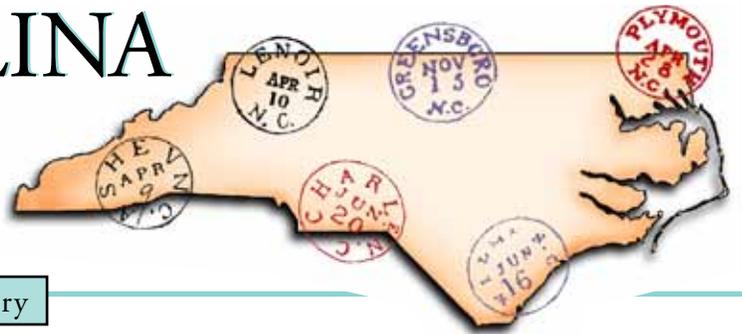


NORTH CAROLINA POSTAL HISTORIAN



The Journal of North Carolina Postal History

VOLUME 39, NO. 1 WINTER 2019 WHOLE 149



North Carolina Antebellum and Confederate Advertising Covers



Rural Carrier Christmas Cards from North Carolina



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By the time you read this, Thanksgiving will have come and gone, as well as Christmas, while the New Year is looming. I hope all NCPHS members, their families and friends will have had happy holidays.

I want to report that the society enters into the next year with a solid membership, a high-quality journal and great expectations (to paraphrase Charles Dickens) for a productive 2020. Our journal benefits from the articles submitted by the members, who write very interesting articles on a wide variety of subjects. This diversity of subjects provides us with something for everyone. I encourage all members to submit an article on any subject that interests them because it just might interest someone else.

Since we forgot to place a dues notice in the last issue, we are late in our annual call for dues payment. Please remit your dues as soon as possible. Members are reminded that dues remain at \$15.00 for the four yearly issues of the *North Carolina Postal Historian*, a very real bargain. Send dues payments to Secretary-Treasurer, Harry Albert, at the address listed below in the masthead. The additional contributions from our sustaining members (over half of our membership) have enabled us to defray the journal printing and mailing costs.

The NCPHS has a contract with the Rocky Mountain Philatelic Library to print the *North Carolina Postal Historian*. It should be noted that Mr. Charlie Freise of that Denver organization voluntarily represents our society and actually is responsible for the printing. He has done an excellent job in getting the journal printed in a timely manner, carefully

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packaged and shipped back to us for each issue. Not only does he volunteer his time to do this for us, but also he pays for the paper on which the journal is printed and the expenses of shipment. He continues to be a very special asset to our society, for which we are very grateful.

Based on interest from some of the society members, the Board approved making a digital issue of our journal available to those who would like to receive a digital version. Therefore, for the first time, the Fall issue of the *North Carolina Postal Historian* was distributed digitally to those members who requested a digital copy either as their sole way of receiving the journal or along with a print copy. If you would like to receive a digital copy, please make sure that the Secretary-Treasurer, Harry Albert, has your current email address. Use the dues notice information provided with this journal to state your preference regarding the journal and provide your current email address.

Again, on behalf of the Board, I wish all members and their families a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



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North Carolina Antebellum and Confederate Advertising Covers: Spotlight Wilmington

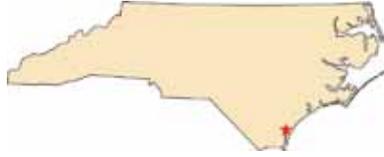


by Larry Baum

First settled by English colonists in the 1720s, a community was formed in 1732 at the current site of Wilmington with the name “New Carthage.” The name changed several times, “New Liverpool”, “New Town” and then “Newton.” The town was incorporated with a new name, Wilmington, in honor of Spencer Compton, Earl of Wilmington in 1739.

At the time of the Civil War, based on the 1860 United States census, Wilmington (pop. 9,552) was the 100th largest city in the United States and the largest city in North Carolina. New Orleans (pop. 168,675) was the largest town from the states that would form the Confederacy followed by Charleston (pop. 40,522), and Richmond (pop. 37,910). Wilmington, situated on the Cape Fear River, was a very important town to both North Carolina and the Confederacy due to its active seaport, which would support significant blockade running during the Civil War.

