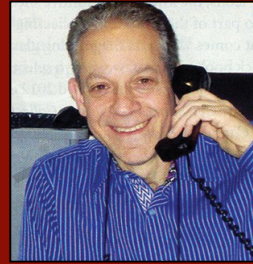


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## Viewing Collections: The U.S. 5¢ 1856 Issue, Part Two

by John F. Dunn

In October 2005 Bennett International Auctions offered at Public Auction the Fred Mayer Collection of the United States 5¢ 1856 Issue. This is Scott #12, so in the viewing I provide Scott numbers only when the item is not a #12 stamp as issued.

Picking up where we left off last month, we now turn to the Foreign usages section, starting with a particularly nice—and valuable—lot.



It is a cover front that bears two horizontal pairs of the 1856 5¢ red brown, pair slightly in at top, used with a 1¢ blue type IV (Sc. 9) and 3¢ dull red (Sc. 11), each tied by “Colonial Express Mail St. John, N.B. Jul. 6” 1857 route agent postmark and matching “Paid” handstamps. The cover also shows a red Boston “19” credit handstamp, endorsed “via ‘New York’”, and a red “America Paid Liverpool JY 17 57” postmark.

The cover was described as “one of the most spectacular and most important 1856 5¢ usages extant” because it is the only recorded 1856 5¢ usage from British North America and one of two recorded to Great Britain, both of which were to Scotland.

As further explained in the lot description, “The cover was posted at St. John, New Brunswick, and went directly to the American steamer *Admiral*, which was bound for Boston. The mail was processed by a steamboat letter carrier who applied the “Colonial Express Mail” postmark. Upon arrival in Boston, the letter was processed through

the exchange office with handstamped 19¢ credit to Great Britain, representing 3¢ British inland postage plus 16¢ for providing sea transport. It was transferred to New York City for the Cunard Line steamer *Persia*, which departed New York City on July 8 and arrived in Liverpool on July 17.

Estimated at \$50,000-75,000, it sold for \$42,500. (All prices quoted here do not include the 15% Buyer's Premium that is added on to these hammer prices.)

Another of the three recorded 1856 5¢ usages originating outside the U.S., this blue folded letter originated on January 24, 1857 in Tabasco, Mexico, ad-



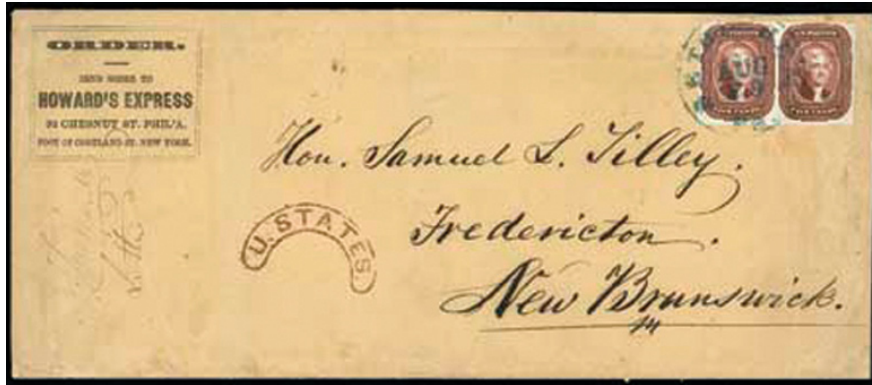
ressed to “Burdeos” (Bordeaux), France, going via New Orleans.

It bears a blue “Romano Hermanos Tabasco” merchant’s cachet, the 5¢ red brown being tied by “New Orleans La. Feb. 21 1857” c.d.s., the cover also with a red “New-York Br. Pkt. Mar 4” exchange office c.d.s., red British “17 MR 1857” transit, “Calais 17 Mars 57” entry c.d.s., framed “GB/1F 60C” debit and “8” (décimes) due handstamps, the reverse with Bordeaux Mar. 18 arrival c.d.s.

The 5¢ paid the 5¢ British open mail rate via British packet, plus 8 décimes due for postage from England to France. It was carried on the Cunard Line steamer *Asia*, the eleventh sailing of British packet service during the Three-Months Period when the British Packet Service Open Mail rate of 5¢ was officially in effect, leaving New York on March 4 and arriving in Liverpool on March 16.

Estimated at \$5,000-7,500, it realized \$8,000.

On page 15 we see a cover from Bethlehem, Pa. to Frederickton, New Brunswick with a 5¢ red brown pair tied by a blue “Bethlehem Pa. Aug 29” 1859 c.d.s. (circular date



stamp), with a printed “Howard’s Express” corner card, exchanged at Houlton Me. with red “U. States” arced handstamp, the reverse with a “Woodstock SP 3 1857” transit and “Fredericton SP 5 1857” arrival datestamps.

Per the lot description, “Howard’s Express was one of the leading package expresses of the era, operating between Philadelphia, New York, and British North America.” The stamps paid the 10¢ rate for up to 3,000 miles.

