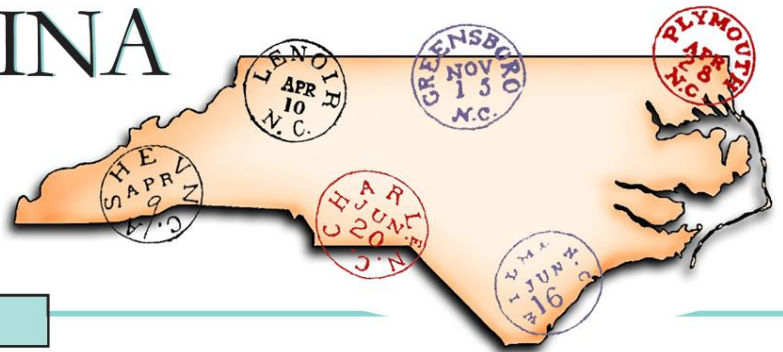


# NORTH CAROLINA POSTAL HISTORIAN

The Journal of North Carolina Postal History

VOLUME 42, NO. 2    SPRING 2023    WHOLE 162



A Wilkes County Postal Love Story



6 ¼ Cent Rate – N.C. Stampless Covers



Postmark Inks Used  
on North Carolina Covers



Rare Korean War POW Postcard



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I want to echo our new Editor, Steve Swain's, comments in the last issue encouraging members to write and submit articles for the *Postal Historian*. You will recall that he welcomes brief articles of one or two pages, as well as longer ones. He suggests that you might showcase a single cover from your collection, share your story about searching for a single postmark, or write about a particular North Carolina postmaster. And remember that Steve is more than happy to help assemble an article. I encourage you to take him up on his offer!

Tony Crumbley actively promotes North Carolina postal history in more ways than you can imagine. As a collector, dealer, current co-editor of this journal, and prolific author, he has worked tirelessly through the years to inspire and support many postal history projects. Now, in a recent article, he has addressed a very large audience.

Tony's "North Carolina Covers: A Primer in Postal History Collecting" appeared in the January 2023 issue of *The American Philatelist*. Tony details how "we have seen the philatelic hobby grow from just stamp collecting to postmark collecting, and to some who focus on specific areas of postal history," such as that of a particular state. He notes the creation of the North Carolina Postal History Society some forty years ago and underscores the publication, on its website, of the North Carolina Postmark Catalog Update, an enormous and invaluable resource for collectors and researchers. He traces the history of the state's postal history with illustrations of North Carolina covers and their postmarks from the stampless period to the 20th Century. His article also features attractive advertising covers from the state. Our thanks to Tony for his past and continuing work and for highlighting the postal history of North Carolina in this excellent article.

Dick Winter, our Society's former editor and the subject of a member profile in the Winter, 2021 issue of this journal, is the author, with John H. Barwis, of *North Atlantic Non-Contract Steamship Sailings 1838-1875*, recently published by The American Philatelic Society. Reviewed by Dwayne O. Littauer in *The Chronicle*, the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society's quarterly, the handsome hardbound volume of 318 pages fea-

## IN THIS ISSUE

### *Miss Eda, My Dearest Friend – A Wilkes County*

#### **Postal Love Story**

by Ken Miller ..... 3

### **6 ¼ Cent Rate – Stampless Covers of North Carolina**

by Bill Schultz and Jasmine Smith. .... 6

### **"Southern Letter Unpaid" Handstamp** ..... 9

#### **Postmark Inks Used on North Carolina Covers**

by Danny Brinkley ..... 10

### **Rare Korean War POW "Dove of Peace" Postcard**

by John Walker ..... 16

### **Automated Postage Stamp Vending Machine** ..... 19

tures color throughout and numerous illustrations of covers and related materials. Littauer notes that this "work is an essential companion to the groundbreaking *North Atlantic Mail Sailings 1840-1875* by Winter and Walter Hubbard, which was devoted to steamships that carried mail under government contracts." The reviewer's positive review details the comprehensive coverage of the book's subject and concludes by suggesting that collectors should hurry to order a copy as only 500 were printed. Dick Winter, an internationally recognized expert on transatlantic mail, once again deserves the plaudits his work will continue to receive from the wider philatelic world.

Peter Powell, a longtime member of our Society, passed away in January. His philatelic prominence was established with his definitive *Confederate States of America: Markings and Postal History of Richmond, Virginia*, published in 1987.

We also regret to hear that Larry Baum passed away in December. Larry, a fifteen-year member of NCPHS, was a collector and dealer of postal history and recently completed a term as President of the Civil War Philatelic Society. His "North Carolina Antebellum and Confederate Advertising Covers," published in the Winter, 2019 issue of the *Postal Historian*, featured numerous covers from his personal collection, and won our Society's Literature Award.



## NORTH CAROLINA POSTAL HISTORIAN

(Library of Congress No. ISSN 1054-9188.)

Web site [www.ncpostalhistory.com](http://www.ncpostalhistory.com)

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

Membership in the Society is \$15 per year. Applications for membership may be obtained from the Secretary/Treasurer. Submissions for the *Postal Historian* or inquiries may be addressed to the editors.

#### **President**

George Slaton  
1230 South Street  
Cornelius, NC 28031  
[geoslaton@gmail.com](mailto:geoslaton@gmail.com)

#### **Vice-President**

Scott Steward  
16311 Manning Road West  
Accokeek, MD 20607  
[scott\\_steward@hotmail.com](mailto:scott_steward@hotmail.com)

#### **Secretary/Treasurer**

Harry Albert  
105 Gatestone Court  
Cary, NC 27518  
[hlalbert78@gmail.com](mailto:hlalbert78@gmail.com)

#### **Editors**

Tony L. Crumbley  
PO Box 681447  
Charlotte, NC 28216  
[tonycrumbley@bellsouth.net](mailto:tonycrumbley@bellsouth.net)  
Steve L. Swain  
5 Meeting Street  
Roswell, GA 30075  
[jedit@fphsonline.com](mailto:jedit@fphsonline.com)

#### **Board of Directors**

#### Term Ending 2023

Stefan Jaronski  
Timothy McRee  
Richard F. Winter

#### Term Ending 2024

Alan Vestal  
George Slaton

#### Term Ending 2025

Scott Steward  
Harry Albert  
Pete Oldham



## Miss Eda, My Dearest Friend A Wilkes County Postal Love Story

by Ken Miller



Wilkes County, North Carolina

I try to acquire covers that tell a story. And I put a premium on those which have their original contents which can support and enhance the stories. Sometimes if there is a choice, I even choose the better story over the better condition of a cover.

Unfortunately, Confederate era covers tend to not have their contents. Families sold their covers to collectors, and they usually kept the letters as family papers. Occasionally these contents have been acquired by institutions which may make them available to researchers. Two cases of this are the Cobb papers at the University of Georgia in Athens and the Bryant-Stephens correspondence at University of Florida in Gainesville. More rarely, individual family members will publish collections of letters.

While researching a cover in one of the Kilbourne auctions (Siegel #1186, lot 638), I learned that this cover had come from a larger collection of letters of the same correspondence. Unfortunately, I did not win that cover but several others from the same correspondence were offered to me later and I acquired a consecutive pair of them.

The two covers that I acquired were also desirable to me because I did not yet have examples of postmarks from these towns. A win-win situation for me.

My first cover (Figure 1) was mailed from Trap Hill, Wilkes County, North Carolina, on January 2, 1862, using a roughly separated CSA #1 stamp.

Trap Hill was an aggressively pro-Union community. They recruited for the Union army and sponsored pro-Union rallies

around the county throughout the war. The community also actively assisted escaped POWs and Confederate deserters.

