NORTH CAROLINA POSTAL HISTORIAN
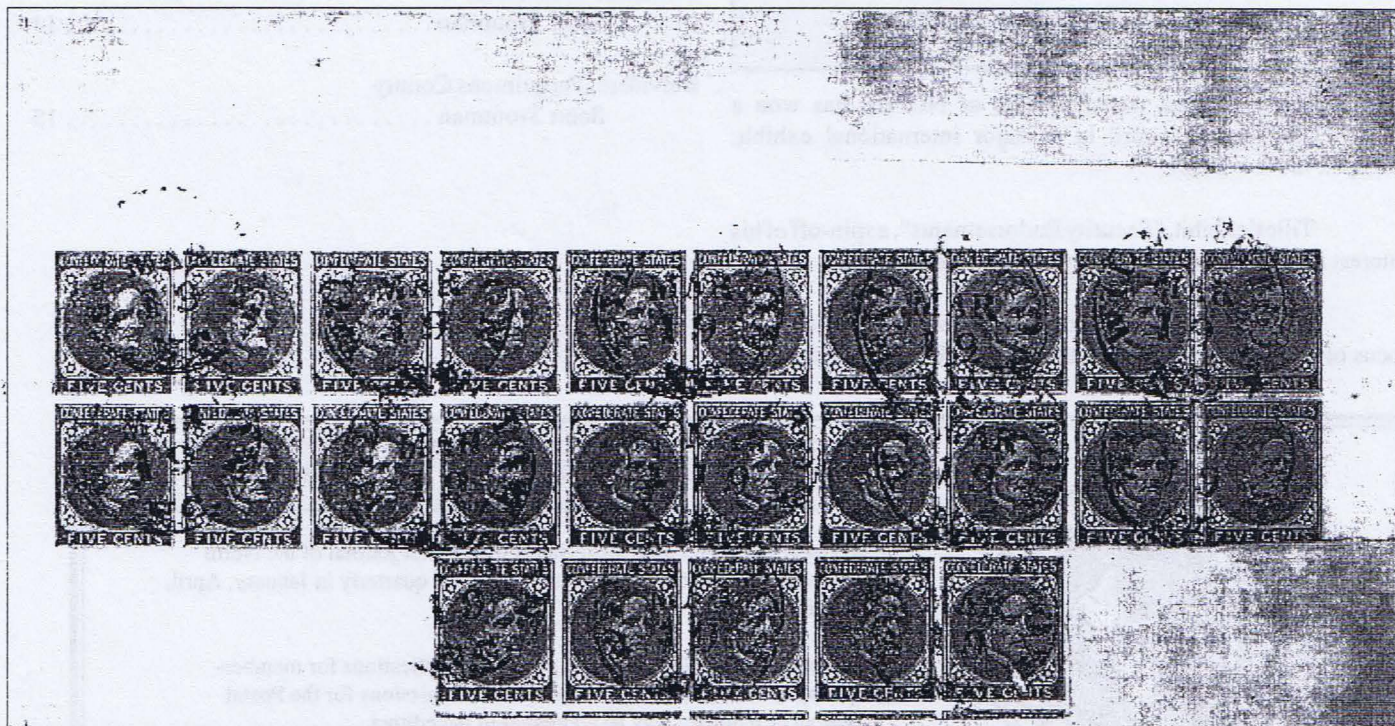
The Journal of the North Carolina Postal History Society

Largest Used Block of CSA #7 Known
Wilmington, N.C., March 19, 1863

Affiliate #155 of the American Philatelic Society

POSTAL HISTORY COMMISSION TO HOLD FIRST MEETING

The newly appointed Postal History Commission will hold it's first meeting on January 28, 1998 in Raleigh. The meeting will have an organizational, get-acclimated and get-acquainted agenda. David Olsen, Administrator of the State Archives and Records has been appointed temporary chairman. State Representative Michael Decker will explain the legislation creating the commission.

NCPHS members who are appointees to the commission are: Ruth Wetmore, Richard Winter, Thomas Richardson, Brian Green, Tony L. Crumbley, John Allen, and Vernon Stroupe. Harvey Tilles has been nominated to fill a duplicated seat. Eight members will be appointed from other disciplines.

The purpose of the NC Postal History Commission is to advise on the selection and production of a postal history exhibit in the North Carolina History Museum. Fifteen linear feet of wall space have been reserved for the project.

TILLES WINS AT INDIAPEX

Harvey Tilles, past-President of NCPHS has won a Large Gold-Vermeil award in a major international exhibit, Indiapex in New Dehli.

Tilles' exhibit, "Security Endorsements", a spin-off of his interest in perfins, has previously won national awards.

According to Harvey, the exhibit will now become the focus of material for a book on the subject. Way to go Harvey!

IN THIS ISSUE

North Carolina Postal Historian

A UNIQUE CONFEDERATE STATES GENERAL ISSUE COVER

by Tony L. Crumbley

While attending the APS Stamp Show '97 in Milwaukee, I spotted an outstanding North Carolina cover in John Hill's award winning exhibit. Shown on the cover of this issue is the largest known used multiple. The stamp is Scott #7 used on a wrapper. It is an Archer & Daly Richmond Printing of the London five cent plates.

This wrapper, posted in Wilmington on March 19, 1863, utilized twenty-five copies of the 5 cent stamp in one block to pay the $1.25 postage for an over weight letter. The wrapper carried the reports from Capt. William D. Muller, ACS, for November and December 1862.

The block is the top two rows of the pane plus a strip of five. The sheet margins are intact and the strip of five below includes the prominent "white tie" variety on the right hand stamp.

