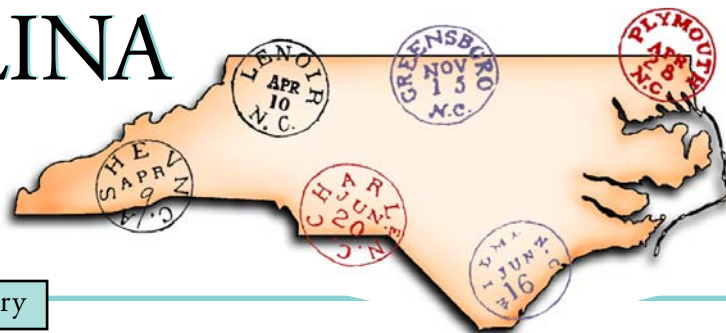


NORTH CAROLINA POSTAL HISTORIAN

The Journal of North Carolina Postal History

VOLUME 35, NO. 3 SUMMER 2016 WHOLE 135



New Bern Postal Service During The Civil War



Jamesville & Washington Railroad



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

There is a significant upgrade currently underway to the society's web site that will improve the flexibility of making changes to the web site and will also make the past journals searchable for readers and researchers. The society's Board of Directors, with input from all board members, has approved this upgrade. The U.S. Philatelic Classics Society has agreed to partner with our society to share half of the costs to modernize the web site. The catalyst for this process has been editor and past president Dick Winter and board member, Scott Steward, who has graciously volunteered to be the new web manager and participate in the web site upgrade.

The new NCPHS web site went active on Monday, 13 June 2016. It looks very much like the old site, but it is easier to navigate around. It has been created in a new software that allows both Scott Steward and Dick Winter to make changes that are needed to the site. For instance, when Dick completes new counties in the North Carolina Postmark Catalog Update, he can add them immediately to our web site as has recently been done for Swain County and soon will be done for Transylvania County. Scott also has made a number of changes to our web site, correcting old information. We are very pleased with the results of the upgrade. Phase II of the contract also is nearing completion which allows the use of the Google Custom Search feature to make word searches across our entire web site and all the PDFs on it. Initial testing shows that this will work to our satisfaction. We are very pleased with our contractor who made all this happen quickly and without the hassle that usually accompanies web site overhauls. A wealth of information is now available by searching through journal articles written not only in recent years but also many years ago.

I have been reviewing some other state's postal newsletters or journals and none exceed the North Carolina society's quality and variety. We have some impressive researchers and writers in the society and I foresee a continuing stream of

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quality articles. We all know that every postal cover has a story to tell.

The popular Charpex Show will be on Saturday, July 30, 2016, at the same location as the past several years, the Worrell Building (formerly Taylor Hall) on the campus of Central Piedmont Community College at 1228 Elizabeth Avenue. It is located just off I-277 and Route 74.

The annual meeting of the North Carolina Postal History Society will be during Charpex at 1:00 pm. After a very short meeting, society member Scott Steward will present an interesting program. The NCPHS Board will meet after the general meeting at 2:30 pm in room 1140. All members are urged to attend the general meeting at 1:00 pm. I hope as many board members as possible can attend also.

The show will have its customary variety of quality dealers and exhibitors as well as some other philatelic societies, notably the Germany Philatelic Society and the British North American Philatelic Society. I will look forward to seeing you at Charpex. If we have additional information about our web site improvements we will present them at the general meeting.

We have a few members who have not paid their dues for 2016, yet they continue to receive our journal. If there is a red dot on your mailing label, it means that we have not received your dues for 2016. Please send your dues as soon as you can.

Frank Hall



NORTH CAROLINA POSTAL HISTORIAN

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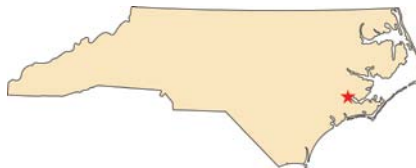
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NEW BERN POSTAL SERVICE DURING THE CIVIL WAR



by Maurice M. Bursey

As you might guess from its name, New Bern was founded by Swiss and Palatine German settlers in 1710 under the leadership of Baron Christoff von Graffenried. His home town was Bern, which would later become the capital of Switzerland. The town's coat of arms in Figure 1 is very similar, but not identical, to that of its namesake in Switzerland. New Bern was inadvertently sited directly on top of an abandoned town of a fierce Indian tribe, the Tuscaroras, and that problem quickly led to unpleasantness.



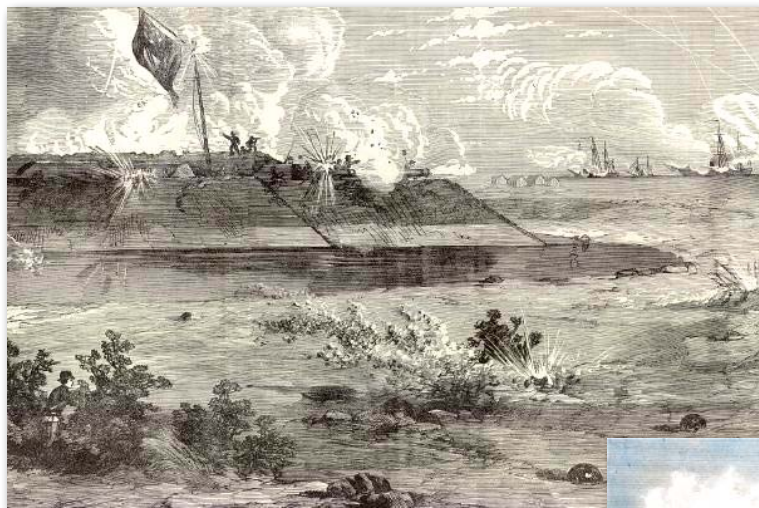
rotating basis in different towns around the eastern part of the state. Members eventually grew tired of wandering around and chose a site on which they planned to build a permanent state capital, Raleigh. It is interesting that the documents

establishing Raleigh defined it as the unalterable seat of government.

Early in the Civil War, General Benjamin Butler was ordered to capture the coastal part of North Carolina. His troops landed on Hatteras Island on August 27, 1861. With very few defenders at Fort Hatteras, it was taken within a few hours (Figure 2). The Confederate defenders retreated northwest to Roanoke Island. They were so few in number that, in a joint army-navy campaign (Figure 3), Butler's forces occupied Roanoke Island without difficulty on February 7, 1862, with the capture of 1500 Confederate troops.



▲ **Figure 1.** Coat of Arms of New Bern, very similar to the coat of arms of Bern, Switzerland.



