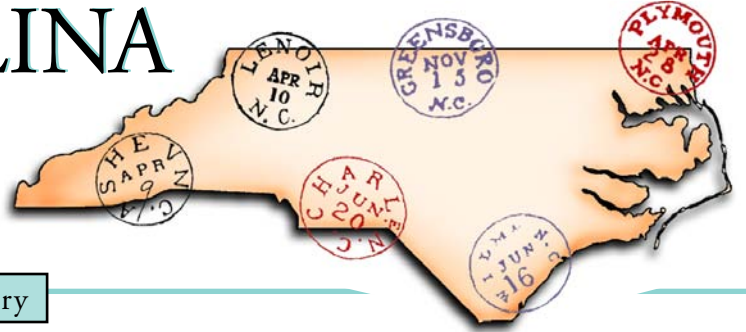


NORTH CAROLINA POSTAL HISTORIAN

The Journal of North Carolina Postal History

VOLUME 40, NO. 2 SPRING 2021 WHOLE 154



Civil War Covers Addressed
to A.A. McKethan



Letter Describing New
Bern as it Enters 1859

Charlotte's Advertising Covers
and Cards of the Classic Era



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As I write this, we are at the one-year anniversary of the Covid-19 pandemic. We've experienced a year learning how to adjust to fundamental changes in how we communicate, socialize and conduct business. The North Carolina Postal History Society has been successful in adapting to these challenges. We have had no interruption in getting out the *North Carolina Postal Historian* and carrying out Board of Director business through Zoom virtual meetings and email. We have had no financial consequences since we do not rely on revenue streams, such as selling services or publications, to finance the society. Hopefully, in the months to come, we will see improvement and an eventual return to normality.

At this point, CHARPEX 2021 is scheduled for the last weekend in July (the 24th and 25th) at the downtown Charlotte Campus of Central Piedmont Community College. We will keep the membership informed of any changes in the next issue of our journal.

As I reported in the President's Message in the Winter, 2020 issue of the *North Carolina Postal Historian*, Board member Tim McRee coordinated with the American Philatelic Society (APS) to use their network to showcase the North Carolina Postal History Society and our journal by their sending an email to APS members in this area and providing them with a digital copy of our Fall 2020 journal that had Part 2 of the Ertzberger article, "Rural Free Delivery in North Carolina." I'm very happy to report that we have received seven new members through that outreach. Hopefully we be able to attract even more fellow postal historians.

I want to re-iterate how fortunate our society is to have very supportive members who keep the organization strong through

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sustaining member contributions, helping each other with researching our particular postal history interests, and submitting articles to the journal. Currently, we still have over a dozen members who have not paid their dues for 2021. The Secretary-Treasurer has sent a reminder for this payment to those who are delinquent. If you are one, please take the time to pay your dues before we are forced to terminate your membership. We really don't want to lose any of our members.

In this issue, Maurice Bursey discusses Civil War covers addressed to A./A. McKethan, a prominent resident of Fayetteville with a strong business as a maker and repairer of carriages, barouches, buggies, rockaways, and sulkies. As a first-time contributor to our journal, Andy Kupersmit describes a letter from a young teacher from Keene, New Hampshire, who writes on New Year's Eve 1858 to a friend back home, about his travel to New Bern to accept a teaching position. The position was no longer available so he sets up a new school there and also provides his observations of the town. Finally, always reliable Tony Crumbley presents an article on Charlotte's advertising covers and post cards of the period 1850-1918.

A **red dot** on your mailing label means we have not received your dues.



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President	Vice-President	Secretary/Treasurer	Editors	
Charles F. Hall, Jr. 537 Easy Wind Lane Garner, N.C. 27529 cfhgarner20@charter.net	George Slaton 1230 South Street Cornelius, NC 28031 geoslaton@gmail.com	Harry Albert 105 Gatestone Court Cary, N.C. 27518 harry.albert@eeco-net.com	Tony L. Crumbley PO Box 681447 Charlotte, NC 28216 tcrumbley@bellsouth.net	Richard F. Winter 5432 Geneva Terrace Colfax, NC 27235 rfwinter645@gmail.com

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Civil War Covers Addressed to A. A. McKethan



by Maurice Bursey

There are more than a few extant North Carolina covers addressed to A. A. McKethan of Fayetteville during the Civil War. Here is a bit of background for their story.

Alfred Augustus McKethan was born on July 8, 1809, in Cumberland County, North Carolina. There are two opinions about his parents. The first, more widespread understanding is that his mother was Christian McKethan, the daughter of John McKethan and his wife Grisella McAllister McKethan, and that the name of his father is unknown. A second group of genealogists holds that he was born in Fayetteville to John J. McKethan and his wife Margaret Campbell McKethan. A very large third group claims that both his parents are unknown. Nothing is known of his early years. Nor are there any extant portraits of him known.

On March 13, 1832, an advertisement appeared on the first page of the *Fayetteville Weekly Observer* announcing the formation of the firm of Gardner & McKethan, a coach-making firm on Person Street, where the men had purchased the business of Mr. A. McLauchlin. The firm was located on a large lot at the corner of Person and Dick Streets, with warehouses eventually on Cool Spring Street and New Street. The firm prospered, not least because Fayetteville was at the falls (navigable limit) of the Cape Fear River, and goods off-loaded from ships there had to be moved farther west. A further advertisement appeared on October 16, 1847, announcing the dissolution of the partnership as of December 15, on account of Charles T. Gardner's leaving the state. McKethan purchased Gardner's share of the partnership, and the business continued as A. A. McKethan under his sole proprietorship. A typical advertisement placed repeatedly in the *Fayetteville Semi-Weekly Observer* in the early 1850s is shown in

Figure 1. This particular advertisement appeared in the January 14, 1850, issue. By 1853 his advertisements informed the public that his company was "The Largest Carriage Factory in the South." It was generally acknowledged that A. A. McKethan was the largest carriage manufacturer in the South, as he claimed.

Beyond his own business activities, McKethan participated widely in municipal activities in Fayetteville. He served on the

Board of Aldermen for many years, beginning in 1847. He was a member of a special committee to set up and provision a commissary for those made destitute by Sherman's occupation in 1865. During the 1870s he served as chairman of the Board of County Commissioners for Cumberland County, and in 1876-1877, he was mayor of Fayetteville. His earliest political views were with the Whig Party; by the 1850s he was a Know-Nothing Party member. By the 1860s he was a leader in organizing a "Southern Rights" Party, and Reconstruction made him a Democratic Party member.