Throughout the antebellum period, North Carolina (1860 pop. 992,622) did not seem to contribute as many advertising cover designs as did its neighbors, Virginia (1860 pop. 1,219,630) and South Carolina (1860 pop. 703,708). The main towns contributing these cover designs, as one might expect, were

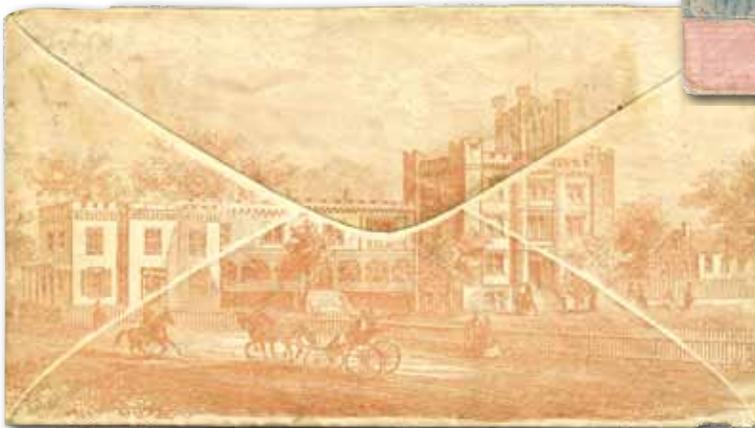


Asheboro, Charlotte, Fayetteville, Greensborough, Newbern, Raleigh, Salisbury and Wilmington.

Antebellum advertising covers, or AD covers, were executed in five types: all-over; cameo; imprint; embossed; and handstamped or stenciled. Although quite rare, I have included stencil designs with handstamped. AD covers are further classified as: “standard” design with words only; “illustrated,” designs with things, buildings, people or other objects; and “figural,” ones where the AD is in the form of the product being sold. All types of AD covers are known used from North Carolina.

First, I will illustrate examples of the different AD cover types and classifications. This will be followed by a census of North Carolina advertising designs by type and a census of North Carolina advertising designs by towns. A sampling of the more interesting designs on covers from various North Carolina towns follows. Then I will spotlight the AD covers from Wilmington. This will include a summary of the known Wilmington advertising covers, which also shows a census of the designs used during the Confederate period. In future articles, I will provide similar information for other towns in North Carolina that had AD covers.

All-Over “Standard”
Salem Mutual Insurance Co. Salem, NC
Insurance
CSA #7 JUN 23 1863
(Siegel Auctions)



All-Over “Illustrated”
NC Institute for the Deaf, Dumb & Blind,
Raleigh, NC
Institution
CSA #11 OCT xx 186x
(Tony Crumbley)



Cameo
 "Standard"
 A. & J. Holt
 Graham, NC
 Dry Goods Merchants
 CSA PAID V NOV 30 1861
 Smithfield, VA postmark
 (Author)



Cameo
 "Illustrated"
 Martin Richwine
 Rowan Co, NC
 Oak Grove Farm
 USA #24 AUG xx 1860
 (Robert Kaufman 1953)



Cameo
 "Figural" *
 Rowan House
 Salisbury, NC
 Hotel
 USA #26 1850s
 (Tony Crumbley)

* Technically they are not selling bells, though they could be ringing it for dinner time.



Imprint
 "Standard"
 S. S. Jackson
 Ash(e)boro, NC
 Attorney
 CSA #7 xxx 10 186x
 (Author)

Imprint
 "Illustrated"
 A. M. Rockwell
 Rocky Mount, NC
 Agricultural Implements
 USA Paid AUG 2 1850s
 (Tony Crumbley)



Cameo
 "Figural" *
 Porter & Gorrell
 Greensboro, NC
 Druggists
 CSA PAID 5 NOV 3 1861
 (The First Hundred Years of Historic Guilford)

* The only known North Carolina figural imprint.



Embossed
 "Standard"
 Wm Neff & Sons
 Wilmington, NC
 Ship Chandler
 USA #11 MAY 1, 1850s
 (Author)



Embossed
 "Illustrated"
 Wilson Female Seminary
 Wilson, NC
 College
 USA #26 xxx xx 1850s
 (Rumsey Auctions)



Handstamped
 "Standard"
 De Rossett, Brown & Co
 Wilmington, NC
 Commission Merchants
 CSA PAID 5 AUG 5 1861
 (Author)



Stencil
 "Standard"
 Brittain House
 Greensboro, NC
 Hotel
 USA #26 FEB 20, 1850s
 (Richard Winter)

The above cover is the only recorded stencil AD design from North Carolina's antebellum period with at least two known examples from this merchant. The use of stencil AD designs is quite uncommon. Of the over 2,500 known AD designs from all eleven Southern states, there are just 12 stencil designs. Only two handstamp designs are recorded from North Carolina whereas New Orleans has about 110 known designs. It is interesting that cities closer to the Northern states seemed to favor the more expensive to execute cameo designs, which were almost exclusively produced in the North. For instance, Richmond has a much higher percent of cameo designs than does New Orleans. North Carolina businesses were more conservative, favoring the imprints and embossed designs.

