

A Sense of Place: Maps and the Mail Manifest Destiny through The Civil War

“It was the nation's manifest destiny to overspread and to possess the whole of the continent which Providence has given us for the development of the great experiment of liberty and federated self-government entrusted to us.”

John O’Sullivan, New York Journalist, 1845

The discovery of gold in California in 1848 triggered a westward expansion of the United States and defined, in the mind of Americans, that the United States should span the continent from Atlantic to Pacific. Lands between the previously settled East and the newly opened West were parceled into territories and opened for settlement. Native residents were displaced as the plains were divided and new states defined.

Communications, trade, and settlement increased. Railroads traversed the continent and branched north and south through the states and territories to create an interconnected infrastructure for travel and trade.

The issue of states rights, specifically regarding the extension of slavery into these new states and territories, accelerated the schism that became secession and the Civil War. Battles waged. Borders were redrawn as the South and North traded victories until 1865.

Through these times of growth and chaos, maps provided a sense of location and place. Abstract locations in new territories became “real” by virtue of being placed on maps. The county, itself, became defined by the new borders. New transportation routes were established and publicized. Businesses, both retail and industrial, advertised their location with maps.

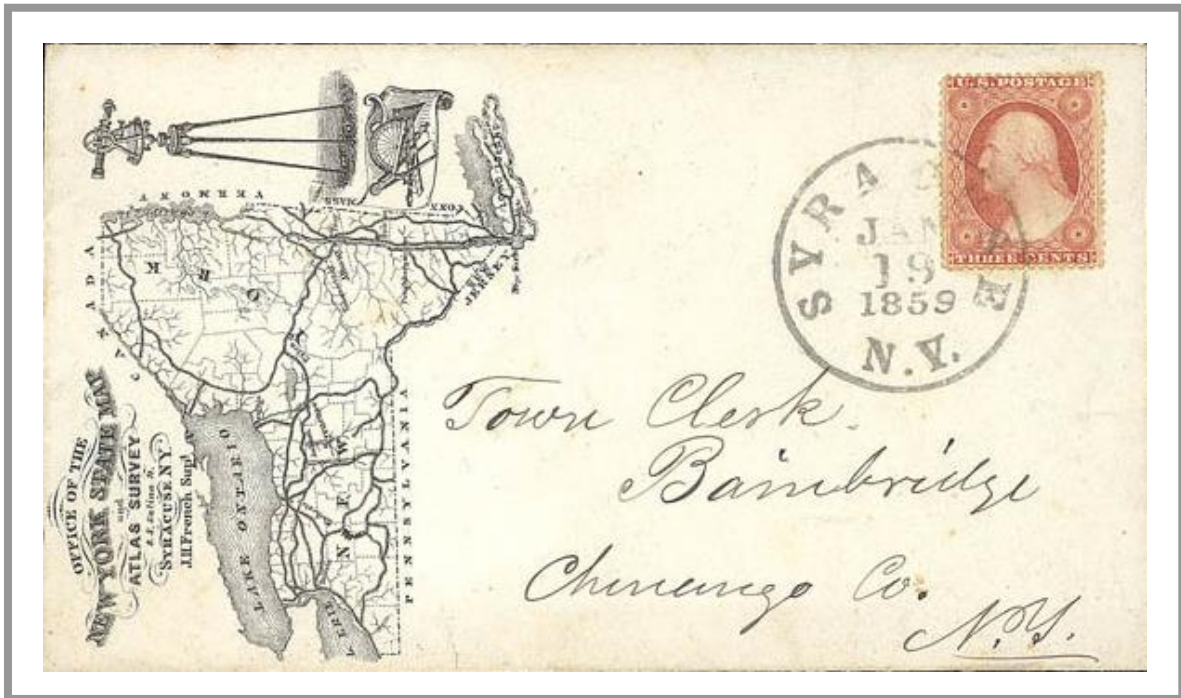
This exhibit shows illustrated mail relating to maps during these tumultuous decades. It is organized by:

- Map publishers
- Maps relating to expansion and the railroads
- Maps relating to commerce
- Maps relating to the Civil War



Multicolored map of United States with 1¢ 1861 issue used to pay the local rate for delivery within New York City. Charles Magnus publisher.

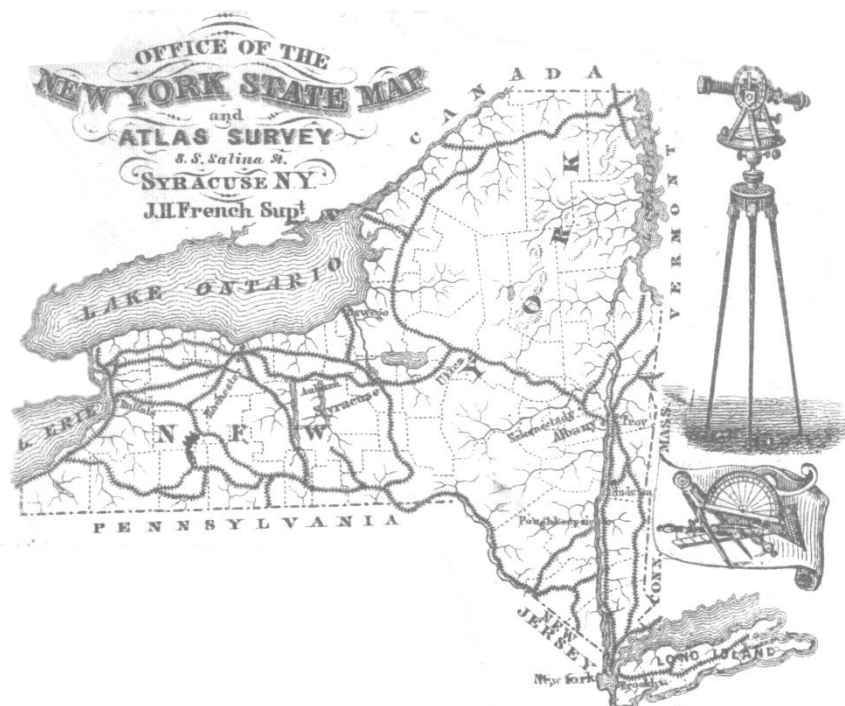
Map Publishers



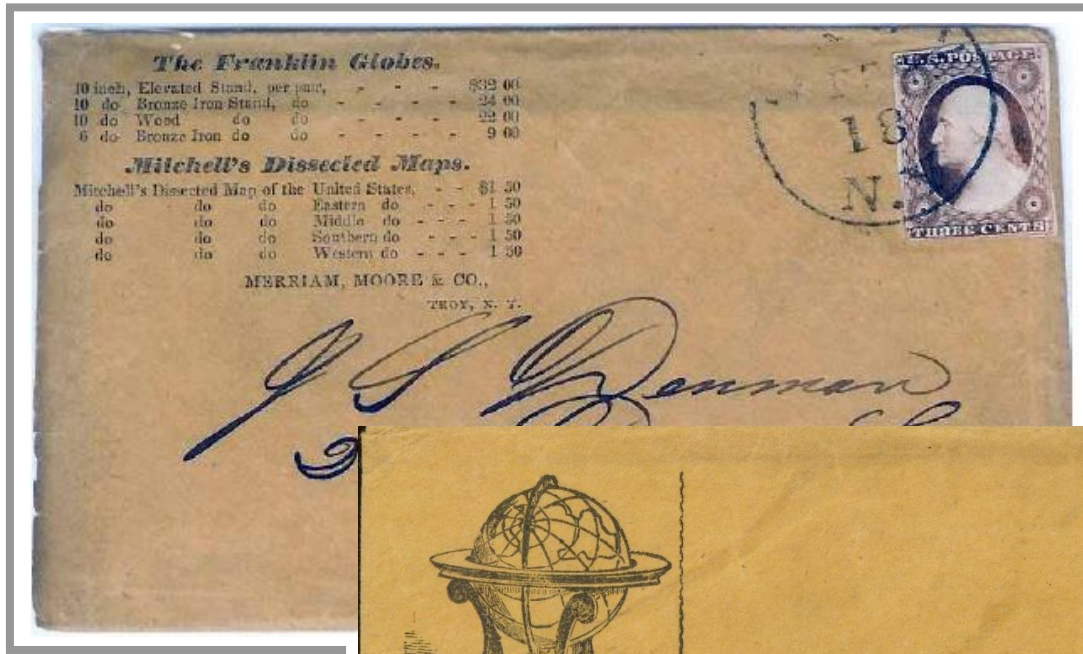
Office of the New York State Map and Atlas Survey, J.H. French, Superintendent.

