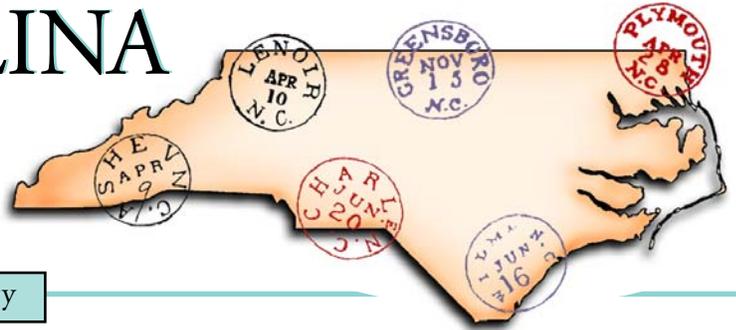


NORTH CAROLINA POSTAL HISTORIAN



The Journal of North Carolina Postal History

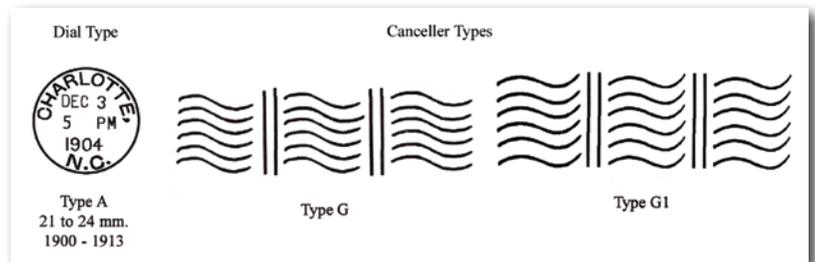
VOLUME 32, NO. 2 SPRING 2013 WHOLE 122

North Carolina Liquor Permits



A Forced March to Fayetteville

Early Columbia Machine Cancels of Charlotte



Williamston, Martin County's Outstanding Post Office



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is not too early to plan to attend the annual meeting of the North Carolina Postal History Society, which will be held in conjunction with CHARPEX 2013, July 27 and 28. This year CHARPEX will be at another new location, Taylor Hall, on the campus of Central Piedmont Community College, 1228 Elizabeth Avenue, Charlotte. It is conveniently located just off I-277 and Route 74. Site location details will be available on the CHARPEX web site, www.charpex.info. I hope you will be able to attend.

The status box of the North Carolina Postmark Catalog Update on the last page shows new changes. County catalogs are now available for Alamance through Mecklenburg, which represent 60 percent of the 100-county project. Large city catalogs, such as Asheville, Charlotte, and Greensboro have been separated from their counties and are listed under the city names because their file sizes are large and would make the county files even much larger. All catalog files that have been completed, counties and cities, are available on our web site, www.ncpostalhistory.com. They are listed under the NC Postmark Catalog tab on the web site home page. Just select the county or city you want to view, then at the bottom of the listing box, select "Click here for PDF," and the file will be downloaded to your computer for viewing. If you want to save or print the file, right click on any displayed pdf page and select the action you want. The date in parenthesis after the name of each county in the on-line listing will tell you the date of the most recent file posted. To date, 3,255 pages have been created and 12,663 new markings not previously documented have been recorded.

Did you know that our web site has an Upcoming Events page on which we try to list all the philatelic events in our area and within a reasonable drive from North Carolina. This information comes from any source that we can find and is assembled for the benefit of our members.

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This issue has interesting articles about World War II liquor permits (Troutman), an 1844 relocation of soldiers from Fort Johnson in Smithville to the U.S. Arsenal at Fayetteville (Hall), new documentation of some early Columbia Machine cancels used at Charlotte (Winter), and a selection of covers from Williamston in Martin County (Crumbley). I think you will enjoy the articles.

Please remember to pay your dues for 2012 if you have not already done so. Check your mailing address label to see if there is a red dot on it. This will mean we have not received your dues payment. There are only eleven members who are delinquent. Are you one? If you are, please make your payment to Bill DiPaolo, our Secretary-Treasurer. Donations above the regular membership amount of \$15 are deductible and will be very helpful to our small society.

Two Board of Directors positions are coming up for renewal. If there are any members who would like to serve on the Board please contact either me or Tony Crumbley. We can be reached by email as shown below.

As always, I welcome your comments and suggestions for improving the society. Please feel free to call me at home (336 545-0175), send me an e-mail message at rfwinter@triad.rr.com, or write to me at the mailing address shown below.

Dick Winter



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North Carolina Liquor Permits



by Scott Troutman

Most often when we talk postal history, we are talking about postage stamps on covers. In this case, we have a war-related revenue item, sometimes called stamps. The items shown in this article, which we will call coupons, have surfaced several times before, but we have never known where they originated. Now with booklets located by Kurt Kohtz and Tony Crumbley, we know that these coupons originated in North Carolina.

It is our assumption that these coupons were issued to soldiers during World War II to allow them to purchase liquor at a state A.B.C. (Alcoholic Beverage Control) store. Recently we have been told only 23 counties in North Carolina had A.B.C. stores at the time, the other counties being dry. The use of coupons was done in other states, notably West Virginia and Virginia. It is possible, however, that our assumption may not be correct, and these coupons may have been used for rationing alcohol within the state by everyone, not just soldiers. Each coupon was good for one pint of liquor. The first ones were perforated 12 and came two coupons to a page. Figure 1a illustrates an open booklet page. The coupon details are depicted in Figure 1b.

1943. The numbers on the individual stamps refer to this table. Figure 1a shows stamps No. 1 and 2 of this booklet. These were usable only from December 7 through December 15, 1942. Each stamp allowed a person to purchase one pint of an alcoholic beverage at the A.B.C. store. The coupons were non-transferable. You had to show the person at the liquor store that you were the person listed in the book as the owner. This

kept them from being used as a sort of money in poker games. The coupon also was void if detached from the booklet. The detaching had to be done by the liquor control agent.

Figure 4 shows the next page, which has the issue date, expiration date, authorizing signature, and, at last, provides the information that these booklets were issued by



◀ ▲ **Figures 1a and 1b.** An open booklet showing the first two coupons, each perforated for removal. The larger view of coupon No. 1, a non-transferable coupon, “permits one purchase of an Alcoholic Beverage not exceeding one pint by volume.”

Figure 2 shows the front of the booklet. This particular booklet was issued in Cumberland County, where Fort Bragg was located. The coupons are printed in black on yellow paper with a horizontal lines as safety or watermarks. The booklet has a brown cover and a black printed serial number, No. 177148.

The inside flap (Figure 3), provides a list of dates when the various coupons could be used. This booklet covers the time period December 7, 1942 until November 30,

the North Carolina A.B.C. Board. The page also suggests that rationing was going on. The book entitles the holder “to purchase the quantity of merchandise indicated on coupons,” but that the A.B.C. Board “reserves the right to decrease or increase the



◀ **Figures 2.** Front cover of coupon booklet, brown in color for use in the 1942-1943 period. This booklet was issued in Cumberland County by the Alcoholic Beverage Control (A.B.C.) Board. North Carolina is not identified on the front but we shall see later that it was identified inside.



◀ **Figures 3.** Booklet cover inside provides a list of dates when the coupons could be used. Here it shows a time period from December 7, 1942 to November 30, 1943.

