

The Machine Cancel Forum

The Journal of The Machine Cancel Society
APS Unit #24

Special Show Issue of Machine Cancel Forum
APS StampShow 2009 at Pittsburgh



Above: A spectacular example of a machine cancel applied by an unknown inventor and manufacturer, used at Pittsburgh in 1872. Not everyone will be lucky to find one of these lurking in a bulk lot, or in a dollar box of covers. But there are other machine cancel finds and adventures to enjoy that will not cost you 'big bucks.' Enjoy yourself at the APS StampShow 2009, happy hunting, and enjoy this special issue of Machine Cancel Forum. Join the Machine Cancel Society, and join in the adventure!

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markings themselves, you are encouraged to contact them. The courtesy of self-addressed stamped envelopes for response would be appreciated.

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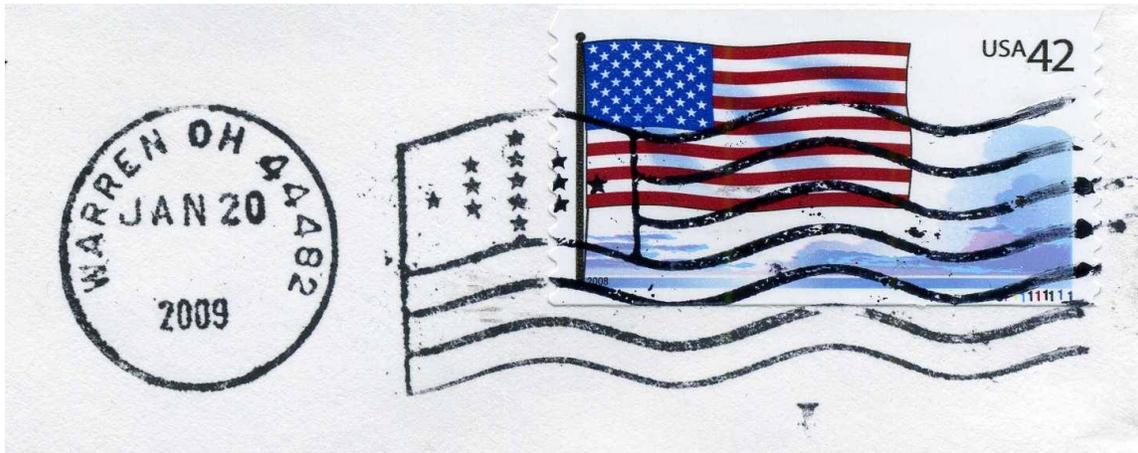
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Editor's Corner



I hope you enjoy this special issue of *Machine Cancel Forum* during your visit to StampShow 2009. This is your invitation to join The Machine Cancel Society. The Society began as The Flag Cancel Society on Flag Day, June 14, 1961. The following year it released its first periodical, *Flag Cancellations*. Later, The Flag Cancel Society became a non-profit corporation in the State of Ohio. The incorporation gave it permanency, and simplified our later 1987 transformation into the present day Machine Cancel Society and its quarterly publication *Machine Cancel Forum*. Over the past 22 years, *Forum* has published just under 5,000 pages on the topic of machine cancels!

As the name suggests, *Forum* is a place for exchange of ideas and presentations of new machine cancel finds, or new members rediscovering something that has not been published for some time. Much of what is known about machine cancels is not found in any central governmental archive. Most of those records have been discarded or destroyed. The key source is the reporting by members of towns that use a certain cancel, dates of use reported, and searches through news reports and patents to match a cancel with a manufacturer.

Many cancels look the same. They are distinguished by their year of use, and from the information gleaned from available records. One of the great unknowns is the manufacturer of the Pittsburgh shield cancel of 1872, featured on the front cover of this issue. Who invented the machine that applied it? Who manufactured the machine? Pittsburgh newspaper accounts and post office records have been searched. There is no information. Even the dates of use of the shield cancel is limited to information from known and reported covers.

The Pittsburgh shield is a pricey cancel. But there is plenty of excitement in collecting uses of other machines. There is a potpourri of different cancels in this special issue: mute cancels used on metered mail, a short term bar cancel used in Xenia, and various Pennsylvania cancels featuring new towns or new dates of use. *How do you evaluate a cancel that 'might be' a machine cancel. An interesting Chicago cancel is evaluated. And yes, there are surprises.* So enjoy this special issue, and the Show.

Early Registered Meter Franked Mail and Machine Cancels

Part I Background by A J Savakis, Editor

There was a period of well over two decades of meter franking experiments to invent, test, and certify machines before meter mail became 'mainstream'. That period leading up to 1920 could fill a small book. The focus is not the meter machine, but the cancelling machines used with metered franked mail that was registered as well. For that purpose, let us jump to April 24, 1920, when at the request of the Postmaster General Albert Burleson, Congress authorized the Postmaster General to amend the Postal Laws and Regulations to accept first class matter by the general public without postage stamps.¹ Although machines that could frank a variety of postage rates were available, the first machines authorized under the 1920 law were single denomination machines. Imagine if you will a machine that could only frank a single value. That means if you were a bank, and mailing 1-cent postal cards, 2-cent letters, 4-cent double rate letters, 5-cent international mail, and 10-cent double rate international letters, you would need FIVE machines for that purpose!

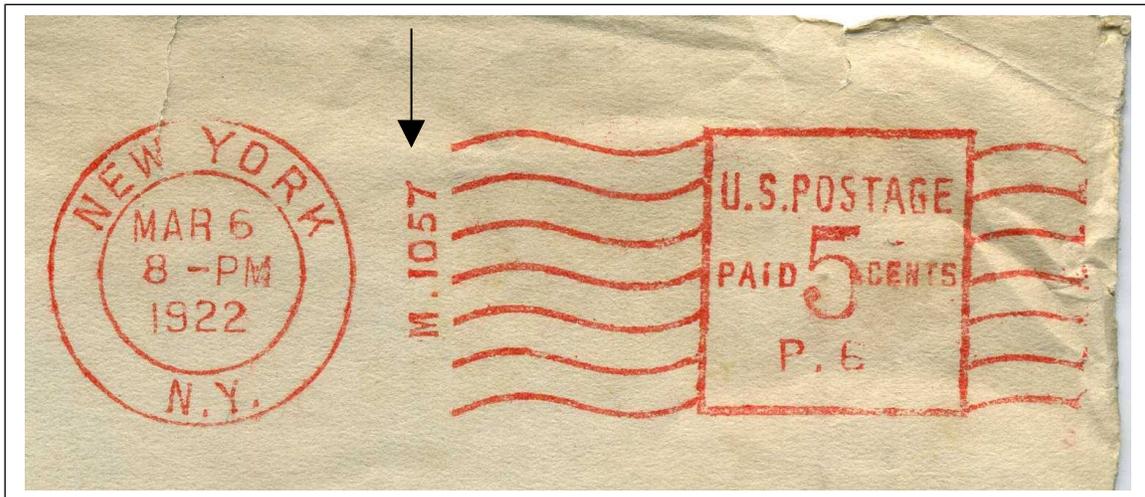


Figure 1, above: NEW YORK / MAR 6 / 8 - PM / 1922 / N.Y. Pitney-Bowes 5-cent meter frank using a square indicia meter design. Vertical, and in between the townmark² and frank, is the meter number: M. 1057. Inside the indicia³, is the permit number: P.6 Arrows point to both the meter number, and the permit number. A Pitney-Bowes meter machine applied the postage.

The square indicia was in use for less than two years, as the design too closely resembled permit mail. The design of the indicia changed from square to oval. The oval meter stamps could ONLY frank ONE VALUE.

¹ William K. Thomas, HISTORY AND EVOLUTION OF METERED POSTAGE (American Philatelic Society 1962), page 9.

² What is comparable to the machine cancel "postmark" is referred to in meter collecting as the 'townmark'. The different terms, 'postmark' and 'townmark' have the advantage of being able to discuss both on the same cover, without confusing whether the marking came from a machine cancel or a meter frank.

³ The term 'indicia' refers to the part of the meter frank that includes the value, and usually the nation of origin.

It would seem an inconvenience that a machine could only frank a single rate, but that did not stop commercial demand for even more machines franking more than the rates previously mentioned. There was a demand for meter machines that could frank registered mail.

Remembering that metered mail had a townmark for the place of origin, what do you do for registered mail? The first oval meter franking machines tried different solutions. Some had no townmark. Some had the townmark blank as to date, but included the city and state of origin. Still others ignored regulations, and included not only the city and state of origin, but the date of mailing.

At right, 17-cent oval meter franks with point of origin New York, New York. A Pitney-Bowes meter machine applied the postage.

Figure 2 A



Figure 2 A has its townmark removed.

Figure 2 B



Figure 2 B has its townmark, but the date has been removed.

Figure 2 C has both its townmark, and a full date.

Figure 2 C



Unfortunately quick scissors removed the postal markings from the back, and the sequence cannot be ascertained from these examples. Just like machine cancels, meter franks need to be kept with their entire envelope or card as much as possible.

There were early meter tests of machines that could frank more than one rate. There was certainly commercial demand for these machines. A small, or even medium, business could certainly not afford to lease postal machines for each and every rate they were using in mailing. Even if the machines were leased for a very low monthly amount, imagine where one would put them all!

Once postal authorities were convinced the process would protect their revenues, multi-denominational machines appeared. These multi-denominational machines first appeared

in 1927 and could frank from a pre-determined set of rates selected by the user. The oval meter indicia⁴ was replaced by a faux perforated stamp with central value in a small oval. There was a choice of a single denomination machine, or one that could frank with three, five, or six different rates. See Figure 2 D.

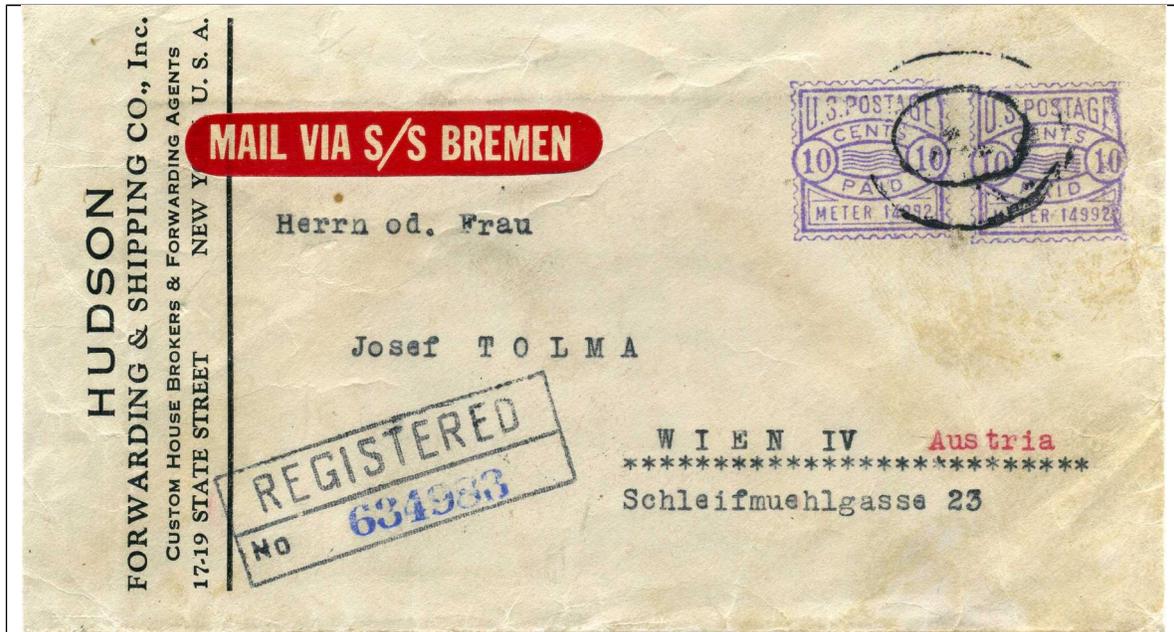


Figure 2 D, above: Registered mail from New York , New York, to Austria. The cover is backstamped with a NY, NY handstamp dated December 6, 1935, and with a NY, NY Foreign handstamp on December 7. There are no transit, registered mail, or other receipt marks. This is an example of a multi-denominational meter frank. The operator's machine did not have a 20-cent rate value, but could apply TWO 10-cent meter franks. Note the mute cancel of the meter frank stamps.

