

The United States Reference Manual

The Cincinnati Carrier Stamp, Sc. 9LB1 (& More)

by John F. Dunn

There is one Scott-listed stamp under the "Cincinnati" head in the Carriers section, that being this C. C. Williams 2¢ brown, Sc. 9LB1.

It is also seen here below on one of only six that are recorded genuinely used on cover. Although not visible in the photo, it is tied by a lightly inked red cancel, as well as being cancelled by a manuscript X. It was used locally to a street address, date unknown.

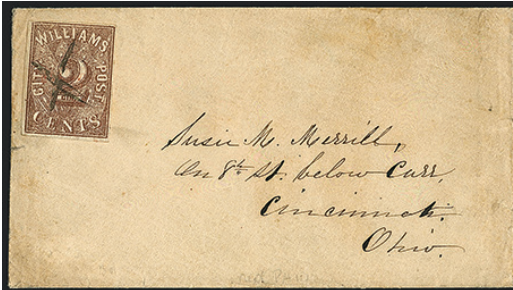
As late as 1941, this stamp was listed in the Locals section; however, perhaps on the basis of arguments by Elliott Perry, it was later moved to the

Carriers. Perry, in one of his "Pat Paragraphs," cites an October 29, 1854 advertisement by Cincinnati Postmaster Vattier, that "rates one Williams' 2¢ stamp, as equivalent to and available for exactly the same purpose on city delivery as two of the 1¢ (Eagle) carrier stamps" and continues, "If a 2¢ stamp issued by a regularly appointed carrier of the U.S. Post Office Department and having the same franking power at the 2¢ rate of two of the 1¢ stamp that was issued by the Department itself is not a 'semi-official' carrier stamp, what is it?, and how does it differ from 'semi-official' carriers that have been so listed in the Standard Catalog for a great many years altho their status is less well authenticated?"

While not cited by Perry, this cover is an example of such a General Carrier (Sc. LO2) usage. The cover to a local street address bears a pair of the 1¢ Blue Eagle Carriers tied by "X" cancels, and represents a rare use of an Eagle Carrier pair to pay the 2¢ intra-city carrier rate in Cincinnati.

Our study of the Cincinnati Carrier does not end there. "Chapter Two" involves Hiram Frazer, who established a local post in Cincinnati in 1845. Per a Scott footnote following the 9LB1 listing as well as in the head for the Locals, the latter quoted here, "Established by Hiram Frazer, stamps used while he was a Cincinnati letter carrier. Stamps of designs L146 and L147 were carrier stamps when used on cover between Feb. 3 1848 and June 30, 1849." The first Frazer strictly Local stamp is Scott design type 145, Sc. No. 69L1. Design Type 146 has an Eagle design used on Sc. Nos. 69L2 through 69L5. Design Type 147 has an Horse and Rider design used on Sc. Nos. 69L6 through 69L8.

Per an article by Robert Meyersburg, "Some New Semi-Official Carrier Stamps," in the August, 1987, *U.S. Classics Chronicle*: "One of the long-standing enigmas of U.S. carrier history has centered on mid-nineteenth century Cincinnati.... The population has enjoyed letter-carrier service since at least 1837. Then, suddenly and inexplicably, gaps begin to appear in the service. Elliott Perry, in his extensive manuscript of Cincinnati carrier history, remarks that "no evidence of U.S. letter carrier service in Cincinnati has been found from October 1845 to June 1849. During



this period all types of the Frazer stamps appear to have been issued and are known used." Perry's records show carrier service to have been resumed on June 5, 1849, by appointment of Henry Deland, Benjamin Phelps, and James Wheat as letter carriers. This government service continued until 1851, when Perry records: "In 1851, when the U.S. carrier service in New York and several other cities was being reorganized, it does not appear that the Postmaster General declared the public highways of Cincinnati to be post routes. Apparently there was neither government nor private letter delivery in Cincinnati until U.S. carrier service was resumed there late in 1854."

As a devotee of Cincinnati carrier history for a number of years, I have searched assiduously for clues to help explain the reasons for the reported gaps in the carrier service.

Perry states: "Any dispatch stamp which was used by Hiram Frazer or by Hiram Frazer Jr., while serving under legal appointment as a U.S. letter carrier, is not a 'local'—it is a U.S. carrier stamp." In agreement with Perry's analysis, I have sought confirmation of both Frazers' (if in fact there were two of them) and John W. S. Browne's appointments as U.S. letter carriers during the 1845-1849 and 1851-1854 periods respectively."

Browne's has not yet turned up, but in the Journals (orders) of the Postmaster General concerning Cincinnati carriers, which may be reviewed in the U.S. Archives in Washington, D.C., I finally found a partial solution to the first gap. Hiram Frazer was appointed U.S. letter carrier for the second time on February 3, 1848....

Consequently, in view of this new documented information, and in concord with Perry's views on the matter, any Frazer stamp showing definite use between February 3, 1848, and June 5, 1849, should be classified as a U.S. semi-official carrier stamp. This treatment is not unlike that of the City Despatch Post stamp of 1842—classified a carrier stamp (6LB1) if it is used on cover with a carrier cancellation, or a local stamp (40L1) if cancelled with the boxed FREE strike of the New York City Despatch Post.

...Existing catalogues should be amended to reflect this important new information. The stamps must be genuinely used on cover during the specified time to qualify for carrier listing.

Despite this declaration by an authority such as Meyersburg, the Frazer stamps used during the period cited are still found only within the Frazer & Co. Cincinnati, Ohio Local listings.

From Siegel Auction Galleries, top, "One of only three recorded on-cover combinations of the 1847 Issue and a Frazer & Co. stamp (Sc. 69L4) for either carrier or private post service"; bottom, "Frazer's City Express Post, Cincinnati O., 2¢ Black on Rose, Semi-Official Carrier (69L6)...used on folded letter dated—'Moorefield Ky. Apr. 12, 1848.'" (emphasis added).