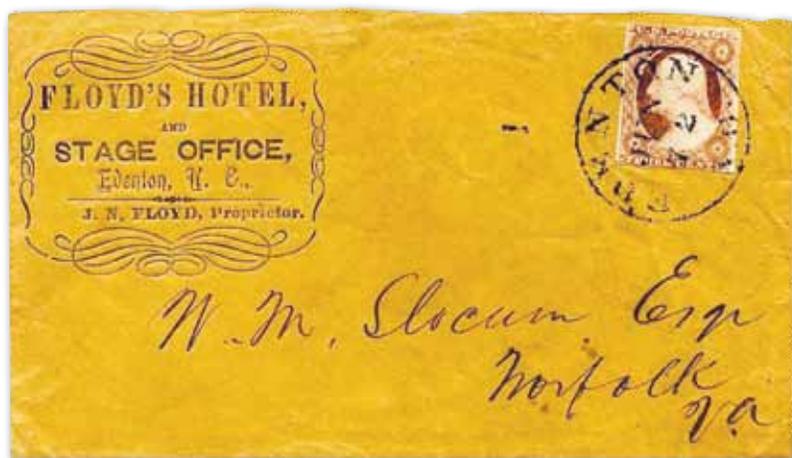
Census of Known North Carolina Advertising Designs by Type

| | All-Over | Cameo | Imprint | Embossed | Handstamp | Stencil | |
|-------------|----------|-------|---------|----------|-----------|---------|--------|
| Standard | 3 | 48 | 69 | 22 | 2 | 1 | 145 |
| Illustrated | 7 | 19 | 8 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 35 |
| Figural | -- | 7 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8 |
| Total | 10 | 74 | 78 | 23 | 2 | 1 | 188 |
| percent | 5.3% | 39.4% | 41.5% | 12.2% | 1.1% | 0.5% | 100.0% |

Census of Known North Carolina Advertising Designs by Town

| | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|-----------------|----|----------------|----|-----------------|-----|
| Asheboro | 5 | Greensborough | 10 | Olin | 1 | Trinity College | 1 |
| Asheville | 2 | Hamptonville | 1 | Oxford | 1 | Tyro | 1 |
| Beaufort | 1 | Henderson | 1 | Pittsboro | 2 | Vance | 1 |
| Brinkleyville | 1 | Hendersonville | 1 | Raleigh | 31 | Wake Forest | 1 |
| Chapel Hill | 2 | Hillsborough | 5 | Rockingham | 1 | Walnut Cove | 1 |
| Charlotte | 9 | Kinston | 1 | Rocky Mount | 2 | Warrenton | 3 |
| Company Shops | 1 | Lenoir | 1 | Salem | 1 | Warsaw | 1 |
| Davidson College | 2 | Lexington | 1 | Salisbury | 9 | Washington | 1 |
| Edenton | 1 | Lockville | 1 | Scotland Neck | 1 | Wilmington | 41 |
| Fayetteville | 8 | Louisburgh | 1 | Seaboard | 1 | Wilson | 2 |
| Franklinton | 1 | Mount Pleasant | 1 | Shocco Springs | 1 | | |
| Gilopolis | 1 | Murfreesborough | 4 | Statesville | 3 | total | 188 |
| Goldsborough | 3 | Newbern | 10 | Tarboro | 2 | | |
| Graham | 1 | Oaks | 1 | Thomasville | 2 | | |

As there are too many North Carolina designs to show all of them, I will show some of the more interesting covers.



Imprint
 "Standard"
 Floyd's Hotel
 Edenton, NC
 Hotel
 USA #11 JUN 22, 1850s
 (Tony Crumbley)

Cameo
 "Illustrated"
 A. A. McKethan
 Fayetteville, NC
 Carriage Maker
 USA #11 FEB 22 1850's
 (Rumsey Auctions)

There is also an "A. McKethan" design.



