

# Integral Rate Postmarks of Cincinnati, Ohio

This exhibit shows 15 of the 16 reported “integral rate” postmarks of Cincinnati utilized during the 1845-51 and 1851-55 rate periods, organized by rate period, marking, and rate. Varieties in use and color are shown, as is use in combination with adhesive postage stamps, notably including the 1-cent eagle carrier stamp, the 1-cent 1851 issue, and the Browne’s local post. Several markings are known in quantities fewer than ten. Items of particular philatelic significance are identified with red dots.

Cincinnati first used “integral rate” markings in June 1847, and continued to utilize them until prepayment of letter postage with stamps became mandatory on January 1, 1856. Markings were primarily on letter mail (3 cents, 5 cents, 10 cents), but also on circulars (1 cent, 2 cents, 3 cents), locally mailed items (1 cent), and crossborder and transatlantic mail (5 cents and 10 cents to pay domestic portion of postage; 10 cents to Canada; 24 cents to pay treaty rate to Great Britain).

The “integral rate” markings of Cincinnati represent one city’s advance in postal efficiency. By including the rate as part of the postmark, a postal clerk complied with the mandates of Section 23 of the Instructions to Postmasters to postmark, date, and rate mail, all in a single step. Some markings additionally included a “paid” designation, further reducing clerk workload. Ironically, the first integral rate marking was introduced only two days before the introduction of adhesive postage stamps, the widespread (and eventually mandatory) use of which would eventually render the markings obsolete.

## 1845 Rate Period 3 Cents Circular Rate (Act of March 3, 1847)

No date was required for circulars.

Reported November 1849-  
June 1851

*Fewer than 10 examples  
recorded on  
circulars*



## 5 Cents Letter Rate (under 300 miles)

June 29, 1847

*Earliest recorded Cincinnati  
integral rate marking*

*One of two reported  
examples of this marking in  
1845 rate period*



**1845 Rate Period**  
**5 Cents**  
**Letter Rate**  
**(under 300 miles)**

July 30, 1849



March 22, 1850

Letter rate mail could be sent paid or unpaid; prepaid mail was required to be marked as such

No line below date

The "5cts" marking is reported in red from June 1847 through the end of the 1845 rate period and appears both with and without a horizontal line. This line is the edge of the slug and does not represent the existence of multiple devices.



May 21, 1850

5 cent 1847 adhesive; stamp cancelled with obliterator

81 reported 1847 issue covers from Cincinnati at 5-cent rate

April 19, 1851

5 cent 1847 adhesive; integral rate obliterated to indicate prepayment where stamp was located elsewhere on cover



The marking was also used on mail bearing adhesive stamps. The Cincinnati post office took care to match the rate to the postmark, even though the presence of stamps rendered the integral rate duplicative and unnecessary.

1845 Rate Period  
5 Cents  
Letter Rate  
(under 300 miles)

December 8, 1850

Prepaid

Charged to account of  
member of Ohio  
Constitutional Convention of  
1850



April 28, circa 1850

Likely arrived at Cincinnati  
by steamer and privately  
forwarded to the mails  
by Milward & Oldershaw

Attempted prepayment by  
charge account obliterated at  
Chillicothe

December 21, 1847

Manuscript integral 5  
"mimic"

Only recorded example of  
this marking



The manuscript date and "5" in this marking suggest that the rate slug in the 5cts marking may have been removable.

**1845 Rate Period**  
**10 Cents**  
**Letter Rate**  
**(over 300 miles)**

June 27, 1849

Prepaid single rate



June 30, 1851

Unpaid single rate.

*Last day of the 1845 rate period; Latest reported use of this marking*



July 12, 1850

Unpaid double rate under 300 miles



February 28, 1848

Originated at New Orleans Feb. 14, 1848; carried by non-contract steamboat to Cincinnati; entered mails there and charged at 10 cents for over 300 miles letter rate

*Fewer than 10 reported of this marking in conjunction with STEAM handstamp*



The "10" marking is reported in red from August 1847 through the end of the 1845 rate period. While primarily intended for use with mail sent at the single letter rate over 300 miles, it was also used to mark double-rate letters (over 1/2 ounce) under 300 miles.

