

1869 Times

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Inside: Another look at 1869 multiples with a focus on the 30¢ and 90¢ stamps. This block of eight is one of a number of 30¢ blocks with similar centering and the characteristic black brush cancellation. What is the origin of these blocks and how were they used? The mystery continues.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This is my first opportunity to address the membership of the 1869 Pictorial Research Associates in what has traditionally been the forum for the president to provide his thoughts to the membership on a quarterly basis. At the outset, let me say that I was pleased to be elected president of our organization at the last board of directors meeting held last fall at SESCAL in Los Angeles. But I know that with this ascendancy comes more work, more responsibility and more decision-making.

I anticipate using not only officers and board members, but also members of the group to work to make our organization better, to endeavor to organize more seminars at national and regional shows, and to vigorously pursue a publication schedule which, as you know, the 1869 cover census is the main concern at present.

Although officers, board members and members at large of the organization play an important role in the success of our group, the 1869 PRA, Inc., it is our quarterly publication, the *1869 Times*, which is the heartbeat of our group and the forum by which members share their knowledge and research, developments are discussed, auctions are analyzed and other matters of importance to our membership are presented.

This publication would not be possible without the long, sometimes tiresome and tremendous effort that our editor, Jon Rose, puts forth throughout the year. Part of this president's message is to thank Jon for all his past efforts and his continuing and future endeavors in editing what I believe to be a very fine quarterly publication.

Although this *Times* may reach you during or after AMERIPEX '86, the international stamp exhibition, I do wish to invite each and every member to the show which was to be held in Chicago, May 22-June 1. The exhibition, which has been described elsewhere in these pages and in the philatelic press in general, is an event not to be missed. The exhibits, seminars, lectures, dealers and general social comradeship that will be present at AMERIPEX leads me to believe that this will be the greatest exhibition that our hobby has ever seen, and will be difficult to duplicate in coming years.

Besides a board meeting devoted primarily to the business of the organization, the 1869 PRA, Inc. will have two outstanding lectures with slide shows. The first will be presented by Jon Rose, our *1869 Times* editor, which is now scheduled to commence at 4:30 p.m. Sunday, May 25. Jon's lecture will be on rates and usages, featuring the 2¢ 1869 on cover. Michael Laurence will give a second presentation on rates and usages of the 10¢ stamp. This is scheduled to begin at noon, Friday, May 30.

Our group will also have a hospitality table on the floor of AMERIPEX and members are, of course, warmly invited to come by to rest weary feet, discuss the show itself or just meet fellow members. I am truly looking forward to the show and the exciting activities and people which make up such an exposition. I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible.

Jeffrey M. Forster
President and chairman of the board, 1869 PRA, Inc.

AN OVERLAND COVER TO MEXICO

by R. H. Stever

Editor's Note: This article first appeared in the Texas Postal History Society Journal. It is being reprinted here with the kind permission of that publication and the author, R.H. (Jim) Stever.

The cover pictured in Fig. 1 below appears to be one of those common orange-yellow envelopes with a 3c 1869, typical of so many domestic uses of the 1869 period. (It was lot 23 in the Sept.11-12, 1981 sale of Gala Stamp Auctions, Richmond, Va.) To a casual observer this seems to be just a simple domestic cover. Nothing could be further from the truth.

This cover is in fact a lovely example of the overland rate to Mexico. Covers to Mexico with 1869 stamps are far from common. Most show the 10c direct rate by sea from U.S. ports to Mexican port cities like Vera Cruz, Tampico or Tuxpan. There was no authorized "paid all" rate to Mexican destinations. Postage could be paid only to the frontier (Mexican border), irregardless of whether transit was by sea or overland.

Prof. George E. Hargest (1971) states that the overland rate to Mexico was three cents to the border. Apparently, each country agreed to charge its domestic inland postage to the frontier, and to collect due postage from the recipient on letters originating in the other country. So Fig. 1 carries only three cents in U.S. domestic postage (See cover below).

