LA POSTA

No 201. LOOKING UP THE COLUMBIA RIVER FROM ARLINGTON ORE. A.C.MARKHAM THE DALLES ORE

vol 9 no 6

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IN THIS ISSUE

NINETEENTH CENTURY POST OFFICES OF GILLIAM COUNTY, OREGON
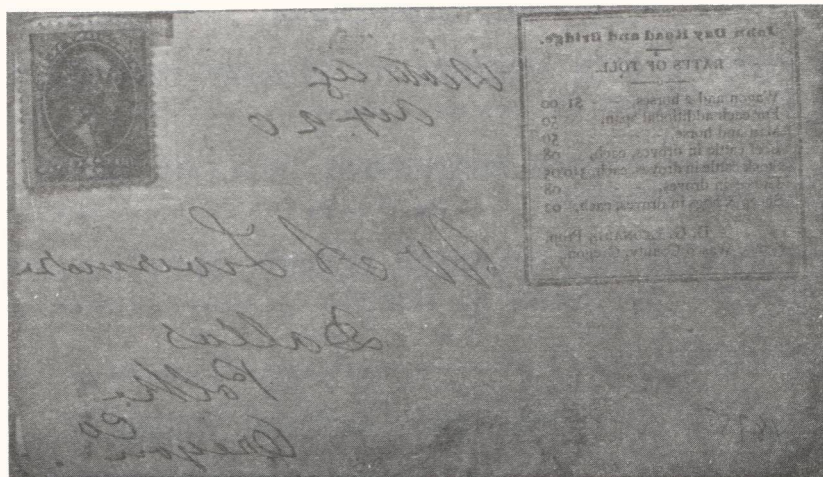
By Richard W. Helbock

Gilliam County was created by the Oregon State Legislature on February 25, 1885, from territory which was previously the northeastern part of Wasco County and the northwestern part of Umatilla County. Named in honor of Colonel Cornelius Gilliam, who commanded forces of the provisional government in an 1847-48 campaign against the Cayuse Indians after the Whitman massacre, the county has a land area of 1,211 square miles. Gilliam County is bounded on the west by the John Day River, and a tributary of the river, Rock Creek, is the major stream within the county. The climate is semi-arid, and the terrain reflects the characteristics of its location on the high lava plateau. There are only about 3,000 people living in Gilliam County today, and, while population has been declining for several decades, there was never a large number of residents.

This article presents a brief chronology of the 25 post office names which were authorized to locations in Gilliam County during the 19th century. The first 16 names came into use before Gilliam County was created, but they were assigned to locations which became part of the county area.

SCOTTS. Established February 4, 1867. Scotts post office, named for a local pioneer settler, was the first post office to be established in the area which was to become Gilliam County. Located on the east bank of John Day River, a few miles north of the mouth of Rock Creek, the office operated in conjunction with Leonard's Bridge, a toll bridge over the John Day. Daniel G. Leonard, the proprietor of the bridge, was the postmaster at Scotts during most of its period of operation.

19th Century Postmasters: Daniel G. Leonard; Edward L. Grimes, Feb. 13, 1870; Daniel G. Leonard, Dec. 27, 1870.

Status: The site of this office was moved, and its name was changed to Rockville on November 26, 1878.

ROCK CREEK. Established June 3, 1872. The Rock Creek post office, a short-lived establishment, was named for the stream which crosses Gilliam County from southeast to northwest. Although the exact location of this office is not known, it is believed to have been in the vicinity of Olex since Alexander Smith was the first postmaster, and Olex was intended to have been named for Smith. In 1906 a second Rock Creek post office was established several miles to the north of this location.

19th Century Postmasters: Alexander Smith; James R. Alfrey, July 1, 1873.

Status: Discontinued on March 11, 1874.

OLEX. Established October 27, 1874. This office was intended to have been named in honor of Alexander Smith, a prominent local settler, but authorities in Washington misinterpreted the name as Olex. The Olex post office was located on Rock Creek at the mouth of Juniper Canyon in section 10, township 1 south, range 21 east.

19th Century Postmasters: James H. Butler; Charles A. Schutz, Dec. 30, 1879; Ella C. Schutz, Aug. 12, 1880; Henry D. Randall, July 3, 1882; Jerome W. Thomas, Jan. 3, 1887; Henry D. Randall, Dec. 29, 1891; Lonner O. Ralston, Aug. 2, 1893; William L. Tobey, Jan. 5, 1899.

Status: Converted to a rural branch of Arlington October 3, 1959, and finally discontinued on August 31, 1976.

LONE ROCK. Established November 8, 1875. The Lone Rock post office was named for a large rock which stands about 100 feet high and measures some 60 feet in diameter. This rock is located near the center of the community and is certainly the most prominent local landmark. The community is in the southeastern part of the county on Lone Rock Creek in section 36, township 5 south, range 23 east.

19th Century Postmasters: Robert G. Robinson; Jay P. Lucas, Sep. 6, 1883; Edward C. Nerren, Dec. 4, 1884; Robert G. Robinson, Jan. 30, 1885; Abraham Wing, Oct. 25, 1886; Albert Henshaw, Apr. 26, 1887; Abraham Wing, Oct. 30, 1889; John B. Goff, Dec. 31, 1890; Edward Cofner, May 15, 1893; Martha Hogan, Oct. 4, 1894; Perry L. Ham, Sep. 28, 1898.

Status: The Lone Rock post office was discontinued July 5, 1963.

ROCKVILLE. Established November 26, 1878, by change of name from Scotts. After four years of relatively light postal business, the Scotts post office was moved some three miles east up Rock Creek, and its name was changed to Rockville. The Rockville post office was located in section 7, township 1 north, range 20 east.

19th Century Postmasters: Thomas S. Lang; Albert N. Varney, Jan. 8, 1883.

Status: Discontinued August 2, 1889, papers to Blalock.

WILLOWS. Established December 17, 1878. This office was named for Willow Creek, and was located at or near the mouth of that stream in the northeast corner of the county.

19th Century Postmasters: Joseph W. Smith; Daniel P. Shippey, Mar. 13, 1882; James A. Vawter, Jan. 26, 1895; Charles T. White, Apr. 13, 1898.

Status: The Willows post office was not in service from June 29, 1885, to January 29, 1895, and from July 12, 1895, to April 13, 1898. This post office was discontinued October 15, 1942.

BLALOCK. Established January 11, 1881. This post office was the first in the Gilliam County area to be established along the Columbia River. It was named in honor of Dr. Nelson G. Blalock, a pioneer resident of Walla Walla, who was active in horticulture along the Columbia River. Blalock post office was on the south bank of the Columbia at the mouth of Blalock Canyon in section 31, township 3 north, range 20 east.

