

The 7¢ Vermillion Stanton Envelopes

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In 1870, the United States Post Office Department ordered a seven-cent envelope as a companion piece to the proposed 7 cent Stanton adhesive stamp (Scott nos. 138, 149) to prepay the direct mail service rate to Germany. The G.H. Nesbitt firm, which had held the envelope contract from 1853 onward, ran into a political problem late in 1869 after Nesbitt's death and the contract was canceled effective March 31, 1870. The Post Office Department solicited sealed bids for a new contract and George H. Reay, a former Nesbitt employee, won the contract. He was to begin deliveries under the new contract on July 1, 1870. However, this was not to be.

W.H.H. Terrell, Third Assistant Postmaster General, sent out the original notice of a 7 cent envelope on April 9, 1870. It read in part:

"NEW SERIES OF STAMPED ENVELOPES. About the 1st of July next, the Department will commence the issue of a new series of stamped envelopes and a new newspaper wrapper. The stamps will be of the same designs and colors as the new postage stamps of corresponding denominations. The shape of the stamps embossed on the envelope and wrapper will be oval. The new postage stamps are oblong.

As the new envelopes and wrappers will be issued under a new contract, it is expected that they can be furnished to the public of a superior quality, and at rates considerably cheaper than those now in use. It is therefore enjoined that you limit your orders from the Department for the current quarter to barely sufficient to last until its close; in the meantime using every effort in your power to dispose of your present stock.

A full description of the new envelopes and wrappers, with a schedule of prices, will be sent you upon completion of the arrangements now in progress for their issue..."

The subject of the new 7 cent design was Edwin McMaster Stanton (1814-1869), the second Secretary of War in Abraham Lincoln's cabinet (1862-1865), who had recently died. He also had been Andrew Johnson's Secretary of War until his dismissal by Johnson, which was the cause of the attempt to impeach Johnson. When the impeachment failed on May 26, 1868, Stanton resigned and returned to the practice of law. In 1869 President Grant named him to the Supreme Court, but Stanton died within four days of his appointment, on December 24, 1869. The use of Stanton as a stamp subject was a calculated political move designed to repudiate the Johnsonian Republicans and any revision of the strictest Reconstruction policy in the South.

No source photograph has been identified for the design but all the other values were from marble busts and Postmaster General Jonathan A. J. Creswell stated in his Annual Report of November 15, 1870 that:

"Upon the conclusion of the postal treaty with the North German Confederation fixing the single letter rate by direct steamers at seven cents, to take effect the 1st of July last, a stamp of that denomination was adopted, and the profile bust of the late Edwin M. Stanton selected for the

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design. This has been completed in a satisfactory manner but, owing to the temporary discontinuance of the direct mailship service to North Germany, it has not been issued to postmasters."

The designer of the 7 cent Reay envelope was Rudolph Philipp Laubenheimer, a German-born engraver, die sinker, and medaillieur who engraved the dies for all the Reay 1870-71 stamped envelopes as well as the 1873 Reay War Department issue. On August 12, 1870, Laubenheimer received a letter from Terrell commending him upon his beautiful dies.

George Henry Reay (1837-1876), the holder of the contract, was a master craftsman in his field. A native of Ireland, Reay was a former employee and assistant to George Nesbitt who had invented the machines used to manufacture envelopes with patents in 1862 (counting) and 1867 (embossing, printing, and folding). By 1876, 90 percent of all U.S. envelopes were manufactured with Reay machines. Nesbitt had a manufacturing plant in Brooklyn, NY, but operated from a building at 77 John Street in Manhattan, which, interestingly enough, contained a store of the George H. Nesbitt Company.

Reay employed 43 men, 7 boys, and 177 girls under Superintendent George Watkins in an area of 22,000 square feet to produce 550,000 envelopes in a ten hour day. Gumming was performed by hand and a girl could gum 25,000 envelopes a day.

The Seven Cent Rate

On June 21, 1870, Joseph H. Blackfan, Superintendent Foreign Mails, sent a notice stating that an additional postal convention had recently been concluded between the United States and the North German Union (NGU), to take effect on July 1st, which reduced the closed mail via England rate to 10 cents and the prepaid direct mail rate to Bremen and Hamburg to 7 cents. The new rates included the NGU, Austria, and Luxembourg.

It is obvious that at this time preparations for a 7 cent stamp and a similar envelope would have begun. However, there was a problem over the subject to be used for the design. Proposals for Baron Steuben and others were debated as evidenced by the essays reported by Brazer 149E-A (Steuben); 149E-B (Lafayette); 149E-C (Liberty), before a decision to use Stanton was reached. This decision was made at least by August 5th (Brazer 149E-D).

In envelope production, Reay began to get his dies approved so that he could meet the original July 1, 1870 deadline. However, a successful protest of the contract led to a reletting of it under new sealed bids. Reay lost the reletting that went to a non-envelope manufacturer, Dempsey O'Toole of Brooklyn on July 16, 1870. On August 30th, that company attempted to reassign its contract to Nesbitt; legally this was not permissible. What finally transpired was a Presidential cabinet meeting on October 4, 1870 that canceled this contract and an agreement on October 7th to accept Reay's willingness to resume the contract. A new agreement for a four-year contract to terminate October 1, 1874 was immediately signed, and Reay made arrangements with the Nesbitt Co. to manufacture the envelopes using his die and machines.

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In the meanwhile, Terrell had sent out a notice regarding the new proposed envelopes dated September 1, 1870 that stated:

"The series has been increased by the addition of a seven-cent stamp to accommodate the reduced rate of postage on letters mailed to the North German Union direct..."

This notice went out after the stamp design decision had been made but during the period after Reay had lost the contracts.

The dispute over the Reay contract postponed the entire Reay envelope production and the filling of orders. Fortunately there was a large stock of Nesbitt envelopes on hand at the Post Office Department to cover the situation. At the same time, it meant no Reay activity on the proposed 7 cent envelope was undertaken before this date.

Fate Steps In

As the 7 cent envelope was not part of the original Reay contract, no preliminary work would have begun until a new contract was negotiated in October 1870. Meanwhile, fate stepped in the person of Chancellor Bismarck of Prussia to end the need for the envelope.

On July 13, 1870, Bismarck arranged the publication of the Ems telegram and convinced the French prime minister that war was imminent, as the latter announced in Paris on the 15th. The actual declaration of war occurred July 19th and would have been transmitted immediately to Washington by transatlantic telegraph. It was obvious that direct mail steamship service would stop and, therefore, the need for a 7 cent stamp and envelope. Blackfan announced the suspension of direct mails on July 23rd and stated that all mail for the NGU would go "closed mail" via England at 10 cents the half ounce. Service was not expected to be resumed until hostilities ended so that the 7 cent rate was "in suspension."

The last North German Lloyd steamer left Bremen on July 16th, arriving at New York on the 29th, while the last Hapag steamer sailed from Hamburg on July 20th and arrived August 1st. The last sailing of either from New York was July 19, 1870. Consequently, there were only three weeks during which the new 7 cent rate would have applied. Because of this, design problems on the 7 cent value and the dispute over the envelope contract, there was neither a 7 cent stamp nor a 7 cent envelope.

War continued throughout the rest of the year with Napoleon III surrendering at Sedan on September 2nd, while Paris held out until January 28, 1871. Wilhelm I was declared Emperor of all the Germanies at Versailles on January 18th.

