

# LA POSTA: A JOURNAL OF AMERICAN POSTAL HISTORY

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### Sortability, Searchability, Color and a Whole Lot More.

This issue of *La Posta* marks the beginning of our 34<sup>th</sup> year of publishing. The next issue will be our 200<sup>th</sup>. I am absolutely amazed by those numbers. Never, in my wildest thoughts, could I have ever believed back in 1969 that I would be involved with this project in 2003. It truly has been a wonderful, rewarding lifetime endeavor. It has allowed me to meet and work with so many bright and interesting people. I have learned so many fascinating things about our country and its past. Thank you all dear subscribers and authors and editors for permitting me to experience these wonderful years.

This is not a retirement speech. Far from it, I have an exciting announcement that I would like to share, and I hope to be making a similar “golden memories” reflection on this page ten years from now.

As many of you have probably noted in previous issues, I have long been fascinated by the potential impacts of personal computers on our hobby. In the March 1983 issue (Whole No. 79) I wrote my first article dealing with a few aspects of this subject, and over the past two decades other short pieces have followed as the computer technology (and my familiarity with it) evolved.

I have never been—nor could I ever hope to be—a computer nerd. I do confess to being a somewhat of a gadget freak, but I’m merely a consumer of what the Bill Gates’, Paul Allens’ and Larry Ellisons’ of the world come up with in the field. I am, however, always ready to explore and embrace a new aspect of the technology when I perceive that it can materially benefit my beloved hobby of postal history.

We are—I believe—on the threshold of a new period of sharing postal history information and research that is directly attributable to recent advances in computer technology. I am referring to the increasing ease and decreasing cost by which CD-ROM discs can be compiled and duplicated.

Compact discs have become more and more a part of most people’s lives over the past 5-7 years. Indeed, in 1998-99 as America On-Line bombarded the Western World with freebie sign-up CDs, Cath & I sought to find some practical use for our own rapidly in-

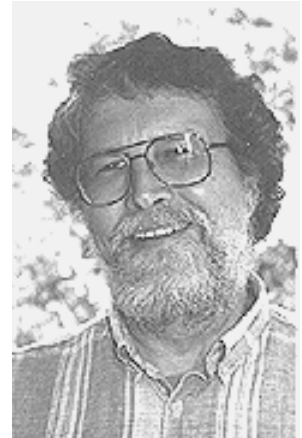
creasing stash of them. (We settled on hanging a few in front of our large windows overlooking the bush to keep parrots from crashing into the glass).

A few brave pioneers began publishing philatelic and postal history research works on CDs in the late 1990s. Bob De Violini was an early CD author and Bob Swanson published his *Domestic United States Military Post Offices of the First World War (1917-1919)-A Postal History* in 2000. In 2002 the Postmark Collectors Club began publishing a series of CDs containing a state-by-state set of color illustrations of the massive *Willett-Thompson Collection of United States Postmarks*. I believe that seven of the discs have thus far been published.

### Postal History on CDs Versus Books

There are advantages and disadvantages on publishing postal history information and research on CDs. The main disadvantages have to do with overcoming our traditional habits. We love books. Books are our lifelong friends. We have read books since childhood, carefully turning their pages to read and observe what new delights and surprises each new page would bring. When we finish reading a book, we place it in some prominent place on a shelf, and, if it was a particularly good book or a book containing useful reference material, we will return to it over and over again like an old friend. I hate to think how long I lugged my geography texts around the country with me and never once bothered to crack the cover of most of them. They were friendly artifacts and I suppose I felt more secure having them around.

I really don’t believe that CDs—or their future successors containing digital information—will ever *completely* replace books. A well produced book is a thing of beauty. It can be a physical work of art as well as a literary work of art. But most books are not works of art. They are merely convenient packages in which to store and share information. Because we are so familiar and comfortable with their form, we may assign them attributes and a level of importance that they do not deserve.



When it comes to storing and sharing information, books are greatly inferior to CDs in many important aspects. I have published books on various subjects in postal history for nearly 30 years. During that time, I have been intimately involved in all aspects of book production from concept to research & writing to prepress to off-set printing to staple binding. I have never tackled signature stitching or binding. Making a book is a great deal of fun, and—depending upon how successfully it all works out—can give one a satisfying sense of accomplishment.

But a book places very severe restrictions on how information may be stored and shared. My old friend, Charles Towle, became very interested in philatelic exhibiting in his later years. He was convinced that the traditional method featuring row after row of nearly identical frames of neatly prepared album or exhibition pages was far too limiting in its ability to truly depict the reasons *why we are so passionate about postal history*. He was determined to find ways to encourage exhibitors of like minds to break through the glass frames and “reach out and grab” the exhibition viewer. To that end, Charles convinced ARIPEX and perhaps a few other national shows to open exhibition classes called “Non-Traditional” or some such term. It was a noble experiment, and it may have had an ongoing legacy in some parts of the philatelic world. The limitations of books are somewhat like those rows of frames. Everything must fit on the page (or maybe two pages) and once on the page, it may not be moved around or be reorganized by the person accessing the information, i.e., the reader.

Many of the books I produced in recent years have been in the form of giant lists. Such lists are never beautiful from an aesthetic standpoint, although I like to think their utility gives them something of an inferred beauty. The United States Post Offices series is a good example. The first five volumes contain a combined total of over 100,000 post offices. The three remaining volumes will add another 60,000 offices when published. The books have been reasonably popular because they fill a basic need for a relatively inexpensive listing of US post offices on a broad geographic base. Each book contains a simple alphabetically organized list of all post offices within a given region along with information concerning their state and county, their dates of operation, and an index number representing an opinion on the likely scarcity of postmarks from the particular office.



How much handier and more useful it would be for the reader if—instead of containing those static alphabetical lists covering a couple hundred pages—the book provided a data base of the same information in a form that permitted one to *sort* it according to all the post offices in a particular state or county; or all the post offices established in the year 1903, or all the post offices in a particular state from which postmarks were considered to be rare. Furthermore, wouldn't it be an advantage if your book could be used to *search* that gigantic list for a post office name or names that might match that puzzling partially struck postmark on a cover you've been wondering about for the past five years?

The E-book version of *United States Post Offices, Volume 1 – The West* can do both of those things when its data base is examined through MS Excel© or whatever spread sheet or data manipulation software you favor (*see advertisement on page 71*).

In addition to sortability and searchability, CDs also can work wonders with illustrations. As a demonstration of this capability, our *USPO Vol 1* E-book comes complete with a full-size set of Postal Route Maps covering most of the western states. Full-size means just that; a one-to-one scale copy of the originals. The Idaho, Montana & Wyoming map of 1884 measures 42x33 inches and is presented on the CD at 150dpi—a resolution sufficient for printing at your desk in good detail. Three states for which postal route maps were not available—Colorado, Nevada and Utah—are illustrated by full color detailed commercial atlas maps dating from 1903. Each of these maps measures 13x19 inches or larger.

In short, what we are offering in this new line of *La Posta* e-books is an information source that allows the reader to reach well beyond the static display of a printed page to find answers to inquiries of far greater scope and complexity. Let us say, for example, that a collector wished to examine the settlement impact of a railroad built through a newly opened region. Data base searches organized on county and date of establishment information should yield a listing of post offices opened in counties along the new route following the date of construction. The possibilities are nearly endless and limited only by the imagination of the user.

In addition to the USPO Vol 1 e-book, we are launching our new series with an e-book version of Don Evans' outstanding series on *Early Air Mail & Aviation in Southern California*. The CD version allows us to match Don's text with the full color images he initially provided us. I think you'll agree that it makes a beautiful presentation.

The third new e-book, entitled *Oregon Historic Images*, is a collection of 111 classic real photo postcard images from the State of Oregon. Most date from the 1910-1920 decade and subjects featured include many small town main street scenes; period transportation including steamboats, train and stage coaches; and post office buildings. All images are scanned as 400 dpi tiff format, and should be suitable for printing highly detailed 8x10 inch prints.

Many more *La Posta* e-book titles are planned for the weeks and months to come. The price per CD will be fixed at \$17.50 postpaid to all *La Posta* subscribers, and you may order by mail direct to us at PO Box 100, Chatsworth Island, NSW 2469 Australia, or use your credit card through Pay Pal on our E-book website page:

<http://www.la-posta.com/ebooks.htm>

This has certainly been an unabashed commercial announcement, but, as you can probably tell, I'm rather excited about using this new medium. For those of you who decide to take the plunge and try one of our new e-books, please do share your thoughts, complaints and suggestions with me. If you are totally displeased and don't believe our e-book is worth the plastic its imprinted on, I'll cheerfully refund your money. But I have a hunch most of you will soon see why I've become so excited.

*Richard W. Helbock*

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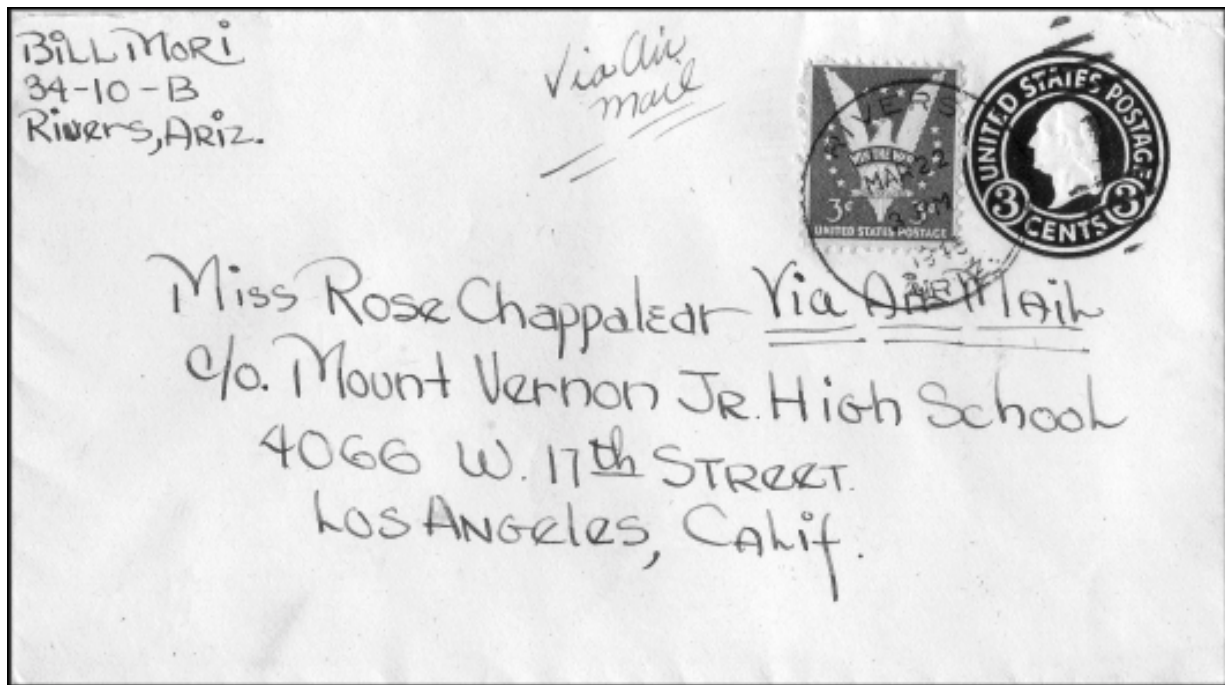
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**Figure 1** A cover from a young school boy residing in the Gila River Relocation Center in 1943 to his former junior high school teacher in Los Angeles. This cover stands as a poignant reminder of how so many lives of American citizens were unfairly interrupted when over 110 thousand men, women and children were confined in remote internment camps in 1942.

## Mail from the Camps: A Postal History of America's WW II Relocation Centers & Associated Internment Camps

By Richard W. Helbock

**T**he Japanese attack on American naval forces at Pearl Harbor December 7, 1941, shocked the people of the United States more severely than any other single event in the history of the nation up to that time. Indeed, it remained the single most devastating attack on the country until the horrific events of September 11, 2001. Throughout the nation, American citizens of all races and creeds reacted with a sense of great patriotism and vowed to support their government in its coming struggle to defeat the enemy.

Many young men and women put their careers and personal plans on hold as they volunteered to join one of the armed services. Others, who had been serving in one of the country's many National Guard units, found themselves suddenly federalized and undergoing a process of intense training for combat. Still others were drafted into military service and soon assigned to one of the new hastily organized divisions

of the US Army. Some grumbled and complained, but, for the most part, the vast majority of the American public supported the war effort. People understood that there was a need for personal sacrifice.

In some parts of the country there was a palpable fear that spread throughout the public. This was particularly true along the West Coast. I was but a young child at the beginning of the war, but I still remember the blackout curtains in our Portland home and my mother's warnings to play close to the house and come running back home quickly if any planes flew low over the neighborhood. I would like to believe that it was this widespread public paranoia that was primarily responsible for the persecutions of Japanese-Americans that followed. Fear, after all, is a natural human emotion, and, although most people had little knowledge of the actual details, it was clear that the Japanese had bombed Hawaii and there was little American military might in place to prevent them from invading the West Coast.

As mentioned, I would like to believe that paranoia was the primary cause of our nation's forced imprisonment of Japanese-Americans, but I have a suspicion that the 1982 Congressional Commission on War-time Relocation and Internment of Civilians was correct in their conclusion that the root causes were racism, poor political leadership, and wartime hysteria.

Other factors also contributed to the victimization of the Japanese-American population in the West. In some areas of California, Washington and Oregon, Japanese-American farmers had become very successful, and there were those among the broader community who resented their success. Some individuals and businesses were only too happy to take over Japanese-American farms once the owners were removed.

There is also the question of long-standing geographic bias in the United States. In other words, would the United States government had dared to forcibly round up and inter 120 thousand peaceful residents of the eastern seaboard? I doubt it. But the fact that the people in question were way out there in the West—out of sight and largely away from the spotlight of news media—meant that for most of the United States *it didn't really happen*. We must remember that the nation was a very different place in the early 1940s. There were fewer people living along the entire Pacific Coast in 1940 than there were living in Pennsylvania.

This article attempts to provide postal historians with an overview of the organization of postal operations in the Relocation Centers and associated internment camps. It offers a first attempt to catalog and illustrate postmarks used on mail from the various camps, and an examination of some of the details of internal relocation center postal service through the example of the Heart Mountain Center. But, before moving on to questions of postal history, it is appropriate to offer a short overview of the establishment of relocation centers.

## Assembly Centers

The task of removing and relocating 120 thousand people was immense. Not since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century removal and relocation of Native Americans from the Southeast to Indian Territory had the US government been involved in such an activity—and never at this scale. Responsibility for the massive relocation was assigned to the US Army.

On February 19, 1942, President Roosevelt sign Executive Order 9066 authorizing the Secretary of War to identify “military areas” from which “any or all persons may be excluded” by the Secretary or “appropriate Military Commander.” The persons to be excluded turned out to be Japanese-Americans, although General John L. DeWitt, Commander of the Western Defense Command and the US 4<sup>th</sup> Army, originally sought to exclude not only Americans of Japanese ancestry but also those of German and Italian heritage.

After several confusing edicts, General DeWitt, who had been assigned operational authority to carry out Executive Order 9066, divided Oregon, Washington, California and Arizona into two military areas numbered 1 and 2. These are combined on map 1 and labelled the Exclusion Area. Military Area 1 was subdivided into a prohibited zone along the coast and a restricted zone inland. Originally, Japanese-Americans were to be forced to relocate from the prohibited zone of Area 1, but eventually they were excluded



**Map 1** The West Coast Exclusion Area and Assembly Centers.

Assembly Center	Date of First Arrivals	Peak Population	Date of Last Departure	Destination Relocation Center
Fresno, CA	6 May 1942	5,120	30 Oct 42	Jerome, Gila River
Owens Valley, CA	21 Mar 1942	9,666	31 May 1942*	*renamed Manzanar
Marysville, CA	8 May 1942	2,451	29 Jun 1942	Tule Lake
Mayer, AZ	7 May 1942	245	2 Jun 1942	Poston
Merced, CA	6 May 1942	4,508	15 Sep 1942	Granada
Parker Dam, AZ	8 May 1942	11,738	31 May 1942*	*renamed Poston
Pinedale, CA	7 May 1942	4,792	23 Jul 1942	Tule Lake, Poston
Pomona, CA	7 May 1942	5,434	24 Aug 1942	Heart Mountain
Portland, OR	2 May 1942	3, 676	10 Sep 1942	Heart Mountain, Poston
Puyallup, WA	28 Apr 1942	7,390	12 Sep 1942	Tule Lake, Minidoka
Sacramento, CA	6 May 1942	4,739	26 Jun 1942	Tule Lake
Salinas, CA	27 Apr 1942	3,594	4 Jul 1942	Poston
Santa Anita, CA	27 Mar 1942	18,719	27 Oct 1942	Poston & others
Stockton, CA	10 May 1942	4,271	17 Oct 1942	Rohwer, Gila River
Tanforan, CA	28 Apr 1942	7,818	13 Oct 1942	Topaz
Tulare, CA	20 Apr 1942	4,978	4 Sep 1942	Gila River
Turlock, CA	30 Apr 1942	3,662	12 Aug 1942	Gila River

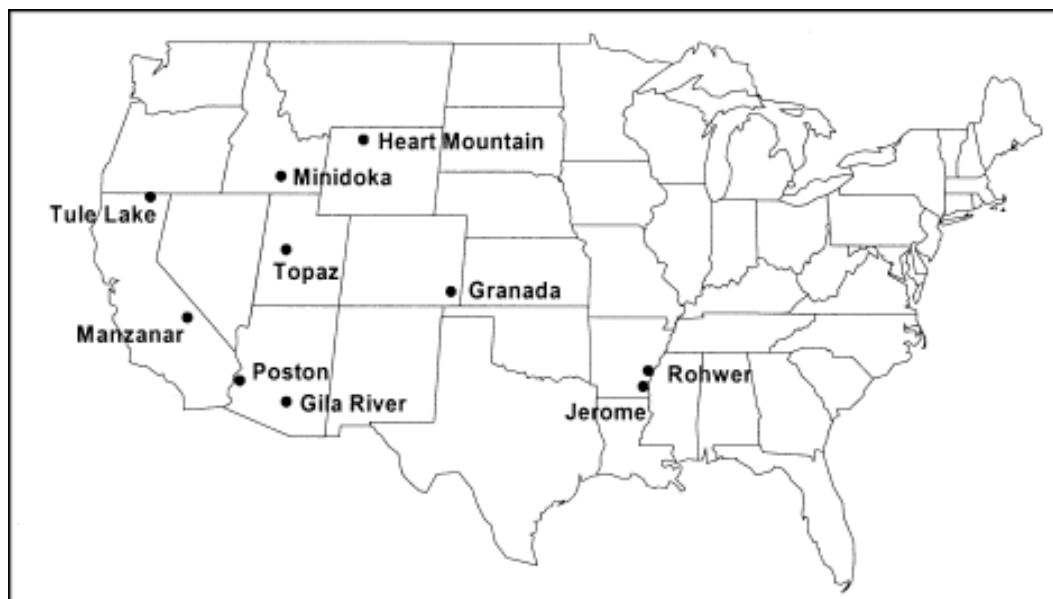
**Table 1** Details of the 17 Assembly Centers that housed Japanese-American evacuees.

not only from both of the Area 1 zones but Area 2 as well. The entire State of California, along with western Oregon and Washington and southern Arizona became known as the Exclusion Area.

The Wartime Civilian Control Administration (WCCA) was established March 11 by the Army to carry out the evacuation of Japanese-Americans—including any person with as little as 1/16<sup>th</sup> “Japanese blood”. The first Army evacuations occurred March 24<sup>th</sup> on Bainbridge Island near Seattle. Residents were given six days notice to dispose of nearly all their possessions and report to their neighborhood “collection point” bringing only “that which can be

carried by the family or the individual” including bedding, toilet articles, clothing and eating utensils. Military Area Number 1 was completely cleared of all Japanese-Americans by June 2, 1942, except for a small number left behind in hospitals.

Evacuees were transported from their neighborhood collection points to a series of 17 hastily organized Assembly Centers scattered along the West Coast from Puyallup in the north to Santa Anita in the south and east to Mayer, Arizona (*table 1*). Eleven of the centers were at racetracks where stables had been cleaned to be used as temporary living quarters. Others were former camps that once housed migrant



**Map 2** The ten Relocation centers were located in remote locations on lands that were either desert or swampy.

workers or Civilian Conservation Corp personnel. In Portland over three thousand evacuees were housed under one roof in the huge Pacific International Livestock Exposition building that had been subdivided into temporary apartments.

Living conditions at the assembly centers were primitive at best. Lavatories and mess halls were communal affairs, and families were typically crowded into small apartments measuring 20 by 20 feet or less. Boredom was a constant problem. A few jobs were available to provide service to the center residents such as cooks, teachers, clerks, doctors and police, but most residents were not so employed. It is surprising in retrospect that there were so few instances of violent resistance.

## Relocation Centers

Meanwhile, the government had created a new civilian organization termed the War Relocation Authority (WRA) to deal with the long-term disposition of the Japanese-Americans who had been evacuated. It was ultimately decided that a series of Relocation Centers were to be established well inland from the West Coast to house the evacuees throughout the rest of the war. Milton S. Eisenhower, then an official with the Department of Agriculture, was selected to head the WRA.

In a meeting with the ten western governors in April 1942, Eisenhower learned that there was no state willing to accept the Japanese-American evacuees unless they were maintained in secure facilities under armed guard by the US Army. Although Eisenhower accepted this caveat and supervised the selection of ten Relo-

cation Center sites, he was greatly troubled by the idea of incarceration of so many innocent people and resigned his position in June 1942.

Two of the Relocation Centers were created by converting Assembly Centers. The Owens Valley Center, located on land leased from the City of Los Angeles, was redesignated the Manzanar Relocation Center on 21 March 1942. Similarly, the Parker Dam Assembly Center on the Colorado River Indian Reservation in eastern Arizona was redesignated Poston Relocation Center.

Other centers were established at widely scattered locations in California, Arizona, Utah, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado and Arkansas (*map 2 and table 2*). The Tule Lake, Minidoka, and Heart Mountain centers were on undeveloped federal reclamation project land. All were very arid places with extreme winter climates. The two Arizona centers—Poston and Gila River—were on Indian Reservations, and even though the tribes in question opposed the centers they were overruled by the Army and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The Arkansas centers—Jerome and Rohwer—were sited mostly on land intended for subsistence homesteads under a program run by the Farm Security Administration and the balance of the Rohwer site was purchased from local farmers. The Topaz Center was on land in central Utah that had been part public domain and part private. The Granada Center in Colorado had been privately owned and was purchased by the Army.

The transfer of evacuees from Assembly Centers to Relocation Centers was begun in early June and completed by October 30, 1942. Once interned in the

Relocation Center	Date of 1st Arrival	Peak Population	Date of Last Departure	Parent post Office	Name of Postal Branch	Postal Branch Established	Postal Branch Closed
Gila River, AZ	20 Jul 1942	13, 348	10 Nov 1945	Phoenix	Rivers	1 Jul 1942	15 Dec 1945
Granada, CO	27 Aug 1942	7,318	15 Oct 1945	Lamar	Amache	15 Sep 1942	30 Nov 1945
Heart Mountain, WY	12 Aug 1942	10,767	10 Nov 1945	Cody	Heart Mountain	1 Aug 1942	18 Nov 1945
Jerome, AR	6 Oct 1942	8,497	30 Jun 1944	Dermott	Denson	16 Oct 1942	31 Jul 1944
Manzanar, CA	21 Mar 1942	10,046	21 Nov 1945	Los Angeles	Manzanar	25 Mar 1942	30 Nov 1945
Minidoka, ID	10 Aug 1942	9,397	28 Oct 1945	Twin Falls	Hunt	1 Sep 1942	30 Nov 1945
Poston, AZ	8 May 1942	17,814	28 Nov 1945	Phoenix	Poston	13 Apr 1942	15 Dec 1945
Rohwer, AR	18 Sep 1942	8,475	30 Nov 1945	McGehee	Relocation	1 Oct 1942	30 Nov 1945
Topaz, UT	11 Sep 1942	8,130	31 Oct 1945	Delta	Topaz	1 Sep 1942	30 Nov 1945
Tule Lake, CA	27 May 1942	18,789	20 Mar 1946	Tule Lake	Newell	16 Jun 1942	30 Apr 1946

**Table 2** *Relocation centers with details as to population and postal branches.*

Relocation Centers, most Issei and Nisei<sup>1</sup> remained behind barbed wire and under guard until 1945. America largely forgot about these people and managed to rationalize the injustice perpetrated against them in the name of “military necessity” for almost forty years. Finally, in 1988 President Ronald Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act which admitted that the relocation had been based on racial bias instead of any true threat to national security and provided redress for Japanese-Americans.

## Postal History

In many cases, the sudden infusion of five to ten thousand residents in a brand new community in sparsely populated states such as Arizona, Utah, Idaho and Wyoming, represented significant disruptions of the existing rank order of municipal populations. Poston, for example, reached a maximum population of nearly 18 thousand resident in September 1942. It was then the third largest city in Arizona. Of course, the limited interaction between the residents of the centers and the general population minimized the full impacts that would normally be expected from such a dramatic influx of new residents.

One of the ways in which this influx of population could and did impact upon local services was the postal system. An account of the confusion surrounding early days at the Granada Relocation Center—whose postal branch name was Amache—appears in *A Wartime History of the Post Office Department*:

Without advising anyone in the postal service of his action, the Project Director [of the Granada Center] issued instructions to all Japanese as soon as they arrived at Amache to advise their correspondents of their new whereabouts, which was to include Granada, Colorado, as the post office of address rather than Lamar. This resulted in large quantities of mail being dispatched to Granada for evacuees, while the little post office at that place was not nearly large enough to handle such a volume of mail, nor was the postmaster and her part-time clerical force capable of coping with such a business...

Since the evacuees had brought very few personal effects with them, they began ordering household goods of all descriptions, most of them came by parcel post. This added considerably to the post office problems, particularly during the 30 days that a room measuring only 20 by 24 feet was service as a post office for a population of more than 5,000 persons.



The Post Office Department coordinated with the War Relocation Authority to develop a workable system of postal service for relocation center residents. Each center was to be served by a newly established branch of a nearby independent post office of sufficient size to transfer mail between the office and the center. The WRA agreed to furnish a suitable post office building, including light, power and water; as well as a safe and necessary furnishings. In addition, it would be the WRA's responsibility transport all mail between the centers and the civil post offices.

Evacuees were housed in military type barracks divided into family apartments. Upon arrival at the camp, each evacuee was given an address card that contained the individual's name, barracks number, and the block number in which their barracks was located. Each block housed some 300 people (*figure 2*). These cards were arranged alphabetically and kept in the post office in order to facilitate the distribution of mail that arrived without a proper and complete address.

Incoming mail was separated by barracks and blocks. Mail orderlies then delivered mail to block managers who subsequently arranged personal delivery to addressees. Registered, insured and C.O.D. mail was

receipted by mail orderlies and then delivered in person to the addressee. Incoming parcel post was inspected by military police before delivery.

An account detailing some of the day to day operations of the Heart Mountain branch appeared in the August 12, 1944, edition of the Heart Mountain *Sentinel*. While similar accounts are not available for branches at the other centers, it seems reasonable that the Heart Mountain experience is fairly typical.