19th Century Postmasters: Burrell W. Griffin; James E. Sindel, Sep. 10, 1884; Walter H. Mariner, Oct. 12, 1887; William J. Mariner, Apr. 13, 1889.

Status: The Blalock post office was discontinued December 31, 1959.

FLETTVILLE. Established November 4, 1881. The Flettville post office was named for George W. Flett, a pioneer settler on Rock Creek in the eastern part of Gilliam County. This office was lo-cated on Rock Creek a few miles northeast of the latter-day commun-ity of Gwendolen in the central part of township 2 south, range 22 east.

19th Century Postmasters: George W. Flett.

Status: Discontinued February 25, 1884, papers to Olex.

ALKALI. Established November 7, 1881. The Alkali post office was named for the canyon at whose mouth it was situated. This name is quite common in arid regions, and was probably applied here because Alkali Canyon does not support a year 'round stream. Water found in the canyon would thus be heavy in dissolved alkaline salts. The post office was located on the south bank of the Columbia River in section 21, township 3 north, range 21 east.

19th Century Postmasters: Elijah W. Rhea; Wdwin B. Comfort, Apr. 22, 1883; Thomas L. Bradbury, July 23, 1885.

Status: The name of this office was changed to Arlington Dec. 31, 1885.

FLETTS. Established May 5, 1884. This was the second post office to be named for George W. Flett, and it was located in the same general vicinity as the old Flettville office. The exact location

of the Fletts post office moved about with the residence of the postmaster, but in general it was located near section 15, township 2 south, range 22 east in eastern Gilliam County.

19th Century Postmasters: Orlando O. Rowland; David F. Stricklin, Sep. 28, 1885; Henry M. Pitman, Dec. 31, 1885; David F. Stricklin, Nov. 9, 1886.

Status: The Flettville post office was discontinued September 12, 1888, papers to Legality.

OASIS. Established May 5, 1884. The Oasis post office bore a descriptive name. This office was located in Eightmile Canyon in the northeastern part of the county. A large spring in the canyon provided enough water to support a small farm of irrigated alfalfa, but the farm was literally an oasis in the surrounding arid land.

19th Century Postmasters: Thomas Fairhurst.

Status: The Oasis post office was discontinued November 3, 1886, mail to Arlington.

CONDON. Established July 10, 1884. This post office was named for Harvey C. Condon of the Arlington firm of Condon & Cornish, which sold lots in the townsite. Condon was the head of a spur railroad built south from Arlington on the Columbia River. It became the county seat of newly created Gilliam County because of its central location and the promise of prosperity anticipated by its early settlers.

19th Century Postmasters: David B. Trimble; Linus W. Darling, Sep. 11, 1889; Harbert Halstead, July 3, 1890; Linus W. Darling, Apr. 22, 1893; John Lyons, Apr. 6, 1897; John F. Reisacher, Nov. 18, 1897.

Status: The Condon post office is currently operating; ZIP Code - 97823.

MAYVILLE. Established October 3, 1884. The details behind the name of this office are obscure, but McArthur reports that the name had to do with some incident which developed as the office was being established. Mayville post office was located in the extreme southern part of Gilliam County on the upper reaches of North Fork Butte Creek in section 4, township 6 south, range 21 east.

19th Century Postmasters: Samuel J. Thornton; Louis C. Trask, Nov. 9 1886; George C. Rippey, June 30, 1892; Ella N. Rinehart, Aug. 30, 1894; Ella N. Angell, Apr. 20, 1899.

Status: The Mayville post office was converted to a rural station of Fossil post office on May 31, 1958.

CLEM. Established November 24, 1884. The Clem post office was named for Clemens A. Danneman, an early settler who owned a ranch which provided overnight accomodations for travelers. Danneman was also

the first postmaster. Clem post office was located near the Condon spur of the Union Pacific Railroad in Scott Canyon, and in section 4, township 2 south, range 21 east.

19th Century Postmasters: Clemmens A. Danneman; James Larch, Apr. 17, 1897.

Status: The Clem post office was not in service from May 5, 1896, to April 17, 1897. The office was discontinued March 31, 1937.

LEGALITY. Established November 24, 1884. The Legality post office was a short-lived affair located east from Rock Creek a few miles north of Olex. The story behind this unusual name is not known.

19th Century Postmasters: Henry J. Knott; Calvin A. Vining, Sep. 17, 1885; Benjamin T. Snell, Nov. 1, 1886.

Status: The Legality post office was discontinued July 9, 1888, papers to Olex.

BAIRD. Established December 8, 1884. This post office was named for its first and only postmaster. The Baird post office is reported to have been located at a point where travelers along the Emigrant Trail reached Alkali Canyon. This would place the office a few miles south of present-day Arlington.

19th Century Postmasters: James C. Baird.

Status: The Baird post office was discontinued February 8, 1886, papers to Arlington.

ARLINGTON. Established December 31, 1885, by change of name from Alkali. The citizens of Alkali, seeking a better image for their community, decided that Arlington, the former home of Gen. Robert E. Lee, had a more pleasing ring to it. It is said that a number of former southerners lived in the town at the time.

19th Century Postmasters: Thomas L. Bradbury; Frank T. Hurlburt, Apr. 17, 1886; James M. Keeney, May 16, 1888; Joseph H. Keeney, Nov. 28, 1888; John G. Ardrey, Oct. 16, 1889; William O. Zeigler, Sep. 11, 1890; Charles W. Shurte, Apr. 20, 1894; James M. Johns, June 25, 1897; Elijah B. Frum, Mar. 6, 1899.

Status: Arlington post office is currently operating; ZIP Code - 97812.

IDEA. Established February 5, 1886. It is reported that this post office was to be named for the wife of a local settler. The lady's name was Ida, but somehow the name got blurred in communications between Oregon and the Post Office Department. The Idea post office was located about six miles east of Condon in section 10, township 4 south, range 22 east on or near Sixmile Creek.

19th Century Postmasters: James W. Hyatt; Royce James, May 4, 1889.

Status: The Idea post office was discontinued July 26, 1889, papers to Gooseberry.

MATNEY. Established December 4, 1886. The Matney post office was apparently named for a local settler, but details are not known. The office was located about four miles southeast of Condon, on or near the East Fork of Thirtymile Creek.

19th Century Postmasters: Godfrey Schilling.

Status: Matney post office was discontinued April 20, 1889, papers to Condon.

