

# LA POSTA

MARCH-APRIL, 1969

POSTAL HISTORY BULLETIN OF THE MOUNTAIN AND DESERT WEST

VOL. I, NO. 2

## FORT STANTON, NEW MEXICO: A POSTAL HISTORY

In June of 1855, after a series of bloody skirmishes between Mescalero Apaches and the army, a military reservation and an Indian agency were established on the banks of the Rio Bonito in south-central New Mexico Territory. The post was named Fort Stanton in honor of Captain Henry W. Stanton of the First Dragoons, who was killed while fighting Apaches in the Sacramento Mountains on January 19, 1855. The site of the outpost, which had been acquired 3 years earlier through a treaty with the Mescaleros, was set in a high valley surrounded by a natural triangle made up of the Capitan Mountains to the north, the lofty Sierra Blancas to the west, and a line of mesas and rolling foothills forming the third leg.

The first Fort Stanton postmaster, David S. Garland, was appointed May 5, 1857, and although the exact date on which postal operations actually began is not known, it is likely that the post office began to function shortly after Garland's appointment. Located at the junction of two important wagon routes - one north to Albuquerque, and the other southwest across the Tularosa Basin through the Organ Mountain Pass to Fort Fillmore on the Rio Grande - Fort Stanton was strategically situated to insure safe passage of the buckboards and stages which carried the early day mails to the southern portion of New Mexico Territory. Operation of the post office is reported to have been interrupted briefly during August, 1857, but on September 15th, George S. Beall became the second postmaster of Fort Stanton.

The next interruption of postal operations at Fort Stanton came about as a result of local action in the United States Civil War. A force of Texas Confederate troops led by General H. H. Sibley invaded New Mexico in 1861, hoping to reach the Colorado gold fields. The Union garrison burned and abandoned Fort Stanton before the Texans could take possession of the installation. Postal records indicate that the post office at Fort Stanton was discontinued October 21, 1863, but in view of the action taken by the retreating Union Army it seems highly unlikely that the office functioned during 1861 or 1862. It should be pointed out that no covers or postal markings have yet been recorded from the early era (pre-1879) of Fort Stanton's history, and due to the chaos of the period and the isolation of the outpost, it is entirely possible that the record of events during the early 1860s shall never become entirely clear.

General Sibley was defeated at Apache Canyon on March 28, 1862, after pushing his advance up the Rio Grande as far as Santa Fe. That battle turned the tide against the Confederate forces in New Mexico Territory, and in early 1863, a garrison of Union volunteers led by Kit Carson re-occupied Fort Stanton. According to postal records, however, the Fort Stanton post office was not re-established until April 9, 1868. On that date, Lawrence G. Murphy became postmaster and the office entered a period of uninterrupted service which has now lasted for over 100 years.

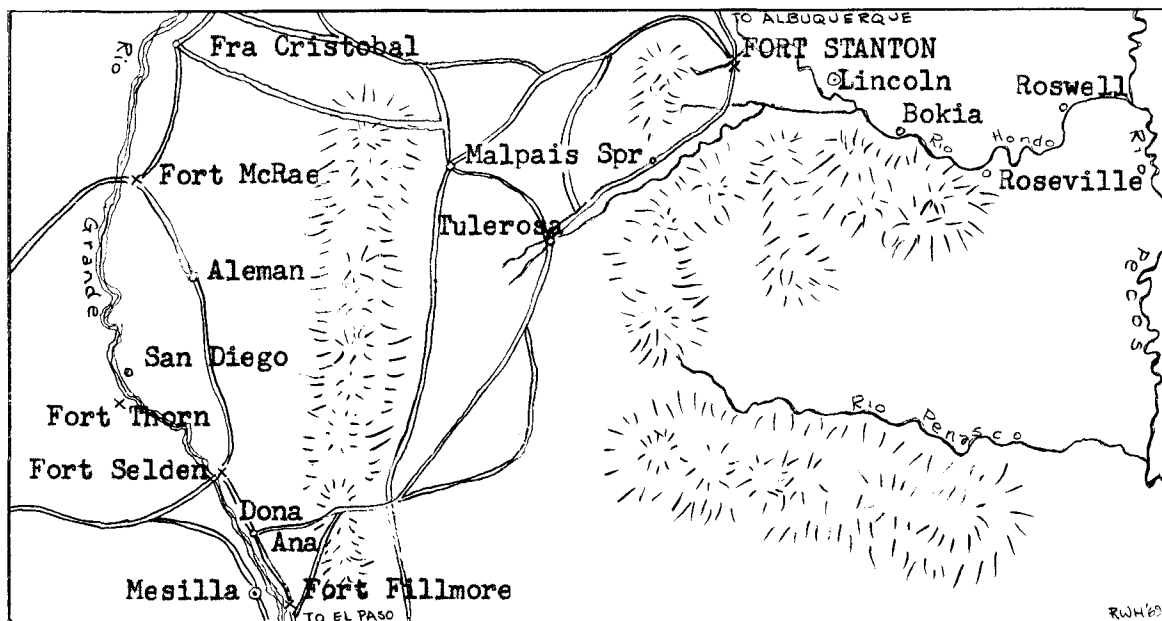
The post-Civil War period heralded the start of a "Golden Age" for the outpost on the Rio Bonito. A stagecoach carrying mail and passengers arrived daily from the thriving mining town of White Oaks, which had been founded in 1879 some 25 miles to the north of Fort Stanton. Twice weekly a stage brought mail to the fort from Mesilla, which laid to the west across the Tularosa Basin and the Organ Mountains. A third stage route

