

Part XIII  
OHIO BICENTENNIAL SERIES<sup>1</sup>  
**MILAM & HOLMES**

By A J Savakis<sup>2</sup>

**A. Introduction**

The Milam & Holmes story begins in Frankfort, Kentucky, with the Milam family. The patriarch of the family, Benjamin C. Milam was born in 1821, and at the young age of 16 was apprenticed to a jeweler by the name of Jonathon Meek. Ben was more interested in fishing reels, and the two were involved in a fishing reel business known as Meek & Milam. Ben had a son, John W. who joined the fishing reel business of B. C. Milam & Son in 1890.<sup>3</sup> Down the street from B. C. Milam & Son was Samuel B. Holmes, a partner in a drug-store known as Holmes & Halloran (1891).<sup>4</sup>

Holmes becomes significant because he is appointed Frankfort postmaster in 1894, and the need for better means of cancelling letters and postal cards created a business opportunity. As Joe Holleman wrote, “Holmes and his business neighbor John W. Milam put their heads together to design and build a machine to replace the laborious hand-stamps. We have two November 1896 benchmarks:

- (1) Their application for U. S. patent filed on November 21, 1896 which later issued as Patent #597,981 (See Machine Cancel Forum [page] 188 [February 1977] an article written by John Koontz) and,
- (2) The earliest impression of a Milam and Holmes cancel, November 20, 1896; see Machine Cancel Forum [page] 396 [February 1978].”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Part XII appeared in the July 2006 Machine Cancel Forum. The series began in the January 2003 Machine Cancel Forum.

<sup>2</sup> Readers will recognize the liberal assistance of Bart Billings, Reg Morris, and Bob Payne, in this presentation of the history, data, and covers, as recently summarized by them in their book **A PRIMER – US MACHINE POSTAL MARKINGS** (privately printed 2005), at pages 121-123. Primer unfortunately sold out and is no longer available. Any errors or omissions in this article are solely the responsibility of the author of this series. Bob Payne presented an Exhibit at Colopex 1995 that explained the development of American machine cancels from the beginning. For this writer, it was an epiphany. The exhibit did more than anything to sharpen my knowledge on the study of machine cancels. Graciously Bob Payne allowed that exhibit to be photocopied, and it remains available from the Machine Cancel Society – a two volume study entitled **U.S. CLASSIC MACHINE CANCELS 1871-1991** – for \$75 retail (\$50 postpaid to members in the USA), and may be ordered through the Secretary. But the longest study on the Milam & Holmes cancellation was by Joe Holleman, ‘with a big assist by Bob Payne’, published in the original *Machine Cancel Forum* in March 1983 at pages 1567-1575. The Holleman-Payne article includes a census of known covers. These three resources are cited in this article, respectively, as **Primer**, **US Classic**, and **Holleman-Payne Article**, followed by page number(s).

<sup>3</sup> **Holleman-Payne**, page 1567.

<sup>4</sup> **Holleman-Payne**, page 1567. The pharmacy later changed its name to Holmes & Baird (1896). *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> **Holleman-Payne**, page 1567. An identical patent was filed in the United Kingdom on July 20, 1897, and granted August 28, 1897. No evidence of a British use has been found. *Ibid.*

Bob Payne featured that November 20, 1896, cover in both of his books, and this earliest reported use for the first Milan & Holmes machine has held the record for the past thirty years. Bob Payne noted that the use of the machine on November 20, 1896, predates the patent application by one day, and that the cancel features ‘sharp letters’, an indication that the rubberized dies used in the machine cancel device (rubber dies being dies that wear quickly), were still new.<sup>6</sup> An earlier use than November 20, 1896, after these years of searching would be unlikely.

Mail to be cancelled by the Milan & Holmes machine was placed face up on a conveyor belt, and by either electricity or hand-power, the belt pulled the mail into the machine for a continuous, repeating cancel. The operator had to hold the stack of letters so that the belt would only take the bottom envelope or card. The roller canceller, as earlier noted, consisted of soft rubber parts that needed replacing.<sup>7</sup> As a result, a succession of different styles of Milan & Holmes cancels are observed:

Type 1: Five slanted lines

Five covers known from Frankfort dated November 20 and December 23, 1896, January 12 and 23, 1897. Jim Mehrer in his September 2006 mail auction offered a sixth cover, dated February 9, 1897 also from Frankfort. At least four covers reported cancelled from Cincinnati dated January 16 and 18, 1897.<sup>8</sup>

Type 2: Spread Eagle – “The Glamour”

Twenty-one covers reported from Frankfort, February 19 to August 28/29, 1897. <sup>9</sup>

Type 3: Five wavy lines

Six covers reported from Frankfort, intermittently, on October 6, October 9, November 4, November 6, and December 11, 1897.

Type 3A: Wavy lines removed, used as backstamp

Two covers reported from Frankfort December 30, 1897, and January 10, 1898. Two covers known from Louisville January 23 and 26, 1898.

Type 4: Four wavy lines, with large serified letters

Nine covers reported from Lytle, Georgia (Spanish-American War Camp Thomas) on June 4, 5, and 6, 1898.

Type 5: Four wavy lines, with small sans-serif letters

One cover reported from Lexington on October 18, 1898. Two covers reported from Louisville, Kentucky on December 27 and 28, 1898. Fourteen covers known from Frankfort for the period of May 19, 1898 to July 25, 1899.

The ink colors vary from purplish brown to black, but more to the purple except for Types 3 and 4 which are only known in black ink.<sup>10</sup>

Bob Payne features a Type 6, with larger 3 mm letters from Frankfort on July 13, 1899, as a backstamp.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>6</sup> **US Classic**, page 209.

<sup>7</sup> **Holleman-Payne**, page 1571-1572.

