

LA POSTA: A JOURNAL OF AMERICAN POSTAL HISTORY

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Onward into the Fog

My personal thanks to you readers who took the time to send along congratulatory emails and notes on occasion of our 200th issue of *La Posta*. It has truly been a long and interesting run, and we are optimistic as we take this first tentative step along the road to our third century milestone. Cath and I hope you will continue to support our efforts. In return, we can only promise you to provide our best effort to produce a high quality publication.

Speaking of the future of our journal, we are currently in dire need of articles. Long ones, short ones, medium sized ones—all would be welcome, and we can offer editorial assistance, advice and technical support to help you turn your ideas into a piece of published postal history research you can be proud of. Let's start a dialogue. Send me an email or note to let me know what you've been thinking about in the way of a story, or checklist, or what-have-you. I guarantee that I can point you along the path to bringing those ideas to fruition.

This plea for articles is particularly directed to you readers who have assembled exhibit class collections. You've already done the hard yards in researching your subjects and obviously you are very well suited to illustrate your research. Exhibits are a wonderful means of sharing your scholarship and love of the hobby, but let's face it, exhibits are rather like the work of the Navajo sand artists. They are by their nature transitory and shared with only a limited number of people who happen to be at the right time and place to see them in person. Publication, however, will forever give life and meaning to your work because it can not only be shared with a much wider audience today, but will be available for future generations of postal history enthusiasts as archived reference matter. *La Posta* is regularly stocked in several major philatelic, historical and public libraries around the nation.

Opportunities for publishing your postal history work and saving your contributions to the knowledge of our hobby are fairly limited. *La Posta* has the broadest support base of any publication specializing in United States postal history today. We can offer high quality image reproduction on substantial paper stock that will assure your research and illustrations are presented in their best possible light.

Summer Travels

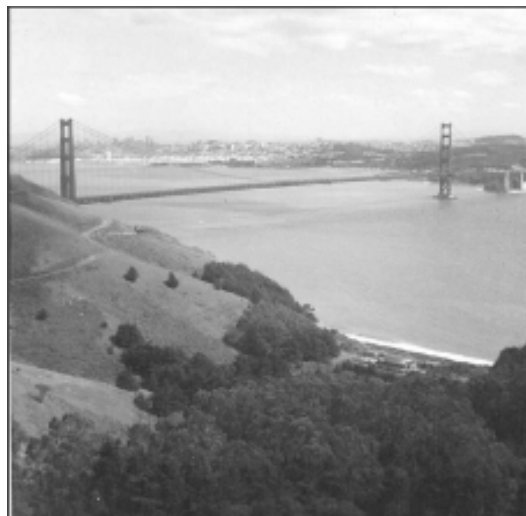
Cath and I plan to attend the APS Stampshow in Columbus, Ohio, August 7-10th. I'll be chairing the American Philatelic Congress presentation of the 2003 Congress Book on the afternoon of Friday the 8th, and would be delighted to meet any subscribers who might like to like to stop in and say hello. If you can't make the APC function, you might stop by Jim Lee's booth and leave a message.



Number 201

The current issue—a first step on the journey into our third century—offers articles by some authors who are quite familiar to *La Posta* readers, and two gentlemen whose names are somewhat new to our pages. Paul Petosky, a resident of Michigan's Upper Peninsula, presents a glimpse into the early history of Marquette post office. Paul writes prolifically about Upper Peninsula post offices and maintains a webpage called "Postmarks from the Past" at:

www.natureinabundance.com/postmarks/postmarks.htm. Paul and I share a bit of "small world" personal history. It turns out that, as much younger men, we nearly shared one of the most spectacular views in the United States together (see Paul's illustration below). We were both assigned to the Radar



San Francisco from the Ft. Chronkite Radar site, circa 1963. (Paul Petosky photo)

Platoon of B Battery, 141st Coast Artillery Battalion, Air Defense Artillery, during the early years of the 1960s. Paul reported for duty at the Radar Site overlooking San Francisco's Golden Gate in fall of 1962 for his tour. I had left just a few months prior to that after completing my tour at Fort Chronkite.

Michael Ludeman begins a very interesting analysis of the discontinuance of Texas post offices over the past two decades in this issue. While Michael is not completely new to our pages—he authored an article called “Texas Post Offices” in December 1983 (While No. 84)—he is well-known among his Texas postal history colleagues and has published frequently in the *Texas Philatelist*. Michael's article will conclude in the September issue and I'm certain you will be most impressed with this scholarly and technical approach to analyzing the reasons why some small post offices were closed but others continue to operate.

Our more familiar authors—Michael Dattolico, Daniel Meschter, Robert Rennick and Tom Clarke—continue their interesting research in the current issue. What would we do without these fellows? I'm not sure, but I have a hunch that we would be hard pressed to continue functioning. We are, indeed, all grateful for their continuing efforts, but even the most dedicated and imaginative writers need a break. Please consider my earlier plea to publish *your* ideas in La posta.

Montana Territorial Postmarks CD-ROM

Finally, we are very pleased to announce that Wes Shellen and Francis Dunn's *Montana Territorial Postmarks* is now available in the form of a fully interactive CD-ROM in our E-book series. This CD-ROM version contains a complete alphabetical listing of all recorded postmarks of Montana Territory, along with a census of each known postmarks. The listing is enhanced by the inclusion of dozens of full color cover illustrations. Interactive features include “hot key” links from hundreds of post offices to their locations on the *Montana Postal Route Map of 1883-84* and their listing of businesses and residents in *McKenney's Directory of 1883-84*. Details for ordering may be found on page 71 of this issue. Readers who prefer a printed version of the Shellen & Dunn book should look for an announcement by Jim Lee in the near future.

Richard W. Helbock

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

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Figure 1 This cover from a wholesale grocery company was postmarked in San Francisco on September 16, 1882. Addressed to the Marks Company in Roseburg, Oregon, it was inscribed “Per ‘Queen of the Pacific’”. On the surface this would appear to be a fairly mundane piece of commercial correspondence, but, as is the case with so many artifacts of postal history, if we look at the history behind the piece we may discover a whole new perspective on communications in the United States in an earlier day. In fact, this cover was carried on one of a small number of fast new coastal steamers operating between San Francisco and Portland in the early 1880s on her maiden voyage north. The advent of these fast new steamships and their temporary dominance of mail service on the north Pacific coast is the subject of our story.

San Francisco—Portland Coastal Mail Steamship Service, 1850-1887

By Richard W Helbock

American missionaries established the first permanent settlement in Oregon’s Willamette Valley in 1834. Twenty three years earlier John Jacob Astor, an American fur trader, had built a trading post at Astoria on the south bank of the mouth of the Columbia, but British interests in the fur trade prevailed. In 1843 a group of about 900 American settlers arrived in the Willamette Valley after an overland trek following the Oregon Trail from Missouri. Thousands more followed in each successive summer, and in 1846 the United States and Great Britain signed an agreement fixing the 49th parallel as a dividing line between the two nations in the Pacific Northwest.

Exchange of mail between the Oregon Country settlers and the outside world was not structured. Some correspondence was carried overland by way of travelers journeying to or from Missouri. Others sent and received mail by way of ships sailing around Cape Horn. A few passed correspondence by way of the trans-Canada express operated by the Hudson’s Bay Company.

The Act of March 3, 1847, effective July 1, 1847, appointed John M. Shively postmaster at Astoria, Oregon, and established a 40-cent postal rate on mail to and from the new post office. A second post office was authorized for Oregon City at the Falls of the Willamette on the same day, and these two offices thus became the first United States post offices established on the Pacific coast.

Section 6 of the Act authorized contracts to carry the mail between the United States and Astoria:

And be it further enacted, that the Postmaster General be, and he is hereby, authorized to contract for the transportation of the mail from Charlestown to Chagres, touching at St. Augustine and Key West, and also at Havana, in the Island of Cuba, if deemed expedient, and across the Isthmus of Panama, and from thence to Astoria, or the mouth of the Columbia river, touching at Monterey, San Francisco, and such other places on the coast as the Postmaster General may direct; the mail to be conveyed from Charlestown to Chagres, and from Panama to Astoria in steamships, and to be transported each way once every two months, or oftener, as the public interest may require: Provided, That the expenditure for said service shall not exceed one hundred thousand dollars per annum.

Competitive bidding began on May 4, 1847, and on November 16th a contract was awarded to Aspinwall, Howland and Chauncey, a syndicate formed by an experienced group of shipping operators. The group incorporated in New York on April 12, 1848, as the Pacific Mail Steamship Company (PMSC). They were awarded a ten-year mail subsidy of \$199,000 per annum beginning October 1, 1848.

The original contract had called for three steamships to operate monthly schedules between Panama and Astoria with intermediate stops. This was modified by the Secretary of the Navy in June 1848 to limit steamship service to San Francisco with sailing ship service onward to Oregon. Congress further modified the contract by declaring that steamers would “stop, deliver and take mails at San Diego, Monterey and San Francisco.”

Viewed from the perspective of the Oregon settlers, the Act, which originally had been intended to provide mail service to the isolated Willamette Valley, had been severely modified to benefit a lesser number of Americans then resident in California even before the first mail shipment was transported. And then came the news of the discovery of gold in California.

Pioneer Years on the San Francisco-Portland Route

The first vessel reported to have carried the mail to Portland in “United States postal sacks” was the *Sequin* in 1849¹. The overwhelming concentration of passengers and goods flowing between Panama and California in 1849 and 1850 caused the fledgling

PACIFIC MAIL STEAMSHIP COMPANY.
THE ONLY THROUGH LINE FOR
CALIFORNIA,
And Oregon, via Chagres or Navy Bay.

The public are informed that under the new arrangements of the Company Steamers inspected and approved by the Navy Department, and carrying the U. S. Mails, will hereafter
Leave PANAMA immediately on arrival of the Atlantic Mails,
And SAN FRANCISCO on the 1st and 15th of each Month.

1063

The following Steam Packets belonging to the Company are now in the Pacific, one of which will be always in port at each end of the route.

Golden Gate, 2500 tons,	Antelope, 750 tons,
Oregon, 1100 "	Republic, 1200 "
Panama, 1100 "	Carolina, 600 "
California, 1050 "	Columbus, 600 "
Tennessee, 1300 "	Isthmus, 600 "
Northerner, 1200 "	Unicorn, 600 "
Columbia, 800 "	Fremont, 600 "

The New Steamer COLUMBIA will ply regularly between San Francisco and Oregon.

The connection in the Atlantic will be maintained by the
UNITED STATES MAIL STEAMSHIPS

GEORGIA, 3000 tons,	EMPIRE CITY, 3000 tons,
OHIO, 3000 "	CRESCENT CITY, 1500 "
ILLINOIS, 2500 "	CHEROKEE, 1500 "
PHILADELPHIA, 1700 tons.	

Leaving New York for Chagres or Navy Bay,
On the 1st of each month.

Figure 2 This Pacific Mail Steamship Company ad card listed the company's shipping rates in the early 1850s. Source: lot 1063, Christie's Sale, David Jarrett Collection, 1990.

PMSC to concentrate almost all of its resources on that trade at the sacrifice of the San Francisco to Oregon route. On May 7, 1850, the *Carolina*—a small steamship of 600 tons—arrived in San Francisco as the latest addition to the PMSC line. She was quickly dispatched with the first Oregon mail received by way of the Isthmus, and arrived at Portland on May 31st.

Water borne mail service between Portland and San Francisco remained sporadic. The *Carolina* made three additional trips between San Francisco and Portland during the summer of 1850, but on the August trip the ship's captain remained outside the mouth of the Willamette due to low water. Late in 1850 the newer and larger ships of the PMSC line—the Oregon, the California and the Panama—began to arrive on the West Coast. They deposited all Oregon mails at Astoria, staying only briefly before rushing south to San Francisco where they usually made a trip or two from the Golden Gate to Panama before their next return to Oregon.



Figure 3 The PMSC steamer *Columbia* as she appeared in the 1850s.

In 1851 the steamship *Columbia*, a vessel built specifically for the Oregon-San Francisco route began a regularly scheduled bi-monthly service between San Francisco and Portland. The *Columbia* was a brig-rigged side-wheeler of 193 foot length and 29 foot beam (figure 3). She was owned and operated by PMS, and the company originally intended that she would deposit mail, cargo and passengers at Astoria to connect with their smaller river steamer, *Willamette*. Outfitting the *Willamette* for river operations was delayed, however, and the *Columbia* made the trip all the way to Portland, arriving April 22, 1851. The PMSC shuttle operation went into service during the summer of 1851 and operated without major incident until January 1852. On January 17th however, the *Willamette* ran afoul of a sand bar above Portland and was sufficiently damaged to be withdrawn from service. In her absence, the *Columbia* began making regular bi-monthly trips to Portland.

The PMSC decided after operating the *Columbia* direct to the upriver port for a few trips that there were real advantages to citing its main depot at the “head of navigation.” In February 1852, the PMSC announced that it was moving its Oregon mail office from Portland to Saint Helens, on the west bank of the Columbia 28 miles downriver. The company invested in some \$40,000 in wharf and warehouse facilities and refused to carry passengers and mail any further upriver. In 1854, PMSC added the steamship *Republic* to its San Francisco-Oregon operations.

Outraged, the civic leaders of Portland responded by attracting the steamship *Peytona* to begin making the San Francisco-Portland run and they soon added the *America* to bolster their competitive effort. For a brief

time, there was a spirited rivalry between the two competitors, but eventually PMSC relented and began making the upriver trips to Portland once again.

Ships operated by other competitors attempted to take on the PMSC from time to time during the 1850s. One of the most noteworthy was the steamship *Commodore*, later renamed the *Brother Jonathan*. In 1857 Captain John T. Wright, an entrepreneur who had made a substantial fortune operating ships between San Francisco and Hawaii, began operating the *Commodore* in direct competition with Pacific Mail vessels *Columbia* and *Republic*. The *Columbia* made direct runs from San Francisco to Portland, but the *Republic* and the *Commodore* called at Crescent City on both legs of the trip. On several occasions the *Commodore* and *Republic* raced each other in close proximity all the way between San Francisco and Portland. The competition reduced fares to only \$30 cabin and \$10 steerage. In 1858 the *Commodore* was sold to the California Steam Navigation Company and rechristened *Brother Jonathan*. Seven years later the *Brother Jonathan* gained a tragic place in West Coast shipping history when she struck a submerged rock off Crescent City and sunk to the bottom with a loss of nearly two hundred lives.

The Ben Holladay Era

The Pacific Mail Steamship Company elected to withdraw from the coastwise trade in 1861 and concentrate its considerable wealth and energy on trans-Pacific commerce. San Francisco to Oregon operations were sold to the California, Oregon & Mexican Steamship Company owned by Ben Holladay, the Stagecoach King. Holladay, the near legendary tycoon owner of the Overland Stage Line and a fleet of river steamers, sought to expand his transportation empire to coastal shipping. In acquiring the PMSC north coast assets, Holladay acquired the steamers *Cortez*, *Oregon*, *Sierra Nevada*, *Republic*, and *Panama*. He entered into a “gentleman’s agreement” with his chief rival of the Day—the California Steam Navigation Company—a company that had begun widespread north coast operations spurred by the British Columbia gold discoveries in 1858. Cabin prices were set at \$45 between San Francisco and Portland and steerage was pegged at \$25.00.

The north coast shipping scene remained peaceful through the Civil War years, but in 1866 a newcomer from New England announced his intention to compete with the introduction of a big side-wheeler ves-

sel named *Montana*. Cabin and steerage rates fell quickly and the battle was on. The newcomer—Anchor Line—announced the addition of a second steamer, *Idaho*, and, while coastwise travel increased year after year, the owners were making scant profits. Finally, Holladay organized a meeting of all the principals with the result that all three companies were combined into the new North Pacific Transportation Company in 1869. As the decade came to a close, the new company was operating a fleet of ten side-wheelers and six propeller steamers on the waters to the north of San Francisco (*table 1*).

Holladay’s primary focus of attention in the waning years of the 1860s was the obvious decline in stage coaching at the expense of rapidly expanding western rail lines. In November 1866 he suddenly sold his entire stage operations to Wells, Fargo and Company for \$1.5 million in cash and \$300,000 in Wells, Fargo stock. In the summer of 1868 Holladay acquired the fledgling Oregon & California Railroad (O&CRR). He, no doubt, saw this as a logical progression of his transport empire into a new generation, and, when combined with his riverboat fleet and coastal steam-

ers, the railroad linking California would give him an unassailable hold on the commerce of the entire Pacific Northwest. Unfortunately, the acquisition proved his undoing.

Holladay used financial strategies that had served him well in earlier ventures and political strong-arm tactics in taking over one-half of the O&CRR—the Eastside Company. The company had only just begun construction of its line south along the Willamette River when Holladay arrived on the scene, and yet he secured American and European financing that promised to deliver returns to investors that could best be described as hopefully optimistic within just a few years.

Holladay was taking advantage of a period of unlimited speculation in railroad building that existed between 1867 and 1873. There was an aura of international euphoria about buying into railroads that was probably not unlike what we witnessed during much of the 1990s with regard to new Internet stocks. The results were similar. On September 18, 1873, the New York stock market plummeted. Holladay was unable to secure new financing to cover outstanding debts, and had to default. European and American creditors appointed Henry Villard to sort out Holladay’s financial disaster and Holladay himself was bankrupt.

The PMSC reclaimed its previously owned ships from the bankrupt Holladay and sold them to Goodall, Nelson & Perkins Steamship Company. Other Holladay ships including the *Oriflamme*, *John L. Stephens*, *Gussie Telfair* and *Ajax*, were sold to the Oregon Steamship Company.

Railroads versus Coastal Steamers: the Race for Celerity

By the early 1870s, the people of Oregon had experienced two decades of postal service linking them with San Francisco, and, since the recent completion of the first trans-continental railroad, points east. Unfortunately, the turn-around-time for response from a letter mailed from Portland to San Francisco in 1870 had not improved significantly over what it had been in the early 1850s. Coastal shipping provided a delivery time of about five days each way, and that was about twice as fast as mail carried overland. Railroad promoters and residents of the Willamette Valley, alike, saw the new rail lines reaching south toward the California border as their best hope for a substantial increase in celerity via the post.

TABLE 1 NORTH PACIFIC TRANSPORTATION COMPANY
FLEET IN 1869

Vessel Name	Vessel Type
Active	Side-wheeler
Ajax	Propeller
California	Side-wheeler
Continental	Propeller
Gussie Telfair	Propeller
Idaho	Propeller
John L. Stephens	Side-wheeler
Montana	Side-wheeler
Moses Taylor	Propeller
Oriflamme	Side-wheeler
Orizaba	Side-wheeler
Pacific	Side-wheeler
Panama	Side-wheeler
Pelican	Propeller
Senator	Side-wheeler
Sierra Nevada	Side-wheeler



Figure 4 *The Oregon & California Railroad began running trains south through the Willamette Valley to Eugene in 1871 and Roseburg in 1872, but, as long as there remained a substantial gap between O&CRR lines and the C&ORR lines in northern California, mail carried by rail could not compete with mail carried by coastal steamers between San Francisco and Portland. Photo: Courtesy of Southern Pacific Company.*

The plan to connect Oregon's Willamette Valley by rail with the Bay Area involved not only Holladay's Oregon & California Railroad building south, but a complementary effort organized by California's Central Pacific building north through the Sacramento Valley to link at the Oregon-California border. Construction on both lines proceeded quickly during the first years. The O&CRR reached Eugene in October 1871 and Roseburg in December 1872. The Central Pacific's company—called the California & Oregon Railroad—laid track as far north from Sacramento as Chico in 1870 and reached Redding in 1872. The aforementioned financial disaster of 1873 halted construction on both lines, and the “gap” from Roseburg to Redding through some very rugged mountainous country remained unconnected for nearly 15 years.

A Eugene newspaper of October 8, 1871, reported the likely impact of the arrival of the new railroads thusly:

Travel between Portland and Sacramento will now be 258 miles by rail and 345 miles by stage, the connections being made at Eugene in Oregon and Red Bluff in California. The time between railroad terminals has been 4½ days by stage but with the setting in of the rains it is now and probably will remain through the winter 5½ days.”²

Between 1872 and 1887—the years of the “gap”—one-way rail and stage travel between San Francisco and Portland probably averaged 5-6 days depending upon weather conditions. In other words, the time required to achieve a response by mail from Portland to San Francisco was ten to twelve days; not substantially different than what it had been by coastwise steamship mail from the 1850s. The situation with

regard to mail celerity was about to change, however, and this change resulted not from the rail sector but the introduction of new, much faster steamships on the north coast route.

The Golden Age of North Coast Steamships: 1876-1887

The collapse of Ben Holladay's dominance of coastal shipping north of San Francisco left two dominant companies in competition for the business—the Oregon Steamship Company (OSC) and Goodall & Perkins Pacific Coast Company, soon renamed the Pacific Coast Steamship Company (PCSC). In 1877, the PCSC had a fleet of 14 vessels consisting of the side-wheelers *Ancon*, *Senator*, *Orizaba* and *Mahogo* and the propeller-driven *Los Angeles*, *San Luis*, *Santa Cruz*, *Monterrey*, *Gypsy*, *Donald*, *Salinas*, *Idaho*, *San Vincent* and *Constantine*. The OSC had a smaller fleet consisting of only six vessels—the side-wheelers *Oriflamme* and *John L. Stephens* and the propellers *Gussie Taylor*, *Ajax*, *George W. Elder* and *City of Chester*. While it might appear that the contest was heavily weighted in favor of the company with the larger fleet, the OSC's *George W. Elder* and *City of Chester* represented a major breakthrough in speed on the north coast shipping scene.

The *George W. Elder* was brought to the Pacific Coast in 1876 and her first trip north to Portland from San Francisco on September 5th was completed in just seventy hours. The *Elder* had been built in Chester, Pennsylvania, in 1874. She was 250 feet long with a 38 foot beam, and weighed in at a massive 1,224 tons (*figure 5*). She was joined the following year by her



Figure 5 This cover was postmarked San Francisco March 3, 1877, and carried on board the OSC steamship George W. Elder to Portland. From that point it was carried south to Roseburg by the Oregon & California Railroad. Inset is a view of the George W. Elder.

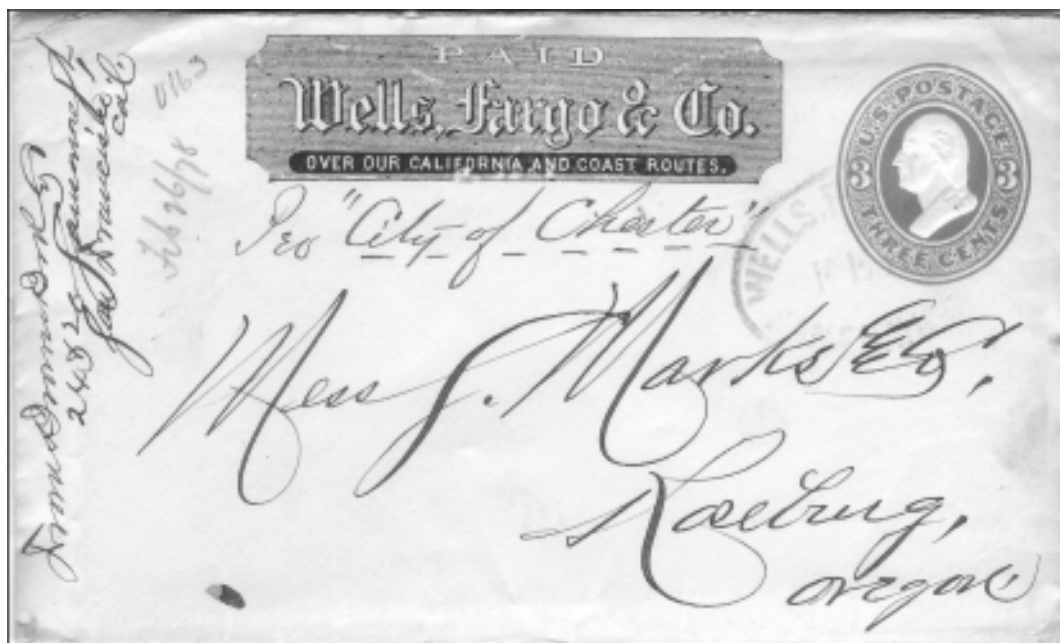


Figure 6 This Wells Fargo franked cover was postmarked with the blue agent marking in San Francisco and carried on board the City of Chester, a fast steamship of the Oregon Steamship Company to Portland.

sister ship, *City of Chester*, and the two vessels allowed OSC to inaugurate a 5-day round-trip schedule between Portland and San Francisco (figure 6).

A savage rate war that saw cabin prices drop to \$7.50 and steerage to \$3.00 ensued between the two companies, and it took peace talks and a truce before fares were raised back to normal. The calm was shattered in 1878 when P. B. Cornwall entered his recently acquired *Great Republic* into the north coast market selling cabins at \$7 and steerage at \$2. The *Great Republic* was one of the last of the old side-wheelers built for the Pacific Mail Steamship Company in 1866 for service on the China trade. Despite her massive size—378 feet long and 3,882 ton—she proved no match for the stormy north Pacific and was sold to Cornwall for far less than her original cost.

Cornwall met with a good deal of initial success. The ship could accommodate more than 800 passengers and, at his very low fares, thousands found it an attractive proposition to travel between San Francisco and Portland. The enterprise ended abruptly in mid-April 1879, however when the *Great Republic* attempted to cross the Columbia Bar at night with 550

cabin and 346 steerage passengers and was stranded at high tide on Sand Island just inside the mouth of the river. The passengers were all successfully evacuated, but, as the tide receded the wooden hulled ship was severely damaged and the next high tide flooded the vessel. The *Great Republic* disaster marked the end of an era as wooden hulled side-wheeler steamships gave way to the newer, propeller driven iron hulled ships such as the *George W. Elder* and *City of Chester*.

Less than a month after the loss of the *Great Republic*, the San Francisco-Portland route saw the arrival of two elegant new propeller vessels—the *Oregon* and the *State of California*. The *Oregon* arrived at Portland April 22, 1879, making the trip from New York with stops at Rio de Janeiro and Valparaiso in 65 days. The *Oregon* was 283 feet long, 37'6" in beam and a tonnage of 1,642 (figure 7). The other new steamship, the *State of California*, was built for OSC and arrived in San Francisco on May 8, 1879, after a 59 day run from Philadelphia (figure 8).

On June 14, 1879, the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company (OR&NC) was incorporated with Henry Villard as its president. The board of directors read like a listing of *Who's Who* in Oregon business and

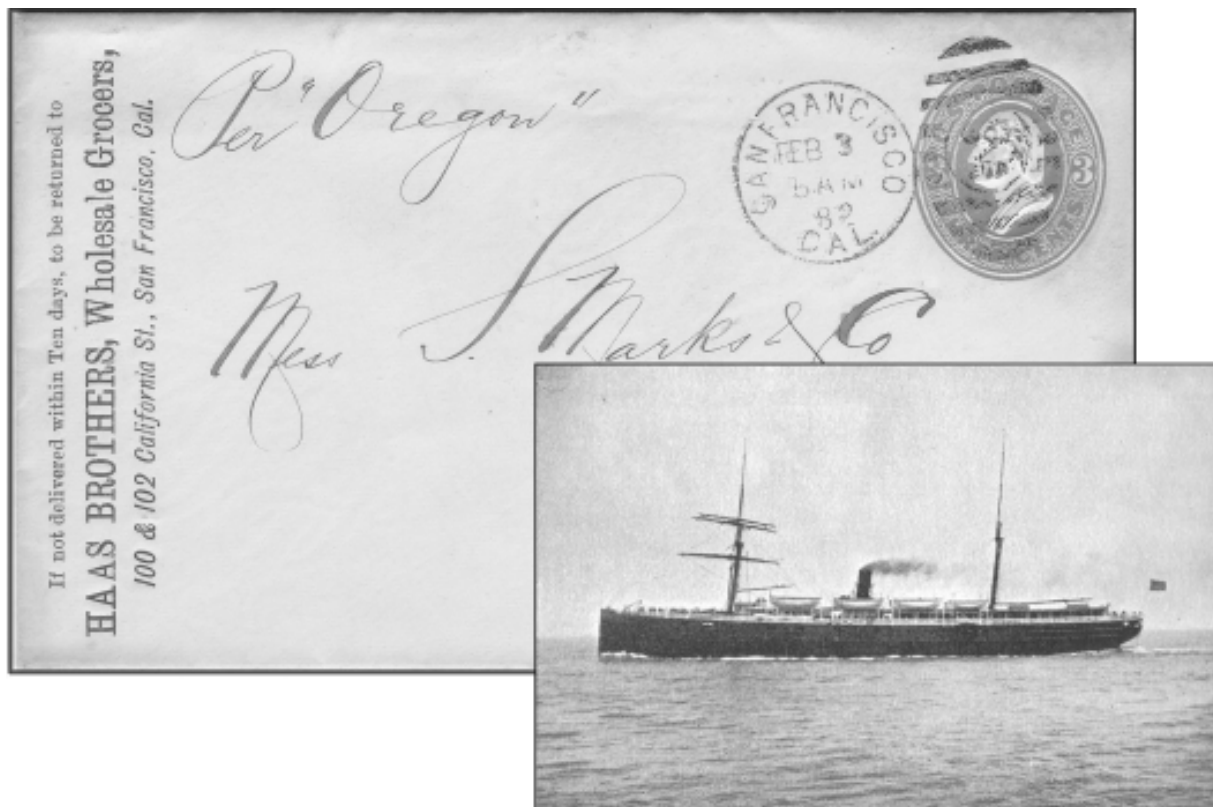


Figure 7 This cover was postmarked San Francisco February 3, 1882, and carried on board the steamship Oregon to Portland. Inset is a view of the Oregon.

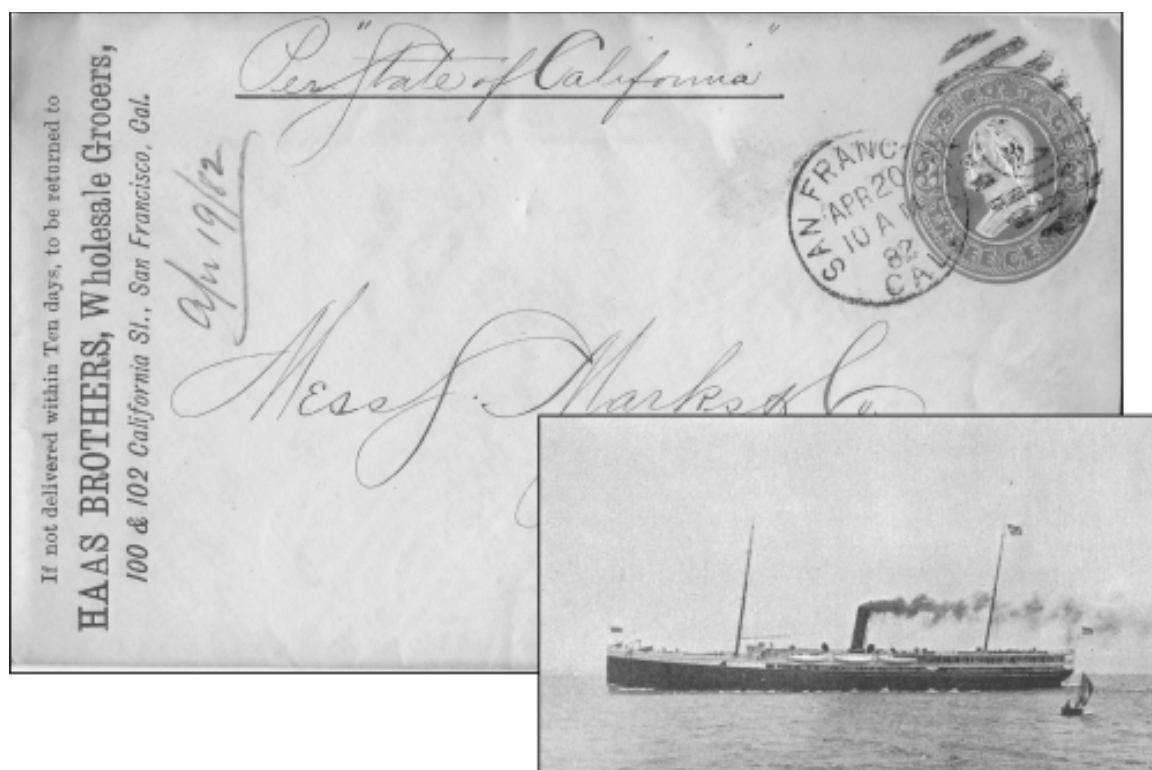


Figure 8 This cover was postmarked San Francisco April 20, 1882, and carried on board the State of California to Portland. It then traveled by train to Roseburg, Oregon. Inset is a view of the State of California.

