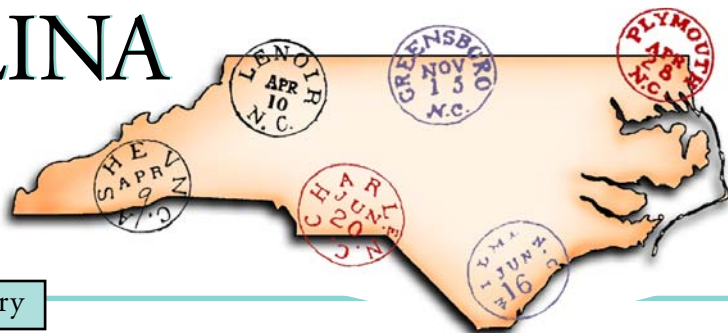


NORTH CAROLINA POSTAL HISTORIAN

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A Survey of Auxiliary Markings



Murphey or Murphy



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

In July 1982 at a CHARPEX meeting, the North Carolina Postal History Society was formed. We will complete our 34th year in July of this year. 2016 promises to be another year of progress and growth for our society.

Tony Crumbley recently shared with me links to some other state postal history journals. We will compile a list of those links and make them available to the membership in the near future. Based on what I have seen, our journal is unsurpassed in content and presentation. The New Jersey Postal History Society has another quality publication that is much larger than ours, but it is available only in digital form. It is surprising that many states do not have publications at all or not of the scope of North Carolina's. We hope to attract new members and based on feedback I have received, quality articles attract more readers and hopefully, members.

I know all of our members have areas of special interest and knowledge, which could contribute an article for the *NC Postal Historian*. Our able editor, Dick Winter, will assist anyone with "writers' block." I would be happy to assist in expanding a writer's concept or theme into an article. Short articles are just as informative and interesting as longer ones, and will be great contributions to the journal. We postal historians have learned that every cover has a story to tell, which would be interesting to the readership. A review of the digitalized versions of past newsletters and journals on the society's web site shows the amazing variety and historical value of the articles that have been contributed over the years. Many of these stories are fruit for additional research. Some that come to mind are more work on rural postal routes, stories on short lived post offices, early railroad postal service, lesser known periods such as the Reconstruction Era and the Federal Period, and overseas military and diplomatic mail. There are many counties whose postal history needs to be told, as well as schools and universities.

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Some of the important upcoming shows are the Carolina Coin and Stamp Show on June 24-26, 2016, at the NC State Fairgrounds in Raleigh and the Charpex show on July 30-31 at Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte. At the Charpex show on July 30, there will be a society meeting and we will continue our tradition of short but interesting postal history presentations. These shows are an interesting way to find good material and meet fellow historians, besides having free admission!

Dick Winter continues to upgrade the status of the *North Carolina Postmark Catalog*, which may be accessed at <http://www.ncpostalhistory.com>. This has been a great benefit to us all, as the site only becomes better and better. At the end of this issue he has a short article on the status of two important postmark catalogs.

Work is continuing on how to improve the web site in terms of making it searchable and easier to modify. Hopefully there will be some concrete progress in near future.

Suggestions and comments for improving the society and the *NC Postal Historian* are always welcome. My email address is fhall@suddenlink.com and my telephone number is (252) 559-4018.

Frank Hall



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A Survey of Auxiliary Markings in North Carolina

by Scott Steward



The Auxiliary Markings Club defines an auxiliary marking as a:
Postal marking applied to covers by handstamp, machine cancellation, a stick-on label, manuscript markings, or by mechanical or electronic methods such as addressograph or computer, indicating that the covers were given special attention due to some special circumstance.

When applied in the broadest context, almost any marking other than a circular datestamp could be called an auxiliary marking. The goal of this article is to give a brief survey of the types of auxiliary markings that might be encountered on covers originating in or passing through North Carolina post offices. This article is by no means comprehensive but rather is intended to highlight this area of North Carolina postal history collecting.

This article breaks auxiliary markings down into two broad categories. The first of these categories are markings that indicate a special handling service that was requested and paid for by the mailer of the letter. The second broad category are auxiliary markings that are used when the normal delivery process does not work as expected.

Probably the most commonly encountered of the first broad category are registered, special delivery, and airmail

(Henderson County) to Augusta, Maine. The cover bears a boxed, magenta, registered marking that includes both the location and date of mailing, "Hendersonville, N.C." and "Aug 7 1897." There are very few North Carolina registered handstamps showing information arranged this way. All were used before or in 1900 and all are uncommon. Figure 2 shows a registered letter mailed from Asheville (Buncombe County) to Waterville, Maine. This style of registered marking is not contained within a box or oval, but also shows the location and date of mailing, usually in three or four lines. The markings can



▲ **Figure 1.** August 7, 1897, registered cover from Hendersonville (Henderson County) to Augusta, Maine, showing an uncommon magenta, boxed, registered auxiliary marking.



◀ **Figure 2.** Registered cover mailed from Asheville (Buncombe County) to Waterville Maine, on December 28, 1897, showing a three-lined, registered, auxiliary marking.

markings. Considering first the registered markings, some of the most interesting of these were the registered markings that showed the location from which the envelope was mailed. These can be found within a box or oval and with no containment, but in several lines. Two examples are illustrated. Figure 1 shows a registered letter mailed from Hendersonville

be found either on the front of a cover or on the reverse. Black, magenta and purple ink examples are known.

These two styles of registered markings can be compared to the more commonly encountered twentieth century registered marking, which does not show the date or location of mailing on the cover front, but a separate registered marking with the

date and location on the reverse contained within a circular datestamp (see Figure 3 and 4). The cover in Figure 3 was mailed from Waynesville (Haywood County) to Buenos Aires, Argentina, on May 3, 1917, with a generic purple registered marking on the front. Additionally the cover had a purple “Return receipt demanded” auxiliary marking so that the mailer will receive a notice that the letter was delivered. The rear of this cover, illustrated in Figure 4, bears a more common, circular, registered marking in the same purple ink that shows the date and location of mailing. Three strikes were applied along the seal of the envelope for security reasons.

Typical airmail and special delivery auxiliary markings encountered are often non-specific and do not include information about the post office. The cover in Figure 5 was mailed September 15, 1951, from Ridgecrest (Buncombe County) to Dallas, Texas, and was sent via the combined airmail and special delivery service. It has both a generic “VIA AIR MAIL” and a

Auxiliary markings often were used by the receiving post office to show that the special delivery fee was paid to the carrier making the delivery. Usually these are generic markings that show the wording, “Fee claimed by office of First address.” However, more specific markings can be found such as the one in Figure 6. This cover was mailed from Winchester, Massachusetts, to Asheville (Buncombe County) on May 2, 1934, via the combined airmail and special delivery service. The front of the cover shows a marking that states “Fee claimed at Asheville, NC,” the location where the special delivery fee was paid.

A later example of a special delivery marking is shown in Figure 7. This cover was mailed from Atlanta, Georgia, to Charlotte (Mecklenburg County) in October 1981, and includ-



▲ **Figure 4.** Reverse of cover showing Waynesville registered auxiliary markings applied along seal of envelope.

