



NJPH

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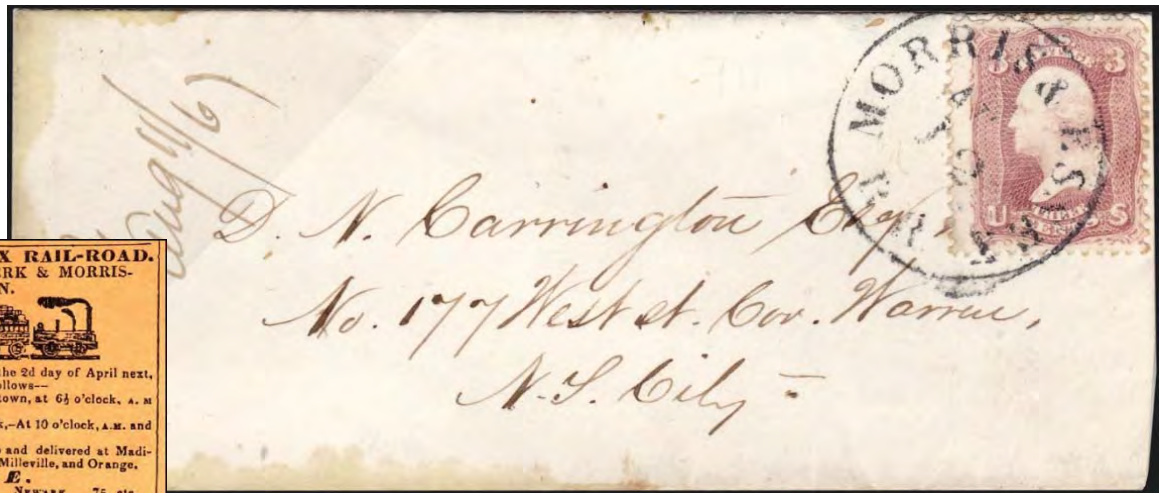
The Morris & Essex Railroad

MORRIS & ESSEX RAIL-ROAD.
 NEW-YORK, NEWERK & MORRIS-TOWN.

ON and after MONDAY, the 2d day of April next, the Carr will leave as follows—
 Leaves the depot at Morristown, at 6½ o'clock, A. M. and 1½ o'clock, P. M.
 Leaves the Depot at Newark,—At 10 o'clock, A.M. and 5 o'clock, P. M.
 Passengers will be taken up and delivered at Madison, Chatham, the Summit, Millerville, and Orange.

FARE.

From MORRISTOWN to	NEWARK	75 cts.
MADISON	"	62½ "
CHATHAM	"	50 "
SUMMIT	"	41 "



A cover cancelled with a Morris & Essex Railroad cancel, sent Aug. 11, 1867 to New York City. See page 127.

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PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE



How fast this summer has moved by, and a busy time in philately at that! First, attending the NAPEX show in Virginia, and then StampShow in Richmond. In addition to the pleasure and challenge of exhibiting, spending a weekend at these shows is an opportunity to share in the warmth, comradery and the philatelic interests of fellow collectors. As I write this message, I’m working with the NOJEX Show Committee dealing with all of the last-minute details that come with staging a World Series of Philately Show in a new venue. And, at the same time, Jean and I have been working on the final edits to this Journal, which is now in your hands. Yes, busy, but all good.

In this issue of *NJPH*, Don Bowe returns with an article tracing the rich postal history of the Morris & Essex Railroad; Don Chafetz continues his series on Morristown’s postal history; this article addressing additional covers used to Germany; and John Trosky returns with an article detailing the postal history related to Peter D. Vroom, a prominent 19th century New Jersey politician and governor. With the recent discovery of the underwater remains of the USS *Indianapolis*, I am reminded of Captain Larry Brennan’s poignant article on the horrific loss of life occasioned by the sinking of that Jersey-built ship in the last days of WWII. He now contributes another tale, the Jersey-built ships that took part in the epic naval battles of Guadalcanal, as we approach the 75th anniversary of that event. Jean Walton contributes a writeup of an 1889 mourning cover discovered by Mike Schwartz with a postmark which appears to be from Huffville, a non-existent New Jersey post office. Finally, I write about covers from the Beach House Hotel in Sea Girt which were postmarked in the early 1880s at the nearby Spring Lake post office with a circular post office cancelling device including the hotel’s name and its Sea Girt location, a most unusual commercial purpose.

Please be sure to visit the Society’s booth at NOJEX. The Society will have a booth inside the ballroom. Stop by, rest your feet and, help to sign up new members. I will present a PowerPoint presentation, “Collecting Stampless Covers,” at the Society’s annual meeting at noon on Sunday, September 10. Complete show information can be found at www.nojex.org.

ROBERT G. ROSE



NJPHS MEMBERS

Please note:

**NOJEX DATES & PLACE HAVE CHANGED THIS YEAR
NOJEX will be held September 8-10, 2017 at
The Robert Treat Hotel in Newark
Annual NJPHS meeting at noon, September 10
For more information, visit NOJEX.org**

Free admission card included with this issue

NOJEX 2017: NEW DATE & NEW LOCATION

September 8-10, 2017

Robert Treat Hotel



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Show Chairman: Barbara Booz

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or email gardenstatepostcard@gmail.com.

THE STORY OF THE MORRIS & ESSEX RAILROAD

By Don Bowe

First, a bit of New Jersey Railroad history...

Colonel John Stevens is without a doubt the father of railroading in New Jersey, if not in this country. As early as 1809, he demonstrated the use of steam engines on a ferry, the *Juliana*, which ran between New York and Hoboken, and on ocean-going vessels. He watched with interest the development of a locomotive as early as 1803 by a Cornishman in Great Britain, followed by a locomotive designed by George Stephenson in 1814. In 1812, Stevens wrote a treatise entitled *Documents tending to prove the superior advantages of rail-ways and steam carriages over canal navigation*.¹ His vision was clear, that the use of railroads would far exceed the value of canals for the swift transport of goods, and the opening of the country to the west to growth and settlement. It was almost with disbelief that he found his ideas ridiculed and rejected. A working model was necessary to demonstrate his ideas.

So without ado, Stevens proceeded to build on his property in Hoboken, a circular track with an engine. This was used to amuse visitors and guests to his estate. The passengers actually rode on the engine itself. This circular “railway” operated until 1828, when the “Steam Waggon” was moved to a linear tract closer to the waterfront. Stevens continued to fiddle and tinker, making improvement, but there is no proof that this locomotive ever pulled cars behind it.²

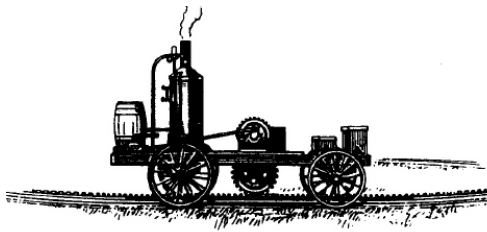


Fig. 1: Col. John Stevens’ first engine at Hoboken. Note the lack of coal (or wood) car, and in fact, passengers rode on the engine itself.

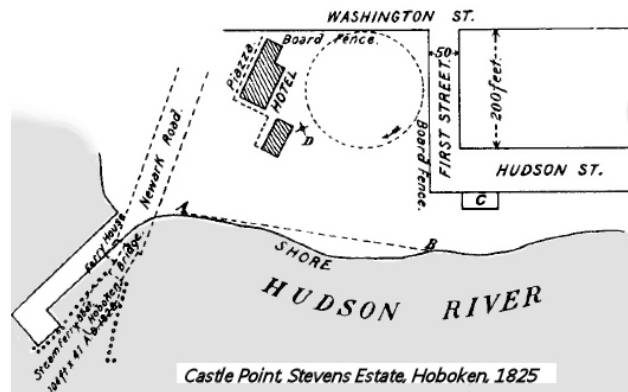


Fig. 2: This engine first rode on a circular track, and was later moved closer to the shore, perhaps to make it more accessible to more people – especially those crossing on the steam ferry *Juliana* to Hoboken.

Gradually the powers that ruled in Trenton began to change, and in 1815 a charter was issued to build a railroad from the Delaware near Trenton to the Raritan, near New Brunswick. It however failed to gain the financial support needed to build it. Again in 1823, another proposed railroad to be under the direction of John Stevens failed again for lack of funds. By 1830 however, a charter was established by the Legislature in Trenton for the Camden and Amboy Railroad, with one million dollars in financing sold within 10 minutes. Something had changed – whether Stevens’ efforts had anything to do with it is hard to measure.

While the Camden and Amboy (which incidentally was chartered Feb. 4, 1830, the same day the Delaware & Raritan Canal was chartered – a compromise under the “Joint Companies” – between the canal and railroad interests), many other railroads were soon to follow. Once the flood gates were opened, a torrent would follow.

Next steps...

Once the feasibility of railroads had been proven, the public clamored for the advantages they offered. The population of Northeast New Jersey who already worked in or depended on the commerce of New York City were eager for easier and quicker ways to access the available Hudson River crossings, and so it is not surprising that the next charters granted by the New Jersey legislature were for railroads to Jersey City – both the Paterson & Hudson River (January 1831, and the New Jersey Rail Road and Transportation Company (March 1832) jumped into that breach, and solved the problems of the bridges over the Passaic and Hackensack, crossing the Meadowlands, and perhaps the most imposing barrier at that point, Bergen Hill. Early locomotives were still struggling to pull cars up inclines, and until this was solved by the Bergen Cut, horses were used to pull cars over the top when locomotives quite literally could not make the grade.

Together these two railroads combined to create the Bergen Cut, which very much reduced the grade, and inventors continued to improve the locomotives of the time, so that when the Morris & Essex was chartered in January 1835, it was a matter of connecting with the New Jersey Rail Road already created, (although until 1854, that connection was made by removing the cars from the Morris & Essex tracks in Newark, and hauling them down Center Street behind horses, to connect with a New Jersey Rail Road engine for the trip to Jersey City).

The Morris & Essex was born to carry people, and the route it chose from Newark first to Orange (1836), and then to Morristown (1838), reflected this. In 1840, a person could board the train in Morristown, and be in New York three hours later. The age of the commuter was born.

Seth Boyden, a Newark inventor, worked to improve the pulling strength of the locomotive. His first engine, the *Orange*, failed on its first attempt to climb the hills west of Newark, but the *Essex* was a significant improvement, and it was no longer necessary to use horses on the steeper inclines.

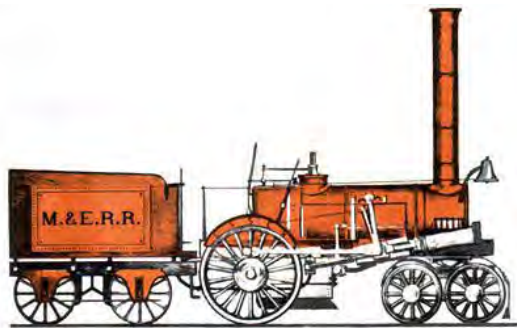


Fig. 3: The Orange – M&E's first engine, soon replaced by the more powerful Essex.

MORRIS & ESSEX RAIL-ROAD.
NEW-YORK, NEWERK & MORRIS-TOWN.

ON and after MONDAY, the 2d day of April next, the Cars will leave as follows--
Leaves the depot at Morristown, at 6½ o'clock, A. M. and 1½ o'clock, P. M.
Leaves the Depot at Newark,--At 10 o'clock, A.M. and 5 o'clock, P. M.
Passengers will be taken up and delivered at Madison, Chatham, the Summit, Milleville, and Orange.

FARE.

FROM MORRISTOWN TO	NEWARK	75 cts.
MADISON	"	62½ "
CHATHAM	"	50 "
SUMMIT	"	41 "

Fig. 4: Early M&E Advertising of its routes and fares³.

The early years of the Morris & Essex were lean – it costs a great deal to build and operate a railroad. To push its lines further west, the Morris & Essex agreed to haul freight of all kinds, and bringing New Jersey products to market helped the bottom line. Wheaton J. Lane describes these years of the Morris & Essex below:

The Morris and Essex was a small line with little traffic; passengers provided almost the entire revenue at first. The line's two locomotives, the Orange and the Essex, slowly pulled one or two passenger cars over the winding route through the hilly territory which it served.... Baggage was carried in a box fastened under the cars. The trains stopped anywhere for travelers, and the engineers frequently had to get out and drive cows from the tracks.

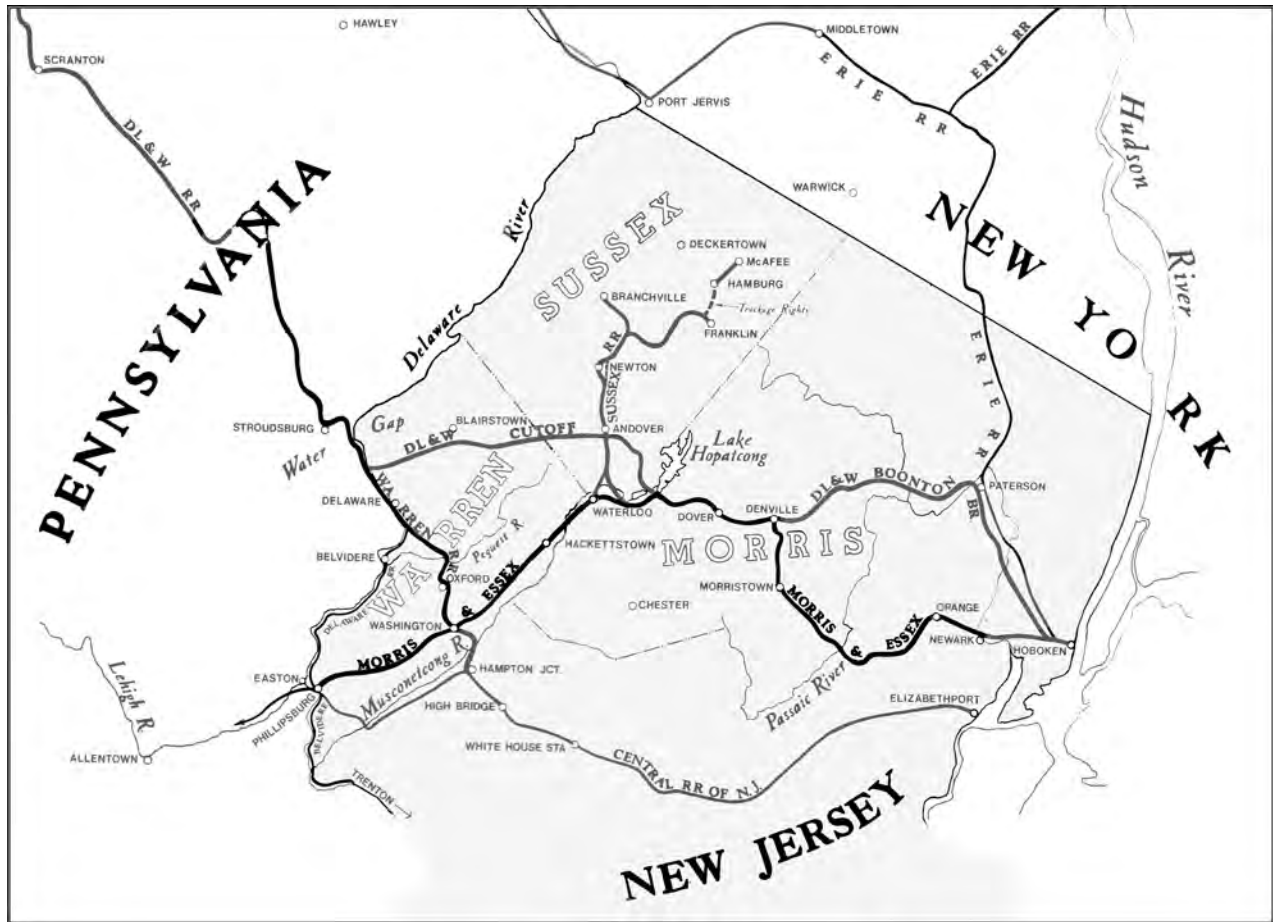
The Morris & Essex secured its first mail contract in 1840, to carry mail from Newark to Morristown for \$540 a year,⁴ and as its route expanded, so did its mail contracts⁵ –although first Morris & Essex cancels have not been recorded before 1851. Railway mail service was still unsophisticated in these earlier days: the mail was accompanied by a Route Agent (a postal employee) who accepted the mail, and cancelled in on board the train. However, sorting the mail was not yet part of his job.⁶ It was not until after the Civil War that the RPO service came into being.

By 1842 the M&E was near collapse, as its profits did not yet outweigh its indebtedness, but reorganization and the decision to go north to Dover to compete with the Morris Canal for anthracite business turned it around. By 1848 the line was completed to Dover, and it was now in true competition with the Morris Canal.

The diminishing forests and soft coal of New Jersey made it clear that a new source of energy was needed, and the anthracite coal fields of Pennsylvania were tantalizingly close – this fact drove the growth of several New Jersey railroads. The race to the Delaware and a connection to those coal fields would provide the needed energy for a flagging iron industry in New Jersey, and for an industrial explosion. It would also provide added railroad income and fuel for its engines. Better than intercepting coal already carried on the canal would be to carry it from the point it entered New Jersey. The Morris & Essex, backed by Newark businessmen, saw its destiny to the west, and in 1851, won the right to expand its lines to Hackettstown. Bonds were offered, and sold, and by 1854 the line was completed to Hackettstown. (See *Figure 5*.)

What was not yet completed was a definite survey or plan to reach the Delaware. Ideally this would have been to the Water Gap, and the M&E made several different surveys in that direction. What they had not counted on however was John I. Blair, the moving force behind the Warren Railroad who had plans of his own. The right of way to the Gap became an issue in 1851, and the two companies, the M&E and the Warren (chartered in February 1851), came head to head in the State Legislature over which railroad would have the upper hand. The Warren won out, but the M&E leveled an injunction, which slowed the building of the Warren road until settled. This was further complicated by the terrain, and the building of bridges and tunnels, the worst of which was the tunnel north of Washington. All of these drained the resources of the Warren, so that when it was completed on temporary tracks in 1856, the Delaware, Lackawanna, and Western was able to quickly lease it in 1857, even before the above tunnel was completed – giving it access to Jersey City by the Warren Railroad and Central Railroad of New Jersey – at a great profit for the Warren Railroad, and a big loss for the M&E.⁷ The M&E completed its connection to the Delaware at Phillipsburg in 1865,⁸ but the DL&W was committed to the Central RR of NJ line to carry coal to the east.

