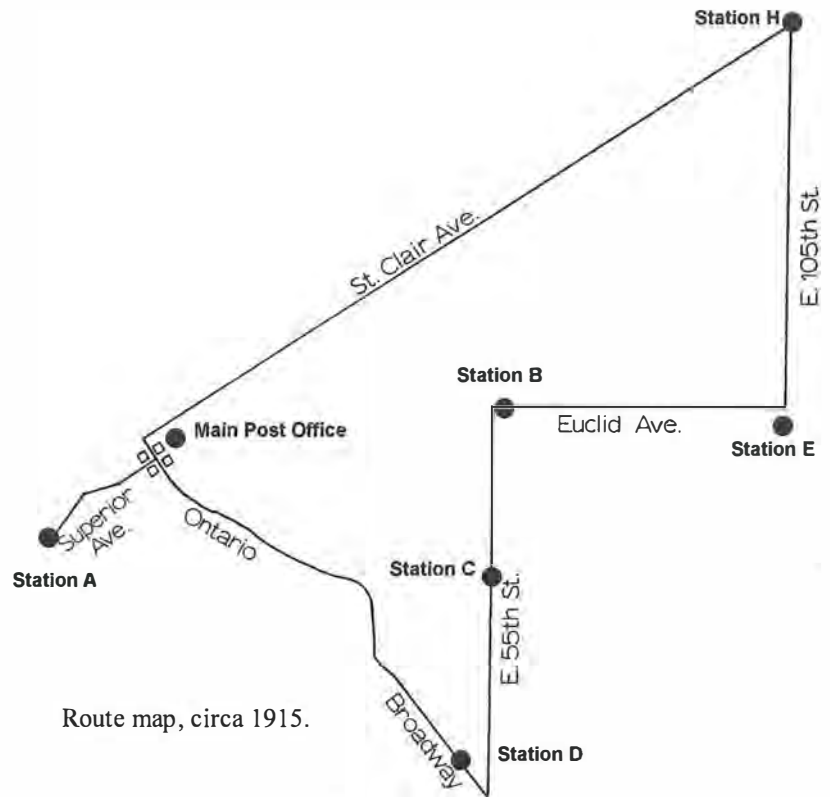


The Cleveland Circuit R.P.O., 1908-1919

This exhibit focuses on the postal markings of the Cleveland Circuit R.P.O., Cleveland's only streetcar postal route. The Cleveland Circuit concurrently utilized both handstamp and machine markings.

The Cleveland Circuit R.P.O.—postal route #3351005—operated from April 3, 1908 through August 4, 1919 on the streetcar line of the Cleveland Electric Railway Company. The single R.P.O. car made nine daily trips on a 16.3 mile route primarily servicing the heavily populated east side of Cleveland and several Cleveland postal stations (B, C, D, E and H), heading east from the main post office, carrying mail bags between the main post office and the stations as well as collecting mail from collection boxes along the route. Some trips included an additional “spur” to Station A. Trip 4 was run in the reverse direction. Trips 3 and 5 skipped the St. Clair Avenue and East 105th portions of the route, progressing directly up Euclid Avenue to Station B instead.



Route map, circa 1915.

The R.P.O. route was phased out after a shift to motor vehicles by the Postal Service, though streetcars continued to carry closed mail sacks to the stations into the 1920s. Two handstamp varieties were used during the existence of the route. Machines were used concurrently with a handstamp device. The Circuit R.P.O. used an American Postal Machines Co. “flag” machine until 1911, followed sequentially by three different machines produced by the Universal Stamping Machine Company. Handstamp markings are shown first, followed by machines in chronological order. Items of particular significance, including the earliest and latest reported markings from the route and the provisionally used “trip” in dial Universal machine from 1912 and 1914, are noted with red dots.



April 4, 1908
Earliest Reported Mail Item from the Cleveland Circuit R.P.O.
 (one day after start of operations)

Handstamp—First Die

October 31, 1908
Trip 8

Year slug below the date only in 1908
Fewer than 10 reported



Correction

November 21, 1910
Trip 5

February 9, 1909
Trip 7
Leather postcard



June 21, 1909
Trip 10

The Cleveland Circuit R.P.O. utilized a steel duplex handstamp featuring a “trip” number in the dial and “RMS” in the killer. Trips 2 through 10 are reported. For most of the R.P.O.’s existence, nine trips a day were run

Handstamp—First Die Uses



December 24, 1913
Trip 7
Special Delivery

it delivered within five days, return to
Elizabeth's Roman Catholic
Magyar Church
9016 Buckeye Road, S. E.
Cleveland, O.

87
Hon.



Bararody
apin Ho.
Bend. Ind.