VINTON. Established September 26, 1888. This one is a complete mystery. No information concerning either the origin of the name or the location of this office has come to light. It may in fact have been located in territory which was later organized as part of Wheeler County.

19th Century Postmasters: James S. Wheeler.

Status: Discontinued November 18, 1889, no papers.

SHELBY. Established October 22, 1888. The Shelby post office served about the same area as the earlier Flettville and Fletts post offices. This office, probably named for a local settler, was located on Rock Creek about six to eight miles south of Olex.

19th Century Postmasters: Malvina Anderson; Lucius W. Paul, June 20, 1889; William B. Flett, June 13, 1880.

Status: The Shelby post office was discontinued May 24, 1883, mail to Olex.

AJAX. Established December 26, 1888. This office is reported to have been named for the steamer AJAX, which brought a local settler to Oregon from California. Ajax post office was located between Ferry and Devils canyons in section 20, township 2 south, range 19 east about 13 miles due west of Condon.

19th Century Postmasters: Mrs. Arabella Thrasher; Mrs. Ellen Palmer, Mar. 18, 1890.

Status: Ajax post office was not in service from Dec. 6, 1895, to Jan. 30, 1910, and was finally closed out to Condon December 28, 1920.

CROY. Established April 17, 1890. Croy post office was located in the northwestern corner of Gilliam County on or near Rock Creek, and probably not far from the old Scotts post office. The origin of this name is not known.

19th Century Postmasters: William Irvine; John J. Bash, Sep. 19, 1898.

Status: Croy post office was discontinued January 30, 1911, mail to Rockcreek.

IGO. Established February 19, 1891. The Igo post office was named for John Igo, an early settler in the area. This office was located in Ferry Canyon, about seven miles northwest of Condon.

19th Century Postmasters: James G. Fix.

Status: Discontinued December 17, 1892, papers to Condon.

GUMBO. Established October 18, 1892, with Zachariah J. Martin as the first postmaster, the establishing order was rescinded Nov. 15, 1892, before the office could begin actual operation.

NINETEENTH CENTURY OREGON POSTMARKS: GILLIAM COUNTY, OREGON
[Part XII of the 19th CENTURY OREGON POSTMARK CATALOG]

By Charles A. Whittlesey

Gilliam County postmarks dated before 1900 are known from just 10 different offices, but given the short-lived, ephemeral nature of many of this county's early post offices, ten offices is not too bad a representation. Arlington was the only Gilliam County office to receive a postmaster compensation of as much as $1,000 during the 19th century, and that figure was reached only in 1899. Condon, the county seat, never exceeded a figure of $750 in postmaster compensation.

A total of 33 differnt postmark types have thus far been recorded from Gilliam County offices. As expected, Arlington leads the list with 7 different types, and, under its former name of Alkali, three more types may be added. Lone Rock follows with five different types and Condon and Olex are represented by four different.
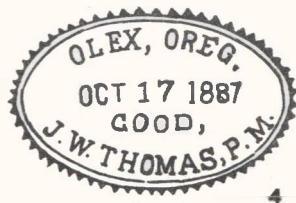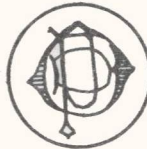
Blalock represents an interesting case. Only three examples of 19th century postmarks are known from the office, but each one represents a different postmark type. Can anyone add to our knowledge of Blalock postmarks, or any of the other Gilliam County offices? If so, please contact the author directly or in care of the editor of LA POSTA.

GILLIAM COUNTY NINETEENTH CENTURY POSTMARKS

TOWN TYPE NO.	POSTMARK CODE	EARLIEST DATE	LATEST DATE	EXAMPLES KNOWN	KILLER TYPE*	NOTES
ALKALI (1881 - 1885)						
1.	M	1Nov82	6Jun83	4		
2.	C1EN1B27	14Apr84	21Jul85	5	Target	
3.	C22JS1B32	20Jan86	18Mar86	4	Target	(1)
ARLINGTON (1885 - Date)						
1.	C31JS1RRB30	21Apr86	15Nov88	4	Wheel-of-fort.	
2.	C1JS1B31	17Nov86	19Jan88	10	Target	
3.	F(OPEN RECT.)	12Dec88b	16Feb89b	2		(2)
4.	OV1JS1RRB47	23Oct89p		1		(2)
5.	C1EN1B27	16Dec89	15Mar90	2	Cork	
6.	C21D9S1RRB30	29Aug93	07	2		(3)
7.	C1JT1B28.5	30Sep93	9Oct94	3	Cork	
BLALOCK (1881 - 1959)						
1.	M	13Jul81		1		
2.	C1J3,9N1RRB32.5	20Nov85		1	Target	
3.	C1EN1BBR26.5	11Nov90		1	Cork	
CONDON (1884 - Date)						
1.	C1JS1B35	1Aug87	16Apr89	2	Target	
2.	C1EN1BBR26.5	27Oct90		1	Target	
3.	C1EN1BBR27.5	7Sep94	27Oct94	2	Target	
4.	C1JN1B28.5	16May98		1	Cork	
FLETTS (1884 - 1888)						
1.	C31JN1B28	14Feb85		1		
LONE ROCK (1875 - 1963)						
1.	M	78?		1		
2.	C21EA1BBR25	80?		1	Target	
3.	C21EN1B32	30Dec83	29Jul87	4	Target	
4.	C1EN1BBR26.5	26Nov94		1	Target	
5.	C1EN1BBM27.5	14Dec97		1	Cork	
MAYVILLE (1884 - 1958)						
1.	C21JN1RRB30	22Feb86b	10Aug87p	2	POD Monogram	
2.	C1EN1B28	26Mar99		1	None	
OLEX (1874 - 1959)						
1.	M	29Dec81	7Jan82	2		
2.	C1EN1B27.5	3Feb85	20May88	2	Target	
3.	C1EN1BBR26.5	11Sep91		1		
4.	OV22E9S1RRB37	17Oct87	12Dec88	2		(2)