THE STORY OF THE MORRIS & ESSEX RAILROAD ~ Don Bowe



Morris & Essex Railroad Lines 1835-1870⁹

Timeline of the Morris & Essex

Jan 1835	M&E chartered (incorporated) to create line from Newark to Morristown
Oct 1836	Connection by NJRR to Jersey City & lower Manhattan ferry
Nov 1836	First section completed from Newark to Orange, trains pulled through Newark by horse power
Jan 1838	Completed to Morristown
July 1838	Congress declares all railroad routes as post roads
1840	First mail contract
Jul 1848	Completed to Dover
Aug 1851	first M&E RR cancels on mail
Jan 1854	Line completed to Hackettstown
Aug 1854	New alignment of tracks in Newark eliminated horse-pulled trains through Newark
1854	Mail contract to Hackettstown
1863	New alignment - began using Long Dock Tunnel
1865	Line completed to Phillipsburg
1868	M&E leased the Newark & Bloomfield RR
Dec 1868	Leased by DL&W, connecting to their Warren RR at Washington
Sept 1870	Boonton Branch - first east to Boonton, then to Paterson (1889), and finally connecting to main line at at west end of Bergen Hill.

Morris and Essex Rail Road Company, }

NEWARK. December, 1851. }

SIR :

For the purpose of constructing that part of the extension of the Road to the Delaware River, between Dover and Hackettstown, the Board of Directors have resolved to open Books of Subscription for an increase of the Capital Stock of the Company of [\$500,000 00] five hundred thousand dollars on Tuesday, the sixth day of January next, at the house of Jacob Clawson, in Hackettstown; on Wednesday, the seventh, at the house of Dennis Cockran, in Newton; on Thursday, the eighth, at the house of Isaac Emmons, in Stanhope; and on Friday, the ninth, and Saturday, the tenth, of same month, at the office of the Company, in Newark, from 10 o'clock A. M. to 4 o'clock P. M. of each day. The terms of subscription will be, in brief, as follows: ten per cent. of the amount subscribed to be paid in cash at the time of subscription, and for the remaining ninety per cent. nine notes each for ten per cent. of the amount, dated January 1, 1852, payable respectively at 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24, 27 and 30 months, at some bank in the counties of Essex, Morris, Sussex or Warren, in this State, or in the City of New York. Should the amount subscribed be such as by this division to make the notes less than \$20 each, the number of notes shall be decreased so that each note shall amount to at least that sum, but the average time shall be as above stated; but no note will be received which has a longer time to run than 30 months. Subscribers may at their option pay the whole amount in cash at the time of subscription.

Interest dividends, at the rate of seven per centum per annum, will be paid semi-annually, in the months of July and January, upon the amount of all moneys paid in, until the road is so far completed to Hackettstown that the same can be used for the transportation of passengers and freight, after which the new and old stock will be blended together, and the same per centum in dividends paid upon each.

No subscription will be binding, unless at least the sum of three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000) shall be, bona fide, subscribed for.

The new stock will be pledged and hypothecated to the Company for the payment of all the notes, and held liable to forfeiture and sale, in default of prompt payment of same at maturity.

WILLIAM N. WOOD,

JOEL W. CONDIT,

BEACH VANDERPOOL,

WILLIAM WRIGHT.

} Committee.

John I Blair Esq
Blairstown
Warren Co
N. J.

Fig. 5: Circular advertising of bonds for the extension of the Morris & Essex lines to Hackettstown, offered December 1851, to finance that enterprise. This cover was folded and sent to John I. Blair (the stamp corner cut away), who became the nemesis to the M&E in the years ahead.



Fig. 6. A Jan 17 1855 letter from Newark to Morristown, postmarked with a light Morris & Essex handstamp tying 3 cent Dull Red 1851 Issue (Scott 11).



Fig. 7: A February 1 1855 letter from Hackettstown to Suckasunny Plains Mines, sent soon after the M&E line to Hackettstown was complete, Morris & Essex handstamp tying 3 cents Dull Red 1851 Issue.



Fig. 8: A May 1857 letter from the Morris Institute in Morristown to Brooklyn with an M&E cancel.

Fig. 9: A second letter from Morristown to Brooklyn, with docketing on front, sent July 21, 1857.

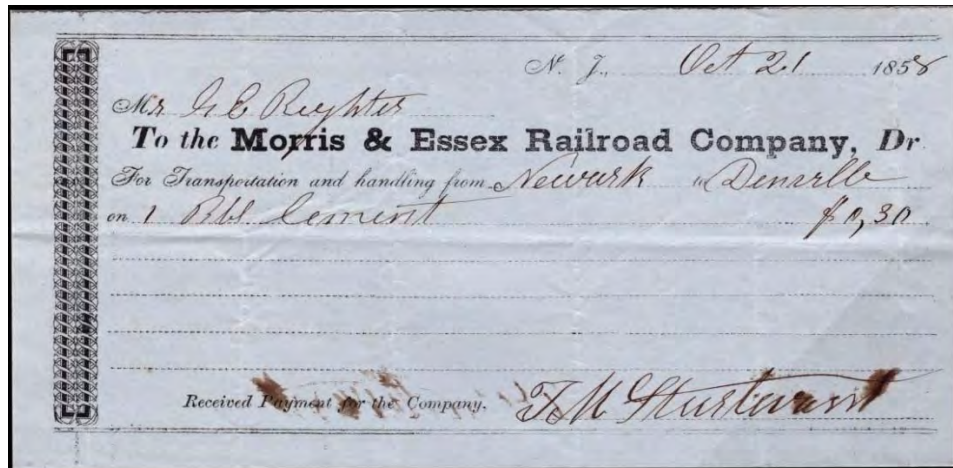


Fig. 10: Bill of lading, dated Oct. 21, 1858, for a barrel of cement carried from Newark to Denville on the Morris & Essex line.

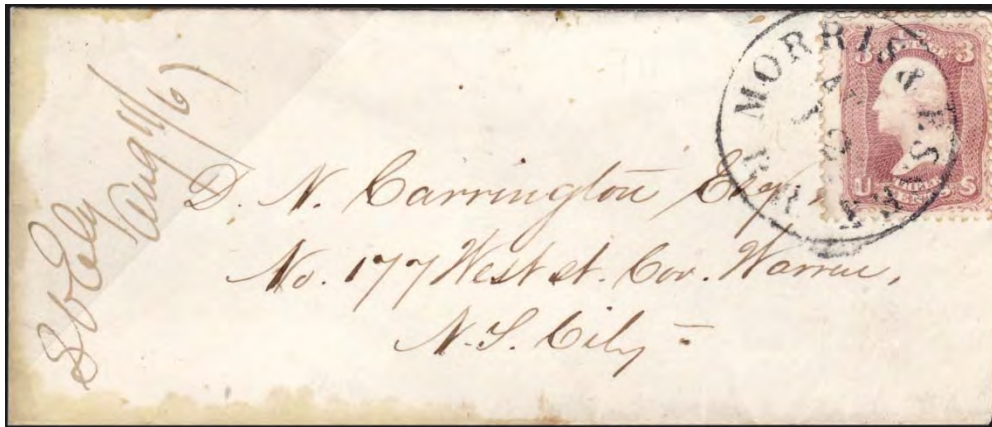


Fig. 11: An August 12, 1867 letter to New York City, postmarked with a M&E cancel.

From the final completion of the troublesome tunnel in 1862 to 1868, the DL&W worked with the Warren and Central of NJ RRs to ship coal east, but in the end, frictions developed. Perhaps CNJ's Elizabethport docks at its eastern end were too far from the New York market, but in 1868, the Morris & Essex, which had leased the Boonton Branch and established a new route to Newark, was in some economic distress,¹⁰ and was an easy target for the DL&W. In December 1868, the DL&W acquired the M&E, gaining access to docks closer to New York and to the Boonton Line.



Fig. 12: An 1867 letter originating in Madison, and sent on the M&E to New Haven, Connecticut.

Don Bowe ~ THE STORY OF THE MORRIS & ESSEX RAILROAD

The history of the Morris and Essex continues, with the name of its lines retained – even today – but the story now moves to the Delaware, Lackawanna, and Western. In 1911, the long and difficult fight to the Delaware and the Pennsylvania coal fields became a blip in history, as the new cut-off line across the state to the north was completed, providing an easier and more direct route. The beautiful but disintegrating cement arch bridge across the Delaware not far from the Water Gap however, attests to the fact that all things change. The coal fields of Pennsylvania were replaced as a source of fuel by those in Minnesota, and oil then replaced both.

Timeline of the Morris & Essex (as the DL&W)

1911	The Cutoff completed - opening line from Port Morris to Slateford Junction in PA
1945	M&E formally merged with DL&W
1960	DL&W merged with Erie RR to form the Erie Lackawanna
1976	Erie Lackawanna became part of Conrail

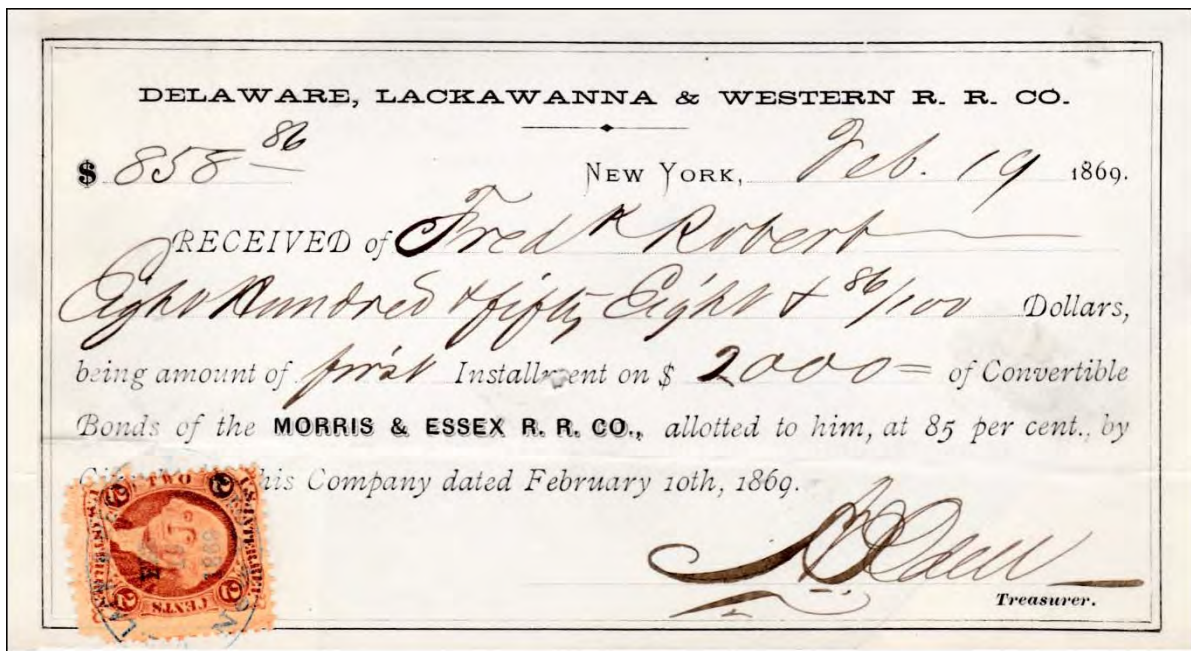


Fig. 13: A receipt for a partial payment on convertible bonds for the Morris & Essex, cancelled with a Scott R15 (Internal Revenue) stamp and a Del Lack & West. cancel Feb. 19, 1869.

The railroads continue, in a much-diminished state, for the transportation of goods and passengers, and only the future will tell what comes next. But in this earlier age, they opened the world to New Jersey.

THE STORY OF THE MORRIS & ESSEX RAILROAD ~ Don Bowe

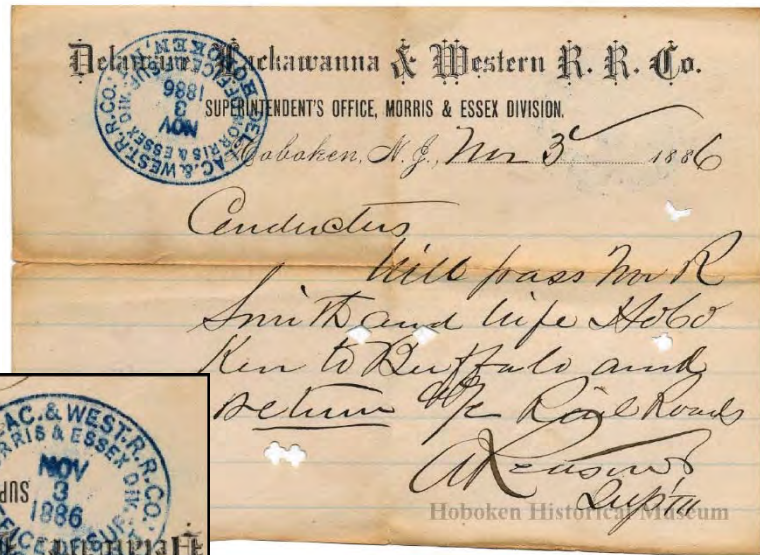
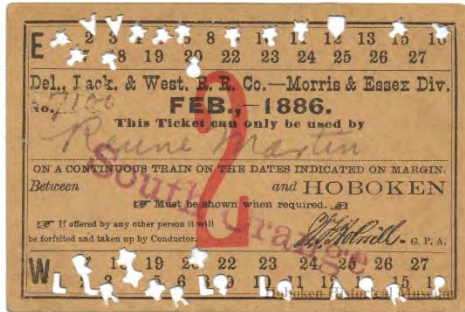


Fig. 14: 1886 railroad passes for the DL&W Morris & Essex Division.¹¹



ENDNOTES & REFERENCES:

- ¹ Documents tending to prove the superior advantages of rail-ways and steam carriages over canal navigation at <https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=QoMpAAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&output=reader&hl=en&pg=GBS.PA18> . this document contains as well Stevens correspondence with Robert R. Livingston and Gouverneur Morris – answering their objections to his proposals
- ² James Alexander, Jr.: “John Stevens, the Man and the Machine” at <http://jimquest.com/writ/trains/stevens.pdf> in an issue of Milepost (no date given).
- ³ Both pictures from “Along the tracks..., How a Railroad Changed a Town,” on the Chatham library site at <https://chathamlibrary.org/tracks.pdf>
- ⁴ Frederick D. Macdonald, *Catalog of New Jersey Railway Postal Markings*, published by NJPHS in 1984.
- ⁵ On July 7, 1838, the United States Congress officially designated all railroads as official postal routes. Mail was picked up and dropped off at local stations. The first RPO car did not enter service until 1862, and it was not until 1869 that Railway Mail Service was officially inaugurated. The famous mail crane for grabbing mail on the fly was not invented until 1867, and not in use before 1869. See *Rails West: Railway Post Office Cars Sort and Distribute Mail* at <http://www.railswest.com/rpo.html>
- ⁶ Our thanks to Nancy Clark for her knowledge of the early history of railroad markings and service.
- ⁷ [Gustavus Myers](#)– “History Of The Great American Fortunes, Chapter V, The Blair And The Garrett Fortunes,” 1917 at http://www.yamaguchy.com/library/myers/am_fortune/am_fortune_405.html#N_2_
- ⁸ New Jersey Railroad Information at http://njrails.tripod.com/19th_Century/Morris_Essex/morris_essex.htm.
- ⁹ Adapted from map in front & back of *The Lackawanna Railroad in Northwest New Jersey* by Larry Lowenthal and William T. Greenberg.
- ¹⁰ Wheaton J. Lane, *From Indian Trail to Iron Horse* -p. 383.
- ¹¹ Both images from the Hoboken Historical Museum Online Collections Database at <http://hoboken.pastperfectonline.com/archive/>

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- Cunningham, John, *Railroading in New Jersey*, published by Associated Railroads of New Jersey, 1951.
 Lane, Wheaton J, *From Indian Trail to Iron Horse*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1939
 Lowenthal, Larry, and Greenberg, William T., *The Lackawanna Railroad in Northwest New Jersey*, published by the Tri-State Railway Historical Society, Inc, Morristown, NJ, 1987
 Macdonald, Frederick, *Catalog of New Jersey Postal Markings*, NJPHS, 1984.

A JERSEY SHORE MYSTERY: The Beach House, Sea Girt, N.J. Cancel

By Robert G. Rose

The Victorian period brought not only the issuance of what philatelists call the Banknote Issues, but was also a time when the well-to-do traveled to New Jersey's sea shore to escape the summer heat and humidity of New York and Philadelphia. With the coming of the railroads and the construction of hotels along the oceanfront towns of Monmouth County, it became possible to depart those sweltering cities and arrive at the small town of Sea Girt in under two hours, there to enjoy the cool sea breeze and ocean surf.¹ It was the opening of the Beach House hotel in Sea Girt in 1876 that gives rise to an interesting postal history mystery.²

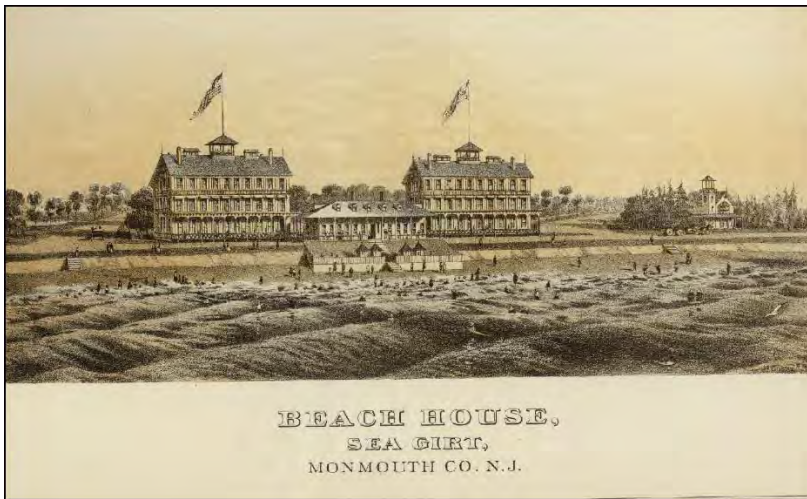


Fig. 1: Illustration of Beach House Hotel, Sea Girt. (Courtesy David Rumsey Historic Map Collection)³



Fig. 2: Jersey Shore: Sea Girt and Spring Lake directly north.