Imprint
 "Illustrated"
 Western Railroad Company
 Fayetteville, NC
 Railroad
 CSA #1 xxx 16 1862
 (North Carolina Postal Historian 33-3)



Cameo
 "Illustrated"
 Bland House
 Greensborough, NC
 Hotel
 USA #11 JAN 25, 1850s
 (Rumsey Auctions)

Cameo
 "Figural"
 Louisburg Female College
 Louisburgh, NC
 College
 USA #26 OCT 2, 1860
 (Rumsey Auctions)

The cameo is in the shape of a diploma.



Cameo
 "Figural"
 C. W. D. Hutchings
 Raleigh, NC
 Saddles & Harnesses
 USA #26 MAY 4, 1850s
 (Tony Crumbley)

Stamp and postmark are on the reverse.





Cameo
 "Standard"
 Lawrence's Hotel
 Raleigh, NC
 Hotel
 USA #26 APR xx, 1850s
 Weldon, NC postmark
 (Tony Crumbley)

Looks like a horn-of-plenty though neither illustrated nor figural.

Imprint
 "Standard"
 The North-Carolina Standard
 Raleigh, NC
 Newspaper
 USA #11 AUG 2, 1850s
 (Rumsey Auctions)



Imprint
 "Illustrated"
 Thos. Carter's Garden and Nursery
 Raleigh, NC
 Nursery
 CSA #2 JUL 8, 1861
 (Rumsey Auctions)

Cameo
 "Illustrated"
 Williams & Harp
 Raleigh, NC
 Shaft & Hub Manufactory
 CSA #2 SEP 25, 1862
 (Siegel Auctions)





Cameo
 "Figural"
 Henderson & Ennis
 Salisbury, NC
 Druggist
 USA #26 OCT 1, 1860
 (Tony Crumbley)



These two cameos have not been found on envelopes: the left cameo of F.L. Bond, manufacturer and dealer in furniture, was shown in the Raleigh newspaper *The Spirit of Age* dated August 29, 1855; and the right cameo of Wm. L. Jacobs, Carolina Saddle and Harness was illustrated in *Kelley's Wilmington Directory*, 1860-61. Cameo corner cards were too expensive to produce for "in-print" use only; therefore, it is assumed that these were executed for envelope advertising.

Imprint
 "Standard"
 J. H. Thompson
 Tyro, NC
 Agricultural Impiments
 CSA #4 xxx xx 1862
 Lexington, NC postmark
 (Author)



Have You Given Us Your Current E-mail Address?

We have started to provide digital copies of our journal to members who desire either a digital copy , a hard copy or both. If you wish a digital copy please make certain we have your current email address on file with our Secretary-Treasurer (harry.albert@eeco-net.com).

Imprint
 "Illustrated"
 Wake Forest College
 Wake Forest, NC
 College
 CSA #6 SEP 14, 1862
 Dunnsville Wake Co postmark
 (Tony Crumbley)



Cameo
 "Standard"
 Gaston Branch House
 Beaufort, NC
 Hotel
 CSA #1 FEB 22, 1862
 Goldsborough, NC postmark
 (Rumsey Auctions)

Spotlight Wilmington

Included here are all the advertising designs that are known to me for the town of Wilmington up to and including the Civil War. The advertising designs or "Corner Cards" here are listed in alphabetical order by merchant. At the end is a summary of the known Wilmington AD covers, listing full cover information, attributions and a census of the Confederate designs. I'm sure there are other designs for North Carolina that I have not recorded. Additions or corrections to my census of designs would be welcomed from anyone. Please contact me at csadcovers@frontier.com if you have additional information.



BANK of CAPE FEAR
 embossed



J. S. BANES
 handstamp



CHARLES BARR
 cameo



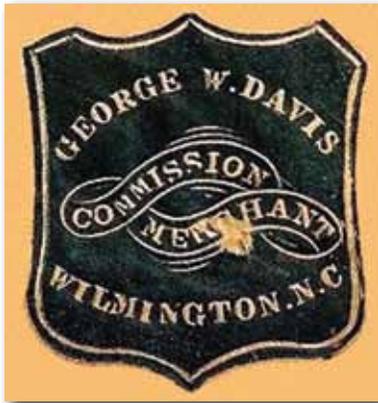
Carolina Hotel
cameo (type I)



CAROLINA HOTEL
cameo (type II)



