

THE PEAPACK OVAL: A REVISION

David Petruzelli

When it comes to discussing very rare philatelic items-- a stamp, or cover where only one or two examples exist, invariably one makes mention of the rumor, nay the belief, that a second or third example may, does, did exist. Call it a form of philatelic pipe dream, or better yet, a desire to play with possibilities--keeping the lines open, so to speak, especially if one's memory of auction sales, name sales in particular, is on the short side.

William Coles' *The Postal Markings of New Jersey Stampless Covers* records two examples of the well-known Peapack oval, dated 1842 and 1843. In 1967, the H. R. Harmer sale of the Edwin Mayer collection listed an 1849 cover with the remark, "Only one other believed to exist." And in 1959 the Joseph Herbert collection sold by Sam Paige showed us still another Peapack oval, dated 1830, and described with a similar comment: "only two believed known." But there is a third cover, and one which is not a recent discovery. This is the Stephen Rich example (1842), illustrated on page 33 of Mr. Coles' book. It is also the cover from which the original listing in the *American Stampless Cover Catalog* was made. Oddly enough, the tracings used in the Coles' book and the 1978 edition of the ASCC are from the Mayer and Herbert covers respectively, so obviously neither of these covers can be said to have been "in hiding," yet Mr. Coles lists the oval with a rarity of RRR-2 and ignores the 1830 and 1849 year dates listed in the Paige and Harmer catalogs.

And finally, there are the discrepancies with dates: where's the 1843 cover mentioned in Coles, and the 1847 cover in ASCC? Until 1965 the various editions of the catalog listed the oval with an 1842 date and the note "one copy known," despite the 1959 appearance of the Paige cover. The 1971 edition dropped any mention of surviving examples, but listed it with an 1847 year date! I suspect that "1847" is a typo that was carried over into the 1978 edition. But where does the 1843 year date come from that is listed by Coles?

Until the question of these additional dates is resolved, the three covers I record are these:

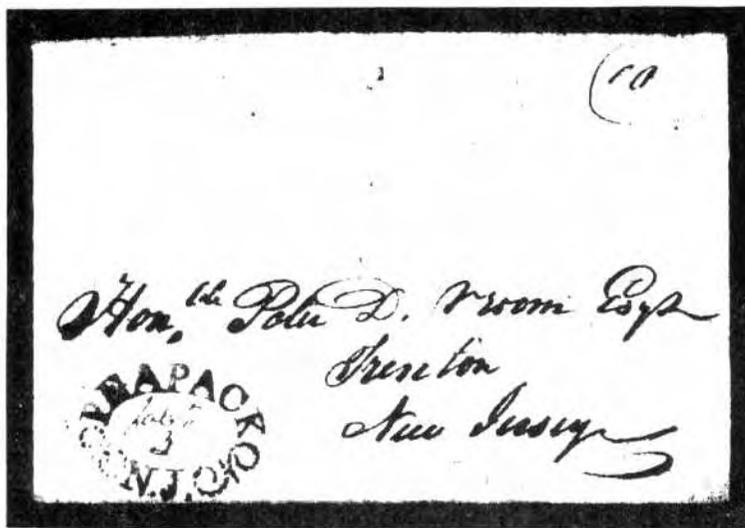
Date	Rate	Destination	Source
2-3-30	"10"	Trenton	Paige 6/59
9-17-42	"12"	Madison	Coles
1-15-49	"5"	Somerville	Mayer

As to the postmark itself, an examination of all three covers shows clearly that the tracings used in Coles and the ASCC are not accurate. In the oval, the fleurons are *dotted*, not solid. While there are only three examples as evidence, I would still surmise that the postmaster of Peapack was rather proud of his postmark. Only a very careful application of the date stamp would reveal the delicate and unusual nature of these attractive ornaments.

In summary, both the tracing and the dates in the Coles' book should be revised as follows:

P14 black (RRR-3)

1830-1849



SUSSEX COUNTY ANECDOTES

by: Donald L. MacPeek



I feel now is a good time to tell you about my interests and how they got that way so you can better understand my peculiar focus on Sussex County. I was born in Andover in 1928 to parents of Scotch-Irish and Dutch stock, both families of which had been in the New World since early colonial days, well in advance of the Revolution. We left the area in 1941, later than most of my immediate family, relocating in northern New York where I won a competitive scholarship which put me

