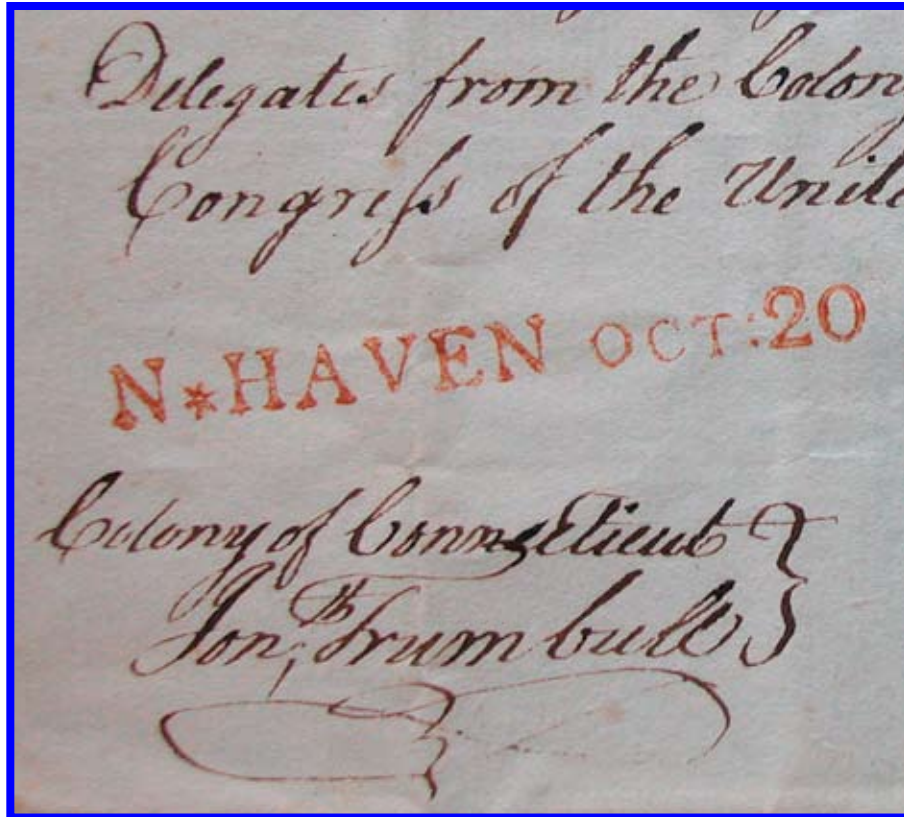


CONNECTICUT



STRAIGHTLINE CENSUS

Compiled

by

WJ Duffney

Introduction

Straightline postmarks are among the first handstamps used in the United States. Simply defined, they are markings in which the post office name appears in one or two straight lines, with or without a frameline. When the postmark has more than one line, the lines are parallel. These devices were made from movable type procured from local print shops.

The larger post offices had seen mail arriving from Europe with straightline markings and they served as models for American handstamps. The earliest straightline marking currently recorded used on these shores was a two-line NEW / YORK of March 15, 1756.

By July 26, 1775, when Benjamin Franklin became the first Postmaster General of the United Colonies, he had established a network of business partners in the printing trade, several of whom were patriots during the American Revolution. Franklin appointed many of them, or their relatives, as postmasters. These early printer-postmasters had a clear business advantage for distributing their newspapers using the mails. We can imagine them reaching for the type at hand to create their straightline handstamps. Following just a single branch of Franklin's network in Connecticut yields some interesting facts.

In New London the Franklin appointment went to printer Dr. Giles Goddard. In 1775 his son, printer-patriot William, set up the Constitutional Post which operated from Massachusetts to Virginia. It ran independently from the British Post and quickly ran them out of business. Because of this William Goddard is remembered as the "Father of the American Postal System." His associates John Parker and John Holt ran the New Haven Post Office under the British system. It was John Holt who assisted Goddard in establishing the Constitutional Post. Under Goddard's new authority the New Haven postmastership was given to another printer, Elias Beers, who continued under Franklin. William's sister Mary Katharine Goddard became our first woman postmaster, in Baltimore, and Congress chose her to print the Declaration of Independence. Research on the biographies of earliest Connecticut postmasters would be a captivating project and is long overdue.