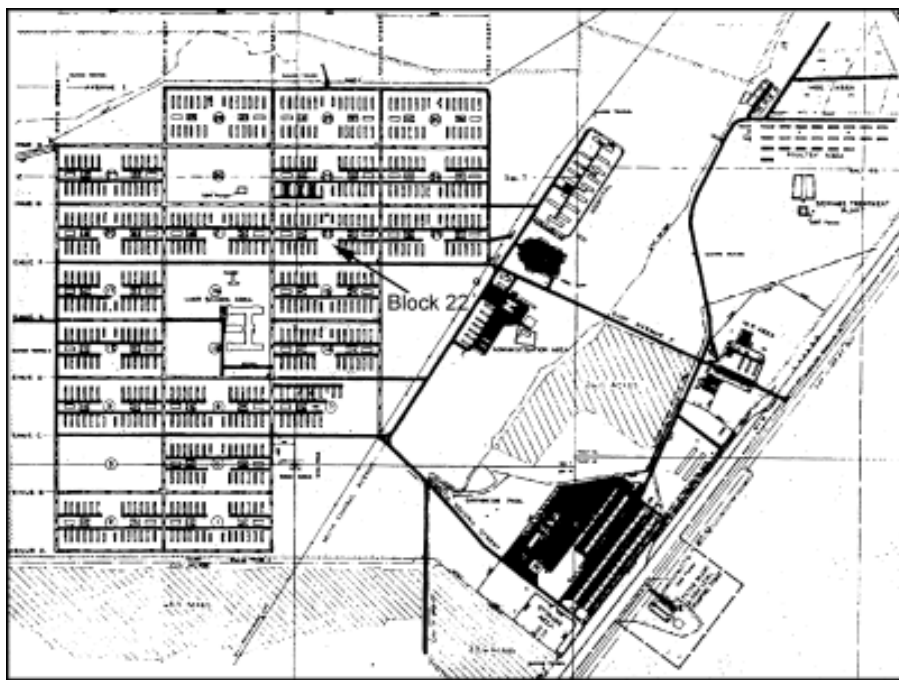
Heart Mountain branch was established August 12, 1942, with Ernest T. Ebert serving as Branch Superintendent. August 15<sup>th</sup> was the first day of business, and on that date a total of \$1.10 in Money Orders was sold—a ten cent money order by the postmaster of Cheyenne and two fifty cent money orders by Ebert as gifts to his niece and nephew. As the weeks passed and winter approached, money order sales to center residents increased rapidly as they sought to purchase household items and winter clothing. As reported in the *Sentinel* article:

The biggest single day business of the first year was Nov. 9, when 317 money orders amounting to \$4,084.91 were sold. The total amount issued to date is \$100,000. The bulk of the business went to Montgomery Ward, with others going to department stores in Chicago, Denver, Los Angeles, Salt Lake City, San

Francisco and Seattle.

Letter writing was reported as the center's most popular leisure-time activity with an average of 3,500 letters sent out daily to addresses in all parts of the United States. The total sales of postage stamps from August 1942 to August 1944 was \$61,594.50 for an average of over \$2,500 a month.

In addition to purchasing stamps and money orders, Heart Mountain's residents also bought War Bonds at the postal branch. The amount of War Bonds sold during the first two full years of operation totaled \$27,142.50, a surprising figure considering that the camp residents were only paid \$12, \$16 and \$19 per month to perform their various jobs. Wages in all



**Figure 2** This diagram of the Heart Mountain camp clearly shows the arrangement of barrack buildings within the residential blocks. Addresses usually consisted of three elements: block number, barracks number and apartment letter.





**Figure 3** This unusual Heart Mountain local rate cover was mailed by a resident of Block 14 to the pastor of the Community Christian Church in Block 22. The location of Block 22 is indicated by the arrow in figure 2.

relocation centers were set at rates that were lower than the base pay for a US Army private so that there could be no claims that the Japanese-American evacuees were being coddled by the government.

Mail distribution within the Heart Mountain center evolved as time passed. Initially, the main camp post office was augmented by a series of five sub-stations set up in available barracks at convenient locations throughout the camp to handle the collection and distribution of mail. Residents were required to call for their regular mail and parcels at the sub-stations. Early in 1943, a mail carrier system was instituted thus eliminating the sub-stations. Registered and insured mail was still claimed at the main post office. Under the delivery system, each carrier covered two blocks and made two deliveries a day. Deliveries of fourth class mail was handled by block secretaries.

### Postmarks from Relocation Centers

Table 2 lists the various relocation centers along with their associated postal branches and the civil post offices associated with each. No records have been seen that might indicate what types of mail cancelling devices were issued to the relocation center branches by the Post Office Department, so all conclusions stated here are based on the empirical evi-

dence of covers seen and postmark examples found in the Willett-Thompson Collection of the Postmark Collectors Club.

Four types of postmarks have been recorded on mail originating from the various relocation centers: a four-bar handstamp, duplex steel handstamps, machine cancels and utility dater handstamps. Out-going mail volumes were believed to be substantial from residents of each of the camps as suggested by the figure of 3,500 letters per day in the Heart Mountain *Sentinel* article. Rubber die handstamps, such as four-bars and utility daters, would have worn out quickly faced with the task of postmarking mail volumes of that magnitude. We must assume therefore, that more durable postmarking and cancelling equipment—steel duplex handstamps and cancelling machines—was used on the majority of out-going mail. Existing evidence supports this assumption.

Surviving covers from the various centers suggest that six of the associated postal branches were issued hand powered canceling machines—three Internationals and three Universals—to expedite the handling of large volumes of outgoing mail. Thus far, there is no evidence that the other four centers—Newell, Rivers, Poston and Hunt—were issued canceling machines. Most mail seen from Newell, however, bears

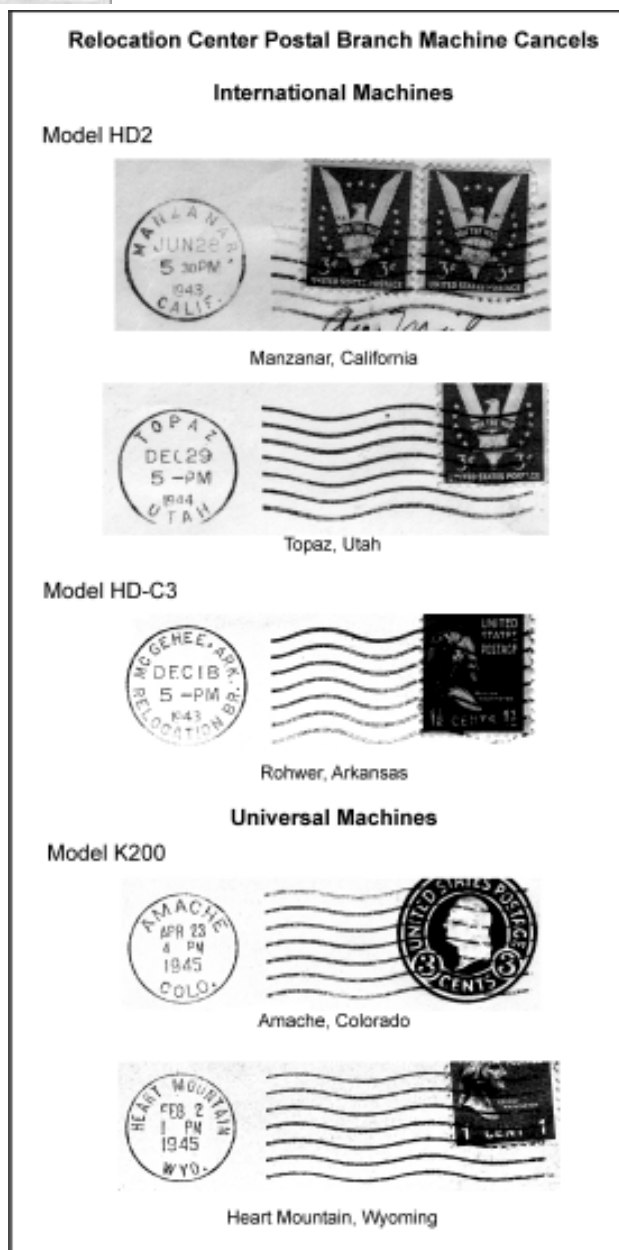


**Figure 4** This cover from a resident of the Newell Relocation Center bears a machine cancel for the Tule Lake parent post office of the Newell Branch. There is no evidence that the Newell branch ever had its own cancelling machine, and surviving covers suggest that much of the camp mail was passed along to Tule Lake for cancelling.







a machine cancel from Tule Lake (figure 4). Figure 5 illustrates examples of impressions made by five of the six relocation center cancelling machines.

Duplex steel die hand stamps may well have been issued to all ten of the relocation center branch post offices. Figure 6 illustrates examples of these handstamps from six of the ten centers. Note that only the Relocation Branch, Arkansas, postmark makes reference to the fact that the postal unit is a branch. The steel duplexes from Hunt, Poston and Rivers are the most commonly seen postmarks from these centers. Those from Amache, Relocation and Topaz are far less commonly seen. The reasons for assigning some relocation center branches cancelling machines and others duplex handstamps are a mystery. Comparison of the use of duplexes and machine cancels with camp populations shown in table 2 suggests that camp population did not have much bearing on whether the postal branch used a handstamp or a machine. Whatever the reasons, branch employees must have found it exceedingly tedious to cancel each and every piece of outgoing mail by hand and the temptation to send a quantity of mail on to the parent post office for cancelling must have been considerable.

A four-bar postmark from Heart Mountain, Wyoming, is represented in the Willett-Thompson Collection of the Postmark Collectors Club (figure 7). It may be noted that this example dates from October 21, 1942, only a little over two months after the camp was opened. It is quite possible that four-bar handstamps were issued to branches serving the other relocation centers. It seems likely that their use was limited to only the first few weeks of branch operation; perhaps as a stop-gap until the facility received its steel duplex handstamps or a cancelling machine.



**Figure 5** Relocation center machine cancels (reduced).

	Anticipated Not Seen	Anticipated Not Seen
Amache	Denson	Heart Mountain
	Anticipated Not Seen	Anticipated Not Seen
Hunt	Manzanar	Newell
		
Poston	Relocation	Rivers
		
	Topaz	

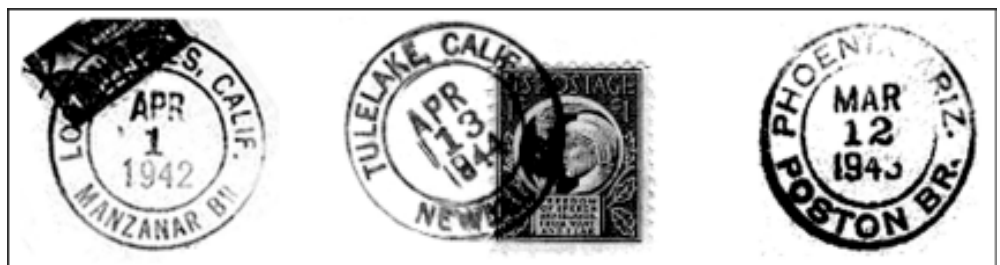
**Figure 6** Examples of steel duplex handstamps have been verified from six of the ten relocation center branch post offices. The author believes that discoveries from the other four branches will eventually be made.



**Figure 7** This four-bar handstamp was used in the early days of the Heart Mountain branch, but the rapid increase in mail volumes caused it to be replaced by a more efficient hand driven machine cancel. (Willett-Thompson Collection of the Postmark Collectors Club).

Relocation center postal branches were also issued handstamps known as utility daters. Impressions of these handstamps—often struck in magenta ink—are not commonly seen on first class mail unless the

sender had paid registry fees. Since the amount of registered mail made up only a small percentage of the total out-going mail from the camps, non-philatelic examples bearing utility dater handstamps are scarce to rare. In fact, if it were not for the somewhat greater number of surviving collector-generated postmark examples, it seems likely that we would have almost no utility dater markings in collector hands today. *Figure 8* illustrates examples of utility dater handstamps from Manzanar, Newell and Poston. All of these are from the Willett-Thompson Collection. Note that, unlike the steel duplex handstamp and machine cancels, each of these identifies the parent



**Figure 8** Utility dater handstamps such as these may be expected from each of the relocation center branches.





**Figure 9** This piece from the Willett-Thompson Collection of the Postmark Collectors Club shows an early use of the utility dater as a postmark on first class mail and an unusual circular handstamp as a killer.

post office. Additional utility daters are recorded from the Rivers, Arizona, branch (see *figure 9*) and the Topaz, Utah, branch has been recorded by Dennis Pack.

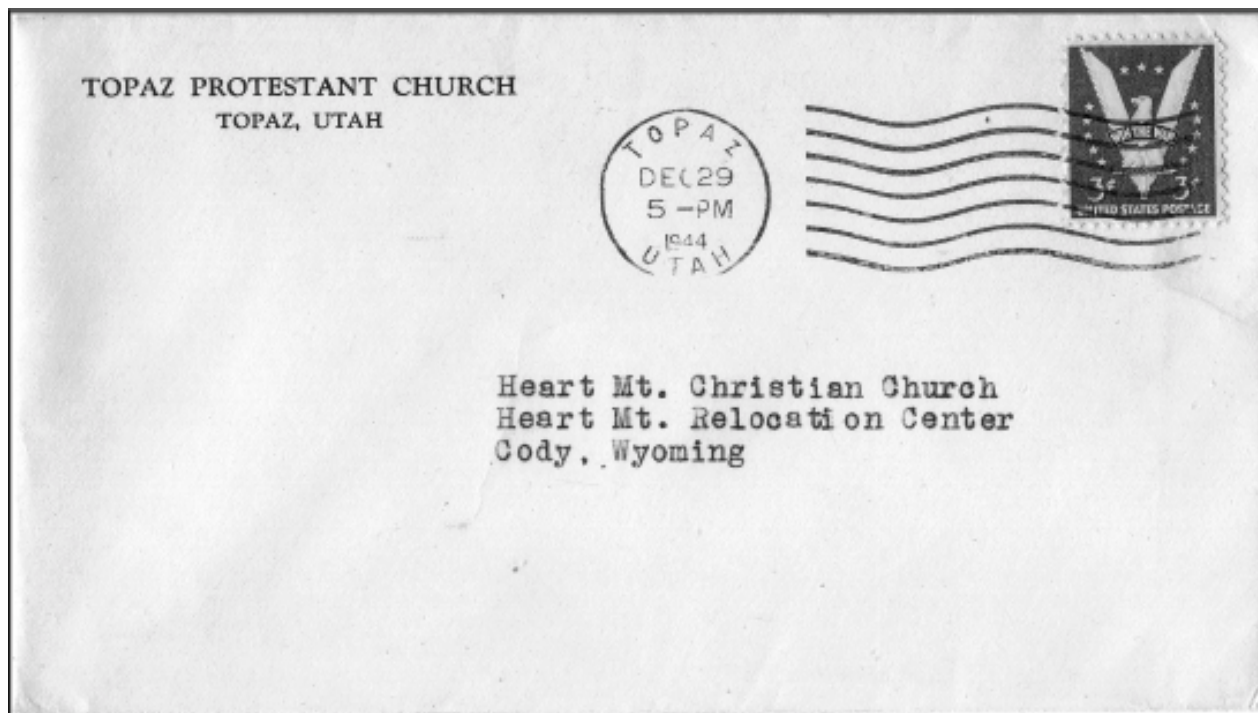
Finally, there is at least one example of a non-standard postmark recorded from the relocation camp branches. Robert B. Bechtel reports in his *Arizona Statehood Postmark Catalog* a Rivers, Arizona, type 2 postmark without a date. He illustrates it as a 35mm circle with “Rivers, Ariz.” at the top of the dial. A handstamp marking matching this descrip-

tion appears in the Willett-Thompson Collection on a piece (*figure 9*). The marking has been struck at least twice as a killer tying three copies of the 1¢ Defense. The postmark is a utility dater of September 21, 1942—about 10 weeks after the Rivers branch was established.

### A note on the market for Relocation Center postal history artifacts

There is a reasonable amount of mail available bearing postmarks and return addresses from evacuees in the relocation centers in today’s postal history marketplace. Dealers specializing in 20<sup>th</sup> century material such as Jim Forte are a good source and items of this type appear from time to time on Ebay. A typical relocation center cover with steel duplex handstamp or machine cancel and a legitimate evacuee return address tends to sell in the \$40-\$80 range among dealers and perhaps tend toward the lower end of that range on Ebay. Any unusual features, however, can add a fair premium and offerings in excess of \$100 are not uncommon (*figure 10*). Assembly center material is far less commonly seen, and a card or cover that can be verified as originating in one of the 17 centers will easily command a price of three figures.

<sup>1</sup> Issei were Japanese-Americans born in Japan; Nisei were first-generation American born citizens.



**Figure 10** This cover is unusual in that it is an example of inter-camp correspondence. It appears to have carried a message from the pastor of the Topaz Protestant Church to pastor of the Heart Mountain Christian Church.

## Railroad Interrupted Mail (Revisited) and the Movie Star Connection

Thomas J. Richards  
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Over a period of years in the mid-90s Henry Bethelot wrote a series of excellent articles on the Railroad-Related Mail Service Interruptions. The following is some additional information of one of the markings discussed in his series and some information on a “new” marking not covered in the series.

### Interruption No. 1944-01-15

As a collector of Movie Related Mail (i.e. mail to movie stars), I was particularly interested in the Interruption No. 1944-01-15 since many of the covers illustrated were sent to movie stars. (See La Posta, Nov. 1994 and May 1995)

Over the years I had acquired some of the covers illustrated and was interested in where the crash took place. Henry noted that no one, as of that date, had been able to identify the site of the crash. All of the items had been addressed to Hollywood or Los Angeles. Some had come from Miami and points south (I recently acquired one that had been mailed in Cuba), others had come from Britain and others from cities in the Northeast. Hibbing, Minnesota, was the farthest west city from which any cover had been sent.

The crash site was believed to be in west; perhaps somewhere after the southern and northern mails would be merged. Recently the Department of Transportation (DOT), Interstate Commerce Commission has published reports of railroad accidents. (See <http://specialcollections.tasc.gov/>) In searching this database the only wreck reported on Jan 15<sup>th</sup> 1944 was a Pennsylvania Railroad crash at Diamond, Pennsylvania. A freight train heading west crashed between Sligo and Lawsonham, Pennsylvania. This area is toward the Northwestern part of Pennsylvania.

This would satisfy the mail coming from the south and east but would not explain the mail postmarked at Hibbing, Minnesota and Urbana, Ohio. More research needs to be done. But with the expansion of information being placed on the Internet this may become easier.

There are supposed to be at least nine different markings applied to these covers. This implies a considerable portion of mail being damaged and could also imply the markings being done at different places. Since I have many of the markings and Mr. Bethelot showed some others in his articles I thought it might be worthwhile to type them. The following is my attempt to give them a Type #.

### TYPE 1

**DAMAGED BY FIRE**

**ENROUTE**

**JAN 15 1944**

See page 17 *La Posta*, Nov. 1994



**TYPE 2**

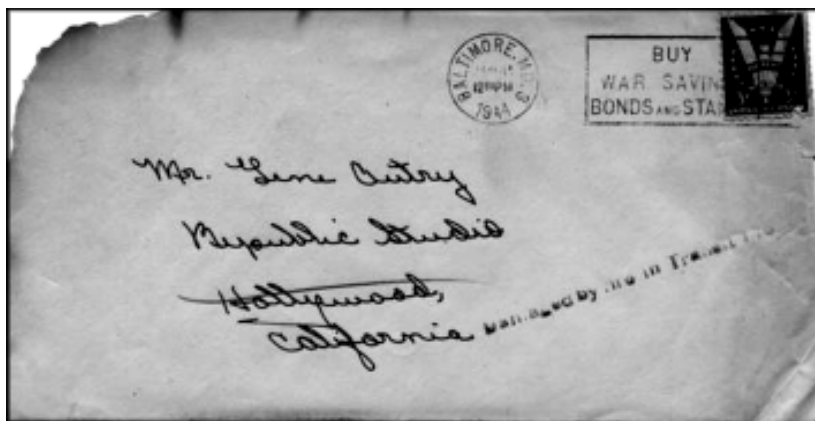
**DAMAGED BY FIRE IN  
TRANSIT 1 15 1944**

See page 65 *La Posta*, May 1995

**TYPE 3**

**DAMAGED BY FIRE ..  
TRANSIT JAN 15 1944**

See page 64 *La Posta*, May 1995

**TYPE 4**

**Damaged by fire In Transit 1 15 ....**

See page 64 *La Posta* May 1995



## TYPE 5

**DAMAGED BY FIRE  
IN TRANSIT  
JAN 15 1944**

See page 65 *La Posta*, May 1995



## TYPE 6

**DAMAGED BY FIRE IN TRANSIT  
1 15 44**

See page 16 *La Posta*, Nov. 1994

## TYPE 7

**Damaged by fire in  
Transit JAN 15 19..**

See page 64 *La Posta*, May 1995

**TYPE 8** This “marking” consists of a label attached to a very badly damaged envelope by a straight pin. The label states:

**This mail damaged in transit  
by fire, January 15, 1944.  
Re-enveloped by Los Angeles  
Terminal RPO, Los Angeles, Calif.  
1944 JAN 21 PM 2 37**

See page 17 *La Posta*, Nov. 1994

**Type 9** This marking eludes me. Does anyone have a type not covered here?

## Interruption No. 1948-08-16

This crash was not covered in the article by Mr. Bethelot, but since it contained a lot of mail to the movie stars it has attracted my interest. The fire was in the mail car and caused several thousands of dollars worth of damage before it could be extinguished. See *figure 6*. from the Terre Haute newspaper of August 17<sup>th</sup> 1948.

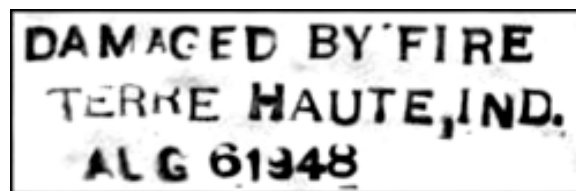


*Figure 6*

*Figure 7* shows a cover from England to Miss Deanna Durbin at Universal Studios. It has been damaged by the fire and taped to keep it together. *Figure 8* shows a cover to Miss J (Joan) Crawford at Warner Brothers Studios. It appears to have received less damage. *Figure 9* show a close-up of the marking.



*Figure 7*

*Figure 8**Figure 9*

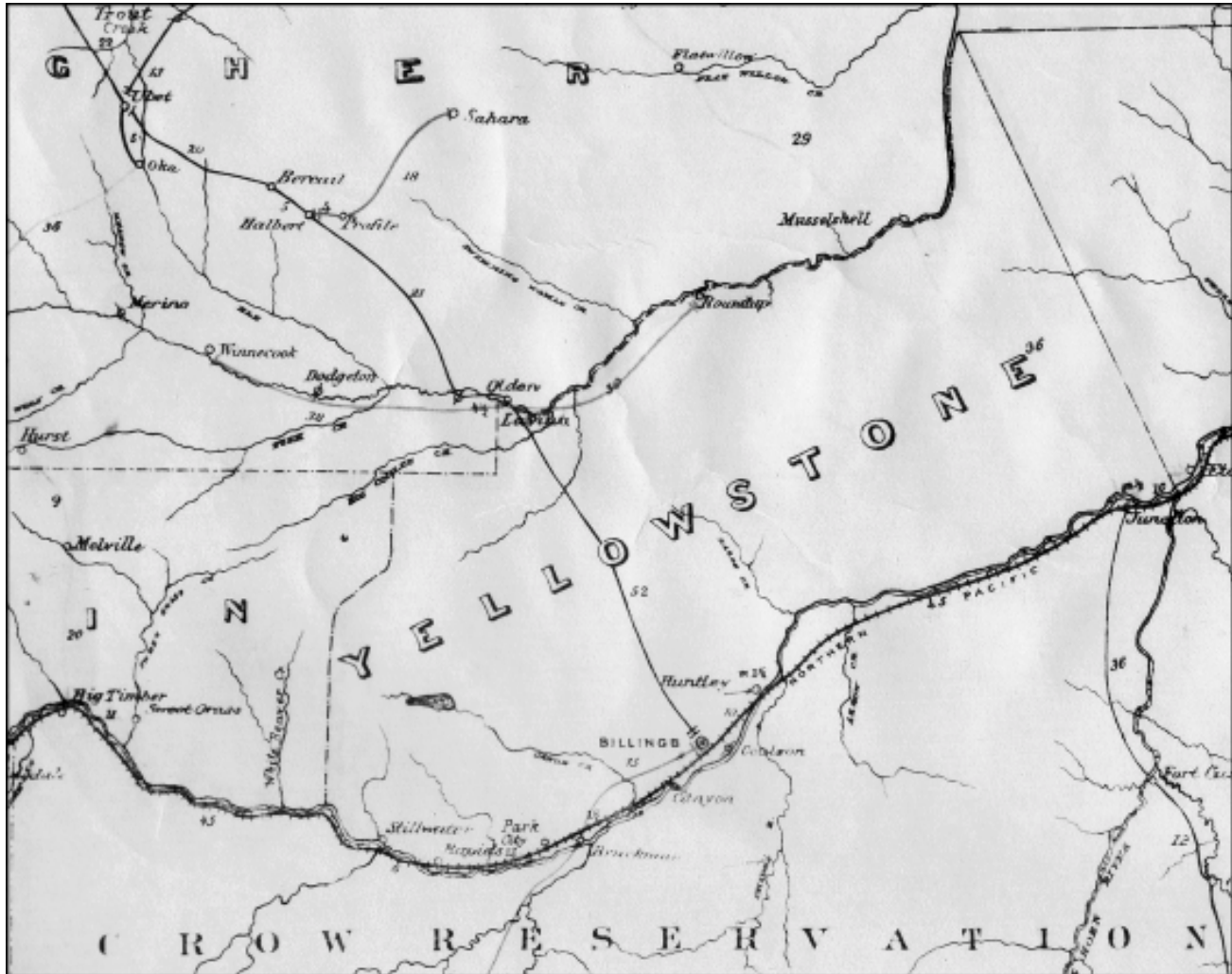
What is interesting about this crash is that I have never seen a cover with this marking that was **NOT** addressed to a movie star. Does anyone have one? Also they all originated in England. So far I have in my collection or have seen covers addressed to:

Deanna Durbin  
Alan Ladd  
Joan Crawford  
Donald O'Conner  
Bob Hutton (3)  
Dennis Morgan (3)  
Errol Flynn (5)  
Wayne Morris

One just addressed to Warner Brothers

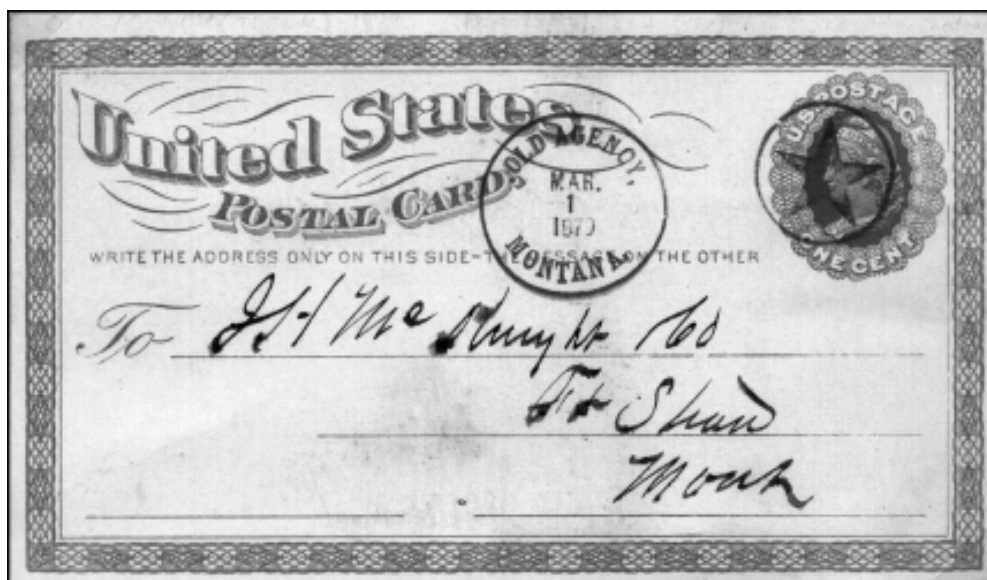
When I exhibited my movie mail collection a few years ago at COLOPEX in Columbus, Ohio, a collector from Terre Haute, Indiana who collected Terre Haute postal history told me he had never heard of this crash and persuaded me to sell him one of the covers. A friend of mine and I acquired these covers in an auction in a lot that contained about 6000 covers to movie stars. We split up the Terre Haute crash covers.

