

MINNESOTA



“Official Business”
State Departmental Offices
Illustrated Covers
1860 - 1960

Compiled by Mike Ludeman



Hosted in the Stamp Smarter Library

<https://stampsmarter.org/learning/StateGovCovers.html>

MINNESOTA: “Official Business” Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards

INTRODUCTION

Mike Ludeman

Although the use of an envelope to securely enclose a letter sent through the mails has been around for many centuries, it was not until the 1840s when several events occurred that brought them into widespread use in the United States. The first was the invention of manufacturing equipment which could mass produce the envelopes inexpensively, and the second was the change in how the United States Post Office Department calculated the way it charged for the postage to carry a letter through the mails. The early rates were based on the number of pieces of paper that made up the letter, and since the envelope was considered a separate sheet, the rate would automatically be doubled for a letter sent in an envelope. This occurred as the result of the Postal Act of March 3, 1845, when rates were changed to consider the weight of the letter rather than the number of sheets comprising the mail piece. This law became effective on July 1, 1845.

By the early 1860s, several state governments had begun to produce decorative envelopes with an all-over background design for use in their “Official Business” correspondence. The typical design included some representation of the official state seal in the upper left corner, together with the name of the individual department or agency, either as part of the design with the seal or in the background of the entire envelope. As these envelopes were often printed in bright colors, they no doubt readily caught the attention of their recipients.

Eventually the local governments (county and city) began to emulate the state government, and some prepared illustrated envelopes for use in their departments and agencies.

The present monograph is an initial effort to document and illustrate these envelopes which were used at all offices within the current state. It is not intended to be complete in all respects, such as one might expect in a formal handbook or catalog but has been prepared to provide the reader with an introduction to a representative sample of the styles and varieties of envelopes that were used during this period, and perhaps educate the collecting community as to the possibilities that could exist in collecting them.

The initial section will include those envelopes used by the state agency and departmental offices, which are typically located at the state capitol. The state department envelopes have been organized into an alphabetical order based on the agency or department name. These department names were not always consistent, as they evolved over time, and therefore, these are usually grouped by what the compiler believed was the most obvious choice. Within the envelopes from a specific

A second section was prepared to include envelopes from agencies and departments prepared for and used by the county and other local (city) governments. The organization of this section was arranged in alphabetical order by county, then by county seat, and finally by date, with any envelopes from a city office in the county to follow.

Only the illustration of front side of these envelopes has been included, unless there is some significant postal history element present on the reverse. When the envelope illustrated also included contents related to the purpose of the office, the contents, or at least the illustrated portion of the

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letterhead or billhead, were also included. As the search for relevant envelopes proceeded, other state and county documents with “interesting” billhead type illustrations were encountered, and because I found these interesting in terms of explaining the purpose for the use of these envelopes, they were included as well.

THE FUTURE PLANS AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The complete series of these monographs has been hosted on the Stamp Smarter website through the courtesy of Don Denman. These are not intended to be an active project of the original compiler, but the source documents (a simple Microsoft Word file) can be made available to other collectors who would be interested in taking responsibility to add new materials to them.

For the immediate future, the compiler solicits the contribution of digital scans that illustrate envelopes which are not present in these monographs, including those present but were used with different dates. Preference will be given to those envelopes with the all-over illustrations, and the state/local buildings and seals, and those used prior to 1920. Contributions of envelopes from any state will be welcome. It is requested that the submitted envelopes should be scanned at 300dpi and provided in the JPG format when possible. Images of envelopes created with a camera or iPhone are not really useful unless they are carefully focused and prepared with no angular distortion. If contributing more than a small number, please contact me to discuss options other than email.

All contributors will be acknowledged in the monograph(s) for which they submit examples unless requested otherwise. Any errors are the sole responsibility of the compiler, and please bring any errors found to my attention.

Mike Ludeman

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July 2021

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First State Capitol

Constructed 1853

Destroyed by fire 1881



Photograph courtesy Minnesota Historical Society (wikipedia)

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Third State Capitol

Constructed 1905




Postcard image courtesy of eBay seller fxx19, June 2021.

