

ILLINOIS



“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>

Illinois: “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 letterhead or billhead, were also included. As the search for relevant envelopes proceeded, other state

Illinois: “Official Business” Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards

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

mike@ludeman.net

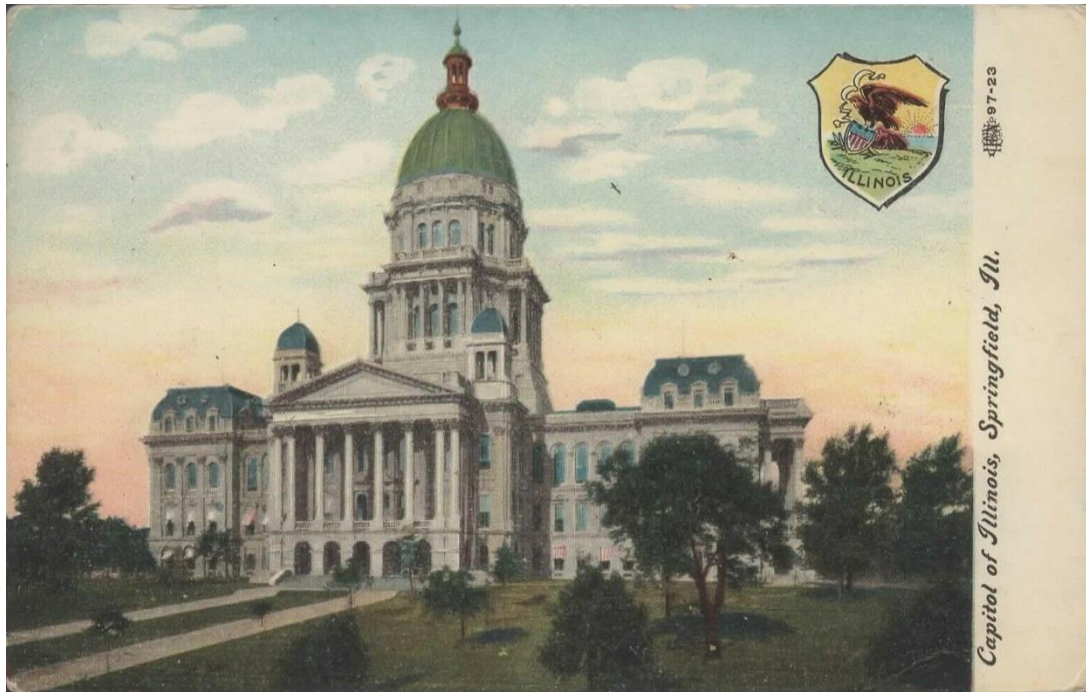
July 2021

v3

Illinois: "Official Business" Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards

State Capitol Building


Constructed 1868 - 1888



Postcard image courtesy of eBay seller zuluwar24, June 2021.

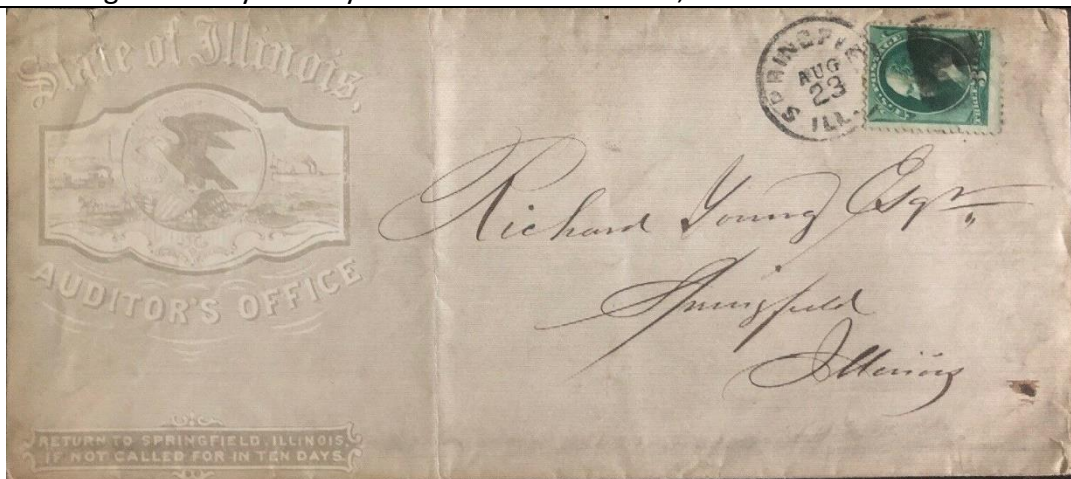
Illinois: “Official Business” Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards

ID:	State: Illinois	County: Sangamon	City: Springfield
Dates: 1 May ~1880s	Color: Green	Size: Regular	
Office: “Office of ATTORNEY GENERAL”			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of Phil Bansner website, item#26714, June 2021.			
			

ID:	State: Illinois	County: Sangamon	City: Springfield
Dates: 17 Aug 1889	Color: Black	Size: Regular	
Office: “STATE OF / ILLINOIS / OFFICE OF / ATTORNEY GENERAL”			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller eliseot, June 2021.			
			

Illinois: "Official Business" Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards

ID:	State: Illinois	County: Sangamon	City: Springfield
Dates: 23 Aug 1880	Color: Brown	Size: Legal	
Office: "AUDITOR'S OFFICE"			
Notes: Dated by docketing on reverse			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller Aztec-collectables, June 2021.			



ID:	State: Illinois	County: Sangamon	City: Springfield
Dates: 7 Aug ~1880	Color: Pale yellow	Size: Regular	
Office: "AUDITOR'S OFFICE"			
Notes: Dated by docketing on reverse			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller Aztec-collectables, June 2021.			

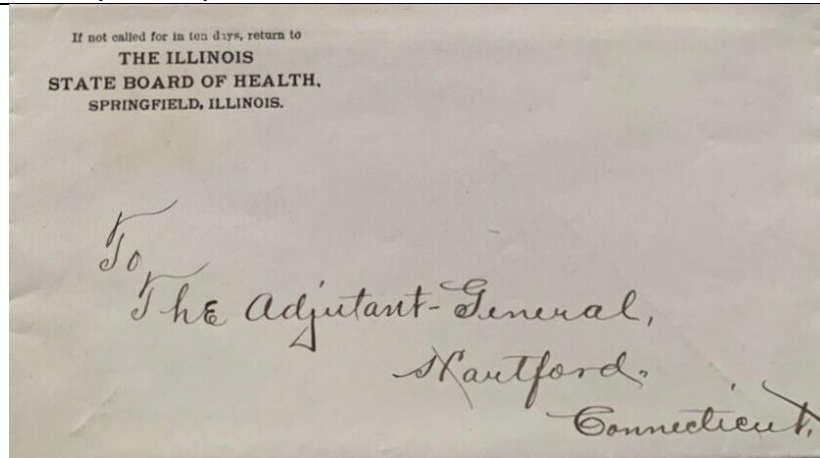


Illinois: "Official Business" Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards

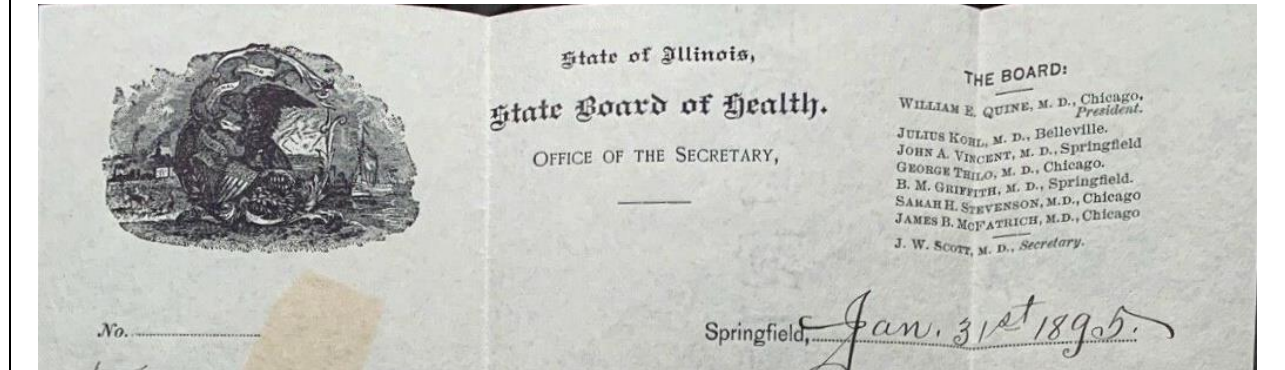
ID:	State: Illinois	County: Sangamon	City: Springfield
Dates: 12 Nov 1895	Color: Pale yellow	Size: Regular	
Office: "AUDITOR'S OFFICE"			
Notes: Very similar to previous entry, but included as it is at least 10 years later.			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller stampyboy, June 2021.			
			

Illinois: "Official Business" Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards

ID:	State: Illinois	County: Sangamon	City: Springfield
Dates: 31 Jan 1895	Color: Black		Size: Regular
Office: "THE ILLINOIS / BOARD OF HEALTH"			
Notes: Dated by the enclosure			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller tohncoverman, June 2021.			



Letterhead



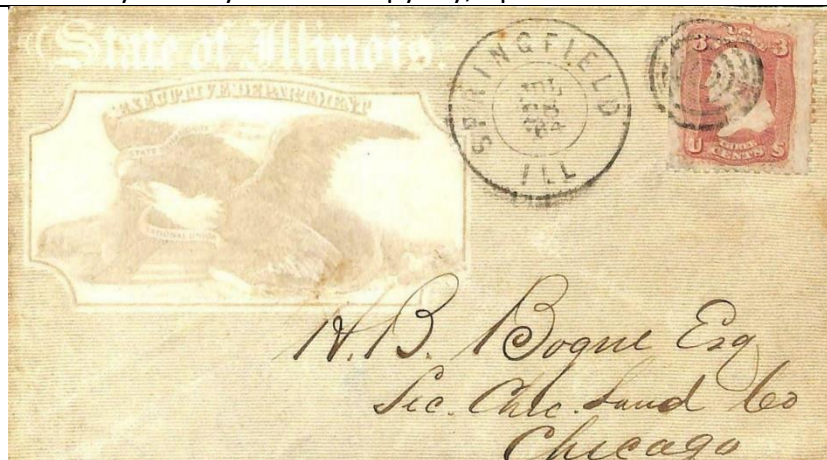
Illinois: "Official Business" Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards

ID:	State: Illinois	County: Sangamon	City: Springfield
Dates: 22 Sept ~1880s	Color: Yellow	Size: Regular	
Office: "OFFICE OF CUSTODIAN / OF FIELD NOTES, PLATS, ETC. / OF THE U.S. SURVEYS."			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller stampyboy, April 2021.			

ID:	State: Illinois	County: Sangamon	City: Springfield
Dates: 28 Oct ~1860s	Color: Brown	Size: Regular	
Office: "EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,"			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller stampyboy, April 2021.			

Illinois: "Official Business" Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards

ID:	State: Illinois	County: Sangamon	City: Springfield
Dates: 28 July 1864	Color: Brown	Size: Regular	
Office: "EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT"			
Notes: Seal is wider.			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller stampyboy, April 2021.			



ID:	State: Illinois	County: Sangamon	City: Springfield
Dates: 21 Sept ~1880s	Color: Brown	Size: Regular	
Office: " Executive Department / GOVERNOR'S OFFICE."			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller stampyboy, April 2021.			



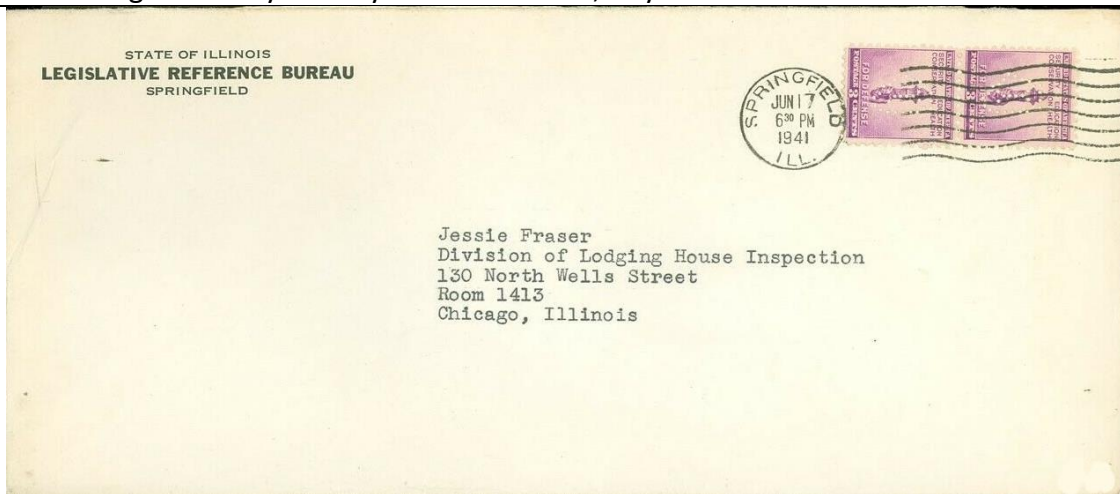
Illinois: "Official Business" Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards

ID:	State: Illinois	County: Sangamon	City: Springfield
Dates: 15 Mar 1881	Color: Brown	Size: Regular	
Office: "Executive Department / SECRETARY'S OFFICE."			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller stampyboy, April 2021.			

