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Acknowledgement

This project would be impossible without the contributions of collectors, dealers, auction houses, and societies. Thanks to all of you.

Roger Curran

As Editor of U.S. Cancellation Club News

Roger wrote many articles on WOF. Roger also provided me with all of his original notes on the WOF cancellations, consisting of 100's of pages of notes and copies of WOF and circular dates stamps.

Daniel F Kelleher Auctions

Provided high resolutions photos used in their 2011 auction of Arthur Beane WOF holdings. Sale #623 January 14, 2011

Postal History Societies and their members

Illinois

Iowa

Michigan

New Jersey

New York

North Dakota/South Dakota

Ohio

Pacific Northwest

Idaho, Montana, Oregon,
and Washington

Pennsylvania

Texas

Wisconsin

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Victor Kuil

Matthew Liebson

Mike Ludeman

James W Milgram

Bob Omberg

Jim Petersen

David Reitsema

Johanna Russ

Dennis Sadowski

Ken Stach

John Valenti

Tim Wait

Max Wender

Anthony L Wilkinson

Richard Winter

Charles Wood

“Cancellations and Killers of the Bank-note Era 1870-1894” by James M. Cole

Updates

For a free book download, updated listing,
or the most recent checklist go to:

The ROCHESTER, NY PHILATELIC ASSOCIATION website

<http://www.rpastamps.org/wof.html>

If you wish to buy a printed book
or you wish to be added to my email update list
and I am always looking for additional cover scans or photos,
please email to:

Larry Rausch stonywoods840@gmail.com

1st Edition November 2019

Introduction

Being an engineer has always pushed me to detail and the Wheel of Fortune cancellation is one of the most detailed examples produced. As I collected past issues of magazine articles related to Wheel of Fortune, I found that Arthur Beane intended to write a detailed study of the cancellation. Arthur passed away before he could accomplish this task. In my search for state lists of Wheel of Fortune towns, very little was found. This prompted me to take up the task that Arthur planned to write. The last few years were spent producing this book.

Contents:

This book contains the history of (1) F.P. Hammond Company, (2) detail of each town postmark alphabetized by state, (3) an alphabetized listing of towns, and (4) a Wheel of Fortune checklist which is located inside the back pocket.

General comments:

I have redrawn the 824 postmark date stamps to better represent what they looked like. Many could not be shown as stamped on the covers because they were either too light or incomplete. Those towns listed without a postmark are identified in published books, but no photo has been found to date; therefore, I could not verify these towns.

Thirty-eight towns used two different duplex Wheel of Fortune cancellations and three of these used three different postmarks. These are:

Port Austin, MI Westwood, NJ Myrtle Point, OR

In the representative postmarks below, the metric size is shown in red, and is measured from outside to outside. Those postmarks which are not round show their size-- first horizontally then vertically.



No study can be totally complete since new listings are always being found, so I'm always looking for new postmarks with the Wheel of Fortune cancellation.

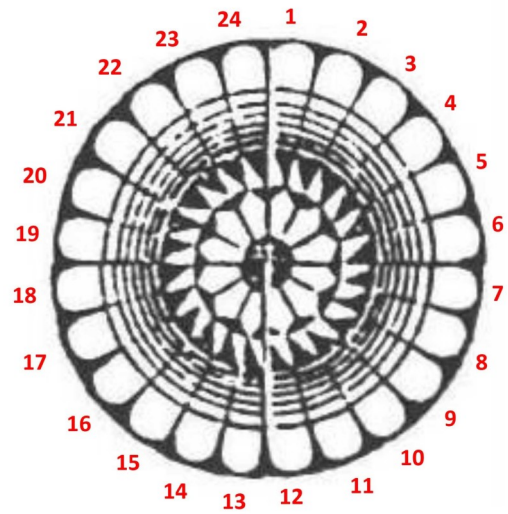
For future updates, go to: <http://www.rpastamps.org/wof.html>

Cancels commonly mistaken for Wheel of Fortune.

This book refers to the Wheel of Fortune as shown in Figure 1. It is divided into 24 segments.

Below are some of the cancels that are mistaken for the Wheel of Fortune cancellation. The most interesting is the one from Florida NY. (Figure 2) as it is the most similar but contains 32 segments and the year extends past the circle border. I've located three copies of this cancellation from 1889-1890. Four additional cancellations are shown in Figure 3.