Rear View



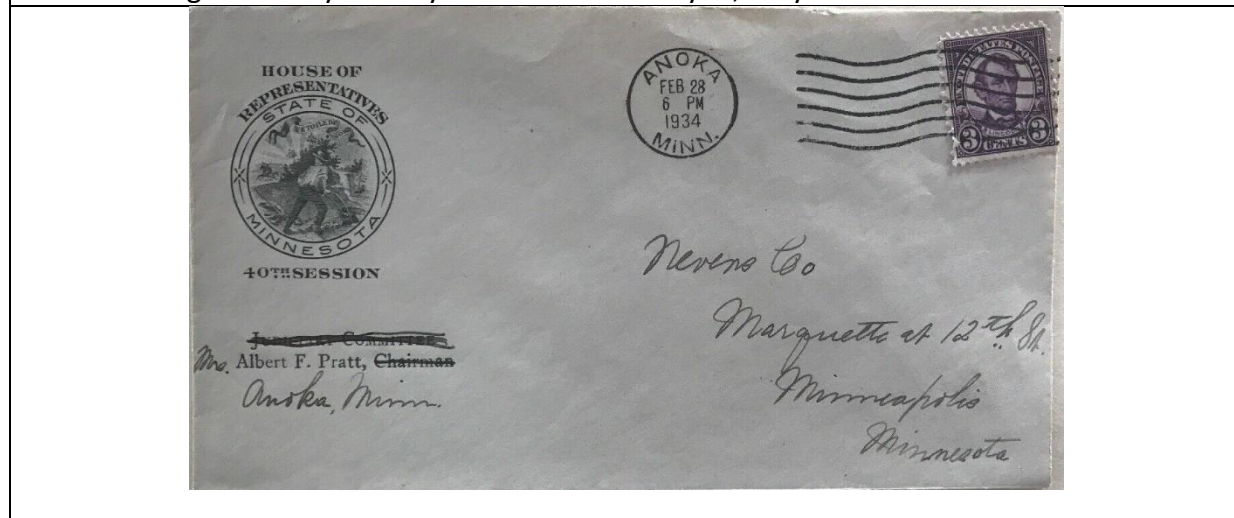
Postcard image courtesy of eBay seller upten_postcards, June 2021

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ID:	State: Minnesota	County: Ramsey	City: St. Paul
Dates: 17 July 1861	Color: Yellow	Size: Regular	
Office: "EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT."			
Notes: Printer's imprint on back flap: "B. E. H?? & SONS. MAUNFACTURERS, BELOIT, WIS"			
			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller stampyboy, May 2021.			



ID:	State: Minnesota	County: Ramsey	City: St. Paul
Dates: 28 Feb 1934	Color: Black	Size: Regular	
Office: "HOUSE OF / REPRESENTATIVES / 40 TH SESSION"			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller calloohcallay11, May 2021.			



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ID:	State: Minnesota	County: Nicolette	City: St. Peter
Dates: 12 Jan 1885	Color: Black	Size: Regular	
Office: "MINNESOTA HOSPITAL FOR INSANE,"			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of Jerry Login Asylum collection, June 2021.			


ID:	State: Minnesota	County: Stearns	City: Saint Cloud
Dates: 13 Dec 1905	Color: Black	Size: Regular	
Office: "STATE NORMAL SCHOOL,"			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller postal38, June 2021.			

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ID:	State: Minnesota	County: Ramsey	City: St. Paul
Dates: 15 Sept 1896	Color: Blue-green	Size: Regular	
Office: "OFFICE CLERK OF SUPREME COURT,"			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of ebay seller wolfestamp, June 2021.			

ID:	State: Minnesota	County: Stevens	City: Morris
Dates: 24 Oct 1908	Color: Blue	Size: Regular	
Office: "JUDGE OF THE DISTRICT COURT / SIXTEENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT"			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of ebay seller stamps-plus, June 2021.			

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ID:	State: Minnesota	County: St Louis	City: Duluth
Dates: 14 Aug 1889	Color: Green	Size: Regular	
Office: "OFFICE OF / STATE WEIGHMASTER,"			
Notes: Printer's imprint on back flap: "Pioneer Press Co., St. Paul."			
<i>Pioneer Press Co., St. Paul.</i>			
Source: Image courtesy of ebay seller stampyboy, April 2021.			
			