▲ **Figure 2.** The shelling of Cape Hatteras. (<https://www.nps.gov/caha/learn/historyculture/civilwar.htm>)

Two years later the colony of Carolina was split into North Carolina and South Carolina. The major reason was that overflow settlements from the colony of Virginia in the northeastern part of North Carolina were simply too far away in the early 18th century for efficient government control from the colonial capital of Carolina, Charleston. New Bern was destined to be a town of importance as a port for a while, and later was chosen as the colonial capital of North Carolina. It remained the state capital for a short while after the American Revolution. The General Assembly then chose to meet on a



▲ **Figure 3.** "Landing of Troops on Roanoke Island, Burnside Expedition, AD 1862," painting by William Momberger. (<http://www.wikigallery.org/wiki/painting>)

Figure 4 shows a Union cover from Roanoke Island, dated nine days after the battle, and canceled in Baltimore after eleven days' travel. The addressee, Lucy Elizabeth Estey, was about 34 years old in 1862 and lived with her widowed mother, also named Elizabeth Estey, in Westminister, Massachusetts, in both 1860 and 1865. The cover was likely sent by her brother Francis, a private in the 25th Massachusetts, which was a unit that participated in this action.

The next target of Butler's campaign was New Bern, which is not far from the coast, and at the time North Carolina's second largest city. The governor of North Carolina, Henry Clark, begged Richmond for more defending troops from the Confederate Army, to no avail; the decision was that the troops were needed more in Virginia, and the eastern part of North Carolina was "hung out to dry." Politics then dictated that the voters of North Carolina blamed Governor Clark for the loss of its eastern part, in spite of his urgent request for more troops from the Army. He was not reelected in the next gubernatorial election, nor was he even renominated by his party!

For his generalship in the capture of eastern North Carolina, the Massachusetts politician-turned-general, Benjamin Butler, was hailed as a great hero in the North. Later his reputation diminished enormously by his failure at Fredericksburg, his edict as commander of occupying forces in New Orleans to the women of that city, and, to the author's mind at least, his burning of the campus of the University of Alabama (he allowed a professor to rescue one book from the university library before burning it).

New Bern postmarks are not consistent in the spelling of the city's name, with at least five spelling changes over the past three hundred years. Some of these spellings appear on covers from the Civil War period. Here, I will use the current spelling for the sake of consistency.

New Bern, as the colonial capital, had a post office from very early times. We know, for example, that James Davis was named postmaster on October 14, 1755. There is a rich variety of early New Bern postmarks; as a result, the first one known to have been used in Confederate New Bern is the eighth postmark type. Here are some covers from just before secession on May

20, 1861, up to March 14, 1862, when New Bern fell to Union forces.

Figure 5 illustrates a cover posted four days before the secession of North Carolina. There is no problem determining where the sender's sympathies lay! This is a Type 8 blue circular datestamp. It is also known in red. The addressee, A. G. Powell, was a wealthy middle-aged farmer. His farm was located outside of Smithfield.

New Bern was part of the Confederacy for only 298 days. It was captured by Federal troops on 14 March 1862. Figure 6 shows a cover with a good strike in blue of the Type 11 circular datestamp. This marking is also known in black ink. The addressee, Susan McPheeters, about 19 at the time, was the youngest daughter of a well-to-do government official.

The front of a military, semi-official envelope is shown in Figure 7, again postmarked with another blue Type 11 circular datestamp. The District of Pamlico, commanded by Brigadier General Lawrence Branch, consisted of the units defending New Bern. It must have been named for Pamlico Sound, where the Neuse River, by which New Bern sits, and the Tar River farther to the north, become estuarine. Pamlico Sound is so wide and long that in 1524 the Italian explorer Giovanni da Verrazzano thought it must be the Pacific Ocean! The addressee of this cover is Archibald A. McKeithan, an immigrant Scot living in Fayetteville who had amassed a sizeable fortune by 1860 from manufacturing carriages. He docketed much of his correspondence with the sender's name and address, in this case Major Boone, Quartermaster at New Bern.

Figure 8 displays a cover dated February 7th, plainly 1862, with a horizontal pair of the first-issue Confederate stamps, canceled with a Type 8 circular datestamp. North Carolina is more than 500 miles wide, and this cover went from New Bern all the way to Cherokee County, the westernmost county, bordering Tennessee and Georgia; hence the 10¢ rate, for traveling a post road distance of more than 500 miles. The destination seems to be Fort Montgomery, which is in that area, but our sender spelled the name phonetically, "Fort Montgumra." Fort Montgomery was where the Cherokee Indians had gathered to be removed from the North Carolina



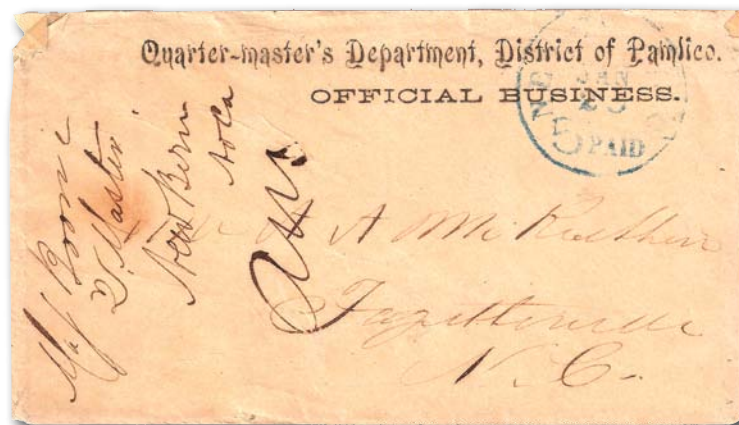
◀ **Figure 4.** February 16, 1862, cover from Roanoke Island dated nine days after the battle and canceled in Baltimore eleven days later. Letter most likely sent to Mrs. Lucy Elizabeth Estey of Westminister, Massachusetts, by her brother who was a private in the 25th Massachusetts that participated in the action.

Figure 5. ▶
May 16, 1861, Confederate seven star patriotic envelope posted four days before North Carolina's secession was approved by the Confederacy. Envelope has a Type 8 blue circular datestamp of New Bern and was addressed to Smithfield (Johnston County).



◀ **Figure 6.** July 19, 1861, envelope from Confederate New Bern with a blue Type 11 circular datestamp indicating 5 cents was paid. The letter was addressed to Susan McPheeters of Raleigh (Wake County), the youngest daughter of a well-to-do government official.

Figure 7. ▶
January 23, 1862, military, semi-official envelope, Quarter-master's Department, District of Pamlico, to Fayetteville (Cumberland County). This district, under command of Brigadier General Lawrence Branch, consisted of the units defending New Bern.



◀ **Figure 8.** February 7, 1862, envelope paid with horizontal pair of first issue Confederate stamps, addressed to Fort Montgomery (Cherokee County), phonetically spelled "Fort Montgumra." The 10 cent payment was for a letter going a distance greater than 500 miles.

mountains along the Trail of Tears to Indian Territory. Miss Colvard, the addressee, was a member of one of the first ten families of European descent to move into Cherokee country.

