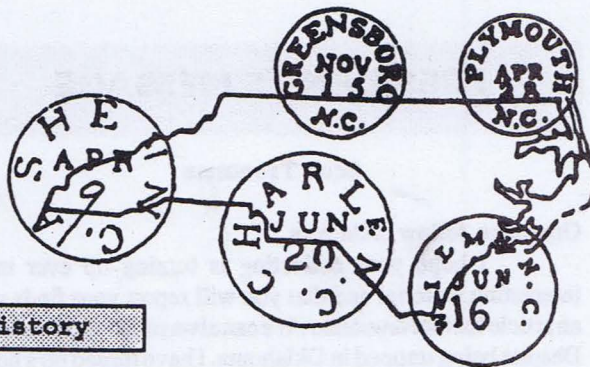


# NCPHS Newsletter

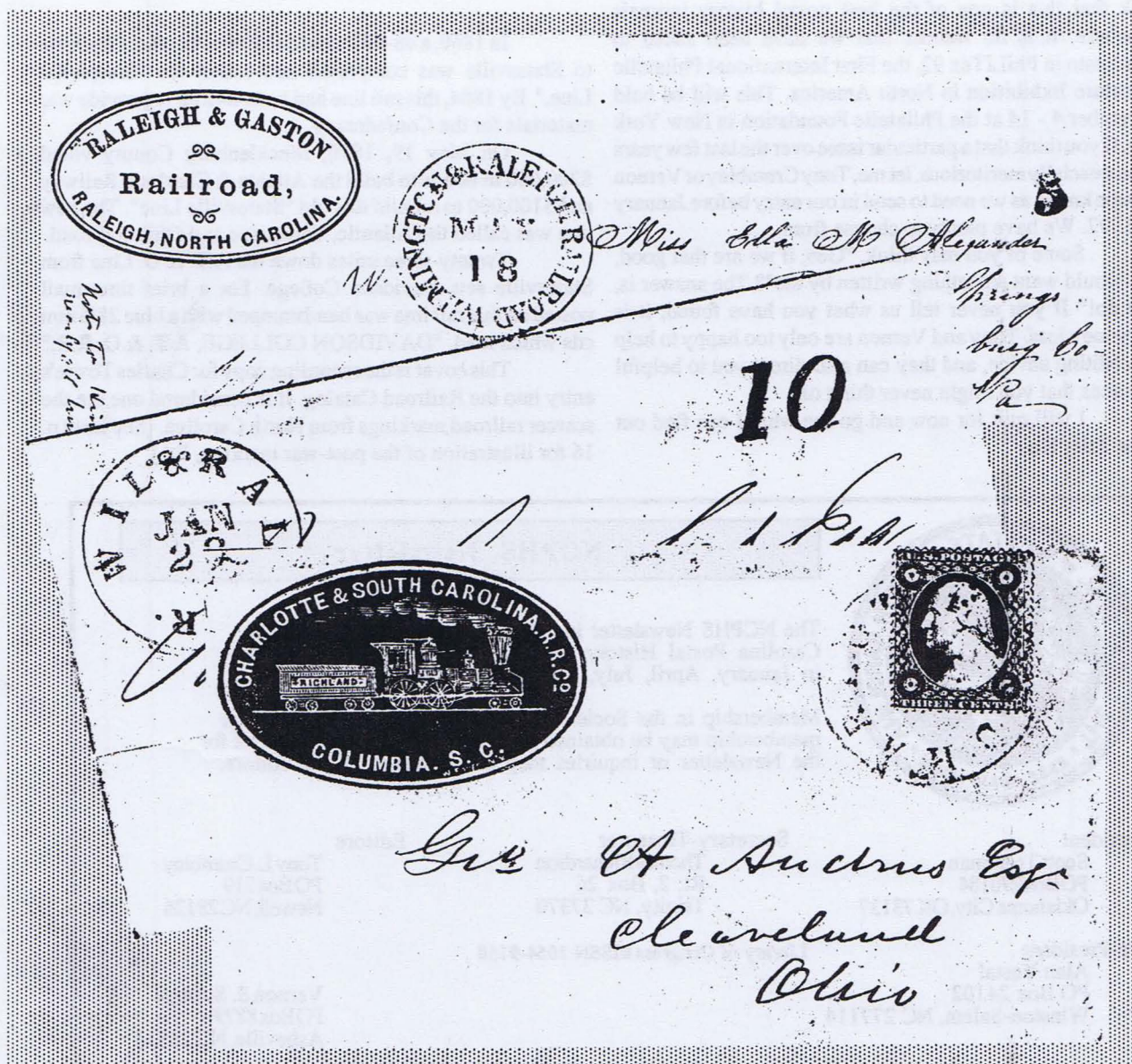
The Journal of the North Carolina Postal History



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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**Scott Troutman**

Greetings, fellow collectors,

I hope your collecting is turning up ever more interesting material and that you will report your finds with an article for the *Newsletter*. We can always use good material. Despite being trapped in Oklahoma, I have turned up a hoard of early material from Tally Ho, N.C., so you never know what you will find or where you will find it!

As a group, we have been finding some very interesting material, and our *Newsletter* reflects this. We think that this is one of the best postal history journals anywhere. It is no wonder that we have been asked to participate in PhilITex 92, the First International Philatelic Literature Exhibition in North America. This will be held November 4 - 14 at the Philatelic Foundation in New York City. If you think that a particular issue over the last few years was especially meritorious, let me, Tony Crumbley or Vernon Stroupe know, as we need to send in our entry before January 31, 1992. We have plenty to choose from.

Some of you may think, "Gee, if we are that good, who would want something written by me"? The answer is, "We do!" If you never tell us what you have found, it is everyone's loss. Tony and Vernon are only too happy to help with editing advice, and they can also direct you to helpful resources that you might never think of.

I will quit for now and go see what I can find out about Tally Ho.

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### A RAILROAD ONE DAY, A CANNON THE NEXT Tony L. Crumbley

In 1860, a 48-mile stretch of railroad from Charlotte to Statesville was completed and called the "Statesville Line." By 1864, this rail line had been torn up to provide war materials for the Confederacy.

On May 19, 1870, Mecklenburg County voted \$200,000 in bonds to build the Atlanta & Charlotte Railway and \$100,000 to rebuild this old "Statesville Line". The new line was called the Atlantic, Tennessee and Ohio Railroad.

Twenty-three miles down the A.T. & O. Line from Statesville sets Davidson College. For a brief time mail posted on this rail line was handstamped with a blue 28½ mm cds which read, "DAVIDSON COLLEGE, A.T. & O. R.R."

This cover is the recording copy for Charles Towle's entry into the Railroad Catalog. It is considered one the the scarcer railroad markings from North Carolina. [See inset p. 16 for illustration of the post-war marking, Ed.]



## 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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# THE PRE-CIVIL WAR RAILROADS OF NORTH CAROLINA

## Their Histories and Postal Markings

by Scott Troutman

### Overview

It is hard to imagine in our time, but in the early 1800's the system of roads in North was dreadful. Ironical for a state that today boasts the nations most extensive network of paved roads. Roads were little more than wide paths through "dreary pines, sandy barrens and dismal swamps". Road maintenance consisted of all able bodied men falling out six days a year to fill potholes, repair bridges, and make drainage ditches. An average day's travel by horse was 35 miles, a long day netted 50 miles.

Rivers provided the fastest means of travel with the advent of steamers. However, canals were non-existent, snags and sandbars clogged the rivers and dredging was unheard of. Therefore, large portions of the state had no access to any kind of decent transportation system.

The visionary Archibald Murphy (1777?-1832) argued that without a system of transportation to move North Carolina's mail and commerce, the state could not progress. Though he did not live to see its fruition, his arguments planted the seeds. The coming of the railroad provided the means to fulfill Murphy's dream.

Two forces drove North Carolina in the early building of railroads. One was a state-wide recognition, created by Murphy, for the need for a decent transportation system. This led the state to finance many of the early railroads. In turn, this resulted in a uniform track gauge, a great rarity in early railroads. The only two gauges used in North Carolina were: 4'8½", the N.C. standard, and 5', the South Carolina standard. The second force was the recognition by the major seaport towns, notably Petersburg, Portsmouth, Norfolk, New Bern and Wilmington, that whichever towns could tap the inland riches of the Carolinas, would grow and prosper. Thus, many of these early railroads were financed by merchants of coastal seaports, and many of these coastal railroads connected with sister steamship lines.

A short note is in order on Weldon, N.C. as no less than four of the early railroads converged there. While this seems an unlikely destination today, in the early 1800's Weldon sat near the center of the Roanoke River Valley, studded with many of the most prosperous plantations in N.C. and Virginia. The rapids just up river blocked river traffic and so the economics of the time guaranteed attempts to try and unlock the riches of the area.

In this article I will discuss each of the early railroads in order of the numbers shown on the map, page 4. On each will be a brief history, followed by a station list and the known postal routes and markings. The postal history has been distilled from Towle,<sup>2,3</sup> Remele,<sup>4</sup> Alexander,<sup>7</sup> the James H. Harris Wilmington, N.C. collection and other sources. Remele (R) and Towle (T) numbers are given for cross reference purposes.