1845 Rate Period  
10 Cents  
Letter Rate  
(over 300 miles)



October 1, 1850  
to Haverhill, MA

145 reported 10-cent 1847  
covers from Cincinnati

December 2, 1847

26 reported covers using two  
5-cent 1847 issue stamps  
from Cincinnati to pay 10-  
cent rate



August 16, 1848

Originated at Louisville and  
entered mails at Cincinnati  
after carriage by steamboat up  
Ohio River

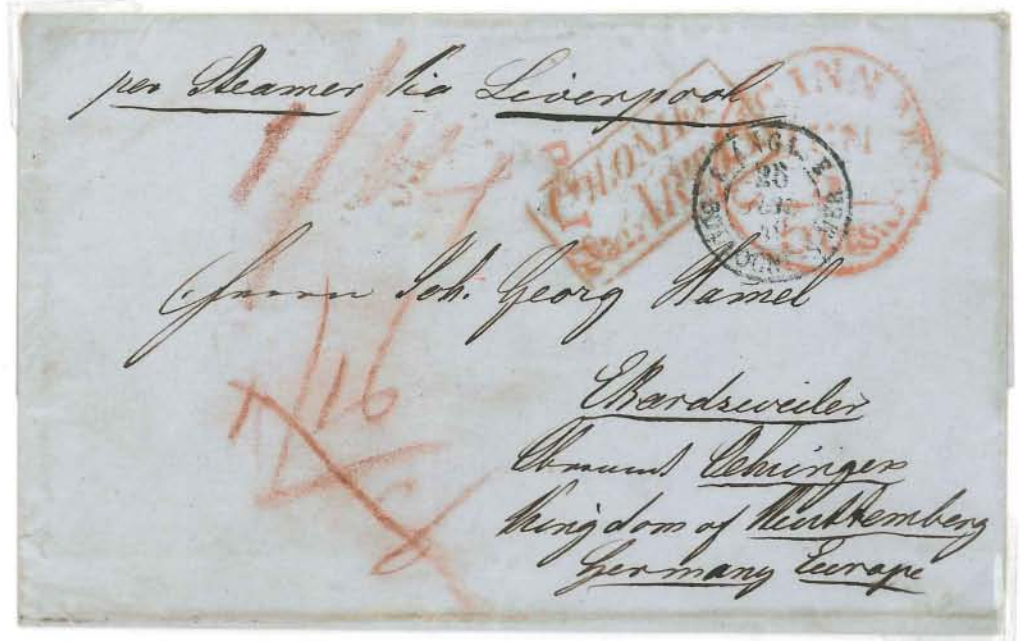
One of two reported  
"STEAM" covers with 2 5-  
cent 1847 issue stamps (of 5  
"STEAM" covers with 5-cent  
1847 issue)

**1845 Rate Period  
Foreign Mail**

June 5, 1849

Cincinnati to Wurttemberg,  
via New York, England and  
France

Postage prepaid to British  
mail system (5 cents); via  
Cunard line vessel *Niagara*,  
departing NY June 13 and  
arriving Liverpool June 25;  
entered the French mails at  
Boulogne



May 1848

Prepaid domestic postage,  
intended 24 cent debit to  
Bremen under Bremen  
Convention mails applied at  
New York

No Ocean line vessel to  
Bremen departed in May  
1848; debit struck out and  
letter sent unpaid via Cunard  
line vessel to Liverpool,  
entering French mails at Le  
Havre

In certain circumstances portions of postage to destinations abroad could be prepaid. Foreign postal systems added additional charges.