A Bonitz patriotic cover is shown in Figure 9. I wrote about these a few years ago, so maybe it will be familiar to readers. The ratty Confederate-issue stamp number 1 is canceled again by a Type 8 circular datestamp. North Carolina collectors will be familiar with the name of the addressee, Miss Otelia Johnson, who was the eldest daughter (about 29 at the time) of a wealthy farmer, Wood T. Johnson, of Wake County. She seems to have saved her wartime letters, and there are a fair number of envelopes around addressed to her that have survived. Interestingly, on September 22, 1862, she became the third wife of William Attaway Eaton, who was born in Granville County around 1813, but is absent from rosters of North Carolina Troops during the war. Maybe all those covers addressed to her contained love letters from Mr. Eaton!

Figure 10 illustrates an exploded temperance cover. Such envelopes must have been available before the interdiction of mail between the South and the North, on June 1, 1861,

because the envelope printer was in Hartford, Connecticut. The design covers so much of the front that the sender put the stamp on the reverse of the envelope so that it would not cover any part of the printed illustration. On the left side, outside a pawnshop, men are destroying casks of rum. Behind them, a figure has been executed by hanging, or perhaps is a suicide. In the center, a man is leading a barefoot girl away from the scene, while a drunken figure lies before them. There is a party of several men taking something (Bottles? A corpse? A headstone?) to an open place in the ground, while another man tries to entice them with a bottle. But on the right, there are scenes of blissful temperance: a couple in a glorious countryside scene, and a man with a sash with the words, "Love, Purity, Fidelity" across his coat. On the envelope flap are the words "Intemperance/is the/curse of the world." Just above the opening containing the name and address of the recipient is the legend, "Execution, operation, & effects of the Maine law." In 1851 the Maine liquor law had become one of the first legal prohibitions of alcohol in the United States. Other states followed it; and it became internationally known. Eliza Linster



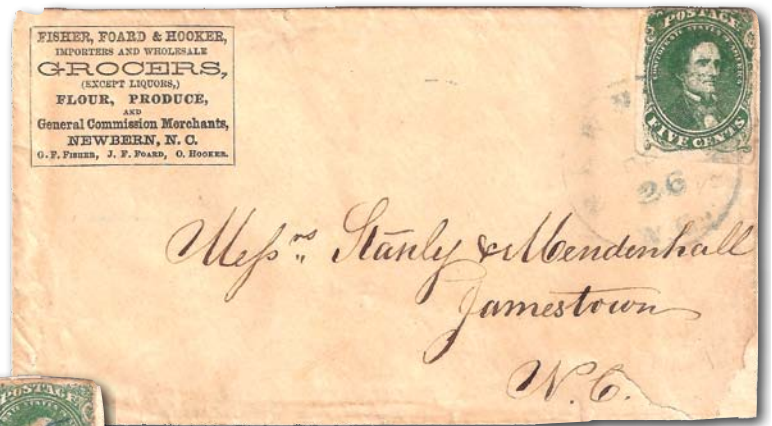
▲ **Figure 9.** February 21, 1862, cover from New Bern to Louisburg (Franklin County). This Bonitz patriotic cover of Goldsboro is paid with a first issue Confederate 5 cent stamp.



Figure 10. ▶

Exploded temperance envelope produced in Hartford, Connecticut, but used in Confederate New Bern. The letter was sent to Statesville (Iredell County). The Type 8 circular datestamp of New Bern does not show the month, only the date. The sender did not want to cover any of the Temperance design and placed the stamp on the back of the envelope.

Figure 11. ▶
February 26, 1862. envelope from New Bern to Jamestown (Guilford County) with corner card of G.F. Fisher, J.F. Foard, and O. Hooker, "Importers and wholesale Grocers" of New Bern. Postage paid with 5 cent first issue Confederate stamp.



◀ **Figure 12.** March 13, 1862, ten-star Confederate flag patriotic envelope mailed to Gold Hill (Rowan County). Letter mailed the day before the Battle of New Bern.

Figure 13. ▶
Contemporary sketch of Union gunboats passing the Confederate blockade in the Neuse River on March 14, 1862 (Watercolor by Herbert Valentine, a private in Company F of the 23rd Massachusetts).



of Statesville, the addressee, lived in a small town in Iredell County near Statesville in 1860; her husband Wyatt was a tailor of fairly modest means.

An advertising cover with a Confederate number 1 stamp is illustrated in Figure 11. The month appears to be February; if so, the date would be February 26, 1862, evidently used before the businesses ran out of printed stationery. In their corner card, G. F. Fisher, J. F. Foard and O. Hooker proclaimed themselves to be "importers and wholesale Grocers (except liquors) and General Commission Merchants" in New Bern. The firm addressed on the cover, Stanly & Mendenhall, of Jamestown, probably bears a relation to the Richard Mendenhall store in the Jamestown Historic District. That store sold "general goods and food" after 1824 through the 19th century.

Figure 12 presents either a ten-star Confederate flag with a white streak inside the circle of stars from wear or from faulty printing. Alternatively, it might be one of the uncommon eleven-star flag designs. More importantly for this story, the date in the circular datestamp is March 13, the day before the Battle of New Bern. Confederate scouts found out late that night that the battle was coming soon. The letter is addressed to Miss Amanda A. Morgan of Gold Hill, a girl of nine.

When the Battle of New Bern actually took place, in a field five miles outside of town, on March 14, 1862, it was pursued on land and sea. Figure 13 is a contemporary sketch of Union gunboats passing the Confederate blockade in the Neuse River on that day. This is a watercolor by Herbert Valentine, a private in Company F of the 23rd Massachusetts; a large number of

his pencil sketches of the war in eastern North Carolina are in the Southern Historical Collection at the University of North Carolina. Figure 14 appeared in *Harper's Weekly* for April 5, 1862. It presents another illustration of the ferocity of the battle. Confederate General Lawrence Branch had an inadequate number of troops to defend New Bern, six infantry regiments and one cavalry unit, about 4,000 troops in total. Most of them were raw recruits with no experience in battle. By contrast, the Union attackers consisted of thirteen infantry regiments, about 13,000 men, and fourteen gunboats. The battle started after breakfast and was over by supper. There was a weak spot in the defenders' center, and when it was breached, the North Carolina militia there broke. Seven trains with about 120 cars in total took most of New Bern's citizens of European descent and some of its African Americans to Kinston, thirty miles away but safely in Confederate hands. Only about 200 whites

remained, and those people were too poor to afford a train ticket, according to several reports. Eventually the occupying troops number above twenty thousand.

The outcome of the Battle of New Bern was celebrated throughout the North as a proof of what Union soldiers could do when led properly, especially after their embarrassing defeats earlier in the war. There were printers who prepared and sold illustrated envelopes to rejoicing Northerners for numerous battles during the War. Prominent among these printers was the well known Charles Magnus firm in New York City. Shortly after the battle they prepared illustrated envelopes depicting scenes from the battle. Three of the illustrated envelopes are shown here, two multicolored (Figure 15, Figure 16) and one in bronze ink (Figure 17).

