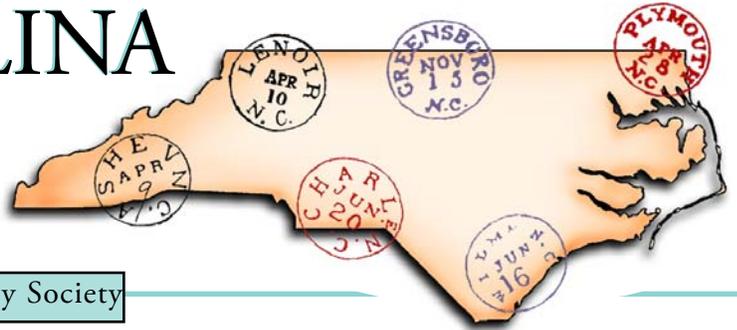
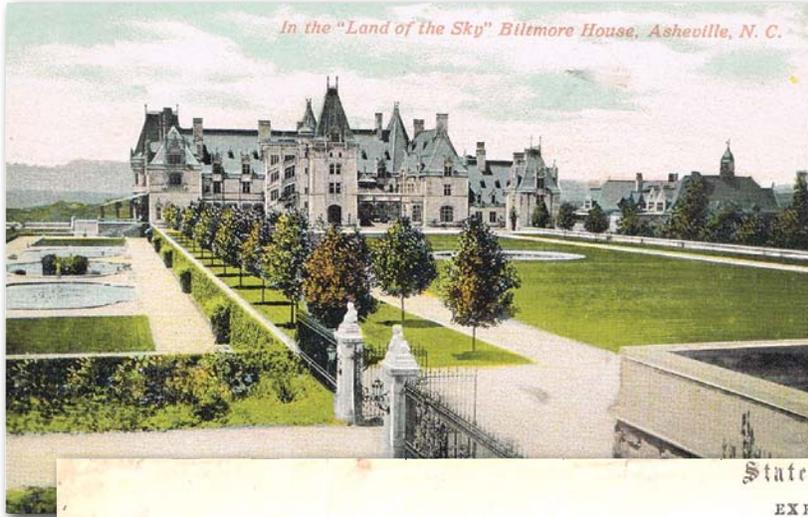


# NORTH CAROLINA POSTAL HISTORIAN

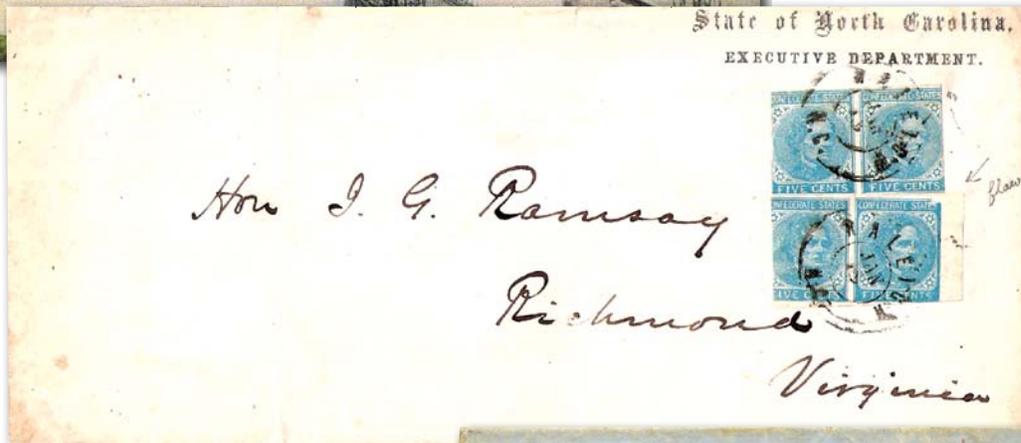


The Journal of North Carolina Postal History Society

VOLUME 30, NO. 1    WINTER 2010-2011    WHOLE 113



Tourism in Western  
North Carolina



Executive  
Department  
Semi-Official  
Covers

Hertford, North Carolina



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## IN THIS ISSUE

I am writing this message early in the holiday season, but the holidays will be over by the time you read it. I hope that your time with family and friends was enjoyable. I would like to extend to each of you my best wishes that the New Year of 2011 will be a healthy and joyful one for each of you. This begins the twenty-ninth year of our society, which is getting stronger each year because so many of you are helping in different ways to make our society grow.

Tony Crumbley advises that the CHARPEX organization has contracted with the Renaissance Charlotte Suites Hotel to host CHARPEX 2011 on August 6-7. This is the same hotel that hosted last year's show, which turned out to be held in an outstanding venue. It is easy place to get to, spacious and well-lighted for exhibits on the show floor, has excellent meeting rooms, and accommodates visitors nicely with its facilities that include food service. We hope that CHARPEX will be able to continue more shows in the future at this location.

Work has begun on our new web site. The new web master is Mike Lampson, who developed and maintains the web site of the United States Stamp Society. That site will be an excellent model for our society's site, along with suggestions from our Board of Directors and members. Hopefully, in the coming months we will have the basic site up and running.

The status box of the North Carolina Postmark Catalog update will show many more changes. Durham through Guilford Counties have been completed and will be on the National Postal Museum web site by the time you read this. The latter has been updated considerably from its original form. Greensboro has been made a separate file as Guilford county had become too large a PDF file. I expect that Charlotte and Raleigh also will be made separate files when the work progresses to Mecklenburg and Wake Counties. Updates to "completed" counties with additional postmarks and dates from the Postmark Collectors Club (PMCC) Museum are con-

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tinually being made. In some cases, the counties have been completed revised with all new pages. The date in parenthesis after the name of the county in the on-line listing will tell you the most recent file posted. To date 2,226 pages have been created and over 8,500 new markings not previously documented have been recorded. The update available on-line has been assembled for 41 of the 100 counties in North Carolina. But even those that have been posted will require significant changes as new information is incorporated from the Postmark Collectors Club collections.

Please remember to pay your dues for 2011, if you have not already done so. The dues remain at \$15 for the year and include four issues of our award-winning journal, the North Carolina Postal Historian. Make your payments to Bill DiPaolo, our Secretary-Treasurer, whose mailing address appears on this page. Our society continues to enjoy good health thanks to the generosity of our members, who contribute their time and money, for which we are most grateful. Donations above the regular membership amount of \$15 are deductible and will be very helpful to our small society.

As always, I welcome your comments and suggestions for improving the society. Please feel free to call me at home (336 545-0175), send me an e-mail message at [rfwinter@bellsouth.net](mailto:rfwinter@bellsouth.net), or write to me at the mailing address shown below.

*Dick Winter*



## NORTH CAROLINA POSTAL HISTORIAN

Library of Congress #ISSN 1054-9158.

The North Carolina Postal Historian is the official journal of the North Carolina Postal History Society. It is published quarterly in January, April, July and October.

Membership in the Society is \$15 per year. Applications for membership may be obtained from the Secretary/Treasurer. Submissions for the *Postal Historian* or inquiries may be addressed to the editor.

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## A Postal History of Tourism in Western North Carolina

by Scott Steward

The mountains of western North Carolina have long provided a difficult to penetrate barrier of thick forests and steep slopes that prevented easy access. During the early days the region was only penetrated by Native Americans and hardiest of white settlers. This isolation began to be breached in the early nineteenth century with the completion in 1828 of a turnpike that stretched from Greenville, South Carolina, to Greenville, Tennessee. The North Carolina portion of this road, called the Buncombe Turnpike, was 75 miles in length and passed from the South Carolina state line through Asheville, Flat Rock, Warm Springs and other towns before it reached the Tennessee state line. The original purpose of this road was to make it easier for farmers in western North Carolina and from lands further west to transport their livestock to markets in South Carolina and Georgia. It has been estimated that approximately 200,000 hogs passed through the area on this road during a typical summer in addition to a variety of other livestock. This commerce provided one of the earliest opportunities for area residents to earn hard cash that could be used to purchase manufactured goods brought north on the turnpike. This road also allowed the first tourists to reach the area by buggy and stagecoach. Typically these visitors were wealthy merchants and planters from Georgia or South Carolina who wanted to escape the heat and diseases of southern cities in the summer. Many of these visitors soon began to build summer estates, with Flat Rock being one of the most popular locations. In order to serve this new population and increased commerce a post office was opened in Flat Rock in March 1838. An example of an early cover passing through Flat Rock is shown in Figure 1. The letter, dated October 22, 1838 was mailed from New Brunswick, New Jersey, where it was rated at 25 cents, to Flat Rock. Apparently, the intended recipient had already left Flat Rock for Charleston, South Carolina, when the letter arrived. The letter was forwarded from Flat Rock on November 6, 1838 and was charged an additional 18  $\frac{3}{4}$  cents in postage.