In 1855, John Homer French was hired to compile a New York State map from various county maps. A French's general map of The State of New York, first published in 1859, became the definitive reference for the topography of the state. It remained so until two decades later, when the U.S. Geological Survey began publishing new maps based on updated surveys.

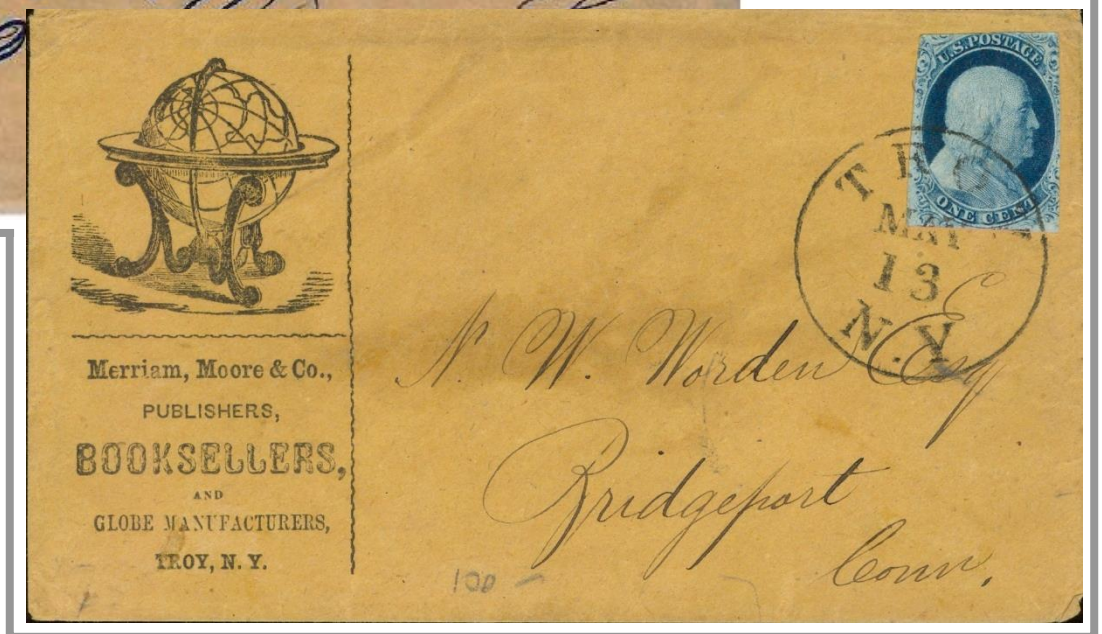
The corner card depicts the state of New York, cities, county borders, principal rail lines, and waterways, along with surveyors tools.



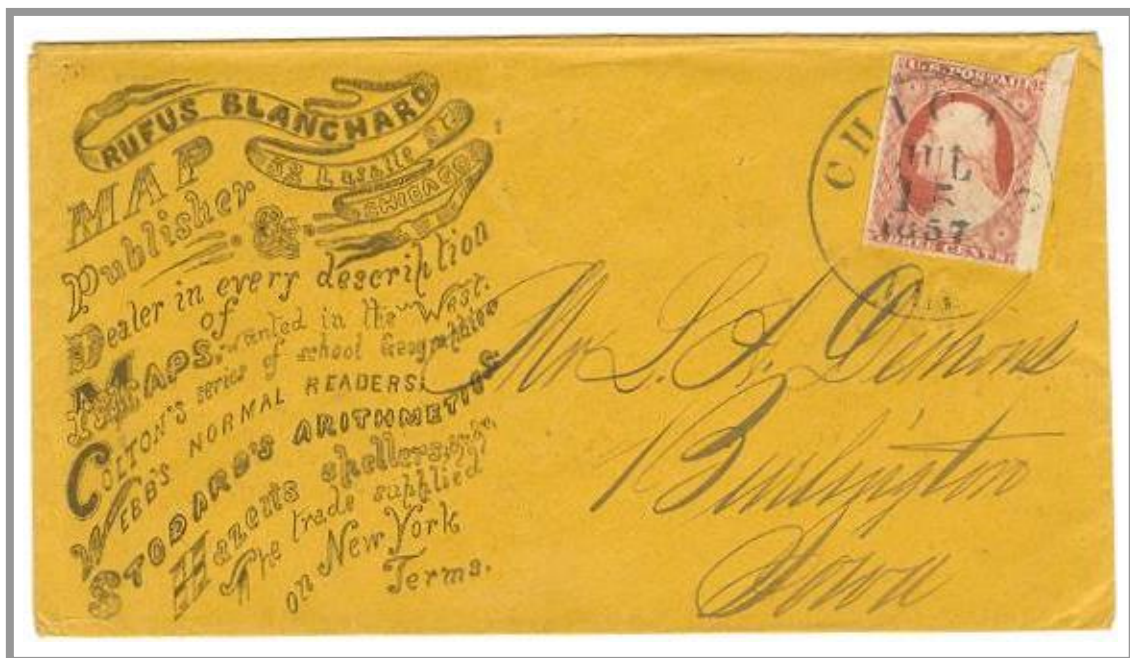
Map Publishers



Merriam, Moore & Co.
February 17, 1855 dated
enclosure.