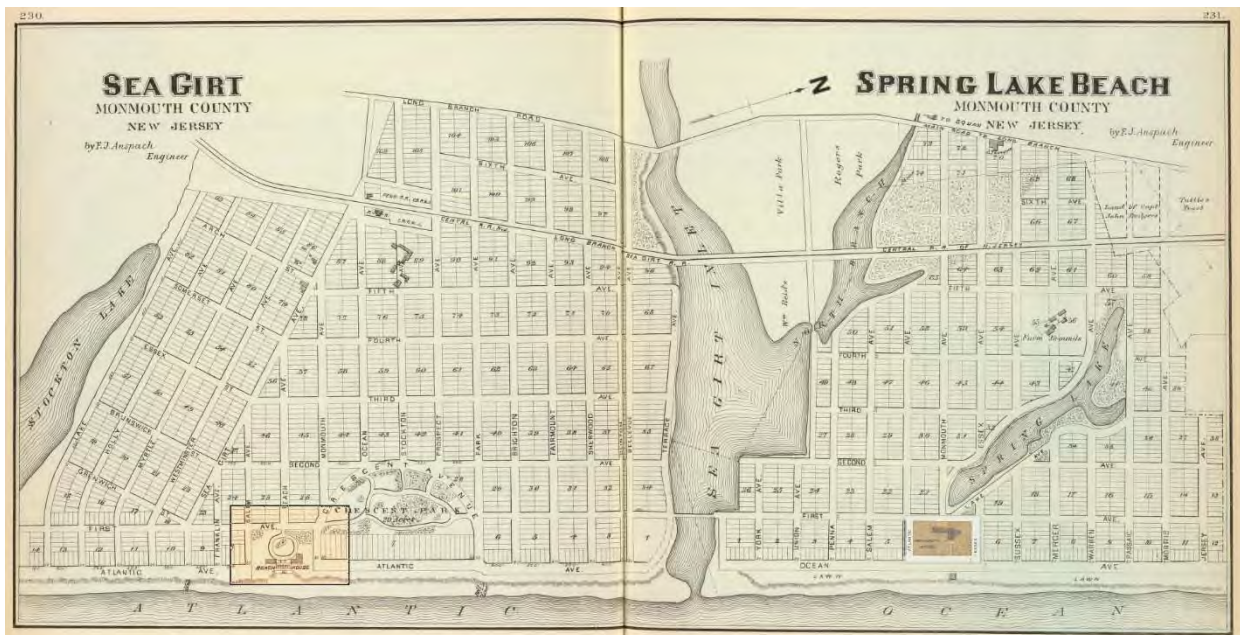


Fig. 3: An 1878 map of Sea Girt and Spring Lake, with Beach House highlighted at left and Monmouth House in Spring Lake highlighted at right. The Spring Lake post office at this time was located across the street from the Monmouth House hotel, at Atlantic & First Avenue.⁴ (Courtesy David Rumsey Historic Map Collection)⁵

A post office was not established in Sea Girt until 1899.⁶ The nearest post office was just to the north, in the adjoining town of Spring Lake. In the summer of 1880, Spring Lake postmarked its mail with a “sawtooth” magenta double circle postmark, duplexed with a solid five-point killer as seen in *Figure 4*.⁷



Fig. 4: Spring Lake magenta cancel with duplexed star, August 18, 1880.

(Courtesy of Daniel F. Kelleher Auctions)

However, mail from guests at the Beach House, which was carried from the hotel to the Spring Lake post office, a distance of less than a mile, was postmarked in a very different manner. During the summer months of 1880 through 1882, mail from the Beach House was postmarked in a smaller double magenta circle and duplexed with a handstamp circle killer that reads “BEACH HOUSE/SEA GIRT, N.J.” surrounding a solid five-point star as illustrated in *Figure 5*.⁸ The inclusion of the name of a commercial entity in this duplexed cancel apparently did not violate any contemporary postal laws or regulations.⁹ However, Roger D. Curran, a student of U.S. postal cancellations, has noted that “a cancel advertising a commercial establishment is rare.”¹⁰



Fig. 5. Spring Lake magenta cancel with star surrounded by legend “BEACH HOUSE/SEA GIRT, N.J.”¹¹



Fig. 6: Tracing of cancel, first reported in Postal Markings.¹²

The use of this Beach House cancel was first reported and illustrated over 80 years ago in the monthly journal *Postal Markings*, in which it was enigmatically suggested that “The hotel in question used its own handstamp to cancel mail—or the P.O. may have been in it and this [sic] used by mistake.”¹² A follow-up report appeared shortly afterwards in that journal, included a tracing of the Beach House circle killer duplexed with a Spring Lake postmark dated June 22, 1880.¹³ (See *Figure 6*.)

The Beach House cancel was next illustrated in an 1986 article appearing in *NJPH* by William C. Coles, Jr., showing an August 17, 1881 cover and tracing, in *Figures 7* and *8*.¹⁴



Fig. 7: Tracing of cancel, reported by Coles in NJPH.

Fig. 8: Spring Lake magenta cancel with star surrounded by legend “BEACH HOUSE/SEA GIRT, N.J., August 17, 1881, with Beach House Hotel corner card to Paris. (Courtesy of Roger D. Curran)

A follow-up article by Coles concluded, without analysis or support, that the “Beach House strike is definitely a hotel marking, not a post office one.”¹⁵ Hotel handstamps were used primarily during the stampless period but examples are known from later years.¹⁶ These handstamps were applied at the hotel to letters of guests that were taken to the post office. However, such covers also show a separate postmark indicating the identity of the post office at which the letters entered the mail. Accordingly, the hotel handstamp and the postmark are always two distinct and separate markings; one applied by hotel personnel to letters to be brought to the post office and the second, the postmark applied by post office personnel at the receiving post office.

The proper identification of this cancel was further confused in 1995 with the publication of *Cancellations and Killers of the Banknote Era, 1870-1894*, by James H. Cole.¹⁷ The cancel’s tracing in the book, as seen in *Figure 9*, incorrectly reads the marking as “BEACH HAVEN,” instead of “BEACH HOUSE.” There is a town of Beach Haven on the Jersey Shore, situated some 40 miles south of Sea Girt. But Beach Haven is located on a barrier island (Long Beach Island) which was without a causeway to the mainland at that time, and has no logical association as the place of origin for this cancel.



Fig. 9: Erroneous tracing of postmark, with incorrect attribution to town of "BEACH HAVEN" instead of "BEACH HOUSE" Hotel.



Fig. 10: Spring Lake cancel in black with star surrounded by legend "BEACH HOUSE/SEA GIRT, N.J., August 3, 1882, the latest reported use of this duplexed postmark and the only example of the cancel in black ink. It appears that the person canceling this piece had to turn the duplex canceler sideways to cancel the stamp at right. (Courtesy of Daniel F. Kelleher Auctions)¹⁸

Because the Spring Lake postmark was duplexed with the Beach House killer cancel from 1880 to 1882, the most probable conclusion is that this marking was applied at the Spring Lake post office. Curran has suggested that “Perhaps the Spring Lake postmaster ordered from his handstamp supplier a special canceler to be used on mail brought in from the hotels.”¹⁹ Or perhaps, during the busy summer months, as Curran has written, “a hotel employee postmarked and cancelled the mail with a handstamp he maintained, so that letters would be available for quick dispatch in the outgoing mail.”²⁰ However, such an arrangement would have violated post office regulations concerning the handling and control of postmarks and cancelling devices.²¹ Thus, it appears most likely that the Spring Lake post office applied this special duplexed postmark to mail brought to it from the Beach House Hotel during the summer months from 1880 to 1882. It is both a scarce and most unusual commercial marking applied to the mails.

ENDNOTES:

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- ¹ John T. Cunningham, *This is New Jersey*, (Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, N.J. 4th ed. 2001), p.224.
- ² Franklin Ellis, *History of Monmouth County, New Jersey* (Reprint ed., Shrewsbury Historical Society, Shrewsbury, N.J., Polyanthos, Inc., Cottonport, Louisiana, 1974) p. 804.
- ³ David Rumsey Historic image and map web site at <http://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/detail/RUMSEY~8~1~23034~800097:Sea-Girt,-Monmouth-County,-New-Jers>
- ⁴ Charles D. Wrege, “Beautiful Spring Lake and its Post Offices, 1875-2008,” *NJPH*, May 2008, [Whole Number 170](#).
- ⁵ David Rumsey, op cit
- ⁶ John J. Kay & Chester A. Smith, Jr., *New Jersey Postal History* (Quarterman Publications, Inc. Lawrence, Massachusetts 1977) p. 96. The post office’s name was originally one word; “Seagirt.” It remained so until November 1, 1931, when name was changed to its present two word style: “Sea Girt.”
- ⁷ Daniel F. Kelleher Auctions, Sale No. 699, May 18-19, 2017, lot 3604. Roger D. Curran, “Seeing Stars,” *U.S. Cancellation Club NEWS*, February 2006, p.14.
- ⁸ Daniel F. Kelleher Auctions, Sale No. 699, May 18-19, 2017, lot 3581.
- ⁹ *Postal Laws and Regulations, 1879* (U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 1879) Sections 375 & 377, pp. 103-04; http://www.uspostalbulletins.com/pdf/PLandR_/1879/1618.pdf
- Neither the first section, captioned “Postage Stamps to be Cancelled, nor the second, captioned “Manner of Cancelling stamps,” addresses the use of the names of commercial entities in a postmark or cancelling device. None of the online PL&R’s from 1879 through 1913 include regulations that expressly address the use of commercial cancelling devices. However, throughout this time period, the use of rubber stamps was not authorized “as the [black] ink furnished by the Department cannot be used with them.” *Ibid*, Section 518, p. 222; “The Department furnishes metal handstamps. The use of rubber stamps is prohibited, as the ink furnished by the department cannot be used with them.” 1895 PL&R, Section 473, p.207; 1902 PL&R: “Postmasters must not use any postmarking stamps than those furnished by the Post-Office Department,” Section 517.4, p. 277; 1913 PL&R (same), Section 541.3, p.309.
- In apparent violation of post office regulations, the Spring Lake post office used magenta ink and rubber cancelling devices, as did many other post offices during this time frame. In his two volume study of the red brown banknotes, Edward L. Willard noted that “Not all of the regulations were observed. In the 1880’s there appear to have been about the same number of regulation-happy postmasters as there are today ...” Edward L. Willard, Vol. 2, *The United States Two Cent Brown of 1883-1887* (H.L. Lindquist Publications, Inc., New York, N.Y. 1970), p. 2. Willard further noted that magenta ink was the second most frequently used ink, the first being black, the only authorized color. *Ibid*.
- ¹⁰ Roger D. Curran, “A Summer Vacation Cancel,” *U.S. Cancellation Club NEWS*, November 2005, p. 125.
- ¹¹ Courtesy of Daniel F. Kelleher Auctions, *op. cit.*, Sale No. 699, lot 3581.
- ¹² Stephen G. Rich, publisher, *Postal Markings (official organ of International Postal Marking Society)*, Vol. 5, Whole No. 53, Nov. 20, 1935, p. 70. The illustration included the Beach House killer tracing without the Spring Lake postmark.

¹³ *Ibid*, Vol. 5, Whole No. 56, February 20, 1936, p. 106.

¹⁴ William C. Coles, Jr., "Ocean Front Fancies," *NJPH*, Vol. 14, Whole No. 66, January 1986, p. 13; Roger D. Curran, *op. cit.*, p. 126. Curran's article, referring to the erroneous Cole "Beach Haven" identification, noted that "in all probability this results from an ambiguous strike of what actually is, in fact, a Beach House cancel." p. 125.

¹⁵ William C. Coles, Jr., "More on Ocean Front Fancies," *NJPH*, Vol. 14, Whole No. 67, March 1986, p. 22.

¹⁶ David G. Phillips ed., *American Stampless Cover Catalog*, Vol. II, *Hotel Mail Markings* (4th ed., David G. Phillips Publishing Co., Inc., North Miami, Florida) p. 75.

¹⁷ James H. Cole, *Cancellations and Killers of the Banknote Era, 1870-1894* (U.S. Philatelic Classics Society, Columbus, Ohio, 1995) p. 110, listed cancel in section titled "Unusual Stars."

¹⁸ Daniel F. Kelleher Auctions, Sale No. 699, May 18-19, 2017, lot 3604.

¹⁹ Roger D. Curran, "Seeing Stars," *op. cit.*, p.14. A later article by Curran appearing in the February 2007 issue of *U.S. Cancellation Club NEWS*, p. 73, illustrated an ad from the 1893 *Postal Guide* by a private supplier of rubber handstamps that included a tracing of the Beach House cancel.

²⁰ Roger D. Curran, "A Summer Vacation Cancel," *op. cit.*, p. 126.

²¹ *Postal Laws and Regulations, 1887* (U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 1887) Section 511, p.221; provides in part as follows: "Postmasters will permit no person, except his duly sworn assistants, clerks, letter carriers, and post office inspectors to have any access to any mail matter in his office"

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MAIL SENT ABROAD TO AND FROM MORRIS COUNTY, Part 5: Additional German covers

By Donald A. Chafetz

In reviewing my collection for the next installment of Mail Sent Aboard, I found that I had a number of covers sent to Germany that had not been included in Part 1. To make up for this deficiency, here are my additional covers.

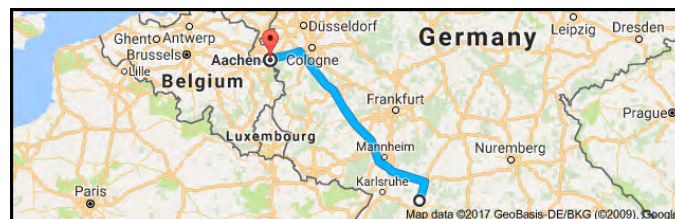
For me, the most challenging covers to understand from a postal history point of view are those sent before the establishment of the UPU (Universal Postal Union). Prior to that time, postal rates were set by treaty agreements between countries which means they varied country by country. Fortunately, there are a number of excellent reference books available to the postal historian. But, from my experience as a casual collector of foreign covers from the period prior to the establishment of the UPU, it is very difficult to find an explanation for all the markings and rates.

A case in point is the cover in *Figure 1*. It was sent October 26, 1853 from Denville, NJ to Ludwigsburg, Baden-Württemberg, Germany. The cover was sent as closed mail aboard a British Packet ship. The mail pouch was unopened when it went through England to the Prussian/German-Austrian postal exchange office at Aachen, Germany. The challenge now is to understand all the postal markings.



Fig. 1: Denville, NJ to Ludwigsburg, Baden-Württemberg, Germany. Sent under the United States - Prussia Treaty of 1852 by British Contract Steamship as Prussian Closed Mail

Fig. 2: Route Aachen to Ludwigsburg.¹

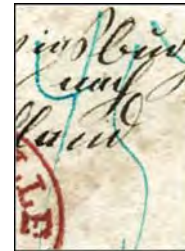
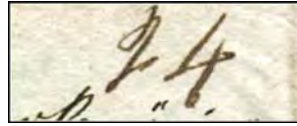


MAIL SENT ABROAD FROM Morris County: Part 5: More German Covers ~ Donald A. Chafetz

Denville, NJ: October 26, 1853
 New York, NY: October 29, 1853
 Aachen, Germany: November 10, 1853



Denville NJ Oct. 26



Figs. 4 – 5: Pen and pencil markings.

An unpaid letter posted in the United States (New York black exchange marking) shows a debit of 23¢ for an unpaid single rate letter. To the unpaid letter the Aachen office applied its red transit marking to the cover.²

In the upper right corner is written the number 24. I assume the Denville postal clerk believed that was the postage fee, but there is no indication that fee was collected.

There is faint blue 45 written by the Denville cancellation. This is a foreign rate marking which shows that the letter was rated for a collection of 45 kreuzer, the equivalent of 30¢.³



New York Oct. 29



Aachen, Germany Nov. 10

Fig. 3: Unpaid Single Rate- U.S. debit to Prussia 23¢

Aachen marked 45 kreuzer postage due in Ludwigsburg

United States inland postage:	5 cents
Sea transport & British Transit:	<u>18 cents</u>
Total postage fee	23 cents ⁴



Fig. 6: Railroad marking: E.B. (Eisen Bahn) 12 Nov
 Curs II (route II Heidelberg to Schliengen)

⊙ = (outward run from Heidelberg south)⁵

Direct mail between the United States and Bremen, Germany

(It did not go as closed mail via England.)



Fig. 7: A 10¢ cover sent from Morrystown, NJ to Göttingen, North Germany. Sent on June 28, 1870 by open mail via the Bremen office. Receipt back stamped Göttingen July 14.



Fig. 8: Letter sent from the New York office to the Bremen Exchange Office. The cancellation shows the date of June 30, PAID ALL (under the cancellation) and inscribed DIRECT.

Fig. 9: Bremen Exchange Office marking indicating mail went directly to Bremen, postage paid July 14, 1870.



Notation on cover back: Received July 16, 1870 from G(eorge) C. Vail.



Hon. George Vail, son of Judge Stephen Vail, was born in Speedwell, Morrystown, N.J., in July 1809. He received his education at the Morrystown Academy, situated where the Library and Lyceum building now stands. Early in life he became interested in the Speedwell iron works, as a partner of his father. Father and son due to the energy, diligence and practical knowledge of the business possessed the prosperity and high reputation of these works. It was at Speedwell that Prof. Morse made his successful experiments in telegraphy, through the valuable assistance and suggestion of Judge Vail and his sons George and Alfred.⁶

George Vail was for many years an active and influential Democratic leader. He was elected to the Legislature; twice elected to Congress; was for several years consul at Glasgow, Scotland; and for five years judge of the court of errors and appeals of New Jersey. He was sent as one of the commissioners to the World's Fair in London in 1851. He was also one of the original commissioners selected to procure a site for the new asylum building. He was a member of Cincinnati Lodge (masonic), of Morrystown, and was at one time master of the lodge, and subsequently senior grand warden of the grand lodge of New Jersey.