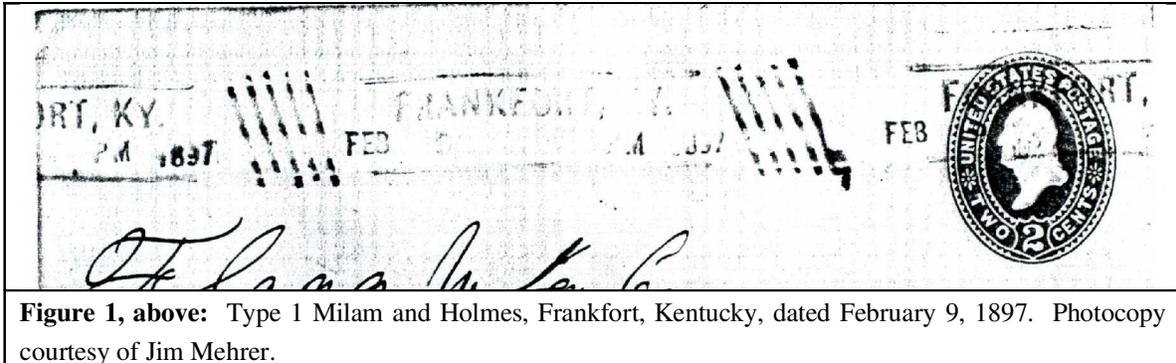
<sup>8</sup> There may be at least one more from Cincinnati according to the census.

<sup>9</sup> **Primer**, page 122. The postmark actually reads “28/29”!

<sup>10</sup> Dates of use are from the three sources noted in footnote 2, as well as an email on Cincinnati usage from Bob Payne dated February 12, 2005.

<sup>11</sup> **Primer**, page 123.

While it is likely that additional covers are in collections not featured in these three published articles and therefore outside the census, the fact remains these cancels are very rare.



**Figure 1, above:** Type 1 Milam and Holmes, Frankfort, Kentucky, dated February 9, 1897. Photocopy courtesy of Jim Mehrer.

## B. Milam & Holmes and the Spanish-American War

Soon after the American Civil War, their battlefields were recognized for their historical significance. They were also seen as a training ground for the Army's officers and troops. The National Park Service's administrative history of the national military parks notes that the battlefields were outdoor classrooms for infantry and artillery units for the purpose of learning strategy and tactics. Major George W. Davis was credited with devising the plan for use of the national military parks for both regular army and state militia units, as well as helping military students, such as West Point cadets, gain familiarity with decisive battles. The use of state militia was encouraged in order to increase their proficiency and capability of acting in concert with regular forces in an emergency. Congress passed a bill on May 11, 1896, formalized the use of the military parks in this manner.<sup>12</sup> A series of events and international problems arose just two years later.

The United States and Spain were in disagreement over the island of Cuba, and its management. "Fueled by the reports of inhumanity of the Spanish, a majority of Americans became convinced that an "intervention" was becoming necessary." The explosion of the USS Maine in Havana harbor brought the disagreement to a boil. On April 19, 1898, "Congress passed joint resolutions proclaiming Cuba "free and independent" and disclaiming any intentions in Cuba, demanded Spanish withdrawal, and authorized President William McKinley to use as much military force as he thought necessary to help Cuban patriots gain freedom from Spain." Spain responded with a withdrawal of its ambassador. Open hostilities between the two powers began, and on April 25 the Congress of the United States declared that a state of war existed by and between the United States and Spain as of April 21.<sup>13</sup> Five weeks later, Congress ordered the Post Office Department to 'establish a temporary post office at any military post or camp for purpose of supplying the officers and troops there encamped with mails.'<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> <http://nps.gov/archive/chch/adhi/adhi6.htm>.

<sup>13</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spanish\\_American\\_War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spanish_American_War) The effective date of war was later changed to April 20.

<sup>14</sup> Lawrence A. Gardner, *Spanish American War Mail: Getting Letters to the Troops*, The United States Specialist (March 1987) at page 132. Mr. Gardner was listed as being a Museum Technician of the National Philatelic Collection, Smithsonian Institution.

“The military post office at each camp was designated as a branch station of the nearest regular post office and placed within the jurisdiction of the postmaster at that office. Supplies for these military stations included postage stamps, stamped envelopes, postal cards, and the like, and were issued to the military stations through the regular post office of which it was a station.”<sup>15</sup>

The Spanish-American War would last just under three months, and most of the deaths would be caused by disease. But during this short time, the United States Post Office worked closely with the Department of War to more efficiently and quickly deliver mail to the soldiers and sailors than they did during the American Civil War. The Post Office Department would inaugurate new methods of postal delivery in order to service the American fighting man.<sup>16</sup> One of the new innovations was the use of the Railway Post Office (RPO). “When Spanish-American War troops were assembled in the South in 1898 prior to Cuba’s occupation, a flood of mail swamped the post offices near the camps. Large postal cars were immediately stationed wherever needed, particularly on sidings near Tampa, Florida, and Camp Chickamauga, Georgia. Crews with a wide knowledge of territory were assigned to work up mail for the armies to separate companies, regiments, batteries, and ships – mail from the soldiers, of course, to regular connections. After departure of the transports, all mail for enlisted men whose destination was unknown was dispatched to Key West, Florida, and thence to Santiago, Cuba.”<sup>17</sup>

