

VOLUME 43, NO. 1 WINTER 2024 WHOLE 165



A black and white photograph showing a long line of horse-drawn wagons parked along the side of a large, multi-story brick building. The wagons are loaded with people and goods, and the scene is set on a dirt street. The building has many windows and a flat roof. The photo is mounted on a page with yellowed corners and a small black mark in the top left corner.



Origin of Kennebec Name

Wallpaper Adversity Covers

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

You are probably aware of the recent collaboration between the American Philatelic Society and the American Numismatic Association, the largest national organizations for collectors of, respectively, stamps and coins. Scott English, the Executive Director of APS, comments that, "There are intersections in our respective organized hobbies," and recommends "That we should use that common ground where possible to meet the challenges before us." Since a sizable number of collectors have an interest in both stamps and coins, it is perhaps surprising that this kind of collaboration has not been undertaken before.

Stamps, coins, and postal history have certain features in common, features which attract collectors and lead them to build their collections around them. One feature is that of rarity. A rare stamp or coin or postal cover is desirable and generally commands a hefty price. The low mintage 1916-D is considered a rarity by collectors of Mercury Dimes, while a provisional stamp crafted by a Southern postmaster in 1861 is considered a rare find by Confederate collectors.

When I began collecting North Carolina postal covers, I was immediately struck by how few covers survive from many early post offices. As I began writing my first article for this journal some years ago on the Black River Chapel Post Office in Sampson County, I was stunned to discover only one extant example in a private collection, even though the post office was in operation for forty years! And when a Confederate cover from Black River Chapel surfaced two years later, I was able to purchase it for far less than the aforementioned dime or Confederate provisional. Keep that in mind as you look for collecting opportunities in the postal history of this state!

We express our hearty appreciation to Rich Weiner for providing a new index for the Postmark Catalog Update on the NCPHS website. This was an enormous undertaking. Rich's work matches every recorded North Carolina post office with the county where it was located.

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Now a researcher can quickly determine the county origin for an obscure post office. Thank you, Rich!

Editor Steve Swain has published a book, *1938 National Air Mail Week Curiosities and Ephemera*. Steve has addressed National Air Mail Week with articles in previous issues of our journal. You can find ordering information about his fresh examination of this topic advertised in this issue.

The USPCS has awarded Dick Winter and his co-author, John Barwis, the Richard Winter Cup for their recently published *North Atlantic Non-Contract Steamship Sailings, 1838-1875*. The award is given for noteworthy, printed resources about United States postal history from the Colonial period to 1900.

The annual Southeastern Stamp Show is scheduled for January 26-28, 2024. This is a fine regional show which many of our Society members attend. It will be held at the Hilton Atlanta in north Atlanta. Further information can be found at sefsc.org.

Finally, make certain you have renewed your Society membership for 2024. If you haven't sent your annual dues yet to Harry Albert, Treasurer, please mail him a check as soon as possible. The Society's low annual dues are affordable for all.

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



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North Carolina Bitters - A Taste for the Homemade

by Jerry R. Roughton



If you have ever seen an old English movie in black and white with a scene in a pub, then you may have heard a customer ask for a pint of “bitters.” Bitters is a noun and under the British definition, bitters is “beer strongly flavored with hops and having a bitter taste.” How much alcoholic spirits by volume there may have been in an English bitters, I cannot say. But once they left old England and gained traction in America by the mid-19th century, bitters had evolved into a much stronger bottled medicinal drink. Bitters were no longer confined strictly to drinking establishments.

What may have originated as an occasional drink with a bitter taste, served in a pub or bar, eventually became an alcoholic based *medicinal tonic*. That’s right, a medicine! Much of which was produced either by non-licensed individuals or licensed druggists/physicians. A pretty fair and comprehensive definition I found years ago is in the 1910 Edition of *The Encyclopedia Britannica*:¹

“BITTERS, the name given to aromatized (generally alcoholic) beverages containing a bitter substance or substances, used as tonics, appetizers or digestives. The bitterness is imparted by such substances as bitter orange rind, gentian, rhubarb, quassia, cascarilla, angostura, quinine and cinchona. Juniper, cinnamon ... and other flavoring agents are also employed in conjunction with the bitter principles, alcohol and sugar. Some bitters are prepared by simple maceration and subsequent filtration, others by the more complicated distillation process. Those prepared by the latter process are the finer commercial articles. Bitters are usually sold under the name of the substance which has been used to give them the predominant flavour such as range, angostura or peach bitters, &c. The alcoholic strength of bitters varies but is generally in the neighborhood of 40% of alcohol.² Some bitters, although possessing tonic properties, may be regarded as beverages pure and simple, not withstanding the fact that they are seldom consumed in an undiluted state; others again, are obviously medicinal preparations and should be treated as such.”

The consumption and popularity of bitters was sustained by a fairly large portion of society, particularly women, in the decades leading up to North Carolina’s statewide Prohibition on alcohol. Effective the last day of December 1907, it was illegal to have or dispense alcoholic drink in the Old North State.³

Long before this happened, however, prohibitionists throughout the state had pushed to have *spirituous liquors*

outlawed, or made illegal on a county-by-county or community-by-community vote. It is evident so-called “tonic bitters,” advertised with their medicinal benefits, claiming “a sure preventive of Chills, Fever and all Malarial Diseases,” and other claims, drew people to believe a bottle saved a trip to a doctor. Beside their medicinal benefits, naturally, was the soothing properties derived from the volume of alcohol that made the customer feel as if the tonic was making them feel healthier.

Perhaps unremarkable were the many kinds, or styles, of so-called medicinal bitters, likely boosted by what the market called for and what could be passed off or supplied. These included “Stomach Bitters,” “Blood Bitters,” “Tonic Bitters,” “Regenerating Bitters,” and so forth. On the other hand, some brands of bitters relied upon identifying with the principal vegetable ingredients in the bitters, such as “Gentian,” “Cinchona,” “Iron,” and “Snake Root.” Among these is “Dr. B. F. Mebane’s Celebrated Taraxacum Bitters” produced at Mebanesville (Alamance County) by Dr. Benjamin Franklin Mebane, whose key ingredient was derived from extracts of dandelions.

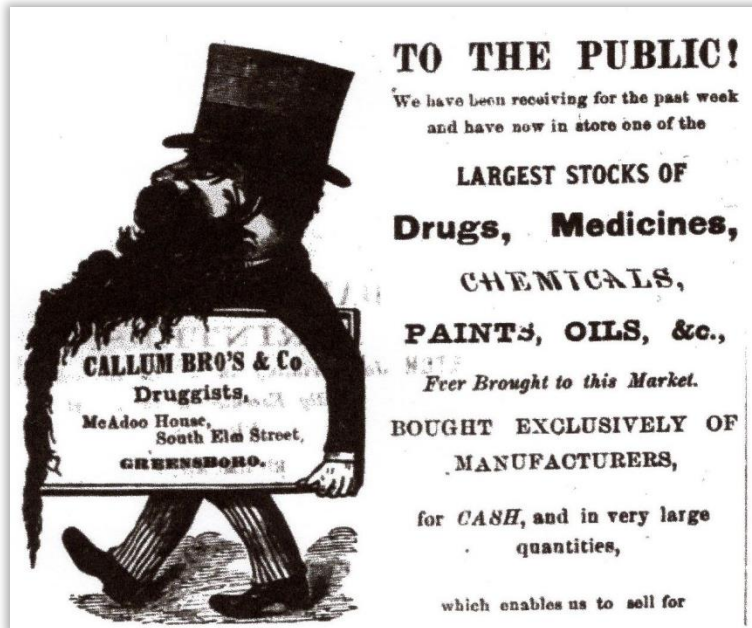
Some producers of North Carolina bitters titled their elixir to identify them to a geographical location. Among some of these were “American Bitters” made in Chapel Hill; “Buncombe Iron Tonic Bitters” at Asheville by druggist Jas. S. Grant; “Dr. Hawley’s Magnolia Bitters” at Magnolia in Duplin County; and one produced in Orange County: “Smith’s Durham Bitters.”

