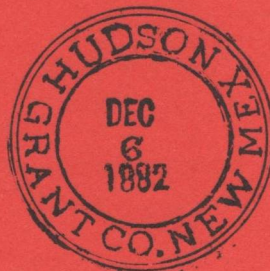
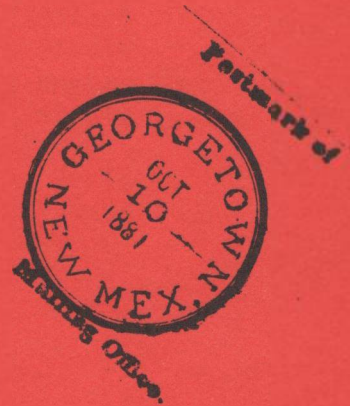




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NEW MEXICO POST OFFICES: PART I, GRANT COUNTY

By Richard W. Helbock and Ruth Dolezal

Grant County in southwestern New Mexico contains the rugged mountainous Gila Wilderness Area, our nation's first such designated wilderness. The county is dominated by the lightly populated Black Range which form the headwaters for the Gila River. Except for its southern panhandle, which is a level high plain, Grant County is a rough mountain country long discouraging settlement by man save those who came in search of its minerals.

Grant County was created January 30, 1868, and was the first county carved from the giant Dona Ana County after the division of Arizona and New Mexico. The name honored General U. S. Grant, and the initial seat of county government was Central City. In 1869, the county seat was moved to Pinos Altos, then the leading center of population. As originally constituted, Grant County included the present Grant and Hidalgo counties, most of Luna, and a small portion of Sierra County.

The economy of Grant County is based upon minerals. Copper was mined in the area before the Spanish colonized New Mexico, and while it was gold which set off the rush of settlement in the 1860's, copper has remained the dominant factor in Grant County's economy to the present day.

A glance at the post office map of Grant County quickly shows the clustered pattern of towns which characterizes a mining area, and in fact most of Grant's post offices have served mining camps and towns. There are scattered ranches and farms in the Mimbres and Gila river valleys. Separ and the present Hachita owe their existence to railroads. Faywood, Hudson Hot Springs, and Gila Hot Springs have and are associated with recreation and tourism. But the vast majority of Grant County communities came into being because of mining.

The following list contains the name of 61 post offices which have operated within the boundaries of present-day Grant County.

NEW MEXICO POST OFFICES GRANT COUNTY

Post Office	Established	Discontinued	Notes
Alhambra	16 Jun 1890	31 Mar 1902	Mail to Silver City
Allison	25 Aug 1893	27 Jun 1901	Mail to Faywood
Alumina	3 Apr 1890	30 Apr 1894	Mail to Pinos Altos
Ansonio	27 Apr 1890	1 Jun 1892	Mail to Hanover
Arenas Valley	1 Jan 1947	Operating	
Azure	7 Jan 1895	27 Apr 1895	Mail to Silver City
Bayard	17 May 1902	Operating	
Black Hawk	30 Jul 1884	6 Apr 1887	Mail to Fleming
Bryan	26 Sep 1912	31 Aug 1913	Mail to Cliff
Buckhorn	29 Aug 1913	Operating	

Post Office	Established	Discontinued	Notes
Camp Monarch	11 Jun 1907	15 May 1908	Mail to Lake Valley
Carlisle	12 Aug 1884	16 Nov 1896	N. ch. to Steeplerock
Central	8 Jan 1887	Operating	
Central City	20 Mar 1870	11 Jan 1871	N. ch. to Fort Bayard
Cliff	4 Aug 1894	Operating	
Dwyer	5 Feb 1895	30 Jun 1917	Mail to Swarts
East Camp	11 Oct 1940	31 Mar 1942	Mail to Duncan, Ariz.
Faywood	28 Jan 1901	Operating	
Fierro	16 Nov 1899	30 May 1969	Mail to Hanover
Fleming	20 Jun 1883	13 Aug 1887	Mail to Silver City
Fort Bayard	4 Oct 1867	2 Mar 1870	N. ch. to Central City
	11 Jan 1871	27 Aug 1965	Mail to Silver City
Fort Bayard Rural	1 Feb 1966	Operating	
Georgetown	21 May 1875	1 Dec 1903	Mail to Mimbres
Gila	5 Apr 1875	Operating	
Gila Hot Springs	1 Jun 1969	Operating	
Gila Hotsprings	9 Jul 1966	1 Jun 1969	N. ch. to Gila Hot Sprs
Goldgulch	28 Oct 1903		Never in operation
Gold Hill	26 Jan 1886	15 Jun 1906	
Hachita	27 Mar 1882	Operating	
Hanover	14 Mar 1892	Operating	
Hansburg	12 Nov 1892	2 Jun 1894	Mail to Allison
Hudson	19 May 1881	28 Jan 1901	N. ch. to Faywood
Hudson Hot Sprs.	28 Jan 1879	1 Feb 1881	
Hurley	15 Nov 1910	Operating	
Ivanhoe	19 Apr 1894	2 Jun 1897	Mail to Hanover
Jackson	22 Jul 1912	15 May 1916	Mail to Buckhorn
Leopold	14 Nov 1904	15 Mar 1914	Mail to Tyrone
Malone	30 Oct 1884	18 Aug 1888	Mail to Gold Hill
Mangus	24 Jul 1896	10 Jan 1898	Mail to Cliff
Mimbres	10 Jun 1886	Operating	
Mimbres Hot Sprs.	24 Jun 1878	28 Jan 1879	N. ch. to Hudson H. S.
Mule Creek	6 Jan 1916	Operating	
Newton	26 Feb 1883	23 Oct 1883	Mail to Silver City
Odon	12 Oct 1912	15 Aug 1917	Mail to Sherman
Parks	27 Apr 1882	9 Jul 1883	Mail to Lordsburg
Paschal	23 Jan 1882	13 Nov 1883	Mail to Silver City
Pinos Altos	4 Oct 1867	19 Jun 1964	To Silver City Rural
Redrock	14 Feb 1896	12 Jan 1968	To Lordsburg Rual
Ricolite	7 Jun 1890	8 Aug 1891	Mail to Lordsburg
Ruia	5 Feb 1917	31 Jan 1919	Mail to Gage
San Lorenzo	26 Jan 1886	3 May 1888	
	26 Feb 1908	22 Nov 1963	To Santa Rita Rural
Santa Rita	8 Dec 1881	9 Mar 1973	Mail to Hanover
Separ	10 Jan 1882	30 Sep 1960	To Lordsburg Rural
Separ Rural Sta.	1 Oct 1960	31 Jan 1966	
Sherman	11 Jun 1894	29 Dec 1967	Mail to San Lorenzo
Silver City	11 Aug 1871	Operating	
Steeplerock	16 Nov 1896	30 Dec 1922	Mail to Duncan, Ariz.

