



18¢ North German
Union Direct Rate

Only recorded use of 2¢ Pictorial to Greece. Knobnoster, MO (25 Oct) via New York (red transit backstamp) and Bremen (9 11 69) to Athens, Greece (6 Nov). With grilled 1868 Lincoln, overpaying 18¢ North German Union direct mail rate, reduced from 19¢ in June 1868.

6¢ North German
Union Direct Rate



Registered letter from Chicago (merchant cachet 21 May 1873) to Manterndorf, Austria (8 June backstamp), sent at double 6¢ direct rate for German mails via Bremen or Hamburg effective 1 Oct 1871. Other postage pays 8¢ registration fee, as indicated by boxed "Recommandirt" marking.

28¢ Rate Via England



New York (10 May 70) on Guion Line steamer *Manhattan* departing 11 May and arriving at Queenstown 23 May. Further transit via London (24 May) to Cadiz, Spain (28 May black double oval datestamp). With red 24¢ credit to England (the U.S. retained 4¢) for fully paid 28¢ rate to Spain via England. Oval “PD” and crayon “4” pence (showing credit to Spain) applied in London.



Pensacola, FL (26 Aug 70) via New York (Paid 24//31 Aug exchange cds) and London transit (13 Sept) to Barcelona, Spain. Mixed franking of Pictorials and 6¢ banknote of 1870 paid 28¢ rate to Spain via England. (Cover restored.)

Printed Matter Rate



Savannah, GA via London (10 Oct 70) to Gibraltar, Spain. Corner clipped for postal inspection (to ensure contents qualified as printed matter). Franked at fully paid printed matter rate via England (14c up to 4 oz.), with 8c credit to England. **Only cover known using a 12c Pictorial on printed matter franking.** (e)



Charleston, SC (23 Sep 69) on printed circular to Mallorca, Spain. Underfranked by 2¢ to qualify for 14¢ mandatory prepaid printed matter rate to Spain via England (see above), so dispatched at letter rate to England, with "4R" (reales) postage due marking for delivery in Spain.

Mixed Franking from Cuba to Spain



One of about 10 recorded covers in the Quadrada correspondence from Cuba to Spain. Most of the Quadrada covers were overpaid to allow for passage by the first available ship, no matter what mail contract applied. From the transit and credit markings on this particular 1874 cover, it is possible to reconstruct its rate, route, and weight.

The total required franking was U.S. 60¢, plus 100 centesimos (= 1 peseta) to pay for internal Cuban postage. The U.S. share of the 60¢ was 24¢, including 20¢ for passage of a double-rate cover from Cuba to the U.S. The red crayon credit mark "36/2", applied at the New York exchange office, indicates a credit of 36¢ to Britain for a double-rate cover weighing ½-1 oz.

Of this 36¢, Britain owed 12¢ to Spain, as indicated by the red "6" credit mark applied in London (6 British pence = U.S. 12¢). The Spanish rate was two British pence (2d) per 10 grams. Thus, the "6" denotes that Britain credited Spain with a triple rate, corresponding to a cover weighing 20-30 grams (≈ 2/3-1 oz.).

The cover traveled by ship from Cuba to New York (mixed franking of 2¢ Pictorial and six 10¢ banknotes of 1873 tied by "N. York Steamship/Nov. 13" circular datestamps); passed through the New York exchange office on 14 Nov., then through London (red 1874 London transit cds on front), and on to Spain. (Cover restored.)



Hartford, CT (11 Mar 70)
via New York (12 Mar)
to Copenhagen,
Denmark (27 Mar).
Overpaid 4¢ on 13c NGU
direct mail rate to Den-
mark via Bremen. With
“Bremen Franco”
datestamp, “2½” cents
credit to NGU for transit
from Germany to Den-
mark, and “Weiterfr 1
Sgr” (restating 2½ cent
credit in silver groschen).

Norway, Michigan (14 Jan
70) to Stavanger, **Norway**
(16 Feb), paying 15¢ NGU
direct mail rate via Bre-
men, with 5¢ handstamp
credit to NGU for carrying
cover beyond Germany to
Norway. (e)



Council Bluffs, Iowa (5 Jan
70) to Lund, **Sweden** (25
Jan). Paying 14¢ NGU rate
via Hamburg. With
“Hamburg Franco” transit
datestamp and Chicago “4
CENTS” credit handstamp for
transit from Hamburg to
Sweden.



Rev. James Dennis was a Christian evangelist attached to the Presbyterian Mission in Syria, and he helped found the American University in Beirut. His correspondence is a main source of 1869 Pictorial covers to the Ottoman Empire, either at the 30¢ rate per ¼ oz. via French mails or the 20¢ rate per ½ oz. through England via German mails. Almost all Pictorial covers using these two rates were franked with a combination of 10¢ or 15¢ Pictorial stamps.

A slower and less-used option was the 15¢ "direct" rate through a German port (Bremen or Hamburg), in force until 30 June 1870. An example of this routing is the unusual cover below.

Triple 15¢ NGU direct rate to Syria



April 1870 from Newark, NJ (28 Apr) to Beirut, Syria (6 Jun), with red New York transit postmark (30 Apr) on reverse and boxed Bremen entry marking on front (13 May).

