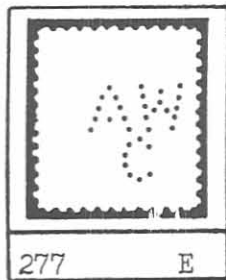


A277 - American Wholesale Corporation and B53 - Baltimore Bargain House

John F. Lyding (L116)



The confirmed user of perfin pattern A277 (AW/C) is listed on pages 21-22 of *The Catalog of United States Perfins* as "Amn Wholesale Corp" (see Figure 1). The abbreviation of "America" and "Corporation" are the result of the fixed line length and a typewriter. The full name as seen on the following illustrations is "American Wholesale Corporation". This Baltimore merchandiser had at least eight locations in Maryland. All eight buildings are illustrated on the back of a December 29, 1920 cover (see Figure 2). The cover front is shown in Figure 3. The locations are listed on Table A.

Figure 1.

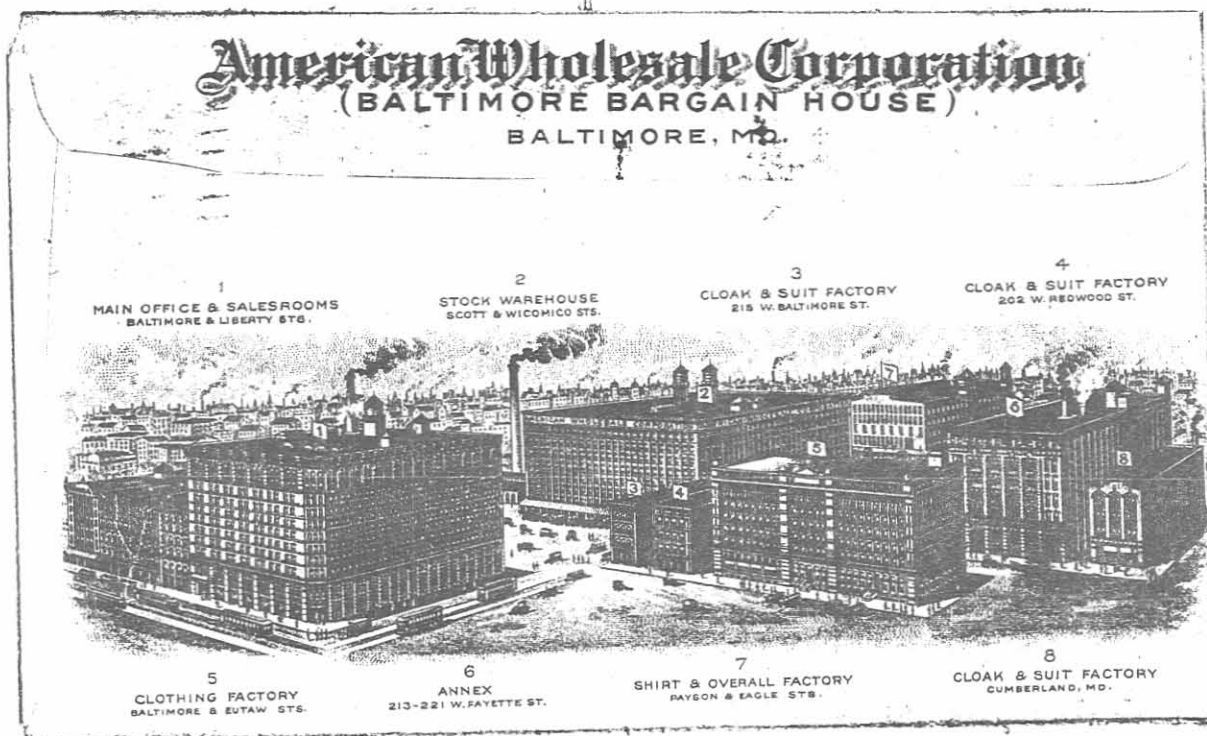


Figure 2 - Locations of the American Wholesale Corporation - 1920

Table A.
Locations of the American Wholesale Corporation - 1920

1.	Main Office	Baltimore Street at Liberty Street, Baltimore, MD.
2.	Stock Warehouse	Scott & Wicomico Streets, Baltimore, MD.
3.	Coat & Suit Factory	215 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD.
4.	Coat & Suit Factory	202 West Redwood Street, Baltimore, MD.

