

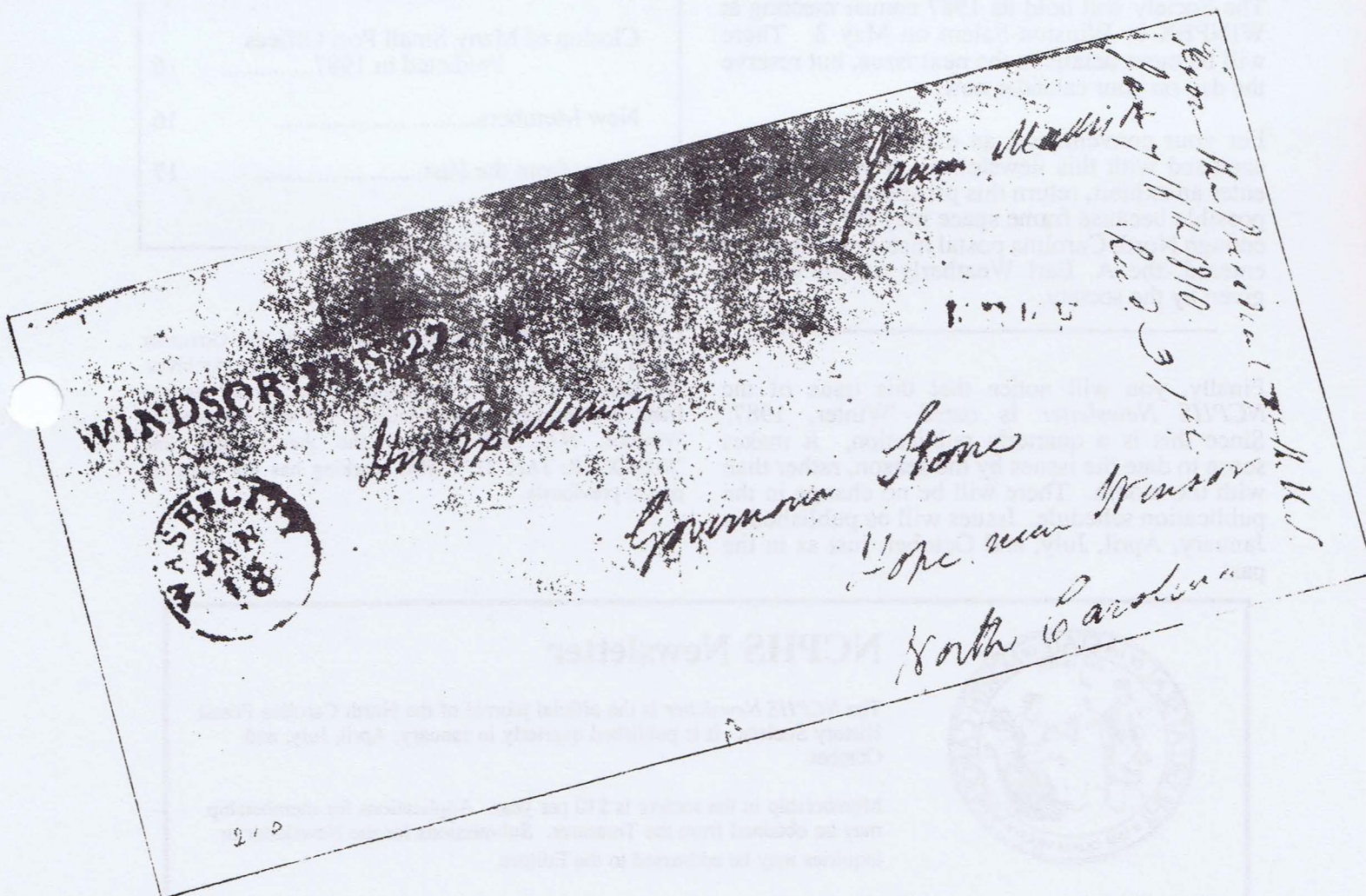
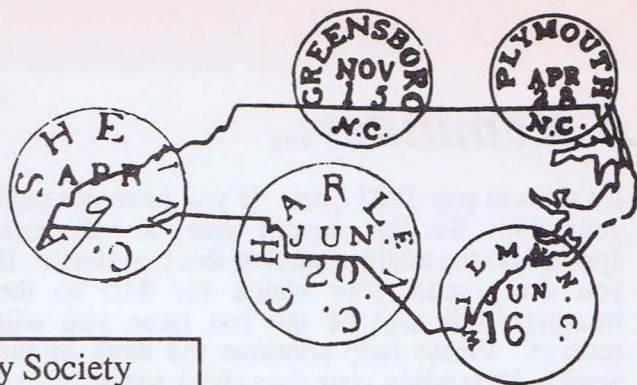
# NCPHS Newsletter

The Journal of the North Carolina Postal History Society

Volume 6, No. 1

Winter, 1987

Whole No. 20



## Surprises in the State Archives

Affiliate Number 155 of the American Philatelic Society





## A Reminder...

It's time to pay 1987 dues. If you have not paid your dues for the current year, a red mark appears on the address label of this newsletter. If you don't send your check for \$10 to the treasurer, this will be the last issue you will receive. Please help continue the work of the Society by sending your dues check today.

## 1987 annual meeting...

The Society will hold its 1987 annual meeting at WINPEX in Winston-Salem on May 2. There will be more details in the next issue, but reserve the day on your calendar now.

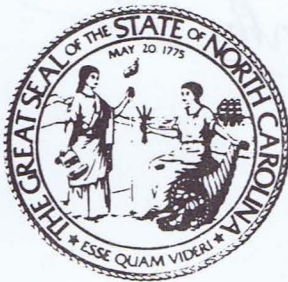
For your convenience, an exhibit prospectus is enclosed with this newsletter. If you wish to enter an exhibit, return this prospectus as soon as possible because frame space may fill up fast. If enough North Carolina postal history exhibits are entered, the A. Earl Weatherly award will be given by the society.

Finally, you will notice that this issue of the *NCPHS Newsletter* is dated 'Winter, 1987.' Since this is a quarterly publication, it makes sense to date the issues by the season, rather than with the month. There will be no change in the publication schedule. Issues will be published in January, April, July, and October, just as in the past.

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**Cover:** An 1810 stampless cover from the Governor David Stone papers in the North Carolina State Archives. The letter was mailed in Washington, D.C. under the free frank of President James Madison. It was received in Windsor, N.C. and marked the straight line "WINDSOR: JAN 27." This marking has not been reported previously.



## NCPHS Newsletter

The *NCPHS Newsletter* 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 \$10 per year. Applications for membership may be obtained from the Treasurer. Submissions for the Newsletter or inquiries may be addressed to the Editors.

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# 166 Years of the Madison Post Office

by  
Dudley Bokoski

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Modern postal operations have an air of calculated efficiency about them. Employees, chosen from unyielding examination rosters, use modern technology to serve the public at the least possible cost. Even the most hide-bound traditionalist would admit the necessity of this, and few would argue for a return to the days of Mr. Franklin's postal system. There is, nonetheless, much to be said for the colorful characters who peopled the Post Office Department during the service's early years.

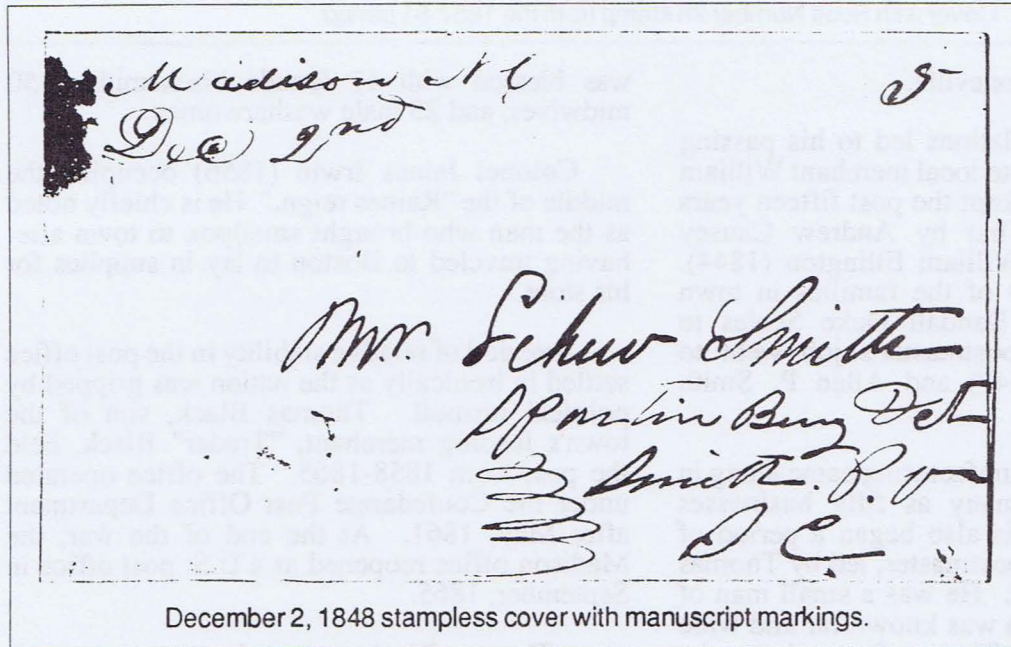
The Madison, North Carolina office (27025) is a classic example of an office that has moved