Union troops occupied the city later the same day. They spent the evening putting out the fires on structures of value



▲ **Figure 14.** This illustration that appeared in the April 5, 1862, *Harper's Weekly* depicted the ferocity of the battle for New Bern.

Figure 15. ▶
"Battle of New Bern," Hand-tinted, C. Magnus, 12
Frankfort St. N.Y., envelope No. 11.





◀ **Figure 16.** "Battle of New Bern," Hand-tinted C. Magnus 12 Frankfort St. N.Y., envelope, No. 8. This envelope scene is very similar to Figure 15 as far as the two mounted soldiers are concerned, but the rest is different.

Figure 17. ▶
"Battle of New Bern," bronze print, C. Magnus, 12 Frankfort St. N.Y., envelope No. 10.



◀ **Figure 18.** April 9, 1862, 26 days after the Battle of New Bern, unpaid "soldiers letter" from camp at New Bern to Leominster, Massachusetts. Letter not marked at New Bern post office but taken by supply ship back north to an unknown port, where U.S.S. SHIP 3 CTS marking applied indicating 3 cents due on letter at destination. Normal 2 cent ship fee did not apply on this mail.

that the retreating Confederate soldiers had set just before their departure, to deny their use to the occupying forces. And there was widespread looting by Yankee soldiers and Africans left behind. In a day, New Bern had gone from a prosperous town of some 7,000 to 8,000 people to a place inhabited almost entirely by Union soldiers and destitute black refugees.

How did postal service resume, now under Union control? Figure 18 is the earliest dated cover in my collection after Union occupation of New Bern. It was sent on April 9, 1862, 26 days after the battle. It is a "Soldier's Letter," from a soldier of the 23rd Massachusetts, with a manuscript military notation from New Bern in the upper right corner. Soldier's letters, properly endorsed by military personnel, were allowed into the

postal system without postage being paid, and the postage was collected from the recipient. The "U.S.S. SHIP 3 CTS" circular marking was applied at a northern port where the supply vessel brought in mail from the Federal troops. Normally such letters would require 5¢ postage due as incoming ship letters, but the extra 2¢ for a ship fee was not allowed on mail carried by these supply vessels, which entered the Federal mail system and only 3¢ postage was due. Evidently a United States Post Office had not been set up in New Bern by April 9. The addressee, Mrs. Julius P. Blodgett, Leominster, Massachusetts, was clearly the wife of J. P. Blodgett of the 23rd Massachusetts. She was 21 years old when the letter was sent, so this must be a letter to a young wife assuring her of his survival.

Figure 19 presents a Type 15a circular datestamp and a fancy killer on regimental stationery of the 15th Connecticut. Type 15a cancellations were used beginning in May 1863. In this postmark, note that New Bern is spelled with a final E. The Type 15a circular datestamp has no year slug inserted into the datestamp.) The fancy cancellation means that someone assigned to the post office had time on his hands to carve the many different designs found in the killer handstamps. The addressee Miss Jennie M. Osborn, 18 years old, was the daughter of Walter Osborn, the collector of taxes in New Haven.

There are several dozen different killer designs used to cancel the stamps that were postmarked at the Union-occupied New Bern post office. Here are just a few more examples. First, the envelope in Figure 20 presents an attempt at humor from January 1864. The caption reads, "Attention Squad; Front Face; Eyes Right!! Why in thunder don't you turn your eyes to the right!!!" The addressee, Mrs. J. Whibby, was Elizabeth Whibby, about 33 years old, who was married to John Whibby, of the 2nd Heavy Artillery Regiment. Before the war they had lived near Lowell, Massachusetts. He was a carpenter who had emigrated from Ireland. The circular datestamp on this cover is a Type 15 with the year shown as "64"

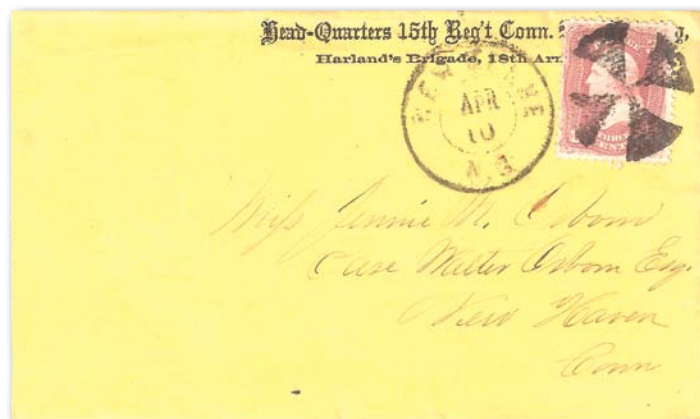
Figure 21 illustrates a preprinted envelope to The Governor, Madison, Wisconsin, which contained the result of soldiers' ballots for the state elections there in April 1864. The circular datestamp on this cover is a Type 14 datestamp with a full year and serif letters.

A different killer appears on the cover in Figure 22. The circular datestamp is a Type 14 and the killer is another of the numerous fancy designs, this time a marking that appears to be a cross-roads type with heart-shaped fillers in the spaces between roads. The addressee, Atwater Treat, was a prominent builder in New Haven, born in 1801.

Among collectors of Union covers, those that bear printed regimental indicia from occupied areas of the South are much sought after and command prices commensurate with ordinary Confederate covers. I will show several samples now from Massachusetts units occupying New Bern. Figure 23 illustrates a typical cover from the 51st Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteers, with a Type 13 circular datestamp. The addressee, Maria L. Underwood, of Milford, Massachusetts, was most likely married to Alpheus Underwood, whose name does not appear in lists of Civil War soldiers. On the other hand, Maria's maiden name was Holden. She had a younger brother, Charles C. Holden, who was a private in the 51st Massachusetts

Figure 19. ▶

Regimental stationery of Head-Quarters, 5th Connecticut, used from New Bern on April 10, 186x, and sent to New Haven, Connecticut. A Type 15a circular datestamp was applied at New Bern. Note the post office name has an "E" at the end, one of several names used for New Bern. There is no year in the postmark. The killer is a fancy cancel, one of many different killers used at New Bern during this time.



◀ **Figure 20.** January 31, 1864, New Bern to Lowell, Massachusetts, humorous patriotic envelope. The circular datestamp of New Bern has the name spelled with an "E" and the year "64," a Type 15 circular datestamp. Type 15a circular datestamp is the same with no year, shown in Figure 19. Note the killer is different from the previous example.