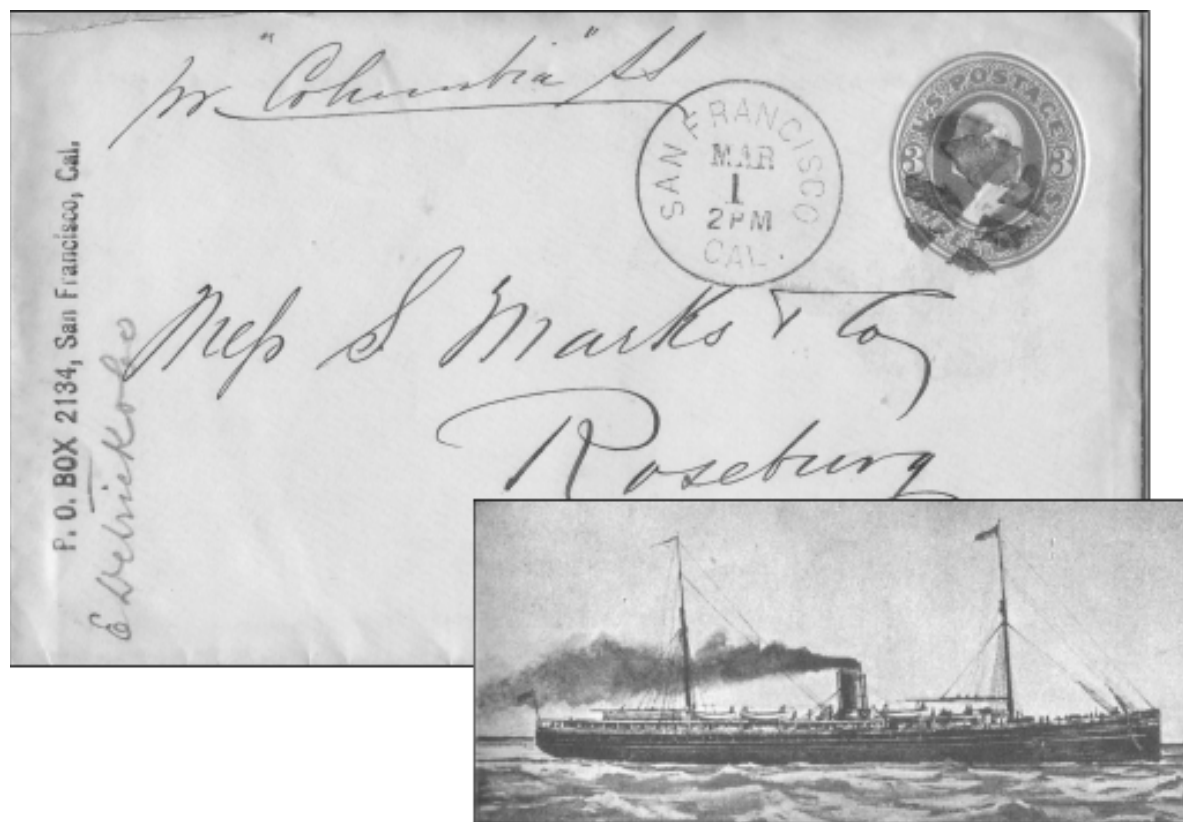


Figure 9 This cover was postmarked San Francisco March 1, 1881, and carried on board the Columbia to Portland. It then traveled by train to Roseburg, Oregon. Inset is a view of the Columbia.

politics, and the new company quickly acquired the assets of several existing transport enterprises in rail, river steamers and coastal shipping. Included in the latter were the recently arrived prizes of the Oregon Steamship Company, the *Oregon* and the *State of California*. The OR&NC quickly ordered its own new vessel from the famous Chester, Pennsylvania, shipyards and the *Columbia* proudly sailed into Portland harbor July 22, 1880. The new *Columbia* was 309 feet long, 38'5" beam and had a tonnage of 1,746 (figure 9). For her day, *Columbia* was a speedster with the ability to cruise at 14 knots. She began operations for OR&NC on the San Francisco-Portland route immediately and established a record of only once in a 15-year period being at sea longer than one night on the southbound trip between the two cities.

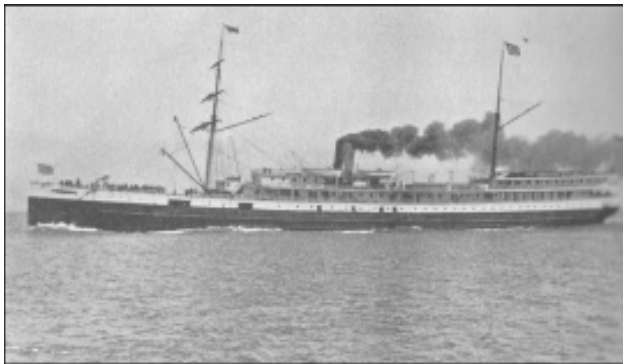


Figure 10 *The Pacific Coast Steamship Company's Queen of the Pacific.*

The Pacific Coast Steamship Company added the *Queen of the Pacific* to their northern fleet in 1882. She was built in Philadelphia and was 330 feet long, 38'5" beam and weighed 1,697 tons (figure 10). She reached Portland on her first trip on September 18th and continued on the Portland route until December 1883 when she was reassigned to routes running south from San Francisco.

The advent of fast, propeller-driven steamships on the north Pacific route in the late 1870s ushered in a golden era in the history of coastal navigation. The five and six day turn around times, combined with the greater number of ships operating on the route meant that postal communications between Portland and San Francisco could actually receive a response within a week of the initial mailing. Coastwise shipping was, far and away, the fastest way to maintain communications between 1877 and 1887.

The Railroads Close the Gap

Railroad construction was revived on both ends of the Oregon to California route in the early 1880s. Henry Villard, the German-born journalist who had been selected to salvage the financially bankrupt Oregon & California Railroad, began building south from Roseburg in June 1881. Rugged terrain separates the Umpqua and Rogue valleys of southern Oregon, and it took three years to extend the line to Ashland at the foot of the even more rugged Siskiyou Mountains.

Meanwhile, south of the border in California, the Southern Pacific had acquired the California & Oregon Railroad and begun pushing the line north through the narrow Sacramento Canyon. As in Oregon, there were substantial obstacles faced in building through the difficult terrain and it was 1886 before the line reached Dunsmuir.

By 1887 it had become clear that Villard's transport empire in the Pacific Northwest had become financially overextended, and in July the Oregon & California was leased to Southern Pacific Company just one month after the line had reached the Oregon-California border. A ceremony was held December 17, 1887, marking the arrival of the first through train from California to Oregon. From that date onward, the overland transit time by railroad between San Francisco and Portland was reduced to less than 40 hours.

Coastal steamships retained their popularity as a pleasant way of making the journey from Portland to San Francisco well into the twentieth century before eventually fading from the scene in the years following World War II. The competitive advantage enjoyed by the steamships in rapid mail delivery and celerity in completing communications through the post lasted only briefly during that 10-year period from the introduction of the fast propeller driven steamers in the late 1870s until 1887 when the Southern Pacific finished linking the rails through Oregon and northern California.

Endnotes

1 Wright, E.W., (ed) *Lewis & Dryden's Marine History of the Pacific Northwest*, 1895, Antiquarian Press reprint, 1961. p.23.

2 Culp, Edwin D. *Stations West, the Story of the Oregon Railways*, Caldwell, ID: The Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1972, p.28.

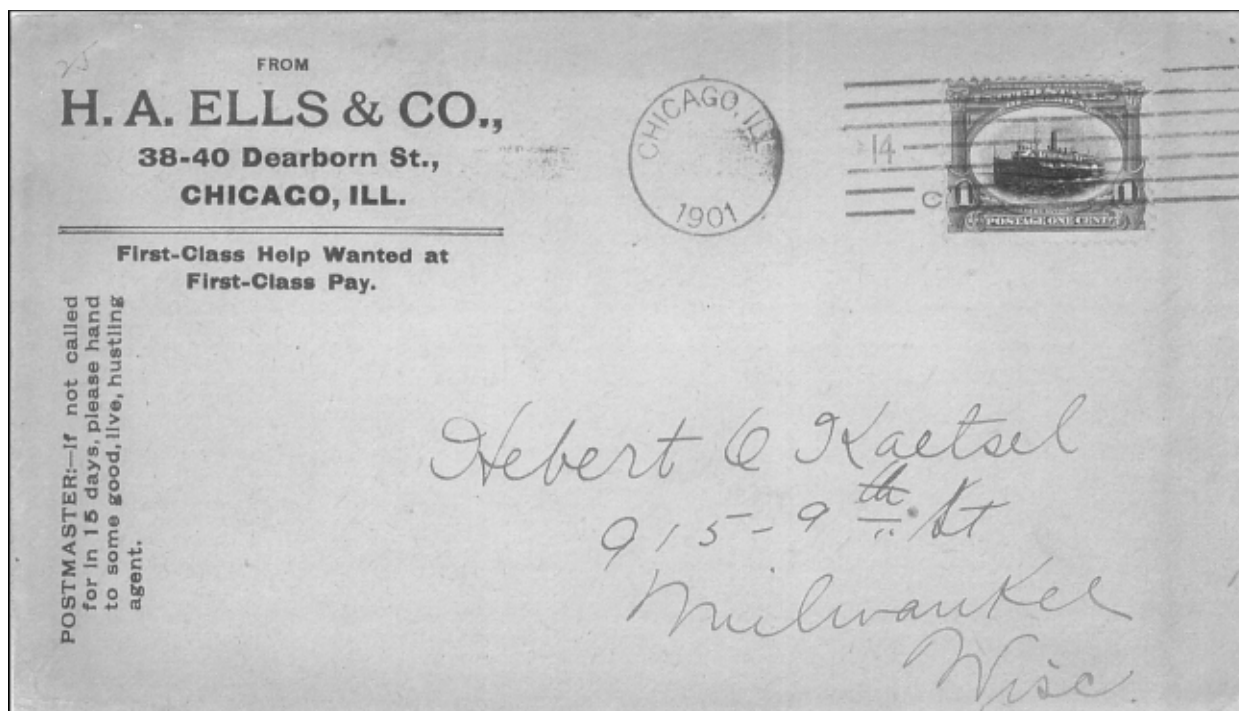


Figure 1 One-cent Pan-American stamp (Scott #294) used to pay the penny circular rate.

True Gold - The Pan-American Exposition Issue of 1901

By Michael Dattolico

It was the first U.S. commemorative stamp set issued in the new 20th century. Now, 100 years later, the Pan-American stamps of 1901 (Scott #294-299) have become choice nuggets of postal history gold. Covers bearing some denominations are nearly impossible to find and becoming quite expensive. There is little doubt that one hundred years from now, collectors will also regard Pan-American postal history items as bona fide treasures.

The history of the Pan-American Exposition stamps is an interesting one. In 1889, the First International Conference of American States, over which Secretary of State James G. Blaine presided, was held in Washington, D.C. Also known as the Pan-American Conference, it was the first time representatives of all independent nations in the western hemisphere gathered. One important item on the agenda was an exposition with all countries participating, a popular idea among the delegates. But unfortunately, there was a problem getting commitments from all the countries, and the idea was quietly shelved.

This is Michael Dattolico's fourth in a series of Treasure Trove articles discussing collecting specialties that are likely to grow in popularity in the future.

The expo idea was revived in 1895 at the Cotton States & International Expositions Conference in Atlanta. A group of businessmen, prodded by Secretary of State Blaine, pushed for an exposition to display the cultural and scientific advancements made by the United States, her neighbors, Central America and South American countries during the past 100 years. This time, the exposition was overwhelmingly approved throughout the Americas. Buffalo, New York was selected as the host city.

The original opening date was slated for 1899, but the Spanish-American War disrupted the timetable for completion. The company's board of directors postponed the exposition's opening date until May 1, 1901. To give structure to the project, the Pan-American Exposition Company was formed on June 25, 1897. William H. Buchanan, overseer of four exhibit divisions at the 1893 Columbian Exposition, was appointed Director-General of the enterprise.

Special covers with cachets were printed by promoters and local businesses to inform the public of the coming event. Many companies used them in mass mailings, while some businesses designed their own thematic stationery. The elaborate promotional en-

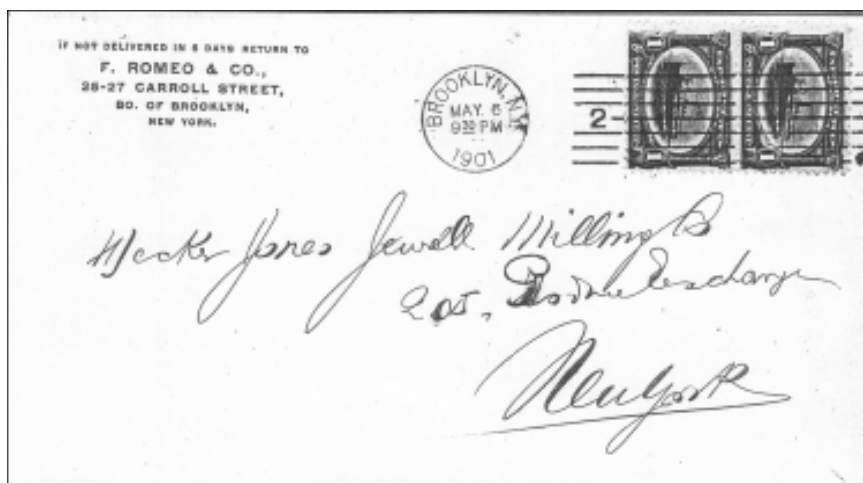


Figure 2 Pair of one-cent Pan-American stamps used to pay the 2-cent domestic postal cost.

velopes did much to spread the message that the Pan-American Exposition would be a precedent-setting occasion.

The exposition gained the support of various government agencies, the most prominent being the U.S. Post Office Department. It appointed John Brownlow to act as liaison with the Pan-American Exposition Company. Also, during the summer of 1899, the Buffalo post office was supplied with POD advertising slogan cancellation devices, making the exposition the first to gain national attention through use of pre-expo ad slogan cancels.

Most importantly, the U.S. Post Office Department decided that special commemorative stamps would be issued for the exposition. The set would include a

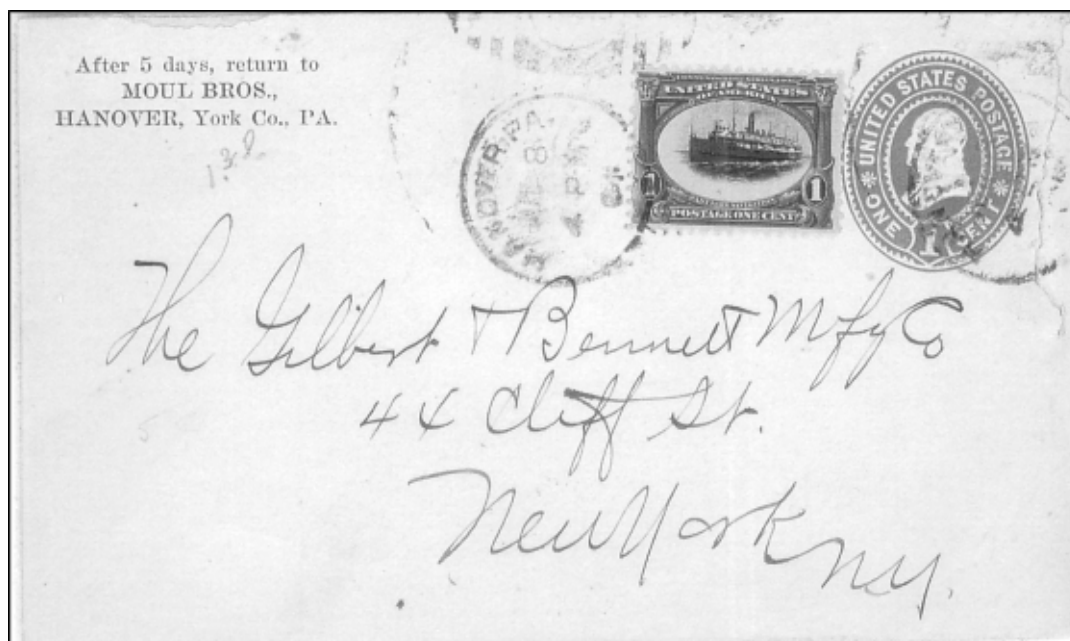
one, two, four, five, eight and ten-cent stamp, the overall theme being transportation. By the spring of 1900, the designs of the stamps were approved by the post office department, and printing of the stamps commenced later that year.

The one-cent stamp featured an inland lake steamer and was issued to pay the penny circular rate. Its colors were green and black. This became one of the most versatile stamps in the set, since single and multiple copies were combined with other stamps to pay various fees. Some examples are:

- (1) Use on one-cent postal cards to pay the two-cent overseas rate.
- (2) Pairs of the stamps to pay the domestic rate of postage on envelopes.
- (3) Multiples of the stamps used on one-cent envelopes to pay the double-rate of postage.
- (4) Single copies used with the four-cent stamp, or five used on one cover to pay the overseas postal fee.
- (5) Copies used with other stamps to complete the registry rate.

Figures 1 through 4 are examples of the one-cent stamp used in various ways.

Figure 3 One-cent stamp used on a penny embossed envelope to complete the 2-cent domestic letter fee.



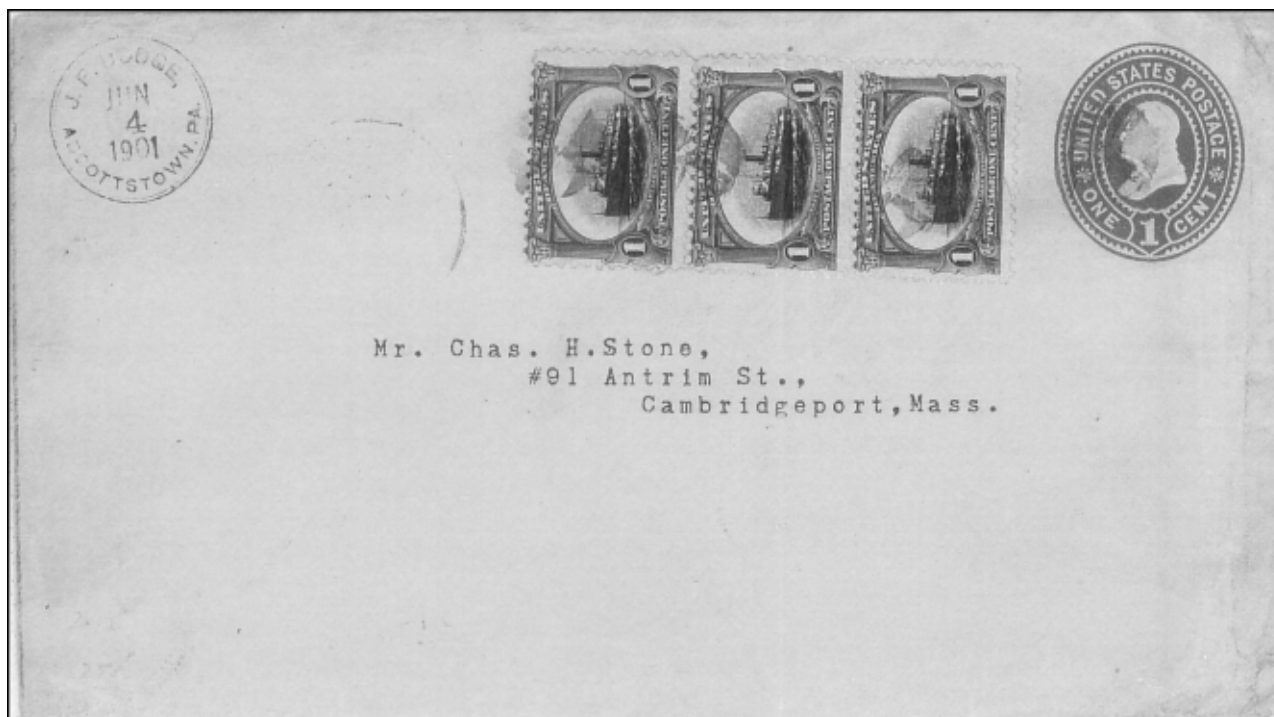


Figure 4. U.S. one-cent stationery envelope on which a strip of three Pan-American stamps were used to pay the double-rate (4-cent) postage rate.

The two-cent stamp featured a train and was issued to pay the domestic 2-cent rate of postage for

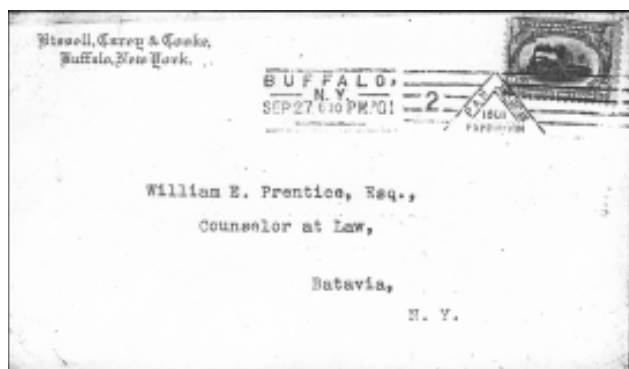


Figure 5 Two-cent stamp (Scott #295) cancelled at a Pan-American "station" post office located on the exposition grounds while the fair was in progress.

regular mail. Its colors were red and black. Its single-copy use on regular letters made it the most common stamp of the series. But pairs of the stamp paid the double-rate mailing cost, while single and multiple copies helped pay registry fees and overseas postal costs. The types of covers on which the two-cent stamp was affixed are endless.

Figures 5 through 9 comprise a scant, random selection of covers showing usage of the series' basic two-cent stamp.

Figure 6 Pan-American envelope mailed to Buffalo, New York from Butler, Illinois on September 5, 1901. Note the R.F.D. cancel on the two-cent stamp. Collecting envelopes featuring the main exposition buildings is one of the most popular sidelights related to the 1901 Pan-American issue.





Figure 7 Advertising envelope mailed from St. Louis in August, 1901 features the two-cent Pan-Am stamp. Because of their unique family name, the Faustus used Mephisto as its ad motif. One wonders how effective the “devil” theme was for their business.

Figure 8 Marion, Ohio hotel cornercard cover on which the Pan-American two-cent stamp was used. The machine device accompanies the circular date marking and ties the stamp to the envelope.

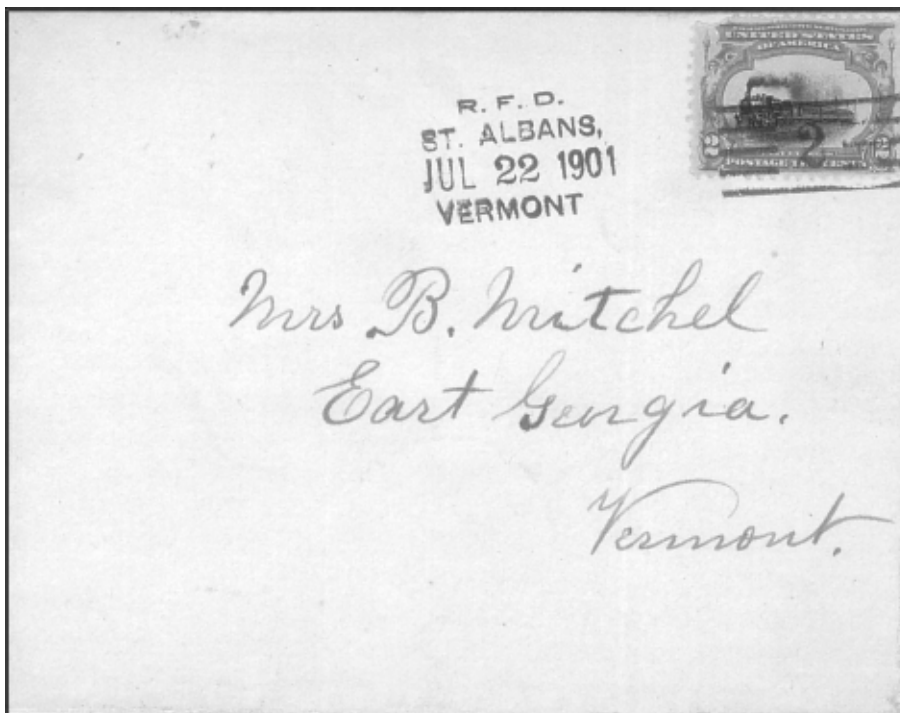
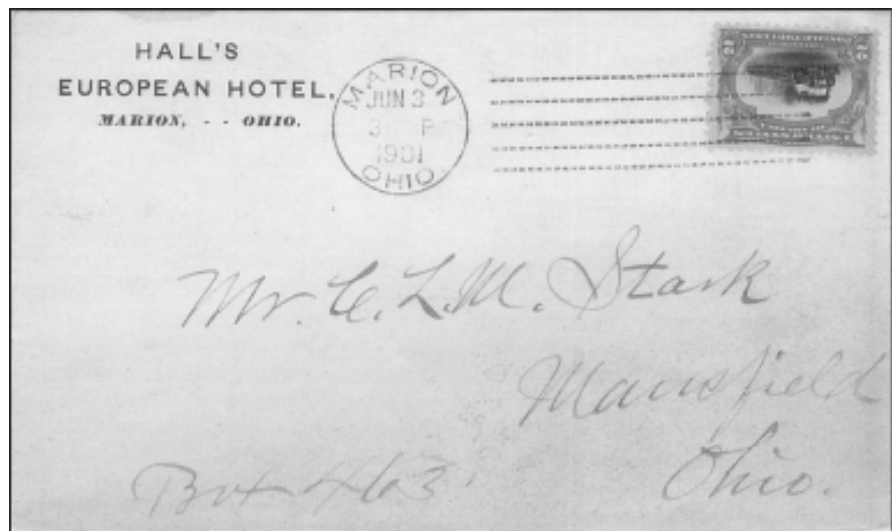


Figure 9 St. Albans, Vermont Rural Free Delivery cancel (Richow 1B variation) ties the two-cent stamp on cover to East Georgia, Vermont, during the summer of 1901.



Figure 10 Four-cent stamp (Scott #296) on cover showing the official Pan-American Exposition emblem, circa mid-1901.

The four-cent stamp featured an early automobile and was issued to pay for double-rate letters. It also was used with one-cent stamps to pay the 5-cent over-

seas rate, and pairs may have been combined with other stamps to complete registry costs.

Figures 10 through 13 illustrate this elusive stamp.

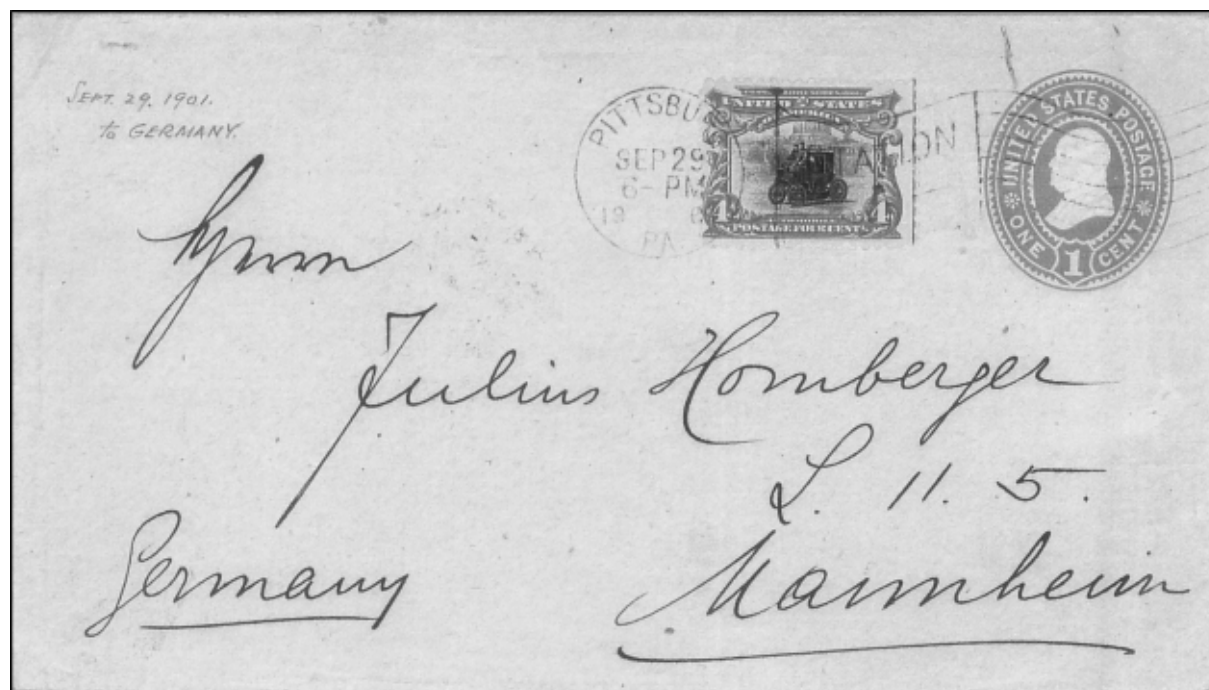


Figure 11 Four-cent Pan-American issue used on a one-cent embossed envelope to pay the 5-cent overseas postal rate to Germany in September 1901.

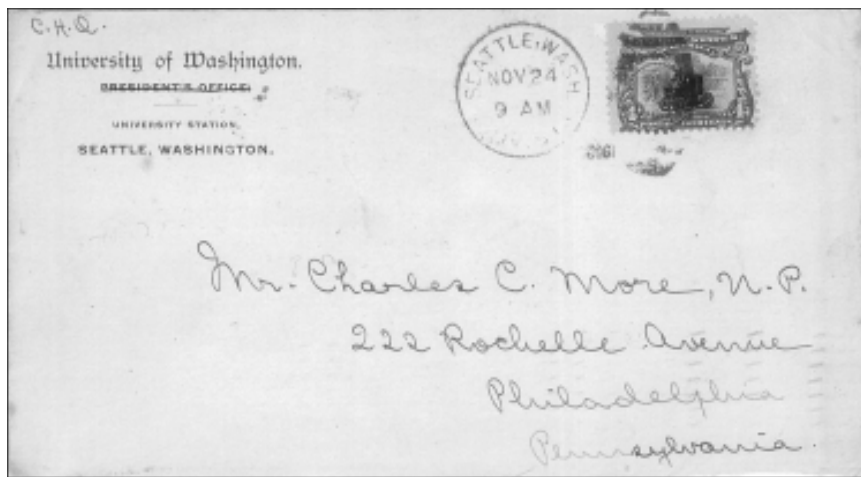


Figure 12 Four-cent “automobile” stamp on cover mailed from Seattle on Nov. 24, 1902 paid the double-rate domestic postage fee. Although the stamps were primarily sold during the Exposition, they were also used after the event ended.

Figure 13 This cover shows a four-cent Pan-American stamp used well after the Exposition closed in 1901. The letter was mailed at Philadelphia in 1906.



The five-cent stamp featured the suspension bridge over Niagara Falls and was issued to pay the basic overseas postal rate. Its colors were blue and black.

Pairs of the stamp also paid for heavy overseas letters and were used to complete the registry rate.

Figures 14 through 16 illustrate this stamp’s usage.