connected the fort with the young settlement of Roswell located at the junction of the Pecos and Hondo rivers. Fort Stanton played host to thousands of settlers travelling by stage and wagon train from Colorado and other northern points to southern New Mexico and Arizona territories. One of the fort's most famous residents of the period was the young West Point "shave-tail" assigned there for his first tour of duty in the 1880s. The man was later to gain great fame as General John J. "Blackjack" Pershing.

Development of rail and road networks in southern New Mexico eventually rendered Fort Stanton's once strategic position obsolete, and in 1898 the Army turned the buildings and site over to the United States Public Health Service. The Health Service converted the post into the Fort Stanton Marine Hospital, and it was charged with the treatment of members of the U. S. Merchant Marine who were suffering from tuberculosis. On July 1, 1953, the Federal Government turned the site over to the State of New Mexico, but the property was subsequently reclaimed for the Department of Interior with the state health department being allowed to continue using the buildings as a hospital for the tubercular.

Chronological List of Fort Stanton Postmasters with Appointment Dates

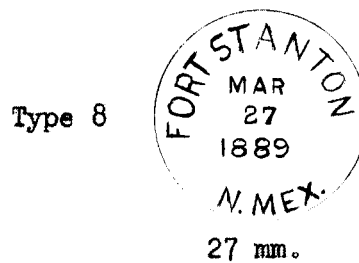
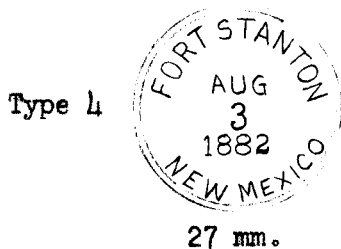
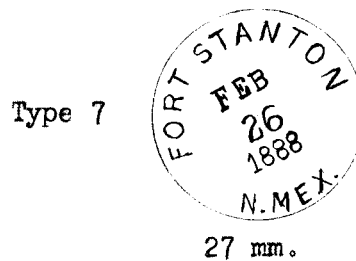
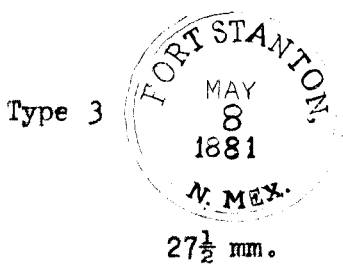
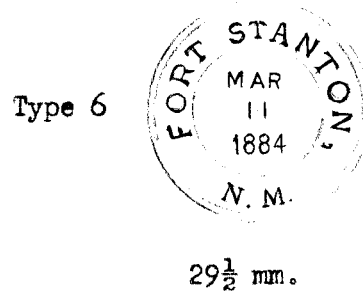
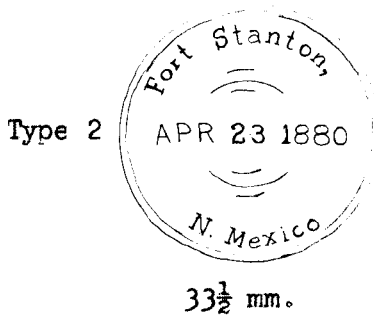
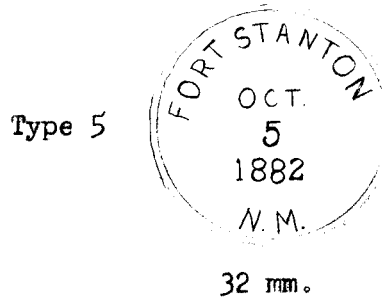
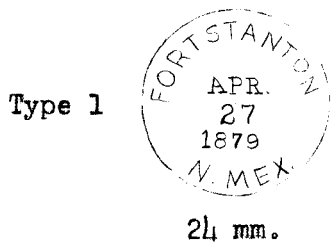
David S. Garland	May 5, 1857	Mrs. Alina O'Neil	July 14, 1892
DISCONTINUED	Aug. 18, 1857	Benjamin F. Stafford	Apr. 18, 1895
George S. Beall	Sept. 15, 1857	Clara L. Blanchard	Feb. 1, 1897
Burton L. Ross	Apr. 30, 1858	Edward S. Maguire	Feb. 27, 1901
Alexander Duval	July 25, 1860	Sophie S. Carrington	July 1, 1901
DISCONTINUED	Oct. 21, 1863	Joel I. Buckner	Feb. 18, 1902
Lawrence G. Murphy	Apr. 9, 1868	Christian L. Heller	July 31, 1908
Chas. Bushnell	July 14, 1873	Harry A. Freedlander	Jan. 23, 1909
Paul Dowlin	Dec. 4, 1873	Joseph H. Gentry	Apr. 25, 1913
William Dowlin	June 8, 1877	C. A. Terrell	June 19, 1952
John C. Delany	May 15, 1882	M. J. Price	Jan. 5, 1955
Ginfield S. Cobean	Apr. 18, 1889	Frances G. Shaw	June 2, 1961
John C. Delany	Apr. 23, 1890		