- | | | |
|----|----------------------------|---|
| 5. | Clothing
Factory | Baltimore and Eutaw Streets, Baltimore, MD. |
| 6. | Annex | 213-221 West Fayette Street, Baltimore, MD. |
| 7. | Shirt &
Overall Factory | Payson and Eagle Street, Baltimore, MD. |
| 8. | Coat and Suit
Factory | Cumberland, MD. |

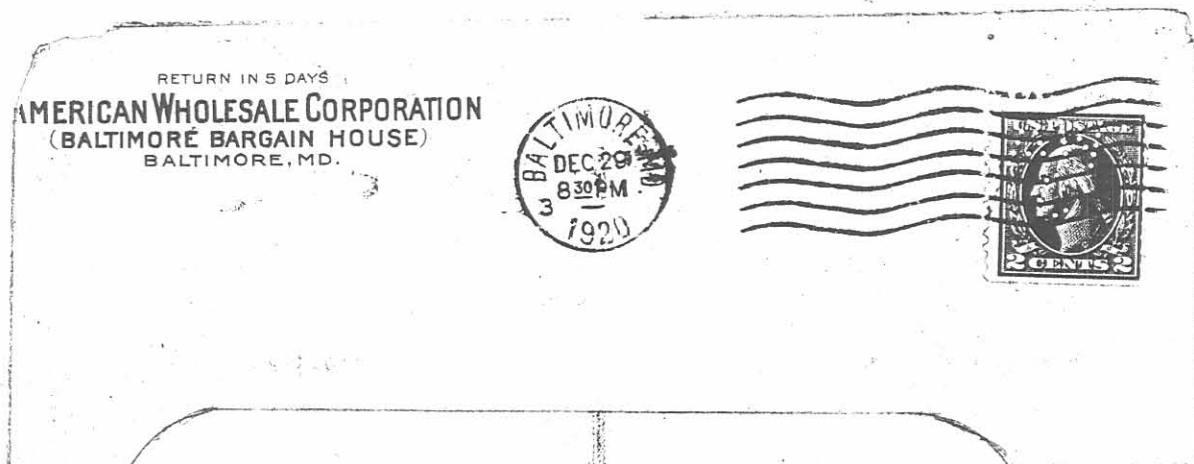


Figure 3 - Front of cover illustrated in Figure 2.

The corporation operated as the "The American Wholesale Corporation (Baltimore Bargain House) from their Baltimore and Liberty Street location. Figure 4 shows a photographically cropped cover with perfin pattern A277. In this instance, the mailing was December 14, 1920. The 1924 bulk mailing cover illustrated in Figure 5, provides an estimate of the establishments size. The text under the building's illustration states, "The enormous space we occupy in our buildings used by us exclusively, not including our outside storage warehouses, if put end to end in a width of 18 feet would make a continuous stretch measuring 11½ miles." That is 1,092,960 square feet!

