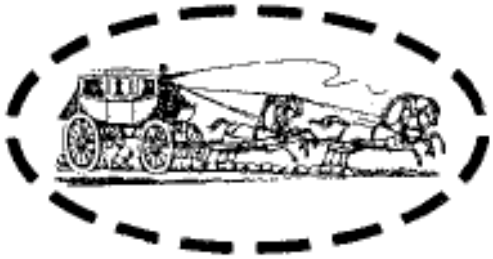

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COVER: Our cover illustrates a portion of a stereo optican card published by Underwood & Underwood titled "A crude post-office–reorganizing the mail service after the earthquake/San Francisco, Cal." The card was discovered recently by Randy Stehle and is discussed in his article in this issue.

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PUBLISHER'S PAGE

An Exciting End to 2001

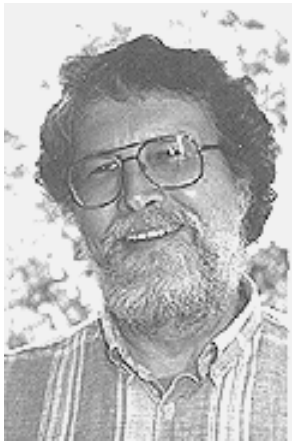
Cath and I closed out the old year with a good deal more excitement and discomfort than we had anticipated. On Christmas Eve a very hot dry wind began to blow from the west turning our surrounding eucalypt forests into tinder dry, oil-saturated kindling. Lightning strikes from a dry electrical storm the night before ignited the bushlands some 25 miles to our north. As we watched in amazement a huge gray plume of smoke began to billow skyward somewhere to our north up the coastal range.

The temperatures climbed to well over 35C (95F) that day. Christmas Day was a carbon copy. Suddenly the television news was giving round-the-clock coverage to the bushfire emergency that had broken out in the Blue Mountains some 50 miles inland from Sydney. Conditions in Sydney and elsewhere in New South Wales were as bad or worse than they were here, and fires started by both natural and manmade causes were beginning to pop up in many places.

On Boxing Day, the day after Christmas, fires had begun burning dangerously close to homes in some of the outer Sydney suburbs. Our local fires continued to burn out of control in national park and state forest lands to our north. We were plagued by a thick, choking smoke at night when the winds died down, but were otherwise not in danger.

Day after day during the week between Christmas and New Years the situation got worse. The international news media picked up the story and we suddenly began getting emails from concerned family and friends. Thanks, friends, it was reassuring and wonderful to know you were concerned about us.

By Friday the 28th it became clear that our fire to the north was moving rather steadily in our direction. It had crossed the Pacific Highway and was burning south along the range of low hills that is known as the Coastal Range in this part of Australia. Smoke was now nearly constantly with us, and life was definitely beginning to get more difficult. Cath and I began organizing lists of what we wanted to evacuate most should the situation call for it. A couple neighbors stopped by and showed us how to flood our rain catching gutters and helped us cut back some of the more flammable bush around the house.



The big question everyone must answer when faced with a bushfire is do we stay and fight it to save our home, or do we evacuate well in advance and save what we consider irreplaceable? In rural New South Wales all the firefighters, with only a few minor exceptions in some of the larger towns, are volunteers. They are wonderful, giving men and women who risk their lives without pay to save, in order of announced priority, their neighbors lives, property and whatever else is in danger. They recommend that residents remain with their property and prepare to fight the fire *until* asked by the local bushfire brigade to evacuate. Cath and I decided that we would follow their recommendation, but I must confess that on Saturday I packed up six cartons containing those sections of my postal history collections I felt I absolutely could not bear to see destroyed. This, by the way, was a really interesting exercise that has since caused me to question why I am still hanging on to bits and pieces of postal history that I *could* bear to see destroyed. Saturday evening we drove down to the Chatsworth Island General Store. The storekeepers and a few neighbors were gathered around a picnic table beside the North Arm of the Clarence watching the fire burn through forest lands on a hill just across the river. That hill was the next hill to the north of our hill, and the fire was burning just two to three miles to our north.

On Sunday morning, which had been touted for days by the TV reporters as “D-day”, the day when the blast furnace winds from the Outback were due to strike the coast once again, the local Ashby Bushfire Brigade fire truck came rolling down our driveway at ten o’clock. Cath and I exchanged worried glances as we both went out to meet them. We were both immensely relieved when the closest fireman hung his head out of the cab, smiled and said, “No worries, we’re just lookin’ for a Mrs. Duke.” He went on to explain that they had received a call from a very concerned elderly lady on the mountain about the need for immediate evacuation, and they wanted to reas-

sure her that no evacuation had been ordered. Should an evacuation be called later that day, we would hear a siren and have ample time to get out.

Despite the fact that our precarious situation hadn't really changed, we were relieved that we were not being ordered to evacuate immediately and very pleased to see first hand that there were trained fire fighters aware we were living here. Prior to this encounter, we had no official information about the local fire situation and, as you might imagine, rumors had begun flying among the small number of local hill-dwellers.

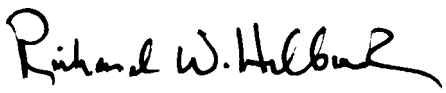
To make what seemed to be one of the longest days of my life a story of manageable length, the dreaded Outback blast furnace winds never materialized on Sunday. In fact, the winds shifted to the southeast and began blowing our fire back on itself. New Years Eve was a bit milder and the winds remained favorable. That evening we had a small thunderstorm pay us a visit and deposit 12 mils of rain in our gauge.

The fires continued to burn in the forests just to our north for most of the next weeks, but the most serious threat ended with that half inch of rain on New Years Eve. A couple of days later a similar event occurred in the Blue Mountains near Sydney, and there over an inch of rain doused fires that had earlier burned along forested corridors to within about ten miles of the heart of the city. Fires continued to burn for several more days on the NWS South Coast about 100 miles south of Sydney, but as of yesterday—January 13th—the current Fire Danger Period was officially called off in the state.

This was an horrendous bushfire event; certainly the worst since 1994. Fortunately, no lives were lost, but nearly 200 homes were destroyed and many thousands of acres of forests and wildlife habitat were burned including over sixty per cent of the Royal National Park south of Sydney, the nation's oldest park.

Forest fires are part of the environmental package in Australia. Some species of eucalypts, including the commonly seen banksias, need the presence of bushfire before their seeds are released to plant a new generation. Cath and I were both frightened and awed by this bush land experience, and we fervently hope that the local residents are right when they say that such fires are only a once every ten-to-twenty year event.

This issue of *La Posta* includes an experiment designed to improve the quality of our graphic images. Since we won't be able to evaluate the experiment until the journal is in print we will most certainly welcome your comments and opinions on how well it has worked out.



BOOK NOTE:

Howard Ness of Spokane, WA, reports that a limited number of copies of Guy Reed Ramsey's *Postmarked Washington, Lincoln & Adams Counties*, a 170-page book published in 1977, are available at $12 each postpaid from **Lincoln County Historical Society, Box 869, Davenport, WA.**

Supplies are limited so interested parties should act with haste.

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The following individuals have expressed an interest in corresponding with other collectors via e-mail. Names are followed by specific interest (where known) and complete e-mail address. If you would like to join this list in future issues of *La Posta*, send us a note via e-mail at ***helbock@la-posta.com***

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UTAH RESEARCH HELP NEEDED

From: "Pat/Bill MacKinnon" <mackbp@msn.com>

To the Editor

"La Posta: A Journal of U.S. Postal History"

Dear Sir:

I am writing in hopes that one of your readers may be able to steer me to information about Hiram F. Morrell, the controversial U.S. postmaster at Great Salt Lake City, Utah Territory during the period 1857-59. My query stems from my work as editor of "At Sword's Point: A Documentary History of the Utah War of 1857-1858" which is a forthcoming book in The Arthur H. Clark Co.'s new series "KINGDOM IN THE WEST: The Mormons and the American Frontier."

The Utah War -- Utah Expedition or "Johnston's Army" as it is sometimes called -- was the Buchanan administration's attempt to suppress what the president believed to be a Mormon rebellion in Utah Territory with a large expeditionary force to escort Brigham Young's successor as governor. As such, this campaign was the nation's most extensive and expensive military undertaking during the period between the Mexican and Civil wars.

Among the ten or so issues around which territorial and federal relations in Utah collapsed was that of postal matters -- in terms of who controlled the contract for mail hauling (on the Independence, MO/GSLC route and its Sacramento/GSLC counter-part), the quality of that service, and the religious affiliation of the federal postmaster in GSLC. As the non-Mormon, federally appointed postmaster in that community, Hiram F. Morell was emblematic of this conflict and one of the most hated men in Utah. That so many of the territorial residents in the mid-19th century were separated by long distances from family in the Midwest, on the Atlantic Coast, or in the UK and in Scandinavia put a special premium on reliable mail service from the East and, with it, pressure on the role and performance/sensitivity of the U.S. postmaster in Salt Lake.

I would be grateful for any biographical information about Hiram F. Morrell -- about whom little is known -- as well as pointers as to where I might find his personal papers. I do have Les Whall's excellent 1982 book "The Salt Lake City Post Office, 1849-1869."

Many thanks.

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Covers postmarked MAD RIVER & L. ERIE R.R. with Scott's #1 (5¢ 1847), #7 and #9 (1¢ 1851).

Please contact, with a photo and price asked, **D. F. Shea, 4106 S.R. 269, Bellevue, OH 44811; Fax: 419/483-6400. APS #183518; USCPC #3411**

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Map 1 *Jefferson County took its name from the Jefferson River, named by Lewis and Clark in honor of President Thomas Jefferson. Part of Jefferson County was taken to form Broadwater County in 1897. (From* Postal Route Map of the Territories of Montana, Idaho and Wyoming, 1884, *provided courtesy of Richard W. Helbock.)*

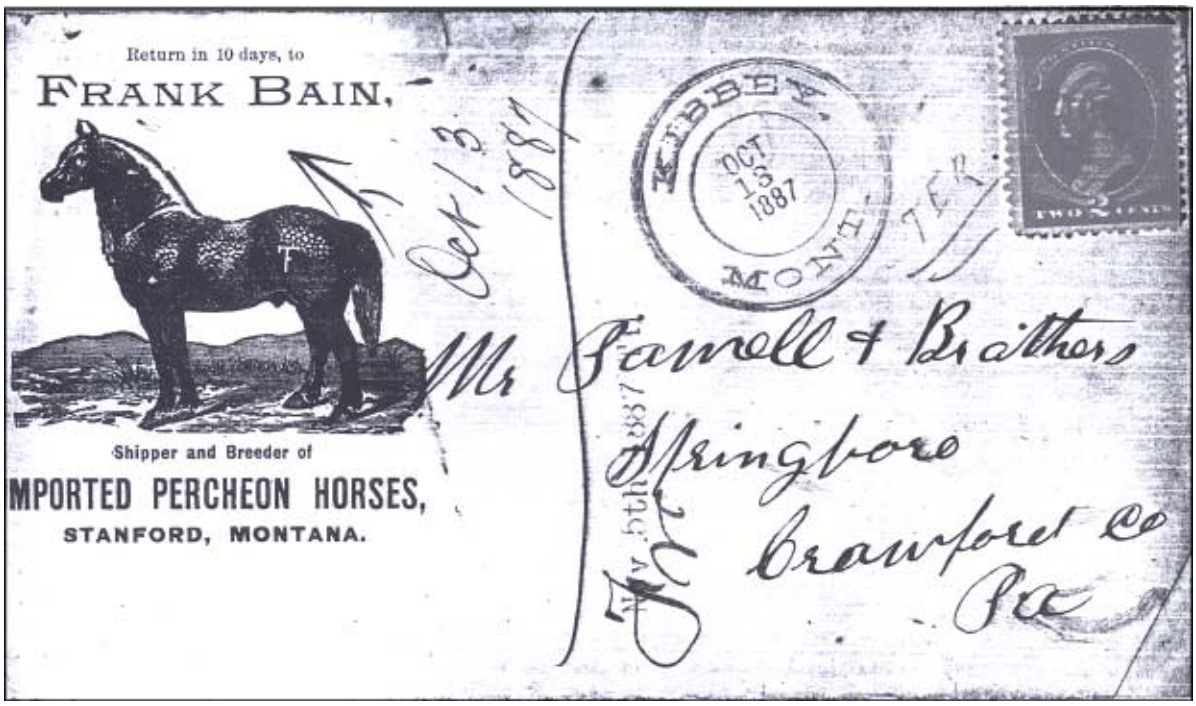

Figure 1 *Kibbey was a small town located in prime ranching country. Illustrated advertising covers such as this beauty are rarely found from Montana Territory (courtesy of Roger Robison).*

Montana Territorial Postmarks

Part 5: Jefferson and Judith Basin Counties

By Wesley N. Shellen & Francis Dunn

In this installment we illustrate and catalog the postmarks from two more of Montana's counties. Jefferson County took its name from the Jefferson River, which forms part of its boundary. The explorers Lewis and Clark named the river in honor of Thomas Jefferson, President of the U.S. at the time of their exploration. A map of Jefferson County, one of the original nine counties when Montana Territory was formed, is included in this issue.

By contrast, Judith Basin County is one of Montana's newest counties and was created in 1920 from parts of Cascade and Fergus Counties. This county also took its name from a river. Meriwether Lewis named the river after his cousin, Judith Hancock. Judith Basin County is prime farming and grazing country.

We appreciate and encourage reports of new postmarks and date extenders that will improve the accuracy and completeness of this work for the benefit of postal historians and especially those who share our passion for Montana postal history. (Send reports to Wes Shellen, PO Box 9395, Missoula, MT 59807-9395; or email wesndeb@aol.com.) We would also like to acknowledge the help and new information we have received following publication of our last installment from Ken Hamlin, Robert Dalton Harris, and Roger Robison

©*Wesley N. Shellen & Francis Dunn*

Your Participation in the Project is Respectfully Requested

If you can expand our knowledge of Montana Territorial postmark types and date ranges, please contact

Wes Shellen
PO Box 9395
Missoula, MT 59807-9395
email: wesndeb@aol.com

Jefferson County

Town	Postmark	Earliest	Latest	Cancel	Notes
ALHAMBRA (1885-1947)					
1.	CDS30	12 MAR 1889			
AMAZON (1888/1931)					*None Reported*
BASIN (1880-Date)					
1.	MSS	19 OCT 1880	27 FEB 1881		
2.	CDS27.5	5 JUL 1881	11 AUG 1881		
3.	CDS28	23 JUL 1887	28 APR 1888	maltese cross	
4.	CDS30	15 MAY 1889	19 OCT 1889	grid	
BOULDER (1871-1871)					*None Reported*
BOULDER VALLEY (1866-1897)					
1.	CDS27	2 SEP 186?	21 APR 187?	target	1
2.	CDS24	1 NOV 187?		target	1
3.	CDS27	8 JAN 18??		target	1
4.	MSS	28 MAR 1880			
5.	DLC28.5	6 SEP 1883	16 JUL 1887	target	blue; blue-black
6.	CDS27	24 DEC 1887	16 APR 1889	target	
CATARACT (1880-1881)					*None Reported*
CLAGETT (1872-1878)					*None Reported*
CLANCY or CLANCEY (1872/Date)					
1.	CDS24	29 NOV 187?		target	
2.	DLC27	24 JUL 1881			
3.	CDS25	24 FEB 188?	16 APR 188?	target	
4.	DLC30	8 JAN 1889			
COLD SPRINGS (1872-1924)					*None Reported*
COMET (1877/1894)					
1.	MSS	17 JAN 1885			
2.	TDLC32	21 JUL 1885	12 JAN 1886		purple; gray-blue
3.	DLC34	9 FEB 1888			
CORBIN (1887-1943)					*None Reported*
ELKHORN (1884-1924)					
1.	MSS	16 OCT 1885			blue-black
2.	DLC28	27 JUN 1887	24 JUN 1889	grid	gray-blue
ELK PARK (1889/1930)					*None Reported*

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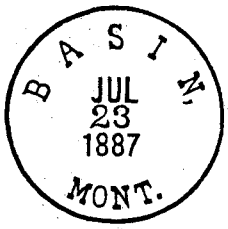

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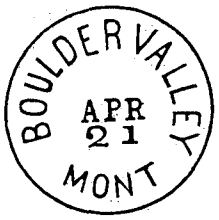

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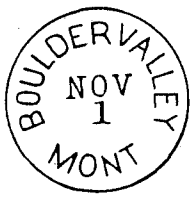

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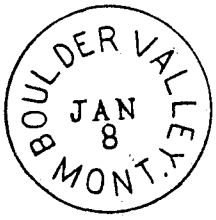

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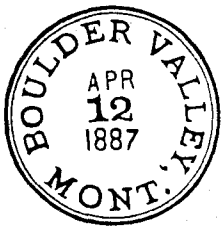

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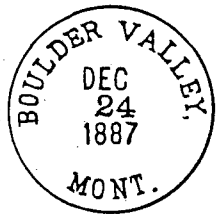

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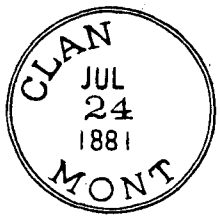

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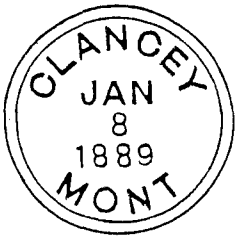

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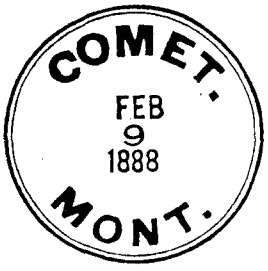

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GREGORY (1881/1888)

1.	DCDS32	27 JUL 1882		target	
2.	DLC30	7 JUN 1886			
3.	CDS27	26 AUG 1886		8-bar grid	

HODSON (1887-1887) *None Reported*

HOPE (1887-1891)

1.	CDS28	21 OCT 1887			

JEFFERSON CITY (1866/Date)

1.	MSS	7 NOV 1867	18 FEB 1868	pen	
2.	CDS26	8 AUG 1878	17 DEC 1878	target	
3.	DLC31	26 NOV 1881	27 JUN 1882	target	
4.	OCT25	2 SEP 188?		cork	
5.	CDS26.5	5 APR 1884		target	
6.	CDS27.5	21 OCT 1889		target	

JEFFERSON ISLAND (1872/1909)

1.	CDS27	12 JUN 1883	17 FEB 1885	cork	

MILK RANCH (1867-1869) *None Reported*

MONTANA CITY (1887-1890) *None Reported*

PARNELL (1881-1883)

1.	DLC28	27 MAY 1882		target	

PIPESTONE (1880-1883)

1.	CDS30	27 JAN 188?			

PIPESTONE SPRINGS (1887-1928) *None Reported*

PRICKLY PEAR (1866-1872) *None Reported*

QUEEN (1888-1888) *None Reported*

TROTTER (1880-1881) *None Reported*

WEBER (1883-1901)

1.	TCDS34	10 MAY 1886	4 JUL 1886	3-ring fancy	

WHITEHALL (1869/Date)

1.	CDS25	14 JAN 1880		pinwheel	magenta
2.	MSS	31 MAR 1882	26 JUN 1883	pen	
3.	CDS32	24 JAN 1884	12 SEP 1884		magenta
4.	CDS24	17 ??? 1887			
5.	CDS30	28 OCT 1887	31 JAN 1888	star in star	

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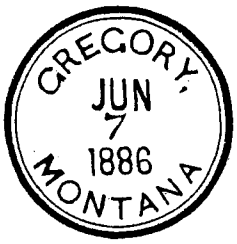

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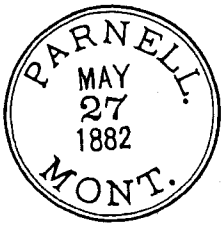

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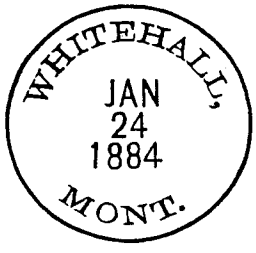

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WICKES (1878-1964)

1.	DLC28	19 MAY 1879	29 DEC 1882	target	blue
2.	CDS26	3 MAY 1883		target	
3.	CDS27.5	28 JUL 1884	12 JUN 1885	maltese cross	
4.	DCDS32	17 MAY 1888	10 JAN 1889	cork	magenta
5.	CDS27.5	7 MAY 1889			

WOODVILLE (1882-1912)

1.	CDS28	22 FEB 1889		target	

Judith Basin County

Town	Postmark	Earliest	Latest	Cancel	Notes
DUBUQUE (1886-1892)					*None Reported*
GRAFTON (1887-1894)					*None Reported*
HOOVER (1879-1880)					*None Reported*
KALATTA (1880-1880)					*None Reported*
KIBBEY (1883-1909)					
1.	DLDC33.5	6 MAR 1887	1 JUL 1889	target	blue-black
LESSARD (1883-1883)					*None Reported*
MANN (1888-1892)					*None Reported*
OTTER (1882-1883)					*None Reported*
PHILBROOK (1881/1912)					
1.	MSS	4 AUG 1882			
2.	DLDC28	3 NOV 1882	15 DEC 1888	target	blue-black
SIFTON (1888-1890)					*None Reported*
STANFORD (1882/Date)					
1.	CDS28	6 APR 1885	1 MAY 1885	maltese cross	
2.	CDS28	8 NOV 1887		target	
3.	CDS28	18 JUL 1885	26 AUG 1889	target	
UTICA (1881-1959)					
1.	MSS	15 AUG 1881	15 AUG 1881		
2.	CDS27.5	5 APR 1884	28 AUG 1887	cork	

NOTES:

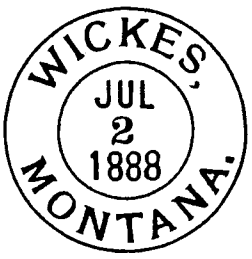
1. Year dates needed to confirm proper sequence of Boulder Valley types 1 – 3.

5

1

2

3

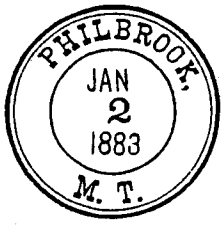


4

5

1

1

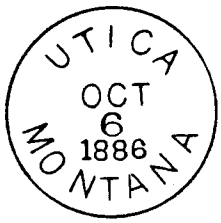


2

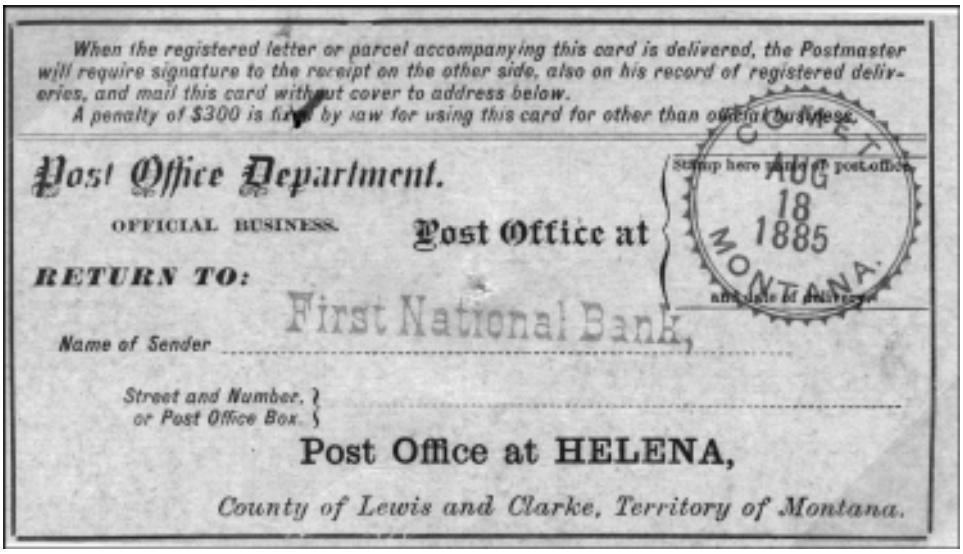
1

2

3



2


When the registered letter or parcel accompanying this card is delivered, the Postmaster will require signature to the receipt on the other side, also on his record of registered deliveries, and mail this card without cover to address below.
A penalty of $300 is fixed by law for using this card for other than official business.

Post Office Department.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS. Post Office at

COMET AUG 18 1885 MONTANA

RETURN TO:

Name of Sender First National Bank,

Street and Number, or Post Office Box.

Post Office at HELENA,

County of Lewis and Clarke, Territory of Montana.

Figure 2 *The Comet post office served the Comet Mine. Examples of Comet postmarks, such as this fancy toothed (TDLC32) specimen are found almost exclusively on registry receipts. Covers or postal cards with Comet postmarks are quite rare.*

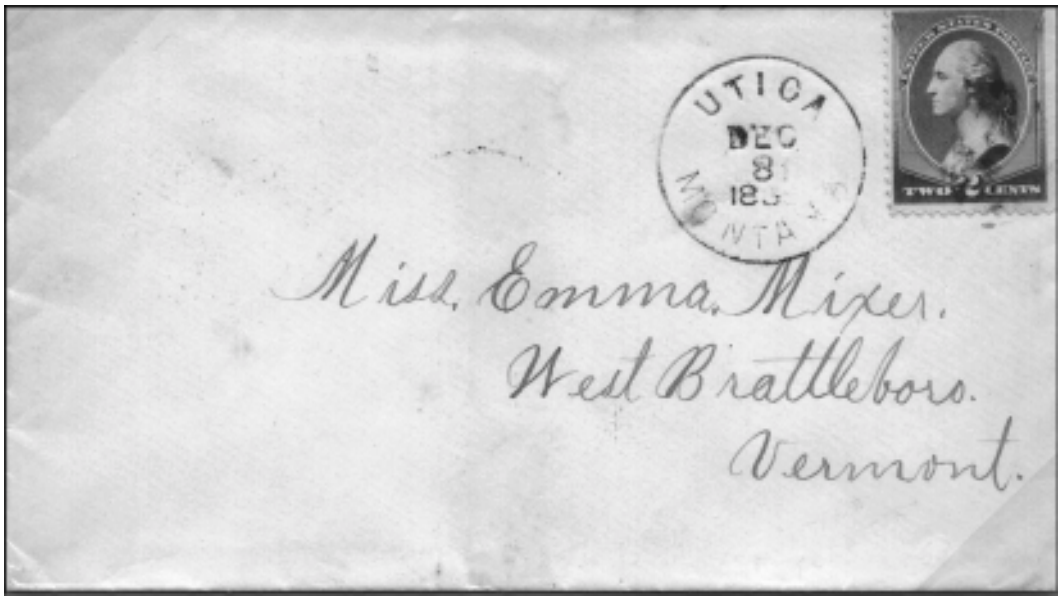


Figure 3 *Utica was a cowboy town, named by four prospectors who, after suffering through a severe blizzard, decided to name the place after their home town in New York where the state insane asylum was located.*

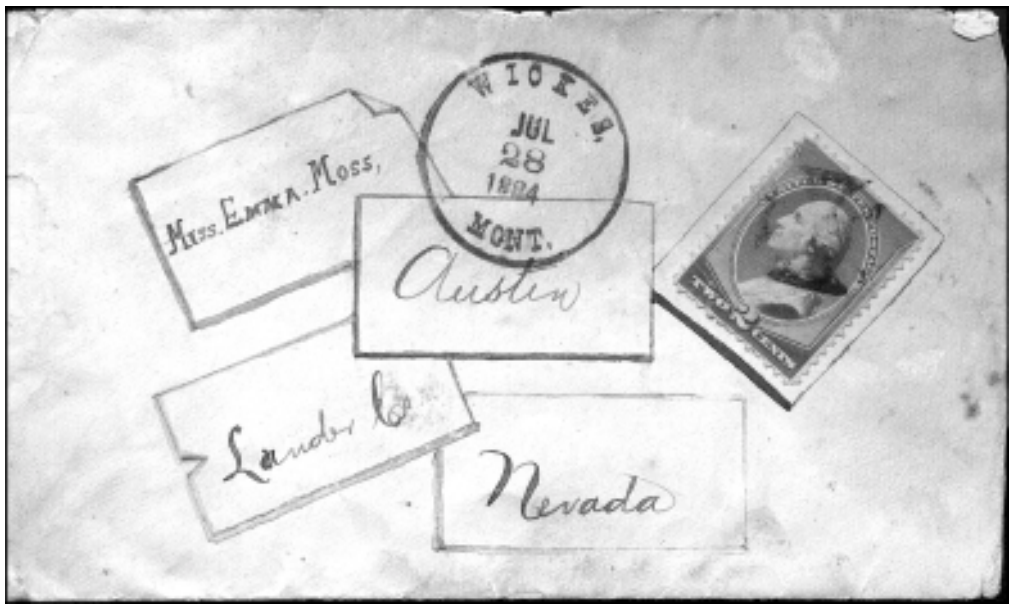


Figure 4 *Wickes, a railroad town, was named after W. W. Wickes, an Alta Mining Company official. Someone had fun preparing the decorative address on this cover to Nevada.*

THE POSTMASTERS GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES, 1775-1971

by Daniel Y. Meschter

The American postal system had its origin in 1638 when the General Court of Massachusetts authorized Richard Fairbanks of Boston to receive letters for dispatch overseas and to deliver letters arriving by ship to their addressees; in other words, postmaster of a kind of private post office.

In 1672 New York Governor Richard Lovelace proclaimed the first intercolonial post between New York and Boston to begin in January 1673. This first attempt failed, but the next year the Massachusetts and Connecticut legislatures authorized messenger service to carry "public letters." From this beginning, evolved the colonial post as a branch of the British Post Office.

By a 1711 Act of Parliament John Hamilton was appointed Deputy Postmaster General in America subordinate to the London postmaster, making him arguably the first Postmaster General in America, but not yet of the United States.

Alexander Spotswood was appointed Postmaster General in America in 1730 and served until he was succeeded by Head Lynch from 1739 to 1743 and Elliot Benger from 1743 to 1753. Spotswood's most memorable action was his appointment of Benjamin Franklin as deputy postmaster at Philadelphia in 1737.

When Franklin succeeded Benger as Postmaster General in 1753, William Hunter (1753-61) and then John Foxcroft (1861-75) were appointed a kind of co-postmaster general that allowed Franklin to take several lengthy trips to England to represent the Pennsylvania Legislature before Parliament on property tax matters and in defense of colonial opposition to excise taxes levied by Parliament.