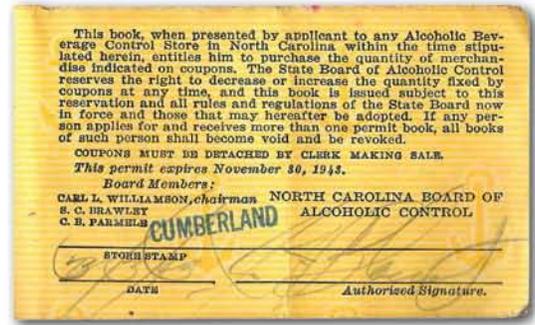
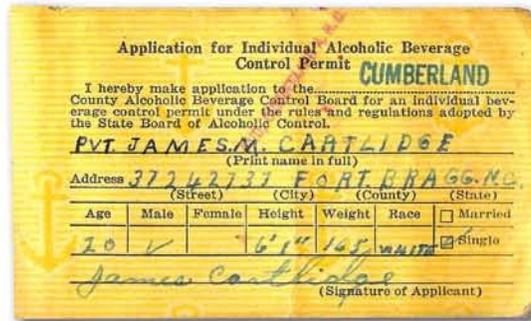


Figure 4. ▶

Page containing issue date, expiration date, and authorizing signature. This page also identifies the issuing state of North Carolina for the first time, "North Carolina Board of Alcohol Control."



◀ **Figures 5.** Another booklet page that shows the individual's application for the coupon, in this case Private James M. Cartledge stationed at Fort Bragg, including his identifying characteristics.

quantity fixed by coupons at any time." If alcohol got scarce, the A.B.C. Board could just declare the pint coupons were worth only a half pint without reissuing the booklet. Note also that if a person "applies for and receives more than one permit book, all books of such person shall become void and be revoked." This page also has the anchor safety or watermark. The county is handstamped in blue ink.

Inside the booklet is a page with the individual's application (Figure 5) and specific identification information for the person to whom the booklet was issued – in this case, Private James M. Cartledge, a twenty year old single man stationed at Fort Bragg. The registration page also has the anchor and horizontal lines safety or watermark.

The inside of the back cover has instructions related to the liquor purchase and use. (Figure 6) It also has a warning that the permit will be revoked if found guilty of six different listed activities.

Booklets exist for other years also. The green one illustrated in Figure 7 for the period December 1, 1943 through November 30, 1944, was supplied by Tony Crumbley. On this booklet the county is handstamped on the booklet cover in blue instead of being printed. Whether the county name was printed or handstamped seems to vary from county to county. This book had 48 coupons, arrange three on a page (Figure 8) and rouletted for removal. They are black on a green paper with elongated horizontal diamond lozenges for safety or watermarks. Each coupon has a red number, which is the number on the book cover.

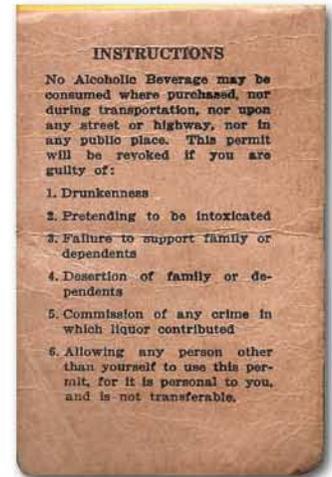
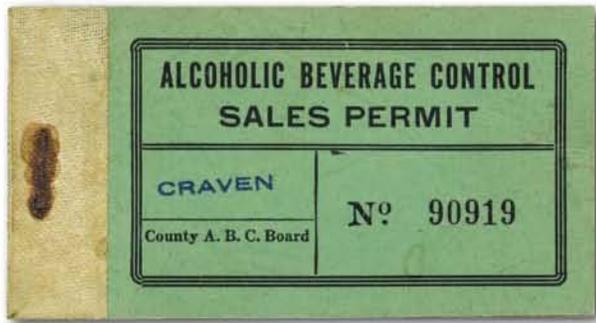


Figure 6. ▶

Inside the back cover of the booklet were printed instructions related to liquor purchase and use along with warnings that permit would be revoked under listed conditions.

Figure 9 shows a black and white scan of the blue-covered 1944-45 book (courtesy of Frank Binder). The coupons in this booklet were good from December 1, 1944 through November 10, 1945. On this booklet cover the county name "MOORE" was handwritten. The 1944-45 coupons also were arranged three-to-a-page. These coupons are roulette 9-1/2. The paper is yellow-orange, like the ones in the 1942-43 book. The safety or watermarks are horizontal lines and a large anchor. The printing is in black with a red serial number on each coupon as well as the book cover. The front and reverse of a typical coupon from this booklet are shown in Figures 10a and 10b.

Soon the war would end and with that the need for these liquor permits. ■



◀ **Figures 7.** Green-covered booklet for the period December 1, 1843 through November 30, 11944. (Courtesy Tony Crumbley)



Figure 8. ▶

The 48 coupons in the green-covered booklet were grouped three on a page. The safety or watermarks on these coupons were elongated horizontal diamond lozenges.



▲ **Figure 9.** Black and white scan of a blue-covered booklet issued for 1944-45. The county name "MOORE" is handwritten.



▲ **Figures 10a and 10b.** The coupons in the blue-covered booklet are yellow-orange, like the 1942-43 coupons. The safety or watermarks are horizontal lines and a large anchor.

Mystery Cover



Unfortunately, we had no responses to our last mystery cover, a crude, hand-made envelope from O.F. Dickin, Company F, 43rd Regiment, North Carolina Volunteers, addressed to Mr. Benjamin Browning, Weldon post office. This cover has an unusual label in the upper left corner. We will leave a smaller picture here in case someone now has an answer.



Our new mystery cover has a postmark that is very difficult to read. We would like to know where the cover was posted. Perhaps you have a similar cover in your collection?

Send your answer to Tony Crumbley or Dick Winter.

A Forced March to Fayetteville



by Charles F. Hall, Jr.

At first glance, a newly acquired cover (Figure 1) with a striking August 5, 1844, circular datestamp from Warsaw, North Carolina, appeared to be an interesting but otherwise unremarkable cover with some intriguing references to a march to Fayetteville and an insurrection in Wilmington. As with other postal history stories, research established that the writer was an individual who would become an important person in later North Carolina military and commercial life. The content of the letter related to important historical events. It is a vivid example of how a seemingly routine cover or letter can contain the elements of an important and fascinating story.

The folded letter was 8 x 10 inches and sealed with red wax. It was addressed to Brigadier General Robert Jones, Adjutant General of the U. S. Army in Washington, D.C. and was signed by Sewell L. Fremont, 2nd Lt., 3rd U.S. Artillery. The letter was docketed on the reverse that it had been received by the recipient on August 7, 1844, only two days after it was canceled. Warsaw was located on the Wilmington and Raleigh Railroad and the letter presumably travelled by rail to Washington D.C. It does verify the efficiency of the postal service at the time. The postal due marked at Warsaw was 18¾ cents, which was the 1844 rate for a letter traveling from 150 to 400 miles, but this was later deleted. The reason for the deletion is documented in the upper left corner of the envelope, where Lt. Fremont wrote in his flourishing script the letters “O.P.S,” which meant “On Public Service,” in other words, official military business. It appears that postage was intended to be charged, but was canceled because of the official military nature of the communication.

