



# NJPH

THE JOURNAL OF  
THE NEW JERSEY POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

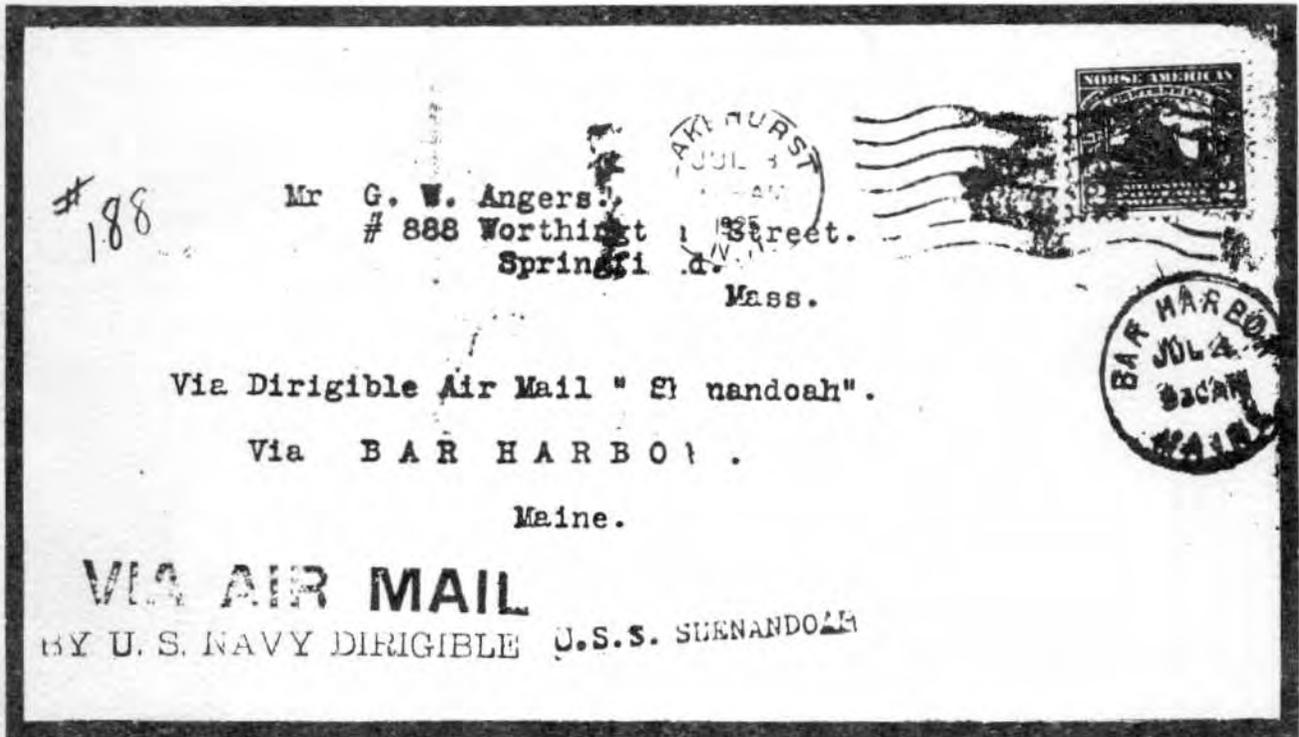
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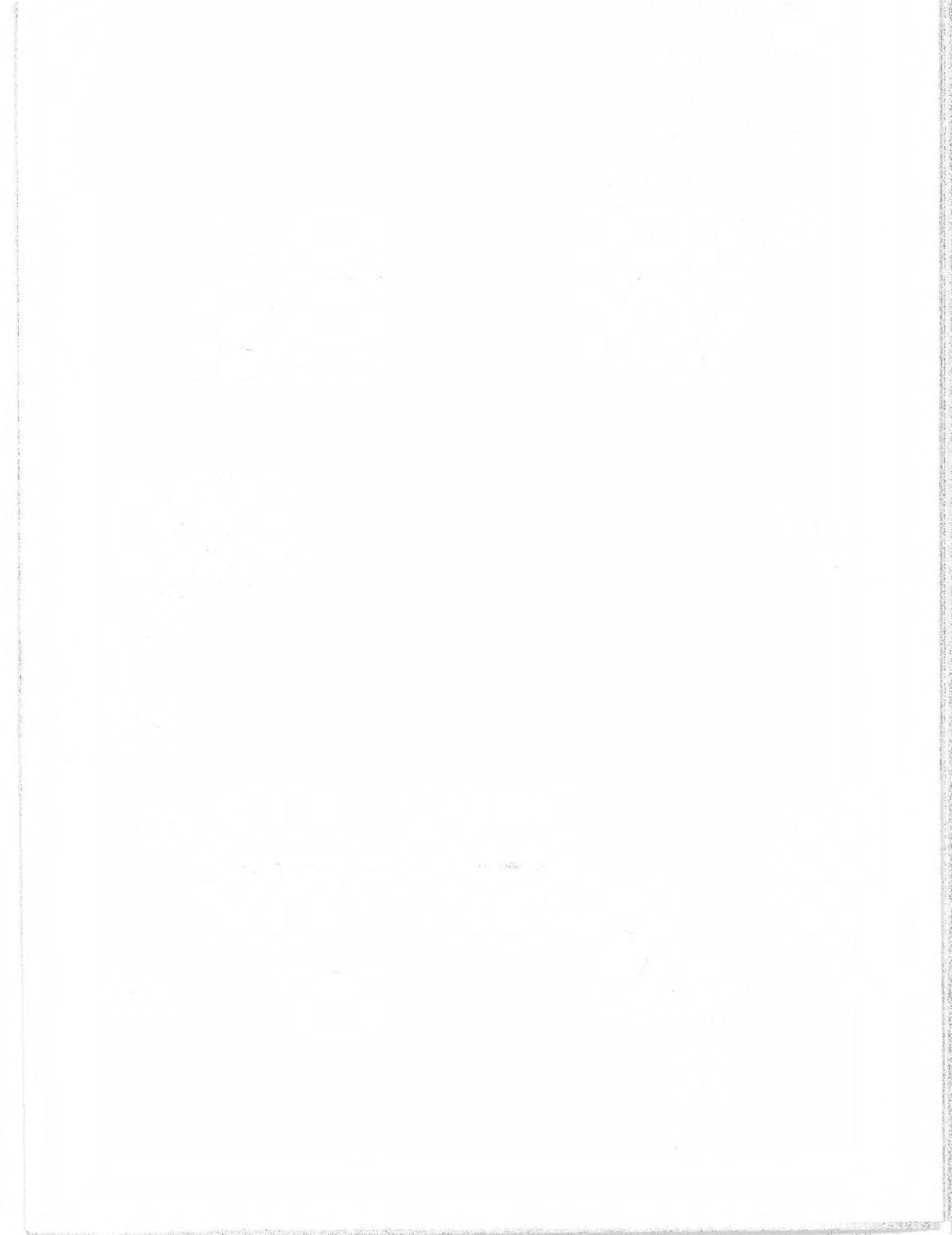
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ZR-1



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## *First Rigid Airship Commissioned as a U.S. Navy Vessel*



# The ZR1 *Shenandoah*

*The Shenandoah moored to the USS Patoka.*

by Cheryl Ganz

The story of the first American-built rigid airship, the ZR1 *Shenandoah*, begins with a German air raid over industrial England during World War I, when thirteen Zeppelins, one of them a Wittmundhaven-based L49, dropped bombs over the Norwich countryside.

To cover the sound of their engines, the airships attacked from high altitude, even though this led to other difficulties: Crews became air sick, engines failed, and radios refused to function. Further, as the thirteen Zeppelins turned for home across the English Channel, several were carried off course by the north wind. Only eight of them would return safely to Germany.

The commander of the L49, thinking he was over Dutch soil, descended to verify his location. In fact, he was still over France and, as the airship descended, it was attacked by five French airplanes and forced to land near Bourbonne-les-Bains. Although some of the nineteen-member crew tried in vain to set their airship afire, the Zeppelin was captured intact. Before it was dismantled, the design was copied.

Parts of the L49 later were exhibited at the Army/Aviation Museum in Paris. Recently, a rear gondola from the airship was put into storage, awaiting construction of a new lighter-than-air museum building at Le Bourget.

In 1918, the United States was given drawings of the L49, and these were used as the basis for construction of America's first rigid Zeppelin-type airship. A Naval Appropriations Bill passed in 1919 provided for construction of one rigid airship in the United States and purchase of another. This was the British R38 that crashed on a trial flight in England. Funds also were appropriated for construction of a naval airship station.

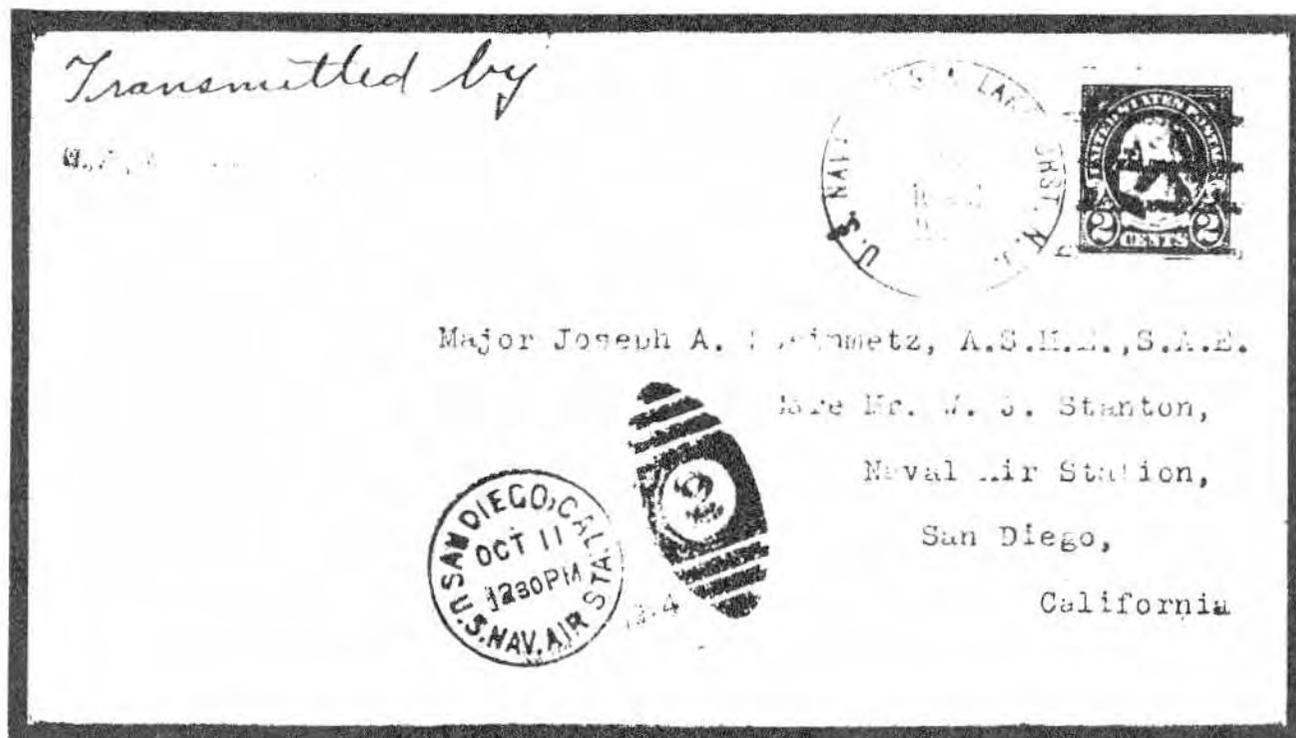
Parts for the ZR1 were made at the Naval Aircraft Factory in Philadelphia and assembled in the new hangar built at Lakehurst, New Jersey. For the ZR1, drawings of the L49 were modified in length, tail fin, and bow design, and one additional engine

was added. Further, the ZR1 was the first rigid airship to use helium instead of hydrogen.