**1851 Rate Period**  
**Circular Rates**  
**1851-1852**

September 5, 1851  
Integral "paid 1"

5 examples recorded



August 20, 1852  
Integral "paid"

Fewer than 10 examples recorded

August 14, 1851  
(per collector docketing)  
Integral "paid 2"

Sent less than 500 miles; 2 cent rate indicative of overweight contents

Only recorded example



Printed circulars could be sent for one cent (up to 500 miles) per ounce if prepaid under the Act of March 3, 1851. A single marking was used with an "integral paid" that appears without a rate slug, as well as with a "1" or "2" rate indicated.

1851 Rate Period  
Circular Rates  
1853-1855



October 23, 1852

Integral "1 paid"

Only recorded example of this marking in blue

Only recorded use of this marking in conjunction with an adhesive stamp (1 cent 1851, Type II, 40R1E)

Illustrated in Neinken

June 12, 1853

Integral "1 paid"



In October 1852, the rate structure for circulars and other printed matter was simplified to a uniform one cent per three ounces anywhere in the United States. A new marking was introduced.



**1851 Rate Period  
Drop Rate**

Circa 1853

Integral "1 paid"

*Only recorded example of this marking on a drop rate cover*

*Only recorded example of this marking with additional "PAID" handstamp*



Local, or "drop," mail for delivery at the post office of origin cost one cent; prepayment was not required. Cincinnati typically utilized red ink on prepaid mail during the 1851 rate period.



Circa 1855

Integral "1 unpd"

*Fewer than 10 examples recorded*

Circa 1855

Integral "1 unpd"

Sender paid for "to the mails" carriage by government carrier (likely by depositing in a letter box) but did not pay for drop fee

*One of two reported examples used in conjunction with adhesive carrier stamp*



Cincinnati used an unusual marking for unpaid drop rate mail, which is believed to be the only United States stampless postal marking to utilize the word "unpaid."

**1851 Rate Period**  
**Letter Rate**  
**3 Cents—Prepaid**



July 3, 1851

Integral "3 cts" and use of circular grid obliterator

Approximately ten reported examples with adhesive stamps; this marking used on adhesives for approximately one week

Third day of use of 3 cent 1851 adhesive

November 12, 1851

Charge box notation showing postage charged to account rather than paid in cash



February 12, 1853

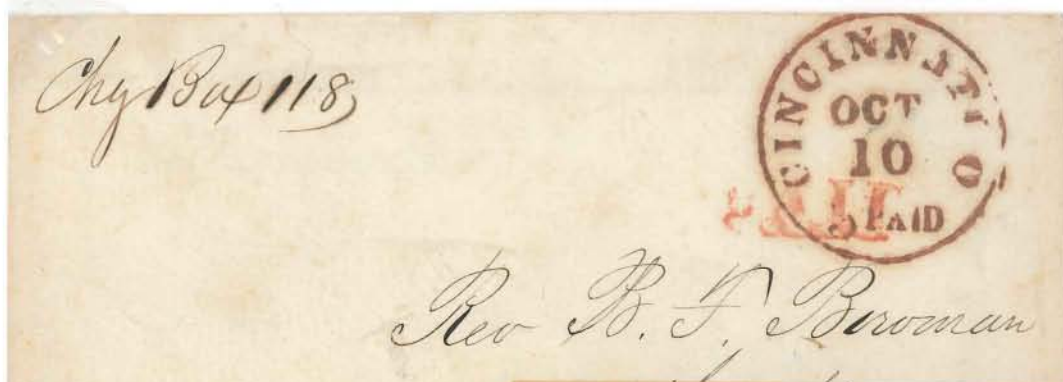
Only recorded example in blue

Red "paid" handstamp applied at postal counter; postmark likely subsequently applied