All of these markings are scarce and the rarities system used is the same as used in Alexander.<sup>7</sup> The meanings of the rarity numbers are as follows:

5	Scarce	16-25 examples known
6	Very scarce	11-15 examples known
7	Rare	7-10 examples known
8	Very rare	3-6 examples known
9	Extremely rare	2-3 examples known
10	Thought unique	

### 1. Wilmington & Weldon Railroad (Wilmington & Raleigh)

**History** - By 1833 the citizens of Wilmington had concluded that their future depended on rail transportation. Subscriptions totaling \$400,000 were sold, some state financing was secured, and on December 30, 1833 the Wilmington & Raleigh Railroad was chartered. The original plan called for the railroad to run to the new state capital at Raleigh. As such, the first 50 miles of track north out of Wilmington were laid in that direction. In 1835, after the citizens of Raleigh showed no interest in the project, the charter was amended and the line turned north for the Roanoke Valley. Weldon was chosen as the site for the terminus and by 1837 construction was underway from both ends.

The railroad began operating in November, 1838 in two sections. The southern section was a 64 mile run between Wilmington and Faison (then called Faison's Depot after Elias Faison, a principle stockholder whose plantation was there). The northern section was a 20 mile run from Weldon to Enfield. A stagecoach run filled the gap until the full length was opened on March 9, 1840.

At 161½ miles, it was the longest railroad in the world and a wonder in its time. Trains ran at 14½ miles per hour. Fare for the Wilmington to Weldon trip was \$5. After 1858, \$4 would take a passenger from Wilmington to Raleigh. By 1861 the line had 23 locomotives.

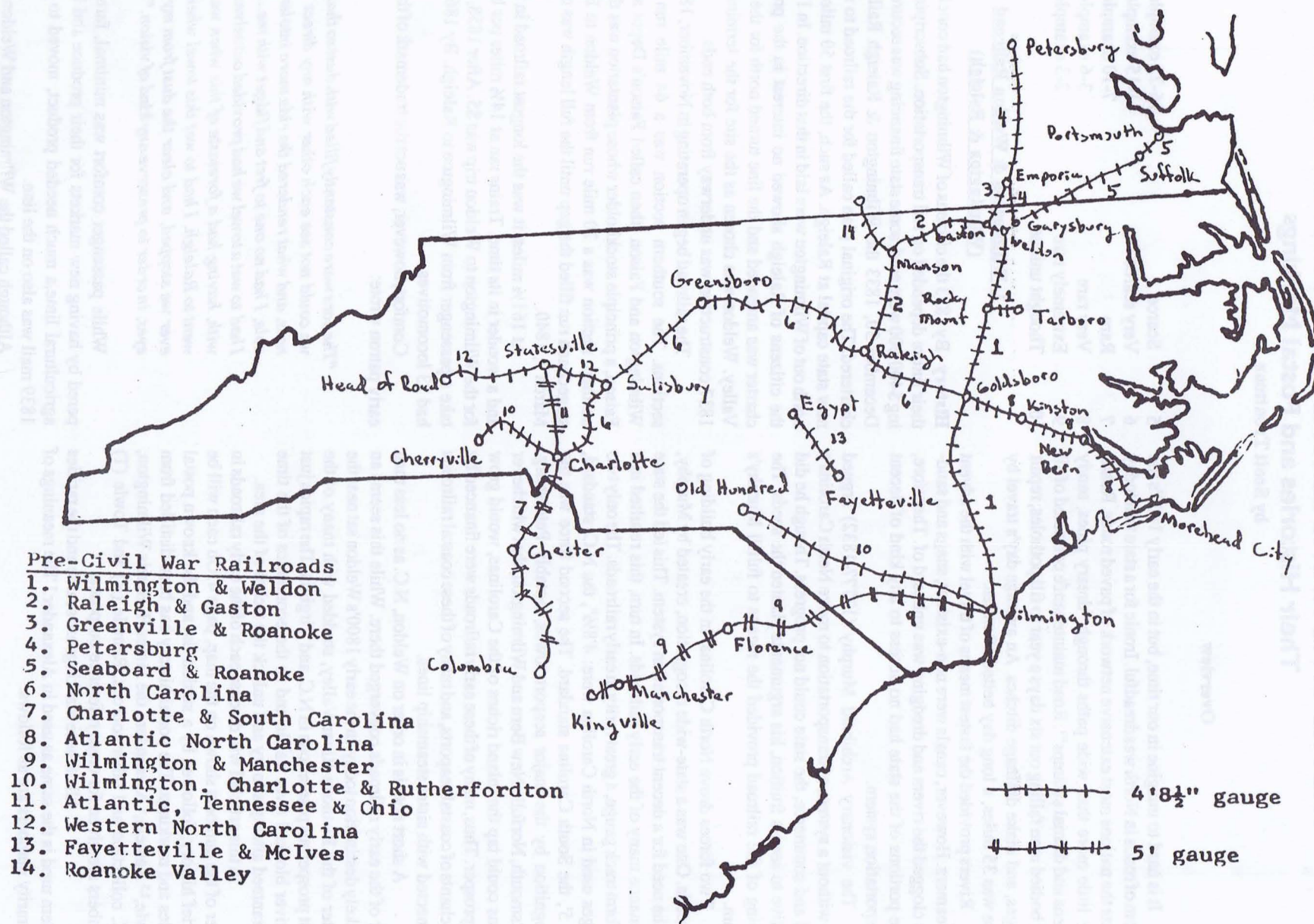
Comfort, however, was not the trademark of the line. An early patron wrote:

*"The cars were constantly filled with dust so that we could not see each other with any directness, and what rendered the ride more intolerable, I had no one to fret and fidget with me... I had to wet a towel we had provided ourselves with, having had a foretaste of this when we went to Raleigh. I had to wet this towel when ever we stopped, and clear the dust from my eyes, in order to preserve any kind of vision."*

While passenger comfort was minimal, farmers prospered by having new markets for their produce and by having agricultural lime, a much needed product, moved to them. By 1839 mail was also on the line.

Although called the Wilmington and Weldon by everyone since 1835, the name was not officially changed until 1855.







Even then, they continued to use the Wilmington & Raleigh postal handstamps.

This company also operated a steamship line from Wilmington to Charleston, S.C. Railroad markings are known on letter sheets dated at Charleston (no postmark) and on at least four covers which bear Honour's City Post carrier stamps. This local post operated out of Charleston. All were undoubtedly stamped on the steamers operated by the railroad.

This railroad today is a key part of the Atlantic Coast Line.

**Station List (1851)** - Wilmington, North East, Rocky Point, Burgaw, Washington, Teachey's, Strickland, Warsaw, Faison's Depot, Dudley (Mount Olive), Goldsborough, Nashunta (Fremont), Barden's Depot, Tossnot (Wilson), Joyner's Depot (Elm City), Rocky Mount, Battlesborough, Whitaker's (added later), Enfield, Halifax and Weldon.

**Postal Routes** - The first mail routes on this railroad were used by the Post Office Department to transport the Great (through) Mails between New York and New Orleans. The contract included the steamboat portion between Wilmington and Charleston previously mentioned. The contract payment to the railroad for the year 1839 was \$40,000, but this was increased to \$45,000 in June, 1840. There were 7 trips per week under this schedule:

Lv Weldon 2pm, arrive Charleston 2nd day 7 am.

Lv Charleston 5pm, arrive Weldon 2nd day 10 am.

This amounted to a 41 hour transit time with the stagecoach piece in the middle. When the railroad was completed, the time dropped to 30 hours.

A new contract was negotiated in 1843 and the annual payment was increased to \$75,000. This remained in effect until March 1, 1852 when a second daily round trip was added, and the annual payment was increased to \$85,125, or \$300/mile/year. This amount was split \$48,600 for the railroad and \$36,525 for the steamboats.

On March 16, 1840, three route agents, James C. Townley, W.L.C. Andrews and E.N. Peterson were assigned to the route.<sup>13</sup> It appears that each was given a handstamp in 1844, see type markings I, II and III.

On February 1, 1854 the Great Mails were taken off the steamboats and moved onto the Wilmington & Manchester Railroad, reducing the annual payment to \$48,000. The schedule now was:

Lv Weldon 1 pm & 11 pm - Arrive Wilmington 9 pm & 9 am  
Lv Wilmington 6 am & 2 pm-Arrive Weldon 1:30 pm & 10 pm

This schedule remained the same until the service was discontinued on June 1, 1861 due to the war.

After the war, service resumed on September 1, 1865, but at a reduced pay of \$16,200 per year. By 1858 the Great Mail route had shifted through western Virginia via Lynchburg and Bristol, but the Wilmington & Weldon continued to carry mail.

Three route agents, G.G. Lynch, A. Sherwood and W.A. Walker received shipments of the 1847 stamps in August of 1848. Each obtained 100 of the 10¢ and 500 of the 5¢ stamps.