Lastly, not to overlook those bitters of folklore, proclaimed as snake oil tonic, and often associated with native American Indians, are a couple of examples made in the Old North State. These included the well-promoted “Mrs. Joe Person’s Indian Tonic Bitters” and the lesser known “Big Chief Cinchona Bitters” of Barney T. Scruggs, Charlotte, North Carolina.

“CALLUM’S SOUTHERN TONIC BITTERS”

Brothers, Robert G. (born about 1853) and William L. (Lewis) Callum (1844-1929) were born in Virginia and were the sons of Dr. James R. Callum (1817—1909), who was a native of Charlottesville, Virginia. Dr. Callum, a druggist, had engaged in the drug business for a number of years at Milton, North Carolina and Danville, Virginia, prior to moving to Greensboro in 1870.⁴ By May 1870, ads appeared for Dr. J. R. Callum’s “New Drug Store” on Davie Street. Business matters changed, however, and by early March of the following year, Dr. Callum announced: “Wishing to retire from business I have sold my stock to the above-mentioned firm G. & W. L. Callum.” He added, “I have consented to remain with them as Prescription Clerk....”⁵

Established first as “R. G. & W. L. Callum,” by 1873 the brothers changed to “Callum’s Drug Store” with the store still located at 22 East Market Street. A few years later, the drugstore at this location was sold and by May 1876 the brothers were doing business under “Callum Bros. & Co.” (Figure 1). Interestingly, the brothers advertised their store also as “City Drug Store.” It was during this period the firm manufactured and sold their “CALLUM’S SOUTHERN TONIC BITTERS.”



▲ **Figure 1.** Callum Bro's & Co. advertisement in the *Greensboro Patriot*, November 11, 1877.

The Callum Brothers advanced in the retail and wholesale drug business at Greensboro, becoming one of the largest drug distributors in the region. Their growth was helped in part, no doubt, by their sales pitches via advertising and competitive low pricing in trade goods. An additional asset was the introduction of their own proprietary medicines manufactured locally in their laboratory in Greensboro.

A preview of the Callum Brothers' activities in this area was touched upon with a short heads-up notice in *The Masonic Journal* at Greensboro, August 1876: The following is an excerpt:

“DRUGS.— In passing down the street the other day we accidentally [sic] stepped into the Laboratory of our energetic young Druggists, Callum Bros., and were surprised to find to what extent they were manufacturing and boxing up, in one doz. boxes, for Fall trade, Carolina Chill Cure, Eye Water, Pile Lotion, Cleansing Cream, Jam Ginger, Southern Tonic Bitters, Paregoric, Landanum, all kinds Essences, Hair Oils, etc. Any and all of these goods, they can and will sell as low as any reliable Drug House in this or any other county.

The goods are all full strength and prepared by a Scientific Pharmacist of an experience of over thirty-five years.”

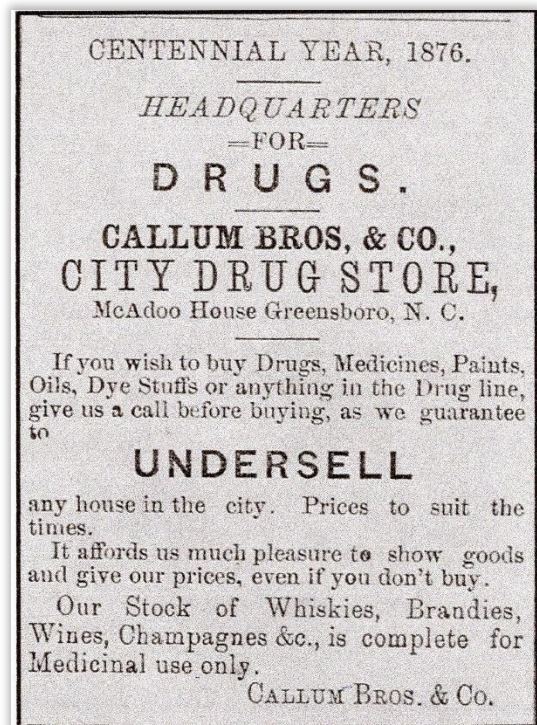
The reference to an experienced “Scientific Pharmacist,” was likely to the Callum Brothers' father, Dr. J. R. Callum, who most probably formulated “CALLUM’S SOUTHERN TONIC BITTERS.”

On the other hand, among the ones listed that gained the most attention and popularity was their “*Carolina Chill Cure*.” It was widely advertised around Greensboro and beyond and became a name brand for them.

“CONSTITUTIONAL BITTERS”

After “CALLUM’S SOUTHERN TONIC BITTERS” had been introduced to the public, the Brothers followed with their “Constitutional Bitters” a few years later. Whether there was a marked difference in the two it is difficult to determine. The second bitters, as with the previous ones, each received a very modest amount of attention.

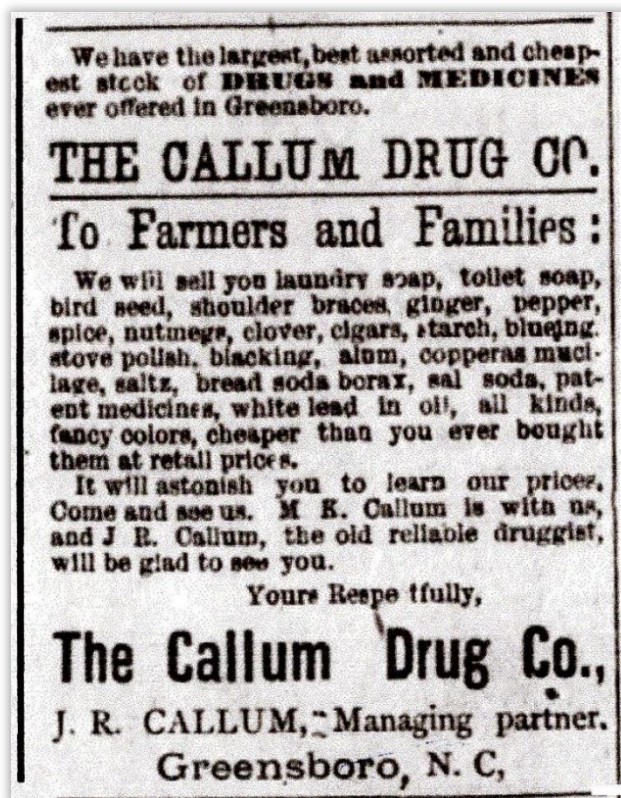
Remarkably, with respect to the “Constitutional Bitters,” I found only a single reference, which consists of a single entry in the 1879-80 directory of Chas. Emerson & Co. It reads: *Callum Bros. James R. & Wm. L., druggists & manufacturer, Constitutional Bitters; Callum’s Eye and Carolina Chill Cure on the McAdoo House (Hotel) Block (located on Elm Street).*



▲ **Figure 2.** The Callum Bros. & Co., City Drug Store.

Figure 2 is a Callum Bros. & Co., City Drug Store, advertisement celebrating the “CENTENNIAL YEAR,” appearing in the *Greensboro Masonic Journal* of August 15, 1876.