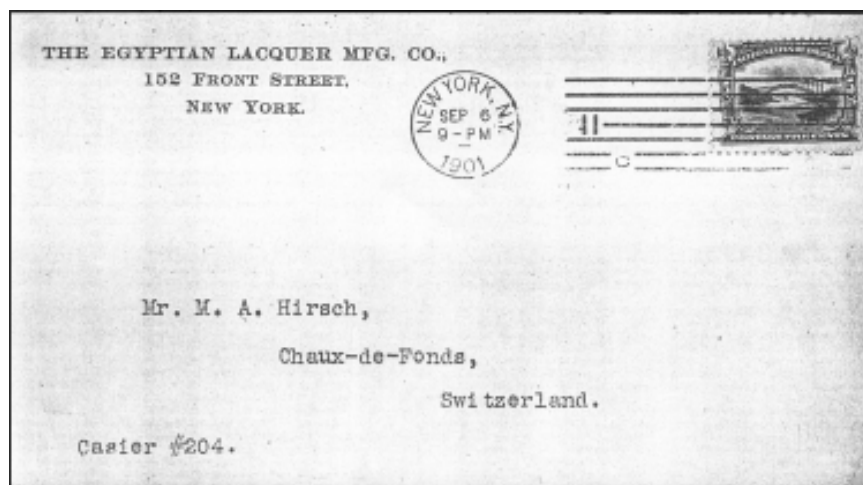


Figure 14 Five-Cent Pan-American Exposition stamp (Scott #297) used on New York cover addressed to Switzerland on September 6, 1901. This was the date that President McKinley was shot at the exposition in Buffalo.

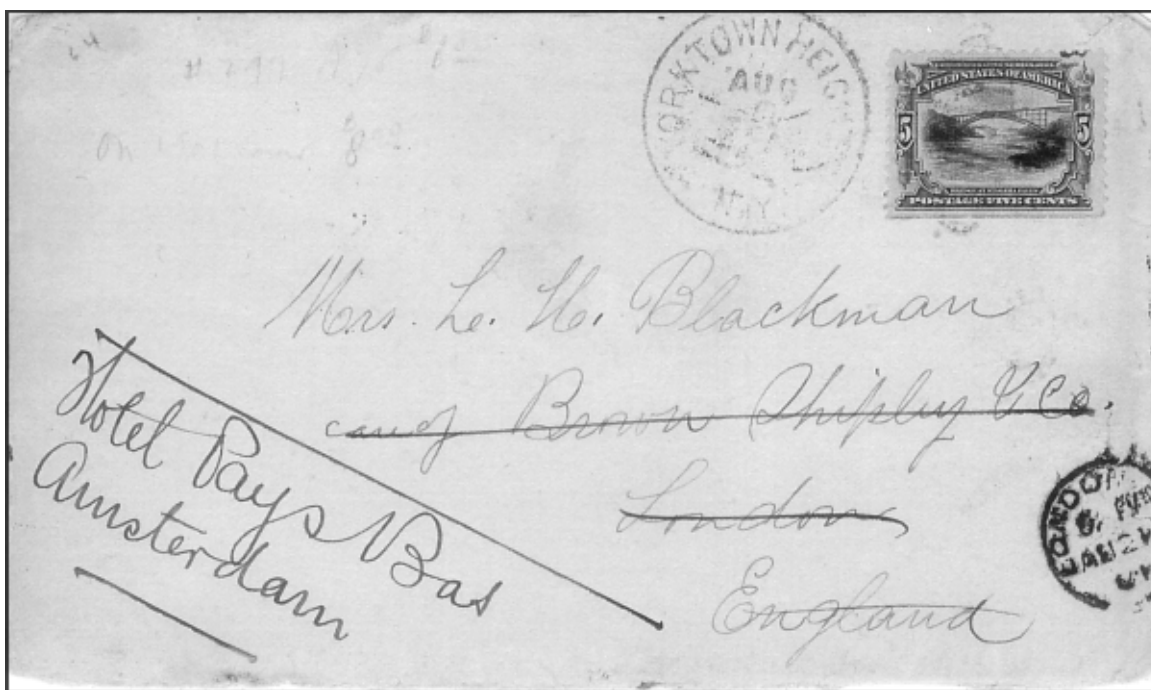


Figure 15 Yorktown Heights, New York cover mailed to England and forwarded to Holland in August, 1901. The five-cent blue Pan-American stamp paid the overseas postal rate

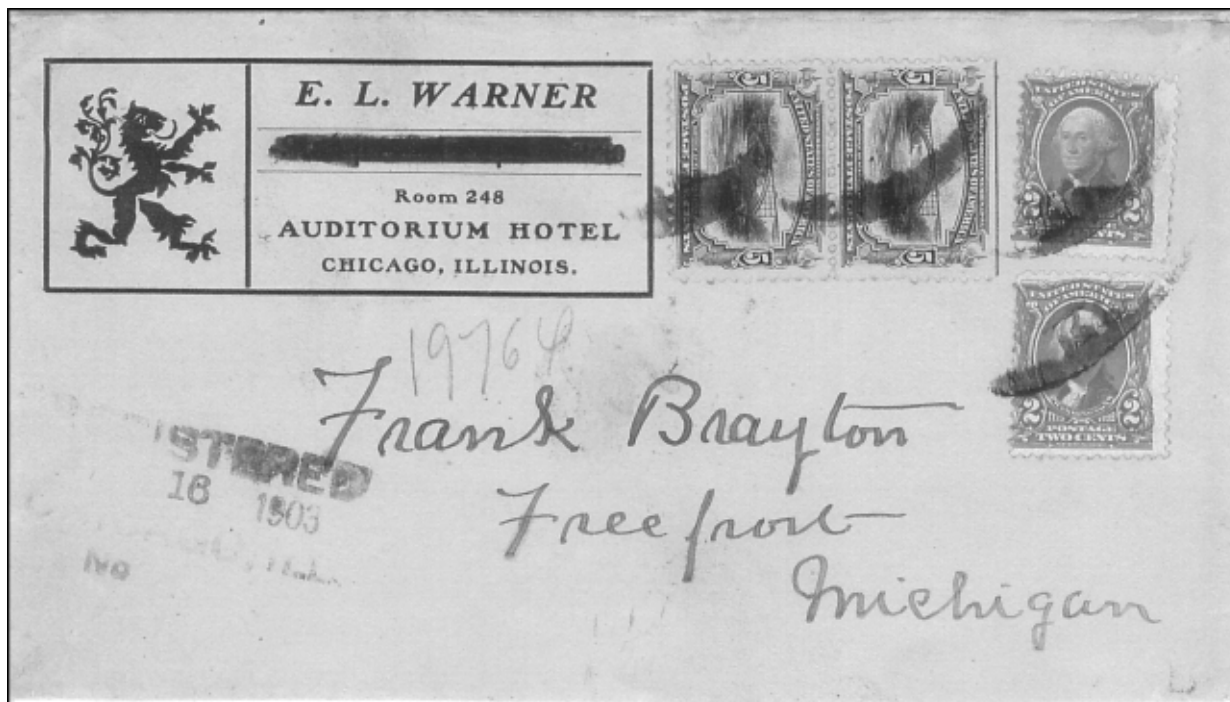


Figure 16 Vertical pair of the five-cent Scott #297 stamp used to pay part of the registry fee on this 1903 Chicago letter to Michigan.

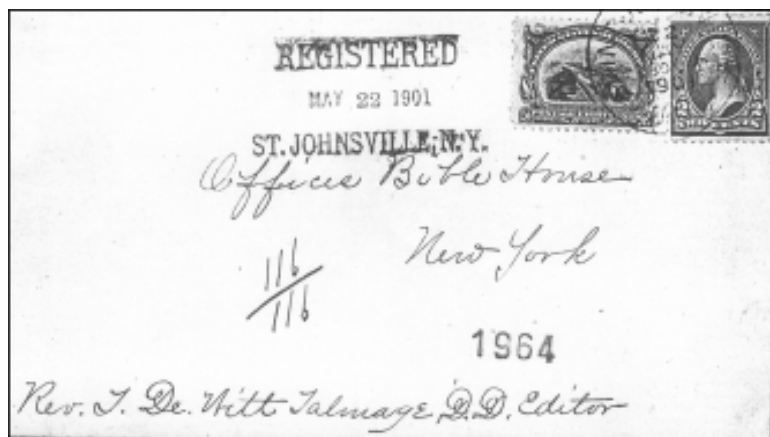


Figure 17 St. Johnsville, New York registered letter mailed to New York City, May, 1901. The eight-cent stamp (Scott #298) is used with a two-cent stamp (#279b) to pay the registry fees. The eight-cent Pan-American was issued primarily to pay registry fees.

The eight-cent stamp featured the locks at Saulte de Saint Marie, Michigan, and was issued to pay for registry letters. Its colors were brown and black. The

stamp also was used on 2-cent envelopes and with two-cent stamps to pay the double-rate overseas fee. One the scarcest stamps of the set, *Figures 17 through 19* reflect its presence on covers.

Figure 18 Registered letter sent from Everett, Washington to Los Angeles in 1901 features an eight-cent U.S. #298 used on a two-cent embossed envelope. The Pan-American eight-cent stamp is one of the scarcest stamps of the series.

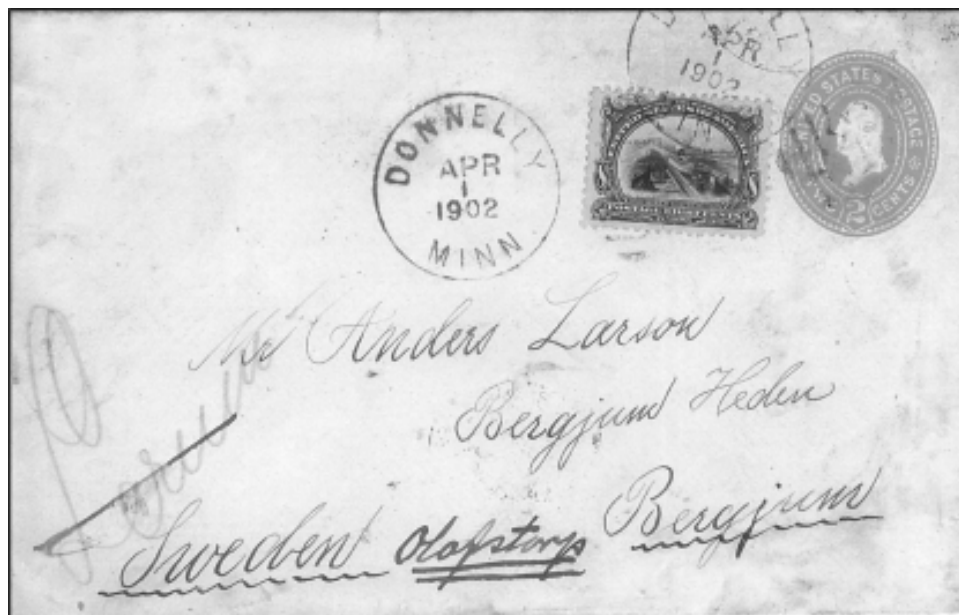
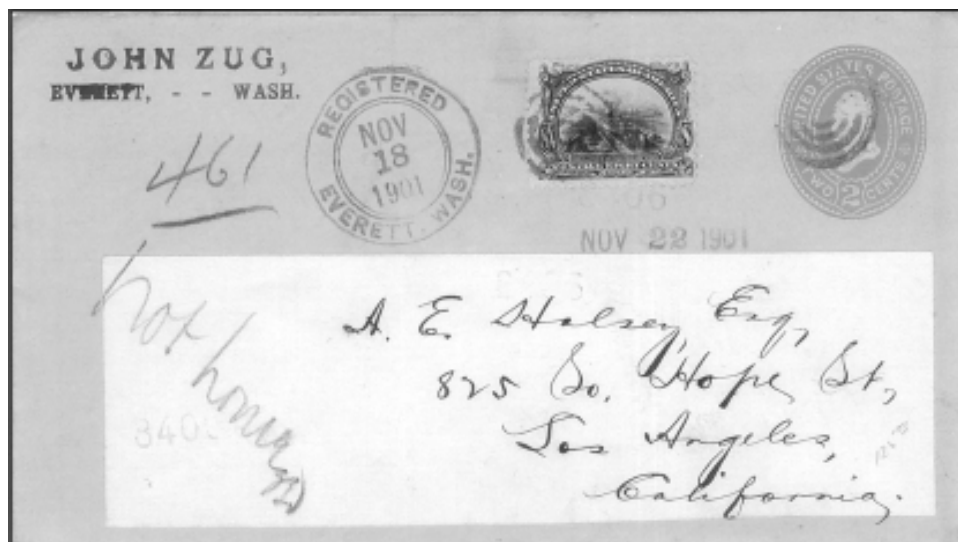


Figure 19 Eight-cent Pan-American stamp affixed on two-cent embossed postal envelope mailed to Sweden in April, 1902. The stamp was applied to pay the double-rate overseas cost of 10 cents.

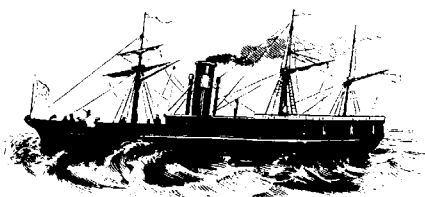
memorative series in our history, holding Pan-American covers while they rise in value is potentially a profitable business venture.

Second, postal historians who collect and study expositions covers as a topic are interested in the stamp series, since they appear on many Pan-American Exposition envelopes.

Third, these poignant, post-Victorian pictorials stroke the heart-strings of many ardent history lovers. Folks who like images of early 20th-century ships are drawn to the one-cent and the ten-cent stamps. Railroad enthusiasts appreciate the two-cent stamp. Those who are partial to geographic themes are drawn to the five-cent and eight-cent stamps. But perhaps the most appealing stamp of the set is the four-cent issue which features an early automobile.

Finally, the September 11th attacks have prompted many Americans to seek emotional solace from our country's heritage. The Pan-Am's simple yet ornate designs provide people with nostalgic, comforting images of a safer, less complicated time in our history. Since the World Trade Center attacks, these stamps reinforce the feeling that there will always be a secure America.

The Pan-American issue was the first commemorative set printed in the 20th century. Covers bearing the stamps are now being sought by more and more collectors in the early 21st century. Imagine what the demand for them will be like one hundred years from now.



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CALIFORNIA

- 1 ALCATRAZ, 1900 VG CDS ON COVER W/FOLD (74-63). EST. \$12
- 2 ALGOMAH, 1908 G+ CDS ON COVER (02-09). EST. \$20
- 3 BLAKE, 1907 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (96-11). EST. \$25
- 4 BLANCO, 1913 F 4-BAR ON PPC (73-41). EST. \$6
- 5 BRADLEY, 1902 VG DUPLEX ON COVER W/C. EST. \$5
- 6 BUCK, 1911 VG 4-BAR REC'D ON PPC (10-13 PER.). EST. \$12
- 7 BUCK MEADOWS, 1917 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (15-24). EST. \$20
- 8 COLD BROOK, 1911 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (11-16). EST. \$20
- 9 CONEJO, 1909 VG DOANE ON PPC (98-20). EST. \$12
- 10 COSUMNE, 1912 VG 4-BAR REC'D ON PPC (52-15). EST. \$15
- 11 DEFENDER, 1909 F DOANE ON PPC (00-15). EST. \$20
- 12 DEWITT, 1908 F CDS ON PPC W/CORNER BEND (03-27). EST. \$8
- 13 DUFFEY, 8/3/11 F LKU DOANE ON PPC (04-12). EST. \$40
- 14 ESMERALDA, 1888 VG CDS ON COVER (87-02). EST. \$20
- 15 FRESNO FLATS, 1911 VG DOANE ON GPC (73-12). EST. \$6
- 16 FULDA, 1911 G+ 4-BAR ON PPC (06-12). EST. \$25
- 17 FYFFE, 1911 G DOANE ON PPC (82-13). EST. \$8
- 18 GREENFIELD, 1916 F 4-BAR ON PPC. EST. \$5
- 19 GRUBGULCH, 1908 VG DOANE ON PPC (83-18). EST. \$20
- 20 INDIAN GULCH, 1888 F DC ON COVER (55-12). EST. \$20
- 21 JAMESBURG, 1910 G+ LKU MOT-1090 ON PPC (94-35). EST. \$6
- 22 JAMISON, 1908 F 4-BAR ON COVER (93-11). EST. \$20
- 23 JERSEYDALE, 1907 VG 4-BAR ON PC (90-30). EST. \$6
- 24 KING CITY, 1894 F TOWN & COUNTY ON COVER. EST. \$50
- 25 KING CITY/REC'D, 1908 VG CDS REC'D ON PPC. EST. \$6
- 26 LOCKWOOD, 1913 G EKU MOT-1390 ON PPC. EST. \$6
- 27 LONOK, 1907 VG DOANE REC'D ON PPC (85-54). EST. \$6
- 28 MALTERMORO, 1905 F DUPLEX ON PPC (94-13). EST. \$20
- 29 MARK WEST, 1911 F 4-BAR ON PPC (65-17). EST. \$12
- 30 MEADOW LAKES, 1932 VG LD 4-BAR ON COVER (30-33). EST. \$20
- 31 MIAMI, 1901 F CDS ON GPC (94-26). EST. \$15
- 32 MILLWOOD, 1896 VG CDS W/STAR KILLER ON COVER (94-09). E. \$20
- 33 MINTURN, 1885 F TC ON GPC (84-22). EST. \$15
- 34 MONSON, 1907 F CDS ON PPC (99-20). EST. \$12
- 35 MONTEREY, MILITARY BR. 1926 VG 4-BAR ON SAFE ARRIVAL PC. \$50
- 36 MOUNTAIN KING, 1908 F 4-BAR ON PPC (07-22). EST. \$12
- 37 NAVELENCIA, 1931 VG LD 4-BAR ON COVER (15-31). EST. \$6
- 38 NEWTOWN, 1910 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (54-12). EST. \$20
- 39 OLIVE, 1909 F DOANE ON PPC (87-63). EST. \$4
- 40 OTAY, 1915 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (70-25). EST. \$12
- 41 PICARD, 1907 VG 4-BAR REC'D ON PPC (88-07). EST. \$20
- 42 PINERIDGE, 1908 F 4-BAR ON PPC (92-44). EST. \$6
- 43 PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY, 1918 F 4-BAR ON PPC (15-19). EST. \$15
- 44 PRIEST VALLEY, 1906 F DUPLEX ON PPC (82-34). EST. \$8
- 45 PRIEST VALLEY, 1914 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (83-34). EST. \$8
- 46 ROSELAWN, 1908 VG DOANE ON PPC (02-18). EST. \$12
- 47 SAINT JOHN, 1911 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (64-17). EST. \$15
- 48 SAN ARDO/REC'D, 1905 VG CDS REC'D & O/S ON PPC. EST. \$6
- 49 SAN ARDO, 1908 G+ EKU MOT-3010 ON PPC. EST. \$6
- 50 SAN ARDO, 1914 VG EKU MOT-3020 ON PPC. EST. \$6
- 51 SAN LUCAS, 1905 G+ DUPLEX ON PPC. EST. \$6
- 52 SENTINEL, 1908 F DOANE ON PPC (80-10). EST. \$20
- 53 SESAME, 1911 F 4-BAR ON PPC (02-13). EST. \$20
- 54 SOLEDAD, 1915 G+ EKU MOT-3470 + MISSETT TO SALINAS \$6
- 55 SOUTH SAN DIEGO, ca1890 F CDS ON COVER (69-04). EST. \$20
- 56 SUGAR PINE, 1908 F 4-BAR ON COVER (07-34). EST. \$6
- 57 SUR, 1910 VG DOANE ON PPC (89-13). EST. \$6
- 58 SWANTON, 1913 G+ 4-BAR ON PPC (97-30). EST. \$5
- 59 TARPEY, 1907 F DOANE ON COVER (92-14). EST. \$20
- 60 TASSAJERA HOT SPRINGS, 1917 VG 4-BAR ON SITE PPC (12-44). \$8
- 61 TRIMMER, 1912 F CDS ON PPC (89-19). EST. \$12
- 62 TUDOR, 1909 VG DOANE ON PPC (93-42). EST. \$6
- 63 VARAIN, 1911 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (07-19). EST. \$20
- 64 WALSH STATION, 1913 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (76-17). EST. \$12

IDAHO

- 65 ARROWROCK, 1913 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (11-17). EST. \$12
- 66 GREEN CREEK, 1910 VG CDS ON PPC W/CREASE (97-75). EST. \$4
- 67 MORA, 1917 F 4-BAR ON PPC (09-18). EST. \$35
- 68 PEBBLE, 1913 F 4-BAR ON PPC (08-17). EST. \$35
- 69 STINSON, 1909 VG CDS ON PPC (01-10). EST. \$35
- 70 TWIN LAKES, 1912 VG 4-BAR ON GPC W/TONING (00-17). EST. \$30
- 71 WEBB, 1910 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (01-21). EST. \$12

OREGON

- 72 BAYVIEW, 1901 F CDS ON MONARCH CVR W/TEAR (01-41). EST. \$6
- 73 LAUREL, 1916 VG 4-BAR ON COVER (79-35). EST. \$6
- 74 LUTGENS, 1901 F CDS ON COVER (90-17). EST. \$12
- 75 ONA, VG 1908 4-BAR ON CVR RED'D @ RIGHT (90-20). EST. \$6
- 76 PIONEER, 1901 G+ CDS ON COVER (00-29). EST. \$10
- 77 POKEGAMA, 1910 G+ BLUE 4-BAR ON PPC (99-11). EST. \$20
- 78 VESPER, 1916 F 4-BAR ON COVER (79-19). EST. \$12
- 79 WARNER LAKE, 1908 G+ DOANE ON PPC (89-24). EST. \$20

WASHINGTON

- 80 DELRIO, 1917 F 4-BAR ON REG'D REC (04-43). EST. \$6
- 81 EAST SEATTLE, 1911 F DOANE ON COVER RED'D @ RIGHT (04-24) 6
- 82 FORT SIMCOE, 1903 G+ DUPLEX ON COVER (70-22). EST. \$12
- 83 HANFORD, 1910 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (08-43). EST. \$6
- 84 HAZEL, 1910 F CDS ON PPC (03-27). EST. \$12
- 85 IRONDALE, 1911 VG 4-BAR ON CVR RED'D @ RIGHT (81-20). EST. \$8
- 86 RETSIL, 1922 VG DUPLEX MIMIC O/S ON COVER (15-66). EST. \$5
- 87 TAYLOR, 1909 VG 4-BAR ON PPC (04-44). EST. \$6
- 88 WEST SEATTLE, 1904 VG DUPLEX ON CVR RED'D @ RIGHT (89-08) 8
- 89 YOUNGSTOWN, 1908 F DOANE REC'D ON PPC (05-09). EST. \$5

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CLOSING DATE: August 13, 2003 (10 PM Pacific)

THE POSTMASTERS GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES

VIII. Amos Kendall, 1835-1840

by Daniel Y. Meschter

The incumbency of Amos Kendall marked a turning point in the development of the Post Office unequaled since its establishment. Up until 1836 it functioned as an autonomous agency accountable only to the President and filing a few reports with the Treasury. As John Milton Niles, his successor, observed in his Report for 1840,

The post office establishment is different from any other branch of the public service. It is a fundamental principle of its organization that it is to be sustained by its own revenues. This principle not only avoids any charge upon the Treasury, but serves to limit altogether the action of the department¹.

This freedom from fiscal oversight, even by the Congress, made the Post Office ripe for incompetent management if not out-and-out corrupt practices.

What Kendall found when Andrew Jackson appointed him to succeed William Barry on May 1, 1835 was a department in fiscal disarray. As an administration "insider," he would already have been sensitive to the House Committee's hearings and the problems in the Post Office². Jackson seems to have given him a free hand to manage departmental personnel without conforming to the White House's "spoils" system

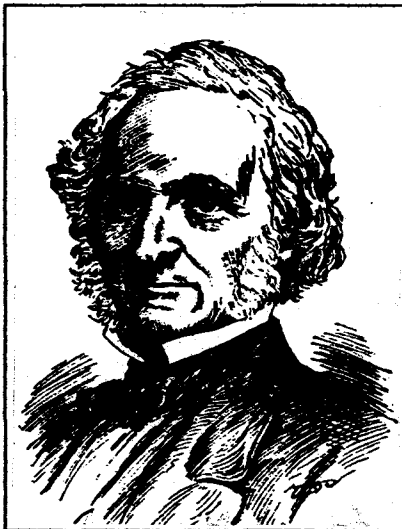
He quickly learned that the department's accounting system gave an inadequate picture of revenues and expenditures, forcing him to make approximations on the basis of largely fictitious figures. He estimated that as of June 30, 1835 the Post Office had a debt of \$1,064,000, of which \$792,000 was due to contractors and other suppliers and \$272,000 in bank loans against accounts receivable and cash on hand of \$1,040,000, leaving a current deficit of \$24,000 (1835 Report, p. 388). To this he had to add \$157,000 "additional allowances" Barry had previously approved³.

While \$24,000 would not seem an onerous burden compared to annual revenues exceeding \$3,000,000, the amounts owed contractors and suppliers were already past due while accounts currently receivable would only dribble in over the

next two or three months, thus understating the current deficit by a large margin. In addition, the \$272,000 Barry unlawfully borrowed on the credit of the United States was not something that could be deferred out of hand. Worse, he realized from what he called "incidents and detached accounts" that not only were the department's debts increas-

ing daily by amounts not reflected on its books, those books hadn't been balanced in twenty years and were worthless as a measure of the department's financial condition.

Kendall was careful not to disparage any of his staff and even paid tribute to Barry as a patriot and friend, saying that "the reason he had not better fortune was that he was too good a man," in an attempt to absolve Barry of blame for anything that happened during his tenure. Kendall, however, could not avoid the plain fact that the Post Office's problems were due in part to Barry's liberality and in part to the incompetence and even dishonesty of his staff.



Amos Kendall

Heads would have to roll!

A story he told years later was that when he first visited the Post Office to meet the officers and clerks and familiarize himself with the department's work routine, one of the clerks approached him to say that he had control of the funds and would be glad to accommodate him with a loan out of departmental funds if he desired. Kendall told him, "I never make myself dependent upon those whom it is my duty to control," to which the clerk replied, "A very correct principle;" but the damage was done. "His assent to the principle came too late," he wrote, "the offer being deemed proof of corruption, and as soon as convenient his services were disposed with⁴." That ill-advised clerk was perhaps only the first of a housecleaning Kendall quietly put into effect.

Amos Kendall was the most effective Postmaster General of his age. He was born in Dunstable, Massachusetts in 1789 and raised on a farm along the New Hampshire border⁵. He graduated from Dartmouth College at the head of his class in 1811

and studied law in Groton, Massachusetts for two years. Seeking opportunity, he made his way to Washington where he accepted a position as a tutor in the family of Henry Clay that took him to Lexington, Kentucky. He was admitted to the bar in Frankfort later that year (1814). In 1816 he became editor of the *Argus of Western America* in which he supported public education, a life long interest, and became an ardent Democrat. As a journalist he played a significant role in carrying Kentucky for Jackson in the 1828 presidential election.

Kendall was among a group of journalists who approached Jackson in February 1829 to receive their rewards for supporting him during the recent campaign. He clearly was amenable to any appointment Jackson might offer him. Rimini described him as "thin and ghostly looking," but obviously "talented, indefatigable, western, a smashing writer, and devoted to 'Jackson and Reform'," qualities Jackson immediately recognized⁶. Kendall accepted the Fourth Auditorship in the Treasury, since it allowed him to establish and edit the *Washington Globe* at the same time. He hesitated to accept appointment as Postmaster General in 1835 since he had a large family and was finding it difficult to support them on a public salary⁷.

After Van Buren re-appointed him in March 1837, as obviously the best man available to clean up the Post Office, Niven saw him as of average height with a long face, close-set eyes, sharp nose, prematurely white hair, and a Yankee twang his years in Kentucky hadn't softened⁸. Van Buren agreed with Jackson that Kendall not only was highly intelligent, but knew how to ingratiate himself into the highest councils of government; someone who was a skillful analyst, cold, competent, and politically dangerous.

Kendall's annual reports were lucid and comprehensive, as they had to be because the Post Office's financial situation was virtually hopeless.

His first step was to open a new set of books, applying up-to-date accounting principles. The measures he adopted to put the department on a sound financial basis reflected what he deemed its major problems: (1) suspend all pending allowances from the credit of the contractors; (2) refuse to accept or pay any drafts, which is to say acceptances, drawn on the department; (3) apply current income to the payment of the current quarter's expenses, the surplus only to be applied to the payment of preexisting accounts; and (4) introduce a system to effect prompter collection and application of current income (1835 Report, p. 389).

The first of these was in reference to payments for additional or improved services such as may have been ordered by the Postmaster General or, more usually, proposed by contractors such as faster or more frequent schedules or improved means of transportation. Despite the fact such allowances were prohibited beyond certain limits by the Act of 1825⁹, Barry's open-handedness as a hearty, well-met fellow in approving additional allowances was a major contribution to the debt he resorted to bank loans to defray. Kendall's suspension of allowances both eased the current deficit and allowed him time to review pending claims; but at a heavy price.

The second alluded to a long-standing policy to funnel all revenues to the Postmaster General in Washington who then accepted drafts drawn on the Post Office, except for postmaster compensations which they deducted from their quarterly returns. Accounts payable numbering in the tens of thousands per year he had to settle and the inefficiency of the process suggested a decentralization policy.

The third measure simply established priorities for the disbursement of current revenues as much in the interest of re-establishing the credit of the Post Office as remedying its deficit problem.

The fourth comprised the procedures required to implement Kendall's decentralization policy. Since approximately two-thirds of the Post Office's expenses were for the transportation of mail, Kendall ordered route contractors to collect the quarterly returns from postmasters along their routes and turn these revenues over to "depositing offices" at the ends of their routes for deposit in local banks. The depositing offices would then pay route contractors' drafts out of these funds as soon as presented, thus simplifying and much expediting the process. In addition, Kendall urged Congress to shift the responsibility for the custody and accounting for revenues to the Treasury.

Kendall's strategy was an instant success. Current expenses pending at the beginning of July were settled by mid August with enough surplus to begin payments on the old debt of which more than half was paid off by mid November (1835 Report, pp. 390-1). He was proud to announce in his 1836 Report (p. 508) that the bank loans were paid off in April and old debt completely retired by the end of the April quarter.

One of Kendall's most important accomplishments was persuading Congress to enact legislation "to change the organization of the Post Office Department and to provide more effectively for the settlement of its accounts" in accordance with his recommendations in his 1835 Annual Report (p.

399). Section 1 of the Act told the story: "That the revenues arising in the Post Office Department, and all debts due to the same, shall, when collected, be paid into the Treasury of the United States¹⁰."

Actually, the Post Office continued to operate in much the same way it always had except that the Act provided for the oversight of an Auditor in the Treasury and required the filing of a series of regular reports with the Auditor and Congress. Among a number of other important provisions, the Act put suits for the collection of money into the hands of the Attorney General instead of the department's solicitor; authorized appointment of a Third Assistant Postmaster General; and transferred the appointment of postmasters for offices at which the postmaster's annual commission exceeded one thousand dollars from the Postmaster General to the President. The Act also contained clearer provisions for route contracting, advertising letters, establishing expresses, and employing letter carriers than ever before.

These were dynamic times and Kendall responded to the challenges of his day. Where William Barry had merely recognized the potential of the railroads to carry mail, Kendall came to grips with the problems this new technology presented (1835 Report, pp. 394-6). He realized, first, that the industry was in its infancy. Railroad construction on the all-important Washington to Boston route, for example, was completed to the extent that mail could be carried from Washington to New York in less than a day and from New York to Boston in about the same time, but only by an arduous combination of different railroad companies, stages, and steamboat routes. He reported (p. 387) that mail was carried "in railroad cars" a total of 270,500 miles during the 1835 fiscal year or about 1% of the overall total, but this figure is suspect. The only contract executed in calendar year 1835 he mentions (p. 396) was to carry the mail ninety miles triweekly from Norfolk to Halifax, N.C. at \$26 per mile per year, *as far as completed*, of course. However, he conceded at one point that "the mail carried on all these [rail]roads are much less than the "great" mail between Washington and New York," implying that some mails were being carried by rail without a contract.