**Figure 2 below:**

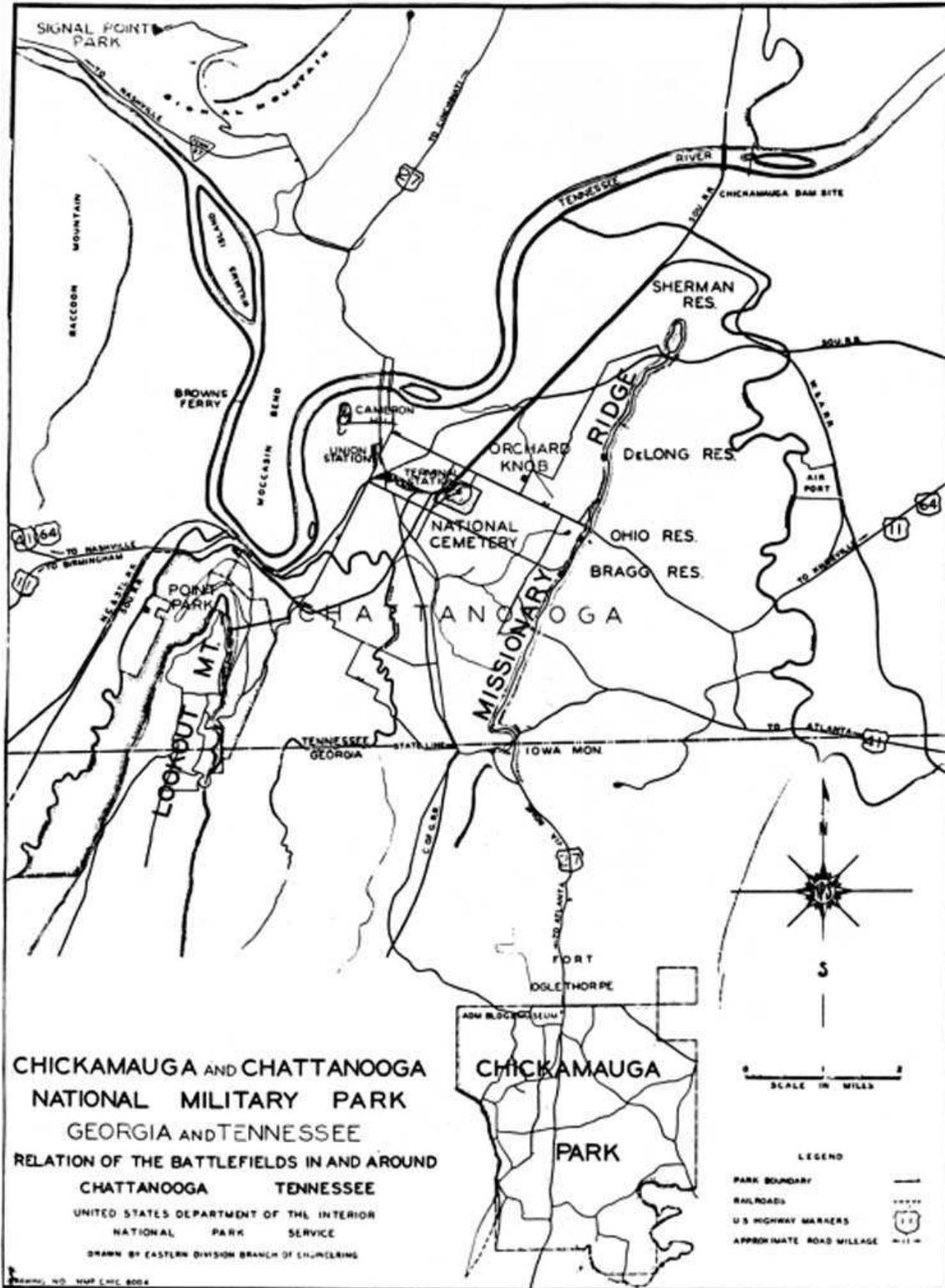
**Chattanooga, Tennessee and its relationship to the Chickamauga National Military Park**

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<sup>15</sup> Col. George S. Goodale, *U.S. Military Postal Stations in the Philippines (1898-1904)* published by Delf Norona Editor, *ENCYCLOPEDIA OF UNITED STATES POSTMARKS AND POSTAL HISTORY* (copyright 1933, 1935) Quarterman Publications reprint dated 1975 at page 42.

<sup>16</sup> *Supra* note 13.

<sup>17</sup> Bryant A. Long & William J. Dennis, *MAIL BY RAIL* (Simmons-Boardman Publishing Corporation 1951) at page 209.



First Assistance Postmaster General Perry S. Heath was in charge. Very quickly he faced the establishment of post offices at 42 military training camps across the continental United States. Each needed experienced postal clerks. **The first important military post office was established on June 6, 1898, at**

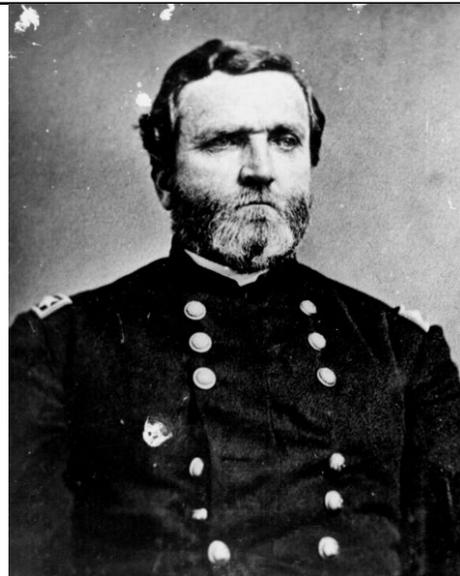
**Chickamauga National Park at the border of Georgia and Tennessee just nine miles south of Chattanooga, Tennessee.** At its peak, the Chickamauga Park Post Office and its twenty mail clerks, plus Army mail carriers, would process 320,000 letters a day, servicing over 50,000 soldiers encamped there. Mail volume was not the only issue. The soldiers were transient, coming and going from one military camp to another.<sup>18</sup>

The soldiers at Chickamauga Park, Georgia, named their camp after Civil War General George Henry Thomas, nicknamed ‘The Rock of Chickamauga’ after his determined hold of the Union center at Chickamauga in 1863.<sup>19</sup> “To meet the demand of delivering this massive amount of regular military mail, in addition to the daily receipt and dispatch of 1,200 pieces of registered mail, plus the sales of stamps and money orders, authorities at **Camp George H. Thomas** utilized two sixty-foot cars of the Railway Mail Service until a permanent post office could be built. One car was used for the sorting and delivery of incoming regimental mail, and the other handled outgoing mail. This method of delivery and dispatch was used also at most of the other congested Florida military encampments.”<sup>20</sup>

**Figure 3: George Henry Thomas** (July 31, 1816 – March 28, 1870) was a career U.S. Army officer and a Union general during the American Civil War, one of the principal commanders in the Western Theater. Thomas was born in Newsom's Depot, Southampton County, Virginia. In 1831, Thomas, his sisters, and his widowed mother were forced to flee from their home and hide in the nearby woods in the wake of Nat Turner's slave rebellion. Graduating from the U.S. Military Academy in 1840, he served as an artillery subaltern in the war against the Seminole Indians in Florida (1841), and in the Mexican-American War at the battles of Fort Brown, Resaca de la Palma, Monterrey, and Buena Vista, receiving three promotions for distinguished gallantry in action. From 1851 to 1854, he was an instructor at West Point. In 1855, he was appointed a major of the 2nd U.S. Cavalry (later redesignated the 5th U.S. Cavalry) by Jefferson Davis, then Secretary of War. On August 26, 1860, Thomas was wounded by an Indian arrow passing through the flesh near his chin area and sticking into his chest at Clear Fork, Brazos River, Texas.