C. CORNEHLSSEN
Cameo "illustrated"



GEORGE W. DAVIS
cameo



DE ROSSETT, BROWN & Co.
handstamp



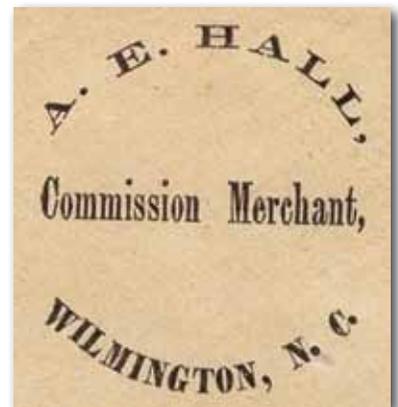
ELLIS, RUSSELL & Co.
cameo



FREEMAN & HOUSTON
cameo



ZENO H. GREENE
cameo



A. E. HALL
imprint



HUTCHINS BILLIARD & BOWLING SALOON
cameo



Wm. L. JACOBS
cameo "illustrated"
(no known covers)



A. MACLEAN
imprint



J. & D. MACRAE & Co.
embossed



A. B. McDUFFIE
cameo



M. McINNIS
cameo



W. H. McRary & Co.
imprint



MOORE, STANLY & Co.
cameo



H. R. PERRIN
embossed



Wm. NEFF & SONS
cameo "illustrated"



Wm. NEFF & SONS
embossed



J.T. PETTEWAY & CO.
imprint



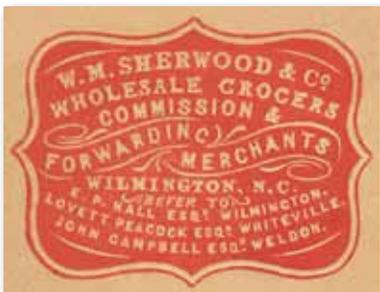
SEAMEN'S BETHEL
imprint (type I)



SEAMEN'S BETHEL
imprint (type II)



J. C. SMITH & CO.
imprint



W. M. SHERWOOD & Co.
cameo



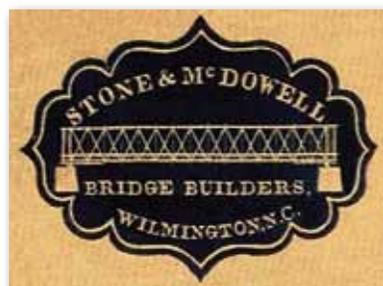
THOs. SMITH & Co.
cameo



T. SOUTHMAYD
cameo



JOHN A. STANLY
cameo



STONE & McDOWELL
cameo "illustrated"



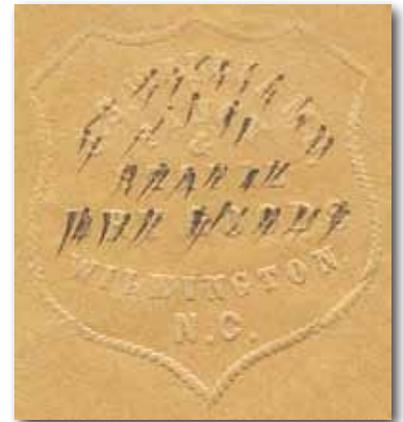
WASHINGTON & LAFAYETTE
HOTEL cameo



S. M. WEST
cameo



G. W. WILKINSON & CO.
imprint



J. S. WILLIAMS
embossed



WEILL & ANATHAN
all-over



T. C. WORTH
cameo



WILMINGTON IRON & BRASS FOUNDRY
all-over "illustrated"



