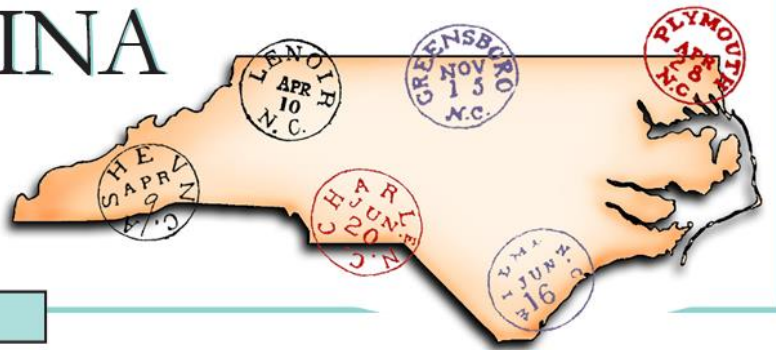
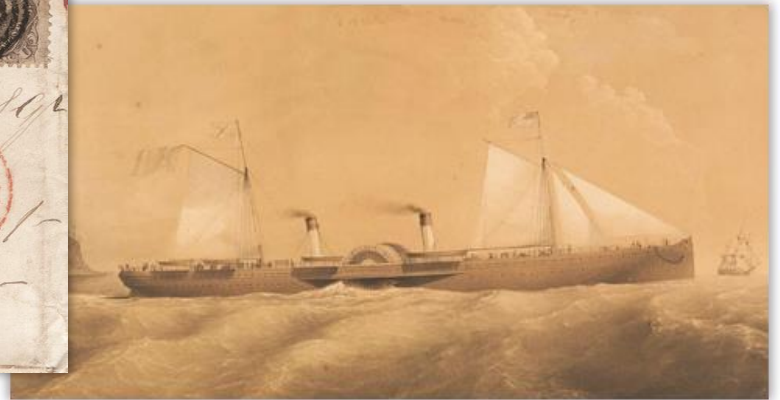


# NORTH CAROLINA POSTAL HISTORIAN



The Journal of North Carolina Postal History

VOLUME 44, NO. 2 SPRING 2025 WHOLE 170



Important Mystery Cover Understood



Brownsville, North Carolina -  
A Granville Post Office (1806 – 1905)



More 1893 Columbian Envelopes  
Used in North Carolina



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Recently, I've been reading a book on art in American culture. The author made a comment that gave me some insight about one reason I collect postal history. The author was discussing the differences between representational and abstract art. I've never been fond of abstract art, but I do find representational, or realistic, art appealing. A big difference between the two styles, at least in my mind, is that abstract art is not located somewhere specifically; it's not visually located in a specific place - such as in a landscape or the interior of a building that you see in realistic art. A postal history cover, however, is located in both place and time. It was mailed somewhere and it arrived somewhere. Its postmark or stamp or some other feature tells you approximately or exactly when it was mailed and received. These aspects of time and place "locate" and identify the postal cover, making it easy to collect covers based on time period or particular post office location. I've noted some further ways we personally connect to our collections in my article in this issue.

Congratulations to Dick Winter whose *North Carolina Ship Letters 1792-1861* was given a Gold award in the Literature competition sponsored by the Chicago Philatelic Society at CHICAGOPEX held in November, 2024. This monograph was recently published by our own Society and distributed to our members. We are pleased that Dick's fine work has received this further honor and recognition.

The extensive Bryson Bateman Specialized Collection of Goldsborough, North Carolina was sold at auction by Schuyler Ramsey Philatelic Auctions in February 2025. Bryson had accumulated many interesting and noteworthy covers. You can view covers from his collection online at the SRPA website under "The Civil War Sale." Take a look at Lot 2989 described as "A Remarkable and Unique 2 Cent Jackson Pair and 5 Cent Richmond Local Issue Combination on Cover."

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As Schuyler Ramsey introduced this cover for bidding, he declared it the finest cover in the entire sale! It sold for over \$9,000.00.

CHARPEX will be held in Charlotte July 26-27, 2025, so put it on your calendar. This year's theme will be the 250th Anniversary of the United States Post Office and Benjamin Franklin as its first Postmaster General. Also featured will be an exhibit of the Signers of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence in 1775.

As we approach the annual gathering at CHARPEX, I want to thank our members for the financial support they provide so faithfully. Your annual membership, your support of the Adopt-A-Library program, your additional sustaining gifts, and your contributions to printing the upcoming monograph on Charlotte Postal History - all these are deeply appreciated. We also thank the stamp and postal history dealers who advertise in this journal and we encourage our members to patronize these dealers and support them with their philatelic purchases.

If you have not mailed your annual membership dues, please send them to Harry Albert as soon as possible. And consider making a further contribution towards adopting a library, making a sustaining gift, and adding an additional amount to support printing the Charlotte monograph. We hope to see you at CHARPEX!



## NORTH CAROLINA POSTAL HISTORIAN

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## Important Mystery Cover Understood

by Richard F. Winter, Stefan Jaronski, Danny Brinkley, and John Barwis

**Editor's Note:** As this issue of the *North Carolina Postal Historian* was preparing to be printed and delivered, we were saddened to learn of the passing of our respected colleague Richard F. Winter. A tribute to Richard will be included in the Summer issue of this journal.

Sharing the specialized skills of four individuals, each with a different primary interest, provided a solution to understanding a difficult cover. This time the results were positive instead of ending up with differences of opinions and no resolution. The four investigators in this case were Stefan Jaronski, Danny Brinkley, John Barwis, and I. Jaronski provided important knowledge on the cover itself, and handling of Federal mail in occupied, coastal North Carolina during the Civil War. I provided insights into the cover's transit to an overseas destination. John Barwis applied his skills in searching the British Library's digital newspapers to find information not previously found in basic steamship-published reports. And Brinkley used his skills as a scientist to analyze certain characteristics of the cover's markings. Together, I believe an important analysis of a very unusual cover was achieved, which I will explain.

### The Cover

On 26 September 2022, Barwis sent me an image of a cover (Figures 1a and 1b), which just had been posted on Richard Frajola's website, "Phila Mercury," by Jaronski. Jaronski hoped that posting the cover image would result in a discussion and perhaps some answers to a number of questions he had about the cover's markings and how it got to its stated destination in South Wales. Per Jaronski the posting did not receive the desired results.

I was interested in the cover from the start because it appeared to have North Carolina postal markings in red ink, which had not previously been reported, although the red ink appearance could have been the effect of ink changes over time or created under different circumstances. The 24¢ 1861 issue postage stamp didn't seem to belong in light of all the other markings. Was the cover altered and no longer in the condition of its initial posting?



▲ **Figure 1a and 1b.** 20 January 1864, envelope containing three-page letter posted at the Federal post office in New Bern (Craven County) to the brother of a Union army enlistee (Battery C, New York Light Artillery) living near Haverfordwest, in county Pembrokeshire, Wales, Great Britain.

Two of the three handstamps, the boxed “PAID” and circle “24,” had not been recorded in the *North Carolina Postmark Catalog*, nor had the postal marking’s ink color that now appeared distinctly reddish in color. Also, the transatlantic sailing data didn’t seem to fit with published data. As did Jaronski, I had a number of questions about the cover that I couldn’t answer or understand. So, I placed the image on my computer’s desktop to revisit on another day.

Almost two years later I decided to study the cover image again and make a new effort to understand it. This new effort used the unique skills of several individuals rather than relying on those of just one individual to plan a course of action and evaluate the data derived. I believe we have uncovered the answers to all the original questions. In the process we learned more about the cover, which we can share with you now.

