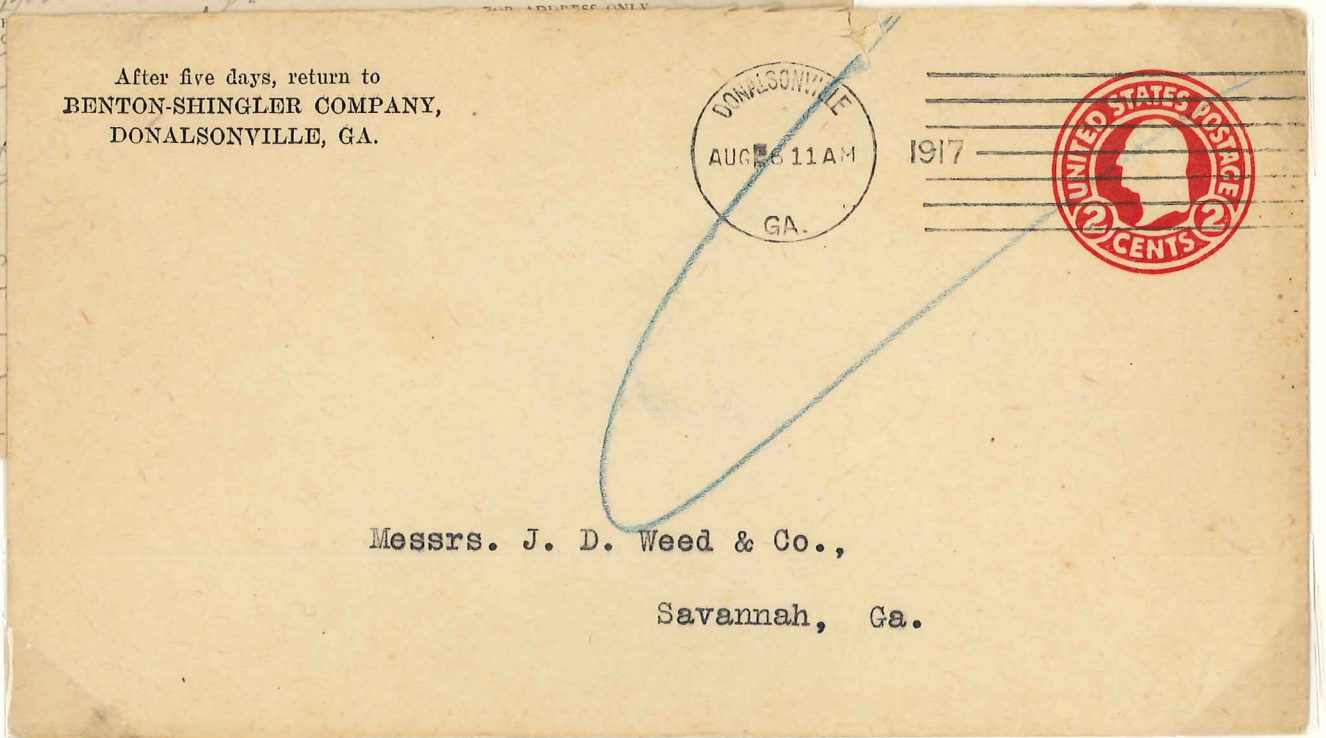
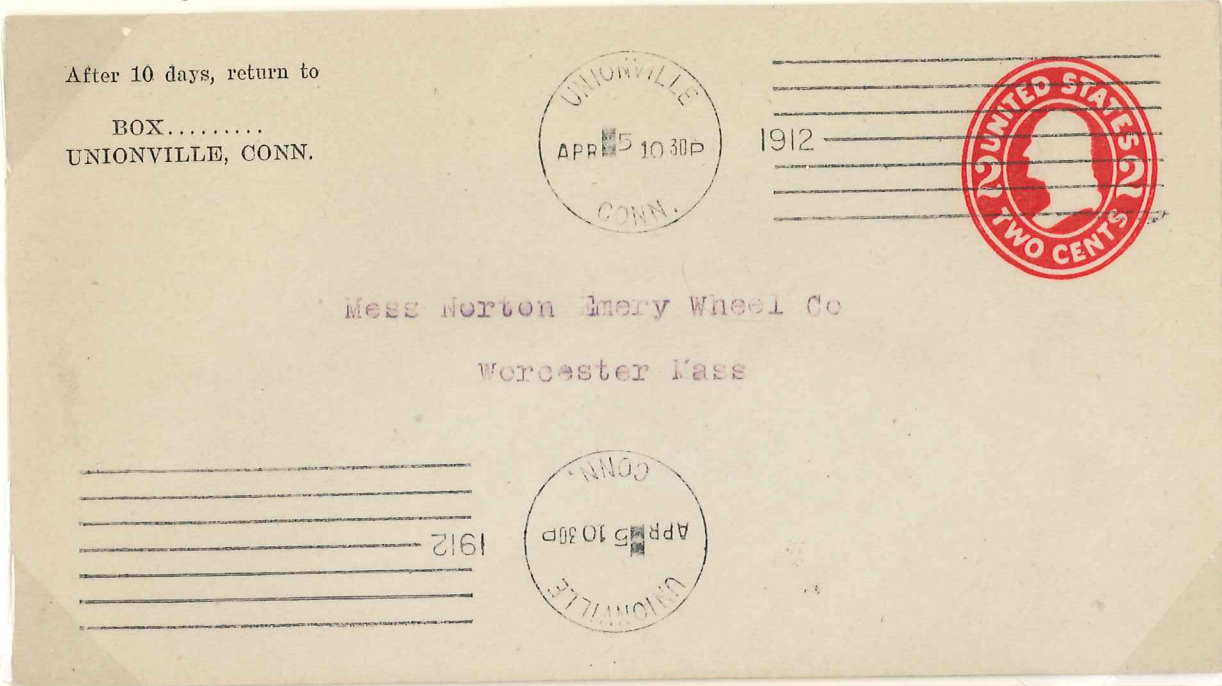


B. F. Cummins Co.

Hand Powered Machines

One of the positions in the rotation of the date must have been a raised surface which printed as a solid rectangle.

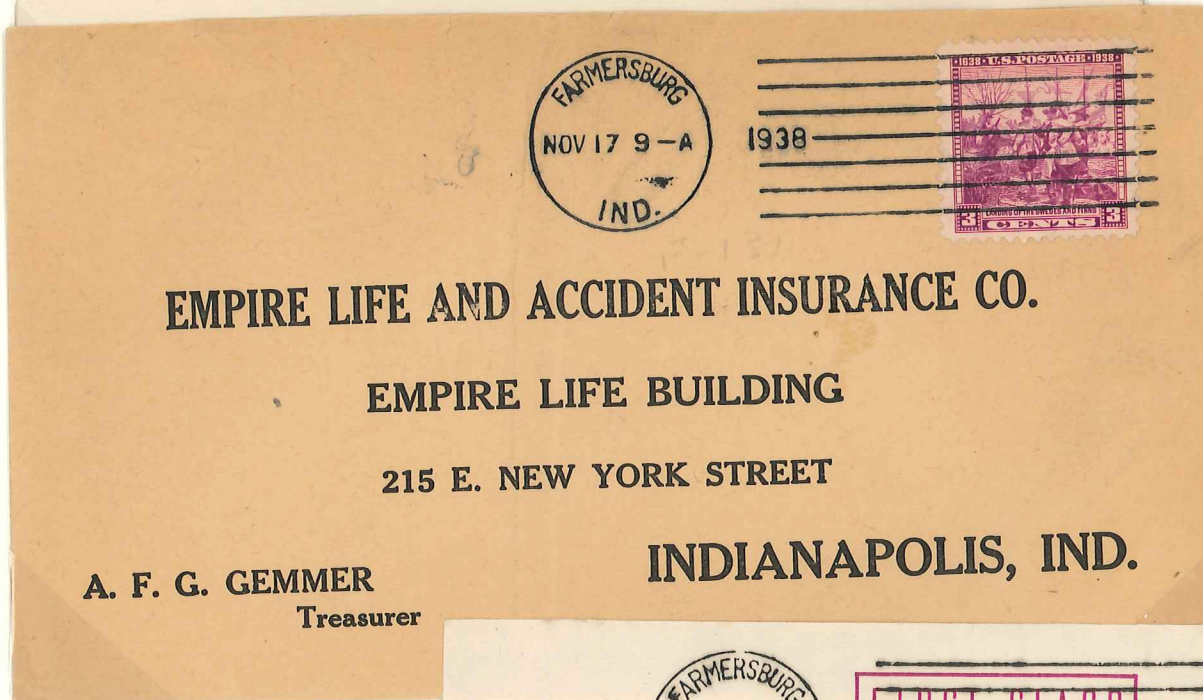


Unionville, CT, Donaldsonville, GA and Mackinac Island, MI with rectangular bars in place of the first digit of the date.