The Continental Congress meeting in Philadelphia in May 1775 understood that a reliable and speedy postal system was essential to insure cooperation among the colonies in the face of the war threatened by the engagement at Concord Bridge in April. It naturally turned to the man with the most experience in the management of the posts who also happened to be a member of Congress—Benjamin Franklin. On May 29, Congress decided that the critical situation of the colonies rendered it "highly necessary that ways and means should be devised for the speedy and secure conveyance of Intelligence from one end of the Continent to the other," and appointed Franklin chairman of a committee to investigate the matter and report. Congress acted promptly on the plan Franklin's committee brought in by resolving on July 26th:

> That a Postmaster General be appointed for the United Colonies, who shall hold his office at Philada. and shall be allowed a salary of 1000 dollars per an. for himself and 340 dollars per an. for a secretary and comptroller, with power to appoint such and so many deputies as to him may seem proper and necessary.
>
> That a line of posts be appointed under the direction of the Postmaster General from Falmouth in New England to Savannah in Georgia, with as many cross posts as he shall think fit.
>
> That the allowance to the deputies in lieu of salary and all contingent expenses shall be twenty per cent on the sums they collect and pay into the Post Office annually, when the sum is under or not exceeding 1000 dollars and ten per cent for all sums above 1000 dollars.
>
> That the rates of postage shall be twenty per cent less than those appointed by the Act of Parliament.
>
> That the several deputies account quarterly with the general post office and the Postmaster General annually to the Continental Treasurer, when he shall pay into the receipt of the said Treasurer the profits of the Post Office; and if the necessary expense of this establishment should exceed the produce of it, the deficiency shall be made good by the United Colonies, and paid to the Postmaster General by the Continental Congress[1]

In addition to the provision for the reduction in the rates of postage, which was suspended not long afterward[2], this plan no doubt was modeled on the system Franklin had supervised for so many years. More importantly, as revised and augmented by another ordinance passed on October 18, 1782[3], it

became the organic act for the United Colonies' postal system and the United States Post Office Department until 1792. Congress almost naturally elected Franklin Postmaster General for the term of one year, or until another should be appointed.

Franklin's most important appointments were his son-in-law, Richard Bache, as Comptroller and William Goddard, as Surveyor. Goddard's duties included establishing post offices in the principal towns and commercial centers and overseeing the post routes. When Franklin went to France in late 1776 to negotiate a treaty with the French government, Bache succeeded him as Postmaster General and Ebenezer Hazard, the energetic postmaster at New York, replaced Goddard as Surveyor.

By providing in the Articles of Confederation that "the United States in congress assembled shall have the sole and exclusive right and power of . . . establishing and regulating postoffices from one state to another throughout all the United States, and exacting such postage on the papers passing through the same as may be requisite to defray the expenses of the said offices[4]," Congress decreed that the postoffice was a federal monopoly and by limiting postage to the costs of operation set the policy that the Post Office was a public service rather than a source of revenue.

The post office faced serious fiscal and management problems throughout the Revolutionary War, in particular from having to serve mobile armies in the field. With the cessation of land operations following Cornwallis's surrender at Yorktown in 1781, the congressional Committee on the Post Office began to consider improvements in the service. Impetus was given to this effort by the election of Ebenezer Hazard as Postmaster General on January 28, 1782, to succeed Richard Bache. Hazard brought both experience and energy to bear on the propriety of a new act codifying and revising the 1775 organic act.

The preamble of the new ordinance passed on October 18th adopted the principles stated in the Articles of Confederation. The text was comprehensive, dealing as it did with organization, routes and service, rates of postage, and penalties for offenses against the U.S mails that had arisen in the interim. It ordered the Postmaster General to direct the Post Office in all its departments and services, including the appointment of his clerk or assistant and all subordinate officers, deputy postmasters, and post riders as well as fixing their salaries and commissions; maintaining regular service at least once a week to and from every post office established under the ordinance; licensing post riders to carry newspapers; and adjusting the packet service with England and France for overseas mail, among a myriad of lesser details.

Hazard also dealt with the growth of stage service between major towns that was so rapid following the Revolution that stages came into general use for carrying the mails by 1785, replacing post riders. Commercial stage service generally was faster and more reliable than post riders on the north-south trunk routes, but so irregular on cross posts that Hazard continued to use riders in some cases even where stage service was available. The advent of stages to carry mail led to the institution of term contracts with stage companies to carry the whole mail in a place that was waterproof and locked the length of the route on schedules dictated by the Post Office whereas post riders were postal employees paid by the mile.

Hazard succeeded in rejuvenating the American Post Office from the shambles left at the end of the Revolutionary War to a functional organization generating an annual surplus in only seven years. Nevertheless, it was still small, comprising about 75 post offices with 77 employees and less than 2,000 miles of post roads, and revenues of only $25,000 serving a population of three million when Hazard passed the torch in September 1789[5]. Postage rates were too high; the Post Office was too weak to enforce its monopoly; employees were undisciplined; and fiscal accountability was lax. Nevertheless, Hazard laid down the main policies and established the basic rules that would guide the Post Office Department through the next century.

Not withstanding his accomplishments, Hazard also was the victim of politicization. He aroused the opposition of the printing trade when he threatened to suppress the exchange of newspapers free of postage. Wrongly charging that he had already put his threat into effect, George Washington himself criticized him for "a new arrangement in the Post Office unfavorable to the circulation of intelligence . . . when the momentous question of a general government (i.e., ratification of the Constitution) was to have come before the people[6]."

Washington also joined the stage owners in condemning Hazard for substituting post riders for stages in some cases despite his wide experience with the irregularity of stage service on cross posts. Hazard knew his days as Postmaster General were numbered.

In the meantime the Constitutional Convention completed its work on September 17, 1787. The provision for postal service was brief and to the

point: "The Congress shall have the power . . . to establish postoffices and post roads[7]." The government's monopoly of the post office carried over from Article IX of the Articles of Confederation.

Following its ratification by the required number of states, March 4, 1789 was fixed for commencing the operations of the new government. Hazard's tenure as Postmaster General actually continued more than six months into the Constitutional era, but he is not regarded as the first Postmaster General of the United States because he was not nominated by the president and confirmed by the Senate.

The First Congress did not deem an organic act for the post office of very high priority since the earlier postal system was still operating under Hazard's capable if controversial management. It satisfied itself with an act "for the temporary establishment of the Post-Office" that provided only for the appointment of a Postmaster General whose powers and salary, compensation of his assistant or clerk and deputies, and regulations of the post office to remain the same as they were under the Continental Congress—the Postmaster General to be subject to the direction of the President in the performance of his duties and making contracts for the transportation of the mail[8].

Hazard identified Richard Bache, his predecessor as Postmaster General; Tench Coxe of Pennsylvania; and Col. William Smith, John Adams' son-in-law as candidates for Postmaster General. Washington, however, chose Samuel Osgood of Massachusetts, possibly on the strength of Osgood's experience in the direction of the Post Office of the United Colonies as a member of the Treasury Board (1785-89). He was confirmed by the Senate and took office on September 26, 1789.

POSTMASTERS GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES

The United States had 59 postmasters general in a trifle less than 182 years from Osgood's appointment in 1789 to the creation of the United States Postal Service and the abolishment of the Post Office Department as a Cabinet post effective July 1, 1971, for an average of almost exactly 3 years each. The longest tenure was Gideon Granger's who was appointed by Thomas Jefferson and served more than 12 years into the Second Madison Administration.

Although far from free from controversy and charges of malfeasance in office, the majority of Postmasters General through Harry New (48) were public servants of dedication and proven ability. Substantially more half of them also served as Representatives or Senators in Congress, or both, or in Cabinet posts other than the Post Office. Others served in a wide variety elected offices as state legislators and governors and not a few as ambassadors and lesser posts. Thomas L. James (29) and Harry C. Payne (40) served as big city postmasters for eight and ten years respectively. Jesse M. Donaldson (53) rose from a small city letter carrier in 1908 through the ranks of postal inspector and First Assistant Postmaster General to Postmaster General in 1947, the only career employee to do so.

After New, however, appointment to postmaster general (except Donaldson) trended towards reward for partisan political activism. Walter Brown, for example, began his career as a member, later chairman, of the Ohio State Republican central committee. As a Washington insider, he served on committees relating to government organization and finally as Assistant Secretary of Commerce under Herbert Hoover whom he supported for president and who later nominated him for Postmaster General.

Lawrence O'Brien (57) was identified in *Current Biography* primarily as a "Democratic political strategist" who directed Kennedy's senatorial and presidential campaigns and served as Johnson's chief congressional liaison[9], but neither he nor Brown ever were elected to public office; nor were any other of the last eleven Postmasters General to any office above state legislator. This is not to say that these men were not competent executives (no woman was ever nominated for Postmaster General), but their partisan perceptions of the relationships between the Post Office Department and the other branches of government may have contributed to its depoliticization with the goal of developing more efficient management operations.

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1 Journal of the Continental Congress, v. II, pp 208-9; see also Burnett, Edmund Cody. *The Continental Congress,* The Macmillan Company, New York, 1941, pp. 97-8

2 J.C.C., v. III, p. 267, September 30, 1777.

3 J.C.C., v. XXIII, p. 670

4 Articles of Confederation, Article IX, November 15, 1777.

5 *United States Domestic Postage Rates, 1789-1956,* U.S. Post Office Department, Washington, D.C., 1956, p. 1; compare Rich, *infra,* p. 67.

6 Rich, Wesley E., *The History of the United States Post Office to the year 1829,* Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1924, p. 65.

7 Constitution of the United States, Article I, Sec. 8.

8 Act of September 22, 1789, 1 Stat. 70

9 *Current Biography Yearbook, 1990,* p. 658

No.	Name	Appointed by	Date nominated (Entered on duties)	Date left office	Date/Place of Birth	Date/Place of Death	Education	Profession/ Occupation	Military Service	Important public offices
					Postmasters under the Continental Congress					
1	Benjamin Franklin		26 Jul 1775	7 Nov 1776	17 Jan 1706 Boston,.MA	17 Apr 1790 Philadelphia	Tutors	Publisher		Penna. assembly, 1744-54 Colonial PMG, 1753-75 Continental Congress, 1775-6 Minister to France, 1776-85 Governor of Penna., 1785-8 Constitutional Conv'tion, 1787
2	Richard Bache		7 Nov 1776	28 Jan 1782	12 Sep 1737 Settle, England	28 Jul 1811 Berks Co. PA		Merchant		
3	Ebenezer Hazard		28 Jan 1782	27 Sep 1789	15 Jan 1844 Philadelphia, PA	13 Jan 1817 Philadelphia, PA	Princeton	Publisher		Surveyor General, U.S. Post Office, 1776-82
					Postmasters appointed under the Constitution					
1	Samuel Osgood	George Washington	25 Sep 1789 (26 Sep 1789)	19 Aug 1891 Resigned	3 Feb 1848 Andover, MA	12 Aug 1813 Nedw York City	Harvard	Merchant	Capt., Minutemen, 1775 Col., Am. Rev., 1776	Mass. Legislature, 1789-1 Continental Congress, 1780-4 Commis'er of Treasury, 1785-9 New York Assembly, 1800-3
2	Timothy Pickering	George Washington	31 Oct 1791 (19Aug 1791)	24 Feb 1795 App'd Sec. of War,	17 Jul 1745 Salem, MA	4 Jan 1829 Salem, MA	Harvard	Lawyer Merchant Farmer	Col. MA militia, 1775-6	Secretary of War, 1795 Secretarty of State, 1795-1800 U.S. Senator, 1803-11 U.S. Representative, 1813-7
3	Joseph Habersham	George Washington	24 Feb 1795 (25 Feb 1795)	2 Nov 1801 Resigned	28 Jul 1751 Savannah, GA	17 Nov 1815 Savannah, GA	Princeton	Merchant	Georgia militia, 1775 Lt. Col., Am. Rev;. 1776	Continental Congress, 1785-6 Georgia Assembly, 1785, 1790
4	Gideon Granger	Thomas Jefferson	2 Nov 1801 2 Nov 1801)	25 Feb 1814 Resigned	19 Jul 1767 Suffield, CT	31 Dec 1822 Canandaigua, NY	Yale	Lawyer		Conn. Legislature, 1792-1801 New York Legislature, 1820-1
5	Return Jonathan Meigs, Jr.	James Madison	25 Feb 1814 (11 Apr 1814)	30 Jun 1823 Resigned	16 Nov 1764 Middletown, CT	29 Mar 1725 Marietta, Ohio	Yale	Lawyer	Col., U.S. troops, Dist. of Louisana, 1804-6	Ohio Terr. Legislature, 1802 Ohio Supreme Court, 1803-4 U.S. Senator, 1808-10 Ohio Governor, 1810-14
6	John McLean	James Monroe	5 Dec 1823 (1 Jul 1823)	7 Mar 1829 Resigned	11 Mar 1785 Morris Co., NJ	4 Apr 1861 Cincinnati, Ohio	Sporadic	Lawyer		U.S. Representative, 1813-6 Ohio Supreme Court, 1816-22 U.S. Supreme Ct., 1829-61
7	William Taylor. Berry	Andrew Jackson	9 Mar 1829 (6 Apr 1829)	30 Apr 1835 Resigned	5 Feb 1785 Lunenburg, VA	30 Aug 1835 Liverpool, Eng.	William & Mary Transylvania	Lawyer	War of 1812	Kentucky House, 1807-10, 14 U.S. Represenative, 1810-11 U.S. Seneator, 1814-16 Kentucky Senate, 1817-21
8	Amos Kendall	Andrew Jackson	1 May 1835	16 May 1840	16 Aug 1789 Dunstable, MA	12 Nov 1869 Washington, DC	Dartmouth	Lawyer Journalist		

9	John Milton Niles	Martin Van Buren	19 May 1840 (26 May 1840)	3 Mar 1841 End of term	20 Aug 1787 Potvonock, CT	31 May 1856 Hartford, CT	Common schools	Lawyer		Conn. Legislature, 1826 U.S. Senator, 1835-9, 1843-9
	Selah Hobbie	Interim	4 Mar 1841	6 May 1841 Newburgh, NY	10 Mar 1797	23 Ma4 1854 Washington, DC		Lawyer	Major, NY militia	New York Assembly, 1827-9 U.S. Representative, 1827-9 Asst. PMG, 1829-51 First Asst. PMG, 1853-4
10	Francis Granger Son of Gideon Granger (4),	William Henry Harrison	6 Mar 1841 (8 Mar 1841)	18 Sep 1841 Resigned	1 Dec 1792 Suffield, CT	31 Aug 1868 Canandaigua, NY	Yale	Lawyer		NY Assembly, 1826-8, 30-2 U.S. Representative, 1835--7, 1839-41, 41-3
	Selah Hobbie (see above)	Interim	14 Sep 1841	13 Oct 1841						
11	Charles A. Wickcliffe	John Tyler	13 Sep 1841 (13 Oct 1841)	6 Mar 1841 End of term	8 Jun 1878 Springfield, KY	31 Oct 1869 Ilchester, MD	Common schools	Lawyer	War of 1812	KY House, 1812-3, 22-3, 33-5 U.S. Repre'tive, 1823-33, 61-3 KY Lt. Gov./Gov., 1837-40
12	Cave Johnson	James K. Polk	6 Mar 1845	5 Mar 1849 End of term	11 Jan 1793 Springfield, TN	23 Nov 1866 Clarksville, TN	U. Nashville	Lawyer		U.S. Representative, 1829-37, 1839-45
	Selah Hobbie (see above)	Interim	6 Mar 1849	8 May 1849						
13	Jacob Collamar	Zachary Taylor	8 Mar 1849	22 Jul 1850 Resigned	8 Jan 1792 Troy, NY	9 Nov 1865 Woodstock, VT	U. Vermont.	Lawyer	Lt. Vermont militia, War of 1812	Vermont Asm'ly 1821-2, 27-8 Vermont Supr. Ct., 1833-42 U.S. Representative, 1843-49 U.S. Senator, 1855-65
14	Nathan Kelsey Hall	Millard Fillmore	23 Jul 1850	31 Aug 1852 Resigned	28 Mar 1810 Marcellus, NY	2 Mar 1874 Buffalo, NY	Common schools	Lawyer		NY Assembly, 1846 U.S. Representative, 1847-9
15	Samuel D. Hubbard	Millard Fillmore	31 Aug 1852	7 Mar 1853 End of term	10 Aug 1855 Middletown, CT	8 Oct 1855 Middletown, CT	Yale	Lawyer Businessman		U.S. Representative, 1845-9
16	James Campbell	Franklin Pierce	7 Mar 1853	6 Mar 1857 End of term	1 Sep 1812 Philadelphis, PA	27 Jan 1893 Philadelpha, PA	Common scnools	Lawyer		PA Attorney General, 1852
17	Aaron Venable Brown	James Buchanan	6 Mar 1857	9 Mar 1859 Died in office	15 Aug 1795 Brunswick Co. VA	8 Mar 1859 Washington, DC	U. North Carolina	Lawyeer		Tenn. Senate, 1826-7 Tenn. House, 1831-3 U.S. Representative, 1839-45 Tenn. Governor, 1845-7
	Horatio King (see below)	Interim	9 Mar 1857	14 Mar 1859						
18	Joseph Holt	James Buchanan	14 Mar 1859	31 Dec 1860 App'd Sec. of War	6 Jan 1897 Breckingridge County. KY	1 Aug 1894 Washington, DC	St. Joseph's Col. Centre College	Lawyer		Secretary of War 1861

19	Horatio King	James Buchanan	12 Feb 1861	5 Mar 1861 End of term	21 Jun 1811 Paris, ME	29 May 1897 Washington, DC	Common schools	Journalist Lawyer		First Assistant PMG, 1854- 60
20	Montgomery Blair	Abraham Lincoln	5 Mar 1861 (9 Mar 1861)	23 Sep 1864 Resigned	10 May 1813 Franklin Co., KY	27 Jul 1883 Silver Spring, MD	U.S. Military Acad. Transylvania U.	Lawyer		Maryland House, 1878
21	William Dennison	Abraham Lincoln	24 Sep 1864 (1 Oct 1864)	16 July 1866 Resigned	23 Nov 1815 Cincinnati, OH	15 Jun 1882 Granville, OH	Miami Univ.	Lawyer		Ohio Senate, 1848-50 Ohio Governor, 1859-61
	Alexander W. Randall	Interim	17 Jul 1866	25 Jul 1866 Appp'd PMG						
22	Alexander W. Randall	Andrew Johnson	25 Jul 1866	3 Mar 1869 End of term	31 Oct 1819] Ames, NY	26 Jul 1872 Elmira, NY	Common schools	Lawyer		Wisconsin Assembly, 1848 Wisconsin Governor, 1858-61 Minister to Italy, 1862-3 First Ass't PMG, 1863-66
	St. John B.L. Skinner	Interim	4 Mar 1869	5 Mar 1869						
23	John A.J. Creswell	Ulysses S. Grant	5 Mar 1869	3 Jul 1874 Resigned	18 Nov 1828 Port Deposit, MD	23 Dec 1891 Elkton, MD	Dickinson Col.	Lawyer	Adj. Gen'l of Maryland in Civil War	Maryland House, 1861-2 U.S. Representative, 1863-5 U.S. Senator, 1865-7
24	James W. Marshall	Ulysses S. Grant	3 Jul 1874 (7 Jul 1874)	23 Aug 1874	14 Aug 1822 Clarke Co., VA	5 Feb 1910	Dickinson Col.	Educator		First Ass't PMG, 1869-77
25	Marshall Jewell	Ulysses S. Grant	24 Aug 1874 (1 Sep 1874)	12 Jun 1876 Resigned	20 Oct 1825 Winchester, NH	10 Feb 1883 Hartford, CT	Common schools	Businessman		Conn. Governor, 1870-3 Minister to Russia, 1873-4
26	James N. Tyner	Ulysses S. Grant	12 Jul 1876	11 Mar 1877 End of term	17 July 1826 Brookville, IN	5 Dec 1904 Washington, DC	Brookville Acad.	Businessman Lawyer		Special Agent, POD, 1861-5 U.S. Representative, 1869-75 First Ass't PMG, 1877-81 Delegate, Int'l Postal Conf., Paris, 1878
27	David M. Key	Rutherford B. Hayes	12 Mar 1877	1 Jun 1880 Resigned	27 Jan 1824\ Greenville, TN	8 Feb 1900 Washington, DC	Hiwassee College	Lawyer	Lt. Col., Tenn. Infantry in Civil War	U.S. Senator, 1875-7.
28	Horace Maynard	Rutherford B. Hayes	2 Jun 1880 (25 Aug 1880)	5 Mar 1881 End of term	30 Aug 1814 Westboro, MA	3 May 1882 Knoxville, TN	Amherst College	Educaator Lawyer		U.S. Representative, 1857-63, 1866-75 Minister to Turkey, 1875-80
29	Thomas L. James	James A. Garfield	5 Mar 1881 (8 Mar 1881)	4 Jan 1882	29 Mar 1831 Utica, NY	11 Sep 1916 New York City	Common schools	Publisher		NY City Postmaster, 1873-81
30	Timothy O. Howe	Chester A. Arthur	20 Dec 1881 (5 Jan 18820	25 Mar 1883 Died in office	24 Feb 1816 Livermore, ME	25 Mar 1883 Kenosha, WI	Maine Wesleyen	Lawyer		Maine House, 1845\ U.S. Senator, 1861-79
	Frank Hatton (see below)	Interim	26 Mar 1883	10 Apr 1883						
31	Walter Q, Gresham	Chester A. Arthur	3 Apr 1883 (11 Apr 1883)	24 Sep 1884 App'd Sec. of Treasury	7 Mar 1832 Lanesville, IN	28 May 1895 Washington, DC	U. Indiana	Lawyer	Brig. Gen., 1861-5	Indiana Legislature, 1861 Secretary of Treasury, 1884 Secretary of State, 1893-5

32	Frank Hatton	Chester A. Arthur	14 Oct 1884	5 Mar 1885 End of term	28 Apr 1886 Cambridge, OH	30 Apr 1894 Washington, DC	Home schooled	Publisher	Lt., Ohio Infantrry, 1862-5	First Ass't PMG, 1881-4
33	William F. Vilas	Grover Cleveland	7 Mar 1885	16 Jan 1888 App'd Sec/ of Interior	9 Jul 1840 Chelsea, VT	28 Aug 1908 Madison, WI	U. Wisconsin U. Albany, NY Law School	Lawyer Educator	Lt. Col., Wisconsin Inf. Civil War	Secretary of Interior, 1888-9 U.S. Senator, 1891-7
34	Donald M. Dickinson	Grover Cleveland	6 Dec 1887 (16 Jan 1888)	4 Mar 1889 End of term	17 Jan 1846 Port Ontario, NY	15 Oct 1917 Trernton, MI	U. Michigan	:Lawyer		
35	John Wannamaker	Benjamin Harrison	5 Mar 1889	5 Mara 1893 End of term	11 Jul 1838 Philadelphia, PA	12 Dec 1822	Public schools	Merchant		
36	Wilson Bissell	Grover Cleveland	3 Mar 1893 (6 Mar 1893)	14 Apr 1895 Resigned	31 Dec 1847 New London, NY	6 Oct 1903 Buffalo, NY	Yale	Lawyer		
37	William L. Wilson	Grover Cleveland	1 Mar 1895 (4 Apr 1895)	5 Mar 1897 End of term	8 May 1843 Middleway, WV	17 Oct 1900 Lexington, VA	George Washington U. Virginia	Educator Lawyer	Virginia Cavalry, Civil	U.S. Representative, 1883-95
38	James A. Gary	William McKinley	6 Mar 1897	20 Apr 1898 Resigned	22 Oct 1833 Uncasville, CT	31 Oct 1921	Alleghany College	Businessman		
39	Charles E Smith	William McKinley	21 Apr 1898	9 Jan 1902 Ressigned	18 Feb 1842 Mansfield, CT	19 Jan 1908 Philadelphia, PA	Union College	Newspaper editor	U.S. Army, 1861-5	Minister to Russian, 1890-2\
40	Henry C. Payne	Theodore Roosevelt	9 Jan 1902	4 Oct 1904 Died in office	23 Nov 1843 Ashfield, MA	4 Oct 1904 Wasbiugton, DC	Shelborne Falls Academy	Businessman		Milwaukee, WI, Postmaster, 1875-85
41	Robert Wynne	Theodore Roosevelt	10 Oct 1904	4 Mar 1905 End of term	18 Nov 1851 New York City	11 Mar 1922	Public schools	Journalist		First Ass't PMG, 1902
42	George B. Courtelyou	Theodore Roosevelt	6 May 1905	3 May 1907	26 Jul 1851 New York City	30 Oct 1940 Huntington, NY	Normal school Georgetown U.	Stenographer		Sec. of Commerce and Labor, 1907-9 Secretary of Treasury, 1907-9
43	George von L. Meyer	Theodore Roosevelt	15 Jan 1907 (4 Mar 1907)	6 Mar 1909 End of term	24 Jun 1858 Boston, MA	9 Mar 1918	Harvard	Merchant		Ambassador to Italy, 1900-5 Ambassador to Russia, 1905-6 Secretary of Navy, 1909-13
44	Frank H. Hitchcock	William H. Taft	5 Mar 1909	4 Mar 1913 End of term	5 Oct 1847 Amherst, OH	25 Aug 1935 Tucson, AZ	Harvard George Washington	Lawyer		First Ass't PMG, 1905-8
45	Albert Sydney Burleson	Woodrow Wilson	5 Mar 1913	4 Maar 1921 End of term	7 Jun 1863 San Marcos, TX	24 Nov 1937 Austin, TX	Baylor U. Texas	Lawyer		U.S. Representative, 1899-1913
46	Will H. Hayes	Warren G. Harding	5 Mar 1921	4 Mar 1922 Resigned	5 Nov 1879 Sullivan, IN	7 Mar 1954 Sullivan, IN	Wabash College	Lawyer		Founder of Hayes Code
47	Hubert Work	Warren G. Harding	4 Mar 1922	21 Mar 1923 App'd Sec. of	3 Jul 1860 Marion Center, PA	14 Dec 1942 So. Denver, CO	U. Michigan U, Pennsylvania	Physician	Col. Army Medical Corps, WWI	President, AmMedAssn, 1920 First Ass't PMG, 1921-2 Secretary of Interior, 1923-8

	Frank Hatton (see next)	Interim	25 S\ep 1884	14 Oct 1884		9 May 1927 Baltimore, MD	Butler U.	Publisher Businessman	Ass't Adj. Gen., 3rd Brigade, Sp. Am. War	U.S. Senator, 1917-23
32	Frank Hatton	Chester A. Arthur	14 Oct 1884	5 Mar 1885 End of term	28 Apr 1886 Cambridge, OH	26 Jan 1961 Toledo, OH	Harvard	Lawyer		
33	William F. Vilas	Grover Cleveland	7 Mar 1885	16 Jan 1888 App'd Sec/ of Interior	9 Jul 1840 Chelsea, VT	9 Jun 1976 New York City	Business school	Businessman		NY Assembly, 1922
34	Donald M. Dickinson	Grover Cleveland	6 Dec 1887 (16 Jan 1888)	4 Mar 1889 End of term	17 Jan 1846 Port Ontario, NY	13 Sep 1959 New York City	Gonzaga U. Notre Dame	Lawyer	Lt., U.S. Army, WW I	Montana Legislature, 1914
35	John Wannamaker	Benjamin Harrison	5 Mar 1889	5 Mara 1893 End of term	11 Jul 1838 Philadelphia, PA	6 Oct 1949 St. Louis, MO	St. Louis U.	Lawyer		Missouri Assembly, 1935
36	Wilson Bissell	Grover Cleveland	3 Mar 1893 (6 Mar 1893)	14 Apr 1895 Resigned	31 Dec 1847 New London, NY	25 Mar 1970 Kansas City, MO	Normal school	Teacher		Postal Inspector, 1915-32 First Ass't PMG, 1936-47
37	William L. Wilson	Grover Cleveland	1 Mar 1895 (4 Apr 1895)	5 Mar 1897 End of term	8 May 1843 Middleway, WV	20 Apr 1972 West Palm Beach FL	Public schools	Businessman		
38	James A. Gary	William McKinley	6 Mar 1897	20 Apr 1898 Resigned	22 Oct 1833 Uncasville, CT	29 Oct 1996 Hunt Valley, MD	U. Chicago Harvard	Lawyer	Lt., U.S. Navy,	
39	Charles E Smith	William McKinley	21 Apr 1898	9 Jan 1902 Ressigned	18 Feb 1842 Mansfield, CT	7 Jan 1996 Green Bay, WI	U. Wisconsin	Educator	Lt., U.S. AAF, 1942-5	Ambassador to Poland, 1065-8
40	Henry C. Payne	Theodore Roosevelt	9 Jan 1902	4 Oct 1904 Died in office	23 Nov 1843 Ashfield, MA	28 Sep 1990 New York City	Northeastern U.	Businessman	U.S. Army, 1943-5	
41	Robert Wynne	Theodore Roosevelt	10 Oct 1904	4 Mar 1905 End of term	18 Nov 1851 New York City		Baylor	Businessman	U.S. Marine Corps, 1943-6	
42	George B. Courtelyou	Theodore Roosevelt	6 May 1905	3 May 1907	26 Jul 1851 New York City		Staunton Military U. Alabama	Businessman	Lt. U.S. AAF, 1942-5	

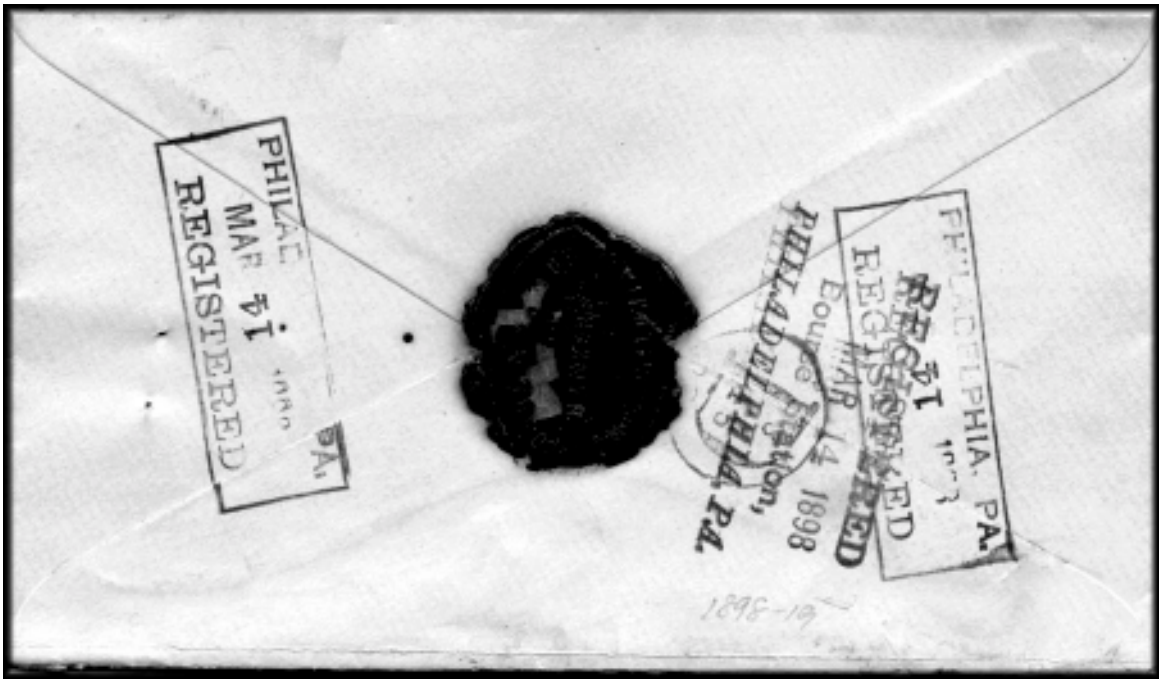

Figure 15 *On a March 1898 cover, the new style multi-line Bourse Station marking meet the older boxed 3-line style. The old world wax seal suggests a currency enclosure to German bankers in NYC.*

Registration at Philadelphia

Part 2

by Tom Clarke

Part One summary…

Unofficial registration procedures to protect valuable mail contents in the early 19th century led to semi-official recorded entries in post office logbooks starting in late 1845. Philadelphia's famed incoming and outgoing mail "R" markings, used between 1845 and 1855, helped convince the Post Office Department in Washington to initiate its official five-cent, non-postage stamp registration service in July 1855.