His investments often reflected his interests in promoting many kinds of transportation. He was a stockholder and director of the first plank road company, the Fayetteville and Western, in the 1850s. He also promoted the Fayetteville and Warsaw plank road, which connected Fayetteville with the Wilmington and Weldon Rail Road. Soon, seeing that railroads would be superior to plank roads, he was an enthusiastic supporter of the Coal Fields Rail Road (later the Fayetteville and Western) and president of the Fayetteville and Florence (South

Carolina) Rail Road. He held a great investment of stock in Carolina City, planned as a rival to Morehead City as the terminus for the North Carolina Central Rail Road, and in a projected Fayetteville-Beaufort Rail Road that never



A. A. McKETHAN
STILL continues to carry on the **CARRIAGE BUSINESS** in all its branches, at the **OLD STAND**. He returns thanks for the liberal patronage he has heretofore received, and hopes, by strict attention to business and a desire to give entire satisfaction, to merit a continuance of the same.

He has on hand a very fine assortment of
Carriages, Barouches, Buggies, Rockaways, and Sulkeys,
Finished, and a very large assortment of Work partly finished, which, for elegance of shape and finish, will compare with any other work.

Persons wishing to buy, would do well to call and examine the work, as he is determined to sell low for cash, or notes on short time.

☐ All work warranted for twelve months, and repaired free of charge, should it fail by bad workmanship or material.

☐ Repairing faithfully executed at short notice, on very reasonable terms.

Fayetteville, Jan. 14, 1850.

▲ **Figure 1.** January 14, 1850, advertisement for A.A. McKethan's carriage business that appeared in the *Fayetteville Semi-Weekly Observer*.

materialized. He was also President of the Cumberland County Agricultural Society for successive terms and Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners for a number of years. His products' reputation was so widespread that before the end of 1865 he was receiving inquiries and orders again from at least New York and New Jersey.

Alfred Augustus McKethan died on January 5, 1890, following a fall that resulted in a broken leg. His death was noted in many newspapers across the state. The mayor of Fayetteville proclaimed a memorial town meeting to honor him and his many contributions to the city. During his funeral, reported in the *Fayetteville Weekly Observer* of January 9, 1890, downtown businesses closed and bells tolled throughout the city. The column was more than an obituary; it was an encomium. Its anonymous author, as if daunted by his own youth in the face of McKethan's reputation, spoke of Alfred McKethan's "sturdy character," "unblemished integrity," and "sincere, open nature." It noted his "aggressive temperament" and how he was "infuriated by opposition" and "incensed at contradiction" too. It summarized his character by reporting that "all his days were devoted to the promotion of his people." And it spoke of "how manfully he battled to wrest [the Cape Fear and Yadkin Valley Rail Road] from unworthy hands and struggled to redeem it from inefficient management." The report summarized his life as a "faithful custodian of the people's interest and unflinching champion of their rights."

In the 1860 Slave Census, he was recorded as the owner (as if one human being could own another) of some 42 slaves. Yet

his business continued after emancipation, for in 1866 his monthly allotted tax payments were among the highest assessed among businesses in downtown Fayetteville. And the author of his obituary listed by name seven African Americans, either former slaves or postwar employees, who took their seats in the main body of the Presbyterian Church at his funeral.

Figure 2 illustrates the use of a prewar, 3-cent red 1860 stamped envelope, obliterated by a black PAID handstamp, from Summerville to Fayetteville after North Carolina seceded from the United States and was admitted to the Confederate States of America. This use was during a five-day period when U.S. postage was still allowed to be used in Confederate North Carolina. The black circular datestamp was dated May 29, and the cover was docketed "B. F. Shaw." There was a Summerville in Harnett County in 1860, and a B. F. Shaw who lived in the part of the county served by the Summerville Post Office at that time. Major Benjamin F. Shaw (1828-1908) served Harnett County as clerk of the county from its formation in 1856 until the position was abolished with the adoption of the North Carolina Constitution of 1868, and then as clerk of Superior Court.

The next example, Figure 3, shows a manuscript town mark of Owensville, Sampson County, dated August 13. It was mailed to Fayetteville, with a handstamped PAID and a 5 in circle handstamp pointing to 1861 as the year of use. The envelope was docketed "W.F. Fowler." There was a William Giles Fowler, born in 1826 in Sampson County, living in the Little Coharie Township, Sampson County, in 1860. He was murdered on his



◀ **Figure 2.** May 29, 1861, 3-cents red 1860 stamped envelope obliterated by a black PAID handstamp from Summerville to Fayetteville, used during the five-day period when U.S. postage was allowed in Confederate North Carolina. (Courtesy of Tony L. Crumbley)



▶ **Figure 3.**

August 13, 1861, envelope from Owensville in Sampson County to Fayetteville paid 5-cents for Confederate postage to a distance of not more than 500 miles. To date this is the only recorded manuscript postmark of Confederate Owensville, North Carolina.

way home from his store in Mooresville in December 1878. One of the men suspected of his murder was lynched by a mob there.

Figure 4 shows usage of a vertical pair of CSA No. 6, canceled in Faison's Depot, Duplin County, by four ink strokes, and a manuscript postmark of September 13, 1862, to Fayetteville. The docketing appears to read "Marabell," but I have found only a few persons living in North Carolina with that surname in the 1860 census, and none in Duplin County. I have looked at several possible replacement letters in the name as well, but to no avail. Nor were any such persons found in North Carolina newspapers of the 1860s.

Likewise, Figure 5, also shows a cover from Faison's with the same manuscript date of September 13, 1862, the same day as the previous cover, canceling a horizontal pair of CSA No. 6.

The postmaster for most of the war, Isham R. Faison, was known to add or omit the word "Depot" from the postmark, apparently indiscriminately. Unfortunately the docketing notation on this cover also has resisted my attempts to decode it.

The envelope in Figure 6 bears a vertical pair of CSA No. 7, canceled by a manuscript Rockingham NC/May 15, 1863. Rockingham is in Richmond County. The docketing notation on this cover shows the name "Covington," then repeats in greater detail, "B.H. Covington/May 15." In the 1860 census, Benjamin H. Covington, Jr., (1837-1880) was a scion of a wealthy Richmond County family. The envelope was made from a legal form, shown as displayed and opened out in Figure 6a and 6b on the next page.

