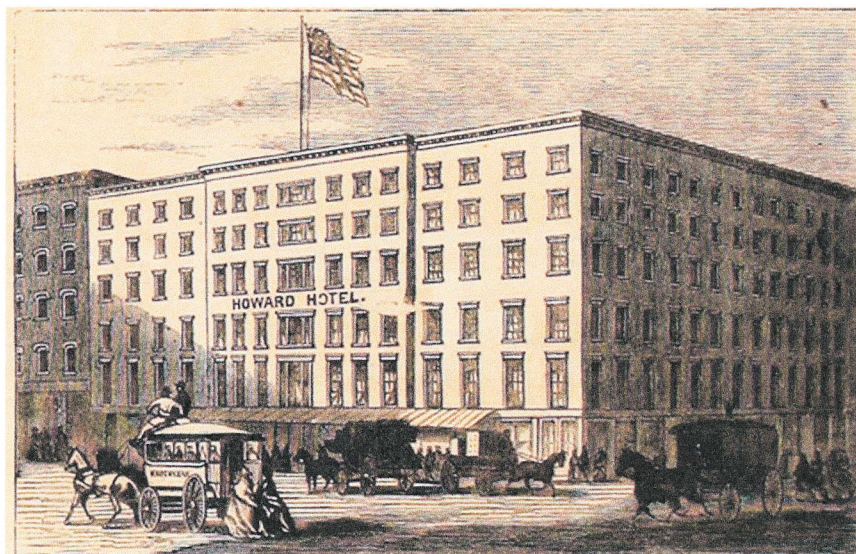


U.S. Hotel Forwarders Mail Markings 1840-1854



Markings shown full size, taken from covers shown in this exhibit.
Note: All other images are shown 75% size unless otherwise indicated

Howards Hotel in New York provided mail delivery service for its guests and marked such mail with an oval handstamp shown at left, from 1842 to 1848.

Scope: Markings shown from:

- **Baltimore:** Barnum's City Hotel, Monument Square.
- **Philadelphia:** Jones' Hotel. Ferguson & Bro., Columbia House. United States Hotel, REA. M. Pope Mitchell, United States Hotel. Washington House, 223 Chestnut St. Franklin House, 105 Chesnut St. E. Badger, Marshall House. Merchant's Hotel, N.W. Bridges.
- **New York:** Howards Hotel, American Hotel, Rathbun's Hotel.
- **Charleston, S.C.:** Charleston Hotel, D. Miner.

Note: Exceptional uses are outlined in red.

Among uses shown: Paid and Collect rates, Free use, Conjunctive uses with City Despatch Post, N.Y. and United States City Despatch Post, N.Y., Drop rate, both 2c and later 1c, Railroad marking, and forwarded use.

History: A tradition of giving letters to stage coach drivers to take to another town for a small fee, or possibly as an added service for customers, probably existed in many hotels dating back to colonial times. Several early hotels undoubtedly took letters written by their guests to the nearest post office, and picked up letters from the post office addressed to their guests. Starting in 1840 hotel markings made their appearance, usually struck on the back of the letter. These are not just advertising handstamps. Several of the hotels, such as Howards Hotel in New York, were acting as independent mail companies by sending letter carriers to different cities. Business letters, not just guest mail, are frequently seen. Other hotels were acting as local posts collecting letters for delivery to the post office. Very little is known regarding these hotel posts because primary source material, such as advertisements, are rarely found. Although there may have been an advertising component in the usage of these handstamps, it should be emphasized that these hotels did provide mail service. Drop boxes for letters probably existed in virtually all the better hotels in the 1840s. It is known if a fee was charged for taking letters to the post office, but it seems probable that some kind of cash "tip" for the service was usually rendered.

Hotel Forwarders from Baltimore: Barnum's City Hotel

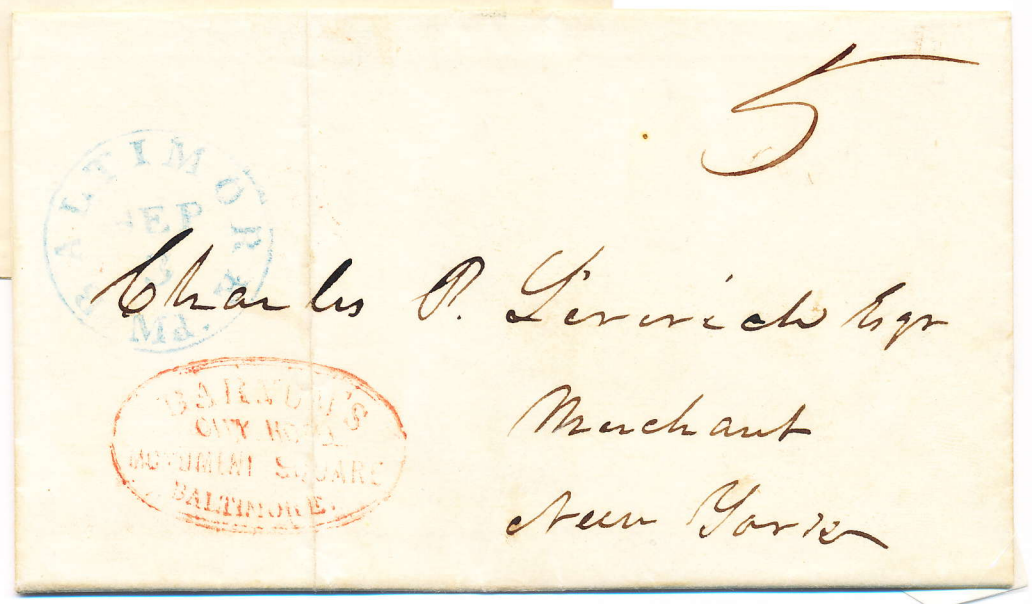


Baltimore, Md. Dec. 6, 1843 to Washington, D.C., 10c collect rate, 30 to 80 miles zone, per letter sheet, effective May 1, 1816