Small
IND.

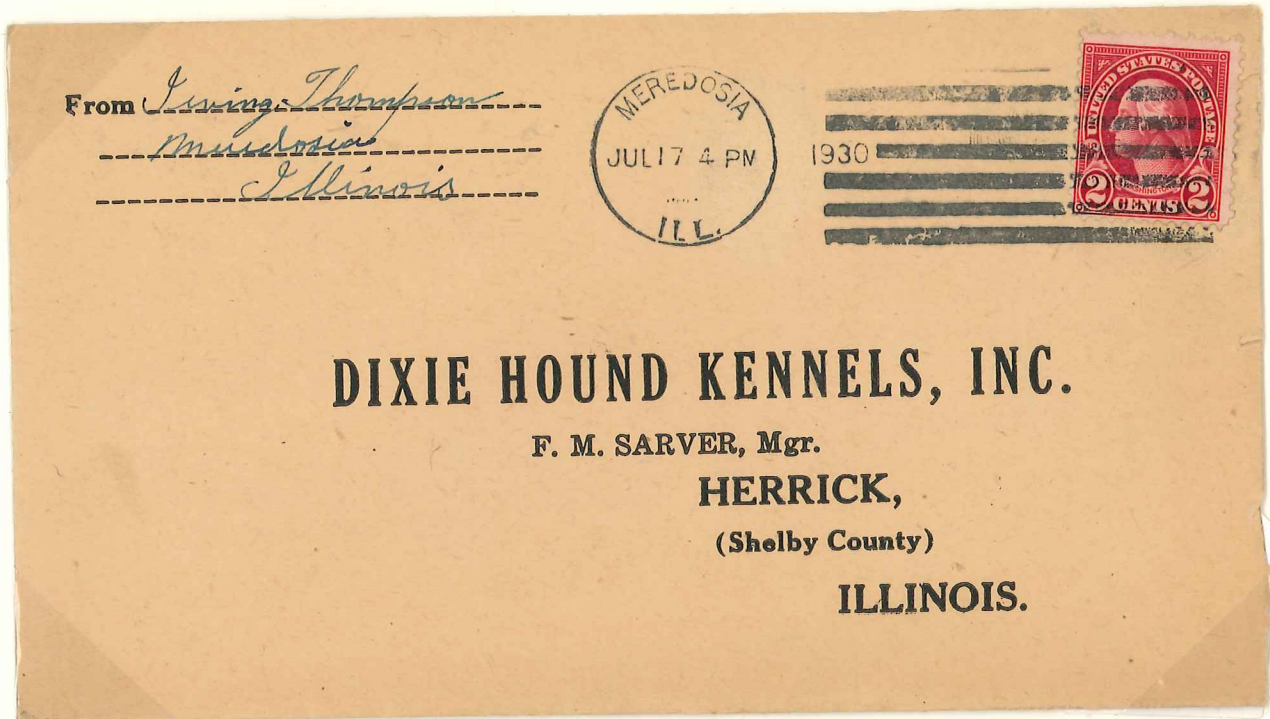


Large
IND.



Serifed 1947.

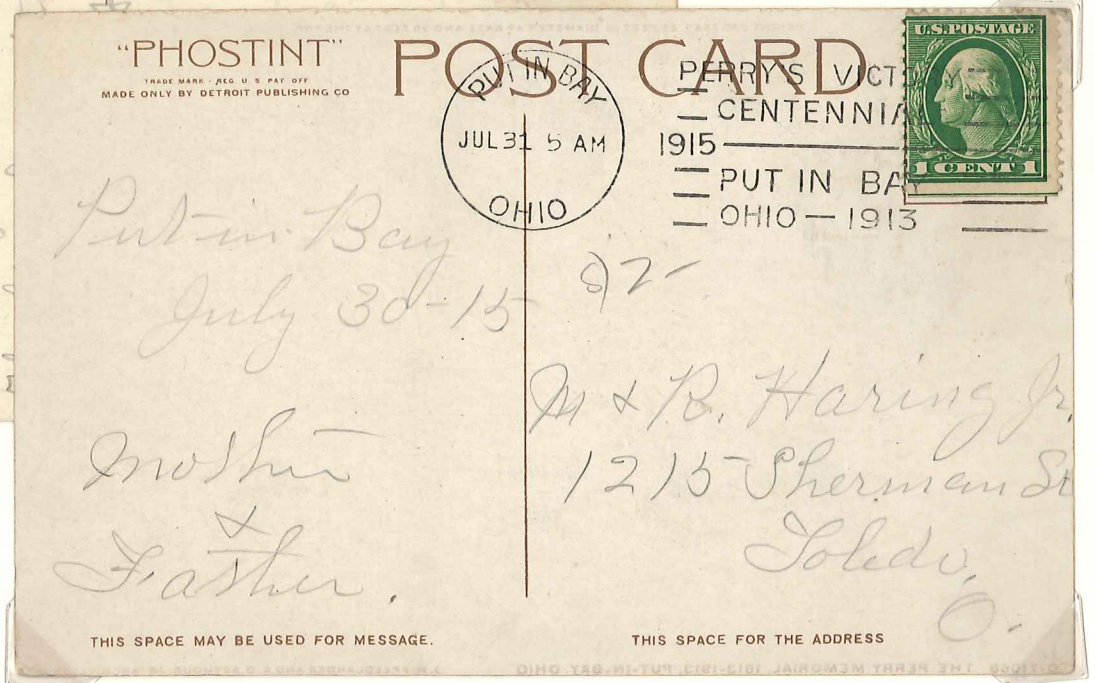
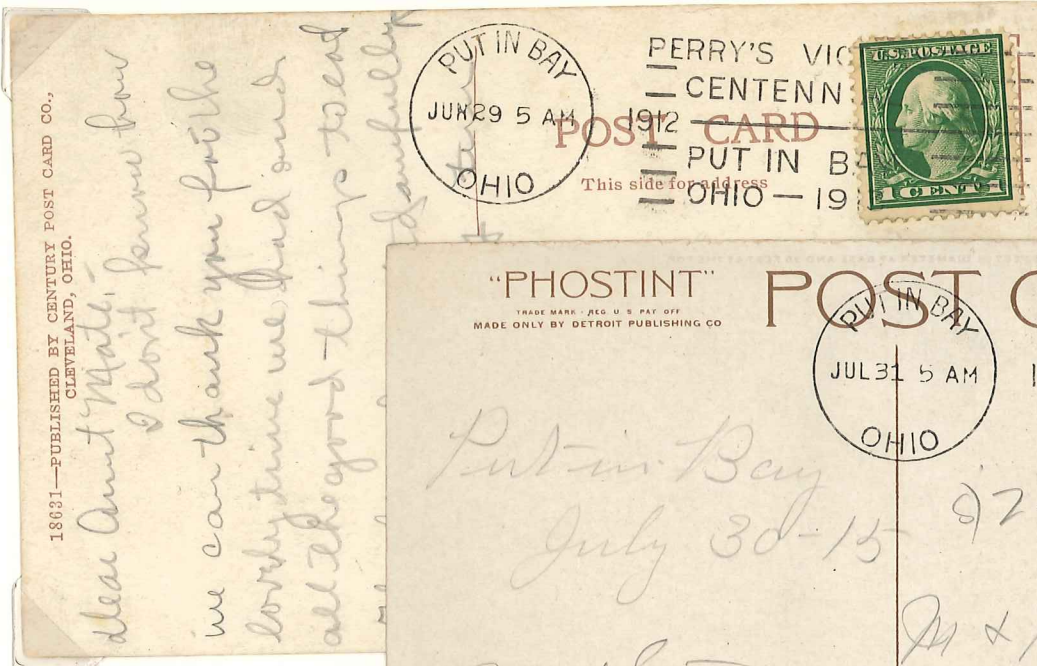
The dial in Farmersbug, IN was changed as shown by these examples from 1916 and 1938, easily noticed in the size of IND. The second dial continued into the 1940's when it was used with a serified year.