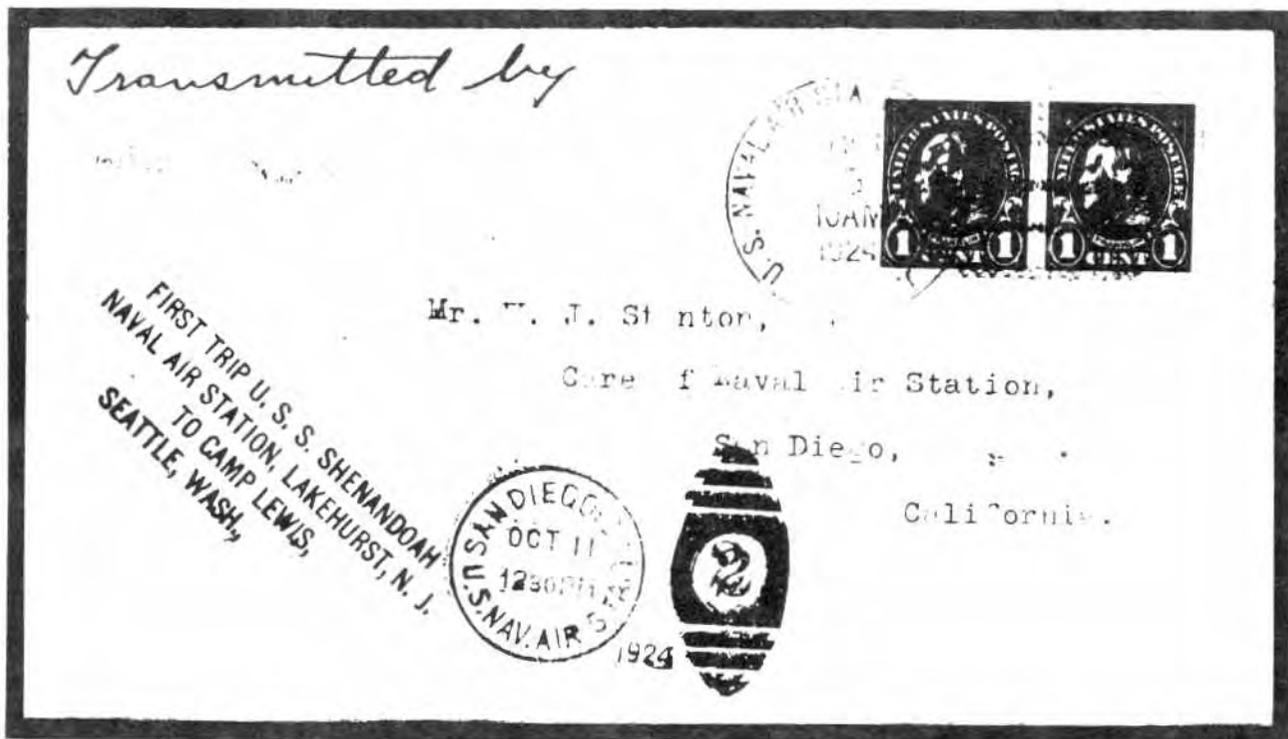
On October 10, 1923, the airship was christened *Shenandoah* — an Indian name meaning "Daughter of the Stars" — and transferred to the U.S. Navy. The ZR1 thus became the first aircraft commissioned as a naval vessel.

Early flights, like one to the Shenandoah Valley on Navy Day, were for training and publicity. Major flights included a trip to St. Louis for the International Aeronautical Congress and National Air Races, a visit to the airship hangar at Scott Field in Illinois, and a transcontinental flight.

The *Shenandoah* never carried official mail but, on a couple of occasions, collector-prepared items



**U.S.S. Shenandoah, Trans-Continental Flight, Oct. 8-12, 1924 (AAMC Z500).** Lakehurst, N.J. Oct. 8, 1924 & San Diego, Calif. Oct. 11, 1924 U.S. Naval Air Station pmks., ms. "Transmitted by." straight line "U.S.S. Shenandoah."



**U.S.S. Shenandoah, Trans-Continental Flight, Oct. 8-12, 1924 (AAMC Z500).** Lakehurst, N.J. Oct. 8, 1924 & San Diego, Calif. Oct. 11, 1924 U.S. Naval Air Station pmks., Appropriate cachets,

were transported. At first, this kind of special request was honored and even abetted by the local postmaster, as I will explain below. Unfortunately, it was soon discovered that some people were taking advantage of the airship program. As Rear Admiral Moffett remarked about A.C. Roessler, the notorious philatelic dealer, "If his request were granted, his plan would be to mail several hundred envelopes — probably empty — to himself and then sell the canceled stamps to collectors at a considerable profit."

The *Shenandoah* first carried private mail in 1924, on a round-trip transcontinental flight from Lakehurst to the West Coast via Texas. At the time, the nineteen-day flight was a very extensive voyage for a rigid airship, in terms of both distance and duration. The trip included stops at Fort Worth, San Diego, and Camp Lewis.

The only private passenger for the entire flight, Junius B. Wood of the *Chicago Daily News*, wrote an article about his experiences for the January 1925 issue of *National Geographic*.

Mail flown on both legs of the flight is known. On the westbound leg, mail was dropped over Gila Bend; eastbound, mail drops were at Pecos, Clarksville, and Dayton. Some covers prepared in advance by Major Steinmetz, a well-known aerophilatelist, were carried on the entire round trip.

Several discrepancies appear on flown mail from this flight. For example, some items are canceled at Lakehurst on October 8, the day after the airship left, and a Fort Worth transit backstamp dated October 9 shows a time of "2pm," when the ZR1 actually departed from that city at 9:46 a.m. Yet, all indications are that these

covers are quite legitimate. There was plenty of time between stops at the various locations for someone on board to service cards and covers, and, in addition, they bear San Diego arrival markings. A private label and private handstamps also were applied to some of these souvenirs, although it may be an exaggeration to say that even a handful of such covers exist.

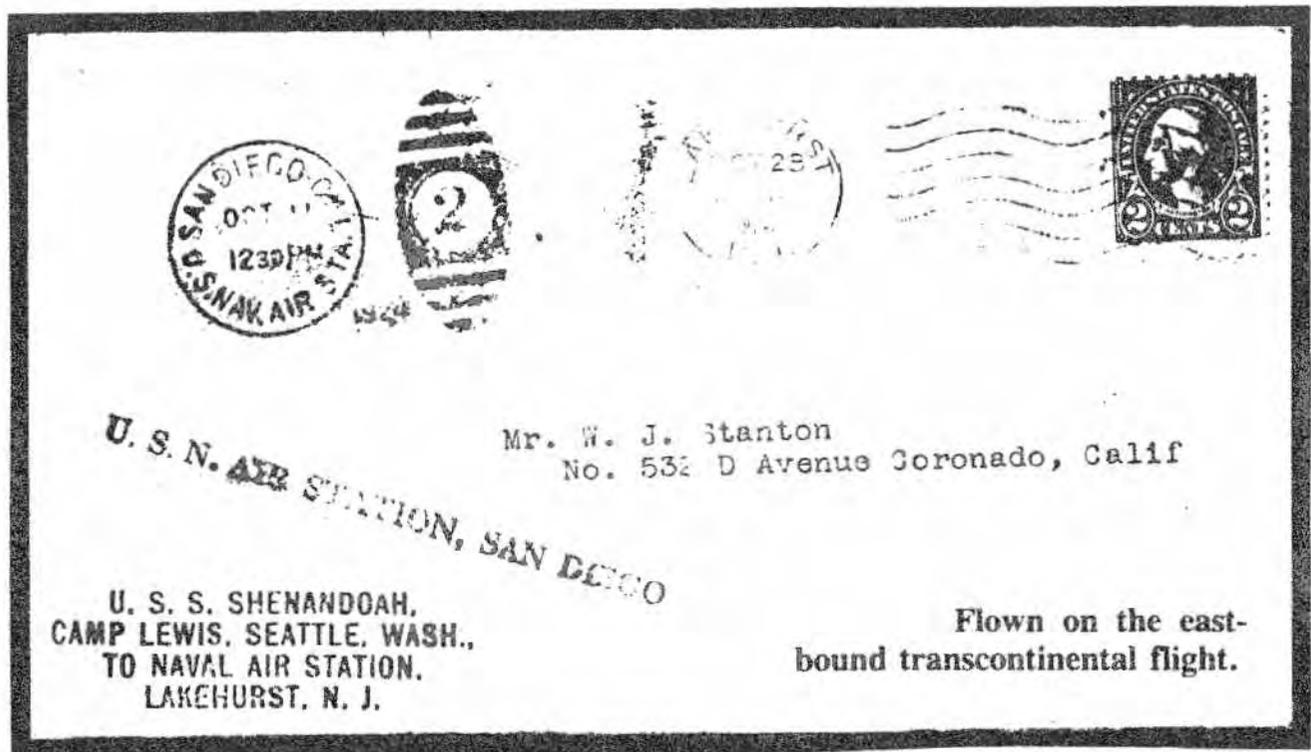
On its return to Lakehurst, the *Shenandoah* surrendered its helium to the *Los Angeles* before it underwent an eight-month overhaul.

In July 1925, the *Shenandoah* flew to Bar Harbor, Maine, where a Governors' Conference was taking place. The conference offered the Navy an opportunity to show off its airship program and to take a few politicians for a short demonstration flight. Arriving from Lakehurst with some guests on July 3, the airship anchored itself

to the *USS Patoka*, a converted oiler equipped with a mast, gas, oil, and helium.

A couple of months earlier, the *Los Angeles* had flown official mail for only two cents per letter, and several collectors and dealers were eager for more flown airship covers. Eddie Buser, a New York dealer, had been reading *The New York Times* each day for news of another flight. He usually checked the society columns as well, theorizing that only the rich could afford the luxury of an airship flight.

On July 2, his efforts were rewarded: The flight to the Governors' Conference was to take place the next day. Buser and his wife, Sophie, rushed home from work and prepared 125 envelopes, which he took by train that evening to the Church Street Post Office in New York. He addressed his parcel to the postmaster at Lakehurst, New Jersey, and he sent it first class,



U.S.S. Shenandoah, Trans-Continental Flight, Oct. 8-12, 1924 (AAMC Z500). Regular Lakehurst, N.J. Oct 28, 1924 pmk., San Diego, Calif. Oct. 11, 1924 U.S. Naval Air Station pmk., Appropriate cachets,



**Flown from Lakehurst  
to Bar Harbor on the flight to  
the Governors' Conference.**

registered, and special delivery. Enclosed were instructions to put the letters on the *Shenandoah* for its flight. Thinking that the flight's destination was Poughkeepsie, Buser addressed the mail to himself in care of general delivery at that post office.

The Lakehurst postmaster applied a July 3 cancellation and arranged the transporting of Buser's covers, along with a handful of covers from two other collectors, one of whom was Major Steinmetz. When Buser got his covers back, they were beautifully stamped with the *Patoka* cancellation and the *Shenandoah's* circular marking. He wholesaled some of these covers to other dealers and placed ads for his remaining stock.

Buser later repeated this same effort for several other *Shenandoah* flights, but he

never again received the special postmaster treatment.

Although Eddie Buser did not have covers on the *Shenandoah's* return flight from Bar Harbor, Major Steinmetz did. These have an inverted date in the Bar Harbor cancel and are backstamped "Lakehurst."

More common and rather interesting variations of these flown covers were created by the aforementioned dealer, A.C. Roessler, who advertised them in his *Stamp News*. These have neither Lakehurst nor Bar Harbor cancellations, and they are not backstamped. Instead, the *Shenandoah* handstamp cancels the stamps.

On the Roessler covers, the *Shenandoah* marking is in either black or violet, while on flown covers it is found only in violet.

The Roessler covers are hand-addressed to Roessler, and they sometimes have a handwritten cachet to the left. Over the years, these covers have been identified as genuinely flown, as total fakes, or as genuine markings on unflown covers. Today, they generally are regarded as unflown covers.

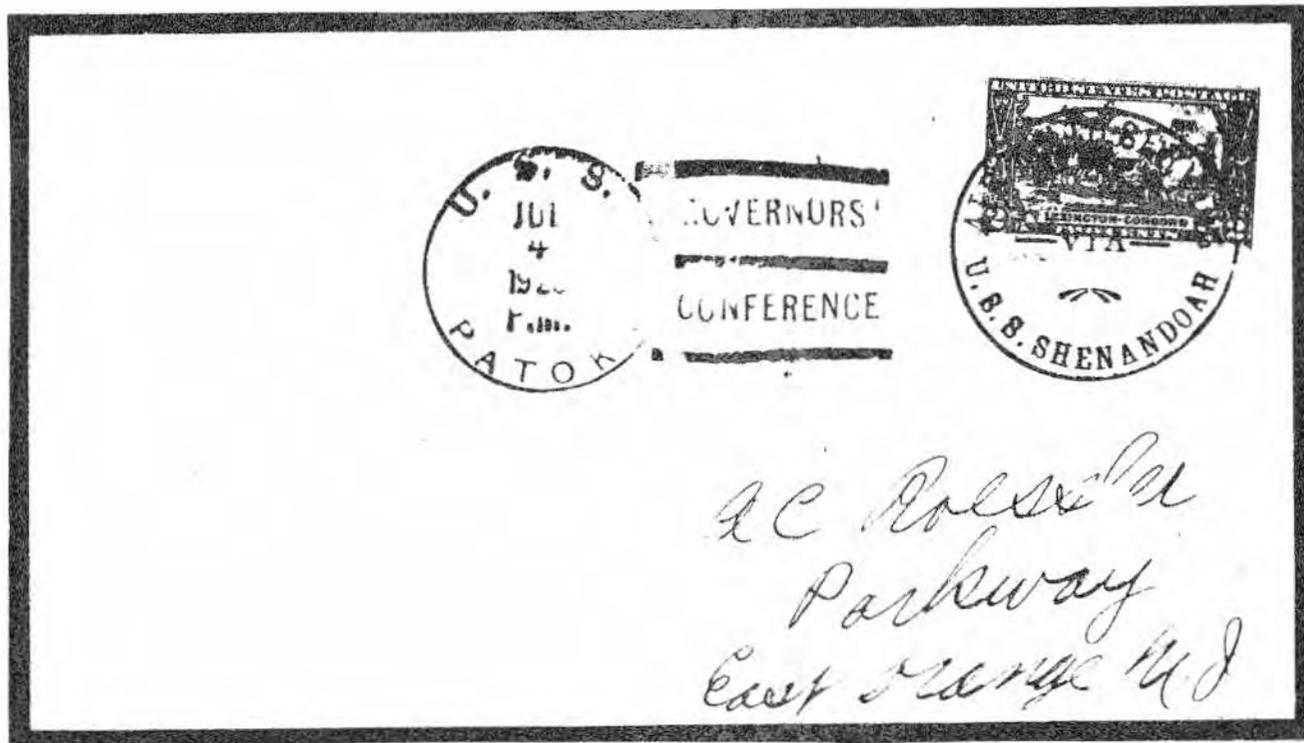
But I also have found what appear to be "forgeries" of these souvenirs, and these were prepared by Roessler, too. Perhaps his sales were good and he needed to increase his stock! These "forgeries" have *Patoka* and *Shenandoah* markings in a size one millimeter smaller in diameter than those on his other unflown covers