The ideal was omni-denominational machines. These were machines that could print ANY value between a set of ranges. See Figure 3. These omni-denominational machines were the most versatile. They first appeared as a rectangular faux postage stamp with townmark and indicia engraved as a single piece. This made transfer of the machine to different cities expensive, as a new engraved indicia-townmark would have to be prepared.

In most cases, the local post office felt obligated to mute cancel the front of the meter cover since there was a threat of revenue loss by cutting off or soaking off a meter frank and reusing the meter stamp.

⁴ What does one do with old meters that are single denominational in ability, in a world that demands multi or omni-denominational abilities to frank mail? We know they reappeared as cancelling devices during the Second World War II. Their use is the material for a book, and are very well covered by Bart Billings in his study of APO markings. One can spot them as being the very large double rimmed (diameters of 26 + 18 mm) APO machine markings and the very large (24 mm) single rimmed machine markings, both electric powered. For information see Billings, U.S. POSTAL MACHINES OF THE ARMY POST OFFICES – WORLD WAR II (privately printed October 2006), Volume I at pages 12-15.

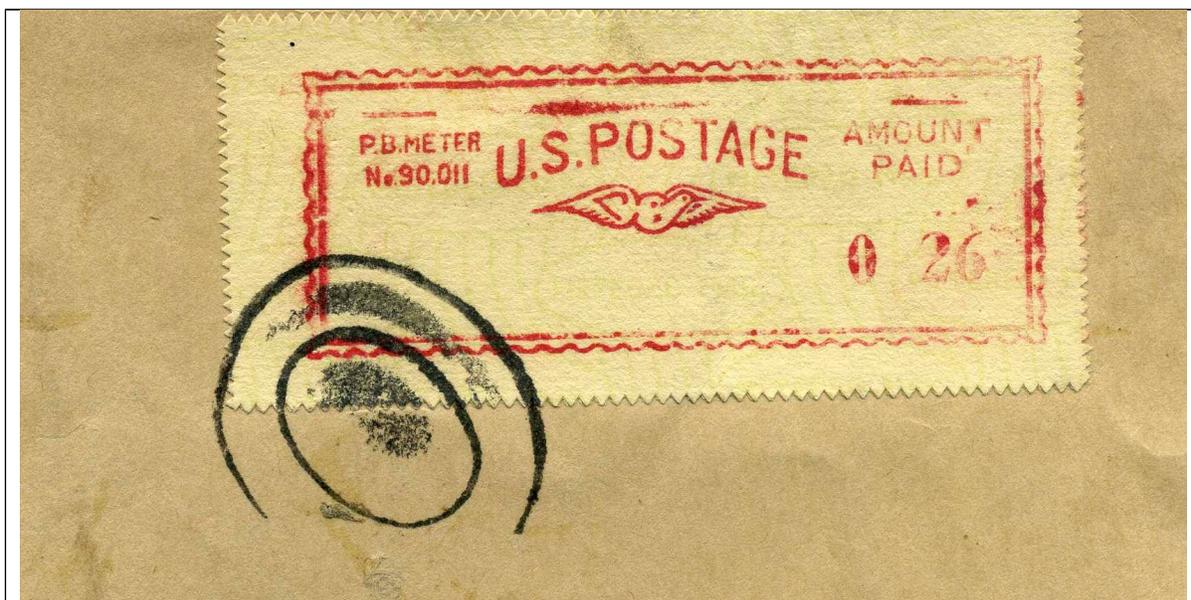


Figure 3, above: Meter No. 90011 Registered mail frank with a 'Flying Eagle'. Note there is no city or state name in the indicia, and there is no townmark. A mute double ringed hand stamp ties the frank to the envelope. A Pitney-Bowes meter machine applied the postage. This is a very early 'Flying Eagle.' Note how the viewer is looking 'head-on' at the bird, and that it more closely resembles a dove.

These early omni-denominational meter machines, intended for registered mail use, had no city or state engraved in their indicia. They are referred to as 'townless' meters.

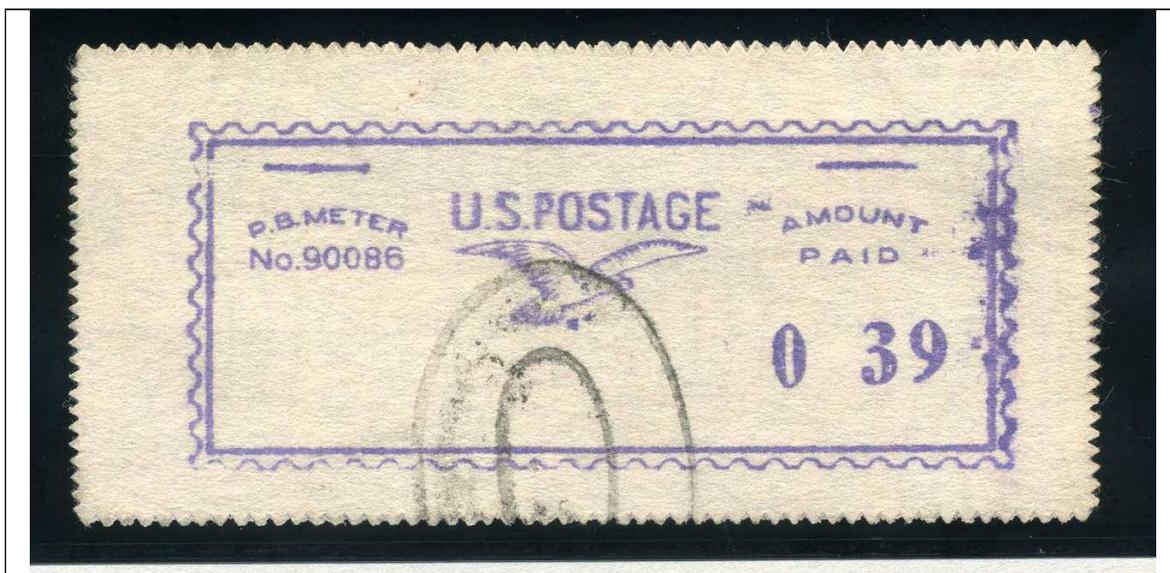


Figure 4, above: Meter No. 90086 Registered mail frank with a 'Flying Eagle'. This is a later meter frank than **Figure 3**. Again, there is no city or state name in the franking, and a mute double ringed hand stamp ties the frank to the envelope.

Why the mute hand cancel? Metered mail was supposed to avoid the cancelling process, and save time by skipping the cancelling process. Besides saving time, this would save money in the processing of mail. BUT Without the townmark and date, it was possible that meter frankings would be cut off or soaked off, and reused IF they were not cancelled. As the volume of dateless, townless meter frankings increased, the need to use machines to 'cancel' the meter arose.

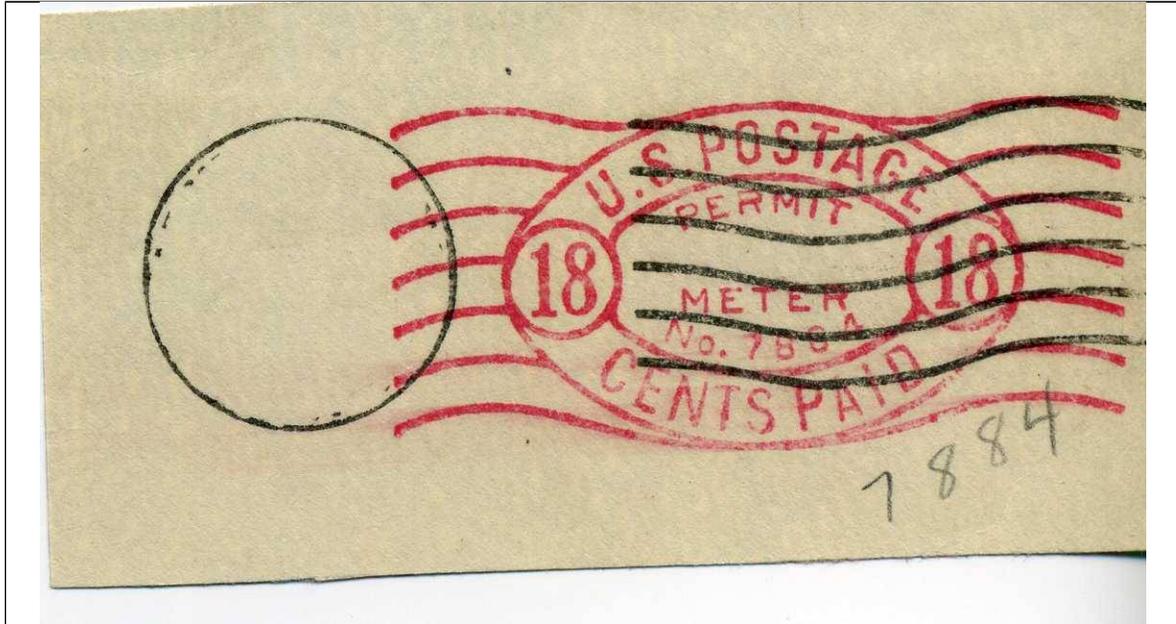
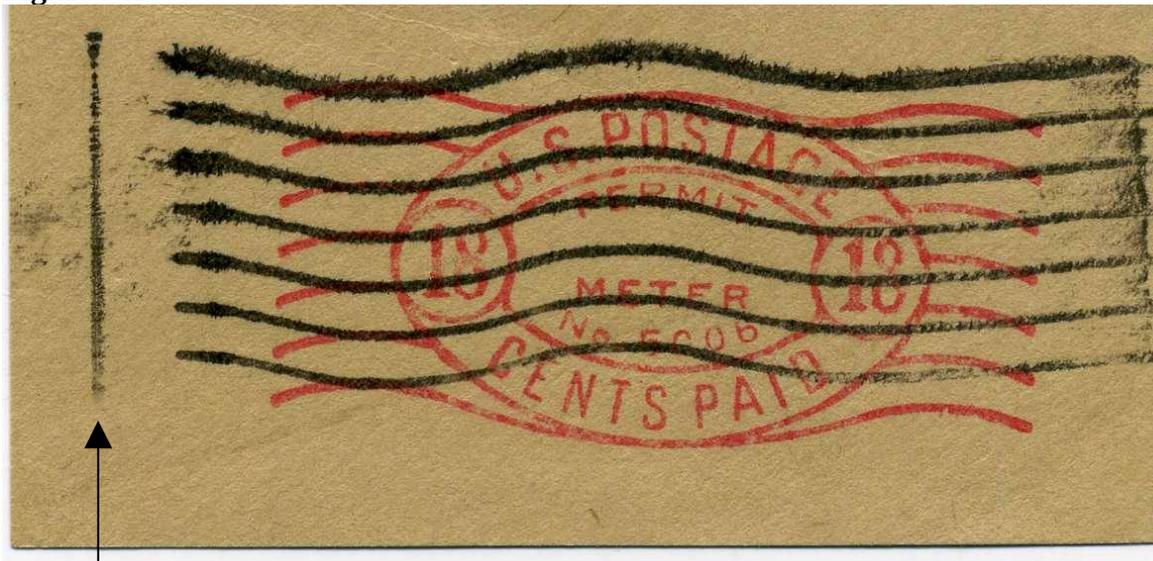


Figure 5, above: Registered mail 18-cent frank, METER No. 7884, applied by Pitney-Bowes meter franking device. A machine cancel with mute dial 'cancel's the meter frank. With what little is showing, this would appear to be a Universal Model D with 6-wavy lines and a single crest in the middle. A fast pair of scissors removed additional information that could have been observed and reported.



Figure 6, above: Registered mail 18-cent frank, METER No. 5006, applied by Pitney-Bowes meter franking device. It appears to be a machine cancel with 6-wavy lines and two crests, which would be a Universal Model G. A fast pair of scissors removed additional information that could have been observed and reported, and the postmark dial which would have been to the left was unfortunately cut off.

Figure 7 A



Both pair of meters in **Figure 7 A and 7 B** are from meter number 5006. Both are overcancelled by a 7-wavy line, single crested, cancellation suggestive of a Universal Model G.