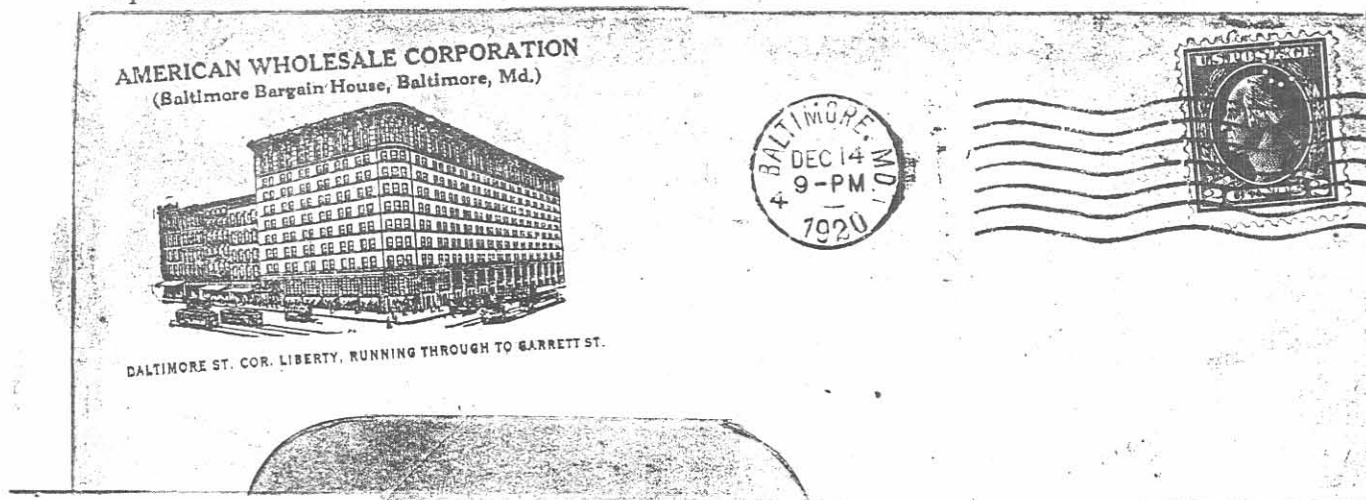


Figure 4 - December 14, 1920 Cover

The Baltimore Bargain House was a Wholesaler of General Merchandise and Manufacturer of Clothing. The Baltimore Bargain House also was a perfin user in its own right. *The Catalog of United States Perfins*, pp. 37-38, lists "Balt Bargain House, Baltimore MD" as the confirmed user of perfin patterns B53 and B53.5 (BBH shown in Figure 6). "Balt" is listed in the Glossary as the abbreviation for "Baltimore". I do not know why the Baloughs did not use "Balto" which is still used locally.

RETURN IN 5 DAYS
AMERICAN WHOLESALE CORPORATION
 BALTIMORE, MD.
 RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED
 ONE OF THE LARGEST WHOLESALE HOUSES IN THE UNITED STATES



Mr. J. M. Paylor,
 Laurinburg,
 N. C.

BALTIMORE, LIBERTY AND HOWARD STS. CORNER

THE ENORMOUS SPACE WE OCCUPY IN BALTIMORE, MD., NOT INCLUDING OUR OUTSIDE STREETS, IF WE WERE TO BE LAYED OUT IN A SINGLE ROW, WITH A WIDTH OF 18 FEET WOULD MAKE A CONTINUOUS STRETCH FROM NEW YORK TO BALTIMORE.

Figure 5 - 1924 Bulk Mail Cover (cropped to fit.)

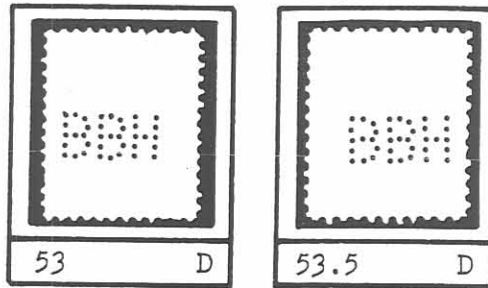


Figure 6 - Perfins used by The Baltimore Bargain House.