Upon closer examination, the letter raised several questions. The heading places the writer, Lt. S. L. Fremont, at “Camp near Warsaw” on August 4, 1844. The most compelling question is what was going on from a military perspective in Warsaw, North Carolina, in 1844? The War of 1812 and the 2nd Seminole Wars were over and the Mexican War was two years in the future. It was a period of a very small, regular army and peace in the land. There was no apparent reason for a military force to be camped in rural Duplin County. The letter was addressed to Brigadier General Robert Jones, Adjutant General of the U.S. Army and senior administrative officer, which suggests that the letter was of some significance, since it was addressed to one of the most senior officers in the army. The letter is brief, and is transcribed here as written:



▲ **Figure 1.** August 4, 1844 folded letter from Warsaw (Duplin County) addressed to Brigadier General Robert Jones, Adjutant General of the United States Army in Washington, D.C. with black Type I circular datestamp canceled the next day. Warsaw's first post office began operations on January 14, 1839, with Robert B. Saunders as the postmaster and remains an operating post office today. (The Author's Collection)

Camp at Warsaw N.C.

4th August 1844

Sir

I have the honor to inform you that in obedience to instructions from your office, received last at Fort Johnston, I left that post this morning in route for Fayetteville Arsenal with 20 men. There appears to be some excitement in Wilmington in consequence of the reports and rumors in circulation in reference to an insurrection of the slave population. I am informed that there were sixty men employed in patrolling that town for the last two nights. I shall leave this place in a few hours and hope by two forced marches to reach Fayetteville on Tuesday 6th midt. a distance of fifty miles.

I am Sir very respectfully
Your obt. Servant
S. L. Fremont
2 Lt. 3 Artillery

Brig. Gen. R. Jones
Adj. Genl US Army

Research soon established that the writer was Second Lieutenant Sewell L. Fremont, a native of Vermont and an 1841 graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point. The 3rd Artillery was part of the small peacetime U.S. Army of the day. With the end of the Seminole War in 1842, its companies were scattered along the southern coast. In 1844, Lt. Fremont's company was stationed at Fort Johnston at

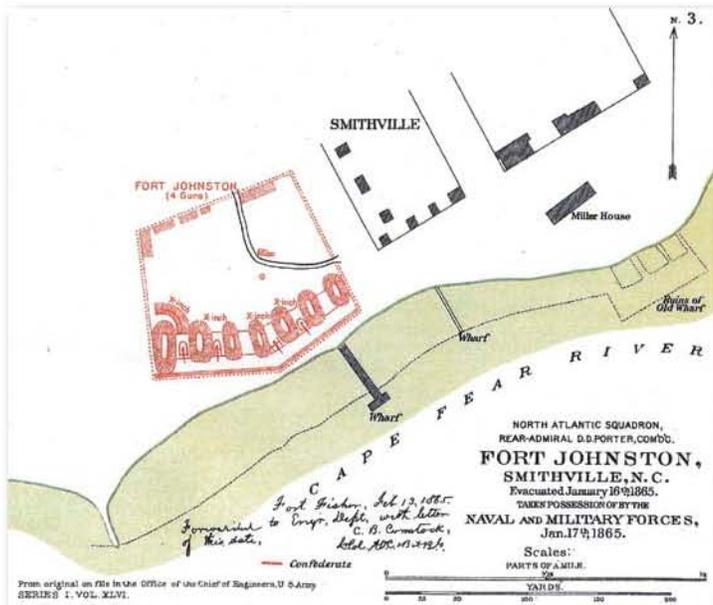


◀ **Figures 2a and 2b.** Sewell L. Fremont. The daguerreotype of the left portrays Fremont as he would have appeared as a Lieutenant in 1844. The ambrotype image on the right depicts him later as a Captain, a rank he obtained on March 3, 1847. Daguerreotypes, the first photographic process, were printed on silver coated metal plates and were introduced in the U.S. in the 1840s. They began to be replaced by ambrotypes, printed in negative on glass plates, in the late 1850s. (Both images courtesy of Robert Borrell, Sr.)

Smithville, North Carolina, now Southport, in Brunswick County. Fort Johnston was one of the state's few federal military facilities, the other three being the North Carolina Arsenal at Fayetteville, Fort Caswell, also in Brunswick County, and Fort Macon in Carteret County. Fort Johnston was built to guard one of the entrances to the Cape Fear River and the state's major port, Wilmington. It was authorized in 1745 by the North Carolina Legislature and was completed about 1764. Originally constructed of tapia, a brittle mixture of sea and oyster shells, sand and water, it was repaired after the War of 1812, later to be replaced by more substantial earthen walls by Confederate forces. It mounted six large guns during the Civil War, but was abandoned after the fall of Fort Fisher on January 15, 1865. Fort Johnston was used intermittently by the military in the twentieth century but was decommissioned and turned over to the Town of Southport in 2002 and is used for recreational purposes. All that remains from its military occupation are the officers' quarters.



▲ **Figure 3.** The officers' quarters at Fort Johnston in Smithville (now Southport.) This is all that remains of the fortification where Lt. Fremont's unit of the 3rd Artillery was based in 1844. It was at Fort Johnston that Lt. Fremont received his orders in August, 1844 to proceed to the Fayetteville Arsenal with his 20 man detachment to become the arsenal guard. The building is now owned by the town of Southport. (The Author's Collection)



◀ **Figures 4.** Plan of Fort Johnston as it appeared in 1865. When Lt. Fremont started his march to Fayetteville in 1844 it would have looked much different than in this drawing since Confederate soldiers replaced the tapia walls with more substantial earthen walls. (*Atlas to Accompany the O.R. of the Union and Confederate Armies*)

The Figure 1 letter informs General Jones that he is following General Jones' orders to report to the United States Arsenal at Fayetteville and will leave within a few hours on a two days forced march, hoping to reach the arsenal by midnight on August 6, a distance of 50 miles. This raises additional questions. Why was Lt. Fremont's detachment going to the arsenal at Fayetteville and why were they marching from Warsaw instead of marching



◀ **Figures 5.** A contemporary drawing of the United States (later Confederate States) Arsenal at Fayetteville. There are no known photographs of the arsenal. Few records survive of its operations and there are only two known imprint covers from the arsenal, both from Confederate administration. This was Lt. Fremont's destination with his march to furnish a guard force. (*Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*)

directly from Ft. Johnston to Fayetteville? He uses the term “forced march” which describes urgency. This poses the question of why such urgency? Was there a perceived threat to the arsenal?

The answer to the purpose of the forced march was found unexpectedly in additional research in the National Archives. It was another dispatch from Lt. Fremont dated August 7, 1844, to General Jones at the War Department. The dispatch reports his arrival at the North Carolina Arsenal and informs his superior that there is no indication of a slave insurrection and that the arsenal commander, Capt. William Bradford, reports he has no need of a guard and will not allow Lt. Fremont's troops to be posted as guards. The text of the letter is transcribed here as written:

North Carolina Arsenal
Fayetteville 7 Aug. 1844

Sir:

I have the honor to Report my arrival at this Station in about twenty hours from Warsaw a distance of fifty miles.

There appears to be no excitement here whatever in reference to an insurrection of the Slaves, nor has there been so far as I can learn. The captain in command says he has no need of a guard and will not allow sentinals to be posted about the arsenal buildings.