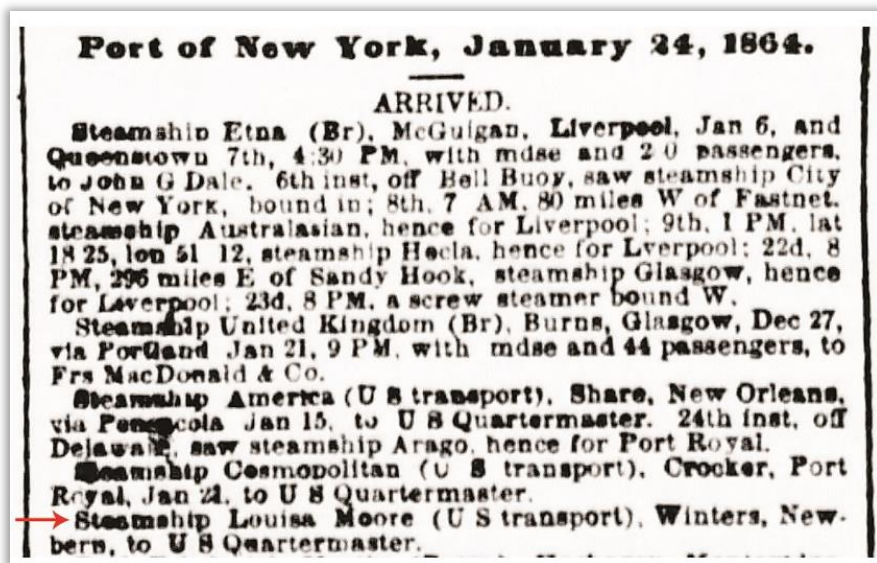
The cover and enclosed letter originated in Union-occupied New Bern, North Carolina. New Bern had been occupied by Federal forces in March 1862, and continued in Federal hands throughout the remainder of the war. The U.S. Post Office reopened not long after occupation. From the dateline on the first page of the letter, it was penned on 16 January 1864 and was posted at the Federal post office in New Bern on 20 January 1864. The letter was from a Union army enlistee (in Battery C, New York Light Artillery) to his brother living near Haverfordwest, in County Pembrokeshire, Wales, Great Britain.

### Transit Overseas

Although posted from a Federal-operated post office, the U.S. post office in New Bern did not exercise the expected custody of the letter. By this time of the war, the Federal Quartermasters Corps contracted with a very large number of private vessels to carry supplies from the major eastern ports to the shipping on the blockade line that the President had ordered on 19 April 1861. These vessels also carried wounded soldiers back north where there was better medical care. Important to our investigation, these contracted vessels often were steamships that carried large quantities of mail from southern locations to the Federal postal system in the northern ports. Here Federal quartermasters entered the mails into the U.S. postal system.

A small information notice used as filler in the *New Bern Times* of 9 January 1864 reported, “During the last quarter, 106,832 letters have been mailed at the New Berne Post office – These are rather small figures when put alongside some of the preceding quarters.”

This transit link to New York was corroborated by a posting in *The New York Herald* of 25 January 1864 (Figure 2), announcing the arrival of the steamship *Louisa Moore*, Captain Winters, a U.S. transport arriving at the port on 24 January 1864 with cargo from New Bern for the U.S. Quartermaster. Four days, from New Bern to New York, was an easy run for the contracted steamship.



▲ Figure 2. 25 January 1864, *The New York Herald*, announcing the arrival of the steamship *Louisa Moore*, Captain Winters, a U.S. transport arriving at the port on 24 January 1864 with cargo from New Bern for the U.S. Quartermaster in New York.

At first, I thought the *Louisa Moore* transported the mail from the ocean-access port of Beaufort, North Carolina, because the 383-ton steamship, built in New York in 1863, probably had too much draft to navigate into Pamlico Sound and then proceed up the estuary of the Neuse River to New Bern. However, an August 1865 shipping advertisement for this vessel said she was receiving freight at the foot of Craven Street in New Bern.

The U.S. Army quartermaster in New York delivered the letter to the New York post office. In New Bern the letter had been marked that 24¢ had been paid, which was the single letter rate to Great Britain for a letter under ½ ounce in weight. The letter writer wrote in the upper left corner that the letter had been paid, and two handstamp markings were applied at New Bern to show that it had been paid 24¢. It appears that someone later added a 24-cent 1861 stamp with a target cancellation that doesn’t appear to tie the stamp to the envelope, an unnecessarily act as the New Bern markings indicate that the letter had been properly paid.



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Arrived St. Johns 30 Jan  
16-hour delay at St. Johns, dep at 0800 31 Jan  
Arrived Galway at 11:00 a.m. 10 Feb

This newspaper account confirmed that *Columbia* arrived at Galway on 10 February 1864, with damaged paddles from being in pack ice off St. Johns [Newfoundland] and carried 21 sacks of mail.

***Galway Vindicator, and Connaught Advertiser, 10 February 1864, page 2:***

“Passengers were all landed at Galway, and the mails were dispatched to Dublin by the half-past twelve train this day.”

These newspapers indicated the mail that *Columbia* carried was put off at Galway and sent to Dublin. From here they would be sent across Irish Sea to England. Therefore, the 11 February 1864 date struck at Liverpool on this cover was correct and indicated when the mail containing this cover arrived at Liverpool.

***The Evening Freeman, Dublin, 16 Feb 1864, page 3 noted:***

"THE COLUMBIA, GALWAY, MONDAY -- The Atlantic Company's steamship Columbia sailed hence for Liverpool at 8:00 a.m. this morning."

***Lloyd's List, London Thursday, February 18, 1864, page 2:***

*Lloyd's List* confirmed that *Columbia* arrived at Liverpool on 17 February 1864 from Galway.

This new information now explained that *Columbia* remained in Galway from 10 February to 16 February, presumably to make repairs to the damaged paddles from the ice pack off St. Johns, Newfoundland, while her passengers and mail had left the ship upon arrival at Galway. The mail had reached Liverpool on 11 February 1864 as the cover marking showed, but the steamer did not reach Liverpool until 17 February. We now know for certain that mail was carried on this penultimate sailing of the line by *Columbia* from Boston.

**Analysis of colored postmark**

That brings us to a discussion of the reddish color postmarks seemingly applied at New Bern. Neither the oblong rectangle with the rounded ends containing the word "PAID" nor the circular handstamp containing "24," had been previously reported as New Bern markings. And, surprisingly, the reddish color ink used for these markings as well as the New Bern circular date stamp had not been seen on a New Bern occupation cover, only black colored ink. This is what caught my attention when I first saw a color scan of the cover in September 2022.

North Carolina Postal History Society member, Brinkley had published three articles in the *North Carolina Postal Historian* since I had first seen the New Bern cover. Brinkley is a registered Professional Engineer in North Carolina. He has been working with scanning electron microscopes (SEMs) for more than 40 years. His articles were about the postmark ink colors used on a few North Carolina postmarks with desirable colors to validate the color listings in our postmark catalog. These colors were not often seen and, in some cases, were argumentative to describe.

His articles have been excellent and informative. Using modern laboratory equipment to collect the data to support his articles, he joined a growing list of scientists applying the use of this equipment to resolve philatelic questions. I saw this as a very real opportunity to apply Brinkley's skills to a North Carolina cover mystery. Jaronski agreed. Were the markings on the New Bern cover made with a previously unseen color ink, had the inks been manufactured post the stated use on the cover, or had they been a known color that for some reason changed over the years.

First, I would like to restate in his own words the equipment he used in his analysis of North Carolina ink colors from his article in the *North Carolina Postal Historian*, whole no. 162, Spring 2023, because it is easy to scan over this information when desiring to get to the results of the data collection:

“All four covers were examined using a Hitachi S-3700N scanning electron microscope (SEM) (Figure 5, next page). 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 as is often the practice with SEM.

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 5.** Commercial image of the Hitachi S-3700N scanning electron microscope, pictured here set up to investigate a variety of different tasks.

I had been concerned with the original ink color of the New Bern postmarks. Had they been in a black ink, as were all the postmarks recorded for this period of use in New Bern, or of a different color ink that gave them the reddish appearance?

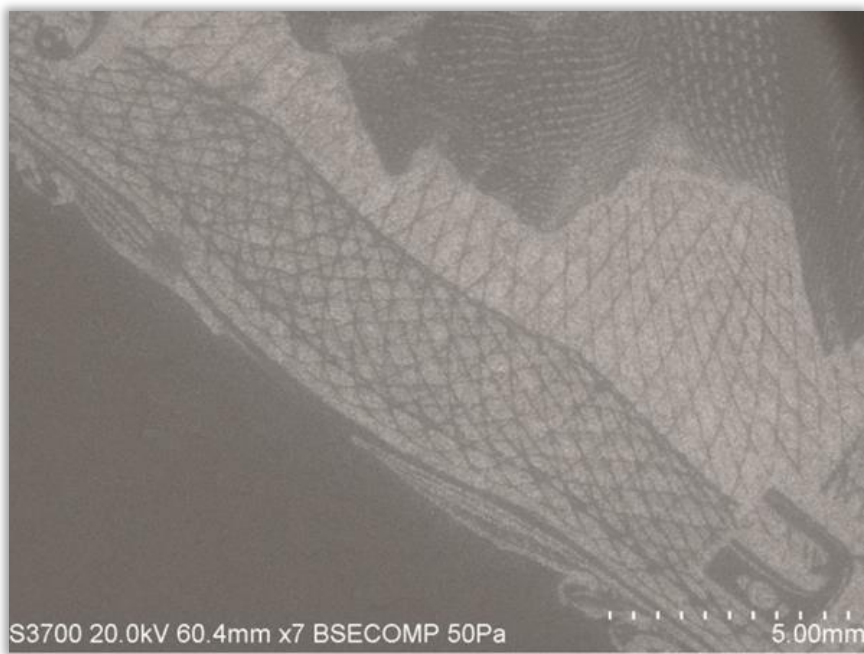
Brinkley pointed out that inks consisting of low atomic number elements (such as hydrogen, carbon and oxygen) do not provide an adequate backscattered electron signal with the SEM to differentiate them from the paper on which they are printed. Referring to black ink postmarks found on covers used at New Bern, he said, “The ink uses a carbon-based pigment for the black base, and this doesn’t show up in the backscattered electron images.”

