die Proofs, Trial Color Proofs, and Plate Proofs.

In Scott's United States Stamp Catalogue proofs are defined as "trial printings of a stamp made from the original die or the finished plate." This definition is sufficient for the purpose of this discussion.

Advertisements for bids for new issues of stamps frequently invited the submission of Proofs in "trial" colors, in order that the Postmaster General might make a selection from a variety of colors and shades. This plan was followed in the letting of the contract for the printing of the Black Jack, as previously mentioned in an earlier chapter. Scott's Specialized Catalogue lists the following eleven trial color proofs of the Black Jack: light blue, dull chalky blue, green, olive green, dull yellow, vermilion, scarlet, dull red, dull rose, brown and gray-black.

Most of the trial color proofs of the Black Jack are on India paper. This is a soft, porous paper and the result after the imprint is a soft color, approaching a pastel. I have found these color proofs, because of the soft and loose texture of the India paper upon which they were printed, very vulnerable to damage and discoloration. The face of these proofs can be easily damaged by even casual contact with a rough surface which would not affect the ordinary printed stamps.



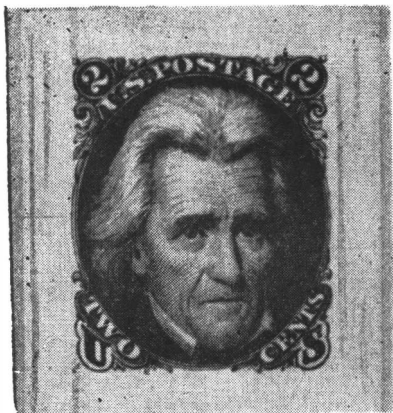
Fig. 15. Plate Proof on India.



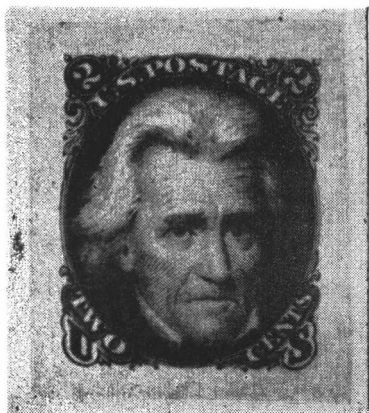
Die proofs are divided into "large" and "small" die proofs, so denominated because of the size of the paper upon which they were printed. As the name indicates, "die" proofs are single impressions, made from the die itself, as contrasted to "plate" proofs, which are printed from the full plate after the process of transferring the subjects from the die to the plate by means of the transfer roll has been completed. We find both small and large die proofs of the Black Jack, as well as plate proofs both on India paper and on a light white cardboard. A plate proof block of fourteen on India paper, formerly in the Southgate collection, is shown in Fig. 15. Generally speaking, proofs show the fine detail of the engraving much more clearly than do the stamps themselves.

Illustrated here are two rare die proofs which were made for specific purposes. The first is known as the "Roosevelt" die, so named because it was printed during the administration of Theodore Roosevelt in 1904.

Eighty-five sets of die proofs of all of our early stamps were prepared by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. They were printed on white wove paper, mounted in albums, and presented



**Fig. 16. Cardboard Die Proof Showing Engraver's Marks.**



**Fig. 17. Rare Die Proof.**

to officials and prominent persons during Theodore Roosevelt's administration, suggestive of the famous Farley imperfs. The stamps were mounted on gray cardboard and the copy illustrated here (Fig. 16) shows this gray cardboard around the edges of the die proof. The marks of the engraver on this proof are also very noticeable.

The second die proof illustrated here (Fig. 17) is an extremely rare item and is probably one of only three in existence. In 1912, under orders issued by the Postmaster General, all stamps, proofs, revenues and other similar items in the Post Office De-

partment were turned over to the United States National Museum for the purpose of making a special exhibit of United States stamps for the San Francisco Exposition, sometimes known as the Panama-Pacific Exposition. In order to comply with the instructions from the Post Office Department it was found necessary to order a special printing of die proofs from the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. It was understood that only two sets of these proofs were issued, one for the San Francisco exhibition and the other for the United States National Museum, known as the Smithsonian Institution. Joseph B. Leavy, former philatelist at the Museum, prepared an article on this special printing for the Philatelic Gazette, which article appeared in the June, 1915 issue (Pages 117-125). In this article Mr. Leavy states that there were only two sets printed and this statement was never questioned until the famous Southgate collection was sold. Brookman, in his work on the United States stamps of 1847, also refers to only two sets of the printing of this proof, but there is now no question but that at least a third set was printed. The die proof here illustrated was in the Southgate collection, but is now in the author's collection.

According to Leavy, the Black Jack proof of this special printing was printed from the original die engraved by the National Bank Note Company. It is on a dark cream colored India paper, and examination under glass shows many of the engraver's marks, such as the corner dots, the lines along the side and other marks used in the engraving of this stamp.

A rather unusual set of proofs in colors was prepared for display at the International Cotton Exhibition in Atlanta, Georgia in 1881. These proofs were printed on a thin card and resemble somewhat the trial color proofs, although the card is heavier than the India paper proofs. These color proofs, which are generally known as "Atlanta" proofs, after the city in which they were first exhibited, are in black, scarlet, brown, green and blue, and are attractive items.

As far as I have been able to ascertain, there are no other proofs of the Black Jack except as described herein.

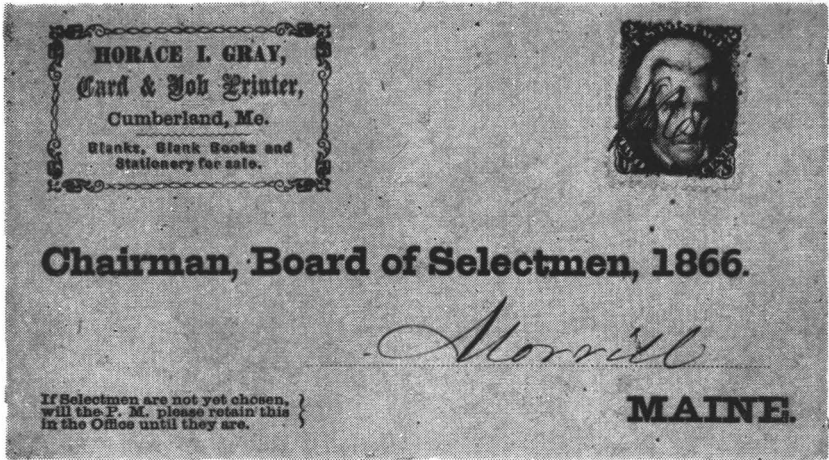


Fig. 18. Cover Showing Printed Address (Except Town).

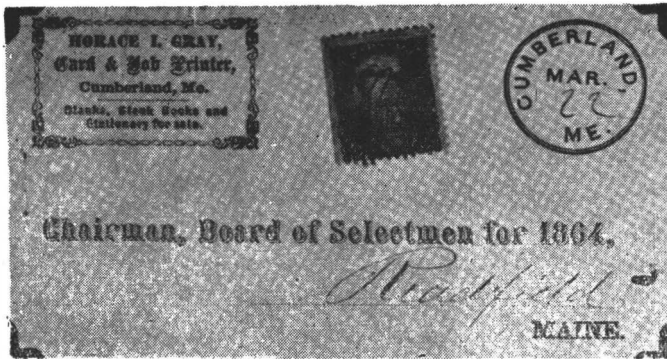


Fig. 19. Printed Precancel Not Applied on Stamp.

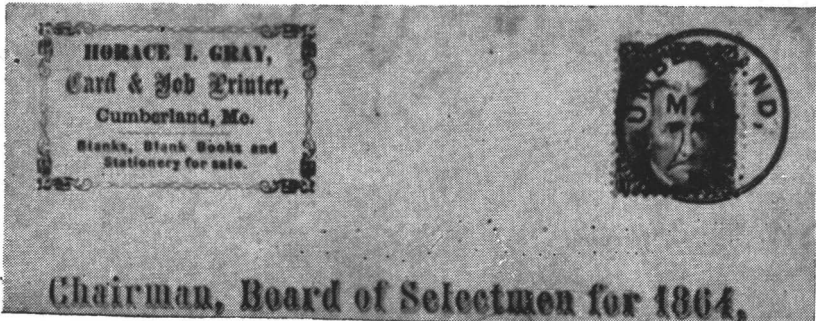


Fig. 20. Same Printed on Stamp.

## Chapter VII

### PRECANCELLING OF THE 2 CENT BLACK JACK STAMP

Students of the subject are not in complete agreement as to which of our postage stamps was first precancelled. Some contend that the earliest precancel in our postal history appears on our very first stamp, the five-cent stamp of 1847. There is much dispute, however, as to whether the "Wheeling Grid," which appears on this stamp, is actually a precancel or merely a control mark. It is a proven fact that this grid was struck on the stamp **before** use, but it seems just as certain that such stamps were also cancelled **after** being affixed to the cover, thus to some extent negating the claim that it is really a precancel. The several opinions of the students of this subject are thoroughly summarized by Brookman in his recent work "The 1847 Issue of United States Stamps," which subject matter he has also included in his later work, "The 19th Century Postage Stamps of the United States" (Chapter VI, page 64).

The next precancel, if we accept the Wheeling Grid as a precancel, was probably that of Cumberland, Maine. Sterling T. Dow, in his very fine work, "Maine Postal History and Postmarks," describes and illustrates five distinct types of this printed precancel, which he describes as "the earliest undisputed precancels in the United States."

The story of the Cumberland precancels is very interesting and I borrow freely from Dow in telling it. Horace I. Gray was a "Card and Job Printer" located in Cumberland, Maine. His corner card advertises "Stocks, Blank Books and Stationery for sale." All of the known Cumberland precancels are on covers from only two firms, that of Gray himself and the Portland firm of Sanborn & Carter. Dow suggests that Gray did the printing for the firm of Sanborn & Carter, together with the mailing, thus accounting for the Cumberland precancel on the Portland firm's mail.

Five distinct types of the Cumberland precancel are known. The two earliest types are described and thoroughly illustrated by Stanley B. Ashbrook in his fine book "The United States One Cent Stamp of 1851-57."

Only the last type, the double-circle cancellation, has been found on the Black Jack, the four other types having become obsolete by the time this two cent stamp appeared in 1863.

The interesting thing about the Cumberland precancel is that, as far as can be determined, it was printed on the cover, along with the corner card and the name of the addressee, **after** the stamp had been affixed. In other words, a plain envelope, with stamp affixed, was put through the printing press and the

cancellation was printed on the stamp, and the corner card, and as much as possible of the address, was printed on the envelope, all in the same process.

I have in my collection three of the Horace I. Gray covers bearing the Black Jack, all of which have the name of the addressee printed on them, in each case the "Chairman, Board of Selectmen," and one of which is here illustrated (Fig. 18). They are also year-dated in the printing, 1865, 1866, and 1869. Unfortunately, none of the three has the Cumberland precancellation, and Mr. Dow indicates that the last, or fifth type of cancellation, was used only from 1862 to 1864, thus accounting for **their absence on covers after 1864**. In correspondence with Mr. Dow, subsequent to the appearance of his book, he suggests this absence of the precancellation of Cumberland on the Gray letters subsequent to 1864 is attributable to the fact that after the year of 1864 the postmark was not required on unsealed mail. I have seen advertised and illustrated in an auction an 1864 Gray cover addressed to Readfield, Maine, and bearing the Black Jack, but with the precancellation printed entirely on the cover and not on the stamp itself. (Fig. 19).

Mr. Stephen G. Rich, the well-known student of early Americana, has written a very illuminating article on the Cumberland, Maine, precancels. The article appeared in "Stamps" under date of August 28, 1943, pages 305 and 306. He describes the fifth type of Cumberland cancellation as being a 28 millimeter circle, with double border. He, too, advances the suggestion made by Dow that the plain stamped envelope was placed in the printing press and that the corner card, as much of the address as possible, and the cancellation, were all printed by the same process, so both Rich and Dow seem to be in agreement as to this detail regarding the Cumberland precancels.

In the Readfield cover above mentioned the Black Jack is placed in the upper middle of the cover, whereas the Cumberland postmark is in the upper right-hand corner of the cover. Had the stamp itself been affixed to the envelope where stamps are usually placed, that is, in the upper right-hand corner, the printed precancel would have struck the stamp, which bears out the theory which has been advanced that the stamps were affixed to the envelope before the printing process was begun.

In the Rich article above referred to there appears a fine illustration of the fifth type of Cumberland precancellation, which completely ties the Black Jack. This is one of the 1864 Gray covers, proving the Dow statement that the fifth type of the Cumberland precancel was used as late as 1864. Through the kindness of Mr. Rich, who has sent me a photograph of his interesting cover, I am able to illustrate it herewith. (Fig. 20). As far as I have been able to ascertain this is the only Black Jack cover in existence in which the Cumberland precancel ties the stamp to the cover.

A very definite and authenticated precancel on the Black

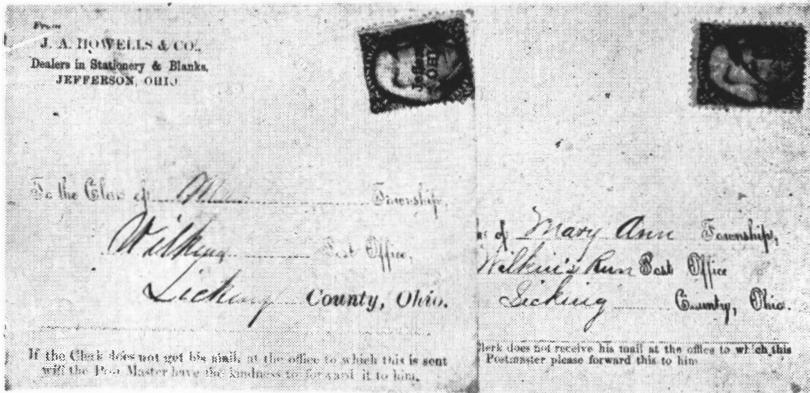


Fig. 21. A Jefferson, Ohio, Precancel Use.

Jack is that of Jefferson, Ohio. This is recognized by precancel specialists as a genuine and authentic precancel and is here illustrated (Fig. 21). It is rather significant that this precancel also appears on the advertising covers, as did the Cumberland precancels, of a printing firm, one J. A. Howells & Company, "Dealers in Stationery and Blanks." Like the Horace I. Gray covers, the Jefferson, Ohio letters are also addressed to public officials who would likely be in need of official forms. The precancellation is on the stamp at an angle, indicating that the stamp was not precancelled before it was affixed to the envelope. What probably happened was that the stamps were affixed, as in the Cumberland covers, and then the cancellation printed on it, as the two words "Jefferson" and "Ohio" are substantially square with the side of the envelope and had the stamp been affixed to the cover squarely the precancellation would also have been struck squarely on the stamp, although at right angle to the other printing on the envelope. Unlike the Cumberland covers, however, a comparison of the several printed portions of the cover and the precancel indicates that the printing was not all done with the same impression. Mr. Rich, with whom I have had some correspondence concerning the matter, is of the opinion that the Jefferson precancel was applied by a hand stamp, though on the one copy I have examined the impression is too deep and clear cut to have been applied in that manner. It is also reasonable to conclude that a printing firm would print, rather than hand stamp, any cancellation on its stamps.

A cover from the same firm, with the Black Jack cancelled in manuscript, is shown for comparative purposes.

A third possible precancel to be found on the Black Jack is reported by Anthony C. Russo, the Chicago specialist of the Black Jack. Mr. Russo prepared a very interesting article on this suggested manuscript precancel, which article appeared in the

**Chicago Sun.** His reasoning was that the two cent stamp during this period was used largely for drop letters and that persons having such letters to mail would bring them to the office and leave two cents with the clerk, who would then affix the stamp. Russo's suggestion is that some ingenious clerk, seeking to save time, used a ruler and drew both a diagonal and perpendicular panned line through each stamp on the sheet, and then as persons left drop letters for mailing he would merely affix one of the stamps already cancelled. I have never seen, to my knowledge, a Black Jack with this cancellation, although it is reported that since Mr. Russo's article appeared several have been located. As far as I know, none has been found on cover and it would be interesting to find such a cover, as it would have a great deal to do with either substantiating or repudiating the Russo theory.

Stephen G. Rich, who was formerly editor of "The Precancel Bee," now "The Precancel Optimist," and is recognized as an authority on precancels, has listed as another possible precancel on the Black Jack a three millimeter horizontal black bar, which is on a stamp in the Black Jack collection of Ignatz Reiner, the New York specialist in this stamp, but neither this item nor the Russo manuscript item above is sufficiently proven to be a precancel to justify the statement that they are actually precancelled stamps. This would leave the Cumberland, Maine and the Jefferson, Ohio precancels as the only authenticated precancels on the Black Jack.

## Chapter VIII

### NUMEROUS EXAMPLES EXIST SHOWING REVENUE USAGE

As an aid in defraying the cost of the Civil War the government issued several series of revenue stamps, so denominated because they were intended to raise "revenue." The first series of these stamps was produced by the Philadelphia firm of Butler & Carpenter, and although the original contract was to run for one year from October 1, 1862, the first stamps were actually delivered four days earlier, September 27, 1862.

Despite these distinct and separate sets of adhesive stamps which were designed and printed for use as revenue stamps we find that the postage stamps in use during the same period were sometimes used in their place. The Black Jack was so used on occasion.

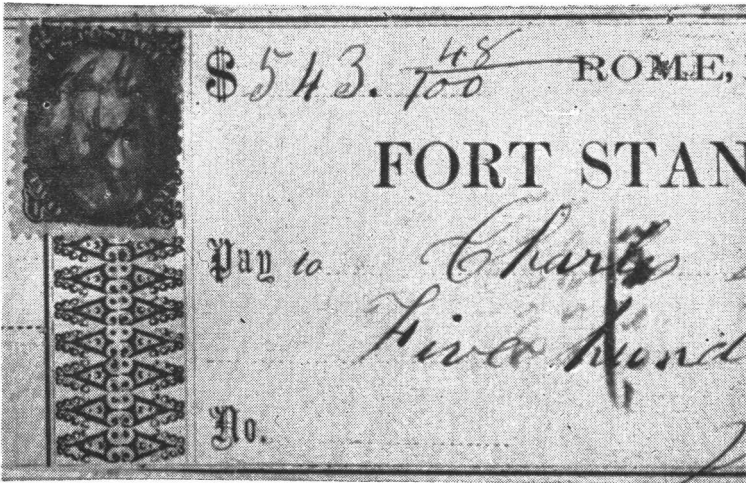


Fig. 22. Used As a Revenue Stamp.

Christopher West has compiled an interesting book on the "United States Revenue Stamps," first printed by the publishers of Mekeel's Weekly thirty-one years ago, 1918. Twenty years before that, 1899, Hiram E. Deats, Alexander Holland, and George L. Toppan had compiled a very comprehensive work on United States revenues, commonly called "The Boston Revenue Book," from which West borrowed freely, with the authors' permission. Much of the specific data as to rates submitted here is from the West book.