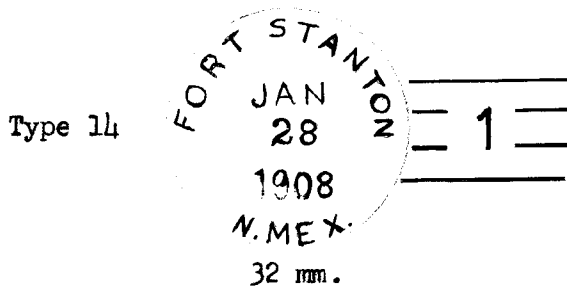
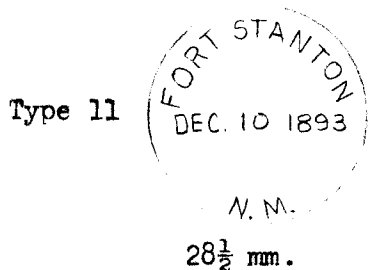
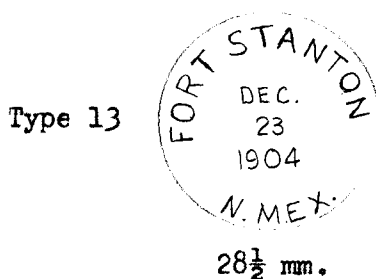
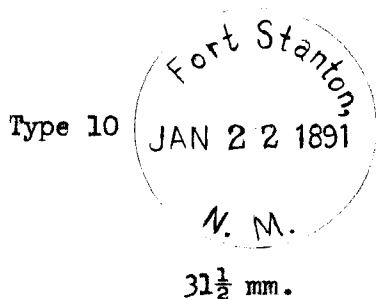


South-central New Mexico Territory: Circa 1875

Known Territorial Period Postmark Types: Fort Stanton, New Mexico

Reconstructions based upon the known postmark types as listed and classified in Sheldon H. Dike's, New Mexico Territorial Postmark Catalog, 1965, p. 30. Illustrations should be considered approximations rather than precise renderings of the various postmark types. Diameter measurements, letter style, and general design are reliable.





Notes

Type	Earliest Date	Latest Date	Integral Killer	Notes on Design
1.	April 27, 1879	same	none	none
2.	April 23, 1880	Dec. 27, 1882	none	none
3.	May 8, 1881	Sept. 18, 1881	none	none
4.	Aug. 3, 1882	same	Star in Circle	none
5.	Oct. 5, 1882	Oct. 14, 1883	Star in Star	none
6.	March 11, 1884	Nov. 24, 1885	Wheel of Fortune	none
7.	Feb. 26, 1888	Oct. 8, 1888	none	none
8.	March 27, 1889	Sept. 3, 1890	none	As Ty 7, but Roman date ltrs.
9.	Dec. 19, 1890	same	none	As Ty 8, Backstamp Transit
10.	March 30, 1891	Feb. 22, 1893	Grid	none
11.	Dec. 10, 1893	Nov. 13, 1894	Star in Circle	none
12.	Dec. 23, 1895	same	none	Similar to Type 8
13.	Dec. 23, 1904	same	Grid	none
14.	Jan. 28, 1908	Nov. 7, 1910	4-Bar w/Numeral	none

Types 9 and 12, which are similar in design to type 8, are not illustrated for that reason. Outer circle diameter measurements appear listed below each illustration. Persons knowing of Fort Stanton postmark types which differ markedly from those illustrated and described above, are requested to contact Dr. Sheldon H. Dike, 1611 Bayita Lane N.W., Albuquerque, New Mexico 87107, or the editor of La Posta.

rwh

PIZ??

The new four-bar hand cancel of the Farley, New Mexico Rural Branch office reads "FARLEY, MN." The abbreviation MN belongs to Minnesota under the recently adopted system.

by William F. Rapp of Crete, Nebraska

The area which now comprises San Juan County was originally Taos County. In 1885, Taos was divided into two counties: Rio Arriba County and Taos County. Later, Rio Arriba County was divided into San Juan County and Rio Arriba County. Today, San Juan County is in the extreme northwest corner of the State of New Mexico. For many years a large part of San Juan County has been a part of the Navajo Indian Reservation.