Figure 4. ▶

September 13, 1862, envelope with vertical pair of CSA No. 6 canceled with pen strokes and a manuscript postmark of Faison's Depot (Duplin County) to McKethan in Fayetteville.



Figure 5. ▶ September 13, 1862, another envelope from Faison's to Fayetteville, this one with a horizontal pair of CSA No. 6 placed upside down and canceled with the postmark. Postmaster Isham R. Faison was known to add or omit the word "Depot" from the postmark, apparently indiscriminately.



Figure 6. ▶

May 15, 1863, envelope made from a legal form sent from Rockingham (Richmond County) to Fayetteville, paid with a vertical pair of CSA No. 7 canceled with the town postmark in manuscript.





▲ **Figures 6a and 6b.** The May 15, 1863, cover from Rockingham to Fayetteville shown in its normal display mode and opened to show it was created from a legal form, an adversity cover.



Figure 7. ▶

September 16, 1864, envelope from Rockingham to Fayetteville paid with CSA No. 12 canceled with two pen strokes. Docketing shows it was sent by B.H. Covington of a wealthy Richmond County family. (Courtesy of Tony L. Crumbley)

Another cover from the same correspondent, Benjamin H. Covington, Jr., in Rockingham is illustrated in Figure 7. It was posted on September 16, 1864, to Fayetteville and was paid with a CSA No. 12 postage stamp canceled by two pen strokes.

A March 6, 1863, cover from Wilmington to Fayetteville bearing a horizontal pair of CSA No. 7 is shown in Figure 8. The stamps were canceled by a partially struck circular datestamp, which could be Fayetteville Type 8, 9, or 10a. It is docketed “Worth,” and McKethan appears to have answered it in March 1863. There were only three men of the proper age

with that last name living in Wilmington, or indeed New Hanover County, in 1860. Barzillai Gardner Worth and the enigmatic H. Worth were next-door neighbors, both merchants, and both roughly equally wealthy.

Figure 9 shows another cover from Wilmington bearing a CSA No. 11 postage stamp canceled by a Wilmington Type 8 circular datestamp with a date of August 15, 1863 or 1864. The docketing contains the name “A. E. Hall.” In 1860 Avon E. Hall was a merchant in Wilmington; in 1870, he lived in Asheville.



◀ **Figure 8.** March 6, 1863, envelope from Wilmington (New Hanover County) to Fayetteville paid with a horizontal pair of CSA No. 7 canceled by an incomplete strike of an unknown Wilmington circular datestamp. Docketing shows that it originated from one of two merchants in Wilmington named "Worth." (Courtesy of Tony L. Crumbley)

Figure 9. ▶ August 15, 186x, envelope from Wilmington to Fayetteville paid with CSA No. 11 canceled by a Type 8 circular datestamp. Docketing shows the letter came from "A.E. Hall," a Wilmington merchant.



◀ **Figure 10.** Pittsboro (Chatham County) to Fayetteville, wallpaper envelope paid with CSA No. 12 canceled with a Pittsboro Type 3 postmark, date unreadable. The sender's name is not known.

Figure 11. ▶ 28 July 186x envelope from Haw River (Alamance County) to Fayetteville paid a single rate with CSA No. 12 canceled with two pen strokes from unknown sender. (Courtesy of Tony L. Crumbley)



Figure 10 provides a beautiful wallpaper cover from Pittsboro (Chatham County) to Fayetteville, paid with a single CSA No. 12 canceled by a Pittsboro Type 3 circular datestamp so smudged that all aspects of the date are uncertain. I thank Tony Crumbley for identifying the postmark as that of Pittsboro. Because the cover is folded to display the attractive wallpaper and I have only its image now from which to work, the sender's

name must remain a mystery until the present owner comes forward.

It is equally difficult to trace the origin of the Haw River cover in Figure 11. The CSA No. 12 postage stamp is canceled with two pen strokes, and the typical manuscript town mark of Haw River, with a date of July 28, is present. The year could be 1863 or 1864. The cover is not docketed with a name.



◀ **Figure 12.** Confederate States semi-official envelope of the Quartermaster's Department, District of Pamlico. Addressed to Mr. A. A. McKethan, Fayetteville (Cumberland County), it is evidently from Major J.B.F. Boone, Quartermaster, New Bern (Craven County). The cover is postmarked Newbern, January 20, 1862. (Courtesy of Dr. Stefan T. Jaronski)

Figure 13. ▶ Cameo "illustrated" ad cover from Fayetteville (Cumberland County) to Marion, South Carolina of unknown date, shows the only Confederate cover known to author that was sent by McKethan. The Marion postmaster redirected the cover to Mars Bluff, South Carolina, marking "due 5" postage. The cameo of this cover showed the name "A. McKethan," which is slightly different from the Figure 14 cover. (Courtesy of Larry Baum)



An image of another cover addressed to A. A. McKethan was published in the *North Carolina Postal Historian* by Dr. Stefan T. Jaronski in the Winter 2017-2018 issue, page 18. This was a newly described stampless semi-official cover from the Quartermaster's Department, District of Pamlico, with a New Bern Type 11 circular date stamp and date of January 20, 1862, and docketed as sent by Major J. B. F. Beard. The cover is reproduced here as Figure 12 so the reader doesn't have to find the original article.

There is one Civil War cover from Alfred McKethan of which I am aware, which is illustrated in Figure 13, a cameo "illustrated" ad cover bearing a CSA No. 1 postage stamp canceled by a black six-bar circular grid with an illegible date (day is 19, month and year unreadable) and a black Fayetteville Type 5 circular date stamp. The cover was addressed to General W. W. Harlee, Marion Court House, South Carolina, with a note to the postmaster to forward. The postmaster sent it on to Mars Bluff, South Carolina, and marked a manuscript "due 5" for the rate to forward the cover.

[Mars Bluff is famous for having had a nuclear bomb dropped on it accidentally by a U. S. Air Force B-47 Stratojet on its way to a war training exercise on March 11, 1958. The bomb was not armed with a trigger of fissionable material, but it did have a high-explosive detonator, which left a crater some 75 feet wide and 25-35 feet deep and destroyed a playhouse.]

The addressee on the cover in Figure 13 was William Wallace Harlee (1812-1897), president of the Wilmington and Manchester Rail Road, Lieutenant Governor of South Carolina,

general in the South Carolina militia, state senator, president pro tempore of the South Carolina Senate, and the man who named Florence, South Carolina, after his daughter Florence.