The use of revenue stamps was first required by the Act of



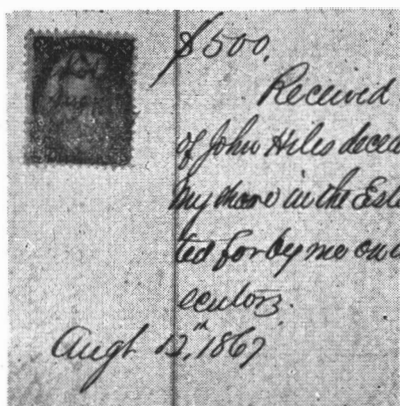


Fig. 23. Revenue Use.

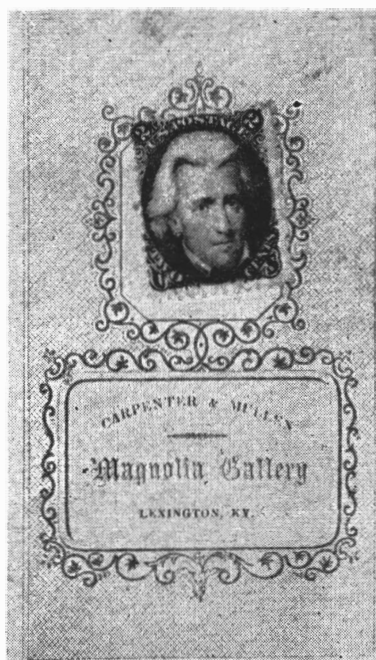


Fig. 24. Used On Photograph.

July 1, 1862. Under the provisions of this act legal instruments and "medicines and preparations, pills, plasters, perfumeries and cosmetics" were required to bear the stamps, the amount usually being determined by the value involved. Under this first act bank checks or drafts for Twenty Dollars or over, payable on sight or on demand, were subject to a tax of two cents. (Fig. 22).

The Act of March 3, 1863, which took immediate effect, made certain changes in the law, but did not change this particular rate as to sight or demand paper, although it did make changes as to time paper. Memos, checks, receipts and other evidences of an amount of money to be paid upon demand, or at a time designated, "shall be taxed as promissory notes."

West took his tax schedules from "A Manual of The District and Excise Tax System of The United States," which was published by Little, Brown & Co., of Boston, in 1863. The 1863 schedule provided for the payment of a one cent tax on any promissory note up to \$200.00, payable in thirty-three days; for each \$200.00 or fraction thereon, from thirty-four to sixty-four days, a two cent tax; and so on. The Act of 1864 fixed the tax at two cents on each receipt for over Twenty Dollars (Fig. 23), and although this had been the tax on receipts previously it was the first time receipts had been separated from checks, memos,

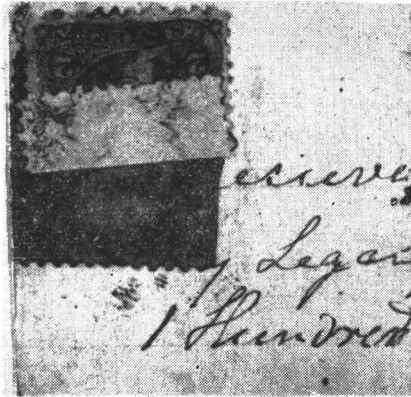


Fig. 25. Revenue Stamp Applied Over 2c Black Jack.

and other instruments and had been given a classification of their own.

The Revenue Act of June 30, 1864 added new items to be taxed, including photographs, and "friction matches and lucifers." In the case of photographs retailing up to twenty-five cents, the tax was two cents (Fig. 24), and on those retailing from twenty-five to fifty cents, the tax was three cents, with a tax of five cents on photographs retailing from fifty cents to one dollar.

The use of our postage stamps as revenues surely was not in-

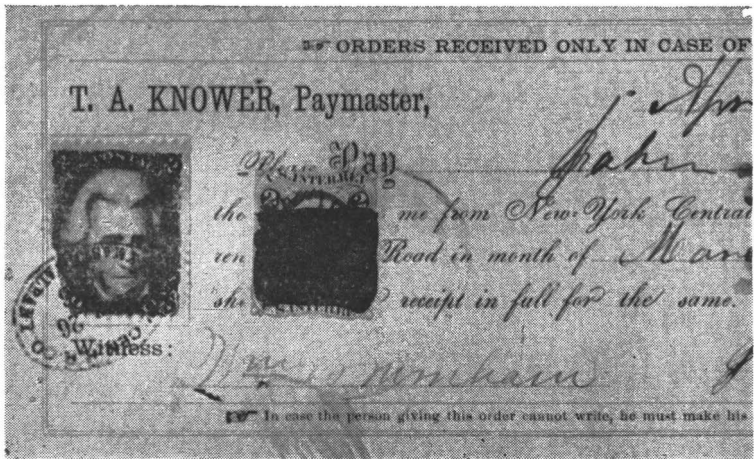


Fig. 26. The Black Jack Did Not Pay the Tax and Regular Revenue Stamp Applied Later.

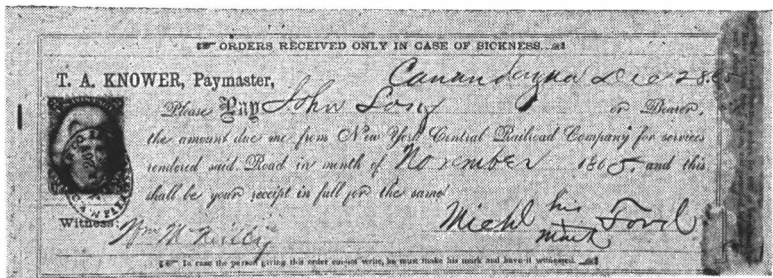


Fig. 27. The Stamp Paid Tax on This One.

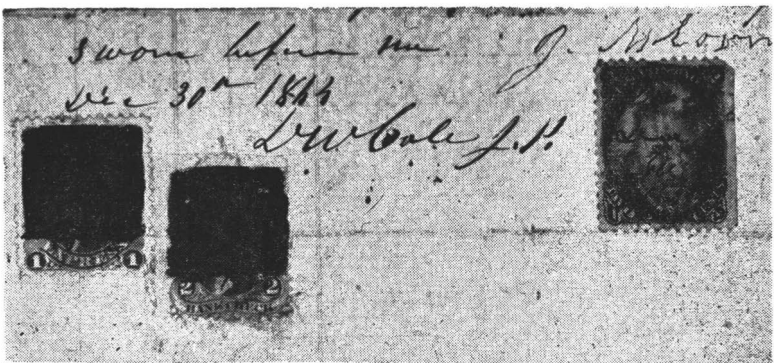
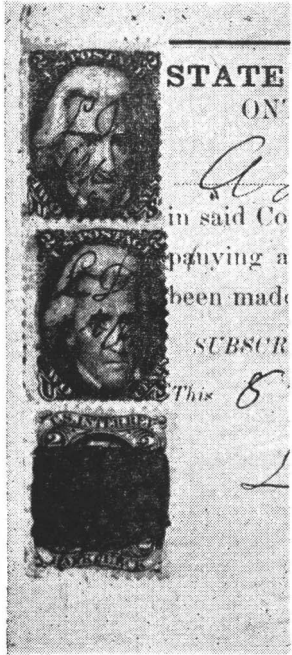


Fig. 28. Revenue Stamps Were Added to Pay Tax.

tended originally nor was it authorized by law. The revenue law provided that each stamp should indicate upon its face the nature of the paper or instrument to which it was to be affixed, such as Playing Cards, Bank Checks, Mortgages, Leases, etc. This requirement of the law manifestly could not be met by the use of our ordinary postage stamps. If detected, the postage stamp was not recognized, and the postage stamp was either covered over by an appropriate revenue stamp (Fig. 25), or an actual revenue stamp was also affixed to the instrument and the postage stamps thus ignored (Fig. 26). Revenue stamps have been defaced to comply with Federal stamp illustration law. The law required these revenue stamps to be cancelled by the initials of the user, together with the date of cancellation, and most of our postage stamps which were used as revenue stamps



**Fig. 29. Another Example of Revenue Stamp Added.**

are found cancelled in this manner. Much rarer, both as to revenue stamps themselves as well as postage stamps used as revenues, are those cancelled by hand stamp (Fig. 27).

Under the rates established by the Act of March 3, 1863, the tax on Certificates, which had been ten cents under the Act of 1862, was reduced to five cents. Two such Certificates are here illustrated, one with two separate revenues used with a single



**Fig. 30. 1c Express Revenue Stamp Did Not Pay Postage Duty.**

Black Jack (Fig. 28), the other with one revenue and two Black Jacks (Fig. 29). The latter shows an overpayment of one cent, and is an 1863 item, therefore a year-of-issue item as to the Black Jack.

Of still rarer usage than postage stamps as revenues is the use of revenue stamps for letter postage. A most unusual use of a one cent Express revenue stamp with one copy of the Black Jack to make up the three cent rate on a first class letter is here shown (Fig. 30). The letter originated in Grass Lake, Michigan, and was addressed to Saline. The error was apparently detected, as indicated by the manuscript "Due 2."

An explanation as to why there was two cents due, instead of one cent to replace the one cent revenue stamp, is found in the legal requirement which provided that where an illegal stamp was used twice the amount of postage would be required to replace the illegal stamp. The law in effect at the time provided that letters attempted to be sent by illegal postage must be sent to the dead letter office, a fate which legally should have befallen, but fortunately did not befall, this particular letter, thus preserving for philately a most interesting item.

The instruments and articles upon which the Black Jack was used as a revenue are confined substantially to those above mentioned and illustrated. This is explained by the fact that most legal instruments in use during the period required a much larger tax, such as mortgages, leases, bonds, conveyances and similar instruments. It is to be expected, therefore, that we only find the Black Jack used as a revenue upon those instruments which required a two cent tax, or a tax which could be paid by one or two two-cent stamps.

The use of postage stamps as revenues is so fascinating a study that some collectors have a highly specialized collection of these rarities.

## Chapter IX

### THE VARIOUS USES AS A SINGLE STAMP

There were several distinct uses of the Black Jack. The use of this two cent stamp in combination with other stamps will be treated later in a separate chapter, but for the present we shall limit our discussion to its use as a single stamp only.

As has been previously stated, the Black Jack was issued originally and primarily to meet the need which arose when the prepaid fee for drop letters was fixed at two cents, including carrier fees, which were abolished as such. (Act of March 3, 1863). The act provided (Sec. 17) that all drop letters should be prepaid, which prepayment was a requirement as to drop letters which had already been added by the Act of 1861, payment in cash upon receipt by the addressee having been possible until the passage of that act. The 1863 Act further provided that such prepayment must be by "stamps affixed to the envelope."

This act, in Section 23, makes provision for this class of letter, that is, the drop letter, as follows:

#### Section 23.

"And be it further enacted, That the rate of postage on all letters not transmitted through the mails of the United States, but delivered through the post office, or its carriers, commonly described as local or drop letters, and not exceeding one-half ounce in weight, shall be uniform at two cents; and an additional rate for each half ounce or fraction thereof of additional weight, to be in all cases prepaid by postage stamps affixed to the envelope of such letters; but no extra postage or carrier's fee shall hereafter be charged or collected on letters delivered by carrier, nor upon letters collected by them for mailing or for delivery"

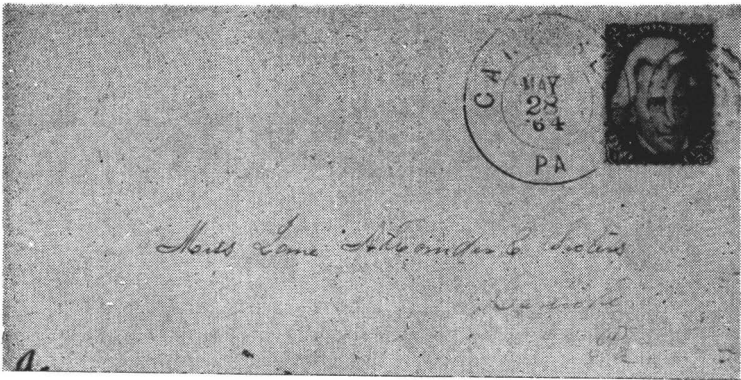
By the provision of Section 14 of the Act of February 27, 1861 all postmasters were instructed to return to the Dead Letter Office, as often as "once a week," all drop letters which were not **prepaid**. It can thus be seen, first because of the increase of the drop letter rate to two cents and the further requirement that such letters should be prepaid with stamps affixed to the envelope, that there was a very definite need for this two cent stamp for drop or local letters. A typical drop letter is illustrated here, (Fig. 31a) bearing the dated town marking of Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and addressed to a local resident.

The Act of 1863 divided mailable matter into three classes (Section 19), "First, letters; second, regular printed matter; third, miscellaneous matter."

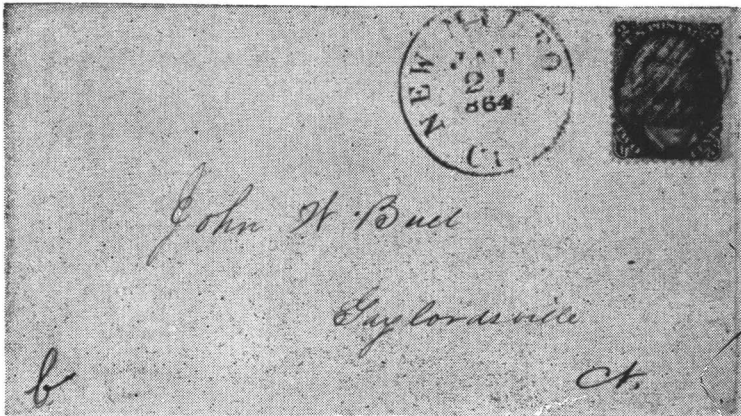
These classes were further defined in Section 20, as follows:

**Section 20.**

"The first class embraces all correspondence, wholly or partly in writing, except that mentioned in the third class. The second-class embraces all mailable matter exclusively in print, and regularly issued at stated periods, without addition by writing, mark or sign. The third class embraces all other matter which is or may hereafter be by law declared mailable; embracing all pamphlets, occasional publications, books, book manuscripts and proof sheets; whether corrected or not, maps, prints, . . . seeds, cuttings, bulbs, roots and scions."



**Fig. 31a.** Cover With 2c Black Jack Showing Drop Letter Rate.



**Fig. 31b.** Cover showing Second or Third-Class Usage.

The rate of postage for second-class and third-class mail, as above described, is set forth in sections 34, 35 and 36.

**Section 34 Provides:**

“And be it further enacted, That the rate of postage upon transient mailable matter of the second class, and also on all mailable miscellaneous matter of the third class (except circulars and books), shall be two cents for each four ounces, or fraction thereof, contained in any one package to one address; and such postage shall in all cases be fully prepaid by stamps, plainly affixed to the wrapper thereof . . . Unsealed circulars, not exceeding three in number, shall pass at the single rate of two cents . . . No extra postage shall be charged for a card printed or impressed upon an envelope or wrapper. These rates must in all cases be prepaid in stamps.”

Many, possibly most, of the covers extant bearing a single Black Jack fall into the second or third classes of mail, as defined by the Act of 1863. Unless the contents of the envelope are still available, the presumption in regard to covers **going through the mail**, that is, from one post office to another, and bearing a single Black Jack, is that they are really second or third-class mail, although they appear on the surface to be first-class letters. Illustrated herewith is such a letter. (Fig. 31b). From all appearances this looks like a first-class letter, similar to that in the previous illustration, but the fact that it was mailed at one city, New Haven, and addressed to another city, Gaylordsville, in an entirely different county, thus necessitating its “going through the mail,” would indicate that the contents are printed, rather than written, and therefore subject to the second or third-class mail rate.

The law further provided that the second and third-classes of mail must be so wrapped or so enveloped with open sides or ends as to enable the postmaster to examine the package without destroying the wrapper. Section 40 gave the postmaster the right to remove the wrapper or envelope to ascertain if there was anything contained which would require a higher rate of postage.

To conceal or enclose a letter (written) or other things, except bills or receipts, in 2nd class mail, subjected the sender to a fine of Five Dollars for each offense, and the payment of regular letter postage (Section 22, Postal Regulations, Summarizing the Act of February 27, 1861.)

Probably the most extensive use of third-class mail was for sending out what we now know as price lists, then known as prices current. Often these were folded letter sheets upon which the current prices were printed and sent to a list of regular customers (Fig. 32b), rather than a printed list enclosed in an envelope, such as is shown in Fig. 32c.

The cover (Fig. 32b) is a printed blue letter sheet with the current market prices of Savannah, Georgia, as of July 9, 1869. The stamp is tied by an odd blue “killer,” double-struck. The





Figs. 32a, 32b, 32c. These Covers Bear Postage Rate For Second or Third-Class Mail.

cover shown as Fig. 32c is a typical third-class item, with printed price list, enclosed in an envelope and mailed from Worcester, Mass. The stamp is tied by an attractive 4-ring target cancellation.

We find many Massachusetts covers in the third-class mail group. The corporations of that commonwealth were required to report the names and holdings of all stockholders annually for tax purposes and such printed lists of stockholders, with their

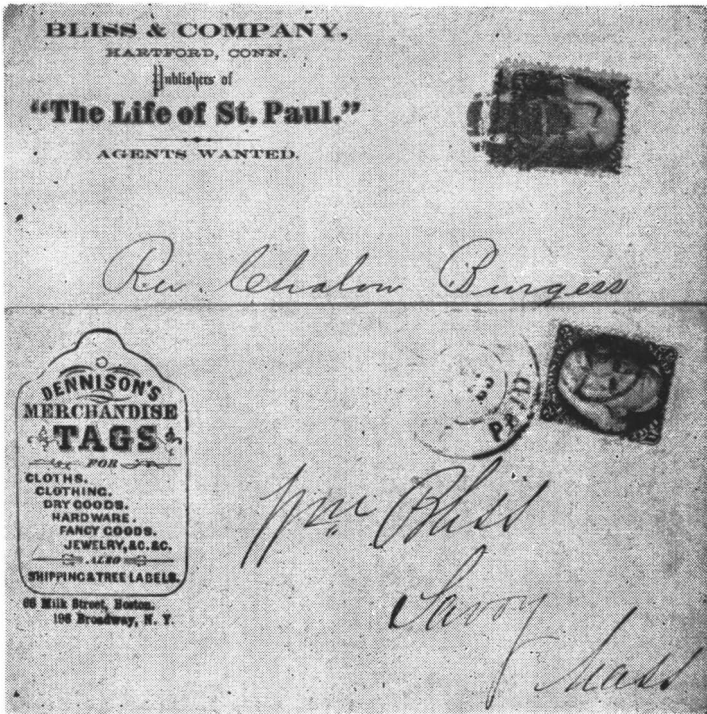


Fig. 33. Black Jacks Used By Business Firms in Mailing Advertising.

addresses, were sent to the assessors of all of the taxing units where such stockholders resided. This constitutes a rather interesting group of covers in the third-class classification and one such cover, with year-dated town marking from Charlestown, Massachusetts, is illustrated herewith. (Fig. 32a).