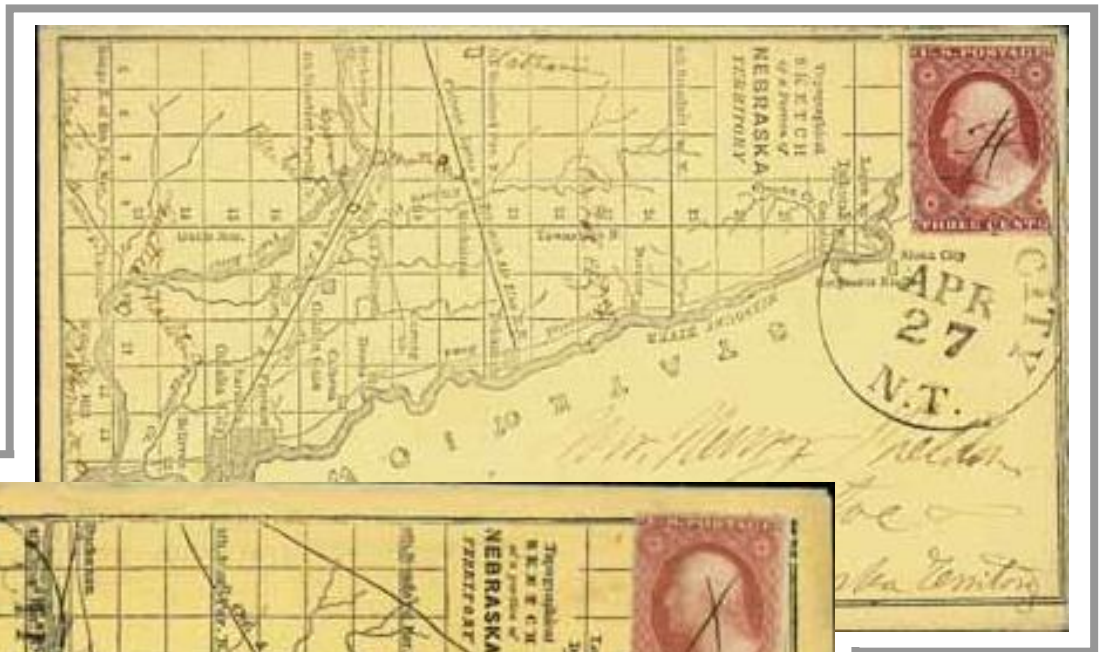
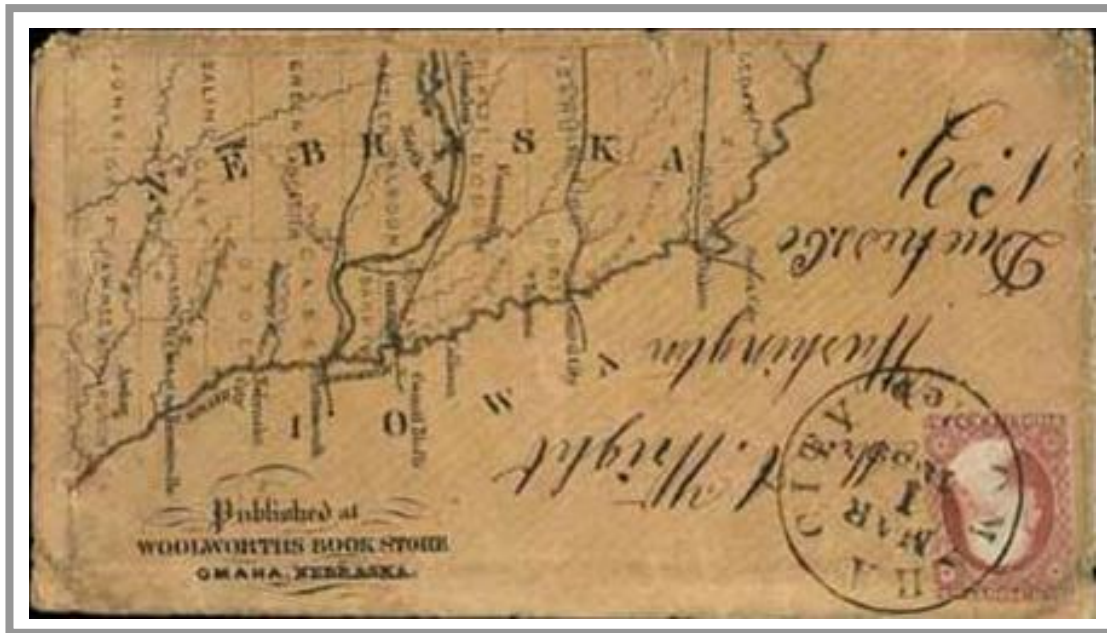


Merriam, Moore & Co.
1¢ unsealed circular rate.



Rufus Blanchard, Map Publisher. July 15, 1857. Chicago, Ill. to Burlington, Iowa.

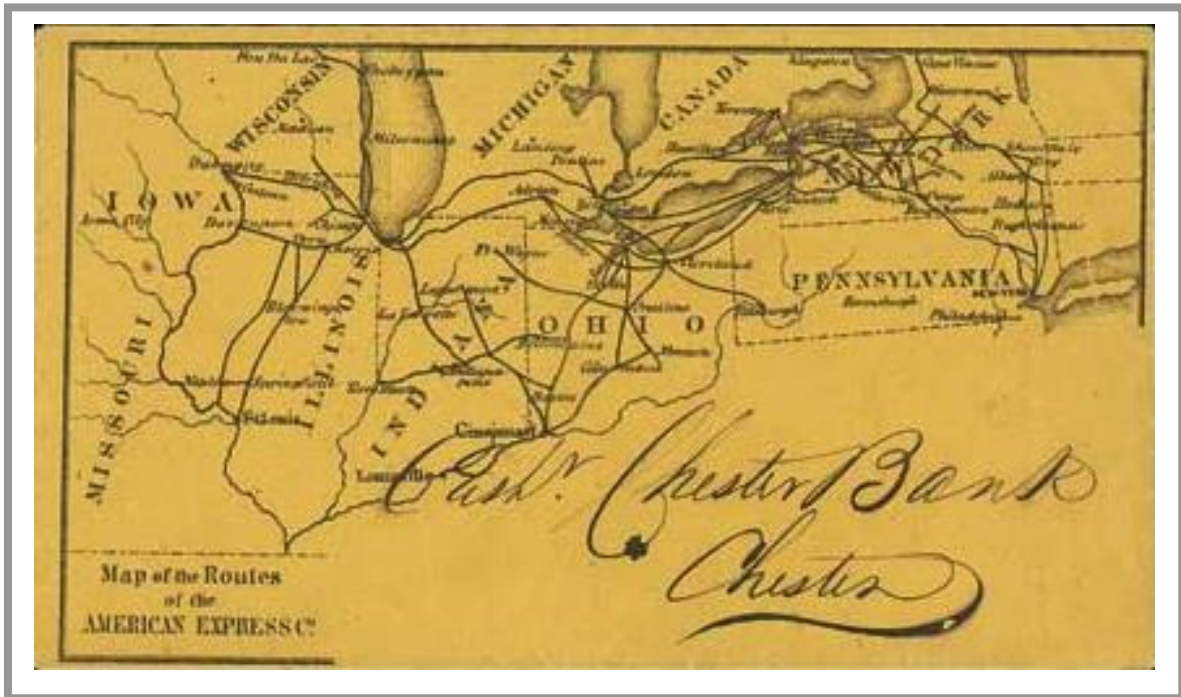
Maps and the Rails



June 4th 1857

Imprint and docketing
on verso

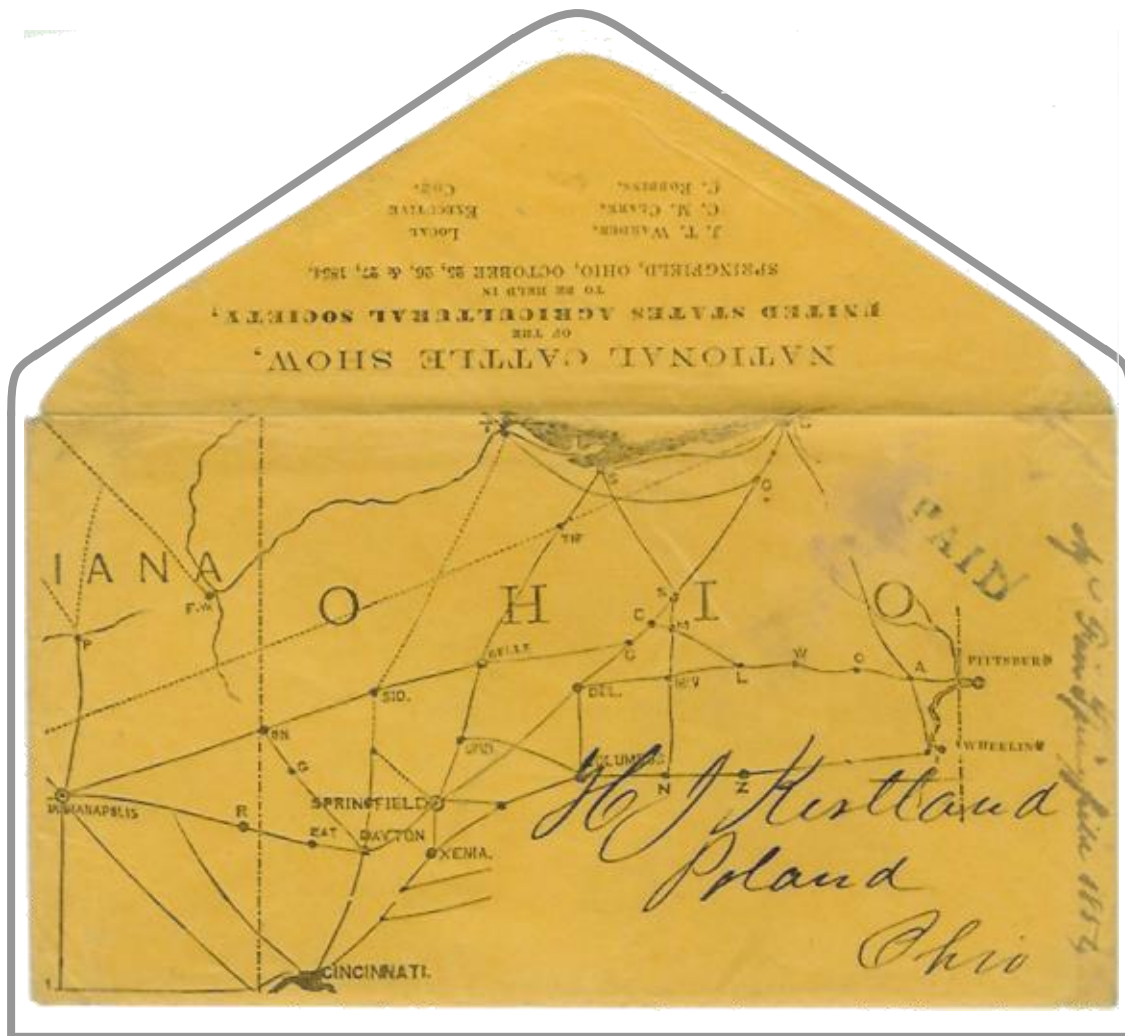
Nebraska Territory Land Maps. Note different configuration in rail lines on these similar covers. Land promoters would have maps drawn with rail lines in the locations that would make their lands appear the most attractive.