The cover in Fig. 1 was mailed April 8 at San Antonio, Texas. The year is uncertain, but is very likely 1870. Earliest known usage of the 3c 1869 is March 27, 1869. April 8 is probably too early for the San Antonio Post Office

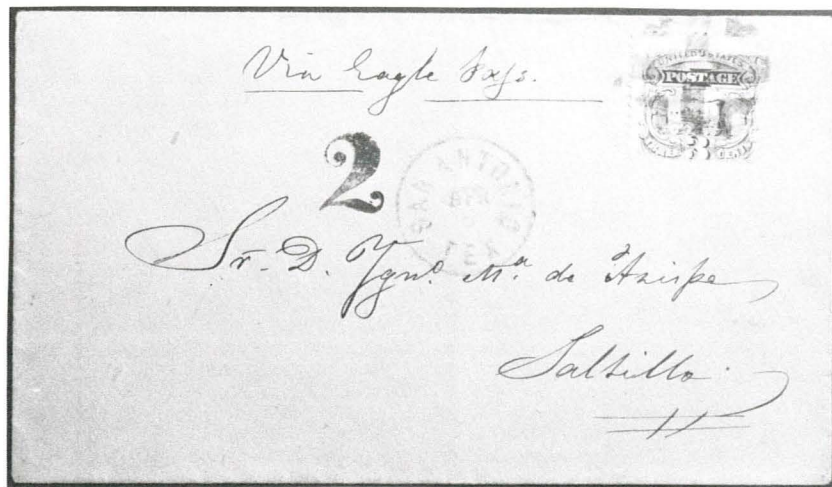


Figure 1. This cover was mailed at San Antonio on April 8, probably 1870. Addressed to Saltillo, Mexico, it was routed "via Eagle Pass." "2" is for 2 reales Mexican internal rate. Stamp is 3c 1869, cancelled by same geometric killer as one in Fig. 2 on p.4.

to be supplied with these stamps. Also, the same circular date stamp and geometric killer (not listed in Skinner-Eno) were used on the cover in Fig. 2 below, docketed May 1, 1870, about three weeks after the cover sent to Mexico. Evidently, the San Antonio postal clerks were using this canceling device at that time.

The cover in Fig. 1 was addressed to Saltillo and directed "via Eagle Pass." It entered the Mexican mails at Piedras Negras, sister city to Eagle Pass, where it received a stylized Mexican "2," signifying two reales due from the recipient. According to Schatzkes (1964) Mexican postal tariffs were based both on the distance carried and the weight of the letter. As this was most probably a single weight letter, and the distance from Piedras Negras to Saltillo (See map, fig.3, p.5) is more than 16 leagues (a league is about three miles), it was stamped two reales due. A distance less than 16 leagues would have required due postage of only one real.

San Antonio was a frontier community in 1870. There were a few small settlements in the area to the southwest towards Eagle Pass. Marauding bands of wild Indians (Comanches, Caranchuas, Apaches, Lipans, Kickapoos and Navajos) harassed settlers along the mail routes. These tribes also roamed south of the Rio Grande in northern Mexico. The railroad had not yet come to this area, and travel was by horseback and stagecoach, a dangerous journey because of the Indian menace. This is probably one reason so few overland covers to Mexico from this era have survived. No doubt most letters went by the safer sea route, and many that went overland were destroyed during the Indian raids. Many interesting tales of skirmishes with Indians on the San Antonio-Eagle Pass-Monterrey stage run were told by August Santleben, an early stage line operator, in his autobiography, A Texas Pioneer.

Santleben was awarded a mail contract in January, 1866 to carry the mail from San Antonio to Eagle Pass and Fort Clark. He also carried mail, cargo and passengers to Monterrey. He had a good working relationship with certain Mexican custom officials at Piedras Negras, but when the Mexican government