The particular appeal to philatelists of covers of the second and third class arises out of the interesting and attractive corner cards which they carry, or the unusual nature of the contents.

The variety of classifications is almost endless, as the specialized collection might be based upon covers by states, type of business, such as newspapers, hotels, colleges and so forth, or corner cards showing various kinds of machinery, or almost any other similar classification. Illustrated herewith are a few examples picked at random from a large variety of corned cards (Fig. 33). Covers of this type with unusually attractive designs will be illustrated in Chapter X, together with items of unusual contents.

## Chapter X

### IT'S USE ON SPECIAL COVERS

#### Patriotic Covers

The first of the patriotic covers in our philatelic history came out of the Civil War. Our last previous war was the Mexican War, 1846 to 1848, and inasmuch as our first postage stamps were produced in the middle of that war, 1847, it is reasonable to presume that there were no "patriotics" circulated during that conflict. In fact, it was the folded letter sheet, and not the envelope as we now know it, that was largely used in that period, not more than 25 per cent, and possibly less than 20 per cent, of the first-class mail being of the real envelope type. Of these, very few had any printing of any kind on them.

The Civil War was over two years old by the time the Black Jack first appeared, July 6, 1863. By that time the "Patriotic" cover was quite generally in use, not only in the Northern states but in the states of the Confederacy as well.

Despite the fairly common use of the Patriotic cover during the Black Jack period, "Patriotics" with the Black Jack are very uncommon. This is readily understandable when we realize that this two cent stamp was used mostly either for drop (local) letters or on second-class and third-class mail, none of which classes of mail would ordinarily command the use of a patriotic cover.

There is probably no question but that the late George Walcott assembled the largest and finest collection of patriotic covers in the United States. In 1934, two years after Walcott's death, his collection of patriotic covers was photographed, catalogued and sold by Robert Laurence, New York collector and dealer, to whom was committed, in accordance with the terms of Walcott's will, the work of disposing of his collections.

One of the fine books of philately is the Laurence compilation of "The George Walcott Collection of Civil War Patriotic Covers." Unfortunately at the time this work was published there was still in effect the law prohibiting the printing of a photograph of any of our United States stamps, so all of the stamps on the Walcott covers are blocked out of the photographs and the exact stamp used on the covers cannot be ascertained from the illustrations.

To confirm my own belief that patriotic covers franked by the Black Jack are extremely rare I have checked through the Laurence volume and the first of the Walcott covers bearing the Black Jack is the 568th cover listed. According to Laurence, Mr. Walcott paid \$100.00 for that cover. Out of a total of 3,113 covers only two other covers with the Black Jack are listed in the en-

tire Walcott collection, so on that basis the ratio of Civil War patriotics franked by the Black Jack is one thousand to one.

Unfortunately for the hobby, in at least one respect, there were many unused Civil War patriotic envelopes remaining at the end of the war. And even now, over eighty years after the close of the War, there is scarcely an auction of United States material held but contains at least one lot of unused Civil War patriotics. This has given rise to some faking and counterfeiting of these desirable items, and the collector must use the utmost care in his purchases.

It is true that many collectors are interested in these unused patriotic envelopes from an historical and art standpoint, and sev-

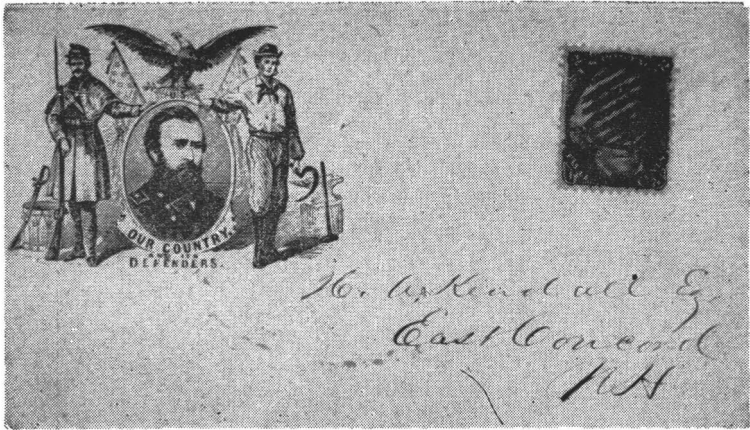


Fig. 34. Civil War Patriotic Envelope With 2c Black Jack.

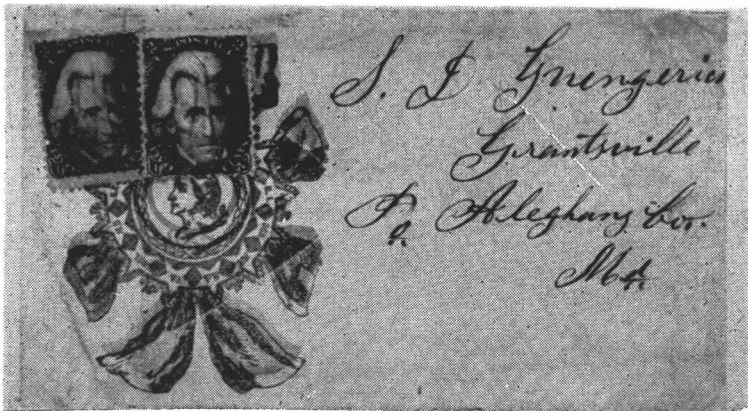


Fig. 35. A Patriotic Cover With Two Black Jacks.



**Fig. 36. Another Patriotic Cover. It Bears the 3c Rate.**

eral outstanding collections have been formed. But the existence of unused envelopes of that period has been too great a temptation to the would be forger of choice philatelic items, and it is a well accepted fact that many faked Civil War patriotic covers have been marketed as a result.

Two covers are here illustrated to show the difficulty of determining the genuineness of the patriotics of this period. The cover bearing the single Black Jack is Laurence No. 583 (Fig. 34), the other No. 103 (Fig. 35). Both may be genuine, though on neither cover are the stamps tied. On the cover bearing the two single copies (Fig. 35) the two stamps are clearly from different sheets, besides being pen cancelled. While this does not prove that the covers are faked, the lack of cancellations tying the stamps to the covers places them in the questionable class, to say the least.

Other patriotics are clearly genuine, such as that shown in Fig. 36. It is Laurence's No. 2715, with a perfectly centered Black Jack and a copy of Scott's No. 63, both thoroughly tied by the large year-dated town marking of Philadelphia. The cancellation also shows it to be a year of issue cover, 1863, in itself a scarce item.

It is unfortunate that the fairly high prices which the Civil War patriotics command have resulted in this counterfeiting, as it throws into question many genuine items which, without the prevalence of this fraud, would find their proper places in the collections of the country.

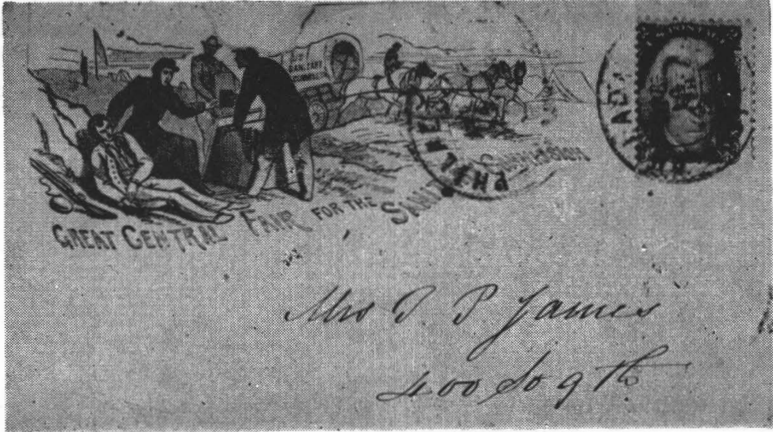


Fig. 37.



Fig. 38.

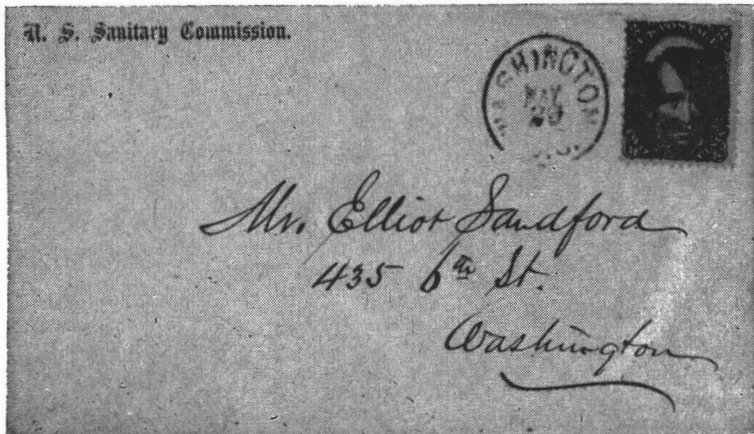


Fig. 39.

Covers With Sanitary Commission Corner Cards.



## U. S. SANITARY COMMISSION COVERS OF HISTORICAL INTEREST

Although trouble over the extension of slavery and threats of secession had been prevalent for many years, and civil war might thus have been anticipated, the actual conflict between the states of the North and the South found both sides woefully unprepared and inexperienced. Particularly was this true as respects provision for the health of the soldiers, and their care when sick or wounded. The Union Army totaled, at its peak, one million men. Of this number 350,000 died during the war, in addition to many thousands more who were crippled as a result of injuries and sickness. Over half of the deaths were from sickness, many of them the results of filth and general unsanitary conditions about the camps and at the front.

On June 9, 1861, in the third month of the war, the Government appointed a Commission of Inquiry into the sanitary conditions of the armed forces. Three days later the United States Sanitary Commission was formed. At first the work of the Commission was largely advisory, but gradually it expanded its work so as to include the care and comfort of the sick and the wounded, and the men on their way to and from the front, as well as handling many of the other services now performed in wartime by the American Red Cross.

Although the Government initiated the program which resulted in the formation of the United States Sanitary Commission and heartily approved of its work, it appropriated nothing for operating expenses. Funds for these services, as today, had to be raised by general public subscription, and in several of the larger cities "Fairs" were held for the purpose of raising such funds. Cincinnati held a "Great Western Sanitary Fair," Cleveland sponsored the "Northern Ohio Sanitary Fair," New York City held a "Metropolitan Fair," while probably the greatest of all was the "Great Central Fair for the Sanitary Commission" held in Philadelphia. For each of these fairs special patriotic covers were produced, some of them illustrating the actual care of the sick and the wounded, while others merely carried the corner card of the Commission. There is also some record indicating that there was an allied commission known as the Western Sanitary Commission, located at St. Louis, but as far as I know there were no special covers prepared and used by such organization.

We find a few of these Sanitary Commission covers franked with the Black Jack, and they are choice items. Fig. 37 shows a cover advertising the Philadelphia Fair. This is Laurence patriotic cover No. 3088. While this particular cover is in black on a white envelope, the same design also appears in brown, purple and red. On the cover here illustrated the 4th (of the day) delivery carrier cancellation of Philadelphia is struck twice,



once completely tying the stamp. This is a drop letter, hence requiring but two cents postage.

The corner cards of two other covers of the Commission are illustrated, Fig. 38 and 39, one of them from the Woman's Branch for the State of Pennsylvania. This cover bears the Philadelphia carrier cancellation, struck twice, which is year dated and shows the first delivery marking.

In the "Memoirs" of General W. T. Sherman, the famous general is reported as admitting the great usefulness of the United States Sanitary Commission, although he declared that their ministrations should be carried on in the rear of the fighting armies and not on the field of battle. Despite occasional criticism of the United States Sanitary Commission its work generally was regarded as outstanding and the Red Cross work in various lands has been modeled somewhat after the work which was begun by this Commission in the Civil War.

### **THE U. S. CHRISTIAN COMMISSION, FORERUNNER OF CHAPLAINS CORPS**

Many of our American institutions are so well established today that we take them for granted and regard them as always having existed. A study of their origins, however, often reveals many interesting facts and the story of the genesis and growth of American institutions of today is often most enlightening.

Earlier in this chapter we have briefly outlined the growth of The United States Sanitary Commission, in some respects the predecessor of the American Red Cross. Of quite a similar nature was The United States Christian Commission, the forerunner of the present Army Chaplain Corps.

War-born as was the Sanitary Commission to care for the physical needs of the soldiers, the Christian Commission likewise was born out of the necessity of war and, in the words of one of the writers, was organized "to promote the spiritual welfare of the soldiers, sailors and marines, while alleviating, comforting and humanizing their temporal needs." Originating at a convention of the Young Men's Christian Association early in the Civil War, the United States Christian Commission grew in size and in importance until its fame spread not only throughout the Northern states but throughout the world, and contributions to its support were both liberal and generous. Because of the extreme care in administering its funds and the carefulness exercised by its administrators in avoiding all questionable methods of raising its funds, such as lotteries, The United States Christian Commission held the high esteem of the entire North throughout the course of the war.

The Commission performed most of the services now handled by our army and navy chaplains. The men were known as "delegates," and were selected only after careful investigation.

The records show that 4,859 volunteer delegates in all were commissioned during the war. They had no special training for this particular service and had to be able to accommodate their work among the men to the rules of military and naval service, not always a task easy of accomplishment. Although first located in New York City, after the first year the headquarters were moved to Philadelphia, where they remained, with branches in many of the larger Northern cities.

On July 29, 1943, the United States Army Chaplain Corps observed its 173rd anniversary. Although the Continental Congress recognized the legal status of chaplains in 1775, as a matter of actual fact the Chaplains Corps as we now know it was not organized until 1920. It is true that in the War of 1812 and in the Mexican War there were chaplains, but it would appear that they were more or less recruited by volunteer methods similar to those used by The United States Christian Commission in the Civil War.

The United States Chaplain Corps today is part of the military and the chaplains are commissioned and receive the pay of



Fig. 40. Covers With Christian Commission Corner Cards.

other officers of similar rank. The delegates sent out by the United States Christian Commission in the Civil War, or Chaplains as they were also known, however, were paid through the funds raised by The United States Christian Commission and not by Government funds, which meant, as a matter of actual practice, that they were civilians attached to military organizations, a position that was not too satisfactory and one difficult to maintain.

Covers with The United States Christian Commission corner cards are classed as patriotic covers. Many of them were soldiers' letters, the stationery having been furnished by the Commission as part of its gratuitous service. In the renowned collection formed by the late George Walcott nine separate styles of corner cards of the Commission were listed. While they are intermingled in Laurence's work with the covers bearing the corner cards of the United States Sanitary Commission they actually constitute an entirely different class of cover.

Several of the styles of corner cards of this agency are shown here (Fig. 40). The original letters are contained in two of the covers illustrated, the one to the delegate on Lookout Mountain station being filled with thrilling news of the war itself and detailing the privations endured by these men.

It has been said that "necessity is the mother of invention," and in the case of the establishment of the United States Christian Commission this truly was the case.

Although soldier mail in the Civil War, as in our more recent wars, was carried without cost to the soldiers, much of the soldier mail was franked by postage stamps. Regulation 10 of the rules governing postmasters as promulgated by the Postmaster General and briefed in the Post Office Directory issued in 1863, provided as follows:

"10. Postmasters at or near any camp or point occupied by the United States forces will mail without prepayment of postage, any letter written by a soldier in the service of the United States and certified to be such by any field or staff officer in the United States Service. At hospitals or detached posts this certificate may be made by the chaplain or surgeon stationed thereat."

Despite this privilege of free mail many soldier letters were franked by postage stamps and much of the stationery used was furnished by The United States Christian Commission.

A continuance of the services of The United States Christian Commission passed with the end of the war itself, such as was the case following World War II with the United Service Organization and similar volunteer groups. The fine work of The United States Christian Commission, however, is one of the bright spots of the War between the States and the study of this particular class of mail adds to the romance of cover collecting.

## Chapter XI

### BISECTED TYPES

One phase of philately that can be studied satisfactorily *only* through covers is that of the bisected stamps. The very nature of the bisect is such that unless it is on cover, and tied over the cut portion of the stamp, the genuineness of the item cannot be absolutely determined. While there are undoubtedly genuine and authentic bisects where the bisected stamp is not tied over the cut portion, as well as faked bisects where the bisect is tied to the cover, there is practically no way of checking an off-cover copy as to its genuineness, and such a copy has little or no value as a bisect.

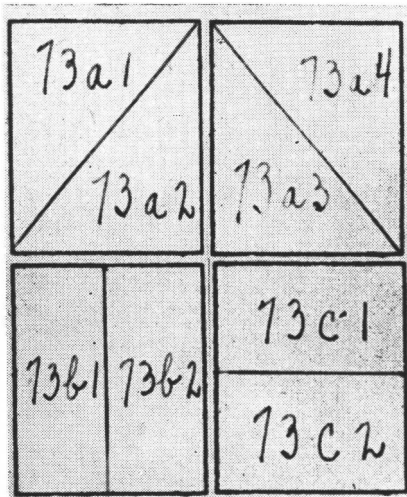


Fig. 41. Ways a Stamp Can Be Bisected.

It has been said on good authority that the use of fractional parts of stamps for postage was never officially authorized by the post office department. It is known, however, that beginning with our very first issue of postage stamps, that of 1847, it was the practice of postmasters to accept fractional parts of stamps in payment of postage. Mr. M. L. Miller, who is recognized as an authority on United States bisects, compiled, with the assistance of other specialists, a list of some 45 covers with the bisected ten cent stamp of 1847, used as five cents postage. This complete list is given in Chapter VI of Brookman's latest work. Other collectors have specialized in other fields of bisected stamps.

As far as is known no complete list of the bisected Black Jack has been compiled. I began such a compilation a few years ago for my own information, and have a record of about 40 such covers.

The 1873 edition of the Postal Laws and Regulations specifically made provision whereby the use of fractional postage stamps was forbidden, as follows:

“Section 402. Fractional parts of postage stamps cannot be recognized in prepayment of postage. For example, a letter or package to which one two cent stamp and a half of another two cent stamp are affixed cannot be considered as having been prepaid three cents, but only two cents; and a letter or package on which 18 cents postage is chargeable cannot be paid in full by affixing a 6 cent stamp and a half of a 24 cent stamp, and so forth.”

The most common use of the bisected Black Jack is with an entire Black Jack to make up the three cent rate for first class letters. Of the 40 covers with the bisected Black Jack of which I have a record, the large majority is of this type. Only in two instances is the bisected Black Jack used alone, that is, for one cent postage. In the list of 40 bisected Black Jacks there is only one cover on which a one cent 1861 stamp is used with the bisected Black Jack to make up the drop letter rate of two cents.

Scott classified the bisected Black Jack in three groupings, the diagonal, the vertical, and the horizontal. But inasmuch as there are actually four different positions of diagonal bisects, it would appear that this classification is not sufficient and could be made more exact by an additional breakdown. Using Scott's 73a, 73b, and 73c as a basis I would suggest further classification of the bisected stamps as shown in Fig. 41.



Fig. 42. Bisected Stamp Well  
Tied to Cover.