ALKALI,
APR
14
1884
OREG.
2

ALKALI,
JAN 20 1886
OREGON
3

ARLINGTON,
MAY 20 1886
OREGON.
1

ARLINGTON,
MAY 17 1887
OREGON.
2

↓ Arlington,
GOOD
——————
FEB 16 1889
——————
↑ Gilliam Co. Or.
J.M. KEENEY.
3

ARLINGTON,
✠ OCT 23 1889 ✠
OREGON.
4

ARLINGTON
MAR
15
1890
OREG.
5

W.O.Zeigler, P.M.
AUG 29 1893
Arlington, Ore.
6

BLALOCK
WASCO CO.
NOV
20
1885
J. R. SINDEL. P. M.
OREGON
2

CONDON
APR 1·6 1889
OREGON.
1

CONDON
OCT
27
1890
OREG.
2

LONE ROCK
MAY
24
OREG.
2

LONE ROCK,
NOV
6
1884
OREG.
3

MAYVILLE,
FEB
22
1886
OREGON.
1

MAYVILLE
MAR
26
1899
OREG
2

OLEX
MAY
20
1888
OREG.
2

OLEX, OREG.
OCT 17 1887
GOOD,
J. W. THOMAS, P.M.
4

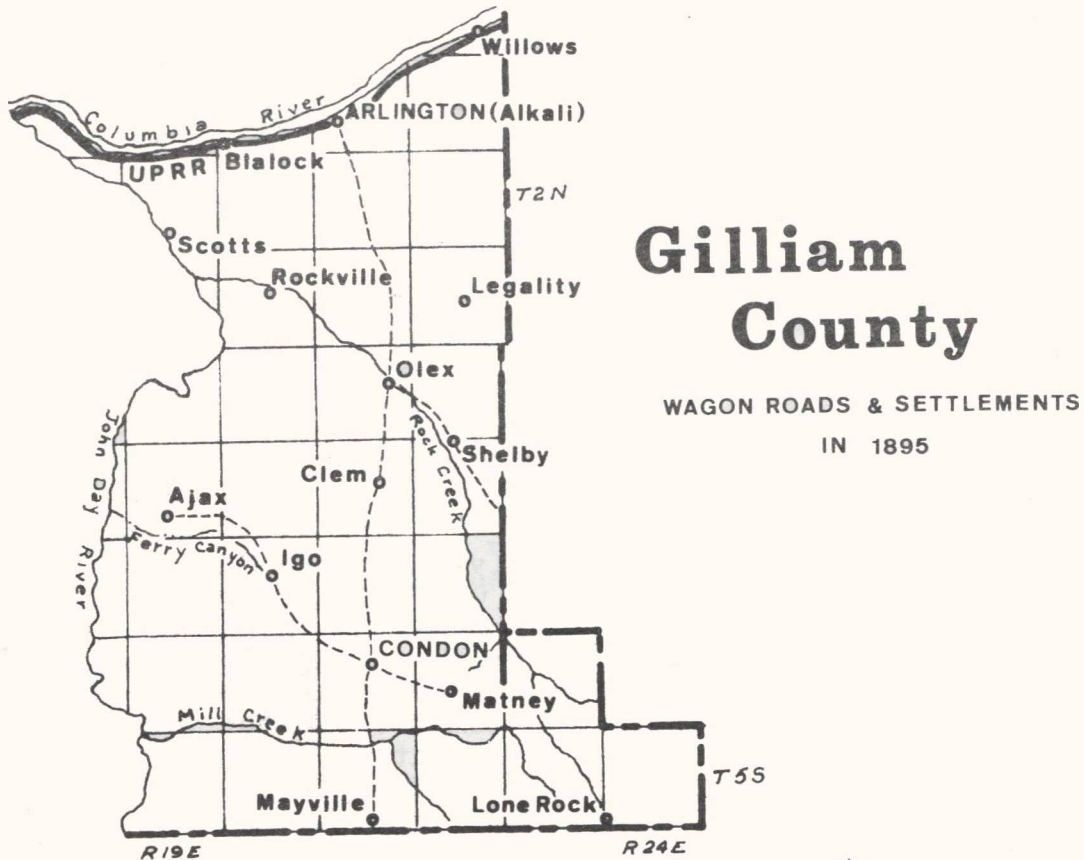ROCKVILLE,
NOV
29
1883
OREGON.
2

SCOTT'S
SEP
4
1878
OREG,
2

GILLIAM COUNTY NINETEENTH CENTURY POSTMARKS

TOWN TYPE NO.	POSTMARK CODE	EARLIEST DATE	LATEST DATE	EXAMPLES KNOWN	KILLER TYPE	NOTES
ROCKVILLE (1878 - 1889)						
1.	C1EA1BBR26.5	80?	80?	2	Target	(4)
2.	C21JN1B27.5	29Nov83		1	Grid	
SCOTTS (1867 - 1878)						
1.	M	20Aug75		2		
2.	C1EA1B23.5	3Jul78r	4Sep78r	2	Star	

*Killer known in association with postmark; not necessarily integral.

Notes: (1) Used after name changed to ARLINGTON in POD records;
December 31, 1885.
(2) Known only on POD Registry envelope.
(3) 1907 use may be favor cancel; known on picture post card.
(4) Cover franked with 3¢ green banknote.

Gilliam County

WAGON ROADS & SETTLEMENTS
IN 1895

RWH '78

THE POST OFFICES OF THE COLORADO DESERT

By Frank B. Norris

PART I: EASTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY

The Colorado Desert, like the Mojave Desert directly to the north, is located in eastern California. In general, the Colorado Desert exists as the lower elevation counterpart to the Mojave. Within the Colorado Desert are such prosperous areas as Palm Springs, Blythe and the Imperial Valley, along with many remote areas accessible only by foot or four-wheel drive vehicle. The Riverside County portion of this desert comprises roughly its northern half. As is the case with the desert in western San Bernardino County, it has had a long and varied history, but has experienced its greatest population growth since World War II.

For thousands of years the northern Colorado Desert had been the home of several Indian peoples, particularly in the vicinity of the San Jacinto Mountains and along the Colorado River, which forms the county's eastern boundary. The interior of the desert was not explored until the early 19th century, when the Mexican government sent exploring parties out from the California coast into the desert. Soon afterward, an annual "salt trek" was established between the coastal communities and the Salton Sea, which was dry at the time.

The area began to receive more travelers in the 1850's and 1860's, in large part brought about by the establishment of the Bradshaw Trail in 1862. This route crossed the area from Palm Springs to the Colorado River near Blythe. The trail also passed through present-day Indian Wells and Dos Palmas, the latter erroneously referred to in postal records as "Dos Palmos."

Arrival of the railroad in the mid-1870's brought the first significant growth to the northern Colorado Desert. Part of the eventual transcontinental route of the Southern Pacific, track was laid into the desert from the west and was responsible for the area's first post office being established at Indian Wells (later Indio) in 1876. Railroads continued to play a leading role in the establishment of area post offices up to the 1920's.