Anxious to preserve national integrity above all and now on the defensive, the French focused upon the land war and gave little priority to blockading actions. This left the Germans free to resume transatlantic steamer service. The North German Lloyd steamer Hermann resumed service, leaving New York on September 26th and arriving at Bremen on the 12th but not carrying mails. Blackfan announced the resumption of direct mail service to Bremen on October

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29th and the Hansa departed New York with Bremen mails that day arriving at Bremen on November 14th.

The Hapag line's Westphalia left New York October 5th, reaching Hamburg on the 24th without mails. Blackfan announced resumption of direct mail service to Hamburg on the 12th with the Turingia sailing on the 15th with the first Hamburg direct mails arriving at Hamburg on the 28th. The armistice was agreed to on January 23, 1871, and a final peace treaty ratified at Versailles on May 10, 1871.

Although service direct to Bremen and Hamburg resumed during September/October 1870, there was no effort at the time to release either the 7 cent stamp or the envelope. Both had to await the end of hostilities. The 7 cent stamp was released to post offices during the quarter ending March 31, 1871, with 166,400 examples being issued." However, the earliest known usage yet reported was the day after the signing of the armistice (May 13, 1871). This would have been in time for the North German Lloyd's Bremen sailing on the 11th - the first sailing of this vessel with mails since July 1870. During the quarter ending June 30, 1871, an additional 427,000 7 cent stamps were issued.

In sum:

There were seven prewar sailings that could have carried letters bearing a 7 cent rate but not a 7 cent stamp and 19 sailings after the resumption of mail service to the close of 1870.

There were 18 sailings of the NGL steamers before the Bremen left on May 11th, of which 11 took place during the first quarter 1871.

There were 13 Hapag sailings in that period of which 7 took place during the first quarter.

This is a large number of sailings for which either the stamp or envelope would have been useful but for which no example is as yet recorded.

New Release Date for 7 Cent Envelope

While the formal announcement of the 7 cent envelope (which eventually was to be the 7 cent Reay, Scott no. U88) had been made September 1, 1870, there was no incentive to push the work forward until Reay officially had a contract and hostilities were over. Once mail service resumed - as it did in September 1870 - it was more important to push the release of the 7 cent stamp (Scott nos. 138, 149). As a result, the new announcement for the 7 cent envelope did not take place until May 1, 1871, at which time Terrell issued a circular offering the "Stamped Envelopes and Newspaper Wrappers of the issue of October 1, 1870," e.g., the new Reay contract, with a schedule to take effect on and after July 1, 1871. This announcement set the new issue dates for all of the new Reay envelopes. In the attached schedule the 7 cent Third Quality no. 3 amber envelope (3-3/8 x 5-1/2 inches) was made available to the public at a price of \$7.24 per 100. The most significant points in this circular are the following three paragraphs:

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"Owing to a change of contractors and of contract prices, it becomes necessary, under the law [ed. - the 1853 law] requiring that 'Stamped Envelopes shall be sold at the cost of procuring and furnishing the same, to change the schedule of rates at which Stamped Envelopes and Newspaper Wrappers of the issue of October 1, 1870 are now sold to the public. The change will take effect on the 1st day of July, 1871, and all Stamped Envelopes and Newspaper Wrappers supplied by the Department on and after that date, must be sold at the prices specified by the now schedule a copy of which accompanies this circular.

Envelopes and wrappers furnished prior to the 1st July next, whether they be of the present or previous issue, must be sold at the rates at which they were obtained from the Post-office Department..."

What this announcement amounts to is:

the first announcement of the availability of the Reay envelopes, which were apparently not ready until about May 1, 1871,

a notice that prices might be different for the Reay and Nesbitt envelopes,

that, while orders might be filled before July 1st with the new envelopes, it would be on a fill-in basis similar to the situation that had prevailed on the National Banknote stamps between January 1, 1870 and the April announcement of the issue.

Hahn, previously cited, discusses the implications of this point in detail.

German Rate Changes

On March 31, 1871, an additional article to the NGU postal convention was signed at Washington, DC. It was signed at Berlin on May 14th, and set forth a new 6 cent direct rate to Germany via the Baltic Lloyd line as soon as that line began to operate. The new rate was announced on June 21, 1871 for the proposed sailing of the Humboldt on July 13th, but the vessel did not inaugurate service from New York until July 22nd. This was the beginning of the end of the 7 cent direct mail rate for which the 7 cent envelope had originally been intended.

On August 21, 1871, Mr. Blackfan announced that a new arrangement had been made with Germany to "take effect on the 1st of October" by which postage on prepaid letters via closed mail through England was reduced from 10 to 7 cents per half ounce. Unpaid letters were double-rated. This created a new use for the 7 cent stamp and letter. On August 30th, Blackfan announced that the direct mails via Bremen and Hamburg would be reduced from 7 to 6 cents per half ounce. This ended the 7 cent direct rate structure for which both the stamp and envelope had been initially proposed.

The sum of these announcements meant that prior to the new October 1, 1871 closed mail via England 7 cent rate, there were the following direct sailings that required either a 7 or 6 cent rate respectively:

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After October 1, 1871, all direct mail was carried at the 6 cent rate, obviating the need for the 7 cent stamp and envelope as previously noted, but the new closed mail rate via England generated a new need for the two items.

This new rate structure continued until the introduction of the General Postal Union rate of 5 cents, effective July 1, 1875. Lurch argued that it was essential to realize that used 7c envelopes must be postmarked between October 1, 1871 and June 30, 1875.

I concur that any late uses do not belong in a used envelope collection as a showing of the proper use. Nevertheless, there is a group of 7 cent envelopes used considerably out-of-period. They can be described as "cute," "late uses," or "philatelic." However, while any 7 cent envelope used is a rarity, with only 36 reported, and another six to a dozen probable, these out-of-periods miss the pail.

A Brief Look at Other Rates

The actual use of the 7 cent envelope, rather than its intended use, was primarily for the closed mail via England treaty rate. The Baltic Lloyd 6 cent rate that covered "Germany, Austria and Luxemburg" according to the July 21, 1871 announcement and extended to Norway on August 2nd was not involved.

As stated, the 7 cent closed mail rate included Germany, Austria, and Luxembourg. This also meant such places as Heligoland, parts of Poland occupied by Germany or Austria, Hungary (under the Austro-Hungarian customs union), etc. A notice of December 12, 1871 added Denmark, effective January 1, 1872, while on March 14th, the rate was extended to Greenland and the Faroes.

The November 1871 United States Mail & Post Office Assistant (USM&POA) reported a 7 cent newspaper rate to Italy, Constantinople, Jerusalem, Rhodes, Turkey, and other points via NGU closed mail through England. Alexandria, Norway, and Sweden had this newspaper rate direct via the NGU. In June 1872 the newspaper rate covered Denmark, the East Indies, Norway, and Sweden (both direct and closed mails) as well as Turkey. On August 5, 1872, the 7 cent newspaper rate was extended to Spain, Russia, and Constantinople via the English closed mails for the NGU.