During this time, Wilkes County was referred to as “The Old Union” county. Union and Southern sentiment were pretty evenly mixed throughout the Appalachian regions, Wilkes County being only one of many examples that were decidedly pro-Union.

The mailing was sent to Miss E. L. Ferguson, Elkville, North Carolina. The contents of the mailing (Figure 2 transcript) shows the writer as “friend” H. J. Spicer.

We learn in the letter that Spicer and Miss Ferguson have corresponded before and the pleasure the letters give him is more than he can ever tell her.

Spicer writes he has just read some of her kind letters and he has read them so often and “they are as interesting as they ever was (sic).”

“It is useless for me to say that I am anxious to see you for I have told you that so often your presence is more pleasure to me than anything else.”

My research as to the sender and receiver of the letter revealed the correspondence was associated with a postal love story involving Henry Johnson Spicer (Figure 3) and Eda Lucinda Ferguson (Figure 4), both of Wilkes County, North Carolina.



◀ **Figure 1.** To Miss E.L. Ferguson, Elkville, N.C., January 2, 1862.

Trap Hill Jan 1st 1862

Miss Eda

My dearest friend, it is with pleasure that I embrace the present opportunity to write to you. But I am fearful that I shall fail to interest you in this letter. You have often said that my letters were all interesting to you, but I fear this will not be the case. Sister and myself just got home yesterday from Surry. We went to pay some of our relations a visit. We had a very pleasant trip but if you could have been with us the time would have passed off much more pleasantly for me. I have just read some of your kind letters that I have read so often and they are as interesting as they ever was. I love to read them for alone sake of the writer. The pleasure that your letters gives me is more than I ever can tell. I am sorry to inform you that one of the volunteers that was stationed at Raleigh was brought home and buried yesterday. He lived about five miles from here. His death was caused by measles. That is the only death that has taken place in that company.

It is useless for me to say that I am anxious to see you for I have told you that so often your presence is more pleasure to me than everything else the condition of our country and the distance we are from each other is such that we cannot have the pleasure of seeing each other as often as I would like but I must try to be as well contented as I can by writing you, and I hope I shall have the pleasure of hearing from you again soon. I shall have to desist writing for the present knowing that I have not interested you much in this badly written letter, but I hope you will not fail to write to me immediately for I am always anxious to hear from you at any time. I must close for the present by saying that I hope you have had a pleasant Christmas and a happy new year. I remain as ever your sincere and affectionate

friend H. J. Spicer

Write to me soon

I had forgotten to say that I intend to pay you a visit on the 24th of this inst if nothing prevents me more than usual. I will say new years gift as it is the first day of the year.

H. J. S.



▲ Figure 3. Henry J. Spicer.



▲ Figure 4. Eda L. Ferguson

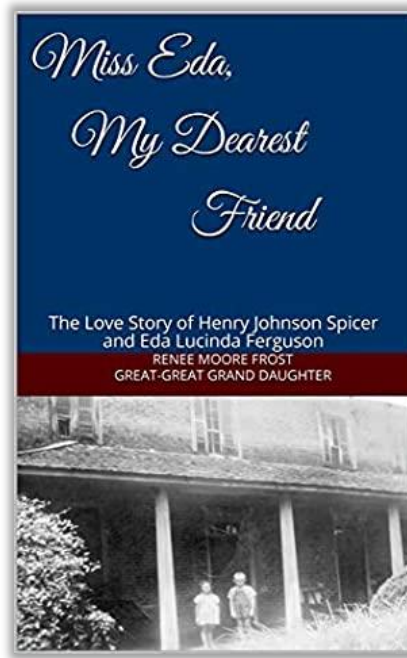
▲ Figure 2. "Miss Eda, My dearest friend ....."

*Miss Eda, My Dearest Friend* (Figure 5), by Renee Moore Frost (the great-great-granddaughter of the couple), published in 2013, contains transcriptions of letters from 1859-1884 along with vast amounts of family history.

If you find a cover such as those of mine, it is fairly easy to figure out the date and read a transcript in this book of the letter the mailing originally contained.

Figure 5. ►

*Miss Eda, My Dearest Friend*, by Renee Moore Frost, is available from the Wilkes Heritage Museum or the author at MooreFrostR@gmail.com.



Although from opposite ends of Wilkes, the letters indicate that the Fergusons and Spicers knew each other from attending Baptist association meetings, business, and involvement in public education.

The letters reflect heavy losses of soldiers from Wilkes, high Confederate desertion rates as the war dragged on, and increasingly severe hardships on the home front. They reflect sharply divided loyalties in Wilkes during the war, including in Spicer's family.

The letters tell about Gen. George Stoneman's Union cavalry raid through Wilkes in 1865. Lindsay C. Ferguson, a Captain in the Confederate Home Guard and Eda Ferguson Spicer's brother, was captured and held overnight in Wilkesboro by Stoneman's forces.

Miss E.L. Ferguson (1831-1915) was "Miss Eda, My Dearest Friend," the female half of the four and a half year Spicer/Ferguson correspondence prior to their marriage in October 1865. Eda was reluctant to enter into a serious romance while the country was in such a state of upheaval. She was afraid to give her heart to someone who might go to war and never return. Also, as her brothers had all enlisted, she and her sisters were needed at home to maintain the family farm, planting and harvesting their crops in order to survive.

My second cover (Figure 6) was mailed on February 12, 1862, from Elkville, also in Wilkes County, using a CSA #1 stamp.



▲ **Figure 6.** To Mr. H.J. Spicer, Elkville, N.C., February 12, 1862.

Elkville was west of Wilkesboro at the Caldwell County line, on what is now state highway 268. Its name was changed to Blackstone in 1914 and the town was transferred to Caldwell County in 1920. The post office was closed in 1942. This area is still referred to as the Elkville community.

Elkville Feb 11th 1862

Mr Spicer

Ever dear Friend your very kind and interesting letter came to hand in due time and was gladly received by one that is ever anxious to hear from you at any time. I am sorry that you did not get my last letters though it was as many of my letters have been that I have wrote to you before of but very little importance and if the boy lost it I hope no person will find for you are the one I wrote it for to read. You say I have never failed to interest you in none of my letters I hope that is the case though I know they are badly written and compared your letters are everyone interesting to me though I have read each of them oftener than I could ever tell you of and every time I read them they bring afresh to my memory the kind heart that composed them and the hand that wrote them.

You say your sentiments are still the same that they ever have been and can only change in doing you have me that often though I can not help doubting it sometimes I hope it will ever be the case for I am sure that nothing but the cold hand of death can ever cause you to be forgotten by me.

I must stop writing at present for my hand is so cold I can hardly hold the pen. I must close by subscribing myself your faithful and affectionate friend  
E. L. Ferguson

Brother Thomas left us again last Thursday morning to go back to his camp he was well when he left but we were all sorry to see him leave

▲ **Figure 7.** To Mr. H.J. Spicer, Elkville, N.C., February 12, 1862.

The contents of the mailing (Figure 7 transcript) shows the writer as E.L. Ferguson. This was Miss Eda's reply to H.J. Spicer's letter of Jan 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1862. Henry J. Spicer (1833-1875) was exempt from conscription as he owned a tan yard where he made leather and shoes for the Confederate Army. He had unsuccessfully tried to discourage both his brothers and Miss Eda's brothers from joining, offering them "Conscription Free" jobs in his Tannery. Regardless of his "Essential Industry," by the end of September 1863, he was required to join the Home Guard.

These covers, and the letters that go with them, provide a fascinating view of the life and times of these families, caught up in the devastating turmoil of a land at war. It is wonderful that these letters have been saved and made available to all of us.



## 6 ¼ Cent Rate - Stampless Covers of North Carolina



by Bill Schultz



and Jasmine Smith

In 2019, recognizing the scarcity of stampless covers bearing a marking of 6 ¼ cents, we began a census of this rare manuscript rate. We started with the two known examples owned by Bill Schultz, and expected to identify ten to twenty covers total.