Figure 13's cameo reads, "A. McKethan/Carriage Maker/Fayetteville, N. C.," above and below a line drawing of a coach. This is similar, but not identical to a antebellum cover sold in Schuyler Rumsey's auction No. 23 of June 2, 2006, lot 249, and shown in Figure 14. This antebellum cover originated in Fayetteville and has an incomplete strike of the Type 4 circular date stamp, with a date of February 22. Since the Fayetteville Type 4 postmark was used as early as July 1850 and the cover was paid with an imperforate 3-cent stamp, the cover probably was dated in the 1850s. It was addressed to Messrs. Towsand & Douglas of Bennettsville, South Carolina.

Lot 248 of the same Rumsey sale was another cameo "illustrated" cover of McKethan identical with Figure 13, addressed to Mr. A H Douglas of Bennettsville.

McKethan married his half first cousin, Loveday (obituary) or Lovedy (headstone) Campbell McAllister (December 20, 1809, Cumberland County, N.C.-February 2, 1899, Fayetteville), on December 21, 1833, in Fayetteville. They had three sons. All three served in the 51st North Carolina Infantry during the Civil War, and all three survived it.

By December 1865 McKethan had changed the name of his carriage business to A. A. McKethan & Sons, bringing them into the company; the first notice of this change in ownership appeared in lists of consignees for the steamship *Washington* in two Wilmington papers, *The Daily Wilmington Herald* and *The*

Figure 14. ►

Two antebellum McKethan ad covers were sold in Schuyler Rumsey's auction No. 23 of June 2, 2006, lots 248 and 249. Each was sent from Fayetteville to Bennettsville, South Carolina, with incomplete strikes of the Type 4 circular datestamp, one with an unreadable date, and the other with a February 22 date, both probably used in the 1850s. The cameo on this cover showed the name "A.A. McKethan."



Daily Wilmington Dispatch, on December 18. The earliest advertisement for the renamed company appeared for the first time in the *Fayetteville Daily News* for August 14, 1866.

Of McKethan's three sons, Hector McAllister McKethan (1834-1881) entered the Confederate military as a lieutenant (equivalent to captain's rank by act of the state legislature) of the "Old Independent Company" of Fayetteville and left the Infantry as Colonel of the 51st North Carolina Troops in General Thomas L. Clingman's brigade. Perhaps the apex of the 51st North Carolina's story was the defense of Battery Wagner on Morris Island, South Carolina, against an assault by Union forces, particularly the 54th Massachusetts, which serves as the climax of the motion picture "Glory." (He wore a brigadier general's epaulets during the battle.) He never married, and his last years were marred by major depression (the author of his obituary chose the word "melancholy").

Edwin Turner McKethan (1840 – 1888) entered Confederate service as a second lieutenant in Company K of the 51st North Carolina and left as captain. In 1867 he married Janie Wright Robeson (1846-1919) in Bladen County. They had four sons, the second of whom was named Alfred Augustus McKethan. Edwin's obituary in the *Fayetteville Weekly Observer* of June 14, 1888, recalled his gentleness and faith and his being among the most prominent of the Young Man's Christian Association in Fayetteville. His life work was the establishment of the Fayetteville Mission School, providing education for needy children.

Alfred Augustus McKethan, Jr. (1847-1915) entered Confederate service in 1864 as a Private and left as a Major. In 1869 he married Kate McLaurin (1848-1881) in Fayetteville, and they had four daughters and a son. After Kate's death, he married Celia Utley (1848-1911) in 1883 in Fayetteville, and they had two sons, the second of whom was named Hector McAlister McKethan. The other son, Joseph Utley McKethan, was the grandfather of Alfred Augustus McKethan (1908-2002), a Florida banker and citrus grower who donated the funds to build the Alfred A. McKethan Stadium at the University of Florida and proclaimed himself a fifth-generation Floridian. (Not on his father's side!)

After Alfred senior's death in 1890, Alfred junior, as his only surviving son, renamed the carriage business A. A. McKethan's Son. That firm ceased advertising in local newspapers in the first half of 1893, and the only remaining newspaper record of the business is the use of its office for a political meeting on May 3, 1894. In 1897 Alfred McKethan, Jr.'s name appears as Vice President in advertisements of the Fayetteville Bank, and by 1899, Alfred McKethan, Jr., had become Clerk of Superior Court in Fayetteville. His turn-of-the-century political view was typical of that period in North Carolina.

According to the *Fayetteville Weekly Observer* of January 27, 1915, his funeral was one of the largest funerals ever held in Fayetteville, attended by the Fayetteville Independent Light Infantry (of which he had been Major commanding), Company F of the North Carolina National Guard, Camp 852 of the United Confederate Veterans, the Cumberland County Bar, county officials, and the local chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, all attending as a body. As at his father's funeral, the reporter noted considerable attendance by members of the African American community who had been his employees. Such attendance was in spite of his earlier politics.

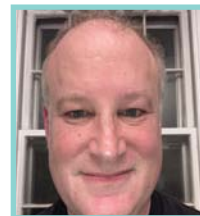
The North Carolina family members are buried in Cross Creek Cemetery #2 in Fayetteville.

Acknowledgments

Thanks to Larry Baum, Tony Crumbley, Frank Hall, and Dick Winter for searching through their collections for Civil War covers addressed to McKethan, especially to Larry Baum for pointing out the Rumsey lots with the different McKethan cameo illustrations. A few files of the Alfred Augustus McKethan Papers pertinent to this time period are housed in the Rubinstein Library at Duke University; I thank Elizabeth Dunn for having copies of them transmitted to me via the Internet during the Library's closure to external researchers during the coronavirus pandemic. ■

An Interesting Letter Describing the Town of New Bern as it Enters 1859

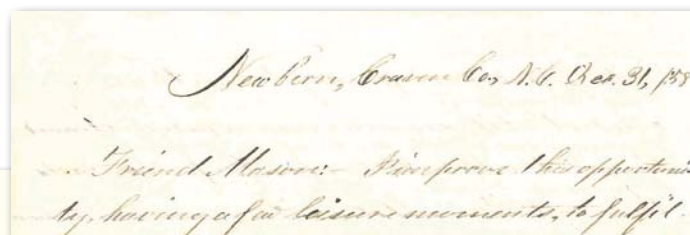
by Andy Kupersmit



I live in New Jersey and am a 20+ year board member of the New Jersey Postal History Society, as well as an infrequent author of various articles. I recently came across a six-page letter and cover on eBay from a teacher who traveled from New Hampshire to New Bern, North Carolina in 1858. He wrote the letter on New Years Eve to his friend back home. In it he talks about his journey there, his experiences

setting up a school, and of course, his observations of the town of New Bern. I purchased the cover and letter. Thinking this might make a good article for the *North Carolina Postal Historian*, I will transcribe the letter and explain a little about the persons involved.