While crash covers are interesting in their own right; the addition of the mail being to a movie star adds another feature to the item. Can anyone add any new information to the above?



**Map 1.** Yellowstone County in southeastern Montana was created in 1883. Billings, the county seat, is now Montana's most populous city. (From Postal Route Map of the Territories of Montana, Idaho and Wyoming, 1884, provided courtesy of Richard W. Helbock.)





**Figure 1** A fancy star-in-circle cancel graces this postal card from Old Agency, a trading post along the Old North Trail, an Indian migration route between the Arctic and Mexico. It is now known as Choteau.

## Montana Territorial Postmarks

### Part 11: Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Teton, Treasure, Valley, Wheatland, Wibaux, and Yellowstone Counties

By Wesley N. Shellen & Francis Dunn

This installment concludes with the final eight counties in our series on Montana territorial postmarks. Of these, only Yellowstone County existed during the territorial period, having been created in 1883. Billings, the county seat of Yellowstone County, is Montana's most populous city. The postal routes of Yellowstone County are shown here in a map from 1884. The other seven counties were all created after Statehood, and most of them were sparsely populated and had few post offices during the territorial years. Stillwater County was created in 1913, Sweet Grass in 1895, Teton in 1893, Treasure in 1919, Valley in 1893, Wheatland in 1917, and Wibaux (pronounced We bow) in 1914.

Our listings of Montana's territorial postmarks in this LaPosta series are based on the study of 2,425 covers reported to us by generous and helpful collectors and dealers. Our study found a total of 600 different territorial postmarks from 269 Montana post offices. The sample of covers studied was large enough, we feel, that we reached a saturation point where we mostly

saw repetitions of postmarks we had already recorded, rather than new towns or types. Of course, no postmark study can ever be complete, for new discoveries will undoubtedly turn up previously unreported postmarks and date extenders. To our satisfaction, a few of these discoveries were reported to us during the publication of this series.

Our long-term goal is to publish the entire Montana postmark catalog in a single, up-to-date monograph to serve as a valuable reference for Montana postal historians and collectors. To that end, we continue to encourage reports of new postmarks and date extenders that will improve the accuracy and completeness of this work. (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 Gordon Bleuler, Joseph Du Bois, Giles Cokelet, James Felton, Stuart MacKenzie, David Morrison, John G. Mullen, Tom Mulvaney, Howard Ness, Ken Robison, Roger Robison, and Gray Scrimgeour.

## Stillwater County

Town	Postmark	Earliest	Latest	Cancel	Notes
<b>NYE (1887/1965)</b>					<i>None reported</i>
<b>PARK CITY (1882-Date)</b>					
1.	CDS28	18 SEP 1885	22 NOV 1888	target	
<b>RAPIDS (1880/1897)</b>					<i>None reported</i>
<b>STILLWATER (1877-1893)</b>					
1.	MSS	3 JUL 1878	7 JUL 1879	pen	
2.	OCT27	8 DEC 1879	12 FEB 1884	none	
3.	CDS27	2 JAN 1886	23 NOV 188?	target	
<b>YOUNG'S POINT (1878-1882)</b>					
1.	DCDS33	17 JUL 1882		star in circle	magenta

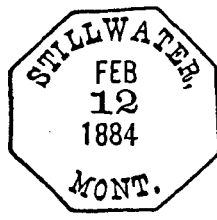
## Sweet Grass County

Town	Postmark	Earliest	Latest	Cancel	Notes
<b>BIG TIMBER (1880/ Date)</b>					
1.	TDLC33	29 APR 1883		Maltese cross	
2.	CDS28	28 JUL 1884		target	
3.	DLDC31	26 JUN 1884	6 JUN 1886		
4.	DLC34	13 APR 1887	10 DEC 1887	target	magenta
<b>GREYCLIFF (1885/Date)</b>					<i>None reported</i>
<b>HURST (1884-1891)</b>					<i>None reported</i>
<b>McLEOD (1886/Date)</b>					<i>None reported</i>
<b>MELVILLE (1883-Date)</b>					
1.	CDS29	30 APR 1886	21 FEB 1888	Maltese cross	
<b>PARADISE (1888-1888)</b>					<i>None reported</i>
<b>PUETT (1881-1882)</b>					<i>None reported</i>
<b>SWEET GRASS (1878-1892)</b>					
1.	DLDC28	5 MAY 1880	27 JUN 1880	target	magenta

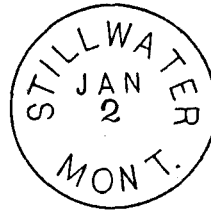




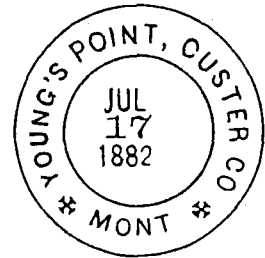
1



2



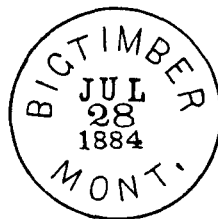
3



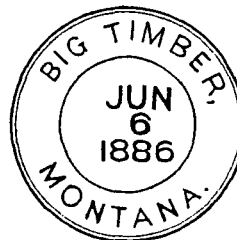
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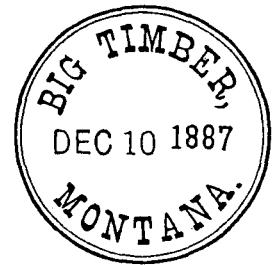
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3



4



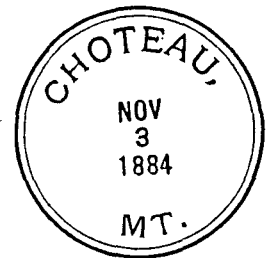
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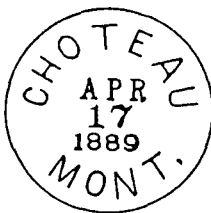
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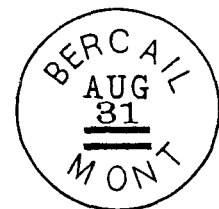
2



2



3



2

## Teton County

Town	Postmark	Earliest	Latest	Cancel	Notes
<b>BELLEVIEW (1885/1910)</b>					<i>None reported</i>
<b>BYNUM (1885/Date)</b>					
1.	CDS25	19 MAR 1889	3 APR 1889		
<b>CHOTEAU (1884-Date)</b>					
1.	DLC33	3 NOV 1884	26 OCT 1886	target	black/magenta
2.	CDS27	10 JUN 1887	17 APR 1889		
<b>OLD AGENCY (1875-1884)</b>					
1.	MSS	20 APR 1876	7 SEP 1877	pen	
2.	CDS24	1 FEB 1877	10 DEC 1879	star in circle	purple
3.	CDS31	16 MAR 1881	25 FEB 1884	star in circle	
<b>PERRYSBURGH (1884-1888)</b>					<i>None reported</i>

## Treasure County

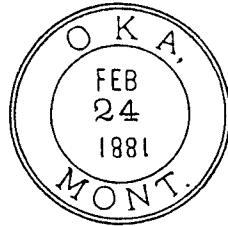
Town	Postmark	Earliest	Latest	Cancel	Notes
<b>HYDE (1883-1883)</b>					<i>None Reported</i>
<b>PEASEFORT (1879-1880)</b>					
1.	MSS	17 MAY 1880		pen	
<b>RANCHER (1888-1927)</b>					<i>None Reported</i>

## Valley County

Town	Postmark	Earliest	Latest	Cancel	Notes
<b>FORT PECK (1879/1881)</b>					<i>None reported</i>
<b>GLASGOW (1888-Date)</b>					<i>None reported</i>
<b>NASHUA (1888-Date)</b>					<i>None reported</i>



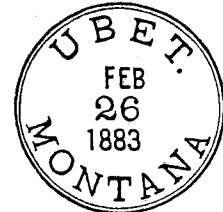
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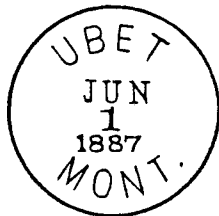
1



2



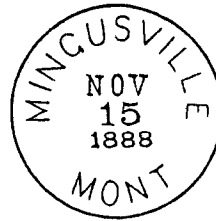
1



2



1



2



2A



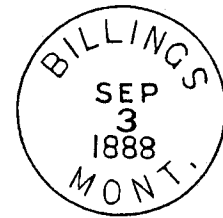
2B



3



4



5



6



1



2

## Wheatland County

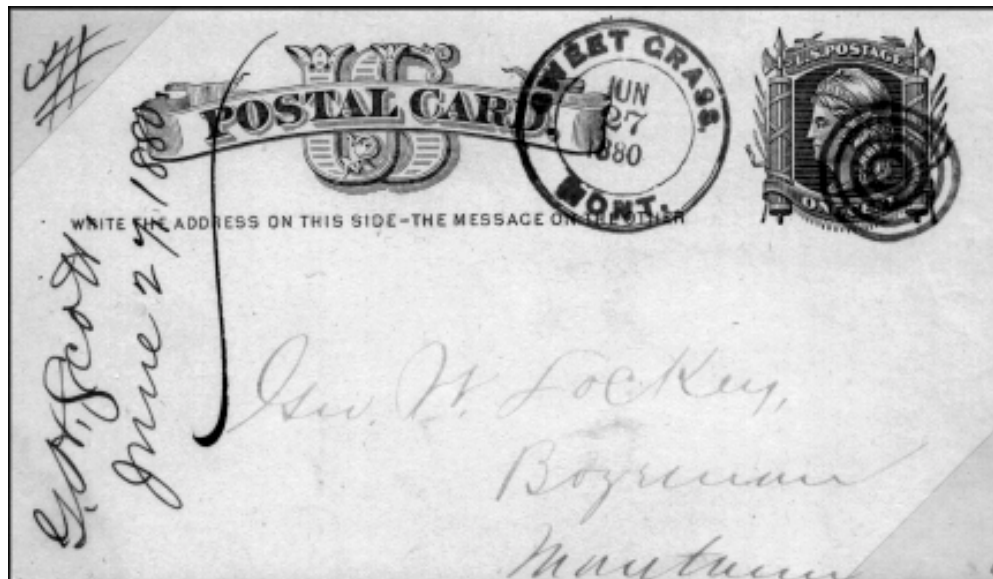
Town	Postmark	Earliest	Latest	Cancel	Notes
<b>BERCAIL (1882/1947)</b>					
1.	MSS	2 FEB 188?		pen	
2.	CDS27	5 AUG 1886	12 MAY 1887	none	
<b>BIG ELK (1882/1913)</b>					
1.	CDS28	16 SEP 188?			
<b>CLARENCE (1887-1888)</b>					<i>None reported</i>
<b>DEVEE (1886-1887)</b>					<i>None reported</i>
<b>MERINO (1881/1900)</b>					
1.	MSS	10 APR 188?		pen	
<b>OKA (1880/1923)</b>					
1.	DLDC30	24 FEB 1881	? SEP 1886	target	magenta
2.	CDS28	14 DEC 1887	29 DEC 1888	target	
<b>SHAWMUT (1885/Date)</b>					
1.	MSS	28 FEB 1886		pen	
<b>UBET (1881/1908)</b>					
1.	DLC28	26 FEB 1883	14 JAN 1885		
2.	CDS28	25 AUG 1885	6 JUN 1888	target	
<b>WINNECOOK (1885/1933)</b>					
1.	CDS28	13 JUL 1885	18 MAY 1887	10-line grid	
<b>YALE (1888-1910)</b>					<i>None reported</i>

## Wibaux County

Town	Postmark	Earliest	Latest	Cancel	Notes
<b>KEITH (1882-1884)</b>					
1.	MSS	25 AUG 1883		pen	
<b>MINGUSVILLE (1884-1895)</b>					
1.	MSS	12 DEC 1884		pen	
2.	CDS28	15 NOV 1888		target	



**Figure 2** Two configurations are known of this rare Billings straight-line postmark; “BILLINGS, MON” used in August, 1882 and “BILLINGS, MONT” used in September, 1882. We have recorded only three examples of each type.



**Figure 3** This postmark from Sweet Grass is a well struck example of a double line, double circle (DLDC) postmark

## Yellowstone County

Town	Postmark	Earliest	Latest	Cancel	Notes
<b>BILLINGS (1882-Date)</b>					
1.	MSS	5 AUG 1882	11 AUG 1882	pen	
2A.	SL29	29 AUG 1882	31 AUG 1882	none	1
2B.	SL29	11 SEP 1882	16 SEP 1882	none	1
3.	CDS29	9 OCT 1882	1 NOV 1882	target	
4.	CDS28	26 DEC 1882	4 JUL 1887	cork	
5.	CSD28	3 SEP 1888	24 SEP 1888	none	
6.	CDS28	27 AUG 1889	7 OCT 1889	none	
<b>BLAKELEY (1886-1897)</b>					
1.	CDS27	7 MAR 1887	12 MAR 1888	cork	
2.	DLOV50x33	14 OCT 1889			
<b>BRUCKMAN (1884-1886)</b>					<i>None reported</i>
<b>CANYON (1880-1883)</b>					<i>2 None reported</i>
<b>COULSON (1877-1882)</b>					
1.	CDS24	3 AUG 187?			
2.	DLDC36	3 JAN 1881	4 MAR 1882	negative star	
<b>HUNTLEY (1877/Date)</b>					
1.	DLC31	13 MAR 1882	5 JUL 1882	star in circle	
<b>JUNCTION (JUNCTION CITY) (1880-1907)</b>					3
1.	MSS	24 JUL 1881		pen	
2.	CDS27	13 MAY 1885	20 NOV 1887	target/cork	
3.	DLC31	23 MAR 1888	3 JUN 1888		purple
<b>LAUREL (1886-Date)</b>					
1.	CDS27	30 JAN 1888		cork	
<b>YELLOWSTONE (1886-1887)</b>					<i>None reported</i>

### NOTES:

1. Billings 2 is known in two configurations; "BILLINGS, MON" with manuscript date on Aug 29-31 (type 2A), and "BILLINGS, MONT" with handstamp date on Sep 11-16 (type 2B).
2. Not the same as the Canyon (Canyon Creek) post office that operated in Lewis & Clark County, 1871-Date.
3. Not the same as the Junction post office that operated in Madison County, 1869/1876.





**Figure 4** Ubet, from the frontier expression "you bet," is one of many colorful names of post offices in territorial Montana.

# THE POSTMASTERS GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES

## VI. John McLean, 1823-1829

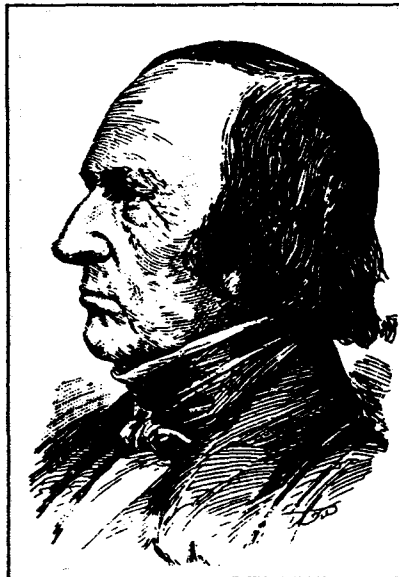
by Daniel Y. Meschter

John McLean's political career was Lincoln-esque. Beginning as a boy of small means and few opportunities, he rose to the top of his profession through his own efforts, but he never achieved his greatest aspiration. His tenure as Postmaster General was one of his lesser attainments.

He was born to a poor farmer in Morris County, New Jersey in 1785. By the time he was twelve his father had moved his family to [West] Virginia and two places in Kentucky before settling in Lebanon, Ohio, thirty miles northeast of Cincinnati<sup>1</sup>. His education was sporadic, as was the case with most farm boys at that time, until he was sixteen when he began study with private tutors he paid out of his own earnings. He moved to Cincinnati at eighteen as an apprentice in the office of the Clerk of the County Court and read law in an attorney's office. He was admitted to the bar in 1807 after which he returned to Lebanon where he opened his own law office and established a weekly newspaper.

McLean's rise in politics was rapid. Founded on a successful law practice and supported by his own newspaper, he was elected to Congress in 1812 and reelected two years later. In Congress he supported Madison's war policies, backed aid to people who lost property due to the war, and endorsed pensions for needy war veterans. He resigned his House seat in 1816 to accept appointment to the Ohio Supreme Court, being succeeded in Congress by William Henry Harrison, later Ninth President of the United States.

Having attracted the notice of the Democratic-Republicans, President Monroe in 1822 appointed him Commissioner of the General Land Office as an Ohioan from one of the first public land states and then Postmaster General to succeed Return J. Meigs, Jr., another Ohioan, the next year. He received a recess appointment on June 26, 1823 to take effect on July 1st. John Quincy Adams continued his appointment when he took office in March 1825.



John McLean

The congressional investigations into Meigs' administration of the Post Office near the end of his term were not without foundation, although Congress seems not to have taken any action as a result of them. What McLean found when he took office was a disorganized and inefficient staff founded on the principle of "adaptation of the individual to the service to be executed," as in the case of Phineas Bradley who continued making out mail contracts, his first assignment as a subordinate clerk, long after he was advanced to Second Assistant Postmaster General<sup>2</sup>.

To deal with this misuse of personnel, McLean drafted a plan of organization dividing the Post Office's mission into seven activities: Appointments, Contracts, Pay, Accounts, Collections, Reports, and Dead Letters. Such a plan was mandated by the growth of employment which McLean reported in 1828 had reached a total of 27,000, including route contractors and their agents and carriers, clerks in local post

offices, 8,000 deputy postmasters, and an elite cadre in the Washington office.

There is no report this draft plan was ever implemented; but by the end of his term McLean had developed and adopted a more refined plan reorganizing the Post Office into three principal branches, (1) Finance under the Second Assistant Postmaster General, including the solicitor's, examiner's, and registrar's offices and the pay office; (2) Appointments under the First Assistant Postmaster General, including the offices for the appointment of postmasters, instructions, and dead letters, and (3) Contracts and Superintendence of Transportation of the Mails under the Chief Clerk, although both McLean and Barry, his successor, recommended a Third Assistant Postmaster General to take charge of this branch.

His skill as an administrator, together with removal of disloyal and incompetent employees, allowed McLean to take control of the Post Office's operations unequaled by any previous Postmaster

General. He demanded that mail contractors comply with the terms of their contracts with some success. His efforts paid off with surpluses in 1825, -26, and -27, but he denied surpluses were his primary objective. Actually, he followed a policy of putting the Post Office's entire receipts back into the service for its general improvement. As he told a Senate committee after leaving office,

"I do not consider an efficient administration of the Department is shown by the annual balance in its favor. Its funds should be actively employed in extending the operation of the mail. They should not be permitted to accumulate in the hands of postmasters and in banks. Revenue is increased in a compound ratio by every judicious extension of the mail<sup>3</sup>.

There were, of course, constant demands for faster and more reliable mail service, particularly from the remoter parts of the south and west. The New Orleans mail was particularly sensitive. When McLean took office the mail was carried from Washington to New Orleans via Knoxville, Columbia, and Natchez in 24 to 25 days. The Post Office estimated it could be carried in 19 days over an alternate route via Montgomery, Mobile, and coastal steamer from Mobile if bridges were built or in 11 days by a good turnpike. A similar situation prevailed in the Northwest Territories of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. During this time, McLean opposed the expansion of stage service in favor of horseback on account of bad roads and sparse population at the cost of reduced passenger transportation and contractor revenue.

Stets alludes to express mails to New Orleans, Cleveland and Detroit during the Granger administration, building upon the express mail to New Orleans Granger established at the time of the Louisiana Purchase<sup>4</sup>. However, it is difficult now to discriminate between the express mails carried by Post Office contractors and those by messengers employed by merchants and large city newspapers to whom speed was becoming an important element in their businesses.

McLean recognized a need for express mail in the rise of the New Orleans cotton market in which traders depended on advance information carried by private messengers for speculative profits. To counter their infringement on the Post Office's monopoly, he instituted an Express Mail in 1825 not only between New York and New Orleans, but other important commercial centers as well. Relay stations were established along the express routes at twelve to fifteen-mile intervals, which McLean

expected would allow speeds of eight to eleven miles an hour, a model for the plan adopted thirty-five years later by Jones and Russell for their transcontinental pony express. Only through letters not exceeding one-half ounce were accepted at triple postage. Transit time from New York to New Orleans was reduced to seven days. Critics who feared the service would be misused to disseminate false information were defeated by its enthusiastic acceptance by merchants and the government itself for urgent public dispatches.

These innovations came at the price of virtually permanent deficits beginning in 1828. McLean was willing to accept as necessary to carry out the Post Office's public service policy.

Other vexing questions that came up during his administration included private boxes for the convenience of postal patrons, to which he demurred as possibly discriminatory and contrary to the 1794 law authorizing carriers, and Sabbatarian objections to the delivery of mail on Sunday, which Congress put off for years<sup>5</sup>.

The election of 1828 was a significant one because it finally joined the questions of the standing of the Postmaster General in the executive councils of government and of patronage in the Post Office Department.

Until McLean's time the Post Office was not an executive department nor was the Postmaster General entitled to a Cabinet seat. The only time a Postmaster General ever appeared at a Cabinet meeting was when Meigs placed the Van Rensselaer appointment in President Monroe's hands.

While McLean denied that agency heads are bound to support the Administration in all matters, he agreed in a letter to Edward Everett that since "the members of the Cabinet are the sustainers of the President" and since disagreements are "decided by the concurrence of the majority of them," their decision therefore "becomes the decision of the Cabinet and each member is bound to support it." For himself, however, he wrote, "The Cabinet shall never think and decide for *me* unless I am a member of it."

With respect to patronage, McLean spelled out his position almost as soon as he took office in 1823, "I have laid it down as a rule from which no consideration will induce me to depart, that I will remove no postmaster unless substantial objections be made, and supported, so that his continuance would be prejudicial to the public good<sup>6</sup>."

McLean became known as a Jackson man early enough that Quincy Adams was often suspicious of

his appointments, with more than a little justification. It appears that while McLean consistently declined to remove incumbents without cause, he inclined to fill vacancies with men favorable to Jackson. What Jackson's election brought was elevation of Jeffersonian concepts of patronage to a higher level of cynicism called the "spoils system," popularly defined as "to the victors belong the spoils," sanctioned by Jackson, the first "pure" Democrat<sup>7</sup>.

The horse-trading inside Jackson's councils prior to his inauguration is not reported, but the reasons for it are clear enough. The public announcement of his proposed Cabinet ranked McLean third below the Secretaries of State and Treasury, thus elevating the Post Office to an executive department and the Postmaster General to Cabinet rank, but McLean could not conscientiously accept the post under the conditions Jackson's staff attached to it. Amos Kendall, himself a subsequent Jackson Postmaster General appointee, said in his *Autobiography*<sup>8</sup> that McLean declined to serve when he found he could not stand against the vindictive members of the Jackson party who were clamoring for a thorough housecleaning of the Post Office and John Quincy Adams wrote in his *Memoirs* that McLean "declined serving as a broom to sweep the Post Office<sup>9</sup>."

In a absurd game of musical chairs, McLean expressed preference for either the War or Navy Departments, but nobody really wanted the Post Office and McLean prepared to resign. It was only William T. Barry's willingness to trade the Supreme Court appointment he was promised for the Post Office that made McLean's appointment to the high court possible. It was an unfortunate choice; Barry proved incompetent.

Some historians consider McLean as one of the best Postmasters General of all time, but their evaluations may be somewhat gratuitous in recognizing the length, if not the distinction, of his political career otherwise. While he was largely responsible for elevating the Postmaster General to Cabinet rank and he is notable for bringing concepts of job classification and personnel management to bear long before plans of organization became usual, he took no action to reform the fiscal problems Congress identified during the Meigs investigations and raised again during Barry's tenure. An objective evaluation would rate McLean's service as Postmaster General as no better than undistinguished.

McLean served 32 years on the Supreme Court from his confirmation on March 9, 1829 to his death in Cincinnati, Ohio on April 4, 1861, making his term as an associate justice among the five or six longest on the high court. His most celebrated opinion was his dissent in the Dred Scott case (March 6, 1857) on the grounds that slavery is an "enforced condition" only sustained by local law and contrary to "right principle." Fehrenbacher, however, considers his dissent in the seven to two decision was shallow as compared to Benjamin Curtis's well-measured and erudite argument and his reasoning overshadowed by political considerations<sup>10</sup>.

McLean had realistic aspirations for the presidency from Jackson's Second Administration when a cabal endorsed him for the Democratic nomination in an effort to block the succession of Martin Van Buren. He turned Whig and then Free Soil. He received 196 votes at the first Republican national convention in 1856, losing the nomination to J.C. Fremont in his last, unsuccessful campaign; but at 71 by that time, he had his age against him.

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Portrait of John McLean from *The Cyclopedia of American Biography*, 1899, v. 2, p. 469.

<sup>1</sup> See *Biographical Directory of the American Congress*, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1961; Vexler, Robert I., *The Vice-Presidents and Cabinet Members*, Dobbs Ferry, NY, 1975; and *The National Cyclopedia of American Biography*, 1899, v. 2, p. 469 for biographical sketches of John McLean.

<sup>2</sup> The following discussion of McLean's tenure as Postmaster General is based on Rich, Wesley E. *The History of the United States Post Office to the Year 1829*, Cambridge, MA, 1924, pp. 84, 99-101, 105-6, 109-10, 119, 127, 131-5.

<sup>3</sup> *American State Papers*, v. 27, p. 324.

<sup>4</sup> Stets, Robert J. *Postmasters & Post Offices of the United States, 1782-1811*. Lake Oswego, OR, 1994, p. 13.

<sup>5</sup> See "Father of Cheap Postage," article in *Linn's Stamp News*, July 22, 2002, p. 30.

<sup>6</sup> Quoted in Rich, *ante*, p. 133.

<sup>7</sup> McLean's relations with Andrew Jackson are mentioned in passing by Remini, Robert V., *Andrew Jackson and the Course of American Freedom 1822-1832*, New York, c. 1981 and *Andrew Jackson and the Course of American Democracy, 1833-184*, New York, c. 1984.

<sup>8</sup> Boston, 1872, p. 304-5.

<sup>9</sup> Philadelphia, 1874-77, v. viii, pp. 99, 109-110.

<sup>10</sup> Fehrenbacher, Don E. *The Dred Scott Case*, New York, 1978, p. 315).



Figure 1. Overall illustrated cover commemorating the 1881 Milwaukee Industrial Exposition.

## Milwaukee Exposition & Fair Covers 1880 - 1906

by Michael Dattolico

By the late 19th century, Milwaukee had evolved into one of our nation's prominent cities. A leader in machine works, breweries and tanneries, its economy was one of the most diversified in the Midwest. Milwaukee claimed to have the lowest death rate, the least amount of crime and most homeowners per capita of any major city in the country at that time.

The city's location along the Lake Michigan coastline has always been its basic advantage. But the steady influx of newcomers, particularly German-Americans, contributed to the city's meteoric rise. Talented, skilled and industrious, they became a bulwark of Milwaukee's manufacturing community and an interwoven part of Milwaukee's social fabric.

Civic-minded German-Americans became important assets in the political structure of 19th-century Milwaukee life. Elected and appointed to positions of leadership, they promoted civic unity by organizing gatherings that featured Germanic themes but galvanized other ethnic factions of the city's population. Such gatherings, particu-

larly Germanic singing and dancing festivals, fostered civic unity, while broader-based expositions organized by city officials often attracted national attention.