To demonstrate this, he provided an image of a 30 June 1863 cover from New Bern with a clear black postmark tying an 1861 3¢ rose stamp to the envelope (Figure 6a). Alongside is a black and white image produced by the SEM evaluation of the postmark where the month, date and year of the postmark should show at the left of Washington’s nose, but don’t show at all (Figure 6b).

In a separate correspondence with Brinkley, he pointed out a feature of the SEM evaluation that he had only slightly mentioned in his article, but was particularly important for the analysis of the New Bern cover.



▲ **Figure 6a.** 30 June 1863 New Bern postmark examined with the scanning electron microscope on a cover to Granville Corners[sic], Massachusetts.



▲ **Figure 6b.** The month, date, and year in the postmark of Figure 6a, “30 June 1863” should show at the left of Washington’s nose on the stamp image, but nothing shows because the black ink used at New Bern was a carbon-base ink. The carbon-base ink provides a very weak backscattered electron signal that is about the same as un-inked paper; therefore, this black postmark is essentially transparent over the stamp impression.

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This was because the black ink used at New Bern was carbon-based. *This carbon-based ink provides the same back-scattered electron signal as the paper that it is printed on, therefore, there is no difference in the appearance of the black postmark and the stamp paper.*

After an extensive examination of the New Bern cover's postmarks Brinkley's conclusions were:

"Looking at the scans of this cover, I am confident that the New Bern markings are not a black ink. The edges of the markings have almost a reddish tinge. If anything, the New Bern markings are more like some of the Boston magenta markings. Most of the black markings I have examined are carbon-based inks and are not prominent in SEM backscattered electron images.

I examined some additional covers this past week to re-familiarize myself with the Boston magenta cancellations. I only have two of these in my collection and both have been certified by the APS as having magenta cancellations. Both are used with 1851 3¢ orange brown stamps. One of the magenta markings consists of an adulterated vermilion ink (it also has an unidentified iron-based constituent – Mars Black with other mineral constituents or Prussian Blue). The other magenta cancellation is not adulterated with any other detectable chemical compound. The New Bern marking inks appear to be only vermilion and the vermilion does not appear to be adulterated, so I would say that they are more like the second type of Boston magenta ink. So, the New Bern markings are either made with a magenta ink or a red ink that has darkened with time. It's definitely not a black cancellation in my opinion.

There are two literature sources that I have reviewed. I have a 1953 edition of the *Merck Index* that lists both a black mercuric sulfide and a red mercuric sulfide (vermilion). Another useful reference is the *Pigment Compendium – A Dictionary and Optical Microscopy of Historical Pigments*. Both Vitruvius (first century BC) and Pliny note that pure cinnabar pigment (minium) was unsuitable for painting outside as it turns black in the sunlight. (and moonlight); however, it could be protected by a coat of oil and wax. Cinnabar is the name of the mercuric sulfide mineral form. Minium is the name typically used for red lead oxide. Personally, I have never seen a discolored vermilion cancellation. I am not saying that it can't occur, but if it does occur, I haven't seen it. Minium was used as the primary colorant in the 3c 1851 stamps and discoloration of these stamps is fairly common due to a reaction with sulfur and other chemical species."

Based on Brinkley's analysis, the conclusion that must be drawn is that the New Bern postmarks were not made in black ink, but in some other color ink, probably locally manufactured with some of the colored features found in the 1851 3¢ orange brown stamps. I consider this analysis sufficient to support initial entries in the *North Carolina Postmark Catalog*. However, additional examples of these markings with the almost reddish tinge will have to be reported to establish the period of use of this ink color.

### The letter

Jaronski has provided a complete transcript of the three-page letter as follows:

New Bern N.C.  
Jan 16<sup>th</sup> 1864

Dear Brother,

After a long lapse of time and being separated many thousand miles, I have a great anxiety of hearing from you, my relations and old acquaintances, hoping this epistle will find you all enjoying the blessings of health as I do at present.

Since I left Europe I have had a great deal to contend with and have been enjoying health and prosperous in worldly pleasures. Since my arrival here I have followed various branches of business. I remained in North America three years, then went from there to Mexico. Remained there two years and from there went to the Golden Land California. I landed at Sacramento City.

I was in commission business, buying, selling and trading with the Natives when the war was declared between North and South America. I returned to New York and enlisted to go for a soldier to fight under the flag of the Union and liberty for all. I have seen very hard fighting. Thousands laid dead on the battlefield, long marches and fatigue and though this is a soldier's life and through God's protection I am among the living.

I enlisted with the infantry and remained there three months and then joined the New York Light Artillery for three years or during the war. Father fighting against Son. I often quote scripture when I think of it. Our army at present are quoted at eight hundred thousand men and the Southern army at six hundred thousand, the largest two armies in the world.

America is the finest, largest, healthiest, and the most productive country in the world. The inhabitants are all nations and the climate is delightful. There is no kind of vegetation in Europe that we have got here and we have got every kind that this world possesses.

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Every man here is well paid for his labour. A labourer gets two dollars per day, a mechanic three dollars and their Board and they live here equal to any gentleman.

The Rich and their labouring men all mess together, three meals per day, good houses and good beds to sleep on. The country is like England, better shaded and much more enterprising. The cities are large. Universally populated.

The Bounty for soldiers here is one thousand dollars premium on enlistment, and twenty dollars per month and their Board they are allowed forty five dollars a year for their clothing by the United States Government and every attention rendered by the best of medical surgeons and physicians. If my life is spared I will visit Wales once more and give you a good information of my past life and this country and shall be able to pay everyone twenty shillings for the pound and with interest.

I have written to you and Elizabeth receiving no answer. I thought your letters were miscarried. I should like to hear from all of you even the coolest friends I had when parting, my relations and old friends were once so numerous that they must forgive me by not naming them, by sending my best love to them. My time is limited. The General has issued for marching.

My kind love to you Wm and my Sister Betsy and also to my Sister Elizabeth and my Brother Morgan and my Brother John, my Nephews and Nieces, Uncles Aunts and Cousins and all enquiring friends, hoping the Lord will prosper you in all your endeavours. Farewell.

Write me all the news. Where is John Darling. Who is who? It seems a long time in war for three years. I changed my name in California to be the same name as a friend who was my partner and connected with one of the largest houses in California. I have a number of valuable things in my possession which I shall bring to Europe.

You will address my letters according to my  
Signature.

Write soon. God speed you.

I remain your sincere Brother  
Thos C Dalley,

Battery C, New York Light Artillery  
New Burn  
North Carolina America

Thomas Roberts

## Resources

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## The Authors

### Richard R. Winter

A retired Navy Captain, Winter is a postal historian with a special interest in transatlantic steamship mail. He authored of two of the four basic reference books about transatlantic mail: “Understanding Transatlantic Mail” and “North Atlantic Mail Sailings 1840-75.” His work for the philatelic community has been recognized through the receipt of numerous awards, including the Distinguished Philatelist Award of the USPCS, the American Philatelic Society's John N. Luff Award for Distinguished Philatelic Research, and the CCNY Lichtenstein Award.

### Stefan Jaronski

Jaronski is a member of several state and national philatelic societies including holding the position of Recording Secretary of the Civil War Philatelic Society Authentication Service. His numerous Civil War related articles have appeared in the *Civil War Philatelist* and other philatelic journals.

### Danny Brinkley

Brinkley is a registered Professional Engineer in North Carolina. He has been working with scanning electron microscopes (SEMs) for more than 40 years. He has given presentations on the Energy Dispersive Spectroscopy (EDS) of Stamp Inks at proceedings of the International Symposium on Analytical Methods in Philately.

### John Barwis

Barwis holds BA, MA and PhD degrees in geology. He signed the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists in 2020 and is also the 2020 recipient of the Lichtenstein Medal. In 2018, he received the APS' Luff Award for Distinguished Philatelic Research. He is a Fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society London and a member of the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society.