in a science and engineering career which began at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York and continued until 1982 at Union Carbide in South Charleston W.Va. where I retired as Associate Director of Research and Development. Now I do some consulting work and study stamps, family geneology and the history of the railways - again in Sussex County. It has turned out that all three of these interests have become amazingly intertwined! My Grandmother Van Syckle, born in Deckertown, now Sussex, in 1875, was a fountain of information about the good old days until her passing in 1960. Even though I remember the 1930's as tough, we lived off the land, purchased little, bartered a lot and enjoyed our relatives. From Andover, I could walk to all of the railroads in Sussex County in a short time, only one being more than an hour away - across neighboring farm country. My parents grew to not worry if I didn't show up at supper time because I had strayed too far on a train watching trek. A couple of after dark returns got me a little hell but never quenched the wanderlust. From these thousands of trips I developed a detailed knowledge of what Sussex County looked like and not just from the roads in those good years. And as my grandmother begged, I've tried never to forget a thing. We've always gotten back "home" at least once a year except in the war years, a time or two during college, and this past year, 1983. History for my kids has been an unusual experience because we have been able to show them the pages in the first Book of Deeds and Wills at the court house in Newton on which can be found information about their ancestors dating before 1800.

One summer working on a track gang convinced me that my childhood urge for a railroad career was not for me. That has not in any way killed my love for the era about steam and collecting information about it. It seems strange now that except for one decaying vestige of the Lehigh and Hudson River Railroad (under the guise of Conrail) that there are no railroads left in Sussex County. You can believe, however, that I know and probably can still wander every inch of right-of-way anywhere in the area. The story gets interesting moreover when we begin to find out about ancestors who were station agents and in a few cases post office people as well! I gave up collecting US per se many years ago to concentrate on classic Latin America, Switzerland, Scandinavia, France and since 1970, about 35 other countries. Most are substantially complete but I do find new things to explain about my very special interest - Venezuela. The interest in New Jersey Postal History came on the basis of just happening to see a note in a Journal about the Society and I knew I was hooked. My objective is to acquire a piece from every post office which ever existed in Sussex County. Needless to say, I have a long way to go but I have made some very interesting finds in post card boxes at shows and the like - yes - even a drop post card with a postage due stamp cancelled McAfee Valley - for 25¢ in Columbus, Ohio! It's been fun, to say the least - and I suspect it will

become more so. I now have the idea of going back to Sussex County and photographing the locations where the current post offices are and the ones long ago were.

My interest in Cutoff - is based on my knowledge about the construction of the Lackawanna main line from Port Morris to the Delaware Water Gap in 1915. The location was somewhere between Roseville Mountain and Blairstown, within my old trekking limits, and served the largely immigrant laborers who were working on the fill that became the "cutoff". I can still hear in my mind the exhaust of the Lackawanna three-cylindrical locomotives as they struggled toward the Roseville tunnel with coal back in the 1930's. I strongly question the indication in Kay & Smith that there was any connection of the Cutoff post office with earlier offices at Lincoln or Greenville. Is there further information on this?

There are some other interesting aspects of Sussex County history that may interest you too. For example, Kay & Smith, and Coles, in his new book, talk about Whitehall (one word in Coles, two in Kay & Smith) in Hunterdon County. There was another Whitehall in Morris County which I know nothing about. But there was yet another Whitehall, just south of Andover. It was a small cluster of buildings including a tavern on the stage line from Stanhope to Newtown (Newton). It was there before 1800, still was there when the precursor to US206 was built & got complicated a bit when the Sussex Railroad was built in the 1850's. Now the railroad is gone but the intersection of the side roads which the railroad and US 206 caused which "preserved" the location, but not the buildings, IS still there. It is Whitehall to anyone who knows anything about the history of Andover. I'll just bet that somewhere, there is mail addressed to "Whitehall" in Sussex County! I mentioned earlier that among my mothers ancestors are the Van Syckles who came to New Amsterdam as Van Syckelin's at least as early as the 1640's. My great grandfather was for some time the station agent for the New York, Susquehanna and Western Railroad and postmaster at Quarryville, a discontinued postoffice northeast of Sussex (then Deckertown). His daughter, my grandmother, later married a Van Syckle. There were lots of them and some lived at a place called Van Syckle's in Hunterdon County (DPO 1851). Yet, there was and IS another Van Syckle's, further northeast of Quarryville near the New York border. In fact, you can find it on current Exxon highway maps of the area! I KNOW mail was addressed to this hallowed location of my relatives - but did it ever have a post office? How do we collect letters addressed to locations that never had post offices? This is the next intriguing part of my Sussex County interest - is to find mail addressed to towns that existed or still exist but which apparently never had postal facilities of their own. The trick is to compile the names of all these locations and even more important, to find out where they were or are. Again, I know where lots of them are but the challenge will be to collect things that no-one ever thought of saving since it is neither the stamps nor the cancels that are important!!!! My progress is nearly nil except for the information - some of which is first hand memory. For starters, the list would at least include: Roseville (not the one in Essex County), Pelletstown, Ackerson, Brighton (a real wide spot but very dear in my memory), Springdale, Woodruff's Gap, Fredon, Pinkneyville and many more.