Mr. Vail was of splendid physique, and his large, massive and portly person gave promise of many more years of robust life. His quiet, unpretentious disposition was quite in contrast and altogether unlooked for in one of such commanding presence.⁷

Mail to Germany during the Franco-Prussian War ~ July 19, 1870 – May 10, 1871

To refresh my knowledge on this war, I turned again to Wikipedia:

The Franco-Prussian War was a conflict between the Second French Empire of Napoleon III and the German states of the North German Confederation led by the Kingdom of Prussia. The conflict was caused by Prussian ambitions to extend German unification and French fears of the shift in the European balance of power that would result if the Prussians succeeded. Some historians argue that the Prussian chancellor Otto von Bismarck deliberately provoked a French attack in order to draw the independent southern German states—Baden, Württemberg, Bavaria and Hesse-Darmstadt—into an alliance with the North German Confederation dominated by Prussia, while others contend that Bismarck did not plan anything and merely exploited the circumstances as they unfolded.⁸



Fig.10: Direct postage fee between Germany and the United States was .07¢ effective July 1870.⁹

Morristown NJ, January 12, 1871 wedge cancellation
 New York, NY, January 13
 Dresden, Germany redirected
 Augsburg, Germany backstamped January 26
 München, Germany, back stamped January 27

New York Paid All
 B^R Transit



Fig. 11: A cancellation showing the day that the letter was to be forwarded from New York and that it was going in transit through the United Kingdom with postage fully paid. New York Paid All / B^R Transit, from Siegel Auctions, showing a clearer image of this cancel.^{10,11}

UPU and Standard Postal Rates

The study, *U.S International Postal Rates, 1872-1996*, provides a succinct outline of UPU rates:

Prior to July 1, 1875, there was no uniform agreement among countries as to how international correspondence was to take place. Individual treaties between countries determined the rates of communication. However, in 1874 a number of countries met at Berne, Switzerland in order to form a "General Postal Union (GPU)," 'a single postal territory for the reciprocal exchange of correspondence between their Post Offices.' The stipulations of this treaty, which came into force on July 1, 1875, extended to letters, postal cards, books, newspapers, and other printed papers, patterns of merchandise, and legal and commercial documents.

Three types of basic mail categories were established among the members of the GPU. These were letters, postal cards and printed matter. The general Union rate of postage was fixed at 25 French centimes for the single prepaid letter; however, to each country was reserved the option, in order to suit its monetary or other requirements, of levying a rate higher or lower than this charge, provided that it did not exceed 32 centimes or go below 20 centimes. Every letter that did not exceed 15 grams in weight was considered a single letter. The charge upon letters exceeding that rate was a single rate for every 15 grams or fraction thereof. Prepayment of postage could be effected only by means of postage stamps or stamped envelopes valid in the country of origin.¹²

Below is a cover used after the establishment of the UPU, from Parsippany to the city of Rottweil am Neckar, in Baden-Württemberg (yes, where Rottweilers originated).



Fig. 12: Parsippany, NJ November 24, 1890
Letter rate to Europe was 5¢/15 gms effective July 1, 1885

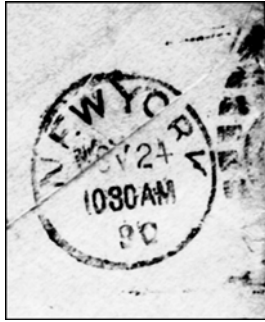


Fig. 13: New York duplex backstamp
November 24, 1890



Fig. 14: Rottweil backstamp
Dec. 6, 1890.

Carried by Named Ship

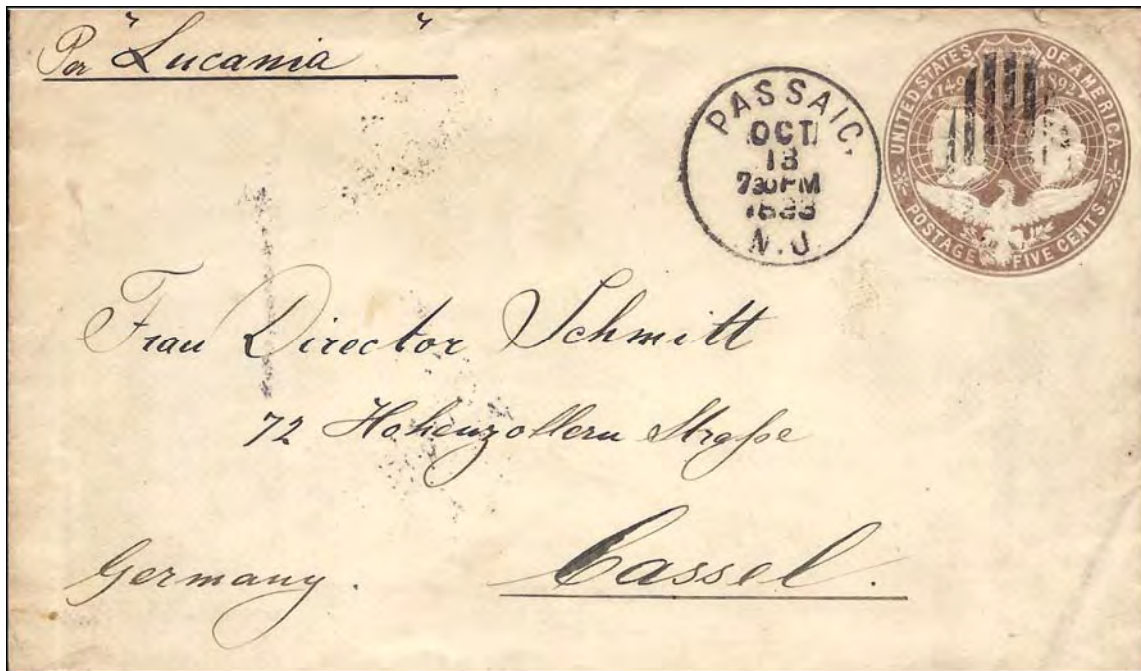


Fig. 15: Passaic, NJ to Cassel, Germany October 13, 1893
Cassel receipt cancel October 22, 1893 (on reverse). Transported by ship *Lucania* (marked in upper corner).

Postage fee July 1, 1892 letter 5¢/ ½oz.

This cover travelled on the RMS *Lucania*, which was a British Passenger Ship of 12,950 tons built in 1893 for the Cunard Steam Ship Company, Liverpool. Her last voyage was on July 7th 1909, after which she was laid up at the Huskisson Dock in Liverpool. Then, at around 7.00 pm on August 14th, 1909, she was badly damaged by a fire, and partially sank at her berth. Five days later she was sold for scrap, and the contents of her interior auctioned.¹³

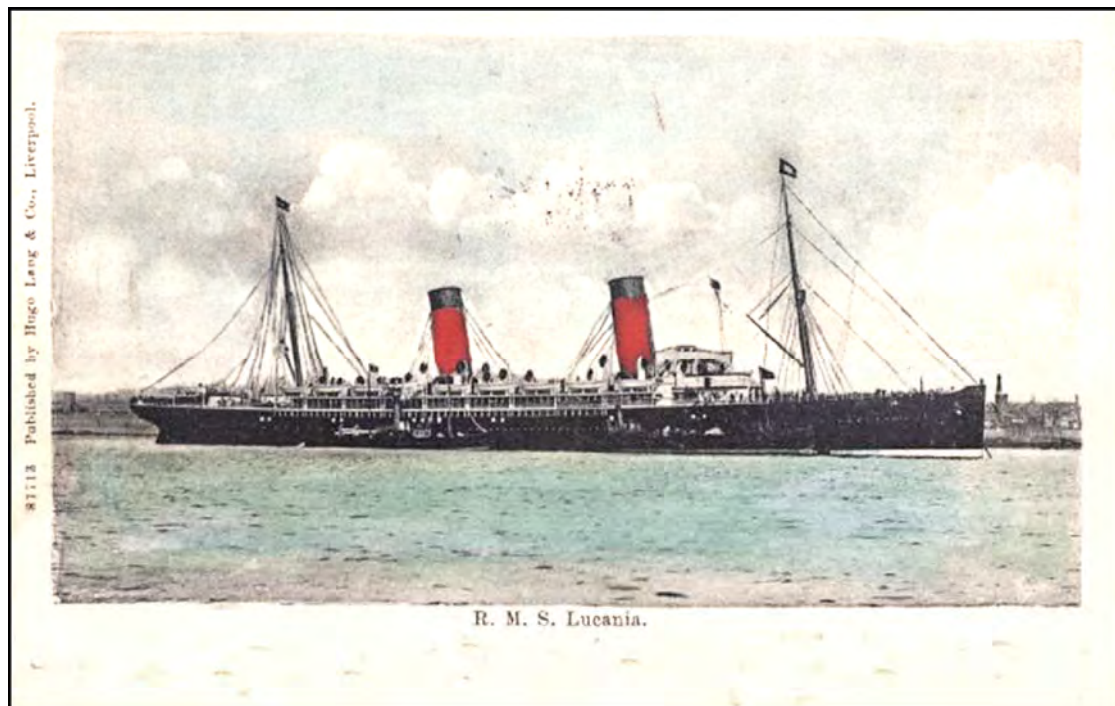


Fig. 16: R.M.S. Lucania.

Post Card Postal Rate

Lastly, the UPU established new rules and rates for post cards.



*Fig. 17: Morristown, NJ to Berlin, Germany
December 13, 1895
Post Office receipt cancel December 23, 1895*

Post card rate 2¢ (July 1, 1875)

ENDNOTES:

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- ¹ Google maps at <https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=map+aachen+ludwigsburg+germany&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8>
- ² Hargest, George E., *History of Letter Post Communication Between the United States and Europe 1815-1875*, Second Edition, Quarterman Publications, Inc., Lawrence, Massachusetts, 1971, p. 89. .
- ³ Ibid, p. 92
- ⁴ Ibid, p. 87
- ⁵ Information provided by Scott Tiffney, ARRL
- ⁶ George Vail article on https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Vail
- ⁷ George Vail on Rootsweb at <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~njmorris/munsellhistory/h-chpt22.htm> .
- ⁸ Franco-Prussian war from Wikipedia at (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Franco-Prussian_War).
- ⁹ Op cit, Hargest, p.155 & p. 213.
- ¹⁰ Siegel Auctions, Mercedes Collection, auction lot 1229, Sale 922, October 19, 2006.
- ¹¹ Richard F. Winter, *Understanding Transatlantic Mail - Volume 1*, American Philatelic Society, PA, 2006, p. 385, Figure 5-441.
- ¹² Wawrukiewicz, Anthony S., & Beecher, Henry W., *U.S. International Postal Rates, 1872-1996*, Cama Publishing Company, 1996 Portland, OR, page 1.
- ¹³ Description from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RMS_Lucania <http://www.wrecksite.eu/wreck>.

PETER D. VROOM, A NEW JERSEY MAN WITH DRIVE

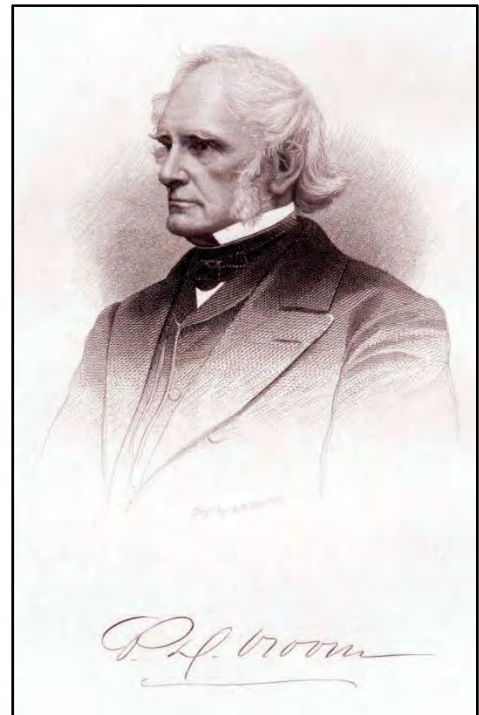
By John A. Trosky

Peter Dumont Vroom was born into a wealthy and old New Jersey family in Hillsborough, Somerset County. His legacy to philately is a rich postal history. His father, Peter senior, was a Colonel in the military and served in the Revolutionary War. The younger Peter led a life of privilege and attended the Somerville Academy, followed by Columbia College in New York City, where he graduated at the age of seventeen. He moved on to study the law under George McDonald in Somerville. He was admitted to the practice of law in 1813. He opened his first law office at Schooley's Mountain Springs. It was shortly thereafter that he went on to a career in politics in New Jersey. He was elected to the New Jersey Assembly from Hillsborough in 1826 and served until 1829 when he was subsequently elected by the New Jersey legislature as Governor of the state. It was during this time that he helped to support the creation of the Delaware and Raritan Canal as well as the Camden and Amboy Railroad. He was succeeded by Samuel L. Southard as Governor in 1832, and Elias Sealey in 1833 (both very short terms) but was again elected in 1833 and served as Governor until 1836.

Vroom's ambition knew no bounds and he set his sights on running for Congress in 1838. As a member of the Democratic Party he was one of five candidates that were running against Whig candidates for election. It was this election which rose to controversy in New Jersey history. The results of the Congressional election that year in New Jersey would go down in history as the Broad Seal War. This contested election was called the Broad Seal War because both parties running for office, the Democrats and the Whigs, were to have received a commission from then Governor of New Jersey, William Pennington, stamped with the great (broad) seal of New Jersey in order to run. However, upon further examination, it appeared that only the Whig candidates

had a properly executed commission signed by the governor. At this time the Democrats controlled the House of Representatives in Washington and, being apprised of this controversy, decided not to seat the successful Whig candidates. The Democrats decided to charge the Whigs with election fraud. Further investigation led to the uncovering of voter suppression by county clerks in both Cumberland and Middlesex Counties. Without this suppression, the Democrats would have had the majority. The five contested seats were awarded to the Democrats including Peter Vroom on February 28, 1840. His hard-won seat in Congress, however, was short lived. Vroom was defeated for reelection in 1840 and returned to New Jersey.

It was at this time he revived his long dormant law practice in Trenton, which brings us to the stampless cover illustrated below.



Peter D. Vroom



Fig. 1. A stampless cover with blue circular Jan 7 (1847) Jersey City date stamp and straightline PAID stamp. Manuscript postage marking for five cents for a distance of less than 300 miles. Manuscript PAID marking in the lower left.

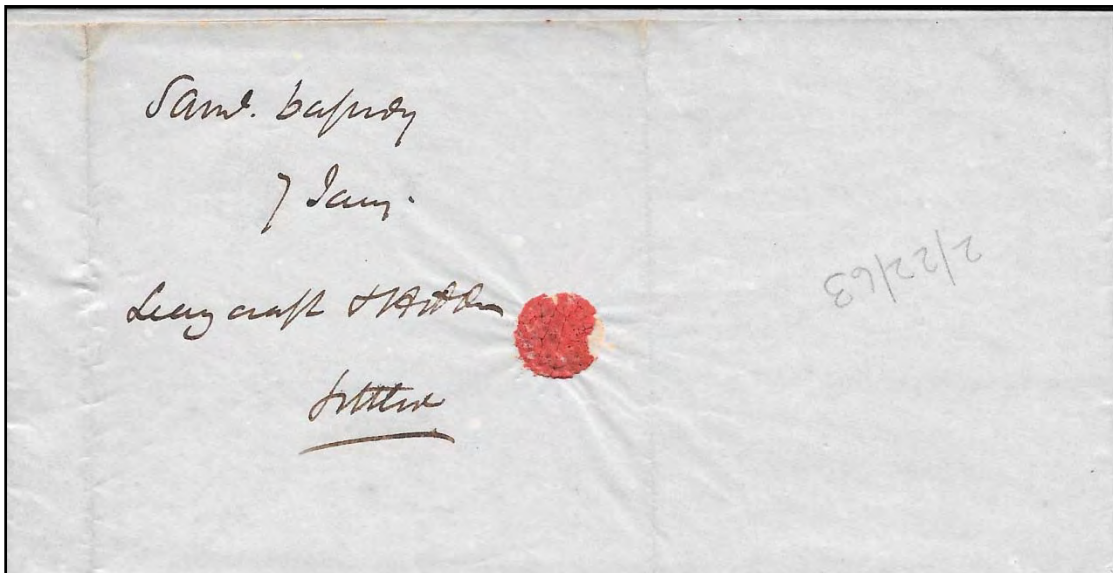


Fig. 2. Reverse of stampless cover showing wax red seal in the center with date and docketing information (Saml. Cassidy / 7 Jany / Leaycraft & Hedden / Settled).

Restarting his practice of law in Trenton, Vroom was close to the seat of government in the State. With numerous contacts and friends in government he was soon appointed to the New Jersey State Constitutional Convention in 1844. It was during this period in Trenton that the above letter was written to Vroom from Jersey City. The contents of the correspondence, as seen below, notes a settlement for a Mrs. Hedden with a gentleman by the name Leaycraft. He advises Vroom that he will be taken care of.¹ The letter is dated January 7, 1847.

Dear Sir/
Mr. Learycraft has settled with Mrs.
Headen he says, and he has desired me to
say so to you - He will be over in a few
days & settle - I will take care of you -
Yours in haste
Peter D. Vroom Esq.
New York 7 Jan 47 -
She pays a smaller sum to get
clear - It will cover costs &c

Peter D. Vroom Esq.

Fig. 3. Contents of stampless cover to Peter Dumont Vroom advising of a legal settlement.

The text of this letter follows:

Dear Sir

Mr. Leaycraft has settled with Mrs. Hedden he says, and he has desired me to say so to you. He will be over in a few days to settle. I will take care of you.

Yours in haste,

Sam Cassedy

Jersey City 7 January 47-

She pays a small sum to get clear- It will cover costs. SC

Peter D. Vroom Esquire

The above correspondence was written to Vroom by a Jersey City attorney, Samuel Cassedy. He was born in Hackensack and educated in Jersey City. He had two brothers one, George, who served in Congress for three separate terms and a second, John, who served in the Court of Common Pleas in Bergen County of which the present Hudson County was a part in the early 19th century. John also served as a member of the State Constitutional Convention in 1844 as well as serving as a State Senator from Hudson County in 1850. After a brief time in Kentucky practicing law, Samuel returned to Jersey City and was accepted to the bar in 1816 becoming the second attorney to settle in the city. It was there that he began his long legal career and became acquainted with Vroom and briefly served on the staff of Governor Vroom as a lieutenant colonel.

Cassedy was a master of the Chancery Court in which this case referred to in the letter was heard beginning in 1845. His role there was to hear evidence and other legal matters. The case noted in the above correspondence refers to Richard Leaycraft vs Frances S. Hedden. In the case, Vroom represented Leaycraft as the complainant. Without getting into much of the legalese of the case, this litigation involves an unpaid loan that was made on behalf of Mrs. Hedden in the amount of \$5,500 at seven percent interest for the improvements to be made on certain properties that she purchased and which were held in trust for her in New York City. To understand the case, one must understand the fact that married women and women in general, in the 19th century, had very little, if any legal standing when it came to contracts.

