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LA POSTA

Whole Number
42

DEC.

1976

POSTAL HISTORY JOURNAL - MOUNTAIN & DESERT WEST

Vol. 7, No. 6

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LA POSTA is the research journal of the Mountain & Desert West Postal History Research Society. It is published on an irregular basis with six issues per volume. The subscription rate is \$5 per volume, and single copies are available at \$1.50 each. For additional information, or to place a subscription, write: Richard W. Helbock, Editor, 1635 Mariposa Drive, Las Cruces, New Mexico 88001.

POST OFFICES OF THE MOJAVE DESERT
PART I: WESTERN SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

By Frank B. Norris

This is the first of a four-part series on the postal history of California's Mojave Desert. Located in the east-central portion of the Golden State, the Mojave is contained within four different counties -- San Bernardino, Los Angeles, Kern and Inyo. Bounded by large mountain ranges on the west and by other deserts on the north and south, the Mojave covers about one-fifth of the state (see map inset), but shelters less than five per cent of California's inhabitants. I've decided to describe this area in terms of climate rather than political boundaries because in its present form the desert describes a coherent historical region. Thus, the progression of post offices within the Mojave displays a historical continuity which appears to differ strongly from adjacent areas.

The Mojave is a fascinating land, difficult to love but worth the effort. It is composed primarily of sharp, barren mountains surrounded by dry lake beds, and geology-text perfect alluvial fans sprinkled with creosote bushes and an occasional Joshua tree. As those of you who have been there may well testify, the Mojave is a land of outrageous summer heat, but gripping winter temperatures often occur as well. Being a desert, the area is largely devoid of cultural intrusions, but the few towns sprawl widely as a rule, and "civilization" in the form of dirt-bike and dune-buggy scars is unfortunately spreading, cancerlike, from the desert's southwestern fringes to even remote areas.

The Mojave Desert is of special interest to the postal historian. Because the area lacks a "natural" (agricultural or even ranching) economic base, its settlement history has often been one of single-purposed communities living precarious lives based upon changing economic fortunes and technological levels. In response, mining, several railroads and transcontinental highways, the military, irrigated agriculture, and amenities-oriented housing have all had their impact here, but only Needles, Victorville, and Barstow -- the latter perhaps best described as "a gas station's stop between L.A. and Las Vegas" -- can truly claim multi-faceted, balanced economies.

Historically, the Mojave has been viewed until quite recent times as a forgotten, villified portion of an otherwise bounteous state. In short, un-Californian. However as the Los Angeles area has grown into its present megalopolitan form, the role of the desert has become more crucial. It has become a necessary recreational and esthetic asset worthy of preservation.

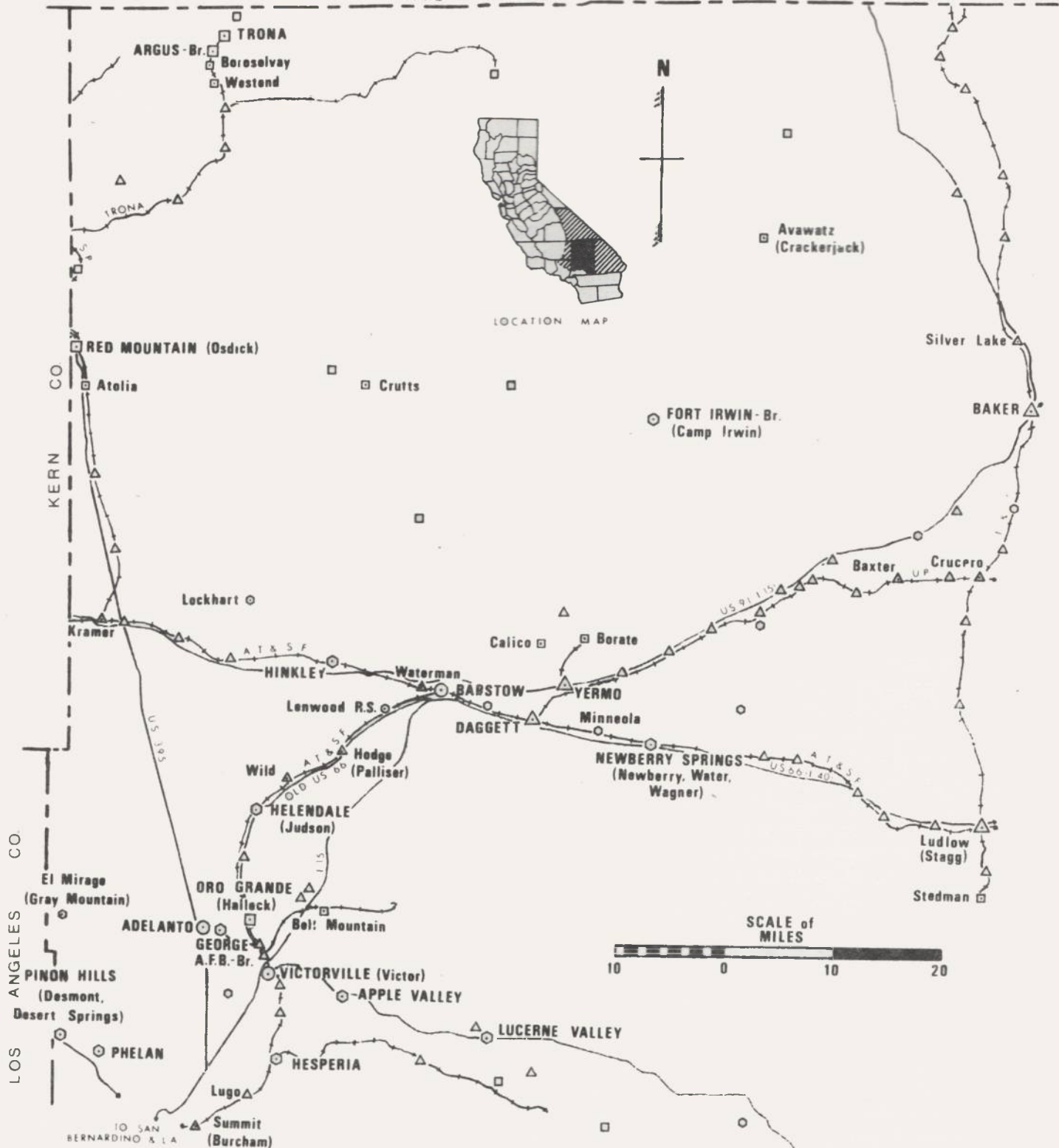
San Bernardino County, under specific discussion here, is the largest county in the United States in land area, and with good reason. Its population is sizeable -- 682,233 in 1970 -- but over 90% of those people live outside the desert region in the extreme southwest part of the county. The county seat, San Bernardino, is there along with a fertile inland valley and an imposing forested mountain range with population clusters around Arrowhead and Big Bear Lakes.