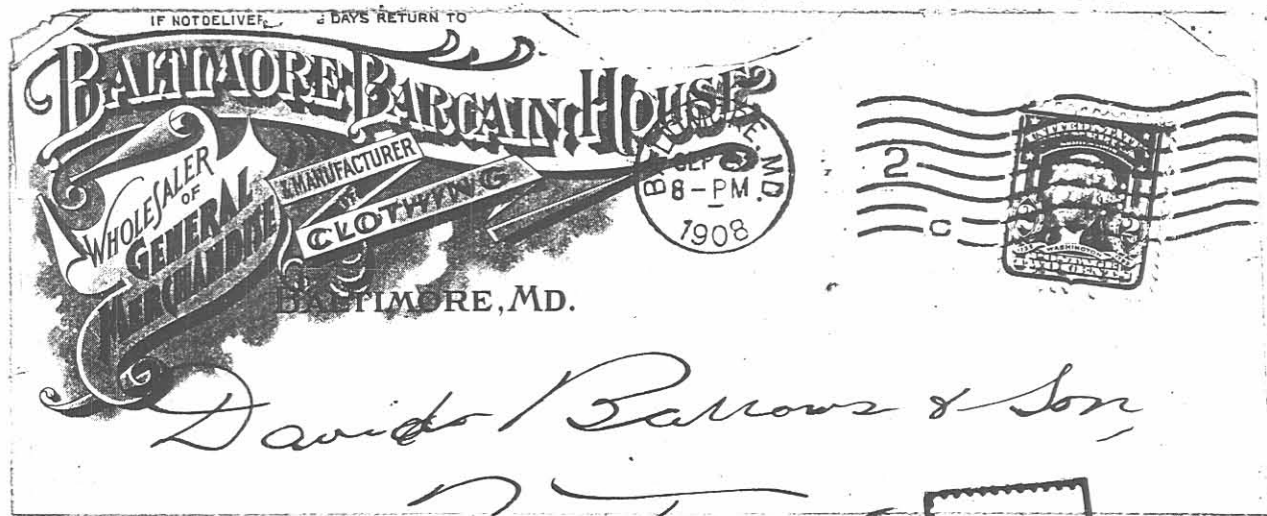


Figure 7 - September 23, 1908.

The earliest Baltimore Bargain House Cover in my collection, Figure 7, shows that the company was using perfin pattern B53 as early as September 23, 1908. This is an early usage and careful examination of Figure 7 discloses that several pins were already missing. This may be the explanation for pattern B53.5. Figure 8 illustrates three covers mailed to Mess. David Barrows & Sons, Nicetown, Philadelphia, PA. With the exception of the stamps, postmarks and the fact that one of the envelopes was addressed by hand, the covers are identical. All three covers have stamps punched with perfin pattern B53.5 (BBH).