We were surprised to see how quickly and exponentially the set grew. With the assistance of numerous postal historians, the census is approaching 130 covers. These covers, along with the history of the 6 ¼-cent payment, are presented online at <https://sixandaquartercensus.omeka.net/>.

Five North Carolina examples of 6 ¼-cent markings have been submitted and included in the census. These will be detailed in this article. In order to examine these covers, some of which are unusual among their 6 ¼ rate companions, we will first briefly review the history of this rate.

Per the Act of Congress passed April 9, 1816, a single-sheet letter traveling less than thirty miles would be rated at 6 cents. However, a small number of covers posted 1816 - 1845 show the manuscript rate of 6 ¼ cents. This unusual “rate” can be traced to two foreign coinages.

The Spanish silver dollar was used in some parts of the U.S. and the Republic of Texas through the mid-19th century and was equal to one U.S. dollar. One real, also known as a “bit,” was one-eighth of a Spanish silver dollar, or 12 ½ cents U.S. Half of this denomination, the “medio real,” “½ bit,” or “picayune,” was valued at 6 ¼ cents. Figure 1 is the front and reverse of a Spanish half real coin.



▲ Figure 1. Spanish half real coin.

In British currency, 3 pence was also the equivalent of 6 ¼ U.S. cents. Figure 2 is the front and reverse of a British 3 pence coin.



▲ Figure 2. British 3 pence coin.

Foreign coinage was legal tender in the U.S., per an act of 1793, and economic hardship, such as the Panic of 1837, increased the use of foreign coins, as U.S. currency could be in short supply.

Thus, 6 ¼ covers represent a large number of U.S. states, not just those with Spanish or British colonial borders.

Throughout most of the 1816 - 1845 period, the 6 ¼ manuscript rate appears. The earliest cover included in this census dates from 1824. It is possible that earlier covers exist but have not yet been identified, or that undated covers included here predate that item without our knowledge.

Sending mail at this price was considered a “rate of convenience.” The written postage matched a denomination that customers would have readily available. The ½ bit Spanish coin, slivers, or British pence may be what the postal customer had in his or her pocket, rather than 6 cents U.S.

We believe the postmaster wrote the rate of payment on the cover at the amount paid to simplify the exchange and ensure that his books balanced precisely. More interesting are the covers rated at 6 ¼ cents and sent due. The postmaster assumed that the recipient/addressee would be most likely to make the slight overpayment using foreign specie.

It is unclear whether this assumption was based on the postmaster's knowledge of the destination or the sender's recommendation regarding the recipient's preference.

Let's explore the five North Carolina stampless 6 ¼-cent covers in order of their date posted.

The Figure 3 cover, from the collection of Tony Crumbley, was posted from Fort Defiance, Caldwell County, N.C. on Jan (or June?) 30, 1831 (docketing dateline) and mailed to Col. Samuel F. Patterson located in Wilksborough (now Wilkesboro), Wilkes County, N.C., a distance of only twenty-three miles, well under the thirty miles official rate distance for the 6-cent rate.

It is interesting how the wax seal on the reverse has migrated through the paper to the front.



▲ Figure 3. Jan or June 30, 1831. Fort Defiance to Wikesboro.

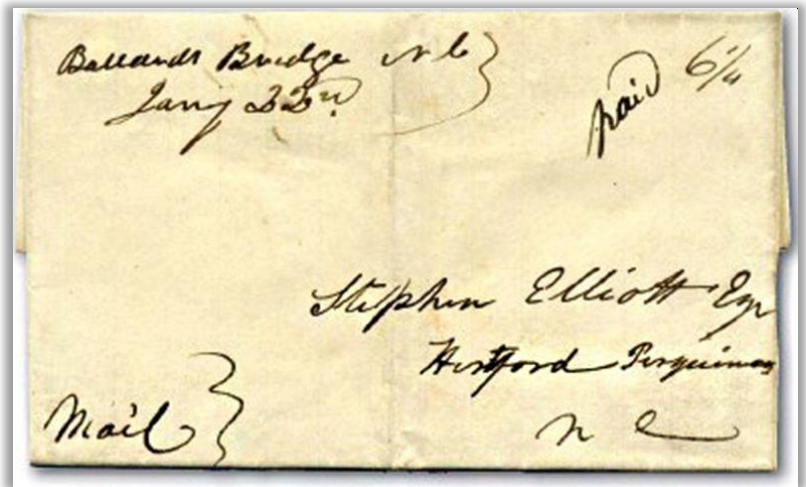


▲ Figure 4. March 6, 1834. Johns River to Harpers Store.

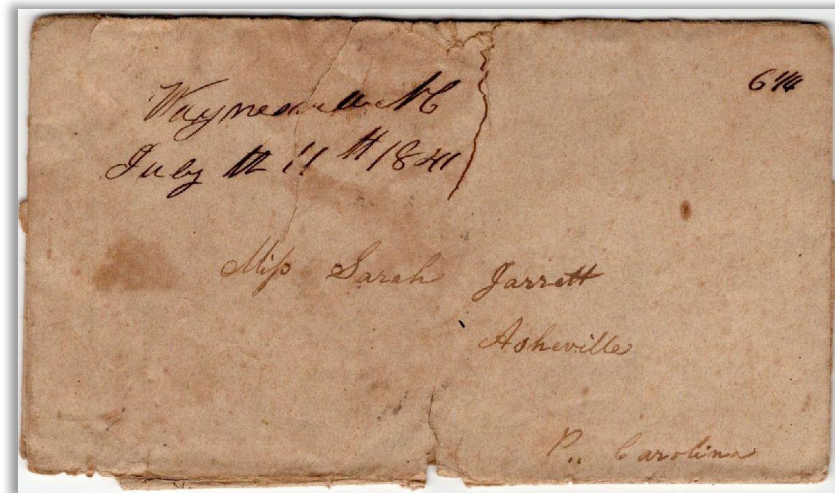
Figure 4 is another cover from the collection of Tony Crumbley was posted from Johns River, Caldwell County, N.C. on March 6, 1834. It was mailed to Levi Laxton in Harpers Store, Caldwell County, a seemingly short distance of thirty-three miles, but it exceeds the thirty-mile cutoff by 10% (an error by the local postmaster?). Of note, the cover is marked "paid" in manuscript. We have a few covers in the census that were prepaid the 6 ¼ cent



Figure 5's cover, from the collection of Winston Williams, is dated January 22, with the year unclear, but believed to be 1833 to 1837. It also bears a manuscript "paid" marking. It was posted from Ballard's Bridge, Chowan County, to Stephen Elliot Esq. in Hertford, N.C., Perquimans County. This distance exceeds the thirty-mile rate for six cents by a factor of two; it is about sixty-seven miles. We do not know whether this is a calculation error by the sending postmaster.



**Figure 5.** ▶  
January 22, 183x. Ballard's Bridge to Hertford.



A July 11, 1841, cover (Figure 6) was sent from Waynesville, Haywood County, to Asheville, N.C. in Buncombe County. The addressee is Sarah Jarrett, and the distance traveled was twenty-six miles. The "rate" marking is a clear and nicely penned  $6 \frac{1}{4}$  unpaid manuscript. The cover is provided from the collection of Tony Crumbley.

▲ **Figure 6.** July 11, 1841. Waynesville to Asheville.

The fifth cover from North Carolina (Figure 7) is from Morganton, Burke County, to Fort Defiance, in Caldwell County. It was posted on February 18, 18xx. Our best guess for the year is between 1841 and 1844, based on the CDS. The distance between the two towns is twenty-two miles, well under the thirty-mile limit for the six-cent rate. Tony Crumbley also provided this cover to the census. Most covers in the census are manuscript cancels. The CDS covers are infrequent - about 30% of the known covers in the census.