San Juan County has never had a large population. The first official census of San Juan County was taken in 1890 when there were seven precincts with a total population of 1,890. By 1900 there were ten precincts containing a total population of 4,828. Of this total, 1,747 lived on the Navajo Indian Reservation.

Prior to 1895, all mail was moved via Star Routes in San Juan County. In 1895, the Durango and Farmington Railroad Post Office started operating on the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad. It served at least the following communities: Cedar Hill, Aztec, Flora Vista, and Farmington. Communities not located on the railroad were served by Star Routes which operated from communities served by the R. P. O. route.

Covers with cancels from some San Juan County post offices are rare, whereas others are relatively common for the period 1881-1899. Based upon the number of years a post office has operated, we would rate the abundance of available covers for a specific post office as follows:

Common - Aztec, Bloomfield, Farmington, Flora Vista, Jewett, La Plata, Largo, and Olio.

Intermediate - Cedar Hill and Fruitland.

Scarce - Coyote, El Rito, Embuda, Espanola, Fairpoint, Good Hope, Hood, Junction, Vallecitos, and Velarde.

In the classification of scarce covers, several of the post offices would be very hard to find. For example, in the case of a post office which operated approximately one year and the postmaster's compensation was less than \$25 it can be assumed that very few letters were mailed from that office. The following post offices would fall into this category: Good Hope - \$17.66; Hood - \$14.23; and, Vallecitos - \$13.21.

On the other hand, some post offices which operated for approximately a year had larger incomes than post offices which functioned for many years. Good examples of this type of office are: Coyote - \$53.53; Embuda - \$245.01; and, Velarde - \$45.67.

List of San Juan County Post Offices and Postmasters Compiled from the Official Register of the United States 1881 - 1899

AZTEC (Taos County 1881-83, Rio Arriba County 1885)

Postmasters: Mrs. S.E. Hart, 1881  
J. A. Koontz, 1883, 1887  
Percy B. Fulton, 1889  
Minnie B. Berry, 1891  
Monroe Field, 1895  
Lucy P. Waring, 1897-1899

BLOOMFIELD (cont.)

Lucy P. Waring, 1891-1895  
F. R. Corbit, 1897  
Blanche Swire, 1899

CEDAR HILL

R. H. Wright, 1895-1897  
Lillian Flack, 1899

BLOOMFIELD (Taos 1881-83, Rio Arriba 1885)

Postmasters: W. B. Haines, 1881-1885  
F. E. Stevens, 1887  
Eva C. Mercer, 1889

COYOTE

J. F. Garcia, 1887

EL RITO

Postmasters: P. I. Jaramitto, 1885  
J. Grant, 1887

EMBUDA

Postmaster: A. Lohez, 1887

ESPANOLA (Rio Arriba 1885)

Postmasters: Jose A. Lusero, 1885  
G. W. Bond, 1887

FAIRPOINT

Postmaster: M. E. Deichsel, 1895-1897

FARMINGTON (Taos 1881-83, Rio Arriba 1885)

Postmasters: F. W. Pierce, 1881, 1887  
W. G. Markley, 1883-85, 1897-99  
Eva C. Mercer, 1889-1891  
H. O. Willis, 1895

FLORA VISTA (Rio Arriba 1885)

Postmasters: Nath. L. Hayden, 1885-1887  
J. D. Rumburg, 1891  
E. N. Shelhamer, 1897  
J. T. McQuillan, 1899

FRUITLAND

Postmaster: J. R. Young, 1895-1899

GOOD HOPE (Rio Arriba 1885)

Postmaster: E. A. Hutchinson, 1885-1887  
(Office established: February 13, 1885)

HOOD

Postmaster: George S. Hood, 1899

JEWETT (Rio Arriba 1885)

Postmasters: Henry Hull, 1885-1891  
A. F. Koehler, 1895  
E. Marcelion, 1897-1899

JUNCTION

Postmaster: Alice Smith, 1895

LA PLATA (Rio Arriba 1885)

Postmasters: Daniel Rhodes, 1885, 1889  
Q. H. Hornbogen, 1891-1895  
Elia Hornbogen, 1897  
Elia Earle, 1899

LARGO (Rio Arriba 1885)

Postmasters: Herbert O. Willis, 1885-1891  
J. H. Thiehoff, 1895  
Helena R. Spinner, 1897-1899

OLIO (Rio Arriba 1885)

Postmasters: David A. Stevens, '85  
C. J. Moss, 1889-91  
W. Simpson, 1895  
M.C. Weidmeyer, 1897  
Sadie Burnham, 1899

VALLECITOS

Postmaster: J. M. Gieon, 1887

VELARDE

Postmaster: D. Martinez, 1887

Note: The Official Register lists no information for the following offices and the following years:

Flora Vista - 1889 & 1895  
La Plata - 1887  
Largo - 1887  
Olio - 1887

References: Official Register of the United States, 1881-1899.