American Express Co. Map of the routes of the American Express Company. Delivered unsealed and without postage to the Cashier of the Chester Bank, Chester, PA. with handwritten notice that the company will be withdrawing its express lines from the Erie Rail Road.



Profile House, Franconia, New Hampshire. Map of routes and distances by rail and stage from various cities and towns to Franconia and the White Mountains of New Hampshire. Major rail and stage lines, as well as key landmarks, such as the “Old Man of the Mountains” depicted on face of cover. Image of the hotel on verso.



National Cattle Show, Springfield, Ohio. Cover showing rail connections to Springfield promoting upcoming cattle show. Likely mailed in bulk at 1¢ unsealed circular rate. Original printed enclosure dated May 1, 1854.



Cincinnati, OH to Chicago, IL. Railroad map of Pennsylvania Railroad routes with table of distances between major cities. Dark blue "Cincinnati, O. / Mar / 2" datestamp.



Congressional Globe, Washington, DC. Cameo corner card depicting globe. "Washington D.C. Apr. 25, 1856" year-dated circular datestamp on unsealed circular-rate cover to Congressman Michael H. Jenks in Newtown, PA. The *Congressional Globe* was the record of debates in Congress from 1833-73. In 1874 it was replaced by the *Congressional Record*.

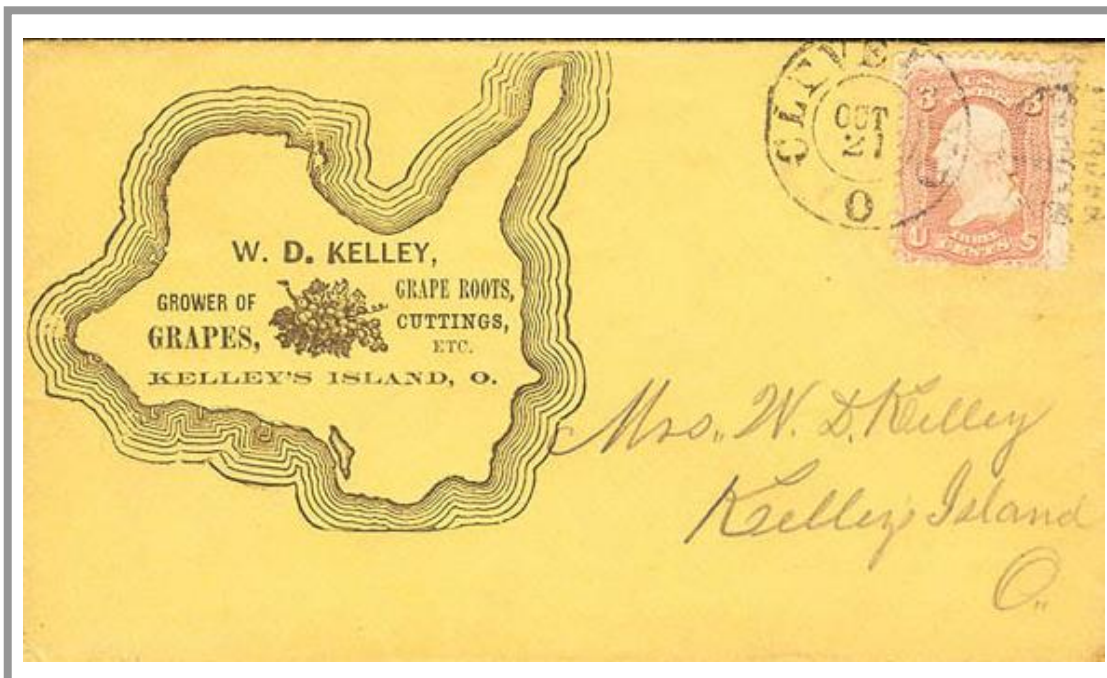


Stylized globe with no geographic accuracy



PFC

Kelley's Island, Ohio. Map of island used for datestamp. Stamp tied by indistinct March 18 datestamp accompanied by printed townmark at left with manuscript "Mar 17" date.



W.D. Kelley, Grower of Grapes, Kelley's Island, O., large illustrated map advertising corner card, on yellow inbound cover to Kelley's Island. "Cleveland, O., Oct 21" datestamp and grid duplex, Advertising use of the Kelley's Island map, similar to the early printed townmark..

Please Recollect the Name and Number.

PAPER HANGINGS DEPOT,

10 CORTLANDT STREET,

Opposite the National Hotel and the Western Hotel, New York.

SOLD IN ANY OF THE STATES, also of all SOLVENT CANADA BANKS, TAKEN AT PAR FOR GOODS.

THE CROTON MANUFACTURING COMPANY, 10 CORTLANDT ST.

THE CROTON MANUFACTURING COMPANY

(Organized under the General Manufacturing Law of the State of New York),

OFFER AT WHOLESALE, IN QUANTITIES TO SUIT PURCHASERS, AT MANUFACTURERS' LOWEST PRICES,
FOR CASH OR APPROVED CREDIT.