Madison is a small town in Rockingham county, about ten miles south of the North Carolina - Virginia line and about 25 miles north of Greensboro. The town, named after President James Madison, is situated at the junction of the Dan and Mayo Rivers. Tobacco and textiles have brought Madison prosperity, as they have to many piedmont towns.

In the early 1800's the state legislature authorized new towns chartered by the state, including two in Rockingham County. Many of these towns died in infancy, but Madison, under the guidance of its founder and first postmaster,

Randall Duke Scales, survived as a trading center. Although most of the 96 lots laid out by Scales were vacant for the first few years, the Roanoke Navigation Company brought river traffic up the Dan and prosperity to the town.

Records in the National Archives indicate the Madison post office opened in the fall of 1820, with Randall Duke Scales as the first postmaster. He was also town administrator



December 2, 1848 stampless cover with manuscript markings.

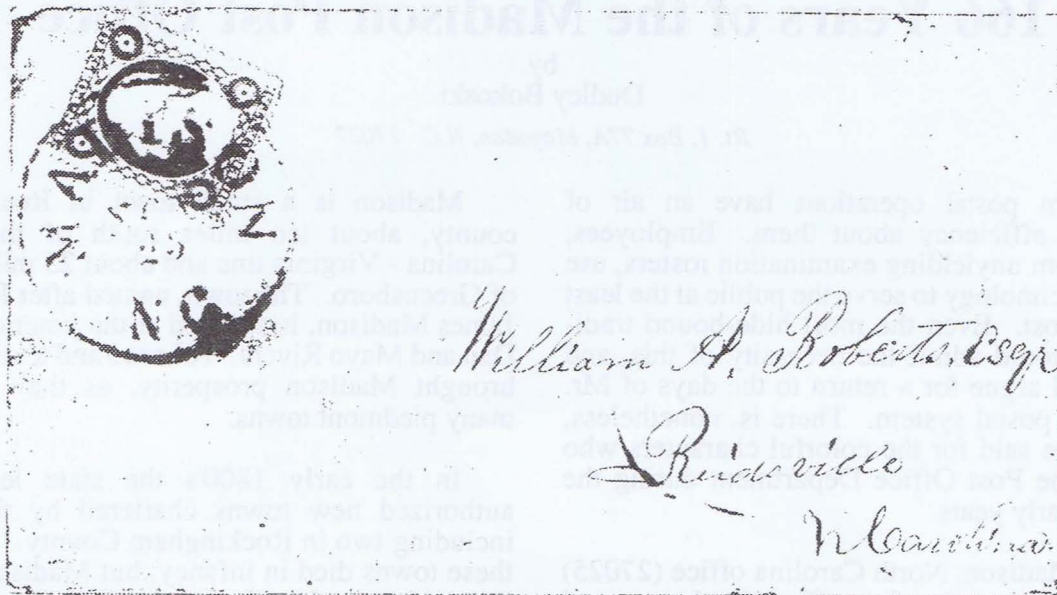
from a colorful past to an efficient, productive present. Present-day postmaster William Sullivan can look back at his office's history and see such colorful characters as the postmaster who had the misfortune of bringing the first epidemic to the town, a newspaper editor known as "Flatnose" who ran the office as a sideline, and one of the worst census takers of all time.

We'll meet these eccentric characters in the course of this brief journey to postal Madison's past, but we'll also meet dedicated men and women who helped the town grow to its present prosperity through their dedication to moving the mails and serving the public.

and his plantation home was the center of community activity. Prior to the establishment of the post office, mail came to town mainly through travelers on the Petersburg to Salem stage coach line. Men who were considered "gentlemen of worth" were obligated as a civic duty to carry mail with them on their travels to the country inns along their route.

A second stage route, to the county seat in Wentworth, linked Madison to the county's oldest office (1794), and nearby Reidsville (1829). The other office in the county at this time was in Mayo (1821), which later was to





Cover with Scott Number 26 stamp from the 1857-61 period.

become modern-day Stoneville.

Scales' land speculations led to his passing on the postmaster's job to local merchant William Porter (1827). Porter kept the post fifteen years and was succeeded first by Andrew Causey (1842), and then by William Ellington (1844). About this time many of the families in town migrated along with Randall Duke Scales to Mississippi and the postmaster's job went to George Reynolds (1847) and Allen P. Smith (1850).

A new boom in manufacturing came along in this period with as many as fifty businesses operating locally. This also began a period of colorful eccentrics as postmaster, led by Thomas D. Rosebrough (1850). He was a small man of under 100 pounds who was known far and wide for telling awful puns. Thrown from a horse, he acquired double vision and had to look away from customers so he would see only one person, not two. His successor, John R. New (1853), ran his office from his shoemaker shop. He freely mixed philosophy and brandy, liberally dispensing both while plying his trade.

The notorious Raines brothers, James and Isaac (1855, 1857), brought the town its first newspaper, *The Democrat*, while serving as postmaster. Their notoriety was due to James' nose, hence the monicker "Flatnose", and to Isaac's terrible record keeping. While postmaster he also served as census taker and printed the results of his effort in such an indecipherable way as to lead some to understand that Madison

was blessed with 17 female blacksmiths, 150 midwives, and 25 male washerwomen.

Colonel James Irwin (1856) occupied the middle of the "Raines reign." He is chiefly noted as the man who brought smallpox to town after having traveled to Boston to lay in supplies for his store.

A period of relative stability in the post office settled in ironically as the nation was gripped by political turmoil. Thomas Black, son of the town's leading merchant, "Trader" Black, held the post from 1858-1865. The office operated under the Confederate Post Office Department after May, 1861. At the end of the war, the Madison office reopened as a U.S. post office in September, 1865.

Thomas Black was no longer postmaster. It is assumed he left office due to federal rules prohibiting ex-Confederate office holders from holding office during the Reconstruction period. On Black's stepping down, Madison's outstanding postmaster of the nineteenth century first took over. William R.D. Lindsay served eight months in 1865-66 and again from 1874-79. He maintained his office in a small building in front of his home, and died while going back to the house after being led by his wife to the office to sign for a registered letter. Lindsay was so well regarded by the community that he was known as Madison's first postmaster, even though twelve men preceeded him. From 1866 to 1874 the post was held by Marshall S. Black.