A third group of possible 7 cent envelope uses involved multiple rates. A 14 cent new open mail rate to Egypt, Tunis, and Tripoli via the Italian mails was announced on January 20, 1871. By November 1871 there was a 14 cent direct mail rate to Greece. A 21 cent rate for the German mails via Brindisi for Aden, Ceylon, India, the East Indies, Penang, Singapore, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Yokohama, Australia, etc., was announced October 12, 1871. Earlier, on October 26, 1870, Blackfan announced a 28 cent rate via NGU mails through Brindisi for the British East Indies, except Ceylon. There were also 28 cent rates to Argentina and Brazil, Uruguay and St. Helena, the Cape of Good Hope, and much of the Far East during the 7 cent envelope era. Envelopes could just as easily be used for the 22 cent rate to Chile, Peru, Bolivia, and Ecuador with a 15 cent stamp added or with two 10 cent stamps to pay the 27 cent treaty rate to China. It was also possible to use the envelope as part of a postage and registration fee domestically or

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going abroad. In sum, there were many opportunities to use the 7 cent envelopes as part of a combined rate using either the 7 cent stamp or other combinations.

Essay Evidence

The 7 cent Reay envelope should have been available by May 1, 1871 when Terrell made his announcement of "availability by July 1, 1871." However, there is reason to doubt that it was, and it is probable that no exact information on the date has survived. At the top of any specialized collection is the design source of the material - the essays, proofs, and trial colors, if any. Such material is available for the 7 cent envelopes, albeit most of the surviving items are unique.

The most spectacular pieces of which I know come from Herman Herst, Jr., discovered sometime in 1967 while he was in Shrub Oak, NY These pieces were reportedly in the effects of the grandson of the person in the Post Office Department who arranged for the 7 cent envelopes, presumably Terrell's grandson or great-grandson. Norman Lurch, who originally acquired the material, was told that the family was from St. Louis, MO, and that there were only five pieces. Three were on card and two on paper.

The premier piece is a card proof, approximately 2x3 inches, which has a manuscript notation reading:

"Changes Suggested June 7, 1871

with the initials "W.H.H.T." affixed at the bottom. The suggested changes included a shortening of the bust at the back and changes in the beard. A second card proof has even more severe beard changes and a sharper cut-back of the bust in the back but is undated and unsigned. Neither change was apparently acceptable to Reay and the original Laubenheimer design remained intact. The proofs have almost complete circles of red ink around the design as if to highlight it."

The existence of the June 7th design, with Terrell's notes on changes, makes it clear that the design had not been finalized when the announcement of issue of the new Reay envelopes was made on May 1, 1871. We have no evidence that it might not have been available in approved format by July 1, 1871. What we do have is a summary of the envelopes "manufactured" in the same fashion that the John Luff records on "Statistics of Manufacture" were compiled for the National Banknote stamps. Ed McGovern compiled this envelope record and it is divided into plain envelopes and those where printing (such as return addresses) was requested. On a quarterly basis of envelopes "issued" to post offices, we have the following:

"Refer to original article for number breakdown."

From this record we know that the 7 cent envelopes were not sent to the post offices until after July 1, 1871, but that they were available for the new October 1871 7 cent via British closed mail rate. We also know that there were only two printings of 11 request" envelopes - in the fall of 1871 and the winter of 1874.

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In addition to the essays and proofs that came from the St. Louis find, I have written reference to a wax impression from this die as well. William B. Maisel and group updated the classic Mason catalog of postal stationery dies proofs and essays in 1989 but without additional details.

A hub die proof does exist. It is 137x115mm and is reportedly unique. Mason originally listed it as no. 56, issue of 1871, and was probably printed between mid-June and late September 1871. It was last publicly offered according to my records in the Carl E. Pelander sale of October 17-18, 1941, where it was lot 617. Lurch attributed it to the Leighton & Wells sales (H.R. Harmer, Inc., April 21-24, 1958) as part of lot 347.

The catalog noted the size was 136x118mm, while the Pelander sale reported 136x115mm. The hub die proof lot in the Wells sale noted a 136x118mm size. Because of the slight difference, it is possible that two such hub die proofs exist although I doubt it. A similarly described piece is also known in the Lanton sale (Eugene Klein no. 103, January 21, 1938) as lot 299 (Mason no. 56) with a 137x120mm. measurement. Are these all the same piece? I think so.

Thorp-Bartels lists a trial color, struck from an untrimmed die on card, "cerise on white (die 45)" that is probably the finished card item reported among the five essays discussed above. No other pieces are known to any of the current specialists and none appear in the leading stationery auctions, the Barkhausen (Harmer June 14-15, 1955 I and III sales), the Siegel Marcus White (December 10-11, 1970 and March 3-4, 1971 sales), nor the W. Parsons Todd Part II sale (Siegel January 10-11, 1978).

There are Reay design 7 cent specimen envelopes. One is the Thorp-Bartels no. 307 Specimen form 12 (31 1/2 x 3 1/2 mm) of the die 45 amber paper size 3, knife 28 square gum, watermark 2, variety B-1. A second type (Thorp-Bartels no. 308) Specimen form 14 (41x4mm) is known. It is knife 29 with the other characteristics being the same so that it is variety B-2. Knife 29 has a 14mm throat in the folding while knife 28 has only 10mm or less.

The most recent Haller catalog, Private Printed Franks on U.S. Government Envelopes, confirms that the Reay envelope comes with a Wells-Fargo type E imprint (see p. 118), which is not known used. Lurch indicated to me that three mint examples are known with his copy being originally from the Thomas Doane Perry collection (lot 1327 of the December 8-10, 1958 sale). It was illustrated in his 1966 Linn's article and is Thorp-Bartels no. 307 with the imprint measuring 72x18mm with the legend on the left reading "if not delivered within 10 days, to be returned to." The envelope measures 83x139mm. I have traced it to a Eugene Costales Wells Fargo auction held May 28-29, 1945.

There were two imprintings of 500 each (a box) on the Reay envelopes. As noted above, the first was "issued" in the fall of 1871 and the second in the quarter ending March 31, 1874. The legal requirements for imprinting changed by the time of the Reay contract so that the imprint could now not indicate the sender's occupation. This meant that on the 1871 imprinting, if not on both, the government imprints were apparently only the "if not delivered ... return to" variety. Consequently, Wells Fargo imprints could not be done by the government but would have had to be done privately.

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Other than the unused Wells Fargo imprints, at least five used imprinted covers are known (one is a late favor use) and several unused. In private correspondence to me, Lurch estimated that 25-50 covers were imprinted by Wells Fargo. However, Calvet Hahn suggested that with three survivors this appears to be too low and that a figure of a half box is more likely, if not a full box.

He was also the first to comment upon the relationship between the imprints and dates of issue, noting that the first 500 imprints were knife 28, and that uses would more likely be 1871 or 1872 than 1873. He added that the survival ratios of imprinted covers is in the ballpark of one percent, which fits other cover survival patterns fairly well. All used imprints and the Wells Fargo are knife 28. There is an unused knife 29 imprint.

In reviewing the draft of this manuscript, Hahn also observed that although the knife numbers were assigned arbitrarily based upon date of discovery, there did appear to be a sequential use, at least in the case of the Reays's (over 10 cent) and that knife 29 was not used on the 1, 2, and 10 cent. It appears to have been used on later printings of the remaining values, e.g., Specimen 14, etc. He concluded that the earliest uses come from knife 28 and the first imprinting should be from that knife exclusively. There is an unused knife 29 imprint.