To inform Milwaukee's citizenry about the upcoming gala events, city leaders relied upon elaborately designed envelopes to carry the message. Decorative, informative envelopes were prepared by local printers. The Chamber of Commerce persuaded local businesses to use the envelopes by having them personal-

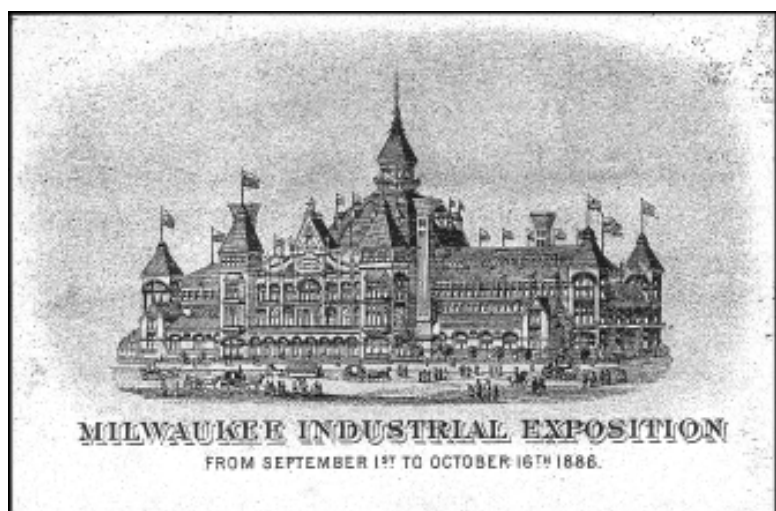
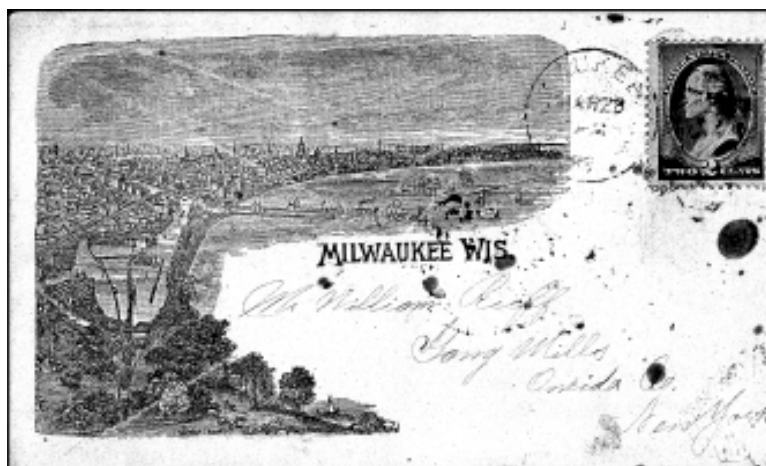


Figure 2. Commemorative card illustrating the 1886 Milwaukee Industrial Exposition.



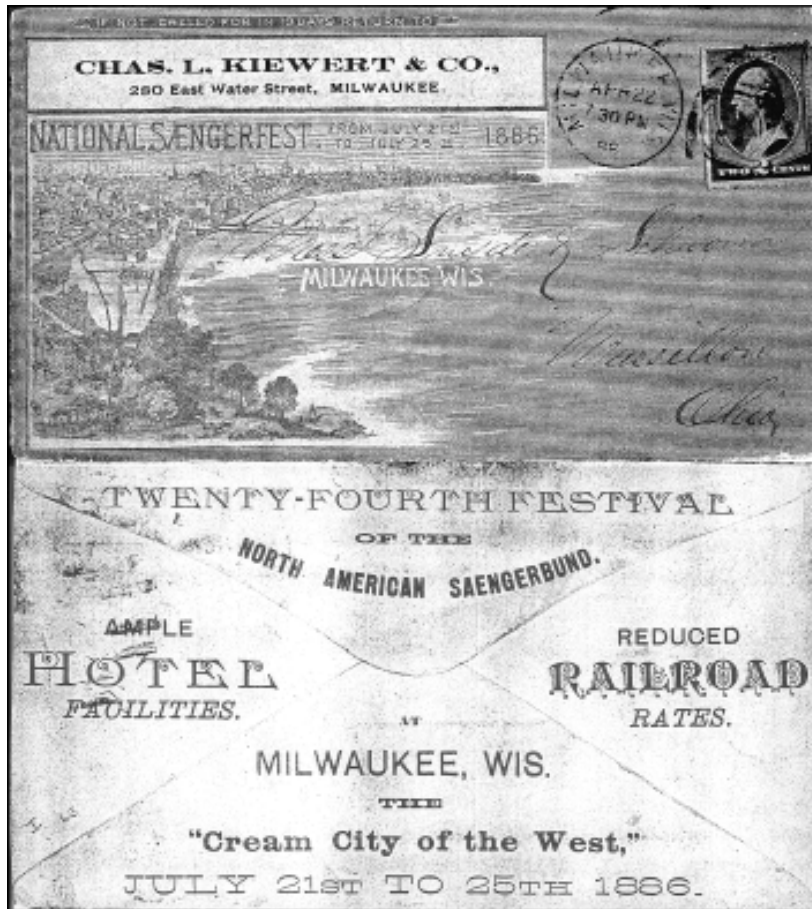
ized for their use. This communication method benefited everyone, from the smallest businesses that used the envelopes to the city itself.

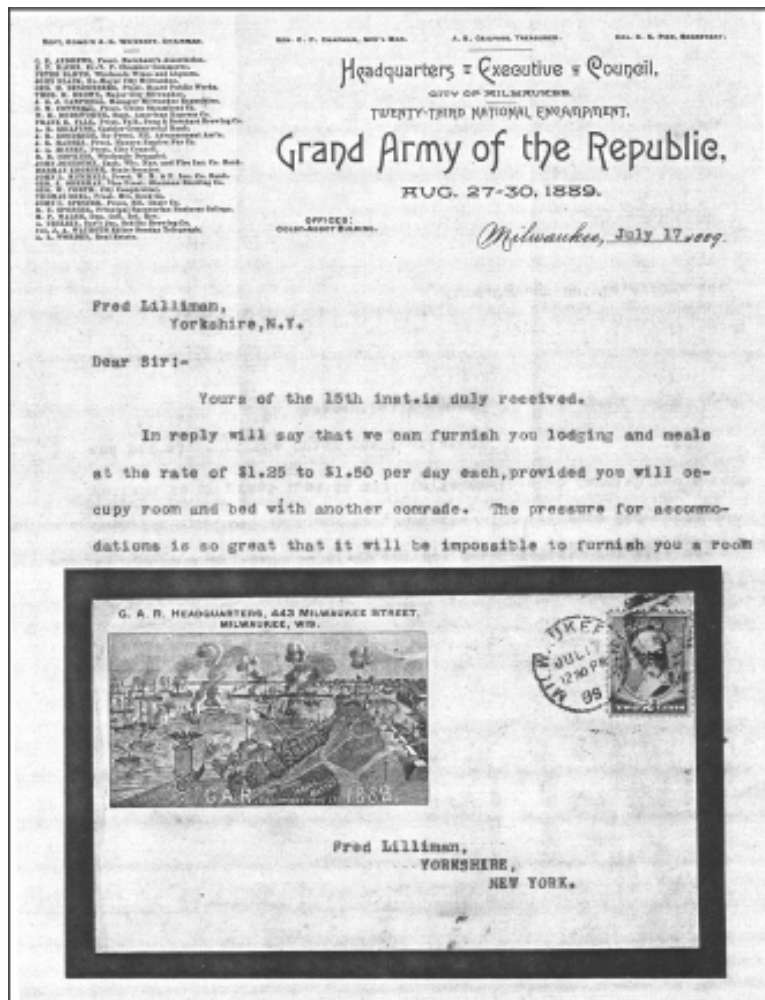
**Figure 3** Envelope showing the city of Milwaukee on Lake Michigan circa 1885.



**Figure 4** Same design as Figure 3 used to advertise Milwaukee's hosting of the 1886 National Saengerfest, a singing and dancing festival featuring musicians from around the country.

**Figure 5** A variation of Figures 3 & 4, this envelope shows the city's name and Lake Michigan is enhanced. The back shows further advertising.





**Figure 6** Milwaukee hosted the 23rd national encampment of the G.A.R. in August, 1889. Shown here is a cover style used to promote the event, along with the accompanying letter.

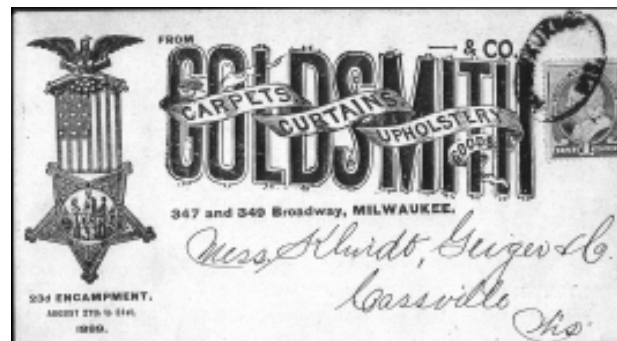


**Figure 7** Overall illustrated cover commemorating the 23rd G.A.R. convention. Note the reenactment of the Grand Naval Battle in Milwaukee Bay



**Figure 8** Business advertising envelope used to promote the 1889 G.A.R. festivities.

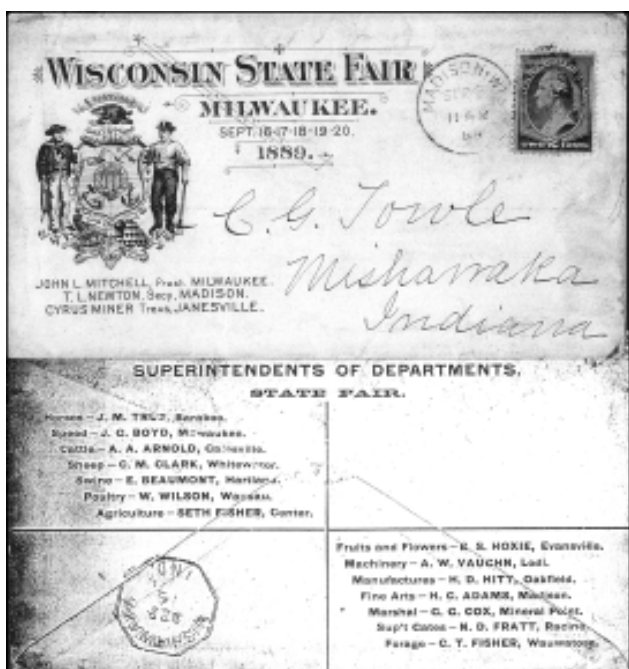
**Figure 9** Camp scene used to highlight the 1889 G.A.R. ceremonies. Like many other covers which illustrated this event, the envelope was used by a Milwaukee business.



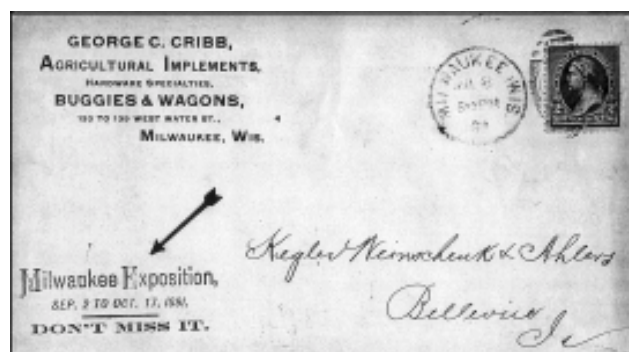




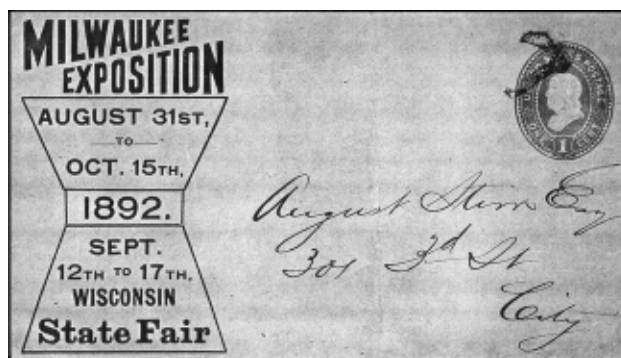
**Figure 10** Business cover used to promote the Knights of Pythias Convention hosted at Milwaukee during July, 1890.



**Figure 11** Front and back views of an envelope promoting the 1889 Wisconsin State Fair.



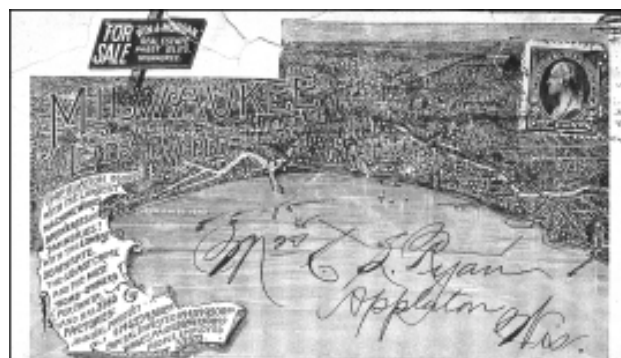
**Figure 12** Business cornercard envelope used to highlight the 1891 Milwaukee Exposition.



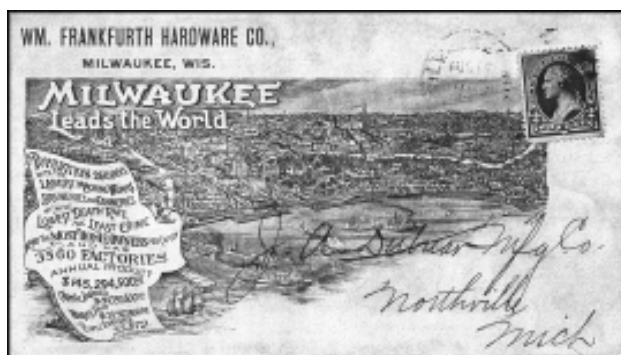
**Figure 13** One-cent embossed stationery used to advertise the 1892 Milwaukee Exposition which was part of the Wisconsin State Fair.



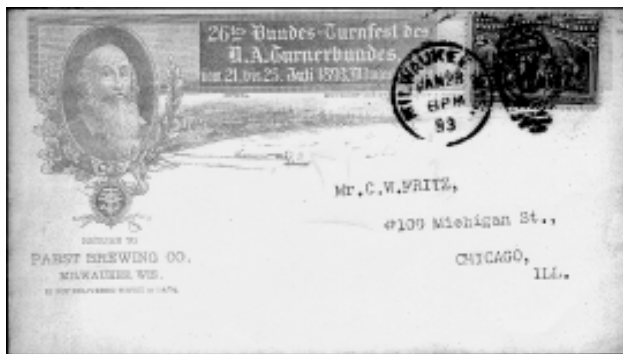
**Figure 14** Overall advertising cover showing Milwaukee on the Lake Michigan shoreline while extolling the positive aspects of life there. The theme was "Milwaukee Leads The World." This letter was mailed to Germany



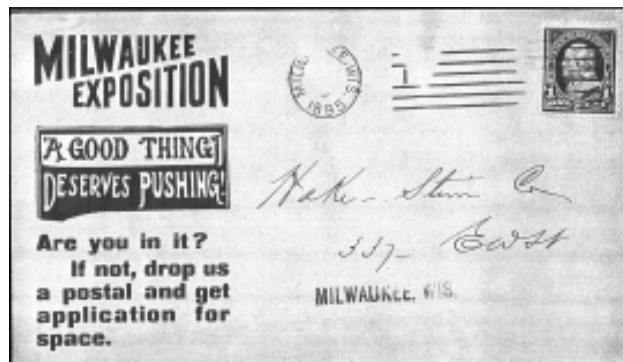
**Figure 15** A "Milwaukee Leads The World" promotional envelope adapted for business use by a local realtor.



**Figure 16** A "Milwaukee Leads The World" envelope used by the Wm. Frankfurth Hardware Company in August, 1893. Note the variations compared to earlier models.



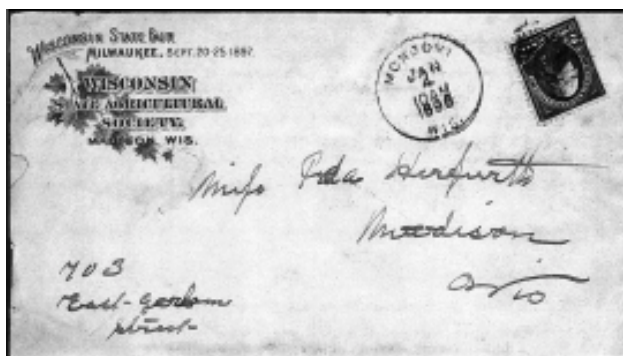
**Figure 17** Pabst Brewing Company advertising cover commemorating a local festival event circa July, 1893.



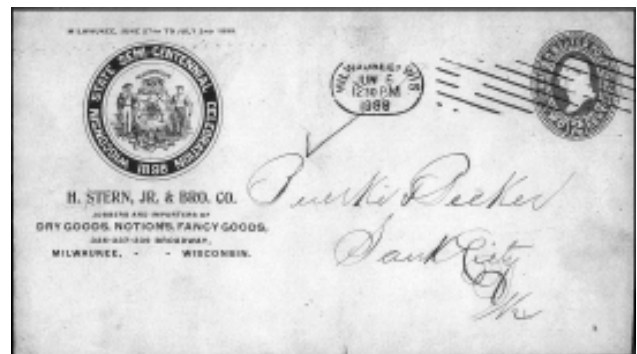
**Figure 18** Promotional cover designed to entice businesses into the Milwaukee Exposition of 1895.



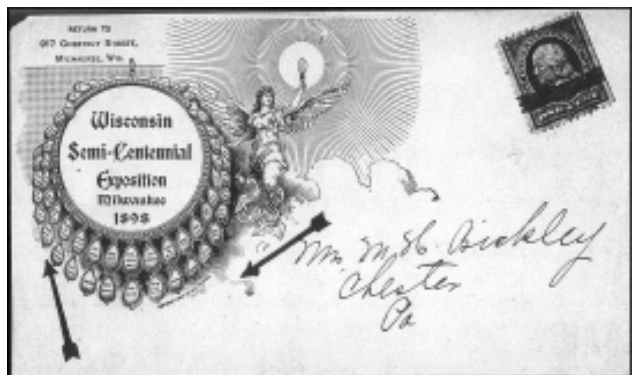
**Figure 19** Decorative envelope used by the Milwaukee Semi-Centennial Celebration Society to promote the city's 50th anniversary in 1895.



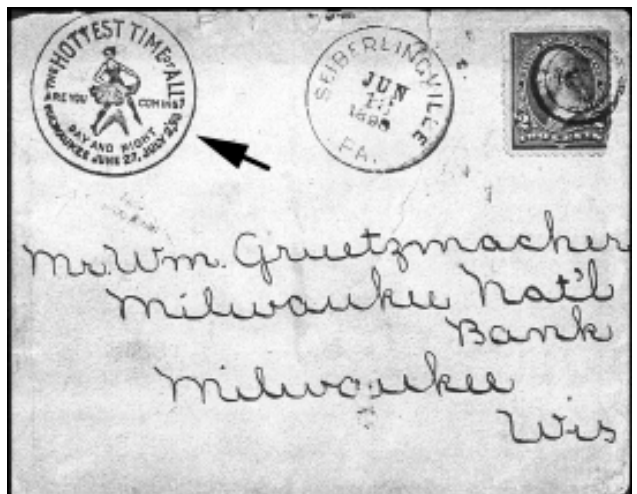
**Figure 20** Multi-colored cornercard envelope used by the Wisconsin State Agricultural Society, 1897.



**Figure 21** One of several envelopes used to promote the Wisconsin Semi-Centennial Celebration in July, 1898. Wisconsin became a state in 1848.



**Figure 22** Elaborate cover used to illustrate the Wisconsin Semi-Centennial Exposition in Milwaukee in 1898.

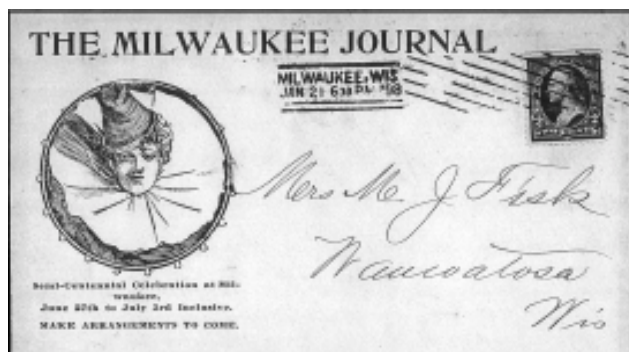


**Figure 23** Regular envelope with a stamped marking affixed publicizing the Wisconsin Semi-Centennial Exposition, June, 1898.





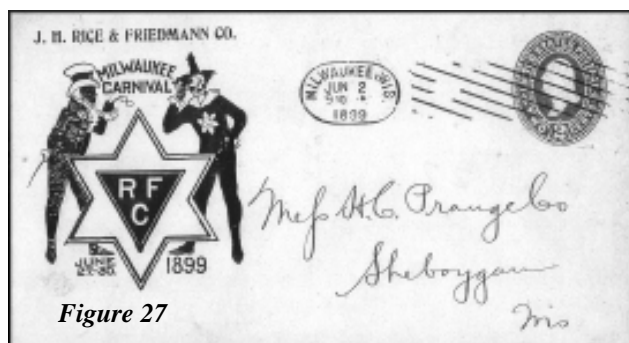
**Figure 24** Festive design highlighting the Wisconsin Semi-Centennial Carnival in June, 1898. Note the clownish figures leaving the train.



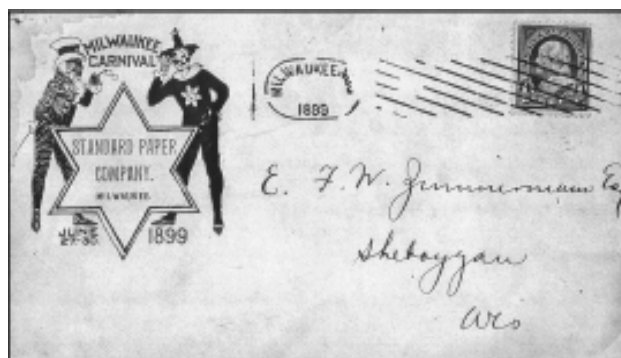
**Figure 25** Another variation of the Semi-Centennial publicity envelopes used in June, 1898.



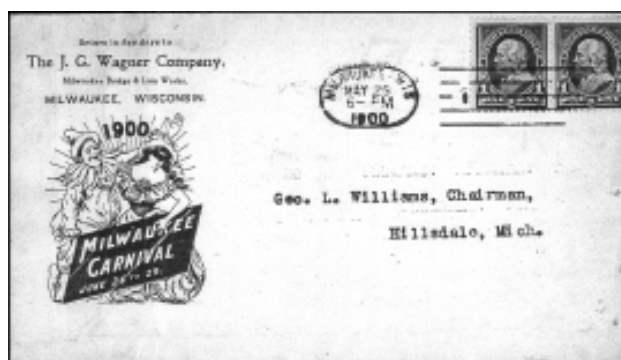
**Figure 26** The Milwaukee Carnival was a popular annual event. This cover was used to publicize the 1899 festival.



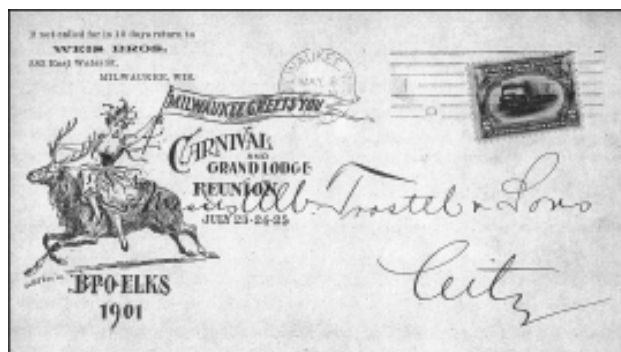
**Figure 27**



**Figures 27 & 28** Two similar envelopes which promoted the 1899 Milwaukee Carnival.



**Figure 29** Decorative envelope used to promote the 1900 Milwaukee Carnival.



**Figure 30** Promotional cover used for the 1901 Milwaukee Carnival.

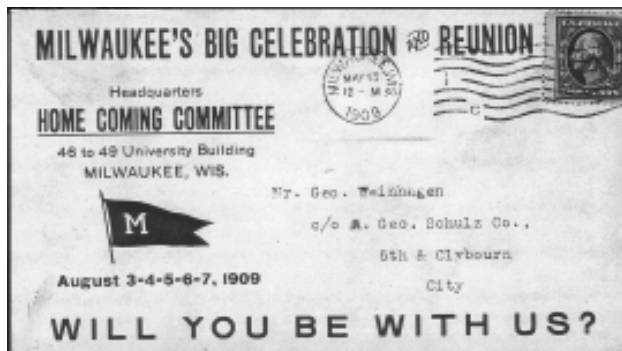


**Figure 31** Multi-colored envelope highlighting the Milwaukee Fahrmarkt, a popular street fair featuring singing and dancing





*Figure 32 All-over advertising cover featuring the 1906 national convention of the Fraternal Order of Eagles*



*Figure 33 Envelope commemorating Milwaukee's "Home Coming" in 1909. The Home Coming was a national event, with most of the country's major cities taking part.*



*Figure 35 Humorous postcard showing two German-American Milwaukee citizens meeting at the Home Coming.*



*Figure 34 Pictorial side of a commercial postcard featuring the national Home Coming in Milwaukee circa 1909.*

## William Carey Brown's Letters from Fort Klamath, Oregon, 1878-1880

### Part 3 - Continued

#### Transcribed by Cath Clark

In July, 1879 Lt. Brown was stationed at Camp Pendleton and wrote an epic letter to his mother recounting, for posterity, his role in the Indian campaigns of 1877 and 1888 (September, 2002 *La Posta*). We now rejoin him at Camp Pendleton in October, toward the end of his six-months of field maneuvers away from Fort Klamath, and follow him back to the Fort. Inspired by his rough journey home, one of Brown's first acts was to draw a map of a wagon road he intended to propose between Ft. Klamath and Roseburg. His attentions then turned to family correspondence and celebrating Thanksgiving and Christmas at his winter quarters.

#### Pendleton, Oregon.

##### Early October, 1879 [*loose letter*]

[portion of letter evidently written to his mother in Denver – begins p. 3]

When I get settled at my post some time I want to make arrangements for you to come and pay me a visit – in fact have been thinking of it for some time – I cannot tell when I can afford to take a leave but want to as soon as I can.

Glad to learn that you had such a pleasant time at Ft. Lyon and hope you will think that army people are not so bad after all.

Tell Helen that she can use the adjective “horrible” as much as she wants to in writing to me but the idea of doing so when writing to anyone is “too horrible for anything.” Guess she will have to go to Wellesley and get those “horrible” expressions taken out of her by prim Yankee schoolmarms.

Glad that Pa has a man to assist him in his business – I think if he would take a vacation from working it would be the best thing he could do. I want Grace to send me one of her new photos when I get back to Klamath.

Remember me to Mr and Mrs Adams. Sorry that I could not have been at home when they visited Denver. I suppose they are acquainted with a great many Army friends. I may possibly get back to Klamath by Nov 15<sup>th</sup>, possibly not until Christmas. Don't worry about me for I am now in a land of peace and plenty and will live first rate from now on.

This roving life suits me quite well just now. I am seeing plenty of new country, people, and having plenty of “experience” – enough that if I were a writer I think I could get up an interesting book.

Tell Helen “Place not thy trust in gypsies for they often prove false prophets and Army officers seldom get rich.” All the talk here is mines, and the mining is principally placer mining. Well I guess I have answered everything of importance so will close and discuss the subject of Indians and mines with the inhabitants of one of the most out-of-the-way places in the U.S.