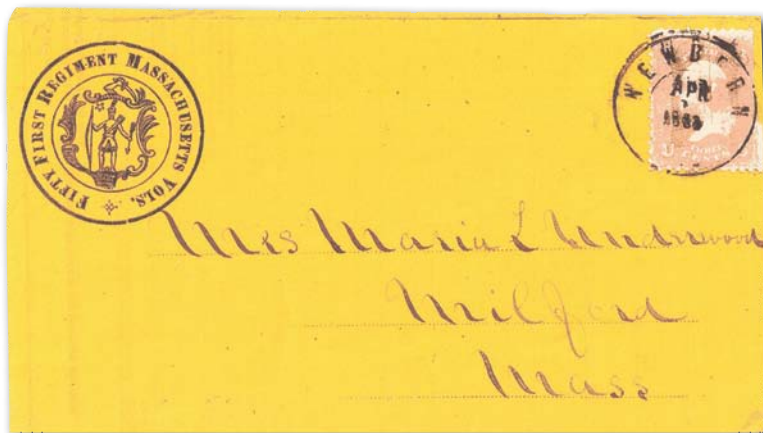


▲ **Figure 21.** April 10, 1864, preprinted envelope to "The Governor, Madison, Wisconsin," which contained the result of soldiers' ballots for the state elections in April 1864. The circular datestamp on this cover is a Type 14 datestamp with a full year and serif letters. Again, a different killer is used on the stamps.



◀ **Figure 22.** March 6, 1865, letter from New Bern to New Haven, Connecticut, with another type of killer. Recipient docketed that the envelope contained a letter from March 5, 1865.

Figure 23. ▶ Envelope with printed corner marking of the 51st Regiment, Massachusetts Volunteers, occupying New Bern. Letter sent to Milford, Massachusetts. A Type 13 circular datestamp of New Bern cancels the 3 cent stamp. Printed regimental indicia from occupied areas are sought after by collectors.



regiment, and it is likely that he was the sender of this cover.

Figure 24 shows an envelope from the 43rd Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteers, the so-called Tiger Regiment, named for its core unit, Company A of the old Boston Light Infantry, whose nickname was the Tigers. The cover is addressed to the community of Newton Lower Falls, but there were too many men with the given name Emery living in that part of Middlesex County near Newton in 1860 to allow a guess as to what the addressee's illegible surname was. The postmark on this cover is a Type 13 circular datestamp which also cancels the stamp.

Figure 25 illustrates a cover from Company I of the 3rd Regiment of the Massachusetts Volunteer Militia (M.V.M.), of Fairhaven, Massachusetts, an important whaling port which shares a harbor with the even more prominent whaling port of New Bedford. The addressee is Mrs. Henry Bourne, of Rochester, Massachusetts; there is no evidence that any Henry Bourne served in the 3rd Massachusetts, but a Henry Bourne was living in another town in Plymouth County, Massachusetts, in 1860. Note the "Soldier Letter" endorsement and the Due 3 handstamp of New Bern.

There may have been a fairly effective Union blockade of Southern ports to prevent commerce between the Confederate States and other countries, but there was no restriction, of course, on international mail from occupied areas. Figure 26 illustrates such a cover from occupied New Bern to John Branigan, Kingston, Canada West, with a November 1863 New Bern Type 14 circular datestamp. It is backstamped Kingston, Canada West, on November 18, 1863. My mail to Ontario in 2016 does not often move that fast! The 10¢ rate to Canada was paid with a horizontal pair of 1863 brown 5¢ Jefferson stamps. The name of John Branigan is too common among persons of Irish descent in Kingston, Ontario, in the 1860s to allow further comment.

An example of a Confederate cover, which does not have a New Bern datestamp but which bears evidence of having

passed through New Bern, is shown in Figure 27. This letter was posted at Greenville, North Carolina, which was safely in Confederate hands on March 16, 1864, and was addressed to Manson, North Carolina, also safely in Confederate hands. But the mails were intercepted by Union troops along the way, and the captured letters were brought to New Bern to be examined. The printing in the lozenge at the left reads, "Rec'd Hd. Qrs., Sub-Dist. New Berne, Apr. 8, 1864," obviously deemed of no military importance, and returned through the lines, continuing on its way to Manson. The recipient, Frederick C. Roberts, a well-to-do attorney living in an inherited home near Manson, turned the cover (Figure 28) and reused it to write to Joseph Jones in Henderson, North Carolina. The latter name is too common in that part of North Carolina to allow identification of the recipient.

A Confederate attempt to recapture New Bern by troops under Major General George Pickett at the beginning of February 1864 failed. Pickett organized a three-prong attack for February 1, but two of his subordinate officers, Brigadier General Seth Barton and Colonel James Dearing, became convinced that the defenses they faced were too strong and withdrew (Shades of George McClellan!). The third, Brigadier General Robert Hoke, halted his troops outside New Bern to wait and hear from the other two prongs. Pickett also had a naval unit, a detachment of Confederate Marines and sailors. A naval action occurred the night of February 2, when a number of Confederate vessels set out to attack the Union Navy Yard. One ship made it to the scene of battle, and actually surprised Union forces, so that the Confederates captured the USS *Underwriter* and began to sail it toward the Navy Yard. However, Union artillery opened fire on the captured ship, setting it on fire. The Confederate Marines had nothing to show for their daring. Pickett retreated on February 4, 1864.

After time passed, the Adams Express Company set up an office in New Bern, and accepted important mail to the north.



◀ **Figure 24.** Envelope with printed corner marking of the 43rd Regiment, Massachusetts Volunteers, the so-called Tiger Regiment, that occupied New Bern. Letter sent to Newton Lower Falls, Massachusetts. A Type 13 circular datestamp of New Bern cancels the 3 cent stamp.

Figure 25. ▶ Envelope with red printed corner marking of the Scott Light Guard of Fairhaven, Company I, 3rd Regiment, Massachusetts Volunteer Militia, sent from New Bern. Letter addressed to Rochester, Massachusetts. A Type 13 circular datestamp and boxed DUE 3 handstamp of New Bern were shown on this soldier's letter.



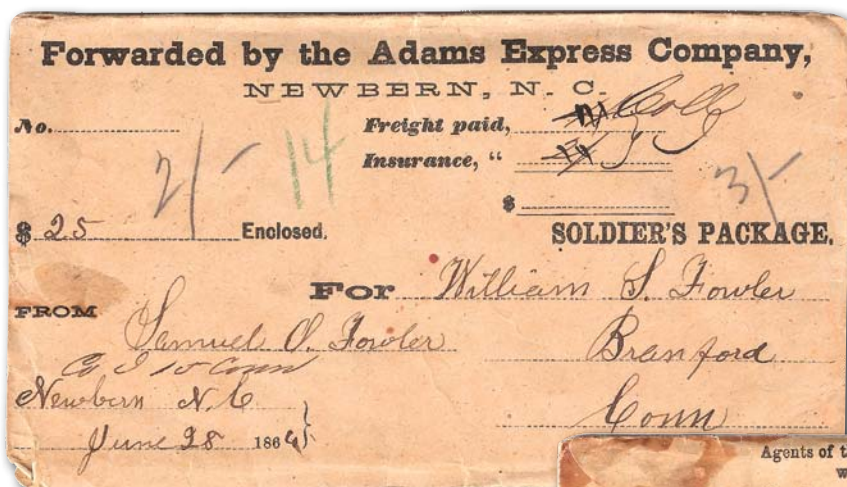
◀ **Figure 26.** November 1863 letter from occupied New Bern to Kingston, Canada West. The 10 cent rate to Canada was paid with a horizontal pair of 1863 brown 5 cent Jefferson stamps. A Type 14 circular datestamp of New Bern was used.