## Brownsville, North Carolina - A Granville County Post Office (1806-1905)



by George Slaton

I have been a member of the North Carolina Postal History Society for about twelve years, and this is the eleventh article I have contributed to *The Postal Historian*, the Society's quarterly journal. In putting together the present article, I am reminded of the enjoyment I have experienced in preparing and writing each article, an enjoyment which involves a number of steps in a pleasant journey of discovery.

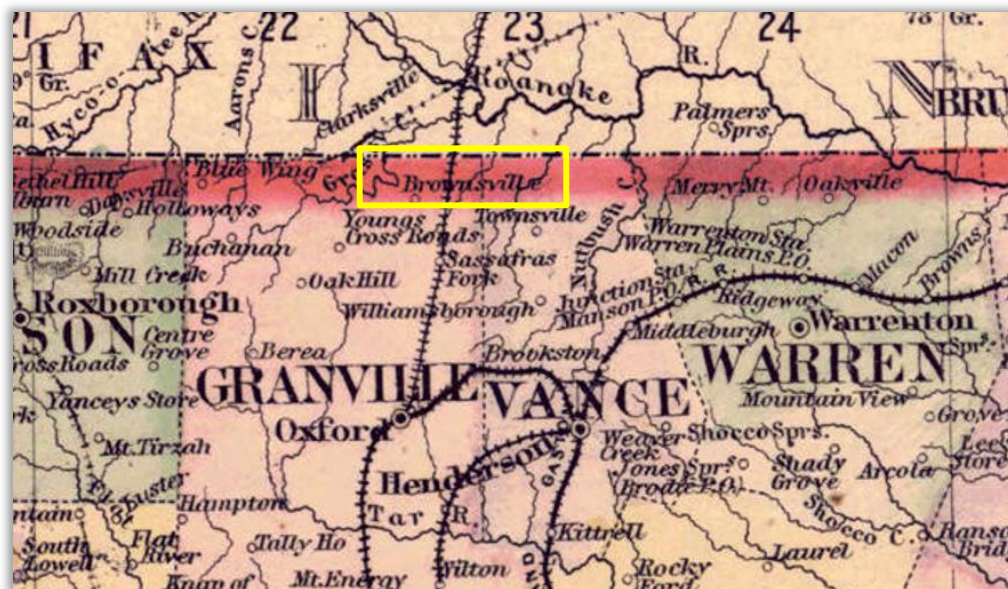
The first enjoyable step is usually finding and acquiring a postal cover that originated from a North Carolina post office. The cover catches your eye because, in some way, it fascinates you as an historical object. That fascination may stem from the cover's post office or county of origin. It may stem from the cover's rate or markings or the particular decade it was posted. The fascination or appeal may simply be a matter of the cover's aesthetic, its fine condition, interesting penmanship, or its well-placed stamp tied by a seldom seen postmark. Of course, for those who solely collect stamps, a stamp with little or no fault and of a certain color shade with large margins may be sufficient reason for acquiring a postal cover.

Once you acquire the cover, you begin looking at it more closely and wondering more about its unique history. You speculate about the sender and recipient. If the cover contains a letter, you will read it closely and learn something about the correspondents. The cover may gain in monetary or historical value as you study it and learn more about its place in history.

This article was inspired by a stampless folded letter posted in 1807 from the now extinct Granville County town of Brownsville (Figure 1). I acquired it for several reasons. First of all, its date is an unusually early one for North Carolina. In addition, the letter provides some fine social history. Yet a third appealing reason I acquired the cover was that it originated from one of those many 19th century post offices which has long since disappeared, but which, while it existed, played a significant role in the life of its community.

Just as with each North Carolina cover about which I have written an article for this journal, I felt the desire to visit its county of origin and research it more fully. You are correct if you sense that possessing such an interesting and historical postal cover leads me to make a deeper connection to it. There was no better way, in my mind, to do that with this cover than to visit the place where it was mailed well over 200 years ago.

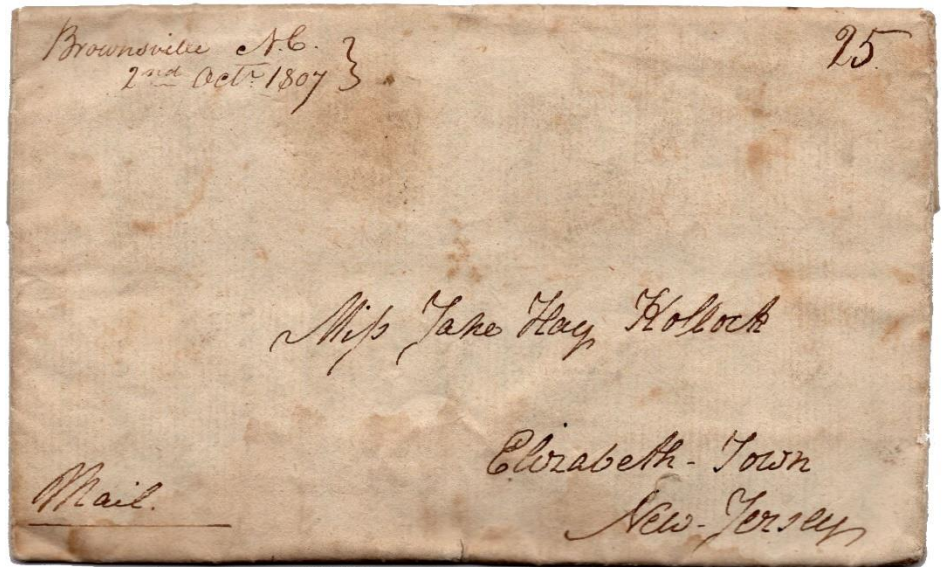
The county seat of Granville is the town of Oxford, and my visit there was very rewarding. My first stop was the Richard H. Thornton Library where the North Carolina Room contains a rich and extensive archival collection of historical books and records. Mark Pace, who staffs the North Carolina Room, is a fine, friendly, and knowledgeable librarian and local historian. Mark is also a long-time member of our Society and, consequently, very familiar with postal history.



◀ **Figure 1.** The Brownsville post office was located in northern Granville County, North Carolina just below the state's border with Virginia. (Courtesy 1881 Grays Map of North and South Carolina.)

Mark recommended a visit to the nearby Granville Museum of History which provided an unexpected source of additional information. These three resources - Mark Pace, the vast holdings in the North Carolina Room, and the museum exhibits - combined to provide most of the information that is included in this article. And I will add that my experience in Oxford that day reflects many other enjoyable research trips and encounters with librarians who are well-informed and eager to provide the guidance that often leads to interesting discoveries.

The first Brownsville cover we will examine is the aforementioned stampless folded letter of 1807 which originally sparked my interest in this early post office. Seen in Figure 2, this postal cover was mailed only one year after the post office opened in 1806. It bears a manuscript postmark of "Brownsville N.C./2nd Oct 1807." The "25" cents postage was charged for the cover's journey of over 500 miles to "Miss Jane Hay Kollock/Elizabeth-Town/New Jersey." The letter is dated "30th September 1807" and begins in dramatic fashion:



▲ **Figure 2.** This stampless folded letter is postmarked in 1807, one year after the Brownsville post office opened. It is addressed to Elizabeth-Town, New Jersey. Collection of George Slaton.