Also, a slightly different color ink was

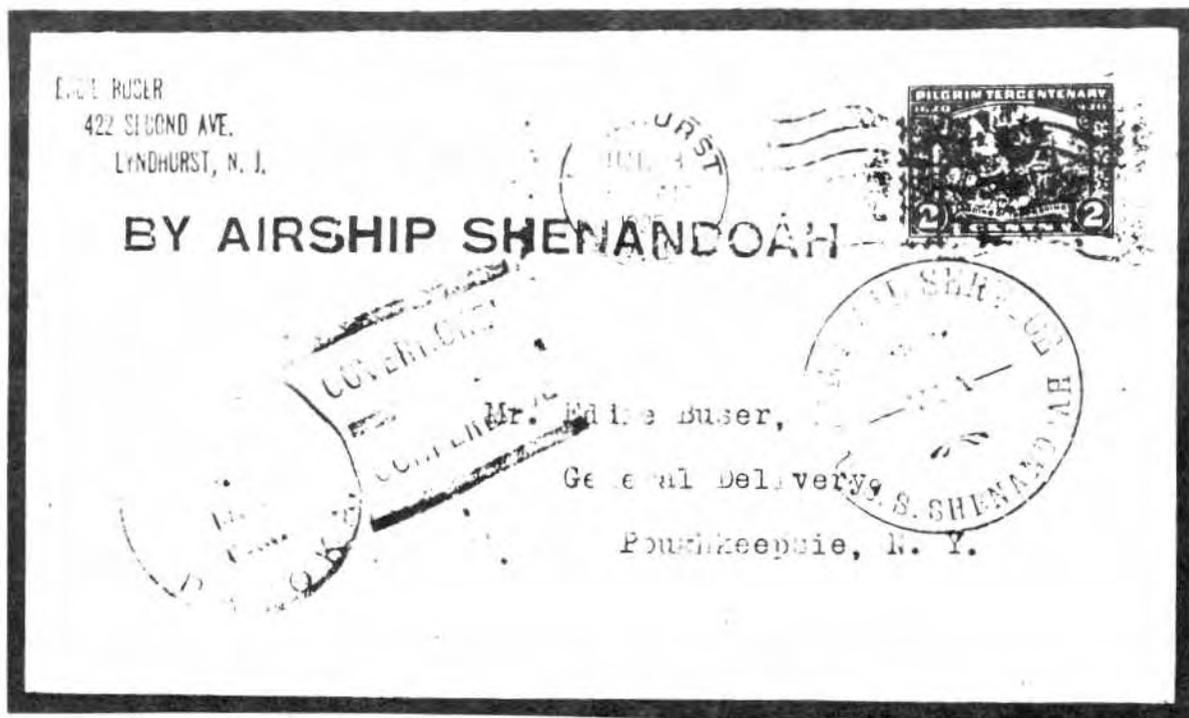
used: On the "forgeries," the *Patoka* cancel is violet-blue and the *Shenandoah* mark is light blue. Roessler once offered Eddie Buser two of these souvenirs for one flown cover, but Eddie was no fool!

In September 1925, the *Shenandoah* left Lakehurst for Minneapolis on what was to be its final flight. The airship broke up and crashed during a storm over Ohio.

During its short term of service, the ZR1 *Shenandoah* spent much of its time being overhauled, sharing helium with the *Los Angeles*, and avoiding bad weather. It was the first rigid airship commissioned by the U.S. Navy, and its demise marked the beginning of the end of the rigid airship program in the United States.



U.S.S. Shenandoah, Governor's Conference Flight, Lakehurst, N.J.-  
Bar Harbor, Me., Jul. 3, 1925 (AAMC Z502). Flown Covers.



### Acknowledgments

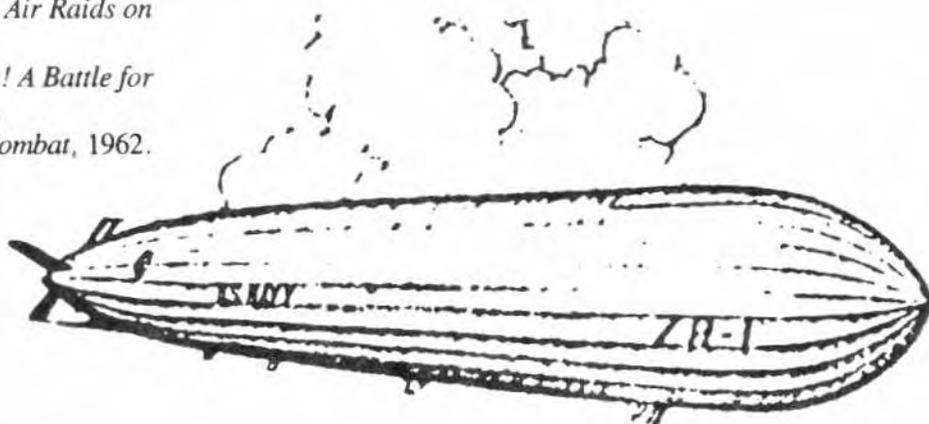
Special thanks to S. Junginger, and to D. Barber, W. Boss, B. Countryman, R. Dodd, P. Huber, D. Kromm, J. Langhoff, W. Schneider, G. Sioras, C.A.M. Spruyt, R. Swearingen, A. Thompson, B. Vesper, and K. Wacker.

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### The Author

*An active member of the Chicago Philatelic Society, Cheryl Ganz collects all airship mail. She is editor of The Zeppelin Collector, and she serves on the board of the American Association of Philatelic Exhibitors.*



# WE NEED ARTICLES NOW !

LARGE AIRMAIL COVER  
SHOWS SCARCE RATE

By: Gary Griffith

'The Transmission of  
Mail by Night'

Plaster model for panel  
on Post Office Dept.  
Building by Anthony de  
Francisci after design  
by Adolph A. Weinman.



One of the most unusual United States airmail covers of the 1920s, franked with \$64 in postage, was sold at auction in September, and is now in the hands of a Midwestern airmail collector.

The cover is actually the top of a wooden crate used to ship newsreel film. It bears a typewritten label, attached at a later date, stating, "This is the cover of the box in which the film of the wreck of the airship *Shenandoah* was shipped to Fox news."

The *Shenandoah* was the U.S. Navy's first domestic-built dirigible, launched Sept. 3, 1923. It crashed in Ava, Ohio, exactly two years later, on Sept. 3, 1925, at a high point of public interest in airships. Fourteen of the *Shenandoah's* 41-man crew were killed when the dirigible broke into three sections during a storm.

Postal markings show that

the shipping crate was posted at 7 p.m. on Sept. 4, 1925, at the airmail field in Chicago. It is addressed to the Fox Film Corporation, care of the Superintendent of Air Mail at Hadley Field in New Brunswick, N.J.

The crash site, in southeastern Ohio, would have been much closer to the airfield in Cleveland than to Chicago. It is likely, however, that the film was sent to Chicago for processing at the company's film department, and then sent to New York for distribution.

The address label also bears the handwritten notation "29 prints," probably indicating that 29 copies of the newsreel were being sent for showing in New York area theaters.

While the contents may have been historically important and of interest to zeppelin or airship collectors, the cover is more important for the

rate it shows.

The address label is marked "Air Mail" in large hand-printed letters, with the word "Night" added above in script. It was carried at the special night airmail rate that was in effect for a relatively short period of time.

On July 1, 1924, the United States was divided into three airmail zones, and transcontinental service was offered at 8¢ per zone.

A year later, on July 1, 1925, a special rate for night flights between Chicago and New York was established at 10¢ per ounce, 2¢ more than the day rate. This was in part because of the danger, expense and difficulty of flying over the Allegheny Mountains. The night rate was discontinued 19 months later, on Feb. 1, 1927.

Assuming that the Fox Film cover was properly franked, it would have weighed 40 pounds, or 640 ounces. It is franked with 64 copies of the



This 1925 night airmail cover, which bears \$64 postage, is the top of a crate. The crate contained film of the wreckage of the *Shenandoah* airship, which crashed Sept. 3, 1925.

\$1 definitive of the 1922 series, which has been assigned Scott No. 571.

There was not yet any such thing as air parcel post, as the planes in use had relatively small capacities, both in terms of their size and the weight they could carry.

"The Post Office actually discouraged it," according to Jay Stotts, an Ohio collector who writes on, and exhibits, the rates of the 1920s and 1930s. "The only patrons who used airmail for parcels were those who felt a tremendous

urgency, because of the great disparity between airmail and surface parcel post rates."

By 1928, the post office was further discouraging the use of airmail for packages by charging a higher rate for the second ounce. Much newsreel film of the period was sent over long distances by Railway Express or other rail services.

The Fox Film cover appears to bear the largest known franking for the night airmail rate, and it was probably one of the heavier com-

mercial items flown up to that time.

The cover was previously owned by the worldwide airmail collector Robert T. Stevens. It was sold on Sept. 29 by Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries Inc. It realized \$375 plus a 10 percent commission.

The Fox cover once again changed hands at the Airpex show in Dayton, Ohio, on Oct. 21, for an undisclosed sum. The item was not pictured in the Siegel auction catalog, and is shown here for the first time. ■

" Thoughts on a Postmark "

By: Peter S. Lemmo

I would like to share some thoughts concerning the Rockaway postmark reported as a **ROUKAWAY** error in the January 1988 and November 1989 issues of the **NJPH** Journal. My interest was piqued, and so I decided to investigate.

After a very thorough and careful analysis of many stampless postmarks I came to the conclusion that this marking, touted as an error, is merely a normal **ROCKAWAY** postmark with the letter "C" not well struck up. (Also, on the same cover, the matching rate handstamp is barely struck up.)

The owner of this cover was kind enough to provide me with a photocopy, which I greatly enlarged for study. My conclusion that this postmark is not an error is based upon two considerations.



ROCKAWAY NJ - December 20, 1848

A careful examination of the illustration on page 7 of the January 1988 issue reveals that the so-called letter "U" has no serifs at either the top left or the top right. Every postmark of this type and time period (1840's), regardless of the town, would clearly show pronounced serifs on all letters, except "O", "Q" and "C". Therefore, if the error was a "U", as is claimed, it would exhibit serifs, at least to some extent. Moreover, this same letter shows a small break in the middle of the right side, further indicating that it is a letter "C".

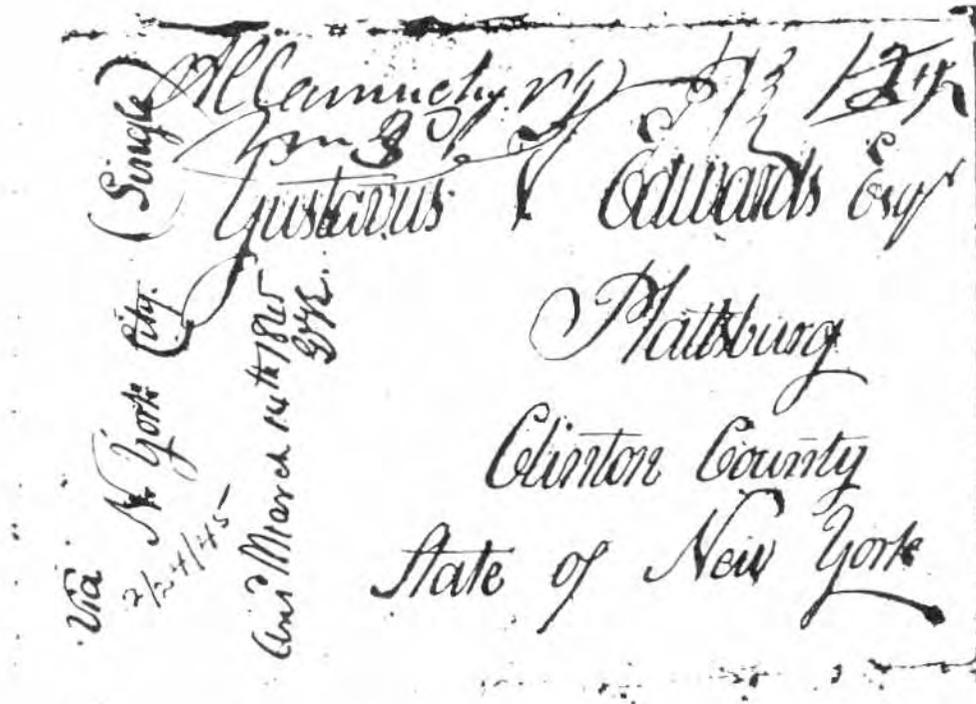
In light of the above, I maintain that the **ROCKAWAY** postmark is not an error, and does not merit inclusion in catalog updates. The illustration on page 95 of the November 1988 issue, shown as figure R20A (according to the catalog system of **The Postal Markings of New Jersey Stampless Covers**, by William C. Coles, Jr.) should now be considered a hypothetical artistic rendering as it does not match the features of the actual marking. I would relegate this so-called error to the realm of wishful thinking.

(The author has been a member of the NJPHS since 1982, is a life member of the APS, and a member of various postal history societies.)

ALLAMUCHY, NEW JERSEY

Len Frank

This 1845 cover from Allamuchy, in rural Warren County, is interesting not only for its manuscript marking and rerating but also for its extended message.