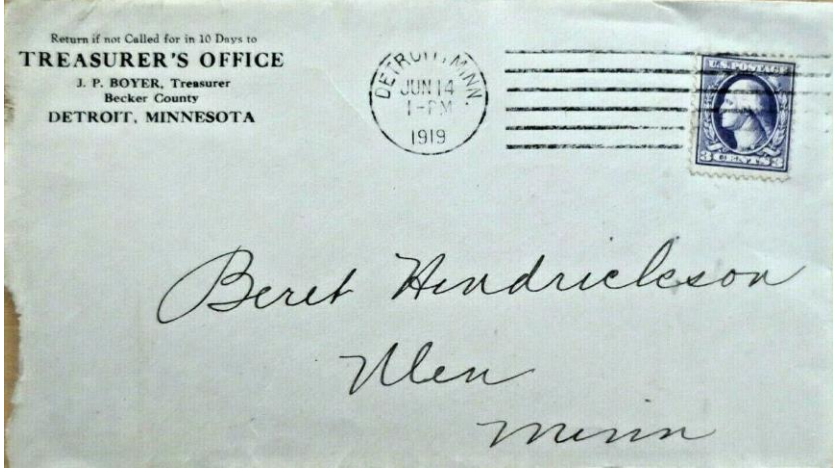
Part 2

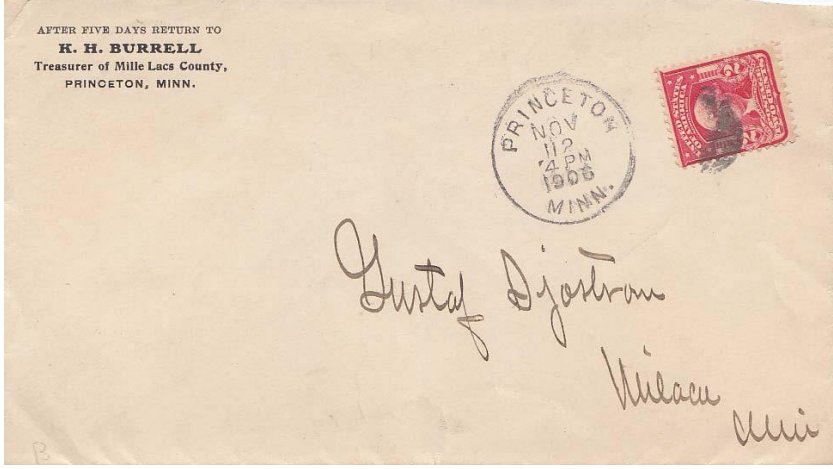
MINNESOTA

County & City Agencies “Official Business” Envelopes

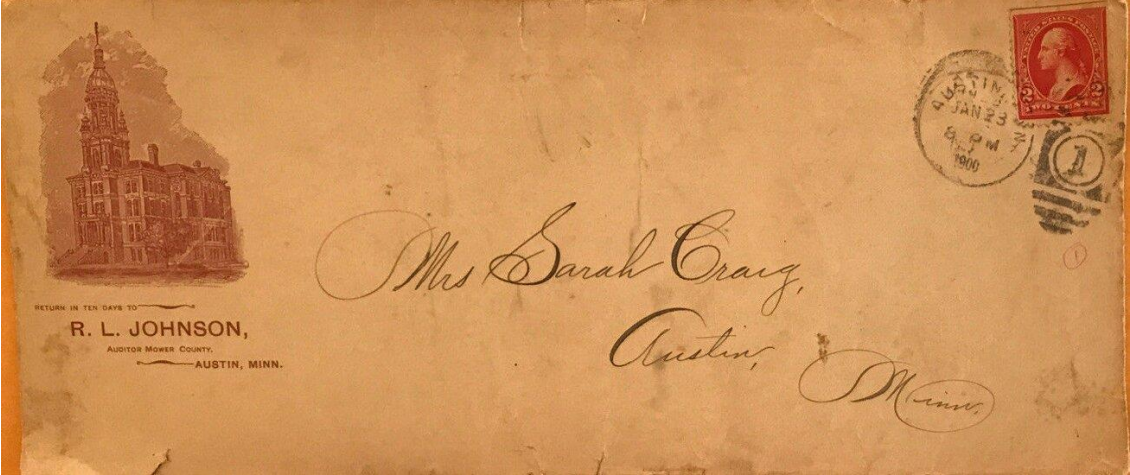
Arranged by County and City

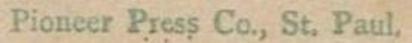
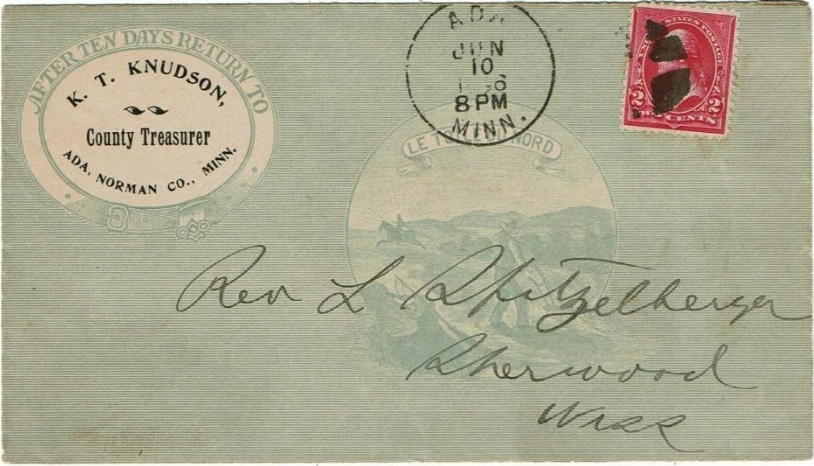
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ID:	State: Minnesota	County: Becker	City: Detroit
Dates: 14 Jun 1919	Color: Black	Size: Regular	
Office: "TREASURER'S OFFICE / J. P. BOYR, Treasurer,"			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller antiquecrossword, June 2021.			
			


