

During the 1847 period postage paid for delivery from one post office to another. A letter deposited at the post office ("dropped") and addressed for delivery at the same post office was rated 2 cents, either prepaid or collect, which is called the 'drop rate.'



November 1849 Baltimore drop letter. Stamp canceled with oval '2' handstamp normally used for drop mail. The letter is datelined Wrightsville PA, a small town north of Baltimore along the Susquehanna River.

Only recorded use of a 5 cent stamp paying the 3 cent circular rate

The circular rate was 3 cents for one sheet sent any distance. The circular had to be both prepaid and unsealed. The regulations also stated that letter postage would be charged on all circulars which contain any manuscript writing.



November 1849 unsealed circular from Albany to New York City.

During this period, when a letter required forwarding to locate the addressee, additional postage was paid to cover the cost of forwarding. 5 cents if forwarded under 300 miles or 10 cents if over 300 miles.



November 1848 folded letter from Petersburg VA, postmarked Richmond VA to then comptroller of New York State, later President Fillmore in New York City. The letter was forwarded from New York City to Albany. Manuscript '5' indicating 5 cents due for forwarding under 300 miles. Red 'FORWARDED' straight-line handstamp. Red New York City and Richmond postmarks.



The folded address sheet entered the mail as a Way letter on the way to Baltimore. Baltimore then sent it to Norfolk where it was forwarded to the Willard Hotel in Washington DC.

Baltimore to Norfolk is under 300 miles so the original postage was overpaid by 5 cents. The Norfolk postmaster did not charge a 5 cent forwarding fee.

If a letter was missent by the post office it was forwarded to the correct address without charging a forwarding fee.



Cover from Andover MA to Rockville CT. Missent to Rockville MA where it was forwarded to the correct address at no cost to the recipient. Manuscript notation 'Missent & Forwarded from Rockville Mass Feb 20'.

Both Andover and Rockville MA town postmarks cancel the stamp.



Partial folded address sheet from Boston MA to Clayville NY. Missent twice, once to Lewiston NY and once to Utica NY. Two manuscript missent markings and three town postmarks.

Local postmasters were required to advertise in a local newspaper the names of addressees from letters that were unclaimed. The names were published three times in local newspapers. If a letter remained unclaimed after three months, it was sent to the Dead Letter Office in Washington, D.C., where it was opened and inspected. If the letter was picked up the addressee paid 2 cents. A letter with valuable content was recorded, and an effort to return it to the sender was made. Ordinary letters were destroyed. Prepayment of postage decreased the volume of unclaimed mail.

Only recorded dead letter with an 1847 stamp



April 1849 cover from Saint Louis MO to Cincinnati OH. Following the regulations, the letter was advertised in one newspaper as shown below. 'ADV 2' was applied, indicating a person would be charged 2 cents to claim the letter. The letter was not claimed and eventually forwarded to the dead letter office where it arrived May 1850. Since the letter was not destroyed, it most likely contained valuables and was sent to Saint Louis to attempt to find the sender.

DAILY CINCINNATI COMMERCIAL.
DEVOTED TO COMMERCE, NEWS, LITERATURE, AND THE BELLES LETTRES.

**OFFICIAL,
ADVERTISED LETTERS.**

LIST NO. 2. JULY 16, 1849

Officially published in the Paper having the largest circulation. Persons calling for these letters will please say they are advertised, and also give the number of the list. All letters advertised are subject to an extra charge of two cents. Letters to the British Provinces must, in all cases, have the inland postage pre-paid. Newspapers must, in all cases, be pre-paid, unless sent from a publishing office to subscribers.

LADIES' LIST.

Adams Jane	Alexander A W	Armer Sarah
Alford Harriet	Amory Elias	Armstrong Frances
Akins Mary A	Arant Martha	Asa Mary
Anderson Miss Anne	Elizabeth	Armer Sarah R
Beth	Atkins Mrs	Asst Caroline
Alexander Martha	Agas Lydia B	
Alisy B M		
Douglass Elizabeth	Bennett	Harris Eliza V
Beecher Catherine	Boyd Mary	

O'Brien Margaret	O'Brien Mary	O'Brien Mary
Ogle Christina	O'Dougherty Fan-	O'Dougherty Fan-
O'Conner Ellen	ny	fine
Patterson Maria	Phelan Mary	Paul Ruth
Palmer Sarah E	Peck Ann	Perry Susan G
Pennington Fanny	Perry Julia Ester	Prior Elizabeth P
Powell Resanna	Pierce Harriet	Pollock Corcoran 2
Pierce Matilda L	Pieron W M	Pardum Thos Mc-
Pace Sarah A	Phelan Mary	Pardum Mary

The letter above was advertised in the Daily Cincinnati Commercial on July 16th, 17th and 18th 1849. The excerpt from the paper shows Ann Peck having an unclaimed letter. On the left is the header for the list.

