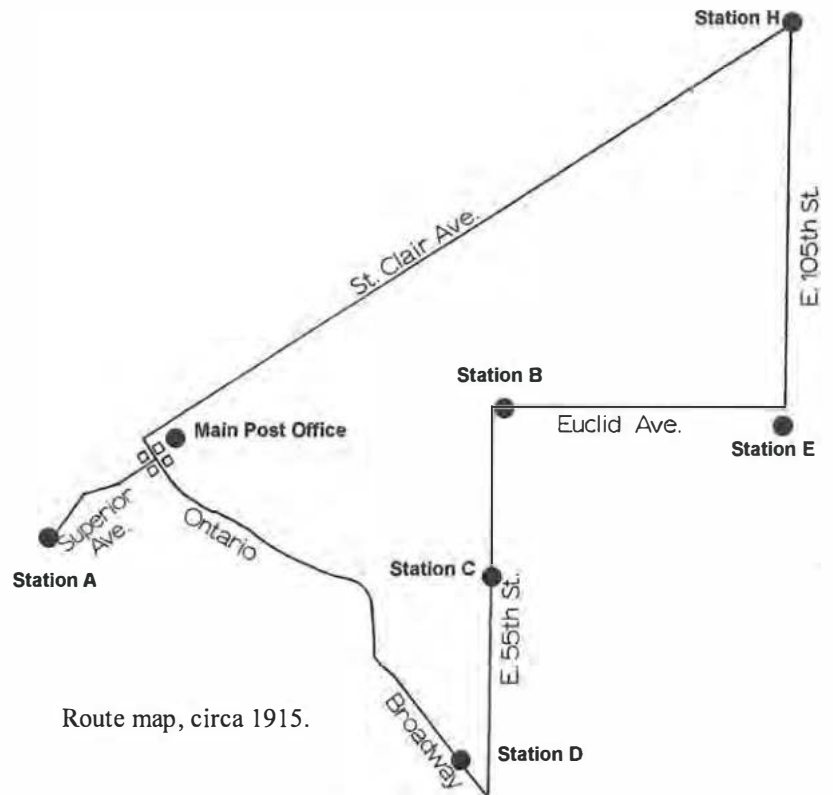


The Cleveland Circuit R.P.O., 1908-1919

This exhibit focuses on the postal markings of the Cleveland Circuit R.P.O., Cleveland's only streetcar postal route. The Cleveland Circuit concurrently utilized both handstamp and machine markings.

The Cleveland Circuit R.P.O.—postal route #3351005—operated from April 3, 1908 through August 4, 1919 on the streetcar line of the Cleveland Electric Railway Company. The single R.P.O. car made nine daily trips on a 16.3 mile route primarily servicing the heavily populated east side of Cleveland and several Cleveland postal stations (B, C, D, E and H), heading east from the main post office, carrying mail bags between the main post office and the stations as well as collecting mail from collection boxes along the route. Some trips included an additional “spur” to Station A. Trip 4 was run in the reverse direction. Trips 3 and 5 skipped the St. Clair Avenue and East 105th portions of the route, progressing directly up Euclid Avenue to Station B instead.



Route map, circa 1915.

The R.P.O. route was phased out after a shift to motor vehicles by the Postal Service, though streetcars continued to carry closed mail sacks to the stations into the 1920s. Two handstamp varieties were used during the existence of the route. Machines were used concurrently with a handstamp device. The Circuit R.P.O. used an American Postal Machines Co. “flag” machine until 1911, followed sequentially by three different machines produced by the Universal Stamping Machine Company. Handstamp markings are shown first, followed by machines in chronological order. Items of particular significance, including the earliest and latest reported markings from the route and the provisionally used “trip” in dial Universal machine from 1912 and 1914, are noted with red dots.



April 4, 1908

Earliest Reported Mail Item from the Cleveland Circuit R.P.O.

(one day after start of operations)