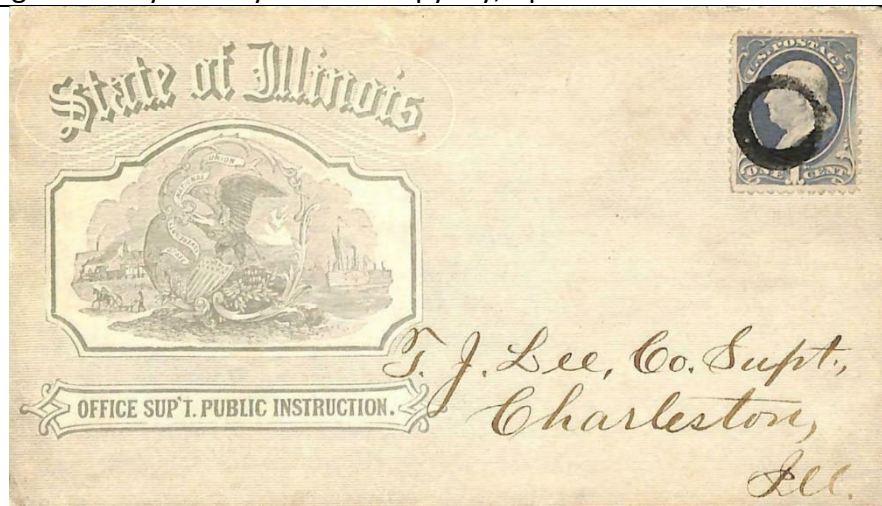
ID:	State: Illinois	County: Sangamon	City: Springfield
Dates: June 1880s	Color: Black	Size: Regular	
Office: "General Assembly, State of Illinois. / HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES."			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller weiszcovers, June 2021.			

Illinois: “Official Business” Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards

ID:	State: Illinois	County: Sangamon	City: Springfield
Dates: 17 June 1941	Color: Black	Size: Legal	
Office: “LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU”			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller dave-katz, July 2021.			

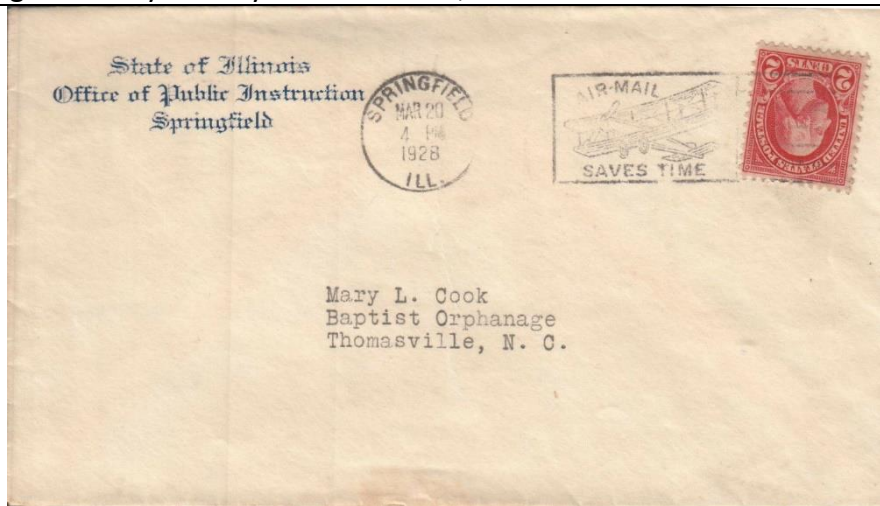


ID:	State: Illinois	County: Sangamon	City: Springfield
Dates: ~1880s	Color: Gold	Size: Regular	
Office: “OFFICE SUP'T PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.”			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller stampyboy, April 2021.			

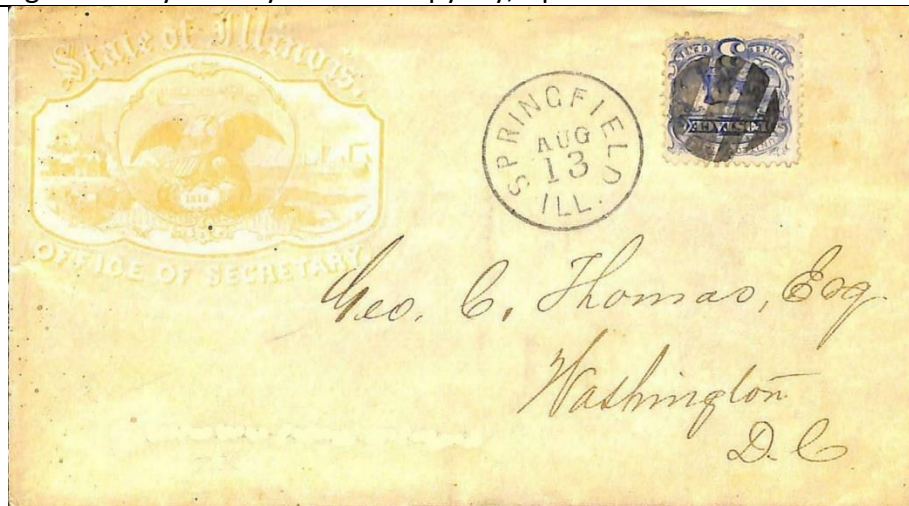


Illinois: "Official Business" Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards

ID:	State: Illinois	County: Sangamon	City: Springfield
Dates: 20 Mar 1928	Color: Blue	Size: Regular	
Office: "Office of Public Instruction"			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller bellesite, June 2021.			

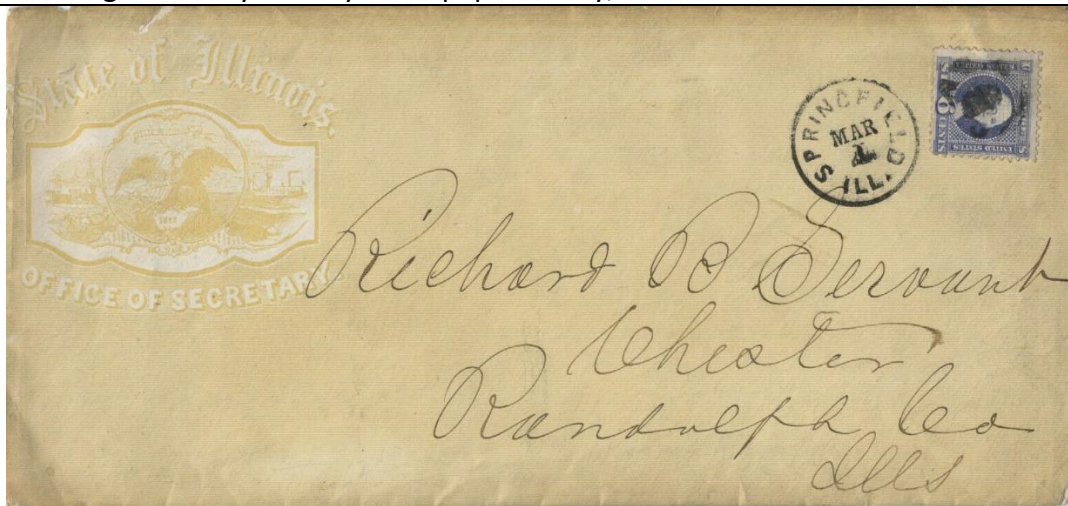


ID:	State: Illinois	County: Sangamon	City: Springfield
Dates: 13 Aug ~1870	Color: Gold	Size: Regular	
Office: "OFFICE OF SECRETARY"			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller stampyboy, April 2021.			