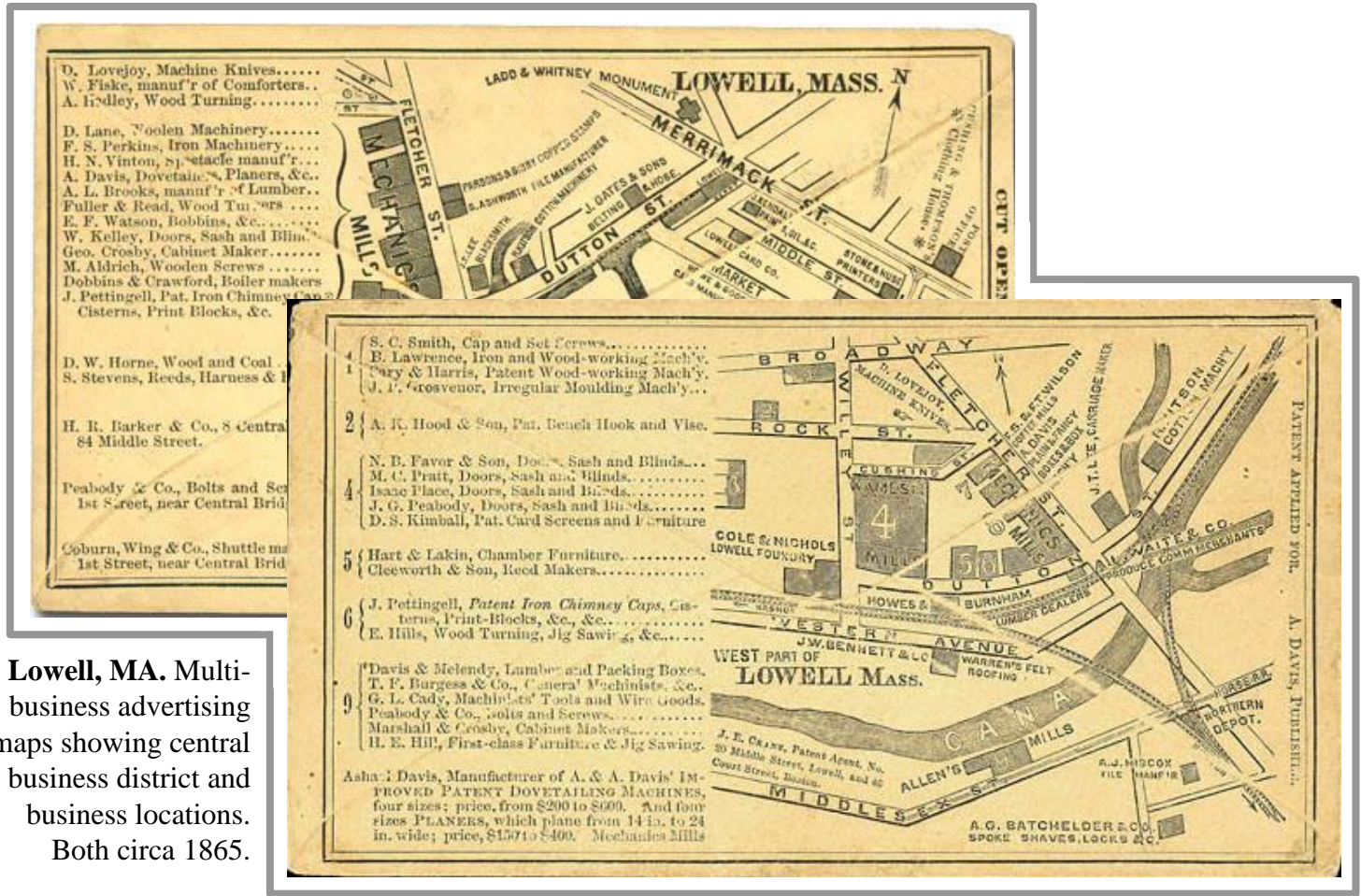
<p>PAPER HANGINGS of every variety of style and price, BORDERS to match, TYPE BOARD PRINTS in great variety.</p>	<p>WIDE WINDOW-CURTAIN PAPERS, plain & shaded, TRANSPARENT WINDOW SHADES, OIL PAINTED WINDOW SHADES, and</p>
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Picture Frames,
 and Importation. As their Stock
 is constantly on hand, they are
 Sole Agents and Dealers in these Articles
 of every Style.
 For
 Purchasers,
OF THE STATES,
 TAKEN AT PAR FOR GOODS.
PLEASE RECOLLECT THE NAME AND NUMBER.
NEW YORK. 1862.



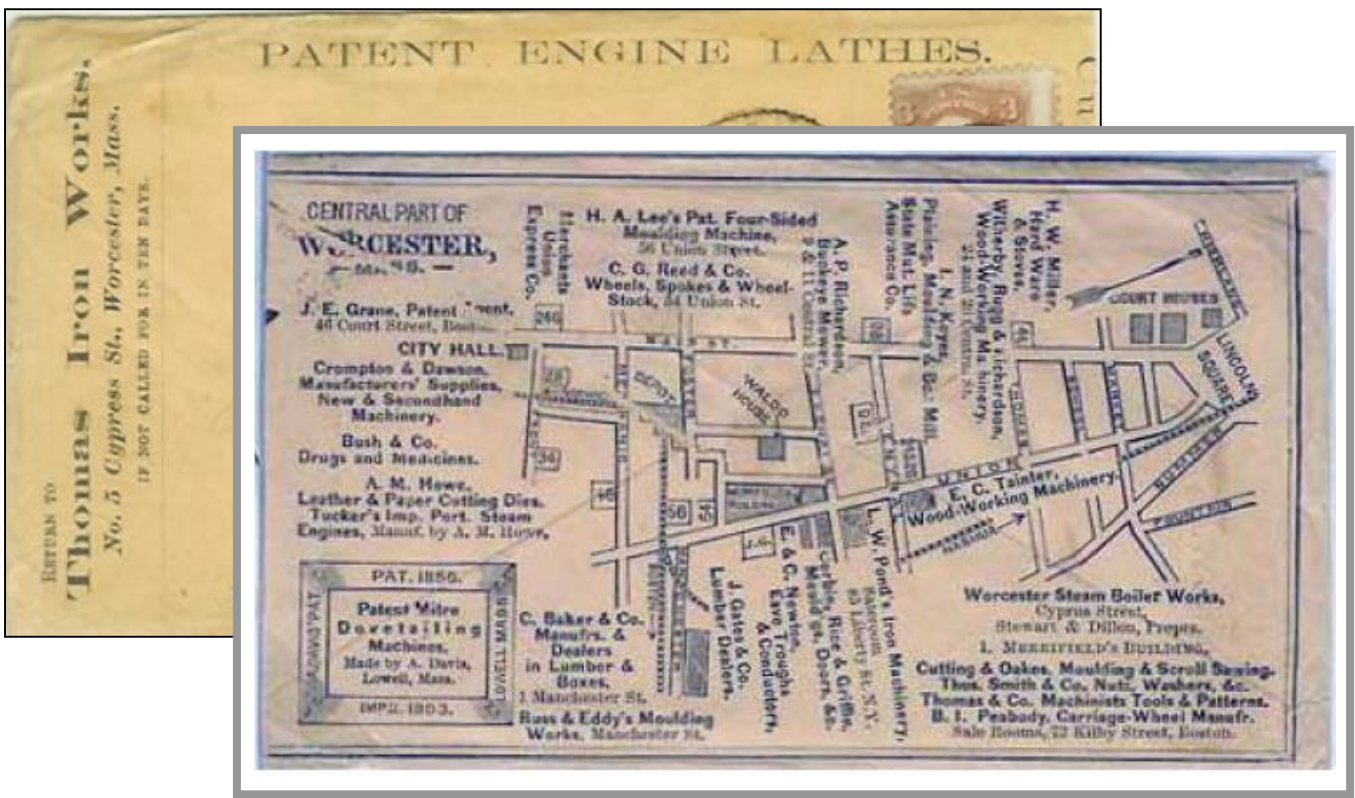
Contents reduced 60%

Map of Lower Manhattan. New York, March 26 (1862). Circular for manufacturer of wallpaper and window shades dated 1862, within. Sent at the 1¢ unsealed circular rate to Cazenovia, NY.