BOTH machine cancels have a vertical line of black ink, which are marked with arrows. These examples of Meter #5006 have been cancelled by the same machine. The mute postmark cancel with city-state information cut out is more evident in **Figure 7 B**. If you line up the cancels, one can match a bit of the mute dial in **Figure A** with the far right end of the dial in **Figure 7 B**.

Again, a fast pair of scissors have made it difficult to gleam additional information.

Figure 7 B



Certified mail was not yet available, and proof of mailing and receipt was by registered mail – even if no valuables were inside the envelope. Legal notices, tax notices, and summons were being sent by mail in lieu of personal service by sheriff, bailiff, or process server. Not only was the front of the mail requiring attention, but so was the back.

Figure 8 A, below: Front of mail from The Pennsylvania Railroad Company, with first class permit 142. The permit indicia was printed by a printer in red ink. It shows that 17 cents was paid by permit. The rubber stamp is a receipt mark by the addressee, and is JAN 13 11 AM 1930 in violet ink. This cover is ex Reg Morris.

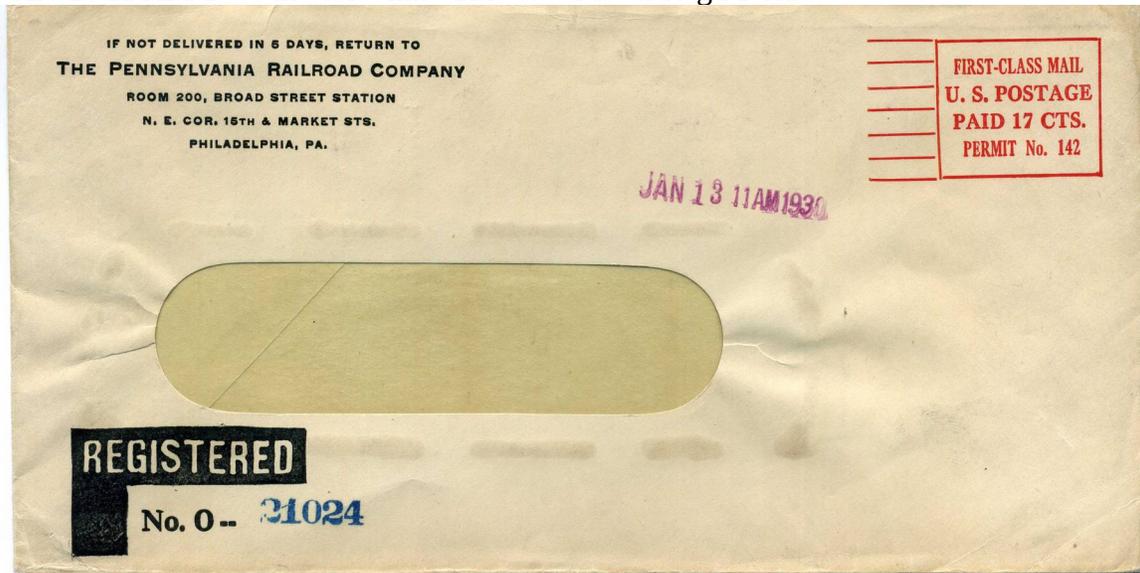


Figure 8 B, below: A repeating Universal Model D applied the back stamp, with two different postmark dials. See **Figure 8 C** for a close-up.

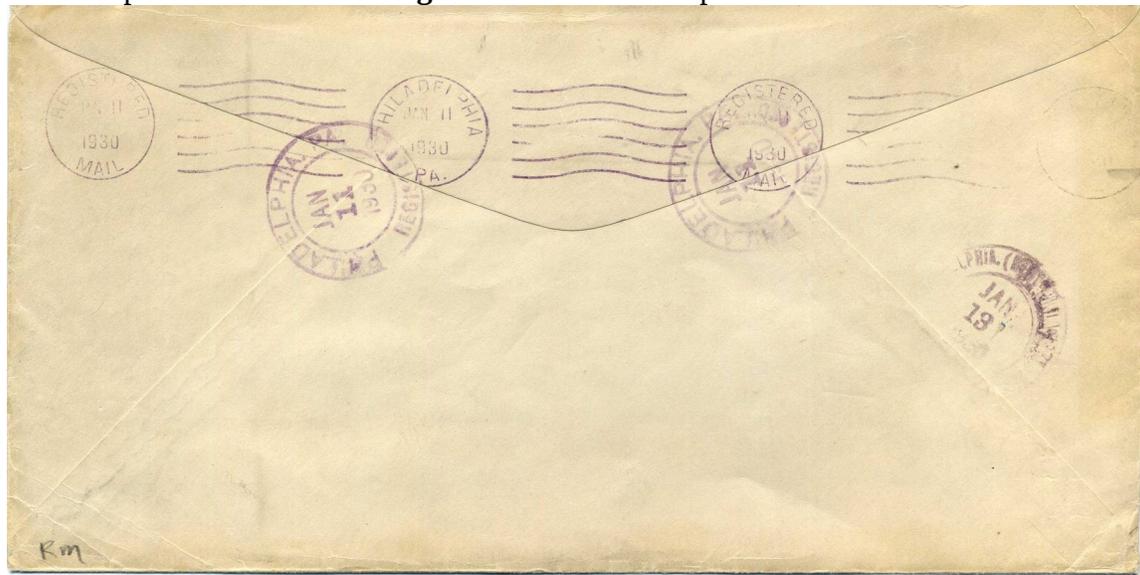


Figure 8 C, below: Close-up of the Universal Model D repeater backstamp, used at the post office of mailing.

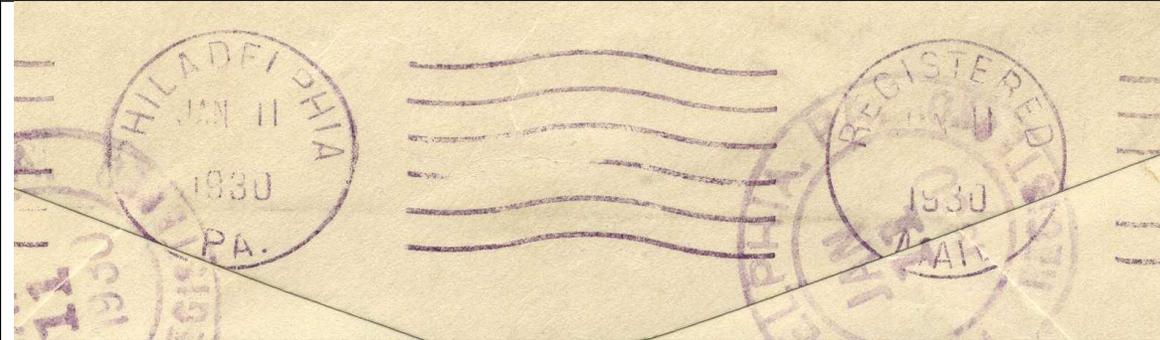


Figure 8 C, above: Note the dual dials in this repeater. The one on the left reads PHILADELPHIA / JAN 11 / 1930 / PA. The one on the right reads REGISTERED / JAN 11 / 1930 / MAIL.

Bob Payne in his epic exhibit and later book, U.S. CLASSIC MACHINE CANCELS 1871-1991, states that two Universal Model D machines with ‘released trip’ were used at New York City and Philadelphia. When his book was published in 1995, he reported the earliest known use of the REGISTERED marking was New York, New York dated March 24, 1926. The last use was Philadelphia, dated June 30, 1937.⁵

Bob Payne explains that the two Universal Model D machines were used to mark outgoing registered mail in New York City (City Hall Station) and Philadelphia on the reverse side with a repeating cancel indicating REGISTERED / MAIL in violet ink. The cancelling die had TWO DIALS with 6 wavy lines between. One dial indicated the city-state, and the other had the registered mail notation. A single dial and cancel has a length of 60 mm, with an overall length of two dials and two 6-way line cancels being 120 mm.⁶

It is admittedly curious that this continuous machine cancel could be a Universal Model D. How do you get two dials into one cancelling die hub or cylinder, and fit it into a Model D? In a later publication, it is noted, “The identity of this machine is in question. In order to imprint a cancel with two different dials impressions, a special die hub or cylinder would be required. However, a letter from the Postmaster indicates the Model D machines were modified for this use.”⁷

⁵ Bob Payne, U.S. CLASSIC MACHINE CANCELS (Machine Cancel Society 1995), page 313.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Billings, Payne, and Morris, A PRIMER – U S MACHINE POSTAL MARKINGS (Bart Billings publisher 2005), at page 207. More information is provided at page 224 in THE COLUMBIA STORY Volume V by Morris-Payne-Holmes: “A short article in *XX Killers*, August 1950, describes a letter Mr Edwin C. Hopps wrote to Raymond A. Thomas, Postmaster of the Philadelphia Post Office, requesting information on this cancellation. The Postmaster stated the machine used to apply the registered markings was a Universal – Model D with the trip mechanism released to permit continuous marking on large registered mail envelopes.”

In 1923, a continuous cancelling Universal with what appeared to be a single dial was tested at Washington, DC. See **Figure 9**. The distance from the left of one postmark to the next is 60 mm.

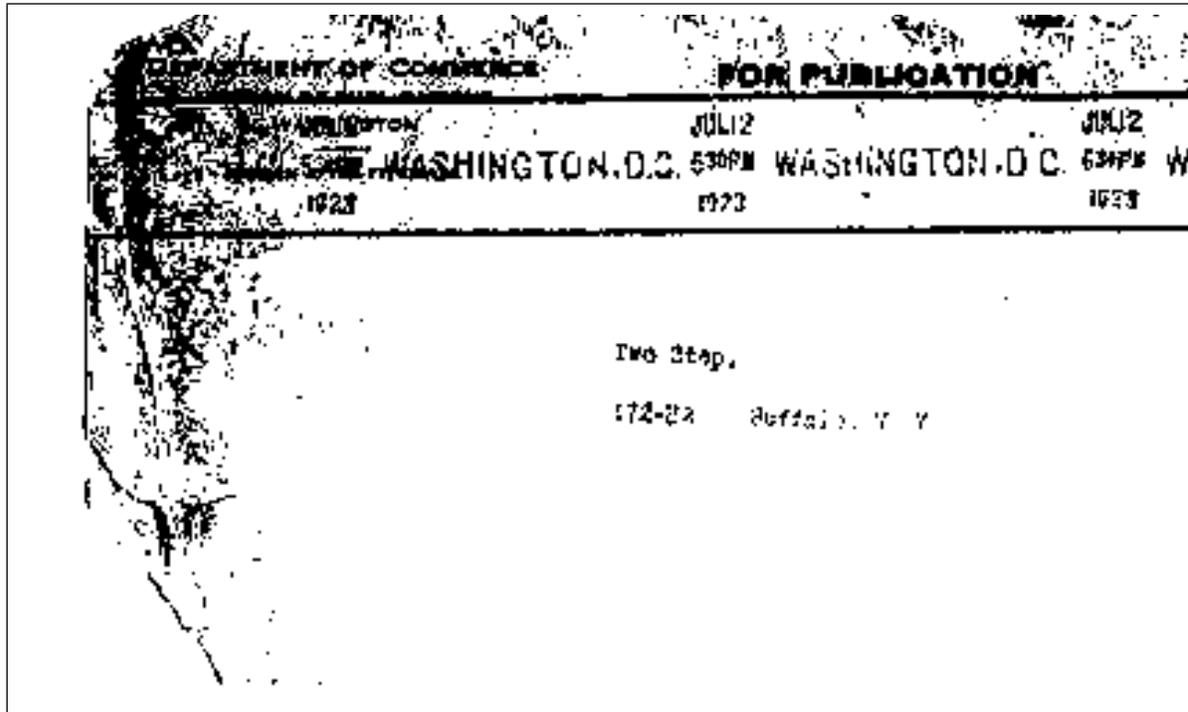


Figure 9, above: Experimental Continuous Impression machine cancel, identified as a Model D, Universal. The cancel is applied to a large size brown penalty envelope, and is cropped to show just the left half of the envelope. The pair of horizontal lines are applied without interruption. The postmark is inside, and reads WASHINGTON, D.C. / JUL 12 / 5 30 PM / 1923.

