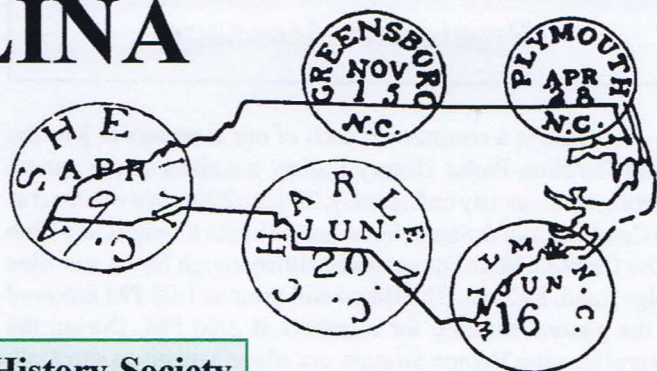


NORTH CAROLINA POSTAL HISTORIAN

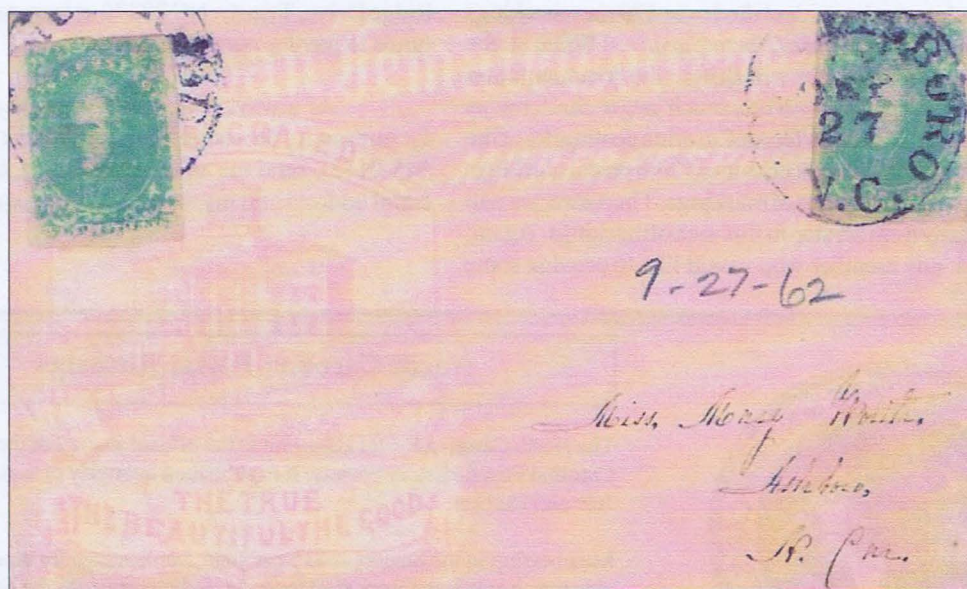


The Journal of the North Carolina Postal History Society

Volume 20, No. 2

Summer 2001

Whole 75



Wesleyan Female College,
Murfreesboro

President's Message

This is a reminder to each of our members to join the North Carolina Postal History Society members at the annual meeting of the society on Saturday, 23 June 2001. We will meet at the Carolina Coin & Stamp Show hosted by the Raleigh Coin Club at the Carolina State Fairgrounds, Hillsborough Street and Blue Ridge Road, Raleigh. The Board will meet at 1:00 PM followed by the general meeting for members at 2:00 PM. During the general meeting Vernon Stroupe, our editor, will give a short talk titled "A Different Look at North Carolina Postal History". He is in the process of rewriting his collection pages and has some new ideas on presenting his North Carolina covers that he would like to share with us. I hope you will mark your calendars with the date of our meeting and plan to attend. We have moved our annual meeting to Raleigh this year in hopes of meeting more of our members.

The NCPHS project at the state archives in Raleigh continues to make good progress. Alphabetically, the assembly of the Postal History Collection has reached Wilson County. There are just a few counties left and then a very large amount of Wake county, which was set aside because it contains hundreds of Raleigh covers. Our work so far has been with 19th century material only. To date, we have identified over 470 new markings for *Post Offices and Postmasters of North Carolina*! When all the counties have been completed we will shift to the documentation of 20th century markings. This will be a much larger challenge as we have little information on the North Carolina postmarks of the 20th century. Our catalog does not document 20th postal markings except for a few special categories of markings. Therefore, we will be starting essentially from scratch in this area of markings. Again, I would like to ask any member who would like to provide some

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assistance to contact me. We work at the state archives in Raleigh on Mondays each week.

We are almost six months into the current fiscal year and less than 15 percent of our members have paid their dues for the year 2001. I consider this my fault since we did not include a separate dues notice in the last issue of the *Postal Historian*. Please send your dues of \$15 to secretary Tom Richardson, 3764 Pine Ridge Drive, Trinity, NC 27370 as soon as you can. We need these funds to pay for our journal.

As always, I welcome your comments and suggestions for improving the society. Please feel free to call me at home (336 545-0175), send me an email message, or write to me. Both my email address and my mailing address appear in this journal.

Dick Winter



North Carolina Postal Historian

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

Membership in the Society is \$15 per year. Applications for membership may be obtained from the Treasurer. Submissions for the News-letter or inquiries may be addressed to the editors.

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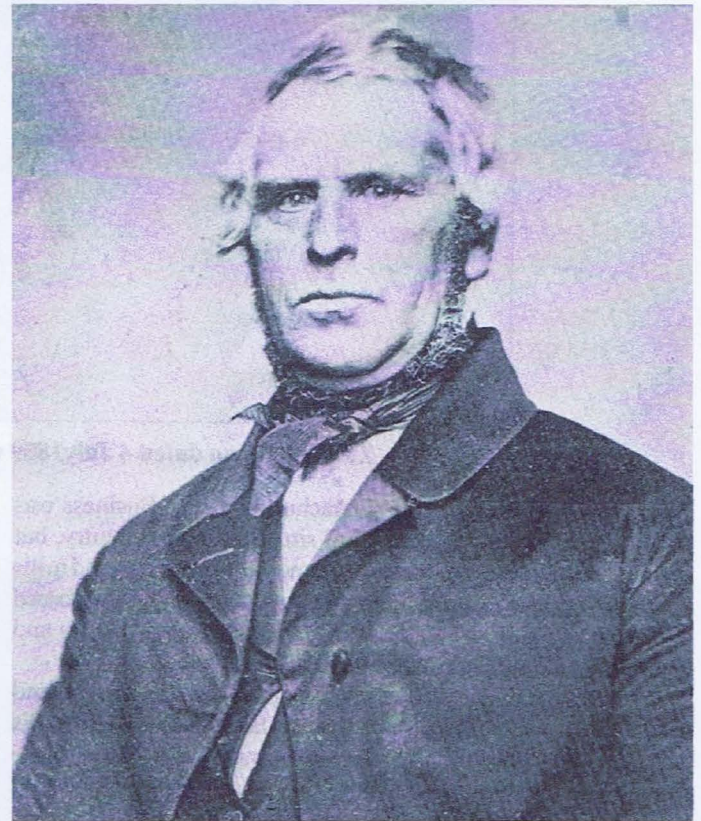
Bartonsville, The Classic North Carolina Postal Marking