▲ **Figure 7.** February 18, 18xx. Morgantown to Fort Defiance.



Regarding the 6 ¼ cent marking in North Carolina, the total surveyed is similar to most other states. The following is the census state by state, reflecting the number of reported stampless cover uses as of January 1, 2023:

**AL: 1; AR: 1; CT: 2; DE: 2; FL: 30; GA: 2; IA: 2; IL: 5; IN: 1; KY: 7; LA: 2; MA: 2; MD: 4; ME: 1; MI: 3; MO: 2; MS: 3; NC: 5; NH: 3; NY: 6; OH: 23; PA: 8; RI: 1; SC: 2; TN: 2; VA: 5; VT: 1; WV: 5.**

Want to learn more? Visit the 6 ¼ Census website at <https://sixandaquartercensus.omeka.net> or check out our APS chat at [https://youtu.be/BH98MS7\\_FiE](https://youtu.be/BH98MS7_FiE).

Do you have an uncounted 6 ¼ cent cover? Do you have information about the unusually long distances some North Carolina covers traveled at the 6 ¼ rate?

Email an image of the cover or relevant information to [bill@patriciaschultz.com](mailto:bill@patriciaschultz.com). We will add new cover submissions to the census, crediting you as the contributor.

Interested in best practices for caring for and restoring postal materials? Learn more from Jasmine's presentation for the American Philatelic Society at [https://youtu.be/kyj\\_Kxwebzk/](https://youtu.be/kyj_Kxwebzk/).

## "Southern Letter Unpaid" Handstamp



On May 27, 1861, the day North Carolina was admitted to the Confederacy, the U.S. Postal Service suspended post offices from forwarding southbound mail to disloyal Southern states. Northbound mail could, however, be sent via Louisville, Kentucky.

On June 24, 1861, Dr. John Speed, the postmaster at Louisville, was advised to forward Southern mail north only after removing the postage stamp. Based on his accounts, over 5,000 letters were being held at the post office at this time. The removal of these stamps was an impossible task, so Dr. Speed developed a more practical means of invalidating the postage.

Postmaster Speed developed the "Southern Letter Unpaid" handstamp. The postmaster started marking these letters on June 25, 1861, with this blue handstamp.

The first batch of covers did not have the Louisville handstamp. Beginning June 27, a blue Louisville handstamp was applied to the covers.

The United States postage stamps from the South were considered contraband and not valid for postage; thus, a bold Due 3 was applied to indicate the receiver would have to pay postage of three cents.

In the census of these covers, only twenty-nine are recorded and of those twenty-nine, only three are from North Carolina.

One of the three covers, shown above, was posted from Murfreesborough, N.C. on July 6, 1861, with a Paid 10 CSA handstamp and a U.S. #26. Only ten of the twenty-nine covers used the U.S. #26.

## Postmark Inks Used on North Carolina Covers



By Danny Brinkley

The purpose of this study is to examine the postmark inks used on four stampless covers mailed during the 1845 to 1857 period. The postmarks were compared to images maintained by the North Carolina Postal History website ([www.ncpostalhistory.com](http://www.ncpostalhistory.com)) in their Postmark Catalog.

The four covers examined had the following postmarks:

- (1) Yellow HERTFORD NC.
- (2) Green HERTFORD NC.
- (3) Green HERTFORD NC and a red NEW PORT RI.
- (4) Yellow PITTSBORO NC.

Examples of the Hertford and Pittsboro postmarks are shown in Figures 1 and 2. The images were obtained the North Carolina Postal History Society website.

All three of the Hertford postmarks were 26-millimeter diameter single line circle with "HERTFORD NC" inside the circle.

The Type 1 postmark (Figure 1) shows a three-letter abbreviation for the month in the center of the circle with the "NC" in an upright position.

The Type 2 postmark does not have a three-letter abbreviation for the month in the center and the "NC" appears upside down due to the circular creation of the marking.

The Type 1 postmark was used with a yellow ink from June 16, 1842, to August 6, 1844. Green ink was used with a Type 1 postmark from May 13, 1845, to July 22, 1846.

The Type 2 postmark is listed as being used with green ink from June 29, 1845, to August 20, 1846.

All three covers had a manuscript month and date written in the center of the circle.



Type 1  
26 mm Yellow  
16 Jun 1842  
6 Aug 1844



Type 2  
26 mm Green  
29 Jun 1845  
20 Aug 1846

▲ Figure 1. HERTFORD NC postmarks.



Orange color reported in 1848  
Yellow color reported in 1851-1852



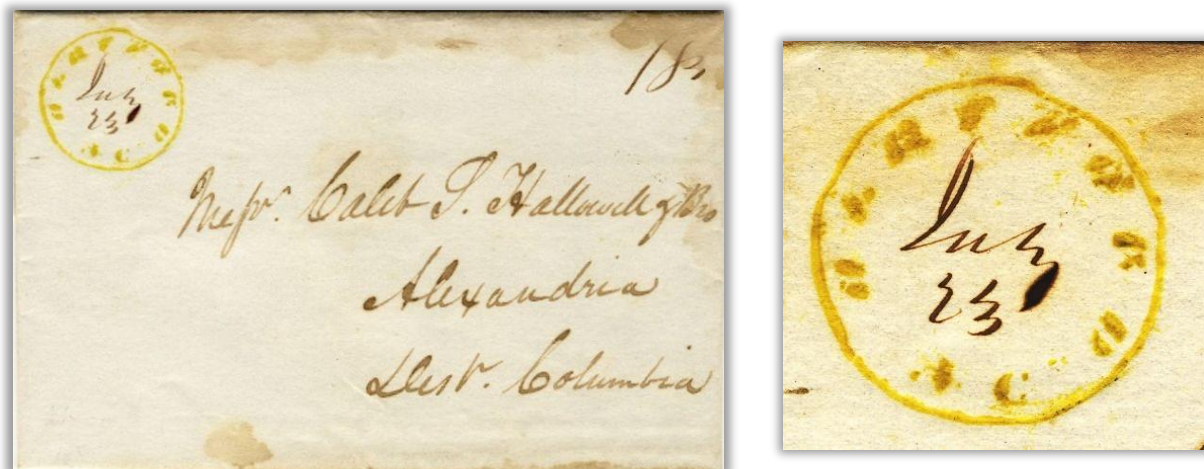
Type 2  
32 mm Red  
23 Apr 1833  
20 Jun 1853  
  
32 mm Black  
26 Sep 1835  
1 Nov 1858

32 mm Blue  
8 Aug 1838  
5 Apr 185x

▲ Figure 2. PITTSBORO NC postmark.



The yellow HERTFORD NC postmark matched the Type 1 postmark except for no month at its center (Figure 2).



▲ **Figure 3.** Yellow, Type 1, HERTFORD NC postmark and an enlargement of the postmark. Note that this postmark has a manuscript month and date written inside the “HERTFORD NC.”

The first green HERTFORD NC postmark matched the Type 2 postmark (Figure 4).



▲ **Figure 4.** Green, Type 2, HERTFORD NC postmark and an enlargement of the postmark. Note that this postmark has a manuscript month and date written inside the “HERTFORD NC” and that the “NC” appears upside down due to the circular creation of the marking.

The second green HERTFORD NC postmark matched the Type 1 postmark except for no month at its center (Figure 5).



▲ **Figure 5.** Green, Type 1, HERTFORD NC postmark and an enlargement of the postmark. The red NEW PORT RI postmark is due to the mailing being forwarded to Nantucket, MA. Note that the postmark has a manuscript month and date written inside the “HERTFORD NC” and that the “NC” is upright.