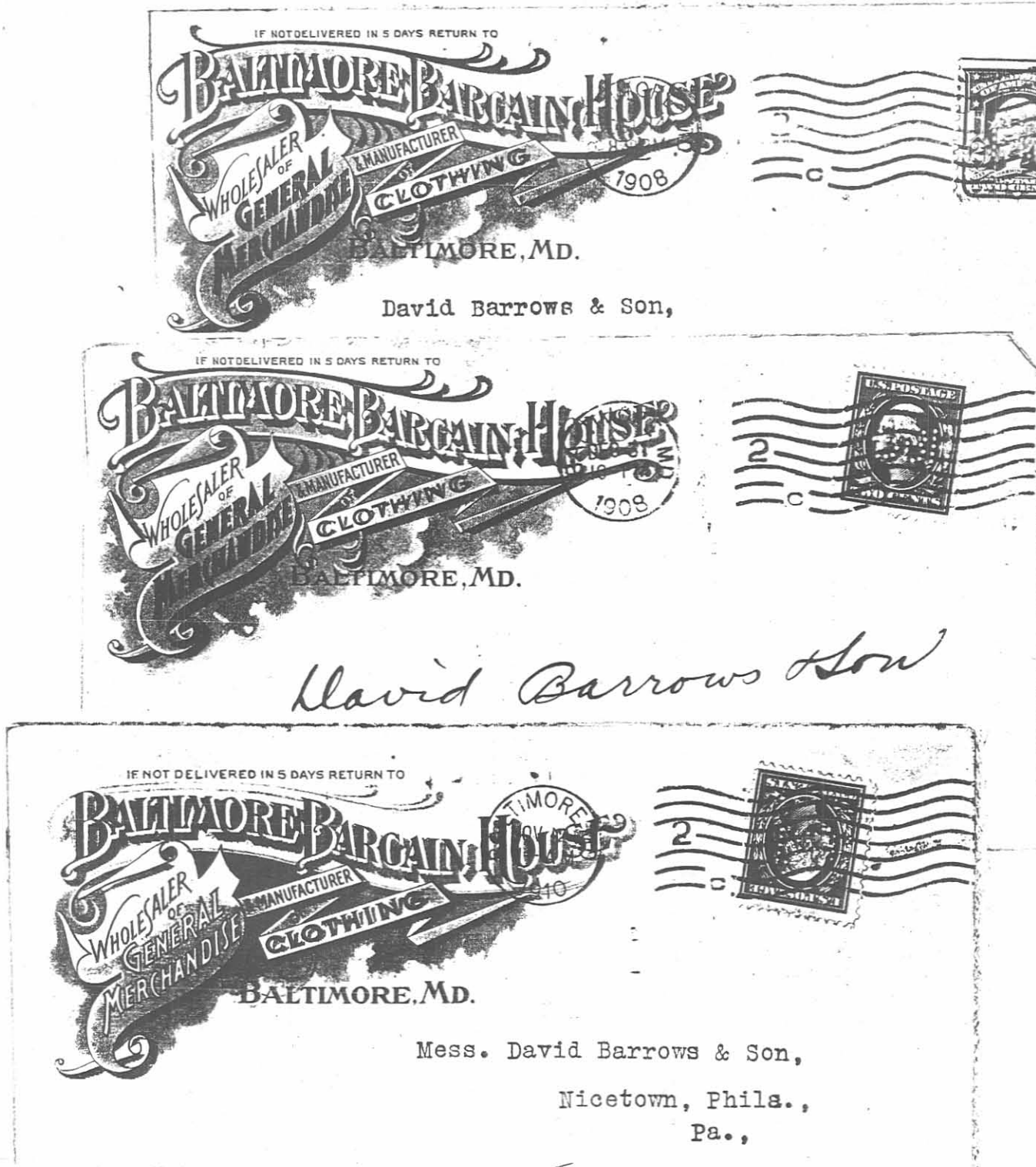


Figure 8 - A trio of Baltimore Bargain House Covers.

If not delivered in 5 Days, return to BALTIMORE BARGAIN HOUSE, BALTIMORE, MD. 466532