Writing to his son Gustavus on February 24, 1845, T.W. Edwards mentions the unseasonably warm "June-like" weather, most unusual in those parts. An itinerant schoolteacher, Edwards was engaged by a Quaker school but his teaching duties had been interrupted by an outbreak of smallpox and then rabies. One child had been bitten by a rabid dog: the child's parents immediately repaired to Easton, Pennsylvania "where there is a conjuror who cured him in one hour" (Pasteur would have been impressed). "People have great confidence in this imposter (Lawlor by name) that they run to him constantly and part with their judgement and cash."

"This part of New Jersey is the best county in the State. It would astonish you to see what quantities of grain, port &c goes to York. Fruit there is no end to it. The very best apples can now be had for 12 1/2 cents per bushel and other fruit in proportion. It is without exception the plentifullest country I ever saw....I would as soon as the Navigation opens send you a couple barrels of superb Apples for spring & summer eating if you desire it and will point to a place of -eposit in N.Y. City as not a day passes but I could send them there only 45 miles from here.. The whooping cough has just made its appearance in my school and the children are leaving me rapidly and the smallpox will iniure me to the amt of 30 or 40 dollars."

---

# Recruit a New Member Today

**Mail Services to the Early Weather Bureaus: 1870-1905**

The first United States Government Agency to be charged with the conduct of a meteorological program was the War Department by Act of Congress on February 5, 1870. The newly-authorized Weather Bureau was then assigned to its Signal Service and put in charge of the Chief Signal Officer, to whom were transferred the accumulated records of many volunteer weather observers under the previous direction of Joseph Henry, secretary of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution. The Signal Service continued to administer the Weather Program for the following twenty years.

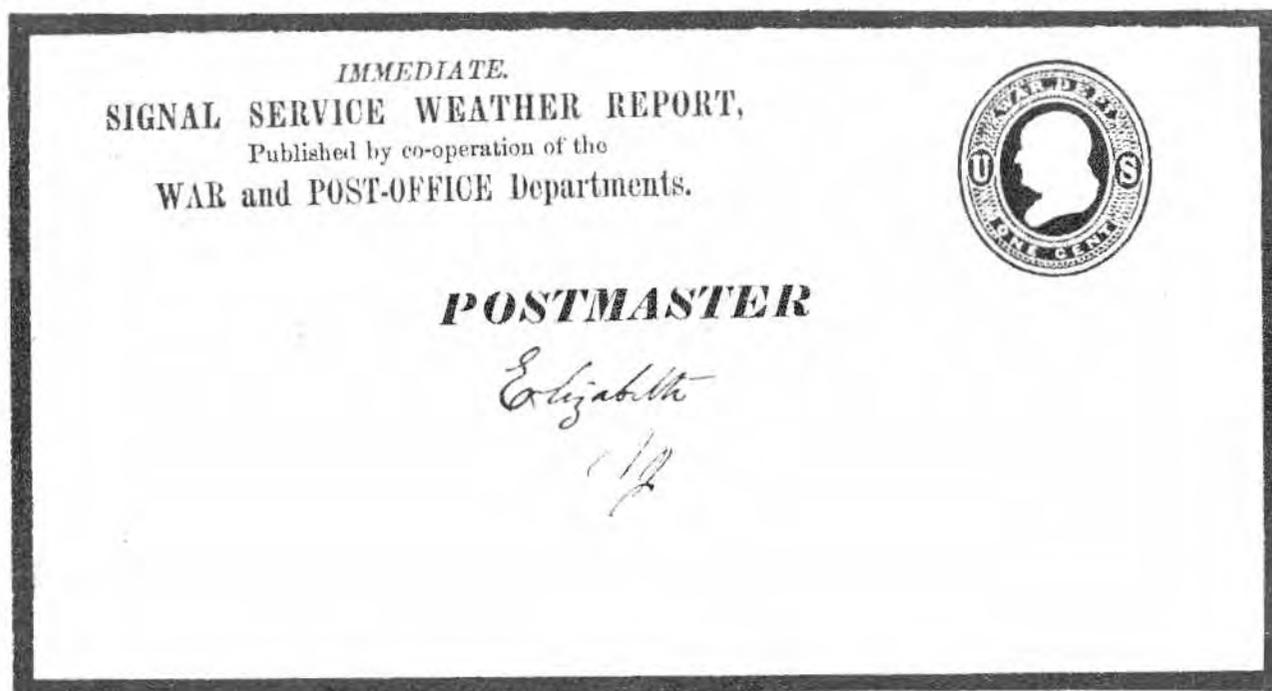
The new Weather Bureau's first major problem was how to distribute and publicize its new daily Weather Reports throughout the nation's growing agricultural and commercial areas. This was solved by the Post Office Department that willingly 'co-operated' and provided services as requested.

Initially and by Order of the Postmaster General, there was the distribution as first class mail of the daily Weather Reports and "Farmers Bulletins" in special open-ended wrappers for posting in all post offices. Penalty franking was provided, also, for all such daily mailings.

On July 1, 1891, also by Congressional action, the weather program was turned over to the newly established Weather Bureau of the Department of Agriculture. Co-operation continued for the mailing, and posting, of the new daily Weather Forecast Report Card in post offices, to expanding community interests, the distribution of more lengthy Weather Forecast slips (flimsey's) to Rural Free Delivery box-holders, the publicizing of the weather flag and whistle signals in the Official Postal Guide and in other ways.

Certainly the most dramatic, but of shortest duration, was the use by co-operating postmasters of a Weather Forecast Backstamp on all, first class mail, a procedure that was not officially approved but was permitted as long as certain required specifications were met.

Specimens to verify the research on the sequence of events are so rare that a few phases were subject to confirmation by a single copy in the collection of the Smithsonian Institution or the Department of Agriculture files at the National Archives.



IMMEDIATE.

# Signal Service Weather Report.

By authority of the Post Office Department, June 18, 1881,  
this Report will be treated in all respects like letter mail.



**POSTMASTER.**

Pittstwn, NJ

The introduction of address labels created some new problems, although this label is carefully positioned, the abbreviated form of the town name is a little confusing at first glance. It is not Piscataway., but a shortened version of PITTSTOWN, Hunterdon Cty.

IMMEDIATE.

# Signal Service Weather Report.

By authority of the Post Office Department, June 18, 1881, this  
Report will be treated in all respects as letter mail.

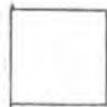


**POSTMASTER.**

*Bayboro*

*n. j.*

The War Dept had transferred its weather operations to the Dept. of Agriculture in July, but you would not know it from this wrapper postmarked Nov. 18, 1891, a Signal Service copy of a remainder used five months after it was no longer in control of the program.



CLEAR OR FAIR WEATHER.



RAIN OR SNOW.



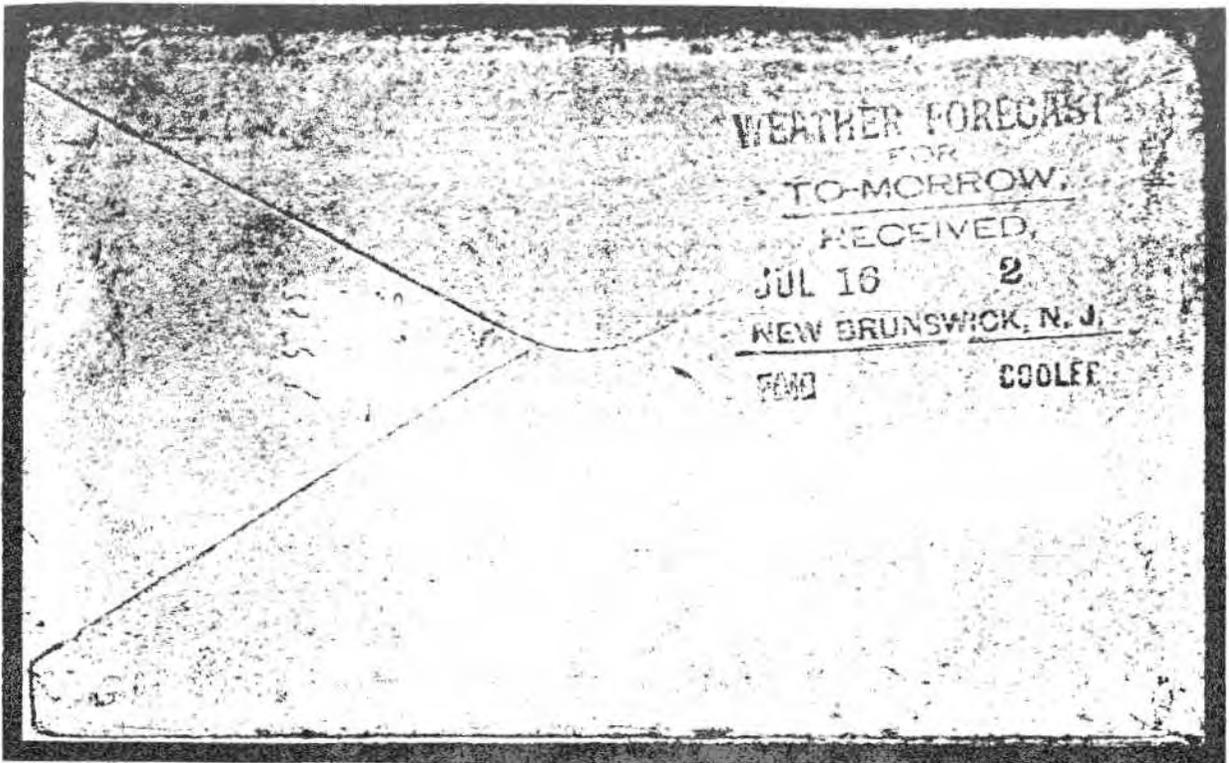
LOCAL RAINS OR SNOWS.



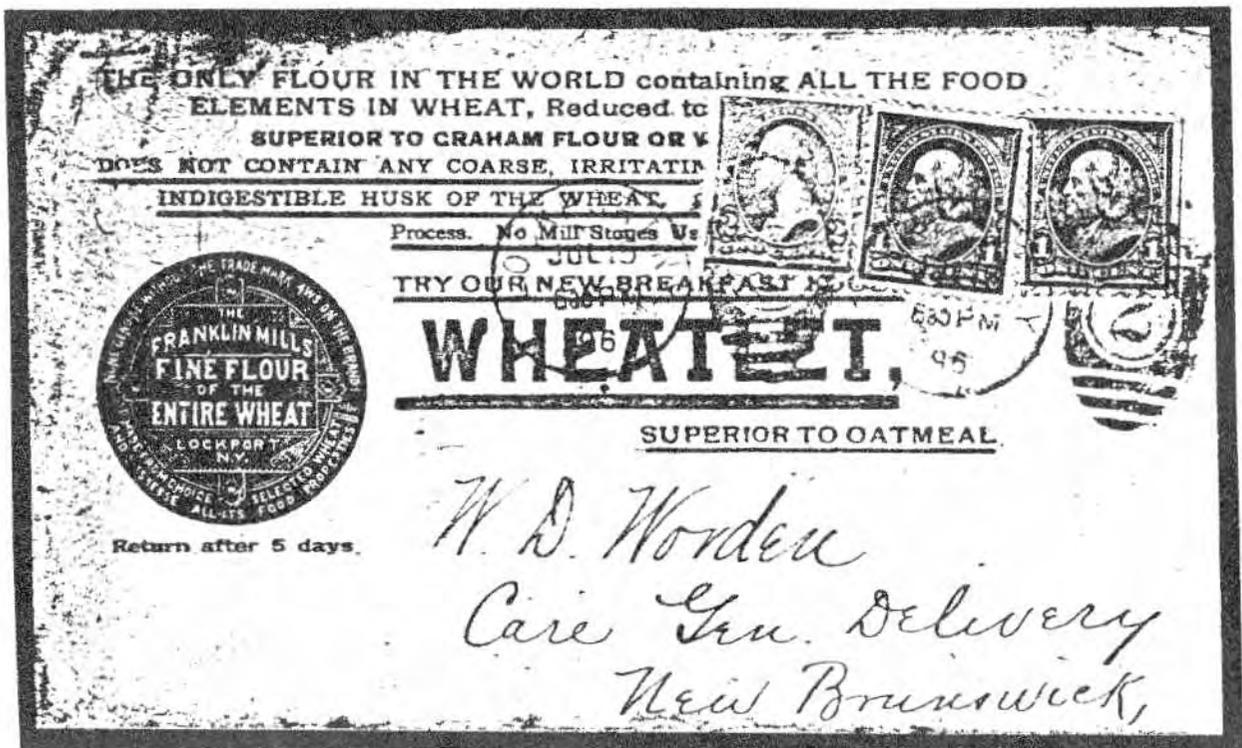
TEMPERATURE SIGNAL.



COLD WAVE.