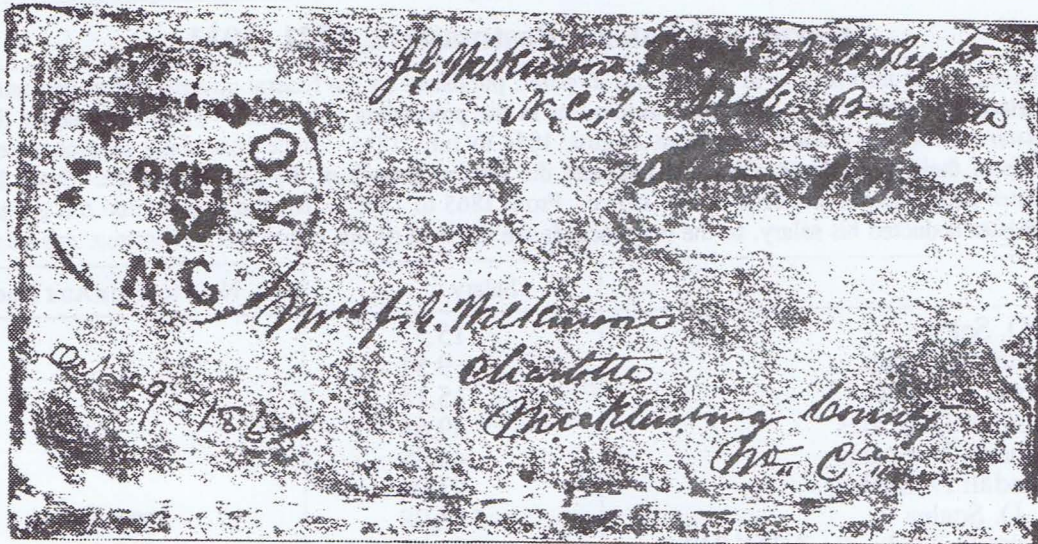


## Salaries of Madison Postmasters, 1821 -1911

This table is based on the information in the *Official Register*, published by the federal government in odd-numbered years. It reported the salaries of all government employees in the preceeding fiscal year. Thus, the amount listed in the 1855 *Register* reflects the amount paid from August, 1854 to July, 1855. Since postmaster salaries were based on the net gross of their post offices, this table indicates the relative growth of the Madison office. From 1841 to 1863 the *Register* listed the net proceeds of the office. From 1865 to 1869 it lists the amount due the government after the postmaster deducted his salary, so the net proceeds are the total of this figure and the postmaster's salary.

		Salary	Net Proceeds/Amt Due Govt
1821	R.D. Scales	15.52	
1829	Ranal D. Scales	9.51	
1831	Ranal D. Scales	15.15	
1835	Randall D. Scales	39.68	
1837	Randall D. Scales	44.85	
1839	Randall D. Scales	93.04	
1841	R. D. Scales	113.98	203.03
1843	Ranal D. Scales (to 3/31/1842)	71.75	130.35
	Andrew G. Causey	125.57	231.18
1845	Andrew G. Causey (to 8/12/1844)	9.91	18.01
	Wm. M. Ellington	71.67	129.01
1847	Wm. M. Ellington (to 4/22/1847)	62.76	60.51
	George Reynolds	12.06	16.27
1849	George Reynolds (to 1/31/1849)	35.89	47.31
	Allen P. Smith	40.29	53.86
1851	Allen P. Smith (to 10/1/1850)	19.59	24.99
	T. D. Rosebrough	70.49	91.50
1853	Thomas D. Rosebrough	63.05	90.45
1855	J. M. New	107.53	119.85
1857	James Raines	105.98	137.82
1859	Thomas T. Black	133.76	116.49
1861	T. S. Black (to 4/30/1861)	105.54	92.11
1863		---	---
1865		---	247.45
1867	M. S. Black	70.00	120.36
1869	M. S. Black	130.00	137.88
1871	M. S. Black	140.00	
1873	M. S. Black	210.00	
1875	M. S. Black (to 9/30/1874)	56.54	
	W. R. D. Lindsay	157.72	
1877	W. R. D. Lindsay	147.48	
1879	W. R. D. Lindsay	141.55	
1881	P. D. Price	155.98	
1883	P. D. Price	205.54	
1885	P. D. Price	240.61	
1887	M. B. Stamps	224.16	
1889	M. B. Stamps	281.07	
1891	Edward F. Fagg	448.11	
1893	C. B. McAnally	579.57	
1895	Chas. B. McAnally	664.56	
1897	Joseph M. Vaughan	835.85	
1899	J. M. Vaughan	616.69	
1901	Joseph. M. Vaughan	704.02	
1903	Nathaniel B. Lewis	890.73	
1905	Phillip A. Peatross	965.79	
1907	Thomas P. Newman	1010.00	
1909	Thomas P. Newman	1100.00	
1911	Thomas P. Newman	1200.00	





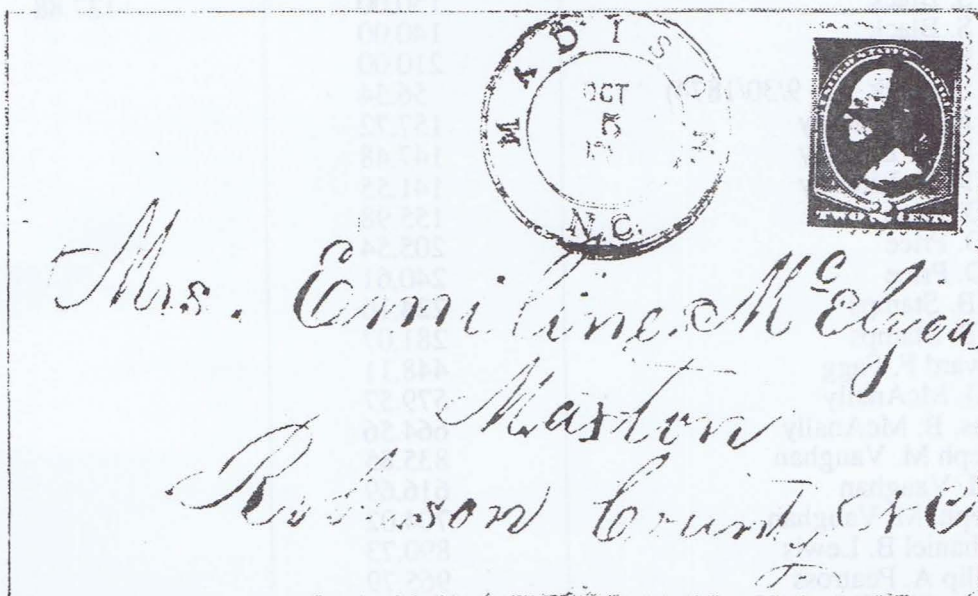
Confederate soldier's letter mailed from Madison Oct. 30, 1862.

Little is known of the group of postmasters who rounded out the eighteen hundreds. They included a local builder, Peter Price (1879); two doctors, William J. Oliver (1891) and Charles B. McAnally (1893); and the town's only female postmaster, Martha Stamps (1885). Others of this period were Edward Fagg (1889), James Byerly (1892), and Joseph Vaughn (1897).

It should be noted that during this time postmasters were politically appointed, often shopkeepers, who were paid on commission. Postmasters in the county received a com-

mission, table of county offices and distances to them, a US map, saddlebag, copy of postal laws, forms and rates, and a ledger. This last item was important, as the postmaster recorded revenues and then filed for his percentage. In 1863 the maximum was 10% on \$2,400. Also, there were a great many commissions issued, with the county having 38 post offices in 1890.

With the turn of the century, the Madison office began to take on characteristics of a modern office with full-time clerks and a dedicated facility. The office was located in two



Fancy cancel from Oct. 5, 1888. Killer is a star in a circle.



different buildings on the lower end of the business district and was moved with the changing of political parties. It was considered a choice political plum, as oldtimers still note that the Post Office Department paid way above local standards for its lease. Most of the town's mail arrived on and was sent out by the Norfolk and Western Railway. Delivery on Madison's first rural route began in April, 1903. By 1907, Madison had three routes. Postmasters of this period included Nathaniel Lewis (1901), Phillip Peatross (1908), Thomas P. Newman (1908), and W.T. Chambers (1913).

In 1922, one of the longest personal stories in the Madison office began, that of the Joyce family. John M. Joyce became postmaster in 1922, and when the office was upgraded from third to second class, his son Bennie became a clerk. Bennie had a long career of public service, eventually becoming postmaster himself in 1955. Mail volume was light at the time, with many people remembering the mail being brought to the office from the train depot on a hand truck which usually brought only one or two canvas sacks.

With the advent of the Roosevelt administration came postmaster John R. Hughes (1934). We know a great deal about the office during this time due to the extensive records he kept which still are kept in the office.

They reflect a period in which the Inspection Service was much more active in daily operations. For example, letters in the file to the chief inspector authorized the use of 512 auxiliary hours per quarter at \$321.51 pay.

Technology had begun to change in the forties, and Hughes wanted to keep up. In 1941 he requested an electric cancelling machine to replace a fifteen year old hand-cranked model. This moved 4th Underassistant Postmaster General to write that he was planning to give the new electric models to offices like Cleveland and New York, and the most he would do for Madison was to send a traveling mechanic to fix the old one.

Another difficulty noted by the inspectors at the time was that the office firearm, a pistol, was not kept locked up and the office had not issued any merits or demerits to employees in five years. The gun had another side-effect. Employees fired wax bullets at cardboard targets during business hours, which surely must of given the average customer pause to reflect on many occasions.