Could the solution to the hub or cylinder mystery on the New York and Philadelphia machines be as simple as modifying the machine to accept a new hub that is twice the size of the former, and with two slots for insertion of the postmark dials?

These cancels were at one time attributed to Columbia, but the authors of *THE COLUMBIA STORY* conclude otherwise. Obviously for a Universal Model D to apply this cancel, special postmark dials for the service markings were needed. “But more significantly, a specially designed cancelling cylinder was also required. The normal cancelling cylinder had a single dovetailed slot to accept the postmarking dial with the majority of the remaining circumference taken up by the cancelling die. This machine required a specially designed and manufactured cancelling cylinder. The reason for suggesting a special cylinder was provided is that there are no ink offsets on the front of the cover. This suggests that the letter sensing mechanism was active on the machine. A production model machine with a new cylinder modified so that the letter sensing mechanism remained active but allowed for continuous cancelling impressions seems to indicate the factory supported the development of this machine. Such a machine could

have been an experimental unit or one that was produced as the result of a special order request.”⁸

A New York City example of meter franked mail with continuous backstamp can be seen in **Figures 10 and 11.**

Figure 10 A, below: NEW YORK / N.Y. no date oval meter stamp franked 19-cents by a Pitney-Bowes machine for registered mail. Front of cover.

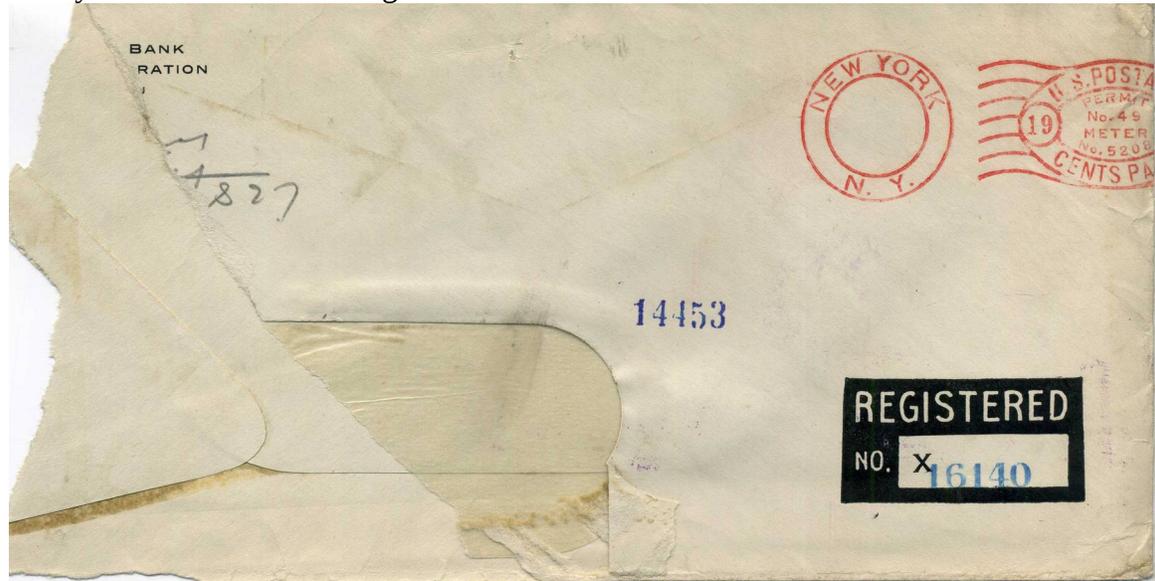


Figure 10 B, below: In violet ink, continuous machine cancel NEW YORK / DEC 5 / 11 PM / 1926 / N.Y. and REGISTERED / CITY / HALL / STA. / MAIL.



See **Figure 11** for closeup of **Figure 10 B**

⁸ Morris-Payne-Holmes, THE COLUMBIA STORY Volume 5 (Machine Cancel Society 2000), page 234.

Figure 11, below: In violet ink, continuous machine cancel NEW YORK / DEC 5 / 11 PM / 1926 / N.Y. and REGISTERED / CITY / HALL / STA. / MAIL. This is a close-up of the continuous cancel in **Figure 10 B**.



It was obviously more expedient to use a machine to backstamp non-valuable registered mail, than to hand stamp a bunch of legal notices. Not all post offices utilized a modified machine for that purpose. Consider the meter franked registered mail from Wilmington, Delaware in **Figure 12**.

Figure 12 A: 18-cent oval meter frank with no townmark and no cancel applied over it. A Pitney-Bowes meter machine applied the meter franking. With enlarged view of meter frank in lower right corner.

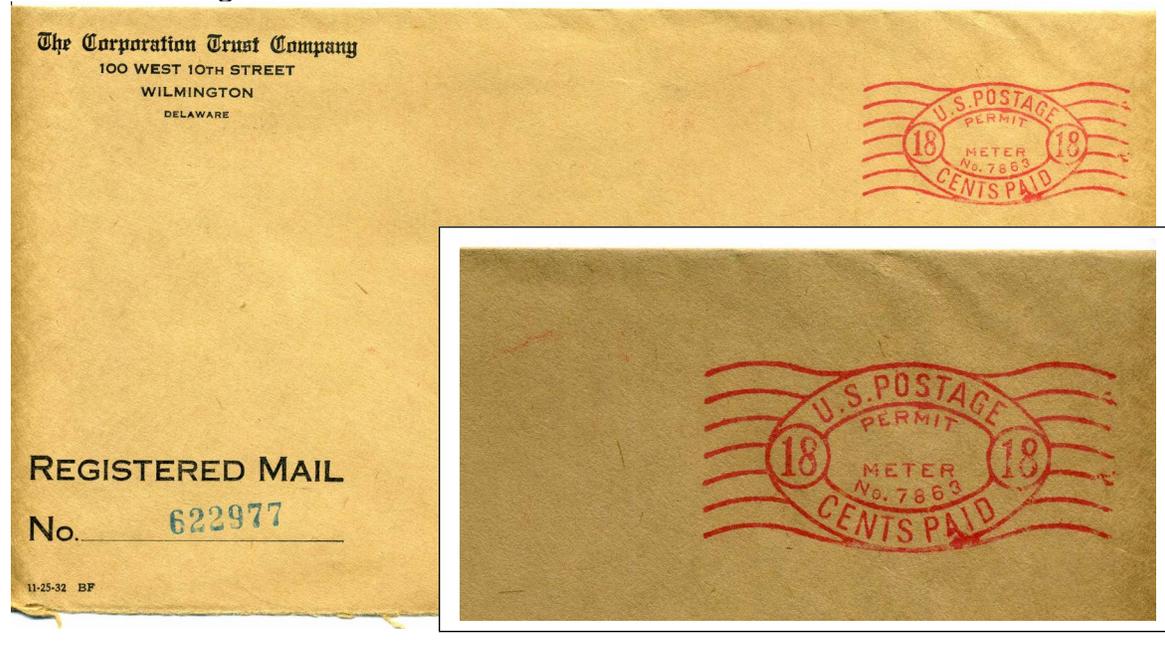


Figure 12 B, below: Universal Model G backstamp applied at post office of mailing. The postmark reads WILMINGTON / FEB 20 / 1933 / 2 DEL. To apply the backstamp, the envelope is fed with its right top corner into the machine first. The arrow points in the direction that envelope passes through the machine cancel. Note the cancellation is applied first, and the dial last.

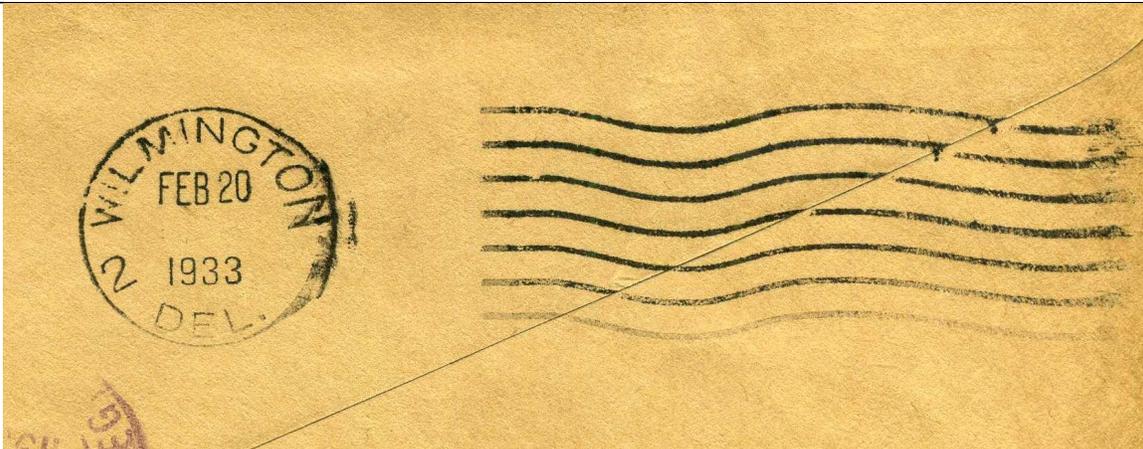
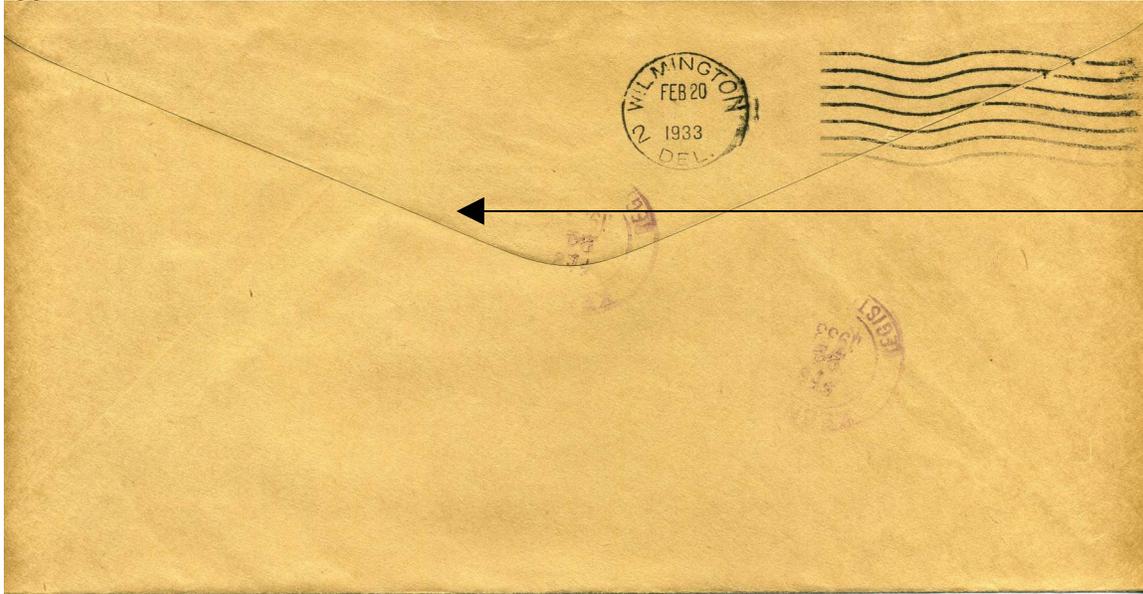


Figure 12 C, above: Close-up of the backstamp featured in **Figure 12 B**. Universal Model G backstamp applied at post office of mailing. The postmark reads WILMINGTON / FEB 20 / 1933 / 2 DEL.

*Before something different from Chicago is shown to you, take a moment to examine the location of the backstamp in **Figure 12 B**. If we are observing a non-repeating cancel, the end of the envelope that is fed into the machine determines the location of the cancel as well as its orientation. In the case of the 1933 Wilmington backstamp, the top right corner of the envelope was fed first and tripped the mechanism, and the machine applied the cancel horizontal to the viewer and in the top right corner. If however we fed the top*

left corner of the envelope into the machine, something different would happen. If one were to feed the top left corner into the machine, the envelope would be on its left side, and the cancel would not be horizontal to the line of sight of the viewer, but rather would be reading up . . . with the cancel at the top and the postmark toward the bottom, dangling. See **Figure 13** for its orientation.