I am very respectfully
Your obt. Servt.
S. L. Fremont

Brg. Gen. R. Jones
Adj. Genl. U.S. Army
Washington
D.C.

The United States Arsenal at Fayetteville grew out of a need for a repository for arms located in the South in order to supply arms, ammunition, and supplies in case of a future conflict. It was a substantial brick and stone facility with octagonal brick towers at each corner and surrounded with a fence. By all contemporary accounts, it was a beautiful structure and the local population was quite proud of its appearance. Construction

began in 1838 and continued slowly during the antebellum period. During the Civil War, the arsenal assumed new importance. Additional facilities were built and rifle making machinery was installed by the Confederate Ordnance Department. There are very few records surviving from the arsenal and details of its early activities are very sketchy. This makes Lt. Fremont's letter particularly significant as it provides details of the transfer and forced march of the 3rd Artillery to respond to a perceived threat of a slave insurrection. He found none and apparently the arsenal commander felt that he had no need of a guard. The order dispatching Lt. Fremont to Fayetteville has not been located, but apparently someone in the War Department had received a report that there was an imminent threat of social unrest in Fayetteville. If that were true, the arsenal would have been a target of an insurrection because of the arms and supplies stored there.

In 1859, such a threat did develop, when the abolitionist John Brown and his followers captured the United States at Harper's Ferry, Virginia. He intended to arm the slave population in order to start an insurrection. John Brown's raid was not successful, but his famous raid did add to the tensions that were building towards the Civil War. There were doubtlessly memories also of the Nat Turner Rebellion, which will be discussed later.

In 1844, the arsenal commandant was Captain William Bradford. It is probable that he had only a skeleton staff, possibly a storekeeper and an ordnance sergeant. The arsenal at that time was not completed and was used as a storage depot only. Future research may add more detail to the very early operations of the arsenal.

The second question posed by the letter is why did Lt. Fremont's forced march to Fayetteville start from Warsaw, in Duplin County, instead of directly north from their base, Fort Johnston, at Smithville (Southport) in Brunswick County? Lt. Fremont's original order from General Jones has not been located for study, but the answer may lie in Warsaw's location on the Wilmington and Raleigh Railroad (W&RRR), which became the Wil-mington and Weldon Railroad in 1855. The railroad connected Wilmington with Weldon and its connec-

tions with railroads to the north. Fort Johnson in Smithville is located at the mouth of the Cape Fear River, 22 miles south of Wilmington. Smithville is 112 miles from Fayetteville by road. In 1844, Fayetteville had no rail connections at all. Warsaw is almost due east from Fayetteville and only 50 miles by road, according to Lt. Fremont. These distances are almost the same today as in 1844. The fact that the move was a forced march, arriving at midnight, indicates some urgency from the War Department to provide the arsenal with a guard.

It is conjectured by the author that Lt. Fremont and his force used the fastest route to Fayetteville from Wilmington; that is, march or sail (the quickest way) to Wilmington and ride the railroad cars to Warsaw and then march west to Fayetteville, which was only 50 miles by road instead of a 112 mile road march from Fort Johnston. This cut their actual road march by over half the miles and their travel time by two to three days. This is an early example of the military utility of the railroads. Their march route likely followed modern N.C. 24,



▲ **Figure 6.** The 1861 route of the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad. In 1844, when Lt. Fremont and his command made their trip, shown in red, it was called the Wilmington and Raleigh Railroad. The map depicts Warsaw and the land road to Fayetteville, virtually the same as it was in 1844. (N.C. Department of Archives and History map)

No. of Stations..	The No. of Stations between Sta. to Wilmington, ...	NAMES OF STATIONS.	ARRIVE HOURS.	LEAVES MINUTE'S	Time at Stations between Sta's	REMARKS.
1		Wilmington, a m		1 30		Terminus
2	9	North East, ...	1 54	1 54 24		0 N. S.
3	11	Marlboro', ...	2 00	2 01 6		1 R. S.
4	14	Rocky Point, ...	2 10	2 11 9		1 Flag.
5	22	Burgaw, ...	2 32	2 36 21		4 W. & W.
6	29	So. Washington, ...	2 54	2 55 18		1 Flag.
7	33	Leesburg, ...	3 06	3 06 11		0 N. S.
8	38	Teachey, ...	3 20	3 21 14		1 P. No. 4.
8½	43	Rose Hill, ...	3 33	3 33 12		0 W. & W.
9	48	Magnolia, ...	3 44	3 45 11		1 R. S.
10	55	Warsaw, ...	4 01	4 02 16		1 R. S.
10½	59	Bowden, ...	4 12	4 12 10		0 N. S.
11	63	Faison, ...	4 22	4 23 10		1 Flag.
12	70	Mt. Olive, ...	4 40	4 41 17		1 Flag.
13	75	Dudley, ...	4 54	4 56 13		2 Flag.
14	78	Everettsville, ...				Flag.
15	84	Goldsboro', ...	5 16	5 46 20 30		Chan Eng
16	92	Pikeville, ...	6 07	6 08 21		1 Flag.
17	95	Nahunta, ...	6 16	6 18 8		2 Flag.
18	102	Black Creek, ...	6 38	6 39 20		1 Flag.
19	108	Wilson, ...	6 56	6 58 17		2 R. S.
20	116	Joyner, ...	7 18	7 22 20		4 Flag.
21	125	Rocky Mount, ...	7 44	7 46 22		2 W. & W.
22	133	Battleboro', ...	8 06	8 08 20		2 Flag.
22½	137	Whitaker, ...	8 21	8 22 13		1 Flag.
23	143	Enfield, †	8 36	8 39 14		3 W. & W.
24	154	Halifax, ...	9 06	9 08 27		2 R. S.
25	162	Weldon, ...	9 30		22	Terminus

*Breakfast. †Wood and Water.

◀ **Figures 7.** A Wilmington and Weldon Railroad timetable from 1859. The stations and distances are little changed from the schedule used by the train that carried Lt. Fremont and his detachment in 1844 from Wilmington to Warsaw. Note that the distance from the Wilmington station to the Warsaw station is 55 miles and the travel time is two hours and 31 minutes, which would have been at least a two day trip by road. (www.learnnc.org)

which passes through Clinton and Roseboro in Sampson County. It is plausible that the unit camped for the night of August 5/6 near today's Roseboro, the approximate halfway point. Lt. Fremont's letter to General Jones probably went north to Washington D.C. by rail, which accounts for the fact that it arrived at the War Department in only two days, remarkable by any standards.

The W&RRR was a significant boost to the economy of eastern North Carolina and many towns grew up around the railroad. Warsaw was one of these communities. It was first settled about 1825 and was incorporated in 1855. It was originally named Duplin Depot, then renamed Mooresville and finally reportedly was renamed Warsaw by a railroad conductor on the first train to travel through the area based on a novel he was reading named *Thadens of Warsaw*. When it was Mooresville, it was a stop on the Fayetteville to New Bern Stage Road. Postal operations began on January 14, 1839 with Robert H.