Wheel of Fortune Postmark



24 Number of segments contained in a Wheel of Fortune Postmark

Figure 1

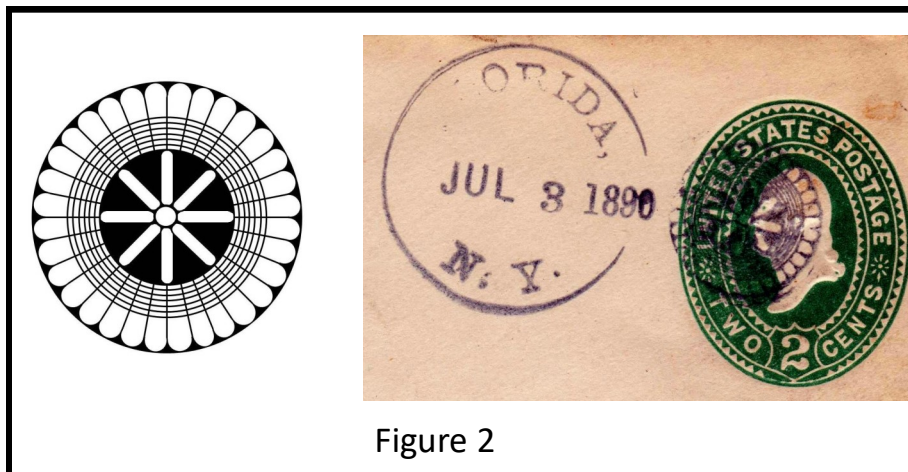


Figure 2

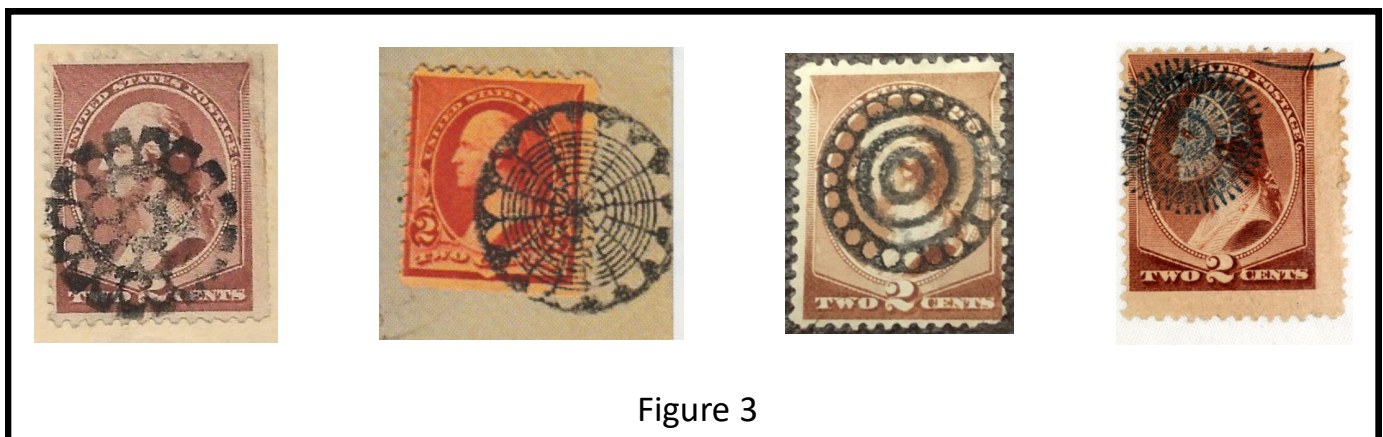


Figure 3

MOST PERFECT CANCELLATION

The best two Wheel of Fortune cancelled covers found to date are from Welcome, WV dated August 8, 1885 and from Barr's Store, IL dated October 20, 1886. These two covers were probably cancelled early on in the life of the handstamp as very little ink has accumulated into the die and the circles are nearly perfect.



Covers of Interest

These covers represent unusual Wheel of Fortune cancellation usages. An exciting cover in Figure 1 contains ten Wheel of Fortune cancellations. The second cover in Figure 2 is a gorgeous cover from Guatemala.



From Bridgeport, Oregon dated 10/08/1883

Figure 1



From Guatemala City, Guatemala dated 05/22/1886

Figure 2

Covers of Interest

In Figure 3, the founding father of Gottenburgh, Nebraska sends a cover to his home country Sweden. It is a very rare opportunity to find a cover which has two different town Wheel of Fortune cancellations as shown in Figure 4.