To satisfy the steamboat portion of their route, a number of vessels were purchased. The first two were the *Governor Dudley* and the *North Carolina*, both were built in New York. Unfortunately these two collided in July, 1840 and the *North Carolina* was sunk. Other ships owned by the railroad included the *Cornelius Vanderbilt*, the *Wilmington*, and the *Gladiator*.<sup>15</sup>

#### Postal Markings:

A

W & RR, manuscript; 1840's; (T 305-AA-1); Rarity factor - 5

B

W & R Railroad, manuscript; (T 305-AD-1); Rarity factor - 6



Type I

WILMINGTON & RALEIGH RAILROAD. (R W7a; T305-H-1)  
Period slightly away from D of RAILROAD, smaller lettering;  
Prestamp period Red  
1847-51 period Red or Blue  
1851-57 period Blue  
Rarity factor - 5



Type II

WILMINGTON & RALEIGH RAILROAD. (R W7b; T305-H-2)  
Period close to D of RAILROAD, larger lettering than C.  
Pre-stamp period Red  
1847-51 period Red or Blue  
1851-57 period Red  
Rarity factor - 5





Type III

WILMINGTON & RALEIGH RAILROAD (R W7C, T 305-H-3)

No period after D in RAILROAD

Pre-stamp period

1847-51

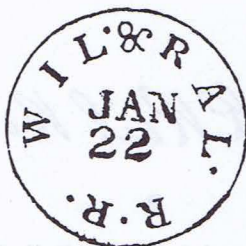
1851 - 57

Red

Red

Blue

Rarity: Blue or red - 5



Type IV

WIL & RAL\* R.R. (R W7d, T 305-I-1)

1847 - 51 Blue

Rarity - 7



Type V

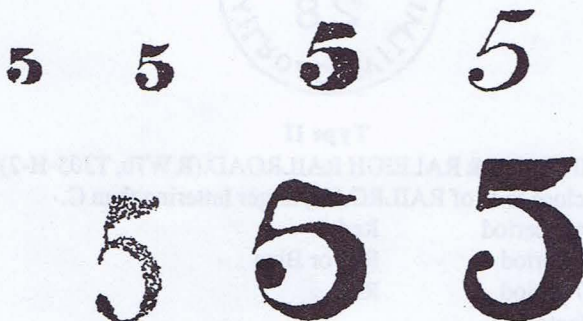
WILMINT. & RALEIGH R.R./N.C. (R W7e, T 305-J-1)

1851-57

Black

Rarity - 9

**Additional Markings** - Handstamp Five (7 known styles)



Handstamp Ten (7 known styles)



Handstamp Free (1 known style)

**FREE**

*[Editors note: A Type III cancellation in brown is known to exist; however, due to the condition of the cover and the possibility of red dye oxidizing to brown, the existence of brown markings cannot be confirmed. The earliest recorded marking is a Type III, dated Feb/2 (1843)-VS]*

### Raleigh & Gaston Railroad

**History** - The reason the people of Raleigh had no interest in joining the Wilmington & Raleigh project was that they had been actively negotiating for a railroad running north to Petersburg, Virginia.

In 1835 the legislature chartered the Raleigh & Gaston Railroad to complete an interstate undertaking. The plan was for the Petersburg Railroad to head south where it would link with and use the already finished Greenville (Va.) & Roanoke Railroad which terminated at Gaston, N.C. The Raleigh & Gaston would extend the line south to Raleigh. To aid the venture, the citizens of Petersburg matched subscriptions for Raleigh & Gaston stock, and the people of Richmond, believing that they would prosper, joined in.

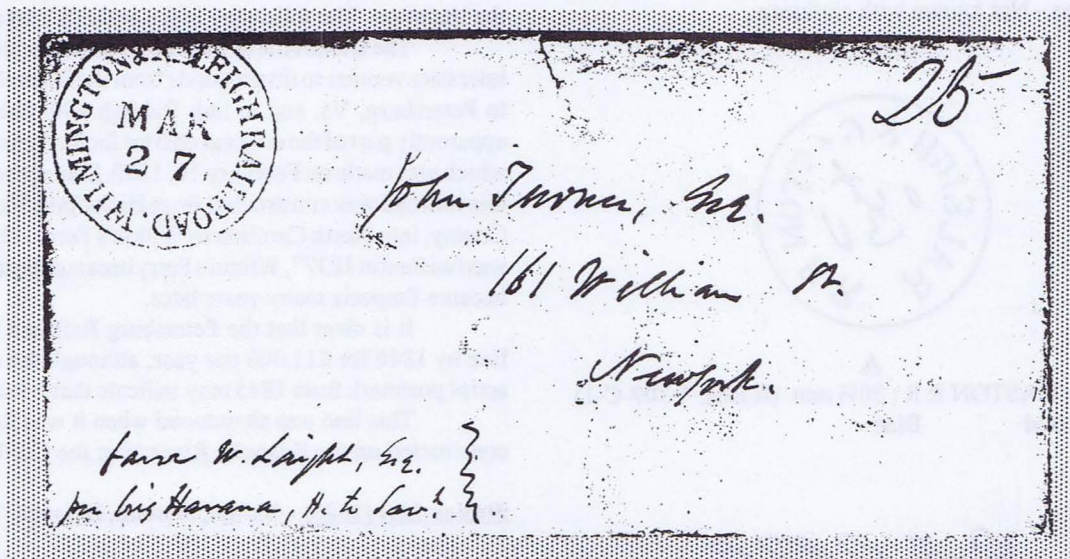
Financial troubles which slowed construction was cured by some additional N.C. state funds, and the first ten miles from Gaston to Littleton was opened in May, 1838. By September, 1838 the line was open to Henderson. Within a year it reached Raleigh and by 1840 the line had been extended from Gaston to Weldon, thereby making Weldon the railroad capitol of N.C. This full line was about 100 miles in length.

Passenger accommodations of the Raleigh & Gaston were about the same as on the Wilmington & Weldon. In 1849 a passenger going from Raleigh to Wilmington found that he had to "change cars at Weldon at 2 or 3 o'clock, in the open air, which although was a serious inconvenience, is far better than the old mode of staging." The trip required most of a day.

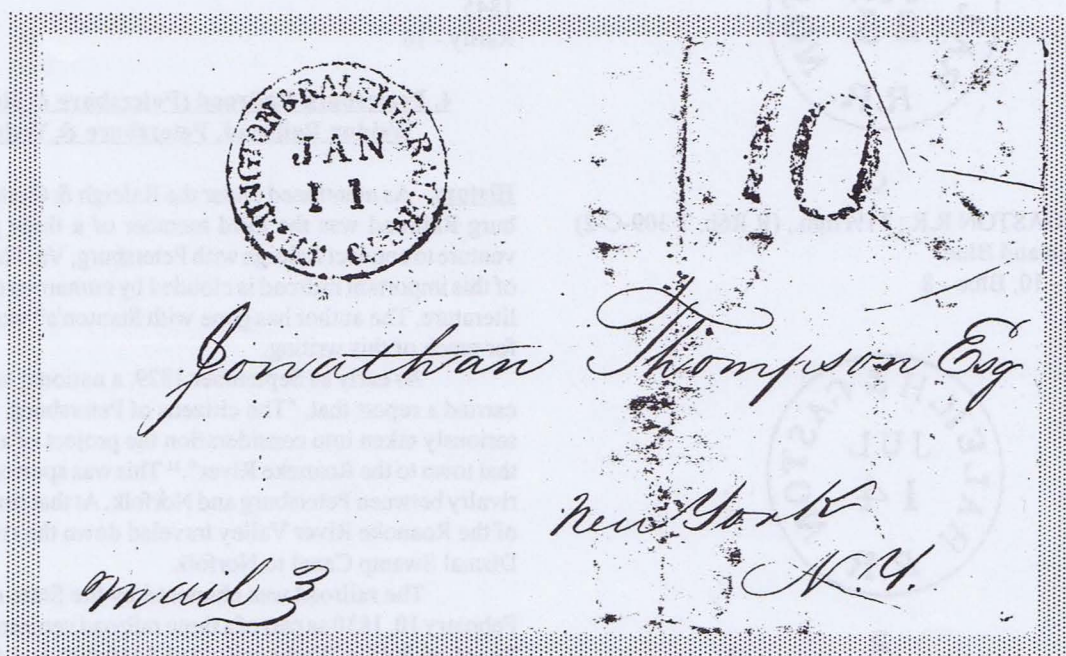
This railroad was a user of slave labor. When the Civil War began, \$125,000 had just been appropriated for additional slave purchases, enough for about 125 strong laborers.

A merger with the Seaboard & Roanoke toward the end of the 1800's created the Seaboard Air Line Railroad. Today this is part of the Seaboard Coast Line.





Type II red cancellation dated Mar/27 (1844). This folded letter started in Havana, Cuba on March 12. It was carried by ship to the U.S. where it was placed in the railroad mail for the remainder of the trip to New York.



Type III cancellation on letter dated Jan/11 (1848)



**Station List (1856)** - Raleigh, Huntsville, Forestville, Franklinton, Kitrel's Henderson, Manson, Ridgeway, Warrenton, Macon, Littleton, Gaston.

**Postal Routes** - Not known with certainty.

**Postmarks:**



**A**  
RALEIGH & GASTON R R; 30½ mm. (R R6a, T 309-C-1)  
Stampless period Blue  
Rarity - 10

*R & G RR Co*

**B**  
R & G RR Co; manuscript (T 309-I-1)  
1850's  
Rarity - 5



**C**  
RALEIGH & GASTON R.R.; 31½ mm., (R R6b, T 309-C-2)  
1851-57; Green and Blue  
Rarity: Green - 10, Blue - 8



**D**  
RALEIGH & GASTON R.R.; 32½ mm. (R R6c, T 309-C-3)  
1851-57, Blue or Red  
Rarity: Blue - 8, Red - 10

### 3. Greenville & Roanoke Railroad

**History** - The history of this, possibly the first railroad constructed in Virginia or North Carolina, is hopelessly muddled in the literature. The following is the author's best understanding.