He had along service with the Union Army during the American Civil War, and received various nicknames as a result: “Rock of Chickamauga, “The Sledge of Nashville”, and “Slow Trot Thomas,” depending on his success and performance.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George\\_Henry\\_Thomas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Henry_Thomas)



*This image comes from the National Archives and Records Administration, the vast majority of whose images and documents are in the public domain.*

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:George\\_h\\_thomas.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:George_h_thomas.jpg)

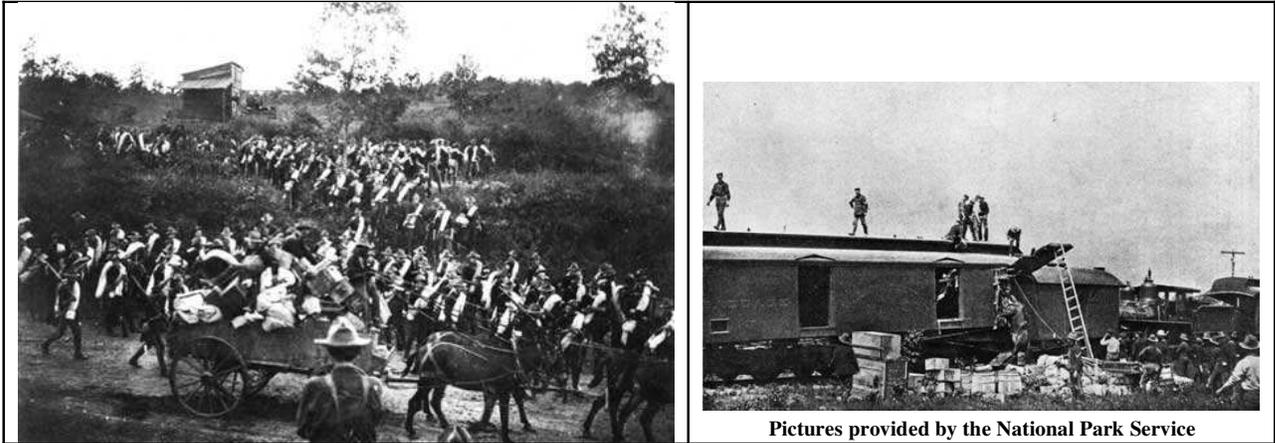
The National Park website notes that the troops left trash, while they were there and after they left. The trash attracted flies and other insects. Human sewage and animal corals that were not cleaned drained into

<sup>18</sup> Lawrence A. Gardner, *Spanish American War Mail: Getting Letters to the Troops*, The United States Specialist (March 1987) at page 133.

<sup>19</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/George\\_Henry\\_Thomas](http://en.wikipedia.org/George_Henry_Thomas)

<sup>20</sup> Supra note 16.

creeks, where the men got their water. “To make matters worse, the soldiers lacked bathing facilities; those sent to Crawfish Springs to get drinking water drove their teams into the creeks, to out and bathed themselves, then filled their barrels.”<sup>21</sup>



Pictures provided by the National Park Service

**Figure 4, above left:** Volunteers arrive 1898 at Camp Thomas, Chickamauga National Military Park.

**Figure 5, above right:** Disease was not the only domestic enemy of troops embarking for the war. There was a train wreck just outside the camp in Georgia.



**Figure 6, above:** Hastily built latrines were erected, and added to the sanitation problem. More men died on U.S. soil than from wounds fighting abroad. Photograph provided by the National Park Service.

<sup>21</sup> <http://nps.gov/archive/chch/adhi/adhi6.htm>

	<p><b>Figure 7, at left:</b> Sternberg Hospital, all under canvas, at Camp Thomas.</p>	
<p><b>Figure 8, at right:</b> Troops practice first aid.</p>		
<p>Although the army planned for a foreign enemy, it was the domestic enemy of sanitation that caused more problems. Photographs provided by the National Park Service.</p>		

A Google search found many other references to volunteer state regiments passing through Camp George H. Thomas, Chickamauga Park. Significant information from these websites is as follows:

1. The Ninth Regiment Infantry, National Guard of Pennsylvania, which was composed of eight companies from Luzerne County. The regiment was mustered into the service of the United States on May 11, 1898, with a total strength of thirty-six officers, and six hundred four enlisted men. They left Gretna, Pennsylvania on May 17, and arrived at Camp George H. Thomas, Chickamauga Park, Georgia, and **bivouacked at Lytle Hill**. They were assigned to the Third Brigade, Third Division, First Army Corps.<sup>22</sup>
2. Michigan's governor in response to President McKinley's request for soldiers nationalized he Michigan National Guard. Federal law did not permit this, and it was necessary for each soldier to volunteer for duty. Indeed, practically all men in the Michigan National Guard did volunteer, and the soldiers were re-organized into four regiments of 12 companies each. Each regiment was supposed to hold 1000 men, and the Michigan regiments were slightly larger. The 31<sup>st</sup> Regiment was sent to Camp Chickamauga Park, Georgia, in May 1898, and remained there until sickness caused it to be moved to Knoxville, Tennessee. It was not until the war was over, in January 1899, the 31<sup>st</sup> was sent to Cuba to preserve order and protect property. It was disbanded on May 17, 1899, with twenty men lost to sickness.<sup>23</sup> As will be seen below, one of the Milam & Holmes covers postmarked **LYTLE, GEORGIA**, appears to refer to RG 31 MC Vol.

<sup>22</sup> <http://paspanishamericanwar.com/ninthregiment>. This is the official website of the Commonwealth's National Guard.

<sup>23</sup> <http://michigan.gov> and from there select National Guard and then history.

**Figure 9: William Haines Lytle** (November 2, 1826 – September 20, 1863) was a politician in Ohio, renowned poet, and military officer in the United States Army during both the Mexican-American War and American Civil War, where he was killed in action as a brigadier general.

Lytle was born in Cincinnati, the scion of a leading area family, the Lytle family. He graduated from Cincinnati College and studied law. After passing the bar exam, he established a law firm in Cincinnati, but soon enlisted in the 2nd Ohio Volunteer Infantry and served as a captain in the Mexican War. After returning from Mexico, Lytle resumed and expanded his legal practice. He was elected to the Ohio state legislature as a Democrat, only by a few hundred votes missed being elected Ohio Lieutenant Governor. He was a celebrated American poet before the Civil War. Lytle's most famous poem, "Antony and Cleopatra" (published in 1857), was beloved by both North and South in antebellum America. Lytle was appointed as a major general in the Ohio state militia, and later joined the Union Army in 1861.