**Fig. 43. A Horizontal Bisect.**

Inasmuch as bisected stamps presumably were used because stamps of proper denomination were not available we find most of the bisected covers originating in small towns, where stamp supplies were not large and might be exhausted as to some denominations. An examination of the list of bisected 10 cent stamps of 1847, above referred to, does not show this small-town origin, although as to Black Jack bisects it is very definitely the case. Such towns as Sinking Springs, Pa.; Bainbridge, Pa.; Annandale, N. Y.; Onondaga, Mich.; Sugar Run, Pa.; Bloody Run, Pa.; East Clarendon, Vt., are only some of the towns of origin of bisected Black Jacks.

Probably the only safe way to be sure you have a genuine bisected stamp is to have it expertized. Most of the items illustrated here have been so expertized.

Probably the largest number of Black Jack bisects from any one correspondence is from the George P. Everhart correspondence. These letters all originated in Manchester, Maryland, and are all addressed in the same handwriting to "Mr. George P. Everhart, Rail Road, York County, Pennsylvania." A portion of one such cover is here illustrated and has the guarantee of Philip H. Ward, Jr.. (Fig. 42). At least eight covers from this correspondence with the bisected Black Jack are known.

Fig. 43 shows a bisected Black Jack tied by the town marking of White's Tannery, Pennsylvania, on a cover addressed to Mr. James Kintz, who was postmaster at Paradise Valley at the time. This cover, and the one next described, were formerly in the Henry C. Gibson collection and are guaranteed as genuine bisects.

Fig. 44 shows a rare combination of the then current three cent stamp, one Black Jack, and a bisected Black Jack to make

up the double letter rate of six cents. The stamps are well tied by the town marking of Bloody Run, Pa., struck twice. I also have other letters from this same correspondence, indicating authenticity of this cover.

A grilled bisect is shown in Fig. 45. The stamps are very much off center and the cut portion is only faintly tied. The town of origin is Cascade, Iowa. This cover was formerly in the Col. Green collection and is a genuine bisect.

Three bisects are shown which are considered genuine but each of which lacks one or more of the conditions usually re-



Fig. 44. A Vertical Bisect. Rare Combination of Stamps.

quired to guarantee it as genuine. In one (Fig. 46) the cut portion is not tied to the cover, as it is flush with the edge of the envelope and therefore could not be tied. It is a late use of the Black Jack, 1871, but was reported as an original find and is presumed to be genuine. Another cover (Fig. 47) bears the town marking of Onondaga, Mich. It is claimed that the ink date in the town marking "20" and the pen strokes cancelling the stamp, are made with the same ink, and that the cover is a genuine bisect. The third cover (Fig. 48) is from Benvenue, Pa. It has the appearance of a genuine Black Jack bisect, being addressed to an attorney and having at one end a notation apparently made by the addressee, showing the date of receipt of the letter and day it was answered. The absence of cancelling marks tying all of these bisects to the cover, however, leaves them in the questionable class, and while it is very possible that they are genuine bisected stamps they lack the value which accompanies an authenticated bisect.

Of a strictly spurious nature, in my opinion, is the attractive piece with the Hudson, Ohio cancellation. (Fig. 49). Whoever manufactured this item was altogether too careful in making

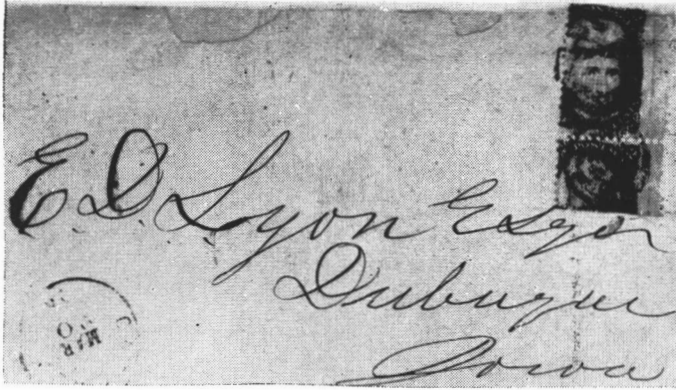


Fig. 45. A Cover from the Col. Green Collection.



Fig. 46. The Bisect is Not Tied to This Cover As the Envelope Was Cut Open Along the Right End.



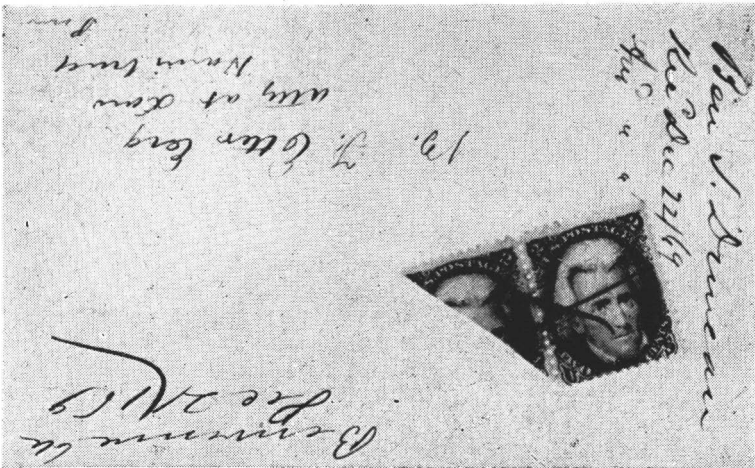
Fig. 47. A Genuine Bisect. Bisected Stamp Not Tied to Cover.



it "good," as the town marking perfectly ties the cut portion of the stamp and for good measure a beautiful black star ties the whole stamp.

Two other covers are illustrated for comparative purposes. The St. Paul cover (Fig. 50) shows the stamp well tied, but the killer does not appear genuine. I am not familiar with the St. Paul cancellations of this period, and if it could be shown from other covers that this was a type of St. Paul killer used during the Black Jack period, it would help in reaching a decision as to the genuineness of this cover.

Somewhat similar is the New York City cover (Fig. 51). The bisected stamp is on the opposite side of the cover from the whole stamp, which latter stamp is tied by a recognized town marking of the period. The bisected stamp, however, is tied by a rather vague and indistinct marking. This cover appears to be a drop



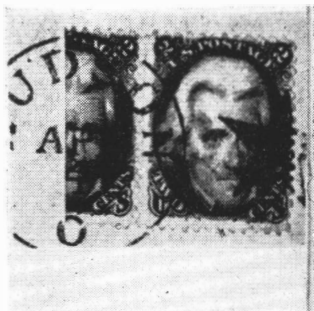
**Fig. 48. This Bisect Is Not Tied to Cover, But Believed Genuine.**

letter, so two cents would be the proper amount of postage. It would therefore appear that this is a spurious cover as far as the bisect is concerned, as there would be no occasion to add an additional one cent of postage, and it would hardly seem that one could not purchase a one cent stamp in New York City.

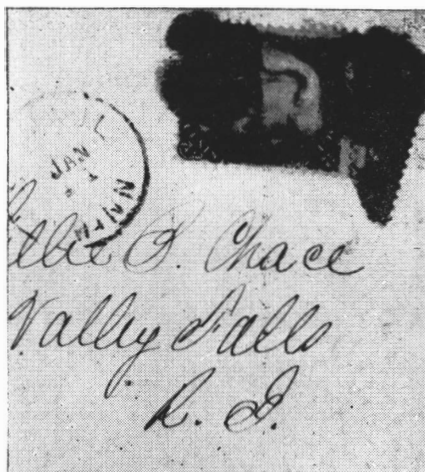
It is possible that as a matter of pure convenience people would bisect a stamp, and that this convenience, instead of the lack of adequate stamp supplies, accounts for bisects. In other words, even people in a large city having plentiful stamp supplies might find themselves at home without a three cent stamp but with several two cent stamps and would use a bisected two cent stamp merely as a matter of convenience. Although it could hardly be said that the bisected stamp was in general use, it was

used frequently enough so that postmasters would recognize it as proper postage until the regulation forbidding it was adopted in 1873.

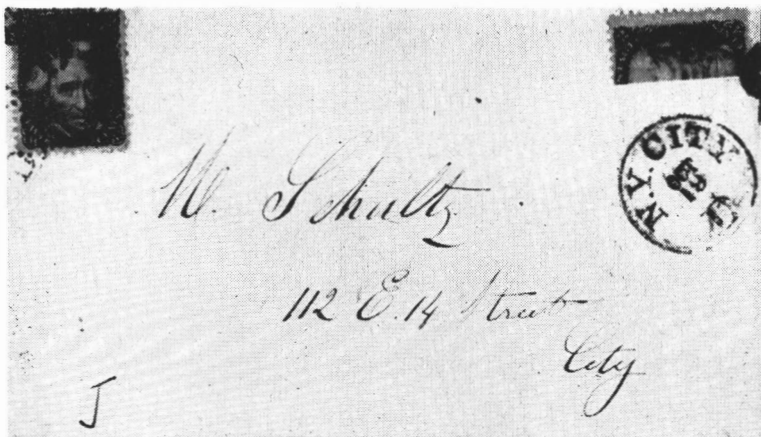
It can be seen from the above that the study of the bisected stamps is most intriguing and poses many interesting problems.



**Fig. 49. This Bisect Believed to Be a Fake.**



**Fig. 50. Bisect Tied to Cover With Smudge Cancel, Believed to Be a Fake.**



**Fig. 51. Another Bisect Believed to Be a Fake.**



Fig. 52. A Horizontal Pair on Cover.



Fig. 53. A Vertical Pair on Cover.

## Chapter XII

### MULTIPLE PIECES ON COVER

We have previously discussed the Black Jack used singly and in its bisected form. We also find it used in pairs, strips of three, in blocks of four and in irregular strips and blocks.

There is no satisfactory explanation of the use of two Black Jacks on a single letter of the first class (Fig. 52). A few years ago, in discussing this matter with Stanley B. Ashbrook, one of our foremost authorities on early United States stamps, he expressed a deep interest in the comparatively large number of covers franked by two Black Jacks, either two single copies or a pair. At his suggestion I submitted to him a description of fifty such covers bearing two Black Jacks which I had in my collection at the time. After a very thorough study which Mr. Ashbrook made of this particular usage he came to the conclusion that these covers merely represented a one cent overpayment of the proper postage. He very logically calls attention to the fact that after July 1, 1863, the date the one cent carrier rate was abolished, we never find this four cent usage in any form other than two two-cent stamps, that is, we do not find a four cent rate made up of a three cent and a one-cent stamp after that date. This adds further strength to the position taken that this usage represents an overpayment of postage only.

I can add nothing to Mr. Ashbrook's conclusion. It seems rather paradoxical that at the very time some of our citizens were cleaning and re-using stamps to the point that specific meas-



Fig. 54. A Strip of Three on Cover.

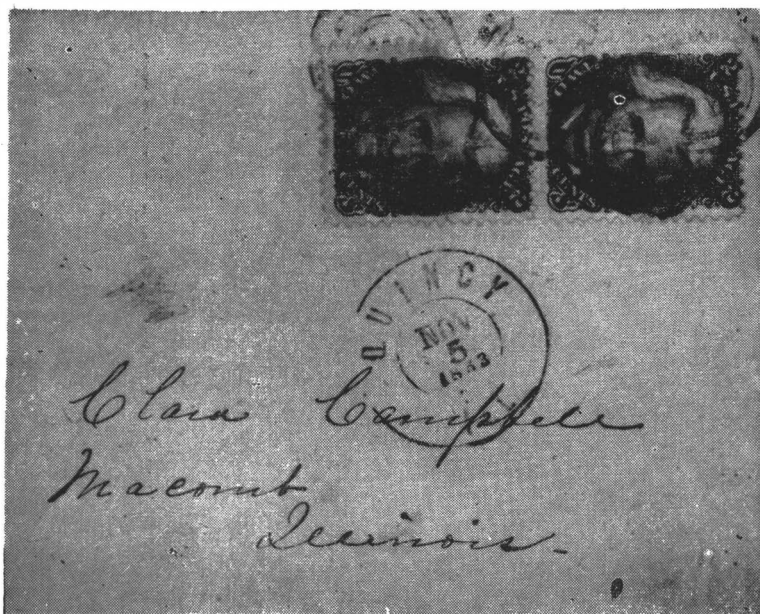


Fig. 55. Another Vertical Pair on Cover.



Fig. 56. A Block of Four on Cover.



Fig. 57. A Block of Four and a Single on Cover.

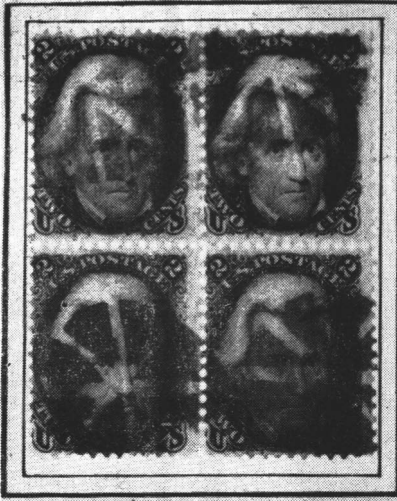


Fig. 58. Block of Four



Fig. 59. Block of Four.



ures were taken to prevent such practice (Chapter II) that others of our citizens were so prodigal as to use too much postage.

A study of the postal rates in effect during the Black Jack period, however, leads to no other conclusion than that reached by Mr. Ashbrook. There were, to be sure, situations which would require four cents in postage. For instance, circulars, exceeding three in number but not over six in number, and sent to one address, required four cents postage (Fig. 53). Again miscellaneous mailable matter weighing from four to eight ounces also required four cents postage (Sec. 34, Post Office Bill, 1863). But the covers bearing either two singles or a pair of Black Jacks that have provoked this inquiry were not used for that type of mail. From all appearances they are first class domestic mail, and as such require three cents postage only (Figs. 52, 55). Until a better explanation is forthcoming as to this usage we will let our case rest on that conclusion.

The use of a strip of three Black Jacks or three singles is readily explainable. The single letter rate in effect at the time was three cents, except for drop letters. We therefore find three Black Jacks used on occasion to pay the double letter rate (Fig. 54). As would be expected these are usually found, but not always, on legal size covers. As I believe is true in regard to all stamps, vertical pairs or strips are rarer than horizontal pairs or strips, possibly explained by the fact that it is easier or more natural to tear a sheet of stamps into horizontal, rather than vertical, strips. I believe the student will find that such statement is correct, and that regardless of the issue or denomination of the stamp that the used vertical pairs or strips are found much less frequently than horizontal pairs or strips (Fig. 55). This cover is a year-of-issue cover, always a desirable item in our early issues.

Next to the bisect the Black Jack in used blocks of four is given the highest value in the standard catalogue. The logical explanation for this high evaluation would be in the fact that there was at the time the Black Jack was in use no rate requiring postage of eight cents only and we find the block of four usually on overweight letters (Fig. 56), or used with a single copy to make up the ten cent rate to Canada (Fig. 57). An examination of the Canadian cover illustrates the difficulty encountered in using blocks or ordinary mail, as in this instance the block for four, with a part of the fifth copy, was affixed to the back of the envelope, leaving the mutilated single copy on the front of the cover. In view of the fact that stamps of five cent and ten cent denominations were available to make up the Canadian and other foreign rates the use of Black Jacks in blocks of four was very rare.

Since the used block of four Black Jacks is valued over twice as much as the unused block one must be careful in the purchase



of the used block unless on cover so that its actual use can be determined. Illustrated herewith are two blocks of four off cover copies. The one (Fig. 58) appears to be genuine, with a cork cancellation typical of the period. It has F grill (Scott's #93). The other block (Fig. 59) has a beautiful greenish-blue cancellation of lozenge shape, with a five-pointed colorless star with solid dot in the center. While this may be a genuine used block, it may also be a forgery. I know of no cancellation of this type in use in the period, and it is possible that someone wanted a used block and made it altogether too attractive, as in the case of the bisect illustrated previously herein (Fig. 49).

Large used blocks of the Black Jack are non-existent. Illustrated herewith is also a strip of four of these stamps in used condition, which makes an attractive show piece. (Fig. 60).



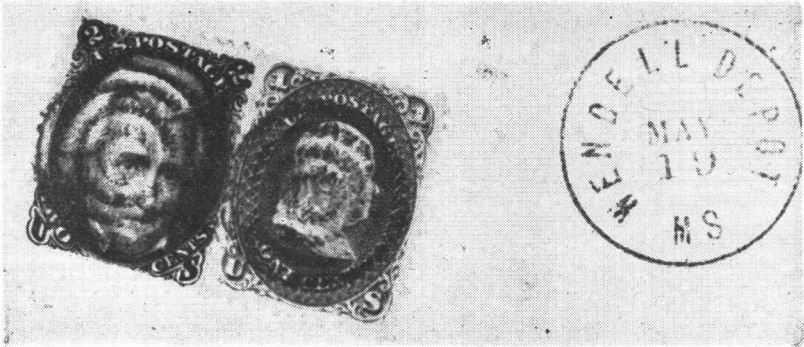
**Fig. 60. Vertical Strip of Four.**

### Chapter XIII

## COVERS ILLUSTRATE USAGE IN COMBINATION WITH OTHER STAMPS

We have previously discussed the Black Jack used singly, as a bisect, and in pairs, blocks and strips. Our present discussion will treat of its use in combination with other stamps of the period.

The most common use of the Black Jack in combination with another stamp was its use with the one cent stamp of the 1861 issue, Scott's #63, and its grilled variations (Fig. 61). This



**Fig. 61. Two Cent Black Jack With One Cent 1861.**

combination was only natural, as one copy of the Black Jack and one copy of the one cent stamp made up the three cent first class letter rate in effect at the time. While the auction catalogue usually describes a cover bearing this combination of stamps as a "rare item" or in similar terms, and while it is actually an uncommon use, still the specialist in this stamp would have several covers with this combination. My own collection numbers an even one hundred such covers at the time this handbook is written, so it could hardly be said to be a "rare" item. Some of these covers have already been illustrated in previous chapters (Figs. 14, 36).

It is interesting to note that this use in combination began early in the Black Jack era. Previously illustrated (Fig. 12) was a month-of-issue cover (July, 1863), where the Black Jack is used with the one cent stamped envelope in use at the time. The earliest use of the Black Jack in combination with the one cent adhesive stamp of the same series of which I have any record is on a cover from Chicago dated September 10, 1863, although there is a record of several covers of this type bearing other dates

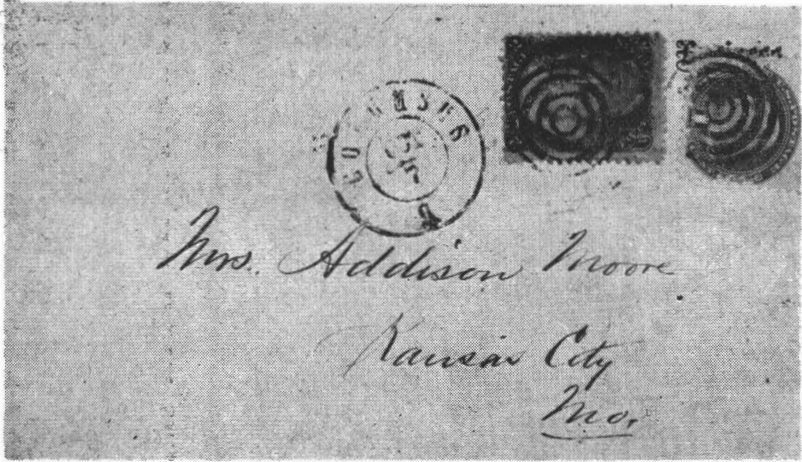


Fig. 62. Two Cent Black Jack With One Cent 1869.