Judge Green, presiding in Chancery Court ruled against Mrs. Hedden and determined that she was liable for the repayment of the loan executed while her husband was still alive. A pre-nuptial agreement she signed stated that her husband would relinquish any rights he may have where it concerned property his wife brought into the marriage. She would be considered a *feme sole* (unmarried woman) in all respects to it. Judge Green ruled that her estate, separate and apart from that of her deceased husband, was responsible for repayment. This is where Samuel Cassedy enters the picture. He was assigned by Judge Green, to act as a special master, to determine the exact amount still due Mr. Leaycraft plus all costs.

William Coles, in *The Postal Markings of New Jersey Stampless Covers*,² shows additional covers to Vroom:



Fig. 4. Note the oval Paterson NJ handstamp, the fancy “PAID” stamp and “WAY” markings. This letter was dated November 4 1829 while Vroom was a member of the State Assembly. The postage of ten cents paid the rate of more than 40 miles but less than 90. Even though marked “WAY” there was no charge on this piece. Letters handed to a carrier or stage driver on their route were all marked “WAY” at the next post office and were subject to a one cent charge for this service.³

An 1830 cover and letter from Vroom as Governor and State Chancellor – a role then part of the governorship – to Southard was included in the long-running Southard Notebook articles in *NJPH*, a contribution from Nathan Zankel. It also refers to a legal case.⁴

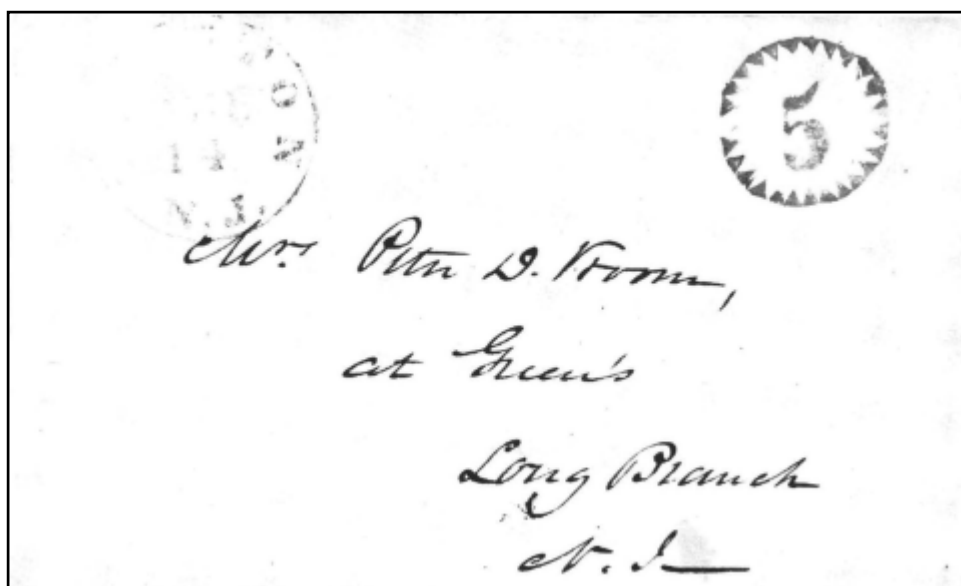


Fig. 5. A fairly common Trenton date stamp, known in blue, black, red and green strikes, used with scarce sawtooth “5” rate marking. Coles indicates this letter was sent Jul 14 (1845) to Vroom in Long Branch, NJ.⁵

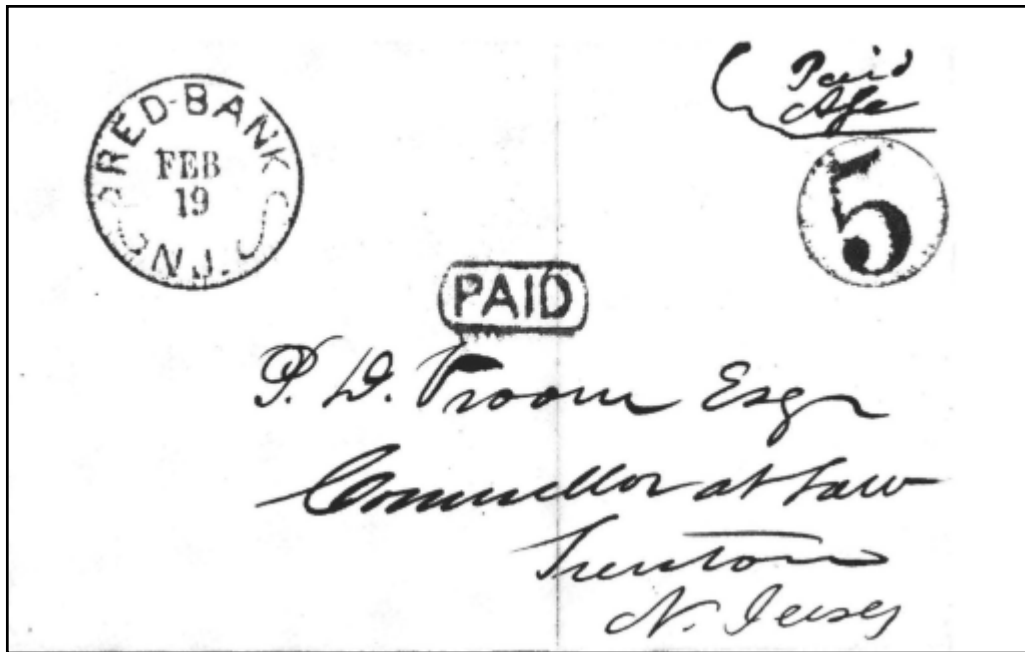


Fig. 6. Letter to Vroom from Red Bank. The circular postmark was applied in both in red and black, and was used in that post office in the period from 1850-51. This cover has a red postmark in this black and white image. Note the fancy flourishes in the postmark as well as the boxed "PAID" and circular "5" handstamps. The manuscript "Paid ASC" indicates that postage was to be paid by a PO Box holder.⁶

It was only a few years later that Vroom's law practice in Trenton so impressed Governor George Franklin Fort that he appointed Vroom to become the Chief Justice of the New Jersey Supreme Court. However, he declined because he wished Chief Justice Green to be reappointed. This was the second offer that he declined. President Polk had offered him a cabinet position of Attorney General which he also declined in 1847. He was subsequently nominated by Fort to the Senate which he did accept. Later that same year, he was appointed by President Pierce as Ambassador to Prussia. He served in Berlin until 1857 when he returned once again to Trenton to practice law.

Vroom remained in Trenton until 1861 on the eve of the Civil War. In February 1861, a conference of leading political figures on both sides of the slavery issue convened at the Willard Hotel in Washington to try and devise a compromise. Needless to say, Vroom and his fellow conference members failed in their efforts and the country fell into an all-out civil war. Returning to Trenton once again, his prowess in the legal field earned him the job of law reporter to the Supreme Court of New Jersey in 1862. He served there until 1872. Peter D. Vroom died in Trenton on November 18, 1873 and, is buried at the First Reformed Dutch Church in Somerville.



Fig. 7: The Peter D. Vroom House at 875 River Road in Millstone, New Jersey.

The author has an indirect connection to Vroom in that his father's business, a tavern in Jersey City bearing his name, was located on Vroom Street in the Journal Square neighborhood of the city from the late 1940s through the early 1970s. The building that housed it is no longer there. The street still is and was named for the former governor.

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ENDNOTES:

- ¹ For a lengthy description of this case, see *Reports of Cases Decided in the Court of Chancery of the State of New Jersey, Volume 4 (Leaycraft v. Hedden)*, beginning on page 512. Vroom was the lawyer for the complainant. Interesting reading regarding an early pre-nuptial agreement (1820), and a woman's rights to make contracts. See https://books.google.com/books?id=eEYaAAAAYAAJ&dq=heddem+vs+leaycraft&source=gbs_navlinks_s
- ² Coles, William C. Jr., *The Postal Markings of New Jersey Stampless Covers* (Collectors Club of Chicago, 1983), p.96.
- ³ Coles, *op cit.*, p.96, and his description on pp. 91-92.
- ⁴ Southard Notebooks: Part XII -Mr. Southard: Business as Usual, contributed by Nathan Zankel, a letter to Southard from Vroom when Vroom was serving as Governor and chancellor of the court of chancery, dated June 2, 1830 in Whole No 144 at <http://njpostalhistory.org/media/archive/144-nov01njph.pdf>
- ⁵ Coles, *op cit.*, p.55, and description on p. 53.
- ⁶ Coles, *op. cit.*, p.52, and description pp. 48 & 52.

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NEW JERSEY'S MANY CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE DECISIVE NAVAL BATTLES OF GUADALCANAL 11-15 November 1942

By: Captain Lawrence B. Brennan, U.S. Navy (Retired)^{1,2}

I. Introduction

The contributions of New Jersey to the naval victory in the Pacific have been ill-defined and underappreciated for three quarters of a century. During the decisive year of 1942, a New Jersey native, Vice Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr., U.S. Navy, among others, contributed to Navy's combat successes. More importantly, New Jersey-built ships played decisive roles in these critical battles.

During 1942, the first year of combat in the Pacific, the United States Navy and the Imperial Japanese Navy fought three major engagements that historians have labeled as "decisive" or the "turning point of the war." The first was the Battle of Coral Sea, 4-8 May 1942, the first engagement where aircraft carriers dominated the battle and Australia was protected from further Japanese attacks or invasion. One month later, 3-7 June 1942, the Battle of Midway was a clear defeat of the Japanese carrier force by three carriers of the U.S. Pacific Fleet. The result of masterful intelligence gathering and analysis and the steely application of "calculated risk" by Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, U.S. Navy, three carriers, USS *Enterprise* (CV 6), USS *Hornet* (CV 8), and the heavily damaged and hastily repaired USS *Yorktown* (CV 5), sank four Imperial Japanese Navy carriers, three during the "famous four minutes." Midway has been hailed as a turning point in the Pacific because it was the end of the seven months of Japanese conquest. Two months later, on 7 August 1942, the United States and Royal Australian Navies landed U.S. Marines on Guadalcanal precipitating one of the most violent and longest campaigns in the Pacific war. Harvard historian, Rear Admiral Samuel Eliot Morison, U.S. Naval Reserve (Retired) explained:

*During the six months ... the United States Navy fought six major engagements in the waters adjacent to Guadalcanal more bitter and bloody than any naval battle in American history since 1814. ... The Guadalcanal campaign is unique for variety and multiplicity of weapons employed and for coordination between sea power, ground power and air power. And certainly no campaign in modern history is more fraught with ferocity and misery; none has blazed more brightly with heroism and self-sacrifice.*³

This article will focus on two naval battles over the course of four calendar days at the end of November 1942. Initially called collectively "The Naval Battle of Guadalcanal," there were two separate night engagements: 12-13 November 1942, now commonly known as the First Naval Battle of Guadalcanal, and 14-15 November 1942, currently known as the Second Naval Battle of Guadalcanal. Both battles were bloody surface actions that resulted in the loss of many ships and men on both sides. No US Navy ship fought in both actions. As a result of these battles, Japan ceased its efforts to reinforce its troops on Guadalcanal, effectively conceding the island and its most valuable asset, Henderson Field, to the invading Americans.

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We will examine these decisive Naval Battles of Guadalcanal with particular emphasis on participating warships which were built in New Jersey's shipyards, both in the south of the state at Camden (New York Shipbuilding Corporation), and in the north of the state at Kearny (Federal Shipbuilding and Drydock Company). Six New Jersey-built ships fought in these battles: the four participants in the First Naval Battle of Guadalcanal were USS *Atlanta* (CLAA 51), USS *Juneau* (CLAA 52), USS *Aaron Ward* (DD 483), USS *Fletcher* (DD 445); the two participants in the Second Naval Battle of Guadalcanal-USS *South Dakota* (BB 57) and USS *Benham* (DD 397). Both anti-aircraft light cruisers and the destroyer, *Benham*, were lost. The postal history of these six ships follows the discussion of the battles. (See page 170.)

We have divided this story into two parts, and in this issue present the first of the two battles. The four New Jersey ships which took part in this first action were all built at the Federal Shipbuilding and Drydock Company in Kearny.

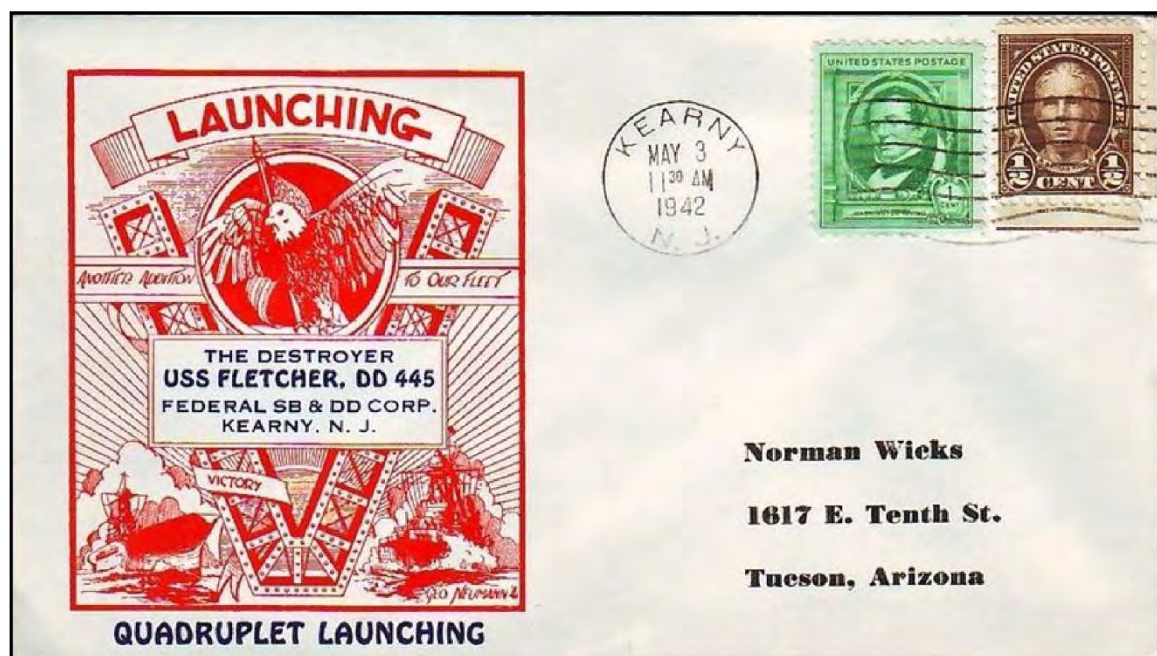


Fig. 1: Cachet for Federal Shipbuilding and Drydock Company on the launching of Fletcher (DD 445), with a 3 May 1942 Kearny machine cancel.

The second battle will be in our next issue. Because so much depends on the narrative, we have let the story tell itself, from the post-action combat narratives.⁴ Occasionally bold has been used for emphasis (not in the original).

II. Overview

The August 1942 landings on Guadalcanal went well but almost immediately the Japanese launched a series of successful actions to isolate the Marines and recapture Henderson Field. The official United States Navy Combat Narrative, *The Landing in the Solomons, 7-8 August 1942*⁵ provides detailed accounts of the situation and combat action.

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Perhaps the entire period between 7 August 1942, when the first Marines landed in the Solomons, and the final evacuation of Guadalcanal by the Japanese should be labeled “The Battle of Guadalcanal.” Hardly a day went by during that 6 months which did not see action on land, in the air, or on the sea. Nevertheless, the climax and turning point of the campaign came with the shattering of the enemy’s supreme effort to overwhelm the island between 11 and 15 November. During the desperate sea and air battles of those 5 days, Japanese losses as estimated by CINCPAC were 2 battleships sunk and 2 damaged, 4 cruisers sunk and 6 damaged, 8 destroyers sunk and 4 damaged, and 12 transports sunk or destroyed. Our losses consisted of 1 battleship damaged, 2 cruisers sunk and 3 damaged, 7 destroyers sunk and 4 damaged, and 3 cargo vessels damaged, 2 of these negligibly.⁶

On 18 October 1942, Commander, South Pacific, Vice Admiral Robert L. Ghormley, U.S. Navy was relieved by Vice Admiral Halsey who had recovered from the illnesses which caused his hospitalization immediately preceding the Battle of Midway. Five days after assuming command, on 23 October, Halsey conferred with his commanders, Rear Admiral Richmond Kelly Turner, U.S. Navy, Major General Alexander A. Vandegrift, USMC, Major General Millard Harmon, U.S. Army, and Major General Alexander Patch, U.S. Army on board his flagship USS Argonne (AG 31) in Noumea. Halsey promised, “You go back there, Vandegrift. I promise you everything I have.” On 8 November 1942, Halsey, “took advantage of the lull to make [a] long postponed trip to Guadalcanal ... Archie [Vandegrift] put us up in his shack that night... Soon after we turned in, an enemy destroyer somewhere near Savo Island began lobbing shells ... It wasn’t the noise that kept me awake; it was fright. I called myself yellow – and worse ...”⁷ These were the pivotal events in Halsey’s command decision-making process that led to the ultimate defeat of the Japanese Navy within the month.

By late 1960s, there was public acknowledgement of the crucial role played by the “pillars of intelligence”.⁸ This is an essential point in consideration of the earlier accounts which tend to contain rich detail and even thoughts of the surviving participants, but neglect this point. While not the sole factor, technology provided great advantages to the US Navy to counter the Japanese dominance in night fighting and torpedo warfare. But technology was a double-edged sword as demonstrated by Admiral Callaghan during the First Naval Battle of Guadalcanal; he was unfamiliar with radar and squandered the opening advantage. There can be no doubt, however, that the US advantages in both radar and intelligence were major factors in the ultimate success.

The strategic situation facing Halsey was summarized in the post-action *Combat Narratives*:

By November [US] air defenses on the island had been greatly improved. The development of landing facilities in the Lunga area was proceeding rapidly, and the striking power of Marine and Army aircraft was beginning to make itself felt. ...

Under cover of darkness the Japanese continued doggedly to put ashore troops and supplies from cruisers and destroyers and by means of landing boats from neighboring islands. ... PT boats from Tulagi attacked repeatedly. ...

The Japanese were not succeeding in improving their position, and it became apparent that they had decided to strike another blow of major proportions. Enemy surface forces were concentrating in the Rabaul-Buin area.

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To ward off the impending attack ... [o]nly one carrier, the Enterprise, was on hand at Noumea, and she was damaged and would not be fully ready for action until 21 November. [The US was] inferior in land-based aircraft as well. ...