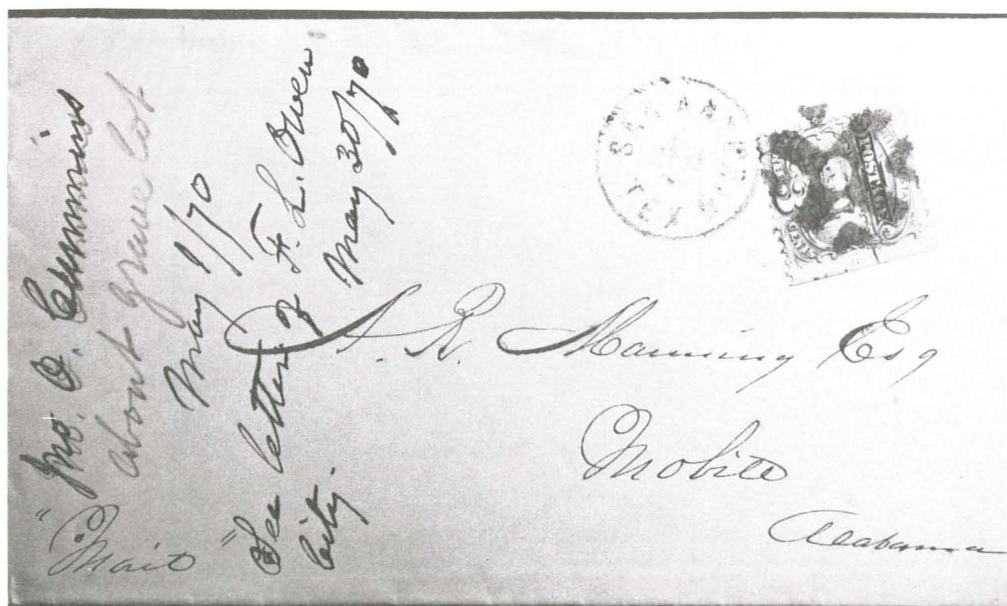


Figure 2. This cover was posted on May 2, 1870 at San Antonio. It shows the same cross-bars killer as ties the 3c 1869 pictured in Fig. 1 on page 3.

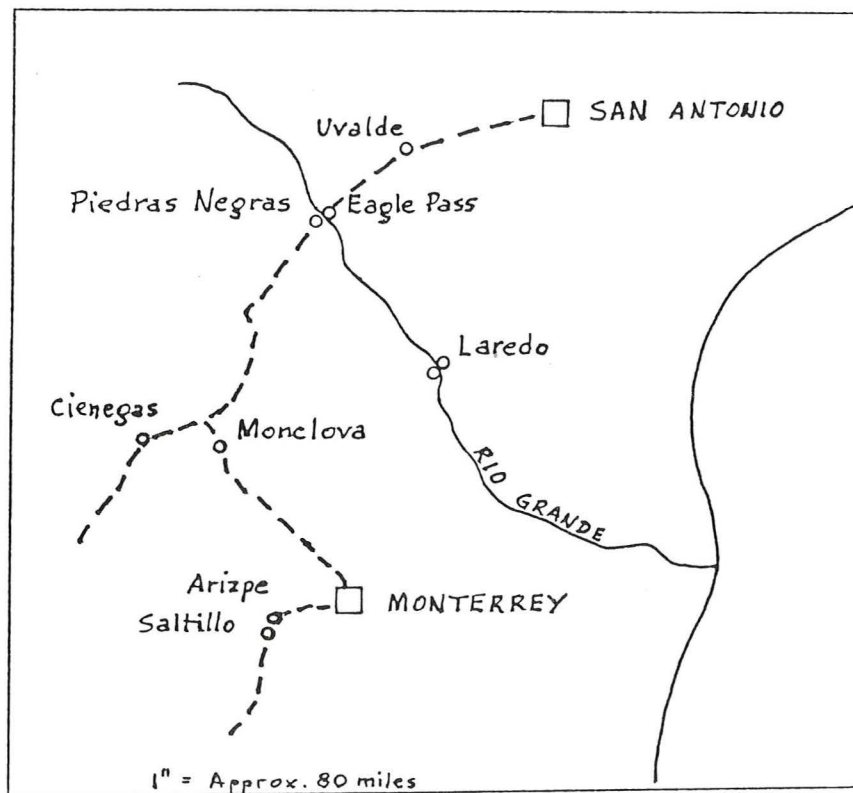


Figure 3. This map shows the pertinent stagecoach routes of southwest Texas and northern Mexico.

replaced these individuals, Santleben was unhappy and allowed his mail contract to expire at the end of 1868. Actually, his trips to Monterrey continued until August, 1869.