Post Office	Established	Discontinued	Notes
Swarts	27 Sep 1887	31 May 1919	Mail to Sherman
Teel	3 Oct 1901	30 Jan 1912	Mail to San Lorenzo
Turnerville	1 Aug 1945	Operating	
Tyrone	15 Oct 1906	Operating	
Upper Mimbres	12 Nov 1877	25 Oct 1882	Mail to Santa Rita
Vanadium	13 May 1912	Operating	
White Signal	29 Oct 1909	15 Jun 1933	Mail to Tyrone
Whitewater	17 Oct 1883	30 Jun 1955	Mail to Hurley.



VIEW OF THE COPPER MINE

Santa Rita del Cobre - Grant County

From Lt. Emory's Report - 1847

ARIZONA TERRITORIAL POSTMARKS

Town	type	Val.		Earliest		Latest				
No.	No.	Postmark	Code	Date	Owner	Date	Owner	Killer	Notes	
PINETOP										
1.	5	C1bN1BBR27 $\frac{1}{2}$		26 Sept 94	?	15 Oct 97	JOT			
2.	5	C1bN1B27 $\frac{1}{2}$		16 Jan 99	SHD	22 Jan 03	HHL			
3.	4	A		16 Dec 07	NLP	10 Nov 08	HHL			
PINTO										
1.	5	C		3 Sept 11	?					
PIONEER										
1.	6	C21e2S1RRB30		19 Mar 83p	?	26 Sept ?	?			1
2.	5	C21bN1B32		6 Aug 84	HHL					
PIRTLEVILLE										
1.	6	C		29 May 11	HHL					
PLACERITA										
1.	6	C1bN1B27		1 June 01	?					2
PLANET										
1.	5	C1bN1B28		20 Oct 02	HHL					
POLACCA										
1.	6	C		29 Mar 08	HHL	6 Aug 09	HHL			
POLAND										
1.	4	C1bN1B28		12 June 02	HHL					
2.	4	B		15 Feb ?	NLP	16 June 06	HHL			
3.	4	C		13 Oct 08	HHL	23 Dec 09	JOT			
POLARIS										
1.	5	C		23 Sept 10	HHL	21 Mar 11	JOT			3
POOL										
1.	5	C		30 Nov 07	NLP					
PORTAL										
1.	4	C		19 July 09	?	30 May 11	SHD			
PRATT										
1.	6	C1bN1BBR27		28 May 92	*					
PRESCOTT										
1.	8	C1aA1BBR30		15 Aug ?	NLP	25 Sept ?	?			4
2.	8	C1gA1BBR26		7 May ?	NLP	28 May 66	HHL			
3.	7	C21eN1R32		18 June 66	HHL	30 Sept 67	?			
4.	8	SL		24 May ?	?	14 July 67	NLP			
5.	8	C1bA1BBR24		11 Nov ?	NLP					
6.	7	C1bA1BBR26 $\frac{1}{2}$		22 Jan ?	DLJ	21 Aug ?	JOT			5
7.	5	C1bA1BBR23		1 June ?	SHD	2 Dec ?	SHD			
8.	6	C1bA1BBR26		30 May ?	NLP	30 Dec 74	HHL			
9.	4	C1bA1BBR26		10 Jan 74	?	23 Apr 80	HRF			
10.	6	C1bN1B23		5 July 81	?			Star		
11.	6	EX		3 Mar ?	HHL	8 Apr ?	HHL			6

Notes:

1. Sometimes with "P. M. " instead of year date.
2. Earliest listed is on piece.
3. Latest listed is on piece.
4. Probable usage is 1865.
5. Known used in 1869.
6. Arizona & New Mexico Express Co.

ARIZONA TERRITORIAL POSTMARKS



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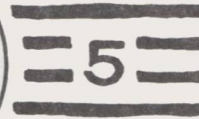
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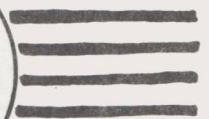
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Prescott, A. T.
JUNE 6

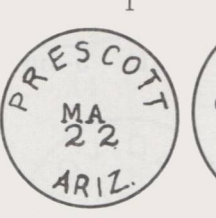
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ARIZONA TERRITORIAL POSTMARKS