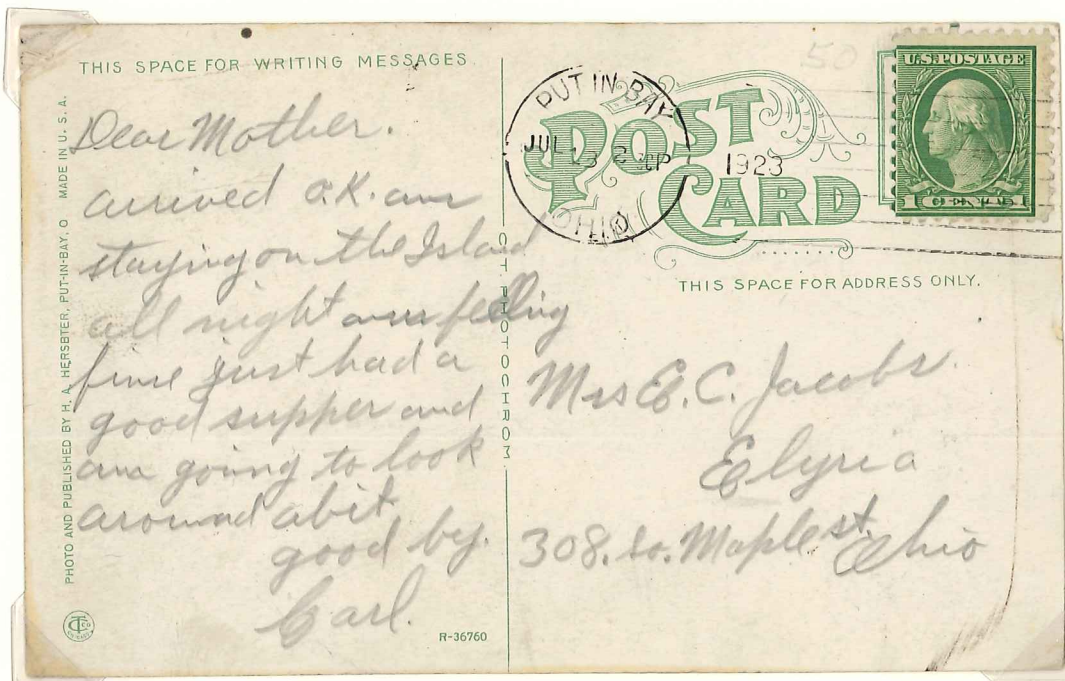
Meredosia, IL used a BFC Co. F-131 postmark into the 1930's and the killer appears to have been a rubber replacement.



By 1935 it appears they had problems getting a new year slug and the year in this example has a very large font.



A slogan cancel based on the F-131 postmarks was used in Put In Bay, OH to commemorate Perry's Victory Centennial. The Centennial was held from July 4 through Sept. 10, 1913, postmarks are known both before and after the celebration. Postmarks are only reported from the summer vacation season.

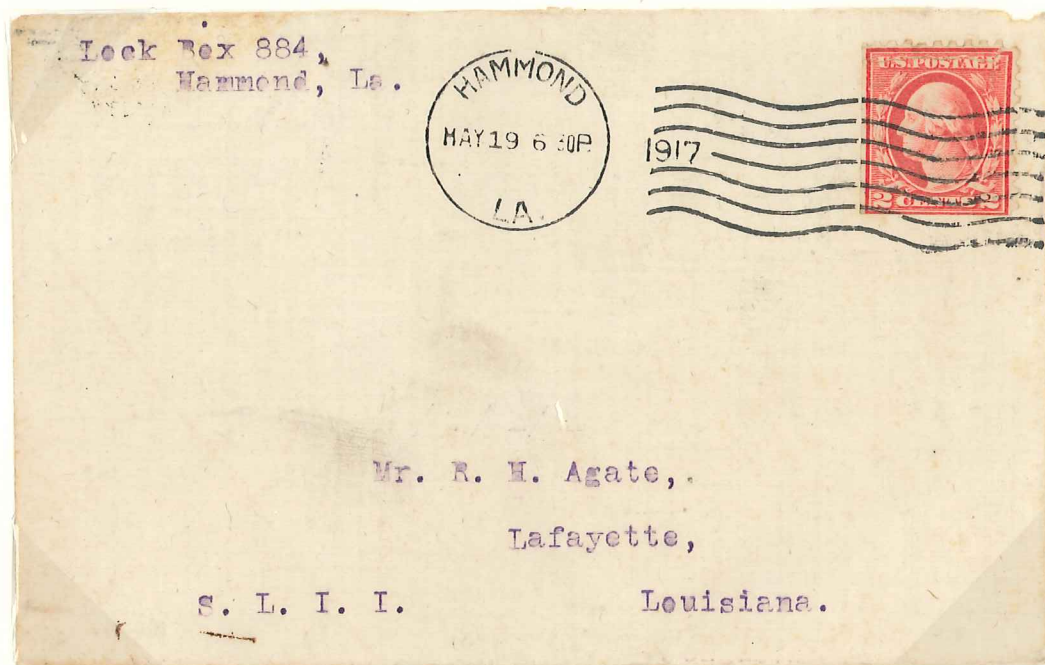


Following the centennial the killer was replaced with a standard 131 killer and used until 1925.

B. F. Cummins Co.

Hand Powered Machines

With few exceptions the B. F. Cummins (and the TMM Co.) machines applied a killer made up of horizontal lines. Two postmarks with wavy lines are known.

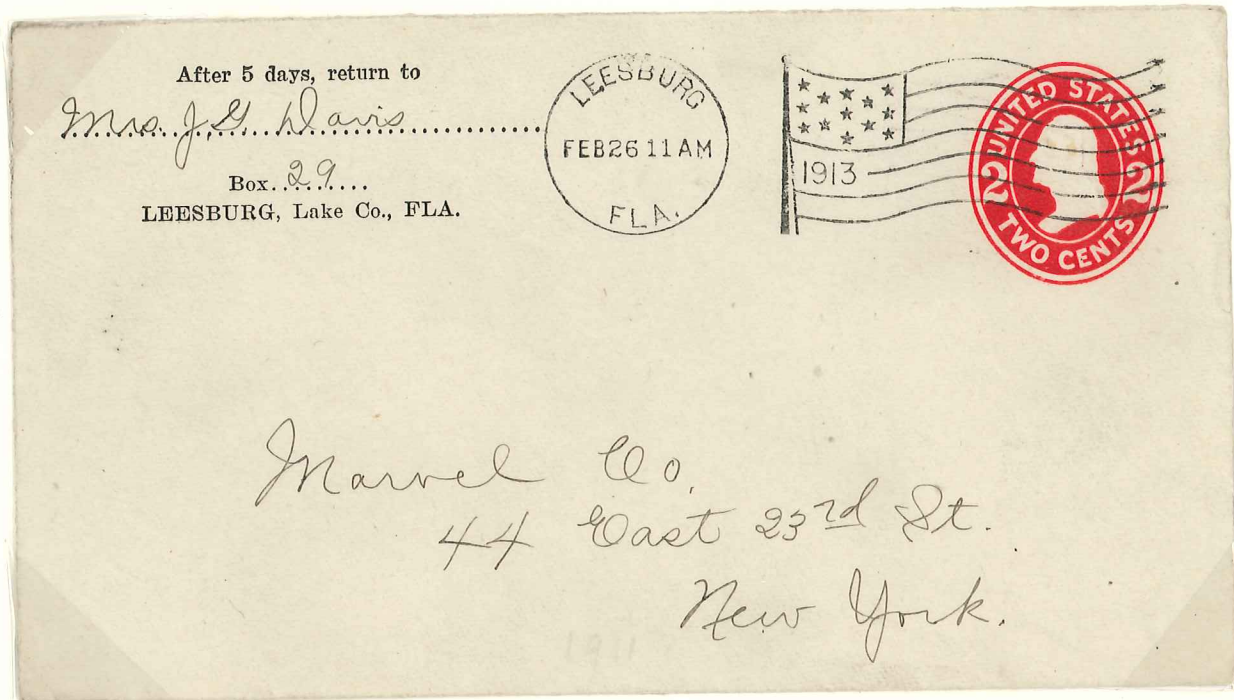


Hammond, LA used the only F type postmark with wavy bars, a 132 killer. This killer still had a diespace for the year. Examples are known from 3 months in 1917. This is the latest reported use.

B. F. Cummins Co.

Hand Powered Machines

The American Postal Supply Co. had found great success at this time with their flag cancels. Two flag cancels were used on Cummins machines, called a 201 killer.