Handstamp—First Die

October 31, 1908

Trip 8

Year slug below the date only in 1908

Fewer than 10 reported



Correction

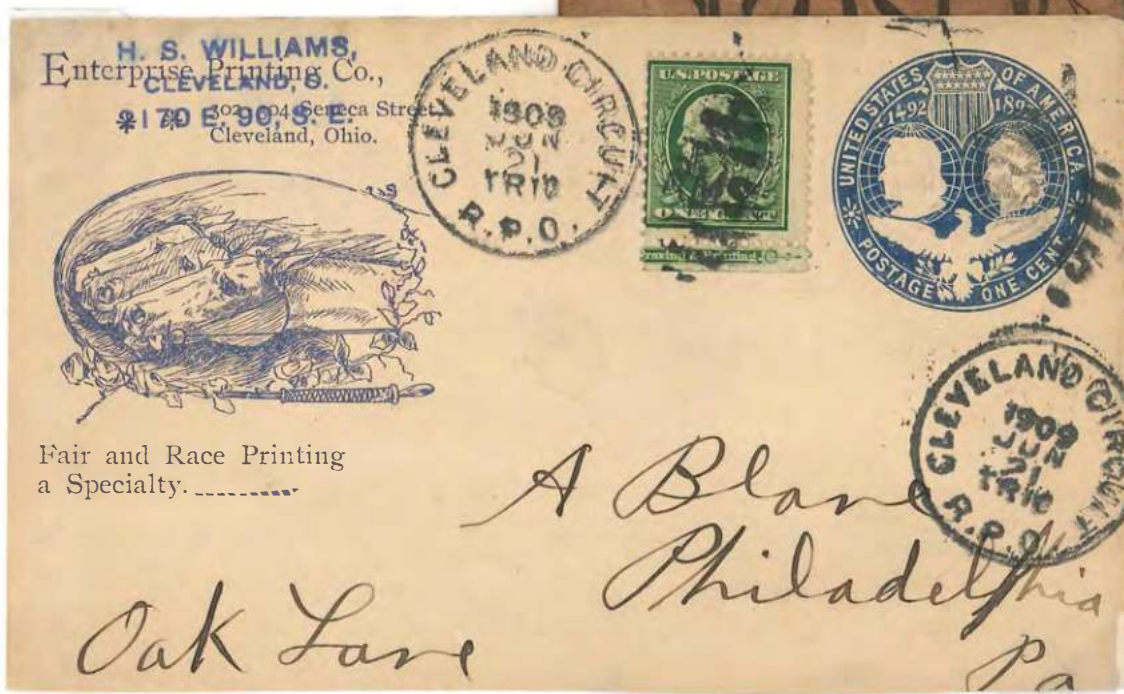


November 21, 1910
Trip 5

February 9, 1909

Trip 7

Leather postcard



June 21, 1909
Trip 10

The Cleveland Circuit R.P.O. utilized a steel duplex handstamp featuring a “trip” number in the dial and “RMS” in the killer. Trips 2 through 10 are reported. For most of the R.P.O.’s existence, nine trips a day were

Handstamp—First Die Uses

December 24, 1913
Trip 7
Special Delivery



This side may have a message written upon it for Inland Postage, but the right hand side must be reserved for address and



POST CARD

The Address to be written on this side.



A Merry Xmas
Happy New Year!

Mrs. M. Graham
Cor. Pratt ave. East 95.
Cleveland
Mrs. La Dange

Bararody
apin Hr.
Bend. Ind.

December 24, 1908
Trip 9
1 cent postage due
(letter rate due to glitter)

Sep. 1, 1910
Trip 4

forwarding marking on redirected mail



RETURN IN FIVE DAYS TO
THE GLIDDEN VARNISH CO.,
CLEVELAND, OHIO, U. S. A.

Glidden's
Water and Oilproof Dressing
for
Concrete and Cement Floors
FULL PARTICULARS FOR THE ASKING

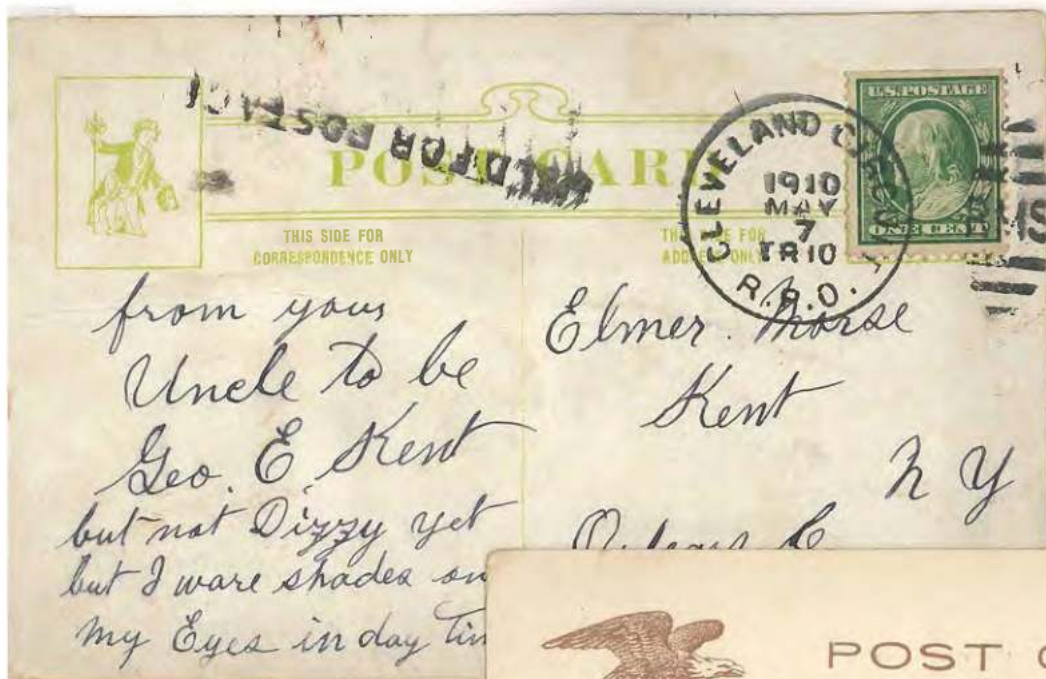


Mrs. W. B. Brayton,
J. M. Pleininger,
6 Rue Faustin-Hélie
Pussy, Paris
France

April 20,
1909
Trip 8
Triple UPU
rate to
France
(1 cent
overpaid)

R.P.O. clerks could handle special delivery, postage due, and foreign-destination mail, and could re-direct and forward mail as well.

