



The Maine Philatelist

Vol. 31, No. 2

October 1998

Whole No. 113

No, the Belfast Bars is not a coastal watering hole

By Rick Stambaugh
Board of Directors

No, this isn't a Sunday newspaper supplement article about Down East watering holes. It's about a unique Maine precancel used by the Dana Sarsaparilla Company. You may have seen these precanceled stamps and thought they were ugly killer cancels that ruined an otherwise very fine stamp. Now,



Figure 1
Type A (left), Type B (right)



Figure 2
8.5 mm 10mm 11.5mm



Figure 3
Belfast, Maine Lowell, Mass.

you'll recognize these as desirable Maine silent precancels.

Figure 1 shows the characteristics of the two Belfast Bar precancel, Types A and B. The most distinguishing feature between the two types is the separation between the bars. Type A with 3 to 3.75mm between bars is uncommon (catalogue value of \$60.00), while Type B with 5 - 5.5mm be-

tween bars is common (catalogue value of \$1). The Type A bar is also wider than Type B.

Only two stamp issues are listed with Belfast Bars, the 1890 one-cent blue Franklin definitive, and the one-cent Columbian commemorative. The Belfast Bar precancel consists of two wide bars (printer's quads) from 8 - 12mm long. Different lengths create different varieties. Figure 2 shows three different varieties of bars on Type B.

Like other "silent" precancels, the originating city can be only established by usage on cover. Hoover (the original precancel "bible") listed this precancel type as Lancaster, New York, but noted that no cover had been seen. Covers from the Dana Sarsaparilla Company have confirmed this precancel type to be from Belfast, Maine.

There is at least one other silent precancel that resembles these types. Don't be fooled by the Lowell, Massachusetts "squares" precancel type that was also used on the one-cent Columbian and 1890 issues. The Lowell precancel type, shown in Figure 3, has shorter bars, and more than one pair of bars on each stamp.

MAIPEX '98 Stamp Show & Auction

Stamps and supplies, show cover and cancel, giant board auction, postcards and covers, refreshments!

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1998

9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Table auction closes at 1:00 p.m.

Oral auction starts at 1:30 p.m.

Carter Hall

Kennebec Valley Technical College,
Fairfield

Exit 35 on Interstate 95, turn east.

The Maine Philatelist is published quarterly by the Maine Philatelic Society, Inc.

The purpose of the Society, a non-profit Maine corporation, is to promote philately in the Pine Tree State. Membership is open to anyone. Membership applications are available from the Secretary, listed below. Dues are \$5 per year.

A Life Membership is also available.

Contact the Secretary for details.

Articles for publication should be sent to the President/Editor at address below.

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PUBLISHING SCHEDULE

The Maine Philatelist is distributed to members in January, April, July and October of each year. Below is a list of deadlines for each issue and the anticipated mailing date. While deadline for copy (articles) is firm, the anticipated mailing date is just that -- a "best guess" of mailing.

ISSUE COVER DATE	DEADLINE FOR COPY	JOURNAL TO PRINTER	ANTICIPATED MAILING DATE
January	Dec. 15	Dec. 30	Jan. 15
April	March 15	March 30	April 15
July	June 15	June 30	July 15
October	Sept. 15	Sept. 30	Oct. 15

Maine stamp club meetings



Stamp clubs in Maine are invited to become members of the Maine Philatelic Society. We will publish, free of charge, meeting information and locations.

PORTLAND STAMP CLUB

The club meets on the second Wednesday of each month at the Maine Veterans Home, 290 U.S. Route 1, Scarborough. The meeting starts at 6:30 p.m. and usually ends about 8:30 p.m. Nonmembers are invited to attend.

WATERVILLE STAMP CLUB

The club meets on the first and third Friday from September to May and on the third Friday only during June, July and August. Meetings are from 6:30 to 9 p.m. at the Kennebec Valley Technical College (KVTC) on Western Avenue in Fairfield (Exit 35 of Interstate 95). For information, call 872-5107. Nonmembers are invited to attend.

BELFAST STAMP CLUB

The club meets on the third Thursday of the month at noon. The location changes each month. For information, call Dick Gerry, president, at 866-3583.