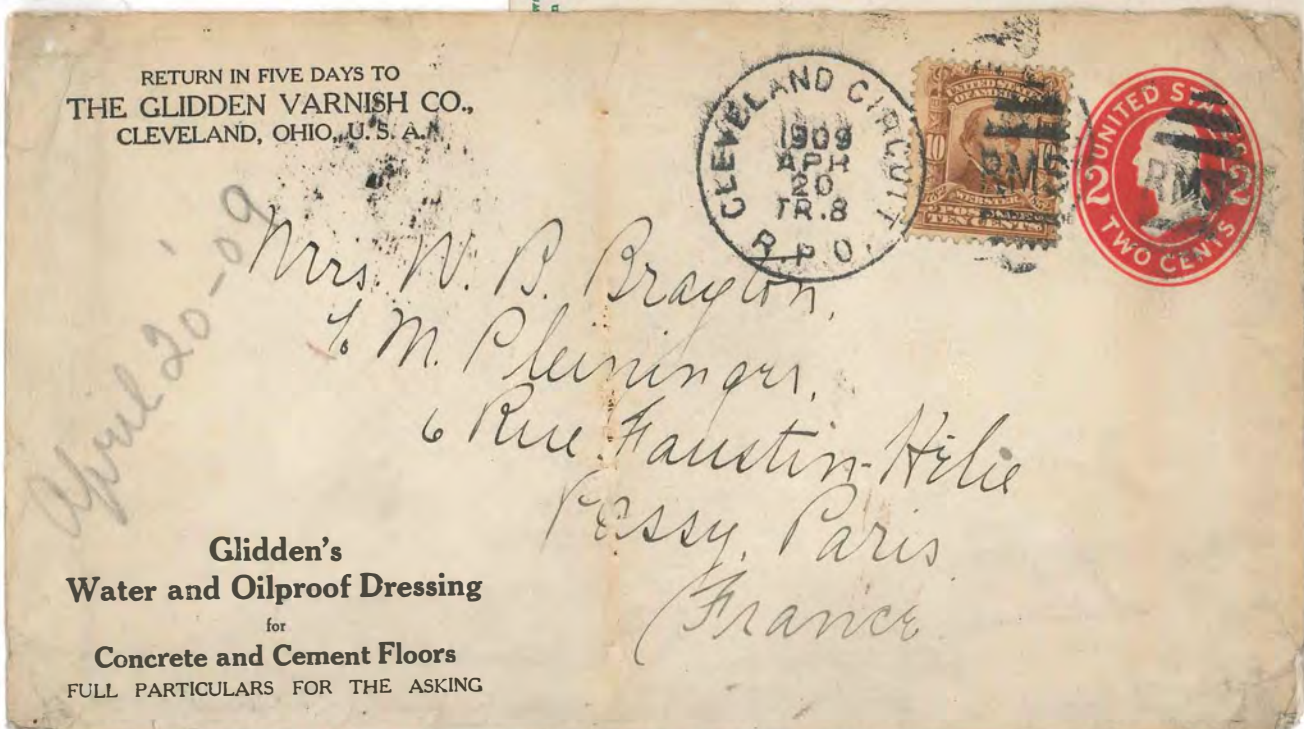
December 24, 1908
Trip 9
1 cent postage due
(letter rate due to glitter)

This side may have a message written upon it for Inland Postage, but the right hand side must be reserved for address and

A Merry X m
Happy New Year!
Mrs. La Dange

Mrs. M. Graham
Cor. Pratt ave. East 95
Cleveland

Sep. 1, 1910
Trip 4
forwarding marking on redirected mail



land,
Ohio.

April 20, 1909
Trip 8
Triple UPU rate to France (1 cent overpaid)

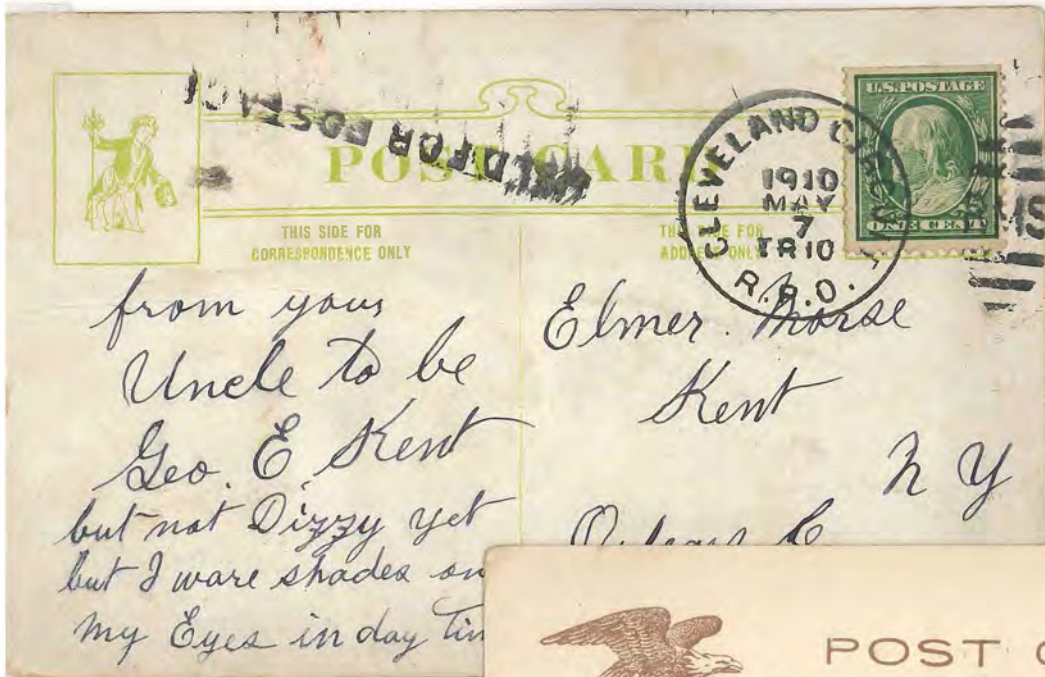
RETURN IN FIVE DAYS TO
THE GLIDDEN VARNISH CO.,
CLEVELAND, OHIO, U. S. A.

