

## Lenoir Provisionals— A Newly Recognized Paper Variety

*Patricia A. Kaufmann*

The stamps and covers we love to study have been around for over 150 years. Some have passed through the hands of celebrated and knowledgeable collectors and dealers of old, yet sometimes these philatelic scholars missed what now seem like obvious idiosyncrasies. Today, for example, we can easily compare famous rarities with a few keystrokes by logging into various websites or bringing up research from older publications. Such a case is the subject of this essay: the unusual Lenoir, North Carolina, postmaster's provisional shown in figure 1. Compare it with a traditional known copy, shown in figure 2, and the difference is immediately apparent: the handstamped design in figure 1 is the same as that in figure 2, but the paper is not the same.<sup>1</sup>



Figure 1. Unique LENOIR N C provisional on variant paper.



Figure 2. LENOIR N C provisional on listed paper.

The paper of the listed Lenoir provisional (fig. 2) has orange horizontal and vertical cross-hatched lines (Scott #49X1, CSA catalog #LEN-NC-A01).<sup>2</sup> The newly recognized Lenoir (fig. 1) is struck on variant paper that has only vertical lines. These are more closely spaced and are blue instead of orange. Comparison of these stamps with other genuine stamps show the same defining design characteristics. Any minor differences are due to differences in inking.

According to the *CSA Catalog*, depending on the location of a particular stamp in a sheet, the listed Lenoir provisional could have three or four horizontal lines per stamp and twenty or twenty-one vertical lines.<sup>3</sup> Variations in the paper are known, however, in which only part of the cross-hatched lines are visible. Thus, far fewer lines show, undoubtedly on the margin edge of a sheet of paper. Such

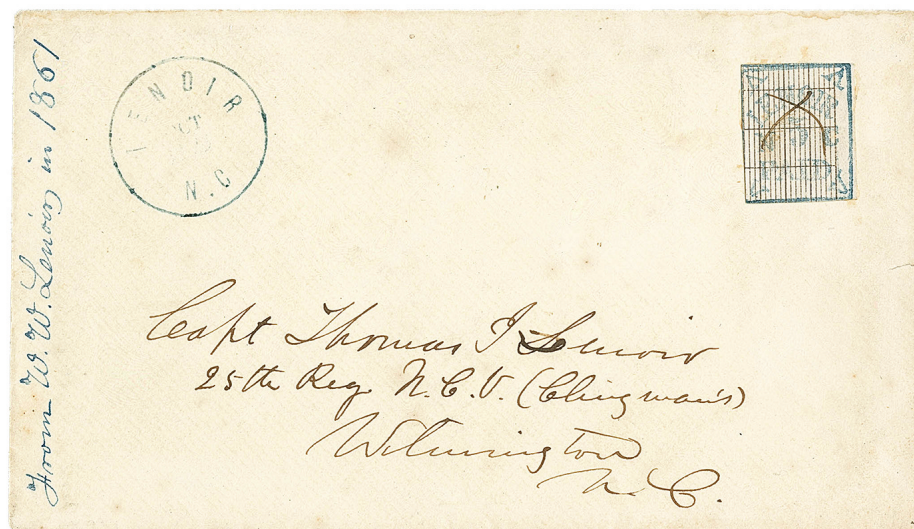
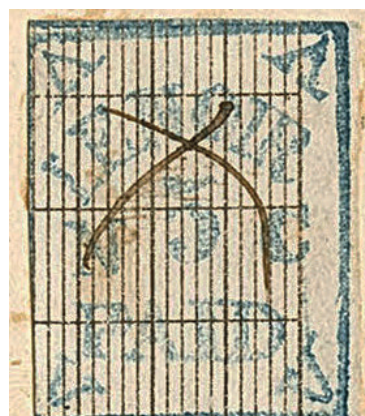


Figure 3. Lenoir provisional used on cover.

Figure 4. Detail of Lenoir provisional from figure 4, struck on margin edge of cross-hatched lined paper.



an example is shown in figures 3 (on cover) and 4 (detail of stamp). Apparently, Lenoir's postmaster used whatever paper or portions of paper were available.

James Harper (1799–1879) served as postmaster of Lenoir from 1841 until sometime in 1862 or 1863. His son, George Washington Finley Harper (1834–1921), was the assistant postmaster. According to written affidavits, George carved the woodcut die used to make the Lenoir provisional stamps and envelopes.<sup>4</sup> The die was carved from pear wood (*pyrus communis*) and handstamped in blue on adhesive white wove paper. A diary entry by George Harper states that he made the woodcut for the stamp on September 19, 1861.