Barbara Muller[1] and James Milgram[2] mention a clause in the Postal Act of 1855 that prohibited any outward indication of the value contained within registered mail. Milgram specifies that this ban did not include the word "registered." The intent of this clause (which was rescinded in 1857) was to hide the valuable nature of the letter and thwart losses by vigilant, sticky fingered thieves. That the extra five-cent "fee" could not be added as a stamp to the envelope underscores the view that any advertisement indicating value was a threat.

However, it seems Philadelphia's interpretation of the clause was overly conservative. It not only refrained from allowing "money" words between 1855 and 1857, it also seems to have ruled out the word "registered". Other offices large and small continued to mark envelopes with "Registered", or "Reg." but Philadelphia was cautious to a fault.

Finally, and maybe in anticipation of the new registry rules, the Philadelphia Post Office began to use its prominent blue or black REGISTERED straightline origin marking about two months prematurely. Then, on July 1, 1863, the registration fee soared to 20 cents, but this sum still could not be shown by postage stamps on the envelope until June 1, 1867. It had taken a dozen years, 1855-67, for the USPO to acquire faith that a registered letter showing telltale postage could travel safely to its destination.

In 1868, a succession of ordinary circular design registry postmarks debuted in Philadelphia. They would last almost ten years, to be replaced by the boxed triple straightline type in 1878. Rates during this period descended to 15 cents (1869), then to 8 cents (1874), and leveled off at 10 cents (1875).

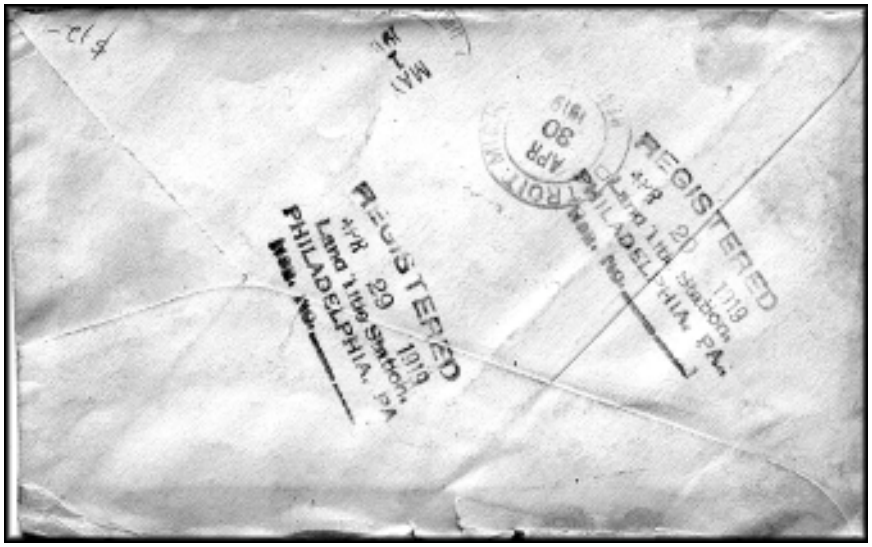

Figure 16 *Two 5-straightline postmarks properly follow the 1879 regulation for "sealing" the back seams of this contemporary cut down envelope to Detroit in April 1919.*

In 1879, a new mandate required backstamps, which Philadelphia pride rendered very distinctive. These would help track mail routing and, if necessary, facilitate investigation of missing mail.

Both front and back markings, now in magenta or purple, took on a brand new look in 1878-1880 when a fresh generation of dated rectangular registry markings was launched. Interesting to note at this point: registration markings didn't quite know what they were. They were actual postmarks because they showed city and date, but via the addition of the word registered, they were service markings, too. This had been the case since the 1868 circle-date registry markings appeared.

Straightline *déjà vu*

Between 1890 and 1905 the rectangle postmarks quietly passed from the scene one by one. City growth and the increasingly intricate, expanding spider's web of local stations and sub-stations called for a registration marking with even more data on it: the town, (station), date, REGISTERED, and sometimes a fifth line for the registration number; thus, the multi-straightline handstamp.

The basic device, used between 1892 and 1910, may have been ordered from Washington's general supply catalog, but these postmarks appear very hit and miss. Some may indeed be homebrew concoctions made from rubber type bought at a local stationer's. Some have whole lines of type that migrated up or down, and some have unmatched typefaces. As a result, in-

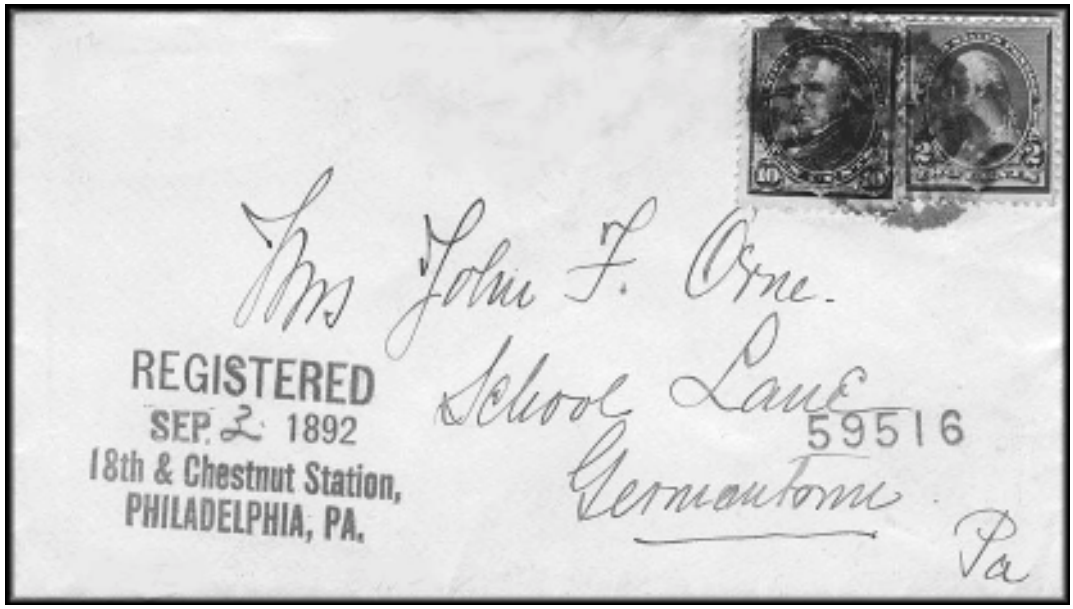

Figure 17 *A bright red 4-line postmark of September 1892 improperly placed on the front. Registration rules were apparently confusing, especially late in the evening at the Night Station –open only three years. It should only appear on the reverse. There is nothing on the back, a mistake perhaps because it was a local cover? The 10+2 rate would be reduced to 8+2 on New Years Day, 1893. An illegible pair of double oval killers was used.*

teresting as they are, they are difficult to catalog. They need to be grouped as a single type of endless variation.

They are also the last registration origin marks to bear a date. Henceforth, after 1910, in Philadelphia and many if not all other cities, determination of a registry date will require a peek at the reverse to confirm not only the date of transit and arrival, but now also the date of mailing as well. (Note: this rule was not followed, as it should have been, as a 1924 POD directive complained. See below.)

Figure 18 *A nice compact Special Delivery-Registry cover with both markings properly in magenta . Again, the postmark should have gone on the reverse, where only Scranton stamped. This is the 8+2 rate +10 and bears a partial double oval RD killer.*

20th century "dater" backstamps

Today, the black ink, general-purpose utility, double-circle, city/date/state marker, usually called a "dater," is used throughout the U.S. And they have a long history.

In Philadelphia these sturdy stampers began to be used at small neighborhood postal sub-stations about 1902. Their popularity increased through the World War I years and they were eventually ordered for Main Office use by about 1920.

But the true antecedent of today's daters appeared many years earlier. The Main Office Money Order Station began to use the basic double circle design in the mid-1880s. The motif for the stamping devices that would help speed the new, safe postal money orders had to be distinct. They helped imprint the words MONEY ORDER or M.O.B(usiness) on the American conscience. With the crush of immigration, many tiny street corner postal money order branches sprang up in the mid-1890s[3]. They were duly supplied with double circle money order daters.

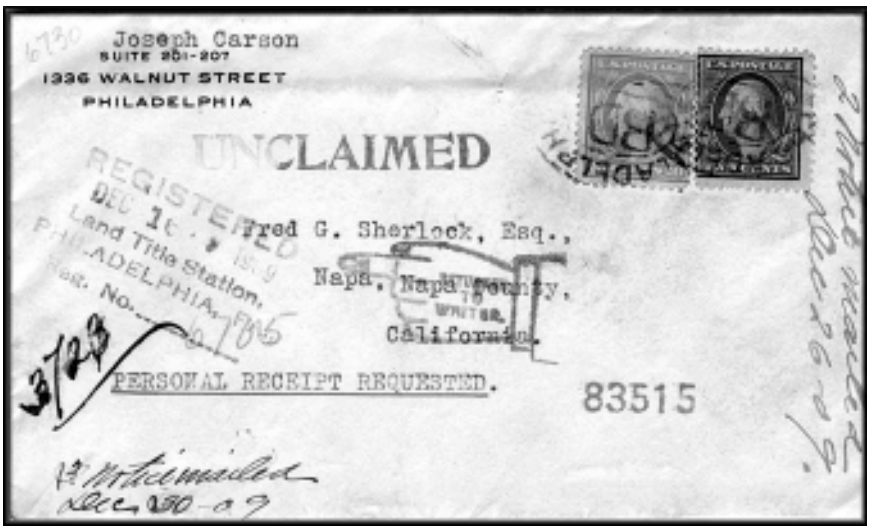

Figure 19 *A lawyer-lawyer unclaimed registry letter (with contents re: a contested will) from December 16, 1909, six weeks after the renewed 10+2 rate became effective. The reverse shows a double circle registered receiving stamp of January 10. (This letter was found within the writer, Joseph Carson's, fabulous Philadelphia stampless collection.)*

In 1890, Philadelphia's registry clerks began replacing the rectangular backstamps with similar double circle daters. Theirs were in the official magenta or purple ink though, and naturally bore the word REGISTERED. Beginning about 1905, after the last of the

backstamp rectangles had become extinct, both the Main Office and local stations used registry daters exclusively. They stamped registry receipts and the reverse flap at both seams –a new requirement to further curb pilferage. Magenta registry daters were still in use as late as the mid-1970's.

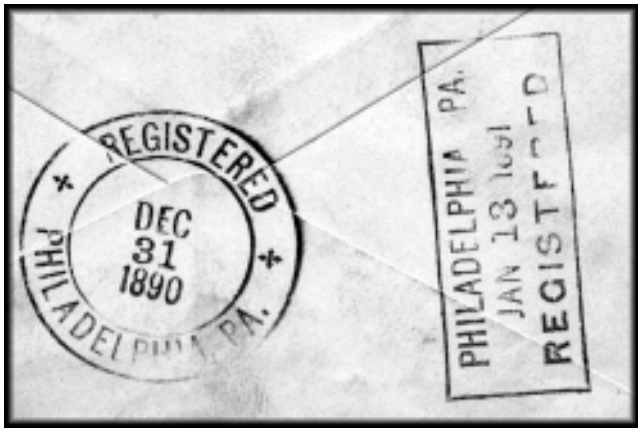

Figure 20 *Another transition of postmarks, the new jumbo double circle style (very early example) and the outgoing box 3-line receiving mark, December 1890.*

The dater look

Philadelphia's registration daters between 1890 and 1894 were balloon-sized, one type of which was strikingly decorated on the outside rim with tiny teeth. Soon, smaller 28-30mm markings would gain acceptance and that size has sufficed, with little change for more than 100 years.

Registry daters display a array of wording types, often rearranged, depending on whether they came from letter stations, name stations, number (sub-) stations, or branches. Main Office types multiply too, according to hand stamp wording: Registered, Registry, Registry Section, Registry Division; by USPO or USPS; by the number of lines of date information; by punctuation or the lack thereof, etc.

Note that even though a good number of regular mail stamp cancellers do abbreviate the town name, none of the registered varieties do. No doubt this was pursuant to a rule or understanding emphasizing security and absolute trace-ability.

In the 'twenties and 'thirties, ordinary window clerk daters, i.e., those not containing the word REGISTERED, are occasionally found on registered mail. Rarely, money order or parcel post daters were used to backstamp registered matter, too. (Almost never do we find unmarked registry items.)

These miscues are invariably due to haste, "highway hypnosis," and fatigue. In the increasingly complex 20th century, teeming postoffice mailrooms, tight time schedules, and numbing routine forced strict rules to bend and triggered the sometime erroneous marks.

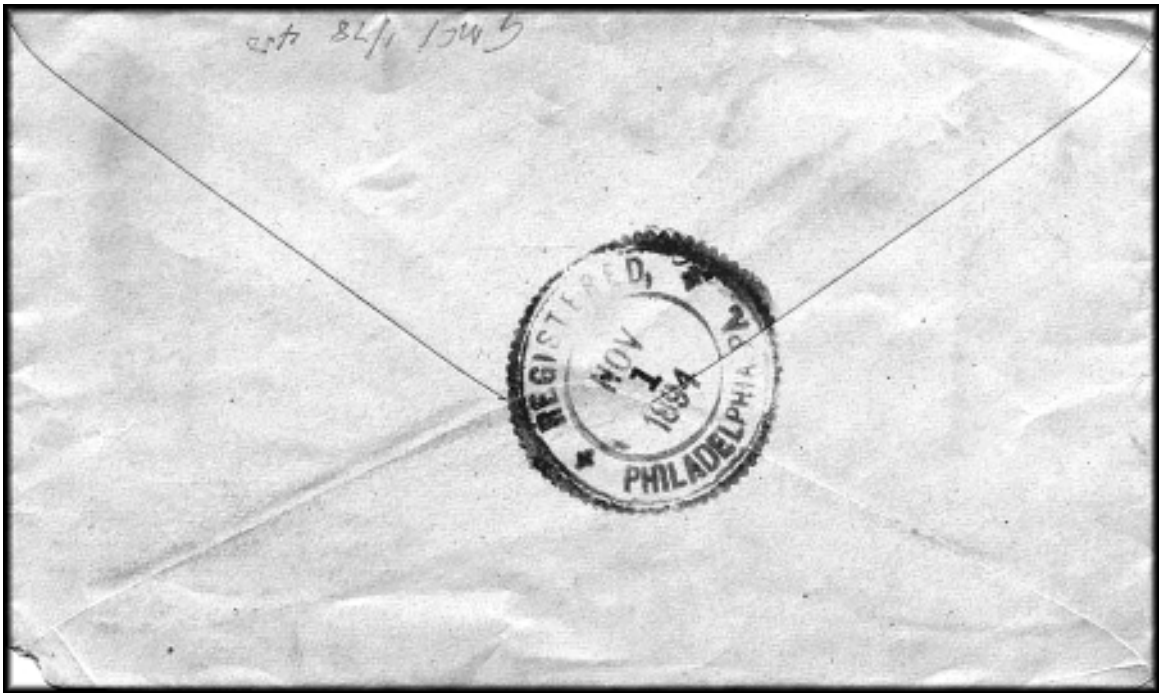

Figure 21 *A striking, toothed variety of the large double circle registry receiving backstamp in reddish magenta. It had a brief life span.*

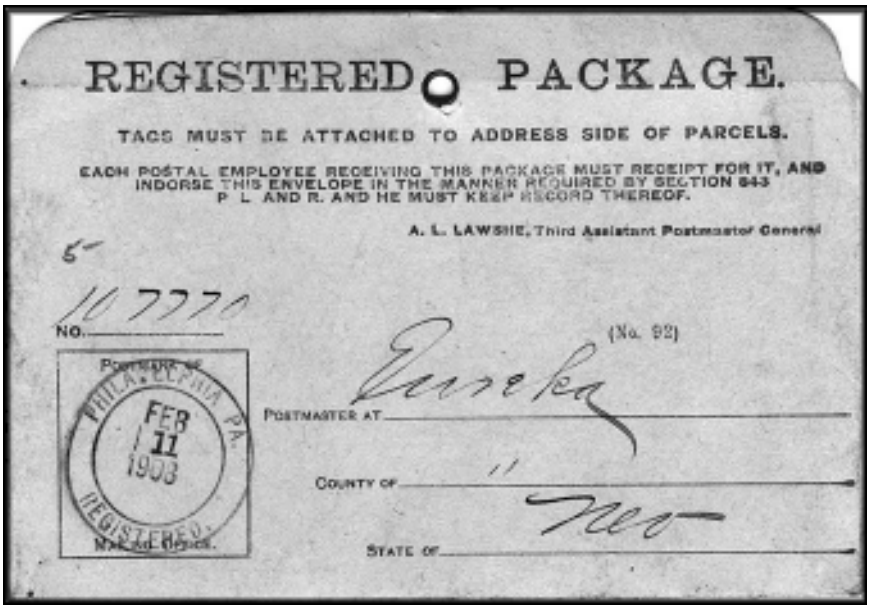

Figure 22 *A registered package tag with an increasingly popular double circle hand stamp sent from the Philadelphia Postmaster to Eureka NV in 1908. It has 11 lines on the reverse for signatures, but in this case only three appear: Union Station, Chicago and "Fm. Og. &. S. F. Tr. 9", and finally that of the P/M at Eureka.*

Registration killers

We must take a look at stamp obliterators, the necessary additional strikes that compliment registry markings on letters. Because it had become illegal to use postmark dials to cancel postage stamps after mid-1860, separate cork killers (and shortly, duplex combination hand stamps) were pressed into use.

Philadelphia's first REGISTERED straightline, 1862-68, was itself used for stamp canceling. It had breeched the "postmark" gap, since it bore no date or town name, as those bold, interesting covers show. As a service mark it could be the killer, and the Philadelphia duplex cancels (with its own killer attached) attended it off to the side.

But after 1868 and the advent of the circle-date registry design, registry markings again matched the definition of town postmark. Thus, fancy carved or plain cork obliterators had to be used for the separate stamp killing operation.

Clerks realized that with the multiple postage stamps required to pay postage plus registry fee (after June 1867), a single duplex and killer-bearing handstamp would not adequately do the job. They needed the aid of another device to guarantee effective cancellation of every stamp.

Figure 23 *Even the Main Office at Philadelphia in 1907 didn't fully understand the 1879 regulation about proper registry marking. A purple DC postmark actually kills the adhesive, flouting the 28-year old directive. Canceling is for double ovals. Then a second clerk stutter-stamped a magenta DC next to it, perhaps for clarity. However, both should have gone on the back, yet none at all appears there.*

Figure 24 *Double ovals with low numbers at first went to "numbered" clerks, but [hypothesis:] about 1890 were redistributed to the new numbered sub-stations for their use. Definitely high numbers above about 30 were assigned to stations —the back stamped 4-line says "Sub-Station No. 59." In mid-1901, #59 indicated a certain countertop, maybe, in a store in at 5101 Market St., West Philadelphia.*

Soon, with the explosion of third and eventually fourth-class mail, neither of which required timely delivery, the undated double oval cancel was born. It was 1879/1880. Inasmuch as the obligatory date was already included in the straightline registry postmark/service mark, the sturdier double ovals would retire the fragile corks. Double ovals, of one sort or another, beginning in 1881, will accompany registered origin markings for the ensuing one hundred years.

Registry clerks received double ovals bearing "R.D.", and later "REG." and "RD" (Registry Division). Companion ovals include C.D., F.D., P.D. and P.P., indicating Collection, Foreign, Parcel and either Post Paid or Parcel Post Divisions. These general-purpose killers will be used at the Main Office until the Depression years of the early 1930s.

Double ovals

These large to oversize cancellers (much smaller after World War I) were used on registration mail and any 3rd and 4th class mail. They bore numerals in the center that seem, at least initially, to represent individual clerks.[4] Early in the cancel's lifetime, about 1886/87, each postal division was accorded its own designated double ovals for obliteration purposes. This would better compartmentalize tasks for the expanding post office and also permit management to easily track workflow and efficiency.

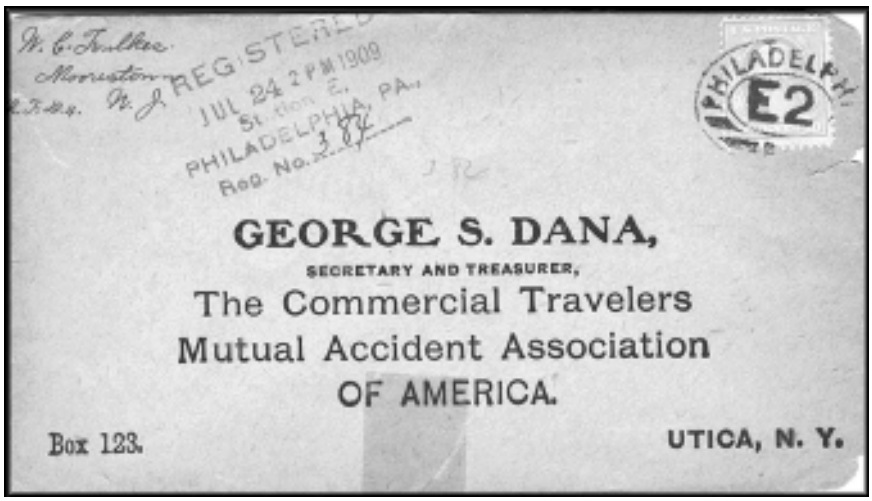

Figure 25 *In the waning days of the 8+2 rate, July 24, 1909, clerk number 2 at Station E handled this registered letter. The killer is proper, but the postmark should have gone on the back, twice. Only a receiving stamp is found.*

Figure 26 *This cover was handled correctly from "Receiving Station No. 7" to Narbonne France. Perhaps New York placed the A.R. (return receipt) for it is difficult to imagine a sub-station having such a rarely used device. Despite the theory that sub-stations received the low double oval number cancels after about 1890, Station 7 doesn't use one in 1893. It either passed the letter uncancelled to the Main Office for canceling, or possessed the RD killer and not a #7 oval.*

Full service (named) Stations will use their own coded ovals, for example "N.P." for North Philadelphia and "S.C." for Sesqui-Centennial. The larger letter stations used letter-clerk codes such as B3, G2, K4, etc. Even the many number stations were supplied with ovals bearing their respective code number within (only one clerk for these storefront stations). Small size coded double ovals succeeded the large variety in the late 'teens and continued in use through the early 1950's.

A variant form of double oval was the large non-lettered style. These are uncommon and probably were used as a temporary replacement device. They are found used as early as 1894 through 1931.

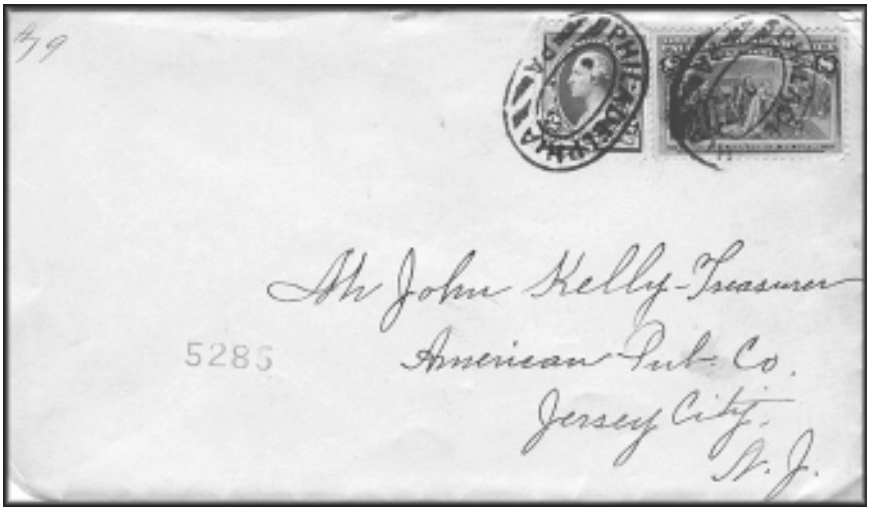

Figure 27 *Blank double ovals may have been used as fill-ins for damaged goods. But this one (Apr. 12, 1894) was either used at Station 14 (who knew how to properly mark a registered letter!) or, as above, passed it along to the Main Office uncancelled for stamp cancellation there.*

More prominent are the no town name, no letter/number, fully mute double ovals. Perhaps they also began life as fill-ins when others were lost or damaged. After all, they could easily be shared inter-departmentally for convenience. After the number and letter forms had passed into history in the early 1930's, the mute style came to dominate. (It is suggested this changeover may be related to the 1934 ruling against modern fancy cancels! See more on this below.)

As the years passed in the new century, getting the job done had become paramount. There was little time to waste monitoring each

department, much less each individual clerk. One example is marking device colors. Prior to 1878, magenta and purple markings for registered letters were the standard. Yet, in Philadelphia in the 'teens, 'twenties, and 'thirties black, blue-black, blue, blue-green, violet, or red ink was periodically used. Perhaps the growing pandemonium of the mail business allowed individual experiments that in prior days would have consequences.

The 20th century origin markers

During the previous era of multi-line markers, the registration fee, on New Year's Day 1893, decreased to eight cents. But as an incentive, for the first time, the enclosed value of the registered item would be insured. Toward the end of the era, on November 1, 1909, the registry fee rebounded to 10 cents. The new fee structure may well be the reason for introducing the new, boxed straightline, REGISTERED markings.

At the same time, another innovation, the blue eagle registry stamp was introduced on December 1, 1911. It would prove an ineffective experiment, since the stamp was not acceptable for normal postage. The registration stamp debacle, however, does illustrate the fact that the 1855 concept of separating fees and postage was still alive, if only briefly until May 1913. (Oddly enough, four weeks later, the abused parcel post stamps issue will be allowed use for regular postage.)

Without a date, the new, boxed straightline markings were rendered no longer postmarks, merely service indications. Since in today's world, registration is a moribund mail choice, the post-1910 markings will become the last of the registry series.

The first of three types is the most blatant, the "number rectangle." Initially used about 1910, they recall the three-line rectangular type of the previous century but with the date removed. The word REGISTERED appears as either thick regular letters or reversed, voided lettering on a magenta field. There is a thick-rimmed open space beneath for the control number to be written in or hand stamped. They were used for two generations into the 1950s.

The second type is the bold, sans serif, single word REGISTERED. This thick lettered marker came to use about 1920 and continued for more than 50 years, into the 1970's and later.