With the success of the Buncombe Turnpike and growing stagecoach traffic, new roads were built through the region including the Western Turnpike, begun in 1849, bringing visitors from western most railroad terminus in the state located in Salisbury. This road allowed tourists to ride the railroad to Salisbury and then complete their journey by traveling three days by stagecoach to Asheville and other

nearby locations. At the same time the Western Turnpike was being constructed, the first plans to extend the railroad westward from Salisbury into the mountains began to be developed. Some construction on the railroad began in 1851, with an extension reaching Charlotte from Goldsboro in 1856. Unfortunately, with the coming of the Civil War railroad construction came to a halt and the existing railroads often were damaged by Union troops. The Civil War however did not stop the flow of visitors to western North Carolina. Many of the wealthy summer residents in the Flat Rock area retreated to the mountains to escape the assaults of Union troops. One of



Figure 1. ▲

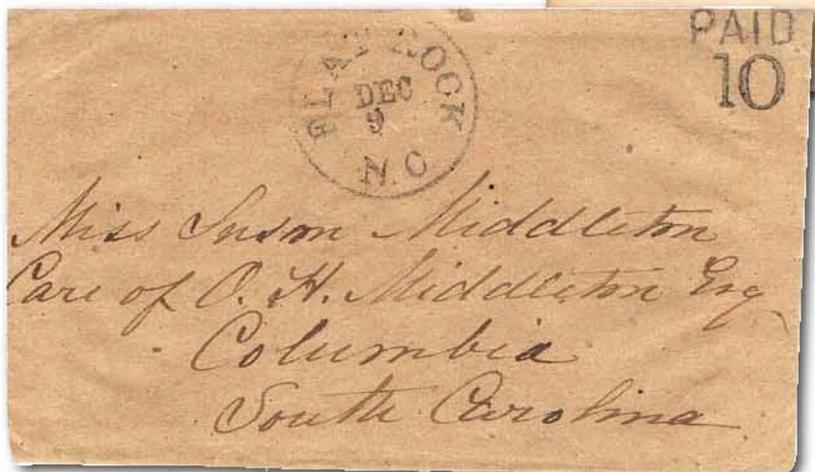
An early letter passing through Flat Rock (Henderson County). Dated October 22, 1838, and mailed from New Brunswick, New Jersey, the letter was forwarded from Flat Rock to Charleston, South Carolina, on November 6, 1838. The letter was charged 25¢ from New Brunswick to Flat Rock and an additional 18  $\frac{3}{4}$ ¢ from Flat Rock to Charleston.

the most famous of these families, from the perspective of North Carolina Civil War postal history, was the Middleton family of Charleston, South Carolina, who spent their summers in Flat Rock. Two covers originating from Flat Rock and mailed to Charleston are shown in Figure 2. These two stampless covers, one rated at 5 cents and the other at 10 cents, each show Confederate handstamp paid markings applied at Flat Rock.

Finally in 1866, efforts were resumed by the Western North Carolina Railroad to build a railroad line westward from Salisbury. After a financial scandal and several engineering

**Figures 2a and b. ▼▶**

Two Civil War era stampless covers from Flat Rock. Both covers are part of the Middleton correspondence from Flat Rock to Charleston, South Carolina. Both covers bear Flat Rock Confed-erate handstamp paid markings. The cover to the right, rated at 5 cents, has an encircled PAID 5 while the lower cover, rated at 10 cents, has a straight-line PAID with a 10 below.



Eastern United States. The hotel boasted a hydraulic elevator and had such luxuries as a fireplace, radiator, and an electric light bulb in each room. Figure 5 shows the Battery Park Hotel as depicted on an early 20th century post card.

Among this flood of new vacationers was George Vanderbilt, who arrived in Asheville for a vacation in 1887, and stayed at the Battery Park Hotel. Vanderbilt had inherited a fifty-million

difficulties the rail line finally reached Asheville in 1880. Figure 3 shows a postal card postmarked on the Western North Carolina Railroad in 1875. The 25 mm marking in black ink reads WEST.N.C.R.R./D.A.RAMSAY.RT.AGT., the date-stamp of Route Agent D.A Ramsay.

Connection to the railroad system allowed many new vacationers to flood into western North Carolina. They were able to visit locations such as Warm Springs, where a natural hot springs, well known for its curative powers, attracted many visitors since the beginning of tourism in the area. Figure 4 illustrates a cover mailed from Warm Springs to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, circa 1880. This cover bears a Type I Warm Springs circular date stamp with a separate killer used to cancel the embossed envelope. Tourists arriving in western North Carolina were able to stay in a number of newly built hotels that catered to every clientele from the more moderate income vacationer to wealthy visitors staying in one of the new luxury hotels in the area. One of the best known of the luxury resort hotels was the Battery Park Hotel in Asheville, which was opened in 1886. The Battery Park Hotel attracted wealthy visitors to western North Carolina and was considered to be the most modern hotel in North Carolina at the time as well as the third finest resort hotel in the South



**Figure 3. ▲**  
Western North Carolina Railroad postmark on a November 2, 1875 postal card showing the stamp of Route Agent D.A. Ramsay. The Western North Carolina Railroad line from Salisbury to Asheville, begun in 1851, finally reached Asheville in 1880.

dollar fortune, which had been accumulated by his father and grandfather in the railroad and shipping industries. He was so taken with the area during his summer long stay that in 1889 he began buying land to the south of Asheville, eventually

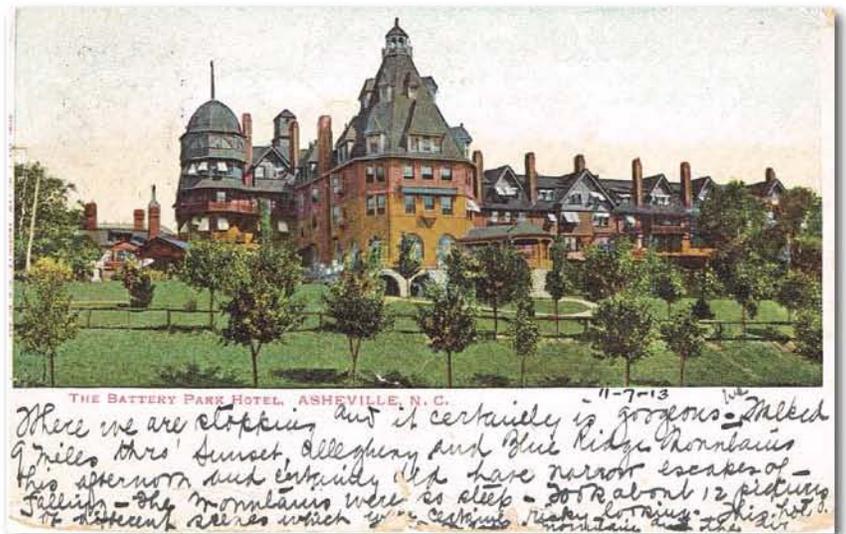


◀ **Figure 4.** Cover mailed from Warm Springs (Madison County) to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, circa 1880, with a Type I, Warm Springs circular datestamp. The connection of western North Carolina to the nation's railroad system allowed more tourists to visit locations such as Warm Springs.