From Gottenburgh, Nebraska dated 08/24/1884

Figure 3



From Jacksonville, Oregon dated 04/11/1888

From Medford, Oregon dated 04/16/1888

Figure 4

History

Every book begins somewhere and this one starts in 1872. A young entrepreneur, Fred P. Hammond, started a company in Chicago, Illinois to produce rubber based devices to imprint postmarks and cancellations on postal mail. This was enabled by the invention of Vulcanized Rubber and a vulcanizing machine to use this rubber.

In 1839, Charles Goodyear stumbled on a process to convert natural rubber to a more durable product and obtained a patent in 1844. Vulcanization is a chemical process of heating rubber in combination with sulfur. This increased the rubber's strength and durability and reduced its stickiness.

The Peerless Vulcanizer shown in the 1898 cover below may have been the type of machine used to make the **Wheel of Fortune (WOF)** canceller (Figure 1) introduced in 1880.

Today this highly detailed fancy
rubber canceller is called
Wheel of Fortune.

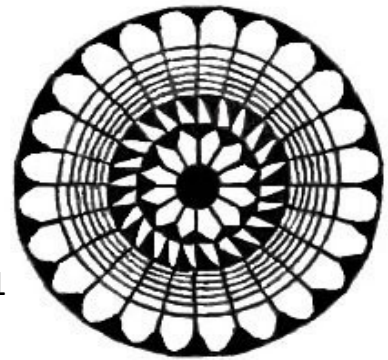
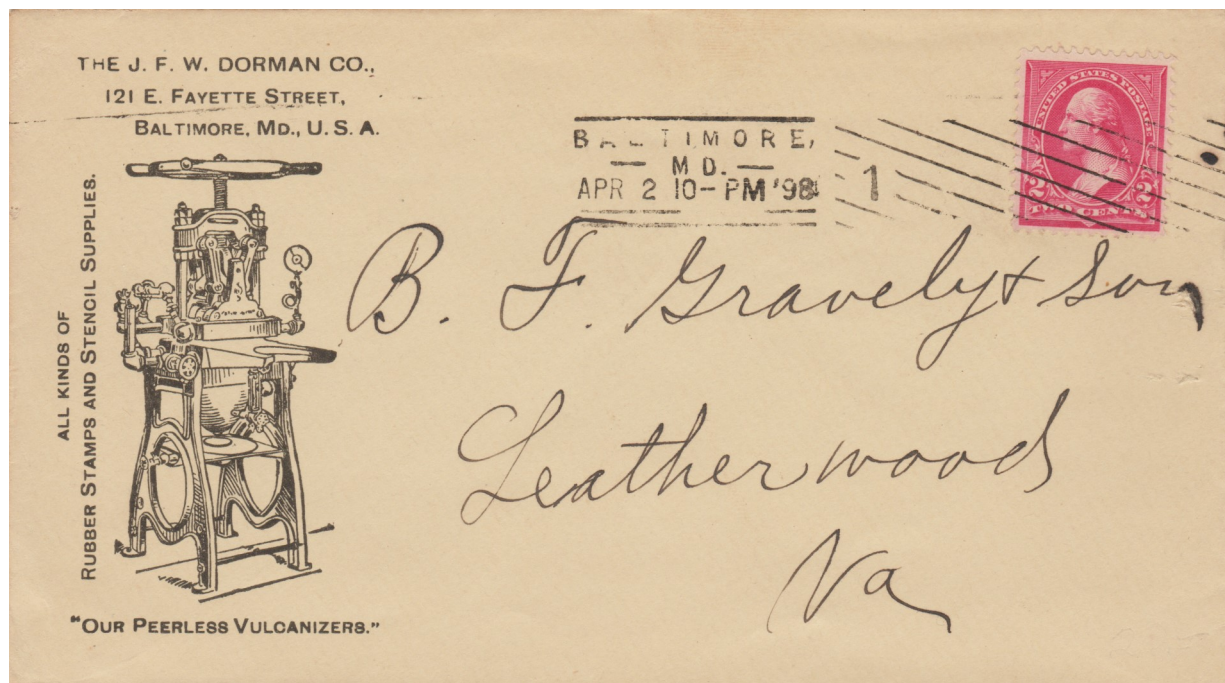


Figure 1



From Baltimore, Maryland dated April 2, 1898

F.P. Hammond operated his business at 164 Madison Street in Chicago, Illinois and a manufacturing facility at 17 South LaSalle Aurora, Illinois. In 1880 he moved his manufacturing facility to Plum street Aurora, Illinois. This 1880 move corresponded with the introduction of the **Wheel of Fortune** cancellation as seen in this ad. (Figure 2)

An interesting portion in this ad is:

THE BEST OFFER YET

One rubber P.O. Dater and Cancellor, Ink Powder, and Pads, Dates for ten years in a Walnut case with tweezers, and all the single line stamps needed in a Post Office.

