

RISING SUN, INDIANA STAMPLESS COVERS

Rising Sun was settled in 1813. The post office opened September 15, 1815. Larger in population than Indianapolis until the mid 1820's, Rising Sun was one of Indiana's ten largest cities until 1830. The stampless era saw this village at the western edge of the frontier mature into a prosperous agricultural and business center requiring expanded postal service.

Mail service began on a once-a-week basis out of the Hartford post office connecting with the Cincinnati, Ohio to Louisville, Kentucky route. The route changed in 1824, going directly through Rising Sun twice a week. Service increased to three weekly round trips in 1830. These routes were carried on foot or horseback over paths, first used by the Indians, that slowly evolved into crude dirt roads. Wagon or coach service was not widespread until after the civil war.

After 1828, mail was also sent and received by steamboat between September and June when river conditions permitted. Carried in pouches, the mail did not routinely receive any steam markings. Frequently, the boats could not safely stop at Rising Sun, delaying receipt of the mails. Complaints against the masters of boats that carried mail down river past Rising Sun to Vevay, or more distant towns, appeared frequently in the local newspaper after publication began in 1833. Mail had to be returned to Rising Sun by the next scheduled land mail service.

A postal history exhibit involves more than just showing rare old covers. There is a much broader story to be told than just annotating their philatelic importance. A postal service exists because of the needs of the people being served. Enjoy their stories.

It has taken almost forty years to assemble and research this exhibit. Postal history is an avocation marked by the slow uncovering of bits of treasure. There are always new discoveries and revelations. One continually uncovers new mysteries to solve. A good steward leaves his contribution to what is known, passing the material on to future generations. This exhibit is dedicated to those who have come before; thank you, David and Bob. This exhibit is presented in hopes it will inspire others to pursue their philatelic dreams.



Territorial Stampless Folded Letter



September 21, 1816. Twenty-five cent rate appropriate for one sheet carried over 400 miles.

The only reported territorial cover from Rising Sun. It contains a description of river travel, the local climate, and family news. Written by Moses Tapley an early merchant who was instrumental in the incorporation of Rising Sun in 1817.

Mr. Hiram Ogle held the contracts for several mail routes including the route through Rising Sun. The routes were run on horseback following paths and trails that had existed before settlement. His sons rode these routes for their father.

"...In those days the settlements were few and far between, and it was a very lonesome ride. His brothers often tied him (Archilles Ogle) to the horse to prevent his falling off should he accidentally fall asleep. He states that he often slept for miles while riding along, the horse being so familiar with the route that it needed no guide."

Archilles Ogle, Switzerland County Scrapbook
Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis, Indiana

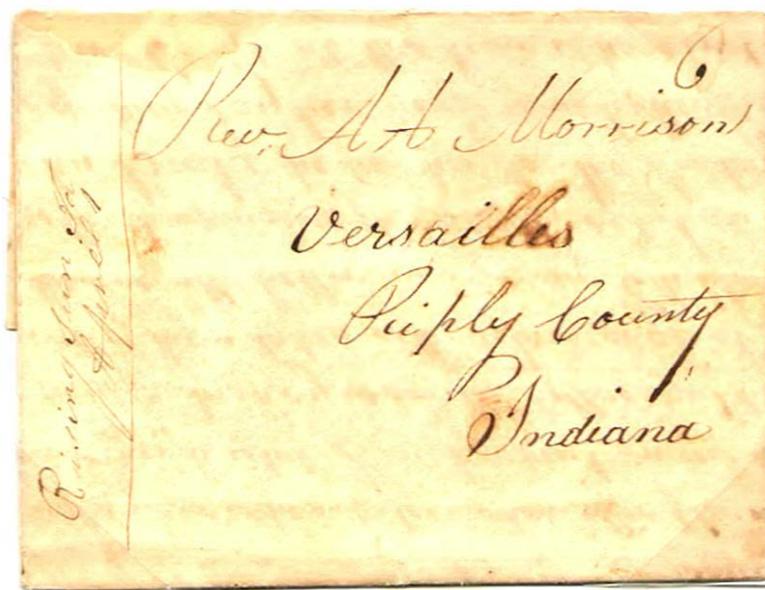
Rising Sun Arch



March 2, 1824. August 14, 1826. 12 1/2 cent rate appropriate for one sheet traveling between 80 and 150 miles.