ID:	State: Minnesota	County: Mille Lacs	City: Princeton
Dates: 12 Nov 1906	Color: Black	Size: Regular	
Office: "K. H. BURRELL / Treasurer of Mille Lacs County,"			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller stamps-plus, June 2021.			
			


MINNESOTA: "Official Business" Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards

ID:	State: Minnesota	County: Mower	City: Austin
Dates: 23 Jan 1900	Color: Red-brown	Size: Legal	
Office: "R. L. JOHNSON, / AUDITOR MOWER COUNTY,"			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller calloohcallay11, May 2021.			
			

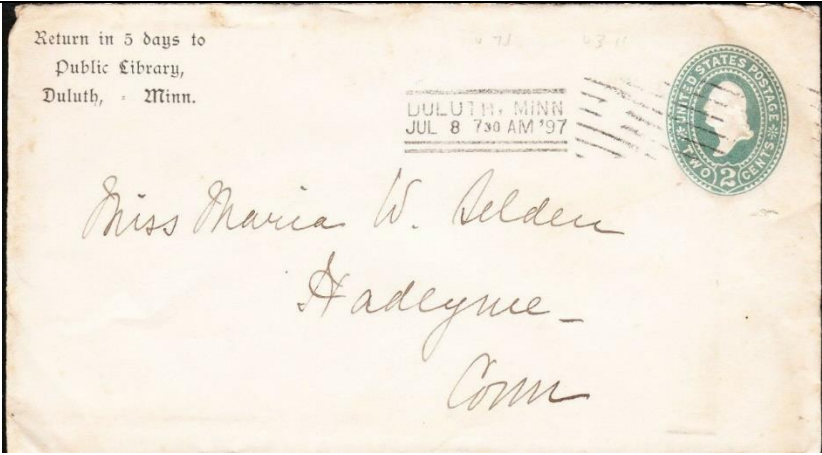
ID:	State: Minnesota	County: Norman	City: Ada
Dates: 10 June 1886	Color: Green	Size: Regular	
Office: "K. T. KNUDSON, / County Treasurer"			
Notes: Printer imprint on reverse: "Pioneer Press Co., St. Paul".			
			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller petamarty, May 2021.			
			


MINNESOTA: "Official Business" Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards

ID:	State: Minnesota	County: Ramsey	City: St. Paul
Dates: 10 June 1886	Color: Black	Size: Regular	
Office: "R. W. BELL, / CLERK OF THE DISTRICT COURT."			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller mrfancycancel, May 2021.			
			

ID:	State: Minnesota	County: Ramsey	City: St. Paul
Dates: 28 Feb 1929	Color: Black	Size: Regular	
Office: "ELSA M. OBST / Treasurer of Ramsey County"			
Notes: Return envelope			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller Empire_stamp_company, June 2021.			
			

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ID:	State: Minnesota	County: St. Louis	City: Duluth
Dates: 8 July 1897	Color: Black	Size: Regular	
Office: "Public Library"			
Notes: On 2 cent green PSE.			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller stamps-plus, June 2021.			
			

ID:	State: Minnesota	County: Winona	City: Winona
Dates: 15 May 1893	Color: Black on buff	Size: Regular	
Office: "CHAS. A. GILE, / CITY TREASURER,"			
Notes: On 2 cent purple Columbian entire.			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller covermuseumannex, May 2021.			
			

MINNESOTA: "Official Business" Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards

ID:	State: Minnesota	County: Winona	City: Winona
Dates: 15 May 1897	Color: Black on cream	Size: Regular	
Office: "CHAS. A. GILE, / CITY TREASURER,"			
Notes: On 2 cent purple Columbian entire.			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller jksu2, June 2021.			

Part 3

MINNESOTA

Private Business’s Using designs similar to the “Official Business” Envelopes

Arranged by County and City

No covers identified.

Part 4

MINNESOTA

Federal Department & Agency Envelopes

Used within the State

Arranged by County and City

No covers identified.