*O! my dear Jane, what a narrow escape we have just had - our lives have been in the most imminent danger - thanks be to God! He has preserved them - in a moment of extreme peril He stretched forth his Omnipotent arm & rescued us from death - but you will be anxious to know to what danger we have been exposed & how preserved - I will proceed to inform you & when you have finished the relation join with us, beloved girl, in grateful praises to that merciful Being who has done so much for us. Tomorrow we expect to set out for Hillsboro - therefore concluded that this day should be spent in visiting the neighboring Ladies - accordingly the horses were put to the Carriage soon as we had breakfasted & sister, Mr. Nash & myself prepared to set out as I wished to take Susan - but Mary thought she would be troublesome & like Mary, being desirous to accompany us, we urged Mrs. Ogden to consent - she hesitated, made some objection but at length began to dress her to go - we were ready to set out when Mrs. O, again expressed her unwillingness to let us take Mary - she seemed so averse that we left her behind - (how providential!). You recollect the Creek between Latium and Mr. Alston's - & the bad Hill you are obliged to descend this side of it - 'tis precisely wide enough for a Carriage to pass - & if you go a few*

*inches on either side your life is endangered- on the side of the road is a large stump which was near upsetting Sister & Mrs. Ogden last Sunday, when returning from Meeting - when we began to descend the Hill Mary called to Virgil (who was driving us) "pray take care that stump" - the caution was ineffectual - when we were near it the Horses pulled that side of the road, nor would Virgil prevent the wheel running upon the stump - Mary exclaimed - "we are going over" - & in an instant the Carriage turned upon the side on which I sat - & all three of us laid upon the ground, confined in a close Chariot - what a situation! Mr. Nash (before he moved) exclaimed "I believe my leg is broke" - we then just sat A crying [sic] under the Carriage - he however got out, found he could walk, & went to assist Mary in ascending the Hill - his anxiety for her made him forgetful of himself - tho' she had received no injury - & I only got skirt scratched off my knee - what a providential preservation! Oh! May we never forget the goodness of our God! Had we been indeed killed - oh! my dear Jake - in one moment our good Parents would have been deprived of three beloved Children - poor little Susan would've been left a hopeless Orphan - & our dear Mrs Ogden, Miss Anna Maria & John bereft of a Brother, who I believe in the whole world is not surpassed. All praise to our gracious protector - all thanks to that merciful Being who is still lengthening out our day of grace. O! that we may be wise - and constantly reflecting that "in the midst of life we are in death."*

If this account sounds overwrought or melodramatic, it may be because the writer is a refined young lady. Sarah Kollock (1782-1824) was, in 1807, the unmarried 25-year-old daughter of Shepard Kollock, Jr. (1750-1839), a Revolutionary War veteran, later member of the Society of the Cincinnati, and at the time this letter was written, the owner and editor of the *New Jersey Journal* in Elizabethtown, now known as Elizabeth, New Jersey.

Sarah's sister, Mary Goddard Nash (b. 1781) and her husband, Frederick Nash (1781-1858), were the traveling companions to whom Sarah refers to as "Mary" and "Mr. Nash." Frederick Nash was a prominent North Carolina attorney and jurist. He was the son of Governor Abner Nash. Born in New Bern and educated at Princeton University, he served as Chief Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court from 1852-1856. The "Mrs. Ogden," "Miss Anna Maria," and "John," were siblings of Frederick Nash. The former was Elizabeth Spaight Nash Ogden (1778-1833), then married to Judge Robert Ogden IV, born in Elizabethtown, New Jersey. The carriage driver, "Virgil," is not further identifiable, though he may have been an enslaved person.

Sarah Kollock penned her letter to her younger sister, Jane Hay Kollock (1791-1867)." In 1809, Sarah married Edward Harris (1763-1813), yet another North Carolina luminary who served in the state legislature and, for the last two years of his life, as a judge. Sarah was later remarried to Samuel King, an attorney, and died at the young age of 42. Sarah Kollock King is buried in the Old Town Cemetery in Hillsboro, North Carolina.

We have an additional stampless cover from the Kollock correspondence for examination. Seen in Figure 3, this cover also features the manuscript postmark, "Brownsville NC" with a date of "17th September." It is addressed to "Miss Jane Kollock/Elizabeth Town/New Jersey. The postage rate is once again "25." Sarah Kollock is again the writer of this letter.

Though there is no repetition of any recent dramatic event, this epistle also reflects the same social connections to prominent North Carolina families. There are a number of references to individuals and families of high social status. "Judge Locke" is Francis Locke, Jr. (1766-1823), then a judge on the Supreme Court of North Carolina. "Mr. and Mrs. Burgwin" refers to George William Bush Burgwin (1787-1854) and his wife, Maria, the "Miss Anna Maria," a daughter of Governor Abner Nash and mentioned in the first letter. They were a young couple, having married in 1807. George Burgwin was a son of John Burgwin (1731-1803), a merchant and planter in Wilmington and progenitor of this notable family. "Mr. Littlejohn" is Thomas B. Littlejohn who lived in central Granville County and was the founder of Oxford Presbyterian Church established in the town of Oxford in 1818.

Perhaps most significantly for our purposes, Sarah Kollock recounts her visit with "Mr. Brown." Thomas Alston Brown was the founder of Brownsville, North Carolina and the first postmaster of the Brownsville post office established there in 1806. Thomas Brown was born in Lanarkshire, Scotland in 1776, the son of Dr. James Brown and Isabella Alston. One of fourteen children, young Thomas grew up in Auchloch Castle. Though Thomas' family was wealthy, under English law, Thomas' older brother would inherit the family estate. This may have motivated Thomas to sail to America and settle in Virginia where he married Martha Morton Daniel in 1804. Some of Martha's Daniel kin had been living in Granville County, North Carolina for some years. Soon, Thomas and Martha moved to the northern portion of Granville County and established Brownsville on a large tract of land they purchased on both sides of what is now Grassy Creek Road.



◀ **Figure 3.** This stampless folded letter from Brownsville to Miss Jane Kollock in Elizabeth Town, New Jersey in 1809 is from the same correspondence as the cover in Figure 2. The letter refers to many prominent North Carolinians and their families. (Collection of Tony Crubley.)

After researching Sarah Kollock's friends and recognizing their prominence in the early history of North Carolina, I began to wonder why so many notable people are associated with what I assumed to be a fairly remote, sparsely settled, and undeveloped portion of the state. Again, Mark Pace was helpful in orienting me to the status of Granville County during these early years of the 19th century. He encouraged me to visit the Granville Museum of History. So, I walked over to the nearby museum building and, from the numerous exhibits there, learned a great deal about the history of the county.

Granville County, at least until 1860, was one of the wealthiest counties in the state. Why? Early on, Granville County established a reputation for producing an abundant and broad array of crops. And, not only could county farmers boast sizable livestock herds, they could produce large crops of grains, vegetables, fruit, and corn.

The area of agriculture in which Granville County's production really soared, however, was that of tobacco. Indeed, along with other counties that bordered Virginia, Granville was soon a bountiful part of the "tobacco belt." As such, the county maintained strong economic ties with Virginia and the tobacco markets in Danville, Petersburg, Norfolk, and Richmond.

The county of Granville too relied far more than other North Carolina counties on an enslaved population. This combination of large farms which profited from growing tobacco and the unfortunate use of enslaved persons to harvest that tobacco led to the creation of great wealth in Granville County.

Tobacco was grown as a cash crop. Tobacco yields were not recorded until 1840, when the Federal census reported

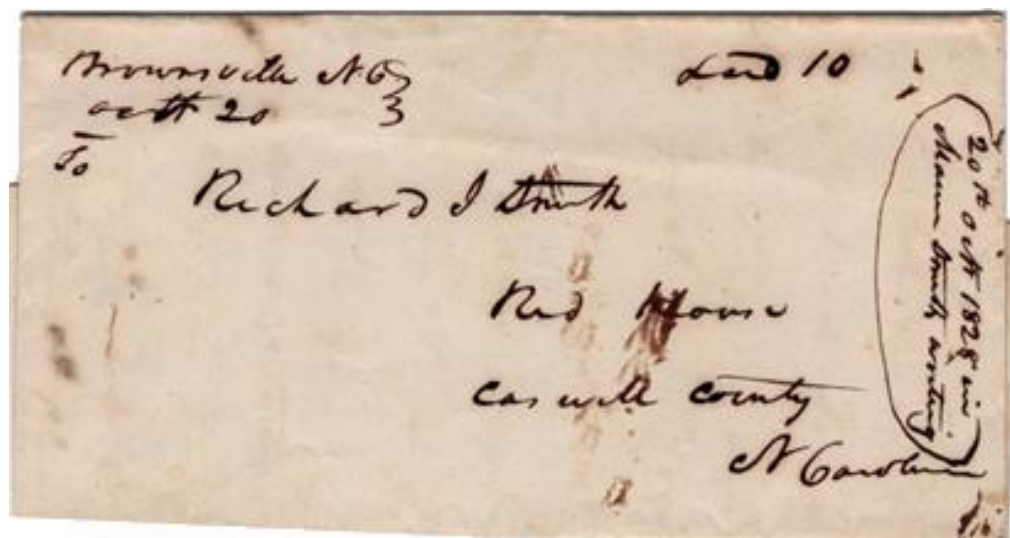
that Granville County produced 3,919,822 pounds of tobacco - more by far than any other county in the state. Further, tobacco production continued to increase to the extent that by 1860 the total production was 6,025,574 pounds. Tobacco farmers in this county along Virginia's border made use of the neighboring state's railroads to carry the crops to market. North Carolina's own Raleigh and Gaston Railroad, chartered in 1835, contributed to the success of the tobacco economy as well.

Brownsville was located in the northern portion of Granville County where the wealthier planters resided. For example, Thomas Person made his home at Goshen, John Penn at Sassafra Fork, and many of the more prosperous planters such as Chief Justice Henderson in the Nutbush community.