William Lytle was mortally wounded at the Battle of Chickamauga in Georgia while leading a counterattack on horseback. Once his identity was known, respectful Confederates placed a guard around his body, and many recited his poetry over their evening campfires. The hill where he died is now known as "Lytle Hill" in the Chickamauga National Military Park.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William\\_Haines\\_Lytle](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Haines_Lytle)



<http://www.generalsandbrevets.com/ngl/lytle.htm>

Note the magnificent connections: (a) Holmes was appointed postmaster of Frankfort in 1894 presumably because he had connections with the Democratic administration of President Grover Cleveland; (b) the use of a Milam & Holmes machine cancel in Cincinnati in January 1896 before the Republican administration of William McKinley could take office (the home of deceased General Lytle's family . . . presumably also a strong Democratic family); and (c) the honor of a military camp being named in the deceased general's name at the spot where he died!

Readers will recall in the last issue of the Ohio Bicentennial Series – Part XII – The Hampdens, reference was made to how James Tyner (Postmaster General), William R. Landfear (inventor), and Timothy Merrick (financier) used their Republican connections to have their Hampden machines used by the Post Office Department.<sup>24</sup> Milam & Holmes were doing the same thing from the other side of the aisle!

**Figure 10:** The National Park Service map for Chickamauga, showing both Lytle Road and the final resting place of General Lytle, marked with bold arrows.

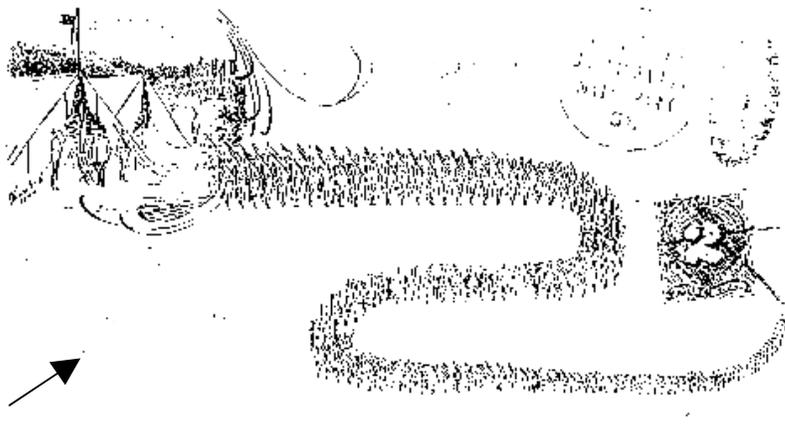
<sup>24</sup> Machine Cancel Forum (July 2006) at page 3759.



The National Park Service on its website for the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park provided the map of Chickamauga, showing both Lytle Road and the final resting place of General Lytle<sup>25</sup> that appears in **Figure 10**. Another part of the website provides this photograph (**Figure 11**) of the midway at Lytle, Georgia:



**Figure 11, above:** Midway at Lytle, Georgia. Is that a railroad car at the far right? RPO?



**Figure 12, at left:** Soldier's Mail to Maine, sent unpaid, and postage due payable when received. The cancel is a hand postmark for the military park dated AUG 9 98.

Note the return address of LYTLE, GA at the lower left portion of the envelope.

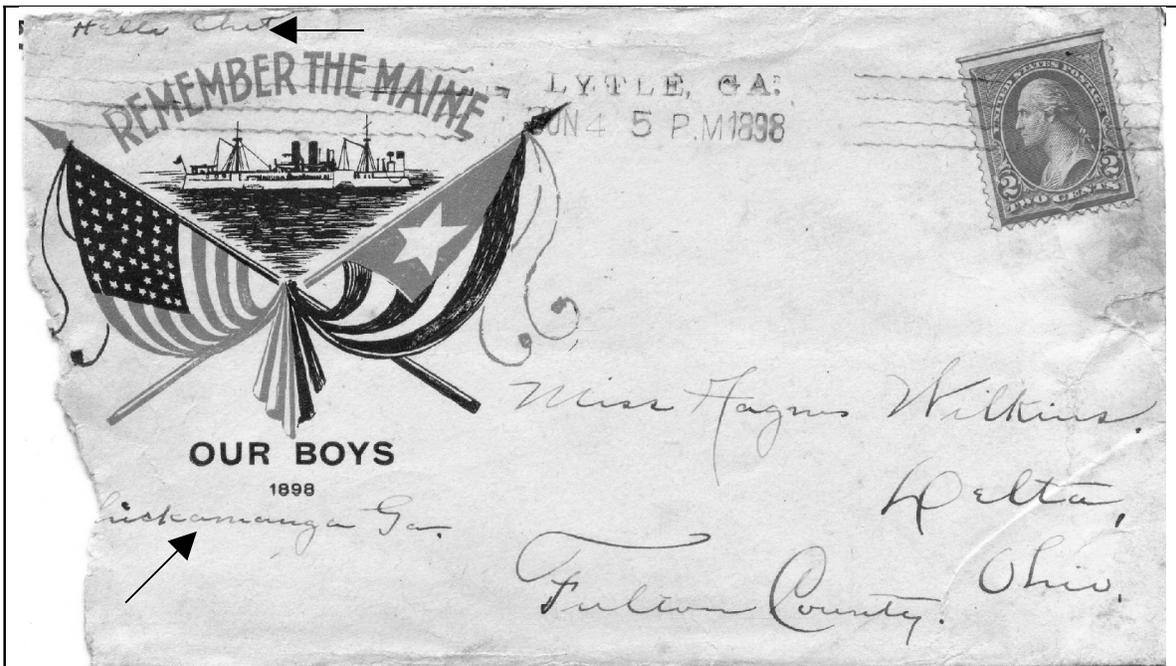
Cover offered in LaPosta

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.nps.gov/chch/planyourvisit/maps.htm>. The map is provided in 'PDF' format, and could either be printed full page, or very small. The full page mode was selected as it was clearest in the central part where LYTLE could be found.

Auction, March 2006.

As shown by the cover in **Figure 12**, the naming of the camp site was fortuitous and continued after the Milam & Holmes machine was taken away. But getting the machine to Georgia for a highly visible test with others in control where the mail cancelled would be sure to be seen nationwide was not just luck!

The first reported use of the Milam & Holmes machine at Chickamauga Park was June 4, 1898. One such early cover is featured in **Figure 13 A** below. It shows a time of 5 PM. Observe carefully the wavy lines. Remember, these were rubber parts and tended to clog and wear easily. These wavy lines are very clear and thin. Using Bob Payne’s comments about the November 1896 Frankfort cover earlier in this article, the cancel dies were relatively new. Compare these thin, crisp wavy-lines with those of **Figure 14 C**.