The 7 cent Reay envelope is known both as an amber shade (knives 28 and 29) as well as a rare very light amber shade (knife 29). A used example of the very light amber is known on a cover from stamp dealer Durbin (of Durbin & Bogert), posted in Philadelphia on April 2, 1875, and sent with a 3 and 10 cent banknote to a stamp dealer in Brighton, England, registered. A possible very late use of the very light amber (Thorp-Bartels no. 308a) is found on a registered printed matter cover to Belgium in 1908. The in-period use cover suggests the light amber was probably the 250-envelope printing by Reay issued by September 30, 1874. The light ambers are knife 29.

The description Of Thorp-Bartels no. 308a is "exceedingly light shade of amber, almost white"; the covers described above are of an amber shade. However, there is another item allegedly on "white paper." In a note I have located on an envelope wrapper marked J.M.B. (J. Murray Bartels), it is described as really creamy white, not pure white. In the William Weiss, Jr. sale of December 1, 1990 (lot 371) is an apparently white Reay 7 cent envelope imprinted privately by the Star Stamp Co. of Reading, PA, "Established 1869." This is an apparent previously unrecorded type, for it is not "very light amber." A used example was apparently sent to Denmark in the summer of 1874, so this would have been printed earlier.

Mr. Hahn drew my attention to the previously overlooked preceding lot in the same sale that contained two Reay 7 cent "official" sized envelopes, using knives 25 and 26 (sizes used for no. 2, or "lady's" sized covers). While it is likely that part of the description is wrong, the envelopes are on "white paper" as is the Star Stamp item. All three items would most likely be from the later Reay printings.

A New Contractor

Nesbitt, who lost his printing contract to Reay, died April 7, 1869 and thus was unable to intervene personally when the Reay contract was rescinded and then reinstated late in that year.

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Reay, in turn, lost his contract to the Morgan Envelope Co. in 1874. In accord with government policy, bids for a new contract were advertised in the summer of 1874 and Morgan, Reay, and the Nesbitt Company all bid; however, all were rejected for not meeting the contract terms.

A new set of bids was called for and opened September 18, 1874. In this bidding there were six firms entered including the George Plimpton Manufacturing Company of Hartford, CT. The Plimpton firm won and a new contract was signed October 4, 1874.

Reay protested the award, reporting Plimpton would have the actual work done at the Morgan company's plant in violation of the terms of the contract. It was true that the Morgan company was furnishing Plimpton with machines in place of Reay's. Further, the new contract called for deliveries beginning October 1, 1874 - an impossibility for a new contractor. As of October 9, 1874, not a single proof of a Plimpton die had been seen by the Post Office Department and Mr. Reay was refusing to turn over his dies or release the engravers that he had under contract - he had signed up most of the key engravers. (Judge Spence had ruled in September 1874 that the dies and master hubs were Reay's property.)

On October 12th, some temporary and defective dies were approved for the lower-valued envelopes and production began Tuesday the 13th. Delivery of the first Plimpton envelopes was to take place Thursday October 22nd, but the deliveries actually began the day before. At this point the 1, 2, and 3 cent values were going into production and dies for the 6 and 12 cent had been approved. Back orders were already at 11 million by October 23rd when the government purchased large stocks of envelopes from Reay.

A departmental circular of December 10, 1874 finally announced the change of contract and contractors, with the new envelopes to be supplied beginning January 1, 1875 with a new price schedule. January 1, 1875 would, therefore, be the date for the new 7 cent Plimpton envelope release (Scott nos. U185 and 186). The actual dies, including the new 7 cent Plimptons, were examined and approved October 30, 1874 by Mr. Casilear, who had been sent by the Post Office Department to Hartford for this task.

Mr. Reay was very upset about losing the contract and sought to hamper Plimpton's ability to meet the contract as much as possible. Not only did he tie the master engravers up in contracts, he also refused to surrender his master dies. Finally, under heavy pressure, he agreed to turn over the dies but hearsay has it that he wrapped the dies in a cigar box that he gave to his wife with instructions to dump them overboard while crossing the ferry from Brooklyn to his New York office. Reay died shortly after this incident.

It has been subsequently reported that Reay's son turned over both hubs and printing dies to Postal Inspector G.E. Doran April 3, 1937. These were recorded and destroyed; however, examination of the record shows these were only miscellaneous dies, some of which were essays. The disposition of the dies actually used still remains a mystery, and the hearsay story may well be true.

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There are no examples of the Plimpton envelope used in the period of the 7 cent rate. In fact, only one used envelope has surfaced to date; it was used in November 1878. The easy key way to differentiate the Reay and Plimpton 7 cent designs is to look at the "7" that has a tail in the Plimpton design and not in the Reay. The Plimpton design also has the hair curling in the back of the head so that it looks like a laurel wreath while the beard flows downward to a greater extent.

The Plimpton envelope was issued during three quarters of the year ending June 30, 1875, with only a few issued during the first quarter. Two qualities of paper were used. The first is an amber of the regular grade (not third grade as in the Reay's), with a 39 knife. This envelope has a 14mm throat in back and measures 82x138mm in size. Based upon the difference in quality of paper, I would suspect that this was the envelope produced in the first printing of 750 examples. It is quite rare with an example selling as lot 385 in the first Marcus White sale (Siegel, December 10-11, 1970).

The second Plimpton type is on the same quality amber paper as the Reay's, e.g., third quality, and is knife 41 (a 17mm throat in back). It also uses a square gum as do all the regular Reay and Plimpton 7 cent envelopes. The envelope is a touch taller, measuring 83x138mm in size. Several unused examples are known with lots 386 and 387 of the aforementioned White sale being represented. I believe one of these unphotographed items is ex-Barkhausen (Harmer, June 14-16, 1955, lot 270).

A third Plimpton variety has long been mislabeled. It is Thorp- Bartels no. 768 that is on "white paper." In a note I located on an envelope wrapper marked J.M.B.* (J. Murray Bartels), it is noted it is really creamy white, not pure white. No envelope is known on white paper; however, Lurch had a full corner, allegedly white, which probably came from a "SPECIMEN" envelope. This item is from the Marcus White sale of March 3-4, 1971 (lot 1103), ex-Worthington. Thorp wrote it up in Stamps, May 7, 1944, p. 228. Lot 146 in the William Weiss, Jr. sale of December 1, 1990 has a second cut square of this rarity - also a full corner (Scott no. U185). There are other cut squares of this specimen. I record a total of about five. Sheriff 11 (Siegel June 18, 1986, lot 246) is the ex-Juhring copy, which sold to Karen (3308mm).

The howling rarity of the 7 cent envelopes is the special Plimpton issue for the 1876 Centennial. It is Thorp-Bartels no. 767a with a 41 knife (17mm throat) in the third quality amber but with round gum rather than square. These were issued both with and without return imprint corner cards. It is unknown if there were six envelopes (three of each) or six sets (12 envelopes) made. Each and every item was "specially printed." The British collector and author, Gilbert Harrison allegedly received a complete set of all denominations from Philadelphia dealer Bogert, of Durbin and Bogert, but cut them up before realizing what he had. Inroads by cut-square collectors may have reduced the number of existing 7 cent entires to one or two.

The complete special printing 7 cent envelope can be recognized by the round gum and at least half of them by the Centennial imprint. Bartels states the amber paper "by transmitted light, has a slightly greenish tint." Of course, unless the piece is a cut square, the easiest way other than the imprint is the use of "round gum." Just prior to the Centennial, Plimpton developed a machine that would apply gum to the top flap in addition to printing and folding the envelope. Prior to this date, the gum was hand-applied and the outside edge was in a straight line. The felt pad used to

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apply the gum in the machine process printed" gum on the flap so that the ends were "round" consequently termed "round gum" by specialists to differentiate the later Plimpton items from the earlier.