Franking represents 1¢ overpayment of triple 15¢ North German Union direct rate, with lightened crayon rate markings at the bottom [red crayon "15" (just visible below the Bremen box) shows U.S. credit to Germany and confirms triple rate].

The highest known franking of Pictorial stamps to the Ottoman Empire and the only one with a 2¢ Pictorial.

While the 1869 issue was in use, most international mail to the Indian Ocean, India and points further east was carried by the British mail system. Postage on letters from the U.S. was the sum of British overseas postage plus the cost of getting a cover across the Atlantic to England. The 1869 rate of 12¢ from the U.S. to England was reduced to 6¢ in 1870, thus lowering total postage for letters beyond Britain sent after 1869.

Seychelles Islands



Lynn, MA (23 Feb 70) via London (14 Mar) to Mahe, Seychelles. British mail 24¢ rate to the Seychelles, with 20¢ credit to Britain and 1d colonial credit for local delivery. **One of two known covers posted to the Seychelles with 1869 issue stamps.**

Ceylon



Janesville, WI (1 Aug 70) via London to Jaffna, Ceylon. British mail 22¢ rate to India and Ceylon, effective 1 Jan 70, with 18¢ credit to Britain and 1d credit for local delivery. **Only three covers recorded to Ceylon with 1869 stamps.**

28c Rate to India



Pittsfield, MA (6 May) via New York (8 May) and London (19 May 69) to Madras, India (24 Jul backstamp). 28c rate to India in 1869, with 18¢ credit to Britain and 1d colonial credit for local delivery. Paid with 24c gray lilac stamp of 1862 plus 2¢ Pictorials.



Boston, MA (7 Dec) via London (18 Dec 69) to Ahmednuggur, India. Double 28c rate to India by British mails via Southampton. Red crayon "36/2" shows double 18¢ credit to Britain, and separate red "2" is 2d colonial credit. Paid in part with 24¢ and 30¢ "F" grill stamps.

22¢ Rate to India



New York (19 May 70) via London (30 May) to Calcutta, India (4 Jul), at British mail 22¢ rate, effective at start of 1870. Carried on *Hansa* (North German Line) with Sea Post Office (Aden) transit backstamp. Also, the EDU for 10¢ ungrilled National Banknote on cover (19 May 70). (e)

34¢ Rate to Singapore



New Bedford, MA (6 Jul 69), via London (16 Jul) to Singapore (22 Aug). Basic British 34¢ rate to the Orient via Southampton valid in 1869, with 24¢ credit to Britain and "1d" credit for local delivery. Postage paid in part with 30¢ "F" grill stamp.



Jersey City, NJ (28 Jun 69), through exchange office in New York (29 Jun) via London (9 Jul) by British packet to China (25 Aug). "HONG KONG MARINE SORTER AU 19/26 69" cds on reverse. The postage (with 10¢ and 15¢ "F" grills) pays the ½ oz. 42¢ rate to Hong Kong via Marseilles effective January 1868. A 59-day transit during the last weeks before Pacific mail from the Eastern US began to be routinely routed via San Francisco using the new transcontinental railroad.



Batavia, NY (27 July 69) to Hong Kong (6 Oct). Franked for obsolete British mail 53¢ rate (valid 1863-67) via Marseilles (with 15¢ & 30¢ "F" grills). Re-routed by railroad to San Francisco ("Paid All") at new U.S. 10¢ transpacific rate.



Shanghai, China (21 Oct 69) via Yokohama (28 Oct) and San Francisco (22 Nov) to New York. Quadruple U.S. 10¢ transpacific rate from China. Carried by branch-line steamer *Costa Rica* of Pacific Mail Steamship Co. to Yokohama, then via main-line steamer *Japan* to San Francisco. Earliest known use of 1869 Pictorial stamps from Shanghai. (e)

Japan to China



Interconsular 6¢ rate between China and Japan, effective April 1870. From Nagasaki, Japan (21 Sep 70) to Shanghai, China (24 Sep), docketed for branch-line steamer *Oregonian*. One of three known covers at interconsular rate franked with 2¢ Pictorial stamp. (e)

Combined 10¢ Transpacific
and 6¢ Transatlantic Rates



Yokohama, Japan (20 Apr 70) via San Francisco (14 May) to Huddersfield, England (2 Jun). Combined 10¢ transpacific and 6¢ transatlantic rates. Manuscript "2" in magenta represents credit to Great Britain applied in San Francisco for covers from Japan to England exchanged through San Francisco.

10¢ Transpacific Rate

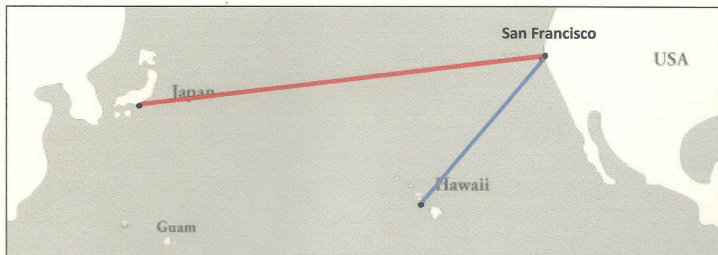


Auburn, NY (1 Aug 70) to Yokohama, Japan (25 Sep). Additional use of 3¢ Banknote stamps of 1870 to make up U.S. 10¢ transpacific rate.