by Tony L. Crumbley

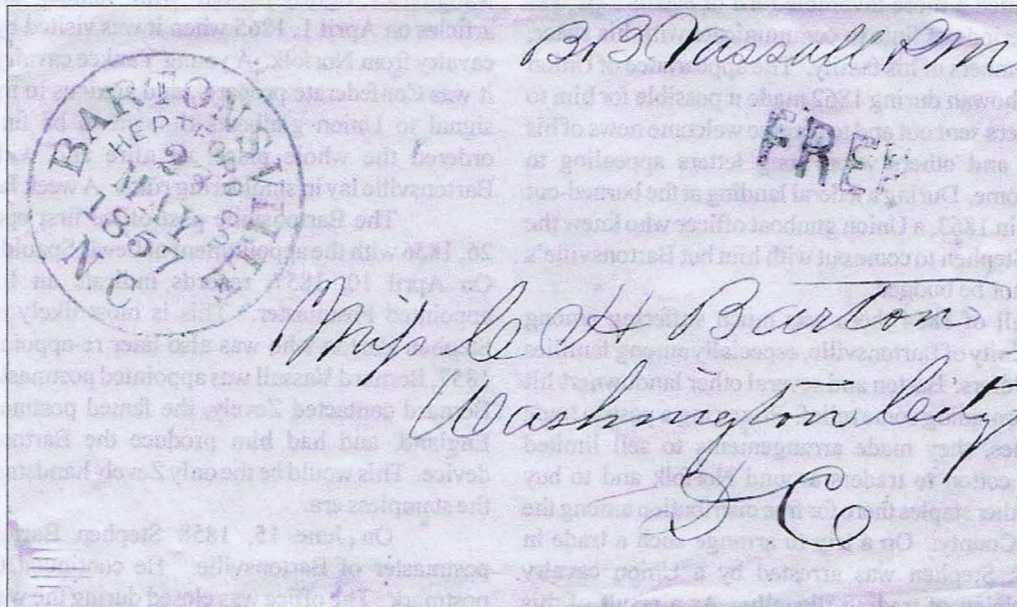
Many of the early builders of Murfreesboro and Hertford county were New England Yankees who came here in quest of fortune in the days before the Civil War. A Murfreesboro store was operated in the last years of the 18th century by a grandfather and granduncle of Harriet Beecher Stowe. When Boston's William Hill Brown, America's first novelist, died at Murfreesboro in 1793, he was staying at the home of his sister and her Boston-born husband. Dr. William Lay Smith, father of N.C. Chief Justice William N.H. Smith, was a Connecticut Yankee and Amos T. Akerman, U.S. Attorney General under President Grant, was a New Hampshire man who once taught school in Murfreesboro.

Stephen Barton, an enterprising Massachusetts lumberman, was a familiar figure in pre-Civil War Murfreesboro. He was the elder brother of Clara Barton, founder of the American Red Cross. Stephen Barton came to Hertford County in 1856 and bought a large tract of virgin woodland on the Chowan River. The site, located a mile or two north of the mouth of the Meherrin, already had a large steam saw mill. Aided by some twenty New England craftsmen and laborers, Barton, in the next five years, built living quarters, wharves, a schoolhouse, ice house, grist mill, store, barns, stables, and other facilities on his land. He gave his little mill town the name Bartonsville and opened a post office there. His wharves became a regular stop on the Murfreesboro-to-Edenton steamboat route and he began trading in lumber with many northern ports by way of the schooners and sloops which called frequently at Bartonsville.

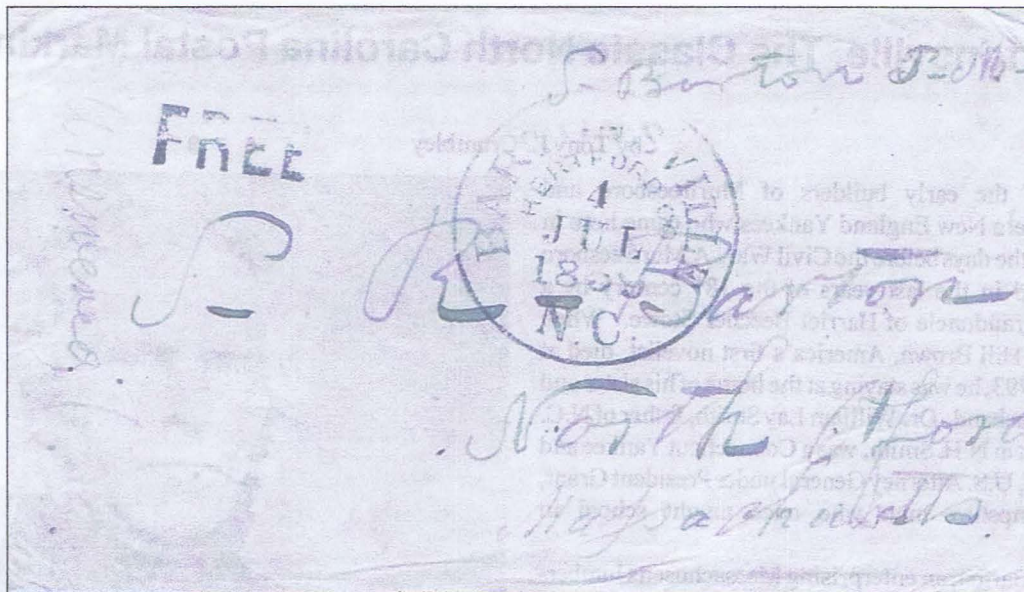
The central feature of the Bartonsville operation was a factory for producing plow beams and plow handles. Opened in 1860, the plant utilized sophisticated machinery patented by A.V.



Stephen Barton, Jr.



Zevly balloon cds dated 23 May 1857 with free frank of B.B. Vassall



Zevely balloon dated 4 July 1865 with free frank of Stephen Barton

Blanchard and Company, a Massachusetts firm. Business was slow because of the tense political situation in the country, but Stephen Barton remained optimistic and kept his factory and mills operating at capacity until the war broke out. Then he was forced to permit all his New England men to leave for their homes and close down for the duration of the fighting.

Stephen Barton vowed his opposition to slavery and secession but adamantly stayed on at Bartonville lest by his departure he should forfeit his property and have it seized by the Confederate government. On the understanding that he would take no part in the war on either side, Confederate authorities left him alone and resolved to tolerate his residence at Bartonville. This made for an uncomfortable relationship for all concerned.

In the lonely months that followed at Bartonville, Stephen Barton and a few hired Negroes tended the fields and livestock and awaited a more favorable turn of events. He was unable for long periods of time to communicate with his sister, Clara, or other members of his family. The appearance of Union gunboats on the Chowan during 1862 made it possible for him to get occasional letters sent out and to receive welcome news of his relations. Clara and others wrote long letters appealing to Stephen to come home. During a federal landing at the burned-out village of Winton in 1863, a Union gunboat officer who knew the Bartons, pressed Stephen to come out with him but Bartonville's proprietor could not be budged.