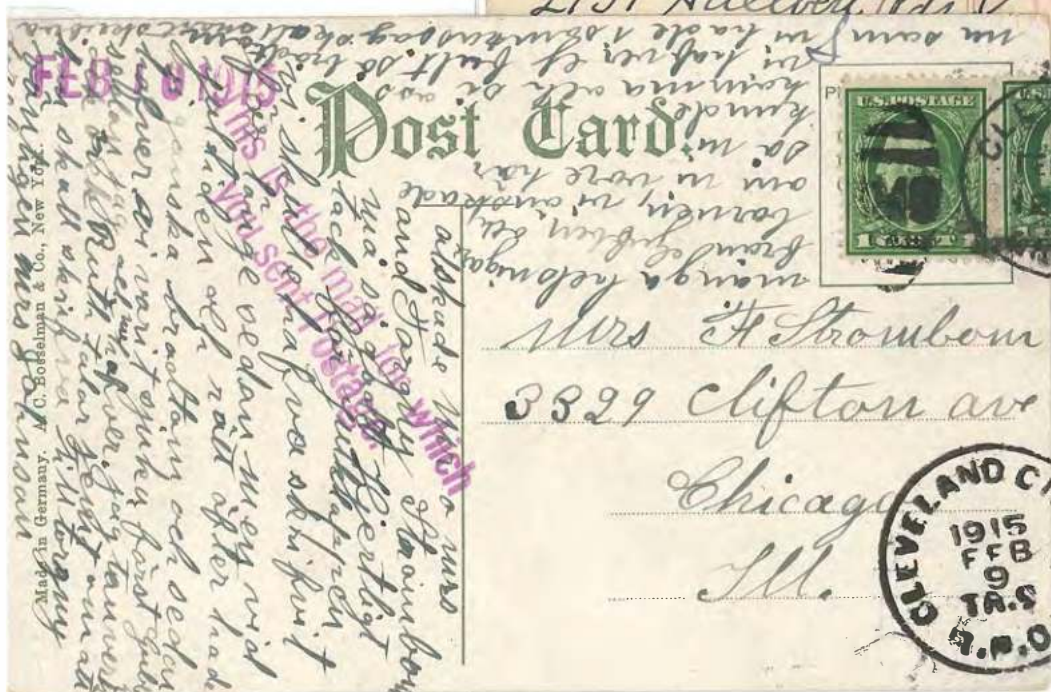
Handstamp—First Die Auxiliary Markings



May 7, 1910
Trip 10
Held for Postage



January 25, 1909
Trip 4
Unclaimed (at Detroit)



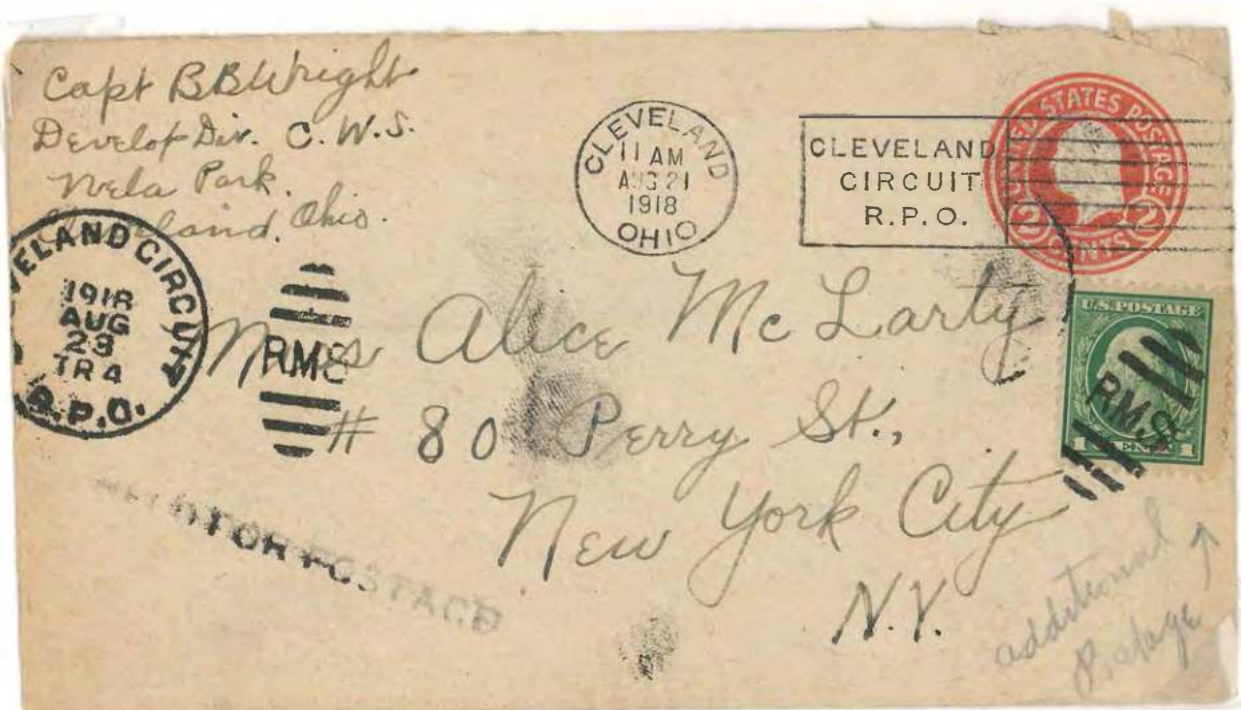
February 9, 1915
Trip 9
"This is the mail for which you sent postage"
Letter postage charged because of message extending into address side of card.