By mail, postage paid.

\$3.00

POST OFFICE SUPPLIES

ESTABLISHED 1872.

WE ARE HEADQUARTERS

For the most complete line of articles used by P. M.'s and their Clerks.

Engraved Letter Headings,
 " Note Headings,
 Stamp Ribbons (all colors),
 Money Order Daters,
 Post-Office Daters,
 Registered Letter Daters,
 Received Daters,
 Patent Inking Pads,
 P. O. Canceling Ink (*by Express*),
 P. O. Rubber Canceling Corks,
 Twine Cutters,
 Steel and Rubber Stamp Racks,
 Coin Detectors,
 Paper Weights,
 Letter and Package Scales,
 Check Protectors,
 Gem Type Case,

THE BEST OFFER YET.

One RUBBER P. O. Dater and Cancellor, Ink Powder, and Pads, Dates for ten years in Walnut case with tweezers, and all the single line stamps needed in a Post Office, this style type: **UNCLAIMED**

By mail, postage paid, on receipt of price, \$3.00.

PROOFS FROM POSTMASTERS.

Your Quarterly Record received, and I like it very much. JOHN CECIL, P. M., California, Md.
 The \$5 Outfit ordered by me was duly received this evening. They are all A No. 1 articles, and give entire satisfaction. — JAS. S. HARTING, P. M., Orangeburg, N. Y.
 The Rubber Stamps, Note and Bill Heads, came to hand all right and meet with favor with those who have examined them, for cheapness, neatness, and durability. — T. W. LITTLE, P. M., Picture Rocks, Pa.
 I have been using one of your Stamps and Pads for the last year and it gives satisfaction. — W. S. BOWEN, P. M., Sheffield, Iowa.
 I received my Note and Letter Heads, Dater, etc., all O. K. Am satisfied with your job. It far exceeds my expectations. WM. J. KIRK, P. M., Maxville, Mo.
 The Dater received, and I am well pleased with it. — CHAS. COBB, P. M., Albion, Idaho.
 Your Box Record received, and is all O. K. — J. W. FITZ, P. M., Fort Madison, Iowa.
 The Pads ordered came to-day. I am very much pleased with them. — ED. S. MENARD, P. M., St. Genevieve, Mo.

Illustrated Catalogue of Post Office Supplies sent free to Postmasters only. For samples of Note and Letter Headings send 6 cts. Address
F. P. HAMMOND & CO., Aurora Illinois.

No. 529.




No. 530.




No. 531.




No. 532.




Figure 2

F.P. Hammond manufactured a handstamp he called the Eureka Dater, (Figure 3). The image is reversed to enable you to read the town of Danversport, Mass. dated Oct 4, 1887

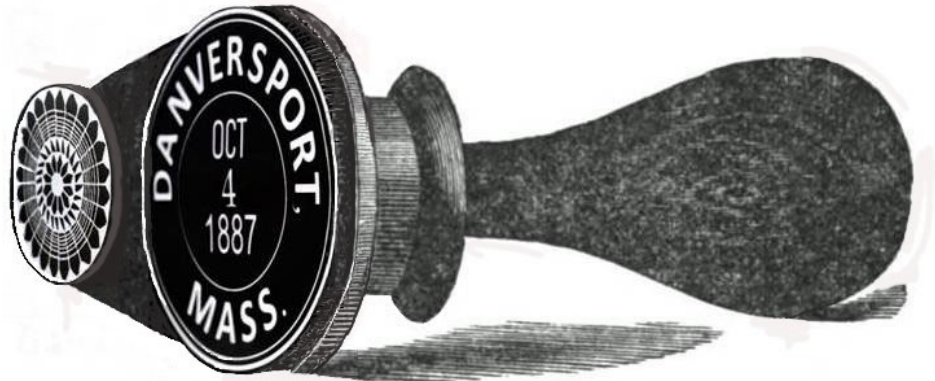


Figure 3

I classify the Wheel of Fortune handstamps by seven different types (Figure 4)--six duplex and one with only the Wheel of Fortune die. Type 0 of the WOF is coupled with many different circular date stamps (CDS).