A highlight of the thirties was the National Postal Clerks congressional district convention in 1939. A program noted a variety of activities for the convention goers including the "Tunatic Trio" performing, a dance group doing "The Little Apple", and a tour of the local CCC camp.

Of greater importance was the construction in 1940-41 of the present office at the corner of Murphy and Franklin Streets. \$75,000 was allotted for the building, but it was put up for only \$45,000 by a firm which later went bankrupt, according to some, as a result of low bidding the job. It is interesting to note that laborers on the job earned 35¢ per hour; masons, \$1.25/hour; and the superintendent, \$50 per week.

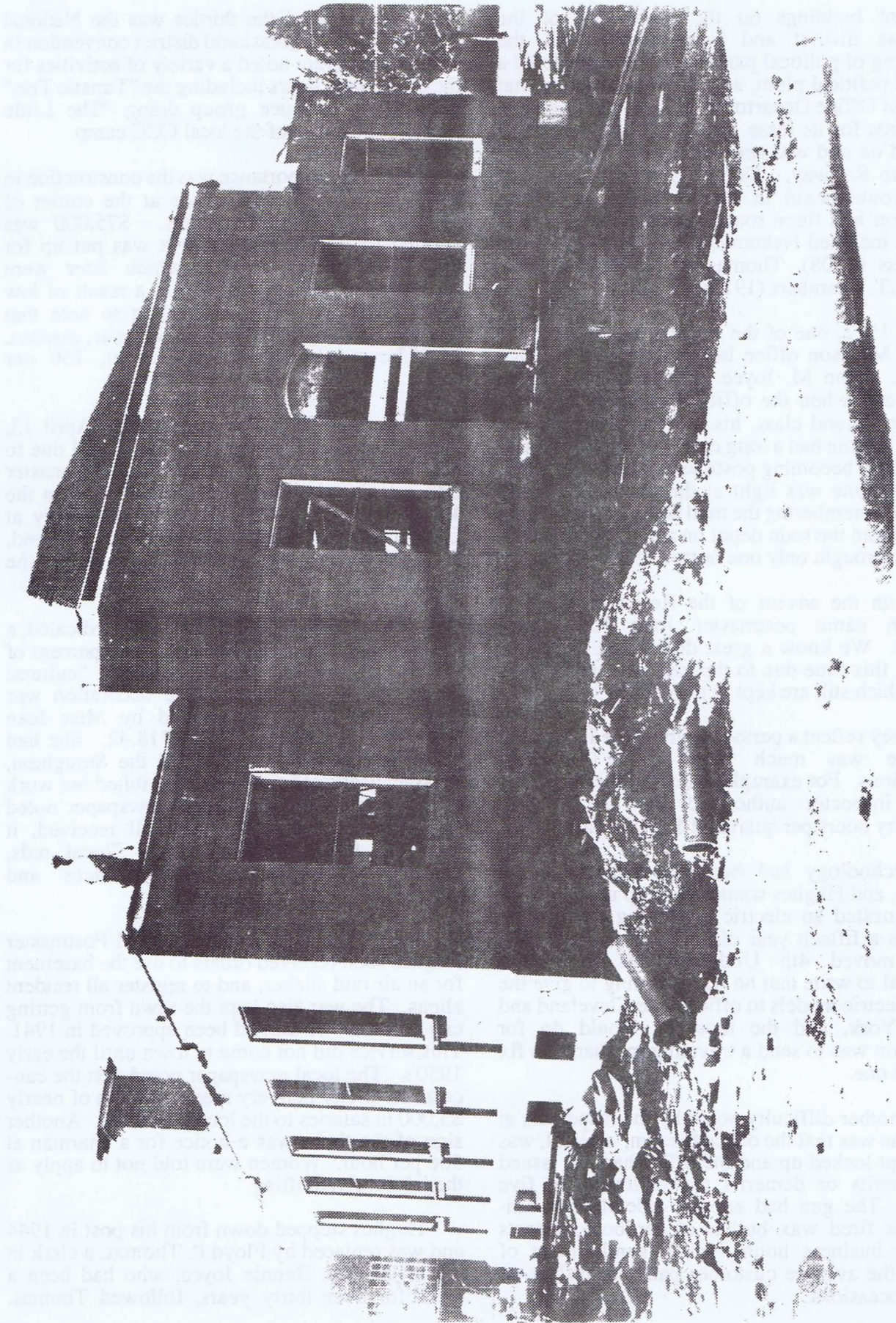
The new office was occupied on April 13, 1941. The building was never dedicated due to confusion over plans to have the Postmaster General give the formal opening speech on the 4th of July. A local army troop was away at Camp Jackson on drills and was unable to attend, thus cancelling the parade, and then the dedication.

Although the building was never dedicated, a striking mural in the lobby was. One percent of the cost of building was set aside for "cultural decoration." In this case, the decoration was mural of local scenes painted by Miss Jean Watson of Pennsylvania for \$718.42. She had previously painted a mural for the Stoughton, Massachusetts office and had exhibited her work at two world's fairs. A local newspaper noted that although the work was well received, it failed to take into account the "local reds, browns, and greens, favoring blues and purples."

Art took a back seat to war and Postmaster Hughes soon received orders to use the basement for an air raid shelter, and to register all resident aliens. The war also kept the town from getting city delivery, which had been approved in 1941. This service did not come to town until the early 1950's. The local newspaper noted that the cancellation of city delivery meant the loss of nearly \$3,000 in salaries to the local economy. Another sign of the times was a notice for a charman at 50¢ per hour. Women were told not to apply as the job involved lifting.

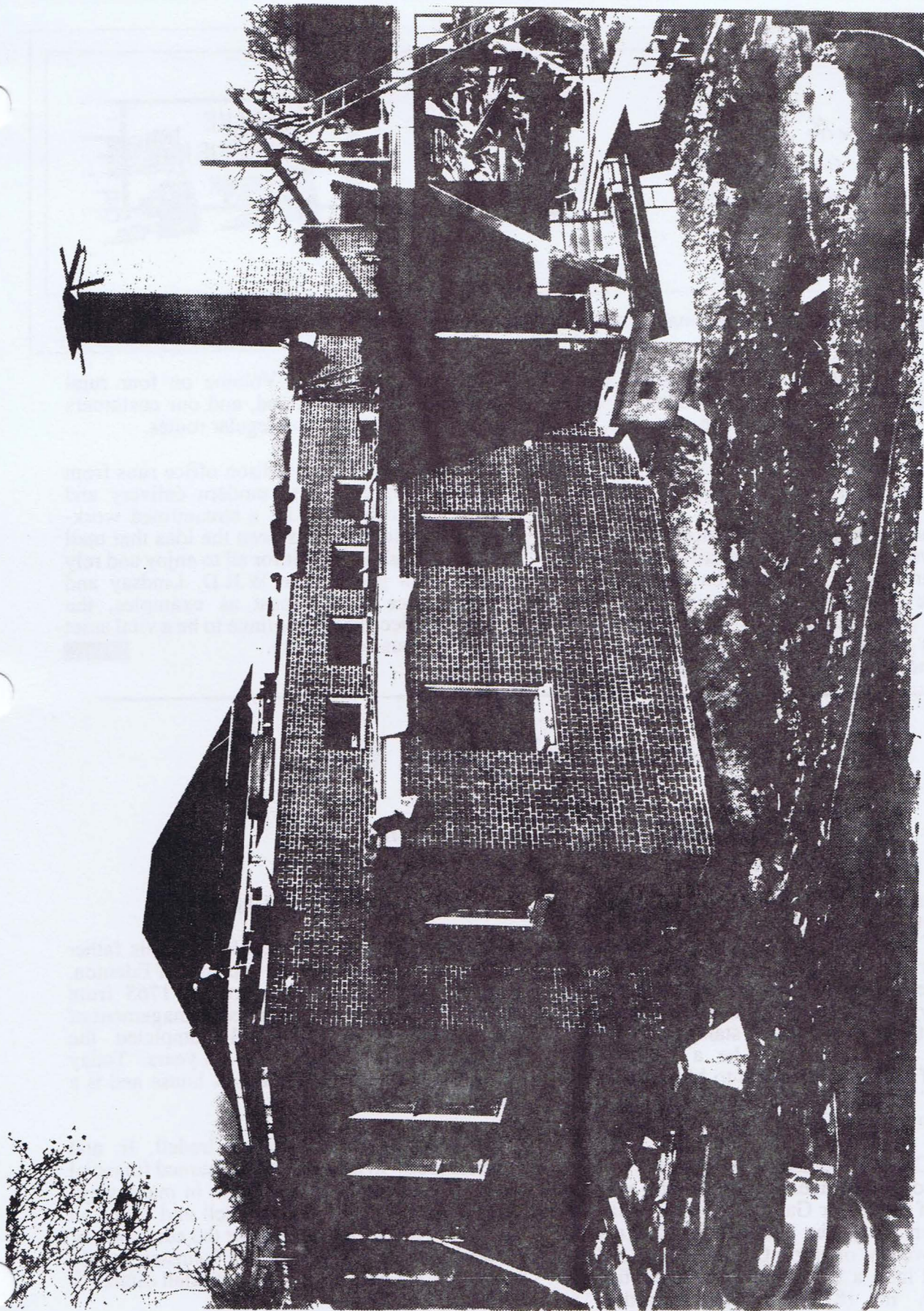
Hughes stepped down from his post in 1944 and was replaced by Floyd P. Thomas, a clerk in the office. J. Bennie Joyce, who had been a clerk for over thirty years, followed Thomas.