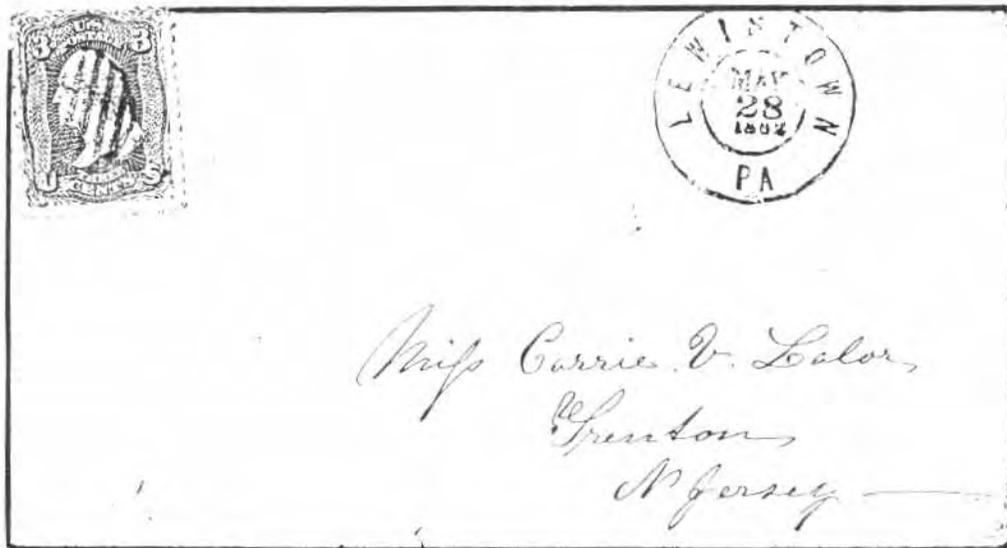


Straightline - Type I  
New Brunswick NJ - July 16, 1896



Advertising Cover from  
LOCKPORT, NY

MISCELLANEOUS CIVIL WAR PERIOD LETTERS OF THE TRENTON, N.J. LALOR FAMILY  
Prof. C.S. Thompson, Jr.



LEWISTOWN PA MAY/28/1862 in double circle. Sc#65 cancelled by circular grid.  
Letter directed to Carrie V. Lalor in Trenton, N.J.

The writer, who has been quite ill, says she is in a very great state of excitement about the news of Banks defeat. She says her town was instantly thrown into an uproar, the drums & fife (sickening sounds since Dick is gone), playing around. Men of all ages signing their names for the war. Brother Bob, one of the first, was off in the ten o'clock train for Harrisburgh, but after arriving there they found they were not needed and are home tonight. You can imagine how different we feel. We buried poor Johan the same day & hour with Dear Dick, two of my best friends gone home to rest. I often think of the following lines.....

Let us be patient! These sever afflictions  
Not from the ground arise  
But oftentimes celestial benedictions  
Assume the dark disguise.  
We see but dimly through these mists & vapors  
Amid these earthly lamps  
What seem to us but dim funeral tapers  
May be heaven's distant lamps.  
There is no flock however watched & tended  
But one dead lamb is there  
There is no fireside, howso'er defended  
But has one vacant chair.

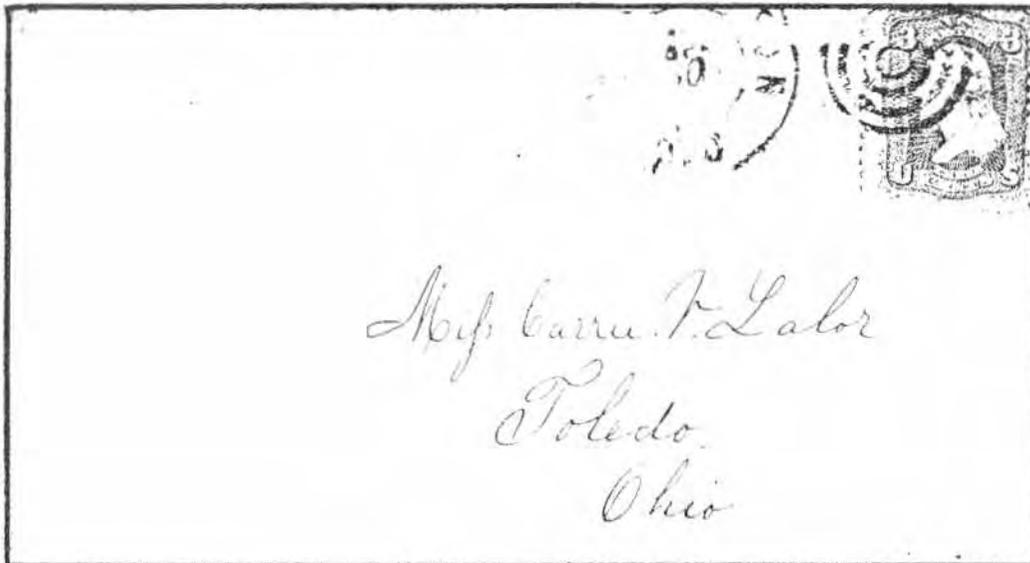
**NOTICE !**

**Last Call for: NEW JERSEY CIVIL WAR PATRIOTIC COVERS**

If you have not already cooperated by submitting Clear High-Contrast Xeroxs of any and all of these covers in your collection, please respond promptly ! As we are beginning to prepare a Major Feature Length Article on this subject for publication in the Journal.

Send Xeroxs to the new co-ordinator for this project:

Brad Arch, 144 Hamilton Avenue, Clifton NJ 07011



TRENTON N.J. in double circle and Sc #65 cancelled and tied by four-ring target. Both markings in black to Carrie V. Lalor who was at that time visiting with a friend in Toledo, Ohio.

This letter is datelined: Headquarters 1st Brigade/April 28, 1864. The 1st Jersey brigade was composed of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 10th and 15th N.J.

The writer says he is still living and in the service with no prospect of getting out of it alive (This brigade had the fourth highest number of killed and wounded in the war, 900). He further states that he tendered his resignation to the ordinance department but got no action. He then notes that Gen. Meade had issued an order saying he would dishonorably dismiss any officer now tendering his resignation in the face of the enemy. As a result, Lieut. Lalor says he will not tender his resignation. Among the war news, the writer says the enemy is about one thousand men of all arms. It is rumored that Gen. Burnside is on his way to the writer's area from Alexandria with thirty thousand troops. Lalor says the troops are in splendid condition and the presence of Gen. Grant is regarded as a tower of strength especially as there is little confidence in Gen. Meade. The writer also notes that Col. Burling has resigned on account of what the girls used to call the chronic "back door trot." He concludes by saying, "If there ever was a hell on earth it is in the Army which is awfully demoralizing and degrading beyond anything you can have any concept of at home."

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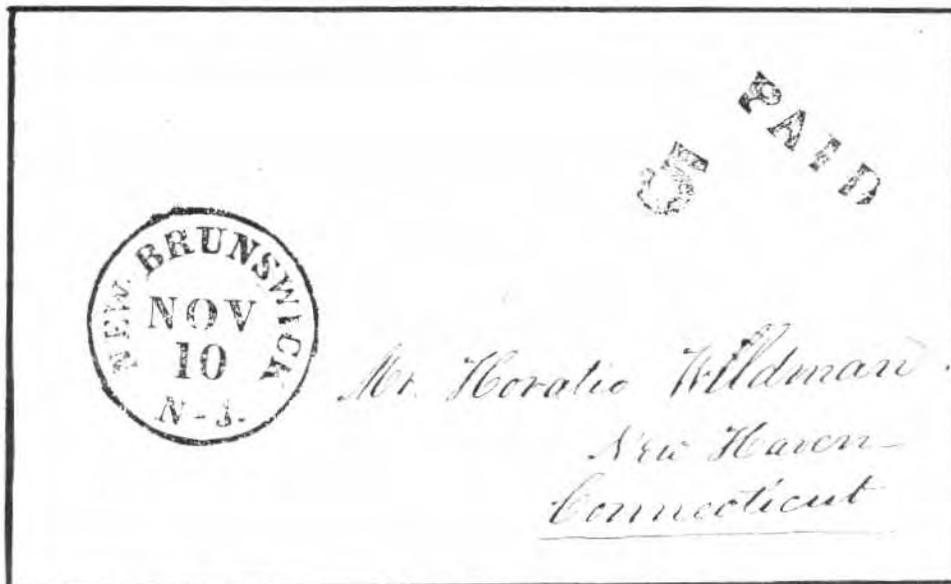
Back Issues of the NEW JERSEY POSTAL HISTORY JOURNAL are available from the Secretary: Joyce L. Groot, 28 Briar Lane, Basking Ridge NJ 07920

Available: #26 to date, individually priced at \$2.00 each, postpaid.  
Discounts available for long runs and/or quantity purchases, INQUIRE !



TRENTON N.J black cds cancels and ties Sc#65 on letter from Carrie V. Lalor to Lieut D.K. Lalor with full military address. Lieut. Lalor served in the ordnance office under Major Gen. Herron as a member of his staff.

AN 1845 LETTER FROM RUTGERS COLLEGE  
Prof. C.S. Thompson, Jr.



NEW-BRUNSWICK N - J. cds and straight line PAID with 5 rate handstamp. All markings in black on letter to New Haven, Ct. 1845.

New Brunswick Nov 8th 1845

Dear Horatio:

It just now entered my cranium to write to you, and acting from the impulse of the moment, I send you this letter. Here I am right in the heart of New Brunswick, the place for rogues and pretty girls. A great many parties are given here, and the students or at least many of them have considerable to do with the girls. As I am not of that number, I do not know much of what is done. There are 77 students in the College most of them fine fellows. We don't have tutors here to make trouble, but all the lectures are delivered by the professors themselves of whom there are eight. We have three lectures a day which occupy us from 9 o'clock until 12½ o'clock. The rest of the time we have to prepare recitations. All the professors are very popular with the students except Prof. Hodenfyl, professor of French language and literature nick-named Punch. He is a little diminutive puppy hardly taller than your brother Fred. He has had one falling out with the Seniors and I guess he wishes he was out of the scrape. He reported to the President and it did not abate the hatred that was already felt. I pay \$2.50 for board of the best kind. New Brunswick is quite a large place containing about 7,000 inhabitants. The streets are paved but not kept in very good order. The College is built on an eminence which overlooks the town. It also commands a fine view of the river and surrounding country. The College building is of stone and three stories high. There has been 7 fires here since I arrived which is 4 or 5 weeks ago though none of any consequence. There are several large brick buildings going up mostly india rubber factories. The principal article made here is india rubber shoes. How do you get along? Has any changes come over New Haven since I left it? How does Bane flourish? Please remember me to him. The election is just over and a pretty exciting time it was. Somerset and Middlesex counties gave a strong Whig majority. How it is in the other counties I have not heard. New Jersey is a Whig state. The Whig papers seem to prognosticate all the evils they can to Mr. Polk's administration. They speak of the approaching meeting of Congress and choice of public printer as "pregnant with the nation's fate" and wisely shake their heads. They also speak ambiguously of war and disunion and hardly know what the terms mean. However, I guess they will see that Mr. Polk has got grit enough to go through as gallantly as he had begun. The Whigs find him to be a more honest man than is consistent with their principles of rapine or plunder and as he begins his administration by turning out these blood-suckers of the nation. They growl and awake the unions gone to pot. However, if anything serious turns up, they will be glad to find that we have such a man at the helm rather than one of their own sort, and if he don't come out in the end, and leave the affairs of this country in better state than that he found them in, he will come far short of the expectations of Whigs and democrats. The weather has been very uncertain and some cases of small pox have occurred though I have not heard of any being around now. I wish you would burn this letter as soon as you have read it, or at least excuse the writing and

I remain Yours truly

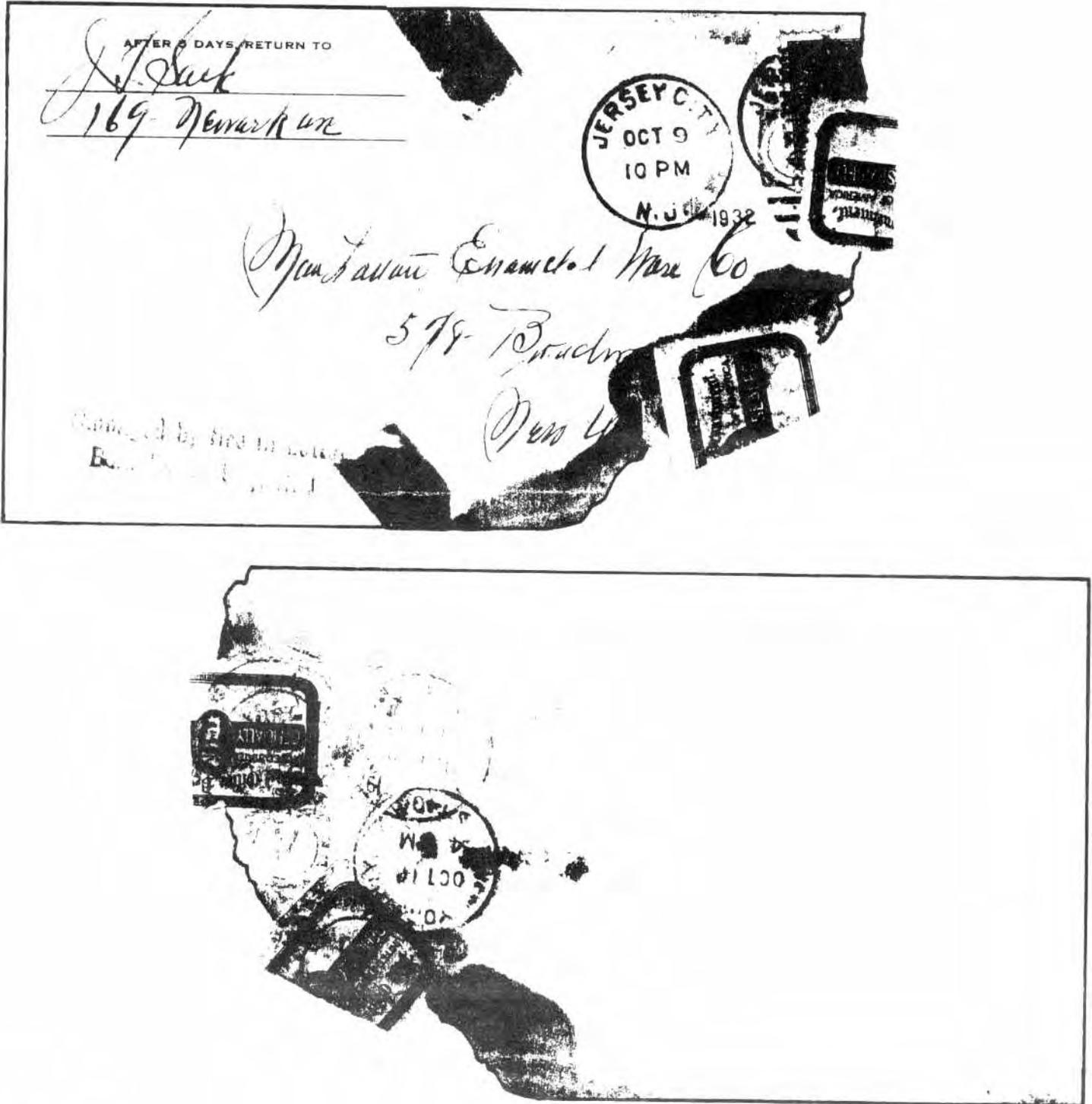
Elisha Whittlesey

P.S. Do you know any about Mr. Clark? Please write soon.