Some mail received auxiliary markings, either in processing by R.P.O. clerks or elsewhere in the mail system.

Handstamp—Second Die



May 12, 1918
Trip 8
Special delivery use
3-cent "war" rate



August 23, 1918
Trip 4

*Held for postage; handled twice by Cleveland Circuit R.P.O.
Latest reported use of Cleveland Circuit R.P.O. handstamp
Only reported cover with two different Cleveland Circuit R.P.O. markings
Only reported cover from WWI military facility at Nela Park (Development Division, Chemical Warfare Service)*

A new die of the handstamp was placed into use in August 1916. Fewer than 20 examples are reported. The latest reported example is August 23, 1918.

American Flag Machine



March 7, 1910
Trip 4
Trip operated
counterclockwise on the
postal route



July 1, 1908
Trip 4
National Education Association
seal



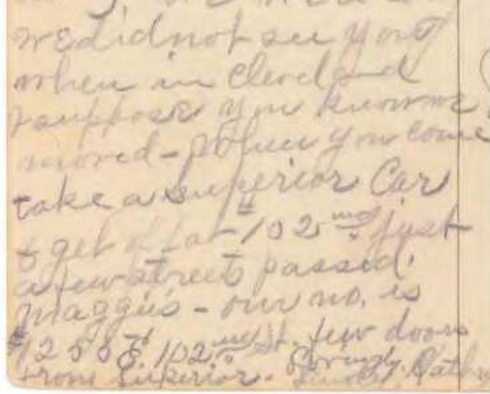
November 30, 1908
Trip 9

An American Postal Machines Company "flag" machine was placed into use on the R.P.O. car in April 1908. The latest reported use is November 17, 1911. Trips 2 through 10 are reported.

American Flag—Uses



June 7, 1909
Trip 4
Letter rate postage due to writing
extending to address half of card