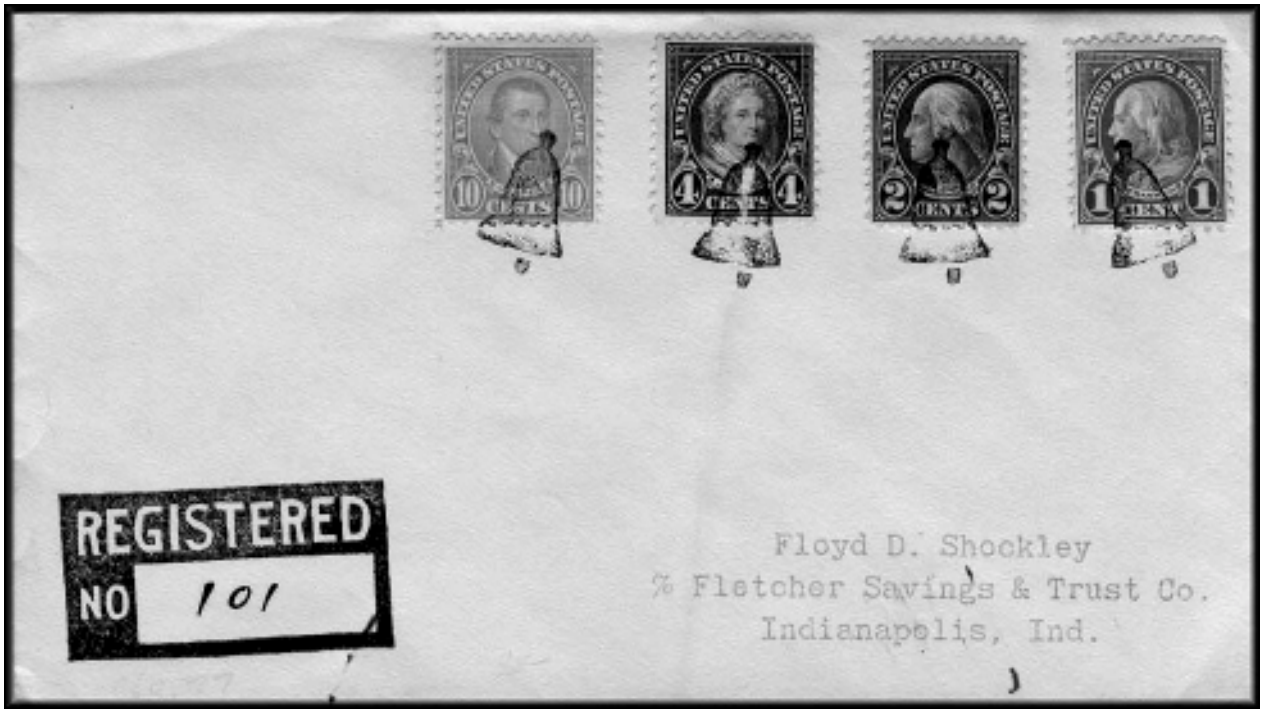

Figure 28 *An example of a philatelic modern fancy that Barbara Mueller claims was the result of a daisy chain of events stemming from decades of registration marking impropriety. Colorful symbols representing a town were a loophole in the regulations. No town was mentioned, as with a normal cancel, yet town pride was enhanced. This Blue Bell PA cover dated from 1932, not from the "classic period" of 1924-28. After 1928 fancies were more philatelic scam than sincere postal activity.*

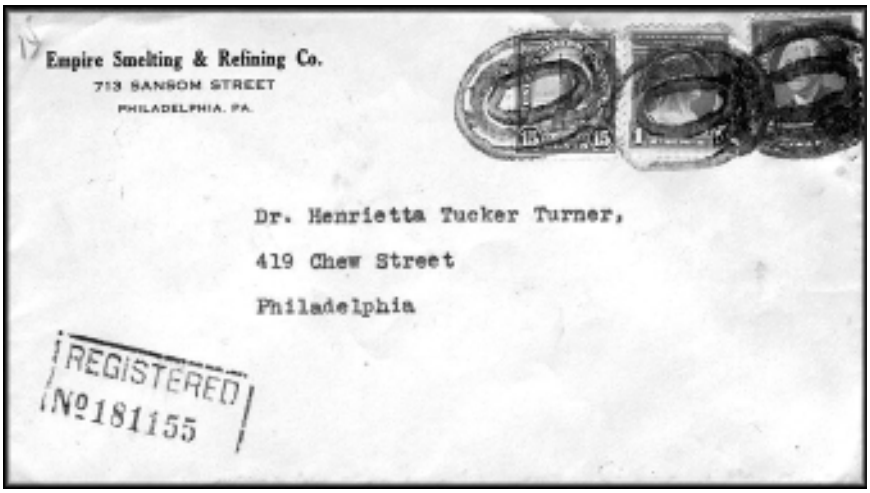

Figure 29 *During the height of the Depression, July 1932, Philadelphia was phasing out her numbered and lettered double ovals in favor of this voided style. It may be a result of the 1924, '28, and '34 impassioned implementation of the 1879 marking rules. Did they now consider a town's name and the central code as a temptation to theft? This example also carries the third type of 20th century boxed straightline, in black (but that's breaking a rule!).*

The third major type is similar: a plain, two-line, three-sided thin box with REGISTERED / No. It was used from the late 1920's to the late 1940's, a sort of Depression-War eyewitness.

There are other formats to be aware of for the period. Beginning in the 1920's, commercial firms or governmental units had envelopes printed that bore the word REGISTERED/No.___ in varied designs. Their purpose was to cut down on standing time in a post office line, no doubt. The pre-World War II stamp firms of Wolseiffer and of Apfelbaum, for example, stamped instructions on their mail before sending it to the post office. It surely sped mail handling, but unless we see a variety of mailings from each company, we can confuse the official post office applied markings with the privately applied features.

Figure 30 *The registration stamp used appropriately in 1912, cancelled by an RD double oval, and marked by the rather new "number rectangle" device. No longer considered a postmark without a date, the magenta marking with its number duly filled in was a properly made up cover.*

Registry-related modern fancies!

Barbara Mueller neatly points out a problem that had developed by 1924. Early 20th century postmasters were not abiding by the 1879 rules concerning backstamps on registered mail. The solution to this problem may actually account for the demise of the station coded double ovals in the early 1930's as well as the adoption of the fully mute style thereafter!

She reports a 1924 directive to postmasters to be sure to "postmark registered mail on the reverse side rather than on the address side."[5] The existing rule had mandated backstamps on the flap and seams for security. A good look at Philadelphia registered mail, especially of the 1890-1910 postmark/service mark period (when small sub-stations developed), shows that clerks had been placing their registry markings either on the front or the back or on both sides.

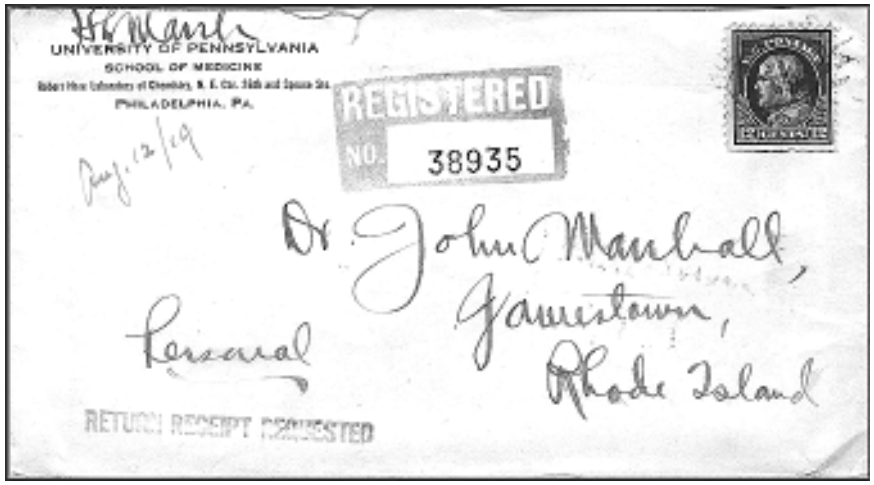

Figure 31 *This is the first major style of the "number rectangle" type. It is from August 1919 and has void letters. It is correctly in magenta-purple as is the return receipt request line. One of the old RD double ovals cancels the stamp, though only one double circle backstamp "seals" the back flap.*

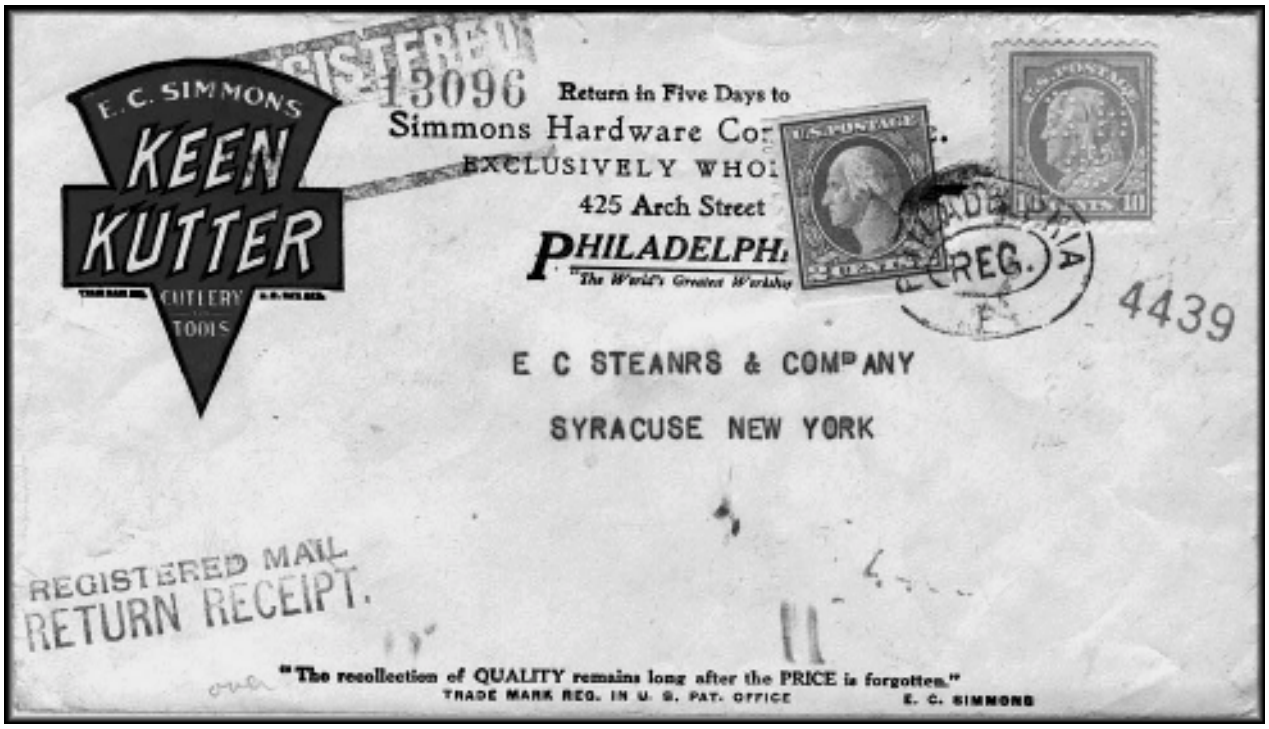

Figure 32 *This red advertising cover contains a bit of everything. It's a January 1915 usage to Syracuse from the Main Office. It has a voided "number rectangle" marking with a hand stamped number within. I uses one of the smaller double ovals bearing REG. instead of RD, the 2 cent is a coil and the 10 cent is a perfin for the Simmons Hardware Company (SH/Co). It requests a return receipt (but does not show one was ever attached to the cover. The two Philadelphia backstamps appropriately mark both seam intersections.*

Perhaps the clerks were as confused over the nature of the devices they were given as collectors are today in categorizing them. We have mentioned previously their quasi-postmark status. Apparently, many of the clerks were getting it wrong. There obviously was an ambivalent understanding of the purpose of the multi-line markers, and of the other locally created styles used in other cities. Is this a major reason for the gradual adoption of the more easily comprehended —and uniform— registry dater-backstamps between about 1895 and 1910? Probably so.

Evidence at hand suggests that, for Philadelphia, such improper stamping was at most stations and to a lesser degree the Main Office! Across the country the problem was equally widespread. Given Philadelphia's conservative nature, we can wonder why improper application of regulations was allowed.

As a postscript, Mueller claims that the 1924 order was the impetus for many 4th class postmasters indulging in the creation of modern fancy cancels. They could still show off the name and glory of their little burgs via pictures and designs, while not breaking the GPO's order to follow the 1879 rule! (Justice is slow, though, and these fancies were rebuked by Washington in

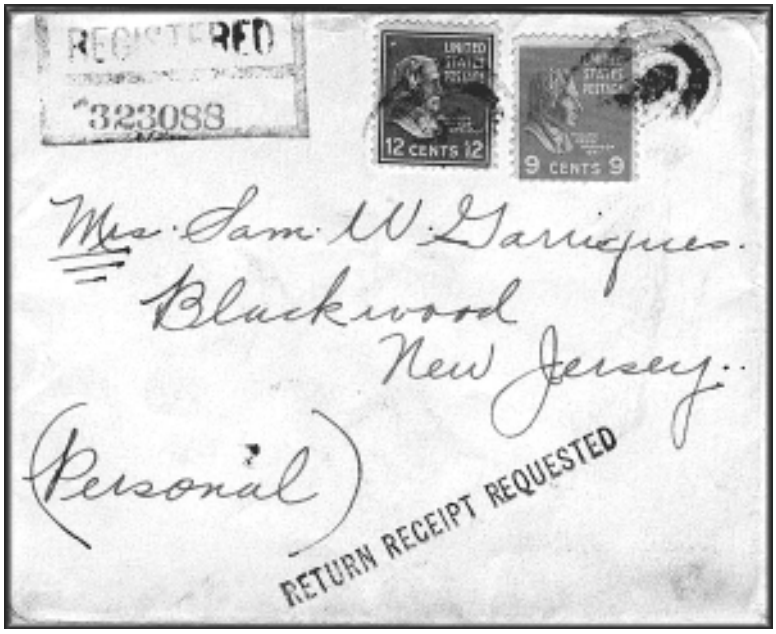

Figure 33 *The second style of the "numbered rectangle" is in not voided. Here it is in purple, with green numerals hand stamped within. The killer appears to be the mute type. The back is stamped from the Kingsessing section of the city in May, 1942.*

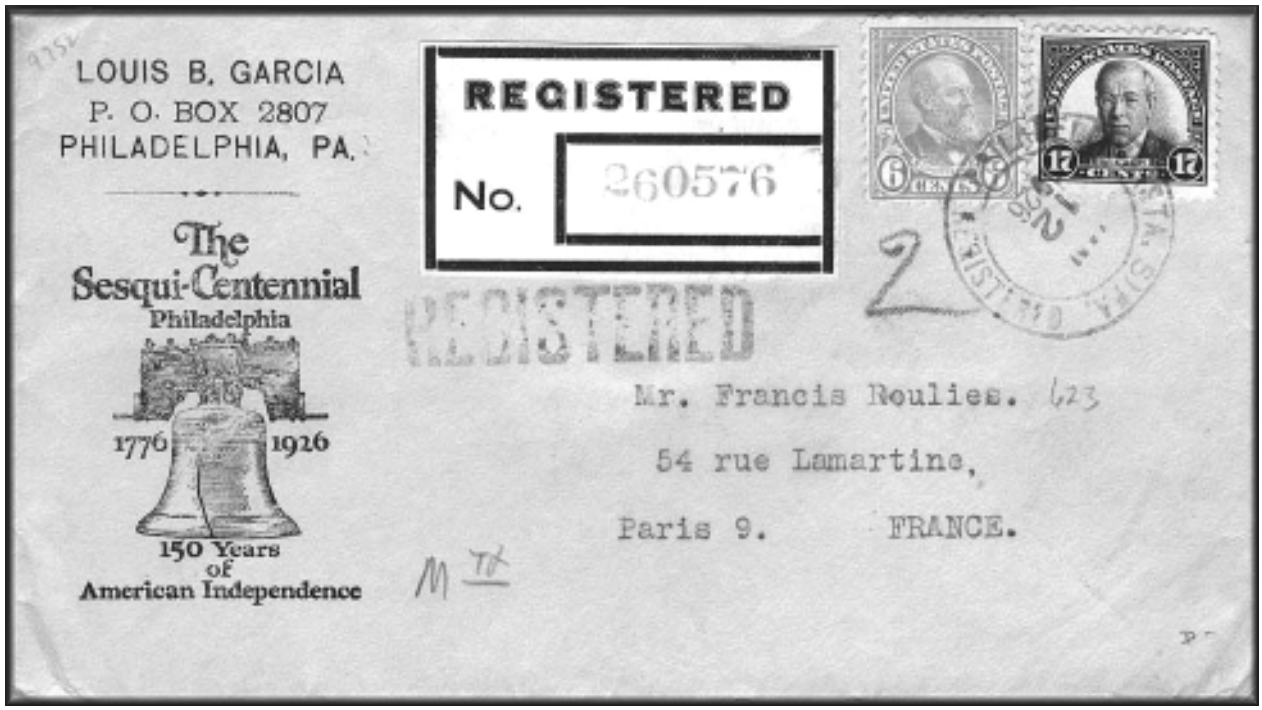

Figure 34 *One of the apparently non-postal markings is shown here from Station S, January 1926. The white label shows up well against the salmon cover, and might be a (preliminary) official label for the Sesqui-Centennial that was to begin in several months, but that still wouldn't make it an official postal label. The stamps are improperly cancelled, and this is two years after the strong injunction from Washington to follow registration rules. The reverse is properly, if poorly, hand stamped from Station S, plus one from the Main Office as a transit marking to the NYC Foreign Mail Section.*

1928, but not outlawed until a full ten years later, in 1934[6].) An interesting cause and effect scenario, but aside from indicating some sloppy sub-station hand stamping, the 1924 directive had little effect in Philadelphia.

Residue of markings today

Beginning in the 1970's, labels began to replace hand stamps. They are colorful, uniform across the country, and apparently facilitate and expedite getting letters into the mail stream. Quickly, via optical character recognition methods, they became computer recognizable, too. All of this hastens processing in a system gorged with mail of every sort. But it also means the beginning of the end of hands-on mail service, as it's been known for 200 years and more.

Today, for mail that absolutely, positively must be registered, the post office will provide (for roughly $7) self-stick labels that say REGISTERED MAIL and exhibit preprinted numbers and bar codes. All of this frees the clerk from any needless stamping except for the generic dater cancellation, in black. But even

Figure 35 *A nicely marked 1952 local registration cover from Earl Apfelbaum Stamps. It bears a private registry marking in red-magenta and two mute double ovals. On the reverse it shows two Station 22 (center city) hand stamps, a Philadelphia Main Office transit, and a Paschall Station receipt marking. None of these are registry markings, though they are in magenta. Apparently, though the regulation is not known, ordinary daters were now acceptable in lieu of true REGISTRATION daters.*

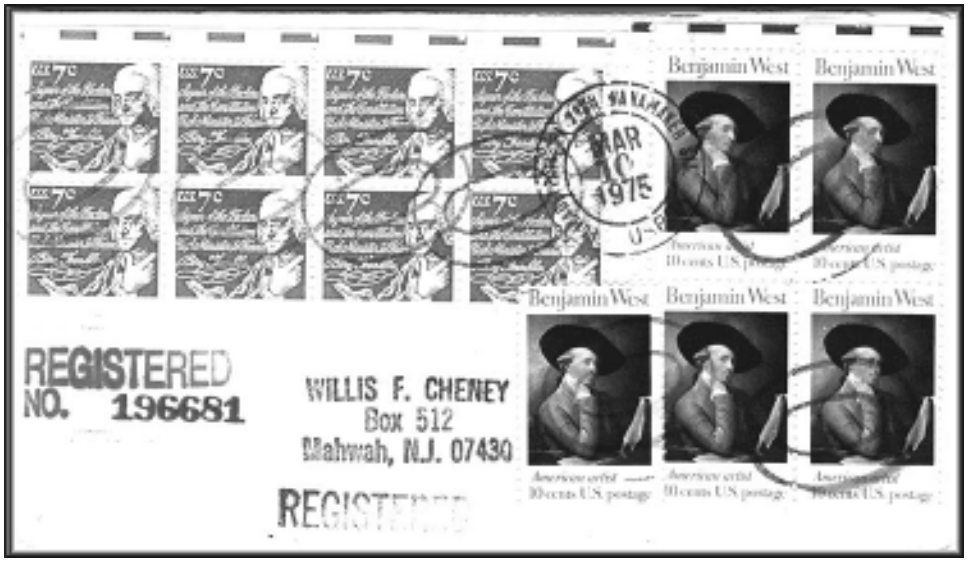

Figure 36 *A late registration cover from the John Wanamaker department store station to New Jersey. There are two registered markings: one a post office two-line in red-magenta, the other in purple, the same color as the hand stamped address, thus private. An improper double circle joins proper mute double ovals, all in magenta, in canceling the philatelicly applied stamps. This is one of the latest "old-style" registered covers the writer has seen.*

that is not needed if they can place a laser meter label on the envelope quicker than the patron can request "postage stamps, please."

Priority, Express, Priority with insurance, confirmation, you name it and the current Postal Service has it —for a pretty penny. Each has, to one degree or another, helped supplant the need for registered mail. Extra-governmental services like Federal Express, Emory, and United Parcel allow senders, as does the USPS, to follow the progress of their valuable mail matter across state, country, and around the world with the push of a few computer mouse clicks. Except for physical documents, Email and electronic banking has helped ring the death knell for registry and other mail services.

Having seen no Philadelphia registered item more recent that 1976, the writer cannot verify whether backstamps are still required. What about foreign registered mail to the states? (Yes, at least as late as 1981.) Today, barcode recording has probably assumed both roles.

We are probably now in the autumn of the Postal Service's life and of modern postal history. How nice to handle old-fashioned registered covers that bear evidence of human thought and handling. We can admire the colorful markings and auxiliaries and the multi colored postage on the front. And we can discern the letter's geographic journey on the back. Very satisfying.

P.S.: Auxiliary registry markings

There is a multitude of auxiliary markings that also fit the category of Registry markings. The list of them is not small. They can be grouped as instructional, free of cost markings useful to clerks and carriers in performing their duties; notices to addressees with some form of message for action; prepaid specialty services at the request of the sender; and carrier markings, indicating the results of unsuccessful delivery. This last, the writer chooses to categorize as "Undeliverable" markings.

A special group lists internal postoffice markings that confirm receipt of registered mail from other offices, or forward it to other offices.

This following list is an approximation of the types that appear in *A Catalog of Philadelphia Postmarks:*

Auxiliary hand stamps

For Personal Delivery Only

Return receipt

REGISTERED MAIL/RECEIPT REQUESTED

REGISTERED MAIL/RETURN RECEIPT.

REGISTERED/RETURN RECEIPT REQUIRED.

RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED/ SHOWING ADDRESS WHERE DELIVERED.

RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED./SHOWING ADDRESS/WHERE DELIVERED.

Deliver to Addressee Only

Return Receipt Requested/Fee Paid

A.R.

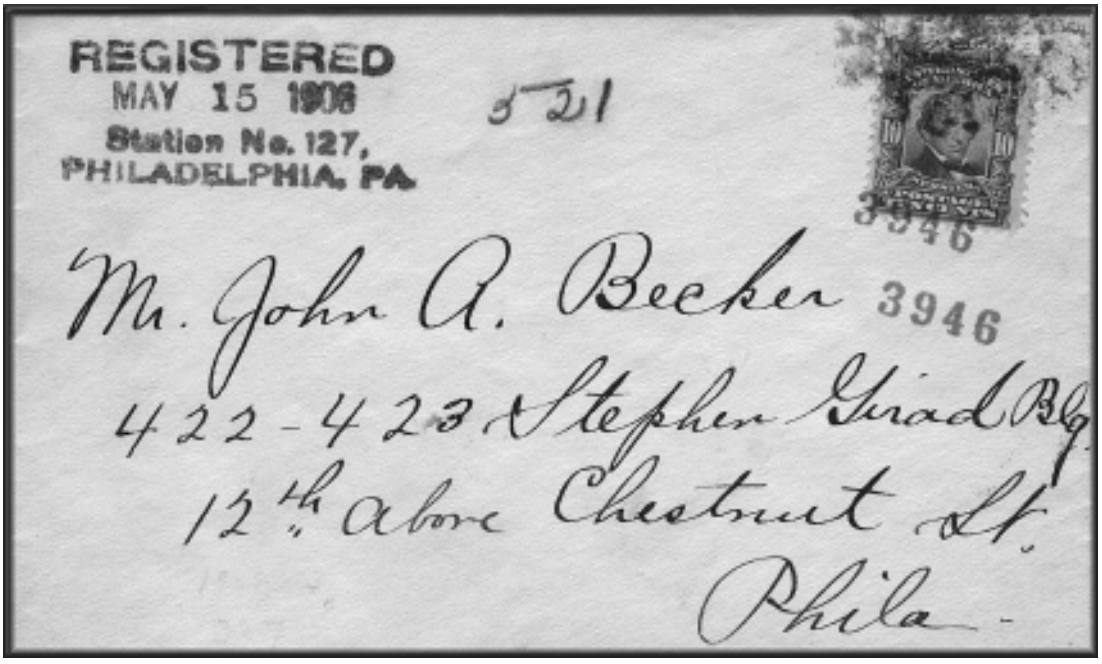

Figure 37 *A standard registered item from a high numbered Sub-Station, #127. This is the kind of practice that drove GPO officials wild. There is a date but no reverse markings, and several other gaffs. Registration security hung in the balance. Did they keep their logbooks is as sloppy a fashion?*
The well-struck postmark that should be on the back is in black. There are no markings on the reverse from either the sending or receiving office, which happens to be the Philadelphia Main Post Office. However, the hand stamped control number is in bright magenta, so they didn't lack the right color ink for failing to follow the rules. The killer is illegible, as so many are. Perhaps the Main Office sent their old markers to some of the sub-stations to conserve cash? (Station 127 in May 1906 was at 1229 So. 21st Street in bustling immigrant Italian South Philly –Rocky's turf.)

Notice messages

NOTICE SENT/Philadelphia, Pa.

Notice/date ms

FIRST NOTICE SENT/date/PHILADELPHIA, PA.

NOTIFIED/date

Not./date/initial ms

notified/date/initials ms

Notified/date/number ms

1st NOTICE/2nd NOTICE/RETURN

name/1st Notice…/2nd Notice…/Return…

Noticed and Unclaimed, Station....

NOTICE SENT TO POSTMASTER/date/ PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Postmaster hand stamps

—on Registry Bill postcards between postmasters

PHILADELPHIA, PA,/CORRECT/date/name

PHILADELPHIA, PA. RECEIVED,/date/ CORRECT/name

CORRECT,/date/name

CORRECT/name/(star)/date/PHILADELPHIA, PA.

PHILADELPHIA, PA./date/21/Wm. Wilkins Carr, P.M.

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Endnotes

[1] Mueller, p. 20.

[2] Milgram, p.31f.

[3] From the *Postal Guide*, 17 number (sub-) stations are listed in 1891; 36 in 1896, exploding to 152 by 1907, and 163 by 1917; 164 in 1924. By 1931 depression times, there were 106 sub-stations in business, though the highest number remaining 160; 102 in 1935; 72 in 1941; 69 by 1947; 67 in 1949, and 20 by 1959, ending with stations #99 and 133.

To be sure, mail volume was not declining, just the reverse. Many of the missing sub-stations numbers indicate consolidation and elevation to full-service stations with names.

[4] Other canceling instruments bear numerals beyond the number of Main Office clerks. The standard Main Office duplex canceller of 1885-1901 maxed at #25 in the killer, indicating 25 clerks; Station killers usually max at 1, 2 or 3.

Double oval numerals must have indicated clerks also, at least initially, from 1881 to about 1890. Then in approximately 1890, numbered sub-stations made their appearance, with 17 listed by 1891. Were the double oval killer numbers then assigned to these new sub-stations? The Registration Division and other departments had recently acquired department double ovals (R.D., F.D., etc.) so that individual clerks actually didn't need numbered killers, and the postulate here is: *they weren't allowed to use them any more.*

The 1880's decade does seem to present more examples of low-number double oval mail than any other decade. Low number mail after the 1890s is not as common, which is what one would expect form small volume sub-stations. With the specific exceptions of #19, 22 and 56, which were large volume downtown satellites, high number double ovals are difficult to find.

Sub-station numbers, by 1924, maxed at 164. Yet there are other canceling devices that bear even higher figures: the wavy-line roller markers of the 1930's -1960's range up to at least 211. What did they indicate? Surely, these were Main Office individual clerk codes.

Carriers had number codes into four digits as witnessed by their notations on returned mail.

Number coding is an interesting topic for further investigation. Presumably every city followed the same pattern, at least after the dawn on the 20th century.

[5] Mueller, p.23.

[6] Mueller make the point that pre-1928 registered fancies are therefore worth more philatelicly as sincere, "pure plays" than those created after the 1928 invective called attention and notoriety to the practice and the entrepreneurs moved in.

TEXAS
Research Assistance Wanted

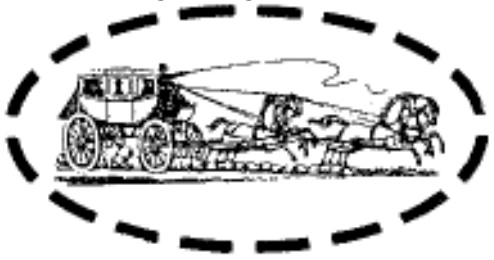
Postal Historian preparing list of all Texas contract stations/branches since 1900. Need information after Postal Bulletin stopped listing numbered stations in 1969. Looking for collector prepared or postmaster supplied lists for 1970-1995 that identify CS/CB/CPU's by name and/or number, address, place of business, dates operated, or any subset of this information. I do not need Rural Stations/Branches/CPO's. Any and all information appreciated.
Thanks in advance.

Michael Ludeman,
PMB 800012
2400 Wallace Pack Road
Navasota, TX 77868

La Posta Backnumbers

Backnumbers of ***La Posta*** may be purchased from Sherry Straley, 2214 Arden Way #199, Sacramento, CA 95825. An index of all backnumbers through Volume 28 has been completed by Daniel Y. Meschter and is available on the La Posta website at *www.la-posta.com.*

To order backnumbers call Sherry at 916-359-1898, fax 916-359-1963 or send her an E-mail at *collectibles@4agent.org.*



POSTAL MARKINGS OF NORTH DAKOTA TERRITORY

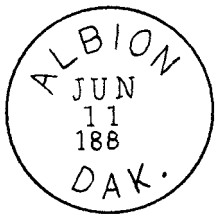
Part XVI: Stutsman and Towner County

By Mike Ellingson
Post Office Box 21402
Eagan, MN 55121
E-Mail: mikeellingson@juno.com

This is the sixteenth installment in an effort to catalog all known postmarks used in the portion of Dakota Territory that later became North Dakota. Please continue to send updates to the author at the above address. Thanks!