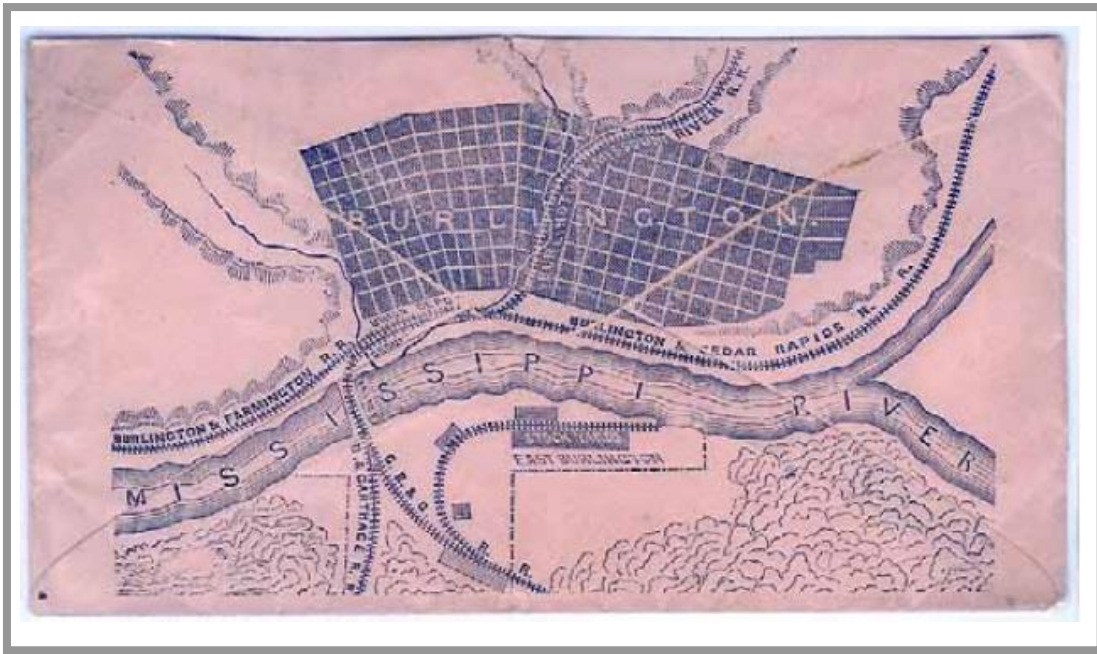


Lowell, MA. Multi-business advertising maps showing central business district and business locations. Both circa 1865.

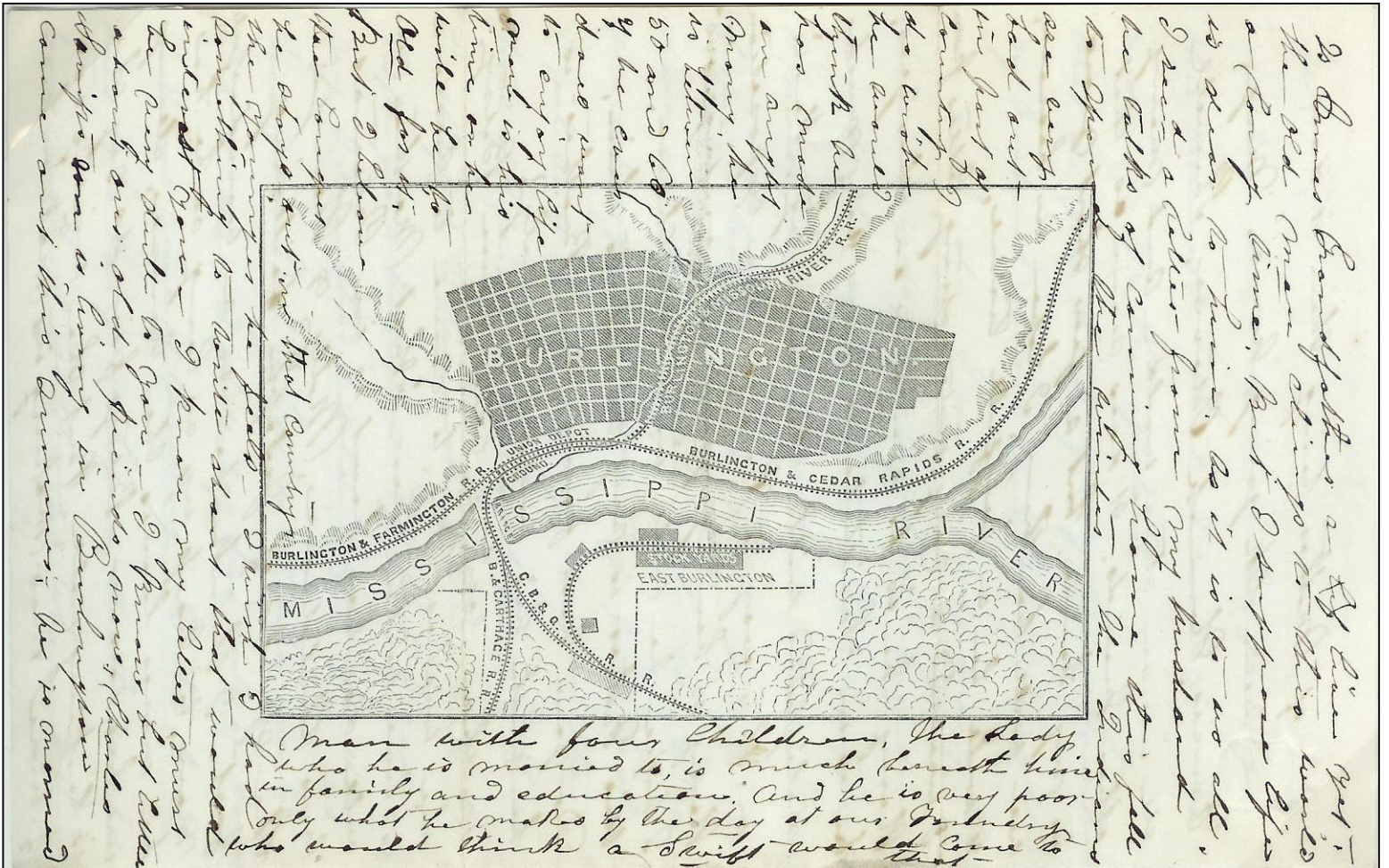
Published by A. Davis, Lowell, MA



Worcester, MA. With multi-business advertising map showing central business district and business locations on verso. Circa 1865.



Burlington, Iowa City Plan and Rail Links. Circa 1865 cover illustrating city plan and stock yard location in relation to Mississippi River and major rail links. A matching lettersheet with the same map was also available.



Enclosed letter on matching illustrated lettersheet

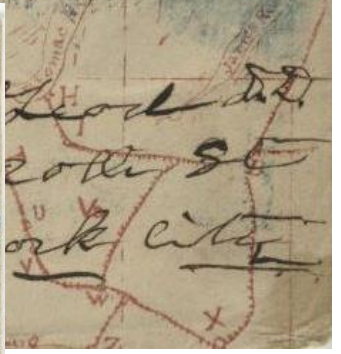
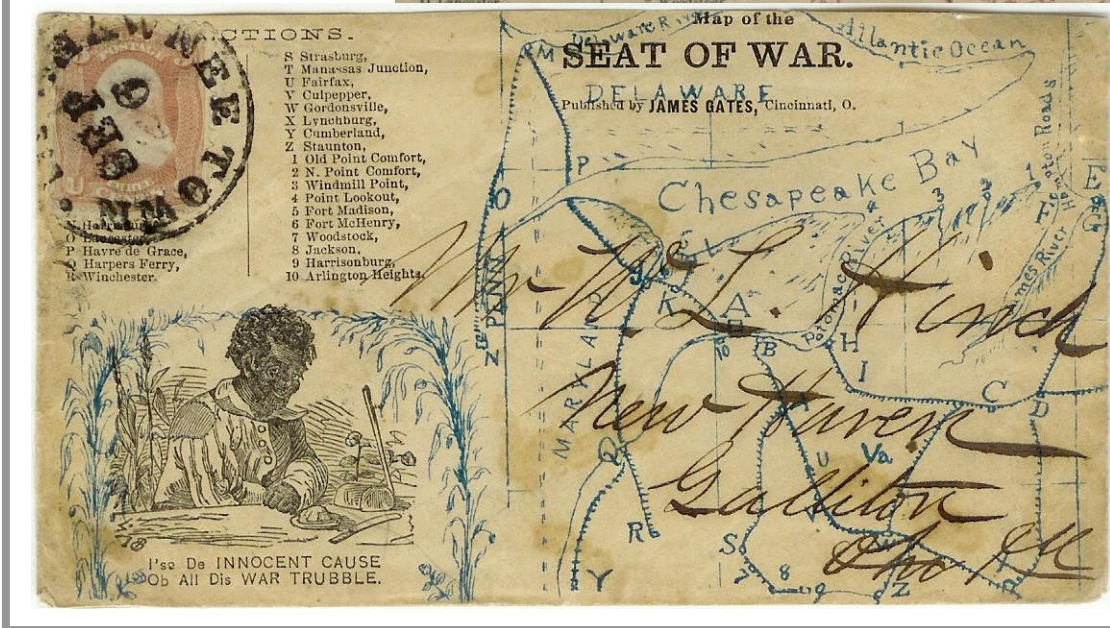