Estimated at \$7,500-10,000, it sold for \$9,500.

Next we have a May 5, 1856 folded letter from Philadelphia, Pa., to Halifax, Nova Scotia, bearing a 5¢ red brown tied by “Philadelphia Pa May 5” c.d.s., endorsed “Arabia’ via Boston”.



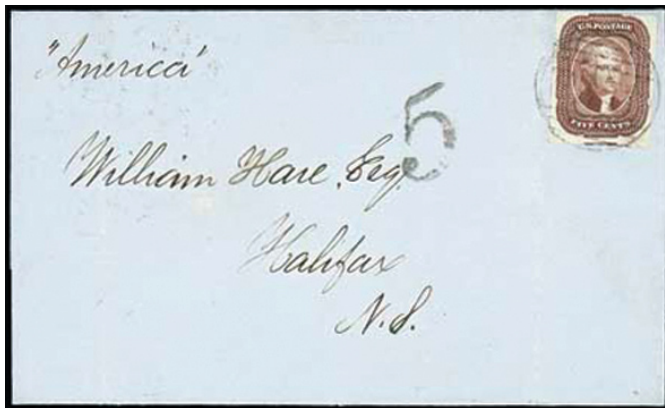
However, per this lot description, it actually was carried overland: “Although endorsed to be carried via the Cunard Line steamer Arabia, which left Boston on May 7, 1856, the letter was apparently transmitted by the land route. It was mailed from Philadelphia on May 5, 1857 with enough time to make the sailing, but evidently missed the Arabia. It was marked ‘Paid’ and ‘10’ (cents) in manuscript (the land route rate). The cover bears a blue St. Andrews backstamp (confirming the land route) and matching ‘6’ (pence) due

handstamp. The 6 pence due reflects the charge for an unpaid letter carried by the land route. Partial payments were not recognized.”

The cover also bears a blue St. Andrews N.B. transit backstamp with matching “6” handstamp, and “H MY 15 1856 NS” receiver. As a result of missing the Arabia, this is one of only two recorded 1856 5¢ usages via the land route to Nova Scotia.

Estimated at \$5,000-7,500, it realized \$5,750.

As a companion piece, we view a February 22, 1859 folded cover from Boston to Halifax, Nova Scotia, with date-line docketing and endorsed “ ‘America’ ”,



bearing a 5¢ red brown tied by a Boston “Paid” grid, with matching “Boston Br. Pkt. Feb 23” c.d.s. on reverse. This cover was carried on the Cunard Line steamer America from Boston on 23 Feb. 1859, and has a “Halifax FE 25 1859” receiving backstamp and matching “5” due handstamp, also with a “Blake Bros. & Co. / Boston, U.S.” merchant cachet on the flap. The usage is a 5¢ open mail rate paid by the stamp, plus 5 pence due for Nova Scotia inland postage.

Estimated at \$1,500-2,000, it went for \$2,700.

Continuing with the outgoing foreign usages, we come to a December 19, 1856 usage of a 3¢ red on buff envelope (Sc. U10) from



Georgetown, South Carolina, to St. Georges, Bermuda, bearing a 1¢ blue type IV (Sc. 9) two singles and 5¢ red brown (Sc. 12) tied by “Georgetown S.C. 19 Dec” circular datestamps, also with a New York style boxed “Not Paid” handstamp and manuscript “4” pence due notation.

The envelope and stamps paid the 10¢ direct American packet rate for distances under 2,500 miles per 1/2 ounce. This is the only recorded 5¢ 1856 usage to Bermuda. It was estimated at \$15,000-20,000 and was hammered down for \$16,000.

Next we have three ‘variations on a postal history theme’, in the form of covers to Hong Kong.

First is this August 19, 1856 cover from Trenton, N.J., to



Hong Kong, China, with a rare 5¢ red brown strip of four (creased in the middle of the strip) and a 1¢ blue type IV (Sc. 9) tied by red “Trenton N.J. Aug 19 1856” c.d.s., endorsed “Via Southampton England”, also with a red “New-York Am. Pkt. Aug 22” exchange office c.d.s., red British “4 SP 1856” transit and “Hong Kong 1 DE 1856” double arc receiving backstamps—and accompanied by the original 8 page enclosure.

Per the extensive lot description, “This cover was pre-paid at the 21¢ rate for open mail carriage by American packet to Southampton. The balance of the postage from Great Britain to Hong Kong, 6 pence, was to be collected upon delivery. The letter was exchanged at New York City and carried by the Havre Line packet Arago, which departed New York on August 23 and arrived at Southampton on September 4. The cover should have been marked with collect postage but was not.

“The letter traveled next on the Peninsular & Oriental

Line steamer Indus, which departed Southampton on September 4 and arrived at Alexandria, Egypt on September 19. After an overland trip, the letter reached Suez and was carried from there on the P&O steamer Oriental, which departed September 25 and arrived at Galle, Ceylon, on October 13. Most likely the cover was delayed in Ceylon, instead of catching the P & O steamer Signapore which arrived in Hong Kong on November 2, it was carried on the P&O steamer Norna, which departed Galle on November 9 and arrived in Hong Kong on December 1, 1856. The cover bears a Hong Kong arrival backstamp of that date.”

