

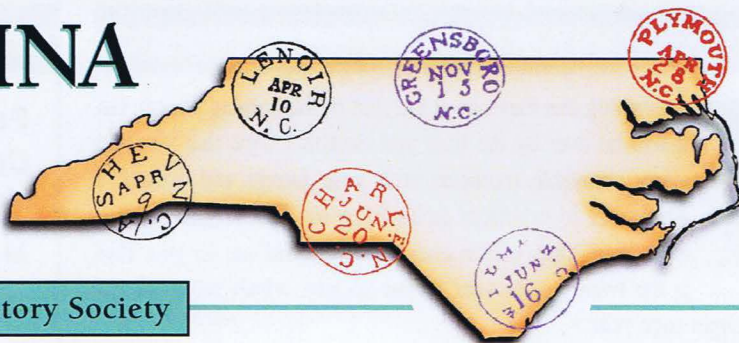
# NORTH CAROLINA POSTAL HISTORIAN

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WHOLE 105



Federal Civil War Postal History by James W. Mitgram, M.D.

## BONITZ LETTERHEAD

NOTE BOTH THE LETTERHEAD AND THE COVER SHOW  
MODIFICATION BY PERSONS WITH UNION SENTIMENT.

Affiliate #155 of the American Philatelic Society





## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I am writing this message at the start of the holiday season, but it will be over by the time you read it. I hope that you had many enjoyable moments with your family and friends. I would like to extend to each of you my best wishes that the New Year, 2009, will be a healthy and joyful one for you. This is the twenty-eight year of our society, which seems to get stronger each year.

In our last issue we mentioned that the Confederate Stamp Alliance was holding a winter meeting at the Wilmington Hilton Riverside hotel on 20-22 March 2009, and that they had invited our society to participate by giving a presentation on Saturday, 21 March. Our presentation will be in two parts. I will give a short overview of the North Carolina Catalog Update project. That will be followed by Maurice Bursey's talk on the Bonitz patriotic covers produced in Wilmington. Larry Lohr will also make a presentation on the Salisbury prison. As an additional note related to Wilmington, Greg Stone has written to pass on Wilmington postal history information made available by the Wilmington Philatelic Society. He writes:

*The Wilmington Philatelic Society, via the hard work of its president, Richard Porcelli, has created a very nice looking web site for the club. A few of the members are postal history collectors, and their Wilmington, NC postal history items have been posted as part of this site. Use the following to take a look at this interesting group of covers — arranged in chronological sequence: <http://www.wingnet.org/rtw/sumwps018.htm>. Check back periodically as new covers are being added to the site from time to time.*

A collaborative digitization project between the North Carolina State Archives, the North Carolina Collection at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and the Outer Banks History Center is producing North Carolina Maps. More than 700 historic North Carolina maps from the late sixteenth century to the 1960s are available on-line at the web site <http://www.lib.unc.edu/dc/ncmaps>. The project expects to grow to 1,500 maps within the next year and will include nearly all original North Carolina maps published prior to 1923. An example of an excellent postal history map available from

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this site is a 1901 Post Route map of North and South Carolina prepared by the Post Office Department. The map shows the frequency and types of mail service, mileage between post offices, and discontinued post offices noted as of June 1, 1901. You can enlarge any portion of the map you wish and extract the image for your own use.

The status box of the North Carolina Postmark Catalog update will show more changes. Currituck County has been completed but not yet added to the web site. I continue to update "completed" counties with additional postmark data from the Postmark Collectors Club Museum resulting in many new listings for the counties. The date in parenthesis after the name of the county in the site listing will tell you the most recent file posted.

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

As always, I welcome your comments and suggestions for improving the society. Please feel free to call me at home, 336-545-0175, send me an email message or write to me. My mailing address appears below.

Dick Winter



## NORTH CAROLINA POSTAL HISTORIAN

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# Patriotic Confederate Envelopes and Covers from North Carolina

## W. & J. Bonitz Envelopes from Goldsboro

by Maurice M. Bursey

"This is some of the paper we found here it is first rate to write accounts [sic] of Union Victories on."

illustrations available to many Southern printers, with verses below, also used by other printers.

So did George Washington Whitman, the brother of Walt Whitman, describe W. & J. Bonitz stationery to his mother from New Bern, on March 16, 1862, two days after the Union occupation of the city.

Publishers in both the North and the South manufactured envelopes with patriotic themes during the Civil War. Such covers from the Confederacy are much less numerous than from the Union, and in general are not nearly so attractive in appearance.

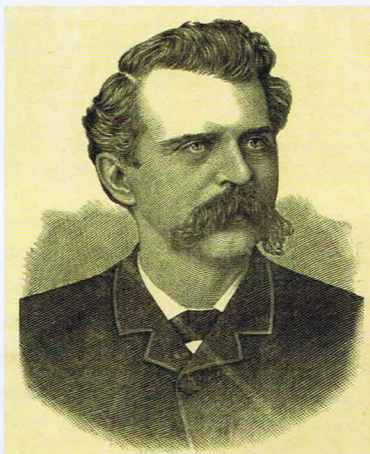
For one thing, there was little available paper in the South. In fact, paper was so scarce by 1863 that most patriotic covers by far have dates of 1861 or 1862. The quality of available paper in the South did not in general match that of paper used for Northern envelopes, and the majority of Confederate patriotic envelopes is printed on coarse brown paper called foolscap.

There were very few publishers of patriotic envelopes in North Carolina. The widest range of envelopes was produced by W. & J. Bonitz in Goldsboro. As cachets, these envelopes used stock

The brothers Johann Heinrich Wilhelm Bonitz and August Heinrich Christian Julius Bonitz were born in a mining town in the famed Harz mountains in Hanover, Germany, and arrived in the United States from Germany as two of three brothers in 1858. They first settled in Baltimore. They anglicized their given names, and both used one or two of their given names, often choosing a different first name or scrambling the order of the names. The two of them had Southern

sympathies. William (presumably Johann Heinrich Wilhelm) Bonitz (**Figure 1**) came to Goldsboro in 1859 or 1860, to avoid testifying as a witness in the lurid trial of Daniel E. Sickles. Sickles [later the Union Major General] had murdered the son of Francis Scott Key in a love triangle. His plea of "not guilty by reason of temporary insanity" introduced the idea for the first time in an American court, and successfully too. Excused from service in the Confederate Army because of a withered leg (although he did volunteer to fight at Bentonville), William was a real entrepreneur: first a retail merchant; then a printer; hotelier; manufacturer of hair dye and hair oil; barbershop, restaurant, and billiard saloon owner in Goldsboro. For about two decades in the nineteenth century, there was a Bonitz Hotel in Goldsboro, which was heavily patronized because Goldsboro was a junction between the Wilmington & Weldon Railroad and the North Carolina Railroad.