If Admiral Halsey's combatant forces could not protect [the transports] and simultaneously counter the new enemy offensive, [the US] would be obliged to retire from the Solomons, thus jeopardizing the entire Allied position in the South Pacific.

Since the enemy invasion force was expected in the Guadalcanal area by Friday, 13 November, it was most important that [the US] transports finish landing their reinforcements and supplies on Thursday and make good their escape. Divorced from responsibility for protecting the transports, the combatant units would be in a better position to carry the fight to the Japanese.⁹

Based on intelligence, on 10 November 1942, Nimitz sent Halsey a message concluding that while the precise day of the Japanese movement towards Guadalcanal remained unknown, “research continues ... While this looks like a big punch I am confident that you with our forces will take their measure.”¹⁰

III. The First Naval Battle of Guadalcanal 12-13 November 1942 Cruiser Night Action

The First Naval Battle of Guadalcanal was a melee which resulted in the death of both US flag officers,¹¹ both of whom received the Medal of Honor posthumously, and the loss of two cruisers and four destroyers. The command arrangements were confused and the US commanders were unable to fully benefit from their electronic advantages. While there were no battleships or carriers for air support for the cruiser destroyer force, there was a lack of familiarity with radar technology and tactics. Unlike Scott, Callaghan had not fought a battle with radar. The US forfeited a valuable initial radar-provided opportunity to attack the Japanese ships allowing the enemy to enjoy the first strike. Not all ships were radar equipped and particularly USS San Francisco, the flag ship, did not have the proper radar technology and control systems to fight the battle. Japanese superiority in nighttime surface actions and “long lance” torpedoes were recognized. The Imperial Japanese Navy force included battleship and heavily armed and armored cruisers. In any event, Admiral Daniel Callaghan, the senior flag officer, simply stated “We want the big ones!”¹²

The initial classified analysis of the engagement sets forth the known details:

Earlier in the day, reports from [US] scouting aircraft revealed that strong enemy surface forces were bearing down on Guadalcanal and were close enough to arrive during the night. Three separate groups were sighted:

- 1. Two battleships or heavy cruisers, one heavy or light cruiser, and six destroyers sighted 1035 bearing 008° T. from Guadalcanal (practically due north of the northwest tip of Malaita Island), distance 335 miles ...*

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2. *Five destroyers sighted at 1045 bearing 347° T., about 100 miles due north of Santa Isabel Island (distance from Guadalcanal, 195 miles). ...*
3. *Two small carriers and two destroyers sighted at 1450 bearing 264° T. (south of New Georgia Island), distance 150. These “carriers” were never confirmed ...
No transports were discovered heading for Guadalcanal ...*

To meet this gathering armada, Rear Admiral Turner now had at his disposal 2 heavy cruisers, 1 light cruiser, 2 antiaircraft light cruisers, 11 destroyers, and 2 fast minesweepers, besides his transports. He decided to assign to Admiral Callaghan all the cruisers and 8 destroyers, thus leaving 1 damaged destroyer, 2 low-fuel destroyers, and 2 minesweepers for the protection of the transports.

Admiral Kinkaid’s force ... was now steaming to get the Enterprise in fly-off position south of Guadalcanal on the morning of Friday, the 13th.

SECOND PHASE - CRUISER NIGHT ACTION OF 12-13 NOVEMBER

“This desperately fought action ... has few parallels in naval history. We have come to expect, and to count on, complete courage in battle from officers and men of the United States Navy. But here, in this engagement, we had displayed for our lasting respect and admiration, a cool but eager gallantry that is above praise. These splendid ships and determined men won a great victory against heavy odds. Had this battle not been fought and won, our hold on Guadalcanal would have been gravely endangered.” - - Rear Admiral R. K. TURNER.¹³

The combatant group, commanded by Admiral Callaghan in San Francisco and Admiral Scott in Atlanta, used Sealark Channel and preceded the transports into Indispensable Strait ... Admiral Callaghan reversed his course and proceeded toward Lengo Channel. His ships were in Battle Disposition “Baker ONE” - the single column being led by the Cushing, followed by the Laffey, Sterett, O’ Bannon, Atlanta, San Francisco, Portland, Helena, Juneau, Aaron Ward, Barton, Monssen, and Fletcher, in that order. The distance maintained between the destroyers was about 500 yards. Between cruisers and between divisions it was 700-800 yards. Signals were made by voice code over TBS [super frequency radio].

At 0000 Friday the 13th, the 13 ships entered Lengo Channel at 18 knots for a search of the Savo Island area ... The moon had set, the sky was overcast, the night was very dark. The sea was calm, and a slight breeze--9 to 10 knots--was blowing from south southeast.

The first sign of the enemy’s presence was a probable torpedo wake which was sighted by the O’ Bannon at 0036. About half an hour later the same ship observed a bright light on the port bow, apparently on the Guadalcanal beach. The San Francisco saw two white lights, with the eastern one sending long flashes. The same phenomenon had been noted on the night of 11-12 October just before the Battle of Cape Esperance. ...

*Near Lunga Point at 0124, while on course 280° T., the Helena’s SG radar picked up three groups of enemy vessels ...**This information was relayed to Admiral Callaghan by TBS, because the flagship was not provided with SG radar. Only the Portland, Helena, Juneau, O’ Bannon, and Fletcher possessed this invaluable equipment.***

All told, there were between 18 and 20 ships. [The US] squadron was not only outnumbered but heavily outclassed.

The picture at the time, however, was not clear to Admiral Callaghan, who had apparently received radar information from the Helena alone ...

The TBS, in the words of Admiral Spruance, “became chaotic with queries and incomplete information.” At 0142 the Cushing informed the OTC [Officer in tactical command] that she was turning left to get in position to fire torpedoes at the ships crossing ... [P]ermission was granted by Admiral Callaghan ... Cushing turned to port but did not fire because she recognized the targets as destroyers which were sheering away. Also, the OTC had ordered all ships back to course 000° T. again.

With this latest shift [the US] column became disorganized ... the van mingled with the Japanese ships and a melee existed even before firing began.

At 0145 Admiral Callaghan ordered the Task Force to stand by to open fire, range 3,000. At the same time the O'Bannon's radar picked up a fourth set of signals from the north, but there is no evidence that the OTC received this information. The new enemy group was in two sections, one distant 9,000 yards and the other 13,500 yards. The existence of these ships and the presence in the formation of at least one battleship is confirmed by the fact that heavy firing was reported from this area during the action, and by the fact that the San Francisco took a 14-inch shell (a dud) at an angle of 20° with the horizontal. Most of the Japanese vessels were so close to our flagship that all her other damage was caused by shells with very flat trajectories.

At this point enemy ships were on both sides of [the US] column, which was in the path of the group containing the first battleship. Suddenly the Japanese illuminated from both right and left and commenced firing. The time was 0148. The OTC immediately gave the command, “Odd ships fire to starboard, even to port.” The guns of the Task Force opened up, and a free-for-all fight began with little semblance of coordination on either side.

The gunfire of the American ships was most effective ...

On the port side the Atlanta, Juneau, Helena, Aaron Ward, Barton, Fletcher, Laffey, and O'Bannon opened on illuminating vessels. ... Both [Japanese] ships burst into flames. Seeing that her target was out of action, the Fletcher shifted fire to the next ship in line ... She was joined by the Sterett, which fired 13 salvos. Both the Japanese vessels were seen to sink almost immediately. In the same area “an enemy destroyer exploded” (this may have been one of the cruisers), and two others were seen to be on fire.

The Atlanta, an odd-numbered [US] ship, had been unable to open fire to starboard as ordered because our destroyers were in the way. While she was shooting at the cruiser to port, a division of Japanese destroyers crossed 1,200 yards ahead of her. ... Atlanta had received thirteen 5.5-inch hits and some 3-inch from the light cruiser, mostly in the bridge section, and twelve 5-inch from the destroyers. There were fires forward. As the enemy ceased fire, [the] cruiser was struck by one or two torpedoes forward on the port side, perhaps from the destroyer to port. All power was lost, except the auxiliary Diesel, and the rudder was jammed left. The ship began to circle back toward the south.

Meanwhile the San Francisco, which had altered course to 280° T., shifted fire from her stricken enemy ship to a “small cruiser or large destroyer ... a heavy cruiser came up on the Atlanta's port quarter and opened fire at a range of about 3,500 yards, bearing 240° R. The Atlanta reported that 19 hits were scored on her with 8-inch armor-piercing ammunition. Although many of the projectiles failed to explode, her hull was holed several times, and her damaged bridge was shattered. The shells were loaded with green dye, the San Francisco's color. As the first shot struck, Capt. S. P. Jenkins of the Atlanta rushed to the port side to get off torpedoes. When he returned to starboard, Admiral Scott and three officers of his staff had been killed, as well as a large number of other personnel. The foremast collapsed, fires were blazing everywhere, and the Atlanta was dead in the water.

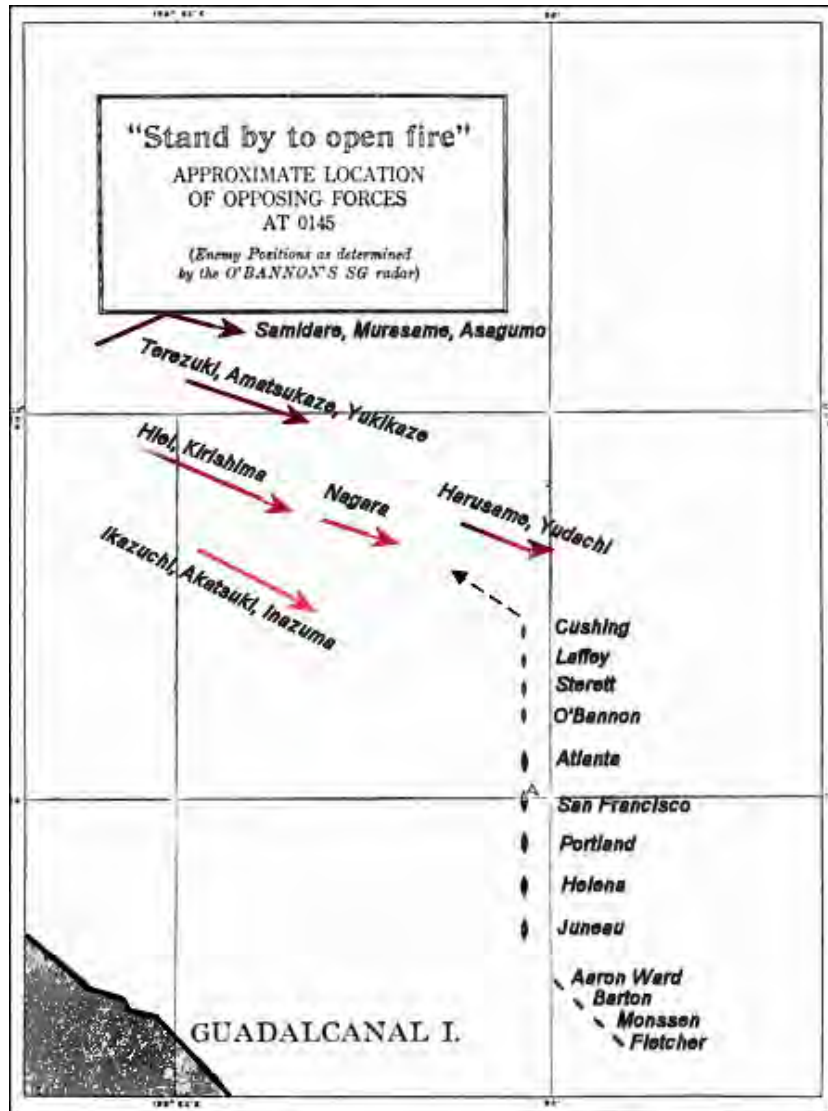


Fig. 2: Chart: 'Stand by to open fire.' Approximate location of opposing forces at 0145. (Enemy positions determined by the O'Bannon's SG radar at Guadalcanal.)¹⁴

The illuminating ship to port on which the O'Bannon and Aaron Ward opened fire was a Kongo battleship, later identified as the Hiyei. The O'Bannon's guns shot out the searchlight, and several blazes were noted on the enemy vessel ...

The San Francisco, still heading in a westerly direction, took the Hiyei under fire 2 or 3 minutes later. Range was 2,200 yards ... Target heading was northeasterly. Many hits were scored at the water line with two salvos. ...

[Subsequently,] the OTC gave the command over TBS, "Cease firing, our ships." The order did not get through to all vessels, but the San Francisco stopped shooting at the Hiyei.

Meanwhile, at 0152, the Portland's second salvo to starboard blew up a Hibiki destroyer. At this time other enemy ships in the same location began firing torpedoes ...

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At 0154 the OTC again directed “cease firing.” Some ships still did not receive the command. Some continued firing, perhaps because they were sure of their targets. Others obeyed, including the Helena, Fletcher, O’Bannon, and the Portland, which verified the order over TBS ...

The O’Bannon was now in the lead of [the US] scattered “column,” since both the Cushing and Laffey had disappeared to starboard. She was on course 280° T., about 1,800 yards from the Hiyei and coming up on the battleship’s starboard quarter. ... [The US] formation had ceased to function as a force. Each ship had become an independent entity faced with the problem of not firing on friendly vessels.

At about this time a large enemy ship rolled over and sank 1,500 yards from the Aaron Ward, which was leading [the] rear destroyers into the melee ...

At 0155 the Barton stopped to avoid collision with a friendly ship and was struck by one and then another torpedo. She broke in two and sank in 10 seconds. Shortly afterward, one [US] destroyers passed through the survivors at high speed. Others were injured by depth charges exploding in the vicinity. At about the same time the Fletcher reopened fire on a cruiser astern of her original target to port.

By 0156 the O’Bannon had closed to within 1,200 yards of the Hiyei. There were numerous fires on the battleship, and gunfire had slackened. The O’Bannon fired three torpedoes. There was a tremendous explosion on the enemy ship, which was enveloped in a sheet of flame from bow to stern. Burning particles fell on the destroyer ... Five burning ships were astern.

At this juncture planes were overhead, but it was impossible to identify them. Torpedoes passed under the Monssen and the Aaron Ward. The Cushing had been heavily hit again, and propulsion was failing. The Portland had been torpedoed, as had the Juneau ...

On hearing of the San Francisco’s predicament over TBS, about 0200, the Portland asked the bearing of the battleship. At the same time the Helena requested permission to open fire on targets of her own. The Task Force Commander asked what type of target she had, saying he “wanted the big ones.” He then told the Portland to take the battleship along with the San Francisco. The Portland, after completing the first circle to starboard resulting from the torpedo, fired 4 main battery salvos at a range of 4,000 yards, making 10 to 14 hits. The San Francisco also gave the Hiyei everything she had. The American flagship, however, was struck by the enemy cruiser’s second salvo, and the Hiyei’s third salvo smashed her bridge, killing Admiral Callaghan and mortally wounding Capt. Young and others. Steering and engine control were shifted to Battle II, which was immediately destroyed.

The San Francisco kept firing at the Hiyei as long as the main battery would bear. Before she was completely knocked out by the battleship, the last remaining gun of her secondary battery set off the depth charges on the stern of the enemy destroyer on the port side. It blew up and was thought to have sunk.

While the San Francisco was dueling with the Japanese battleship, the O’Bannon barely managed to avoid the sinking Laffey and was unable to keep from passing through some of the crew in the water. Life belts were thrown overside. Shortly thereafter the Laffey blew up ...

At this time the Helena’s radar plot reported 6 ships to starboard ...

The Hiyei ceased firing on [the US] flagship after 5 or 6 salvos. The San Francisco had received 15 major caliber hits, as well as numerous others, and 25 separate fires were burning. What had saved her from complete destruction was the enemy’s use of bombardment ammunition. She was still between 2 Japanese groups, but apparently they were now shooting at each other. The officer of the deck, Lt. Comdr. Bruce McCandless, was conning the damaged ship, while Lt. Comdr. Schonland, who had succeeded to command, continued fighting the fires below. Lt. Comdr. McCandless decided

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to make his escape around Cape Esperance, but as he continued to head west a large vessel opened up on him, and he circled to the eastward, astern of the enemy forces.

After a quarter-hour of battle most of [the US] ships were seriously shot up. The Cushing had received up to 20 hits from cruisers and destroyers and lay helpless. The Laffey had sunk; the Sterett had just been hit in the foremast and had lost SC radar, identification lights, and TBS transmitting antenna; the O'Bannon was slightly damaged. The Atlanta was burning, and the San Francisco and Portland were badly holed. The Helena had suffered minor injury. The Juneau had left the scene of action. The Barton had blown up. Only the Aaron Ward, Monssen, and Fletcher were untouched.

The Aaron Ward did not have long to wait for her share. She passed through what was apparently the entire enemy formation ... receiving three 14-inch, two 8-inch, and five smaller hits ...

At about 0205 the Monssen launched five torpedoes at the Hiyei, 4,000 yards to the northwest of her. Soon there were two explosions at the target. Five minutes later the Sterett located the Hiyei to port, illuminated by star shells and by a burning vessel to the south. She was seen to be considerably damaged. A full salvo of four torpedoes was fired at a range of 2,000 yards, and the 5-inch battery opened on the battleship's bridge structure. Two of the torpedoes hit and exploded ...

At 0212 the Helena had been unable for some minutes to raise the OTC on the TBS, so she tried to reassemble our scattered units. At 0215 her radar showed that the major portion of the Japanese force was in disorderly retirement ... Sterett managed to retire at flank speed (later reduced to 23 knots.) ...

Monssen was again illuminated by star shells to port ... Immediately searchlights 2,500 yards away illuminated her and she was hard hit by medium caliber shells. Number 1 gun was put out of action ... Steering was lost next, and the destroyer's upper works became a mass of flames. As she had no more guns, torpedoes, or power, abandon ship was ordered. The commanding officer and several others were trapped on the bridge but jumped from the rail to the water, suffering more or less serious injury.

At 0205 the Fletcher had turned south at 35 knots to round up ahead of a Maya cruiser which was proceeding on a southerly course at 20 knots ... Six minutes later there were two or three explosions at the target. Increasingly heavy detonations were followed by flames. Twenty or 30 minutes later the Maya blew up and "completely disintegrated."

This was the last episode of the action proper.