Building the current Madison Post Office in the fall of 1940. A front view.  
Photo courtesy of Madison Post Office.





Building the current Madison Post Office in the fall of 1940. A rear view.  
Photo courtesy of Madison Post Office.



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Except for local mail, today, mail from Madison is canceled at the Greensboro sectional center.

Joyce is regarded as the outstanding postal worker of the 1900's. S.F. Webster, a local merchant, was postmaster from 1966-68, and was succeeded by J.B. Jones, and the current postmaster William J. Sullivan. Sullivan was previously postmaster in Lake Waccamaw, N.C.

The biggest changes of the modern era at our office have been the shift from rail transportation and the increasing reliance on technology to break the emphasis on labor-intensive production. An example of the reduction in manhours is the current complement of one regular and three part-time clerks, as opposed to

eleven clerks in 1939. Volume on four rural delivery routes has doubled, and our customers enjoy city delivery on two regular routes.

The history of the Madison office runs from eccentric shopkeepers to modern delivery and distribution techniques by a streamlined workforce. The constant has been the idea that mail service is a public benefit for all to enjoy and rely upon. With people like W.R.D. Lindsay and Bennie Joyce in the past as examples, the Madison office should continue to be a vital asset to a prosperous community.

**NCPHS**

## James C. Johnston, Esq.

by

Ken Schoolmeester

P.O. Box 8465, Greensboro, N.C. 27419

Who was James C. Johnston, Esq., to whom this attractive Wilmington, N.C. cover shown on the top of page eleven, is addressed? The cover has a horizontal strip of three 1851 one cent blues; one is type II, Scott number 7, the other two are type IIIa, Scott 8a. The 1987 catalogue lists total value of these stamps off cover as \$1,135. There seems to be a considerable amount of material addressed to Mr. Johnston in collectors' hands. Another example is shown on the bottom of page eleven.

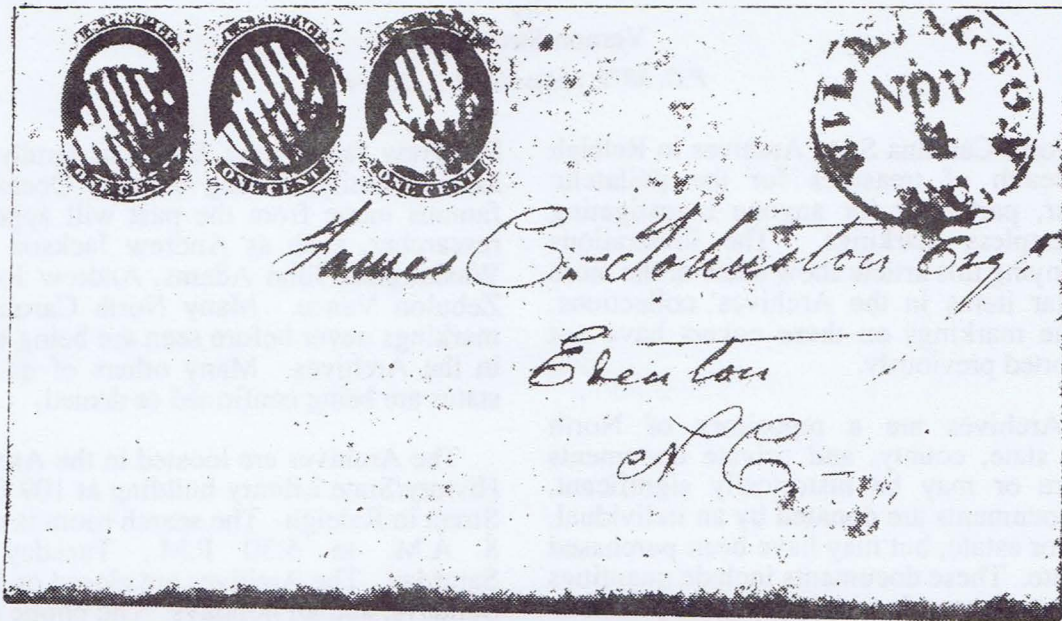
James Cathcart Johnston, born in the 1780's, was the son of Samuel Johnston, who was the nephew of Governor Gabriel Johnston. Samuel was a member of the Continental Congress in 1781, Governor of North Carolina from 1787 to 1789, and later a U.S. Senator. At the time of his death in 1816, he was regarded as

"the most eminent citizen of the state."

James C. Johnston, a bachelor, and his father lived on a plantation on the outskirts of Edenton. Samuel purchased the property in 1765 from David Rieusset. James assumed management of the plantation in 1807 and completed the plantation house over the next ten years. Today the house is known as the Hayes house and is a National Historic Landmark.

James was cousin to James Iredell, Jr. and Helen Iredell. In later years he assumed financial responsibility for Helen. He was in many ways the benefactor for both the Iredell and Johnston families. He provided funds for the education of James Iredell, Jr. and numerous Johnston family members. He also managed the Iredell estate for a number of years.

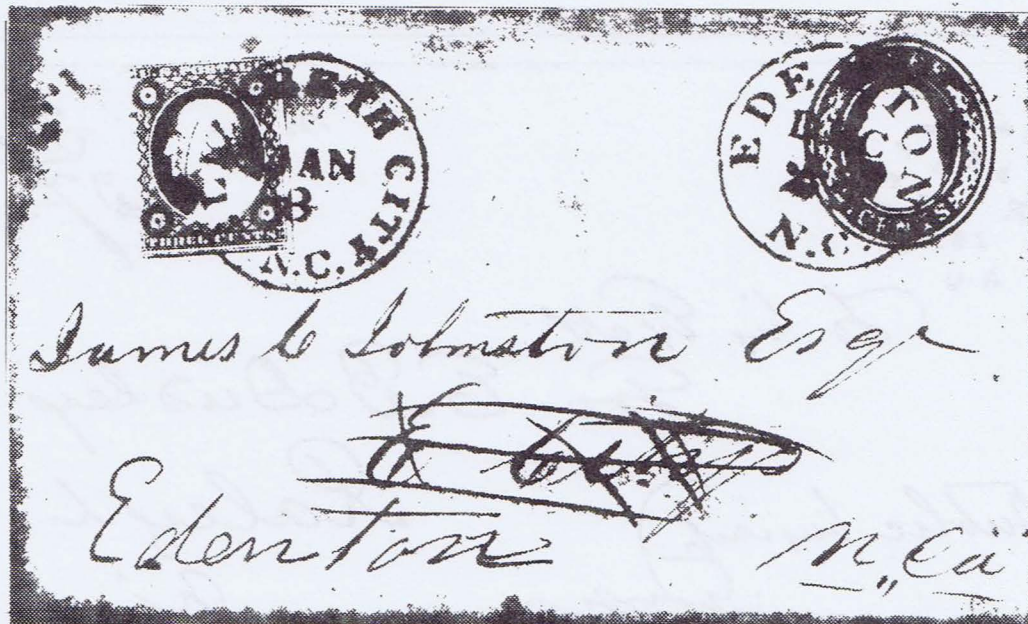




At the outbreak of the Civil War, many citizens of Edenton moved to Raleigh for safe haven. James, then in his 80's and in ill health, insisted on staying in his plantation home. His relatives abandoned him and moved with many others after the fall of Roanoke Island. He never forgave them. Johnston willed his homeplace to his "friend and advisor" Edward Wood of

Greenfield in 1863, two years prior to his death. His relatives contested the will in a legal battle which reached the N.C. Supreme Court. The court found in favor of Mr. Wood; and the Wood family has owned the home ever since. James Johnston is buried in the Hayes family cemetery in Edenton.