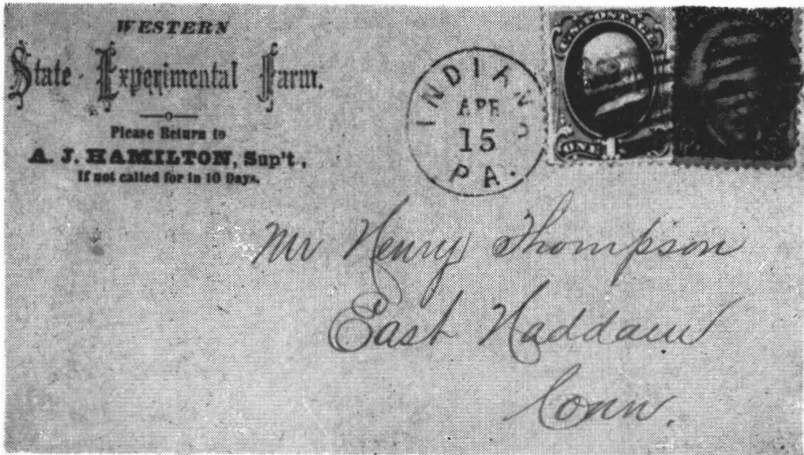


Fig. 63. Two Cent Black Jack With One Cent 1870.

in September and several in October, November and December of the year of issue.

I would conclude, after an examination of these covers, that there is no special pattern in the use of this combination. We find these two stamps on covers from small towns and from our largest cities, on plain covers and on those with attractive corner cards, on covers bearing manuscript cancellations as well as those with fancy designs and special postal markings, on soldier mail and on patriotic covers. In other words, there seems to be no particular characteristic as to this usage and we therefore conclude that many of our citizens found it convenient and natural to use the two cent and an one cent stamp to make up the three cent first class letter rate.

Much rarer is the use of the Black Jack with the one cent stamp of another issue to make up the three cent rate. We have heretofore discussed and illustrated its use with the demonetized one cent stamp of the preceding issue (Fig. 11) and the one cent stamped envelope then in use (Fig. 13) Chapter IV.

The Black Jack is also known used with the one cent stamp of the 1869 pictorial issue, Scott's #112 (Fig. 62), with the one cent stamp of the 1870 issue, Scott's #145 (Fig. 63); and with the one cent stamped envelope of the 1870-71 issue, Reay #U76, (Fig. 64), as well as with the one cent Express revenue (Chapter VIII, Fig. 30).

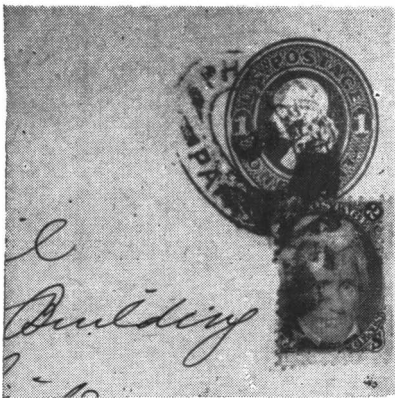


Fig. 64. Two Cent Black Jack With One Cent Reay Envelope.

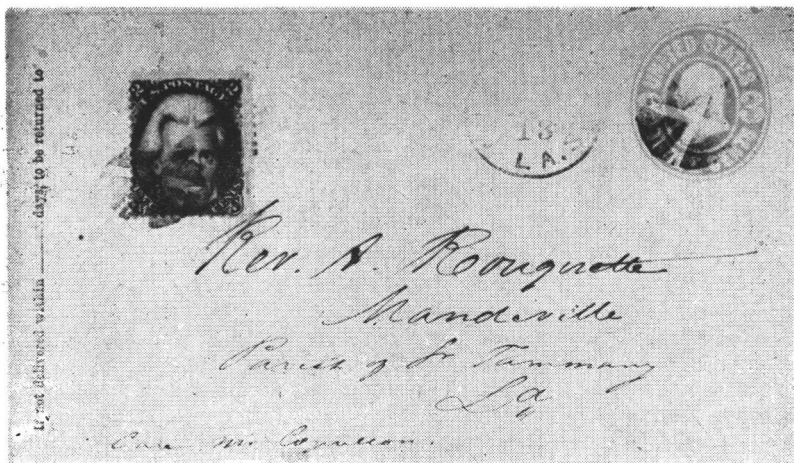


Fig. 65. Pair of Two Cent Black Jacks With Five Cent 1862.

A very rare usage is shown in Fig. 65, where a pair of Black Jacks is used with the five cent stamp of the period to make up the treble rate for first class letters. In my opinion this is a much rarer usage than many of those indicated above.

The use of the Black Jack in combination which poses the most vexing problem and which so far defies satisfactory ex-

planation is its use with the three cent stamp of the same series to make up five cents postage on domestic mail. The only type of first class domestic letter calling for the five cent rate at that time was for a letter conveyed by private ship or vessel where delivered to the post office where the ship arrived, (Fig. 66). This



**Fig. 66. Two Cent Black Jack Used On a Three Cent Envelope to Make the 5c Ship Rate.**

letter was brought into New Orleans by a private ship and under the law in effect at the time, the captain was entitled to a two cent fee for carriage, which in this case was prepaid.

The post office bill of 1863, which became effective on July 1st, 1863, provides as follows:

**"Sec. 31.** And be it further enacted, that the Postmaster General shall have authority to pay, or cause to be paid, a sum not exceeding two cents each, for all letters conveyed in any vessel or steamboat not employed in carrying the mail, from one port or place to any other port or place in the United States . . . "

While other such covers are known to exist, that is, private ship rate covers, they are extremely rare. But we find the five cent rate made up of one copy each of the Black Jack and the three cent stamp of the period for letters between inland points, where carrying by boat is either impossible or entirely impracticable (Fig. 67).

This particular cover is postmarked at Davenport, Iowa and is addressed to Lyons, Iowa. Both of these towns are located on the Mississippi River and it is conceivable that this letter might have been delivered by ship, except for the fact that it



Fig. 67. 68. 69. Black Jacks Used  
With 3c Stamps to Make-Up  
The 5c Rate.

bears the town marking of the apparent point of origin, Davenport, which it would not show if it were carried outside of the mail on a private ship. The original letter is inside the envelope and is dated at Davenport on April 24, 1868, so this could not have been a ship letter, which would thus explain the five cents postage.

Another cover (Fig. 68) carries the postmark of Indianapolis and the destination was Logansport, both in the State of Indiana. Both of these cities are located on rivers that might be navigable to small craft and it is possible that the letter was picked up by private ship and deposited at Indianapolis in the post office and thence to Logansport through the mails.

A third cover bearing this odd rate (Fig. 69) shows the point of origin as Freeport, Illinois, and the point of destination as Lewisburg, Pennsylvania. As in the case of the two covers last above described it is possible that this letter was picked up by private ship and deposited in the post office at Freeport and thence was sent through the mails to Lewisburg, Pennsylvania. Unfortunately the contents of the two covers last described are missing, so the exact point of origin cannot be determined. It is as reasonable to conclude that they are ship letters as that they are not, inasmuch as river traffic was heavy on many of our inland waterways in those days and persons having letters to be mailed frequently handed them to the ship captain to be deposited in the post office at the next port of call. In fact, such an explanation of the five cents postage on these letters is more logical, in my opinion, than trying to explain them on the theory of over-payment of postage. This usage could hardly be explained by an overpayment, as in the case of the two Black Jacks discussed in Chapter XII. In other words, the entire Black Jack used on the cover here illustrated is surplusage as far as can be ascertained, and there would be no necessity for using any postage other than the three cent stamp to cover the first class letter rate unless it actually is a private ship letter.

On large, overweight letters, and on registered mail, we occasionally find odd combinations, in which most all of the denominations of this same series are used. It is hardly necessary to illustrate them, as the need for odd amounts of postage is quite obvious in such cases.

## Chapter XIV

### VARIOUS PLATES DISTINGUISHED BY MARGINAL MARKINGS AND SPACING

There were seven different plates used in the printing of the Black Jack. About this there seems to be little doubt. The plates were numbered 28, 29, 30, 31, 50, 51 and 53. They were engraved by the National Bank Note Company of New York, which firm also had produced the entire 1861 issue following the demonetization of the 1856 issue. Luff reports that altogether 256,566,000 copies of the Black Jack were printed.

The engraving on a single Black Jack is 20½ mm. wide and 25 mm. in height. On the sheet the stamps are arranged slightly less than 2 mm. apart horizontally and 2 mm. vertically. It is true that there are slight variations in this width of separation, due to the method of line engraving which was used in preparing the plates. Occasionally you will find a spacing of two full mm. between the stamps horizontally, but spacing of this width is very unusual. The 2 mm. between the stamps vertically is measured from the bottom of the oval containing the Jackson portrait to the top of the oval of the stamp next below.

The perforation, 12 gauge, takes approximately 1 mm. of the space between the stamps, leaving less than ½ mm. margin on each stamp, even if the perforation were perfectly spaced about the stamp. The well-accepted fact that the perforating on the Black Jack is notoriously bad is partly explained by the close spacing.

As has been suggested in the Introduction, the Black Jack is distinctive in that the head of the subject occupies more of the stamp itself than in any other of our stamps.

The oval containing the picture of Jackson, at its widest part, takes up the entire width of the stamp, whereas 23 mm. of the 25 mm. in height is taken up by this portrait, the two remaining mm. being at the top of the stamp and taken up with the curved band which contains the words "U. S. Postage."

The stamps were printed from steel plates in sheets of 200, arranged in two horizontal panes, each pane containing 100 stamps, 10 x 10. The method of engraving used was what is commonly known as "line engraving." Brookman, in his work "The Nineteenth Century Postage Stamps of the United States," devotes an interesting chapter to a description of this process, which was used in engraving all of our Nineteenth Century stamps. It is not necessary to explain this method of line engraving in this work, but anyone interested in the details of this particular kind of work should surely read the very interesting and informative first chapter contained in Volume I of Mr. Brookman's book. Suffice it to say that in this process the



design of the stamp is located on the plate according to certain dots and lines placed there by the lay-out man, and although it is intended that these marks be exactly the same distance apart it is only natural that there should be small variations, which account for the slight variance in the spacing.

## SHEET MARGINS



**Fig. 70. Large Block Shwingo Position of Plate Number And Engraver's Imprint.**

In the preparation of the several plates of the Black Jack there appears to be a lack of uniformity. At least on Plates 29, 30 and 50 and presumably on Plates 28 and 31, the engravers name and the plate number appear at the bottom of each pane, in a perforated sheet margin (Fig. 70). These perforated margins do not appear to be of uniform width, as various illustrations accompanying this work will disclose. On some of the sheets, at least, the engraver's name also appears at each side, and at the top of the pane, but in a different style of panel and without the plate number (Fig. 71).

After examining a hundred or more sheet margin copies I had about reached the conclusion that the left sheet margin of all of the sheets was without perforation until I ran across a copy with a perforated sheet margin at the left (Fig. 72). Out of many sheet margin copies which I had examined this was the only copy I had found in which there was a perforated margin at the left. Shortly after discovering this copy, however, a reader of the series of articles from which this book was compiled, Mr. Amon Carter, Jr., of Forth Worth, Texas, kindly submitted to me a photograph of an entire left pane from Plate 30, and this pane has a perforated margin the entire length of the left side



**Fig. 71. Showing Engraver's Imprint on Side of Sheet.**



**Fig. 72. Stamp Showing Sheet Margin Perforated.**

of the pane and in this perforated margin there is contained the engraver's name similar to that as shown on the right pane and heretofore illustrated (Fig. 71).

I believe it is also possible to state with certainty that the top and bottom sheet margins were in all cases perforated. While it is true that occasionally one finds a straight edge at the top or at the bottom of a single copy of the Black Jack I think it is also just as true that these are all copies where the straight edge has been made with shears, as it was not uncommon for people using these stamps to disregard the perforations where they were very much off-center and they relied entirely upon cutting the stamps apart with shears.

My study also leads me to the conclusion that there was no additional spacing between the two panes in at least the first four plates, 28, 29, 30, and 31. In other words, this scant 2 mm. spacing separated the two panes as well as the stamps in the remainder of the sheet. The stamp itself is not known in imperforate condition and several straddle-pane copies, some of which are here illustrated, lead to the conclusion that the spacing was the same throughout the entire sheet. I was of the opinion that this was true as to all of the seven plates of the Black Jack until I ran across an unusual copy (Fig. 73). This has a straight edge at the right of the stamp and there is faintly shown a part of

another copy, separated by a pane margin of  $4\frac{1}{2}$  mm. This copy surely negatives my earlier conclusion that in all of the sheets the space between the two panes of each sheet was the same as between the stamps within the pane, approximately 2 mm. The copy last illustrated is on an 1869 cover, a late use, and is grilled  $9 \times 13$ .

It was my first conclusion that the straight edge sheet margin, and not the perforated sheet margin, appeared only at the left of some of the sheets, but upon further examination of ad-



Fig. 73.



Fig. 74.

**Stamps Showing Engraver's Marks.**

ditional copies I discovered some copies with an imperforate sheet margin at the right, as well as at the left, so I have now reached the conclusion that in some of the sheets there was no perforated sheet margin at either the right or the left of the sheet. While it is possible that these are copies from one of the later sheets, where the two panes were separated by a space up to  $4\frac{1}{2}$  mm. in width, still an examination of the copies themselves indicates that they are sheet margin stamps and not pane copies.

Although the subject of guide lines poses a very interesting and complex problem and will be treated as a special subject, some of the stamps show that a guide line was used for cutting the outer edges of the sheet and not only for separating the two panes. This would also tend to prove that on some of the sheets, at least, there were no perforated margins at the sides. Sometimes these are merely marks similar to guide line marks, whereas on other copies (Fig. 74) the engraver's marks run the entire length of the stamp, thus indicating that at least some of the sheets may have been prepared without a perforated margin either at the left or at the right.

At the bottom of the panes, at least on Plates 29 and 30, there appears the full name of the engraving firm, with the plate number (Fig. 70). This reads as follows: "ENGRAVED BY THE NATIONAL BANK NOTE COMPANY CITY OF NEW YORK." This nameplate covers the four center stamps of each pane. Immediately below this, and covering only the two center stamps of each pane, is the plate number, as "No. 30 Plate," the numeral appearing under the left and the word "Plate" appearing under the right center stamp. The "NATIONAL BANK NOTE COMPANY" is colorless on a background consisting of a black panel.

The plate names on the sides, and at the top of the panes, are as follows: "NATIONAL BANK NOTE CO—NEW YORK," and consist of a panel of colorless letters on a black background. The panel is slightly larger than that at the bottom of each pane, but does not carry the plate number (Fig. 71).

### ENGRAVER'S MARKS

In the process of line engraving the lay-out man would indicate on the soft steel plate the exact spots where the design of the stamp was to be "rocked in." In other words, if there were to be 200 stamps printed from one plate, as was the case with the Black Jack, there would be indicated on the steel plate, by corner dots or lines, the exact location of these 200 positions. After the design of the stamp had been transferred from the transfer roll to the 200 positions on the sheet it was intended that these engravers marks which were placed on the plate to assist in the transfer, would be burnished out of the plate so they would not appear on the finished stamp. While it is true that in many cases this was done, still we do find many copies of the Black Jack in which the engravers marks, little dots or faint lines, are clearly visible. It is by means of such marks, together with imperfect transfers, such as double or triple transfers, that stamps can be "plated," that is, that a particular copy can be located as to its exact position on a certain plate.

The Black Jack has never been so plated. In correspondence some years ago with Mr. Herbert B. Atherton, the noted Black

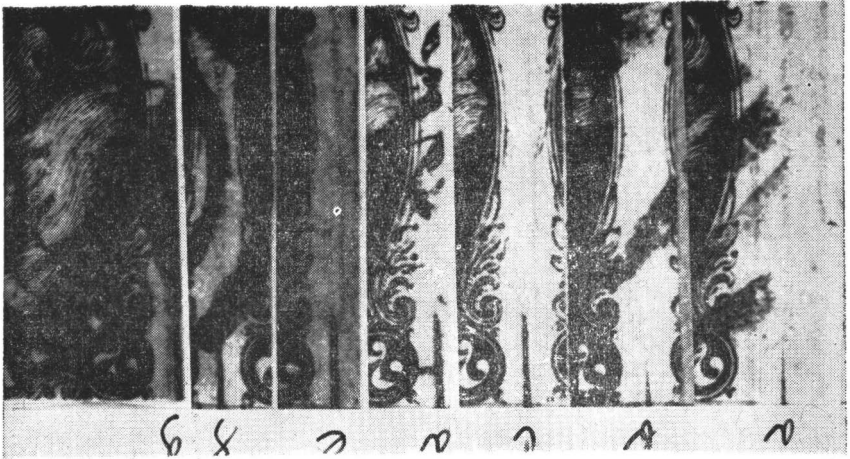


Fig. 75. Guide Lines at Top of Right Pane.



Fig. 76. Guide Lines at Top of Left Pane.

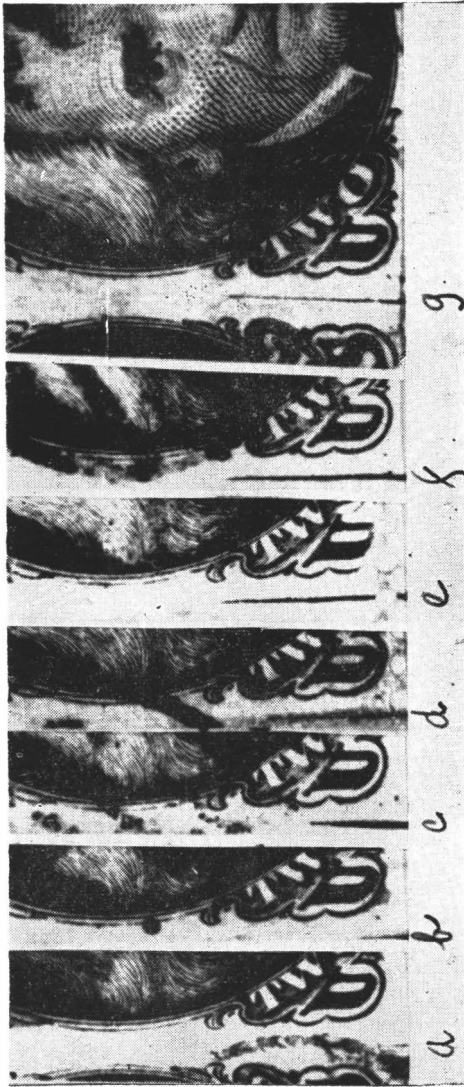


Fig. 77. Guide Lines at Bottom of Right Pane.