YORK COUNTY STAMP CLUB

The club meets on the second and fourth Thursday of each month from 7:30 to 9 p.m. in the basement of People's Heritage Bank on Main Street in Sanford. Usual events include raffle, auction, presentations, refreshments, and an occasional visit from a stamp dealer. Dues are \$5 per year. For information, contact Secretary Tracey Lesvaseur, Rt. 1, Box 3206, Shapleigh, ME 04076.

UNION RIVER STAMP CLUB

The Union River Stamp Club meets the first Thursday of each month at the Ellsworth Library, beginning at 7:30 p.m.

UNITARIAN-UNIVERSALIST STAMP CLUB

The Unitarian-Universalist Stamp Club has members throughout the U.S., and you don't have to be a Universalist to join. For information, send a business size SASE to George Barner, 8 Arlington Street, Kennebunkport, ME 04046-6343. Mr. Barner also edits the club's newsletter.

Seasonal mail service to Great Gott Island is by boat

By Arnold R. Krommenohl

Looking across the water from Bass Harbor lighthouse on Mount Desert Island, one can see Great Gott Island. It was named after its first settler, Daniel Gott, who lived there until his death in 1814.

The island had its own post office from 1902 until 1927.



tember 14.

The "Federal Building," as the post office is generally known, is in a meadow near the dock. The original



Philip Moore was the last postmaster until he left the island with nearly all the other year-round inhabitants in 1926. Today, postal service is provided by contract mail carrier Brian Parker to the summer colony of about 27 families. Brian delivers the mail from the Bass Harbor Post Office to the island on his mail boat six days a week from June 15 through Sep-

weatherbeaten shack built in the 1960s measured approximately seven feet by seven feet. It had been replaced by this trim red and white structure of the same size in 1991.

The compact interior serves adequately for its purpose.

Pigeon holes with the names of the summer residents line the rear wall. On the right side a lobster crate serves as a table for sorting the mail. On the left side is a bulletin board with lost or found notices and an ad for summer resident Rita Kenway's homemade currant jelly.

The island has no electricity, no phone service and no roads.



Photos: Upper left, the old post office, photo by Letitia Baldwin; upper right, the new post office, photo by Arnold Krommenohl. Left, postcard with CDS of Dec. 22, 1922.

And you thought figuring postage was difficult now...