Estimated at \$30,000-40,000, this rare usage fetched \$52,500.

Look familiar? You can check back to page 17 and see that it this lot is similar, but not identical to the previous cover.

This usage also went from

Trenton to Hong Kong with a 5¢ red brown strip of four and a 1¢ blue type IV (Sc. 9) tied by red “Trenton N.J. Sep 5 1856” c.d.s., endorsed “Via English Mail Steamer”, with a red “New-York Br. Pkt. Sep 9” exchange office c.d.s., red British “22 SP 1856” transit and “Hong Kong 1 DE 1856” double-arc receiving backstamps.

Per the lot description, “A second cover from the Lt. English correspondence prepaid 21¢, sufficient for carriage on the Saturday American packet sailing of the following day from New York. The cover evidently missed the American packet sailing and was marked at New York with the British packet datestamp of September 9. Transmitted as an overpaid 5¢ British open mail cover by British packet, it was carried on the Cunard Line steamer Niagara, which departed from Boston on September 10 and arrived at Southampton on September 21.



“The cover was rated 2 shillings due as an overweight collect letter, weighing between one and one-quarter and two ounces to Hong Kong. At the time, the rate progression on mail from Great Britain to Hong Kong was 6 pence up to 1/2 ounce, 1 shilling for 1/2-1-1/4 ounces, and 2 shillings for 1-1/4-2 ounces.

“The letter traveled next on the Peninsular & Oriental Line steamer Pera, which departed Southampton on October 10 and arrived at Alexandria on October 18. After an overland trip, the letter reached Suez and was carried from there on the P&O steamer Hindustan, which departed October 21 and arrived at Galle, Ceylon, on November 8. From Ceylon, the letter was taken by the P&O steamer Norna, which departed Galle on November 9 and arrived in Hong Kong on December 1, 1856. The cover bears a Hong Kong arrival backstamp of that date.

“[The stamps] prepaid the 21¢ British open mail rate via American Packet, actually handled via British Packet and rated 2 shillings postage due.”

The cover and some stamps have small faults, but it is the rarity of the strip of four and the usage—different from the previous conveyance—that carried the day. Estimated at \$30,000-40,000, it realized \$57,500.

The third variation is a blue folded cover bearing a 5¢ red brown, 1857 3¢ dull red (Sc. 26) and 10¢ green types III, II, III (Sc. 32, 33) strip of three, tied by “Boston 2 Feb”



circular datestamps, endorsed “Steamer via N York”, also with red “New-York Feb 3” transit backstamp, red “London Paid FE 16 58” transit and “Hong-Kong 24 AP 1858” double arc receiving backstamp.

Per the lot description, “The cover is from the Augustine



Heard correspondence correctly prepaying the 38¢ rate for carriage by Prussian closed mail. [Instead] The cover was exchanged in New York City for carriage by the 33¢ British mail rate to China with magenta “28” cents credit to Great Britain. The cover was carried from New York by the Cunard Line steamer Europa, which departed on February 3 and arrived at Liverpool on February 15. The cover then caught the sailing of the Peninsular & Oriental Line steamer Colombo, which departed Southampton on February 20 and arrived at Alexandria on March 5. After an overland trip, the letter reached Suez and was carried from there on the steamer Nubia, which departed March 20 and arrived at Galle, Ceylon, on April 3. It was then placed on the P&O Line steamer Pottinger, which departed Galle on April 16 and arrived at Hong Kong on April 24, 1858.”

The auctioneers rated this cover with a relatively modest \$10,000-15,000 pre-sale estimate, but the bidders felt otherwise, and the cover soared to \$62,500.

Next we have a blue folded cover from Boston to Shanghai, China, with a 5¢ red brown (Sc. 12) tied by “Boston 3 Feb” c.d.s., also with a red “New-York



Br. Pkt. Feb 3” exchange office c.d.s., boxed “Returned for Postage” handstamps, additional postage paid in cash for the 33¢ rate, reverse with “New-York Br. Pkt. Mar 9” transit and magenta “28” credit, “Hong Kong 22 MY 1858” backstamp receiver.

As explained, “This cover is from the Heard correspondence to Shanghai posted from the same sender and on the same day as lot 165 [the third of our Hong Kong covers, page 19]. The cover was prepaid for the 5¢ British open mail rate, which was not valid for mail to Shanghai.

A New York exchange office clerk originally marked the cover with the February 3 datestamp and then realized his error. The cover was then struck with the exchange office's red "Returned For Postage" handstamp and the letter was returned to Boston.