One Centennial envelope of the 7 cent value was sold as lot 518 in the Barkhausen sale (Harmer, June 14-16, 1955) to Marcus W. White and resold as lot 388 in the White sale (Siegel, December 10-11, 1970). This item probably was the same shown in the Court at Honor at the Columbian show in Chicago, May 1992).

Used Seven Cent Envelopes

Historically, in the old Bartels and other price lists, used copies of these envelopes were rated at six to ten-twelve times higher than mint ones. Probably the reason is that the original printing was not used much because of the changes in the originally-intended use, and the fact that when the envelopes were finally ready, there were lower rates to the major destinations.

A collection of used postal stationery entires has rarely been exhibited and most of the great collections contain very few examples, especially within the true period of use. Truly nice collections of used Nesbitts have been reported. Beyond that, collections are sparse except for a few farsighted people who have plucked these gems from the great holdings and the strays offered by various dealers over the years. Even dated cut squares are virtually impossible to locate. Fancy cancellations, other than New York foreign mail (NYFM) uses, are few and far between on Reay envelopes. When Lurch showed one frame of 7 cent material, Thorp commented that the 7 cent envelope used New York primarily as a point of embarkation so it was only natural that they would have NYFM cancels, which were in vogue during the currency of the envelope. While NYFM cancellations rarely appear on postal stationery, the 7 cent envelope is the second most-often seen envelope with such cancels. Thus, it is not surprising that I record three used entires and two cut squares with these cancels - all different. The Waud-VanVlissingen book gives dates of use of the various cancels that is helpful in dating the 7 cent items, or in confirming dates. To date, I record the following covers with NYFM cancels:

Type NYC Date Waud-VanVlissingen

EKU LKU

A8 Sept4,1874 Jan 10, 1874 June 1, 1875

G3 Mar 8, 1875 Feb 23, 1875 Mar 20,1876

G25 Feb 19, 1873 Feb 15, 1873 Feb 15, 1873

I also note two cut squares that are undated in the William Weiss, Jr. exhibition collection, which is one of the collections for which photocopies are made available through the US Philatelic Classics Society. One, a cut square of Scott no. U88 with G5, the reverse wheel design, bears a foreign mail marking used from October 2, 1873 - November 14, 1875, so that it is both within and without the proper period for correct use. The second cut square is from the Lurch collection,

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ex-Leighton & Wells sale of April 21, 1958 (lot 332). It bears type W5, which was only used late (August 9, 1875 - September 28, 1875) so that it is out-of-period.

Too often the rate specialist takes a "who cares" attitude, not seeking a postal stationery use or combination use paying the rate being illustrated. Too often these are classed as "back-of-book" items and deemed not worthy of the finest collections, or are fronts rejected even when rarity indicates a full cover may not be located. Somehow judges do not mark down these exhibits for lack of completion when the completing item is postal stationery.

The great envelope auctions contained very few 7 cent used envelopes. Barkhausen contained three (but no photo) and these probably ended up in the Marcus White sale that also had three - one of which was not illustrated (lot 361 in the White 11 sale). Perry had three, although he only reported two; Slawson had none. There was only one - to Denmark - in the Daniel Weiner sale (Ivy July 8-9, 1983, lot 1171), which is one of the three known uses to that country. His was a major used envelope sale - perhaps the most important ever held - inasmuch as the young man was an intelligent and effective collector and gatherer of this type of material. His cessation of collecting is a tragic loss to the field.

Writing about the 7 cent adhesive, J.W. Sampson noted the stamp is almost never seen bearing the postmark of any small town in New England or the South, but the names of country (farm) towns and villages in Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, and Wisconsin frequently appear. This seems to be so because these were settled by a large proportion of the 2.6 million German emigrants who left Europe between 1823 and 1873 to settle in the United States. A million or so settled in our larger cities and a large percentage of Cincinnati postmarks show their arrival. Also, Milwaukee, St. Louis, Philadelphia, and Baltimore follow in order of commonness when we omit New York. The same holds true for the envelopes.

At present I record some 35 covers (one may be a duplicate), three fronts, and three cut squares. The most incredible use is a gem from the Seymour Kaplan collection that was then in the Steven Albert holding before being privately sold. It contains a 7 cent National (Scott no. 149) in combination with the 7 cent envelope used to Pesen, Germany. It is the only such combination use reported. Several other 7 cent envelopes are known with various adhesives: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 10 cent denominations. These make intriguing combinations, but it is necessary to be very careful to check usage before assuming the combinations are in period.

I was recently offered an example with a 5 cent Taylor combination that was quite pretty, but its date was 1876 and consequently out-of period so is of interest primarily to the true specialist of the Taylor. As with a number of other late uses, it is probably philatelic, tied in with a shipment of stamps to England, such as was often done by G.B. Calman, L.W. Durbin, R.E. Bogert, or other early dealers. In fact, I record in-period uses from both dealers to M.D. Russell in Birmingham, England, who was a client. Neither cover pays the 7 cent rate for which the envelope was designed.

I record more uses to Germany than to England; however, England is second even though there was no 7 cent rate. Denmark is the next most popular destination followed by Switzerland. I note uses to Austria and the Netherlands, as well as a couple of domestic uses, one with the 8 cent

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registry fee in the proper period. I cannot repeat it enough; if one is a purist, and I believe one should be in the case of early used postal stationery, it is important to check the dates or match up ship sailing so a huge premium is not paid for the high-catalog 7 cent envelopes with out-of-period uses.

There are six in-period uses by stamp dealers of the 7 cent envelope on correspondence to England. All are by Durbin of Bogert and Durbin (late examples by Durbin and Calman are also known). As one example could be the earliest known use based on ship sailings, it is important to consider that the remainder are concentrated in 1874-76, so that the other item is probably from the same period.

In reviewing my draft manuscript, Calvet Hahn offered several observations that should help in dating. First, based upon the fact that imprints were made on only two occasions in the quarter ending September 30, 1871, and again in the quarter ending March 31, 1874, I have assigned all but the obviously late imprint covers to the earliest appropriate date in those cases where several alternate dates appear possible. Second, Mr. Hahn observed a sequential use of knives 28 and 29 in production with knife 29 being in use in 1874. Thus, the earliest uses are probably exclusively knife 28.

Several items can also be assigned tentative dates based on associated items from the correspondence involved. This applies to some of the cut squares as well as other material.

In-Period Listings

Imprinted cover, New Orleans June 16 and New York June 21 British transit to John Pelton, Stuttgart, Germany, with backstamp D.4 of July 7. Undated, this is assigned to 1872 in light of the imprint. It would have traveled on the NGL Rhein departing New York June 22, 1872, and reached Southampton July 2. An 1873 alternative seems late; such would go on NGL steamer Mosel sailing June 21, 1873, and arriving at Southampton August 1, 1873, The item is ex-T.D. Perry and was lot 1086 in the Harmer sale of December 10, 1958.