August Heinrich Christian Julius Bonitz (**Figure 2**) arrived in North Carolina to



▲ **Figure 1**



▲ **Figure 2**

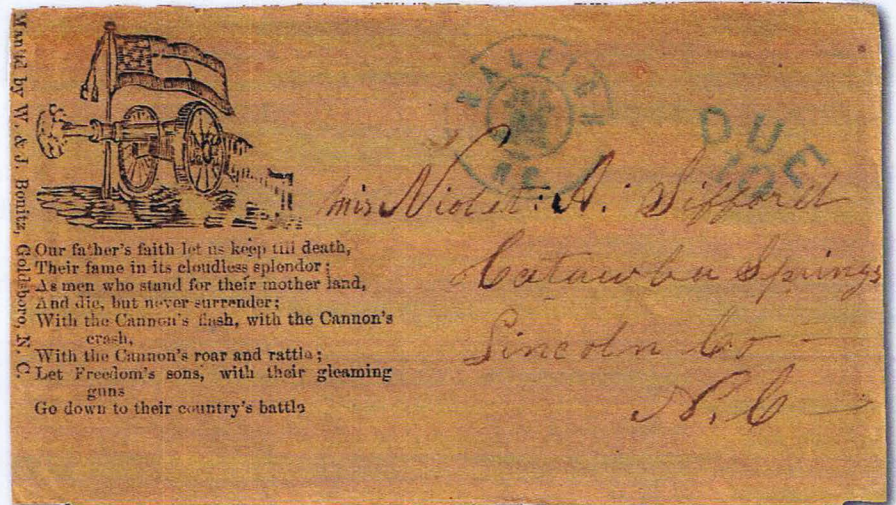


◀ **Figure 3**



Figure 4 ▶

work with his brother on the last boat before war was declared. Shortly afterwards the brothers bought the stock of an old weekly newspaper being sold, and from those supplies provided paper and ink to North Carolina regiments. They also had printing contracts with the Confederate government. A. H. C. J. Bonitz served three years and eight months as Julius A. Bonitz in the North Carolina Local Defense — Provost Guard, Goldsboro — was a



◀ Figure 5

schools in Goldsboro (which were among the very first in North Carolina), he was called the father of Goldsboro's schools.

The Bonitz brothers made envelopes from whatever paper was available to them. As noted above, most of their surviving illustrated envelopes are made from a plain brown paper, foolscap, available to many printers at the beginning of the war; a smaller number of their envelopes use a

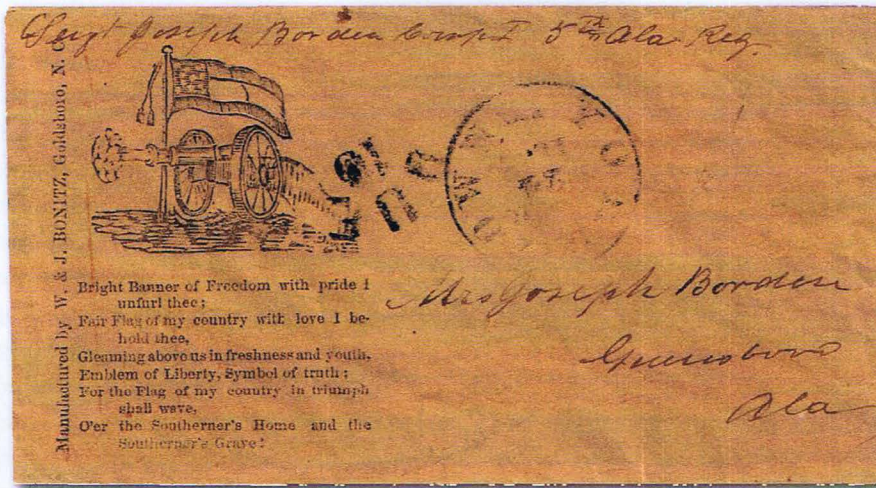
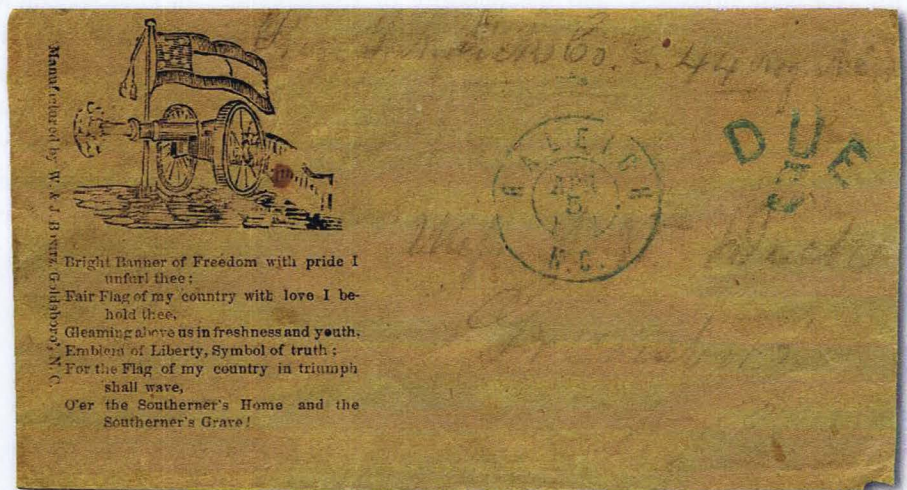