**Figure 13 A, above:** Postmarked LYTLE, GA / JUN 4 5 P.M 1898. Note how thin and crisp the 4-wavy line cancel is in this example. Compare them with the 4-wavy line cancel in **Figure 14** that follows, which is a day later. There are a couple of interesting things with this cover. First, the return address is Chickamauga, Georgia, which is postal history proof tying Lytle, Georgia, with Chickamauga post office. Second, unlike the cover in **Figure 12**, postage is provided by the soldier. Finally, although this cover is posted to a Miss Aagnus Wilkins of Delta, Ohio, there is a “Hello, Chet” in the top left corner of the cover, a message perhaps to a brother of the young lady, or a someone who would be delivering the mail to the young lady?  
 Ex Reg Morris

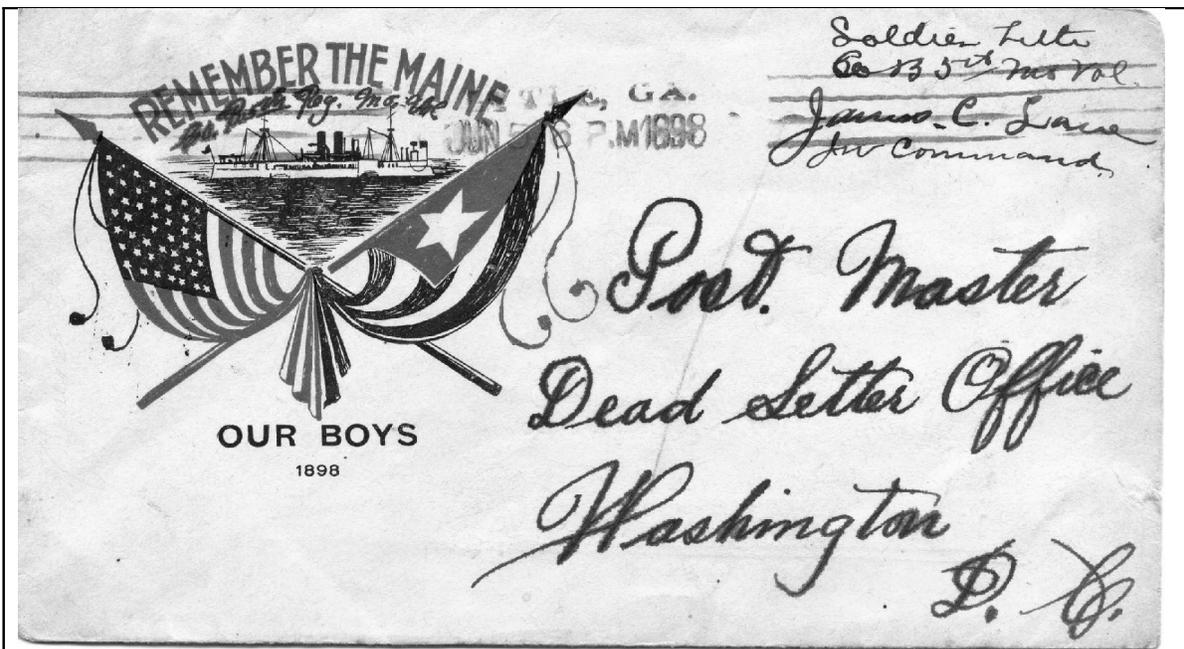
**Figure 13 B, below:** The 4-wavy line cancel is enlarged, showing the thin, crisp wavy lines.



Before leaving this June 4, 1897, cover in **Figure 13 A**, let's compare it with other June 4, 1897, Milam & Holmes covers. The census of Lytle, Georgia, Milam & Holmes gives us this information on the use of the machine on June 4<sup>th</sup>:

- As a matter of fact , there are only TWO covers dated June 4, 1898, and both have 5 PM for their time. The second one was owned by Bob Payne, and he pictured it twice, in Primer and US Classics.
- Both of their cancellations feature crisp, thin wavy lines.
- The corner card of the Bob Payne cover was a printed patriotic cover, with an American Flag and with a return address of "CAMP THOMAS" / Chickamauga Battlefield / LYTLE, GEORGIA.
- The Bob Payne cover is also posted with two-cents postage paid by the soldier.

The cover in **Figure 14 A**, below, is different in that it is not sent with postage paid, but neither is it sent postage due. It is soldier's mail sent to the Dead Letter Office!

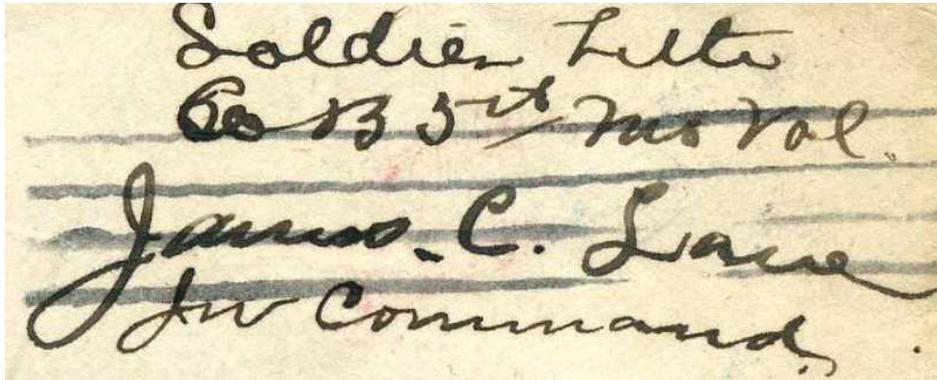


**Figure 14 A, above:** Milam & Holmes repeater cancel along the top of this Spanish-American War Cover.

The 4-wavy lines make this a Type 4 Milam & Holmes cancel. The postmark reads LYTLE, GA. / JUN 5 6-P.M 1898. This is the second day of a three-day use. The lines are no longer thin and crisp.



**Figure 14 B, above:** Close-up of the corner card, with what appears to read Co. B 5<sup>th</sup> Reg. Mc [Michigan?] Vol[unteers]. Note how thick the cancellation's wavy lines appear.