Barnum's marking in black

Baltimore Md. Sep. 3, 1845 to New York, 5c collect rate, distance under 300 miles, per ½ oz., effective Jul. 1, 1845. Barnum's marking in red

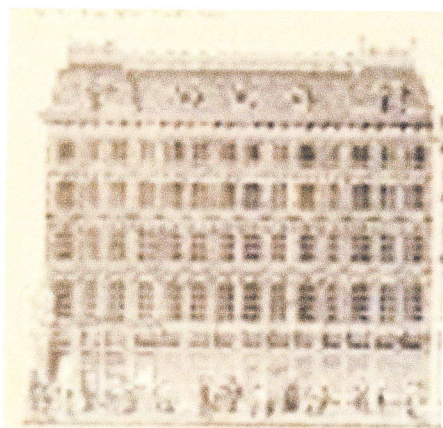


Barnum's City Hotel at Monument Square was built in 1825. The imposing six-story hotel was torn down to make room for Baltimore's Equitable Building built in 1891 and is still standing, located at 10 North Calvet Street, the oldest building in Monument Square.

Hotel Forwarders from Philadelphia: Jones' Hotel



Philadelphia Dec. 1, 1844 blue cds to Bordentown, N.J. 6c collect rate, under 30 miles zone. **Forwarded to Burlington, N.J.** Forwarding fee of an additional 6c was not charged for some unknown reason. Red Bordentown Dec. 3 cds.



Jones' Hotel, also known as the Benjamin Say House, was located at the historic address of 148-152 Chestnut St. before the major renumbering of Philadelphia's streets in 1857. After the hotel closed down, it operated as a store by Garrett & Son before being demolished.

Hotel Forwarders from Philadelphia: Jones' Hotel



Philadelphia Feb. 10, 1845 to
Baltimore, Md., 12½ cents
collect rate, 80 to 150 miles
zone.

1845
Letter
Thomas Olivier
to
D. M. Perine
Dated 9 February 1845

Docketed Dated 9 February 1845

Letter transcript:

Phila. Sunday, Jones' Hotel

My dear Sir,

I am on my way to Balto. & you
may expect me day after tomorrow
if nothing happens - Please return
the proceeds of the Balto. Water
Co. Bonds until I get on.

Yours very truly,

Thomas Olivier

(to) David M. Perine, Esq.

Phila Sunday
Jones' Hotel
My dear Sir.
I am on my way to
Balto. & you may expect me day after
tomorrow. if nothing happens -
Please return the proceeds of the Balto.
Water Co. Bonds until I get on -
Yours very truly
Thomas Olivier
David M. Perine Esq

Hotel Forwarders from Philadelphia: Jones' Hotel

The only known drop rate letter with Jones' Hotel marking



Philadelphia Sep. 15, 1845, local use, 2c drop letter rate, collect. Business letter to William Morris Meredith, legal contents about terms of settlement for a park.

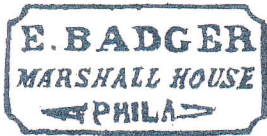


Addressed to **William Morris Meredith** (1799-1873), a Whig party politician and attorney from Philadelphia, served as United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania from 1841-1845. He served as Secretary of the Treasury under President Zachary Taylor from 1849 to 1850, and was elected Pennsylvania's Attorney General, serving from 1861 to 1867. He later served as a member of a commission working out a settlement of the *Alabama* claims in 1870.



Meredith depicted on the Fifth Issue (1874 and 1876) U.S. Fractional Currency 10 cent note

Hotel Forwarders from Philadelphia: Marshall House

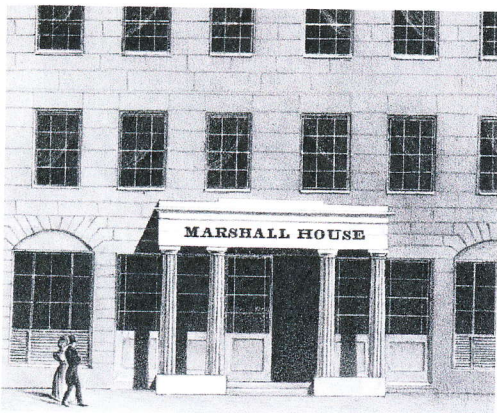


Earliest known example (Sep. 19, 1840) of this marking. Nearly all others date from 1841.



Philadelphia Sep 19, 1840 to Elkton, Md, 20c collect rate. The distance between the two towns is 51 miles, thus 10c rate for 30 to 80 miles zone, per letter sheet. A second letter was enclosed, thus double rate $10c \times 2 = 20c$.

The addressee, General James Sewall (1778-1842) was an officer in the War of 1812, commanding the 2nd Battalion of the 49th Maryland Regiment. Sewall defeated the British in their invasion of Maryland in 1813, repulsing them at Fort Defiance near Elkton, Md. Sewall served as Clerk of the Circuit Court in Elkton from 1816 to 1840, and was a railroad executive in the 1830s for the first railroad from Philadelphia to Baltimore.