Figure 8. ▶

August 28, 1853, folded letter from Lt. S.L. Fremont in Smithville (Brunswick County) to Brigadier General Jones in Washington D.C., requesting a copy of a court martial. The cover has a Type I circular datestamp in blue ink of the type used from 1831 to 1850. The blue color was used from 1842-43. The letter also uses the free postage available for official military correspondence, shown by the manuscript "OPS," an abbreviation for "On Public Service." The postmaster added a blue handstamp "FREE". Note that the datestamp has a manuscript day and the month is in type. (The author's collection)



◀ **Figures 9.** April 12, 1835 folded letter by another officer stationed at Fort Johnston in Smithville, Surgeon H.A. Stinnecke, also to Brigadier General Jones in Washington, D.C., requesting information on his orders for a four months leave of absence. This cover illustrates the bright red Type I circular datestamp in use in the 1830s. Because it is official military mail, the "on Public Service" is written across the top right and the postmaster has added a red handstamp "FREE." Lt. Fremont used the abbreviation "O.P.S." on his letters instead of writing out "On Public Service." (The Author's Collection)



Saunders as the first postmaster. Owen L. Fillyaw became postmaster on November 30, 1841, and would have been the person, most likely, to handle Lt. Fremont's letter on August 5.

Another interesting question generated by Lt. Fremont's letter is the reference to reports and rumors of "an insurrection of the slave population." There is no documentation of such an event, but there was a general apprehension following the Nat Turner insurrection of August 1831, when an estimated 55-65 citizens were killed by Nat Turner and his band in Southampton County, Virginia. There was also the growth of the Abolitionist Movement, and 1844 was an active political year between that movement and its foes in Wilmington. Further research may reveal more details of the insurrection fears that were referenced by Lt. Fremont.

The importance of Sewell L. Fremont to North Carolina is not limited to the role he played in garrisoning the U.S. Arsenal at Fayetteville. Mr. Fremont's biography begins with his birth in Vermont. His name when he was born was Sewell L. Fish. According to available documentation, he changed his name, "by legislative action" before he entered the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y.

Additional research may discover the reason for his name change, but he graduated from West Point on July 1, 1841, as number 17 in his class of 54. He had a distinguished military career, serving first in Florida from 1841 to 1842 during the Seminole War. Then he was assigned to the 3rd U.S. Artillery at Fort Johnson, N.C. from 1842 to 1845. It was during this period he was ordered to the arsenal at Fayetteville. It is not known how long Lt. Fremont and his command remained at the arsenal at Fayetteville since he was told by the arsenal commander that his guard force was not needed; however, one account published but not referenced suggests that the guard remained for a while but was removed well before 1860:

On August 6, 1844, the North Carolina Arsenal in Fayetteville witnessed the arrival of the first permanent garrison detachment of regular soldiers. Lt. Sewell L. Fremont and 20 members of the third United States Artillery marched into the city with little fanfare, from the arsenal's commander, Captain James Bradford or the local citizens of Fayetteville. It did not take long for the new arrivals to arouse the interest of the civilians with their stories of combat and daring acts during the Seminole Wars. The artillerymen would soon become a common sight at public events, putting on drill and tactical demonstrations.

The guard was not to remain on a permanent basis and was



◀ **Figures 10.** May 18, 1847, folded letter from Warsaw to Philadelphia, illustrating the Type 1 circular datestamp used from 1843-65. This marking is in bright red, as is the “10” handstamp for the 10 cents 1847 rate for distances over 300 miles. The datestamp is the same type as on Lt. Fremont’s letter in Figure 1 but is a different color. Warsaw also used green markings during this period. (The author’s collection)

Figure 11. ▶ September 29, 186x cover posted from Smithville during the Confederate period. It uses a 10 cent stamp with a manuscript postmark and cancellation. Fort Johnston would have been much different at that time than when Lt. Fremont was stationed there. The Confederate military greatly strengthened the fort and mounted heavier artillery to keep the Cape Fear River open for blockade runners. (The author’s collection)



at some point withdrawn. During the turbulent events leading up to the Civil War, it is evident that the arsenal was without a garrison even though a large number of arms and stores were on hand there. On October 23, 1860, The Mayor of Fayetteville, Archibald McLean, and a group of citizens petitioned the Secretary of War, John B. Floyd, to provide a company of U.S. soldiers to guard the arsenal. They were concerned about the John Brown raid at Harper’s Ferry and the possibility that the arsenal and its store of arms could face such a threat. The arsenal commander, Captain J. A. J. Bradford did not believe the arsenal was menaced and the Governor, John W. Ellis, believed the guard was “notoriously unnecessary.” Nevertheless, on November 1, 1860, the Secretary of War directed General Winfield Scott to send a company of the 2nd Artillery to move from Fort Hamilton, New York, to Fayetteville to protect the arsenal. It is recorded in official records that the arsenal had a guard of “forty two effective muskets” of the 2nd US Artillery on April 22, 1861, when it surrendered to North Carolina state forces prior to being turned over to the Confederate Government.

Lt. Fremont was posted to Texas in 1845 and saw action when the Mexican War began. He took part in the Battle of Palo Alto on May 8, 1846, and distinguished himself by taking command of Major David Ringgold’s battery when that officer was killed. He was promoted to 1st Lt. after the Battle of Resaca-de-la-Palma. After the Mexican War,

he served at Fort Moultrie and taught at West Point. He was promoted to Captain on March 3, 1847, and performed quartermaster duty in Washington, D.C. By late 1847, he was posted back to Fort Johnson, North Carolina.

In 1853, the regiment was transferred to San Francisco, California, and the War Department chartered the steamship *San Francisco* to carry the regiment there via Cape Horn. The ship wrecked on December 24, 1854, on her maiden voyage, two days out of New York harbor. Fremont and his family survived the shipwreck, but apparently lost their possessions. Fremont was the regimental quartermaster and acting adjutant of the 3rd U.S. Artillery Regiment. On August 15, 1885, 32 years later, Fremont filed a claim for damages with the U.S. Treasury Department for his losses in the shipwreck, \$1,621.75, his and his family’s clothes, silverware, books, carpet, a piano-forte, a saddle and a buggy and harness.

Fremont resigned from the army on April 4, 1854, served as an assistant U.S. engineer and worked on improvements to the Cape Fear and Savannah rivers. On December 8, 1854, he became manager of the W&RRR just as it was changing to the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad (W&WRR). This was one of the most important railways in North Carolina and in the South. It connected the port of Wilmington to Weldon, immediately south of the Virginia state line where it connected to railroads going to Raleigh and Virginia. During the Civil War, it assumed even greater importance as the “lifeline of the Confederacy,” transporting supplies brought into Wilmington

by blockade runners to the Army of Northern Virginia. Lt. Fremont's Civil War career was quite distinguished. Even though he was a New England native, he served almost exclusively in the South following his graduation from the U.S. Military Academy. His wife was from a prominent Smithville family. After North Carolina seceded on May 20, 1861, he was appointed Chief of Artillery and Engineers for the state, with the rank of colonel. He was placed in command of the coastal defenses of the southern part of the state. He designed and named Fort Fisher, the principle fortification that guarded Wilmington during most of the war.