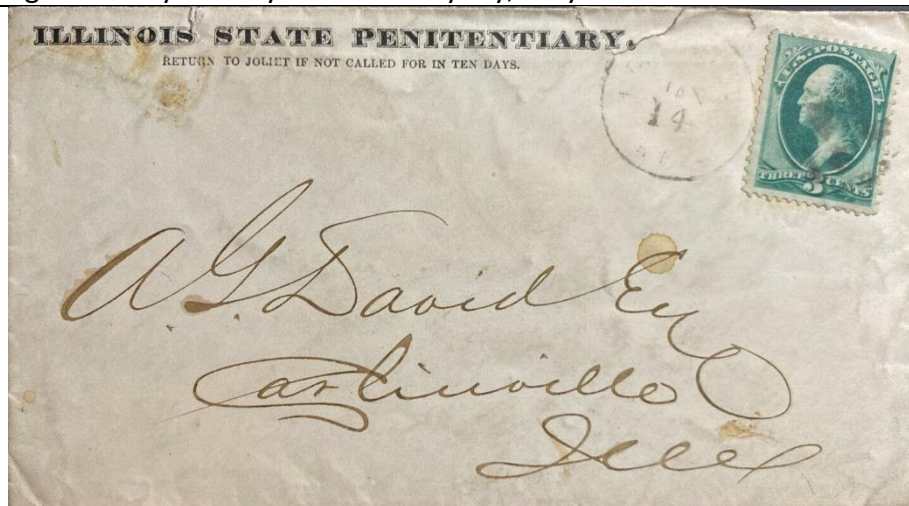


Illinois: "Official Business" Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards


ID:	State: Illinois	County: Sangamon	City: Springfield
Dates: 1 Mar ~1870	Color: Gold	Size: Legal	
Office: "OFFICE OF SECRETARY"			
Notes: Secretary of State ?			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller paperhistory, June 2021.			



ID:	State: Illinois	County: Will-Kendall	City: Joliet
Dates: 14 Jan ~1870s	Color: Black	Size: Regular	
Office: "ILLINOIS STATE PENITENTIARY,"			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller stambyboy, May 2021.			



Illinois: "Official Business" Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards

ID:	State: Illinois	County: Sangamon	City: Springfield
Dates: 3 Oct ~1880s	Color: Brown	Size: Regular	
Office: " Executive Department / TREASURER'S OFFICE."			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller stampyboy, April 2021.			
			

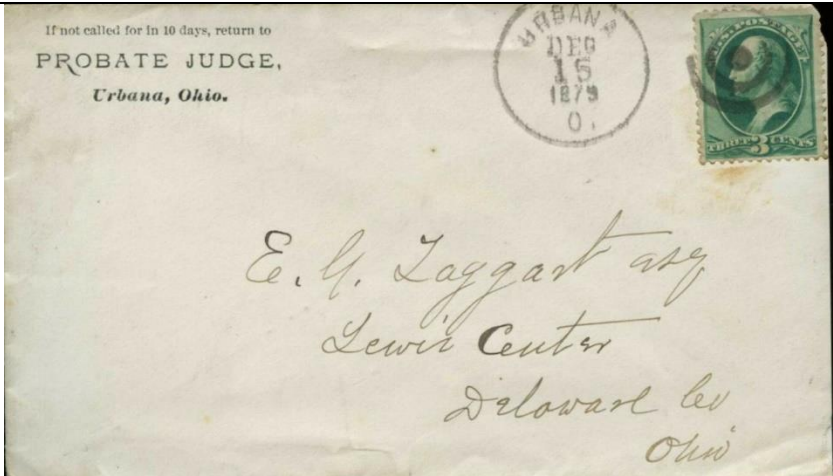
Part 2

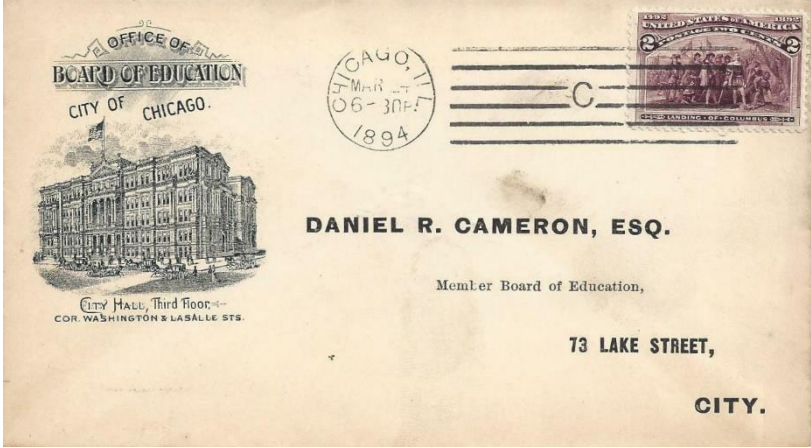
ILLINOIS

County & City Agencies “Official Business” Envelopes

Arranged by County and City

Illinois: "Official Business" Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards

ID:	State: Illinois	County: Champaign	City: Urbana
Dates: 15 Dec 1873	Color: Black	Size: Regular	
Office: "PROBATE JUDGE,"			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller covermuseumannex, May 2021.			
			

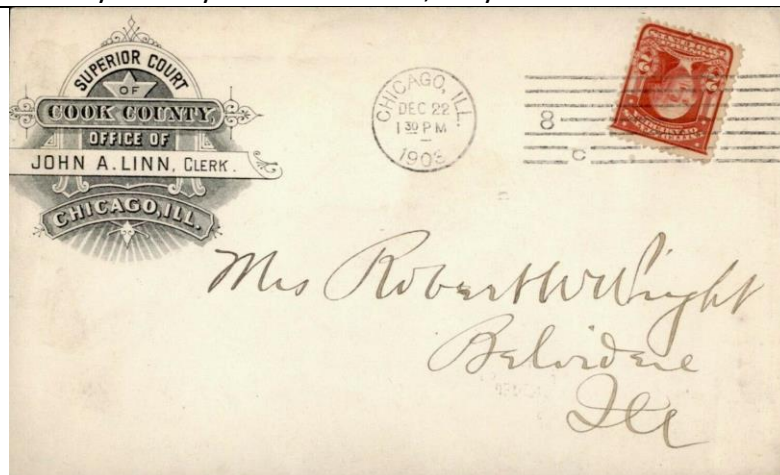
ID:	State: Illinois	County: Cook	City: Chicago
Dates: 24 Mar 1894	Color: Black	Size: Regular	
Office: "OFFICE OF / BOARD OF EDUCATION / CITY OF / CHICAGO"			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller halfmoon28a, June 2021.			
			