Stutsman County

Code	Earliest	Latest	Killer	Notes
Albion (1885-1896)				
1 C1GN1B27	11 Jun 1887	6 Jun 1888	target	
Arctic (1882-1885)				
None Reported				
Arrowwood (1887-1893)				
None Reported				
Atwill (1883-1895)				
1 C1GN1B27	27 Feb 1886	22 Jun 1888	target	
Cleveland (1882/Date)				
None Reported				
Corinne (1884-1906)				
1 C1GN1B29	17 Jun 1889	19 Aug 1889	star	
Donovan (1882-1883)				
None Reported				
Durham (1884-1887)				
None Reported				
Edmunds (1885-1975)				
1 MS	27 Dec 1885		pen	1
2 C21HN1B29.5	16 Aug 1886	10 Feb 1890	target	
Eldridge (1880-1982)				
1 C21GN1R28	10 Nov 1880		cork	
2 C2HN1B31.5	15 Oct 1883	21 Feb 1884	honeycomb	



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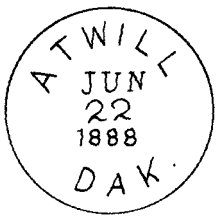

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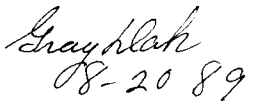

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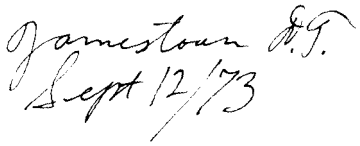

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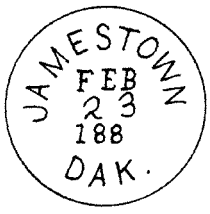

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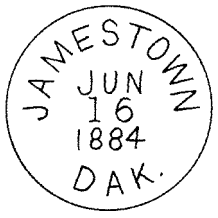

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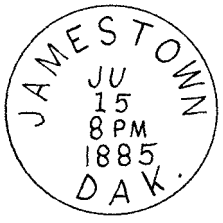

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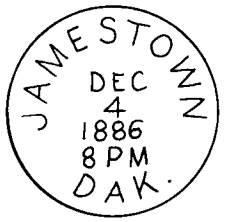


7

Esler (1882-1906)

1	C21HNR27	7 Apr 1883	25 Aug 1885	target

Gray (1884-1914)

1	MS	23 Apr 1889	20 Aug 1889	pen

Horn (1887-1893)

None Reported

Stutsman County

Code	Earliest	Latest	Killer	Notes

Jamestown (1872-Date)

1	MS	12 Jul 1873	12 Sep 1873	pen
2	C41HN1B29	11 Nov 1880	11 Jul 1881	target
3	C1GN1B26.5	29 Dec 1881	23 Feb 1883	target
4	C1GN1B27	9 Mar 1883	14 Apr 1884	cork
5	C1GN1B26.5	16 Jun 1884	11 ??? 1884	cork
6	C1GN1B28	18 Mar 1885	5 Oct 1885	cork
7	C1GN1B28	3 Oct 1886	11 Jan 1888	cork
8	C1GN1B28	23 Apr 1889	16 Dec 1889	cork

Karlopolis (1889-1894)

1	C1GN1B27	15 Aug 1893	10 Oct 1893	target

Medina (1888-Date)

None Reported

Montpelier (1886-Date)

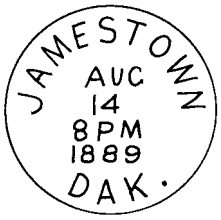
1	C1GN1B27	9 Jun 1887	9 Feb 1888	target

Pingree (1882-1993)

1	MS	25 Jun 1883	8 Oct 1883	pen
2	C1GN1B32.6	12 Jun 1884	27 Mar 1886	honeycomb

Rio (1887-1894)

1	MS	17 Oct 1887		pen



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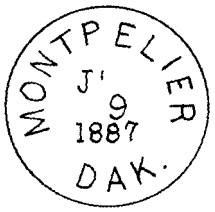

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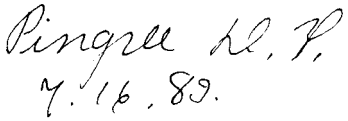
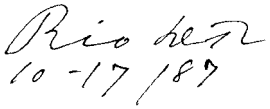

Pingree D. T.
7.16.89.
1

2


Rio dell
10-17/87
1

1

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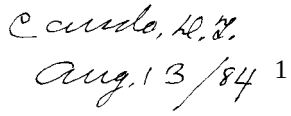
1


Cando, D.T.
Aug. 13/84
1

2

1

Sharlow (1887-1910)

None Reported

Spiritwood (1879-Date)

1	C41HN1B27.5	26 May 1881	27 Feb 1882	star-in-circle
2	C1GN1B27.5	25 Jun 1886	20 Apr 1887	target

Tarbell (1881-1886)

None Reported

Windsor (1883-1975)

1	C1GN1B25.5	18 Jul 1887		target

Ypsilanti (1882-Date)

1	C1GN1B26.5	3 May 1883	8 Jul 1886	target

Towner County

	Code	Earliest	Latest	Killer	Notes
Cando (1884-Date)					
1	MS	13 Aug 1884		pen	
2	C41HN2B31	15 Jun 1887	3 Aug 1887	target	
3	C1GN1B2?	6 Mar 1888		target	1

Coolin (1884/1910)

None Reported

Hanson (1888-1890)

None Reported

Perth (1889-1973)

None Reported

Picton (1887-1912)

None Reported

Sidney (1887-1906)

None Reported

Snyder (1886-1890)

1	C21HS1B33	19 Jan 1889	30 Mar 1889	cork

Notes:

1. Traceable postmark not available.

Esler in Stustman County was a station on the Fort Totten-Fort Seward trail.

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- manuscript editing
- research on US military covers, US possessions and general states postal history

The 1906 San Francisco Earthquake and Fire - Recent Discoveries

Part 3

By Randy Stehle

This article is the third and concluding part of the presentation of a newly discovered family correspondence from this 1906 event. This part will feature the last two letters written in early and mid-May 1906. Another new discovery — a letter written from Berkeley, CA four days after the earthquake, will be shown. In addition, a vintage stereo optican card depicting a crude refugee post office will be shown.

Letter Number Five

The following letter was sent from Oakland, CA to Pasadena, CA. The letter is dated April 30, 1906, and the cover is postmarked May 1, 1906. It was one of the few pieces in the collection not written from one family member to another. Like most of the other pieces, it was addressed to Mrs. Edith Gilmore.

1412 Twelfth Avenue
Oakland

My dear Edith: -

I haven't become fully settled yet to write you a good long letter since our recent experience, but I want to tell you how much I appreciated your very kind letter which I received on Saturday.

I am so glad that you had none of the real horror of the experience, although we in Oakland are truly fortunate when we consider what San Francisco suffered. It was a real pleasure for us to feel that we were helping in a small part to alleviate some of the suffering by caring for refugees in our different churches, where beds and food were offered to as many as could possibly be accomodated [sic]. Since Friday last, all of the refugees still remaining in Oakland, have been brought together in just three or four big camps, run systematically, thus relieving those who spent each day working in their home church. It seems as if we had lived a century since the earthquake, and I sincerely hope that we may never again have to face such an awful ordeal. Even now, though, people are beginning to get back to old duties and habits and we are trying to forget, but for a long time yet everything will date from the "time of the earthquake".

Papa's place in the city, like most others, was burned, and it will mean an entirely new start for him. But as he says, he has much to be thankful for, in that his family are all well, for health can bring happiness, and health and happiness together can defy many hard things.

I am so glad to know you are so happily situated, and I can almost see the "apple-pie order" of that bungalow. Our first accounts told us that Los Angeles suffered worse than we - and just to think how peacefully you slept through it all!

I won't call this a letter but will hope to write soon and will be able to write in at least a rational manner and tell you something besides "quaking" news.

Thanking you again for your much appreciated letter, and with kindest regards to Mr. Gilmore, with love to yourself from us all,

Lovingly your friend,
Bertha
April 30th – 1906

Letter Number Six

The next letter was written on May 13, 1906 and mailed two days later once again from Oakland to Pasadena, CA. It was sent to the same addressee as the previous letter, but this time it came from her sister Grace. In the fourth paragraph Grace mentions that Van Ness Avenue and Dolores Street saved the rest of San Francisco from burning. They are still very wide – both have a narrow island running down their middles. Van Ness is six lanes wide and used to have some of the nicest mansions in the city on it. Many of them were blown up with dynamite as the fire spread in an effort to make an even more efficient fire break. Dolores Street is four lanes wide and runs by its namesake, Mission Dolores. **Map 1** shows the location of these two streets as well as the burned area.

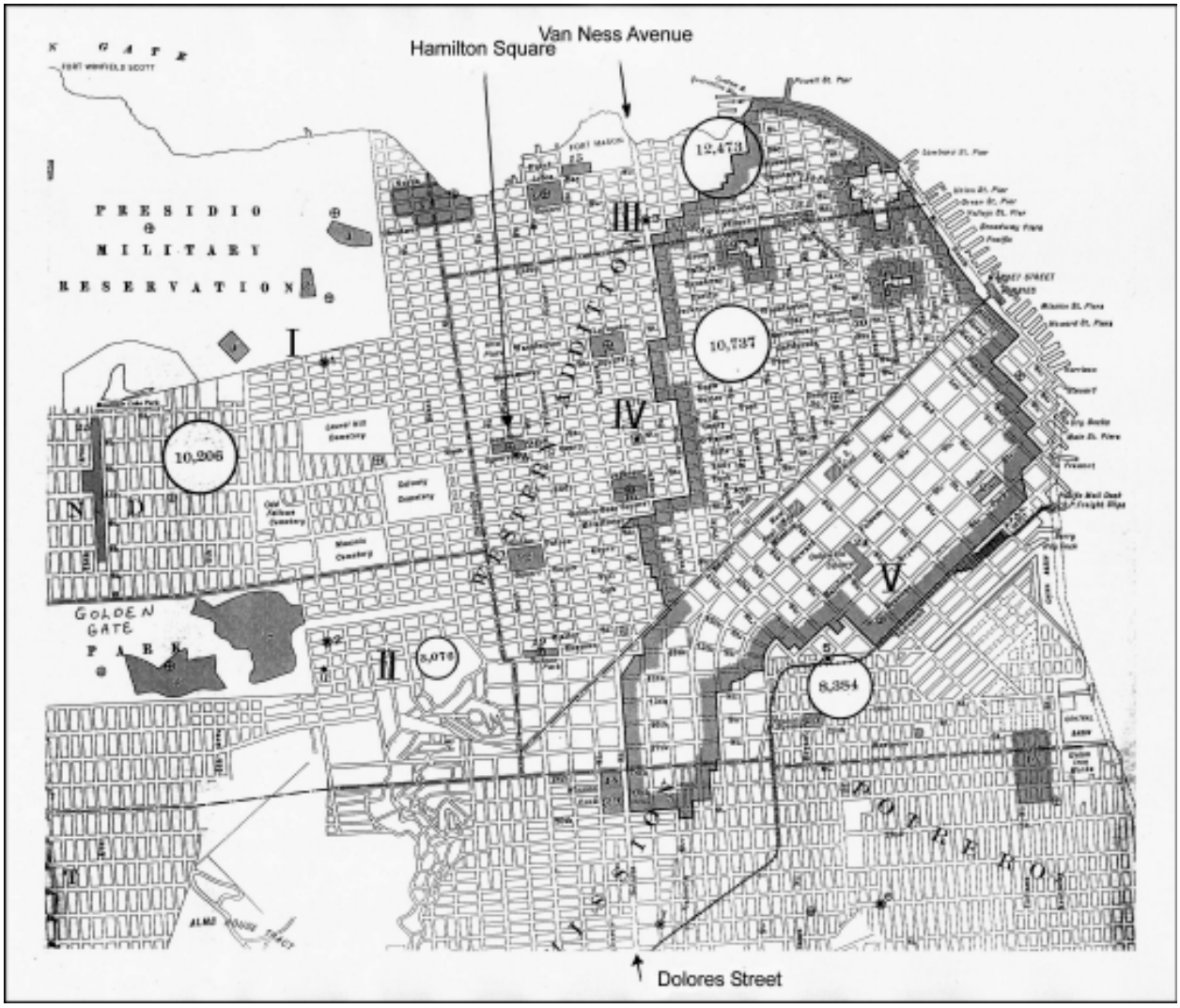
REGINALD H. ALLEN, D.D.S.
TELEPHONE VALE 341
651 East 14th St.

OAKLAND, CAL.,
May 13th 1906

My dear Edith: -

"Safely through another week God has brought us on our way" means something now when we sing it. Claribel & I came home together from communion service which was held at half past four and we wondered if we would ever feel any sense of security again.

We had a real jolly shake again last week which put us all on edge again. I have been very nervous the past week and quite wakeful at night and sometimes I would just have the horrors especially if there was a death lie stillness. A dog barking or a rooster crowing in the distance was sufficient to break the strain.



Map 1 *The burned area of San Francisco with locations of Dolores Street, Van Ness Avenue and Hamilton Square highlighted.*

I have been impressed how much older so many look just in these few weeks. I feel as though I had lived about a hundred years. My visit with you and Howard seems as though it had been in a previous existence. I have lost all track of events before the 18th of April. Everyone seems to feel the same way. Do what we will we can't talk or think of anything else. Father & Reg went to San Francisco to-day – fathers first trip over since the calamity and they both looked and acted as though they had been to a funeral. No one can conceive of the awful desolation unless he sees for himself.

It is going to take so long to build up again as the burned district is to be built up fireproof. We will send a paper telling of the propossed [sic] changes in streets. Everyone now realizes that wide Van Ness Ave & Dolores Streets were the saving of the rest of the city.

If I could write a soul stirring poem it would be to the fire fighters when they took their stand at Van Ness in a last desperate effort to save the city. The residents on Russian Hill near the reservoir were saved principally by wet blankets. Householders turned their attention to their own property and fought the fire with blankets wet in the reservoir. The Deerings saved their home and I think Briggs were not burned.

I met Mrs. Kate Allen in Tafts the other day and she is one who has aged so much. She said Lewis saved the silver & their rugs and the two gunny? sacks of instruments only to have them stolen again. Her boys have started their business again. The courage & cheerfulness of every one is something marvelous. The only blue person I have come across is Mrs. Kemp and she seems so depressed and is amazed by the cheerfulness of those who lost every thing. She thinks there will be a reaction which there undoubtedly will be – this winter will try men's souls.

You would not know the business portion of Oakland. It is so changed. Crowds of people on the streets. It makes me think of Los Angeles so much doing. I have been downtown once since the shake and I did not feel at home at all. I could not get any black darning cotton for Laura or tennis flannel or black tracing paper. Can you send me a piece. I want to take off a collar pattern. Just as soon as I can get some flannel [I] am going to make baby clothes for the wee refugees on the way. If you and your friends want

to help make baby clothes. I almost forgot to tell you that we came near being refugees. Marion & I came home last Sunday from Sunday school to find the daddy & Dora fighting fire. We had not noticed that the heat from the gas burner over which we place our tin oven had gradually melted the zinc which covers the woodwork and wall back of it. The partition and wood work were all afire when Dora discovered it. Fortunately Reg had just come in from a ride and with the hose and aid of Mr. Downey we got it out. Dora's room & the loft over the dining room were blue with smoke. About five minutes more and the roof would have been ablaze. Reg's cottage is progressing nicely. The plastering is about done and it is a very nice job so clear & smooth. I expect Marguerite to be with me a few days or rather nights this week. Her company is on this side and it is so hard for her to go to San Rafael every day. She is working like a trooper.

Miss Stephens who had charge of the Social Settlement work in East O[akland] is going to have Dolly's kindergarten in Hilo [Hawaii]. I hope the change will benefit her.

The Hulls & Cousin Joe are still at fathers. We shall hate awfully to give up that baby he is such a dear. I am trying to persuade Laura to go South as it seems such a good chance as long as they are not settled. She plans to spend two weeks in June with Mrs. Nash in Berkeley.

Monday evening - I did not finish this last evening as I was rather tired so retired early. Today has been an April day only cold. The children & I were invited to Ann's birthday party but I could not go so Claribel took Marion. She has such a nice time. It was a [sic] awful nice party mamma. I had three dishes of ice cream & three pieces of cake. Her eyes just beamed as she told me. The children are all very well. Clareda's cheek is entirely healed but there is a very red spot there yet. I suppose it will take several months for it to go away. I hope it won't leave a permanent scar.

We have Harry's riding horse and Reg rides nearly every night & morning. Ethel Richardson has had several rides. He is black and a nice gentle animal. I have almost finished my embroidered belt. I am putting the extra knobs on the border.

The money for the opera tickets is to be refunded. I will turn mine into the relief fund. Dr. Shuey's rent has been raised $25 so Reg's goes up, I suppose $10. Just now it is a good thing to own Oakland property. Remember me kindly to the friends in Pasadena. Much love for your dear self.

Your Affectionate sister

Grace

Another Newly Discovered Letter

The following letter was written and postmarked on April 22, 1906 at Berkeley, CA. It was addressed to Queens, L. I. (Long Island), NY, arriving there four days later. It was sent without postage and received to markings of any kind. The envelope was opened roughly at the bottom. It was later folded and mounted in an album, which explains the toning and the rough bottom edge. This cover is shown in *Figure 1*.

Dear Miss Williams

Thank God I can write you that we are safe. The fire did not reach our house but we were so badly damaged that our house is unsafe and we escaped to Oakland or Berkeley yesterday. We slept the night in the Park [Golden Gate Park].

Oh dear I will write you particulars some other time. The fire did not cross Van Ness Ave. I think Miss Ryder is safe. We lost no friends so far as known.

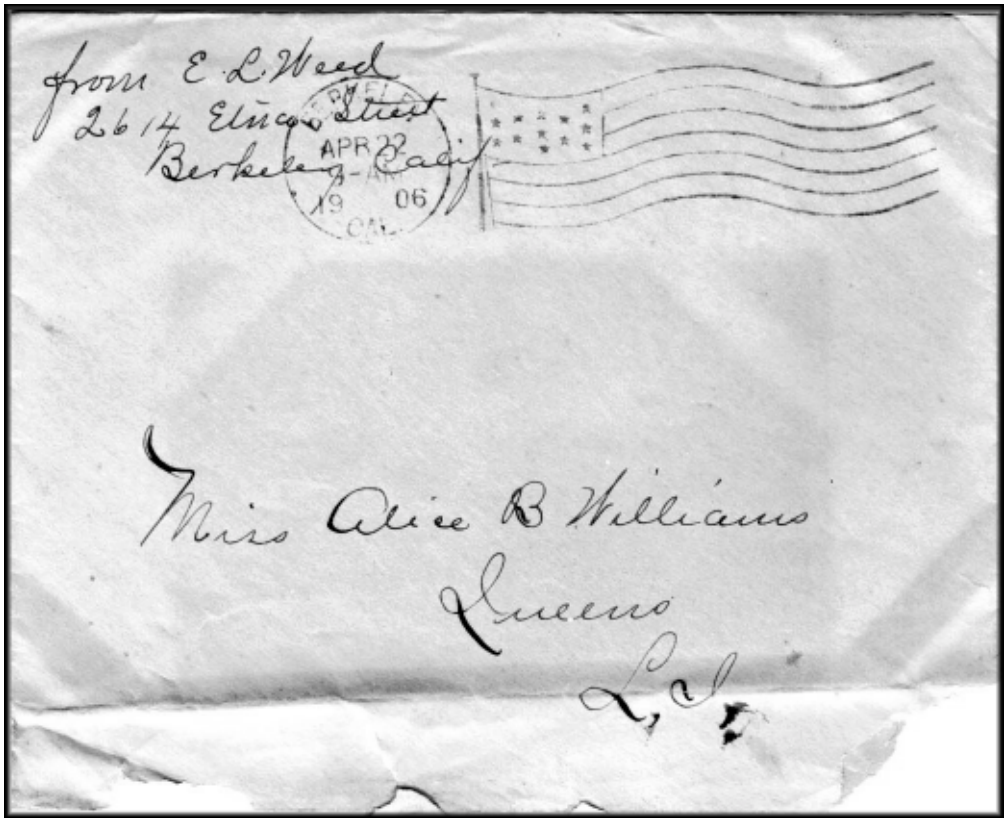


Figure 1 *Cover containing newly discovered quake letter from Berkeley.*

Will write more later. It is beyond imagination. What was once a city is an awful waste. I did not find out about Miss Minion – will try to get in and try to find my friends as soon as they will admit me to return.

Until further notice will be at 2614 Etna St, Berkeley, Calif.

Lovingly yours,

Eva L. Weed

ps. We are allowed to send letters without postage for we have no available cash – no banks & it is awful. But we have plenty to eat and all the rest have plenty – people have been so kind to send food.

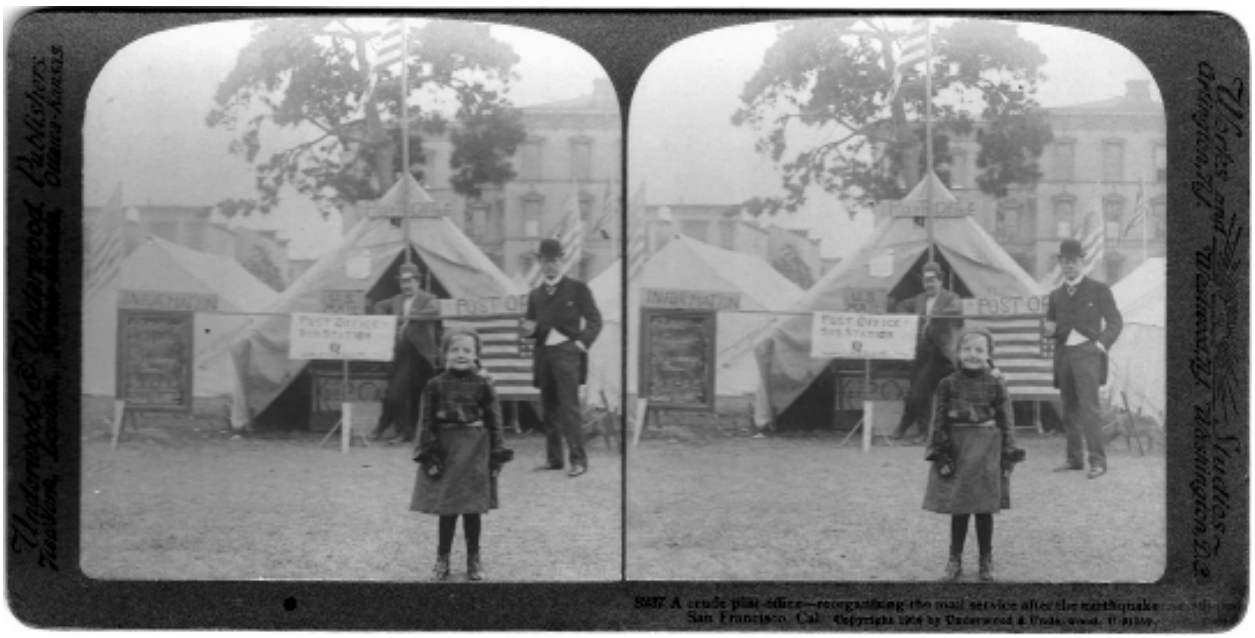
One Final New Discovery

This author has raised the question of how the refugees living in the various camps utilized the U.S. mail system in an earlier article (See "Auxiliary Markings: Refugee Camp Markings of the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake & Fire" in *La Posta* Vol. 31, No. 5, October-November 2000, pp. 40-48). There was no mention of refugee camp mail in any government documents, newspapers or special collections consulted. The image shown in the stereo optican card in **Figure 2** helps shed some light on this area. The card was published by Underwood & Underwood, who according to them, had works and studios in New York; London; Toronto; Ottawa, Kansas; Arlington, NJ; Westwood, NJ and Washington, D.C. They copyrighted it in 1906.

Figure 2 *Mysterious postal substation Q in stereo optican card.*

The photography on the card is a bit underdeveloped and not as well focused as one could wish for. This is card number 8237, and is captioned "A crude post-office–reorganizing the mail service after the earthquake/San Francisco, Cal." It depicts a young girl standing in front of a tent that has three "Post Office" signs on it. It is identified as Substation Q, in Hamilton Square. (Hamilton Square was refugee camp number 20, and is shown on *Map 1*.) There is a "Keep Out" sign just inside the tent and an American flag on its left side between the two gentlemen wearing hats. There is also a chalkboard on its right side that shows that it is also open on Sundays from 9 a.m. to noon. The other writing on the chalkboard is unreadable. A sign reading "Information" appears just above the chalkboard.

There is no record of Substation Q in the *Postal Guides*, *Daily Postal Bulletins*, *Orders of the Postmaster General* or the local newspapers. San Francisco had lettered stations that went as far as Station O, and numbered stations that went as high as number 54, according to a list updated to December 1, 1906 published in the 1907 *Postal Guide*. The Hamilton Square refugee camp officially opened on June 5, 1906, and closed on August 31, 1907. Its maximum population was 702 people in the first week of December 1906. If it were an official U.S. post office, it should have appeared in the list in the 1907 *Postal Guide*. One can speculate about the true status of Substation Q, but in the absence of any other evidence, it appears to be a pragmatic approach to a difficult situation. Maybe times were simpler back then–less bureaucratic red tape and more of a take charge attitude.



19th Century Fort-to-Fort Correspondence

By Michael Dattolico

The United States Army of the 19th century was a small, widely dispersed force that spanned the country. Most soldiers' mail was sent to friends, family members and other loved ones at home. That was especially true during that century's four major declared wars: the War of 1812, the Mexican War (1846-1848), the Civil War (1861-1865) and the Spanish-American War of 1898.

During those wartime periods and the interim years between them, mail was also carried from one military post to another. Such "fort-to-fort" correspondence is scarcer than the usual soldiers' mail sent home.

There is collectible evidence that soldiers wrote to fellow soldiers stationed at other camps, forts, barracks and arsenals. Often, the men who wrote to each other had served together in other places, had been classmates at West Point, or even had entered the army together, which reinforces the axiom that friendships formed during military service are often life-long relationships.

At many permanent installations, the families of some officers and enlisted men resided with them. When the soldier husbands and fathers campaigned against some far-away enemy, the men posted mail at every opportunity to their families who awaited their return. Soldiers sent mail from towns through which they passed that had post offices. But often troopers mailed letters from forts having postal outlets when they stopped for supplies.

Routine transfers of soldiers often prompted fort-to-fort mail. During such moves, the families of those men often had to wait until the displaced soldier found suitable quarters at the new post. Since they did not immediately accompany him, the moves prompted a flow of correspondence between the soldier at his new fort and his family who later arrived. Examples of mail sent under those circumstances can be found, especially after the discovery of the Grierson correspondence was made in the late 1970s.

Perhaps most interesting are letters sent from one dependent to another living at different base. Just as soldiers formed close friendships, so did the wives and children of the men bond and remain close friends, regardless of where they were stationed. An example of such mail is illustrated in this article.

What follows is a selection of correspondence mailed from one army post to another, a fort cover sub-category which is unique in its own way.

Figure 1 is an early example of fort-to-fort correspondence between two soldiers who happened to be family members. The letter was written by Lt. Edgar M. Lacy, then based at Fort Howard, Wisconsin Territory, to Lt. John Lacy at Fort Niagara, New York.

Docketing indicates that Lt. Edgar Lacy's letter was written on July 23, 1830. It was likely carried by army courier from Fort Howard via Fort Dearborn to Detroit, where it entered the U.S. mails. Amazingly, that part of the journey took only seven days. From Detroit, it was carried via mail carrier to Fort Niagara. This example of mail is especially significant, since the writer and recipient were not only officers but were also brothers. Lt. John Lacy later joined his brother in Wisconsin Territory during the Black Hawk War of 1832.

With the discovery of some Grierson family correspondence came a number of similar covers that were mailed by General Benjamin H. Grierson from various forts to loved ones who resided at other posts. *Figures 2* through *4* are examples of such mail.

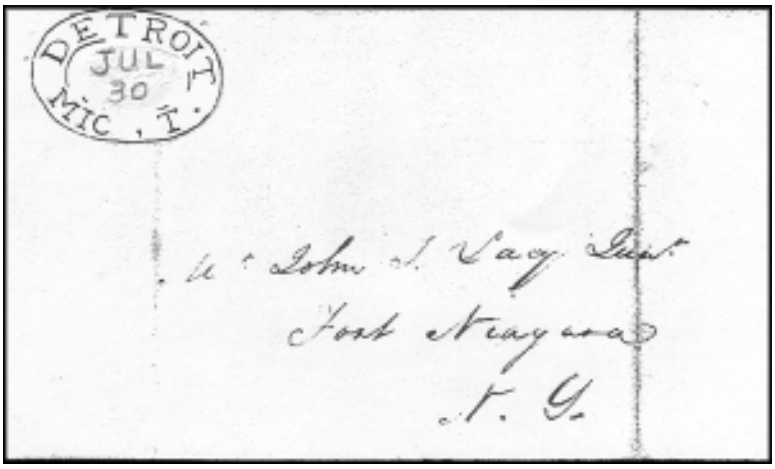


Figure 1 *Letter sent from Fort Howard, Wisconsin Territory via Detroit to Fort Niagara, New York, July, 1830 (date enhanced).*

Figure 2 was mailed by General Grierson from Fort Gibson, C.N. (Cherokee Nation) circa 1870 to Alice Grierson, to the St. Louis Arsenal. Since Jefferson Barracks is nearby, that's probably where Mrs. Grierson actually resided, although one wonders why that fort's post office didn't handle her mail.

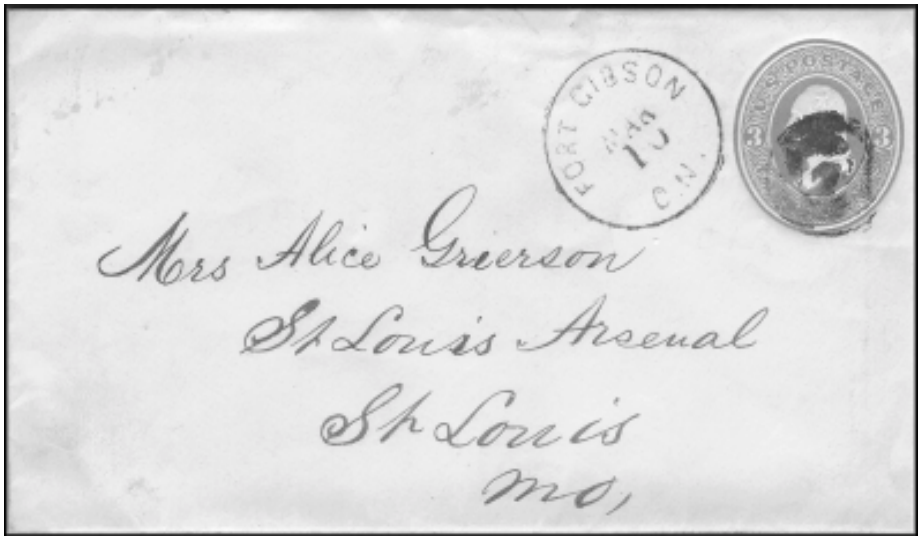


Figure 2 *Fort Gibson, C. N. (Cherokee Nation) cds postmark on a cover mailed circa 1870 to the St. Louis Arsenal.*

Figure 3 is a similar Grierson letter. This one was mailed by the general from Camp Stockton, Texas, to his wife, then staying at Fort Concho, Texas. *Figure 4* is a similar example mailed from Fort Yates, Dakota Territory to Fort Concho during the same period. It was mailed circa March, 1883.