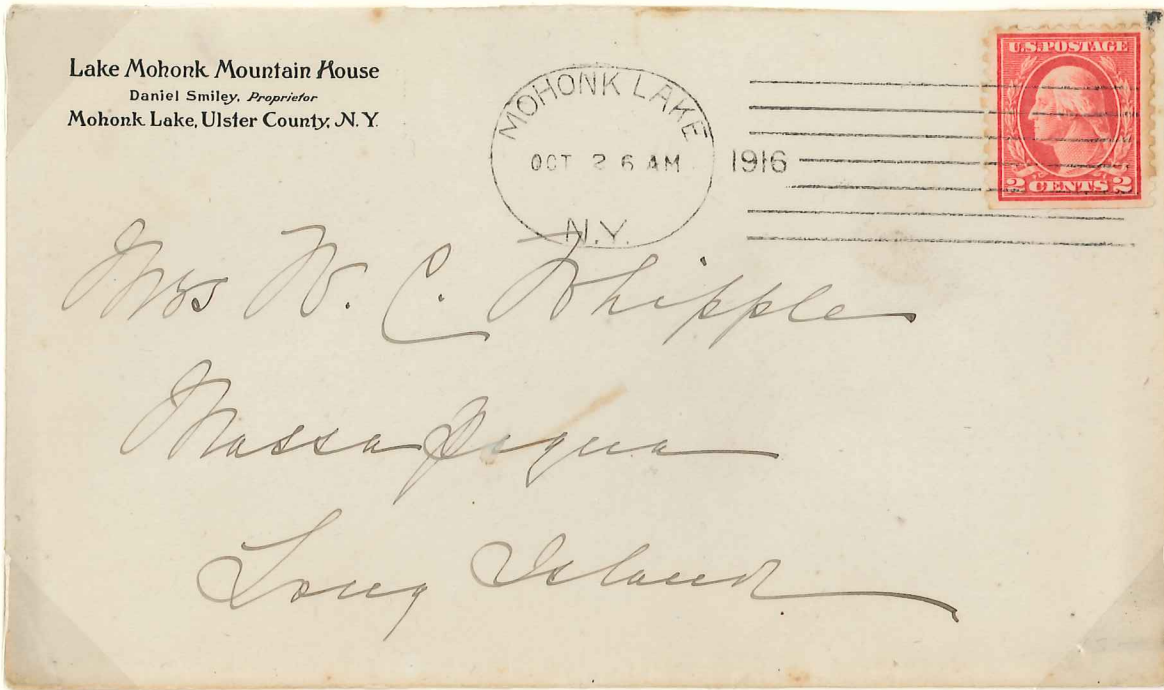


Leesburg, FL F-201

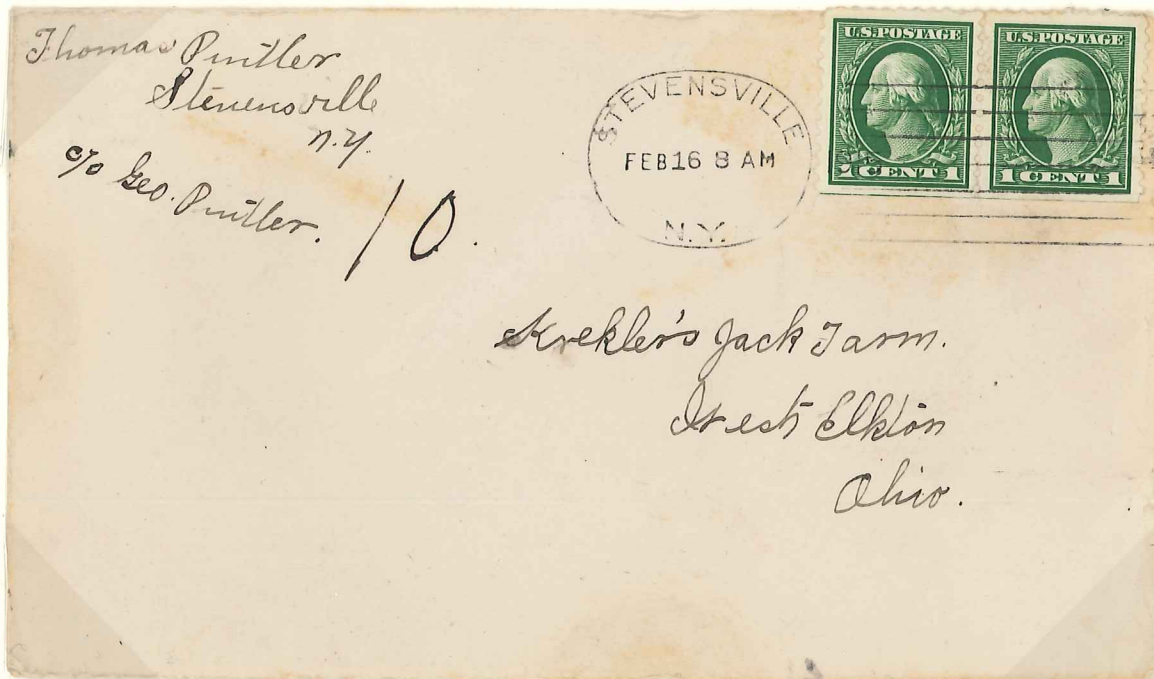


F-201 from Lahaina, HI. The scan shows the dial portion of the cover shown earlier from Lahaina having MAUI in the killer bars. The dials in both postmarks are identical.

Several towns were also known to use a distinctive oval 'H dial' postmark with these 131 type killers.



Mohonk Lake, NY H-131

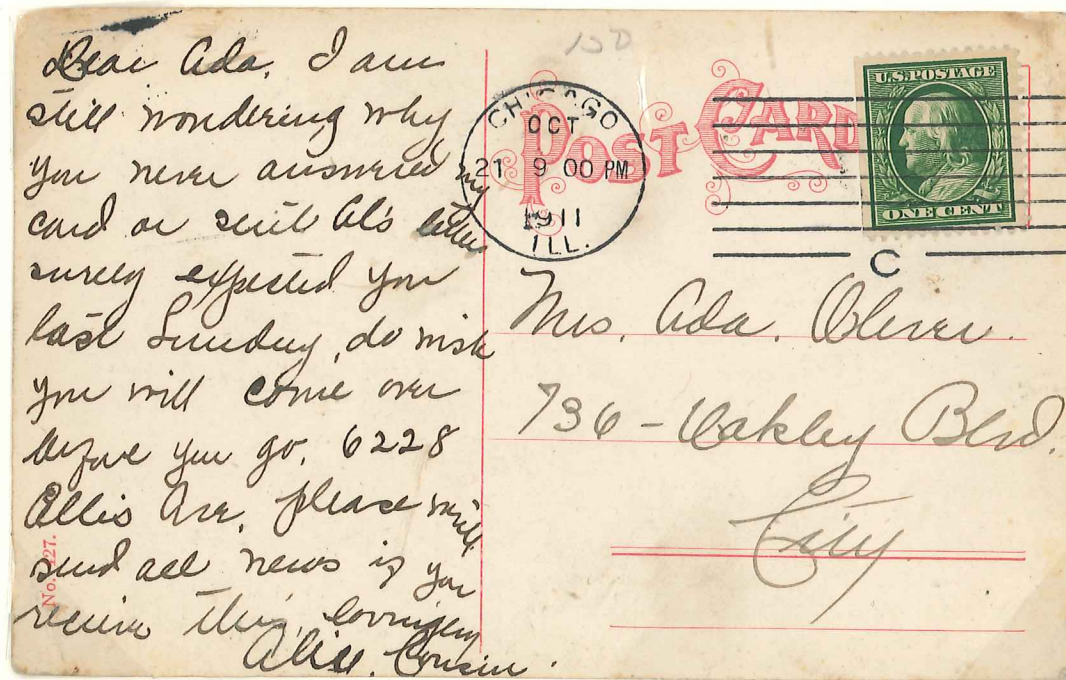


Stevensville, NY H-131 postmark

The contract to lease the TMM machines was set to expire on June 30, 1913 and the BFC Co wanted to be in a position to obtain much more business. B. F. Cummins himself had suggested that bids for that contract be opened before Jan. 1912 so companies would be able to build the machines needed to fulfill any successful bids. Bids were requested for high, medium, and low speed machines to be submitted by Oct. 31, 1911. At this time the BFC Co. had only the TMM Co technology suitable for high speed applications.

