

COVER OF THE ISSUE

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Footprints was a post office in Madison County from June 23, 1886 until April 15, 1890. Mail service came from the nearby town of Munnsville when the post office was discontinued. Here's an interesting cover with a beautiful Circular Date Stamp and Killer that was in the Kelleher Auction #623 (January, 2011) Lot #1064. It was part of the Beane Family Collection of United States Fancy Cancels.

It would seem that the name "FOOTPRINTS" came from a local phenomenon. According to James H. Smith in *The History of Chenango and Madison Counties* (1880): "Indentations in the rocks which form the bed of a small stream which courses down the east hill a little northeast of Munnsville, have been supposed to represent the footprints of human beings and domestic and other animals. They are not, however, well-defined foot-prints and require a vivid imagination to give them that resemblance." Smith goes on to describe how they "footprints" are actually erosion



in the limestone river bed. Smith also notes in his work that in 1880 Grove S. Hinman was supervisor of the Town of Stockbridge which includes the village of Munnsville. He was supervisor from 1880 to 1882.

Many smaller post offices in the 1870s and 1880s purchased their own CDS's and included either or both County names and postmaster names. At the current time I have about 400 such examples from New York State. I also have a want-list of about 200 more that I hope to find.

The killer is a wonderful example of the fancy design "US MAIL entwined." Usually this killer becomes less distinct as it's used to cancel the mail, but in this case the letter was postmarked only weeks after the post office was established. So the killer was still in almost pristine shape.

In April 2011 I was at the Crossroads Stamp show in Quechee, Vermont and talking with friend and dealer Elwyn "Doub" Doubleday. Our conversation turned to #210s on cover. Doub collects #210s from New York State Post Offices and I collect them from Vermont. He mentioned that he had recently been unsuccessful in the Kelleher auction on an item from Footprints. Doub said it was the only known Footprints cover and somebody else must have really wanted it since the price realized was quite high.

What a laugh we had when I told him that I was the high bidder on the item! Now the kicker: at the same show, a fellow Vermont collector told me about a Vermont postmaster/county cancel in the Kelleher auction that he had been outbid on also. It, too, was an extremely rare example that he said he had never seen in years of collecting. Of course, he was also surprised when I told him that I was the high bidder on that item as well.