In the fall of 1864 there was much suffering among families in the vicinity of Bartonville, especially among families of Confederate soldiers. Barton and several other landowners hit upon an idea for providing some relief. Procuring a pass to trade within Union lines, they made arrangements to sell limited amounts of their cotton to traders around Norfolk and to buy grain, meat, and other staples there for free distribution among the poor of Hertford County. On a trip to arrange such a trade in September, 1864, Stephen was arrested by a Union cavalry company on suspicion of trading illegally. As a result of this misfortune, he was imprisoned for several weeks at Norfolk under wretched conditions. His health broke and he was in emaciated

condition when Clara Barton learned of her brother's plight and used her influence to free him.

Stephen now joined his sister at a field hospital near Richmond where Clara had become a celebrity for her sacrifices on behalf of wounded soldiers. Together they went to her home in Washington, D.C., where, in spite of Clara's efforts, Stephen's health failed further and in early March, 1865 he died. Clara Barton accompanied her beloved brother's remains to their home in Oxford, Massachusetts and arranged his burial in the family cemetery. She always felt that she had lost the one person in her life with whom she shared the deepest spiritual bonds.

Left untended in the final months of the war, Bartonville was prey to thieves and the raids of the notorious Buffalo bands that infested nearby swamps and harassed neighboring plantations. But the place was still intact and its warehouses tightly-packed with lumber and manufactured articles on April 1, 1865 when it was visited by a party of Union cavalry from Norfolk. A young Yankee cavalry officer, thinking it was Confederate property, and anxious to make some kind of signal to Union gunboats thought to be further down river, ordered the whole place set afire and within a few hours Bartonville lay in smoldering ruins. A week later the war ended.

The Bartonville post office first opened on February 26, 1856 with the appointment of Lewis Spaulding as postmaster. On April 10, 1857, records indicate an L. Barton Jr. was appointed Postmaster. This is most likely a typo and it was Stephen Barton who was also later re-appointed. On May 14, 1857, Bernard Vassall was appointed postmaster of Bartonville. Bernard contacted Zevely, the famed postmark maker in New England, and had him produce the Bartonville postmaster device. This would be the only Zevely handstamp used in N.C. in the stampless era.

On June 15, 1858 Stephen Barton was appointed postmaster of Bartonville. He continued to use the Zevely postmark. The office was closed during the war and reopened on 16, Dec. 1865 with the appointment of Sallie Ann Beal as postmaster. The post office name was changed to Riddicksville

on Feb. 23, 1866.

References: *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, William S. Powell, Vol. 1, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill.

Post Offices and Postmasters of North Carolina, Colonial to USPS, Vol. II, NC Postal History Society, Charlotte, N.C.

Editor's Note: An examination of the microfilm, *Record of Appointments of Postmasters, North Carolina, 1832-1971*, Roll 93, Hertford County, shows Bartonville is faint. The manuscript entry L. Barton is probably S. Barton, especially since the history of Bartonville does not mention any other Barton present except Stephen.

Murfreesboro's Wesleyan Female Academy

by Tony L. Crumbley

Next to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Bingham School at Oaks and Mebaneville, and, perhaps, Davidson College one of the most frequently encountered college covers¹ from North Carolina is the Wesleyan Female Academy located in Murfreesboro in Hertford County. It's hard to understand why such an obscure college would have such a large number of covers remaining; however, over the years the author has owned over ten examples of the distinctive embossed shield corner cards from the school. These shields come in both blue and red -- placed on the back flap (Figure 1) and on the top left corner of the envelope. There are also several different sizes of envelopes. Most have been used in the mid to late 1850's.

The cornerstone for Wesleyan Female Academy, a Methodist girl's school, was laid on June 24, 1853, built by contractor A.G. Jones of Warren County, under the sponsorship of the Virginia Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

The original main building was brick, tin-roofed, and in the shape of a T. The structure was 120 feet by 140 feet deep and had a portico supported by four Corinthian columns. There was an observatory on the roof and verandas in the rear three stories high. The first floor contained a large central hall with dining hall, seating 300, recitation rooms, laboratory, archives and five dormitories or student rooms. On the second floor was a study hall or chapel, parlor, library, recitation and music room and ten dormitories. The third and fourth floors were given over to living space for students with the exception of four music rooms and a painting studio. Near the roof was a reservoir which sent water by pipes to each floor. When rain did not fill it, there were force-pumps to bring water from a well.

Wesleyan Female was the largest boarding school in the patronage of the Virginia Conference. A commentator in 1877 had this to say:

Figure 1

An example of the red shield used on the reverse. The 3 cent 1851 issue adhesive indicates the use was before 1856, and the spelling of Murfreesborough was first noted in the Official Register in 1858.



"This imposing structure is the first landmark of Murfreesboro which strikes the eye on the approach to the town from any direction and the last upon which lingers the eye of the departing citizen or stranger. In entering the village by the Boykins Road it stands full before you for the last mile or more, fronting the intersection of that road with Main Street."



Figure 2 - Blue front shield dated 15 Mar (1859) with 3 cent issue of 1857

Figures 2 and 3 are examples of the Wesleyan shield used on the upper left corner in both red and blue. Both covers were posted approximately 1859.

A visitor in 1860 commented of the school:

"Situated in the midst of a wide spread lawn, tastefully intersected by winding walks and bordered by a variety of fragrant and beautiful spring flowers, the spacious college building rears its lofty cupola-capped head. It is a fine piece of architecture, and is at once the pride and ornament of the village."

Efforts were made to keep the academy open during the Civil War but the fall of Roanoke Island and the burning of Winton in February 1862 led to the taking over of the college by Confederate troops at the end of that month and the closing of the school. Cornelius B. Riddick had succeeded Wills as president in 1861. Reopened in the fall of 1865 under President J.D. Coulling, Wesleyan was soon flourishing once more. The death of

President Coulling in 1866 brought Rev. Paul Whitehead to the helm until 1873 and he, in turn, was succeeded in 1876 by Rev. W.G. Starr.

On the cover is an example of an all over advertising cover portraying the college building and the quote "To the true, the beautiful, the good." The cover was posted on Sept. 27, 1862 after the campus had been taken over by Confederate soldiers. The interesting point of this cover is that it is franked by two copies of the Confederate 2 cent green. The Postmaster must have mistaken the two green stamps as the 5 cent green issue, Scott #1, and allowed the cover to pass with short payment.

The Postmaster throughout this period of time was Dr. Samuel J. Wheeler. Postmaster Wheeler first served from August 31, 1835 until he was replaced by Robert Parker on April 9, 1849. Postmaster Wheeler was again appointed Postmaster on October 2, 1854 -- about the time of the opening of Wesleyan Female College. He was appointed Confederate Postmaster on March 3, 1862., and was replaced sometime during the war by James M. Trader.

Samuel Jordan Wheeler, born at Murfreesboro, N.C. on October 5, 1810 and died at Willow Hall, September 8, 1879 was the founder of a family of some note. He was the second son of John Wheeler and his wife Elizabeth Jordan. Wheeler was educated at Hertford Academy in Murfreesboro. He took a bachelors degree from Columbian College (now George Washington University) and received a M.D. degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1833.