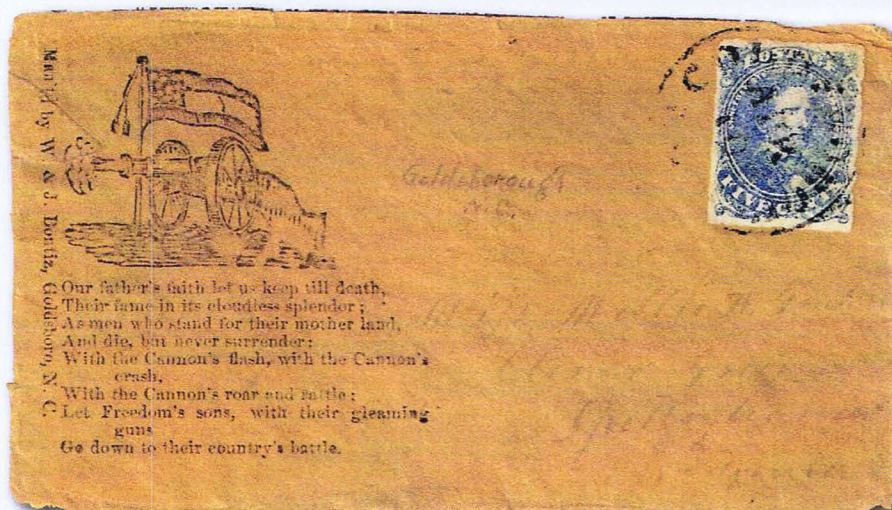
Figure 6 ▶

prisoner of war, and then returned to civilian life in 1865, becoming well respected as a newspaper publisher and a philanthropist. In 1883 he was listed as a bookseller and stationer. He had taken over the *Goldsboro Daily Rough Notes* from its prior owners by 1868, and by the middle of 1869 had acquired the *Goldsboro Daily Messenger*, which is considered the successor to the *Rough Notes*. For a short time beginning in the fall of 1869, he published a German-language newspaper in Goldsboro, *Die suedliche Post*. In 1887 he and his wife moved to Wilmington, and they later lived in the Bonitz Hotel in Wilmington. When he died, condolences and eulogies poured in from all over the state and beyond. Because he had chaired the committee that established the first graded



better grade of white paper. A very few were reported a hundred years ago on other papers. The designs incorporate one of five patriotic illustrations that were available to many other Confederate printers; one of fewer than ten verses below the illustrations, also used by many other Confederate printers; and





◀ Figure 7

from Confederate States Scott 1, whose earliest known use is October 16, 1861, to Scott 12, earliest known use May 1, 1863. This range indicates that envelopes were probably available no later than the fall of 1861, and that supplies were available, or at least in people's hands, at least until the spring of 1863.

Figure 3 (page 3) shows a cover with the only depiction of the Confederate flag that

Figure 8 ▶

a single vertical printer's imprint to the left of the illustration and verse: "Manufactured (or an abbreviation thereof) by W. & J. Bonitz, Goldsboro, N. C." Patriotic illustrations, imprints, and verses used in the Confederacy were first codified by Van Dyk McBride, appearing in the 1945 Dietz catalog, and later expanded and renumbered to the listing used today. The current listing is conveniently given in the 1986 Dietz catalog.



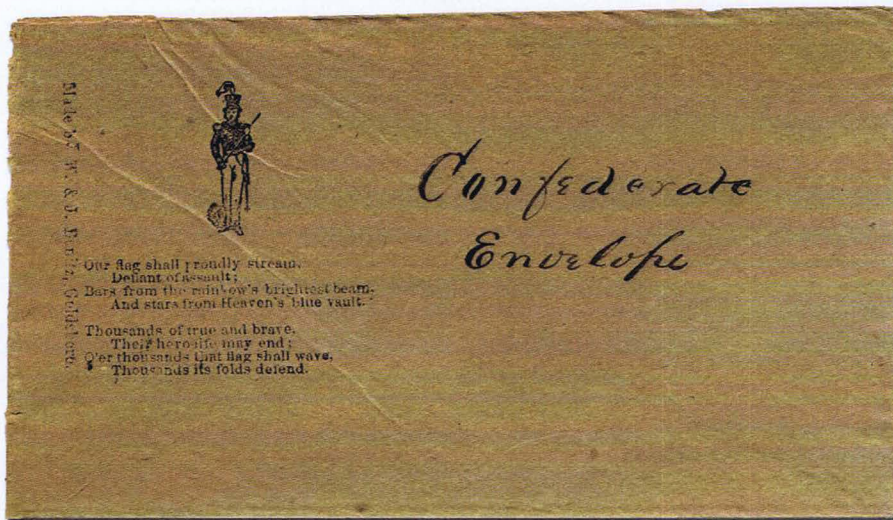
◀ Figure 9

the Bonitz firm used. The design, Dietz type F 10-11, with a ten-star flag, also includes one of three verses that they chose to match the flag design. Above the flag is a long, thin blank streamer, which is a standard addition to the flag no matter which printer used the flag cut. (W. & J. Bonitz were the only printers to identify themselves; other printers who used the cut did not add their imprints.) The name of the manufacturer reads downward to the left of the design. The verse "Bright banner of freedom, with pride

I unfurl thee..." is considered Verse 1 in the standard listing, and there are also "Our Father's faith let us keep till death..." Verse 4; and "Stand by that flag, men of the South..." Verse 28, known used with this flag design. On covers with Verse 1, the manufacturer's imprint begins with the word "Manufactured."

Bonitz covers were used predominantly in North Carolina, but they also are known used from Virginia, and, to a lesser extent, from Georgia. Their covers are scarce with United States stamps used before or after secession; normal, usages range





◀ Figure 10



▼ Figure 11

On Verse 4 covers, it begins with "Mant'd," and on Verse 28 covers, with "Man'td."

#### Verse 1

*Bright Banner of Freedom with pride I unfurl thee;  
Fair Flag of my country with love I behold thee.  
Gleaming above us in freshness and youth,  
Emblem of Liberty, Symbol of Truth;  
For the Flag of my country in triumph shall wave  
O'er the Southerner's home and the Southerner's Grave!*

On a few of these covers, the first word of the third line is misspelled: "Gleeming." Apparently a few envelopes were printed with this misspelling, and a correction made before the next printing. One of the error covers is known as a Union usage from New Bern, and must have been taken from a Confederate soldier by a Union soldier after the occupation of New Bern on March 14, 1862.

#### Verse 4

*Our father's [sic] faith let us keep till death,  
Their fame in its cloudless splendor;*

*As men who stand for their mother land,  
And die, but never surrender;  
With the Cannon's flash, with the Cannon's crash,  
With the Cannon's roar and rattle;  
Let Freedom's sons, with their gleaming guns  
Go down to their country's battle.*

#### Verse 28

*Stand by that flag, men of the South,  
Of noble patriot sires,  
Your cause is just, you'll safely pass,  
Through Abolition fires,  
Dim not a single star that decks,  
The Southern flag o'erhead,  
And let its light ne'er cease to glare  
But wider LET it spread!*

The second design used by W. & J. Bonitz is a standard Confederate cut of a cannon facing and firing left, beneath a twelve-star flag. **Figure 4** shows this cachet, Dietz CN-3. The other design elements can include Verse 1 plus the imprint, either beginning with "Man'td" and reading up or down, or with