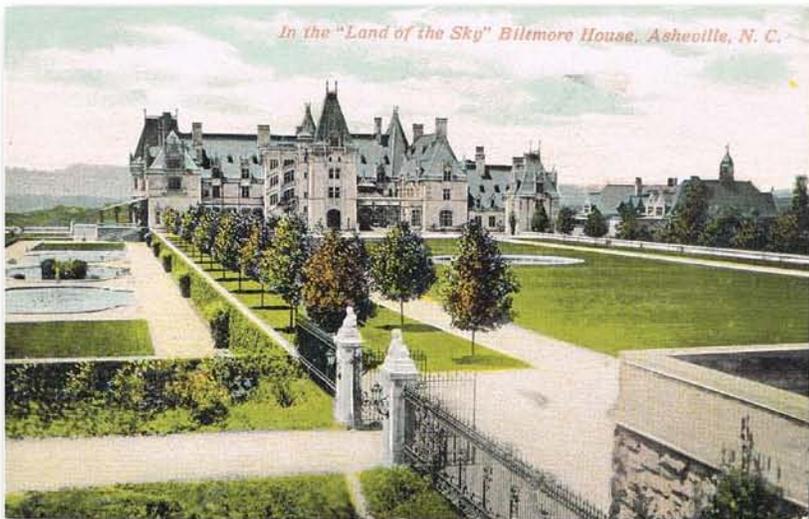
amassing 130,000 acres. In 1890 Vanderbilt began building a house on this land. The 250 room house, built in the French Chateau style, was completed in 1895. Figure 6 shows the Biltmore House depicted on a post card mailed in 1913.

**Figures 5 ▶**

A post card mailed in 1913, showing The Battery Park Hotel, which opened in 1886. The hotel was located in Asheville and was considered to be the finest hotel in North Carolina at the time. The post card was published by J. M. Law of Asheville.



In the 1880s and the 1890s the railroads expanded from Asheville into areas further west in North Carolina. With this improved access to



◀ **Figure 6.** A post card mailed in 1913 illustrates The Biltmore House, a 250 room house built by George Vanderbilt that was completed in 1895. Vanderbilt had spent the summer of 1887 at The Battery Park Hotel before deciding to make his home in western North Carolina. The post card was published by H. Taylor Rogers of Asheville.

One of the visitors to western North Carolina during the 1890s was the Reverend John C. Collins who was a Congregational minister from Connecticut. Rev. Collins and a group of other religious leaders wanted to create a mountain retreat where Christians could gather together. Rev. Collins started to bring his goal to reality in



◀ **Figure 7.** 1907 post card showing the Hotel Wheeler, which was located in Hendersonville (Henderson County). As the railroads were extended to areas outside of Asheville there was a need for hotels to accommodate visitors to these areas. The post card was published by Hackney & Moale in Asheville.

1897 when he purchased 4,500 acres of land in Buncombe County. In 1897 Rev. Collins used this land to host the first Christian assembly in what would become the town of Montreat. Attendees at this first assembly stayed in tents but shortly afterwards a campaign was begun to raise funds

center for the Presbyterian Church. The post office in Montreat, which got its name from a contracted form of mountain retreat, was opened in 1898. Figure 8 shows a cover mailed to Victor, Iowa, from Montreat in 1900. This cover bears a black circular date stamp and a black bull's eye cancel. On the reverse of the

**Figures 8 ▶**  
A cover mailed September 19, 1900, from Montreat (Buncombe County) to Victor, Iowa. The Montreat post office was opened in December 1898 to provide postal service to visitors at the retreat center that was being developed.



◀ **Figure 9.** An envelope mailed September 13, 1904, from Sapphire (Jackson County) to Greenville, South Carolina. The front of the cover has a Sapphire datestamp and the reverse shows a logo from the Sapphire Inn (inset, lower left), which was built in 1890 to accommodate visitors and workers at the Headquarters of the Sapphire Mining Company. The Inn was remodeled to accommodate tourists in 1899.

envelope is a circular datestamp struck as it passed through Black Mountain, North Carolina and a black circular datestamp when it was received in Victor, Iowa.

for building construction. This building effort was successful and Montreat still serves today as a retreat and conference

At the turn of the century, tourism continued to expand into new areas within western North Carolina. Many of these

**Figures 10 ▶**

A post card mailed August 20, 1908, from Balsam (Jackson County) to Atlanta, Georgia, with a black Type 2-1 Doane cancel and a hotel stamp from the Balsam Inn in magenta ink. The post card was published by Hackney & Moale in Asheville.

new visitors had an interest in fishing and hunting in the area. Figure 9 shows a cover mailed from Sapphire, located in Jackson County, to Greenville, South Carolina, in 1904. The cover bears a black circular date stamp and a bull's eye cancel. The reverse of the cover has a receiving cancel of Greenville and the printed name of the Sapphire Inn. The post office at Sapphire was opened 1892, shortly after the Sapphire Inn was built in 1890 as part of the headquarters town of the Sapphire Mining Company. The Inn was remodeled



Western North Carolina continued to attract both well-known and wealthy visitors. One of the most famous visitors to the area during this time was three-time presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan, who eventually purchased a summer home in



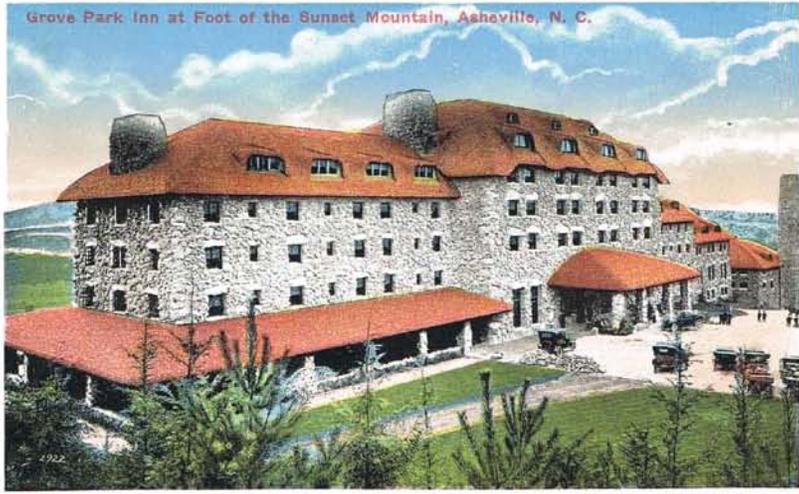
◀ **Figure 11.** A post card mailed November 8, 1913, along the Asheville and Murphy line, which was part of the Southern Railway. This card bears a circular date stamp of the railroad line with a duplex RMS cancel. The post card was published by J. H. Law in Asheville.

in 1899 to be able to accommodate tourists to the area. Unfortunately in 1906, the Inn was destroyed by fire.

Another new hotel at the turn of the century was the Balsam Inn, which opened in 1908, and was also located in Jackson County. Figure 10 illustrates a post card mailed in 1908 from Balsam. This post card bears a black Type 2-1 Doane cancel and is also marked with a hotel stamp in magenta ink from the Balsam Inn. Through the early twentieth century, western North Carolina continued to attract a wide cross section of visitors from the wealthy and famous to the middle class. Figure 11 shows a post card mailed on the Asheville & Murphy line of the Southern Railway in 1913. This card to Atlantic City, New Jersey, bears a circular date stamp with a duplex RMS (Railway Mail Service) cancel.

Asheville. One of the wealthiest visitors to western North Carolina during this time was Dr. E.W. Grove. Dr. Grove had made a fortune in the patent medicine business and had come to the North Carolina Mountains from St. Louis hoping the environment might improve his wife's health. While in the area, Dr. Grove decided that Asheville would be a good place to invest some of his fortune in development. As part of his development campaign Dr. Grove built the Grove Park Inn, which opened for business in 1913. From the time of its opening to the present day, the Grove Park Inn has hosted a wide variety of wealthy and famous guests such as presidents, writers, and other notables. A post card, mailed in 1915, showing the Grove Park Inn is shown in Figure 12.