"At Boston, an additional amount of postage, 28¢ to make the total rate of 33¢, was eventually paid in cash and the letter was returned to New York City for transmission. At New York the letter was bagged for Cunard Line mail and a new exchange office datestamp of March 9 was struck on the reverse. After crossing out the day in the New York datestamp, and the "Returned For Postage" handstamps, a clerk marked the letter with the correct 28¢ credit notation.

"The letter departed Boston on the Cunard Line steamer America on March 10 and arrived at Liverpool on March 22, 1858. From Liverpool the letter went to London where it was postmarked with a London Paid March 23 datestamp after a clerk originally rated it as due and correctly crossed out the due notation. The cover then caught the sailing of the Peninsular & Oriental Line steamer Colombo, which departed Southampton on April 4 and arrived at Alexandria on April 17. After an overland trip, the letter reached Suez and was carried from there on the steamer Bentinck, which departed April 20 and arrived at Galle, Ceylon, on May 7. It was then placed on the P&O Line steamer Norna, which departed Galle on May 7 and arrived at Hong Kong on May 21, 1858."

The only recorded 1856 usage to Shanghai, as well as the only recorded use of the Auxiliary Marking, "Returned for Postage," this remarkable example of postal history was estimated at \$15,000-20,000 and realized \$21,000.

Next stop, India, in the form of a blue folded letter from Troy, N.Y., to Saugor, Hindustan (India) with a 5¢ red brown and 1857 10¢ green types II, III (Sc. 32, 33) block of four tied by "Troy N.Y. Paid May 4" c.d.s., endorsed "overland via Southampton", black "Boston Br. Pkt. 5 May" backstamp and red "40" credit handstamp, British red "Paid 1858 MY 17" transit, manuscript "1", the reverse with

red “Bombay JU 24 1858” transit and “Saugor 29 Jun” arrival c.d.s.

Per the lot description, “The... cover...was exchanged at the Boston office and directed to the British steamer,



receiving the correct “40” credit handstamp in red. The letter was carried by the Cunard Line steamer Canada, which departed May 5 and arrived in Liverpool on May 17. The letter then caught the sailing of the Peninsular & Oriental Line steamer Colombo, which departed Southampton on May 20 and arrived at Alexandria on June 2. After an overland trip, the letter reached Suez and was carried from there on the steamer Nubia, which departed June 4 and arrived at Aden on June 10. From Aden the letter was taken by steamer to Bombay and thence to the destination, where it arrived on June 29, 1858.

This cover...shows the 1 penny credit from Great Britain to India (the red manuscript “1”). According to Moubray (page 190), the 1 penny credit had been introduced on mails to India in September 1856....”

The latest date of the three recorded 5¢ usages to India and the only one showing the 1 penny credit from Great Britain to India, it exceeded its \$30,000-40,000 estimate with a \$42,500 hammer price.

On page 23 we view the only recorded 1856 5¢ usage to Belgium, a partially printed circular from New Orleans to Antwerp, Belgium, bearing a 5¢ red brown tied by a “New Orleans La. Oct 7” 1856 c.d.s., endorsed “per first Steamer”, also with a red “New-York Br. Pkt. Oct 15” exchange office c.d.s., British manuscript “1/-” debit, Belgium boxed accounting handstamp with manuscript rate division in décimes, and blue manuscript “14” (décimes) due from the

addressee, the reverse received in Belgium with red “Anvers 29 Oct 1856” back-stamp, also with a British “BY 28 OC 1856” transit c.d.s. in red.

Per the lot description, “The letter was carried by the Cunard Line steamer Africa, which departed October 15 from New York and arrived at Liverpool on October 27. It was handled as a collect letter from England to Belgium, where it arrived on October 29. The rate from England to Belgium was 6 pence per 1/4 ounce plus 8 pence sea postage for a total of 14 pence due from addressee. Britain’s share was 1 shilling with the remaining 2 pence Belgium's share.”

Estimated at \$10,000-15,000, this cover realized \$15,000.

Here’s another combination of a spectacular multiple and a remarkable usage. It is a blue folded letter bearing the largest 1856 5¢ multiple in any format, a block of six tied by four strikes of “Richmond Va. Jul 23 1857” circular datestamps. The

folded letter from Richmond, Va., to Bremen, and then forwarded to Münden über Springe, Hanover, also bears



a red "New York Am. Pkt. Jul 26" exchange office c.d.s., red "Aachen 7/8 Franco" transit. It was redirected upon receipt in Bremen with a red crayon "1 1/2" (silbergroschen), and a blue "Münder 9/8" arrival c.d.s..

The block was folded over the edge of cover (resulting in creases and small internal tears), and the cover has been opened out, expanded and patched with a piece of the original letter sheet.

Per the lot description, "The letter was processed at the New York City exchange office under the Prussian Convention to be carried by an American packet leaving on July 25, 1857. As with the previously discussed covers sent by Prussian closed mail, the cover was correctly marked with the 'Paid 7' credit to Prussia datestamp. The letter was carried by the Havre Line steamer Arago, which departed from New York City on July 25, 1857, and arrived at Southampton on August 6, 1857. The next day, the cover reached the Aachen exchange office, which applied its boxed paid datestamp. When the letter reached Bremen it was redirected to Münder über Springe in Hanover. A total of 1-1/2 silbergroschen was charged for the additional handling to Münder, where it was received on August 9 and backstamped with the blue arrival marking."