T. C. & B. G. WORTH
embossed

**Summary of Know Wilmington Advertising Covers Including a Census of Designs Used
Through the Confederate Period**

| Business | * | Stamp | Date | Type | Business | Attribution | Notes | ** |
|---|---|--------|----------|----------|--------------|--|-------------------------------|----|
| Bank of Cape Fear | U | U27 | 02/05/61 | emb | bank | Ebay | emb on rev. | |
| J. S. Banks | U | 26 | 08/26/57 | hnstp | comm./mer | Author | Springfield MA pmk | |
| Charles Barr | C | 11 | xx-xx-6x | cam | tailor | Author | Aiken, SC pmk | 3 |
| Carolina Hotel ty I | U | 11 | 04-08-5x | cameo | hotel | T. Crumbley article | Wilmington & Ra- leigh pmk | |
| Carolina Hotel ty II | U | 11 | 01-19-5x | cameo | hotel | J. Rodriguez | | |
| C. Cornehlson | U | 26 | 05-xx-5x | cameo | porter & ale | T. Crumbley | | |
| George W. Davis | U | 11 | 07-14-5x | cameo | comm./mer. | Author | cameo on rev. | |
| De Rosset, Brown & Co. | U | 26 | 04/24/61 | hnstp | comm./mer. | Author | | |
| De Rosset, Brown & Co. | C | PAID 5 | 04/24/61 | hnstp | comm./mer. | Author | | 6 |
| Ellis, Russell & Co. | U | 11 | 11-26-5x | cameo | comm./mer. | Author | | |
| Freeman & Houston | U | 11 | 11-08-5x | cameo | factor | J. Rodriguez | | |
| Zeno H. Greene | C | 1 | 03/01/62 | cameo | who. grocer | Author | | 3 |
| A. E. Hall | U | U27 | 12/16/60 | imprint | comm./mer. | T. Crumbley | | |
| A. E. Hall | C | 4 | 04/28/62 | imprint | comm./mer. | L. Hartmann | | 1 |
| Hutchins Billiard & Bowl- ing Saloon | U | 11 | 06-30-5x | cameo | saloon | Ebay | cameo on rev. | |
| Wm. L. Jacobs | U | | | cameo | saddlery | Kelley's 1860 -61 Wilming- ton Directory | cover not known | |
| A. Maclean | C | 7 | xx-xx-6x | imprint | hardware | Author | | 3 |
| J. D. MacRae & Co. | U | U10 | 09-01-5x | emb | comm./mer. | Author | emb on rev. | |
| A. B. McDuffie | U | 26 | xx-xx-5x | cameo | comm./mer. | Ebay | | |
| M. McInnis | U | 11 | xx-xx-5x | cameo | grocer | R G Kaufmann auction | | |
| W. H. McRary & Co. | C | PAID 5 | none | imprint | comm./mer. | T. Kaufmann | | 1 |
| Moore, Stanley & Co | U | 11 | 10-04-5x | cameo | comm./mer. | T. Crumbley | | |
| Wm. Neff & Son | U | 11 | 04-13-5x | cameo | chandler | Ebay | | |
| Wm. Neff & Son | U | 11 | 05/01/55 | emb | chandler | Author | | |
| H. R. Perrin | U | 26 | 04/04/61 | emb | dry goods | wingnet.org | | |
| J. T. Petteway & Co. | C | 11 | 08-01-6x | imprint | comm./mer. | Author | Imprint, rev. | 1 |
| Seamen's Bethel (ty I) | C | 6 | 08/30/62 | imprint | church | Rumsey 37 | | 1 |
| Seamen's Bethel (ty II) | C | 11 | 08-10-6x | imprint | church | Siegel 1151 | Goldsborough pmk | 1 |
| W. M. Sherwood & Co. | U | 26 | 09-06-5x | cameo | comm./mer. | Author | | |
| J. C. Smith & Co | U | 11 | 06-29-5x | imprint | comm./mer. | T. Crumbley | | |
| Thos. Smith & Co. | C | 7 | 12/27/62 | cameo | grocer | Author | | 1 |
| T. Southmayd | U | PAID 3 | 01-09-5x | cameo | foundry | Ebay | cameo on rev. | |
| John A. Stanley | U | 11 | 05-18-5x | cameo | omm./mer. | J. Rodriguez | | |
| Stone & McDowell | U | 26 | 03-01-5x | cameo | bridge bldr | Nutmeg 40 | | |
| Washington & Lafayette Hotel | U | 11 | xx-xx-5x | cameo | hotel | Author | cameo on rev. | |
| Weill & Anathan | U | 26 | 01/02/61 | all-over | dry goods | T. Crumbley | | |
| S. M. West | C | 4 | 07/21/62 | cameo | auctioneer | J. Kimbrough | Whitesville pmk | 1 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|--------|----------|----------|------------|-------------|--------------------|---|
| G. W. Wilkinson & Co. | C | 1 | 01/24/62 | imprint | confect. | T .Kaufmann | impression on rev. | 1 |
| J. S. Williams | C | PAID 5 | 11/22/61 | emb | dry goods | Author | | 2 |
| Wilmington Iron & Brass Foundry | U | 26 | 02-15-5x | all-over | foundry | J. Palazolo | | |
| T. C. Worth | U | PAID 3 | 03-07-5x | cameo | comm./mer. | Author | | |
| T. C. & B. G. Worth | U | U9 | 11/07/60 | emb | comm./mer. | Author | | |
| T. C. & B. G. Worth | C | PAID 5 | 07/14/61 | emb | comm./mer. | Author | | 2 |

* U for USA or pre-civil war and C for CSA or Confederate

** Census of known Confederate covers by AD type

References:

“1860 United States Census.” https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1860_United_States_Census (Accessed November 17, 2019).