In order to accommodate visitors beginning to arrive by automobile rather than train, as well as locals who had purchased cars, roads in the area began to be improved to accommodate automobiles. The first Good Roads Association in the state was started in Asheville in 1899, but the movement



◀ **Figure 12.** A 1915 post card showing the Grove Park Inn, which was located in Asheville. The Inn was built by Dr. E.W. Grove and opened for business in 1913. The post card was published by Roy A. Bagby in Louisville, North Kentucky.

United States. Efforts to buy land for the establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National park began in 1929. However, in the 1930s with the Great Depression, tourism to western North Carolina began to suffer. In an attempt to boost tourism in the area a number of efforts were begun to bring in visitors. One effort was a decision in 1930 of the Vanderbilt heirs, in

**Figures 13 ▶**

A post card mailed January 22, 1932, from the Asheville Biltmore Station post office with a Type 1 Biltmore Station cancel. The post card was published by the E. C. Kropp Company in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.



soon spread to other towns and counties in the area. However, improvements in the road system were often slow due to a lack of funding.

In 1923 efforts were begun to create a national park on the North Carolina and Tennessee border, which would eventually become the most visited national park in the



conjunction with the town of Asheville, to open the Biltmore House for public tours. The house remains open today and is still a large draw for tourists in the area. To provide postal service to visitors at this new attraction the Asheville Post Office opened the Biltmore Station office. A post card mailed from Biltmore Station in 1932 is shown in Figure 13, which bears a Type 1 Biltmore Station cancel.

Efforts to build the Great Smoky Mountains National Park continued during the Great Depression with the first park rangers reporting for duty in 1931.

▲ **Figure 14.** A souvenir envelope from the 1937 convention of the Society of Philatelic Americans, which took place in Asheville. The cover, postmarked at the convention station, is franked with Scott No. 797.

The new national park was featured on two stamps during this period. The first was Scott # 749 released in 1934 and the second was Scott # 797 released in 1937 for a convention of the

**Figures 15** ▶

A post card mailed May 25, 1939, from Smokemont (Swain County) to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, with a black circular date stamp and a four bar cancel. The post card was published by Cline Studios in Chattanooga, Tennessee.



1940s real photo post card showing the Cherokee, North Carolina post office. From the end of World War II to today, tourism continued to grow in western North Carolina. Even today it is a major contributor to the economy of western North Carolina and visitors continue to come to the area from all over the world. ■

◀ **Figure 16.** A undated real photo post card showing the Cherokee post office circa 1940s. The post card was published by the W. M. Cline Company in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Society of Philatelic Americans in Asheville. Figure 14 shows a souvenir cover from the convention that was franked with a Scott #797. This cover was mailed to Brooklyn, New York, in 1937 and postmarked at the convention station.

Because the Great Smoky Mountains National Park was carved out of portions of several counties, it sometimes incorporated existing communities. One such community was Smokemont, located in Swain County, which was originally a lumber town. However, it was eventually bought and incorporated into the national park. A post card mailed from Smokemont in 1939 is shown in Figure 15. This post card bears a black circular date stamp with a four bar cancel.

Finally in 1940 the Great Smoky Mountains National Park was officially dedicated. While the national park brought an end to some communities, it provided new opportunities for others. For example, Cherokee, which is located on the Cherokee Indian Reservation, is a primary entrance into the National Park from North Carolina. This location in conjunction with its association with the Indian Reservation allowed the town to transform itself into a thriving tourist town, which still has many visitors today. Figure 16 shows an undated but circa

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## Some Confederate Semi-Official Covers from the Executive Department in Raleigh

by Maurice M. Burse

Around the time of the Civil War, the state government of North Carolina was far smaller than it is today. The Executive Department then appears to have consisted of the governor himself, his private secretary, his aides-de-camp, and possibly an occasional assistant scribe. The Adjutant General's office was apparently included sometimes in the Executive Department, but since that office had its own imprinted envelopes and since this article is restricted to discussion of covers with the imprint of the Executive Department itself, covers from the Adjutant General's Office will not be discussed here. There were three governors of North Carolina between secession on May 20, 1861, and the fall of Raleigh on April 13, 1865: John Willis Ellis, who first took office on the first day of 1859 and was reelected to another term in late 1860, but who died from tuberculosis on July 7, 1861; Henry Toole Clark, who as speaker of the Senate was next in line to Governor Ellis (at that time the state constitution did not provide for a lieutenant governor) and succeeded him upon his death, thus becoming both governor – he referred to himself as “ex officio governor” at first – and speaker of the Senate simultaneously; and Zebulon Baird Vance, already a popular war hero when he defeated the unpopular Clark, who was blamed for the loss of the eastern part of North Carolina to the Union Army earlier in 1862, in the gubernatorial election in the late summer of 1862. Vance was reelected to a second term near the end of 1864, and held the governorship until the collapse of state government in April of 1865. There was then no civilian governor until William Woods Holden was appointed provisional governor by the federal government on May 29, 1865.

The governors proposed the names of their assistants subject to the approval of the state legislature. As a result, most of

them who worked in the Executive Department had connections. Typically they were the sons of government officials or of other prominent families, but they also were very talented in their own right. The following names have been identified by perusal of the Governors' Papers and Governors' Letter Books, ledgers into which correspondence to and from the Executive Department was copied.

Between North Carolina's secession on May 20, 1861 and his death on July 7, 1861, Governor Ellis employed Pulaski Cowper; Graham Daves, his brother-in-law and also the son of an earlier governor; and Frank H. Dewey, as his private secretaries. Governor Clark continued with Cowper and occasionally Dewey, and added the enigmatic S. Whitaker as a secretary. (This man does not appear to have been either Samuel Whitaker, Stephen Whitaker, or Spier Whitaker, the three Whitakers I have been able to identify as North Carolina notables during the Civil War.) Governor Clark's aide-de-camp was William J. Houston, and Clark also was advised by two former governors whose signatures appear on letters from the Confederate Executive Office of North Carolina, Thomas Bragg and Warren Winslow, who sometimes styled himself as military secretary. James G. Martin, as Adjutant General, wrote letters from the Executive Department as well as on stationery from the Adjutant General's Office.

Governor Vance continued once again with Pulaski Cowper, and added Richard H. Battle, of the famous North Carolina family, Alexander Miller McPheeters, and S. M. (Marmaduke Swaim) Robins as private secretaries. His aides-de-camp included David A. Barnes, George Little, and once again James G. Martin, whose title varied between aide and adjutant general. Aides to the governor held the rank of colonel.

The imprinted covers of the



▲ **Figure 1.** Semi-official cover addressed by Governor Vance himself to A. A. McKeithen, a businessman in Fayetteville, and docketed by the recipient as having come from him.

Executive Office are generally described by Confederate collectors as semi-official. They were official because they were used by government officers, of course, but postage had to be added to them. Only envelopes of the Confederate Post Office itself were truly official; i.e., postage did not have to be added to covers carrying official business of the Post Office.

In the following remarks, the numbers of the types of Raleigh postmarks are taken from *Post Offices and Postmasters of North Carolina*, Vol. 3. The numbers of the imprint styles are taken from *The New Dietz Confederate States Catalog and Handbook* of 1986 (cited hereafter as the New Dietz Catalog).