The PITTSBORO NC postmark (Figure 6) matched the Type 2 postmark that is listed as a 32-millimeter diameter single line circle with “PITTSBORO NC” inside the circle, along with the month and date. This postmark is listed as being used with a yellow ink from 1851 to 1852.



▲ **Figure 6.** Yellow, Type 2, PITTSBORO NC postmark and an enlargement of the postmark. Note that the month and date are applied with the same yellow ink as the town postmark. Per the NCPHS website, yellow ink was reported to have been used with this Type 2 postmark from 1851 to 1852.



All four covers were examined using a Hitachi S-3700N scanning electron microscope (SEM) (Figure 7). This SEM has a variable pressure mode that allows the examination of electrically non-conductive materials (such as paper) without altering the item by applying



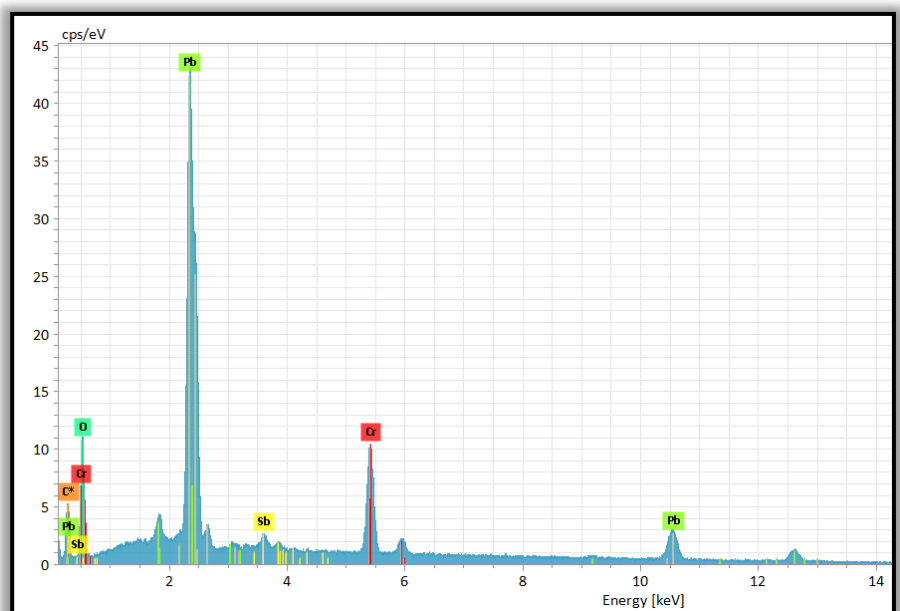
conductive coatings.

▲ **Figure 7.** Hitachi S-3700N scanning electron microscope.

In this mode, the source of the electrons (often referred to as the “gun”) is maintained at a high vacuum and the chamber containing the specimen is maintained at a partial pressure with respect to the “gun.” This chamber partial pressure tends to negate the “electron charging” of non-conductive specimens permitting the examination and analysis of these specimens. For example, consider the likelihood of encountering static electricity on a cold, dry day versus a very humid day.

Normally, the electron beam scans over the sample (hence the name ‘scanning’ electron microscope), but the beam can be fixed on a single point or a smaller area for X-ray analysis of the selected feature(s) to obtain an elemental composition of the desired feature or features.

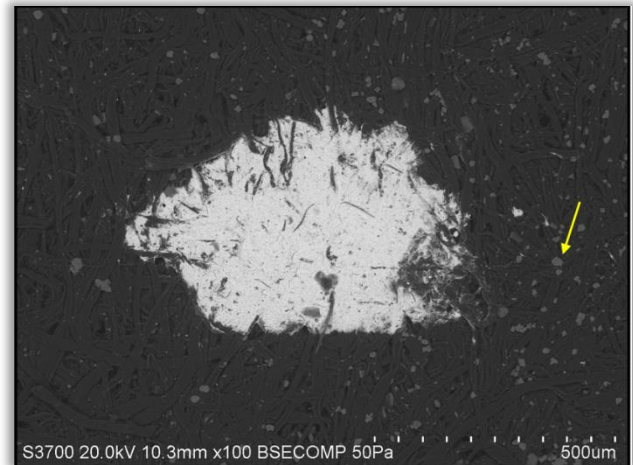
Figure 9. ►  
Energy dispersive x-ray spectrum.



Some of the images were obtained using the maximum distance between the specimen and the backscattered electron detector to view as much of the specimen as possible (i.e., as low of a magnification as possible).

Once the specimen had been examined at a low magnification, the specimen was raised to an approximate 10 millimeter working distance to perform elemental analyses of the postmarks.

In the case of the yellow HERTFORD NC cancel, a backscattered electron image of the letter “C” in “NC” was examined. The top portion of the “C” is shown in Figure 8 at higher magnification.



▲ **Figure 8.** Backscattered electron image of the letter “C”.

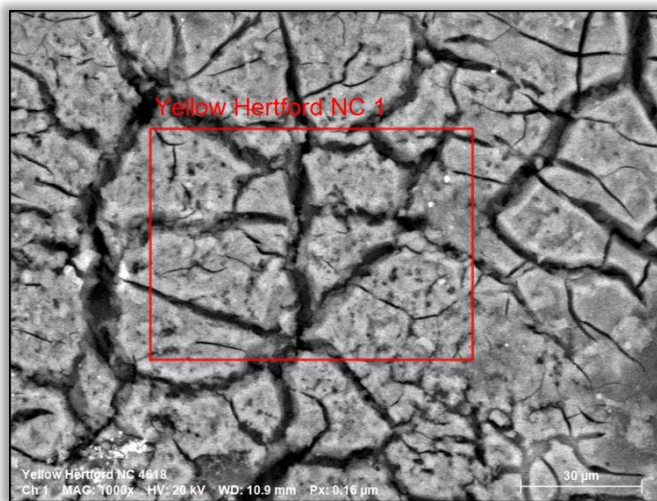
This, and other images, along with the resulting energy dispersive X-ray spectrum chart (Figure 9) provide specifics as to the postmark ink composition.

This ink pigment had a very small particle size (one micron and smaller) and appeared to be relatively homogeneous. The pigment consisted primarily of lead, oxygen, chromium, carbon, and antimony.

These elemental results suggest that this pigment is a mixture of lead chromate ( $\text{PbCrO}_4$  or chrome yellow) and either lead antimonate ( $\text{Pb}_3[\text{SbO}_4]_2$  – Naples yellow or antimony trioxide ( $\text{Sb}_2\text{O}_3$ ). The proportions of the lead, oxygen, and chromium concentrations (~64% Pb, ~16% Cr, and ~20% O) were consistent with lead chromate ( $\text{PbCrO}_4$  or chrome yellow). One of the main uses of this compound is as a paint pigment.

A portion of the manuscript month and date was noticeable in the lower magnification images of the yellow HERTFORD NC cover suggesting that this ink did not use carbon black (or lamp black) as its primary colorant. The darker regions of the end of the letter “Y” in “July” were examined at higher magnification.

The dried manuscript ink had a “mud cracked” appearance (Figure 10) and contained high concentrations of potassium and iron in addition to oxygen and carbon. The presence of potassium and iron could indicate the use of potassium ferrocyanide ( $\text{K}_4\text{Fe}(\text{CN})_6$  or Prussian blue).