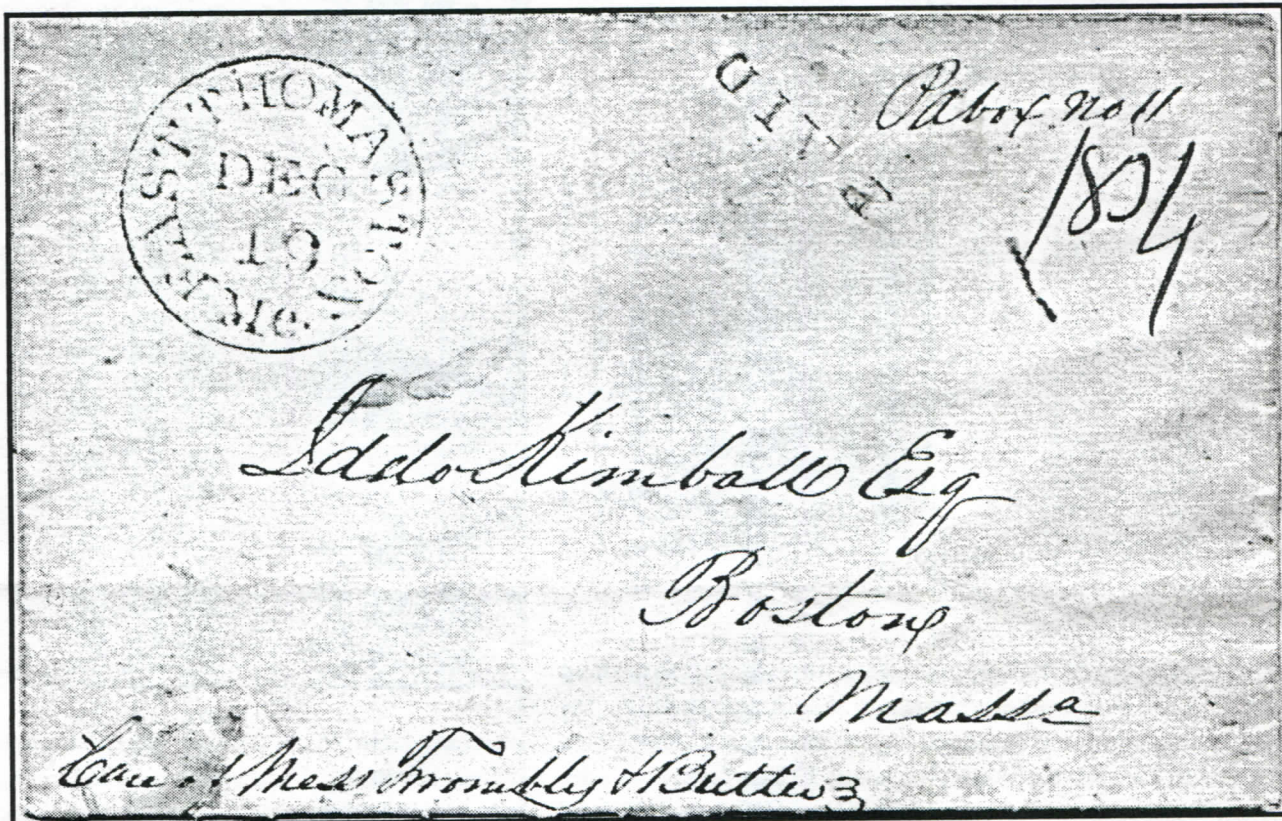
By Kennedy Wilson

If you think 32¢ is too much to pay for mailing a simple letter, consider the plight of the individual who mailed this letter. It was mailed from East Thomaston, Maine (the original name for Rockland) on 19 December 1842, addressed to an individual in Boston, Massachusetts at a cost of 18.75 cents.

This is not an error by a sleepy postal clerk. On May 1, 1825, the U.S. Post Office Department raised the rate from 18.5¢ for a single letter carried a distance of between 151 and 400 miles to 18.75¢. The rate remained at that amount until July 1, 1845. The rates for let-

denomination coins to satisfy the demand. It was an immense problem to provide a new and distinctive coinage system, to procure the necessary machinery, and to train the skilled engravers and workmen to operate the machinery.

So a year later the Congress passed another act which provided legal tender status to certain foreign coins which at the



ters carried other distances remained at the previously set levels: not over 30 miles, six cents; from 31 to 80 miles, 10 cents; from 81 to 150 miles, 12.5 cents; and over 400 miles, 25 cents.

Why do you suppose they did that? The increase in revenue of one-quarter cent for that distance was minuscule and there was no coin valued at one-quarter cent in circulation at that time. How did the sender pay 18.75 cents?

The answer to the problem lies not with the U.S. Post Office Department, but with the U.S. currency system and the U.S. Mint. Acting by the authority granted in the new Constitution, on April 2, 1792 the U.S. Congress passed an act which established the U.S. Mint to provide money for the new country. In so doing, they also created a currency system of coins of gold, silver and copper in various values and designs. In the lower denominations, these coins consisted of half-dimes, cents and half-cents. There was no provision made for the coinage of the dime or a quarter-cent value.