There were other stage lines which ran between San Antonio and Eagle Pass after 1868, but no U.S. stage line operators ran routes into Mexico. According to Thonhoff (1971), B.F. Ficklin's U.S. Mail Stage Line had stages leaving San Antonio for Eagle Pass at 7 am every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The cover in Fig. 1 could have been carried to Eagle Pass by a Ficklin stage, as April 8, 1870 was a Friday. However, Ficklin did not operate into Mexico, and letters addressed to Mexico had to wait at the Piedras Negras post office for a stage of the Diligencias Generales, the Mexican postal system. One of the stage line operators in the D.G. system was Felix Maceyra, a Mexican citizen from the city of Chihuahua. He owned an international stage line running between San Antonio and Chihuahua, with connecting coaches at Cienegas to Monterrey, Saltillo and other Mexican cities.

Thus the evidence is inconclusive as to which line carried the cover in Fig. 1 to Eagle Pass. It no doubt traveled on a Maceyra stage to Cienegas; but a Maceyra advertisement in the San Antonio Express of July 25, 1867 is unclear as to whether he also operated the connecting stage to Saltillo, or whether this portion of the Diligencias was run by another stage operator. There are no back-stamps or other notations to indicate when this letter arrived at Saltillo.

The addressee on the Fig. 1 cover is yet another story, although a historical one, rather than philatelic. His name, abbreviated on the covers, is Senor Don Ignacio Maria de Arizpe, an important rancher and businessman in the Saltillo area. Readers who have traveled to Saltillo will recall the Arizpe Hotel.

The family ranch was located about 14 kilometers northeast of Saltillo. Today this is the site of the small town of Arizpe, named after one of Don Ignacio's relatives, Miguel Ramos Arizpe, who presided over the constitutional convention of 1823 after Mexico won her independence from Spain.

There is one intriguing speculation about this cover, which will no doubt never be fully reconciled. That is the possibility of a German connection. Many of the early settlers of south Texas and northern Mexico were German immigrants. For example, Santleben years later recalled the names of 77 passengers on his trips to Monterrey, 32 of whom were Germans or German immigrants. The handwriting, especially the double "s" of Eagle Pass (on the cover in Fig. 1), suggests a German hand may have addressed this envelope. There are no collector or dealer markings on the cover, thus indicating minimal, if any, exposure to the philatelic marketplace. And Gala Auctions reports the cover was consigned by a gentleman from Sweden who purchased the cover in Germany! Could a German immigrant in the employ of Don Ignacio have carried it back to Germany? Unless this is part of a correspondence which one day turns up, I doubt if we will ever know.

*

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A One in a Million Cover in a Barrel of Plain Janes

by Wesley A. Crozier

I was 20 years old when I first saw the cover. Leon Reussille, prominent Red Bank, New Jersey, lawyer and faithful member of the venerable Monmouth County Philatelic Society, showed it to me at his home. He then proceeded to relate the story behind the cover.

John S. Applegate founded his law firm in Red Bank in the mid-1800's. It grew into a large business with several partners. This was the firm with which Leon Reussille became associated after graduating from Princeton University. He became a full partner in the early 1900's, and in his last active years as an attorney he was a senior partner in the firm.

During his early years with the firm Leon became interested in stamp collecting. He fiddled around with foreign issues for a while, then started collecting U.S. plate number blocks. He formed a very strong collection of these, which included many of the earliest commemoratives. It was inevitable that Leon would sooner or later become interested in early U.S. issues. When this happened, it wasn't long before Leon, with the typical lawyer's mind for details, history and research, began to collect early covers.

We are approaching the exciting part of Leon's story. He told me that about 1925 it occurred to him that because of the age of the Applegate firm there might be archives somewhere, and these would include old envelopes with stamps. As the result of inquiring and searching, he finally located the oldest letters sent the firm. They were not stored in an organized way. What Leon found in the loft of a small brick building, which stands to this day almost in the center of the Red Bank business district, was a bunch of large old barrels crammed full of letters.