Glidden's
Water and Oilproof Dressing
for
Concrete and Cement Floors
FULL PARTICULARS FOR THE ASKING

April 20-09
Mrs. W. B. Brayton,
4 M. Pleininger,
6 Rue Faustin-Helic
Passy, Paris
France

R.P.O. clerks could handle special delivery, postage due, and foreign-destination mail, and could re-direct and forward mail as well.

Handstamp—First Die Auxiliary Markings



May 7, 1910
Trip 10
Held for Postage



January 25, 1909
Trip 4
Unclaimed (at Detroit)



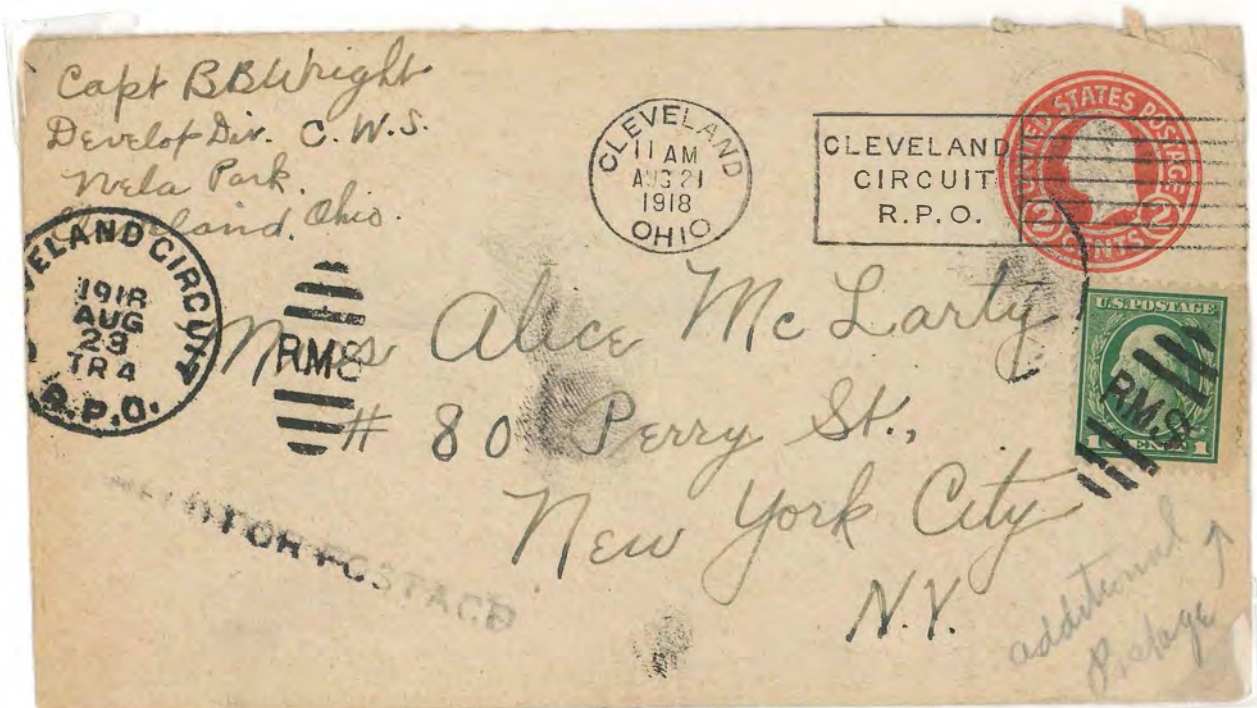
February 9, 1915
Trip 9
"This is the mail for which you sent postage"
Letter postage charged because of message extending into address side of card.

Some mail received auxiliary markings, either in processing by R.P.O. clerks or elsewhere in the mail system.

Handstamp—Second Die



May 12, 1918
 Trip 8
 Special delivery use
 3-cent "war" rate



August 23, 1918
 Trip 4
 Held for postage; handled twice by Cleveland Circuit R.P.O.
 Latest reported use of Cleveland Circuit R.P.O. handstamp
 Only reported cover with two different Cleveland Circuit R.P.O. markings
 Only reported cover from WWI military facility at Nela Park (Development Division, Chemical Warfare Service)

A new die of the handstamp was placed into use in August 1916. Fewer than 20 examples are reported. The latest reported example is August 23, 1918.