**Figure 14 C, at left:** The frank for the cover in Figure 14 A reads:

Soldiers Letter  
Co B 5<sup>th</sup> Mc Vol  
James C. Lane  
In Command

Note how strong the cancellation wavy lines appear.

Which raises an interesting point: Why are the cancellations different in just two days of use?

Either the rubber dies wore quickly, due to a great deal of mail cancelled (the most likely)

OR

Different machines were used at Lytle, Georgia.

In the Holleman-Payne article, there is speculation as to how many machines were built by Milam & Holmes. The census does not show more than one city used on any one given day. There is however examples of the machine being used on different days at different locations, but very close to one another. For that reason, Holleman-Payne speculate that there at least two machines, with one being provided for

use by David N. Comingore of Covington, Kentucky, to demonstrate the Milam & Holmes machine. Holleman and Payne were even able to find the contract with Comingore making him an authorized salesman and setting forth his commission. Those authors speculate that the Frankfort machine cancel was always at the Frankfort post office, and that a demonstration machine would have been necessary. It was perhaps through Comingore's connections with the Kentucky National Guard that got the machine down to Chickamauga.<sup>26</sup>

In any event, the combination of poor die wear and the sweep of the Democrats from power spelled doom for the Milam & Holmes machine. Holmes ceased to be the Frankfort postmaster in 1898. The political connections seemed to have dried up.

Having explored the Ohio connections of the Lytle, Georgia, use of the Milam & Holmes machine, it is time to turn to the sole use of the Milam & Holmes in the state . . . Cincinnati.

### C. The Milam & Holmes machine cancel used in Cincinnati

The Milam & Holmes machine cancel was used in Cincinnati during January 1897, before President McKinley and his administration could take power, before the machine was used in Georgia (June 1898) and before Comingore was contracted as a salesman (May 1897). Remember, it was Holmes who had the political connections to get himself appointed as Frankfort postmaster (serving from 1896 to 1898<sup>27</sup>). With President Grover Cleveland in power until March 1897, those would have necessitated Democratic connections. Holmes through the party would have had connections to counterparts in the post office in Cincinnati (through the Lytle family?), and hence Holmes held the opportunity to get the machine in use there. It is interesting to note that when the contract was signed between John W. Milam, Samuel B. Holmes, and David N. Comingore, the machine was referred to as the "The Milam Cancelling Machine." The public use of the name in 1898 of the one partner, Democrat Samuel B. Holmes, was no longer an asset! It is the writer's opinion that it was Holmes's connections that got the machine into the Cincinnati Post Office, and that thereafter the uses in Kentucky especially was the work of Comingore. As to who got it to Georgia, it might have been everyone's effort.

The census for Cincinnati use shows only Type 1 cancels, with 5-diagonal lines:

1. January ----, 1897 AM
2. January 16, 1897 6:30 PM [Saturday]
3. January 16, 1897 7 PM [Saturday]
4. January 18, 1897 [Monday]

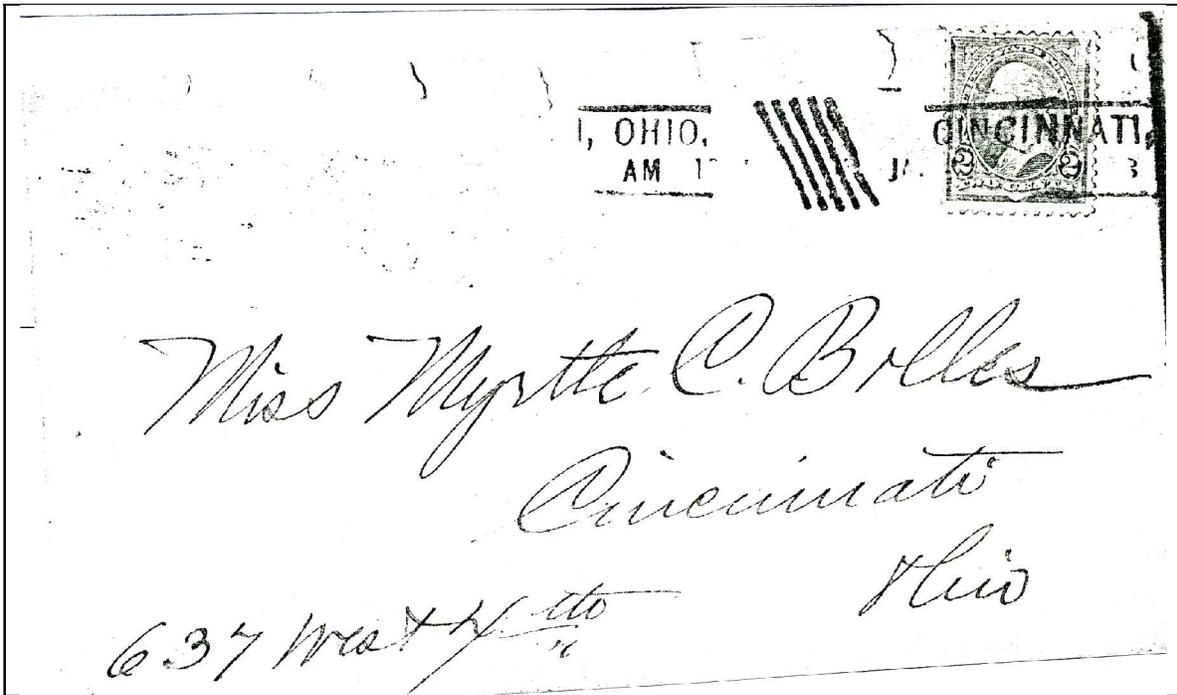
With covers #1, #2 and #3 reported in the Holleman-Payne article.<sup>28</sup> Covers #1 (a poor example) and #4, the sole Monday use, was referred to the writer by Bob Payne through email.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>26</sup> **Holleman-Payne**, at pages 1572, 1577.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> Holleman-Payne, at page 1571.

<sup>29</sup> Email from Bob Payne to Alex Savakis, dated February 12, 2005. The text of which is as follows, "Good Morning. As to the Cincinnati, I recall only two copies in which I had both and sold the 2<sup>nd</sup> copy years ago as it was rather crum[m]y brought it brought [sic] a handsome price. Dates of use are Jan 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, 1897. Best, Bob."