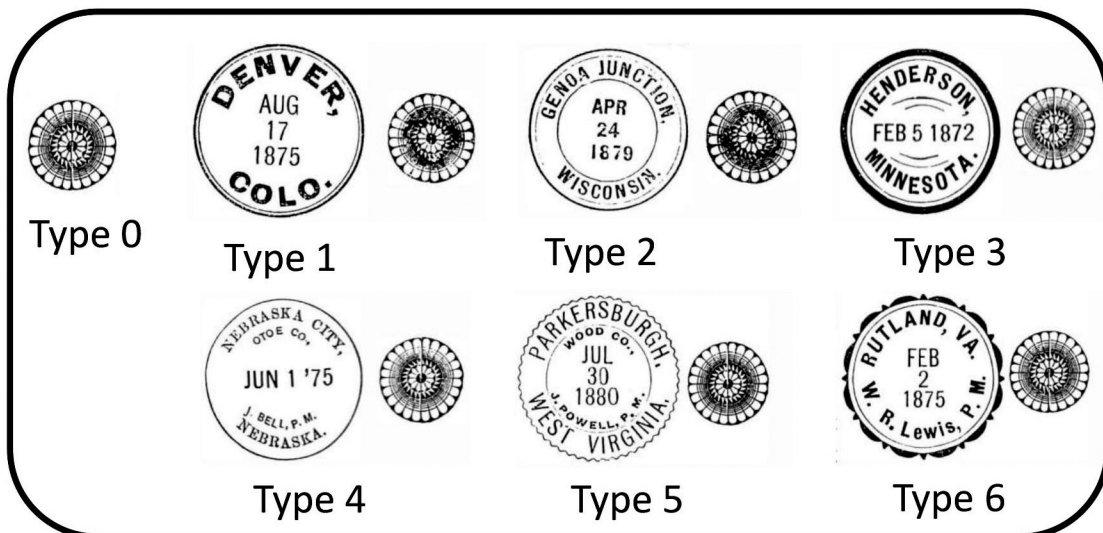
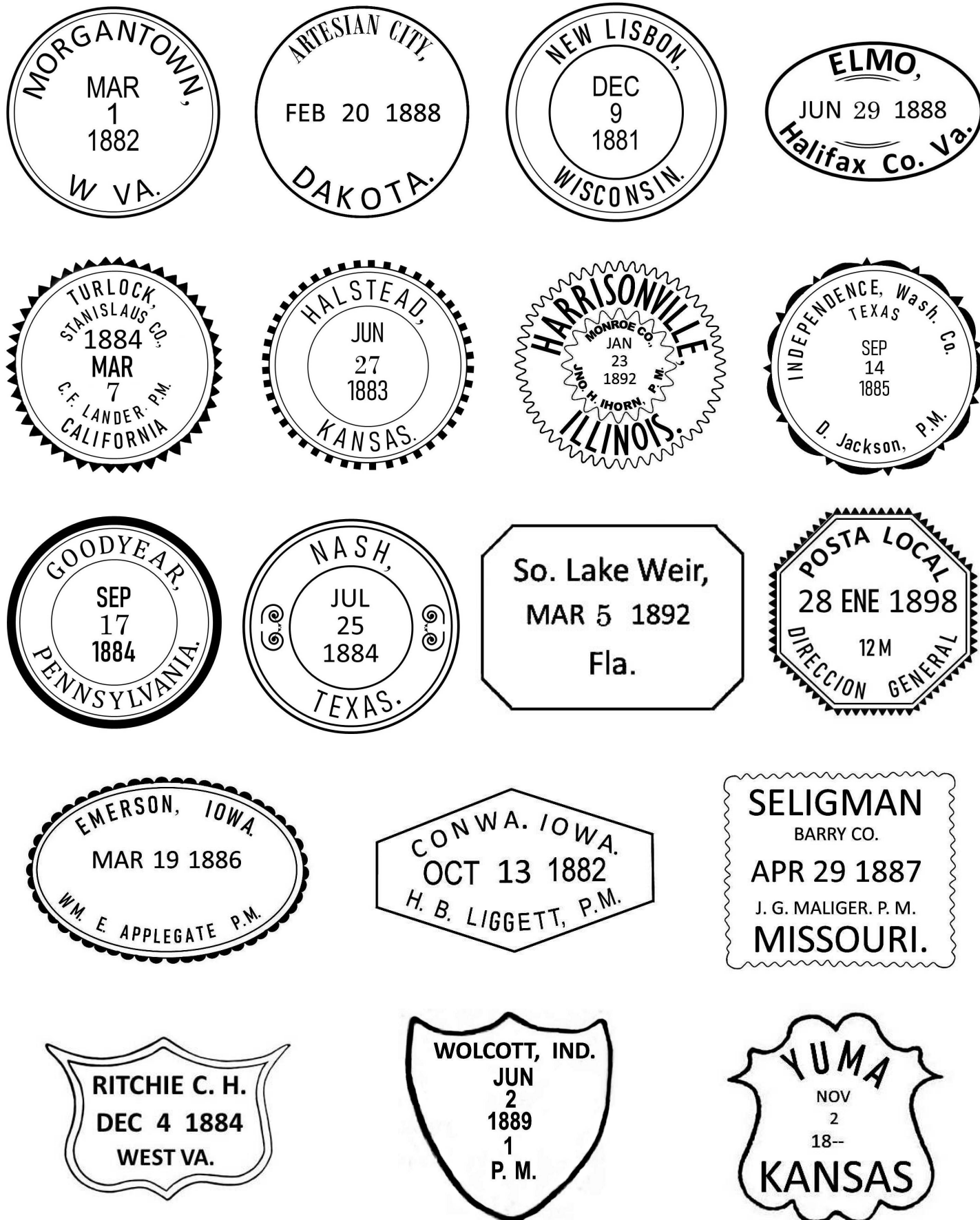