Figure 3. ▲ Registered cover mailed from Waynesville (Haywood County) to Buenos Ayres, Argentina, posted on May 3, 1917, showing “REGISTERED” and “Return receipt demanded” auxiliary markings.

“SPECIAL DELIVERY” marking, each in magenta ink. While these markings do not give specifics about the post office used to mail the letter, a variety of shapes and colors can be found in many post office markings.

ed special delivery service. Upon arriving in Charlotte the letter was marked with a magenta clock-faced received stamp of the special delivery section showing that the letter was received on October 9, at 10:00 AM. The letter also has a pen notation indicating that it was finally delivered at 5:35 PM the same day by carrier #10. The letter correctly was paid the 18 cent first class surface rate plus \$2.10 for special delivery service.

Another group of auxiliary markings that may be encountered are covers with the marking “Way.” This marking, sometimes by a handstamp but more often in manuscript, typically indicated that the letter was picked up along a mail route by a



◀ **Figure 5.** September 15, 1951, airmail special delivery cover from Ridgecrest (Buncombe County) to Dallas, Texas, showing auxiliary markings for both services in magenta ink. Each is a generic marking giving no information about where the marking was made.

Figure 6. ▶ May 2, 1934, airmail cover with special delivery service requested from Winchester, Massachusetts, to Asheville (Buncombe County). The auxiliary handstamp, "Fee claimed at Asheville, N.C." shows the special delivery fee was paid at a specific location, Asheville.



◀ **Figure 7.** Special delivery cover sent from Atlanta, Georgia, in October 1981 to Charlotte (Mecklenburg County). A magenta SPECIAL DELIVERY handstamp and a magenta clock-faced receiving stamp showed that the letter was received at 10:00 AM. A pen notation indicated it was delivered at 5:35 PM on October 9, 1981, by carrier #10. The letter was correctly paid the 18 cent first class surface rate plus \$2.10 for special delivery service. (Courtesy of Tom Breske)

mail carrier traveling the postal route and then deposited at the next post office on his mail route. The letter would not have been in a locked mail pouch but a loose letter. Once the next post office was reached the letter would be placed in the mails as originating at that office. It was postmarked, rated for any postage due, and in some cases, an extra fee paid and marked to show the fee given to the person delivering it to the post

office for the service. At some post offices this fee was passed on to the letter recipient. An example of a cover with the "Way" marking in manuscript is shown in Figure 8. This folded letter was most likely handed to a mail carrier on his way to the Enfield post office in Halifax County. The letter was addressed to Williamston (Martin County). The postmaster at Enfield marked this letter for 5 cents postage due, then added one cent



◀ **Figure 8.** Folded letter outer sheet of letter picked up on the way to Enfield (Halifax County) by post carrier, addressed to Williamston (Martin County). Enfield postmaster wrote “Way” on letter face, marked the 5 cent postage due rate, then corrected to 6 cents, adding 1 cent way fee that he paid to post carrier.

Figure 9. ▶ Reconstruction period cover in late 1860s from Wilmington (New Hanover County) to Fayetteville (Cumberland County) lacking full postage and marked at Wilmington for 3 cents postage due. (Courtesy of Tony Crumbley)



◀ **Figure 10.** May 7, 187x envelope from Asheville (Buncombe County) to Morganton (Burke County) originally mailed without a stamp for postage. The Asheville postmaster marked the cover “HELD/FOR/POSTAGE” with a circular handstamp. The next day when proper postage was paid, he affixed a stamp and sent the letter on its way with a new datestamp.

as a way fee that he had paid the mail carrier who delivered the letter to him. The rate was overwritten and corrected to 6 cents postage due.

The second broad category of auxiliary markings that can be found, and in the author’s opinion the more interesting, are markings used when the normal delivery process does not work as expected. These problems can be the result of any number of issues but commonly encountered examples include incorrect postage, the addressee cannot be located, mail sent to the wrong location, and damaged mail.

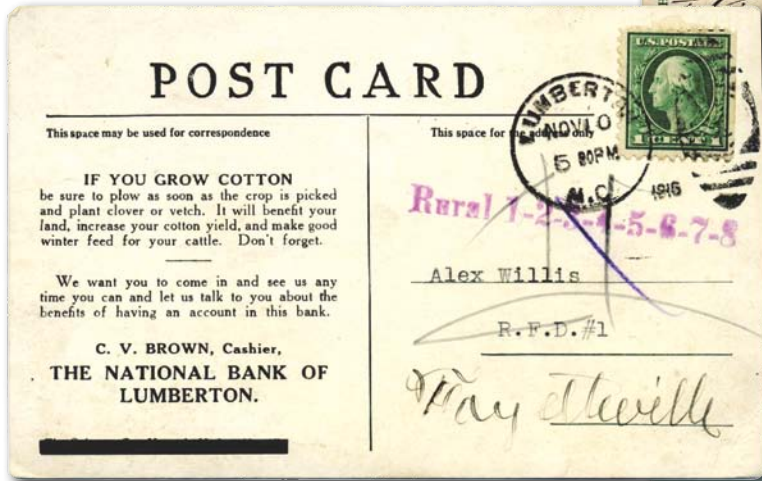
An example of a cover which had incorrect postage is shown in Figure 9. This cover was mailed from Wilmington (New Hanover County) by the firm of Worth & Daniel, Commission Merchants, to Fayetteville (Cumberland County) in the late 1860s. It appears to have originally lacked full postage and was marked as “Due 3” with a handstamp. Apparently, this letter weighed over ½ ounce and required a second rate.

Another example is shown in Figure 10. This cover was mailed from Asheville (Buncombe County) to Morganton (Burke County) in the 1870s. It appears to have been originally mailed on May 7th without a stamp. The postmaster marked the envelope with a circular datestamp and a “Held for Postage” circular handstamp, then contacted the sender for the postage fee. Once the proper postage was paid, a stamp was affixed to the cover, which again was postmarked in Asheville on May 8th, and the letter was sent on its way.

Figure 11 illustrates a later example of a cover missing postage. This post card arrived at the Salisbury (Rowan County) post office on April 13, 1912, addressed without postage to Catawba (Catawba County). The postmaster at Salisbury contacted the sender and the postage was paid. He affixed a 1 cent stamp to the card, struck a magenta handstamp reading, “This is the Mail for/which you sent postage.” and postmarked the card with a machine canceling device. The post card was