THE CALLUM DRUG CO. advertisement in Figure 3 is from the *Greensboro Daily Workman*, July 10, 1890.



▲ Figure 3. THE CALLUM DRUG CO. advertisement.

Take note who the Manager was of this drug store. It is likely James R. Callum, the individual on the Figure 4 cover.



◀ Figure 4. James R. Callum is likely the cachet's image on this October 1889 GREENSBORO N.C. postmarked cover.

On his 88th birthday in 1905, the *Charlotte Daily News* wrote: “One of the oldest druggists in the State, and perhaps the very oldest in actual service, is Dr. J. R. Callum of Greensboro, who has been in the business for more than sixty-five years.”⁶

Dr. Callum, who lived another four years, was still active in the business of the drug store. He died on September 12, 1909, just shy of ninety-three years old.

Advertisements from post-Civil War era North Carolina newspapers reveal quite clearly that Charlotte was one of the leading cities with an extensive number of druggists and drug stores. Such stores in this period, as in previous times, purchased their commercial stock supply of drugs primarily from out-of-state drug houses.

Nonetheless, occasionally one finds among the advertising columns in the *Charlotte Democratic*, for example, an advertisement or two from a local druggist selling his own proprietary medicines. Manufacturing one's own remedies in this period was still quite a new market idea among druggists, though it had flourished in the industrial northeast. A search for proprietary medicines, especially bitters, in extant newspapers from the decades leading up to the Civil War was minimal.

“BURTON'S STOMACH BITTERS”

Among North Carolina's leading druggists of his time was Wm. M. Wilson (1842-April 6, 1928). He began at Charlotte in 1869 and became one of the most well-known druggists in the city. Over the decades he survived numerous successions with partners in the drug store business at Charlotte. In 1888, at forty-six years of age, Mr. Wilson established “The Wilson Drug Co.” at Charlotte, which operated as a wholesale drug firm. However, within a year it was announced: “... we have opened a Retail Store adjoining our Wholesale House. The Store will be under the management of Mr. Thos. Reese...”⁷

“Burton’s Stomach Bitters” was one among the twenty-five of the “Family Remedies” found on a Wilson Drug Co. price list from 1889. A little more than a decade earlier, it was simply called “Burton’s Bitters,” when W. M. Wilson was in partnership with W. R. Burwell, d.b.a. Wilson & Burwell. After Mr. Burwell left, the company was reorganized as The Wilson Drug Co., a wholesale drug business.

It lists twenty-five of the “Family Remedies” sold by the firm, of which seven are listed with the “Burton’s” prefix, including “Burton’s Stomach Bitters.” (Note: A dozen bottles of their “Stomach Bitters” is priced at \$3.50.)

Along with their discounted order, the merchant would receive a present of a “Silver Mounted (Glass) Show Case.”



▲ **Figure 5.** CHARLOTTE N.C. OCT 4 (18)89 mailing to L. Perguson & Co. including wholesale price list.

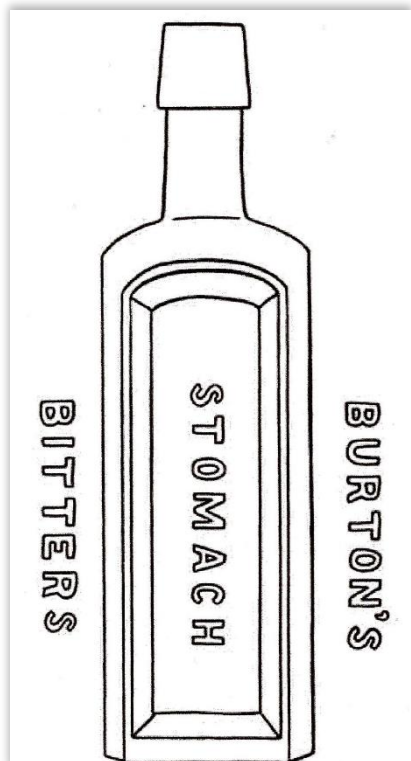
ASSORTMENT FOR \$50.00			
1 Dozen	Bragg's Nerve and Bone Liniment,.....	at \$1.50.....	\$1.50
1 1/2	" Cooper's Sarsaparilla,.....	" 7.50.....	3.75
2	Burton's Horse and Cattle Powder,.....	" 1.50.....	3.00
1	" Burton's Specific Vermifuge,.....	" 1.50.....	1.50
1 1/2	" Cook's Emulsion Cod Liver Oil, (Small),.....	" 4.00.....	2.00
1-3	" " " " (Large),.....	" 7.50.....	2.50
1 1/2	" Coope's Gin and Buchu,.....	" 6.00.....	3.00
1	" Bragg's Blood and Liver Pills,.....	" 1.50.....	1.50
1	" Hall's 25 cent Magic Hair Dye,.....	" 1.75.....	1.75
1	" Toothache Drops,.....	" 0.75.....	0.75
1	" Burton's Worm Confection,.....	" 1.50.....	1.50
5-12	" Wilson's Liver and Dyspepsia Remedy,.....	" 6.00.....	2.50
1	" Diarrhoea Remedy,.....	" 1.75.....	1.75
1	" Burton's Cough Syrup,.....	" 1.50.....	1.50
1	" " Soothing Syrup,.....	" 1.50.....	1.50
2	" Strengthening Porous Plasters,.....	" 1.00.....	2.00
1	" Burton's Stimulating Liniment,.....	" 1.50.....	1.50
1	" " Stomach Bitters,.....	" 3.50.....	3.50
1 1/2	" Comp. Ext. Corydalis for the BLOOD,.....	" 7.50.....	3.75
1	" Bowden's Tooth Wash,.....	" 1.50.....	1.50
1	" Eye Water,.....	" 1.50.....	1.50
1	" Concentrated Ess. Jamaica Ginger,.....	" 1.50.....	1.50
1	" Extract Lemon,.....	" 1.50.....	1.50
1	" Extract Vanilla,.....	" 1.75.....	1.75
1	" Ruby Hair Oil,.....	" 1.50.....	1.50
			<hr/> \$50.00
<p>N B.—Show Cases shipped at buyers' risk, and freight on same must in all cases be paid by the Purchaser.</p>			
<p>THE WILSON DRUG CO., CHARLOTTE, N. C.</p>			

▲ **Figure 6.** Wilson Drug Co. price list.

Figure 7 is a drawing of the face plate side of a “BURTON STOMACH BITTERS” from Watson’s *Bitters Bottles*.⁸

It is a square-shaped, amber colored bottle. On the three side plates appears: BURTON’S / STOMACH / BITTERS; the fourth side is plain and flat. Catalog No. 62. Measurements: Height—8½” and Width—2¼.”

It is considered a rare bottle, reportedly with no known example.



▲ Figure 7. “BURTON STOMACH BITTERS” face plate drawing.

“DR. B. F. MEBANE’S CELEBRATED TARAXACUM BITTERS”

The bitters of Dr. Benjamin Franklin Mebane are among the few known produced in North Carolina during the Civil War era. He was born May 18, 1823 at Mason Hall in Orange County, which later became a part of Alamance County in 1849.

Dr. Mebane received his medical degree in 1850 from the University of Pennsylvania. He chose to practice medicine and first located at Mason Hall, where he established a medical practice. Afterwards, around 1855, he moved about one mile southeast of Mason Hall to Mebaneville.⁹ It is there he established a medical office and eventually developed and improved upon his tonic, “a prescription for Indigestion.”