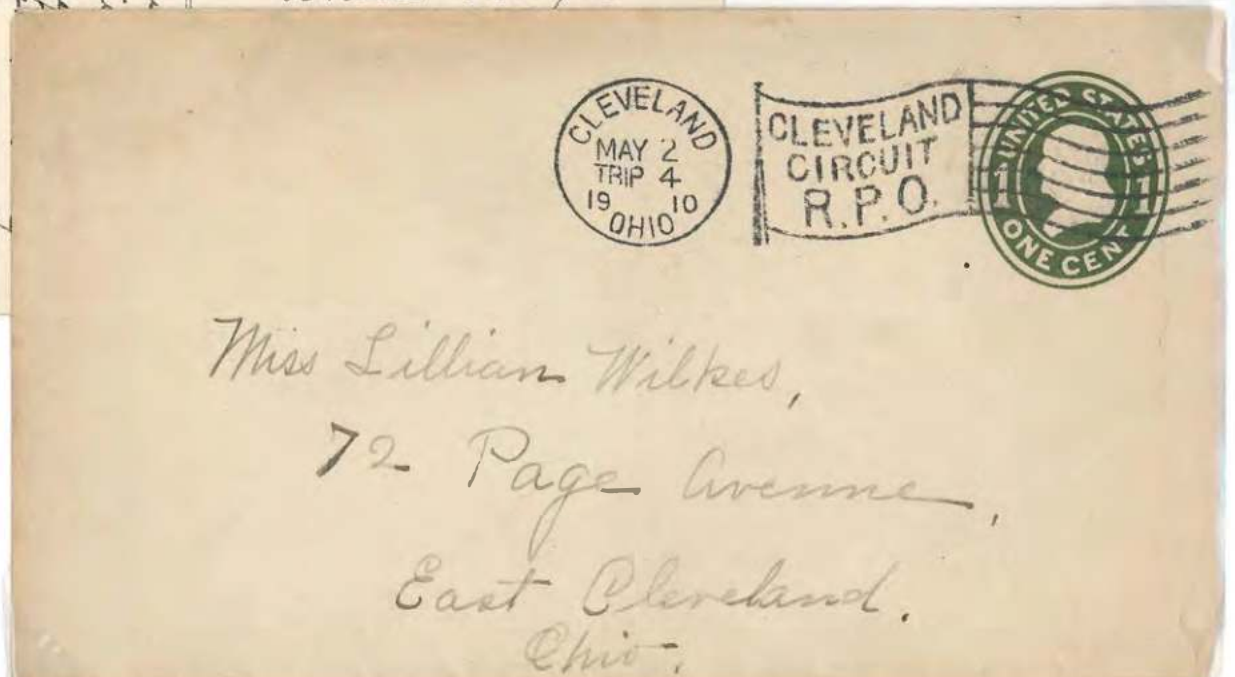
December 24, 1909
Trip 7
Christmas seal



August 6, 1910
Trip 4
2 cent UPU postcard rate
To United Kingdom



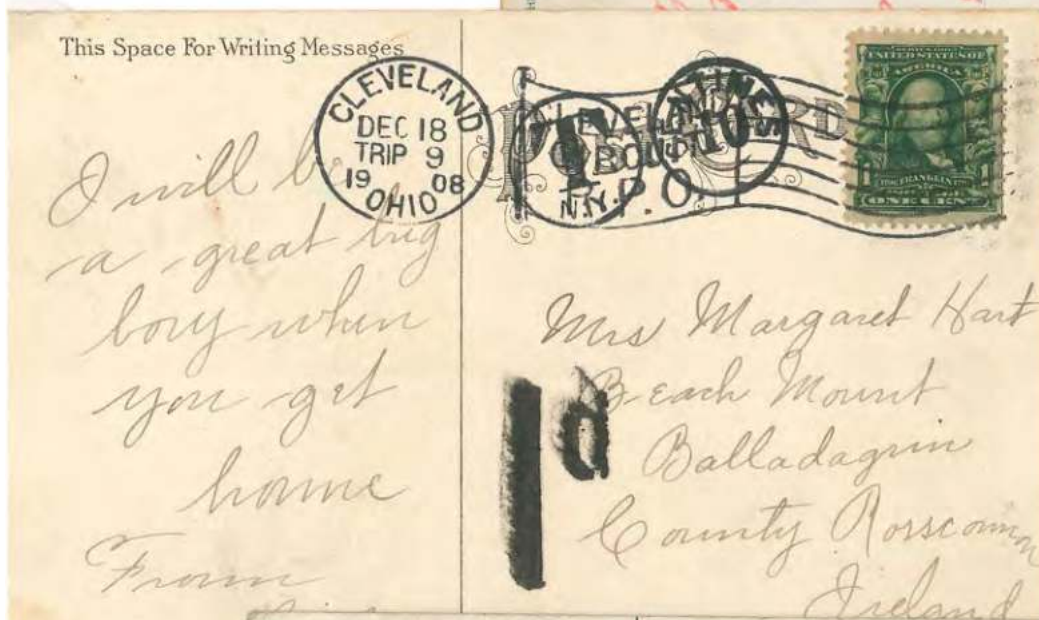
May 2, 1910
Trip 4
1 cent printed
matter rate



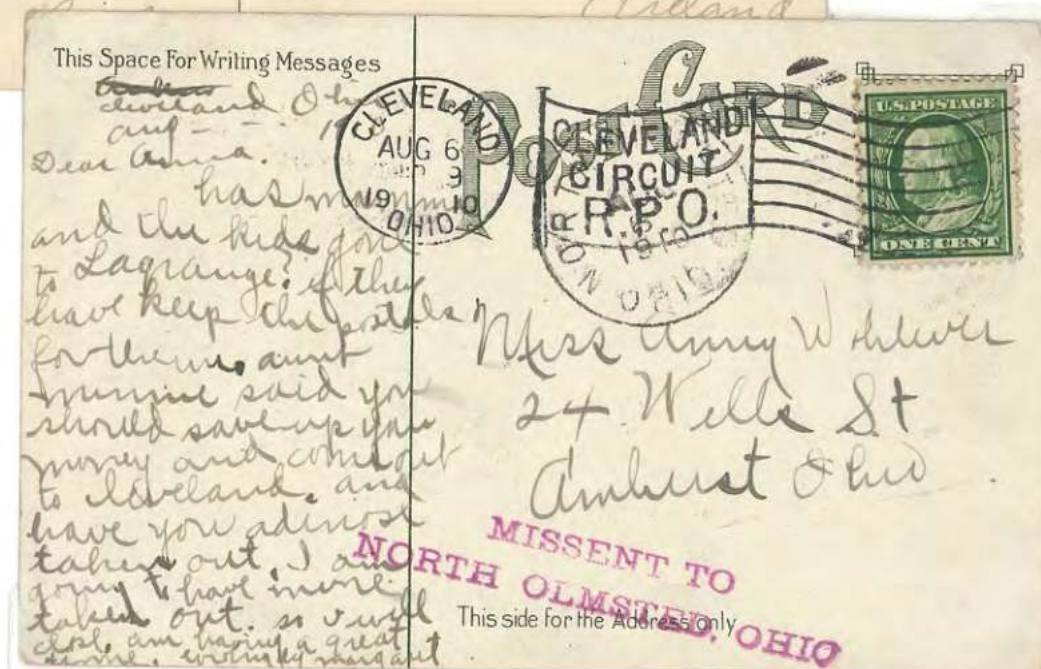
As with the handstamp, the flag machine was used to process numerous types of mail.