The Marshall House Hotel was located at 625-631 Chestnut Street. Edmund Badger was the proprietor from 1837 to 1841. This lithograph is from an 1837 advertising print showing the front facade of the hotel. The hotel was later named the Columbia House in 1841. Examples of the new marking bearing that name are shown on next page.

Hotel Forwarders from Philadelphia: Columbia House



COLUMBIA HOUSE
PHILADELPHIA.

“Columbia House, Philadelphia” marking is recorded used from 1841 to 1847.

Philadelphia Apr. 24, 1846 to Lawyersville, Schoharie County, N.Y. 10 cent rate, over 300 miles.

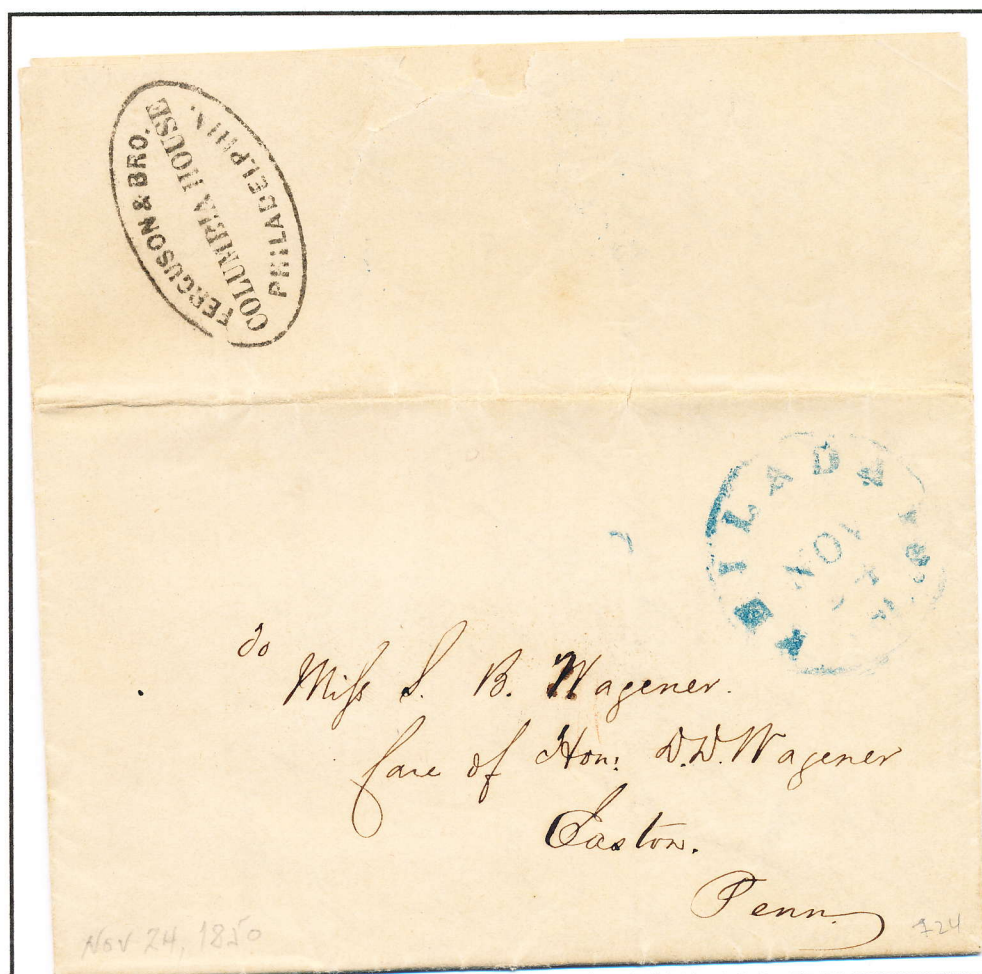


“Columbia House/ Ferguson & Bro./ Philadelphia” marking is recorded used in 1850 only.

Philadelphia Nov. 24, 1850 to Easton, Pa. Rate is not marked but should have been 5 cents as under 300 miles.

Letter is datelined
“Philadelphia, Columbia House, Sunday, November 24th 1850”

Columbia House was razed in 1856.