Since aboriginal times man has lived and traveled through the San Bernardino County section of the Mojave. Father Garces traversed the area in 1776, and the Old Spanish Trail wound through as well. Permanent occupancy of any significance did not occur until shortly before the coming of the first railroad in the early 1880's. Halleck (Oro Grande), center of a gold-mining area now on the Santa Fe Railroad, became the first post office in early 1881, but not long thereafter followed numerous other railroad towns. Identification of several of these towns was confused by the practice of using two names for the same locality: one given by the railroad, the other generated by the local populace. Accessibility created by the arrival of the railroad also engendered more favorable conditions for mining -- principally lead, silver, zinc and tungsten as well as gold -- and as a result, the region boasted over 15 post offices by the turn of the century.

Later railroad construction created more towns. Though many of the "settlements" they created were nothing more than evenly spaced section houses (see map), other stations grew due to the railroad's centralizing influence. Later railroads included the Union Pacific (SP, LA & SL) in 1904-05, the Tonopah and Tidewater in 1905-08, and the Trona Railroad built in 1913-14 to service the potash deposits on Searles Lake. Branch lines were also constructed to serve as feeders for the main routes.

Railroad and mining activities had essentially completed their areal expansion by the end of World War I. Few changes in the region's settlement composition took place from 1920 until the mid-1940's. Wartime however brought a small but significant military presence into the Mojave, and this presence has remained and even expanded in the period following WW II. First, increased auto traffic brought several benefits. Not only did it enlarge several communities along the major U. S. highways, but it was solely responsible for the many hamlet-sized crossroads settlements found on these same routes. Also, the new-found affluence enjoyed by postwar, amenity-conscious Americans found its expression in several Mojave communities. Located relatively near the Los Angeles area, these towns such as Hesperia, Yucca Valley, Phelan, and others are composed of 5-acre or smaller lots primarily designed for retired persons, or for the occasional use -- during winter, weekends, or holidays -- of residents from other areas of southern California.

INYO CO



SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

(Western Desert Portion)

SETTLEMENT FUNCTION:

- △ Transportation
- Mining
- Other
- Mixed

POSTAL HISTORY:

- △ Present (1975) P.O.
- △ Discontinued P.O.
- △ Settlement, never a P.O.

RIVERSIDE CO

POST OFFICES OF THE MOJAVE DESERT
PART I: WESTERN SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

Post Office	Established	Discontinued	Mail to [Notes]
Adelanto	16 Oct 1916	Operating	
Apple Valley	29 Mar 1949	Operating	
Atolia	10 May 1906	15 Aug 1922	Osdict
	10 Nov 1927	31 Jul 1944	Randsburg
Avawatz (1)	13 Aug 1908	15 Dec 1910	Silver Lake
Baker	21 Jan 1933	Operating	was Silver Lake
Barstow	15 May 1886	Operating	
Baxter	6 Jun 1914	31 Mar 1919	Yermo
	21 Jun 1923	15 Jun 1926	Crucero
Bell Mountain	7 May 1953	6 Apr 1956	Victorville
Borate	7 Jul 1896	14 Dec 1907	Daggett
Borosolvay	13 Aug 1917	31 May 1921	Trona
Burcham	13 Jan 1893	14 Sep 1898	N. ch. to Summit
Calico	18 May 1882	30 Nov 1898	Daggett
Crackerjack	26 Feb 1907	12 Aug 1908	Ch. to Avawatz
Crucero	18 Apr 1911	30 Jun 1917	Stagg
	11 Nov 1922	25 May 1943	Kelso
Crutts	21 Apr 1916	31 Aug 1922	Barstow
Daggett	12 Apr 1883	Operating	
Desert Springs	16 Feb 1949	30 Sep 1959	Ch. to Desmont
Desmont	1 Oct 1959	31 Aug 1962	Ch. to Pinon Hills
Doble	27 Jul 1900	31 Aug 1906	Victorville
El Mirage	17 Apr 1917	28 Feb 1923	Victorville
Goldbridge	15 May 1917	15 Aug 1918	Barstow
Gray Mountain	27 Oct 1913	16 Apr 1917	Ch. to El Mirage
Halleck	3 Jan 1881	30 Apr 1925	Ch. to Oro Grande
Hawley	25 Jun 1883	10 Dec 1883	Daggett
	9 Apr 1884	31 Oct 1888	Daggett
Helendale	30 Sep 1918	Operating	was Judson
Hesperia	25 Feb 1888	Operating	
Hinkley	16 Mar 1908	Operating	
Hodge	25 Oct 1925	31 May 1941	Barstow
Joshua Tree	16 May 1946	Operating	
Judson	8 Dec 1909	29 Sep 1918	Ch. to Helendale
Kramer	20 Oct 1896	31 Aug 1911	Hinkley
	2 Mar 1912	30 Nov 1918	Hinkley
Landers Rural Br.	1 Feb 1962	Operating	Of Yucca Valley
Lenwood Rural Br.	1 Oct 1955	15 Jun 1963	
	16 Mar 1964	Operating	Of Barstow
Lockhart	10 Dec 1952	28 Feb 1957	Barstow
Lockhart Rural Br.	1 Mar 1957	31 Jul 1958	Of Barstow
Lucerne Valley	9 Sep 1912	Operating	
Ludlow	15 Sep 1926	8 Nov 1974	Newberry Springs
Lugo	12 Apr 1917	30 Apr 1924	Hesperia
Minneola	17 Apr 1896	5 May 1897	Daggett
Morongo Valley	23 May 1947	Operating	