Yours affectionately,

W.C. Brown

[postscript, written in pencil on back of letter]: **Oct 5<sup>th</sup> 7 PM**

Will start on the 7<sup>th</sup> for Umatilla Agency via Indian Valley and Council Valley at (Brownlee's) Ferry the way we came in. Will have a detachment of 8 men. Will probably be at Umatilla Acy on the 24<sup>th</sup> Oct.

#### Umatilla Indian Agency, Oregon

##### Nov 1<sup>st</sup>, 1879 (Saturday night)

[*postmarked Pendleton, Oregon - Nov. 3*]

Dear Sister Grace,

As you sent word some time since that I was owing you a letter I am happy to announce that the scouts are to go on furlough during the balance of their enlistment (until Dec 12) and all the rest of us are ordered home and I expect to start for Klamath next week and will go about as far as horse flesh and steam can carry me, and expect I will be there by or before the 17<sup>th</sup> so you can send all mail to Klamath in the future.

Tomorrow will make six months that I have been away and it will seem queer to get one's "store clothes" again and live in a house. I am keeping my tent warm tonight by a fire in front of it and have a couple of candles stuck on a piece of wood to write by.

Lieut Farrow will be up from Vancouver tomorrow and the scouts will probably be paid off on Monday. Well, I haven't written but one page but that is *such* good news that it's as good as a longer letter so good night. Yours,

W. C. Brown

### Fort Klamath, Oregon.

Nov 16th, 1879.

[postmarked Linkville, Oregon Nov. 18, 1879]

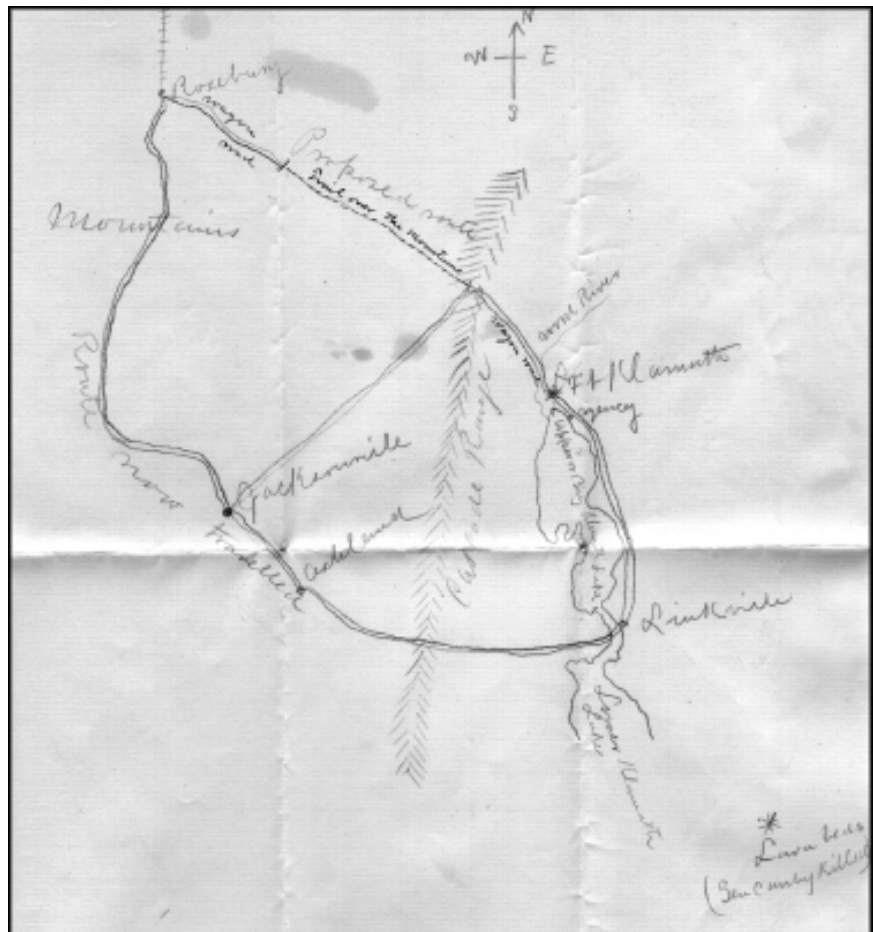
*Ed. Note: These two letters are written on a large fold-out ledger page with one to Mother on the front and one to Father on the back. It includes Brown's hand drawn map of a wagon road he would like to propose between Ft. Klamath and Roseburg (figure 3-1). Now enjoying his return to the luxury of Fort life after his field campaign, the back of the letter is sealed with red sealing wax, not found on any previous covers.*

Dear Mother,

I have several letters from home which I have not answered and as I have time now will try and answer your letters more promptly in the future. I arrived here on the 14<sup>th</sup> and am once more located comfortably in my winter quarters. I am messing with Shelton who lives in the same house with me – this is more convenient for me and my mess here will probably not be so large. I shall be pretty busy for a month or so settling some Q.M. accounts. Had a pretty rough stage trip over from Roseburg. We had to ride all of one night and 2 days while it rained or snowed nearly all the time. We have about a foot of snow here – it has come much

earlier than usual this year. Yours of Oct 19<sup>th</sup> came yesterday via . . . Pendleton Agn., having been forwarded twice. I notice what you say about my taking a leave of absence and as I wrote before the only thing that keeps me back is money. It is about 400 miles from here to Sacramento and a stage ticket from here - there would amount to about \$100 and from Sacramento home I don't know what it would cost but I suppose about \$70 so you see that my tickets alone not counting meals etc. would be about \$200. I suppose you could find out at the ticket office in Denver what a ticket would cost to Sacramento. I am going to watch my chances this winter however and if I can get detailed to San Francisco I will take a leave of one month from that point and will save the fare from here- there.

The main trouble seems to be about getting there is that San Francisco, although it is Division Headquarters, is not in this Dept. Glad to hear that Pa's health is so much improved and



**Figure 3-1** Lt. William Carey Brown's hand drawn map for a proposed wagon road connecting Fort Klamath and Roseburg.



that he is getting along so well in business. I hope the girls are studying well to prepare themselves to go to school in the east. I do not approve of the plan of sending them for one year only as they will do well if they get a thorough education in 3 or 4 years.

I think I can spare \$500 per year from my salary and probably more to educate them. I have a few hundred dollars ahead and will send home \$500 in plenty of time so that the girls can have it when they are ready to go east.

I don't know what I shall do next summer – possibly remain here in which case I would like you to pay me a visit. I have also been thinking of my way to open a wagon road from here to Roseburg (80 miles). We now go to Portland via Linkville & Jacksonville & Roseburg, a distance of about 220 miles. There is a road on each end of the route that I propose and only about 50 miles of travel would have to be opened.

It is possible too that Gen. Howard may detail me on duty again with the Indian scouts which will I think be enlisted again in the Spring but I apprehend no difficulty with the Indians in this Dept for next summer for things look better now there than they have in some years.

I received a letter from Pa the other day but have mislaid it – hope he will do well on his land speculations. Hoping to hear from you soon I remain,

Your affectionate son  
W.C. Brown

Dear Father

I have found your letter – if you invest any money for me please invest it in paying off your debts as nothing would please me more than to see you get entirely out of debt once more and then you know just how you stand.

Your affectionate son  
W.C. Brown  
2<sup>nd</sup> Lieut 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry

## Fort Klamath, Oregon.

**November 23<sup>rd</sup> 1879**

*[postmarked Linkville, Oregon Nov 28]*

Dear Mother:

Yours of the 2<sup>nd</sup> was duly received coming via Pendleton and I have been expecting another letter direct from home but suppose it will come by tomorrow's mail.

Glad that you have got a piano for the girls – hope they will be able to give me some good music when I get home again.

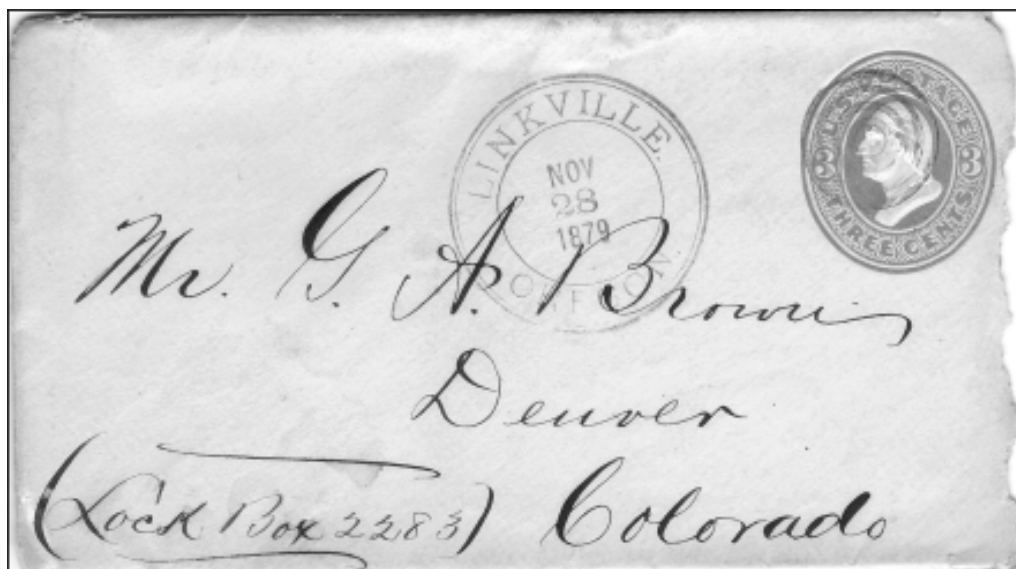
I sent you a photo the other day taken in [field attire] when I was in Portland. I will get one taken in full dress when I get an opportunity – did not have my full dress along this time.

The snow is still on the ground here and there are prospects for a long winter as I do not think now that it will go off before spring. I am getting along pretty well with my papers and as Shelton is Post Adjutant this winter I hope to do some reading this winter – will read Military Law or something of the kind I think. In regard to the girls I do not think one year at Wellesley or any other college will give them more than a mere “smattering” of anything they should undertake. I think they should have at least two and much better 3 or 4 years at college. They can tell better when they get there. I think an “elective” course would be very good but they are old enough now that (with the aid of their teachers) they ought to be able to choose for themselves and select a course that they would like to take an interest in and do well in. I think the plan of going to Philadelphia is a very good one indeed.

We now have mail here six times a week, an improvement on last year.

**Nov 24<sup>th</sup>:** No letter came today. I wrote from Pendleton about Nov 1<sup>st</sup> asking if Pa wished the loan of 3 or 4 hundred dollars. I could let him have it. I expected an answer before this and am keeping the money, (part of it in greenbacks) and have no safe place to keep it, having lost the key to my trunk. It would be a great accommodation to me if you could answer letters pertaining to money matters promptly.

**Nov 26<sup>th</sup>:** Yours of Nov 10<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> and Grace's letter of the 16<sup>th</sup> received today. The one that you said you wrote on the 7<sup>th</sup> was not received. I see that you probably answered my letter to Helen of Oct 30<sup>th</sup> or 31<sup>st</sup> and it has been



**Figure 3-2** This cover carried Brown's letter of November 23rd was postmarked at Linkville on November 28th.

lost. Much obliged for those Land Office [papers]. Have received no papers from home lately. I did not stop at Vancouver on my way back but was there last May – it is a very beautiful place indeed and the officers there had fine quarters. It is an Infantry Post and is Dept Headquarters and for that reason I would rather serve here than there. Lieut Lundeen is stationed at Fort Stevens [Oregon] at the mouth of the Columbia River.

I will enclose herewith check for \$250 for Pa to use until called for. If the Umatilla Reservation is sold in the spring I will need it then and will probably need it on short notice. I do not think I will want it however before July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1880 when the other \$200 becomes due.

We will have a Gen. Court Martial here in a day or so to try Cp'l Mack . . . all the officers here & Lt. Parke . . . are on the Court. Lt. Parke is in Capt Rileys Company. We have target practice nearly every day. I hear this evening that mail was rec'd that should have been long ago & suppose yours of the 7<sup>th</sup> will be along in a day or two. Please acknowledge receipt of check promptly.

Yours affectionately,  
W.C. Brown  
2<sup>nd</sup> Lieut 1<sup>st</sup> U.S. Cavy

### Fort Klamath, Oregon.

Nov 28th, 1879.

[postmarked Linkville, Oregon Nov 29]

Dear Mother,

Enclosed please find check for thirty and 21/100 dollars (\$30.21) for yourself and the girls.

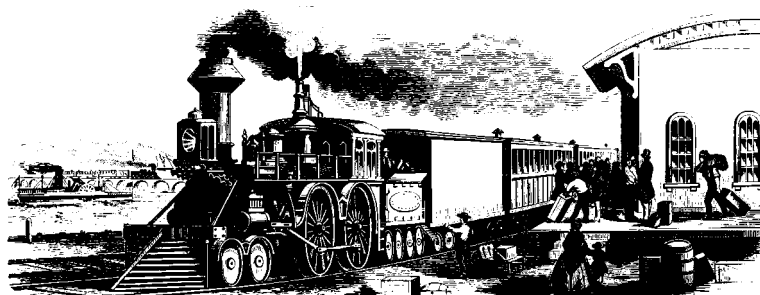
Took Thanksgiving dinner with Capt. Riley yesterday. We expect Lt. Paske tomorrow. Have not as yet received your letter of the 7<sup>th</sup> yet – was there anything of importance in it? Rec'd Denver Tribune yesterday.

Have been at work all day drawing a map of the Big Crook Country where we were last summer and fall.

Please acknowledge receipt of money and oblige.

Your affectionate son,  
W.C. Brown

2<sup>nd</sup> Lieut 1<sup>st</sup> U.S. Cavalry





**Fort Klamath, Oregon.****Nov. 30<sup>th</sup>, 1879.***[postmarked Linkville, Oregon Dec 13]*

Dear Mother,

Yours of Nov 7<sup>th</sup> came yesterday via Pendleton – if I can get ordered to San Francisco for anything this winter I will probably take a month's leave from there as I can take a leave better this winter than next summer, as I have too many irons in the fire for next summer to take a leave at that time. I am having a very easy time so far this winter, as I am not Post Adjutant and have but little duty to perform.

I was looking over some old orders the other day and find that benefits are only to be given in time of War, and for services done in presence of the enemy and as we had no "war" in the military service of the term this summer and I could hardly be said to have performed service in presence of the enemy (as I did not have a hostile shot fired at me during the summer) there is no danger that the War Department will offer me any benefit on Gen. Howard's or any one else's recommendation. So I will let the matter drop right there, and you needn't say anything more about it.

It is raining today and I hope the snow will go off. On the 27<sup>th</sup> I sent home a check for \$200 and on the 29<sup>th</sup> a check for \$30.21 which I hope you will receive in due time and acknowledge receipt. By the way please let me know how much is wanted to pay for Grace's and Helen's Music, Painting and Elocution lessons, etc., etc. and I will remit the amount.

As I wrote you before I suppose a ticket home would cost me about \$120 each way exclusive of meals, sleeping car, etc.

Hoping that you are well I remain yours affectionately – Will.

By the way can't you buy and send me a couple of Christmas presents suitable for Col Whipple's two children. Sophie 7 yrs old & Elmer 4 yrs old to cost 3 to 5 dollars – if you get them and send them right off they will be here in time for Christmas. W.C.B.

**Denver, Colorado****Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> 1879****Lieut. Wm. C. Brown****Fort Klamath, Ogn**

[loose letter from Lt. Brown's father, with letter from mother on the back]

Dear Son –

Yours of Nov. 23<sup>rd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> enclosing a check for \$250.00 dollars rec'd today. I enclose you my note for the acct payable on demand. I can return it at anytime, on 24 hour notice. As I don't expect to go into debt much, it will save me occasionally paying out but for 30 days at a time. I have now a bal. in bank, including your checks of 1146.14 but I will draw that about all out the first of the week to pay for some California [Westerns?] I expect in at that time. On the 13<sup>th</sup> of Dec. I expect to receive 4000 head of south [down] [westerns] when I will draw out all my money in bank, and will probably have to borrow about \$400 for 30 days . . . Business is very good yet and I think it will continue good all winter. The weather is fine, and building has stopped only 3 or 4 days on acct of cold weather this fall, so far, today and yesterday. Brick and stone masons could work just as well as in the summer. I hope it may [continue] .. as there are several hundred houses and business blocks in process of construction, some of which will take all winter to finish with good weather. I will close, and let your Ma and sisters give you the news. They are better in collecting the city news than I am.

Affectionately yours, Pa

G.A. Brown

P.S. I allow you 6 percent per annum on the last \$250 which would likely be about the amt I would have to pay the bank during the time I will have it, as I would not be paying the bank all the time. G.A.B.

Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> 1879

My Dear Son,

Your Father has written saying that I will be able to give you the news but really news is a very scarce commodity here.

I notice what you say in regard to answering business letters "promptly" and I had flattered myself that I had done so and I know that usually is acknowledging the receipt of money. I have mentioned it in the second letter so that there might be no mistake about it, and I know that the last money you sent to myself and the girls in July I wrote you twice acknowledging the receipt of it so that you cannot have received all of my letters for I *know* that I have not been negligent about it. I have sent papers *regularly* every week except I think about one month this summer when you were beyond the limits of civilization and I myself have done up every paper sent to you. But I know that paper mail is very uncertain. I have not sent the S. Peter Tribune because there was nothing in worth sending of late. We did not get it yesterday but I will send it when it comes and will mail with *this* the Denver Tribune.

I received a letter the other day from Mrs. Ellis & Charlie. He would like to hear from you, is in poor health and says that Dr. Daniels tells him that three months in Denver would do him more good than all his medicine, but I *cannot* take him. Our house is too small.

This has been our communion Sabbath and twenty three persons united with the church, most of them by letter. Some six or eight in "confession," among the latter Grace and Helen and I cannot tell you how glad and happy I feel that they have confessed Christ and "chosen that better part" which shall not be taken away from them. God grand that you and *all* of us may be "faithful unto death and receive a crown of life."

It is almost time for church and I must close and let Helen write you her views about school and etc. . . . Yours with much love,

Mother

TO BE CONTINUED



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### CALIFORNIA

- 1 ALDEN STA/OAKLAND/REC'D, 1906 G CDS REC'D ON PPC (00-08). \$6
- 2 ARABELLA, 1899 VG CDS ON COVER (88-20). EST. \$12
- 3 BEATRICE, 1911 F 4-BAR ON PPC (84-55). EST. \$4
- 4 BELLOTA, 1908 VG CDS REC'D & A BIT O/S ON PPC (60/18). E. \$15
- 5 BLANCO, 1911 VG LKU MOT-170 ON PPC (73/41). EST. \$8
- 6 BLANCO, 1914 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (73/41). EST. \$8
- 7 BOULDIN ISLAND, 1899 G CDS ON COVER (78-18). EST. \$15
- 8 BOULDIN ISLAND, 1915 F 4-BAR REC'D & O/S ON PPC (78-18). \$15
- 9 BULWINKLE, 1911 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (09-22). EST. \$6
- 10 CHILES, 1912 G+ LIGHT 4-BAR ON PPC (88-24). EST. \$10
- 11 COLEVILLE, 1910 VG 4-BAR ON PPC. MONO CO. EST. \$4
- 12 CORNWALL, 1897 F CDS ON GPC (90-11). EST. \$20
- 13 COSUMNE, 1905 G+ DUPLEX ON PPC (52-15). EST. \$15
- 14 DONNER, 1920 G+ NONSTANDARD CDS ON PPC (82-26). EST. \$6
- 15 ERLE, 1907 VG DOANE ON PPC (92-09). EST. \$20
- 16 FT. BARRY BR./SAUSALITO, 1941 VG FD DC ON COVER (41-47) \$12
- 17 FT. CRONKITE/SAUSALITO, 1941 F FD DC ON COVER (41-47). \$12
- 18 GRANDVILLE, 1913 G+ 4-BAR ON PPC (07-21). EST. \$6
- 19 HAYWARDS, ca1910 TYPE 11F (SCRIBBLE) RFD 1 ON PPC. EST. \$6
- 20 HEMLOCK, 1912 VG DOANE ON PPC (90-13). EST. \$15
- 21 HERNANDEZ, 1920 F 4-BAR ON PPC (92-36). EST. \$8
- 22 JACKSONVILLE, 1908 VG 4-BAR STRUCK ON STAMP (51/18) \$10
- 23 JERSEY, 1908 G+ DOANE ON PPC (98-35). EST. \$6
- 24 KINSLEY, 1910 F 4-BAR ON PPC (96-28). EST. \$12
- 25 KLAMATHON, 1908 G+ LIGHT 4-BAR REC'D ON PPC (97-18). E. \$10
- 26 LARABEE, 1924 F 4-BAR ON REC'D REC (21-25). EST. \$35
- 27 LASSEN, 1920 G+ 4-BAR ON PPC (14-23). EST. \$12
- 28 LASSEN VIEW, 1940 F 4-BAR ON GPC (34-41). EST. \$12
- 29 LAUGHLIN, 1908 VG DOANE ON PPC (02/11). EST. \$35
- 30 LINNE, 1911 F DOANE ON PPC (89-25). EST. \$12
- 31 LOWELL HILL, 1910 F DOANE ON PPC (78-18). EST. \$20
- 32 LUCIA, 1928 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (00/38). EST. \$8
- 33 MANZANAR, ca1916 G+ 4-BAR ON PPC (11-29). EST. \$12
- 34 METZ, 1909 VG DOANE ON PPC (88-33). EST. \$6
- 35 MILLSAPS, 1910 F DOANE ON PPC W/STAMP GONE (94-27). \$8
- 36 MONSON, 1907 G+ CDS REC'D ON PPC (89-20). EST. \$10
- 37 MOORETOWN, 1909 VG CDS ON PPC (88-13). EST. \$20
- 38 MOORETOWN, 1913 F 4-BAR ON PPC (88-13). EST. \$20
- 39 NARANJO, 1911 VG CDS ON PPC (01/18). EST. \$20
- 40 NAVAL HOSPITAL BR/SAN DIEGO, 1945 F MACHINE ON PPC. \$5
- 41 NAV. TRN. SCHOOL STA/L.A., 1942 G+ 4-BAR ON PPC (41-45). \$10
- 42 NEWHOPE, 1907 F DOANE O/S ON PPC (78-10). EST. \$10
- 43 NEW MONTEREY STA, 1911 VG DUPLEX ON PPC (09-13). EST. \$15
- 44 OLIVE, 1910 F DOANE ON PPC (89/63). EST. \$4
- 45 ORANGEHURST, 1910 F 4-BAR REC'D ON PPC (08-16). EST. \$35
- 46 PACHECO, 1909 G 4-BAR ON PPC (59-13). EST. \$12
- 47 PACIFIC GROVE, 1900 F LKU MOT-2070 ON PPC. EST. \$5
- 48 PACIFIC GROVE/REC'D, 1907 F CDS REC'D & O/S ON PPC. EST. \$4
- 49 PAICINES, 1918 G+ 4-BAR ON PPC. EST. \$4
- 50 PANOCHÉ, 1910 VG DOANE ON PPC (70-15). EST. \$10
- 51 PENNINGTON, 1896 G+ CDS W/STAR KILLER ON CVR (81-17). \$20
- 52 PENNINGTON, 1908 F DOANE ON PPC (81-17). EST. \$20
- 53 POINT REYES, 1908 F 4-BAR ON PPC (91-48). EST. \$8
- 54 POSTS, 1908 VG DOANE ON CREASED PPC (89-10). EST. \$15
- 55 PRIZE, 1910 VF 4-BAR ON PPC (00-19). EST. \$12
- 56 QUARTZ, 1898 VG CDS ON COVER (97-24). EST. \$12
- 57 QUINTETTE, 1906 F DOANE REC'D ON PPC (03-12). EST. \$20
- 58 REPRESA, 1910 F DOANE ON PPC (92-71). EST. \$4
- 59 RIEGO, 1908 F 4-BAR ON PPC (08-19). EST. \$20
- 60 ROBLES DEL RIO, F 1952 LD MACHINE ON GPC (41-52). EST. \$6
- 61 SAN ANTONIO, 1880'S VG CDS ON COVER (58-87). EST. \$75
- 62 SANTA RITA, 1912 G+ 4-BAR REC'D ON PPC W/STAMP GONE. \$10
- 63 SCALES, 1909 F CDS ON PPC (80-23). EST. \$12
- 64 SEQUOIA, 1904 F CDS ON TALL CVR RED'D @ RT (86-14). \$15
- 65 SHELDON, 1907 VG DUPLEX ON PPC (60/13). EST. \$20
- 66 SKAGGS, 1910 G+ DOANE ON PPC (95-27). EST. \$6
- 67 SLATINGTON, 1911 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (03/20). \$6
- 68 SPRECKLES, 1932 F 4-BAR ON COVER (98-73). EST. \$4
- 69 SUGAR PINE, 1915 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (07-34). EST. \$6
- 70 TASSAJARA HOT SPRINGS, 1914 G+ 4-BAR ON PPC W/STMP GONE. 5
- 71 TOPAZ, 1908 G+ CDS O/S ON PPC. MONO CO. EST. \$4
- 72 UPTON, 1904 F CDS O/S ON PPC (97-07). EST. \$30
- 73 VICHY SPRINGS, 1915 F DOANE ON PPC (93/36). EST. \$6
- 74 WEST BUTTE, 1907 G+ DOANE ON PPC (63-20). EST. \$6
- 75 WHEATVILLE, 1910 F 4-BAR ON PPC (91-20). EST. \$12
- 76 YAGER, 1908 F DOANE ON PPC (80-32). EST. \$8

### IDAHO

- 77 AUSTIN, 1907 G+ CDS REC'D ON PPC COR. GONE (98-10). EST. \$15
- 78 CHESLEY, 1907 G+ CDS REC'D ON PPC (99-13). EST. \$12
- 79 COLLINS, 1910 VG CDS ON PPC (95-15). EST. \$20
- 80 CRYSTAL, 1930 F 4-BAR ON PPC (10-38). EST. \$6
- 81 GREENCREEK, 1910 F 4-BAR ON PPC (97-75). EST. \$4
- 82 HARLEM, 1912 G+ 4-BAR ON PPC (07-18). EST. \$20
- 83 PINCHOT, 1909 G+ 4-BAR ON PPC (STATE NOT STRUCK) (05-10). 15
- 84 ROBIN, 1912 F 4-BAR ON PPC (99-56). EST. \$4
- 85 WESTLEYAN, 1923 VG NONSTANDARD 4-BAR ON PPC (25-38) \$8

### SOUTH DAKOTA

- 86 BATES, 1908 F DOANE ON PPC (86-24). EST. \$12
- 87 BONEITA SPRINGS, 1909 F 4-BAR ON PPC (08-44). EST. \$12
- 88 DAVISTON, 1909 VG 4-BAR ON CREASED PPC (08-17). EST. \$20
- 89 DIAMOND, 1909 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (07-18). EST. \$6
- 90 KIMBRO, 1910 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (07-13). EST. \$35
- 91 ORMAN, 1910 G+ DOANE ON PPC (06-14). EST. \$12

Minimum Bid \$3.00 please. Phone bids accepted.

**CLOSING DATE: April 16, 2003 (10 PM Pacific)**

## Moving The Mail Above The Arctic Circle In The 1920s— The Episcopal Mission At Allakaket, Alaska

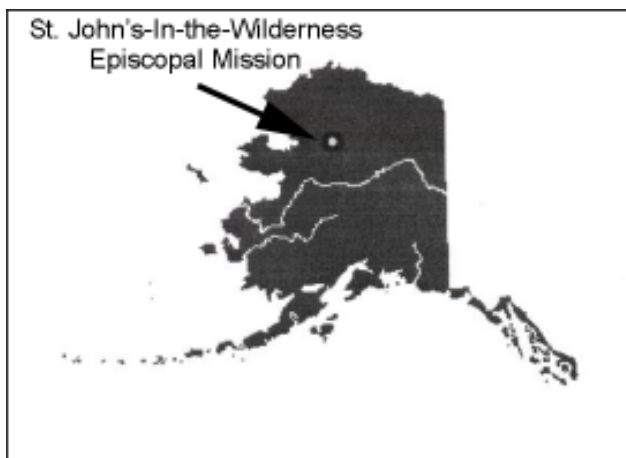
By Randy Stehle

I was lucky enough last year to come across a remarkable 12-page letter written in 1922 by Muriel Alice Thayer, the Episcopal Deaconess at a small Alaskan mission just north of the Arctic Circle. Her letter detailed her duties at the mission, which included being postmistress and weatherman. Reading it inspired me to learn more about the settlement where she lived, missionary work in Alaska, how the mail was routed so far north and the eventual establishment of a post office at her village.