NCPIIS





# Philatelic Treasures from the State Archives

by  
Vernon Stroupe, Jr.

P.O. 8879, Asheville, N.C. 28814

The North Carolina State Archives in Raleigh has a wealth of treasures for the philatelic researcher, particular for anyone investigating early stampless markings. The illustrations accompanying this article show a few of the more spectacular items in the Archives' collections. All of the markings on these covers have not been reported previously.

The Archives are a repository of North Carolina state, county, and private documents which are or may be historically significant. Private documents are donated by an individual, his heirs or estate, but may have been purchased by the state. These documents include quantities of correspondence. In recent years the philatelic value of these collections has been recognized and the more recent acquisitions have been protected. Most of the older documents which have postal markings are protected, or withdrawn from public inspection with a photocopy substituted.

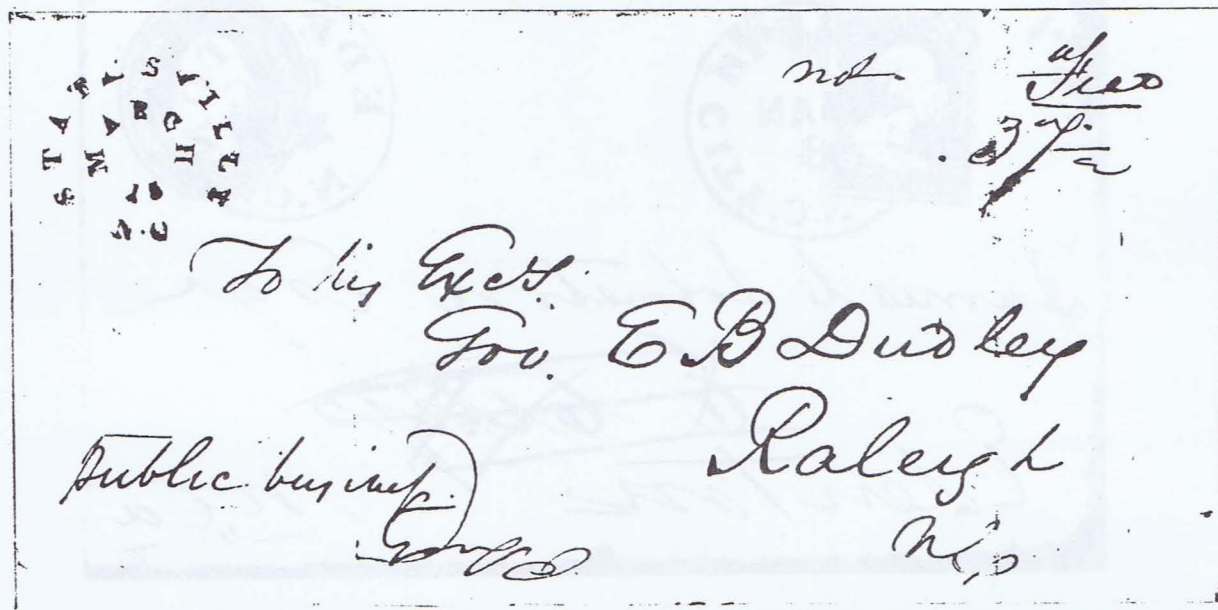
Areas which are philatelically rich are the private papers of state officials such as governors, secretaries of state, and other prominent individuals. The Archives contain the private papers of General Patterson, the

Pettigrew family, the Bingham family, and the Lenoir family, among others. Occasionally a famous name from the past will appear to the researcher, such as Andrew Jackson, George Washington, John Adams, Andrew Johnson, or Zebulon Vance. Many North Carolina postal markings never before seen are being uncovered in the Archives. Many others of questionable status are being confirmed or denied.

The Archives are located in the Archives and History/State Library building at 109 East Jones Street in Raleigh. The search room is open from 8 A.M. to 5:30 P.M., Tuesday through Saturday. The Archives are closed on Mondays, Sundays, and all holidays. The phone number is (919) 733-3952.

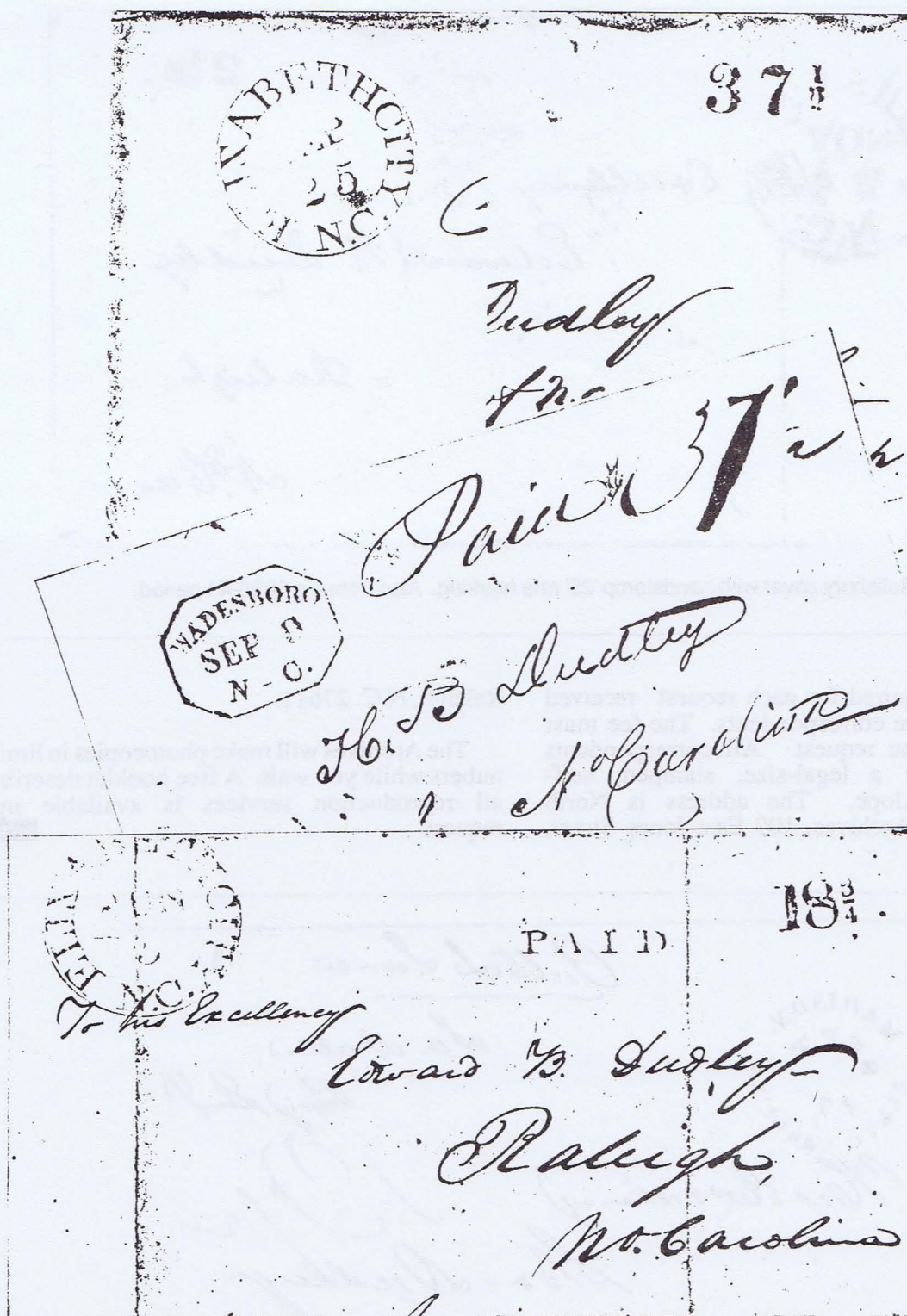
The majority of the public use of the search room is for geneological research. Most of the literature and collection descriptions reflect this emphasis, as do the card listings, but this does not preclude other types of research.