The 5 cent blue CSA General Issue bears the portrait of Jefferson Davis and was designed and engraved in London by Jean Ferdinand and Joubert de La Ferte. The printing company of Archer & Daly printed 36,250,000 copies of the stamp in Richmond from typographic plates shipped from London. The plate consisted of four panes of 100 stamps each. Unused full panes of this stamp still exist today, however, they are becoming scarcer each year as more and more are being cut into mint singles.

The stamp was printed on both London and Local paper. The Local paper is much coarser than the London paper. Both London and Local glue were used on the stamps - the London glue is clear and even, the Local glue is dark and appears to have been applied with a coarse brush.

The most common use of this stamp was to pay the ten cent rate. Examples do exist for payment of the 5 cent and over payment of the 2 cent rate, as well as other rates. The illustrate example is by far the largest usage and a striking North Carolina cover.

WILMINGTON to LONDON

by Richard F. Winter

The folded letter illustrated in Figure 1 provides an opportunity to talk about the postal convention between the United States and Great Britain. This letter originated in Charleston, South Carolina on 3 March 1852 and was addressed to London.

On 15 December 1848, a postal convention between the United States of America and her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland was signed in London by George Bancroft, United States minister at London and Viscount Palmerston, the British Foreign Secretary.[1] The United States Senate ratified the treaty on 6 January 1849. Great Britain ratified the treaty on 23 January 1849, and ratifications were exchanged in London on 26 January 1849. President James K. Polk proclaimed the treaty effective on 15 February 1849.[2] This postal convention would remain in effect until 31 December 1867, longer than any other U.S. bi-lateral postal arrangement.

The postal convention established the basic rate of 24¢ for a single letter of ½ ounce between the United Kingdom and the United States. Of that amount, 8 pence or 16 cents was considered the sea postage and belonged to the country who furnished the contract mail packet that carried the letter. At this time, steamships were used to carry contract mails between the two countries. Under the convention an inland fee for a single rate letter in Great Britain was set at 3¢ or 1½ pence, and in the United States, at 5¢. The three portions were combined to form the 24¢ rate. Letters could be sent fully prepaid or unpaid. Partial payment was not permitted. Any partial payment appearing on a letters was ignored by the post offices of the two countries. The original convention allowed each country to use its own scale of progression for multiple rate letters. This created difficulties since the British scale was 1,2, and then 4 rates for letters weighing between 1-2 ounces. The American progression of rates was one rate for each half ounce, which allowed for a triple rate on letters between 1-1½ ounce. The British progression did not allow for any odd-numbered rates after the first rate. Congress corrected this problem by authorizing the British rate progression to be used in the United States in the Act of 3 March 1849. Postmaster General Jacob Collamer put this Act into effect on 19 March 1849.[3] Since the triple rate in the United States on mails to Great Britain was allowed for a period of just over one month (until it was legal again in 1866), it is highly unlikely that one will find an example.

The convention established exchange offices at New York and Boston in the United States and London, Liverpool, and Southampton in Great Britain. These offices were the only offices permitted to exchange mails between the two countries. They made up the mails to be dispatched and the letter bills which accompanied the mails. They also were the only offices permitted to do the actual accounting between the two countries. In his instructions to postmasters on 19 June 1849,[4] Postmaster Collamer provided the following specific instructions to the exchange offices:

"The exchange offices of the two countries, in mailing to each other, are to postmark the
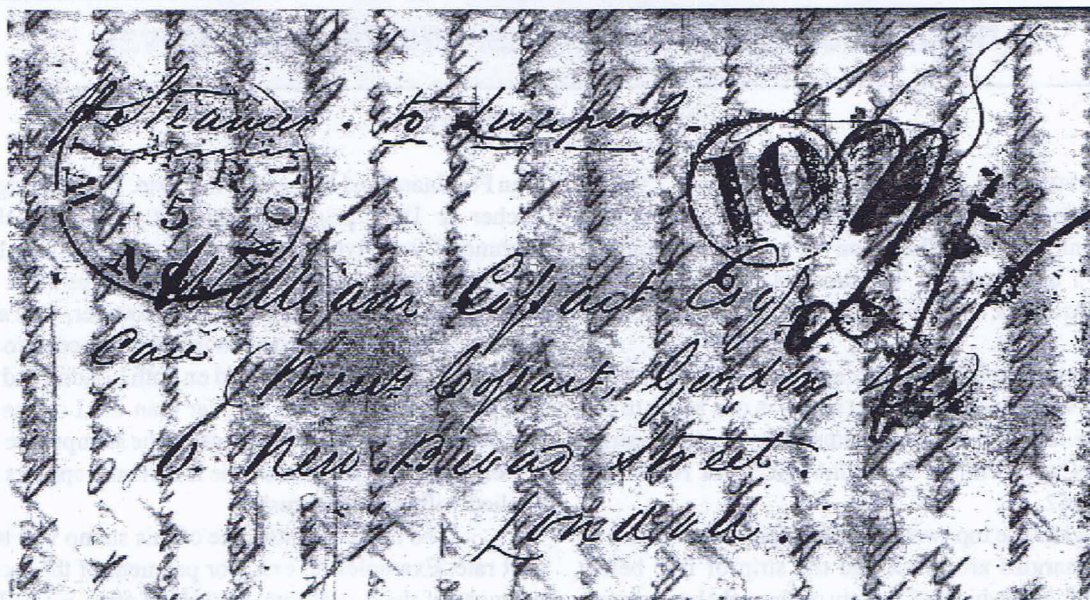
Figure 1. Charleston, S.C., 3 March 1852, to London, sent unpaid in the British Treaty mails, carried privately to Wilmington, N.C. where it was posted. New York marked 10¢ debit to G.B. and London marked 2 shillings postage due for a double rate letter (½-1 oz.)

letter, not with the entire postage, but with the credit and debit portions of it only; if a paid letter, with the credit amount in favor of the other country, in red ink, and with a 'paid' stamp in same color; if unpaid, with the debit amount against the other country, in black ink. But before the exchange office receiving such letter delivers it, or mails it to the interior, it is to re-stamp the letter with its own office stamp, in all cases, and with the 'paid' stamp in red ink, if paid; if unpaid, with the amount, in black, of the entire postage to be collected."