Figure 11. ▶

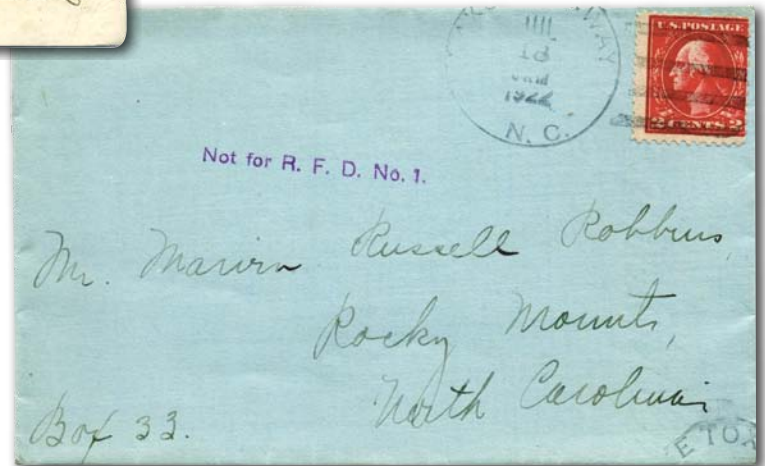
April 13, 1912, post card mailed at Salisbury without a stamp and addressed to Catawba (Catawba County). Postmaster contacted sender and postage was paid. He applied the stamp and used a canceling machine device to postmark the card, adding also the magenta handstamp, "This is the Mail for/which you sent postage." Catawba used a 4-bar hand cancel to mark the receiving date, April 17th. (Courtesy of Tony Crumbley)



◀ Figure 12. November 10, 1916, post card posted at Lumberton (Robeson County) to RFD #1, Fayetteville (Cumberland County). At Fayetteville a magenta, auxiliary handstamp was applied to show their eight possible RFDs. Letter carriers crossed thru numbers 1-4 to show the address was not on their routes. (Courtesy of Tony Crumbley)

Figure 13. ▶

1922 cover from Lake Toxaway (Transylvania County) to Rocky Mount (Edgecombe County) with auxiliary marking indicating addressee was not on RFD #1. (Courtesy of Tony Crumbley)



received at the Catawba post office on April 17th, where it was marked with a 4-bar cancel of Catawba.

Another situation which often resulted in the use of auxiliary markings was difficulty in locating the intended recipient of a piece of mail. An example of such a cover is shown in Figure 12. This post card was mailed from Lumberton (Robeson County) to Fayetteville (Cumberland County) in November 1916. The card was addressed to Alex Willis on Rural Free Delivery Route (RFD) #1 served by Fayetteville. Unfortunately, either Mr. Willis did not live on RFD #1 or he could not be located. Harold E. Richow, in his book, *Encyclopedia of R.F.D. Cancels*, wrote that "RFD carriers and postmasters often made conscientious efforts to locate addressees on mail that was incorrectly or insufficiently addressed. Over 200 variations of such auxiliary postal markings have been recorded." This is one example from North Carolina, where such markings are seldom seen. The card was stamped "Rural 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8" in magenta ink to show the possible RFD routes from Fayetteville. As the card was passed

from one letter carrier to the next, the carrier would mark off the route for which they were responsible. Since the cover shows no signs of being returned one may presume that Mr. Willis was eventually located. Note also that route numbers 1-4 were crossed through, but not the other numbers, suggesting that he was finally found in one of them, perhaps number RFD #5.

Another cover with an uncommon RFD-related auxiliary marking is shown in Figure 13. This letter was mailed from Lake Toxaway (Transylvania County) to Rocky Mount (Edgecombe County) in 1922. Since the letter was not to an addressee in the city it was given to a letter carrier on RFD route 1 of that city. It appears that the addressee also was not on this RFD carrier's route and he marked it "Not for R.F.D.

Figure 14. ►

Cover mailed from Wadesboro (Anson County) on October 31, 1906, to Elkin (Surry County). Since the letter went unclaimed for a month and had a return address it was marked as "UNCLAIMED" and returned to the writer. (Courtesy of Tony Crumbley)



◄ **Figure 15.** April 29, 1902, envelope from Boca, California, to Asheville (Buncombe County) to be held for general delivery. Since the letter had not been called for, it was advertised on May 24th and struck with an auxiliary marking, "ADVERTISED UNCLAIMED/May 24 1902/ASHEVILLE, N.C." in blue ink. The black circular datestamp of June 6th indicated the advertising was successful and an addressee found. (Courtesy of Tony Crumbley)

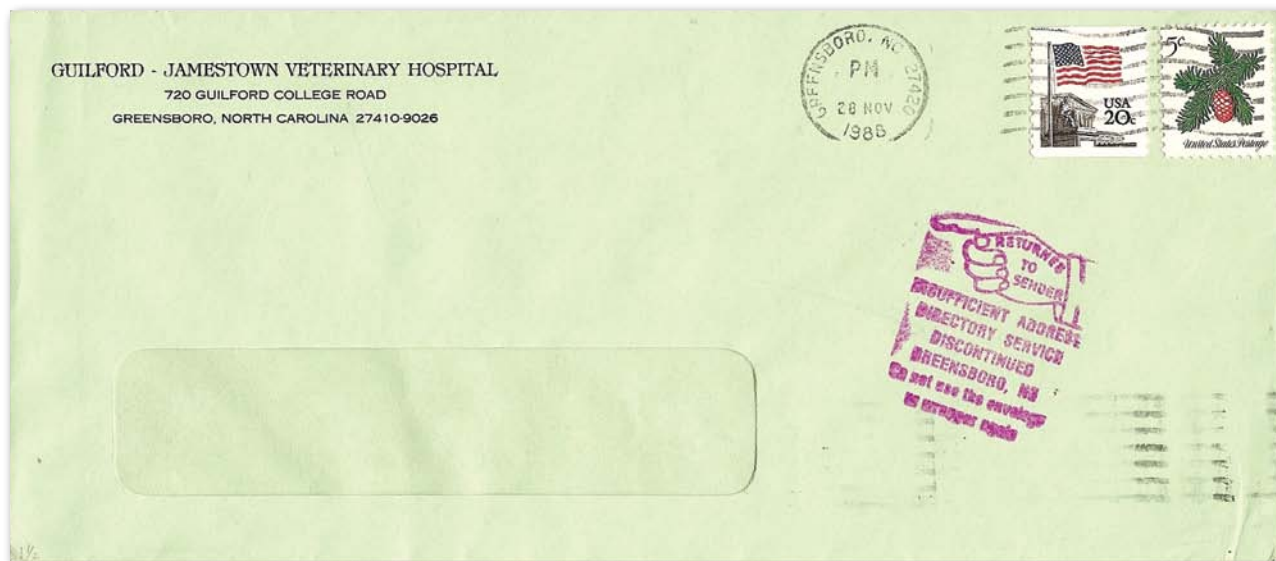
No. 1" with a purple handstamp. There were six RFD routes from Rocky Mount at the time and presumably the addressee was found, but we don't know on which route.

Figure 14 shows an example of a cover that was not successfully delivered. This cover was mailed from Wadesboro (Anson County) to Elkin (Surry County) in October 1906. The cover was held at the Elkin post office with the expectation that the intended recipient would claim it. Unfortunately, after five weeks this did not happen. Since it had a return address and had been held for at least one month it was marked as "UNCLAIMED" and struck with a pointing-hand handstamp containing "RETURN TO WRITER." The letter was postmarked in Elkin on December 3rd with a metal duplex, canceling device and returned to Wadesboro from which it had originated earlier.