Figure 27. ▶ March 16, 1864, letter from Confederate Greenville (Pitt County) addressed to Manson (Warren County), intercepted and taken to New Bern to be examined, then released through the lines to go to Manson. Octagonal handstamp reads, "Rec'd Hd. Qrs., Sub-Dist. New Berne, Apr. 8, 1864."



◀ **Figure 28.** Cover turned at Manson and used again on a letter to Henderson (Granville County) with manuscript postmark.



◀ **Figure 29.** Adams Express Company, money letter for \$25, sent June 28, 1864, from New Bern to Branford, Connecticut. Adams Express envelope specifically indicated it was a "Soldier's Package."



Figure 30. ▶

Reverse of money envelope with impression in red wax seal, "Adams Express/New Bern/ N.C./Company."



◀ **Figure 31.** June 25, 186x, envelope sent from New Bern to Taunton, Massachusetts with Type 15a circular datestamp of New Bern with month and day slugs reversed from their normal places. The stamped on corner card information reads "Gaston House, W.P. Moore, Proprietor, New Berne, N.C.," a hotel since the mid-1850s.

Figure 32. ▶

Gaston House hotel of New Bern and adjacent wholesale grocery, probably late 19th century. The Gaston House later was named the "Lord Tyron" and burned down in the 1960s.



Figure 29 illustrates a money letter sent by Samuel O. Fowler in Company I of the 15th Connecticut sending \$25, perhaps after getting his pay, to his elder brother, William S. Fowler, in Branford, Connecticut. Many of this generation were farmers in New Haven County near Branford, never marrying but living together as a family. The accompanying letter also contains a complaint about not hearing from him for two weeks! The reverse side of this envelope (Figure 30) is sealed with the red wax seal of the New Bern office of the Adams Express. A colleague (not from North Carolina) suggested that I should explode the envelope in order to show both sides, but to me that would be desecration.

Finally, shown here is a New Bern hotel cover with a Type 15a circular datestamp (Figure 31); the month and date slugs are reversed from their normal places in the datestamp. The corner card information seems to have been stamped on, not lithographed. Type 15 datestamps were in use from 1863 to 1867, so the year is not clear, but it has a pencil notation of 1865 on the back. In 1870, there was a William P. Moore, a farmer and distiller living with his family close to New Bern; perhaps he had been the proprietor of the Gaston House five years earlier. The Gaston House had been a hotel since the mid-1850s, but the building was originally constructed as a facility to cure and store hams. The addressee on this cover, Joshua Dean II, of Taunton, Massachusetts, was a member of a large family, but none of his family appears to have been likely to be in eastern North Carolina in 1865. Thus the cover does not appear to have been part of a family correspondence. Unfortunately, the Gaston House, later the Lord Tryon, burned down in the 1960s. Figure 32 provides a late view of the Gaston House.

Today New Bern maintains its battlefield and honors the troops who lost their lives there, but it prefers to recall its role as the capital of the Colony of North Carolina. ■

Acknowledgments:

My descriptions of postal markings use the Type numbers in the “North Carolina Postmark Catalog Update” found on the website of the North Carolina Postal History Society, www.ncpostalhistory.com. This catalog update is a complete revision of the four-volume set, *Post Offices and Postmasters of North Carolina, Colonial to USPS*, published in 1996 by the North Carolina Postal History Society and with different volumes edited variously by T. L. Crumbley, R. J. Stets, V. S. Stroupe, R. Y. Wetmore, and R. F. Winter. In particular, the chapter on Craven County was invaluable.

Historical and biographical information was assembled from genealogical web sites, especially www.ancestry.com.

I thank Tony Crumbley for providing images of a number of fascinating New Bern covers from his collection, some of which appear as Figures in this article.

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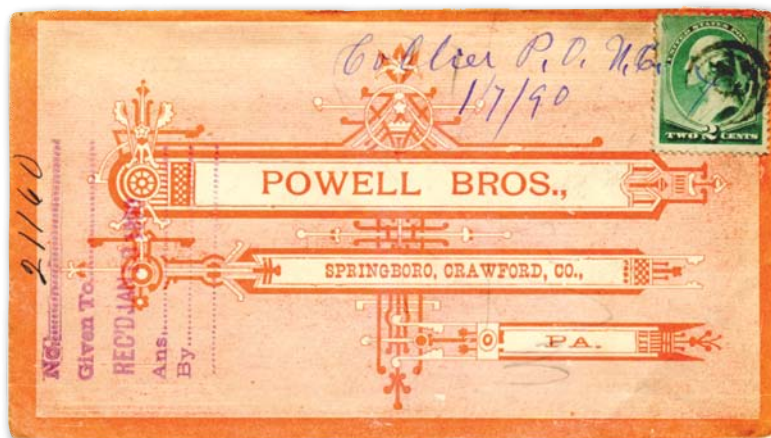
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New Markings

Tony Crumbley reports this new manuscript postmark for Collier, Person County. Here it was used on a July 7, 1890, cover in purple ink.

This orange printed, all-over advertising cover of the Powell Brothers Livestock Emporium in Springboro, Pennsylvania, was provided by them as a return envelope. Another Powell Brothers reply envelope was explained as a different mystery cover in the Summer 2010 issue of our journal (Whole No. 111).



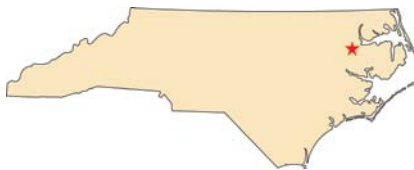
Jamesville and Washington Railroad a.k.a. “Jolt and Wiggle”



by Tony L. Crumley

In a recent EBay sale, one of our advertisers, Elwyn and Anne Doubleday, offered an interesting North Carolina cover which I promptly bid on. To my surprise, I think I was the only bidder. What intrigued me most about the cover, which I will show here first, Figure 1, was that corner card marking of the Jamesville and Washington Rail Road. I had not heard of this railroad.

In 1994, I published a monograph titled, “Postal Markings of the North Carolina Railroads, including Station Agents, Wa-



carrier lines built in North Carolina and 540 different companies involved in these railroads. The Jamesville & Washington Railroad is listed in his research as being incorporated in 1869.