John H. Wilson Jr., in his *Roaming Around Northern Granville County* (2003), tells us that "Brownsville had a post office, a store, and a school." They "were probably housed in a two-story building that stood as late as 1965." The local people called it "The High House." One local man recalled that there was "a hole in the wall that was earlier used to pass mail through."

In continuing our survey of the postal history of Brownsville, we examine another stampless cover in Figure 4. The cover has a manuscript postmark of Brownsville/N.C./Oct 20" and is addressed to "Richard J. Smith/Red House/Caswell County/N Carolina." Its "due 10" marking indicates that the postage was due upon receipt. It is docketed, though probably at a much later date, by someone noting that the letter was written on "20th Oct 1828 in Mama (?) Smith writing."

**Figure 4.** ▶ This stampless folded letter of 1828 with a Brownsville manuscript postmark bears a "due 10" marking indicating that the postage is due upon its receipt. (Collection of Tony Crumbley.)

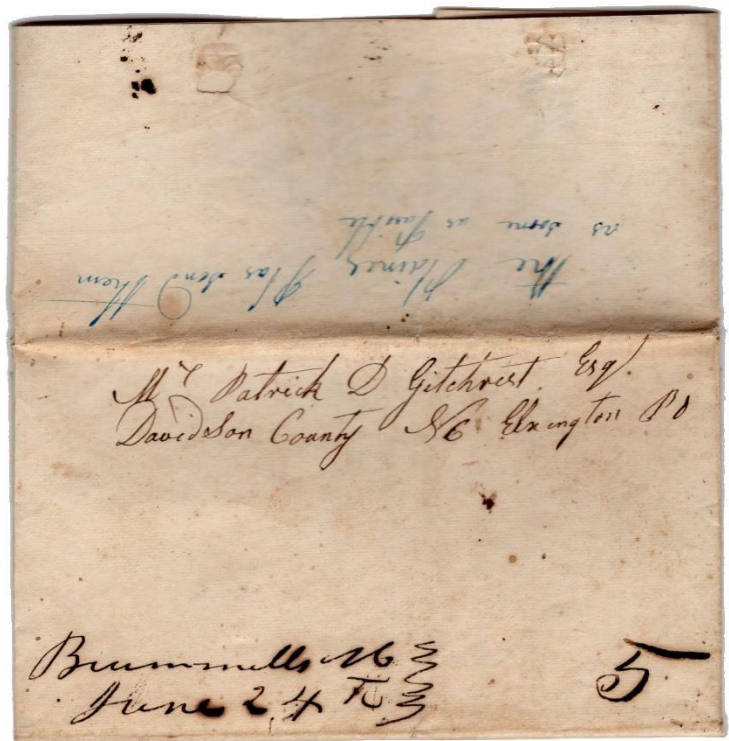




◀ **Figure 5.** Stampless cover from Brownsville to Monroe in Warren County, North Carolina. Its 10 cents postage indicates that it was mailed between 1816 and 1845. (Collection of Tony Crumbley.)

Another stampless cover bears the manuscript postmark of “Brownsville NC/8 June.” The cover (Figure 5) is addressed to “Mr. John R. Hinson/Monroe/Warren Cty/NC.” It bears the postage cost of “10” and “Pr. Mail.” The postage indicates that the cover was mailed sometime between 1816 and 1845 when the cost was 10 cents for a letter traveling 30-80 miles.

**Figure 6. ▶**  
Stampless cover dated 1848 and mailed from Brownsville to Lexington in Davidson County, North Carolina. (Collection of Tony Crumbley.)



The stampless cover (Figure 6) contains content which clearly shows that not every resident of Brownsville was as literate as the well-educated Sarah Kollock.

With a manuscript postmark of “Brownsville NC/June 24th” and the appropriate “5” postage cost in 1848, the addressee is “Mr. Patrick D. Gilchrist, Esq./Davidson County NC Lexington PO.”

The letter’s author, “Dr (?) J. McGibboney writes in part (mistakes and misspellings retained):

“I in forme you that we are all well at this time hoping these lines will find the State of Health....I in forme you that Seth Starbuck and his wife is both Dead you no the law of Virginia is that the wife has to sine her Interest and acoledge the same before the tittle is good in law...”

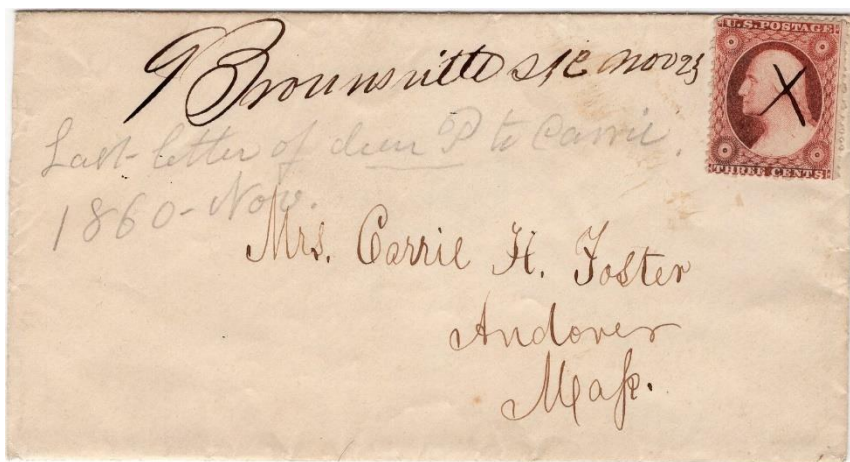
The letter, of course, addresses some legal issues, but its phonetic spellings are amusing to read.



◀ **Figure 7.** The first stamped letter in our survey bears three 1-cent blue Franklins. It was sent to Weldon (Halifax County), North Carolina. (Collection of Tony Crumbley.)

The first stamped letter in our survey (Figure 7) bears three 1-cent blue Franklins. The addressee is “Rev. Robt. Burton/Weldon/N.Ca.” The postmaster has marked it “Brownsville N.C./May 17th.”

In Figure 8, we note a cover with a 3-cent red Washington stamp, cancelled with an “X” in ink. It has a manuscript postmark of “Brownsville NC November 23.” It is addressed to “Mrs. Carrie H. Foster/Andover/Mass.” At some point in time, someone recorded in pencil that the cover contained the “Last letter of dear PtoCarrie/1860 - Nov.”



▲ **Figure 8.** This cover, mailed from Brownsville to Andover, Massachusetts, features a 3-cent red Washington stamp. (Collection of Tony Crumbley.)



We have one additional cover mailed from Brownsville less than a year before the outbreak of the Civil War. This folded letter, seen in Figure 9, features a 3-cent red Washington stamp canceled with three strokes of ink. The postmaster has marked it “Brownsville N.C./September 25 1860.” It is addressed to “Rev. Robt. O. Burton/Weldon/N.C.”

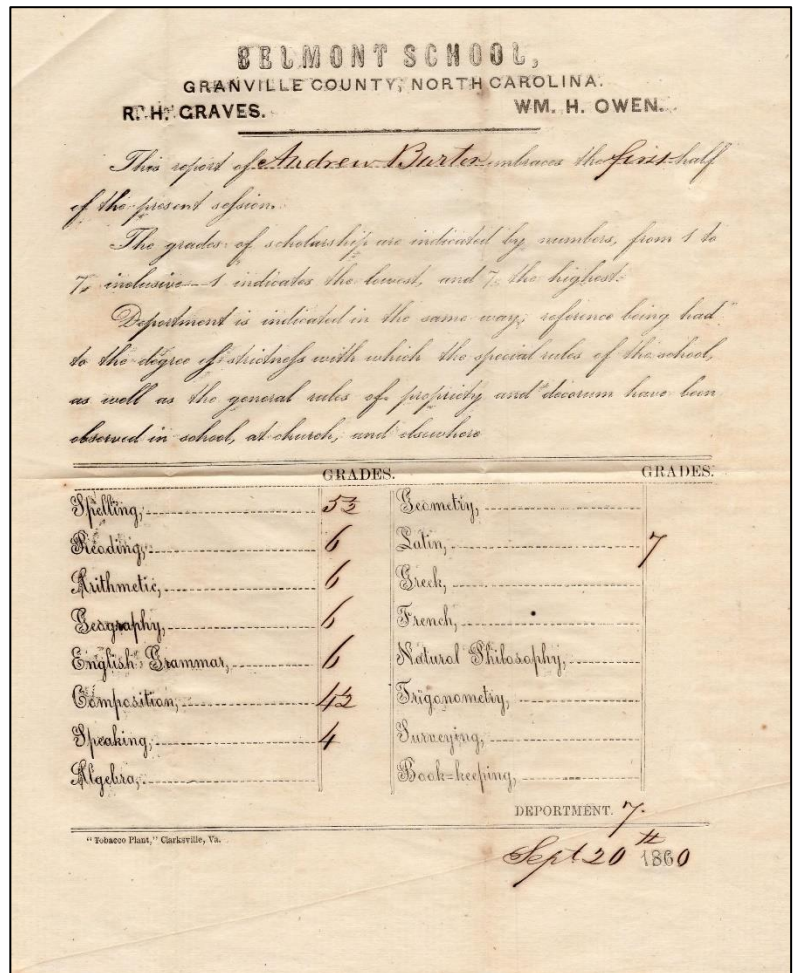
◀ **Figure 9.** This 1860 folded postal cover features a 3-cent red Washington stamp. It traveled from Brownsville to Weldon (Halifax County), North Carolina. (Collection of George Slaton.)