A second example of an undelivered letter is shown in Figure 15. This letter was mailed on April 29, 1902, from Boca, California, to Asheville (Buncombe County). The letter had been endorsed "Gen del" in the lower left corner indicating it should be held at the Asheville post office to be picked up as a general delivery letter. A flag cancel on the reverse dated May 4th indicates the receipt date at Asheville. A May 4, 1902,

purple handstamp on the front also supports it being held at Asheville. Since the intended recipient did not pick up the letter, it was advertised on May 24th, marked by a blue auxiliary marking, "ADVERTISED UNCLAIMED/MAY 24 1902/ASHEVILLE, N.C." Apparently this time it was successful and the letter was postmarked in Asheville again on June 6th when it was picked up.

Figure 16 illustrates another example of an undelivered letter. This letter was mailed from Greensboro (Guilford County) on November 28, 1988. Since it is a window envelope and there are no contents, the destination is unknown. It can be assumed that the destination was local as the item apparently never left the Greensboro office. Apparently the address information was either incomplete or not understandable. The letter was marked with a pointing hand inscribed "RETURNED/TO/SENDER" to be returned to the originator's. The auxiliary marking also contained the instructions, "INSUFFICIENT ADDRESS/DIRECTORY SERVICE/DISCONTINUED/GREENSBORO, NC/Do not use the envelope/or wrapper again." Historically, many large post offices maintained city directories for a variety of locations in order to help find the intended recipients of mail. This service was generally limited



▲ **Figure 16.** Cover mailed from Greensboro (Guilford County) for local delivery in 1988 showing auxiliary marking indicating the address was insufficient, that directory service was no longer available in Greensboro, and that the letter was being returned to the sender. (Courtesy of Tom Breske)



► **Figure 17.** December 17, 1902, cover from Raleigh (Wake County) to Nashville (Nash County) showing an auxiliary marking that indicated the address was changed to Nashville, Tennessee by the Raleigh post office. (Courtesy of Tony Crumbley)

to first class mail and items with additional services such as special delivery; however, it appears by November 1988 this service had been discontinued in Greensboro. Note that the post office indicated they did not want this canceled envelope to be reused, so a statement to that effect was included in the instructions.

Another situation that often resulted in the use of auxiliary markings was letters with erroneous addresses. Typical addressing errors included addresses containing a city but no state or addresses containing a city and a state but the city was not located in the state shown in the address. Letters and cards with

these types of errors are often referred to as “nixies.” The January 1886 United States Official Postal Guide, section 417, page 709 defines a nixie as:

Domestic matter of the first and second-class which is addressed to places not post offices, or to states in which there is no such post office as that indicated in the address, is called “nixes” and is unmailable.

An example of such a letter is shown in Figure 17. This cover was mailed from Raleigh (Wake County) in December 1902 and was addressed to Nashville (Nash County). While Nashville is a proper North Carolina address, for some reason the mail



◀ **Figure 18.** March 7, 1929, letter from Youngstown, Ohio, to Charlotte, Louisiana. The Atlanta post office realized there was no Charlotte in Louisiana and corrected the address to Charlotte, North Carolina. Additional auxiliary markings showed there was no Menafee Airways at Charlotte and the letter was returned to the sender as “Unclaimed.” (Courtesy of the Auxiliary Markings Club)

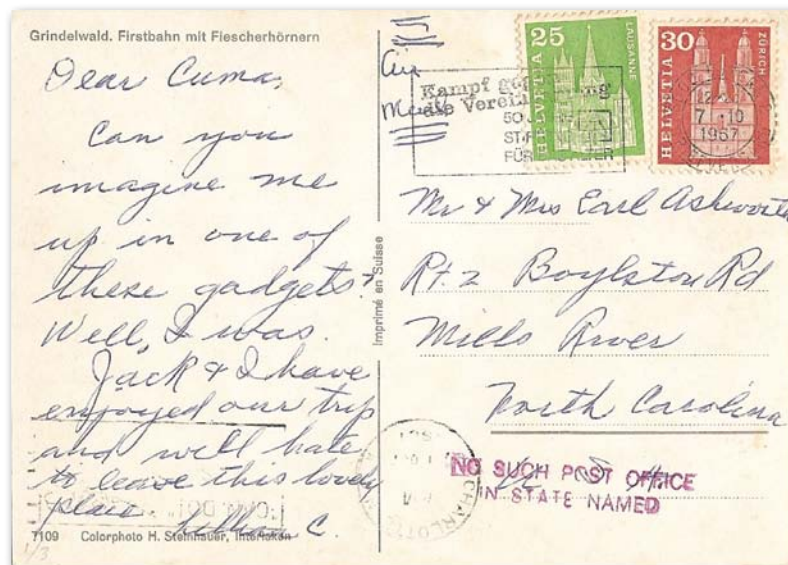


Figure 19. ▶

October 7, 1967, postcard sent by airmail from Switzerland to Mills River, North Carolina. At Charlotte the post office struck the magenta auxiliary marking, “NO SUCH POST OFFICE/IN STATE NAMED.” There hadn’t been a Mills River post office in North Carolina since 1904. It is not known how the post card reached the addressee. (Courtesy of Tom Breske)

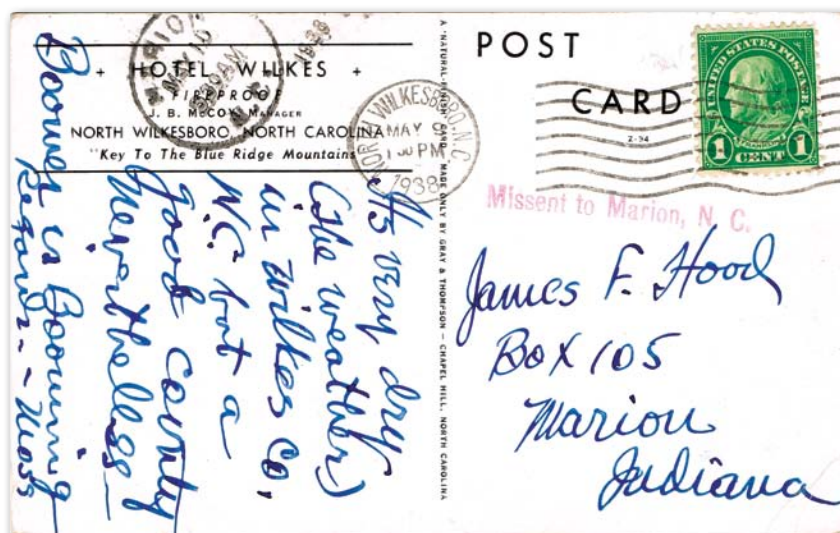
clerk crossed out “N.C.” and directed the letter to Nashville, Tennessee. To indicate the address had been corrected the letter received the auxiliary marking “DEFICIENCY/IN/ ADDRESS/SUPPLIED/BY RALEIGH NC PO.” The letter was received by the Nashville, Tennessee, post office and marked with a received stamp on the rear of December 18. Apparently the letter was successfully delivered.

An example of a nixie arriving in North Carolina is shown in Figure 18. This cover was mailed on March 7, 1929, from Youngstown, Ohio, to Charlotte, Louisiana. A mail clerk in Atlanta realized there was no Charlotte post office in Louisiana and corrected the address to send the letter to Charlotte, North Carolina. A circular, auxiliary handstamp reading, “DEFICIENCY/IN/ADDRESS/SUPPLIED BY/8/AT

LANTA, GA.” was applied in magenta ink. Unfortunately, there was no Menafee Airways located in Charlotte, so the letter was stamped with a “No such firm in Charlotte, N.C.” handstamp in magenta ink. Additionally, a boxed RETURNED TO WRITER auxiliary marking was applied with “Unclaimed” checked off as the reason.