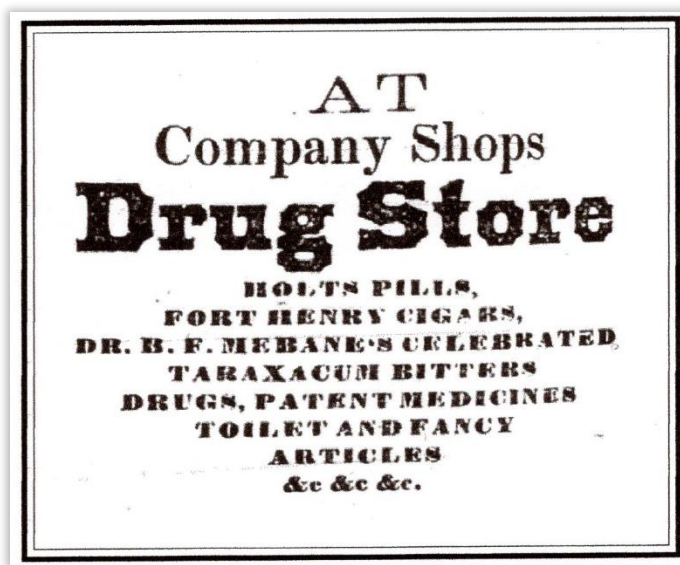
According to a “History of Taraxacum,” published in 1903, it was “about forty years ago,” circa. 1863, that Dr. Mebane was “very successful” with his Taraxacum Bitters.¹⁰

A noteworthy fact about Dr. Mebane’s Taraxacum Bitters is that this “vegetable tonic” was derived from “the dried rhizomes and roots of dandelions.” As advertised, it “Cures and prevents Indigestion and Dyspepsia,” as well as asthma, and prevented colic and cramps and was “a good appetizer.”¹¹

For nearly forty years Taraxacum Bitters was advertised and sold to the public as a “bitters.” This changed, however, in 1903 when a newspaper article appeared locally to explain a name change that would occur with Taraxacum Bitters: ¹² The *Mebane Leader* stated:

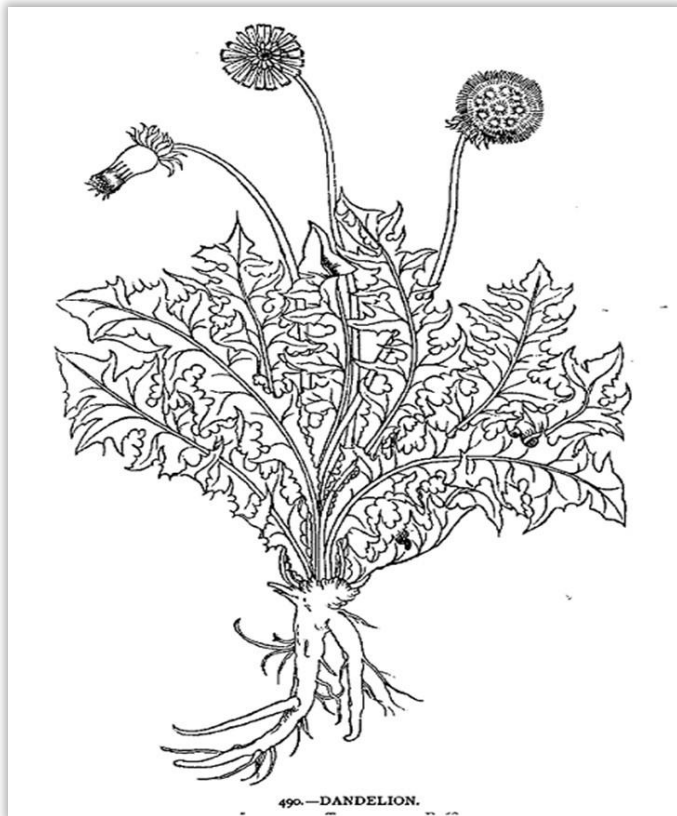
“The formula is composed entirely of vegetable remedies and there is in Taraxacum Bitters no opium, cocaine, morphine, mercury or potash, in fact drugs of any kind. So many of the Bitters and Patent Medicines now on the market contain narcotics and drugs that temporarily give relief, but are followed by such dire results that the word ‘Bitters’ has fallen into disrepute. For this reason Taraxacum Bitters hereafter will be known as Taraxacum Compound.”

Figure 8 is an AT Company Shops Drug Store advertisement listing the availability of Taraxacum Bitters.



▲ Figure 8. TARAXACUM BITTERS available at AT Company Shops Drug Store. (Courtesy of Alamance Gleaner (Graham) August 18, 1880.)

The dandelion's scientific name is *Taraxacum officinale*. Its popular name is a corruption of the French *dent-de-lion*, or lion's tooth, named because the jagged leaves supposedly resemble lion's teeth. Figure 9 is a drawing of a dandelion.



▲ Figure 9. *Taraxacum officinale* "Dandelion."

Another career B. F. Mebane pursued later in his life was politics. It was said he practiced "Democratic principles" and he was elected to the North Carolina House of Commons in 1878 and later elected to the State Senate in 1881.¹³

It was during his term in the House that Dr. Mebane received "a petition from citizens of Mebanesville asking for the incorporation of said town." HB 99, which he introduced in March 1880, was enacted without any opposition. "An Act to Incorporate the Town of Mebanesville in Alamance County," was ratified on March 29th.

Section 2 of this Act states: "The corporate limits of said town shall be embraced within a square, commencing at the railroad warehouse and running east to the Orange County line, the other sides namely, the north, west and south shall be equally distant from the centre"¹⁴

The town's original name of "Mebane" was in honor of Alexander Mebane, an American Revolutionary War general and member of the U.S. Congress. In 1883,

the name was changed back to "Mebane". It was incorporated as a city in 1987.

Mebane is one of the fastest-growing municipalities in North Carolina. It straddles the Research Triangle and Piedmont Triad Regions of the state.

The Figure 10 map shows the city's relative North Carolina location.



▲ Figure 10. Mebane, North Carolina.

MEBANESVILLE & The North Carolina Railroad

The Southerner at Tarboro' of July 21, 1855, reported news on the tracklaying by the N. C. R. R. around Mebanesville in Alamance County:

"We learn that the work on this great enterprise is progressing with all dispatch. On the eastern end, the Xcars are running daily to Mebanesville, 32 miles east of Greensboro,' and 100 miles west of Goldsboro'. On the western end the cars if not now will in a few days be running to Lexington, 35 miles west of Greensboro,' and 62 miles east of Charlotte; making 162 miles of the road now in use, leaving some 60 miles yet to finish; and a portion but little to do, except to lay down the iron."

At the time, Mebanesville was a small settlement started near the railroad depot. By February 6, 1856, it had its own post office. About seven years before Mebanesville would be incorporated as a town, some sense of its status is revealed in a February 6, 1873, excerpt from the *Raleigh Daily Era*:

"Mebanesville is a depot town in Alamance County and has an "eating house" and three stores. Two old gentlemen own all the building lots and until recently they have stubbornly refused to 'sell a foot' unless for nearly a fortune in price." (*The Daily Era*, Ral. 2-6-1873.)

Dr. Benjamin Franklin Mebane had been a lifelong resident of Mebanesville. It is likely he was remembered by those who knew him, his neighbors and friends, primarily as a doctor who enjoyed a large practice and maintained it till his death, which occurred on September 9, 1884.

In addition to his medical and political service, records show that Benjamin Franklin Mebane was the second C.S.A. Postmaster at Mebanesville, beginning on July 31, 1861. Figures 11 and 12 are covers that would have been posted by Benjamin Franklin since he was postmaster throughout the war.