Illinois: "Official Business" Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards

ID:	State: Illinois	County: Cook	City: Chicago
Dates: 24 Jan 1898	Color: Blue on tan	Size: Regular	
Office: "Probate Court, / Judges Chambers."			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller m.esmaili, May 2021.			

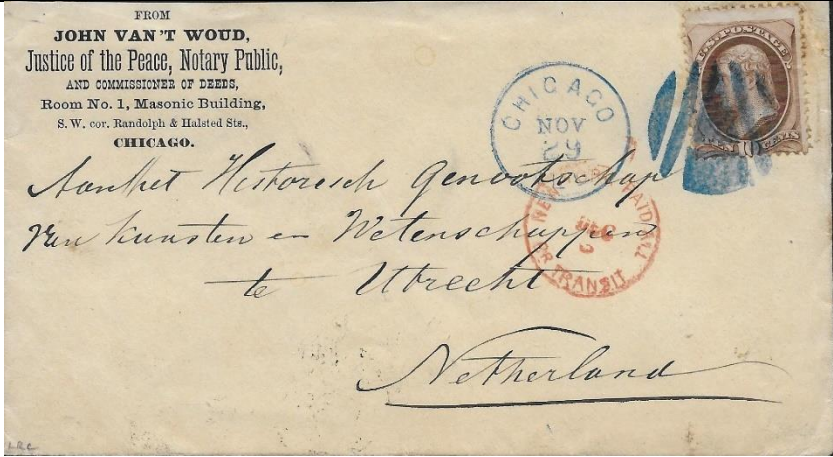


ID:	State: Illinois	County: Cook	City: Chicago
Dates: 22 Dec 1903	Color: Black	Size: Regular	
Office: "SUPERIOR COURT / OF / COOK COUNTY / OFFICE OF / JOHN A. LINN, Clerk."			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller m.esmaili, May 2021.			



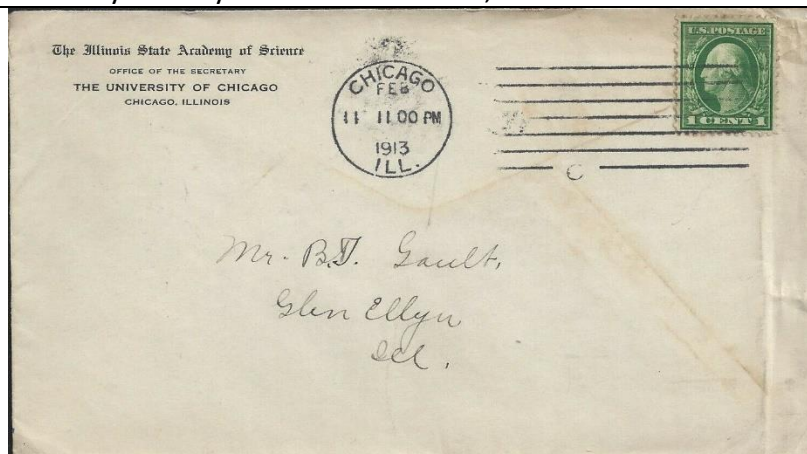
Illinois: “Official Business” Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards

ID:	State: Illinois	County: Cook	City: Chicago
Dates: ~1970s?	Color: Black	Size: Legal	
Office: “STATE OF ILLINOIS / DEPARTMENT OF LABOR / BUREAU OF EMPLOYMENT SECURITY”			
Notes: Unused window envelope			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller soundnostalgia, July 2021.			
			

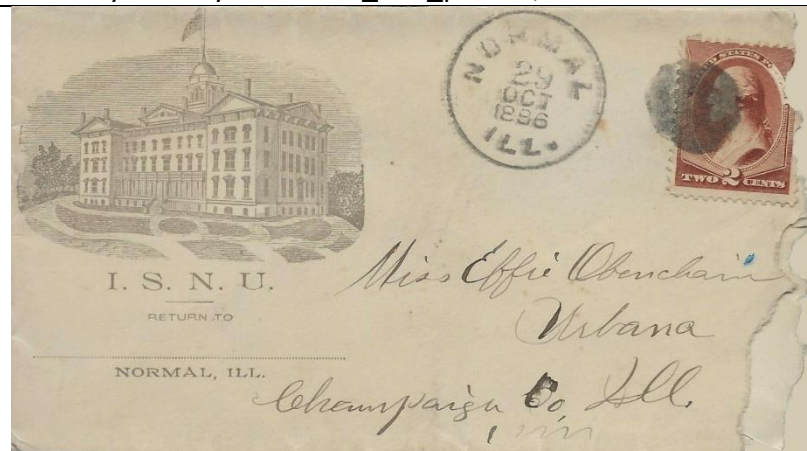
ID:	State: Illinois	County: Cook	City: Chicago
Dates: 29 Nov 1870s	Color: Black	Size: Regular	
Office: “JOHN VAN’T WOULD, /Justice of the Peace, Notary Public, / AND COMMISSIONER OF DEEDS”			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller covermuseumannex, May 2021.			
			

Illinois: "Official Business" Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards

ID:	State: Illinois	County: Cook	City: Chicago
Dates: 13 Feb 1913	Color: Black	Size: Regular	
Office: "The Illinois State Academy of Science / THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO"			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller halfmoon28a, June 2021.			

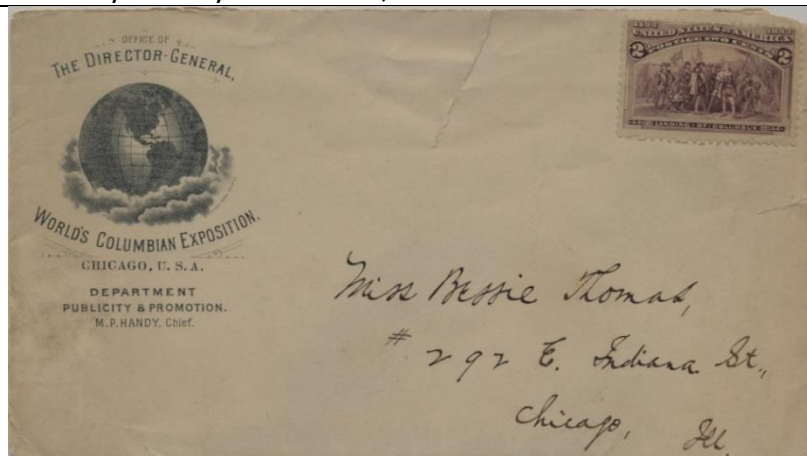


ID:	State: Illinois	County: McLean	City: Normal
Dates: 29 Oct 1886	Color: Black	Size: Regular	
Office: "I.S.N.U."			
Notes: Illinois State Normal School			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller civil_war_photos, June 2021.			