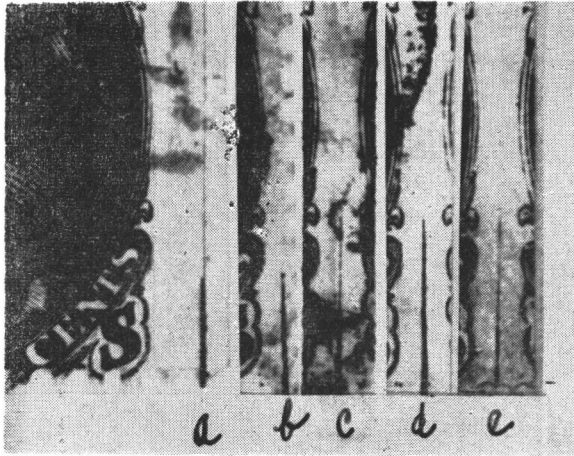


Fig. 78. Guide Lines at Bottom of Left Pane.

Jack authority, he lamented the fact that the Black Jack had never been plated and expressed the hope that some day such would be undertaken. With seven plates of 200 positions each it would mean the locating of 1400 separate positions, a rather arduous task.

It would appear that it was customary to locate the four corners of the stamp on the plate by a small dot. Many of these dots are still to be found on the printed stamp. (See Figs. 77a, 77b, c, d, f and g and 78b, c and d). On the bottom tier of stamps on Plate 30 (Fig. 70), the bottom corners of each position have two dots each, a rather interesting fact and one which assists in locating at least the positions of the twenty bottom stamps on plate 30. On other copies we find as many as 3 dots on one corner.

Less frequently we find the engravers marks in the form of solid lines the entire length of the stamp (Fig. 74). These are probably at the side of the sheet and were used as the starting point for the layout. It is possible that on these plates where there were no perforated margins at the sides that these lines at the sides were left purposely in order to assist in cutting the sheet.

### GUIDE LINES

Scott's Specialized Catalogue describes guide lines as "horizontal or vertical colored lines between the stamps, and extended wholly or partially across the sheet," and states that their purpose is to "serve as guides for the operators of perforating machines, or to indicate the line of separation of the sheet into panes."

As has been previously suggested, some copies of the Black Jack have vertical lines the entire length of the stamp (Fig. 74 and Fig. 78a) but in my opinion these are sheet margin lines and appear only on those sheets, probably from plates 50, 51 and 53, where the side margins are not perforated margins but are straight edged. I believe that on none of the plates of the Black Jack will we find the mark for cutting the sheet into panes a solid line the entire length of the sheet. Rather we find a short dash, one at the bottom and one at the top of each sheet, indicating where the sheet is to be cut into its two panes.

If we start with the well established fact that there were seven plates of the Black Jack, then there would be only seven guide lines at the top and seven at the bottom of the Black Jack plates, a total of 14 different guide lines. These could appear on 28 different stamps, 14 top guide lines and 14 bottom guide lines, as the guide line could appear on the right or left of the stamp, depending upon which side of the arrow the sheet was cut, as illustrated in Fig. 75-78. But regardless of that fact, there could be no more than seven distinct types of the bottom arrows. In other words, a guide line appearing at the top of any Black Jack should fall into one of seven types, and similarly, a guide line appearing at the bottom of any Black Jack should fall into one of seven types.

No two guide lines of the seven Black Jack plates were exactly the same. Some are short, others quite long; some have a definite width, others are the faintest of lines. Because full sheets of the Black Jack are non-existent, and full panes are extremely rare, it is almost impossible to assign a certain guide line to a specific sheet, and say that guide lines "a" are from Plate 28, for instance.

I have arranged and had enlarged several guide lines of the Black Jack so that comparison and classification may be more easily made. Except for weak impressions or distortions in the printing process these guide lines should be exactly the same; that is, there should be no more than seven specific types at the top and seven specific types at the bottom of the Black Jack sheets.

The problem posed by a study of the guide lines is clearly evidenced by reference to Figs. 75 -78. In Fig. 75 are shown in enlarged size seven top guide marks for cutting the sheet into its two panes. As previously stated, we find the guide or arrow either at the right or the left of a particular stamp, depending upon whether the sheet was cut in two at the right or at the left of the guide mark. Regardless of where the sheet was cut there would still be only seven specific types of top guide lines from the seven sheets of the Black Jack.

Fig. 75 shows seven and Fig. 76 show five of these top guide marks, a total of twelve. How can these be reconciled with the accepted fact that there were but seven plates of the



Black Jack and therefore would be only seven types of guide lines at the top and seven at the bottom of the Black Jack sheets?

A careful comparison of these two illustrations discloses that all twelve guide marks or arrows are different. It is true that there is not a great deal of difference between some of the marks, but after allowing for the wearing of the plates still these differences cannot be satisfactorily reconciled. It is possible that the stamps shown on Figs. 75a and 76e are sheet margin and not pane margin copies. Sheet margin copies of the Black Jack seem to have caught some of the ink from the plates in the printing process and the result is a smudgy gray along the entire margin, a condition not appearing on pane copies.

This condition is indicated in the two copies last mentioned. The copies shown on Fig. 75d and e are also near enough alike so we may regard them as being from the same plate. But eliminating those specific items from our consideration we are left with nine distinct guide lines for seven plates, (Figs. 75b, c, d, f and g and 76a, b, c and d), each of which is sufficiently different from each other as to defy reconciliation.

We go to the guide marks or arrows at the bottom of the sheet and we are confronted with much the same problem. Fig. 77 shows seven and Fig. 78 shows five types, again a total of twelve. Fig. 78a is apparently a sheet margin copy and not a pane copy, as indicated by the extension of the guide mark almost the full length of the stamp. Many of the others, however, are definitely pane copies, as part of the adjoining stamp is clearly shown (Figs. 77a, g and 78c, d and e).

A comparison of these bottom guide lines bring more satisfying results, however, than does a comparison of the corresponding marks at the top of the sheet. For instance, Fig. 78d and e and 77g are near enough alike so that it is possible that they are from the same plate, as is true also of Fig. 77e and f and possible Fig. 78d. This would leave seven distinct types of bottom guide marks, as follows: Figs. 77a, b, c, d, e, g and 78b.

Further attention is also called to Fig. 78b. This has a very definite guide line but the stamp is also perforated on all four sides. Two explanations, at least, may be made as to this copy. Someone may have perforated the straight edge resulting from cutting the sheet into panes after the stamp was issued, as sometimes this practice was resorted to in respect to straight edge copies of many of our early stamps. Secondly, the engraver may have made a mistake and placed the guide line in the wrong place on the plate and did not take time to burnish it out. A similar instance is shown in Fig. 79 where there is a definite guide line alongside a perforated margin, which also might indicate in addition to the explanations above, that marks similar to guide lines were placed on the plates so as to assist in perforating the sheets.



**Fig. 79. Guide Line Showing  
On Perforated Margin.**

Even after we agree upon the seven types of guide lines from the top and seven from the bottom of the seven plates of the Black Jack we cannot match them in pairs and say that any specific two are from plate 28, or plate 29 and so forth. The absence of large pieces of the Black Jack renders such a determination impossible unless the several sheets are plated.

I realize that when so few guide line copies are available for study that it hardly justifies one in making too definite a statement on this subject. But presumably there were only two guide line copies to each sheet of 200 stamps and the ratio of guide line copies to other copies is 1 to 100, unless we reach the further conclusion that there were also similar marks placed on some of the plates to indicate the place of perforating the sheets. At least a beginning is made in this effort to study the several plates of the Black Jack, and it is hoped that further research will supply additional data in this fascinating subject.

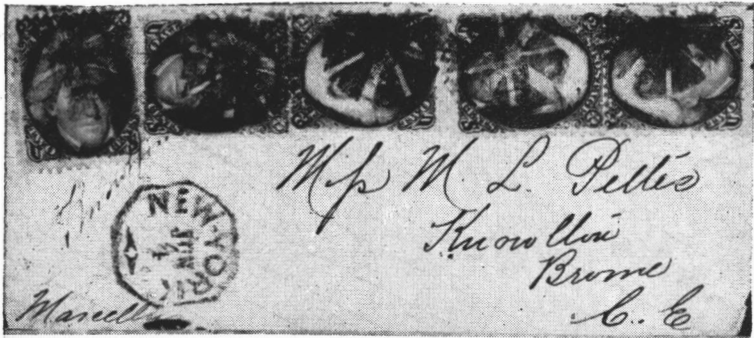


Fig. 80. New York to Canada



Fig. 81. Buffalo, N. Y. to St. Catherines, Canada.

## Chapter XV

### USES ON FOREIGN MAIL

One of the most fascinating phases of philately is the study of our United States postage stamps as used on foreign mail, that is, on mail to or from countries other than our own. Questions of rates, postal markings, both local and foreign, routes of travel, prepaid and collect items, the special significance of the color of the postal markings, and many other similar details, have made this particular branch of collecting most intriguing.

My discussion of the subject in its connection with the use of the Black Jack on foreign mail must of necessity be very general. I make no pretense at being an authority on or a special student of the subject. The late Dr. Warren Babcock, Professor Milliken, Stanley B. Ashbrook and Harold Stark, to mention only four, have made exhaustive studies of this phase of philately. The collector interested in this special subject would find the written works of these and other specialists most informative and instructive. It is only by coincidence that one of the most interesting periods of foreign mail usage should be at the very time of the use of the Black Jack, which is the subject of this book, hence this chapter on its use on foreign mail.

### CANADA

At the beginning of the Black Jack period, 1863, the Confederation of Canada had not yet been effected (1867). Canada proper was divided into Upper and Lower Canada, Upper Canada being the western and Lower Canada being the eastern portion of the country. In the postal history of this period Canada was divided into Canada East and Canada West, abbreviated to C.E. or C.W. (Figs. 80, 81, 83). The several provinces which later joined in the Confederation enjoyed their own independent postal system and were listed in the schedule of postal rates separately from Canada, such provinces including New Brunswick, Cape Breton, Prince Edward's Island, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. Prince Edward's Island did not join the Confederation until 1873 and it is only now that Newfoundland is giving up its separate status and is joining the Dominion (1949).

A very elaborate and detailed schedule of foreign rates is listed in the Post Office directories of the period. At the beginning of the Black Jack era all of the provinces that we now consider Canadian were given a separate listing, but they were also classed together under the heading of "British North American Provinces" as far as postal rating was concerned. The rate for a single letter (not exceeding  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz.) was ten cents for distances up to 3000 miles, and for distances in excess of 3000 miles the

rate was fifteen cents per single letter. A change was made in the Post Office directory for 1867, whereby the provinces were both listed and rated separately, although the rates were in the same amount as previously. On April 1, 1868 a new rate went into effect, the single rate being reduced from ten cents to six cents on prepaid letters, although it remained ten cents on unpaid letters not exceeding  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz. in weight.

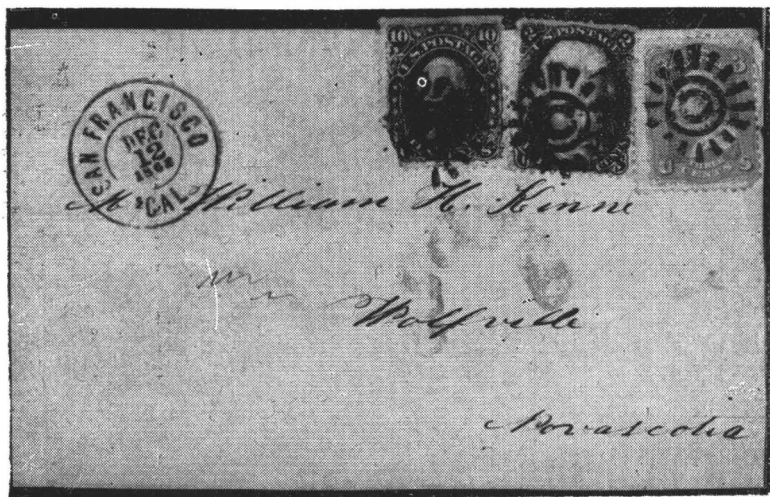


Fig. 82. San Francisco to Nova Scotia.

Although our series of stamps at the time included stamps in denominations of five cents and ten cents, which could be conveniently used to make up the ten cent Canadian rate, we find the Black Jack frequently used for that purpose, sometimes in the form of five Black Jacks (Figs 80 and 83) but more frequently in combination with the three cent stamp of the period (Fig. 81). Prepayment on all letters to the British North American provinces was optional, with the exception of mail sent to Nova Scotia, where prepayment was at first compulsory. By the provisions of the 1866 law prepayment to Newfoundland was also required. One interesting detail of the law specified that letters received from Canada bearing unused United States stamps in sufficient amount be delivered by our Post Offices without further charge, that is, without any local charge.

The cover illustrated in Fig. 80 is interesting from several other standpoints. It bears the rare octagonal New York City postmark which is rarely seen on covers during the Black Jack period. In fact, it is the only one I have observed in over 200 New York City Black Jack covers. The envelope itself appears to have been home made from writing paper, and in the lower

left hand corner appears the word "Marcellus," which is probably the name of a ship and thus indicates that the cover was carried by boat. The cover shown in Fig. 81 is also interesting because it shows the manner in which stamps were placed on top of one another in order to save room for the address, and on this particular cover each of the stamps is struck by the rare shield cancellation of Buffalo, N. Y., making it altogether a most desirable cover.

Special postal markings are also to be found on mail to Canada. Section 343 of the 1853 edition of Postal Laws and Regulations provided as follows:

"Under these arrangements with Canada and New Brunswick, the respective United States exchange offices are required to stamp 'U. States' on all letters sent into any of the British North American Provinces, as above; and to mark all paid letters received from the said provinces with the word 'PAID' and the full amount of the United States and Provincial postage paid thereon, both in red ink, and to mark all the unpaid letters from said provinces in black ink, with the full amount of the United States and provincial postage due thereon . . ."

At this point it might be proper to observe that the general rule as to all foreign mail at this time provided that where the postage was prepaid the postal marking was to be in red, and was to be in black when the item was unpaid, in which event the postage was to be collected at the point of delivery.

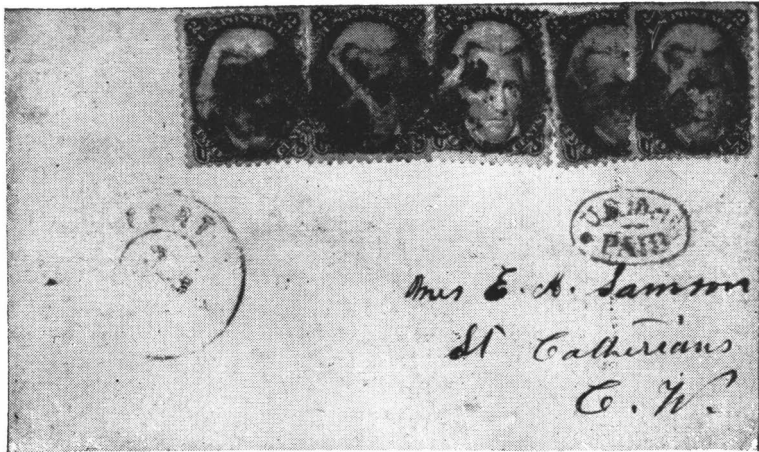


Fig. 83. Detroit to St. Catharines, Canada.

By the Postal Laws and Regulations of 1852, regular exchange offices were established along the border between the United States and Canada, between which cities mail for the two countries would be "exchanged," and frequently these dif-



**Fig. 84. Covers to Canada With "1d" and "1" Canadian Markings.**

ferent post offices would have markings peculiar to their own office. This was true as to the requirement of stamping letters entering any of the British North American provinces with the "U. States" above referred to, and we find several different styles and types of this marking. It does not appear that this requirement as to stamping all letters entering Canada with the "U. States" was carried out throughout all of the period, as we find many covers without this marking.

Illustrated herewith (Fig. 82) is an interesting cover originating in San Francisco in which each stamp is cancelled by the famous San Francisco "cog wheel" cancellation, and upon which cover is shown a very blurred cancellation of the "U. States" required under the provisions of the law above quoted. Another and later style of marking which was used in pursuance of the requirements of this Act consisted of a red oval in which appeared the word "U.S. 10 Cts. PAID" (Fig. 83). (See also Fig. 57 in Chapter XII). The San Francisco cover is particularly interesting and rare because it carries the 15 cent rate to Canada for single letters in excess of 3000 miles. It is also a year-of-issue cover and desirable from that standpoint as well.

On transient matter of the second class, the regular domestic rate was charged to and from the line. Thus a single Black

Jack would carry such mail to the International Boundary Line, any balance of postage to be collected at the point of delivery. In the Postal Laws and Regulations for 1868, the rate on transient matter of the second class was set at four cents. Fig. 84 shows two such items, one to Canada, one to Nova Scotia, each with a different kind of collecting mark, "1" and "1d," both in black, thus indicating the amount to be collected at the point of delivery. These markings stand for one pence, the equivalent of two cents in our money.

Section 260 of the Postal Laws and Regulation, 1866, provided that Cunard steamers, touching at Halifax, could carry prepaid letters for Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island for five cents for the single rate, the inland rate to be collected on delivery (Fig. 85). This letter was carried on the Cunarder "Asia" to Halifax, with the requisite five cent postage prepaid and made up of one Black Jack and the three cent stamp of the period. The cover also bears three markings in black, the "6," applied to the cover (upside down) indicating the local rate to be collected on delivery. The cover bears the black back-stamp of the Boston British Packet dated January 31, and also the Prince Edward's Island receiving mark, dated February 10, 1866 both in black. The black circular marking, with 13½ in the center, undoubtedly has some significance, but I am unable to explain it.



**Fig. 85. Five Cents Ship Rate.**

An unusual combination is also shown in Fig. 86, a pair of Black Jacks with the six cent stamp of the 1869 issue. The letter was not carried by the Cunard line, but by an American ship "Steamer City of Brooklyn," leaving on August 9. This letter would appear to be overpaid in the amount of four cents, the two Black Jacks, as the Canadian rate had been reduced to six cents for a single letter before the issue of 1869 appeared, as stated above.



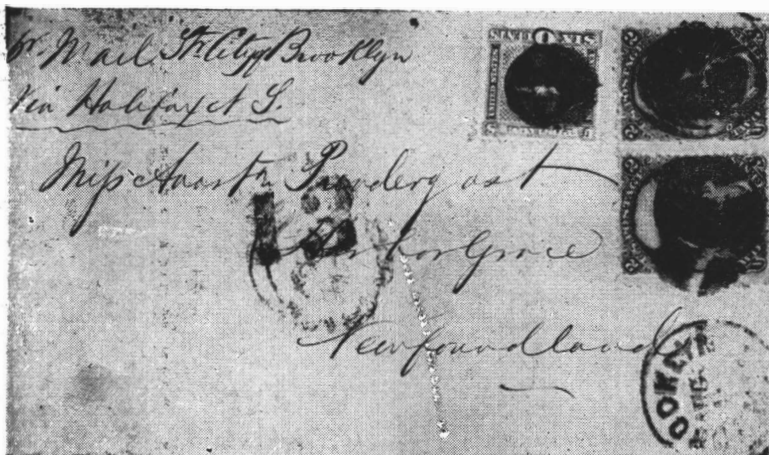


Fig. 86. An Unusual Postage Rate.