## Census of Types of Bonitz Covers

Cut	Verse	Imprint	Color of paper	No. known
Flag and streamer, Dietz F10-11	1	Manufactured, Bonitz, reading down	brown	13
		Manufactured, BONITZ, reading down	brown	4
		no imprint	brown	2
		covered by stamp in illustration	brown	1
		trimmed off	brown	2
		weak printing	brown	1
	4	Man'td, Bonitz, reading down	brown	2
	28	Man'td. Bonitz, reading down	brown	18
	unknown	Manufactured, Bonitz, reading down	brown	1
		Man'td., Bonitz, reading down	brown	4
Cannon, Dietz CN-3	1	Manufactured, Bonitz, reading down	brown	4
		Manufactured, BONITZ, reading down	brown	3
		Manufactured, BONITZ, reading up	brown	7
		Man'td., Bonitz, reading down	brown	15
			white	2
		Man'td., Bonitz, reading up	brown	2
	4	Man'td. Bontiz, reading down	brown	6
		Man'td., Bonitz, reading down	brown	4
		Man'td., Bonitz, reading down	brown	1
	Unknown	Man'td., Bonitz, reading down	brown	3
		Made by Bonitz, reading down	brown	2
			white	2
Soldier presenting arms, Dietz SN-1	11	Made, Bonitz, reading down	brown	4
		Man't., Bonitz, reading down	brown	2
			white	2
	42	Made, Bonitz, reading down	brown	1
Two soldiers at attention, Dietz SN-2	11	Mant', Bonitz, reading down	brown	6
		Man't., Bonitz, reading down	brown	4
		trimmed off	brown	1
	42	Made, Bonitz, reading down	brown	1
			white	2
Two mounted dragoons, Dietz SM-2	5			
		Man'td, Bonitz, reading down	brown	14
			white	8
		Man'td, Bontiz, reading down	brown	2
		trimmed off	white	2



"Manufactured" and reading up or down. There may have been two printings of the "Man'td" version, because the imprint on these is most often angled straight up and down, but on one envelope known to the author it angles to the right as it descends. On some of these CN-3 covers with the "Manufactured" imprint, but not all, the publishers' name is capitalized: BONITZ, (Figure 5 on page 4) or BONITZ (Figure 6 on page 4). These are all on brown paper, and the "Bonitz" imprint appears to be more common than the capitalized one.

The "Gleeming" error occurs on three brown and two white envelopes. Brown paper was more common than white for this design.

Covers with Verse 4 are again on brown paper and have only the "Man'td" imprint reading down. A remarkable error in the imprint, as shown in Figure 7 on page 5, is rarely found in Verse 4 covers, with the publishers' name misspelled "Bontiz." The discovery of this error was announced only in 1973.

Verse 28 has been seen with the imprint reading down. Finally, two covers with an unknown verse have been seen in illustrations of lots in auction catalogs, unfortunately partially overlapped by other lots.

The final category of covers within the scope of this article has designs including soldiers. The Bonitz brothers used several cuts for this type. Dietz SM-2, illustrated in Figure 8 on page 5, shows two small mounted dragoons above Verse 5 (May those Northern fanatics who abuse their Southern neighbors...) and the imprint "Man'td" reading down. It occurs on both brown and white envelopes with roughly equal frequency, and there are also late 19th-century reports of its existence on "dark grayish manilla (sic)" and "heavy greenish paper." The other designs, Dietz SN-1 and SN-2, show standing armed soldiers, in costumes typical of the first part of the nineteenth century.

#### Verse 5

*May those Northern Fanatics, who abuse their Southern neighbors,  
Approach near enough to feel the point of our sabres;  
May they come near enough to hear the click of a trigger,  
And learn that a white man is better than a [racial epithet].*

Design SN-2, shown in Figure 9 on page 5, has two soldiers standing at attention, rifles on their shoulders. It is known with Verse 11 (Men of the South, arise, arise...) and the imprint "Mant'" reading down on brown paper, and also with Verse 42 (Our flag shall proudly stream...) and the imprint "Made" reading down, on brown paper.

#### Verse 11

*Men of the South, arise, arise —  
Hurl back the invading foe,  
The sunny land must — aye — be free  
Tho' blood of thousands flow!  
Shall we, who worship only God,  
To a despot bend our knee?  
No! No! men of the South arise,  
AND SWEAR YOU WILL BE FREE.*

Design SN-1 (Figure 10 on page 6) shows only one standing soldier, with either Verse 11 or Verse 42 below. The soldier on SN-1 differs from those on SN-2. The plume of his hat is bent, and he is presenting arms, so that his rifle is angled. As before, covers with Verse 11 have the imprint "Mant'" reading down, and those with Verse 42 have the imprint "Made" reading down, with the abbreviation for the state omitted. This design is known on both white and brown paper.

#### Verse 42

*Defiant of assault;  
Bars from the rainbow's brightest beam,  
And stars from Heaven's blue vault.  
Thousands of true and brave,  
Their hero[illegible] life may end;  
O'er thousands that flag shall wave,  
Thousands its folds defend.*

The soldiers' uniforms have been described as appropriate to the Civil War, but they clearly are not. They resemble uniforms of the War with Mexico (184), or even the War of 1812.

Like other southern publishers, W. & J. Bonitz also made writing paper with the same design elements as their envelopes. Bonitz stationery is not very common. Two types have come to the author's attention, both using the cannon cut (Dietz CN-3) and Verse 1. One uses "Manufactured" as the first word of the imprint and larger font for the verse, the other "Mant'd" and a smaller font. In both cases, the imprint is horizontal, and placed above the cut. The verse is to the right of these elements, with "Confederate States of America" in old English type below, as in Figure 11 (on Page 6). The letter sheet and cover in Figure 12 (on Page 1) have been altered from Confederate to Union sentiment. The cover, addressed to a young lady in New York City, is inverted and uses a Union stamp, Scott 65, canceled with a blue Baltimore CDS. Oddly, the letter sheet is datelined Newbern, with altered verse and "Confederate" struck out and replaced by a manuscript "United," and is addressed to the German Savings Bank in New York City in German handwriting. ■



## Patriotic Confederate Envelopes and Covers from North Carolina

I particularly thank Tony Crumbley for suggesting the topic of this article and for making available copies of Bonitz covers from his collection and from auction catalogs, Jerry Roughton for providing me with materials for a Bonitz article begun in the early 1990s but never completed, Jim Milgram for allowing me to use the illustration of the Bonitz lettersheet from his new book *Federal Civil War Postal History* (his **Figure 4-42**), and John Bonitz for providing me with a photograph of his ancestor. The Southern Historical Collection has given permission to use Figure 2. I also thank Lisa Coombes, North Carolina State Archives; Barbara Ilie, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Eileen McGrath and Allison Murray, North Carolina Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; James Milgram, M. D., Lake Forest, IL; and Ellen Peachey, American Philatelic Research Library, Bellefonte, PA; The picture of Julius Bonitz is reproduced with the permission of the Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

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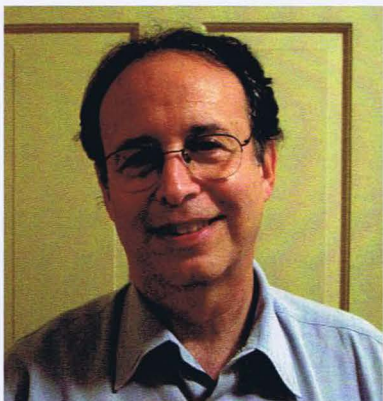






## Meet Founding Member Rich Weiner

This quarter we'd like to continue our series of founding fathers by focusing on Rich Weiner. Rich was born in Brooklyn, New York in 1945. He grew up in a military family, which took him all over the world, resulting in his attending 12 different schools before college. It was during his time living in Heidelberg, Germany, in his teens, that Rich first got interested in Philately, starting, not surprisingly, a collection of German stamps, followed by excursions into U.S., U.N., and Israel philately.