The color of the markings, then, became important on mails transmitted under the United States-Great Britain postal convention. The red color always meant prepayment or a credit to the other country, and the black color signified postage due or a debit to the other country. Also, since the exchange offices were the only offices permitted to do the accounting on the letters, any rate markings made by other post offices had no meaning and was discouraged. Because of the routine markings required of the exchange offices on each letter, both countries soon provided handstamp markers to the exchange offices showing many of the most often used debits and credits, as well as the total postage due values. There were a number of other important features of the postal convention, but these will be omitted for now and explained as the need arises in analyzing covers.

Now back to the cover illustrated in Figure 1. As mentioned earlier, this folded letter originated in Charleston. It was endorsed by the sender "Pr Steamer to Liverpool." This endorsement did not indicate the steamer's name or which steamship company was to carry the letter. At the time, steamships

from two lines carried mails to Liverpool, the British contract steamers of the Cunard Line and the American contract steamers of the Collins Line. Since the instructions were non-specific, the New York postmaster was free to place the letter on any steamer he chose that carried British Treaty mails. He elected to place the letter in the mails carried by the next steamer to depart, which was a British contract steamship. Since the steamship line that carried the letter determined the amount of money received by each country, he could have waited for a later steamer and increased the revenues to the United States. However, in the spirit of sending mails in the fastest manner, he elected to use the British contract mail steamer, which was to depart 10 days earlier than the American one.

Unlike the cover analyzed earlier,[5] this letter was carried privately to Wilmington, probably on the daily steamer from Charleston to Wilmington, which was operated by the Wilmington & Raleigh Railroad. The letter was posted unpaid in Wilmington on 5 March 1852. Because the letter entered the United States mails at the Wilmington post office, it was not processed by the railroad route agent and did not receive a route agent marking. It was already in a sealed mail bag when placed on board the train at Wilmington. The manuscript "48" in the upper right corner was an indication of the unpaid letter rate, 2x24¢ = 48¢. It is not certain who applied this marking. It could have been written by the letter sender as an indication of his desire to send this double rate letter in the British Treaty mails. Or it could have been written by the postmaster in Wilmington. In either case, it was not required to be on the letter and served little purpose.

The letter went by the rail system from Wilmington to New York where it was prepared for the mails to be sent out on the next British contract mail steamer, the Cunard Line steamship

Africa. The New York exchange office marked the circle "10" handstamp in black, as required, to show the United States debit to Great Britain. Since the letter was to be carried on a British mail steamer, the United States was entitled to only 5¢ per single ½ ounce letter. In this case, the debit was 2x5¢ = 10¢. Of the postage to be collected at destination, the British were entitled to keep 2x(16¢ sea postage plus 3¢ internal postage) = 38¢. The steamship *Africa* departed New York on 10 March 1852 and arrived at Liverpool on 22 March 1852, a respectable 12 day voyage.[6] The letter was in a closed mail bag from the New York exchange office to the London exchange office and therefore received no Liverpool markings. It arrived at London the next day, 23 March 1852, and was struck with a red circular datestamp on the reverse, 1852/23MR23. London, as required by the postal convention, marked the letter in black pen for a postage due of 2 shillings, or 48¢. This was the manuscript marking to the right of the circle "10" handstamp in Figure 1.

This cover is typical of the letters carried under the 1848 United States-Great Britain postal convention. It is an unpaid example and shows the debit marking of the New York exchange office and the postage due of the London exchange office in the colors assigned by the convention. The originating post office, Wilmington, North Carolina, was required to mark only its datestamp, which showed when the letter was forwarded from that office. The basic 24¢ rate on mails to Great Britain was to remain in effect for almost twenty years. It was finally reduced to 12¢ on 1 January 1868 and to 6¢ on 1 January 1870.[7]

Bibliography

[1]. U.S. 16 *Statutes at Large*, p. 787.

[2]. *Ibid.*, p. 788.

[3]. George E. Hargest, *History of Letter Post Communications Between the United States and Europe, 1845-1875 (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1971)*, pp. 33-36.

[4]. *Report of The Postmaster General - 1849*, Wierenga Reprint (Holland, Michigan: Theron Wierenga, 1976), p.841.

[5]. See Richard F. Winter, "Charleston, S.C. To Belgium via Wilmington & Raleigh Railroad," *North Carolina Postal Historian* Whole Number 60, pp. 3-5, for another cover carried from Charleston to Wilmington by the Wilmington & Raleigh Railroad.

[6]. Walter Hubbard and Richard F. Winter, *North Atlantic Mail Sailings 1840-75* (Canton, Ohio: U.S. Philatelic Classics Society Inc., 1988), p. 30.