Figure 1 illustrates a small blue

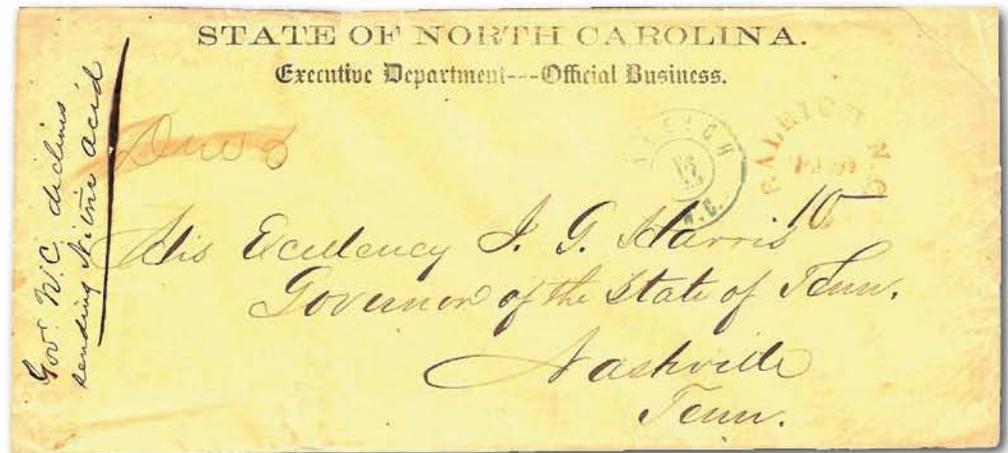
**Figures 2 ▶**

Semi-official cover from the Governor of North Carolina to the Governor of Tennessee, which contained a refusal to send nitric acid, a reagent for the preparation of gun cotton and other explosives.

cover with the imprint “State of North-Carolina/Executive Department.” with the first line in Old English font and the second in Roman. The imprint resembles Type I of the North Carolina Executive Department imprints in the New Dietz Catalog, except for the period after Department in this figure. The cover bears a ten-cent engraved Type B Confederate stamp (Scott 12), and is addressed to “A. A. McKeithen, Esq.,” Fayetteville, in the handwriting of Governor Zebulon B. Vance himself. Governor Vance docketed, and therefore must have personally read, nearly every letter addressed to him while he was governor, be they from President Jefferson Davis, from a barely literate farm wife begging him to intercede with the army to send her husband home, or from twenty or more citizens of some community petitioning him to right some grievance. Most of the time he wrote hasty notes with the docketing, and from these his secretary was to compose a reply which the governor would then sign, or ask the secretary to sign himself as an official of the state. This correspondence required a response to Mr. McKeithen directly from the governor himself. The addressee, who spelled his name MacKethan, owned the largest carriage factory in the South and was president of the Cumberland County Agricultural Society for many years.

To this day Zebulon Baird Vance (1830-1894) remains a towering figure in the history of North Carolina. His statue is one of the two allotted to North Carolina in Statuary Hall in the United States Capitol. Born in a log cabin in Buncombe County, he attended the University of North Carolina. After

law school, he practiced in Asheville, and when the ordinance of secession passed in May 1861, he was already commanding a company in the 14th North Carolina Regiment. In August he was elected colonel of the 26th North Carolina Regiment, which fought at New Bern and Richmond. After election as governor in September 1862, he championed individual rights and local self-government, and so was often at odds with Jefferson Davis. After the fall of the Confederacy and imprisonment in Washington, DC, he was quickly paroled and practiced law in Charlotte. Pardoned in March 1867, he served



again as governor of North Carolina from 1876 to 1879, and then was elected by the state legislature as United States Senator, where he served until his death in 1894. The description of North Carolina as “a vale of humility between two mountains of conceit” is ascribed to him, possibly incorrectly.

Figure 2 shows a legal size envelope with the imprint “State of North Carolina/Executive Department --- Official Business.” This style of imprint is not listed in the New Dietz Catalog. The cover bears a red rimless Raleigh handstamped five-cent provisional, Scott 68XU1, revalued by hand to ten cents, and a Raleigh double circle datestamp of (probably) June 17. It is addressed to “His Excellency I. G. Harris, Governor of the State of Tenn., Nashville, Tenn.” Isham Green Harris (1818-1897) served as Governor of Tennessee from 1857 until March 12, 1862, when, learning that Abraham Lincoln had appointed Andrew Johnson as military governor of Tennessee, he ceased to function effectively as governor. Nashville had fallen on 25 February 1862. After the war Harris fled to Mexico, but returned later and served as United States Senator from Tennessee from 1877 until his death. In the 53rd Senate (1893-1895) he was President pro tempore.

Since the June 17 cover is addressed to Governor Harris in Nashville, it cannot have been addressed later than March 1862, and so must have been sent in June 1861. Tennessee had seceded from the Union on May 6 (but did not join the

Confederate States until July 2), and the earliest known use of the 68XU1 Raleigh provisional, in red ink, is after June 4. (That is the earliest known date of use of the same handstamp in blue, Scott 68XU2, which is known to have preceded the use of the red handstamp.) Unfortunately the contents of the envelope have not been located either in Governor Vance's Letter Books or his Papers in Raleigh, nor in Governor Harris's Papers or records of the Army of Tennessee in Nashville, though evidence of a letter from Richmond about nitric acid, dated June 11, 1861, does exist in the last collection. So it is impossible to date the cover more precisely.

The envelope is addressed in the hand of the splendidly named Pulaski Cowper (1832-1901). Born in Murfreesboro, he studied law with Thomas Bragg, and when Bragg became governor, Cowper was his private secretary, continuing on with Governors Ellis, Clark, and Vance, sporadically for the last two. After the Civil War he was president of the Home Insurance Company of Raleigh and served that city as alderman for many years.

The imprint on the "State of North-Carolina/Executive Department" cover in Figure 3 differs from that in Figure 1 by virtue of the wider spacing between the Old English letters in the first line and the centering of the second line in Roman letters under the first. It differs from any of the imprints listed in the New Dietz Catalog, but would be similar to the Type III listed if the catalog example showed a hyphen between "North" and "Carolina" and a period after "Department." The cover bears a faint – so faint that it cannot be determined if the ink is red, blue, or green, the three colors in which this handstamp is known – Type 1 PAID marking. The town marking, if there ever was one, is entirely faded. Further, the

cover bears faint traces of pencil notes over most of the front and the reverse, which may obscure the original information on it.



▲ **Figure 3.** Semi-official cover from Col. David A. Barnes, an aide-de-camp to Governor Vance, to W. P. Pope, a businessman in Wilmington. The cover was then turned and reused for mail to W. H. Pope in Raleigh.

This cover is addressed to "Mr W P Pope, Wilmington, N.C." William P. Pope (1829-1887) was then the owner of a livery stable in Wilmington, and later an owner of tobacco farms and sawmills in southeastern North Carolina. The hand on the envelope is that of David Alexander Barnes (1819-1892), aide-de-camp to Governor Vance. Before the war Barnes had been a trustee and lawyer for the Seaboard & Roanoke Railroad and a member of the North Carolina House of Commons three times. During the war he was aide-de-camp to Governor Vance. (Colonel Barnes's handwriting varied over the period of the war, but this example is consistent with that in several other records.) After the war he was a superior court judge, a member of Governor Vance's military council, a trustee of the University of North Carolina, and vice-president of the state educational convention assembled to consider its reopening after it had closed in the winter of 1870. Vance took office on September 8, 1862; so the cover must have been sent after that date. The cover was turned and reused from Wilmington to carry a letter to "W H Pope Esquire, Raleigh." It then bore a Type A engraved ten-cent stamp (Scott 11), with a smudged partial strike of a Wilmington circular datestamp, probably Type 8.

Figure 4 shows a stampless cover with the imprint "State of North Carolina,/Executive Department." The Old English and Roman fonts of lines 1 and 2, respectively, their centering, and the punctuation appear to resemble the Type II imprint



▲ **Figure 4.** Semi-official cover addressed by M. S. Robins, private secretary to Governor Vance, to L. V. Blum, a newspaper editor in Salem.



counties surrounding Randolph County. He was elected several times to the State Legislature and was known as the father of

◀ **Figure 5.** Semi-official cover addressed by M. S. Robins to J. R. Hargrave, a lawyer in Wadesboro.

listed in the New Dietz Catalog, and the imprint is likely an example of this catalog listing. The cover is stampless; it bears a black Type 13 Raleigh double circular datestamp, but Type 13 Raleigh markings do not provide a year. The Type 13 handstamp came into use in 1863, and so the date of November 19 must have been in 1863 or 1864. The fact that the ink is black argues for the later date, for the earliest known use of black ink for the Type 13 is April 21, 1864. The Type 2 PAID handstamp on the cover is known to have been used with the Type 13.

