

# Multi-letter RPO killer marking

By John Valenti

Illustrated here is what I consider an unusual and likely previously unreported multi-letter RPO killer. Single letter killers, especially the directional letters “E,” “W,” “N,” and “S” are relatively common on RPO mail. The subject mailing shown in Figure 1 bears a “SAND. NEW. & WHEEL. R.P.O.” (567-1-3 Sandusky, Newark [Ohio] and Wheeling [West Virginia]) October 11, 1887 postmark duplexed to a multi-letter “W S N” killer that clearly represents the initials of the RPO postmark.



Figure 1  
Sandusky, Newark & Wheeling RPO with “W S N” killer.

Figure 1 is a cropped image of the killer and postmark on the Scott #UX9 postal card on which it was struck.

The letters are somewhat crude with the “S” (SAND.) and “N” (NEW.) below the “W” (WHEEL.), but clearly represents the RPO name despite the reversed ordering of the “W.” The author would enjoy hearing from other society members about interesting 19th Century RPO killers. My email is: classiccancel@att.net.

As a dealer in 19th Century U.S. postal history with an emphasis on cancellations and postal markings, I am always on the lookout for railway/RPO covers that bear interesting and fancy cancellations. Below are examples of some I have handled.

Chicago & Dun.  
RPO (690-D-2)  
Solid blue “5 Point  
Star”



Chicago &  
Dun. RPO  
(690-D-2)  
Blue “2-Bar  
Shield”



Boston & Albany RPO (53-E-2)  
“Skull and Bones”



N.Y. & PITTS. RPO (203-M-11)  
Fraternal “Star in Crescent”



DEN. & PACIFIC R.P.O.  
(950-A-1)  
Negative “OK”



SODUS PT. & SO. R.R. (129-C-1)  
Positive “OK” in circle



LAW. & BRAD. R.R. (26-B-1)  
Positive “OK”