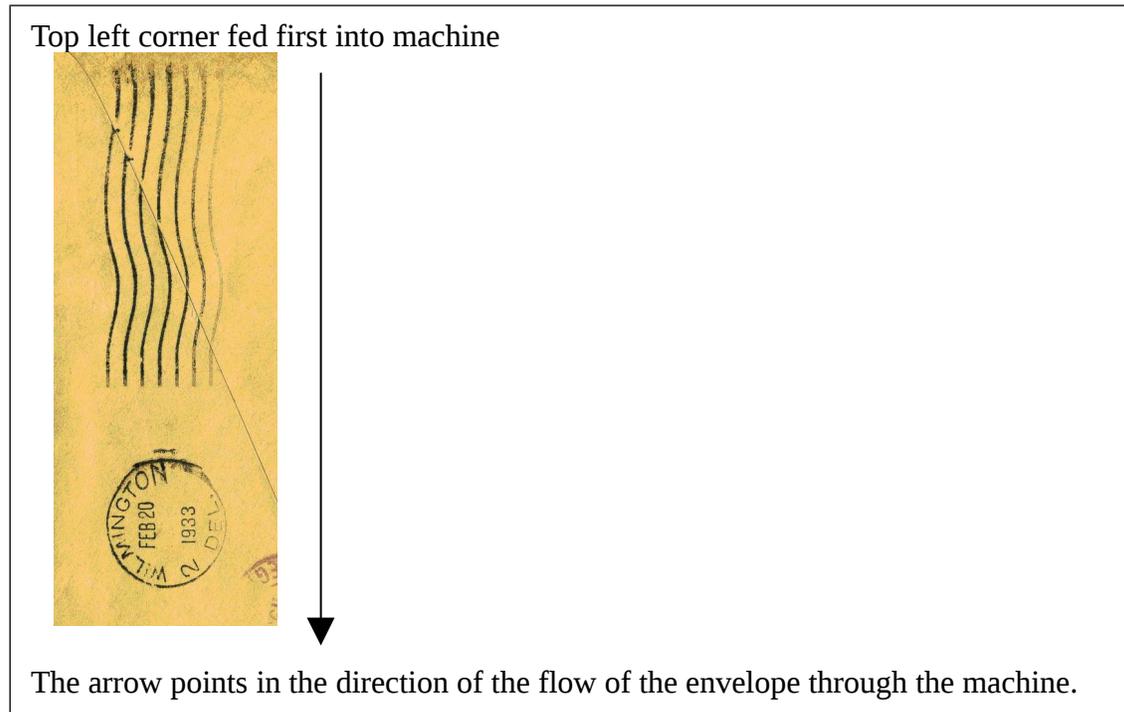
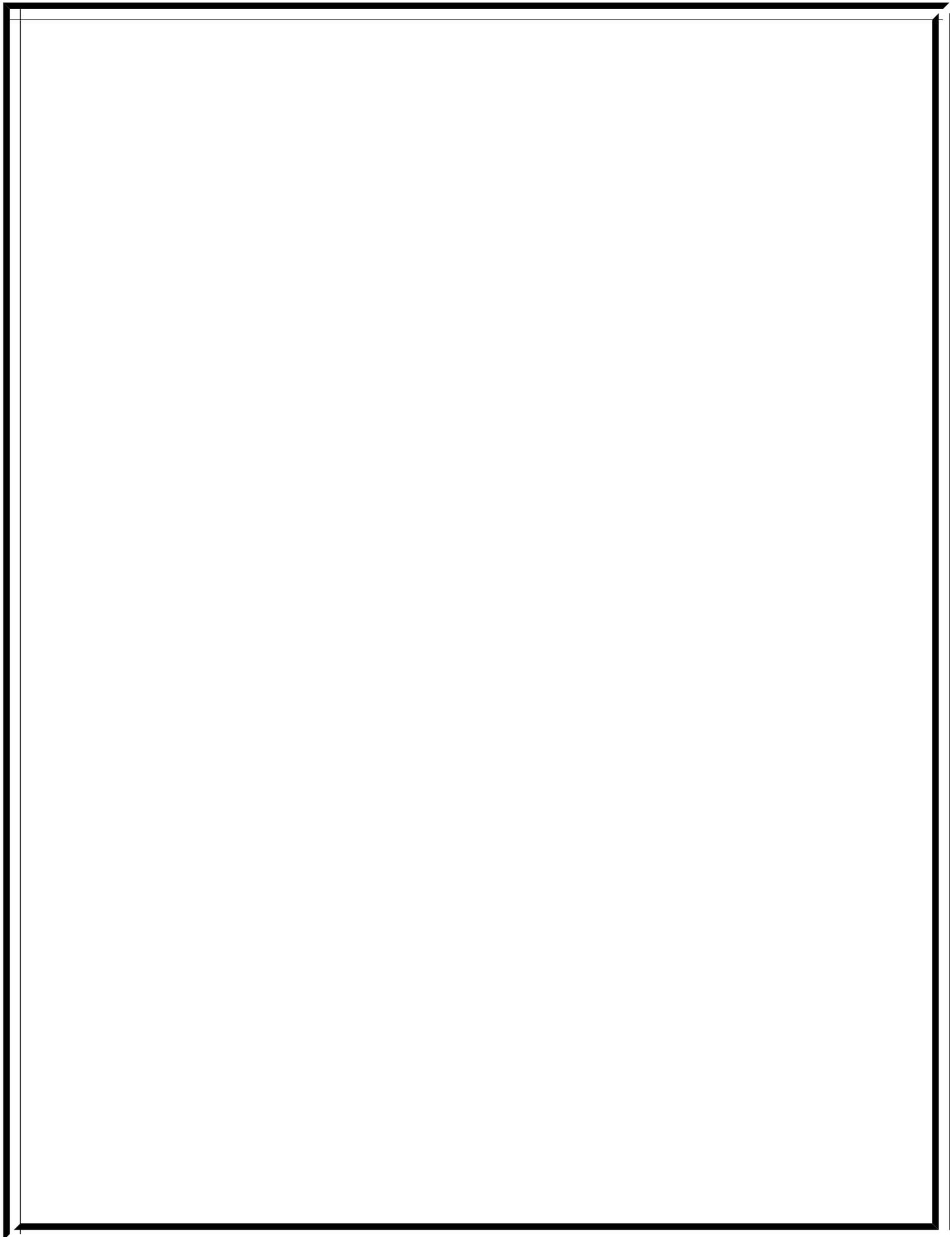


Figure 13: If an envelope's left top corner were fed into a Universal machine cancel, the cancel would appear on its side if the envelope were normally oriented to the eye of the viewer.

If you have a good handle on this background, as well as the explanation of **Figure 13**, you are ready to proceed to Part II. If not, please review Part I again. In Part II, something different from Chicago will be reviewed. You need to understand why the cancel in **Figure 13** is on its side before you appreciate the Chicago backstamp in Part II.



A note about Machine Cancel Forum

This is a special show issue of *Machine Cancel Forum*. It is just a sample, and topics vary from issue to issue.

The Machine Cancel Society was originally The Flag Cancel Society. In 1987 the Flag Cancel Society expanded its study to include all machine cancels, as well as all Flag Cancels. The Flag Cancel Society changed its name to reflect its expanded area of interest.

Prior to 1987, *Machine Cancel Forum* was published privately by Koonz and McGee. It is for that reason you will see references at times to *Machine Cancel Forum I or First Series*, and *Machine Cancel II or Second Series*. Since the two series were not published in the same years, they can also be distinguished by their year of publication. First Series runs from 1974 to 1986. Second Series began in 1987.

How to get *Machine Cancel Forum*? It is very easy. Join the Machine Cancel Society! Dues for US delivery of Forum is only \$15 per year. If you wish to join the Society, send your dues payable to The Machine Cancel Society to:

Secretary, Gary Carlson
1261 Ducrest Dr S Columbus, OH 43220-3813
machinecancelsecretary@gmail.com

Early Registered Meter Franked Mail and Machine Cancels

Part II A cancel from Chicago by A J Savakis, Editor

There is an intriguing note in the U.S. meter catalog, which reads, “With “REGISTERED / MAIL” at left (90123). This slogan was applied to the adhesive tape stamps only. The left portion with the slogan was meant to be stuck to the front of the cover and folded over with the postage indicia on back.”⁹ It was one of those notes missed until an example popped up on ebay. The cover, front and back are displayed as **Figure 14**.

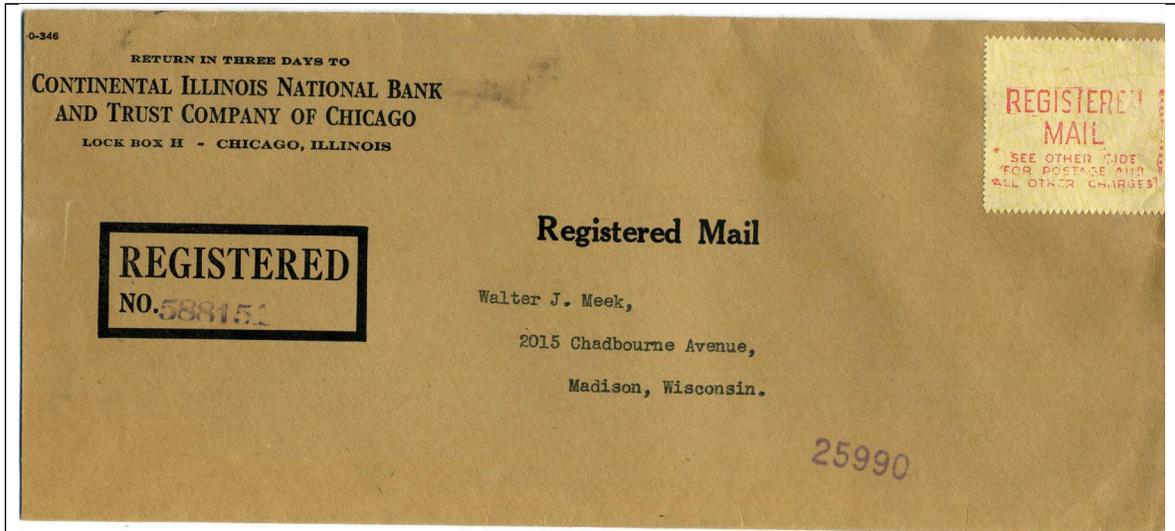


Figure 14A, above: Chicago, Illinois registered mail dated April 14, 1936. **FRONT**
Figure 14B, below: **BACK** of cover featured in **Figure 1A**.



⁹ Hawkins & Stambaugh, UNITED STATES POSTAGE METER CATALOG (Second Edition privately published by the authors 1994), at page 72.

The description from the catalog very much explains the meter frank and its slogan, and how it was applied. Although both the slogan and the meter postage frank are printed on a single adhesive tape, the tape is applied by hand with the REGISTERED / MAIL slogan applied to the top right corner of the front of the envelope, and the rest of the tape folded over so that the meter stamp is at the top left corner of the back of the envelope.

If one were to take a scan of the two halves of the tape, and put them together, the tape before applied to the envelope would look like this:



Figure 15, above: Graphically cropped, the single meter tape which is wrapped onto both sides of a single envelope are placed side-by-side to recreate how the tape would have appeared before being applied to the envelope.

It is interesting that this meter frank has BOTH a date and the city-state information. This 'flying eagle' meter must have been intended for uses other than registered mail. If this meter machine were being used for regular mail, then the city-state would have to be engraved in the indicia, and the date also be available for printing. So this meter machine that produced the frank in **Figure 15** from the very beginning was leased for different duty than the townless meters in **Figures 3 and 4** that appeared in Part I of this article.

The meter cover was dutifully handstamped on the back, and then some items that I had not noticed when I bid on ebay.

1. The meter machine in **Figure 15** is meter #90122. The catalog lists only meter #90123 as using this slogan. But this was a mistake on my part in reading the catalog. The next listing¹⁰ states that additional meters used this slogan, but instead of an omnidenominational potential of printing rates from 0 00 to 99 99, the meter like the one in

¹⁰ Hawkins & Stambaugh, UNITED STATES POSTAGE METER CATALOG (Second Edition privately published by the authors 1994), at page 73.