This cover is addressed to “L. V. Blum, Salem, N.C.” Levi Vanniman Blum (1811-1893) was a book printer and publisher of a newspaper, *The People’s Press*. Further evidence for dating the cover to 1864 comes from the handwriting on the

the bar in Asheboro.

The cover in Figure 5 bears a Type A engraved ten-cent stamp, Scott 11. The address is also in Robins’s handwriting. The imprint is “State of North Carolina,/Executive Department.” The Old English first line is much more widely spaced between words and the Roman font of the second lines differ from that in Figure 4. Indeed, the second-line font of Figure 5 resembles the second-line font of Figure 1. The imprint thus does not correspond to any of those shown in the New Dietz Catalog. This cover bears an incomplete Raleigh double circular datestamp, probably also Type 13, in black. The month is likely August, and thus must have been applied in 1863 or 1864. The latter year is attested to by the handwriting

▼ **Figure 6.** Semi-official cover addressed by Richard H. Battle, private secretary to Governor Vance, to Dr. J. M. Lyle, a physician in Franklin.



cover. It is that of the private secretary who came to work for Governor Vance in late 1864, M. S. (Swaim Marmaduke) Robins (1827-1905), a teacher and lawyer from Randolph County who served as a state legislator during and after the war. He chaired the state Senate committee investigation of the North Carolina Rail Road in 1867, and practiced law in several

of M. S. Robins and the docketing, “1864,” between the stamp and the imprint. The addressee is “J. R. Hargrave Esqr,” (1816-1871), a wealthy lawyer and planter in Wadesboro, who had served in the North Carolina House of Commons for two terms in the late 1840s.

Figure 6 shows a legal size cover carrying a pair of the

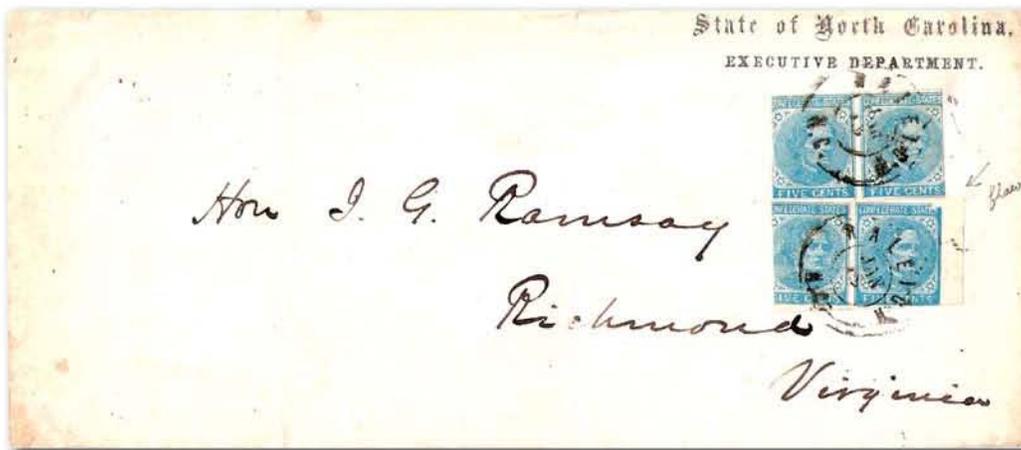
Richmond print of the typographed Jefferson five-cent stamp, Scott 7; the plate for printing this issue was brought by blockade runner from the manufacturer De La Rue in England, but the quality of ink ingredients available to the printers in Richmond was far inferior to that used by De La Rue to make their own printing of these stamps in London, Scott 6, and the London and Richmond printings are so easy to distinguish that the Scott Catalog gives them different numbers. The stamps are canceled by a blue Raleigh double circular datestamp (Type 13); the date appears to be Mar 7 or May 7. The “State of North-Carolina,/Executive Department” imprint is not quite the same as that in Figure 1; the first line is much the same, but the spacing between the letters in the second line is narrower, so that the comma in the first line is above the space between the E and N of “Department” – which is not followed by a period in Figure 6. (Magnification shows that in Figure 6 the mark after “Department” is definitely not a printed period.) The imprint does not match any of the examples in the New Dietz catalog either. The addressee is “Dr. J. M. Lyle, Franklin, Macon County, N.C.” John McCampbell Lyle (1820-1892), was a native of Dandridge, Tennessee, and practiced medicine in Waynesville and Murphy, and in Macon County.

The writing in Figure 6 is apparently that of the best known of Vance’s private secretaries, Richard H. Battle (1835-1912). He came from a widely known family in North Carolina. Early versions of his signature contain the abbreviation Jr.: he was named for his grandfather. After graduation he was a tutor in mathematics and Greek at the University of North Carolina,

was elected Auditor of Public Accounts, serving until the office was abolished. During his brilliant postwar career in the law, he also was chief among the establishers of Rex Hospital in Raleigh, then president of its board of trustees. He also chaired the boards of the Olivia Raney Library, the Raleigh Cemetery Association, and the Raleigh Associated Charities, and served as a trustee of the University of North Carolina (33 years!), St. Mary’s College, and St. Augustine’s College, and was president of the advisory board of the North Carolina Agricultural Society. He declined at least one judicial appointment.

The cover in Figure 7 is also addressed in Battle’s hand. It carries an imprint with a widely spaced Old English “State of North Carolina,” line above the “Executive Department.” line. The imprint looks identical to that of the cover in Figure 5, although the two envelopes are of different sizes. The Type 13 Raleigh double circular datestamp is in black and the date appears to be Jan 15 or 19. There are four 5-cent Richmond printing typographed stamps (Scott 7) on the cover paying the double rate – two horizontal pairs, with the right stamp of the lower pair having a printing skip in its upper right corner. The franking with these stamps points to a January use between 1863 and 1865, with the black ink used for the Raleigh double circular datestamp suggesting a late date within this period. The addressee is “Hon. J. G. Ramsay, Richmond, Virginia.” James Graham Ramsay (1823-1903) was a physician and the first president of the medical society in Rowan County. He served in the North Carolina Senate from 1856 to 1864 and then

represented North Carolina in the Confederate House of Representatives in Richmond. That information



◀ **Figure 7.** Semi-official cover addressed by Richard H. Battle to Hon J. G. Ramsay, one of North Carolina’s representatives in the Confederate Congress in Richmond.

and then read law there with his father, William Horn Battle. (His uncle was Kemp Plummer Battle, president of the University.) After the war began, he was a lieutenant in Company I of the 43rd Regiment, North Carolina Troops, becoming captain and quartermaster of the regiment in early 1862. He resigned this post in early September of that year to become Governor Vance’s secretary, and in August 1864 he

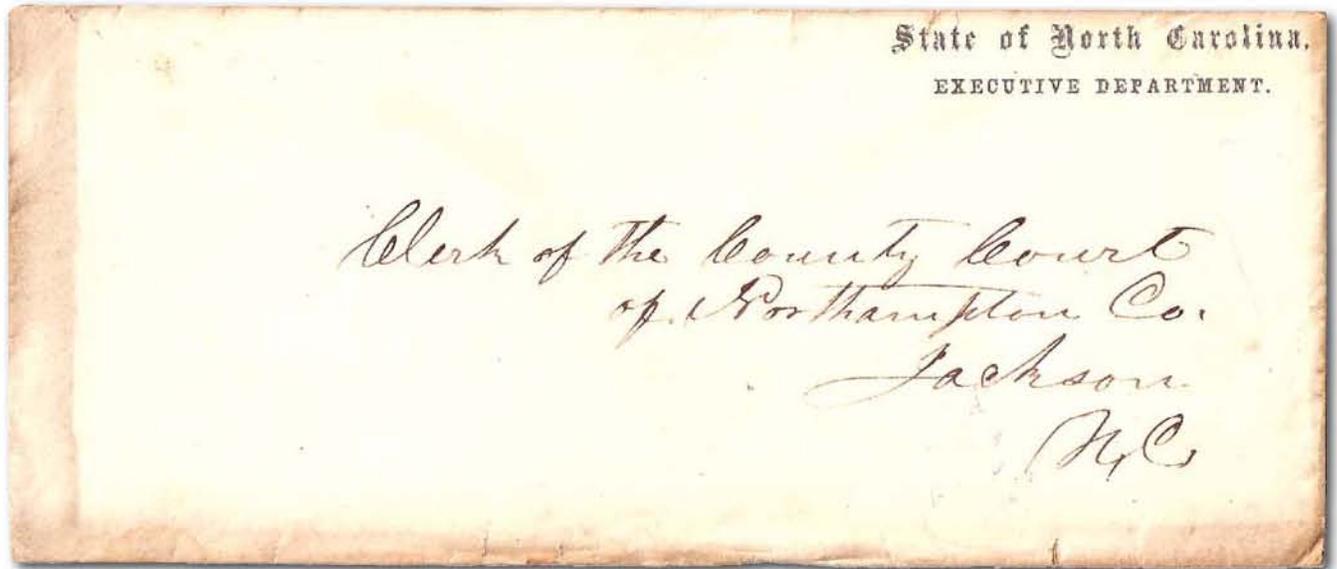
the war he again served one term in the Senate.