Unimprinted cover posted New Braunfels, Texas July 21, 1872 with sender's handstamp of July 20, 1872, with N.Y. Paid All 7131 British transit as well, addressed to Wiesbaden, Germany, and backstamped AUSC./Aug.14. This traveled on the Hapag steamer Holsatia leaving New York August 1, 1872, and arriving at Plymouth on August 11, 1872. It was a private treaty purchase of Lurch from Herman Herst, Jr. (see no. 21).

Unimprinted cover from Bangor, Maine July 15? bearing a New York Jul 17 "via Eng. & Oste." Paid All transit and addressed to Frederick Allen in Lucerne, Switzerland. This is one of a series of three covers from Bangor to Allen in Lucerne (nos. 3, 4, 8). It bears a 1 and 2 cent adhesive to make up a 10 cent rate. I have assigned it to 1872 where it would travel to Hapag's Vandalia, departing July 18, 1872, and arriving at Plymouth on July 31, rather than the identical transit in 1871 or the sailing of the Silesia on July 17, 1873. It is backstamped both at Basel and Lausanne on July 31, 1872.

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Unimprinted cover from Bangor, Maine, September 4 with New York 917 "via Eng. & Oste." transit and bearing 1 and 2 cent adhesives to make up- the 10 cent Swiss treaty rate. Addressed to Frederick Allen in Lucerne, this is knife 29, and appears to be the earliest use of that knife. This could have gone on Frankfurt leaving September 7 and arriving at Southampton on September 21, 1871, However, it makes better sense to fit closer to the 1873 use and go on NGL's Weser II, leaving New York September 7, 1872, and reaching Southampton September 18, 1872. An 1873 use doesn't fit. This is illustrated in the Siegel Marcus White 11 sale of March 34, 1871 as lot 360 and either it or the preceding cover was lot 685 in the Laurence & Stryker sale of April 16-18, 1957. The two covers are twins (see nos. 3, 8).

Imprinted cover New York October 30, 1872 with three 1 cent stamps missing to A. Blokzeyl, Rotterdam, Holland. It is backstamped Rotterdam 10/Nov/1872. This traveled on the Hapag liner Frisia, departing October 31, 1872, and arriving Plymouth November 10, 1872, and is under the Dutch treaty 10 cent rate applicable between February 1870 and June 30, 1875. It is ex-Lurch and is illustrated in his Linn's article.

Imprinted, knife 28 stamp dealer cover New York December 7 to Carl Hyllested, Copenhagen, Denmark, bearing an untied 10 cent brown (described as no. 161). This was received December 22 and bears a "3" as well as registry no. 5207 and went "via Bremen." The stamp would indicate a use in 1873 or later, but the only one that fits is the NGL Donau departing New York December 7, 1872, and reaching Southampton on December 18. There is a Danish transit of December 22 and Bremen receipt of December 22. I conclude thus that this is an 1872 item, particularly in light of the imprint, and that the stamp is a National misidentified as a Continental. This is ex-Howard Lehman and ex-Albert/Kaplan by private treaty. Probably from Durbin as Hyllested was a collector (see nos. 16, 20).

Unimprinted New York December 12, 1872, Paid All British transit to Student Theodore Haas at Strassburg, Alsace, and redirected to Karlsruhe with both December 24, 1872, and December 25, 1872, German backstamps. This cover went on Hapag's Frisia that left New York on December 12, 1872, and arrived at Plymouth on December 22, 1872. It is ex-Lurch.

Unimprinted Bangor, Me. January 15, 1873 with New York transit of January 16 to Switzerland and bearing four 3 cent (no. 147) and one 1 cent (no. 145) adhesives to cover the double closed mail rate of 14 cents. This third of the Bangor covers is backstamped January 31, 1873 (see nos. 3,4). It traveled on Hapag's Cimbria leaving New York on January 16, 1873, and reaching Plymouth January 26, 1873. It is ex-Albert and was listed in the Gil Fitton summer 1974 listing as lot 743.

Unimprinted New York February 19 and NYFM G25 cancel sent to Birmingham, England, where it was backstamped in red on March 3, 1873. This stamp dealer cover overpays the 6 cent treaty rate. It left New York on February 20, 1873 on the Hapag's Harmonia II and reached Plymouth on March 3, 1873, for transmission to Birmingham that day. It sold as lot 410 in the Laurence & Stryker sale of November 26-29, 1948, and again as the Albert private treaty through Gil Fitton's summer list as lot 742 (see nos. 19, 25).

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Unimprinted knife 28 cover San Antonio, Texas March 4 with New York British Transit of March 11 to L. Konig, Berlin, Germany. For awhile this was considered a possible earliest known usage. It probably went on the NGL Hansa leaving New York March 12, 1873, and reaching Bremen March 26, 1876. This could be an 1874 cover sailing on NGL's Graf Bismarck departing New York March 11, 1874 and arriving on March 22, 1874, at Southampton. I assign it to the earlier date because of the knife. Probably marked for making a cut square but fortunately spared. It was lot 1686 in the Siegel sale of October 23-26, 1984.

Unimprinted Princeton, N.J. June 3 with red New York June Paid All Br. Transit to Vienna on front only. There are a number of alternate choices for this: one in 1872, two in 1873, and one in 1874. I have chosen 1873 as the most likely. It could have traveled on the NGL's Hannover leaving June 4 and arriving June 16, 1872 in Southampton or Hapag's Silesia departing June 4, 1874, arriving at Plymouth on June 14, 1874, but I prefer to think it went either on NGL's Kronprinz Friedrich Wilhelm on June 4, 1873, arriving at Southampton on June 17, 1873, or the Adler (Eagle) line's Ernst Moritz Arndt, sailing June 4, 1873, and arriving at Stettin on June 22, 1873. It sold as lot 636 in the m. Sol Salkind sale of April 29, 1972.

Unimprinted blue Chicago July 21 maltese cross 1873 to George Smith, Brighton, England, where a receipt of August 5, 1873 was struck on the back. There is also a red Chicago backstamp CHICAGO / PAID ALL. This represents a one cent overpayment of the English 6 cent treaty rate. It went on the NGL's Kronprinz Friedrich Wilhelm July 23, 1873 from New York and arriving at Southampton on August 4, 1873. It is ex-Lurch.

Cut square postmarked Lynchburg, Va posted August 6 to Vienna, Austria. As similar Lynchburg fronts to Prof. Morgan Hart at Leipzig are from 1873 (see nos. 14, 15), this is probably the first of the series. If so, it would have left on the Hapag Thuringia leaving August 7 from New York and arriving at Plymouth on August 17, or on the NGL's New York, leaving August 6 and arriving at Southampton on August 18, 1873; it could have caught NGL's New York, leaving on August 8, 1873.

Unimprinted front only postmarked August 11 at Lynchburg, Va to Prof. Hart at Leipzig, Germany. This bears an 1873 pencil date. It went either on the Hapag's Thuringia departing August 14 and arriving at Plymouth on August 25, or on the NGL's New York, leaving New York on August 15, 1873 and arriving at Southampton on August 26. From the Stanley Piller stock.

Unimprinted front only postmarked Lynchburg August 31 with 1873 pencil date to Prof. Hart at Leipzig. This has British transit markings of September 3 and 4. It would have caught the Hapag's Silesia leaving September 4, 1873, arriving at Plymouth on September 14, 1873. From Piller stock.