Town	type	Val.	Earliest		Latest		Owner		Killer	Notes
No.	No.	Postmark Code	Date	Owner	Date	Owner				
PRESCOTT (Cont'd.)										
12.	6	EX	? Apr ?	HHL	26 Sept 78	HHL				1
13.	5	C1bN1BBR26 $\frac{1}{2}$	21 ? 80	HHL	31 Aug 81	?				
14.	5	C1bN1B26	10 Feb 82	NLP	10 July 83	SHD				
15.	3	C1bN1B26	5 Oct 83	?	1 Dec 85	JOT				
16.	5	C1bN1B26	27 Apr 86	JOT	15 Nov 87	SHD				
17.	3	C1bN1B26 $\frac{1}{2}$	10 Dec 87	HHL	29 May (91?)	WHS				
18.	4	C1bT1B26 $\frac{1}{2}$	31 May 90	SHD	9 Aug 94	HHL				2
19.	3	C1bT1B27	22 July 91	SHD	25 June 94	?				
20.	4	C1bT1B27	9 Dec 95	SHD	3 Dec 98	SHD				2
21.	4	C1bT1B27	13 May 97	SHD	16 Aug 97	JOT		Target oval		
22.	4	C1bT8B25	14 June 98	?	13 Sept 98	?		Number grid		
23.	4-3	C1bT8B25	17 June 99	?	3 July 00	?		Number grid		
24.	2	C1bT6B25	12 Nov 00	SHD	5 June 08	?		Number grid		2, 3
25.	3	REG	6 June 04	HHL	23 Jan 05	NLP				
26.	3	C1bT6B21 $\frac{1}{2}$? Oct ?	HHL				Waving lines		
27.	3	REG	20 Aug 09 ^v	NLP						
28.	2	C1bT9B23	19 July 02	?	30 Nov 04	?		Vertical lines		4
29.	2	C1bT9B23	21 Feb 03	?	21 Mar 03	SHD		Vertical lines		
30.	2	C1bT9B23	31 Jan 05	NLP	14 Sept 06	?		Vertical lines		
31.	2	C1bT9B23	20 Aug 07	SHD	7 Dec 07	NLP		Vertical lines		
32.	2	C1bT7B27	18 May 10	NLP				Number grid		
33.	1	C1bT6B22	10 Dec 07	SHD	7 May 11	SHD		Waving flag		5
34.	1	C1bT6B22	4 Jan 08	JOT	22 Dec 11	SHD		Waving flag		6
35.	2	C1bT6B22	30 Jan 12	?				Waving flag		
PROVIDENCE										
1.	4	C1bN1B27	22 Jan 00	HHL	3 May 01	HHL				
2.	4	B	11 May 03	JOT	21 Nov 03	HHL		5-bars		
PUNTENNEY										
1.	5	A	19 Nov 08	HHL						
2.	5	C	17 Feb 09	HHL						
PURDY										
1.	8	OV1b1S1B28x40	28 Jul 83	SHD	8 Dec 83	HHL				
QUARTZKING										
1.	6	C	26 June 09	SHD						
QUARTZSITE										
1.	5	C1bN1B27	9 Aug 01	HHL						
2.	5	B	4 Mar 07	SHD						
3.	5	C	21 June 08	JOT						
QUIJOTOA										
1.	5	C1bN1BBR27	8 Aug (85?)	HHL	4 Nov 86	JOT				

Notes:

1. Wells Fargo & Co.
2. Earliest listed is on piece.
3. Also with date type T8.
4. Used in 1902 and 1904 only.
5. Used in 1907, 1909, and 1911 only. Crossbar on "A" of "ARIZ" gone in 1909 and later.
6. Used in 1908, 1910, and late 1911 only.

ARIZONA TERRITORIAL POSTMARKS



24



REGISTERED
JUN 6 1904
PRESCOTT, ARIZONA.

25



26



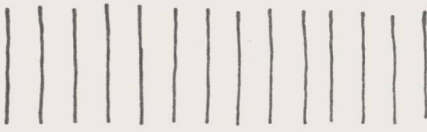
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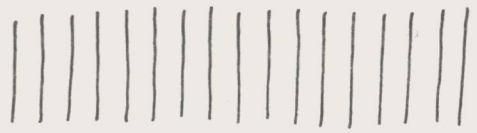
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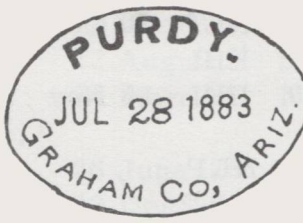
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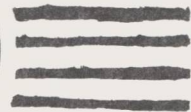
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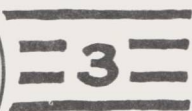
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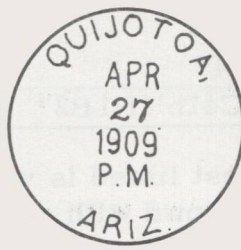
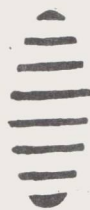
2