The Greenville & Roanoke was part of the three railroad interstate venture to divert goods from the Roanoke River Valley to Petersburg, Va. and to link Raleigh with Petersburg. It was apparently part of the original charter for the Petersburg Railroad which was made on February 10, 1830. Slave labor was used and this railroad was constructed from Hicksford, Va., in Greenville County, into North Carolina to Wilkin's Ferry. This 18 mile road was finished in 1837<sup>7</sup>. Wilkin's Ferry became Gaston and Hicksford became Emporia many years later.

It is clear that the Petersburg Railroad had leased this line by 1840 for \$11,000 per year, although the existing manuscript postmark from 1845 may indicate that it ran its own trains.

This line was abandoned when it was flooded by dams constructed on the Roanoke River after the Civil war.

**Station List (1845)** - Gaston, Summit, Bylands, Va., Hicksford.

**Postal Routes** - See Petersburg Railroad

**Postmarks:**

*G & RRRd*

**A**  
G & RRRd, manuscript  
1845  
Rarity - 10

### 4. Petersburg Railroad (Petersburg & Roanoke, Weldon Railroad, Petersburg & Weldon)

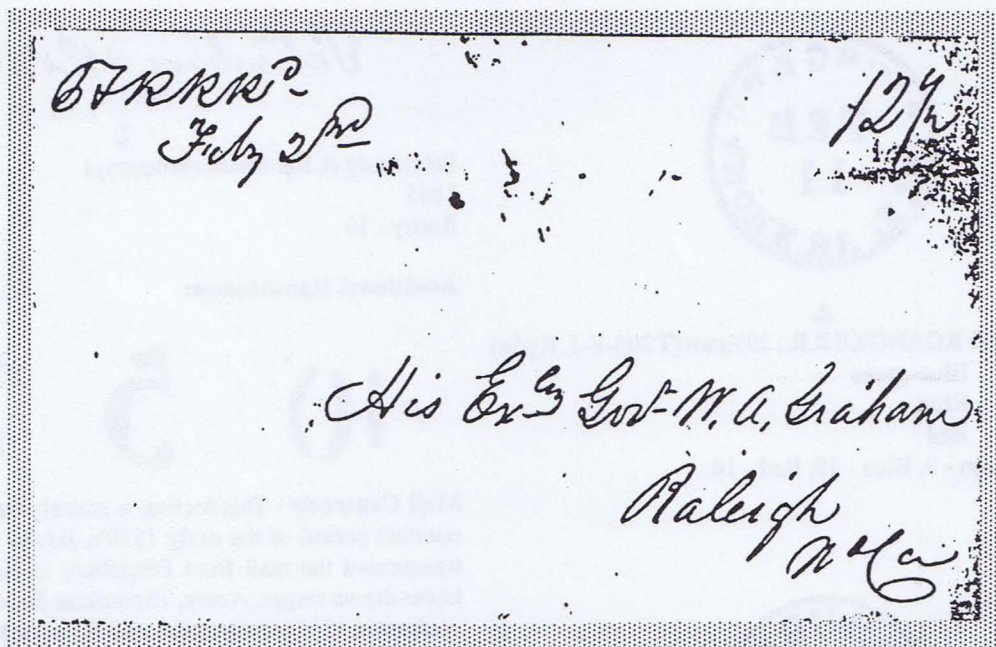
**History** - As mentioned under the Raleigh & Gaston, the Petersburg Railroad was the third member of a three part interstate venture to connect Raleigh with Petersburg, Va. The early history of this important railroad is clouded by numerous conflicts in the literature. The author has gone with Stanton's<sup>15</sup> work as the basis for much of this writing.

As early as September 1829, a national news magazine carried a report that, "The citizens of Petersburg, Virginia have seriously taken into consideration the project of a railroad from that town to the Roanoke River".<sup>11</sup> This was spurred on by a trade rivalry between Petersburg and Norfolk. At that time the produce of the Roanoke River Valley traveled down the river and up the Dismal Swamp Canal to Norfolk.

The railroad was chartered by the State of Virginia on February 10, 1830 as part of a three railroad venture. The Virginia Board of Public Works provided \$160,000 and the remaining \$240,000 was raised by selling subscriptions, many to the people of Raleigh.

By the autumn of 1830, engineers, under the direction





Only known postal marking from the Greenville & Roanoke Railroad, dated Feb 2nd (1845).  
This cover is in the Governor William A. Graham Papers, N.C. State Archives in Raleigh.

Moncure Robinson began surveying the route. Construction began in 1831 and by October, 1832 the line was open and operating from Petersburg to Jarrett's Station, about halfway down the line. By the next summer the railroad was completed to Blakeley Depot at Garysburg, N.C., across the river from Weldon. Passengers and freight had to be off-loaded and transported across the river to Weldon to make connection for southern travel.

In 1837, the Portsmouth & Roanoke bridged the river at Garysburg and the Petersburg entered into negotiations to use the bridge. These negotiations fell through and in 1840 the Petersburg built a bridge of its own. In 1851 a new bridge was built as a joint effort with the Seaboard & Roanoke.

The railroad was officially named the Petersburg & Roanoke Rail Road. A fact that time has largely erased is that the Petersburg Railroad was commonly referred to as the Weldon Railroad by the townspeople until well after the Civil War.<sup>11</sup> As such, this writer feels that postal markings for the Weldon Railroad have long been incorrectly ascribed to the Wilmington & Weldon. The Petersburg & Weldon was another common nickname.

The railroad leased the Greenville & Roanoke Railroad for \$11,000 per year, starting in 1840, to create its western route into Weldon. The western route was 64 miles long to Weldon and could be covered in about four hours. This included "ample time allowed for stops at stations, for getting cows off the tracks, and on occasion even for helping a farmer along the route extinguish a fire."<sup>11</sup> The trains reached top speeds of 30 miles per hour, considered imprudent at the time. The older eastern leg was 60 miles long.

The Petersburg introduced cars with state rooms, berths and rocking chairs, though the rocking chairs "were made fast so that the facility of rocking cannot be exercised".<sup>11</sup> While the Baltimore & Ohio is generally credited with the first sleeping cars, the Petersburg appears to have an equally valid claim.

The early dinky engines had no cover over the engineer, and he was forced to stand up all the time. Only a small iron railing was provided to steady himself and he was exposed to both sun and rain.

The Petersburg was a key railroad during the Civil War, especially during the siege of Petersburg. It was rebuilt after the war and the line was eventually leased to the Atlantic Coast Line. The eastern leg is still a main line, while the western leg was abandoned when dams built on the Roanoke River flooded it.

**Station List, Western leg (1858)** - Weldon, Gaston, Hicksford, Va., Bellfield, Jarrett's Station, Stoney Creek, Reams, Petersburg. **Eastern leg** - Weldon, Garysburg, Pleasant Hill, Hicksford, Va., Bellfield, Jarrett's Station, Stoney Creek, Reams, Petersburg.

**Postal Routes** - The first route agents were assigned in March 1839, initially two agents, David Bull and Enoch Reynolds ran from Richmond to Weldon. By late 1841, there were three agents.

Petersburg to Weldon	1844-51	7 trips per week
Petersburg to Weldon	1852-60	14 trips per week

For detailed information on early mail contracts, see Stanton.<sup>15</sup>



Postmarks:



A

PETERSBURG & ROANOKE R.R.; 29½mm (T305-F-1, Rp5a)

1845-51 Blue-green

1847 Blue

Unknown Red

Rarity: Blue-green - 9, Blue - 10, Red - 10



B

PETERSBURG & R.R.R.; 30 mm. (T 305-F-1, R p5b)

1848 Blue-green

1851-57 Black

Rarity: Blue-green - 10, Black - 9

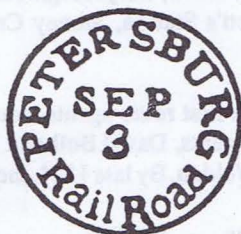
*Weldon R. Road*

C

Weldon R. Road ; manuscript (T 305-L-1)

1860's

Rarity - 10



D

PETERSBURG Rail Road; 30 mm. (T 305-W-1)

1839 Black

Rarity - 9 (?)

*Petersburg & RR Road*

E

Petersburg & RR Road; manuscript

1845

Rarity - 10

Additional Handstamps:

10 5 5

**Mail Contracts** - This section is entirely from Stanton.<sup>16</sup> In the contract period of the early 1830's, Edwin Porter & Company transported the mail from Petersburg to Halifax, N.C. in two horse-drawn stages. Avery, Thompkins & Co. were awarded the contract in 1834 to convey the mail from Richmond to Halifax via Petersburg in railroad cars and four horse-drawn coaches. It is possible that Porter also carried the mail on the railroads, but no documentation has been found to confirm this. Avery, Thompkins & Co.'s contract was from January 1, 1835 for four years at \$8,000 for the 95 mile route.

