

The Marking Equipment used by Window Clerks at the GPO in New York City, 1880 – 1911.

Purpose:

This exhibit will show the current and newly discovered examples of marking equipment used by the “window clerks” at the General Post Office in NYC, N.Y. between the period of 1880 to 1911.

Scope:

A new system of identification has been developed by the exhibitor for the different types of marking equipment used by the window clerks. The exhibit is broken down into two periods. The first period of markers address the markings used on the front of the letter. The Type WC-1 marker being used to cancel the stamps only and was used all the way into the 1950's. The other two markings were used to the end of the period when Postal Order no. 5113 changed all the registered cover markings to the new design in 1911. The second period was broken down into two different groupings which addressed the markings on the reverse side of the letter. The first grouping being from 1881 to 1896 and having a circular geometric design. Each window clerk employee had there own specific piece of marking equipment. The number of available covers seen with the Type WC-4 marking is the most common which leads one to believe that this employee maned the front window the most of the time. The employees using the Type WC-5 and WC-6 are most difficult to locate, meaning they worked the front window very little. The Type WC-7 has only two known copies and had to be a short time employee. The Type WC-5 to WC-7 equipment stopped being used by 1890 and the WC-4 became a general marker for all the front window clerks until the change over in 1895. The second grouping of markings were used between 1896 to 1911 and the design changed to a rectangular box design with the words “NEW YORK” and “REG” added to the marker. These markers were used commonly with all the front window clerks.

A secondary objective to this exhibit was to show that the front window clerk, as part of his job function and responsibility was to apply the Type II “City” registered labels to the letter at the initial mailing process. This exhibit shows two examples, page 2 and page 12, where the labels were applied to the letter and then hand stamped with the Type WC-1 marker.

Exhibit Plan:

- I. General Front Window Clerk Markings, Type WC-1 to WC-3.
- II. Specific Front Window Clerk Markings, Type WC-4 to WC-7.
- III. Rectangular Design Examiner Markings, Type WC-8 to WC-12.

Special Notes:

Important pieces are high lighted with a red border.

Special and Historical notes identified in Italic print.

Epilogue:

With PO no.5113 from September 25, 1910 and starting January 1, 1911, all post offices were to change over to the three new design rubber-faced devices for registration markings on letters which would replace all the old design markers. This became the “end to the era” of the marking equipment presented in this exhibit.