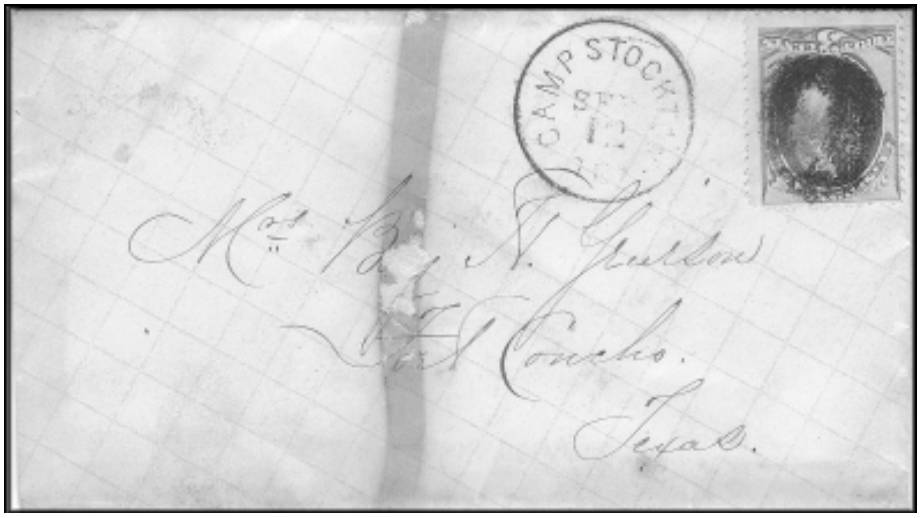


Figure 3 *Letter sent circa 1870 from General Benjamin H. Grierson, then stationed at Camp Stockton, Texas, to Fort Concho, Texas.*

Figure 5 was written by General Grierson while he was at Fort Davis, Texas in 1885, to Whipple Barracks, Arizona Territory. The backstamp on the cover indicates that the Prescott, Arizona post office handled the letter. Whipple

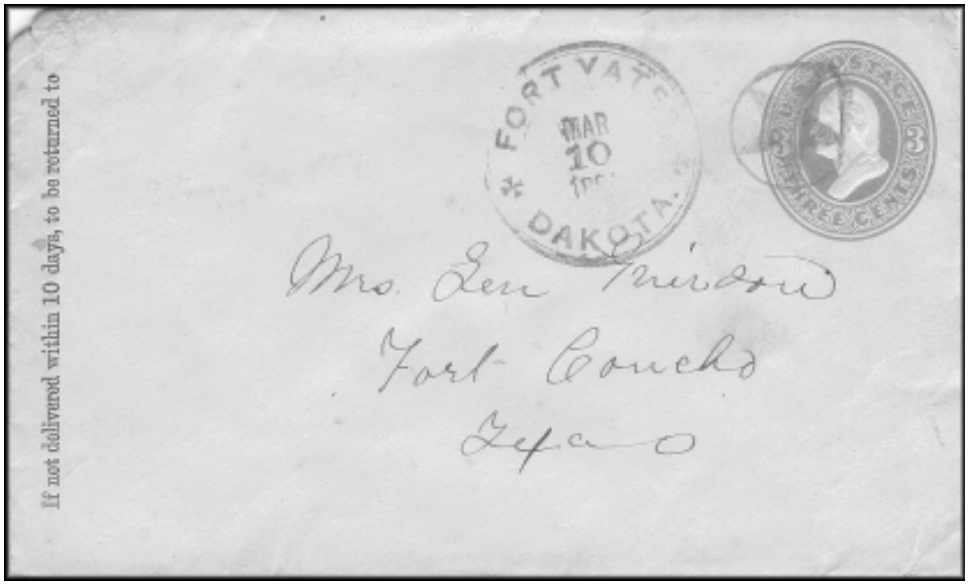


Figure 4 *Fort Yates, Dakota letter addressed to Fort Concho, Texas circa March, 1883.*

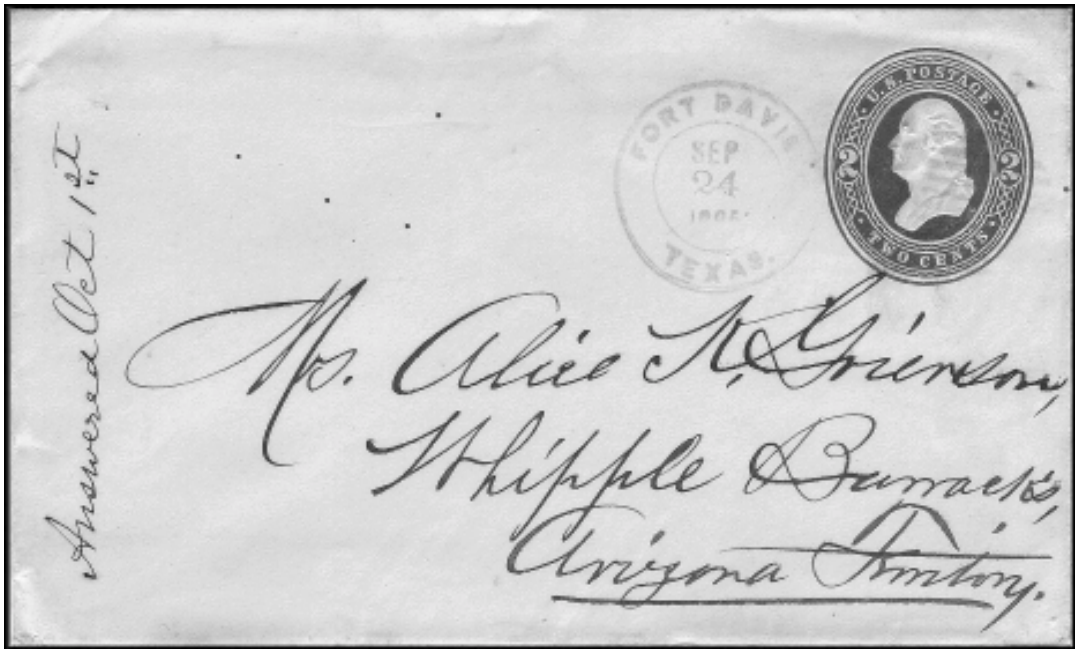


Figure 5 *Letter mailed at the Fort Davis, Texas post office to Whipple Barracks, Arizona Territory in 1885. Whipple Barracks relied upon the Prescott, Arizona post office for its mail service.*

Barracks did not have its own post office. It relied upon the Prescott P.O. for its mail service.

Although mailed during the early 20th century years, *figure 6* is an unusual "encampment-to-fort" example of mail from a soldier to his wife. It was sent by Colonel Butler D. Price, then participating in the 1904 war games to his wife living at Fort McPherson, Georgia. The letter was handled by the temporary "Maneuver Station No. 1" postal station, which operated for a very short period before the military exercise ended.

Occasionally, letters written by military dependents at one fort to friends living at other forts can be found. *Figure 7* is probably such a cover.

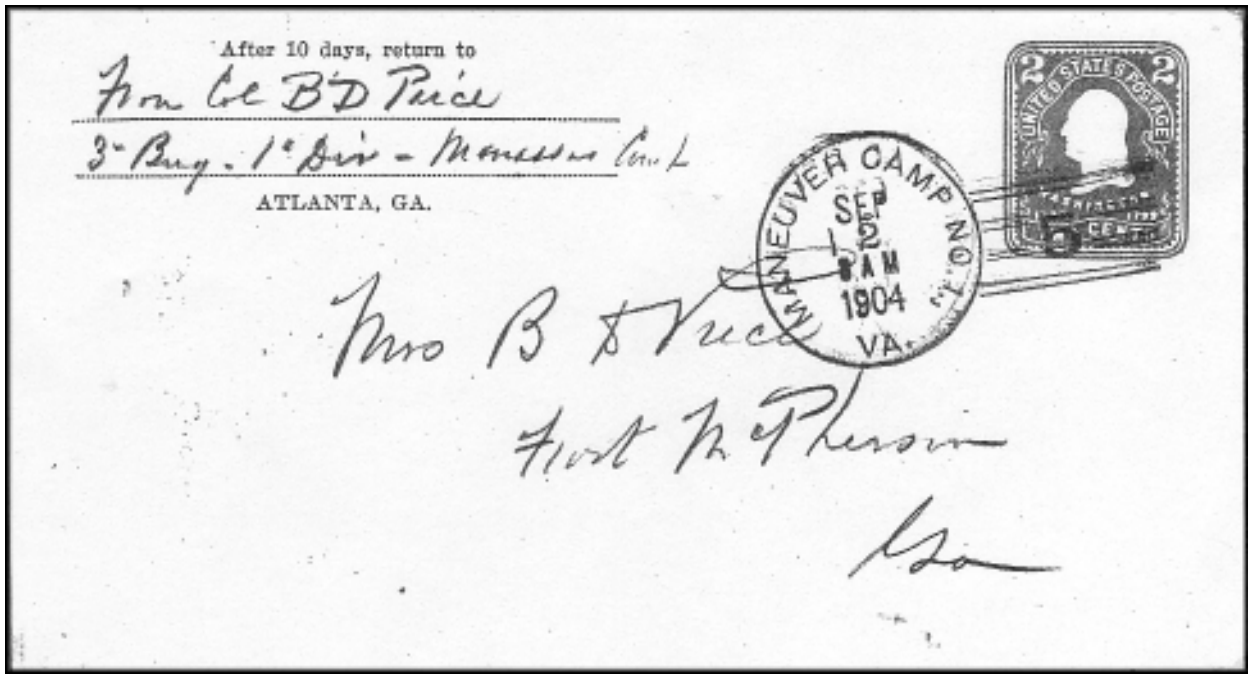


Figure 6 *Letter mailed from the military postal station designated as Maneuver Camp No. 1, Virginia, September, 1904, to Fort McPherson, Georgia*

Figure 7 *Letter mailed from Fort Bennett, Dakota Territory, July 4, 1885, to Fort Mason California.*

It was mailed from Fort Bennett, Dakota Territory on July 4, 1885, to Mrs. Guy Howard, in care of General Oliver O. Howard, at Fort Mason, California. Also known as Fort Point, San Jose, it was renamed Fort Mason in November, 1882 and was located at a strategic spot near San Francisco Bay. The San Francisco post office handled Fort Mason's mail.

Figures 8 and *9* are a different kind of mail sent from fort to fort. Those letters are examples of mail sent from one soldier friend to another.

The *figure 8* cover originated at Fort Smith, Arkansas on March 12, 1843. It was mailed to Colonel Ethan Allen Hitchcock, then commanding the 3rd U.S. Infantry at Fort Stansbury, Florida Territory, from a former West Point classmate. When the letter was mailed to Hitchcock, the Seminole War was nearly over. Fort Stansbury was closed in April, 1843.

Figure 9 is especially interesting. The letter was written by an officer returning from duty in Alaska in 1873. He apparently stopped at Fort Walla Walla, Washington Territory, due in part to illness or need for rest, where he wrote the letter to Captain T. G. Whipple who was stationed at Fort Lapwai, Idaho Territory. The Walla Walla town post office handled the nearby fort's mail.

The letter contains some noteworthy statements from the returning soldier. He wrote, "…Sitka is not worth the breath of one good mule…". He also stated, "…I am not well…", and "…I now appreciate a good fire more than you can know…". It is signed "B.W."

Figure 10 is slightly different. It is an example of official fort-to-fort mail. The letter originated from POST OF MARFA, TEXAS and was sent to Fort Davis, Texas. The Marfa town post office first handled the cover.

The addressee was the Fort Davis quartermaster, and stamped on the cover's front is the name, Lt. J.M.T. Partello. One wonders two things: Was Partello the fort's quartermaster or a member of that section?

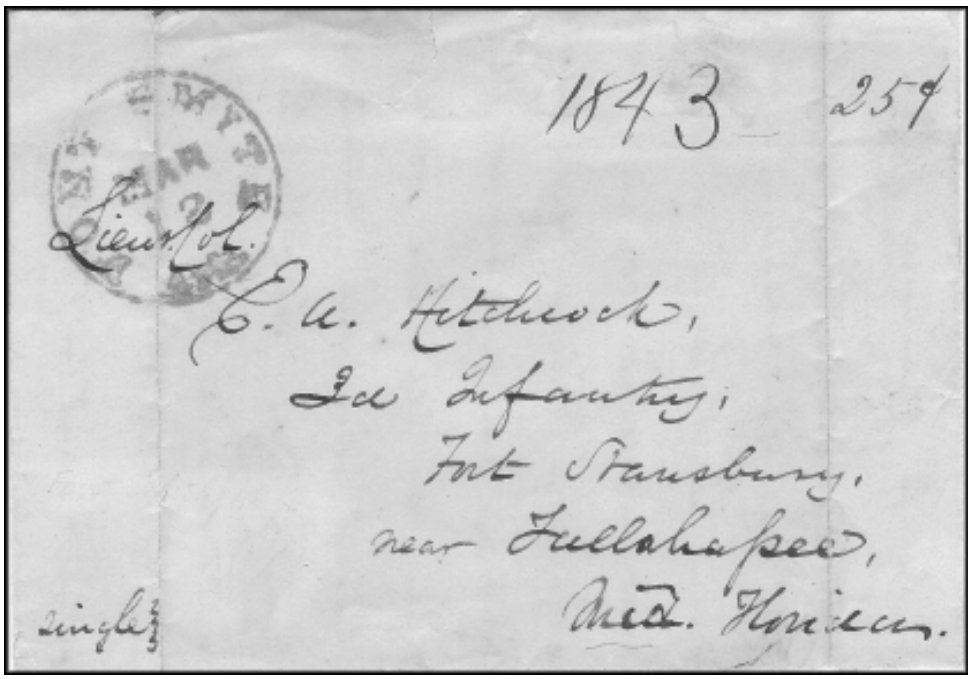


Figure 8 *Letter originating at Fort Smith, Arkansas on March 12, 1843. It was addressed to Fort Stansbury, Florida Territory.*

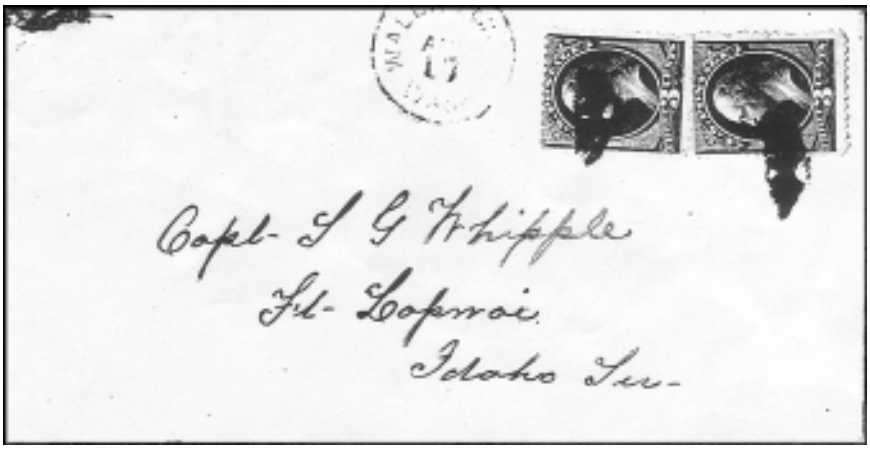


Figure 9. Letter written at Fort Walla Walla, Washington Territory. It was sent to an officer stationed at Fort Lapwai, Idaho Territory.

And since the quartermaster's office sometimes oversaw postal functions at some forts, was Partello the Fort Davis postmaster in 1888?

Little information exists about the "Post Of Marfa, Texas" that existed in 1888. Robert B. Roberts' *Encyclopedia of American Forts* indicates that it was situated on a plateau overlooking the town of Marfa. But Roberts information begins by stating that the place was "...originally established in 1914 as Camp Marfa, headquarters of the Big Bend District of eight border patrol outposts along the Rio Grande…". He further states that its name was later changed to Fort D.A. Russell and was used as a prisoner-of-war camp in 1943 for captured German servicemen. But no information was provided about the Post of Marfa, Texas in 1888. Perhaps Texas postal history specialists have information about this mysterious post that existed in the late 1880s.

If you collect military mail from the 19th century, be on the look-out for this particular breed of correspondence. It's truly exciting to find it.

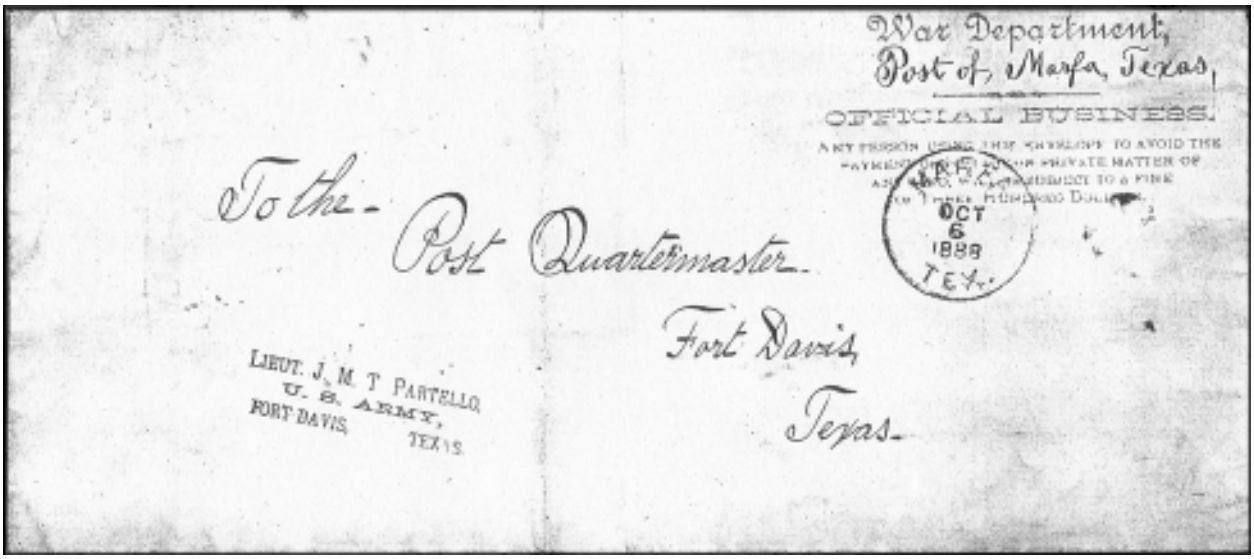
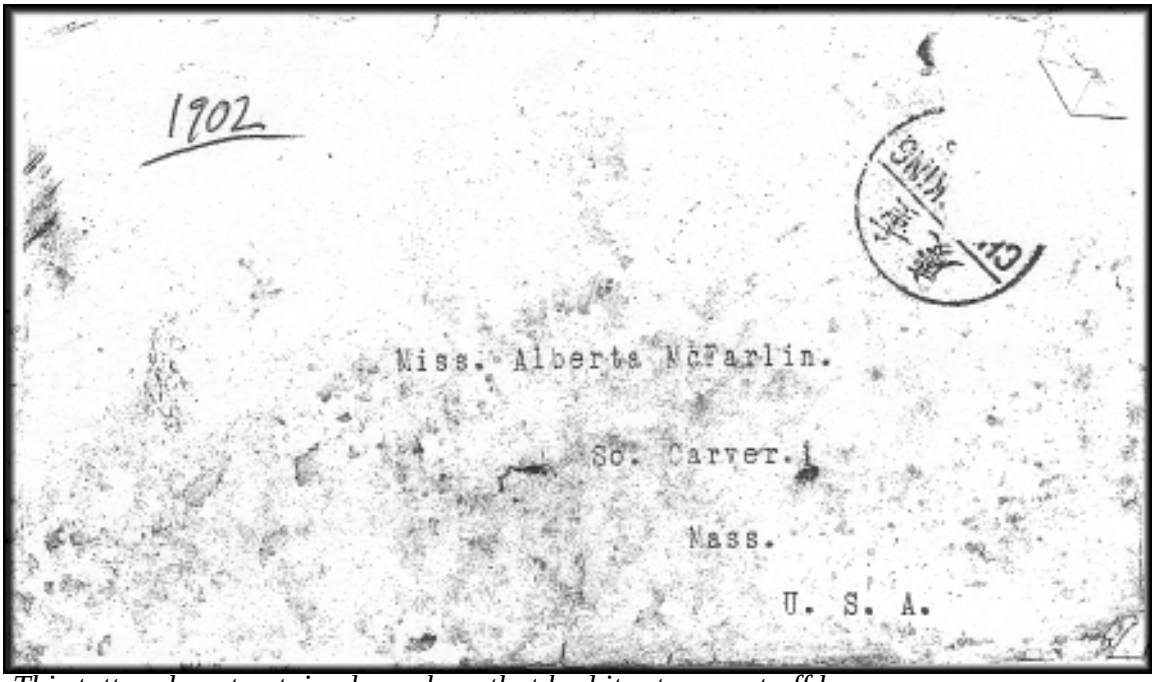


Figure 10 *Official envelope with War Department indicium and manuscript, POST OF MARFA, TEXAS, addressed to the post quartermaster of Fort Davis, Texas, October 8, 1888.*



This tattered, waterstained envelope that had its stamp cut off by some over-eager collector of an earlier day carried a first-hand account of some of the events of China's Boxer Rebellion.

A Boxer Rebellion American Missionary Letter

Submitted by Albert H. Tetrault

The tattered cover illustrated above contains an interesting letter from a missionary in China during the Boxer Rebellion, giving an on-the-spot report by the people involved. The letter was written in 1902 and addressed to a Miss Alberta McFarlin of Carver, Mass. It is probable that the author, W.E. Manly, was a missionary from Massachusetts.

Chung-King, China, August 30th 1902
Dear Friends at Home:

We sent out a mimeograph letter in May, just previous to my going to Tai-cheo for the second itinerary. Am now preparing to leave again in a few days, and will write of the events of the past few months before going.

Many of you have heard of the troubled times we are having in this province of late. We hesitate to write the news of the Boxer movement there where it was never known before. It came as an unexpected test of the work, and is no light trial of our faith.

I spent the Sunday of June 15th at Tien Ku Chow, our country church twenty-five miles from Tai-cheo. Owing to the prevalence of Boxer rumors and the possibility which every one felt of coming danger, the services Sat. Evening and all day Sunday naturally bore along the line of faithfulness to Christ in the midst of trial and persecution. By coincidence the S.S. lesson for the day was the Death of John the Baptist. The text for the morning sermon was "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." [Revelation ch. 2, v.10] The old Chinese Preacher also earnestly exhorted to steadfastness and testified to his own willingness to die for the Lord.

The following Tuesday night about midnight, over one hundred Boxers came and made an attack, first upon the church and then upon the little hamlet. The Preacher met his death in the church, then others fleeing were killed, and three more were burned to death in their homes, and three were wounded. The houses were burned, the church partly destroyed, and eight-two people rendered homeless.

The next day, the Boxers went up into a hill fortress for protection, and their number soon

increased to five or six hundred. The troops first sent were poorly armed and entirely insufficient to dislodge them. When these deficiencies were remedied, the later mistake was made of inducing the Boxers to disperse, without taking any of them prisoners or inflicting any serious loss upon them. On account of this policy, which is understood to have originated with the Viceroy, they have grown bold and intimidated the people over a large extent of territory.

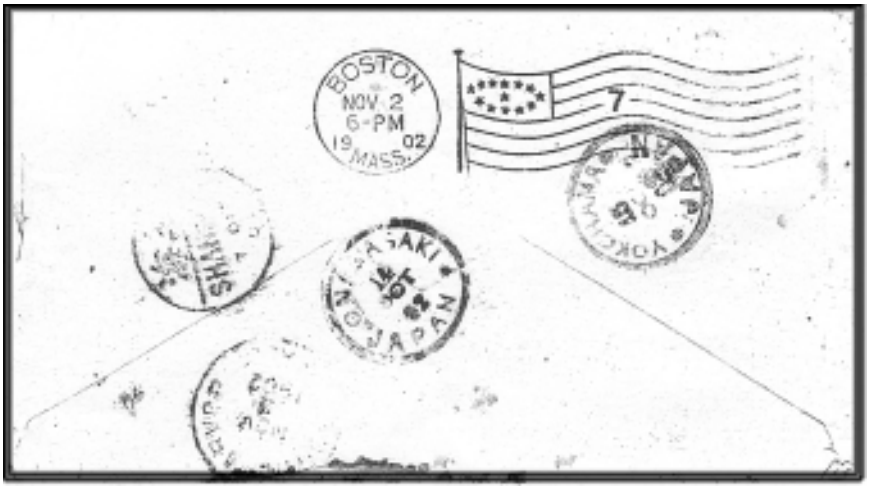
Then too the crops were so poor that large numbers of people were living on the border of starvation. These poor people exiting in beggar bands, combined with the Boxers and robbers. This combination of fanaticism, lawlessness and starvation may have still more serious results. However, heavy rains later have partially averted famine, therefore unless it be the desire of the Empress Dowager to stir up new trouble, it is to be hoped that this will end in a few months. The Viceroy is to be superceded.

When the massacre occurred, I had left Tai-cheo and gone down the river to meet the Superintendent, who was coming on his quarterly rounds. It was not safe to go to Tien Ku Chow at once, so we remained at Tai-cheo. After a few days Bro. Lewis returned to Chung-king, while I remained till Aug. 2nd. The dead were buried, the wounded carried to Chentu for treatment, and the refugees were brought to Tsi-cheo or Chentu for safety. As soon as it became somewhat quiet, I tried to get a settlement, at least to the extent that the refugees could go back to their homes. This object seemed about to be attained, when fresh troubles north of Chentu, put an end to all negotiations for a time. Moreover a fresh band of Boxers, defeated in another quarter, came into our district. I did what could be done for the protection of the Christians in the villages, waited a few days to see if anything else would happen, and then returned to Chung-king.

Besides the disaster at Tien Ku Chow, there have been about a dozen houses robbed or burned in our district. One probationer and six other enquirers or relatives of Christians have been killed.

The end is not yet, and we know not what the future holds. But this we do know, God will overturn the work of the evil-doer, and in His own time will open an effectual door for His truth in many hearts still ignorant of His love. There had been a great movement toward the church in the Tai-cheo circuit the past year, and this may be the reason why the forces of evil broke out first in this part of West China. God lives and His kingdom will come in answer to the prayer He has taught us. God does not want us to withdraw, but to stand firm, go on, and possess the land. Just as much as ever do we need increase of workers, your help financially, and still more the succor of your prayers. Let the opposition of evil fire us with more zeal for God. We are on the winning side. "God wills it".

Yours for victory;
W.E. Manly.



The missionary's letter dated August 30, 1902, arrived in Carver, Mass. about two months later, on Nov. 3, 1902, via Shanghai, Nagasaki, Yokohama, and Boston.

Letcher County
Kentucky
Scale 1:250,000
Letcher County
Harveyton
Tribbey
Hardburly
Bulan
Darfork
Walkertown
Woodland Park
Christopher
Diablock
Happy
Viper
Fusonia
Vicco
Sassafras
Scuddy
Kodak
Brinkley
Mallie
Amburgey
Spider
Pine Top
May
Bath
Littcarr
Carr Creek
Redfox
Carcassonne
Jeremiah
Carbon Glow
Isom
Letcher
Cornettsville
Blackey
Hot Spot
Premium
Daisy
Roxana
Hallie
Slemp
Skyline
Defeated Creek
Leatherwood
Big Rock
Tilford
Delphia
Linefork
Gordon
Blair
Cumberland
Sand Hill
Hiram
Clutts
Lynch
Chad
Benham
Dione
Lotz
Nolansburg (Splint Post Office)
Puncheon
Hartley
Speight
Dorton
Deane
Democrat
Hemphill (Jackhorn P O)
Jackhorn
Neon
Fleming
Cromona
Dunham
Burdine
Caskill
East Jenkins
Jenkins
Thornton
Neon Junction
Millstone
Payne Gap
Sergent
Mayking
Bellcraft
Marlowe
Whitco
Ermine
Whitesburg
Dongola
Oscaloosa
Southdown
Van
Flat Gap
Eolia
Pound
Pardee
Lipps
Big Laurel
Clamorgan
Stephens
Addington Wise
Laurel Grove
Roaring Fork
Dunbar
Roda
Stonega
Osaka
Derby
Arno
Andover
Needmore
Sutherland
Esserville
Ramsey
Dooley
Norton

The Post Offices of Letcher County, Kentucky

Part I

by Robert M. Rennick

On March 3, 1824 the Kentucky legislature created Letcher County, the state's 95th, from parts of Perry and Harlan Counties. It was named for former Congressman and then governor Robert P. Letcher (1788-1861). To the county's original 340 square mile area were added sixty more square miles from Perry County in 1858 and a ten mile section along the Elkhorn and Beefhide valleys from Pike County in April 1884. A month later Letcher lost eighty square miles toward the formation of Knott County. Its present 339 square mile territory has a population of some 26,000.

Like other eastern Kentucky counties Letcher's terrain is rugged and hilly, and nearly all of its settlements have been in its narrow stream valleys, the headwaters of three major Kentucky rivers. The county's most distinguishing topographic feature is the impenetrable 125 mile-long Pine Mountain ridge, extending from the southwest to the northeast, ending near Elkhorn City in Pike County, and marking the boundaries of Letcher and Harlan County and Letcher and Virginia's Wise County. Its highest point, at 3,273 feet, is just above Whitesburg, the county's somewhat centrally located seat.

It is generally accepted that the first significant settlement in what became Letcher County was made in 1803 at the mouth of Pert Creek, on the Kentucky River's North Fork, at the upper end of Whitesburg, by a party of North Carolinians led by the Adams brothers. In 1804 George Ison II settled his family on Line Fork, and by then Maryland-born Benjamine Webb had brought a group of settlers to the mouth of Boone Creek and later to the mouth of Bottom Fork, near the present Mayking. Other pioneer families were the Caudills, Dixons, Stampers, Colliers, Lewises, Whitakers, Wrights, Crafts, Browns, Halcombs, Holbrooks, and Bentleys. By 1810 every major valley in the future county had been settled. By 1815 the pioneer families had been joined by Banks, Maggards, Days, Fields, Morgans, Blairs, Breedings, Fraziers, Bakers, Hoggs, Combs, and Mullins. Most of the county's settlement and geographic feature names were taken from these early families.

Letcher lies in the heart of the eastern Kentucky coal country. But until mining began in earnest with mineral rights acquisitions in the early 1900s, the county was one of Kentucky's most isolated and least economically viable areas. Many of its larger communities began as coal towns, while others grew up around rail stations and distribution centers supplying vicinity mines and camps. Some of the earlier settlements developed around timbering operations or continued to provide merely basic sustenance for small family holdings. Mining and quarrying remain the county's main economic support. Few non-extractive manufacturing jobs are available. The uneven terrain severely limited commercial agriculture. Tourism holds some promise for the future.

Letcher's 127 operating post offices will be considered below according to their locations in the main valleys of the headwaters of three major Kentucky River systems: The Poor Fork of the Cumberland River, the North Fork of the Kentucky River, and the Big Sandy River's Levisa Fork. Offices will be located by road miles from the courthouse in downtown Whitesburg or from the other offices in the same valley.