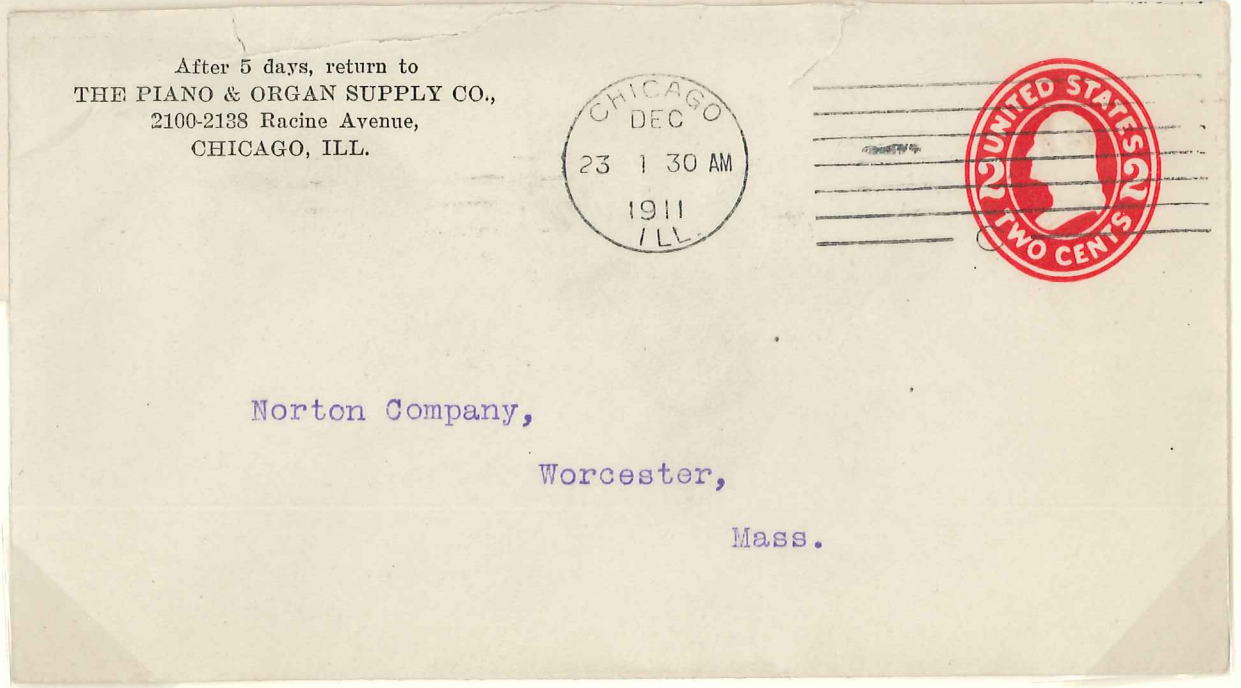
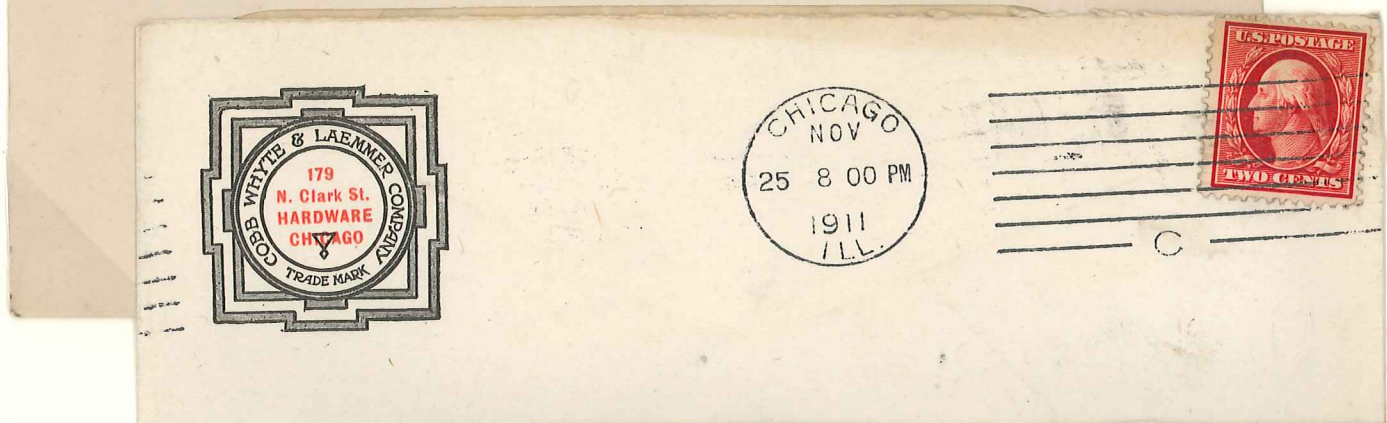
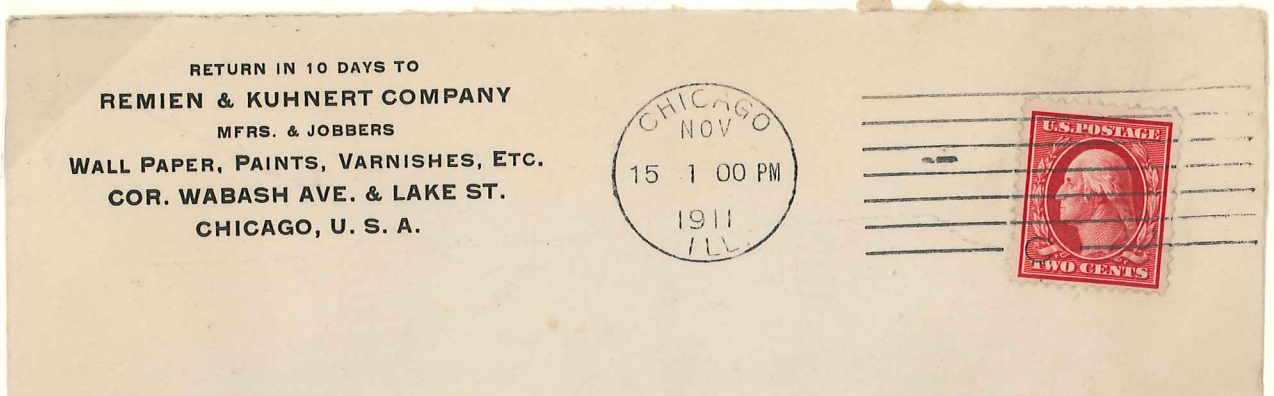
Rather than submitting a bid for high, medium and low speed machines by the October 31, 1911 deadline, Cummins submitted a single price to meet all of the USPOD's needs. This bid was accompanied by a 'secret letter' which detailed the prices for each machine category. Competitors complained that the bid did not qualify and should be dismissed. However, the bid was the lowest received and the USPOD did not want to dismiss it. A legal review by the Assistant Attorney General was begun.

Continued testing with TMM machines started the efforts directed towards winning this contract.



ERU of un-numbered Chicago D-104 postmark. Chicago, at this time was using 25, numbered machines at the main post office. This machine was used for four days. It was then reused sporadically until Jan. 3, 1912. This was believed to be an experimental usage.

Later in November another D-104 postmark appears. This had a different dial than the earlier use. Examples are known through Dec. 30, 1911.



Three examples of a Chicago D-104 postmark used from Nov. 15 through Dec. 23, 1911.

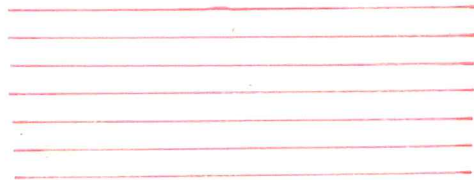
Note the smudge mark towards the left end of the killer between the third and fourth bars. Also note how the bottom killer bar 'bisects' the C service letter, normally it passes through the top half of the C.

While testing continued on the old TMM Co. technology the BFC Co. was working to develop new high speed machines capable of fulfilling the requirements of the contract which was to start July 1, 1913. The BFC Co. was working on new technology to compete for this contract. No decision had yet been made on the unusual bids opened on Oct. 31, 1911.