The initiation of the Express Mail in 1836 by PMG Kendall complicated the picture. Initially the express mail contract from Petersburg to Warrenton, N.C. went to James Williams at \$200 per mile per year. In November, 1836, this contract, as well as that of Avery & Co., was in part transferred to the Petersburg RR for the portion they traversed at the rate of \$8,000 per year for the express mail and \$10,000 for the Great Mail.

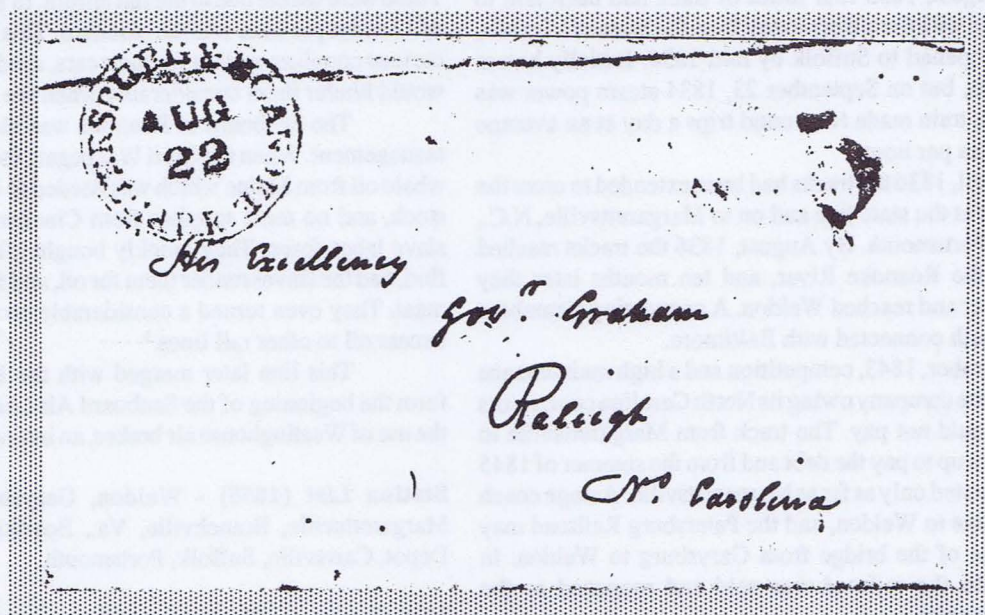
With completion of the Greenville & Roanoke in 1837, the main mail route was transferred to Petersburg via Hicksford and Gaston. However, a three trip a week route continued from Hicksford to Blakely Depot (at Garysburg), for which the Petersburg was compensated at an additional \$1,340 annually.

In 1838 the Express Mail contract was discontinued and a new contract went into effect paying \$237.50 per mile per year. At this point the Great Mail route went from Petersburg to Weldon. This contract ran through 1843. In 1844, the Great Mail route was transferred to run to Gaston, part of an effort to eliminate the steamboat section from Wilmington to Charleston. However, this order was rescinded in February, 1845, apparently without ever having gone into effect. The Petersburg did receive an extra \$100 for mail going over the Greenville & Roanoke tracks. This status quo was maintained throughout the fiscal year 1847.

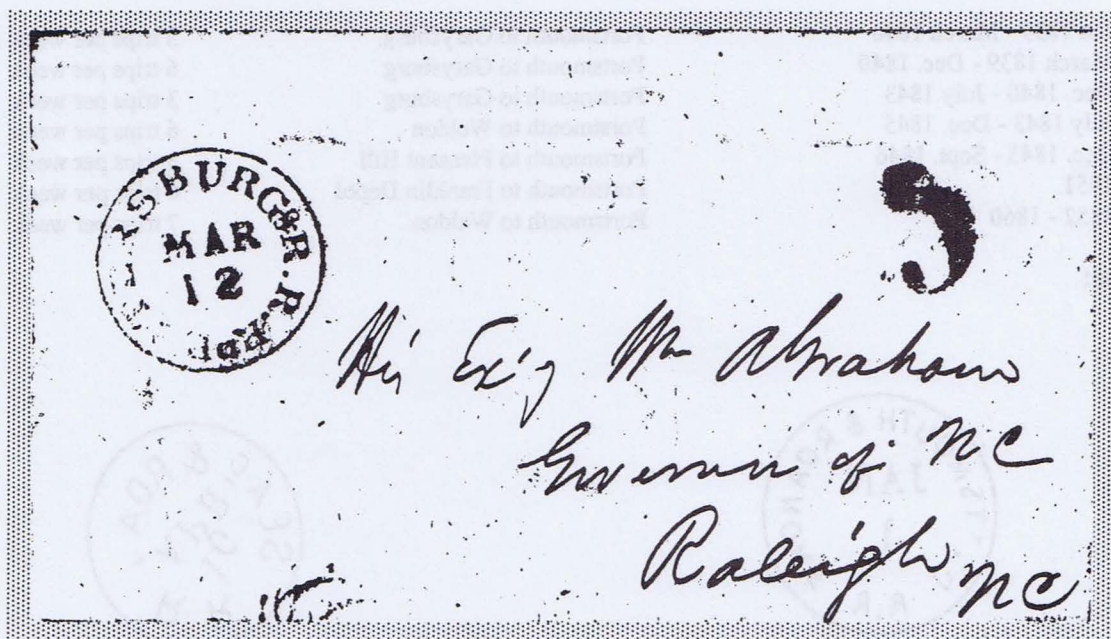
5. Seaboard & Roanoke (Portsmouth & Roanoke)

**History** - Portsmouth and Norfolk had prospered from the Roanoke Valley commerce due to their location at the end of the Great Dismal Canal. However, with the Petersburg Railroad under construction, the two towns subscribed \$150,000 to build a railroad of their own. The Portsmouth & Roanoke R.R. was chartered on March 8, 1832 in Virginia and in January, 1833 in





This unique blue cds, *Illus. A*, is datelined "Weldon".  
The enclosure, dated August 22, 1847, is in the Governor's Papers, N.C. State Archives.



This only known blue-green cds, *Illus. B*, is dated March 12, 1848. The enclosure, datelined "Weldon", establishes this was a Petersburg & Roanoke designation and not a Petersburg & Richmond handstamp. It could have been a station agent's handstamp.



North Carolina. Construction began from Portsmouth using slave labor.

By August, 1833 four miles of track had been laid to Bowers Hill, and with the aid of money from the State of Virginia, 17 miles were opened to Suffolk by mid 1834. Initially horses pulled the trains, but on September 23, 1834 steam power was introduced. The train made two round trips a day at an average speed of 13 miles per hour.

By April, 1836 the tracks had been extended to cross the Meherrin River at the state line and on to Margarettsville, N.C., 62 miles from Portsmouth. By August, 1836 the tracks reached Garysburg on the Roanoke River, and ten months later they spanned the river and reached Weldon. A connecting steamboat line at Portsmouth connected with Baltimore.

By October, 1843, competition and a high maintenance roadbed found the company owing its North Carolina contractors \$30,000 they could not pay. The track from Margarettsville to Weldon was torn up to pay the debt and from the summer of 1845 the railroad operated only as far as Margarettsville. A stage coach connected the line to Weldon, and the Petersburg Railroad may have gained use of the bridge from Garysburg to Weldon. In September, 1846 the railroad was sold and reopened as the Seaboard & Roanoke.

The Seaboard & Roanoke rebuilt the tracks to Garysburg and, jointly with the Petersburg Railroad, built a new bridge and two miles of track from Garysburg to Weldon. The finished 80 mile route was opened on November 10, 1851.

With a charge of 5¢ per mile, this was one of the most

expensive railroads to ride in the south. Trains were pulled with small "single driver" engines (only one drive wheel on each side). These were usable due to the flat terrain. In 1840 an average speed of 12 miles per hour was the standard. This line also developed a curious coupling system for their cars, used nowhere else, which would hinder them considerably when the Civil War broke out.

The Seaboard & Roanoke was blessed with a creative management. When the Civil War began, they were faced with no whale oil from Maine which was needed to lubricate their rolling stock, and no meat supplies from Cincinnati used to feed their slave labor force. They quickly bought all the hogs they could find, had the slaves render them for oil, and fed the slaves with the meat. They even turned a considerable profit from selling their excess oil to other rail lines.<sup>5</sup>

This line later merged with the Raleigh & Gaston to form the beginning of the Seaboard Air Line (the Air referred to the use of Westinghouse air brakes, an innovative safety feature).

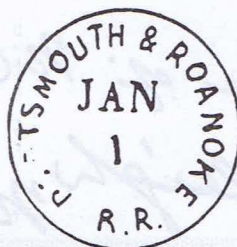
**Station List (1855)** - Weldon, Garysburg, Murfreesboro, Margarettsville, Branchville, Va., Boydkin's Depot, Franklin Depot, Carrsville, Suffolk, Portsmouth.

**Mail Contracts** - The history of these contracts is given in detail in Stanton.<sup>15</sup> Mail was carried as early as 1839 and possibly before that. Route agents were used as early as 1839. This was continued until the Portsmouth & Roanoke went broke in 1846. New contracts with the Seaboard & Roanoke were made by 1851 and possibly earlier.