The Archives will answer some simple questions by mail, but the staff will not undertake lengthy or complicated research. The Archives will answer only one question per letter. A



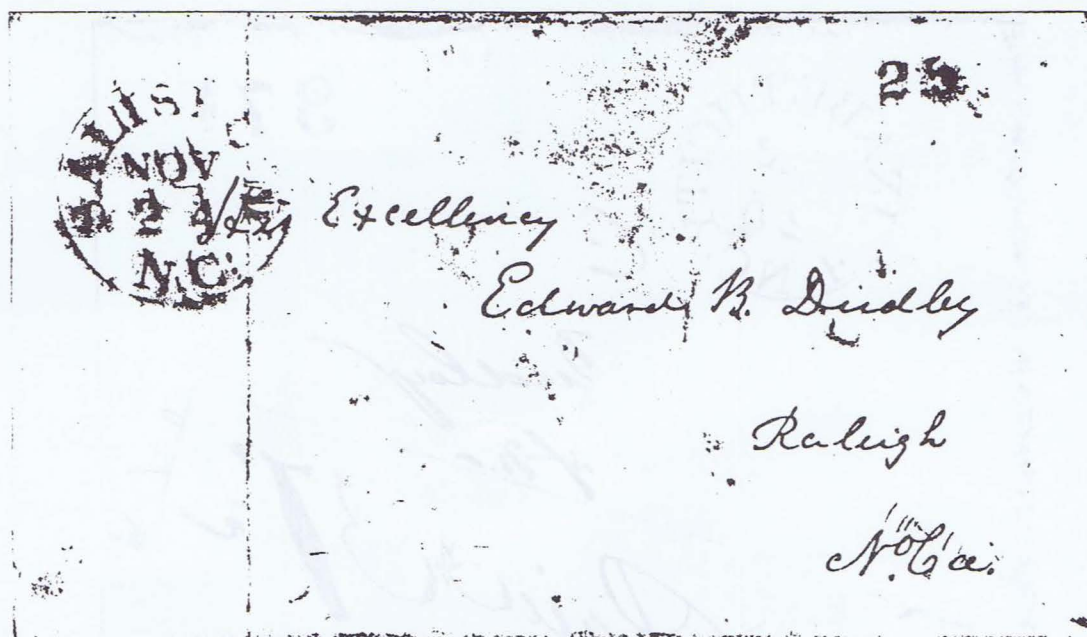
Statesville marking with month and day in a circle, addressed to Edward B. Dudley (Governor 1836-41).





Three covers with previously unreported markings from the 1836-41 period. From top to bottom, an Elizabeth City handstamp rate for 37 and 1/2 cents; an octagonal Wadesboro date stamp; another Elizabeth City rate stamp, this one for 18 and 3/4 cents.





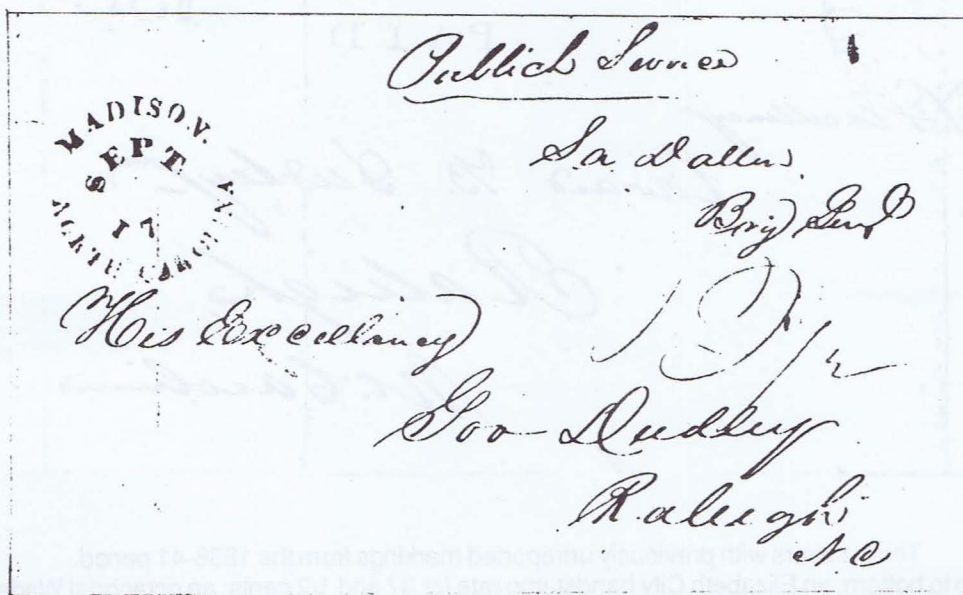
Salisbury cover with handstamp '25' rate marking. Also from the 1836-41 period.

\$5.00 fee is required for each request received from out-of-state correspondents. The fee must be sent with the request. All correspondents should enclose a legal-size, stamped, self-addressed envelope. The address is North Carolina State Archives, 109 East Jones Street,

Raleigh, N.C. 27611.

The Archives will make photocopies in limited numbers while you wait. A free booklet describing all reproduction services is available upon request.

**NCPHS**



Madison CDS with month and day in a circle, also 1836-41 period.



# Minutes of the Fall Meeting in Raleigh

by

Darrell Ertzberger

P.O. Box 16361, Alexandria, Va. 22302

Vice-president Darrell Ertzberger called the Fall 1986 meeting of the North Carolina Postal History Society to order at twelve noon at the Mission Valley Inn, Raleigh, on November 1. Seven members and two visitors were present.

Minutes of the 1986 annual meeting had been published in the *NCPHS Newsletter* and were approved as published.

Treasurer Milton Wicker reported a balance of approximately \$730 in the treasury. At that point, forty members had paid 1987 dues. All members were reminded that 1987 dues should be sent to the Treasurer by January 1.

## Old Business

Non-profit status. Ken Schoolmeester had volunteered to proceed with obtaining a non-profit status for the Society. He was not present at the meeting, but Harvey Tilles reported that work was proceeding and that the signatures of the Society's Board of Directors were needed to incorporate.

Post Office Records Preservation. Darrell Ertzberger reported on attempts to establish a repository for North Carolina post office documents. As reported at the annual meeting, the Southern Historical Collection of the Wilson Library at UNC-Chapel Hill had tentatively agreed to accept these documents. The Library has not responded to further letters, so more investigation is needed.

Post Office Artifact Preservation. Harvey Tilles reported that the High Point Historical Museum might be willing to accept postal artifacts. Other members commented that the USPS was very sensitive about the disposal of artifacts because of incidents in other states involving antiques that were government property. Harvey Tilles volunteered to pursue the matter with the High Point Museum.

APS Affiliation. At the annual meeting the Society voted to apply for affiliation with the American Philatelic Society. Darrell Ertzberger reported that the Society was accepted as affiliate

#155 at the APS's annual convention in August.

## New Business

The first new item discussed was the selection of the site of the 1987 Annual Meeting. Two possible locations were proposed: WINPEX in Winston-Salem on May 2-3, and CHARPEX in Charlotte on July 25-26. The members voted to hold the meeting at WINPEX. It was suggested that an exhibit prospectus for the show be mailed with the next *Newsletter*.

It was announced that volunteers were needed for a nominating committee to select a slate for the four positions on the Board of Directors for terms expiring in 1987. Harvey Tilles volunteered to act as chairman for the committee.

As a result of discussions at the annual meeting, the future publication was announced of a monograph covering North Carolina stampless markings from colonial times to 1865. The target date for publication is mid-1987. President Vernon Stroupe is currently working on the text. The members present were asked to give their views on the options of publishing this work serially or all at once. Some suggestions were made to delay publication for a year if the work was published all at once in order to collect more material and to raise the amount in the Society treasury. However, the general consensus was to publish the monograph all at once, as soon as possible. It was suggested that a "Publications Chairman" be appointed to do such tasks as a promotional mailing to all the libraries in the state.

A request was made by Mr. and Mrs. Bill Harter to recognize that spouses can be members of the Society without paying an additional membership fee. The membership agreed, after the Treasurer reported that the biggest change would be to add "Mr. & Mrs." to the *Newsletter* mailing label.

Treasurer Milton Wicker announced that a new printing of the membership application was needed. He suggested that a new blank be added



to the form for "specific collecting interests", such as stampless, Confederate, or Doanes. The membership agreed it was a good idea.