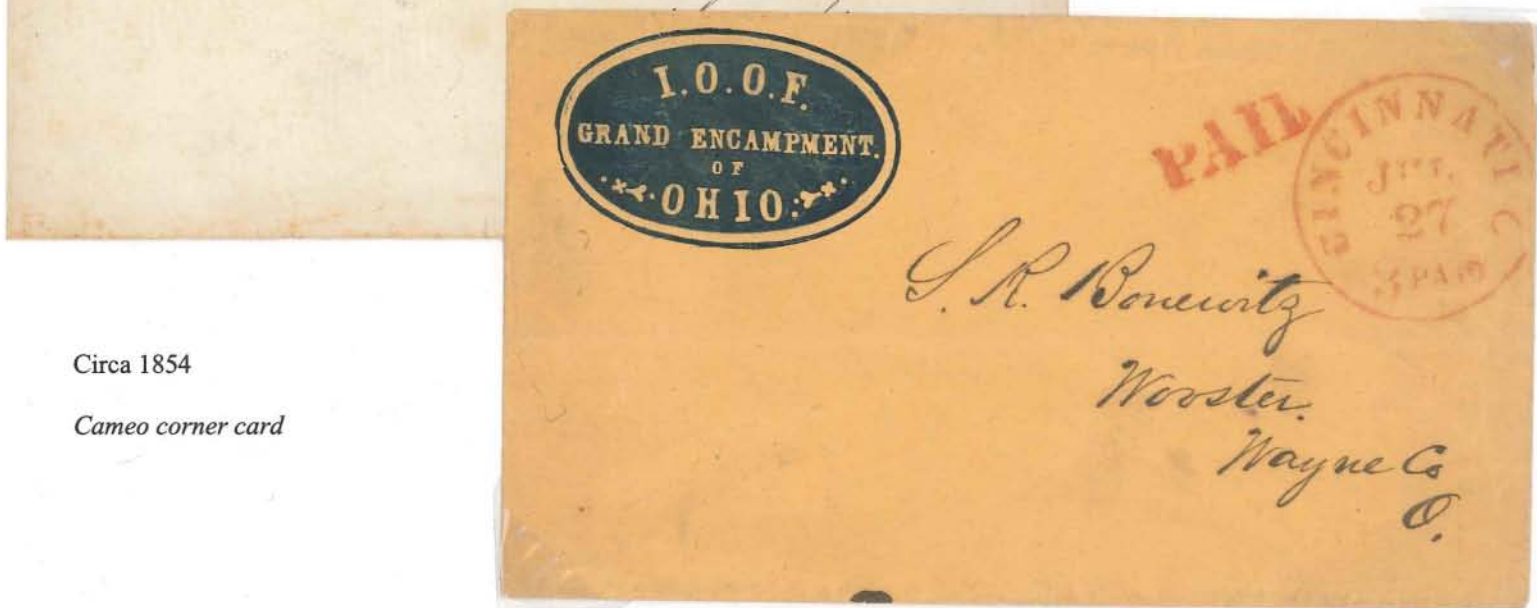


Effective July 1, 1851, prepaid letter rate mail for distances under 3,000 miles cost three cents. Cincinnati utilized the handstamp previously used for circulars, with the addition of date slugs.

1851 Rate Period  
Letter Rate  
3 Cents—Prepaid



October 10, 1854



Circa 1854

Cameo corner card

A smaller postmark appeared in January 1853 and was used through 1855.