#### Postal Routes

Jan 1839 - March 1840	Portsmouth to Garysburg	3 trips per week
March 1839 - Dec. 1840	Portsmouth to Garysburg	6 trips per week
Dec. 1840 - July 1843	Portsmouth to Garysburg	3 trips per week
July 1843 - Dec. 1845	Portsmouth to Weldon	6 trips per week
Dec. 1845 - Sept. 1846	Portsmouth to Pleasant Hill	3 trips per week
1851	Portsmouth to Franklin Depot	6 trips per week
1852 - 1860	Portsmouth to Weldon	7 trips per week

#### Postmarks:



**A**  
PORTSMOUTH & ROANOKE R.R.; 32-32½ mm. (R P12)  
1857-61 Brown  
Rarity - 9  
Considered a "hold over" marking as the name was changed in 1848.

**B**  
SEABOARD & ROANOKE R.R.; 30 mm. (R S3)  
1857-61 or possibly 1851-57  
Rarity - 10



## 6. North Carolina Rail Road

**History** - With the Wilmington & Weldon and the Raleigh & Gaston already operating, the advantage of rail transportation was obvious, even to a state factionally divided between east and west. The western (Piedmont) plan called for construction of a railroad connecting the Charlotte & Columbia at Charlotte with Danville, Virginia. Easterners argued this scheme was a sellout to out of state interests.

W.S. Ashe introduced a bill in 1848 to finance a railroad from Goldsborough to Charlotte, passing through Raleigh. The state would put up two million dollars with another million to come from the sale of stock. The vote in the state senate was a tie, broken in favor of the railroad by Speaker Calvin Graves from Caswell County. This was political suicide as the railroad would not run through his county. His political career was over.

The railroad was chartered January 27, 1849. Former Governor John Motley Morehead was the railroad's principle backer, getting personally involved in the sale of stock, surveying the route, and overseeing the roads construction.

Construction did not get under way until January 1852. Work began at each end with the South Carolina Railroad aiding considerably on the Charlotte end. Postal service began in 1855 with stage coach service connecting the two ends, about a 90 mile gap. On January 20, 1856 the final connection was made about midway between Greensboro and Jamestown. The line was 223 miles long.

Six hundred and thirty two acres of land were purchased in Alamance County and the community of Company Shops grew up around the railroads repair shops. This is modern Burlington.

The line was a boon to the state. Freight rates were half what it cost to ship by wagon. But a trip across the line was an all day affair. Trains left Goldsboro at 6:30 pm, made Raleigh at 9:30 am, Greensboro at 3:13 pm, Salisbury at twilight and steamed into Charlotte at 9:15 pm.<sup>5</sup> The train and the mail with it now moved across the state at an average speed of 15 miles per hour.

The railroad named its engines after mythological figures or geographic features. Figure 1 shows a list of the engines owned by the company in 1858.<sup>6</sup>

The Civil War left the railroad untouched but in terrible shape. In 1871 it was leased to the Richmond & Danville for 30 years. They defaulted and, effective January 1, 1896, it was leased to the Southern Railroad for 99 years.

**Station List** - Goldsborough, Boon Hill, Pine Level, Mitchenor's Store (Selma), Powhatan Turnout, Stallings, Raleigh, Asbury's Turnout, Morrisville, Brassfield, Durham, Strayhorn's, Hillsboro, Mebane, Haw River, Graham, Company Shops, Gibsonville, McClean's, Greensborough, Jamestown, High Point, Thomasville, Glenn's Turnout, Lexington, Holtsburg, Salisbury, China Grove, Coleman's Turnout (Kannapolis), Concord, Harrisburg, Query's Turnout, Charlotte.

### Postal Routes:

Goldsborough to Charlotte -

1855-59

7 trips per week

1860

6 trips per week

### Postmarks

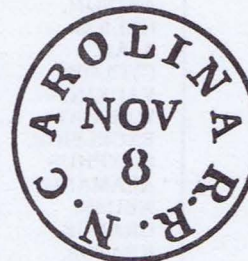
*NC Rail Road*

**A**

NC Rail Road; manuscript (T 322-A-1)

1850's (?)

Rarity - 6



**B**

N.CAROLINA R.R.; 33½ mm. (R N16a, T 322-B-1)

1851-57

Black or Blue

Rarity: Black - 8, Blue - 10



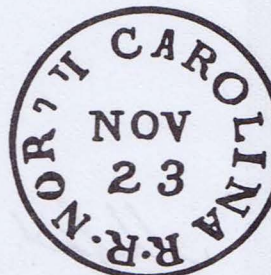
**C**

NO<sup>H</sup> CAR<sup>R</sup> R<sup>L</sup> R<sup>P</sup>/N.C.; 29½ mm (R N16b, T 322-C-1)

1851-57

Black

Rarity - 8



**D**

NORTH CAROLINA R.R.; 36 mm. (R N16c, T 322-D-1)

1857-61

Black

Rarity - 9

**North Carolina R-R.  
August 25 1860.**

**E**

North Carolina R-R.; 49 x 4 mm. (R N16d, T 322-I-1)

1857-61

Black

Rarity - 9



NORTH CAROLINA RAILROAD  
DEPARTMENT OF SHOPS.  
REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING JULY 1st, 1858.

NAMES OF ENGINES.	BY WHOM BUILT.	DATE OF ARRIVAL	COST, INCLUD- ING FREIGHT.	KIND OF ENGINES.
ASTRON, .....	R. Norris & Son,	July, 1855	10,000	Passenger
HELIOS, .....	"	"	10,000	"
AJAX, .....	"	September, 1854	9,800	"
CYCLOPS, .....	"	November, "	9,800	"
YADKIN, .....	B.K. & Co.,	October, 1856	9,250	"
WATAUGA, .....	R. Norris & Son,	November 1856	8,500	"
EXCELSIOR, .....	"	December, 1854	9,000	"
SISYPHUS, .....	"	September, 1854	9,800	"
ALAMANCE, .....	"	April, 1857	8,600	"
NEUSE, .....	"	"	8,650	"
ORANGE, .....	R.L. & M.W.	May, "	8,900	"
KRATOS, .....	R. Norris & Son,	July, 1855	9,500	Freight,
ULYSSES, .....	"	October, 1854	9,000	"
APOLLO, .....	"	September, "	9,000	"
IXION, .....	"	"	9,000	"
PACTOLUS, .....	"	March, "	9,000	"
CYBELE, .....	"	July, "	9,000	"
MIDAS, .....	"	September, "	9,000	"
TRAHO, .....	"	February, "	7,800	Gravel,
PELLO, .....	"	September, "	7,800	"
GUILFORD, .....	"	November, 1856	9,950	Freight
ROWAN, .....	"	"	9,965	"
ARISTOS, .....	"	July, 1855	9,500	"

THOS. E. ROBERTS, *Master of Machinery.*

Figure 1.

A curiosity of the North Carolina and other early railroads was the names given to the engines. Some had mythological Greek names, some were named for heroes, rivers or counties. Reprinted from *The Tree of Life, A History of the North Carolina Railroad*, published by The North Carolina Railroad Company, Raleigh, N.C.



Bright blue cancels US #11, *Illus. B*, on folded letter dated Oct/24 (1851)



## 7. Charlotte & South Carolina Rail Road Company

**History** - The Charlotte and South Carolina was chartered in S.C. on December 18, 1846. It was an attempt to deliver the untapped goods from Piedmont North Carolina into South Carolina. The North Carolina charter was granted on January 2, 1847. The railroad would use the gauge standard of S.C. instead of the N.C. gauge.

Work got underway from the Columbia end. In 1851 the first 35 miles was opened to Winnsboro, S.C. The next year the line reached Rock Hill, S.C., 85 miles from Columbia. Completion came in late 1852. The full run was 112 miles long.

On July 9, 1869 it was consolidated with the Columbia & Augusta, creating the Charlotte, Columbia & Augusta Railroad. Around the turn of the century it became part of the Southern Railroad.

**Station List (1859)** - Columbia, Killian's Mill, Campbell's, Ridgeway, Simpson's, Winnsboro, White Oak Turnout, Young's Turnout, Blackstock, Cornwell's Turnout, Chester, Smith's, Ebenezer, Catawba River, Fort Mills, Morrow's Turnout (Pineville, N.C.) and Charlotte.

### **Postal Routes**

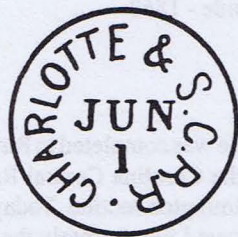
Columbia to Winnsboro	1851	6 trips per week
Columbia to Rock Hill	1852	6 trips per week
Columbia to Charlotte	1853-60	6 trips per week

### **Postmarks:**

*C & S C R R*

**A**

C & SCRR (manuscript) (T 338-A-1)  
1850's  
Rarity - 8



**B**

CHARLOTTE & S.C.R.R.; 30 mm. (R C7, T 338-B-1)  
1851-57      Black  
Rarity - 8

## 8. Atlantic North Carolina Railroad

**History** - With the Wilmington & Weldon operational and the North Carolina Rail Road under construction from Goldsboro,

the people of the seaport towns of New Bern and Morehead City quickly realized they were losing out. Plans were formulated in the early 1850's for a line from Morehead City to New Bern, on to Kinston and ending in Goldsboro.