Perhaps the most difficult problem was the absurdity of competitive bidding, required by law, to carry the mail by rail where there could realistically be only one bidder. As Kendall observed in his 1836 Report (p. 511), the department's choices were limited to either paying what the railroads

demand or adjusting the compensation by negotiation.

Railroad transportation itself was so new even the companies had no clear idea of what to charge. Kendall tended to compare company demands in the \$250 to \$300 per mile per year range with stage contracts at a fraction of that so that the portion of the mail carried by rail increased very slowly as a few railroads began to moderate their demands. In a letter to Congress transmitting a statement of the contracts made by the Post Office during 1835, Kendall listed only three three-year contracts to carry the mail ninety miles daily from New York to Philadelphia by a combination of rail cars and post coaches at \$117 per mile; 145 miles daily from Philadelphia to Chambersburg by rail cars and post coaches at \$26 per mile; and 100 miles daily from Baltimore to Philadelphia by rail cars and steamboat during season at \$100 per mile; but none of the bidders were railroad companies¹¹.

Kendall's failure to solve the problem of railroad transportation of the mails was mitigated in part by the fact that neither railroad construction nor technology had moved fast enough to make railroads a vital factor except in the Washington to Boston corridor. Congress did not help when first it declared all railroads to be post roads, to the discomfort of the railroad companies, and rather awkwardly attempted to limit the Postmaster General to not paying "more than twenty-five percent over and above what *similar* transportation would cost in post coaches¹². Congress backed away from this limitation during its next session by raising the maximum to convey the mails by railroad to \$300 per mile-year, ironically within the parameters of what the railroads originally demanded and to which Kendall had steadfastly objected¹³.

Another mitigation was Kendall's revival of the express mail system that went far beyond where the railroads would reach for years to come. It began with an overland line from New York to New Orleans reducing the transit time from 13 days, 19 hours by contract mail to 6 days, 19 hours by express (1836 Report, pp. 507, 512)¹⁴. He also indicated intent to start express lines from New York to St. Louis, reducing the time from 13 days, 10 hours to 5 days, 0 hours; from New Orleans to New York via Cincinnati by triweekly steamboat and Columbus by land to connect with the St. Louis route, from 17 days, 18 hours to 13 days, 4 hours with improvement by daily steamboat service between New Orleans and Cincinnati expected to be inaugurated in January 1838; and from Boston to

Buffalo via Albany (1837 Report, pp 795-6). By 1839, however, road improvements and the efficiencies the express routes introduced reduced the contract mail schedule between New York and New Orleans to nine days, competitive enough with express mail at a much higher cost to justify discontinuance of the express routes.

Kendall was the first PMG since Meigs to concern himself with postal rate reduction, but he limited himself at first to proposals to make rates conform to the national currency in five-cent gradations and doubling the mileage in each zone to reduce accounting errors (1835 Report, p. 401). Congress wasn't impressed. He was more specific in his 1836 Report (p. 509) where he illustrated a scale embodying these principles and reducing rates by about twenty percent:

Up to 75 miles	5 cents
75 to 150 miles	10 cents
150 to 300 miles	15 cents
300 to 600 miles	20 cents
Over 600 miles	25 cents

But, again, Congress was not prepared to act.

Rate reduction on its own merits became paramount in his 1837 Report (p. 795) in which he assured the President it would not result in a reduction in service. By 1838 he clearly was aware of Rowland Hill's conclusions that the cost of transporting mail depended more on the weight of a letter than the distance carried. He appears to have accepted Hill's argument that losses due to reducing postal rates to some minimum would be more than offset by increased volume. His hands tied by Congressional reluctance to lose revenue, Kendall dispatched George Plitt, a Post Office special agent, on a year-long tour of Europe to study and report on the postal systems there most comparable to the United States (1839 Report, p. 617).

Although Kendall didn't remain in office long enough to see the problems of mail transportation and rate revision resolved, the claim of Stokes & Stockton for allowances for extra services he suspended in his fiscal reform program pursued him for several years to come.

The facts were that in 1831 R. C. Stockton entered a combined bid—a practice barred by the Act of July 2, 1836—to carry the mail on eleven routes between Washington and Philadelphia and southwestern Pennsylvania for four years from January 1832 in *gross* “as advertised” for \$14,950 per annum and in *improved* form that Stockton agreed to perform “for \$100 less, proportionately to

the duties now performed, than the pay now given,” whatever that meant, “whenever the Postmaster General shall direct.” Barry, apparently so directing, approved Stokes and Stockton's claim for \$83,000 allowances for additional services, more than doubling the price of their original contract. The House Select Committee reviewed these additional allowances in depth and not only condemned the practices of combining routes in single bids and writing proposed improvements into contracts, but found that Barry had disregarded Section 43 (Act of 1825) that prohibited additional allowances except where extra service was required and severely limited the compensation allowable for it¹⁵.

Suffice it to say that Kendall, as he later wrote, “Knowing nothing of the principles on which these additional allowances were based” and being aware they had been examined and condemned by the House Select Committee, he concluded on further investigation that the Stockton & Stokes claims,

were unauthorized by law and, with slight exceptions, were mere gratuities, not based on any services rendered to the department. Concurring also with the committee of Congress that Messrs. Stockton & Stokes had already received much more than they were entitled to, your memorialist, after taking the opinion of the Attorney General, refused to restore to their credit the amounts suspended, or any part thereof¹⁶.

Stokes and Stockton's recourse was to obtain passage of a private act, such as Congress was wont to enact at the close of sessions without inquiry or debate as a “courtesy,” directing the Solicitor of the Treasury, “to settle and adjust the claims of William B. Stokes . . . for extra services performed . . . according to the principles of equity” and the Postmaster General to credit such sums as the Solicitor may decide due to the credit of Stokes & Stockton¹⁷. Wafted by a favoring gale, Stokes & Stockton now filed claims for extra services accruing after Kendall took office adding up to another \$39,000 for a new total of \$122,000.

The Treasury's Solicitor was generous to a fault. He gave Stokes & Stockton everything they asked for plus another \$34,000 they hadn't for an “additional daily mail to Washington,” and almost \$7,000 interest for a new total just shy of \$163,000, nearly three times their original contract.

Kendall credited \$122,000 of the award to Stokes' account as he felt bound to do, but continued to refuse the additional \$40,000. Stokes then brought suit to compel payment which the Circuit Court for the District of Columbia granted. Protected from personal liability as Postmaster

General by the Act of 1836 and defended by the Justice Department, Kendall appealed to the Supreme Court which affirmed¹⁸. Kendall promptly credited the balance due and that should have been the end of it, but it wasn't!

Aware that the 1836 Act didn't protect Kendall from suit as an individual, Stokes sued for damages in October 1839 and won a judgment of \$12,000. This decision, however, was set aside on an unresolved issue involving a finding of malice and retried in November 1841 when a jury found damages of \$11,000.

In the meantime, Kendall resigned as Postmaster General in May 1840 to manage Van Buren's reelection campaign. Even while still in office he founded and edited the *Extra Globe* to oppose the Whig press supporting Harrison. Nor did he hesitate to use the 13,000 deputy postmasters under his control to sell subscriptions. Harrison's election, however, left him unemployed and virtually without means with only the prospect of establishing another newspaper to tide him over until the Supreme Court ruled on his appeal in the Stokes case.

But Stokes was out for blood. He obtained an execution for debt with the result that pending his appeal to the Supreme Court, Kendall was confined to the bounds of the county jail. Fortunately, "bounds" in this case meant the boundaries of the District of Columbia so that except for the threat of actual imprisonment under certain circumstances, his confinement was not onerous. He established the short-lived *Kendall's Expositor* in 1841 and the weekly *Union Democrat* the next year. He then undertook to act as agent for claimants against the government; his fee for winning a large settlement for the Cherokee Indians solved his financial problems for the time being.

Things continued looking up when the Supreme Court reversed the Circuit Court, vacating its award on the grounds that Stokes, having chosen mandamus as a remedy, could not then elect another remedy—personal suit—for damages in excess of those granted by the Solicitor¹⁹. Finally, Samuel F.B. Morse employed him as his legal representative and business associate in the ownership and management of the patents covering his invention of the telegraph. Their association lasted fifteen years during which both became wealthy.

Kendall engaged in charitable, religious, and educational causes during his last years. He opposed secession and supported the Union in the war effort, but as Postmaster General he once agreed to

prohibit the use of the mails to distribute abolitionist literature in the South (1835 Report, pp. 397-8).

He was an important contributor to Washington's Cavalry Baptist Church and a founder, benefactor, and first president of the Columbia Institute for the Deaf and Dumb that later became the renowned Gallaudet College.

During his life he wrote a biography of Andrew Jackson (incomplete) and his own *Autobiography* published in 1873. He died in Washington on November 12, 1869 after a long and productive life.

Portrait of Amos Kendall from *The Cyclopedia of American Biography*, 1907. v. 5, p. 296.

¹ *Annual Report of the Postmaster General*, Executive Doc. No. 1, December 5, 1840, Serial 375, p. 483.

² *Examination of the Post Office Department*. House Report No. 103, February 13, 1835, Serial 277.

³ Kendall's *Annual Report of the Postmaster General*, House Executive Doc. No. 2, December 1, 1835, Serial 286, pp. 387ff; House Ex. Doc. No. 2, December 5, 1836, Serial 301, pp. 507ff; Senate Ex. Doc. No. 1, December 4, 1837, Serial 338, pp. 794ff; Senate Ex. Doc. No. 1, December 3, 1838, Serial 33, pp. 664ff; and Senate Ex. Doc. No. 1, November 30, 1839, Serial 354, pp. 613ff. are cited in the text by [Year] "Report" and (page number).

⁴ Kendall, Amos. *Autobiography*, Boston, 1872, excerpted in *The Cyclopedia of American Biography*, *infra*.

⁵ See Vexler, Robert L., *The Vice-Presidents and Cabinet Members*, Dobbs Ferry, NY, 1975; and *The National Cyclopedia of American Biography*, 1896, v. 6, p. 436. for biographical sketches of Amos Kendall

⁶ Rimini, Robert V., *Andrew Jackson and the Course of American Freedom, 1822-1832*, N.Y., 1981, pp. 166-7.

⁷ *Ibid.*, *Andrew Jackson and the Course of American Democracy, 1833-1845*, New York, 1984, pp. 241-2.

⁸ Niven, John. *Martin Van Buren, The Romantic Age of American Politics*, New York, NY, 1983, pp. 393-4.

⁹ Sec. 43, Act of March 3, 1825, 4 Stat. 114.

¹⁰ Act of July 2, 1836, 5 Stat. 80.

¹¹ Letter from the Postmaster General, March 31, 1836, House Doc. No. 203, Serial 290.

¹² Sec. 2, Act of July 7, 1838, 5 Stat. 283.

¹³ Act of January 25, 1839, 5 Stat. 314.

¹⁴ Richard Graham, *Linn's Stamp News*, October 21, 2002, p. 44 discusses and illustrates an express cover from New Orleans via New York to England).

¹⁵ House Report No. 103, *op. cit.*; 4 Stat. 114.

¹⁶ *Memorial of Amos Kendall*. House Doc. No. 37, December 15, 1845, Serial 482, pp. 1-2.

¹⁷ Act of July 2, 1836 for the relief of William B. Stokes, *et. al.*, 6 Stat. 665.

¹⁸ 37 U.S. 523.

¹⁹ 44 U.S. 87.

Marquette County, Michigan, Early Post Offices

By Paul E. Petosky

Although Marquette County might not be unique in the fact that there were more post offices established on the Marquette Iron Range in a shorter period of time than any other section of the country, the number established is remarkable. In the county's three major towns, Marquette, Negaunee and Ishpeming, there were seven different post offices between 1847 and 1863.

In the 1840s, when the first copper mines, and then the iron ore mines were being opened, at which time the Upper Peninsula of Michigan was remote and isolated from the rest of the country, there was much confusion in the Post Office Department at Washington and the officials there weren't quite sure where all these new mining towns were.

At this same time the original Upper Peninsula counties—first Michilimackinac, then Chippewa, under the legislative act of March 9, 1843—were being sub-divided

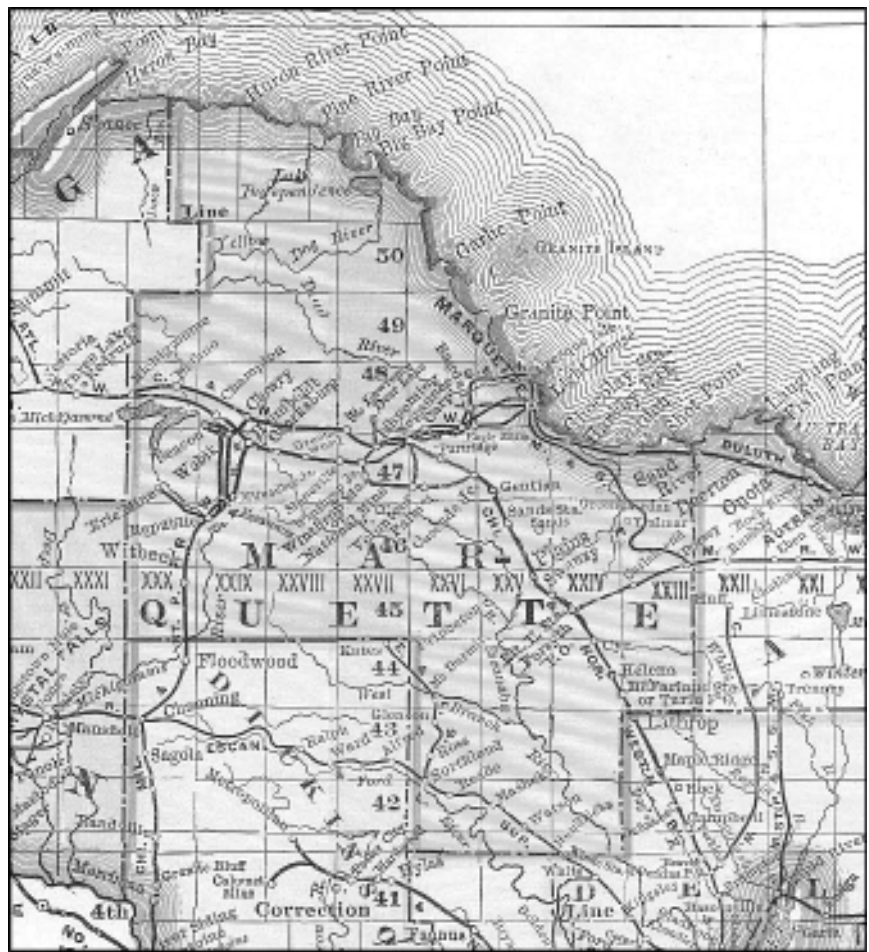


Figure 1 Marquette County, Michigan, 1903. (Source: Rand McNalley's Upper Peninsula, 1903.

into Marquette, Delta, Houghton, Ontonagon and Schoolcraft counties which led to further confusion in Washington. Michigan maps were scarce and many didn't even include the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

The early records have the Fort Wilkins Post Office, which was established on January 4, 1845, the Eagle River Post Office, which was established May 11, 1847 and the one at Houghton, established on March 24, 1846, recorded in Marquette County. And when looking for the first Carp River Post Office on the Marquette Iron Range, established on January 12, 1847, it was found as being in Houghton County.



Figure 2 This cover displays a Carp River, Michigan, postmark from the early 1850s. The name of the office was changed to Marquette in 1856.



Figure 3 View of Marquette, circa 1861.

Carp River, Michigan - (The site of the Carp River Forge), erected by the Jackson Iron Company in 1847 which first produced iron in 1848, closing in 1856. Carp River was known as the Jackson Location. William B. McNair was the first postmaster at Carp River succeeded by Philo Marshall Everett of Jackson on June 29, 1848, who had organized the Jackson Iron Company. The Carp River Post Office discontinued operation on April 2, 1851 and was reestablished on October 13, 1851 with Peter White as its postmaster. Amos Rogers Harlow, organized the Marquette Iron Company on September 14, 1859 and became the first postmaster of Worcester (Marquette County), with the name changed to Marquette Post Office #1 on August 21, 1850, to honor Jacques Marquette, the French Jesuit missionary; the Worcester Post Office discontinued operation on August 16, 1852.

What is called the second Carp River Post Office (Marquette #1), (there was already a post office operating at the Jackson Location) which was opened in Marquette by Peter White, in competition with Amos Harlow on October 13, 1851. Amos Harlow withdrew from the field on August 16, 1852 and on April 17, 1856, the Carp River Post Office of Peter White's was renamed (as Amos Harlow's Worcester Post Office), Marquette Post Office #2.

It was to be a number of years before any organized mail service would be established to this remote wilderness area. There were as yet no railroads affording connections with the outside world and the ships, which could only operate in the

"open" season, had no regular schedules. The captains of the vessels sailing from "Below" as the lower lake ports were generally referred to, would accept packets of mail for Lake Superior ports. Before the opening of the first ship canal at Sault Ste. Marie in June, 1855, they would leave the mail at the Sault to await the sailing of one of the few vessels to Lake Superior ports. Between May, 1850, and October, 1855, the *Lake Superior Journal* was being published at the Sault - and for the most part only in the open season. Its columns carried many complaints about the poor mail service provided to the Lake Superior region.

On October 17, 1853, the people of Marquette realized, with the sailing of the last vessel for the season, that the area would not receive any mail during the long winter ahead. A mass meeting of the citizens was held early in January, 1854, and Peter White was selected to go to Green Bay, Wisconsin. He was pro-



Figure 4 This cover displays a Marquette, Michigan, duplex of April 16, 1898

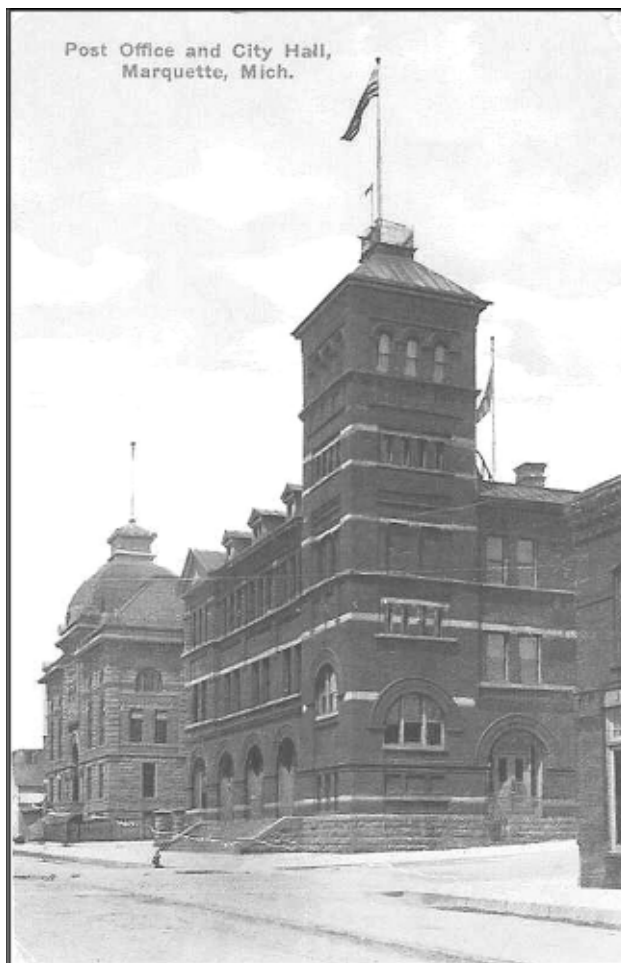


Figure 5 Marquette post office as seen on a postcard view circa 1910. City Hall, shown at left, still stands.

vided with six Indians and three dog teams of three dogs each and went after the mail, taking with him about a thousand letters to be posted.

They found the snow-shoeing tedious work, for the snow was wet, soft and heavy. It required a full week to get to Cedar River in the vicinity of Green Bay and much to their surprise met up with five double teams with five sleigh loads of United States mail bound for Lake Superior places, via Escanaba, which reached Marquette on January 21st. Peter White continued on his way to Green Bay and then to Fond du Lac, which was the northern end of the telegraph line at that time. He exchanged a number of messages and letters with Senator Lewis Cass at Washington, with the result that the Upper Peninsula of

Michigan towns were promised mail deliveries every week - and by team, when they could get through the snow.

Unlike today, when many of the smaller communities and rural dwellers are being provided with mail service from a central point, each and every mining and lumbering location as it came into being, if it had only a dozen people, had to have its own post office. This resulted in the establishment of many offices, a condition which would not happen today, for, with the many excellent highways and motor transportation, remoteness and isolation has almost disappeared.

Before large areas of Marquette County, as well as from others, were taken to form additional counties as the iron ore and copper mines were being opened and developed, the post office records show that Crystal Falls, Iron River, Mastodon, Mastodon Mine and Stambaugh were all in Marquette County, whereas they are now in Iron County formed in 1885. These post offices were established between 1881 and 1884. Floodwood, a few miles north of Channing, was established as a post office on November 21, 1887, was the last one to go to another county, it now being in Dickinson, which was formed in 1891, giving the Upper Peninsula of Michigan its present fifteen counties.

By 1929 some sixty-odd post offices had been established in Marquette County, and, even though it is the largest Upper Peninsula county, that represents a lot of post offices for a population of approximately 44,000 people. On the average, that's a post office for each 735 persons. Marquette County is the largest county in the state, land wise, not in population.



Figure 6 Front Street, Marquette, circa 1910.

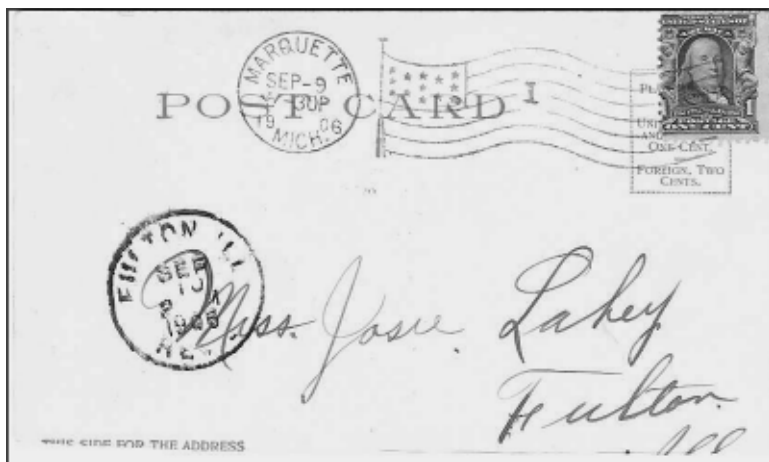


Figure 7 Marquette American machine flag cancel of 1906.

But the establishment of these many post offices, and the discontinuances of quite a few, give an insight into the history of the region. The dates of their establishments give the approximate date of the founding of a town, or location, and occasionally the source of the town name, for some were named after their first postmasters.

And now many of the early town names are quite strange to most of us. We know about a few of the places for they were established mining locations, and there are quite a few which have come and gone and we have no knowledge as to how they got their names.

A post office was established at a place called Bartley on November 27, 1905, with Anthony G. Cafferty as postmaster. Another place, is Clowry, near Ishpeming which had a post office from December 22, 1892 until May 15, 1894, with William F. Tobin, Postmaster. The location, Dukes, near Chatham, was first called "Lehtola." Its first post office wasn't established until July 22, 1929 with Axel G. Laxo, Postmaster.

Even Green Garden, at the top of a hill near Chocoday had its own post office from December 4, 1894 until September 30, 1911, having three postmasters during this time. Green Garden, as a community, has almost ceased to exist and very few know where it is located although it is still marked by a church at the top of a steep hill and a graveyard.

Greenwood Furnace, west of Ishpeming, had its own post office from March 8, 1867 until October 27, 1875. The furnace went out of business and so did the town.

Another place is Harperville, near Ishpeming. This post office was in existence from February 20, 1893, until May 15, 1897, with Jacob Harper, Postmaster.

And there was a place called Huff, the postmaster being James W. Huff, this office being in existence from July 21, 1894, until May 31, 1895 - less than a year. It was near Carlshend, which post office was established in December 7, 1894. Between this time and 1931 Carlshend's first three postmasters were all named Johnson - Charles P., Henry D. and Gilbert A.

Over the years, Negaunee and Humboldt seem to have had the most postmasters up to 1930, both having had sixteen.

Princeton can well boast of having had the postmaster who served for the longest time. George J. Sarasin was appointed on December 27, 1898 and served continuously for 43-years - a wonderful record for most any man.

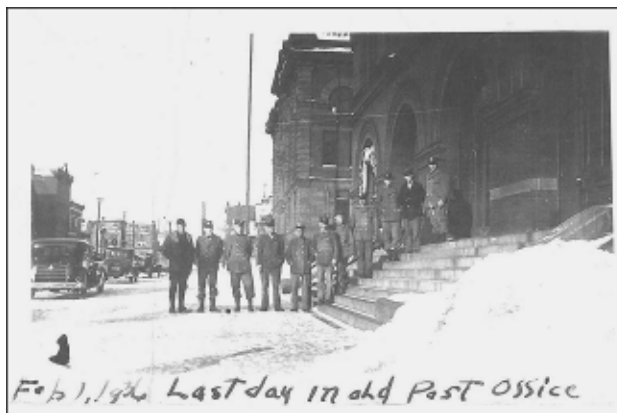


Figure 8 Postal staff in front of the old Marquette post office on the last day, Feb. 1, 1936.



Figure 9 The "new" Marquette post office as seen in the 1940s.



Figure 1 An examination of this multi-colored Spanish-American War patriotic design is the subject of this article.

By Michael Dattolico

Of the many patriotic covers created during the Spanish-American War, none is more beautiful or worthy of study than the design shown as *figure 1*.

The picture was created to inspire patriotic fervor for the Cuban battlefield. It consists of three vertically arranged vignettes: a naval battle fought between Spain and the U.S., intertwined American and Cuban flags, and a U.S. soldier posed in fighting stance. The design was produced by the Clinton Company of Chicago.

The artwork is impressive, but there is a problem with the picture. The error lies in the depiction of the naval battle. Although Havana's harbor was the site of the *U.S.S. Maine's* destruction on February 15, 1898, no naval battle occurred there. The predominant sea battle of the Cuban campaign was fought near Santiago Bay—hundreds of miles from Havana. Yet the artists portrayed the entrance to Havana harbor as the scene behind the battle, as evidenced by the Morro

Examination of a Special Spanish-American War Cover

Castle tower which can be seen in the background. No such tower existed near the entrance to Santiago Bay.

When studying this patriotic design, there are two key issues on which to focus. One involves the people who used them. Another is the envelope's range and distribution. When considering those matters, two theories seem plausible to me. One is that these envelopes and matching stationery were used primarily by soldiers billeted at the sprawling mobilization centers in the East

during the summer and autumn of 1898. The second theory is that they were widely used by U.S. troops garrisoned in Cuba in the spring of 1899.

Evidence which gives credence to the first theory is the correspondence of an enlisted soldier who used the covers and stationery throughout the summer and fall of 1898. The man was Private F. J. Parker, a member of Company I, 22nd Kansas Volunteer Infantry Regiment. The unit mobilized at Topeka in May, 1898, and was sent to Camp Alger, Virginia in June. Parker's first known use of the materials came from the crowded Virginia encampment that eventually hosted over 35,000 men, all of whom awaited combat orders to Cuba. The letter was mailed from there on July 15th. (*figure 2*). In it, he wrote that they had been there for several weeks, and the weather was hot. The 22nd Kansas regiment remained at Camp Alger until the end of August.

In early September, the unit received marching orders but not for Cuba. Instead, it was transferred to Camp Meade, Pennsylvania. On September 5th, Parker again used the envelope and stationery to write



Figure 2 Featured patriotic stationery mailed with a matching cover from Camp Alger, Virginia, on July 15, 1898. The wording in the emblem confirms that this patriotic design was meant to boost support for the military campaign in Cuba.

“...I have been sick for the last couple of days...The reason I was sick was that they gave us a lot of spoiled meat that was not fit for a dog to eat. And I think that if there is not a change, there is some danger of the cook shack being turned over....”

“...I have been to town a number of times. Leavenworth is the dirtiest town in the state of Kansas and has a rough set of people....”

to his parents in Kansas. From the tone of his letter, he still seemed hopeful that he would soon go to Cuba. (figure 3).

The 22nd Kansas Infantry remained at Camp Meade until early October, at which time the unit was sent to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, presumably for demobilization. Combat operations had ended in Cuba and much to Parker’s chagrin, his unit was also passed over for garrison duty. On October 15th, Parker again used the cover/stationery set to inform his parents that he had arrived safely at his new location. (figure 4). In that letter, Private Parker wrote:

“...I will try and write you a few lines and let you know that I got here all right. We spread our blankets on the soft side of a board floor but did not sleep very well.

“...Last night we went to a show and got back to camp about twelve o’clock. We had straw to put on the floor of the tent so we slept very well....”

Parker used the patriotic materials again on October 26th. That letter was headlined “Camp Lindsey, Kansas”, which was likely a portion of the Fort Leavenworth reservation set aside for Kansas national guardsmen awaiting discharge. (figure 5). Parker’s letter refers to one of the most scandalous aspects of the Spanish-American War—tainted food. To his parents he wrote:

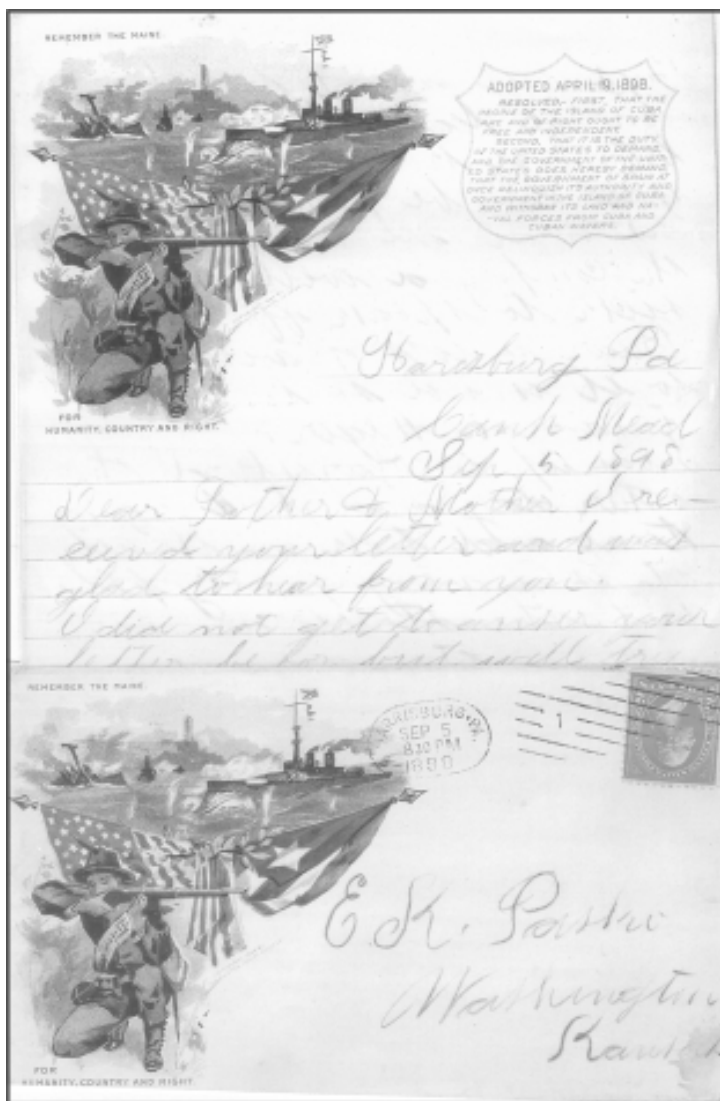


Figure 3 Cover and enclosed letter mailed at Camp Mead, Pennsylvania, by Private F. J. Parker, 22nd Kansas Infantry, on September 5, 1898.