From a previous Society Auction, one item therein is a real winner! Described as a Beemerville DPO PC, it turns out to afford a real comparison of the vast differences between what the post office could do in 1905 compared to today! The card was addressed to Augusta, perhaps six miles to the south. It carries Newton and Augusta cancels which give a clear picture of how it got there and when. At that time there was a mounted post route from Beemerville to Sussex, Deckertown up to 1901 and when my grandmother

lived there. By rail, it got an early train from Sussex to Franklin Furnace on the New York, Susquehanna and Western, formerly known as the New Jersey Midland. There was a junction there with the Franklin Branch of the Sussex Railroad (Lackawanna). The mail was exchanged there and it went to Newton for sorting and placing on a train bound from Newton for Branchville, the end of the Sussex Railroad and beyond Augusta by a few miles. The card made it in ONE DAY! Today it would be driven to Dover for "processing" at 078 and delivered no sooner than the next day - making an even longer trip.

I'm now sure Whitehall was the first stop on the Newark and Oswego stage line which ran through Sussex County from Stanhope - Whitehall - Newton - Augusta - Tuttle's Corner - Sandystown (Hainesville) - Brick House (Montague) and then across the Delaware. This route eventually became US 206 except I'll bet the four horse hitches went thru Halsey rather than by Ross' Corner, as US 206 does today.

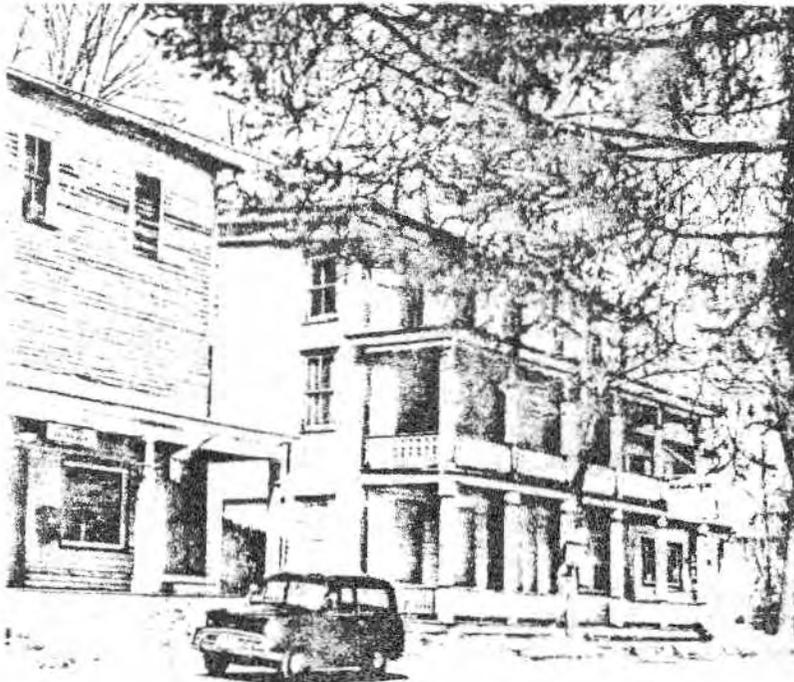
While I am interested in an illustrative examples from each post office, I'm sure that my horizons will expand as more material and information comes to light. I certainly will be looking carefully at the Society Auctions, perhaps as the best solution. Certainly some of the most difficult, if not impossible, items will be from offices closed before the advent of adhesive stamps and/or anything other than a manuscript cancel. Even so, in the short time I've been at this I have examples from about half of the 60 DPO's for Sussex County (I don't count those which later became Warren County locations about 1824). There are about 25 post offices in the County today. I have on my list of populated places about 60 other such locations - one being real interesting in that it appears two towns had the same name - not at the same time, and it was the name which moved! (There is a Rail Road mixed up in this!).

Perhaps someone could help me on a few DPO identifications which I can't locate geographically with the info I have here. These are Benville, Foster's Ferry, Knowlton's Mills, Maxville and Willow Grove. Were these really in Sussex County? What are they near or called today? The lists of existing post offices show Glasser (07837). I can't find it? Where is it - what is it? New information here suggests that Monroe (07434) and Glenwood

(07418) may now be DPO's. Is that true? Listing of Montague as an active Zip in the Current phone book for Sussex County gives 07827. Since there is no other post office on record for Montague Township I would not be surprised to see it reinstated. Any information on this? On page 75 of Coles new book, I see a Johnsonburgh cover - but with "Johnsonsburgh" CDS. All my records show Johnsonburgh is correct. What is the explanation?