The legal-size cover in Figure 8 was apparently carried outside the mail. With no markings, it cannot be dated. It is addressed to the “Clerk of the County Court of Northampton County, Jackson, N.C.” The imprint is the same as the imprint in Figure 7. Again, the handwriting can be attributed to Richard H. Battle.

indicates that the year of the cancelation was 1865. After

Figure 9 shows a small blue cover with a Scott 12 Type A ten-cent engraved stamp canceled by a black Raleigh double circular datestamp with the month JUL showing clearly. From

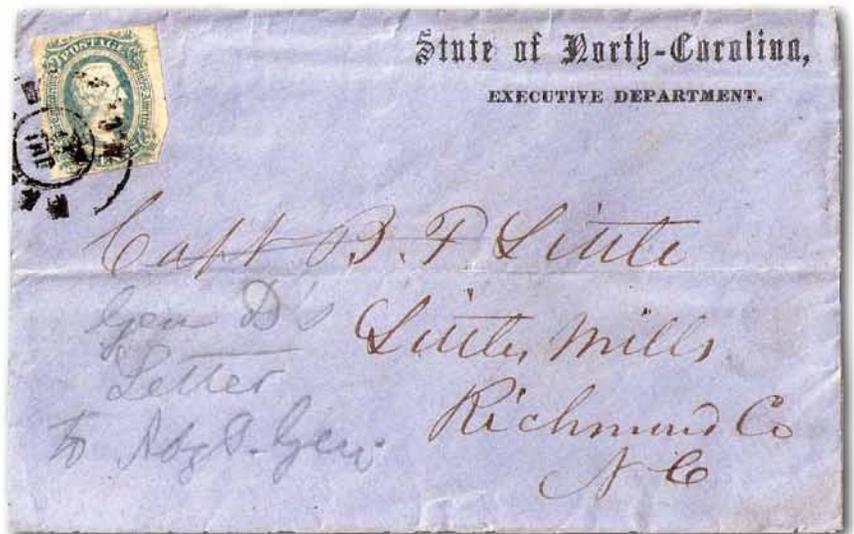
▼ **Figure 8.** Privately carried cover addressed by Richard H. Battle to the County Court of Northampton County in Jackson.



the date of issue of the stamp, the year can be only 1863 or 1864, and the black ink of the Raleigh Type 13 supports the later date. The two-line imprint on this cover bears similarities

**Figures 9** ▶

Cover addressed, most likely by Richard H. Battle, to Captain B. F. Little, a Confederate Army ex-officer and future member of the state legislature, in Little's Mills, named for the recipient's family.



to the one in Figure 4, except that it is more heavily inked, and, of course, the paper is blue instead of white. The addressee is "Capt. B. F. Little." Captain Benjamin Franklin Little (1830-1879), a planter and co-proprietor of a dry goods store among other businesses, commanded Company E of the 52nd North Carolina Infantry. He was wounded and captured at Gettysburg and was a federal prisoner until he was exchanged in March 1864. On that basis the cover, which is addressed to him at home, must have been mailed in July 1864. In late 1864 and 1865 he represented Richmond County in the state legislature.

A large variety of imprint styles was used, then, by the printers for the North Carolina governor's office during the Civil War. In fact, there is at least one type beyond the ones

described here, the Type IV of the New Dietz Catalog, one that uses much smaller fonts than any shown here. An example of the Type IV imprint was unavailable for this study. It is also clear that the printers made numerous printings of these envelopes, and they used whatever good quality envelopes were available to them at the time of the printing because of the great paper shortage in the Confederacy due to the Union blockade. It is unclear how many printers accepted this work from the governor's office, but almost certainly there was more than one.

Thus, information gathered about the senders and recipients of letters sometimes can date a cover when the year does not appear in the cancellation. Such information is likely to be available when mail originates from a government office. ■

### Acknowledgments

Thanks for the help of Darla Brock, State Archives & Library, Nashville, TN; Douglas Brown, Larry Odzak, Sarah Rice, and Alison Thurman, North Carolina State Archives; Michelle Cronquist, Bridget Madden, Allison Marchant, Allison Murray, and Jason Tomberlin, North Carolina Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Tony Crumbley, Charlotte, NC; Kacy Guill, Special Collections, East Carolina University; Beth Hayden and Mitzi Townes, Government and Heritage Library, North Carolina State Archives; Barbara Ilie, Southern Historical Collection; Jane Johnson, Public Library of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County; Sharyl Monkovich, First Presbyterian Church, Raleigh; Joan Pruett, Nashville, TN; Bill Surface, Museum of the Cape Fear, Fayetteville; and Kay Tillotson and

Pamela Toms, Genealogical Services, North Carolina State Archives.

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\*A complete list of sources is available from the Editor.

## Mystery Cover



There were no responses to the question in the last *Postal Historian* asking for the location of this manuscript cancel, dated 11 June 1876. According to the *U.S. Official Postal Guide of 1877* the only post office in the United States with a spelling that begins "Camer.." is Camera in Pender County, North Carolina. This office moved from New Hanover County in 1875 and was in operation under the name Camera until 3 April 1883.

Can you locate the office shown on this manuscript cancel dated 19 April 1850?

Send your answer to Tony Crumbley or Dick Winter.



# Hertford, North Carolina

by Scott Troutman

Hertford in Perquimans County is one of the older towns in North Carolina and fairly little has been written about it. In this article I will showcase some of its postal history.

The Perquimans River begins twelve miles to the north, and the narrow river twists around a peninsula, joins the waters of two creeks, and becomes for the remainder of its journey south to the Albemarle Sound a dramatically broad tributary. The land on the peninsula was given by land grant to Jonathan Phelps on January 1, 1694, although there is evidence it had been occupied by his grandfather Henry Phelps since about 1665. The site was known as Phelps' Point. In the second quarter of the eighteenth century, Phelps' Point became the center of government for Perquimans County, with the erection of a courthouse, public warehouse and jail. The point became the landing place of the Perquimans River ferry and taverns were opened to serve the traveling public.

In the spring of 1758, the state legislature passed "An Act for establishing a town on the land of Jonathan Phelps, on Perquimans River." The act set the town name of "Hertford," which would consist of 100 acres with an additional 50 acres for common ground. The name Hertford was chosen for the new town to honor North Carolina governor Arthur Dobbs' political patron, Francis Seymour Conway, Earl of Hertford. Dobbs' name was given to one street while other streets received London names such as "Grubb," "Hyde Park," and "Covent Gardens," as well as the more common "Church," "Front," "Market" and "King" streets.

The first deeds for town lots were signed in April 1759 and each lot purchaser was allowed three years in which to build a house of at least 16 feet square. By 1790 only twenty five lots had been sold to 15 individuals, so it wasn't exactly a booming place.

It wasn't until 1792 that Hertford got a post office. Tavern keeper and town resident, widow Sarah Decrow, was the first postmaster of Hertford, serving until April 7, 1795, when

Thomas McNider took over as postmaster. Sarah is considered to be the first woman in the United States to hold such a postmaster position after the adoption of the federal constitution.