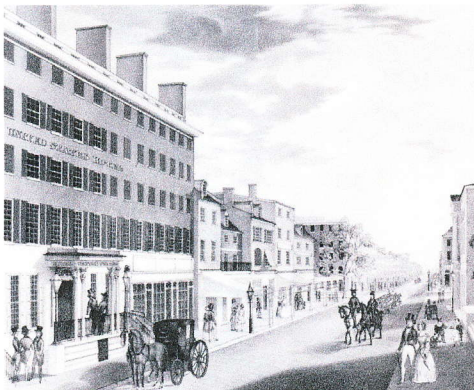
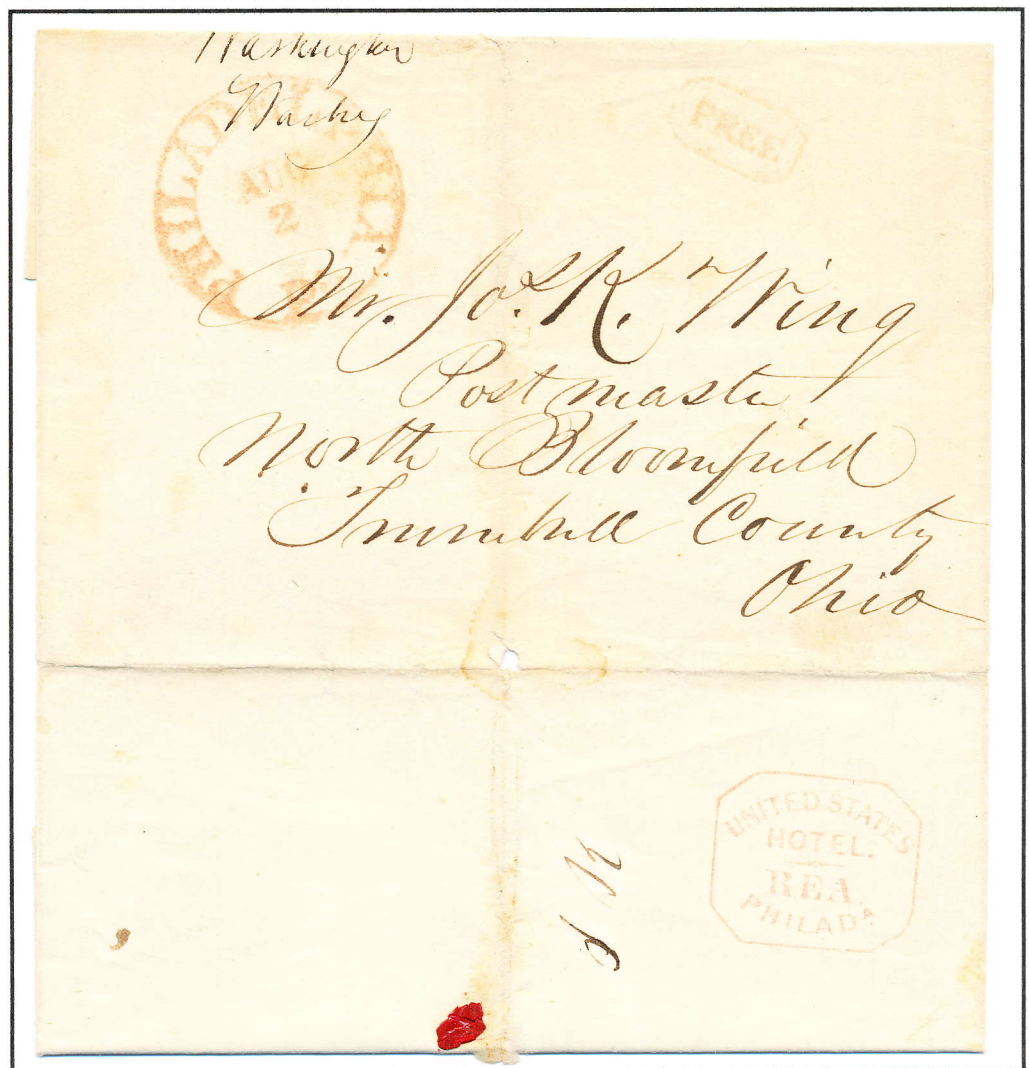


Hotel Forwarders from Philadelphia: United States Hotel



"United States Hotel/ Rea/ Philada." marking. Philadelphia Aug. 11 circa 1845 to Providence, R.I. on early envelope, 5 cents collect.

"United States Hotel/ Rea/ Philada." marking. Philadelphia Aug. 2, 1844 to Postmaster, North Bloomfield, Trumbull County, Ohio. "Free" boxed marking. Docketed "Aug. 1st 1844, E.A.B."



The United States Hotel, shown at left in this circa 1840 advertising print, was opened in 1826 by proprietor John Rea, at 419-423 Chestnut Street, directly across from the Second Bank of the United States. Thomas C. Rea, son of John Rea, operated the hotel until his death in 1846. The hotel was altered in 1840, and demolished in 1856 for the erection of a new building for the Bank of Pennsylvania.

Hotel Forwarders from Philadelphia

United States Hotel



"M. Pope Mitchell./
United States/ Hotel/
Philadelphia." marking.
Philadelphia Mar. 10,
1849 to Urbana, Ohio.
10 cent collect integral
rate datestamp

After Thomas C. Rea
died in 1846, ownership
of the hotel passed to M.
Pope Mitchell that year.
This marking is known
used from 1846 to 1849.



Merchants Hotel

"Merchants Hotel -
N.W. Bridges -
Philadelphia." marking.
Philadelphia Jul. 21,
1842 local use to street
address, 9th & Arch
Street. Delivered by
carrier for 2c fee.

Marking is known used
only in 1842.



Hotel Forwarders from Philadelphia: Washington House



"Washington House/ 223 Chestnut St./ Philadelphia." blue marking, known used 1841 to 1847.

Philadelphia May 16 1842 to street address in New York, 12½ cents collect rate.

"Washington House/ 223 Chestnut St./ Philadelphia." black marking, known used 1841 to 1847.

"Philada. Rail Road" red railroad route agent marking, "New York 10 cts. 10 Aug." circa 1846, integral rate datestamp applied in transit to destination of Boston.

This cover was given to the railroad route agent at the train station in Philadelphia to make the connection to Boston via New York in time.



Hotel Forwarders from Philadelphia: Washington House



WASHINGTON HOUSE
223 CHESTNUT ST.
PHILADELPHIA.

"Washington House/
223 Chestnut St./
Philadelphia." black
marking, known used
1841 to 1847.