Unique "Double" Pacific Mail Transit



Stamps tied by strikes of Japanese "X" chop cancel on 1870 cover to Hilo, Hawaii via San Francisco (19 May). Cover carried on Pacific Mail Steamship Company's *Japan*, which cleared Yokohama on April 20, with transit cds in San Francisco May 19. The next contract steamship sailing to Hawaii was not until June 10, so letter placed on non-contract clipper ship *Governor Morton*, sailing May 19 and arriving in Honolulu June 2. The 20¢ postage was intended to pay two separate rates — the 10¢ rate from Japan to San Francisco, plus the 10¢ contract steamship rate from San Francisco to Hawaii (although the letter actually went by non-contract sailing vessel to save time). **No other comparable cover recorded.** (e)



In June 1870, letters from Hawaii to the U.S. could be sent by a monthly contract steamer or by non-contract ships, most of which were sailing vessels. The contract steamers usually reached San Francisco in about 11-14 days, but the non-contract ships typically took a week longer.

Also, the postage rates were different. For a *contract* steamship, the U.S. rate was 10¢ per ½ oz., plus 5¢ Hawaiian postage; *non-contract* mail cost 3¢ per ½ oz., plus a 2¢ ship fee per letter, plus 5¢ Hawaiian. (In 1870, Hawaii was still an independent nation and empowered to issue its own postage stamps.)

Thus, a contract steamer was a bit faster but cost more and only operated once a month. Depending on the dispatch date, it might be both cheaper and more timely to use a non-contract ship, as illustrated by the cover below.

Last Non-contract Cover from Hawaii to the United States



Cover from Hawaii to Bridgeport, CT, carried on non-contract American sailing bark *D.C. Murray*, departing Hawaii on 2 Jun 1870, with San Francisco receiving circular datestamp (22 Jun). Correctly prepaid 5¢/5¢ non-contract rate (5¢ Hawaiian postage, 2¢ ship fee and 3¢ U.S. postage).

Blue 5¢ Kamehameha stamp is uncanceled; letter did not pass through the Hawaiian postal system, but was delivered directly to the ship. (Cover restored.)

This was the last non-contract cover known from Hawaii. A new postal convention (effective 1 July 1870) abolished both a separate 2¢ ship fee and the need for mixed Hawaii-U.S. postage on letters to the United States. **Only five covers from Hawaii are recorded with the 2¢ Pictorial stamp.**

(N.b.: The June 1870 contract steamer *Ajax* departed Hawaii on 23 June, reaching San Francisco on 4 July, two weeks after the *D.C. Murray* had arrived.)

Post Office Experiments in Using Proofs for Public Display and as Political Gifts

In 1881 Atlanta hosted an International Cotton Exposition. In support, the Post Office Department ordered a special printing of all U.S. stamps from 1847 to 1880 for display. Most of the designs were reprinted in five colors on thin white card. The 2¢ was produced in a pane of 150 examples for each color, and when these passed into philatelic hands, the panes were typically cut into singles and a few pairs and blocks.

These Atlanta proofs are "trial colors" only in a display sense, since they were created more than a decade after the 1869 stamp issue had been superseded by the Banknote series.

1881 Atlanta Trial Color Plate Proofs



1904 "Roosevelt" Small Die Proof

The Bureau of Engraving and Printing produced 85 leather-bound albums containing small die proofs on white wove paper mounted on gray cardboard. These albums were presented to various Washington dignitaries, and individual proofs have trickled into the market during the past century.



1915 Panama-Pacific Small Die Proof

The Bureau of Engraving and Printing made a special printing of unmounted, small die proofs on yellowish, wove paper for display at the 1915 Panama-Pacific Exhibition at San Francisco. About 3-5 examples of each denomination have become available to collectors.



Reissue of 1875

All 1869 denominations were reissued in small quantities to meet collector demand for the original stamps. Reissued stamps are on hard, white paper without grill.



Largest known block
(one of two recorded)
(e)

During its heyday, the 2¢ Pictorial played a pivotal role in the circulation of domestic mail, franking all but a tiny percentage of carrier correspondence, business circulars, wrappers containing periodicals, books, and pamphlets, and what the POD labeled "miscellaneous mailable matter." Unfortunately, this period of bloom was brief. Due to public unpopularity, 1869 Pictorials were replaced after only 13 months by the first Banknote issue. Even so, the 2¢ Pictorial continued useful service into the 1880's — no longer a major workhorse of the postal system, but still in harness.

Promotion to First Class!

Very late use of 2¢ Pictorial. Philadelphia, PA (8 Feb 88) to Colorado Springs, CO (22 Feb 88 arrival postmark on reverse). The domestic letter rate had been reduced from 3¢ to 2¢ in 1883; and thus the 2¢ Pictorial — formerly used as a "junk mail" stamp in 1869 — was promoted to first-class status by 1888.