I enjoyed researching this article probably more than any of the other ones I have written. I got to go to my local branch of the National Archives where I looked at the 1920 Federal census, *Records of Postmaster Appointments* and *Post Office Site Reports*. I went to Stanford University to view the Serial Set of the Congressional Record, and to the University of California at Berkeley to see postal route maps. I also went through my microfilm copy of the *Daily Postal Bulletin* (PB). I am indebted to Yogi Patel, Archives Assistant at the Archives of the Episcopal Church in Austin, TX, for sending me some invaluable information on Deaconess Thayer.

### Missionaries In Alaska

The map shown in *figure 1* shows the location of the Episcopal Mission of St. John's-In-the-Wilderness. It is located  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile north of the Arctic Circle, on the south bank of Koyukuk River, near its junction with the Alatna River. It is approximately 190 air miles



**Figure 1** St. John's-in-the-Wilderness mission.

from Fairbanks. Its location near these two rivers made it a natural spot for the establishment of a trading center for the Koyukon Athabascan Indians and Kobuk, Selawik and Nunamiut Eskimos. In fact, this spot was the northernmost range of the Athabascans in Alaska. The Indians live on the south side of the river in the village of Allakaket, while the Eskimos live on the other side of the river in the village of Alatna. These various bands established joint settlements in the early 1850's.

The church has a long and colorful history of missionary work in Alaska. The first Anglican missionary to cross the border from Canada into what was then Russian Alaskan was the Reverend William Kirby. He arrived in Fort Yukon in 1861, holding services in the local Athabascan language. This reflected the Anglican churches respect for the native cultures. The first Episcopal mission in Alaska was established in 1889 at Anvik. Other denominations, such as the Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Swedish Evangelical, Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholics, Russian Orthodox, Moravians, Congregationalists, Quakers, Baptists and Lutherans also founded missions in Alaska. At the beginning of the twentieth century, more than 82 missions and churches were educating the natives both academically and spiritually.

These mission schools helped supplement the efforts of the government schools, and were officially much appreciated and encouraged. In his 1906 report to Congress, the Governor of Alaska wrote, "These schools all teach the English language, and this is the first essential for contact with the white man, that the Indian may be more valuable as a laborer and better able to treat for his hire. In some instances, where the natives have been long under the influence of these missions, they have been very considerably advanced in civilization, indeed, so far that it seems but fair and right that some means should be provided by which a native could acquire all kinds of property and transmit it to his descendants, the same as all citizens."

It was in 1906, that the northernmost of all the Episcopal missions was founded in Allakaket by Arch-deacon Struck. (Six years later this same man made the first ascent of Mt. McKinley.) The first mission consisted of three spruce log buildings, one of which

functioned as a church. The first two missionaries there were Miss Boyes, the trained nurse, and Miss Wilcox, the teacher. Robert Marshall, in his 1956 book, *Arctic Wilderness*, wrote that these two missionaries, "...were kindly, competent ladies, with a good sense of humor, who did not try to force on the natives any more of the white man's schooling or medicine or Christianity than the natives were willing to absorb."

### Deaconess Thayer

The 1920 Federal census, done just two years before

Miss Thayer wrote her letter, details the inhabitants living in the area of the mission. The village of Allakaket had 82 natives, 51 of which were under 21 years of age. There were also three white people from Pennsylvania: the female mission nurse, the female mission teacher and Les Flegel, the merchant who ran the local store. Across the river, the village of Alatna had 32 natives.

In the fall of 1921, Deaconess Thayer arrived at the mission for her three-year Alaska service stint. She was 31 years old, and a native of San Francisco. She was a first generation American, both her parents having been born in England. She had graduated from St. Margaret's House, Episcopal Training Center for women in 1919, before working for two years at Good Samaritan Mission in the city of her birth.

The cover that contained her letter is shown in *figure 2*. It was postmarked in Tanana, Alaska on March 22, 1922, with a Type four 4-bar cancel. (There was no post office near the mission until 1925.) The corner card, which is light and hard to see, reads, "M. A. Thayer, DEACONESS/St. John's-In-the-Wilderness/Allakaket/Koyukuk River/Via Tanana, ALASKA".

The actual letter is dated March 6, 1922, indicating a 16-day journey from the mission to Tanana. The first page of the letter is shown in *figure 3*. Note the nice letterhead head she used, as well as her clear handwriting. I have transcribed the 12-page letter exactly as she wrote it. Her grammar and spelling are, for the



**Figure 2** This cover carried Deaconess Thayer's letter of March 6, 1922.

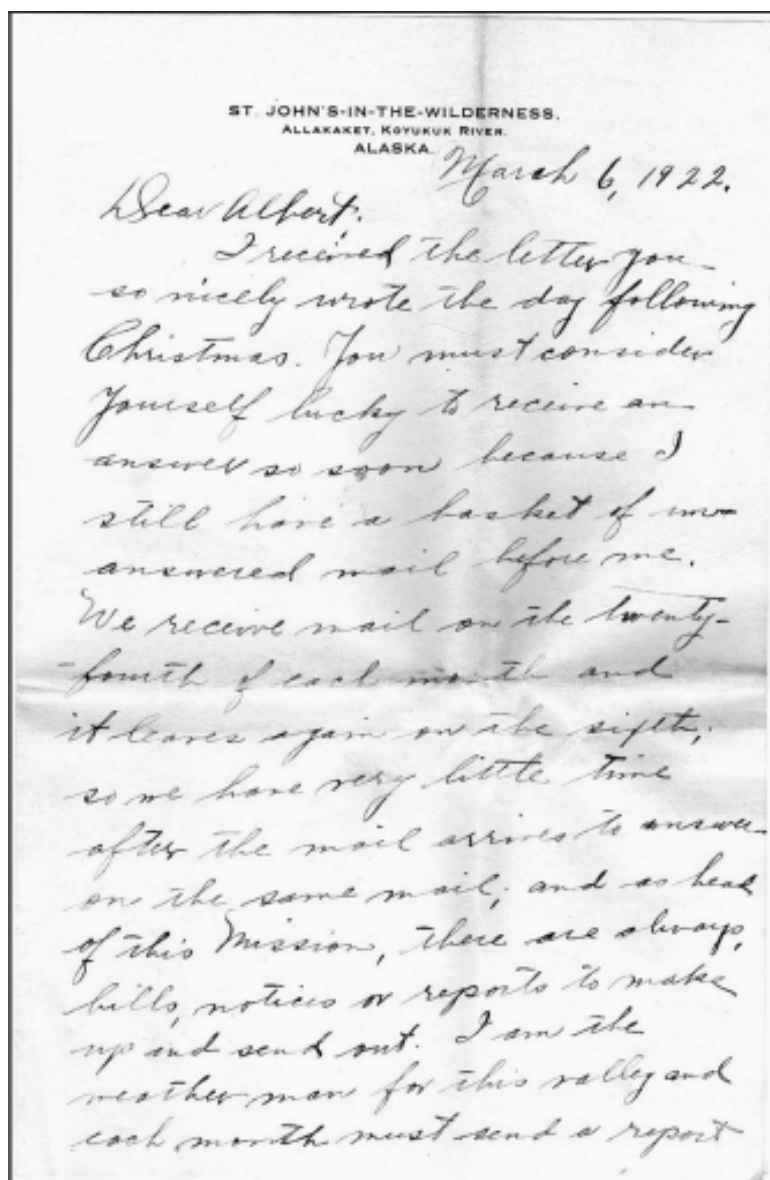
most part, quite good. She had a tendency to leave out personal pronouns on occasion, though. Her punctuation lent itself to some run-on sentences – she often used a semicolon when a dash or colon would have been more appropriate. I had to look up a few of her words to see what they meant. The word "cottas" means a loose white outer ecclesiastical vestment, usually knee length with large open sleeves. I believe she uses the word "riffles" instead of "ripples", and that "Mitre" is the name of an Episcopal newsletter. "Potlach" is a form of native ceremonial festival. She mentions a Mrs. Turner in her letter. In the 1920 Federal census, Deaconess Thayer lived in Berkeley with the Reverend James Taylor, a Canadian-born Episcopal Church clergyman, his Welsh wife, Ida, and their ten-year-old son, Thomas.

Her letter reads as follows:

Dear Albert,

I received the letter you so nicely wrote the day following Christmas. You must consider yourself lucky to receive an answer so soon because I still have a basket of unanswered mail before me. We receive mail on the twenty-fourth of each month and it leaves again on the sixth, so we have very little time after the mail arrives to answer on the same mail; and as head of this Mission, there are always bills, notices or reports to make up and send out. I am the weather man for this valley and each month must send a report to the Government. I am enclosing you a copy, so that you can see what work there is on a weather report. I am also postmistress and receive and sort all mail for this val-





**Figure 3** The first page of Deaconess Thayer's letter.

ley. Receive and dispatch all the outgoing mail. Write the letters for the natives. Weight [sic] and stamp all outgoing mail. Then I am school teacher mornings and nights. Am cook, wash woman, and scrub woman for this six room cabin. Am preacher, organist, show director, choir mother and laundress. We have sixteen boys in the choir some are Eskimo and some are Indian. We have to furnish the handkerchiefs for the choir and these together with their cottas, and stiff collars must be washed and ironed. Then I visit the sick and bury the dead. I dispense food and clothing to the natives in return for wood, water and moccasins. I am busy; but this keeps me from being lonesome or homesick. Think of it; six months of my Alaskan service has passed. Albert, I am sure you would enjoy playing on this little old organ. Thanksgiving morning I had service at eleven o'clock and at three

had a funeral service for a little eighteen months old boy that had fallen through an air hole in the ice and been drowned and frozen in the river. When I had closed the organ in the morning it was alright [sic]; but when I attempted to play the funeral hymn the old organ began falling to pieces in all directions. It was something terrible. Now I have the organ nailed to the floor, so that it can not be moved or shaken about. I have taken it to pieces and cleaned the reeds and it is really much better; but still there is room for improvement. Tell Lenore that it is better than the one she used for kindergarten. What class does Miss Swinburne teach? She has been so busy that she has not written. I know how busy those in the Mission can be. Do they have teacher's meetings? I had a "Mitre" this month and see quite a write up about the new organist and choir director. How long will he last with that bunch? I wonder. I have not had any Mission news except the little my sister sent me. I expect Mrs. Turner will be writing before long, now that the rush is over. I had a letter from Bernice. She told me Gerta had been quite ill. She gave me only the news about the dances and parties down at the Mission.

We had a wonderful Christmas here; beginning with the midnight service Christmas Eve; Carols at five o'clock Christmas morning. Wrapped in new shoes, parkas, caps and mittens, we marched from cabin to cabin singing carols and wishing each family a Merry Christmas. Then home to the cabin where we all had a fine breakfast. School at ten; church at eleven thirty and again at five. Our offering amounted to Sixty-seven Dollars and fifty cents. After the evening

service we had the fifty one little school children come in and hang up a stocking on our cabin walls. I then had to hold private service in a cabin where death threatened to carry off the mother of a large family. I am glad to say that death was finally defeated and Amelia is very well again. After the private service for her family I returned to our cabin and filled the stockings with cakes, candies, nuts and raisins. The mates I had already filled with clothing and toys. It was stockings to the right of them, stockings to the left of them, stockings to the front and stockings to the back of them; rattle and roll of loaded stockings. At nine o'clock Monday morning I rang the bell and the children trooped in to claim their stockings. Oh! such fun. At ten o'clock we all gathered around a large and well trimmed and lighted spruce tree and sang carols and then I, as Santa gave a bundle of cloth-



ing and candy to man, woman and baby. Then all went home to don their new clothing during the hour of daylight we all played foot ball on the river. Men and women play football here. All wear moccasins and so do not injure each other. The ball is round and about twice the size of a base ball. It is made of moose hide and stuffed with excelsior. It really is a great sport. That night and every night, except Sunday, for two weeks they danced until six thirty each morning. We all had a fine time.

Do you not go to those wonderful dances and parties that Bernice wrote me about? The Young Peoples Fellowship, I believe she said had big times and were quite successful. Now Albert, this is what I want to know. Has this Young Peoples Fellowship added of these one hundred and fifty young people to the regular congregation? Is it a Spiritual factor or only social? It is supposed so I understand, to have a five fold plan; Church worship – social, literary, missionary and something else, or other. Is it fulfilling this plan? I have always been interested in the Young Peoples Fellowship, but have not had a chance to

watch the results of any branch. Please ask Lenore to let me know. How does Miss Swinburne hold out? Is she strong enough for that place? I am worried about her, because I know both the place and her.

The country is quite a large valley here. We are one thousand feet above the sea level. We have some high bluffs across the river and these are the burying grounds. It is a steep climb of a little over one hundred feet, almost straight up. The river is very winding and quite wide, with a swift strong current. The mountains are plainly visible all about us; though some miles distant. We travel by row boats or canoes in the summer; either rowing, paddling, poling or lining. By the line method we mean; harnessing our dogs to a long line and they walk along the shore while with a paddle you steer your boat free of the shore, riffles or sand bars. In the winter we travel on snow shoes or by dog team. Reindeer make better teams, but there are none just here, so we use dogs. Of course, you can say; Gee or How all you like but if the dogs decide to go their way it is hard to stop them because you have no lines or reins on them.

Form No. 1000-3-11-1

U. S. Department of Agriculture, Weather Bureau.

MONTHLY SUMMARY.

COOPERATIVE OBSERVERS' METEOROLOGICAL RECORD

Month of February, 1921; Station, Alakaket; County, Rogovukuk  
 State, Alaska; Latitude, 66°-24'; Longitude, 152°-44'; Hour of Observation, 2 P.M.  
 Time used on this form, None

TEMPERATURE.					PRECIPITATION.					Direction of Wind or Force of Current.	Character of Sky according to Subject.	Miscellaneous Remarks.
Date.	Max.	Min.	Average.	* Wet Bulb.	Time of Beginning.	Time of Ending.	Amount in Inches.	Direction.	Duration of Snow or Ice at Time of Observation.			
1	21	5	16	21	9 AM		0.16	1/2	26 in.	Calms	10	Barometer 28.22
2	24	9	16.5	21		10 AM	0.01	1/2		Calms	10	28.34
3	15	-1	16	11						Calms	5	28.46
4	13	-11	14	-10	D.N.	D.N.	0.03	1/4		South	7	28.74
5	15	-27	40	-23						Calms	0	29.24
6	-15	-23	34	-37						Calms	0	29.60
7	-15	-50	35	-15	10 AM	12 M		T		Calms	7	29.08
8	-11	-43	32	-37						Calms	0	29.24
9	-9	-42	33	-10						Calms	7	29.12
10	-2	-13	11	-2						N.E.	10	29.72
11	3	-5	8	3	D.N.	1 P.M.	0.10	1	27 in.	Calms	10	28.78
12	14	-25	39	-10						Calms	10	28.86
13	-9	-26	17	-13						Calms	8	28.20
14	-11	-25	14	-16						Calms	0	28.32
15	-1	-16	15	-1						Calms	10	28.26
16	3	-6	9	3	8 AM	12 M	0.06	1/2		Calms	10	28.88
17	6	0	6	6	4 PM					Calms	10	28.86
18	13	-1	14	13			0.20	2	28 in.	Calms	10	28.72
19	16	-32	48	-13						Calms	0	29.30
20	-12	-34	22	-19						Calms	7	29.12
21	-14	-34	20	-16						Calms	0	28.88
22	17	-20	37	17	1 P.M.			T		N	10	28.60
23	31	-3	34	1		D.N.	0.30	3		N	0	29.20
24	22	-11	33	22						N	10	28.90
25	23	-22	46	9						Calms	0	29.00
26	9	-25	34	4						Calms	0	28.96
27	5	-30	38	0						Calms	0	28.80
28	6	-24	30	6					30 in.	N	3	28.46
29												
30												
31												
Tot.	357	574	717	346			0.86	8 1/4			1.54	808.96
Mean.	14	-24	25	-15			.12	1			5/8	28.87

TEMPERATURE.

Mean maximum, 14  
 Mean minimum, -23  
 Mean, 37

Maximum, 31, date, Feb. 23  
 Minimum, -53, date, Feb. 6  
 Greatest daily range, 48, date, Feb. 19

PRECIPITATION.

Total, 0.86 inches.  
 Greatest in 24 hours, 0.30, date, Feb. 23

SNOW.

Total snowfall, 87 inches; on ground 19th, 27 inches;  
 at end of month, 30 inches

NUMBER OF DAYS—

With .01 inch or more precipitation, 4 7  
 Clear, 10; partly cloudy, 7; cloudy, 11

DATES OF—

Killing frost, \_\_\_\_\_  
 Thunderstorms, \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hail,

Figure 4

Reindeer you drive as you would horses. The Eskimos are very nice and I believe more friendly to the white people and to the church. They do very fine fur work. The Parkas and moccasins they make are wonderful. The Indians do beautiful bead work and also make fine birch bark baskets. I have found them very nice and ready to do their share of the Mission work.

The two tribes do not trust each other and do not mix or mingle. They sit on separate sides of the Church and in the Potlach House. The Mission alone keeps peace between them.

Please give my love to your Mother and Lenore; best wishes and regards to your father and yourself and believe me.

Your sincere friend  
Muriel Alice Thayer

How is Miss Bayview?

She added the circled notation, "Answered 5/2/22" at the bottom of the last page of her letter.

The copy of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Weather Bureau, Cooperative Observers' Meteorological Record she had enclosed in the letter is shown in *figure 4* at about 50% of its original size. The weather station opened in 1907, and closed in 1982.

For the month of February 1922, it never got above freezing (31 degrees was the high). It did get down to 53 degrees below zero on February 6. (Temperatures have fallen to as low as 70 degrees below zero there.) In addition to recording the maximum, minimum and range of daily temperatures, she also recorded the



*Figure 5 Deaconess Thayer in the 1920s.*



*Figure 6 Deaconess Thayer in 1949.*

of day, barometric pressure and auroras (nine during the month).

A photograph of Deaconess Thayer in full dress taken in the 1920s in California is shown in *figure 5*. Another shot of her taken in 1949 is shown in *figure 6*. When her Alaskan service was over, she returned to her native California, where she spent the rest of her life. She worked at St. Andrew's Home for Boys in San Francisco from 1925-29 and the mission at King City, CA from 1929-1933. During the last six or seven years of her life, she taught at the All Soul's Church in Berkeley. She died on November 5, 1952, donating her eyes to the Stanford University Eye Clinic. Her generosity made possible two cornea transplants, that restored the sight of a West Coast longshoreman and a former Arizona cowboy.

To get a feel for the salaries of Alaskan missionaries (and the discrepancy between the genders) in the 1920s, please see *figure 7*. This page from the Department of Missions of the Episcopal Church details the business arrangements in connection with the Alaska mission. Women, regardless of their ordination, were paid \$600 a year when they first started. Single laymen were paid \$950 a year, while single ordained men received \$1,100. Women did receive supply outfits that men did not. Allakaket had a supply outfit worth \$375, the second highest of all the Alaskan missions. This would at least bring a woman's compensation up to \$975. Men had to supply their own outfits, though single men did get a freight allowance of up to \$50 a year if stationed in the interior of Alaska.

temperature when the sun set and the mean temperatures. Other items she recorded include: precipitation data (beginning and ending times, amount of rain and or snow, and snow depth), prevailing wind direction, character

F 303

**THE DEPARTMENT OF MISSIONS  
OF THE  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH**  
281 FOURTH AVENUE  
NEW YORK

**BUSINESS ARRANGEMENTS IN CONNECTION WITH  
THE ALASKA MISSION**

**Salaries For Men**

	First 3 years	Next 4 years	Next 7 years	All future service
Single Men Ordained.....	\$1,100	\$1,200	\$1,250	\$1,300
Single Laymen .....	950	1,050	1,150	1,250
Married Men Ordained...	1,500	1,650	1,800	2,000
Married Laymen .....	1,200	1,350	1,500	1,650

Married doctors are on the same basis as married ordained men.

Unmarried doctors are on the same basis as unmarried ordained men.

Unmarried men, whether ordained or lay stationed in the interior, have a freight allowance, the amount to be determined by the location of the Mission, but in no case to exceed \$50 a year.

Married men stationed in the interior have a freight allowance, the amount to be determined by the location of the Mission, but in no case to exceed \$100 a year.

**Salaries For Women**

For the first five years.....	\$600 a year
For the next five years.....	700 a year
For subsequent service .....	800 a year

**Supply Outfits**

In addition to the salary for women, annual supply outfits will be provided in accordance with the following table:

Allakaket .....\$375	Fort Yukon .....\$300	Tanana .....\$300
Anvik ..... 350	Ketchikan ..... 200	Tanana Crossing. 400
Chena ..... 300	Nenana ..... 300	Valdez ..... 200
Fairbanks ..... 300	Salchaket ..... 350	Wrangel. .... 200
	Stephen's Village 300	

The Supply Outfit for women covers such supplies as it may be necessary to send into the Mission for the use of the missionary during the year. Women missionaries on furlough are paid the cash salary received in the field plus \$300, in lieu of supply outfit.

(OVER)

**Figure 7 Compensation schedule for Alaskan missionaries in the 1920s.**

## Postal Routes

As mentioned above, there was no post office near the mission when this letter was written. The Post Office Department (POD) established star routes in Alaska to facilitate the transportation of the mails. The star routes served both places that had post offices and those that did not. On June 30, 1922, there were 11,042 miles of star routes in Alaska operating at an annual expense of \$208,049. The number of star routes in Alaska was actually decreasing in the 1920s due to extension of the Government railroad, which

could carry the mails quicker and at less cost. Prior to using airplanes, the summer season allowed the use of the Koyukuk River, as a natural highway for carrying the mails. From mid-September or mid-October to some time in May, the mails had to be carried by dog sled back then.

In my attempt to figure out the routing of this letter, I went to the Map Room at the University of California at Berkeley. They have the best selection of maps in Northern California, and had the *Alaska Postal Route* maps from 1917 and 1937. The letter was written in 1922, so I examined both maps. The 1917 map is shown in *figure 8*. The mission was located in the village of Alatna then, which is found just above the Arctic Circle (arrow). At this time, mail was carried on a 190-mile star route to a point that connected with Fairbanks. There were nine trips during the period from September 15 to May 31, which equates to monthly service. As the 1922 cover under study was postmarked at Tanana, the routing must have changed from the 1917 map.

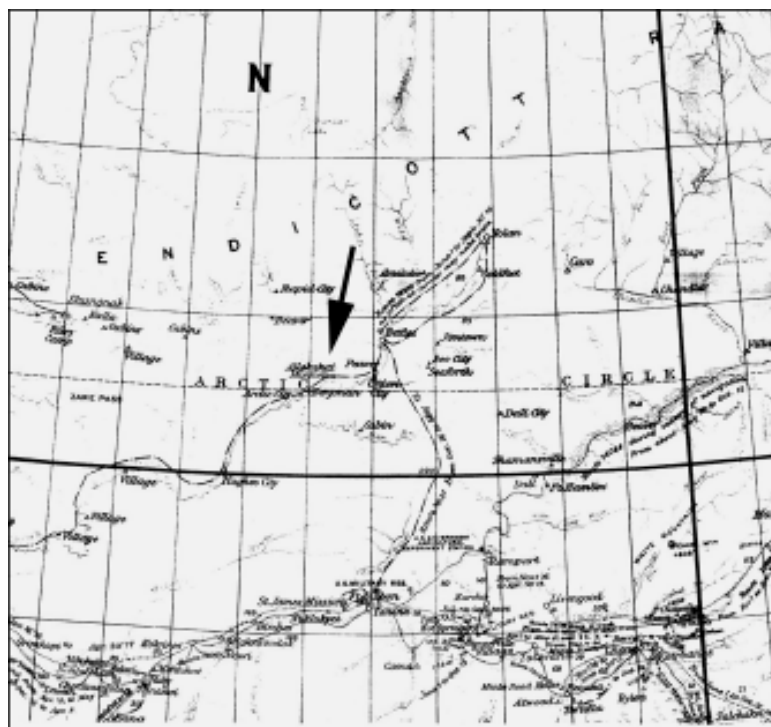
The 1937 postal route map has different routing than in 1917. It is shown in *figure 9*. At this time, Alatna had changed its name to Allakaket. It is shown on the map as "Allakaket Mission" (arrow). During the cold months (October 16 to May 15), star route 78137 went from Tanana to Beetles. It was another 36 miles from here to the mission. The letter could have gone this route, but lacking a 1922 postal route map, I cannot say for sure. There could have been another direct route covering the 160 miles from the mission to Tanana in 1922. The important thing is that star routes were set up to supply places without post offices, and that it took 16 days for the letter to get to Tanana.

Further research into the *PB* revealed a few more interesting facts about routing the mails. The route from the mission to Beetles was not a star route, but considered a Special Service route. A typical announcement from a 1926 *PB* authorized the postmaster at Alatna to employ a carrier to perform special service as often as practicable, at a rate not exceeding 2/3 of his compensation as postmaster from October 16 to May 25.





**Figure 8** Detail from the Postal Route Map of Alaska, 1917, showing the location of the Episcopal Mission (arrow added).



**Figure 9** Detail from the Postal Route Map of Alaska, 1937, showing the location of the Episcopal Mission (arrow added).

There were also provisions for emergency mail service. The seasonal conditions in Alaska sometimes caused mail to accumulate. This was due to extreme cold temperatures and heavy snowfall, as well as waiting for the ice to break up on the rivers. Prior to 1925, annual competitive bids were required to be placed by outside contractors. This often led to delays in moving the mails. This situation was eliminated by Public Law Number 439, signed by President Coolidge on February 21, 1925. This law allowed the Postmaster General “to provide difficult or emergency mail service in Alaska, including the establishment and equipment of relay stations, in such manner as he may think advisable without advertisement therefor [sic].” This law also waived the requirement that the mail carriers be bonded.

A typical emergency notice under “Star-Route Service/Established” in the September 18, 1930, *PB* reads, “The superintendent of railway mail service at Seattle, Wash., is hereby authorized to employ A.G. Vachon, of Tacoma, to perform emergency service from Tanana, by Alatna, Beetles, and Coldfoot (n.o.) [no office] to Wiseman for the transportation of not to exceed 500 pounds of mail, each way, from about Oct. 16 to May 15, 1931, at the rate of 71 cents a pound for mail carried; payment to Carrier A.G. Vachon to be made by the postmaster at Tanana.”

### Alatna Gets A Post Office

In 1925, paperwork was filed to establish a post office for the mission at the village of Alatna. The first page of this document is shown in *figure 10*. On August 25, 1925, the office of the First Assistant Postmaster General, Division of Postmasters’ Appointments sent the establishment form to Wilfred Evans, the applicant for the position of postmaster at Alatna. The name of the post office was subsequently crossed out, with the notation “Na[me] Ch[anged] to Allakaket 5/1/38”. The notation “4-67°-153°” just above the name of the proposed

**EXECUTE AND RETURN WITH YOUR BOND**

**ESTABLISHMENT**

LOCATION OF PROPOSED POST OFFICE

**Post Office Department**

FIRST ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL

DIVISION OF POSTMASTERS' APPOINTMENTS

James S. Huntington,

IN REPLYING MENTION INITIALS AND DATE

AF--AES

Aug. 25, 1925

Washington

POST OFFICE DEPT.