Colonel Fremont later returned to managing the W&WRR and was responsible for the movement of military, commercial, and civilian traffic during the war. He



◀ **Figure 12.** August 27, 186x, cover with a Wilmington and Weldon Railroad Company corner card from Oxford (Granville County) to S.L. Fremont in Wilmington (New Hanover County). The Type 3 circular datestamp was used from 1856-1876. Oxford was not on the W&RRR, but was on the Oxford and Henderson Railroad which was chartered in 1871 and became operational in 1881. (The Phil Perkins Collection)

Figure 13. ▶ Cover to S.L. Fremont posted at Oxford (Granville County) circa 1870 with corner card of J.H. Horner's Classical & Mathematical School. Fremont received correspondence from Oxford in October 1861 and during the 1870s from this school and apparently had some connection with the school. (The author's collection)



was very successful and managed to keep the vital link between the South's major port open to commercial traffic as well as moving supplies to the Confederate forces in Virginia. He was a very able administrator and was able to maintain the engines, passenger cars, boxcars, flatcars and the rail beds in good repair during the entire war.

After the war, Fremont remained Chief Engineer and Superintendent of the W&WRR and later the Wilmington, Charlotte and Rutherford Railroad. He was involved in a number of other enterprises also. He acquired a rice plan-

tation in Brunswick County but continued his architectural and surveying career. He was the architect of the North Carolina Asylum in Goldsboro and was architect for the city of Wilmington. When he died in 1886 in Memphis, Tennessee, he was the United States Architect.

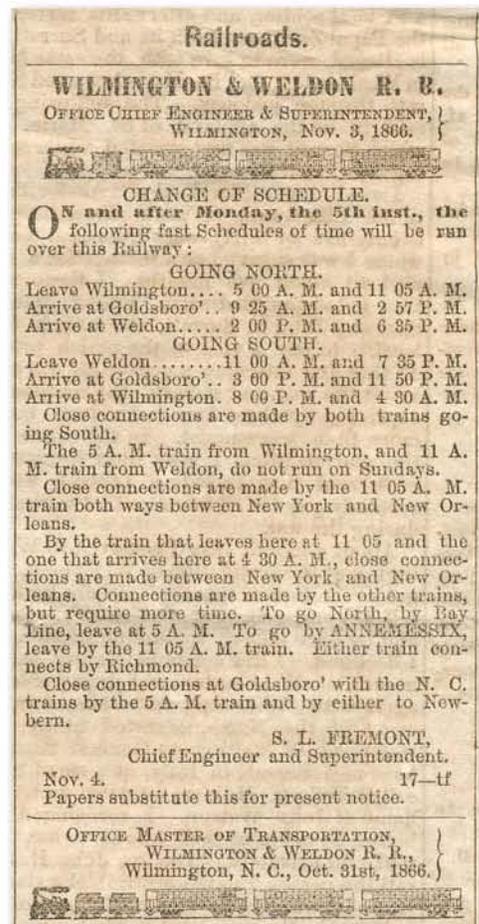
The narrative that began in 1844 with a forced march to Fayetteville ends with the Wayne county community of Nahunta honoring Sewell L. Fremont by re-naming the town for him on April 1, 1872, in recognition of his services to the railroad and the state. Figure 14 illustrates an early example of the Fremont postmark.

Lt. Sewell L. Fremont's letter and the events he documents are remarkable not only for the historical information, but important in providing additional details about the first Fayetteville arsenal guard, which was sent to protect the arsenal from a rumored slave insurrection that turned out to be untrue. It gives additional detail about reported social tensions in 1844 at Wilmington and

Fayetteville, details that Lt. Fremont considered important enough to report to his superiors in Washington, D.C. His folded letter with its cover and contents are an important contribution to North Carolina postal history. Even with current research there are still further questions for future inquiry. This letter illustrates that seemingly unremarkable postal material may contain an interesting and historically significant story. ■



▲ **Figure 14.** October 20, 1903, early cover from Fremont (Wayne County), the town named in honor of Sewell L. Fremont. (The author's collection)



► **Figure 15.**

Wilmington and Weldon Railroad schedule change notice in the December 19, 1866 Wilmington newspaper, *The Daily Journal*, signed by S.L. Fremont, Chief Engineer and Superintendent. In the difficult economic and political Reconstruction period, as North Carolina struggled to rebuild the state's economy, Fremont continued to operate the railroad effectively. (Clipping provided by Doug Williams)

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Early Columbia Machine Cancels of Charlotte

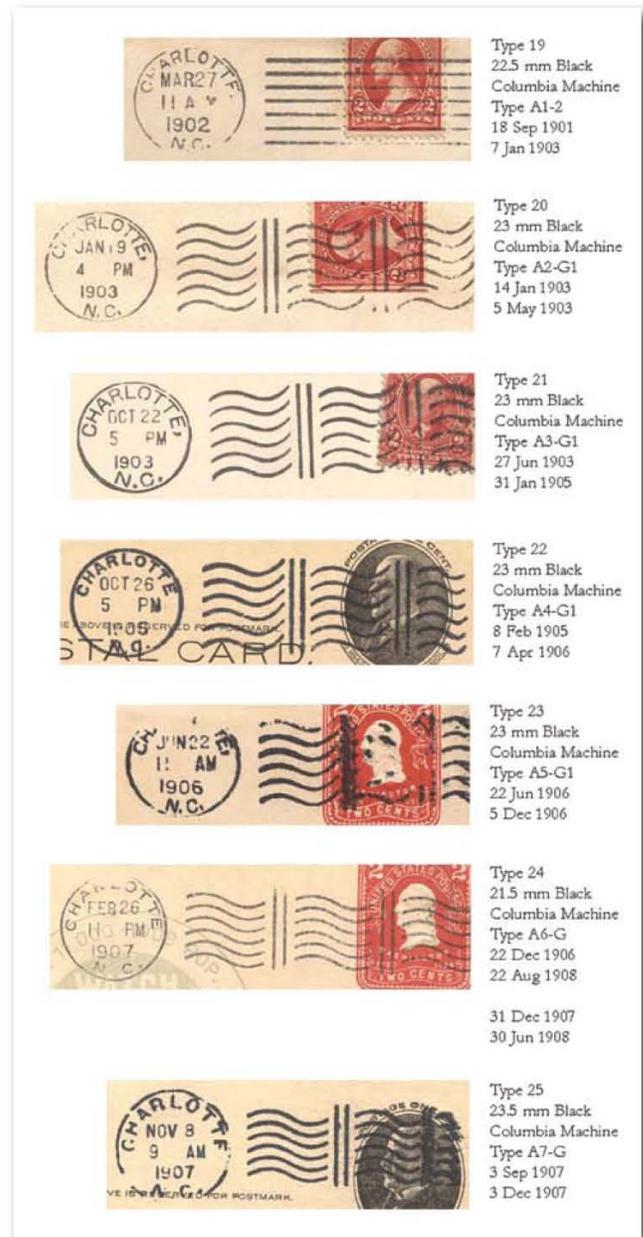


by Richard F. Winter

In the Summer 2012 *North Carolina Postal Historian*, Volume 31, No. 3 (Whole No. 119), Tony Crumbley and I presented an article titled, "Pioneer North Carolina Machine Cancel." Included with the article was a seven and one half page listing of pioneer machine cancels. The first seven cancels listed for Charlotte were Columbia machine cancels with dial types A1 through A7. In the article we picture three covers with some of these cancels in Figures 32 through 34. Existing documentation identified the canceller types used with each dial type. The 7 bar canceller was used with dial type A1. Different cancellers made up of three sets of short, wavy lines separated by parallel vertical bars were used with dial types A2 through A7. We could find no documentation, however, that described or pictured the dial types listed as A2 through A7.