Post Office	Established	Discontinued	Mail to [Notes]
Newberry	15 May 1924	31 Jan 1967	Ch. to Newberry Sprs.
Newberry Springs	1 Feb 1967	Operating	
Oro Grande	1 May 1925	Operating	was Halleck
Osdick	14 Feb 1922	13 Sep 1929	Ch. to Red Mountain
Palliser	5 Aug 1914	29 Oct 1925	Ch. to Hodge
Phelan	25 Nov 1916	Operating	
Pinon Hills	1 Sep 1962	Operating	was Desmont
Pioneertown	15 Mar 1950	Operating	
Red Mountain	14 Sep 1929	31 Dec 1960	To Rural Branch
Red Mountain Rural	2 Jan 1961	12 Sep 1975	To Comm. Post Off.
Red Mountain CPO	13 Sep 1975	Operating	
Rosemine	4 Apr 1899	15 Feb 1900	Victor
Slaterange	27 Apr 1900	14 Dec 1901	Johannesburg(Kern Co)
Stagg	15 Feb 1902	14 Sep 1926	Ch. to Ludlow
Stedman	28 Mar 1904	30 Nov 1907	Stagg
Summit	15 Sep 1898	30 Apr 1901	Cajon
	13 Aug 1901	30 Jun 1910	Cajon
	5 Feb 1915	?	?
Trona	27 Mar 1914	Operating	
Ulmer	14 Nov 1888	6 Feb 1890	Barstow
Victor	10 Apr 1886	23 Sep 1903	Ch. to Victorville
Victorville	24 Sep 1903	Operating	
Wagner	12 Oct 1911	8 Jul 1919	Ch. to Water
Water	9 Jul 1919	14 May 1924	Ch. to Newberry
Waterman	25 Oct 1881	19 Apr 1887	Barstow
Watson	19 Feb 1883	25 Jul 1883	Calico
Westend	11 Oct 1919	1 Feb 1974	Trona
Wild	12 Mar 1928	15 Oct 1931	Helendale
Yermo	21 Oct 1905	Operating	
Yucca Valley	15 Nov 1945	Operating	

(1) Formerly Crackerjack and possibly different location.

TO BE CONTINUED [Coming next: EASTERN SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY]



**HAPPY
1977!**

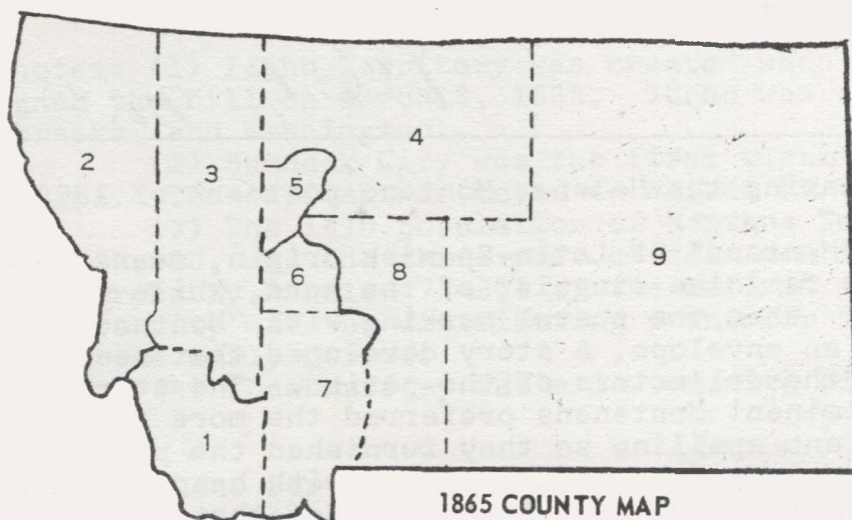
The Editor

MONTANA TERRITORY By Harry L. Fine

[Editor's Note: La Posta is proud to welcome to our pages an article by Harry Fine, one of the deans of Western postal history. It must be noted that this article is a direct result of a request by Giles Cokelet in the recent Readers Preference Questionnaire. See folks, sometimes we really do get what we ask for.]

My interest in Montana territorial postal history dates back to 1936, and I've been interested in stamps on a hit and miss basis since 1917. Early in my association with the United States Rubber Company (now Uniroyal Inc.) we lived in Montana, and its fascinating early history was one of the prime factors in my becoming interested enough to delve into its postal history. Now, forty years later, we are still trying to find some of the answers and acquire that elusive cover.

James M. Ashley, a member of Congress from Ohio and Chairman of the Committee on Territories, first suggested the name "Montana" to be applied to Idaho Territory being formed during the 37th Congress in 1863 (1). The name "Idaho" met with greater favor and was adopted by a vote of Congress. Ashley again introduced the name Montana during the 38th Congress when the formation of a new western territory was being considered in 1864. This time the name Montana was accepted with approval of Congress. The new territory was cut from Dakota, Idaho and Washington territories, and organized under an act of Congress with Abraham Lincoln signing the bill to create Montana Territory on May 26, 1864.