Following the flurry of activity surrounding railroad construction, the next developments were agriculturally oriented. Blythe, a currently prosperous town along the Colorado River, made an abortive attempt to develop in the early 1880's. Isolation, heat, flooding and the high cost of water channelization combined to bring about the town's early demise. To the west, small farm areas surrounded the artesian wells at Walters (later Mecca), Kokell (later Thermal) and Indio. Palm Springs, now a famous sun and health resort, began as a small agricultural oasis in the 1880's. So did Palmdale, an ephemeral community to the south of Palm Springs. Neither of these two settlements was particularly successful, since local Indian clans and the failure of the irri-

gation system denied early settlers their water rights.

The eastern part of the county saw slow but continuous growth in the first few decades of the twentieth century. Blythe and the smaller valley towns of Palo Verde, Fertilla, Rannells and Neighbors all began to attract between 1905 and 1915. Mesaville, a homestead community located on the higher ground to the northwest, also came into being, but with less success. Palm Springs began to enjoy sustained growth. With the continued expansion of the Los Angeles area and greater public acceptance of the desert's recreational opportunities, the community began to attract an increasing number of well-to-do health-seekers, sun-worshippers and, after the late 1920's, motion-picture celebrites.

The desert's biggest activity in the 1930's was the construction of the Metropolitan Water District (MWD) aqueduct from Parker Dam on the Colorado River in San Bernardino County to Los Angeles. Many workers who might otherwise have been unemployed helped in its construction, and because of the activity the towns of Berdoo Camp and Desert Center came into being. Joshua Tree National Monument, located largely in the county, was created in 1936, but primary access to the Monument was by way of the north, where Twentynine Palms, Joshua Tree and other "High Desert" communities outside the county were beginning their development.

During World War II the eastern desert saw activities related to military operations. General Patton used most of the land east of Desert Center for his tank training exercises, and operated several headquarters camps at scattered locations in the region. None of these resulted in post offices however, as training continued for only slightly over a year. Meanwhile, in the Coachella Valley, small farm and retirement towns began to appear at such places as Desert Hot Springs, Cathedral City, La Quinta and others.

Since World War II, population growth has been impressive. A comparable increase in the number of post offices has not occurred. Among the few post-war post offices which have been established are Sky Valley, an office located in a 5-acre "jackrabbit" subdivision; Eagle Mountain, at the site of a large iron mine opened by Kaiser Steel; and Chiriaco Summit, a wayside stop for highway travelers along U. S. 60 (Interstate 10). Both postal regulations and regional economics appear to indicate that little new postal activity will occur in the near future. Area growth however, will prevent the many discontinuances of post offices common to more stagnant regions.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY DESERT POST OFFICES

Post Office	Established	Discontinued	Notes
Arabia	22 Aug 1913	30 Oct 1915	(Thermal)
Berdoo Camp	22 May 1934	15 Jul 1937	(Indio)
Bermuda Dunes Rural Br.	1 Sep 1961	1 Jul 1970	(Indio)

S A N   B E R N A R D I N O   C O.

52

WHITE
WATER
DESERT HOT SPRINGS
(Noria?)
to Los Ang-
eles
NORTH PALM
SPRINGS
10
Snowcreek
Garnet
(Pierce Gray)
Sky
Valley
JOSHUA   TREE   NATIONAL   MONUMENT
present boundaries

S A N
PALM
SPRINGS
THOUSAND PALMS
Edom
Berdoo
Camp
EAGLE MOUNTAIN
M. W. D.
Aqueduct

Palm-
dale
CATHEDRAL
CITY
Bermuda
Dunes
INDIO (Indian
Wells)
pre-1950
boundaries
97
DESERT CENTER

Ind. Res.
(alternate
sections)
RANCHO
MIRAGE
10
N

J A C I N T O
PALM
DESERT
Indian
Wells
LA
QUINTA
COACHELLA
THERMAL
(Kokell)
CHIRIACO
SUMMIT
10

M O U N T A I N S
Arabia
I. R.
MECCA (Walters)
RR rerouted 1905-07
NORTH SHORE
SCALE OF MILES
5   0   5   10   15

I.R.
86
Salton Sea
formed 1905-07
Dos Palmos
Coachella Canal
Rannells

I.R.
Salton

S A N   D I E G O   C O.
I M P E R I A L   C O.

I.R.
Lost Lake

Midland

95

Mesaville
Fertila

BLYTHE

Neighbors

RIPLEY

POST OFFICES of
RIVERSIDE
County
(Desert Portion)

EXISTING RAILROADS
ABANDONED RAILROADS
HIGHWAYS
• EXISTING POST OFFICES
○ DISCONTINUED POST
   OFFICES

RIVERSIDE COUNTY DESERT POST OFFICES

Post Office	Established	Discontinued	Notes
Blythe	6 Mar 1882	31 Aug 1882	no papers
	15 Jan 1883	23 May 1884	(Ehrenberg, AZ)
	26 Dec 1908	Operating	
Cathedral City	27 Sep 1928	Operating	
Chiriaco Summit Rural Br.	1 Aug 1959	Operating	
Coachella	30 Nov 1901	Operating	
Desert Center	15 Mar 1934	Operating	
Desert Hot Springs	1 Aug 1944	Operating	
Dos Palmos (sic)	10 May 1877	26 Jun 1877	no papers
Eagle Mountain	1 Nov 1951	Operating	
Edom	28 Aug 1913	31 May 1939	To THOUSAND PALMS
Fertilla	3 Mar 1914	31 May 1930	(Blythe)
Garnet	1 Jul 1930	4 Aug 1943	(Palm Springs)
Gray	8 Aug 1913	9 May 1918	moved to Noria
Indian Wells (1)	22 May 1876	15 May 1877	
Indian Wells (2)	9 Jul 1915	30 Dec 1953	(Indio)
Indian Wells Rural Br.	1 Sep 1968	30 Jun 1972	To Br. of Palm D.
Indian Wells Branch	1 Jul 1972	30 Jun 1977	(Palm Desert)
Indio	3 Jul 1888	Operating	
Kokell	10 May 1901	6 Jun 1902	To THERMAL
La Quinta	22 Nov 1930	30 Jun 1943	(Indio)
	1 May 1948	Operating	
Lost Lake Rural Br.	16 Jun 1964	Operating	
Mecca	26 Sep 1903	Operating	
Mesaville	23 Aug 1911	1 Mar 1914	moved to Fertilla
Midland	5 Nov 1927	10 Mar 1967	(Blythe)
Neighbors	31 Oct 1905	15 Dec 1920	(Blythe)
Noria	10 May 1918	30 Sep 1920	(Edom)
North Palm Springs	16 Feb 1950	Operating	
North Shore Rural Br.	2 Apr 1962	Operating	
Palmdale	9 Mar 1888	11 May 1890	m. to Palm Sprs.
Palm Desert	16 Jul 1947	Operating	
Palm Springs	12 May 1890	Operating	
Pierce	18 May 1899	30 Apr 1902	(Palm Springs)
Rancho Mirage	1 Feb 1951	Operating	
Rannells	18 Feb 1909	15 Dec 1933	(Ripley)
Ripley	12 Jul 1920	23 Jun 1922	(Blythe)
	1 May 1923	Operating	
Salton	4 Feb 1889	7 Aug 1891	(Indio)
	2 Mar 1894	30 Apr 1906	(Mecca)
Sky Valley Rural Br.	16 Jun 1959	5 Jun 1969	(Desert Hot Sprs)
Snowcreek	25 Apr 1914	31 Jul 1918	(Cabazon)
Thermal	7 Jun 1902	Operating	Was Kokell
Thousand Palms	1 Jun 1939	Operating	Was Edom
Walters	2 Jun 1896	25 Sep 1903	To Mecca
White Water	3 May 1926	Operating	