Figure 4 Patriotic envelope and stationery sent by Pvt. Parker to his parents from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, on October 15, 1898.

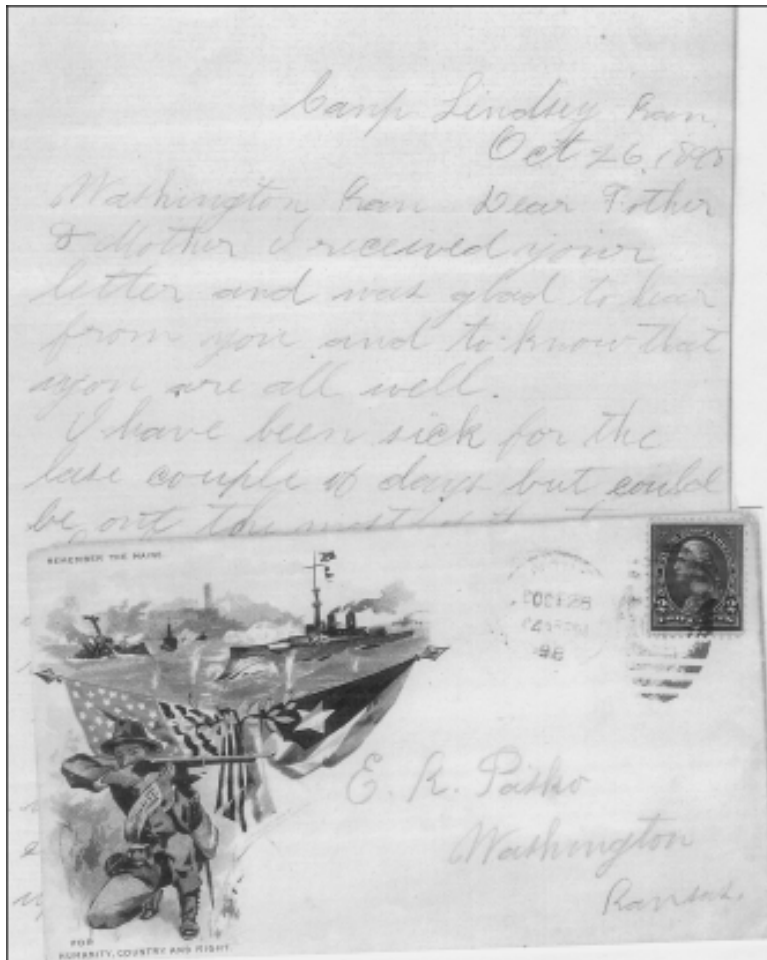


Figure 5 Letter to Parker's parents written on the patriotic stationery and mailed in a matching cover on October 26, 1898, while his unit was encamped at Camp Lindsey, Kansas. Camp Lindsey was likely located somewhere on the Fort Leavenworth post grounds.

"...All we have to do is wait for our discharges and pay. I will have somewhere near \$75. We will not be here later than November 3rd, but probably will be loose by the 31st.

Parker's continuous, almost exclusive use of the covers prompts one to speculate if they were available only to soldiers. The idea that the materials were produced just for them is accepted by a growing number of postal historians. Perhaps it is coincidence, but I have never seen this patriotic type used by civilians. Virtually every one that I've seen either bears a military postmark, or is verified as soldiers' mail by the enclosed letters. I've never seen a confirmed, non-military usage of this patriotic design, although they certainly may exist.

How was Parker able to use the envelopes at each camp? To answer that question, several possibilities seem feasible.

First, it is a fact that various organizations such as the YMCA provided soldiers at the larger mobilization centers to provide soldiers with humanitarian assistance. Offering free writing materials was one form of aid. If that is true, Parker had access to the letterhead pages and enve-

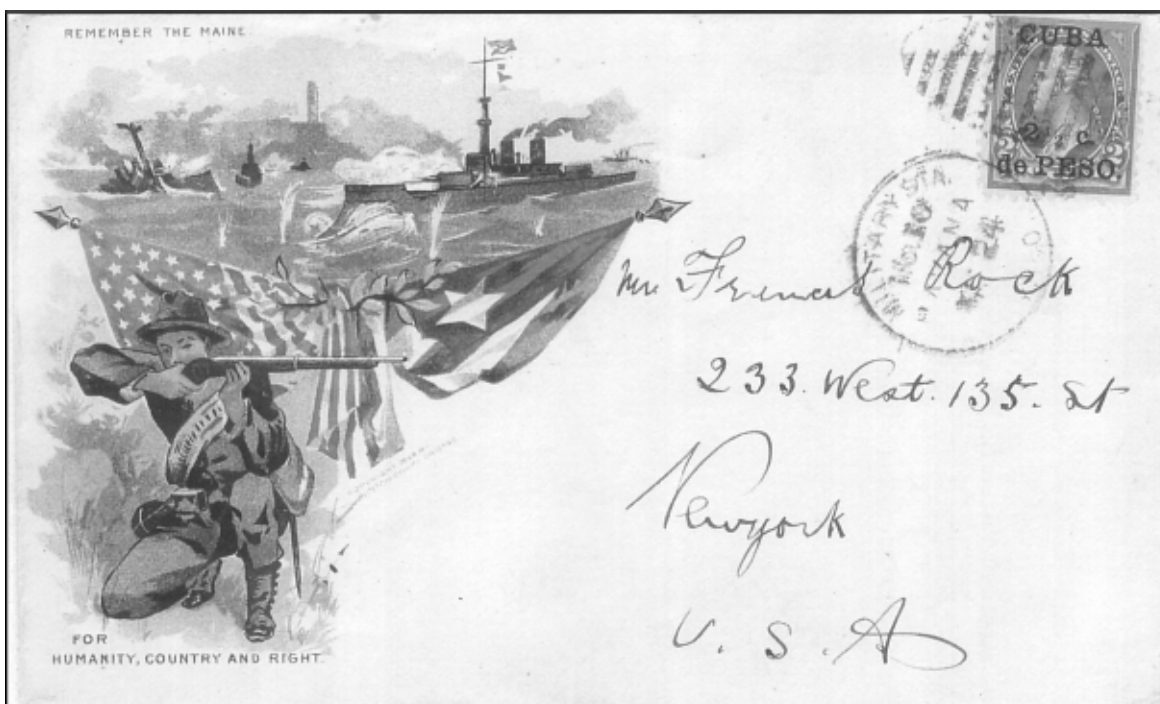


Figure 6 Example of the patriotic cover sent from Military Station No. 10, Havana, Cuba, in March, 1899.

lopes at Camp Alger, and may have grabbed a stash of the materials for future use at other locations.

Second, it may be that the cover/stationery set was also available without cost at Camp Meade and Fort Leavenworth. That would explain how Pvt. Parker had access to them while billeted there.

Third, there is the possibility that the mailing materials were not free, and he bought a supply of them at Camp Alger. It's possible that he also purchased the covers at Camp Meade and Fort Leavenworth, although the unlikelihood that he bought them at all is significant.

That the envelopes were used in Cuba during the occupation period is verified by *figures 6 & 7*. It is obvious that this patriotic design was used there during the military postal station period, which officially ended in the spring of 1899.

That the envelopes were mailed by military personnel only is clear, since they reflect the 2-cent U.S. domestic rate of postage available only to soldiers, sailors and marines. If civilians had mailed the covers, they would have paid the UPU overseas postal rate of five cents. I have never seen this patriotic design mailed from Cuba on which a 5-cent stamp was affixed, although the existence of such covers is a distinct possibility.

Since the two covers were processed through different military stations, again one might wonder about the source of the patriotic materials.

Humanitarian groups were also present in Cuba and likely offered the envelopes and stationery free to soldiers at American garrisons. It seems unlikely, however, that soldiers brought the patriotics with them to Cuba, since so many other mailing materials were available.

These beautiful patriotic covers, especially with matching stationery, are regarded as prized discoveries. Without a doubt, many are still out there, waiting to be found.

Continued from page 8

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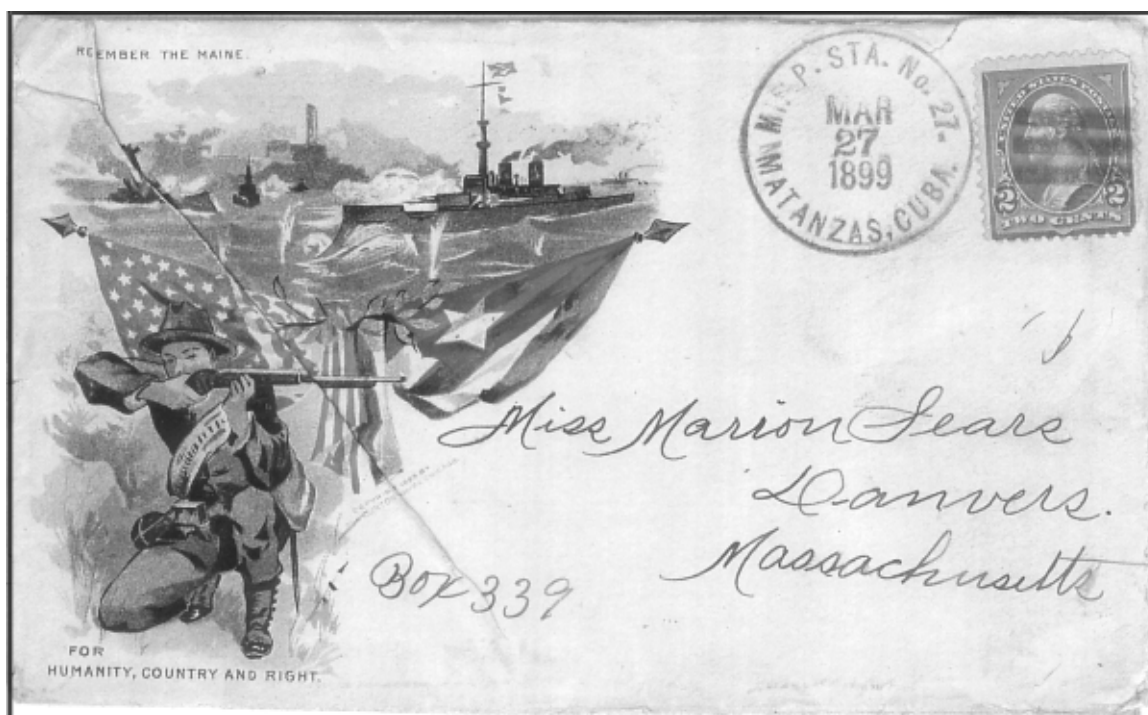
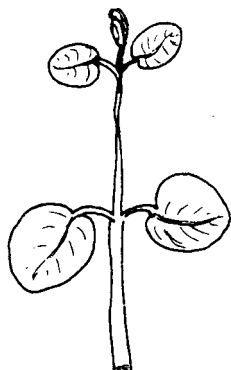


Figure 7 Envelope mailed from Military Station No. 27, Matanzas, Cuba, March 27, 1899, to Massachudetts. Note the creases that run through the picture part of the cover. Was this envelope the last one in a bundle that was packed too tight, causing the paper to crinkle?

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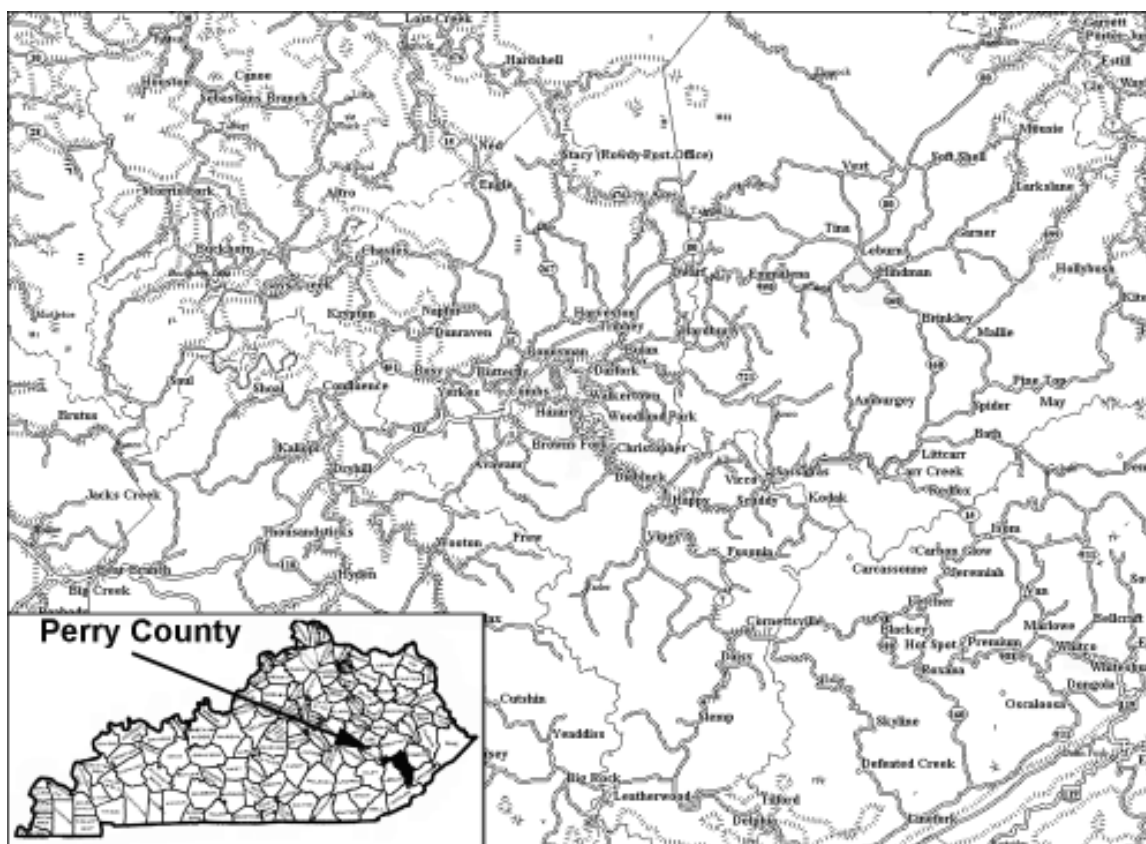
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The Post Offices of Perry County – Part II



By Robert M. Rennick

(Continued from La Posta Vol. 34, No. 2.)

county (see below) and elsewhere. Most of the homes and business buildings were torn down, several were converted to private use, the stores closed, and the post office was discontinued in 1984.

Midway between Typo and Blue Diamond was *Bonnyman*. This camp was established around 1917 to serve the Liberty Coal Company camps and the local L&N station of *Alex*. It centered at the mouth of Short Fork, along which Ky 15 now passes on its way to a junction with new Highway 80 and the entrance to the Daniel Boone Parkway 0.7 miles further on. The local post office was established on July 12, 1918 with Leonard J. Hammel, postmaster, and, like the station, was named for Alex Bonnyman of Knoxville, the Blue Diamond Coal Company president. By 1921 the station had become *Bonnyman*. In 1915 the office was moved 0.4 miles up the creek. It is now the only active post office in the First Creek valley.

The *Clemons* post office occupied several sites on First Creek, between half a mile and one mile above (northeast of) Bonnyman. The first name proposed for it was *French* for its first postmaster Fulton French Caldwell, but it opened, on February 2, 1924, at the mouth of Road Fork (of old Ky 28) as *Windon* for the local rail station. On October 16, 1925 Caldwell had the name changed to *Clemons*, honoring several related Quicksand area families that had moved to Perry County in its early coal development days. It closed in 1954.

Post Offices on Big Creek and its Branches

Five post offices served the nearly ten-mile-long and probably aptly named Big Creek which joins the North Fork one mile above Typo and five rail miles below Hazard.

From March 12 to December 6, 1880 Benjamin T. Fields ran the inexplicably named *Catur* post office. This was probably on Big Creek's Right Fork, five miles up from the North Fork and seven miles southwest of Hazard.

Catur may have been at or very close to one of the sites of one of eastern Kentucky's most traveled post offices, *Avawam* [æv/uh/wahm]. This office was established on December 10, 1892 by Alfred *Couch* whose first name was his family's. According to his son Stewart, Couch then suggested it be called *Wigwam* or *Agawam* (the latter the name of a Massachusetts town) but by an alleged "slip of the tongue" it came out *Avawam*.¹¹

Avawam's first location is believed to have been at the mouth of Brown's fork, three fourths of a mile up Big Creek. By 1915 it had been moved to a site just below the mouth of Big Creek's Right Fork (then called Amy's Fork). In October of the following year, John D. Fields had it moved two miles up the Fork, on the old road to Leslie County's Cutshin, to the mouth of Mudlick Fork, less than half a miles from the Leslie County line. In April 1917 John D. moved it another mile southwest to McIntosh Creek, three fourths of a mile within Leslie and six miles from the Middle Fork (of the Kentucky River) at Dry Hill. But by October 1917 Henry C. Fields had it moved one mile back, to Mud Lick Fork of what had by then become Right Fork, one fourth of a mile within Perry County. It apparently moved a few more times in the 1920s, and by 1940 was probably at the junction of Ky 80 and 451. The following year it moved back up Right Fork (by then paralleled by Ky 80) to a site 2 ½ miles from Leslie County. After yet more moves, it is now 1.2 miles up Right Fork and Ky 80, 4 ½ miles from the mouth of Big Creek, just above the mouth of Steepfield Fork.

The second *Begley* post office (the first operated between 1844 and 1853 in what was to become Leslie County) was somewhere in the Big Creek valley. Link Eversole was its only postmaster between March 31, 1910 and mid-March of the following year. The *Begleys* are still an important family in Perry and Leslie Counties.

Tug, not to be confused with Tub, near Bulan, was three-fourths of a mile up Big Creek valley from its Right Fork confluence and thus four miles south of the North Fork. It was operated from September 15, 1917 through June 1920 by Ballard F. Fields and may have honored an area farmer, twenty-four-year-old Tug Fields, or else a sixty-year-old widower listed in the 1910 Census.

Big Creek's lowest branch, Browns Fork, had its own post office, two miles up the Fork, from 1946 till its suspension in November 1992. Marion Couch was *Browns Fork*'s first postmaster.

Post Offices on Lotts Creek and its Branches

Lotts Creek heads at the confluence of the Young and Big Forks in Knott County and extends for 8 ½ miles, six in Perry County, to join the North Fork at Darfork, three miles below Hazard. Its name derivation, and thus the spelling, was long in controversy until a U.S. Board on Geographic Names decision was rendered in 1939 for the above spelling.

According to one tradition, the name was derived when "Danger Nick" Combs, who had acquired the lower reaches of this stream valley in the 1790s, had some of his land fenced off into small lots. Yet, on all pre-1850 maps of that area, as well as Luke Munsell's 1818 Kentucky map, the name is spelled with two "t"s.¹² It's now thought to have been named for some non-local family. The most likely possibility was that of William Harrison Lott (ca. 1789 to before 1840) and his wife Elizabeth Lafferty (nee McMillan) (1793-1865) who lived and died in Clark County.¹³ Yet, with curious consistency, on most post-1850 maps and other documents, including post office site location reports, the stream's name was spelled with only one "t". Anyway, seven post offices were in the Lotts creek watershed.

The earliest of these was the short-lived *Holliday* (October 4, 1901 to July 14, 1904) that its only postmaster Sherman B. Holliday located, in his Site Location Report, 3 ½ miles south of Dwarf and five miles north of Hazard. This would likely place it at the mouth of Godsey Fork of Trace Fork, a Lotts Creek tributary, and one third of a mile above (northeast of) the future Bulan. Sherman (ne April 1875) was a son of Elisha and Harriet Holliday, and descendant of Virginia-born John H. Holliday who had settled in the Troublesome valley before 1821 and was an early Perry County judge. Sherman's first name choice was *Orear*, probably for the distinguished Republican Judge Edward C. O'Rear (ne 1863), who had just been appointed chief justice of the Kentucky Court of Appeals for the Seventh District.¹⁴

A family of Grigsbys, beginning with Miss Cora, descendants of Thomas who settled with "Danger Nick" Combs in the 1790s, ran the *Grigsby* post office from

October 5, 1904 to 1933. It was on the present Rt. 1088 toward Cordia, a short distance up Grigsby Branch of Lotts, half a mile east of the Lotts Creek Community Church and seven miles northeast of Hazard.

In 1918 the L&N built a spur line up the 3 ½ mile-long Jake Branch of Trace Fork and established near its head a station it called *Burlingham*, probably for mine owner William Burlingham. Here the Hardy-Burlingham (Coal) Mining Company founded what was supposed to be one of the largest coal towns in eastern Kentucky. Its post office, also to be called *Burlingham*, was opened on April 17, 1918 with Albert Kirk, postmaster, as *Hardburly*. And this name was shortly applied to the town and the station. When the area mines closed in 1955, most of the families they supported moved away, leaving several camp houses owned and occupied by their residents. In 1966 a local self-improvement effort helped maintain some semblance of the community, and its post office survives.

Also in 1918, at what may then have been called Brushy Fork and is now Godsey Fork, a mile or so north of Trace Fork and two miles north of Lotts Creek, the Pioneer Coal Company, owned by a Mr. Heath, opened a mine and established a camp they called *Heiner*. By October 18, 1918, when Zack Grass started the *Heiner* post office, this vicinity had also become the northern terminus of the three-mile-long Danger Fork Spur of the L&N. A village just above the post office was then called *Whitsett*. On November 22, 1927 the post office and station became *Pioneer*. But by 1936 and until the post office closed in 1944, the community it served had again become *Heiner*.

On May 15, 1919 Evan Riley Nicholson opened the *Bulan* post office [byu/luhn] to serve the Lotts Creek Coal Company camp and the new Danger Fork Spur station of *Downing*. This was 1 ½ miles up Trace Fork of Lotts and 2 ½ miles from the North Fork. In 1922 Nicholson moved his office 300 yards south to serve *Duane Station* [du/ayne]. Since then, *Bulan* has been a trading center with several stores and its still-active post office serving a number of coal camps and now private homes on Ky 476 between the mouth of Jake Branch and Godsey Fork. For years the *Duane* station was the junction of the Jake Branch and Danger Fork spurs. The *Bulan* and *Duane* names have not been derived but both were likely brought in by the railroad or one of the mining companies. For awhile

in the 1920s the place had earned the nickname *Pistol City* for every local male is said to have carried a gun.

Between Bulan and Hardburly, on Jake Branch, another coal company was served by the post office and Jake Branch Spur station of *Tribbey*. This office was established on October 2, 1919 with Henry G. Harp, a commissary manager, as postmaster. Its name too was imported with derivation unknown. The office also survived the mine's abandonment, closing in 1984.

A name whose derivation still confuses historians and local people alike is *Darfork*. Or was it *Danfork* or *Darkfork* or *Darbfork*? The coal town, station, and post office named *Darfork* by and for the local Darb Fork Coal Company was half a mile up Lotts Creek and just a mile below (north of) Hiltonian. The first names proposed for its post office, established by Kelley Lee Phillips on December 6, 1927, were *Tauber* for the local Lotts Creek Spur station, and, possibly, *Urschel* (derivation unknown). A short distance up Lotts Creek from the Tauber station was, then, the *Danfork Station*, the western end of what, since 1918, was known as the Danger Fork Spur. This vicinity was on land first owned by "Danger Nick" Combs. About half a mile below the mouth of Trace Fork is a Lotts Creek branch identified on the 1914 Troublesome 15 minute topo map as Dark Fork and on more recent state and federal maps as Darb Fork. In 1936 the *Darfork* post office was moved nearly half a mile up Lotts Creek, probably to the mouth of Darb Fork to serve a community then locally called *Darb Fork*. Several short distance moves later it ceased as an independent post office in 1965, and became a Hazard rural branch.

Post Offices on the North Fork Above Hazard

Among the earliest settlers at the lower end of Leatherwood Creek, a major south side of the North Fork tributary, was Robert S. Brashaer, son of Samuel and Margaret. Just below the mouth of Leatherwood, 16 ½ miles above (southeast of) Hazard, he opened a store and initiated salt production from a hand drilled well which supplied early Perry County settlers for a number of years. Here he also established the *Brasherville* (sic) post office on February 21, 1829 which enjoyed a discontinuous operation by Robert and other family members in this name and as *Brashersville* through July 1863.

This post office was re-established on June 18, 1868 by Anderson Cornett, but as *Salt Creek* for this was then the name of the community between Leatherwood and Bull Creeks, 1 ½ miles below the Letcher County line. On March 17, 1875 the office was moved just over the county line, on the mouth of Line Fork (the site of the future Ulvah) where it served several stores and mills. By the fall of 1885 it was back in Perry County, at the mouth of Bull Creek. On January 18, 1896 storekeeper and postmaster John B. Cornet had its name changed to *Cornettsville* since he and nearly all of the other vicinity residents were descendants of his pioneer grandfather William Cornett (1761-1836), a Virginia-born Revolutionary War veteran who had settled at the mouth of Bull Creek in 1796-97.¹⁵ In 1912 the office was again moved, one half mile further down the North Fork to serve the newly opened *Cornettsville* (rail) *Station*, some two road miles from the county line. It still serves the upper section of the county, but on Ky 7, across the Fork from the railroad.

The village (with its active post office) of *Jeff* is now mostly centered at the junction of Ky 7 and 15, on the west side of the North Fork, across from the mouth of Carr Fork and six miles above (southeast of) Hazard. The office was established on April 2, 1902 by Columbus C. Hall and named for Jefferson Combs who had settled there in the late nineteenth century and from whom Hall's father Phillip had acquired the site. In 1914 the L&N named its local station *Hamden*, it's said, for a railroad inspector. In more recent years, the vicinity has been the site of the county's D.C. Combs Memorial High School and the Kenmont Coal Company mines.

The *Fortbranch* post office was established on November 17, 1905 in Alex McIntire's store at the mouth of this 2 ½ mile east side-of-North Fork Tributary. The stream, settled in the early nineteenth century by Samuel Brashear, was named for Bengé's Fort near its head. James Riddle, the first postmaster, was shortly succeeded by McIntire himself, followed by several other McIntires. In March 1913 the office was moved a mile down the Fork to the mouth of Big Branch where, the year before, the L&N had opened a station it called *Hombre* [*hahm*/bree or *ahm*/bree]. On May 26, 1913 the office was renamed for the station and continued to serve this vicinity, also known as *Big Branch*, till mid-September 1925. Whence *Hombree* is not known.

Shortly after the *Fortbranch* post office was moved to Big Branch, the Fuson family of Bell County, Kentucky and their Fuson Coal Company began mining operations just above (south of) Fort Branch (the stream). By 1917 they had here their own camp of some 200 residents an L&N station called *Fuson*. To serve them, Granville B. Richards re-established the local post office in the fall of 1918 but called it *Fusonia* [*fyu/sohn/yuh* or *fyu/sohn/ee*]. It was opened on February 12, 1919 with Robert E. Potter, the mine superintendent, as its first postmaster.

In the early-mid 1920s *Hombre Station* was renamed *Coolidge*, presumably for the country's new president. In 1928, if not earlier, the *Fusonia* post office was moved to the mouth of Big Branch where, by this name, it continued to serve the *Coolidge* station till 1935 when it was moved to the new highway (now Ky 7) on the west side of the North Fork, across from the railroad tracks. Here it closed in 1962.

Some three miles up Big Branch, Jeremiah P. Dixon established the *Crow* post office on April 6, 1908 and possibly named it for one or more county families. It closed at the end of June 1913.

In 1912 the brothers Stephen A.D. and William Jones leased from Leslie J. Combs land at the mouth of Gregory Branch, just above the present southern limits of Hazard, and that summer opened the county's first locally owned coal mine. Their company was the Raccoon Coal Company and the new L&N station there was called *Raccoon*. But since his name was already in use in Pike County, it was disallowed for S.A.D. Jones' post office which opened on January 9, 1914 as *Douglas* (derivation unknown). A year later the Raccoon mine was acquired by the Columbus Mining Company, named for the Ohio city whence its founders had come, and the station and post office (in March 1918) were renamed *Christopher*. The office closed in 1945, and the name is now applied to a residential neighborhood between Gregory Branch and Diablock, on the east side of North Fork, directly across from Hazard Community College and Ky 15.

The now residential neighborhood of *Diablock*, half a mile above (south of) Christopher and directly across from the mouth of Buffalo (Foreseam) Creek, began as another coal town, founded by and named for the Diamond Block Coal Company. To serve its camp of over 700 residents and the local *Karles Station*, the

Diablock post office was opened on November 15, 1916 with William B. Haynes, postmaster. After some vicinity moves in the 1930s it closed in 1948.

A mile above Diablock, at the mouth of Raccoon Creek, is another former coal town called *Glomawr* [ghloh/mahr]. Its mine was opened in 1914 by the East Tennessee Coal Company, and its community, station, and post office are said to have been named by the company executive W.E. Davis for the old Welsh word for high quality coal. The office was established on November 15, 1915 with Henderson Monhollen, postmaster. Sometime later the Reliance Coal Company bought the ETCC holdings, and after several more ownership changes and the decline in the coal market after the Second World War, the mine shut down and its employees began to move away. The post office closed in 1954. From a population of over 1,000 in 1940, fewer than fifty families remained by 1970 to form a community development association for the town's revitalization.

The next coal town on the North Fork stretch between Hazard and Jeff was *Stormking*. Named for the Storm King Coal Company, the town of over 200 residents, along with its rail station and post office (established on April 22, 1921 with Girard H. Harmon, postmaster) were half a mile above Bear Creek and midway between Glomawr and Jeff. The office closed in 1929.

The Dakota Block Coal Company had a mine, station, camp (with commissary) and two post offices on North Fork, nearly a mile below Hurricane Branch and 2-2 ½ miles east of the mouth of Maces Creek. Its first post office was the very short-lived (January 18 to April 5, 1918) *Kendak* with Lawrence R. Feetham, postmaster. On January 28, 1927, with Harvey S. Adkins, postmaster, the office was re-established as *Dakota*, but closed only five years later.

Post Offices on Carr Fork and its Perry County Branches

Carr Fork, often identified as Carrs Fork, Carr Creek, and Carrs Fork Creek, is one of the North Forks' longest and historically most important branches. It heads near the first site of Omaha in southeastern Knott County and joins the North Fork at Jeff (Hamden Station).

It is said to have been named for a Willie Carr who, on a 1794 hunting trip, was killed while fleeing an Indian attack and was buried on its banks. Besides

Jeff, seven other post offices served communities and rail stations in the valleys of its Perry County section.

Yellow Hill was Perry County's first Carr Fork post office operating somewhere above the later Happy between March 27, 1879 and June 7, 1889. John J. Godsey was its only postmaster. In his 1884 Site Location Report, Godsey sited it four miles above the North Fork and five miles below the Sassafras post office (which was then at the mouth of Sassafras Creek), ten miles southeast of Hazard, where it served Kelly's Mill and the nearby James Stacy Mill.

The *Happy* post office, serving a village of some 200 residents three miles up the Fork, was established on May 22, 1908 by Colonel Dilce Combs who is said to have named it for the cheerfulness of his neighbors. It still serves a viable community with a consolidated elementary school, stores, and a number of homes, and includes the old coal town of Defiance between it and Scuddy.¹⁶

The first of the two Montgomery Creek post offices was *Kodak*. This was established on April 10, 1901, with George Brown, its first postmaster, somewhere on the upper end of the 4 ½ mile-long creek, possibly over the Letcher County line since it was then included in Letcher's Site Location Reports. Brown, therein, located it five miles southeast of Sassafras. His first name choice may have been *Clark*, in use in Jefferson County. Whence *Kodak*? This office and another in Tennessee, just east of Knoxville, are said to have been named for George Eastman's recently invented (1888) camera, or at least his Eastman Kodak Company founded in 1892. This was a name Eastman is said to have coined for its ease in spelling, pronouncing, and remembering, but most of all, for is no having any meaning. He once said he liked the letter "k" and this has two of them.¹⁷

In February 1906 the *Kodak* post office was definitely moved into Letcher County (if it hadn't been there already), and may have remained there till it returned to Parry County in 1912, with Malinda Martin, postmaster. By January 1920 Taylor C. Combs, an earlier postmaster, had the office in Perry County, about one fourth of a mile up Kelly Fork of Montgomery. The following year it was moved three fourths of a mile down Montgomery to a site 1 ½ miles from Carr Fork to serve a mining town that the Montgomery Creek Coal Company was then building in that valley. This later served the Meems-Haskins mine which closed

in the early 1960s and its *Emmons Station*, the terminus of the Montgomery Creek Spur line from Vicco. By 1959 the office was at the mouth of Kelly Fork, two miles from Vicco and two stream miles from Letcher County. In 1966 it became a rural branch and closed for good in 1974.