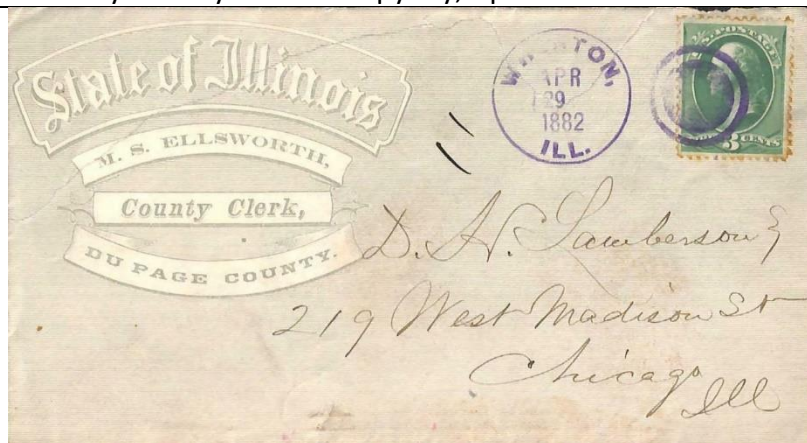


Illinois: "Official Business" Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards


ID:	State: Illinois	County: Cook	City: Chicago
Dates: ~1893	Color: Black	Size: Regular	
Office: "THE DIRECTOR GENERAL / WORLD'S COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION"			
Notes: Does not appear to have been mailed.			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller zeflin, June 2021.			

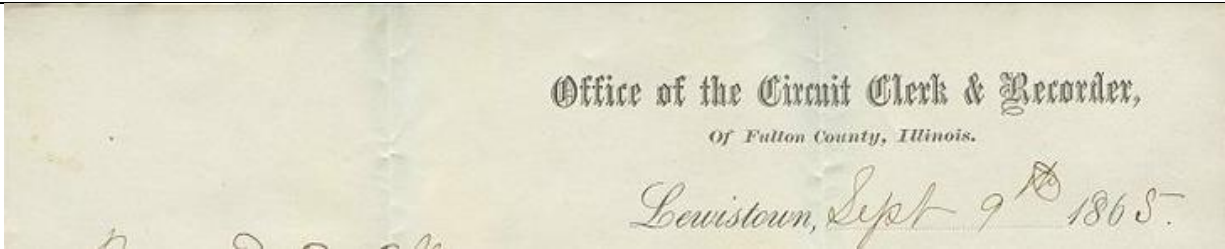


ID:	State: Illinois	County: Du Page	City: Wheaton
Dates: 29 Apr 1882	Color: Gray	Size: Regular	
Office: "M. S. ELLSWORTH, / County Clerk,"			
Notes: Printer's imprint on backflap: "Sewell's Chromatic Envelope Factory, 40 State St., Chicago." Sewell's Chromatic Envelope Factory, 40 State St., Chicago.			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller stampyboy, April 2021.			



Illinois: “Official Business” Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards

ID:	State: Illinois	County: Du Page	City: Wheaton
Dates: 12 Dec 1925	Color: Black	Size: Regular	
Office: “CITY COLLECTOR,”			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller soundnostalgia, July 2021.			
			

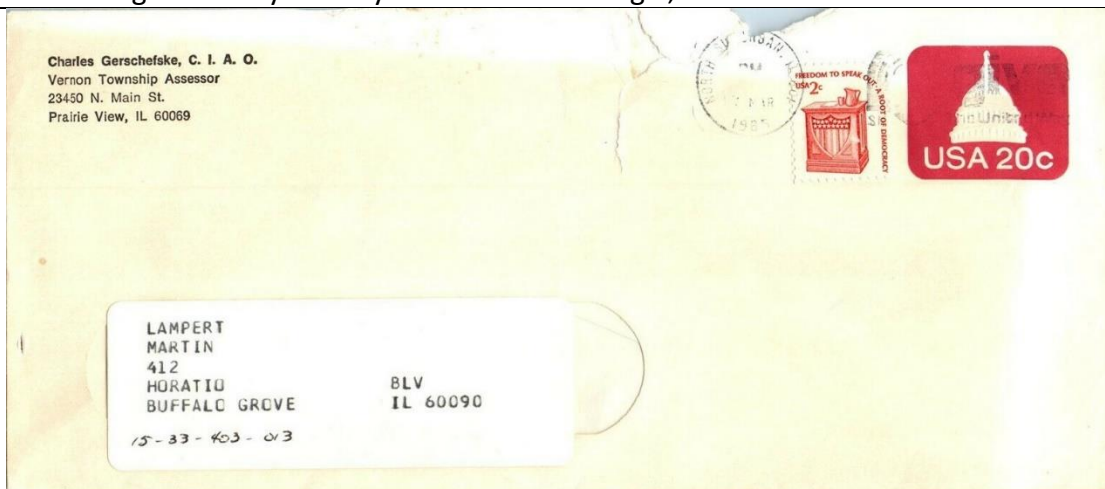
ID:	State: Illinois	County: Fulton	City: Lewistown
Dates: 9 Sept 1865	Color: Black	Size:	
Office: “Office of the Circuit Court & Recorder”			
Notes: Letterhead			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller emartnet, June 2021.			
			

Illinois: "Official Business" Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards

ID:	State: Illinois	County: Knox	City: Galesburg
Dates: 6 Jan ~1870s	Color: Black on pale pink	Size: Regular	
Office: "JOHN S. WINTER, County Clerk,"			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller oldiesngoodies, May 2021.			

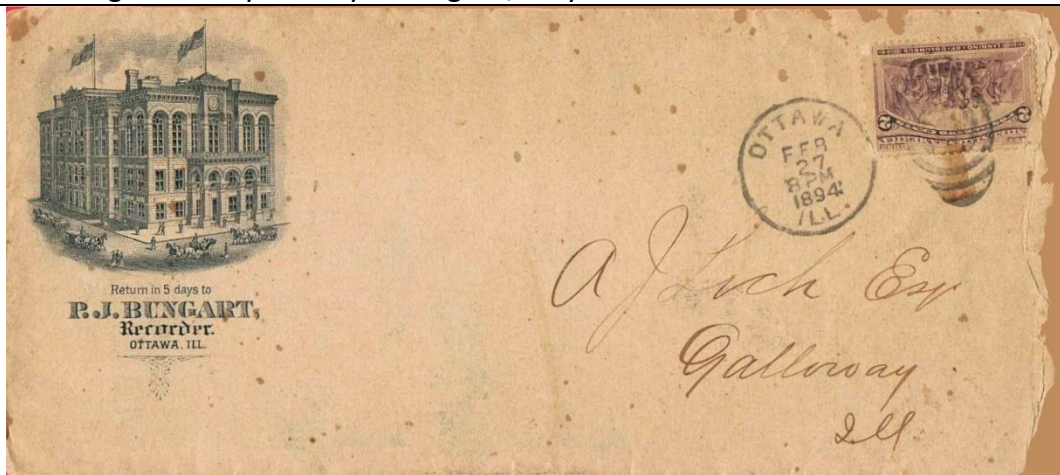


ID:	State: Illinois	County: Lake	City: Prairie View
Dates: ?? Mar 1985	Color: Black	Size: Legal	
Office: "Vernon Township Assessor"			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller soundnostalgia, June 2021.			