At 0226 the Helena ordered all ships to form on her and take an easterly course. By 0230 the Cushing was abandoning ship, since her fires were totally out of control. The Portland, which was still turning in tight circles at speeds up to 20 knots, asked the Helena for a tow, but this was not considered safe due to the danger of torpedoes. At 0235 the Helena instructed all ships to turn on their fighting lights briefly. Five minutes later she located the San Francisco, although the latter was unable to show lights because they had been shot away. The flagship signaled the news of Admiral Callaghan's death by flashlight, the only means of communication left. The Fletcher joined, and the three ships stood out Sealark Channel. Later they fell in with the Juneau in Indispensable Strait. The O'Bannon and Sterett retired through Lengo Channel.

When the firing ceased, the Portland observed nine ships burning, only three of these being ours (the Atlanta, Cushing, and Monssen). At 0330 she saw what was thought to be a Nachi-class heavy cruiser blow up. A Tenryu light cruiser or large destroyer also exploded.

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At daybreak she could see the Hiyei steaming slowly in circles northwest of Savo Island, with a cruiser or destroyer nearby. The Atlanta lay 5,000 yards to the south, not burning any longer. The Cushing and the Monssen were burning to the northwest and the north, and the Aaron Ward was 15,000 yards north. At 12,500 yards, south of Savo Island, lay a Shiguri-class destroyer with two small boats alongside. After checking identification by signaling the Atlanta, the Portland fired six 6-gun salvos at this ship. The last one exploded the after magazine and the destroyer sank. This destruction of an enemy vessel while steering was still out of control was "one of the highlights of the action," according to Admiral Nimitz.

Half an hour later the Japanese battleship began firing two-gun salvos at the Aaron Ward, which was about to be taken under tow by the tug Bobolink ... from Tulagi ... The Hiyei gave up firing after the fourth because planes from Guadalcanal had started to attack her.

At 1000 the Atlanta and the Portland were still in waters off the enemy-held shore. Eventually the Bobolink returned from taking the Aaron Ward to Tulagi and towed the Atlanta to Lunga Point ... At 1400 the Atlanta ... informed the Portland that she could no longer check flooding conditions. The Portland's commanding officer communicated with COMSOPAC and relayed his permission to scuttle. The Atlanta's crew was taken off by Higgins boats from Tulagi, and the demolition party, headed by Capt. Jenkins, went to work. A charge was set in the Diesel engine room, and there was a small explosion. Patrol was maintained around the ship till she sank at 2015.

At 1432 the Bobolink came back for the Portland, but the latter did not reach Tulagi till 0108. Only 2 or 3 knots could be made because of the difficulty in overcoming the rudder effect produced by her damaged stern.

At daylight the Monssen was boarded by members of her crew, who removed the eight remaining wounded men. At 0800 survivors were picked up from the water by landing boats and taken to Guadalcanal. At 0900 more fires broke out, and some hours later the ship blew up and sank. The Barton's survivors were picked up by Higgins boats from Guadalcanal and by rescue parties from the Portland.

Meanwhile the rest of [the US] Force was proceeding through Indispensable Strait in its retirement to Espiritu Santo ... Heavy ships present were the San Francisco (severely damaged) and the Helena (slightly damaged), with the torpedoed Juneau maintaining a station 800 yards on the San Francisco's starboard quarter because only one screw was operating and she could not turn quickly except to the right. She was down 10 to 12 feet by the bow, but was able to maintain 13 knots. The Sterett was on the port bow and the Fletcher on the starboard.

At 1101 a Helena talker reported a disturbance in the water like that made by a porpoise. This proved to be one of three torpedoes, apparently aimed at the San Francisco. The first crossed that ship's bow and just missed the Juneau's stern, while the third passed astern of both ships. The second, however, which seemed to come from beneath the San Francisco, struck the Juneau on the port side, at about the same point where the hit had been made the night before. There was a terrific explosion, and the ship broke in two and disappeared in 20 seconds in a cloud of black, yellow, and brown smoke. Debris showered down among the vessels of the formation to such an extent that some observers thought that a high-altitude bombing attack was going on.¹⁵

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No sight or sound contact with the submarine was made. It was not feasible to stop and search for survivors due to the crippled condition of the ships and the weakness of the antisubmarine screen. Furthermore it seemed unlikely that any of the personnel could have survived the force of the explosion. Actually, however, about 120 men were left struggling in the water, two-thirds of them wounded. Sixty were still alive when sighted by a search plane at 1100 the next day. They had three rafts and several life nets. The plane dropped a rubber boat but air contact was not maintained, and no effective attempt at a rescue was made. The destroyer Meade conducted a search on Monday, 16 November, but found nothing, nor was she sighted by the survivors. Three men in the rubber boat reached Santa Catalina Island on the night of the 18th and were picked up by a PBY [a flying boat – or amphibious aircraft] on the 21st. On the 19th, 3 rafts with 10 men were sighted. Seven of these were later rescued.

At 1121 on the 13th a B-17 appeared over the Task Force and the loss of the Juneau was signaled for relay to COMSOPAC. For reasons as yet unexplained, the message never arrived. The surviving vessels proceeded to Espiritu Santo, arriving at 1600 the next day.

In the 34-minute Cruiser Night Action of 12-13 November, one of the most furious sea battles ever fought, our ship losses admittedly were large. The enemy, however, suffered more severely, and his bombardment of Guadalcanal was frustrated with results which became impressively apparent during the next two days. Casualties on both sides were heavy, with the American force having the serious misfortune to lose both its commander, Admiral Callaghan, and its second in command, Admiral Scott.¹⁶

Admiral Halsey observed:

[L]ike Dan Callaghan, Norm Scott was dead or wounded. We eventually learned that both these splendid men were dead ... I had known and loved Norm Scott for many years; his death was the greatest personal sorrow that beset me the whole war ... Archie Vandegrift expressed it in a dispatch:

To Scott, Callaghan and their men goes our greatest homage. With magnificent courage against seemingly hopeless odds, they drove back the first hostile stroke and made success possible. To them the men of Guadalcanal lift their battered helmets in deepest admiration.¹⁷

Admiral Nimitz concluded:

This action in which a brave and gallant leader... took in brave men against superior forces, was a turning point in the Solomons Islands campaign. Had the powerful enemy fleet succeeded in its mission of bombarding our airfield on Guadalcanal, the task of preventing a major enemy attack and landing of large-scale reinforcements would have been much more difficult if not impossible. The calculated decision of Admiral Turner to send in the cruiser force, the resolution with which Rear Admirals Callaghan and Scott led the ships in, the well-directed fire and courage of our personnel, merit the highest praise.¹⁸



Fig. 3: Downed Japanese aircraft off Guadalcanal.¹⁹

U.S. Navy photo 80-G-32367

POSTAL HISTORY

The four naval ships in this article were all built at Federal Shipbuilding and Drydock Company at Kearny Point, in Kearny, NJ, just north of the confluence of the Hackensack and Passaic rivers, about 3 miles from Newark Liberty Airport in an area now known as River Terminal Development. A memorial still stands to the company and men who created so many of our naval ships.

USS ATLANTA (CL 51)

The class leader of lightly armed and armored cruisers with five inch guns, *Atlanta* was built at Federal Shipbuilding and Drydock Company, Kearny, New Jersey. She was christened by Margaret Mitchell, author of *Gone with the Wind*, and Atlanta, Georgia's favorite citizen. The ship was commissioned on Christmas Eve, 24 December 1941, less than three weeks after the attack on Pearl Harbor. She had a service life of nearly 11 months, all during the war. She departed New York for the Panama Canal Zone on 5 April, reaching Cristobal on the 8th. After transiting the isthmian waterway, *Atlanta* then cleared Balboa on 12 April; she ultimately reached Pearl Harbor on 23 April 1942. Her first combat was the Battle of Midway. Thereafter, she participated in many of the battles surrounding the Guadalcanal invasion.

During the First Naval Battle of Guadalcanal, *Atlanta* was the flagship of Rear Admiral Norman Scott, US Navy. *Atlanta* was awarded five battle stars for her World War II service and a Presidential Unit Citation for her "heroic example of invincible fighting spirit" in the First Naval Battle of Guadalcanal on 13 November 1942.



Fig. 4: A First Day of Mail Service cover from the USS Atlanta, showing Locy Type FDPS 3z 20Jan 1942.

Naval Cover Museum,
Credit: Greg Ciesielski

Atlanta attacked the Japanese destroyer *Akatsuki*, but was soon torpedoed in her port side, with many men lost as well as damage to steering control. She was then mistakenly shelled by the USS *San Francisco* in the melee that followed, killing Rear Admiral Scott, serving as 2nd in command. *Atlanta*, suffering irreparable damage and losing against the incoming seas, was ordered scuttled by her captain. On 13 November 1942 demolition charges took her to the bottom of the sea. She has a service history of less than a year.

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Fig. 5: Another First Day cover with a US Navy parcel post cancel on a cacheted cover for the USS Atlanta, 20 Jan 1942, showing Locy Type FDPS 9xz. Naval Cover Museum: Credit: Greg Ciesielski

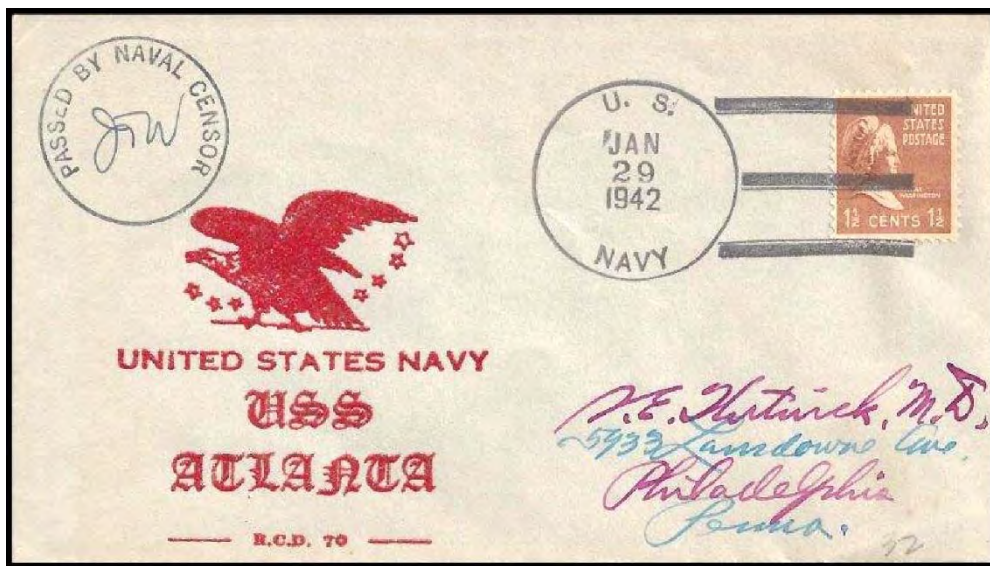


Fig. 6: A cover from the USS Atlanta, 29 Jan 1942, showing Locy Type 3z (BBT). Sent to Philadelphia with a naval censor cancel. Naval Cover Museum: Credit: Greg Ciesielski.

USS JUNEAU (CL 52)

Tragically remembered as the ship of the Five Sullivan Brothers, who were lost along with all but ten of their shipmates in the morning following the First Naval Battle of Guadalcanal, USS *Juneau* had a brief, ten month, service life, all during the war.

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Built at Federal Shipbuilding and Drydock Company, Kearny, New Jersey, *Juneau* was commissioned 14 February 1942, St. Valentine's Day. The light cruiser, which was equipped only with five inch guns primarily for anti-aircraft defense, earned four battle stars. She left the East Coast on 22 August 1942 and was escorting USS *Wasp* (CV 7) on 15 September 1942 when that ship was sunk by a Japanese submarine. *Juneau* next fought at Santa Cruz, 24-26 October 1942, when USS *Hornet* (CV 8) was sunk. Three weeks later she survived the night encounter of the First Naval Battle of Guadalcanal, only to be torpedoed herself by a submarine.

The Senior Officer Present Afloat (SOPA), Captain Gilbert Hoover, who commanded USS *Helena* (CA 50), was relieved of command for failure to rescue or report the sinking of *Juneau*. He was assigned as Commanding Officer, Naval Weapons Station, Earle, New Jersey. *Juneau* had the shortest service life of the New Jersey-built ships which fought during the Naval Battles of Guadalcanal.

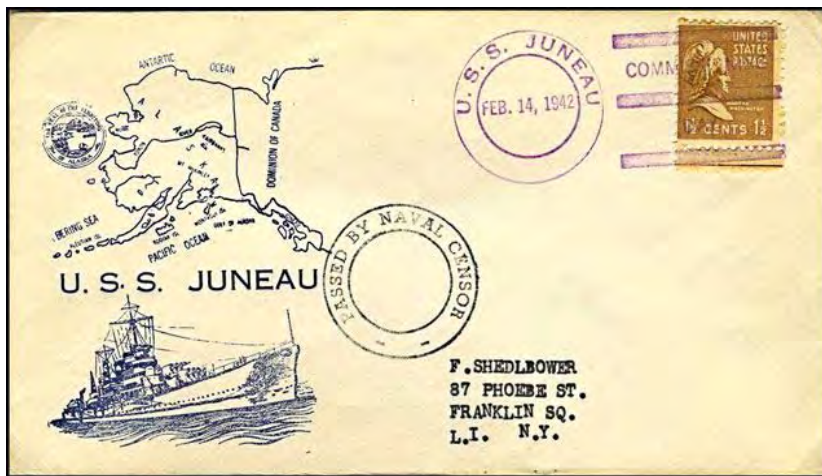


Fig. 7: A Commissioning Day cover from the USS Juneau, 4 February 1942, Locy Type F [Fancy] cancel passed by naval censor and mailed to Long Island, NY. Non-philatelic postmarks from the ship are rated rare in the USCS Postmark Catalog.

Fig. 8: A picture of the five Sullivan Brothers, who survived the first torpedoing of Juneau, only to perish when it was hit again. 687 men were lost when she sank.²⁰

“Just a few minutes into the battle, *Juneau* was hit by a Japanese torpedo on the port side near the forward fire room. The shock wave from the explosion buckled the deck, shattered the fire control computers, and knocked out power. The cruiser limped away from the battle, down by the bow and struggling to maintain 18 knots. She rejoined the surviving American warships at dawn on 13 November and zig-zagged to the southeast in company with two other cruisers and three destroyers.

“About an hour before noon, the task force crossed paths with Japanese submarine I-26. At 1101, the submarine fired ... at *San Francisco*. None hit that cruiser, but one passed beyond and struck *Juneau* on the port side very near the previous hit. The ensuing magazine explosion blew the light cruiser in half, killing most of the crew. A message from USS *Helena* to a nearby B-17 search plane reported that *Juneau* was lost ... and that survivors were in the water.”²¹



The Juneau went down in 20 seconds. Fearing another Japanese attack, the retreating task force could not risk stopping to pick up survivors. Because the message sent was never received at Noumea, the 120+ men in the water were left to their own resources for 8 days, when only 10 remained to be rescued.

NEW JERSEY-BUILT SHIPS IN THE 1ST NAVAL BATTLE OF GUADALCANAL

CRUISERS



Fig. 9: USS ATLANTA (CL 51)
US Navy Photo NH 57455
Steaming at high speed, probably during her trials, circa November 1941.

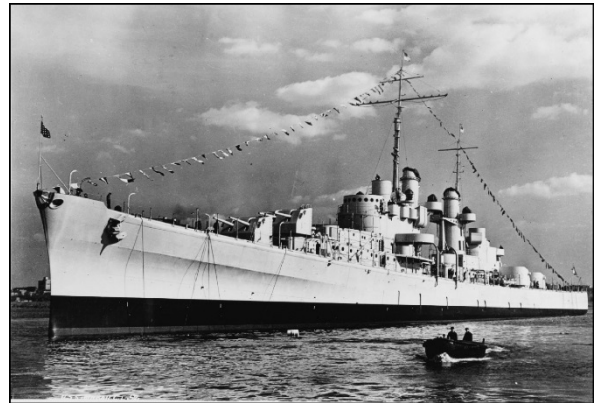


Fig. 10: USS JUNEAU (CL 52)
National Archives #19-N-28149
Afloat just after being launched at the Federal Shipbuilding Company yard, Kearny, 25 October 1941



*Located on the site of Federal Shipbuilding & Drydock Co.,
a monument "to the veterans who served aboard the ships launched from this Kearny Federal shipyard and to the men and women who built them."*

Destroyer History Foundation photo by D. W. McComb.

DESTROYERS



Fig. 11: USS FLETCHER (DD 445)
U.S. National Archives #: 19-N-31243
Maneuvering off New York on 18 July 1942.



Fig. 12: USS AARON WARD (DD 483)
National Archives 80-G-12263
17 August 1942, during operations in the Solomon Islands area. Note her pattern camouflage.

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USS *FLETCHER* (DD 445)

The lead ship of a class of 175 World War II destroyers, USS *Fletcher* was built by Federal Shipbuilding and Drydock Co., Kearny, N. J.; and commissioned 30 June 1942, less than half a year before the Naval Battles of Guadalcanal. The radar equipped *Fletcher* was undamaged during the First Battle of Guadalcanal. She earned 15 battle stars for World War II, and was decommissioned on January 15 1947. (See *Figure 1* for a launch day cover May 3, 1942.)

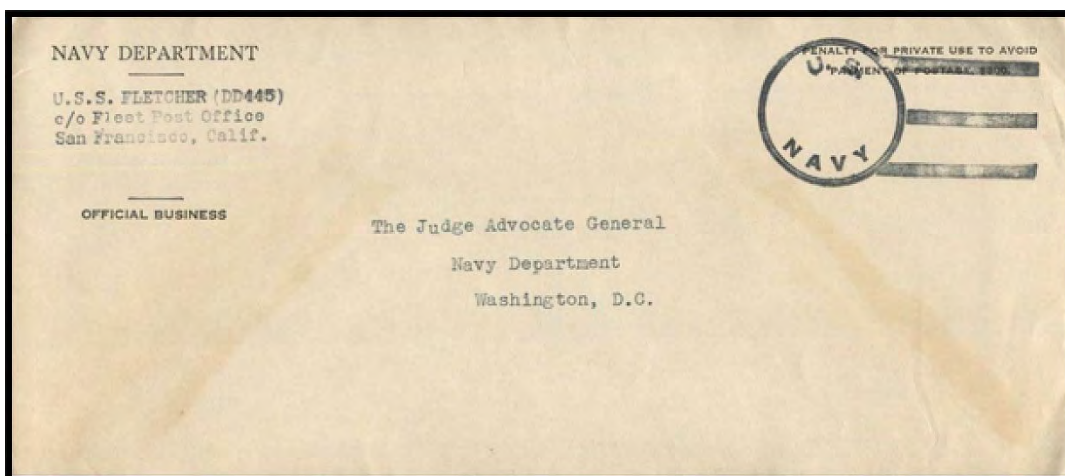


Fig. 13: A 1945 business envelope sent from USS Fletcher to Washington with Locy Type 3x(BTT).