[7]. Charles J. Starnes, *United States Letter Rates to Foreign Destinations, 1847 to GPU-UPU*, Revised Edition (Louisville, Kentucky: Leonard H. Hartmann, 1989), p. 20.
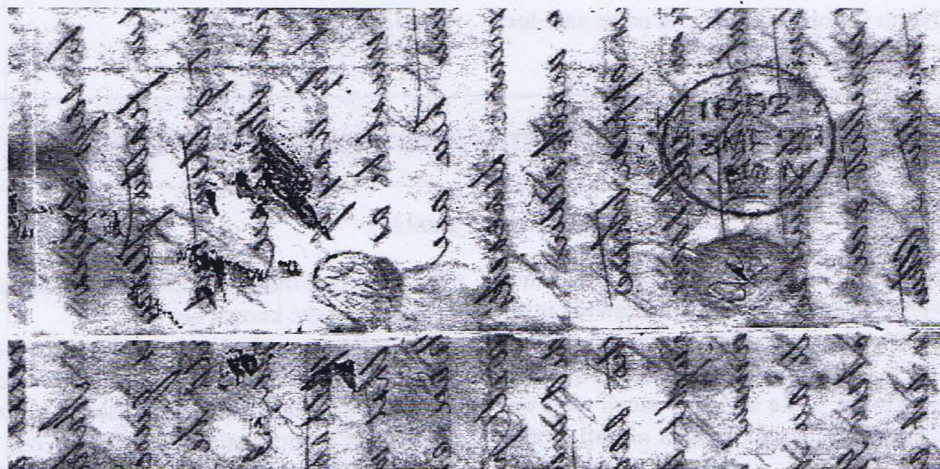
Reverse of the folded letter showing the red circular London receiving handstamp reading, "1852/23MR23" in the upper right corner.

Recent Confederate N.C. Auction Realizations

by Tony L. Crumbley

On October 28 and 29, 1997, the Robert A. Siegel firm conducted what is considered the largest ever Confederate sale. The sale was made up of four name collections plus additional lots for other collectors. Included were collections owned by John Birkinbine, Sherrell Nunnelley, William Murphy and Alexander Hall plus additional material from the Doc Simmon collection. The sale consisted of 1,472 lots and had many seldom seen North Carolina Confederate covers. Some of the most notable covers included a Southern letter unpaid cover from Murfreesborough, North Carolina to Richfield Spring, New York. This is perhaps the only known Southern letter unpaid cover from North Carolina. The cover sold for $11,500 plus 10% hammer fee.

Numerous provisionals were included. One of two known Carolina City provisional 118XU1 brought $4,250. This same cover sold two years ago for $3,000. A copy of Greensboro paid 10 provisional 32XU1 sold for $850. A Lenoir provisional 49X1 on a Davenport female college cover sold for $6,000. Only two such college covers are known from the 27 recorded Lenoir provisionals. A Raleigh provisional 68XU1 on advertising cover sold for $2,300 and the same provisional on a 10 star Confederate flag patriotic cover brought $1,700. Three other Raleigh provisionals brought $450, $120 and $160, respectively.

Two Salem provisionals were included in this sale. A 73XU1 netted $1,050 and 73XU3 sold for $1,300, both well over estimates.

Several nice North Carolina handstamp paids and dues were included. A unique P. Hill N.C. due 10 sold for $1,000. Most likely a record price for a Confederate due cover. Two Ridgeway handstamp paid 5 covers netted $200 and $100 each.

In the General Issue Section a strip of 5 of Scott #3 used from Salisbury sold for $1,300 even with the note that the cover had been cleaned and repaired. Two covers with Patterson N.C. fancy cancels brought out-of-sight prices, a pair of Scott #7 realized $3,750 and a single Scott #11 realized $2,100. Both were considered VF examples of this fancy paid 10 handstamp. A VF example of the two-cent red brown Scott #8 sold for $2,100 another example from Goldsboro realized $575. A example of Scott 11c canceled with a vivid red Greensboro CDS and a black Wilmington missent sold for $750. Another highlight in the sale was a gem copy of Scott #11 tied to a Southern Express Company's telegraph envelope with a bold blue dateless Charlotte handstamp sold for $1,700.

There were several scarce unofficial roulette stamps offered in this sale. One cover with an outstanding pair of #6 posted from Oxford realized $1,200. A roulette 20 cent green Scott #13 used over a black 10 cent provisional handstamp realized $4,000 and a 20 cent green roulette on legal size cover realized $1,050.

It's safe to say in spite of the fact this was the largest amount of Confederate material to come on the market in quite some time, the market held strong and produced many new record prices.

The All North Carolina Airmail Flight of 1937

by Tony L. Crumbley

Considerable research has been done on the early airmail flights throughout the world. The American Airmail catalogue last published in the mid 1970's contains perhaps more information than any other aspect of U.S. postal history. Such details as where flights flew from, who flew the plane and how much mail was carried is readily available on most North Carolina, as well as other American flights.

There are, however, two events that took place in North Carolina that are not considered official flights. Thus, they are not covered by the American Airmail catalogue. The first unlisted event is the All North Carolina Airmail Flight of October 11 - 16, 1937. Only one flight, the one from Kitty Hawk on October 12, 1937 is listed and considered official. The second is the First National Airmail Week conducted nationwide May 15-19, 1938. This flight, though not included in the catalog, has had considerable research conducted and much is known about these flights. This article will address the 1937 flight in hopes of adding to the knowledge of this aspect of North Carolina postal history. The list

that follows are the known cities that participated in this flight and the details of the known covers.

Eastern Airlines under the leadership of David Rickenbacker was responsible for the service. It was their intent to use these flights to help promote the use of airmail service. As this was the purpose of the 1938 flights, one can assume the 1937 flights were a catalyst for the flights a year later.