In 1927 James S. Trosper applied for a post office to serve the new Green Ridge Coal Company mine and camp, the nearby *Emmons* (with a total population of 1,500), and the *Green Ridge Station* on the just completed Montgomery Creek Spur, 1 ½ miles up from Carr Fork and Vicco and, then, 1 ¾ miles below Kodak. When *Green Ridge* was disallowed by the Post Office Department, the local post office, which opened on February 29, 1928, with Rennie Menifee Elam, postmaster, took the name *Barridge* for A.F. Barbieux, the mine superintendent, and Green Ridge. In later years and just before it closed in 1953, the *Barridge* post office was less than half a mile below Kodak.

Just above and across Carr Fork from Montgomery Creek is the two-mile-long Stacy Branch. A mile up this stream were the two mines and camp for the Carrs Fork Coal Company. Its post office, established on July 14, 1920, with Edward H. Griffith, postmaster, and the company's Stacy Branch Spur station, were called *Allock* for company executives John B. Allen and H.E. Bullock. The company and its mines are defunct and the post office was suspended on May 1, 1992.

The area between the Knott County line and Montgomery Creek, half a mile below, and centering at the mouth of Stacy Branch, is now the sixth class city of *Vicco*. To serve the several area mines and their camps on the newly opened Carr Fork Spur, the rail station of *Montoco* (for the Montgomery Creek Coal Company) was opened at the mouth of this stream, six miles above Hamden Station. Here, on March 21, 1921, with William McKinley Stacy, postmaster, the *Montago* (sic) post office was established. Meanwhile, a short distance above this station and post office, at the mouth of Stacy Branch, the Virginia Iron Coal and Coke Company which began to dominate coal production in that area, had its own station called *Vicco* and a village that may have been called *Millard* for local storekeeper Claud Millard. On April 11, 1923 the *Vicco* name was applied to the *Montago* post office and the whole area between Montgomery Creek and the Knott County line came to be called *Vicco*. From the mid-1930s through the early 1950s this place

was a very busy trade center for at least twelve coal companies in a two-mile area. The town was incorporated in 1964 with a population of 750, which fell to around 300 by the end of the twentieth century. Its eastern limits extend slightly over the Knott County line, with *Sassafras* and other unincorporated communities now considered a part of *Vicco*.

Another Carr Fork coal camp and station was *Scuddy*, a little over a mile above (east of) Happy and 1 ½ miles below Montoco Station. It was named for its site at the mouth of the 1 ½ mile-long Scuddy Branch, but it is not known why the branch was so named. By 1920 the local Carr Fork Spur station was *Scuddy*, and on October 25, 1924 Hobart H. Combs opened the *Scuddy* post office to serve the villages of *Scuddy* and *Defiance* (the latter one mile below). The office closed on May 31, 2002 with the retirement of its forty-year postmaster Peggy McIntyre.

Post Offices on Maces Creek and its Forks

Mason Combs (ca. 1757-1822), the oldest of the eight sons of John Combs, Sr., settled at the mouth of Carr Fork in the mid-1790s. Over time he and some of his family acquired holdings on a 7 ¾ mile-long south side tributary of the North Fork, two miles above Carr's mouth, and this stream early became Mason's Creek. For some reason, as early as the early 1860s, this stream was known as Maces Creek which still identifies it on all published maps. Early on, two main forks of Maces were distinguished as the Right Hand Fork, which joins the main stream only one fourth of a mile from the latter's North Fork confluence, and the Left Fork which joins it a mile above. Only well into the twentieth century did Maces assume its present identity as the Middle Fork.

The first of the four Maces Creek post offices was established at the mouth of Wicks Branch of the Left Hand Fork, 2.7 miles up from the North Fork. It was named *Hallsville* for the first of its two postmasters Philip W. Hall (1823-1914), a Virginia-born surveyor and timber dealer, who in 1846 settled on, and soon acquired most of, the land on this stream.¹⁸ It was soon serving area businesses, including a couple of stores and a flour mill.

The *Hallsville* post office closed in late September 1879, but was re-established as *Viper* on May 26, 1886 by local storekeeper and Hallsville's last postmaster Enoch C. Campbell. According to tradition, some

local boys had just killed a snake in the road near Campbell's store. Sometime before 1912 the office was moved to the mouth of Maces, three miles above Jeff, where it would soon serve the L&N's new *Masu* Station. By the First World War, this vicinity too had become a mill town with several stores and hotels, and a rail shipping point for lumber products made from the logs hauled by donkeys down each of Maces' forks. Sometime before 1921 the *Masu* rail station had also become *Viper*. Today the *Viper* post office serves a small hamlet of several homes and businesses extending for almost a mile along Ky 7 and the North Fork from the mouth of Elk Branch to above the mouth of Maces.

From October 5, 1904 to the late 1980s the Right Hand Fork had its own post office—*Farler*. It was located at several sites in the vicinity of the confluence of Right Hand Fork's head forks—Wells and Stratton, some four miles southwest of the present *Viper*, and was named for the family of its storekeeper and first postmaster William Bell Farler.¹⁹

Main Maces Creek (now its Middle Fork) had its own post office called *Dow*. Perhaps by January 25, 1911 when Henry C. Cornett established this office, the stream was already called *Middle Fork* for this was the office's first proposed name. But as that name was then in use in Jackson County, *Dow* was chosen instead. Whence *Dow*? Perhaps it was named for the famed nineteenth century evangelist Lorenzo Dow or one of the many eastern Kentuckians named for him. But we don't know. The office operated till January 13, 1919 at the mouth of Hollythicket Branch, 2 ½ miles south of *Viper*.

Kirby served the upper end of the Left Hand Fork of Maces from January 28, 1908 through January 1914 with James N. Brashear its only postmaster. It was five miles from the North Fork, just above the mouth of Rogers Branch. It might have been named for the family of George and Martha Kirby of the nearby Leatherwood District for no local Kirbys are known.

Post Offices in the Leatherwood Watershed

The main Leatherwood Creek, historically referred to as Big Leatherwood, heads at the present Delphia and extends for about thirteen miles to the North Fork just below Cornettsville, roughly seventeen miles south of Hazard. It was named in pioneer times for the many leatherwood trees that early settlers had

observed along its banks. For much of the twentieth century it and its principal tributaries were the site of extensive coal mining; and seven post offices served a heavily populated area until recent years.

Jesse, established by and named for Jesse Brashear, was the earliest of the Big Leatherwood offices. It operated from July 28, 1882 through March 1911 at the mouth of Beech Fork, seven miles up from the North Fork.

A coal town below the mouth of Owens Branch, 1 ½ miles north of *Jesse*, was *Slemp*. It was named for C(ampbell) Bascom Slemp (1870-1943) of Big Stone Gap, Virginia, a lawyer with extensive coal land holdings in eastern Kentucky who was influential in the development of several Perry County coal fields. His Kentucky Coal Land Company (later renamed for him) was one of several area firms that combined in 1914 to form the Kentucky River Coal Corporation, a super land-holding company. He served his Virginia district in the U.S. Congress from 1907 to 1923 and was secretary to President Coolidge from 1923 to 1925. The *Slemp* post office was first established on June 26, 1905 with Henry Singleton, postmaster, but was discontinued in mid-July 1918. It was re-established on May 12, 1923 by Mrs. Ollie Lewis and still operates on Ky 699, at the mouth of Owens Branch.

A mile up Big Leatherwood, on its east bank, just above the mouth of Little Leatherwood, would have been the *Arch* post office, named for postmaster-designate Lizzie Cornett's father (ne 1850). Since Hardin County had already pre-empted that name, Lizzie's office opened on July 21, 1905 as *Daisy* either for another area Cornett, of whom nothing is known, or the flower. In 1911 Lizzie (later Mrs. Frank Horn) was succeeded by her brother Marion C., the local storekeeper, who maintained the office till the Second World War. Sometime before the First World War, the Ritter Lumber Company opened in that vicinity one of the region's largest sawmills to which it built a narrow gauge railroad to haul the logs down Leatherwood. The post office was suspended on May 19, 1995.

To serve coal operations on Jewel Ridge and the head of Big Leatherwood, James Singleton, Henry's brother, opened the *Delphia* [*dehl/fee/uh*] post office in 1912 at the mouth of Stony Fork, five miles above Slemp. In 1916 Preston H. Hall had the office moved two miles up Leatherwood to the mouth of Barkcamp

Branch where it remains. Delphia is a fairly common girl's name in eastern Kentucky but for whom this office was named is not known.

During the Second World War, on Jewel Ridge, overlooking Leatherwood's Blair Fork, over a mile east of Delphia, the Jewel Ridge Coal Company built a camp and began mining. The local post office, between December 1, 1950 and 1972, was *Tilford* probably named for John E. Tilford, the executive vice president of the L&N until he succeeded James B. Hill as president in 1950.²⁰

The five-mile-long Little Leatherwood Creek which joins Big Leatherwood one mile south of the North Fork, had a coal camp and two offices called *Wentz*. These were named for Daniel Bertsch Wentz and the Wentz Corporation of Philadelphia which, in the early twentieth century, owned coal land in several sections of eastern Kentucky.²¹ The first *Wentz* post office was operated by Granville Halcomb and his wife Mary between June 18, 1906 and May 15, 1918, three miles up Little Leatherwood. In 1946 the office was re-established, again as *Wentz*, to serve the *Little Leatherwood* community and its school at the mouth of Straight Fork (then Fender Creek), less than half a mile above the first *Wentz* site. It closed in 1957.

Perry's most recently developed coal town was the short-lived *Leatherwood* at the head of the four-mile-long Clover Fork (just north of the convergence of Perry, Leslie, and Harland Counties) which joins Big Leatherwood less than half a mile south of the Jimhill Station. In 1944 the Blue Diamond Coal Company opened a mine here and named it and the town growing up around it for the stream. But since *Leatherwood* was already in use by a Breathitt County post office, the Perry office opened in 1944 as *Toner*. James Sparkman was appointed its first postmaster. By March 1946 the town too had become *Toner*. When Breathitt's *Leatherwood* was renamed Watts in 1949, the *toner* office took the *Leatherwood* name (effective July 1, 1949). By this time the mine had become the largest in the Kentucky River watershed, and its village within just a few years had become a modern coal town with a school, stores, and other businesses serving over 600 homes. The camp, though, soon became superfluous since, with mechanization, area coal operations required fewer workers who could more economically commute and not have to be provided for in a company town. The post office, which had several locations within a square mile area, closed in February 1992.

Post Offices in Perry County's Middle Fork Watershed

Heading in Leslie County's southwest corner, the Middle Fork of the Kentucky River joins the North Fork three miles above the Lee County seat of Beattyville. The eleven-mile-long Perry County stretch of this stream and several of its branches were served by seven post offices. In the early 1960s the Fork was dammed one mile southwest of the village of Buckhorn to create the 1,230 acre Buckhorn Lake. Some of the post office sites are now underwater.

One of several Kentucky post offices that began in one county and watershed and literally moved to another was *Doorway*. This was established in Owsley County some four miles up the Right Fork of Buffalo Creek from Mistletoe on August 8, 1883 with James Eversole, its first postmaster. The first name proposed for it was simply *Door*. Could these names refer to its having been a gateway to something? By 1910 it may have been moved up Buffalo, almost to its head and one mile from the Perry county line. In 1918 postmaster Sarah J. Gilbert had it moved again to a site at the head of Squabble Creek, one mile within Perry County. After several moves on Squabble Creek, a 7 ¾ mile-long stream joining the Middle Fork just below (north of) the Buckhorn Dam, it closed in 1959.²²

The post office of *Gays Creek*, from its establishment by Jeremiah Morris on December 26, 1888 to the present, has occupied sites literally from one end of this 3 ½ mile-long Middle Fork branch to the other. It was first at or close to the stream's mouth, 1.7 miles above (southeast of) the dam and some twenty miles below (northwest of) Hazard. In 1901 it was moved over two miles up the creek to the mouth of Feb Fork. Since the late 1960s the office has been on Ky 28, above the head of the creek and less than one fourth of a mile from the Breathitt County line. The creek, over half of which is now a part of Buckhorn Lake, is said to have been first settled by and named for Henry Gay, a Revolutionary War veteran, who died there around 1830. His descendants are still an important family in the Middle Fork watershed.

The unrecalled, short-lived (July 12, 1900 to mid-August 1905) and underived *Wharton* post office was on Middle Fork, maybe a mile from the Breathitt County line. William H. Creech and Green B. Johnson were its only postmasters. Since the area it served was dominated by Johnsons, the first name proposed for it was *Johnson*, then in use in Christian County.

The *Lois* post office was established on August 31, 1901 some two miles up the Otter Creek branch of Middle Fork. Maxie York was its first postmaster and *Otter Creek* was her first name choice. In 1903 Marta B. York had the office moved 1 ¼ miles up Otter but it closed in February 1906. In 1920 Jerry York, probably Maxie's husband, re-opened it at or close to Martha's relocation where it continued through October 1922. Whence *Lois* is not known.

Famed *Buckhorn Spring*, half a mile up Squabble Creek, has been home to an educational and religious complex since 1903. According to tradition, a Tennessean Jerry Smith is said to have settled there in the early nineteenth century and named the spring for a 4-snag buck he killed there whose antlers he hung over the spring. The still active *buckhorn* post office was established on June 12, 1902 with Laura (Mrs. Anderson D.) York, its first postmaster.²³

In 1903 a New York City evangelist and educator Harvey S. Murdock and his wife Louise founded here a Presbyterian church and a school they called Witherspoon College. Later, an orphanage or children's home (which soon became their main concern) was added, along with a well-appointed hospital. The complex is now the Buckhorn Home for Children, sponsored and managed by the Presbyterian Child Welfare Agency. Its school was leased to the county for operation as a public school. Their children have come from all over eastern and southeastern Kentucky for care they would not receive in their home communities.²⁴ In 1996 the community around the Buckhorn complex was incorporated as a sixth class city with a present population of 144.

To serve a Middle Fork valley settlement of Bollings and Bowlings from August 25, 1903 to 1959 were the post offices of *Bowling*, *Lillian*, and *Bowlingtown*. *Bowling* was established on the west side of the Fork, at or just below the mouth of Eversole Branch, by Robert L. Bowling whose first name choice *Bowling Town* was disallowed by the Post Office Department since it violated the one word rule. This area is said to have been first settled by the brothers Israel and Frank Bolling or by the family of the Rev. Jesse Bowling (1758-1841), the progenitor of the county's Bowling-Bolling families. From September 7 1907 to February 1, 1918, however, with Robert and his brother Ambrose L. Bowling as postmasters, the office was called *Lillian*, allegedly for the lady in whose home it was first located.²⁵ by then the community's name was spelled *Bowlingtown* and, accordingly, on Feb-

ruary 1, 1918, the office also became *Bowlingtown*. Ambrose continued as postmaster till November 1921 when he was succeeded by Amanda Bowling. In 1930 the office was moved to a site about half a mile below (north of) the mouth of Bowling Branch (of the Middle fork) where it remained till it closed in 1959 for the creation of Buckhorn Lake and the 856 acre Buckhorn Lake State Resort Park. Scores of families and businesses were forced to relocate. The present Buckhorn Lodge, completed in 1964, is at the site of the old Bowlingtown School.

Then there was *Saul* on Perry County's other aptly named Leatherwood Creek, a 5 ½ mile-long Middle Fork branch that heads just short of the Perry-Owsley-Clay Counties convergence. To serve an area settled in the 1820s by Bangers, Couches, and Bowlings and also, early, called *Leatherwood*, this office was established a little under one mile south of the head of the creek, on August 26, 1903, by Francis Barger. Maintained by further generations of Bangers along with Couches, Wests, and Napiers, the office was moved at least ten times up or down the creek, until in the late 1960s it reached the mouth of Leatherwood's Right Fork where, on March 25, 2001, its building was destroyed by fire. As of this writing its future is in doubt. With the Middle Fork impoundment in the early 1960s its status became even more uncertain. The lake effectively cut this area off from the rest of Perry County, requiring a fifty mile trip through three other counties to get to Hazard. *Saul's* name source is not known.

Unlocated Post Offices

Several offices are listed in the Post Office Registers as having operated in Perry County in the nineteenth century but nothing is known of their locations. There were no Site Location Reports for them. In fact, there's no reason to assume they were not in any of the counties taken from Perry.

The earliest was *Stamperville*, from 1825 to 1826. The Stampers were a pioneer family descended from North Carolinian William Stamper (1774-1852) who arrived in Kentucky in 1800 and settled at the mouth of Colly Creek of Rockhouse (in the present Letcher County). He was a Perry County judge (1823) and sheriff (1829) who later moved to Morgan County. Since other Stampers populated several sections of the future Breathitt, Leslie, and Knott Counties, *Stamperville* could have been anywhere in the five county area.

Mount Zion operated between January 8, 1861 and February 21, 1867 with Zachariah Campbell its only postmaster. Could there be any connection between it and Mount Zion Church at the upper end of Sixteen-Mile Creek, three miles from Dice? That's the only other Mount Zion name in the area taken from the original Perry County.

Alfred N. Seaber and his wife Hannah B. are listed in the Post Office Register as the only postmasters of a *Greys Creek* post office from November 10, 1876 to August 18, 1879. According to the Perry County history published for the DAR in 1953, Hannah Seaber was appointed postmaster of *Gays Creek* on January 15, 1879. This was the date of her appointment to the *Greys Creek* office. But there's no record of *Gays Creek* existing before 1888. Nor is here any stream called Greys Creek in Perry County where the 1880 Census reports the Seabers as residents. Yet the Seabers were then neighbors of Jeremiah Morris, *Gays Creek's* first postmaster, and other families known to have lived in that section of Middle Creek. This remains an enigma.

Several Perry County offices are known to have been authorized but may not have operated. We know for sure that *Blanford* didn't. Robert W. Combs' authorization of July 19, 1898 was rescinded on July 21, 1899. But where this office would have been and for whom or what it was named is not known.

Conclusions

Twenty-two of the ninety post offices operating within Perry's present limits are still active. These are: Ary, Awawam, Bonnyman, Buckhorn, Bulan, Busy, Chavies, Combs, Cornettsville, Delphia, Dice, Dwarf, Gays Creek, Happy, Hazard, Jeff, Krypton, Rowdy, Slemph, Vicco, Viper, and Yerkese. Three—Hazard, Vicco, and Buckhorn—serve currently incorporated communities, while forty-seven were the foci of towns or villages, many of them coal camps now all but abandoned. Most of the others centered on a church, school, store, or rail stop.

Twenty-three offices were named for local or area persons or families while eleven were named for well-known, non-local persons. Four had geographic or descriptive names. Seven were named for local or nearby features (six streams and a spring). Local economic activities or the companies that carried them out gave their names to eleven offices. Two were named for alleged local events or recurrent social activities. Five had other name sources including

coined names and errors. Twenty-seven had underived names. Six offices have not been precisely located, including two or three that may not have been within the present Perry County limits.

Thirty-one offices had names that were not those first proposed for them. Twenty-four served communities, neighborhoods, or rail stations with other names. Eleven had name changes.

Endnotes

1 Many eastern Kentuckians had fought with Perry in this battle.

2 In later years, mines in the Lothair area were operated by the Blue Grass coal company, doing business as Black Gold.

3 The popular "folk etymology" from a greeting "(hel) lo there" has never been taken seriously.

4 *Allais* recently became a rare example of "de-annexation" when Hazard's lower city limits were changed to exclude this section.

5 "Short Jerry" and his brothers were the sons of Moses and Lydia Combs and grandsons of "Chunky Jerry", who was the son of Nicholas ("Danger Nick"), a brother to pioneer John Combs, Sr. and uncle to George, Henry Harrison, and Elijah.

6 One possible source was Arrey or Ara (Mrs John) Holliday, at whose home it's said Combs, on February 27, 1901, had married Fannie Holliday.

7 There is nothing to the story of the Post Office Department misreading the first postmaster's application for a post office to be called *Napper*.

8 In ca. 1886 Kentucky Geological Survey maps, this stream was identified as Henson's Branch but was shown on 1915 maps as Napier Branch which still identifies it.

9 *The WPA Guide to the 1930s Colorado*, composed by the Colorado Writers Program, and reprinted by the University Press of Kansas, 1987, P. 435.

10 According to the Rev. J.J. Dickey's July 21, 1898 interview with Edward Callahan.

11 May Stone's 1941 manuscript on the names of places and streams in some eastern Kentucky counties.

12 As given in Mary T. Brewer's *Of Bolder Men* (A history of Leslie County), 1972, P. 137.

13 According to selected correspondence of the Office of the Secretary of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names, Washington, D.C., ca. 1938-39.

14 Guy Beckwith in *Kentucky Ancestors*, Vol. 29 (4), Winter 1993-4, P. 208.

15 Judge O'Rear, a native of Camargo, in Montgomery County, Ky., was a Montgomery County judge (1894-1898), a chief justice of the Kentucky Court of Appeals (1901-1917), and an unsuccessful Republican candidate for governor in 1910.

16 Bull Creek is said to have been named by an early Cornett for a buffalo bull shot on its banks by pioneer William.

17 *Happy* is not to be confused with *Happy Valley* on the Short Fork of First Creek, a coal camp for Bonnyman miners built in 1918 and named for local folks making merry one night. This First Creek community was severely damaged in a June 1976 flood that's said to have been caused or at least aggravated by extensive strip mining in the area.

18 Hannah Campbell, *Why Did They Name It...?* New York: Ace, 1964, Pp. 188-92.

19 Wicks Branch was probably named for Wilkinson "Wilks" Bransom, another early settler.

20 The Farler progenitor, Forrest, Sr. (1790-1870), arrived in Kentucky from Virginia in 1829. His son Alexander (ne 1817) settled what his family at the site of the future *Farler* post office and soon acquired nearly all of Mace's Right Hand Fork.

21 Tilford's predecessor James Brent Hill also had a station named for him. *Jimhill* was the junction point of two L&N spurs—1) the ten-mile-long Leatherwood Creek branch between Dent on the main line, one mile below Cornettsville, and Leatherwood-Toner (see below) and 2) the five-mile-long Blair Fork Spur to Jewel Ridge and Tilford. Hill served as the L&N president from 1934 to 1950. In 1959 Tilford became the chairman of the L&N's advisory committee. (Kincaid A. Herr, *Louisville and Nashville Railroad, 1850-1963*, Louisville: L&N Railroad, 1963, Pp. 289, 301, 386.) *Dent*, incidentally, was named for John K. Dent, the L&N's vice president for traffic, 1947, who "was one of those chiefly instrumental in the building of branch line trackage to develop and serve new coal fields." (Kincaid A. Herr (as "Ole Reliable"), "Our Place Names are Personalized" *The L&N Employees' Magazine*, February 2, 1956, Pp. 20-23, 46).

22 The U.S. Steel Corporation acquired the site of Lynch in Harlan County from the Wentz Corporation in 1917.

23 Squabble Creek is traditionally believed to have been named by Jerry Smith, its first settler, for a fight between his brother and some other hunters over a division of game.

24 *Oklahoma* was the first name for Mrs. York's *Buckhorn* post office.

25 Joe Creason in the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, January 6, 1957.

26 Could this have been Lillie (nee Sept. 1875), the wife of Milton Bowling?

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We have an extraordinary base of support from our Sustaining Subscribers that is deeply appreciated. This base has gone far to support our expansion of research and writing in recent years. The Sustainers' list is a small way of paying tribute to those who support *La Posta* above and beyond the regular dues, and we would like to make sure that it is current.

Please bear in mind that changes may require a delay of at least one full issue before they appear in print.

Thank you,

Cath Clark
Subscriptions

Glimpses at History, II

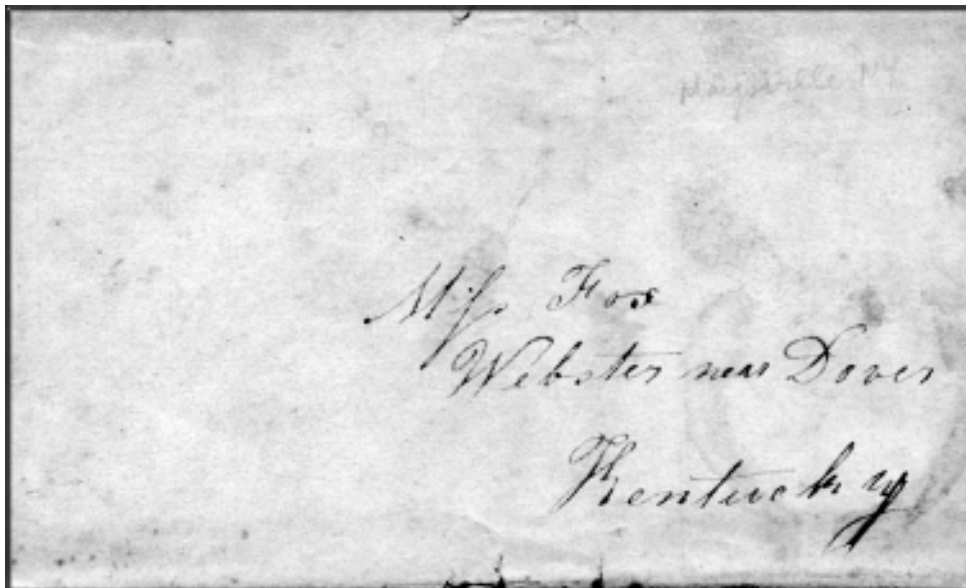


Figure 9 1843 a nondescript privately carried letter written in Maysville KY and sent to Webster KY. No rates, no markings, but a nice “slice of life” from the almost frontier of 1843.

by Tom Clarke

In Part One, we wondered how non-exhibiting collectors handled their less than exhibitable, but personally satisfying, covers and letters? The motivation is the same psychological gratification that it is for those who exhibit (though eBay uses the pitch “What’s Your Obsession?”). Collectors regardless of level choose items that reflect their jobs, hometown, or some deeper wish fulfillment: antique cars, escape back to simpler times, and so on. “Abstraction” collectors forget the cares of the workaday world and may select topical items, say, war-related covers, augmented by Civil War cartes-de-visite or World War maps or ribbons, while others collect based on their family names, letter content that describes early day life styles, favorite sports, vacation spots.

The grandest abstraction, academically speaking, is collecting covers and letters that portray the overall socio-political sweep across some portion of time. It is the attempt to find covers and content (plus old magazines and newspapers, real photo postcards, even old bottles, clothing, and implements!) that reflects the amazing events that, taken together, developed the wealthiest, most powerful and, we hope, the most ethically, decent-minded country ever.

Tom Clarke is a *La Posta* Associate editor and a frequent contributing author to our pages for the past 15 years. He has published extensively on the subject of Philadelphia postal history.

Overall History as a Theme, 2

The casual glance through a miscellaneous collection reflected some key events to 1831 in Part One. That surprising array of content continues here through to 1885. It might have gone on but for space (and the proportionately fewer letters preserved in the 20th century, thanks to the phone and now eMail). These include:

1843, Maysville KY, John Q Adams speaks (1849, Bridgewater PA, Taylor’s inaugural & Fr Revolution)
(1855, Meadville PA, Know Nothing Party, slavery)
1861, Oberlin OH, Secession worry of abolition leader and Lincoln hater
1863, Alexandria VA, draft bill in Congress
1863, Elgin IL, seeks govt job; US detective
1864, Memphis TN, Grant can take Richmond, Sherman good, AL reelected
1865, Geneva NY, Lincoln eulogy
1866, Atlanta GA, setting up a black school
1872, NYC, gold buying fever, Wall Street
1885, Cheyenne WY, Pres Cleveland, Terr’l problems w DC, women vote!

1843

Our Everyman's view of a portion of the passing parade of American life begins again, in 1840. There were 26 states at the time. Michigan had entered three years before and Florida and Texas, numbers 27 and 28, will be added in 1845. In a privately carried letter (figure 9) to a Miss Mary Fox in Webster KY, a haggard teacher (probably female) complains about weariness (which sounds a bit like this writer excusing himself to the *La Posta* editor):

... but you know my dear, [I promise to write but] I get so tired of Books & Pens after School time that it is quite a task to sit down to write . . .

After much family talk she mentions going to church to hear former President John Quincy Adams talk. That's all, no more comment as if it were the norm for small villages as Maysville KY to receive former Chief Executives. Yet, this unpopular president was, nevertheless known as "Old Man Eloquent" for opposing slavery and the forthcoming Mexican War that followed the annexation of Texas. The writer goes on to mention Christmas upcoming, and all the visits and arrangements, and all the addressee's sisters, so that it sounds like pages from *Little Women*.

1861

There are two Pennsylvania letters of 1849 and 1855 that cannot be found –sorry. The first from Bridgewater PA mentions the festivities at Zachary Taylor's inaugural parade in March 1849, and the 1848 French Revolution (the one that Karl Marx in England relished as the beginning of the people tak-

ing over the reigns of government). It is interesting to note that Mexican War hero General/President Taylor, who will die in office after two years, owned 118 slaves and purchased another 64 and a sugar plantation just weeks before his death. That would surely have been a proper purchase to his son-in-law, Jefferson Davis.

The second item of 1855 from Meadville PA complains about the growing dissention between the slave and non-slave states, and about the growing phenomenon of the Native American Party, also known as the "Know Nothings". They championed current citizens and argued for a halt to immigration, another theme still heard in some homes and offices today.

Uncle Tom's Cabin, in play and book form, was written a few years before this, and was igniting bitter hatred toward slavery in the north. Two years after the letter, the Supreme Court will seem to put the last nail in the coffin of the abolition of slavery by issuing the Dred Scott Decision. You will recall that it states that not only can't slaves, as "furniture", bring a lawsuit, but even free blacks only have the rights that the dominant white race chooses to give them. No one seemed concerned that eight of the nine justices were slave owners themselves. And four years later there was war.

By 1861 we were 34 states, Kansas joining in January, and 35 when West Virginia separates from secessionist Virginia in 1863. The 1861 cover and letter comes from Oberlin OH, (figure 10) and is a wonderful entry point for the Civil War since it begins:

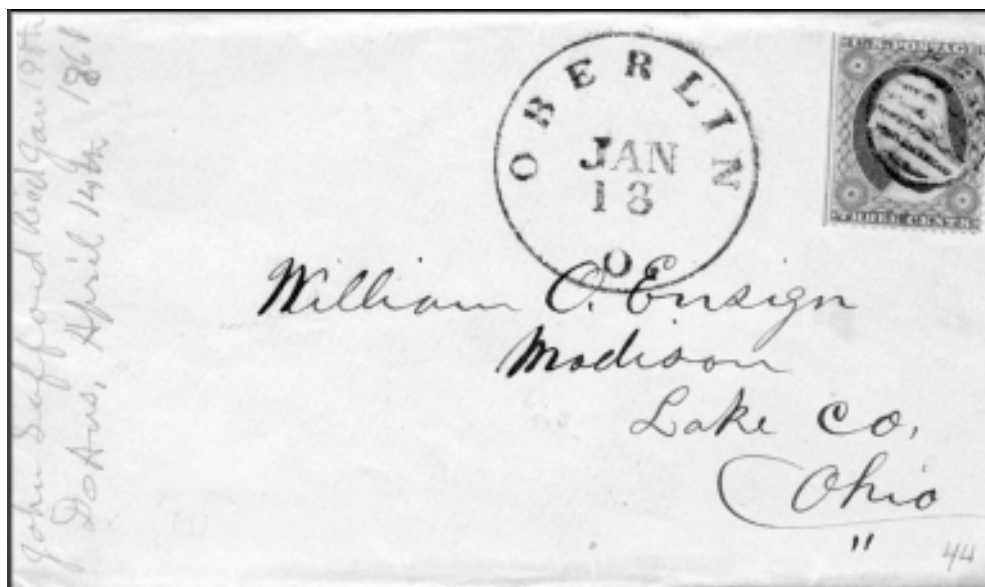


Figure 10 1861 A large blue Oberlin Ohio dial and 7-bar killer; January 18, 1861, making reference to secession, and the Oberlin theological atmosphere.