Division of Topography

JAN 16 1926

FIRST ASSISTANT

DIVISION OF POSTMASTERS' APPOINTMENTS

JAN 8 - 1926

RECEIVED

POSTMASTER GENERAL

SIR: With reference to the proposed establishment of a post office at the point named below, and in order that the office, if established, may be accurately represented upon the post-route maps, it is requested that you furnish accurately the information called for below and prepare a sketch according to instructions on opposite side of paper, which should be returned to the First Assistant Postmaster General, Division of Postmasters' Appointments, as soon as possible.

Respectfully,

4-67<sup>a</sup>-153<sup>a</sup>      FIRST ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL.

Proposed post office, Alakaket Alaska

If the town, village, or site of the post office be known by another name than that of the post office, state that other name here: Alakaket

The post office would be situated in the \_\_\_\_\_ quarter of section No. \_\_\_\_\_, in Township \_\_\_\_\_, Range \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_ principal meridian, County of \_\_\_\_\_, State of \_\_\_\_\_.

The name of the nearest river is Koyukuk, and the post-office building would be at a distance of \_\_\_\_\_ on the East side of it.

The name of the nearest creek is \_\_\_\_\_, and the post-office building would be at a distance of \_\_\_\_\_ on the \_\_\_\_\_ side of it.

The name of the nearest office on the same route as this proposed post office is Bettles, Alaska, and its distance is 36 miles, by the traveled road, in a N direction from the site of this proposed office.

The name of the nearest office on the same route, on the other side, is Lenana, Alaska, and its distance is 160 miles, in a E direction from the site of this proposed office.

The name of the nearest office not on the same route as this proposed post office is Koyukuk Mouth, and its distance is 500 miles, by the traveled road, in a S direction from the site of this proposed office.

The post-office building would be on the \_\_\_\_\_ side of the \_\_\_\_\_ Railroad, and at a distance of \_\_\_\_\_ from the track. The railroad station name is \_\_\_\_\_.

The post office would be \_\_\_\_\_, air-line distance, \_\_\_\_\_ from the nearest point of my county boundary.

Signature of Applicant for Postmaster: Wilfred J. Evans  
Date: Dec. 6, 1925

**Figure 10** Page one of the Geographic Site Report filed to establish a post office at Alatna, Alaska, by Wilfred Evans.



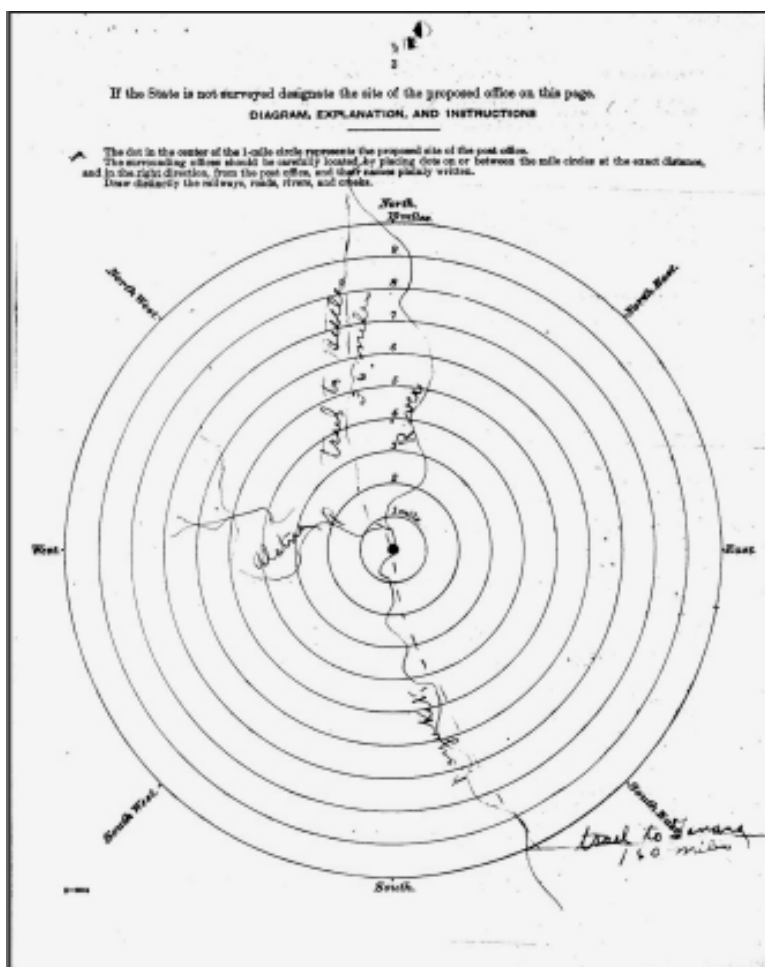
post office means that it was located in the Fourth Judicial District, at the given latitude and longitude.

Part of the application for the establishment of a post office required the completion of a diagram that showed surrounding post offices, railways, rivers and creeks. The diagram submitted for Alatna is shown in *figure 11*. The diagram consists of ten concentric circles radiating out of a central point in one-mile increments. The applicant on an attached note wrote that the distances are so vast that that the scale of the diagram is too small. He drew in the Alatna and Koyukuk Rivers, as well as the 36-mile trail to Beetles and the 160-mile trail to Tanana.

Evans signed the form on December 6, 1925, getting it back to the POD on January 8, 1926. The official postmaster appointment date was given as January, 14, 1926, in the *Records of Postmaster Appointments*, but as effective August 31, 1926 per the *PB*. With the vast distances involved and the slow pace of written communication back then, it is impossible to say when the post office actually began operating. According to official records, it closed temporarily effective October 31, 1930. It was re-established on February 24, 1933, changing its name to Allakaket (the old name for the mission) on May 1, 1938. The name Alatna was assumed by the small Eskimo village across the river. It is still operating today.

## Allakaket Today

The first public school was established in 1957. A flood in the spring of 1964 caused by ice jamming inundated 85% of the village. In 1975, the community incorporated as a city, including both villages of Alatna and Allakaket. A clinic and airport were built in 1978. A new school and roads were built in 1979. In September 1994, flood waters destroyed and swept away almost all of the city's buildings, homes and food supplies for the winter. Residents were housed in other villages for the winter. The city has relocated near the old site and is rebuilding. The 1990 census showed a population of 170 people: 126 Indian, 34 Eskimo and 10 white.

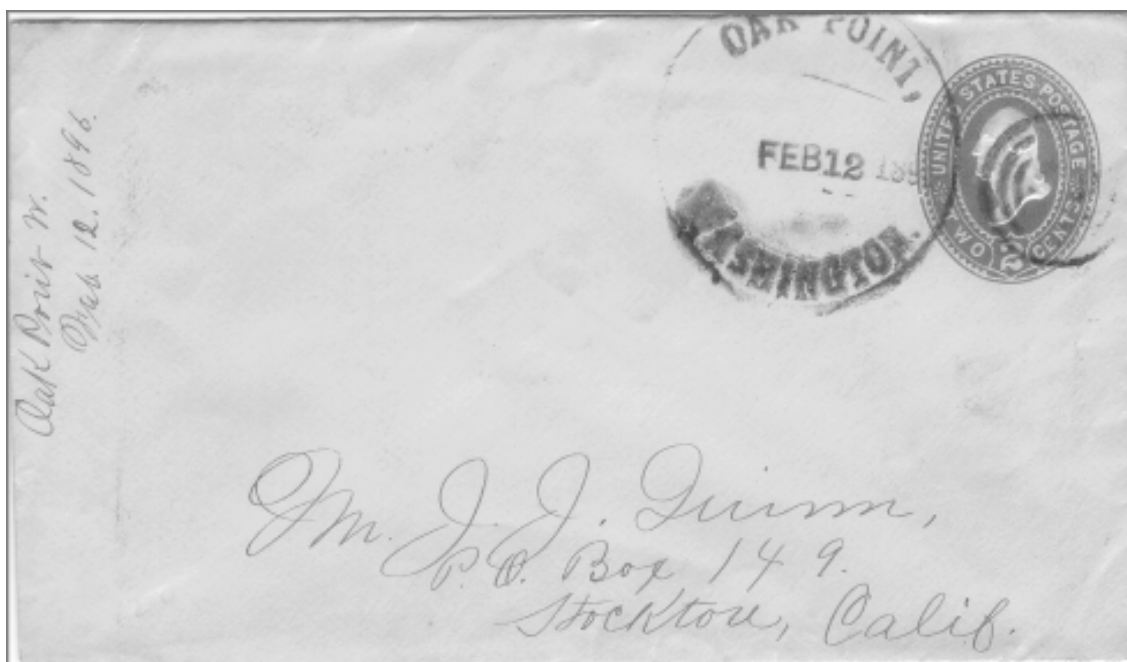


**Figure 11** Locational diagram accompanying the *Geographic Site Report* (reduced about 50%)

I sent a copy of the letter to the mission to see what kind of response I would get. The mission treasurer wrote me back, thanking me for the "old letter" and saying that she would share it with people and then put it in a safe place. She said that what they really needed were old pictures of people in the Koyukuk River area. She named some missionaries who did some photography from the 1920's to 1950's, and then added that "In those days a lot of our parents didn't have cameras." She closed by saying that they could also use more old letters. I recognized her last name, Moses, from the 1920 census. She was Athabascan.

I close with a quote from "*The Alaskan Shepherd*", an Episcopal journal:

Some give by going to the Missions  
Some go by giving to the Missions  
Without both there are no Missions



This Oak Point, Washington, duplex handstamp of 1894 is an example of the kind of equipment the GPO was trying to eliminate with the suppression of private-made canceling devices.

## Suppressing 19<sup>th</sup> Century Cancel Suppliers: a Reference

by Tom Clarke

In the Nov 2002, *La Posta*, p.50ff, a newly found broadsheet of John Goldsborough, canceling device creator of the 1880s, was displayed. The article generated by it reconsidered the life span of private canceler makers and questioned the end date, when federal postoffice supplies replaced them. Pertinent to the demise were these comments:

Finally, the suppression

The discussion in the 1994 *La Posta* articles aimed at locating the endpoint for privately made handstamps. Postal marking ads seemed to abruptly end in the Fall of 1889. . . . [See "Early Philadelphia Wessons, in Context", July 1994; "Non Standard Postmarkers, ca. 1879", September 1994; plus another "Philadelphia's Circular Postal Markings, 1765 to 1870, concluded", January 2000.]

Well, not so. However, the date of suppression has been narrowed down to sometime before 1894. The [private canceler] ads reappeared prior to 1893 — and probably they'd never left the scene. The previous incorrect estimate of their demise is a story of insufficient information. Revealed by further evidence is a continuation of marker offerings,...

One of the final companies to advertise markers was the Sadler Company of Baltimore MD. In the combined Columbian stamps issue of February-March 1893 *Guide*, we see the Sadler Company had added an office in Kansas City MO. Two months later in the May 1893 edition, their gargantuan ad spanned the *last six pages* (including the rear cover) plus an additional half page toward the front...

Sadler proudly proclaimed themselves as *the Cheapest P. O. Supply House and suppliers of Everything for Postmasters and Contractors to the U.S. Post Office Department*.

...Such an entrepreneurial success story! Just a few months before, in the February-March issue, they, like Yale and Towne, had only been advertising postal cabinets. However, by February-March they were also touting their new sea-to-sea coverage with the recent addition of a San Francisco office. Unfortunately, San Francisco was not mentioned in the May issue. Is this perhaps explained by the fact that the year 1893 was a year of a profound economic Panic?

The end came sometime after May 1893. Between then and October 1894, private marker advertisements ceased. There must be references and orders to this alteration but unknown to the writer. In fact, not only are there no postal marker ads, there are no ads at all

after that approximate date. Perhaps the increasing page space required by the rapidly growing number of post offices prohibited it? Perhaps that ephemeral P. O. D. order grounding any but P. O. D. supplied devices also included a clause or two outlawing all ad space in government documents?

## Another reference

A *La Posta* subscriber in Europe recently assisted by supplying the following information:

It would seem that the suppression of privately made hand stamps (*La Posta*, November 2002, page 50, etc.) was either via the following text or via one of the Sections quoted in the 1893 *Postal Laws and Regulations*.

It is interesting to note that just a few years later, rubber stamps were back in full swing, supplied by the Post Office Department or on their behalf. This quote is from *United States Official Postal Guide*, Second Series, Vol. XIX, No.6, June 1897. Maybe this text helps in your research.

### INSTRUCTIONS IN RELATION TO POST-MARKING AND BACK-STAMPING.

Post Office Department, Washington D.C., May 14, 1897.

Legible postmarking of mail matter is of the greatest importance to the public as evidence before the courts, in business transactions conducted through the mails, and in fixing the responsibility when mail matter has been improperly handled by postmasters and other postal employees. The frequency of complaints in regard to defective postmarking makes it necessary for the Department to adopt severe measures to remedy the trouble. Illegible postmarking is generally due either to carelessness in the method of handling the stamp, failure to keep the stamp clean, improper adjusting of type in stamp, improper condition of inking pad, or failure to place letters on rubber pad or some elastic surface when postmarking them. Much of the postmarking, especially that at the smaller offices, is a reflection upon the postal service. The Department considers failure of duty in this respect a serious matter, which must be remedied at once. Attention is called to Sections 422, 471, 474, 475 and 509, *Postal Laws and Regulations*, 1893.

### POSTMARKING STAMPS.

The Impression of every official stamp should be perfect; so made that each letter and figure of the stamp may be distinct. To effect this, the stamp must be kept clean, which may be done by brushing it with a stiff brush, slightly wetted and dipped in powdered pot-

ash or soda. Alcohol, ether, or coal (kerosene) oil may also be used for this purpose. The type after use must be cleaned before being replaced in the box.

Rubber, brass, and other postmarking or receiving stamps, not furnished by this Department, are positively prohibited, and wherever in use must be discontinued at once.

### The Regulations

Section 422. Uniform Canceling Ink.—That the Postmaster-General be, and he is hereby, authorized to adopt a uniform canceling ink or other appliance for canceling stamps, . . . to be used in all post-offices where stamps are canceled, and he is hereby authorized to said canceling ink or other appliance in the same manner as other supplies . . .

Section 471. Stamps to be Defaced.—Postage stamps affixed to all mail matter or the stamped envelopes in which the same is inclosed, shall, when deposited for mailing or delivery, be defaced by the postmaster at the mailing office....

Section 474. Impression to be Taken of the Postmarking Stamp.—The figures of the stamp must be carefully adjusted at the beginning of each day; and then a clear impression must be made in a book specially provided for the purpose, so as to afford evidence of the discharge of this duty. . . An impression must be made in the book provided of every change made throughout the day, and each impression should be taken immediately after change is made in the date or hour. This book or record must be kept two years, after which period it may be sold as waste paper.

Section 475. How to Secure Legible Stamping.—The impression of every official stamp should be perfect; so made that each letter and figure of the stamp may be distinct. To effect this the stamp must be kept perfectly clean . . . The type [for the dates, etc.], after use, must be cleaned before being replaced in the box. The stamp should be held firmly in the hand and struck upon the letter with a light, sharp blow, care being taken not to let the stamp fall upon the impression made at another post-office, or upon any portion of the address. The postmarking ink furnished to postmasters must be used in postmarking. (See Section 422.)

Section 509. Back-Stamping.—Every postmaster, the gross receipts of whose office amount to \$500 per annum, and every postmaster of a separating office, upon receipt of the mail, will immediately place the postmark of his office on the back of every letter therein received; and every postmaster whose office is not a separating office, and the gross receipt of which are less than \$500 per annum, will immediately upon receipt of the mail, back-stamp the month, the day of the month, and the year upon the back of every letter therein received, using the postmarking

stamp for that purpose. The value and importance of this practice are so great that failure to observe this rule, if continuous or repeated after notice, will be ground for removal from office.

The above quotes point out fundamental postmarking instructions that collectors will find interesting nonetheless. Not mentioned by the May 1897 instructions is Section 473, a more pertinent reference. It defines a proper handstamp as a metal one though, as our correspondent states, rubber markers will eventually return to use, possibly because they were less expensive, and maybe too because they were easier on the hands, re: today's repetitious movement, carpal tunnel syndrome.

Section 473. Mail Matter Other than Second Class to be Postmarked.— All mail matter, except that of the second class, deposited in any post-office for mailing, must bear a postmark giving name of the post-office, and, on first class matter, the date of the deposit. . . No offices are exempt from the requirements of this section.

The Department furnishes metal postmarking stamps. The use of rubber stamps is prohibited, as the ink furnished by the Department can not be used with them.

Unfortunately, contrary to the suggestion, nothing specific and definite in the *Regulations* comments on whether postmasters can or cannot purchase *metal* canceling devices, as John Goldsborough's were, from private companies. The distinction is made that rubber markers are out, and that, by the way, the Department furnishes [the required] metal devices. But *alone?*

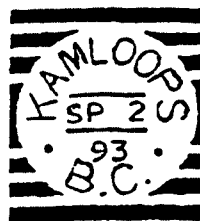
(The 1893 volume was mailed to postmasters probably in January. The book used for this writing has a hand stamp impression on the cover STANDISH/FEB/20/1893/ME. with additional name stamps of the postmaster and his/her assistant: H. B. Hartford, P.M. and Addie Morrison, Asst. P.M.)

The last private canceler ad in the *Postal Guide* appeared in May 1893, several months after the *Regulations* were relaeased. Thus, the previously stated dates are still acceptable. Sometime between May 1893 and November 1894 the government suspended all private manufacture of devices unless, no doubt, under contract to the Department (such as the Sadler Company above, self proclaimed "*Contractors to the U.S. Post Office Department*").

The rewritten and expanded 1902 edition of the *Postal Laws and Regulations* finally places into print the rule we've been searching for. In Section 567.4, it very

frankly states, "Postmasters must not use any other postmarking stamps than those furnished by the Post-Office Department."

But an 1893-4 order suppressing private contracts must reside in the archives in Washington. One day an enterprising *La Posta* reader will locate it.



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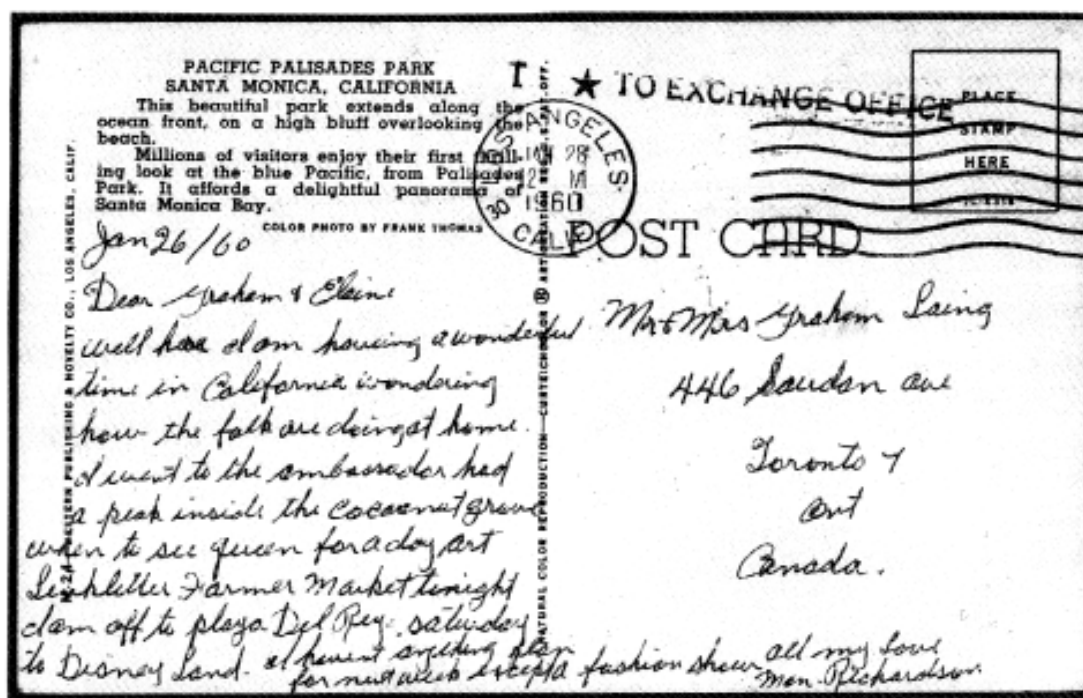
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**Figure 1** Picture postcard mailed without a return address from Los Angeles, California to Toronto, Canada. An instructional “T” marking, in magenta, noted the card being relocated from the Los Angeles Foreign Exchange Office to the San Pedro Foreign Exchange Office for processing.

## Instructional “T” Marking Used at the Los Angeles, California Mail Facility

By H.J. Berthelot

The picture postcard illustrated in *figure 1*, addressed to Toronto, Canada, was mailed at Los Angeles, California, on the 28<sup>th</sup> of January 1960. From the 1<sup>st</sup> of August 1958 through the 6<sup>th</sup> of January 1963, the United States (U.S.)-Canadian Postal Convention allowed standard, surface-rated cards to be transmitted between two countries at three-cents each. This card, however, was not only unpaid, but it did not have a return address.

Note the auxiliary marking just above the cancellation, “T [star] TO EXCHANGE OFFICE.” It is my understanding that this not-often-seen auxiliary marking was affixed at the Los Angeles, California Foreign Mail Facility. When that facility became overcrowded, the handling of foreign mail was relocated to the San Pedro, California Foreign Mail Facility. The instructional “T” marking, affixed in magenta, evidenced that this card was among the foreign mail matter transferred from Los Angeles to San Pedro for processing.

San Pedro, located a few miles south of Los Angeles, conveniently had its exchange facility located down by the docks. At this time, the greater proportion of foreign mail was being conveyed by ocean-going vessels.

How it subsequently was handled by exchange clerks in San Pedro, as well as by postal officials in Canada is not evident from the card.

While the U.S. and Canada were members of the Universal Postal Union (UPU), they had a bilateral convention for the exchange of mail. Such agreements were permissible under UPU-rules. The Convention’s rules regarding unpaid/insufficiently paid mail were the same as the UPU’s rules, except for the requirement of stating the total deficiency on the item in centimes. On the illustrated card, the deficiency (three cents U.S.) should have been doubled as a penalty (3 cents X 2 = 6 cents) and noted on the card that the San Pedro Facility as six-cents due. The total deficiency, under the convention rules, was not to be noted in centimes, rather it was to be stated in “cents.” In

Canada, the six-cents due should have been collected in Canadian cents, from the addressee upon delivery of the card.

The writer has seen another item—an envelope—struck with a variation of the instructional “T” marking. Posted in Los Angeles on the 21<sup>st</sup> of November 1955, the envelope was addressed to Wellington, New Zealand. From the 1<sup>st</sup> of November 1955 through the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 1961, the UPU surface letter rate from the U.S. was eight cents per fifteen grams. This envelope, of the first weight unit and with a five-cent adhesive affixed, was insufficiently paid three U.S. cents. On the envelope was an instructional “T” marking applied at the Los Angeles Foreign Mail Facility. The marking read **“T- To Exchange Office.”** At the San Pedro Foreign Mail Facility, a clerk applied a double-circle, binocular type UPU-T marking. In the left circle was the wording “T / S.P. CALIF”; in the right circle was the wording “CENTIMES / 18.” Both markings were struck in magenta.

According to UPU regulations, the deficiency was noted on the envelope in equivalent centimes. The calculations by the San Pedro Foreign Mail clerk were as follows: three-cents U.S. insufficiently paid, doubled as a penalty was the total deficiency in U.S. currency (3 cents X 2 = 6 cents); and, with one-cent U.S. being the equivalent of three centimes, the total centime amount due was noted on the envelope (6 cents X 3 centimes/cents = 18 centimes). The envelope was then routed to New Zealand. Upon receipt of the envelope in that country’s Foreign Office, the amount due was converted into New Zealand currency. Accordingly, the envelope was struck with a domestic due handstamp with five pence “TO PAY.” That amount presumably was collected from the addressee upon delivery of the envelope.

I would be interested in hearing from readers who have examples of this instructional “T” marking on other U.S. mail covers destined to foreign destinations. Many questions remain regarding the use of the marking—Was Los Angeles the only Exchange Office to have utilized such a marking?—What was the period of its use?—Are there other variations of the marking besides the two noted in this article?

According to a 1975 “Postal Bulletin,” the United States Postal Service discontinued the San Pedro Post Office “as a foreign exchange office for surface trans-Pacific mail in June 1973.”

Readers may reach me at: hankberthelot@yahoo.com or at: 132 Livingston Pl. W., Maitairie, LA 70005.

## References:

Beecher, Henry W. and Anthony S. Wawrukiewicz. *U.S. International Postal Rates, 1872-1996*. Portland: CAMA Publishing Company (1996).

*Postal Bulletin PD 21022*, dated February 6, 1975. Washington D.C.: United States Postal Service (Directives Control Division).

Unpublished handout distributed at the 1998 meeting of the Postage Due Mail Study Group, held at Mesa, Arizona, in conjunction with ARIPEX.

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## Two letters from early Ohio

by Tom Clarke

Ohio was separated from the North West Territory in 1803, when it requested and was granted statehood by the United States Senate, but not until 1817 would all claims to the land in present day Ohio be ceded by Indian tribes.

Settlers came from New England and New York through the Mohawk Valley (across central New York) and down the general coast of Lake Erie into and beyond and due west from the Philadelphia and New Jersey through Pittsburgh region of Pennsylvania.

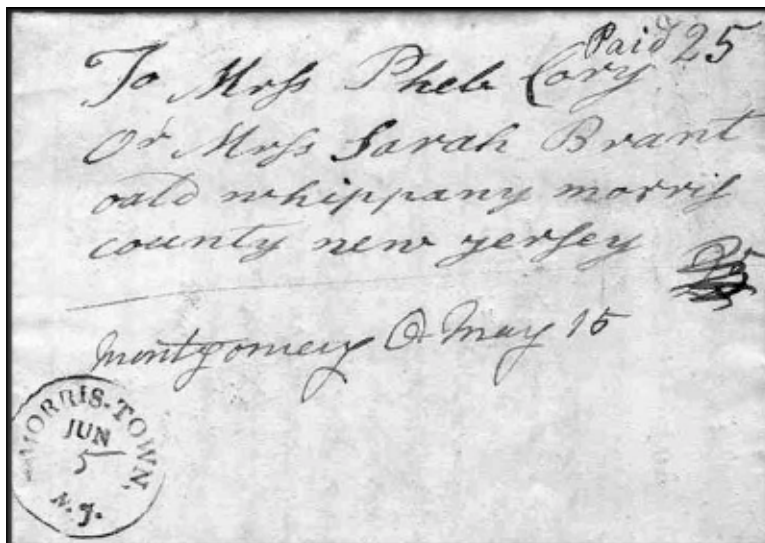
Following the Revolution and unsettled times that followed, the populating of Ohio lagged behind that of Tennessee and Kentucky. These two states, admitted to the Union in 1792 and 96, had 36,000 and 74,000 people each in 1790 but expanded to 105 and 220,000 by 1800! The territory north of the Ohio still had Indian difficulties and treaties to write, and what's more, the mid-Atlantic and New England States argued heatedly for years over who owned what part of the new-won lands.

But, by 1803 the required number of 50,000 had flooded into the area (45,000 in 1800), and by 1810 and 1820, Ohio proudly boasted shocking growth up to 230,000, then 581,000 people. It is at this latter point that the two letters described here were written.

New York, meanwhile, was exploiting the midwest by way of its connection to the famed Erie Canal (built 1817-25), and Philadelphia, which still had the bulk of ocean trade and increasing inland trade to interior rich farm lands west to Pittsburgh, and shortly to the coal fields to its north, continued its lush, lucrative business life.

Eventually, smallish Baltimore will contend with New York and Philadelphia and make a stab at economic greatness by developing the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, felt certain to bring increasing western business through Maryland's only seaport.