While fairly sparsely settled, the people of the three counties of Lenoir, Craven and Carteret put up \$400,000 and the state loaned them another \$1,000,000. Construction went quickly and by the mid 1850's the railroad was in operation. They learned their lessons well by watching both the Wilmington & Weldon and the Seaboard & Roanoke. They established a connection with a bi-monthly steamer to New York, and by offering access to a large northern market, their efforts were quickly rewarded.

The initial plan was for the train to make a single daily round trip, and, as such, the line was built with almost no sidings. When war talk started and more goods started flowing, they quickly realized the error. A crash program was made to build sidings and it, too, paid off. In 1862 alone, the railroad's profits were so enormous that they paid off one-fourth of their debt to the state.<sup>5</sup>

After the war they rebuilt their severed line and continued operation, sometimes as the Atlantic-Carolina Railroad and later as the Midland North Carolina. In 1910 they leased the line for ninety-one years to the Norfolk & Southern Railroad.

**Station List (1855)<sup>9</sup>** - Goldsborough, La Grange, Kinston, Dover, Cove Creek (Cove City), Tuscarora, New Bern, Havelock, Newport, Carolina City, Morehead City.

### **Postal Routes - Unknown**

**Postmarks** - None known until post-Civil War.

## 9. Wilmington & Manchester Rail Road

**History** - After the success of the Wilmington & Weldon at bringing commerce to the city, another Wilmington group decided to try to tap the central area of South Carolina. This new railroad would use the S.C. gauge. Construction appears to have begun in 1851 or 1852 from Manchester, S.C. heading east, and from Wilmington headed west. Manchester was in the Catawba River Valley and is today called Sumpter Junction. In 1852 a 34 mile run was opened from Manchester to Lynchburg, S.C., nine miles east of Sumter. In 1853 this run had been extended east to Florence Station and a North Carolina section from Wilmington to Whiteville was in operation. The western run was now 54 miles long, the eastern 46 miles in length. In 1854 the full run opened including an extension westward to Kingsville, S.C. Kingsville was a junction point with the Columbia Branch of the South Carolina Railroad. The full run was 171 miles long.

To insure that the Wilmington & Weldon did not get expansion ideas, this railroad bought 20% of the Wilmington & Weldon stock.<sup>5</sup> A passenger going across this line paid \$6 for the privilege. It was reported in excellent operating condition late in the Civil War.

The route was later extended to Augusta, Georgia and became the Wilmington & Augusta Railroad. Currently the Southern Railroad controls the Kingsville to Sumter section. The rest is part of the Atlantic Coast Line.



**Station List (1860)** - Wilmington, Registers, Brinkley's, Flemington, Whiteville, Grist, Cerro Gordo, Fair Bluff, Nichols, S.C., Mullins, Marion Court House, Great Pee Dee, Mar's Bluff, Florence Station, Timmonsville, Lynchburg, Maysville, Sumpterville, Manchester, Wateree, Kingsville. See Figure 2 for the 1860 schedule.

**Postmark:**



**DAVIDSON COLLEGE,  
A.T. & O. R.R.**

Dated JAN / 25 (1889)



**WILMINGTON & MANCHESTER R.R.; 32½mm**  
(R W6, T 340-A-1), Rarity - 10  
1851-57 Black

WILMINGTON & MANCHESTER RAILWAY.									
Thos. D. WALKER, Pres.; J. P. ROBERTSON, Supt.; JOSEPH J. LIND, Treasurer; and R. B. McRAE, Gen. Transportation and Ticket Agent, Wilmington, N. C. [March 1st]									
Exp.	Nail.	Fra.	Mile.	STATIONS.	Mile.	Fra.	Mile.	Exp.	
P. M.	A. M.			LEAVE	ARRIVE			P. M.	A. M.
7 25	8 30			Wil. & Wel. R'way	171			1 15	1 45
8 15	9 00			Wilmington	170 6 00			12 44	1 18
8 49	9 32			Register's	161			12 21	12 51
9 13	9 55	60		Brinkley's	153 5 40			11 58	12 22
9 42	10 23	90		Maxwell's	143 5 10			11 31	12 02
10 04	10 45	1 30		Flemington	136 4 80			11 02	11 31
10 25	11 07	1 50		Whiteville	126 4 50			10 36	11 05
11 05	11 45	1 50		Grist's	117 4 20			10 24	10 50
11 17	11 56			Cerro Gordo	118			10 07	10 31
11 37	12 15	2 10		Fair Bluff	107 8 90			9 41	10 01
12 08	12 42	2 40		Nichols	99 8 60			9 15	9 24
12 33	1 04	2 70		Mullins	93 8 80			8 53	9 07
12 50	1 30	3 00		Marion	84 3 00			8 26	8 35
1 28	1 55	3 30		Great Pee Dee	76 2 70			7 54	8 01
2 03	2 26	3 60		Mar's Bluff	69 2 40			7 25	7 41
2 28	2 50	3 90		Florence	63 2 10			6 47	6 51
3 03	3 19	4 20		Timmonsville	52 1 80			6 20	6 20
3 32	3 45	4 50		Lynchburg	43 1 50			5 57	5 54
4 00	4 10	4 80		Maysville	34 1 90			5 22	5 20
4 28	4 36	5 10		Sumpterville	24 90			5 01	4 54
5 02	5 05	5 40		Manchester	14 60			4 39	4 33
5 25	5 24	5 70		Wateree	9 80			4 50	4 45
6 15	6 05	6 00		Kingsville					
A. M.	P. M.			ARRIVE	LEAVE			A. M.	P. M.

ALABAMA & MISSISSIPPI RIVERS RAILWAY.									
JAMES L. PRICE, Pres., Selma. W. R. BILL, Acting Supt., " [June 13]									
Pass.	Mile.	STATIONS.	Mile.	Pass.					
A. M.		LEAVE	ARRIVE	P. M.					
8 30		Selma	80	8 30					
9 20	12	Harrell's M. Roads	18	2 50					
9 30	14	Junc. C. M. & G. R.	16	3 30					
10 15	17	Vernon	18	2 15					
10 55	23	Bellevue	7	1 45					
11 15	27	Coffee Springs	8	1 30					
11 30	30	Uniontown	1	1 15					
A. M.		ARRIVE	LEAVE	P. M.					

Fares, about 5 cents per mile.  
Daily Stages connect at Uniontown with Greensborough, Demopolis, Lauderdale Springs, on the Mobile & Ohio Railway, and Southern Railway of Mississippi.  
A branch road is being constructed from Uniontown in a northerly direction, 9 miles, to Newbern, with a prospect of being extended to Greensborough.  
The Railway Connections of the Wilmington and Manchester Railway are the Wilmington & Weldon Railway (p. 234) at Wilmington; the Cheraw & Darlington Railway and North Eastern Railway (p. 237) at Florence; the Camden Br. of S. Carolina Railway at Wateree Junc., and the Col. Br. of S. Carolina Railway at Kingsville (p. 237). The standard time of this road is eight minutes faster than that of the S. Carolina.

**Figure 2**  
Schedule from Appleton's Railway Guide - 1860

## 10. Wilmington, Charlotte and Rutherford Railroad

**History** - Not much information is found on the early history of this railroad, but it was clearly an attempt by yet a third group in Wilmington to bring goods from the Piedmont and far western regions of the state their way. A map from 1855<sup>9</sup> shows the entire planned route of the railroad, however, at the time of the Civil War only two disconnected sections were finished.

The first section ran west from Wilmington to Old Hundred, so named because it was 100 miles from the starting point of the line. The second piece headed northwest out of Charlotte to Lincolnton, then turned southwest to Cherryville, a total of 41 miles.

This line was completed to Rutherfordton after the Civil War. By 1871 the Carolina Central Rail Road operated on the Charlotte to Wilmington section. Today the entire route is part of the Seaboard Coast Line, formerly the Seaboard Air Line.

### Station List (1855)<sup>9</sup> -

Eastern Section - Wilmington, Black Rock, Lumberton, Laurel Hill (Laurinburg), Old Hundred.

Western section - Charlotte, Cottage Home, Lincolnton, Cherryville.

**Postal Routes** - Unknown

**Postmarks** - Not Reported



### 11. Atlantic, Tennessee & Ohio Railroad

**History** - Little is known about the construction of this 48 mile railroad from Charlotte to Statesville, except that it had apparently just opened at the time of the Civil War. It is shown on maps from 1855.<sup>9</sup> The road was built to the South Carolina gauge enabling trains from Charlotte & Columbia to continue north. Financing may have come from South Carolina.

Because it offered no strategic advantage in the Civil War, its tracks were removed to provide rails for the much needed Piedmont Railroad being constructed from Greensboro to Danville, Va. It was rebuilt after the war and operated until the 1880's when it was leased to the Charlotte, Columbia & Augusta Railroad. Around the turn of the century it became part of the Southern Railroad.

**Station List (1855)<sup>9</sup>** - Charlotte, Alexandriana, Davidson, Mt. Mourne (Mooresville), Fallstown, Statesville.

**Postal Routes** - Unknown

**Postmarks** - No Civil War or pre-war markings have been reported.

### 12. Western North Carolina Railroad

**History** - The most ambitious of the railroad projects, the original charter for this railroad was to build a line from Salisbury west through the mountains to Murphy. Work began in the late 1850's heading west from Salisbury. It ran to Statesville where it connected with the Atlantic, Tennessee & Ohio, and moved on to a point called Head-of-Road near present day Newton, 45 miles total length. The Civil War caught up with it and work ceased.