The Reverend Burton was a Methodist minister in Weldon, North Carolina. In 1860, his sons John and Andrew were attending the Belmont School in Granville County. The cover contains school reports for John and Andrew, as well as a written report signed by “R.H.G.,” Ralph Henry Graves.

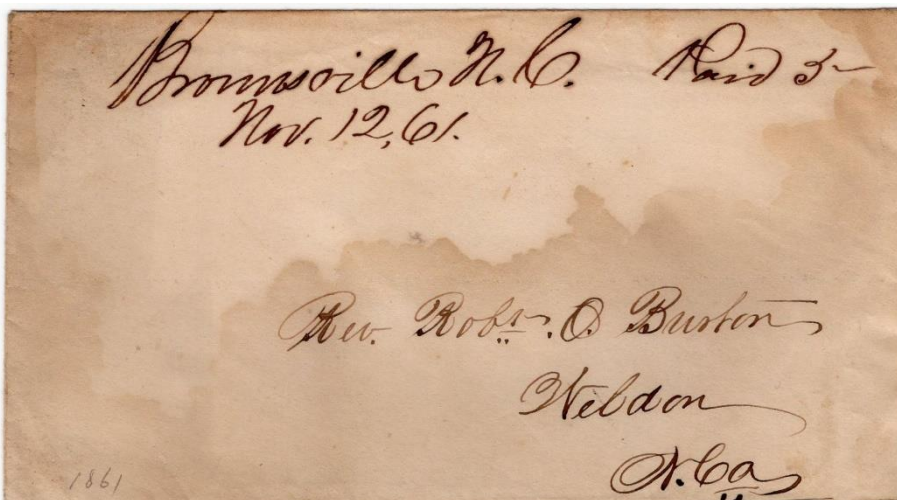
Ralph Henry Graves (1817-1876), who penned the letter, was an important North Carolina educator. He grew up at his family’s home, Belmont, in the northern portion of Granville County. The family had migrated from Virginia. An 1836 graduate of The University of North Carolina, he was teaching at the prestigious Caldwell Institute in Guilford County, North Carolina in 1844. In 1853, he assumed the principalship of Hillsborough Academy. Several years later, Graves returned to Granville County and established the Belmont School, a school for boys. It was located on the old family property where he was born. The Belmont School closed in 1866, probably due to the financially pressing circumstances at the end of the Civil War. In his final stint as an educator, Ralph Graves partnered with James Horner to form the Horner-Graves School in Oxford, Granville County, North Carolina. This school eventually became the Horner Military Academy.

The school report for Andrew Burton from the Belmont School, Granville County, North Carolina in 1860 is shown in Figure 10. It notes that “The grades of scholarship are indicated by numbers, from 1 to 7, inclusive. 1 indicates the lowest, and 7 the highest.” The report shows that Andrew excelled in Latin, performed well in several other subjects, and struggled a bit in two others. He received a high mark for Department.

We are fortunate to have three covers from the Confederate (1861-1865) period for our review. An early war cover is seen in Figure 11.



▲ **Figure 10.** Printed and manuscript school report of 1860 for Andrew Burton, a student at the Belmont School in Granville County, North Carolina. This report was included in the cover featured in Figure 9. (Collection of George Slaton.)



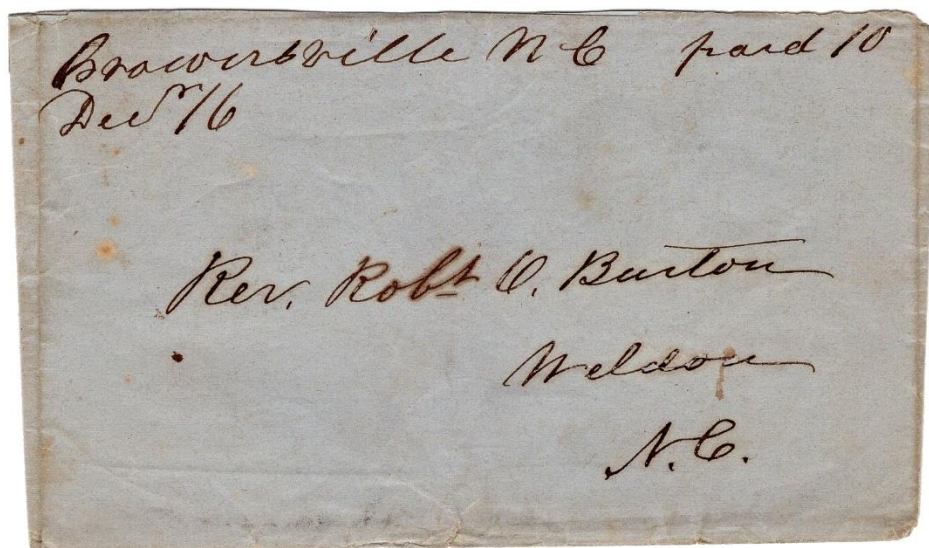
This manuscript “Paid 5” postal cover is likewise postmarked “Brownsville N.C./Nov. 12, 61.” Addressed to “Rev. Robt. O. Burton/Weldon/N.Ca.,” it contains a brief letter from son, John, just before the December holidays, requesting that his father “send us the money to bring us home, send it soon as possible or we will not get it, \$15 if you please.”

◀ **Figure 11.** Confederate cover postmarked in Brownsville on November 12, 1861. The enclosed letter is a request from John Burton to his father requesting ‘money to bring us home’ for the holidays. (Collection of Tony Crumbley.)

Figure 12 exhibits a blue folded letter, also addressed to “Rev. Robt. O. Burton/Weldon/N.C.” Postmarked “Brownsville NC/December 16,” the postage cost is denoted with a manuscript “paid 10.”

**Figure 12.** ▶

This blue Confederate folded letter shows that the sender paid 10 cents to mail it to Weldon (Halifax County, North Carolina. (Collection of Tony Crumbley.)



A rare postmark is featured in Figure 13. This Confederate cover is also addressed to Robert Burton. It bears a 31 mm “BROWNSVILLE N.C.” circular datestamp centered with a manuscript date of “Apl/65.” “PAID 10” is stamped in the upper right. Both stamped markings are in brown ink.

**Figure 13.** ▶

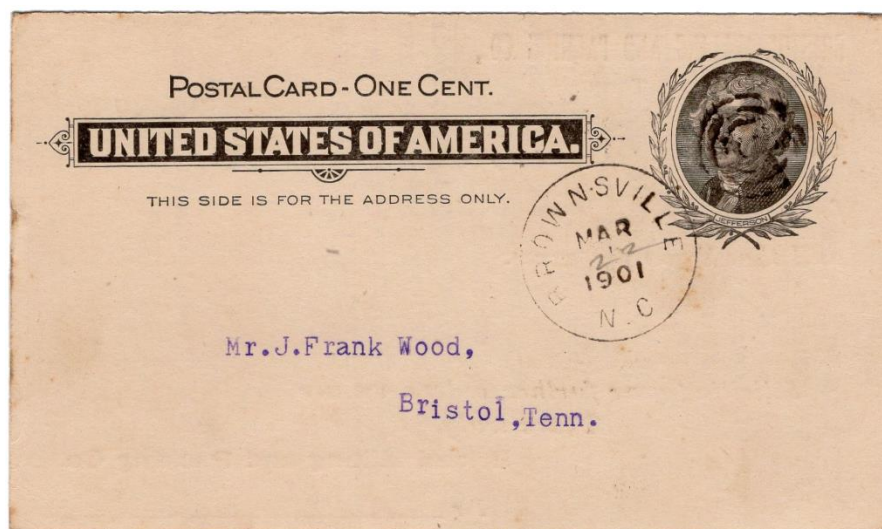
The 31mm Brownsville circular date stamp is rare. Both the date stamp and paid marking are in blue ink. It was mailed in April 1865.