Figure 4

Below is a sampling of circular date stamps used with Wheel of Fortune.

Figure 5



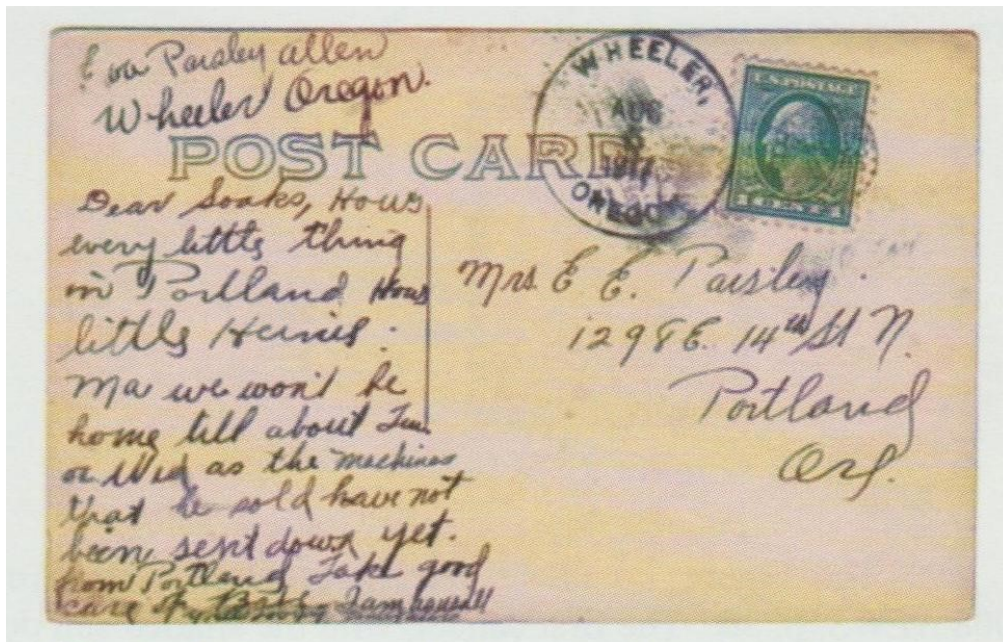
Below are picture of both the earliest and the latest cover found to date using the Wheel of Fortune cancellation. (Figure 6 & 7)

The earliest cut square is dated February 26, 1880 from New Lisbon, Wisconsin and the latest postcard is dated August 5, 1917 from Wheeler, Oregon