The railroad operated during the war, but everything except the tracks was carried off for use on more vital roads. At the end of the war, the shops consisted of a three sided wooden building, an anvil, a hammer and a few scraps of iron.<sup>5</sup>

After the war, the first construction was a run from Greensboro to Winston and south to Mooresville, and then from Head-of-Road, it pushed west to Old Fort. At that point the company went broke. A New York syndicate refinanced it and the line was completed to Asheville, Murphy, and on to Chattanooga, Tennessee. In 1894 the Southern Railroad bought it.

**Station List (1855)<sup>9</sup>** - Salisbury, Barber, Statesville, Poplar Grove, Head-of-Road.

**Postal Routes** - Unknown

**Postmarks** - None known from before or during the Civil War.

### 13. Fayetteville & McIver Railroad (Western Railroad)

**History** - This railroad was constructed in the mid 1850's to bring coal from a mine in Chatham County to Fayetteville, where it could be barged down the Cape Fear River. The true name of the railroad is in doubt. Black<sup>5</sup> refers to it as the Western Railroad, while a cover in the James H. Harris collection shows a Fayetteville & McIver marking. The latter name seems more likely.

Equally questionable is where it ended. The coal mine was at Egypt (Cumnock). Black<sup>5</sup> lists it as going to Gulf, however the Egypt to Gulf piece is shown as a road on maps from 1855.<sup>9</sup> It is possible that the line had only been completed to McIver when the marking in the Harris Collection was applied.

During the Civil War the Egypt mines provided a low grade coal used by most of the Confederate blockade runners. After the war the railroad did carry mail as the Cape Fear & Yadkin Valley Railroad. It was probably during this period that it was extended to the town of Gulf. Later it was known as either the Chatham Railroad and/or the Egypt Railroad. Today it is part of the Atlantic Coast Line system.

**Station List** - Fayetteville, Manchester, Johnsonville, McIver Williamsburg, Egypt (Cumnock), The Gulf.

**Postal Routes** - Not known

**Postmark:**

*Egypt Station  
F&M R.R.*

A

Fayetteville & McIver R.R.; manuscript  
Rarity - 10

### 14. Roanoke Valley Railroad

**History** - Perhaps the strangest of the early southern railroad was chartered in 1857.<sup>12</sup> This was yet another group trying to tap the riches of the Roanoke Valley. The concept was to head northwest off the Raleigh & Gaston from a point called Valley Junction near present day Manson, and to proceed along the Roanoke River through Virginia connecting with the Richmond & Danville.

Consider the stupidity of this statement: they began construction at the two proposed ends using two different track gauges! What were they going to do when the ends met? No one knows. The eastern, or N.C., piece was completed as far as Clarksville, Va., about 25 miles, when the war broke out. Given a hopelessly moribund management, this railroad was ordered to be torn up to provide rails for the much needed Piedmont Railroad (constructed during the war from Greensboro to Danville, Va.).

Only a part of the Roanoke Valley Railroad was ever rebuilt. A short 12 mile section was in operation in 1922 from Manson to Townesville under the name of the Roanoke Railroad.

**Station List<sup>9</sup>** - Manson, Lynesville, Townesville, Clarksville, Va.

**Postal Routes** - It is doubtful that this railroad carried mail.

**Postmarks** - None known.



### Acknowledgments

The author wishes to gratefully recognize the original research by Tom Stanton in the National Archives, including the Postmaster General's Journals and the Mail Route Registers. Also thanks to Tony Crumbley for the idea and use of much of the material illustrated, Amy Troutman for research assistance, Don Herndon for the use of his library, and to James H. Harris and Vernon Stroupe for access to their material.

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A black North Carolina Railroad cds, Illus. C., ties a US #10 to brown, ribbed paper cover to the Honorable Thomas Ruffin, member of the North Carolina Supreme Court.



## WILMINGTON & FAYETTEVILLE RIVER ROUTE MARKING

by  
Greg Homesly

This cover was recently purchased from a friend and fellow stamp collector in my area, because it struck me as being something different and unusual. I had never seen such a postmark during the banknote period. My philatelic counselor told me to do a little research on the cover to see what it was. In researching the cover, I find the marking listed in the U.S. Transit Marking catalog as (H-25-A, Wilmington - Fayetteville, N.C. Cape Fear River Steamboat - Route #13100) which ran 112 miles.

Knowing the letter was written from Maysville, July 20, 1875 makes one wonder why the letter was not posted at the Maysville Post Office, for upon referring to Lists of Post Offices in N.C. Dates Established and Discontinued, the post office in Maysville was established on April 20, 1875 in Jones County and is still operating. Maysville is about 50 miles from Wilmington, and the Cape Fear River definitely does not run through Jones County.

The cover is addressed to Col. B.F. Little who was a veteran of the Civil War, and resided in Little's Mills in Richmond County about 75 miles from Fayetteville. The date slug in the marking is July 22.

On referring to the perpetual calendar in Hubbard & Winter's North Atlantic Mail Sailings, 1840-1875, the letter was written on a Tuesday, two days before the cover was postmarked at the docks in Wilmington.

One very reasonable theory behind the postmark is that the person who wrote the letter, Mr. P.C. Shaw, may have had business to attend to in Wilmington by horse and carriage, and decided to have the letter put in the mail at the docks in Wilmington in order to reach Col. Little quicker. Of course this is speculation, but it all seems logical.

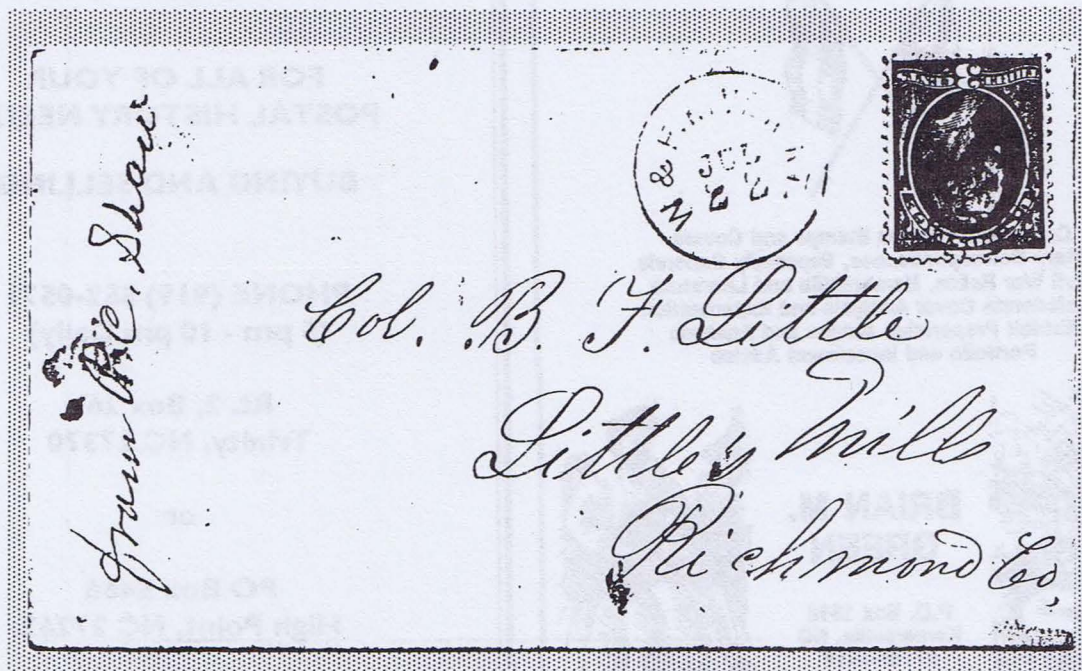
How many times have we, ourselves, had this situation occur? We intend to mail a letter close by, hop in our car and take a trip a few miles out of town, forgetting to mail the letter, and we simply mail the letter from another post office.

On this particular marking, I now refer to an article printed in the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society Silver Anniversary Booklet, *Collecting Transit Markings* by Charles L. Towle. This type of marking generally occurs as a result of mail being posted at a station on train or boat, handed to an agent or clerk in route or otherwise received by an agent or clerk without previous marking or lacking a cancellation of postage stamp.

Boat transit markings are known from the 1860 period until well into the twentieth century. Basically they will be found in either the Agt. or R.P.O. type of marking, but there are a few manuscript markings and fancy types known. Most boat routes carrying mail were on inland rivers, inland lakes, coastal rivers, and bays, but a few were over considerable ocean distances, such as the R.P.O. routes to Cuba and Alaska. A few varieties of boat transit markings are most confusing, such as a R.R. used on the New Orleans and Vicksburg River Route. Several others which only show a route or contract number were carried by steamboat. It is very difficult, in most cases, to distinguish boat transit markings from rail transit markings.

Certainly many more covers were carried by river boat mail, but for some reason, few have survived. If you have similar covers in your collection I would be interested in hearing about them.

Greg Homeley  
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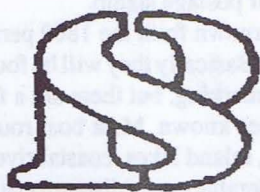
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