Active in Baptist affairs, Doctor Wheeler is listed as one of the founders of Murfreesboro Baptist Church in 1842 and Chowan Baptist Female Institute (now Chowan College) in 1847. He was an enthusiastic supporter of Chowan: serving as agent for the Institute, as lecturer in anatomy

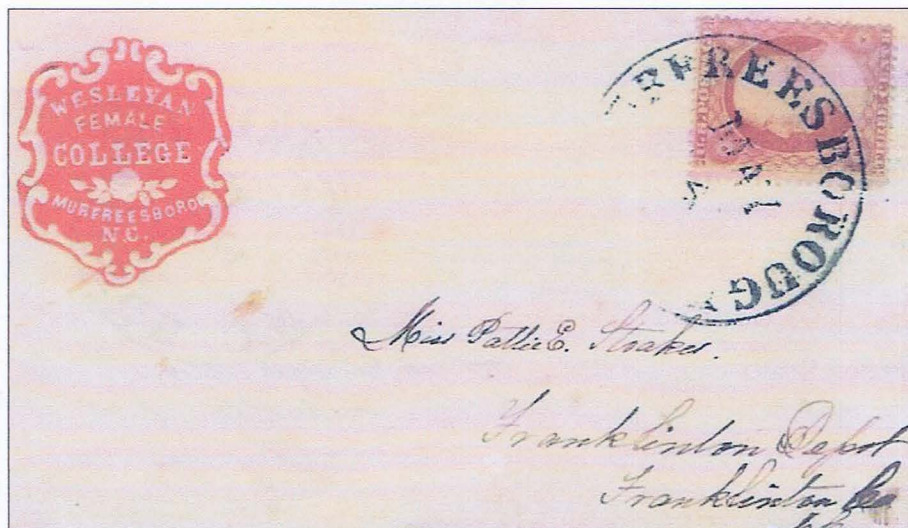
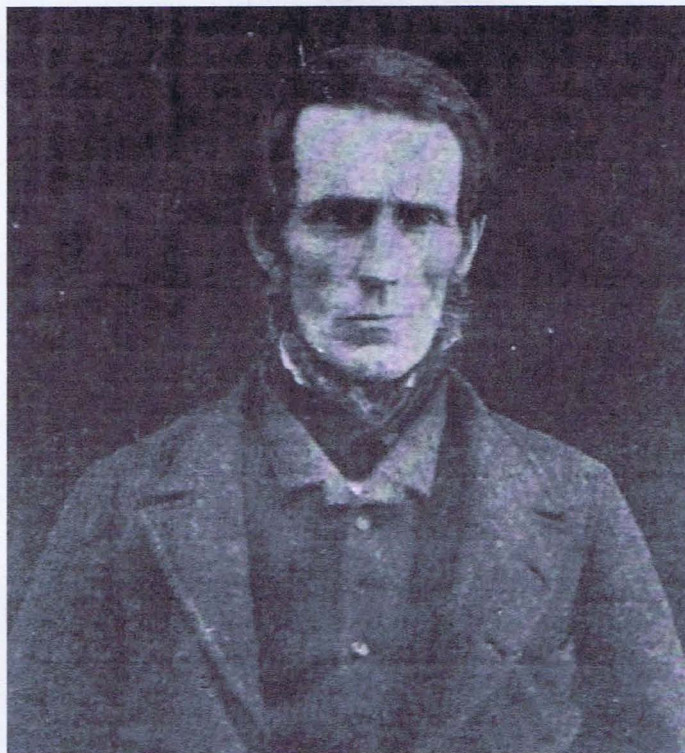


Figure 3 - Red shield on front dated 5 May (1859)

and physiology and as a member of the Board of Trustees. He, also, served as Clerk of the Chowan Association for a number of years.



Dr. Samuel J. Wheeler

Brother of a historian and half-brother of a professor, Doctor Wheeler's first literary effort was a history of Meherrin Church which he completed in 1846. Writing from 1855 to 1862 under the assumed name of "Revoir," he was a weekly correspondent to the Petersburg, Va. *Daily Express* and also published a serialized history of *Hertford County* in a local paper. During the 1870's he wrote a series of historical sketches for the *Murfreesboro Enquirer*, and contributed to numerous newspapers. Doctor Wheeler was owner and editor of the *Murfreesboro Citizen* until poor health forced him to sell the paper in 1858.

Dr. T.C. Parramore, professor of history at Meredith College, Raleigh, N.C. writes "Dr. Wheeler's retiring disposition and rustic habits denied to all but a select few the realization that he was probably the foremost North Carolina antiquarian of his day."

In spite of his health issues Postmaster Wheeler was commissioned a colonel of cavalry in the Confederate Army.

On Sunday morning, August 5, 1877, at about 2:00 a.m., fire broke out on the third and fourth floor of the main building and was beyond control when discovered a few minutes later. The students being on vacation, and President Starr and two of his staff escaping, no one was injured but the building was a total loss. The origin of the blaze was not determined but there was some suspicion of arson. A visitor of 1877 observed:

"The broken and blackened walls, the still smoking ruins, the complete destr-

uction of the rare and beautiful shrubbery, the evidence of so much care and attention, the effacement of the well proportioned walks and terraces immediately around the building...saddened my heart..."

Insurance coverage of \$10,000 on the furniture and \$20,000 on the building encouraged local Methodists to begin at once plans for a new building. The academy was reopened in September, 1881 with Mr. E.E. Parham as president. Parham was succeeded in 1892 by Rev. R.P. Troy.

Josephus Daniels wrote the following editorial in the *Raleigh State Chronicle*, dated 14 June 1890:

"My heart has long turned to this rich, beautiful and healthy section of North Carolina, and my feet were right glad to press the soil of this famous old town which has been for half a century the educational centre of twenty-five counties. For more than a hundred years it has been the home of educated men and women, and an educating influence has gone out from this community which has been felt not only in this State but in Virginia as well. The town is as lovely as it is old. Restful shade trees throw their shadows upon large and airy houses where happiness and content reign supreme. A cleverer people, a better educated audience, will not be found in the State.

"Today is commencement day of Wesleyan Female College. It is an annual occasion of deep interest to the people of this village and the parents of the young ladies throughout the Albemarle section of this State, and in Southeastern Virginia. I find here gentlemen from Gates, Perquimons, Camden, Northampton and other counties attending the exercises. This college has long enjoyed a deservedly high reputation among Southern female institutions. It is a Methodist College, and is under the auspices of that church. From the June in 1857 when the first graduates received their diplomas, it has educated many of the noblest and best women who have blest the State and country. The building here is large and well constructed and arranged, and is situated in the midst of spacious grounds which are ornamented with beautiful shade trees and flowers. It contains, under one roof, a spacious and beautiful chapel, parlor, dining-room, lecture rooms, music rooms, high pitched and well ventilated dormitories, all heated by steam. It is a new building, the old one having been destroyed by fire in 1877. Within two hundred yards of the building is a valuable mineral spring. The water is cold, pleasant to the taste and an excellent tonic."

The main building had recently been refurnished throughout when, at 8 p.m. on the evening of Wednesday, May 31, 1893, fire broke out again and once more the academy was entirely destroyed. The school, which had trained some 2,000 students since its opening in 1855, was not thereafter reopened.

1- The term "college covers" encompasses all college and prep school covers.