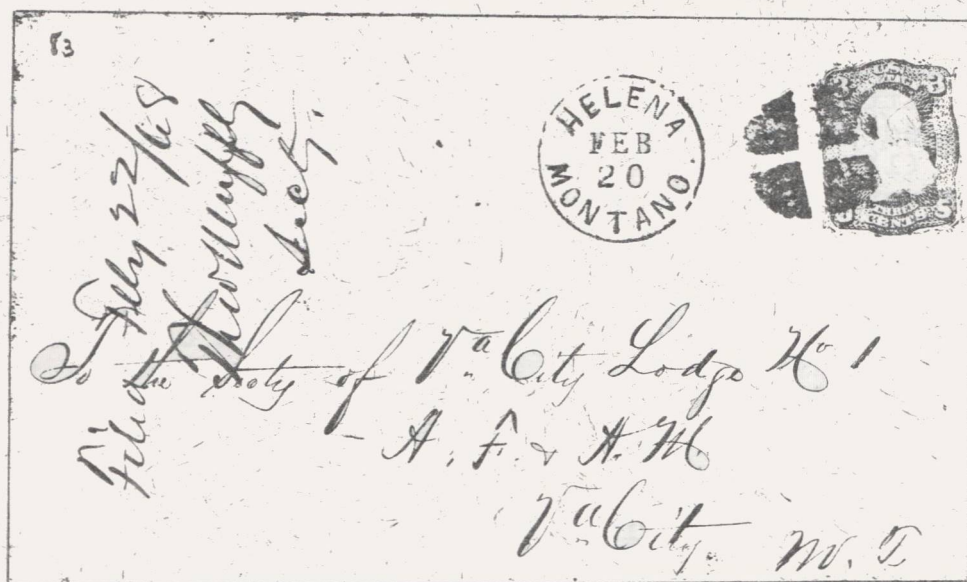


1865 COUNTY MAP

Judge Sidney Edgerton, a former Ohio Congressman and staunch supporter of Lincoln, was appointed the first territorial governor of Montana on June 22, 1864, and the first Territorial Legislature was held at Bannack City beginning on January 16, 1865 (2). One of

the first orders of business was the creation of nine counties which were named Beaverhead, Big Horn, Choteau, Dawson, Deer Lodge, Jefferson, and Madison.

During the territorial period (May 26, 1864 - November 8, 1889) a total of 568 post offices were opened. Some were only opened a short time, others for several years, and many are still in existence today. Many of the town names have interesting derivatives, but for me the "MONTANO" postmarks used by Bannack City, Helena, and Virginia City during the 1865-1870 period presented a problem that took considerable research and proved to be an interesting project.



A cover bearing the Helena, Montano postmark of 1868. [Fine]

The word "Montana" of Latin-Spanish origin, means mountains. Montana is the feminine singular of the word, while montano is the masculine. When the postal marking with "Montano" was first discovered on an envelope, a story developed that seemed to be acceptable to the collectors of the period. The story goes that a group of prominent Montanans preferred the more forceful and masculine Montano spelling so they furnished the postmasters of Bannack City, Helena, and Virginia City with hand-stamp postmarkers with the Montano spelling. It was intended that all in-coming and out-going mail would be canceled with the new postmarkers, and they were of the opinion that this method of publicity would create a general use of the Montano spelling and lead the legislature to adopt Montano instead of Montana. There were actually only two other collectors interested in Montana postal history in 1936 and the explanation seemed to satisfy them, but I felt a need for some verification.

I found no evidence in my research to indicate a movement to change the name of the territory was ever attempted. All indications point toward an error in spelling being made by the U.S. Post Office Department in Washington when the postmarkers were ordered. The Post Office Department at that time furnished the postmasters of offices doing an annual volume of \$300 or more a handstamp postmarker at no cost. Postmasters at smaller offices were required to buy their own postmarkers.

The annual volume was derived from the sale of stamps, domestic money orders and registered mail. Bannack City, Helena, and Virginia City were sizeable and active mining communities, and easily qualified for a free postmarker.

The Montano postmark on cover is a fine addition to any collection of territorial covers and particularly a collection of Montana covers. The Bannack City, Montano, and Virginia City, Montano, covers are not quite as clear as my Helena, Montano, so I am showing an example of a fine Helena, Montano. The stamp is tied with a cork killer and a notation at the left indicates the letter was received in Virginia City on February 22, 1868. To add interest, especially for those collectors who belong to the Masons, the letter is addressed to the Sec'y of Va. City Lodge No #1, A.F. & A.M. The notation has reference to the fact that the letter was filed by Theo Muffley Secty.(4).

It is always a pleasure to hear from territorial collectors, and, while my prime interests are Montana and Fort Laramie, I do have an interest in all intermountain territories.

Footnotes: (1) Idaho Territory was created when Abraham Lincoln signed the bill on March 3, 1863. Idaho was cut from Dakota, Nebraska, and Washington.

(2) Bannack City was the first territorial capital of Montana. The capital was moved to Helena by vote in 1874.

(3) The 1870 population of Montana Territory was just under 30,000, and the three post offices mentioned in the article probably handled 75-80% of the mail in the territory. Virginia City was the distributing point for incoming mail during the early period.

(4) Theo Muffley was a lawyer with offices in Virginia City.

References: Gen. Services Admin., National Archives, Washington, D.C. (postal records).
Montana Historical Society, issues of the Montana Post, 1865-1875.
Leeson, History of Montana, 1885.
Stout, History of Montana, 1921.
Correspondence with many territorial collectors.

TERRITORIAL POSTMASTERS OF NEW MEXICO: "CAPTAIN JACK" CRAWFORD, THE POET SCOUT

By Thomas K. Todsén

One often has the idea that a postmaster is on the job at his post office throughout his tenure. A perfect example for showing the error of this idea is John Wallace (Captain Jack) Crawford, who was appointed postmaster at Craig, New Mexico, on 31 May 1881 and held that position until the post office was discontinued on 14 December 1885. His restless nature and his frequent absence from Craig will be evident later.

John Wallace Crawford, the third child of John Austin Crawford and Susie Wallace, was born in County Donegal on 4 March 1847. His father, a tailor, sailed to America in 1854, leaving Mrs. Crawford and five children. Mrs. Crawford followed in 1858, and the children came over one or two years later. The boys, John, his elder brother William, and his younger brother Austin, worked in the coal mines at \$1.75 a week picking slate. The father was one of the first Pennsylvania volunteers in the Civil War and served in the 48th Pennsylvania Infantry under Captain George Lawrence. He was seriously wounded twice (at Antietam and Cold Harbor), and the second wound eventually caused his death. Young John tried twice to volunterr, but was turned-down because of his age and size. Finally, early in 1863, he enlisted in Company F of the 48th Pennsylvania. John too was wounded twice, the first and more severe coming at Spottsylvania on 12 May 1864, and the second at Petersburg on 2 April 1865. During his first recovery period, he recuperated at Saterlee Hospital in West Philadelphia. It was at that institution that a Sister of Charity taught him to read and write. The written word never ceased to fascinate John and, in later years, his pencil and pad were as much a part of his trail gear as his rifle and food.