Locally produced wooden handstamp. These are the listing items from the Baker collection used in his 1976 books. The first is reduced at the right removing its franking. Both folded letters contain family news. This device probably did not contain a top line to the arch; however, the strike on second cover has a top line from "rolling" the device as the cancel was struck.

Manuscript



April 1, 1828. Six cent rate for one sheet traveling less than 30 miles.

"The first merchant of the village was Caleb A. Craft, who, the same year as the village was laid out, erected a log-house on Lot No. 2, which contained but one room, in which he kept tavern and store. It is said that in December, 1814, Mr. Craft built on the same lot a hewed log-house of two rooms. The upper one was used as a sleeping room; in one corner of the lower room was a store and in another was a bar, liquor then being not in such disrepute as now. The building stands on Front Street near Fifth, and is still known as the Craft property. Mr. Craft was also the first postmaster of Rising Sun [September 15, 1815]. His death occurred May 30, 1849."

History of Dearborn, Ohio, And Switzerland Counties, Indiana 1885

Other postmasters at Rising Sun during this rate period and dates appointed:

Able C. Pepper, June 6, 1829
John Lanius, November 20, 1829
John W. Hall, January 1, 1841
John Lanius, May 23, 1845

Manuscript - Postmasters Free Frank

Rising Sun Pa
Sept 10th

94300
Caleb A. Craft Pa

Ans -

J. R. Whitehead Esq
Neway
Indiana

Rising Sun Pa
May 26th

John Lanius P.M.
Free
John T. Brazee
Lancaster
Ohio

September 10, 1828. Caleb A. Craft, P.M.
May 26, 1837, John Lanius, P.M.