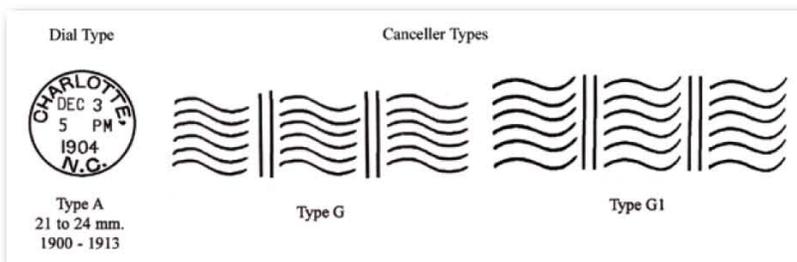
The expert thesis on the Columbia machine cancels is a seven-volume book by Reg Morris, Robert J. Payne, and Timothy B. Holmes, *The Columbia Story*, published by the Machine Cancel Society from 1994-2001. These books provide a very detailed history of the company and all the different postmarks their machine produced; however, they don't illustrate or describe the differences in the dial types of the machine markings used between 1903 and 1907. As a result, we were unable to identify the dial types used in Figures 33 and 34 of the article. This was very frustrating because, at first glance, the dials look exactly alike. Figure 1 illustrates the dial and canceller types in question as shown in *The Columbia Story*.

In the recently completed catalog of Charlotte postmarks, now on-line at our society web site, www.ncpostalhistory.com, the identification of dial types A2-A7 now has been made. Each marking is listed and illustrated. The differences in each are very subtle. Since the different dials were not used at the same time, a careful examination of numerous examples helped separate the differences, which often were small changes in letter-spacing or size. A summary of these postmarks is illustrated in Figure 2. The period of use for each cancel is shown. Note that Type 24, Type A6-G, was used during two different periods.

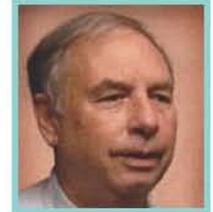


▲ **Figures 2.** Dial types A2 - A7 showing dates of use. Note type A6 was used during two different periods.

◀ **Figures 1.** Dial and canceller types for the 1903-1907 Columbia Machine cancels.



Williamston, Martin County's Outstanding Post Office



by Tony L. Crumbley

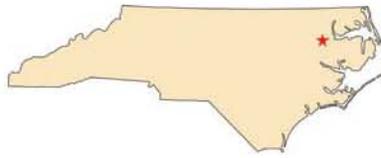
Driving down Highway 64 from Raleigh to the Outer Banks, when the controlled access highway turns into little more than a two-lane highway, you know you have made it to Williamston.

This bright spot is in Martin County, one of the state's smallest and the second largest declining population county in the state. Clearly there is little in the county beyond swamps. Fewer than 25,000 residents live in the county today.

Over the years, only 29 different post offices have been established within the county. Today, only eight post offices have survived. Williamston, the first and one of the few remaining open, has given us a colorful postal history.

The first settlers at what is now Williamston were the Tuscarora Indians. Their settlement was known as Squhawky on the Moratock River. For some reason the Indians chose to leave the settlement long before the first white settlers arrived sometime before 1730. The English settlers moved to the south side of the then Roanoke River. At this time the community was called Tar Landing as it became the principal shipping point for the tar, pitch, turpentine and other forest products in the area. Williamston's location on the south side of the Roanoke River is shown in Figure 1 on a 1839 Post Road map prepared by David H. Burr, topographer for the Post Office Department. It is about 35 miles up river from the Albemarle Sound.

In 1774, Martin County was formed from Halifax and Tyrell counties and Williamston was named as the county seat. By November 1779 the town of Williamston was incorporated – the first town to be incorporated in the county. There are sev-



eral versions of the origin of the town name, the most likely being it was named for a wealthy farmer who owned a large plantation in the northwestern part of the county, Colonel William Williams II. His father, Colonel William Williams, migrated

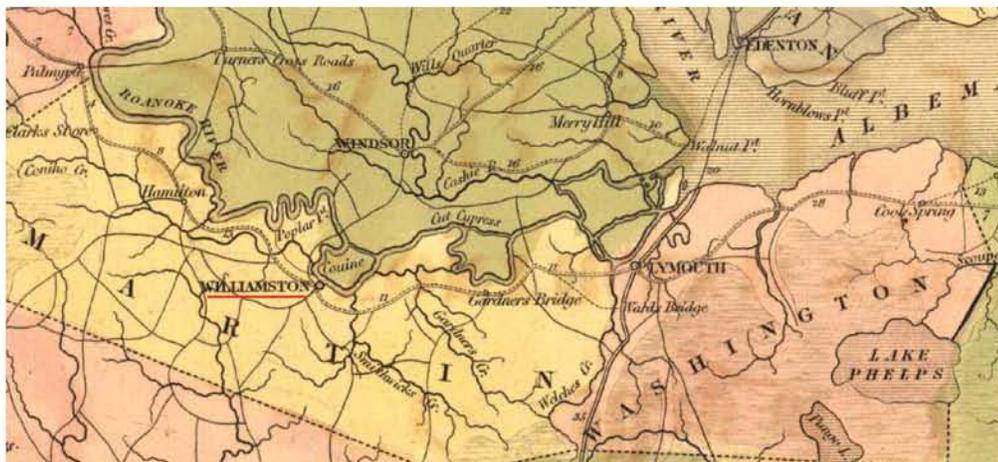
to the United States from Wales in the early 1700s and settled on the banks of the Roanoke River.

William Williams II was a delegate to the Hillsborough and Halifax conventions in 1776. He was elected colonel of Martin County's militia and continued in that position until he was elected the county's first state senator in 1777.

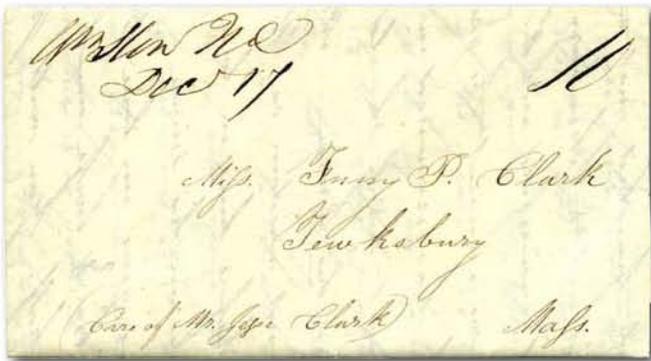
Williamston, being a public port on the Roanoke River with active water shipping, as well as the seat of local government, created substantial economic activity for this community to grow and prosper. The addition of the railroad increased freight movement greatly. In 1922, the Roanoke River was bridged and this created significant highway traffic for the town.

Williamston's postal history undoubtedly began with the first river boat captains dropping off and taking letters from the town landing. A post office was first established in March 1793 with Henry Hunter appointed its first postmaster.