Figure 15 could frank ALL values from 0 00: to 9 99½. Note that the “:” symbol is a character than can be replaced by a half-cent symbol if required for a rate. If you go back to **Figures 3 and 4**, note there are no colons in the figures of value. Those machines in **Figures 3 and 4** could not print fractional rates. They were intended for registered mail, and could insure the contents using their omni-denominational capacity.

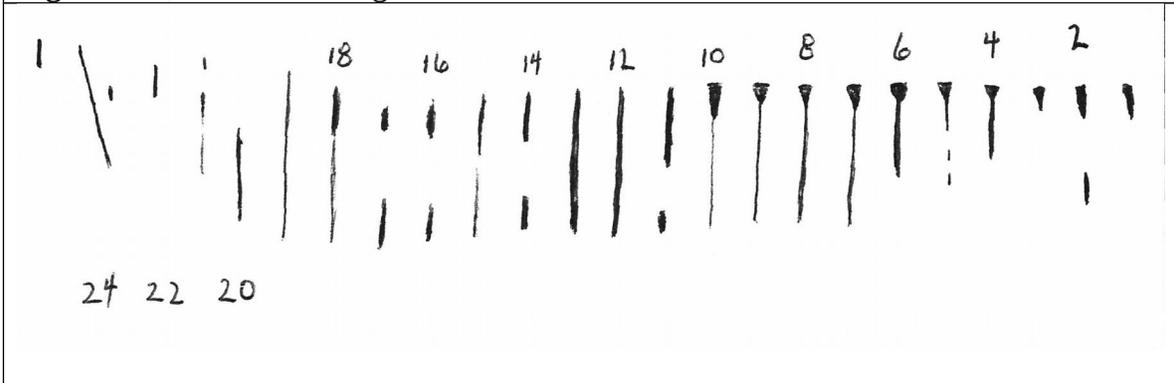
If there was any question that meter #90122 was intended for multiple jobs, the fact that it could print a rate with a fractional cent would settle that issue.

2. There are a series of vertical bars, much like Doremus or Barr-Fyke cancellation bars, that cancel the meter frank. To emphasize them, I have taken a scan of the meter with the black cancellation, and removed some of the color.



Figure 16A, above: Background color has been removed from the scan in Figure 15. Note how not only the cancellation is easier to see, but the watermark of the postage meter paper now stands out.

Figure 16B, below: Tracing of the vertical bar cancels.



Both the Doremus and Barr-Fyke cancels ceased being used about 15 and 40 years earlier, and the chances of an old machine or its cancellation hub being converted to a rocker-style hand cancel is pretty remote. Still an analysis as to why it cannot be is needed.

In making the tracing in **Figure 16 B**, I also numbered them from the right, the end that I think the cancellation was first applied. From the right and to the left, I numbered them with even numbers. *Note how the cancel suddenly turns upward at the far left.*

I can submit the following observations:

1. The bars are too short to be from a Barr-Fyke die, as the full length bars measure 12-14 mm tall compared with 20 mm or more for the Barr-Fyke.
2. Doremus vertical bar cancels have 15 mm tall bars, and the cancellation on our meter stamp could be possibly a worn example. Still, the Doremus vertical dies numbered from 16-19 in number. This example clearly has over 20 before it goes upwards and off the envelope to the far left.
3. Machine cancel devices apply their marking to the top right corner if the use is for cancelling stamps. If the die is engraved upside down (like for a RETURN TO SENDER cancel), the lower left corner of an envelope can be cancelled and the cancel will read up with relation to the envelope. Otherwise, the cancel will be upside down. There are other examples of machine cancels being applied toward the middle of an envelope, and different mechanical arrangements are used. Also, these are the continuous cancelling hubs and cancellations, shown in Part I of this article. But there is no arrangement for cancelling in the upper left corner of an envelope horizontal to the long end of the mail piece. If one tries to cancel the upper left corner by feeding the corner to be cancelled first, the only way to get it into the machine is to turn the envelope on its short side and feed it in down. But the cancellation will be perpendicular to the top . . . like the sample shown in **Figure 13** from Part I.

The only thing left would be a roller (one that rolls like a wheel) or a mechanical handstamp (one that goes up and down like a piston).

In going back to **Figure 16 B**, one can observe the series of bars swerving upward at around bar 20 or 21. So a mechanical stamper is out. It must be a roller.

Indeed, when I started this exercise, there was a similar roller cancel featured in Leonard Piskiewicz's book, CHICAGO POSTAL MARKINGS AND POSTAL HISTORY. His roller Type RL-21 pictured on page 79 is it, with just a little thicker bars. **See Figure 17.**

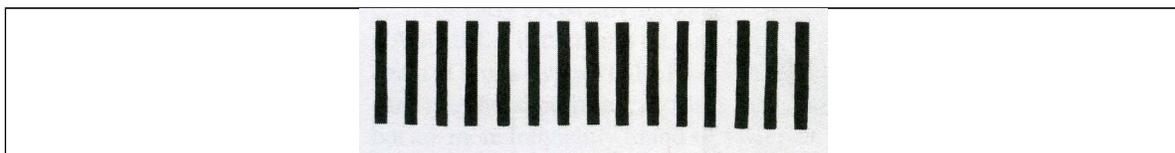


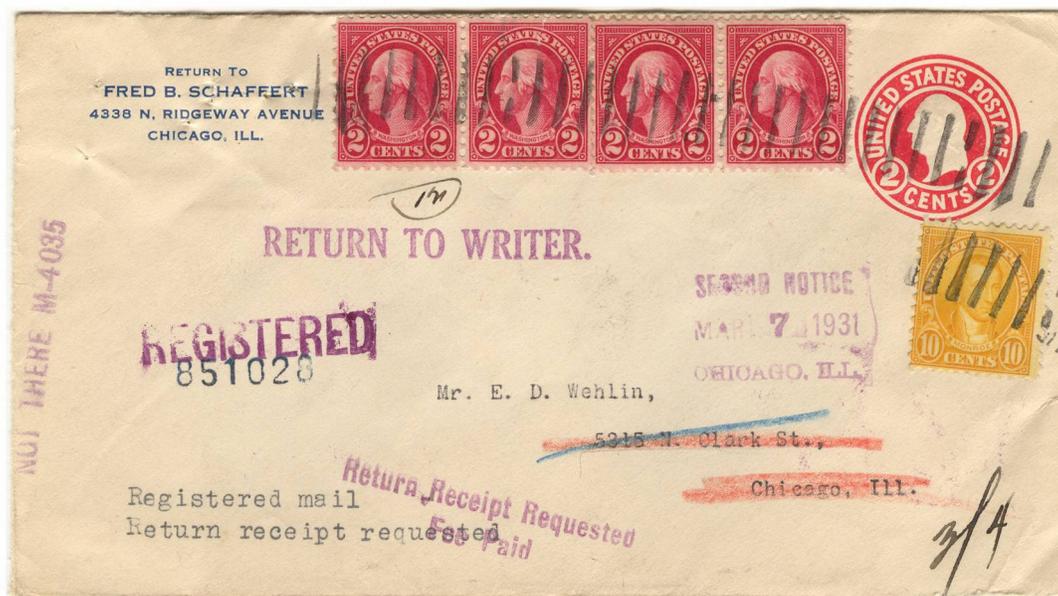
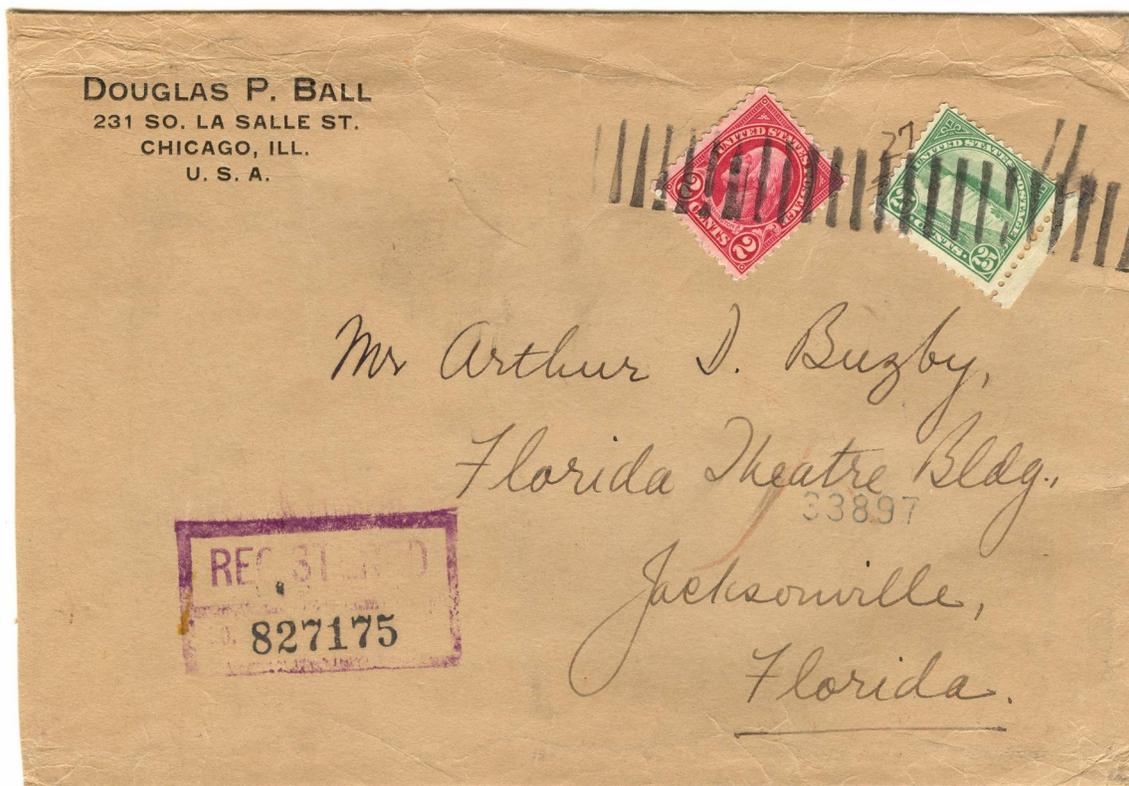
Figure 17 above: Identified as a roller, Leonard Piskiewicz labels this as Type RL-21 for Chicago in his book on Chicago markings and postal history.

So why does the marking in **Figure 16** look so much different than the marking in **Figure 17**? As summarized by Leonard in an email, 'Wear.' As further proof that they are the same, he points out that his Type RL-21 was used at the Old P.O. Annex, just like the round handcancel says in **Figure 16**!



Figure 18, above: Courtesy of Leonard Piszkiwicz, 1929 and 1932 examples of Chicago Type RL-21 roller cancel used on registered mail.

FEB 6 1930



MAR 2 1931

Figure 19, above: Courtesy of Leonard Piszkiwicz, 1930 and 1931 examples of Chicago Type RL-21 roller cancel used on registered mail.

Langford also explains that the flag cancel die stayed with the machine as it moved from city to city. Hence the star field becomes a finger print for identifying Flag Cancel machines as they are moved from city to city, as well as to distinguish new machines that have been installed.

But even with this information available in book form, there are unknowns and surprises.

To illustrate this, consider the Flag Cancel machines used at Xenia, Ohio. The Flag Cancel Encyclopedia gives the reader this information about the dates of use of three different Flag Cancel machines:

- | | | | | |
|----|-------|---------|------|------|
| 1. | Xenia | B 14 | 1901 | 1913 |
| 2. | Xenia | B 14 dd | 1913 | 1917 |
| 3. | Xenia | A 14 | 1917 | 1921 |

The cancels for Xenia are described as either a type B14 or a type A14. The letter distinguishes the style of the postmark dial in accordance with a chart. The B dial has the four digits of the year separated at the bottom of the dial. For example, a B dial with a year of 1901 would appear in the dial with a “19” in the lower left corner, and the “01” in the opposite lower right corner. The number describes the flag style and the arrangement of the stars. The number “14” has a 3-2-3-2-3 arrangement of stars, and the stars are numbered for discussion purposes in **Figure 1**.