Note: All existing rural branches became Community Post Offices (CPO)
upon publication of the 1977 Post Office Directory.

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

The leaves all fell off the mulberry trees last night. All in one night, we in southern New Mexico moved from Indian summer to what passes here as winter. Today is December 4th, and, while the sun was as bright and the sky was as blue as they were yesterday, today the bare trees speak of winter. Winter is one of my favorite times of the year. I like the sharp bite of the air outside, the smell of juniper logs burning in the fireplace, and the happiness I feel in knowing that I can devote lots of time to postal history without the distraction of those tempting summertime activities such as camping or trout fishing. Every winter I try to conceive and execute a major postal history project. It might be writing up, illustrating and mounting a new exhibit. It might be planning and beginning a new collecting field. Or it might be taking on a research project leading to an article, monograph or book.

Fortunately, some of you share my particular delight in the winter season, for there are recent indications that postal history work is afoot. Edith Doane sends word that her Montana study will be complete soon. Chuck Whittlesey has already forwarded three new Oregon counties in the 19th Century Oregon Postmark Catalog. These will appear in Volume 10, and a "special" treatment will be given to Umatilla County. Charles Towle reports that he is coming along nicely with his project. The exact nature of the "project" will be announced in the near future. I know there are others of you who are thinking about postal history studies. Why not drop me a line, and let me in on your plans. I promise to be of any help I can, even if you choose not to publish your work in LA POSTA. Of course, if you are thinking of publishing in LA POSTA, I will bend over backward to make your task easier.

The response to Miss Doane's series continues to be strong. It is anticipated that a complete listing of additions will appear at the conclusion of the present series, so please check your collections, note additions as you can and send them to me for forwarding to Edith. Edith will then answer your letter directly.

William P. Hoffman, RD #2 ALPS, Averill Park, NY 12018, sends word that he has a duplicate set of LA POSTA backnumbers from Vol. 6, No. 6 through Vol. 8, No. 6. Bill is asking $25 for the set postpaid. If you are interested, please write Bill direct. Bill also reports that he is still in search of Vol. 1, No. 1 through Vol. 4, No. 1. Can anyone help?

Subscriptions for Volume 10 have been coming in over the past three weeks. Thus far we have 23 Sustaining Subscribers signed up (about one-third of the current total) and 13 regular subscribers renewing (about one-fifth of current total). Please renew today so that there is no possibility of unintentionally interrupting your subscription. A very happy and prosperous 1979 to everyone!

RICHARD W. HELBOCK, EDITOR, 1635 MARIPOSA DRIVE, LAS CRUCES, NM 88001

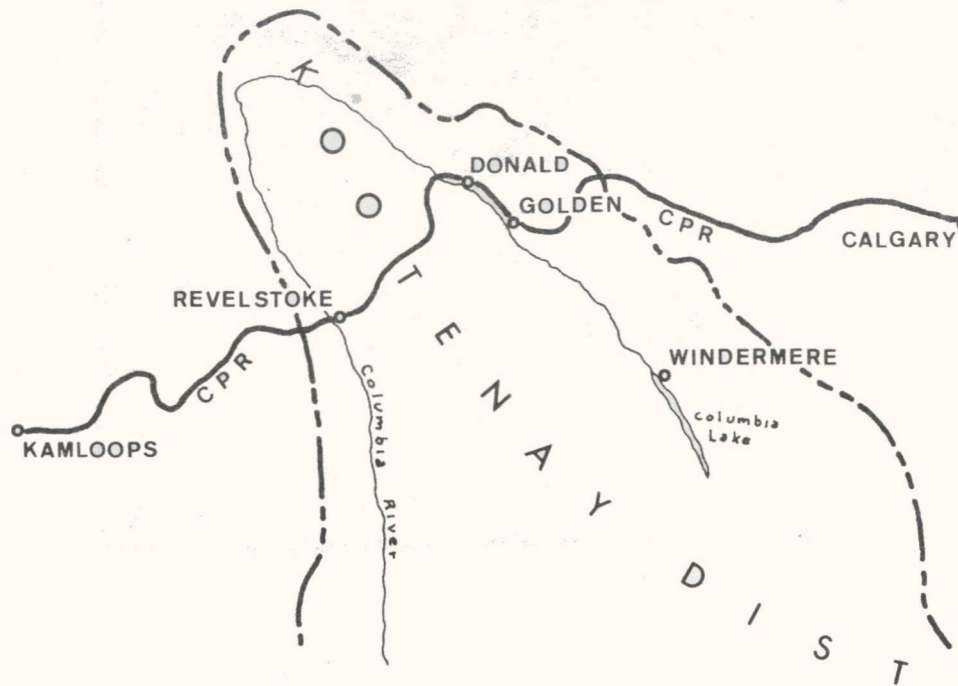# THE STOLEN CHURCH OF WINDERMERE, BRITISH COLUMBIA

By John Henry

Some people insist that the church was stolen. Others, more lenient, say that, like an abandoned puppy, it just followed Mr. Kimpton home. Regardless of how it happened, Windermere had the church and Revelstoke didn't. And tempers flared.

During the early days of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) in British Columbia, the town of Donald was a division point on the main line between Golden and Revelstoke. As such, a fairly large town had become established based on the requirements of serving the large population of CPR employees. Among the many niceties of living there was the St. Peter's Anglican Church.

Then, in 1899, the ax fell. The CPR, in its infinite wisdom, decided to terminate the division point at Donald and consolidate the services with those available at Revelstoke. All employees wishing to stay with the CPR were relocated, including their houses and possessions, by the CPR. Local businessmen, seeing their customers moving away, closed shop, and in many cases moved their buildings to more fruitful locations. Finally, the town was essentially abandoned except for the church building.