New Lisbon, Wisconsin Feb 26, 1880

Figure 6



Wheeler, Oregon Aug 5, 1917

Figure 7

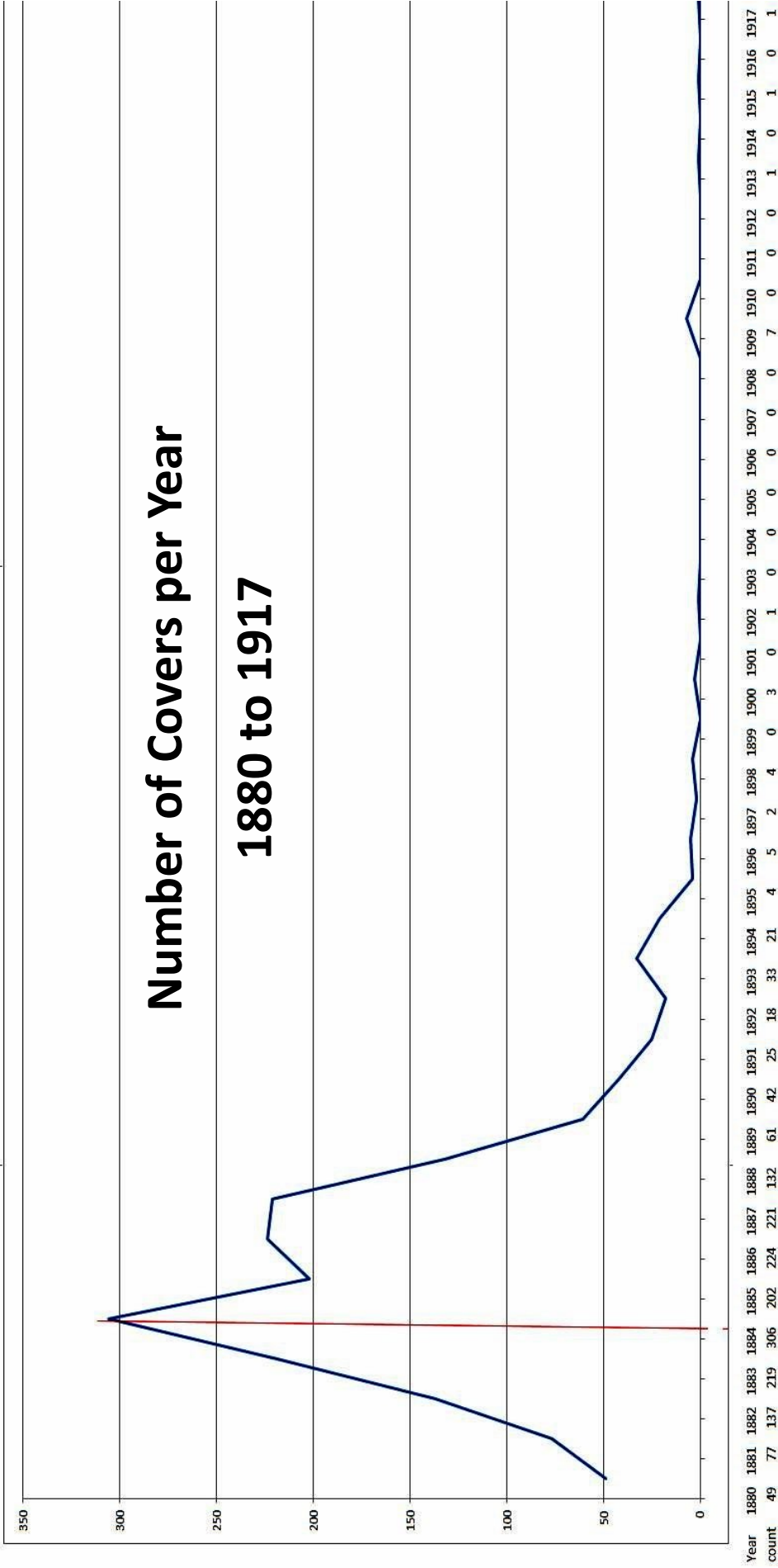


Figure 8

This graph (Figure 8) shows the number of known Wheel of Fortune covers per year. The peak year is 1884 but a few covers have been found out to 1917. The postal usage of the WOF had a steep decline starting in 1887 because of the following U.S. Post Office rule. “The Department furnishes metal postmarking stamps. The use of rubber stamps is not authorized, as the ink furnished by the Department cannot be used with them.”

This decline in the use of rubber stamps spelled the end of the Wheel of Fortune cancel. F.P. Hammond sold his company to Albert S. Carter in 1887 and Carter moved the company to Denver, Colorado on June 1, 1889.

A business reference listed that in 1884 F.P. Hammond was an Assistant Postmaster and in 1889 he was listed as working for Adams Express Company.