Another example of an incorrect address on mail is shown in Figure 19. This postcard was sent by air mail from Switzerland to Mills River, North Carolina, in October 1967. The post card arrived in Charlotte (Mecklenburg County) where it was post-marked as received. Here it was stamped in magenta ink with the auxiliary marking handstamp, “NO SUCH POST OFFICE/ IN STATE NAMED.” The catalog, *Post Offices and Postmasters of North Carolina*, lists a post office by that name, first in

Figure 20. ▶ May 24, 1906, postal card from Fort Wayne, Indiana, to Williamston (Martin County) sent in error to Wilmington (New Hanover County) Here it was marked with the auxiliary marking handstamp in purple ink, "MISSENT TO/WILMINGTON N.C. The postal card was reposted the day it arrived, May 26th, as shown by two different Wilmington postmarks. (Courtesy of Tony Crumbley)



◀ **Figure 21.** Postcard mailed from North Wilkesboro (Wilkes County) on May 9, 1938, to Marion, Indiana missent to Marion, North Carolina. At Marion (McDowell County) it received an auxiliary marking, "Missent to Marion, N.C." in magenta ink and was reposted to its proper destination on May 10th.

Figure 22. ▶ January 5, 1893 envelope for local delivery in Charlotte (Mecklenburg County) received two strikes of the auxiliary marking, "Received in Bad Condition/ at Charlotte, N.C.P.O." (Courtesy of Tony Crumbley)



Buncombe County and later in Henderson County, but it closed in September 1904, 63 years earlier.

A frequent cause for the use of auxiliary markings was when letters were misdirected to an incorrect post office. Figure 20 illustrates this use. This postal card was mailed from Fort Wayne, Indiana, to Williamston (Martin County) on May 24, 1906. Unfortunately instead of going to Williamston the postal card was sent to Wilmington (New Hanover County), where it was marked "MISSENT TO WILMINGTON N.C." in purple ink. At Wilmington the postal card was marked with a receiving datestamp, and then redirected the same day to Williamston.

A second example of misdirected mail is shown in Figure 21. This post card was mailed from North Wilkesboro (Wilkes County) to Marion, Indiana, in May 1938. Unfortunately, the card was sent to Marion, North Carolina. Once it arrived in Marion (McDowell County), it was stamped "Missent to Marion, N.C." in magenta ink and forwarded to Indiana.

Another reason for the use of auxiliary markings is damaged mail. The item could have been damaged in the sorting process or in any variety of disasters. Figure 22 shows an example of this type of mail. This January 1893 letter, mailed from Charlotte (Mecklenburg County) to another address in



▲ **Figure 23.** A letter mailed unsealed from Greensboro (Guilford County) on May 7, 1986. The letter received a magenta, auxiliary marking “RECEIVED UNSEALED AT/GREENSBORO, NC 27420-9998.” The ZIP code indicated it was a postmaster handstamp. (Courtesy of Tom Breske)

Charlotte. At some point during the process the letter was damaged and was marked with a “Received in Bad Condition/ at Charlotte, N.C.P.O.” in magenta ink.

A second example is shown in Figure 23. This letter was mailed from Greensboro (Guilford County) on May 7, 1986. Apparently through an error by the sender the letter was mailed unsealed, which was noticed by the Greensboro post office. The letter was marked with an auxiliary marking handstamp stating that it was “RECEIVED UNSEALED AT/GREENSBORO, NC 27420-9998.” The ZIP code indicated it was a postmaster handstamp. Presumably this marking was used so that the recipient did not blame the post office for unsealing the envelope.

As mentioned at the beginning, the auxiliary markings shown in this article represent just a small portion of the different markings that might be found on North Carolina covers. But, generally speaking, auxiliary markings for this state are not abundant. I hope this article will give you another perspective from which to view your postal history collections. If you are interested in learning more about auxiliary markings, a good place to start is the Auxiliary Markings Club, which has a web site at www.postal-markings.org. I would like to thank Tony Crumbley, Jimmy Jordan, Tom Breske, and the Auxiliary Markings Club for providing much of the material for this article. ■

Last Mystery Cover



Poor management of postmark device use, in this case over-inking, can sometimes make it difficult to identify postmarks. Can you identify the post office where this marking was used and explain its significance on the cover?

Correct answers for this mystery cover’s marking came from Jamie Cromartie, Frank Hall, and Greg Capps.

The post office datestamp was from Blantyre in Transylvania County, postmarked in magenta ink on May 31, 1932, the last day of its operation.