Aptly described as "one of the highlights of a collection replete with the most notable items of this issue..." it was estimated at \$75,000-100,000 and went for \$67,500.

Up next was a buff envelope bearing a 5¢ red brown "original block of six reduced to a block of five" from Pe-



kin, Ill. to Berlin, Prussia. If you look closely you can see where one stamp was removed (arrow). The stamps are tied by grid cancellations to the cover, which also displays a

matching “Pekin Ills. Jan 20” c.d.s., red “N. York Br. Pkt. ‘Paid 7’ Jan 27” exchange office c.d.s., red boxed “Aachen Franco 13/2” transit, reverse with German “14/2” arrival c.d.s.

With the full block of six, the stamps paid the 30¢ Prussian Closed mail rate. This is nevertheless the second largest 1856 5¢ multiple in existence and one of only four known blocks on cover. Estimated at \$20,000-30,000, it went for \$23,000.

Continuing in the German area, we have a buff cover from Erie, Pa., to Hildburghausen, Saxony, with an illustrated woodcut portrait of the Sauk Indian Chieftain



Keokuk—the namesake of Keokuk, Iowa—bearing a 5¢ red brown tied by “Erie Pa. Jan 29” 1858 c.d.s., the cover also with a black “New-York Br. Pkt. ‘23’ Feb 3” exchange office debit c.d.s., blue manuscript “45” due rating crossed out and re-rated “12 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>”, the reverse with red “Aachen 17 2” transit c.d.s. and backstamps that include a “Hildburghausen 19 2” receiver.

The cover was prepaid at the British open mail rate of 5¢, but the New York clerk disregarded the prepayment and sent the cover as part of the Prussian closed mail. It was exchanged with a 23¢ debit to Prussia shown in the exchange handstamp. The cover was carried in closed bag by the Cunard Line steamer Europa, which departed from New York on February 3, 1858, and arrived at Liverpool on February 15, 1858. The cover was rated as 45 kreuzer due in Aachen. This amount was crossed out and restated in the currency of Saxony as 12-1/4 neugroschen, which was equivalent to the total rate of 30 cents. The cover bears an arrival backstamp of February 19.

This is the only recorded 5¢ usage on an illustrated cover. The purpose of the portrait is unknown. It may be related to a product, or brand, named Keokuk. It seems that the Prussian mail clerk added the moustache to the image in the same blue ink he used to rate the cover, giving the chief a Persian appearance. Estimated at \$15,000-20,000, it attracted a top bid of \$16,000.

Mail to Great Britain was represented by this cover bearing the 5¢ red brown in two brilliant horizontal pairs with exceptionally large margins and portions of



six adjoining stamps, used with a 1¢ blue type IV (Sc. 9) and 3¢ dull red (Sc. 11) tied by “Albany N.Y. Apr 9” circular datestamps, the cover also sporting a red “America Paid Liverpool AP 24 57” datestamp with matching red “3” credit handstamp, the reverse with a green “Aberdeen AP 25 1857” receiver and an embossed coppersmith & plumbers’ return card on the flap.

Per the lot description, “The cover departed New York April 11 on the steamship Alps, operating under an American mail contract for this sailing, replacing the Collins Line steamer Atlantic. The cover arrived at Liverpool on April 24 and marked 3¢ credit to England for inland postage. The United States retained the balance, 5¢ inland postage plus 16¢ for sea carriage. The cover arrived in Aberdeen the next day.

“The 24¢ rate from the United States to Great Britain had been established by the Treaty of 1848. The 5¢ open mail rate was not available for mail destined for Great Britain.” The stamps paid the 24 cent rate per 1/2 ounce for up to 3,000 miles. Surprisingly, this is the only recorded 1856 5¢ usage to Great Britain on a full cover.

Estimated at \$50,000-75,000, this unique destination fetched a top bid of \$115,000.

This next cover displays a wealth of markings, not to mention the postage itself, and is the only recorded 1856 5¢ usage to Sardinia that was prepaid and traveled by Prus-



sian Closed mail. The 3¢ red on buff envelope (Sc. U10), from New Orleans, La., to St. Julien, Sardinia, bears a 5¢ red brown, 10¢ green types I-III (Sc. 13-15) vertical strip of three tied by “New Orleans La. Aug 8 1857” circular date-stamps, magenta “15” credit, red boxed “Aachen 29 8 Franco” handstamp and magenta “f 3¼” rating out in red crayon and rated “7”, red “Franca”, “P.D.”, and “Via Di Svizzera” handstamps. The reverse shows various markings including a red “New-York Am. Pkt. Aug 15” exchange office backstamp and “S. Julien 4 Set 57” receiver.