3



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4

ARIZONA TERRITORIAL POSTMARKS

Town	type	Val.		Earliest		Latest				
No.	No.	Postmark	Code	Date	Owner	Date	Owner	Killer	Notes	
QUIJOTOA (Cont'd.)										
2.	6	C1bN1B27		15 July 90	NLP					
3.	5	C1bN1B27½		20 May 02	SHD	24 Nov 05	SHD			
4.	5	C		27 Apr 09	SHD					
RAY										
1.	4	C		30 May 07	NLP	28 Dec 08	JOT			
2.	3	C1bT1B29½		16 Nov 10	?	27 July 11	?	Grid		
REDINGTON										
1.	6	M		19 Jan ?	NLP	6 Aug 85	?			
2.	6	C1bM1B26½		20 Feb 94	SHD					
3.	6	C1bN1BBR27½		2 Nov 97	JOT	10 Apr 05	?			
RED ROCK (Pinal Co.)										
1.	6	C1bN1BBR28		29 Apr 89	HHL	11 Mar 94	SHD			
REDROCK (Pinal Co.)										
1.	6	C1bN1B27½		3 Sept 99	HHL					
2.	4	C1bN1B28		8 Jan 05	HHL	1 July 05	HHL	Grid		
3.	4	C		8 Mar 09	NLP	29 Dec 09	HHL			
REEF										
1.	6	C1bN1B28		8 Apr 02	HHL	13 Dec 04	NLP			
RENO										
1.	7	C1bN1BBR27½		22 May 94	NLP					
RHOADES										
1.	5	C1bN1B28		12 Sept 07	?					
RICE										
1.	5	C		18 July 10	HHL	18 Nov ?	NLP			
RIVERSIDE										
1.	6	C1bN1B27½		? Nov ?	HHL				1	
2.	6	C1bN1B28		29 Nov 98	HHL					
ROOSEVELT										
1.	3	B		24 Mar 05	NLP	20 Oct 06	HHL			
2.	4	C1bT1B30½		14 Mar 07	HHL					
3.	3	C		13 Mar 09	HHL	15 Nov 11	?			
ROSEMONT										
1.	6	C1bN1B27½		1 Aug 98	NLP					
2.	5	A		19 Nov 06	NLP					
3.	5	C1eT1B31		8 Feb 10	NLP				2	
RUCKER										
1.	5	C1bN1B27		19 Oct 98	HHL					
RUTHERFORD										
1.	5	C		30 July 09	HHL	20 Jan 11	?			
RYE										
1.	5	A		9 Apr 06	HHL					
SACATON										
1.	6	M		8 Oct 83	SHD					
2.	6	C41b'1N1B27		3 Nov 83	*	29 Jan 87	NLP	Star in circle	3	

Notes:

1. Earliest listed is with the 2-cent '83.
2. Also known with manuscript date.
3. Earliest listed has 1909 in postmark, but backstamp reads 1910.

ARIZONA TERRITORIAL POSTMARKS

Town type	Val. No.	Postmark Code	Earliest Date	Owner	Latest Date	Owner	Killer	Notes
SACATON (Cont'd.)								
3.	5	C1bN1BBR28	27 Apr 94r	SHD				
4.	5	C1bN1B28	27 Sept 98	?				
5.	4	C1bN1B28 $\frac{1}{2}$	27 Dec 04	NLP				Grid
SAFFORD								
1.	7	M	30 Oct 79	JOT				
2.	5	C41eN1B28	7 June 80	?				
3.	5	C1eS1B29 $\frac{1}{2}$	22 Sept 81	?	19 Dec 81	HHL	Target	
4.	5	C21kN1RRB27 $\frac{1}{2}$	18 Aug 84p	HHL				
5.	5	C1b1N1B25	2 Apr 88	SHD				Oval grid
6.	4	C1bN1BBR28	25 Aug 90	?	30 Oct 93	NLP		
7.	4	C1bT1B28	21 Nov 94	JOT				
8.	3	C1bT1B27 $\frac{1}{2}$	29 Aug 96	?	23 Nov 04	HHL		
9.	2	C1bT1B27 $\frac{1}{2}$	14 Sept 00	?	14 Dec 07	?		
10.	3	REG	4 Nov 07v	HHL	13 Dec 07m	HHL		
11.	3	C1bT1B29	5 Sept 08	?	17 Jan 10	?	Grid	
12.	3	C1bT1B29	1 Jan 09	HHL			Grid	
SAINT DAVID								
1.	6	C1eN1RRB26 $\frac{1}{2}$	12 Jan 86	NLP	16 Jan 90	SHD		
2.	5	C1eS1RRB30 $\frac{1}{2}$	18 Sept 93	HHL	22 Nov 94p	?		
3.	4	C1bN1B28	? June 00	HHL				
SAINT JOHNS								
1.	5	C31e10N1B30	28 Dec 83	JOT	25 Aug 85	HHL	Star in circle	
2.	4	C1bN1BBR26 $\frac{1}{2}$	31 July 86	SHD	16 June 88	?		
3.	4	OV22eS1BRB26x41	10 Jan 90m	?				
4.	4	OV2eS1RRB23x40	4 Jan 92p	?				1
5.	4	C1bT1B28	24 Mar 92	?				
6.	4	C1bS1B31	12 Mar 94p	NLP				
7.	4	C1bT1B28	9 Nov 94	NLP				
8.	3	C1bN1B28 $\frac{1}{2}$	2 May 98	JOT	15 Aug 01	?		
9.	3	C1bT1B29	22 Aug 02	SHD			Grid	
10.	2	C1bT1B29 $\frac{1}{2}$	24 Mar 07	NLP	11 Apr 11	?	Grid	2
SAINT JOSEPH (Yavapai Co.)								
1.	5	C41eN1B31 $\frac{1}{2}$	26 June 78m	SHD	8 Nov 87	?		3
2.	6	C21eN1RRB29	22 Dec 91	JOT	7 June 95	?	Star in circle	
3.	6	C1bN1B28	21 Feb 99	HHL				
4.	4	C?	7 Dec 10	?				3
SAINT MICHAELS								
1.	4	C1bN1B28	1 Sept 03	?	21 June 05	HHL		
SALOME								
1.	5	C	24 Oct 06	NLP				
2.	5	C	10 Feb 08	NLP	27 Aug 09	SHD		
SAN BERNARDINO								
1.	5	C	16 June 11	?				

