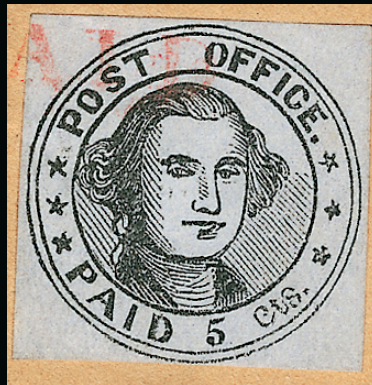


Lot 15



Lot 15  
Detail of Stamp

## Millbury, Massachusetts

### Lot 15

**5c Black on Bluish (7X1).** Large margins to ample at bottom, sharp impression, tied by red “Paid” handstamp, matching “Millbury Ms. Jan. 12” (1847) circular datestamp and “5” sans-serif numeral in circle handstamp (the latest of four different numeral handstamps used on Millbury provisional covers) on brown cover to “*Mr. William E. Hoit, Care Loder & Co., 83 Cedar St., New York*”, opening tear in flap barely shows at top edge

EXTREMELY FINE. A MAGNIFICENT EXAMPLE OF THE MILLBURY, MASSACHUSETTS, POSTMASTER’S PROVISIONAL STAMP TIED ON COVER. THIS IS AMONG THE FINEST OF THE EIGHT RECORDED COVERS BEARING THE DISTINCTIVE MILLBURY PROVISIONAL DEPICTING GEORGE WASHINGTON. THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THIS COVER HAS BEEN OFFERED AT AUCTION SINCE ITS DISCOVERY IN 1896.

Census No. 7X1-COV-19. Ex Dutcher and Lapham. Small “W.H.C.” (Warren H. Colson) handstamp at lower right. With 2011 P.F. certificate. Scott value on cover is \$125,000.00. Estimate \$100,000-150,000

### *The Millbury Postmaster*

Colonel Asa Holman Waters II (1808-1887) was a wealthy and well-educated resident of Millbury, Massachusetts, a mill town near Worcester with a population of 3,000 in the 1850’s. Holman was graduated from Yale in 1829 and earned his law degree from Harvard. His considerable family wealth came from manufacturing guns, including the 1836 Army Flintlock Pistol made by Waters and Johnson from 1836 to 1844 ([www.gunandswordcollector.com/Templates/articles/10\\_asa\\_waters.html](http://www.gunandswordcollector.com/Templates/articles/10_asa_waters.html)). The mansion he built in 1832 still stands as a historical site.



Asa H. Waters (1808-1887)  
Millbury Postmaster 1836-1848



Waters and Johnson 1836 Army Flintlock pistol

Waters received his postmaster’s appointment from Andrew Jackson on January 18, 1836, and he served as nominal postmaster through the administrations of Jackson, Van Buren, Harrison, Tyler and Polk. Most of the functions of postmaster were performed by Waters’ deputy, Henry Waterman, a local jeweler, who was directly responsible for issuing the adhesive provisional stamp in 1846. Waterman succeeded Colonel Waters as postmaster on November 10, 1848.

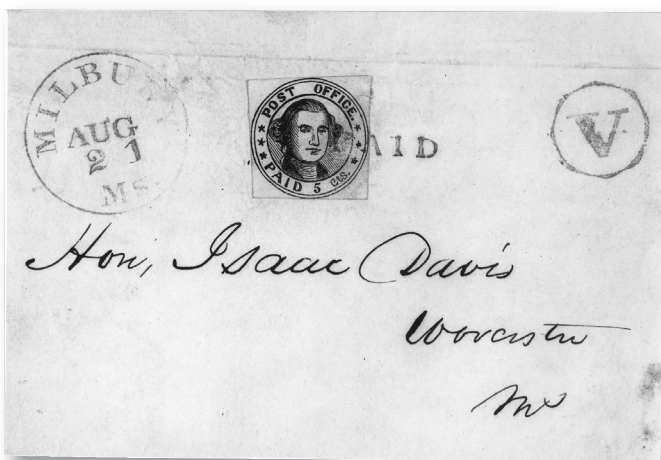
### ***The Millbury Stamp***

The distinctive Millbury provisional stamp is one of two postmasters' 1845-47 issues with portraits, both of which depict George Washington (the other is the New York City adhesive). The Millbury was printed by typography from a single woodcut die. The cartoon-like portrait is a three-quarter portrait of Washington, with the words "Post Office" above and "Paid 5 Cts." below, but the post office name is entirely absent. All known examples are printed in black on a bluish white paper. The town postmark used on mail spells the name "Milbury" with one L, but the official spelling is with two L's.