As is often the case, Rich's stamp interests took the proverbial "back seat" to pursuit of higher education. In his case, Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the University of Pennsylvania, respectively, were followed by a move to NC in 1969, where he received M.D. and Ph.D. degrees from Duke University. Following residency training in Psychiatry at UNC, Rich joined the faculty of Duke School of Medicine and the staff of the Durham VA Medical Center, and remains employed at both.

Somewhere along the line, Rich decided to get back involved with stamp collecting. After perusing a variety of dealers' offerings at some local stamp shows, he discovered stampless postal markings. It was a real revelation that philately didn't necessarily need to involve stamps. A further revelation was that, since postage during the stampless era in the U.S. was at least partially based on number of pages of paper being sent, stampless postal communications generally involved a single sheet of paper being folded so that it included both an integral address leaf, on which a postmark could be written or handstamped, and the letter itself. This latter phenomenon allowed him to get not only a 'postal history' item, but also a letter from a relatively early time period in our Nation's history, i.e. a personal perspective on life in the American past.

This interest led Rich to embark on a decades-long focus on NC stampless postal markings, amassing what is likely now the second most comprehensive collection of such material, and the source of some of the stampless postal markings illustrated in the NCPHS's multivolume work: *Post Offices and Postmasters of North Carolina*. In the process of accumulating NC stampless items, Rich

also became more and more interested in the content of the enclosed letters themselves, particularly those that portrayed first-person accounts of contemporary events and experiences. This interest gradually evolved into a broader excursion into the world of old letters collecting, primarily, though not entirely, covering the stampless period in U.S. history.

For Rich, the major source of enjoyment of such collecting is the discoveries that can sometimes be made from researching such communications and the people who wrote and received them. Nowadays, the internet, along with more traditional sources, such as the Southern Historical Collection at UNC-Chapel Hill, have made such research much easier to carry out. Just like many physicians learn best through the experiences of their patients, a more poignant and meaningful sense of history can be gained from the personal experiences and perspectives reflected in letters — particularly since, during the stampless period, there were no viable alternative means of communication, i.e. no telephone, email, or text-paging.

Along the way, Rich has discovered a number of NC letters of historical interest. One of the first of these was a stampless folded letter from "Brunswick, Cape Fear" to Newport, Rhode Island, datelined 1747. Despite not having postal markings (which were extremely rare until the late 1700's in NC), the letter is extraordinary just in having been datelined from NC at such an early date. In addition, it may well be the only letter datelined from Brunswick, which ceased existence as a town by the end of the Revolutionary War. If that were not enough, the content of the letter contains mention of the depredations in the local shipping lanes by Spanish privateers, who, at the time, were scouring the N.C. coast as part of what was termed "King George's War" in the colonies. Eventually, in 1748, the Spanish actually invaded Brunswick, but were soon evicted by a hastily assembled local militia. Finding all this out, once more, offers the opportunity to make history real.

Rich has plans to eventually write articles on some of these letters; some in our own NCPHS *Postal Historian*. So far there has only been time to do one: a very early Davidson College letter from 1837, written by student William P. Bynum to his father in Germantown, NC (NCPHS *Postal Historian*, Fall, 2002, pp 11-13). This letter, written only several months after the opening of Davidson College, was postmarked Mt. Mourne, as the pickup from there was more reliable than that from the newly established Davidson College Post Office. It describes what life was like at the College during its earliest days — all the more meaningful because it is portrayed in the words of the student himself. ■



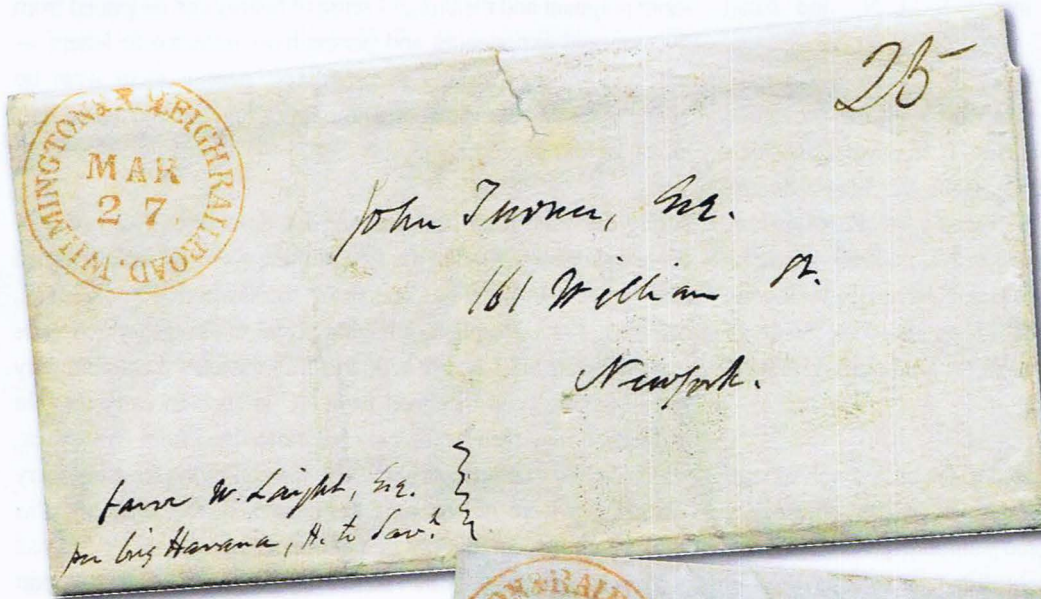
# The Wilmington and Raleigh Railroad

by Tony L. Crumbley

In 1833 the citizens of Wilmington went to Raleigh and asked for permission to bond a railroad running from Wilmington to Raleigh. Their request was denied by the state legislature in January 1834. With this defeat, the citizens went back to the legislature and requested permission to charter a company that would build the railroad. This was approved and overwhelmingly funded by the citizens of Wilmington. The original charter was to run the railroad from Wilmington to Raleigh. Because the citizens of Raleigh did not want the railroad coming to Raleigh, the line was changed at Faison to head towards Weldon where it could connect with the Richmond & Petersburg railroad. An

amendment of the charter was made in December 1835. The railroad would, however, continue to operate under the Wilmington & Raleigh name until 1855.