In 1862, G. W. F. Harper enlisted as a private in Company H, 8th Regiment, North Carolina Infantry, eventually earning the rank of major (fig. 5). In his post-military career, Harper was quite ambitious, becoming a merchant, railroad builder, banker, politician, and entrepreneur.<sup>5</sup> (Decades of G. W. F. Harper's

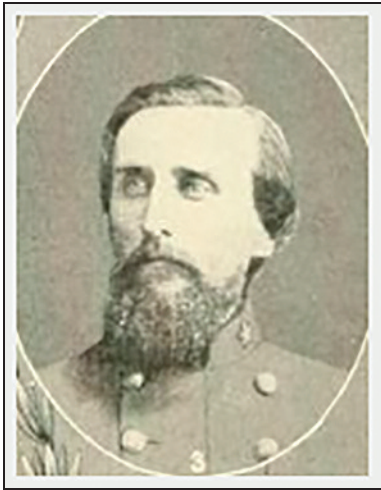
*The Confederate Philatelist*

Figure 5. G. W. F. Harper, creator of the Lenoir provisional design.  
In Walter Clark, ed., *Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina, in the Great War 1861-'65* (Goldsboro, NC: State of North Carolina, 1901) facing 431.

diaries and other papers, dating between 1838 and 1921, are housed in the Southern Historical Collection at the Louis Round Wilson Special Collections Library at Chapel Hill, North Carolina.)

On-cover examples of the Lenoir provisional are recorded tied by the office postmark, paid marking or—most frequently—a manuscript X. The cover in Lot 1906 of Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries Sale 810 shows one example in which the adhesive is canceled with the PAID 2 rate handstamp.

A Lenoir variant-paper stamp was issued Philatelic Foundation certificate #6857 (fig. 6), dated June 25, 1956, and signed by Louise Boyd Dale, chairman of The Expert Committee from 1953 to 1967.<sup>6</sup> The submitter is listed as “Lawrence [sic] & Stryker.” The certificate states the subject Lenoir stamp is genuine but notes it is “without the usual cross lines.” The examiners, however, failed to define the primary differentiating characteristic: the example is completely different paper, which has closely-spaced blue lines instead of the orange lines of the usually seen cross-ruled paper. And the vertical lines are roughly twice as far apart.

The PF certificate was issued in the age of tiny black and white photos when auction catalogs had heavy print-screened dot patterns. It is no wonder examiners missed the paper distinction, unless they had a genuine color reference comparison at hand. With today’s resources, serious students can more easily spot such differences.

The CSA Authentication Service issued the variant-paper variety Genuine Certificate #06153, dated December 30, 2017. It is a unique addition to the world of Confederate provisional adhesives rarities (fig. 7).



First Quarter 2018

No. 6857 25th June 1956

THE PHILATELIC FOUNDATION  
22 EAST 35TH STREET  
NEW YORK 16, N. Y.

EXPERT COMMITTEE

We have examined the enclosed Confederate States:  
Lenoir 1861 5c., blue, Scott 49X1, pencancelled  
without the usual cross lines -----  
submitted by Lawrence & Stryker -----  
of which a photograph is attached and are of the opinion  
that it is genuine and is torn and thinned -----  
-----  
-----

*For The Expert Committee*  
*Chairman*

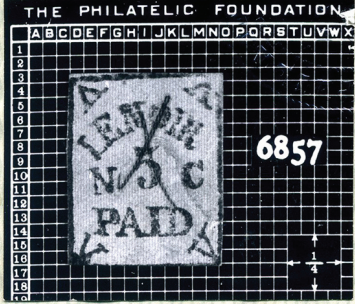


Figure 6. 1956 PF certificate 6857 for variant paper Lenoir, not noting the thin blue lines of the paper.

Approximately twenty-nine covers bearing the Lenoir adhesive stamp are recorded, although I am unaware of this variant being recorded anywhere other than the old files of the Philatelic Foundation.

The same woodcut device was applied directly to envelopes, as evidenced by the sole recorded cut square with the single 5-cent impression (Scott #49XU1) offered by Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries in 2016 as lot 3131 in sale 1132. It is ex Alfred Caspary and Frank J. Stanley. (fig. 8).



*The Confederate Philatelist*



**06153** **December 23, 2017**

**Authentication Service**

We examined the item submitted by the applicant that is described and illustrated below:

SC 49x1 (CC LEN-NC-A01) Lenoir NC postmaster's provisional adhesive 5c blue on variant vertical lined paper used with a pen cancel.

We are of the opinion that:

The stamp is **GENUINE** as described. Thins and a repaired tear.

Numbers are CSA Catalog (CC) or Scott Catalog (SC) numbers.



For the Authentication Service

  
 Chairman: John L. Kimbrough MD

Submitted by: Patricia A. Kaufmann



Not valid without embossed seal.

The validity of this certificate can be verified by contacting the Confederate Stamp Alliance Authentication Service.

Figure 7. 2017 CSA certificate 06153 opining genuine Scott #49X1 (CC LEN-NC-A01) on variant vertical-line paper.

The paper on the variant Lenoir provisional has closely-spaced lines like those found on advertising covers of the period. A careful check of such covers revealed that, universally, the lines are horizontal on such all-over advertising envelopes, while the lines on the variant Lenoir provisional are vertical. Thus, the briefly entertained idea that this might be a cut square was thrown out as illogical, especially when coupled with the fact that it has faults more characteristic of an adhesive than a cut square.