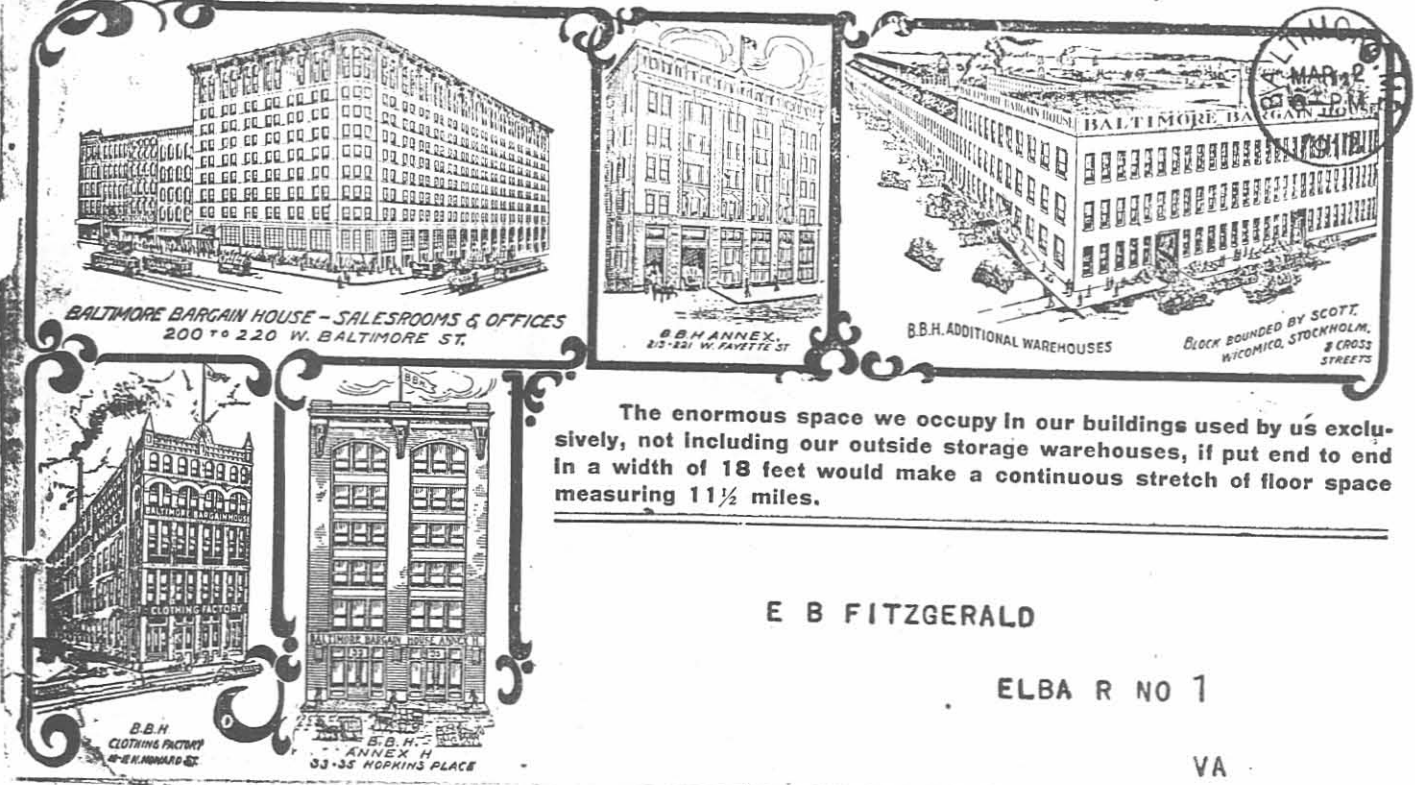


Figure 9 - Left-hand side of Baltimore Bargain House 4 1/2 x 10" Envelope

The envelope shown in Figure 9 was posted on March 2, 1912. In order to fit this in the available space the right two inches of the cover have been removed. In addition to illustrating five of the Baltimore Bargain Houses locations it contains the same wording with regard to "The enormous space..." used by the company. Figure 10 displays the slogan printed on the back of the cover and the stamp and portion of the cancel that was removed from Figure 9. The stamp on this cover is punched with perfin pattern B53. It is interesting to note that the main office and salesroom's address is now given as 200-220 West Baltimore Street. Fortunately or unfortunately, depending on how one looks at it, the right leg of the letter "H" is missing being off the stamp to the right. We can glean several bits of information from this stamp. First, the pins which were missing in the September 23, 1908 cover (Figure 7) have been replaced indicating a repaired perforator. Second, there is no indication of the right leg of the letter "H" on the left hand of the stamp, indicating that this was a single die or the left-most die in a multiple-headed device.

**WE SELL
SAME GOODS
FOR
LESS MONEY.
MORE GOODS
FOR
SAME MONEY.**

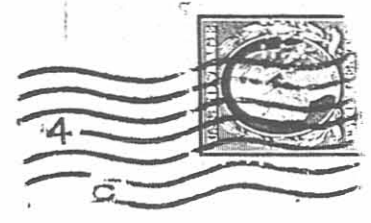


Figure 10 - Slogan on the back of envelope and stamp from envelope in Figure 9.



B. B. H. ANNEX
213-221 W. FAYETTE



B. B. H. SHIRT & OVERALL FACTORY
COR. PAYSON & EAGLE STS.

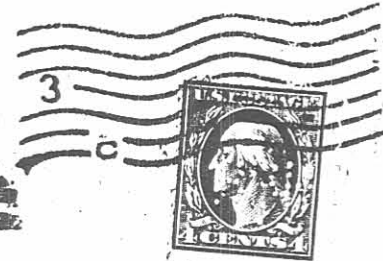


B. B. H. CLOTHING FACTORY
10-12 N. HOWARD ST.

If not delivered in 5 Days, return to BALTIMORE BARGAIN HOUSE, BALTIMORE, MD.