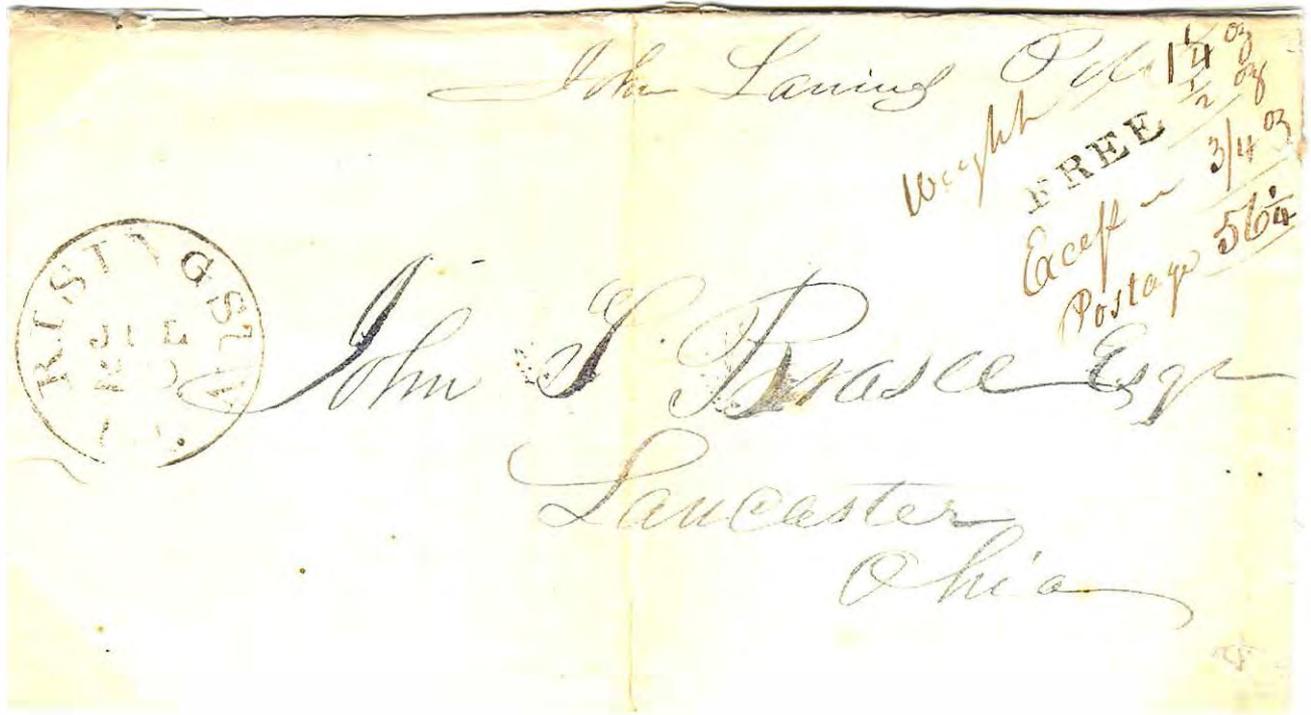
Manuscript - Turned Folded Letter



February 6, 1830 from Vevay. February 22, 1830 from Rising Sun.

This folded letter was first mailed from Vevay to the Sheriff of Dearborn County at Lawrenceburg. It carried the ten cent rate appropriate for one sheet traveling between 30 and 80 miles. The sheriff then served this document on Able C. Pepper, former postmaster at Rising Sun. It was return mailed from Rising Sun carrying the six cent rate appropriate for one sheet traveling less than 30 miles.

First CDS - Overweight Postmaster's Free Frank



July 20, 1837, John Lanius, P.M.

John Lanius sent this overweight free folded letter to Lancaster, Ohio. It apparently contained a draft on the Bank of Pennsylvania and legal documents concerning the purchase of land. He was charged for the triple 18 3/4 cent rate appropriate for one sheet traveling between 150 and 400 miles. His free franking privilege paid for the first 1/2 ounce of this letter even though it did not pertain to post office business.

This is the earliest seen usage of this government supplied CDS device. Baker's, "The Postal History of Indiana" lists the earliest usage for this, the first CDS from Rising Sun as June, 1833. Seven items seen between June, 1833 and May, 1837, including two Postmaster's free franks, do not carry the CDS device.

First CDS - Manuscript Franking



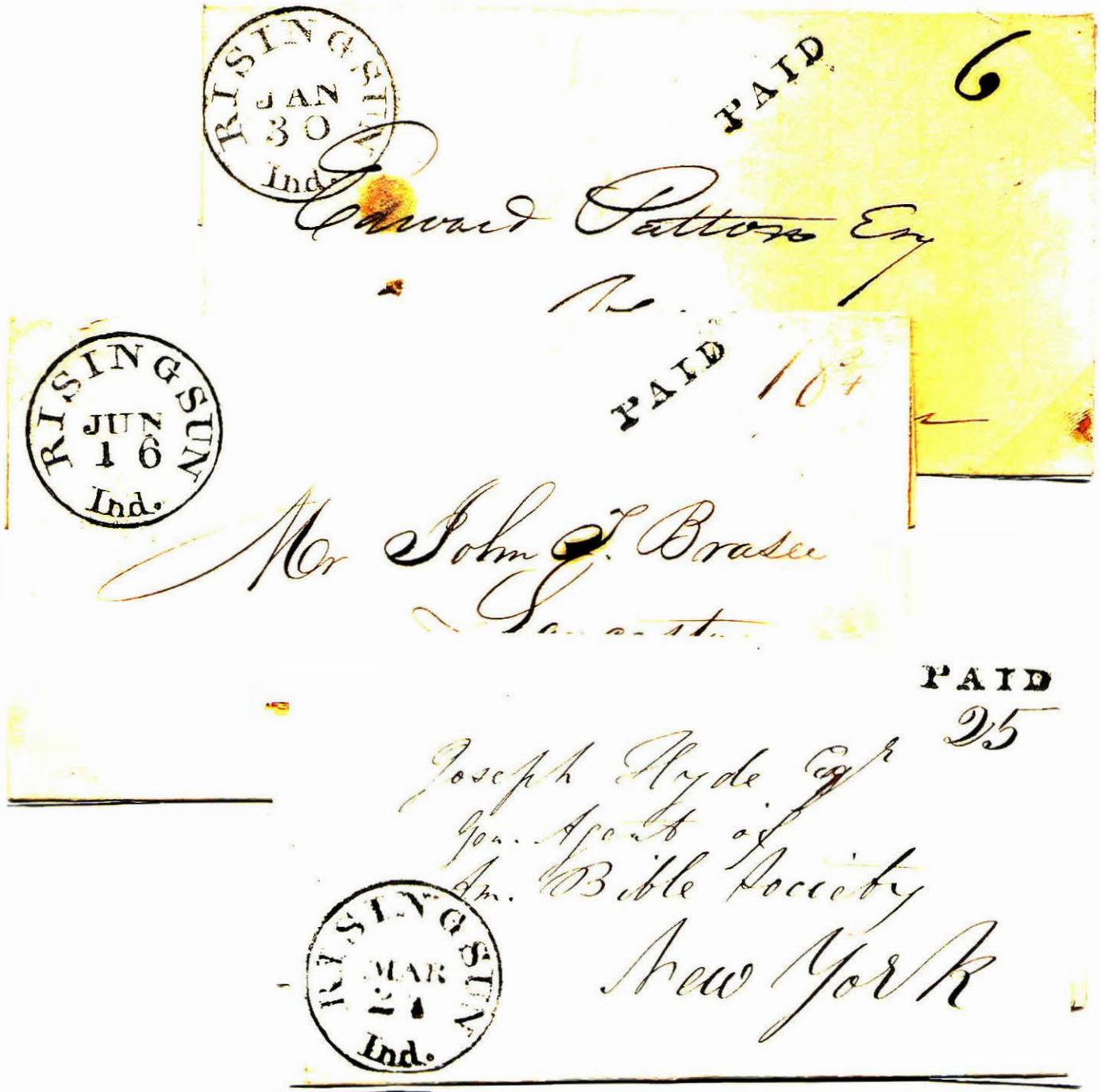
November 3, 1838. Twenty-five cent rate for one sheet traveling over 400 miles.