American Flag Machine



March 7, 1910
 Trip 4
 Trip operated
 counterclockwise on the
 postal route

Miss Laura Hoopes,
 at 372 M. St.



July 1, 1908
 Trip 4
 National Education Association
 seal

Handwritten text on the envelope, including "Mr. J. W. Beck, Pawnee City, Nebr." and various notes about a meeting.



POSTAL CARD

THE SPACE BELOW IS FOR THE ADDRESS ONLY.



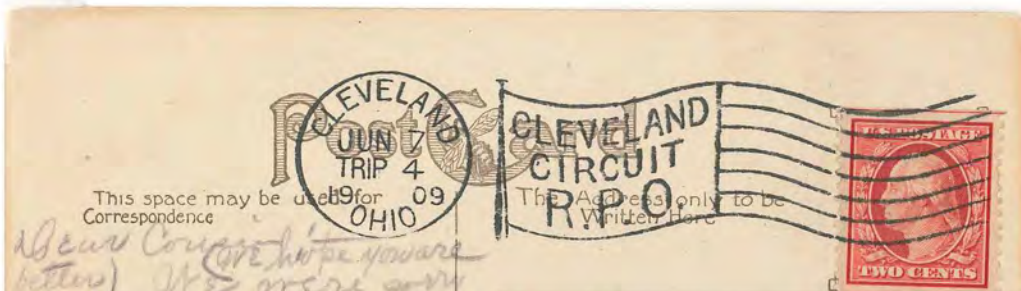
THE SPACE BELOW IS FOR THE ADDRESS ONLY.

Globe from 6
 Chillicothe
 Geo Martin

November 30, 1908
 Trip 9

An American Postal Machines Company "flag" machine was placed into use on the R.P.O. car in April 1908. The latest reported use is November 17, 1911. Trips 2 through 10 are reported.

American Flag—Uses



June 7, 1909
Trip 4
Letter rate postage due to writing
extending to address half of card

Dear Cousin (I hope you are
better), We were sorry
we did not see you
when in Cleveland
I suppose you know we
moved - when you come
take a Superior Car
& get off at 102nd - just
a few streets passed
Maggi's - our no. is
1258 E. 102nd - a few doors
from Superior. *Brooklyn, N.Y.*

December 24, 1909
Trip 7
Christmas seal



Miss Ethel Umbatacter
North Ridgerville
Ohio

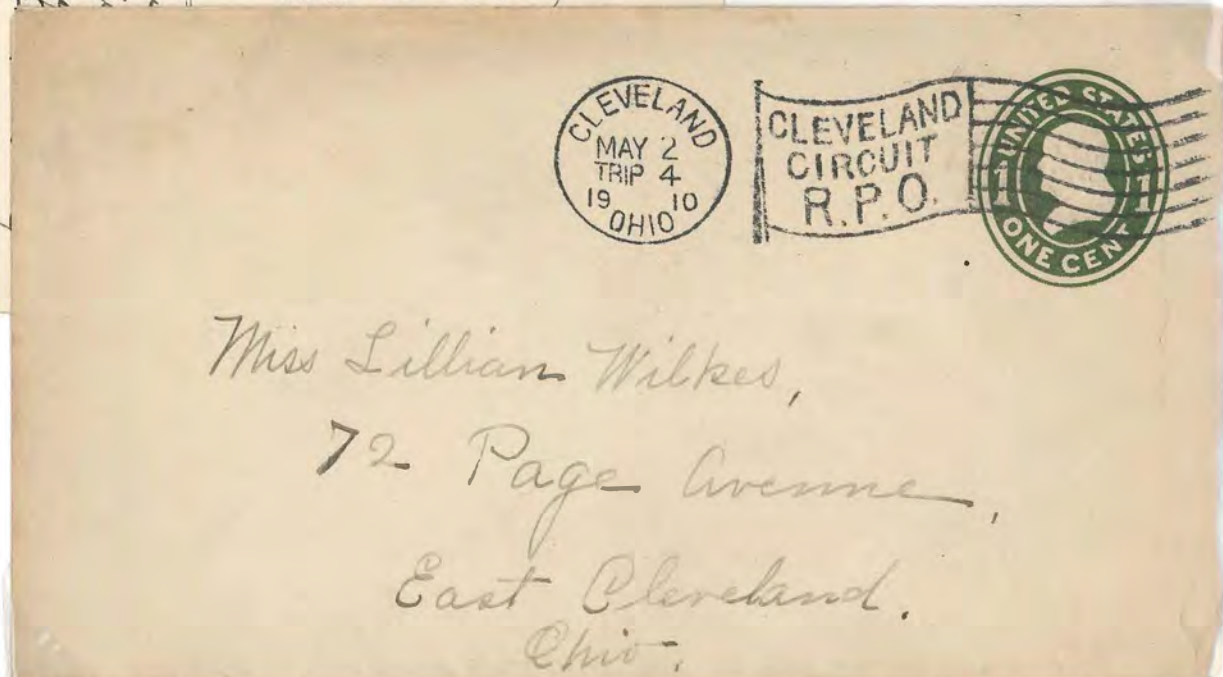


August 6, 1910
Trip 4
2 cent UPU postcard rate
To United Kingdom

at Niagara Falls. At
wonderful heat for me to
visit the Falls, Niagara,
rapids, & the also was our
on the Canadian side of
the river. Will write soon
and send our address. *For from*