Oberlin Jan 15th 1861

My dear Will

Your letter closes with "yours till the 4th of March" and as I suspect you intent to "secede" about that time I must write before that.

March 4th, of course, is the original inauguration date established by Washington, and Lincoln was to take the reins of the Federal Government. Since the letter is addressed to Madison OH, Ohio was obviously split over the issue of the Union. The student writer mentions the University President's preaching:

The President has not been able to preach for several weeks and it is feared that he will not be better soon. He seems to be about worn out. Well, I don't know but his work is done and well done. He has doubtless done about as much good as any man living. He has exerted a great influence on the world

The president mentioned is Charles Finney. Though Oberlin made an unprecedented decision in 1835 to admit students regardless of race (and shortly coeds), and although one of its founders was Theodore Weld, an arch abolitionist and reformer, Charles Finney's forte was revivalism. He was the key figure there between 1849 and 1866 and it seems odd, at the height of political and social passion, that he only mentions personal and community revival as his consuming work:

Since 1860, although continually pressed by churches, East and West, to come and labor as an evangelist, I have not dared to comply with their request. I have been able, by the blessing of God, to perform a good deal of labor here; but I have felt inadequate to the exposure and labor of attempting to secure revivals abroad.

Perhaps the thoughts of national suicide were too much for him and he was content to withdraw to the interior? Anyway, our student writer is rather blasé at his friend's secessionist politics. He only adds toward the end:

Matters are really getting to look quite serious in political matters. How things will terminate I don't know, but my prayer is that Right may triumph and that there

will be no mean cowardly wicked yielding to Sin. But a few days or weeks will determine.

If that's not a fence sitting position befitting a good politician. Anyone could interpret it however they chose and agree to it! He finally says, "Take good care of yourself bodily & spiritually & make it your aim to do good in the world." Did his friend end up in a burial pit in Tennessee or Virginia? Did they face each other unbeknownst in the heat of battle? Did the writer, John Safford, ever run for office, or become a preacher himself? Either one would seem to suit him.

1863

Naturally, war letters would have to weigh strong in this sort of timeline summary, and this one is an average one, from Fort [Blakeley?], Feb 19, 1863, except for the current event it calls to mind (*figure 11*). There is some chitchat about the writer's sore back and leg and then mention of the weather. It snowed six inches so he assumes the northeast states, "had a regular north Easter". He mentions one soldier who was walking back to camp in the snow via the tracks with his coat over his head and ears, and was gruesomely mangled by the train because he could not hear it coming. Then he mentions a prime war topic, the Draft Bill:

How do the People in the north like the Bill passed by Congress for drafting. It will catch some of the doofscas & cowards who are afraid to look at a gray back & are all the time talking about us who have come to serve our Country. It pleases us much . . .

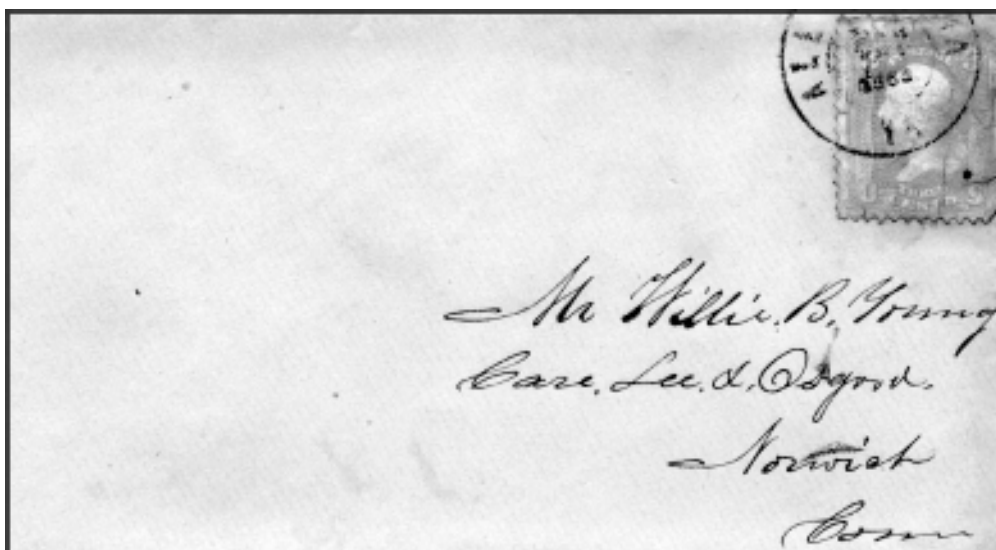


Figure 11 1863 Alexandria VA to Norwich CT; from the brother of the recipient of the Lincoln letter below (1865). He questions the draft bill, which had disastrous results.

Once the Irish immigrants of New York learn of it they will riot bloodily for several days and take it out on many blacks, partly blamed for the war, given the recent Emancipation Proclamation and the recruitment of black soldiers.

After Abraham Lincoln issued the March 3, 1863, Enrollment Act of Conscription, demonstrations took place in many Northern cities, the riots that broke out in New York City were both the most violent and the most publicized. By the time the names of the first draftees were drawn in New York City on July 11, reports about the carnage of Gettysburg (July 1-3, 1863) had been published in city papers. Lincoln's call for 300,000 more young men to fight a seemingly endless war frightened even those who supported the Union cause Perhaps no group was more resentful of these inequities than the Irish immigrants populating the slums of northeastern cities. Poor and more than a little prejudiced against blacks-with whom they were both unfamiliar and forced to compete for the lowest-paying jobs-the Irish in New York objected to fighting on their behalf.

On Sunday, June 12, the names of the draftees drawn the day before by the Provost Marshall were published in newspapers. Eventually numbering some 50,000 people, the mob terrorized neighborhoods on the East Side of New York for three days looting scores of stores. Blacks were the targets of most attacks on citizens; several lynchings and beatings occurred. In addition, a black church and orphanage were burned to the ground.

All in all, the mob caused more than \$1.5 million of damage. The number killed or wounded during the riot is unknown, but estimates range from two dozen to nearly 100.

1863

On September 19, 1863, Victoria writes to her Ma and Pa in Allegan MI from Elgin IL (*figure 12*). The writer's a caustic sounding sister or wife or girlfriend and says:

J N has got back from Washington. He has gone there with his pockets all full of recommends to the President he wants some high office so he can strut around and command. He is a United States detective now, I suppose that don't pay as well as he wants to be paid
....

Since our lady doesn't go into detail, we're not sure whether he was a Pinkerton detective, used during the war to guard trains, etc., or one of the new detectives who signed on to catch counterfeiters. Paper money, greenbacks, were recently issued by the U.S. Government to help finance the war, and in 1865 re-names the United States Secret Service. Probably the latter and who knows how far he climbed and how much he was able to earn eventually? Did Victoria ever share in his future good fortune?



Figure 12 1863 Elgin IL to Allegan, MI, discussing a government job, presidential references, all from a semi literate farm girl.

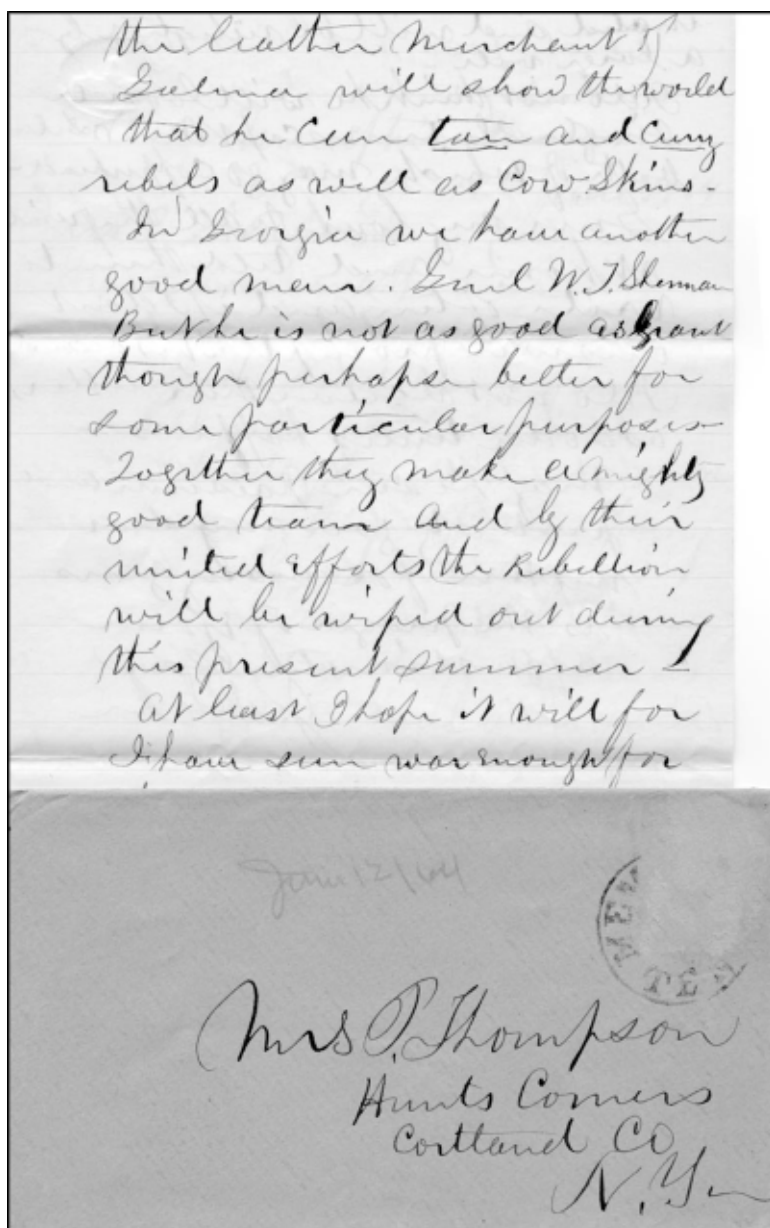


Figure 13 1864 Sadly missing a 3c #65 stamp, this occupied Memphis letter refers to Lincoln, Grant and Sherman in one letter.

1864

From Union occupied Memphis comes this cover and letter, dated June 12, 1864, to Hunts Corners NY (figure 13). With the war less than a year to go, a son writes his mother:

His regiment has just returned from the Red River Expedition, one of the few military jaunts west of the Mississippi in Northern Louisiana. Our writer didn't go and he is glad because he still has the energy that the others have had taken out of them. He goes on to write:

The news from before Richmond is good. Grant is the man possessing the ability to take Richmond. No other man has had the necessary command and the leather merchant of Galena will show the world that he can tan and curry Rebels as well as cow skins. In Georgia we have another good man. Genl W. T. Sherman. But he is not as good as Grant though perhaps better for some particular purposes. (Is this our divinity student from Oberlin form 1861 talking here? He's still hanging to the middle of things!) Together they make a mighty good team and by their united efforts the Rebellion will be wiped out during this present summer. At least I hope it will for I have seen enough war for the present.

And then he adds:

I would like to go home and stay for a year or two and then if we have to have a fight with France or England I am in to that too. President Lincoln is re-nominated and will be reelected by a larger vote. I do not think he will lose a single state except MO and Del, both of which may go Copperhead ("Peace at any Price" activists)....

The war would go on another 10 months, not just the two he hoped for, and Lincoln, Grant and Sherman would indeed gain the victories he was so confident of. But no war with England, who agreed to pay the British-built Confederate attack ship, the Alabama Claims into the millions. France, who had taken advantage of our preoccupation with war saw their puppet Emperor Maximillian of Mexico executed by patriots in 1866, and by then had too much trouble with Prussia for America to bother with her. So hopefully our writer lived a happy, non-belligerent long life after all.

1865

In April 1865, the 11 wayward states had all but been brought back into the Union, by force of arms, and we had grown to 36 states, with the addition of Nevada in late 1864. Grant had besieged him at Petersburg was tracking now Lee and in Northern Virginia in early April surrounded his dwindling forces at Appomattox Court House. Abraham Lincoln was looking more gaunt with the cares of war but was happy enough on the news of Lee's surrendered to

call for the playing of “Dixie”, sort of a salute to a reunited nation. Then five days later he went to relax and see a play with Mary at Ford’s Theater.

Meanwhile, traveling salesman E.B. Young was completing another circuit across New York selling cloth goods when he heard the news and saw people’s response. In a small correspondence, he almost never strayed from talk of cloth prices, silk parasols, capos, shawls, etc. But on April 20, 1865, five days after the President’s death, he began his letter with this profoundly moving lament (figure 14):

Geneva, Ontario Co New York, April 20, 1865

My Dear Willie,

I write you under feelings of the deepest gloom & grief for the loss of our late most estimable unselfish and noble President, fallen as he has by the hands of a most miserable assassin. No man was ever more deservedly and heartily beloved by the mass of our Union loving people than he. And if any thing was wanting to make the rebellion most odious & detestible in the eyes of all good men the assassination has done it. Mr Lincoln dies a martyr to Liberty; we had a very solemn and impressive discourse yesterday on the above in church at Seneca Falls from Rev Slator Condit. The cities & towns I have passed through since Saturday are draped in mourning, stores were closed yesterday from 11 AM to 3 PM and today being fast day the stores are closed through the day. The great mass of the people are sincere mourners, and feel undoubtedly as I feel that there is a great void in the Nation. I probably shall never love a person whom I never met so well again. May we all strive to imitate his virtues. I shall go to Rochester day after tomorrow....

Sadly for Mr. Young, Congress will reverse Lincoln’s peace program of seeking out the “better angels of our nature” to bind up our wounds. Rather they would occupy the south militarily during Reconstruction and in doing so, anger southerners to the point that reintegration on the northern model would be impossible. The new south would be a segregated and backward, not achieving their former prosperity until World War II demanded full employment and industrialization into the south as well.

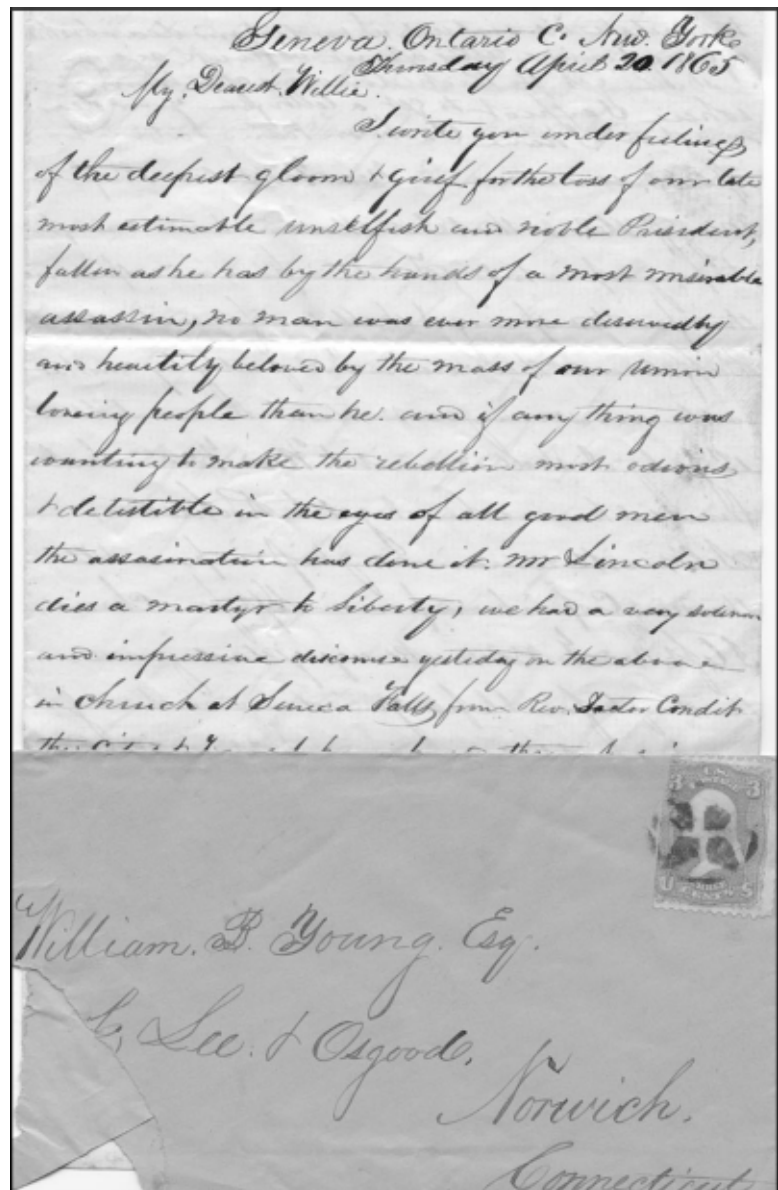


Figure 14 1865 A mis-struck dial on this Geneva NY letter to the writer’s son in Norwich CT painfully relating his feelings on the death of Abraham Lincoln.

1866

During Reconstruction, northern “carpetbaggers”, Freedman’s Bureau volunteers, and troops will try to design a better, racially neutral, society. This letter, from Atlanta to Newark, and brutally hard to read because of the cross-writing, is curiously dated January 1st, though cancelled December 31 (figure 15).

... The colored people here have behaved very well. We have changed all our old servants but one old nurse. And all I hope for the better. The only problem is the lack of means to pay them. . . . I have determined to establish a School for Colored Chil-



Figure 15 1866 An Atlanta GA carpet-bagger letter back home in Newark NJ describing life in the south, colored servant, scarcity of money, and a school for colored children.

dren in my parish. Under the auspices of the P. E. Freedman Commission by our Gen. Miss. Soc in Phila.

We must assume these are the carpetbagger variety who have taken up residence, possibly to do religious work. Family members are mentioned and a piano so it seems they have moved completely from Newark NJ to the South. How long they stayed and whether they felt they were successful in their endeavors to rebuild the town and citizenry is a good question. About a week before in Tennessee, the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan was organized by half a dozen former Confederates, including General Nathan Bedford Forrest. It will be another century before “northern” conditions prevail in the South.

1872

In June 1872, the north was humming with the sounds of industry and the nation was lurching into a period of unprecedented growth. Inventions in the next 20 years will astound the world and propel America into almost everyone’s limelight. This is the day for the beginning of arbitration over the Alabama Claims between the U.S. and Great Britain. The writer shows Wall Street’s interest (figure 16):

It is now about 11 o’clock, and a cool, pleasant morning. This is the day the Great Conference at Geneva begins, but by the Herald’s dispatches, it seems the Englishmen are not expected to be on hand at 12 M, so there is a little flurry on Wall St and the great hold-

ers of gold are making it a little scarce ... “How much gold did we borrow yesterday?” “About 120,000.” “How much the day before?” “How much have we got to have today?” ... A hack just stops in front with 3 ladies and a good looking man with eye glasses, brown mustache and imperial ... He comes in in a business way and hauls out his greenbacks and buys his exchange and gold and jumps in by the side of a meek young woman and off they go.

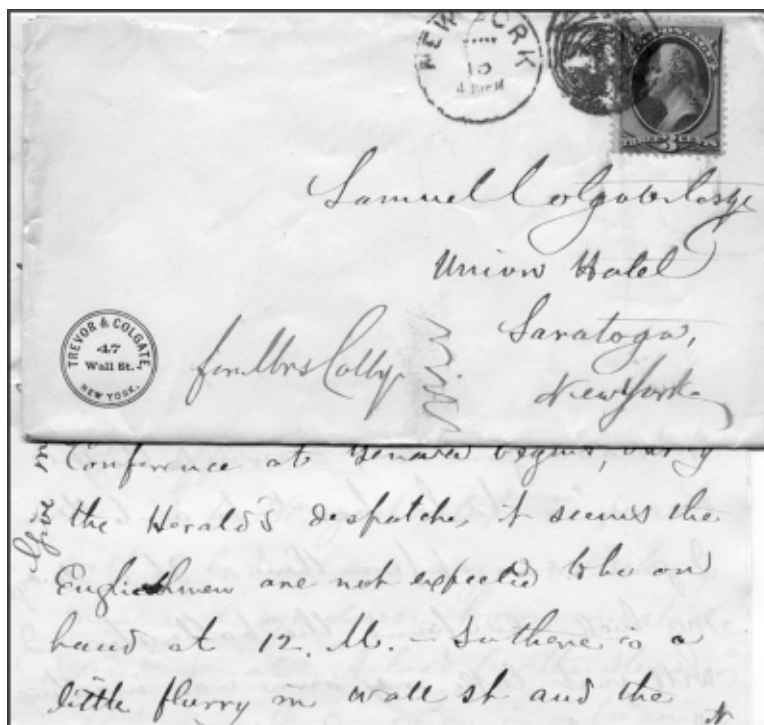


Figure 16 1872 A New York City to Saratoga NY gold bullion dealer’s clerk describing the hustle and bustle of gold trading and how daily events create price swings.

An interesting, if incomplete, view of life in the fast lane at Trevor and Colgate, 47 Wall Street (by the corner card name on the envelope). Gold was a store of value for those who could get their hands on it, though the fluctuations could drive a man to drink, or jump off a bridge. Just like the stock market of the last few years.

1885

On February 28, 1885 AT&T was born, American Telephone and Telegraph provided long distance service for American Bell. Only local telephone companies operating under Bell granted licenses could connect to AT&T's long distance network, in order to protect Bell System's virtual monopoly after its key patents expired in the 1890s (sound familiar 120 years later?). By now our country had grown to 38 states, with Colorado's confirmation in 1876. Four years hence, four states will be added, and the flag's star field demands a drastic rearrangement, when North and South Dakota, Montana and Washington join the Union.

With the end of the Civil War, and the linkage of the Union Pacific and the Central Pacific railroads in Utah in 1869, wealthy sightseers began, and entrepreneurs began to supply accommodations for people, to explore the rich sights and sounds of the West. Wyoming will not be a state for five more years, but it was doing business nonetheless.

Women were given the right to vote in 1869 (closely followed by Utah)! What was the reason for this most unreasonable concession in the man's world of the 19th century? Either 1) the Democrats in the legislature wanted to embarrass the appointed Republican governor so that if he signed the bill, he would look like a fool to the rest of the territory and country. If he didn't, he would alienate certain citizens, or 2), it was a purely economic: Wyoming wanted to civilize the territory enough to attract settlers.

In Cheyenne City, a displaced New Yorker writes to a fellow Keeseville home towner, and he playfully instructs her a description of Territorial status:



Figure 17 1885 A chatty Cheyenne City territorial letter to a girl back in NY state, probably the first stage of love letter writing, describing women's rights and territorial status pre-statehood.

... If you had stooped a moment to consider you would have known that a resident of a Territory has no voice in electing the President. We have but one officer in Washington. The Territory elects one Representative and when in Washington he has no vote he is nearly a Lobbyist. Our officers are appointed by the General Government. We have the right to elect our city officers our county officers but our Territorial officers are appointed by the State Government and the reason we are in sympathy for the father of the Great Political Party [Democratic] is that with a Democrat President we will have Democrat officers for our Territory. By the way, the Ladies have the right to vote here. And it is amusing to see the Ladies working on Election Day ... women have any right that man only in this Territory ... but I will say this for elections here that you never see any disputes or drunkenness on Election Days. And street brawls we never see. This place has a bad name and a great many men have been killed here but the majority of those killed surley needed killing. And morly [morally?] the town was improved. ...

And so, about a dozen more glimpses of American life over a half century. All fascinating, all real, and all serve as witnesses to the remarkable growth of the country.

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Recent Texas Discontinued Post Offices

By Michael M. Ludeman

Postal historians with an interest in Texas are fortunate to have at their disposal not one but two detailed studies which provide information about the operational periods of the independent post offices in Texas from the Spanish period (beginning in 1779) up to the present time. The first of these studies was prepared by John J. Germann and Myron R. Janzen, who published their project on a subscription, county-by-county basis between 1986 and 2000.¹ The second was prepared by Walter G. Schmidt, who published his alphabetical sequence of Texas post offices in 1993.²

Both of these comprehensive studies were developed using USPOD and USPS source documents, and are in agreement for most of the post offices and their operating dates. The few variations can be attributed to different interpretation of the data in those instances where multiple sources provided dates. Germann's work was published over a 15-year period, and some post office status changes for counties published early in the project were distributed to subscribers, but many other changes from the same period were not provided. Schmidt's work was published in 1993, and the author is not aware of any effort to bring it up to date.

The USPS has created a website which includes a page titled "Postmaster Finder," which includes an option to view a partial list of post offices by state, as well as additional information about postmasters appointed after 1986. These lists (for Texas anyway) are not very complete, and are missing many of the establishment and discontinuance dates for current and recently closed post offices.³

This article will identify all of the status changes which occurred for Texas post offices between January 1, 1982 and the present, and will revise a few dates published in the noted references where additional information has been located and confirmed by the author.

Methodology

The first step was to identify those post offices which had undergone some type of status change. Most of the activity since 1982 was in the form of a post office being closed, but several instances were identified where a new post office was opened, or the name

of a present post office was modified. For completeness, these changes were also recorded and are reported as part of the present article.

Most status changes for post offices are published in the *Postal Bulletin*, which is published by the USPS on a bi-weekly schedule. Issues for the previous 20 years were examined, and many status changes recorded. However, to help ensure that *all* status changes were identified, a second approach was used as a cross-check. This involved the use of two other publications available to the author. The first was a second publication by Germann that was very similar to Schmidt's book, but which was published in 1989.⁴ This list was developed as the basis for Germann's county study, and was used in the present exercise rather than Schmidt's list only because the author had earlier converted it to a computer database format, which was an easier format to work with than the printed version. The second publication was prepared by the author for the Post Mark Collectors Club (PMCC), and consisted of a complete list of all active post offices in Texas, including all classified and contract units as of early in 2002.⁵

By comparing these two alphabetical lists of post offices, it was possible to identify all those post offices which had closed or otherwise changed between the publication of the two lists in 1989 and 2002 respectively. The results of this comparison were then matched with the data obtained from the *Postal Bulletins*, and the dates were determined for the close or other status change for each post office. Both John Germann and the author had been accumulating this data regarding these changes over the years, but even with the data from the *Postal Bulletins* and pooling our resources, we still lacked dates for about a dozen post offices. Even the USPS web site was not able to provide some of the missing dates.

At this point, a new resource was discovered quite by accident. While viewing the USPS website pages associated with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), a web page was found which listed a series of USPS-managed computer database systems from which an individual could request records using the FOIA. One of these databases was called the Post Office Discontinuance Tracking System (PODTS), and was described to contain data about post office closings. An

FOIA request was submitted for the records for Texas, and after the requisite wait, the response to the request was received. Because the materials from this resource are not well known, and may potentially be of interest to postal historians interested in other states, the materials which were provided will be discussed at some length in the following section.

The Post Office Discontinuance Tracking System

The PODTS database was established about 1994 according to the information provided in the letter which accompanied these materials. It is maintained at the USPS Headquarters in Washington, DC, and is not available to personnel in the various Area or District offices at the present time. The information which is put into this database is received from the District offices on various standard forms, and then entered into the computer at Headquarters. In spite of the claim that this database was established in 1994, the Texas portion of this database was relatively complete for records going back to about 1985, and also included a few records from earlier closings.

The records maintained in this database track two categories of post offices in the closing process of their life cycle. The first consists of post offices which have had their operation suspended by the USPS for some reason, but the post office has not yet been officially closed. The second category represents those post offices which have been officially closed, and the close duly reported in the *Postal Bulletin*.

The records provided by the USPS consisted of two summary reports, one for each of the two categories noted in the previous paragraph, and detailed reports for each post office. These summary reports included the name of the post office, state, ZIP Code and the suspension date, and for the closed offices, the effective or official closed date. These lists included information for all but three of the Texas post offices which had been identified earlier as having closed during the period of study.

The detailed reports were very interesting. There were actually two different formats provided. The first was titled "Discontinued Proposal Fact Sheet," and consisted of a wide variety of information compiled by the USPS during the evaluation process made by the District office prior to the final decision to close the office, including a number of financial facts about the post office prior to its close. The second report

was titled the "Emergency Suspension Fact Sheet," and contained a subset of the data included in the first report. The letter that accompanied these reports noted that the field evaluators were not required to complete every data field in these reports, so that some reports would be less complete than others, and that this was a feature of the process and not an indication that the missing data was omitted by accident. It simply was not required as part of the decision process.

Even though a number of these records did not have complete data, there was sufficient data present to expand the original scope of the present article to provide an additional section which will present and analyze some of this newly discovered data in an effort to provide some insight into the process the USPS utilized during the close of these post offices. Reports were provided for a total of 80 post offices. Nine of these were from the early 1970s, and were subsequently ignored for the purposes of this study. One was a duplicate entry, leaving 70 good entries to use in the study.

The Post Office Changes

As the records from the PODTS were examined, it was determined that the earliest record for a post office not found as listed as closed in Germann's alphabetical list of 1989 was the entry for Hasse, in Comanche county, which had been closed on July 6, 1982. As a result, it was decided to use 1982 as the starting point for presenting the results of this study. In this way, all of the post offices which closed from the beginning of 1982 up to the present, including those which may have been previously reported in the Germann and Schmidt publications, could be listed in a complete date-order sequence.

During the period covered by this study, two post offices were identified as having been opened. The first was at Santa Fe, in Galveston county, which had been established on Jan. 1, 1983. Santa Fe was a new post office that resulted from the consolidation of two other post offices, Alta Loma and Arcadia, both of which were closed on Dec. 31, 1982. The second new post office was the opening (re-establishment) of the post office at Prairie View, in Waller county, on March 31, 1984. The previous post office at Prairie View had closed on Dec. 31, 1938.

Also, during this period, two other post offices were identified as having had an official name change. The post office at De Soto, in Dallas county, changed the

spelling of that post office to one word, Desoto, on Sept. 1, 1999. Then on Feb. 22, 2002, the post office at Little River, in Bell county, changed that name to Little River Academy, to reflect the consolidation of the two communities, Little River and Academy, which had actually occurred back in the early 1980s.

The majority of the status changes, however, involved the close of post offices. A total of 74 post offices had been identified as having closed since the appearance of Germann's list in 1989, and another 14 post offices were added to the list to fill in all post offices that had closed beginning on Jan. 1, 1982.

Table 1 presents a summary by year of all post offices which were closed between 1982 and 2002. The following information is presented in the columns for this table:

- a) The post office name.
- b) The county where the post office was located.
- c) The ZIP code for the post office at the time of close. Many of these towns retained their community identity within the postal system as either a Community Post Office (CPO) or a place name, but in some instances, the ZIP code was changed after the independent post office closed, usually to the ZIP code of the new administrative or parent office. The original ZIP Code is shown in this table.
- d) The USPS District in which the post office was located.
- e) The date that the post office was placed in the "Emergency Suspension" status.
- f) The official close date of the post office, as published in the *Postal Bulletin*.
- g) The "actual" close date, which is strictly the author's personal opinion as to when the post office should be considered closed. This is usually one of the two previous dates unless a third, specific close date, was provided in the PODTS. It was the author's intention for this date to reflect the actual date when a postal patron could no longer obtain services at that post office.
- h) Notes. This field contains the author's comments for the post office or dates.

Particular attention should be paid to the description of column "g)". In many instances throughout the 1980s and 1990s, there was a considerable delay between the time that postal service was discontinued at an office, and the official close date which was reported in the *Postal Bulletin*. The reader should keep

this in mind whenever dealing with the similar "official" close dates reported in the *Postal Bulletin* for other states.