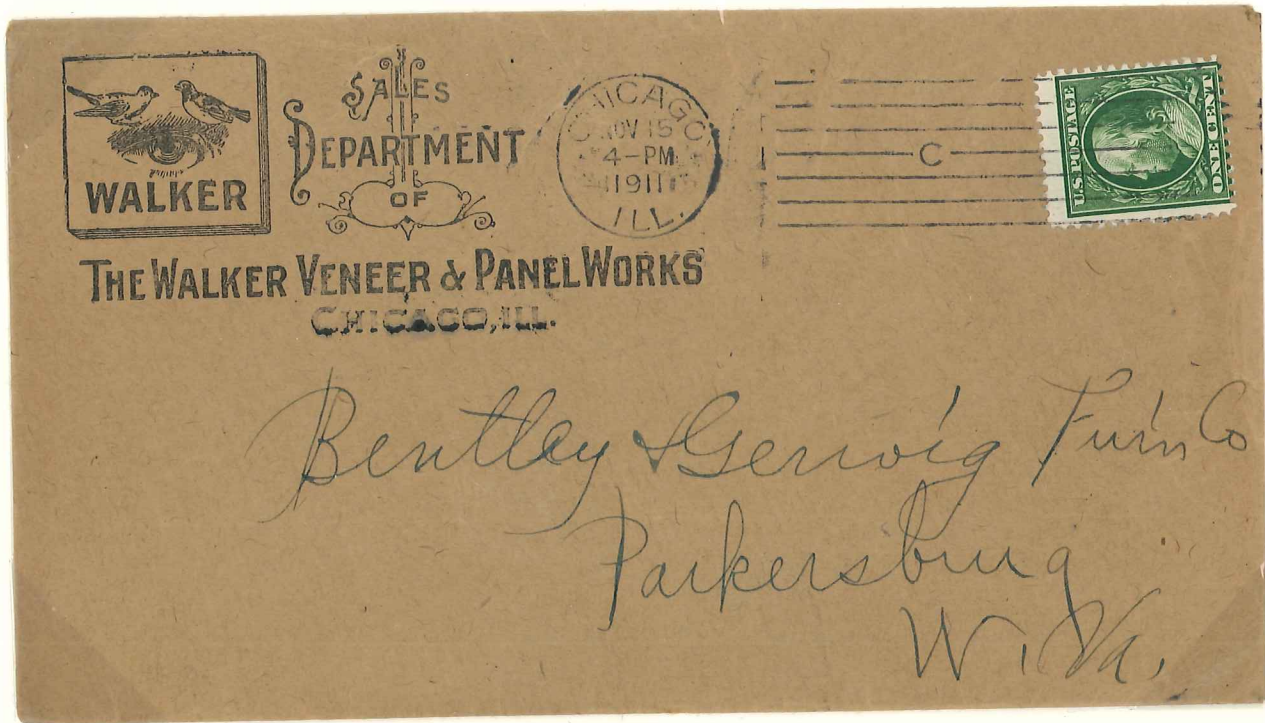
These machines were based on patents by Patrick J. Madigan and James Rehak. Despite the fact that Mr. Madigan was head machinist in the Chicago Post Office, the patents were assigned to the BFC Co. On Nov. 4, 1911, Dr. C. P. Grandfield, 3rd assistant postmaster general, gave the BFC Co approval to run 'secret' tests of their new machines in Chicago. Later he approved tests of additional machines.

**J Dial
Postmark**

Only TMM or BFC dial
with day and time on
different lines.



7 Horizontal
Bar Killer



First test of the new BFC Co. postmarking machine. Examples are known from Nov. 14 - 16.



Only reported example from a later test on Nov. 27, 1911 using the same dial used on Nov. 15.

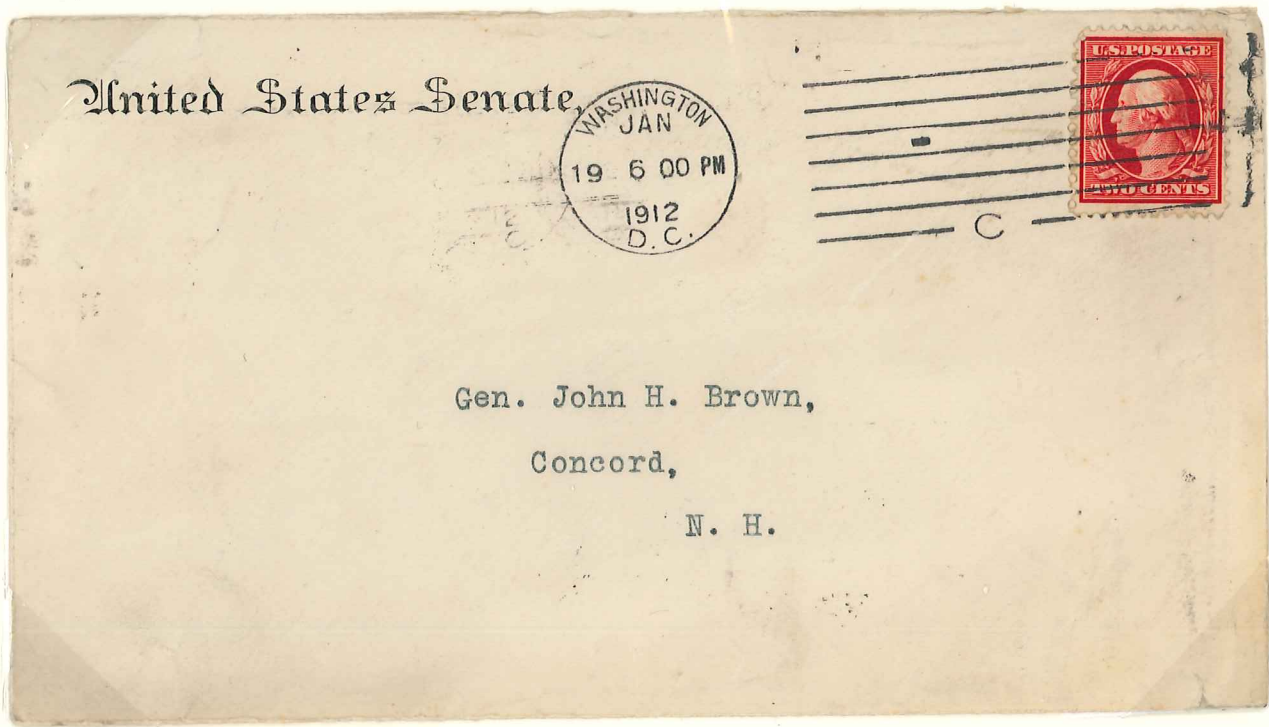
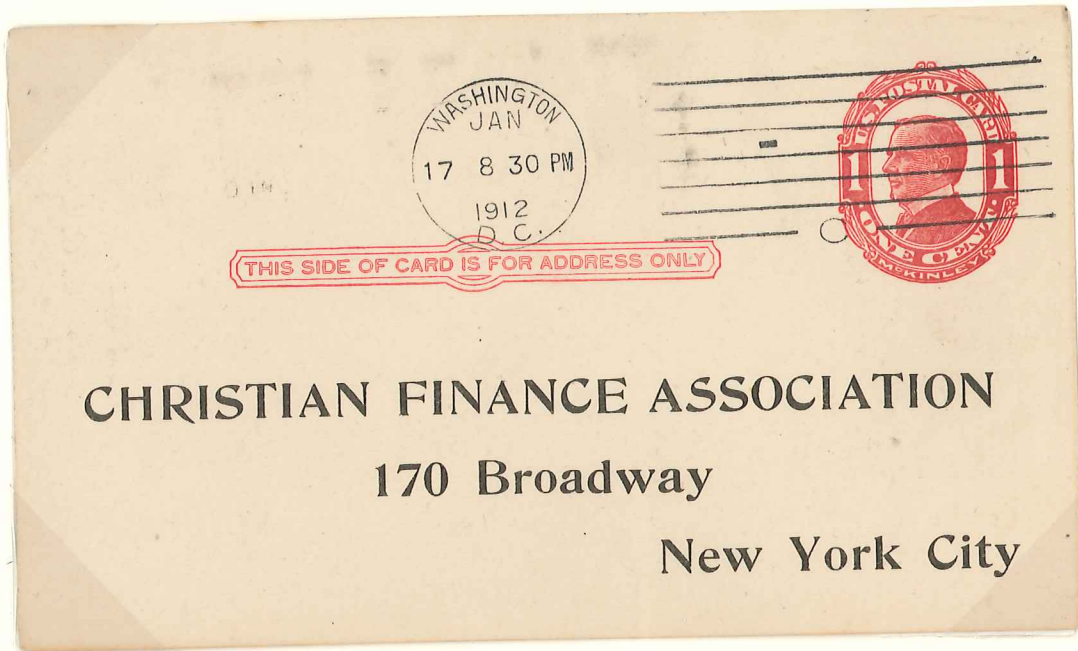
On Dec. 19th, 1911 the Chicago postmaster informed the USPOD that 4 new BFC Co machines were installed for testing.



Two different postmarks probably from different machines.