American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. Background design with globe showing Asia and Africa. Fundraising text reads: “Appropriated \$370,000: Needed, for Growth & Development, \$400,000.” Manuscript “Missent & Forwarded.” c. 1859



B.T. Babbit, Soap and Saleralns Manufacturer. Background design with illustration of factory and map of lower New York with Broadway, Washington, Rector, and Morris Streets labeled. c. 1865

Maps and the Civil War



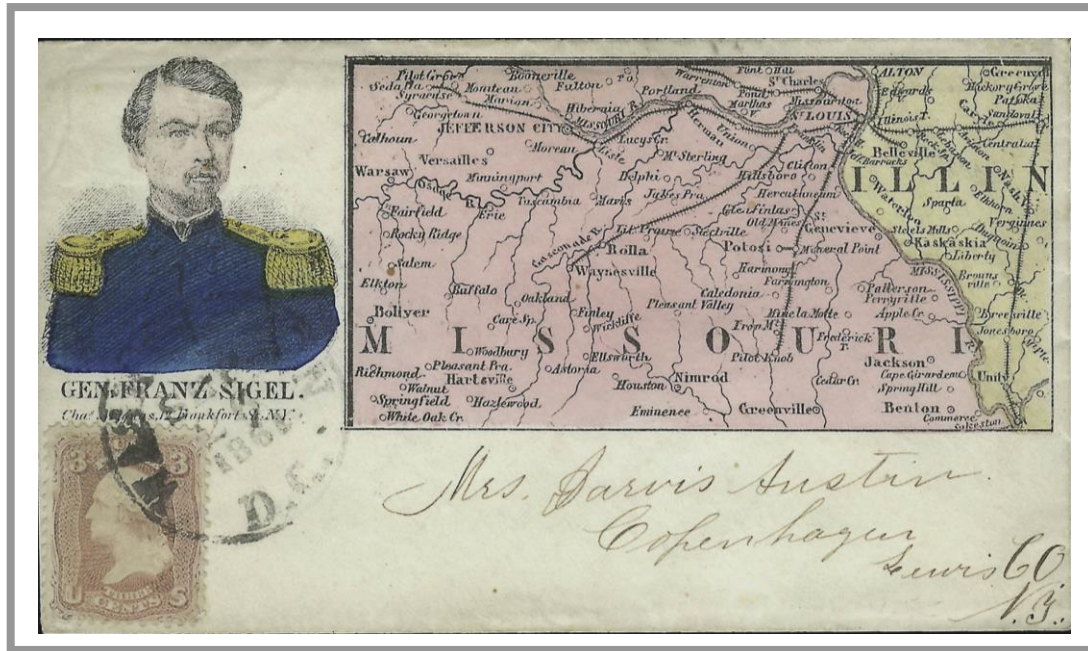
Secondary printing in red (front only)

Secondary printing in blue

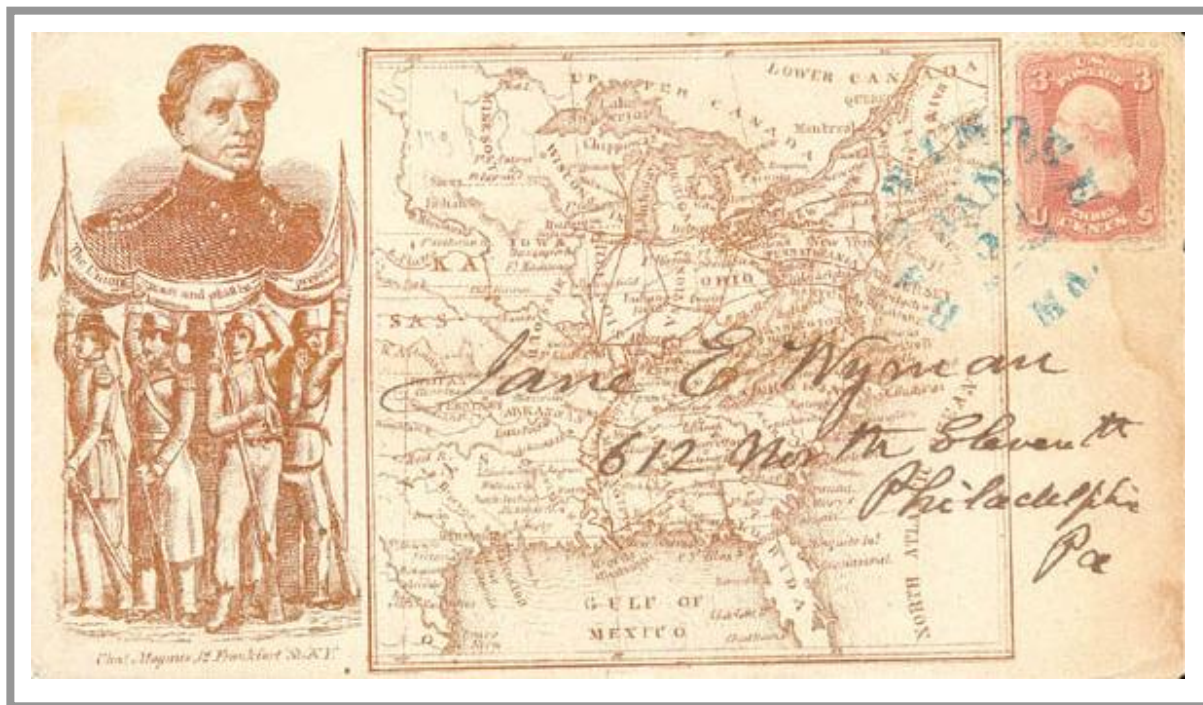
I'se de Innocent Cause ob all dis War Trubble. Bicolor caricature design with additional map of the "Seat of War" depicting key Civil War locations in the Maryland/Delaware/Virginia region. Published by James Gates, Cincinnati, OH.



Map of the Battles of Corinth and Pittsburgh Landing (Shiloh). Union troops captured this critical rail crossing in June, 1862 and successfully defended it from Confederate attacks later that year leading to the surrender of Memphis and the opening of the lower Mississippi River. J.G. Wells, New York imprint on backflap.



German-born Sigel commanded the 4th Brigade of Army of Southwest Missouri Jan.-Feb. 1862. His mediocre military career is most notable for assisting in the securing of Missouri and maintaining the loyalty of the large German-American population in the St. Louis area.