The author would appreciate hearing from anyone with additional information on this flight or covers that differ from those that follow.
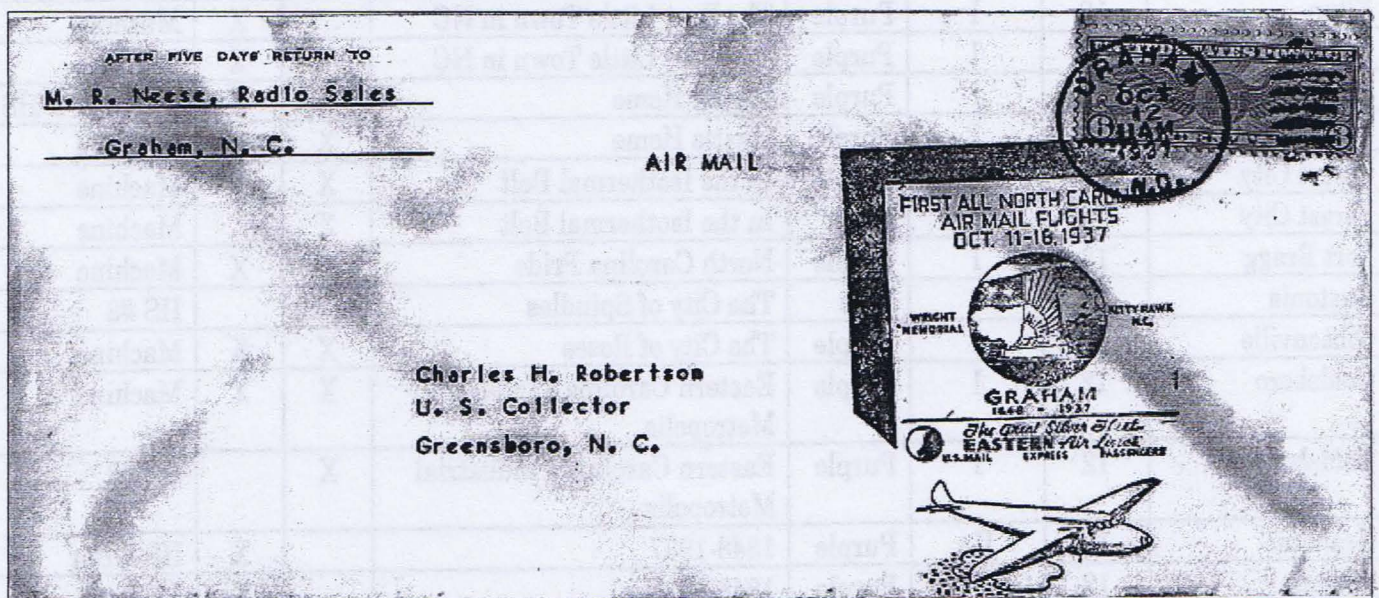
Three distinct cachets were used for this flight. Type I was a larger rubber stamp variety in different colors with customization of city name and slogan for each city. The Type II is a printed cachet similar to the rubber stamp but shaded and smaller. Type IIa is like the Type II but a rubber stamp cachet instead of printed.

Type 1

Type II

Type IIa

City	Oct. Date	Cachet	Color	Slogan	Cover Size Reg	Cover Size #10	Type Cancel
Asheboro	12	I	Purple	Center of North Carolina		X	HS #1
Asheboro	12	I	Purple	Center of North Carolina	X		Machine
Asheville	12	I	Purple	Men to Match our Mountains	X	X	HS #2
Black Mountain	12	I	Purple	The Key City	X		Machine
Burlington	12	I	Blue	The Progressive City	X		HS #1
Burlington	12	I	Blue	The Progressive City	X	X	Machine
Chapel Hill	12	I	Purple	The University Town	X	X	HS #1
Chapel Hill	12	I	Purple	The University Town		X	Machine
Chapel Hill	13	I	Purple	The University Town	X		Machine
Charlotte	12	I	Purple	The Friendly City	X		Machine
Charlotte	12	I	Purple	The Friendly City		X	Machine
Charlotte	13	II	Blue	The Friendly City		X	HS #4
Charlotte	15	I	Purple	The Friendly City		X	HS #4
Cherryville	12	I	Violet	High in the Piedmont	X	X	HS #1
Clinton	12	I	Purple	Busiest Town in the World		X	Machine
Clinton	13	I	Violet	Busiest Town in the World	X		Machine
Concord	12	I	Purple	The Town You Will Like	X		Machine
Dunn	12	I	Red	The City of Action an added cachet reads: "First Airmail Flight from Dunn, NC"		X	Machine
Durham	12	I	Purple	Industry and Education	X	X	Machine
Durham	12	I	Purple	Industry and Education	X		Four Bar
Durham	15	I	Purple	Industry and Education	X		HS #1
Elizabeth City	12	I	Black	Coastal Park Gateway	X	X	Machine
Elizabeth City	11	I	Black	Coastal Park Gateway	X		HS #1
Elkin	12	I	Red	The Best Little Town in NC	X		Machine
Elkin	12	I	Purple	The Best Little Town in NC		X	Machine
Elkin	13	I	Purple	The Best Little Town in NC		X	Machine
Fayetteville	12	I	Purple	Hustle Home	X	X	Machine & HS
Fayetteville	12	I	Purple	Hustle Home	X		Machine
Forest City	12	I	Purple	In the Isothermal Belt	X		Machine
Forest City	12	I	Black	In the Isothermal Belt	X		Machine
Fort Bragg	12	I	Purple	North Carolina Pride	X	X	Machine
Gastonia	12	I	Blue	The City of Spindles	X		HS #3
Gibsonville	12	I	Purple	The City of Roses	X	X	Machine
Goldsboro	12	I	Purple	Eastern Carolina's Industrial Metropolis	X	X	Machine
Goldsboro	12	I	Purple	Eastern Carolina's Industrial Metropolis	X		HS #2
Graham	12	II a	Purple	1848-1937		X	HS 9 Bar
Graham	12	I	Purple	1848-1937		X	Machine