Before we get into the history of the railroad, let's discuss the history of Jamesville and the reason the railroad line existed. Jamesville is the second oldest town in Martin County. It is located on the southern bank of the Roanoke River about 12 miles upriver from Plymouth. Its early residents depended on the shipment of agricultural and forest products on the river. They also took advantage of the early springtime fishing season that was centered here. Prior to the Civil War, Jamesville thrived as did Dennis Simmons' construction of the Astoria Mill, a large sawmill operation, a mile north of the city, providing the largest antebellum industry.

According to the U.S. Post Office Department records, the town of Jamesville was a renaming of an already-established post office called Gardner's Bridge, which had its post office since February 23, 1823. Its first Postmaster was Maurice Gardner. This post office had nine postmasters from then until August 3, 1855. At this time the post office name was changed by the Post Office Department to Jamesville. The town itself was incorporated in 1785 as James Town, it changed its name to Jamestown in 1797 and on February 10, 1855, it formally changed its name to Jamesville. The post office is still in operation today.

During the Civil War, the community was caught in the middle of the Confederate and Union forces. The Union headquarters was at Plymouth,

about 12 miles to the east and downriver, while Williamston was held by the Confederates about 12 miles to the west upriver. Jamesville in the middle became a “no man's land.” The once-prosperous town was virtually destroyed during the course of the war, including the large, Astoria saw mill. In 1860 there were 46 people living in Jamesville.

By the year 2010 Jamesville's population was recorded at only 491. This was a very small rural town surviving on the success of a few area farms, and the wood products of the vast forest areas to the south and a very successful saw mill.

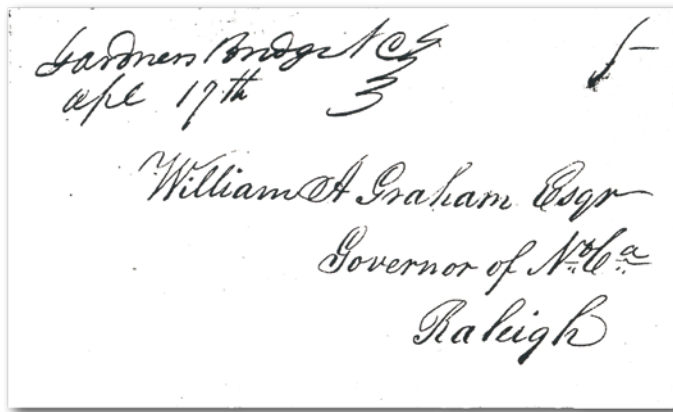
As mentioned earlier, the first post office for the community was named Gardner's Bridge. Figure 2 illustrates a cover in the



▲ **Figure 1.** Jul 6, 1871, envelope with lengthy corner card marking of the Jamesville & Washington Railroad & Lumber Company, posted at Jamesville (Martin County) with a manuscript postmark addressed to New York City. This is the only cover seen with a manuscript postmark of Jamesville. The printed corner card advertised not only the railroad but also the lumber company and its many products, both under the same organization.

terways, Etc.,” which included all the known railroad markings of North Carolina, but this railroad was not listed. The monograph was incorporated into Volume 4 of *Post Offices and Postmasters of North Carolina, Colonial to USPS*, a four-volume set detailing all the known postmarks of North Carolina. I thought I knew most of the railroad lines in this state. The introduction to the monograph showed that there were 241 rail lines and agents and 594 different markings for North Carolina. Nowhere was there a Jamesville and Washington Railroad in the listing.

David Carriker, in his book, *History of North Carolina Railroads: 1830-1996*, indicates there were 278 different common



Governor's Papers at the North Carolina State Archives. This photocopy of a folded letter was posted at the Gardner's Bridge post office on April 17, 1847. It was addressed to William A. Graham, Governor of North Carolina. The letter was marked with a manuscript postmark in the upper left corner and with the the postage due of 5 cents in the upper right corner. To date, only three covers have been recorded having been posted at Gardner's Bridge.

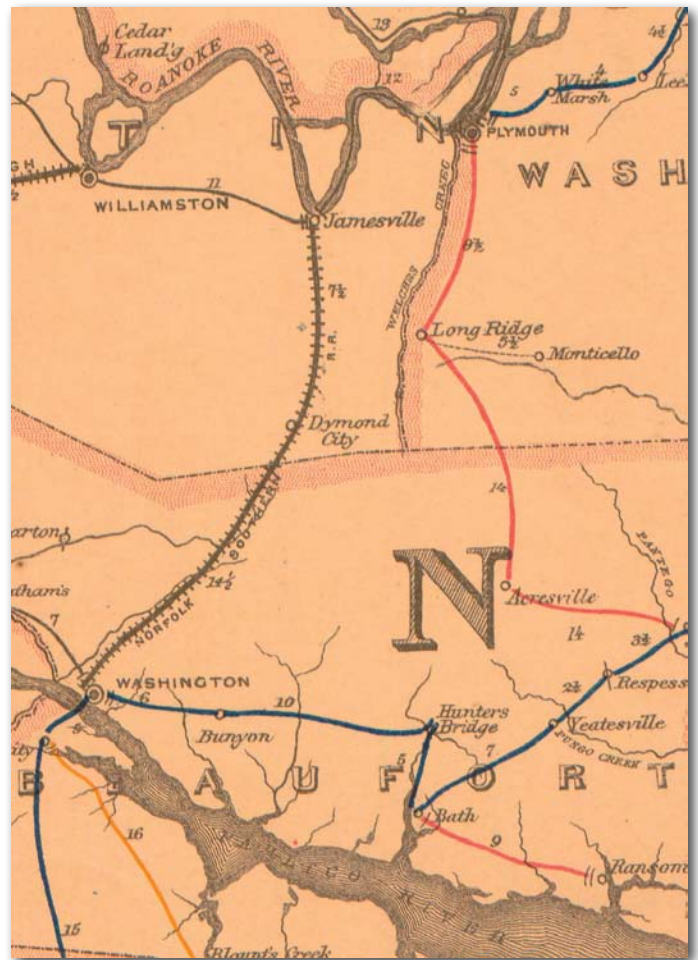
After the name change to Jamesville on August 3, 1855, only one cover has been reported showing a manuscript cancel of Jamesville. That cover is the one shown in Figure 1 with the corner card of the Jamesville & Washington Rail Road. Postwar development of Jamesville followed with improved transportation and continued exploitation of the vast timber of the region to the north of Washington. Simmons built an even larger sawmill after the war, which operated until 1919. In 1889, it was touted as the largest manufacturer of wooden shingles in North Carolina producing 25,000 a day.

The corner card of Figure 1 has more words than I've ever seen on a corner card cover from North Carolina. Clearly, the proprietors of the railroad and the saw mill wanted to get their message across not only about their railroad but also about the services they offered with the lumber company. The name that appears on the corner card was the Jamesville and Washington Railroad and Lumber Co. of North Carolina. The railroad was incorporated in 1869 and was built to haul lumber from Dymond City and the regions around Jamesville, to the port in Washington, North Carolina.