The letter dateline is shown in below and the letter transcription follows:



Newbern, Craven Co., N. C. Dec. 31, /.'58

Friend Mason,

I improve this opportunity, having a few leisure moments, to fulfill the promise I made you the morning I left Keene. Perhaps I owe an apology to you for not writing before but I trust you will pardon me if I neglect to make it at this time.

Our journey from Keene to Newbern was in every way pleasant, with one or two exceptions. Those were delays after we reached Virginia of the cars. On our journey here we stopped nearly two days at Hartford, Connecticut, and from there we went by boat to New York where we tarried nearly one day. At New York we took an ocean steamer and went to Portsmouth, Virginia and from there we came here by rail. We were on the water one day and a half. I came near being seasick but was not really.

My fare to New York, aside from board, was \$4.75; from New York to Portsmouth, Va. \$8.00 including board; from Portsmouth to Newbern, a distance of some 200 miles, \$9.00 exclusive of board. In passing the last distance we were obliged to tarry two nights on the way. Fare at the hotels \$2 per day. From the above you can see that it is much more expensive traveling in the Slave States upon the public roads than in the Free States, with a great many more delays and incidental expenses.

I was disappointed in securing the school. It had been taken and in operation about 3 weeks when we arrived. I was sorry, for I believe I could have made a thousand dollars clear per year if I could have secured the school. I concluded I would try and do something in Newbern so I opened a day school for seven weeks and in the meantime my friend Read engaged a free school in the country at \$110 per quarter of 60 days. I was favored with 14 pupils. That paid me near \$50 for the seven weeks, but I was obliged to pay out about \$35 of it to defray my expenses. Hence, I did not make much. In the meantime, however, I was looking out for a better chance & working for the future. I heard of several openings and I made up my mind to leave Newbern as soon as I closed my day school unless I received better inducements.

The 20th, a week ago last Tuesday, just four days before my school closed, Mr. Pearce—one of my patrons—came to me and said he wished me to remain in Newbern and teach the coming year & if I would consent to remain, himself and Mr. [David W.] Bell would obligate themselves to pay me \$600 per year, fund all except my board, and they would build me a school house and an office to study in. I reckoned that I could not do better for the present & accordingly accepted the offer. I shall commence the 4th of January. I don't expect the school house will be completed before April or May. It will cost me about \$12 per month to board. I have the months of July and August to myself. I shall come home then.

The Methodist Episcopal Conference commenced at Newbern December 8th & continued two weeks, during which time Perley H. [Scoville] & Elliott Scoville (friends from home) were here. P. H. joined the conference & was appointed to preach the coming year at Clark's Creek, Montgomery Co., N. C.—some 150 or 200 miles from here. Elliott intends to join next year or as soon as he can. There is no change for the better in their appearance. P. H. wears a big white hat & from the bead under it I heard more obscene stories & brags than I've heard before in a long time. I was astonished & thought that the souls he wants to save would be mighty few. He told me he had saved a great many souls from hell since he came to North Carolina. I can assure you, it would have made you laugh &

made you mad to have seen him parade and heard his talk. Elliott expects to teach school in Bath, Beaufort County, the coming year. P. H. is regarded highly among his brother Methodists for they can make him a real tool to work with. You must excuse me for speaking as I have of our old schoolmates.

Newbern is situated between Neuse & Trent rivers at their confluence & 40 miles from the Sound. The estimated population is 7,000 but I should say that this estimate is too large. More than 1/3 of the whole are blacks. The streets are laid out well and beautifully shaded. The buildings are mostly poor and look old & very rusty. There are not over a dozen houses in the place built in modern style. Chimneys are mostly built upon the outside of the houses. The manufacture of turpentine, resin, & tar is carried on to a considerable extent. Agri[culture] is limited here. Newbern has a fine harbor & employs some 15 or 20 vessels in exporting & importing, from different parts of the U. S. and the West Indies.

The people here are kind and hospitable to strangers, or at least those that live in the country are. I went to Smith's Creek a short time since—a distance of 33 miles from Newbern. I wanted to see the country so I commenced to travel that distance on foot thinking I could survey the country much better. But when I had traveled a short ways, I concluded I had better engage a team, so I called at a plantation, inquired if I could there get conveyance to Smith's Creek. The reply was in the affirmative. A nice mule was harnessed to a \$150 buggy and a servant ordered to carry me 18 miles. I asked what I should pay for the trouble & kindness and the reply was nothing, and I could not persuade them to take a cent. The mule was rather tardy at first, but the servant cut a black quill switch about 5 feet & with this he made him travel the 18 miles in less than 2 and a half hours.

On the way I got a nice dinner for which I paid the sum as I did for the team. I would add here that I paid the servant that brought me the 18 miles 30 cents which pleased him exceedingly. At Smith's Creek, I stayed a week with my friend Read & I paid just this much \$00.00 for my board. [Read is probably George Henry Read -- a native of Swanzy, Cheshire county, New Hampshire, Presumably he is the same George H. Read that shows up in a photograph of members of the U. S. Sanitation Commission in Washington D. C.] The people are distressingly indolent and lazy. They manifest, in general, no enterprise whatever. There are the best facilities in the world for doing business of all kinds here, but they avail nothing on account of the cursed institution of Slavery which involves their entire interest, or nearly. There is much poor land here & a great deal that is good but you can travel almost in any direction from Newbern 30 or 40 miles & you would not pass a half dozen decent buildings & cultivated fields. The surface of the country is mostly covered with pine timber which yields an abundance of turpentine, resin & tar.

I now close lest I weary you with my ugly scrawls. Excuse my 101 errors and remember me, your friend, — J. B. Abbott.



◀ **Figure 1.** January 3, 1859, envelope with letter was posted at New Bern addressed to Andrew J. Mason, Keene, New Hampshire, and paid with 1857 3-cent dull red, Type III postage stamp canceled with a blue type 8 circular datestamp of New Bern.