Per the lot description, “The cover bears a New York exchange office datestamp of August 15 and was marked with a manuscript 15 cents credit to Prussia. The United States retained the 5-cent inland postage and the 18-cent sea postage, leaving Prussia with the 15 cents for Belgian transit, Prussian inland postage, and postage beyond Prussia. It was carried by American packet on the Collins Line steamer Baltic, which departed August 16 and arrived in Liverpool on August 28. The closed bag was then exchanged at Aachen, receiving magenta ‘f 3¼’ silbergroschen notation representing the equivalent of 8 cents paid (f = franco, or paid) for the postage beyond Prussia. The routing handstamp ‘Via Di Svizzera’ as well ‘Franca’ and ‘P.D.’ handstamps indicate the route was to be via Switzerland and that the cover was prepaid. The red crayon ‘7’ likely represents a credit to Prussia.



“It is not surprising that this is the only known Prussian closed mail rate 5¢ cover, given its high rate and postage as well as the distinct possibility of delay due to ongoing wars and unrest. Moreover, this cover is a fantastic use of a 3¢ Nesbitt....a Very Fine usage bearing a superb and remarkable 10¢ strip with three different types, [paying] the 38¢ Prussian Closed Mail rate per 1/2 ounce.”

The pre-sale estimate of \$30,000-40,000 proved conservative as the cover fetched \$75,000.

In this next example the emphasis was on the point of origin, as “fewer than six” 1856 5¢ usages are known from Texas. In this instance it is a



light blue folded cover from Galveston to Nantes, France with a 5¢ red brown irregularly cut in the shape of a parallelogram, tied by a bold “Galveston Tex. Sep 11 1856” c.d.s., the cover also with a red “New-York Br. Pkt. Sep 23” exchange office c.d.s. [above the “Na” of “Nantes”].

It was transferred to Boston for the Cunard Line steamer Arabia, which departed on September 24 and arrived at Liverpool on October 4, receiving an “Etats-Unis. Paq. Brit. A. Calais 6 Oct. 56” entry c.d.s. (that also ties the stamp) with matching “13” (décimes) due handstamp. The reverse shows a red Liverpool “6 OC 1856” transit backstamp, and French backstamps that include a “Nantes 7 Oct. 56” arrival c.d.s.

Estimated at \$5,000-7,500, it realized \$4,250.

On page 28 we view a cover from New Orleans, La. to Bordeaux, France, bearing a 5¢ red brown pair with large margins on all sides including an enormous bottom sheet margin cancelled by a “New Orleans La. Dec 5” c.d.s., the cover also with a red “New-York Br. Pkt. Dec 16” exchange office c.d.s.

It was transferred to Boston for the Cunard Line steamer Arabia, which departed on December 17 and arrived at Liverpool on December 28. It also



bears an “Etats-Unis. Paq. Brit. A. Calais 30 Dec. 56” entry c.d.s. with matching “13” (décimes) due handstamp uprated in manuscript to “26”, the reverse with a red Liverpool “29 DE 1856” transit backstamp, various French transits and a “Bordeaux 30 Dec. 56” arrival c.d.s.. The stamps paid double the 5¢ British Open mail rate via British packet, plus 26 décimes due for double-weight postage from England to France.

This cover was described as “one of the greatest covers bearing United States Imperforate issues...When this cover was sold in the renowned [1957 H. R. Harmer] Caspary sale, it was described as ‘One of the most beautiful items of a collection in which beauty abounds’.”

This cover was carried on the last sailing prior to the “Three Months Period” when the British Packet Service Open Mail rate of 5¢ was officially in effect Estimated at \$150,000-200,000, it went for \$125,000.

(See page 32 for a brief explanation of the “Three Months Period”.)

This next cover is the earliest 1856 5¢ Trans-atlantic usage. It was sent from New Bedford, Mass., to Paris, France, bearing a 5¢ red brown, two 3¢ brownish carmine (Sc. 11) singles and a



10¢ green type III (15), tied by red grid cancellations, the cover with a matching “New Bedford Mass Paid Mar 27” c.d.s., red “New-York Am. Pkt. Mar 29” exchange office c.d.s. It was carried on the Collins Line steamer Ericsson, which departed New York on March 29 and arrived at Liverpool on April 12, where it received an “Etats-Unis-Paq. Am. A. Calais 14 Avril 56” entry c.d.s. with matching “8” (décimes) due handstamp as well as a red Liverpool “14 AP 1856” transit backstamp, the reverse also with a “Paris Poste Restante 15 Avril 56” receiver.

As further explained, “During the period that the 21¢ rate was in effect, there was also a 20-cent rate for carriage by Havre Line packet, or American packet directly to Le Havre. Many senders prepaid 21¢ so their letters could be carried by whichever of the two lines was departing earlier. Many of the covers that were prepaid 21 cents were actually carried by the Havre Line.”

Estimated at \$20,000-30,000, it sold for \$27,000.