Philadelphia Oct. 4
1845 to Easton, Pa.
"Paid" marking, 5
cent rate

WASHINGTON HOUSE
223 CHESTNUT ST.
PHILADELPHIA.

PROSPECTUS OF THE COLONIZATION HERALD.

THE Managers of the PENNSYLVANIA COLONIZATION SOCIETY having resolved once more to issue a paper under the same Editorial auspices that conducted their former paper with so much popularity, address their friends in Pennsylvania and the public generally, in the earnest hope of securing their support and patronage.

The press has become the great lever to move the public mind, and no object, however good in itself, can long attract public attention which disregards this instrument of influence.

At a time when plans of benevolence abound, and when they are pressed perseveringly upon the notice of philanthropists, we feel it to be our duty to send forth again the herald of Colonization. We are sure, that the "HERALD" will justify the confidence which its former management inspired, and that it will prove a most acceptable miscellany of news and science, and an able advocate of the cause it is designed to promote.

The price of the "HERALD," is ONE DOLLAR IN ADVANCE, and is believed to be within the reach of most who feel any interest in the cause. It will be issued monthly, on the fourth Wednesdays of each month. The profits will be applied to the general objects of the Society. Our friends may therefore consider their subscriptions as a donation to the cause of Colonization.

The following recommendation, the signatures to which were obtained in a very few hours, might doubtless have included the names of most of the Pastors of every denomination in the city, had time been taken to wait upon them. Enough however are here to show that the object is good.

RECOMMENDATION.

Philadelphia, April 19th, 1843.

The Subscribers are pleased to learn that the Pennsylvania Colonization Society has commenced the publication of a monthly paper entitled the Colonization Herald.

Such a paper is much needed to give information respecting the cause of African Colonization. This cause we consider eminently beneficial in its influence upon Africa, and useful to our country. We hope the Herald may be extensively circulated, and cordially recommend it to the patronage of all friendly to the cause—

JOHN M'DOWELL, Pastor of the Central Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia.

J. KENNADAY, Pastor of the Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church.

THOMAS L. JANEWAY, Pastor of the North Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia.

D. L. CARROLL, Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Northern Liberties, Philadelphia.

GEO. W. BETHUNE, Minister of the Third Reformed Dutch Church.

C. C. VAN ARSDALE, Minister of the First Reformed Dutch Church.

WM. A. WIGGINS, Pastor of the Western Methodist Episcopal Church.

JOHN PATTON, Pastor of Western Presbyterian Church.

J. F. BERG, Pastor of the First German Reformed Church.

S. H. TYNG, Rector of the Epiphany Church.

ASHBEL GREEN, D. D.

WM. A. McDOWELL, D. D.

Rev. THOMAS HOGE,

J. H. JONES, Pastor of the Sixth Presbyterian Church.

JOHN CHAMBERS, Pastor of the Independent Church.

H. A. BOARDMAN, Pastor of the Tenth Presbyterian Church.

WILLIS LORD, Pastor of the Penn Square Church.

A. D. GILLETTE, Pastor of the Eleventh Baptist Church.

C. C. CUYLER, Pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church.

JOEL PARKER, Pastor of the Clinton Street Presbyterian Church.

Please preserve until called for by the carrier.



Enclosure
scale: 70%

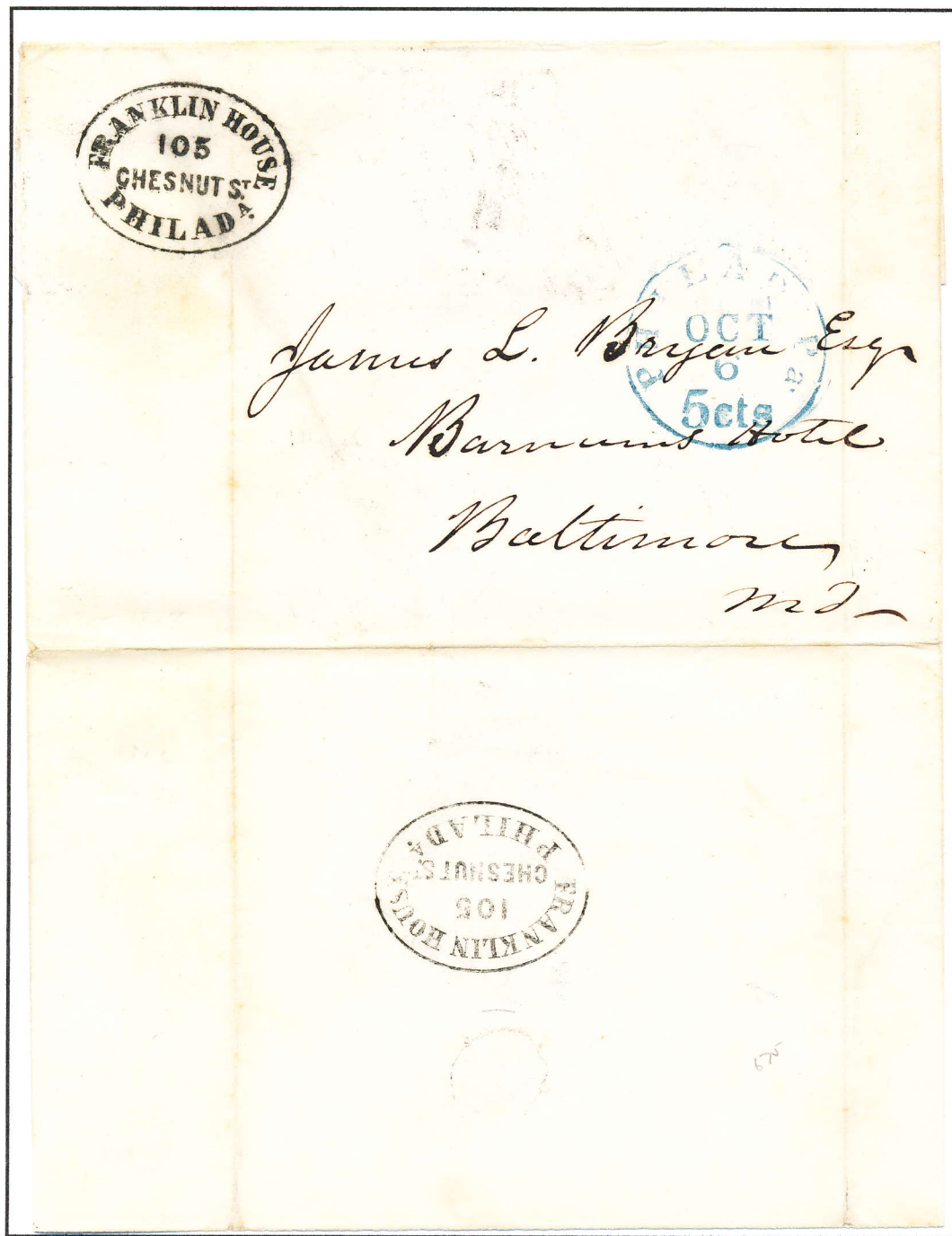
Letter written by Elliot Cresson
(1796-1854) Quaker philanthropist
and strong supporter of the American
Colonization Society which estab-
lished the first colony of liberated
slaves in Port Cresson, Liberia.