◀ **Figure 11.** March 9 1861 Mebanesville NC manuscript postmark with PAID 5 red handstamp to Livingston Alabama. (Tony L. Crumbley collection.)

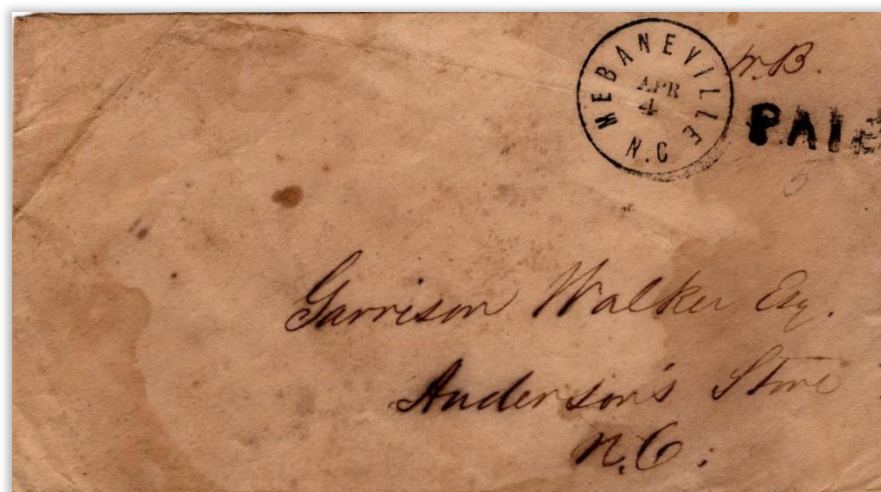


Figure 12. ▶
MEBANESVILLE April 4 1861 To Garrison Walker Esq. Anderson's Store, N.C. with PAID 5 handstamp. (Tony L. Crumbley collection.)

Endnotes

¹ *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Eleventh edition (1910), Vol. IV, page 14.

² While the alcoholic strength of bitters varied, reportedly they were seldom consumed in an *undiluted* form.

³ Remarkably, an exception in the law allowed individuals to purchase a quantity from a drug store upon a written prescription from a physician. Licensed druggists who had paid the necessary taxes on the sale of alcohol were required to record any and all sales of liquor.

⁴ *Greensborough Patriot*, April 14, 1909.

⁵ *Ibid.*, March 2, 1871.

⁶ *Charlotte Daily News*, May 6, 1905.

⁷ *Charlotte Democrat*, June 8, 1888.

⁸ Richard Watson. *Bitters Bottles*. New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons (1965).

⁹ www.Scottcollection.org. Family history by James E. and Mary Mebane-Scott.

¹⁰ "History of Taraxacum," *The Mebane Leader*, June 1, 1903.

¹¹ William S. Powell, ed. *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, Vol. IV, Chapel Hill: UNC Press (1991), pp. 244-245.

¹² *The Mebane Leader*, op. cit.

¹³ *The Tradesman*, April 15, 1903, Vol. 48, page 68.

¹⁴ *Resolution and Laws, State of North Carolina, Passed by the General Assembly at its Special Session of 1880*. Chapter 7, pages 127-128.



Southeastern Stamp Expo

JANUARY 26 - 28, 2024

10:00am - 5:30pm Friday & Saturday
10:00am - 3pm Sunday

World Series of Philately Show
 20+ Dealers | 140 Frames of Exhibits | Seminars | Awards



SHOW THEME

The 2024 Southeastern Stamp Expo is proud to celebrate former U.S. President Jimmy Carter's 100th birthday. The centennial anniversary will be showcased in exhibits, presentations, and special philatelic displays.



Admission: Just \$5 for the whole family, all weekend (Includes free Raffle ticket)

Hilton Atlanta Northeast
 5993 Peachtree Industrial Blvd
 Peachtree Corners, GA 30092

www.sefsc.org - sestampexpo@gmail.com
 www.facebook.com/SEStampExpo  [@SEStampExpo](https://twitter.com/SEStampExpo)

The officers of the Southeast Federation of Stamp Clubs are pleased to announce that the Southeastern Stamp Expo, an APS World Series of Philately (WSP) accredited national stamp show sponsored by the Southeast Federation of Stamp Clubs, will be held at the Hilton Hotel Atlanta Northeast, 5993 Peachtree Industrial Blvd., Peachtree Corners, GA 30092 on January 26 – 28.

The Expo's theme is the centenary of the birth of former U.S. President and Nobel Peace Prize recipient Jimmy Carter. Show admission includes a free raffle ticket for the drawing of a Jimmy Carter autographed Presidential inauguration cover.

Expo Features include:

- More than 140 frames of exhibits
- Twenty dealers with forty tables
- Structured youth activities, including free stamps
- “What’s in Your Attic?” stamp appraisals
- Presentations include Jimmy Carter Philately, Stamp Expertising, Designing First Day Cachets, Scouting on Stamps, and Exhibiting: Display, Thematic, and Topical

Complete Expo information can be found at www.sefsc.org.

Covers mailed during the May 15-21, 1938, National Air Mail Week celebration can be a fascinating and enjoyable postal history collection theme. It is estimated that approximately 10,000 cachet designs were created specifically for the 1938 event.

Using a state-by-state format, several studies have sought to present examples of mailings during the week of May 15, 1938, showcasing the numerous cachets, postmarks, and other markings on the covers.

To supplement those studies, this monograph by *North Carolina Postal Historian* co-editor Steve Swain, can be characterized as items associated with the Air Mail Week event that are “curiosities and ephemera.” Such artifacts include oddly designed cachets, labels and stickers applied to covers, cachets printed on tissue thin paper (“flimsies”), Air Mail Week advertisements, autographs of unique persons, promotional posters, and various enclosures in mailings such as letters to a stamp collecting child, “Greetings” from a postmaster or an event State Chairman.

Enjoy this tour down National Air Mail Week’s “road less traveled.” The 8.5 x 11-inch, full color, 90-page monograph can be ordered from the author at jedit@fphsonline.com.



1938 National Air Mail Week Curiosities and Ephemera

By Steve L. Swain

Burlington RFD Carriers - A Rare Image

The Historian editors thank Society member Douglas Williams for providing the postcard images presented below.

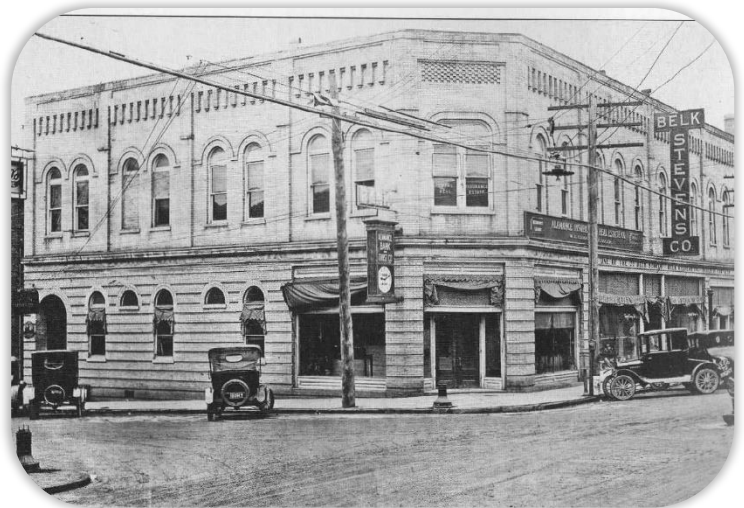


▲ **Figure 1.** The image side of a postcard sent in 1913 from Burlington, North Carolina with a unique and scarce image of Burlington's RFD (Rural Free Delivery) carriers.