Crawford's years immediately after the Civil War are obscure. In his personally dictated short autobiography, he does not even mention the fact that he married Anne Marie Stobes of Numida, Pa., on 18 September 1869, or that she bore him five children. In none of his written works does he indicate his marriage, though some of his children are referred to in his poems. Be that as it may, John Crawford went west to the Dakota country about 1874 where he was Chief of Scouts for the Black Hills Rangers, and was apparently one of the founders of Deadwood, Custer City, Crook, Gayville, and Spearfish. During the Sioux campaign of 1876 he was initially second in command of General Crook's scouts under Buffalo Bill Cody and took over from Cody when the latter resigned on 24 August 1876. Crawford reported that he had once been a sheriff and law officer, but he failed to mention where. When the Sioux action

was completed Crawford resigned to tour with Cody. There was a controversy between them over money and star billing and, on 29 June 1877 in Virginia City, Nevada, Crawford was accidentally shot on stage. He finished-out the act and was then rushed to the hospital where he had a slow recovery. Cody abandoned him, not even paying his hospital bill

While he was convalescing, Crawford wrote his first play,



John Wallace "Captain Jack"
Crawford [New Mexico Magazine]

"Fonda," in collaboration with Sam Smith. He opened with his own company of 15 people in San Francisco for a ten-week tour. Crawford arranged a contract to present the play in Australia, but could not raise enough money to outfit his group. Perhaps discouraged with the theatrical life, John accepted an offer to become General Crook's Chief of Scouts for the Apache campaign in New Mexico and Arizona. Based at Fort Craig, he moved his family there in 1881, where his wife and children took-over his sutler, caretaker and postmaster duties while he continued his search for fame and fortune. Examples of Crawford's exploits appearing in the New Mexico press throughout the period are: in 1881, prospecting operations of Crawford's Lode and Placer Company were reported proceeding apace; in 1883, John Crawford was stated to be owner of the George Marquis, Apache Queen, Victoria, and Indian Girl locations near Dripping Springs, one of which contained a 7-foot vein of copper ore; in 1884, he entered a contract with the GAR of Pennsylvania for 100 nights of lectures; in 1885, Crawford

was reported to be on the stage in New York; in 1886, he was lecturing in New Mexico and Colorado.

Crawford's pursuit of the end of the rainbow led him to Alaska in 1898. While he was there, the Army abandoned Fort Craig so his custodial job disappeared and his family moved to nearby San Marcial and later to Clovis. Captain Jack got nowhere in Alaska and

left there in June 1880, returning to the stage, reading his poetry, giving temperance lectures, and performing in his plays.

Gradually Crawford moved his base of operations from New Mexico to New York as seen in the changes in his address reported in Who's Who in America. Finally he separated from his wife completely, and at the time of his death on 28 February 1917 was living in Woodhaven on Long Island. Crawford is buried in the National Cemetery in Brooklyn.



The Stage Station and Post Office - Craig, N.M.

Captain Jack's enduring monument is formed by his plays and poems. His first play, "Fonda," mentioned earlier was copyrighted in 1888. In 1889 he wrote the first play to be copyrighted in New Mexico in collaboration with James Barton Adams. The play was titled, "Tat; or Edna, The Veteran's Daughter." "Tat" was recopyrighted in 1896 as "The Mighty Truth; or, In Clouds and Sunshine". Then, in 1908, Crawford wrote "Colonel Bob: A Western Pastoral in 5 Acts" in collaboration with Marie Madison. His poems include "The Poet Scout", published in 1879, 1886 and 1891; "Lariattes" (1904); "The Dregs" (1907); "The Bronco Book" (1908); and "Whar' the Hand of God is Seen, and Other Poems" (1911 and 1913).

Bibliography: (1) GSA, Appointments of Postmasters, New Mexico.

(2) Nolan, Paul T., "Captain Jack Rides Again," New Mexico, Vol. 43, No. 1, (Jan 1965), pp. 3-5.

(3) New Mexico, Vol. 37, No. 1 (Jan 1959), p. 20.
(4) Dictionary of American Biography, Scribner's, 1964.

(5) Who's Who in America, 1899-1914 editions.

(6) Crawford, J. W. The Poet Scout, 1886.

(7) Daily New Mexican, 2 Feb 1881, 3 Mar 1883, 18 May 1883, 27 Nov 1889, 31 Jul 1894.

(8) Nolan, Paul T., Three Plays by J.W. Crawford, 1966.

BOOK NOTES By Helbock

THE POSTMARKS OF MEXICO, 1874-1900 promises to be an impressive addition to the body of postal history knowledge about our neighbor to the south. Karl H. Schimmer, President of Mexico-Elmhurst Philatelic Society International has produced a magnificently illustrated, 400 page, hard-bound listing of postmarks from 2000 post offices in existence prior to 1900. The book offers nearly 4000 different postmark illustrations and postal maps for each of the Mexican states as of 1900. Available in an 8.5X11 inch format, The Postmarks of Mexico represents a continuation of Joseph Schatzkes' THE CANCELLATIONS OF MEXICO, 1856-1874. It may be ordered from Langdin Longwell, 169 Geneva Avenue, Elmhurst, Illinois 60126. The price is \$37.50 postpaid.

THE POSTAL HISTORY OF INDIANA by J. David Baker may well prove to be the model for future state postal histories. Published by Leonard H. Hartmann, P.O. Box 21397, Louisville, KY 40221, this two volume set covers the development of Indiana postal history from the pre-territorial days to 1970. In so doing it contains literally thousands of markings, maps and covers from Indiana's 4,000 post offices. The two volumes span some 1,100 pages printed on quality 70 lb paper, and offer the 1890-1970 records of Post Offices and Postmasters on microfiche. This massive work is priced at \$75.00 postpaid, and may be ordered from Mr. Hartmann.