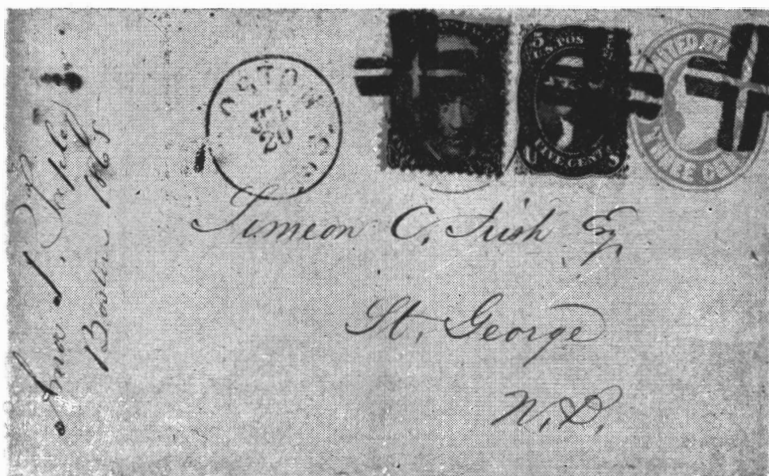
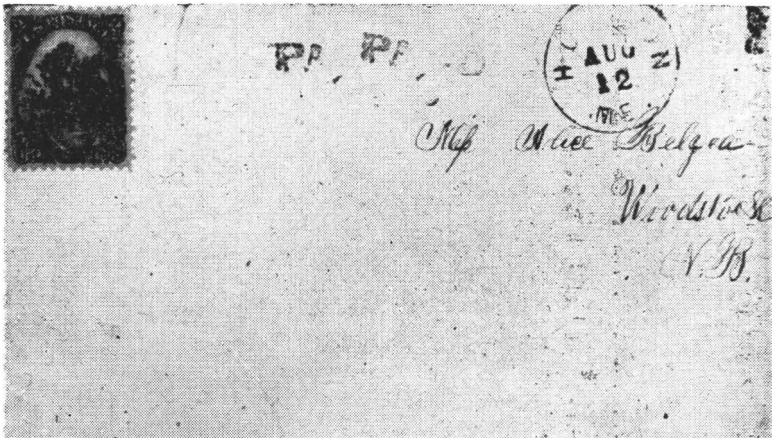


Fig. 87. An Interesting Combination of Stamps.

A very interesting combination to pay the ten cent rate is shown in Fig. 87, with each stamp struck with a most attractive crossroads cancel.

Probably the rarest of the covers passing between Canada and the United States at this time were those carried by ferry between Canadian and American ports, or those carried on a short trip over the International Boundary Line, for which a special rate of two cents for a first class letter was established. This regulation would cover letters going from Detroit to Windsor, or vice versa, from Port Huron to Sarnia, and between similar United States and Canadian points where the only transportation was by ferry. It would also include short land routes over the International Boundary Line. Such covers are almost non-existent. Fig. 88 illustrates such a cover from Houlton,



**Fig. 88. Two Cent Black Jack Paying Postage Only to U. S.-  
Canada Lines. Canada Handstamp "PAID"  
Collects Postage in Canada.**

Maine, which is located practically on the Maine boundary line, and Woodstock, New Brunswick, a distance of less than fifty mile inside of the New Brunswick border. These two towns were established by international treaty as "exchange offices."

Winthrop S. Boggs, in his exhaustive and authoritative work "The Postage Stamps and Postal History of Canada," states that this special rate, one pence for Canada, two cents for the United States, began on June 10, 1851 and continued until February 1, 1875. Mr. Boggs gives the text of the letter from Canada's first Postmaster General, James Morris, to Postmaster General Hall of the United States, suggesting that such an arrangement might be in effect between Franklin, Vermont and Frelighsbury, Canada East and between Newport, Vermont and South Potton, Canada East. These towns were about as far distant from each

other as Houlton, Maine and Woodstock, New Brunswick, so it is reasonable to suppose that the cover above illustrated is a letter carried under such postal regulation. "PAID 2" struck twice is in black.

It can thus be seen that the study of foreign mail as used between only two countries, such as the United States and Canada, presents many interesting problems and merits the most careful research of the specialist in this field.

### USAGE ON FOREIGN MAIL TO ASIA

Covers with the Black Jack to countries in Asia are not plentiful, probably because traffic with the Far East had scarcely begun at the time the Black Jack was in use. Commodore Perry made his memorable trip to Japan in 1853 and the following year the first treaty with Japan was entered into, so trade with at least Japan was less than ten years old at the time the Black Jack first appeared.

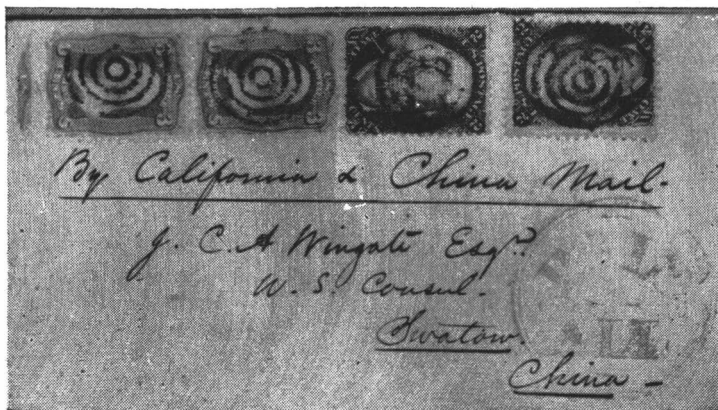


Fig. 89. United States to China.

There were in effect during this period six different rates to China on first class letters up to  $\frac{1}{2}$  ounce, depending upon the routes taken. These rates varied from 10 cents to 72 cents, the latter rate being for letters which went by way of Marseilles and the Suez Canal. The low rate of 10 cents covered letters to San Francisco by regular mail, and thence to China by private ship. Fig. 89 illustrates such a cover, originating in Bristol, New Hampshire, and addressed to the United States Consul at Swatow, China, J.C.A. Wingate. It is an 1869 letter and on the reverse side are the black receiving marks of both Hong Kong and Swatow. The large "PAID ALL" in a circle, all in red, is the characteristic marking on this mail to China by private ship

out of San Francisco, and all of the other covers over this route which I have examined have on them this same large red marking, and also in manuscript "By California and China Mail," as on the cover illustrated.

By way of Southampton, mail to China required 45 cents in postage, and illustrated in Fig. 90 is such a cover, addressed to Macao. This cover to Commander Robert Townsend originated at Rochester, New York, and bears the correct postage when carried by way of Southampton. Several postal markings appear on the front of the cover, while on the reverse side is the black receiving mark of Hong Kong. The red London "PAID" receiving mark is superimposed on the red packet marking of New York and partially obliterates it. The red "40" shows the amount of the 45 cent rate which is credited to China. The large "1" in the center is in red and is apparently an English marking. I find this "1" marking on all China mail "Via Southampton," though on some covers it appears as "1d" (1 pence). It is probably the portion of the postage paid English as a transfer point, thus leaving the usual 3 cents for sea travel.

An interesting sidelight on this cover arises out of the fact that during the Civil War the Steamer "Wachusett," commanded by the addressee, Commander Townsend, captured a Confederate ship.

The small and intriguing cover to Batavia, on the island of Java, Fig. 91, originated in Wilmington, Delaware, on April 22, 1865, a few days after the close of the war, and is addressed to Commander C. R. P. Rodgers of the U. S. Steamer "Iroquois." The thrice-struck Wilmington town mark is in black, while the "N. York Pkt." marking and the London receiving mark are both in red, as is also the "48," showing the amount of the 53 cents postage credited to Java. This was the correct postage for a letter carried by British steamer via Marseilles.

An interesting use of the Black Jack on second class mail from China is illustrated by Fig. 92. This is a printed wrapper enclosing a Price Current list of Shanghai prices, and carries the rare U. S. Consul General mark of the Post Office Department at Shanghai. Both the postmark and the boxed "Via San Francisco" are in black, although the latter marking is also known in red. Although it was not uncommon for price lists to be sent into the United States in large lots and then stamped and mailed individually, this cancellation was apparently applied in Shanghai.

I have never seen a cover with a Black Jack used as part of the postage to Japan, although undoubtedly such covers do exist. Some few years ago I acquired what is claimed to be the very Black Jack which was the basis for the inclusion in Scott's Catalogue of the listing of a Black Jack used in Japan (Fig. 93). Illustrated herewith is the letter signed by the prominent New York dealer and philatelist, Edson J. Fifield, then with Scott

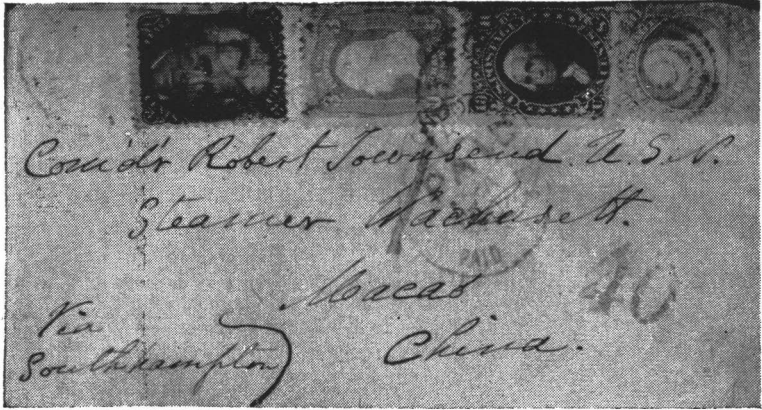


Fig. 90. Another U. S. to China Cover.

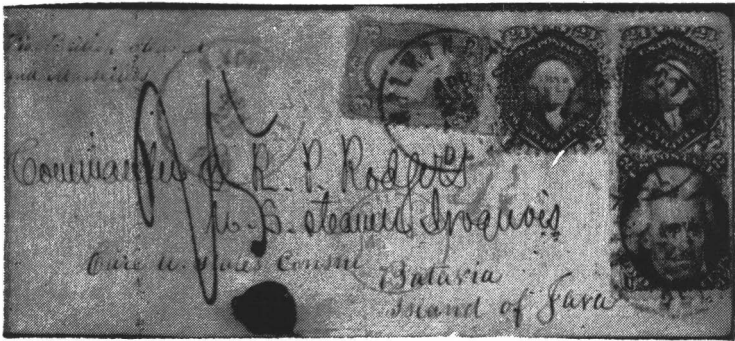


Fig. 91. United States to Batavia, Java.

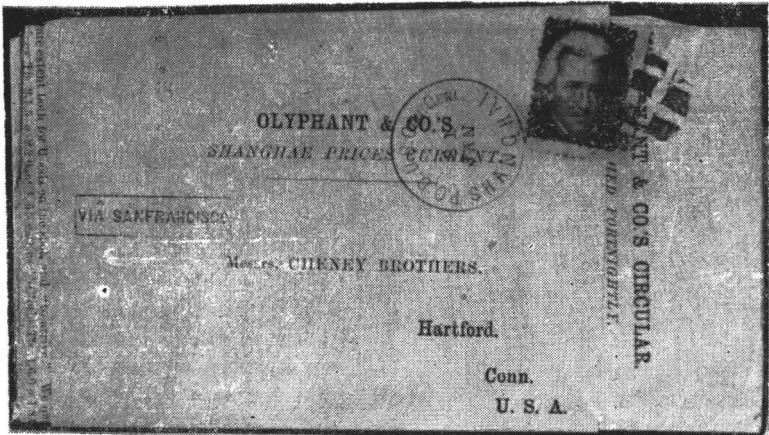


Fig. 92. A Cover Mailed from Shanghai to the United States.

Stamp and Coin Company, the publisher of the Standard and Specialized Catalogues, returning the stamp and advising Ashley C. LeDuc, likewise a prominent dealer and philatelist, of Florida, that the copy of the Black Jack, #87, showing a Japanese cancellation, would be listed in their next catalogue. Such Japanese usage is listed in Scott's Specialized Catalogue, though no value is assigned, as the publisher of this catalogue assigns no value at all, or gives the value in italics, when the actual value is unknown or is in a state of fluctuation.

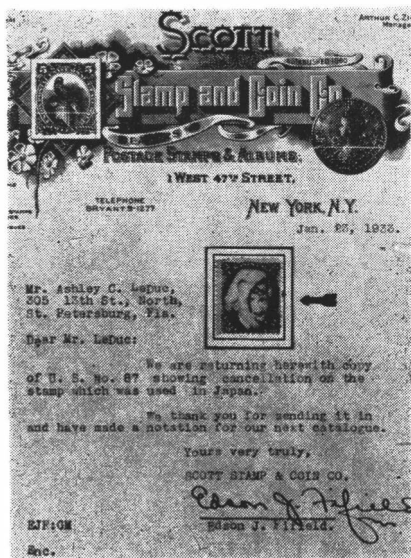


Fig. 93. Black Jack Stamp Used in Japan.

I am no authority on Japanese cancellations and postmarks, but the copy here illustrated has been expertized as above indicated and is reputed to be the exact copy used by Scott in listing this usage in its catalogue. The cancellation does appear to be very similar to those found on the Japanese stamps of that period.

Undoubtedly covers with the Black Jack addressed to Asiatic countries other than those above mentioned do exist. We had postal treaties or agreements with several such countries, but the rates were comparatively high and the routes were indirect. The adhesive postage stamp as we know it was but 20 years old at that time, and many countries had not yet developed a postal system. The addressees on all of the first class letters above illustrated, oddly enough, were in government service at the time. It is not strange, therefore, that foreign covers of the Black Jack era, particularly to Asiatic countries, are rare.

## USES ON FOREIGN MAIL TO THE COUNTRIES OF EUROPE

It is not necessary, nor would it be practical, to discuss in detail the use of the Black Jack on the mail to all of the foreign countries with whom we had postal treaties. There were, to be sure, some special cases where rates were not uniform, and others in which certain special provisions prevailed, but in general it may be said that the postal rates in effect at the time were uniform as to each particular country.

One variation from the general rule was in relation to the German States. As was true in respect to the Canadian Confederation, so also was it true that the Black Jack was first used before the unification of the German States into the German Empire. We therefore find that the mail of the period was addressed not to Germany, but to Prussia, Bavaria, Saxony or one of the states that later combined with the others to make up the German Empire.

During the Black Jack period there were two specific rates in effect in respect to mail addressed to the several German States. If letters were sent by way of Bremen or Hamburg the rate was 15 cents for the single letter (Fig. 94). This particular

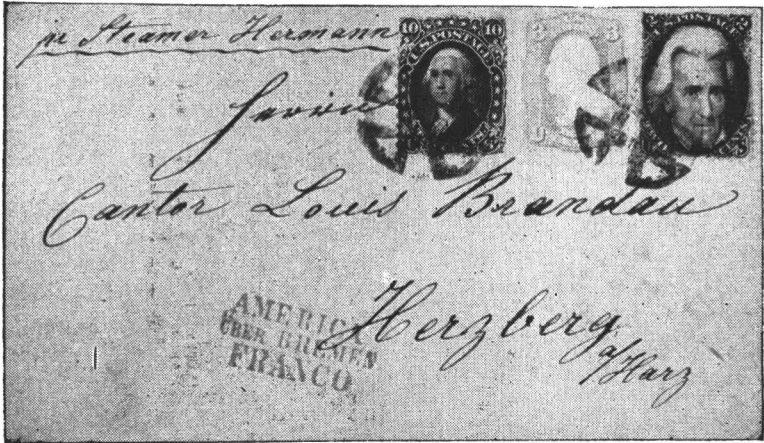


Fig. 94. United States to Germany.

cover is apparently addressed to the Cantor of a Jewish synagogue, one Louis Brandau. The circular marking is in red, "N. YORK BREM. PKT." The "12" indicates the amount of the postage to be credited to the foreign country. The Bremen marking, "America-UBER Bremen-Franco," is in blue and shows that the letter went "by way of Bremen" and therefore required only the 15 cent rate. It was carried on the Steamer



"Hermann," and an attractive cancellation ties each of the stamps to the cover.

Fig. 95 illustrates another letter carried on the Steamer "Union" by way of Southampton to a doctor at Frankfort-on-the-Main. Both postal markings are in red, showing prepay-



Fig. 95. Another U. S. to Germany Cover.

ment of the postage. The circular marking is the rare New York "Paid All Transit" marking, much rarer than that shown on the preceding cover. The French marking indicates the letter cleared through Cologne.

The second rate in use to the states of the German-Austrian Postal Union went by what was called the Prussian Closed Mail. This required 28 cents in postage, which was divided as follows: 5 cents for the domestic (U. S.) fee, 16 cents for sea travel and 7 cents for the local rate. Fig. 96 shows one of these "Closed Mail" letters, originating in Prattville, Alabama and addressed to Eugene A. Smith, "student of philosophy" in Berlin. The Prattville marking is in black, the New York marking in red, showing prepayment, and the boxed Aachen marking, which is in blue, shows this to have been a Prussian closed mail letter, thus requiring 28 cents postage.

An interesting sidelight on the last cover is called to mind by a chance conversation with one of the Burger brothers, famous Nassau Street stamp dealers for many years. While looking through their stock of covers on one of my visits to New York City I ran across a letter from the Eugene A. Smith correspondence and casually mentioned to Mr. Burger that I had a cover or two from that correspondence. Mr. Burger then told me how years before, when they were much younger, his brother had





Fig. 96. United States to Germany.

toured several of the Southern States on a bicycle, looking for old covers and other philatelic material. He had heard of and contacted a Professor Eugene A. Smith, of the University of Alabama, and had finally obtained some old correspondence from him. In it were many letters addressed to the Professor when, as a young man, he was studying in Europe. My collection contains letters addressed to Eugene A. Smith at Berlin, Heidelberg and Hanover, thus indicating that he studied at several of the famous universities in Europe.

During the Black Jack period the rate to France for the first class letter weighing up to 1/4 ounce was 15 cents (Fig. 97). This is a very fine cover, showing the correct postage and with each stamp cancelled by the very rare star-within-a-star cancellation of West Hampton, Mass., the large star containing in its five points the letters U-N-I-O-N. Brookman, in his latest work (Vol. I, p. 227) illustrates a similar cover with the same combination of stamps on a letter to France with each stamp cancelled by this UNION star cancellation of West Hampton.