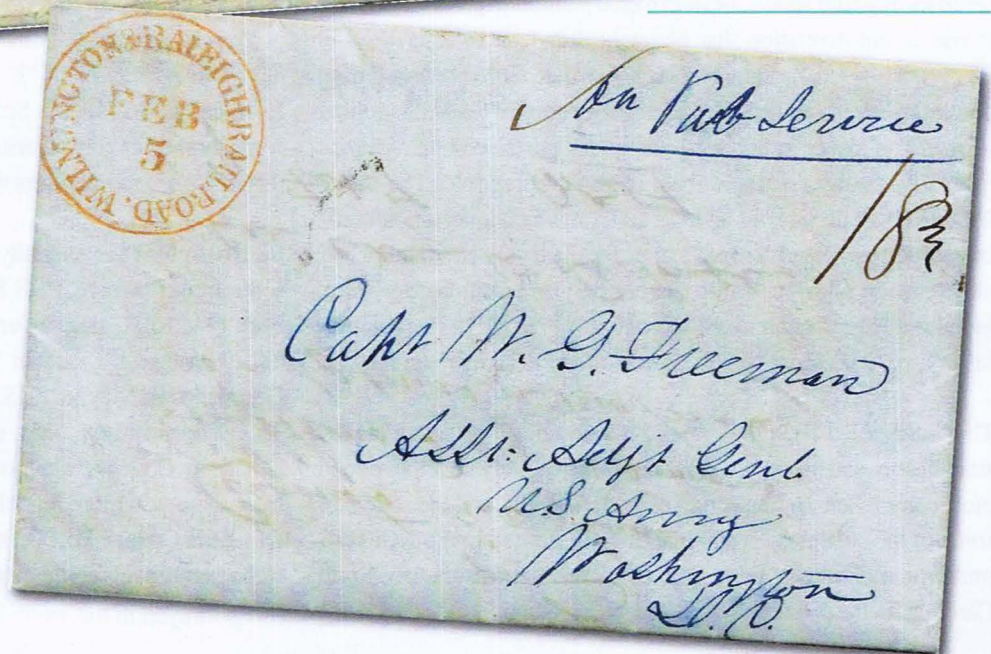
The actual construction of the line began in October 1836 and work was completed to Weldon on March 7, 1840. At this time the track ran 161½ miles and was the longest railroad line in the world. The track was 4 feet 8½ inches wide, the same as the Petersburg railroad but not the standard 5 feet of most southern railroads. The track was made of wood with a metal cap over the wood. The metal cap often would buckle under the weight of the train.



◀ **Figure 1** *Wilmington & Raleigh Railroad, red, March 27, 1844, paid 25 (ms); this folded letter originated in Havana, Cuba, and was shipped by brig Havana to Savannah (ms lower left). The cover was posted on the railroad on March 27, 1844 and forwarded to New York, the earliest known marking from this railroad. Harris Type II cds*

**Figure 2** ▶

*Wilmington & Raleigh Railroad, red, February 5, 1848, paid 18¾ (ms); this folded letter was posted at Fort Johnson, NC and is a request from Lt. Freeman to summon a witness to a forthcoming trial. Harris Type II cds*





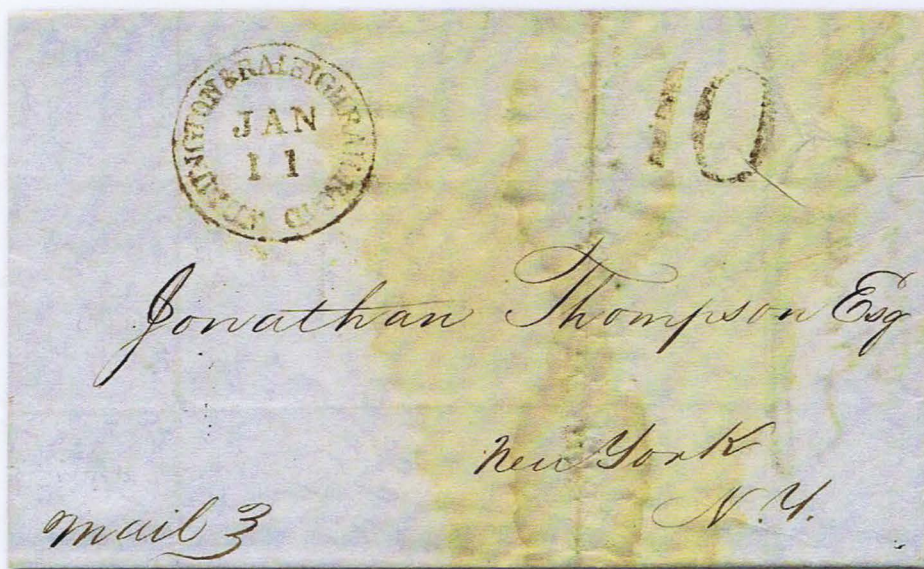


▲ **Figure 3** *Wilmington & Raleigh Railroad, red, October 27, 1846; this letter was posted in Charleston on October 26, 1846 and carried to Wilmington to be placed on board the railroad to Philadelphia.*

*Harris Type I cds, bold 10 (hs)*

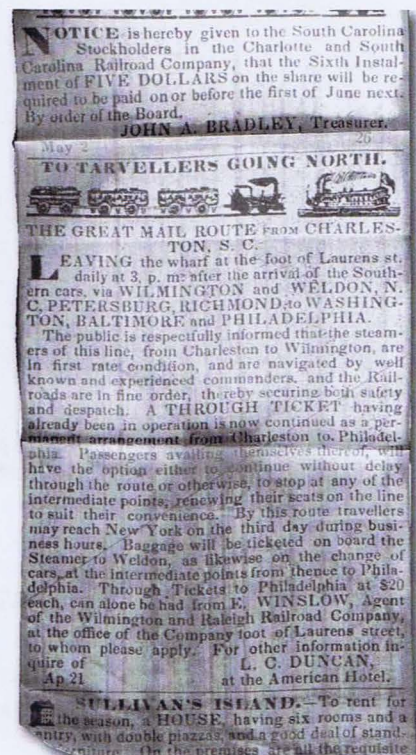
Between 1839 and 1844 the rail line operated two locomotives. The first, named *Brunswick*, was made by the Norris Locomotive Works of Philadelphia, PA. The second, named *John C. Calhoun*, was made by the Baldwin Locomotive Works, also of Philadelphia. Each company manufactured 1,000 locomotives between 1836 and 1860. Baldwin would continue to make locomotives until 1954 and was the greatest builder of locomotives in American history.