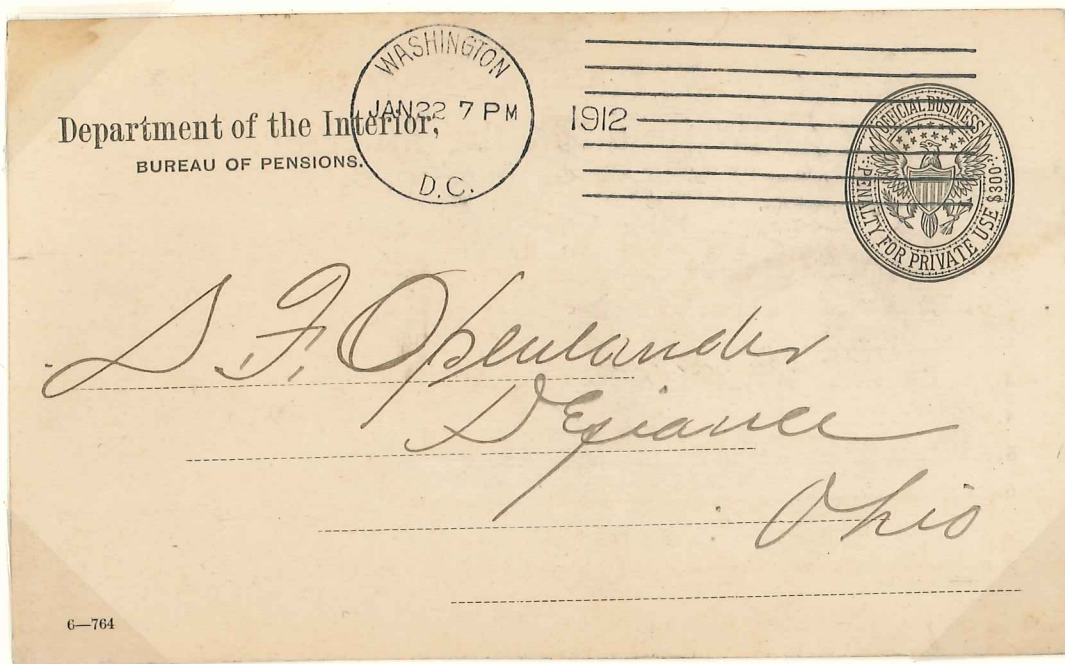
Dials can most easily be distinguished by the width of ILL., which is 8 mm on top example and 9 mm on Bottom.

On Jan. 20 a letter was sent to each company which had tendered a bid on the Oct. 15, 1911 deadline asking them to send their machines to Washington D.C. for testing by the machine cancel committee. One reason for these tests was to determine if the BFC Co had a satisfactory machine. Some unusual TMM Co postmarks are known which make their appearance on Jan. 20, perhaps B.F. Cummins had some inside information on this new request and was able to get a head start on the tests.



Examples from Jan. 17 and 19, 1912 of a D-104 postmark which has what appears to be the same 'smudge' in the killer between the 3rd and 4th bar. The bottom bar also bisects the C service letter similar to the Chicago machines used at the end of 1911. The dial does not match any of the machines which were in regular service. Apparently the machine which was last used in Chicago on Dec. 30, 1911 was shipped to Washington for these tests.

One of the machines sent by the BFC Co. to Washington D. C. in answer to the Jan. 20 letter was their Model #2 which had been sold to postmasters of small towns starting in 1911 (this machine impressed the E, F, G and H type postmarks).



Only reported example of a F-131 postmark from Washington D. C. from a 'preliminary' test.

These were not included in the bidding for 1913 but the Canceling Machine hearings (on p. 608) documents this exchange between Mr. McCoy (appointed a committee of one to investigate the canceling-machine contracts with the Post Office Department) and Mr. Bushnell (Chairman of the canceling machine committee charged with testing machines and making recommendations).

Mr. McCoy: Now, then, please describe this No. 2 Cummins machine. In the first place, what type of machine is it?

Mr. Bushnell. It was a small machine intended to operate either by hand or electric power. It is a machine which the Cummins Co. designed to sell to postmasters.

Mr. McCoy. Was it one of the machines on which they bid later?

Mr. Bushnell. No sir.

Mr. McCoy. They did not bid on it at either time?

Mr. Bushnell. No sir.

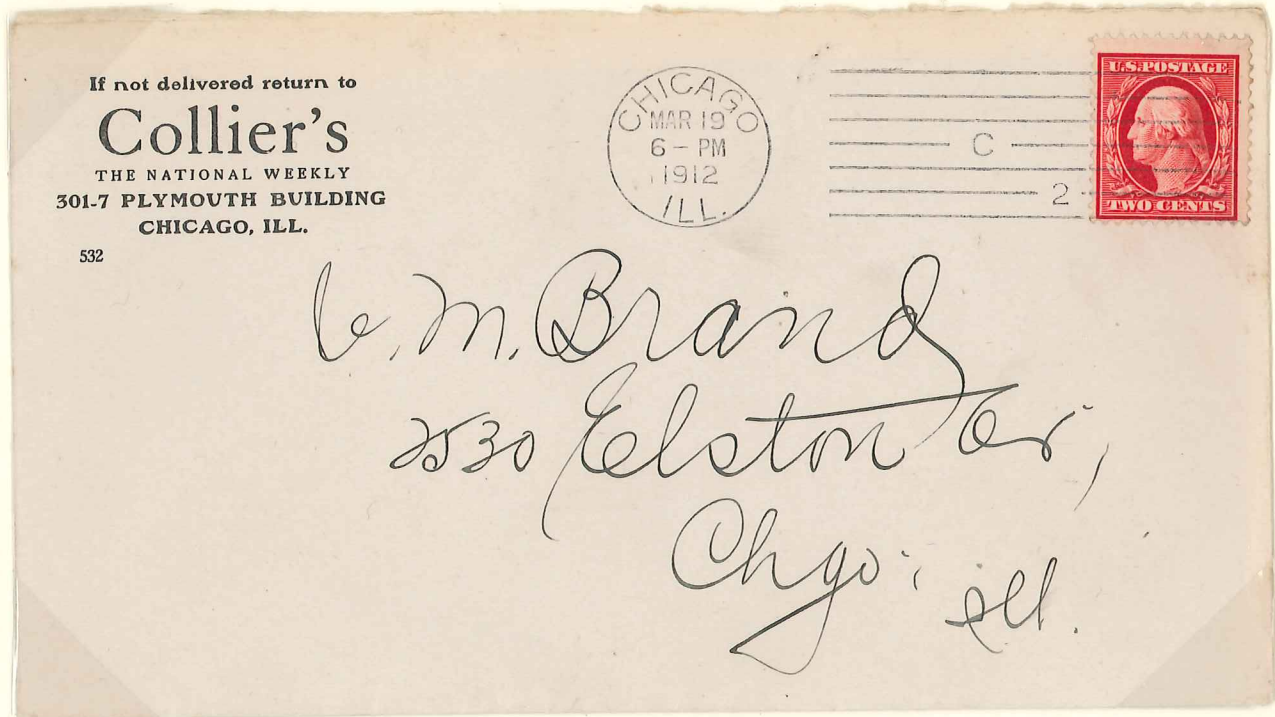
Mr. McCoy. It was not tested in Washington?

Mr. Bushnell. It was here and was given a preliminary test, as all machines are, but not as a part of the bid. It was simply there in the Washington office along with the other machines.