Figure 1 illustrates the envelope that contained the letter of J.B. Abbott. The letter was posted on January 3, 1859, and was addressed to Andrew J. Mason of Keene, New Hampshire. The postage was paid with an 1857 3-cent dull red, Type III postage

stamp. It was canceled by a blue Type 8 circular datestamp of New Bern, used from October 1850 to April 1861, and then during the early part of the Confederate period.

Have You Given Us Your E-mail Address?

We would like in the future to be able to send information to members using e-mail, but we lack valid e-mail addresses for many of our members. Please help by sending your e-mail address to Harry Albert, the Secretary-Treasurer at harry.albert@eeco-net.com or Tony Crumbley at tcrumbley2@bellsouth.net.

The letter writer was Joseph Brown Abbott (1835-1892), shown in Figure 2. From *Biographies of Early Settlers and Notable Citizens in the History of Keene, New Hampshire* (1885) we know that :

“Joseph B. Abbott, son of Daniel and Polly (Brown) Abbott, was born in Surry, New Hampshire on August 11, 1835...Daniel was a farmer and was often called upon to do town business. Joseph taught school in Illinois and then in New Bern, North Carolina. He married Lydia C. Martin of Richmond, New Hampshire on September 1, 1859.

When the Civil War began, Abbott was appointed an agent in the Special Relief Department of the United States Sanitary Commission, holding the title Chief Assistant. He moved to Washington, D.C. and accepted the assignment on 12 March 1862. He remained with the US Sanitary Commission throughout the war.

In June 1864, in testimony before the Commission in Washington D.C., he stated, ‘I have been on the battlefield and in hospitals and witnessed much suffering, but never did I experience so sad and deplorable a condition of human beings, as that of the paroled Union prisoners just from Belle Island, and the rebel prisons of the South, emaciated by starvation, with impaired minds, vision, powers of speech and hearing, occasioned by want of sufficiency of wholesome food, exposure to the cold and inclement storms of wind and rain. I believe from what I have seen and experienced

among our unfortunate prisoners on board the flag-of-truce boats, that their barbarous treatment and sufferings which they endured while confined in the military prisons of the South can hardly be exaggerated.’ ”

In 1868, he settled in Richmond, New Hampshire, engaging in the manufacture of lumber. He has held various town trusts, including town representative in 1876, and was chosen county commissioner in 1874, which position he held three years. In 1877, he was appointed by President Hayes, agent to the Ute tribe of Indians in Colorado. He resided in the Los Pinos agency a little over a year, when he resigned and came to Winchester, New Hampshire. He was soon after appointed to fill a vacancy in the board of commissioners, was elected to serve in 1882, and again in 1884.

The recipient of Abbott’s letter, Andrew Robinson Mason (1833-1912) of Keene, New Hampshire, was obviously a friend and schoolmate. During the Civil War, Mason enlisted on 27 September 1862 in the Navy, serving as a landsman on the ships, USS *Ohio*, the USS *San Jacinto*, and the USS *North Carolina*. He was discharged from the Navy on 6 February 1864. Mason was the son of Joseph Mason (1786-1874) and Harriet Calkins Ormsby (1795-1864).

He married Lucy Lawrence on 22 January 1861. In 1870, Mason was a hotel keeper at the Eagle Hotel in, New Hampshire. ■



▲ **Figure 2.** Joseph Brown Abbott (1835-1892) born in Surry, New Hampshire. During the Civil War he served in the United States Sanitary Commission in Washington, D.C.

Mystery Cover



This envelope was sent to Allegan (Allegan County), Michigan, and paid the 3-cent rate with three 1861 blue 1-cent stamps, each canceled with blue ink pen strokes.

Can you determine the post office of origin?

Send your answers to Tony Crumbley or Dick Winter (see masthead on page 2 for email addresses).

Charlotte's Advertising Covers and Cards of the Classic Era –1850-1918

by Tony L. Crumbley



The Industrial Revolution began in 1760 and is considered to have had two phases. The second phase began in 1850 and ran until 1918. This second phase had a major impact on philately. The first United States postage stamps came into being in 1847. The Revolution brought about major changes in printing technology which allowed for efficient stamp printing. This technology also supported adding advertising to envelopes, thus allowing expanded marketing of companies or their product.

The first cameo corner card producers in the United States began in the early 1850s. Most of these companies were located in northern cities, such as, New York; Philadelphia; Wilmington, Delaware; and Worcester, Massachusetts. There were known cameo producers in Nashville and New Orleans also. It would take decades for this skill to become common place in the South. Southern businesses, however, began to buy these advertising covers for their own use by the mid-1850s.

The earliest recorded advertising covers from North Carolina are stampless covers from Greensboro, Salisbury, and Wilmington. These are handstamp "paid three" covers, indicating they were first used after the rate decreased to three cents in 1851.

The intent of this article is to focus on the development of educational, commercial, and hotel advertising covers in Charlotte – from the 1850s until the end of the Industrial Revolution. There are numerous examples in the later years of this period, so the author will focus on hotel advertising covers and cards.

Post cards have been included here as they were first introduced in the United States in the 1870s and saw their peak use through the early 1920s. This also was caused by the improved printing technology.

The earliest recorded advertising cover from Charlotte, Figure 1, is from Rev. and Mrs. Burwell who headed Charlotte Female Institute. By early 1856, a group of Charlotte citizens organized a stock company to build and start a girls' school in Charlotte. Rev. Robert Burwell and his wife, Margaret, moved from Hillsboro to head the school. The Burwells used an impressive corner card that was embossed and printed for use in marketing their school. These corner cards were used during the war years as well. The Burwells headed the school until 1872.

In 1878, the school was bought by William Robert Atkinson. Figure 2 is an envelope that carried the school's advertising



◀ **Figure 1.** Cameo "Standard" corner card, Charlotte Female Institute, Charlotte, North Carolina, Mr. & Mrs. Burwell, on June 13, ca. 1858 cover, the earliest recorded advertising cover from Charlotte. The Burwells opened the school after it was chartered in 1856. This corner card is also known used during the Civil War.