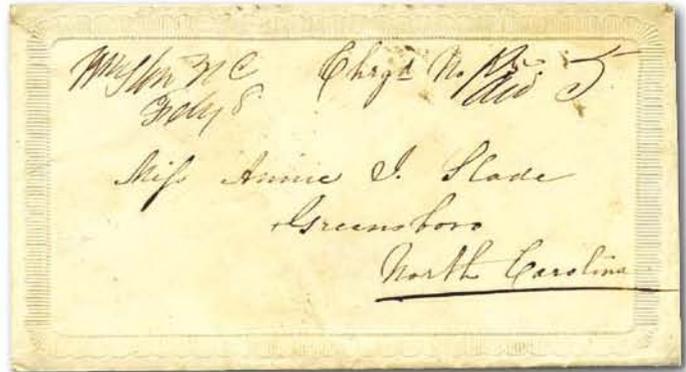
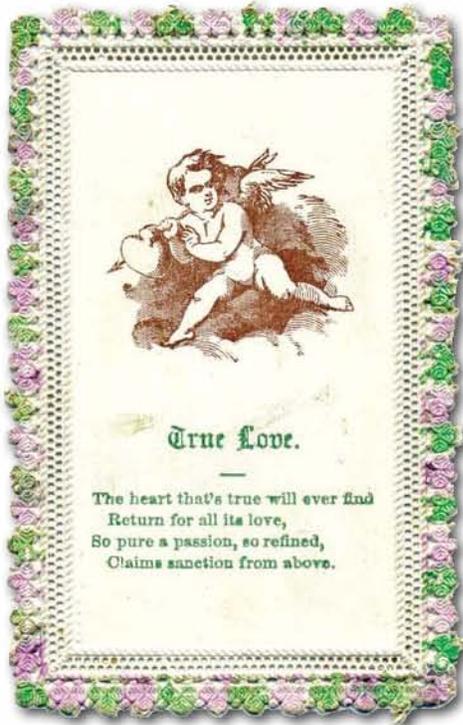
Throughout time, Williamston has been the source of some of the most interesting postal history of any city within the state. From its early manuscript marking, which first was recorded in 1799, to its fancy cancels and modern color cancels, there is much to collect from Williamston. The following covers illustrate some of the delightful postal history items from Williamston. ■



◀ **Figures 2.** Williamston is located about 35 miles up the Roanoke River from its mouth at Albemarle Sound. Even at this distance, it was an active shipping port in the 18th and early 19th centuries. It was named the county seat when Martin County was formed in 1774.



◀ **Figure 2.** December 17, 1850, folded letter to Tewkesbury, Massachusetts. Williamston postmaster marked 10¢ postage due at destination with manuscript "10." Note postmark is abbreviated "W^mston, NC."



◀ ▲ **Figures 3 and 4.** European valentine and envelope in which it was sent from Williamston on February 8, 185x, to Greensboro (Guilford County), paid 5¢ and charged to account no. 15. The abbreviated manuscript postmark was used from 1798 through 1853.

Figure 5. ▶ September 22, Ca. 185x, to Trenton, New Jersey, with Type I postmark. Letter sent "Free" as Asa Biggs was a U.S. Senator from Martin County from 1854 to 1858, resigning during the first session of the Thirty-Fifth Congress to accept a federal district judgeship offered by President Buchanan. Biggs also served as a congressman and as a member of the state convention in 1833 and 1861. During the Civil War he served as a Confederate district judge until the end of the war.



Figure 6. ▶ December 8, ca. 1857, embossed ladies envelope to Greenfield Hill, Connecticut. Scott No. 26 canceled with bright red Type I circular datestamp used at Williamston from 1856 until April 1861, first in red and from mid-1859 in black.



◀ **Figures 7.** August 24, 1859, cover to Scuppernon (Washington County) with Scott No. 26 canceled with the Type I circular datestamp in black ink. This postmark continued in use well into the Confederate period.

Figure 8. ▶ May 3, 1864, cover to Summerville (Harnett County), paid with Confederate 10¢, Scott No. 11, with new Type 2 cancellation introduced in 1863 and used until the late 1860s.



◀ **Figures 9.** November 2, ca. 1864, cover to Oxford (Granville County), a previously unlisted soldiers Due 10 with a Type 2 circular datestamp from D. Stovall of Co. B, 1st Regt., Ga. Reserves to Juno W. Stovall. A note is attached to the Postmaster to please forward to Sassafraz Forks. Confederate soldiers did not have free franking like the Union Soldiers, and had to send mail postage due.

Figure 10. ▶
 January 23, ca. 1866, envelope to Huntsville, Alabama, on badly eroded postal stationery cover, with Type 2 circular datestamp. The crude star killer was used on Scott No. U58 shortly after the war ended. This is the only known example of this killer.

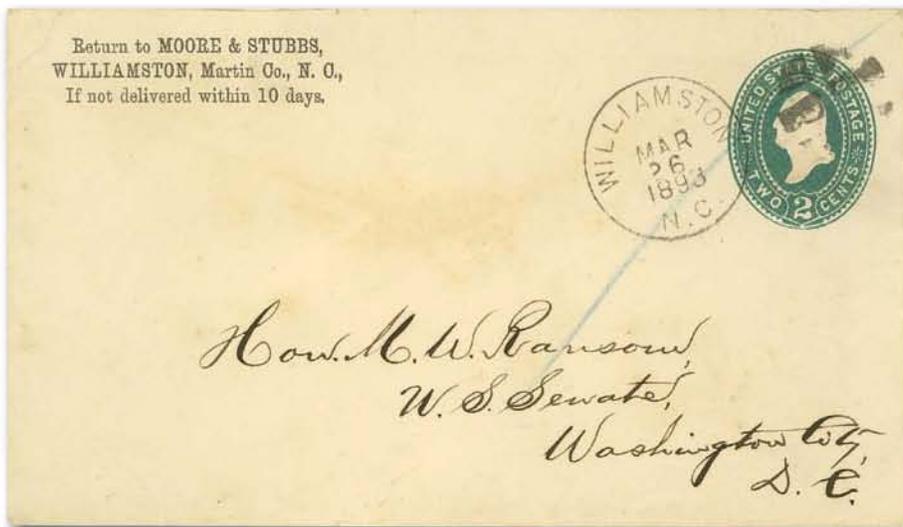


◀ **Figures 11.** August 7, ca. 1866, postal stationery to Louisburg (Franklin County) with a Type 3 circular datestamp introduced shortly after Union occupation. Nathan Thompson was appointed postmaster on September 4, 1865, and most likely created this eagle and the previous star killer. The Type 3 postmark was used in black and blue ink until 1875. This ragged example is the only known cover with this eagle cancel.

Figure 12. ▶
 March 8, ca. 1868, cover to Murfreesboro (Hertford County), paid with gridded 1861 stamp, canceled by a 6-bar circular grid killer. The postmark was a Type 2, which still was in use.



◀ **Figures 13.** December 24, 1871, postal card to Baltimore, Maryland. The postmark is a blue Type 3 circular datestamp most likely introduced by postmaster John Watts who took office September 19, 1870. The killer in blue is a separate device of indistinct design.



◀ **Figures 14.** March 26, 1893, postal stationery cover to U.S. Senator Matthew W. Ransom in Washington, D.C. Ransom served as a democratic senator from North Carolina from 1872-1894. Indicia canceled with a Type 5 circular date-stamp. Letter could not be sent "free" because the Senate was not in session when it was sent.

Figure 15. ▶
May 24, 1894, postal stationery cover to New York City. Postmark is Type 5a, similar to Type 5 with the time slug added. Indicia canceled by separate killer.



◀ **Figures 16.** March 27, ca. 1925, cover to Jackson (Northampton County) with Type 9 postmark in bright red ink, a metal duplex postmark used from 1913 to the 1920s.

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