

**ELIZABETH, NJ ~ ALTERED ELIZABETHTOWN CANCEL ~ Robert G. Rose**

This altered postmark is dated June 22 and its 1855 usage is confirmed by the dateline on the enclosed letter, just a month after the post office's renaming. As of April 1, 1855, the law required, for the first time, the compulsory prepayment of all domestic mail, with three cents paying the half ounce rate under 3,000 miles, as reflected in the handstamped rate marking.

The question then arises: which of the existing Elizabethtown handstamps was altered to read "Elizabeth?" The *Coles Book* includes two possibilities. The first is a 29 millimeter circle in blue (E10) with reported uses from 1840 to 1857, as shown in Figure 3.<sup>3</sup> Five cents paid the half ounce rate under 300 miles, effective on July 1, 1845, on this 1846 cover.



*Fig. 3: Elizabethtown postmark in blue with matching "PAID" and "5" on 1846 cover to Madison, New Jersey, Coles type E10.*

The second Elizabethtown postmark is a 31 millimeter circle in black (E11) with reported uses from 1853 to 1855 as shown in Figure 4<sup>4</sup> on the following page. Three cents paid the compulsory prepaid rate for one-half ounce domestic mail under 3,000 miles that became effective on April 4, 1855, just four days before the posting of this cover.



*Elizabethtown  
E10 – Coles 1840-57*



*Elizabeth  
Unlisted postmark - 1855*



*Elizabethtown  
E11 – Coles 1853-55*



Fig. 4: Elizabethtown postmark in black with matching "PAID 3" on 1855 cover to Princeton, Coles type E11

The altered postmark shown in *Figure 2* measures 29 millimeter and the spacing of the letters also matches up with those in *Figure 3*, Coles type E10. It appears then, that the type E10 handstamp was altered with the removal of the letters "town" to read as "Elizabeth." The "PAID 3" rate marking is identical to that shown on the 1855 cover in *Figure 4* and is the proper rating effective on April 1, 1855.

#### ENDNOTES:

<sup>1</sup> William C. Coles, Jr., *The Postal Markings of New Jersey Stampless Covers* (The Collectors Club of Chicago, 1983), p. 168, with Coles type E2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 170. Coles also reports this postmark in green from 1845 to 1857 and in black without a year date. Coles type E10.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* Coles type E11.

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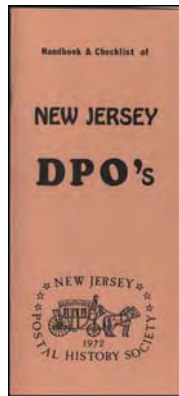
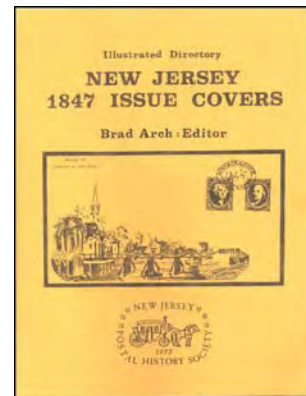
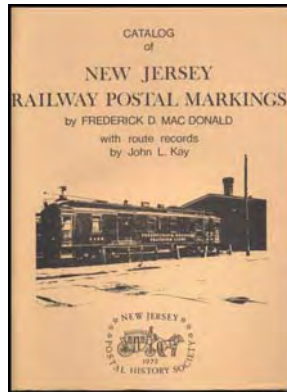
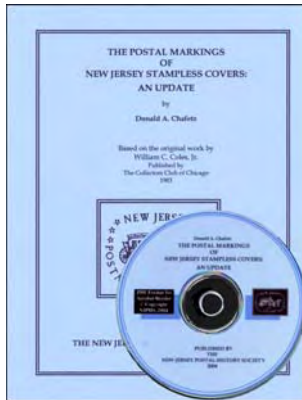
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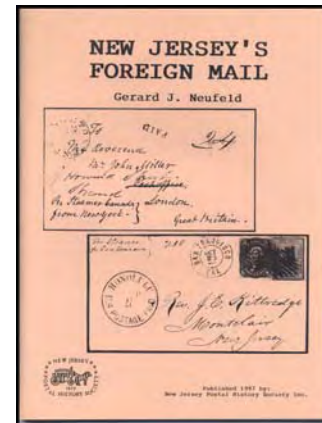
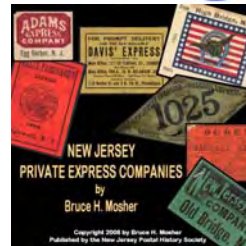
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