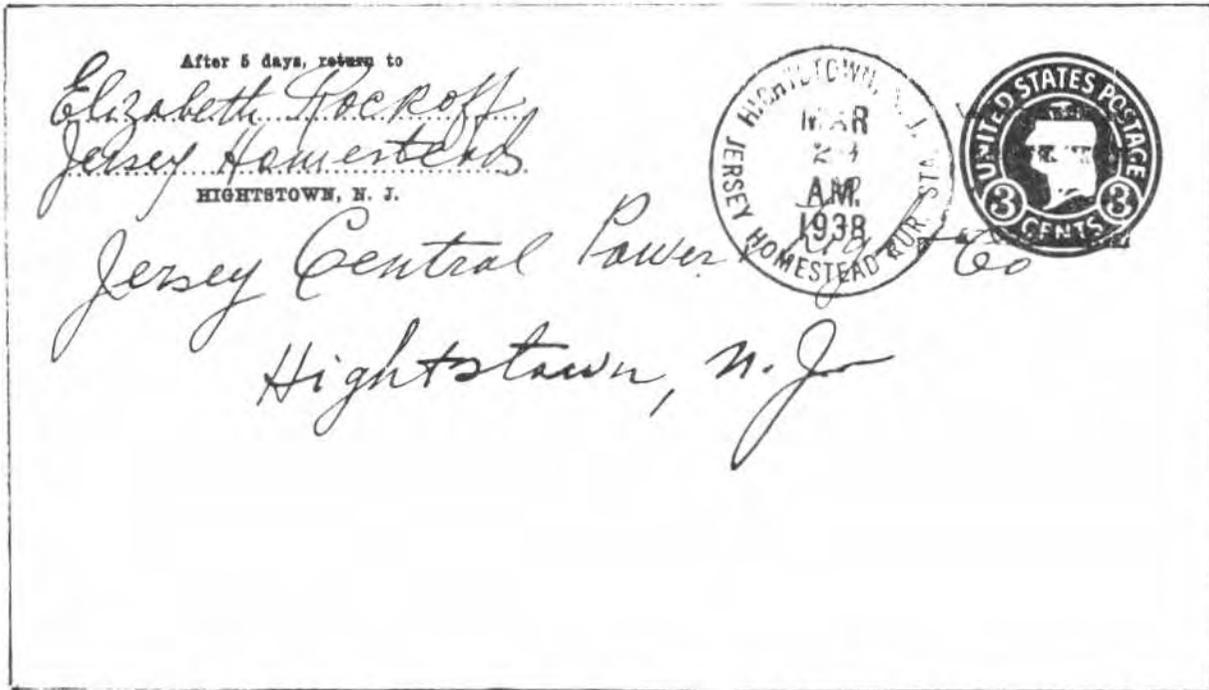
Correspondence regarding any of my inquiries, or other aspects of Sussex County postal history may be directed to me at any time at the following address:

1518 Village Drive
South Charleston, West Virginia
25309

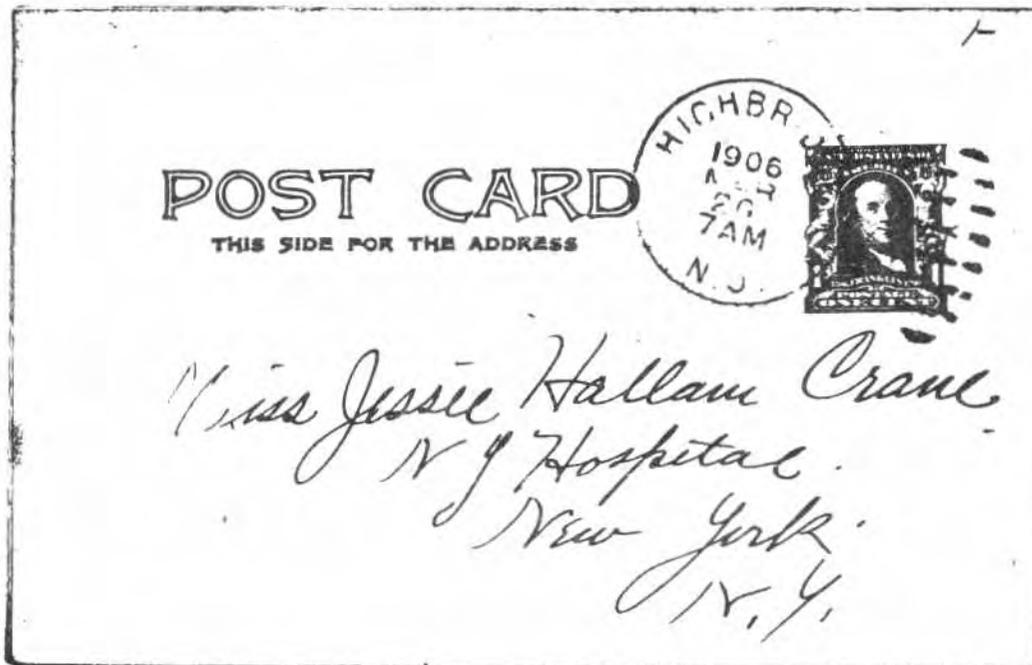


The inn and post office in Johnsonburg.