THE "THERE'S MORE HERE THAN MEETS THE EYE" DEPARTMENT By Todsén

From the List of Appointments
of Postmasters - New Mexico

From the Silver City Enterprise

- a) Silver City - Owen L. Scott
appointed 28 December 1882 15 January 1883 "O.L.Scott informs us his commission as postmaster arrived last night and that he will probably enter upon the duties of his office about the first of next month"
- b) Hillsboro - John M. Webster
appointed 5 December 1884
replacing June L. Fuller 28 November 1884 "June L. Fuller, postmaster at Hillsboro, has been arrested by U. S. Mail Inspector Adams, charged with purloining \$870 from the mails. He was released on \$5000 bail."
- c) Alumina - James H. Hill
appointed 3 April 1890 4 July 1890 "Mail communication between Silver City and Alumina via Georgetown has been established, the first U.S. Mail traversing the route last Saturday. J.H. Hill is postmaster of the new office."

THE POST OFFICES OF WYOMING: PART XVII, UINTA COUNTY

By Daniel Y. Meschter and Ruth Dolezal

Uinta County was originally one degree of longitude wide and extended all the way from Utah to Montana along the western edge of Wyoming Territory. The southern end of this strip was set-off from Idaho and Utah territories by the Wyoming Organic Act of July 25, 1868. Neither Utah nor Idaho had organized separate county governments for these parts of their territories, so the area was politically unorganized as far as Wyoming was concerned. It remained for the First Wyoming Legislature to erect Uinta County on December 1, 1869, thus making it the fifth county of Wyoming.

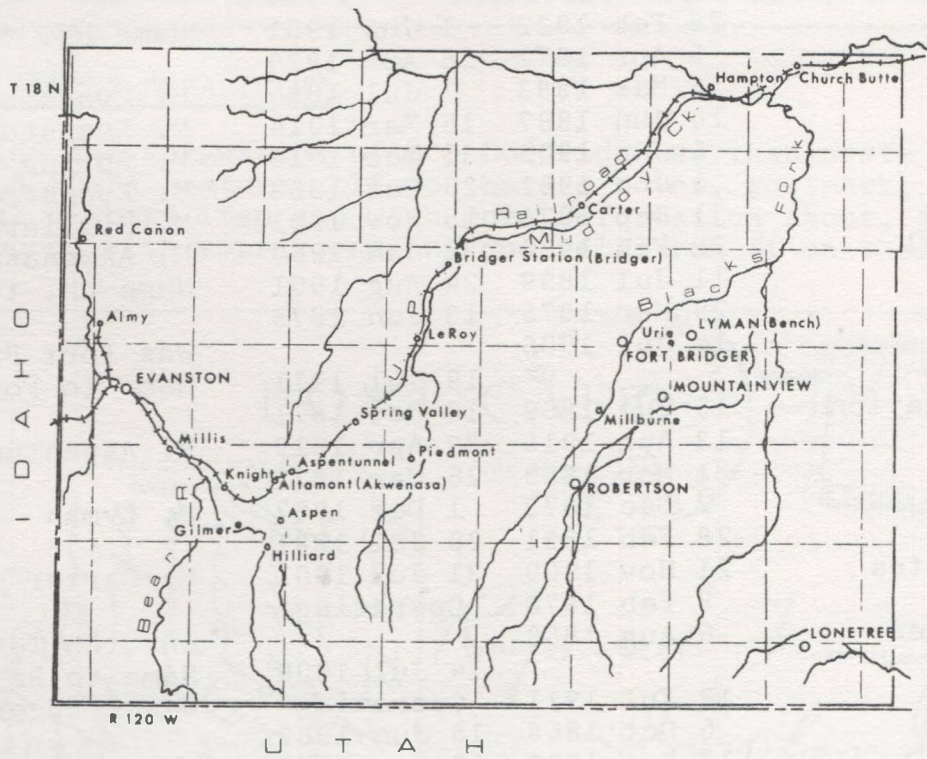
The name of the county comes from the Uintah Mountains which lie south across the Utah border, but are in clear view from many parts of the county. The "Uintah" spelling was commonly used during the first few years of the county's existence.

The original county area was reduced in 1872 by the creation of Yellowstone National Park, and once again in 1911 by the establishment of Lincoln County.

Fort Bridger, established in 1843 as a trading post by Jim Bridger and his French-Spanish partner Louis Vasquez, was the first permanent settlement in Uinta County. The fort was second in importance only to Fort Laramie during pre-territorial times in Wyoming. It was a key way station and supply point on the Emigrant and Overland trails, the route of the Pony Express, and the transcontinental telegraph line. Uinta County postal history began with the establishment of a post office at Fort Bridger on the Oregon Route in 1850. The Mormons bought-out Jim Bridger in 1853, but abandoned the post in 1857 with the approach of the U.S. Army. Fort Bridger post office was permanently re-established in 1858 when W. A. Carter was appointed postmaster. Carter served as the postmaster until 1881, during which time he was post sutler, cattleman, and "first citizen" of southeastern Wyoming.

Modern postal history may be said to have begun with the arrival of the Union Pacific Railroad in the fall of 1868. Post offices were established at numerous stations along the rails, and the townsite layed-out by the railroad and named Evanston became the county seat and principal town. Piedmont, Aspen, Hilliard, and Gilmer were all early-day railroad towns, but all were by-passed when a tunnel was driven through the hills between Altamont and Aspentunnel. In 1868 Gilmer was well on its way toward becoming the last hell-on-wheels railroad town, but railroad builders decided not to layover for the winter but to push on to their date with destiny at Promontory Point. Also known as Bear River City,

UINTA COUNTY POST OFFICES



RWH '77

Gilmer survived a general riot in November 1868 but could not survive the competition of Evanston.

Jim Bridger's choice of the Black's Fork Valley for the site of his trading post proved prophetic. The valley is fertile agricultural land, and today post offices clustered around Lyman and Mountainview serve a prosperous farming region. Uinta County has an economy based chiefly on agriculture, the railroad, and cattle raising. Fort Bridger has been restored and has become a popular tourist attraction. Of the 35 post offices listed for Uinta County, two are believed not to have operated and five are the result of changes in name.