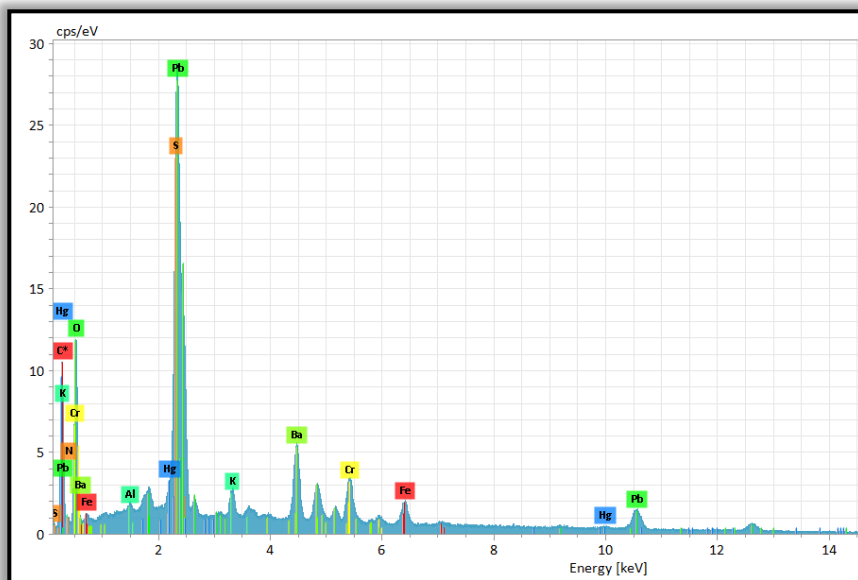


▲ Figure 10. “Mud cracked” manuscript ink.

In the case of the green HERTFORD NC postmark, a backscattered electron image of the lower portion of the letter “E” was analyzed.

Compared to the yellow Hertford postmark, this pigment appeared to consist of a mixture of different compounds based on the intensity variations of the SEM images.

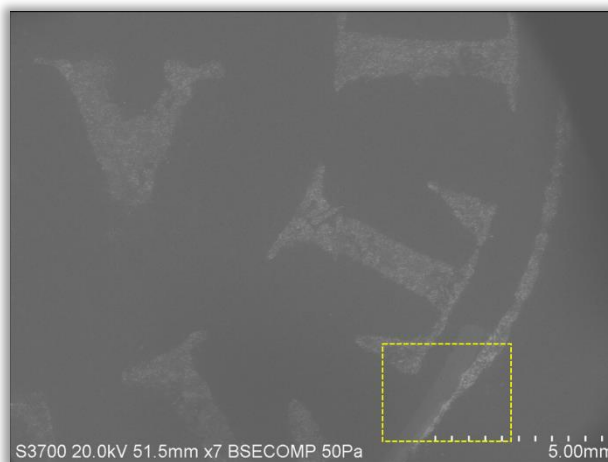
Figure 11 is the graphic representation of the analysis of this pigment.



▲ Figure 11. Green HERTFORD NC spectrum.

Based on the detected elements and their relative concentrations, this pigment is believed to be a mixture of lead chromate ( $\text{PbCrO}_4$  – or chrome yellow), barium sulfate ( $\text{BaSO}_4$ ), potassium ferrocyanide ( $\text{K}_4\text{Fe}(\text{CN})_6$  or Prussian blue), and possibly mercuric sulfide ( $\text{HgS}$  or vermilion).

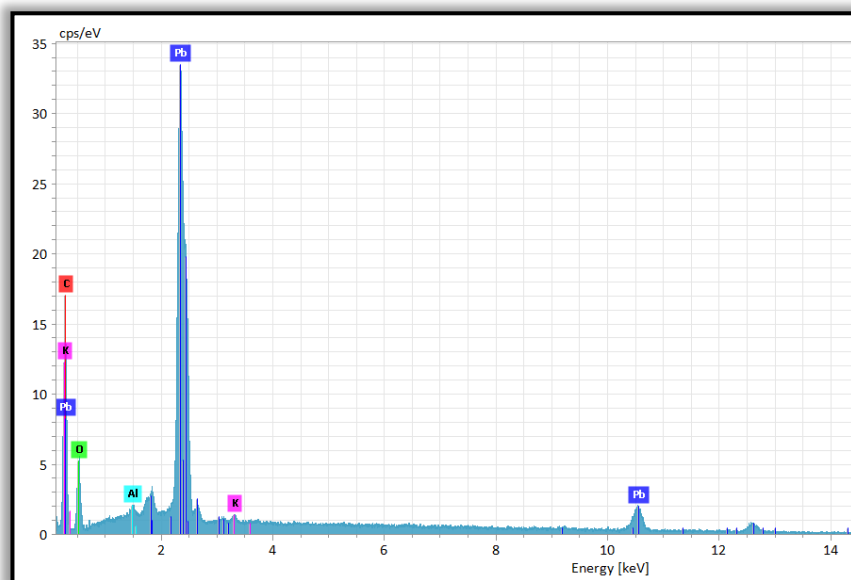
In the case of the yellow PITTSBORO NC postmark, the backscattered electron images of the outer circle and first “T” (Figure 12) show this yellow ink to have a lower average atomic number (based on the image signal response) compared to the yellow HERTFORD NC postmark.



▲ Figure 12. Yellow PITTSBORO NC “T” image.



Although there are some higher atomic number particles present in this pigment, the definition of the paper fibers at the postmark location suggest that this postmark is more like a staining agent than an ink pigment. This particle (Figure 13) consists primarily of lead, carbon, and oxygen with a trace amount of aluminum. This particle shows no chromium to support this pigment consisting of lead chromate. The colorant in this postmark was unable to be positively identified.



▲ **Figure 13.** Yellow PITTSBORO NC spectrum.

Older editions of the “Merck Index” list lead monoxide as a yellow to yellowish red substance, and this could possibly explain the obtained analysis results for this postmark. However, the absence of significant concentrations of particulate matter makes identification of this postmark ink more difficult.

Regardless, the yellow PITTSBORO NC postmark is quite different in color and composition from the yellow HERTFORD NC postmark. Also, there is a ten-year difference between when these postmarks were made.

Although not analyzed, it is believed that the manuscript ink is like that used on the Hertford manuscript characters based on the similarities between the backscattered electron images. Unlike the other ink pigments, the yellow PITTSBORO NC postmark showed a localized brightening of the envelope paper fibers rather than a dense agglomeration or layer of particles.

In summary, these early, stampless covers used postmark inks that consisted of mineral-based pigments. Although the specific chemical compound used was not identified (this would require additional analyses using other analytical instruments such as Fourier Transform Infrared (FTIR) spectrometers, X-ray diffraction (XRD), the obtained elemental analysis results and a little investigation allows one to identify the most probable substances used for these pigments.

The yellow HERTFORD NC postmark is believed to consist primarily of a mixture of lead chromate ( $\text{PbCrO}_4$ ), commonly known as chrome yellow, and lead antimonate ( $\text{Pb}_2[\text{SbO}_4]_2$ ), commonly known as Naples yellow.

The green HERTFORD, NC postmark is believed to consist primarily of a mixture of lead chromate and potassium ferrocyanide ( $\text{K}_4\text{Fe}[\text{CN}]_6$ ), commonly known as Prussian blue. In this case, it is believed that a yellow pigment was mixed with a blue pigment to create the rich green pigment used for this postmark.

The pigment used to create the yellow PITTSBORO NC postmark was not able to be determined with certainty. Unlike the other ink pigments that consisted of a layer of particulate on the paper fibers, this pigment appeared more like a staining agent of the paper fibers with only a few particles present.

Several of the manuscript inks were found to contain a combination of elements suggesting that they contained potassium ferrocyanide.

## Acknowledgements

Thanks to the North Carolina Postal History Society for its work on the North Carolina Postmark Catalog and to Tony Crumbley for introducing me to its existence. Thanks to Tony Crumbley for loaning me these covers for this study.