The Figure 1 card's caption at the bottom of the image reads: "TEN OF UNCLE SAM'S R.F.D. CARRIERS STARTING ON THEIR DAILY TRIPS FROM BURLINGTON N.C." Yellow arrows superimposed on the image point to the ten carriers.

Postcards with images of RFD carriers are not plentiful, but they indeed exist for carriers in several states. However, such cards usually show only one or two carriers with their horses and/or buggies. The Burlington card is especially unique with its photograph of ten carriers.

A search for vintage Burlington photographs revealed the circa 1920 Figure 2 image of the Alamance Bank & Trust Company building (best remembered as the Raylass building) at the corner of Main and West Davis streets. This could well have been the location for the photograph taken years earlier of the Burlington RFD carriers.



▲ **Figure 2.** Alamance Bank & Trust, circa 1920.

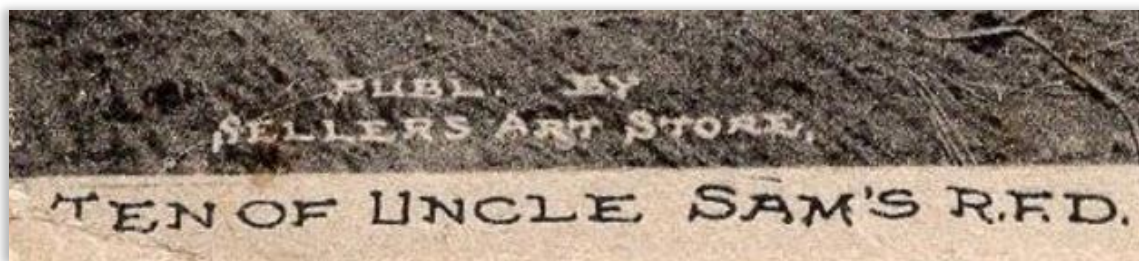
The card was sent by “Clara” to Mrs. J.E. Smith (“Viola”) in Shermansdale (Shermans Dale), Pennsylvania (Figure 3).

Clara writes: “Received your letter before I left home. I came down here for a rest and am having a very nice time. Hope you will have time to write me while I am here.”

It is interesting to note that nothing was said about the card’s image. No mention of an association of the RFD carriers photograph with a family member or acquaintance, no special reason to use the card. It was simply a card she procured while in Burlington on which to write a note and send back home.



▲ Figure 3. To Mrs. J.E. Smith (“Viola”).



▲ Figure 4. “PUBL. BY SELLERS ART STORE”

As for the why the card image was used, seen in the lower right corner of the image side of the card is “Publ. (Published) by Sellars Art Store” (Figure 4).

The Sellars family has an extensive history with Burlington, including Sellars Department Store founded in 1872 by Dr. Benjamin Able Sellars, a prominent physician and civic leader. Sellars Art Store could possibly have been associated with Sellars Department Store. However, research did not reveal any association of the card’s image with the Sellars family.

Irrespective of any association, it is likely that Sellars Art Store was simply the company chosen to print the card and was not responsible for the original idea of having RFD carriers pose for the photograph.

It is intriguing to consider who or what organization sponsored the card and why. The Burlington post office perhaps?

Steve Swain, Editor

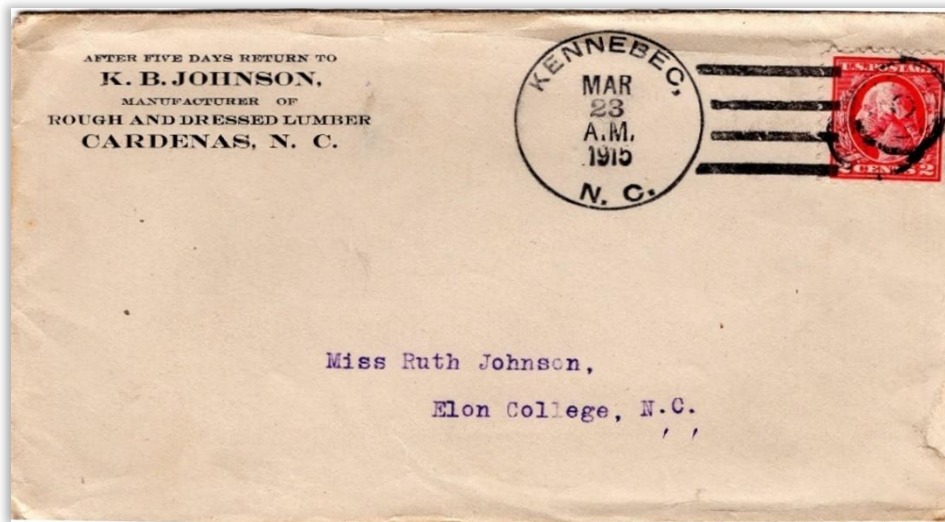
Editor’s Note:

For further reading, the April 1985 *North Carolina Postal History Society Newsletter* included Milton G. Wicker’s “The First Rural Free Delivery Route in North Carolina.”

The second location for experimental R.F.D. routes in the nation was in the rural Rowan County community of China Grove, N.C. This was the first route for North Carolina.

Origin of Kennebec, North Carolina Name

by Robert Gross, Waterville Stamp Club, Waterville, Maine and the Maine Philatelic Society, Hudson, Maine



▲ **Figure 1.** K.B. JOHNSON CARDENAS N.C. corner card cover postmarked KENNEBEC N.C. MAR 23 1915.

The Cardenas, North Carolina post office was renamed Kennebec, North Carolina between 1915 and 1919. Kennebec is a small unincorporated community in southern Wake County along the border of Harnett County. The community is situated along North Carolina Highway 55. Much of the area has been recently annexed by the Harnett County town of Angier.

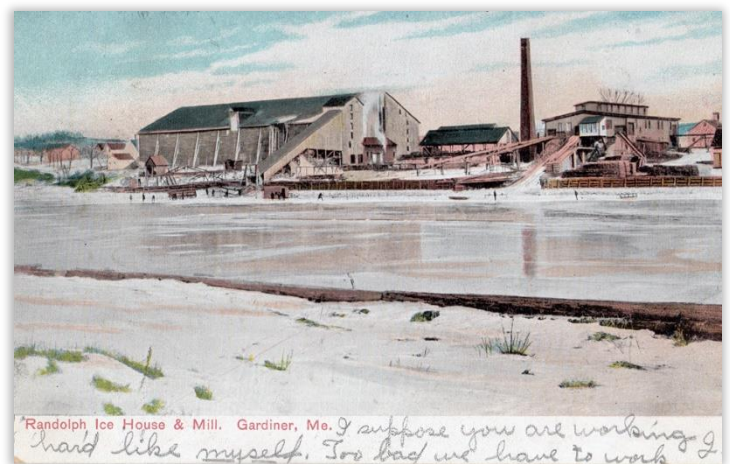
Kemp Johnson, born in 1863, was President of the nearby Bank of Fuquay in Fuquay, North Carolina, and was a leader in the growth of both the town and the Mills Railroad, which was initially incorporated as the Raleigh and Cape Fear Railroad. He is credited with renaming Cardenas, "Kennebec."

Johnson operated a large sawmill in that vicinity (Figure 1) which provided a livelihood for about 100 people. In addition to his lumber business, which served several counties, he also operated K.B. Johnson & Son gas and oil. In 1943, he was killed when an unscheduled train rammed his automobile as he was crossing the rail line in front of his house.