United States Census, 1890 and 1900.

(Editors Note: While Mr. Rapp compiled this listing without the benefit of reference to Dr. Sheldon Dike's fine New Mexico Territorial Postmark Catalog, it is a testimony to the scholarship of both men that the classification of San Juan County postmarks according to degree of scarcity do not markedly differ. The major exception seems to be Espanola, which was apparently listed wrongly in the 1887 Register. Dr. Dike makes a listing of known San Juan County covers as follows: Farmington(6 types), Bloomington and Embuda(4 types), Aztec (3 types), Largo and El Rito (2 types), Flora Vista, La Plata, Cedar Hill and Fairpoint (1 type). No postmarks are known for any of the other San Juan County offices for the 1881-1899 era. Espanola, Rio Arriba County, lists 6 different postmark types during the last two decades of the 19th century.

POST OFFICES AND POSTMASTERS: 1856

The following list contains the names of post offices and their postmasters in Utah and New Mexico territories as of mid-1856. The list is taken from a commercial version of the United States Official Register, and the monetary values refer to compensation of the postmaster (left-hand column) and net revenue returned to the Post Office Department (right-hand column), as a result of operations during the preceding year.

UTAH TERRITORY

Post Office	County	Postmaster	Comp.	Net R.
American Fork	Utah	Leonard E. Harrington	\$6.81	\$4.21
Box Elder	Weber	Salmon Warner	8.59	5.18
Canal Creek	San Pete	James Allred	4.95	3.70
Carson Valley	Carson	John Reese	17.00	11.00
Cedar Valley	Utah	Horace Burdick	---	---
Cedar City	Iron	Isaac C. Haight	48.00	39.00
Centerville	Davis	Aaron B. Cherry	3.00	2.00
Draper	Salt Lake	David James	7.00	5.00
Farmington	Davis	James Leithead	19.60	13.11
Fillmore City	Millard	Thomas R. King	12.00	7.00
Fort Johnson	Iron	Joel H. Johnson	---	---
Home	Salt Lake	Samuel Bennion	---	---
Kaysville	Davis	Samuel Henderson	14.04	9.93
Iehi City	Utah	David Evans	17.00	13.00
Lone City	Utah	Isaac Houston	---	---
Manti	San Pete	George Peacock	23.23	11.62
Mormon	Salt Lake	William Hyde	---	---
Mount Pleasant	Salt Lake	Lyman Wright	---	---
Ogden City	Weber	James G. Browning	59.23	35.33
Palmyra	Utah	Charles A. Davis	9.78	6.57
Parowan	Iron	James Lewis	31.73	21.79
Payson	Utah	Charles B. Hancock	14.22	9.78
Pleasant Grove	Utah	William G. Sterrett	16.00	11.00
Provo City	Utah	Lucius N. Scovil	41.42	27.68
Salt Creek	Utah	Timothy B. Foote	---	---
Salt Lake City	Salt Lake	William Bell	703.37	576.85
Santaquin	Utah	Benjamin F. Johnson	---	---
Springville	Utah	William Miller	31.00	24.00
Stoker	Davis	David W. Sessions	9.96	6.02
Tooele	Tooele	John Rawberry	11.57	7.39
Union	Salt Lake	Warren Foote	5.36	3.22

TERRITORY OF NEW MEXICO

Albuquerque	Bernalillo	Henry Winslow	\$108.61	\$24.96
Algodones	Unknown	Michael Gleason	---	---
Bernalillo	Unknown	Francisco Perea	---	---
Brigham's	Unknown	William Brigham	---	---
Fernandez de Taos	Taos	Solomon Beuthner	55.28	21.18
Fort Craig	Unknown	Ignacy Sumouski	---	---
Fort Defiance	Bernalillo	John E. Weber	---	---
Fort Thorn	Dona Ana	Alexander Duvall	---	---
Fort Union	Taos	Ceran St. Vrain	82.92	28.41

Fort Willmore	Dona Ana	William McGroty	47.00	16.00
Las Cruces	Dona Ana	James A. Lucas	---	---
Las Vegas	San Miguel	Stephen Boice	7.74	4.76
La Canada	Rio Arriba	Patrick K. Kelly	---	---
Los Lunas	Unknown	Moses Sacks	---	---
Los Luceros	Unknown	James Barry	---	---
Santa Fe	Santa Fe	David V. Whiting	225.59	323.45
Socorro	Socorro	Vincente St. Vrain	20.10	11.17
Tecolata	San Miguel	William H. Moore	7.59	5.97

This list contains a number of errors and obvious omissions, but postal records of the 19th century are like that and for the most part they are all we have to work with. It is sometimes possible to correlate information with more than one source in order to minimize errors, but such correlation generally proves the exception rather than the rule.