POSTAL FIRES at Jersey City NJ

1932

'Damaged by fire in Letter  
Box, Jersey City, NJ'



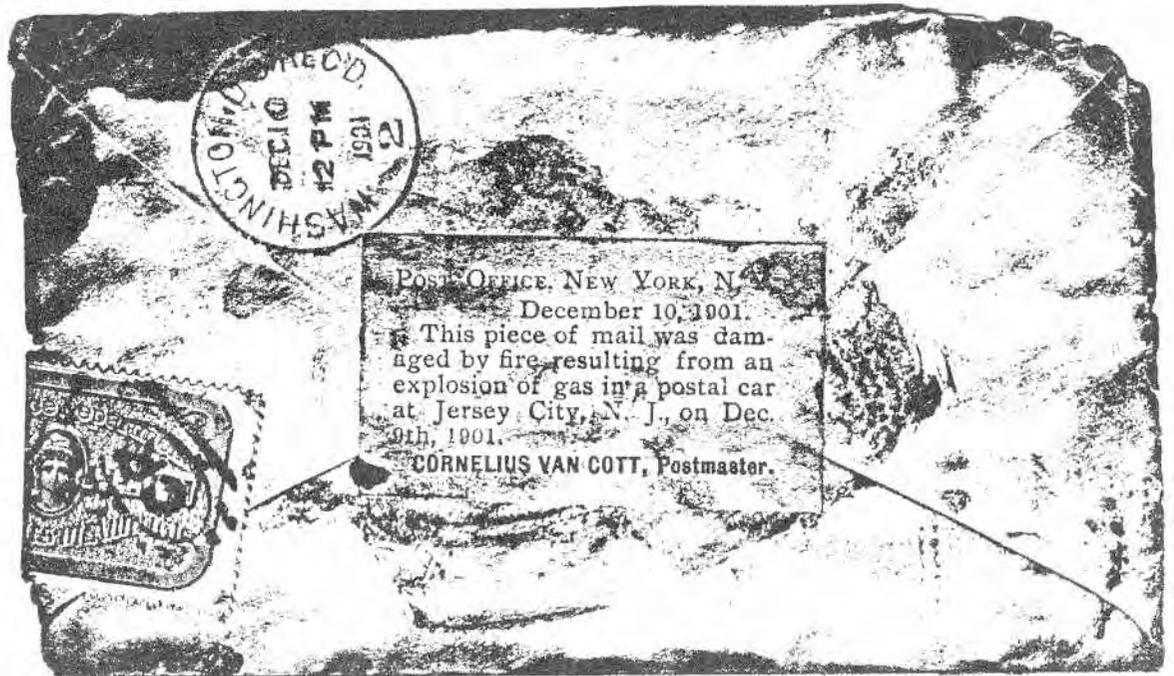
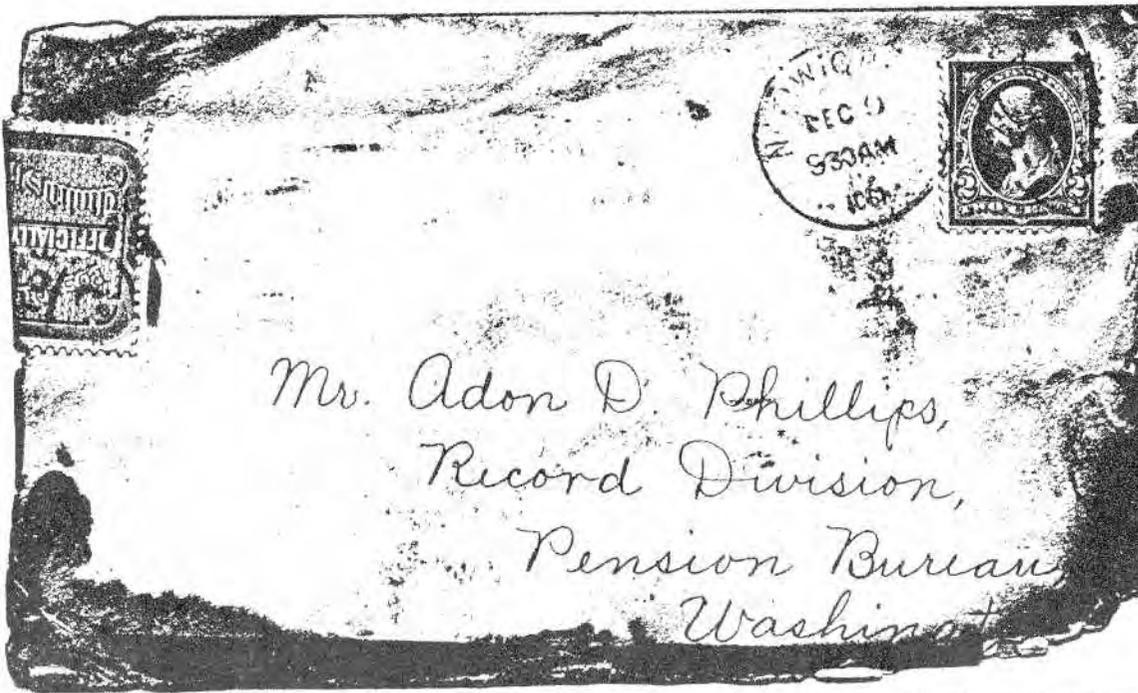
Excerpted from an article by  
Lowell S. Newman

followed by the illustration  
of another cover from the  
same fire.

A very different kind of railway mail interruption is  
illustrated by the cover shown here. Great quantities of  
mail were sorted aboard railway mail cars in the late 19th  
and early 20th century.

As the trains ran day and night, it was necessary to have  
well-lit mail cars in which the sorting could proceed at all  
hours. Coal, oil and kerosene lamps proved to be quite  
dangerous in the closed cars which rocked and swayed  
down the tracks — fire being an ever-present danger.

The end of the century saw the introduction of gas lamps  
to the mail cars, a major improvement both in terms of the  
amount of light generated and the lessened danger of fire  
from spilled flammable fluid.



Norwich CT to Washington DC

Of course, gas can cause fires too and, when it does, there is the potential for an explosion as well. This cover was mailed at Norwich, CT, on Dec. 9, 1901, and was on route to Washington, DC, when an unfortunate railway accident delayed its progress.

At Jersey City, NJ, leaking gas in a mail car exploded, charring mail, sorting racks and mail sorters as well. The damaged mail was taken to the nearby New York City post office, where the partly-opened envelopes were officially sealed and hastily printed labels describing the cause of the damage were pasted on the back.

The speed with which the New York post office was able to get this mail back into the mail stream is a testimonial to the great efficiency of postal workers in this era. The letter mailed in Connecticut at 9:30 a.m. on Dec. 9, and damaged in the mail car explosion later that day, was sealed, labeled and sent on its way quickly enough that it was received in Washington, DC, at 12 p.m. on Dec. 10.

Today's Postal Service would be hard pressed to deliver a letter from Norwich to Washington that quickly, even without an exploding mail car. Perhaps we should stop improving our postal system and start delivering the mail like they did in the good old days.



LeRoy NY to Elizabeth NJ

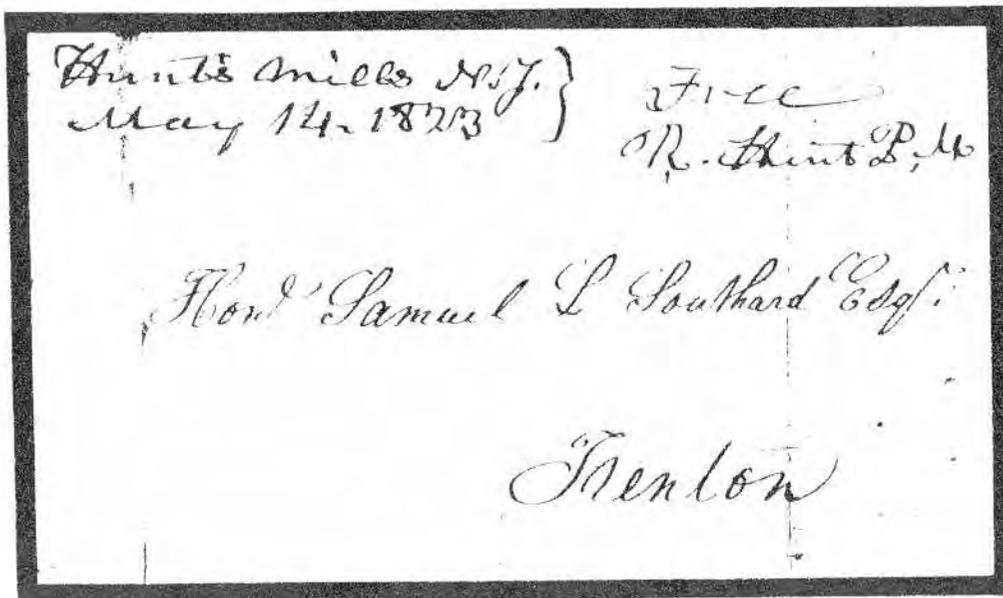
# New Jersey Discontinued Post Offices



FAIR MOUNT - Hunterdon County - 1849-1915



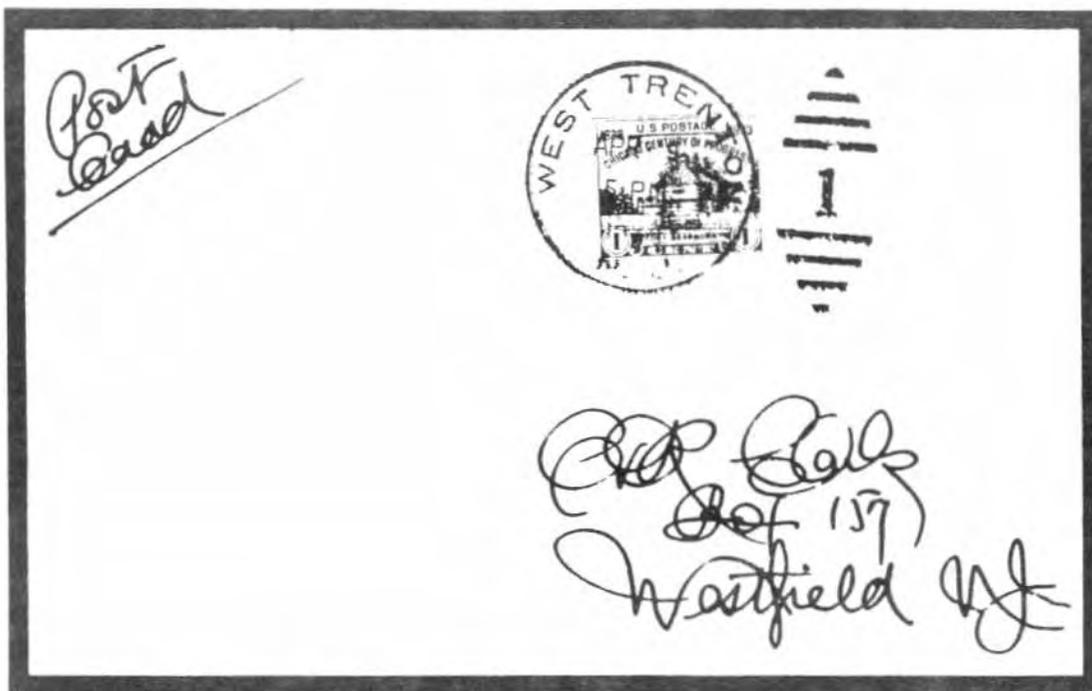
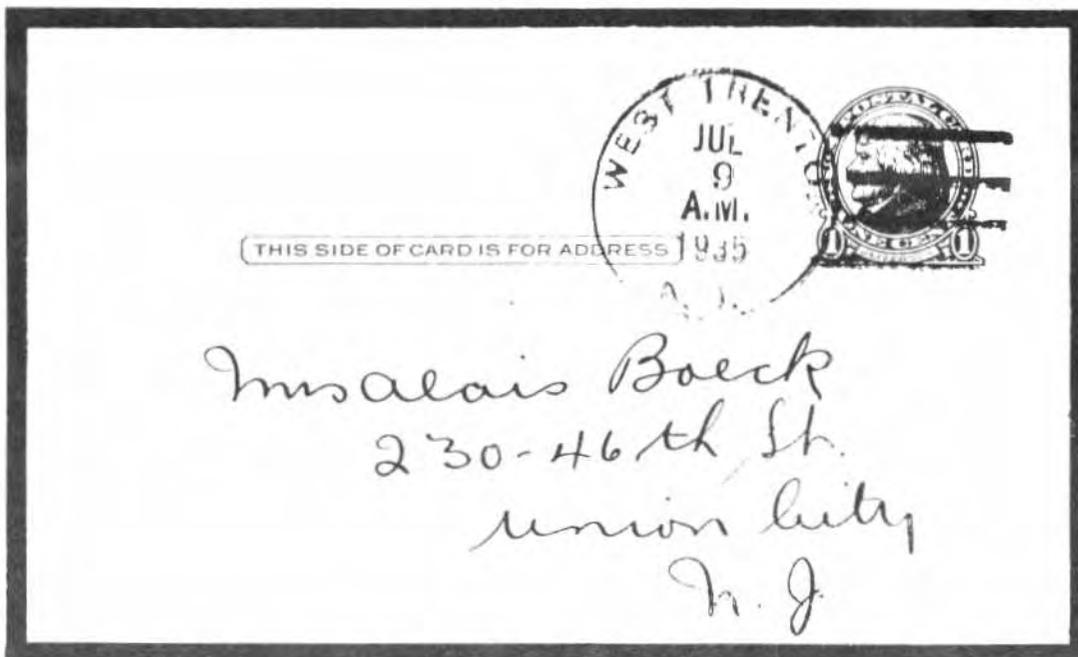
HUNT'S MILLS - Hunterdon County - 1816-1829