City	Oct. Date	Cachet	Color	Slogan	Cover Size Reg	#10	Type Cancel
Greensboro	12	I	Red	The Gate City	X		Machine
Greensboro	12	I	Violet	The Gate City	X		Machine
Greensboro	12	I	Red	The Gate City		X	HS #2
Hamlet	12	I	Purple	The Healthy City	X		Machine
Hamlet	12	I	Purple	The Healthy City	X		Machine & DCHS
Hamlet	12	I	Purple	The Healthy City	X	X	Machine & HS
Hendersonville	12	I	Black	The Gem City	X	X	Machine
Hendersonville	12	I	Black	The Gem City	X		HS #1
Henderson	12	I	Purple	City of Thrift	X		Machine
Hickory	12	I	Violet	Best Balanced Town in U.S.	X	X	Machine
Hickory	16	I	Violet	Best Balanced Town in U.S.	X		Machine
High Point	12	I	Purple	The Work Shop of the South	X		Machine & HS #1
High Point	12	I	Purple	The Work Shop of the South	X		Machine
High Point	12	I	Purple	The Work Shop of the South		X	HS
Kings Mountain	12	I	Purple	The Historical City	X	X	Machine
Kinston	12	None			X		Machine
Kitty Hawk	12	I	Black	Birthplace of Aviation	X	X	Four Bar
Kitty Hawk	12	II	Blue	Charlotte's Cachet		X	Four Mar
Lenoir	12	I	Purple	Furniture Center of the South	X	X	Machine
Lenoir	12	I	Purple	Furniture Center of the South	X		Machine & HS
Lenoir	16	I	Purple	Furniture Center of the South	X		Machine
Lexington	12	I	Blue	Lexington Leads	X		Machine
Lexington	12	I	Blue	Lexington Leads	X		HS #1
Lincolnton	12	I	Red	Goes Air-Minded	X	X	Machine
Lincolnton	12	I	Purple	Goes Air-Minded	X	X	Machine
Lumberton	12	I	Black	Eastern Carolina's Best	X		Machine & HS
Lumberton	12	I	Black	Eastern Carolina's Best	X	X	Machine
Marion	12	I	Violet	Lake City of the Mountains	X	X	HS #1
Maxton	12	I	Purple	A Good Place to Live	X		HS #1
Maxton	12	I	Purple	A Good Place to Live	X	X	Machine
Monroe	12	I	Purple	City of Homes	X	X	Machine
Monroe	12	I	Orange	Same printed with Monroe First Flight and Birthplace of Andrew Jackson Cachet		X	Machine
Morganton	12	I	Violet	The Mimosa Town	X	X	Machine
Morganton	12	I	Violet	The Mimosa Town	X		Machine & DCHS

City	Oct. Date	Cachet	Color	Slogan	Cover Size Reg	#10	Type Cancel
New Bern	12	I	Red	Land of Enchanting Waters	X		HS #1
New Bern	12	I	Red	Land of Enchanting Waters	X		Machine
New Bern	12	I	Purple	Land of Enchanting Waters	X		HS #1
New Bern	12	I	Purple	Land of Enchanting Waters		X	Machine
N. Wilkesboro	12	I	Purple	Key to Blue Ridge	X	X	Machine
Orracoke	12	I	Black	The Fisherman's Paradise	X		Four Bar
Pinehurst	12	I	Violet	Famous Winter Resort	X	X	HS & Ms Cancel
Raleigh	12	I	Red	The Progressive City	X	X	Machine
Rockingham	12	I	Purple	The Best Town of All	X	X	Machine
Rocky Mount	12	I	Red	The Air-Minded City	X	X	Machine
Rocky Point	12	I	Purple	Wilmington's Cachet	X		HS #1
Roseboro	12	I	Purple	Roseboro, NC This cachet appears to be a generic handstamp with Roseboro added to the cachet after it was struck		X	HS #1
Salisbury	12	I	Purple	Where Opportunity Greets You	X	X	Machine
Salisbury	15	I	Red	Where Opportunity Greets You	X		Machine
Shelby	12	I	Purple	The Governor's Own	X		Machine
Southern Pines	12	I	Violet	The Mid-South Resort	X		Machine
Southern Pines	12	I	Black & Violet	The Mid-South Resort	X		Machine
Tarboro	12	I	Black	Visit Tarboro's Chapel of Antiques		X	Machine
Tarboro	12	I	Black	Visit Tarboro's Chapel of Antiques	X		HS #1
Wallace	12	I	Violet	The Coming Town	X	X	Machine
Warrenton	12	I	Purple	Carolina's Biggest Little Town	X	X	Machine
Wilmington	12	I	Purple	North Carolina's Major Port	X	X	Machine
Wilmington	12	I	Purple	North Carolina's Major Port	X		Machine & HS #1
Wilmington	12	I	Purple	North Carolina's Major Port	X		HS #1
Wilson	12	None		A Good Place to Live	X		HS #1
Winston-Salem	12	I	Purple	World's Tobacco Metropolis	X		Machine & HS
Winston-Salem	12	I	Purple	World's Tobacco Metropolis	X	X	Machine

HS #1 = Handstamp Numeral 1
MS = Manuscript
DCHS = Double Circle Handstamp
Machine = Machine cancel
Four Bar = Four bar handstamp

LOCUST HILL COMMEMORATION

President Alan Vestal submitted the following article from THE REVIEW, presumably from Reidsville and dated October 30, 1997. - ed.