American Flag—Auxiliary Markings

January 28, 1911
Trip 8
Held for Postage



December 18, 1908
Trip 9
1 cent underpaid for UPU
rate to Ireland
Double deficiency
charged to addressee



August 6, 1910
Trip 9
Missent to and forwarded from North Olmsted, Ohio

Universal Machine —Model B First Die



January 17, 1913
Trip 6

Mr. Ralph Hovey

The Buckeye Stereoptican Co.

CLEVELAND, O., U. S. A.

SHOW IT WITH A

Mirroscope

Trade Mark Reg. U. S. & Foreign Countries



March 25, 1912
Trip 8
*horizontal
coil stamp*

Dr. W.F. Doolittle,

9510 Euclid Ave.,

Cleveland, O.

Mirroscope



AFTER 10 DAYS RETURN TO

THE CYCLONE WOVEN WIRE FENCE CO.
CLEVELAND, OHIO

FRANK C OSTER

12300 SUPERIOR AVE.

January 16, 1912
Trip 8
*imperforate vertical
coil stamp*

A Universal Model B machine was first placed into use on or about August 1, 1911.
Trips 1-2 and 4-10 are reported.

Universal Machine —Model B First Die Uses



February 14, 1914
Trip 4
One cent postage due collected with
parcel post postage due

E. C. Strauss & Co.
200. Broadway St.



April 23, 1912
Trip 6
UPU rate to France

Miss Muriel Kimmey

Paris, France.



October 8, 1912
Trip 6
Returned unclaimed from Boston

Mr. Harry J. Doolittle

Boston

mass.

To General Delivery

The machine was one of 60 purchased by the United States Post Office Department as part of its second contract with the Universal Stamping Machine Company.

Universal Machine —Model B First Die Uses

RETURN TO
CHRISTIE'S COLLECTION COMPANY,
6408 EUCLID AVE. CLEVELAND, OHIO
If not delivered in 10 days.



March 20, 1912
Trip 7
Shermack private coil

Merchant & Planters Bank

Sherman, Tex.

After 5 days, return to
THE STANDARD OIL COMPANY,
AT POINT OF MAILING.



August 20, 1914
Trip 5
Standard Oil
"Ohio" perfin



ONOMY
WICK OIL STOVE

Donald McBride, Esquire,

~~1201 Leader News Building,~~

Cleveland,

Ohio.

care Root & McBride Co

December 18, 1913
Trip 8
Used as forwarding marking

The latest reported use of this die is September 9, 1914.

Universal Model B "Trip" in Dial Provisional Machine



July 11, 1912
Trip 6
Fewer than 10 reported between
July 9 and July 20, 1912



July 11, 1912
Trip 7
Fewer than 10 reported between
July 9 and July 20, 1912



September 22, 1914
Trip 6
Four reported between September 8 and October 1, 1914

During short periods between July 9 and 20, 1912 and September 8 and October 1, 1914, a different Universal Model B machine, with a wavy bar killer, was used on a provisional basis on the Cleveland Circuit R.P.O. It is believed that a Universal machine from Cleveland's Station B was used, perhaps to allow service or repair to the dedicated Circuit R.P.O. universal machine. The marking is identified as a streetcar use by the presence of "TRIP" in the postmark dial.

Universal Machine – Model B Second Die

After 5 days, return to
THE STANDARD SAND & MACHINE CO.,
5151 St. Clair Avenue,
CLEVELAND, OHIO, U. S. A.



October 2, 1914
Trip 8

*Earliest Recorded
Use of Second Die*

CLEVELAND FENCE CYCLONE

ORNAMENTAL WOVEN WIRE FENCES AND GATES
FARM GATES AND OTHER WOVEN WIRE SPECIALTIES

1230 EAST 55TH ST. CLEVELAND, O.



The Hayden Hardware Co

Sun Prarie Wis

November 4, 1915
Trip 8

Post



November 26, 1914
Missing periods in "R.P.O."

Charles L. Sims

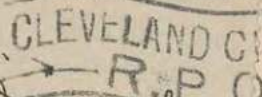
Roselank

N.Y.

Box 295

Elkhart,

Ind.



January 29, 1916
Trip 9
Forwarded

By October 2, 1914, the Universal Model B machine (or at least its canceling die) was replaced. The second die is most noticeably different in the shape of "P" in "R.P.O." Some 1914 and 1915 examples seem to show missing periods in "R.P.O."