The map in Figure 3 was taken from an 1894 map titled, "Post Route Map of the States of North Carolina and South Carolina" published by order of Postmaster General Walter Q. Gresham. It shows the small land route of the Jamesville & Washington Railroad from Jamesville at the northern end to Washington on the Pamlico River at the southern end, passing through Dymond City in the center part. The red and blue lines are postal route services between towns, weekly (in red) and three times a week (in blue). This short, North-South railroad connected Martin County in the North to Beaufort County in the south. It was an independent rail line operating on a narrow

▲ **Figure 2.** Photocopy of a folded letter posted in the Gardner's Bridge post office on April 17, 1847, addressed to Governor William A. Graham in Raleigh. This is one of only three recorded manuscript postmarked covers from Gardner's Bridge. The letter was sent unpaid and marked for 5 cents postage due in Raleigh.

gauge track. The railroad used a small wood-burning engine and is said to have spent more time off the track than on the track. By 1870, the first segment of the narrow gauge railroad extended into the vast stands of timber south and east of Jamesville. The railroad made possible small scale farming and large scale timbering in the Jamesville and Griffin townships. The company soon decided to take the logging line public and began improving the tracks and deciding where to go next. The



▲ **Figure 3.** 1894 Post Route Map of North Carolina showing the area that includes the railroad track of the Jamesville & Washington Railroad between those two towns, the first in Martin and the second in Beaufort Counties. Note that Dymond City is the only other stop on the 22 mile railroad line.

decision was made to continue the line to Washington, North Carolina. The additional rights-of-way were purchased in 1877 and the line to Washington was completed in 1885. This was the first railroad to enter Washington. The line ran 22 miles and made one round trip daily. The only other town on the line was Dymond City, 7.5 miles south of Jamesville according to the post route map in Figure 3. Figure 4 shows a contemporary view of the building in Washington, North Carolina, that became the Jamesville & Washington Railroad depot and hotel. It was built in 1886 and is a private residence today.

In 1892, the Jamesville and Washington Railroad was sued by a customer of the railroad. The plaintiff claimed that he purchased a ticket for \$1.00 to ride the “Jolt and Wiggle,” so named because of its bumpy ride. The plaintiff left on September 7 with a planned return on September 9. On September 8, the engine broke an axle from the rough track. When the plaintiff tried to return on the 9th, the train was not running and the spare engine was in the shop as well.

The allegations were that the railroad’s “roadbed was in a bad, shackly, and ruinous condition; that defendant had but two engines, both of which were worn and in bad condition, one of them at that time being in the shops for repair, and not in a condition to be used; that the bad condition of defendant’s roadbed had rattled the other one so as to cause the axle to break.” The passenger claimed that this showed willful negligence by the railroad. The plaintiff filed suit for \$500. Of course, the railroad denied the claim and the \$500 was not paid.

The Jamesville & Washington Railroad was eventually sold in 1894 to the Norfolk and Southern Railway. After 1895 it doesn’t appear on any railroad maps, indicating that this narrow gauge railroad was of no use to the Norfolk and Southern Railway.

To this day, the Jamesville & Washington Railroad is commonly known as the “J&W RR,” “Jolt and Wiggle” or the “Jolter and Wiggler” railroad. ■



▲ **Figure 4.** Contemporary view of the building in Washington that became the depot and hotel of The Jamesville & Washington Railroad line. It is a private residence today.

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▲ **Figure 5.** Top part of a \$1,000 certificate at 8% return from the Jamesville & Washington Railroad and Lumber Company issued in 1873. This documented was printed by the American Bank Note Company to raise money for the railroad’s improvements. The certificate has an ornate border with vignette scenes from the railroad. The certificate is for sale by the on-line company of Scripophily.com for \$295.00.

Uwharrie, Montgomery County

by Tony L. Crumbley



For nearly two decades, the Crumbleys had a cabin on Lake Tillery which faced Morrow Mountain and was backed up by the Uwharrie National Forest. Throughout this time, if I had a day off or a weekend free, we would head to Uwharrie to enjoy the wildlife and the wilderness. If it was wild in North Carolina, it was there in the Uwharrie. There were bears, turkeys, bobcats as well as 100,000s of deer. I was told that each year more than 10,000 deer were extracted from Uwharrie.

The Uwharrie National Forest was first purchased by the Federal Government in 1931 during the Great Depression. The land was known as the Uwharrie Reservation.

In 1961, President John F. Kennedy proclaimed these lands in Montgomery, Randolph, and Davidson Counties as Federal Lands. The Uwharrie National Forest – in total 50,189 acres – are included in the forest.

Considerable history exists in the area. The Uwharrie National Forest is named for the Uwharrie Mountains, some of the oldest in North America. The Uwharries were created from an ancient chain of volcanoes. The 1,000 foot hills today were once 20,000 foot peaks.

In 1799, gold was discovered in nearby Reed Gold Mine. In the early 1800s, gold was also found in the Uwharries. Old gold mine sites can still be found today and gold is still being panned from the creeks and streams.




“Uwharrie” has its roots as an Indian name. Some say the name means “rocky field.” The area was widely known by the Indians as a great source of stone for making arrows and other stone tools. The volcanic rock was great for this purpose.

By the time that the federal government acquired the land for the national forest, most of the post offices within the 50,000 acres had ceased to operate. One of these post offices was Uwharrie which sat near the middle of the park. Today a few stores remain but that is about it.

The Uwharrie post office first opened on December 29, 1876, and operated until April 30, 1914, when the mail was forwarded to Moratock. The Figure 1 cover is the only Uwharrie cover that the author has seen and the only one in our society records for that post office. The letter, addressed to Lexington (Davidson County), was posted on May 29, 1886, and marked in a blue-black manuscript across four of the 2 cent stamps on the letter and across the indicia of the stamped, 1883 Plimpton & Morgan envelope. With an additional 2 cent stamp, pen-cancelled, the total payment was 12 cents. This amount consisted of 2 cent internal rate plus 10 cents registration fee. “R No #7” was written on the left edge of the envelope to indicate this was the 7th registered letter from Uwharrie, presumable during the accounting period, which was probably quarterly. ■



◀ **Figure 1.** May 29, 1886, Uwharrie (Montgomery County) embossed envelope to Lexington (Davidson County) with manuscript cancel of Uwharrie. The twelve cent postage paid the domestic rate plus 10 cents for registration fee. Note the manuscript “R No. #7” on the left side of the envelope to indicate this was seventh registered letter from Uwharrie during the accounting period. Only recorded cover from Uwharrie.



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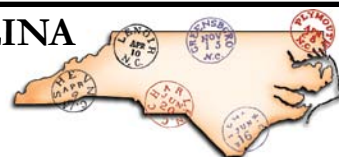
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North Carolina Postmark Catalog Update

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Alamance through Swain

Alamance thru Currituck and individual cities have been updated;

Fayetteville has been added to the individual cities list

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