Mr. Frank Hollingworth
White Lodge

May 2, 1910
Trip 4
1 cent printed
matter rate

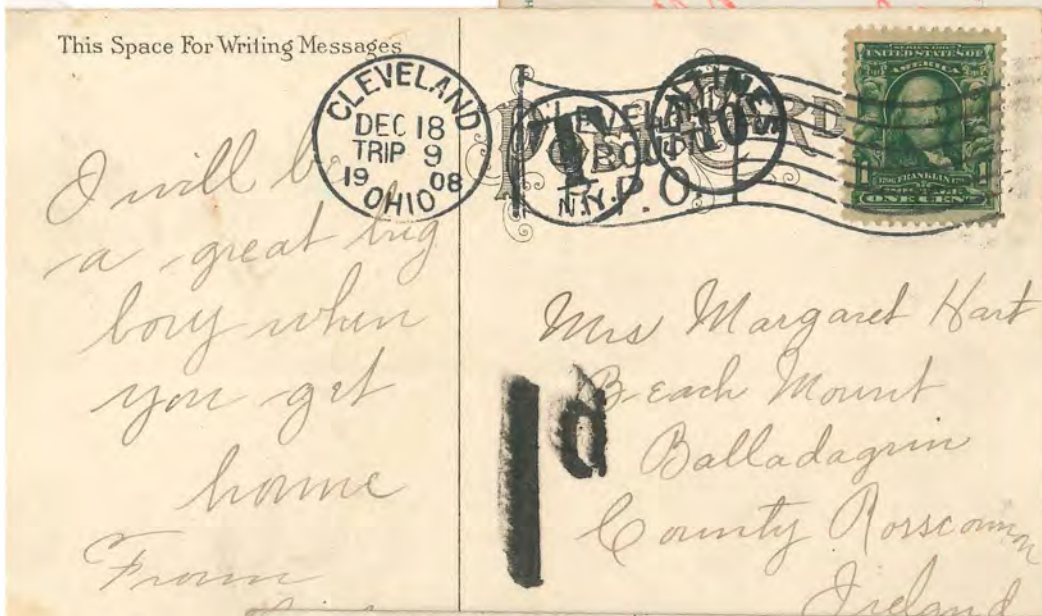


Miss Lillian Wilkes,
72 Page Avenue,
East Cleveland,
Ohio.

As with the handstamp, the flag machine was used to process numerous types of mail.

American Flag—Auxiliary Markings

January 28, 1911
 Trip 8
 Held for Postage



December 18, 1908
 Trip 9
 1 cent underpaid for UPU
 rate to Ireland
 Double deficiency
 charged to addressee