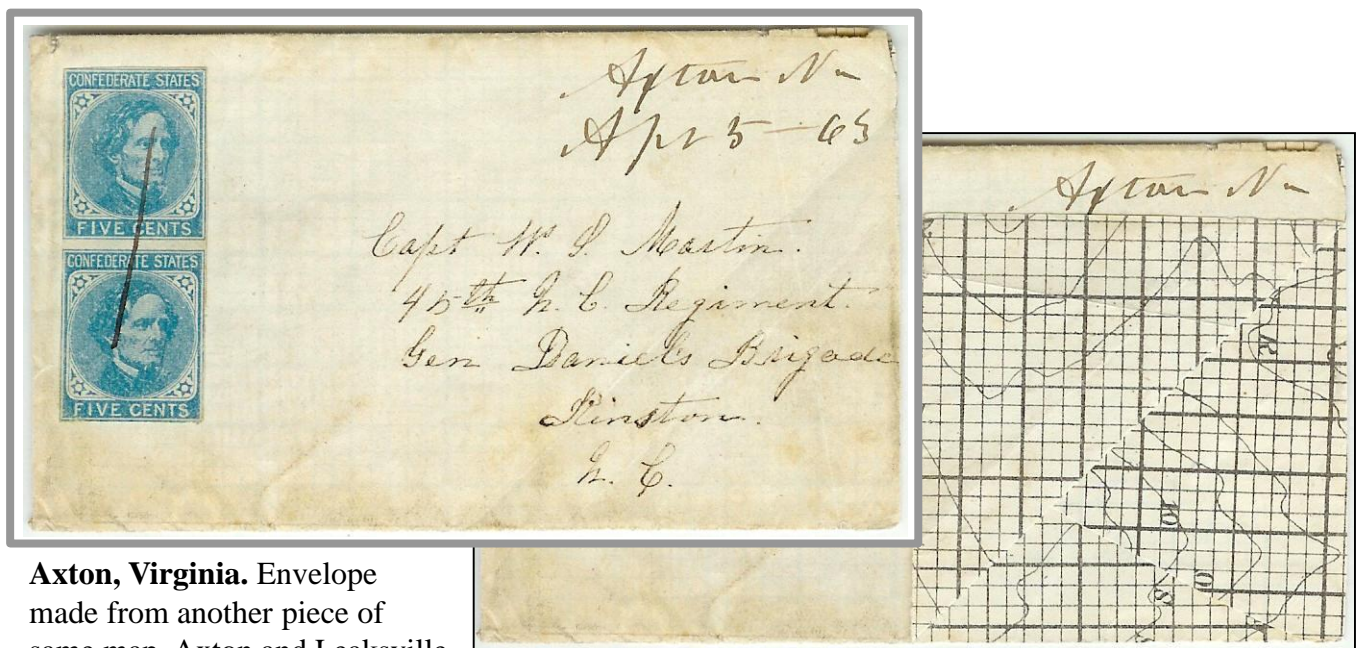
Baltimore, MD to Philadelphia, PA. From a series of patriotic with different portraits of Generals pictured at the left.

PFC

Charles Magnus, a New York printer and publisher, produced about 700 different patriotic envelope designs. As many of his more ornate and colorful designs were issued near the end of the war, used examples of Magnus designs are less-commonly found than those of other publishers.



Leaksville, North Carolina.
Cover made from old map.
Addressed to physician with
45th NC with Rodes' Division
at Richmond, VA.



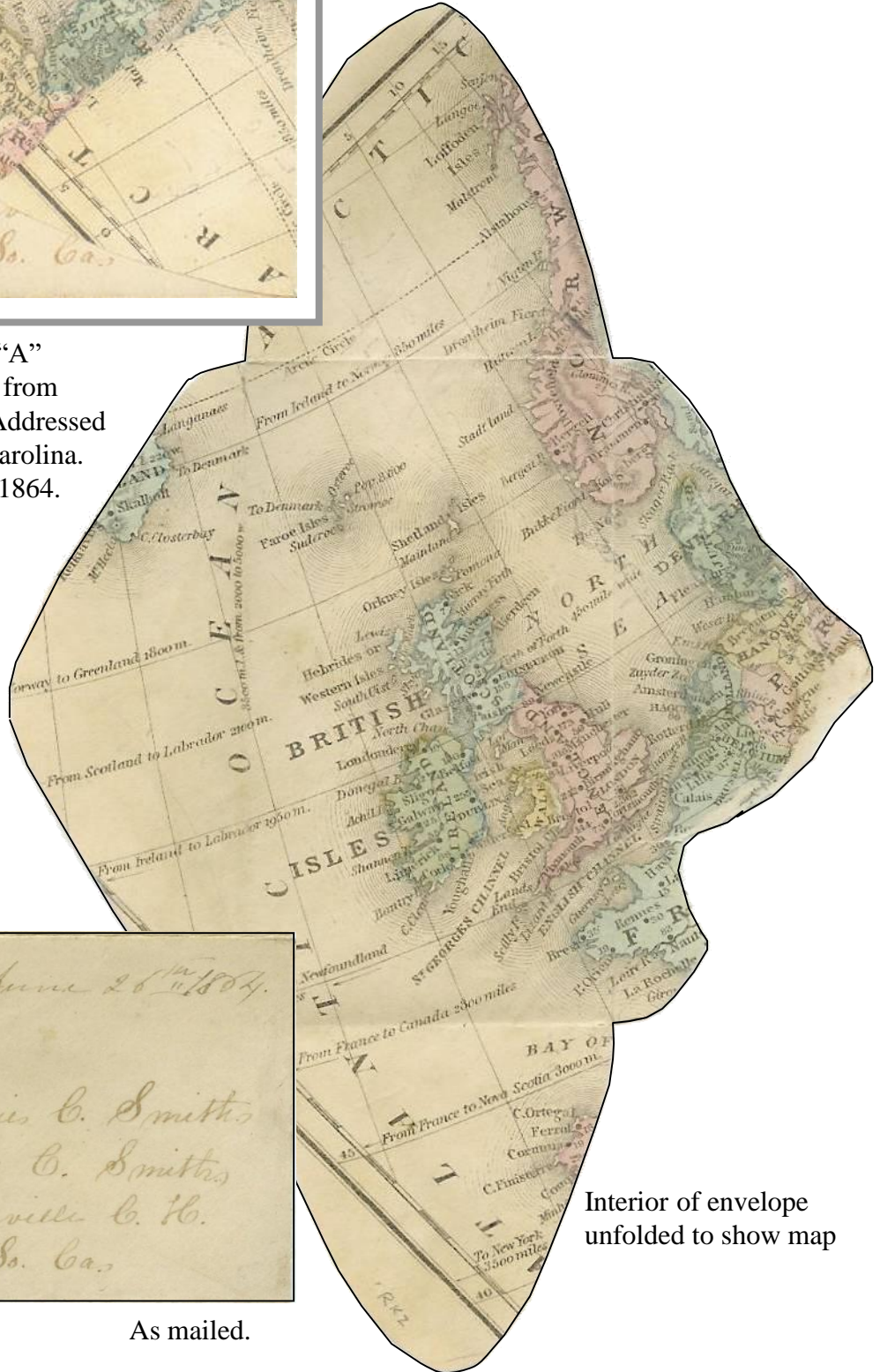
Axton, Virginia. Envelope
made from another piece of
same map. Axton and Leaksville
are about 15 miles apart.

The scarcity of paper in the South as the Civil War continued led to the use of wallpaper, ledger pages and old maps for the construction of envelopes. With borders changing on a daily and weekly basis, it is not hard to imagine that old maps quickly lost their perceived value.

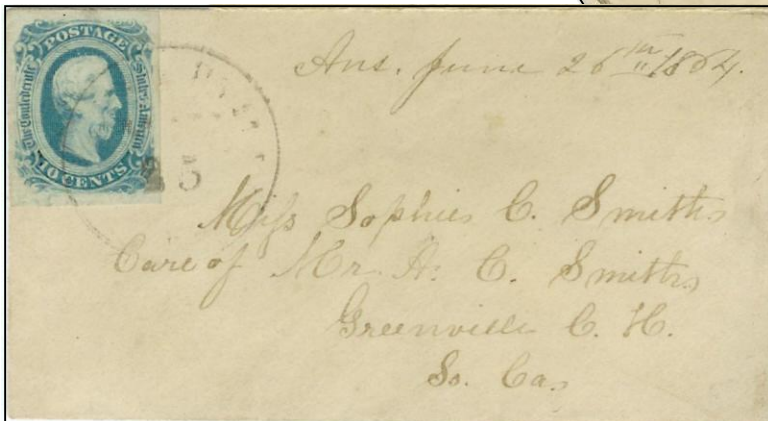
Maps and the Civil War



June 25, 1864. 10¢ blue, 1863 die "A" adhesive on diminutive cover made from folded map of British Isles region. Addressed to Greenville Court House, South Carolina. Docketed as answered on June 26th 1864. Flaps folded over for display.



Interior of envelope unfolded to show map



As mailed.