This census is an on-going effort to record all Connecticut straightline postmarks of the 18th and 19th Centuries. The Connecticut Postal History Society first published the census on compact disc in 2008. It has been compiled through the generous contributions of the members of the CPHS, searches of auction catalogs, philatelic literature, and the internet. It relies on previous studies done by Robert F. Chambers, David L. Jarrett, and Dr. James W. Milgram, as well as information from the *American Stampless Cover Catalog*. The information has been updated for this website. I intend to continue to collect data and hope that eventually other philatelists will carry on the work. We were fortunate to have access to the photographic and philatelic archives of the late Arthur J. Warmesley.

A total 481 examples from 57 different Connecticut post offices are currently recorded. Contributions of new information to the census are welcomed. A numerical summary follows.

~ W.J. Duffney
2019

Acknowledgments

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All entries reside in private collections unless source information is given. Commercial philatelic dealers are given credit when items have been recorded from their stock.

| Post Office | Number | EKU/OKU | SL Styles |
|-------------------|--------|------------|-----------|
| Black Hall | 4 | 04-06-1894 | 1 |
| Bridgeport | 8 | __-__-1805 | 1 |
| Brookfield | 1 | 05-22-1840 | 1 |
| Canaan | 1 | 08-17-1827 | 1 |
| Central Village | 3 | 05-19-1847 | 1 |
| Chaplin | 1 | 10-07-1829 | 1 |
| Chelsea Landing | 4 | 11-10-1823 | 2 |
| Colebrook [2] | 1 | 11-29-1830 | 1 |
| Danbury | 4 | 04-19-1794 | 2 |
| Deep River | 1 | Unk Date | 1 |
| Derby [1] | 5 | 08-06-1799 | 1 |
| Durham | 3 | 06-22-1800 | 2 |
| East Goshen | 4 | 03-06-1828 | 1 |
| East Guilford | 1 | 08-23-1821 | 1 |
| East Lyme | 1 | 05-06-1846 | 1 |
| Essex | 5 | 07-31-1882 | 1 |
| Farmington | 15 | 09-07-1829 | 1 |
| Fisherville | 1 | 06-19-1846 | 1 |
| Franklin [2] | 25 | 06-24-1862 | 5 |
| Greenwich | 2 | 07-18-NYD | 2 |
| Hartford | 47 | 01-23-1766 | 4 |
| Killingly [1] | 1 | 10-13-1827 | 1 |
| Litchfield | 54 | 06-18-1804 | 5 |
| Lyme | 7 | 11-15-1836 | 2 |
| Middle Haddam | 1 | __-__-1838 | 1 |
| Middletown | 4 | __-__-1792 | 1 |
| New Hartford | 1 | 09-26-1832 | 1 |
| New Haven | 53 | 01-06-1775 | 3 |
| New London | 38 | 01-05-1774 | 2 |
| Northville | 1 | __-__-1859 | 1 |
| Norwalk | 1 | 02-14-1775 | 1 |
| Norwich [1] | 21 | 10-14-1789 | 3 |
| Oakland | 2 | 03-14-1842 | 1 |
| Pomfret | 11 | 09-22-1829 | 1 |
| Poquonock | 2 | 07-15-1827 | 1 |
| Quinebaug [2] | 1 | 02-08-1888 | 1 |
| Ripton | 1 | __-__-1808 | 1 |
| Rocky Hill | 1 | __-__-1833 | 1 |
| South Farms | 1 | __-__-1829 | 1 |
| Southford | 3 | 12-29-1882 | 1 |
| South Glastonbury | 5 | __-__-1841 | 2 |
| South Norwalk | 3 | 07-17-1845 | 1 |
| Stamford | 10 | 09-29-1800 | 1 |
| Sterling Hill | 1 | 01-25-NYD | 1 |
| Stonington | 22 | 03-18-1800 | 4 |
| Thompson | 5 | 09-11-1826 | 1 |
| Tolland | 4 | 09-11-1826 | 1 |
| Washington | 2 | 10-06-1837 | 2 |
| West Cheshire | 4 | 06-26-1854 | 1 |
| West Hartland | 5 | 08-12-1843 | 1 |
| West Meriden | 30 | 03-24-1846 | 2 |
| West Woodstock | 7 | 06-07-1830 | 1 |
| Willington | 9 | 10-31-1851 | 2 |
| Winchester | 2 | 08-27-1827 | 1 |
| Windham | 8 | 01-12-1795 | 3 |
| Windsor | 21 | 06-29-1840 | 2 |
| Woodstock [1] | 2 | 03-13-1851 | 1 |