NAMES.

RESIDENCES.

No. OF COPIES.

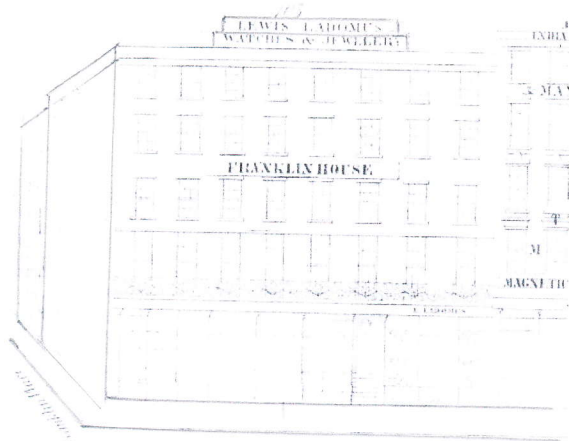
Hotel Forwarders from Philadelphia: Franklin House



“Franklin House/ 105 Chesnut St./ Philadelphia.” black marking, additional strike on reverse. Philadelphia Oct. 6, 1847 blue integral rate 5 cts. datestamp, to Baltimore.

Less than 10 examples are known of this marking

e



The Franklin House hotel was built by David Winebrenner in 1825 and stood at the northwest corner of Third and Chesnut Streets, the area abutting Franklin Court, where Benjamin Franklin’s residence and print shop stood until demolished in 1812. This line drawing of the luxurious hotel is from *Rae’s Chestnut Street Panorama* published in 1851.

Hotel Forwarders from New York



American Hotel



"American/ Hotel/ New York." marking known used 1846-1851. New York 5 cts. 11 Dec. 1845 integral rate datestamp, collect to New London, Conn.

Howards Hotel



"Forwarded From/ Howards Hotel/ New-York" marking, recorded in blue from 1842 to 1844.