Hertford was the hub of the county's postal system. From Hertford the mail moved by water to Newby's Bridge until 1838, when a weekly land route was authorized. Upon the change of name from Newby's Bridge to Belvidere in 1861, a tri-weekly post was instituted. Postal facilities reflected the relative isolation of Perquimans County. In 1844, according to the Raleigh's *North Carolina Standard*, only four post offices served the county --Hertford, Durant's Neck, Newby's Bridge and Woodville. To a great extent, Perquimans County and the other counties north of the Albemarle Sound remained North Carolina's "Lost Provinces" as they more closely are associated with Virginia than with the rest of the state.

One of the reasons for Hertford's slow growth was that it was easier to reach it by boat than by land. Norfolk to the northeast was the prime market. Early on, you could take a shallow draft sailboat or steamer up the Albemarle Sound and out through the Currituck Inlet and up to Norfolk. But in 1828 Currituck Inlet closed. After that, larger boats had to sail south to the Slash inlet at Hatteras, an additional 100 miles added to the trip. The other waterborne option was the Great Dismal Swamp Canal which gave access to the James River and the Chesapeake Bay. Many Hertford boats used this option, but it was a slow and tedious trip.

Hertford really needed a bridge across the Perquimans River, so beginning in 1797 they hired two men, John Clary (who lived on the opposite side of the river) and Francis Newly, to

**Figures 1** ▶  
Manuscript Hertford postmark, June 2, ca. 1840, showing 6¢ paid to Elizabeth City (Pasquotank County), the rate for a single letter posted less than 30 miles. (courtesy Tony Crumbley)



build a floating bridge across the river. It was opened in 1798 as a toll bridge with Clary and Newly the bridge owners/operators. It continued in operation until being destroyed January 11, 1863, by Union forces under the command of Lt. Commander Charles W. Flusser. This was done to disrupt the movement of Confederate supplies. In 1867, after the Civil War, a new floating bridge was constructed “buoyed up by a row of empty whiskey or oil barrels on either side, the bridge had a hinged draw in the middle to allow boats to pass.” The floating bridge was carried off in a flood on February 4, 1897. While it was hauled back and reinstalled, shortly thereafter it was replaced with a more conventional wood and steel truss bridge as the floating bridge required constant expensive upkeep.

Hertford never had much industry. Boat building was done since the earliest days, and shingles, hogshead staves and naval stores (turpentine and pitch) were produced locally. In the 1860, census Perquimans County contained only twelve manufacturing establishments, making it one of the twenty least industrialized counties in the whole country. Of the manufacturers, five were flour mills, four were lumber operations and the others were boot makers, or makers of carriages, saddles and harnesses.

Education in the area, as in much of North Carolina, was largely the prerogative of the wealthy well into the late 1800’s. While public education became law in 1839, the reality in the area was that if you got four months schooling a year you did

well. Poor pay led to attracting poor teachers, and children were as likely to get a good whipping or caning as an education. This didn’t help school attendance. Hertford Academy opened in 1819 to those who could afford it and the Quakers opened the Eastern Quarterly Meeting Friends Boarding School or Belvidere Academy in Hertford in 1850. The academies taught spelling, reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar, geography and later Latin and Greek or sometimes French to both boys and girls. But in 1850 the illiteracy rates were 37% for whites over twenty years old (much higher for women), and 88% for blacks.

During the Civil War, Hertford was attacked several times by Union troops, most notably twice in 1863, but was not occupied for any length of time. As such, postal service continued throughout the war under postmaster Edwin Brace. Since most of the men who could read and write were away, Civil War covers are quite scarce.

The town continues today as the county seat of a rural area. The courthouse, built in 1825, continues to serve. ■

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◀ **Figure 2.** Green Hertford circular datestamp, July 22, 1845, on unpaid letter to Newport, Rhode Island, redirected to Nantucket, Massachusetts, for total postage due of 15¢. This 25 mm handstamp is known in green, yellow and black ink. (courtesy Tony Crumbley)

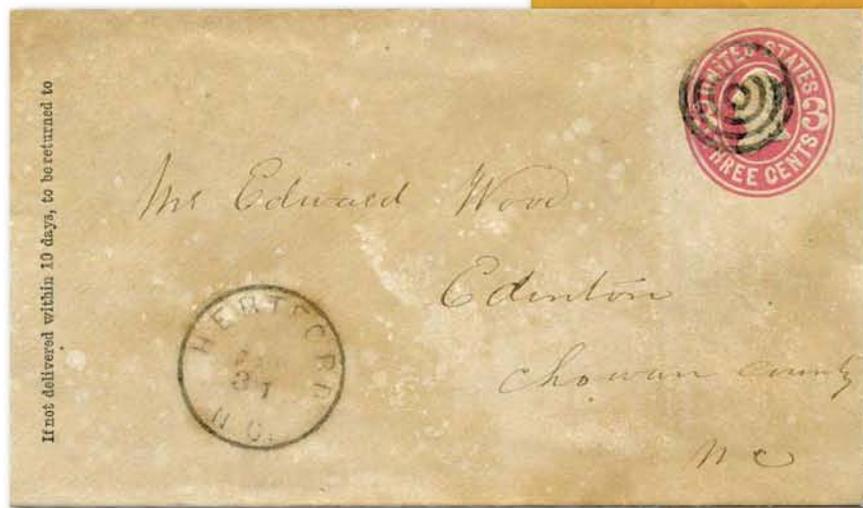
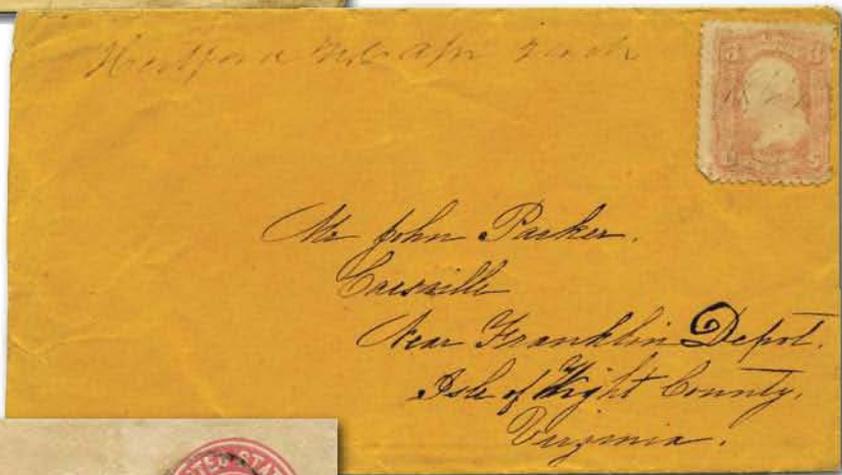
**Figures 3 ▶**  
Red 33 mm Hertford circular datestamp, December 5, 1850, with red PAID and 10 handstamp showing payment to Peekskill, New York. (courtesy Tony Crumbley)





◀ **Figure 4.** Red 33 mm Hertford circular datestamp, July 25, 1854, with red PAID and unusual 3 hand-stamp on paid letter to Thomas Pettygrew, Cool Spring (Washington County). (courtesy Tony Crumbley)

**Figures 5 ▶**  
 Manuscript Hertford cancel, April 24, 1867, used during the reconstruction period before government-issued datestamps arrived, to Carrsville near Franklin Depot, Virginia. (courtesy Tony Crumbley)



◀ **Figure 6.** Black 27 mm government-issued Hertford circular datestamp with bullseye killer on Scott U82 postal stationary on 31 January 187x envelope to Edenton (Chowan County). (Courtesy Tony Crumbley)

**Figures 7 ▶**  
 Black 31 mm Hertford steel duplex datestamp, April 9, 1904, on an envelope to Somerton, Virginia. (courtesy Tony Crumbley)



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## North Carolina Postmark Catalog Update

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**Alamance through Guilford**

Greensboro has been made a separate file. Minor changes have  
been made to some of the other counties

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