The fifth class city of ***Whitesburg***, with some 1,600 residents, is 151 road miles southeast of downtown Lexington, via the Mountain Parkway and Ky 15, and 31 road miles east south-east of Hazard. It was founded in 1842 on land offered by Stephen Hiram Hogg to attract the new county's seat from the Adams settlement, two miles up North Fork, where the first session of the county's court had been held. It was named for Daugherty White of Clay County who introduced Letcher's enactment bill in the state legislature.[1] The local post office, the county's first, was established on February 10, 1843 as ***Whitesburgh Court House*** with William Caudle, postmaster. ***Court House*** was soon dropped as was, in 1892, the terminal "h".

The town was incorporated on March 6, 1876, and until the arrival of the railroad in 1911-12 and the building of the area's coal camps shortly thereafter, it was the county's only town of any significance. By the late 1920s it had become Letcher's main shipping point and trading center. As with other Kentucky River towns, though, its physical situation on the river and between hills has limited expansion, and its population

has never increased from a high of 1,800 in 1930. Yet an influential regional media center and its public radio station, a community college, and a progressive newspaper have given Whitesburg a cosmopolitan atmosphere shared by few other mountain towns.[2]

Post Offices on Letcher County's Poor Fork of the Cumberland River and its Several Branches

The fifty mile-long Poor Fork heads less than one fourth of a mile from the Virginia line, two miles south of Bilvia, near the highest point in Letcher County's Pine Mountain. It extends between this range and Black Mountain to join Clover Fork at Baxter in Harlan County. Here it helps form the main Cumberland River, one of Kentucky's major waterways. Poor Fork is said to have been early named for the unproductivity of the soil along its banks. Eight post offices served its Letcher County residents.

The earliest of these offices was ***Colliers Creek***, somewhere on this four mile-long Poor Fork branch, settled early by the Backs, Morgans, and Colliers.[3] William Collier was its only postmaster between August 5 and late December 1858.

The ***Partridge*** [pahrt/rihdj, though often pronounced paet/rihdj by older residents] post office was the next to be established, on January 7, 1869, probably at the mouth of Little Joseph Day Branch. Rebecca Ann and Joseph Day were its first two postmasters. It is traditionally believed to have been named for the many game birds early encountered in that vicinity. In 1923 Jess B. Eversole had the office moved some 4 ½ miles down the Fork to a site just above the mouth of Lewis Creek. It is now on US 119 (which parallels the entire Poor Fork route), 1 ½ miles below the mouth of Colliers, one mile from the Harlan County line, and eighteen miles southwest of Whitesburg.

The Lewis Creek area had earlier been served by two offices. The ***Lewis Creek*** office operated at the mouth of this stream between October 7, 1878 and mid-November 1888, supplying the needs of a settlement called ***Claysville*** for the family of Jesse Clay, the first of its two postmasters. The creek probably honored the family of John J. Lewis, a Harlan County judge, born at the mouth of Colliers Creek. On April 5, 1906 this office was re-established as ***Path***, named for a small local road. Millie A. Jenkins served as ***Path's*** only postmaster through September 30, 1907.

The first of the two ***Oven Fork*** post offices was established by David M. Collier on February 6, 1879, probably up what is now Meadow Fork but which, according to turn-of-the-twentieth-century maps, was an extension of the stream for which it was named.[4] This stream, probably settled before 1800 by the Bachs (Backs) and other families of Thuringian descent, is said to have been named for the open ovens used by the early German settlers to produce bricks for local chimneys or, more likely, to bake their bread. The stream is now entirely called Franks Creek, a name earlier limited to a 3 ½ mile-long upper branch. Sometime later, but before the First World War, the office was half a mile up Meadow Branch of Poor Fork, a separate stream, four miles above (east of) the mouth of Oven Fork, and 11 ½ miles southeast of Whitesburg, where it closed in April 1922.

In the spring of 1945 the ***Oven Fork*** post office, with Winnie Sumpter, postmaster, was re-established nearly half a mile below the mouth of Oven Fork (by the Franks Creek) and, till January 1993, served the scattered homes along a 2 ½ mile stretch of US 119.

Descendants of Samuel and Rebecca Maggard, who settled on Poor Fork before 1810, gave their name to the ***Maggard*** post office. This occupied two sites from February 5, 1885 through June 1911, first at the mouth of Maggard Branch, two miles below (southwest of) Partridge's first location, and then at the mouth of Colliers, 1 ¼ miles further downstream. David W. Webb, the first postmaster, was succeeded by James T. Maggard, a mill owner, in 1887.

On January 5, 1892 John S. Coldiron established the ***Eolia*** [ee/oh/lee, ee/oh/luh] post office at or near the mouth of Meadow Fork, half a mile below the old Franks-Smith Creeks confluence where, after several vicinity moves, it continues to serve the entire upper Poor Fork valley. No one knows how or why it was so named. Speculations include someone's taste in classical literature, from the Greek mythological Aeolus, the wind god (could it have been named on a very windy day?); a famous brand of piano and organ no one recalls; or a feminine name (though none of that name are included in area censuses.)

The least recalled, shortest lived, unlocated, and inexplicably named office of ***Vada*** [va/duh] occupied two sites somewhere above Oven Fork from March 30, 1900 through 1902, with Wilson C. Mullins, the first of its three postmasters.

Post Offices in the Valleys of the North Fork of the Kentucky River below Whitesburg: Bull Creek

Bull Creek[5] heads above the Carcassonne Community Center and extends for nearly six miles to the North Fork, a mile and a half within Perry County, and a mile above Cornettsville. Three Letcher post offices are known to have served its main valley and a branch.

The ***Arminta*** post office, whose name derivation is not known, was at the mouth of Mare Branch, three fourths of a mile within Letcher County, and 3 ¼ miles up Bull from North Fork. John Haynes and Pauline Blair operated it from June 23, 1905 through May 1919.

On March 27, 1907, Harrison Banks established a post office near the head of Montgomery Creek and named it ***Gander*** for the wild geese that would gather in that place every fall. By the 1920s, maybe earlier, the office had been moved across the mountain south of Montgomery, to a site three fourths of a mile up the Meadow Fork of Bull.

In 1923 the Rev. Hendrick D. Caudill, surveyor, teacher, and agricultural extension agent, opened a settlement school at a site about half a mile up the creek from Meadow Fork. He named it ***Carcassonne*** [kahr/kuh/zohn] as its physical layout reminded him of a photo he once saw of the famed cathedral town in the south of France.[6] In 1937 the ***Gander*** post office was moved to the settlement school, and when Anna Caudill, Hendrick's wife, became postmaster in 1939, she renamed it for the school. By the time the school was discontinued in 1974, the building was in use as a community center under the direction of the Caudills' son Cliffton. On the retirement of ***Carcassonne's*** last postmaster, Clifton's wife Ruby, in 1980, the office closed.

Line Fork Post Offices

Line Fork, or Line Fork Creek, as it's often called by Letcher residents, is the first North Fork tributary to drain that county exclusively. It heads just short of the Harlan County line, at the northern edge of Pine Mountain, and extends for some twenty-seven miles east, north, and northwest to the North Fork at the Perry County line, just below the present site of Ulvah. According to the late Letcher historian Harry Caudill, the stream was named by pioneers Gideon Ison, Gudgeon Ingram, and William Cornett who, on arriving there in 1790, spotted a long line of marked trees allegedly hacked by land agents to delimit boundaries for American war veterans. Samuel Cornett, William's brother, later settled in this valley, and was his family's Letcher County progenitor.

The earliest Line Fork post office may have been ***Cornett's***, established on May 31, 1848 by a later Samuel Cornett. On December 12, 1850, though, Nathaniel B. Kelly had the name changed to ***Boone Valley***. It closed in December 1853. It may have been on (or at the mouth of) Cornetts Branch, fourteen miles up the creek from North Fork, that's known to have been settled by Samuel Cornett whose family were its only inhabitants for much of the nineteenth century. But it's not known to what ***Boone Valley*** referred. Historian William T. Cornett thought that whatever it was had been named for one Boone Cornett of that family. But no such person is listed in Cornett family records.

The mouth of Cornetts Branch was the first site of the ***Line Fork*** post office itself which Oliver G. Halcomb (or Holcomb), the local magistrate, established on May 5, 1879. It was soon the center of a village of some 400 residents, several mills, and Gideon Ison's store. It survived an intermittent operation and a name change in 1890 to ***Linefork***. By 1931 it was serving a community then, as yet, called ***Kingdom Come***, half a stream mile above its original location. It still operates, just below the Four Square Church, the Kingdom Come Settlement (Elementary) School, and the Kingdom Come State Park.

Three post offices in succession served the upper end of the Line Fork valley. The first was ***Arthur***, established by Clark Cornett on August 15, 1883, nine miles above (west of) the Line Fork post office, probably at the mouth of Long Branch. In November 1892 it was moved a mile upstream, probably to Koyles Branch, and closed in November 1897. Historian Cornett wondered if it had been named for then U.S. President Chester Alan Arthur, for this was then a heavily Republican area.

On June 7, 1907 Charlie McKnight opened the ***Bear Branch*** post office at the mouth of this 2 ½ mile-long north side tributary of Line Fork to serve a community that may also have been called ***Melton*** for one or more area families.[7] The office closed in mid-November 1908.

One or more Gilley families gave their name to the third upper Line Fork post office. It was established at the mouth of Koyles Branch by Martha Lewis who

called it ***Gilley*** since her first choice, ***Arthur***, probably for its predecessor, had been preempted in 1898 by another Arthur in Edmonson County. ***Gilley*** opened on June 24, 1914 with Henry T. Holcomb, its first postmaster. In 1935 it was moved one mile up the Fork to the mouth of Jakes Creek; and in mid-1939 was moved another 1 ¼ miles up to serve the ***Head of Line Fork*** neighborhood, at a site just west of Bear Branch. Here it closed at the end of 1988. A little over nine miles up Line Fork, just below the mouth of Big Branch, was the first of the two aptly named ***Chestnut Hill*** post office sites. This office was first operated between December 6, 1890 and June 23, 1892 by Moses S. Ison. It was re-established on November 14, 1893 by Monroe Holcomb who, in 1900, had it moved three fourths of a mile downstream to the mouth of Whitaker Branch where it closed in September 1904.

From February 25, 1921 to 1988 the lower end of Big Branch was served by another post office. Finding his preferred name ***Meadorville*** in use in Whitley County, Major Cornett then proposed the name ***Skyline*** for, it's been said, he envisioned a time when mail would be carried by air.[8] That, or a more prosaic and obvious explanation.[9] Most recently this office was one fourth of a mile up Big Branch from Line Fork, just above the old Big Branch School.

From the First World War till 1986 the area at the mouth of Line Fork, twelve stream miles below Whitesburg, was served by the ***Ulvah*** [Uhl/vuh or Uhl/vee] post office. This office began on November 1, 1897, with William T. Haney, postmaster, as ***Gourd*** (name derivation unknown). Sometime before 1907, for reasons also unknown, the office was moved 2 ¼ miles up the North Fork to a site just above the mouth of Talent Branch (across from the future ***Red Star*** mining company's camp).

In 1912 the L&N Railroad reached Gourd's first post office site and, it's said, named its local station for these lines from the Scottish poet Thomas Campbell's 1803 ballad "Lord Ullin's Daughter":

Oh, who be ye would cross Lochgyle, this dark and stormy water? Oh, I'm the chief of Ulva's isle, and this is Lord Ullin's daughter."

The ballad tells the familiar Scottish story of the rich man's daughter and her lover who, on eloping, are pursued by her angry parent, come to the banks of a stream where they hire a boat to take them across. But the boat sinks in a sudden storm and they are drowned, leaving the grieving father to regret the chase and forgive the lover.

By March 1914 the ***Gourd*** post office had been moved half a mile further up North Fork to a point half a mile below the mouth of Orchard Branch and assumed the ***Ulvah*** name. Sometime before 1919 the ***Ulvah*** office was returned to the vicinity of its first site to serve the ***Ulvah Station*** and several area coal camps, truck mines, and sawmills. By the time it closed in 1986 the office was in the community's only remaining store, one fourth of a mile above the Line Fork confluence and the Perry County line.

Serving a small North Fork coal mine and camp and the ***Pershing*** (rail) ***Station***, two miles above the mouth of Line Fork, was the ***Bluefield*** post office. The station's name, undoubtedly that of America's World War One commander, was first proposed for the office, but gave way to ***Bluefield***, possibly for the West Virginia coal town.[10] It operated from April 17, 1920, with Charles W. Murphy, its first postmaster, through July 1928.

Gordon was established at the mouth of Trace Fork of Line Fork Creek on August 12, 1898 to serve one of eastern Kentucky's most rugged, isolated areas, at the northern edge of Hurricane Gap Mountain.[11] According to first postmaster Sarah V. Field's Site Location Report, the first name proposed for her office, then just south of Trace Fork, was ***Benton*** (in use in Marshall County). But that was replaced by the name of an old area family of whom there is no record. The office closed in mid-November 1924, but was reopened on March 16, 1927 by Frank Helton at the mouth of Valley Branch, four miles above the Linefork post office's present site. Here it remained through September 1992.

Just below the mouth of Turkey Creek is the Line Fork's active ***Hallie*** post office. Alamander Whitaker, who established it on June 16, 1916, is said to have named it for a local lady who also remains unidentified.

Two offices served Turkey Creek, Line Fork's first major tributary. ***Banks***, established on April 21, 1900 and named for the family of its first postmaster Clem Banks,[12] was mostly at the mouth of Bates Fork, 1 ½ miles up Turkey, and two miles south Hallie. It closed in 1965.

At two sites, two to three miles above Banks, in the vicinity of Turkey's Deadening Branch, was Isaac and George B. Ison's ***Josie*** post office. It operated from June 14, 1902 through July 1913, and it and its name source are unremembered today.

From June 11, 1905 through March 1912 Lucinda Morgan (Mrs. William B. Lusk) operated the ***Lusk*** post office one and a half miles up Line Fork. The Lusks were the descendants of Samuel Lusk (1785-1876) who settled at the mouth of Line Fork around 1806. William Lusk of Indian Bottom was the county surveyor in the 1870s.

The ***Flint*** post office, established by Loranza Boggs on September 14, 1907, could have been called ***Peach*** if there hadn't then been an Oldham County office by that name. The Letcher office was 2 ½ miles up Ingram Creek, a Line Fork branch, and may have been named for Flintfield Branch which joins Ingram one mile below the post office site. The office closed in April 1931, and was re-established on May 18, 1938, with Astor Boggs, postmaster, but closed for good in 1957.

Defeated Creek, a 4 ½ mile-long westside branch of Line Fork, was one of several eastern Kentucky streams named early for an alleged white settler's losing encounter with marauding Indians. From October 21, 1909 till 1943 Matilda Ison and her storekeeper brother Byrd Ison, children of Gideon, Jr. and Mary (Banks) Ison, ran the ***Defeated Creek*** post office on Line Fork, just above the creek's mouth. According to Miss Ison's Site Location Report, her new post office would be serving a locality called ***Hubert.***

Post Offices on Rockhouse Creek and its Tributaries

Rockhouse Creek, which heads one third of a mile from the Pike County line, west of the old Etty post office, extends for some twenty-five miles roughly southwest to the North Fork at Blackey. Among its earliest settlers were the family of James Collins, a Methodist preacher from Virginia, who arrived at the mouth of Camp Branch in the winter of 1803-04. According to tradition, the family was kept by the snow and cold from building more permanent quarters and were forced to erect a makeshift shelter under a rockhouse on the banks of the creek that thus took its name. It's also been said that Camp Branch was named for the Collins' winter camp. Both streams were so named by 1817, according to Clay County order books of that year. Over the years, nineteen post offices served the residents of the main Rockhouse valley and six more served Camp Branch families.

The first Rockhouse post office, just above the mouth of Camp Branch, was appropriately named ***Rockhouse.*** It was established on July 31, 1876 with Millard Collins, its first postmaster, and within a few years was serving several stores, James M. Collins's mill, and other businesses. (For awhile, from August 1878 to February 1879, the office was called ***Collins*** with Millard and James its postmasters, and for some unknown reason was listed in Post Office Department records as a separate office.) ***Rockhouse*** closed in January 1905. By today's roads (Ky 931 via Camp Branch and Sand Lick Creek) the office site is only nine miles north of Whitesburg.

Camp Branch Post Offices

The first office in this stream valley was ***Lucas*** which operated four miles up the branch, just below its head, between September 23, 1880 and early January 1884. Samuel Breeding, its first postmaster, preferred the small community's full name, ***Lucastown***, a name still identifying that site on published maps. From September 14, 1891 till late July 1892 the community was served by another post office, ***Aaron,*** with William and Mary E. Lucas, its only postmasters. Both the village, then apparently called ***Aaronsville***, and the two post offices, were probably named for Aaron Lucas (1827-1923), William's father.

Less than a mile below Lucas(town) and Aaron(sville) was the ***Lester*** post office that Samuel T. Webb, a school teacher, established on September 28, 1893 to serve several area mills. It's said to have been named for a well known area preacher, about whom I know nothing. It closed in 1947.

Then there was ***Effie*** (derivation unknown) run by Thomas Bowens between June 15 and September 9, 1897, somewhere between the mouth of Camp Branch and the mouth of the latter's Little Sandlick Branch, near the site of the later Polly.

Polly, named for the local descendants of pioneer Edward Polly (1758-1845), began as the post office of ***Fall***, maintained by Sarah Polly between January 8, 1902 and mid-January 1905. It was re-established as ***Polly*** on April 27, 1909, one fourth of a mile up Little Sandlick two (of today's) road miles from the main Rockhouse Creek, and run by the brothers James M. and Andrew J. Clay, neighbors of the Pollys, till

September 1921. On June 15, 1935 Edward D. Polly moved his ***Sandlick*** post office to the mouth of Little Sandlick and renamed it ***Polly.*** It too closed in 1947. Neither ***Fall*** nor James Clay's first name preference, ***Luna,*** have been derived.[13]

From August 5, 1903 through 1913, the ***Sandlick*** post office served residents of Sandlick Creek, which extends for 4 ¾ miles from its head, just south of Sandlick Gap, to the North Fork within Whitesburg's present western limits. Georgia and Charles H. Back were the office's only postmasters at a site one fourth of a mile south of Jim Hogg Branch, about a mile below the head of the creek, and 2 ½ miles south of Polly. It was re-established, also as ***Sandlick***, on November 10, 1923 by Edward D. Polly, but it's not known if it was then at the mouth of Little Sandlick or if it moved there in 1935 when Edward D. had it renamed ***Polly.***

Three post offices served the upper end of Rockhouse Creek. The first, ***Razorblade***, was at the mouth of Razorblade Branch, 5 ½ miles above the mouth of Camp Branch. Established on April 9, 1883 by John T. Bentley, it lasted till January 1887. Neither its name nor the stream's has been derived.

On September 18, 1889, at or near the mouth of Mill Creek, some 500 yards above Razorblade, Thomas M. Mead (sic) established the ***Deane*** post office. Named, it's said, for a local man (identity unknown), it was moved several times in its vicinity, and is now one fourth of a mile up Mill Creek.

The third area office was ***Democrat***. This was a transfer, on February 8, 1893, of an office called ***Stick*** that had been established on February 12, 1889 in Knott County, some three miles north, by Elhanan King. Probably at the outset, but certainly by 1913, ***Democrat*** was at the mouth of Big Branch, two (current road) miles on Ky 7 below Deane. In recent years, till it closed in 1985, it was on Ky 7, opposite the mouth of Lower Appletree Branch, half a mile above Big Branch. Though no one seems to know the source of ***Stick***, everyone agrees that ***Democrat*** was named for the one lone Democrat in a staunchly Republican precinct, Mr. King himself.

Once a thickly settled community with over 1,000 residents, ***Jeremiah*** is now but a settlement of modest bungalows stretched out along Ky 7 and Rockhouse Creek. It is centered on its active post office between Spring and Doty Branches, 4 ½ miles above Blackey. This office was established on May 27, 1884 and named for its first postmaster, a local storekeeper Jeremiah P. Dixon (1856-1932). Dixon was called "The Prophet" by his neighbors, and indeed his middle initial stood for "Prophet," for he was named for the Biblical prophet Jeremiah.

Somewhere in the Rockhouse valley (site unlocated but known to have been one mile east of the main stream and between the Rockhouse and Deane post offices) was an office actually named ***Profitt***. But it was named for local families of that name. Isom Sergent, who was later to establish the Isom post office, was its only postmaster between May 28, 1891 and early June 1893. The Profitts were the descendants of one Jeremiah Profitt, whose name in county records was sometimes spelled Prophet, and his wife Phoebe (nee Roark.)[14]

Another short-lived (June 3, 1892 to mid-June 1894) and unlocated post office on Rockhouse Creek, also between Deane and the Rockhouse post office, was ***Cline***. The Clines were a Pike and Floyd family whose connection with Letcher County and Martin V. Bates, the office's only operator, is unknown.

The ***Colson*** [kohl/suhn] post office was established on May 26, 1897 by Elisha L. Creech, and named for David Grant Colson (1861-1904) of Middlesborough, then representing eastern Kentucky in the U.S. Congress. It may first have been located somewhere on Camp Branch, but by 1902 is known to have been one fourth of a mile up the Branch near the Rockhouse post office, and two miles below Fall (Polly). It was later moved one mile up Rockhouse (north) to the mouth of Trace Fork, and when it closed in 1975 was half a mile up Trace (and Rt. 1410), just above the Andy Hollow (now Camp Fork).

About half a mile up Trace from Colson's last site was ***Saluda*** [suh/lú/duh] which May Cook operated from May 30, 1907 through July 1908. While the name derives from some Indian word for "corn river," suggesting that corn was once planted on the banks of a stream, and identifies features in Virginia and the Carolinas, the reason for its application to a Letcher County post office is unknown.[15]

A post office called ***Joseph***, at two locations on or near Rockhouse Creek, was operated by J. Edward and Walter B. Thomas between January 25, 1898 and mid-February 1902. The sites may have been just below the Betze (later Sackett) post office, for Site Location Reports sited them four to five miles south of Bath (in Knott County) and 4 ½ to five miles north of Tillie. ***Eva***, for his nine year old daughter, was J.

Edward's first name choice, while ***Bill*** may have been Walter's first preference. But Joseph has not been identified.

The ***Betze*** [beht/see] post office was just below the mouth of Daniels Branch, and three miles below Camp Branch. Established on November 26, 1901 by John W. Collins, it's said to have been named for a Mrs. Betze Collins, a highly respected old lady in the community.[16] But there is no known relationship between her and John W.[17] The office was discontinued in mid-November 1916, but was re-established at or close to the first site by J.R. Maggard on September 12, 1928. His first name choice ***Betze*** was superceded by ***Sackett*** which, according to Keitha McKenzie, Maggard's granddaughter, was the name of a then postal inspector.[18] This office closed for good in 1957.

Now at the junction of Ky 15 and 7, where Stamper Fork meets Rockhouse Creek, and 1 ¾ miles below (southwest of) Betze-Sackett, is the ***Isom*** [a:s/uhm] post office. It was established on February 10, 1898 at the mouth of Little Colly Creek, one fourth of a mile above, and, with its community, was named for the Ison families who had settled in the area after the Civil War. The spelling of the name, though, may suggest that of Isom Sergent, its first postmaster. In recent years, the name has mostly identified the active post office, while the community has been locally known as ***The Stock Sale***, referring to its role, since the 1930s, as a market for area livestock.

Two miles up Little Colly Creek from Rockhouse and the Isom post office was Tillie.[19] This began on June 14, 1890 as ***Hogg*** for a branch of this important Letcher County family. But on February 4, 1895, Ira S. Hill, its first postmaster, had the name changed to ***Tillie*** for the family of James M. Tilley (ne ca. 1830) and his wife Mary.[20] ***Hogg's*** first site is not known but, as ***Tillie***, the office was at several locations on Little Colly, including the junction of the old routes on Ky 7 and 15, and the site of the Little Colly Church, half a mile above its last site, at the mouth of Cow Branch, to which it had moved by 1926, and where it closed in late May 1933.

Grouse, Tocsin, and ***Greanleaf*** were short-lived post offices in the Rockhouse system that operated from 1906 till just before the First World War. Neither their names nor their locations have been precisely derived.

Grouse, between May 18, 1906 and mid-June 1912, may have been at the head of Low Gap Branch of Elk Creek, 2 1/2 miles above the later Blackey post office's first site. William Dixon was the first of its two postmasters. (Could it have been named for the game bird?)

Tocsin [tahx/uhn] was established on June 22, 1906, 1 ½ miles up Beaverdam Branch, four miles above Colson, and four miles west of Democrat. Postmaster Ezekiel Elberson Bentley's first name choice was ***Don.*** By 1909, when Henry Baker was postmaster, it had probably moved to the main Rockhouse Creek where it closed at the end of April 1914. (Could there be any tie-in with the Anglo-French word for a bell or the sound made by one?)

Letcher County's ***Greenleaf*** (not to be confused with the earlier offices of this name in Floyd and Knott Counties), was established on October 22, 1906 with Cordelia Hammons, postmaster, somewhere three miles southeast of Amelia and three miles north of Isom. In March 1908 Millie and George A. Combs had it moved 2 ½ miles east to serve the village of ***Greenleaf*** whose location has not been determined. According to Combs family records, George A. and Millie were then living in the vicinity of Elkhorn Branch (now Race Track Hollow), between Sackett and Isom, at or certainly near the earlier ***Joseph*** (see above). Wherever the ***Greenleaf*** community and office were, the latter closed in March 1912.

About halfway up the 2 ½ mile-long Caudills Branch of Rockhouse Creek, and 3 ¼ miles from North Fork, William Caudill, on December 26, 1908, established the ***David*** post office named for David Caudill. In 1916 the office was moved three fourths of a mile down the branch, but in 1923 it was moved by William Mandt one mile north to serve the Caudills Branch Coal Company camp and ***Walbot Station*** on the L&N's new Caudills Branch spur. By 1926 the coal company had become ***Carbon Glow*** and, on February 16 of that year, the post office took that name. It's believed that, in seeking a name to mark the superior quality of its coal, the company modified "glowing coal," which had that connotation, by taking "carbon" as a more impressive rendition of coal and reversing the words to come up with the catchier ***Carbon Glow.*** Or, as county historian William T. Cornett suggested, the company may have sought to trade on the success of the Welsh mining towns called "Glo" this and that, as did the East Tennessee Coal Company in Perry County which had founded and named a camp Glomawr in 1914. The ***Carbon Glow*** post office closed in 1957, and some slate dumps are now

the only evidence of the mining that characterized the upper end of the Caudill Branch valley for several decades.

By the early 1920s two stations on the newly established Rockhouse Branch of the L&N were serving several recently opened coal mines in the lower end of that valley. One station, at the mouth of Caudill Branch, was ***Duo.*** On November 6, 1926 Roger F. Cooper opened a post office here that, instead of his preferred ***Duo***, was called ***Letcher*** for the county. Sometime later the post office was moved three fourths of a mile down the creek to serve the ***Letcher Station*** and the Presbyterian-owned Stuart Robinson School near the south end of Crases Branch. After the school closed in the late 1950s, its campus was taken over by the short-lived Calvary College.

To be continued . . . .

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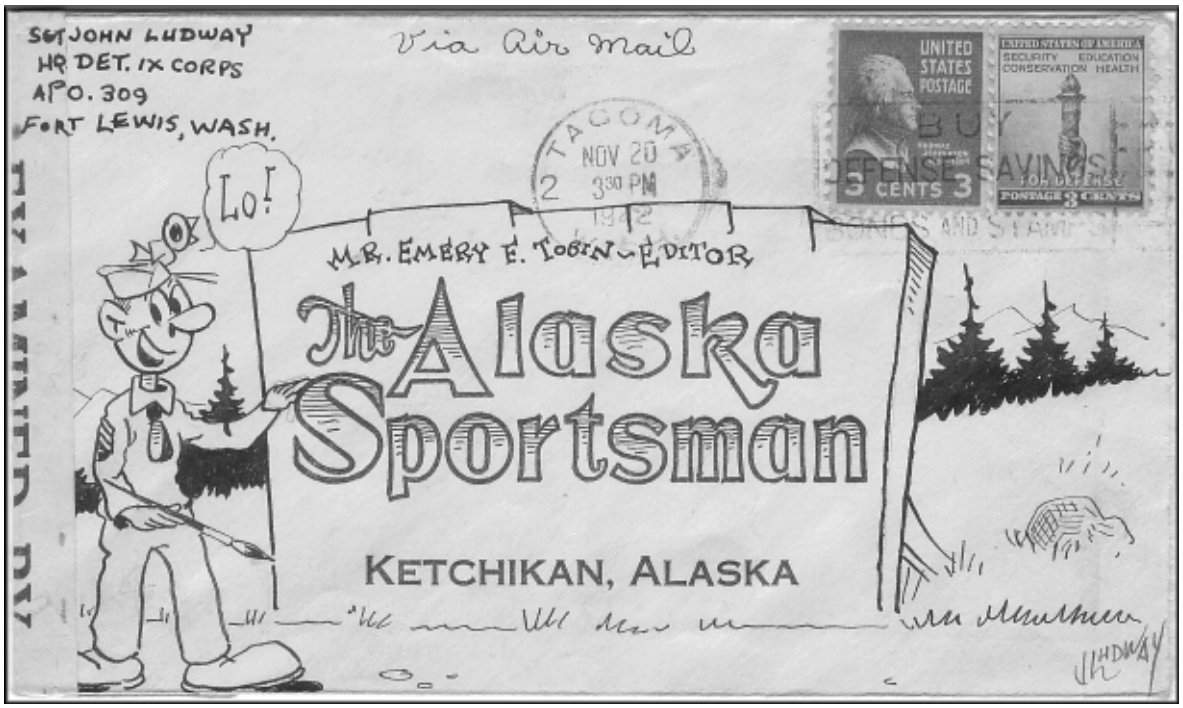
WWII Comic Cachets of Seargent John Ludway



The cover illustrated above is one of only three pieces in my collection featuring the comic artistry of Seargent John Ludway, and I would be very interested in hearing from La Posta readers who might have similar work in their collections.

Seargent Ludway was assigned to Headquarters Detachment of the Army's Ninth Corps, and the covers in my collection date from November 1942, when the unit was stationed at Fort Lewis, Washington, to March 1944 when it was at Fort McPherson in Atlanta, Georgia. Ninth Corps headquarters remained in the U.S. throughout most of the war. It was transferred to Hawaii in October 1944 and on to the Philippines in July 1945.