The map of Utah and New Mexico territories in 1855, which appears on the following page, is derived from an old school atlas of about 1857 vintage. Many errors and inconsistencies are contained in the map, but knowledge of this portion of the continent was far from perfect in the mid-19th century. It is possible to locate many of the territorial post offices listed above, but unfortunately a large number are not shown on the map.

As a matter of note, the Fort Defiance post office was the first to be established in what was to become Arizona. Postal records carry its date of establishment as April 9, 1856. John E. Weber was the first and only postmaster, and the office was discontinued October 21, 1863. In 1855-56, there were no post offices operating in what was later to become Colorado.

If members or subscribers are interested, your editor will be happy to redraft other old maps of the mountain and desert west. As a geographer, it has been my pleasure to assemble a modest collection of old maps of the west, and I frankly enjoy dabbling in the joys of cartography. If you find them worthwhile as postal history reference material, please let me know and I shall include others with future issues.

rwh

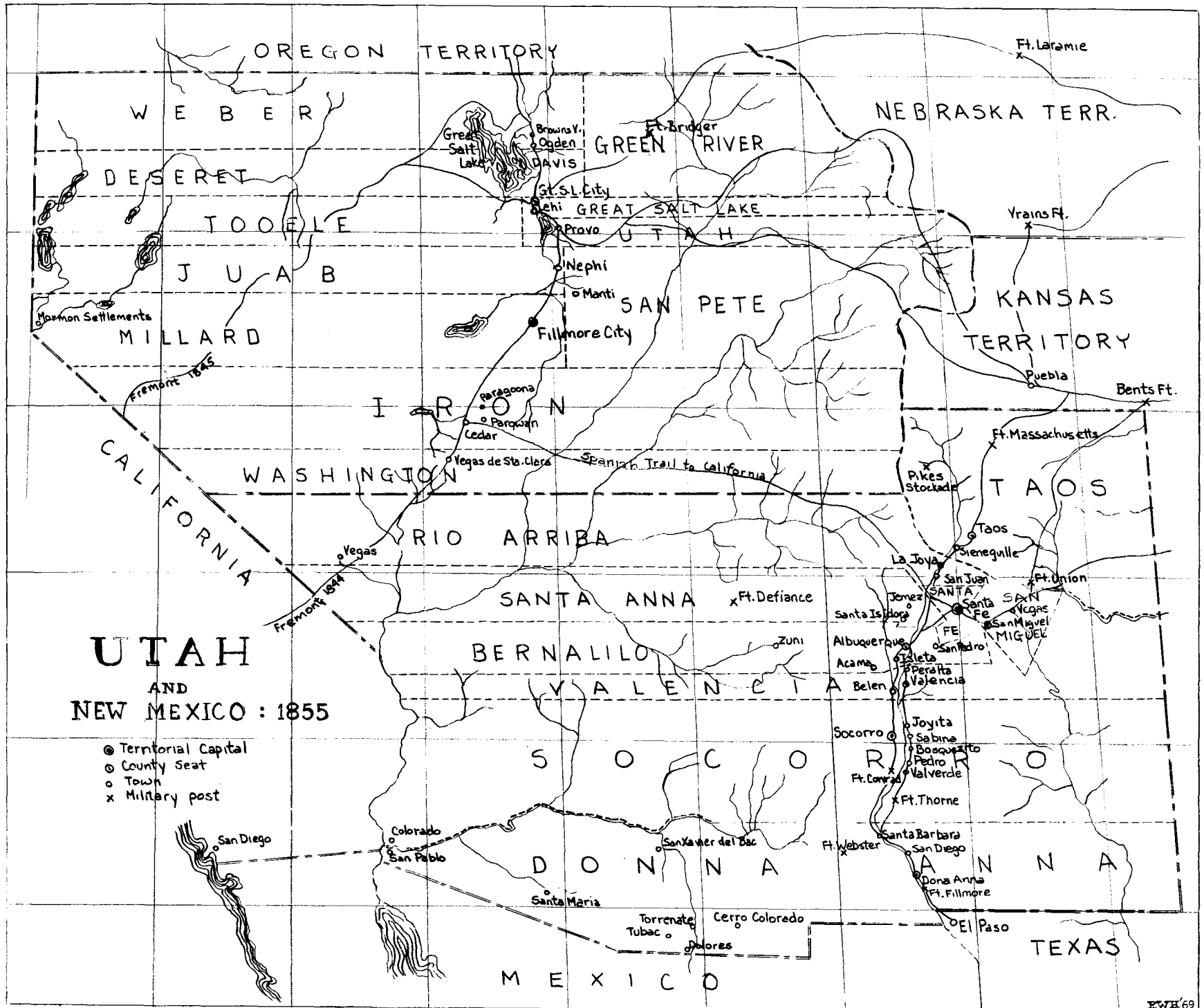
#### MEMBERSHIP REPORT

As of the date of this writing, the Mountain and Desert West Postal History Research Society has a total of seven paid member/subscribers. The names and addresses of these people are listed below. This will be the LAST issue of La Posta mailed to those who are not members.