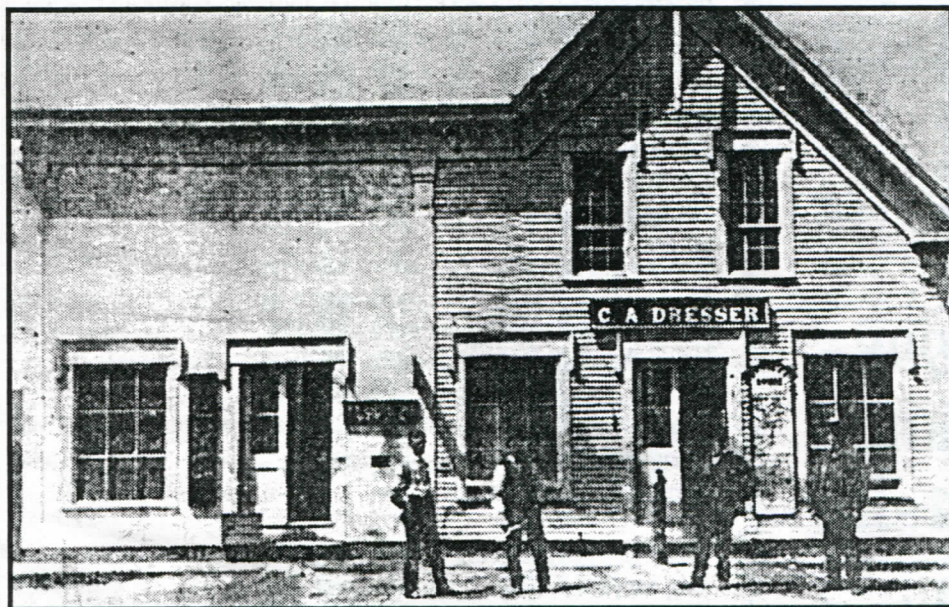
Government being government even then, it turned out to be impossible to provide a sufficient quantity of these lower

time were in common circulation; specifically, "Spanish milled dollars at the rate of 100 cents for each dollar ... and in proportion for the parts of a dollar." Thus Spanish coinage became "legal tender for the payment of all debts and demands" within the territory of the United States.

In 1816, the postal rate had been set at 18.5 cents for the fourth distance zone of postal rates. But with the dire lack of small value U.S. coins in circulation, it took seven coins to pay the 18.5 cent charge for one letter (three half-dimes, three cents and one half-cent), and it could not be done with any combination of the Spanish coins.

After a period of about nine years with individuals struggling to find the necessary coins to pay for postage, on March 3, 1825 Congress solved the problem. They raised the zone rate by one-quarter of a cent to 18.75 cents which then could be paid with only two of the plentiful Spanish legal tender coins: the *real* at 12.5 cents, and the *medio* (half-*real*) at 6.25 cents. It was not until February 21, 1857 that Congress withdrew the use of foreign coins as legal tender in the United States.

Post Offices of Maine A regular feature



This photo of the post office in Andover was taken before the turn of the century. It shows the post office, telephone office and general store of C.A. Dresser. A sign stated the store dealt in "flour, medicine, dry stuffs, box and package groceries, confectionery, books, stationery, holiday goods, toilet and fancy articles, powder shot and fancy meats." The post office was established on August 18, 1824 and is still operating although now in a new location. Thanks to Secretary Bruce Hazelton, who loaned the photo. Do YOU have a photo of an old post office? Send it to the editor with as much information as you know about it.

Upcoming New England stamp shows of interest to the collector

October 10, 1998: MAIPEX '98 Stamp Show & Auction, sponsored by the Waterville Stamp Club, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Table auction closes at 1 p.m., oral auction starts at 1:30 p.m. Stamps and supplies, show cover and cancel, postcards and covers, refreshments available. Carter Hall, Kennebec Valley Technical College, Exit 35 on Interstate 95, Fairfield.

October 17-18, 1998: WALPEX '98 Annual Exhibition & Bourse sponsored by the Waltham Stamp Club, to be held at Minuteman Science-Technical High School, 758 Marrett Rd. (Route 2A) in Lexington, Massachusetts, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday; 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday.

October 31, 1998: CHAMPEX '98. 19th annual Exhibition & Bourse of the Vermont Philatelic Society, 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Christ the King School, Locust Street at the Route 7 rotary, Burlington, Vermont. Fourteen dealers, Halloween theme, free admission.

November 1, 1998: First Sunday Stamp Bourse, Holiday Inn, Dedham, Massachusetts, Route 1 at junction of Rt. 128, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

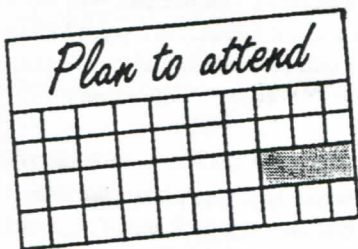
November 7, 1998: York County Stamp Club's annual Stamp Show, Elk's Hall, Route 1, Saco, Maine (across from Funtown) 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Dealer bourse, exhibits, show cancel and cacheted cover. U.S. Postal Service will be present. Refreshments will be available and there will be a youth area.