Brandes H. Smith



This Homestead Rur(al) Sta(tion) marking, dated March 29, 1938 appears to be from a branch of Hightstown. However, Homestead Rural Station is not listed in Kay and Smith. Has anyone more information?



On December 1, 1905 Highbridge became High Bridge, but at least as late as March 20, 1906, the old one word canceler was still being used.

Update on New Jersey COUNTY & POSTMASTER Cancels :

Since the Preliminary Listing that appeared in the January 1981 issue, and the Update that appeared in the January 1982 issue, an illustration has been found for the MIDVALE type, and two new listings complete with illustrations have been found.

CORRECT
JOHN G. COFELA, P.M.
JERSEY CITY, N.J.



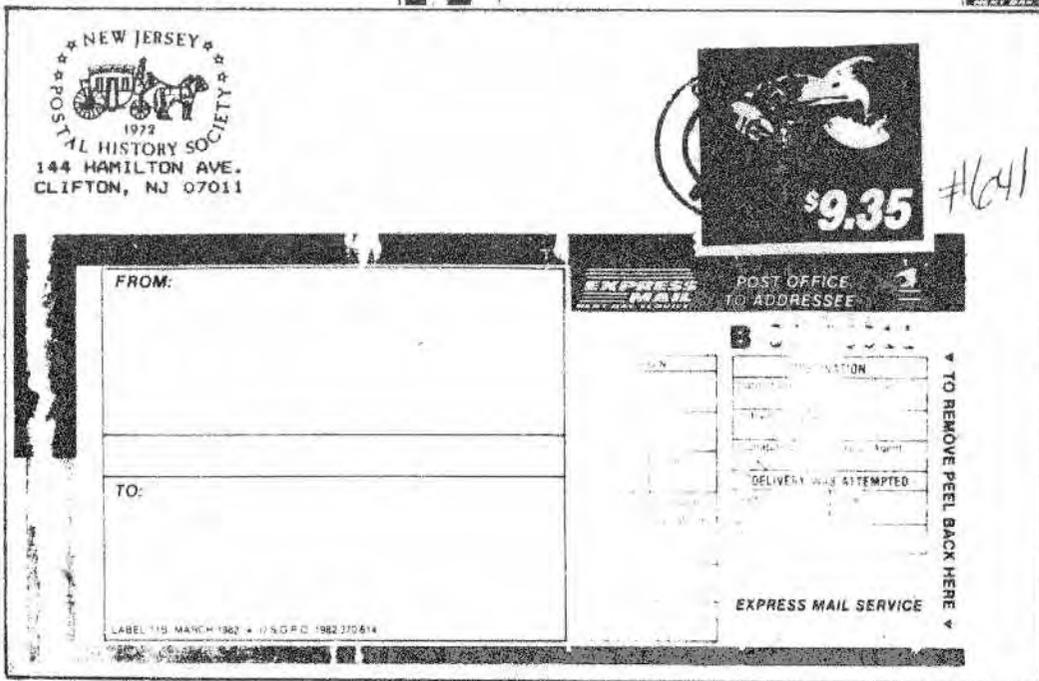
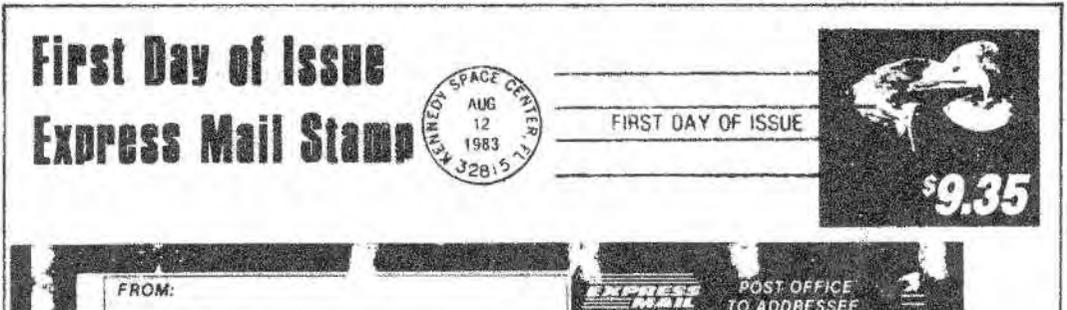
CORRECT/JOHN G. COFELA, P.M./JERSEY CITY, N.J.	Jan	1887
MIDVALE/PASSIC CO., N.J.	Oct 12	1878
IRA W. MOE, /Moe, N.J.	Feb 10	1899

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The New EXPRESS MAIL

Wm. Harnden

While philatelically inspired cacheted First Day Covers of the \$9.35 stamp are relatively easy to acquire, here we have an Express Mail usage tied on a First Day cover and received the next day, and a commercial usage on a relatively small cover from late August 1983 mailed from CLIFTON NJ, and tied with the magenta DC CDS and delivered in Pittsburgh PA the next day.