# New Jersey Discontinued Post Offices

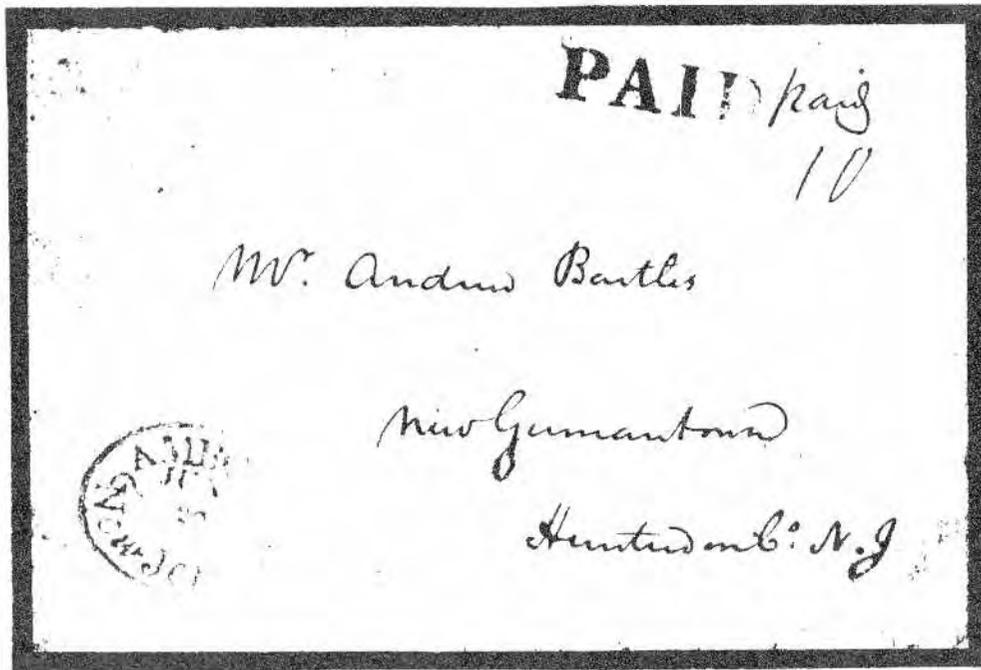
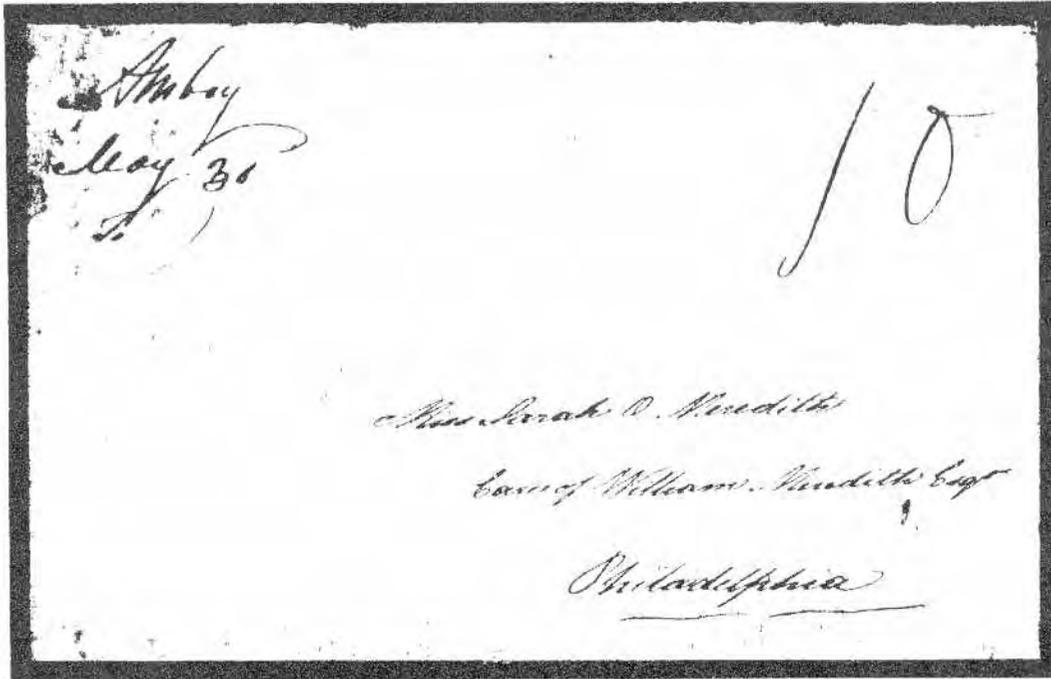


WEST TRENTON - Mercer County - 1925-1953



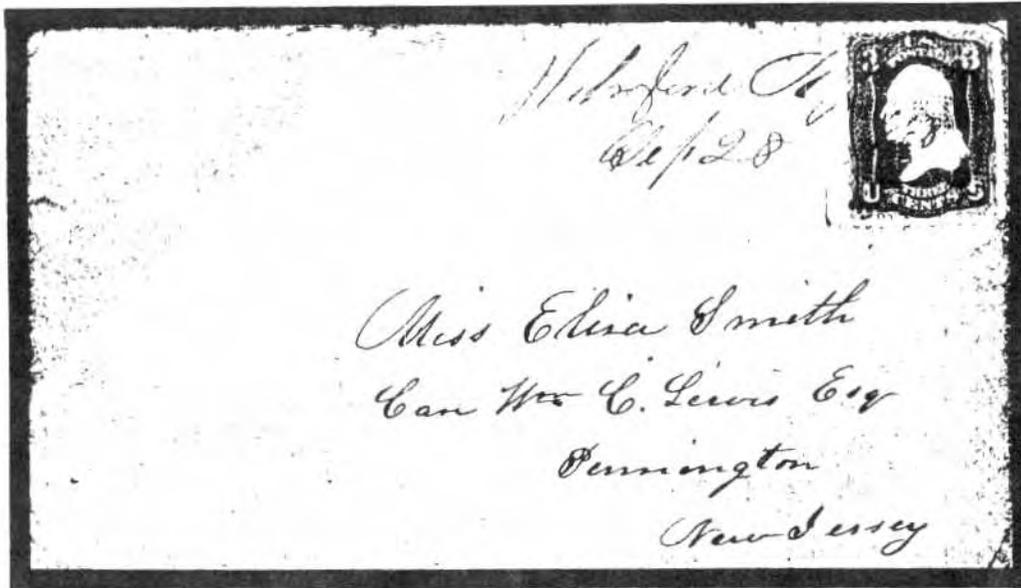
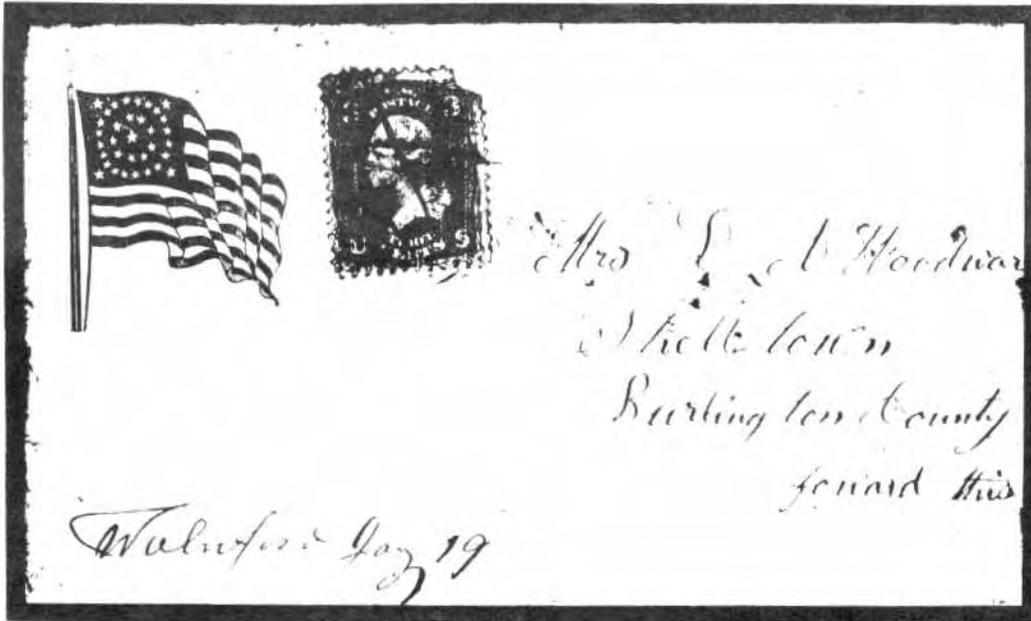
# New Jersey Discontinued Post Offices