Folded letter from the Baker Collection showing the perils of steamboat travel.

“...E. G. Brown was Commander of the Splendid Steamship Herald running from Cincinnati to Vevay three times per week, on August 7 six miles below Cincinnati it was discovered to be on fire, the weather was very dry and hot and the wind blowing rapidly upstream all exertions were in vain to save her. ... [Mr. Brown] ordered the pilot to run her ashore and the passengers to make their escape from the boat ... nothing was saved except for the passengers.”

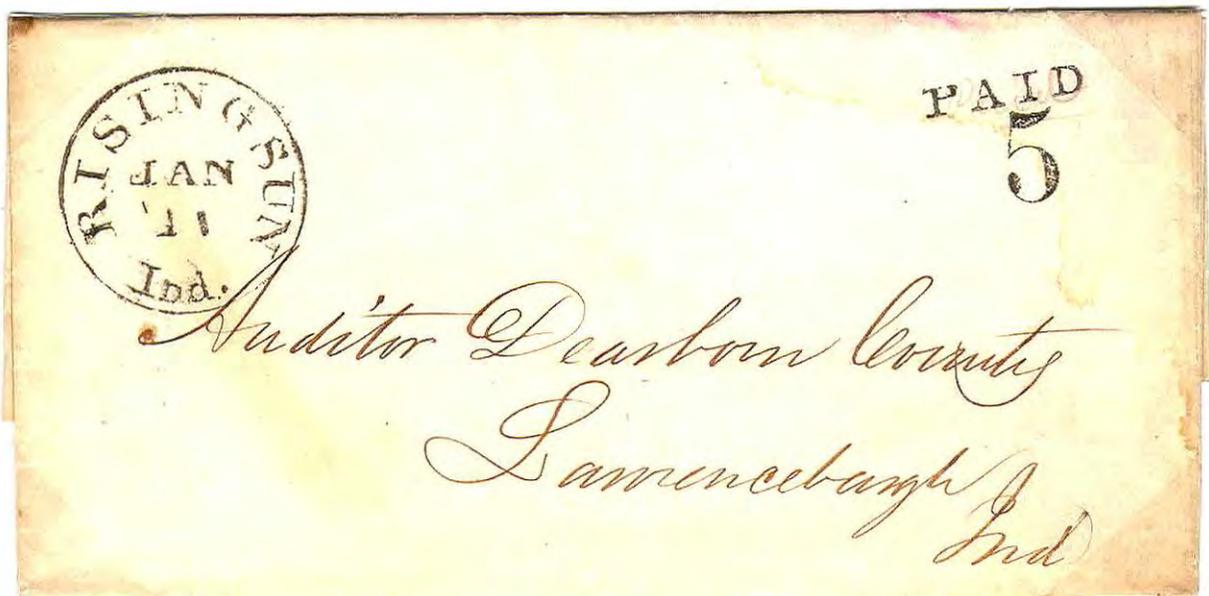
The Steamer Herald was built at Rising Sun in 1835 on a hull constructed on Laughery Creek at Hartford. The local newspaper indicated it ran between Rising Sun and Cincinnati, Ohio three trips weekly. No sketches or record of its dimensions have been found. While not a regular mail boat, it is known to have carried pouches of mail at times to Rising Sun. One newspaper account stated that General Harrison was on board at the time of the fire, but safely left the boat walking to his house near Cleves, Ohio.