Figure 2. ▶ Another Charlotte Female Institute advertising cover, mailed in September 1882. The one-cent rate indicated it carried a circular for the school. The image is of the original school building.



flyer in 1882. The corner card is of the main building on the Girls' School campus. The school closed in 1891. Some alumni of the school did not want Charlotte left without a girls' school so they re-opened the school as The Charlotte Seminary for Girls. This school operated until 1896 when the Presbytery of Concord and Mecklenburg purchased the old Charlotte Female Institute and established it as the Presbyterian Female College. Key staff from the Charlotte Seminary were moved to the new school.

The Presbyterian Female College served Charlotte well until 1912 when the name was changed to Queen's College. Figure 3 is a post card mailed from Charlotte on June 29, 1918, showing an image of the school at that time -quite an enlarged campus. The school exists today as Queens University, a co-ed campus.

Figure 4 illustrates another early cameo "illustrated" example, that of Jonas Rudisill. This corner card was produced by William Eaves of New York, who produced corner cards from 1858-1860. Eaves was by far the most prolific of the American cameo stamp diesinkers. More than 540 signed have been recorded. He is considered to have produced more than a 1000. You can see Eaves' name in the lower right corner of the design.

In 1818, Jonas Rudisill was born in Beaver Dam (Lincoln County). In 1850 he and family moved to Charlotte, where he

established himself as a contractor and architect, a successful business up to his death in 1895. Only one building has been identified as being built by him and that is the North Carolina Military Institute. I will write more about that later. Rudisill stayed active in the Charlotte community long after the Civil War.

One of the scarcest of all types of corner card advertising covers is one with stencil markings. Figure 5 is an example of one such cover. A metal stencil was placed over the envelope and ink applied to the stencil. The ink would pass through the stencil cutouts and leave the image on the cover. This example of Tiddy's Marble Works, Charlotte, N.C. was posted from Charlotte with a horizontal pair and a single 1857 1-cent blue stamp paying the rate to Statesville (Iredell County). The cover was posted December 14, 1860, and forwarded from Statesville to Olin (Iredell County) on December 20. Little is known about the marble company. The 1869 *Branson Business Directory* indicates Tiddy and McCoy were still in the marble business.

By the 1870s, engraved printing had become a popular trend. The cover in Figure 6 was engraved by Brown & Warner Company of New York and was posted on November 24, 1874, to Col. A.B. Spring. It is quite an elaborate over all advertising envelope. The enclosure to this envelope was an engraved letter sheet, the upper portion of which is shown in Figure 7,

Figure 3. ▶

In 1912, the Presbyterian Female College changed its name once more to Queen's College. This post card, posted from Charlotte in 1918, shows an image of the campus as it looked then.



◀ **Figure 4.** In 1850, Jonas Rudisill established himself in Charlotte as a contractor and architect. This cameo "illustrated" envelope was produced by William Eaves of New York and mailed October 22, ca. 1858. The 1857 3-cent dull red stamp was canceled with a Type 4 Charlotte postmark that was used in blue ink from 1855 to 1864.

from the son of Col. Spring, a student at the school. The school has quite a history. Initially, the school was built by D. H. Hill in 1859 as the North Carolina Military Institute. It was a creation of Davidson College and Professor Hill. The building was modeled after Hill's alma mater, the US Military

Academy at West Point. The wood work was done by Jonas Rudisill previously mentioned in Figure 4. When the Civil War broke out, Professor Hill took his cadets to Raleigh to train the troops. During the war, the building was used as a hospital. In 1883, the building reopened as the city's white school and the



◀ **Figure 5.** This Tiddy's Marble Works advertising cover is one of only two North Carolina stenciled corner cards recorded. It was mailed December 14, 1860, from Charlotte to Statesville (Iredell County) and forwarded from there to Olin (Iredell County). A horizontal pair and a single 1857 blue 1-cent stamps were used to pay the postage rate.

Figure 6. ▶ The Carolina Military Institute was opened by D. H. Hill in 1859. During the war years, it operated as a hospital. This cover was posted with a Type 7 Charlotte circular datestamp on November 24, 1874. The engraved envelope was produced by Brown & Warner Co. of New York.



◀ **Figure 7.** The enclosed letter sheet, the upper half of which is illustrated here, has the same design engraved on the paper as the envelope in Figure 6. The letter was from B. D. Springs, the son of Col. A. B. Springs and dated November 23, 1874. Young Springs was a student at the Carolina Military Institute at this time. Built in 1859, the school was modeled after the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. During the war it was used as a hospital, while the students were taken to Raleigh to train the troops.



◀ **Figure 8.** This 1902 post card shows the image of the former Carolina Military Institute after it was re-opened in 1883 as the city's white, grade school, the first tax-supported school in Charlotte. The building was razed in 1954.

city's first tax-supported, public grade school. The image in Figure 8 is a post card from 1902. The old Carolina Military Institute building by the early 1950s now was used for school maintenance supplies and was razed in 1954. It stood on Morehead Street at the corner of South Boulevard.

A two story framed hotel first opened at 30 North Tryon Street in 1825. This hotel existed for nearly 100 years, but under several names. The facility first opened as Dr. Samuel Henderson's Tavern. In 1826, it became Robert I. Dinkins House of Entertainment. By 1830, the facility had the name of The Charlotte Hotel. Figure 9 is a post card of the old Charlotte City Hall. The building to the left is the Charlotte Hotel. In 1856, the hotel held the stage coach office for passengers traveling west to Asheville or south to Camden, South Carolina. It later became the Carolina Inn and by 1892, back to the Charlotte Hotel with new electric fans in the dining room. J. W. Brown ran the hotel from the early 1900s until 1917. It was finally called The Evermore Hotel; however, it was destroyed by fire shortly thereafter.

The Buford Hotel was first advertised as the "Headquarters of Cotton Mill Men." Traveling salesmen filled Charlotte's second most important hotel between 1885 and 1915. The building was located at 139 South Tryon Street. The men staying there caused the ladies to avoid that corner for fear of comments that they might incur. Thomas Edison and Alexander Graham Bell stayed there on visits to Charlotte.

The cover in Figure 10 was posted on April 4, 1887, two years after the hotel opened when it was called the Buford House. It was posted on the Washington & Charlotte Railroad Fast Mail train on its way to Greensboro.

In 1890, the hotel was enlarged to include the city's first elevator and a fourth floor roof garden dining room. The hotel was named for Colonel A. S. Buford, President of the Richmond & Danville Railroad. The very best rooms rented for \$2-\$3 a day.