Rockingham County postal patrons will have a once-and-only opportunity to see history repeat itself - for about four hours Saturday.

As one of the concluding activities of the ongoing Centennial Celebration of Rural Delivery, the Locust Hill Post Office will re-open for regular mail service for one day only between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. on Saturday.

The one-time re-opening commemorates the historic importance of the former U.S. postal station at Locust Hill, which closed in 1910. It also marks the initiation of rural mail delivery in the U.S., which began in 1896.

Reidsville Postmaster Wayne Cormack will work the original postal station during the special operating hours Saturday. The station still stands at its original site near the corner of N.C. 150 and Wagon Wheel Road.

G.M. McDowell, a Locust Hill resident and a rural mail carier, will play a major role in the commemoration by delivering mail to area residents in a horse and buggy along the old Stage Coach Trail, N.C. 150.

The current highway used to ba a heavily traveled stage coach route between Winston-Salem and Raleigh. McDowell plans to make stops at the Lenox Castle, Ashland, McIver and Locust Hill postal stations.

The Saturday event also will provide a chance for postal patrons to meet McDowell in the horse and buggy or meet Postmaster McCormack at the Locust Hill station.

McCormack will mark letters and packages for postal customers using a special commemorative Locust Hill (hand) stamp.

The postal personnell also will be available for commemorative photographs, interviews and business.
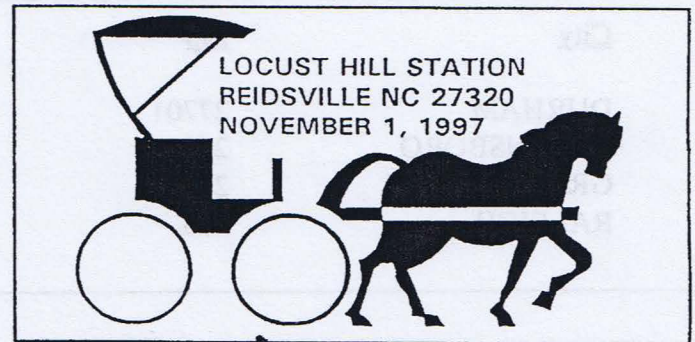
LOCUST HILL STATION
REIDSVILLE NC 27320
NOVEMBER 1, 1997

U.S. POSTAL SERVICE, OFFICIAL SPONSOR OF 1992 OLYMPIC GAMES

by Glenn Estus

Late in 1989, a press release from the United States Postal Service (USPS) stated that 145 post offices in the United States and Puerto Rico had permission to use a special die hub cancellation with the wording "U.S. POSTAL SERVICE/ OFFICIAL SPONSOR/ 1992 OLYMPIC GAMES". These hubs could be used continuously or intemiittently through August 3 1, 1992, depending upon prior commitments at each local post office.

The earliest reported date seen is December 26, 1989 from a number of post offices. There is one report of an earlier date (December 3, 1989) from the Northern Virginia Sectional Center, however this may be a poor inking of Dec. 30 or Dec 3 1.

Even though the last authorized date for the cancel's use was August 31, 1992, a few post offices used the cancellation well after that time. The latest date reported is Green Bay, Wisconsin (January 3, 1995).

In North Carolina, the slogan was used at 3 post offices as noted below. Some notes on the chart: ZIP is the ZIP Code number actually found in the cancellation dial.

For those interested in Olympic cancellations, I must make mention that another Olympic cancellation exists from North Carolina. In late 1959 and early 1960 a number of post offices throughout the United States used a special cancellation honoring the Olympic Winter Games held at Squaw Valley, California.

ASHEVILLE/N.C.   Dec. 4, 1959   Feb.28,1960 boxed

I have not been able to determine why the cancellation was used at Asheville.

Any one with earlier or later dates are is asked to send such information to the author at:

PO Box 451
Westport, NY 12993-0451.

City	Zip	Earliest	Latest
DURHAM	27701	Dec 2 91	Dec 2 91
GREENSBORO	274	Mar 10 90	Mar 17 90
GREENSBORO	27420	Jan 8 90	Jun 19 90
RALEIGH	276	Dec 27 89	Aug 3 93