Murphey or Murphy: A city by either spelling is one and the same

by Tony L. Crumbley

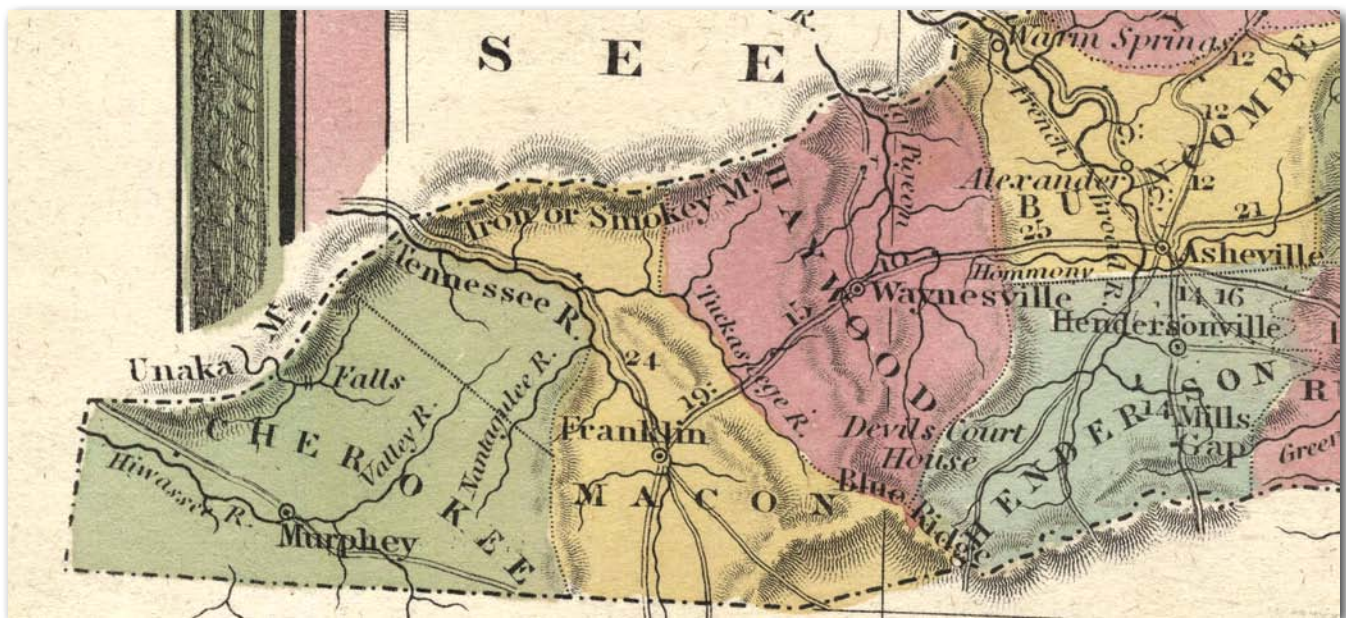


The town of Murphy was founded in 1839. Its first post office was named Huntington with Archibald R.S. Hunter as its first postmaster. The town was located in Macon County alongside the Hiwassee River. This area had been known to the Cherokee Indians as Tlanusi-yi (the Leech Place) because of a legend that a giant leech lived in the river there. Figure 1 shows Cherokee County just a few years after it was formed. “The New Map of Nth. Carolina with its Canals, Roads & Distances from place to place along the Stage & Steam Boat Routes” by Henry Schenck was drawn in 1841 and published in an atlas about 1846. Murphey is the only town shown in Cherokee County situated alongside the Hiwassee River on the stage route to Tennessee. The map is shown courtesy of the University of North Carolina library



Murphy to Vonore, Tennessee, has been designated one of 16 National Millennium Flagship trails. Before 1836, the population in this region was primarily Cherokee Indians. In 1838, President Jackson sent George Winfield Scott with 7,000 troops into western North Carolina to build six forts and oversee the removal of over 7,000 Cherokees to Oklahoma. The largest of these forts was Fort Butler, built at the present site of Murphy. From Fort Butler, the Cherokee were moved along the Unicoi Turnpike to Fort Cass, today known as Charleston, Tennessee. The removal of the Cherokee to Oklahoma along the “Trail of Tears” has been described as the greatest blot in American History. More than 4,000 Native Americans died before they reached Oklahoma.

On January 4, 1839, the North Carolina legislature formed he



▲ **Figure 1.** Cherokee County shown in green at far left on “The New Map of Nth. Carolina with its Canals, Roads & Distances from place to place along the Stage & Steam Boat Routes” by Henry Schenck drawn in 1841, shortly after Cherokee County was formed from Macon County. (Courtesy of the University of North Carolina library)

on their web site called “North Carolina Maps.”

An Indian trading path called “Unicoi Turnpike” passed through the area, connecting it to the eastern Tennessee region. The original trail covering approximately 67 miles from

western most North Carolina county from Macon County and named it in honor of the Cherokee Indians. The post office of Huntington, which was formed in Macon County in 1835 with Archibald Hunter as its postmaster, was now in the new coun-

ty of Cherokee. Five months later, on June 13, 1839, the Huntington post office had its name changed to Murphey, while Archibald Hunter remained its postmaster. The legislature named this town for a former legislator, Archibald DeBow Murphey, who was well known for his economic and educational visions. Pictured in Figure 2, he was known as the father of education. Unfortunately, his bold ideas about organizing and improving the educational system in North Carolina fell on “deaf” legislative ears for North Carolina was not ready for such ideas in the early part of the nineteenth century.

The earliest recorded postmark from Murphy is a straightline manuscript marking dated July 28, 1840. A unique circular manuscript marking, recorded in February 25, 1846, is illustrated in Figure 3. The postmark was created by someone during postmaster Jesse Berryman Brook’s term, creating a mimic circular marking with “Murphy North Carolina” around a rimless circle and the date in the center.

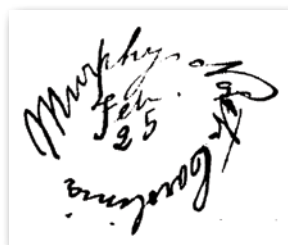
It is interesting to note the manuscript postmarks of this time have the town name spelled “Murphy,” unlike the proper spelling of Archibald Murphey’s name. In fact, all of the manuscript postmarks of Murphy that we have seen up to July 1847, during the terms of at least four different postmasters, show the spelling “Murphy.”

Figure 4 illustrates a manuscript cover from Murphy dated June 11, 1849. The spelling of the post office name on this cover has an “e” in the name. This was during the time of the fourth postmaster, Stephen G. R. Mount, who was appointed April 12, 1847. This folded letter is addressed to R. C. Pearson in Morganton (Burke County) and contains business-related content.

A manuscript postmarked cover with postmaster Stephen G. R. Mount’s free frank is illustrated in Figure 5. The cover is addressed to William H. Thomas, Esq. in Washington, DC. Thomas was an Indian agent, trader, lawyer, and colonel in the Confederate Army. He owned several stores in western North Carolina and had been involved with the movement of the



▲ **Figure 2.** Former legislator, Archibald DeBow Murphey, who was well known for his economic and educational visions. Unfortunately, North Carolina was not ready for his bold ideas about improving the educational system. (Picture courtesy of the State Library of North Carolina)



◀ **Figure 3.** Unique circular manuscript postmark used at Murphy on February 25, 1846.

Cherokee Indians to Oklahoma. He lived from 1805 until 1893. The Thomas papers are on file at the Duke University Library.

The cover illustrated in Figure 6 is franked with a 3¢ dull red 1857 stamp, indicating its use between 1858 and 1860, addressed to Statesville (Iredell County). The pencil “1860” on the cover’s front is of unknown origin. There is no sure way to date the cover other than it is pre-Civil War and after the 1857 stamp was issued. The point to note is the spelling of Murphy.

Again, no “e” was added to the manuscript. There were five postmasters appointed in Murphy between October 1857 and September 3, 1860 when Josiah Stuart was appointed. The last in this period, Josiah Stuart, also would be the first Confederate postmaster. The author speculates that the cover was posted Sept. 13, 1860, and that the pencil notation was probably put on the envelope when the contents were removed. Other covers before 1860 show the “e” in the postmark name. In 1859 when Elisha Holden was postmaster, he spelled the town’s name without an “e.”

As the state entered the war, postmaster Josiah Stewart received the town’s first circular datestamp. The earliest recorded use of this handstamp is on the cover shown in Figure 7, September 16, 1861. This is the only known cover with this large circular 37.5 mm circular datestamp, sometimes called a “balloon” style datestamp, and a PAID handstamp with the small, “printer’s type” 5 handstamp. This small “5” is the smallest rate marking used in North Carolina during the war. The cover was posted to Franklin, (Macon County). Note the spell-



◀ **Figure 4.** Murphy, June 11, 1849, manuscript postmark of Postmaster Stephen G. R. Mount, postmaster from 1847 until 1857. Note that the “e” was added back to the spelling of Murphy.



Figure 5. ▶

Murphy, March 30, ca 1850, with postmaster free frank of Stephen G. R. Mount, addressed to William H. Thomas, Esq., Washington, DC. Thomas served six terms in the North Carolina Senate beginning in 1846 and operated multiple stores in Haywood County.