## References

- North Carolina Postmark Catalog Update*, <http://www.ncpostalhistory.com/resources/north-carolina-postmark-catalog-update>, accessed January 10, 2023.
- The Merck Index, Sixth Edition*, Merck & Company, Inc., 1952.
- Ellis, C. 1940. *Printing Inks, Their Chemistry, and Technology*. New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation.
- Eastaugh, N., V. Walsh, T. Chaplin, and R. Siddall. 2008. *Pigment Compendium, A Dictionary and Optical Microscopy of Historical Pigments*. Amsterdam: Elsevier.

## Rare Korean War POW “Dove of Peace” Postcard

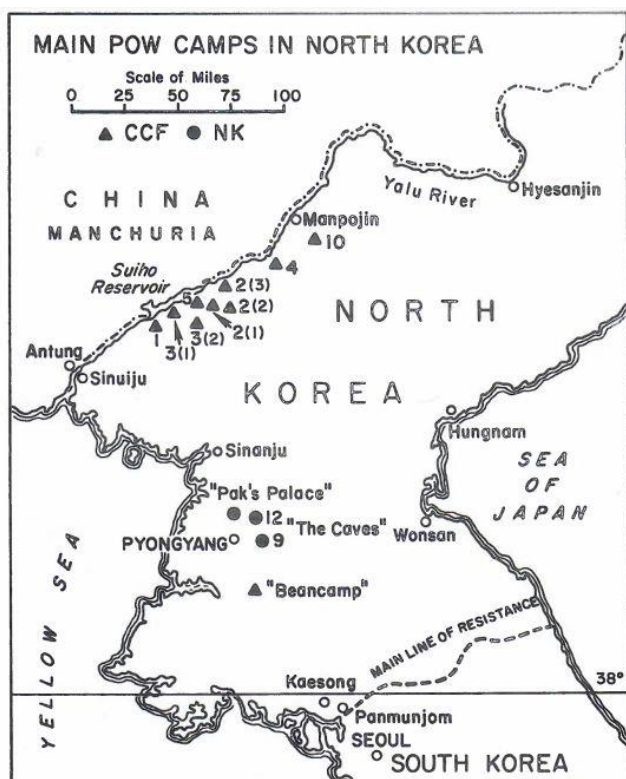


By John Walker

Without warning, North Korean forces invaded South Korea on June 25, 1950, and rapidly advanced taking control of much of the country. Heroic resistance by American forces in Southeast Korea around the area known as “The Pusan Perimeter” contained the advance.

A resolution was passed by the United Nations to resist the invasion and sixteen nations, led by the United States, sent forces to combat the invasion by North Korea, other nations providing medical and other aid. The most significant contribution in terms of military personnel being made by the United States.

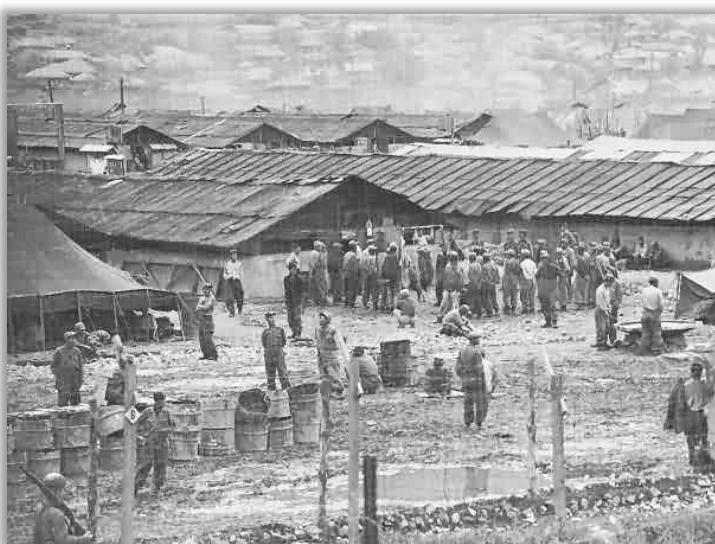
Following successful landings at Inchon in Northwest South Korea in September 1950, United Nations forces made rapid advances into North Korea at which point China came to the aid of North Korea on October 8, 1950. There followed nearly three years of military stalemate with the war moving back and forth on either side of the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel.



▲ Figure 1. North Korean POW camp locations.

In the early days of the war, American POWs suffered greatly. Nearly 40% died in captivity, either from unsanitary, life-threatening living conditions or execution. Survivors of the camps likened the conditions to concentration camps. It was only when the Chinese allied with North Korea that proper POW camps were established.

Figure 1 shows the locations of the POW camps in North Korea. A typical North Korean POW camp is shown in Figure 2.



▲ Figure 2. U.S. prisoners in North Korean POW camp.

On July 10, 1951, Armistice negotiations began, but it was not until July 27, 1953, that an Armistice was signed at Panmunjom bringing an end to the conflict in which some five million people lost their lives. Both countries are both still technically at war since a formal peace treaty has not been concluded.

POW mail from the Korean War is not common and is very often found in poor condition. However, in anticipation of an Armistice, conditions in the North Korean POW camps began to improve in the Spring of 1953.





▲ Figure 3. "Dove of Peace" postcard to Charlotte, North Carolina.



▲ Figure 4. North Korean Military Mail handstamp.

Many of the restrictions on prisoners' letters were relaxed and the Chinese introduced a special postcard which was adorned with a "Dove of Peace" symbol. The postcard was issued in two colors, blue and green. To date, only five examples are known of the blue card and none of the green version.

Figure 3 is the address side of a blue "Dove of Peace" postcard written by Army 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Millard J. Butler to his wife in Charlotte, North Carolina. The card received a strike of the North Korean Military Mail handstamp (enlarged image from another card shown in Figure 4) and was received at APO 100 in Yokohama on June 18, 1953.

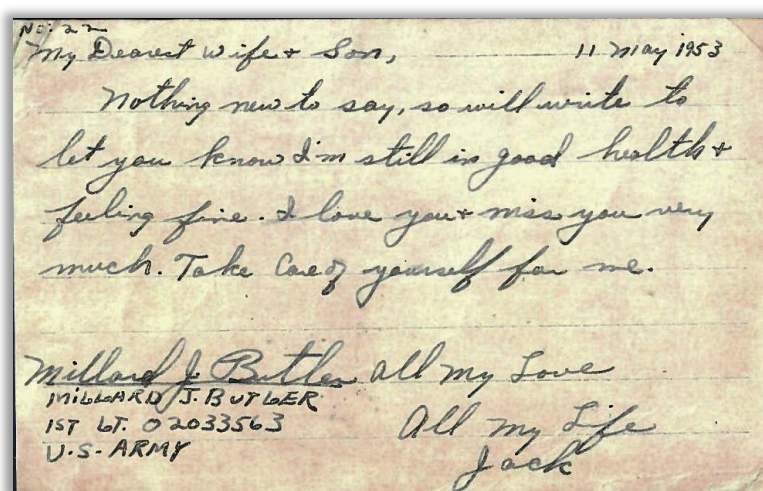
The card's message side (Figure 5) indicates the card

was written on May 11, 1953, a bit more than a month before processed by the Army-Air Force Postal Service. Incoming mail to POWs took at least 3 months to reach them, if at all.

The card's brief message assures Millard's wife and son that he is "still in good health & feeling fine." The card is signed "All my love, all my life – Jack."

All other examples of this postcard bear the same APO 100 receipt postmark. At least one other of the five known postcards is addressed to Mrs. Butler in Charlotte.

Millard Butler continued his career in the military achieving the rank of Lt. Colonel. After his service, he retired to Charlotte.



▲ Figure 5. "I'm still in good health & feeling fine."

**Editor's Note:** The “Dove of Peace” artwork also appeared on letter sheets made available to POWs. The sheets came in “Large Dove” and “Small Dove” varieties. Figure 6 is a “Small Dove” letter sheet variety. The “Large Dove” variety is shown in Figure 7.