Durham, 2 Dec 1991

Raleigh, 5 Mar 1990

Greensboro, 10 Mar 1990
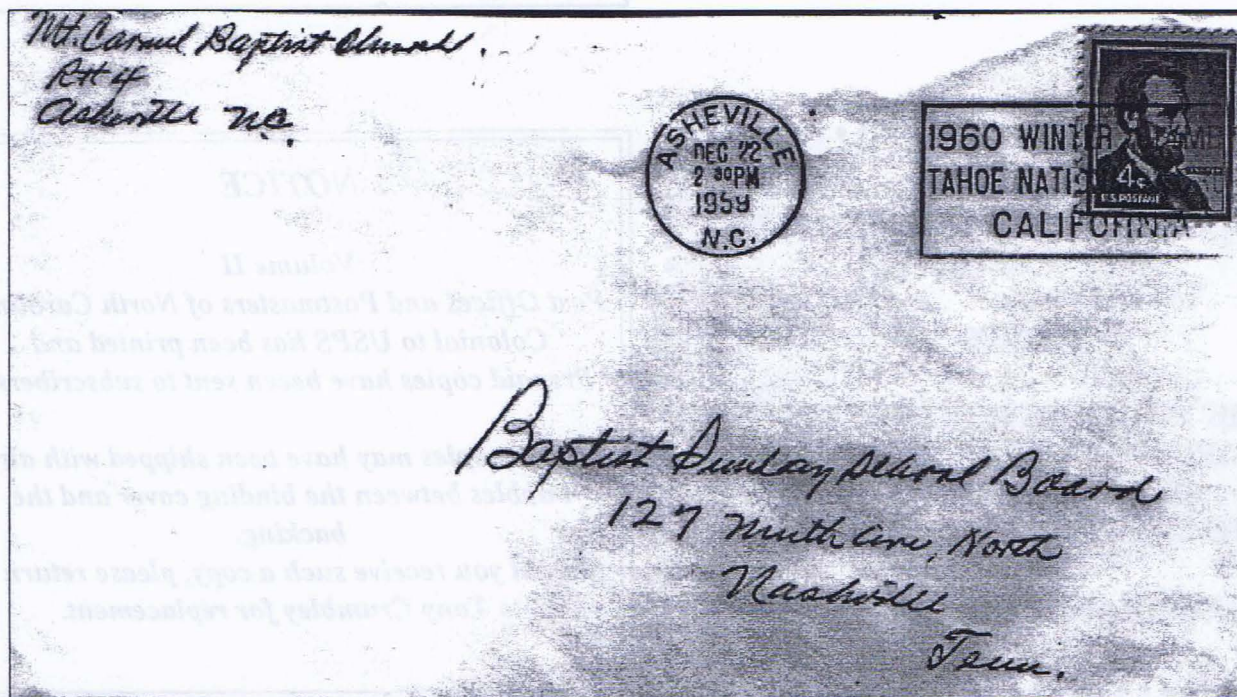
Old Mica Mine Cover

by Scott Troutman

Shown is a cover from the Pine Orchard Mica Mine in Soda Hill, Watauga County. The cover has a purple cancellation from Gap Creek with a double impression of a four ring bullseye killer on a two cent brown 1883 stamp. Soda Hill had its own post office from June 10, 1875 until November 11, 1905. It closed for about seven months between December 16, 1885 and July 8, 1886. There is a good chance this cover is from the time period when Soda Hill post office was closed given the banknote with which it was posted.

Gap Creek was to the north in nearby Ashe County. Its post office operated from July 7, 1851 until December 6, 1866. It too closed for a time and reopened July 10, 1867. It closed for good on May 14, 1904. Neither Soda Hill or Gap Creek are shown on modern maps. Both of these towns were north of Deep Gap near present day highway 221 on either side of the Ashe-Watauga border. Both could be classified as ghost towns.

Today, North Carolina remains one of the top three mica producing states in the nation along with New Hampshire and South Dakota. Mica is an alumino-silicate crystal which forms soft rocks. Mica has the unusual property that its crystalline structure allows it to be broken into ever thinner sheets. It also becomes translucent as it becomes thinner and will not burn. It also is both an excellent thermal and electrical insulator.

A popular use for sheets of mica in the 1880's was for candle lanterns. These were small lanterns into which a single candle was placed as a light source. The sides were made of thin, translucent mica sheets. The mica was favored over glass as it did not break and it was cooler if you touched it. Mica candle lanterns are still used today by hikers.

Sheets of mica, not large enough to be used in lanterns or in electrical insulation, are ground up and used in a great number of products including paints, lubricants, rubber, wallpaper, roofing, and plastics. It is also the shiny stuff in Christmas tree snow.

Belvidere, Perquimans County

By Scott Troutman

Today, Belvidere is a small country town of about a thousand people situated along the Perquimans River. It's biggest claim to fame is that Wolfman Jack, the, famous disc jockey who was featured in the movie American Graffiti, had relocated there when he died.

But Belvidere is an old town, founded in the early 1700's by a group of Quaker settlers. The first post office wasn't established until December, 4 1827 under the name Newby's Bridge. Matthias Jordan was the first postmaster. This first post office operated as a private post office until 1842.

On March 28, 1861 (three months before NC joined the Confederacy), the name of the post office was changed to Belvidere. This name came from a local 18th century plantation on the Perquimans River.

Quaker influence remained strong. In 1833 Belvidere Academy was opened by the Quakers. In 1895 the ownership of the academy was transferred to the Piney Woods Friends Meeting, a congregation founded in 1794 and still operating. The academy was turned into a public school in 1914 and burned down on May 2, 1935.

Elihu A. White was the first postmaster of Belvidere (1861-1866), and Adelaide E. White was postmaster in 1913-14. The White's were a prominent Quaker family and the post office may have operated at times from the building which since 1959 has housed Layden's Supermarket. It was formerly owned by one "Uncle Rufus" White and the building began as a blacksmith's shop in 1883. When Uncle Rufus ran the place it had the peculiarity that they would not stock Red Devil lie, popular for cleaning and soap making, because the name offended Uncle Rufus's religious sensibilities.

The Perquimans River originates in the heart of the Great Dismal Swamp to the north and served as the primary transportation route during the early years. Supplies came in by the river and the town shipped out corn, wheat and naval stores.

In the early part of this century the town had a cotton gin, sawmill and grist mill - they have all closed. At one time the town housed two doctors; now the nearest one is at Hertford. Belvidere today is pretty much what it has always been, a quiet little town on the banks of the river.

Bibliography
1.   "Belvidere", Our State, Kathy E. Grant, August 1997.

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There are no new members to report for this quarter.

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