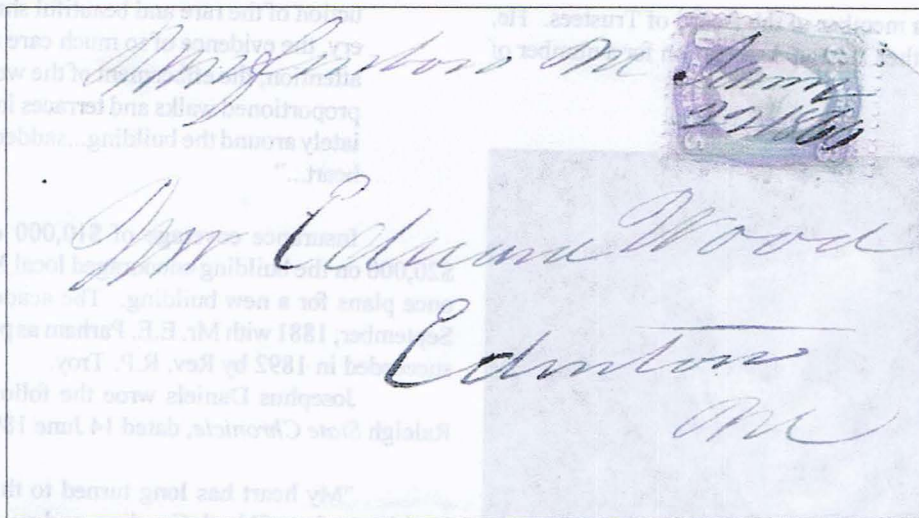


Figure 4 - At the end of the Civil War the Type 3 balloon cds of Murfreesborough was discarded and the new postmaster, Mary Eliza Trader, returned to manuscript markings. Manuscript markings were still in use in 1870.

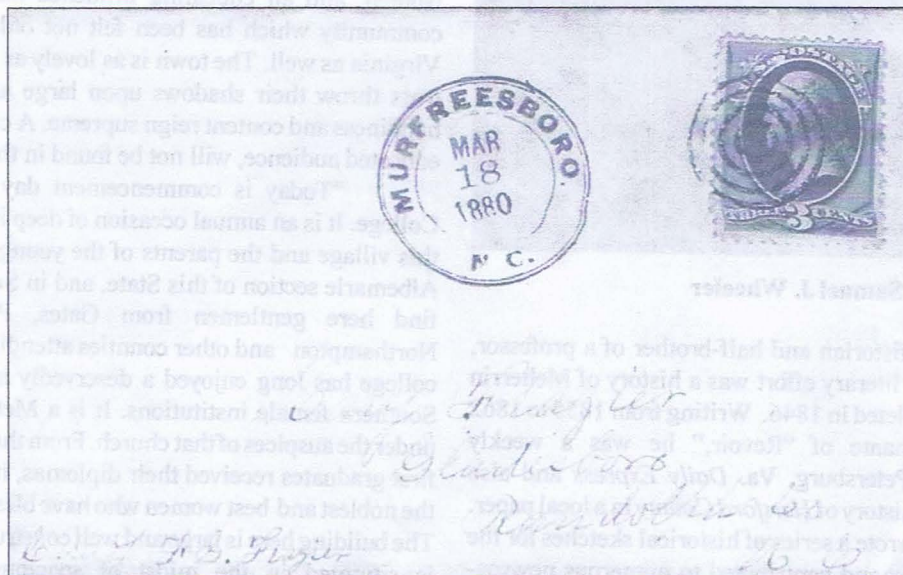


Figure 5 - Postmaster James Trader used the Type 4 triple circle duplex cds with a target killer in 1880.

An Early Reconstruction Letter from Raleigh, North Carolina

by Tony L. Crumbley

April 13, 1865 was the day Raleigh fell to Union forces, and the day the war came home to citizens in the capitol city and the surrounding countryside. By 7:30 a.m. General Sherman reached the city and set up headquarters in the Governor's palace. The streets of the city were nearly deserted. Shops were closed. At the capitol, only a servant, whom Governor Vance had entrusted with the keys to the building, remained.

With the occupation of the city, the operation of the Confederate post office ceased. It would be nearly a year before the official Union post office would be officially reopened. In the interim, the mails went through. Figure 1 is an example of an late Civil war letter from a Federal soldier camped near Raleigh on April 23, 1865.

Camp near Raleigh N.C.
April 25th 1865

Dear Nephew

it is with plesure I take My pen to write you a few lines in answer to your letter of Jan 11 which came to hand while we were at Goldsboro and intended to answer before but have neglected it til now.

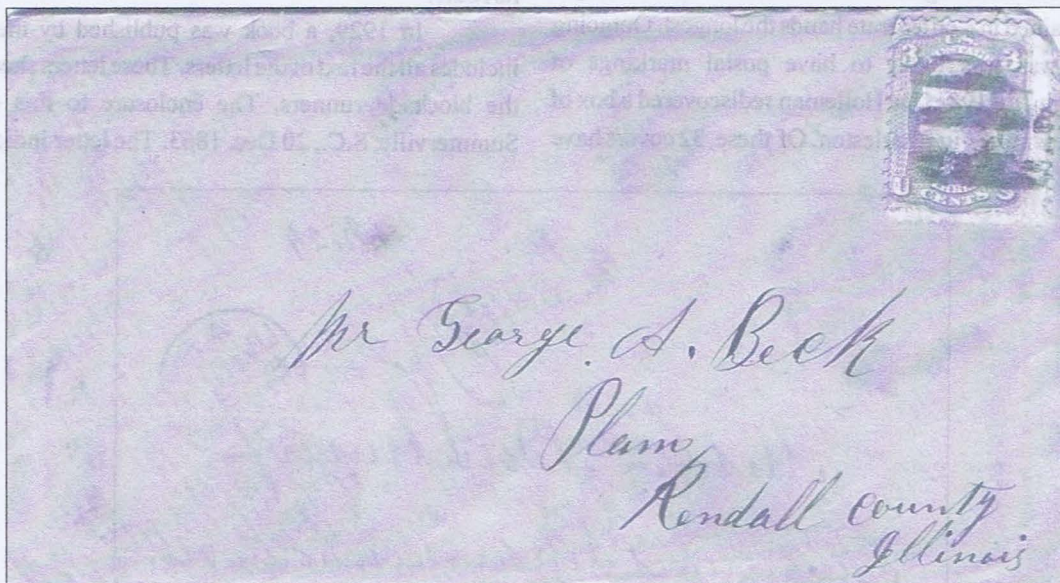
We left Goldsboro the 10 and got here the 14 a distent of 45 miles. Johnson [General Joe Johnston] comments leaving this place the 12th & the first of our troops came in the 13: Kilpatrick was the first to come in, but put right out after Johnson onley leaving a guard as he went trough.:

Johson went out near Hillsboro about 40 miles from here when he got there Gen. Sheridan cut him off from Greensboro so he came to the conclusion to surrender the partickles of which you have long before you get this: we got the news of Lees surrender the morning of the 12 and the boys had a good time in the way of chearing throwing hats & Co but it made no delay on our movements for 8 Oclock was again on the move and we went on our way rejoicing when we got here Lees men comments coming in: and three days ago Johnsons men were coming in and now the talk is amung the boys what a good time they are going to have when they got home we expect to leave about the first of May and march through to Fredericks Burg that will take us about a month from there we will probaley go by rail: the Batteries and Ordnance will be left here til the roads are repared and sent by rail that is if the surrender is approved by the president which I think will be without doubt: want that be a Glorious day when the soldiers return to their homes once more: if we start the first of May we will probaley get home about the first of June.