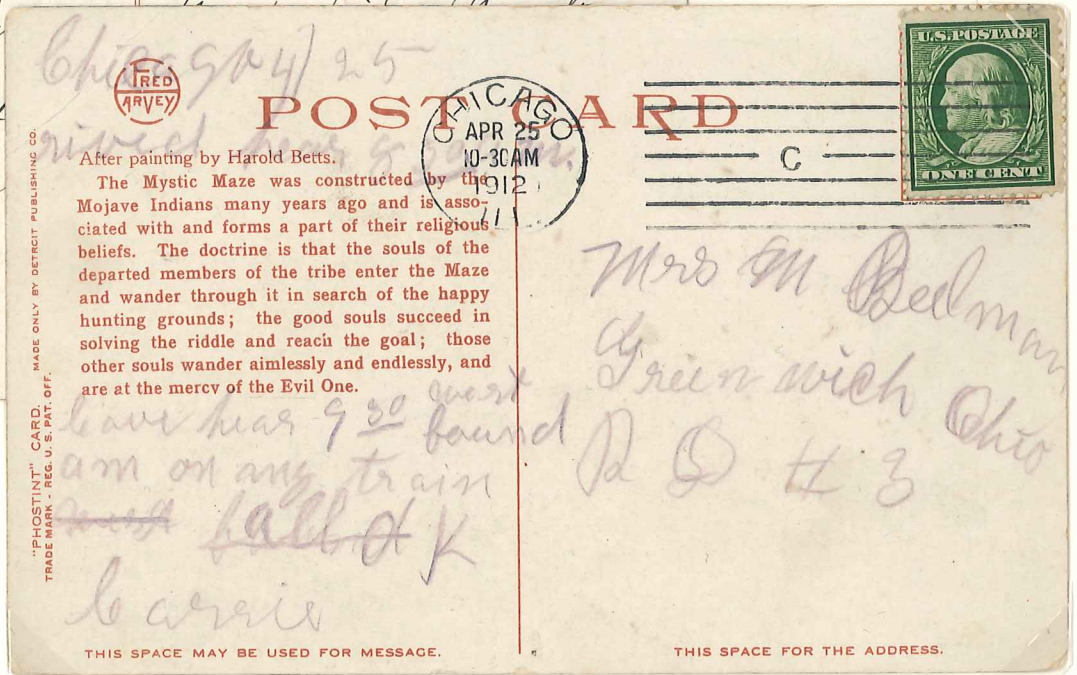
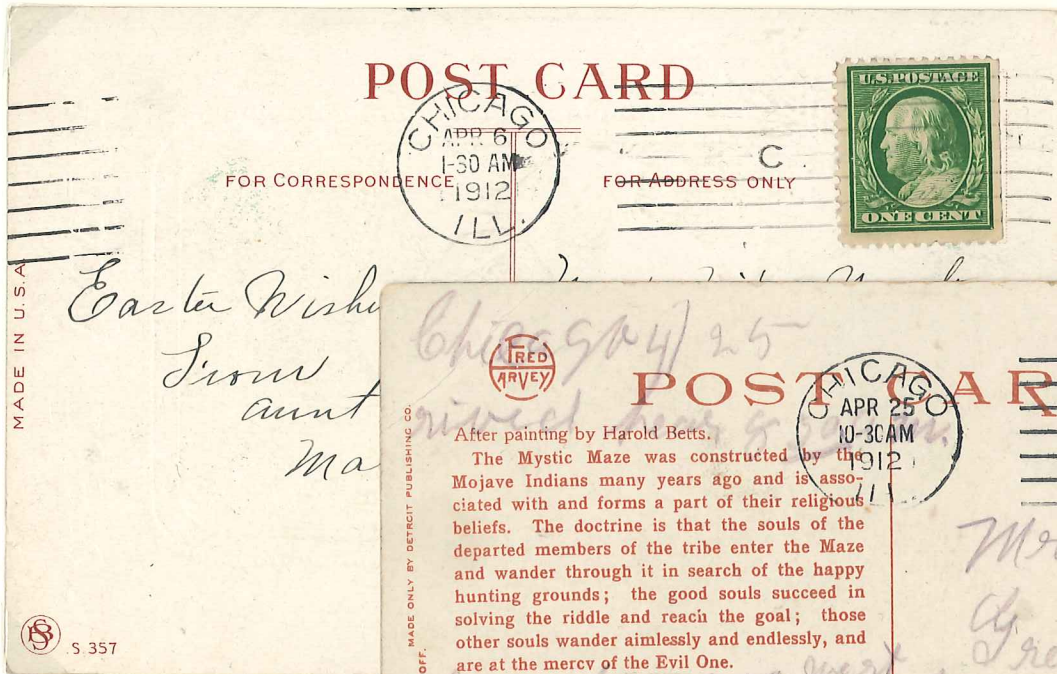
Tests on the new BFC Co. machines continued in Chicago as there were frequent changes in the postmarks and dials probably as a result of improvements in the machine.

Some of these machines used killers with no machine numbers but can be distinguished by the length of the left portion of the 4th bar in the cancel.

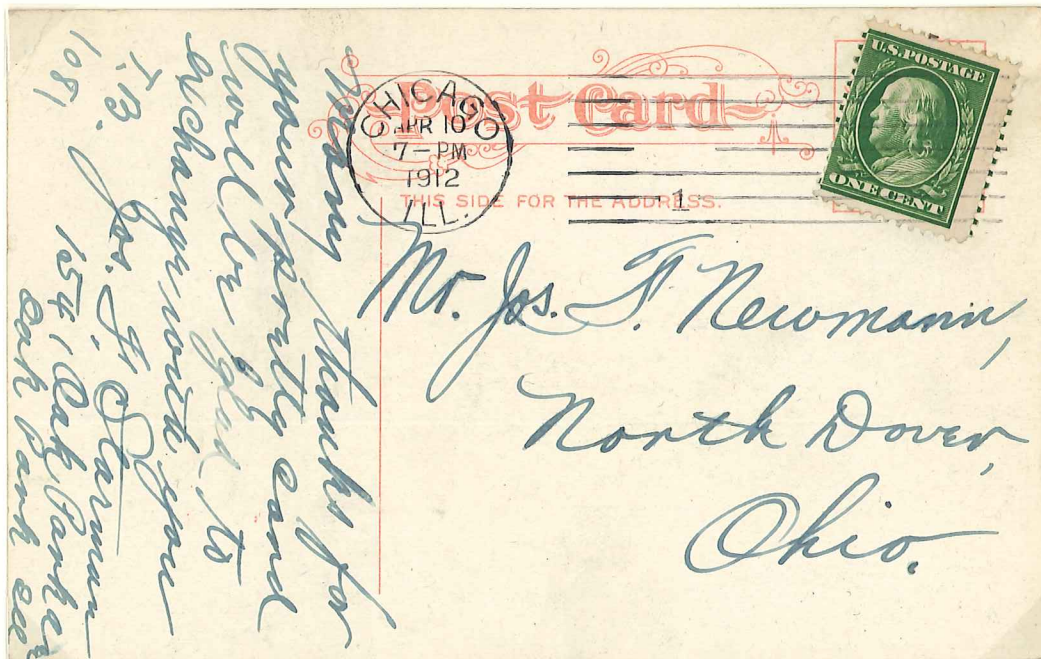
Others had a diespace for the machine number in the killer. These killers can be identified by the length of the left segment of the 4th and 6th bars.



Machine #2, Mar. 19, 1912. Examples known from Mar. 12 thru April 6, 1912.

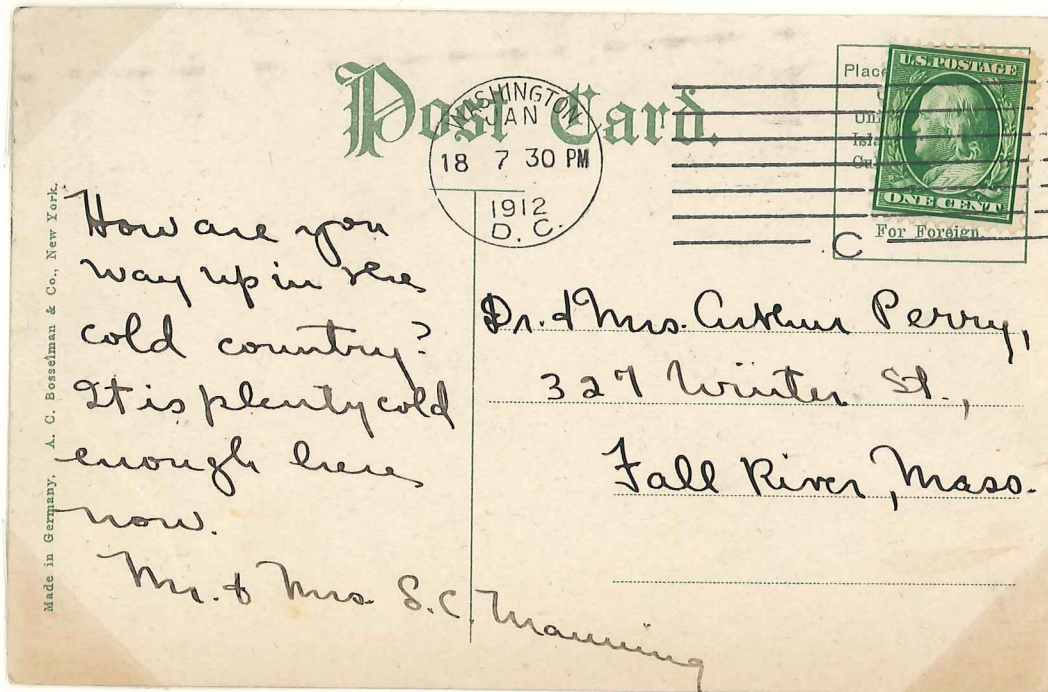


Tests continued in April of 1912. Numberless tests on April 6 and April 25. Both the dials and the killer are slightly different. Note the width of the ILL. The top example is wide while the bottom is narrower.



Machine #1 with blank diespace for service letter used in early April 1912.

Apparently a second TMM Co machine was also included in the tests which also impressed a D-104 postmark.



D-104 postmark from test machine in Washington D.C. on Jan. 18, 1912. Note that the bottom killer bar on this postmark does not bisect the C but rather intersects about a third of the way down. The dial is also slightly different from the previous examples from Washington. This is particularly noticeable by the shape of the G in Washington.

Despite these tests the TMM Co machines were not included in the BFC Co bids for the 1913 contract.