November 8, 1998: Riverside Stamp Bourse, Holiday Inn,

Grove Street, Newton, Massachusetts, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., free parking.

November 22, 1998: Franklin Stamp Club Show, Howard Johnson Motor Lodge conference room #2, Route 91, Exit 26 north and south and Route 2E at rotary, Greenfield, Massachusetts, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free admission and parking.

Show listings are free. Please send to the Editor before the deadline for the next issue!



Maine Philatelic Society's
annual
MUDPEX
stamp show,
exhibition
and auction
will be held at the
Kennebec Valley
Technical College in Fairfield
on Saturday, April 24, 1999
PLAN TO ATTEND!

**The York County
Stamp Club's annual
Stamp Show
will be held on
Saturday,
November 7, 1998
at the Elk's Hall,
Route 1, Saco, Maine
from 9:00 a.m.
to 4:00 p.m.!**

The location is across from
Funtime and the show
will include a dealer bourse
(including supplies), exhibits,
a show cancel and cacheted
cover. The U.S. Postal Service
also will be present.

There will be a youth area,
and the *BEST* lunch deal
in the State of Maine!
Plan to attend this important
show; you won't be sorry!

*Sponsored by the
York County Stamp Club.*

THE CLASSIFIEDS

Classified advertisements are free to members. You may use this space to buy and sell, trade or swap. When sending an advertisement, please mark it for the Classifieds and indicate how many issues you wish it to appear. All ads will appear twice and be removed unless otherwise indicated.

WANTED

Father and 13-year-old daughter collecting U.S. postage on a limited budget. Looking to pay face or a little higher for newer issues, mostly Scott numbers 2000-2800. Please contact Robert Vear, P.O. Box 501, Waterville, ME 04903-0501. (2-99)

Wanted: Portland, Greenwood and Albany ad. covers, postal history, postcards. Buy or generous trade for other Maine. Charles Brand, 2031-31st Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94116. (2-99)

Wanted: modern (since 1970) U.S. covers. I am especially looking for junk mail transportation coil covers, Express mail, postage dues, insured mail, Certified mail, etc. Contact Rob Washburn, P.O. Box 840, Skowhegan, ME 04976-0840. (4-99)

Check your collections, accumulations, etc., for Pitcairn Island stamps and covers. I'm looking for 1938 "Radio Established Over Pitcairn" covers with dates other than March 18. Also looking for Newfoundland covers. Everett L. Parker, HC 76, Box 32, Greenville, ME 04441-9727. E-mail to: eparker@moosehead.net. (4-99)

Wanted: Maine hunting and fishing stamps on license. Will pay a minimum of \$10 each for every license I need. Also want Maine (and other New England states) Old Home Week seals. Terence Hines, P.O. Box 629, Chappaqua, NY 10514-0629. (4-99)

Information needed to further research on Maine NARROW GAUGE RPOs. Need RPO, month, day, year, train no. ME 4 BAR COLORED cancels, need P.O. name, month, day, year, time, color. Will respond to all information received. Bruce L. Corey, 108 Marilyn Ave., Westbrook, ME 04092-4624. (3-99)

Wanted to buy: Maine fancy cancels on cover or postal cards, stampless to 1920 only. Let me know what you have. Gil Roderick, 52 Fern St., Bangor, ME 04401. (2-99)

FOR SALE

Precancel approvals: town and types 15¢, classics, 1922-26 general, bicents, prexies, perfins available. Buro approvals starting at 5¢. Good mixed precancel lots. 2,000-\$25.00; 10,000-\$110.00. Mixed buros, 2,000-\$25.00, 10,000-\$110.00. Dick Laetsch, 108 Ashswamp Road, Scarborough, ME 04074. e-mail: precancel@aol.com (2-99)

For sale: DPO, Macy, ME - Doane 1906 on PPC, Rarity 8, First \$75.00 takes it. Carl A. Burnham, RR1, Box 559, Limington, ME 04046. Telephone 637-2871. (1-99)

ADDENDA AND ERRATA (Continued)
The Post Offices of Maine: A Rarity Guide

There are addenda and errata to The Maine Philatelic Society's recent book. Additional updates will be published in forthcoming issues of *The Maine Philatelist*. Note under "Explanation of Terms," New Hampshire should read "Maine."