“Biggest US Cities By Population - Year 1860.” <https://www.biggestuscities.com/1860> (Accessed November 17, 2019).

“Wilmington, NC History.” <https://www.wilmington-nc.com/wilmington-nc-history.html> (Accessed November 17, 2019).

Rural Carrier Christmas Cards from North Carolina



by Darrell Ertzberger

The explosion of the Rural Free Delivery (RFD) system coincided with the rise in popularity of picture post cards. Undoubtedly, both encouraged each other. The popularity and utility of post cards was not lost on rural carriers. During what was known as the “Golden Age of Postcards,” 1907 to 1916, many rural carriers gave Christmas greeting post cards to patrons on their routes. Most carriers delivered these cards on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. At this time, fourth class post offices and rural carriers that were based in them, worked on Christmas Day. Christmas Day was not a paid federal holiday until 1938.

The RFD system started with experimental routes in 1896. It grew slowly at first, but as rural residents discovered its utility, the demand for rural routes greatly increased. There were 11 routes in North Carolina in 1901; 337 in 1903; 971 in 1905; 1,169 in 1907; and 1,261 in 1909 (these numbers are derived from the *U.S. Register* and may not be exact).

By the time the post card craze had taken off in 1907, the number of rural carriers, all potential card buyers for carrier-oriented Christmas cards, was substantial. One company saw the opportunity for profit in the situation.

From about 1906 to 1916, the Republican Printing Company of Rushville, Indiana, supplied custom printed cards for the

RFD carrier market. There was a new design each year. A carrier could order cards with his/her name and route number printed on the face of the card. The card backs were blank or were printed with a seasonal poem. Cards with the carrier name and route were sold at 75 cents for one hundred cards. Carriers could also get cards from local sources and a few other companies, but Republican appears to be the main supplier during this period.

Most postal history collectors have neglected these cards, probably because it is difficult to identify their origin. Usually, the only clues are the carrier’s name and route number. Occasionally the card might be canceled, giving a clue to its origin. Most are not canceled. Some carriers followed regulations, which called for postage on anything placed in an RFD box, but from existing cards, it is evident that most did not. Richow illustrates many of the card designs in his *Encyclopedia of RFD Cancels*, but provides no further information.

Postal historians are familiar with RFD cancels which the U.S. Post Office Department issued to carriers from August 1900 to July 1903. The vast majority of these Christmas greeting cards date after these cancels, so very few cards are canceled with carrier rubber stamps. A few are known with carrier purple pencil cancels. A tiny number have carrier-ordered privately produced

handstamps from the period after 1903. Because of the difficulty of identifying these cards and the lack of cancels on many, most state postal collectors do not have these cards in their collections, and most postal history dealers do not have them in their stocks. They are most often found in post card dealer stocks.

With the advent of online resources, it is easier to identify card origins. The author discovered that by using the 1910 *U.S. Census* and the *U.S. Register of Civil, Military and Naval Service*, most cards could be identified. The 1910 census lists everyone in the United States and gives the occupation of most adults. The *U.S. Register* is a list of all employees of the US government. It was published in odd years (1903, 1905, 1907, etc.). Unfortunately, the *U.S. Register* volumes are organized by state and post office, not employee name, so attempting to identify a card's origin using only the *U.S. Register* is a very tedious search. Using both resources makes the search easier. First one gets a county and state from the 1910 census using the carrier's name. At a minimum this gives you a target county and state. Sometimes the office is the village of residence that is listed in the census. One then uses a list of offices in the target county to pinpoint an office and confirm the carrier name in the *U.S. Register*.

The author has collected nationwide RFD carrier Christmas cards for several years, and has made some observations. The existing cards tend to match the distribution of RFD routes and known RFD cancels. Routes were plentiful in the mid-west and northeast, less so in the south and the west. RFD covers from the mid-west and northeast are not too difficult to find; those from the south and west are treasures. The same is true for the carrier Christmas cards.

The author has two cards from North Carolina in his collection. These are the only North Carolina examples known to him. One is from Henry Route 2 in Lincoln County. The other is from Pleasant Garden Route 1 in Guilford County. While this seems to be a tiny number known, it is better than some southern states, like Georgia and Tennessee from which no cards have been recorded.