Leon related that it was easy for him to obtain permission from the partners of the firm to "take what he wanted." So in the weeks which followed he did just that. He carted off cardboard boxes filled with envelopes, which bore interesting stamps and postmarks. Leon said that there were far too many to count, but they numbered in the thousands. He said, "I did not keep the majority, as they appeared to be too ordinary." (Oh, would I like to see those thousands of "ordinary" plain Jane covers today!)

The earliest covers were folded letters, which for the most part had been sent from New Jersey towns in the early 1850's. These were stampless, as many of the smaller New Jersey town post offices were not supplied with stamps until the late fifties. Leon did not recall any covers with the 1847 Issue, but there were hundreds with Scott #26 and #65. There was a profusion of Bank Note stamp covers, many with advertising corner cards. There were large numbers of envelopes from the 1890's, but Leon discarded these. There was little, if anything, from the twentieth century.

This find aroused Leon's interest in U.S. postal history, and he continued to collect old covers for many years. Later he developed a passion for trans-oceanic ship covers, with particular emphasis on rates and vessels.

Leon said he spent hundreds of hours sorting and studying those thousands

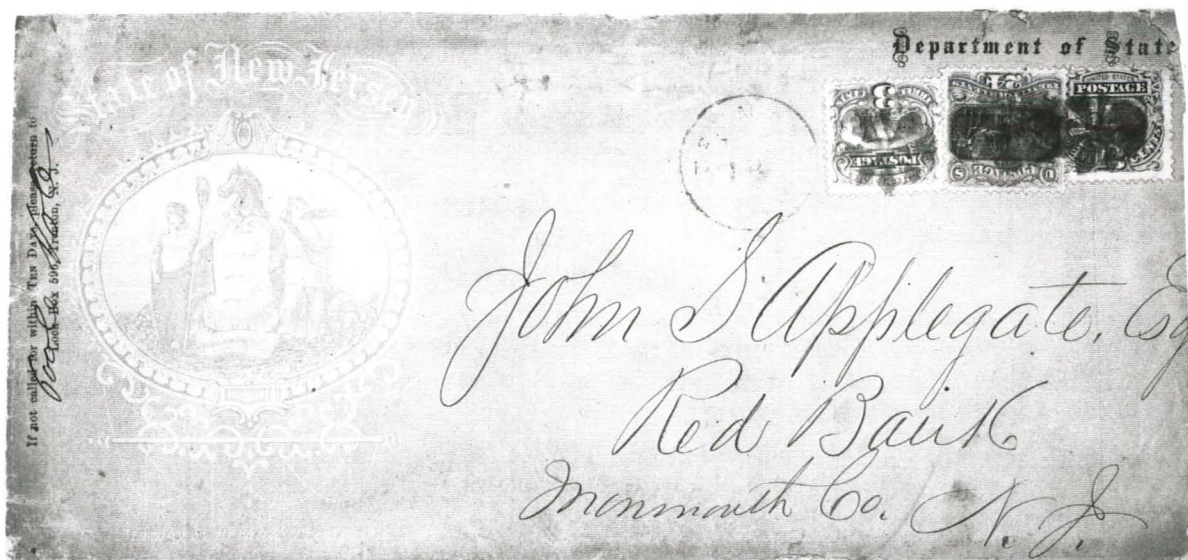


Figure 1. A 3c, 12c and 24c 1869 pay the 13 times 3c letter rate from Trenton, NJ, to Red Bank, NJ. Year unknown. At left is cachet of New Jersey state seal. Cover contained legal documents.

of old Applegate covers. But his greatest thrill came when he found the legal size cover with the 24c, 12c and 3c 1869s. The cover with the state seal of New Jersey is from the New Jersey Dept. of State and contained legal documents. The year of use is unknown. The stamps paid the 13 times domestic letter rate. (See Fig. 1 above.) Leon said that this cover was far and away the best item in the lot. He had always prized it highly.