Between 1830 and 1839, 28 railroad companies were chartered in the State of North Carolina. Undoubtedly railroads were the talk of the communities. Only two of these, however, were built. From 1840 until 1845 no railroad companies were chartered. The depression of 1837 had put a halt to economic growth. By 1845, however, railroad companies began to pop up all over the nation.



▲ **Figure 5** *Wilmington & Raleigh Railroad, brown, January 11, 1848; the letter with bold 10 (hs) originated in Charleston and transferred to the railroad for passage to New York. The brown color ink is most likely oxidized red ink.*

*Harris Type III cds*



▲ **Figure 4** *Notice published in Charleston Mercury, April 21, ca. 1846; giving details of steamship connecting with rail line in Wilmington.*



From its earliest days, the railroad carried people, freight and mail. The Norris locomotive could carry 23 passengers and travel between 10 and 16 miles per hour, much faster travel than by stage or horseback. The first mail contracts with the Wilmington & Raleigh Railroad were executed in 1839. Route No. 2071 covered a short section from Weldon south

and Route No. 2072 a longer section from Wilmington north. The mail traveled by stage over the uncompleted section in the middle.

By 1844 and until 1851, the train made seven trips per week. From 1852 until 1860, the trips were increased to 14 per

**Figure 6** ▶

*Wilmington & Raleigh Railroad, red, February 22, 1848; a pair of Scott #1 paying the 10 cent rate to New York from Charleston, SC to Ghent, Belgium. Letter posted February 19, 1848 on board the train from Wilmington. It was carried from the U.S. by the Cunard steamer Hibernia. Harris Type III cds*



week. The 1851 station list was Wilmington, North East, Rocky Point, Burgaw, Washington, Teachey's, Strickland, Warsaw, Faison's, Dudley, Goldsboro, Washingta, Barden's Tossnot, Joyner's, Rocky Mount, Battles, Enfield, Halifax, Weldon.

One of the more unusual discoveries of mail carried on the Wilmington & Raleigh Railroad is that many of the covers

originated in Charleston, South Carolina, but have no Charleston postmarks. Four covers are known with Honour's city post carrier stamps, indicating they were handled by the private delivery service of Charleston. All direct travel at this time between Charleston and Wilmington was by steamer. Mail was carried by contact with a steamboat line. It is clear these letters must have been carried to the steamer line in Charleston without going through the Charleston post office,



**Figure 7** ▶

*Wilmington & Raleigh Railroad, red, January 23, 1848, bold 5 (hs); this folded letter has no contents thus its origination is unknown. The Sherwood family ran a business in Wilmington so it was most likely mailed from Wilmington to Stricklands, NC. Harris Type III cds*



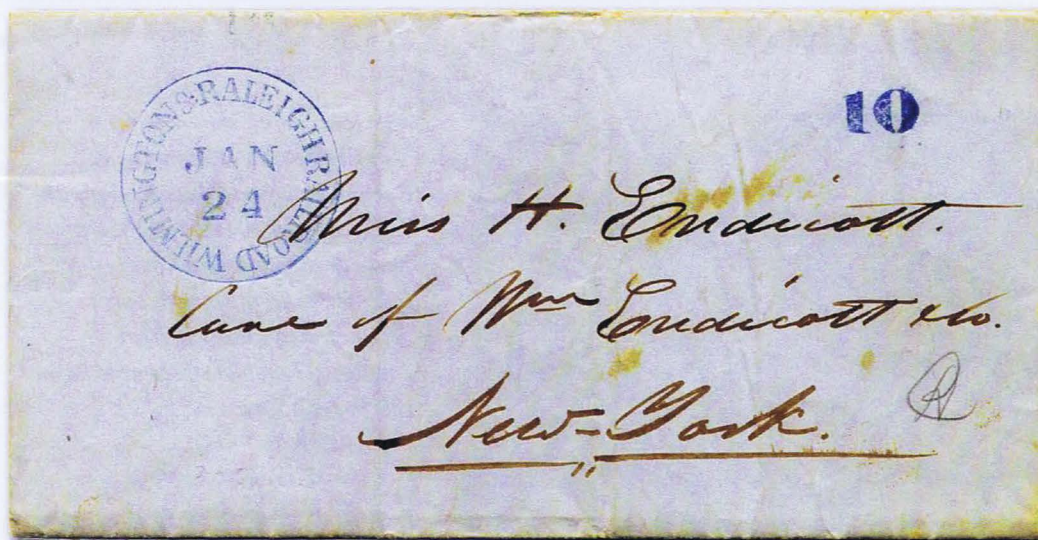
and then handed directly to the railroad route agent in Wilmington.

Route agents were assigned to the Wilmington & Raleigh Railroad sometime before 1846. It made sense for mail to be carried to Wilmington from Charleston and placed on the railroad there as this was part of the great mail route. By the 1850's one could travel from Wilmington to New York by railroad in 70 hours.

Throughout the operation of the rail line as the Wilmington

& Raleigh, considerable mail was canceled by the route agent. Five different handstamps were used with ink colors of black, blue and red. Numerous handstamp rate markings are known. Two distinct "5" and six distinct "10" rate markings are known as well as manuscript rate markings.