The boys are all well & tough Chris Beck hasent got here yet but is expected every day: I hurd this morning that Joseph Cox was at New Berne our regt is small and the detales are large in the way of picket & Camp guard wo we are on duty about every two days there is no soldier allowed to go to town without a pass sined by the Division Commander but when we leave here that will play out and I hopt it may be soon.

This leaves me well & hope it may find you all the same

Yours Truly
Aaron



The cover is franked with a U.S. 1861 issue #65 and is tied by a bold 5 bar grid field cancel but no postmark, an indication that ten days after its occupation Raleigh had no postmaster and the mail was being processed by the military in control.

A WILMINGTON BLOCKADE COVER

by Tony L. Crumbley

The decision to impose a naval Blockade on the Southern states was among the first strategic decisions made by the North in the Civil War. Gen. Winfield Scott, the 75 year-old head of the army, saw it as a way to force the South back into the union. President Lincoln declared the seceded states to be under blockade on April 19, 1861 in his first formal proclamation after calling for volunteers to defend the Union. The goal of the blockade was twofold: to prevent shipment of war materials to Southern States and to isolate the Confederacy diplomatically. Lincoln did not want Europe to enter the war.

The decision to impose a naval Blockade proved to be difficult to enforce. The Confederacy possessed over 3,500 miles of coastline from Alexandria, Virginia to Brownsville, Texas -- a coastline with 189 harbors, inlets and navigable rivers -- to be blockaded. The U.S. navy had only 90 warships, of which only 42 were in commission at the time of the proclamation. By the end of the war, however, the U.S. had assembled a fleet of ships large enough to cause considerable difficulties in shipments of mail and goods through the ports.

One of the prize additions to a Confederate collection is a cover that passes through this Blockade. Incoming blockade covers were usually marked by the port of arrival post office -- most of which were Wilmington and Charleston -- the two major harbors that remained in Confederate hands the longest. Outgoing blockade mail was less likely to have postal markings of Confederate origin. In 1981, Joe Holleman rediscovered a box of 61 blockade covers stored in Charleston. Of these, 32 covers have

markings typical of blockade run covers. This is by far the largest group of blockade run covers to ever come onto the market. The condition of the covers was mixed. It seems the daughter of the family became a stamp collector and removed many of the attached stamps.

In early 1863, Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius L. Burckmyer, their daughter, Mamie, and Mamie's nurse, Ann Maquire, were in France. Mr. Burckmyer decided at this time to return to the Confederacy to do whatever he could to support the cause. He left his wife and child in France to return to their home in Charleston. The covers and letters that survived were primarily his letters to them.

Mr. Burckmyer had good connections with the blockade runners and seemed to know which port was the most likely to be successful in getting mail through. Many of his letters told of his trials with the blockade runners. Without the content of these letters we would not know today where these letters passed through the blockade.

Figures 1 and 2 show a recently acquired examples of these Burckmyer covers that passed through the port of Wilmington in December 1863. No Wilmington marking is visible so the content of the enclosures must be used to determine its route.

In 1929, a book was published by the family which includes all the text of the letters. These letters shed much light on the blockade runners. The enclosure to this cover is dated Summerville, S.C., 20 Dec. 1863. The letter indicates a previous

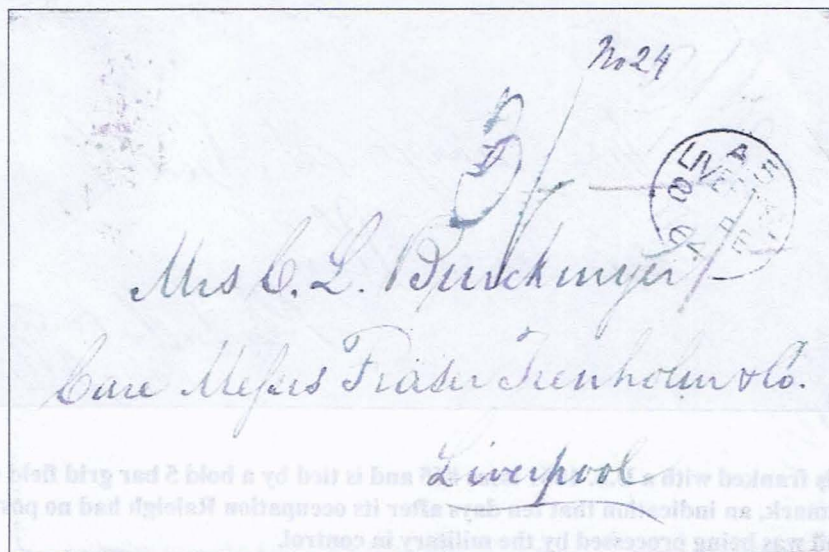


Figure 1 - Blockade cover with rates and Liverpool receiving mark



Figure 2 - Reverse of the cover in Figure 1 showing the Bahamas and London receiving marks with the contents of the letter written in very fine hand in two directions, a technique commonly used to conserve paper.

letter had been mailed December 9 and sent to a friend in Wilmington to be forwarded through the blockade. This is a very lengthy letter telling of the conditions in Charleston and assuring Mrs. Burckmyer that they have enough funds for her to live a normal lifestyle.

The letter that followed the December 20 letter was written in Summerville, S.C., January 8, 1864 and states the December 20 letter had been written from December 20 to December 29 and sent to Wilmington to pass through the blockade. The cover was posted onboard the ship sometime after December 29. It arrived in Nassau, Bahamas January 8, 1864

where it entered the mail system. It was carried to London and arrived there February 7, 1864. It was then forwarded to Liverpool on February 8, 1864 for delivery to the Frasier and Trenholm Company, a noted British firm, for forwarding to Mrs. Burckmyer in Paris.

This exceedingly rare North Carolina cover is a good example of why it is important to maintain a record of not only the covers of a correspondence but also its content. Without the enclosures we would never have known the port of departure for this cover .

Size Doesn't Make Rarity - Flat Rock, NC

by Tony L. Crumbley

Collectors of North Carolina Confederate covers are accustomed to seeing a proportionate larger share of covers from Flat Rock, NC than from any other community of its size. Except for the much larger cities during the War, few cities have retained such a large amount of their Confederate era postal history. Considering its location in the high country, it is surprising to see such a large volume of mail remaining.

In comparison to other major North Carolina cities, Flat Rock has retained a surprisingly large number of its Confederate covers. As expected, more covers remain for Raleigh than any other city if you include the provisionals. Flat Rock, however, ranks fourth with over 40 known stampless covers -- not counting stampless provisionals, Flat Rock ranks third.

	<u>Known Stampless</u>	<u>Known Provisionals</u>	<u>Total</u>
Raleigh	26	200+	226+
Greensboro	47	28	75
Salem	34	29	63
Fayetteville	43	0	43
Flat Rock	40	0	40
Charlotte	37	0	37
Asheville	36	0	36
Wilmington	28	0	28

When one compares the population of Flat Rock with other areas of the state, you wonder even more about the volume of mail from this community. The entire county of Henderson had only 10,448 people in 1860, most residing in Hendersonville, the county seat. Wake County had 28,627 people, Guilford 20,056, Mecklenburg 17,374, Forsythe 16,692 and New Hanover 15,429.