▲ **Figure 6.** Small Dove letter sheet from MSgt Roy T. Gordon to Mrs. Roy T. Gordon, Tacoma, WA.



▲ **Figure 7.** Large Dove letter sheet from Pvt. First Class Albert R. Coccia to Mrs. Mary Coccia, Philadelphia, PA.

The letter sheet images are reproduced and distributed to the public with the permission of Bob Collins.

Other images can be seen on Collins' Korean War exhibit pages published by the Military Postal History Society at [www.militaryphs.org/exhibits/korean\\_war/frame6/index.html](http://www.militaryphs.org/exhibits/korean_war/frame6/index.html).

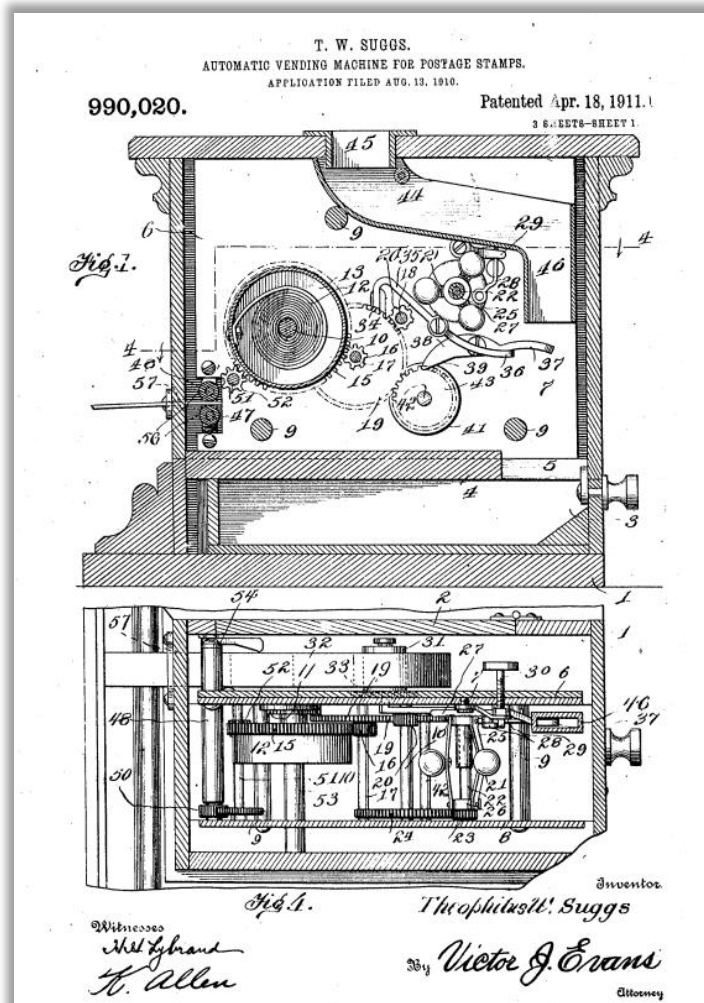


# Automated Postage Stamp Vending Machine

The editors thank member Jerry Roughton for providing the images of T.W. Suggs' Automated Vending Machine for Postage Stamps.

In the early 1900s, the United States Patent Office received numerous applications for inventor's creations of vending machines designed to dispense cigarettes, stationery, newspapers, pencils, and, yes, postage stamps. A design and patent request for a postage stamp vending machine (Figure 1) was the creation of Theophilus W. Suggs of Arba, North Carolina, filed August 13, 1910, with the patent approved on April 18, 1911.

Suggs' application for a postage stamp vending machine patent was apparently not the first to be received by the patent office. Rather, Suggs' invention was essentially a refinement of an existing machine. In his application, Suggs described his invention as having an "improved mechanism for feeding the tape (roll of stamps) in predetermined amounts on deposit of a coin."



▲ Figure 1. Specifications for automated vending machine for postage stamps.



## SEEKING

Confederate and Southern States  
Postal History as well as a few  
Select Customers for such.

### Carolina Coin & Stamp, Inc.

Tony L. Crumbley  
P.O. Box 681447, Charlotte, NC 28216  
704.395.1191  
tonycrumbley@bellsouth.net



## BIG Lick STAMPS

*Buying and selling Stamps, Covers &  
Collections of the World*

**Cary Cochran**  
Owner

P.O. Box 163  
Locust, North Carolina 28097  
1.800.560.5310  
carytj@yahoo.com

Public Auctions  
Fine Stamps and Postal History

Schuyler  
Rumsey  
Philatelic  
Auctions

47 Kearny Street  
Suite 500  
San Francisco  
California 94108  
t: 415 781 5127  
f: 415 781 5128

email: srumsey@rumseyauctions.com

UNITED STATES

BRITISH COMMONWEALTH

WORLD WIDE

**Hugh M. Clark**  
Rare Postage Stamps  
Est. 1965

By Appointment Only  
25stampede@verizon.net

Cell: 301-335-3792

## 2023 SUSTAINING MEMBERS

Harry Albert  
Robert Arnold  
W. Bryson Bateman  
Ralph Baumgardner  
Daniel W. Brinkley  
D. Wayne Burkette  
Christopher Chamberlin  
Gregory Ciesielski  
Hugh Clark  
Cary Cochran  
Lindsey T. Cooper  
Tony Crumbley  
Roger Curran  
F. David Dale  
Kendall Dickert  
Bill DiPaolo  
Andrea Edmondson  
Roy Elmore  
Patrick Enfinger  
Joseph Farkas  
Pascual Goicoechea  
Frank Hall  
Sam Hudson  
Steve Jackson

Stefan Jaronski  
Jimmy Jordan  
Patricia A. Kaufmann  
Robert Lowen  
Art Keeter  
Michael W. Kelly  
Rodney L. Kelley  
John Kimbrough  
Clinton L. Lary  
Timothy McRee  
Kenneth D. Miller  
Paul J. Miner  
Boyd Morgan  
Vernon Morris  
Richard Murphy  
Timothy O'Connor  
Anders Olason  
Pierre Oldham  
Michael O'Reilly  
Mark A. Pace  
Stephen B. Pacetti  
Bruce E. Patterson  
Jason Pipes  
David Reedy

Tom Richardson  
Allan Schefer  
Schuyler Rumsey  
Eugene Setwyn  
William A. Shulleeta  
George Slaton  
Bonnie & Jay Smith  
Robert W. Soeder  
Scott Steward  
Gregory Stone  
Steve Swain  
Dave Swart  
Harvey Tilles  
Alan Vestal  
John Walker  
Richard Weiner  
Jerry Wells  
Kent Wilcox  
Richard L. Wines  
Douglas Williams  
Richard F. Winter  
Judy Woodburn  
Adlais S. Woodlief

(55.9% of membership)

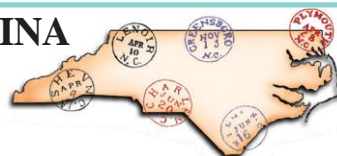
## NEW MEMBERS

Robert Arnold – Allen, TX  
Robert Lowen – Otto, NC  
Paul J. Miner – Charlotte, NC  
Bob Wilson – Prosperity, SC

## Have You Given Us Your E-mail Address?

Please help by sending your e-mail address to Harry  
Albert, the Secretary-Treasurer, at hlabert78@gmail.com  
or Tony Crumbley at tonycrumbley@bellsouth.net.

## NORTH CAROLINA POSTAL HISTORIAN



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

*North Carolina Postmark Catalog Update*  
All Counties and Six Large Post Offices are available on  
<http://www.ncpostalhistory.com>

Recent inputs require additional changes to the catalog.  
Please check the date on the bottom of the front page  
of each PDF to see if it is current.