I was only 20 at the time I first saw this cover. That was in 1944. I was too young and too poor to buy it. However, I never forgot it, and a good many years later, when things were going fairly well, I decided to try to purchase it.

I arranged a visit to Leon's home, and during the evening I brought up the subject of "the cover." Surprisingly, Leon was receptive, and we discussed many aspects, including value approximations. A few weeks later we met again, and this time we agreed on a price. I purchased the cover on a time payment contract basis, and Leon said afterwards, "I can't think of anyone in whose collection I would rather place this cover." I was delighted, needless to say, and in the years which followed I featured the cover in several exhibitions. It always drew a great deal of attention.

This is the only known domestic use cover which bears the combination of 3c, 12c and 24c 1869s. It is not registered, so the 39c postage must have paid the 13 times 3c rate, for the contents were heavy legal documents.

I enjoyed the cover for many years. Then at a time of "economic reality" I decided to sell it. Several years ago it became the prized possession of a postal history buff on the East Coast. The exact whereabouts of this cover is unknown to me at this time, but the day will come when it will find its way back onto the market.

I will always remember this cover fondly and the story of the "barrels full of envelopes" because it happened so close to my lifetime home--just two miles away. Mr. Reussille died several years ago at the age of 91.

EDITOR'S PAGE

In a note from me in *Times* #35 (see p.18) there was a brief discussion of late usages of forwarder B. F. Stevens' markings. I noted there exists a cover with a 10¢ Pan American (#299), used in September, 1901, and showing the B. F. Stevens forwarding marking. In this case the service was from England to Genoa, Italy.

Herman (Pat) Herst wrote to say that years ago he amassed a collection of Stevens covers, perhaps the "most extensive" at that time. "The basis for it was a find made by John Fox in the late 1930s, a huge correspondence addressed to a U.S. Naval officer, who throughout his career had his letters sent via Stevens," wrote Herst.

"I recall newswrappers on papers sent to South America and Turkey. He used Stevens for his personal errands when in London. There were letters to him from Stevens with opera tickets enclosed, unused.

"The earliest Stevens marking was 1866, a small oval, much smaller than the one customarily encountered. There were several types of ovals over the years, all more or less similar, but for that first one.

"I would guess that the latest one was after his death (Stevens died on March 5, 1902), perhaps 1903 or 1904. But the interesting thing is that he had a successor who continued the marking with "U.S. DESPATCH AGENT," with his name substituted in the handstamp for Stevens.

"The collection was written up and appeared as a feature story in *Philately*, the magazine started with great hopes by a St. Louis millionaire, who dropped a bundle on it before he died in 1947 or so. . . . Many of the covers bore 1869 stamps.

"The collection was sold intact in a Robson Lowe auction in London in the 1950s or 1960s. Interestingly, Stevens' office on Henrietta street in London still stands . . . It is only a stone's throw from the London Philatelic Centre in Covent Garden," Herst concludes.

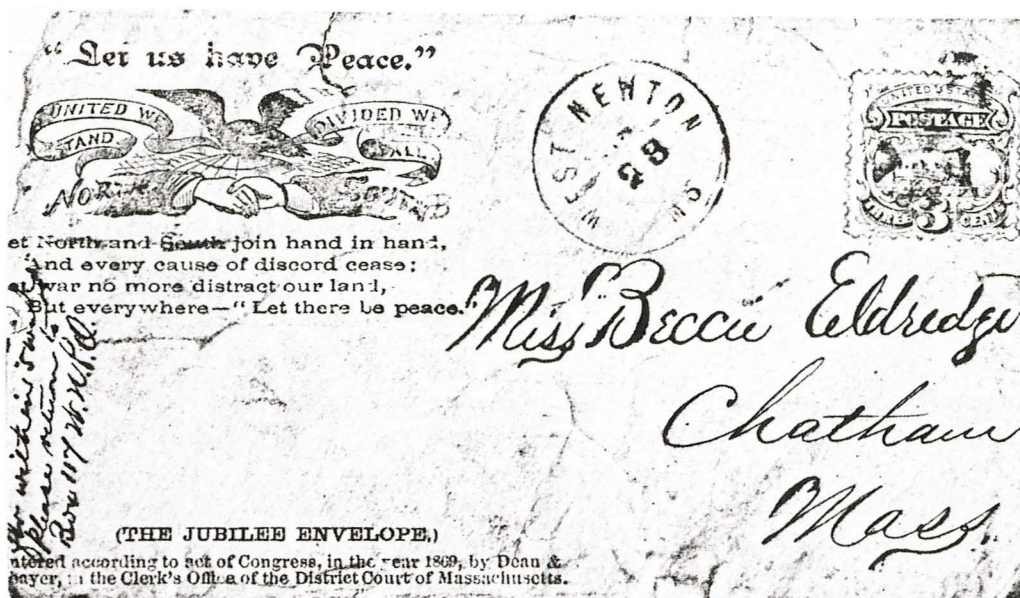
Some questions arise. What is the earliest use of the B. F. Stevens forwarding marking? What is the latest with Stevens name? What was the name of the successor forwarder? If any reader can pull out the article in *Philately* and send me a copy, I would appreciate it.