**Figure 15:** The writer believes this is Cover #1 in the Cincinnati Milam & Holmes census, with a date in the census of “----“. This was a photocopy either sent by Bob Payne separate from the email, or in Reg Morris’ files. The upper left corner is ripped off. The day of the week would appear under centered under the “INC” of CINCINNATI. That part is totally gone from the left part of the repeating cancel. It is unreadable at the right. The census by **Holleman-Payne** notes that Cover #1 and #2 might be the same, but note that while the time is unreadable, one can see AM. So covers #1 and #2 are different!

To the best of the writer’s knowledge, Cover #1 appeared in print only once, in Bart Billings’ A HISTORY OF POSTMARKING MACHINES USED IN OHIO (October 1982) at page 16, and at that time was believed to be the only Cincinnati example.

Cover #2 was featured in Bob Payne’s book, US Classics, at page 211. Cover #2 is dated JAN 16 6 30 PM 1897. and for the first time a January 18, 1897, use is noted as a Last Known Use in the literature. Cover #2 is featured in **Figure 16 A** on the following page.

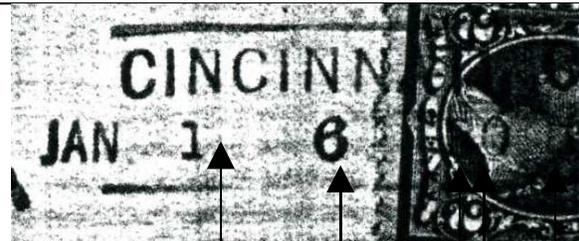


**Figure 16 A, above:** This is cover #2 in the **Holleman-Payne** census, with a postmark reading CINCINNATI, OHIO. / JAN 16 6:30 PM 1897. This is a very hard cover to reproduce. The corner card masks part of the postmark.



97 C 16

**Figure 16 B, above:** This is the far left corner of Cover #2 featured pictured whole in Figure 16 A. You can see the 97 of 1897 at the far left. The C of CINCINNATI is below the “e” of “The”. The “1” of “16” is inside the globe. The “6: of “16” is half inside the globe.

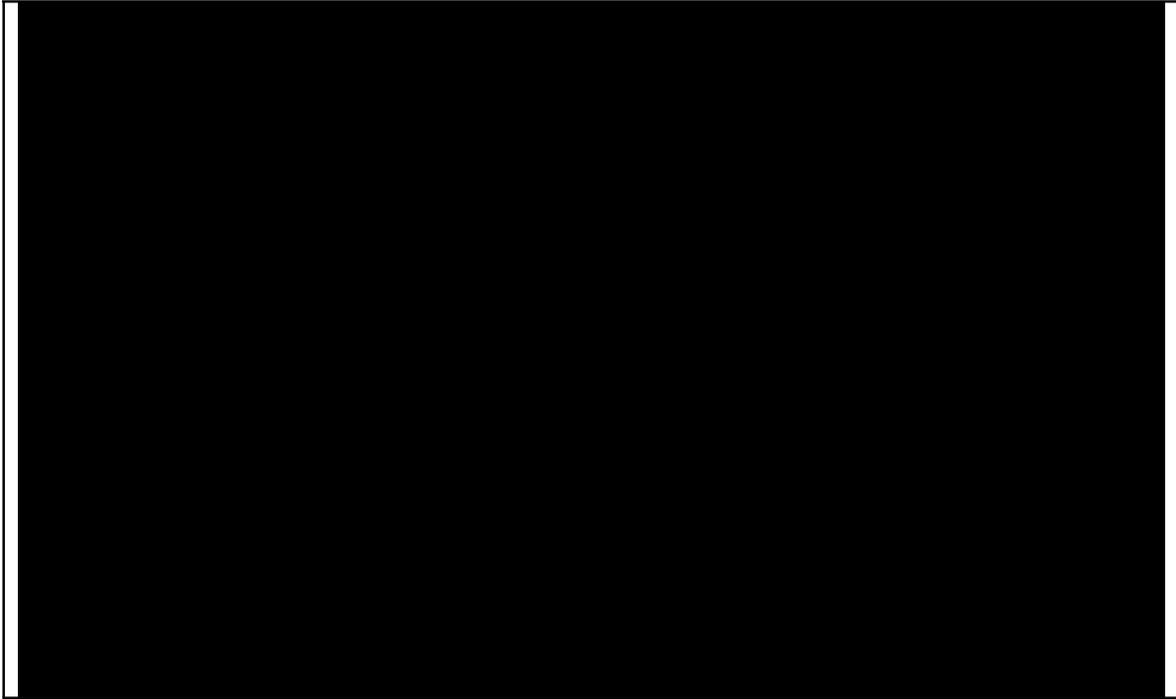


[6] 6 30 P

**Figure 16 C, above:** This is the top right part of the cancel of Cover #2 featured pictured whole in Figure 16 A. The “6” of the date “16” did not print, and its location is marked [6]. If it would have printed, it would have been located between the “NC” of CINCINNATI. Note the large gap between the hour and minutes.

Despite the problems with reproducing this cover, the information is readable, and the cover is sound. Cover #2 was sold in Jim Mehrer’s Mail Bid Sale #72, and brought slightly more than its \$800 estimated value. A similar Type 1 Milam & Holmes on cover posted in Frankfort went without bid.

Cover #3 is the best of the trio presented thus far, with a full repeating cancellation and postmark, clear of corner cards and not obscured by its postage stamp.



**Figure 17, above:** This cover, referred to as Cover #4 in the census, appeared in its entirety in the **Holleman-Payne** article. It would reappear as a scan of its top quarter in Primer and the Machine Cancel Society Handbook (Revision July 1992).

Cover #4 is referred to by text only in the US CLASSIC book, and to the writer's knowledge, the January 19, 1897, usage has never been scanned and pictured in a machine cancel publication. The writer is equally sure that it is not the same as Cover #1, as it is doubtful knowing Bob Payne that he would sell the first use and last use from his collection unless it was in a trade for something he dearly needed.

Is there a fifth or even sixth Cincinnati Milan & Holmes cover? It is possible, as the first census published in 1983 did not include times, and it is possible that collectors might have assumed their cover was already reported.

By all means, if you have a Milan & Holmes Cincinnati cover not pictured in this article, please send a good photocopy to the Machine Cnncel Editor. I would especially like to see the January 18, 1897, over. Also, if you have a Milan & Holmes for another city with a date not reported, likewise a photocopy would be appreciated!

**Dues Reminder!**

Have you paid your 2007 dues? Your dues notice was sent with your October 2006 copy of Machine Cancel Forum. Kindly remit if you have not already.