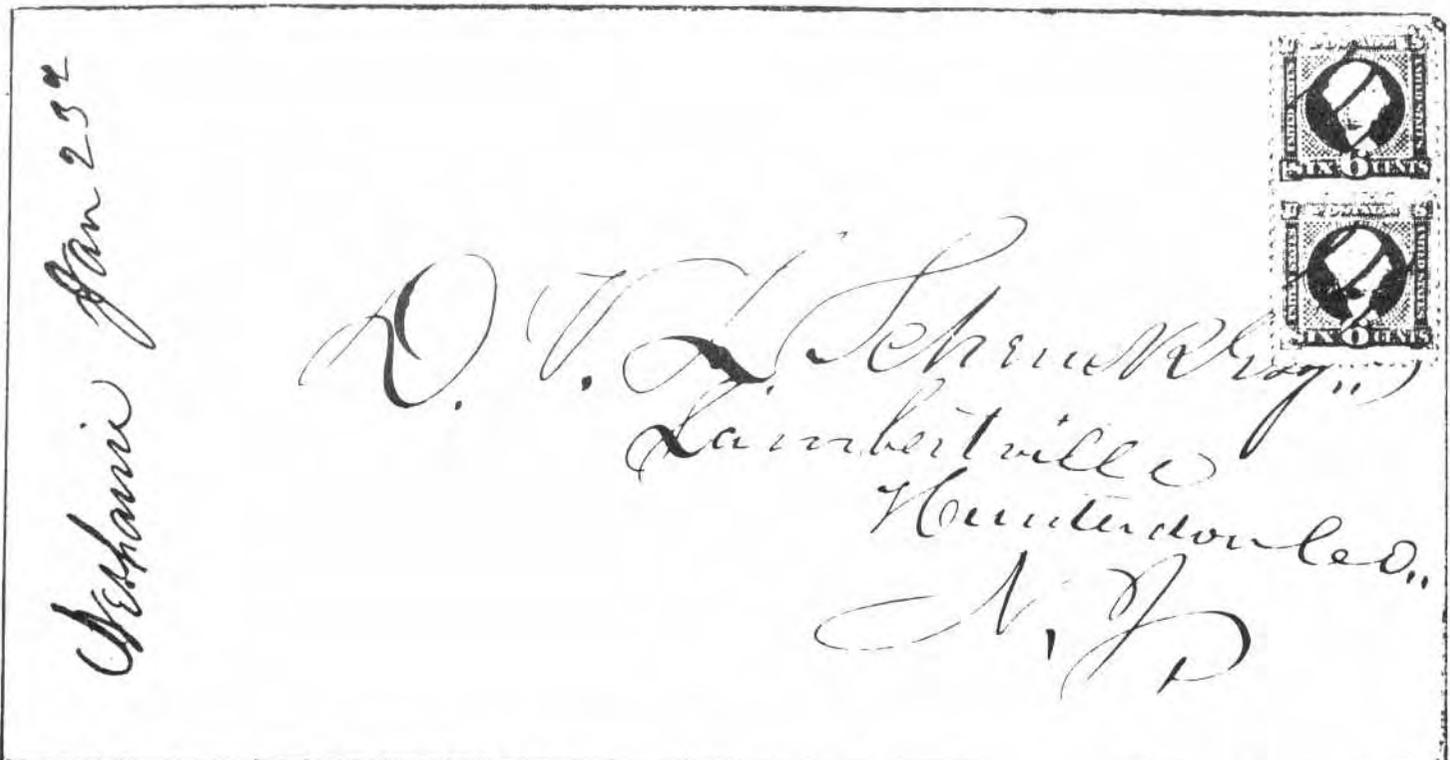
6¢

NJc1869
13

MULTIPLE WEIGHT (2X) DOMESTIC LETTER RATE

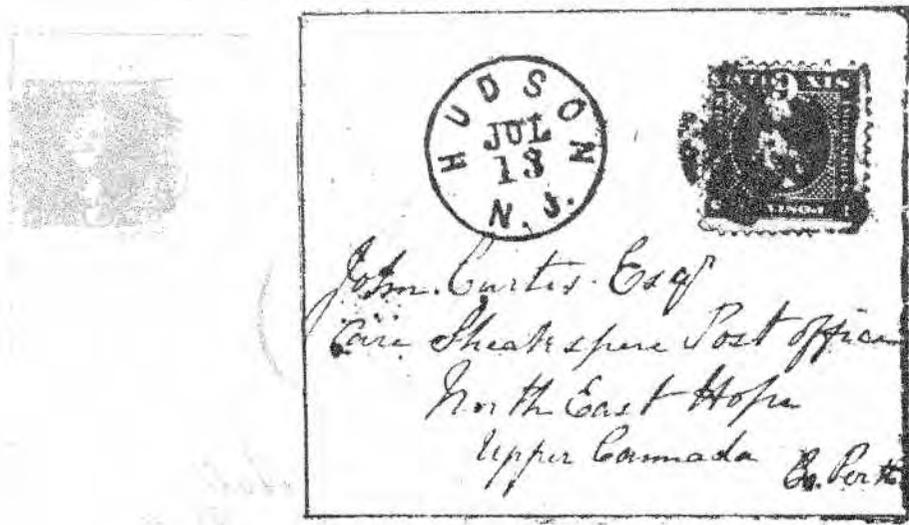


MULTIPLE WEIGHT (4x) DOMESTIC LETTER RATE