First CDS - Paid Handstamp



January 30, 1838. Six cent rate for one sheet traveling less than 30 miles.
June 16, 1838. Eighteen and 3/4 cent rate for one sheet traveling between 150 and 400 miles.
March 27, 1841. Twenty-five cent rate for one sheet traveling over 400 miles.

The 1845 to 1851 Rate Period



August 11, 1845. Ten cent rate for less than 1/2 ounce traveling over 300 miles.
January 11, 1847. Five cent rate for up to 1/2 ounce traveling less than 300 miles.

Manuscript franking gave way to a variety of handstamp franking devices for the reduced simplified rate structure. Government supplied CDS was used with a "Paid" device as needed. Above is the only large "five" example seen. It is the listing example in Baker.

Periods of red ink usage roughly follows changes in postmasters. Postmasters appointed:

Samuel F. Covington, May 6, 1846
John B. Covington, February 29, 1848
Robert P. Moore, April 27, 1849
John S. Hayden, September 23, 1850
William F. French, September 24, 1851

First CDS - Ten Cent Circle



December 11, 1849. Ten cents sent collect, less than 1/2 ounce traveling over 300 miles.
February 21, 184x. Ten cents sent collect, way New York, less than 1/2 ounce traveling over 300 miles.

First folded letter sends family and business news to Virginia. The second envelope probably dates between 1846 and 1848 prior to the forty cent California rate established August 14, 1848. It is an early item from the Clark family correspondence that continued as late as 1863.

First CDS - Small Franking Devices, Black Ink



December 25, 1845, Five cents prepaid by sender, up to 1/2 ounce traveling less than 300 miles.

February 6, 1846, Five cents sent collect, up to 1/2 ounce traveling less than 300 miles.