1. Harold P. Lopes, Asst. Editor, Western Stamp Collector, P.O. Box 10, Albany, OR.
2. William H. Bauer, 112 Jeanne Drive, Westwego, LA 70094
3. William F. Rapp, Jr., 430 Ivy Avenue, Crete, NB 68333
4. Mrs. Ruth Dolezal, 3810 S. 59th Avenue, Cicero, IL.
5. Dr. Sheldon H. Dike, 1611 Bayita Lane N.W., Albuquerque, NM 87107
6. Mrs. Otto W. Kaminky, P.O. Box 532, Connersville, IN 47331
7. Richard W. Helbock, 930 Lees Drive, Las Cruces, NM 88001
8. Ernest S. Peyton, 1203 South 16th Street, Las Vegas, Nevada 89104

To become a member of the Society and subscribe to La Posta, send \$5.00 to Richard W. Helbock, 930 Lees Drive, Las Cruces, New Mexico 88001.





6

**UTAH**  
AND  
**NEW MEXICO : 1855**

- Territorial Capital
- County Seat
- Town
- x Military post

There are no prerequisites to becoming a participant in the rewarding field of postal history research. There are no degrees required, no courses to be completed, and no apprenticeships to be fulfilled. Postal history research requires only a consuming interest in the subject, coupled with a willingness to rummage long hours through old book stores, libraries or museums, and the patience to contend with partial answers or solutions which are not always completely satisfying.

Before getting into the meat of this series of articles discussing postal history research techniques, I should like to submit my qualifications to write such a series are only slightly better than my qualifications to write about heart transplants, or nuclear physics, or a host of other esoteric topics. My real hope here is that some of you who read these articles will rush to my rescue, whether or not that is your intent, and shed true light on this subject. So if you see a gap in my coverage, or recall an omitted source, or are familiar with some technique unknown to me, please take the time to correct my short-comings, and thereby benefit the other members of the study group.

As presently visualized, this series will consist of a group of interrelated articles describing postal history research source materials (documents, records, maps, etc.), techniques for organizing and exchanging postal history information between researchers, and postal history research methods (systems of classifying postmarks, tabulating systems, etc.) If readers have suggestions of other subjects which might be covered in this series, your comments and suggestions will be most welcome.

#### Data Sources: The Literature Search

Research in postal history is similar to research in most other fields with respect to the use of background sources of information. Research builds in the manner of a coral reef, layer upon layer, upward and outward from the existing body of knowledge. It is for this reason that a postal history study must start with a literature search to determine the "state of the art."

Stated another way, the literature search answers such questions as, "How much do we know about \_\_\_\_\_?", "Has anyone ever tried to \_\_\_\_\_?", or "At what level of detail have \_\_\_\_\_ been researched?" By their very nature, literature searches deal almost exclusively with secondary sources, that is, postal history research done by other people.

At this point, the fun begins. Postal history literature has never ranked among the most widely disseminated of mans' letters, and the best pieces have a tendency to disappear from print rather rapidly. Above and beyond the difficulty in obtaining a copy of someones' classic work dealing with the Fastbuck Express of Hogwash County, is the problem of learning that it exists.

There appear to be no hard and fast solutions to this initial research quandry, but the postal historian does have some options. First, for those fortunate(?) enough to live in New York, Los Angeles, or certain other cities which have very large and well established philatelic societies, there are the great club libraries. The Collectors Club of New York has an outstanding collection of philatelic works. The Philatelic Library of Los Angeles, the Eugene Klein Collection in the Philadelphia Free Library, and the library of the Philatelic Research Society of Oakland, California, are among the best and most complete in the United States. Other sizeable philatelic libraries, both semi-public and private, do exist in the United States, and it is entirely possible that a literature search can be conducted in a small or moderate sized library. If a philatelic library of any size is available, the attempt should obviously be made.

While on the subject of philatelic libraries, mention should also be made of the newly organized American Philatelic Research Library, a project of the American Philatelic Society. The purpose of this library, which may someday be one of our nation's largest, is "to establish and maintain a comprehensive reference library of philatelic and related material for research and study...". The future of this project shall be watched with interest by all of us who are engaged in postal history research activities.