Notes:

1. Earliest listed is cut-to-shape.
2. Latest listed is on piece.
3. Earliest listed is on piece.

ARIZONA TERRITORIAL POSTMARKS



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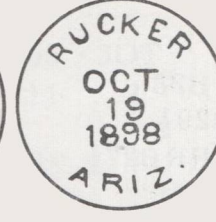
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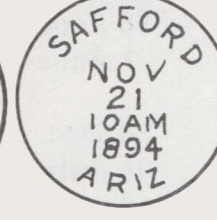
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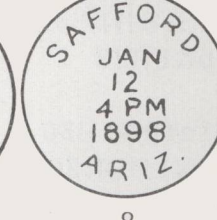
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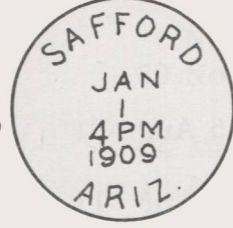
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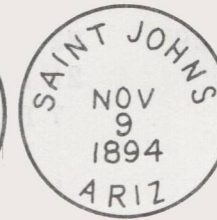
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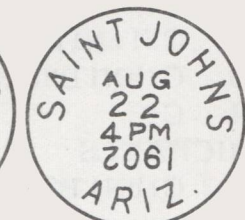
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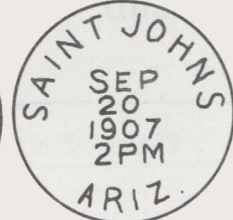
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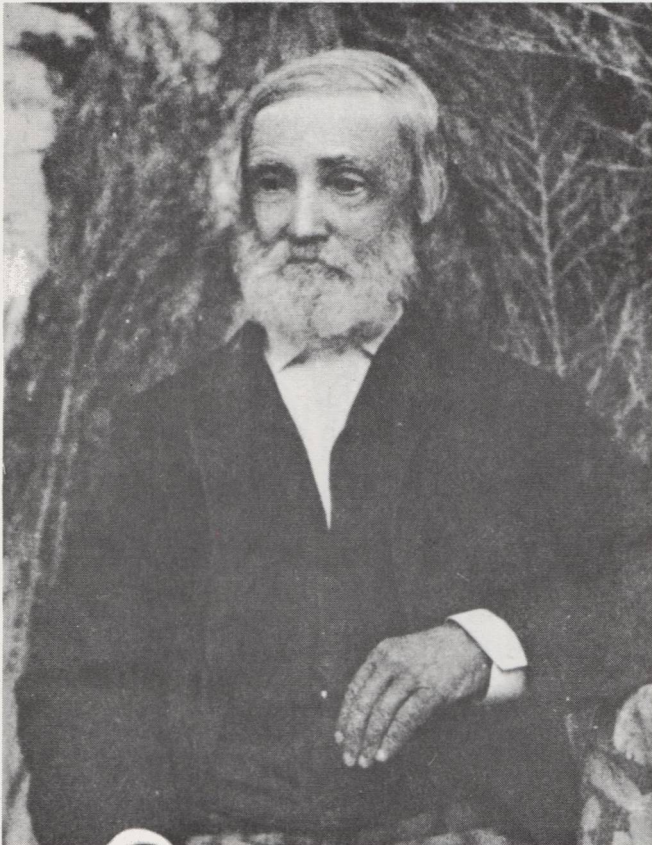


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TERRITORIAL POSTMASTERS OF NEW MEXICO - SAM BEAN OF MESILLA

by Thomas K. Todsen



In 1820, the census-taker in Mason County, Kentucky, never did find Francis and Anna Bean and their two sons, Joshua and Samuel G. It would be as good a guess as any to say that the Beans purposefully made themselves scarce because they were suspicious of anyone connected with the government and, anyway, the information the census-taker wanted was their own personal business. A third son, Roy, who achieved "fame" as "The Law West of the Pecos", was born later.

Joshua, the oldest by several years, left home early and was in California about the time of the American occupation. He became mayor of San Diego and was a Major General in the California State Militia when he was ambushed by a jealous rival in November 1852.

Samuel G., born in 1817 or 1819, went to Independence, Missouri, in 1845 and there contracted to drive a mule team along the Santa Fe Trail (in all his later years he was known for his booming voice, developed in controlling his teams). He volunteered to fight in the Mexican War and was discharged in New Orleans in the summer of 1847. Though he returned home for a short time, such were his tales of the vast Southwest, of the opportunities waiting and the dark-eyed señoritas to be courted, that he was eagerly joined by his brother Roy when he became restless again for the attractions of New Mexico. The two brothers arrived in Independence in March 1848 and purchased a wagon and all the goods their meager resources would allow. Joining a wagon train, they went to Santa Fe but, deciding there was more money further on, they continued south along the Camino Real to Chihuahua. There they were greeted with open arms and soon "Los Frijoles" were established traders in all manner of goods, but particularly in whiskey.

Sam began courting Petra Kirker, whose father organized a raid on Cochise's village and sold the scalps obtained to the Mexican government (he later left one jump ahead of the Federales since there were Mexican as well as Indian scalps in

the bunch). Then Roy, as he was wont to do, got into trouble by killing a drunken bully who threatened him. As a result, with a mob at their heels and the Bean wagon in the van, the American traders fled Chihuahua for their lives. Most of them, including Roy, went to California, where Roy went to work for his brother, Joshua. Sam, however, journeyed north to Paso del Norte (now Ciudad Juarez) where he married Petra in March 1849, when she was fifteen.

The following years up to the Civil War were Sam's most prosperous. He and his bride moved to the new town of Mesilla where Sam set up a combination store, saloon, boarding house, and gambling hall that netted him up to two hundred dollars on a good day (Sam's own statement). He also operated a freighting and hauling business. His appointed predecessor having absconded with collected taxes, Sam became the first elected sheriff of Dona Ana County on 1 September 1854, at a time when that county extended from the Texas line to the Colorado River and was larger than any state east of the Mississippi River. He was elected to a second term during which he was appointed postmaster (holding this post from 31 December 1858 to 31 December 1859, Mesilla's second postmaster).