According to the Kennebec Baptist Church in Angier, the name Kennebec comes from the Kennebec River in Maine. Originally, sawmill owner Kemp Bethea Johnson and other Cardenas, North Carolina residents traveled to Maine during the summers to buy Kennebec River ice, and had it shipped to their location in Wake County, North Carolina.

Kennebec river ice had a natural blue tint and was considered to be the best ice for iceboxes before modern electric refrigeration. In warmer weather, ice was stored in barns insulated with sawdust to keep it from melting.

Figure 2 is the image side of a postcard showing the Randolph Ice House & Mill, Gardiner, Maine located on the Kennebec River.



▲ **Figure 2.** Postcard showing Kennebec River ice, Gardiner, Maine. (Courtesy of the Kennebec Historical Society, Augusta, Maine.)

Needing sawdust to keep ice frozen made Johnson's lumber yard a perfect place to store and sell Kennebec ice. Kennebec Ice was distributed by the Morse Ice Company

of Bath, Maine from the upstream Kennebec River communities of Dresden, Richmond and the "Iceboro" section of Gardiner, Maine.

Green Park Inn - A North Carolina Post Office

by Tony L. Crumbley



In 1891, a group of three businessmen from Lenoir began the development of a hotel in Watauga County, North Carolina. The team was led by Civil War veteran Major George Washington Findlay Harper (Figure 1).



▲ **Figure 1.** George Washington Findlay Harper (July 7, 1834–16 March 16, 1921).

The team named the hotel the Green Park Inn. The original structure was over 73,000 square feet with sixty guest rooms. Each room had a fireplace, running water, and electric bell alarms. The hotel had a restaurant, bar, a ballroom, billiard room, bowling alley, shooting gallery, tennis court, and a telegraph office.

Figure 2 is a circa 1891 photograph of the Green Park Inn soon after it opened.



▲ **Figure 2.** Green Park Inn, circa 1891.

Figure 3 is a postcard with an image of the hotel as it looked in the 1940s. Note the card's upper right corner caption of "Green Park Hotel" instead of "Inn". The hotel's official name began as and remains Green Park Inn.



Figure 3. ▶

An unused Curteich postcard of the Green Park Hotel with circa 1940 image of the facility .

Green Park

John M. Bernhardt	20 Jul 1891
John L. Hayes	8 Apr 1893
Charlie S. Young	18 May 1898
Discontinued	15 Sep 1900
Mail to Blowing Rock	
John Ingle	26 Jun 1901
John L. Hayes	10 Jul 1914
Fred A. Young, Acting	21 Sep 1926
Orephus W. Spencer	6 May 1927
J. Edgar Young, Acting	8 Aug 1932
J. Edgar Young	19 Oct 1932
Discontinued	15 Sep 1935
Mail to Blowing Rock	

▲ **Figure 4.** Green Park postmasters, *North Carolina Postmark Catalog*.

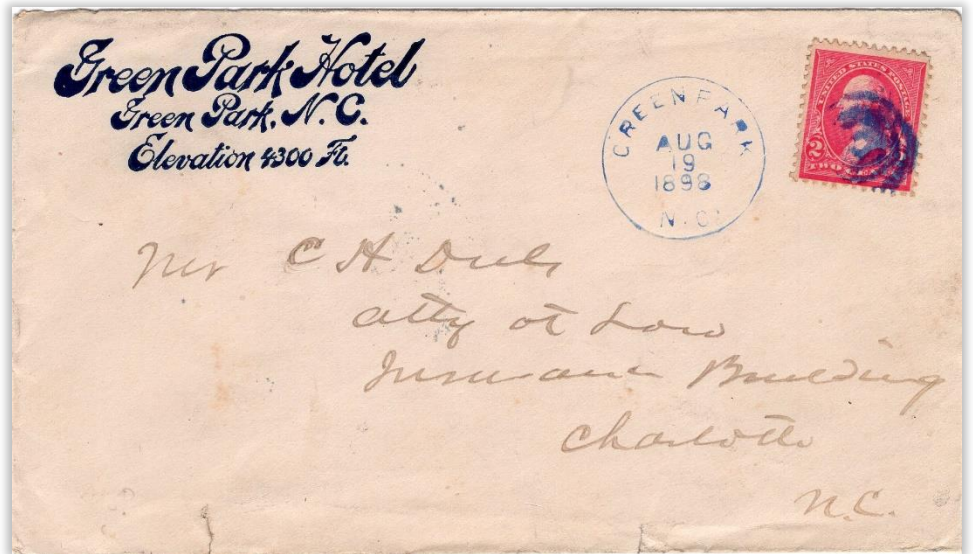
The Green Park Inn had its own post office, Green Park, NC, which opened July 20, 1891, with John M. Bernhardt as Postmaster. The office closed briefly in 1900 until it reopened in 1901.

Taken from the *North Carolina Postmark Catalog*, located on the North Carolina Postal History Society's website, Figure 4 shows a list of Green Park, Watauga County postmasters through September 15, 1935 when the Green Park facility was discontinued and mail was forwarded to Blowing Rock.

The post office was the only post office in the area for many years. Thus, the general public regularly used the post office as well as guests staying in the hotel.

The Green Park Inn currently keeps a portion of its first mail sorting system in the History Room of the hotel.

The cover in Figure 5 is from the Green Park Hotel with a previously unlisted blue hand stamp cancel of 1898. The corner card indicates the hotel is at 4,300-foot elevation which was a cool place to be during the summer months in North Carolina.



▲ **Figure 5.** Green Park Hotel corner card with an unlisted blue Green Park, NC CDS, Dated August 19, 1898. This CDS would be replaced by 1900. The cover is addressed to an attorney in Charlotte, N.C. (Mecklenburg).

The Figure 6 cover has the same corner card but with a lighter blue ink, the postmark is dated 1901 and is recorded as early as August 1900.

Figure 6. ▶

The Green Park Hotel corner card with a lighter blue ink. Note the marketing of the elevation at 4,300 ft. The CDS is dated August 19, 1901, and is recorded as early as 1900. The cover's address is Dallas, N.C. (Gaston).



The postcard in Figure 7 was mailed August 14, 1922, from Green Park with a 33 mm black CDS. This is a 1910 Type B 4-Bar cancel. It is recorded as used there from 1916 to 1922.



◀ **Figure 7.** This postcard has a 33 mm black 1910 Type B 4-Bar handstamp dated August 14, 1922. The marking is recorded used as early as August 1916. The card is posted to Washington, NC. (Washington).

The image in Figure 8, a hand-colored postcard, is of the Green Park Hotel as it looked in 1926 or 1928.

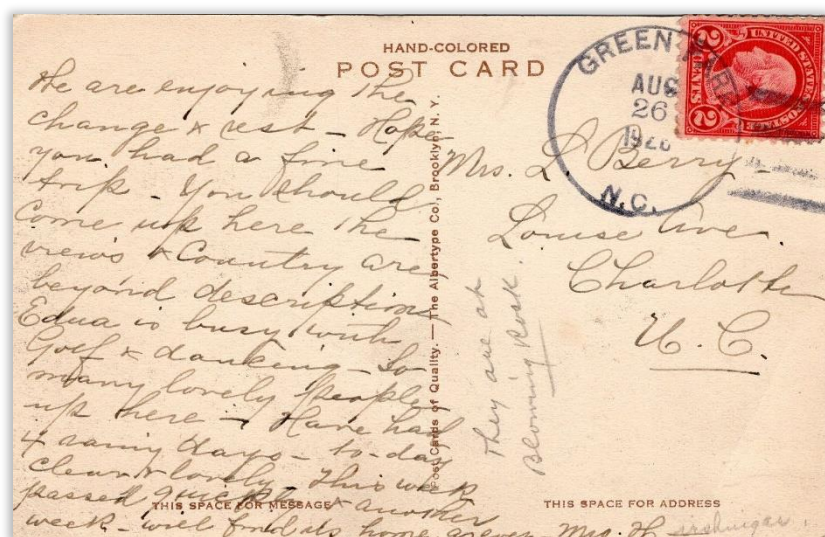
Figure 8. ▶

The front of this card is an image of the Green Park Hotel as it looked in the late 1920s.