In addition to the presentation in *table 1*, a county map of Texas identifies the counties where the closed post offices were located. All Texas post offices are administered out of one of the four USPS districts. The Dallas district is responsible for the northeast section of the state. The Fort Worth district is responsible for the northwest section. The Houston district is responsible for the southeast section, and the Rio Grande district, located in San Antonio, is responsible for the southwest and far west section of the state. While these regions appear to vary significantly in geographic size, they each contain between 200 and 400 post offices, and provide a convenient way to present trends in post office activity. These four USPS districts are designated by the bold lines separating the counties on the map in *figure 1*.

As can be readily observed from the map, the vast majority of these closed post offices were located in the central and western regions of the state. In fact, over half (45 of 88) were located in the Fort Worth district, which encompasses the Panhandle, South Plains, and North Central regions of Texas. All of these were in counties characterized by large tracts of land used for farming and ranching, and which have generally low populations.

Analysis

As of January 1, 1982, there were 1,485 independent post offices operating in Texas. During the period of this study, two new post offices were established, and 88 were closed, leaving a total of 1,399 post offices in operation as of December 31, 2002. This is a decrease of 5.9% in the count of post offices for the 21 year period. By way of comparison, the number of operating post offices changed from 1,700 on January 1, 1960 to only 1,485 at the beginning of the present study. This previous 21 year period shows an overall decline of 215 post offices, or 12.5%—over double the rate from the most recent 21 year period.

It should be noted that the author worked closely with John J. Germann in identifying these DPOs and establishing their actual close dates. John has given me permission to state as part of this article that he also believes that the dates presented here represent the best information available and are appropriate to be used in updating the post office listings in his two publications.

Table 1
Texas Discontinued Post Offices (1982 - 2002)

Post Office	County	ZIP	Dist	Close Dates			Actual	Notes
				Suspension	Official	(PB #)		
<u>1982</u>								
Hasse	Comanche	76456	FW	1982/07/06	1994/11/09	(21883)	1982/07/06	
Forest	Cherokee	75945	DA				1982/07/23	JJG
Black	Parmer	79004	FW				1982/08/20	JJG
Arcadia	Galveston	77517	HO				1982/12/31	JJG,(1)
Alta Loma	Galveston	77510	HO				1982/12/31	JJG,(1)
<u>1983</u>								
Grayburg	Hardin	77618	HO				1983/01/08	JJG
Barnum	Polk	75927	DA				1983/01/21	JJG
Roaganville	Jasper	75971	DA				1983/07/09	JJG
El Sauz	Starr	78544	RG				1983/07/15	JJG
Kirkland	Childress	79238	FW	1983/09/02	2002/11/02	(22087)	1983/09/02	
<u>1984</u>								
Lone Grove	Llano	78646	RG				1984/03/16	JJG
Dorchester	Grayson	75030	FW				1984/08/03	JJG
Ben Bolt	Jim Wells	78342	RG				1984/10/06	JJG
<u>1985</u>								
Wayside	Armstrong	79094	FW				1985/01/04	JJG
Glazier	Hemphill	79037	FW				1985/01/22	JJG
Goodland	Bailey	79237	FW				1985/04/01	(9)
Chalk	Cottle	79224	FW	1985/06/28	2002/11/02	(22087)	1985/06/28	
Rockland	Tyler	75792	DA		1992/10/13	(21821)	1985/08/13	
Twitty	Wheeler	79090	FW		1985/10/24	(21537)	1985/10/24	JJG,(2)
Northfield	Motley	79246	FW	1985/12/06	1989/10/14	(21755)	1985/12/06	
Wetmore	Bexar	78163	RG		1985/12/26	(21546)	1985/12/26	
Ridge	Robertson	77874	HO		1985/12/26	(21546)	1985/12/26	JJG,(3)
<u>1986</u>								
Texon	Reagan	76954	RG	1986/03/31	1989/01/14	(21714)	1986/03/31	JJG,(4)
Alanreed	Gray	79002	FW				1986/04/04	(10)
Masterson	Moore	79058	FW				1986/05/31	JJG
Albert	Gillispie	78601	RG	1986/08/16	1992/02/01	(21816)	1986/08/16	
Bee House	Coryell	76512	RG	1986/09/26	1989/09/16	(21753)	1986/09/26	
Saspanco	Wilson	78153	RG	1986/12/29	1989/10/28	(21755)	1986/12/29	
<u>1987</u>								
Redford	Presidio	79846	RG	1987/01/17	2002/09/28	(22098)	1987/01/17	
Monroe City	Chambers	77579	HO	1987/02/06	1988/10/27	(21694)	1987/02/06	JJG,(5)
Leaday	Coleman	76851	FW	1987/03/31	1988/10/15	(21692)	1987/03/31	JJG,(6)
Turnersville	Coryell	76580	RG	1987/10/02	1989/06/24	(21748)	1987/10/02	
<u>1988</u>								
Best	Reagan	76931	RG		1988/05/21	(21680)	1988/05/21	JJG,(7)
Minden	Rusk	75680	DA	1988/07/01	1989/10/27	(21755)	1988/07/01	
Voss	Coleman	76888	FW	1988/08/31	2001/11/02	(PODTS)	1988/08/31	(12)
Sammorwood	Collingsworth	79077	FW	1988/09/01	1989/08/19	(21748)	1988/09/01	
Fashing	Atascosa	78020	RG	1988/10/01	1989/09/16	(21753)	1988/10/01	
Fife	McCulloch	76839	FW		1988/11/05	(21700)	1988/11/05	
Dermott	Scurry	79515	FW		1988/11/16	(21707)	1988/11/16	JJG
Royalty	Ward	79779	FW	1988/11/30	2002/11/02	(22087)	1988/11/30	
Clay	Burleson	77839	HO	1988/12/07	Not Set	(PODTS)	1988/12/07	JJG,(8)
Cheapside	Gonzales	77952	RG	1988/12/30	1989/10/28	(21761)	1988/12/30	

Table 1 (Part 2)
Texas Discontinued Post Offices (1982 - 2002)

Post Office	County	ZIP	Dist	Close Dates				Notes
				Suspension	Official	(PB #)	Actual	
<u>1989</u>								
Flomot	Motley	79234	FW	1989/02/27	1994/02/17	(21861)	1989/02/27	JJG
Truscott	Knox	79260	FW				1989/04/01	
Carey	Childress	79222	FW	1989/04/28	2002/11/02	(22087)	1989/04/28	
Tokio	Terry	79376	FW		1989/07/15	(21747)	1989/07/15	
Afton	Dickens	79220	FW		1989/08/19	(21748)	1989/08/19	
Lelia Lake	Donley	79240	FW		1989/08/19	(21748)	1989/08/19	
Fieldton	Lamb	79236	FW		1989/10/07	(21715)	1989/10/17	
Duffau	Erath	76447	FW	1989/12/01	1992/07/11	(21816)	1989/12/01	
Boys Ranch	Oldham	79010	FW	1989/12/15	1992/02/08	(20815)	1989/12/15	
Whon	Coleman	76889	FW	1989/12/29	1993/09/30	(21851)	1989/12/29	
<u>1990</u>								
Antelope	Jack	76350	FW	1990/02/09	1992/05/23	(21812)	1990/02/09	
Dryden	Terrell	78851	RG	1990/06/19	1992/08/22	(21823)	1990/06/19	
Ben Arnold	Milam	76517	RG	1990/07/31	1992/11/14	(21825)	1990/07/31	
Red Springs	Baylor	76378	FW	1990/08/04	1992/05/30	(21812)	1990/08/04	
Kirvin	Freestone	75848	DA		1990/11/01	(21776)	1990/11/01	
Birome	Hill	76625	RG	1990/11/30	1993/01/16	(21832)	1990/11/30	
<u>1991</u>								
Katemcy	Mason	76850	FW	1991/02/22	1992/08/02	(21818)	1991/02/22	
Cone	Crosby	79321	FW	1991/04/15	1993/01/23	(21836)	1991/04/15	
Geneva	Sabine	75947	DA		1991/06/15	(21791)	1991/06/15	
Peacock	Stonewall	79542	FW	1991/07/11	1993/02/06	(21832)	1991/07/11	
Long Mott	Calhoun	77972	RG		1991/07/27	(21796)	1991/07/27	
Eliasville	Young	76348	FW	1991/08/12	1993/10/28	(21853)	1991/08/12	
Boston	Bowie	75557	DA		1991/11/30	(21803)	1991/11/30	
<u>1992</u>								
Magnolia Springs	Jasper	75957	DA	1992/03/03	1994/08/27	(21878)	1992/03/03	(12)
Elbert	Throckmorton	76359	FW	1992/05/14	1993/04/02	(21865)	1992/05/14	
Perry	Falls	76677	RG	1992/06/30	2002/11/02	(22098)	1992/06/30	
Vera	Knox	76383	FW	1992/07/09	1996/07/27	(21939)	1992/07/09	
Leon Junction	Coryell	76552	FW	1992/10/02	2002/09/28	(22087)	1992/10/02	
Maysfield	Milam	76555	FW	1992/10/02	2002/11/02	(22098)	1992/10/02	
Otto	Falls	76675	RG	1992/10/02	Not Set	(P00TS)	1992/10/02	
Sandy	Blanco	78665	RG	1992/10/02	2002/09/28	(22087)	1992/10/02	
Aiken	Floyd	79221	FW		1992/12/19	(21827)	1992/12/19	
Bula	Bailey	79230	FW	1992/12/19	1993/10/28	(21853)	1992/12/19	
Ode11	Wilbarger	79247	FW		1992/12/26	(21827)	1992/12/26	
<u>1993</u>								
Newport	Clay	76254	FW		1993/02/06	(21832)	1993/02/06	
<u>1994</u>								
Speaks	Lavaca	77985	RG	1994/02/04	2002/28/02	(22093)	1994/02/04	(11)
Newgulf	Wharton	77462	HO	1994/03/31	2003/01/04	(22098)	1994/03/31	
Winchester	Fayette	78964	RG	1994/05/17	1997/07/21	(21948)	1994/05/07	
Waka	Ochiltree	79093	FW		1994/09/03	(21878)	1994/09/03	
<u>1995</u>								
No Post Offices Closed in Texas								
<u>1996</u>								
Bebe	Gonzales	78603	RG	1996/06/01	2002/09/28	(22087)	1996/06/01	

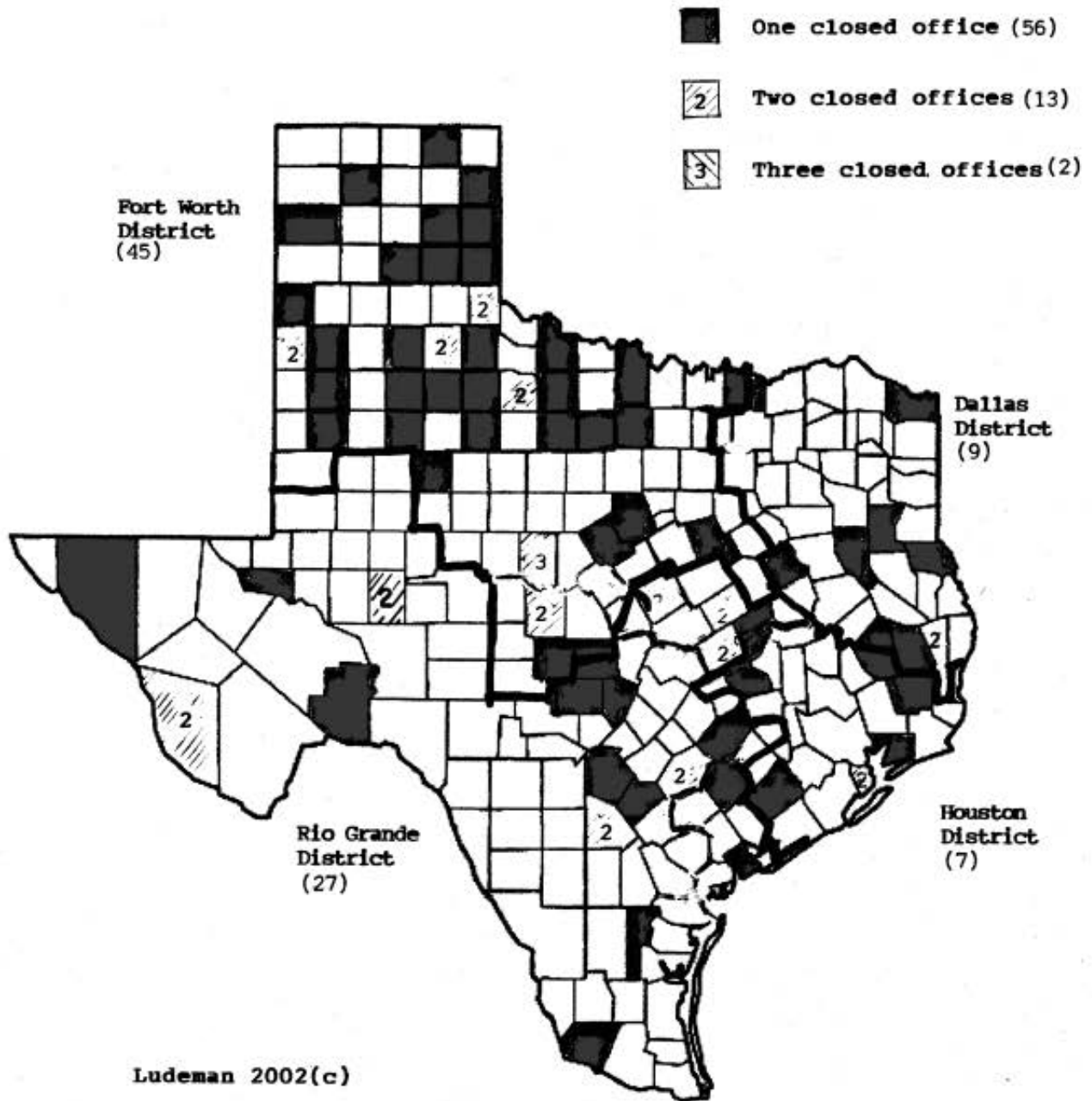
Table 1 (Part 3)
Texas Discontinued Post Offices (1982 - 2002)

Post Offices	County	ZIP	Dist	Close Dates				Notes
				Suspension	Official	(PB #)	Actual	
<u>1997</u>								
Justiceburg	Garza	79330	FW	1997/05/30	2002/11/02	(PODTS)	1997/05/30	(12)
<u>1998</u>								
McCoy	Atascosa	78053	RG	1998/03/27	2002/09/28	(22093)	1998/03/27	
<u>1999</u>								
Shafter	Presidio	79850	RG	1999/02/05	2002/11/02	(22087)	1999/02/05	
Salt Flat	Hudspeth	79847	RG				1999/12/??	(13)
<u>2000</u>								
Dumont	King	79232	FW	2000/11/01	Not Set	(PODTS)	2000/11/01	
<u>2001</u>								
Pear Valley	McCulloch	76867	FW	2001/01/05	Not Set	(PODTS)	2001/01/05	
<u>2002</u>								
No Post Offices Closed in Texas								

Notes:

- JJG This entry taken from John Germann's Alphabetical List (Reference 4) and not the PODTS reports from the USPS. Dates from Germann's list unless otherwise indicated. These entries included for completeness.
- (1) These two post offices were consolidated and reopened as Santa Fe, in Galveston county, on 1983/01/01.
- (2) This date replaces Germann's originally published date of 1985/11/15.
- (3) This date replaces Germann's originally published date of 1985/11/15.
- (4) This date replaces Germann's originally published date of 1988/12/17.
- (5) This date replaces Germann's originally published date of 1988/10/20.
- (6) This date replaces Germann's originally published date of 1988/10/15.
- (7) This date replaces Germann's originally published date of 1988/05/20.
- (8) Germann originally showed this office closed as of 1967/01/27. It is believed but not confirmed that the post office was replaced by a CPO or a Classified Station of Burleson at that time. Postal Service at Clay Independent post office may have actually ended in 1967.
- (9) Date provided by Arthur E. Rupert from his list of Community Post Offices.
- (10) Date provided by the current operator of the Community Post Office at Alanreed, who had managed this CPO since independent post office closed.
- (11) Speaks was scheduled to be closed on 1992/12/12 and was so reported in PB 21827. However, the close order was rescinded when the USPS was unable to establish a CPO at Speaks, and eventually closed on this date. It is not known if service was available at Speaks between the 1992 and 1994 dates.
- (12) This official date was entered into the PODTS record but had not been published in the Postal Bulletin at the time this article was finalized.
- (13) No other information located.

Figure 1
TEXAS
Discontinued Post Offices
(1982 - 2002)



To be continued

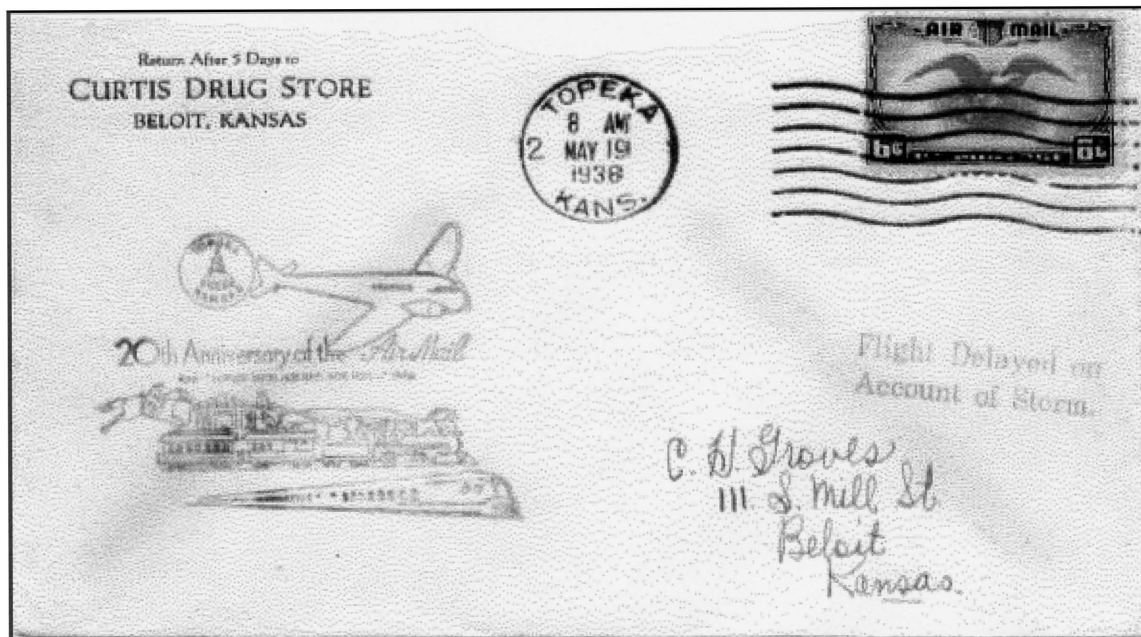
New Help In The Classroom – A Postal History Fable

By Michael Nickel

Over the course of several years, through several grade levels, Johnny had been able to count on using his father's postal history collection to help with various school projects and homework assignments. He's used covers to provide insight and illustration for geography, history, and current events classes. He's even found them useful in foreign language classes and once even in science class.

Today, though, it was Johnny's English teacher who had presented him with a challenging assignment – bring an example to class to illustrate the word “irony”. Johnny was stumped. He thought and thought and still could come up with nothing. In desperation he went to look through some of the covers that had been useful before. “But, how could they help?” he wondered.

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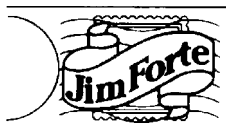


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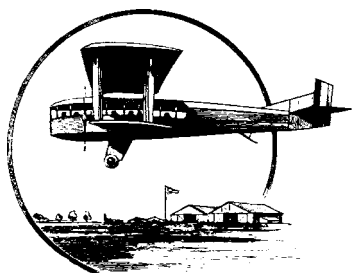
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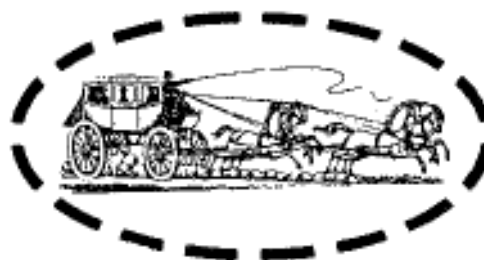
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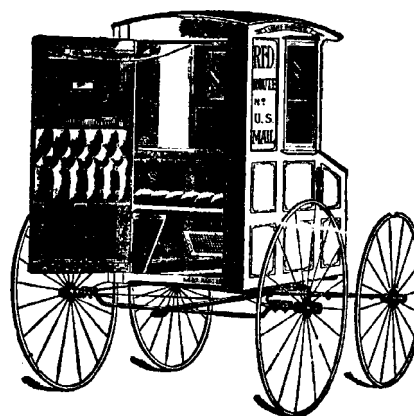
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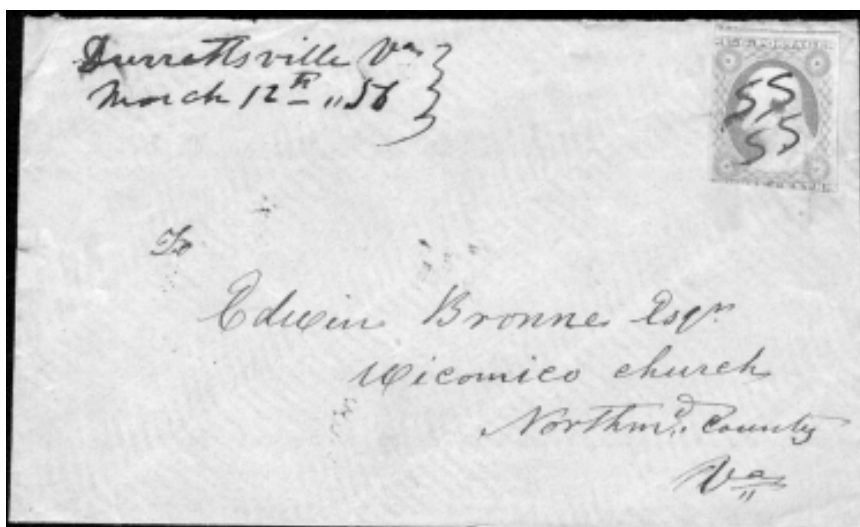
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Postal Anomaly Mystery Solved!

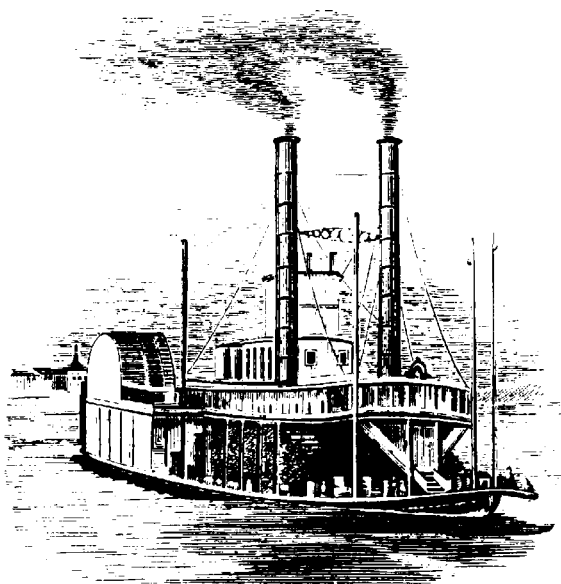
By Kevin Belmont

A special thank you goes out to two readers that helped to solve the postal anomaly from my article in the last issue of *La Posta*. **Wayne Farley** and **Bill Lizotte** both provided valuable information. The postmark is not Surrattsville, but rather Durrettsville, Richmond County, Virginia. According to the Virginia Postal History Society catalog, there are two other known examples of manuscript cancellations from Durrettsville.



Durrettsville, Virginia, March 12th 1856

Appointed	Postmaster
2 Mar 1837	Richard G. Northen
8 Aug 38	James T. Clements
26 Oct 38	Richard G. Northen
25 Sep 39	James T. Clements
8 Oct 41	Richard H. Lyell
18 Jun 42	Bartholomew Miskell
16 Jun 43	Discontinued
23 May 44	Issac O. Butler
18 Jun 46	Richard A. Payne
24 Sep 51	Alexander Bryant
23 Dec 54	George H. Landon
23 Sep 57	Robert Mackam
1 Mar 59	William E. Hill
7 Feb 66	James A. Johnson



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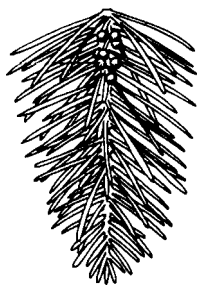
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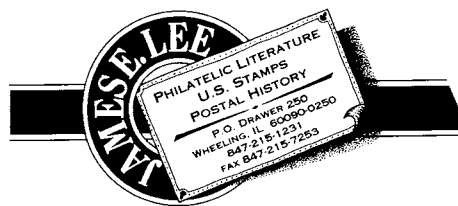
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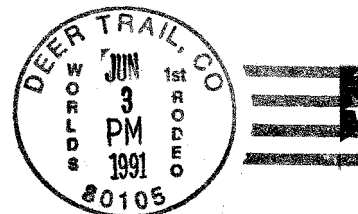
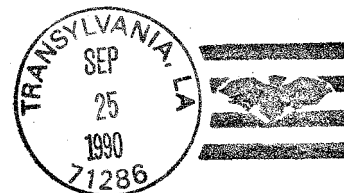
Strange but true, it is easier to find what U.S. post offices existed in 1902 than to find out what U.S. post offices are operating in 2002.

The only official source, *USPS' National 5-Digit Zip Code & Post Office Directory*, leaves out literally thousands of stations and branches, lists closed offices, and is riddled with other errors.

Finally, a complete list is here! *The Post Mark Collectors Club's Directory of Post Offices*, as noted in *Linn's Stamp News* and the *American Philatelist*, is as accurate as 10 years of research and 20 volunteers can make it. The postal rarities of tomorrow are listed here, and only here.

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U.S.S. CHICAGO (CA-29)

U.S.S. HOUSTON (CA-30)

Please send full-size image (with price) via

email to: pmarche@jps.net OR photocopy (with price) to:

**C.R. Kimes, 1355 Martin Drive, Auburn, CA
95603**



La Posta Backnumbers

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

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

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DPO's, RPO's, ships, Doanes, Expos, machines, military, advertising, auxiliaries, and more! My Mail Bid Sales offer thousands of postal history lots. Write/ call for sample catalog. Jim Mehrer, 2405-30th Street, Rock Island, IL 61201. Phone: (309) 786-6539. Email: mehrer@postal-history.com. Internet website: <http://www.postal-history.com>. [34-3]

GRAND FATHER'S Collection: All covers old, U.S. Postal history 36/\$110; U.S. Naval 36/\$110; First Flights 36/\$110; Advertising 36/\$110; Worldwide Postal History 36/\$110; (½ lots available). Beautiful covers! Send \$5 cash for entire catalog. Victor Schwez, 10519 Casanes Ave., Downey, CA 90241 [35-4]

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CALIFORNIA: MENDOCINO County to 1900: Albion, Casper, Cleone, Cuffy's Cove, Elk, Fish Rock, Fort Bragg, Gualala, Inglnook, Kibesillah, Little River, Mendocino, Miller, Navaro, Navaro Ridge, Noyo, Noyo River, Point Arena, Punta Arenas, Rock Port, Usal, Westport and Whitesboro. Send photocopies or priced on approval. Don East (APS, WCS) P.O. Box 301, Little River, CA 95456 [34-3]

CALIFORNIA - KERN & IMPERIAL County covers and cards. Especially interested in Bakersfield corner cards. Send description or photocopies and prices to John Williams, 887 Litchfield Ave., Sebastopol, CA 95472 [34-3]

CALIFORNIA: LOS ANGELES County to 1900 and City of Los Angeles forerunners. Scans, photocopies or approvals. Michael Zolno, 2855 West Pratt, Chicago IL 60645, mzolno@aol.com [34-3]

TOWNS: WANTED

CALIFORNIA - SISKIYOU COUNTY: wanted, covers, acrds, letters and billheads and early paper. Send photocopies, description and prices to: Bud Luckey, 6110 Beverley Way, Dunsmuir, CA 96025 [34-3]

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LOUISIANA and other mid-Gulf Coast states. Stamped/stampless, etc., postal history (1790-1920). Individual items/entire correspondences. Ron Trosclair (APS), 1713 Live Oak St., Metairie, LA 70005-1069, PH: (504) 835-9611. Email: rontrosclair@yahoo.com [35-5]

NEBRASKA TERRITORIAL covers (before Mar 1, 1867) wanted for my personal collection. Write or send copies. Ken Stach, 15 N. Morning Cloud Circle, The Woodland, TX 77381 [34-4]

NOTE:

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July 20, 2003

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SOUTH DAKOTA Territorial and Statehood covers wanted for my personal collection. Write or send copies. Ken Stach, 15 N. Morning Cloud Circle, The Woodland, TX 77381 [34-4]

WEST POINT, NEW YORK covers -- stampless to 1890 -- wanted for personal collection. Send on approval or photocopies. Prompt response promised. Richard Helbock, P. O. Box 100, Chatsworth Island, NSW 2469 Australia [34-6].

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NOW AVAILABLE: Post Offices of Virginia - \$20; The Post Offices and Postmasters of Hawaii - \$20; The Post Offices of Alabama to 1900 - \$20; The Post Offices of Georgia - \$20; Post Offices of Puerto Rico - \$20; Post Offices of Philippine and Ryukyu Islands (under US administration) - \$20. Coming soon Post Offices of WV and SC. All available from the author, postpaid: Richard E. Small, 14349 Coleraine Ct, Reston, VA 20191. [34-4]

United States Post Offices on CD-ROM. The most complete lists currently available*. Contains: Combined alphabetical list of active and discontinued Offices from all states (including years of operation and counties); 50 individual state lists, plus DC and Indian Territory; combined list of all Counties; and statehood, territorial and Confederate secession dates. The ultimate reference for identifying manuscript postmarks, postcards, letters, etc. (*NOTE: Alabama and Georgia have not been fully researched, but this CD includes thousands of offices previously unpublished from those states.) PC or MAC. \$99.00 postpaid, worldwide. (Illinois residents: \$105.68.) Jim Mehrer, 2405- 30th Street, Rock Island, IL 61201. [34-3]

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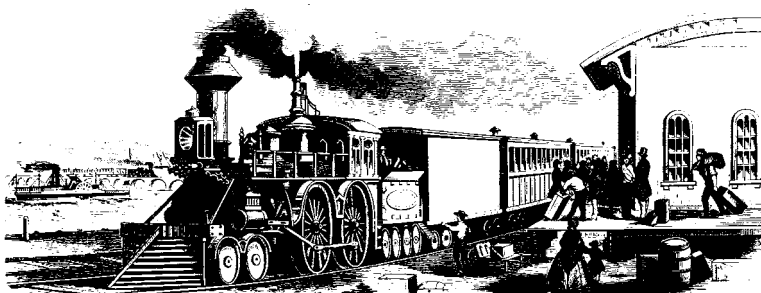
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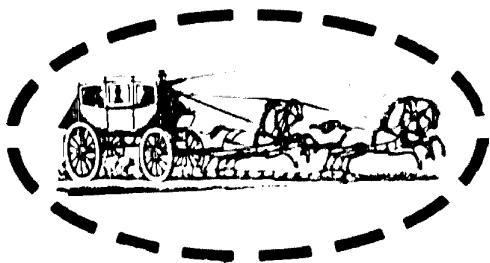
EXPRESS COMPANY & Parcel Delivery Company covers, Corner-Cards, Labels and Stamps. Locals: Forgeries and Fantasies. William Sammis, 436 Thomas Road, Ithaca, NY 14850-9653 E-mail: cds13@cornell.edu [34-3]

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FOREIGN: WANTED

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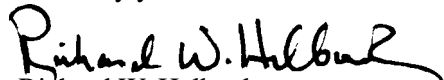
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Sincerely yours,


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Publisher

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Address: _____

City, State, ZIP: _____

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1-page	\$100.00	\$230.00	\$420.00

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

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