Ohio was developing its interior by connecting its rivers also with canals, like the Ohio Canal, joining Olean to the upper Allegheny, and others like the Champlain and Oswego (linking the Erie to Lake Ontario) Canals. Of course, New York will ultimately benefit from these connections, which brought interior goods over the Lakes to the Erie Canal, to Albany and then to New York City.



The Ohio River of course will drain goods from the lower portions of the state down to the Mississippi and eventually, if farmers were lucky, to the other "Big Apple" of the day, New Orleans.

### Letter One

The first letter is a manuscript "Montgomery O" mailed on May 15, 1820,

presumably close to Cincinnati in the south of the state near the Ohio River. The initial 25 cent due rate was scribbled out and "Paid 25" added at the top, but the curious thing is the Morris-Town NJ dial (June 5) that also appears on the front.

It appears that Morristown placed a receiving cancellation on the letter. Or, perhaps it was manuscripted and rated, then taken out of the post office by an east-bound traveler who then entered it in the mails 20 days later after reaching New Jersey. But then why would there be a 25 cent rate applied?

It is headed "Sycamore Hammelton County Ohio May 6<sup>th</sup> 1820", and is addressed "To Mrss Pheb Cory Or Mrss Sarah Brant oald Whippany morris county new jersey."



The spelling is almost thoroughly phoenetic, but this farmer has a good handle on words nevertheless. However, he has definitely never heard of sentence punctuation! Odd the realize that this thick dialect and colloquial speech will one day blend into the pure, unaccented, American English that the Midwest is noted for, the voice of network news and of the directory assistance phone lady.

Dear aunts I take this opportunity to in form you that we are all well that if at home blessed be god for his kindness to us all my second sun john has gawn down the river to new Orleans with one thurd of a boat load of flour and cyder and apples to try the chance of trade and hant yit returnd and I cant in form you how he is nor whare it will be six month the 20 of this munth since he left home we have had three letters from him and other accounts all say he is wel he roat in his first letter to send him one eo jersey for he had a mind to go round to philadelphia or new york and if he shold he will likely call and se you but I think he will return the shortist and quickest way home for he must have had a good deal of trouble and must be tyard of the trip what he took with him was the proceeds of oure oan farm 100 barrels of flour 80 bushels of apples 6 barrels of cyder 6 dozen chickens We hav had a very pleasant winter and spring sum coald weather but midlin dry very pleasant this preasant time good weather for work people if planting their corn small grain looks wel grain is cheap wheat from 62 to 75 cent a bushel corn from 25 to 37 2/4 Cent a bushel heare will be but aslim chance of fruit this summer by reson of a frost when in bloom it is a general time of helth a brought heare and plenty of provision but mune is scarce and mostly paper and that not very good I hant bin to Cincinnati for 3 munth but expect to go next weak to coart as witness and cant tell how flints family is at present but believe they are al well for I hant heard to the conterary my family is as well as commun and I send their respects to you and all in quiring friends I hope you will excuse me for not righting oftener to you you perhaps think I have forgot you but I have not I shold be very glad to se you and no how you doand aunt sarah brant lew and all the oald neibours so no more at present but remain your friend and well nephew

Phebe Cory Sarah Brant Samuel Kitchel



## Letter Two

The second letter comes from the center of the state, Truro, presumably close to Columbus, the cancel that accompanies the letter. The letter is dated April 11<sup>th</sup> 1824 and was mailed to the writer's brother Silas Cockran, Peru, County of Clinton, State of New York. This tells us the route this emigrant took moving west. This letter expresses the loneliness that a recent emigrant feels far from his old home and familiar faces.

Truro April 11<sup>th</sup> 1824

Dear Brother I once more resume my pen by way of an epistle not hearing from you or any of my friends this long while I really feel anxious once more to hear from you and your family with the rest of my friends in that quarter of the world which I trust you will on the receipt of this letter shortly after write to me the particulars of the whole family connection As to myself and family we enjoy a good degree of health at present Last August my son John was married to a step Daughter of mine so we all live together in one family they manage the business generally Last July I bought one half of a grist mill and now in expectation of buying the whole I have rented my farm and have moved to the mill which is about 2½ miles from the farm in Franklin County flour nets me \$2 a hundred corn 25 cents, wrye and buck wheat the same as corn. Pork last fall qand winter was \$2.25 a hundred thousands of hoggs drove from this to Baltimore Market which is about 200 miles there the butchers give from 4 to 6 dolars a hundred which brings money into the country last winter we kept over rising of Eighty hoggs old and young how many we wintered this season I knows not for they have run in the woods all winter Last season was very Sickly in this country great many deaths amongst the number Esq Bull myself & family were all sick with the fever and ague except Ezra I every day feel the loss of my family and expect to feel the loss till I shall meet with them in a far distant.... I feel old age creeping in apace I find that



time waits for no man. I have long anticipated on the enjoyment that I shall have of seeing you in this country. that is one reason why I have delayed writing I now give up the Idea for I know not whether I am writing to the living or the dead So adieu my best love to all that enquires after me you will direct a letter to Truro Township Franklin County Columbus post office

John Cockran

Last season was the wettest that was known crops of wheat & corn very light potatoes nothing seed potatoes current 37½ cents bushel and hard to be got Last season we planted . . .

Both letters give witness to the typical farmer that built this country, that until the 20<sup>th</sup> century constituted 70-80-90% of the nation's workforce. Today that number is less than 5% overall, with office and service jobs in the ascendant. Ohio has passed through farming, to heavy industry, has its rust belt region, and about 12 million people today.

For the great, great, great, great, great grandchildren of these men, loneliness has mostly vanished and food prices are astonishingly inexpensive—not good news for the few remaining farmers. Loneliness has been replaced by quantities of noise and activity. Disparities in education about the same, though, some still have a rough time spelling and others in casting off unbecoming speech patterns, while most do just fine. Almost everyone knows about commas and periods. And Ohio, sometimes land of buckwheat is still the land of the Buckeyes.

## Bibliography

Mitchell, Robert D. and Groves, Paul A. (eds) *North America - The Historical Geography of a Changing Continent*. Roman & Littlefield Publ., Inc. Savage MD. 1990.

## POSTAL HISTORIANS ON LINE

*Continued from page 8*

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**Gerry Tenney** — gtenney@gateway.net

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— Edthomas@fsc.edu

**Don Thompson** [Stampless NH, MA, FL]

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**Robert L. Toal** — rtoal@ukt.edu

**Don Tocher** [19th Century US] — dontoch@ix.netcom.com

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**Clarence J. Winstead** [NC Doanes, flags, RPOs & PPCs]

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**Kirk Wolford** [Postal History Dealer]

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**Zolno, Michael** — mzolno@aol.com

## Colorado Postal History Society

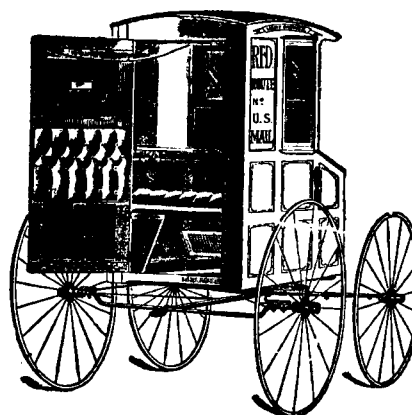
*Now Publishing*  
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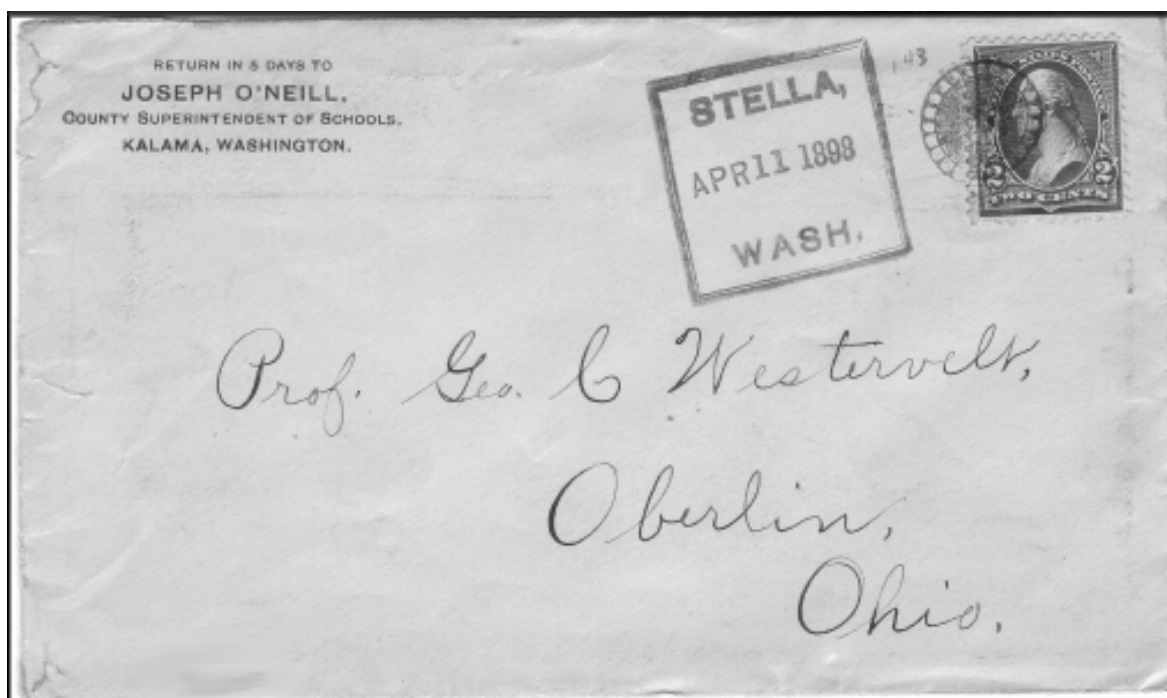
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**Figure 1** This spectacular fancy boxed straight line postmark with accompanying wheel-of-fortune killer was used to cancel mail at Stella, Washington, during its heyday as a lower Columbia River lumber port.

## Stella, Washington: Columbia River Logging Ghost

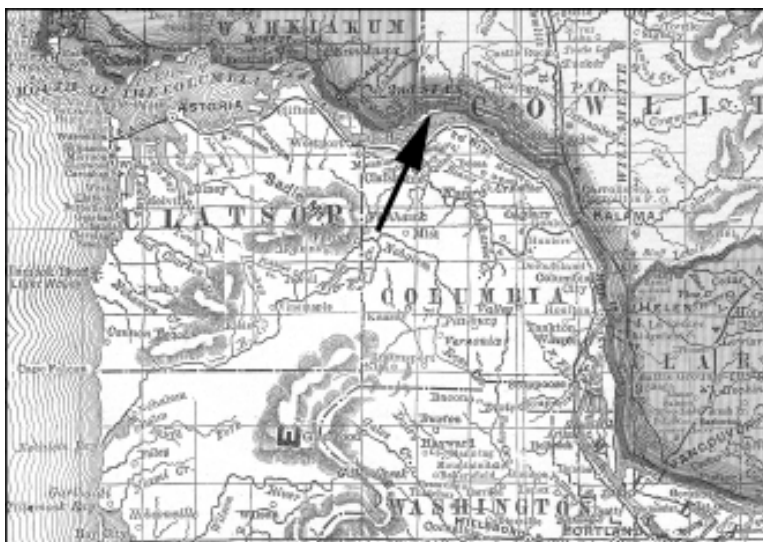
By Richard W. Helbock

Both banks of the lower reaches of the Columbia River are dotted with rusting metal frames and decaying pilings of what once were towns and villages associated with river commerce and, in particular, river commerce associated with logging. One such town was the Washington community known as Stella, about ten miles west of modern day Longview (map 1).

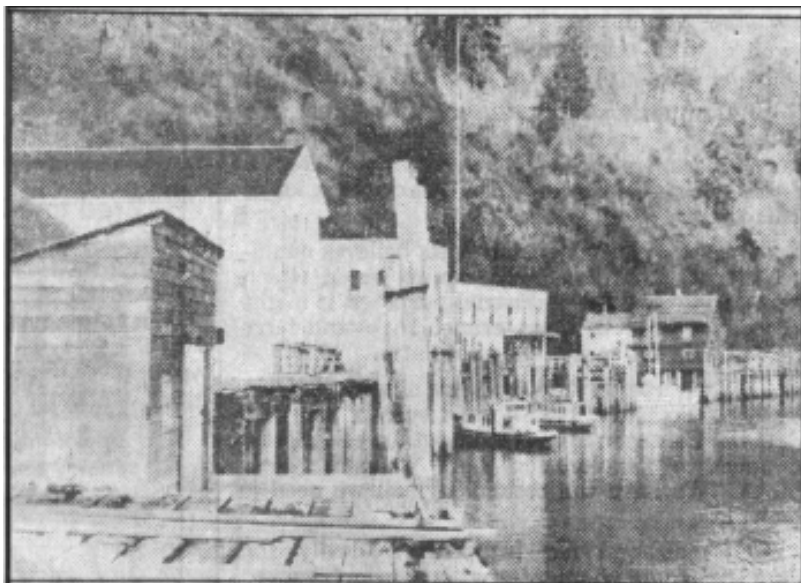
In 1884 John A. Packard was appointed postmaster of a new office that he named Stella in honor of his daughter. Packard had built a store building on pilings set above the river and maintained a stock of goods that he sold to passing vessels from his river landing. In a few years Packard's store was joined by a saloon, a hotel and several small local sawmills. A vigorous trade developed supplying river steamers with cord wood flumed down Fall Creek to the Stella waterfront, but that was only the beginning.

A few years before the Stella post office opened, B. F. Brock had purchased a large tract of lumber in the area and by 1884 had

begun building a logging railway to access the property. By the early 1890s local lumber mills were shipping huge "cigar" rafts of lumber containing upwards of three million board feet pulled by ocean-going tugboats to mills as far away as San Diego.



**Map 1** Stella (arrow) on the Washington bank of the lower Columbia River in a 1903 Rand McNally Map.



*Stella, Washington, circa 1910.*

Logging technology advanced rapidly from axes and cross-cut saws to donkey engines and fully mechanized mills. Stella enjoyed boom years in the 1890s and early 1900s, and had a population of 134 in the Census of 1900. In 1907, a fire burned much of the town, but owners rebuilt quickly. *Figure 2* shows a view of Stella from the river about 1910.

A second fire destroyed most of Stella including the post office in May 1921. This time Stella rebuilt on a smaller scale. In 1923 the planned Long Bell Lumber Company town of Longview was built ten miles up the river and much of the business activity that had once gone to Stella was drawn to the heavily financed new community.

Christian Stuckmeier became postmaster in late 1898, and he moved the site of the post office from its original location to his new Stuckmeier & Son General

Merchandise store building. Bud Horton bought the Stuckmeier store in 1919 and the post office remained at the building with Horton's nephew as postmaster. Bud Horton's young Swedish wife, Anna, replaced Troy Horton as postmaster in 1923, but since her knowledge of English was limited, most of the paper work was done by John Wilke, the bookkeeper. *Figure 4* shows a 1995 photo of the rebuilt Stuckmeier Store after the 1921 fire.

During the late 1920s and into the 1930s mail was transported between Stella and Longview by truck. The river steamers and giant ocean-going log rafts were a thing of the past and Stella existed only as a small remnant community in the shadow of bustling Longview. Finally on January 15, 1935, Stella's post office was closed out to Longview.



**Figure 4** The old Stella post office as it appeared in 1995. (John Wager Photo)



**Figure 3** This cover bears a Stella postmark of September 1, 1894. The style was one of those sold by commercial postmark dealers of the early 1890s.



# West Virginia Research Papers

By Alyce Evans

MC DOWELL COUNTY LEX  
 KNOWN AS EVANSVILLE  
 PROPOSED NAMES LEX OR LECK  
 CHANGED TO BEARTOWN  
 SANDY RIVER DISTRICT  
 BRADSHAW QUAD Y8  
 429170E 4136100N 1140'

ESTABLISHED 28 Oct 1905  
 DISCONTINUED 14 Aug 1955

*Named for LEX EVANS (gr. father of R. L. TURNER)  
 PM 1537-1542  
 1947-1951*

48th county created

Fr Elexis Music Evans 14 Apr 1905:

ON RT FR AVONDALE TO PAYNESVILLE ON WHICH THE MAIL IS  
 CARRIED 3X PER WEEK. BRADSHAW-4mi SW AVONDALE-4mi NW

VILLAGE OF 150-POP. SUPPLIED-275 DRY FK-80YDS S OZLEY CR-2mi N  
 Jaeger & Southern RR-STATION NOT YET LOCATED OR NAMED.

.....

Fr Wm E Kennedy 22 Jul 1916-SITE CHANGE 2/7mi S HURRICANE CR-3/4mi E DAN -2mi S N&W RR-

.....

Fr V T Strickler 12 Mar 1920-SITE CHANGE 125 YDS NE:

TO MOVE 1 Apr OR SOONER BECAUSE THE HUDSON COAL CO. WANTS THE OFFICE REMOVED FR THEIR BUILDING.  
 200 PATRONS RESIDE WITHIN A 1 mi RADIUS. CANCELS:\$81./91./91./109.

.....

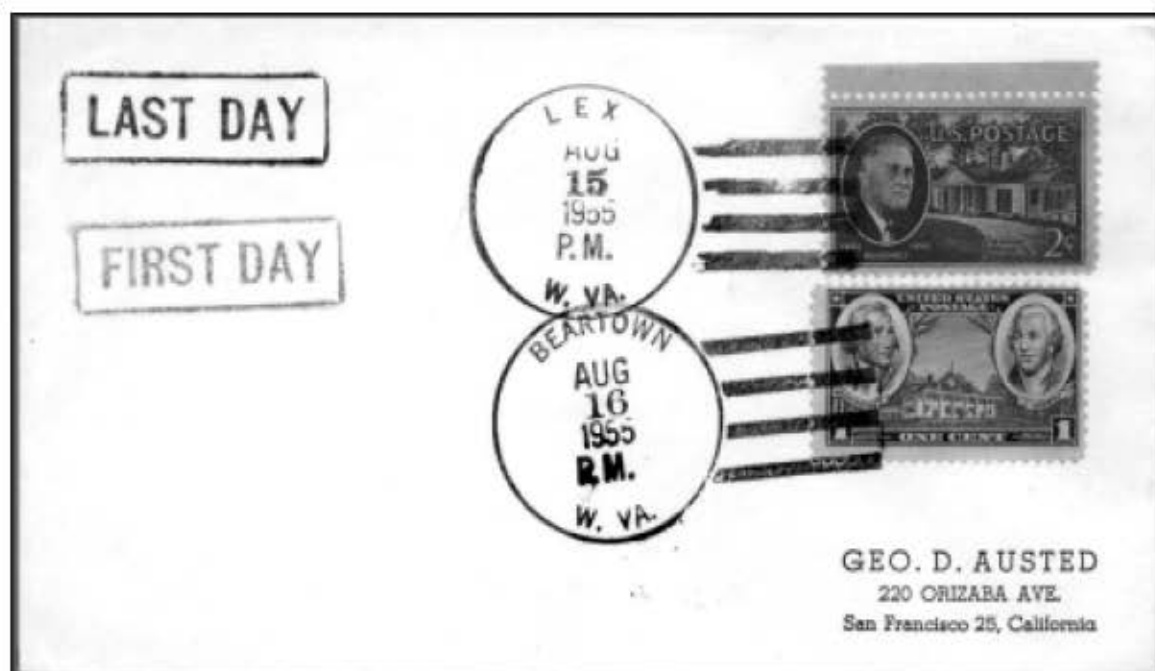
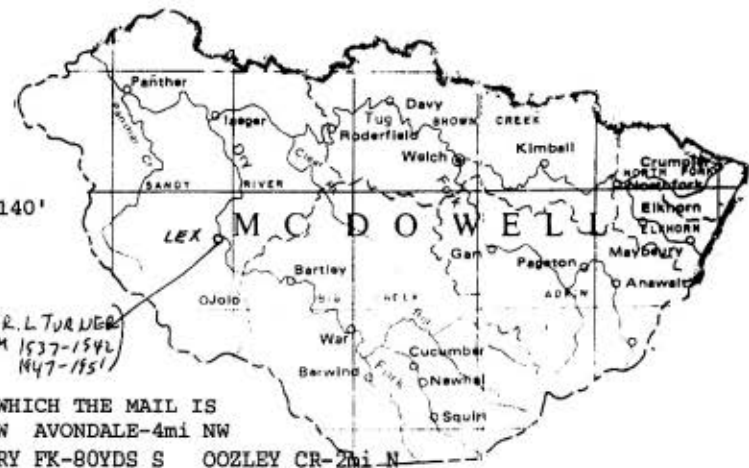
Fr Robert L Turner 4 Feb 1938-SITE CHANGE 2640'NW: N&W RR BRADSHAW IS THE DEPOT, GLUCK IS  
 THE STATION FOR LEX. ....14 May 1942: N&W RR LEX STATION 1100'E

.....

## POSTMASTERS:

ELEXIS MUSIC EVANS	28 Oct 1905
ROBERT F TAYLOR	26 Jul 1913
MAX EVANS	18 Jul 1914
WM E KENNEDY	28 Jul 1916
V F STRICKLER	15 Jul 1918
GORDON B HOPKINS	17 May 1920
THOMAS L BOEHLING ?	3 Aug 1921
LAWRENCE ATWELL	23 Jan 1923
WM. H LINKHOUS	30 Jun 1923
JAMES L FRANKLIN	16 Oct 1923
WM H LINKHOUS	9 Jan 1928

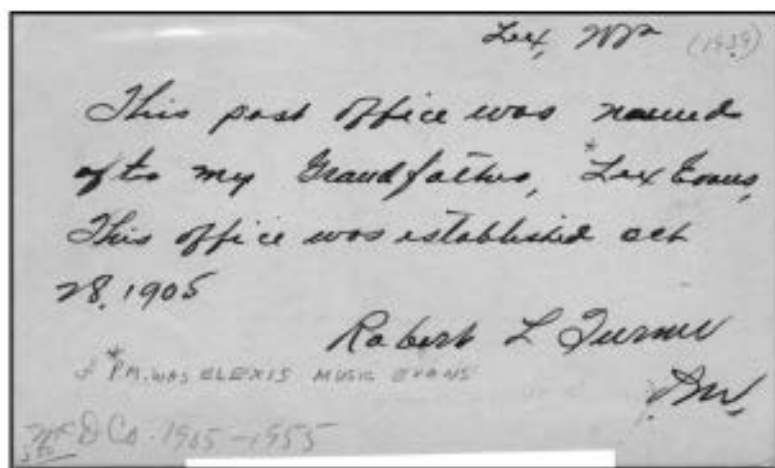
LAFAYETTE N ODLE	28 Jan 1928
JAMES F HURT (Hart?)	27 Oct 1928
ROBERT L TURNER	28 Dec 1937
(inducted 3/23/42)	
IRWIN C TURNER	14 May 1942
ROBERT L TURNER-RETURNED FR ACTIVE DUTY	1/1/47
WILLIAM L HART	23 Apr 1951







Postmarked LEX Oct. 5, 1909

Postmarked LEX  
July 15, 1939

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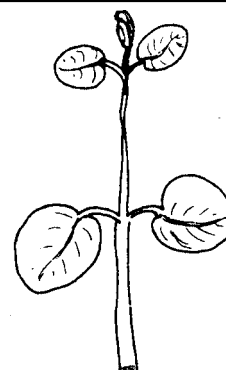
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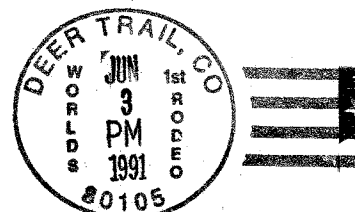
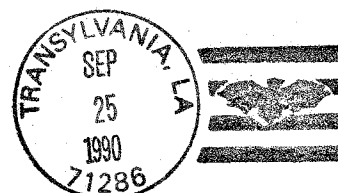
*Strange but true, it is easier to find what U.S. post offices existed in 1902 than to find out what  
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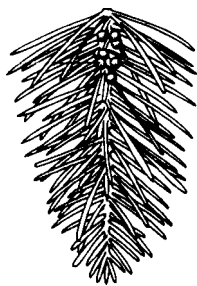
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I am seeking information, covers, postcards, or photos of the Spruce Production Division—a U.S. Army unit that logged spruce trees in Washington & Oregon for airplane construction during WW I.

The camps were based in coastal counties, and may be addressed "Camp 4", or "S.T. Camp 2/48<sup>th</sup> Sqd. S.P.D." or similar.

Will buy, or would appreciate copies or jpegs.

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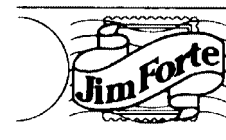
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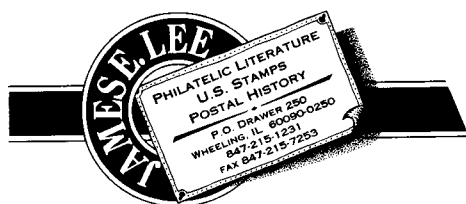
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Backnumbers of *La Posta* may be purchased from **Sherry Straley, 2214 Arden Way #199, Sacramento, CA 95825**. An index of all backnumbers through Volume 28 has been completed by Daniel Y. Meschter and is available on the *La Posta* website at [www.la-posta.com](http://www.la-posta.com).

To order backnumbers call Sherry at 916-359-1898, fax 916-359-1963 or send her an E-mail at [collectibles@4agent.org](mailto:collectibles@4agent.org).

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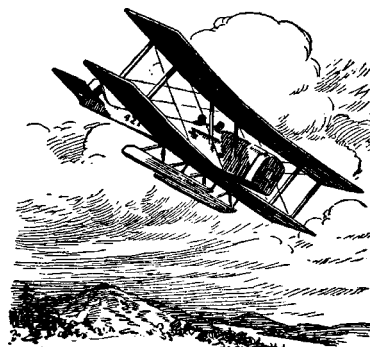
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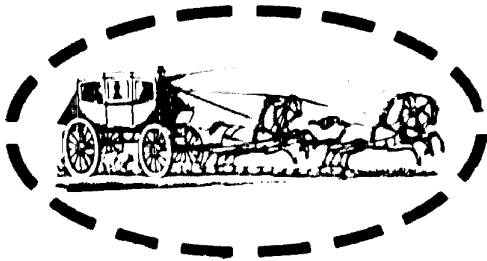
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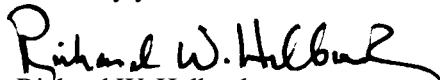
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City, State, ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

## ADVERTISING IN LA POSTA

**La Posta** publishes two types of Ads: Display & Auction/Net Price. Details for placing each are as follows:

**DISPLAY ADS** - May be run on a contract basis for one, three or six insertions. Ad contents may be changed at any time, provided proper notice is given. Contract rates for ads of varying sizes are as follows:

Ad Size	One Issue	Three Issues	Six Issues
1/8-page	\$13.00	\$29.90	\$54.60
1/4-page	\$30.00	\$69.00	\$126.00
1/2-page	\$55.00	\$126.50	\$231.00
1-page	\$100.00	\$230.00	\$420.00

These charges include Type setting & Layout

### AUCTION/NET PRICE ADS:

The charge for placing a 1/2-page ad is \$45.00; 1 -page \$90.00; 2-pages \$170.00

These prices are for prepaid camera ready copy. Add \$15 typing charge is for 1/2-page auctions, \$35 for 1-page auctions; and auctions over 1-page must be camera ready, transmitted via E-mail or provided on computer disc.

**Ad Deadlines are as follows: Dec/Jan issue - Nov 20; Feb/Mar issue - Jan 20; Apr/May issue - Mar 20; Jun/Jul issue - May 20; Aug/Sep issue - July 20; Oct/Nov issue - Sep 20.**

**La Posta, 33470 Chinook Plaza, Suite 216, Scappoose, OR 97056**

or

**P.O. Box 100, Chatsworth Island, NSW 2469 Australia**

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