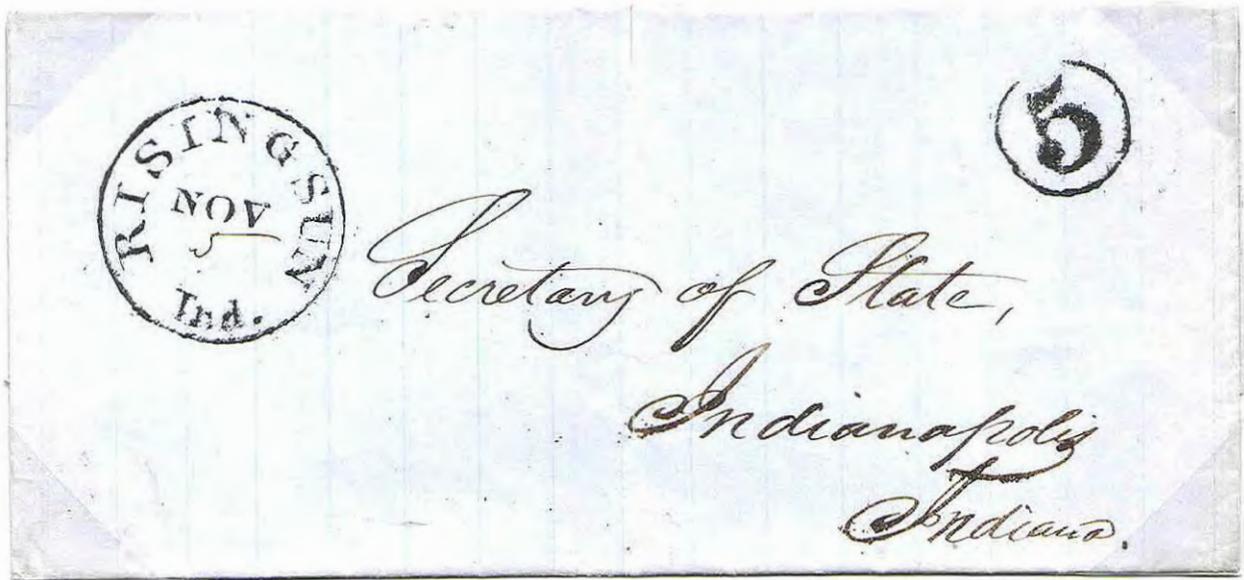
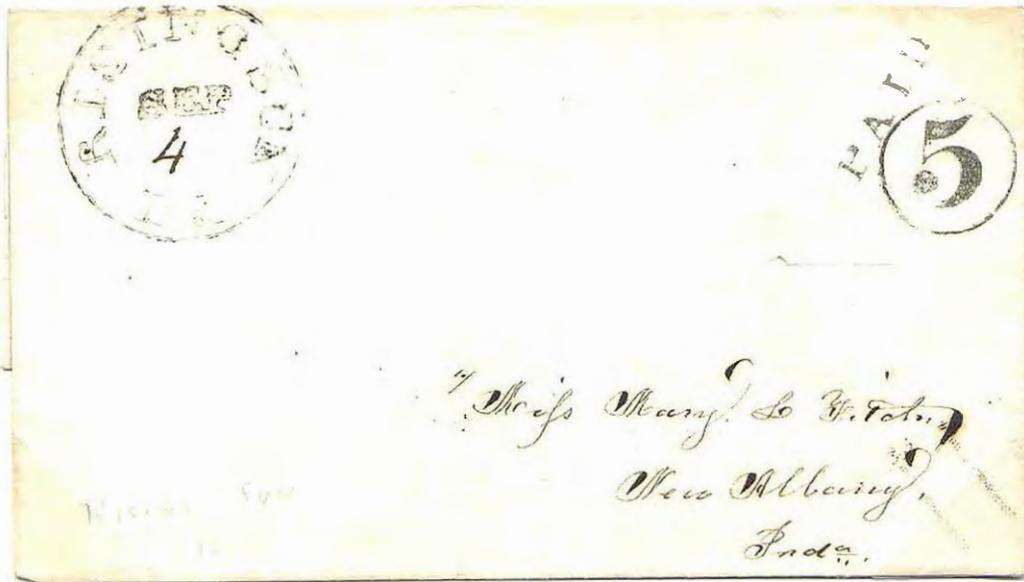
April 1, 1846, Ten cents sent collect, up to 1/2 ounce traveling over 300 miles.