Unimprinted knife 28 cover postmarked October 1; N.Y. PAID ALL Via Hamburg with corner card label of stamp dealer Durbin, addressed to Carl Hyllested at Copenhagen, Denmark. This pays the 7 cent treaty rate via Hamburg from 1872-75. It could have transited in 1872, 1873, or 1874. I have put it at the latest date where it could have gone via the NGL steamer Rhein, leaving October 17, 1874 and reaching Southampton on October 27, 1874. It should have left on

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Hapag's Cimbria departing New York on October 17, 1872 and arriving at Plymouth on October 27, or on the Silesia, departing October 16, 1873 with arrival at Plymouth on October W, 1873. The cover sold as lot 2286 in the Siegel sale of December 10, 1984. Richard Winter does not record the Hamburg marking on this cover, but the comparable Bremen marking is only known in 1874: (see nos. 6, 20).

Imprinted, registry no. 13, domestic cover from Jacksonville, Oregon January 3, with a pair of 2 cent Nationals (no. 146) addressed to Wm. Garratson, 645 Market St., San Francisco, from D.L. Hopkins and received January 19, 1874 by docketing on the back. This cover shows the 3 cent domestic rate and 8 cent registry fee that went into effect on January 1, 1874, so that this may well be the earliest known usage of the 8 cent fee.

Unimprinted cover from Serbin, Texas March 12, 1874 in blue to Andres Kapplen in Tautew by Laberno, Germany, with a New York March 14 transit marking. It is knife 28 and traveled on the NGL Main leaving New York March 14, 1874, and arriving Southampton March 24, 1874. Sold to order for \$450 as lot 1687 in the Siegel sale of October 23-26, 1984.

Imprinted, Durbin cover, with registry no. 3412, from Philadelphia May 13, 1874, paying the 6 cent treaty rate to Mr. Russell at Birmingham, England, where it was receipted on May 25, 1874. This bears 1 and 6 cent stamps to pay the 6 cent treaty rate and 8 cent registry fee. It traveled on the Hapag steamer Westphalia, leaving New York on May 14, 1874 and arriving at Plymouth on May 25. It is noted as entered May 31, 1874 by Mr. Russell. Ex-Albert by private treaty (see nos. 9, 25).

L.W. Durbin label and a Philadelphia June 12 c.d.s. with New York PAID ALL Via Bremen June 13 to Carl Hyllested at Copenhagen. This marking is only recorded by Winter from June 6 to August 19, 1874, thus dating this cover. It traveled on the NGL Oder, leaving June 13, 1874 and arriving at Southampton on June 25, 1874. Ex-Gobie, this was lot 509 on the Siegel Albert sale of June 25-26, 1983, where it was purchased by Dan Weiner who resold it almost immediately as lot 1171 in the Steve Ivy sale of July 8-9, 1983 (see nos. 6, 16).

Unimprinted cover from New Braufels, Texas August 1, 1874 to Germany by New York German, closed mail with a red New York Aug. 8 transit marking. It was received on August 20, 1874. It would have traveled on the NGL Mosel departing August 8, 1874, and arriving at Southampton on August 18. This was a Herst private treaty sale item to Lurch and sold as lot 3964 in the Gold Medal sale of October 11, 1990 (see no. 2).

Unimprinted NYFMA8 cover of August 1 with knife 29 to A. Buddig, Wolffenbuttel, Germany, arriving September 4. As discussed earlier, the only possible year for an August use of this NYFM is 1874. This traveled on the NGL Neckar, leaving New York on August 1, 1874 and arriving at Southampton on August 12. It is ex-D.D. Bercheimmer and sold as lot 395 in the Siegel sale of January 25, 1972. It is also ex-Albert and is a private treaty item.

Unimprinted cover from Defiance, Ohio December 28 with New York British transit of December 30 addressed to Mr. Banson, Hanover, Kingdom of Prussia "via North German Union Line." It was received 1.11 Aug. I (Ausberg). This has been claimed as an earliest known usage

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of 1871 probably due to the wording of the address; however, it only fits the Hapag Westphalia sailing from New York on December 31, 1874 with arrival at Plymouth on January 11, 1875.

Unimprinted cover with NYFM G3 cancel and March 8, 1875 company backstamp and a New York British transit of March 9 to Berlin where it was received on March 22, 1875. This is the only example that can be proven to have traveled on the Adler (Eagle) line where it went on that firm's Lessing, departing March 9, 1875 and arriving at Hamburg March 22, 1875. It represents a scarce sailing. This is ex-Thomas Doane Perry and Lurch and sold as lot 830 in the Siegel sale of December 17, 1953.

Unimprinted Durbin registered cover with 3 and 10 cent stamps on the very light amber paper (Thorp-Bartels no. 308a), postmarked Philadelphia April 2, 1875 and addressed to Russell at Brighton England. It bears a British crown registered marking on the face and was received on April 14, 1875. It traveled on the NGL Oder departing New York and reaching Southampton April 14, 1875. This is the only known used example of TB308a and confirms the light amber as a late Reay printing. It is ex-Lurch (see nos. 9, 19).

Unimprinted combination cover with the 7 cent (Scott no. 149) and New York June 29 boxed red DIRECT SERVICE / PAID ALL to Mr. Hirschfield, Posen, Germany. The only known combination cover, this pays the 6 cent rate to England and an 8 cent registry fee. The boxed handstamp is unrecorded by Winter, but he records a "direct service" 26mm circle in late February 1875. A different direct marking is known through June 1873. This might be an 1874 use traveling on the NGL's Graf Bismarck, leaving New York July 1, 1874 and arriving at Southampton on July 14. However, it is most likely the latest recorded 8 cent registry cover traveling on Hapag's Herder, departing July 1, 1875 and arriving at Plymouth on July 11 on the first trip of this vessel since it left the Adler (Eagle) line to join Hapag.

Undated 7 cent Reay on white! with 3 cent (no. 136) to make up the 10 cent rate to Denmark. Posted Wellington, Mass., and bearing NEW YORK PAID ALL / VIA BREMEN (marking known June 6 to August 18, 1874 according to Winter). Unphotoed. Lot 3522 Herst sale of May 7, 1965 and sold for \$12 (see no. 23).

1874 undated Reay envelope with top torn and 1 cent (no. 145) added to Switzerland. Supposedly 1872 but bears NEW YORK PAID ALL / VIA BREMEN, which is only known for two months of 1874. Lot 1363 Laurence & Stryker sale of March 28-31, 1952. Ex-Maisel.

Undated unphotographed registered cover to Germany with knife 29. This was lot 361 in the Siegel White II sale of March 3-4, 1971. It may be duplicated above.

Cut square undated with NYFM G25 (This marking is known from October 2, 1873 to November 14, 1875 so it can be in-period). William Weiss, Jr. exhibit.

Without imprint. Sept. 8, ... Very Light Envelope. Identified by auctioneer as Thorp 308a. Philadelphia to Lenburg, Schwein, Aug. No. 3 on reverse, red New York British Transit. (never seen) Louis K. Robbins Auctions, Sale 9 December 6-7, 1985, Lot 1037.

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Imprint. Possible 1872 or 1874 use, February 3, 187.... Defiance, Ohio, penmanship fancy "North German Union Lines." No proof of year date. Embossed Stamp is torn, red New York British Transit, to G.H. Bansen, Hannover, Germany. Private List, from Germany; Ivy, Shreve & Mader, Inc., October 23, 1992 Auction, Lot. M.