New member Delmar R. Frazier announced that he was doing research of the Confederate post offices of North Carolina. He is investigating the existence of offices, the names of postmasters, and the creation and closure of offices. He requested any information from

members that might be helpful. He said he had reviewed the Pickett papers in the Library of Congress which concern Confederate post office operations. Phil Perkinson said he had seen a manuscript list of Confederate postmasters in the library at Chapel Hill.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30.

NCPHS

## Closing of Many Small Post Offices Predicted for 1987

The North Carolina chapter of The National Association of Postmasters of the US (NAPUS) reports that new regulations are making it much easier for the Postal Service to close small post offices. There are predictions that more small offices will be closed in 1987 than anytime in recent years. Training sessions have been scheduled for January in Greensboro to brief and train selected USPS personnel on how to handle post office closings. NAPUS is opposed to any closings and is attempting to line up support in Washington to prevent any such actions.

It appears that some offices in North Carolina will be targeted for discontinuance, but the USPS has not announced any specifics yet. If any member of the Society learns of a proposed closing, please inform the *NCPHS Newsletter* so that the information may be published. All too often in recent years the USPS has announced official office closings long after the offices actually closed so that it is impossible to obtain last day of operation covers. The practice has been to "suspend operations" with no notice while procedures to discontinue the office are begun. Later official notice of the discontinuance is announced, but the office had really closed many months earlier.

At the present time, the *NCPHS Newsletter* knows of only one office that the USPS is attempting to close. It is Maple in Currituck County. Last January the Maple postmaster moved to become the postmaster of Currituck and the USPS began procedures to close the office. The current officer-in-charge of the Maple office said that in February and March of 1986, the financial office of the sectional center in Raleigh did a study and then sent area residents notices which announced the USPS's intention to close the office. The residents were

strongly opposed to the closing and expressed their feelings at a public meeting held by the Postal Service. The reorganization of the Postal Service regions in June appears to have delayed the closing, but the Postal Service has not announced any reversal of its decision. The office could be discontinued very soon.

NCPHS

## New Members

Please welcome these new members:

John C. Dorsett  
P.O. Box 1786  
Thomasville, N.C. 27361

Delmar R. Frazier  
602 Pearson Circle  
New Bern, N.C. 28560

Pine Tree Stamps  
136-D Oakwood Drive  
Winston-Salem, N.C. 27103

Margaret Wilson  
2108 White Oak Road  
Raleigh, N.C. 27603



This cancel will be used Feb. 27 to Mar. 1  
in Charlotte.



## Letter from the Past

### Education in Eastern North Carolina, 1829

*In all of our collections we have covers, especially stampless covers, that still have the original contents. Many of these letters tell fascinating stories about the life and times in North Carolina's past. In this issue we begin a new column in which we will print some of these interesting letters. If you have any covers with interesting contents in your collection, please send a transcript and a photocopy of the cover to the editors.*

*Our first letter is from Tony Crumbley's collection. It was written by one E. Hutchins, a schoolteacher who had come from the north to teach in Eastern North Carolina. In 1829, he wrote this letter back to a friend in New Hampshire who was apparently considering coming south to teach. It was mailed from Pantego in Beaufort County.*

*It cost Mr. Hutchins twenty-five cents to send his letter. The cover is marked "Paid", so he paid the postage, rather than the recipient. In his letter he says \$360 is a good annual salary for a teacher. That means Mr. Hutchins paid .07% of his salary to mail this letter. Today that would mean on a salary of \$20,000, it would cost \$13.89 to mail a letter. Letters were a luxury few could afford in the early nineteenth century.*

Pantego N.C. March 4, 1829

My Dear Sir

Your favor of Nov. 24th was received by due course of mail last. I noticed in a letter to your father to which after paying some attention to the subject of "school teaching" I now attempt to reply. In no part of the country, that I have ever visited are instructors of youth as scarce as they are here, or as little attention paid to learning. The consequence is ignorance, with its attendant evils, is almost every where visible. Many heads of families, in some places, are not able to read one word. Many children and youth are now growing up in ignorance, some because their parents will not pay for their schooling, and others because there are no schools to which they can go. Yet in justice to the legislature or the state I must say that it has taken some small measures to remedy the evils that now exist, but it will be a long time before free schools can be supported generally here as they are in the New England states.

The manner in which schools are supported in the country is something as follows. Sometimes one man will hire a teacher to instruct his family, by the quarter or by the year, for which he is to pay a certain sum and if his neighbors see fit to send their children and buy a part of the amount. They can do so, if not the man pays it himself. But the more general practice is for a teacher to obtain a school by subscription; that is he agrees to teach the children of those who agree

Pantego N.C.  
March 4

Paid 25

Mr. Merritt Ambrose,  
Centre, Sandwich,  
New Hampshire.



to pay for the number of schollars that they send. Some begin with no more than ten schollars; but if they are approved of as teachers and attentive to their business their schollars always increase. But many that pretend to be teachers here are quite unqualified for the task. And others become unsteady after some length of time. And by not attending as they ought to their business, turn themselves out of employment. Good teachers frequently have from 20 to 35 schollars, and have from two to 4 dollars a quarter for teaching them in common bunches; so if a man has 30 schollars for which he is paid 3 dollars a quarter it will amount to 90 dollars, or 360 dollars a year. Out of which he must pay his board which is not dear. Should you see fit to come to this state, I have no doubt but that you might do well if you are favored with health. Winsor Dixon near Hookerton one of my intimate friends, who has been successful teacher here, says that you may call on him and he will use his influence in procuring a school for you. Should you find it convenient to land at Newbern, call on James Woodley, engineer of the steam mill. From there if no other way should offer you can take the stage to Kinston or to Cox's Bridge where with a trifling expense, you can be conveyed to his house. Should you land at Washington, Beaufort Co. take the stage to Esq. Howell Hearn's and he will direct you to Capt. Cornelius Johnson who will assist you in obtaining a school. Should you have to land at Wilmington or any other port, you can take the stage or water to Newbern or Washington or take a school in any part of the state you may think proper. If you come I should advise you not to leave home before the middle of Sept. You will then arrive here by the first of Nov. when, if life is spared, I shall be able to introduce you to my acquaintance, as I don't expect to leave here for Indiana before the middle of Nov. The first of June next I expect to go to the westerly part of the state, to stay till the last of Sept. As I don't think it prudent to spend my time here in July - August and the first of Sept. If you should come here I should recommend you to leave the low country the latter part of the summer and either go to the North or to the westerly part of the state. At the latter place I will see if a school can be obtained for you and let you know what the prospects is. Should I see you here.

The people here generally are remarkably kind to strangers, but their ways and manners are far from being agreeable to one from the North and should you come you must calculate to pass through some difficulties and many lonsome hours. Especially at first. The houses here are

not very good, the land low, and much of it in a wilderness state; (and so level that you can scarcely see two miles in any direction there is so much wilderness). The houses generally at a distance from the road (except in the town or villages) and slaves about almost everyone's house. But as I have before stated the people altho far from being as intelligent as those at the North, are noted for their kindness to strangers.

I have now with pleasure stated things as near as I can as I view them. And in making up your mind you must consult your own feelings and the opinions of others. But should you conclude to come I wish you to let me know it as soon as convenient by sending me a letter at Cove Creek, Craven Co. in this state. I owe Br. Hosea Quinly and Br. Saml. Beede, an apology for not writing to them; but if they will overlook my negligence, and write to me, I will immediately answer them. I wish to be remembered to all enquiring friends in your vicinity.

This is written in great haste, which is the only apology I can make for its many improprieties, on which I hope that you will look with a lenient eye.

My health of late has not been very good, but is now better than it was a few days ago.

Respectfully yours,

E. Hutchins

Note should you conclude to come here you may be under necessity of sailing from Boston to New York, and these take shipping to Newbern or to Washington, or if you can be put ashore on Portsmouth at Ocracoke bar, you had better do so and wait a few days to go to either of the places mentioned above, than to go to any other port. It often happens that coasters that are not advertised in the papers, lay at the wharves in Boston and other ports, so that it will be necessary for you to visit the wharves and enquire for yourself. For want of proper attention to this subject, I lost five dollars by paying my passage to Wilmington and afterwards finding a vessel at Boston bound for Ocracoke bar, which was much more on my course; but the owners would not let me have my money unless I would give them 5 dollars.

E.H.