Naval Cover Museum: Jon Burdett



Fig. 14: A cover sent 8 March 1946 to San Francisco with a Locy Type F cancel.

Jon Burdett

Recommissioned October 3 1949 to August 1 1969, winning an additional five battle stars for the Korean War, *Fletcher* was finally decommissioned and struck 1 October 1969, more than 25 years after her initial commissioning.

USS AARON WARD (DD 483)



Naval Cover Museum: Jon Burdett

Fig. 15: A Commissioning Day cover for Aaron Ward, March 4, 1942, Locy Type FDC 3z, noting first day of postal service. The postmark is over the censor marking.

This *Gleaves*-class destroyer was built by Federal Shipbuilding and Drydock Co., Kearny, N. J.; and commissioned 4 March 1942. On the night of 12–13 November, in the initial surface phase of the Naval Battle of Guadalcanal, she was part of a group of cruisers and destroyers intercepted and drove off a superior Japanese bombardment force including two battleships.²²

Admiral Halsey said of her: “The *Aaron Ward* gave another fine example of the fighting spirit of the men of our destroyer force. Though hit nine times by both major and medium caliber shells which caused extensive damage she nevertheless avoided total destruction by the apparently superhuman efforts of all hands. The superb performance of the engineers’ force in effecting temporary repairs so that the ship could move away from under the guns of the enemy battle ship largely contributed to saving the ship.” -- Admiral Halsey on the action of 12–13 November 1942.

She survived the Naval Battle of Guadalcanal but was sunk off Guadalcanal 7 April 1943 by an air attack. *Aaron Ward* was awarded four battle stars for her World War II service. She had a service life of 13 months.

ENDNOTES:

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² A two-part article by the same author, “From Guadalcanal to the Garden State,” on the August 1942 landings appeared in the pages of *NJPH*, February and May 2012. For further reading go to Whole #s 185 and 186 at <http://njpostalhistory.org/media/archive/185-njphfeb12.pdf> & <http://njpostalhistory.org/media/archive/186-njphmay12.pdf>.

NJ CONTRIBUTIONS TO NAVAL BATTLES OF GUADALCANAL: 11-15 Nov 1942 ~ Lawrence Brennan US Navy, (Ret.)

- ³ Morison, Samuel Eliot, *History of United States Naval Operations in World War II, Volume 5, The Struggle for Guadalcanal, August 1942-February 1943* Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1948) p. ix.
- ⁴ This narrative is largely taken from the *Battle of Guadalcanal, 11-15 November, 1942, including the Enemy Air Attacks of 11 and 12 November; the Cruiser Night Action of 12-13 November; the Air Operations of 13, 14, and 15 November; and the Battleship Night Action of 14-15 November*, ~~Confidential~~[declassified], OFFICE OF NAVAL INTELLIGENCE, U.S. NAVY, [1943]. Publications Branch, Office of Naval Intelligence - United States Navy, 1944. For the non-abbreviated version, see <https://www.history.navy.mil/research/library/online-reading-room/title-list-alphabetically/b/battle-of-guadalcanal.html#phase2>.
- ⁵ Leonard Ware, *United States Navy Combat Narrative , The Landing in the Solomons, 7-8 August 1942 –* <http://ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USN/USN-CN-Solomons/index.html>
- ⁶ *Battle of Guadalcanal, 11-15 November, 1942* at <https://www.history.navy.mil/research/library/online-reading-room/title-list-alphabetically/b/battle-of-guadalcanal.html#phase2> .
- ⁷ Halsey, William F. Jr., and J. Bryant, III, *Admiral Halsey's Story*, New York, McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1947, p.123.
- ⁸ Prados, John, *Islands of Destiny: The Solomons Campaign and the Eclipse of the Rising Sun*, New York 2012, Penguin Publishing Group, p. xvi, NAL Caliber Edition.
- ⁹ Combat Narratives, op cit., Solomon Islands Campaign: VI, *Battle of Guadalcanal, 11-15 November 1942* 1944, pp. 6-8. See <https://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USN/USN-CN-Guadalcanal/USN-CN-Guadalcanal-1.html>
- ¹⁰ Prados, op cit., p. 167.
- ¹¹ Some sources erroneously contend that Callaghan and Scott were the only two US flag officers killed in combat during World War II. Rear Admiral Isaac Kidd, US Navy was killed on board his flagship, USS *Arizona* (BB 39) on 7 December 1941 and Rear Admiral Henry M. Mullinix, U.S. Navy was killed on board his flagship, USS *Liscome Bay* (CVE 56) when it was sunk on 24 November 1943.
- ¹² Prados, op cit., pp. 170-78, NAL Caliber Edition.]
- ¹³ Report of Operations of Task Force 67 and Task Group 62.4 - Reinforcement of Guadalcanal November 8-15, 1942, and Summary of Third Battle of SAVO, Dec. 3, 1942. See <http://taskforce67.tripod.com/tf67.htm>.
- ¹⁴ Modification of [1] [Image:NavalGuadalcanalNov13.jpg](#) with ships' names added. Map of the naval engagement of November 13, 1942, at 01:45 just before several U.S. warships began to turn left (indicated by dotted black arrow) in preparation to engage the Japanese ships and the U.S. column began to jumble. The Japanese warship groups are represented by red arrows.

Background taken from [1] (which is a U.S. government public domain document) and modified by [user:Cla68](#), on June 21, 2006 to include warship forces battle tracks, then by [user:Pibw1](#), with ships' names. On Wikipedia at . https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:NavalGuadalcanalNov13_mod.jpg.

- ¹⁵ For detailed accounts of the loss of USS *Juneau* see USS *Fletcher* (DD 445) Executive Office, Rear Admiral Joseph C. "Bill" Wylie's letter and *Left to Die, The Tragedy of the USS Juneau* by Dan Kurzman. Excerpt from Admiral Wylie's 20 April, 1986 letter:

Some time in the middle or late forenoon (was it about 1000 or 1100?), my captain and I, exhausted, had told the doctor to send to us on the bridge a gill of his medicinal whiskey. We were in the chart house, just abaft the bridge, pouring the whiskey into two dirty coffee cups, when we heard and felt a tremendous explosion. We rushed out of the chart house, one to each wing of the bridge, and looked aft. *Juneau* had simply disintegrated. The air was filled with debris blown in every direction. As soon as we saw this, one of us (I think it was I) pushed the engine order telegraph to emergency flank speed; the other, Cole, passed the word on the loudspeaker system for all hands topside to take cover. None of the fragments landed on our ship. One complete 5-inch twin gun mount did land in our wake less than a hundred yards behind us. We never did get to drink the medicinal whiskey; I suppose one of the quartermasters saw his chance.

Captain Cole then at once ordered right rudder to turn and go back to the scene. We had turned perhaps as much as 150 degrees when Captain Hoover, over the short-range line-of-sight voice radio (TBS), ordered us to resume screening station, which of course we did. We were puzzled because, although it did not seem possible that any man could have survived that dreadful explosion, instinct and training in such a situation automatically tell us to go look for survivors. In discussing the explosion just after Captain Cole gave the order to turn right, we had assumed that a welder's torch had touched off a magazine and that, in turn had touched off the other magazines.

Perhaps 10 or 15 minutes after the radio order to resume screening station, Captain Hoover (I am sure he knew we would be upset) sent us in *Fletcher* a fairly long visual message. In it he said that *Helena* had seen a torpedo, fired from somewhere on the port side of the formation, pass between *Helena* and *San Francisco* headed in the general direction of *Juneau*. We had not seen this. He said also that he had warning of two and perhaps three more Japanese submarines ahead along our general track to *Espiritu Santo*. We, in *Fletcher*, apparently were not on the distribution of the warning. I suppose it was not sent on one of the frequencies or in one of the codes that destroyers normally covered.

Only then, after reading Captain Hoover's message, did my captain and I realize the awesome difficulty of Captain Hoover's decision. On the one hand was the basic instinct to look for survivors even though, from the strength of the explosion, we could hardly believe there could be any. And on the other hand was Captain Hoover's almost unique responsibility. Helena had been only lightly damaged in the fight the night before and was the only cruiser in the South Pacific that was ready for combat. San Francisco had been severely damaged and was in no condition either to fight or to defend herself. Sterett was badly damaged and, as I noted above, was burying her dead. Fletcher was the only destroyer within hundreds of miles that had an anti-submarine search and attack capability.

This was the dilemma. Should he let Fletcher go back and look for survivors, when he knew, and we did not, that there was a Nip submarine close to the scene of the explosion, thus risking the very clear chance that that submarine could take out Fletcher while we were searching for or picking up survivors?

Or should he retain the one destroyer capable of giving at least minimal protection to the one combat-ready cruiser in the South Pacific, the helpless San Francisco, and even some protection to the sorely damaged Sterett?

I think that Captain Hoover made the most difficult single decision that I have ever known; he made it without a moment's hesitation; and I think he made the correct decision under those incredibly difficult circumstances. This was the most courageous decision I have ever seen. Obviously, then and now, I disagree totally with the too-hasty ComSoPac decision to relieve Captain Hoover of his command. (See <http://www.ussfletcher.org/stories/juneau.html>)

¹⁶ Combat Narratives, Solomon Islands Campaign: VI, *Battle of Guadalcanal, 11-15 November 1942* ~~Confidential~~ Publications Branch Office of Naval Intelligence - United States Navy, 1944, pp. 7-35

<http://ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USN/USN-CN-Solomons/index.html>

¹⁷ Halsey, William F. Jr., and J. Bryant, III, *Admiral Halsey's Story*, New York, McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1947, p.127.

¹⁸ Combat Narratives, Solomon Islands Campaign: VI, *Battle of Guadalcanal, 11-15 November 1942* ~~Confidential~~ Publications Branch Office of Naval Intelligence - United States Navy, 1944, pp. 7-35.

<http://ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USN/USN-CN-Solomons/index.html>

¹⁹ Wikipedia showing Official U.S. Navy photo [80-G-32367](#) from the U.S. Navy [Naval History and Heritage Command](#).

²⁰ Sullivan Brothers photo at U.S. Naval Historical Center Photograph #NH 52362

²¹ The Sullivan Brothers: The Loss of USS Juneau, (CL-52) at <https://www.history.navy.mil/browse-by-topic/disasters-and-phenomena/the-sullivan-brothers-and-the-assignment-of-family-members/the-loss-of-uss-juneau.html>

²² Aaron Ward DD 483 website at <http://destroyerhistory.org/benson-leaveclass/ussaaronward/>

MEMBER'S NEWS: Annual meeting, Member address changes

MEMBER NEWS: NOJEX, Member address changes, Older journal online access

IMPORTANT REMINDER: NOJEX dates are September 8-10 and has been moved from our old venue to the Robert Treat Hotel in Newark Our annual meeting will be there on Sunday September 10 at noon. For more information and directions, see www.nojex.org.

A free pass will accompany this journal, either included with your hard copy or attached as a downloadable pdf to the emailed version, which you can print out and bring with you to the show. Please come! We look forward to seeing you there – stop by the NJPHS booth and say hello, and if you can, come to the annual meeting on Sunday. Bob Rose will do a PowerPoint presentation on collecting stampless covers.

MEMBER CHANGES:

Address changes:
E. Leslie Byrnes: from PO Box 765, Kinderhook, NY 12106-0765 to % the Pines, 154 Jefferson Heights, Catskill, NY 12414-1215
Al Atkinson, 4 Ironwood Trail, Denville, NJ 07834 NJ 07834 to 111 Gramercy Pl., Southampton Twp, NJ 08088 asa@verizon.net (same)
Roger Brody from 110 Knightsbridge, Watchung NJ 07069-6400 to 27 Schindler Ct, Somerset NJ 08873, rsbco@optonline.net (same)

FREE ONLINE LIBRARY: As noted in our last issue, all back issues are available online and easily downloaded. Warren has added a new version of the title index – with this file, you can go to any issue up to November 2012 by just clicking on the title you are interested in, and the pdf of that issue will open in your browser. Here is the link to that file:

<http://www.njpostalhistory.org/media/archive/njphindex1-204.pdf>

This is easily searchable by using the Ctrl>F search tool. You can still also download the Excel file which can be sorted by general topic, location, or author. The link to that file is available at the bottom of this page: <http://www.njpostalhistory.org/njphs-journal.html>

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HUFFVILLE, NEW JERSEY: A Puzzle Needing your Help

By Jean Walton

Member Mike Schwartz recently sent along the following cover with questions about just where the town of Huffville might have been located, as it is not listed in Kay & Smith,¹ although there was a Huffedale in Hunterdon County and a Hurffville which was in Camden and Gloucester counties at different points in history.

The cover in question is shown in *Figure 1*. It is a small mourning cover.



Fig. 1: A mourning cover sent from Huffville, NJ. May 11, 1889 to Clayton, Gloucester (sic) Co., New Jersey, noted advertised on July 1st but unclaimed in Clayton. The two Clayton backstamps indicate when it was first received in Clayton (May 13, 1889), and an Aug. 1, 1889 cancel – presumably when it was sent to the dead letter office – appropriate for a mourning cover.

So the search began. To begin, the cancel could have been Huffvillage or Huff Village instead of Huffville, but darkening and adjusting the image seemed to produce no evidence of extra letters. Huffdale or Huffvale also seemed to be ruled out.

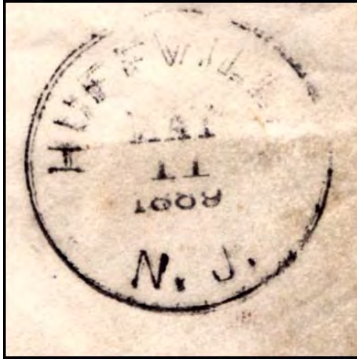


Fig. 2: HUFFVILLE cancel, May 11, 1889.

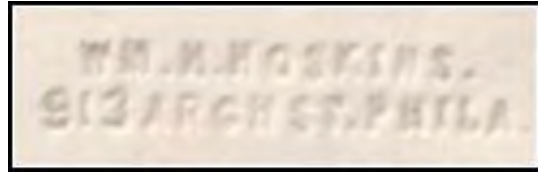


Fig. 3: Printer's Imprint:
Wm. H. Hoskins, 913 Arch St. Phila.

I have looked through the National Archives Postmaster Appointments for Huffville in the following counties:

- **Gloucester** (figuring it might be close to the address), and found Hurffville, but no Huffville,
- **Camden** (where Hurffville was before it was in Gloucester),
- **Hunterdon** (as there was a Huffdale post office there), and
- **Burlington** (as I found some evidence of a Huffville Rd), all to no avail.

Of course, that leaves another 17 counties I did not try. I have obviously looked mostly at southern and central NJ counties, but it could be any. But the recipient being in Clayton in Gloucester prejudiced me in that direction (although the sender did not seem to know how to spell Gloucester). The envelope paper came from Philadelphia, adding some fuel to that theory.

The New Jersey Library Commission's version of *The Origin of New Jersey Place Names* was also of no help.² I also checked the *NJPH* index for some mention in older *NJPH* issues and found nothing.³

I then turned to the Postal Bulletin archives⁴ and searched as many ways as I could think of, and found mention of a Huffville post office in Virginia, but nothing in New Jersey.

Hurffville (the closest match) had a post office beginning in 1858 until 1972. It seems unlikely that they would have received a canceller that misspelled the name in 1889, but perhaps it might have happened.

We are out of ideas, so we throw the question out to you – does anyone know of a Huffville post office in New Jersey? We are open to all ideas or anything leading to an answer.

Please contact your editors at njpostalhistory@aol.com or by mail to Jean Walton at 125 Turtleback Rd., Califon, NJ 07830,

ENDNOTES:

¹ John L. Kay and Chester M. Smith, Jr. *New Jersey Postal History*, the “bible” of New Jersey postal historians.

² This can be accessed on Rutgers Cartography site at http://mapmaker.rutgers.edu/356/nj_place_names_origin.pdf. It was originally compiled by the Federal Writer's Program of the WPA in 1938.

³ The *NJPH* title index, available at <http://www.njpostalhistory.org/media/archive/njphindex1-204.pdf>.

⁴ A wonderful resource at <http://www.uspostalbulletins.com/pdfsearch.aspx?pid=1&Group=48&id=48>.

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Always looking for **STAMPLESS LETTERS OF SAMUEL L. SOUTHARD.** Contact me at jwalton971@aol.com, or write Jean Walton, 125 Turtleback Rd., Califon, NJ.

PATERSON, NJ WANTED INTERESTING COVERS. Contact George Kramer, P.O. Box 2189 Clifton, NJ 07015, or email gjkk@optonline.net.

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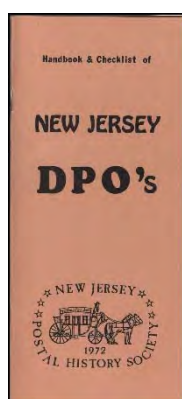
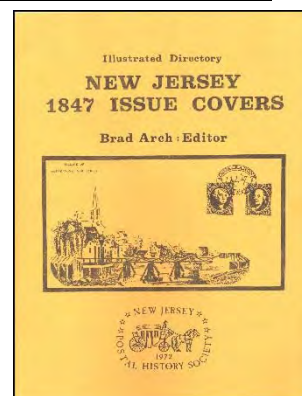
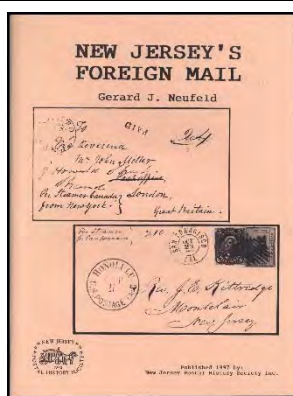
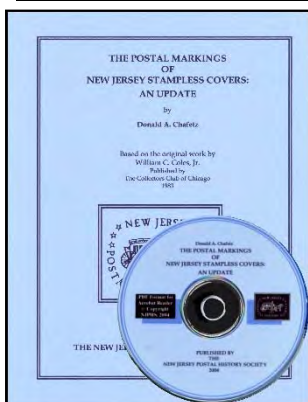
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