The Buford was more than a hotel. The Commercial National Bank was organized here in 1874. Later this would

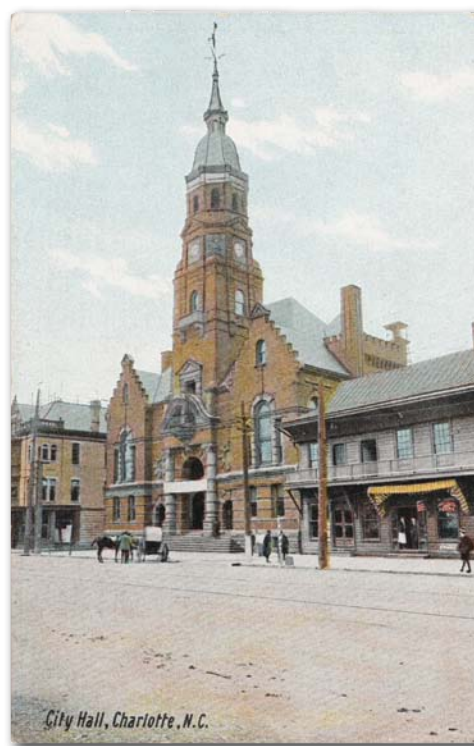


Figure 9. ▲ One of the earliest hotels in Charlotte opened 1825 and stayed around for nearly 100 years under several different names. By 1830, it was known as the Charlotte Hotel. This post card of Charlotte City Hall shows the hotel to the right of the City Hall building. The hotel was destroyed by fire ca. 1917.

become the Bank of America and then Nations Bank. The Union Bank was organized here in 1908. It grew into the First Union Corporation, later the Wachovia Bank, and now part of Wells Fargo Bank. At one point, the Charlotte Post Office was

Figure 10. ▶

The Buford House, later known as the Buford Hotel, was the hotel of choice for cotton traders and other traveling salesmen. The hotel operated from 1885 until 1915. This envelope was postmarked "Wash.&Char.R.P.O. F.M./April 4, 1887," the Washington & Charlotte Fast Mail train on its way to Greensboro.



◀ **Figure 11.** Another Buford Hotel cover posted with a Type 14 Charlotte duplex postmark on February 13, 1893. The advertising design shows the new Charlotte Trolley Line in front of the hotel. The hotel was expanded in 1890 and Charlotte's first elevator was added to the building. Two of Charlotte's major banks had their beginnings in this hotel.



Figure 12. ▶

The Central Hotel first opened in 1840. It had several names throughout the years; first a tavern, then Sadler's Hotel, and later the Mansion House. This cover shows an image of the hotel as it looked in 1883. The cover was posted February 18, 1883, with an 1881 blue green 3-cent bank note and a Type 11 Charlotte circular datestamp.



housed here. Figure 11 shows an advertising image of the building in 1893. By then, the city had added the trolley system running in front of the hotel.

From the 1840s until the 1930s, the Central Hotel was considered Charlotte's finest. It stood on the southeast corner of Trade and Tryon Streets. It was first called a tavern, then the Sadler's Hotel in 1846. Later it was the Mansion House. It was

rebuilt in 1853-54 with the city's most elegant bar and dining room. In the early days, a bowl and pitcher provided bath water for the rooms. However, a tin tub of hot water could be brought upon request.

Count Tyrzi of Russia stayed there in 1875 while traveling from Florida to New York. Figure 12 is a cover with an image of how the hotel looked in 1883. The four story hotel had no

elevator. It did have a special ladies' entrance which sheltered the fair sex from being seen entering the hotel. The cover in Figure 13 is an example of the 1902 corner card.

Three of Charlotte's most famous men, William Henry Belk, Edward Dilworth Latta, and newspaper editor Joseph P. Caldwell boarded here until they were married. In 1931, the 125 room hotel changed its name to the Albert Hotel. Shortly thereafter, it was torn down and replaced by a S. H. Kress & Co. Dime Store, which stood there until 1973. Today, it is part of Nations Bank Plaza.

The post card illustrated in Figure 14 shows Trade Street in Charlotte as it looked in 1910. The building on the left is the Selwyn Hotel. The opening of the Selwyn in 1907 marked a bold change for Charlotte. It was their attempt to bring "high class" and vacation travelers to the city. The Atlanta developers were hoping to recruit train travelers between Atlanta and New York.

The immense hotel at the northeast corner of West Trade and North Church Street was named for Lord Selwyn, the

English owner of the land purchased for the early town of Charlotte. The hotel had a total of 150 rooms, 75 of which had electric lights, and a bath. Every room was an outside room. The rooms with baths rented for \$2 - \$3 per night. The bridal chamber was \$5.

Boxing champion Jack Dempsey as well as visiting Presidents stayed at The Selwyn. The hotel was remodeled in 1948 with air conditioning and showers. It closed in 1964 and later became the site of the Charlotte Marriott Center.

The cover illustrated in Figure 15 shows the hotel as it looked in 1909. Posted on October 9, 1909, to Rochester, New York, it was canceled with a Charlotte Type 27 Columbia Machine cancel, which was used from March, 1907 until July, 1910.

Numerous other hotels opened during this heyday of Charlotte's development. Though most of these historic facilities have been long gone, remnants of each still remain for those of us who enjoy our postal history and post card hobby.



◀ **Figure 13.** This 1902 version of The Central Hotel ad cover is less ornate than the previous one. It was posted June 6, 1902, to Salem, Virginia, with an 1895 carmine 2-cent stamp canceled by a Type 19 Charlotte Columbia Machine cancel that was used from 1901 to 1903. This was the second machine cancel to be used in Charlotte.

Figure 14. ▶

The opening of the Selwyn Hotel in 1907 was a bold bid to attract convention business to Charlotte. Named for Lord Selwyn, the English owner of the land purchased for the early town of Charlotte, it was built by Atlanta developers to recruit train travelers between Atlanta and New York. This 1910 post card shows the Selwyn Hotel on the left side of Trade Street in the foreground.



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▲ **Figure 15.** The Selwyn Hotel when built was considered fire proof as this ad claims. Many of those so called fire proof buildings were later found not to be so. The cover is posted with a 1909 Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition issue stamp cancelled with a Type 27 Charlotte Columbia Machine cancel used from 1908-1910.

New Markings



30 September 1887, envelope from Sandy Mush, Buncombe County, to Asheville, 28 mm circular datestamp with 4-ring target killer, submitted by Tony Crumbley.

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