For researchers who live in Crete, Nebraska, or Connersville, Indiana, however, there is likely to be no philatelic library available beyond ones' own meager resources. In this case, a recent publication by the HJMR Company, P.O. Box 2368, Miami Beach, Florida 33140, can provide some assistance in learning what has been written about various postal history topics, as well as, offering a means of obtaining copies of some studies. Titled the Priced Guide to Philatelic Literature, this booklet contains 232 pages listing literature ranging from handbooks and catalogs to tear sheets from some leading philatelic journals. For example, Chase & Cabeen's classic study of territorial postmarks is available in sections with prices ranging from \$3.00 to \$5.50. The cost of the Guide is \$1.00, which is refundable with the first literature purchase of \$3.00 or more.

Needless-to-say, this source is severely limited in terms of its selection of available postal history research. Much of the great postal history is simply not on the market. A copy of Frickstad's, A Century of California Post Offices brought \$40.00 in the recent auction of the Clifford collection, and this work is far from the rarest of postal history literature piece.

The Philatelic Literature Review, a quarterly journal of the Philatelic Literature Assn., represents another possible approach for determining the "state of the art" on any postal history topic. This organization, which claims over 1000 members, is concerned with the buying, selling and exchanging of philatelic publications.

A thorough literature search is really the first basic step in conducting postal history research. Beyond saving hours of needless effort resulting from "rediscovering the wheel", a good search can introduce a student to new insights and sources of information.

RWH

Next Issue: RECORDS AND DOCUMENTS OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

### ONGOING RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Owners of covers bearing 19th century COLORADO postmarks are respectfully requested to contact William H. Bauer, 112 Jeanne Drive, Westwego, Louisiana 70094. Bill is attempting to catalog all known 19th century Colorado postmarks, and anyone who has seen Dr. Dike's New Mexico catalog can appreciate what a job this is. If you would like to help out, just drop a note to Bill. I am sure he will be willing to share the work. If you don't have time to get actively involved, but do have some Colorado covers, please make a tracing of the postmarks and send them to Bill along with killer type, diameter measurement in mm., and date of postmark (if indistinct in the tracing).

John H. Willard, 1025 Monroe Street, Denver, Colorado 80206 is also engaged in postal history research of Colorado. It is hoped, although not at this writing known, that the efforts of Mr. Willard and Mr. Bauer are complementary rather than duplicating. Future issues will certainly contain more on the Colorado studies.

William F. Rapp, whose San Juan County article appears in this issue, has graciously offered to answer questions on Railroad postal history. Bill has a good deal of source material in this area, and can be reached at 430 Ivy Avenue, Crete, Nebraska 68333.

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

This issue of La Posta represents our first substantive effort in the dissemination of postal history research and postal history research techniques. It is my sincere hope that those of you reading this issue will judge the effort worthwhile and helpful. The future of La Posta is largely in your control. Quality of research, directions of investigation, scope of projects and publications, and many other dimensions which will dictate the future of this bulletin are almost entirely a function of the interests and enthusiasm of its readers.

As mentioned on two previous occasions, I have given my personal guarantee of at least 60 pages of quality postal history research during 1969. Thanks to my friend Bill Rapp, whom I have never met in person, there is no longer a danger that you will be subjected to 60 pages of pure Helbeck this year. His interesting article was a most welcome vote of confidence.

One of the originally stated purposes of this study group - La Posta's parent organization - was to serve as a forum for postal history questions. If you are too "hung-up" on your everyday life to write an article or do a study, please take the time to drop me a line and ask your questions. I can't even guarantee you an answer, but at least your interests will be voiced in La Posta, and its entirely possible that someone just may be able to help.

The first piece in this issue, the Fort Stanton article, is the result of a question asked of this group of readers. Last December, I requested information about 3 types of Fort Stanton postmarks. Thanks to Dr. Dike and Dr. Walter Jacobus of Englewood, N.J., I was able to assemble the information presented in the aforementioned article. It is readily admitted that this was a fortunate example for Dr. Dike had already done heroic research in New Mexico territorial cancels, but I do not believe that this is an isolated case. Others questions on other subjects can be answered. It is only necessary to ask in order to learn which questions we can, and which we can not, answer.

Monthly Surprise: For modern-day 4th class and rural branch postmark collectors. If you would like a pleasant bonus with your returned cover, try sending addressed, stamped envelopes to: 1) Red Devil, Alaska 99656; and 2) North Pole, Alaska 99705. Just write a short polite note requesting an example of the postmark. I believe you will be more than satisfied with the returned covers.

In closing, please permit one last impassioned plea for comments, criticisms, questions, suggestions, and if you haven't yet contributed - money (\$5 to keep us going).  
rwh

CONTENTS OF THIS ISSUE

Fort Stanton, New Mexico: A Postal History .....	1
New Mexico Postal History: Part I - San Juan County 1881 - 1899 by Bill Rapp .....	5
Post Offices and Postmasters: 1856 - Utah and New Mexico territories .....	7
Membership Report .....	8
Map of Utah and New Mexico territories - 1855 .....	9
Postal History Research Techniques I .....	10