Original research by the exhibitor correlated the newspaper to the cover.

During the 1847 period important or valuable letters addressed to Philadelphia and a few other cities were recorded and marked with an "R". These letters usually have a manuscript tracking number.

The large 'R' was used until October 1849 and briefly in June and July 1851



March 1849 folded letter from Baltimore MD to Philadelphia PA. 5 cent stamp canceled with blue 'R'. Manuscript registration number '27' applied in Philadelphia.

Only recorded example of 'R' canceling a stamp.



June 1851 folded letter from Providence RI to Philadelphia PA. The letter entered the mail on a train from Boston. U.S. Express Mail route agent datestamp. Manuscript registration number '18' applied in Philadelphia. Very late use of the large blue 'R'.

The small 'R' was used in Philadelphia from October 1849 until September 1851



April 1850 folded letter from Baltimore MD to Philadelphia PA. Stamp canceled with two red 5's and the blue Baltimore town postmark.

On arrival in Philadelphia the recorded letter had a small blue 'R' and a manuscript number '8' applied.



April 1850 folded letter from Baltimore MD to Philadelphia PA.

Manuscript registration number '36' applied in Philadelphia. Small 'R'.

Stamp is Double Transfer type A position 8oR1 with red numeral '5' cancel. Blue Baltimore town postmark.

Envelopes were not commonly used until later in the 1847 period. As the use of envelopes spread, businesses began adding printed corner cards and advertising.



Cover from Syracuse NY to Detroit MI.

The Syracuse Saleratus Manufacturing Company produced potassium and sodium bicarbonate which were leavening agents or baking soda.



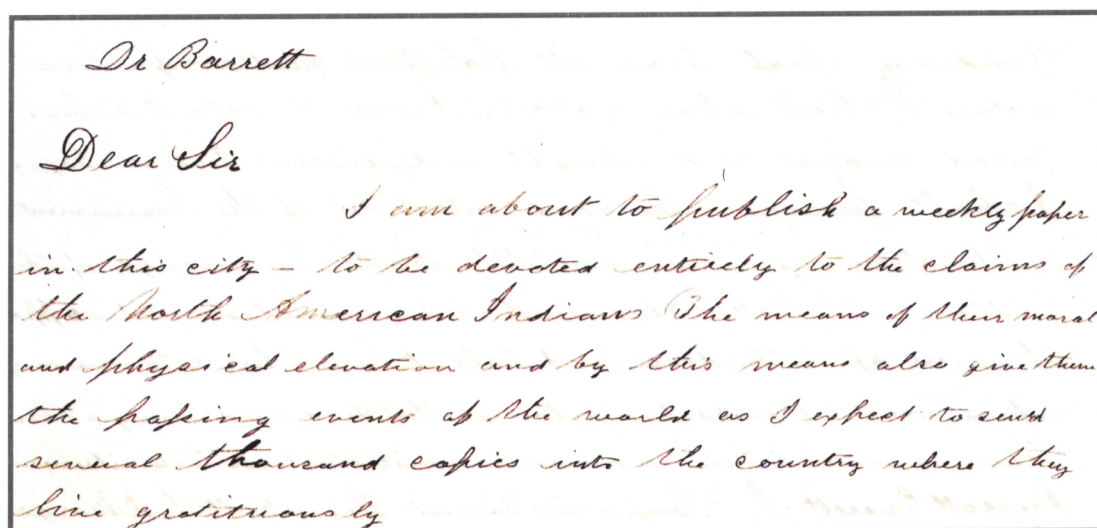
November 1849 cover from Philadelphia PA to Baltimore MD.

O'Reilly's Atlantic, Lake & Mississippi Telegraph advertising cover using six distinct fonts.

One of two recorded illustrated political envelopes used with 1847 stamps



June 1851 overall illustrated propaganda cover from New York City to Middletown CT. Stamp is red orange. The illustrated envelope by Valentine & Dundee shows Indian life and westward expansion.



The enclosed letter, a portion is shown above, was written by George Copway of the Ojibway Nation. Copway, a Canadian, moved to New York City in the 1840's, where he published a number of books and pamphlets relating to the life of and issues surrounding Native Americans.

This letter discusses his desire to start a newspaper devoted to the claims of Native Americans. He was successful in publishing the newspaper which lasted for three months.

The practice of giving valentines originated in Europe in the early 1800's and gained in popularity in the United States during the 1850's. During the 1847 period it is unusual to have greeting cards of any kind, although a few years later they were in common use.

Cover from Wilmington DE to Chester PA dated 15 February.

Based on the 15 February postmark, the note on the envelope and the nature of the design, it is reasonable to assume that it contained a valentine.

At bottom of envelope manuscript 'If you don't I'll die'.



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New York City red square grid.

Cover from New York City to Massey Crossroads MD.

Embossed envelope sent in February to a single woman. Perhaps containing a valentine.