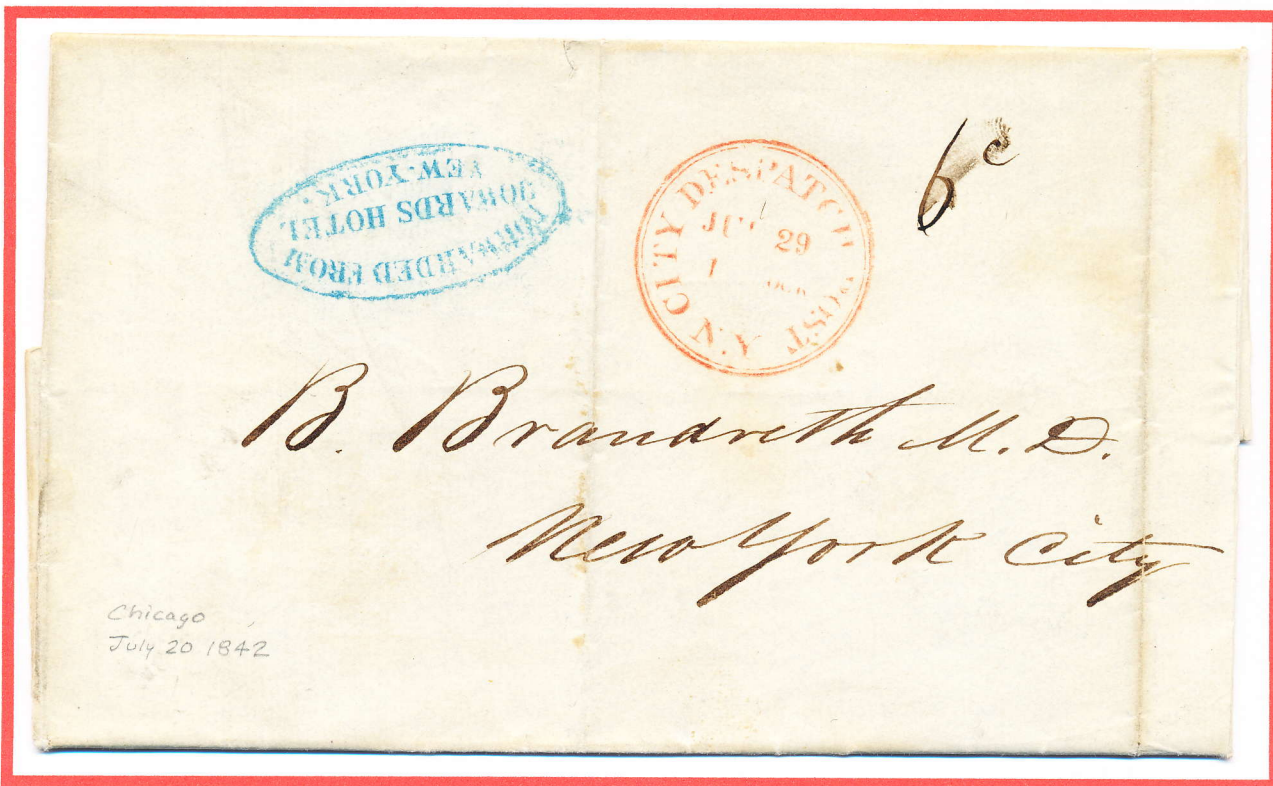


From Troy, N.Y. Sep. 22, 1842, privately carried on Hudson River steamer to New York, where it was dropped off at Howards Hotel. The hotel was a station of the government carrier service, who applied the red "U.S. City Despatch Post Sep. 27, 9 o'clock" datestamp, and delivered this letter to a merchant address on Water Street for 3 cents collect.

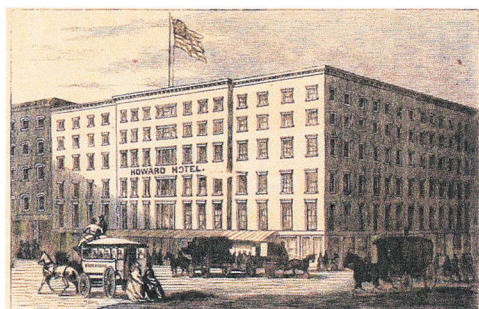


Hotel Forwarders from New York: Howards Hotel

"Forwarded From/ Howards Hotel/ New-York"
marking, recorded in blue from 1842 to 1844.



From Chicago, letter dated Jul. 20, 1842, privately carried to New York to Howard's Hotel, given to Greig's City Despatch Post for local delivery. "City Despatch Post N.Y. Jul. 29, 1 o'clock" red datestamp. **Manuscript "6c" rate** which is explained by the letter "*Mr. A.H. Smith had left Chicago two days before your package for him arrived & we now return it by private hand.*" **Thus both package and letter required 6 cents total postage (3 cents each) collect.** Greig's local post advertised delivery of parcels not exceeding 1 pound, in addition to letters. Docketing "S.F. Gale, Chicago, July 20th 1842". Stephen Francis Gale (1812-1905) was a prominent businessman in Chicago, opening a book and stationery store in Chicago in 1835. Gale was the agent for Miller & Co.'s Express in 1843 and later the agent for Wells' letter Express in 1844.



Howards Hotel operated a regular mail messenger service between Troy and New York City using Hudson River steamboats. Letters carried by this private delivery service entered the City Despatch Post (Greig's) for local delivery, such as this example. Postmaster General Charles A. Wickliffe's Report for December 1841 mentions "It is a notorious fact our principal hotels are common receptacles for letters . . . and I am at a loss to devise a remedy for this evil." and later in the report "**I understand that a box is kept at Howard's for the reception of letters for places on the Hudson.**"

Howards Hotel was located at no. 176 Broadway, corner of Maiden Lane. Howards was also located only a few blocks from the Hudson River steamboat docks. The hotel's central location and having City Despatch Post's letter boxes made it a convenient drop-off point for letters addressed to New York City.

Hotel Forwarders from New York

Rathbun's Hotel

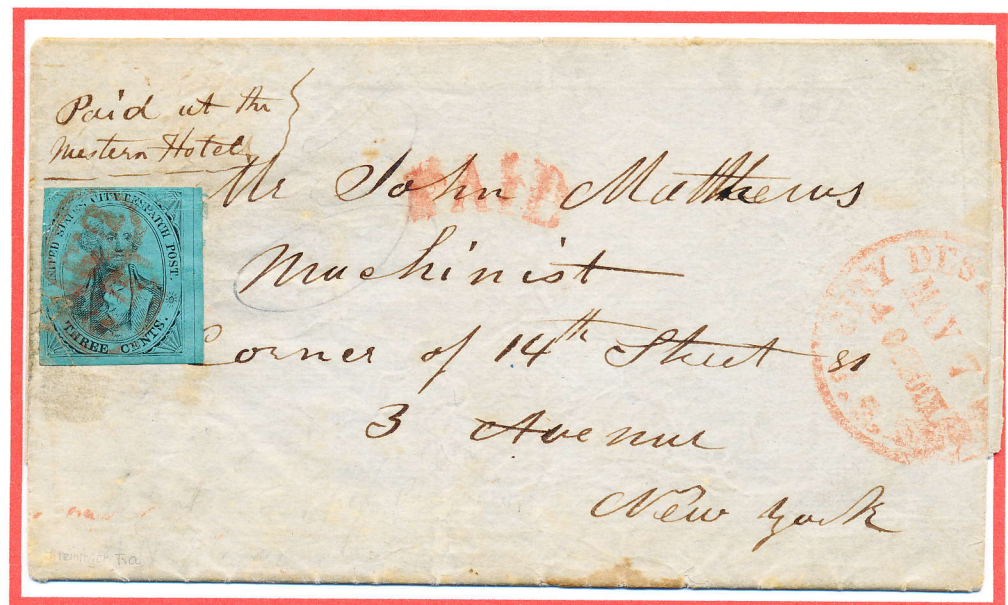
Rathbun's Hotel, located at 163-165 Broadway at Courtland Street in New York City, opened in 1846. The proprietor was Benjamin Rathbun. The hotel's main entrance led to reading and lounging rooms. Parlors for ladies and a dining hall were on the second floor, and the sleeping rooms above. Rathbun's nephew Allen was the front desk clerk. Social columns of the New York newspapers chronicled the marriages and catered receptions held in its parlors.