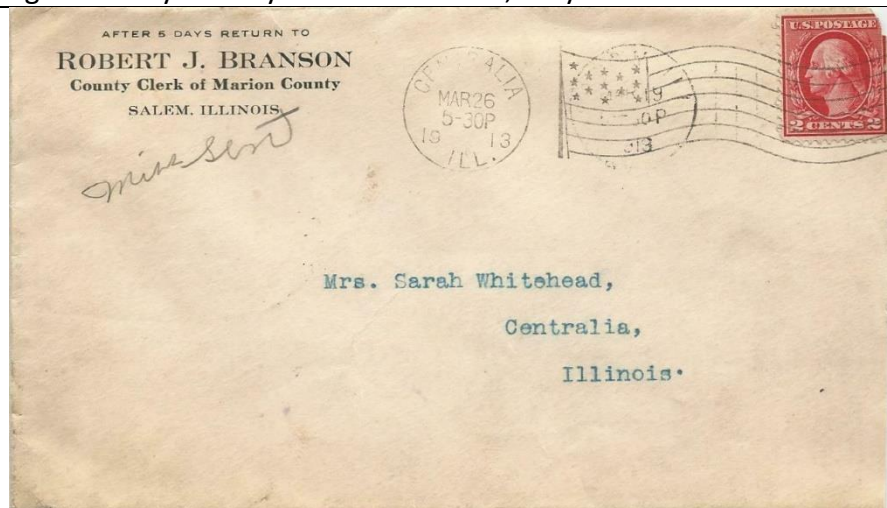


Illinois: "Official Business" Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards

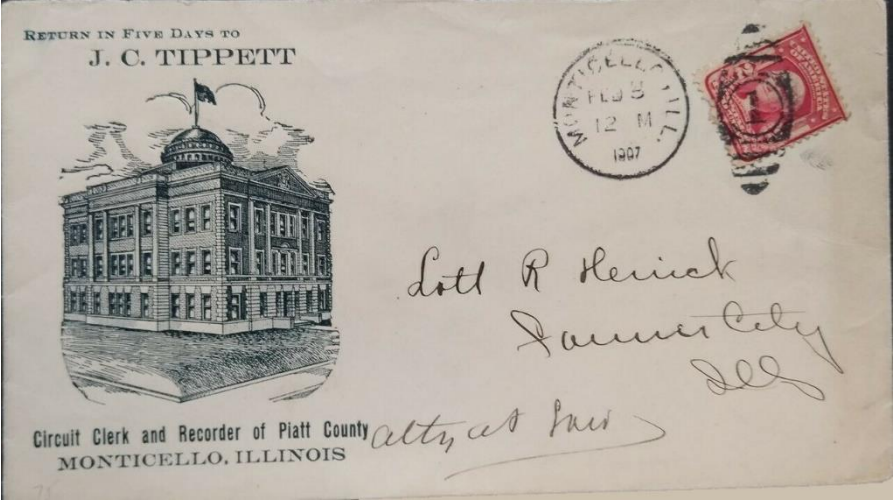
ID:	State: Illinois	County: LaSalle	City: Ottawa
Dates: 27 Feb 1894	Color: Black on tan	Size: Legal	
Office: "P. J. BUNGART, / Recorder."			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller gadc, May 2021.			

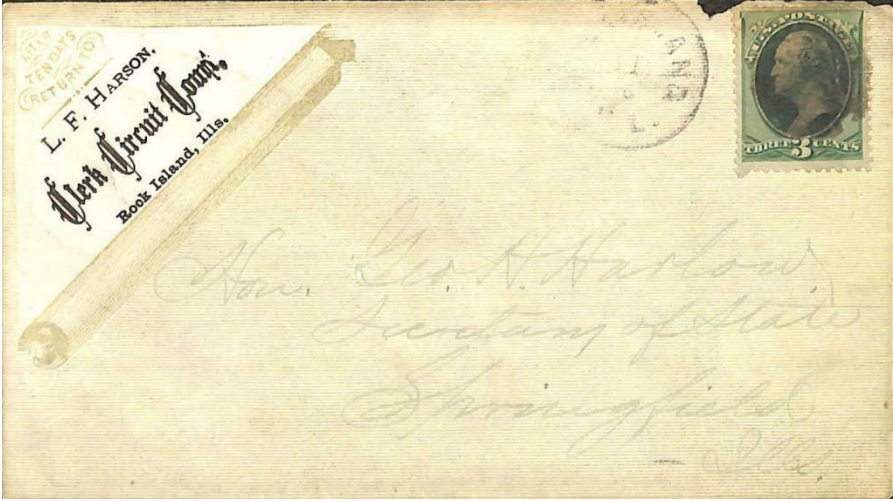


ID:	State: Illinois	County: Marion	City: Salem
Dates: 25 Mar 1913	Color: Black	Size: Regular	
Office: "ROBERT J. BRANSON, / County Clerk of Marion County,"			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller mocardmn, May 2021.			



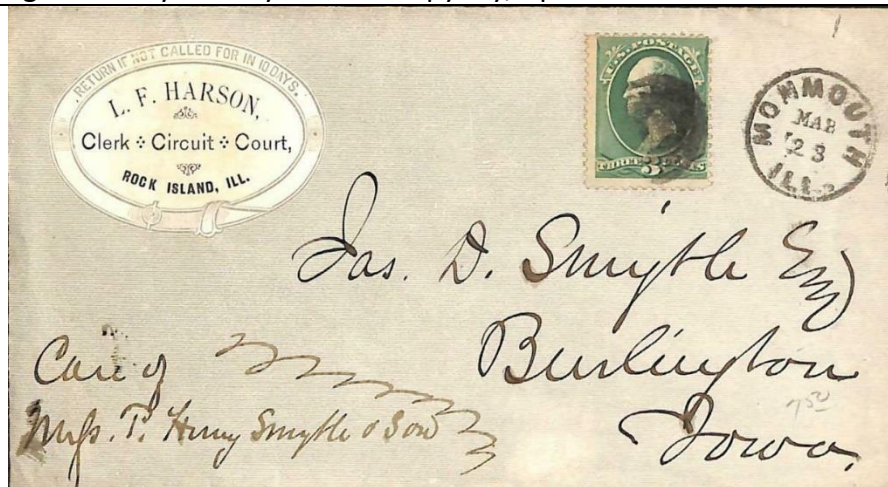
Illinois: "Official Business" Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards

ID:	State: Illinois	County: Platt	City: Monticello
Dates: 8 Feb 1907	Color: Black	Size: Regular	
Office: "J. C. TIPPETT / Circuit Clerk and Recorder of Platt County,"			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller covercrazy2, May 2021.			
			