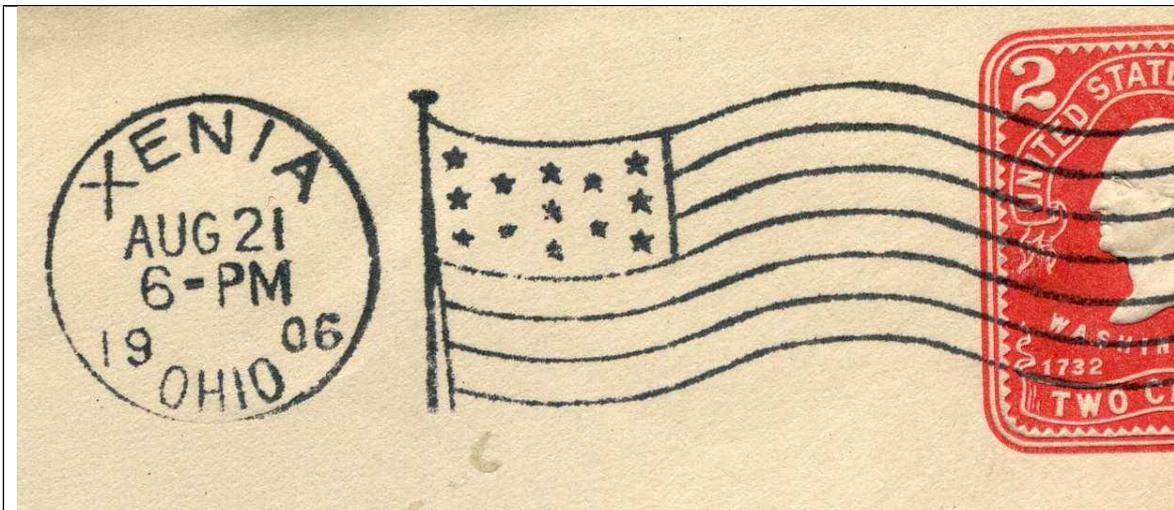


Figure 3, above: Xenia, Ohio Flag postmark date 1906 0821.
Die #1 used 1901-1913. This is Type B14.

In comparing this Flag with the others used in Xenia, compare the location of stars 11, 12 and 13 in all the examples. In Flag #1, the stars #11 and #13 at the far right are on top of each other, with star #12 slightly to the right of them. Also note where the halyard (the rope that ties the flag) attaches to the staff in relation to the stars and union. For Flag #1, the halyard attaches at the lower left corner of the union.

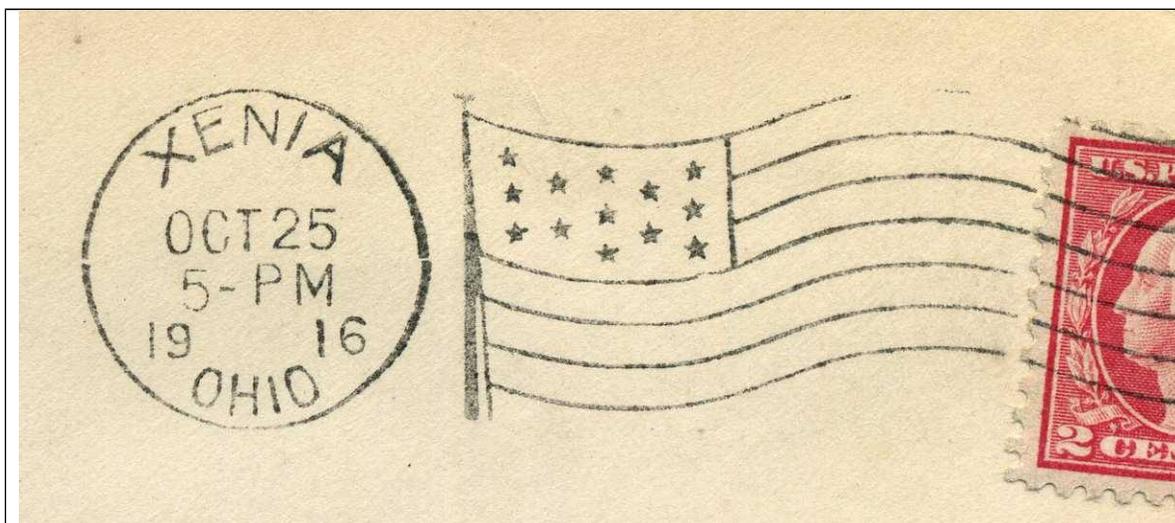


Figure 4, above: Xenia, Ohio Flag postmark date 1916 1025

Flag Die #2 used 1913-1917. This is also a Type B14, but the Flag die shows a different pattern in the stars and where the halyard attaches to the staff. This is a different die (abbreviated “dd”) and represents a new machine replacing the older machine which was in use from 1901.

To distinguish the Flag cancellations, compare stars 11, 12, and 13 with the example featured in Figure 3. For this Flag Die #2, star #12 is not in line with stars #11 and #13. Instead, star #12 is to the left of both. Also, the halyard in Flag Die #2 attaches with a great deal more ink.

Both Flag Die #1 and Flag Die #2 has postmark dials with the digits of the year split. For Flag Die #3, not only are the digits together, but again the machine is changed as can be shown by observing the Flag Cancel die itself.

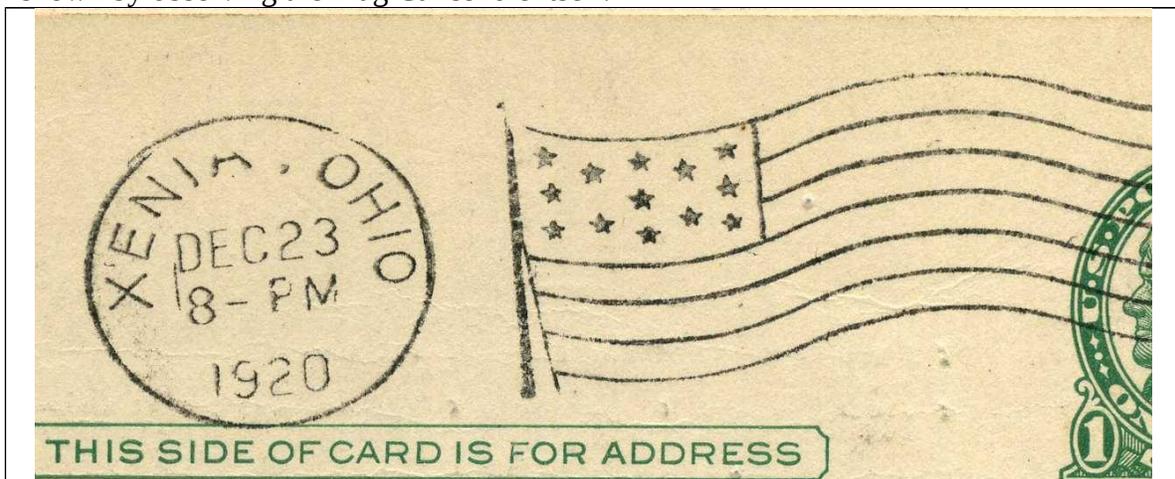


Figure 5, above: Xenia, Ohio Flag postmark date 1920 1223

Flag Die #3 used 1917-1921. The digits of the year are together in the lower middle of the postmark dial. This is a style A dial. This is the easiest way to distinguish Flag Die #2 and #3. Besides being a different arrangement of stars, note how much farther the halyard is from the staff in comparison with the earlier dies.

One could easily conclude the record of machines used in Xenia from 1901-1921 is complete. But there is a surprise. What is not disclosed from the record is that between the Flag Cancel machine that applied Flag Die #1 and Flag Die #2, there was a Columbia machine used for a brief period of time.

Machine Cancel collectors know about the 'interregnum' use of a Columbia machine at the Xenia post office from two reports of actual examples.¹² It is assumed, but not proven, that the Columbia machine was a temporary use after the older American Flag Cancel machine ceased to operate, and the replacement Flag Cancel machine was not yet available.

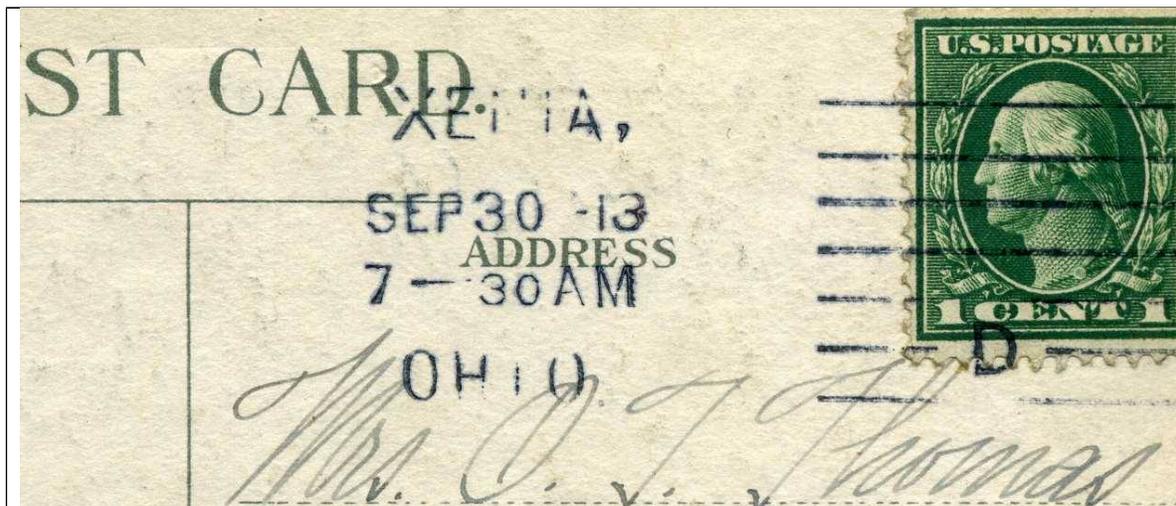


Figure 6, above: *Columbia machine cancel Type K-7 (D)*
Postmark date of 1913 0930

This is only the second reported example of a Columbia machine cancel at Xenia. Additional examples if known are asked to be reported to the Editor.

The D in the cancellation indicates the post card was Deposited for mail delivery at the Xenia Post Office.

The Columbia machine cancel's dates of use is unknown; and can be for a week, a month, or longer. While it is assumed it was a short term replacement, it is possible that either Flag machine #1 or Flag machine #2 was used simultaneously with the Columbia.

Hence dates of use of not only the Columbia, but Flag Cancel uses in the summer and fall of 1913 are needed to be reported.

¹² The initial report was of a 1913 0925 use in the multi-volume study by Bob Payne, Reg Morris, and Tim Holmes. Mike Ellingson reported and sold on E*Bay a 1913 0930 example.



Figure 7, above: Xenia, Ohio Flag postmark date 1913 0726 of a Parcel Post stamp. Die #1 used 1901-1913. This is Type B14.

For being a last year use of Flag machine #1, the device is still applying a good impression of its Flag Die. Indeed, it can be argued that this late use is a better example than the earlier ones! *It begs the question as to why it was replaced. Perhaps it was something sudden, without time for an orderly replacement of the Flag Cancel machine by another of the same manufacturer, and hence something quick was sent.*

The mystery of the Columbia interregnum is compounded by the observation that the Columbia machine sent to Xenia had a cancellation die not used on any other Columbia! If you will notice in **Figure 6**, the cancellation die included the letter "D".

To the Editor's information and belief, this was the ONLY Columbia bar cancel of this 7-bar style to have a die space for insertion of a letter (C for Collection from mailboxes; D for Deposited at the Post Office; R for Received at destination Post Office; and T for Transit).

August 1913 through December 1913 Flag Cancels are requested to be reported to the Editor (*Please! Include a scan of the cancel for verification purposes*) as well as any other Columbia uses at Xenia.

Information can be emailed to the Editor at [mcsforum @ embarqmail.com](mailto:mcsforum@embarqmail.com).

Thank you!

Get Free Information, On-Line!

As a service, the Machine Cancel Society has information on-line, available for the public, to assist them in their quest for machine cancel information.