WYOMING POST OFFICES UINTA COUNTY

Post Office	Established	Discontinued	Notes
Akwenasa	28 Feb 1922	1 Jun 1951	Name ch. to Altamont
Almy	5 Apr 1872	25 Apr 1879	
	6 Mar 1883	7 Jul 1884	M. Evanston
	10 Jun 1887	15 Mar 1914	M. Evanston
Altamont	6 Jan 1902	31 Dec 1913	M. Spring Valley
	1 Jun 1951	25 Oct 1963	M. Evanston
Aspen	1 Sep 1873	15 Nov 1901	M. Hilliard
Aspentunnel	28 Feb 1922	31 Jan 1950	M. Akwenasa
Bench	11 Jul 1899	24 Aug 1901	Name ch. to Lyman
Bridger	29 Mar 1875	13 Jun 1875	
Bridger	14 Jul 1906		Was Fort Bridger
		19 Jul 1911	Name to Fort Bridger
Bridger Station	15 Jul 1869	10 Oct 1871	
Callister	13 Apr 1915	30 Apr 1919	M. Aspentunnel
Carter	31 Mar 1869	26 Mar 1872	
	2 Dec 1873	1 Dec 1967	M. Lyman
Charleston	28 Feb 1881	20 Jul 1881	
Church Buttes	21 Nov 1900	31 Jul 1901	M. Carter
Evanston	8 Feb 1870	Operating	
Fort Bridger	6 Aug 1858		In Utah Territory
		14 Jul 1906	Name to Bridger
	19 Jul 1911	Operating	Was Bridger
Gilmer	5 Oct 1868	15 Jun 1869	
	17 Dec 1869	20 Mar 1871	
Hampton	26 Jun 1915	15 Jun 1923	M. Carter
Hilliard	23 Jul 1873	31 Dec 1902	M. Knight
Knight	11 Jan 1902	30 Nov 1921	M. Evanston
LeRoy	28 Jun 1906	31 Oct 1923	M. Carter
	11 Dec 1923	23 Sep 1942	M. Carter
Lone Tree	9 Jan 1888	12 Oct 1895	Name ch. to Lonetree
Lonetree	12 Oct 1895	Operating	Was Lone Tree
Lyman	29 Aug 1901	Operating	Was Bench
Millburne	6 May 1904	15 Sep 1939	M. Fort Bridger
Millis	13 Sep 1913	15 Feb 1916	M. Evanston

Post Office	Established	Discontinued	Notes
Mountain View	11 Jun 1891	28 Apr 1894	M. Fort Bridger
	17 Jan 1898	22 Sep 1956	To Mountainview
Mountainview	22 Sep 1956	Operating	
Piedmont	15 Jun 1869	19 May 1967	M. Fort Bridger
Plano	26 Oct 1899	8 Oct 1900	Rescinded
Red Canon	26 May 1887	15 Aug 1900	M. Almy
Robertson	31 Mar 1893	Operating	
Spring Valley	3 Dec 1900	15 Sep 1921	M. Piedmont
	29 May 1928	31 May 1932	M. Piedmont
Syracuse	16 Jun 1902	14 Feb 1903	M. Piedmont
Urie	8 Feb 1907	15 Jan 1916	M. Fort Bridger
Velma	12 Jul 1898	29 Oct 1898	Rescinded

Notes: "M." - indicates "mail to."
 "To" or "Name to" - indicates "name changed to."

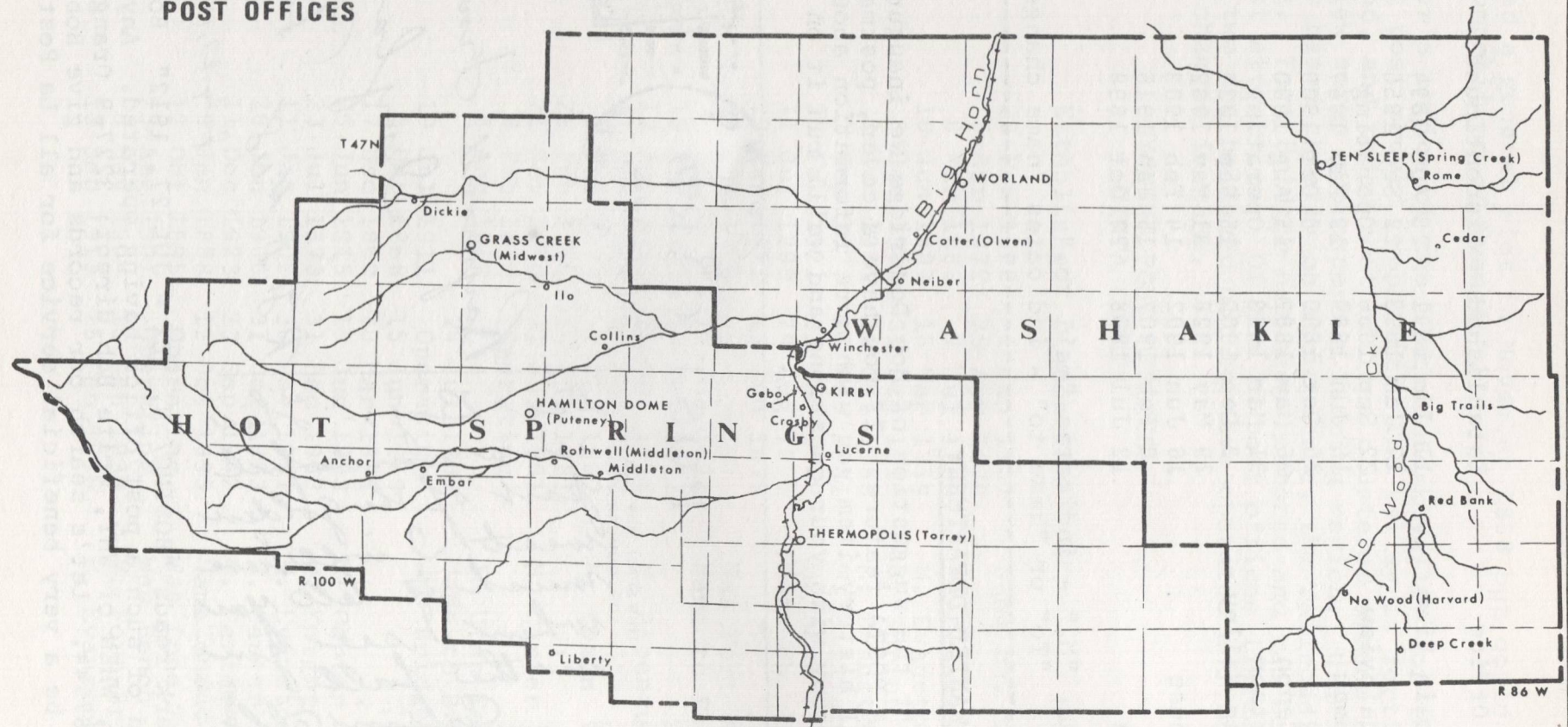
HELP WANTED DEPARTMENT.