Chronological List of Connecticut Straightline EKUs

| | | | |
|-----------------|------------|-------------------|------------|
| Hartford | 01-23-1766 | Colebrook [2] | 11-29-1830 |
| New London | 01-05-1774 | New Hartford | 09-26-1832 |
| New Haven | 01-06-1775 | Rocky Hill | __-__-1833 |
| Norwalk | 02-14-1775 | Lyme | 11-15-1836 |
| Norwich [1] | 10-14-1789 | Washington | 10-06-1837 |
| Middletown | __-__-1792 | Middle Haddam | __-__-1838 |
| Danbury | 04-19-1794 | Brookfield | 05-22-1840 |
| Windham | 01-12-1795 | Windsor | 06-29-1840 |
| Derby [1] | 08-06-1799 | South Glastonbury | __-__-1841 |
| Stonington | 03-18-1800 | Oakland | 03-14-1842 |
| Durham | 06-22-1800 | West Hartland | 07-07-1843 |
| Stamford | 09-29-1800 | South Norwalk | 07-17-1845 |
| Litchfield | 06-18-1804 | West Meriden | 03-24-1846 |
| Bridgeport | __-__-1805 | East Lyme | 05-06-1846 |
| Ripton | __-__-1811 | Fisherville | 06-19-1846 |
| East Guilford | 08-23-1821 | Central Village | 05-19-1847 |
| Chelsea Landing | __-__-1824 | Woodstock [1] | 03-13-1851 |
| Tolland | 09-11-1826 | Willington | 10-31-1851 |
| Poquonock | 07-15-1827 | West Cheshire | 06-26-1854 |
| Canaan | 08-17-1827 | Northville | __-__-1859 |
| Winchester | 08-27-1827 | Franklin [2] | 06-24-1862 |
| Killingly [1] | 10-13-1827 | Essex | 10-09-1882 |
| Thompson | __-__-1827 | Southford | 12-29-1882 |
| East Goshen | 03-06-1828 | Quinebaug [2] | 02-08-1888 |
| Farmington | 09-07-1829 | Black Hall | 04-06-1894 |
| Chaplin | 10-07-1829 | Deep River | Unk Date |
| Pomfret | 10-12-1829 | Greenwich | Unk Date |
| South Farms | __-__-1829 | Sterling Hill | Unk Date |
| West Woodstock | 06-07-1830 | | |

Table Layout

| Date | Straightline | Size | Notes |
|---|---|---|--|
| Date that the straightline was struck, or datelined | General configuration of the handstamp* | Size from source or from actual measurement** | Rate, Description, Destination, Source |
| | Postmaster | | |
| | Postmaster at the time of use | | |
| <p>*General configuration is not accurate for items which were not viewed or available in illustrations. Such entries are recorded as [No Photo Available].</p> <p>**New measurements done for this census are based on the criteria set forth in the <i>ASCC</i>. Size includes the town name and state designation, plus any star or punctuation mark immediately adjacent. Size does not include month, day, or year. If the town name is in two lines, the height includes both lines. Size should be taken only as a guide because not all sources measured in the same way.</p> | | | |

Key

| | | | |
|-------|--|-----------|---|
| DL | Double Line | Re-est | Re-established |
| EKU | Earliest Known Use Currently Recorded | Sc | Scott Catalog |
| LKU | Latest Known Use Currently Recorded | SL | Straightline |
| OKU | Only Known Use Currently Recorded | St | State |
| Co | County | TwN | Town |
| c | Circa (placed before or after figures) | 2L, 3L | Two Line, Three Line, etc. |
| Disc | Discontinued | Unk | Unknown |
| DPO | Discontinued Post Office | / | Beginning of new line below |
| Est | Established | [1], etc. | Denotes a single name designation that was assigned more than once, not necessarily to the same office location |
| FF | Free Frank | AJW | Arthur J. Warmsley Archives |
| hs | Handstamp | ASCC | American Stampless Cover Catalog |
| MD | Month Date | CHS | Connecticut Historical Society |
| MDD | Month and Day Date | C-RL | Christie's Robson Lowe |
| MDDY | Month, Day Date and Year | DK | Daniel Kellogg Auction |
| Ms/ms | Manuscript | MB | Matthew Bennett International |
| NYD | No Year Date | Nutmeg | Harmer Nutmeg Auctions |
| Op | Operating | Paige | Samuel C. Paige Auction |
| PM | Postmaster | RAS | Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries |
| PMFF | Postmaster Free Frank | RCF | Richard C. Frajola Auction |
| Pmk | Postmark | | |
| PO | Post Office | | |
| PSE | Postal Stationery Entire | | |

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