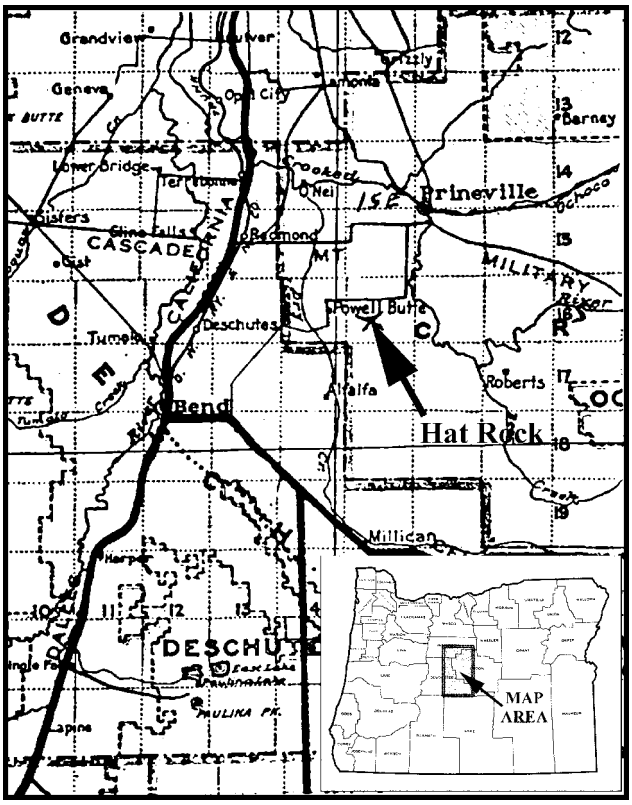
I have no details regarding Seargent Ludway other than his obvious skill with pen & ink, and would be delighted to correspond with readers who might be able to shed more light on the man and his work. Please contact Richard W. Helbock at La Posta. [helbock@la-posta.com]

Hat Rock, Oregon

By Victor I. Case

Hat Rock was typical of many of the small, short-lived post offices that were established in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in the arid western United States. When Louisa E. Becker filled out her Geographic Site Report for the Post Office Department (POD) in 1910 she claimed that the new office would service 40 residents of the lightly settle ranching community situated about midway between Bend and Prineville in central Oregon. Roads in this area were very primitive and there were, as yet, no rural routes operating out of either Bend or Prineville so a post office was authorized at Hat Rock on September 6, 1910.

The office was named for a prominent local rock formation on the southeast slopes of Powell Butte, and was located in Section 16 of Range 16 South, Township 15 East (map 1). Hat Rock was only about five miles southeast of the Powell Butte post office, an office which had itself only been opened in March 1909. It seems likely that the post office was physically situated within or adjacent to the Becker Ranch house.



Map 1 *Hat Rock (arrow) was about halfway between Bend and Prineville.*

Once the office was authorized the POD placed an order for equipment and supplies including a rubber die handstamp postmark to properly postmark mail and cancel stamps. It took perhaps a several weeks from the time the office was authorized before the official postmark handstamps could arrive and in the interim, Postmaster Becker employed a time-honored technique to postmark and cancel her outgoing mail—she wrote the required details out by hand. *Figure 1* illustrates a postcard with stamp cancelled by the manuscript notation "Hat Rock/12-12-10/ Ore." *Figure 2* illustrates an enlarged view of the stamp. The card

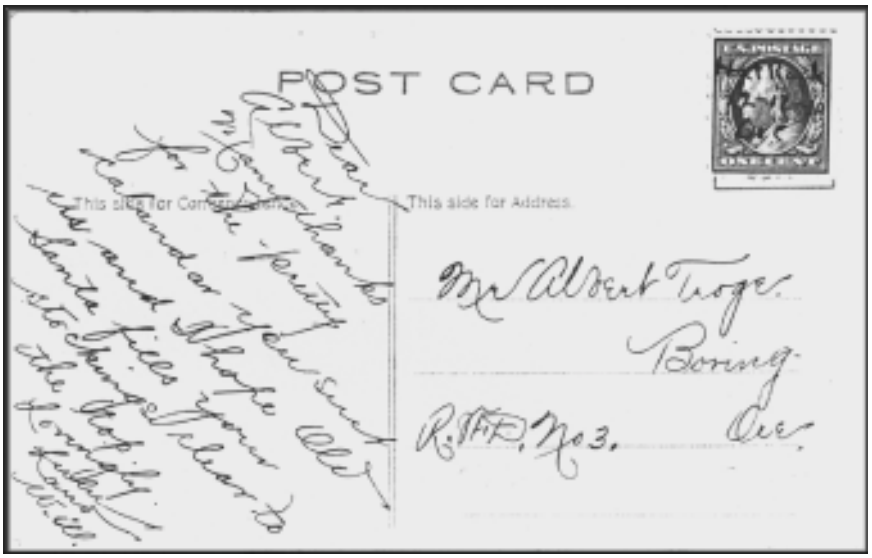


Figure 1 *Hat Rock manuscript postmark dated December 12, 1910.*

Figure 2

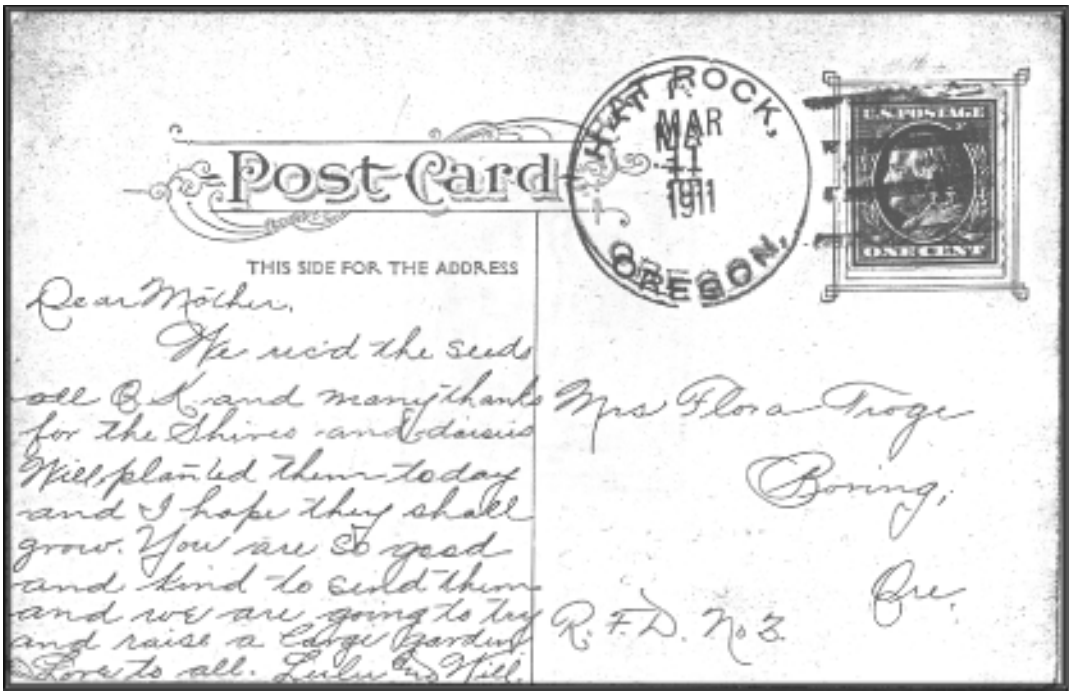


Figure 3 *This postcard displays a slightly doubled, but well-struck example of the Hat Rock four-bar. The device was in used for less than 12 months.*

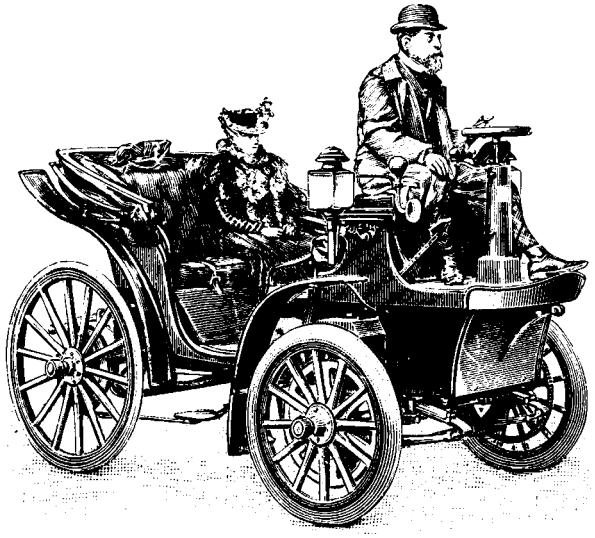
is signed "Lulu and Will", and there appears to be a fairly high probability that "Lulu" is in fact the postmaster.

Sometime between mid-December 1910 and mid-March 1911 the handstamp postmarker arrived at the remote post office. *Figure 3* illustrates another postcard from "Lulu and Will" addressed to the same family on Rural Route 3 out of Boring, Oregon. This card has its stamp proudly tied by a nicely struck example of the new Hat Rock four-bar.

The 1911 *Official Register* reports that Mrs. Louisa E. Becker was paid $20 for the year ending June 30, 1911, for her duties as postmaster at Hat Rock. There are very few Oregon postmasters who received less than that amount in that year.

By autumn of 1911 it had become clear to someone in Washington that the post office at Hat Rock was expendable. Perhaps it was the lack of mail volume coupled with its proximity to Powell Butte (the Powell Butte postmaster was paid $200 in 1911). Perhaps the POD had decided to authorize rural routes to operate out of Bend and/or Prineville. Perhaps Postmaster Becker had decided it was not worth the bother and decided to resign her commission. For whatever reason, the Hat Rock post office ceased to function on December 15, 1911.

Post offices such as Hat Rock that served small dispersed farm and ranch communities throughout the arid West were fairly common in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Their existence was typically short, being limited by a lack of business, and increase in ease and speed of transport, and expansion of the Rural Free Delivery system. Representative postmarks from such offices however, are not at all common.



Newly Documented Alaska Postal EKU

by Don Glickstein, glickstein.d@ghc.org

LaPosta's January 2002 census of 19th century postal cards from Alaska generated information about a new earliest known usage (EKU), as well as a photo of the now second-earliest known usage.

The new EKU was mailed from Fort Wrangel on July 1?, 1879 on a UX3 to Portland, Ore. The second numeral of the date—if there is one—is indistinct in the photo from the auction catalog when it was last sold. The faint-in-places cancel was struck twice. It's hard to tell from the catalog photo which Helbock cancel type it is, but it appears to be what would be a new, early usage of the type 7 duplex—large letters with a complete month, date, and year, with an adjoining concentric-circles canceler.

Likewise, the catalog only shows the northeast quadrant of the card's front, so we don't have documentation as to whom it was addressed or the message.

(The card's previous owner recalls that the card was written in French from a missionary. The last name of the addressee appears to be Capelli or Capilli, although there could be other interpretations of the handwriting after the "Cap.")

The card sold in the July 13-14, 1999 Matthew Bennet auction for $130 plus 10 percent fee.

The card mailed from Sitka on Feb. 24, 1884, now becomes the second EKU of a postal card, and the earliest known postal from Sitka. (*figure 1*)

Its full text (*figure 2*) (with unreadable phrases indicated by dashes) reads:

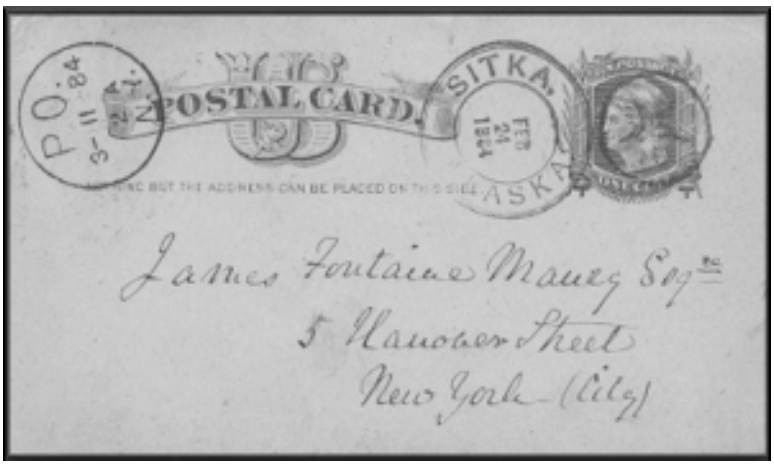


Figure 1

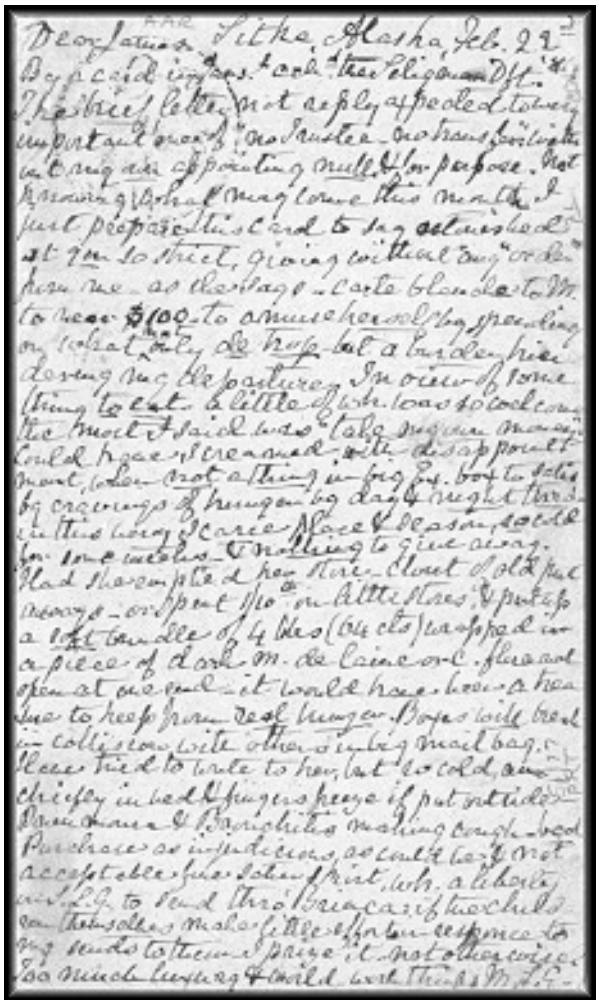


Figure 2

Sitka, Alaska, Feb. 22 '84
Dear James,
By a card in Jan. I ackd. the Seligman Dft. The brief letter not reply expected to very important one of no Trustee. No transfer — last — appointing null & for purpose. Not knowing what may come this month I just prepare this card to say astonished at you so strict giving without any order from me as the — carte blanche to M. to — $100 to amuse herself by spending on what not only de trop, but a burden hindering my departure. In view of something to eat - a little of wk. — to welcome the most I said was "take —money." Could have screamed with disappointment when not a thing in big — box to satisfy cravings of hunger by day & night thro in this very scarce place I — so cold for some —& nothing to give away. Had she emptied her store-closet of old — or spent 1/10th on little stores. I put up a— trundle of 4 lbs (64 cts) wrapped in a piece of dark M. de laine or C. flannel open at one end- it would have been a treasure to keep from real hun-

ger. Boxes will break in collision with others in big mail bag. Have tried to write to her, but so cold, am chiefly in bed &fingers freeze if put outside. Pneumonia and bronchitis making cough bad. Purchase as injudicious as could be & not acceptable —wk. a liberty — L.G. to send thro' Briaca. If the children themselves make little effort in response to — and sends to them- I prize it, not otherwise. I so much luxury & would work think. M.L.G.

Due to my own computer-user error, the January *LaPosta* article was severely truncated.

Part of the truncated copy contained some thank yous and resources. They include:

* Reference: Postmarks of Territorial Alaska by Richard W. Helbock, third revised edition, 1986. This classic by LaPosta's editor, is now out of print but available from dealers of philatelic literature for $25-$50. Alaska philatelists around the world hope the day isn't far when Helbock is persuaded to release a new edition. *[Message received—RWH]*

* Club: The Alaska Collectors Club publishes The Alaskan Philatelist. For more information: David Schwantes, 8148 E. Fourth Ave., Anchorage AK 99504. The club also conducts mail auctions.

* Dealers: Two dealers who specialize in Alaska (and other) material are Steve Sims, 1769 Wickersham Dr., Anchorage AK 99507, and Carl Cammarata, P.O. Box 145, Scotts MI 49088. Sims maintains the ongoing listing of newly discovered territorial postmarks. Cammarata has been invaluable in supplying both cards and information about the earliest Alaska postals.

* Special thanks: dealer Stephen T. Taylor, 5 Glenbuck Rd., Surbiton, Surrey KT6 6BS England. Taylor provided information about the new EKU.

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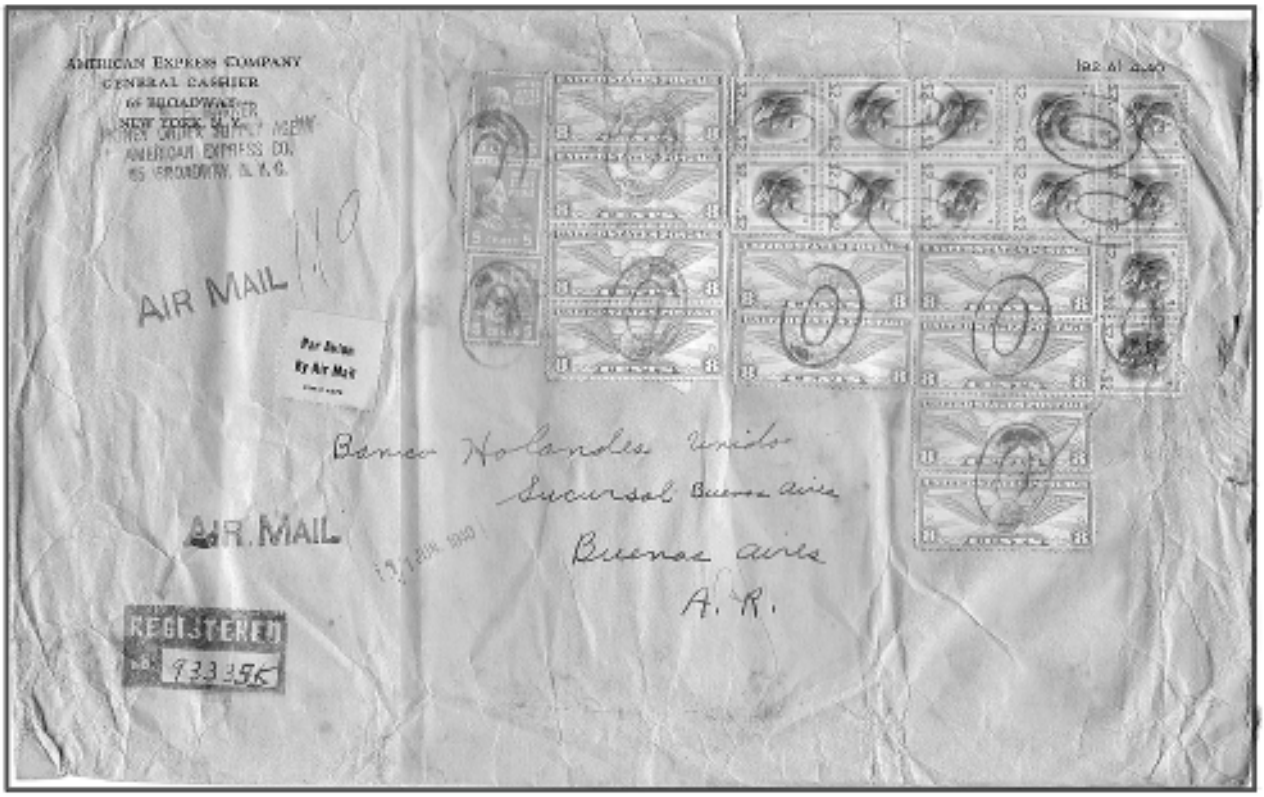
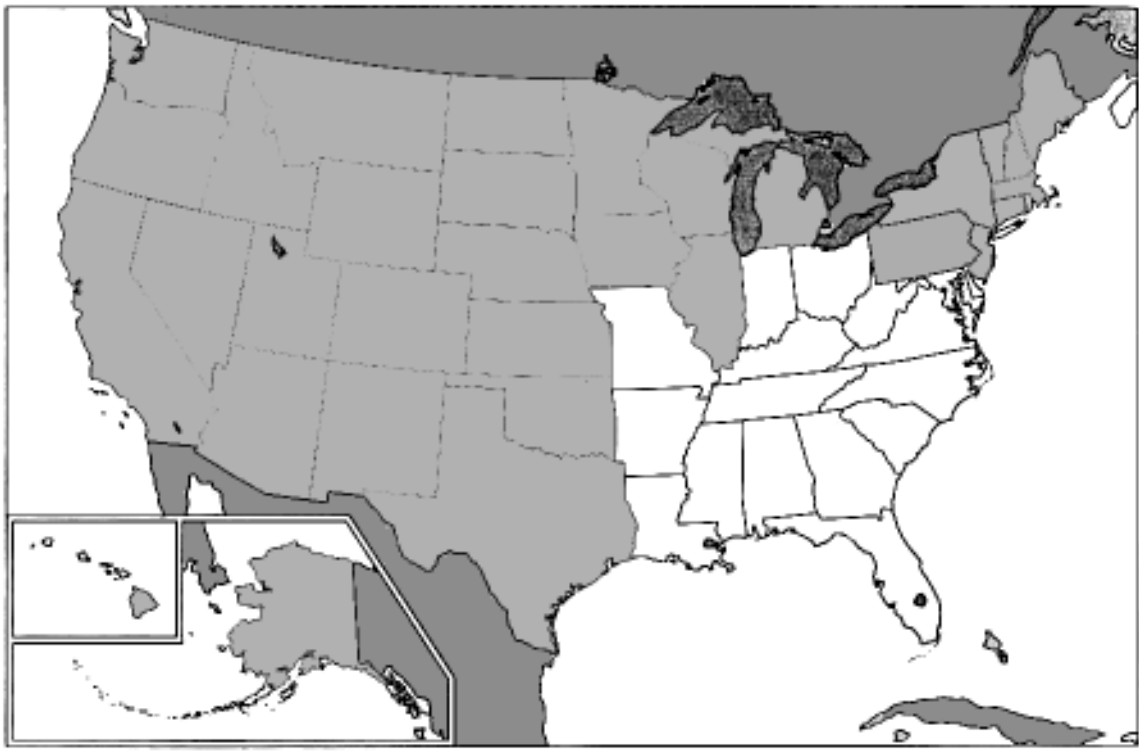


Postmarked New York, NY, Trinity Station, June 4, 1940, this cover was franked with a block ten plus two addition copies of the $2 Harding, ten copies of the 10¢ winged globe and three 5¢ Monroes. The total of $24.95 represents 15 cents registration and air postageof 40 ¢ per ½ ounce for 31 ounces. The cover bears a San Juan, Puerto Rico transit dater and Argentine arrival marking on reverse. It measures 13½ by 9½ inches.



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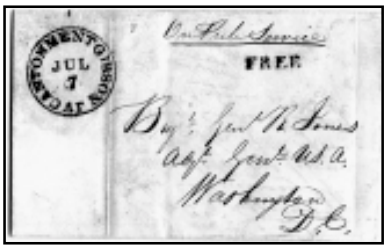

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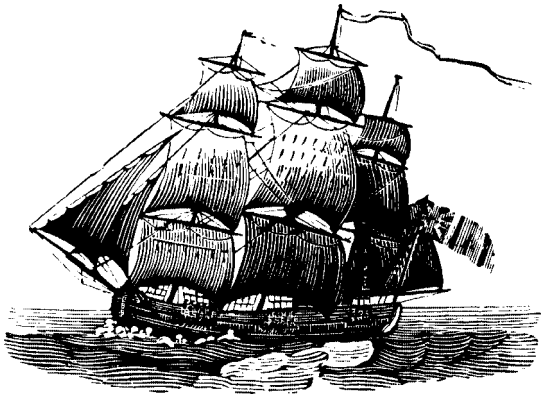

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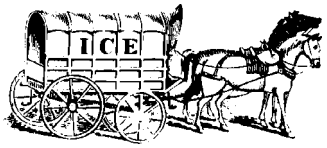

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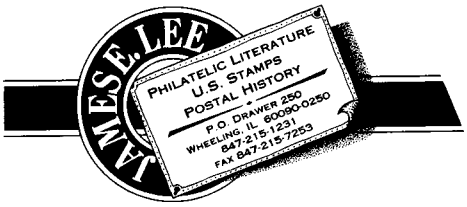

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WWW.TOWNCANCEL.COM is the newest Postal History website. There are currently 17 states online and more coming. Do you collect State Postal History, Doane Cancels or cancels of any kind? Check out this site. Also, up to date Doane Lists of Georgia, Minnesota and Wisconsin are online. Gary Anderson, P.O. Box 600039, St. Paul, MN 55106 [33-3]

CARDS & COVERS: FOR SALE

POSTAL HISTORY featured in our mail bid sales. Free catalogs. Juno Stamps, 1765 Juno Ave., St. Paul, MN 55116-1467. junostamps@aol.com [33-3]

TOWNS: WANTED

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CALIFORNIA - KERN & IMPERIAL County covers and cards. Especially interested in Bakersfield corner cards. Send description or photocopies and prices to John Williams, 887 Litchfield Ave., Sebastopol, CA 95472 [33-6]

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IDAHO PANHANDLE: Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Clearwater, Idaho, Kootenai, Latah, Lewis, Nez Perce, and Shoshone Counties. Interested in all postmarks and other postal history items. Send photocopies or priced on approval. Write or e-mail for post office lists. I will pay all copying or mailing costs. Peter Larson, 5301 Robinson Park Rd., Moscow, ID 83843, Tel 208-883-8297, e-mail plarson@wsu.edu. [33-6]

LOUISIANA and other mid-Gulf Coast states. Stamped/stampless, etc., postal history (1790-1920). Individual items/entire correspondences. Ron Trosclair (APS), 1713 Live Oak St., Metairie, LA 70005-1069, PH: (504) 835-9611 [33-5]

NEBRASKA TERRITORIAL covers (before Mar 1, 1867) wanted for my personal collection. Write or send copies. Ken Stach, 15 N. Morning Cloud Circle, The Woodland, TX 77381 [33-4]

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OHIO-HOLMES & COSHOCTON counties. All Postal History, DPOs. Especially want Berlin S/L and CDS on folded letters, Baddow Pass, Clark(s), DeWitts Ridge, Dino, Doughty, Drake's, Humphreysville, Jones Corners, Killbuck, Manning, Morgan Settlement, Mounthope, Palladium, Pictoria, Prairie, Salt Creek, Saltillo, Special, Tuttleville, Ward's and Winesburgh. Larry Neal, 8650 Twp Rd 79, Millersburg, OH 44654. Member APS, OPHS. [34-2]

NOTE:

EXPIRATION DATE SHOWN AT END OF EACH AD, i.e., [33-1], MEANS AD WILL EXPIRE WITH THIS ISSUE.

AD DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE:

March 20, 2002

E-MAIL US IF YOU INTEND TO RENEW YOUR AD & TIME IS SHORT

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WACO VILLAGE, TEXAS. Interesting old Texas Covers - especially those from McLennan, Bosque & Coryell Counties. Jim Alexander, Box 21792, Waco, TX 76702-1792. jalexa5943@aol.com [33-2]

WEST POINT, NEW YORK covers -- stampless to 1890 -- wanted for personal collection. Send on approval or photocopies. Prompt response promised. Richard Helbock, P. O. Box 100, Chatsworth Island, NSW 2469 Australia [33-6].

WISCONSIN - WAUSAU (1850+) Would anyone have early covers, with special cancels on the letter? Looking for the octagon cancel which was used in 1870s to 1880s. Would you have any DPOs of Marathon County? Advise, with copy of cover or covers and price. APS Life Member. William Grosnick, Sr., 833 11th Avenue, Wausau, WI 54401[33-6]

DOANE CANCELS: WANTED

Buy, sell and trade Doane Cancels of all states. Send photocopies or on approval. Gary Anderson, P.O. Box 600039, St. Paul, MN 55106 [33-5]

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WANTED: TO BUY, sell or trade, mint or used, US postally stamped cards. List availablke on request. Dick Borkowski, PO Box 118, Edgemont, PA 19028 [33-6]

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HELD FOR POSTAGE -- US Post Office Forms #1543, #3540, #3548 sought for study of varieties -- Need better items and accumulations of common. Write for offer: David L. Straight, P.O. Box 32858, St. Louis, MO 63132 or e-mail: dls@library.wustl.edu [33-6]

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WANTED: MISCELANY

EXPRESS COMPANY & Parcel Delivery Company covers, Corner-Cards, Labels and Stamps. Locals: Forgeries and Fantasies. William Sammis, 436 Thomas Road, Ithaca, NY 14850-9653 E-mail: cds13@cornell.edu [33-3]

AIRMAIL COVERS - Commercial Only (No First Flights or philatelic)-United States to destinations in Europe, Africa, Asia and Oceania dating from before 1938. Also C1-C9 on commercial covers to foreign or domestic addresses. Send priced on approval or photocopies, or request my offer. Richard Helbock, P.O. Box 100, Chatsworth Island, NSW 2469 Australia [33-5]

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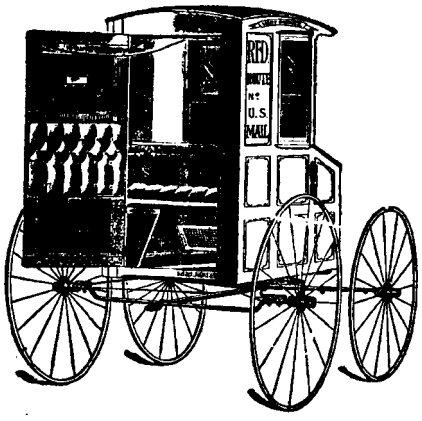

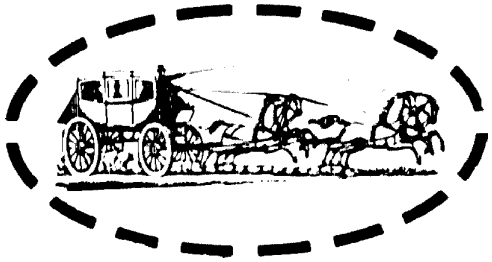

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Publisher

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