August 6, 1910
 Trip 9
 Missent to and forwarded from North Olmsted, Ohio

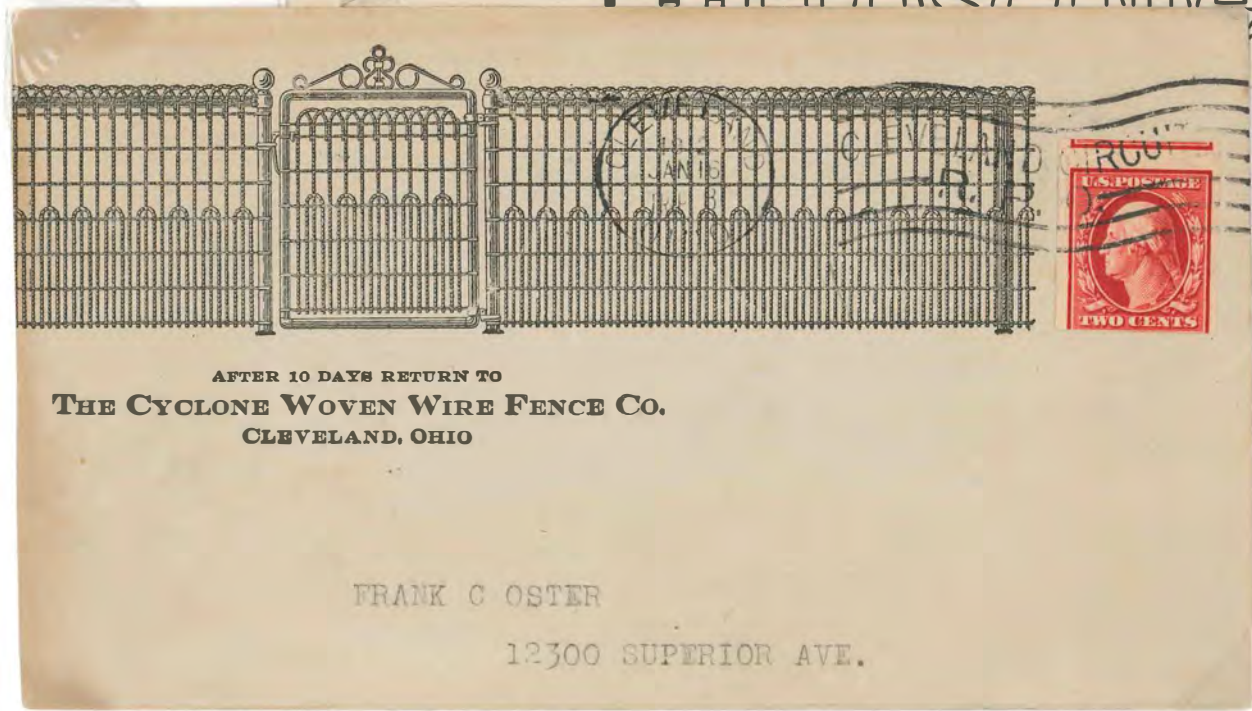
Universal Machine —Model B First Die



January 17, 1913
Trip 6



March 25, 1912
Trip 8
horizontal
coil stamp



January 16, 1912
Trip 8
imperforate vertical
coil stamp

A Universal Model B machine was first placed into use on or about August 1, 1911. Trips 1-2 and 4-10 are reported.

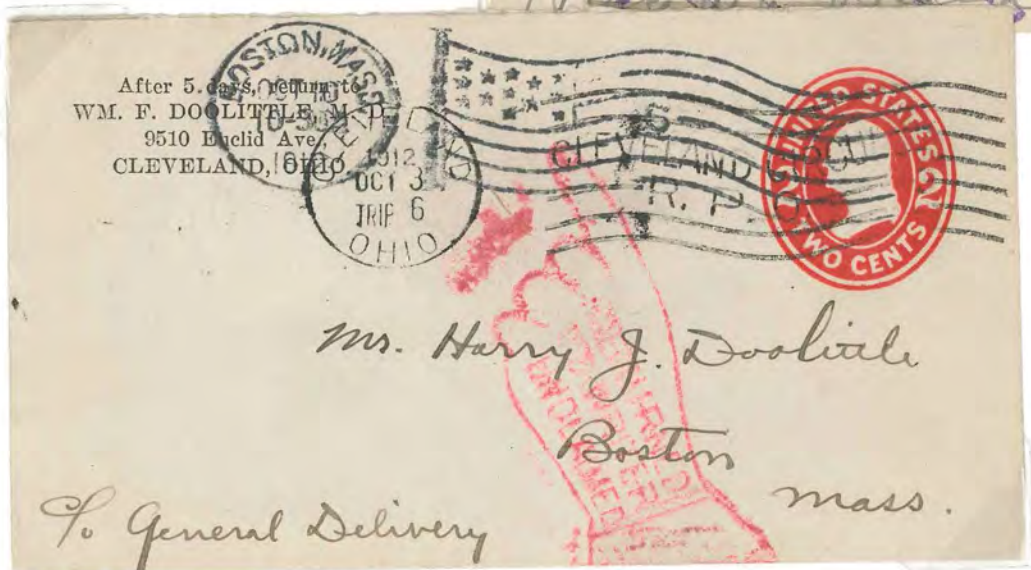
Universal Machine — Model B First Die Uses



February 14, 1914
Trip 4
One cent postage due collected with
parcel post postage due



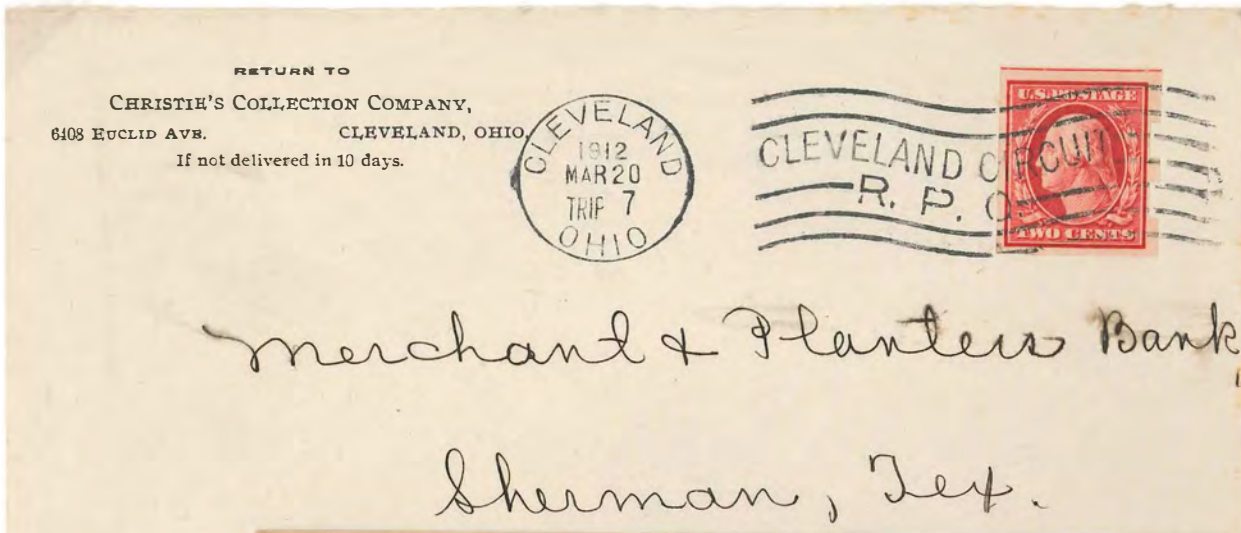
April 23, 1912
Trip 6
UPU rate to France