Fred P. Hammond died in an accident at his home on November 10, 1929. He is buried in the West Aurora, Illinois cemetery. (Figure 9)

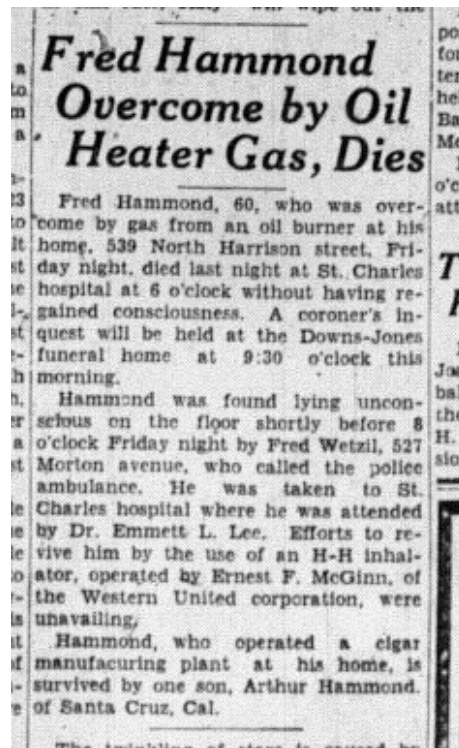


Figure 9

The A.S. Carter Company is still in operation today (2019) and owned by Dale Young and located in Cotopaxi, Colorado, a small town with a census of 47.

Searches were conducted in:

- Chicago, Illinois Public Library
- Aurora, Illinois Public Library
- Denver, Colorado Public Library
- Newberry Library Chicago, Illinois
- Corporation and Business records and City Directories
- Chicago, Illinois Tribune
- United States Official Postal Guides

James Cole in his introduction of his 1995 book “ Cancellations and Killers of the Bank-note Era 1870-1894” says this about the Wheel of Fortune. Quote” The commercially prepared and supplied “Wheel of Fortune ” cancel, used in well over 600 towns with 350 of them listed here”.

James Cole was correct more than 600 towns used the Wheel of Fortune this book details usage in 1057 towns in the United States, Mexico, and Guatemala. The chart below shows the number of towns in each state. The top three states are Illinois with 96 towns, Kansas with 94 towns and New York with 78 towns.

Wheel of Fortune number of towns per state							
Alabama	AL	3		Nebraska	NE	42	
Alaska	AK	0		Nevada	NV	1	
Arizona	AZ	4		New Hampshire	NH	9	
Arkansas	AR	14		New Jersey	NJ	25	
California	CA	23		New Mexico	NM	16	
Colorado	CO	18		New York	NY	78	
Connecticut	CT	14		North Carolina	NC	10	
Delaware	DE	5		North Dakota	ND	15	
Florida	FL	9		Ohio	OH	39	
Georgia	GA	9		Oklahoma	OK	15	
Hawaii	HI	0		Oregon	OR	28	
Idaho	ID	7		Pennsylvania	PA	49	
Illinois	IL	96		Rhode Island	RI	3	
Indiana	IN	23		South Carolina	SC	5	
Iowa	IA	52		South Dakota	SD	23	
Kansas	KS	94		Tennessee	TN	9	
Kentucky	KY	13		Texas	TX	28	
Louisiana	LA	5		Utah	UT	4	
Maine	ME	9		Vermont	VT	3	
Maryland	MD	10		Virginia	VA	15	
Massachusetts	MA	18		Washington	WA	30	
Michigan	MI	38		West Virginia	WV	11	
Minnesota	MN	31		Wisconsin	WI	35	
Mississippi	MS	3		Wyoming	WY	1	
Missouri	MO	44		Guatemala	GT	4	
Montana	MT	15		Mexico	MX	2	
				Town Total		1057	

Wheel of Fortune Steam Boat 1845-1847

In the preparation of this book I found an interesting cover about a steamer called Wheel of Fortune.



Side Wheel
Steamer cover
dated
August 12, 1846

The “Wheel of Fortune”, a side-wheel cargo/passenger steamer, was under construction from 1844 to 1845.

In newspapers from 1846 in the **Louisville Daily Courier** and the **Daily Picayune** advertised that the “Wheel of Fortune” traveled the Gulf of Mexico coast between New Orleans and Biloxi the towns between them and the Mississippi, Red, and Ohio Rivers. The primary route was round trips between New Orleans and Louisville.



At 3:00 am on July 11, 1847, the steamer “Wheel of Fortune” caught fire and burned on the Ohio river.