"Rathbun's Hotel New York" greenish-blue rare marking only known used from 1847 to 1848. New York 5 cts. 24 Apr. 1848 red integral rate collect datestamp, to Fabius, Onondaga County, N.Y.

Western Hotel

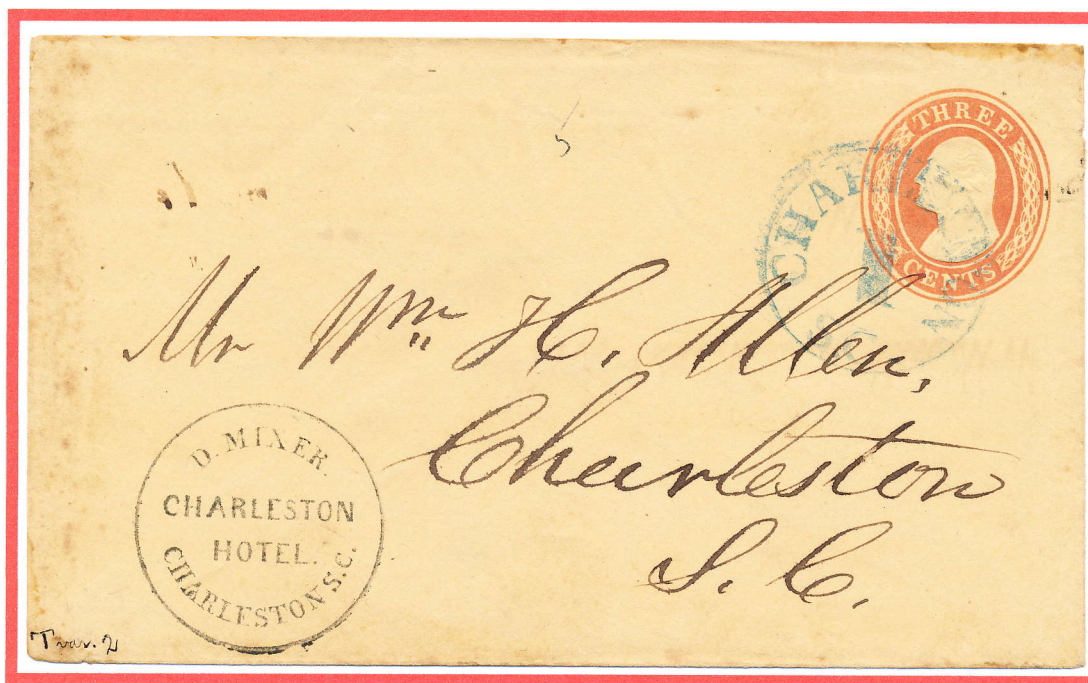
Sender's endorsement "Paid at the Western Hotel". The hotel was a station of the U.S. City Despatch Post, government carrier service.



U.S. City Despatch Post, New York, N.Y. 3c black on Blue Glazed Paper, Surface Colored, cancelled by red "U.S." in octagon frame. Pencil "3", red "Paid" in arc, red "U.S. City Despatch Post May 7, 4 o'clock" (1846). This letter was prepaid and handed into the post office, then turned over to the carrier service. The writer was probably a guest at the Western Hotel. Rare usage.

Hotel Forwarders from Charleston, S.C.: Charleston Hotel

The Charleston Hotel was built in 1839 at 200 Meeting Place, Charleston, S.C. It was designed by architect Nathaniel E. Potter, and was described as a striking structure, with Parthenon-style facade denoting architecture of the Greek Revival period.



"Charleston Hotel, D. Mixer, Charleston S.C." circular hotel handstamp. The hotel used a different oval marking during this period, and **this circular marking is the only known example.**

Charleston S.C. 1" integral rate datestamp on 3c red Nesbitt postal entire with The blue "1" rate handstamp was usually used for circulars and unstamped drop letters, so this is an unusual use. This is a convenience use for an overpaid drop letter, locally addressed.



Charleston S.C. Feb. 6" datestamp 1851 3c dull red, to University, Virginia, with blue embossed corner card of "Charleston Hotel, D. Mixer, Proprietor, Charleston, S.C."

EPILOGUE

When the post office began using more letter boxes, the importance of the hotels as mail repositories diminished. Most of the recorded uses are prior to 1860.