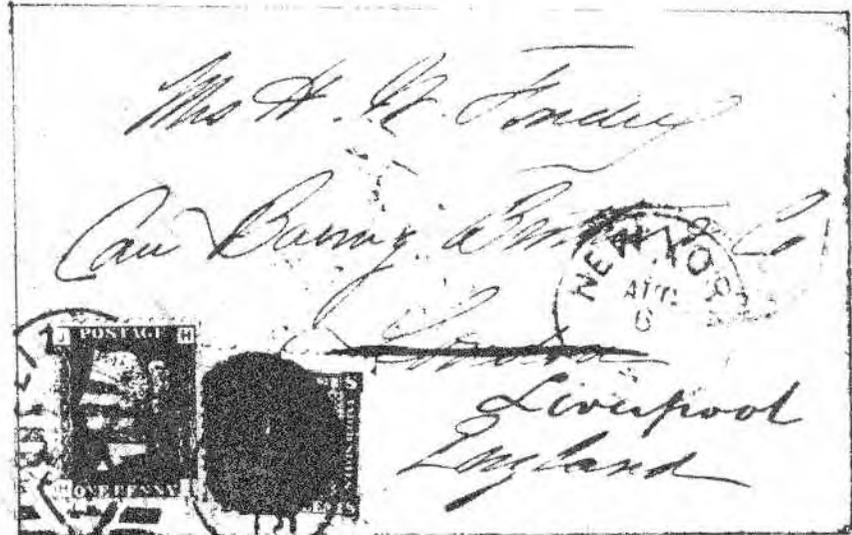
6¢

LETTER RATE TO CANADA



6¢

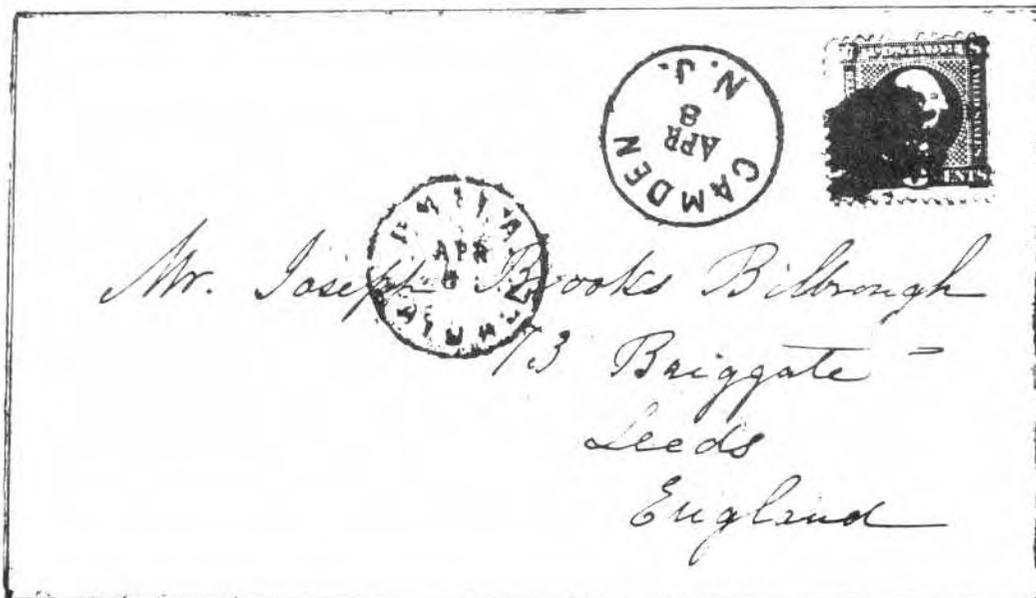
FOREIGN LETTER RATE TO ENGLAND - 1870
FORWARDED INTERNALLY WITH
ONE PENNY RED ISSUE OF 1864