H. Grant Crowell, PRA #340, sent the photocopy of the illustrated peace propaganda cover illustrated on p.10. The cover was sent from West Newton, Mass., in 1869 or 1870, franked with a 3¢ Locomotive, and bears the slogan, "The Jubilee Envelope."

Crowell surmises that the "jubilee" reference might refer to the year, 1870, which would be the 250th anniversary (jubilee?) of the landing of the Pilgrims in 1620. "No one that I have talked with has any more input than guesswork," Crowell wrote. Any ideas, readers?

The peace slogan at the upper left reads: "Let us have peace"/UNITED WE STAND, DIVIDED WE FALL/ North/South (clasped hands logo). And the poem: "Let North and South join hand in hand/ And every cause of discord cease/ And war no more distract our land/ But everywhere—Let there be peace."



Jubilee Envelope and peace propaganda corner card. What does it mean? See article, p.9.
From H. Grant Crowell collection.

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AUCTION NOTE

Robert A. Siegel's April 5, 1986 Rarities of the World Sale in New York City featured a handful of noteworthy 1869 items. Included was a set of the Atlanta plate proofs of the re-issues (123TC-132TC), 78 different, which sold for \$13,200 (Cat. \$30,650). An off-center, but sound used 15c invert (119b) went for just \$5,500 (\$17,000). A second used copy, nice looking, but repaired sold for \$4,950. A used 30c invert, red cancel, slight defects including pinhole, realized \$17,050, to the book. A cover with the 6c and 12c National Bank Notes plus two 24c 1869s to Peru (Davis cover) realized \$15,400. And, finally, an unused corner block of eight of the 30c without grill (121a) sold for \$9,350 (\$37,000) to a floor bidder.

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Germany, $\frac{1}{2}$ oz., per Bremen Mail.	10 cents.
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This abbreviated rate table appeared in a small booklet published in 1869. Called "Sixth Annual New Year's Address of the Letter Carriers of Brooklyn P.O.," the booklet's cover was illustrated on p.22 of 1869 Times #35, February, 1886. [Courtesy of Herman (Pat) Herst]

MORE ON MULTIPLES

By Jon W. Rose

1869 Times Editor-in-Chief

Since I have been editor of the *1869 Times*, this journal has said a great deal about existing multiples of all values of the 1869 Issue. Our first look was when PRA President Jeffrey Forster gave his guided tour through the 1869 portion of the Charles Hirzel Collection, housed in the Swiss PTT Museum in Bern. You may recall the four blocks of the 90¢, including a choice used block of six, and the mint plate number (3) and imprint block of 50 of the 2¢ 1869. If not see *Times* #30, pp.4-14.

In *Times* #31 (February, 1985) I examined the 90¢ stamp with emphasis on multiples, cancellations and printing varieties, especially the first named. In the article I listed 16 multiples. The listing included five used blocks of four and one used block of six. Thanks to the cooperation of a PRA member, who prefers to remain



Figure 1 at left pictures the sixth used block of four of the 90¢ 1869. It belongs to a PRA member. Figure 2 at right pictures unused, og block of four, reinforced and rejoined perfs, sold in the April Siegel Rarities sale.

anonymous, we can now illustrate a sixth used block of four, shown in Fig. 1 above. This block is in the gray black and carmine rose shades, reasonably canceled in black and off-center to the top and slightly left.