One of the Donald merchants, Rufus A. Kimpton, had business interests in Windermere, B.C., and planned to resettle in that town. Not liking to leave the abandoned church, Mr. Klimpton had it taken down. The CPR transported it for him to Golden. There, it was loaded on a barge and steamer for transport up the Columbia River to Windermere where it was erected on the east side of Columbia Lake (see map).

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, in New Westminster church auth-
orities had given the abandoned church building to St. Peter's
Church of Revelstoke with the understanding that they were respon-
sible for getting the building to Revelstoke. When the Revelstoke
delegation arrived at Donald they found no building, but soon dis-
covered what had happened to it. Many angry letters were addressed
to, and ignored by, the congregation of the new church in Winder-
mere directing and demanding that the building be given up to
Revelstoke. The Windermere congregation assumed a "fat, dumb and
happy" attitude, and eventually the trouble went away -- that is,
except for one small detail. While the building was being trans-
shipped in Golden, some scoundrel stole the church bell.

The missing bell soon turned up, calling the good Anglican
Church people of Golden to services in their St. Paul's Church. It
was now the turn of the Windermere people to write demanding let-
ters and commission delegations, but they found that others, too,
could ignore their mail and play dumb. Finally, the inevitable
was accepted, and all efforts to recover the bell were terminated.

Today the building, sans bell, continues to serve the Anglican
congregation of St. Peter's in Windermere, while the stolen bell
calls other Anglican worshipers to services at St. Paul's in Golden
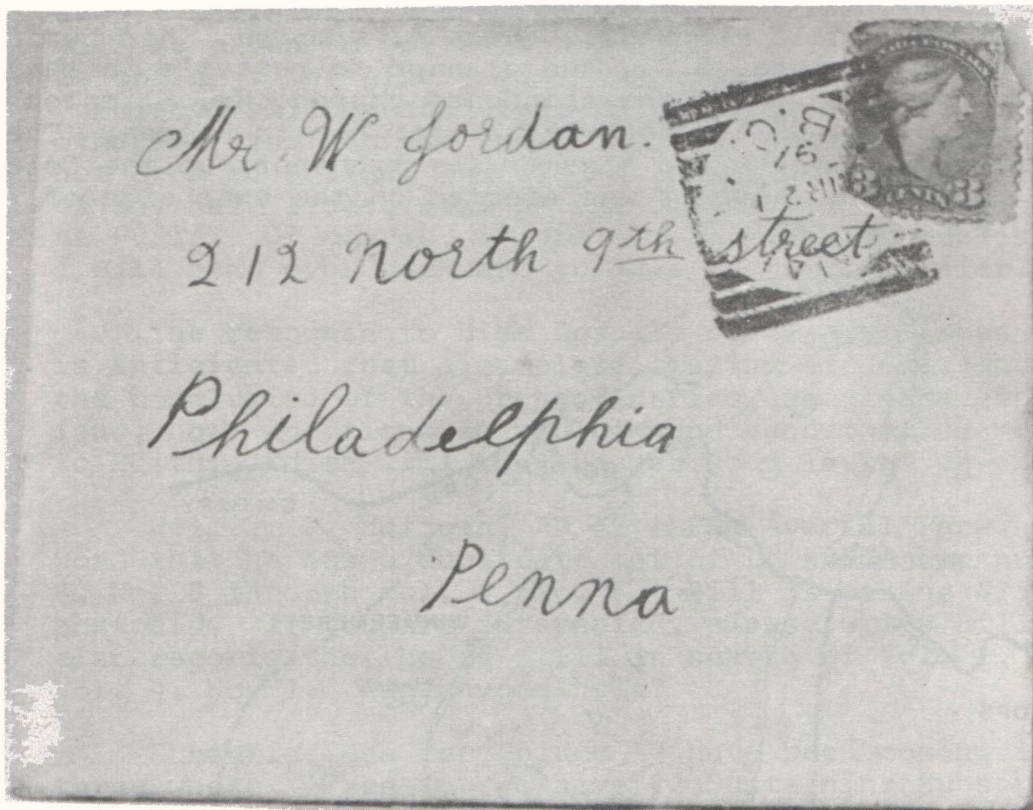one hundred miles or so down the Columbia.
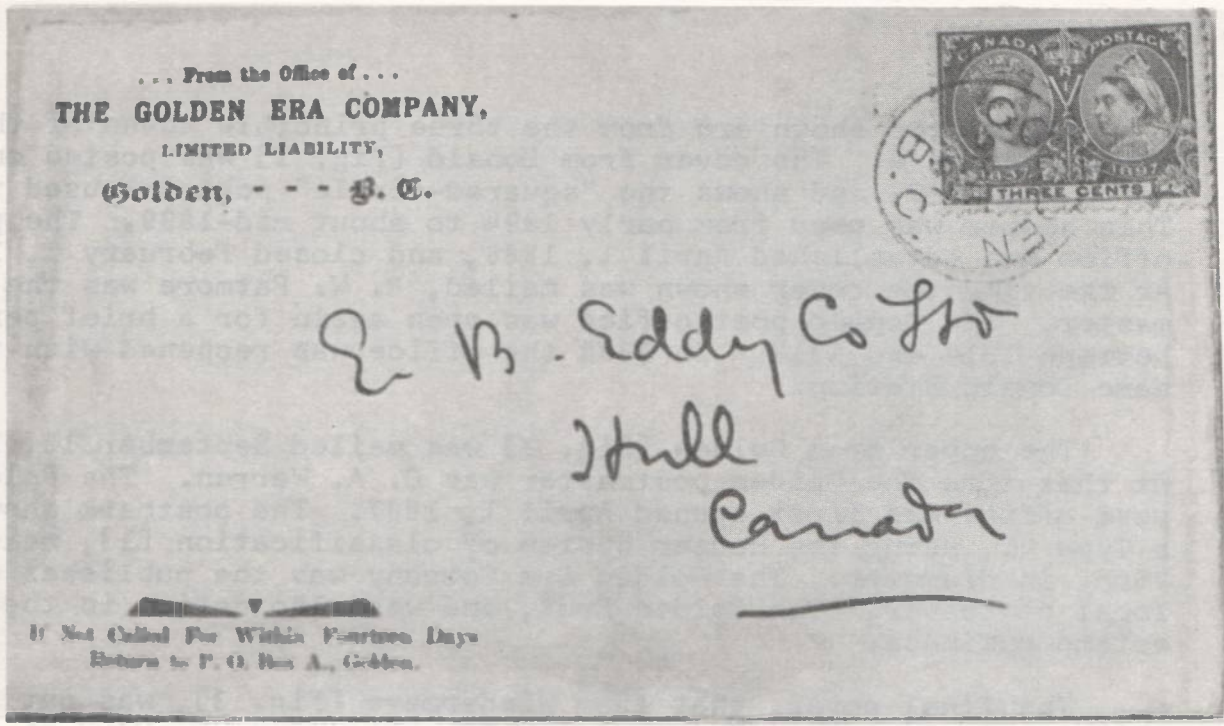