6¢

NJc1869
15

FOREIGN LETTER RATE TO ENGLAND 1870

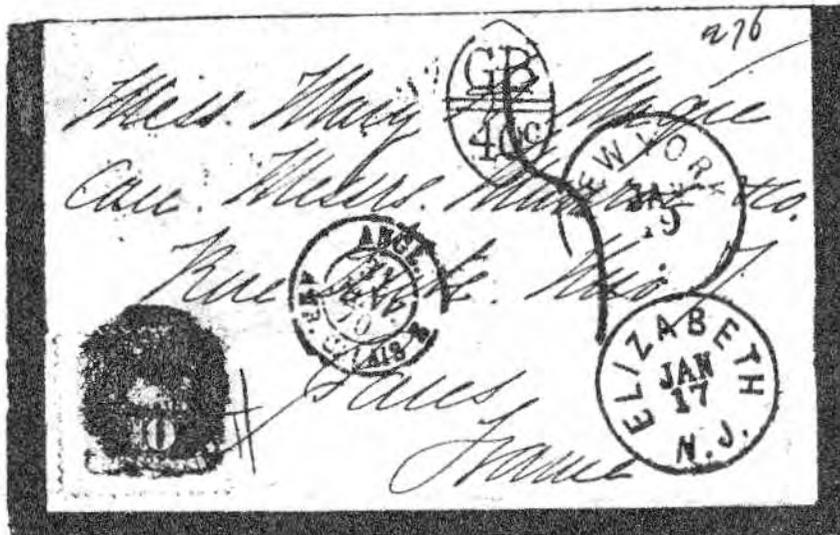


10¢

NJc1869
16

FOREIGN LETTER RATE DIRECT TO FRANCE 1870
ALTHOUGH PRE-PAID AT THE DIRECT RATE, THE LETTER
WAS ROUTED VIA ENGLAND DUE TO LACK OF DIRECT
SAILINGS DURING JANUARY, ONLY REQUIRING A 4¢ RATE,
RESULTING IN AN OVERPAYMENT OF 6¢.

NOTE: HANDSTAMPED "GB/40¢" & FRENCH SQUIGGLE
"5" DECIMES DUE MARKING, AND "ANGL.(ETERRE)/
AMB(ULANT) CALAIS" TRANSIT MARKING.



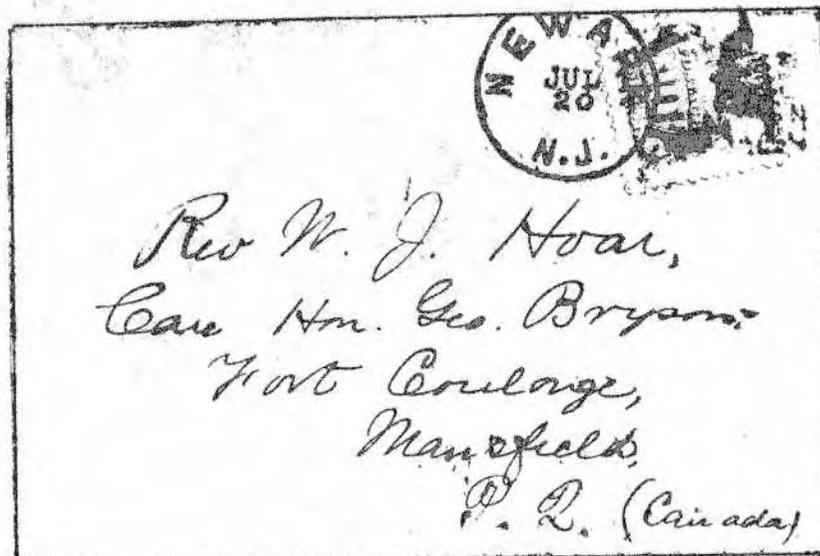
10¢

FOREIGN LETTER RATE DIRECT TO FRANCE 1870
NOTE ABSENCE OF "GB/40+" MARKING, AND
APPEARANCE OF "ETATS. UNIS/PAQ. FR. H No. 2"
FRENCH TRANSIT, AND "B" DECIMES MARKING.



10¢

4¢ OVERPAYMENT OF 6¢ RATE TO CANADA
10¢ RATE REDUCED THE PREVIOUS YEAR



12¢

NJc1869
19

FOREIGN LETTER RATE TO ENGLAND 1869



12¢

MULTIPLE WEIGHT (4x) DOMESTIC LETTER RATE



12¢

PLUS THREE 3¢ - PAYING 21¢ RATE TO SWITZERLAND



15¢

FOREIGN LETTER RATE TO FRANCE 1869



to be continued