The first card, shown in Figure 1, is from Winfield C. Johnson, carrier on route 2. This is the Republican Printing Company's 1909 design. While some 1909 Republican cards have a poem printed on the back, the reverse is blank on this example. In the 1910 census, Winfield Johnson is listed as a 28-year-old married man with a wife and four children, living in Howard Creek township of Lincoln County. Occupation is listed as "Rural Mail Carrier." The 1909 *U.S. Register* shows he was a rural delivery carrier in the Henry post office. Therefore, this card is from Henry Route 2.

The card from R.F. Fentress, Route 1, is easier to identify (Figures 2 and 3). He stamped and postmarked the card with a Pleasant Garden, Dec. 24, 1910 four-bar cancel. This is the 1910 Republican design. The reverse has a divided back with a poem. On the 1910 census, Robert F. Fentress is a 55-year-old widower in the Fentress township of Guilford County whose occupation is listed as "Mail Carrier, Rural Route." His three children also lived in his household.

In his collection, Tony Crumbley has a photograph of Robert Fentress with his delivery buggy in front of the Pleasant Garden post office (Figure 4). The back of the photo identifies the people in the photo as Postmistress Annie Neeley, at left, with carrier "Uncle Bob" Fentress and Mrs. Neeley's niece Agnes Neeley. "Uncle Bob" is the man that sent and delivered this Christmas card. This happens to be one of the very few images of rural carriers reported from North Carolina.

The practice of giving Christmas cards could be, and sometimes was, a subtle request for a holiday gift or tip. Because of that aspect, the Post Office Department took a dim view of the practice and had regulations to prohibit it. It is apparent from the existing number of cards that the rules were ignored as often as respected. In 1916, Republican Printing stopped producing cards. The reason is not known. It could have been a change in ownership of the company, pressure from the U.S. Post Office Department, or other factors. By that time, the height of postcard craze had passed. Folded holiday greeting cards in envelopes were becoming more popular. Very few carrier cards are known from any state after 1916. Since about 1975, Grace



◀ **Figures 1.** 1909 Christmas card from Winfield C. Johnson, the RFD carrier on Henry Route No. 2 in Lincoln County. This is the Republican Printing Company's 1909 design. The reverse is blank on this example.



◀ **Figure 2.** Picture side of 1910 card from Robert F. Fentress, the 55-year-old, widower rural delivery carrier in Guilford County. He delivered mail on route no. 1 in the Fentress township of Guilford County. The Christmas card was the Republican Printing Company's 1910 design.

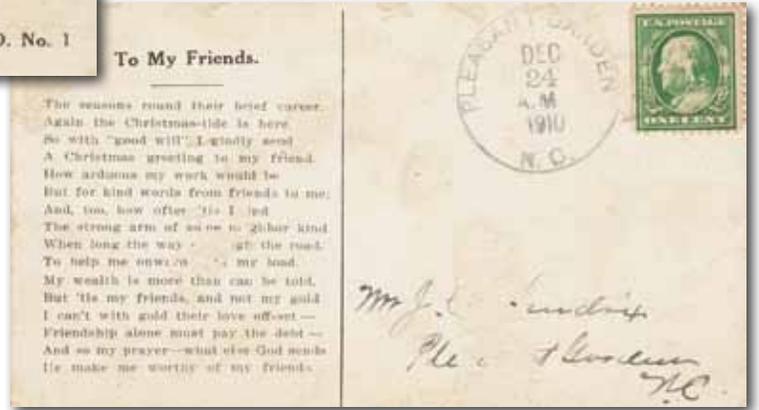


Figure 3. ▶ Address side of the 1910 Fentress Christmas card showing the Republican Printing Co. poem for that year. The carrier placed the 1 cent stamp on the card and struck a 32 mm Type A 4-bar cancellation of Pleasant Garden.



◀ **Figure 4.** Photo of Pleasant Garden post office with RFD wagon and horse. Text on back identifies the people, from left to right, as Postmistress Annie Neeley, rural free delivery carrier "Uncle Bob" Fentress, and Mrs. Neeley's niece, Agnes Neeley.

Sales, a mail-order company (now on the web) has marketed holiday cards for mail carriers.

Most likely more carrier Christmas cards exist from North Carolina than shown here. The author would like copies of any that can be identified, or that the owner believes are from North Carolina.

The NCPHS plans a major article on North Carolina rural free delivery in the spring 2020 issue. If you have any RFD cancels, covers, photos, or carrier cards in your collection, we would very much like to have copies or records of them. Contact the author or the editors.

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