PG	POST OFFICE	TOWN	R	COUNTY	ESTABLISHED	DISCONTINUED	NOTES
71	Small Point (2)						ADD: Changed to Small Point Rur. Sta., Phippsburg
72	ADD: Small Point Rur. Sta., Phippsburg	Phippsburg	1	Sagadahoc	19 May 1967	?	Formerly Small Point (2). Changed to Small Point CPO, Phippsburg
72	ADD: Small Point CPO, Phippsburg	Phippsburg	0	Sagadahoc	?	5 July 1995	Formerly Small Point Rur. Sta., Phippsburg
72	Snow Corner						Capital "H" on Hermon
73	South Brewer		5				
73	South Brewer Br., Bangor	Brewer				27 Oct. 1938 (LKU)	
73	South Brewer		1		22 Oct. 1938 (EKU)	?	
73	South Chatham Rur. Sta., Fryeburg						South Chatham is in New Hampshire
74	South Gouldsboro		1			17 Oct. 1992	
74	South Harpswell		1			2nd line, 4 March 1996	Changed to Harpswell (2)
74	South Hiram		1			30 Nov. 1991	
76	South Portland Sta., Portland		4				
76	South Portland Br., Portland		3		1 Jan. 1939 (EKU)	?	ADD: Changed to South Portland Annex, Portland
76	ADD: South Portland Annex, Portland	South Portland	0	Cumberland	?	Operating	Formerly South Portland Br., Portland
77	South Standish (2)		3				
77	Southwest Harbor						Spelling changed, 1 Dec. 1948
78	Squirrel Island Rur. Br., Boothbay Harbor	Southport	1		?	?	ADD: Changed to Squirrel Island CPO, Boothbay Harbor
78	ADD: Squirrel Island CPO, Boothbay Harbor	Southport	0	Lincoln	?	Operating	Formerly Squirrel Island Rur. Br., Boothbay Harbor
79	Sullivan (1)						
79	ADD: Sullivan (2)	Sullivan	0	Hancock	6 April 1993	Operating	Formerly North Sullivan
79	Sumner (1)						
79	ADD: Sumner (2)	Sumner	0	Oxford	1996	Operating	Formerly West Sumner
80	Temple Mills		1				
81	Togus Br., Augusta		1		4 Oct. 1935 (EKU)	31 March 1978	Formerly Veterans Administration Home Br., Augusta
81	Townsend		1				

* EKU means "Earliest Known Use." LKU means "Latest Known Use."

President's Message

By Everett L. Parker

With a strong pledge of support from board member Robert Vear and active member Steve Busque, we are forging ahead with plans for next year's MUDPEX show. There will be more information available in our next issue about their involvement and the show's future. I've received several letters of encouragement from members who stated they do not want to see the events ended. And we've had a number of people who have pledged to help at shows. So that's all good news and makes the future of shows more promising.

On another subject, what would you like to see more of in *The Maine Philatelist*? I've heard from a couple people who said less postal history and more news about what's happening on the Maine philatelic scene would be nice. But frankly, there isn't a lot going on in with philately in Maine. Or is there? It's up to you to tell me about what's happening.

You can write up a favorite page from your collection that has something to do with Maine, whether postal history or something else. You can send me news clippings of things related to Maine post offices and stamp activities. And clubs can (read that, "should") send information about their meetings and activities. Without your help, there isn't much news to publish. So I hope you'll do your part. Together we will succeed!

Maine Philatelic Society
HC 76, Box 32
Greenville, ME 04441-9727

What are YOU doing to promote
philately in Maine?

TO:

(6-99) #549
Kindahl, Mr. Kelvin
29 Clark Street
East Hampton, MA 01027-2329

IMPORTANT NOTICE:
If (6-98) appears after your
name on the mailing label, it's
time to renew your dues!

Are YOU on the Internet?

In order to offer more rapid communications, we will publish e-mail addresses of Maine Philatelic Society members and officers ONLY if they wish to be listed. Please e-mail your address to the president to be included here. If you're not on the Web, look into it -- there are hundreds of sites worldwide to explore!

- George Barner = gbarner@cybertours.com
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