On this cover the town mark and star cancellations are both in black, with the New York Exchange office mark and both of the French receiving marks, one over the other, being in red, showing prepayment. The "12" shows the portion of the 15 cents postage credited to France, leaving 3 cents for sea travel.

The rate to Italy and Two Sicilies, via North German Union, closed mail, via England, was 19 cents for a letter not exceeding 1/2 ounce. Fig. 98 shows such a letter, carried by the Cunarder "Saxonia," and bearing the rare "New York—Paid All—Direct" marking in red. The stamps are each cancelled by an odd but attractive killer in black.



Fig. 97. United States to France.



Fig. 98. United States to Italy.

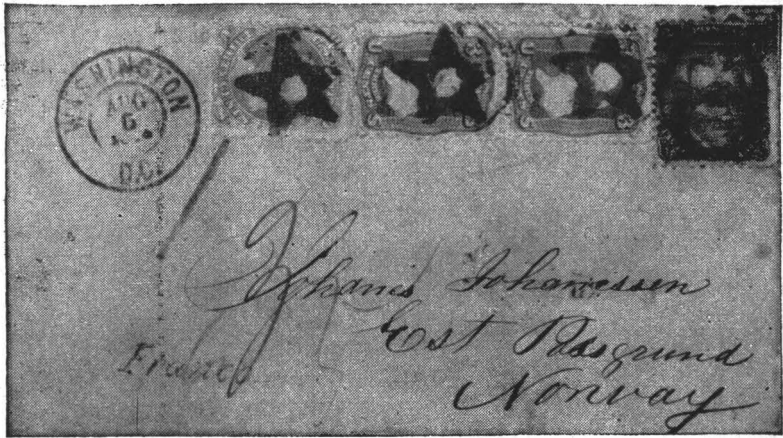


Fig. 99. United States to Norway.



Fig. 100. United States to Switzerland.

Norway mail carried two rates, depending upon whether the letter was sent by Prussian closed mail, in which event the rate was 42 cents per single letter, or by way of Bremen or Hamburg, in which event the single letter rate was 38 cents. The letter shown in Fig. 99, originating in Washington, D. C., bears the correct rate for mail sent by the way of Bremen or Hamburg, and the "35" in manuscript indicates the amount of postage credited to Norway, leaving 3 cents for sea travel. Note the "Franco" in the lower left corner, and the solid star, with colorless circle at the center, cancelling each stamp. This cover was formerly in the Henry C. Gibson collection.

The rate to Switzerland for a ½ ounce letter was 42 cents by Prussian Closed Mail, so the letter illustrated in Fig. 100 was a fully prepaid letter. Both the red New York marking and the boxed "PD" shows the postage was fully prepaid. The "36"



Fig. 101. United States to Germany (19c Rate).

in the circular marking from New York shows the amount which the New York Exchange office credited to Switzerland. The letter was apparently carried by the boat "Java," and by way of Paris to St. Gall, en Suisse, as tied into the red "PD" marking is the circular French receiving mark.

By way of Hamburg or Bremen, as in the case of mail for the German states, a lower rate was in effect, that of 19 cents. Fig. 101 illustrates such a letter, with the rate correctly paid. The "16" in script indicates the amount of the postage credited to Switzerland, the remaining 3 cents covering sea travel. The cover originated in Williamsburgh, but the state is indistinct and as there are nine post offices of this name listed in the post office directory of the period, it is impossible to determine the exact point of origin. Five separate backstamps are on the re-



Fig. 102. United State to Spain.

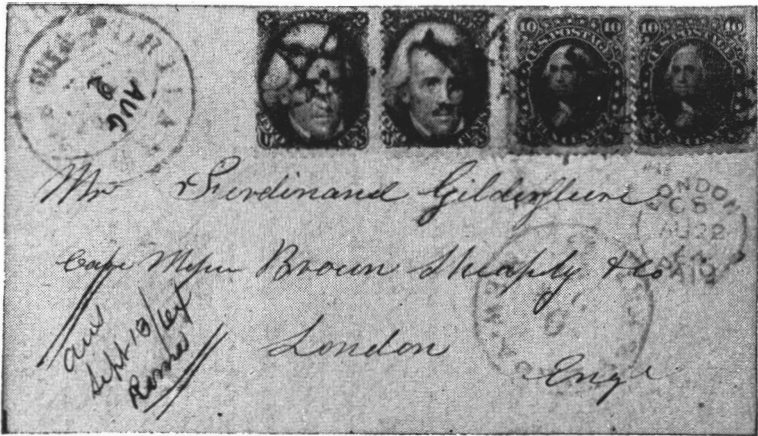


Fig. 103. United States to London Showing 24c Rate.

verse of the cover, among them the dated receiving marks of Hamburg, Heidelberg and Basel.

Mail to Spain by French mail was 42 cents and Fig. 102 shows a cover with the correct postage. Originating in Boston on January 2, 1867, addressed to Ensign Joshua Blake on the "U. S. S. Augusta" and bearing the prepaid Boston British Packet marking, the letter was first directed to Gibraltar, Spain, then forwarded to Barcelona, then to Toulon, France, where it apparently caught up with the addressee. In addition to the boxed "PD" and the three receiving marks on the front of the cover, receiving marks on the reverse side of Barcelona on February 13 and of Toulon on February 21 are to be found.

Mail to Great Britain and Ireland at the time the Black Jack first came into use was 24 cents up to ½ ounce, though it

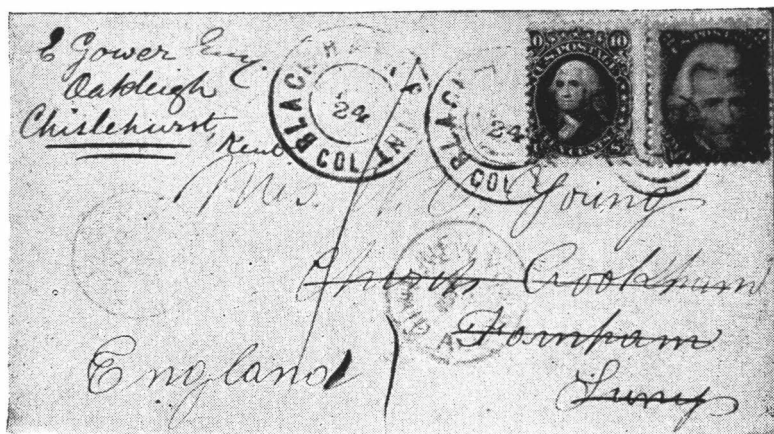


Fig. 104. United States to England Showing 12c Reduced Rate.

was later reduced to 12 cents, so we find the Black Jack used in combination to make up both rates. Fig. 103 is a fine cover originating in Portland, Maine on August 2, 1864, and bearing the correct postage made up of two copies of the Black Jack and two copies of the 10 cent stamp of the same series, Scott's #68. Each stamp is cancelled by the attractive black outline star of Portland with solid dot in the center. The Portland "PAID" town marking, the New York American Packet, and the London receiving mark are all in red.

Fig. 104 shows a cover following the change of rates. This letter, from Dr. Carroll Chase's famous collection of territorial covers, originated at Black Hawk Point in Colorado Territory (Nevada) on April 24, 1868, and cleared through New York on May 2nd. It bears the Liverpool receiving mark of May 13,



1868. The New York marking is the rare "PAID ALL" marking in red.

The covers illustrated represent most of the European countries with whom we had dealings at the time. I do not recall having seen covers with the Black Jack to either Russia or Portugal, although they undoubtedly exist. The covers illustrated, however, fairly reveal our postal system of the period and the various routes over which the mail traveled, as well as the great variety of postal markings which were affixed to the covers enroute.

## Chapter XVI

### PAPER CREASES, BAD PERFORATING ODDITIES

In addition to the orthodox or standard copies of stamps, where the printing, color, paper, perforations and other details are normal and in conformity to the original design, there are also the unlisted varieties which form a part of any specialized collection. In fact, because such "oddities" are so few, they often command a slightly higher price than a normal copy, a direct result of the law of "supply and demand," which is undoubtedly the controlling factor in the valuation of all philatelic items.

The "creased paper" variety is one such oddity to be found in the Black Jack. Although the paper upon which our stamps were printed was carefully examined for defects and flaws before the printing process was begun, we still find instances where

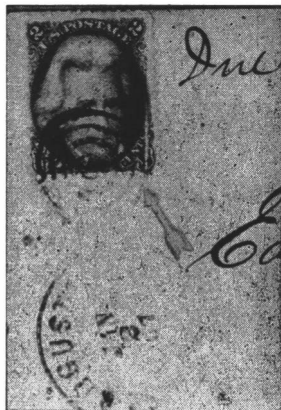


Fig. 106. Paper Crease. See Arrow.

defects in paper escaped the vigilant eye of the examiner, and copies of stamps are found where the paper was creased or folded before the stamp was printed. This results in an unprinted strip through the stamp, the width varying with the depth of the crease or fold, which becomes quite apparent if the crease unfolds or is pressed out. In figure 105 are illustrated several off cover copies where this condition exists.

The detection of creased paper copies on covers is more difficult. The fact that the stamp was stuck to the cover and the creases therefore prevented from opening up, as is possible in an off cover copy, results in a situation where many creased paper copies on cover appear to be normal until examined under glass. Fig. 106 illustrates a creased paper copy on cover from St. Au-





Fig. 105. Paper Creases.



Fig. 107. Bad Perforating Jobs.

gustine, Florida. (Florida covers with the Black Jack are extremely scarce). Careful examination discloses that there is a definite paper crease the entire length of the stamp, though only the lower half has opened up so as to be discernible to the naked eye.

Double or "freak" perforations form another class of oddities. Especially in the earlier issues of our stamps, when the perforating process had not been perfected, we find many perforation errors, resulting in odd and unusual items. Illustrated in Fig. 107 are several stamps showing double perforations. It was not uncommon, when the perforation was so very much out of line and actually cut into the design of the stamp, for the users to cut the stamps apart with shears in the margins, thus completely ignoring the perforation. Fig. 107a and f are such examples, while 107d shows such imperfect perforation as to centering, that there results a stamp where parts of four separate stamps are shown.



**Fig. 108. "Blind" Perforations.**

Still another variety is what is known as a "blind" perforation (Fig. 108). Even today, with the most modern equipment, occasional instances of this incomplete perforation are found, where only a few perforations appear between certain rows of stamps on a sheet, thus resulting in a "blind" perforation. Such items have value only as oddities or when purchased for study purposes. On the stamp illustrated, only four perforations appear on the left, and five on the right, whereas a fully perforated Black Jack has from sixteen to seventeen perforations along each side of the stamp.

Certain printing defects resulted in what is known as an off-set, or an impression on both sides of the paper. While a certain process of printing is now known as "off-set printing" and was actually employed in producing some of our regular postage stamps, 1918 to 1920, the original off-set resulted from the impression of one sheet before the ink had completely dried being transferred to the back of the sheet on the top of it. Fig. 109 illustrates a normal Black Jack on its face, while on the re-

verse side of the stamp there are off-set parts of four Black Jacks from a wet sheet upon which had been placed the sheet from which the illustrated stamp was taken.

It has been reported that the Black Jack is known actually printed on both sides, but I have never seen such a copy nor do I recall having seen it mentioned in any authentic work. Information as to any such item would be most welcome by the author.

Undoubtedly there are other oddities or freak copies to be found on the Black Jack, but those described or illustrated above are the most common.



**Fig. 109. Interesting Oddity.**

## Chapter XVI

### CANCELLATIONS WITH FANCY DESIGNS

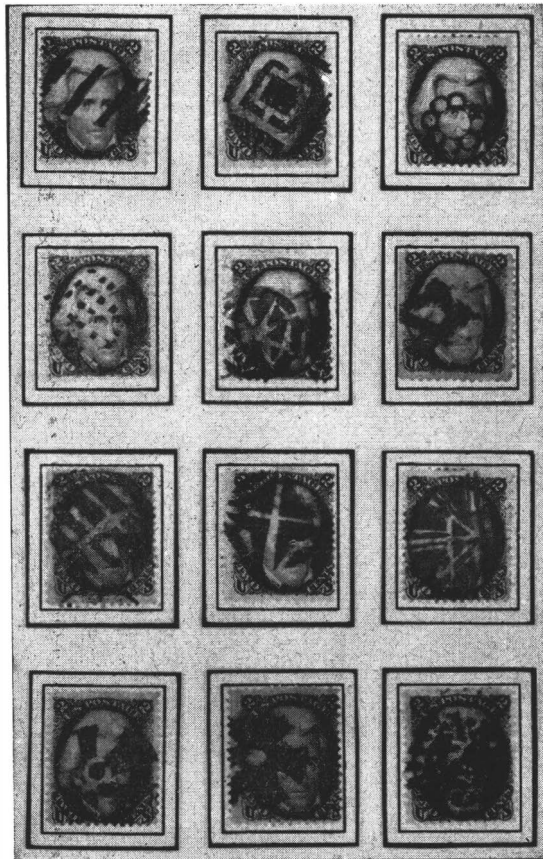
One of the most fascinating specialties in philately is that of fancy cancellations. Postmasters were permitted to design and make their own canceller or "killer," as it is known in the hobby.

Probably the article most commonly used in making these cancelling devices was the ordinary cork. Sometimes it was



**Fig. 110. Fancy Design Cancellations.**

used without alternation, which would result in merely a large black spot or smear. Some postmasters and ingenious clerks would spend much time and skill in whittling out beautiful designs for the killer, with the result that we find stamps of the



**Fig. 111. More Fancy Design Cancellations.**

Black Jack period cancelled by almost every design that could be carved from cork or wood.

Without attempting to be all inclusive the list contains such things as stars, leaves, flags, shields, flowers, snowflakes, crosses, animals, human faces, skulls, anchors, Masonic designs and geometric arrangements that defy description.

Probably the most famous group of fancy cancellations emanating from any one source, was that produced by Postmaster John W. Hill of Waterbury, Conn. He was either a clerk or the Postmaster at the Waterbury office from 1865 to 1918. So beautiful and unusual were many of Hill's designs that a special handbook has been prepared by Mannel Hahn and published by William R. Stewart, both of Chicago, illustrating two or three hundred of these Waterbury cancellations.

While some individual cancellations are fully as famous as the Waterbury cancellations, no post office had such a large variety. Among the famous cancellations are the Canton (Miss.) lyre; the Danbury hats; the San Francisco cog wheel; the Cambridge, Blackstone (Mass.) and North Bennington (Vt.) shield; the New York City "dancing man" and "three leaf clover," to mention only a few. Because of the great scarcity of some of these cancellations, a nice strike on a good copy of any of the stamps of the period commands a high premium.

No attempt will be made to illustrate all of these cancellations. Enough types will be shown, however, to indicate the wide range of subjects and designs which were employed in this particular field. All of the designs shown in Fig. 110 and 111 are in black, although some of these same designs are known in colors as well.

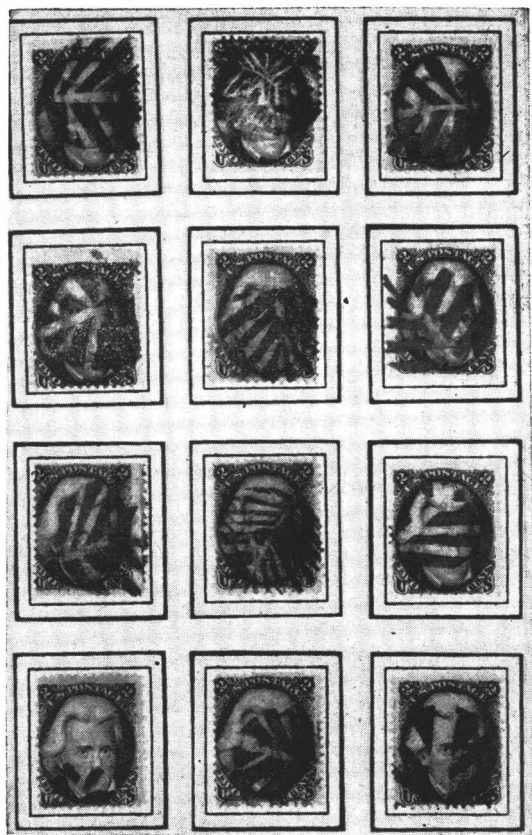


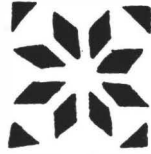
Fig. 112. Leaf Design Cancellations.



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1. Lombardy Grove, Vermont
2. Atlanta, Georgia
3. Bridgeport, Conn.
4. Salem, Mass. (red)
5. Brooklyn, N. Y.
6. Newbury Port, Mass.
7. Alexandria, Virginia
8. Unknown

9. Utica, N. Y.
10. Lawrence, Mass.
11. Utica, N. Y.
12. Washington, D. C.
13. Atlanta, Georgia. (blue)
14. Alexandria, Virginia
15. Hartford, Conn.
16. San Francisco, Calif.

All are in black except where noted.

A favorite design used by postmasters for cancellations during the Black Jack period was the leaf. Sometimes this design would approach a fan in detail and the latter term is occasionally applied to this fancy cancellation. Shown here (Fig. 112) are twelve separate and distinct designs with the leaf as the motif. They are all in black.

### STAR CANCELLATIONS



Fig. 114

The fancy design used probably more frequently than any other in cancelling our stamps during the Black Jack period was the star. These took almost every conceivable form. There were solid stars, outline stars, Star of David, stars within a circle, stars and crescent, double stars, stars with letters in the points and innumerable other fancy and intricate creations. It would be almost impossible to show all of the star designs used





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16

Fig. 115.

during the Black Jack period, but illustrated here in Fig. 113 are twelve such cancellations.

New York City had several different star designs, one very interesting type being a four pointed star within a circle. The West Hampton, Mass. star, with the letters U-N-I-O-N in the five points, is a particularly attractive design, while Putnam, Conn. had a very attractive star design in which a small solid star appeared between all of the points of the large star, all of which were enclosed in a solid circle. Pittsburgh and Portland, Maine, also had characteristic star cancellations.

While most of the star cancellations are in black, as is true with cancellations generally during the Black Jack period, we find them also in the other colors which were used for cancelling purposes during the period.

### **N. Y. CITY CANCELLATIONS ON THE BLACK JACK**

As might be expected, the city of New York had probably the largest variety of cancellations during the Black Jack period. See Fig. 115. While some cities, like San Francisco, Philadelphia and Chicago for example, used only a few types of cancellations. New York seemed to have an unusually large number. Shown in the accompanying illustration are types of cancellations used in New York City during the Black Jack period. There are fully as many more types, particularly star cancellations, of which there were several interesting designs.

The shield cancellation No. 11, is in red. I have two or three covers with this shield cancellation on them and although the strike is rather light on each cover, the outline of the shield is very definite. The artist whom I employed to make these sketches apparently discovered that there was a large "E" in the center, although I was not able to definitely arrive at that conclusion.

Of the cancellations illustrated here, Nos. 3, 6, 9, 11 and 16 are in red, while Nos. 7, 12 and 14 are in blue. The others are in black, although it is true that some of the markings here illustrated, such as No. 10, appear in both black, red and blue.