October 8, 1912
Trip 6
Returned unclaimed from Boston

The machine was one of 60 purchased by the United States Post Office Department as part of its second contract with the Universal Stamping Machine Company.

Universal Machine — Model B First Die Uses



The latest reported use of this die is September 9, 1914.

Universal Model B "Trip" in Dial Provisional Machine



July 11, 1912
Trip 6
Fewer than 10 reported between
July 9 and July 20, 1912



July 11, 1912
Trip 7
Fewer than 10 reported between
July 9 and July 20, 1912



September 22, 1914
Trip 6
Four reported between September 8 and October 1, 1914

During short periods between July 9 and 20, 1912 and September 8 and October 1, 1914, a different Universal Model B machine, with a wavy bar killer, was used on a provisional basis on the Cleveland Circuit R.P.O. It is believed that a Universal machine from Cleveland's Station B was used, perhaps to allow service or repair to the dedicated Circuit R.P.O. universal machine. The marking is identified as a streetcar use by the presence of "TRIP" in the postmark dial.

Universal Machine – Model B Second Die



October 2, 1914
Trip 8
Earliest Recorded Use of Second Die



November 4, 1915
Trip 8



November 26, 1914
Missing periods in "R.P.O."



January 29, 1916
Trip 9
Forwarded

By October 2, 1914, the Universal Model B machine (or at least its canceling die) was replaced. The second die is most noticeably different in the shape of "P" in "R.P.O." Some 1914 and 1915 examples seem to show missing periods in "R.P.O."

Universal Machine – Model B Second Die

After 5 days, return to
 THE STANDARD OIL COMPANY
 AT POINT OF MAILING.

December 10,
 1914
 Trip 7

*Standard Oil
 Company
 "Ohio" perfin*



THE GILBERT AND BARKER MFG. CO.
 SPRINGFIELD
 MASS.

AFTER 5 DAYS RETURN TO

THE WHITE COMPANY
 MOTOR CARS AND TRUCKS
 AT POINT OF MAILING



*James L. Bidjovsky,
 11410 Parkview Ave.,
 Cleveland.*

August 26, 1915
 Trip 4

*The White Company
 perfin*

From
The Brown Fence & Wire Co.
 Cleveland, Ohio.



Do your bit!
 LIBERTY LOAN BOND
 Acquire at any bank or post office

Phillipsburg Second National
 Bank.

Phillipsburg, N.J.

May 28, 1917
 Trip 6

*The Brown
 Fence & Wire
 Co. perfin*

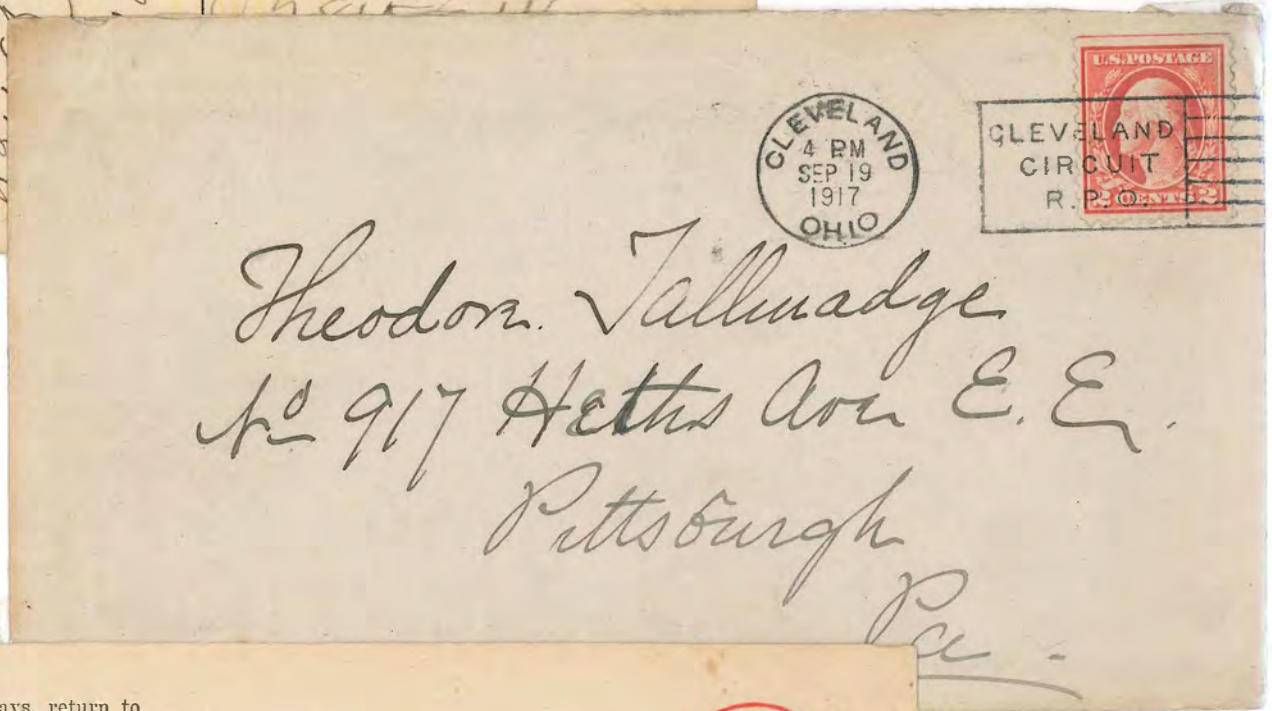
*"BUY A
 LIBERTY
 BOND"
 Promotional
 auxiliary
 marking
 Applied at
 destination
 office*