The 1869 Branson Business Directory of North Carolina indicates another surprising comparison. Without a doubt, Hendersonville was the seat of commerce for the county. Hendersonville had 20 mills, 15 churches, 6 lawyers and 6 manufacturers. Flat Rock had zero.

	<u>Commerce Hendersonville</u>	<u>Flat Rock</u>
Mills	20	0
Physicians	3	1
Churches	15	0
Merchants	6	1
Hotels	2	1
Lawyers	6	0
Manufacturers	6	0

A look at the development and history of Flat Rock may give some clues to the reasons for this. Because of the difficulty of travel in the mountainous region, development was slow to come to Henderson County. With the completion of the Buncombe Turnpike in 1828, the mountains of North Carolina became comparatively accessible. In 1829 Judge Mitchell King visited Flat Rock for the first time. His visit from Charleston to the Land of the Sky soon became an annual event. When the temperatures of Charleston heated up, he would head to the hills for cooler times. Soon there were many others from Charleston who would spend their summers in Flat Rock -- away from the heat of the coastal city.

The trip to Flat Rock from the coast took from 10 to 14 days. The "quality" traveled by coach. Their support help by humbler vehicles. Provision wagons formed a necessary part of the cavalcade. The road into the mountains, while dignified by the name turnpike, ran sometimes up a creek bed, sometimes up a gulch and over any obstacle which it could not go around. A smooth surface was doubtless not one of its good points.

In 1829 the post office was established in Flat Rock with John Davis as its first postmaster. Soon Flat Rock had more than its share of cosmopolitan citizens. Flat Rock had originally been a summer resort for the Cherokees. Here, during unrecorded centuries it was the Indian customs to bring to this area the women, children and oldsters during the summer months while the braves went on hunting expeditions or war parties.

By 1860 when the Civil War began, Flat Rock was

commonly called "The Little Charleston of the Mountains." Many of Charleston's more affluent had their summer home there. When hostilities broke out in Charleston, many of Charleston's citizens moved away from the war front. Flat Rock became their safe haven from the war.

It didn't take long until others realized the mountains were a safe place to hide. Soon the mountains were full of Confederate deserters seeking refuge from the war. In order to support themselves, they soon became a gang of thieves robbing anyone who happened to cross their path. Toward the end of the war, things became so bad troops were stationed in the area to help control these renegades. Many of the residents of the area hid their valuables from these gangs in order to preserve them. In recent years a restoration project at the old hotel in Flat Rock uncovered a hidden room in the hotel that was used to store hotel valuables as well as others of the area.

I have in my collection a cover and letter written to the commander of the troops stationed in the area asking for help in going into the hills to retrieve a wagon that had been stuck in a creek bed. The owner feared going after the wagon because he knew he would be robbed if he did. Even with this concern, the area undoubtedly was considered a safe haven for at one point the Confederate Secretary of Treasury, C. G. Memminger, suggested the capital of the Confederacy be moved from Richmond to Flat Rock. It seems Memminger's family was there, he knew the area well and felt it would be a safe place for Davis to be. The thought was ruled out because of the inability to run the government because of its inaccessibility.

Perhaps the single most important factor in the volume of covers that remain is the fact of who these residents were. They were of the caliber of Memminger -- wealthy, literate, connected individuals who had the ability and desire to save their mail. Two major correspondences -- the Middleton family and the Pinckney family have given us many of these Flat Rock covers. Middleton

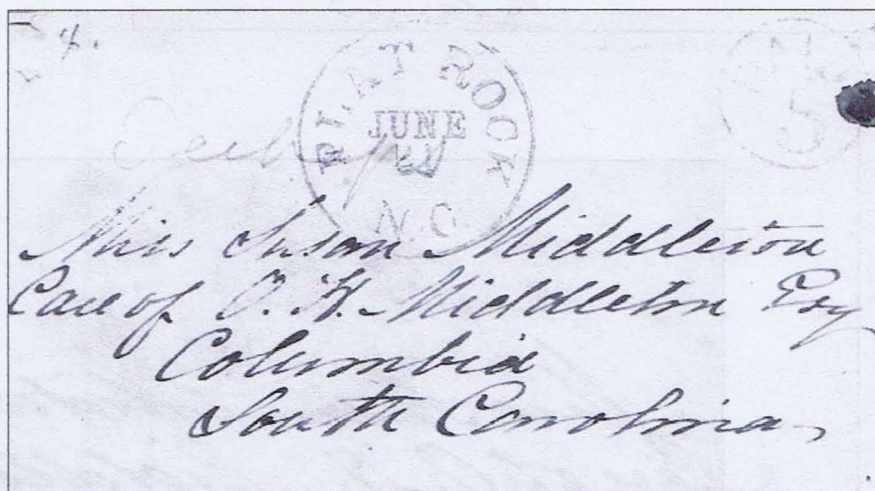
was a businessman involved in shipping from Charleston and Pinckney was a respected preacher in South Carolina.

The Middleton plantation correspondence in itself was quite large producing more wallpaper covers than one can imagine. Most of the illustrations in this article are from the Middleton correspondence. There must be well over 25 wallpaper covers from this Middleton correspondence. A recent Seigel sale had 7 Flat Rock wallpaper covers, 6 from the Middleton family and 6 stampless Flat Rock covers as well as several other Confederate Flat Rock covers.

The Flat Rock stampless covers are both 5 and 10 cent rates with two different 10 cent hand stamp markings being used and a manuscript rate also was used. The known stampless covers are as follows:

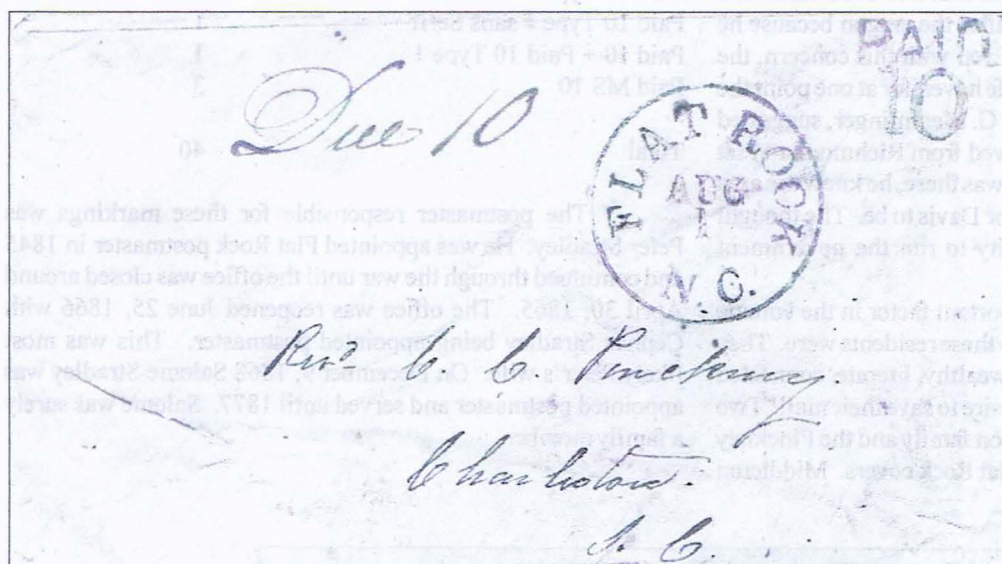
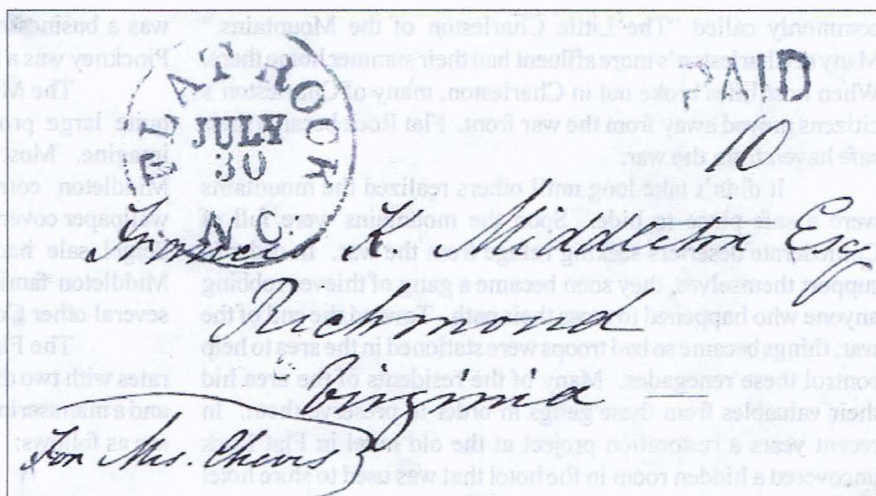
	<u>Quantity Known</u>
Paid 5	10
Paid 10 Type 1 with Serif	25
Paid 10 Type 1 sans Serif	1
Paid 10 + Paid 10 Type 1	1
Paid MS 10	3
Total	40