Imprint Status Unknown, Knife 28, New York, April 187..., unreadable cancellation, Thorp 307, Photo in Marcus W. White Sale No. 2, Robert A. Siegel Auctions, Inc., March 3-4, 1971, to Germany. No other report on this cover.

At least one other cover is known. It is in the collection of a willing but far too busy executive so that data has not been forthcoming so far. T.D. Perry and Lurch wrote that they knew of two covers in Germany (not recorded here to my knowledge, as well as one in a Vermont collection now dispersed with a cover being reported).

Somewhere in print there is a statement that the entire remaining Reay supply was bought by one philatelic house, probably Durbin & Bogert, but the listing does not support this. What does seem correct is that the Durbin firm bought about a box (500) of the 7 cent value that was used for stock as well as their own mail by the Fall of 1872 as indicated by a survival rate of about one percent of such covers.

Late Uses

To date, not a single example of the Plimpton 7 cent envelope has been recorded during the proper period of use. While the 3,000 printing was small, several should have appeared if they were distributed in time. The earliest example is several years out-of-period.

The only two examples of used Plimpton covers are the ones illustrated as lot 486 in the Siegel White II sale of March 3-4, 1971. It is a knife 41 type postmarked New York, November 14, 1878 at 12:30 P.M. As the full cover is not illustrated and I have not seen it, the destination is unrecorded. There is also a used quartered cork cancel; ex-Lurch on a Plimpton cut square. An unreadable portion of a c.d.s. is alongside. Item L, the 1904 used to China is a U186 entire. These are the only used Plimpton items I have been able to record.

The listing of other out-of-period uses of the Reay and/or Plimpton envelope is as follows:

A. Cut square NYFM W5 (known used August 9, 1875 to September 28, 1875 according to Waud and Van Vlissingen) with "England" manuscript. This is ex-Lurch.

B. L.W. Durbin registered cover Philadelphia February 9, 1876 to H.A. Russell in Birmingham, England (registry no. 45117) with February 21, 1876 receipt date and bearing a 3 cent green (Scott no. 184) and a 5 cent Taylor (no. 179). It was part of a private treaty offering by dealer Labrun Harris in 1990.

C. Registered purple cancel New York January 3, 1879 on quarter envelope and addressed to Berlin. This has PF certificate no. 225066 and is ex-William Fox auction.

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D. Registered G.B. Calman cover with a 3 cent green (no. 147) and a 5 cent Taylor (no. 179) New York March 22, 1879 to collector J.D. Russell in Birmingham, England, bearing a registered English receipt marking on the face and an April 2, 1879 receipt marking on back. Ex-Toaspern.

E. Calman registered no. 10977 cover New York July 26, 1879 to Robert Duhle & Co., Berne, Switzerland, with a 3 cent green (no. 184) and 5 cent Taylor (no. 185) per "S.S. Britannic" of the White Star Line. This has a boxed CHARGE and is backstamped Basel 6 VIR 79 to give a receipt date. It was in the Albert private treaty Frajola sale as lot 630.

F. 1879 cover Galveston, Texas Se t. 14 7 P.M. c.d.s. to Liverpool, p England, with addressee inked out. It bears a PAID / LIVERPOOL / U.S. PACKET / 30 SP 79 circle for dating. Sold as lot 162 in the Rich sale of March 19, 1964 and lot 26 of that firm's sale of May 10, 1966. It was lot 652 in the Koerber sale of March 22, 19??.

G. Favor imprint cover San Francisco Nov. 14 2 P.M. 1887 to Dr. Merck, Room 42, Palace Hotel, City. Ex-Lurch (compare cancel with H).

H. New York April 7, 1888 7 P.M. c.d.s. on knife 28 cover used to Germany. This was illustrated as lot 359 in the Siegel White H sale of March 3-4, 1971.

I. Unimprinted Baltimore April 11, 1893 cover with A. Lohmeyre handstamped corner card. This has a straightline REGISTERED / APR 11 1893 / 13 ALTIMORE, MD. and bears a 6 cent Columbian on the back flap, as well as N.Y. Exchange registry label 36302. Ex-Gobie. One of two covers in lot 658 of the Siegel sale of December 16-18, 1986.

J. 1894 cover to John Seybold, Syracuse, N.Y. with 1 through 6 cent Columbians (nos. 230-236); sold as lot 2165 in the Wolffers sale no. 76.

K. Imprinted Baltimore, Md. May 16, 1898, double circle registry no. 88448, c.d.s. on cover with return receipt, combination with 6 cent Sc. no. 271, sent to F. Salzmann, Berne, Switzerland, sent by Lohmayer, Baltimore, Md. dealer, with handstamp on back, Ex-Gobie. One of two covers in Lot no. 658, Robert A. Siegel Auction Gallery, Inc., September 16-18, 1986.

L. PLIMPTON, Sc. U186, entire, dated June 19, 1904, with pair of 3 cent Louisiana Purchase, (Sc. 325) Reg. no. 19748, from Boston, via San Francisco (dated June 14, 1904) to Tsingtau Kiautschon, China, received July 22, 1904, also canceled in Shanghai (July 19, 1904). Philatelic Foundation Certificate no. 0138769.

M. Printed matter New York 1908 cover to Mons, Belgium, bearing the 1 cent 1902 (Scott no. 300) and a 2 cent shield (no. 319) on the back with registry cancels and a Mons receipt. This is ex-Gobie described as Thorp-Bartels no. 308a very light amber in one auction but not in the other. Lot 492 in the Manning sale of November 15, 1984 and lot 657 in the Robert A. Siegel sale of December 16-18, 1986.

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N. Cut square with unidentified cancel sold as lot 1536 in the Weiss auction of May 19, 1990. I have not listed mint entires or cut squares except when they are unusual, for a quantity of them are on the market and for the most part are not rare. There were supposedly 500 specimen envelopes done, presumably 250 of each of the types described.

O. Undated Scott nos. 185-186, New York registered label 8805, to Russia, lot 449, Robert A. Siegel Auctions, sale 148, February 14, 1951.

P. September 10, 1909, with Scott no. 302, registered to Don Heer Joh Sandow Duitach Consolm Aesland. Private treaty offering 591, WESTPEX, Trevor Davis stock, London, England.

Q. Undated Scott nos. 184-185, 15 cent registered rate to England, lot 1828, Robert A. Siegel Auctions, sale 363, December 9-12, 1969.

R. April 8, (1879?) New York Post Office registered no. 3291 from B. Calman, 1245 Pearl Street, New York to Odessa, Russia, via German Line. Private treaty, October 1991.

Philatelic Literature

The philatelic literature regarding the 7 cent Stanton envelopes is sparse. The bulk of the published information is contained in catalogs such as the Thorp-Bartels or the Scott Specialized and in the articles cited herein such as that of Lurch. Auction catalog listings for the major stationery sales have been a major resource as have the occasional listings in other auction and private sales.

I should like to thank Messrs. Gobie, Lurch, Maisel, and Smith for making their records available and Richard C. Frajola for his generosity in sharing the Frank S. Levi records he owns. Particular thanks go to Calvet M. Hahn, whose patience barely exceeded his ability to yell as he made extensive critical analysis of the material in draft form, and to my wife Ruth, for putting up with the harassment that working up this research required. The errors remain mine, however, I believe this is the first time material on the subject has been pulled together and that it will provide new insights and direction for the collectors of postal stationery and postal history in general.