VISIT:

www.machinecancel.org

You will find a sampling of some Machine Cancel Forum articles, plus some really valuable features:

❖ **William Barlow's Award-Winning Boston Machine Cancel Exhibit**

William Barlow, Jr., has produced an award-winning exhibit (2008 Indypex GOLD) on the history of machine cancels used in Boston, Massachusetts. Most collectors of machine cancels will recognize that Boston was a major center for experimentation with new machines, and study of American flag machines used in this city alone offers an amazing variety. The exhibit goes well beyond the American company and is a useful education for both new and experienced machine cancel collectors.

❖ **Ohio Town List of Universal Machine Cancels**

The *Ohio Town List of Universal Machine Cancels* is a free web based publication, available without charge and subject to the licensing agreement at the beginning of the document. The 50-page publication was prepared for the first Universal Symposium held at the Trumbull Philatelic Exhibition in 2008 at Warren, Ohio. It is a list of all reported Universal machine cancels used in Ohio, and is an on-going research project. Here is an opportunity for you to participate in the search for additional town locations, types of cancels, Universal models, and dates of use.

❖ **Useful links to other machine cancel sites**

Some useful links to other machine cancel sites on the web, as well as links that will steer you toward identifying the manufacturer of the machine that applied a particular cancel.

Some Recent Pennsylvania Machine Cancels and Uses

Not previously reported . . .

By A J Savakis, The Editor

The Machine Cancel Society has published an impressive list of books, and periodicals, since its inception. Added together with privately published books and manuscripts on the subject of machine cancels, a four shelf bookcase with three-foot shelving would be insufficient to hold the material!

Despite this information that is available in print, there are plenty of new uses, new towns, new machines, and types to be found and reported. Machine cancel collecting is an adventure!

Consider these Pennsylvania finds:

1. In the July 2009 issue of Forum, Matt Stoll reported this new date of use of a Type F 6 () cancel used at Philadelphia, Station B.



Figure 1, above: A NEW DATE OF USE! American Postal Machines Company used at Philadelphia, Station B previously reported used on March 18, 1896, has been found used January 19, 1896 as well by Matt Stoll.

Bob Payne has previously reported machine #1, American Postal Machines Company, used at Philadelphia, Station B, on March 18, 1896¹³ with a Type F dial, and Type 6 () canceller. The Type F dial designation for the American bar cancels is the same style as the Flag Cancel Encyclopedia by Frederick Langford's type chart.¹⁴ The bar cancellation Type 6 () from the study on American Cancels¹⁵ indicates that there are 6 straight bars, with a blank die space.

¹³ Billings, Payne & Morris, A PRIMER – US MACHINE POSTAL MARKINGS (2005) at page 40.

¹⁴ The Flag Cancel Encyclopedia is in its Fourth Edition. It is ONLY available from the MCS. Please contact the Secretary to order. See address and email elsewhere in this document.

¹⁵ Morris, American Machine Cancels (1975 and 1978).

Bob Payne described the March 18, 1896, find as unique. With this new January 19, 1896, example, additional copies used in early 1896 are likely to be found.

AMERICAN POSTAL MACHINES COMPANY

PHILADELPHIA ** STATION B

Editor's Note: This list of use was provided by Bob Payne in January 2005 before he passed away. The new find by Matt Stoll is added.

Machine # 1

PA	PHILADELPHIA	STA. B	F		NEW EKU!	<u>1896</u> <u>0119</u>	1896 0318
PA	PHILADELPHIA	STA. B	F	6 ()		1896 0402	1898 0207
PA	PHILADELPHIA	STA. B	F	14 ()	Flag	1898 0421	1899 0923
PA	PHILADELPHIA	STA. B	F	37 (1)	Expo.Flag	1899 0925	1899 1127
PA	PHILADELPHIA	STA. B	F	38 (1)	Flag	1899 1215	1899 1230

Machine #2

PA	PHILADELPHIA	STA. B	F	13 (2)	Flag	1896 0115	1896 0310
PA	PHILADELPHIA	STA. B	F	1 6 (2)		1896 0310	1896 0319
PA	PHILADELPHIA	STA. B	F	1 W2(2)		1896 0324	1896 0517
PA	PHILADELPHIA	STA. B	F	2 6 (2)		1896 0612	1896 0619
PA	PHILADELPHIA	STA. B	F	2 W2(2)		1896 0628	1898 0404
PA	PHILADELPHIA	STA. B	F	37 (2)	Expo.Flag	1899 1102	1899 1128
PA	PHILADELPHIA	STA. B	F	38 (2)	Flag	1899 1212	1899 1228

This new find proves that the lists of uses are ever expanding, and this is the discovery area available for collectors to engage.

The key of course is reporting. Not only does this add to the body of information, but it encourages others to look as well. Consider the next Philadelphia find:

2. David Vogtman reports a September 30, 1896, cancel, also from Station B, Philadelphia, with machine #2 noted in the cancellation bars. See Figure 2, below:

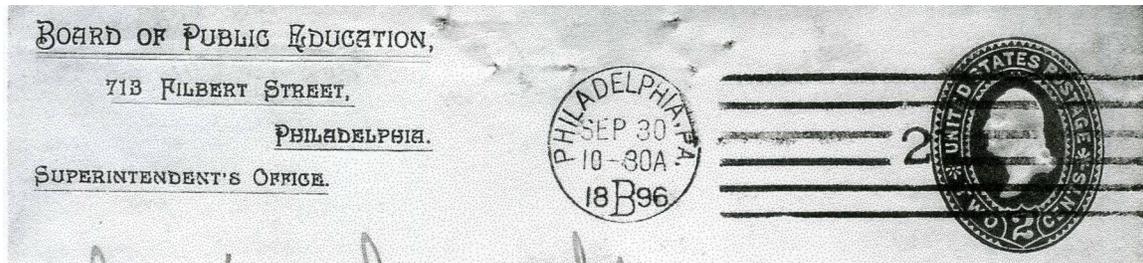


Figure 2, above: A NEW DATE OF USE! American Postal Machines Company used on September 30, 1896, at Philadelphia, Station B Type F 6 (2) previously reported used during two periods in 1896: March 10 – 19 and June 12-19. This report adds a third period of use in September. The find was reported by David Vogtman.

3. As this special issue was being assembled, a visit to a local Akron, Ohio, stamp bourse, produced for the Editor this interesting small town Pennsylvania marking used at Youngsville:



Figure 3, above: December 22, 1925, Columbia machine cancel used at Youngsville, Pennsylvania. This is a previously unreported town using a Columbia device.

The very busy cover with postal markings due to its forwarding and directory search draw the eye away from the lightly applied machine cancel at the top right corner of the envelope. The machine cancel is a Type G1W Columbia machine cancel, from a town not previously reported to have used a Columbia machine. See Figure 4 for a closeup.



Figure 4, above: Type G1W Columbia machine cancel used December 22, 1925, at Youngsville, Pennsylvania.

Youngsville is a small town in Warren County, northwestern Pennsylvania.¹⁶ In 1980, it had a population of about 2000. In the last census in 2000, it shrunk a bit. It is located in an area rich in outdoor opportunities like hunting, fishing, and camping. Finding this machine cancel – a new town – was a nice catch.

New dates of use, new towns are discoveries to be found and shared in common boxes of covers. There is a machine cancel adventure ready for you.

* * * * *

Join the Machine Cancel Society! Dues for US delivery of Forum is only \$15 per year. If you wish to join the Society, send your dues payable to The Machine Cancel Society to:

Secretary, Gary Carlson
1261 Ducrest Dr S Columbus, OH 43220-3813
machinecancelsecretary@gmail.com

¹⁶ The webpage of Youngsville, Pennsylvania, says that it is an incorporated 'borough.'

PROJECT 2000

In the January 1997 issue of Machine Cancel Forum, it was announced that a new project was launched by the Machine Cancel Society. This project was named PROJECT 2000, and its goal was to create a supreme electronic database of machine cancels. The Society chose ACCESS by Microsoft for processing and storing the information.

First, all previous work published by the Society was to be integrated into a single, coherent assembly of that data. This ambitious project was only possible with the advent of powerful computing equipment to assist in the task. This part of the project was completed as of November 13, 1998, and this milestone is called Revision 0 of the Supreme Database of Machine Cancels.

Second, State Database Managers, with the assistance of members, would expand on that 'ground zero' list to include additional, unpublished information, as well as PIX illustrations of the cancels. You are invited to participate as either a data reporter OR as a database manager.

Information concerning the status of purchasing the ACCESS program and state databases should be directed to Art Hadley. Information and questions for a particular state should be directed to the following State Database Managers:

STATE DATABASE MANAGERS

CA			MI	
	Don Pearson		OH	Gary
Carlson				
DC			MT	
FL	Bart Billings			
			PA	Bob
McKain				
ID	Peter Larson	NV		
	Bart Billings	TN	L Steve Edmondson	
IL	Don Pearson			
			UT	Dennis
Pack				
IN	Art Hadley		<i>New England</i>	Bob
Bush		VA	Rich Small	
KY	Art Hadley			
				WY Jim
Faber				
NC	Tony Crumbley			

Other Forum and Membership Issues:

Change of address (E-mail or other): Notify Gary Carlson, Secretary
Mutilated or undelivered Forum : Notify Alex Savakis, Managing Editor

Is this issue of Forum correctly addressed?
If not, please notify the Secretary Gary Carlson
1261 Ducrest Dr S Columbus, OH 43220-3813
machinecancelsecretary@gmail.com

GENERAL PUBLISHING INFORMATION

Note the larger font starting with the January 2009 issue. The preferred format is WORD.

Articles in Machine Cancel Forum starting in 2009 use this format information:

Text Font: Times New Roman size 12, with
JUSTIFY alignment

Title: Times New Roman size 16, with size 14
font for author's name and address

Captions for Figures: Times New Roman font size 10, also
JUSTIFIED

*The word **Figure** followed by a number for illustrations are both in **bold** in the text and caption.*

Footnotes, Page Numbers & Header: Times New Roman font size 10, and also
JUSTIFIED

Articles should have room at the top for header, and at the bottom for
footer.

Writers' Deadlines:

For January Issue,	November 1st	February 1st
	For April Issue,	May 1st
	For July Issue,	August 1st
	For October Issue,	

The email domain of the Editor is embarqmail.com. Send email to
Alex at mcsforum@embarqmail.com Thanks!

On July 22, 2009, the German Philatelic Society announced that SIX awards at Minnesota Stamp Expo 2009, July 17-19, 2009, were given to Jerry H. Miller for his exhibit

'From Hinrichsen to Michelius' ... The Wilhelmian-era Experimental Machine Postmarks of Germany 1866-1914 by Jerry H. Miller

The latter exhibit won a total of six awards ... Show Grand Award
APS Research Award
Postal Society Award
GPS Chapter 10, 50th Anniversary Award
GPS Gold/Show Gold ...

and is now eligible to participate in the Champion of Champions Competition which takes place at APS Stamp Show at Richmond, Virginia, August 12-15, 2010.

Jerry H. Miller is also a member of The Machine Cancel Society, and he is congratulated for these honors. The Machine Cancel Society wishes him the best at the Champion of Champions Competition next August.

There is more to report:

At CHICAGOPEX 2009 (GBCC Convention, Nov. 20-22), Jerry H. Miller's British Machine Markings exhibit will be presented: ***'From Hill to Bickerdike' ... The Victorian-era Experimental Machine Postmarks of England 1857-1901.*** (Grand Award Winner at WESTPEX 2006). At this convention, he will be giving a power-point presentation on Friday, November 20: **Evolution of Machine Postmarks Worldwide from 1857-1914**, which includes portions of an exhibit that he has not previously shown. If you will be in Chicago that weekend, this promises to be an informative talk.

Jerry H. Miller's book (Second Edition) *From Hinrichsen to Krag: The Experimental and Early Machine Postmarks of Germany (1866 until 1906)* is available in limited quantities from the Machine Cancel Society. As a service to members, they are being sold at \$58, postpaid USA. Shipping to Europe or Oceania will be an additional \$15 postage. If you are not a member, you can join for 2009 for an additional sum of \$15. Send checks made payable to The Machine Cancel Society to: Secretary, Gary Carlson, 1261 Ducrest Dr S Columbus, OH 43220-3813 email:machinecancelsecretary@gmail.com

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