The postmaster responsible for these markings was Peter Stradley. He was appointed Flat Rock postmaster in 1845 and continued through the war until the office was closed around April 30, 1865. The office was reopened June 25, 1866 with Cephas Stradley being appointed postmaster. This was most likely Peter's wife. On December 9, 1868 Salome Stradley was appointed postmaster and served until 1877. Salome was surely a family member.



**Type 1 Flat Rock cds with PAID/5 handstamp marking,
dated 28 June (1861)**

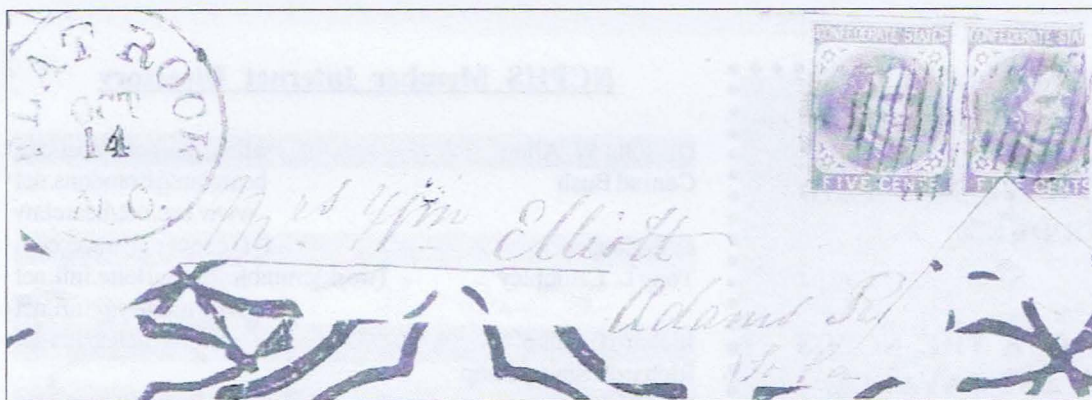
**Type 1 cds of Flat Rock with hs PAID
and manuscript 10 rate
30 July**



**Type 1 Flat Rock cds with hs
PAID and serified 10 plus
manuscript Due 10 applied
at Charleston
1 Aug**

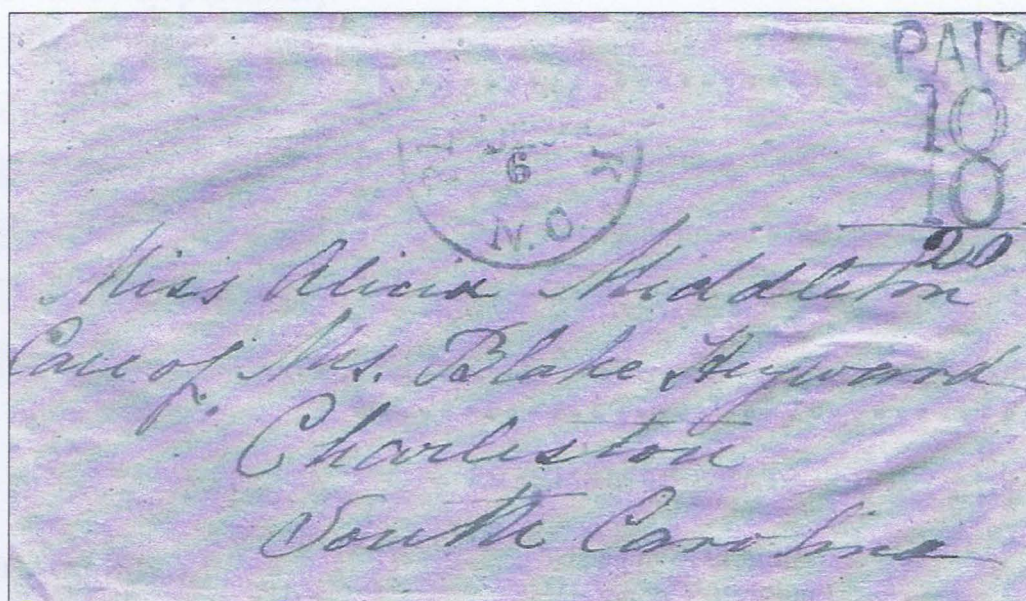
**Type 1 cds of Flat Rock with hs
PAID and sanserif 10 rating
3 July**





Yellow, brown and gray wallpaper cover from Flat Rock with a pair of
CSA issue of 1862, De La Rue printing

Type 1 Flat Rock cds with hs
PAID and $10 + 10 = 20$ cent



RALEIGH !!! - CALL TO MEET

The North Carolina Postal History Society will have it's Annual Meeting

Saturday, June 23 at 2 PM

(Board of Directors meet 1 PM)

At the Carolina Coin & Stamp Show, N.C. State Fairgrounds

Hillsborough Street and Blue Ridge Road

**REMINDER
TO THOSE WHO HAVE NOT PAID
THEIR DUES**

**THE 2001 DUES FOR THE NCPHS
ARE NOW DUE AND PAYABLE.
PLEASE SEND YOUR \$15
TO THE SOCIETY TREASURER.**

NEW MEMBERS

**No new members
have been reported
this quarter**

2001 SUSTAINING MEMBERS

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Lindsey T. Cooper, IV
Tony L. Crumbley
James H. Davis, Jr.
Warren Dixon
Robert F. Doares, Jr
Dr. Fred C. Frostick
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Elizabeth Howard
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Robert Outlaw
Tom Richardson
Jim Scott
Vernon S. Stroupe
Harvey Teal
Richard Weiner
Ruth Y. Wetmore
State Historical Society of Wisconsin

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