Note the smaller size of the trees in the Figure 8 image as compared to the Figure 3 card. Quite possibly, the Figure 3 card image is an artist's rendition whereas the Figure 7 image was a hand-colored real-life photograph.



Figure 9 is the reverse of the Figure 8 card showing an unlisted postmark type for Green Park.



◀ **Figure 9.** The reverse of Figure 8 shows a previously unrecorded handstamp from the Green Park Hotel. The CDS is dated August 26, (1928) and posted to Charlotte, N.C. (Mecklenburg). This is a 1924 Type D 4-Bar Cancel.

Shown in Figure 10 is the 1924 Type D-4 bar used from Green Park in 1930. This is the latest known use from this post office. The post office was officially closed on September 15, 1935, and mail went to Blowing Rock, North Carolina.

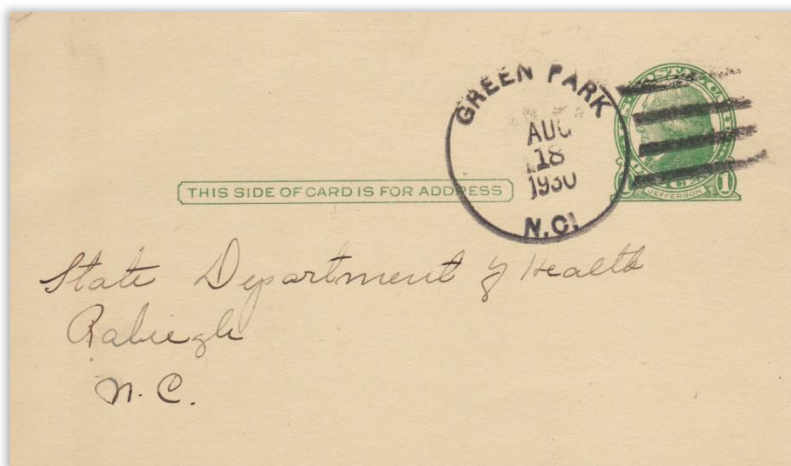


Figure 10. ▶

Green Park, N.C., with a 1924 Type D 4-Bar cancel dated August 18, 1930. This is the latest recorded handstamp. The post office closed in 1935. (From Ertzberger Collection)

In its 130+ years of operation, the hotel has had numerous “named guests.” Some of these included Annie Oakley, J. D. Rockefeller, Eleanor Roosevelt, Calvin Coolidge, and Herbert Hoover. Margaret Mitchell wrote part of *Gone with the Wind* at the hotel.

In 2010, the hotel was purchased by New York hoteliers. The building was refurbished and completely modernized. There are currently eighty-eight guest rooms, multiple common areas, and a library was added. Today, there are multiple dining options and a fitness center.

The Green Park Inn was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1982 with consideration given to the hotel's physical location straddling the Eastern Continental Divide and its significance throughout the rich history of North Carolina and the High Country.

The hotel stands as the last of the grand manor hotels in all of western North Carolina, as well as the state's second oldest operating resort hotel.

Sources

www.GreenParkInn.com/history
 NCPHS Online Catalogue – Watauga County
https://stampsarter.org/features/NC_POHome.html
<https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/harper-george-washington>
<https://blowingrock.com/the-green-park-inns-grand-dame-of-the-high-country/>

North Carolina Wallpaper Adversity Covers



by Steve Swain

During the American Civil War, Union navy and railroad blockades isolated the Confederacy from all markets, creating shortages of almost every kind of commodity, including paper. The saying, “Necessity is the mother of invention” never has been more aptly used than when describing the multitude of solutions to the paper shortage the southern states devised.

Blank paper on which to write a letter was in short supply. But even more scarce were envelopes to mail the correspondence. Every source of paper imaginable was used to create envelopes: The backs of titles pages from books, sheet music, blank checks, maps, hotel guest registers, insurance forms, advertisement flyers, and a host of other sources.

Given these dire, adverse situations, collectors refer to these envelopes as adversity covers.

Some of the most colorful adversity covers were created from wallpaper cut from surplus rolls of paper used for the walls in living rooms, dining rooms, and bedrooms. The envelope was made by cutting a rectangular piece of wallpaper and folding it into the appropriate shape, with the design being the inside of the piece.

In 1885, Anne Simpson of Pendleton, South Carolina, wrote an article for the *News and Courier*, describing her creation of adversity envelopes during the Civil War. The article was later included in *South Carolina Women in the Confederacy*.¹

On page 34, Ms. Simpson writes:

“A favorite’s night employment was found in making envelopes. No bits of white paper suitable for writing with pen and ink could be wasted on envelopes, Thus it happened that wallpaper served to make envelopes meat enough. These were stuck together with gum from peach trees.”

North Carolina mailings using covers made from wallpaper are unarguably some of the most colorful and unique items available. The following North Carolina wallpaper adversity covers are shown by the courtesy of North Carolina Society member, professional philatelist, and Confederate postal historian Patricia Kaufmann. Take the opportunity to view many more covers at <https://www.trishkaufmann.com>.

The flaps of the covers illustrated here have been folded over for viewing the printed designs.



▲ **Figure 1.** CSA 11, 10¢ blue used on geometric pink, taupe and gray wallpaper cover with FLAT ROCK / N.C. / FEB / 13 cds. From the well-known Middleton correspondence to Miss Susan Middleton Care of Oliver H. Middleton Esq, Columbia, South Carolina. Oliver Hering Middleton was a businessman involved in shipping from Charleston and the Middleton plantation correspondence was quite large, notably producing a prolific number of wallpaper covers.



◀ **Figure 2.** CSA 11c, 10¢ greenish blue (3 margins), tied by RALEIGH / N.C. double circle datestamp on red, brown and cream wallpaper cover to Hon. Thomas Ruffin, Graham, NC, with the added bonus of being produced from recycled newsprint, quite evident both front and back.

Figure 3. ▶
CSA 12a, 10¢ milky blue left sheet margin single tied to FAYETTEVILLE / N.C. // OCT / 6 / 1863 cds on showy geometric wallpaper in shades of blue, white, maroon, and dark buff.



◀ **Figure 4.** CSA 11, 10¢ blue (4 big margins, touching at left). Tied with bold WILMINGTON / N.C. // AUG / 26 [1863] cds on blue, brown and white floral wallpaper cover to J.A. Bitting, Huntsville, NC, with docketing at top "Worth letter and Rect (receipt) for money left at Bank Cape Fear with J G Loch / Aug 1863."

Endnotes

¹ Simpson, Anna, fl. 1861-1885, Memoir of Anna Simpson, in *South Carolina Women in the Confederacy*, Vol. 1. United Daughters of the Confederacy, South Carolina Division; Taylor, Thomas, Mrs. and Conner, Sallie Enders, eds. Columbia, SC; The State Company, 1903, p.34.

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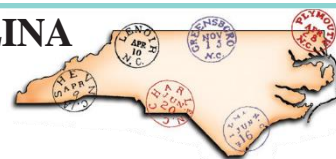
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