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Many hotels provided guests with mail service, in some cases a handstamp was applied to the letters serving as an advertisement for the hotels.



Thomas's Irving Hotel handstamp.

April 1850 folded letter from Washington City DC to Baltimore MD.

Occasionally merchants or financial houses would provide return addresses or advertising handstamps to letters.



Wesley Wheless Banking House handstamp.

March 1851 folded letter from Nashville TN to New York City.

[One of two recorded with this handstamp.](#)

To conserve paper, letters were sometimes answered on the original letter, refolded and mailed a second time. These letters are known as turned covers. Since they went through the mail twice and were opened twice it is unusual to find them in pristine condition.



November 1850 folded letter from Greenwich CT to Argyle NY. The letter was answered, turned and remailed back to Greenwich. The return postage was paid by the recipient.

Greenwich canceled the stamp with a 4 ring red target.

Only 5 covers are recorded with this cancel on a 5 cent stamp.

The letter has been opened and refolded to show both the original and return fronts.

Folded Address Sheet Reused as a Newspaper Wrapper



October 1848 double rate folded address sheet from Brunswick to Portland ME.
 Canceled with crossed rim-less grids. Brunswick received no 1847 stamps.

Four months after receiving the letter the sheet was turned and used to send a newspaper from Portland to Goose River ME. Manuscript '1 Newspaper chg-176'. Rate marking '3' representing the newspaper rate.



50% actual size



Section Four - Carriers and Local Posts

Official Carriers



This section presents a selection of Carriers and Locals used in combination with the 1847 stamps as well as examples of the 1847 stamps paying the city carrier fees.

Boston

In 1849 post offices in several cities began their own delivery system carrying mail to or from the post office and to or from the addressee's home or business. This was a direct reaction to the competition from local penny posts.

The Carrier Departments operated as separate units within each post office and issued their own stamps for prepaying fees. These stamps are known as semi-official carrier stamps.



March 1850 folded address sheet from Boston MA to New York City. The Penny Post delivered to the post office.

Boston carrier tied with postmark. Stamp is dark brown dot in 'S' variety with pre-printing paper fold.

From the mail



April 1848 folded letter from New York to Boston entered the mail of a mail train from New York. U.S. Express Mail route agent datestamp.

Notation 'Penny Post deliver this early'. There were three deliveries a day; this sender requested the first delivery. 2 cents collected on delivery at 174 Washington Street.



Cover from New York City to Middletown CT. Rose colored U.S. Mail carrier stamp.

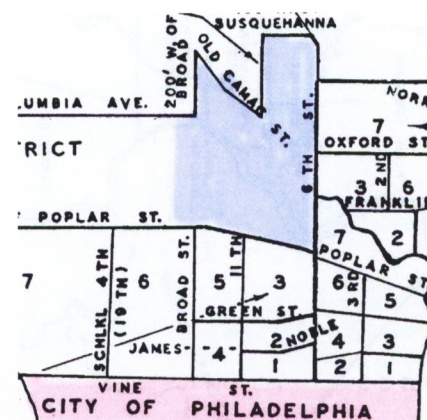


Cover from New York City to Cambridge MA. Buff colored U.S. Mail carrier stamp.

Unusual New York City use of the 7 bar round red grid canceling 5 cent stamp. Normally the 13 bar diamond grid was used in New York City.

Two letters from Philadelphia to an address on the 'outskirts' of Philadelphia, outside the area covered by the post office that the letter was mailed from. Thus the 5 cent stamp paid the under 300 mile (intercity) rate to the post office of the recipient, Ms. French. At this time there were other post offices in Philadelphia County besides the main post office in the city of Philadelphia.

The sender delivered the letters to the Philadelphia post office and paid 2 cents in cash for carrier delivery to Ms. French. The fact that the letters are addressed with delivery instructions favors the view that the letters were intended to be delivered to Ms. French, not delivered to the Philadelphia post office to be picked up by her.



This contemporary map shows the boundary of the city of Philadelphia and above the North boundary Poplar Street.



Stamp canceled by both the Philadelphia 'PAID' and 'FREE' cancels. Numeral '2' in circle rate marking struck at right.

The 'FREE' serves as an 'auxiliary marking' indicating that the carrier fee (shown by the '2' rate marking) had been prepaid in cash. The 'FREE' marking was most likely applied by the postmaster, not a clerk.

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Stamp canceled with numeral '2' in circle rate stamp; second numeral '2' rate marking at right. Manuscript 'all pd'.

The 'all pd' is the equivalent of the PAID and FREE used above, 'all' referring to the interoffice 5 cent rate and the 2 cents carrier delivery fee.



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The carrier stamps below are recorded on three covers with 1847 stamps



Folded address sheet from Philadelphia PA to New York City. Black on rose with carrier's initials 'LP'. (7LB1)



March 1851 folded address sheet from Philadelphia PA to Richmond VA. Black on vermillion carrier stamp (7LB8)