This machine was used with the second die through at least July 17, 1917.

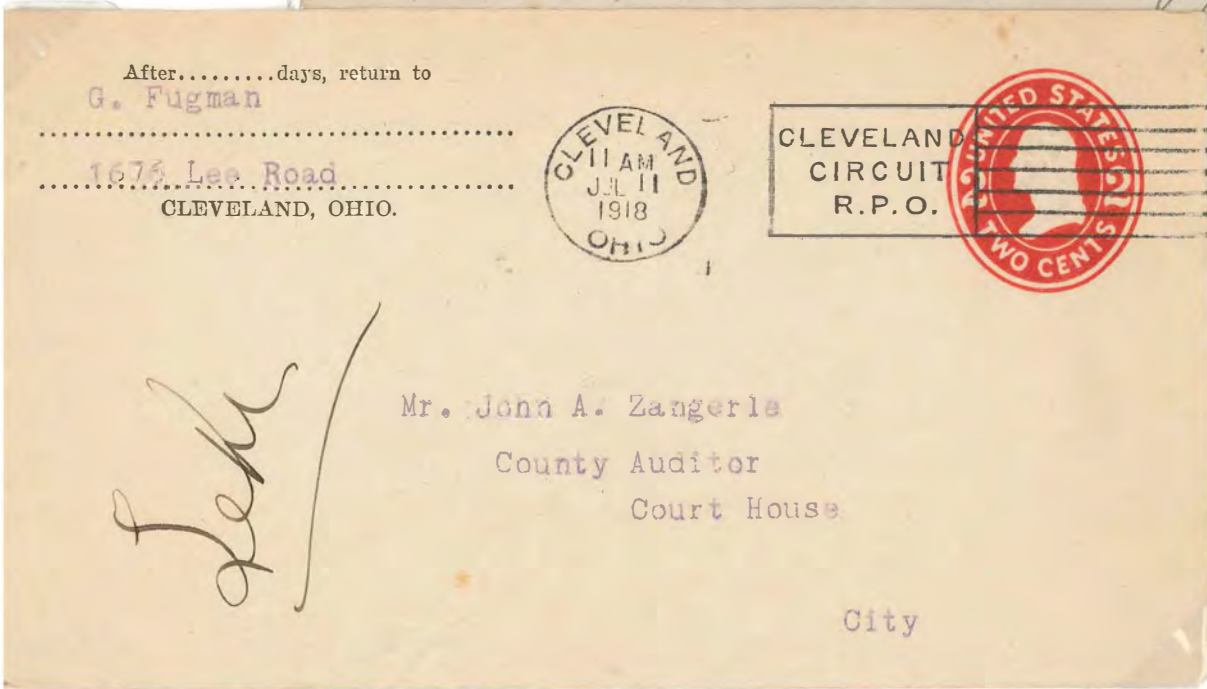
Universal Model D Machine



September 27, 1917
5 a.m.
Only reported example of this trip



September 19, 1917
4 p.m.



July 11, 1918
11 a.m.
"drop" rate

A Universal Model D machine, imprinting a boxed killer, was used as early as July 2, 1917. Instead of "trip" numbers, this machine used a time of day corresponding with the departure time of the trip of the R.P.O. car.

Universal Model D Machine



January 16, 1918
11 a.m.
3-cent "war" rate



February 14, 1919
4 p.m.
3-cent "war" rate
Fewer than 5 1919 uses reported



May 16, 1919
4 p.m.
2-cent "war" rate for postcards
Latest reported marking from
Cleveland Circuit R.P.O.

By mid-1919, the Post Office Department had adopted motor vehicles to carry mail between stations and to collect mail from mailboxes. The Cleveland Circuit R.P.O. was formally discontinued effective August 4, 1919.