Nineteen examples of the Millbury provisional are recorded in the census appended to this catalogue, including one with original gum, seven cancelled off cover (all have faults), three cancelled on pieces (one sound, the others with faults) and eight on covers (six sound, two with faults).

### ***Discovery of the First Millbury Provisional Stamps***

The first examples of the Millbury provisional were found on two letters contained in bound volumes of correspondence donated in 1884 to the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Massachusetts ([www.americanantiquarian.org/Findingaids/isaac\\_davis.pdf](http://www.americanantiquarian.org/Findingaids/isaac_davis.pdf)). Both letters are addressed to Isaac Davis, one dated August 21, 1846



The first Millburys discovered were found on two letters addressed to Isaac Davis, donated to the American Antiquarian Society in 1884

(Census No. 7X1-COV-12) and the other dated December 16, 1846 (Census No. 7X1-COV-18). The discovery of the two Millbury provisional stamps in 1884 inspired Hiram Deats to write a letter of inquiry to retired postmaster Asa H. Waters, who replied on January 24, 1885, crediting his deputy, Henry Waterman, with issuing the stamp. The full text of Waters' reply is quoted in the Luff book.

The December 16 Davis cover was sold or exchanged by the American Antiquarian Society in 1895, and it entered the collection of a British collector, Sir William B. Avery, who was active in the 1890's and a contemporary of Thomas K. Tapling. The August 21 Davis cover remained in the Society's collection until shortly after the 1989 Weill Brothers sale. John R. Boker Jr., acting as agent for a German collector, was outbid for the December 16 Davis cover in the Weill sale. Within the next year or two, Boker approached the Society about deaccessioning the August 21 cover, and they accepted his offer. The cover is now in Germany.

### ***Sale History of the Millbury Cover to William E. Hoit***

The cover offered here was another early discovery. It is reported that the niece of the addressee, William E. Hoit, found the cover in papers at the family home in Worcester. We have been unable to obtain more information about this member of the



Hoit family (also spelled Hoyt). The cover is addressed to William Hoit in care of Loder & Company at 83 Cedar Street. This firm produced merchant tokens during the 1850's and advertised itself as "Importers and Jobbers of Fancy and Staple Dry Goods."

Hoit's niece sold the cover to the New England Stamp Company, who in turn sold it to Frank J. Dutcher (1850-



Frank J. Dutcher (1850-1930)

1930), a wealthy member of the Hopedale Community in Massachusetts. Dutcher was the first president of the Draper Corporation, which later became a division of the Rockwell Corporation ([www.hope1842.com/dutcherbyhackett.html](http://www.hope1842.com/dutcherbyhackett.html)). The Draper loom, patented in 1895, was the cutting-edge technology in textile weaving until after World War II ([www.jstor.org/pss/3115965](http://www.jstor.org/pss/3115965)). Little has been written about Dutcher's stamp-collecting activity, but he was a collector of substantial means in the 1890's and a member of the Collectors Club of New York.



Loder & Co. merchant's token

The New England Stamp Company pictured this Millbury cover on a holiday greeting card with the inscription "Compliments of the Season 1906-1907." There is no other information about its ownership history between the time it was owned by Frank J. Dutcher and its display by Henry G. Lapham at the Collectors Club of New York on April 4, 1928. Lapham owned both this cover and the original-gum example from the Ferrary collection (Census No. 7X1-OG-01). The cover was one of the items acquired by Frelinghuysen when the Lapham collection was dispersed privately by Warren H. Colson, after Henry Lapham's death in 1939.



Henry G. Lapham (1875-1939)

The ex-Ferrary stamp with original gum owned by Lapham at the time of his death was not acquired by Frelinghuysen. It is reported that the Weills acquired the stamp from Colson and sold it to Josiah K. Lilly Jr. (the Weills did not sell it to B. D. Phillips). When the Lilly collection of Postmasters' Provisionals was offered by the Siegel firm (February 2, 1967, lot 19), the stamp sold for \$34,000 to A. T. Seymour, a Texas collector who topped the bid Weill was carrying for B. D. Phillips. Seymour's collection was later sold privately (including the Millbury) and at auction (Siegel Sale 373, April 23, 1970), at which point the Weills reacquired the stamp. They sold it to "E.G." for his collection of Postmasters' Provisionals, which the Weills bought shortly before selling their stock in 1989. The stamp sold to a dealer for \$110,000 plus 10% buyer's premium as lot 631 in the 1989 Christie's Robson Lowe sale of the Weill Brothers Stock, and it remained in dealer hands until it was acquired by William H. Gross, the current owner.