*First Quarter 2018*

Figure 8. Unique Lenoir cut-square use;  
Ex Caspary and Stanley.  
Courtesy Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries



Figure 9. Unique Lenoir 5-cent struck twice to make a 10-cent rate.

## Philatelists S. Kellogg Stryker and Robert Laurence

S. KELLOGG STRYKER (1902–1989), known as “Kelly,” was the second curator of the Philatelic Foundation, serving from 1962 to 1976 and continuing as curator emeritus for the remainder of his life. He made many important discoveries of previously unrecorded US stamps. Stryker and Robert Laurence formed a philatelic auction house—Laurence and Stryker—which operated from 1942 to 1960. Kelly was presented with the John N. Luff Award; upon his death in 1990 he was named to the American Philatelic Society (APS) Hall of Fame. (The APS Hall of Fame honors deceased philatelists who have made outstanding contributions to philately.)<sup>7</sup>

Robert Laurence met legendary collector George Walcott when he was still in the employ of J. M. Bartels Co. When Walcott died, one of the terms of his will was that Mr. Laurence undertake the disposal of his considerable philatelic holdings.<sup>8</sup>

Other than being associated with Kelly Stryker, Robert Laurence is most closely associated with the editing and 1934

publication of the George Walcott auction catalog of used Civil War patriotic covers, a source still widely referred to today. Walcott’s collection was considered the most complete in existence. In a 1935 issue of *The American Philatelist*, J. Walter Scott predicted the Walcott catalog “[will] surely be the authoritative textbook for Patriotics of all time.” That has proven mostly true.

Robert W. Grant republished the Walcott catalog in a second edition in 1974 with improved photos and used it as a launch pad for his own book on the subject, which never progressed past the first volume. It had a separate pricing guide (supplement) with the intent that the guide would be updated without having to reprint the entire book.<sup>9</sup>

In 1995, the late William R. Weiss, Jr., finally produced a comprehensive work on the subject with over 6,400 listings, over 5,000 illustrations, and 2,942 verses.<sup>10</sup> It also had a separate, and indispensable, pricing guide that could be updated as a separate unit.

Another unique Lenoir provisional is the double-strike of a 5-cent for a 10-cent rate (Scott #49XU2) on a Union patriotic entire addressed to Lt. G. W. F. Harper, who carved the pear-wood device used to make these provisionals. It was in the collection of the late Charles Kilbourne and was offered in Siegel Sale 815 as Lot 54, where it was hammered down at \$23,000 plus the buyer premium. (fig. 9). No doubt G. W. F. Harper would be amused that we continue to make a fuss over his wartime postal creations.

*Author’s Acknowledgment:* My thanks to Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries for providing many of the Lenoir images from past important auctions.



## NOTES

1. Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries, lot 3130, sale 1132, 2016.
2. Patricia A. Kaufmann, Francis J. Crown, Jr., and Jerry S. Palazolo, eds., *Confederate States Catalog and Handbook of Stamps and Postal History* (n.p.: Confederate Stamp Alliance, 2012), 282.
3. *Ibid.*, 282.
4. Francis J. Crown, Jr., ed., *Surveys of the Confederate Postmasters' Provisionals* (n.p.: Quarterman Publications, 1984), 172–178; 651–652.
5. Richard A. Shrader, Harper, George Washington Finley, NCPedia. <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/harper-george-washington/>. Accessed December 30, 2017.
6. History of the Philatelic Foundation, A Trip Down Memory Lane. <http://www.philatelicfoundation.org/?s=Louise+Boyd+Dale/>. Accessed December 30, 2017.
7. American Philatelic Society Hall of Fame. <https://stamps.org/Hall-of-Fame/>. Accessed December 30, 2017.
8. Robert Laurence, compiler, *The George Walcott Collection of Used Civil War Patriotic Covers*, 2nd ed. (Hanover, MA: R. W. Grant, 1975).
9. Robert W. Grant, *The Handbook of Civil War Patriotic Envelopes and Postal History*, vol. 1 (Hanover, MA: self-published, 1977).
10. William R. Weiss, Jr., *The Catalog of Union Civil War Patriotic Covers* (Bethlehem, PA: self-published, 1995).

## CSA Authentication Service

*Make sure you are getting what you paid for*

Have that new purchase authenticated by the CSA Authentication Service—a service that examines only Confederate stamps and postal history. CSAAS examiners have more than 250 years of combined experience in the field of Confederates. Off-cover stamps, both used and unused, are accepted at lower fees. Each Patient submitted must be accompanied by an official application.

Application forms are available at: [www.csalliance.org](http://www.csalliance.org)

Or contact:

John L. Kimbrough, MD  
CSAAS Chairman  
10140 Wandering Way  
Benbrook, TX 76126  
[jlksa@aol.com](mailto:jlksa@aol.com)