At about this time, with the unrest between the North and the South, there were several abortive attempts to get the Territory of Arizona authorized. Mesilla and Tucson were mostly of the Southern persuasion. To add to the Southern strength in the U. S. Congress, James Lucas, the New Mexico Territorial delegate from Mesilla, proposed in 1857 that such a territory be set up to be that part of the Territory of New Mexico south of 33°40' N. This proposal was voted down then as it was in 1859 when Lucas re-introduced the bill. However, in anticipation of eventual approval, a Constitutional Convention was held in Tucson in March and April 1860. The approved constitution shows Samuel G. Bean as a signatory on 5 April 1860 and also designates him to be Territorial Marshal to "have jurisdiction in all Counties and Districts in the Territory; serve all process that may be placed in his hands emanating from the Supreme Court; receive the same fees now allowed U. S. Marshals for services in New Mexico."

The 1860 U. S. Census of Mesilla shows 40-year-old Kentucky-born Samuel G. Bean as a hotel-keeper with real estate worth \$6000 and personal estate of \$1000. Listed also are his wife, Petra, age 26, and his daughters, Cecilia, 10, Virginia, 6, and Margaret, 4, all born in New Mexico.

About this time that nemesis of the Bean family, brother Roy, showed up again, having been run out of California following a "minor" shooting scrape in which Roy killed a man. Sam set Roy up in a saloon, billiard parlor, and general store on Main Street in the new gold mining town of Pinos Altos (Arizona says the ad in The Mesilla Miner!). However, the town went downhill shortly as the mines dwindled and the Apaches made life untenable, so Roy returned to Mesilla to work in Sam's place.

That was the situation when the War Between the States erupted. Sam's sympathies lay with the Confederate cause but, for the sake of his business, he tried to maintain as neutral a position as he could. This did him no good, though. Roy's troubling ways came back to haunt Sam twice over. First, Roy openly espoused the South and, when Baylor took over Southern New Mexico, Roy joined up and acted as a scout, some stories say. In the second place, one time when Sam had to go to Santa Fe on business he left Roy in charge. One of the things

Roy had to do was to put the professional gamblers' stake money in the safe each night and pass it out again in the morning. When Sam returned from Santa Fe he found a group of outraged gamblers and no Roy. Opening the safe revealed that Roy had done it again, since all the money was gone. The stories don't say whether Sam ever got the "loan" back, but it's doubtful.

With his besmirched reputation and tarnished political image as a result of Roy's actions, Sam felt it the better part of valor to pack up his family and move to San Antonio with the defeated retreating Confederate troops. There he stayed until after Appomattox.

On his return to Mesilla, he found that his property had been confiscated and sold, not only his business but his home as well. The latter was locked up, unused, so his wife, Petra, asked permission to go in and reminisce over the place where she had spent all her adult life. She then refused to be budged and took over the house completely. In accord with the chivalrous code toward women which characterized the frontier at that time, the Army officer who had purchased the house acquiesced and allowed Sam to buy it back.

Sam never did get over being called an old rebel though it is told that many a youngster had his britches warmed for saying it aloud where Sam could hear. In an attempt to recoup, Sam moved to Silver City, where the mines gave some measure of prosperity, but, failing to develop anything there, he moved to Las Cruces. There he returned to his old business of being a saloonkeeper. Though the building was burned at one time by a drunken soldier, Sam persisted.

During his later years, he became something of a town philosopher, his booming muleskinner voice being heard all along Main Street in discussion and argument on religion and politics, on conduct and education. Having no formal education, he was much in favor of everyone getting as much education as possible and was one of the strongest backers of the New Mexico College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts. He wrote much poetry, mostly unpublished, though he was knocked out on the street by Pat Garrett for a derogatory published one (Sam allowed he probably deserved it). Many of his articles were published in local newspapers, his last one which he himself took to the Las Cruces Citizen the morning of the day he died, appearing just above his obituary under his byline of "Oldtimer". In it he praised the beginning of Elephant Butte Dam, advising everyone to get their money out of its hiding place to buy valley lands at two to three dollars an acre since it would surely go to twenty and maybe even fifty (this same land now sells for up to \$5000 per acre).

Samuel G. Bean died the afternoon of 29 October 1903 at 4PM, most likely of a stroke, while he was sitting and talking in Sam, Jr's saloon. His wife, his three daughters, and his son survived him. The best of the Beans, he never achieved the notoriety of his brother, Roy, but he had more influence for good than both of his brothers together. He was a character in the best sense of that word.

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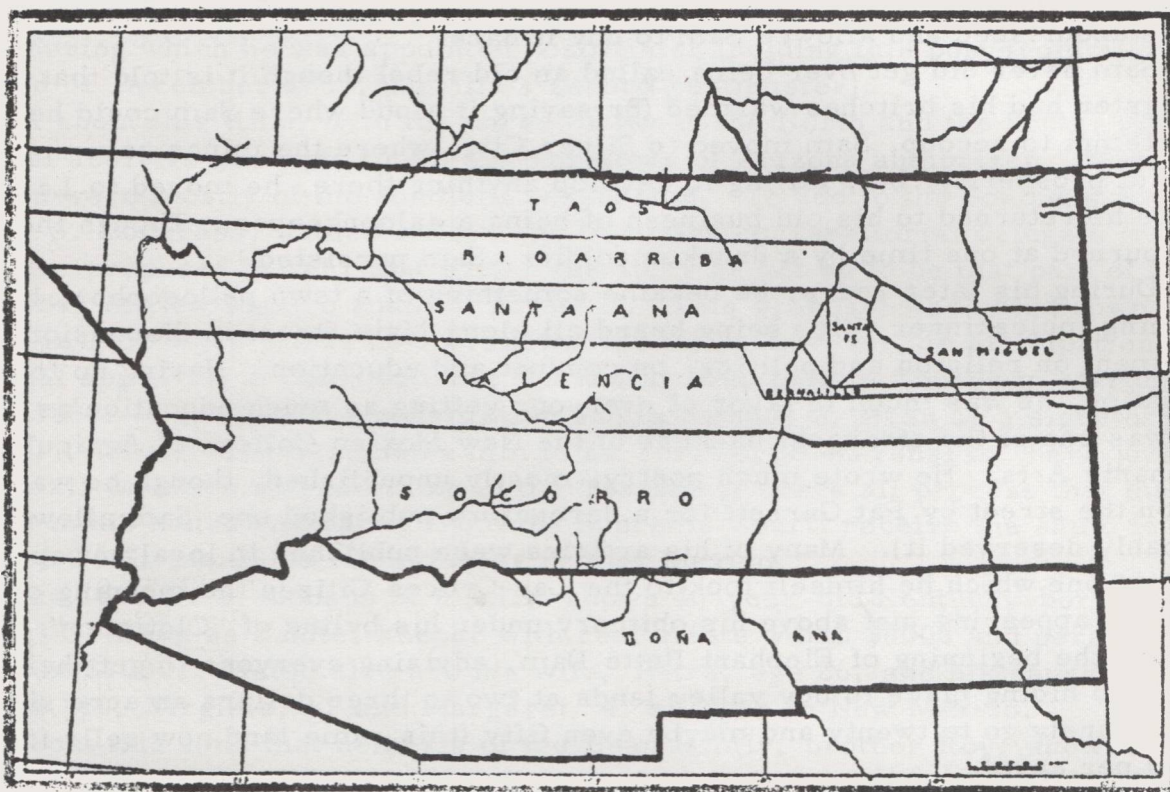
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New Mexico Territory in 1855
Showing County Boundaries