Figure 1.   DONALD, B. C.
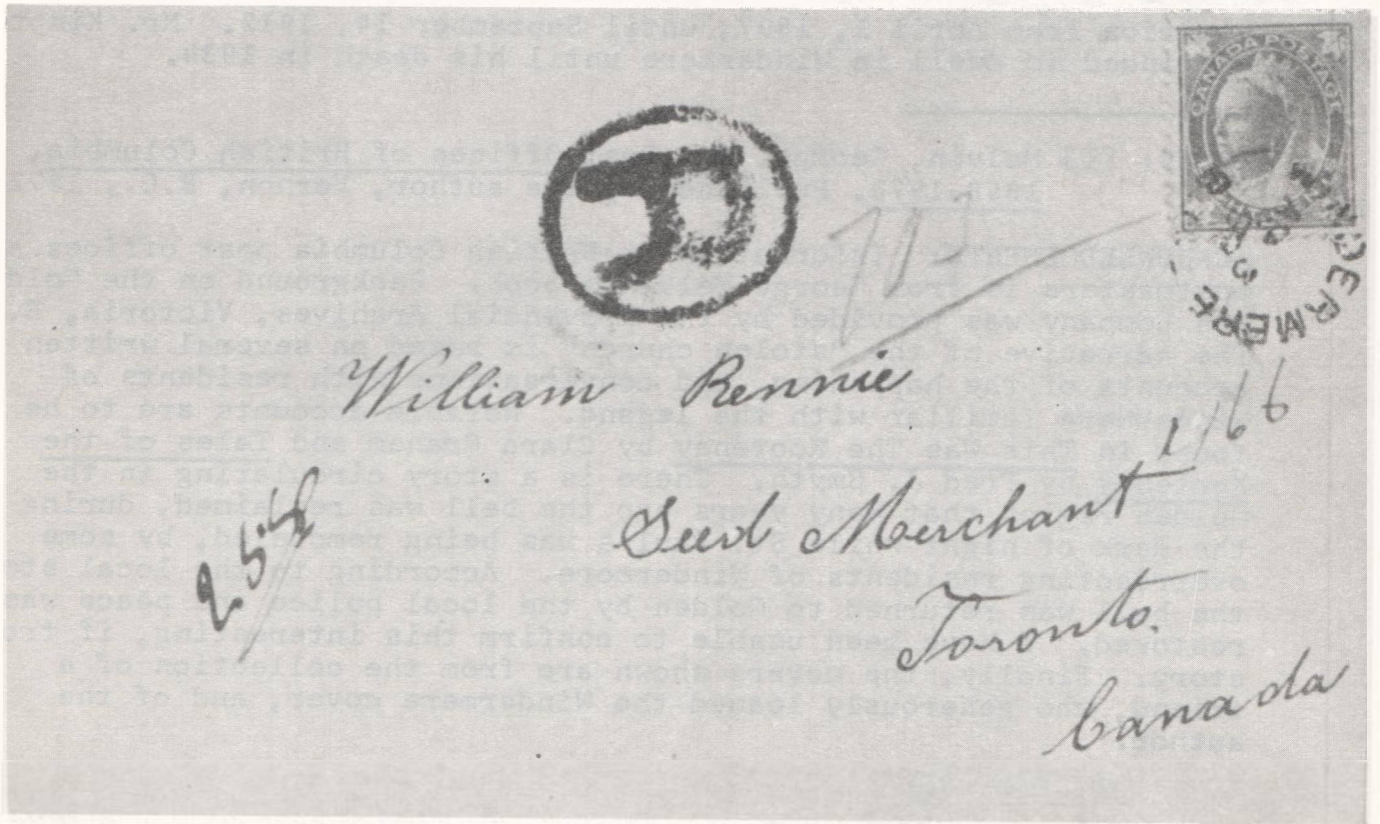
Figure 2. GOLDEN, B. C.

Figure 3. WINDERMERE, B. C.

The covers shown are from the three principle towns of the above narrative. The cover from Donald [Fig. 1] was posted on March 27, 1897, and shows the "squared-circle" postmark used there. This hammer was used from early 1894 to about mid-1899. The post office was established April 1, 1886, and closed February 1, 1903. At the time the cover shown was mailed, R. W. Patmore was the postmaster. The Donald post office was open again for a brief period between 1914 and 1917. In 1930 the office was reopened with the name Donald Station.

The cover from Golden [Fig. 2] was mailed September 13, 1897. At that time the Golden postmaster was C. A. Warren. The Golden post office was first opened April 1, 1887. The postmark shown is a Type VI, using the Houser System of classification [1], measuring 25mm. in diameter. The Golden Era Company was the publisher of the local newspaper, "The Golden Era", and was also active in the real estate business.

The final cover, that from Windermere [Fig. 3], was put in the mails April 3, 1898. The postmark is a Type II using the Houser System. Windermere post office was established October 1, 1887. At the time the cover was mailed the postmaster was R. A. Kimpton -- yes, the same man who brought the church home. Kimpton held the position from April 1, 1897, until September 14, 1912. Mr. Kimpton continued to dwell in Windermere until his death in 1934.

NOTES: [1] Melvin, George. The Post Offices of British Columbia, 1858-1970. Published by the author, Vernon, B.C., 1972.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: Information on British Columbia post offices and postmasters is from George Melvin's book. Background on the Golden Era Company was provided by the Provencial Archives, Victoria, B.C. The narrative of the "stolen church" is based on several written accounts of the happening, and conversations with residents of Windermere familiar with the legend. Notable accounts are to be found in This Was The Kootenay by Clara Graham and Tales of the Kootenay by Fred J. Smyth. There is a story circulating in the Golden region that many years ago the bell was reclaimed, during the dark of night while St. Paul's was being remodeled, by some overreacting residents of Windermere. According to the local story, the bell was returned to Golden by the local police and peace was restored. I have been unable to confirm this interesting, if true, story. Finally, the covers shown are from the collection of a friend, who generously loaned the Windermere cover, and of the author.