Universal Machine – Model B Second Die

December 10,
1914
Trip 7

*Standard Oil
Company
"Ohio" perfin*



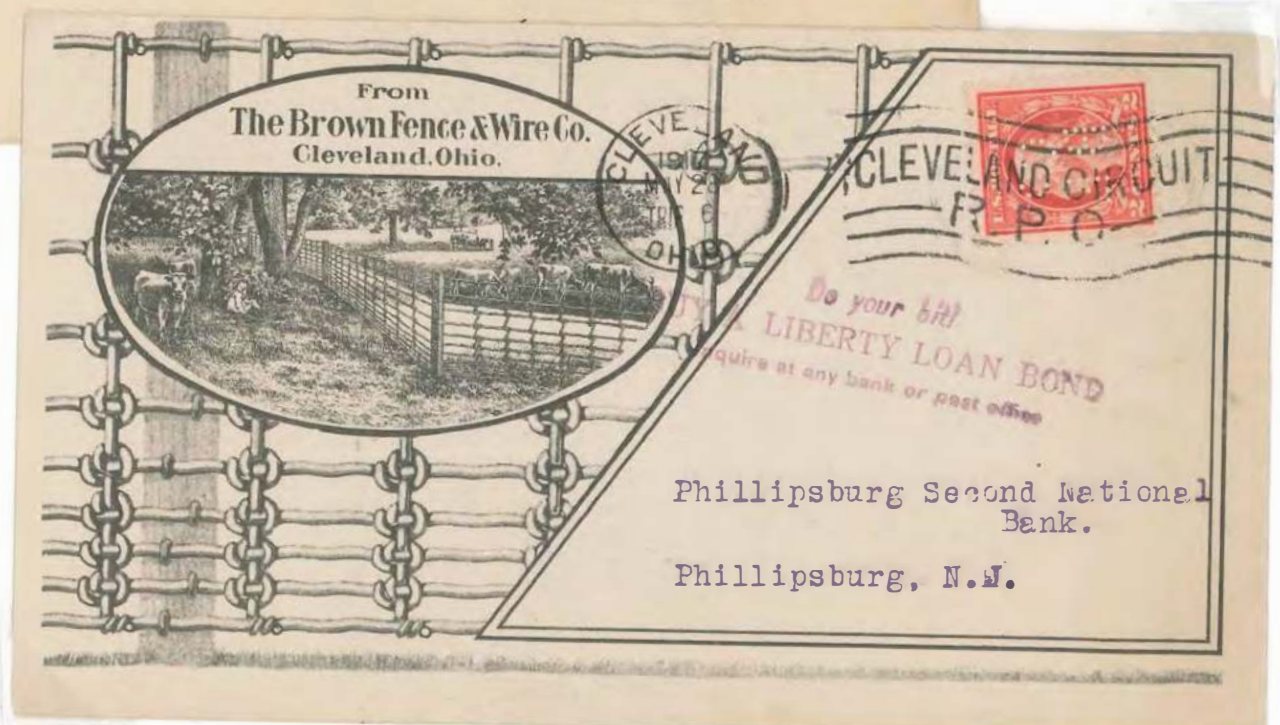
August 26, 1915
Trip 4

*The White Company
perfin*

May 28, 1917
Trip 6

*The Brown
Fence & Wire
Co. perfin*

*"BUY A
LIBERTY
BOND"
Promotional
auxiliary
marking
Applied at
destination
office*



This machine was used with the second die through at least July 17, 1917.