First CDS - Small Franking Devices, Red Ink



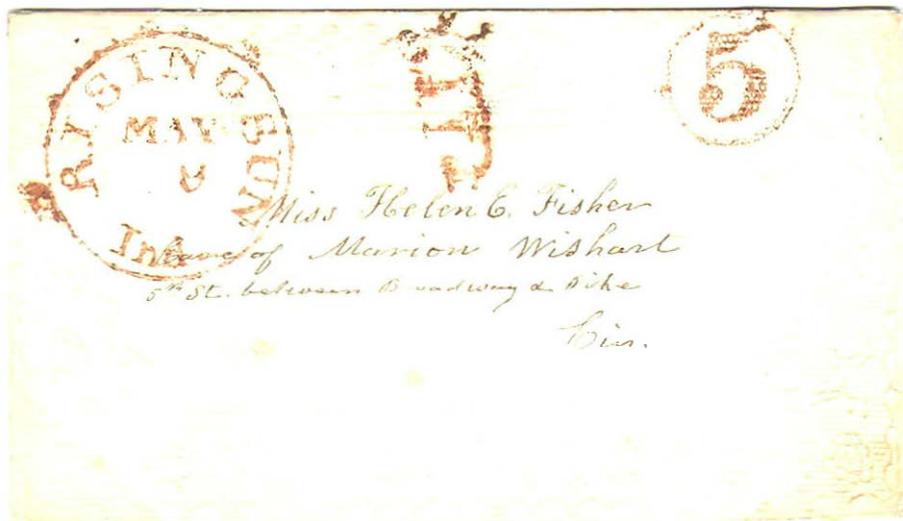
June 20, 1846. Five cent prepaid by sender, up to 1/2 ounce traveling less than 300 miles.
August 17, 1848. Five cent sent collect, up to 1/2 ounce traveling less than 300 miles.
August 29, 1846. Ten cent sent collect, up to 1/2 ounce traveling over 300 miles.

First CDS - Five Cent Circle, Black Ink



September 4, 185x. Five cent prepaid by sender, up to 1/2 ounce traveling less than 300 miles.
November 5, 1850. Five cents sent collect, up to 1/2 ounce traveling less than 300 miles.

First CDS - Five Cent Circle, Red Ink

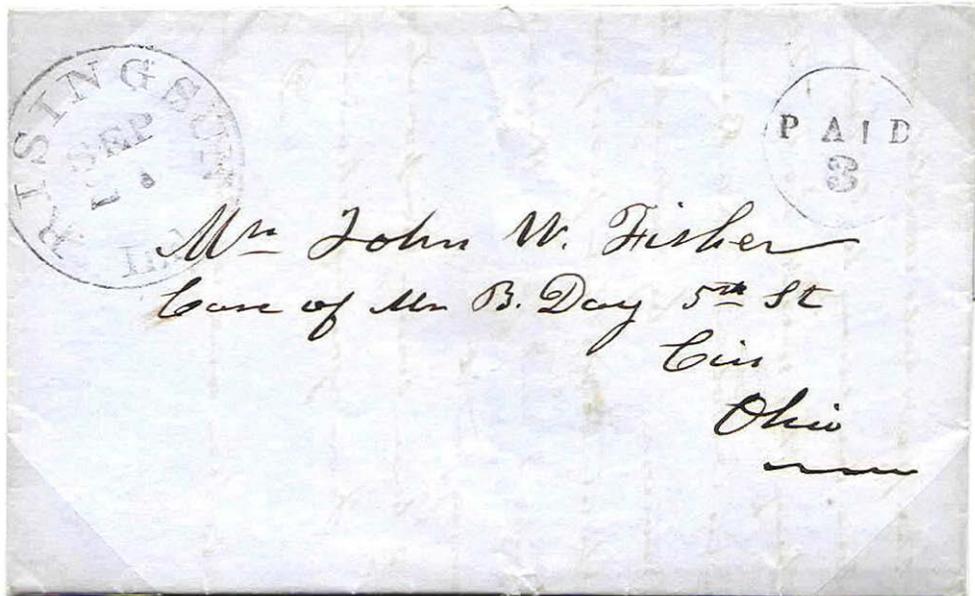


May 9, 1851. Five cents prepaid by sender, up to 1/2 ounce traveling less than 300 miles.

May 23, 185x. Five cents prepaid by sender, up to 1/2 ounce traveling less than 300 miles.

Two ladies' envelopes without contents going to Cincinnati are the latest usage of red ink reported. The larger "PAID" handstamp on the first envelope is the only example of this device seen. John J. Hayden was postmaster from September 23, 1850 to September 24, 1851. Rising Sun returned to using black ink on a September 27, 1851 cover shown on the next page.

The 1851 to 1855 Rate Period



January 22, 185x. Three cent rate for up to 1/2 ounce traveling less than 3,000 miles prepaid.
September 27, 1851. Three cent rate for up to 1/2 ounce traveling less than 3,000 miles prepaid.

Two different devices are reported from Rising Sun. They were used a very short time as the 1851 stamp issue appears on covers in October of 1851 ending the stampless period at Rising Sun.