BALTIMORE ST. AND LIBERTY, RUNNING THROUGH TO FAYETTE ST.



E. B. FITZGERALD & SON

GRETNA

VA

The enormous space we occupy in our buildings used by us exclusively, not including our outside storage warehouses, if put end to end in a width of 18 feet would make a continuous stretch of floor space measuring 11½ miles.

Figure 11 - Front and partial back of March 18, 1913 BBH mailing.

Figure 11 illustrates a photographically cropped front and a portion of the back of a March 18, 1913, cover from the Baltimore Bargain House. The main office and salesroom is once again listed as at Baltimore Street and Liberty, Running through to Liberty and the now familiar statement about the company's enormous size is shown on the front while the back of the cover illustrates three other locations.

Table B.
Locations of the American Wholesale Corporation/
Baltimore Bargain House, 1910 - 1920

<u>Number</u>	<u>Usage</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>1912</u>	<u>1913</u>	<u>1920</u>
1.	Main Office	Baltimore Street at Liberty	Yes	Yes	Yes
2.	Stock Warehouse	Scott & Wicomico Streets	Yes	Yes	Yes
3.	Coat & Suit Factory	215 West Baltimore Street	No	No	Yes

4.	Coat & Suit Factory	202 West Redwood Street	No	No	Yes
5.	Clothing Factory	Baltimore and Eutaw Streets	No	No	Yes
6.	Annex	213-221 West Fayette Street	Yes	Yes	Yes
7.	Shirt & Overall Factory	Payson and Eagle Street	No	Yes	Yes
8.	Coat and Suit Factory	Cumberland, MD	No	No	Yes
9.	Clothing Factory	10-12 Howard Street	Yes	Yes	No
10.	Annex H	33-35 Hopkins Place	No	Yes	No

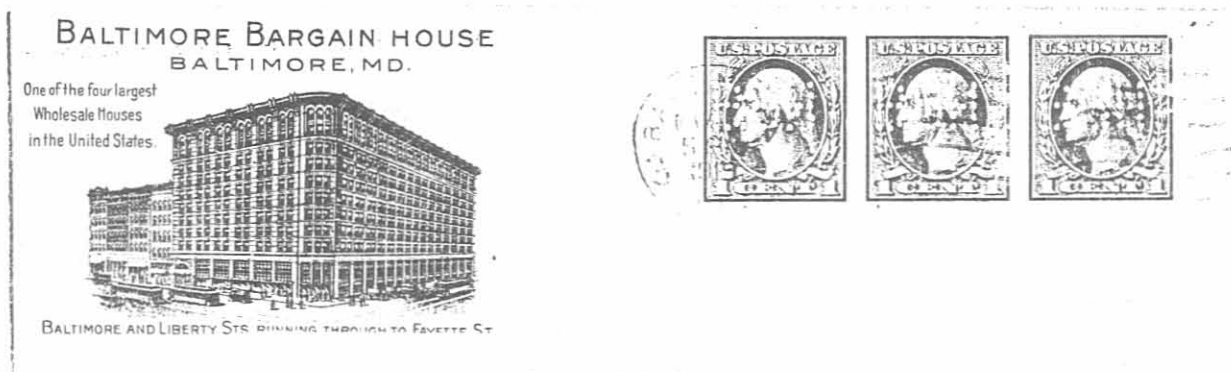


Figure 12 - May 8, 1919 window envelope.

By 1919 the company had adopted window envelopes and used a small amount of color in their corner card. The May 8, 1919, cover shown in Figure 12 shows the familiar main office/salesrooms and a new slogan, "One of the four largest Wholesale Houses in the United States. The building is colored a light orange and the three 1¢ green Washington stamps are punched with perfin pattern B53.5.

In preparing this article, I was greatly assisted by being able to use the height of the perfin to distinguish between perfin patterns B53 and B53.5. B53 measures 5mm in height while B53.5 is 5.5mm.

An advanced copy of this article was forwarded to the US Catalog Editor, John M. Randall, recommending that he add the cross references as he develops the new catalog.