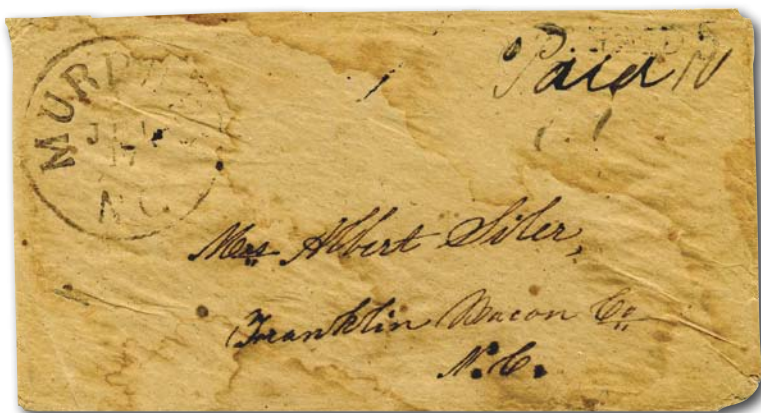


◀ **Figure 6.** Murphy, Sept. 13, ca 1860, franked with a 3¢ dull red 1857 stamp, addressed to Statesville (Iredell County). The manuscript postmark still was in use at Murphy. Notice that the “e” again has been dropped from the town name.



Figure 7. ▶

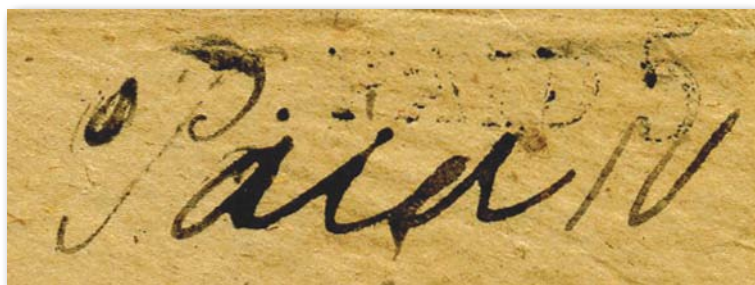
Murphey, September 16, (1861), envelope addressed to Franklin (Macon County), showing Murphy’s first date-stamp, introduced by Confederate postmaster Josiah C. Stuart, who served from Sept. 3, 1860, until August 3, 1861. This handstamp was a large 37.5 mm circular date-stamp, sometimes called a “balloon” style marking. Note, the post office name again had the “e” back in the town’s name. The “printer’s type” 5 is the smallest rate marking used in North Carolina during the war.



◀ **Figure 8.** Murphey, July 17, late in the war, to Franklin (Macon County). This cover has a handstamp Paid 5 and a manuscript Paid 10. The ink of the handstamp rate marking is significantly different than the ink used on the circular datestamp, indicating the markings were applied at a different times, and suggesting the cover may be an unrecognized provisional.

Figure 8a. ▶

Enlarged view of upper right corner of Figure 8 showing a different PAID 5 handstamp and the manuscript "Paid 10" to revalue the rate, probably a result of the basic Confederate rate change on July 1, 1862. The different ink color of this rate marking and the circular datestamp indicates different inks and probable use at different times. This suggests the PAID 5 on this cover may be an unrecognized provisional marking.



ing of Murphey in the circular datestamp has the "e" added back into the marking.

During the Civil War, Cherokee County men enlisted as both Union and Confederate soldiers. No major battles took place in Murphy, but late in the war, Union raiders burned the court house.

The remoteness of the area of Cherokee County posed a major problem for North Carolina. Many deserters found a haven here. It was estimated by Governor Vance that more than 1,200 deserters were hiding in the area. At one point, he requested General Lee to send troops down to regain order to the area. Without a doubt, these were wild times for Murphy.

The second Confederate cover to be illustrated, shown in Figure 8, was used later in the war. The cover was posted on July 17, and was addressed to Franklin in Macon County. This unique, revalued cover has the large 37.5 mm circular datestamp and a different PAID 5 handstamp, with a much larger "5" for the rate. Figure 8a is an enlarged view of the upper right corner of the cover. A manuscript "Paid 10" was placed in the same vicinity as the rate marking to indicate a revaluation of the postage. On October 16, 1861, Mercer Fain was appointed postmaster of Murphy. He was the last of the Confederate postmasters in Murphy. The Confederate postal rate was changed from 5 to 10 cents on July 1, 1862. Because of the circular datestamp this letter had to be posted during postmaster Fain's term. One should note the difference in color of the ink used for the PAID 5 handstamp and the circular

datestamp. The circular datestamp is a brownish black color and the rate marking is a true black color ink. This would indicate the markings were applied at different times. Perhaps the Paid 5 handstamp on this cover was a provisional marking applied to the envelope earlier and the cover later was used after the rate increased to 10 cents. To date, however this marking has not been officially recognized as a provisional marking.

Figure 9 is a cover posted on March 5, 1877, from Murphy to Charleston, South Carolina. The manuscript postmark again was changed to one without the "e" in Murphy. The official postal ledger of 1877 showed the name was officially changed to Murphy without the "e." For whatever reason, the town name flip-flopped back and forth with and without the "e" in its postmark spellings for over forty years. We may never know why.

In 1877, the North Carolina Railroad Company, which had been chartered in 1855, restarted construction of its rail lines in the western part of the state. Construction had ceased during the war. The tracks reached Asheville in 1877. In 1888, the first railroad to be built in Cherokee County reached Murphy, called Murphy Depot.

The first recorded handstamp after the Civil War was an octagonal datestamp used in 1881. A tracing of this postmark is shown in Figure 10. This postmark's use would be short-lived as, by July 11, 1887, Murphy had a new 32 mm, double-circle datestamp, which is illustrated in Figure 11. The cover is posted from J. W. Cooper, an attorney with the Cooper &

Figure 9. ▶
Murphy, May 5, 1877, cover to Charleston, South Carolina. Postmaster James Abbott still used a manuscript postmark, but the name was now spelled without the “e.” He was appointed postmaster in October 1867. The spelling of the town name was officially changed in the postal ledger of 1877.

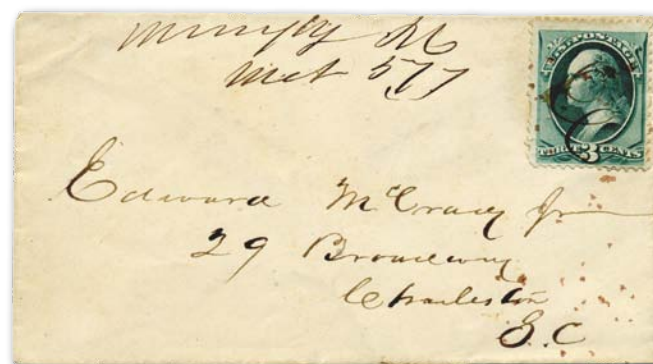


Figure 10. ▶
Tracing of first recorded handstamp from Murphy after the war, an octagonal marking recorded used in 1881.



◀ **Figure 11.** Murphy, July 11, 1887, cover to Morganton (Burke County). For a brief time in the late 1880s, postmaster John W. King used this 32 mm double circle duplex handstamp to cancel the mail.