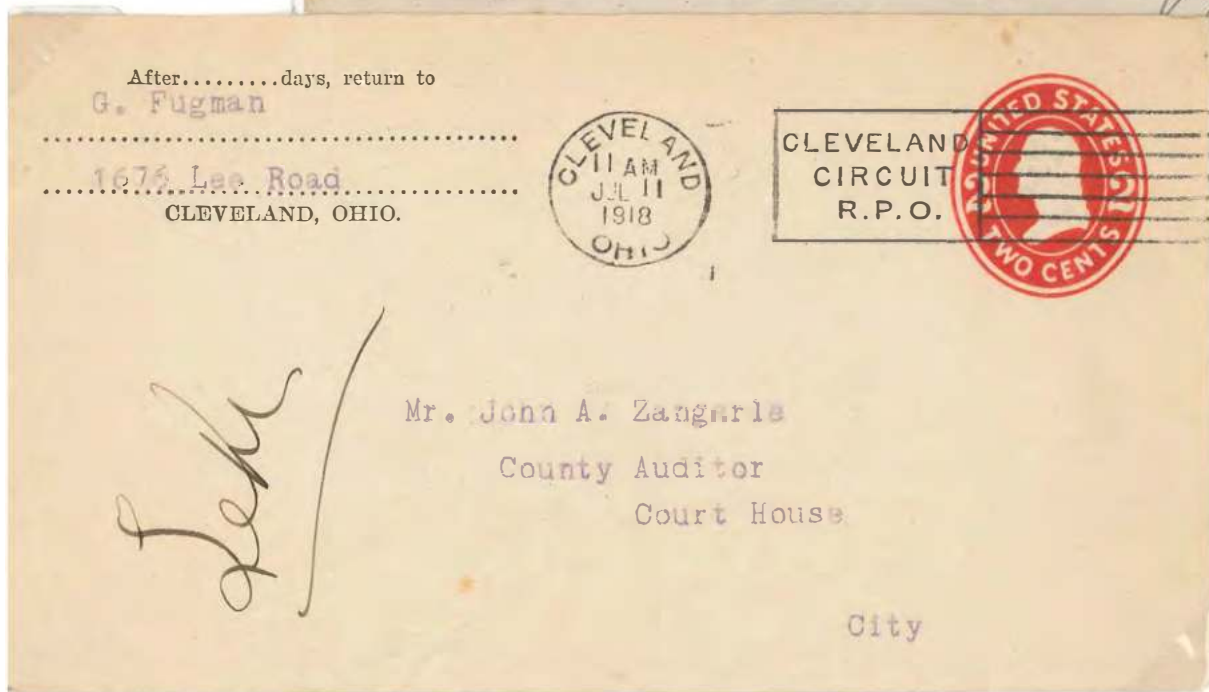
Universal Model D Machine



September 27, 1917
5 a.m.
Only reported example of this trip



September 19, 1917
4 p.m.



July 11, 1918
11 a.m.
"drop" rate

A Universal Model D machine, imprinting a boxed killer, was used as early as July 2, 1917. Instead of "trip" numbers, this machine used a time of day corresponding with the departure time of the trip of the R.P.O. car.

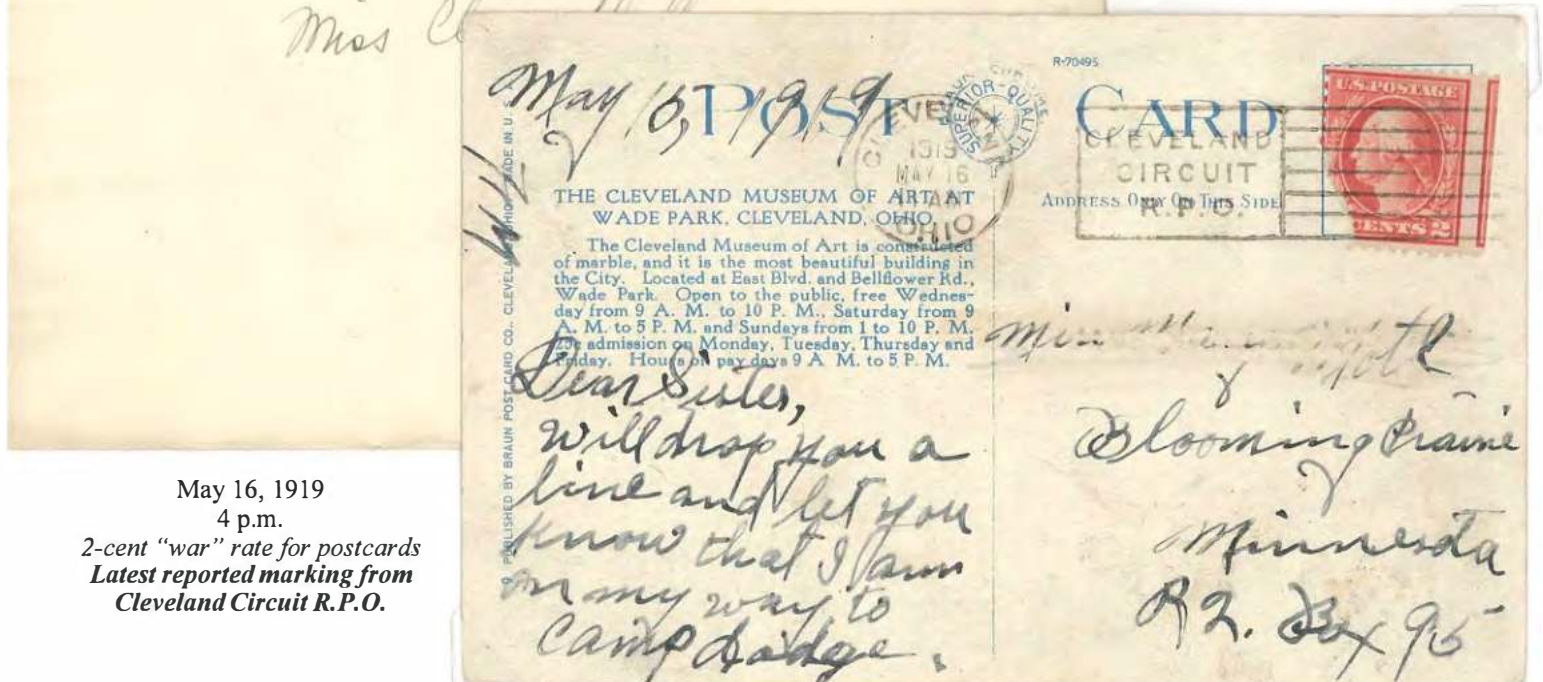
Universal Model D Machine



January 16, 1918
11 a.m.
3-cent "war" rate



February 14, 1919
4 p.m.
3-cent "war" rate
Fewer than 5 1919 uses reported



May 16, 1919
4 p.m.
2-cent "war" rate for postcards
Latest reported marking from
Cleveland Circuit R.P.O.

By mid-1919, the Post Office Department had adopted motor vehicles to carry mail between stations and to collect mail from mailboxes. The Cleveland Circuit R.P.O. was formally discontinued effective August 4, 1919.