A Brownsville postmark from the early 20th century is shown in Figure 14. The 28 mm circular datestamp postmark is found on a 1 cent postal card addressed to “Mr. J. Frank Wood/Bristol, Tenn.” The postmark contains “BROWNSVILLE N.C./MAR 22 1901.” The “22” is written in pencil.

**Figure 14.** ▶

This 1-cent postal card, mailed in 1901, features a 28mm circular datestamp denoting that it was mailed from the Brownsville post office.



We end our survey of the postal history of the Brownsville post office, which closed in 1905, with an interesting footnote about its aforementioned founder and first postmaster, Thomas Alston Brown. You will recall that Brown emigrated to America, finally settling in Granville County, probably because he would inherit nothing from his father's estate in his native Scotland. The eldest Brown son, John, who did inherit the estate, died in 1832, and Thomas became heir to the Scottish estate. So, Thomas, with his wife and all but one of his children returned to Scotland where he lived for the remainder of his life. A daughter, Isabella, had previously married Abraham W. Venable. Thomas deeded the Brownsville Plantation to them upon his departure. Isabella died in 1871 while Abraham passed away in 1876. Both are buried at nearby Shiloh Presbyterian Church.

#### Author's Note

*My sincere thanks to Mark Pace, librarian and local historian at the Richard H. Thornton Library in Oxford, North Carolina, whose knowledge of Granville County History is unsurpassed. Mark is a long-time member of the North Carolina Postal History Society.*

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## More 1893 Columbian Envelopes Used in North Carolina

An article by Tony Crumbley in the Winter 2025 issue of the *North Carolina Postal Historian* presented an initial census and images of 1893 Columbian Exposition stamped envelopes used in North Carolina. Tony extends his "Thank You" to members having unlisted 1893 Columbian North Carolina stamped envelopes who sent scans to Tony of the covers for updates to the census and image library. A special note of gratitude is offered to Darrell Ertzberger for scans of numerous covers in his collection.

Presented on this and the following page are additions to the original listing of covers presented in Tony's article. And, as before, please send Tony scans of any unlisted covers in your collection for additional updates to the census.

Scott	Rate	Town	County	Date	Size	Note
U349	2 cents	Albemarle	Stanly	July 1,1893	P	
U348	1 cents	Asheville	Buncombe	May 22,1893		
U349	2 cents	Asheville	Buncombe	May 22,1893		
U348	1 cents	Asheville	Buncombe	?	P	
U351	10 cents	Asheville	Buncombe	Jun 26,1893	I	To Germany
U350	5 cents	Asheville	Buncombe	Jul 8,1893		To Germany
U349	2 cents	Asheville	Buncombe	Nov 21, 1893		
U348	1 Cents	Barnardsville	Buncombe	May 8,1896		#264 Poem
U349	2 cents	Belcross	Camden	Oct 13, 1893	P	
U349	2 cents	Belmont	Gaston	Mar 20,1894	R	front
U349	2 cents	Bethania	Forsyth	Jun 3 ,1893		
U349	2 cents	Carrier Springs	Buncombe	Jan 30, 1893		
U349	2 cents	Charlotte	Mecklenburg	May 23,1893	P	
U349	2 cents	Climax	Guilford	Oct 24,1893		
U349	2 cents	Cody	Surry	Dec 15,1893		
U348	1 cents	Concord	Cabarrus	Jan 25 1895		
U349	2 cents	Concord	Cabarrus	Jan 5, 1894	Q	
U349	2 cents	Corinth	Chatham	Jun 7, 1894		
U349	2 cents	Crooms	Columbus	Mar 20,1894		star in football killer
U349	2 cents	Dana	Henderson	July 2,1893		
U349	2 cents	Davidson	Mecklenburg	May,93	Q	
U349	2 cents	Dillsboro	Stokes	Mar 29, 1894		
U349	2 cents	Dunn	Harnett	Mar,1895		
U348	1 cents	Emma	Buncombe	Jul 10,1894		

U349	2 cents	Franklin	Macon	Apr 30, 1894		#225 Registered
U349	2 cents	Franklin	Macon	?27, 94	P	
U349	2 cents	Gibson Station	Scotland	Nov 30, -	Q	
U349	2 cents	Greensboro	Guilford	1-May-28		Alaska Yukon imprint Block
U349	2 cents	Hendersonville	Henderson	Oct 10,1893	Q	
U349	2 cents	Hickory	Catawba	Jan 16 1894	Q	
U349	2 cents	High Point	Guilford	Nov 24,	Q	
U349	2 cents	Hope Mills	Cumberland	Jan 31,1894	A	
U348	1 cents	Hot Springs	Madison	3-Jan		#269
U349	2 cents	Kernersville	Forsyth	Dec, 1893	P	
U349	2 cents	Kernersville	Forsyth	May 11 1895	P	
U349	2 cents	Kings Mountair	Cleveland	?4,1893	A	
U349	2 cents	Leaksville	Rockingham	May 16,1893	Q	
U349	2 cents	Lenoir	Caldwell	Feb 1 1894	Q	Split Grid cork cancel
U349	2 cents	Macon	Waren	Dec 25,1893	Q	Advertised, Unclaimed
U348	1cents	Matthews	Mecklenburg	Nov 4,93	Q	
U348	1cents	Matthews	Mecklenburg	Dec 30,93	Q	
U348	1 cents	Matthews	Mecklenburg	Jul 26,93	Q	
U349	2 Cents	Middletown	Hyde	? 24,1894	A	
U348	1 cents	Murphy	Cherokee	Jun 27 1893		
U349	2 cents	Nathans Creek	Ashe	Oct 24,1893	Q	
U349	2 cents	Oxford	Granville	Feb 23, 1893	R	
U348	1 cents	Oxford	Granville	Jan 27,1897	P	#230 Tobacco Ad
U349	2 cents	Pamele	Martin	Apr 13,1894	Q	
U349	2 cents	Saine	Lincoln	Dec 30 1896		
U349	2 cents	Scotland Neck	Halifax	July 25, 1893	P	
U349	2 Cents	Tarborough	Edgecombe	Mar ?, 1894	Q	
U349	2 cents	Washington	Beaufort	Jan 23,	Q	
U349	2 cents	Washington	Beaufort	Sep 22, 1893	Q	
U349	2 cents	Waynesville	Haywood	Jun 30 1893		
U349	2 Cents	Wilmington	New Hanover	May 29,1893	Q	To Germany + 3 cent Columbian
U349	2 cents	Wilmington	New Hanover	Aug 30, 1893	Q	
U349	2 cents	Winston	Forsyth	Oct 14, 1893		
U349	2 cents	Char. & Atlanta RPO	Fast mail	Dec 19,		
U349	2 cents	Char. & Atlanta RPO	RPO (Charl	Nov 29,		
U349	2 cents	Golds. & M.City RPO	(Kinston)	May 8,1894		
U349	2 cents	Goldsboro & M.City RPO	(kinstc	Sep 9, 1894		
U349	2 cents	Goldsboro & M.City RPO	(kinstc	Mar17,1894		
U349	2 cents	Lynch & Durham		May 18,1893		#230, #231
U349	2 cents	Mount Airy& Wil. RPO	(Mt. Airy	Jan 22, 1894	P	
U349	2 cents	Mount Airy& Wil. RPO	(Mt. Airy	May 9,1893		
U349	2 cents	Wash. & Charleston RPO	(Wilm	Sep 5,1892		
U349	2 cents	Wash. & Charleston RPO	(Wilm	May 8,1893		
U349	2 cents	Wash. & Charleston RPO	(Gold	Feb 12,1894		
U349	2 cents	Wash. & Charleston RPO	(Charl	Dec 18,1893	Q	
U348	1 cents	Wash & Wil. RPO		Jun 20,		To Brazil
U349	1 cents	Weldon & Kinston RPO		Mar 13,1897		
U349	2 cents	Wilm & Ruth.RPO	(Monroe)	Sep 11,1893		



◀ October 24, 1893, Climax, N.C. Columbian Exposition advertising stamped envelope. (Collection of Darrell Ertzberger.)

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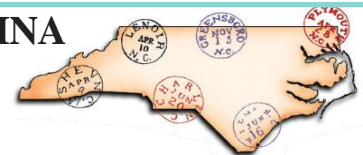
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<http://www.ncpostalhistory.com>

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.