C o n t i n u -  
ing the array of  
unique covers  
in the Mayer  
Collection, we  
come to a blue  
folded cover  
bearing a 5¢ red  
brown block of  
four used with  
a 1¢ blue type II  
(Sc. 7) tied by a



“Donaldsonville La. Sep 8” c.d.s and grid cancellations, also with a red “New-York Am. Pkt. Sep 20” exchange office c.d.s.

It was carried on the Havre Line steamer Fulton, which left New York on September 20 and arrived at Havre on October 3, where it received a red “Outre-Mer Le Harve 3 Oct. 56” entry c.d.s. and manuscript “12” (décimes) due rating, plus French backstamps.

Representing a prepayment of 21¢ for any service to

France, it was handled via the 20¢ direct American packet rate, plus double-weight 12 décimes due (7.5 to 15 grams) for French inland postage, and is the only 1856 5¢ block on cover to France. It was estimated at \$75,000-100,000 and received a top bid of \$160,000.

We now come to a section of covers that display various Packet ship usages.

First up is a folded letter endorsed “Per First Steamer”, bearing a 5¢ red brown horizontal strip of three and single tied by “New Orleans La. Nov 8” circular datestamps, also with a blue



New Orleans merchant handstamp and red “New-York Am. Pkt. Nov 15” exchange office c.d.s. ,

It was carried on the Havre Line steamer Fulton, which left New York on November 17 and arrived at Havre on December 1, where it received a red “Outre-Mer Le Harve Dec 56” entry c.d.s. with matching “6” (décimes) due handstamp, and French backstamps including “Nantes 3 Dec. 56” transit.

Quoting from the explanation on page 29, As further explained, “During the period that the 21¢ rate was in effect, there was also a 20-cent rate for carriage by Havre Line packet, or American packet directly to Le Havre. Many senders prepaid 21¢ so their letters could be carried by whichever of the two lines was departing earlier. Many of the covers that were prepaid 21 cents were actually carried by the Havre Line.” In this instance, however, the sender paid the 20¢ direct American packet rate. Although it was endorsed to be sent by “first Steamer,” it was prepaid only enough to be carried by the Havre Line steamer, which turned out to be the next steamer departing.

Estimated at \$40,000-50,000 it realized \$55,000.

Next we have a blue folded letter with a 5¢ red brown tied by a “New Orleans La. Jan 13 1857” c.d.s., the cover endorsed “Per Asia”, with a red “New-York Br. Pkt. Feb 4” exchange office



c.d.s. and matching “Too Late” straightline postmark, “Angl. Amb. Calais 15 Fevr. 57” entry c.d.s. with framed “G B / 1F 60C” debit and “8” (décimes) due handstamps, the reverse with a red Liverpool “14 FE 1857” transit backstamp, various French transits and “Havre 16 Fevr. 57” arrival c.d.s.

In this instance, the “Too Late” marking was the added value ingredient, as Auxiliary markings of any sort are rare on 1856 5¢ covers, and this is the only recorded “Too Late” marking on such a cover.

Estimated at \$5,000-7,500, it realized \$2,700.

And now for a string of “Three Months Period” usages. Briefly, starting January 1, 1857, a new postal treaty went into effect between Great Britain and France, reducing the French due charges on mail through Great Britain. A new treaty rate of 15¢ per 1/4 ounce went into effect between the U.S. and France on April 1, 1857, and the January 1-April 1, 1857 period is what is known as the “Three Months Period”.

Sixteen British and seven American packets carried mail to and through France during this period, which makes it a great candidate for a specialized collection.

This section of the Mayer Collection had a comprehensive showing of such covers, starting with a cover, pictured on page 33, carried on the first sailing of the British packet service during the Three-Months Period.

This cover bears an 1856 5¢ red brown tied by a “New Orleans Dec 8” c.d.s., also with a red “New-York Br. Pkt. Dec 24” exchange office c.d.s., “Etats-Unis Paq. Brit. A.



Calais 6 Janv. 57” entry c.d.s., framed “G B / 1F 60C” debit and “8” (décimes) due handstamps. The reverse displays a red Liverpool “5 JA 1857” transit backstamp and French backstamps including a “Mulhouse 8 Janv. 57” arrival c.d.s. Estimated at \$2,000-3,000, it sold for \$1,600.

Jumping to the last few covers in this “Three Months Period” section, we view a blue folded letter to Bordeaux, France with a 5¢ red brown tied by a “New Orleans La. Mar 15” c.d.s., also with a black “Boston Br. Pkt. Mar 25” exchange office handstamp, “Angl. Amb. Calais 7 Avril 57” entry c.d.s. with framed “G B / 1F 60C” debit



(both tying the stamp) and “16” (décimes) double-weight due handstamps. The reverse has a French transit, “Bordeaux 9 Avril 57” arrival c.d.s. and red Liverpool “7 AP 10857” backstamp.