POST OFFICES OF THE ALASKA GOLD RUSH, II

By Richard W. Helbock

Circle City and the Birch Creek Strike, 1893. Published reports of a fabulous creek in Russian America with gold so plentiful it could be scooped out with a spoon created a flurry of excitement along the Atlantic Coast in 1864, but the story was soon forgotten amidst the news of the Civil War. Well, forgotten perhaps, but not lost. In 1893 three Boston men set out for the upper Yukon to locate the fabulous creek, which they knew as Preacher's Creek.

During May of 1893, two hardened prospectors, Cherosky and Pitka by name, successfully talked Jack McQuesten into grubstaking them for an attempt to placer mine a stream they called Too-whun-na. McQuesten, who was still trading from his post at Forty Mile, knew little about Too-whun-na, or as it was later known Birch Creek, but providing grubstakes nearly always contained some degree of speculation and McQuesten was a businessman. The prospectors set out for Too-whun-na at about the same time the trio of Bostonians began their long journey to Alaska. Cherosky and Pitka found gold on the Mastodon, a tributary of Birch Creek, and, after staking their claims, the pair headed for the nearest American recording office to file. The nearest office was located in the village of Tanana, nearly 400 miles down the Yukon.

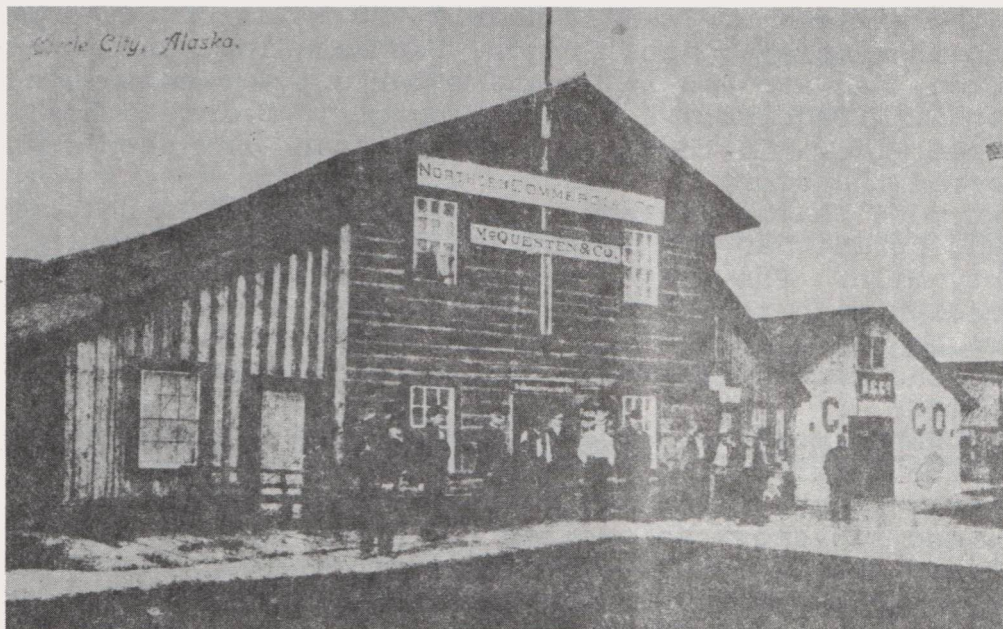
The Bostonians, Jack Gregor, Pat Kennaley, and Jonathan Pemberton, had arrived in Tanana after a transcontinental rail trip to San Francisco, a steamer voyage to Saint Michael, and a riverboat ride. To their dismay they found few people who even remembered the story of Preacher's Creek, and no one who considered it more than a fantasy. Tanana was not a large community in 1893, but it was the largest settlement on the Yukon outside of Forty Mile. The Alaska Commercial Company maintained a post for trading with the Indians, and in 1891 the St. James Episcopal Mission had located in Tanana. While the U. S. Government operated a land recording office, a post office was not established until 1898.