August 21, 1854

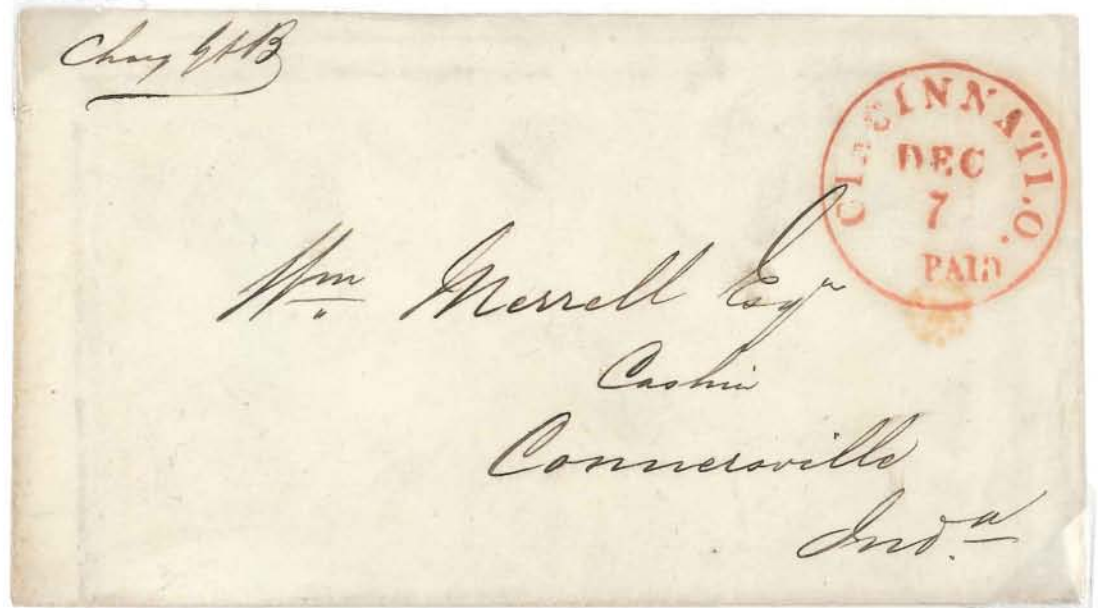
Approximately ten examples  
recorded

An additional "3 paid" marking was utilized from July through September of 1854, concurrently with the smaller marking.

**1851 Rate Period**  
**Letter Rate**  
**3 Cents—Prepaid**

December 7, 1855

One of two recorded examples lacking a second "PAID" handstamp



An unrated "paid" marking was used for letter mail between February 1852 and August 1855 for letter mail. It does not precisely match either the "1 paid" or "3 paid" markings and represents a distinct device.



Circa 1854

Free frank of Salmon P. Chase as United States Senator (served 1849-55)

Circa 1855

Sent free to Commissioner of Pensions; franking privilege allowed privilege holder to send and receive mail without cost



A "free" integral rate marking was used for letter mail sent under a franking privilege between March 1853 and October 1857.

1851 Rate Period  
 Letter Rate  
 5 Cents—Unpaid

March 23, 1852



Effective July 1, 1851, unpaid letter mail was charged 5 cents. The existing "5 cts" marking continued in use, with black ink instead of red ink. The 5 was either partially cut away or wore down.



August 13, 1853

Forwarding use  
 (originated at  
 Philadelphia on  
 August 2; total of 10  
 cents due to recipient

Red "FORWARDED"  
 applied at Cincinnati

June 6, 1853

Written on board the  
 Steamboat Tweed, on the  
 Ohio River below  
 Louisville

Entered mails at  
 Cincinnati



A new marking was put into use with an integral 5 in mid-1852; blue ink was placed into general use for unpaid mail.

**1851 Rate Period**  
**Letter Rate**  
**5 Cents—Unpaid**

January 11, 1853

*Advertised at New Orleans, 1 cent due*

June 14, circa 1853

*1 cent printed matter rate—incorrectly postmarked with “5” integral rate marking intended for letter mail*



Circa 1853

1 cent Browne & Co. adhesive pays “to the mails” carriage

5 cents domestic letter postage unpaid

A second variety of this marking exists with an upright, rather than italic, figure “5.” It is reported used from December 1852 to August 1854.