In 1855 the railroad was renamed the Wilmington & Weldon Railroad. In 1872 it was leased to the Wilmington, Columbia and Augusta Railroad. This lease was ended in 1878 when the WC&A went bankrupt. In 1900 the W&R merged into the Atlantic Coast Railroad. ■



◀ **Figure 8** *Wilmington & Raleigh Railroad, blue, January 24, 1850, small 10 (hs); this folded letter originated in Charleston on January 23, 1850. It was delivered to the railroad the next day for transit to New York. There are six different 10 (hs) markings recorded on the Wilmington & Raleigh railroad covers. Harris Type III cds*

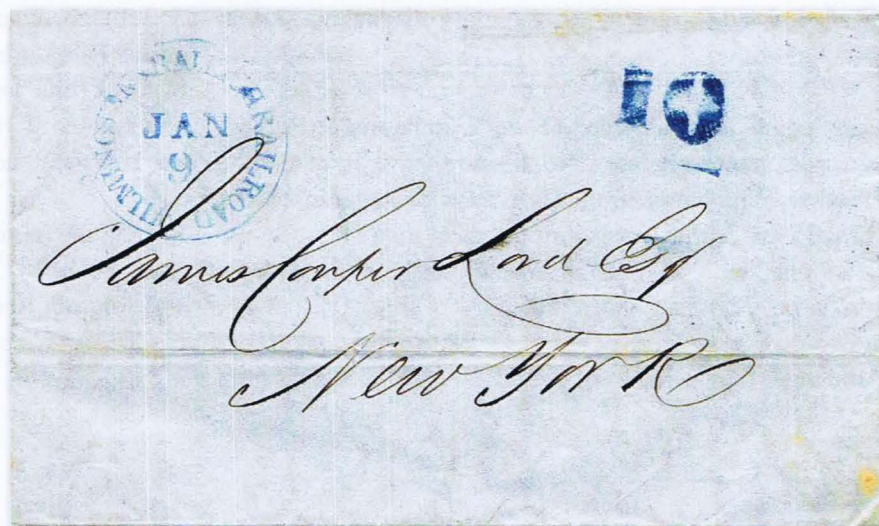




◀ **Figure 9** *Wilmington & Raleigh Railroad, blue, May 18, 1850, small 5 (hs); this ladies envelope was posted from Wilmington to Palmers Springs, Mecklenburg County, VA. Harris Type III cds*

**Figure 10** ▶

*Wilmington & Raleigh Railroad, blue, January 9, 1851, midsize 10 (hs); this folded letter originated in Charleston on January 7, 1851. It entered the mail on the railroad January 9 for transit to New York. By 1851 the trip from Wilmington to New York took 70 hours. Harris Type III cds*



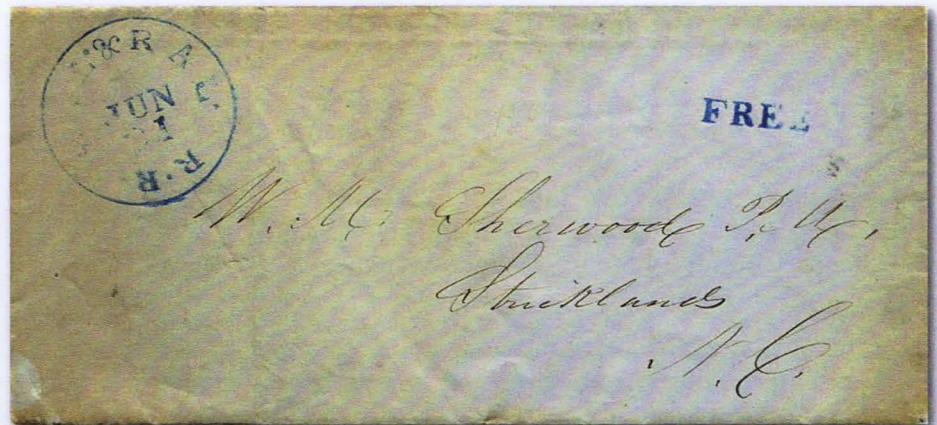
◀ **Figure 11** *Wilmington & Raleigh Railroad, blue, January 28, 1851, slanted 10 (hs); in 1851 a new datestamp was introduced by the railroad route agent. This cover originated in Charleston on January 27 and was forwarded by rail to New York. Type 305-I-1*





◀ **Figure 12** Wilmington & Raleigh Railroad, blue, December 3, 1851, midsize 5 (hs); this folded letter was posted from Wilmington on December 3 for delivery to Stricklands, NC.  
Type 305-I-1

**Figure 13** ▶  
Wilmington & Raleigh Railroad, blue, June 21, 1854, free (hs); W.M. Sherwood was a physician and postmaster in Stricklands. The cover in Fig 12 was posted to the doctor thus required 5 cents postage due. This cover was posted to him as postmaster and was sent free.  
Type 305-I-1



◀ **Figure 14** Wilmington, NC, blue, February 15, ca. 1854; Honour's City Post was a privately operated mail and package delivery service that operated in Charleston from 1851 until 1858. It carried mail, mostly between businesses and hotels to the post office. This letter probably originated from a business and was carried by Honour's directly to the mail boat in Charleston for delivery to Wilmington. It entered the mail in Wilmington and was carried on the rail line to Philadelphia. Type 305-I-1

#### Sources:

S. David Carriker. *Railroading in the Carolina Sandhills Vol. 1: The 19th Century (1825-1900)*. Matthews, NC: Heritage Publishing Co., 1985.

Andrew J. Howell. *The Book of Wilmington*. Wilmington, NC: Wilmington Printing Co., 1930.

C.W. Remele. *United State Railroad Postmarks 1837 to 1861*. State College, PA: The U.S. 1851-60 Unit, No. 11 of the American Philatelic Society, 1858.

Richard F. Winter. *Wilmington & Raleigh Railroad Steamboats*. *North Carolina Postal Historian*, Whole No. 88, Fall 2004, pp. 9-13.



## NCPHS & CSA Joint Meeting

March 20 – 22, 2009

**Hilton Wilmington Riverside  
301 North Water St., Wilmington, NC 28401**

The NCPHS will meet jointly with the Confederate Stamp Alliance for their midyear meeting. The CSA has invited us to attend free of charge for a presentation by Maurice Burnsey, Larry Lohr and Dick Winter on Saturday, March 21. If you would like to attend the entire weekend including dinner on Friday, March 20 and a 10 dealer Bourse, the registration fee is \$100. Checks should be sent to Tony Crumbley who can also provide additional information.

## 2009 SUSTAINING MEMBERS

Marshall Acee	John Hardy	Dennis Osborne
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Maurice Bursey	Steven Jackson	State of North Carolina, Archives & Records
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Bill DiPaolo	Raymond Marshall	
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Raymond Marshall

## NORTH CAROLINA POSTAL HISTORIAN



If you'd like to contribute information  
or articles to the Spring *POSTAL HISTORIAN*  
please submit by the following deadline:

MARCH 1

## CALLING ALL MEMBER CYBER-PHILES

The *POSTAL HISTORIAN* has compiled a  
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Please send your email address to  
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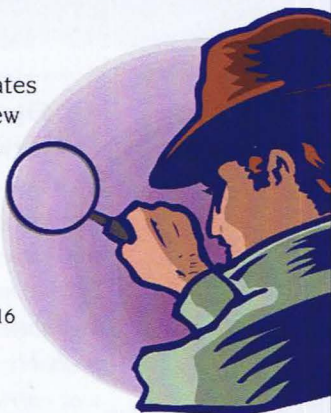
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