Carried on the 14th sailing of the British packet service during the Three-Months Period, this was the last sailing to arrive in France prior to the introduction of the new United States-France Convention rate of 15¢ on April 1, 1857. Estimated at \$2,000-3,000, it went for \$3,500.

Next we view a blue folded cover with the 5¢ red brown tied by a “New Orleans Mar 23 1857” c.d.s., the cover to Paris also with and “Angl. Amb. Calais 21 Avril 57”



entry c.d.s. with framed “G B / 1F 60C” debit and “16” (décimes) double-weight due handstamps, the reverse with a black “Boston Br. Pkt. 8 Apr” exchange office c.d.s., red Liverpool “21 AP 1857” transit backstamp and “Paris 22 Avril. 57” arrival c.d.s..

This cover was carried on the sixteenth, and last, sailing of the British packet service during the Three-Months Period. However, as explained in the lot description, “The new postal convention between the United States and France became effective on April 1, 1857. However, the 5¢ British open mail rate was not discontinued even though it no longer appeared in the rate tables. The same method of accounting used during the Three Months Period, including the use of the rectangular debit handstamp, and the same French postage due rates were applied. Examples of such usages on covers that were carried on the two Cunard Line sailings of April 1 (fifteenth) and April 8 (sixteenth) are known. The recorded covers for the sailings were posted in New Orleans before the new rate was in effect on April 1.”

Estimated at \$3,000-4,000, this example sold for \$1,100.

As explained earlier, sixteen British and seven American packets carried mail to and through France during the Three Months Period; however, the cover on page 35 is the only recorded 1856 5¢ usage during this period handled by an American Packet.

The cover bears a 5¢ red brown tied by a “New Or-

leans La. Jan. 18 1857" c.d.s., red "New-York Am. Pkt. Feb 1" exchange office c.d.s., "Angl. Amb. Calais 16 Fevr. 57" entry c.d.s. with oval "GB / 40C" debit and "5" décimes due



handstamps, the reverse with red Liverpool "6 FE 1857" transit backstamp, French transits and "Massevaux 18 Fevr. 57" arrival c.d.s.

As explained, "This letter was exchanged in New York City on February 1 for carriage on the Collins Line steamer Atlantic, which departed that day and arrived at Liverpool on February 14. Although the letter was insufficiently prepaid to be carried by the 21¢ American packet rate, it was accepted and transmitted as fully prepaid. The letter entered the French mails on February 16 and received the "GB 40c" oval debit handstamp that was reserved for prepaid mails carried by American packets. The letter was rated and handstamped with a 5 décimes due marking which included the French inland postage of 4 décimes plus 1 décime for the reduced British transit postage."

Estimated at \$15,000-20,000, it realized \$12,500.

And now for the new Treaty, and a first week of usage under the new Postal Convention between the U.S. and France. The blue folded letter to Bordeaux, France, endorsed "Str Asia", bears an 1856 5¢ and 10¢





green type II (Sc. 14) tied by “New Orleans La. Apr 6” c.d.s., and red “New York ‘Paid 12’ Apr 15” exchange office c.d.s. Carried on the Cunard Line steamer Asia, which departed New York on April 15 and arrived at Liverpool on April 28, it has an “Et. Unis Serv. Br. A.C. 28 Avril 57” entry c.d.s., the reverse with French transits and “Bordeaux 30 Avril 57” arrival c.d.s.

As explained in the lot description, “It appears from this letter that there still may have been some confusion regarding how to implement the new convention rate. Although no postage due was to be collected on sufficiently prepaid convention mail, this cover shows a manuscript 5 decimes, the amount due for a letter received from an American packet during the Three Months Period. But the 5 decimes was changed to 8 decimes due, the amount due for a letter received from a British packet. This was an error on the part of the French office.”

Estimated at \$5,000-7,500, it realized \$3,250.

Concluding our viewing of the Fred Mayer Collection of the United States 5¢ 1856 Issue, we show a blue cover bearing a 5¢ red brown and 1857 10¢ green type II (Sc. 32) tied by a Boston “Paid” grid, the cover also with a red “Boston ‘Paid 12’ 12 Oct” and French “Et. Unis



Serv. Br. A. C. 25 Oct. 58” entry c.d.s. The reverse has a “Boston Br. Pkt. 12 Oct” backstamp, exchange office date-stamps, and a French transit and arrival c.d.s.

This cover was transferred to New York for the Cunard Line steamer Arabia, which departed on October 13 and arrived at Liverpool on October 25, making it the latest recorded usage of the 1856 5¢ on Trans-atlantic Mails.

However, despite its significance, and a \$5,000-7,500 pre-sale estimate, it realized just \$2,400.

Note: The Frajola and Mayer book referred to in the auction is available from Richard Frajola for \$45, plus \$5 postage and handling, for U.S. addresses by specifying the book and sending payment to: Richard C. Frajola, P.O. Box 2679, Ranchos De Taos, NM 87557.

And for access to one of the finest postal history sites, go to:

<http://www.rfrajola.com/bookads/mayerbookad.htm>

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