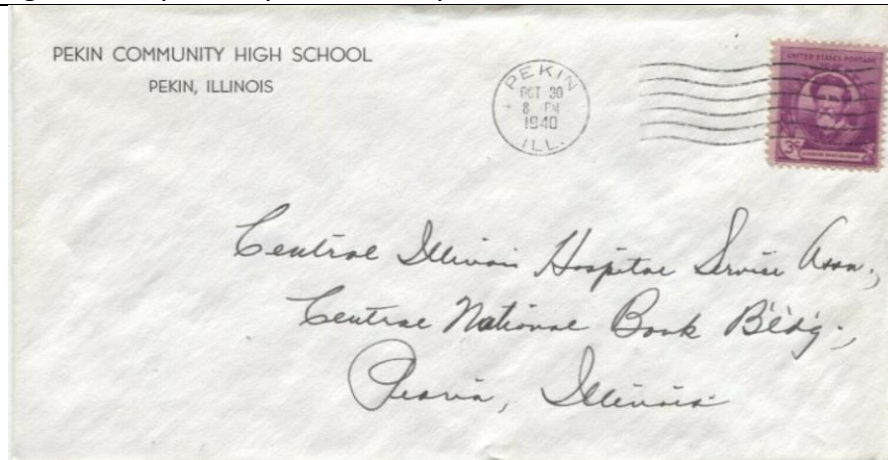
ID:	State: Illinois	County: Rock Island	City: Rock Island
Dates: Before Oct 1, 1883	Color: Black on yellow	Size: Regular	
Office: "L. F. HARSON, / Clerk Circuit Court,"			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller stampyboy, April 2021.			
			

Illinois: "Official Business" Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards

ID:	State: Illinois	County: Rock Island	City: Rock Island
Dates: Before Oct 1, 1883	Color: Black on yellow	Size: Regular	
Office: "L. F. HARSON, / Clerk * Circuit * Court,"			
Notes: Another cover for same office.			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller stampyboy, April 2021.			



ID:	State: Illinois	County: Tazwell	City: Pekin
Dates: 30 Oct 1940	Color: Black	Size: Regular	
Office: "PEKIN COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL"			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller webby99, June 2021.			



Illinois: “Official Business” Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards


Part 3

ILLINOIS

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

Arranged by County and City

Illinois: "Official Business" Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards

ID:	State: Illinois	County: Cook	City: Chicago
Dates: 20 Feb 1881	Color: Pale rose	Size: Regular	
Office: "American Bureau of Mines / Chicago"			
Notes: Dated from docketing.			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller stampyboy, April 2021.			
			

Part 4


ILLINOIS

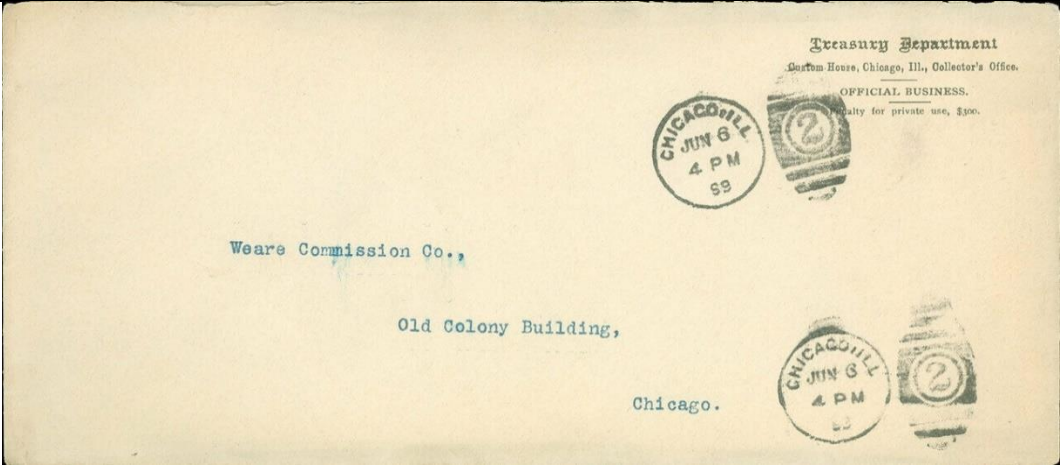
Federal Department & Agency Envelopes

Used within the State

Arranged by County and City

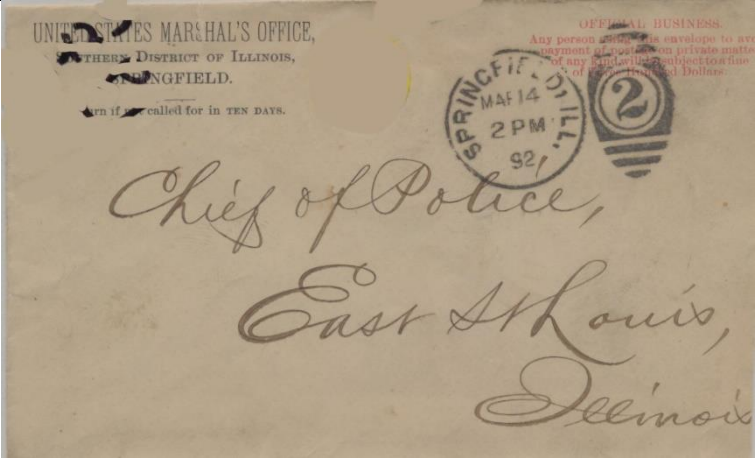
Illinois: "Official Business" Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards

ID:	State: Illinois	County: Peoria	City: Peoria
Dates: 15 May 1868	Color: Black on brown	Size: Regular	
Office: "United States Internal Revenue / Collector's Office, 5th District, Illinois"			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller mrfancycancel, June 2021.			
			

ID:	State: Illinois	County: Cook	City: Chicago
Dates: 6 June 1899	Color: Black	Size: Legal	
Office: "Treasury Department / Custom House, Chicago, Ill, Collector's Office."			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller dave-katz, June 2021.			
			

Illinois: "Official Business" Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards

ID:	State: Illinois	County: Sangamon	City: Springfield
Dates: 25 Oct 1864	Color: Black	Size: Regular	
Office: "Office of United States Attorney / For the Southern District of Illinois"			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of dealer Phil Bansner website, item#89890, June 2021.			
			

ID:	State: Illinois	County: Sangamon	City: Springfield
Dates: 14 May 1892	Color: Black	Size: Regular	
Office: "UNITED STATES MARSHAL'S OFFICE / SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS,"			
Notes:			
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller yefzin, June 2021.			
			

ID:	State: Illinois	County: Cook	City: Chicago
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Illinois: "Official Business" Illustrated Covers and Corner Cards

Dates: 2 Oct 1940	Color: Black	Size: Legal
Office: "NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS / OFFICE OF / UNITED STATES MARSHAL"		
Notes: Pointing hand with "Return to Writer" auxiliary and "UNCLAIMED" auxiliary marks. Dated by postal markings on reverse.		
Source: Image courtesy of eBay seller klez, June 2021.		