In the *Times* #31 article I listed 16 multiples, as stated. Number three on the list was an unused block of four, described as follows: “unused, og, centered well left and high; deep carmine and black; reinforced, rejoined perfs, grill breaks, bottom right stamp may have tiny thin, 1984 PFC, Suburban Stamp Co., lot 105, sale of 10/24/84; also Peter Kenedi, lot 67, sale of 1/25/83. Lot #119 in the April 5, 1986 Robert A. Siegel Rarities of the World Sale was one and the same piece. See Fig. 2 above. It sold for \$14,850 to the book. The auction catalogue description was as follows: “Fresh, disturbed o.g., left perfs trivial bit in, nicely centered horizontally, some reinforced & rejoined perforations. A very rare block, with P. F. Certificate.” Catalogue value is \$65,000.

The anonymous collector mentioned above owns a most exciting array of 1869 multiples, in addition to the used 90¢ block. Most impressive are the used multiples of the 30¢ bi-color. These include two used blocks of 12

(one of which is illustrated in Fig. 3 below), a block of 10, a block of eight, a block of six and four blocks of four. All of these blocks, whose stamps total 81, have the same non-descript black brush cancellation.

Also shown here (Fig. 4 below) is an irregular used block of 11, which I believe sold for \$4,125 in the Harmer Prestige '84 Sale in New York City, Oct. 9, 1984. This block is now in a PRA member's collection. Note that the block of 12 and block of 11 illustrated here both have the selfsame black brush killer cancel. In fact, a block owned by this writer and several other blocks I have seen all have the same cancel.

Does any reader of this quarterly know the origin of all these blocks? Were they, perhaps, at one time in a complete pane of 100 or so cancelling a very large package? Or were they used on a series of packages sent out by the same firm requiring high rates of postage? I would welcome all comments on this mystery.

Figure 3. At right is one of three known used blocks of 12 of the 30¢ 1869. It is one of two in the collection of the PRA member whom we will call Mr. Anonymous. The third is in the Ryo Ishikawa collection. Note the characteristic black blotch killer cancel and the marked off-centeredness to the right, a characteristic of all three blocks of 12.



Figure 4. At left is the second largest known used block of the 30¢ 1869. Now in the collection of a PRA member in the West, it sold in the 1984 Harmer Prestige sale for a reported \$4,125. It also is markedly centered to the right and is struck with the black brush blob killer. Could all of these large blocks have come from the same piece? Or perhaps from one correspondence of heavy mail?

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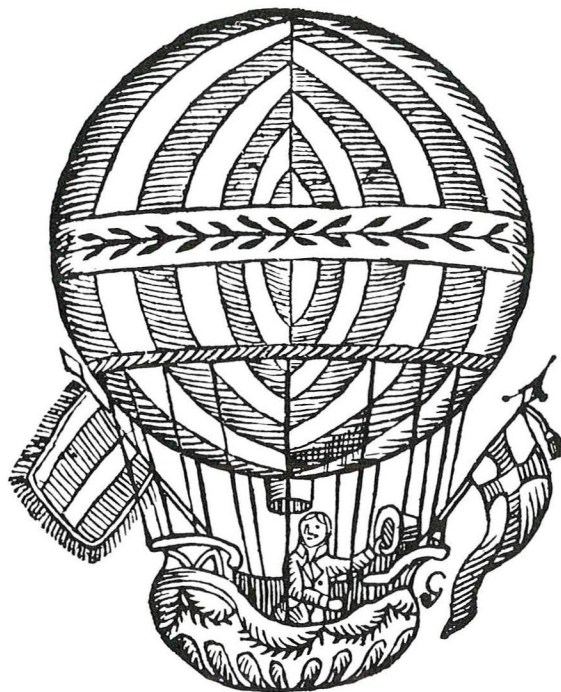
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