[At the suggestion of Bob Doddridge we inaugurate herewith a new LA POSTA feature. If you have a cover, postmark, or other postal history item you wish more information about, just send a photocopy with your questions and we'll run it on these pages.]



Postmark reads "BOSING/ N. MEX - JUL 27, 1912" Bob can find no record of such a post office having operated. Any comments on WHERE, WHEN or WHY, write Bob direct: 3227-B Orange, Los Alamos, N.M. 87544. Let's search our records and give Bob a hand. This could be a very beneficial service for all La Posta readers.

HOT SPRINGS AND WASHAKIE COUNTY POST OFFICES



LA POSTA, Vol.5, No.2 (Sept 1973) carried a brief history of the Mitchell, Alaska, post office, an unusual office which was in service from 1891 to 1895 and is believed to have been located in Canada at the trading post called Forty Mile. At the time it was reported that only one example of a Mitchell postmark was known, and details of it were sketchy and confined entirely to an auction lot description in a 1971 Herst sale. Since that writing quite a bit of new information has come to light about the Mitchell postmark, and a second example is now known. The details concerning the original Mitchell are most interesting, and I should like to pass them along in this follow-up.

In August of 1976 I received a letter from Theodore Bozarth of Titusville, NJ, in which he mentioned that he had discovered the Mitchell postmark. Fascinated, I wrote Mr. Bozarth requesting the details of his discovery and any other information he could provide about the origins of the postal card and its postmark. He responded with a history of both the Mitchell card and its companion piece, a 1¢ postal card postmarked Sitka in 1894 and bearing a message with the sailing schedule of "Str. City of Topeka" from Mitchell. Both cards are addressed to Mr. H. Rehlen in London, and what follows is an excerpt from Mr. Bozarth's letter:

"Both had been sent to H. Rehlen by himself, I believe. He had apparently mailed the 1¢ blue with a 1¢ Columbian added inside an envelope which he either addressed directly to Sitka, inquiring about service at Mitchell, or to Mitchell, with the result that it was forwarded to Sitka and answered there with the information that Mitchell was open only in the summer months. Later he sent the other card to Mitchell, which was returned to him with the requested postmark."

"Rehlen was apparently not a postmark collector, per se, but had a unique hobby in that he timed and diagnosed the routing of all his correspondence, which was apparently rather extensive with German-writing collectors throughout the world, or at least with such people in the United States. Years ago I bought a mixed lot of U.S. postal cards which contained a great many addressed to him, either the desirable 2¢ blue international cards or the less valuable domestic cards with adhesives added. Most of them had the routing indicated in red ink on the reverse."

"In 1892-94, his address was: #94 Devonshire Road, Forest Hill, London S.E. In 1896 it was: 116 Holmesdale Road, South Norwood; in 1897: 29 Champion Grove, Denmark Hill; and in 1902: 2, Aylward Road, Forest Hill, all in London, S.E. On the last card he is offered 100 assorted unused postal cards of Porto

Rico from the Spanish administration, probably stock "liberated" during the Spanish-American War. He did not make a routing for this card, nor did he indicate if he had accepted the offer (@ 10/), so perhaps his interest was beginning to wane."

"Ironical that it took a German living in England to preserve the only known copy of an early Alaska postmark. Vive les collecteurs!"

The Mitchell card is postmarked August 1, 1895, and carries the notation on reverse "Sent from Mitchell P.O. Alaska Aug 1st, 1895 -- via St. Michaels - Unalaska & San Francisco" There is a pencil notation "R17/10,730p", and on the face a London, S.E. postmark of Oct 17, '95. A faint Unalaska postmark of Sept ?, 1895 also appears on the face of the card.

The second Mitchell postmark appears on a cover addressed to London, Ontario. The postmark is identical with the first example, but is dated Sep 1, 1894. Oddly, this cover is franked with a 2¢ Columbian (the earlier card also bears a 1¢ Columbian). Routing for this 1894 example was different than the 1895 card. On the reverse of the cover appear the double red oval of the Alaska Commercial Co., St. Michael Alaska Ty. of Jan 27, 1895, and a Seattle Transit mark of May 6, '95. There is also a London, Ont. postmark of May 15, '95 indicating arrival. The cover face bears an additional marking in a circle reading "AM MY/14", which is apparently a type of arrival marking.

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

And so once again we come to the close of another volume. It has been a real pleasure to be back at the desk this year. Tom Todsen, Dan Meschter, Ruth Dolezal, "Doc" Dike, and Frank Norris have all contributed excellent research articles to our pages. I am looking forward to their continued support, but there is lots of room for others of you to join our authors list and I sincerely hope you'll consider doing just that in 1977.

I would like to welcome our new subscribers who joined us in 1976 and express my hope that you will stay with La Posta in the years to come. Particular thanks to those of you, both new and "old" subscribers, who have become SUSTAINING. The word is literally true. Without your support there would be no La Posta for our total subscriptions are less than 100, but because 30 or 40 of you feel strongly that the journal should continue to be published, and are willing to support it, we can afford to meet publishing and mailing costs (almost).

So we are off again for a Volume 8! If you have not yet renewed your subscription, please do it today. Happy 1977 friends!
RICHARD W. HELBOCK, EDITOR, 1635 MARIPOSA DRIVE, LAS CRUCES, NM