March 18, 1855

*Only recorded example of this marking*



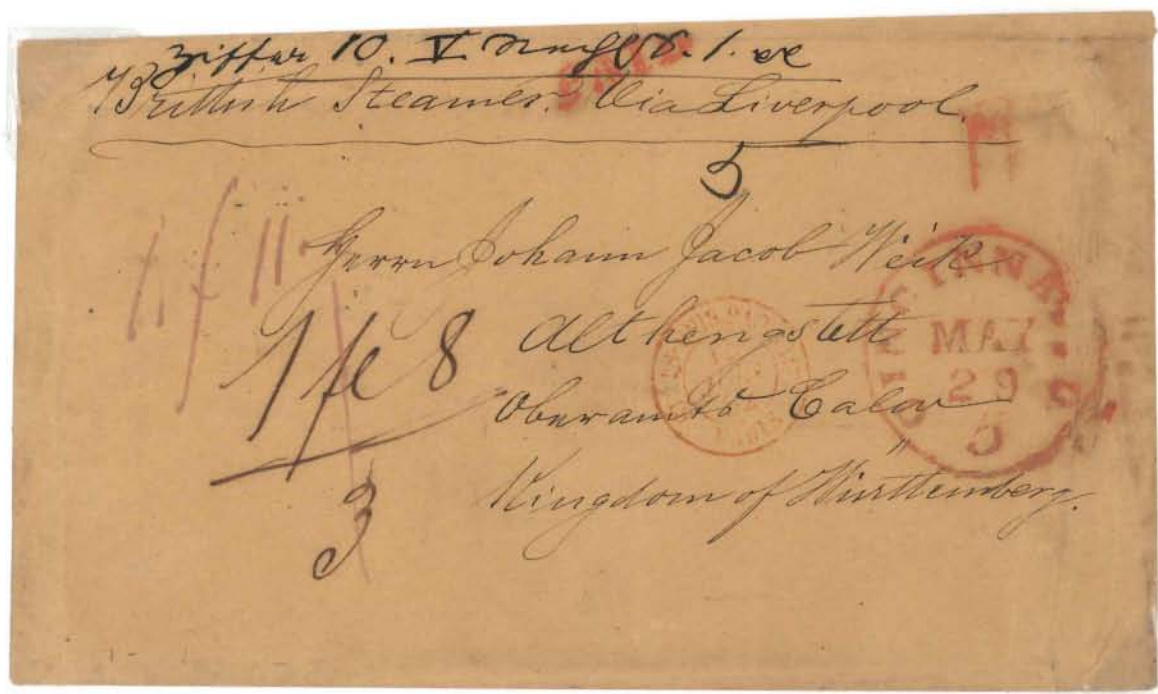
By 1855, unpaid mail was uncommon. This marking appears to have been locally assembled.

**1851 Rate Period  
Foreign Mail**

December 11, 1852

10-cent fully prepaid rate to  
Canada; exchanged to  
Canadian mail system at  
Buffalo NY

Only recorded  
example of this marking



May 29, 1852

5 cents represents  
prepaid British open mail  
rate; carried by Cunard  
line steamer Africa,  
departed New York June  
2 via Liverpool (June  
12), to Paris and then to  
Württemberg

Three recorded examples  
in red on transatlantic  
mail

Additional means of prepaying mail to foreign destinations evolved in the early 1850s. Integral rate markings were used infrequently on such mail.

## The End of Integral Rate Markings

September 27, 1852

Adhesive (applied to back flap) overlooked; letter incorrectly marked as unpaid

Manuscript "Overch'd 5" subsequently added to prevent collection of postage upon receipt



February 17, circa 1853

Double rate letter; single rate prepaid (3 cents) and second rate unpaid

Only reported cover with two Cincinnati integral rate markings in different colors



March 29, circa 1855  
to Columbus, OH

"1 unpaid" marking applied in error to unpaid letter rate mail; corrected in manuscript

Only recorded example of this marking showing rate correction



May 6, circa 1854

Erroneously marked as unpaid domestic mail despite prepayment of 20 cents at post office counter

Only recorded example of this marking with integral rate obliterated



The use of postmarks with integral markings could lead to confusion and rating errors, undermining postal efficiency. Mandatory prepayment by adhesive stamp ultimately eliminated the need to rate mail items, and rendered integral rate markings obsolete.