Figure 12. ▶
Murphy, July 1, 1893, envelope to Knoxville, Tennessee, with 2¢ Columbian stamp from the Cherokee Lumber and Manufacturing Co. of Murphy. The metal, government-issued postmark on this cover was new to our records and will appear in a future change to Cherokee County.



Mauney legal and real estate firm in Murphy to Samuel McD. Tate in Morganton (Burke County). Attorney Cooper was seeking the delay of a court case he was involved in with Mr. Tate.

By November 1886, Murphy had received standard, postal-issue, metal handstamps ranging in size from 26 to 28.5 mm. The cover in Figure 12 was posted July 11, 1893, with a Columbian Exposition 2 cent commemorative stamp on a cover to Knoxville, Tennessee. The circular datestamp on this cover was previously unrecorded at 28.5 mm size. It has the

date in three lines and no time marking. The cover has a corner card of the Cherokee Lumber and Manufacturing Co. located in Murphy.

The “North Carolina Postmark Catalog Update” indicates from 1839 until 1900, Murphy had 17 different postmasters, excluding Confederate postmasters, and 7 different handstamp devices. In total, the catalog records 29 postmasters and 20 different regular handstamp devices, including the new one just illustrated. Without a doubt, western North Carolina counties

provide a wonderful postal history area to collect. Most of the markings from this principal city of Cherokee County are Sources:

“North Carolina Postmark Catalog Update,” Cherokee County. http://www.ncpostalhistory.com/project_postmark_catalog.aspx. (accessed March 9, 2016).
Stroupe, et. al. ed. *Post Offices and Postmasters of North Carolina, Colonial to USPS*. 4 vols. (Newell, NC: North Carolina Postal History Society, 1996).

uncommon and many are rare or unique. Nevertheless, this should not deter interest in this wonderful area. ■

“North Carolina Maps.” <http://www2.lib.unc.edu/dc/nc-maps>. (accessed March 9, 2016).

“Unicoi Turnpike Trail.” <http://tennesseecoverhill.com/unicoi-turnpike-trail/> (accessed March 9, 2016).

New Markings



Tony Crumbley reports this misplaced and found again Confederate cover from Lenoir Institute (Lenoir County). A pencil notation of “1863” is probably the year of use since year dates were often written in pencil on an envelope when the contents were removed. This is one of three Confederate Lenoir Institute covers in our records. This use is not listed in *Confederate States of America, Catalog and Handbook of Stamps and Postal History*, but is in the *North Carolina Postmark Catalog Update*.



The latest new marking to be reported by Tony Crumbley is shown on this 28 August 1850 folded letter from Ridgeway (Warren County) to Richmond, Virginia. The circular datestamp was shown in *Post Offices and Postmasters of North Carolina, Colonial to USPS*, Volume 3; however the rate marking was not shown. The enlarged picture to the right shows this 17.5 x 18 mm boxed 5 handstamp. This is not the same marking used during the Confederate period, which was really two separate handstamps, a boxed frame and the numeral 5. The markings here appear to be in a yellow-orange color but this may not be the actual color. Colors in the yellow range are always difficult to confirm.

Status of the Postmark Catalogs

by Richard F Winter



As most of you know, the rights to the *American Stampless Cover Catalog (ASCC)* belong to the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society. For several years they have been in the process of updating that 3-volume catalog, which has not been updated since 1997.

Progress has now started to appear. Portions of the new catalog, which has the stampless postmarks of the various states, are now available to review. A listing of the markings for Alabama and Ohio, along with color scans of sample postmarks and rate markings can be seen on their web site, <http://www.uspcs.org/>. Under the “Resources” drop-down menu, which appears directly under the society’s name at the top of their Home page, select “American Stampless Catalog” under “Books & Monographs,” then select “Table of Contents.” Section I of the new catalog will contain the states section. Alabama and Ohio are shown as PDFs. While the full catalog is not available yet, these two sample states will give you an idea of the style of the new catalog. The prices listed for these two sample states are the old prices and will be updated later. Additional states soon will be added, one of which will be North Carolina. Additional information describing the new catalog appears under the tab, “Your Input” on the Table of Contents page. This will allow you to provide comments if you wish.

The North Carolina Postal History Society hasn’t waited for the new *ASCC* to appear. A few years ago we posted on our web page, under the “Projects” tab shown on the Home page, right side, a project called “North Carolina Postmarks During the Stampless Period.” If you open this project by clicking on “project” in the descriptive paragraph, you will see a complete listing of each of the North Carolina postmarks that will be in the *ASCC* catalog. This information includes descriptions of the markings, tracings or actual scans of the postmarks, and our evaluation of the prices to go into the *ASCC*. This information will be helpful because most of these postmarks will not be illustrated in the new *ASCC*.

As most of you know, in a separate tab on the Home page of the North Carolina Postal History Society web site, titled

“North Carolina Postmark Catalog,” we have been showing an additional project “The *North Carolina Postmark Catalog Update*. The project lists each of the counties that we have updated from the original 1990s catalog, *Post Offices and Postmasters of North Carolina, Colonial to USPS*, in new, downloadable PDFs. The original catalog has been extended to the twenty first century, with eighteenth and nineteenth centuries updated. To date, we have published PDFs of 85 North Carolina counties with only 15 remaining. Five cities with very large amounts of postmarks have been made into separate PDFs. They include Asheville, Charlotte, Fayetteville, Greensboro, and Wilmington. It can be assumed that Raleigh will be added to the list of separate PDFs when the work on it is completed. During the more than ten years that work on this catalog has been underway, a significant amount of additional postmark information has become available, primarily from the resources of the Postmark Collectors Club Museum in Bellevue, Ohio. This postmark information is being added to the catalog a few counties at a time as work continues to finish on the catalog. I estimate that three to four more years will be required to complete this catalog, but I have no plans to discontinue the work already underway.

To give you a scope of this total effort to date the following statistics may be of interest:


- 85 counties and five large cities have been created
- 5,865 post offices have been done; postmarks have been shown from only 57%, meaning no postmarks are known from 43% of the offices that existed
- 5,015 catalog pages have been prepared
- 18,794 postal markings not in original catalog have been added

Readers are encouraged to submit additional markings or other data to rfwinter@triad.rr.com. Color scans at 300 dpi and jpeg files are desired for new markings. ■

Have You Checked Our Web Site?

The North Carolina Postal History Society’s web site is located at
www.ncpostalhistory.com

Take a look and let us know how you feel about it.



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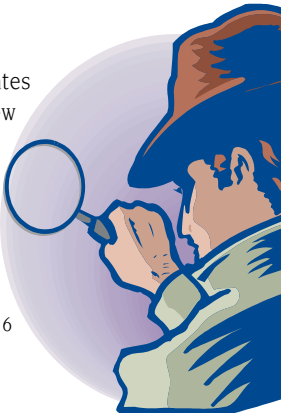
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**NORTH CAROLINA
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If you'd like to contribute information or articles to the
 Summer *POSTAL HISTORIAN* please submit them by
May 15

North Carolina Postmark Catalog Update

The following counties and are now available at
<http://www.ncpostalhistory.com>
Alamance through Stokes

Alamance thru Currituck and individual cities have been updated;
 Fayetteville has been added to the individual cities list

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