A chance meeting between Cherosky and Jonathan Pemberton in a waterfront saloon in Tanana gave the Bostonians new faith in Preacher's Creek. Cherosky was celebrating after filing his claim, and his story so excited Pemberton and his partners that they hired the two prospectors to guide them to Birch Creek. The party left Tanana two days later aboard the riverboat Arctic, and, after a rigorous summer of prospecting on Birch Creek, the Bostonians found enough gold to justify filing their own claims. They travelled back to Tanana, filed, and returned up the Yukon by late September. When they arrived at the point along the river nearest the trail to Birch Creek, they were surprised to find Jack McQuesten and over one hundred miners from the Forty

Mile area who had gathered to try their luck in the new field. Word of new gold discoveries spread quickly.

McQuesten, with wisdom based on long experience, argued that the group should remain along the banks of the Yukon and "dig in" to spend the approaching winter. Most of the men agreed and a rough camp was soon under construction, but a few ignored McQuesten's warnings and set off overland for Birch Creek. Through the Alaskan autumn of 1893 a community of crude log cabins with sod roofs took form along the bank of the Yukon River. The name Circle City was adopted by these early residents in the belief that their camp lie just above the Arctic Circle.

With the coming of spring, most of the miners set out over the eight mile trail for the back country of Birch Creek to pan for gold and stake their claims. The Circle City camp remained and prospered. Word of the strike brought miners from Tanana and Saint Michael. Soon men were headed for Circle City from the Pacific Northwest and California. The next three years were years of rapid growth for Circle City. McQuesten's trading post was joined by others. Saloons, hotels, and churches were built. In a short time Circle City became the "Queen City of the Yukon," it was the American metropolis of the north with a permanent population of about 500, and a transient population of several thousand.



McQuesten's Trading Post in Circle City about 1908.

Leroy Napoleon McQuestion (sic) was appointed the first Circle postmaster on March 19, 1896. McQuesten's appointment

preceded by over a year the awarding of the first contract to carry mail to and from Circle City. On June 30, 1897, Portus B. Weare was awarded Contract No. 78094 to deliver mail between San Francisco and Circle via Seattle. The contract, which covered 4,850 miles, called for five trips per annum.

This appointing of a postmaster and awarding of contracts certainly must have seemed to Post Office Department officials in Washington, D. C., the reasonable and proper way of establishing mail service to the new area of settlement. Unfortunately, these officials were almost totally ignorant of Alaskan environmental conditions, and a system that worked reasonably well in the United States produced chaos along the Yukon. In August of 1897, Captain P. H. Ray of the Eighth Infantry was ordered to Alaska to investigate reports of starvation among the miners of the Yukon. Captain Ray found little starvation, but his description of the conditions of mail service is of interest:

Fort Yukon, Alaska
December 18, 1897

Sir: I have the honor to invite the attention of the Department to the deplorable condition of the mail service in the Territory. The regular mail contractor has brought but one mail as far as Circle City this year, and has sent none out. There is no provision whatever for forwarding the mails west of Circle City during the winter.

The Postmaster for Circle City is somewhere in the States; his assistant has been put out of office for drunkenness; and the office is now in charge of the agent of the American Commercial Company. The Post Office Department has failed to provide the office with any postage stamps. The mail that comes in by steamer via St. Michael is without any proper supervision. There are no route agents, and the officers of the company pay little, or no attention, to it. Over 100 sacks of mail were put ashore here when I landed- all Circle City and Dawson mail. I induced the captain of the steamer Weare to take part of it. The captain of the steamer Bella refused to take any. After my return from Circle City, I found lying in the snow, a second class mail sack, which upon opening I found several hundred letter addressed to Dawson, Northwest Territory. I shall try to get it sent forward the first thing in the spring. I recommend that the Post Office Department place route agents on all steamers, both ocean and river, and that a route be made to include Fort Yukon, Rampart City, and Tanana Station in the winter, either via Dyea or in our own territory (Cook Inlet), should that route be found practical.

The present mail contractor is frozen in somewhere about the mouth of the Tanana River, and it is to be

regretted that contracts are awarded to men who do not understand the conditions existing up here. They seem financially and mentally incapable of fulfilling their obligation.

Very respectfully,

s/P. H. Ray
Captain, Eighth Infantry
Adjutant General United States Army
Washington, D. C.

Whether, or not, it was Captain Ray's indignant report which brought about action, on June 28, 1898, Charles Smith was appointed postmaster at Circle, and on June 30, 1898, P. C. Richardson was awarded Contract Np. 78097 to carry mail between Seattle and Circle. Richardson's contract called for two trips a month during June, July, and August, 1898.

Interestingly, only one example of a 19th century Circle postmark is known. This postmark is a single circle measuring 28 mm. in diameter dated March 28, 1899. It appears on a stampless cover bearing the manuscript notation, "No Stamps at Circle City, Alaska." The cover is reported by Cavagnol, and was sold at auction by Robert Lewenthal in April 1971. In 1955 this cover sold for \$53, and in 1971 it brought a successful bid of \$110.

Circle City dominated the Yukon in 1896. In that same year discoveries were made a few hundred miles to the east on another Yukon tributary which radically changed the nature of life along the great river. Circle managed to cling to its metropolitan role for a few years after the great Klondike strike, but by late 1899 there were only 55 residents left in town. The glory days were over.

TO BE CONTINUED:

EDITOR'S COMMENTS - A few brief comments only, at this time. First, Bill Helbock is finally in Islamabad, Pakistan, after bureaucratic foul-ups you wouldn't believe. When we receive a firm address we will publish it here. Secondly, Bill and I and La Posta all thank you for your support as evidenced by the number of sustaining subscribers. And last but not least, I'm not a Bill Helbock with his diversity of philatelic interests - so - , unless you are willing to settle for articles mostly on New Mexico and Arizona for the next year, PLEASE send in that material you've been saving for a rainy day. The thunderheads are building on the horizon! ! !
THOMAS K. TODSEN, co-EDITOR, 2000 Rose Lane, Las Cruces, NM 88001

LATE BULLETIN: Bill's address is
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