AMBOY - Middlesex County - 1792-1842



# New Jersey Discontinued Post Offices

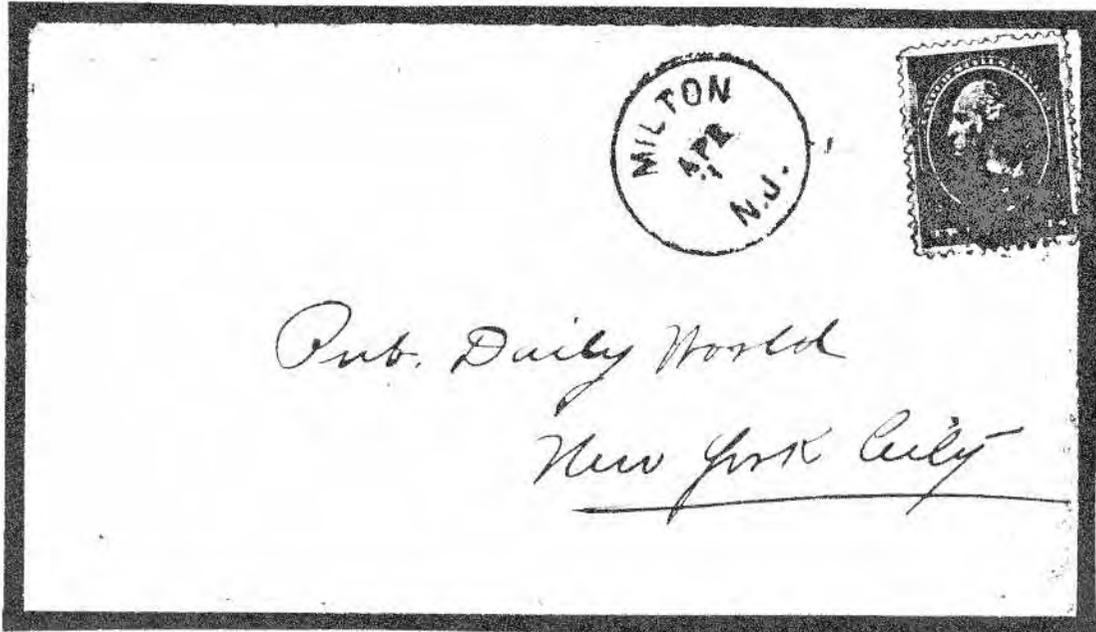
WALNFORD - Monmouth County - 1850-1904



# New Jersey Discontinued Post Offices



MILTON - Morris County - 1820-1908



NAUGHRIGHT - Morris County - 1886-1948



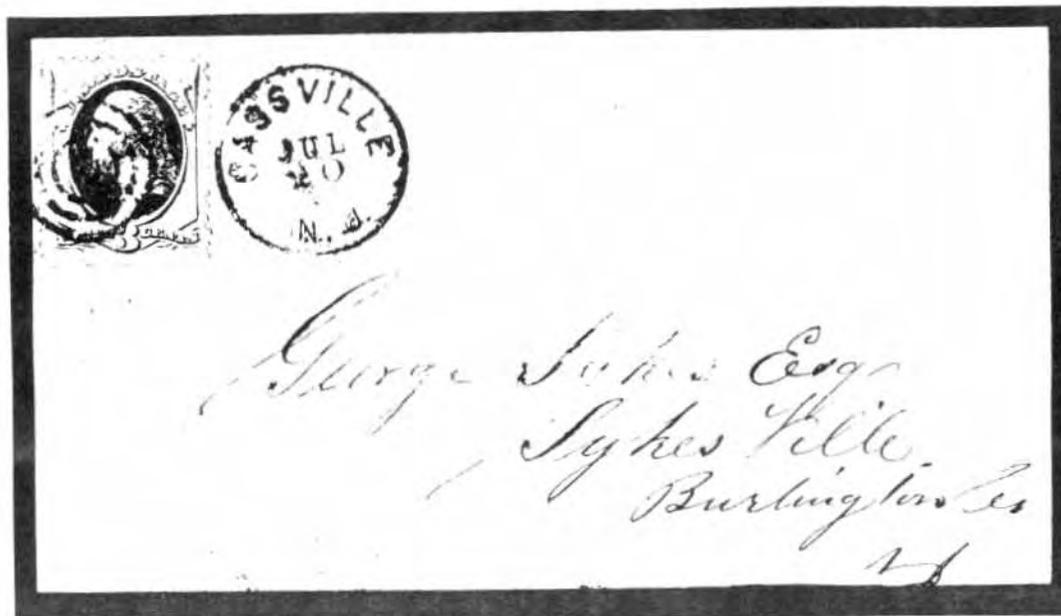
# New Jersey Discontinued Post Offices



BERGEN IRON WORKS - Ocean County - 1848-1865



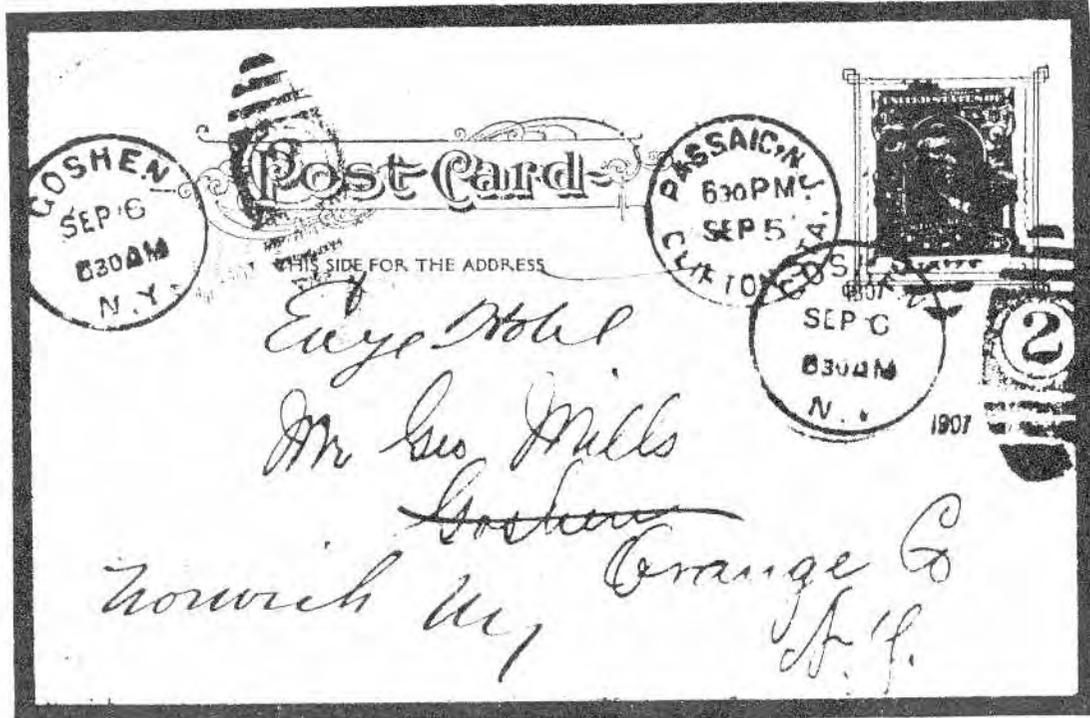
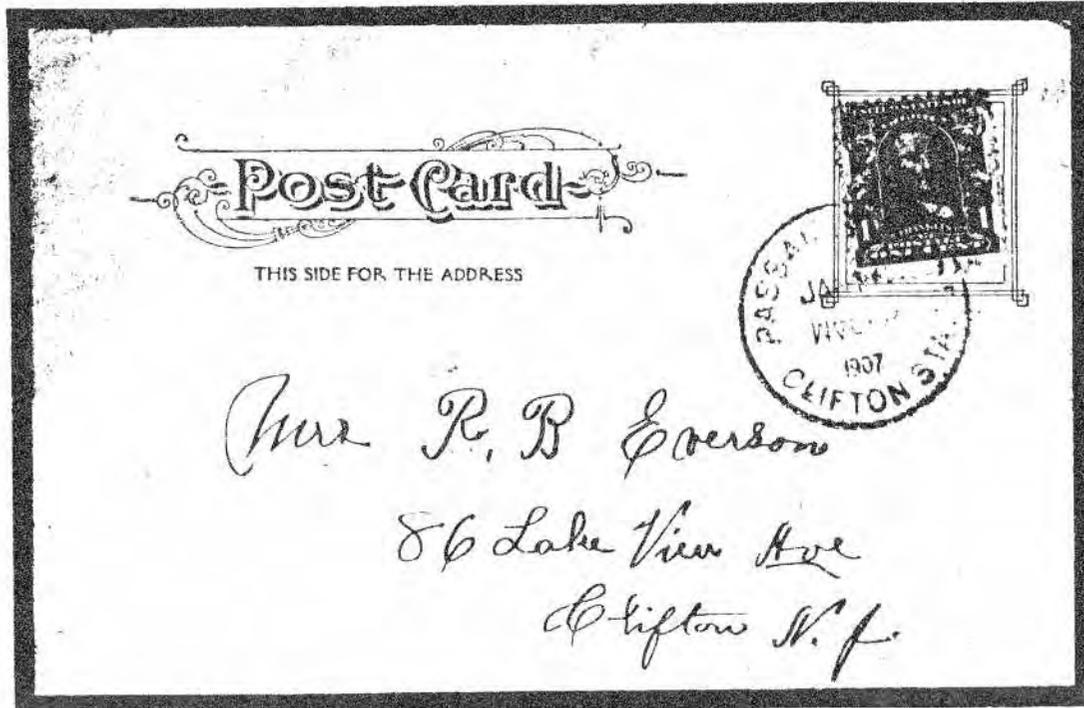
CASSVILLE - Ocean County - 1837-1960



# New Jersey Discontinued Post Offices

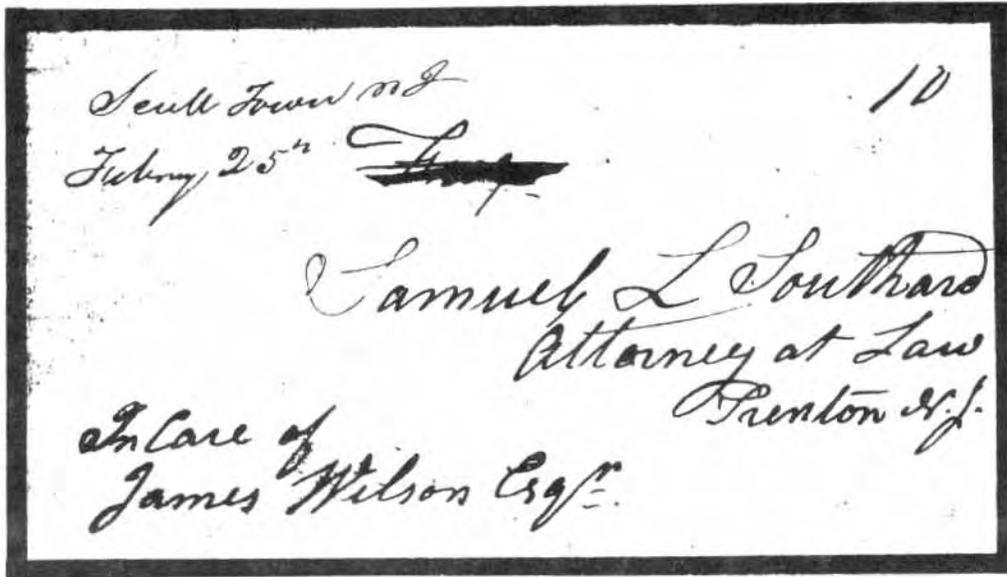


CLIFTON STATION - Passaic County - 1902-1908



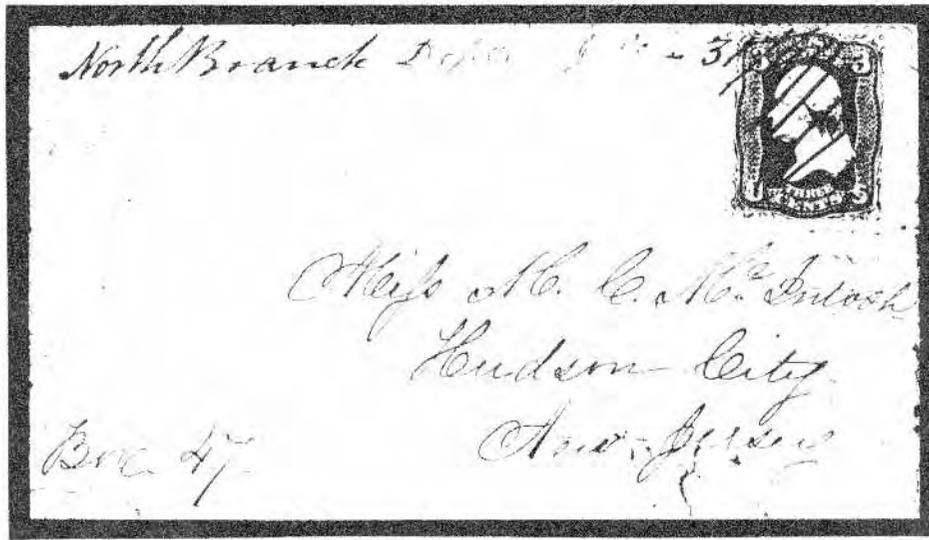
# New Jersey Discontinued Post Offices

SCULL TOWN - Salem County - 1826-1862



# New Jersey Discontinued Post Offices

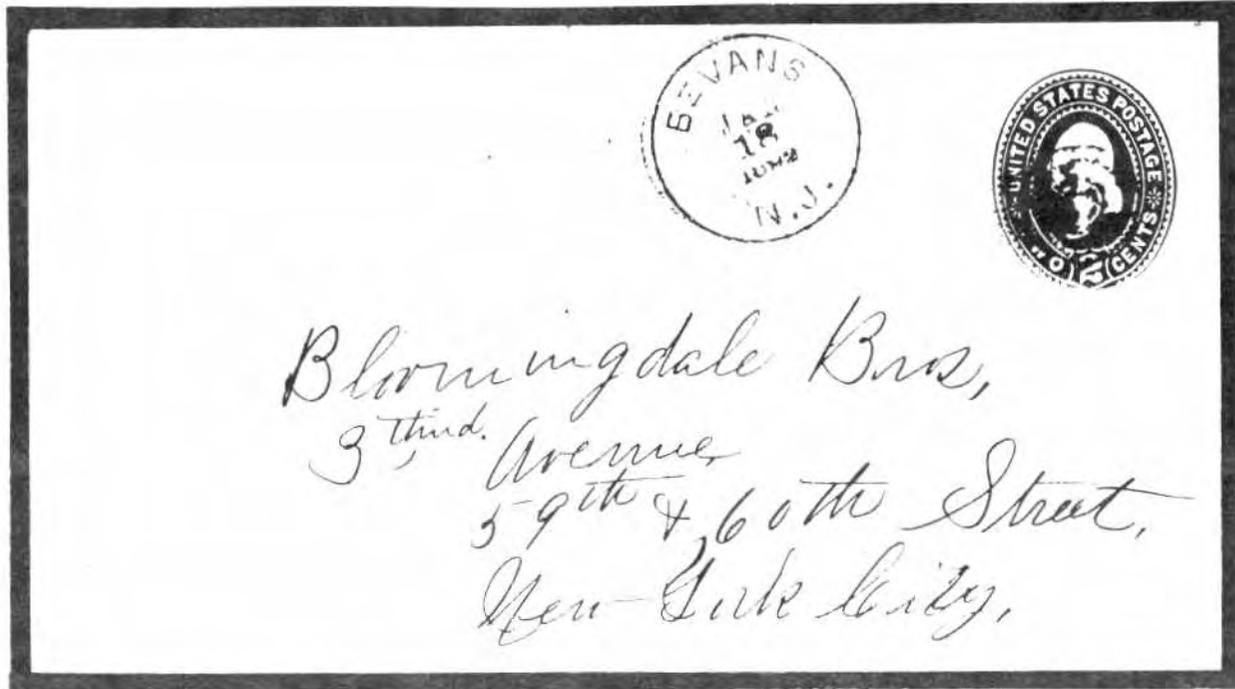
NORTH BRANCH DEPOT - Somerset County - 1851-1966



# New Jersey Discontinued Post Offices



BEVANS - Sussex County - 1829-1969



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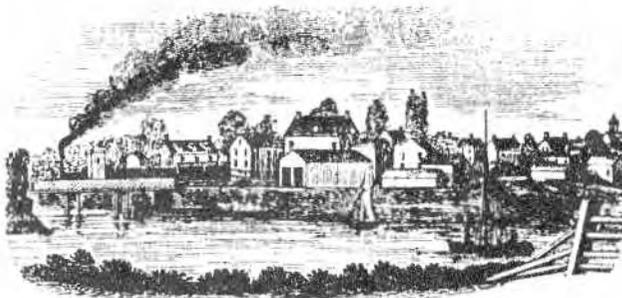
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